

Coaches Training Manual

U11 & U-12 House

Philosophy of Coaching

Will have a commitment to attacking and creative soccer where players are encouraged to make decisions in a structured environment. The core of the Master Plan is the implementation of a structural training program based on age group, psycho-motor (physical), cognitive (thinking and learning) and psychosocial considerations (development of self in relation to others), Is committed to creating an environment of enjoyment and development for each child.

Safety needs to be the number one priority. We expect our coaches to provide a “good coaching” method which requires enthusiasm, patience, knowledge and understanding of soccer and a developmental long term approach that will encourage children to develop a lifetime passion for the beautiful game. This long term approach does not include coaching to win at all cost, yelling and harsh critiquing.

Recent studies show that more than 73% of all children who play organized youth sports end up quitting by the time they reach the age of 13. Dr. Ronald Quinn states in the official US Youth Soccer Manual: "The needs of the child, while playing soccer, should be placed above the needs, convenience and self interest of the adults. True player development focuses on the development of the player, not the development of the team. Up to the age of 12, this should be the only criteria used in designing and running youth soccer programs." Therefore, it is important that coaches understand how children experience soccer. Good coaching consists of methods, didactics and organization and always taking into account the age and ability when planning activities. “Good coaching includes many touches on the ball and many repetitions.”

Philosophy is modeled after the "Dutch vision," developed by the Dutch Federation in 1986. In many countries around the world children learned the game of soccer through a natural development by playing “soccer in the streets.” The children spend countless hours of their youth playing the game with their friends in an unstructured environment.

For example a young soccer player growing up in Holland in the sixties would play on average 2 to 3 hours of small-sided games every day - rain, snow, wind or sunshine. This child-owned learning process involves a relation to soccer, endless repetitions, always fun and imaginative, and group generated rules and challenges. Over the course of a year this would average to about 1,000 hours of soccer. In Holland, children were not eligible to play for a club until the age of 10. Considering that most of the children started playing soccer at about 5, Dutch youngsters would enter the club environment with approximately 5,000 to 6,000 hours of soccer under their belts. These countless hours of learning soccer explains the advanced technical and tactical development of many youngsters around the world. Playing “street soccer” develops the soccer brain or, as we call it, the ability of “reading the game.”

As society has changed all over the world this natural development of children-owned learning has been replaced by a more adult-controlled process. With this approach, limited time needs to be used more efficiently. According to philosophy and the Dutch Federation's model of using training time more efficiently, coaching staff is recommending the Circuit Model for age groups U6 to approximate U12. The Circuit Model enables the coaching staff to introduce as many facets as possible within limited time frames.

This model will create more enjoyment and makes more efficient use of fields and time. Within the Circuit Model, the coaching staff will emphasize consistent themes throughout all age groups which will ensure a smooth transition to the next age groups. The team/coaching clinics will be conducted the first weekend of August. It is important that all House Coaches arrive at least 15 minutes prior to their assigned clinic. This will enable the League Trainer to distribute the

age appropriate curriculum and explain the format. It is also important that each House Coach provides the League trainer with a ball for each player and a sufficient amount of cones and bibs. Within the developmental philosophy, it is important for coaches to be cognizant of some established youth coaching and responsibilities. As role models, coaches have a tremendous responsibility towards the young players.

Principles of Youth Coaching

Coaching is teaching the players; the key is motivation. Coaching starts with making observations. A coach must be able to "read" the game.

- A Coach of youth soccer must always be positive
- A Coach must always check that the playing area is safe
- Activities need to be developmentally appropriate - fun, agility
- Give clear instructions - brevity, clarity
- Simple to more complex progression
- Opportunities for decision-making
- Use safe and appropriate spaces

Responsibilities and expectations of the Coach

- Provide a safe environment for the players
- Dress professionally
- Be on time for practices and games
- Prepare practice sessions and game plan
- Encourage and be positive in correcting mistakes
- Provide sufficient numbers of balls and equipment
- Be familiar with emergency procedures
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- Respect and be polite to referees
- Know the rules of the games

US Soccer lists the following game checklist as a measuring stick to evaluate practices:

- Are the activities fun?
- Are the activities organized? Are the objectives clear?
- Are the players involved in the activity? Is there maximum participation of the players?
- Is creativity and decision-making being used?

Coaches need to avoid the 4 'L's at all costs

- Laps: Time is precious and limited
- Lectures: Attention span is short - if you speak more than 30 seconds you will lose them
- Lines: Do not have the players standing waiting to take their turn
- Language: You are an important role model; never use inappropriate language around children

Coaching has collected some great resources (books, videos, etc.) to assist you in planning your practices. You can find many of these at the Public Library, or you can check with our staff.

What is technical training?

Development of the proper execution of a number of soccer techniques

Techniques: passing, shooting, dribbling, receiving, heading and defending (Goalkeeper techniques)

Components: the ball, pressure, direction, scoring, time, space, opponents, teammates, progression

A tactical training utilizes game-related activities - emphasizing a certain technique, maximizing repetitions - without eliminating the other components of the game of soccer.

What is tactical training?

Development of proper decision-making with various soccer situations.

Tactics: the 3 main moments - ball possession, opponent with ball possession, transition between the two.

Components: the ball, pressure, direction, scoring, time, space, opponents, teammates, progression

A tactical training utilizes game-related activities - emphasizing a certain technique, maximizing repetitions - without eliminating the other components of the game of soccer.

Stages of Progressive Youth Development

U6-U10 Introductory or Pre Phase, Development

In the introductory phase emphasis will be to create a fun environment for learning (street soccer concept). In this phase the emphasis should be on acquiring the basic skills and mastering of the ball, i.e. dribbling and foot skills. The U10 player should master 15 standard dribbling moves.

U6 5 dribbling moves

U8 10 dribbling moves

U10 15 dribbling moves

U10-U12 Individual phase: Ideal age for acquiring skills, Development

In this phase the emphasis will be the mastery of the ball in game-realistic situations. Learning to solve soccer problems and how you can adjust yourself to these situations.

