



Soccer Coaches Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue #4, April 2008

Coaching Directors Area: Spring is officially here. Soon you will be running to practices and games and before you know it tryouts will be happening. Enjoy the moment. Couple of items.....

- ⚽ Coaches payments will be April 30, 2008 and August 30, 2008
- ⚽ The complex was voted down 5-2. We will be going back to the New Denmark board one more time. Other options are now starting to appear. As I get more information I will pass it on to you.
- ⚽ We need someone to coach a U-19 boys team. If you know of anyone let me know.
- ⚽ Also need coaches for next year.
- ⚽ Luxemburg Casco (JV girls) and Ashwaubenon (Varsity Boys) are looking for head coaches. If you are interested or know of someone who is, let me know. Coaching HS soccer is a blast!
- ⚽ Right after this newsletter I will be working on the contracts. They will need to be signed and returned.
- ⚽ Check out <http://www.wiyouthsoccer.com/index.asp> for information about ODP or getting you "C" license.
- ⚽ Scott Pfaff has volunteered to help coach when needed. This means if there is a game or tournament that you can not make Scott or myself can show up and coach. We have our coaching passes and therefore can coach any level.

Please let me know if there is anything that I can do. I have moved into my high school season, which means my time is limited, but I will attempt to help anyone who needs it. Any issues should be brought to my attention so that I can find a remedy.

Have Fun!
Bob

P.S.....Thanks to the coaches who showed up to the coaches meeting. I really appreciate the support. For those who could not make it, I have listed below the instances where I talked about the upcoming meeting. As a coach in this club, I appreciate all that you do, and in return I have worked diligently to protect your rights and reduce your work load. For this, all I ask is that you attend **one** meeting. If you did not know about the meeting then I have to assume you do not read the coaches newsletter, which would be another instance of me wasting my time.

Volume 3, Issue #2, February 2008

I have now booked the annual coaches meeting. The mandatory meeting will take place on March 15 at 2:00 at the Notre Dame High School gym. I plan on having a short meeting and then two training sessions. One session would cover "coaching the flat back four" and the other could be a topic of your choice. Any ideas? I will also need some players to coach....someone want to bring a team? Just let me know. If you can not make the meeting, please let me know.

Volume 3, Issue #1, January 2008

I am also working on a Mandatory coaches meeting in February. The location and time are still up in the air as I am also working with UWGB to host a local coaches clinic. We are trying to get several college coaches to do a 2 hour clinic for the local clubs. As I get more details I will let you know.

Volume 2, Issue #11, November 2007

Remember, we will have a mandatory coaches meeting in February. I will let you know the time and place as we get closer.

Volume 2, Issue #10, October 2007

Send me your info and I will get it published on the web. Remember to keep a date free in February for our annual coaches meeting.

Coaching Corner: Making Soccer Drills Work By Alan Maher

The major emphasis at most soccer conventions and workshops is the presentation of drills. Coaches collect drills like souvenirs, returning home with their new-found prizes. For many coaches the problem is that the newly-acquired drills do not work for their teams. What to do? How can drills be adjusted to the local situation or the specific team? Where does one begin?

The solution is to consider the basic elements of a drill. Any drill for any sport. There are common elements for all. Knowing and understanding the common elements will help a coach adjust a drill to work in the local situation or at least help make it work.

Let's examine the common elements of all drills in some detail.

No. 1 - TIME

There are two aspects to time. How long does the drill last and how often should the coach use it? In soccer any situation creates two basic questions. How long can one group of players hold and control the ball? One minute? Two minutes? Or can they hold it longer? The other aspect is, how many passes in a row can one team make before losing possession of the ball? Ten? More? Time is a basic element of any drill.

No. 2 - VELOCITY

This also has two aspects. First, how hard do you want the ball passed? A soft pass to space or a hard pass to feet? The harder the ball is struck, the harder it is for the receiving player to control it. The second question is, how hard does the player run? Run hard? Jog, then change pace? Jog? Keep moving, even if only walking? Jog in place? Standing is not an option on a soccer field. The Dutch say, "move now; rest later."

No. 3 - HEIGHT OF THE PASS

Do you want the ball delivered on the ground? Under the armpits? Over the heads of the opponents? Three choices, all of which are critical. The players must decide which is best.

No. 4 - DIRECTION

Where is the ball to go? To feet? To space? This is related to the velocity of the ball. A hard pass to feet or soft to space? Each pass has a different degree of difficulty. What degree of difficulty does the coach want and need in the drill?

No. 5 - SPACE

What is the size of the space to be used? Large or small? Small space is more demanding, as players must pass more accurately and react more rapidly to the pace of the drill. A large space gives more time to react and conceals passing errors. There is more time to run after a bad pass in a big space. Also, is the space to be wide or long? Along, narrow space forces long axis passes, while a wide space forces more square and back passes. Both kinds of space serve a purpose, but what is the purpose of the drill?

