



Training Program

Under 12: Season Plan

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Coaching U12s

By Gary Stephenson



US
YOUTH
SOCCER



How to Organize Your Team

Coaches,

We are providing a more refined coaching curriculum to address the ages U6 to U12 for 2015 and 2016. We feel it is important to develop technical objectives for these age as well as incorporating group and team tactics at the older ages. We recognize that development varies from child to child and feel it is important at the younger ages to realize the potential in every child and provide appropriate instruction. Plan to have objectives for the year that reflect the skill level of the team your coaching. Here are a few general objectives for the U6 to U12 player:

U12 Player

- Dribbling moves performed at speed and under pressure
- Introduction of the roles of the third defender and third attacker in small sided play
- Field vision and awareness beyond the few players near the ball
- Delivering instep long balls to targets
- Roles by position on defense and attack
- Roles and responsibilities on re-starts
- Receiving air balls on the run
- Recognition of player roles in thirds of the field

Formation by Numbering position

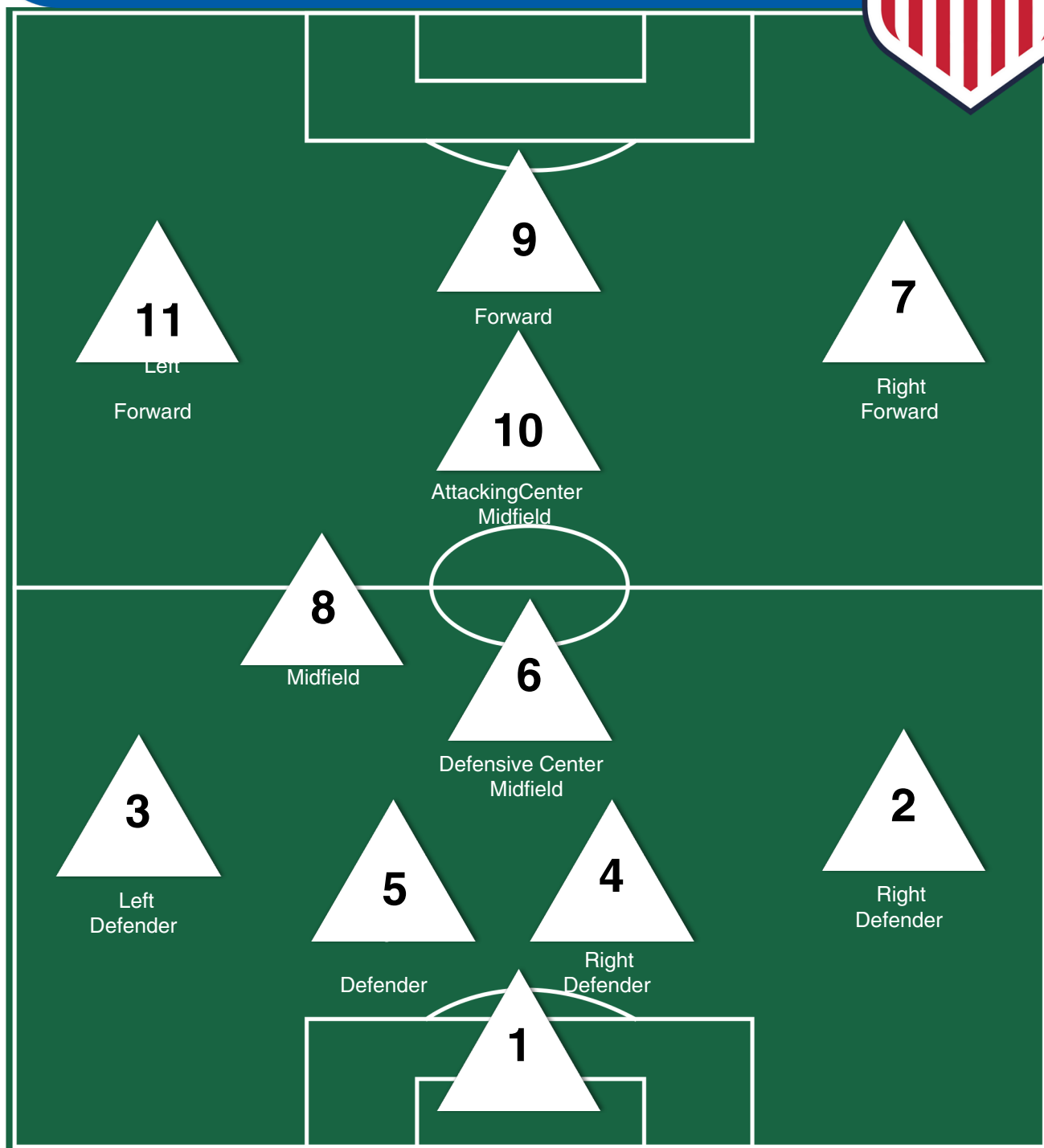


U.S. SOCCER - Numbering

By Gary Stephenson



U.S. Soccer's Numbering System (GK-4-3-3)



Goal/Objectives Setting

By Gary Stephenson

Goals/Objectives! Why they are Essential

As a coach you play a very large and positive role in your players and their parent's development. You are often seen as much more than a leader in practices & games. Because of your position you really are a teacher, as well as an individual mentor, to be utilized when needed. To excel in this position you must set yourself goals for each individual. The most important aspect in setting these goals is that they are not driven by game results and are measurable. They should be detailed at the start of any season giving you a realistic picture to strive towards. There has been a lot of research done in the soccer world to put guidelines down as what players at each age group should be able to do. We have taken this data and tailored objectives and lessons for age specific groups. Before you sit down and work on the big picture there are a few factors which need to be taken into account.

