

# Coaching Manual



**Smoky River Soccer Club**

## **Acknowledgments**

This manual was prepared by Mark Heckbert with assistance from Aimee Anderson and Wendy Garant. The structure of the manual was based upon BC Soccer's "Small-Sided/Mini Soccer Club Development Manual". Additional content was based upon "The Official US Youth Soccer Coaching Manual" produced by US Youth Soccer, observations from the University of Alberta Youth Summer Soccer Camps and from drills adapted from various sources on the web. We appreciate the effort, thought and technical work that those before us have contributed and thank them for sharing their ideas to help make our club stronger.

## **The Responsible Coach**

### **Code of Conduct**

Thank you for volunteering as a coach for the Smoky River Soccer Club! Your time and effort is appreciated. You will contribute towards the positive development of young players, our soccer association and the sustainability of our communities.

1. Coaches will respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport.
2. Coaches will place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
3. Coaches will develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
4. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
5. Coaches must encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviours and performance.
6. Coaches will ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players.
7. Coaches will, at the outset of the season, clarify with the player and, where appropriate, their parents, exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from their coach.
8. Coaches must fully cooperate with others (Smoky River Soccer Club Executive, other coaches, officials) in the best interests of the player.
9. Coaches must always promote the appropriate Code of Conduct and positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) to players, parents and spectators alike. Never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations or the use of prohibited substances or techniques.
10. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and experience and be a role model for players, parents and spectators.

## **Principles of Coaching**

The following principles are presented so that players receive a healthy and positive soccer experience.

### **Developmentally Appropriate**

This challenges the coach to examine the appropriateness of the activity. The demands of the activity should fall within the range of the player's ability.

### **Clear, Concise and Correct Information**

How instructions are given is crucial when dealing with young children. Too much information overwhelms them and too little information doesn't give them enough to get started. Provide enough information to get them started and then add new challenges.

### **Progress from Simple to Complex**

Are the activities presented in a way that allows for ongoing modifications and new challenges to meet the players' interests and abilities?

### **Safe and Appropriate Training Area**

The area should be free of hazardous materials (e.g. glass, stones, holes etc.) and be safe from traffic or other environmental dangers. The training situation should be psychologically safe. Is the fear of failure reduced? Can the child take creative risks without fear of admonishment from the coach?

## **Decision Making**

Are there opportunities for the players to make decisions? Decisions may be spatial (where to run or pass), temporal, (when do I pass), or kinesthetic (how do I handle the ball?). These need to be present in all activities for learning to occur.

## **Implications for the Game**

The activities presented during training must in some way reflect the demands a player faces in the game. The younger the player, the less clear it may seem, while the older the player, the more clear it will become. The coach at this level is providing the foundational movement and thinking skills that will enable the player to later solve more complex problems.

## **Eliminating Lines, Laps and Lectures**

- a) Having players stand in lines waiting for their turn generally indicates an inappropriate activity. The activity will not keep their interest. Think about how the drill can be modified to reduce the waiting times.
- b) Running laps without a ball is not productive. All practice activities should take place with a ball.
- c) Avoid lectures.
- d) Reduce elimination games. Activities which involve elements that lead to players being eliminated from the activity often result in elimination of players who most need practice in technique and decision-making. Design activities that keep all players engaged throughout the length of the activity.
- e) Eliminate the use of physical activity as punishment (e.g. running laps, sit ups etc.). Making players run when there is a behaviour problem is counter-productive. When the consequences warrant,

short-term exclusion from the activity will often get a positive result.

### **Demonstrate Your Positive Character**

- a) The coach is likely the first person of influence in the child's sport involvement.
- b) Have total respect for players, parents, officials, Board, the game and yourself.
- c) Set language expectations and enforce it. No use of profanity ever.
- d) Demonstrate sportsmanship every day. Shake hands with opposing coaches and be sure to praise the opposition.