Players should be prepared to play in 11v11

Training will include technical preparation for possession within 3-4-3 system (Introduction of triangles, rectangles)

Introduction of defensive module (1v1, 2v2, etc.)

U13-U15 Collective phase: Tactical Development

Learning to solve soccer problems within your position and the team concept. Emphasis on advanced technical preparation for possession (straight line, wine glass introducing larger distances).

Speed of play through possession in small spaces

Game situational tactical training for 3-4-3 and 4-3-3 system involving three or more players

Implementation of flank module

Implementation of buildup module

Implementation of defensive module (zone)

Implementation of attacking module

As the players are growing fast and are able to play the ball over longer distances, the coach will have to evaluate and plan the use of the circuit training concept.

U16-U19 Competition Phase

In our three year plan with increase of age groups, technical staff will prepare teams for competition and implement a variety of systems. In this phase, players must learn how to systematically plan to achieve a positive result and enjoy.

Training and evaluation will be provided according to the **TIPP model (Technique, Insight, Personality and Physical Dimension)**.

Taking into consideration the soccer development of the young soccer player, is adopting a training program that will progress to a consistent system of play.

Within the TIPP model, is recommending 3-4-3, 4-3-3 model until the age of 16. This system enables for optimal use of field space and the development and understanding of triangles, diamonds, rectangles and other geometric shapes that make up the game.

To prepare our young players to play within this system, the coaching staff recommends the following formations during practice:

3v3 Triangle no emphasis on formation

4v4 introduce diamond shape

6v6 GK 2:3 or 3:2 formation

8v8 GK 2:3:2 or 2:2:3 formations for academy game day

11v11 GK 3:4:3 or 4-3-3 formation

Older age groups U16-U19 will prepare for competition, will train and prepare for a variety of systems such as 4-4-2, 3-5-2.

During the progressive soccer development of the young soccer player, is recommending the 4v4 model. (Except for U6 where social group in general is limited to two friends, we recommend 3v3.)

WHY 4v4?

The 4v4 is a great teaching model as it is the smallest number of players per team which contains all of the components that are present in the 11v11 game: the ball, team mates and opponents, realistic pressure, appropriate space, guidelines (rules), direction of play (attacking and defending), and the combination of length and width in the game (team shape).

4v4 develops all elements within the TIPP philosophy:

Technique and skills that are realistic

Insight: awareness, vision, choices and decisions

Personality: fun, enjoyment and competition

Physical: fitness

4v4 also includes important element of repetition. Young players recognize different situations that are constantly repeated. In 4v4 there are no lines and no waiting.

The role of the coach as a facilitator

The coach sets up the game and the conditions for learning, provides some supervision and allows the game to teach.

4v4 is a clear environment to analyze the game and is not as intimidating for the novice coach as analyzing 11v11.

The Coach must observe the three main areas of the game:

Team is in possession of the ball (Attacking)

Employ buildup by using the entire playing area in terms of length (depth) and width (spread out, possession)

Width as a preparation for depth

Learn and determine team shape which should resemble a diamond (allows for triangles.

also see passing dribbles. preparation of possession)

Create goal-scoring opportunities by taking action individually or collectively

1-2-1 diamond formation

Play your position

Communication - coach player in front of you

The other team has the ball (Defending)

Aim is to prevent goals from being scored by getting behind the ball and to regain possession.

Simple principles are reinforced as there is neither a spare defender nor goalkeeper

Limit available space:

depending on the strength of the opponent (towards the ball pressing, drop back to your own goal, force opponent to your strength)

eliminate penetrating pass

delay the play

keep opponent in front of you

mark opponent on the inside

provide cover for player challenging the ball

focus on ball and opponent at same time

When ball changes possession (Transition)

Aim is to rapidly change for possession to defending and vice versa.

Loss of possession: pressure from nearest player towards the opponent with the ball; all players must be involved; limit space available; get behind ball and organize; delay the ball; force players to play ball back.

Recovering ball: if possible play long ball; create space for long ball; utilize space available; create opportunities to score; take advantage of lack of organization.

Organization of 4v 4 games

Depending on age and skill level of players, the game can vary in size from 35-25 to 45-30. Of the basic 4v4 game, there are a number of variations, such as line soccer, small goals, bigger goals, long narrow field, short wide field.

4v4 with 2 small goals (stress ball possession)

4v4 with 2 big goals and goalkeepers (stress shooting)

4v4 with 2 small goals (stress switching the field)
4v4 on a long narrow field (stress the penetrating pass)
4v4 on a small, wide field (stress using the wings)
4v4 line soccer, score by dribbling ball over a line (stress ball control, team work shielding and 1v1 movements)
4v4 with 2 small goals and big goal with goalkeeper (stress-building up the play or finishing)
Rules: with or without off-sides?
Throw-ins or kick-ins?
Corner kicks?
Time limit or number of goals
Tournament-style or per individual
Depending on the numbers, for U6 we are recommending 3v3 as a 6-year-old relates and cooperates with one or two friends. Three makes a triangle, the basic team unit of soccer.

U12 Training guidelines and training manual

A) Overview

Some coaches say that the U12 year-old players have "turned the corner" and are looking like real soccer players. However, games are still frantically paced and a bit unpredictable for the most part. These players know how much fun it is to play the game skillfully. As a result, we begin to see some of the players drop out who recognize the importance of skill and become discouraged with their lack of it.