Research from Ewing, M. & Seefeldt, V. (1989). Participation and attrition patterns in American agency-sponsored and interscholastic sports: An executive summary. Final report Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association (North Palm Beach, FL: Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association) as cited from Weinberg & Gould (2007). Foundations of Sport & Exercise Psychology. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Reasons kids drop out of sports:

- Failing to learn or improve skills
- Not having fun
- Not being with their friends
- Lack of excitement, improvisation & creative opportunities
- Lack of exercise, meaningful movement & fitness improvements
- Lack of optimal challenges &/or consistent failure

Reasons kids play sports:

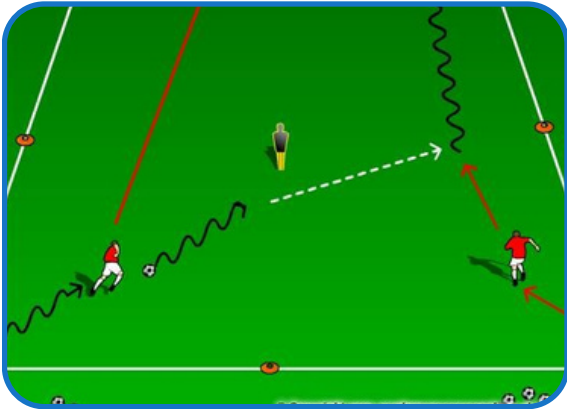
- To learn & improve their skills
- To have fun
- To be with friends
- To experience the excitement of competition
- To enhance their physical fitness
- To demonstrate their competence

It becomes your role as teacher and mentor to examine your training sessions and see if they are aligned with the reasons kids play and avoid the reasons children search out other activities.

U12 Week 1

By G Stephenson, Technical Director

Improve player's ability to use the dribble to help set up the pass



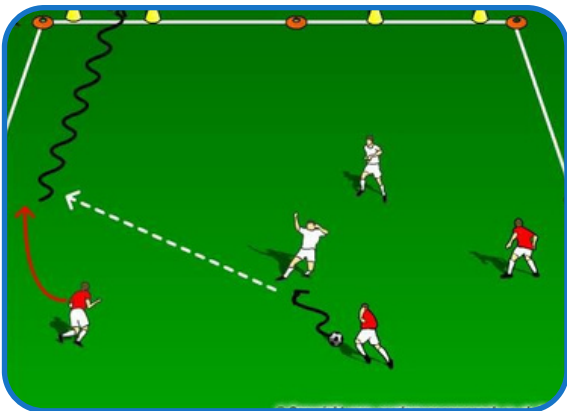
2v0 - Combination Play

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Place a "defender" (wallman, cone, pole, etc.) in the center of the space. Form (4) lines in each corner of the field with ball. The player with the ball dribbles towards the defender to "commit" them. Then players pass to teammate. Both players run off the field, and stand in the next line. The next group begins a similar movement. **Combinations = Take-over, through ball, overlap, dribble-give/go

Coaching Points:

Dribble with the laces of the foot when dribbling at speed; Pass with the inside of the foot to be more accurate & strike the middle of the ball when passing
Who - The player with the ball, and teammates around the ball; What - The laces of the foot should be used when dribbling at speed; Where - Pass to the open space in front of me



3v2 - Dribble Goals (2)

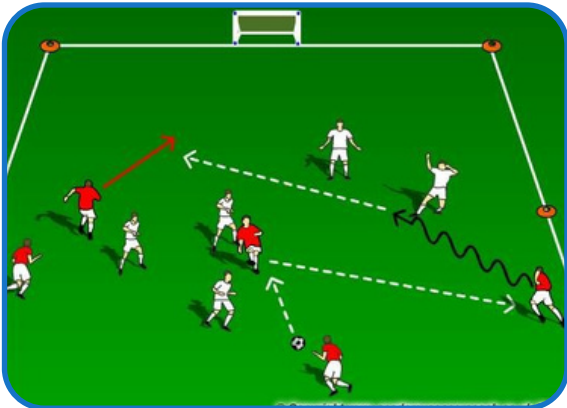
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Play (2) goals on each end-line using (4)

cones. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Designate a group of attackers (3), and a group of defenders (2). Play 3v2, scoring by dribbling through the gate. Rotate attack & defense. *If the defense win the ball they can attack the goals on the opposite endline.

