

Being Timo Schultz – Episode 2

((phone ringing 2x)) Schultz!

Music Thees: “Bon voyage Timo Schultz, also for district and club
You shall be my very last FC Sankt Pauli coach.
How much can love endure? I may never make it out!
But until then fuck it, Forza, FC Sankt Pauli!”

Debbie: Being Timo Schultz, a MillernTon podcast where we followed the FC Sankt Pauli coach for a year.

Debbie: Welcome to the second episode of "Being Timo Schultz", a project in which we accompanied the FC St. Pauli coach for an entire season and repeatedly recorded short podcasts with him.

In this episode, we look at the phase from October to the end of December. You will hear a lot in the conversations and in the live recordings, and we don't want to spoil your anticipation for this episode, but you certainly know yourself how things went sportingly at FC St. Pauli at the end of 2020. So while the first episode of "Being Timo Schultz" ended with the defence of the town's championship, we start the second episode with a rather bitter setback:

[AFM radio play-in: ...the left side, Karlsruhe with Heisel advanced close to the baseline, brings the ball in to the 16. St Pauli heads the ball a little short. Shot from the back. AT THE POSTS, INTO GOAL! BALL IS IN THE GOAL, HIMMELMANN FROM THE POST THE BALL Bounces back.

No goal! No goal! Knut: Dude, it was in! Sata, yes, but there is goal line technology and Sata doesn't get a signal on his wristband, Knut: Dude, oh dude so there honestly, watch a slow motion again and you see - inside post and there it bounces into the yellow man in Himmelmann and he's lying there like a flounder on the ground but Sata waves both arms up, says the game continues and now the game is stopped after all. Knut: Himmelmann catches the ball and falls in with the ball. Sata goes now - it bounces off the left post so from Karlsruhe's point of view, shot to the left post, Himmelmann holds the ball and falls, then falls back. We don't have goal-line technology because we're in the second division. It's goal! That's 1 to 0...

...-and there the game is over, Karlsruher Sport Club beats FC Sankt Pauli 3 to 0 on matchday seven, sending St Pauli to 16th place? 17th place! In 17th place, down to the direct relegation place. Exactly]

Debbie: At the beginning of November, FC St. Pauli lost at home against Karlsruher SC with 0:3. And it was mainly the way the team presented itself in the first half that caused some disillusionment. There was a noticeable lack of aggression. This was a characteristic that had been seen countless times in previous years at FCSP: Successes or big games, like this time the derby, were often followed by disappointment. And with the defeat against KSC, FC St. Pauli suddenly plummeted to a relegation spot after a solid start to the season. This crash came at an inopportune time, namely right before another international break.

Because of the sobering defeat, the atmosphere between Timo Schultz and Tim became a little more uncomfortable. But perhaps it was only due to the unfortunate opening question.

Tim: Timo, do you actually look at the table of the second division after seven match days?

Timo: Yes, you are number 17 who asks me that or asks me about the table. Unfortunately, yes, of course, anyone who says we're not looking at the table yet and it's a snapshot, of course it's a snapshot and of course you can also say immediately with two or three wins, if we had won, we would have been fifth or sixth, but we didn't and we rightly didn't and of course you worry about it and your mood doesn't rise when you look at the table. That's not only the case for the fans, but also for me as a coach and for the players.

Tim: This comes almost at an inopportune time so shortly before the international break. You're now in 17th place during the international break, which is also creating a bit of unease in the media, and I have to be honest with myself. For you too?

Timo: Uh, yes and no. On the one hand, of course, you have two sleepless nights or you ponder more than usual and you are looking for causes and trying to find solutions somewhere. But that's what I do when things are going well and if we win two or three games in a row, even then I'm not the next coach of Manchester City, just as I'm not the last one, and that goes for the players as well, but it's still true that we're not satisfied with seven points. We had hoped for a few more points, but of all things we lost the two games before the international break, in games where we actually expected more, and yes, it's different! To put it bluntly, we don't need to beat about the bush.

Tim: You come from the youth training centre area. I would say that the focus is more on the development of players and your own game. You said before the game against KSC that the development of the players is very important. In the second division, the focus is much more on results compared to the A-youth Bundesliga, for example. (Timo ((laughs)): Yes.) Many teams play with a blatant strategy of avoiding mistakes and are - yes - partly successful. FC St. Pauli played some appealing football on the first seven matchdays, although not every game, but only seven points after just as many games. Do you have to adjust the focus you learned in the youth training centre a bit? Let me ask you a little bit heretically?

Timo: Yes, yes, I wouldn't say that you have to adjust the focus in any way, because of course, even if you don't see it immediately, a large part of the training content is really defensive behaviour. Maybe I have to look at how the personnel selection is at the weekend. Maybe that's a topic where you as a coach have to question yourself from game to game or from season to season. Back then, before the Nuremberg game, we deliberately chose an extremely offensive line-up and did quite well with it, and then of course you stick to that. I'm also aware that it doesn't work well in the long term when you're on the pitch with seven offensive players at times. The problem is perhaps a little bit that we don't really have that defensive player on the six, for example, where we say he's going to put everything out for us and yes, but that's certainly - that's going to be a key in the next few weeks, to find a better

balance between defence and offence, because we haven't managed to do that so far. I think that we are the team [in the?] top 3 shots on goal and top 3 running values and sprints in the offensive and I think we are also quite good in terms of xG-value in terms of offensive play, but especially in the moments after losing the ball, when we don't get any pressure on the ball, we simply don't have enough players who immediately think defensively or are behind the ball and now we have to see who we can trust to do that. Is it then perhaps the case that with a backline of four, where you have perhaps one more player behind the ball from the outset, is that easier to handle? Yes, that's my responsibility and of course I'm thinking a lot about that right now.

Tim: For the most part, I would put the game against Karlsruher SC in the area of lack of aggression. Would you also?

Timo: Yes, it's funny. I already thought you were present at my half-time speech. That was the first time that an opponent was louder, that an opponent talked more, that an opponent was more aggressive and more alert, I had the feeling. So the second balls that fell, well with us it was more like that, we were complaining with the referee, we were discussing, we were briefly annoyed and those were all things that we didn't have in the first few days of the game and that is actually also the biggest point of criticism, I had of the team, because sometimes we didn't play a good first half, sometimes we made a bad pass that created a chance and so on, we had all that in the games before, but we were actually back quicker, we were more alert, we supported each other better. We were able to sort out these mistakes that might have happened, and we simply didn't manage to do that well enough against Karlsruhe in the first half. I don't think we're in a position to just play something down like that at the moment, or to just say, okay, so it's not working, so it's not working, and we'll still go into half-time with a 0-0 score and things will be better in the second half. We are not there yet.

