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# Advanced Coach

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everyone plays®





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# Welcome!

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Most of you reading this are coaches who have completed the AYSO Intermediate Coaching Course and want to learn more about youth soccer coaching. The AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission is pleased to prepare this manual to help you continue your soccer coaching education. It is important to remember the philosophy that brings us together. AYSO is unique because it recognizes the needs of young people by holding to philosophy: everyone plays, positive coaching, balanced teams, open registration, good sportsmanship, and player development. These elements have made AYSO a model for other youth sports groups and have resulted in astounding growth. Our philosophy is reflected in this manual and the course that accompanies it.

We encourage you to use the techniques contained here to train your players. However, this manual was not developed to stand alone. In order to fully understand the information that is contained herein, you must attend the AYSO Advanced Coaching Course.

We encourage you to continue coaching education by attending AYSO coaching clinics in your section. Your section coach administrator can provide the information. Again, welcome! We're glad you are continuing your coaching education. On behalf of the players, thank you!

A special thanks to Tony DiCicco from Soccer Plus Goalkeeping Camps for his contribution to this manual.

**National Coaching Advisory Commission**



# Introduction

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The AYSO Advanced Coaching Course is designed to provide the experienced coach with a methodology necessary to coach and develop the U19 player.

The coaching cycle and principles of play remain the same; however, the U19 player is required to perform at a higher physical level and at a higher degree of intensity. They also require a greater understanding of the game.

This course will focus on the selection process involved in teaching your players to recognize and create opportunities for themselves and their teammates.

The objectives of this course are to teach the coach how to develop observational skills and evaluate players performance; combined with analyzing play, recognizing and correcting errors, and coaching sessions to build skill, confidence, and knowledge of when, where, and why to use the techniques. This is another step in the process of continuing education, the aim of which is to enable the players to benefit from qualified coaching, which will, in turn, give them the best possible playing experience.

This manual was prepared by the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission. Comments concerning the material herein should be forwarded to the AYSO National Office, to the attention of the Player Development Dept.



# AYSO Vision & Mission

## AYSO Vision

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To provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

## AYSO Mission

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To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

### **Everyone Plays**

Our goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

### **Balanced Teams**

Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

### **Open Registration**

Our program is open to all children between 4 and 19 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

### **Positive Coaching**

Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

### **Good Sportsmanship**

We strive to create a safe, fair, fun and positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

### **Player Development**

We believe that all players should be able to develop their soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as members of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game.



# Advanced Coach Course

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## Sample Course Schedule

### Classroom

- Introduction 20 minutes
- Qualities of a Coach 15 minutes
- Understanding the U19 Player 20 minutes
- Observation & Evaluation 90 minutes
- Laws of the Game 90 minutes
- Injury Prevention 40 minutes

### Field

- Free Play 40 minutes
- Checklist Development 40 minutes
- Ball Control 90 minutes
- Dribbling 90 minutes
- Passing 90 minutes
- Restarts 90 minutes
- Functional Training 35 minutes
- Shooting with Goalkeepers 45 minutes
- Goalkeeping 90 minutes
- Shooting 90 minutes
- Tactical Development 120 minutes

*Note: The times allotted on this sample schedule do not include registration, breaks, lunch, etc.*



**AYSO Advanced Coaching Course**

| <b>COURSE SCHEDULE</b>                                 |                  |   |
|--|------------------|---|
| <b>FRIDAY</b> ( <i>We will start at 7:00pm sharp</i> ) |                  |   |
| <b>Lecture</b>   | 7:00–7:30 p.m.   | Review<br>Qualities of a Coach<br>Coaching Cycle  |
|  | 7:30–7:50 p.m.   | The U19 Player<br>Break   |
|  | 8:00–9:30 p.m.   | Observation & Evaluation<br>Student Participation<br>Preparation for Field Sessions<br>Principles of Play |
| <b>SATURDAY</b>  |                  |   |
| <b>Field</b>   | 8:00–8:30 a.m.   | Warm-up   |
|  | 8:30–9:00 a.m.   | Students formed into teams<br>Free play – all teams<br>Observe and Evaluate                               |
|  | 9:00–9:30 a.m.   | Checklist Development<br>Break  |
|  | 9:40–11:10 a.m.  | Ball Control  |
|  | 11:20–12:50 p.m. | Dribbling   |
|  | 12:50–1:40 p.m.  | Lunch   |
|  | 1:40–2:00 p.m.   | Warm-up   |
|  | 2:00–3:30 p.m.   | Passing   |
|  | 3:40–5:00 p.m.   | Restarts  |
|  | 5:00–6:15 p.m.   | Dinner  |
| <b>Lecture</b>   | 6:15–7:45 p.m.   | Law Lecture   |
|  | 7:45–8:15 p.m.   | Injury Prevention   |
| <b>SUNDAY</b>  |                  |   |
| <b>Field</b>   | 8:30–9:00 a.m.   | Warm-up   |
|  | 9:00–9:30 a.m.   | Demonstration–Functional Training   |
|  | 9:30–10:00 a.m.  | Shooting with Goalkeepers<br>Checklist Development  |
|  | 10:00–10:10 a.m. | Break   |
|  | 10:10–11:40 a.m. | Goalkeeping   |
|  | 11:40–12:15 p.m. | Lunch   |
|  | 12:15–12:30 p.m. | Warm-up   |
|  | 12:30–2:00 p.m.  | Shooting  |
|  | 2:00–4:00 p.m.   | Tactical Development Organization   |

**Note:** This course requires 18 hours minimum. Every effort will be made by the staff to keep to this schedule.

To successfully complete this course, the student coach is required to attend **ALL SESSIONS**.



# Qualities of a Coach

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You as the coach need to have three things to help you make the game enjoyable for the players and to make your job easier. They are knowledge of the game, the ability to communicate that knowledge to the player, and the ability to observe so that you can correct and coach to improve play. All corrections should be done in a positive manner, catch them being good!

Coaching styles differ between individuals. Each of us has a different coaching style based on our own personality. Effective coaches, however, possess the same basic qualities:

- Leadership
- Teacher
- Conscientiousness
- Fair and Honest
- Good Appearance
- Responsibility
- Drive
- Demonstrator
- Enjoyment
- Understanding
- Patience
- Communication
- Motivator
- Humorous
- Self-confidence

## ***Coach yourself before you coach others!***

The basic qualities of any coach combine into four basic attributes all successful coaches share:

- Knowledge of the game.
- Always place an athlete's well being first.
- The ability to communicate that knowledge to the player.
- The ability to observe and evaluate (coaching eye) so the coach may correct any apparent faults in a positive manner.

Every activity you undertake during a season uses your coaching qualities and abilities. How you execute all the activities listed below, and many others, reflect your personal coaching style.

- Planning and adjusting a season as required.
- Organizing a season.
- Simplifying a complex technique, skill, or tactic to its basic component, in a language appropriate to the players' ages.
- Holding players' attention in order to convey knowledge in a positive manner.
- Demonstrating skills under game conditions, as much as possible.
- Correcting players' actions in a positive manner.
- Molding players with different levels of skills and knowledge into a functioning unit, with the focus that soccer is a team game.



- Developing a system or formation of play that suits and is good for the team, not an individual.
- Changing that system or formation, if need be, for the good of the team, not an individual.
- Delegating the necessary administrative duties within the team.
- Motivating players.
- Building confidence.
- Listening to the players.

**Points to Remember**

- Every coach need:
- Knowledge of the game.
- Always place an athlete's well being first.
- Ability to communicate knowledge to players.
- Ability to observe and correct.

***Players need to play and have fun!***



# What to expect from the Under 19 Player

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## Adolescence ages 13 to 18

### Stages of Social-Emotional Development In Children and Teenagers

This part of the manual presents an overview of the developmental tasks involved in the social and emotional development of children and teenagers, which continues into adulthood. The presentation is based on the Eight Stages of Development developed by psychiatrist, Erik Erikson.

Persons 18 and over are considered adults in our society. Of course, there are some who will try to act older than their years. But, for the most part, most everybody grows in this same pattern. Parents learn much about taking care of their babies and young children. At the hospital or with the doctor, you might pick up information about what to feed them or how long they should sleep. Later, school staff may remind you about the importance of talking and reading to your young children. You can also see how your friends or relatives treat their kids. You cannot say the same thing about learning to talk with teenagers (adolescents). It seems like everyone, even teachers and neighbors have problems understanding them. Giving up, you might turn to doing and saying the same things your parents did with you. But those were other times and coaching the adolescent soccer player can have its challenges and its rewards.

Working with teenagers can be challenging but most coaches who coach the U19 players find it to be extremely rewarding and very positive.

Coach, you can begin to understand this age group if you remember:

- This is the last step before being an adult.
- This is a time for adolescents to decide about their future line of work and think about starting their own families in a few years.
- They want and need to start making their own decisions.
- They must put a little distance between themselves, their parents and their coach. This does not mean that you can't continue to "look after them" or help them when needed. You should, as much as possible, let them learn from the results of their actions.
- Adolescents also need to be around other adults, both male and female. These can be relatives, neighbors, teacher or coaches. Of course, they should be positive role models.
- Teenagers can learn from these role models about things like how to fix the car, getting along with others, ideas for future jobs or how to train for a soccer game.
- Finally, don't worry if teenagers want to spend time alone. They can "spend hours" day dreaming about their future life. They might be planning the things they can do or will buy "when they grow up."
- Remember, to travel far, one begins with the first few steps!



- The child, now an adolescent, learns how to answer satisfactorily and happily the question of "Who am I?" But even the best - adjusted of adolescents experiences some role identity diffusion: most boys and probably most girls experiment with minor delinquency; rebellion flourishes; self - doubts flood the youngster, and so on.
- Erikson believes that during successful early adolescence, mature time perspective is developed; the young person acquires self-certainty as opposed to self-consciousness and self-doubt.
- He comes to experiment with different - usually constructive - roles rather than adopting a "negative identity" (such as delinquency). He actually anticipates achievement, and achieves, rather than being "paralyzed" by feelings of inferiority or by an inadequate time perspective. In later adolescence, clear sexual identity - manhood or womanhood - is established.
- The adolescent seeks leadership (someone to inspire him), and gradually develops a set of ideals (socially congruent and desirable, in the case of the successful adolescent).
- Erikson believes that, in our culture, adolescence affords a "psychosocial moratorium," particularly for middle - and upper-class American children. They do not yet have to "play for keeps," but can experiment, trying various roles, and thus hopefully find the one most suitable for them.

Go get them, coach...



# Injury Prevention

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At this level of play all U16/19 coaches should understand what overuse injuries are and how they occur.

In brief: With the growth of youth sports programs, overuse injuries in young people have become common. Making the diagnosis can be challenging, but often the real hurdles are in identifying the causes of injury. Growth-related factors require special considerations in injury management. Recommendations for prevention of overuse injuries include avoiding heavy training loads and early sport-specific training, taking adequate rest periods, and ensuring proper supervision.

The benefits of regular exercise are not limited to adults. Youth athletic programs provide opportunities to improve self-esteem, acquire leadership skills and self-discipline, and develop general fitness and motor skills. Peer socialization is another important, though sometimes overlooked, benefit. Participation, however, is not without injury risk. While acute trauma and rare catastrophic injuries draw much attention, overuse injuries are increasingly common.

Coach's efforts should focus on how the injury developed and consider issues that are unique to growing athletes and not on treatment.

## **Kids' Activities Intensify**

The true magnitude of youth sport participation in the United States is difficult to measure. Approximately 35 million children and young adults between ages 6 and 21 participate in sports, including 6 to 8 million in school programs. Over the last three decades participation among young women has increased dramatically. Involvement in non-scholastic clubs, in sports such as volleyball, basketball, softball, and gymnastics, also appears to be increasing. Furthermore, parents are hiring "personal" coaches and trainers to furnish specialized training beyond that provided by schools or clubs. Between school and club programs, private instruction, and popular summer sports camps, many youngsters are training and competing year-round. Though it is uncertain if more children and young adults are involved in sports, it seems clear that those who participate are doing so in a more extensive way.

Because training has become more sport-specific and nearly continuous, overuse injuries are now common among young athletes. Recent data indicate that 30% to 50% of all pediatric sports injuries are due to overuse. In a study of children (aged 5 to 17) who reported to a sports injury clinic, 49.5% of 394 sports injuries were classified as overuse, with boys and girls displaying a similar frequency. The relative percentage of overuse injuries varies by sport, however. In a 2-year study of 453 young elite athletes, 60% of swimmers' injuries were due to overuse, compared to 15% of soccer players' injuries. Athletes who had overuse injuries lost 54% more time from training and competition than those who had acute injuries.

## **How Overuse Occurs**

Overuse injuries occur when a tissue is injured due to repetitive sub-maximal loading. The process starts when repetitive activity fatigues a specific structure such as tendon or bone. With sufficient recovery, the tissue adapts to the demand and is able to undergo further loading without injury. Without adequate recovery, micro-trauma develops and stimulates the body's inflammatory response, causing the release of vasoactive substances, inflammatory cells, and enzymes that damage local tissue. Cumulative micro-trauma from further repetitive activity ultimately causes clinical injury. In chronic or recurrent cases, continued loading produces degenerative changes leading to weakness, loss of flexibility, and chronic pain. Thus, in overuse injuries the problem is often not acute tissue inflammation, but chronic degeneration (i.e., tendinosis instead of tendinitis).

## **Contributing Factors**

An understanding of the risk factors contributing to overuse injuries is the cornerstone of prevention. These risk factors have typically been classified as intrinsic or extrinsic. In children, issues specific to the immature musculoskeletal system deserve special consideration (table 1).

### **Table 1. Factors Contributing to Overuse Injury**

#### **Intrinsic Factors**

- Growth (susceptibility of growth cartilage to repetitive stress, inflexibility, muscle imbalance)
- Prior injury
- Inadequate conditioning
- Anatomic mal-alignment
- Menstrual dysfunction
- Psychological factors (maturity level, self-esteem)

#### **Extrinsic Factors**

- Too-rapid training progression and/or inadequate rest
- Inappropriate equipment/footwear
- Incorrect sport technique
- Uneven or hard surfaces
- Adult or peer pressure

## **Coaches Checklist**

### **1. Injury Prevention:**

- Proper warm-up
  - Light exercise
  - Static stretching
  - Dynamic stretching
- Sufficient physical conditioning
- Correct soccer technique
- Knowledge of the Laws of the Game
- Rest and fluids
- Safe Equipment – shin guards and proper shoes

### **2. Coaches duties for training sessions and games:**

- Have medical forms with you at all times
- Keep change for phone and location
- Keep cell phone charged
- Check equipment
- Check training field or game field for hazards
- Check players to be sure they are warmed up
- Check any player who looks suddenly different
- Keep fluids on hand
- Ice – Zip lock bags make good ice packs

### **3. Treatment:**

- Treat minor injuries only
- If there is any questions, get professional help
- Heat Exhaustion – player feels cold and clammy
  - Rest and Fluids
- Heat Stroke – player feels hot and dry
  - Hospital now!
- Treat minor injuries with R.I.C.E.
  - Rest
  - Ice
  - Compression
  - Elevation



You are required to carry your medical release forms. Carry them everywhere you go with your team.

Do not rush any player back into the game. The player's long-term welfare is much more important than any game. If there is any question, sit them down!

Use the checklists on the following pages to help prevent injuries at games and training sessions.

### **Points to Remember**

- Carry your player's medical release forms at all times.
- Make sure players are properly equipped.
- Prevent injuries.
- R. I. C. E: Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation.
- Never play an injured player.
- When in doubt, leave them out!
- Get professional help for severe injuries.

### **Coach's Safety Checklist**

- Attend safety/first aid clinic.
- Teach players about injury prevention and safety around goalposts.
- Inspect game and training areas for unsafe conditions such as glass, rocks, metal, holes, mud, sprinkler heads, sticks, bicycles parked near the edge of field, or any other dangerous objects which might lead to injury.
- Check goalposts. There should be no hooks or protruding fastening devices on the uprights or crossbar of goals. Check goal nets for holes or loose tie-downs.
- Check for loose panels on soccer balls.
- Make sure players are allowed rest and fluids during training and games.
- Ensure proper warm-ups prior to training sessions and games.
- Enforce a policy of NO jewelry and NO casts and splints. Shin guards are required. Approved knee braces are allowed.
- Instruct players on the laws of the game.
- Maintain a simple first-aid kit and have it at all games and training sessions.
- Know where the nearest telephone is and know the emergency number to call, if needed. Have change for the phone. Keep cell phone charged.
- Have medical release forms at all games and training sessions.
- Seek medical help for all but minor injuries.
- Do not allow non-AYSO players to participate in your training sessions and games.
- If an injury occurs, call your Regional Safety Coordinator.
- Report any unsafe condition that could cause an injury.



# Coaching Cycle

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The coaching cycle is a method of teaching techniques and tactics accompanied with conditioning. The elements of training sessions are taught to improve player and team performance. You evaluate the player and team performance and select the elements to be taught at the next training session.

A coach's job is easier and more fun if a systematic approach to teaching players is adopted. To communicate effectively, it is important that coaches acquire knowledge of the coaching process and the methods utilized to develop players.

## **Match Characteristics**

There are four match characteristics, which are seen at all levels of play:

- Finishing.
- Short combined with long play.
- Risk of shooting or advancing versus the safety of maintaining possession.
- Transition from offense to defense and vice-versa.

Regardless of what is taught or how it is taught, players should be provided the reason why they are practicing certain elements of the game. Within the limits of their age brackets, the players can be provided guidelines, or principles of play, that support the game's objectives. These principles are not taught separately but are integrated into the training session organization. Thus, as the organization of the training session is changed to include more and more of the match characteristics, the players are provided with more of the reasons why the game is played in a certain manner.

The Advanced players should perform the same techniques as the intermediate player; however they need to do it faster, and at a higher intensity level. The activities you do with the advanced players need to build to this higher level of intensity.

The intermediate course showed that any activity could be made more difficult by varying:

- Speed
- Space
- Opposition

In addition, advanced players need to understand the necessity for the correct timing of a play. They need to pass at the correct time, shoot at the correct time, dribble at the correct time, etc. The advanced players need to be taught to anticipate correct timing of options in any game situation.

Through training and conditioning you will help the player increase physical speed. Through repetitive activities, like basic touch activities to more complex pressure exercises at the match related level, we help the player enhance technical speed.

You strive to have the players develop their understanding of the decision-making process by combining physical and technical speed as the players develop, with intelligent observations and critiques from the coach. The faster the players see their options and make a correct choice, the faster they will play. This is tactical speed.

All three speeds, physical, technical, and tactical are interrelated in the development of the player.

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## Elements of a Training Session

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### What is Taught

- Conditioning: Increasing the body's ability to expend energy in a more efficient manner. Development of Physical Speed.
- Techniques: Dribbling, Ball Control, Passing, Shooting, Heading, Tackling, Goalkeeping. Development of Technical Speed.
- Tactics: Executing the principles of play as an individual, in small groups, and as a team.
- Mental alertness and the interrelation of the three speeds.

### Match Pressure

#### Controlling the Pressure

Training sessions should simulate, as much as possible, the pressures players experience during match conditions. The problem for the coach is how to vary the simulated pressure under controlled conditions. This may be done by:

- Changing the physical space available to the players.
- Varying the speed of play.
- Varying the amount of opposition.

A training session with the advanced player provides the coach with additional options to change the pressure to meet the players' capabilities. Always start with opportunities for success, and then build up the pressure to increase the degree of skill or tactical execution.

### Buildup to Match Conditions

#### Organizing the Training Session

From the time of the players' arrival at the training session, the coach should seek to gradually build up play to approach that of a match. The process of developing the flow of action in a training session is termed "buildup." Note that the term can also be applied to developing a whole complex segment or to the level of play during a match (an attack buildup).

1. Create an opportunity to evaluate a players' ability to execute a certain skill, technique or task. Use free play to observe a player's capabilities.

Free play describes the condition where individuals play without restrictions on time or space. Players are given general directions on what they should attempt to accomplish and then are left on their own. The players should play hard and stop for frequent rests. Exploring the self and the ball allows players to develop natural abilities.

Free play has many positive features:

- Free play avoids wasting time organizing lines.
  - During free play, players learn to avoid others, seek open space, and to become more aware of action around them.
  - The coach's observational powers will increase as the coach is forced to isolate the individual actions in group movements.
  - It provides an environment for teaching solutions (options) to match problems.
2. A tactical activity requires organization of the players to repeatedly execute a specific technique, skill, tactic, or combination thereof.
  3. A pressure activity repetitively tests a player's ability to perform a learned behavior. Pressure comes from execution at a high work rate.

4. Coaches should seek high repetition rates in their activities and maximum ball touches in the time allotted. Avoid having players standing around for long periods. During rest intervals try to include some sort of ball work such as juggling, or have the players study their teammates' technique.
5. Establish a match condition situation so that players can use their judgment to apply the lessons learned. Generally, this is some sort of small group game involving the keeping of score and encompassing the characteristics of a match. A game occasionally is restricted or a condition imposed to emphasize a particular skill or tactic (i.e. control all balls before passing). Lift the condition when the point is made. Introduce only one condition at a time.

A small-sided game of 5 v 5 (3 teams of five players each with one team resting) is preferable to a full scale eleven per side training session game. With only five a side, the number of ball touches is increased, the decision making process is simplified to an acceptable level, and the coach has more opportunities to study and correct player performances.

In summary, the coach must always remember to go from the simple to the complex, communicating in a language appropriate to the age of the players.

### **Teaching and Coaching Techniques**

During buildup, employ the following presentation techniques:

- State the objective. Make a short statement on the tactical objective (one or two sentences that's geared to the age level of the players).
- Demonstrate. Use key, age-oriented words.
- Involve a player or a group of players. Repeat the demonstration with a new player or new group of players. If several players are required, build up the positions with specific instructions.
- Involve remaining players. Circulate and correct. Use an assistant coach to help keep the activity organized and running.

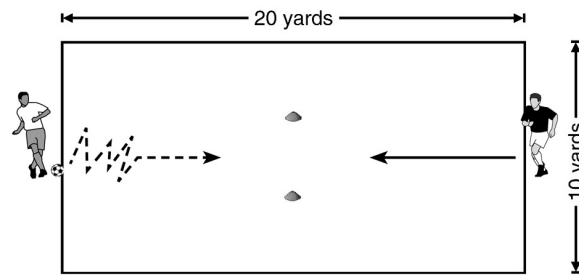
### **Maximizing Coaching Opportunities!**

Ideally, coaching is a one-to-one relationship. Unfortunately, the majority of training session time, simply due to the number of players, is spent teaching. Thus, the coach should learn to recognize those opportunities to provide individual instruction. Using the proper organization will help the coach to maximize these possibilities.

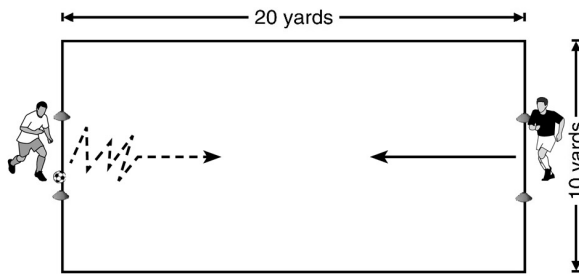
During training sessions, there are many opportunities to coach more than one player at a time. Equal emphasis should be placed on coaching both the attacking and defending aspects of each player.