Some other things that we can expect when working with players of this age are:

They will yell at their teammates when they make a mistake

They will openly question the referee's decisions

Players will encourage each other

They will pass the ball even when they know that they will not get it back

Team cooperation is emerging; they will run to a spot, away from the play, even when they know that they might not get the ball

They will point out inconsistencies between what you say and what you do

The difference in skill levels between the players is very pronounced

Some players might be as big as you are, some might be half your size

Not only will some of the players come to training with expensive cleats, but some will also come with matching uniforms, sweat suits, and bag

They will get together with their friends and be able to set up and play their own game

B) Age characteristics - U12

They begin to develop the abilities to sustain complex, coordinated skill sequences

Most players are able to think abstractly and are thus able to understand some team concepts that are foundational to the game

They are beginning to be able to address hypothetical situations, and to solve problems systematically

They are spending more time with friends and less time with their parents

They are susceptible to conformity to peer pressure

They are developing a conscience, morality and scale of values

Players tend to be highly self-critical; instruction needs to be enabling

Show them what can be done instead of telling them what not to do

Although they are more serious with their play, they are still mainly involved because it is fun

They are openly competitive; a few may foul on purpose

They are looking towards their role models and heroes in order to know how to act

They enjoy competition

Psychological development has progressed

Team work has improved

Technical competency has improved

Problem solving with teammates

Self appearance and peer pressure are a concern

Varying stages of puberty

C) Goals and what to teach:

Technique:

Important to establish a good strong solid base. Development of individual skills under the pressure of time, space, and an opponent. Increase technical speed.

Dribbling: Encourage risk taking! Moves to beat an opponent; keeping possession

Shielding: Spin turns; change of speed, change of direction

Receiving: Ground and airballs; all surfaces, from a partner and on the move

Shooting: Proper striking technique, partner serve from all angles, turns, cut backs; volleys

Passing: Proper technique; laces, inside, outside; short and long; crossing

Heading: Self serve; partner serve - jumping to head, turning the ball; partner juggling

Tackling: Proper technique, in balance, no fear

Insight:

"Dawn of tactical awareness"

Individual: 1v1 situations in attack and defense. Play 1v1 frequently.

Small Group: 2v1, 2v2, 3v1, 3v2, 3v3, 4v2, 4v3, 4v4. Play a variety of positions; develop an awareness of basic principles of play.

a) Attacking: Keep possession; Encourage risk taking; Take players on 1v1 in proper areas of the field. Support. Basic combination play (Wall pass, takeover). Promote attacking soccer.

b) Defending: Proper pressure (in front and behind); Channel player; Immediate chase; Cover; Marking.

A great deal of coaching/teaching within 4 v 4 games.

The Game: 8 v 8 or 9 v 9 (Includes keepers)

Personality:

Learn sportsmanlike conduct, respect opponents

Learn to communicate with team, coaches and managers

Learn to accept authority

Adhere to rules and regulations

Learn to concentrate and focus

Learn to take care of equipment

Learn to report an injury

Knowledge of rules

Learn to take care of your body

Physical Dimension / Athleticism:

All fitness work done with the ball, in partners, and in fun engaging activities.

a) Flexibility

b) Agility - with and without the ball

c) Speed

d) Strength

e) Endurance

f) Balance

The Youth Soccer Training plan for age groups U6-U12 will utilize the "Circuit Model" and each training session will contain:

a) Small Groups

b) Many ball contacts per player

c) Specific rules and guidelines

d) Frequent repetitions

e) Enjoyment

Circuit Model

To implement this training plan the general method adapted is the "Circuit Model." The Circuit Model enables the coaching staff to introduce as many facets as possible within limited time frames. This model will create more enjoyment and makes more efficient use. Depending on numbers, coaches will divide group and field size in various parts and rotate groups during a 60 to 75-minute training session.

1) General Warming up

2) Depending on age group and ability, stations will include:

- a) Exercises at aiming at targets or scoring (U12 add passing/collecting)
- b) Exercises for dribbling (Fast Feet) (U8 and above add taking away)
- c) Scrimmage format for maintaining or taking away the ball. (U8 and above)
2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3, etc.

3) Conclude session with group scrimmage, depending on numbers and age group, 4v4, 5v5, 7v7, etc.

Organization of Circuit Model:

A good preparation of the training is critical for the success of the Circuit Model. Initially coaches as well as players have to get used to the model, as this training does not utilize the original model of having a coach in front of the group. Instead, once the players are comfortable with the model, the coach will have to monitor different stations at the same time. Usually after two training sessions, players and coach should feel comfortable with the model. The model is to be used for all age groups U6-U14. Of course field size and content of exercises will vary between age groups.

- a) Set up two fields sized approximately 45x25. Divide each field in two
- b) Training about 60-75 minutes

First Training

Five minutes prior to practice, the coach will set up the stations and mark out the fields. (See diagram)

0-10 minutes: Warming up

10-25 minutes: Take players to station 1 (aiming at Targets)

25-45 minutes: Take players to station 2 (Fast Feet)

45-60(75) minutes: Take players to station 3 (Scrimmage: 3v3, 4v4, 5v5, 7v7, etc.)

Second Training

The coach will utilize same model and teaching themes.

0-10: Warming up

10-30: Repeat theme A and B from session 1. Divide into two groups. Rotate after 8 minutes.

30-50: Introduce new exercise for theme A. Group 1 demonstrates, group 2 watches.

Group 1 continues. Group 2 in second grid repeats Theme B. Rotate after 8 minutes.

50-60(75): Scrimmage and clean up

Third Training

Use the same themes as in training 1 and 2. Introduce third theme (except U6). In session two, the coach will utilize same model and teaching themes.

0-10: Tagging games

10-30: Introduce new exercise from theme B. Group 2 demonstrates, group 1 watches.

Group 2 continues. Group 1 in second grid repeats Theme A from last session. Rotate after 8 minutes.