No. 6 - DISTANCE

Short passes need to be more accurate, as the time for a player to get into a position to receive the ball is also short. Long passes give the receiving player more time to get in the path of the ball. Short passes often transfer pressure from one player to the next, while long passes deliver the ball to a place where there is less pressure.

No. 7 - RULES

What are the rules to be observed? Two-touch passing? Ignore the offside law? Wall pass before shooting? What are the rules? And change the rules if they are not working. Rules should be simple and few in number.

As the coach begins a training session, there are three basic rules to keep in mind. First, from the beginning the coach must make it work. Whatever it is that the coach wants out of the drill must be the outcome. Give a clear statement of what is to be done, why it is important and show how it should be done. Give concrete examples and proceed in small steps that all can follow and understand. But make it work. If it is not working, the coach can manipulate the elements mentioned above to make it work. For example, the coach can add more time or more space if needed.

Second, the coach must make it better by making it harder for the players. This can be done in a variety of ways. Limit the touches on the ball. Go from unlimited touches to two touches of the ball. Then try one-touch passing. Then back off and change the rules again. Try one touch or three touches, no two-touch. What does this teach? How? And why?

Maybe the coach can reduce the amount of space that the players can use. This will put more demands on both passing and running off the ball, much more demanding of all concerned. Adding players will fill up the space and put more demands on the passing and running off the ball. Does everyone know what to do? Where to go? How to help? Try it. Finally, introduce opposition. This is a simple change that should come as the last step, not the first. Players must develop confidence and courage in what they do before they face opposition on the field of play. One opponent even just walking around causes players to lower their heads and focus on the ball, not on the field of play. The level of passing is lowered. Players feel pressure, real or imagined.

So only at this point should opposition be considered. Also, the opposition should be at a ratio of two attackers to one defender if the players with the ball are expected to execute tactical options with their heads up, viewing the field of play. Thus, two on one is acceptable; two on two is not. Keep the two-to-one ratio at all times. Include three on one, four on two and five on two. This can be increased to include six on three or eight on four.

To review: Any drill, if done correctly, might help any team, but only if it is worked correctly from the beginning. Knowing and understanding how to manipulate the basic elements of drills can help a coach to make proper adjustments to assure success. In addition, the coach should be aware of three simple steps for training.

1. Make it work.
2. Make it better/harder.

It is important to add that when Step 3 fails, go back to Step 1. The first rule of soccer is simple: make it work!

Featured Activity: Here is a session from the fourth week of the U16 EC Vitoria Team.

Session 1

Focus: Build from the back in the Def 1/3.

Players: 16 players + 2 GK's

Field: ½ field

Warm-Up

4v4 keep away game. Once a team has ball possession on your own field, only two defenders from the opposite team can enter their field to attempt to steal the ball. If they do so, then they will strive to play it to their own field and maintain possession. The teams score goals if they split the opponent, by passing the ball through the both defenders and the pass is complete at the other end.

Coaching Points

- Encourage quick ball circulation.
- 1-2 maybe 3 touches on the ball.
- Adjust angles of support



Progression 1

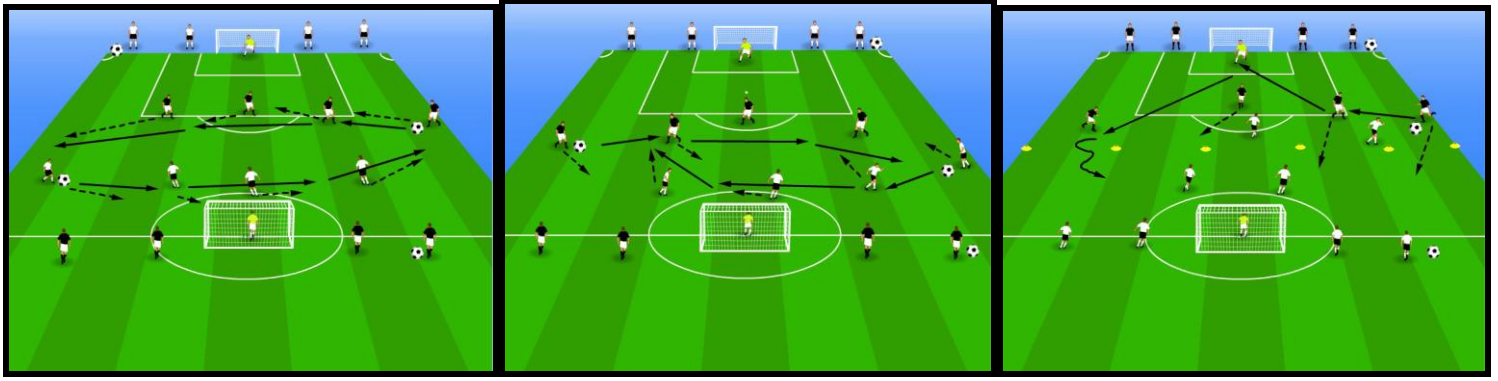
Build from the back from the Def 1/3. 4 groups of 4. 02 groups at a time, building up from the back simultaneously. 2 fullbacks + 2 Center backs + Goalkeeper.