### **Summary**

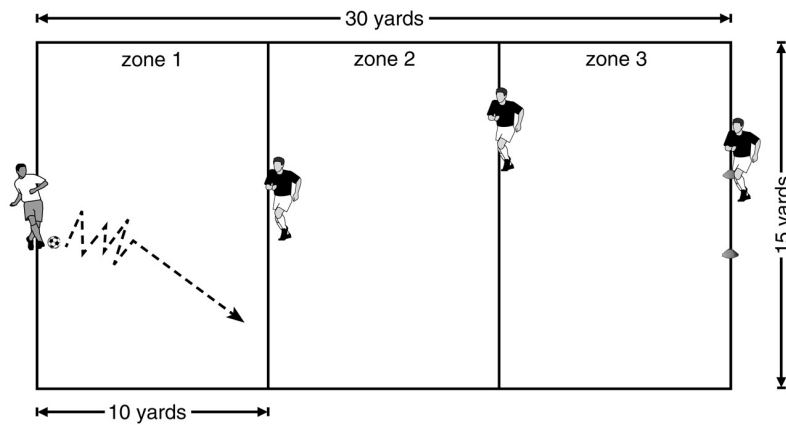
A coach should use a systematic approach to help in communicating with and training players. The training session is an attempt to duplicate a match in a learning environment. The goal is to build up to match conditions so that the play reflects shooting, short and long play, risk, and transition from defense to offense and vice versa. To acquire these capabilities, players are trained using elements of skill development, tactics, and conditioning. Controlling space, speed, and opposition can simulate the achievement of match pressure while working in these areas. The training session is organized to build up to match conditions using exercises, free play, activities, and small-sided games. Each segment of the training session should be communicated in a clear and positive manner. Finally, feedback is provided to the players on an individual basis. By following this approach, coaches will find their thoughts are sufficiently organized for them to think on their feet and direct players toward achievable goals. The players will thus assimilate the material in a rapid and efficient manner.



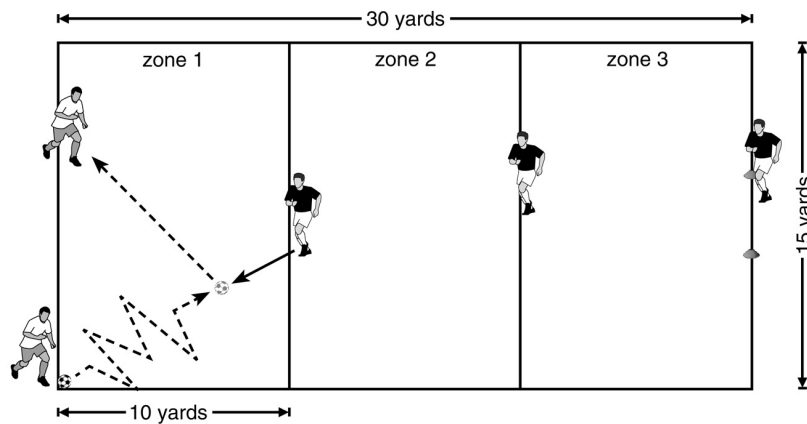
**1v1 Central goal**



**1v1 End line goal**

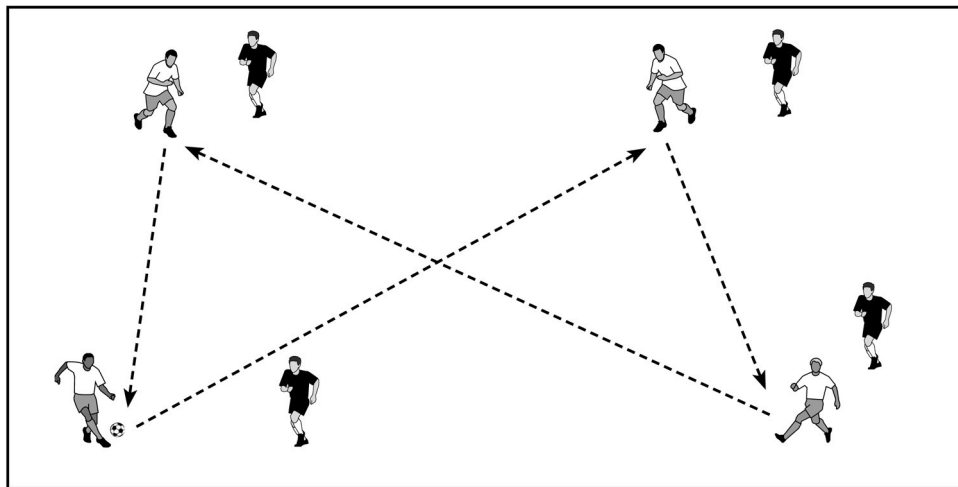


**1v1 3D zones**



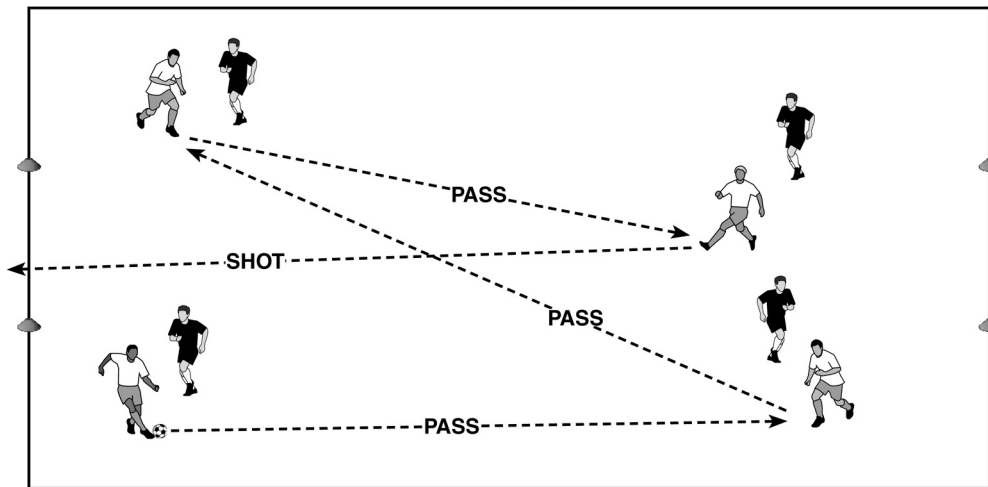
**2v1 3D zones**

30 X 15 yard grid



**4v4 Keepaway Advanced Course**

30 X 15 yard grid



**4v4 Goals on end line Advanced Course**

The chart on the following page summarizes the coaching cycle and the key idea of buildup. Use buildup to teach your players techniques and tactics while developing conditioning, which will lead to improved individual and team performance. You decide what to teach them, and build up the training session through warm up, free play, activities, and small-sided games. You control the difficulty during the training session by varying the speed of the activity, the space allowed to do it in, or the amount of opposition allowed. When you have completed a training session, you observe and evaluate the match characteristics of shooting, short vs. long play, risk and transition in game situations. You evaluate and select the elements to be taught at the next training session.

# Coaching Cycle

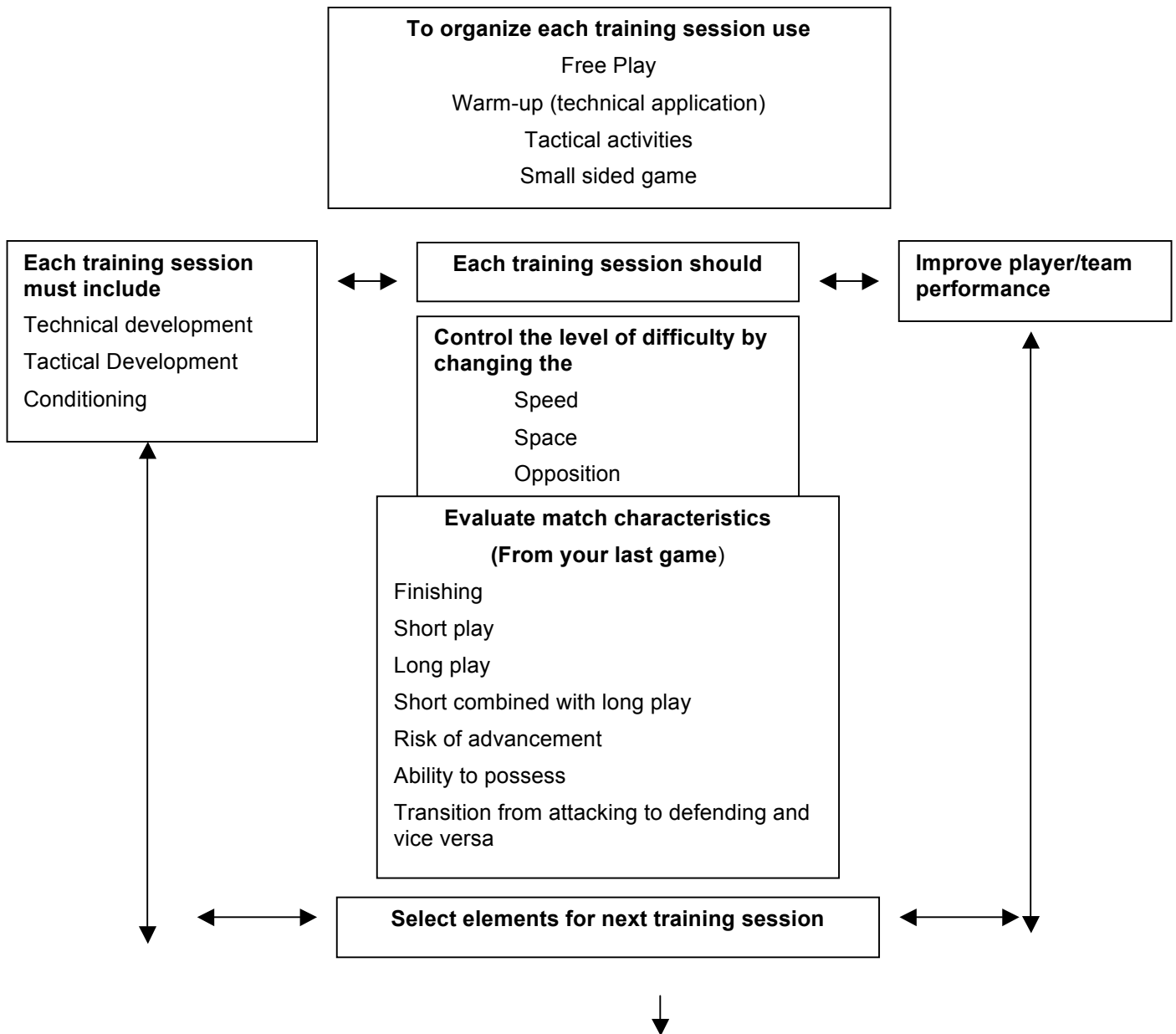


Figure 5-1

**Points to Remember**

- Develop techniques, tactics and conditioning.
- Use buildup.
- Vary speed, space and opposition.
- Evaluate performance.
- Use the coaching cycle.

# Principles of Play

There are five attacking principles and five defending principles of play that are found in every soccer match.

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

The principles of play may be analyzed by considering the players around the ball in a small group of three attacking players and three defending players.

The player with the ball is termed the first attacker. The player(s) SUPPORTING the teammate with the ball is termed the second attacker and provides width and depth. The third attacker provides mobility.

Conversely on defense, the first defender is responsible for delay and is nearest the ball; the second defender provides depth and cover; the third defender provides balance and cover. This is illustrated in the accompanying figure (fig 6-1).

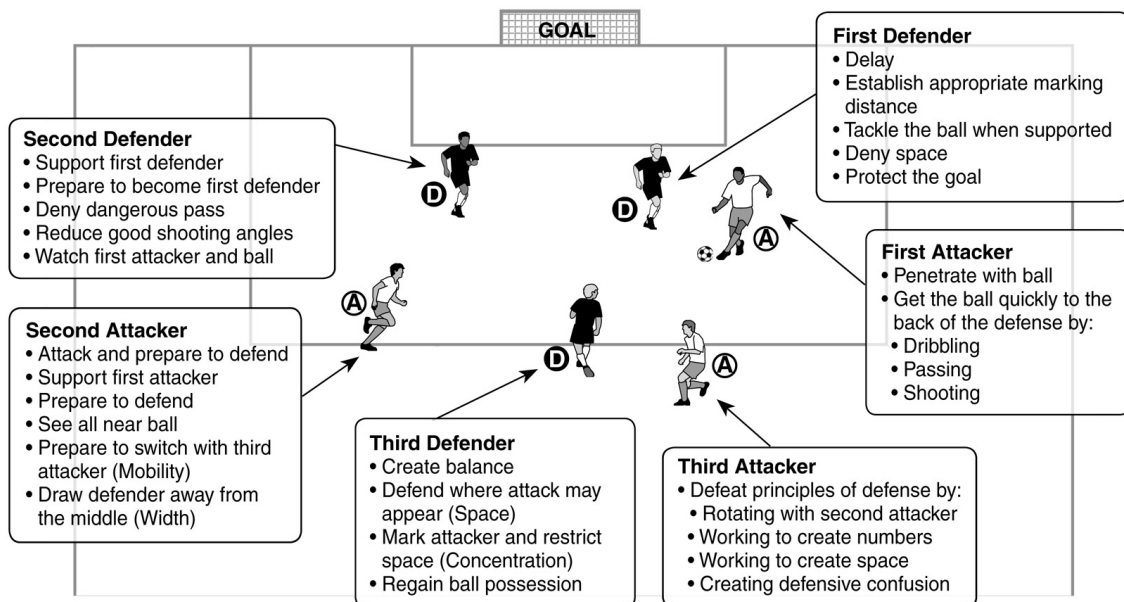


Figure 6-1

Remember that one player alone cannot carry out all of the attacking or defending principles of play.

Each player has basic responsibilities that depend upon which team has the ball and where the ball is on the field. The advanced player makes tactical choices based on their skill level and understanding of the game. The basic responsibilities accompanied with an area or responsibility, (fig 6-2), of a position apply to any player who has moved to another location during the play.

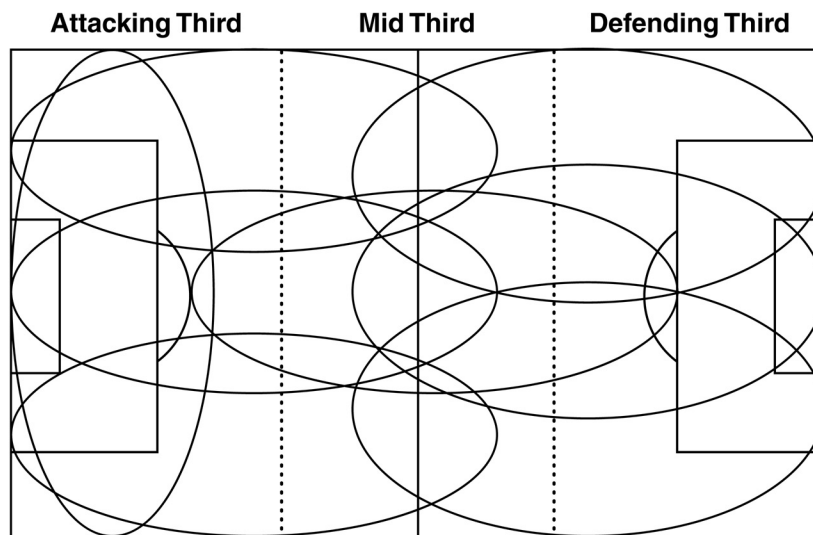


Figure 6-2 Areas of responsibilities (the coach decides)

| Position                | Own Team Will Ball                                 | Other Team With Ball                          |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Goalkeeper              | - begin the attack                                 | - stop scoring attempt                        |
| Defenders (Fullbacks)   | - maintain possession<br>- advance ball            | - stop scoring attempt<br>- regain possession |
| Midfielders (Halfbacks) | - advance ball<br>- maintain possession            | - delay attack<br>- regain possession         |
| Strikers (Forwards)     | - score<br>- advance ball<br>- maintain possession | - regain possession<br>- delay attack         |

The basic responsibilities of a position apply to any player who has moved to another location during the play. As a Sweeper Back goes forward the role of Sweeper Back must be filled by a teammate otherwise the defending organization would be compromised. .

**Points to Remember**

- Attacking principal of play
  - Penetration, depth, width, mobility and creativity.
- Defending principal of play
  - Delay, depth, concentration, balance, composure.
- Positional responsibilities.
- Area of responsibility.





# Observation and Evaluation – I

---

The art of observation and evaluation is crucial to your development as a coach. If you do not SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING, you cannot CORRECT errors or determine what techniques and tactics your players need to work on.

Observing any game, training session, activity, or free play is like watching a movie or a tape. At some time, you mentally STOP the action and analyze a single FRAME or instant of the action. The more factors that you can analyze from each situation, the more information you get to help you solve problems.

The following pages present a simple exercise to train you in game observation. We have taken the liberty of setting up 8 FRAMES from a game. The game is being played between the defending (D) team and the Attacking (A) team with the ball. We ask you to take a brief glance of 5-15 seconds at each one, and then analyze each situation in terms of the attacking and defending principles which we have listed. You can begin your analysis of each situation by trying to identify the first, second, and third attackers and defenders (see Principles of Play). If you see something else, write it in the blank spot.

Check off the principles that are being applied in each frame and be prepared to support your choices!

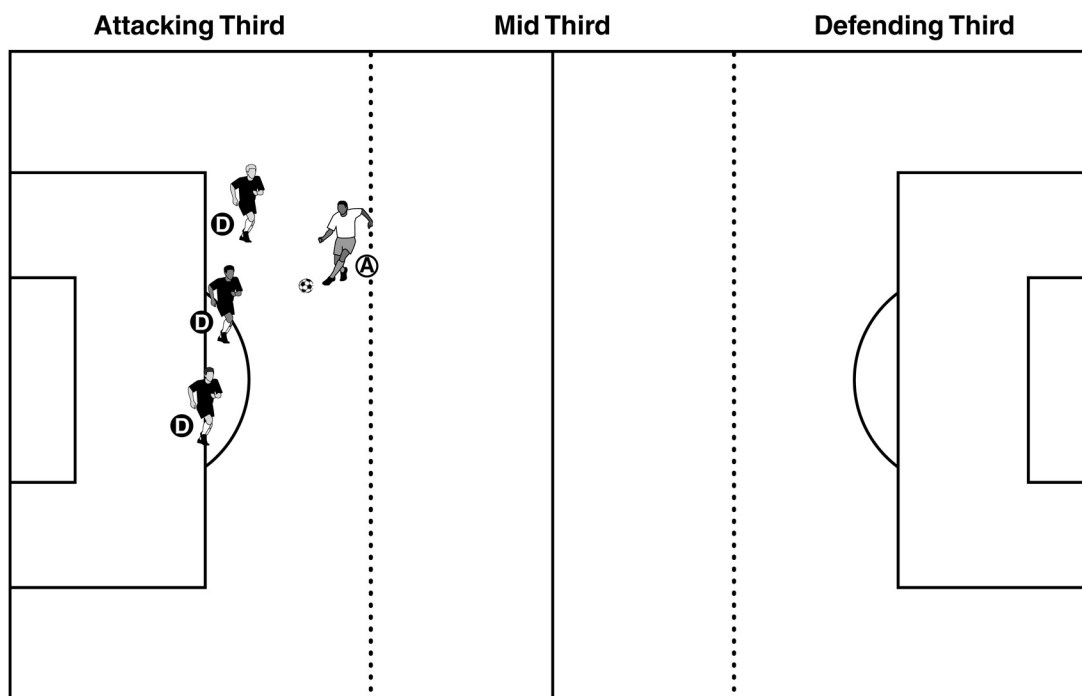


Figure 7-1

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

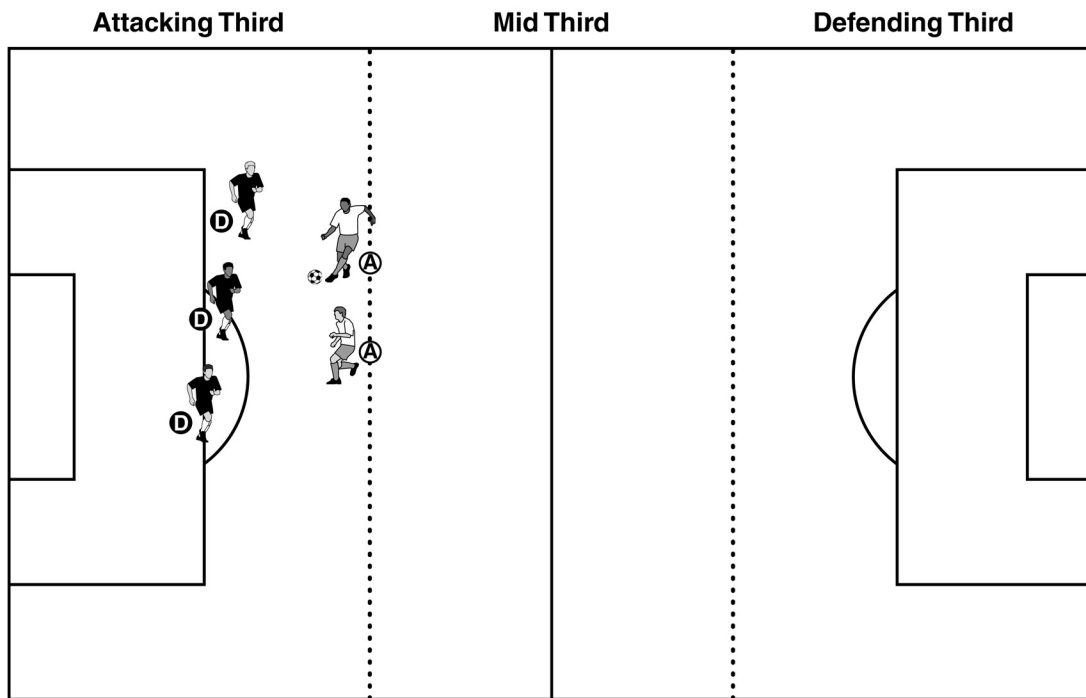


Figure 7-2

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
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- Composure