### **Program Description and Approach**

As coaches and teachers we will focus on the long term picture for players of Canadian soccer. Our primary focus is to encourage recreational players who will benefit from the healthy aspects of soccer and community participation and give back to the game for years to come as coaches, officials and administrators. We are focussed on contributing to the enjoyment of participating in team soccer and healthy competition which leads towards the goal of fitness for life for our players.

We will achieve these player-centered goals through logical and integrated training and practice and through provision of structured competition including games with neighbouring communities where possible.

## **The Coaching Pathway**

The Smoky River Soccer Club follows the Coaching Pathway in supporting and advancing the coaching skills of the Club coaches. The Coaching Pathway is inspired by Canada Soccer's Long-Term Player Development plan and is informed by the Coaching Association of Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development model.

The **Grassroots Program** provides certification for coaches with teams from U5-U15 and is organized as follows:

**Active Start-U5**

**Fundamentals-U7 & U9**

**Learn to Train-U11**

**Soccer for Life-U13 &U 15**

The Club encourages all coaches to work towards obtaining certification and advancing their coaching skills. In order to facilitate this, the Club arranges certification courses annually within the region. If you are interested in furthering your skills as a coach, please see the "News" section on the home page for the Club for upcoming certification courses or contact the Board at any time.

## **Stages and Age Groups**

### **Active Start (U5)**

The U5-Mixed class is for all sexes and runs from 6:30 pm to 7:15 pm. At this stage players should participate in stimulating exercises and eventually short games that develop basic technical skills in fun settings. Coaches will emphasize movement exercises such as running, jumping, twisting, throwing and catching and games that promote a feel for the ball while teaching basic principles of play within a fun but structured setting. Informal games can be set up after several weeks and at the end of

practices. Players should be given equal time and try all team positions. Equal time should be allotted to practices and games.

**STRUCTURE:** A number of stations are established and teams rotate through each station. Ball size 3. If a game is appropriate, the field of play is 30 m long X 22 m wide (max). No offside, but teach basic throw in. One coach is nominated as referee for each game.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Shin pads, cleats mandatory. Clothing as appropriate for the weather. No hats permitted.

**GOAL:** Encourage activity and develop basic motor skills.

**TECHNICAL:** Introduce individual skills. Dribbling with all parts of the foot, combined with simple techniques for changing direction (turns, drag backs). Basic shooting where players experience success and the thrill of a goal!

**TACTICAL:** No tactical instructions. Emphasis on the individual.

**PHYSICAL:** Provide a fun setting and simple mode of play that develops basic movement skills in running, jumping, kicking, throwing and catching. **Every child must have a ball.**

**MENTAL:** Fun and passion for play. Experience success and build confidence by receiving positive recognitions.

**LIFESTYLE:** Enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities.

**PERSONAL:** Positive attitude and self-esteem.

**GOALKEEPING:** No specific full-time goalkeepers at this age. All players should learn the basic techniques of ball handling at different



heights (not high balls) and throwing with one and two hands on the ground and in the air. Footwork is introduced including side-skip to get in line with the ball.

### **PRACTICE DRILLS: Centers with Different Activities**

**Simon Says**

**Red Light, Green Light**

**Red Rover**

**Tag**

**Hit the Coach (with the ball)**

**Ball Toss & Clap**

**Obstacle –Agility Course**

**Sharks and Minnows-** coach is shark, players minnows. Coach tries to hit players with balls. Hit players must lie down, are saved by active players stepping over them.

**Cone Maze-** random spread cones with a few small goals on the outside. Players try to dribble through without hitting cones. When it's time to clean up, players try to hit cones and pick them up.

## **FUNdamentals (U7)**

The U7 stage is for all sexes and focuses on creating stimulating practices and games that develop basic technical skills, always in a FUN atmosphere. The emphasis should be on movement exercises and games that promote a feel for the ball while teaching basic principles of play within a fun but structured setting. Mini game formats are used and the kids play each other in a 5 v 5 (4 players out plus one goalkeeper) setting. All players should play equal time and try all team positions including goalkeeper. Equal time is allotted to practices and games.