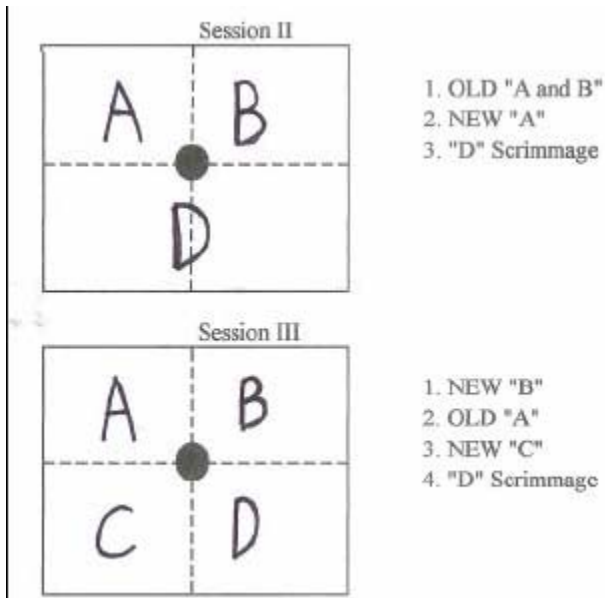
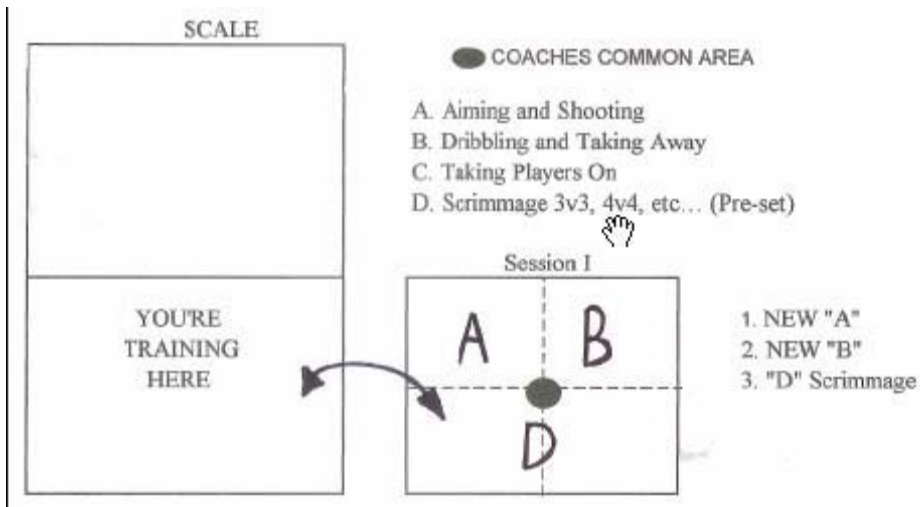
30-50: Introduce Theme C to entire group (U6 will continue with themes A and B only.

Alternate repetition and introduction of new exercise for themes A and B)

50-60(75): Scrimmage Format and Clean up

Training 4-12 continues the model with same themes. When the coach introduces a new exercise within same theme, it is important that this is introduced for the entire group.

First couple of sessions, it is important that the players and coach become comfortable with the organization. Once the organization is clear, the coach can start to teach details of soccer.



coaches / team clinic model

Circuit Model U-12

COACHES COMMON AREA

- A. Aiming and Shooting
- B. Dribbling and Taking Away
- C. Taking Players On
- D. Scrimmage 3v3, 4v4, etc. (Pre-set)

Session I

1. NEW "A"
2. NEW "B"
3. "D" Scrimmage

Session II

1. OLD "A and B"
2. NEW "A"
3. "D" Scrimmage

Session III

1. NEW "B"

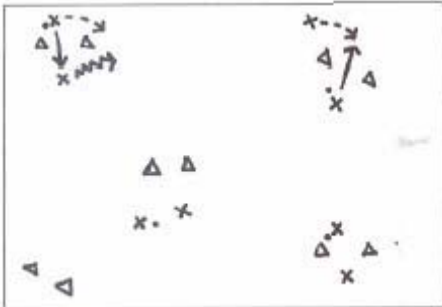
2. OLD "A"
3. NEW "C"
4. "D" Scrimmage

U12 Training Guidelines and Training Manual

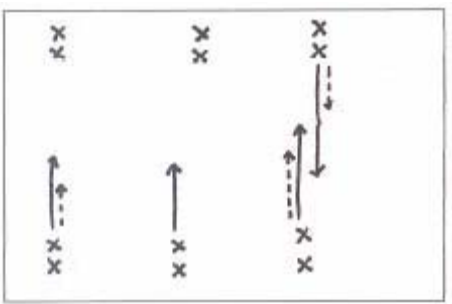
A) Aiming and Scoring

1. Gates (Goal Cone Course): The players form pairs and each is given a ball. Cones are used to form a number of small goals about 2 yards wide within the playing area. The idea is for the pairs of players to pass the ball to each other through the small goals as often as possible, changing the goal each time. Which is the first pair to pass to each other through 10 goals?

Variations: Which pair can make the most passes in a given timeframe? Between 1 and 2 defenders are identified by different-colored training bibs. They then try to make it difficult for the pairs to pass to each other - not by tackling the players directly while they are dribbling, but by blocking the way through the goals.



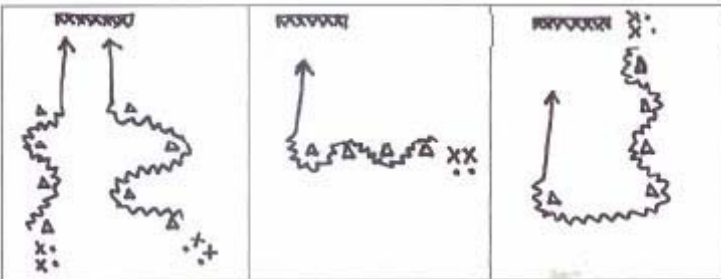
2. Line Passing: Players in groups of four. One ball per group. Ball is played to the opposite line, and the passing player follows their pass. Start with two touch, and progress to one touch.



Coaching points: receiving player needs to call for the ball and step forward to make contact with the ball. Also, passing player needs to sprint to the next line. Challenge them by moving the cones (lines) closer together. More progressive challenges are to have the serving player underhand toss to the next line for chest traps, volleys and headers.