Tim: What does it take? I mean, other teams, I look at Sandhausen for example, they get it right. At least, they always call on these basic virtues of aggression.

Timo: Yes, yes, yes. You wrote a good article about the phases of a defeat on Twitter. Take a look at a Sandhausen game with sense and reason. Just look at the first quarter of an hour against Karlsruhe, Tim, believe me, that was even more bottomless than what we did against Karlsruhe. So now you're going down this road again: mentality, lack of aggression and so on, I'm not on board with that! That was not a good half against Karlsruhe! I'm 100% with you on that, but this myth about the others - did you see HSV's second half yesterday?

Tim: ((laughs)) Yeah. I did.

Timo: So what? Did they not fight either? Were they not aggressive either? That's easy, the game against Karlsruhe, I agree with you 100 per cent, we weren't at our best in the first half. But we certainly weren't bad or arrogant or underestimated them or anything else. It was just not a good game in the first half. And also not with the parameters that we have displayed in the first six match days, 100 per cent! But you're always saying that Sandhausen always pulls it off, hey, they're playing like shit! They won happily against us, then again against Darmstadt, where I think they

have 8 to 30 shots on goal, they also won somehow, because of the stupid set-pieces. You've already said it well, now Karlsruhe too, they have five players over 1.90 in the squad, they mumble everything away at the back, they come forward with the set-pieces and in between they shovel every ball onto Hofmann. That works, yes it works. It works 100 per cent and we can take a leaf out of their book, I'll be honest with you, because we're still too young, too impetuous, too naive and too wild. But we don't have the squad for such a style of play, that has to be said quite clearly. We've got Simon, we've got Ziere, with a few exceptions, and if James is fit at some point, which we hope he will be after the international break, then these are our physically strong players. And that was it.

Tim: Yes, well I didn't mean that Sandhausen would play great football, I would just classify Sandhausen, for example, as a mistake-avoiding strategy team-.

Timo: Yes, they don't foam at the mouth every time, they don't foam at the mouth every time, as I said, just look at Karlsruhe or a lot of other games, they manage to win their games because of their compactness and because of a high willingness to run and because of a high effort, which also distinguished us. That's it. Full stop. But just because my team wasn't up to scratch for a half, I wouldn't go into the notch: why don't they want to or something? I don't see that at all. Zero point zero.

Tim: But does that annoy you as a coach when you see that something is missing on the pitch, that somehow this spirit is missing?

Timo: Immensely. Yes, as I said, I already mentioned that very, very clearly at half-time, and that's when I became a little louder for the first time. It's noticeable that in games where the team is perhaps a bit of a favourite or where they can make a leap up in the table, they often - even last season - played exactly such games. And to be honest, I'm still looking for that, so maybe you have some ideas? Maybe you could set off a New Year's Eve firecracker beforehand or I don't know what, I'm still looking for a way to turn the tide somehow. How can you somehow make it work? Because it's just obvious at the moment.

Tim: I would even go so far as to say that this has been a problem for FC St Pauli for years, that in such games, especially when their backs are not against the wall, that it all seems a bit more lax and that there is a kind of pressure drop.

Timo: Yes, definitely.

Tim: Can you, I mean, I'm sure you will after the first half in Karlsruhe, when you said you got louder in the dressing room, but I'm sure you will also try to turn some screws for something like that. So that it doesn't happen?

Timo: Yes, you always try to set so-called anchors so that the boys know, okay, something happened, something negative, but: Period. I mean, we've proven often enough in the current season that it doesn't make a difference if we're leading 1-0 or trailing 1-0 or if the game is even, we still play our game. We still play the way we play. That's why I wasn't worried at all about the result. For me, the biggest difference to the games before was that you just - they were somehow running alongside and it was somehow so quiet and there wasn't even a jolt through the

team when there were good actions, but everyone somehow played down what was their task, but somehow for themselves. And there was no Knolli who pushed at the back, there was no - I don't know - Rico is an older player now, who went to someone. There was also no one who nagged the other player. I mean, that's also a form of communication, to wake each other up. Or, for all I care, to shout at the referee or whatever. It was just such a tired kicking game. And that's what I kept telling my boys, I don't want that. So, we can make a lot of mistakes, that's not a problem. So if we can, we won't, but what mustn't happen is that we just play like that. And then we're not good either, that has to be said again. As I said, other teams can do that, they can play their game like that. That's not us. We can't do that. We can't yet.

[Interlude]

Debbie: Um, wait a minute! What was Timo Schultz suggesting? Set off New Year's Eve firecrackers before the game to motivate the team? 16 games later, at the derby home game, that's exactly what happened: All around the Millerntor, everything that crackles, rattles and pops went up in the air. There was a real thunderstorm before kick-off. It didn't seem to have missed its mark.

For the time being, however, we remain in the dreary month of November. And there was the away game in Paderborn. After a good start, Rodrigo Zalazar missed a penalty in the 21st minute. And Paderborn's Dennis Srbeny did better, also missing the penalty in the 28th minute, but scoring with the re-bound shot to give Paderborn the lead. After that, FC St. Pauli completely lost the thread and only the weak Paderborn chances led to the fact that the score was only 0-2 from FCSP's point of view. FC St. Pauli thus remained stuck in the bottom of the table.

[Fan chant: St. Pauliiii, St. Pauli scores a goal, St. Pauli scores a goal for us, our flag flies only for you, don't you see it? Sankt Pauli, our choir sounds only for you, can't you feel it? Sankt Pauli]

Tim: The last talk, but also the performance in Paderborn, kept me very busy. FC St. Pauli seemed almost helpless and disoriented in some phases of the game. It was as if they were missing someone. Someone to give direction. This then led to an article being published in the MillernTon after the Paderborn game and days later in the Abendblatt, each with the identical title: "Is FC St. Pauli missing its leading players?" After the performances shown before, this question simply forced itself upon me. And so I wanted to discuss this topic again in peace with Timo Schultz. However, this triggered rather mediocre joy in him:

Tim: You, I'd like to talk to you today about the topic of leadership players, if that's okay with you?

