

## Jeffrey Talan, coach SC Heerenveen U13:



# “Translating technique to the game”

**Jeffrey Talan arrived at Heerenveen in 1995 as a player, where he experienced his greatest success. He reached the cup final with SC Heerenveen and played in the Champions League. He also played for the Dutch National Team 8 times and scored one goal. Talan feels at home in Heerenveen and continued to live there after his playing career ended. The technically gifted right-winger now coaches the SC Heerenveen U13 selection. He illustrates how he approaches technique training and what the important issues are. Functionality is a priority; the game is the eventual goal. Talan makes clear that this does not exclude the Coerver method.**

**By: Hans Slender**

“After my playing career I immediately started coaching at SC Heerenveen. This is my third season as a coach. The first season I was Erik ten Voorde’s assistant at U13s, I am now in my second season as U13 coach. After my playing career I really wanted to work with youth players. For me the U13s seemed to be best age category to work with. It is also a great way to learn about the coaching profession. I think that a coach must start at the bottom and then slowly work his way up. Within this age group there is still much to be learned. They must

focus on technique. When you reach the higher age groups, then the story becomes more tactical. I must admit that this appeals to me as well. We work closely together with the U17s and I really enjoy this. However, at this moment my preference is with the technical aspect.”

### **Cooperation**

SC Heerenveen is known for its success in educating players, as well as coaches. Hence the reason that head coach Gertjan Verbeek was promoted from within the club as Foppe de Haan’s replacement. Within the youth program the development of coaches is done very consciously: at SC Heerenveen we work in pairs. The coaches all assist each other. This is why I am so closely involved with the U17s. I assist Hans de Jong with the U17s and he assists me with the U13s. Furthermore I could be asked to give technique training to the first team squad from time to time.” The advantage of this working method lies within the intensive guidance, which the players receive during training. Furthermore the coaches can discuss and learn from each other.

### **Technique training**

“The most important aspect of technique training is that it must be translated to the game. Juggling one thousand times



is great if you can do it, but eventually it must lead to better results in the game. The training must be related to a game, because that's where you use the technique. You start by learning the different techniques. For this I use different cut and turn exercises, including several well-known Wiel Coerver exercises. Afterwards you will translate these learned techniques into a game situation."

*"Sometimes they provide solutions or alternatives that I didn't even think about"*

### Manchester United

When Jeffrey Talan first started coaching he went on a training internship at Manchester United under the supervision of René Meulenstein. "Our head coach Gertjan Verbeek thought it was good for me to follow Manchester's training sessions for a week. The idea behind this week is for us to gather ideas which we can then apply to our own training sessions. I wasn't able to observe all the teams, but focused primarily on the younger age groups (U12 and below). These kids were very skilful with the ball. They showed a lot of courage in their actions, whereby they constantly possessed great ball control, even when pressured by their opponent. I really enjoyed and appreciated this. Showing courage and using your technique to find solutions to difficult situations."

### Performance

"When I returned to Heerenveen I gave a presentation to the other coaches. I gave an overview of the week's events and told my story. This was the first time we visited another club, but it was an amazing experience. From this experience we learned what a constructive education visiting clubs from other countries can be. We therefore have decided to do this more often. This could be at another top club in the United

Kingdom, but there are plenty of other countries whose clubs have excellent youth programs."

### Practice

"At SC Heerenveen we have a technical plan which is used by all coaches. Within these technical guidelines specified by the club I develop my own practice sessions, which are mainly based on my experiences as a player. The Wiel Coerver exercises are frequently used by other coaches, but I have also used these as a player. As a coach I use exercises which I liked as a player. I cannot really remember how we used to train when I was this age, but I do remember that a lot of coaches chose not to use a ball as much as I would have liked. My players are not forced to run before practice. I prefer they start with a ball right away. The younger players need to have

## PASSPORT

### Jeffrey Talan

Date of birth: 29 September 1971

#### PLAYER:

1990-1992 FC Den Haag  
 1992-1994 ADO Den Haag  
 1994-1995 FC Den Haag  
 1995-2003 SC Heerenveen

#### COACH:

2003-2004 Assistant coach SC Heerenveen U13  
 2004-heden SC Heerenveen U13 coach

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Jeffrey Talan played 8 caps for the Dutch National Team and scored 1 goal

as many ball contacts as possible, as this is the only way to learn ball control. Most players arrive at 4pm, even though practice doesn't start until 4:30pm. So they already play for half an hour before practice even starts. A warm-up without a



ball is therefore complete nonsense. Before a game we always dedicate one part of the warm-up to exercises without a ball, but never before practice.”

