



January 2013

U.S. Women's Youth National Teams Program 'Technical Tests'

Introduction



The primary vision of the U.S. Women's Youth National Teams program is, ***“to deliver more technically skilled and tactically sophisticated players to the full Women's National Team in an effort to sustain performance success over the next 20 years.”*** As part of the goal to develop players, we have identified the need to establish nation-wide technical testing and benchmarking. We hope to inspire players to spend more time with the ball through this cultural and behavioral revolution.

US Soccer's Youth National Team Directors, April Heinrichs (Technical Director) and Jill Ellis (Development Director) have identified and refined the following protocols which can be used as tests, homework and training exercises. These tests were designed with U12 to U20 players in mind, are geared towards motivating players to spend time on their own improving their ball control, short range passing, speed and agility with the ball, and, the use of their instep for driven balls and shooting. A player that controls the ball is a player that helps control the tempo of the game, advance the ball and contribute to the team's tactical abilities.

We hope you find these technical tests fun, challenging and rewarding as you see the daily improvement in your game!

Outline & Order



TESTS

1. Head Juggling - x 1 attempt
2. Instep Juggling - x 1 attempt on each instep
3. Figure 8 Dribbling – x 1 attempt
4. Controlled Speed Dribbling – x 3 attempts
5. Passing & Receiving – x 1 attempt
6. Power Shooting – x 1 attempt
7. Driven Long Balls – x 1 attempt

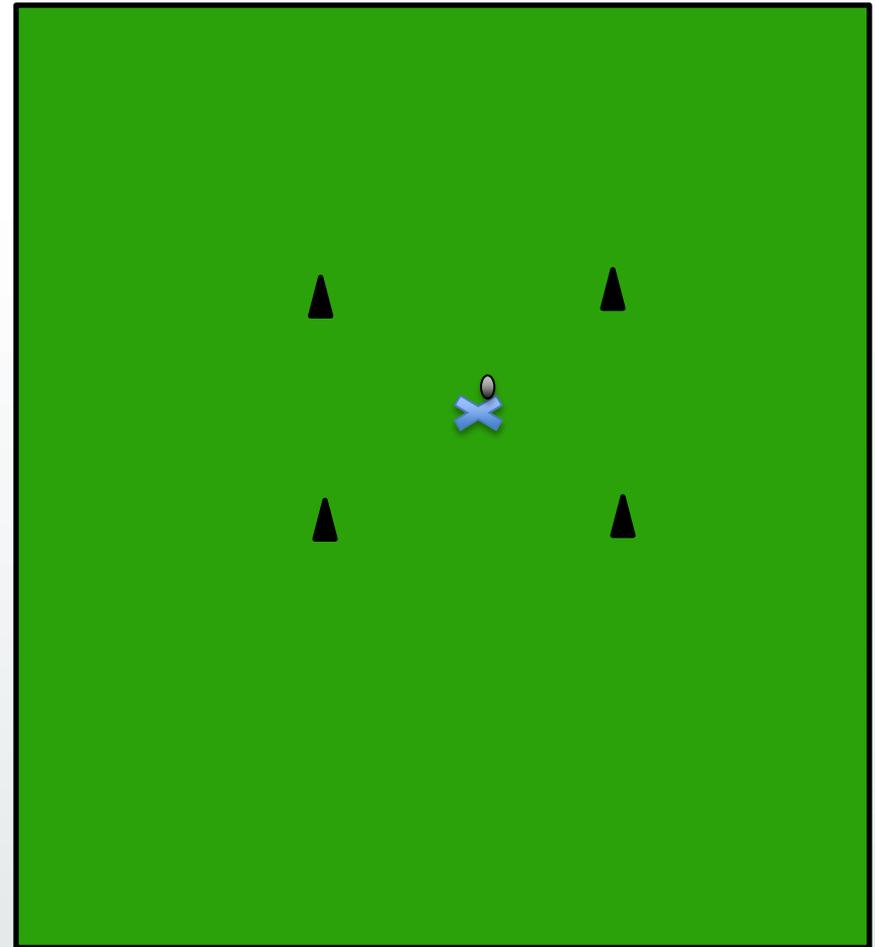


Warm Up

Recommended Warm-Up



- ▶ Warm-up every player before tests begin.
- ▶ In a 5x5 grid, one or two players per ball.
- ▶ Do some dribbling and change of directions in the grid with a ball for 10-15 seconds each.
- ▶ Give each player 10-15 seconds to try each of the juggling tests:
 - Head Juggling
 - Instep Right Juggling
 - Instep Left Juggling
- ▶ Recommend maximum of 5 minutes for the above warm-up phase, as too much warm-up time will pre-fatigue players. And, the tests progressively warm-up players so they are not at risk for injury.
- ▶ Start the Tests!
- ▶ Keep Score!
- ▶ Consistency in 'judging' is important!
- ▶ Good Luck!



