

## **Rob Edwards Introduction**

**I first started working with Jim towards the end of my spell at Huddersfield Town. I was already at the ‘veteran’ stage by then, and like all pro footballers, I obviously wanted my playing career to go on for as long as possible, especially as I was Captain of the Club. Jim had already produced really good results from using his techniques with a couple of my team-mates, and they recommended that I should go and do a couple of sessions with him.**

**The first time we met I remember saying to Jim, ‘Can you make me faster?!’ His reply was instant – ‘No, but I can help you think that you are, and help you gain an extra yard by becoming a clearer reader of the game’. I thought right, this sounds interesting, and we started from there.**

**At the time, I was out of the first team, and I feared my career might be drawing to a disappointing close. The sessions with Jim had an immediate impact, and I was back in the first team within weeks. From then on, we met regularly, using all the mental preparation techniques described in this book, pretty much as they stand here. The methods were clear, practical and easy to apply, and I used them consistently, both in matches and in training. They undoubtedly had a direct, totally positive effect on my performances on the pitch.**

**During my final season at Huddersfield Town, I worked with Jim on the Friday before matches. The strategies we used gradually became more varied and detailed. We worked on the Reframing and Internal Dialogue ideas, as well as techniques such as Goal Setting and Objective Thinking. Every time I used a new technique, I felt its positive influence on the pitch. As my powers of concentration and confidence grew, every dimension of my game improved. Even at that late stage of my career, my game was developing, and I held onto my first team place for the rest of the season until I picked up an injury.**

**Looking back, I really feel in all honesty that I could have played to a consistently even higher standard if I’d had access to these preparation strategies when I was younger. I had an enjoyable, fulfilling career, but I can’t help wondering what I could have achieved if I’d been able to use Jim’s methods of psychological training from the early days. I honestly believe these ideas can hold the answer to one of the most difficult areas in football – how to remain self-confident in all situations.**

**Here in the *Making the Team* manual, you’ll find clear guidance about nutrition and physical training as well as mental preparation strategies. Again, these are areas we used to get little advice about, even at pretty high levels of the professional ladder. It was obvious from looking around the football world that a programme linking these things together could help bring success, but the specific expertise didn’t always seem to be there.**

**You, the current generation of players and coaches, are more fortunate. Sports science has now given us proven, tested information to help us play to our highest potential. The teams smart enough to make use of this information will gain a vital advantage. This manual pinpoints the key conditioning strategies and, crucially, helps you build the mental strength to put them effectively into practice. Jim has taken the time and the trouble to write his techniques down, just as he used them with me and my team mates, and I urge you to read them and get using them straight away. I recommend these methods without hesitation, because I saw first-hand how they worked for me. If you apply them long-term, who knows where your career will take you? The very best of luck with it!**

**Rob Edwards**

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