Coaching Points:

Point your standing leg/plant foot towards the player or space you wish to pass the ball; Follow through with your foot after you pass the ball to increase speed and accuracy when passing
What - Recognizing the moment to attack & engage the defender with the dribble; Why - To enable commit the defender, which will open more space for my teammates to enter without the ball



EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

7v7 - 3 goals & 1 goal

TRAINING AREA = 50W x 60L. Place (1) large goal at one end of the field and (3) small goals made from cones at the other end of the field, approximately 3 yards wide. Position balls at each of the field for easy access. Play for set period of time, or number of goals (determined by coach). Players scoring on the small goals, score by passing the ball through the cones. 1pt. = score a goal; 2pt = beat (1) opponent, and score a goal; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and score a goal

Coaching Points

Dribble with speed & change directions when attacking open space, or an alone defender
Look to pass, and keep possession if there are several defenders around/near the ball
*Who - The player with the ball*Why - Taking players off the dribble will open up space for teammates throughout the rest of the field



GAME

Play 9v9 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

Zone Changes

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

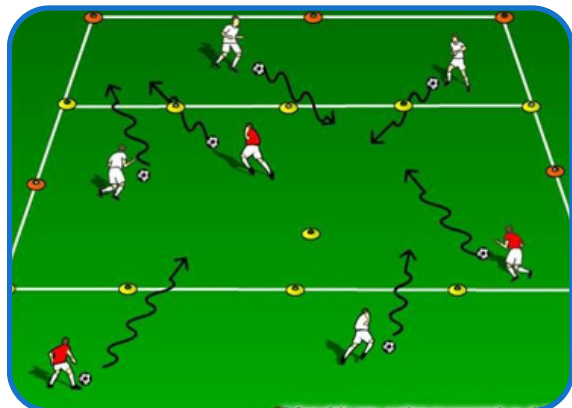
TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Make (3) zones in the space. The end zones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. On coach's command players are to dribble under control into a new zone. In order to enter the zone they perform a move:

Step over & go; Scissors; Double Scissors; Outside or Inside foot cut; Drag-push-go

Coaching Points:

First touch should be into space with the outside of the foot (laces) – quickly accelerate to ball; Take a touch with each step (outside of the foot); Keep weight on toes, knees bent to change direction quickly

What - Dribble to penetrate into a new zone/open space; Where - The angle of the 1st touch when penetrating should allow the player to dribble at speed with long strides



SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

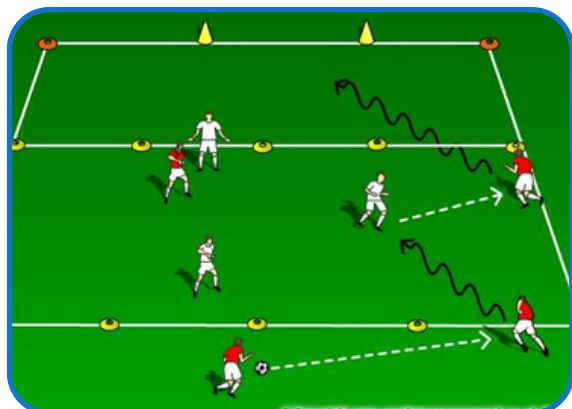
4v4 - 3 zones - 1 goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Make (3) zones in the space. The end zones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. Place (2) cones on the end-line 8 yards wide making (1) goal for each team to attack. Players can not enter the final attacking zone unless it is with the dribble. When the offense dribbles in to the final attacking zone, only (1) defender can follow. This will set up a 1v1 in the attack space. Red (4) v White (4). Score by dribbling through the cones

Coaching Points:

Head up as the ball travels to you to receive the pass; Position the body with open position to attack multiple angles, and weight on toes

When - The moment the player with the ball identifies available space to attack & enter; Why - Space behind the defender allows for more scoring chances if successful dribble penetration occurs



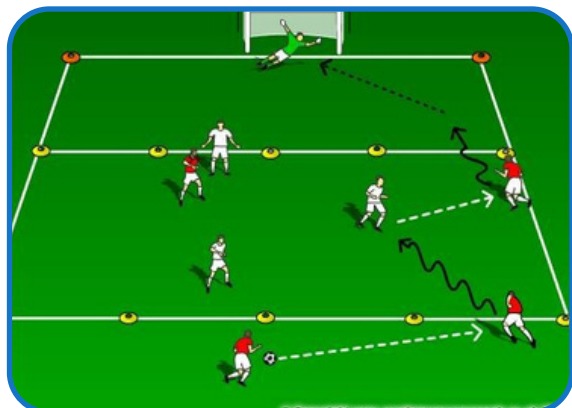
EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

5v5 - 3 zones - 1 goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Make (3) zones in the space. The end zones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. Place (1) goal on each end-line for each team to attack. Players can not enter the final attacking zone unless it is with the dribble. When the offense dribbles in to the final attacking zone, only (1) defender can follow. This will set up a 1v1 in the attack space. Players can shoot the ball in the middle zone of the space. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting the ball through the goal.

