

COACHES CORNER



<http://www.eteamz.com/gblightningsc/index.cfm?>
P.O. Box 1022, Green Bay, Wisconsin, 54305

Coaching Director Area

By Bob Rickards

Coaches,

Thanks again to everyone who helped make this tryout season one of the smoothest I have ever been involved with. I hope that you have enjoyed the new electronic registration processes. Please forward your suggestions to us so that we can make the process even smoother for next year.

Everyone should be submitting your expense reports to me for the 2009 season. Those of you that have submitted, should have receive your final payments as I am sending your forms to our treasure and he is send out checks as soon as possible. Remember if you do not submit by October 31, you will make a donation to the club.

Contracts for the coming year will be sent out in the middle of August. I will begin to work on them as soon as I can wrap up this year. We are still in need of **a U12 girls coach and a U14 girls coach**. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please have them contact me.

The facility is moving forward. We have secured the Karma company to develop a CASE statement and theme. Preliminary results show that they understand what we need and where we need to go. We have also begun interviewing planning companies for development of the project. We are looking for volunteers to help move the project forward.

Just recently we introduced our **"First Touch Academy"** to help develop young soccer players for the U10 age group and to promote the club locally. This is an off shoot of Erik Lofdahl and Jim Nash's clinic offered last year. Thanks Guys!! First Touch is a six week clinic the runs for 90 minutes aimed at developing players for our younger age groups. As we all know, small numbers in the younger ages mean smaller numbers in the older ages.

The camp is designed to introduce basic soccer techniques through a "games and activities" approach to learning while having fun. This should create an environment that develops creativity and problem solving skills that brings out the game within each child. Dribbling, passing and shooting will be techniques covered while exposing them to tactical decisions through small sided games.

Any coaches interested in helping out with the clinic should contact me. We will be running the clinic from September 13th – October 18th, running in both Green Bay and Luxemburg. The club will pay coaches \$15 and hour for any time worked. We do

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not need you to commit to every session. In fact we are limiting the number to 40 kids. I would just like you to commit to three weeks. The format will be 45 minute of instruction and 45 of games. If you are interested let me know. The following coaches have already committed.

Blair Badow
Erica Barth
Jacob Depas
Brian Gerondale
Erik Lofdahl
Katie Manders
Mike Le Mere
Brad Nycz
Bob Rickards
Tim Sewell

The format will be the following:

WEEK 1 Basic Foot Work
WEEK 2 Progressive Dribbling
WEEK 3 Technical Passing
WEEK 4 Passing and Receiving
WEEK 5 Field Awareness
WEEK 6 Putting it all Together

A winter session will be offered at St. Mary gym for those who really need a coaching fix. I will always welcome the help.

As always, comments, suggestions are always welcome.

All for soccer,

Bob

Bob Rickards
Interim Coaching Director
Green Bay Lightning
Bob.rickards@snc.edu
920-336-8898
920-619-4061



Why play small side games? *See Article* on page 3

Coaching Corner

By Lawrence Fine

Today's newsletter discusses the issue of the game being the best teacher.

If, as many people acknowledge, the game is the best teacher, why do we as coaches try to override this concept as much as we can?

The debate that seems to go on in youth soccer is how many league matches and tournaments should be played compared to how many practices should there be. Some teams have a 1:1 game to practice ratio while other teams who play a lot of tournaments might be as high as 2:1 or even 3:1. Many are proposing we need to cut back dramatically on the number of games played and increase the number of training sessions so it's more in the 1:4 or even 1:5 range.

The question is, if the game is the best teacher, why do we think we as coaches can teach it better in training sessions?

I believe one reason is that we don't allow the players the freedom to play in games either so since we don't give them the freedom to try things, to experiment and yes, even to fail, then we aren't giving them the opportunity to create learning situations for themselves. If we take away the learning opportunities in the games then yes it does make sense to reduce the number of games and increase the number of training sessions.

How are we limiting the number of learning opportunities in games? By doing all, or some, of the following

- Screaming at players for making mistakes
- Subbing players for making mistakes
- Telling the players what to do and when to do it in the game
- Subbing players when they first start to show the first signs of being winded so they never learn to pace themselves
- Discouraging creativity
- Insisting the players play 'simple' at all times
- Giving 'coaching points' as soon as a player makes a mistake

By taking away the learning opportunities in the game, coaches feel obligated to spend more time in training to make up for what wasn't learned.

