

Cumberland United Soccer Club

Micro Soccer Coaching Program

Pavel Cancura



Micro Soccer Program



Dear Cumberland Micro Coach,

First of all, I'd like to welcome you to the CUSC coaching staff for another year. With a successful year behind us, and a new season ahead, there are many new initiatives being started at CUSC, and it is an exciting time to be a part of this growing club.

As coaches of Micro soccer, our aim is to introduce our youngest members to the sport, and to help them both enjoy and learn the basics of soccer and sport in general. Once again we are engaging some of our most talented senior youth players to help inspire and develop our Micro players at the U5 and U6 levels. The U7s will continue playing small sided games each week, and I hope this booklet will help you organize and run effective practices with them prior to each of these games.

This booklet, and the things discussed and worked on in the classroom/gym at our coaching clinics, are designed to help the parent/coach who may or may not have experience coaching or playing soccer to put together solid practice plans and run a successful season with their Micro team.

Specifically, the primary objectives are to:

- Prepare coaches working with players aged 4 – 7 years old, by expanding their knowledge and understanding of the development needs of these ages.
- Provide coaches with concrete and practical applications of the basic theories behind developing 'micro' soccer players.
- Providing actual practice outlines to both guide coaches through training sessions, and give them the confidence to build their own practice plans to suit their team and coaching style.

I'm excited for this chance to share with you my passion for a game that I fell in love when I was as young as some of the players you'll be coaching this year. These are some of the most fun and most important developmental years for players, and with the right guidance they can start to develop a real desire to play and excel at soccer.

I wish you all the best for a great season of fun and development!

Sincerely,
Pavel Cancura
Club head Coach



Micro Soccer Program

Simple Soccer Philosophy

Across the Club!

- Training vs. Playing:
 - An over-emphasis is placed in early years on playing games vs practicing.
 - In a game, the top players touch the ball for roughly 4 minutes.
 - At practice our kids can spend a full 90 minutes touching a ball.
 - Rule of 10,000 - Almost everyone who achieves excellence spends something like 10,000 hours practicing in their run-up to stardom. That goes for violinists as well as computer programmers. The "natural" talent who glides easily to the top is a myth. - *Malcolm Gladwell*
 - Owen Hargreaves – Canadian born star midfielder for Manchester United and England. Growing up in Calgary he surpassed virtually all Canadian players by placing a strict focus on training with his coach as opposed to playing.
- SKILLS are fun!
 - Learning new skills and developing into better players is what makes soccer fun over time.
 - Development fuels a love and passion for the game.
- People vs. players:
 - Soccer is a great tool we can use to teach fundamental life skills.
 - Above all our focus is to engage and empower young bodies and minds, and to use soccer as a method for developing great people first, and great players second.
 - Ethical play is what's inspiring about soccer – showing grace and compassion in the heat of 'battle'.
 - Athletes are leaders whether they accept it or not, and we coaches must teach them to harness the power of that leadership.
- **Development vs. Winning!**
- **WE ARE NOT DEVELOPING TEAMS! WE ARE DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS!!!!!!!**

Micro Soccer Program

LTAD (LTPD)

Active Start and FUNdamentals (0-8 years old):

At this stage, coaches and teachers should aim to create a stimulating learning environment where the atmosphere is "Freedom and Fun."

The physical curriculum emphasizes the ABCs of movement:

agility, balance, co-ordination and speed, as well as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching. Technical instruction is introduced through

movement exercises and games that promote a feel for the ball. This includes gaining ball control in receiving passes, dribbling, passing less than 25m, kicking the ball forward, and shooting on goal.

Keeping in mind that small children are naturally egocentric, basic tactical concepts involving basic cooperation between players can be introduced. Playing situations work best for teaching understanding of the game and building basic game intelligence and decision making.

Game formats should progress from 3v3 to 5v5 as the children grow through this stage, and the season should range from 12 to 20 weeks. In order to help de-emphasize competitiveness between coaches and parents, no league standings should be kept. A basic league fixture schedule can be created, but it is basically an extended jamboree format, and the emphasis is clearly on FUN.

All players should play equal time and try all team positions, including goalkeeping, and equal time should be allotted to both practices and games. Children should continue to participate in a variety of additional activities. Swimming and well-structured gymnastics programs are recommended,



along with ball sports. (taken from the LTPD)

WE ARE NOT DEVELOPING TEAMS! WE ARE DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS!!!!!!!

For a Full PDF version of the entire Long Term Player Development Program, please visit:

http://www.canadasoccer.com/wellness/Wellness_CoupeDuMonde.asp



Micro Soccer Program

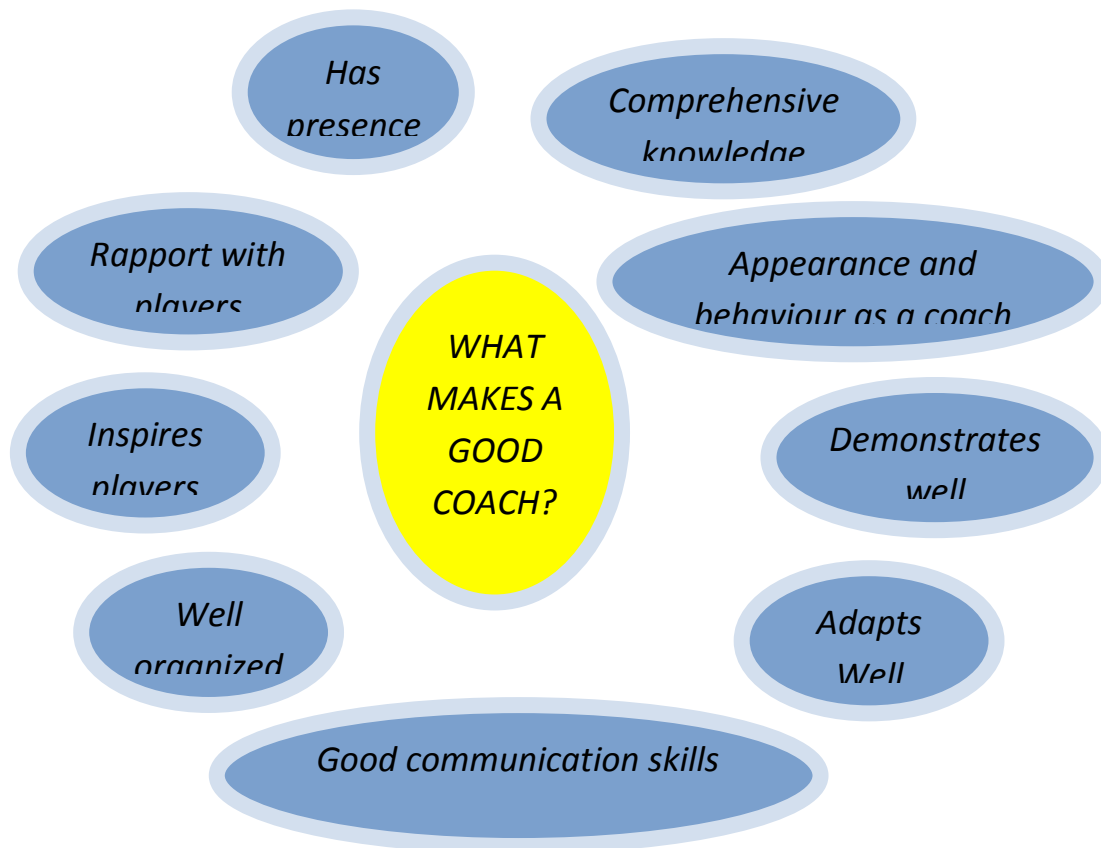
WHAT IS COACHING?

(From Sanjeev Parmar)

“At it’s heart, coaching is an art of deceptive simplicity and power. We all have within us the ability to engage with others in ways that promote real connection, clarity, freedom and action. If we are lucky, we have known people in whose presence we’ve felt affirmed, extended, liberated, energised and stimulated to grow.

Coaching is about developing people.”

Engage, Connect, Clarify, Imagine, Give freedom, Action, Presence, Liberated, Energised.





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COMMUNICATION

(From Sanjeev Parmar)

“It is estimated that about 83% of all learning occurs through showing people what to do.

- 11% through hearing.

- 6% through other senses”.

(Harrison and Blakemore)

Better to see it once than hear it a hundred times.

Communication

| | <u>Told</u> | <u>Told/Shown</u> | <u>Told/Shown/Done</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Recall after 3 weeks | 70% | 72% | 85% |
| Recall after 3 months | 10% | 32% | 65% |

I hear and I forget.

I see and I understand.

I do and I remember.

Confucius



Micro Soccer Program

ROLE OF THE COACH

(From Sanjeev Parmar)

Coaches have a much more valuable role to play than just being good soccer instructors who can demonstrate proper technique to new players. Coaches are role models to their players and each coach must understand his/her responsibility as a teacher, leader and counselor.

TEACHER

- Simple teaching points to help players learn.
- Encourage skill development through games / activities.
- Encourage activity both at practice as well as at home to inspire an active lifestyle.