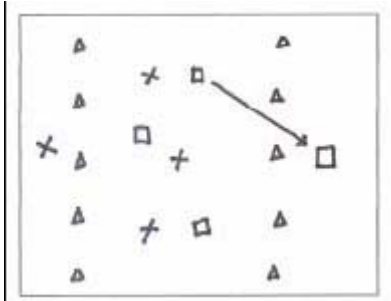
3. Dribble/ Shoot Courses:

- A) Various cone set-up
- B) Various starting positions, 90 degrees etc.
- C) Various body position starts, knees, stomach, butts; add relays



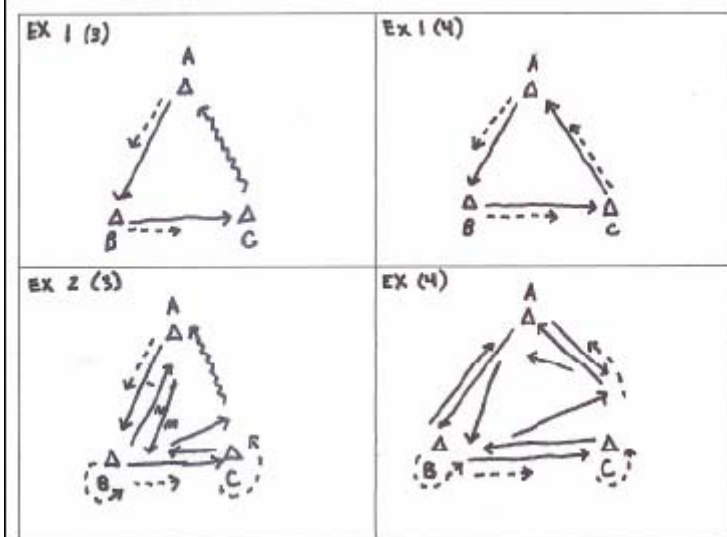
4. Deep Target: Two teams, each team has one player in the end zone. Score by passing the

ball in the air to your teammate in the end zone (2 points). Score with a pass on the ground to the teammate in the end zone (1 point). **Variation:** Add a defender in each end zone. This game can also be played 2 vs. 2 + 1, or 3 vs. 3 + 1. This set-up has the player in the end zone able to receive for both teams. In this progression the end zone player will play the ball back to the scoring team, allowing them to counterattack at the other end zone.



5. Triangle Passing: Groups of three, 1 ball per group.

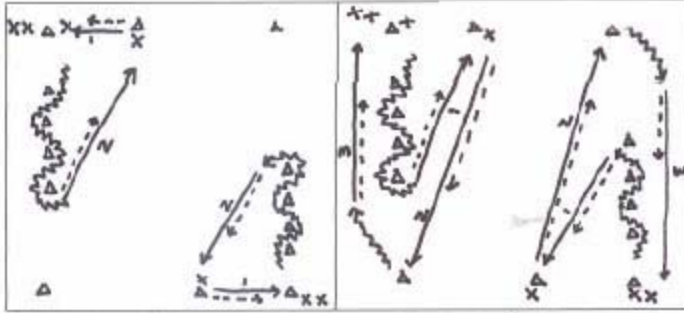
Exercise 1: Player A passes to B, and follows their pass. Player B passes to C, and follows their pass. C dribbles to the starting cone, and repeats sequence. If you have four players then add the fourth to the start cone. A to B follow the pass, B to C follow the pass, C to A follow the pass. When players seem to be managing this, change the direction of the pass.



Exercise 2: Player A passes to B, B passes back to A twists around the cone and A plays a lead pass. B then repeats the sequence with C. C then dribbles to the start cone. If you have four players then add the fourth to the start cone. A to B, B back to A, A serves a lead pass. B to C, C back to B, B serves a lead pass. C to A, A back to C, C plays a lead pass. Repeat until players are able to manage this, challenge them by changing the direction of the passing.

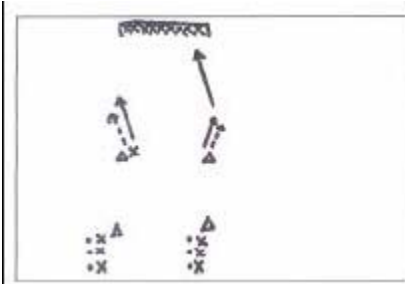
6. Dribbling and Passing:

Exercise 1: Set-up - using four cones, mark out a 10 x 12 yard field. Place another cone in the center of each end line. Place one player at each center cone. The remaining players form two lines, one at each slalom course. This exercise has both sides working simultaneously. The first player in the group dribbles through the slalom course and passes diagonally from the last cone back to the player on the end line. The end line player serves it to the next player in line for the slalom course. Each player must follow their passes to the next station.



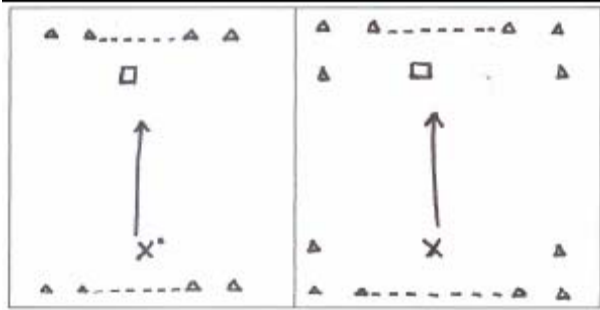
Exercise 2. Set-up is the same as 1. Players dribble through the slalom course and pass diagonally back to the end line. The player on the end line passes diagonally forward to the cone at the far end of the near sideline. Each player must follow their pass to the next station.

7. Finishing: Set-up - cone or cones placed 18 yards away from the goal. Players form a line and begin by rolling the ball with their opposite hand (left hand if you are right footed). Players follow the pass and finish. Progress to self-serving with your opposite foot, having the next player in line serve a ball, and starting with your back to goal (having the next player in line serve between your legs.) **Coaching points:** head down, proper placement of the plant foot, balance with the arms, shooting foot leg swing and landing on the foot that strikes the ball (start slow, allow the players to visualize what they are trying to accomplish). Players should be using both feet in these exercises. **Variations:** Cones are placed 10 yards from goal. Players hold the ball in their hands, walk forward and release the ball and strike a volley (making contact with the ball on its way down). Add half-volleys and side-volleys.