The other way to look at it is to allow the players to learn in games and then in the situations they aren't able to solve on their own, use training to help with those. Introduce concepts in training and then let the players figure out how to apply them in a game situation.

Am I suggesting more organized games (league or tournaments) and less training? Not really. Instead, I would suggest if your team trains 3 times a week, have 2 regular training sessions and the third one should be designated for small sided soccer. Have a 3 v 3 tournament or combine with a couple of other teams and have a 6 v 6 tournament. Work with whatever numbers make sense for what was worked on in training. If you were putting a big emphasis on 1 v 1 play, use very small numbers (1 v 1 tournament or 2 v 2 or 3 v 3). If you worked on combination play, go with larger numbers. Switch the teams around so the players get accustomed to playing with and against different players.

Occasionally, have a street soccer tournament. Combine a couple of teams together and see how it goes.

Sometimes play with small goals and other times, play with full sized goals and with keepers.

Encourage the players to take chances, be innovative, work hard, compete and have fun.

What are some of the drawbacks in this idea? When the players are trying to figure things out in a game situation they might make some wrong decisions which could result in a lost goal scoring opportunity or maybe a goal against or possibly even...a loss.

Also, if the coach isn't constantly doing something on the sideline (yelling at the ref, telling the players what to do, making manic subs etc), they might not be able to justify their pay.

Also, some parents might see these "play dates" as not being as important as the training dates but this is where the real coaching comes in. Real coaching involves man management and this includes selling the players, and their parents or guardians, on the importance of this type of learning opportunity.

There are a lot of reasons I can think NOT to do what I'm suggesting and only one reason I can think of doing so....for the kids.



**Get more involved with your Club!
Help with the Academy!**

Featured Activity: Triangle Game

This triangle game puts the focus on individual skills - By Tony Carr

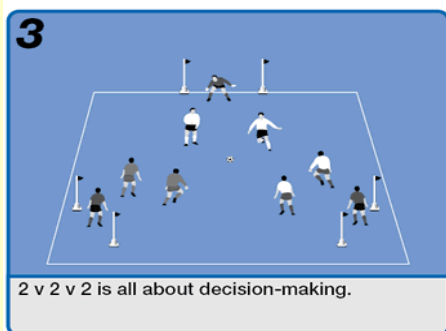
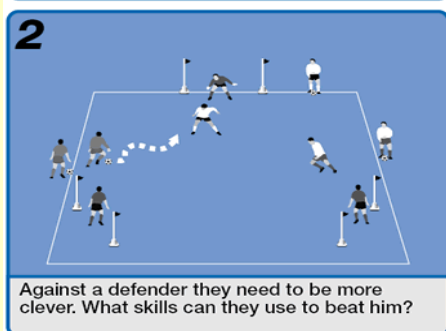
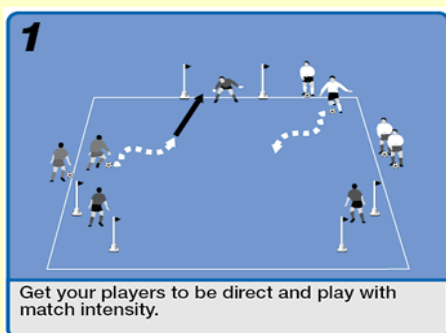
This practice initially focuses on individual skills such as dribbling, shooting and 1v1 attack and defend. You want to see good technique throughout and you should point out any technical errors to your players as you proceed.

Do they have the ball under control?

Are they shooting low and hard, placing the ball, or just blasting it at the goalkeeper.

You can progress the session to a team game where these skills are to be applied to a team environment if the team is to be successful.

Can your players exploit the spaces?
Is their movement good?



In a 30 yard square arrange your players into groups of three with one nominated goalkeeper per team.

The goalkeeper can be rotated so that everyone has a turn at attacking.

What your players have to do

Let the players set out the pitch as in the diagrams - it's their playground! The practice starts with one player from each team attacking the goal to their left.

They must dribble and shoot to score past the goalkeeper. Ensure that they use good technique and that they play at match intensity.

How to advance it

Now each team introduces a defender.

The players again take it in turn to attack the goal to their left, but this time they must beat a defender on the way.