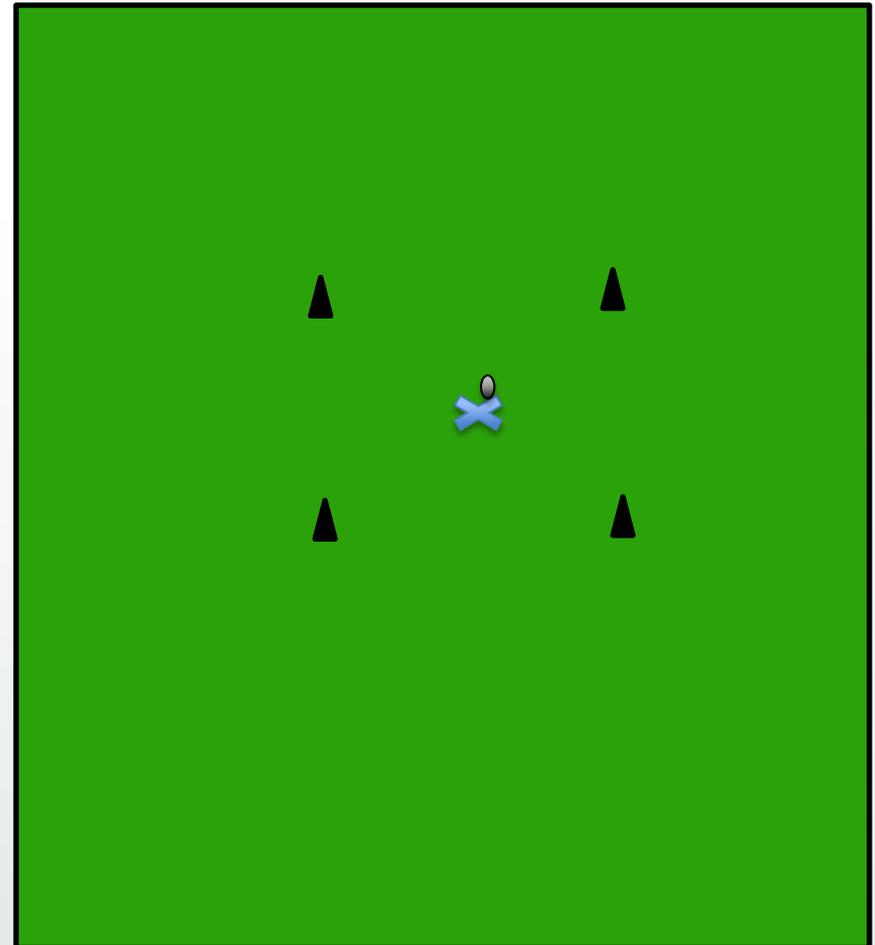


7 Technical Tests

Head Juggling - Test



- ▶ Purpose: This test is designed to assess the skill of heading.
- ▶ Equipment and Field Organization:
 - 1 ball; stopwatch and tape measure
 - Player works in a 5 x 5 yard grid
- ▶ Instructions:
 - Ball starts in the hands; player juggles the ball with her head.
 - If the ball touches the ground, or, is played with another surface, the player picks up the ball and starts juggling and recounting.
- ▶ Scoring:
 - The player has **60 seconds** to achieve her maximum consecutive juggles.
 - Each head juggle counts as one point.
 - Use of another body part stops the count.
 - The player's maximum consecutive number of head juggles is recorded.



Instep Juggling - Tests



- ▶ Purpose: This test is designed to assess skill with the instep.
- ▶ Equipment and Field Organization:
 - 1 ball; stopwatch and tape measure
 - Player works in a 5 x 5 yard grid
- ▶ Instructions:
 - Player juggles the ball with the instep only, making contact with the ball at waist height, without creating a back spin on the ball.
 - If the ball touches the ground, or is played with another surface, she may pick up the ball and start juggling and re-counting again.
 - 2 Tests (combined for one score) are:
 - Right Foot Only – 60 seconds
 - Left Foot Only – 60 seconds
- ▶ Scoring:
 - The player has **60 seconds** to achieve her maximum consecutive juggles on each test.
 - Each juggle counts as one point.
 - Use of another body part stops the count.
 - The player's maximum consecutive number of instep juggles is recorded (for each of the tests) and is then combined to create **one overall instep score**.

