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SPEECH BY DR TAN ENG LIANG, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE SPORTS COUNCIL
AT THE CHEQUE PRESENTATION OF THE SSC/MILO FOOTBALL TRAINING
SCHEME AT THE NATIONAL STADIUM THEATRETTTE ON SATURDAY, 6 AUGUST
1983 AT 11.00 AM

The Milo Football Training Scheme is now in its 10th year. Through the past decade of the scheme, much has been learnt from the many incidents and experiences encountered. The Scheme has been successful in imparting football skills to many young Singaporeans and also in nurturing and developing potential trainees to national level. Presently, eight of the National Squad players are graduates from the Scheme and some of the better scheme graduates (eg Fandi Ahmad and David Lee) have shown outstanding skills which have resulted in them being awarded contracts by professional teams.

It is also heartening to note that all the under-16 Lion City Cup teams of 1982 were fully made up of trainees from the Scheme. Furthermore, for those trainees who did not don the national colours, many have continued to be active in the sport through the 30 National Football League Clubs.

The Scheme's organisers and coaches have certainly done well for the past decade and have reason to be proud of their achievements. However, it is important to remind ourselves that we should not be contented to rest on our laurels. These successes should not make us "swell-headed" but should instead "fire-up" our imagination to continue to seek and develop new and better means for training and imparting skills and knowledge of soccer.

When I use the phrase "fire-up" our imagination, I am not asking all of you to begin day dreaming of great achievements, instead, I am calling out to all those who are involved in football to put in as much effort as they would expect their trainees to put into training, to discover how they can improve what is considered good training techniques into better techniques and finally, the best. Further improvements to standards achieved can only come when both coaches and trainees strive for improvement, for how can more water be poured into a cup if there is no more water to be poured.

In progress, there must also be a time for reflection on the past, not so much as to rejoice over past victories or cry over defeats but to review and analyse the activities and programmes carried out thus far so as to be able to determine how best we can go on improving our production and products.

Football is a team game and therefore requires what is known as team effort. Developing individual skills in dribbling, kicking and heading are important but they are only efficiently used when the individual can use the skills developed in complementing and supporting the team. A team is just like a machine with many moving parts. When one part fails or decides to go on its own, the machine becomes ineffective for the purpose it is built for. This job of developing team effort is not only the coaches' problem but also every player's problem. For if the individual chooses to play his own game, the coach will not be able to do much about it except to "cut" the player from the game. Question is what if there are a few players like that? I leave the result to each of your imagination.

To be able to develop a proficient team is not the final task of the organisers and coaches. It is also necessary to ensure that the team will develop good inter-team relationships. What good is a team that plays well but also commits the most number of fouls or is tagged as a team that causes spectator violence wherever they play because that team has the wrong fighting spirit. Incidents of violence and discourteous behaviour between playing teams are becoming to be common news. To attempt to cure this growing ulcer in the body of football, it will require the efforts of officials, players and spectators. It is when we strive as a unit then can we succeed.

The Training Scheme will be going into a new decade and with it will be new challenges. I am confident that the Scheme will continue to prove itself to be worthy.

On behalf of the Singapore Sports Council, I would like to thank Nestle Pte Ltd for donating \$50,000 to finance this year's Training Scheme. For Nestle, also, I would like to specially thank them for their continued interest and support for this project thus far.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Members of the Advisory Committee and coaches for giving their time, effort and service to see the Scheme through so many years.