Timo: Suuure! Yes, we can do that.

Tim: ((laughs)) Okay, then I'll get started. Timo, as a player, would you actually describe yourself more as a chief or as an Indian?

Tim: Well, I think it was relatively clear that I was definitely a chief. So definitely someone who liked to take responsibility, who didn't just look after himself, but also the group. No matter whether I was playing or not. That was always my thing.

Tim: And who were the chiefs at FC St Pauli next to you during your active time?

Timo: Yes, Fabio Morena in his very own way as captain, he was very quiet and didn't really interfere much verbally, I would say. But when he did say something, it carried a lot more weight, of course. And on the pitch, of course: Boller! I think I was always able to settle a lot of things with him. Yes, and in the early days also Thomas Meggle on goal. Who, of course, was somewhere in the autumn of his career, but who already had an extreme charisma on his team-mates and opponents.

Tim: I would say it was about ten years ago, shortly before the 2010 World Cup, when Michael Ballack was injured, there was a kind of discussion in the German media/sports media about whether a team, a football team, really needs these leading wolves, these leading players? Stefan Effenberg was always mentioned, and he said, yes, definitely. Michael Ballack would have liked to see himself in that position, but many others have said, no, newer teams or the new team philosophy is actually more to the effect that these leading players are no longer needed, these leading wolves. How do you see that?

Timo: Yes, people also like to talk about a flat hierarchy and I'm completely on board with that, everything has changed a bit anyway. In the past, as an old player you were automatically a leading player and as a young player you had to shut up and carry the balls and be happy if you played three minutes. So this change, it's simply there, not just since today, but since ten years. I think that - I don't remember who said it, but it sums up the whole thing well: when you talk about leading players and the corresponding mentality and such things, what is mentality anyway? And he mentioned Mesut Özil, who is now an absolute red rag, but I thought that was totally cool, he said that for him Mesut Özil is the leader par excellence. Then, of course, everyone looked at him and said, what's that all about? I mean, he doesn't care about anything and if he cares about anything, it's the wrong things. Then he said, yes, but on the pitch, when everyone's arse is on the line, Mesut Özil wants the ball, always and no matter where! And I think that's also a kind of leadership, not to lead a group or to lead verbally, but to give a team security on the pitch, for example. I think Stefan Effenberg once said the same thing to his teammates: if you don't know where to go with the ball, pass it to me! If I make a mistake, that's okay. I can handle it. Let them hit me. And I think it's cool when every player in the team simply has his job. Maybe one of them is just there to play dumb and the other one is there to score the goals and the third one is there for the tackles or the headers and the fourth one is there for the moment when you have a problem as a team and need someone, in basketball it's called go-to guy.

Tim: Yes, interesting. The discussion about leading players is not new for the FC St. Pauli squad. This topic has been present around FC St. Pauli for years, so I'd like to ask you directly: is there anyone missing from the FC St. Pauli squad who can take on such roles on and off the pitch?

Timo: Discussions like that pop up especially when you're not successful in sport. So I'll just say that up until the HSV game we had great leading players and now we've lost twice and now they're all stupid and not good enough and they're not contributing. So I can only think in the last three months, so to speak, since I've been working with the boys and it's like they're behaving in an exemplary manner, they're paying attention to the big picture, they're hard-working and that's the decisive thing for me. What we can't deny, that's clear and I don't close my eyes to it: there's simply no one who's really an unrestricted regular and we just don't win the games. And of course you don't start with the 21-year-old. That's normal, but then you look at who is more responsible. And that is first of all the coach, but also of course the older players, the supposed regulars, the players you have in mind before the season as key players, as top performers, and if the natural players don't live up to the expectations, then they are targeted first. That's completely normal, so I think you can grow as a leading player, so that's part of it. And now it's up to everyone, to me as a coach anyway, but also to the others, to prove that they are good enough and that they are doing their job well enough.

Tim: How can you, if you now perceive in the team that there is perhaps a lack of leadership on the pitch, of coaching perhaps also on the pitch, how can a coaching team develop leaders? Can you do that at all or does it have to come from within the team itself?

Timo: Yes. I think I heard a terrible term the day before yesterday: it has to grow organically! I think Friedrich from Hertha BSC Berlin said that about leading players leaving - and that was also our approach, we also gave away some older players, players who had been with us for a very long time and had a very high standing. Then a new management structure has to be formed first. That is not really the case with us. It's simply the case that the players who have been there the longest and are the oldest are automatically at the top of the hierarchy. Whether that's good or bad, I can probably tell you in two or three months, but that's the way it is. And I'm not at all dissatisfied with the boys. Knolli is doing a great job, even when he's not playing he's completely in the spirit of things. Robin Himmelmann gets involved and they are all there. But it's simply the case that these five players have a lot to do with themselves at the moment because of injuries or perhaps because of last season. You can't deny that.

Tim: And you say: yes well, of course that has to stand on its own a bit, but can you create a or can you as a coaching team create a working atmosphere in which such players can develop better? I ask this deliberately because from the outside, last season under Jos Luhukay, there was a very strong impression that it was more of a toxic environment or a toxic environment for the development of leading players and I wonder to what extent you perhaps take the approach that such players can also develop into something like that?

Timo: If you clap your hands again later and the official recording is finished, then I'll be happy to tell you something about it. ((laughs))

Tim: ((laughs)) Hahaha.

Timo: No, honestly, if I want to be a leader and if I want to lead a team and if I want to move forward, then I simply don't give a shit who the coach is and whether he is nice to me or not and whether we have just won three games or drawn twice. Or whether I played well or badly. I'm a leader solely because of my behaviour on the pitch and my performance on the pitch, but you don't need that, I mean, you've seen me play for years and all my team-mates have said that I've played great every time: Yay, Schulle is the best and we're chasing him. Not at all. But I was the first one at training and I was the last one at training, I put my foot down every training session. I never started grumbling or looking for excuses. Then I'm not a leader. Then I'm one of umpteen and then I should, then I have to run after others and then I can't stand somewhere else and say I take responsibility and I want to and I do' and these types in general, maybe not only with us in the team, these types in general, they're dying out, yes. And that has many reasons.