**STRUCTURE:** Total session time is 45 minutes and runs from 6:30-7:15 pm. 10 minute warm up, 15 minute practice, 20 minute game (two 10 minute halves with 2 minute break). Don't switch sides at half time. 4 on 4 with a goalkeeper. Two minute shifts. Game consists of 2-15 minute halves with a 5 minute break. Ball size 3. Field of play is 30 m long X 22 m wide (max). No offside but practice basic throw in, goal kick and corner kick. One coach is nominated as referee for each game. Fouls result in an indirect kick.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Shin pads, cleats and water bottle mandatory. No hats permitted. Goalkeepers wear a different coloured jersey than the rest of the players.

**GOAL:** Technique development through fun practice. Emphasis on skills and ABCs of the game, not tactics.

**TECHNICAL:** Dribbling basics and introduce dribbling with sole, inside and outside of foot. Introduce and develop techniques for turning and changing direction, including more advanced techniques such as inside and outside hooks, step overs and scissors. Develop short passing with side foot and laces and develop concept of passing to the feet. Introduce the concept of passing with both feet. Introduce receiving with inside and outside of foot and instep and introduce crossing and shooting while dribbling.

**TACTICAL:** Basic game concepts and rules. Introduction to team cooperation through small-sided games, but emphasis is still primarily on the individual. Finding space is important.

**PHYSICAL:** Develop the ABCs of movement: agility, balance and speed. Speed training should focus on quickness and agility. Continue general development of running, jumping, kicking, throwing and catching. Develop flexibility.

**MENTAL:** Basic game awareness and situations/formats to develop decision making. Experience success and receive positive recognition.

**LIFESTYLE:** Enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities.

**PERSONAL:** Positive attitude and self-esteem. Fair play and ethics. Promote group interaction skills.

**GOALKEEPING:** All players take turns in goal. Continue development of ball handling at all heights and above balls should be simple service with no opposition. Introduce simple communication (“Keeper!”). Continue with basic diving technique from “Gorilla” stance. Introduce the concept of the keeper as the rear defender (can pass ball back to keeper).

**CLASSIC WARMUP:** Define a limited area with cones. At your whistle, players dribble. Stop on whistle. Start on whistle. Toe taps followed by forward and backwards toe taps, followed by tic tacs, tic tacs forward and tic tacs backward. Resume dribbling, encourage use of all parts of the foot. On whistle, command part of body to touch ball. More dribbling. Sweeps. Command forming into groups of certain number. Warm up followed by stretching.

**CLASSIC STRETCH ROUTINE:** Form circle, one player leads demonstration in centre. Progress from feet to head. Ankle, quad, groin, hips, sides, arms, neck.

#### **PRACTICE DRILLS:**

**Ball Retrieve-** Coach stands in the middle of the training area and collects all the balls. Coach explains that he will throw balls in different direction that that each player must bring their ball back to

the coach as quickly as they can. Coach puts various conditions on how they retrieve the ball, eventually being asked to maneuver the ball with their feet.

**Body Part Dribble**-Each Player has a ball in a defined area ie. 10-20 yard circle. Players dribble ball in the space and avoid touching each other. While they dribble, coach calls out a body part and player touches it to the ball. After touching the ball, players immediately starts to dribble again. Activity promotes listening skills and coordination.

**Everybody's It:** In a defined areas i.e. 10-20 yard circle, each players runs around trying to tag everyone else and at the same time trying not to get tagged themselves. Coach gives signal when to begin and let them play for 30-45 seconds. When tagged, player sits down inside boundary. It's a game of total vision requiring players to move into spaces to attack and out of spaces to retreat.