Look at their decision-making. What skills do they use to beat the defender?

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How to put it into a game

Now all the outfield players play simultaneously with one ball - a 2v2v2 game! Each team starts with 10 lives and they lose a life each time they concede a goal. Again, look for good decision-making. How do the outfield players organize themselves and how do they respond to winning or losing possession?

7 Reasons to Play Small-Sided Games

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become more skilful with it! (individual technical development)
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make more, less-complicated decisions during the game! (tactical development)
3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically efficient in the field space they are playing in! (reduced field size)
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Less players on the field and less players on the team will guarantee this! (need to feel worthy and need to feel important)
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have more, involved playing time in the game! (more opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunity to play on both sides of the ball! (more exposure to attacking and defending situations)
7. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunities to score goals! (pure excitement)

Best of all, the game is simple, can be played without adult involvement and it's FUN!

These are the reasons why we adults must foster "Small-Sided

Goalkeeping Area:

Today's topic - coordinating with your backs on balls played behind them -By Lawrence Fine

Too often, keepers are trained completely apart from the rest of the team so when they are in a game situation, they are not prepared for events when they involve group dynamics.. An example of the type of situation that keepers frequently struggle with because it requires team coordination, communication and decision making is when the ball is played behind the last line of defense and the backs must turn and chase. Some of the decisions that need to be made include the following:

- * Should the keeper come out and get the ball?
- * Should one of the field players retrieve the ball and play it back to the keeper?
- * Should one of the field players retrieve the ball and turn with it?
- * Should one of the field players retrieve the ball and pass it wide to a teammate?
- * Should one of the field players retrieve the ball and clear it to safety?

While some might want hard and fast rules regarding this type of a situation, the reality is, each occurrence will be different and only by recreating these situations in a training environment, will the players learn how to handle the situation when they occur in real games. This is a vital part of goalkeeping and if neglected, will result in more goal scoring situations for the opponent. The keeper must be involved in this type of training on a regular basis in order to make sure he understands the various possibilities he will encounter.

Start with a keeper in goal, a back four (or, if your team plays with three in back, a back three) around forty yards out and three opposing players providing pressure who are ten yards further back. A server starts in the center circle with balls.

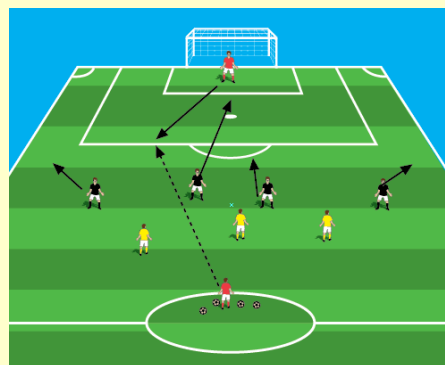


The server plays the ball behind the back four and at that point, the ball is live.



The backs would turn and chase and the keeper's first decision is whether to come out and get the ball or to stay back and either have the ball passed back or played away.

If the decision is made for the keeper to come get the ball, he starts with an early and loud call of "KEEPER!" and wins the ball. As soon as he makes this call, the backs will get out of his way and provide support (both to receive the next pass but also in case the keeper doesn't get the ball).



If the keeper decides it would be better for a back to win the ball and play it back to him, he would call "BACK!" and provide support away from the goal.



The server would play different balls to make the keeper and team react accordingly. Some balls might be high bouncing balls which would allow for the option of a head back to the keeper so that the keeper could use his hands. Balls could be played in different angles and different paces to make the keeper make decisions on the fly.

Once the keeper and back four are on the same page, you could add midfielders for both teams so that not only is the decision making being worked on but so is actually playing the ball out of the back and linking with the midfielders. Ultimately, this could be turned into an 11 v 11 situation where all dead balls start back with the server so the backs and keeper is working on decision making and then it turns into a regular scrimmage.

This is one of many examples where keepers training must be integrated with the entire team in order to prepare for game situations that will arise.