[Interlude]

Debbie: After the two clear defeats against Karlsruhe and Paderborn, VfL Osnabrück came to the Millerntor. Osnabrück had previously lost to Nuremberg on matchday 8 and, although this seems almost unbelievable after the end of the season, this was their first defeat of the season, which knocked them off second place in the table. Accordingly, Osnabrück came to the Millerntor "only" as the sixth-placed team. The game itself was clearly dominated by FC St. Pauli. But the famous knot just wouldn't burst, despite the best chances:

AFM-Radio: Tim:...too inaccurate Himmelmann can pick it up, Himmelmann plays the ball quickly over to Max Dittgen, who SHORTAGES THE TEMPO AND NOW TURBO WITH TEMPO AND IS ON THE MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF OSNABRÜCK'S BOX. TWO PLAYERS AGAINST HIM, HE'S ALREADY IN THE PENALTY AREA, HE CAN NOW MAKE THE CROSS, HE MAKES THE CROSS - NO, BUT THERE'S LANKFORD, HE CAN SHOOT, SHOOT BOY! NO - OHHH!
Bobby: He lays the ball from the right to the left, six-eleven metres in front of the goal half-right position and shoots it three metres past the goal to the right (Tim: OOUUCH!!!!1!11!) really had a lot of space in front of him: huge chance, huge chance in the 83rd minute...]

Debbie: And as it goes in such games, that's how it went in this one: VfL Osnabrück scored the game-deciding 1:0 through David Blacha almost in the opposite direction. "If you've got shit on your foot, you've got shit on your foot" is what you call it. Three games, 0 points, 0 goals, 17th place, all the euphoria from the beginning of the season - gone. FC St. Pauli was at least on the way to a crisis. Or was it, Timo?

Timo: I actually think it's too early to declare a crisis. But I'm not naïve either, if things go on like this, then we're definitely on the best way there, so I'm not completely out of touch with reality. On the other hand, what's the point of declaring Armageddon or a crisis if I don't really see any plans to change anything in the short term? So it's true that of course all the alarm bells are on for us and that we know what the clock has struck, but on the other hand I've always done quite well with it and that's what I've learned from Michael Frontzeck and so on, to keep calm in such situations and simply to give the boys confidence and to provide confidence that we'll get everything sorted out.

Tim: How do you deal with defeats personally? Are you in a bad mood for three days or can you sleep at all?

Timo: ((laughs)) Oh, that's a nasty question, luckily no journalist has asked me that yet. I actually have to nibble at it too, of course. You prepare the boys, you put your foot down all week and then at the weekend, for various reasons, you don't somehow manage to get the three points and that's what we work for all week. Then it's still okay once or twice, but when you look at it now: But when you see the standings, the points and the fact that you're just not reaping the rewards, then of course something like that puts a strain on you. Of course. Anything else would be a lie, I think it's the same for every coach.

Tim: And what is your outlet?

Timo: ((thinking)) Hm ... first two nights of bad sleep, distraction with the family actually also, but above all, and this is my biggest outlet, it's the analysis. To really look at what we did well? What did we do badly? Because even in the games we didn't win, that's what really makes me feel positive, and that's why I refuse to talk about a crisis. We had a great first half against Paderborn, we dominated the game against Osnabrück for 90 minutes, I think, and that just shows me that we can do it and that only little things are missing, but we have to change them as soon as possible, that's clear.

Tim: It is not the first time that you have lost games as a coach, I would like to know, I have a question here, what has been your biggest defeat as a coach? And I would try to give an answer to that myself. Was it against Wolfsburg in the U19 in the 18/19 season or what would you rate as your biggest defeat?

Timo: Yes, I really don't need to think about it for long, that was by far the worst defeat I've had to take as a coach and that brings me back to the previous question: I draw a lot of strength from that defeat, for example, in situations like that, because then I simply remember the situation at the time and how the one, two, three weeks afterwards were, they were really difficult, they were tough, they were clouded by such a huge - how should I put it? - They were clouded by such a huge sadness somehow and a feeling of failure, and then I always said to myself that it would never happen again. So you can lose and you can also grieve for a day or two, be sad, be angry, be furious, but then you have to look forward, because everything else makes no sense and the defeat in Wolfsburg still hangs over me today. On the one hand, I have a really stupid feeling, because that was the decision that we couldn't finish first. But on the other hand, for me personally, with the clear setting that I say this must not happen to me again, this will never happen to me again, that I let myself go, in inverted commas, and simply let myself drift and simply don't get my act together fast enough.

Tim: How is it actually medially? Personally, I already notice that the wind is changing a bit. Do you actually notice that? Apart from the match reports on MillernTon, do you notice a change in reporting?

Timo: ((laughs)) Hahaha. .. No, on the one hand it's clear, I don't want to know if somehow coach XYZ was here, how it would rustle in the press. It's more the case that at the moment I'm noticing that the press is still very sympathetic to what we're doing here, because I don't think the impact has been really severe yet, and that the BILD newspaper says: "What mistakes did Mr. Schultz make?", that's what they have to do, that's their job, and I have a good relationship with the journalists, a professional relationship. I even have a friendly relationship with Buttje because I've known him for such a long time and we play together in the division of the elderly and I can assess everything very well and that was also something you're well attuned to when you're a football coach. I think my experience as a professional and as a co-coach also helps me a lot. You can't take it personally at all. It's just that they do their job and they would prefer to write only positive things, and that's up to me and us, so that when we win, they will immediately write positive things again and be happy about it, because they have no interest in always writing heretical news about how bad St. Pauli is. The best example is: what mistakes did Mr. Schultz make? - He changes too often! And three weeks ago we were still the joker kings of the division. That's, yes, that's their job and that's okay. I can deal with that very well. My composure also helps me to somehow be able to assess everything sensibly.

Tim: Would you actually say that you also allow such voices from the media or somehow take them on board and maybe even incorporate them into your work as a coach?

Timo: Um, actually a big no with an exclamation mark, but it's not like everything in the press is nonsense. Well, we have a few people with us who know a lot about football and they see a few things and maybe it's not so bad sometimes when there's something in the newspaper that's critical of the player, when I've already told him three times and he doesn't change it or doesn't want to accept it, when it comes from the press and maybe from a teammate, then maybe he thinks about it when so many people say it, whether it can really be true. So I don't always see it as a negative and necessary evil, it's ultimately a very populist thing, but it's also feedback on our work and that counts not only for me, but also for the players and for everyone else.

Tim: And, if we now come back to the sports and how it influences the current situation of your work, I'm totally interested in whether you're more the type who keeps to himself and just continues to work with what he has, as it is, or whether you also open up a bit. So the question would be, do you actually allow more or less voices from the outside when things aren't going so well sport-wise?