8. Two Ball Tag: Players form a circle. Two balls are passed back and forth in the circle. The object of the game is to not be caught with two balls at your feet. Players must quickly release the balls, concentrating and preparing for the next pass. If a player gets caught with two balls, they must perform a push-up. Also, if a player passes the ball out of the circle, they will need to do a sit-up. Challenge them by making the circle smaller and smaller, and limiting the number of touches.

9. Josh and Jim's game: The game is played 1 vs.1. The grid is 12 to 15 yards long x 8 yards wide. The goals are 6 yards wide. Players take turns taking shots on the opposing player's goal (shots must be on the ground). Players have to take their shot on or before the third touch. Two points are awarded when a player scores on the opposing goal. One point is deducted when a ball is touched the fourth time or when a ball is struck out of the field of play. Challenge them by limiting touches and adding a 5 yard zone they must play in. Coaches should encourage players to come up with variations for this game.



10. Team Handball: Players start with a game of possession in a small grid. Each player may take no more than three steps with the ball in their hands. No contact on the bodies will be allowed. Progress to a larger field with goals and keepers. To score, the team must volley the shot, half volley, head, roll, or bounce the ball off the ground in any way they can (the last version is a great way to allow players to express themselves).

B) Dribbling and Taking Away

1. Moving Touches: Each player has a ball. Various combinations while in motion. (Ex. Two outside rights, one inside right, two outside lefts, one inside left, one outside right, etc...) Continue repeating sequence for 30 seconds. Challenge them by increasing combinations.

2. Fast Footwork:

Top-Touches - Each player has a ball. Player starts with feet behind the ball. First touch placed on top of the ball (bottom of the foot), switch feet and continue for 30-40 seconds. *Notes:* keep your head over the ball (pretend there is an imaginary string attached from your chest to the center of the ball). Bring the knees up. Play with your head up when you've established a rhythm. Have the player count all touches on the ball (rest equal to work).

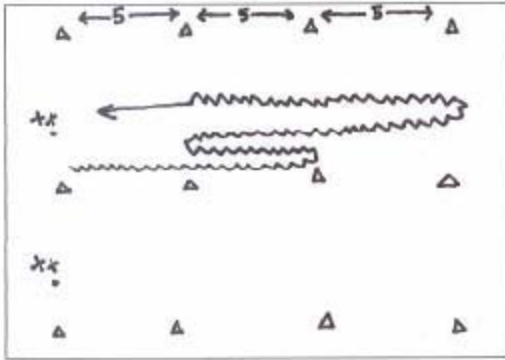
Tic-Tacs - Ball is placed between the feet. First make a touch with the left instep, then the right instep. Repeat for 30-40 seconds. *Notes:* (Attached string) keep the knees slightly bent, stay loose. Head up when rhythm is established and count every touch on the ball.

Puskas - Start with your feet behind the ball. Place left foot (bottom) on top of the ball. Roll the ball back then tap forward with the laces of the same foot. Switch feet and repeat for 30-40 seconds. *Notes:* attached string. Bounce with the non-kicking foot for balance. Head up and establish a rhythm. Count every lace touch.

Killer "V" - Start with feet behind the ball. Place left foot (bottom) on top of the ball. Roll at an angle towards the right foot. Push away with the outstep of the right. Grab the ball with the bottom of the right foot and roll it at an angle toward the left foot. Left foot (outstep) pushes the ball away. *Notes:* Attached string. Establish a rhythm and lift your head. Count every outstep push.

Half Conti - Feet behind the ball. Start by pushing the ball away with the outstep of the right foot, then tap the ball with the instep of the right foot. Repeat for 30-40 seconds. Switch feet, work the left foot for 30-40 seconds. *Notes:* Attached string. Establish a rhythm, and play with your head up. Count every touch. Challenge them by adding movement, i.e. moving top touches. (If you are doing the moving touches, there is no need to keep count.) Another way is to have the players start with stationary touches, on command they speed off with the ball, working on acceleration and change of direction. On command they stop and resume the original touch.

3. Cut! Change of Direction: 3 players per grid. 1 ball per team. Players dribble to third set of cones, cut, dribble to second set of cones, cut, dribble to fourth set of cones, cut, dribble to the starting line and exchange ball with next player in line. Go through two rotations to determine a winning team. Challenge them by designating a cut (outside of foot, stop/step over, roll back, etc.) Also, a change of speed or direction move can be added in center box.

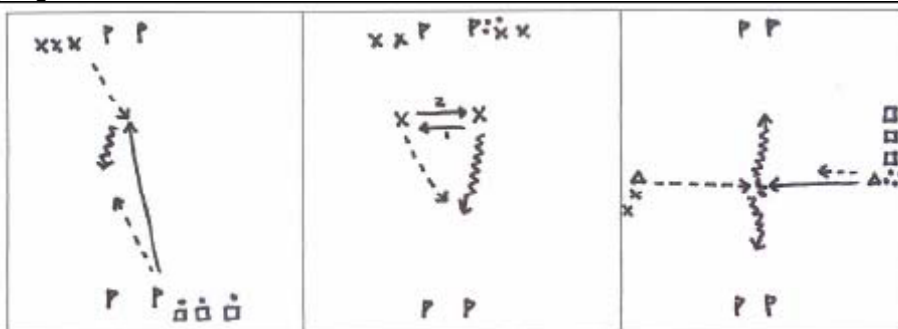


4. 1 v 1 Competitions:

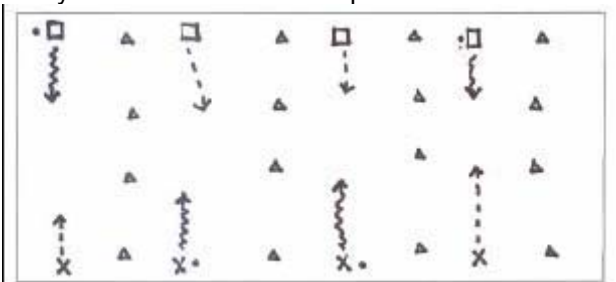
A) Players are divided into two equal groups. One group has a supply of balls. The group with balls serves to the other line and becomes a defender. The receiving player attempts to score in the opposing goal. If the defender obtains possession of the ball, they can attack the other goal. Change lines each one of your turns. Challenge them by giving a maximum number of seconds to score. Also, add a second defender.