LEADER

- Set goals that are challenging and realistic to the ability level of each player in the program.
- Motivate players by encouraging them to achieve their best and always being positive.
- Promote fair play and encourage being a good sport.
- Inspire each player to be the best he/she can be.

COUNSELOR

- Listen to players concerns, and be supportive.
- Make each training session a positive and fun place to be.



Micro Soccer Program

The Micro Specific Practice Plan

Most of your practices will last no more than 30 minutes, which means you will likely only need 2 and at the most 3 activities planned for each practice. For Micro soccer players we focus on 3 primary categories of drills, as well as an “icebreaker category”:

1. Command driven and dribbling games

The setup is usually a simple rectangle in which each player has a ball at their feet and are working on various skills that the coach explains, demonstrates and coaches. Dribbling games are utilized to keep the kids interested and to add speed and realism to the skills learned. These drills also allow all players to develop at their own pace, as stronger players are encouraged to try more difficult skills at a faster pace, while weaker players have a chance to work on more basic things at a slower pace.

2. SAQs (Speed, agility, quickness and skill)

Various obstacle courses that have kids progress from speed and agility exercises to ball control, dribbling, passing, finishing, etc.

3. 1v1 and 2v2s

These are used to maximize the time spent directly involved in the play. During 1v1s, each player is either directly attacking with the ball or directly defending a single opponent, which is excellent for their development.

4. Ice Breakers: Fun activities that focus primarily on ABCs (agility, balance, coordination, and speed)

The next two pages give you a more in depth overview of these three categories. After that, you will find many other games that are appropriate for U5-U7 players. Regardless of what you plan for practice, the most important elements to remember are:

BE ENERGETIC! – Continuous communication and encouragement is important to keep the kids focused and involved.

KEEP IT SIMPLE! – The simpler the commands and instructions, the better.

KEEP IT MOVING! – If you have lines, keep the lines short, and moving quickly.

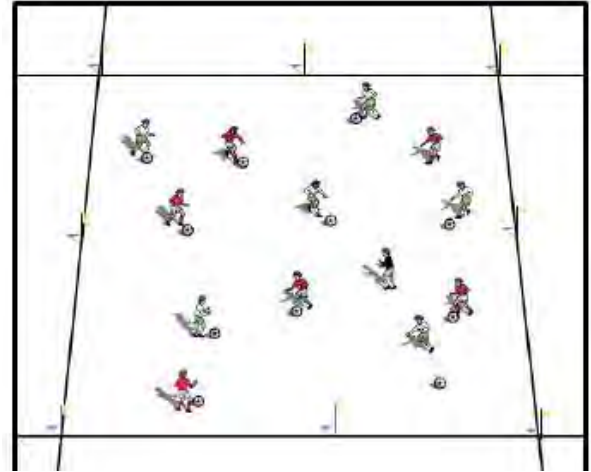
HAVE FUN! – Kids must be having fun during practice or we’re not doing our job!

1. Command Driven Drills and Dribbling Games: (square setup)

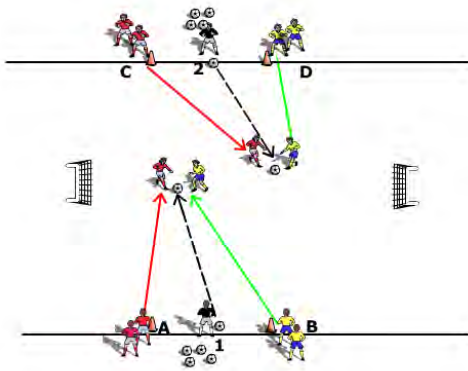
These are very productive for developing the kids but require lots of energy and enthusiasm, and must be combined with other games/activities to keep the kids interested. It's often smart to do a few minutes of dribbling with the kids, then play a round of a dribbling game, then go back to the dribbling, etc. This keeps them motivated longer.

- Common Commands:

- A touch each step: Dribbling the ball while touching it at every step
- Left foot only, Right foot only
- Soles of the feet only
- Down – players Sit and stand back up quickly
- Roll – barrel roll and back up
- Summersault
- Jump
- Twist – spin jump and continue
- SWITCH! – players change balls with someone else
- Foundation - ball is tapped back and forth between your feet using the inside of the feet)
- Toe Taps (tapping the ball with the sole of your feet, one after another)
- TURN! – players perform a turn and go the other way
 - Show them to turn with the sole of their foot first, then with inside/outside of the foot, and then step over turns, cruyff turns and more complicated ones.
- EXPLODE! – players sprint to the outside of the perimeter and back
- Fingers! – players have to get their head up and see how many fingers the coach is holding up
- Coach! – Players must dribble around a coach or high five him/her and continue dribbling.
-
- CHOP – players cut the ball in a new direction using the inside of their foot.
- Scissor! – this will only work with U6 or older, and you have to be patient as you teach them this move.
- Call out a body part and the players must stop the ball with it: head, knee, butt etc..
- Assign numbers to activities so that players have to think a bit more as to what they have to do.
- BE CREATIVE!



2. 1v1 Games: The initial setup is usually the same and is as follows:

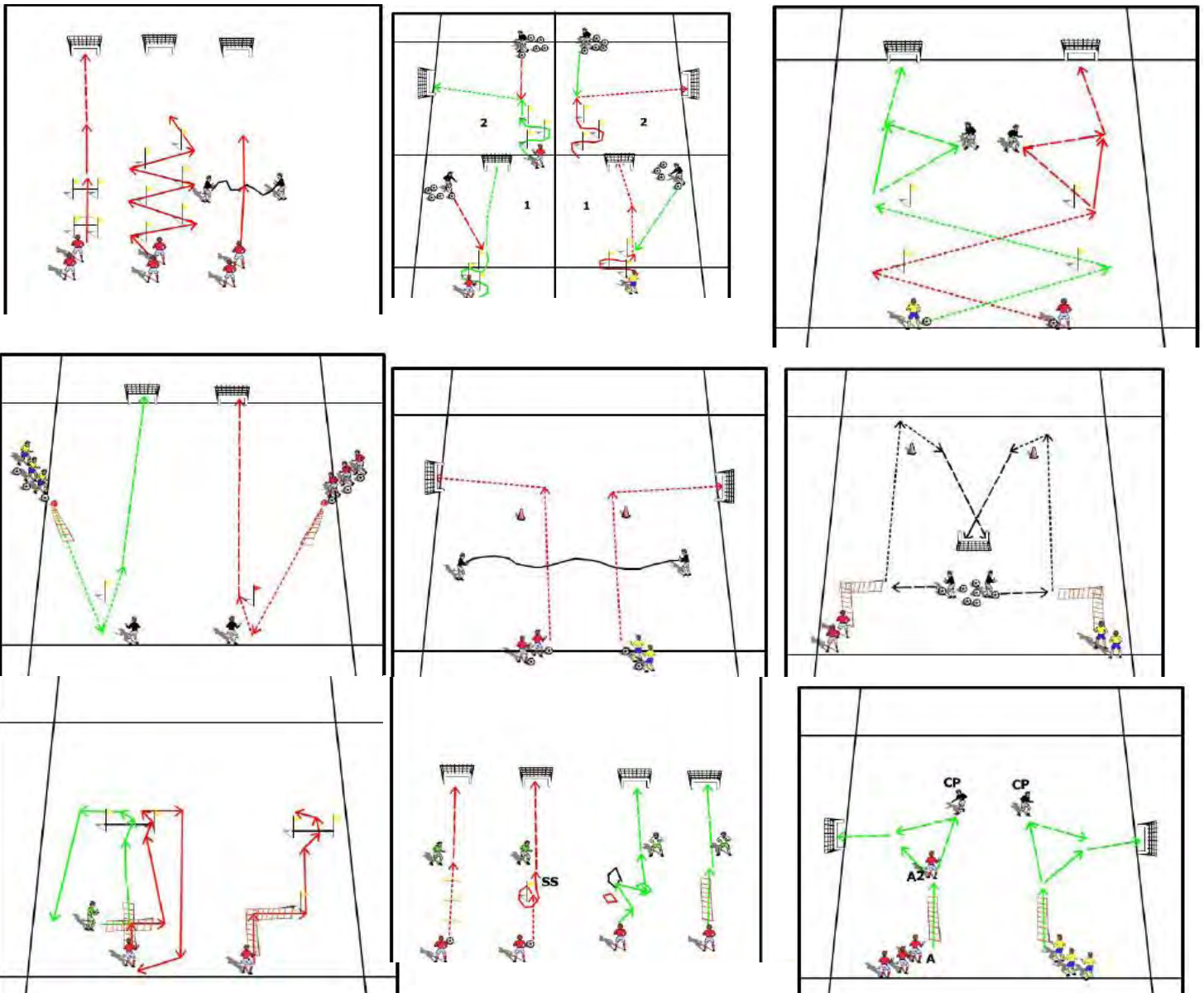


Set up: 1 goal is placed on either end of the field, facing out. Players are asked to line up evenly on one of the sidelines. Balls are in between the two lines with the coach.