Timo: Well, I'm someone who likes to exchange ideas with people from my immediate environment or with people who I know can assess my situation. So I regularly talk on the phone with Michael Frontzeck, for example, who knows the club, who knows the job, who also knows such situations very well, and who can maybe give me one or two pieces of advice. Funnily enough, I spoke to Cristian Fiel on the phone a few days ago - I don't know if I told you this before - because he went through exactly the same situation in Dresden last year. He also had a very good game, he got a lot of praise, but then he just didn't get the points, so at some point he had to leave and you try to get opinions from the outside. Of course, I exchange a lot with Andreas, with my two co-trainers or with the staff in general. That's why I do allow voices to be heard, because at the end of the day it's always said that four

eyes see more than two, and yet you have to make sure that you don't take everything at face value, but I can see the path I want to take, the path I want to take with the team, and yet I don't put blinders on.

[Interlude]

Debbie: Although it was too early for Timo Schultz to speak of a crisis after the Osnabrück game, one game later it was definitely there. FC St. Pauli took an early lead in Braunschweig through Maximilian Dittgen. But the longer the game went on, the worse it got. At the end of an inexplicably passive performance, FCSP once again had 0 points. The fourth defeat in a row. And in the end it was highly deserved. For the first time, Timo Schultz publicly counted his team out: After the defeat, he said at the press conference that he wanted to "cut back old heritages". The performance in Braunschweig was indeed affecting, FC St. Pauli had allowed themselves to be dragged down more and more to the low level of play of the opponent after taking an early lead. It didn't seem as if the players were fighting back collectively against the threat of defeat. Timo Schultz made it quite clear at the press conference that he was not satisfied with the team's attitude. The next conversation with Tim was accordingly.

Tim: Timo, you said that you have a soft spot for sports psychology. What are the most important levers in the mental area to get a team back on track if it is not so successful at the moment? Can you make that general statement?

Timo: No, I don't think you can say that across the board, because it always depends on the type of player and the team. In our case, for example, we have a lot of what we call S/P types, a lot of people, a lot of players who have to feel comfortable and who feel uncomfortable when something happens that they can't control, when they make mistakes, when they get into situations that they can no longer control and where they have the feeling that something is getting out of control.

Tim: And you said-

Timo: -that's the biggest focus for us.

Tim: What other types are there? You said it's those S/P types who get into trouble when they get stressed. What other types are there?

Tim: There are still guys who get down to work, who think more analytically and then tend to look for solutions. Then there's the guy who doesn't give a shit, who just does it. I'd say that's the Max Kruse type, who doesn't care about anything, but just assumes that he's the coolest and that nobody can do anything to him anyway. And then there are people who grow from such situations and think to themselves: hey cool, this is a great challenge, it's not going the way we imagined, but now I'm the one who's pulling the coals out of the fire. And these, yes, we actually have - I'll say ninety percent of our squad actually consists of feel-good types, of types who need a familiar environment, who need such a process, who need it somehow, yes, not to be reduced to just the performance at the weekend, but also to how hard they try and things like that, and of course that's not always the case in professional football,

that it just goes straight and everyone can feel good and you can actually assume that no obstacles will be put in your way.

Tim: It sounds like the first thing you have to do in scouting is to create a psychological profile of new-to-sign players, doesn't it?

Timo: Um, yes, it is definitely an important building block in the future squad composition to bring in these chiefs more and by that I don't mean that he has to be 34 and shout at everything and everyone on the pitch, but simply, yes, with us for example, Rico Benatelli is a good example of that. He's certainly not the loudspeaker, nor is he the one who leads the way in terms of body language. But he always wants the ball and he was also one of the few in Braunschweig who simply said: "Hey, play me. So what's your problem? Why do you kick every ball away, why don't you play me? So nothing can happen, once I've got it, everything's fine." And just to have that charisma and to say in a situation like that, where things just aren't going well, "Hey, let's put the ball back here and then we'll play football again, because the worst thing that can happen is that we get one in, but we also get one in like that and it doesn't go well that way either. So, what the hell, we're going to carry out our plan now instead of somehow throwing everything away and just stretching out all fours and saying: I hope nothing happens.

Tim: I found that quite exciting with what you mentioned as an example, Max Kruse, let's say guys who don't give a shit. That fits relatively well with a discussion that was once held about Lukas Podolski, when it was said that he simply doesn't think on the pitch. That's why he's so good. That will probably fit in, but turning this argument around, because "stupid kicks well", so to speak, is sometimes the argument, especially for strikers, because they apparently don't think?

Timo: ((laughs)) Yes, yes, with Lukas Podolski it was always like that, you could tell him two things, as soon as you tell him the third, he has forgotten the first. And /um/ that also has advantages, of course. So there are strikers who really make a record of themselves when they don't score and others, well, I'll never forget when we lost 4-0 in Karlsruhe, I think, or it doesn't matter, in any case it was a clear loss and it was hot as hell and afterwards we were all sitting in the dressing room exhausted and Max comes in at some point, takes off his jersey and his little belly goes over his trousers, he shakes his head, looks at all of us bit by bit and finally says like this: "Yeah, I can't win a war with you guys either! "

Tim ((laughs)): Hahahaa.

Timo: And the whole locker room just had to laugh, because it was just like that, he was serious. It was clear to everyone that he was serious and somewhere he was almost right, because everyone knew that he was better than us and yet with his fat score of 20 and probably having the biggest, snottiest (biscuit?) himself, he knew he was still better than us and it was just in his head. So he already said back then, when he came to us, he said that he would be at the 2014 World Cup. Then he had a fractured fibula or I don't know what, somehow he broke his leg in Bremen and was a substitute for us. That was quite clear for him. And this mindset, of course at first glance it's sometimes really strange, but on the pitch it helps you. You can't have eleven of them, then you'll go crazy, but I would never have grabbed the ball in the

88th minute at nil-nil and shot from twenty metres. And Max has been doing that for fifteen years, or a Deniz Naki or an Ebbers or a Hennings, they're all like that. They're just different types. And we're definitely missing some of them, but that's just the way it is - that's not just been the problem for three months, but actually for three to five years. That the core and, above all, the management of this team consists of precisely these types.

Tim: Would you actually call that one of the core problems at the moment? Or is the core problem simply that you didn't win the games you should have won?