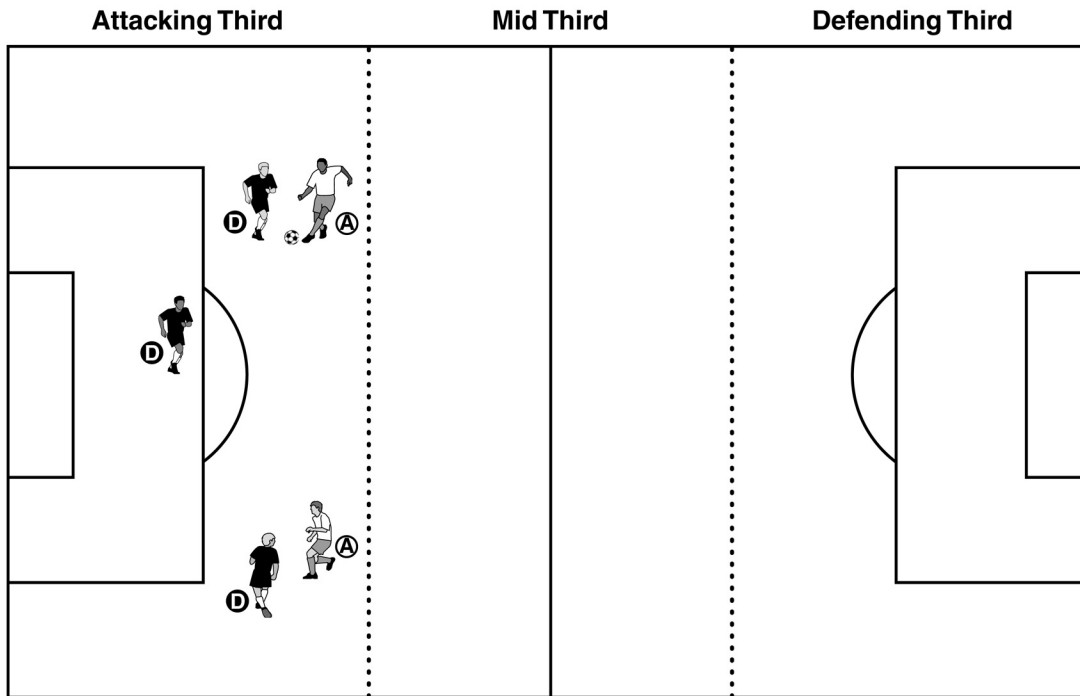


Figure 7-3

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

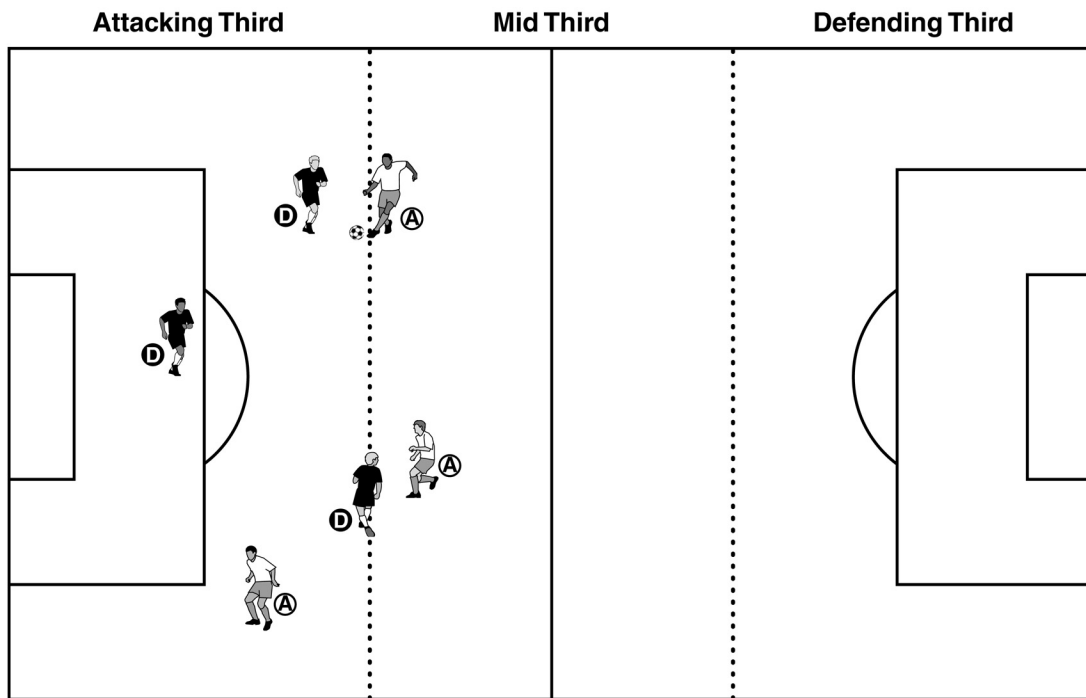


Figure 7-4

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

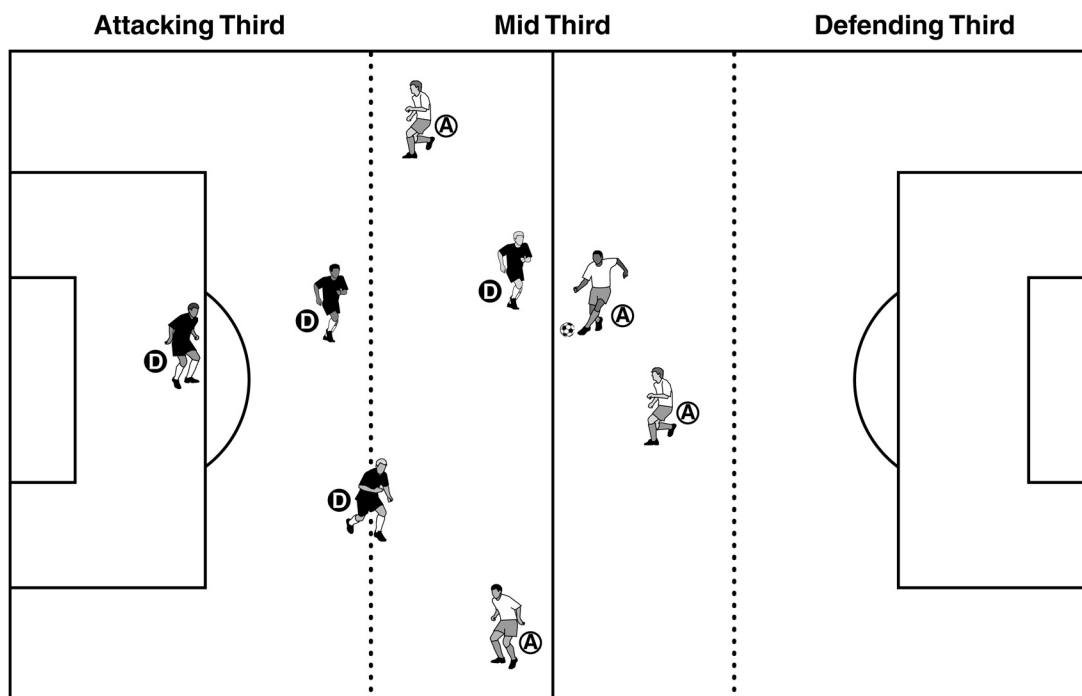


Figure 7-5

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

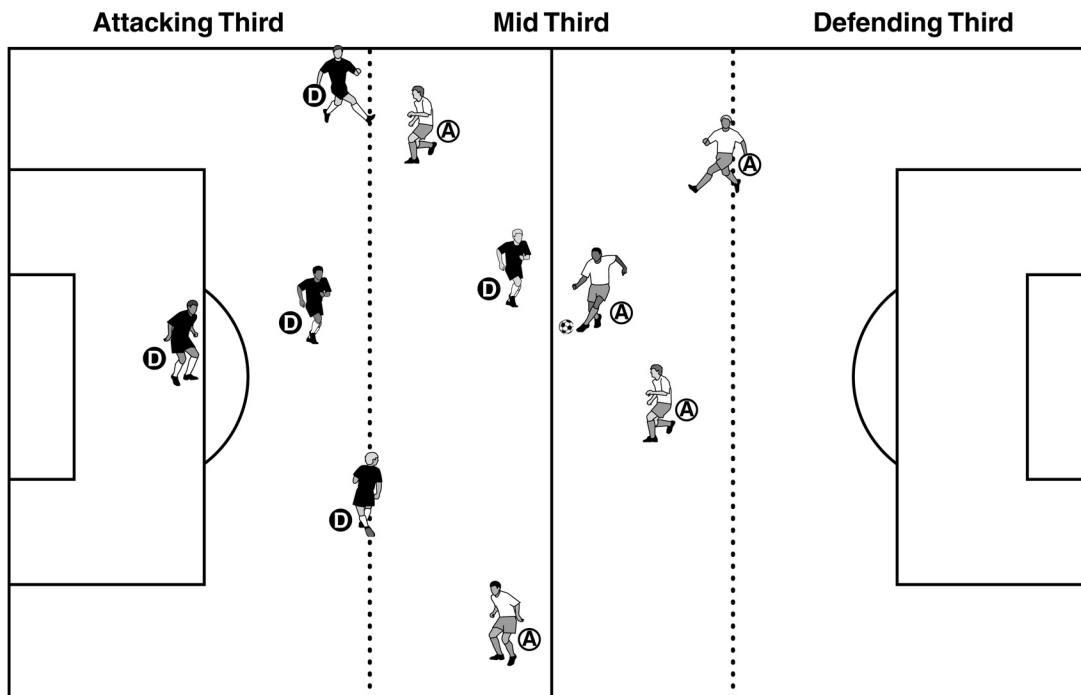


Figure 7-6

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure

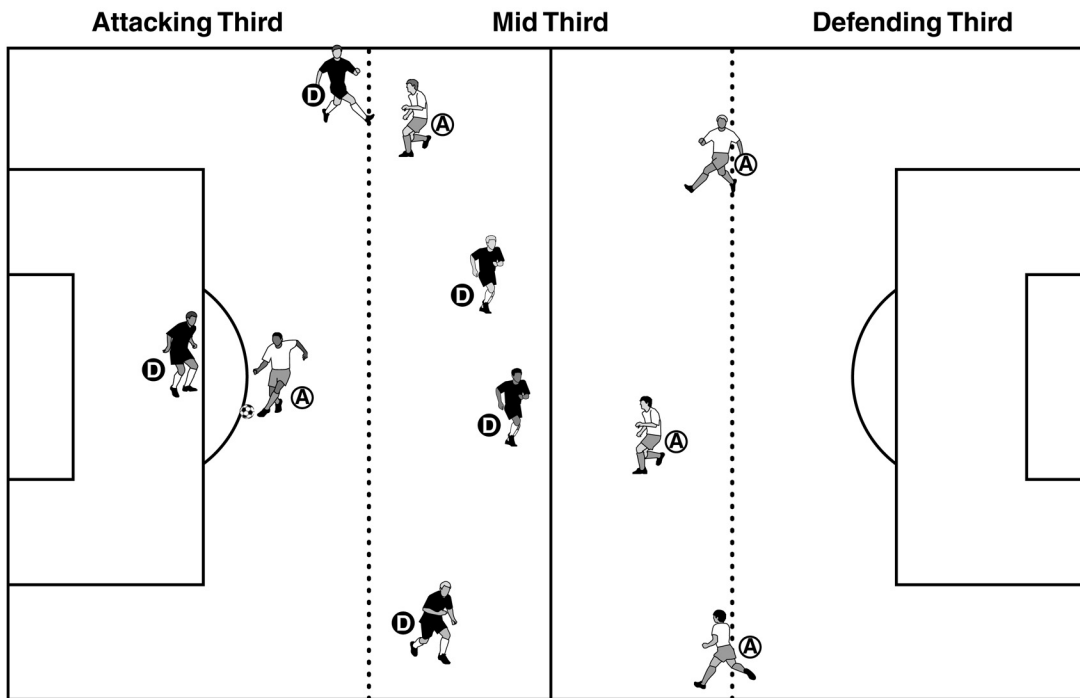


Figure 7-7

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure



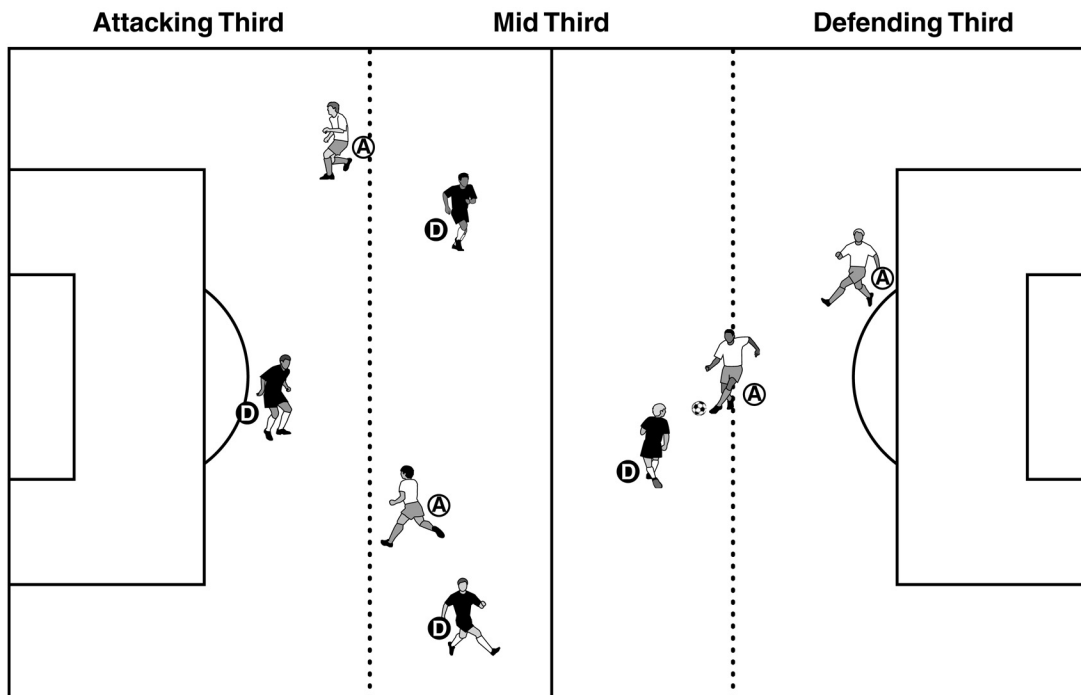


Figure 7-8

Check off the principles that are being applied and be prepared to support your choices!

The five attacking principles combine to form a philosophy of attacking play that leads to scoring. The attacking principles are

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity

The five defending principles create a philosophy of play that counters the scoring potential of the attacking principles. The defending principles are

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure



# Observation and Evaluation – II

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As a part of your training in observation and evaluation, you need to develop skills in technique observation and evaluation. During the course, you will be asked to observe and evaluate in six areas:

- Ball control
- Dribbling
- Passing
- Shooting
- Goalkeeping
- Organization

You should watch the play, check items that you see—good or bad. Diagram any particular plays that were remarkable, and write down your observations of the game. This is a long learning process, and coaches will need time and many training sessions to “read” many of these factors.

This course is designed to develop your ability to observe and evaluate. We will divide the coaches into groups of 4 to 6 coaches. You will work as a team with the other coaches, both observing and evaluating field work. All members of the coaching team must give input.

Each coach should note personal observations on the observation checklist that your group has been assigned. The instructor will lead the analysis session where all of you will discuss your findings.

There are several points to remember when observing:

- When a breakdown occurs, the coach should take into account that many factors may have contributed.
- Draw a quick picture of situations that demonstrate your observations.
- Use a few key words to get your idea on paper quickly. When time permits, go back and expand on the important findings.

We will review the characteristics of these six areas by reviewing the checklists we will ask you to use during the field sessions.

# Review of 3 vs. 3

The intermediate course showed you the development of techniques and small games to a 3 vs. 3 situation. We will review the basics of 3 vs. 3 play before going on to 4s. The basic objective of the 3 vs. 3 developments is to penetrate into the space behind the defenders. This is accomplished by (1) maintaining possession of the ball and (2) penetrating runs into that space by teammates.

Identify the first, second, and third attackers and defenders and the principle of play each is carrying out in this 3 vs. 3 situation. The first, second, and third attackers and defenders can change when the players or the ball moves. This is diagrammed in figure 5-1.

## Possession

Look for the triangles that occur between the players. The players should play in triangles and preserve passing angles while they seek to move to create opportunities to penetrate.

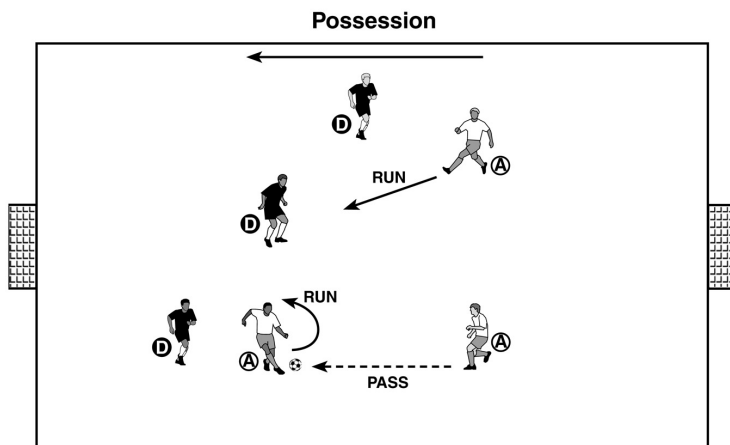


Figure 9-1

## Penetration

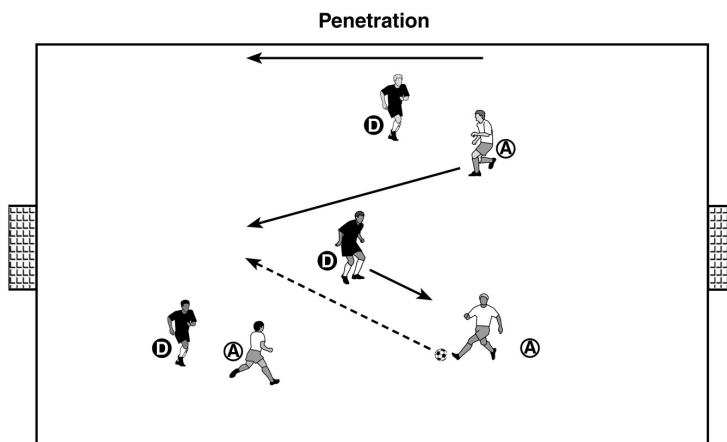


Figure 9-2

# Advanced Coaching

We now continue the process of teaching you to coach the advanced player.

We will start this session with warm-up and free play. A good warm-up will emphasize both cardiovascular exercises and proper stretching (fig 10-1).

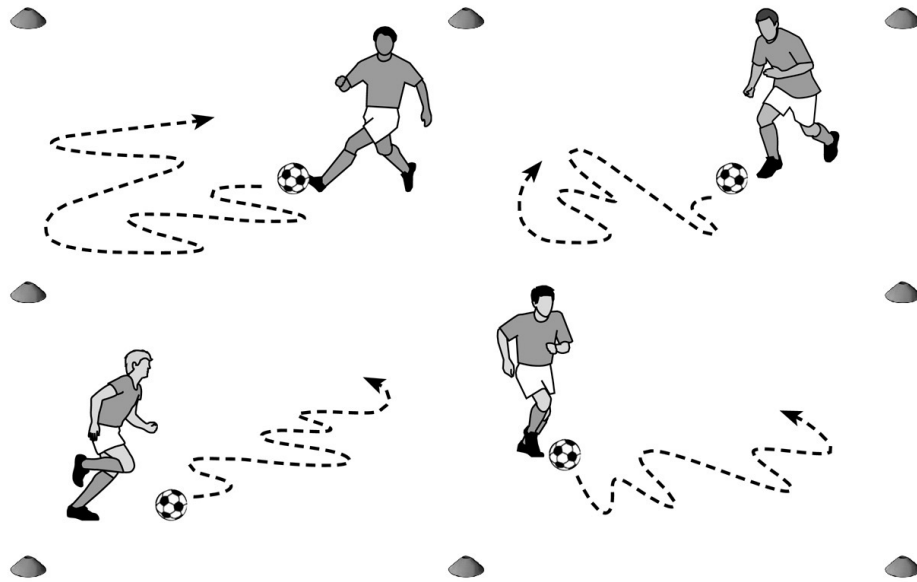


Figure 10-1

Everyone get a ball and dribbles inside the grid for up to 30 seconds. There are no restrictions. Alternate dynamic and static exercises by increasing the tempo (coach blows a whistle to speed-up or slow down).

While warming up include stretching the various muscle groups. Remember to build up the warm-up using stretches that are: **STATIC, DYNAMIC** and **BALLISTIC**



Warm Up Notes:

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We will now begin the session by having teams 1 and 2 as players and teams 3 and 4 as observers. Teams 1 and 2 will play for 5-7 minutes and then observe teams 3 and 4 as they play for 5-7 minutes. Each team should designate one or two coaches to fill out one of the four observation checklists for the game:

|        |              |
|--------|--------------|
| Team 1 | Ball control |
| Team 2 | Dribbling    |
| Team 3 | Passing      |
| Team 4 | Organization |

Coaches should check items they see, diagram any particular plays that were remarkable, and write down their observations of the game.

The game is free play between teams of 4-6 players. There are no goals, and play is continuous. The object of the game is to maintain possession and score points, for example, four consecutive touches equal one point.

When both teams have played, we will ask each team to have one or two coaches give the group's observations of the game. Each team has to give their findings in two minutes.



## Worksheet Observation Checklist - BALL CONTROL

---

1. First touch efficiency
2. Number of touches
3. Possession
4. Surfaces
5. Preparation
6. When
7. Where
8. Why
9. Additional comments



## Worksheet Observation Checklist - DRIBBLING

---

1. Appropriateness (Why)
2. First touch efficiency
3. Initial move (deception)
4. Positive direction
5. Acceleration
6. Vision
7. Maintained possession
8. Beat defender
9. Where



## Worksheet Observation Checklist - **PASSING**

---

1. Timing
2. Accuracy
3. Pace
4. Deception
5. When
6. Where
7. Positive result





## Worksheet Observation Checklist - INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATION

---

### Individual Attacking

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity
- Overall attacking shape

### Individual Defending

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure
- Overall defending shape

### Miscellaneous

- Communication
- Leadership
- Movement
- Understanding
- Cooperation



## **Worksheet Observation Checklist - TEAM ORGANIZATION**

### **Team Attacking**

- Penetration
- Depth
- Width
- Mobility
- Creativity
- Overall attacking shape

### **Team Defending**

- Delay
- Depth
- Concentration
- Balance
- Composure
- Overall defending shape

### **Miscellaneous**

- Communication
- Leadership
- Movement
- Understanding
- Cooperation



# Field Sessions

---

Each field session should be preceded by general tactical and technical observations. These general observations provide a basic guideline for the level of skill and various techniques that the coach of the advanced player should try to achieve tactically.

Each session should progress from tactical development for 3s, then to 4s, then finally to the small game situation. Each section should demonstrate how to apply pressure to the players.

We have organized each field session into a menu system. We cannot possibly teach you everything. What we have done is to present some menus which utilize a logical progression from 3s, to correct and improve the different techniques.

Each session is organized around a menu of three types of activities:

- 3s
- 4s
- Small game situation

The essential element for all sessions is the application of pressure. Pressure is what the advanced player needs to develop playing speed.

Each coaching session with the advanced player requires that you move quickly into pressure. The control needed in each activity is as required by the pressure.

Once you have built up to 3s (3 vs. 3, 3 vs. 2, 3 vs. 1), work on first-touch or one-touch.

In every section of the coaching session, you (the coach) need to follow five steps:

- Observe and evaluate tactical and technical abilities.
- Stop the activity.
- Correct the errors.
- Continue the activity.
- Move into the next phase of the buildup.



# Ball Control

---

## General Observations

### Tactical Objective:

- To maintain possession and prepare for the next move.
- Technical Emphasis:
- All permitted surfaces must be developed – the various surfaces of the feet, legs, body, and head.
- The goal is to reach a level of skill that will give the confidence to use the most effective surface successfully under any match condition without hesitation.

### Coaching Notes:

- The lack of confidence is the primary reason for hesitation and for the wrong surface being presented to the ball!
- The level of confidence must be to a degree where the players know that they can perform under match conditions.
- The players must have the awareness that they must receive the ball and maintain possession in the space available and at the speed commanded by the pressure from the opposition.
- When the opponent is close, control the ball close. When the opponent is away, control the ball and lead into the next move.
- Know your position on the field. Know the position of your teammates. Know the positions and likely actions of your immediate opponent.

## Warm-up

Alternate jogging and stretching. Use as many ball control warm-ups as possible.

In pairs: Receiver jogs backward slowly. Partner follows with ball in hands. Partner serves the ball to receiver, who controls it and returns it to the partner. The coach controls the distance. Start with the tops of the foot, then the thigh, the chest, and finally the head. The ball should be controlled and returned to the partner's hands without touching the ground.

Three players in a triangle: Similar to the "in pairs" above, except that the ball is controlled and moved sideways to a third player. Do 10 repetitions; then reverse the direction.

Mild pressure: Use the "in pairs" activity. After serving the ball, the partner challenges the receiver for the ball.

## Technique Demonstration

The objective is to take the pace off the ball, bring it under control, and move instantly into the next move. Any of the following surfaces can be used:

### Feet and Legs

- Inside of foot
- Outside of foot
- Sole
- Top of foot
- Thigh (top/inside)
- Chest



When the ball comes down at an angle the body is inclined backwards to present a platform. The steeper the angle of the ball, the more the body must be inclined. The arms are used for balance. The eyes must be on the ball. As the ball strikes the chest, the chest is arched inwards at the same time as the hips are brought back. The front foot is also brought back. Good timing is required so that all this movement takes the pace off the ball, and, as the body is now arched forward, the ball will drop to the ground in front of the player.

A more advanced technique is to receive the ball on the chest with a turning motion of the shoulders to direct the ball to the ground in the direction the player wishes to turn and go.

The second method is used for balls coming horizontally or with a low trajectory. As the ball arrives, the arms are raised for balance and the chest is withdrawn as the hips go back. The body is over the ball, almost wrapping itself around the ball. Care must be taken not to direct the ball down to the knees, cause a loss of control.

**Head:** This is probably the hardest control technique to master. The hard forehead does not cushion the ball without many other elements of skill being present. The head may be used when the player has a lot of time and wants control, or when heading the ball away will be negative.

**Stomach:** The stomach can be used for bouncing balls, i.e., running at speed into a bouncing ball or controlling the ball while maintaining speed.