Instructions: coach rolls out a ball, and one player from line A and one from line B play 1v1... they can score on either goal. If numbers are too high, a second coach (2) can roll out a ball for a player from line C to play against a player from line D. If possible, each coach can even roll a second ball out to create a 3rd and 4th game of 1v1 at once. You can also progress this to 2v2 where 2 players from each line run out.

IMPORTANT!!!:

- I. Keep the lines short, and keep the players moving. You should not have 14 players watching a game of 1v1. As soon as 1 group is out, send another ball out, and then another, etc.
 - II. Be CREATIVE!!! Have the players do summersaults, rolls, spin jumps, jump over hurdles, etc, before playing 1v1.
- 3. SAQ and Dribbling Patterns:**
- Be Creative in applying the ABC's of movement.
 - Look to move from quickness and agility, to ball control, and eventually to some additional skill like receiving or finishing (attain this by doing the course with no ball, ball in hands, and then ball at feet or some combination of these)
 - If you add a goal/target, the kids will be more interested.\
 - Some ideas or patterns:





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4. Ice Breaker

Balance Olympics: Kids lie down on their stomachs to start. The coach calls out either left or right, and the kids race to stand up on the appropriate foot as quickly as possible. Repeat a few times, and then ask players to do it with their eyes closed. Add other variations like touching your standing toe while balancing, or spinning in a circle by hopping on your one foot, etc.

Reaction Races: Players start in a line facing the coach, in various starting positions. The coach designates a specific word for starting the race (ie: “now”, or “start”). Players must remain completely frozen until they hear that word. If a player flinches or false starts on a different command (ie: go). Then they must take a step back and start behind everyone. Change the starting positions and races often. Include a ball, so that players must perform various tasks while running that works on control and coordination. Some examples of exercises:

- **Hold the ball in one hand**
- **Balance the ball on the back of one hand**
- **Hold the ball way above your head**
- **Dribble the ball basketball style**
- **Hold a ball in one hand while dribbling another**
- **Summersault or roll while holding the ball**
- **Lie down, throw the ball up, stand up and catch it**
- **Throw the ball from behind your back, over your head and catch it in front**
- **Throw the ball from behind your back, over your head and control it with your feet**
- **Throw the ball up, spin, and catch (or control with feet)**
- **Throw the ball up, get down (either on knees or chest) and catch**
- **Standing on one foot, throw the ball over your head (behind you), spin with a jump and catch on the other side (or settle with your foot).**
- **Be creative! Anything else goes too**

Follow the Coach: Coach faces the kids and they mimic his movements as he runs left, right, forwards and backwards. Try it with different types of movement (ie: hopping on one foot or both, skipping, high knees, high heels, ski jumps). Try to throw the kids off by pointing in a direction opposite to where you’re moving. Also add commands like “Down” (kids touch chest to ground and stand back up), or “Up” jump with knees to chest, etc.

Reaction 1v1: two players stand facing each other, with 2 yards between them and a ball between them. Coach yells out various body parts to touch or activities to do in quick succession (ie: knees, head, toes, back, jump, spin, etc). When the coach yells ball, the players race to first grab the ball, and later to dribble the ball away from their opponent.

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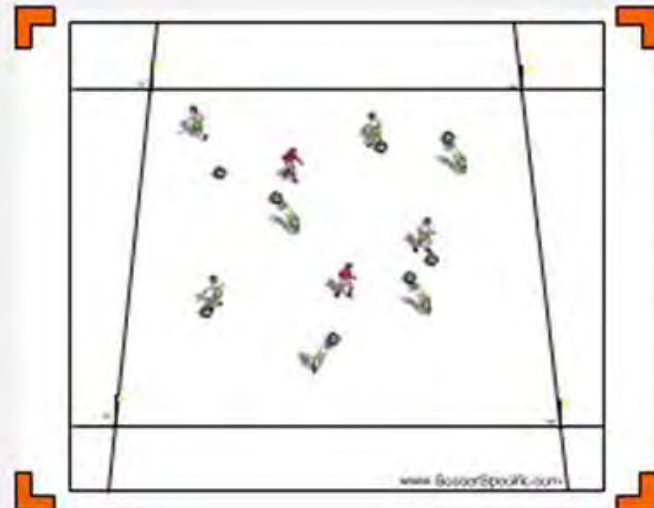
Sample Sessions

Session 1:

Ice Breaker – Balance Olympics: Kids lie down on their stomachs to start. The coach calls out either left or right, and the kids race to stand up on the appropriate foot as quickly as possible. Repeat a few times, and then ask players to do it with their eyes closed. Add other variations like touching your standing toe while balancing, or spinning in a circle by hopping on your one foot, etc.

Activity 1: Dribbling exercises combined with Freeze tag:

- Work on foundation, rolling the ball with the sole of the foot, roll-stop, and inside/outside of the foot. After a few minutes, progress to some freeze tag. In between each round of freeze tag, repeat some of the skills again.



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: 20x20 grid. Ball with each player except for the player who is "it".

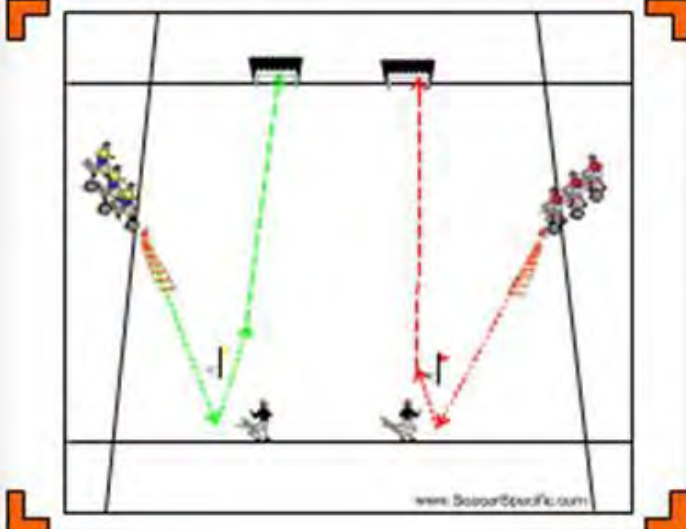
Instructions: Players run around the grid with 2-3 players "it". If a player is tagged, he/she is frozen and must hold the ball up over their head and stand with their legs apart. The other players who are not frozen can unfreeze someone by rolling a ball through their legs.

Variation 1: Players have the ball in their hands and roll it through frozen players' legs with their hands.

Variation 2: Everything is done with a ball at their feet (reduce the number of players who are "it" for this variation)

Coaching Points: Always vocal and positive. Coaches or parents can join in to make things more fun.

Exercise 1: SAQ's with turning and finishing:



ACTIVITY #2


Set up: 2 lines as pictured above. A ladder in front of each. one stake and two pugg goals.

Instructions: The first player in each line runs through the ladder, drops the ball and dribbles to the flag, where he/she performs one of the turns that were introduced in the first drill. After the turn, the player finishes but shooting on one of the goals. Allow 2-3 minutes with each turn so that each player gets a few chances to try them.

Coaching Points: Correct the turns to make sure the players are doing them properly. At the ladder, be creative with the exercises the players do. Have them go forwards, backwards, sideways, hop on one foot or both feet, etc. You can also have them pass the ball beside the ladder before running through the ladder and collecting the ball on the other end.

Session 2:

Exercise 1: Stakes/cones Dribbling – small touches to big touches



www.SoccerSparks.com

ACTIVITY #4


Set up: 20 yard diameter circle with 10-15 stakes closely concentrated in the center. One team spread out around the outside of the circle, and the other team on the inside with a ball.

Instructions: Players perform various exercises through the center stakes before switching spots with someone on the outside of the circle. Variations include:

- Sprint through with a ball in your hands
- Sprint through, but make a full circle around any one of the stakes (always facing forwards)
- dribble through with the ball at the feet
- dribble through, making a circle around any one stake
- dribble through, turn and dribble through again
- dribble through and pass to a player from distance (focus on taking the 1st touch out of the feet)

Coaching Points: focus is on being aware and keeping your head up to avoid the other players/stakes.

Exercise 2: 1v1s



www.SoccerSparks.com

ACTIVITY #3

Set up: 2 goals are placed on either end of the field, facing out. 4 cones are placed on each sideline. Kids are asked to line up evenly at each of the 4 cones. All the balls are in between the two lines with the two coaches.

Instructions: coach 1 rolls out a ball, and one player from line A and one from line B play 1v1... they can score on either goal. At the same time, coach 2 rolls out a ball for a player from line C to play against a player from line D. If possible, each coach can even roll a second ball out to create a 3rd and 4th game of 1v1 at once. Since each game will last between 5-20 seconds, the kids will get many repetitions, and plenty of exercise. With the goals turned outwards, the kids will have to show more ball control to stop, turn and score on the goals that are faced away from them.

Coaching Points: Encourage kids to cheer one another on, and to celebrate goals in crazy ways!

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Session 3:

Exercise 1: Dribbling skills, some simple move reviews and introductions, and a couple rounds of sharks and minnows.



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: a grid of roughly 15x15 yards is built using cones. All of the players have a ball at their feet.