Double rotation. Below you see the first rotation. Ball goes from one fullback thru the center backs and reaches the opposite fullback. The second rotation then starts, same as the first one, but this time the ball is returning its starting point. Once the second rotation is done than a final cross happens at the end of the play and two players (one center back and the weak side fullback) perform runs across the box (near and far post). Once the groups are done the next two start. The exercise is done for 20-25 minutes non-stop.

ROTATION #1

ROTATION #2

FINAL PHASE OF THE ROTATIONS



Coaching Points

- Emphasize the right speed and direction of the pass
- Angles.
- Play the ball in the “future spot” = Leading passes
- Watch the quality of first touches
- Perform final phase with sharpness, even though finishing is not the aim of the exercise (economic training).

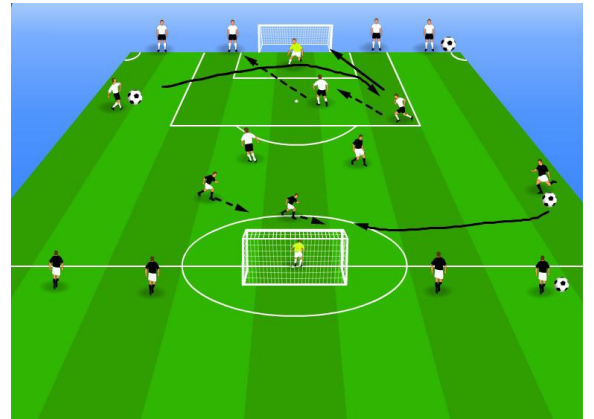
Progression 2

Now add pressure to the rotation. Divide the field into 2 halves. The ball starts from the Goalkeeper hands and it is passed to the group who is building up. There are no restrictions when building up the attack. There will be pressure from 2 opponents in one half of the field and 2 opponents on the other half. 4 + GK v 2 v 2.

Defenders can counter attack. Once the game is over (ball out of bounds, goalkeeper has its possession or goal) then the attacking team exits the field and the defending team will attack the other way. Unlimited touches, but 1-3 touches strongly recommended.

Coaching Points

- Involve the Goalkeeper in the build up
- Find the open man.
- Be direct with the play. No need to mix ball possession with lack of objectivity.
- Diagonal passes.
- Be prepared to anticipate possible passing lanes. Think ahead and good vision.
- Without the ball provide the correct support wide and deep (forward and backwards).



Progression 3

Finish the session with a 4v4 game and then progress it to a 8v8.

Coaching Points

- Keep the idea that the team is building up with a back 4, even though the space appears too big. In possession it is ok to let the players of a back to use the width of the field.
- Include the Goalkeeper once again.
- Continues to work on the speed of the play to reach the



opposite goal. A team actually wants to get out of their own defensive third.

Cool Down

Swimming Pool – Stretches and swimming exercises.

GoalKeeper Activity: Angle play

This area alone separates the pretenders from the contenders. By simply taking up the right position you can make goalkeeping look very easy. -- Tony DiCicco, *Goalkeeper Soccer Training Manual*

Along with footwork and good catching skills, positioning provides the foundation of good goalkeeping. A keeper who is always in position makes it look like every shot goes right to them, because the shooter has nowhere else to put the ball. Poor positioning leaves vast areas of net for a shooter, or even an empty net.

Basic Positioning Principles

First, to position themselves accurately, the goalkeeper must know where the goal is! It sounds obvious, but during the scramble of a game a keeper can lose track. When the play starts moving towards the goal, the first thing the keeper must do is check the posts to make sure they are starting off with good position. Then, whenever they can divert their attention for a split second, they should check the posts again to make sure they've maintained that good position in the face of a moving ball.

Second, the goalkeeper must always try to position themselves on an imaginary line that runs from the center of the goal to the ball (Fig. 1). This puts them in position to get to either post equally well. The center line determines the side-to-side positioning.

Third, the goalkeeper must position themselves far enough off the goal line to cover the angle created by the ball and both posts. They should be able to cover either post with a couple of quick steps (footwork!) and a dive if necessary (Fig. 2). The angle and the keeper's ability determine the forward/backward positioning. Many young or timid goalkeepers tend to stay very close to the goal line - sometimes right on it. They must be taught to come off the line if they are to cover any shots near the posts.