**Glob**- Use cones to create a rectangle, with one end being the "Finish Line". Coach is the nasty "Glob" in the centre of the area who challenges the players to try and run by him without being tagged and cross the "Finish Line". Ham it up. Then introduce the balls in subsequent rounds and have them try to get across and through "Glob Country" by dribbling their ball while the coach tries to kick it gently out-of-bounds. Player re-entry can be done by three toe taps on the ball. This is not an elimination game.

**Gates**- Pairs of cones to make the "gates" are placed within the defined boundary area. "Upon command, players dribble a ball through as many "gates" in 60 seconds. Payers keep track of how many "gates" they conquer. Play the game several times to allow players to try and best their scores. Younger players compete against themselves in this game.

## U9

This age group is for all sexes and is where players can begin to understand the concept of working with teammates. The idea or willingness to intentionally pass the ball to someone is just beginning to take hold. Some players will go back and forth between egocentric play and cooperative play while others appear to lag behind due to a slower development. Coaches should design activities in which players are sharing a ball. Continue though, to encourage individual skill development through this stage.

**STRUCTURE:** Total session time is 60 minutes and runs from 6:30-7:30 pm. 10 minute warm up (include stretching), 30 minutes practice, 20 minute game. Switch sides at half time. 4 on 4 with a goalkeeper. Three minute shifts. Game consists of 2-10 minute halves with a 2 minute break. Ball size 3. Field of play is 36 m long X 25 m wide (max). No offside but practice basic throw in, goal kick and corner kick. One coach is nominated as referee for each game. Fouls result in an indirect kick.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Shin pads, cleats and water bottle mandatory. Shorts are expected. No hats permitted. Goalkeepers wear a different coloured jersey than the rest of the players.

**GOAL:** Technique development through fun practice. Emphasis on skills and ABCs of the game, not tactics.

**TECHNICAL:** Dribbling basics and introduce dribbling with sole, inside and outside of foot. Introduce and develop techniques for turning and changing direction, including more advanced techniques such as

inside and outside hooks, step overs and scissors. Develop short passing with side foot and laces and develop concept of passing to the feet. Introduce the concept of passing with both feet. Introduce receiving with inside and outside of foot and instep and introduce “crossing: and shooting while dribbling.

**TACTICAL:** Basic game concepts and rules. Introduction to team cooperation through small-sided games, but emphasis is still primarily on the individual. Finding space is important.

**PHYSICAL:** Develop the ABCs of movement: agility, balance and speed. Speed training should focus on quickness and agility. Continue general development of running, jumping, kicking, throwing and catching. Develop flexibility.

**MENTAL:** Basic game awareness and situations/formats to develop decision making. Experience success and receive positive recognition.

**LIFESTYLE:** Enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities.

**PERSONAL:** Positive attitude and self-esteem. Fair play and ethics. Promote group interaction skills.

**GOALKEEPING:** All players take turns in goal during the year but goalkeepers shall be rotated at half time during a game. Continue development of ball handling at all heights and above balls should be simple service with no opposition. Introduce simple communication (“Keeper!”). Continue with basic diving technique from “Gorilla” stance. Introduce the concept of the keeper as the rear defender (can pass ball back to keeper).

**PRACTICE DRILLS:**

**Math Dribble**- Every player has a ball within a confined area. Players dribble a ball while avoiding others. Coach calls out a math problem. Players solve the problem by forming the appropriate sized group and move together while dribbling i.e. 3-1 (equals pairs) or 1+2 (equals groups of three). Encourages dribbling, ball control, changing direction and changing speed, quick reaction to cues, awareness of other players.

**Gates in Pairs**- Using pairs of cones, coach constructs 8-12 randomly-spaced goals approximately 3 yards apart. Each pair of players has one ball. After a signal from the coach, pairs of players attempt to play as many passes to each other through the gates in 60 seconds. Players cannot pass the ball through the same gate on consecutive passes. At the end of 60 seconds, challenge players to improve on the first score. This activity encourages problem-solving, speed of passing, changing direction, receiving and passing, communications and cooperation.