Instructions: Two sharks are selected out of the group. The rest of the group is instructed to begin dribbling around the square with their ball. On the coaches command, the two sharks (who do not have a ball) begin running around trying to steal other players' balls and kicking them out of the grid. If a player's ball is kicked out of the grid, they become a shark themselves. The game ends when only one player is left with a ball.

Coaching Points: Rotate the sharks. You can have the coaches participate as the game goes on. Towards the end you can even have the coaches be the sharks. Encourage players very positively even when their ball is kicked out, and pump them up to be a shark at that point.

Exercise 2: SAQ dribbling with different parts of the feet... and finishing



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: T hurdles, no more than 3 per line so up to 3 lines. One T hurdle in each line will be low to jump over, and one will be high to duck under.

Instructions: Various SAQ and technical drills with finishing

- Progressions:**
- 1 - run over, duck under, drop ball and finish on goal.
 - 2 - throw the ball up as you go over the first hurdle, and throw the ball up as you duck under the second.
 - 3 - dribble through the course following your ball
 - 4 - push the ball on one side of the t as you jump or duck on the other
 - 5 - push under one side, jump over, and come back over the other side with the ball, then continue to the next hurdle and go under both sides again before finishing
 - 6 - add various exercises in between the 2 hurdles (ie barrel roll, summer sault, etc).


Coaching Points: Focus on technique primarily. Speed will come eventually.

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Session 4:

Exercise 1: 1v1 gates

You can start with just a cone, then add a coach defender, and then a player defender.



ACTIVITY #2

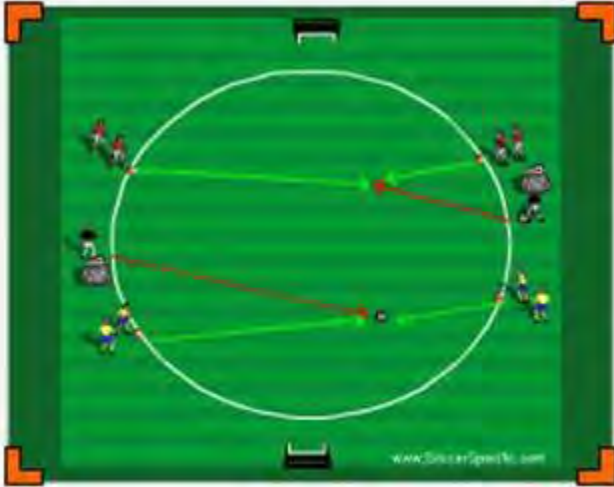
Set up: 6 YARD WIDE GATES WITH 2-3 PLAYERS PER GATE.

Instructions: Dribbling station where players progress from learning moves, to varying paces, to putting both together:

- 1 - various moves are done through the gate, with just a cone there as a defender
- 2 - a defender is placed in the gate and players carry the ball in their hands. They score first by touch a flag before being tagged by the defender
- 3 - Ball is at the feet and players must dribble through the gate without losing the ball.

Coaching Points: have fun with the kids, encouraging creativity and explosiveness. Point out that players don't always have to start at the middle of the gate, and don't always have to do the same thing to try to get through.

Exercise 2: 1v1 games in circle- players must finish from distance (without leaving the circle. You can stress different types of shooting (ie: inside of the foot only), and as always, stress 1v1 moves and give points and encouragement for creativity.



ACTIVITY #4

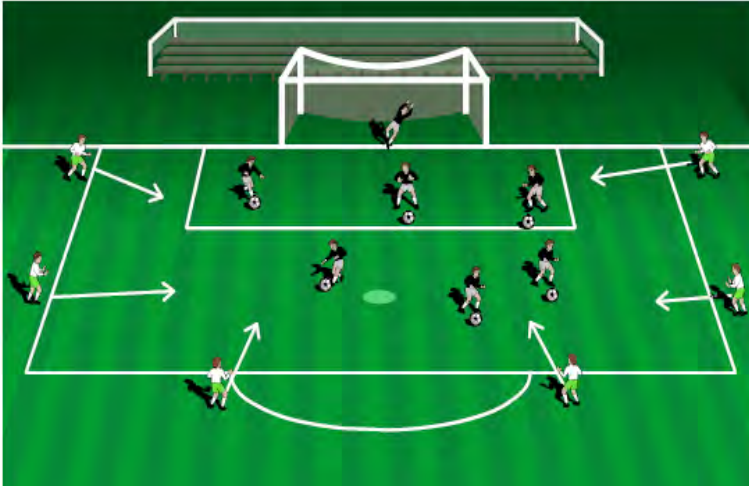
Set up: 2 goals set up 5-10 yards outside of the center circle 2 lines of each team with a coach in between each with the balls. If there are small numbers (less than 8 players) you can just have one pair of teams with one coach. still be sure to send more than 1 game of 1v1 out at a time.

Instructions: first player in each line will play 1v1 to either goal. Points are scored by making moves, or by scoring on goal. Players may not dribble out of the circle, if they do, the game is over. Goals can only be scored from within the circle so an accurate pass of 5 yards must be made.

Coaching Points: vary the starting positions and exercises that must be done before playing.

Useful drills and games for your practices:

1 – Team Keep Out



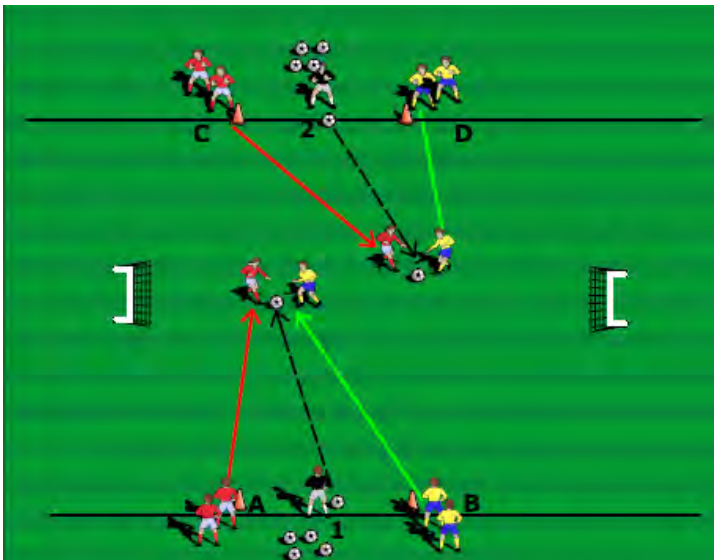
Set up: One team starts in a grid with a ball at each player's feet. The other team starts on the outside of the grid without a ball. one or two goals are placed on the end line.

Instructions: On "go" the team without the balls must run into the grid, try to steal all of the balls from the defending team and shoot them into the goal(s). Once a players' ball is stolen and scored or kicked out, he/she must help his/her team mates keep their ball out of the goal. Once all of the balls are gone, the teams switch roles.

Coaching Points: Encourage team-work for both teams, especially for the defending team. Be VOCAL and POSITIVE!

Notes: _____

2 – 1v1 Goals Inverted



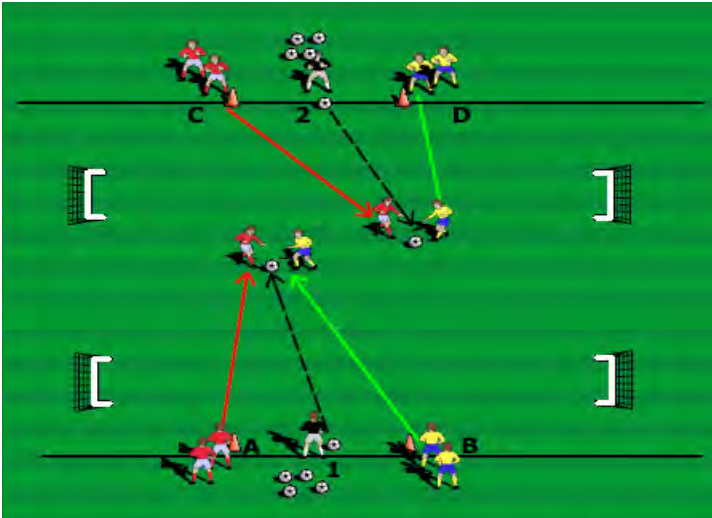
Set up: 1 goal is placed on either end of the field, facing out. Kids are asked to line up evenly at one of 4 cones placed 2 on each side line. Balls are in between the two lines with the two coaches.

Instructions: coach 1 rolls out a ball, and one player from line A and one from line B play 1v1... they can score on either goal. At the same time, coach 2 rolls out a ball for a player from line C to play against a player from line D. If possible, each coach can even roll a second ball out to create a 3rd and 4th game of 1v1 at once. With the goals turned outwards, the kids will have to show more ball control to stop, turn and score on the goals that are faced away from them.

Coaching Points: Encourage kids to cheer one another on, and to celebrate goals in crazy ways!