Coaching Points

If there is space behind the defender = dribble penetration; If there is space in front of the attacker = dribble to shoot on goal; Allow the ball to be received across the body - Push ball out away from the body to take space (dribble or shot); Take touch with inside of the foot away from pressure – backwards, or side ways to maintain possession

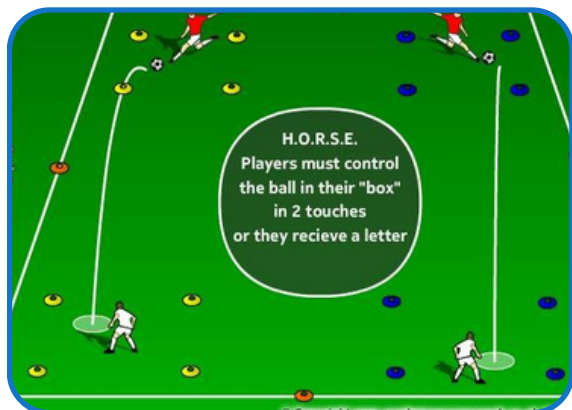


GAME

Play 9v9 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above





H.O.R.S.E.

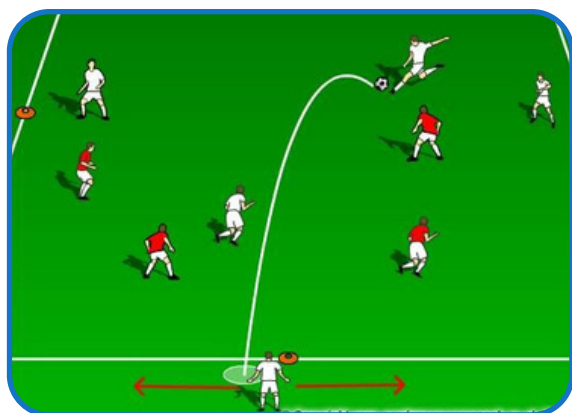
TECHNICAL WARM-UP

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Build (4) "boxes" at opposite ends of the field, across from one another, 5x5x5. Players alternate turns serving the ball to one another. The ball must be played in the air, and land inside the "box." The players must control the ball INSIDE the box in 2 touches or less before the return service. Play until one player acquires H.O.R.S.E., then change opponents

Accumulate a letter (just like basketball version) - *Service outside opponents box; *Control of service; outside box

Coaching Points:

Angle of approach should have curved, or 45° angle path towards ball – keep hips open; Strike the bottom half of the ball, plant foot behind the ball; Foot should strike the center of the bottom of the ball to produce back spin



5v5 Targets

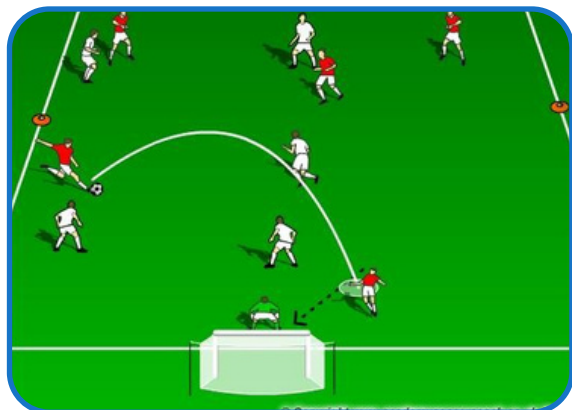
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 50L. Position (1) from each team at the end of the space behind the end-line. 4v4, players look to connect with their target through an aerial pass behind the defense. The pass must be controlled with (2) touches to score a point.

Variations - *Aerial pass controlled with 1 touch = 2pts.; *Aerial pass made with 1-touch pass = 4pts.

Coaching points

When receiving the ball, the first touch should be away from the body with the inside of the foot to allow for a lofted/aerial pass; Speed of approach to the ball should be medium pace, with an angled/curved path to strike the ball; What - Look up and make eye contact before you make the pass; When - Make the pass when you do not have any pressuring defenders, and there is space to play an aerial pass



EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

6v6 to goal

TRAINING AREA = 50W x 60L. Position (1) large goal at opposite ends of the field. Score by shooting the ball in the goal. Goal = 1pt. Aerial Service & Goal = 2pts. Aerial Passes in buildup, Aerial Service, & Goal = 4pts.

Coaching Points:

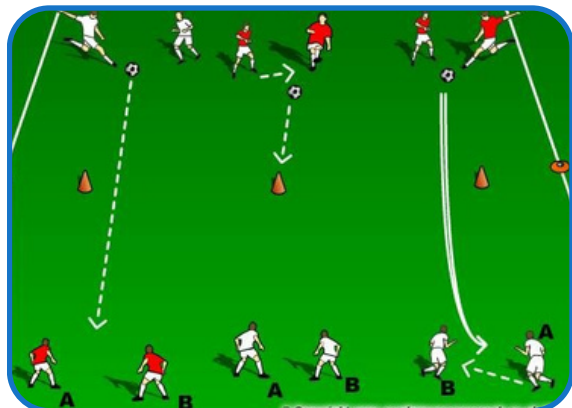
When - Players without the ball should make runs into space when my head looks up and then goes back down to strike the ball; Where - In wide areas, or deep areas away from the field - I should look to play aerial passes; Why - Aerial passes will allow me to get in behind the defense quickly