**Ball Control**

**Feet and Legs**

- **3s**  
Use a full size goal. (two goals can be used at each end of a grid). Three Attackers (A) vs. 2 Defenders (D). One Attacker serves the ball to another Attacker who is covered by a defender (D). Attackers control the ball as required, try to shoot at goal, or maintain possession by returning the ball to the Server.

**Ball Control 3v2**

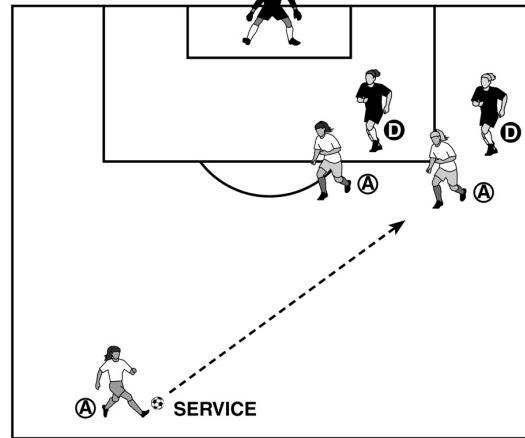


Figure 12-1

- **4s**  
Four Attackers (A) vs. 2 Defenders (D). Attacking team tries to maintain possession and penetrate for a shot on goal. Restriction may be used. Defenders challenge for ball.

EMPHASIZE: Is the best surface being used?

**Ball Control 4v4**

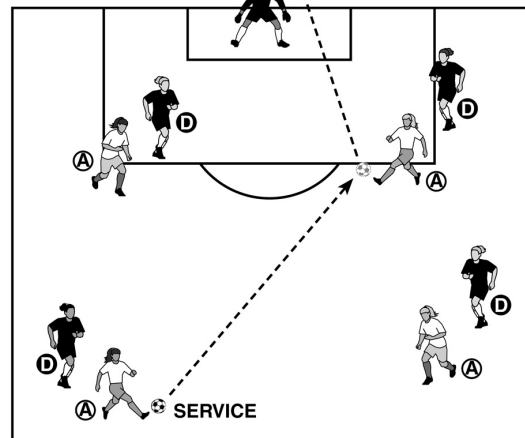


Figure 12-2

- **Small game situation**  
Small game - 4 Attackers (A) vs. 4 Defenders (D). Control each pass, then shoot, pass, or dribble. The objective is to score.

EMPHASIZE: Is the best surface being used?  
Are they beginning to play faster?

**Small Game Situation**

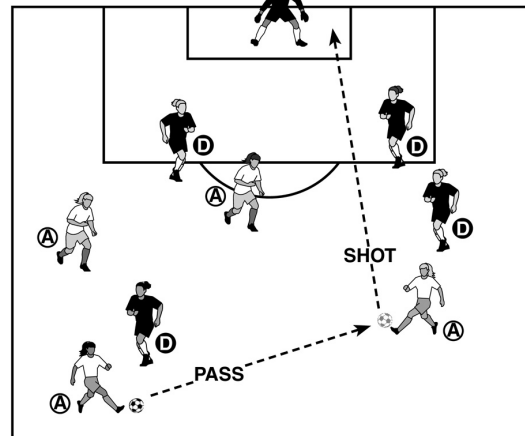


Figure 12-3

**Chest**

- **3s**  
Three Attackers (A) vs. 2 Defenders (D). Attackers and Defenders run to create space. One of the Attackers serves the ball to another attacker who controls with the chest and has the option to shoot at goal or maintain possession by returning the ball to another attacker.

**3s Chest**

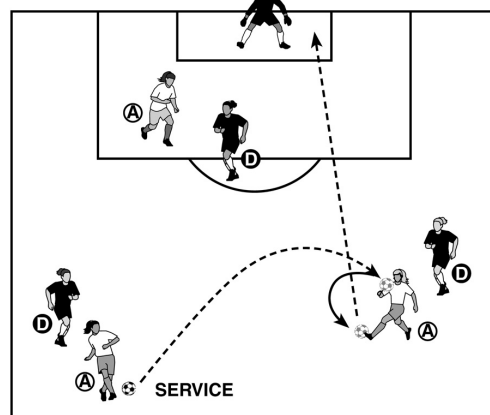


Figure 12-4

- **4s**  
Play 4 v 4 (as in Figure 12-4) Attacking team sets up in front of goal. Close marking by defenders, attackers try to beat defenders. One attacker must initiate the attack by serving the ball to a teammate's chest, who tries to control, turn and shoot on goal.

**4s Chest**

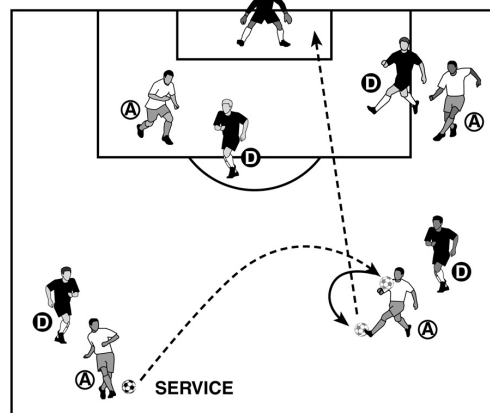


Figure 12-5

- **Small game situation**  
Four Attackers (A) vs. 4 Defenders (D). Two attackers and defenders in each half of the field. Attackers try to chip the ball to an attacker in the other half, who controls the ball with appropriate surface and tries to shoot, pass, or dribble. The objective is to score. If Attacker is disposed from the ball the Defenders become Attackers and the roles switch. All Keeper saves are played to the far half of the grid.

**Small Game Situation**

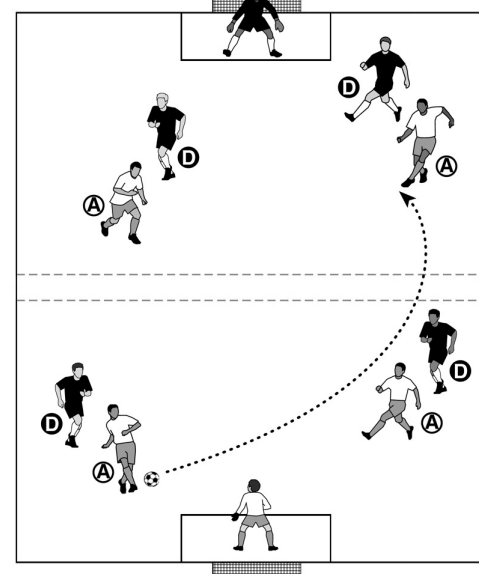


Figure 12-5

# Dribbling

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## General Observations

### Objective:

- To maintain possession while under pressure.
- The advanced player must have at his disposal a “repertoire” of moves, not only to attack but to extricate himself from a given situation anywhere on the field. All players must have this ability if they wish to progress and play at a higher level.

### Technique:

- The ball is kept close to the player’s feet. The player is in a balanced, dynamic position over the ball. Avoid a stiff, upright body.
- The eyes are focused ahead; the ball is in the lower edge of the player’s vision cone.

### The coach looks for

- Touch: The ball is touched at every step.
- Drive: the player explodes, with the ball pushed out in front for more rapid advancement.
- The player must master touch, eye contact, body movement, and acceleration.

## Observation

### Errors

- The ball is played too far in front, giving the defender an easy steal.
- The stride is too long and the player’s body is too erect.
- When past a defender, the player fails to accelerate and position the body between the defender and the ball.

The coach should learn many moves and demonstrate their tactical application. Encourage the use of alternate parts of the feet as techniques are perfected.

## Warm-up

- Ball juggling – tap the ball back and forth between the feet.
- Running using feints – jog down one side of the touch line, step over the ball with one foot, then back again.
- Running, changing pace and stride – place markers at full-stride distance on touch line. After 5-10 yards, shorten the distance between the markers to bring the strides down to short, choppy strides. Players race down one side of the touch line matching stride to markers, juggle ten times, race back, then juggle, repeat several times.

Develop warm-up games that stress turning, change of pace, acceleration and change of direction. The key is to develop flexibility and agility. Use the basics to develop fast feet.

## Dribble Free

- The coach lets the players dribble the ball with no instruction. All players remain in the center circle or grid. Stop after 30 seconds.
- Demonstrate keeping the ball close. Repeat the activity 2-3 times. Observe technical points for your own reference.
- Players practice turns. The coach controls the speed of play and has players change direction, avoiding collisions. Coach demonstrates how to accelerate when space opens up.





### **Buildup**

- Players look down at the ball and raise the head until they can see the coach and the ball. The head and eyes are fixed, not moving. The coach checks the focus point of each individual.
- Players juggle the ball back and forth, watching the coach. Players can “UP” or “DOWN” as the coach’s hands raise or lower. Hands are raised from below the waist to the middle of the chest, but not overhead. The coach critiques the eye and head position.
- Coach back up slowly, the players advancing and calling to the coach as above.
- In pairs, players coach each other as above.

Advanced variation: player with ball chases the retreating partner, who is 10-15 yards ahead. When the partner raises hands, the ball is passed and the players switch roles.

Combine eye with touch control. Repeat as above, but player retreats 2-3 yards in advance of the dribbler. Steal the ball if it is hit too hard in front of the player.

### **Turns and Acceleration**

Emphasize turning, changing direction, and moving away. Encourage as many moves as possible. Many players will favor a certain move. Encourage the development of a repertoire.

### **Shielding**

#### **Demonstrate:**

- Body between the ball and the opponent.
- Ball on the far foot.
- Shoulder pointed toward the opponent.

### **Dribbling**

#### **Passing the Opponent**

1. Review the tactics for one vs. one play.
2. Repeat warm-up with upper body feints.
3. Continue motor movement training. Set up two objects stationed 4 to 6 yards apart. One player is stationed between and attempts to block the opposing player from getting through. The attacking player attempts several upper body feints, and tries to catch the opponent moving the wrong way. Instruct your players to watch the weight shift of the defender.
4. Practice three “Coerver” moves without pressure. Judge when your players can execute these successfully. Then use pressure in 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, and group games. Progressively add more moves, using the same teaching method. The more moves in the players training, the more likely they are to develop two or three to a very high level. The “Matthews” moves are not difficult, but the level to which he developed them was phenomenal. Remember, there is a psychological impact when a player knows that the opponent is a clever dribbler, and this alone may give the dribbler the advantage.
5. In the early stages, players must be encouraged to try again, especially after failure. It must be impressed on the player that, with practice, these moves can be developed. The coach must recognize that players will be creative and develop their own moves. If these are effective, they should be encouraged.
6. NOTE: There are many video tapes which show specific dribbling moves. Don’t be afraid to use them.

CAUTION: Apply pressure carefully. Remember, SUCCESS COMES IN CANS!

**Coerver Moves**

- 3s**  
 3 (O) vs. 3 (D). Dribble to beat the defender in 3s. O1 receives the ball from a teammate (O2 or O3). O1 attacks and tries to beat the defender by dribbling and then shooting. If O1 is unable to beat the defender, O1 passes to O2 or O3, who attacks and tries to beat the defender by dribbling and then shooting.

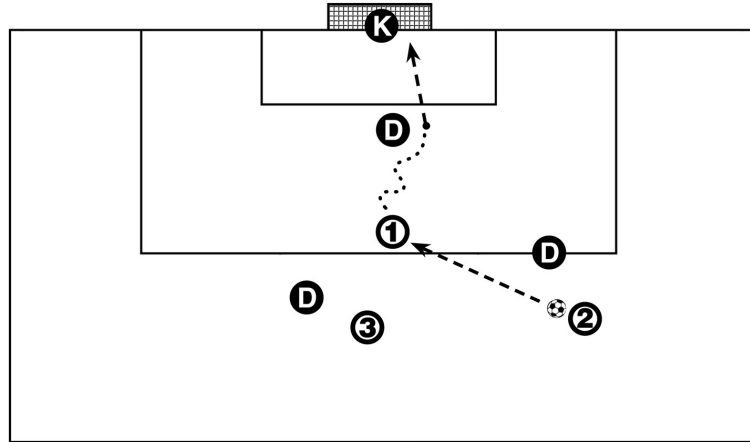


Figure 13-1

- 4s**  
 4 (O) vs. 4 or 3 (D). O1, O2, O3 and O4 pass, dribble, and use moves to create shots at goal. Defenders can take the ball, pass and dribble to create a shot at goal. The restriction is that you must dribble before shooting.

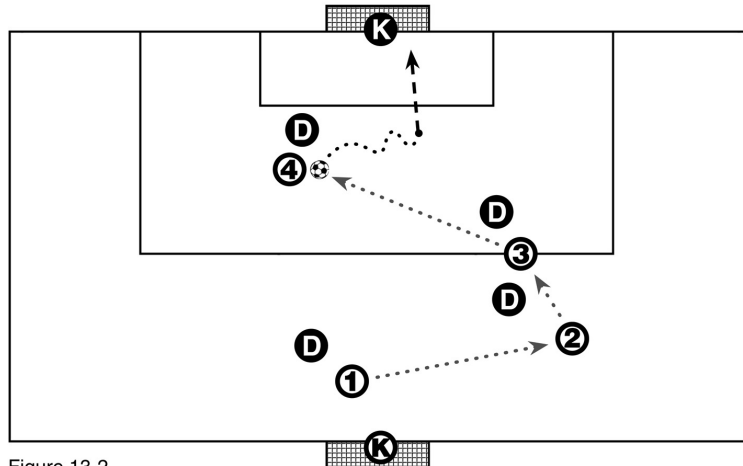


Figure 13-2

- Small game situation**  
 5 (D) vs. 5 (O). Emphasize the where, when, and why of dribbling! Play small sides with goalkeepers and full-size goals. Scoring is allowed after a dribble. Use other restrictions.

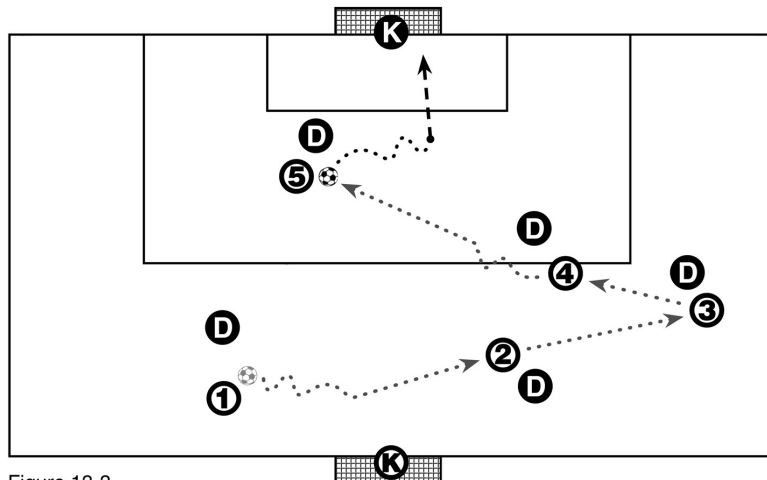


Figure 13-3

### Change Direction

- 3s**  
 3 (O) vs. 2 (D). Use the dribble and change of direction to try to beat the defenders into the space or to maintain possession by creating opportunities to pass. Try to penetrate using the dribble.

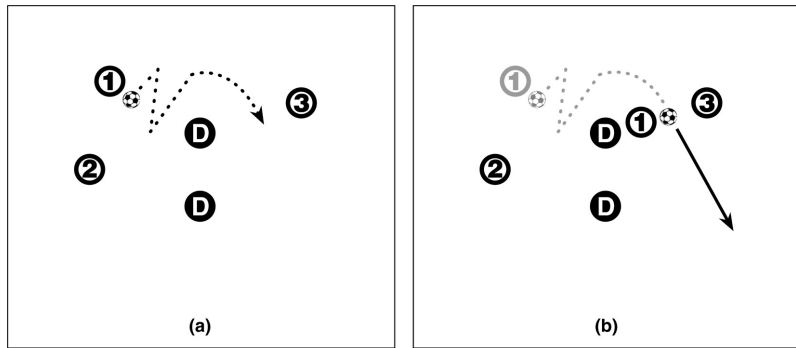


Figure 13-4

- 4s**  
 4 (O) vs. 4 (D). Dribble and use the change of direction to create transition passing. Using two halves of field, each with two offensive and two defensive players dribble and create space to pass to teammates on the other half of the field. Difficulty can be increased by adding a no man's land where no player can go.

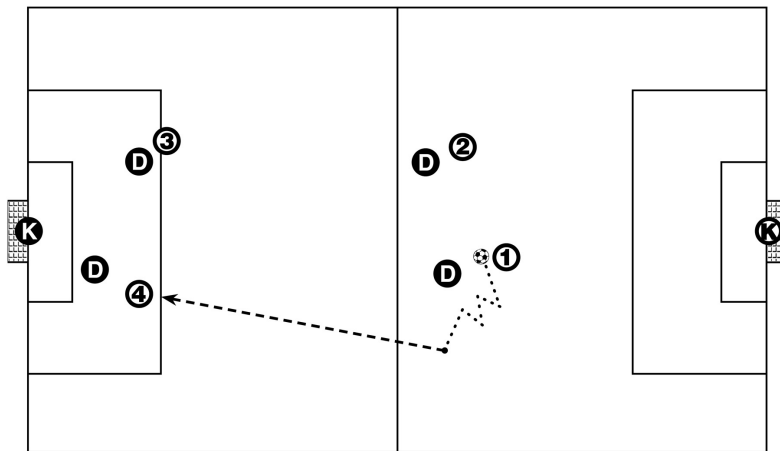


Figure 13-5

- Small game situation**  
 5 (O) vs. 5 (D). The ball may be passed or dribbled in either shooting zone. The ball must be dribbled through the central zone to the shooting zone. If defenders steal the ball they counterattack.

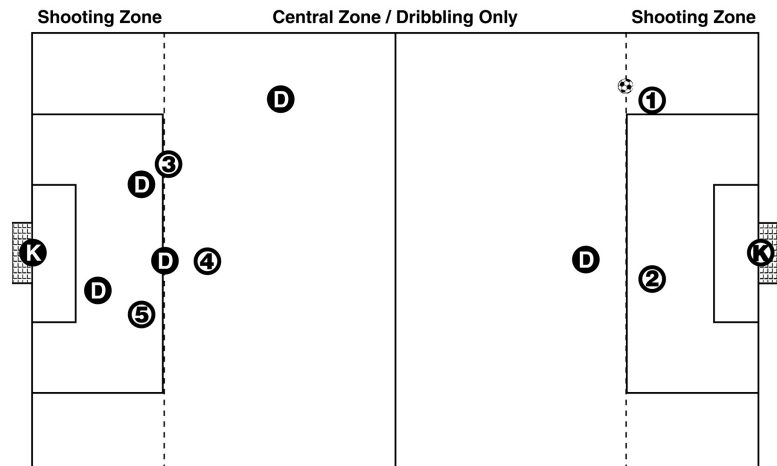


Figure 13-6

# Passing

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## General Observations

### Objective:

To advance the ball or to maintain possession

### Technique:

Review the inside of the foot pass. The body is in a balanced position, with the weight on the non-kicking foot, which points in the direction of the target. The kicking foot is held parallel to the ground, and is turned out to present a flat surface to the ball. The leg is drawn back from the hip. The ball is struck through its mid-point, and the foot follows through in the direction of the target.

## Characteristics of a Good Pass

- Timing
- Accuracy
- Pace
- Deception
- When
- Where
- Positive result

## Warm-up

Start with light jogging and combine with static stretching. Build up to ball exercises that emphasize passing, and be sure to stretch the whole body.

- An excellent warm-up activity is 5 vs. 1 keep-away, building to 5 vs. 2.
- The coach should observe the 5 vs. 1 to see how the players handle this “easy” situation. When the coach is satisfied with the success rate, the coach will add another defender (5 vs. 2).
- The organization of 5 vs. 2 should always allow a player to have a passing option to each side.
- The goal for the five is to create a through, or penetrating, pass which splits the two defenders. The goal of the two defenders is to play first and second defenders to prevent the through pass and to pressure the five players into errors.
- During the free-play session, observe and evaluate the passing techniques of the players. All players need to pass the ball well, but at the advanced level it becomes even more critical to execute the technique in an efficient manner. The players will need to know different passing techniques and the knowledge of how to apply them to become skillful passers of the ball.

After reviewing the basic techniques take the players through a variety of passing drills. The players must understand and practice the following:

- Outside of the foot pass.
- Instep (laces) pass.
- Lofted, or long, high pass.
- Chip pass.
- Volley (straight).
- Volley (with a sideways approach).
- Half volley pass.
- Heel pass.

The following exercise can be used at most levels. It is very useful in assessing a new team or players.

On half of a field, or a 60 x 60 grid, place the players at varying distances from each other. The coach can condition this in a way that will best benefit the players. The distances will demand a certain technique, but the coach can ask for a lofted pass instead of an instep drive. The coach can call for an outside of the foot pass instead of an inside of the foot pass. At a signal from the coach, the players can rotate to a new station.

Pressure is applied by time only. The coach will try to have the ball passed around between the players in an acceptable time, coupled with an acceptable success rate.

An obvious bonus to this activity is the ball control training session. The coach must observe and critique as necessary.

**Buildup**

The coach needs to create situations where the players learn to help the teammate with the ball. Players can do this by making the correct runs, into the correct space, and at the correct time.

**Passing and Support**

The following exercise will emphasize the need to play with the head UP, to be able to see what is happening, and to be aware of the situation. When supporting, it is important to be at the correct supporting angle to receive the ball and play it forward.

In the preceding diagram, we have 4 (D) vs. 2 (O) in one grid, and 2 (D) vs. 2 (O) in the other grid. The space in the middle is “no man’s land,” and is used only to pass the ball through or over.

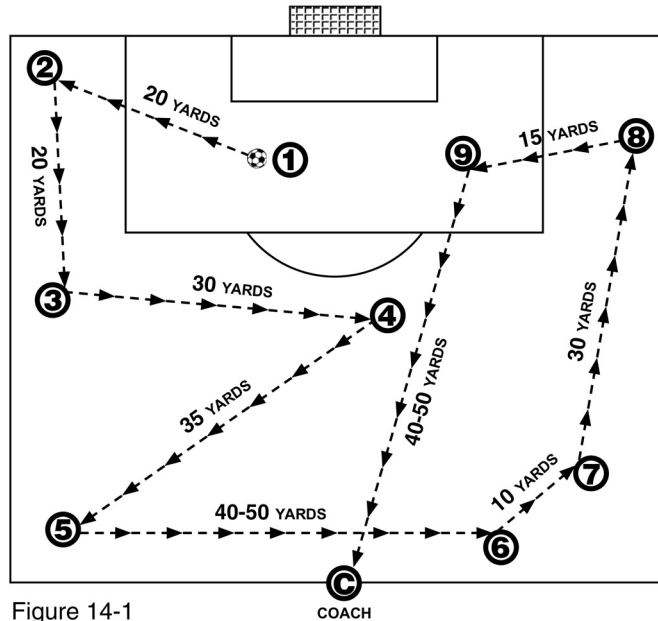


Figure 14-1

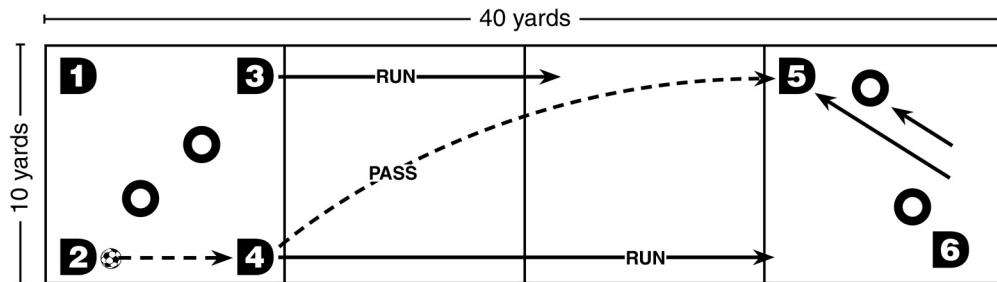


Figure 14-2

The object for the Ds to keep possession and, by communicating “eye to eye” with D5 or D6, to judge the correct time to pass the ball to either D5 or D6.

As the pass is executed, the closest supporting players, in this case D3 and D4, sprint to support the pass and to create a 4 vs. 2 in the right-hand grid.