Notes: _____

3 – 1v1 To Any Goal



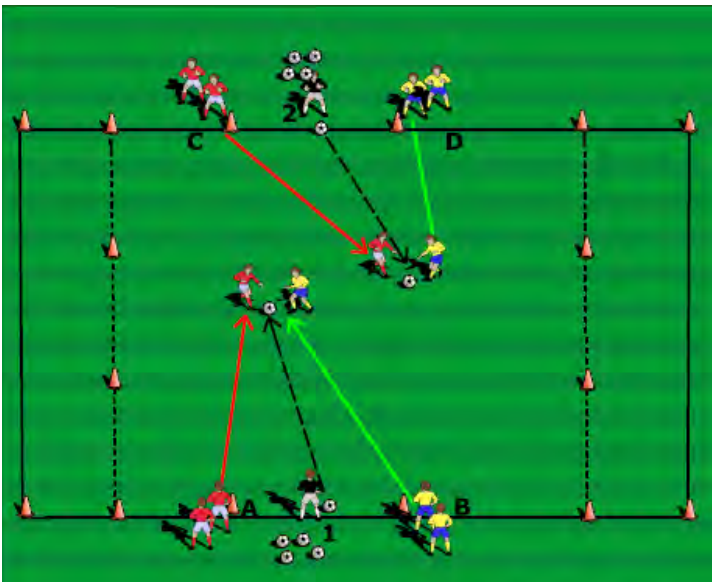
Set up: 2 goals are placed on either end of the field (4 in total). Kids are asked to line up evenly at one of 4 cones placed 2 on each side line. Balls are in between the two lines with the two coaches.

Instructions: coach 1 rolls out a ball, and one player from line A and one from line B play 1v1... they can score on either goal. At the same time, coach 2 rolls out a ball for a player from line C to play against a player from line D. If possible, each coach can even roll a second ball out to create a 3rd and 4th game of 1v1 at once. Used varying starting positions (ie: sitting, lying down, summersault before going, etc)

Coaching Points: Encourage kids to cheer one another on, and to celebrate goals in crazy ways!

Notes: _____

4 – 1v1 End Zones



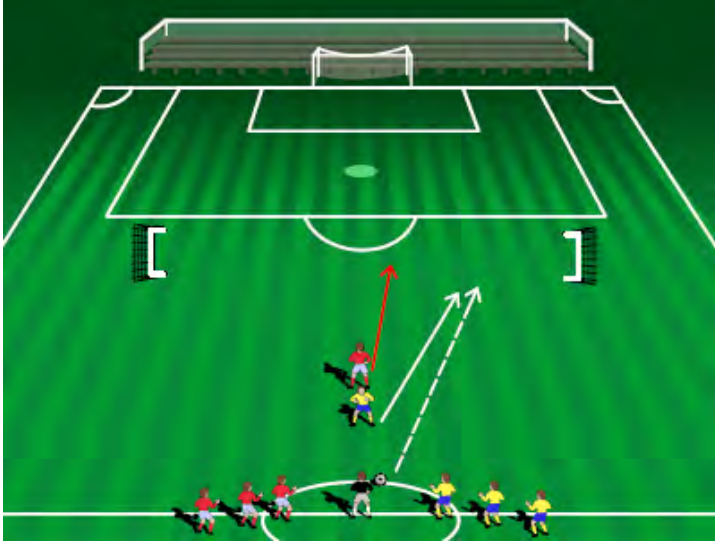
Set up: A field that is roughly 15 yards wide and 30 yards long is built. An end zone 5 yards wide is created on each end of the field. Kids are asked to line up evenly at one of the 4 cones in the middle of each sideline. The balls are placed in between the two lines with the two coaches.

Instructions: coach 1 rolls out a ball, and one player from line A and one from line B play 1v1. A point is scored when a player dribbles into an end zone. At the same time, coach 2 rolls out a ball for a player from line C to play against a player from line D. If possible, each coach can even roll a second ball out to create a 3rd and 4th game of 1v1 at once.

Coaching Points: Encourage kids to cheer one another on, and to celebrate goals! Also try to make sure kids are playing against different opposition as much as possible.

Notes: _____

5 – 1v1 back to goal



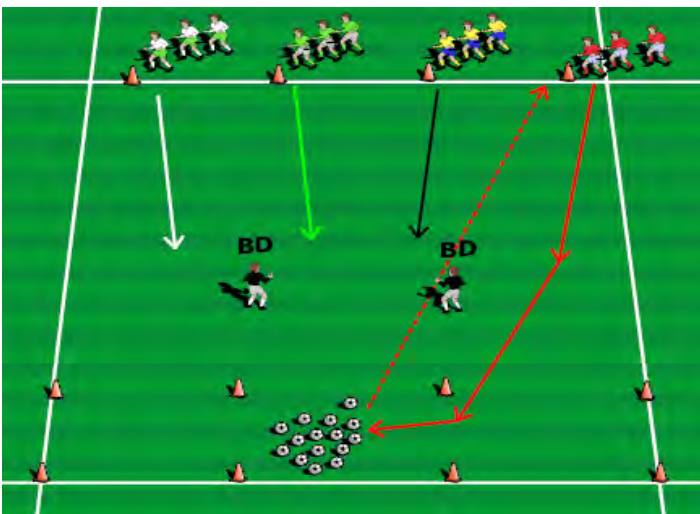
Set up: Two players stand back to back, one facing the coach and one facing the main goal. Another small goal is placed on each side-line.

Instructions: When the coach throws the ball out, the player facing the coach becomes the attacker, and the other player tries to defend. The attacker scores on the big goal. If the defender wins the ball, he/she must score on either goal on the sideline.

Coaching Points: Encourage players to cheer on one another and celebrate goals. Keep the game moving and start a second game as soon as the first two have left (even if there are other games still going on).

Notes: _____

6 – Big Dog



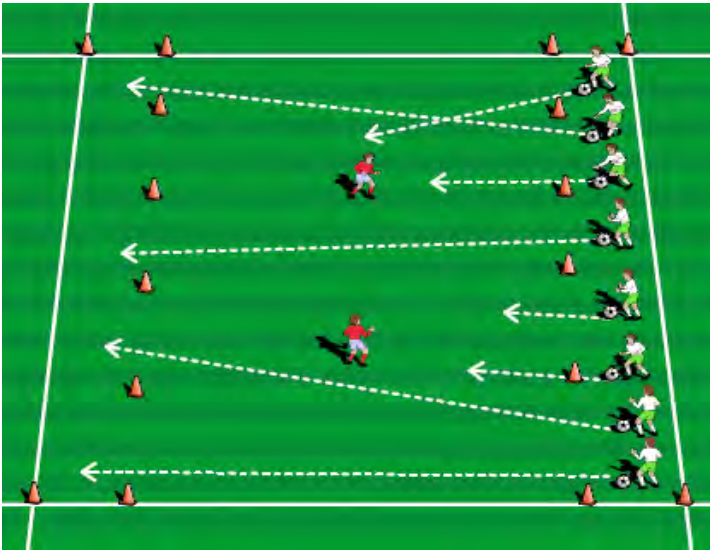
Set up: Grid size is 15x30. Teams of 3-4 players are made. Each team lines up on one end line. At the end of the grid, an endzone is made using cones, and all of the balls are placed inside of this end zone. Two players are selected each round to be the Big Dogs.

Instructions: When the game starts, the first player from each line tries to get to the end zone on the other side without being tagged by one of the big dogs. If the player is tagged, then he/she returns to the back of the line and the next player runs out. If the player gets to the end zone without being tagged by a big dog, that player dribbles a ball back to his/her line. Once all of the balls are gone, the team with the most balls wins. The big dog for the next round can be selected from that team.

Coaching Points: Emphasize close dribbling on the way back from the end zone. Be Vocal and Positive!

Notes: _____

7 – British Bulldog (Crossing the Ocean)



Set up: Make a grid with a 5 yard end zone on each side. One or two players without a ball begin in the middle of the field (these are the bulldogs). The other players spread out across one end zone with a ball each.

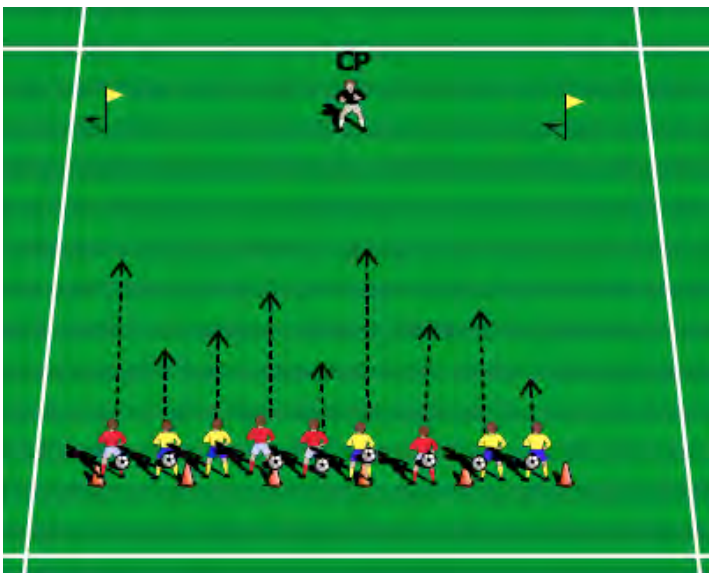
Instructions: When the coach says go, the players try to "cross the ocean" without having their ball stolen by one of the bull dogs in the middle. If a player's ball is stolen or kicked out of the grid, he/she becomes a bull dog. Eventually there will only be one player left. This player can start as the bull dog next time if he/she wants.