**Pac Man**-Each player has a ball in a confined area (approximately 20 X 20 yards). All but two players must place their ball outside of the boundary. The two players with a ball are the Pac Men. Pac Men dribble their balls and attempt to hit other players below the knee with a pass. Other players try to avoid being hit by running, dodging and jumping. Once a player is hit, they become Pac Men as well. The game continues until everyone has been hit and has their ball.

**Boss of the Balls**- This is a small-sided game of 4 v 4 with two small goals and is played in an area approximately 20 X 30 yards. The coach stands at the mid line with all the balls. As soon as goal is scored or a ball goes out-of-bounds, the coach tosses another ball in. When the coach runs out of balls, the players gather all the balls up and return them to the coach. Do not gather the balls for the players. The game must have a natural ending point.

**Shot to the Head**- Players line up at the top of the 18 yard box. One goalkeeper. Coach has all the balls on the right side of the net. Player approaches goal and coach passes a ball. Player takes a shot, then continues forward and coach tosses a second ball to the player who then heads the ball into the net. Player retrieves both balls for coach.

**Sweeping Up the House**- Two goals opposite and offset to each other with three cones in front of each goal. Players divided into two teams behind each set of cones. Player dribbles through cones, dribbles around coach, who runs a bit of interference, and shoots on goal. Player who shoots waits beside goal for ball from next player. Player picks up ball from net and takes to start of other line. So, two lines of dribblers and shooters ongoing at all times. Amend game to teach sweeping instead of dribbling after a couple of practices.

## **U11**

This stage is for all sexes and introduces players to disciplined training and begins to develop their understanding of principles of play alongside their skills. Repetition is important to develop technical proficiency, however creating a fun and challenging environment is still important to stimulate learning and a love of the game. All players play equal time and try all team positions including goalkeeping.

**STRUCTURE:** Total session time is 60 minutes and runs from 7:30-8:30 pm. 10 minute warm up (include stretching), 30 minutes for



practice sessions, 20 minute game. 5 on 5 with a goalkeeper. Field of play is 55 m long X 36 m wide (max). Ball size 4. No offside but practice basic throw in, goal kick and corner kick. One coach is nominated as referee for each game. Fouls result in an indirect kick.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Shin pads, cleats and water bottle mandatory. Shorts are expected. No hats permitted. Goalkeepers wear a different coloured jersey than the rest of the players.

**GOAL:** Focus on technique, skill development and introduce tactics. Talented players will start to be identified but FUN is paramount.

**TECHNICAL:** This stage is the best opportunity for skill learning. Teach more advanced skills and movements. Practice drills used to encourage decision-making. Develop and refine dribbling. Continue to develop turns, drag backs, shielding and hooks as well as fakes, step overs and scissors. Refine short passing, develop passing with outside of foot and chips and introduce medium and long passes. Introduce receiving with all parts of the body and shooting with volleys and half-valleys. Introduce heading.

**TACTICAL:** Continue with small-sided games. Introduce attack and defense principles and basic team play with 2 and 3 player combinations. Introduce positional awareness in a variety of positions. Teach basic set pieces such as free kicks and correct throw-ins.

**PHYSICAL:** Continue to develop the ABCs of movement: agility, balance and speed. Maintain flexibility and suppleness. Continue to develop quickness and agility.

**MENTAL:** Introduce basic mental preparation with goal-setting, determination and concentration. Experience success and receive positive recognition.

**LIFESTYLE:** Enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities.

**PERSONAL:** Fair play and ethics. Accept training structure and discipline. Promote group interaction skills and internal motivation.

**GOALKEEPING:** Players still take turns in goal. Continue development of ball handling, ball rolling and over-arm throws, footwork, goal kicks, drop kicks, moving back passes and punts. Introduce side-arm and javelin throws and deflecting. Introduce a variety of new dives. Introduce catching and deflecting crosses from a simple thrown service. Emphasize importance of on-field communication with other players.