All the characteristics of a good pass are involved here.

As the players achieve more success, the coach must create more challenges for them. The creative coach can be of great help to the players. Players need fun, challenging games and exercise that will help them be better players.

Example: Grid size is 30 x 50 yards

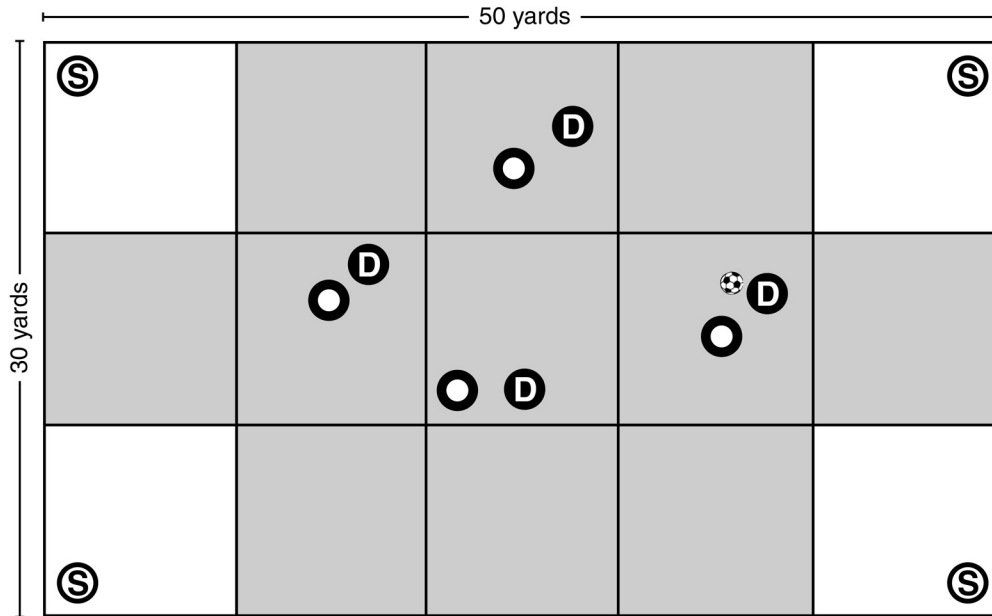


Figure 14-3

- The game is 4 (D) vs. 4 (O) plus supporting players (S).
- Possession (no goals).
- Ds and Os play possession and use the support players as necessary. Only the shaded area is used by the 4 vs. 4, D vs. O players as they pass to and receive from the S players. The coach should be very involved and can call many different conditions for varying periods of time, i.e.;
  - Two-touch.
  - One-touch.
  - Combine short and long play.
  - Only a headed pass to S.
- Introduce a method of scoring to add fun and realism.

Go to goal!

Finally we must bring our training sessions off the passing techniques to match situations.

Example: Half field or 40 x 50 yard grid

- 5 + 1 (goalkeeper) vs. 5 + 1 (goalkeeper).
- Offside law applies.
- Coach controls the session and calls the conditions as the game progresses.
- All ground passes.
- No passing back to the goalkeeper.
- A point for every lofted pass on target.
- One-touch.
- Two-touch or any combination that the coach judges will benefit the team.

The final period of this exercise should be completely free of restrictions.

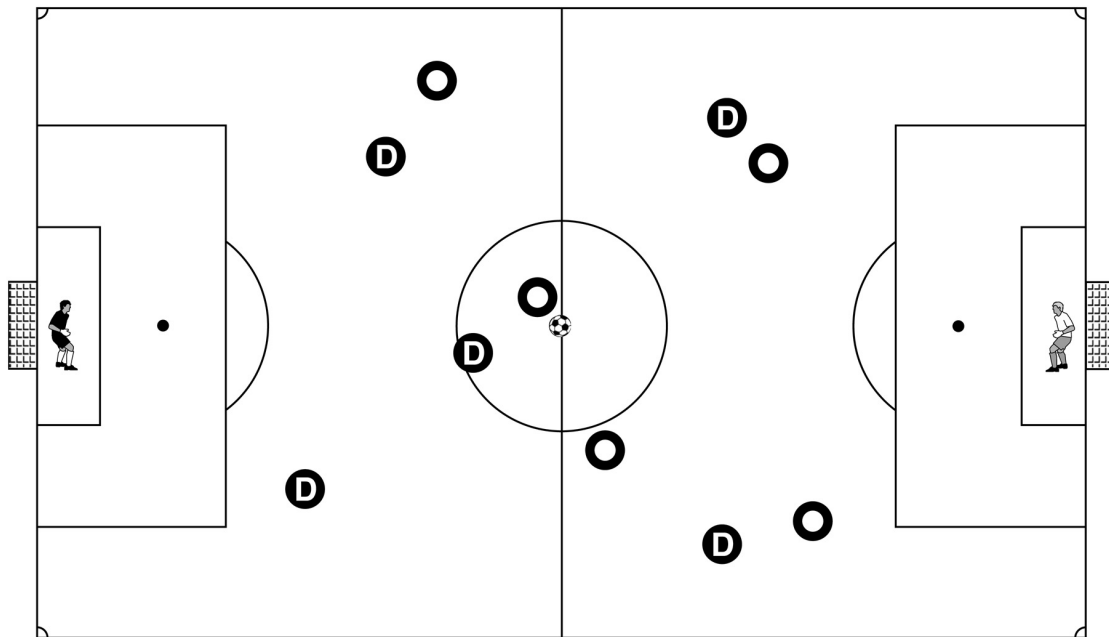


Figure 14-4

### Coaching Points

Teach the players that field conditions affect the kinds of passes required: Wet or dry ground. Pass accordingly.

- Is the receiver ready?
- Has the receiver called for the ball?
- Is the receiver prepared?
- Is the receiver making eye contact?
- Is the receiver moving to receive the ball?
- Are players off the ball keeping a defender occupied?
- Are players off the ball pulling defenders out of position?
- Are players off the ball running as decoys?
- Are passes going to the correct side of the receiver so that defender is screened?
- How are the players' selections of the correct techniques for given situations?

It can be argued that many good players can have weak areas in their play; however, a player who consistently has trouble passing the ball, and who does not work very hard to correct this deficiency, will not play at a high level in the game.

# Restarts

In this course, we will concentrate on the restarts that concern both the attacking play and defending play in the attacking third of the field. The emphasis will be on set plays.

Coaches must appreciate that many goals result from set plays, and that it is wise to study the attacking and defending point of view.

## Free Kicks (Defending)

Distances up to 30 yards from goal are dangerous to defend against an accurate and powerful kicker. If we are going to set up a wall, how many players do we place in the wall?

The following diagram provides a guide.

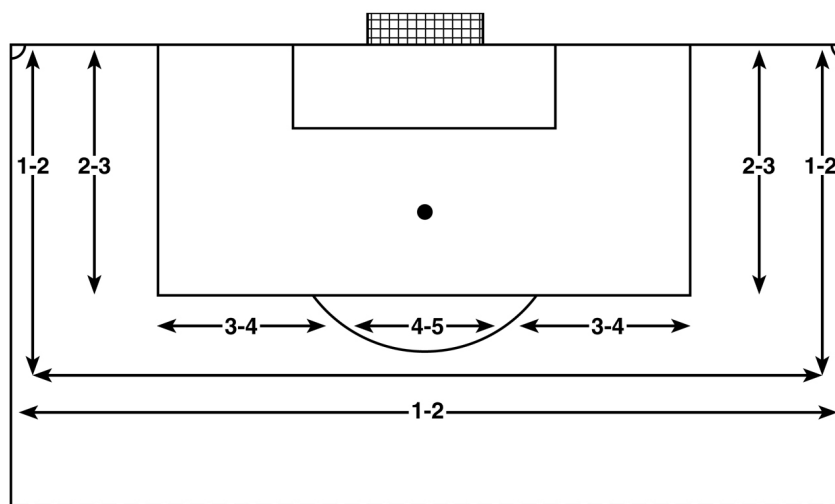


Figure 15-1

It is important that not too many players are placed in the wall. The defense must have enough players to mark the attacking players in the danger areas. The objective for the defense is to organize well and retain their concentration during the stoppage just prior to the kick.



## Placing the Wall

---

The goalkeeper can call for the number in the wall, but should not set the wall. It is dangerous for the goalkeeper to go to a post and leave the rest of the goal open. The wall should be set by a field player 10 yards from the ball and further from the goal. It is the field player's job to set the first wall player directly in line with the ball and the post that the defense has chosen to cover.

If the kick is central, or close to central, the wall should include a player on the outside of the post. This is to minimize the chance of the kick being swerved around the wall. The remaining members in the wall should know who they are and move quickly into position. Sizing the players in the wall should have the tallest toward the post and the shorter players toward the middle. The goalkeeper must always be in position to see the ball.

- The better the organization, the better the chances for the defense against the kick. All players should know their roles in wall situations.
- This organization needs to be practiced on the field with the numbers necessary for a full training session. Chalkboards and coaching boards have their uses, but they will not take the place of live field sessions.

Free kicks in the defending third are probably the most dangerous. The following diagram shows an example of a defending position.

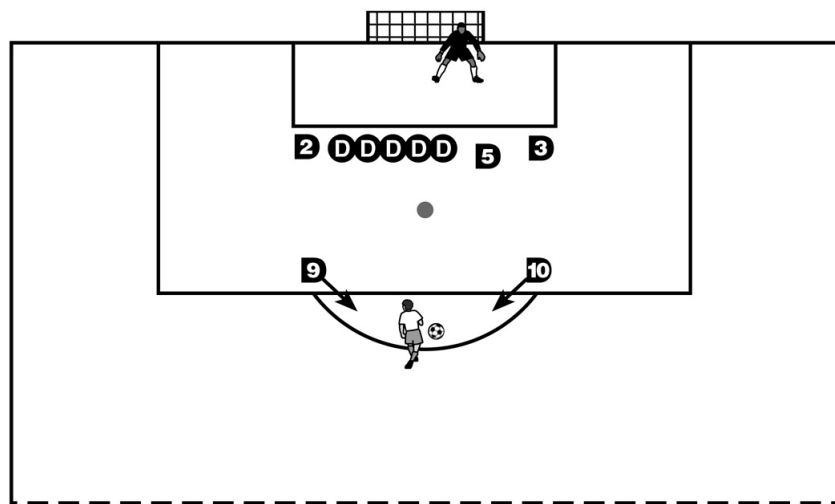


Figure 15-2

The area covered here is from the 6 yard line to the penalty area. D5 is positioned just inside the post and should be able to cover this area. D2 and D3 should be no wider than the 6 yard box, but of course will adjust to mark opponents. D9 and D10 are threatening the kick in the event that the kicker plays the ball short or sideways to another kicker.

Coach observes:

- Wall is set by a field player.
- Correct number of players in the wall.
- Players are sized correctly
- Position of the goalkeeper.
- Defenders mark the open spaces.
- Players know how to defend against the indirect free kick in the penalty area.

## Free Kicks (Attacking)

The ball is stationary, there are no ball control problems. There is no pressure on the kicker. Many attackers can move forward. Training can develop high levels of timing and coordination.

### Defending Free Kicks in the Scoring Zone

The wall is protecting part of the goal from a driven shot. The goalkeeper is positioned to see the ball. One objective when attacking will be to try to obscure the goalkeeper's view of the ball until the last second.

The following diagram will illustrate one example of an attacking play.

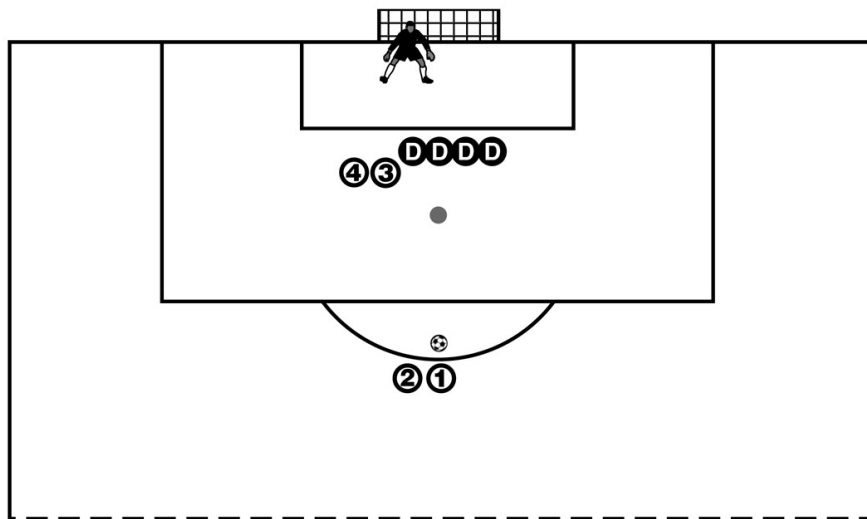


Figure 15-3

The attacking players position themselves 6 or 7 yards from the ball. Their job is to obscure the goalkeeper's view of the ball. They stand close together and keep their feet together. They must watch the kick and not break until the kick is taken. They then spin around and move fast to the goal, looking for the rebound. As shown, there are two players at the kick. They can make various runs, which can confuse the goalkeeper or the defense or both. Sometimes a good decoy run will make the wall break early.

Coach observes:

- The two attacking players near the wall should be less than 10 yards from the ball
- They should try to block the goalkeeper's view of the ball, and they should attack the goal for rebounds after the kick
- The two players involved in the kick should:
  - approach from different angles.
  - try to screen the kick (ball).
  - take a direct shot at goal.

Field examples of the indirect free kick in the penalty area will be demonstrated.

## Corner Kicks (Defending)

---

On the corner kick we will place one defender 10 yards from the kick. The objective of this is to unsettle the kicker, who might then misplace the shot. The goalkeeper's position is critical: halfway between the posts, with feet along the goal line, facing the field.

The defenders marking the posts must concentrate on when to move. The near post defender is slightly out from the goal and is ready to move to the space in front. The space behind is covered by the goalkeeper. However, if the goalkeeper comes out for the ball, this defender must drop quickly back into the goal.

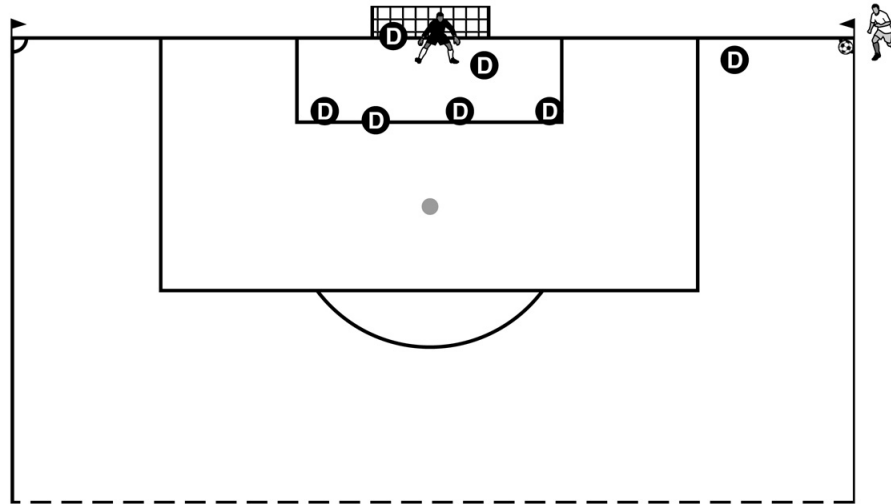


Figure 15-4

Two other defenders cover the near post. They must be first to the ball, strong in the air, and aggressive.

The far post defender positions inside the post and along the goal line. Two more far post defenders are positioned on the 6 yard line or slightly further. It is vital that they are positioned to be able to watch the back half of the penalty area.

Note: Defenders must aggressively attack the ball (move the ball) and play it away.

Coach observes:

- Position of the players threatening the kick.
- Position of the goalkeeper.
- Technique of the near post defenders and the far post defenders.
- How quickly the defenders move out when the ball is cleared.

## Corner Kicks (Attacking)

The coach should understand that many goals are scored from well executed corner kicks. The kicker is very important, as the accuracy of the kick (service) often makes or breaks the play. The kicker should be technically strong and understand what is required.

The following diagram will show attacking positions for an inswinger corner to the near post.

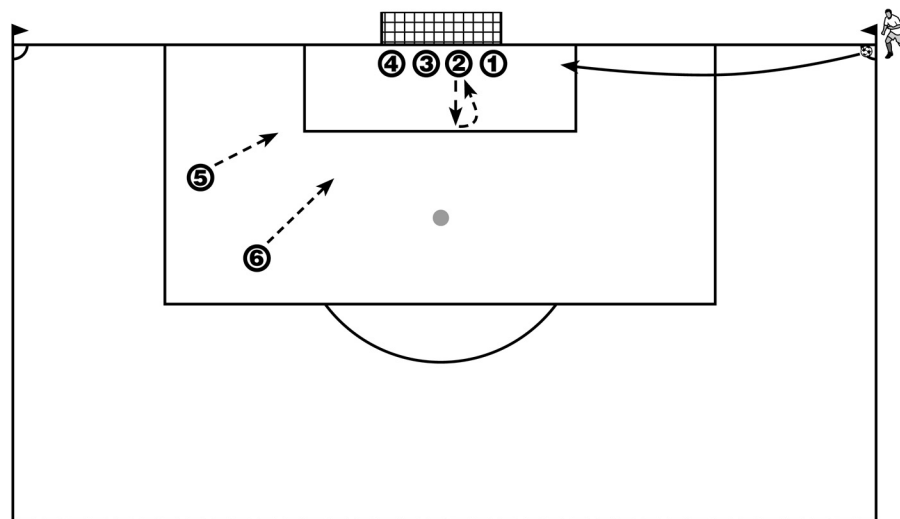


Figure 15-5

O1 will go to meet the ball and “flick” it on, or redirect it. After the ball is played, O2 will move out to the 6 yard line, ready to move back if necessary. If the ball is redirected across the goal, O3 and O4 have to be quick to react. O4 must be ready at the far post.

O5 and O6 will judge the situation and move as required. All attackers in the goal area must be alert to the dangers of offside if the ball is partially cleared.

Coach observes:

- Accuracy of the kick.
- Movements of the players in the goal area.
- Timing of the runs by O5 and O6.
- Demonstrations will include short corners.

## Throw-ins (Defending)

---

The throw-in is a very dangerous time for the defenders. It is very easy to relax concentration when the ball goes out of play.

The following diagram illustrates a defending position against a long throw. Marking behind the receiver is very important; also the space in front of the receiver is covered. The goalkeeper is in the front half of the goal. Defenders cover the space in the penalty area.

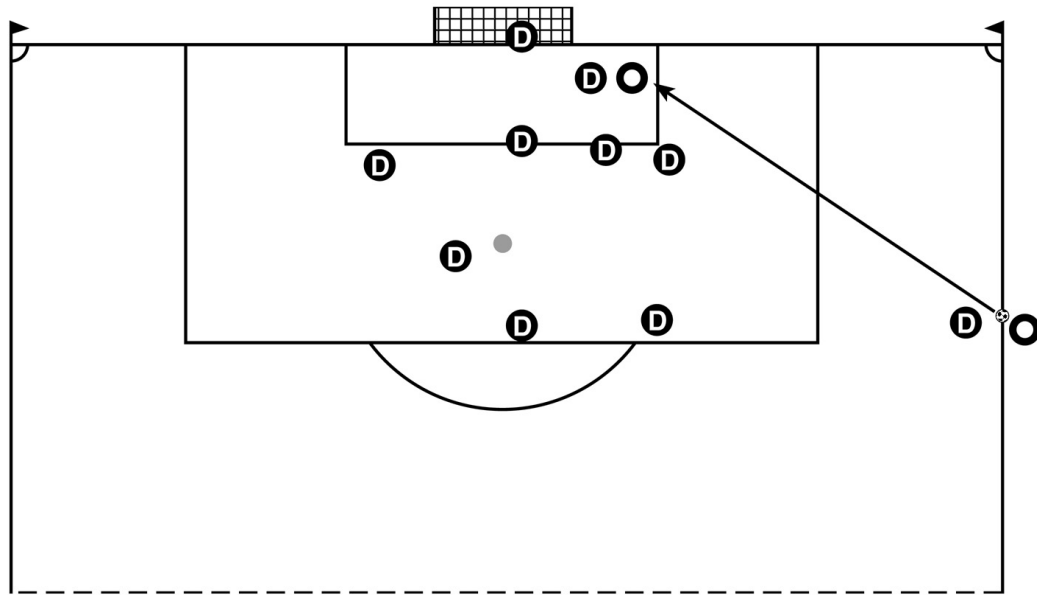


Figure 15-6

Coach observes:

- Defenders move quickly into position while the ball is being retrieved.
- Marking must be tight, including the thrower's position.
- Pressure must be applied to the receiver.
- As much space as possible is covered in the penalty area.

## Throw-ins (Attacking)

The nearest player to the ball takes the throw as quickly as possible to take advantage of any defending lapse. The exception to this is if the attackers decide on a long throw.

The throw is to an unmarked player, whenever possible, and thrown for easy control. The supporting players must seek to create space to make the throw effective.

The following diagram illustrates an attack for a long throw-in to the near post.

O5 should move from the near post as late as possible to meet the ball. The timing of the attackers' runs is critical, timed so that they arrive in various positions as the ball is played to them.

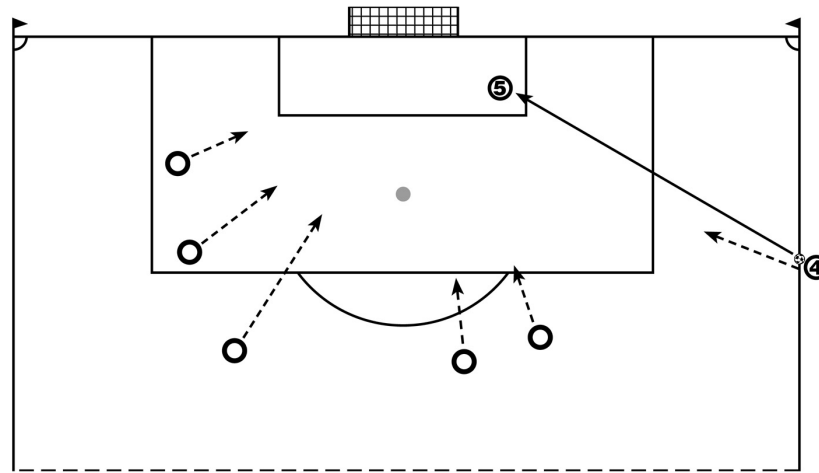


Figure 15-7

Note: Design your own restart in this space

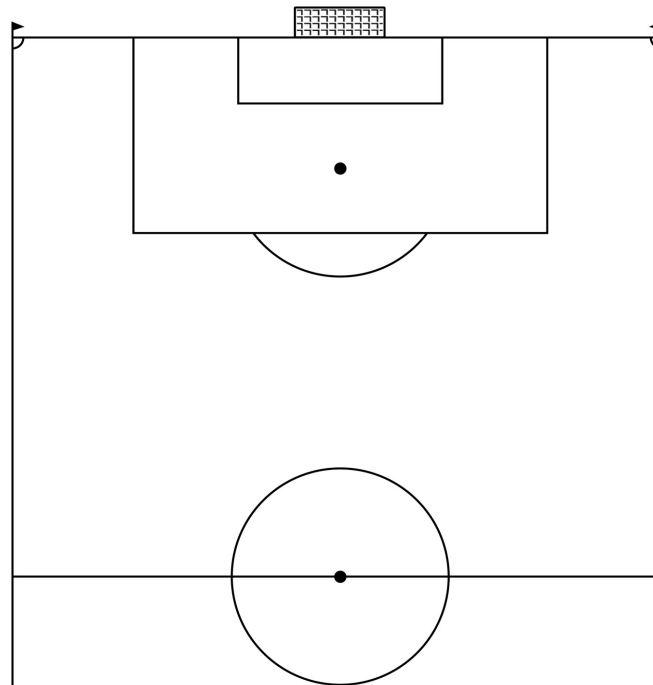


Figure 15-8

# Functional Training

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As the skill level develops and the player gains confidence, the coach should introduce technical training aimed at practicing a player in their position. Each position has its own particular requirements and the advanced player must work hard on these skills.