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



Team Carnival Shooting

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

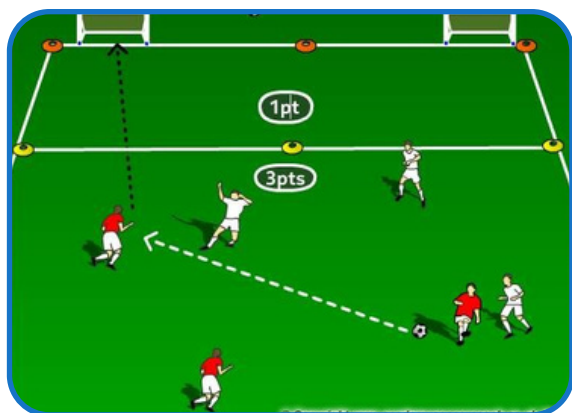
TRAINING AREA = 10W x 30L (Build several spaces based on the number of players). Position (1) tall cone in the center of the space. The objective is to shoot the ball into the cone and knock it over for a point. Play to (3) points then change roles & opponents.

Player A = Shooter

Player B = Receives missed shot & passes to A

Coaching Points:

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball



SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

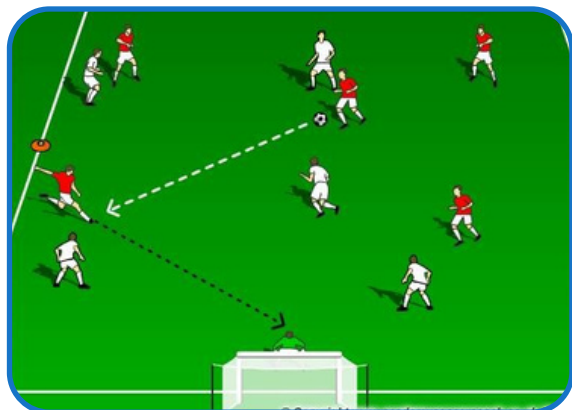
4v4 - 4 goal game TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) goals on each

end-line in the corner

making a total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball; When - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; Why - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances



EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

5v5 - 3 goal & 1 big goal TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones along

each end-line 3 yards

apart making a goal, for a total of (3) goals on one end-line. **If possible, the middle goal should be a different color to distinguish from other goals. The opposite end line should have (1) large goal. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball; When - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; Why - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

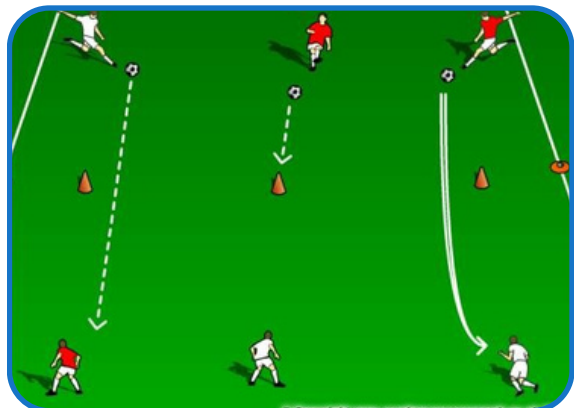
Technique Shooting

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Put players in groups of (2) with (1) ball between them. Place a tall cone in the middle of the space. Position (1) player from each group on either side of the cone. Alternate taking turns "shooting" to knock the cone over. Play until (5) - rotate partners.
Variations: Instep Drive; Curled Shot; Bent Shot

Coaching Points:

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Curled = heel down, toe up – strike the inside central part of the ball with inside part of the foot. Sweep leg across the ball – follow through and bring knee up toward face ("kiss the knee" – to increase spin); Bent = toe down, heel up – strike the inside central part of the ball with the laces. Wrap foot around the outside of the ball as player finishes shot. Roll hips towards goal after striking the ball



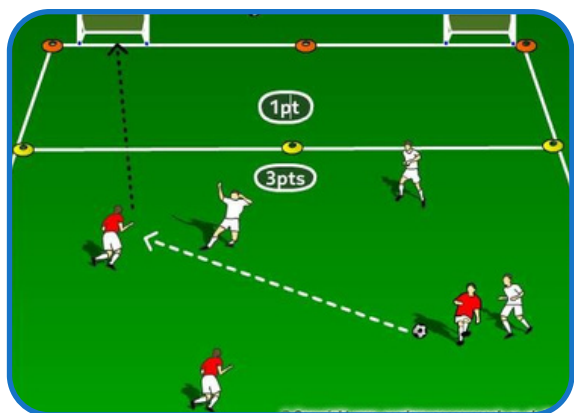
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

3v3 - 4 goal game 3 point shooting

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) goals in each corner of the spacing, making (4) goals total. Place a line 10 yards from the goals on each side. Goals scored from behind the line = 3pts, goals scored inside the line = 1pt. Red (3) v White (3). Score by shooting ball into goal.