How far out a keeper must come depends on their size and ability - smaller goalkeepers or keepers with a poor range will need to come farther out to be able to cover the entire angle.

But don't forget the third dimension not represented in these pictures: height. A keeper who is far off their line is more likely to be beaten by a chip over their head, so that must also be put into the equation. The keeper must adjust the forward/backward position so that they're confident they won't be beaten easily over the top.

Positioning Around the Goal

The goalkeeper must constantly adjust his or her position as they move around the goal. Let's look at what happens as the ball changes spots.

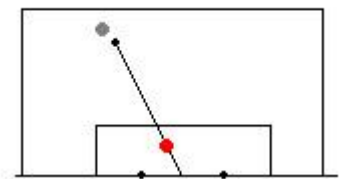


Fig 1. The Center Line Position

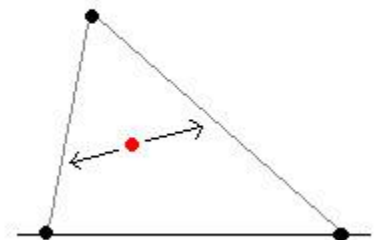


Fig. 2 Covering the Angle

At a tight angle, with the ball near the end line, the angle the keeper needs to cover is very small, so they can stay near their goal. However, the keeper must stay outside the near post. This will prevent them from deflecting a shot into their own net inside the near post. At sharp angles the goalkeeper should always position themselves so any ball they deflect at a right angle (they should already be square to the ball) will go outside the near post.

Here's a quick way for goalkeepers to tell if they are outside the near post: if the goalkeeper, while square to the ball, points their arms straight out sideways, the arm nearest the goal should be pointing outside the near post. If it is pointing into the net, the keeper needs to take another step or two out from goal.

As the ball moves further out onto the soccer field, the near post is not as much of a concern any more, but the keeper must move further out to cover the angle.

Figure 3 shows conceptually where a keeper should be positioned (red dots) as the ball (black dots) moves around the edge of the penalty area. The blue line shows the shape this makes. The actual size of the arc will differ depending on the size and skill of a particular keeper, but the general shape will remain the same. (The angle lines are only drawn on the left side of the illustration to avoid clutter.)

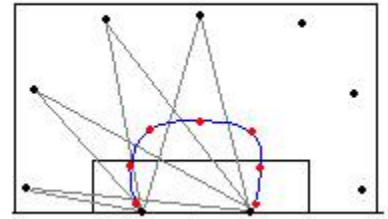


Fig. 3: The Goalkeeper's Arc

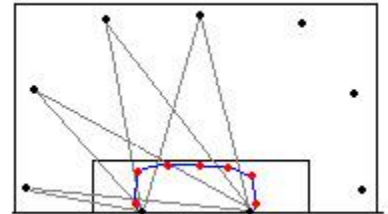


Fig. 4 Adjusted Arc

If we look at the top of the arc, though, we notice that the keeper is very far off the line (sometimes 10-12 yards out!) and likely to get chipped, especially if they're not very tall. So we need to adjust the top of the arc to account for high balls. The top of the arc gets flattened, bringing the keeper back to a position where they have a chance to get to any ball over their head (Fig. 4). Again, the exact position will depend on the size and skill of the player. Shorter, less skilled keepers will be more comfortable closer to the goal line, others may be comfortable closer to the six.

Tony DiCicco calls this concept the "Arc Angle". It can easily be demonstrated on the soccer field with three ropes about 50 feet long, one attached to each post and one to a stake at the middle of the goal line. Place the ball at varying spots around the penalty area and have the keeper find their position, then place a cone there. When the exercise is finished, the cones will show that keeper's arc as in Figure 3. Adjust for chip shots and you'll end up with the keeper's arc as in Figure 4.

A keeper should learn this arc and use it as a general guideline for how they position themselves as the ball moves. Notice that this arc roughly follows the goal box. Make sure the keeper notes how their own arc matches or differs from the goal box, so they can use the goal box as a reference during practices and games. However, do not let a keeper, especially a young one, think they must move along this arc at all times. If the ball quickly changes position, they must move as quickly as possible to cover the new position, cutting across the box if necessary.

Also, remember a given keeper's arc will change as they gain size, strength and ability. You may want to run the exercise with the ropes once a season to see if their arc has changed.

Quick Summary - Positioning:

- Know the location of the goalposts
- Stay on line between the center of the goal and the ball
- Move far enough off the line to cover the angle to each post
- Be aware of balls over the head when way off the line
- At sharp angles, always play outside the near post

Mistakes to Watch For:

- Not checking the goalposts frequently
- Staying planted on the goal line
- Standing inside the near post on sharp-angled shots