B) Two equal groups. Players pass back and forth (limited to two touches), on command the player with the ball passes forward or dribbles (these are two variations). The receiving player or dribbler attempts to score. If the player without the ball gains possession, they then become the attacker. **Various starts:** one player throws the ball to other player who volleys the ball back, toss and head, toss and thigh trap, etc. **Variation:** Attacker starts from the top of the grid and the defender starts from the side line.

C) Two equal groups. One group has a supply of balls. The side with the balls serves to opposing side and becomes a defender. The receiving player has the option to attack one of two goals, they may change their mind (and direction) and attack the other goal. If the defender obtains possession, they may score at one of the two goals. Challenge them by allowing a maximum number of seconds (let a good competition go a bit longer). Also progress to 2 defenders.



5. World Cup Dribbling: Players take on the name of a country. Play 1 vs. 1 for 90 seconds. Dribble the ball over the goal line for one point. Winner moves up one field. Loser moves down one field. In case of a tie, the country that moved up the previous game moves up again. Everyone tries to reach the top field.



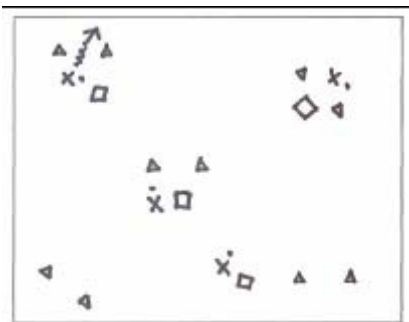
6. Knock-Out:

A) In a small grid. Each player has a ball and dribbles freely. One or two players are outside the grid without a ball. On command the outside players enter the grid and attempt to knock out all of the balls. Switch two "knockers" and continue. **Variations:** place a time limit, have players that have had their ball knocked-out help the original two. Reduce the grid size as players get knocked out.

B) Musical Knock-out: Players in a grid. One player doesn't have a ball. On command players dribble. Player without a ball dispossesses a player with a ball. When the ball is taken from a player, they must retrieve a ball from a different player. Player without a ball at the conclusion is not the winner. Challenge them by adding more than one player without a ball.

7. Dealing with the Ball in the Air: Various juggling touches. Example: left foot, right foot, left foot and catch. Left thigh, right foot, head and catch. There are numerous combinations to choose from. Challenge them by increasing the number of touches. Also, progress to constant juggling without the catch. Another challenging exercise is to have players attempt, short touch, high touch and short touch. Repeat.

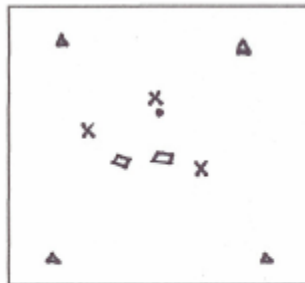
8. 1 vs. 1 With Gates: In a grid, set-up 6 small goals. Set up in pairs, 1 ball per pair. One player is the attacker and one the defender. You score by dribbling through any one of the small goals. Attackers cannot score on the same goal twice. Play for one minute, switch partners. Keep your score, add it up at the end of the round or rounds.



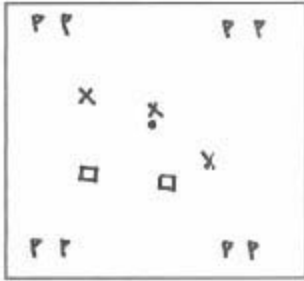
9. Alvin's: 1v1. Players set up in pairs. One player is designated the attacker and the other the defender. The attacker is placed on front of the defender with the ball at their feet. On command, the attack may dribble in any manner they wish, avoiding a tap on the shoulder by the defender. If tapped the attacker must perform one pushup and resume. The defender allows a free touch at the restart. Play for 45 seconds up to one minute, rest, and switch rolls. **Variations:** 1) If the attacker can turn and face the defender and tap their shoulder the defender must do one pushup; 2) All pairs in a grid. 1v1 keep away. Duration of game no more than 45 seconds. Player without the ball must perform three flying stars.



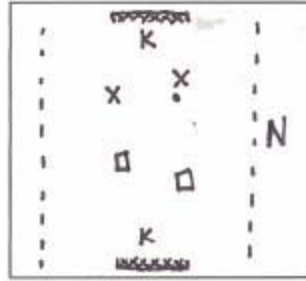
Possession: 4 vs 1, 5 passes = 1 point. Minus 1 point if defender touches the ball. Change defender every 1 min. and 30 secs.



Line soccer: Control the ball over the line to score



4 small goals. Control the ball over the line in either of the opposing team's goals.



2 full size goals. Play 2 vs. 2 + keepers and a neutral wing player. (neutral player must play the ball back to the team they received it from)

C) Taking Players on 3 vs. 2

Possession: 4 vs. 1, 5 passes = 1 point. Minus 1 point if defender touches the ball. Change defender every 1.5 minutes

Line soccer: Control the ball over the line to score

4 small goals. Control the ball over the line in either of the opposing team's goals.

2 full size goals. Play 2 vs. 2 + keepers and a neutral wing player. (Neutral player must play the ball back to the team they received it from.)

D) Fitness Training

The training staff this year is asking that all coaches add exercises to their program that include building strength, agility, coordination, mobility, speed, and balance. To accomplish this and also keep the kids focused we have decided to use various forms of tag games both with and without a ball. We have included some literature and a few web pages for further reference.

Please note that you must research your particular age group.

www.usyouthsoccer.org

www.coachesinfo.com

www.soccerfitness.net

www.IFPA-fitness.com

www.mayouthsoccer.org

www.canadasoccer.com

www.soccerclinics.com

www.amencascorers.org

www.revolutionsoccer.net

www.turboathletes.com

www.flashdrills.com

PRINCIPLES OF PHYSICAL FITNESS

In all the different components of fitness mentioned above, there are certain basic principles that apply to soccer fitness training.