Coaching Points:

When - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; Why - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances; Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball



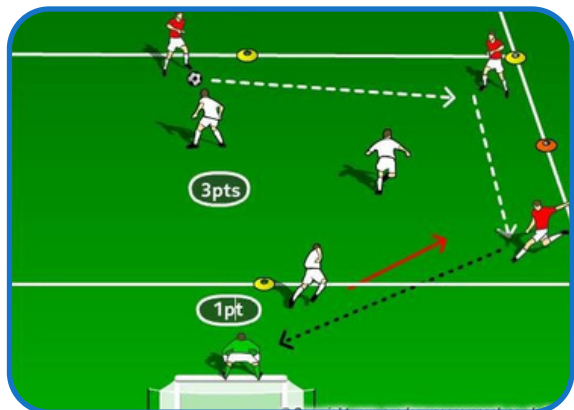
EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 - 2 large goals

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (1) large goal on each end-line for each team to attack. Place a line 10 yards from the goals on each side. Goals scored from behind the line = 3pts, goals scored inside the line = 1pt. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting ball into the goal.

Coaching Points:

Where - the direction of my first touch should be towards to goals as often as possible when in shooting range; When - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; Why - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



TECHNICAL WARM-UP

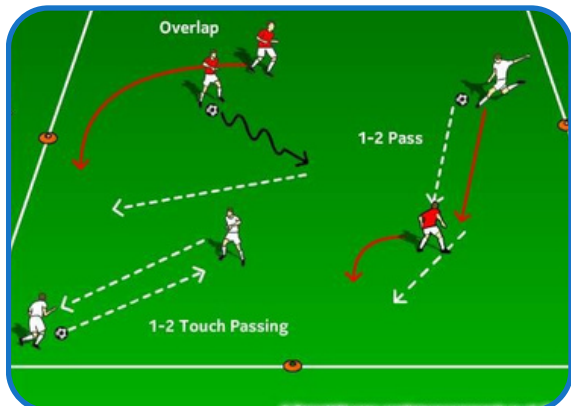
Attacking Warm-up

TRAINING AREA - 20W x 30L. Players should be in groups of (2) with (1) ball between them. Dribble & pass to one another throughout the space. Work on various (2) player combinations:

-1/2 touch passing, through balls, overlaps, wall passes, etc.

Coaching Points:

What - Individual decision when in the attack; When - As the player receives the ball and begins attack



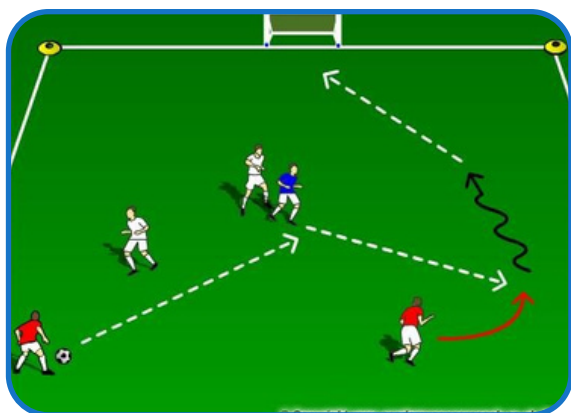
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

2v2+1 to (1) small goal

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Position (1) small goal on each end-line for the teams to attack. Red (2) v White (2) +1 (neutral player). Score by passing the ball in the goal.

Coaching Points:

What - Decision to pass, dribble, or shoot; Who - The player in possession of the ball; If there is pressure on the ball and limited space behind the defender(pass); If there is limited pressure on the ball, and available space behind the defender (dribble)

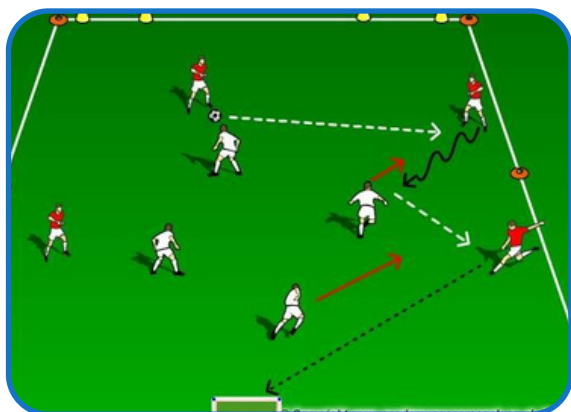


EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 (1) goal & (2) counter goals **TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) small goal on one end-line, and on the opposite end place (2) cones in each corner 3 yards apart making (2) goals. Red (4) v White (4). Score by passing through the cones & goal. Rotate goals to attack.

Coaching Points:

What - Decision to penetrate (shoot/dribble) or possess the ball; Who - The player(s) without the ball; When - As the ball travels to their teammates; Why - The support & movement of teammates will help the player with the ball better understand their options - dribble, shoot, or pass

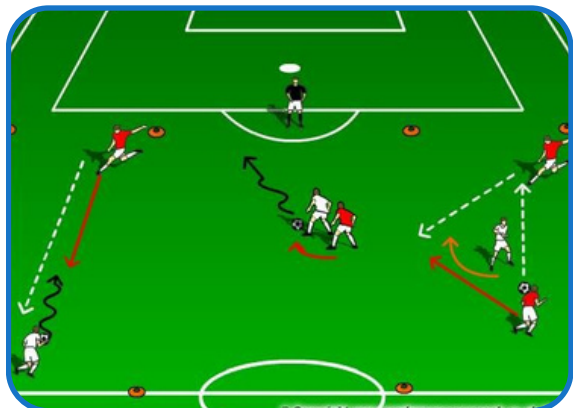


GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above





TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Individual Partner Defending Technique

TRAINING AREA - 40Wx 30L. Players in a groups 2-3 with (1) ball. Each group works on "defensive technique."