Variation 1: Players start with the ball in their hands and must be tagged to become a bull dog. This variation can be used once to introduce the game.

Coaching Points: Be vocal and positive! Have the coaches or parents join on occasion.

Notes: _____

8 – Red Light Green Light



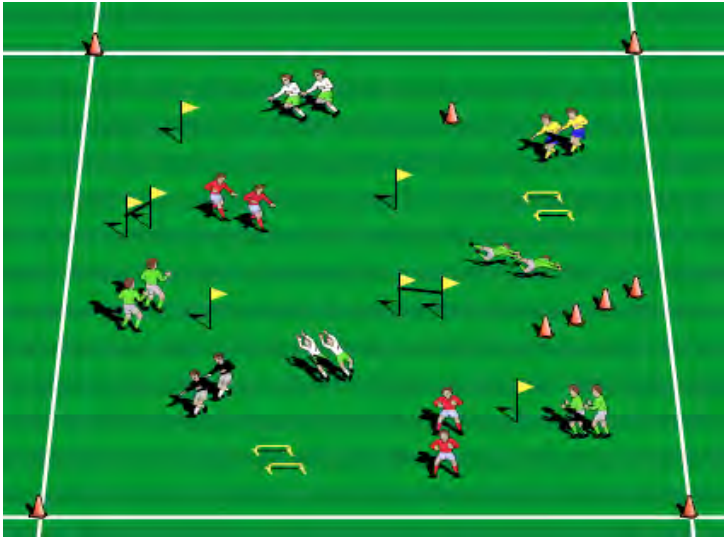
Set up: set up a line of cones as the starting line and some stakes or cones as the finish line. Players start with balls on the starting line. Coach stands at the finish line, facing the players.

Instructions: 1 - A ball in each player's hands - run towards the coach when he yells green light, slow when yellow, stop and freeze when he says red. If caught moving at red, player must restart from the starting line. 2 - Same as 1, but instead of yelling Green, Yellow, Red, the coach holds up either a green, yellow or red bib or cone, without saying a word. 3 - Same as 1 but with the ball at their feet. 4 - Same as 2 but with ball at their feet (Play this variation the longest).

Coaching Points: Be vocal, energetic, and have fun with the kids.

Notes: _____

9 – Follow the Leader



Set up: Make a simple grid using cones. Place various obstacles all throughout the grid at random. Be creative. Use hurdles, cones, ladders, ropes, puggs, and anything else at your disposal).

Instructions: Players partner up. One player leads and the other mimics everything that player is doing. Two coaches demonstrate the drill. Be very creative in your demo to give players ideas – focus on agility, mobility, ball control, change of direction, creativity, etc.

Variation 1: Players have no ball

Variation 2: Players carry a ball in their hands

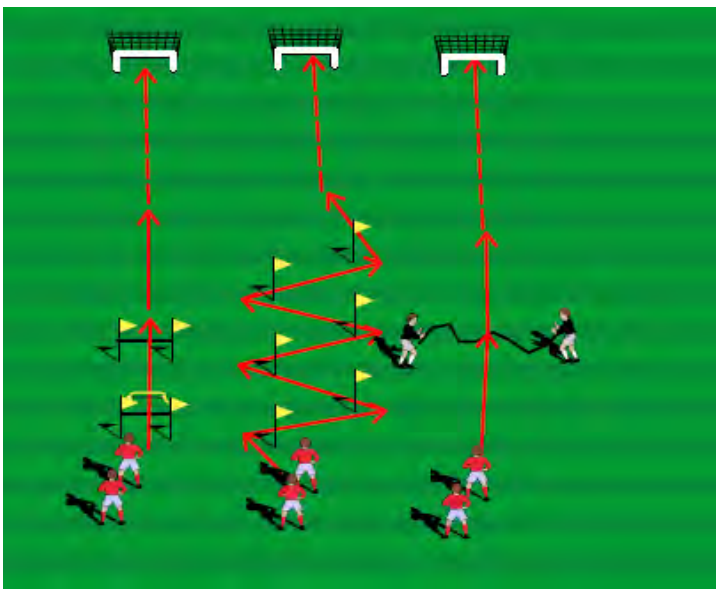
Variation 3: Players have a ball at their feet.

Variation 4: Players now try to “lose” their partner. When coach calls “freeze”, which pair are furthest apart?

Coaching Points: Encourage and compliment creativity. Be vocal at all times, calling out good moves or creative ideas to spur everyone’s imagination.

Notes: _____

10 – Dribbling Patterns



Set up: Set up 2 to 3 identical courses. Option 1: big hurdle (waist high), small hurdle (just taller than ball), big hurdle. Option 2: Slalom course using stakes. Option 3: 2 coaches swing a rope at shin height to jump over.

Instructions: Variation 1: Players run and duck under the first hurdle, jump over the next, crawl under the third, and then score on the goal. Variation 2: Players go through the slalom course as fast as they can. Once they've cleared the last stake they can shoot at goal. Variation 3: Players run and jump over the rope and then score. Gradually increase the height, and build up to swinging the rope and having the kids run under it.

Important: With all 3 variations, have the kids run through the course without a ball first, then with a ball in their hands, and then with a ball at their feet.

Coaching Points: Always be vocal and positive. If time permits, you can progress to a relay race between three teams.

Notes: _____

11 – Flip Cup



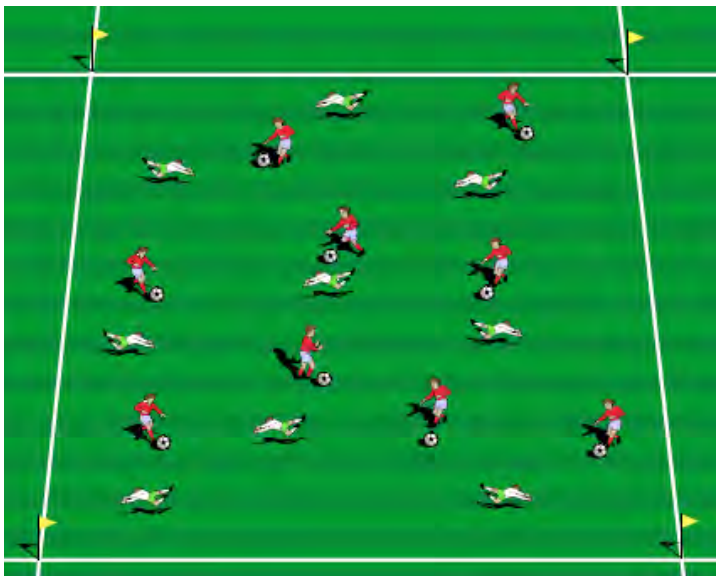
Set up: A grid is made using stakes. 20-30 cones (saucers) are placed at random throughout the grid, half of them facing up, and half facing down.

Instructions: When coach says “go”, one team starts flipping the saucers up, while the other team begins flipping the saucers down. Stop the game after a couple of minutes and count the cones to see who is in the lead. *Variation 1:* Players have no ball. *Variation 2:* Players hold a ball in their hands. *Variation 3:* Players dribble a ball around with their feet. *Variation 4:* Players dribble a ball and must perform a coach specified task after flipping each cone (ie: two toe taps, a turn, a summersault, etc) *Variation 5:* Two colors of cones are used, and each team tries to flip their color up until they’ve flipped them all.

Coaching Points: Always be vocal and positive! Make sure kids keep the ball close when it's at their feet.

Notes: _____

12 – Crab Soccer



Set up: Make a grid using cones or stakes (15x15 to 20x20).

Instructions: One team starts as the crabs, who are walking around in crab position (on their hands and feet with their butts just off the ground). The other team is on their feet. You can even start with just a handful of crabs instead of a whole team. *Variation 1:* non-crab players start with the ball in their hands and are simply running around trying not to get tagged. If they get tagged by a crab, they must become a crab themselves. The game ends when the last player is tagged. You can play 1-2 games this way to introduce the game and let players understand the rules. *Variation 2:* Players play the same game with the ball at their feet, and must dribble around while not allowing the crabs to kick their ball out of the grid. Once the ball is kicked out, they become a crab as well.

Coaching Points: Encourage constant movement. A coach can join the crabs if the game isn't flowing well.