Timo: Yes, yes, the one causes the other. So there we are with the chicken and the egg. We would have these games, these 2:2 games, maybe we would have lost one and won two of them if that were different. And maybe we wouldn't be in this negative vortex again if that were different. And that's something we have to break up as soon as possible. We probably would have had to do it even more blatantly in the summer, but then we have to do it now. So we can't go on like this. Well, there is no way - it won't go forward like this. That has to be said very clearly.

Tim: After the game in Braunschweig, you were really disappointed for the first time, which you clearly expressed at the press conference, but also afterwards. Have you changed your speech to the team in the course of time because of the current series?

Timo: Yes and no, I'll put it this way, we've always been very direct and very clear about things. So if it's not enough somewhere, then it's not enough somewhere. But so far it has always been connected to seeing how we can do it on a motivational level, on a content level, on a personal level. To stay more and more, very, very soft and very, very yes with each other and for each other. No, no one was ever really counted out in front of the whole group, at some point it happened in private and so on, and now on Sunday we actually talked turkey for the first time for one and a half hours in a different tone, because the boys - the content was actually the same, just in a sharper tone. The boys have to help themselves, too, with everything we can prepare and a sports psychologist and a mental coach and physios and strength coaches, two, and here and there, at the end on the pitch they are responsible for it themselves and then they have to find solutions themselves. And they can't do that in training and they can't do that in the game. And that wasn't the first time we brought it up. I think I've already mentioned it three or four times in the press, that it's all far too sweet and far too soft, far too much youth football. Against Braunschweig, that was district league level. They just blindly ploughed every ball forward, nothing else. They tripped over the ball! And we don't manage to stick to our line, to keep playing football, but we just keep thundering more and more into their level, into their direction with every minute, and we can't do that. If we want to play football like that, we'll lose every game. We can't. And that's something the boys have to change. Each of them individually and also as a group, but as I said, we haven't managed that in the last few years and we won't manage it this year either in the current constellation.

[Interlude]

Tim: No matter how this podcast documentary will be evaluated later, no one should claim that Timo Schultz did not answer my questions openly and honestly. And that's despite the fact that the situation couldn't be more shitty.

At the beginning of the project, we had hoped that the season would go something like it did. With a phase in which the results are sometimes not right, in which there is also a bit of headwind. We wanted to take a kind of low point, find out how Timo Schultz deals with defeats, what doubts he might have, whether he thinks about himself. But of course it wasn't planned that it would go so deep. Two or three bad games, okay, but it was not planned that FC St. Pauli would not win 13 games in a row. The defeat in Braunschweig was something like the bottom of this series. Accordingly, the basic mood of the talks had changed considerably. It would have been surprising if Timo Schultz had been in the best of moods in the midst of the sporting crisis. Sure, he continued to tell stories from the dressing room, but the relaxed mood was somehow missing. As strange as it may sound and as bad as the quality of the soundtrack is, for me personally, Timo Schultz's answers in the recording we have just heard are probably the best I have recorded with him in terms of content.

[Fan chant: Das Herz von St. Pauli]

Debbie: Timo Schultz then followed up his words that he wanted to "cut back old heritages" with action: At the press conference before the following match against Erzgebirge Aue, he answered the question about filling the goalkeeper position unusually openly with the words "We haven't decided that yet." - a formulation that is already sufficient for filling the goalkeeper position in the middle of the season to assume that a change would take place there.

Yes, and so it came to pass: at the game against Aue, Svend Brodersen was in goal instead of Robin Himmelmann. A decision that was quite understandable for sporting reasons. According to various statistics, Robin Himmelmann was one of the weakest goalkeepers in the second division this season and not nearly as strong as he had been in previous years. The discussion about this personnel matter finally reached its climax in January and was then of course also discussed accordingly with Timo Schultz.

Now, in this second episode, we'll stick to the day-to-day business for the time being: Maximilian Dittgen, Simon Makienok, Kevin Lankford and Daniel Buballa also had to vacate their places in the starting eleven. Particularly in the case of Buballa, who had been a regular player up to that point, the phrase "cut back old heritages" may have been apt.

It didn't really help at first: FC St. Pauli played well, but were down 0:2 shortly before the end. Only with the substitution of Knoll, Makienok and Dittgen FC St. Pauli was able to elicit real pressure again:

[AFM Radio: In front of the main stand: Marvin Knoll. Lays the ball down, brings the ball in now. Sharp ball into the sixteen, in header extension and then shot, GOAL! DITTGEN, DITTGEN on the right inside the five-yard box, he puts the ball into the box. But it's not enough to equalise, it's still 2:1 behind, ten minutes to go...

....small scramble, while Knoll now runs towards the ball with four strides, one, two, three, now the ball comes into the sixteen, it's good! WISHER! POST, GOAL, TOOOOOOOR! Simon Makienok, two. Two! Let's go, let's go. Another goal! PUT

THE BALL IN THE BOX! (singing) HE PUT THE BALL IN THE BOOOX, HE PUT THE BALL IN THE BOOOX, HE PUT THE BALL IN THE BOOOX, ONE MORE!
((Song 2)) Makienok's follow-up shot, after the ball has bounced back off the right-hand post into the middle, he then knocks it in! Come on!]

Debbie: A point at home against Erzgebirge Aue was of course far too little in view of the increasingly critical situation in the table. This draw was the ninth game in a row without a win for FC St. Pauli. The club remained in 17th place in the table. At least, that is how it was planned, FC St. Pauli would have had the opportunity to finally score three points just a few days after this game in Würzburg. An English week was on the cards. But in the end, nothing came of it. The Würzburg Kickers, who were badly affected by injuries at the time, had a positive Corona case, so that a quarantine was ordered for 14 players. However, the way in which the Würzburg team dealt with the situation led to massive disgruntlement, both on the part of FC St. Pauli and the DFL. It seems that the Kickers communicated the positive case only on their own channels and not with the DFL, which is responsible for match cancellations. A cancellation of the match, as announced by the Würzburger Kickers in the morning before the match, was therefore not possible for the time being. It was not until late in the afternoon that the DFL officially cancelled the match. In the meantime, however, FC St. Pauli had to follow the usual matchday procedure. Sporting director Andreas Bornemann said in unusually clear terms shortly after the cancellation: *"We are anything but thrilled to have received the official cancellation only two hours before kick-off. The whole process was highly questionable and not professional"*.