Many kinds of functional training can be developed for forwards, midfielders, outside backs, inside backs, sweeper, goalkeepers, etc.

This session of the course will provide an introduction to functional training.

The coach's observational and evaluating skills are crucial to designing functional exercises for their players.

The demonstrations will be from the following examples:

## **Goalkeepers**

- Judging whether to catch or punch a high cross.
- Distribution: to throw or kick.

## **Fullbacks**

- Defending the goal when the goalkeeper is out.
- Defending against high crosses.

## **Center back**

- Interception of passes.
- Recovering when beaten.

## **Sweeper**

- Communicating with other defenders.
- Making space.

## **Midfield**

- Supporting the attack.
- Creating a 2 vs. 1 on attack.

## **Wingers**

- Dribbling to pass the fullback.
- To cross the ball or go to goal?

## **Strikers**

- Turning and shooting under pressure.
- Meeting crosses.

There are many more techniques that a player can practice for a given position. Again, as the coach becomes more aware and observational skills develop, it will become easier to evaluate and identify problems. The coach should understand that these and other methods demonstrated are not instant remedies.

The development of skill in any sport is a long process and is highly dependent on the methodical, patient, and diligent efforts of the coach or teacher.



## Observational Checklist - FINISHING

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\_\_\_ Timing

\_\_\_ Accuracy

\_\_\_ Preparation

\_\_\_ Anticipation

\_\_\_ When

\_\_\_ Where

\_\_\_ Why

\_\_\_ Techniques

\_\_\_ Desire

\_\_\_ Decisive

\_\_\_ Risk



# Finishing

---

## **General Observations**

### **Objective:**

- To score goals
- Emphasize the correct technique
- Review the instep drive

The ball is struck on the top of the foot at the instep or shoelaces. The foot is pointed down. The ankle is locked back. The non-kicking foot is planted beside the ball, pointing at the target. The leg is flexed at the knee and at the hip. The knee is bent bringing the foot up behind the body in preparation for the swing forward. The actual kicking motion starts with a forward movement of the thigh and a final rapid movement of the lower leg and foot through the ball. The foot should not turn in or out but follow through in the direction of the target. The ball should be struck at its midpoint to keep it low.

Finishing during match conditions should emphasize getting the shot off quickly and making adjustments to movements of the ball and players.

## **Warm-up**

Prior to any training session it is important to warm up to prepare for the physical exertion and to help prevent unnecessary injuries. The training of finishing is an area where a good full-body warm-up is highly important. A combination of jogging and static stretching is a good way to start, building up to more energetic running and ball exercises. Exercises using the instep kick should be introduced as the warm-up develops making sure that both legs are worked in preparation for the session to follow (this shall be demonstrated on the field).

It is stated at the beginning of this chapter that the objective is to score goals. The scoring of goals is the prime objective of the game itself, and finishing is the area where most of the thrills and excitement are created. Throughout this chapter, we will emphasize the techniques and development of skills that will lead to increased confidence of the players, which will lead to more chances being created, and, in turn, more goals being scored.

A very important point to begin with is that coaches must encourage players to shoot when within the range of the opponent's goal. It might even be suggested that the development of a "habit" for shooting can be a good thing. The coach should teach an aggressive attitude toward shooting.

Whether in a pre-season training session or during the season, the coach will have to analyze the problems of not scoring goals that "should have been scored" or players not shooting when they have been in a position to do so. The problems the coach must consider first are the factors that can affect the best of chances.

## **Good Defending Play: Pressure from Defenders**

### **Good Goalkeeping**

All too often we fail to give credit to the other team!

In the coach's analysis, it is decided what technique was required in the missed chances and what technique was used. The coach decides that the players need some training on their technique. On the field it may be necessary to revert to a fundamental training session for a short period of time. Providing the ball is moving at all times prior to a shot, the players can be led through the "accuracy phase" again. As stated above, this should be for a short session, and can be without a goalkeeper. The coach must emphasize that the ball is struck in the correct manner and confirm that a high percentage of shots are hitting the target.



In analyzing the problem of players not shooting when in a position to do so, the coach has to ask some questions.

- Does the player (or players) lack confidence in shooting? If so, have the players had some coaching in finishing?

The coach should understand that some of the players do not enjoy the responsibilities that go with finishing, such as the risk of failure.

- Have some of the players been “over coached” in passing the ball, and continue to do so “one too many times” in the opponent’s penalty area?

Again, we are looking at a good, positive, and well organized training session to solve some of these problems, and also the opportunity to get to know our players and ourselves a little better.

### **Buildup**

We now move on to one of the most important parts of the finishing training session, and often the most neglected. Finishing practice must take place under the most realistic conditions, short of a match. It is necessary to have a full-size goal and warmed-up goalkeepers who are also being coaching – in other words, goalkeepers who are required to perform seriously.

It is very helpful to have a good supply of soccer balls. At the advanced level, we can use our defending players to perform realistically: to place themselves in good defending positions, to block a shot, to chase an opponent that has passed them, and generally to apply pressure as directed by the coach.

The elements of **speed, space, and opposition** are used by the coach to condition during the training sessions.

It is very important to remember that these elements are interrelated, and the imaginative coach can use a large number of variations. The end of this chapter will show some examples.

During any training session, the coach must work hard at observing as many relevant points as possible that will enable the player to benefit from even one session. The coach should understand that as the player prepares the foot he/she must be aware of certain points to look for. Just prior to the shot the player must know

- The position of the goalkeeper:  
This will help the selection of the area of the goal to shoot at.
- The need for accuracy:  
At the moment of striking the ball, the head must be down and steady.

The contact must be through the middle or the top half of the ball.

### **Buildup**

The following examples will be demonstrated during this course. The coach should understand that these are a very small selection of the great number of activities and exercises available to the imaginative, creative coach.

Three players in each group set up 25 yards from goal. The player shooting faces the goal, and the other “servers” stand 5 yards to either side. On a signal, a server serves the ball and the player is required to control and to get the shot off. The server challenges immediately after serving the ball. The coach observes and controls the variations found necessary.

### **Pressure Activity 3 vs. 2 + 1 Goalkeeper**



- Develop a series of plays to get the third attacker free to take shots from the edge of the penalty area. Players must constantly work to get off as many shots as possible in the time allowed (3 minutes).
- The rest of the team retrieves balls and then rotates.
- All players should participate in all positions irrespective of their normal team positions (in the older age groups, goalkeepers should play in goal).

**2 vs. 1 in the attacking third**

- Emphasis is on getting the shot off quickly.

## Combination plays

### Scissors/Take over

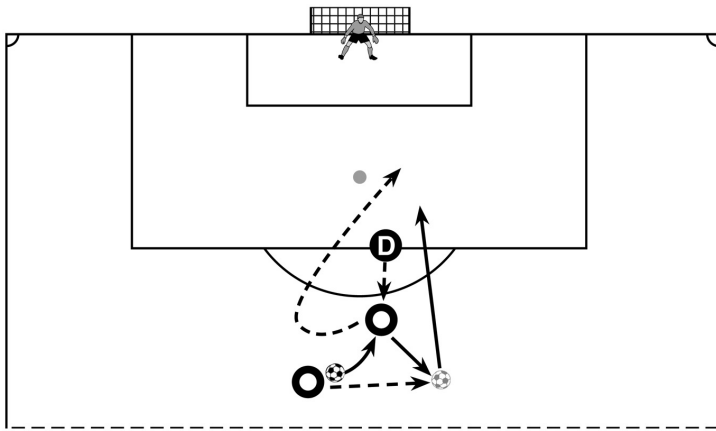


Figure 17-1

### Double Pass

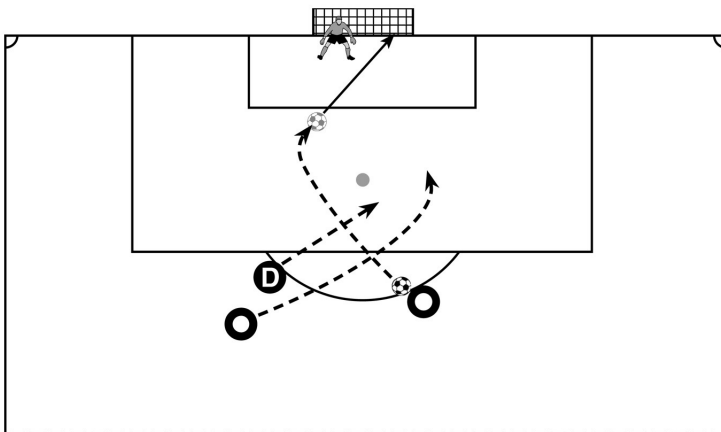


Figure 17-2

### Crossing and Finishing

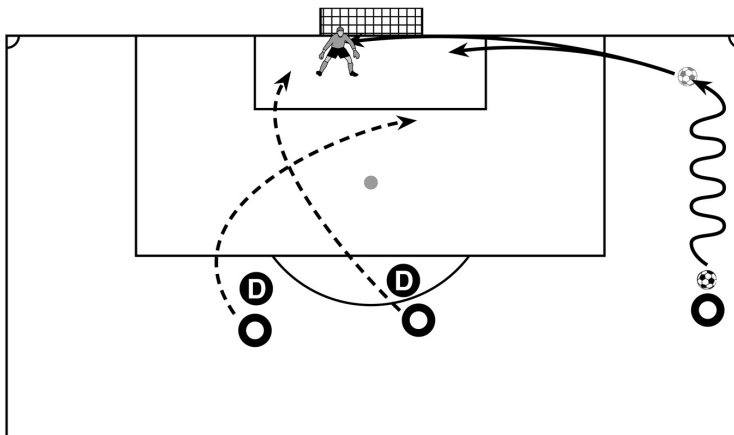


Figure 17-3

### Check and Switch

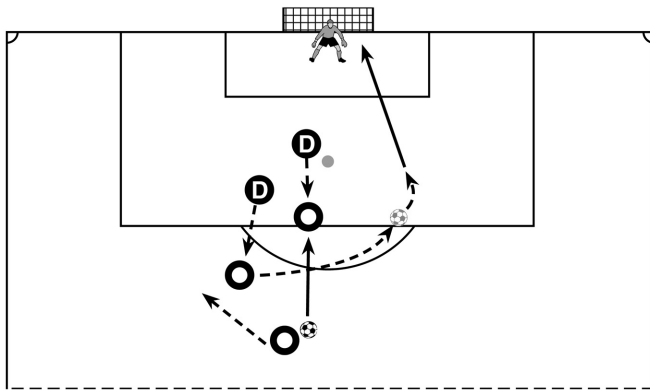


Figure 17-4

### Crossover

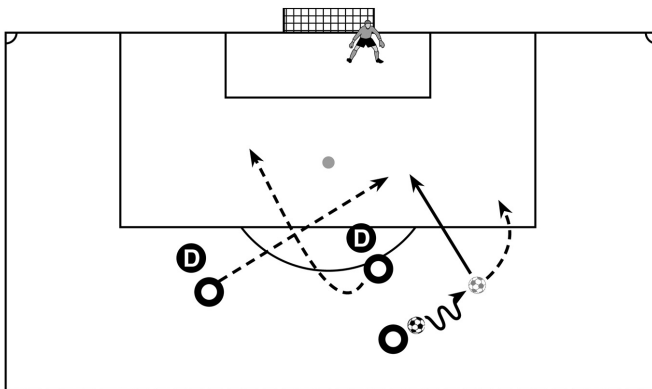


Figure 17-5

As stated earlier, these examples are a guide and can be used as is or modified to suit the coach and the team's requirements. Remember that if players cannot shoot accurately without pressure, then it is very unlikely that they will do so under pressure. This is a developmental process and gradual buildup is important. Players need to experience success before the next challenge is presented to them.



## Observation Checklist - GOALKEEPING

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- \_\_\_ Positioning
- \_\_\_ Awareness
- \_\_\_ Leadership
- \_\_\_ Communication
- \_\_\_ Decisiveness
- \_\_\_ Mechanics
  - \_\_\_ ground balls
- \_\_\_ Mechanics
  - \_\_\_ low drives
- \_\_\_ Mechanics
  - \_\_\_ high balls
- \_\_\_ Mechanics
  - \_\_\_ crosses
- \_\_\_ Distribution
- \_\_\_ Balance
- \_\_\_ Concentration
- \_\_\_ Understanding

# Goalkeeping

This session will focus on Goalkeeper decision making. Goalkeeper positioning will aid the goalkeeper's decision making process.

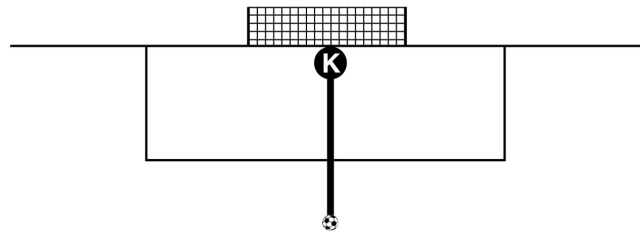
## Goalkeeper Positioning

### Precise Positioning

- All goalkeepers maximize their saving percentage by being in the right place at the right time.

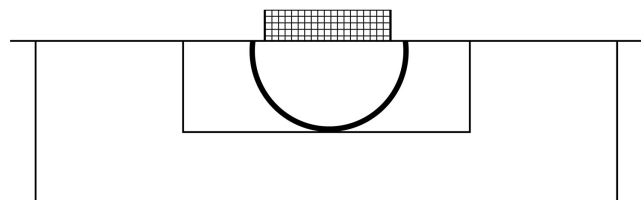
### Ball Line

- Definition: An imaginary line from the center of the goal to the ball.
- In all situations, the goalkeeper must be straddling this line.



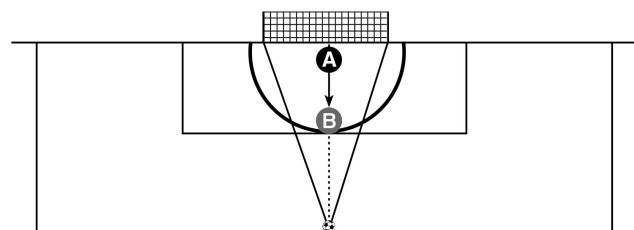
### Angle/Arc

- An approximate guide in the positioning for shots.
- Starts one yard outside the post, peaks at the center of the six yard box, and finishes one yard outside the opposite post.



### Stealing ground

- The footwork keepers use to move down the ball line towards their proper position on the angle arc.



**Stealing Ground to maximize ball line/angle arc positioning**

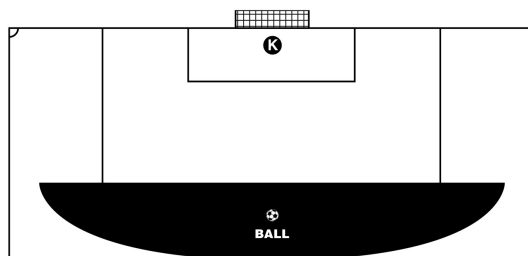
**Positioning for Shots:**

**Inside the 18**

- This is where the ball line and angle are most heavily come in to play.
- Positioning for balls.
- Reaction time is maximized.
- NOTE: Important exceptions:
  - Bouncing Balls: Can take sudden changes in direction and bounce erratically depending on field conditions.
  - Dipping Ball: The danger of the dipping ball that is shot in an arc is that it can dip just underneath the crossbar.

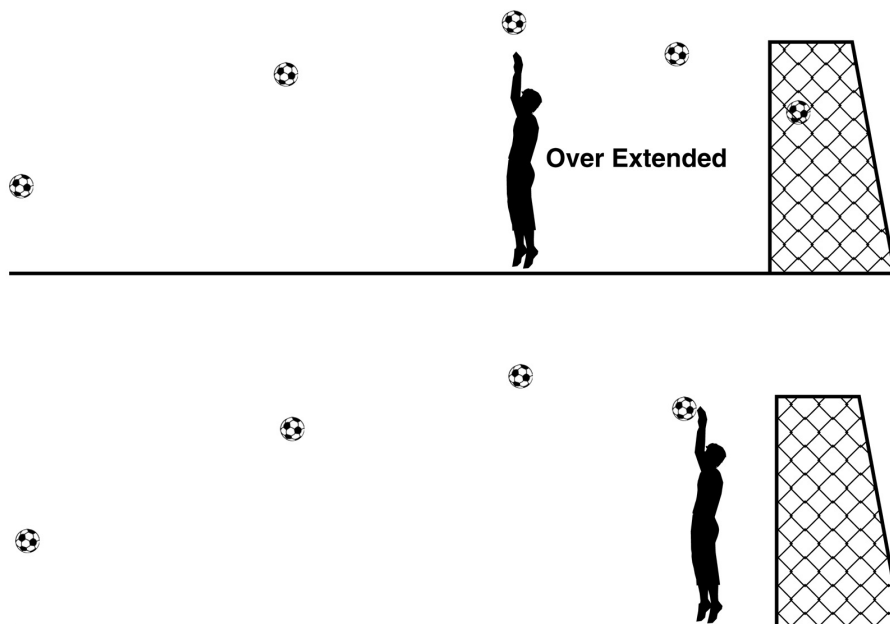
**Outside the 18**

- Different mind set.
- Positioning must be more conservative.
- Start one to two yards off of your goal line.
- WHY?
- Ball is longer in flight and the keeper will have more time to adjust to the ball.
- Footwork back to bar is very difficult.



Consequence of being too far off the line: Ball apexing over keeper and dropping into the goal.

With a shot being taken from the outside the 18 or bouncing, we play the percentages that we can cover most of the balls hit to our left or right with good footwork and diving technique while at the same time not allowing a high shot to beat us over the top.







### **Exceptions to the Ball Line**

#### **Corner Kicks**

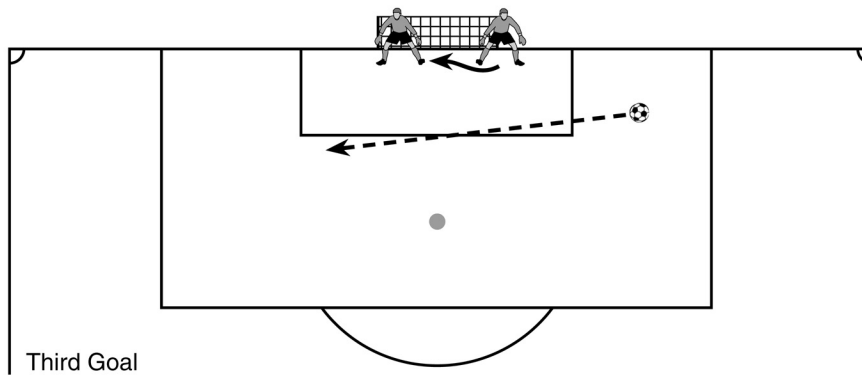
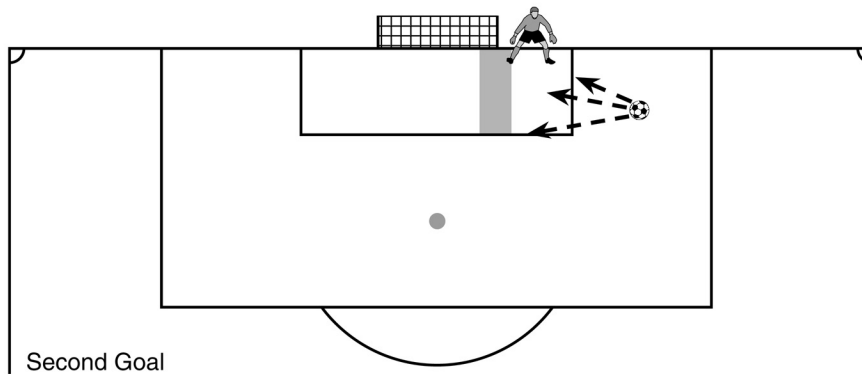
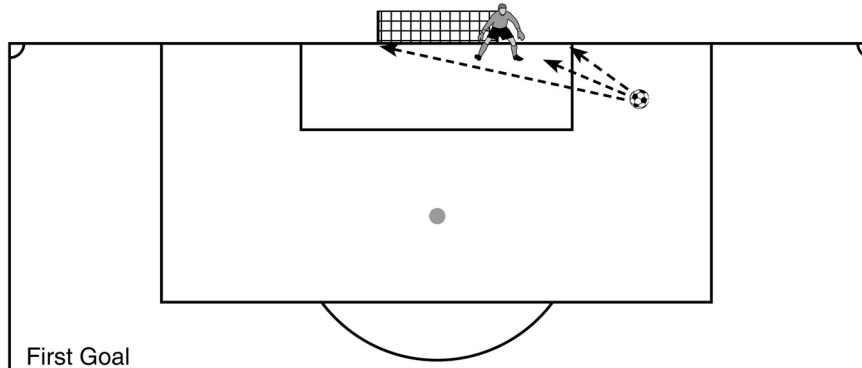
- Goalkeeper is no longer straddling the ball line because the threat is the cross and not the shot.

#### **Wall Building**

- Ultimately, the placement of the wall is the goalkeeper's responsibility.
- Tallest player to shortest.
- Start from the near post.
- Trying to create a funnel to the center of the goal.
- The keeper concedes the upper corners due to the difficulty of the shot.
- The number of players in the wall depends on the placement (angle and/or distance) of the free kick.

**Three Goal Situations**

- **First Goal** is the actual goal -the GK must be patient and remain just outside the near post in case of a direct shot.
- **Second Goal** is the 'goal' defined by the near post to approximately the six yard box the GK is looking to intercept the pass across the 6 to the oncoming striker.
- **Third Goal** is the space behind the GK from the center of the goal to the far post - the GK must cover using footwork into this space.



## Vertical Positioning

### Defending Third

- Position should be 1 to 2 yards off line for balls outside 18 yard box.
- Advanced male players can stretch positioning to 3-4 yards off line.
- Inside the 18, play the ball line/angle arc position.

### Middle Third

- 6 to 12 yards off goal line.
- Shape: Sprinter's stance to gain ground on through ball or bad touch.
- Distance off line dictated by ability to cover shot back to the bar.

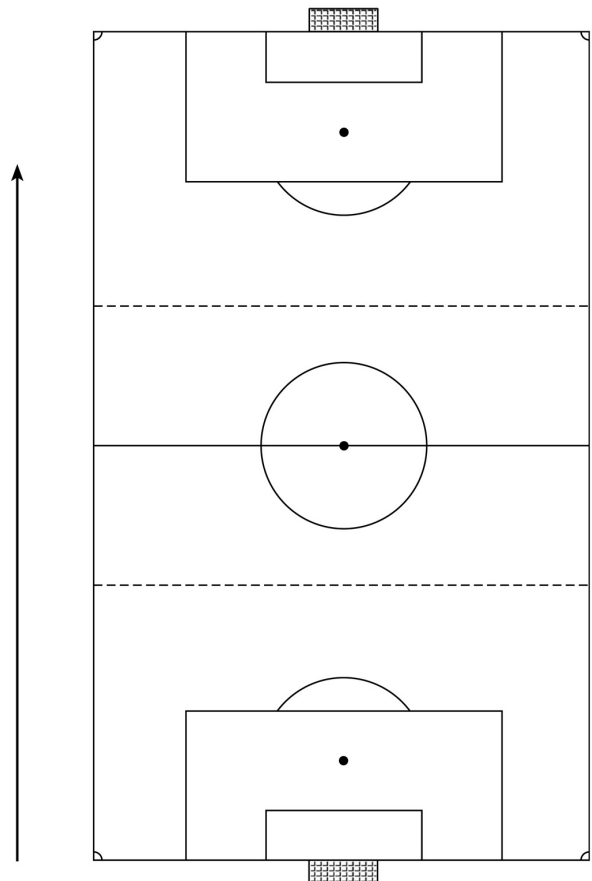
### Attacking Third

- Position should be, at minimum, top of the 18.
- Function as a support player.
- Keep in verbal contact with defense.

