

# Richard Grootsholten

Dutch

Schout 44  
2671 ZR Naaldwijk  
The Netherlands

Mob: +31 6 51 83 84 65  
richard.grootsholten@hotmail.com  
[www.linkedin.com/in/richardgrootsholten/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/richardgrootsholten/)



## Profile:

UEFA Pro-Licensed coach with over 30 years coaching experience working with all ages. Wide developed Academy and Sport Director. Has helped to create and implement country-wide, club-wide and academy-wide youth development and management systems and has experience of all aspects of Youth Academy Operations, Management and 1<sup>st</sup> team Topsport performance.

Experienced Technical Director and an expert in planning and executing strategy in key Academy and 1<sup>st</sup> team development areas including:

- Player scouting / recruitment
- Player management / Protection of Academy graduates
- Optimal financial modelling for successful, stand-alone Academy business model
- Marketing / maximisation of independent Academy income
- Infrastructure planning

Most recently Executive Director of Legia Warsaw. Currently one of the biggest projects in football to build a professional development center with a pathway up to the first team. Former Academy Director of Feyenoord Rotterdam, one of Europe's leading academies in developing players for the highest-level including Robin van Persie, Giovanni van Bronckhorst, Leroy Fer, Stefan de Vrij and Jordi Clasie.

Formerly successfully ran the award-winning academy of Sparta Rotterdam FC, one of the most important youth development centres in The Netherlands which helped to develop dozens of top Dutch football players including Memphis Depay, Marvin Emnes, Kevin Strootman, Georginio Wijnaldum, and Jethro Willems, before challenging himself to lead international projects in countries / leagues with strong but as of yet unfulfilled football potential (Canada / MLS, Russia, Poland).

Proponent of mixing traditional successful Dutch youth football methodology, including key concepts such as holistic player development and the focus on the 4 key areas of football (Technique, Tactical Awareness, Physical Development and Mental Strength) with modern methodology and technology (football-specific physical conditioning, video-analysis, online player development tracking etc.) in the specific context of given Academy / 1<sup>st</sup> team / country.

## Employment



### Legia Warsaw (Poland)

*June 2019 – July 2022*

Executive Director Academy

- Executive Director of the biggest club in Poland with the ambition and the resources to be one of the best in (Eastern) Europe
- Tasked with creating a club wide vision on the whole sport side with priority to connect the first team with the academy in the most optimal way to maximise potential of the players
- Designing and implementing a fresh, innovative development pathway into the first team
- Involved in designing and creating the new build Legia Training Center which was ready in June 2020 and can be compared to the top in Europe



### Feyenoord Rotterdam (Holland)

*March 2016 – March 2019*

Academy Director

- Academy Director of one of the biggest clubs in Holland with a worldwide reputation of developing home grown players into the first team environment
- Tasked with designing and implementing a fresh, innovative development pathway into the first team
- Youth League success and biggest promotion of academy players into first team since years



### KGHM Zagłębie Lubin FC (Poland)

*May 2013 - July 2015*

Academy Director (including Technical Director role)

*August 2015 - February 2016*

Consultant Academy Director

- Initially as Academy Technical Director, and then as Academy Director, laid the foundation for the most ambitious youth development project in Central and Eastern Europe (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPQ6a2XZ710>)
- Author of 200-page Handbook detailing all Academy sporting and operational aspects
- Lecturer at inaugural UEFA Pro & A-Youth Elite coaching courses in Poland (Polish FA)



### Kuban Krasnodar FC (Russia)

*January 2013 - April 2013*

Consultant

- Performed club structure and Russian football market analysis in order to advise club owner / board on how to create a successful and profitable youth academy



## Vancouver Whitecaps FC (Canada)

2010 - 2012

Technical Director Residency/Youth Academy

Head Coach u19 / Head Coach PDL (2<sup>nd</sup> team) / Assistant Coach of the first team

- Developed and led a professional youth academy and a club-wide player development system. Created a club-wide Whitecaps playing style. Created an age-related curriculum

## Canadian National Football Association

2010 - 2012

- During time in Canada:
  - Assistant Coach of Canadian National u17 team at the u17 World Cup Mexico, July 2011
  - Assistant Coach of the Canadian National u20 team (camp and qualifications)



## Sparta Rotterdam FC (Holland)

2008 - 2010

Technical Director (Club Sport Director)

2006 - 2008

Academy Director and Assistant Coach of the first team

### Achievements:

2009

Winner of the 'Rinus Michels Award'

"Best Youth academy of the Netherlands 08-09", National champion u19

## Other

### Experience at the Royal Dutch Football Association (KNVB):



2012

Tutor coaching course in Mozambique, Singapore, Johannesburg

2008 - 2010

Member of Committee tasked with developing new nationwide youth football/coaching plan (The Master Plan 2015)

2001 - 2010

Tutor UEFA C, B and A license

2006 - 2010

Member of Dutch Academy Directors Committee

## Education, Qualifications and References

### Coaching Qualifications:

2012

International Tutor/Instructor at KNVB

2007

UEFA Pro License - Professional Football Coach

2003

Football Conditioning - Certified Instructor (Raymond Verheijen methodology)

2001

Tutor / Instructor at KNVB

1989 - 1997

UEFA – A, B and C License - Football Coach

### Education:

2019

Sports Leadership Program (Nyenrode University), a personal journey to success..

### Consultancy:

2014 – present

Founder of Academy Associates.

Providing consultancy to Elite Youth Academies and Federations worldwide on how to overcome the greatest challenges in youth development and helps lay down a blueprint for long-term success.

Speaker at Conferences worldwide.



Languages: Dutch: Fluent, English: Fluent, German: Basic, French: Basic

References: On request