

LIVE

books

Practise makes perfect

■ **Coaching Girl's Soccer Successfully**, by Debra LaPrath, Human Kinetics, 191 pages, \$24.95.

SOCCER is no longer the domain of males and with equal numbers of girls enjoying the sport there is plenty of demand for good coaches.

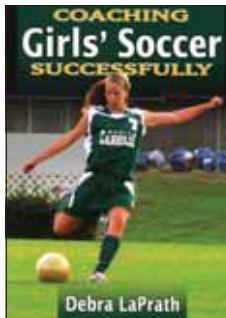
Often it is parents who are thrust into this role with very little experience.

Debra LaPrath draws on her 18 years of coaching experience to provide information on effective ways to help turn your team into champions. She begins with a chapter on establishing your coaching philosophy and she builds her approach on that. While most of the material in the book would be relevant for players of either sex, much of what she discusses is helpful in establishing a connection with your players based on trust and respect. This degree of sensitivity will work well with the young girls who are the focus of her book.

LaPrath outlines all aspects of the coach's role, including preparing for the soccer season, how to conduct practices effectively, teaching skills, coaching team play, handling game-day situations and evaluating your results.

Throughout the book there are photographs and diagrams to further illustrate the points being presented.

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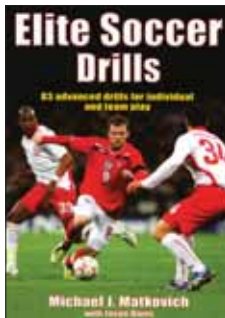
■ **Elite Soccer Drills**, by Michael J. Matkovich with Jason Davis, Human Kinetics, 183 pages, \$21.95.

There is no substitute for practise to improve the skills necessary for any sport. As the participants improve the degree they are challenged by those practise sessions needs to increase. For advanced soccer players simple ball control and passing drills are not enough.

In this book, coaches Michael J. Matkovich and Jason Davis have collaborated to produce this detailed collection of more than 80 different soccer drills. The drills are applicable to both individual performance and the team as a whole.

Each drill is presented with a complete description, which includes the purpose, organization, procedure, key points, variations and a diagram.

They are divided into chapters based on the type of drill,



for example juggling drills form one chapter, while the tactical side of the game is focused on in another. Coaches who are hoping to help their players move up to an elite level of play will find plenty of help with these drills.

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■ **Soccer Skills and Drills**, by National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Human Kinetics, 161 pages, \$21.95.

On the surface, soccer seems like one of the simplest games in the world: kick the ball down the field and into your opponent's net.

Lying beneath that simplicity is a game of finesse where players work together as a chessboard in constant motion, challenging the defences of their opponent until they find the weakness that leads to the goal.

Utilizing the resources of the National Soccer Coaches Association

See Books page 17

Experiences can vary

QUESTION:

My best friend is a wonderful man who is kind, accomplished and a great husband and father. His younger sister is a total disaster. She has had terrible relationships, is in extreme debt, and at the age of 40 is still dependent on her parents for support. How can two people turn out so differently when they have the same parents and grow up in the same loving home?

ANSWER:

There are a huge number of variables that go into the making of an individual. There are, of course, genetic differences but in addition, each sibling in a family gets dropped at birth into an emotional environment that is somewhat different than that of the sibling before him or her.

Let's look at an extreme example as a way of identifying some of the variables. John and Sarah get married when they are 26 and decide to work hard and play hard for a few years before having children. When their son Mark is born they are doing well and are delighted to be parents. Sarah stays home as planned and enjoys the break from work. John gets a promotion and Sarah's parents are great babysitters so their lifestyle continues with only a few disruptions.

Four years later Mark is in preschool, Sarah is back at work and the couple decides to have a second child. When Sarah is six months pregnant, John loses his job and Sarah's mother has a stroke and dies. Sarah's father becomes dependent on her and his health begins to fail. Sarah, an only child, has been very close to her parents and feels a deep loss for which she has little



Mark is off with his grandfather and new grandmother on summer vacation and Sarah is looking for a preschool for Martha. Sarah remains concerned about Martha's appetite and irritability, noting that she is a little underweight and wonders if she is ready for preschool. On her first day at school Martha bites the teacher. Sarah begins to think that Martha may need to be home schooled. And so on

Though the example is extreme, it serves to illustrate that each child is dropped into a different emotional soup.

Every family goes through stressful periods and even the most emotionally stable parents can experience anxiety given the nature and number of stressful events. The anxiety in one family member can easily transfer to another. Given the time of birth and the developmental process, one child may be more susceptible to parental anxiety than another. Martha was born into a more anxious family than Mark and therefore may be up against more challenges in developing an identity outside of the anxious focus of her mother. I suspect that your friend's sister was more susceptible to the family anxiety than your friend was. When clients complain that their sibling got more of their mother's focus than they did, I remind them that it's not always fortunate to be the object of a parent's attentive concern.

time to grieve. John is going through his own challenges with trying to find a new position. Their savings are dropping and John, having always earned a good salary, is struggling with depression.

Just before their daughter Martha is born, John and Sarah are forced to sell their home and move into a small house in a different neighbourhood. At this point Sarah is really feeling the stress and John's depression is deepening. Sarah's father starts dating a strange woman who is nothing like her mother and Martha is having trouble nursing. Sarah begins to think there is something wrong with her daughter.

The doctor says that Martha has lost weight and that Sarah should watch her carefully. Sarah gets more concerned about Martha who gets more irritable. John starts feeling ignored by Sarah, resents her focus on Martha and switches from wine to Scotch.

Mark seems to be somewhat under the radar. He helps his mother with the baby, watches TV with his dad and enjoys his grandpa and the new girlfriend. In fact, he spends quite a bit of time with them.

Three years later, John is working and drinking less.

Margaret Anne Speak, M.A., C.C.C. works with couples, individuals, and families from a Bowen Family Systems perspective at Family Services of the North Shore. Questions? Write on the couch@familyservices.bc.ca or call 604-988-5281.

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