### Practice planning

“I start the practice with a 20 minute technical session. After that I proceed with a theme, such as heading, passing and shooting or receiving. I always finish with a possession game. We do a lot of small sided games. Towards the end of the week we work with larger games, to prepare the players for the game. The previous coach, Erik at Voorde, told me that when you practice small things in the days leading up to the

*“The players are usually aware of their own mistakes”*

game, the players will think small during the game as well. So I practice small sided game at the beginning of the week (3:3 and 4:4), with frequent ball touches, short passing and shooting exercises and increase the numbers, possession, positioning and passing and shooting exercises throughout the week leading up to an 11:11 game on Friday.”

### Guidance

“During these small sided games I am mainly concerned with stimulating good actions whereby the players use the learned techniques. When a player makes a cutting move, which he previously learned, it is my job to comment on it. I mainly coach in a positive manner. The players are usually aware of their own mistakes. I only say something when they make a mistake while doing something, which I believe to be a great

importance. For example, when they make the field too small. Technical mistakes do not have to be corrected, as the players know when they make a mistake. While teaching technique the guidance is much more detailed. You are dealing with things such as how to position your foot and overall stance. However, when making a cutting move you are also dealing with the reasoning behind your choices. Which move do you use in which situation? Are there any alternatives? For example, you are teaching them how to step over and turn toward the desired direction. You practice this with pressure (adding a defender), so that the players can practice it as if it were a game situation. At a given moment you can also ask the players which technique(s) they would use in order to get from a certain situation to a certain position. They then provide alternatives, which they have to execute. At first you guide them through the techniques and after a while you let them make their own choices. This will stimulate creativity. Sometimes they provide solutions or alternatives that I didn't even think about.”

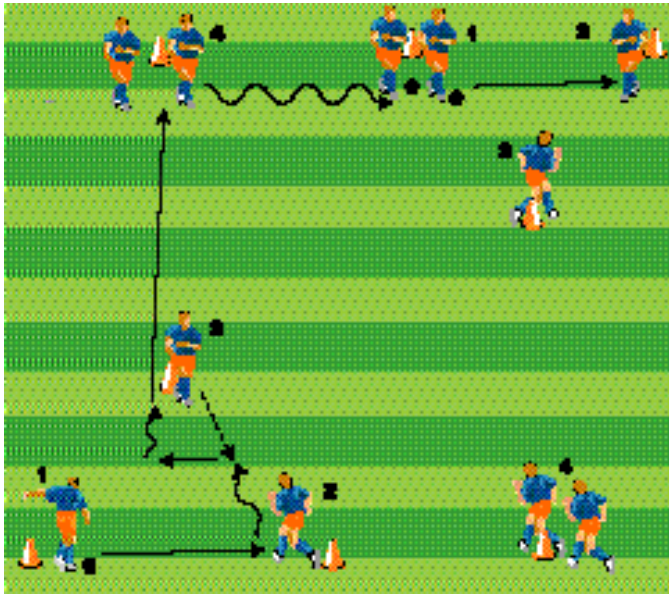
### Passive resistance

“During technical exercises I often work with passive resistance. The defender gives the attacker the feeling he is being pressured into a certain direction. The attacker then has to find a solution by going in another direction. When practicing technical exercises you have to give the players the idea that they are turning away from someone, so that they are not just turning and moving freely across the field. I always start without resistance, letting them move freely and I gradually increase resistance by adding defenders. The U13s understand what passive resistance means, but I have only been working with them for a short amount of time, so they still have a lot to learn. One player may just walk up to the attacker; the other will immediately try to steal the ball. I therefore always explain what the reasoning behind practicing with resistance is. Providing a reason why will aid them in their development and understanding.”

### Varying

“I work with technical exercises using cones and with exercises done from specific positions on the field. This depends on the moment and on what we are trying to accomplish. Within the smaller exercises we use cones as opponents, passive resistance from the defenders and sometimes even duel exercises. These exercises usually involve receiving, beating an opponent or making a cutting move after which the ball needs to be passed. I try to vary this as much as possible. As a coach I am also trying to develop myself within this. With the U13s you can still experiment with the exercises, as they are not very critical yet. As a player I used to be very creative and I am trying to do the same as a coach. I try to come up with new things. I do repeat the exercises that reciprocate positive reactions and are going well, especially when pertaining to important aspects. However, I also try to come up with new ways to train these aspects. As a coach you are never done, you are always trying to find new ways to train things.”