**PRACTICE DRILLS:**

**Dribbling Skills**- Start with two lines of 10 cones about 4 m apart. Players line up behind each row of cones and start dribbling through with right foot, then left foot, then sole roll each time returning to the start of the cone lines by dribbling back along the outside of the exercise area. Then, using the middle area between the two cone lines, players proceed forward while dribbling using tow taps, then foundations (side-to-side taps), sole rolls, step overs and scissors. Using the internal exercise space gives more room to move and players return to the start by dribbling back outside of the cone lines. Emphasize control and technique, not speed.

**Mini World Cup**-Using one goal, one ball and one goalkeeper, the rest of the players form pairs and choose their country name. The boundary for the activity is the 18 yard box. Team of two players

move out into the area. The coach kicks out the ball and each team battles to score a goal. After a team scores, they stand behind the net. The last team who has not scored is eliminated and all the teams that did score in that round come back onto the area for another round. Each round eliminates one pair of players. The final team to score wins the World Cup.

**Defrost Tag**- Start with two equal teams in a 30 X 30 yard area. One entire team is inside the area without balls while the other team's players are outside the area, each player with a ball. At the coach's signal, the team outside the area dribbles their balls into the area and attempt to hit the inside team's players with passes below the knee. Emphasize passing, not shooting. When a player is hit, they are "frozen". A player can be "unfrozen" if a teammate crawls between their legs. Both players are now back in the game. The game ends when the inside team is all "frozen" or the time limit expires.

**Get Outta Here**-Set up a small-sided field, approximately 30 X 20 yards with two equal-sized teams. The starting point is on the outside of the field at the midline. The coach tosses a ball onto the field and one pair from each team runs onto the field for a 2 v 2 situation. There are no goalkeepers. If a goal is scored, the scoring team stays on while the defending team sprints off and a new pair runs on. If a ball goes out of bounds or a goal is not scored, the coach shouts "Get Outta Here" and both pairs must run off the field and are replaced by the next two players from each team. This is designed as a fast-paced activity that requires concentration from everyone both on and off the field.

**Pirates**- Create a 15 m circle with cones. Each player has a ball and dribbles the ball inside the area while maintaining control and tries to kick the other players' ball outside of the area. Once a ball has been

kicked out, that player is out for that round. The winner of each round is the last player inside the circle still with their ball.

**British Bulldog**-Set up a 30 X 30 yard area. Each player, except one, has a ball and lines up on one end line outside of the area. The one player without a ball is the starting Bulldog. On the coach's signal, players try to dribble their ball across the area without having their ball touched by the Bulldog. When a player's ball is touched, he joins the Bulldogs for the next round. The game ends when the last player with a ball is caught.

### **Race for the Throne**

One goal, coach in net. Two sets of three cones on either side of net facing out into field away from goal. Two cones forming a gate at top of 18 yard box. Players divided into two teams, a base of cones. At coach's signal, players go at same time to dribble through cones, advance through gate and shoot on goal. After a few rounds, morph drill to include a tornado turn before they shoot. Morph drill into 1 V 1 situation where first player through gate continues on offence while second player tries to defend.

## **U13-U15**

This stage is for all sexes and is a fertile period for learning. The players are usually eager to learn and have considerable coordination and stamina. These players can sequence thoughts and perform complex tasks. The idea that field space can be successfully covered by several short passes or one properly played pass begins to make sense. A coach can expect his players to understand the game and use teammates to help solve problems. However not all players will be at the same level of tactical understanding. Training sessions that

present appropriate problems for players to solve will result in positive gains during games.

**STRUCTURE:** Total session time is 60 minutes and runs from 7:30 - 8:30 pm. 15 minute warm up (include stretching), 50 minutes for practice sessions. Ball size 5. Offside is taught. Basic throw in, goal kick and corner kick. One coach is nominated as referee for each game. Fouls and hand balls are called.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Shin pads, cleats and water bottle mandatory. Shorts are expected. No hats permitted. Goalkeepers wear a different coloured jersey than the rest of the players.