Frequency - Refers to the quantity of training sessions during a defined period of time, often a week. For example, a professional player may train twice a day, 5 times a week.

Intensity - Can be simply defined by how *hard* a player trains. Too much exercise can lead to injury and fatigue whereas too little will not have enough of an effect. Elite players can train longer

and harder than players at a lower level. Intensity is often based on the number of repetitions and how many exercises/sets done. It is linked to the principle of progressive overload.

Progressive overload & duration - Training programs should stress the players' physiological mechanisms enough to cause an improvement in the desired area. This means that working on the same fitness program for a long time will not bring about improvement. Therefore, training status will only be bettered by gradually increasing the load that the body is working against. Incorrect overload may bring injury and demotivation due to overzealous targets. The duration is the time spent in a training session and is dependent upon the sport and individual.

Type of exercise & specificity - All training sessions and types of exercise undertaken need to be designed for the specific demands of the sport, the position being trained for and the individual needs of the athlete.

Reversibility - "Use it or lose it!" What is gained through training will eventually be reduced or lost if exercise is stopped or reduced. A sufficient level of general activity should be planned during periods of inactivity. (Injuries – if possible, time away from home or during the summer break.)

Recovery (detraining) - Needs to be carefully monitored. Recovery periods that are too great will lead to the benefits being lost; recovery time that is too short can lead to overtraining again, resulting in injury. Training provides the stimulus for increased performance but it is during the recovery when the bodies' physiological mechanisms for improvement are implemented.

CONCLUSION

The performance potential of a football player can be improved by fitness training which is generally divided up into aerobic, anaerobic and specific muscle training. Other factors that are important to a players' progress are his genetic background, diet and mental fitness.

Improvements in performance depend upon the training methods used. Frequency, intensity, progressive overload, type of exercise, & specificity and recovery all play a part in determining performance.

9 Critical Characteristics You Must Have to be a Successful Soccer Athlete!

Soccer has rapidly evolved into a quicker and faster game. Not only does it take excellent technical and tactical skills, but also a higher degree of athleticism in order to be a competitive player. Because of this increased level of play, there are great soccer players and there are great soccer athletes. Take for example Rivaldo, Zinedine Zidane, or Diego Maradona. What do each of these players possess that allow them to be the best in the world? They are all incredible athletes displaying great field perception, an explosive first step, and the ability to play with both feet. These dynamic players have developed their athletic skills over a period of years.

Yes, genetics does play a role in determining athleticism, however through proper training and practice one can become a better athlete! It is important to understand that developing athleticism is a long-term process, not a six-week program. To become a great athlete means to continually work on the following athletic qualities year round. Below is an Athletic Checklist of the key components of athleticism. Use this checklist as a tool to evaluate your own level of play. Which of these components are your strengths? Which athletic components are your weaknesses?

Which areas do you need to improve in the most?

First Step Quickness

Straight Ahead Speed (SAS)

Lateral Speed and Agility (LSA)

Acceleration/Deceleration - ability to start & stop

Endurance

Flexibility & Stretching

Multi-Directional Strength & Power Balance

Mental Toughness

Now that you have completed the Athletic Checklist, you can use your results as a basis for your soccer training. The key to planning your training session is to write out your objectives for the day and put them in a sequential order that best meets your needs.

Examples of training session order might be the following:

Warm-up (include balance exercises and flexibility)

1. Speed Training (SAS or LSA) w/out a ball
2. Soccer Technical Skill (passing, shooting, etc.)
3. Soccer Tactical Skill (small sided games)
4. Cool down (Stretching)

Warm-up (Dynamic Flexibility)

1. Speed Training (SAS or LSA) w/a ball
2. Multi-Directional Strength & Power
3. Endurance (soccer specific)
4. Cool down (Stretching)

Warm-up (Balance & Dynamic Flexibility)

1. Speed Training (SAS or LSA)
2. Soccer Technical Skill (wall pass, give and go, etc.)
3. Soccer Tactical Skill
4. Multi-Directional Strength
5. Cooldown (Stretching)

Below you will find a fine example of a Training Formula. This Practice format is from the California Youth Soccer Association. Learn more about this topic and many more by accessing www.cysanorth.org. Also, to obtain great youth soccer videos and books visit www.fundamentalsoccer.com.

The Practice Routine

1. Establish a theme
2. Determine what is to be learned or accomplished
3. Establish a ritual
4. Arrive early
5. Check weather and field conditions
6. Greet the players and socialize
7. Have the players participate in a FUN activity
 - Step 1 Begin Practice: Demonstration/Explanation of 1st part of the theme, role of first attacker or 1st defender in the theme
 - Step 2 Warm up: figure & stretch routine
 - Step 3 ONE(+)ONE: cooperative Play aimed at improving individual technique/tactics
 - Step 4 ONE(vs.)ONE: Competitive Play aimed at Testing individual's technique/tactic
 - Step 5 HALF-Time Routine: Demonstration/Explanation of 2nd part of the Theme Role of other attackers or Defenders in the "Theme"
 - Step 6 SMALL SLIDE GAME(s): Cooperative Play (+) aimed at improving 2nd part of the Theme. Competitive Play (vs) aimed at Testing improvement 2nd part of the "Theme"
 - Step 7 SCRIMMAGE" Cooperative Team Play (+) aimed at improving the Theme. Competitive Team Play (vs) aimed at Testing of the Theme
 - Step 8 COOL DOWN: Stretching Routine
 - Step 9 END PRACTICE: Review, compliment and assign homework

Remember, there is no "right" way to train soccer players. We highly encourage all coaches to research as many options as possible. Ultimately, select a training format that best suits you and your team. By spending a few minutes organizing prior to the start of every practice, you will be able to provide a FUN and SAFE learning environment for your players. Whichever formula you choose, a rhythm will be established. The routine allows young players to turn on their "Soccer Computers" They know it's "Soccer Time."