**Attacking third**  
 Positioning should be, at minimum, top of the 18  
 Function as support player  
 Keep in verbal contact with defense a

**Middle third**  
 6 to 12 yards off goal line  
 Shape: Sprinter's stance to gain ground on through ball or bad touch  
 Distance off line dictated by ability to cover shot back to the bar

**Defending third**  
 Position should be 1 to 2 yards off line for balls outside 18 yard box  
 Inside the 18, play the ball line/angle arc position



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## Communication

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Communication is an important factor between the goalkeeper and her/his teammates. There can be no misunderstanding about defensive and attacking responsibilities involving the goalkeeper. Communicating with and organizing the defense effectively is as important as any other aspect of the position.

### Using the voice to make saves, not the hands.

A knowledgeable goalkeeper who is able to read the game can place his/her players in positions where the attack can be stopped before reaching the goal or forcing the attacking team to play poor percentage shots and service.

### Why do goalkeepers have to take this responsibility?

- It helps establish authority and leadership.
- They are the last line of defense and have a better vision of the field and can see how attacks develop.
- There are two essential elements in good communication.

### What To Communicate And How To Communicate

#### What to Communicate

What the goalkeeper communicates must be information and encouragement. This will fall into five main areas:

1. It is invaluable for the goalkeeper to communicate information about the blind side situation on the opposite side of the field to the ball. For example, when the ball is on the left flank the goalkeeper should observe the marking on the right flank. The goalkeeper should let teammates know when an attacker is trying to get behind the defense on the weak side.
2. When the play is around the penalty area and particularly when opponents play the ball backwards, defenders very often fail to close on the ball to prevent a shot on goal. The goalkeeper should encourage the appropriate player to apply immediate pressure.
3. In some situations a teammate will be in possession of the ball and facing his/her own goal and therefore not precisely aware of the situation at her/his back. The goalkeeper, by clear communication can advise the player in possession in the decision making process. It may be to pass to the keeper, to put the ball out of play or which way to turn with the ball.
4. The goalkeeper must communicate his/her intentions as early as possible to avoid confusion or a possible collision with a teammate moving to play the same ball.
5. The goalkeeper should encourage transitional play.

#### How to Communicate

There are four factors in effective communication. Communication should be:

1. Loud & Clear
2. Calm
3. Concise
4. Timely
  - a. Clarity of voice and information is essential and the call must be loud enough for the players to hear. Goalkeepers must not be afraid to turn up the volume.
  - b. The voice, while being authoritative and decisive, must also be calm.
  - c. The call should be to the point.
  - d. The call from the goalkeeper must be early. The purpose of calling is to give information to teammates in time for effective action to be taken.

**Terms**

The goalkeeper must develop a glossary of terms that the team can agree on and understand the exact meaning of each one. Examples: (Ask students to come up with as many as they can and briefly discuss each one)

- Away
- Contain
- Stand him/her up
- Tackle
- Push left/right
- Don't dive in
- Pressure ball
- Cover
- Balance
- Track your runner
- Push up/out
- Drop
- Step up

**Information**

Must be specific, not general information.

In order to eliminate confusion, it is imperative to put a name to a specific job.

**Examples:**

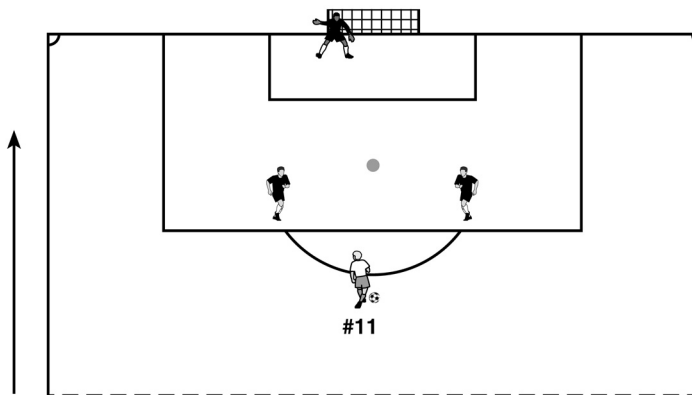
Good communication "Jill, get goal side of #10!"

Poor communication: "Mark up!"

Using the term "mark up" is so general that players will not always know what they we supposed to do. If the communication does not specify who is to do what, then by the time the players figure it out among themselves, the damage has already been done. Whenever possible identify teammate by name and opposition by number.

**Example: Diagram One**

The other team has the ball and is counter attacking. The keeper has two defenders who are equally distant from the player with the ball. What should be said?



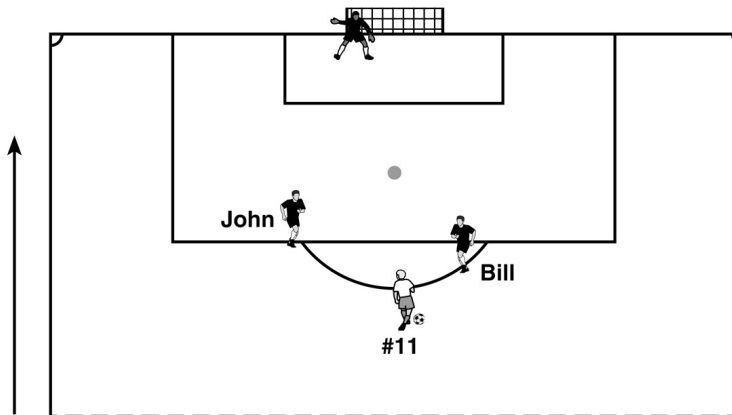
**Get the keeper off the line**

For balls outside the box, the instruction from the keeper should be simply "Go to the ball". This will cause defenders to communicate and decide who is first defender and who is second defender.

If defenders don't communicate and Bill thinks that John is going in step up to pressure and vice versa, then the attacker only has to beat one of them to get into a prime scoring opportunity.

In this situation the goal keeper could put a name to a specific job: "Bill, pressure ball" If Bill steps up, he's done his job. If he doesn't and the player gets in and/or scores, then it will be obvious to everyone that it was Bill's responsibility and he did not deal with the situation properly.

In the second diagram, Bill has put pressure on the ball and John is in a good covering position. To help make play predictable, the keeper can instruct Bill to "Push him right!" and if he gets beat by a touch or a dribble, then John is there to cover.



**Some things Keepers should avoid:**

- **Eliminate "cheerleading"**

That is what your parents are for. "Cheerleading" is not productive and is annoying to defenders who will ultimately tune you out.

Yelling at teammates, Keepers must try to remember that you are not Zerga and are not in the World Cup. You need to give support to your teammates in order to get them to work FOR you, not the other way around. If a keeper finds it necessary to bark at a player, they must do so sparingly. Have your keeper think of how they would like their teammates to respond to them after giving up a soft goal.

It is always a good idea for keepers to double check with teammates on their positioning or marking assignments. To assume that they "had" someone could be costly. If the tactical communication is good, then the defender need not worry about looking foolish by having players running behind him/or her and scoring. Most defenders come to expect and appreciate a goalkeeper who keeps them focused and on their toes.

**Introduce the "Keeper" call.**

- Let your team know you want to get it.
- Have each keeper put the ball on the ground.
- They shuffle, ran, skip, bounce around.
- When coach yells "basket" each keeper scoops the ball nearest them and freezes. All keepers yell "Keeper" and scoop the nearest ball and freeze in a good finished position.
- Each dropped ball must be picked up as quickly as possible with a keeper call and then brought into the basket

**The Basics (getting started)**

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**Focus:**

- Basic Stance 5 Minutes
- Footwork: Shuffle, Mini shuffle, Side on 5 minutes
- Basic Catching: basket, contour, side contour, high contour 20 minutes.
- Associated Handling: 20 minutes.
  - Front smother
  - Collapse dive
  - Tipping
  - Boxing



## **Contour Catching Coaching Points**

### **Technical Coaching Points**

The ability to handle balls cleanly and consistently comes from the proper coaching of hand and arm technique.

### **The Vocabulary**

There is a rationale for how and why goalkeepers use their hands and arms in a certain way. If any one of these areas is neglected, catching percentages go down drastically.

The contour of the ball is round. It is very difficult to catch a round object with two flat surfaces. Therefore, when fielding a shot the goalkeeper must prepare his or her hands in a shape modeling the CONTOUR of the ball thus we will call this the "Contour Catch". The hands must provide a pocket for the ball to fit into comfortably. Many keepers do not understand why they drop so many balls. There is a myth that just by putting two hands up, the ball will stay where it belongs. Not so. There are micro technical considerations that must be addressed.

### **Hard hands/soft hands**

Let's focus on the fingers or more specifically the thumbs. These two digits are the key to solid catching. Poor placement will result in allowing the ball goes through the hands and off of the face (or worse, the GOAL!) Ideally, they should be about an inch to an inch and a half apart.

Next, the fingers should be spread wide and flexed. The initial contact should be with the tips of the fingers and not the palms. Immediately after contact the fingers should tighten slightly to maintain a grip on the ball. The quieter sounding catches usually indicate good fingertip contact. It is a great complement for a keeper to be told he/she has "soft" hands.

Conversely, when a keeper attempts to catch the shot and the resulting sound is as if someone had been slapped, that would be considered "hard hands" and needs immediate attention! In this instance, the hands may be too close together and the fingers are not prepared in the shape of the ball.

### **The Arms**

The arms should be extended outwards, slightly flexed at the elbow and roughly but not quite parallel to each other, in order to meet the ball. If the arms are extended straight out, a keeper ends up resembling Frankenstein and will catch very little because it is hard to get the palms facing the ball. If the arms are bent close to the body, the elbows are pulled apart which in turn turns the thumbs down making it also difficult to catch consistently.

### **Introduction to Control Zone**

- Exercises to develop technique of contour catches
- Each (player) keeper with a ball in their hands
- Coach tells all keepers to start moving around like a goalkeeper, jogging, shuffling, even skipping, while holding the ball in a contour catch position.
- Players can now bounce the ball and make contour catch.

### **Teach Setting for a Shot**

Introduce "Training"- the goalkeeper ready position: Lightly bouncing dancing on the toes alternating feet.

- The rhythm is:
  - Training (bounce) dance.
  - Set.
  - Server bounces the ball at keeper.
  - Keeper makes save.



- Now keepers go back to moving around but must stop and set before bouncing and saving.
- Make sure everyone tries to catch the ball on the way UP, around waist height. The ball should be cushioned with a contour catch and there should be little or no sound on contact.

### **High contour**

Now have keepers toss the ball in the air and try to catch above the head. Arms should be outstretched in order to take the ball as high as possible and the catch should be made in front of the head. The fingers should be spread and slightly flexed to form a contour that will fit around the ball. The head should be steady. It is important that the ball is brought to the body and secured as quickly as possible.

This will be difficult for the younger keepers so encourage them to collect the ball with a contour catch after the first bounce.

### **Side Contour**

- The side contour catch should only be used when there isn't enough time to get the body behind the ball.
- Have keepers in pairs with one ball.
- Player with ball lobs underhand to either side of the keeper who makes a side contour catch.
- Progress into bouncing the ball and overhand throws.
- After each side contour catch the ball should be hugged to the chest (putting the ball away).

### **Basket Catch Coaching Points**

#### **Technical Coaching Points**

For balls on the ground

- Legs are slightly apart, not wide enough for a ball to go through, with the knees bent slightly so that balance and mobility are maintained or:
- Place one knee on the ground, the other bent at a right angle and the body square to the ball.
- Get as much of the body behind the ball as possible.
- Prepare the hands with the palms facing the ball.
- Hands are placed lightly on the ground and under the ball creating a ramp.
- The arms are parallel.
- Arms are out in front of body so that the legs/knees do not get in the way.
- Stance is staggered, legs apart, one foot slightly in front of the other, so that balance and mobility are maintained.
- Knees are bent slightly.
- With hands on ground and underneath the ball will create a ramp for the ball to go up the arms and into the chest. Upper body is bent at the waist so that the ball cannot pop free.

#### **Basket in the air**

- Get as much of the body behind the ball as possible.
- Prepare the hands with the palms facing the ball.
- Arms are parallel and extended slightly to meet the ball.
- The contact surface for the ball is on the forearm.
- As the ball makes contact with the forearms, upper body folds over so ball is secure.





### **Basket to the Front Smother**

Sometimes a goalkeeper must save forward and end up on the ground.

Situations are:

- hard low shots.
- skipping shots.
- wet conditions.

In order to get as much of the body behind the ball and make a secure save, the keeper's body will have to get low and come forward to meet the ball.

- When a keeper is attacking a ball like this, the forward momentum should continue after the save. This is easier to accomplish by dropping to both knees just before contacting the ball.
- The ball is in the basket and since the body should already be low to the ground, the forearms make the contact with the ground. The ball is secure against the breast plate.
- If done properly, there should be no pain. It doesn't hurt.
- A keeper must never take his/her arm off the ball in order to resist or break their fall.

### **Exercises for developing the basket catch technique.**

- Have keepers in pairs with one ball.
- Server rolls the ball along the ground for keeper to make the basket catch.
- Server tosses ball around knee height and then at the waist.
- Server throws the ball in an arcing lob for keeper to make a basket catch.

### **Coaching Points**

- Keeper calls
  - Loud & Clear
  - Calm
  - Concise
  - Timely

**Calls should be made BEFORE moving to the ball not after collection.**

- Make sure that the balls are spread out.
- It's not a race. Let the keeper closest to the ball take it and go get another one.

### **Collapse Dive**

Practice taking the ball to the ground slowly.

- Rhythm:
  - Ball in Contour Catch position.
  - Training Bounce.
  - Set.
  - Attacking Step.
  - Use stepping leg to lower body slowly to the ground.
  - Finish in side position with head behind hands.
- Next teach reloading without the ball.

### **Have a contest to see who can get up the quickest while maintaining balance.**

There are six elements in the technique of dealing with crosses:

- The Starting Position.
- Judging the Flight of the Ball.
- Making an Early Decision.
- Attacking the Ball.
- Take-Off.
- Handling-Catching-Deflecting-Punching



### **The Starting Position**

The position of the goalkeeper in relation to the goal depends primarily on two factors:

- The distance of the ball from the goal.
- The angle between the ball and the goal.

In diagram (#1) the ball is about 30 yards from the goal about even with the outside 18 yard line. The goalkeeper is 6 yards from the goal line and on the shooting line.

In diagram (#2) the ball is near to the touch line and about 18 yards out. The goalkeeper is about three yards from the goal line and on the shooting line.

In diagram (#3) the ball is near to the goal line and near the edge of the penalty area. The goalkeeper is about half a yard from the goal line and about 3 yards from the near post.

In every case the goalkeeper's position must enable her/him to observe through 180'. The stance should be open and the body position always in the center of the shooting angle.

### **Assessing the Flight of the Ball**

The most important factor in assessing the flight of the ball is to wait until the ball has been kicked before making a move.

The goalkeeper must assess three things before moving:

1. The line along which the ball is traveling.
2. The pace at which the ball is traveling.
3. The trajectory of the ball including "reading" any swerve that may be expected.

Only when an assessment of these three factors has been made can the goalkeeper make an accurate decision and purposeful movement.

### **Making an Early Decision**

After assessing the above, the goalkeeper must decide whether to attack the incoming ball or to stay and protect the goal. This decision must be made as early as possible.

If there is any doubt about being able to get to the ball the goalkeeper must stay and defend the goal. He/she must adjust the position to be in line with the ball and the goal and if possible to move down that line to narrow the shooting angle.

Once the decision has been made to attack the ball, then that decision is final and positive.

### **Attacking the Ball**

**There are three instructions to remember when attacking the ball:**

1. Move late.
2. Move quickly.
3. Take the ball at the highest possible point in its trajectory.

**There are four advantages in delaying movement to the ball.**

1. More time is given to judge the trajectory and pace of the ball.
2. More time is given for teammates to clear a path to the ball.
3. A later movement means that the goalkeeper must move quickly and therefore will be able to jump higher.
4. Because greater height is achieved, the ball can be taken earlier in flight.

**Goalkeepers will take three types of crosses when attacking the ball:**

1. When moving into line towards the ball.
2. When moving into line away from the ball.
3. When moving across the line of flight.



### **Take off**

Once the keeper has successfully positioned him/herself, then they must attempt to win the ball above head height.

- The take off is one footed.
- Transfer of momentum: The knee drives up toward the ball while the arms are simultaneously extending to the ball.
- Optimally, the knee/leg closest to pressure is the "drive" leg in order to protect the otherwise exposed midsection. It also enables the keeper to attain greater height.
- The hands prepare for a high contour catch.

### **Landing**

One or two footed. This depends on the situation and how comfortable the landing will be.

#### **Depending on pressure, the ball can be held a few different ways:**

- If the keeper is going to the ground or he/she is making physical contact with teammates or opponents the ball must be placed in the basket to protect it from being knocked out.
- If there is little to no pressure, keeper can keep the ball in front of them while looking for throwing or kicking distribution options.
- The catch is held high so that momentum to the ball takes them beyond the challenge.

### **Handling- Catching-Deflecting-Punching**

Handling-Catching; arms should be outstretched in order to take the ball as high as possible and the catch should be made in front of the head. The fingers should be spread and slightly flexed to form a contour that will fit around the ball.

The head should be steady. It is important that the ball is brought to the body and secured as quickly as possible.

When the goalkeeper makes contact with the cross the first priority will be to catch the ball. There are two circumstances in which the goalkeeper will choose not to catch the ball.

1. The ball may be too high to catch or because the goalkeeper is moving backwards. When either of these happens the goalkeeper should deflect the ball out of play for a corner.
2. When there is strong challenge from one or more opponents. When this happens the goalkeeper should punch the ball. The golden rule is "When in doubt, punch it out."

### **Deflective Saves**

#### **Technical Coaching Points**

Not all shots can or should be caught.

A goalkeeper needs to have a variety of ways to deal with parrying the ball out of danger.

#### **Hard shots**

- On hard swerving or skipping shots, if a keeper cannot get both hands to the ball a heel of the hand can be used.
- This hard surface of the hand will help drive the ball out of danger and allow the goalkeeper to recover and get into position.



- The parry should be directed to the sidelines.
- Some goalkeepers at higher levels use their fists to create a hard surface to re direct a shot that is too hot to handle.
- On shots that are almost out of the keeper's reach, the use of the fingertips can be just enough to change the path of the ball away from the goal mouth.
- For most shots this will be the lower hand.
- Some shots, like high ones over the keeper's head and away from the body, may be saved with the upper hand.

### **Punching - Two Fisted Technique**

This is the best technique when attacking the ball along the line of flight. Contact is made with the surface of both fists. The fists strike through the bottom half of the ball to propel the ball high and the arms end fully extended.

### **One Fisted Technique**

This is normally the best technique when attacking the ball across the line of flight. The punch is made by the fist of the inside arm. By using the goal side arm a greater swing of the arm is facilitated exerting more force on the ball. Contact on the ball should be on the lower half.

### **Crosses to the Posts**

Crosses to the Near Post Area:

- When the ball is crossed to the near post area the goalkeeper must be positioned within touching distance of the near post. If the decision is made not to come for the ball then that position must be held. If the decision is made to come for the cross, he/she must make sure that she/he makes contact with the ball either by catching it or punching it. The route taken must be the shortest to the ball.

### **Crosses to the Far Post:**

- If the goalkeeper has been drawn to the near post and the ball is crossed to the far post, he/she must recover across the goal.
- As the goalkeeper turns to make the run he/she must turn INTO the field of play, never away from it.
- The goalkeeper must take a direct route to the far post. It is important that the goalkeeper gets ball side/goal side before thinking about narrowing the angle.
- Once in position that post is now the near post and we refer to the above.
- The final decision concerning all crosses is whether to catch, punch or deflect the ball. If the catch is made then the ball must be "put away" i.e. securing the ball to the chest.
- If the ball is punched, the height, distance and angle of the clearance are critical.
- If the ball is deflected the ball should be played to safety, preferably over the goal line.

### **Footwork**

Preparing to attack a cross requires a few different footwork combinations.

- Short, quick preparation steps.
- Long strides.
- Cross over.
- Backpedaling.
  - When a cross is sent into the area, the goalkeeper should use short preparation steps in order to get into the line of flight of the ball and to compensate for any flight changes the ball may take.
  - The long stride is used to cover distance if the ball is longer in flight.
  - The cross over is used to get to the ball that is going to land in an arc toward the back post.
  - Backpedaling is used for balls to the back post that need to be caught from the goal line to approximately three yards out.



## Hand Distribution

### Technical Coaching Points

#### Bowling

A very accurate short range (1-20 yards) hand distribution

- Ball is cradled with hand and forearm.
- Keeper steps towards target as the arm is brought back.
- Arm swings like a pendulum low to the ground.
- Ball is released quickly but smoothly on the ground.
- Arm and back leg come forward to follow through.

#### Baseball Throw

An accurate, intermediate style (20-40 yards) of hand distribution.

- Ball is in the palm of the throwing hand.
- Keeper steps toward target.
- Body gets low to the ground similar to motion of a pitcher.
- Ball is thrown hard and low.
- Throwing arm and back leg follow through.

#### Sling Throw

Medium to long range hand distribution (20-50+ yards).

- Body is in a side on position to the target.
- Front arm is pointing to the target.
- Back arm has ball cradled between the hand and forearm.
- Front foot steps toward the target while back leg pushes off.
- Throwing arm is kept straight and is brought over the top of the head in vertical arc.
- Ball is released at about the top of the arc and comes off the finger tips last.
- There should be backspin on the ball to help maintain accuracy.
- Throwing arm and leg follow through and finish in front of the body.

## Foot Distribution Coaching Points

### Technical Coaching Points

#### Goal Kick

It is important that a goalkeeper be able to take goal kicks that have distance and accuracy.

If a goalkeeper cannot take this kick properly, it exposes a team tactically.

#### If the keeper takes the kicks but they cannot provide adequate distance:

- The team will be put in a position to try to work the ball out of their defensive third and exposing the team to counterattacks.

#### If the keeper has no accuracy:

- A target player who is strong in the air will rarely be utilized and the team will have a more difficult time keeping possession.

#### If the defender must take the kick:

- This allows the attacking team to position themselves closer to the goal by keeping everyone in an on-side position once the ball is in play.
- This gives the attacking team a numerical advantage up field.

#### Techniques of kicking a long ball

- Approach to ball is about 4-6 yards.
- Angle of approach is roughly 45 degrees.
- Speed of approach varies - should be about a jog pace.



- Head steady and focused on the ball.
- Arms out for balance.
- Plant foot about even with the ball and a step away.
- Kicking leg brought back, bent at the knee.
- Brought through forcefully, making contact with the bottom back half of the ball with the instep of the foot.
- Follow through and land on kicking foot in front of body. Ball should have backspin. Any side spin will negatively affect accuracy.

### **Punting**

- Can release ball with either or both hands. Novice should try each style to find out which is most comfortable and consistent.
- Head down eyes focused on the ball.
- Backswing with kicking leg.
- Plant foot aimed at target.
- Plant leg slightly bent.
- Contact point is the laces of the shoe.
- Ankle locked.
- Follow through.

### **Half Volley (Drop kick)**

#### **Technical Coaching Points**

- An effective foot distribution.
- If done properly it can give the keeper the ability to play a long, accurate, quick and manageable distribution.
- Especially useful into the wind.
- Ball can be dropped from the right, left, or both depending upon success rate and preference.
- Timing is the key.
  - The ball must be struck just as it hits the ground.
  - Too early and it becomes a punt that is hit low.
  - Too late and it will probably come off the shin and go about 15 yards.
  - The ball is released from the hand(s) at waist height or below.
  - Plant foot is placed next to the spot where the ball will hit the ground.
  - Kicking foot/leg swings straight back.
  - Upper body is bent slightly forward and the head is steady and the eyes are focused on the ball.
  - The kicking leg swings forward with the toe pointed down.
  - The contact surface on the foot is the middle to upper foot on the laces.
  - After ball is kicked, kicking foot follows through and lands in front of the planted foot.

### **Footwork**

#### **Technical Coaching Points**

##### **Training Bounce**

- The preparation bounce when getting ready for action.
- A light bouncing on the balls of the feet.

##### **Stealing Ground**

The steps a goalkeeper takes toward the attacker as he/she narrows the angle on a shot.

##### **Lateral Shuffle**

- The feet do not cross.
- Movement used to cover short distances (1ft-4-yds).
- Keeps goalkeeper in a balanced and square position to deal with a shot.