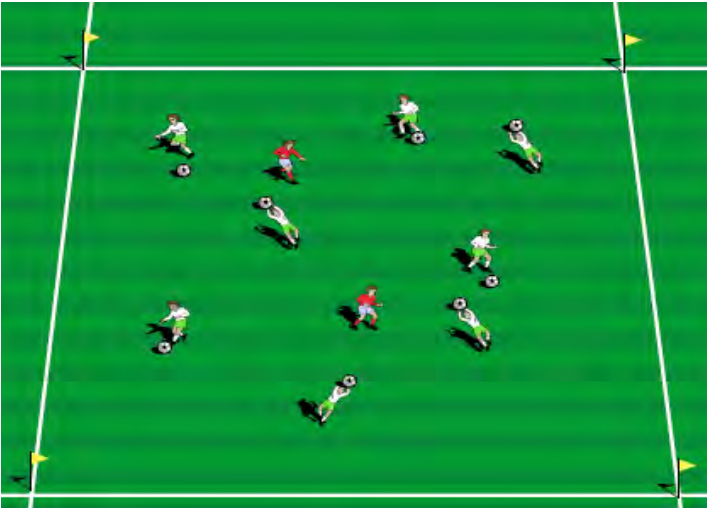


Micro Soccer Program



Notes: _____

13 – Freeze Tag



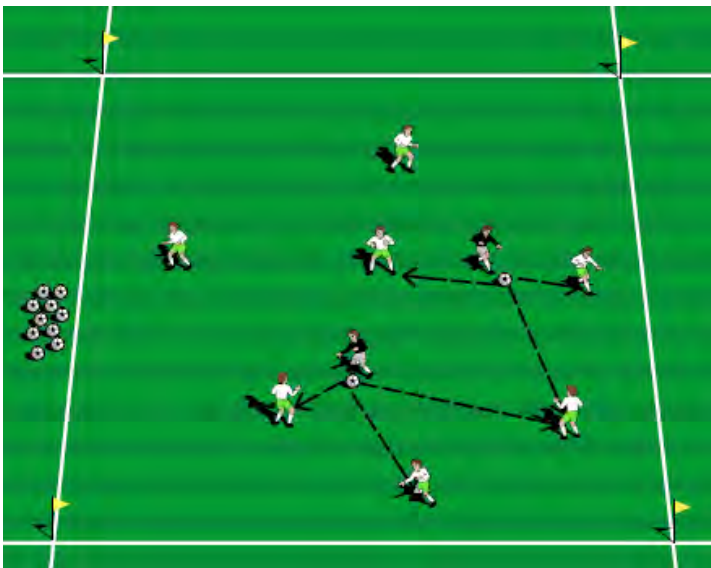
Set up: 20x20 grid. Ball with each player except for the player who is "it".

Instructions: Players run around the grid with 2-3 players "it". If a player is tagged, he/she is frozen and must hold the ball up over their head and stand with their legs apart. The other players who are not frozen can unfreeze someone by rolling a ball through their legs. Variation 1: Players have the ball in their hands and roll it through frozen players' legs with their hands. Variation 2: Everything is done with a ball at their feet (reduce the number of players who are "it" for this variation)

Coaching Points: Always vocal and positive. Coaches or parents can join in to make things more fun.

Notes: _____

14 – Ghost Busters



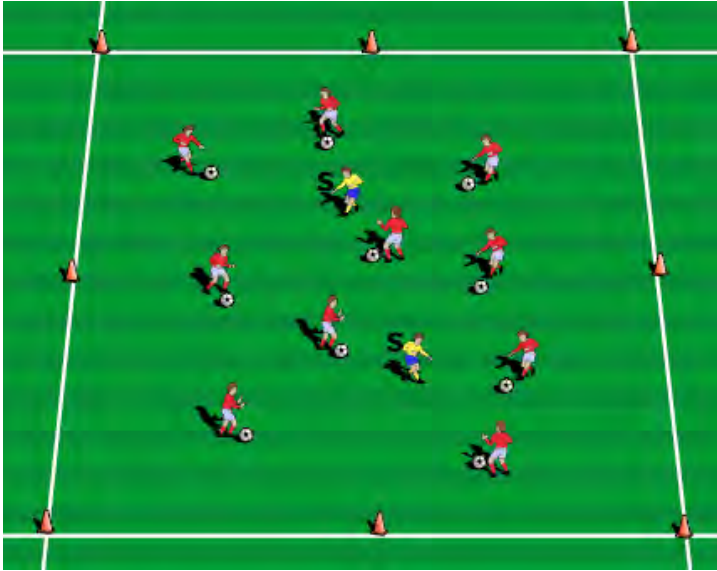
Set up: 20x20 grid. Two players start with a ball and are the ghosts. All other players are Pac-man. The remaining balls are outside of the grid (you can have a single location or multiple locations for the balls).

Instructions: The ghosts run around the grid with their ball trying to touch or hit the other players (pac-man). When a pac-man gets hit below the waist, he/she must run to retrieve a ball outside of the grid, perform a predetermined soccer skill (ie: toe tap, pendulum, turn) and then return to the grid as a ghost. The game ends when only one pac-man remains. Variation 1: 2 ghosts with the ball in their hands start. Variation 2: 5 ghosts with the ball at their feet. A coach may have to join to get this one rolling properly.

Coaching Points: Always be vocal and positive. Be creative with the soccer activities the pac-man must do after being hit.

Notes: _____

15 – Sharks and Minnows



Notes: _____

Set up: A cone grid of roughly 15x15 yards. Each player has a ball at his/her feet.

Instructions: Two sharks are selected out of the group. The rest of the group is instructed to begin dribbling around the square with their ball. On the coaches command, the two sharks (who do not have a ball) begin running around trying to steal other players' balls and kicking them out of the grid. If a player's ball is kicked out of the grid, they become a shark themselves. The game ends when only one player is left with a ball.

Coaching Points: Rotate the sharks. You can have the coaches participate as the game goes on. Towards the end you can even have the coaches be the sharks. Encourage players very positively even when their ball is kicked out, and pump them up to be a shark at that point.

16 – Pirates of the Caribbean



Set up: A 5x5 square in the middle of the main grid with all of the balls inside. One 5x5 square in each corner of the main grid. Teams of 3-4 players in each corner square.

Instructions: On "go", the first player in each line runs to the middle, and dribbles a single ball back to their square, at which point the next player runs and does the same. The game ends when all of the balls are back at the square. Variation 2: Same as variation 1, but once all of the balls are gone from the center, players can run and steal balls from other teams' squares. All players can run around at once at this point. Variation 3: Two teams work together against the other two teams to steal from the opposing teams' corners and bring to their own 2 corners. Variation 4: Same setup as 1 and 2. All of the kids can now run to the middle at once, and can then get right into stealing balls.

Coaching Points: Have the kids encourage their team mates.



Micro Soccer Program



Notes: _____

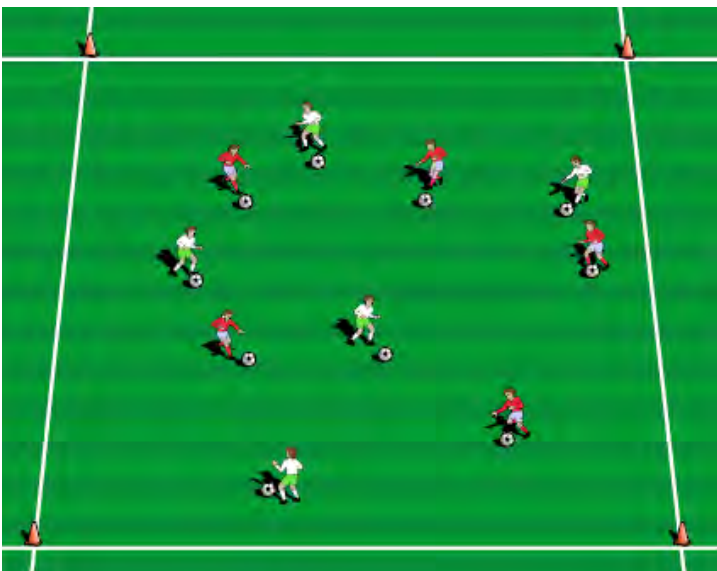
17 – Juggling Station



Set up: 20 x 20 grid. Each player with a ball.
Instructions: Walk the kids through the basics of juggling: 1 - Demonstrate. 2 - Thigh catch, 2 thighs catch, 3 etc. 3- Thigh foot catch 4- foot catch. 5 - head catch 6 - thigh head catch 7 - start on knees, throw the ball up, stand up and catch 8 - start on knees, throw the ball up, thigh and catch, 2 thighs catch, etc. 9 - start on knees, throw the ball up, thigh-foot and catch. 10. Open juggling... who can get 3? 4? 11. Application – throw the ball up, settle it and run. 12. Different ways to settle the ball. **Coaching Points:** Always be vocal and positive, and don't let a single activity go on too long. Engage the coaches and parents. Yell out positive results (ie: Jonny got 2!) After some practice, ask if anyone can do one of the skills in front of the group. This drill can be very productive, but needs to be coached enthusiastically.