The whole thing went rather wrong somehow: The day after the match was cancelled, the health authorities reduced the number of players who had to be quarantined from 14 to ten. According to DFL regulations, even the match against FC St. Pauli would have had to take place. Accordingly, the Würzburg Kickers had to play in Darmstadt days later with a short squad. 12 field players and three goalkeepers were available. In the 76th minute, Eric Verstappen, the third goalkeeper, was substituted as an outfield player, but he could not prevent the defeat either.

[Interlude Fan chant]

Debbie: So the unintentional match-free days during the week for FC St. Pauli could only be used for training to a limited extent due to the journey and the long stay until the final cancellation. One week after the match at home against Aue, Fortuna Düsseldorf came to the Millerntor. They also had a slow start to the season, but did not lose a single game in the 2nd division between the end of November and the end of January and were thus able to improve from a similarly poor position in the table to 3rd place at the end of January.

At the Millerntor, Fortuna showed what made them so strong in this phase: FC St. Pauli simply could not keep up with the merciless effectiveness in the offensive and a compact defence. Especially the effectiveness in the offensive was completely missing for FCSP in this phase of the season, which was shown once again in this last match of the year. In the end, the 0:3 defeat was a little too high, but it fitted very well into the picture and the atmosphere that has arisen around FC St. Pauli. In the

2020 annual table of the 2nd division, FC St. Pauli is in last place. Only five victories were celebrated in 2020. Four of them in the second half of last season. Of the 12 games in the 20/21 season, FC St. Pauli won only one. So it is high time to look for the reasons for this:

Tim: Timo, twelve games, eight points is certainly not what you had in mind at the beginning of the season. I would say that the problem on the offensive side is not the number of scoring chances, but the way you use them. Do you have to improve the coordination of your running routes? Do you need to practise your shots on goal better or do you simply lack luck?

Timo: Well, to say this without any accusation in any direction: I think we gave up 38 of 41 points before the season. Is that so?

Tim: Yes.

Timo: I think so, so definitely an exorbitant amount. And that's simply a fact that you can't explain away. If I compare our current team, for example, with the team we were really good with in the second division, we had Hennings, Ebbers, Naki, Lehmann, Kruse and even Finn Bartels, we simply had finishers in the squad. And this pure finishing quality, i.e. a.) the quality of the finish itself, but b.) also being able to get into a position, people like to talk about nose, but it's often also timing in the free run and the calmness in the finish, that's of course completely missing from us. So we don't need to talk about that. We are the team with the most shots on goal, even though we have one game less, with the most shots on goal in the division and with the most shots on goal inside the box unbelievable! You mustn't tell anyone that. But and you have to say it clearly, you can also see that in training. You can also see in training that many people, perhaps with self-confidence, simply lack a basic finishing quality. Point.

Tim: Can you train that?

Timo: No. So, I think it sounds stupid, I think if you train somewhere in the youth and transitional area, you can still do it with some limitations. Just such a one-contact finish in the box and so, you can still somehow rehearse that through permanent training, differential teaching, blablabla you can still rehearse all that, but now Ivan Mantanovic comes, he's been training for four weeks, I think, now with and when we do goal kicking, then he's with ten or twelve goals and the next one comes with four. And that's it. And he was born in 2003, he's only just turned seventeen and that certainly has nothing to do with the fact that he somehow has an insane number of shots on goal more than ours. And of course he completely outdoes Guido in that area. That has to be said as well. Just the times he was there, the game he played, it wasn't that great against Nuremberg, but you have the calmness he has in his finishing and the way he positions himself to the ball and so on, that's simply a different level. And apart from that, if you look at the history of our strikers, we hardly have anyone in the squad who has ever scored in double figures for several seasons in a row.

Tim: Let's move on to the second area of improvement, you always demand a flat build-up play from your defensive players, or at least frequently. In some of the

twelve games, or in many of the twelve games, you forced that, but you could also see again and again in the games that the opponents were more or less invited through, let's say, hair-raising bad passes. Do you have to adapt your philosophy, your playing philosophy, or does the squad have to adapt to your philosophy by changing the squad?

Timo: That's the crucial question, isn't it?

Tim: Yes, it is.

Timo: Um, no. Well, I don't accept that the players can't do it. We have all second division players and we also have players who have already proven that they can do it. What we've lost, of course, is this whole rhythm, which I think we found quite well until the Karlsruhe game. Permanent changes in the defence due to injuries or players not fit, not fit to play. One is different from the other. And also this naturalness to simply do things even though there is pressure from the opponent, because we have the option of, let's say, a high nine. Which is not to say that one excludes the other. I can play out the back if I don't really get much pressure, or if I get real pressure, I can of course play a targeted ball on the nine and go for the second ball, because then there's space behind it somewhere. And that is something that has to do with conviction. And in the end we lost that conviction. I think the most blatant thing was at the back in Braunschweig, but also against Düsseldorf in the second half, when we showed such positive arrogance and still believed in our plan, still played in the zones that the opponents offered us, and if you look at it, every opponent offers us spaces somewhere. And we actually found them quite often and took advantage of them. That's why we created so many chances. And in the end, you have to say that it makes a big difference when James is on the pitch alone. Lawrence! Then it's two classes better. So of course we can't avoid looking at which player can do what? And we definitely lacked the alternatives recently and then something like what happened against Düsseldorf comes out.

Timo: Timo, apart from the results and the current standings, so it's 12 games, eight points. Now, before the winter break, which is relatively short, how satisfied or not are you with the way your team plays in general?

Timo: Well, I would want to differentiate a lot there as well. I think that until the Karlsruhe game, and even the Karlsruhe game wasn't that bad, we were really good, played courageously, refreshingly forward, but also pressed forward, so that you could see that the team believes in what we have worked on together. You always have the feeling that it's going like this, it's going forward, it's going in the right direction and you can build on something and you have to change something to make it even better. But somehow you were always seeing, okay, this fits and it's going in the right direction. And with the Karlsruhe game and with maybe ten or fifteen percent less self-confidence and then with the international break, you kind of had the feeling: oh, now some of us are a bit shaky and now we have to look again at where we can get the security and confidence and that's a mode in which the team couldn't really perform last year or the last few years and we have to be critical. So far, we have not been able to turn things around. Every now and then we had a good game and good phases afterwards, but basically we lost that light-heartedness and freshness, that thing that distinguished us going forward, and I have the feeling

that we left our path a little bit and tried to improvise a little bit and find compromises, and unfortunately we lack those guys on the pitch who can just sort things out themselves, because a match plan can't always work out. You can't always play 100% of the space that you have planned in advance, and yet, especially then, you need to find a solution on the pitch, and yes, we have unfortunately stagnated more in the last few games, or perhaps even taken steps backwards, than we have really been able to develop.