## Duel 1 against 1 within passing and shooting exercise



### Organization

- The ball is passed wide and controlled
- The player who receives the pass initiates the duel with the opponent and tries to beat him
- When he has space to give the pass, he will pass to the far player
- The receiving player takes the ball to the second group
- Everybody rotates one position

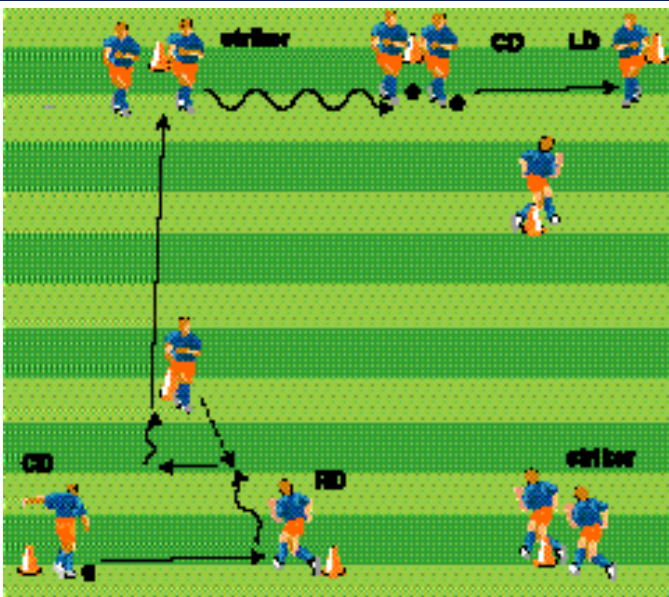
### Coaching

- Receive the ball with the back foot
- Initiate duel and make an action
- Do not make too many actions

### Details

- Execute exercise in two coupled organizations, right and left, depending on the number of players this can also be done in 1 or 3 organizations

## Duel 1 against 1 within passing and shooting with positions



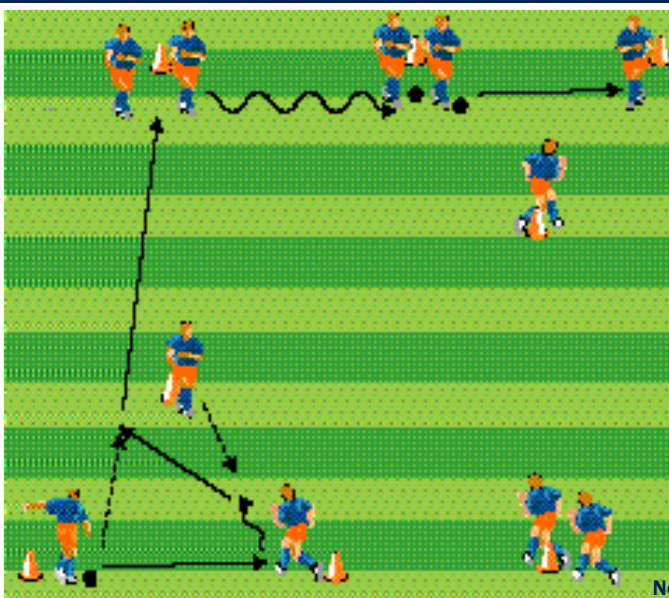
### Organization

- The central defender passes to the back
- The back controls the ball and passes around his opponent to the striker
- The striker joins the other group, everybody rotates one position
- You can also leave the defender until he has won the ball from his opponent

### Coaching

- By playing from their positions the players can translate it to the game
- The back cannot beat his opponent on the outside (imaginative sideline)
- The striker has to ask for the ball
- When the back can pass to the striker without beating his opponent he should do this

## Duel 2 against 1 within passing and shooting exercise



### Organization

- After the wide pass has been given, the defender can try to steal the ball
- The two attackers have to finish the 2 against 1 and pass to the farthest player
- This player takes the ball to the other group, whom execute the exercise on the other side
- All players rotate one position
- You can also leave the defender until he has stolen the ball from his opponent

### Coaching

- Always look deep to see if the deepest player can be reached
- Accent on receiving and passing, less on actions