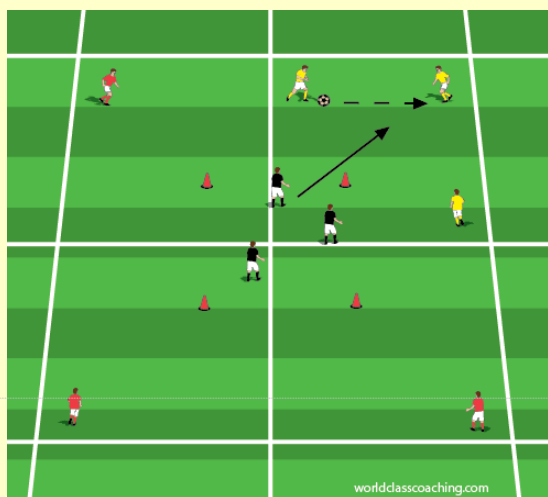
Watford Game - By Aidy Boothroyd

INTRO

Since joining Watford FC, the coaching team have a simple philosophy, "If it doesn't happen in a game, don't do it in practice". The Academy team plays the following "Hornets" game before every training session. It is a small practice which involves a great deal of what may happen in a match. The game can be adapted to either a defensive, offensive or transitional theme.

ORGANIZATION

- Mark out 20x20m grid split into four 10x10m squares.
- An additional diamond shaped box of approx 2x2m is marked out in the centre of the above grid.
- 3 teams of 3 players (or 4x4, 5x5).
- First team (with ball) occupy one 10x10m square.
- Second team spread out across remaining three 10x10m squares.
- Third team (defenders) stay in small 2x2m diamond.



OBJECTIVE

- One player comes out of diamond to act as defender.
- Team with ball must make 4 passes around defender & then pass to any of the other players in another square.
- As ball goes into that square, new defender follows ball, old defender returns to diamond.
- Players on receiving players team, rush to support team mate in that square.
- This team must now make 4 passes in presence of defender.
- Remaining players spread out across remaining 3 squares.
- The cycle continues.
- If defender wins ball, his / her team come out & are replaced by team who lost ball.

KEY FACTORS - TRANSITIONAL THINKING

- Support Play.
- Keeping calm under pressure.
- When & where to take your eyes off the ball.
- Head up - (Should see Crossbar, Touchlines & Communicate).
- Take up a good position.
- If defending, "Where am I going with the ball if I win it?"
- If attacking, "Where's my pass going to?"
- DON'T GET CAUGHT SPECTATING
- If you see your team mate ball watching - TELL THEM .
- If you see the opposition ball watching - TAKE ADVANTAGE .

PROGRESSIONS

- Add a goal 20m from the above grid with keeper and a defender in front of him. Allow two or three transitions and then team with ball must break out and try to score.
- Apply the above principles to a small sided game (6v6, 8v8).

3 secret tips to improve your coaching

Bring your drills to life

The word drill paints a picture of an army parade ground, not of a game of soccer. You need to bring your drill alive to soccer by helping the players imagine the scenarios they are working on.

Either put it into context yourself or challenge the players to see where the drill fits into the game.

Pick out the detail

Drills, unlike games, are designed to highlight and emphasize the exact detail of a technique. Have this in mind when you are observing, and comment on the detail and not the whole. If a pass is too wayward check the position of the player's feet or follow through. Pick out the detail and coach the player.

Balancing accuracy, speed and technique

A balance must be struck between accuracy, which is where the ball or player is in the right place at the right time, and the way that accuracy was achieved.

Good technique will lead to accuracy, but sometimes unusual technique can have the same effect. Don't force a player to change if it works for them, just make them aware of the differences. However, don't compromise accuracy for speed in drills.

If accuracy falls significantly as things get faster, slow it all down again.

Don't get blown away

By David Clarke

Here are my tips for playing in windy weather:

Playing into the wind checklist

- Tell your players to keep it tight — short passing into the wind. Any long balls will be held up by the wind and you will soon find you're up against a fast breakaway attack.
- In training practice holding the ball up — get your players to play balls into the attacker with his back to goal creating opportunities for your midfielders to run with the ball.
- At goal kicks tell your goalkeeper to play out to the sides — a long kick down the middle would be suicide.
-

Playing with the wind checklist

- Tell your players to resist the temptation to blast long balls into the opposition half — your forwards will soon get tired of the ball going straight out of play.
- But do let your goalkeeper unleash some long balls — get your forwards to cause chaos with the bouncing goal kicks by heading them towards goal.
- Tell your forwards to test your opponents' goalkeeper with high accurate shots.