Notes: _____

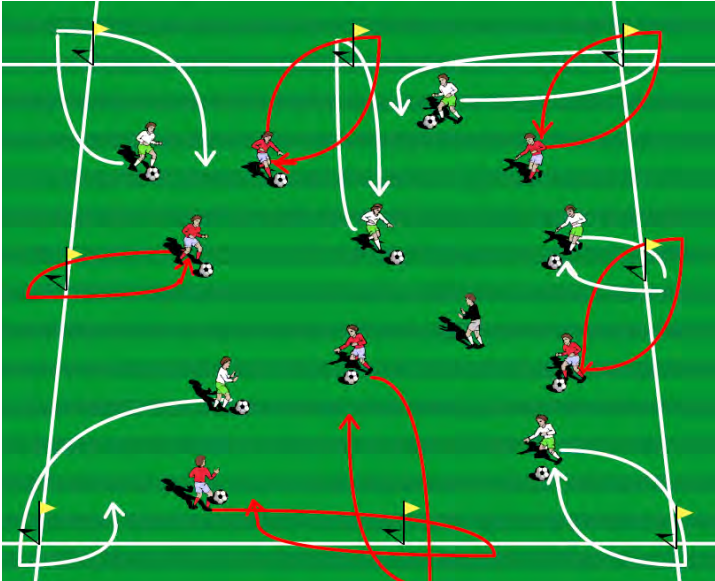
18 – Soccer Math



Set up: 20x20 grid. A ball at each player's feet.
Instructions: Coach assigns activities to numbers that he calls out for the players to perform. Start with soccer specific activities for 1, 2 and 3 and then get into goofier ones. Spend some time properly learning the soccer activities. Some ideas are: 1. toe taps 2. Pendulum 3. simple turn with ball 4. Cruyff turn 5. Sit down and get back up 6. summersault 7. bear walk and head the ball 8. throw the ball up and control it 9. leave ball and sprint to a cone and back 10. Yell a word that the coach chooses.
Coaching Points: Be very vocal. Ask the kids how many numbers they think they can remember. Try to catch who is the fastest to react, and encourage sharpness. Try calling numbers faster and faster. Try simple addition or subtraction once they're satisfied.

Notes: _____

19 – Explosion!

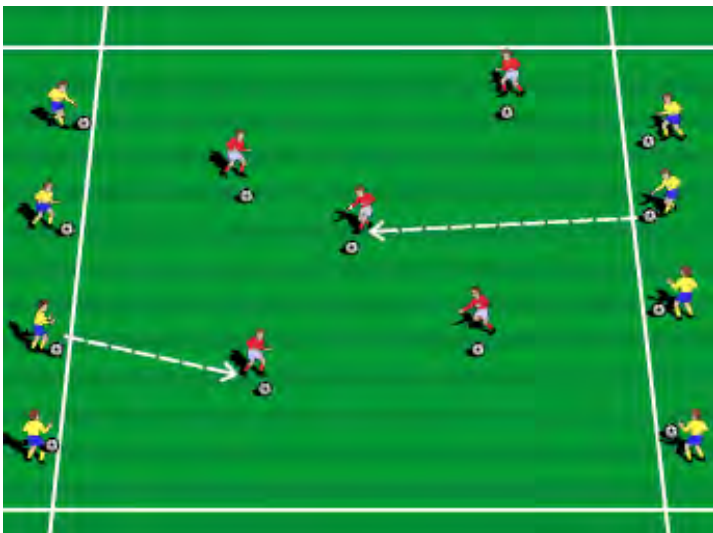


Set up: 20 x 20 grid. A player on each ball.

Instructions: Players dribble around the square as the coach gives them various commands: 1. Coach yells a body part and the players freeze with that body part touching the ball - foot, heel, toe, knee, bum, head, elbow, shoulder etc (3 minutes). Eventually you can start to change body parts very fast to see if they can keep up. 2. When you yell "EXPLODE" all of the players must run around one of the stakes and come back. 3. Goofy freeze: When you yell freeze, the players must freeze in a goofy position. 4. You can introduce simple techniques as well: dribbling with just one foot, just insides, toe touches, pendulum, simple turn (roll with your foot). **Coaching Points:** Always be vocal and positive, and don't let a single activity go on for too long. Engage the coaches and parents. You can even have a ball at your feet and participate with the kids while instructing.

Notes: _____

20 – Gauntlet



Set up: Grid is 20 yards long and 10 yards wide. One team is split so that half is lined up along each side-line with a ball at each player's feet. The other team is lined up at one of the end-lines.

Instructions: On "go", the team on the end line tries to run the gauntlet to the other end line while the team on the sidelines tries to hit them with a ball below the waist. If a player gets hit, the ambulance (coach) has to pick up the player and take them to the hospital to get fixed up (ie: fix them on the spot and return them to the line). *Variation 2:* Players get eliminated when hit and join the players on the sidelines. **Important: For the players running the gauntlet, introduce the game first without a ball, then with a ball in their hands, and lastly with a ball at their feet.**

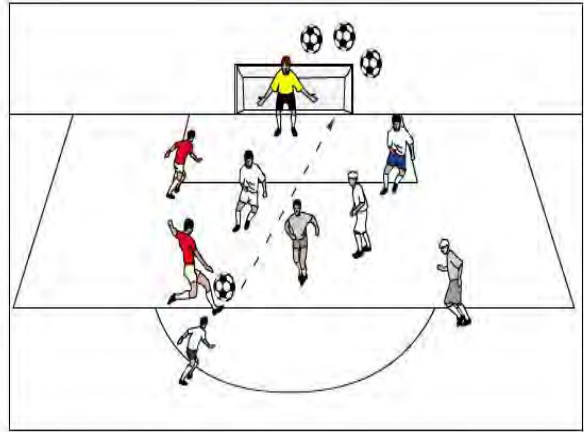
Coaching Points: Be energetic and vocal. Take some time to demonstrate proper passing techniques to the

players before starting the game.

Other Micro Games

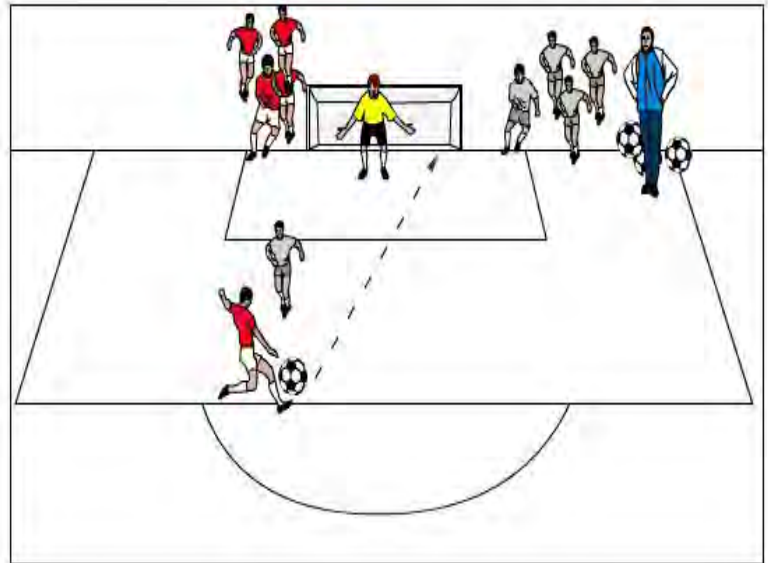
WORLD CUP

- Teams of 2 players
- Play in the 18 yard box: 2v2v2v2v2v2v2
- Each team picks a country for themselves
- Every team is trying to score on the same goal (with a goalie being the coach)
- Last player to touch the ball before it goes in gets the goal (their team)



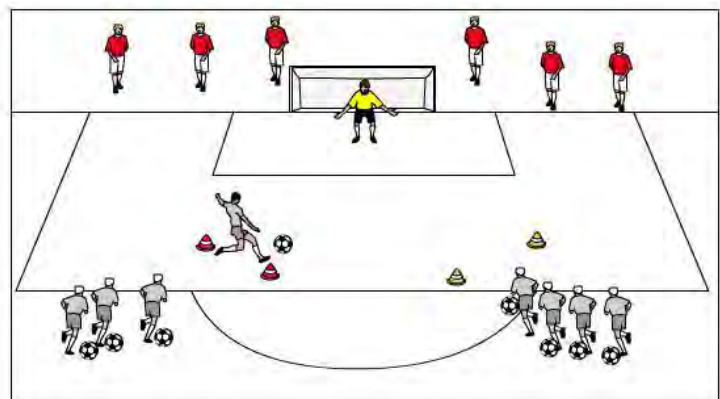
1 V 1 TO GOAL

- All the players line up on either side of the goal
- Coach rolls the ball out and the first two players in line run to the ball to compete to try and score on goal



1v 1 AROUND THE GOAL

- 2 teams
- lined up at the edge of the 18 yard box
- when the coach throws the ball forward, the first two players in line run around the cone and try to get a shot on goal



SMALL SIDED GAMES

USING CONES OR PUG NETS

In order to keep kids as involved as possible it's a good idea to have two 1v1 games going on at the same time. Most games will last about 6 – 20 seconds. With two games at the same time, it will make the players keep their heads up so they don't run into the other players.

Encourage players to celebrate after scoring!

Encourage players to cheer on their teammates (this helps pick up the energy level and enthusiasm of the kids)

Encourage players to try different moves