Tim: And what about you personally? You said the very nice word "finding compromises" or the term "finding compromises". How have you experienced that since the summer or what have you learned for yourself since then - you are still a relatively young coach in the men's adult sector?

Timo: First of all, there is no difference in the area of team management, tactics and so on, and also through my time as a co-coach and as a player. So nothing could really surprise me or not really, really surprise me with things that I would not have expected before. What I underestimated, I'll say that quite clearly, was the physicality at the beginning, that is, the boys were not completely fit, except for the newly signed. Of course, that makes you think about how it can be, and what I underestimated even more was the composition of the squad, especially in terms of mentality. So to really have the players in there where you know they stand up, they stand up even in difficult times, in difficult phases on and off the pitch. Maybe I overestimated some of the players. You have to admit that honestly, and that's also the biggest point where we have to readjust now in the winter and where, on the other hand, and that's also something that gives me hope, we can perhaps make big steps relatively quickly through this readjustment and adaptation.

Tim: I also believe that you can do that. So that's my personal feeling, even if I don't want to make a prognosis or give you an expert opinion. Timo last question! Now is yes-

Timo: The Christmas question?

Tim: Yes, the Christmas question, exactly, we have 23 December on the day of the recording. When you were a player at FC St Pauli, what were the Christmas parties like in the regional league? What would you say the Christmas parties were like in regional league times?

Timo: Is there an "adults only" edition of this podcast?

Tim: ((laughs)) Yes, we can do that.

Timo: ((laughs)) Haha. So, no, nothing forbidden at all. As a rule, and that's a huge difference from today, it was usually organised by the team itself, simply because we wanted to, because we were up for it, we wanted to do what we felt like doing. We then asked the club, what does it look like? Can we do it? Where can we do it, what framework? Do you want to participate or not? Yes? And there were some good things. So often the players organised something themselves, for example I also invited guests, like Corny from the theatre, (Mr Willnowsky?) or something, who then had a performance, then Boller and Paddy Borger organised a cool quiz. So it was

really cool, and of course sometimes it got out of hand. But it never really got into an antisocial phase, so we always enjoyed doing something together again, especially with the women and the staff, and buying presents again, or one year I remember we organised a Christmas Secret Santa within the team. So everyone drew a different player or the athletics coach or the physio or the kit attendant and then they had to give each other presents. I remember that Ebbe got a sponsorship for an elephant from Hagenbeck's zoo. So because we Ebbe, Ebbe was always the Ebbefand, so ((sings)) Who plays so beautifully and elegantly? Ebbe, Ebbefand! So there was this Ebbe Sand song and Snail Kalla gave me a wooden cow, for example, because René Schnitzler once said to me: You have a technique like a wooden cow! And then he painted a 12 on this wooden cow and put it on an old bench from the old Millerntor. So that was already - that was celebrated in the past and now you have to say, now it was actually so that everyone came away as quickly as possible with the final whistle of the last training session, but the times are of course also, now with Corona are simply different.

[Interlude]

Tim: Looking back, what Timo Schultz outlined just before Christmas is a pretty apt analysis. Guido Burgstaller is sorely missed, stability is brought by someone like James Lawrence, the mentality, the self-confidence in the squad, that's a problem. How good this analysis actually was, was then shown in January. But January will be part of the third episode of "Being Timo Schultz". Until then you can get rid of "Schulle" as a nickname and used to "wodden cow".

Debbie: Yes, that was it for 2020 - looking back, not only from FC St. Pauli's point of view, it won't be the most popular one. FCSP spent the winter in a relegation spot and didn't have much time to catch their breath, as play resumed right at the beginning of January. Yes, and as we know, everything turned out all right in the end, but many must have thought of FC St. Pauli with a rather queasy feeling at the turn of the year.

We also had our doubts about the future of this project. But we will report on that in the next episode of "Being Timo Schultz".

[Fan chant]

Tim: This podcast documentation would not have been possible if MillernTon had not been actively supported from many sides. For example, from the club itself, which supported this idea in the summer of 2020 and agreed to give me a kind of private audience with the head coach of FC St. Pauli at regular intervals. Thanks for that. And, of course, a huge thank you to Timo Schultz himself, who was open and honest with me even in this difficult sporting phase. I will miss these private audiences, Timo! The title song of "Being Timo Schultz" has hopefully already made it into all your playlists. Thees Uhlmann recorded the chorus of the song again especially for this project. A big "Diddl, Digga!" for that, dear Thees! The live sequences from the rather sobering games in this episode come from the FC St. Pauli reportage for the blind and visually impaired. You can listen to them online and even by phone at every FC St. Pauli home or away match. So if you want to hear my squeaky head voice, as heard in the sequence from the Osnabrück game in this episode, or you

Being Timo Schultz – A MillernTon podcast project

want to hear a well-trained and expert voice doing a live report on FC St. Pauli games, just type "AFM-Radio" into a search mask. You won't regret it.

We are the MillernTon. We podcast and blog about FC St. Pauli and fan topics the way we like it. We love doing this and that's why we are currently in the process of professionalising ourselves. We'll be honest: to professionalise we need money and reach. So feel free to share, comment and like our content on social media. And if you can and want to support us financially, you can find all the information you need on our website. If you transfer a small amount of money to us every month, it will help us a lot along the way. Because we would like to continue to make projects like this one possible. "Being Timo Schultz" was produced by Debbie, Maik and me. Maik sits behind the controls and is responsible for the fact that all the cuts here run so cleanly into each other. Debbie guides us with her voice chronologically through a season that can definitely be described as a rollercoaster ride. Three of us wrote the script for this project. I'm Tim and in the next episode I'll tell you about the fact that in January I was also preparing for an early end to "Being Timo Schultz" in terms of content. You can listen to that in a few days. Look forward to it!

[Outro: Bon voyage Timo Schultz, also for district and club! You shall be my very last FC Sankt Pauli coach. How much can love endure, I might never make it out, but until then, fuck it, Forza, FC Sankt Pauli!]