### **Mini Shuffle**

- Like the lateral shuffle, just used in much shorter increments.
- Mini shuffle used for saves like the collapse or extension dive.

### **Crossover Step**

Similar to the lateral shuffle but

- The crossover step helps a keeper cover more ground quickly (4-8 yards).
- Used when the ball changes the point of attack and there is no immediate threat of a shot.
- There is usually the transition from crossover into a lateral shuffle when shot is about to be taken.
- Initial step taken to gain momentum and cover ground between keeper position and shot directed to far post area.

### **Sprinting**

- Used when leaving the goal line to make any number of saves within and beyond the 18.

### **Training Activities Drills**

#### **Footwork**

##### **Example**

- Line of balls one yard apart (vertically).
- Shuffling in and out.
- Up 2 back 1 vertically and/or laterally.
- High knees.
- Facing one direction, foot over ball and touching in-between balls.
- Circling ball
- Two footed jumping.
- One footed jumping.
- Side on jumping.

#### **Breakaway**

Three types:

1. Winning the free (naked) ball.
2. Smother the shot.
3. Striker control/Play the next touch.

### **Winning the free ball**

#### **Exercise #1**

- Two keepers, two balls.
- Balls about 3-4 yards apart.
- Keepers face each other with a ball on left and right.
- One keeper is the leader and chooses a ball to attack.
- The other saves the free ball. They reload and continue for X number of repetitions.
  - This setup can be employed from the knees and feet depending on how comfortable the keeper is with the technique. Once the technique comes together, add the pressure of time (20-30 seconds).

#### **Exercise # 2**

- Half group training, half recovering.
- 5-6 balls placed randomly within an area.
- Players shuffle laterally and make breakaway save on coach's command.
- Train for one minute.
  - Variation: Coach calls out 1,2, or 3 and keepers save that number as quickly as possible.



## The Smother (Double Cobra)

"Double Cobra" - Fingers together, hands bent at the wrist forming "cobra". Bottom arm (forearm/pulse) makes contact behind and in the middle of the ball. Upper arm makes contact on the upper half, pushing ball into the ground. Hands go out and around the ball preventing the ball from popping out or being pulled away from the keeper.

### Exercise

Keepers start by lying on their side in a position with the hands to the ball in the "Double Cobra". Hands are held off of the ball and most meet the ball at the same time that the partner is sinking the ball. Train X number of reps per side and switch positions.

### Exercise

One player is the striker and picks a ball to shoot. Keeper must get there in time to save/smother.

Caution: For the sake of safety, striker should kick ball with right foot when picking the left ball and vice versa. This will help protect the keeper's fingers.

### Exercise

Goalkeeper starts on post, shuffles to ball that is 4 yards away on the goal line. After touching ball, keeper must attack stationary ball that is placed even with post, three yards away. Coach times the attack and kicks ball as keeper arrives. Variation keeper forward rolls from post to center of goal, gets shape and attacks ball.

### Exercise In Your Face

Set up: one goalkeeper in goal, one on the 18, and one striker. Two balls, one placed one step in from the post on the 18. Striker starts with back to goal and turns to shoot on goal. First keeper must save/smother the shot. If he/she cannot, second keeper must keep the ball out of the back of the net. Replace kicked ball with one from ball pile.

## Smother Game

### Exercise

- Place 2 large goals 18 yards apart.
- Place 2 balls in each net.
- Play with 2 goalkeepers.
  - Initially one keeper acts as striker.
  - Ball is in the center of the field and "striker" places a hand on the ball.
  - Keeper is positioned one "big" step away from the ball.
  - Once the "striker" removes the hand from the ball, the game is live.
  - Striker tries to score.
  - Keeper attempts to get possession.
  - If keeper gains possession, he/she must place ball on ground (to show control) and then may attack opposite goal.
  - If striker misses, keeper gets ball at midfield.
  - If keeper saves and it goes out of bounds, keeper gets possession.
  - If goal is scored, keeper becomes striker.
  - Game is played until one keeper scores 3 or with more than two keepers, winner stays on. Team competition, can progress to 3 v 3.

### Match related

- Two lines.
- One goalkeeper, three waiting off field by the post.
- Others are at the top of the D" with coach and a pile of balls.





- Coach serves ground balls, which the attacking player follows, at various speeds and angles into the box.
- Keeper must then come for the ball and win it breakaway style.
- Progress to the point where the ball served is not always to the goalkeeper's advantage.

**Caution:** *Be sure to instruct the players in the attacking role to always jump the goalkeeper.*

### **Collapse Dive**

#### **Exercise**

With ball in hand, practice the attacking step that leads into the side contour. Progress to taking the ball to the ground. Legs help bring body softly to the ground.

#### **Exercise**

- Coach, two balls, two keepers standing shoulder to shoulder.
- Coach holds a ball in each hand. Keepers must take an attacking step and save ball past coach.
- Next keeper takes a turn. Keeper works one side.
- Do this until both cross the 18 yard line.
- Backpedal and then train the other side.
- Variations
  - Same service from coach, but keepers now save across coach's body so that they are not just working one side.
  - Three goalkeepers with two balls weave for 15 yards.
  - Coach holds two balls.
  - Drops one
  - Keeper mini shuffles then saves.

#### **Exercise**

- One ball per keeper. Coach stands inside the corner of the six.
- First keeper throws ball to coach who gives hand service to the far post.
- Keeper must then get up, and cut back through the service of the next keeper without interfering with the ball.
- Look to establish a good successful rhythm then increase the difficulty of the serve.
- Progress to foot service.

#### **Exercise**

- Footwork/change of direction.
- Coach is 6-8 yards away with a pile of balls.
- Goalkeeper starts on the post, shuffles laterally to a cone placed 4-5 yards away on the goal line.
- When cone is touched, coach strikes dead ball back to the post where the keeper started.
- Coach volleys balls from acute angles at far post.

#### **Exercise**

- Collapse Dive Tag (Area depends on number of players)
  - Players start at one end of the field with a ball each.
  - Coaches start at other end, on signal coaches try to tag the keepers who are trying to reach the other end.
  - In order to avoid being tagged, player must execute a collapse dive.
  - That player only has three total collapse dives available to him/her.
  - After they use them up, must stay on feet.
  - If tagged, become a chaser.



## Extension Dive Progression

### Exercise

- Practicing the first step and explosion without the ball.
- Place two balls three yards away from the goal line and four yards apart. Have goalkeeper:
- Steal ground.
- Set.
- Mini shuffle.
- Plant with foot nearest to the ball.
- Explode over ball with the arms and outer knee providing momentum.
- Land in a balanced, two footed stance with chest facing the field.
- Add a coach a few steps away with a ball. The keepers must do the same footwork and explosion but must see if they can reach the ball with both hands.
- Progress to the coach serving balls outside the control zone with the hands. It might be necessary to add an object such as a ball or a player crouched down to encourage full explosion and extension.
- Keeper must dive "through" the ball.
- Once ball is caught, it must be the first object to hit the ground. The landing must then be distributed from the arms, to the midsection, and lastly the thigh.
- The chest should always be facing the field with little to no rolling.

### Exercise

- To encourage extension diving it will be necessary to put goalkeepers in a poor shot saving position that reduces their angle play.
- Coach hits half volleys or volleys from outside the 18.
- The keeper's position is started inside the goal. When the coach makes a move to shoot, the keeper can then steal ground and must try to make the save.
- Starting in the goal reduces the keeper's ability to maximize angle play and they will have to make more save away from the body on a higher percentage basis.

### Exercise

- Coach hits half volleys or volleys from outside the 18.
- Keeper in a push up position with knees on the goal line. This adds an athletic element of getting off of the ground and getting set and balanced for the shot.

### Exercise

- Coach serving from acute angle.
- Keeper in push up position with shoulder near post.
- When coach moves to hit ball toward far post, keeper pops up and makes save.

### Exercise

- Coach serves balls from the ground.
- Keepers start facing coach with one hand on the post.
- When coach gives the signal, keeper foot works across goal mouth toward their far post.
- The coach is bending a ball to the far post and the keeper must make the safest most efficient save.

# Tactical Development to 4s

As players become more skilled, the need to develop and become creative in their play will determine how successful their level of play will be. Tactics can be best defined as “the means by which the principles are executed.” With this definition in mind, we will devote considerable time to the field application of the principles of play. We will also consider four elements that are involved in the organization of play.

**Communication** – verbal and non-verbal signs, so very important for successful team performance.

**Leadership** – players’ willingness to assume the responsibility for taking charge on the field and being positive representatives for the coach.

**Understanding** – the awareness of what is happening, what is going to happen, or what might happen. Additionally, it is highly important for the player to know why, when, and where to do certain things.

**Execution** – actions by players which translate the principles of play into tactical play.

The following exercise will consist of three teams of four players in the following configuration:

**R = Red / B = Blue / G = Green**

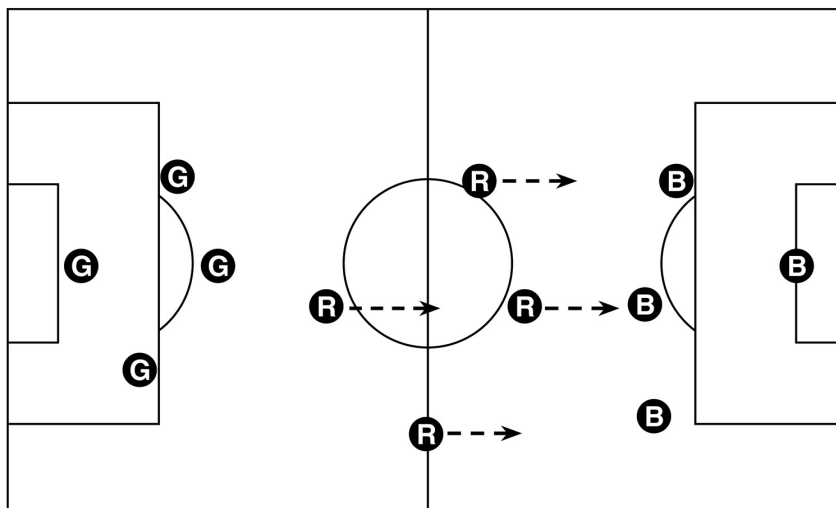


Figure 19-1

In the diagram, red is attacking and blue is defending. Green is resting. If red scores, blue clears the ball, or the ball goes out of play, the session ends. Reds will remain at the end they attacked and rest. Blue will then go the length of the field and attack the green team. The next sequence will be blue stay and rest, while green will come to attack the red defense.

For this exercise, each team should have a coach who will critique their

session during the rest periods. Comments will focus on organizing their next session on attacking/defending principles. Specific examples will be given by the coach to assist in developing more effective play.

**Attacking:** Examples should be as closely related to match conditions as possible with no restrictions, i.e., central attacking play, wing play, takeovers, diagonal or overlapping runs, or any combination that results in a shot on goal.

**Defending:** Emphasis must be the need to pressure, force errors, deny penetration, and organize good first, second, and third defender play.

### Attacking Play

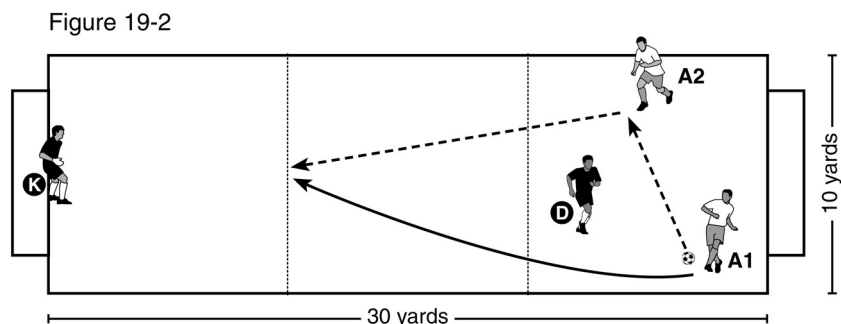
We will concentrate on attacking the goal from central positions. The greatest concentration of defenders will exist in front of the goal and in the penalty area in general. As the attackers approach the penalty area, they have the first priority of creating space. If this is successful, or as it is attempted, the speed of the attack must increase.

Delay for any reason will help the defense. The attackers must keep in mind the options as they come within range of goal. Players can pass, dribble, or shoot at goal. Attacking players must be coached to risk the play that might result in a goal. In combination plays, the speed of play is essential, and if the shot is not taken and a pass is made, then it should be directed into the space behind the defenders.

The following are examples of combination plays that can be employed to confuse the defense, and create and exploit the space at the back of the defense, leading to that all important shot at goal. Many of these examples were demonstrated at the intermediate course. However, advanced players should be playing faster against more sophisticated defenders and should be capable of performing these activities.

In all three activities the offside law applies.

Grid size is 10 x 30 yards. The game is 2 vs. 1 + goalkeeper.



### Blind side run

What you should see:

This is tight and not as easy as it looks. The timing is critical. If D stays and marks A1, then A1 has the task of getting the pass to A2 for a return pass to meet the run of A1. If D elects to mark A1 on the run, this allows A2 to cut inside and go to goal also for attackers to create overlaps, takeovers and crossovers.

Now play 4v4 in a 25x30 yard grid

In the small-sided games (4 vs. 4 vs. 4 see figure 19-1) these are the kinds of plays that should be attempted. Remember that once a play is initiated, speed is the important factor. Defenders should not be allowed to recover. All attacking players must be willing to try new things and attempt difficult techniques.

### Defending Play

All defenders must be aware of three points. Their main concern must be to restrict the time, space, and options that the attacking player has to dribble, pass, or shoot at goal.

Prevent the opponent from turning with the ball.

The idea is to prevent the turn so the opponent cannot play the ball forward. The defender must watch the opponent with the ball. (This may not be the same opponent the defender is marking).

Move to the opponent while the ball is traveling. Do not get too close. The defender must be able to see the ball to judge the feints and movements of the opponents. A position about three feet behind the opponent will allow the defender to watch the situation and react to the movements of the opponent.

The defender must concentrate and be patient! The defender must judge the correct time to tackle. Very often this is as the opponent is turning and trying to go past the defender.

Some rules for defenders:

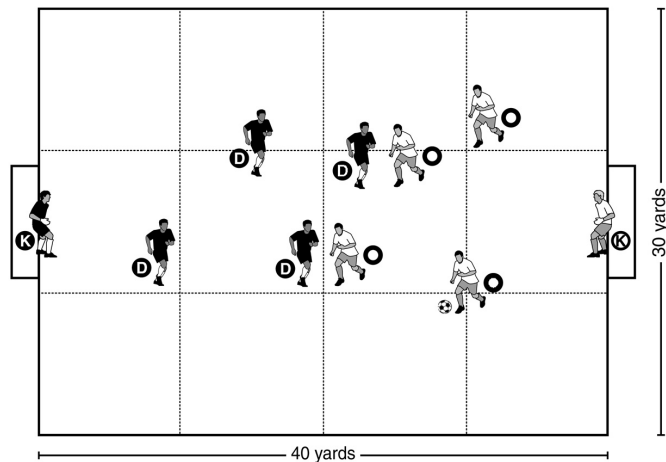
- Keep the play in front of the defense.
- Close down the opponent to prevent the forward pass.
- Be patient and stay on your feet.
- Force play in one direction, either down the touchline or across the field.
- Concentrate.

The following exercise will demonstrate these ideas:

Grid size 30 x 40 yards. The game is 4 vs. 4 + goalkeepers

- All players are encouraged to shoot. This will pressure the defenders to get into position early to stop the opponent turning or to block the shot.
- Defenders must observe two important points
  - Make early decisions. The defender nearest to the opponent with the ball must challenge.
  - Clear communication between defenders. The covering player can verbally assist and encourage the challenging player.

Figure 19-5



During the 4 vs. 4 + goalkeepers activity, we will consider more aspects of defenders' play.

- When outnumbered and retreating, a defender must apply the principle of delay, and while doing so, keep the opponents and the ball in view.
- When beaten, it is important to take the shortest route to get back goal-side of the ball.
- Try to stay goal-side in every defending play
- When marking, defenders must be aware of the position of the ball. However, it is imperative that they watch carefully for opponents making runs off the ball into positions behind the defense.

A final thought is for the defenders under pressure in their penalty area. They must make every effort to play the ball away safe.

***It should be played high, it should be played far, and it should be played wide!***



# Review

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The basic point of this course is that the advanced coach must know how to OBSERVE and EVALUATE any training session, game or activity in order to determine how to improve player performance.

The basic process of observation and evaluation followed by correction applies at all levels of coaching. Observe and evaluate. Decide what to correct. Plan how to correct it. Use the coaching cycle, buildup, and the presentation techniques to effectively make corrections.

You can and will need to change the activities, the items to be corrected, the buildups, the training groups etc., during the season. Use the same basic process each time. What you teach will change; how you teach it should not. Coach yourself before you coach others. You expect your players to improve throughout their season and careers; you should expect the same of yourself. Set goals and work to achieve them.

Above all else, have FUN!! Soccer is a great game!



# The Laws of the Game for the Advanced Coach

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## Introduction

Players in the older age divisions should become familiar with all aspects of the Laws of the Game, as should their coaches, in order to gain full enjoyment and appreciation of the game. Perhaps the simplest and most efficient method of gaining a thorough understanding of the Laws is by attending the **Basic/Regional Referee Training Course**. This course comprises approximately 8 hours of instruction and is usually offered just prior to the beginning of the season or sometime in the first few weeks. Consider attending this training session with the entire team as this would be an excellent way to ensure everyone has been exposed to an accurate explanation of the Laws of the Game. This would also later help you avoid spending valuable practice time explaining technicalities of the Law. If this training is not being offered or the team is unable to attend, ask your local director of referee instruction if an instructor would be available to review the Laws of the Game with you and your team perhaps, in a couple of special afternoon sessions.

Your players would increase their understanding of the Laws as well as their effectiveness as players by actually becoming youth referees and officiating younger age divisions as either the referee or assistant referee. This experience provides the players with some firsthand experience deciding whether or not an infraction has occurred, helps them develop respect and empathy for referees and the challenges of officiating, and adds to their maturity as players. The benefits of you, as a coach, to officiate some matches can be very worthwhile. Coaches who have done some refereeing will attest to their increased appreciation and understanding of the Laws and to an increased effectiveness as a coach because of their refereeing experiences.

Attending referee training should provide an understanding of the spirit behind the Laws of the Game and the philosophy of refereeing. Understanding this spirit and philosophy provides players and coaches with a solid foundation which will serve them well as they continue to develop their playing and/or coaching skills.

It is assumed that your players have a relatively good working knowledge of the Laws of the Game but the Laws do change, as do the AYSO National Rules and Regulations. In order to stay up to date with any recent changes, each year, you should familiarize yourself and your team with any changes. Be sure your source of information is a current AYSO edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game as well as a current copy of the AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

Many of the Laws involve understanding and applying a concept rather than memorizing a series of facts. It is your job as the coach to help your players understand and apply these concepts. As a coach of the older and more advanced players, you are challenged with the joy and sometimes frustrations of dealing with maturing young adults (teenagers!!). As these young players mature they may, on occasion, test the limits of acceptable behavior and challenge the authority of the referee as well as the coach. It is very important, to not only their development as soccer players but to their future relationship with other authority figures as well, that appropriate responses are given and examples set for these young adults. Remember that these players are in the process of forming lasting values for such concepts as honesty, truthfulness, fairness, and respect for authority along with appropriate ways to deal with perceived injustices. It is a well demonstrated fact that players on a team will collectively reflect the values and behavior of their coach. Your influence will go far beyond your player's success as soccer players!



## **The Spirit of the Game**

The Laws of the Game are intended to provide a game which is, first of all, enjoyable for the players and, secondly, enjoyable for the spectators. It is intended to be a "players' game" and interruptions or interferences in play by non players are to be minimized. Therefore, coaching during the game is only permitted in AYSO under limited conditions. Coaching in AYSO is limited to comments which instruct, encourage, and are made in a positive manner. This coaching is further limited to two coaches per team who must remain within 10 yards of the halfway line. This limited coaching is a concept to which many Americans have difficulty adapting, since this interference by non players (coaches) is common in many sports. Many of the sports with which the average American is familiar involve the active participation of the coach; indeed, in some sports, rules are often written to allow the coach to direct the action of players from the sidelines or to stop play (time-outs) to instruct the player how the "coach" wants the game to be played. It is also quite normal in other sports for the coach to be allowed to come on to the field to instruct players, voice disagreement with referees, and demand an explanation or reconsideration of a decision. The emphasis in these sports has made them into more of a "coaches' game" rather than a "players' game." In soccer, the Laws of the Game intend for something quite different to occur.

Soccer referees are instructed by the Laws to "interfere with the game as little as possible." Referees in some sports are actually required, when a rule has been broken, to stop play and not to continue play until the infraction and the violator of the infraction are verbally identified and the punishment options are explained to the team which was fouled. Indeed, it is not uncommon in some sports for considerably more time to be devoted to dealing with these interruptions than is actually spent playing the game. Many spectators and coaches have grown accustomed to being kept informed by referees as to the precise nature of the referee's decisions. Therefore, it is understandable that a common request from the novice soccer spectator, coach, or player is, "Hey, ref, what's the call?" which, as all knowledgeable soccer enthusiasts know, really translates to, "Pardon me, Mr. Referee, but please stop the players from enjoying the game while you explain to me what is going on?"

As a coach, you have the opportunity to increase the understanding of the spirit of the game for your players and for many of the parents and spectators who will be watching your games. The more knowledgeable the participant is, the more enjoyable the game. Training sessions belong to coaches and games belong to players, so do your coaching during practice and let the players make the decisions during the games. It is what makes it fun, and is what the Laws provide for as the "Spirit of the Game."

## **The Philosophy of Refereeing**

**Enjoyment, Equality, and Safety!** That is the referee's job description in three simple words. Soccer is a game, and the reason people play games is to have fun. The referee is there to facilitate a game that will provide the maximum enjoyment for the players. The referee endeavors to permit both teams an equal opportunity to play the game fairly and safely within the confines of the Laws of the Game.

Players and coaches alike must remember that the Laws of the Game for soccer require referees to adopt a philosophy of refereeing considerably differently than referees in many other sports. The Laws of soccer intend "...that the game be played with as little interference as possible..." Referees are instructed to "penalize only deliberate breaches of the Law" and avoid stopping the game for "...trifling or doubtful..." violations. Play should be allowed to continue even if an obvious foul has occurred if stopping the game would, in fact, be "...giving an advantage to the offending team."

Players and coaches must also remember that referees have considerable authority and flexibility when determining whether the spirit of the Law has been broken enough to deserve being penalized or that, in the interest of the flow of the game; play should be allowed to continue. Referees differ, as do players and coaches, and opinions may vary. However, it is only the referee's opinion, which determines when play should be stopped. Dissent with referee decisions is unsporting and counterproductive to team success. Coaches must instill in their players the ability to respect and accept referee decisions and to maintain their composure and focus on the game.





Referee and assistant referee decisions are communicated through a simple series of hand and flag signals. It is not required that referee decisions be explained or justified. Interrupting play to explain or justify a call, in older player's games often encourages debate and can be the catalyst which precipitates misconduct. Referees signal their decisions and resulting restarts quickly and with minimum interruptions in play. With only three exceptions, players may immediately restart play. The three exceptions when players must wait for the referee's signal (whistle) to restart are kickoffs, penalty kicks and when the referee tells the players to wait.

This philosophy of refereeing is a concept that each referee develops through personal interpretation of the spirit and intent of the Laws of the Game. Referees strive for uniformity of interpretation, just as players strive for excellence in playing skills and coaches strive to develop successful teams. With varying degrees of success, each does the best they can, and we should all recognize and appreciate the efforts of one another. Understanding the philosophy of refereeing will help players and coaches better understand referee decisions. In most instances, those decisions require judgment based on the spirit of the Law rather than the rote application of the letter of the Law.

Good players and good coaches know the rules and more importantly they understand the Spirit of the Game and the Philosophy of Refereeing. Enjoy your experiences and an AYSO coach and help your players get the maximum benefit from their AYSO experience. Remember...

**In AYSO, it's about more than the game!**