*1v1 Defensive Technique - dribbling

*1v1 Defensive Technique - no turn

*1v2 Defensive Technique - intercept pass

Players should go through each type of defending situation and rotate. Player in possession (dribbling/passing) tries to beat the defender. Rotate offense-defense each turn. Rest after 45 sec, stretch 90 sec, repeat.

Coaching Points:

Approach quickly to the ball – long strides; Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides; Bend knees, weight on toes when pressing the ball ; Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball



SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

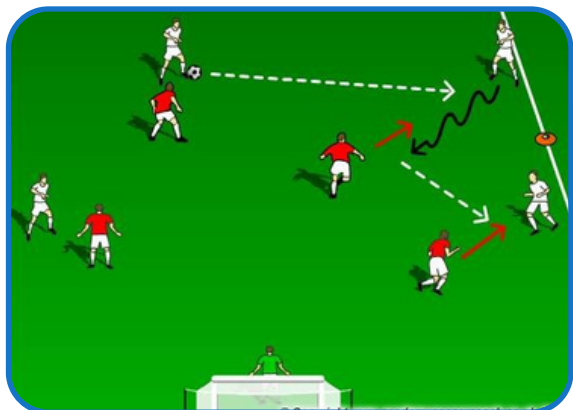
2v2 score on two goals TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3

yards apart in each corner

forming a "goal" for a total of (4) goals. Coach starts with the balls. Coach plays ball to one team. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the "goals."

Coaching Points:

Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!; Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player; Who - The player closest to the ball; What - Applying pressure on the player with the ball; When - With the other team in possession



EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 score on one large goal & two goals

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each two corners forming a "goal" for a total of (2) goals. Place one large goal at the opposite end.

Play for pre-determined amount of time. Red team defends large goal, and white defends two goals. After each period change the goals defended.

Coaching Points:

Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!; Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player; Who - The player closest to the ball; What - Applying pressure on the player with the ball; When - With the other team in possession



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

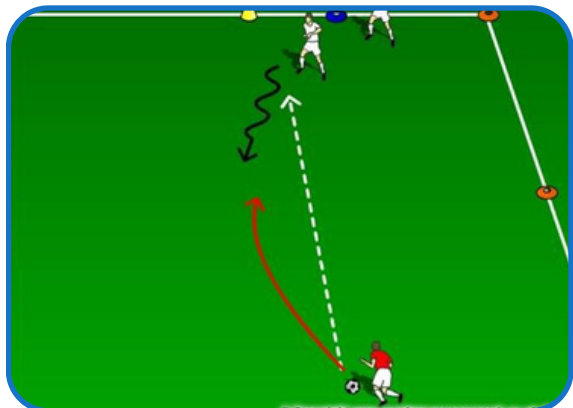
TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Individual Defending Cone

TRAINING AREA - 10W x 15L. Place (1) cone at each end of the space. Player with the ball should try to dribble forward and knock over the cone. If the defender wins the ball, they can advance to other opposite cone.

Coaching Points:

Cover the space with long strides, and decrease speed/strides as you approach the ball; Angle of approach for defending should for the ball in ONE DIRECTION – angle, or curve run; While defending, slow down, get down, stay down – bend knees, place weight on toes to adjust feet/body as the ball moves



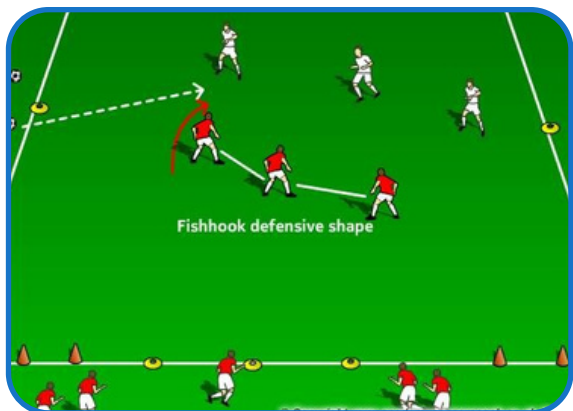
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

3v3 score on two goals

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each corner forming a "goal" for a total of (4) goals. Red players to white. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the "goals."