**GOAL:** Focus on individual techniques by spending lots of time with each player handling a ball. Introduce specific game situation tactics. While typically highly motivated to play, the nature of the training session is crucial. FUN continues to be paramount.

**TECHNICAL:** Technical correction is effective with this group. Using the “freeze” method during play to describe, explain and correct is useful but should not be overused. Players can now begin to be creative in their on-field thinking. Continue to teach more advanced skills and movements. Practice drills used to encourage decision-making. Develop and refine dribbling with speed. Teach defense under indirect kick scenario. Emphasize distribution of the ball to the sides and use of the full field. Refine heading including use of attacking headers.

**TACTICAL:** We are now playing with full field size. Continue to teach attack and defense principles and basic team play. Continue with unit positional awareness in a variety of positions. Teach basic set pieces such as free kicks and correct throw-ins and strategies under these scenarios.

**PHYSICAL:** Continue to develop the ABCs of movement: agility, balance, control and speed. Maintain flexibility and suppleness. Continue to develop quickness and agility and encourage strong and brave tackling with proper technique.

**MENTAL:** Continue to encourage basic mental preparation with goal-setting, determination and concentration. Experience success and receive positive recognition.

**LIFESTYLE:** Enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities.

**PERSONAL:** Fair play and ethics. Accept training structure and discipline. Promote group interaction skills and internal motivation.

**GOALKEEPING:** Players and coaches may choose two goalkeepers at this stage. Introduce some specific time during practice to train goalkeepers. Continue development of ball handling confidence and provision of direction to other players. Emphasize the important role of communication with other teammates and role of seeing the whole field. Emphasize importance of commanding the 18 yard box and directing players during indirect free kicks.

**PRACTICE DRILLS:**

**Bucket Ball**- Use up to half a field with a garbage can in the middle. Two even teams play against each other and a point is awarded when they hit the bucket. Teams are not permitted to touch the bucket. A bonus point is added to the team if they play the ball into the barrel.

**Triangle Goal**- Using cones, create a three-side goal in the middle of the area. Two teams play against each other with the defending team placing three goalkeepers in the goal. A goal can be scored from any

side. When possession is lost, the goalkeepers must vacate the goal and the team that has lost possession must employ a quick transition to avoid being scored upon. Play is to a set number of goals. If a goal is scored, the team who scored can become the defending team.

**Four Goal Game**- Two teams play on a 40 X 30 yard area with a small goal in each corner. Each team defends two goals and attacks two goals. Goalkeepers are optional. One goalkeeper could be used to defend both goals! Play is to a set number of goals. Players are able to identify which goal is the most vulnerable to attack.

**Exchange Ball & Shoot**- Set up two goals with keeper and balls divided into half in each goal. Place two portable goals, each 20 m from centre field. Players are divided into two teams at half, 5 m apart across from each other and behind a marking pylon. Coach starts drill by having the first player pass a ball back and forth until the whistle is blown. Once the whistle is blown each player advances toward their respective goal and receives a pass from the keeper and shoots on the goal with one touch. If the player scores, return to the line, if the player misses, return the ball to the net. First team to score 10 goals wins and the other team runs a lap.

**Tic Tac Toe Warm Up**- Place nine cones in a 3X3X3 grid about 2 m apart. Players line up into 2 teams. Three pinnies are supplied to each team. On the whistle, the first player places a pinnie at a cone. Each subsequent player places or moves their colour in order to try and get three in a row. Winning team rests, loser sprints around cones.

**Relay Warm Up**-Two teams. One player at each cone to start. Cone 10 m from team line up. Starting player receives a pass from the player at the cone, one touch back to cone. Starting player moves to role at cone, cone player returns to back of line. First team to successfully pass 10 times wins. Round two=headers. Round

three=two players. Round four=volley. Round five=two player volley. Round six=two player heading.

**Steal the Bibs**- Set up a 10 m X 10 m box with pylons. Players all place their jersey or pinnie in the back of their shorts and on the whistle try to steal the pinnie from their team mates and place it in their own shorts. If a player loses their pinnie they continue to try and steal others. Players can have multiple pinnies. When the whistle blows, players without a pinnie do two pushups.

**Centre Circle Warm Up**- Using the centre circle or a circle of cones, each player begins by dribbling in a controlled manner inside circle. At the whistle, players spin while dribbling. Complete several series. Next whistle, player holds ball and touches ball with knee. Again, complete several series. Next whistle, touch ball with high kick. Next series, back to dribbling and on whistle, step tap on ball with both feet. Next series, scissor over ball.

Next partner up, each with a ball. One partner throws ball to other and heads back while receiving player throws their ball in the air straight up and catches it. Repeat with volley. Repeat with flick over passed ball.

**Warm Up With the Ball**- Place two cones 10 m apart in a long grid. Place a ball at one cone, alternating for each pair along the grid. Players line up at one end of grid. Player starts by dribbling ball to other cone, then advancing to next pair of cones and dribbling ball to other cone. Players advance through full grid.

**Defensive Shape Drill**- Two teams of four face each other within a large grid. Two other players at each end corner. Using principles of cover, space and shape, team of four attempts to pass ball through defence to their players on the end corners. Emphasis on communication, equal spacing and forcing predictable play.



**Stick Together Drill**- Make a box. Two teams of five or so. One team holds hands and does not let go. For 60 seconds, linked team tries to tag other loose players. Keep track of how many players are left after 60 seconds. Reverse roles. Losing team does fitness.

**2 V 1 Shooting Drill**- Three pylons 10 m out from top of 18 yard box. One pylon centre top of 18 yard box with a player. 1/3 players at centre, 1/3 at right pylon, 1/3 at left pylon. Centre player passes to centre pylon player, who receives ball, turns and shoots unopposed on goal. Upon the shot, the two players on the outside pylons advance 2 V 1 on goal.

**Salsa Warm Up**- Two teams in a box. Each starts with one ball, passing to their team while mixing with the other team inside the box. After 30 seconds, introduce a second ball to each team. Stop dribbling on whistle and move around doing high leg kicks. Start dribbling again and introduce a third ball. Stop dribbling and do leg twists. Jog around and on whistle, shoulder bumps. Jog around, back leg stretch. Pass again with multiple balls but after a player passes a ball, they sprint around a cone and then back into action. Emphasis on communication. Stop dribbling and jog again, on whistle, lunges and torso twist. Now, continue passing, but switch it up and pass to team of another colour.

**Fun Header Warm Up**- One goal at centre with two corner flags as posts. Two piles of balls 3 m either side of posts. One player at each pile of balls. One keeper. Rest of players divided equally facing each side of goal 4 m back. Player throws a ball to the attacker who tries to score with the head. Attacker replaces keeper. First to six wins. Losing team does 5 pushups.

**One Touch Shoot and Defend**- One goal with keeper, two flags at top corners of 18 yard box. Two sets of players on each side of goal on goal line. Two sets of players on each flag. One player on goal line plays a ball to the players at the flag who controls ball with one touch and shoots. Player who passed the ball tries to block shot. Alternate sides.

**Pass and Move**- Set up a rectangle 10 m X 20 m with 6 cones on corners and at middle perimeter on long side. 5 players start, one at each cone with one cone without a player. One ball. Player passes ball to another position then runs to open cone.

Progression: Player passes ball to another position, receives pass back, then plays ball to another position and runs to open cone.

**Pass and Swap**- Players in pairs facing each other 5 m apart. Cone beside each player. One ball/pair. Crisp, controlled passing back and forth. At the whistle, players on one side of the pair switch with the player next to them. Emphasize position awareness, passing control, efficient switching, demand the ball when switching occurs.