Coaching Points:

Player closest to the ball = 1st defender (pressure direct the ball); Player closest to the pressuring defender = 2nd defender (support the ball); Player furthest from the ball = 3rd player (balancing defender); "Fishhook" defensive shape (NIKE SIGN)



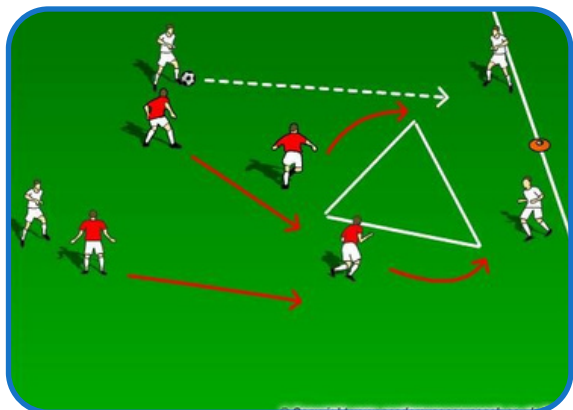
EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 - (4) goal game

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each two corners forming a "goal" for a total of (4) goals. Score by passing the ball through the goal

Coaching Points:

Player closest to the ball = 1st defender (pressure direct the ball); Player closest to the pressuring defender = 2nd defender (support the ball); Player furthest from the ball = 3rd player (balancing defender); "Fishhook" defensive shape (NIKE SIGN)



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above





TECHNICAL WARM-UP

GKs mix with Field players

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. The number of balls should equal the number of GKs involved in the warmup. Field players should pass the ball around the space. When the GK makes eye contact with the player; the field player in possession should take a touch and "shoot" on the GK. The objective of the shot is to go towards the GK (no around them, not over them, and not past them). Shots should be taken from 12-15 yards away. *Only shoot on GK's command.

Coaching Points:

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; Players should move their feet quickly, with short strides, and step towards the ball.



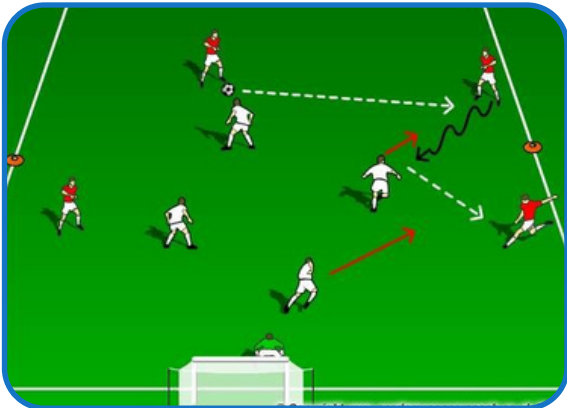
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 - 4 goal game

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) goals on each end-line in the corner making a total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball; When - The player gets ready to strike the ball I should move my hands into position; Why - Because the visual cue of shooting will help me be more prepared



EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 to 1 large goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (1) on each end-line for each team to attack. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Shuffle & Catch - Footwork & Handling

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Each GK has a ball at their hands/feet.

Players should bounce the ball down into the ground and catch the ball at various heights - low, medium, high. Coach yells out "go" to trigger the bounce & save.

Coaching Points:

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; Players should move their feet quickly, with short strides, and step towards the ball; Elevate off (1) foot to receive high balls; Collect high balls at its highest points, as it begins to descend; Bend at the knees, and shuffle feet to collect low balls – do not bend at the waist



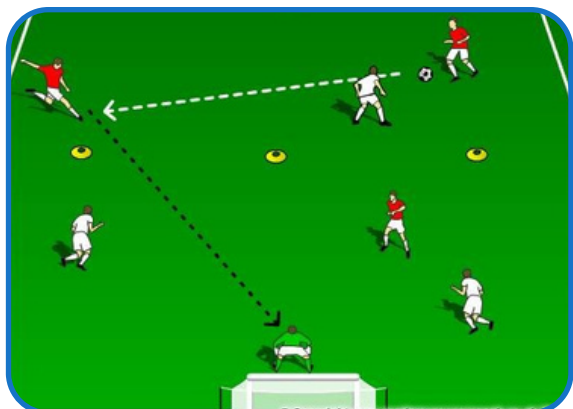
SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

2v1; 2v1 + GKs

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. Place three cones at the midway point of the space (15 yds). Position 2 players in a zone, and 1 player in the opposite space making 2v1; 2v1. Players are restricted to their "zone". Try to score on goal from both zones.

Coaching Points:

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; GK should place my weight on toes, and point body towards the ball; As the player gets ready to strike the ball GK should move hands into position; Why - Because the visual cue of shooting will help GK be more prepared

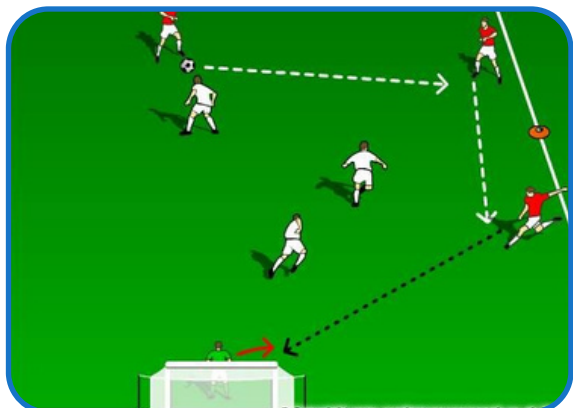


EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 + GKs to 1 large goal **TRAINING AREA** = 40W x 50L. Place 1 large goal at opposite ends of the field on each endline. Red v White score by passing/shooting the ball into goal.

Coaching Points:

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball; When - The player gets ready to strike the ball I should move my hands into position; Why - Because the visual cue of shooting will help me be more prepared



GAME

Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