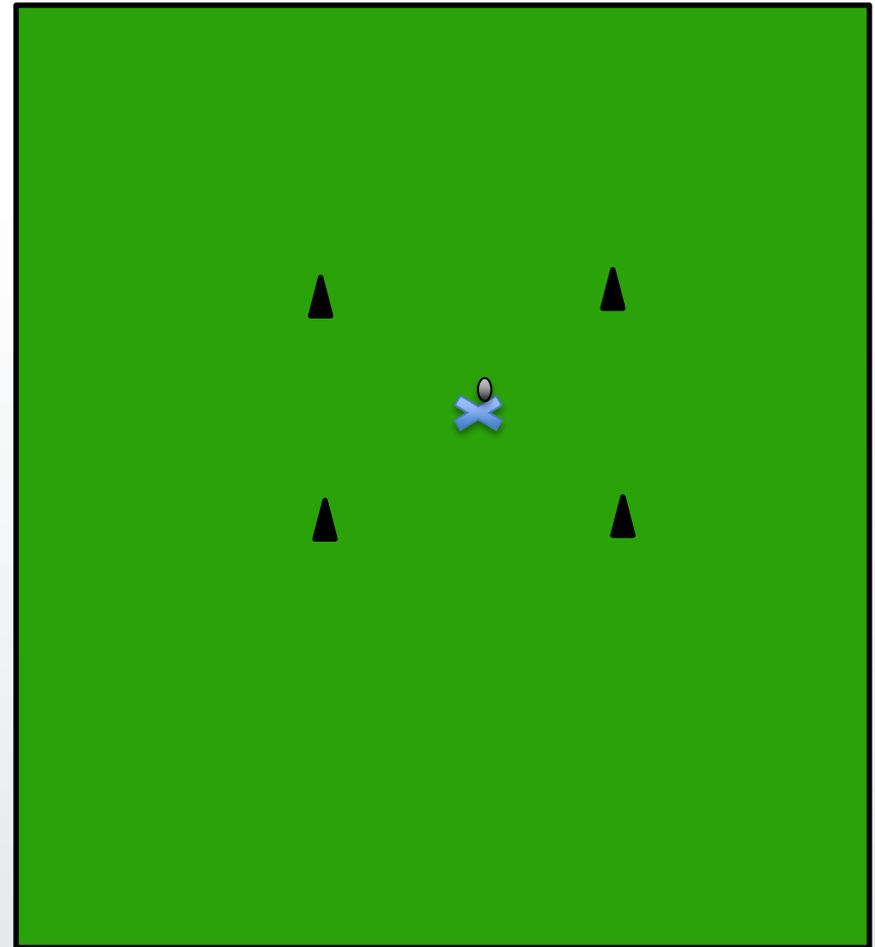
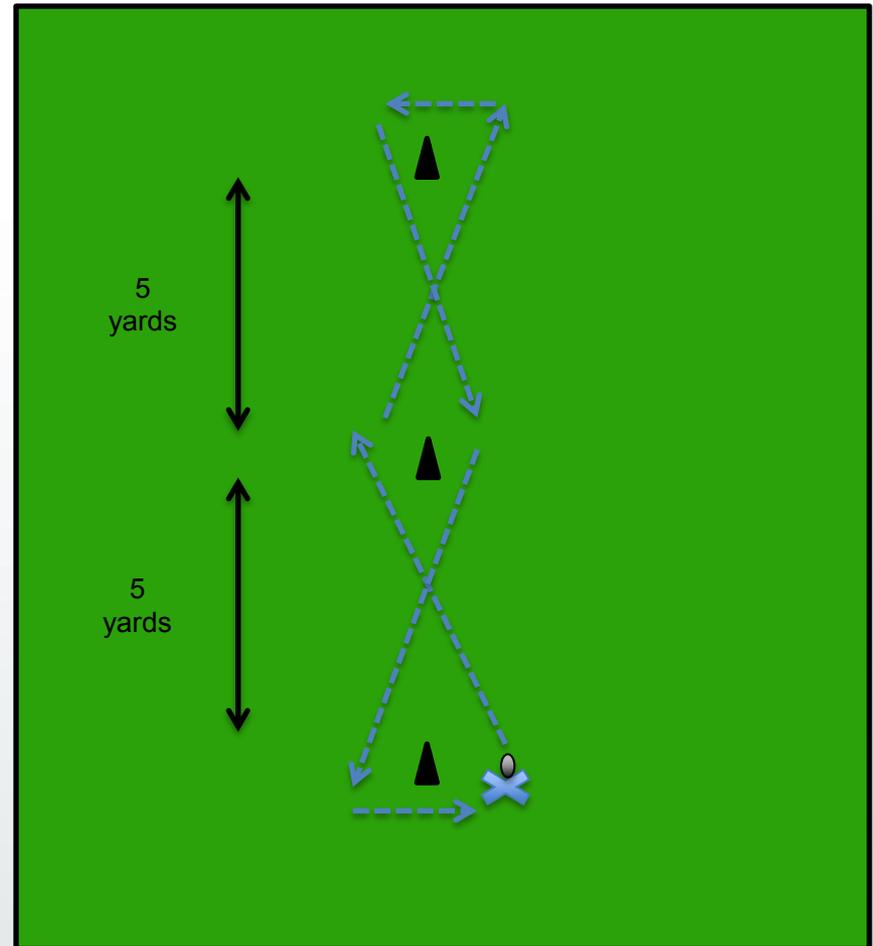


Figure 8 Dribbling - Test



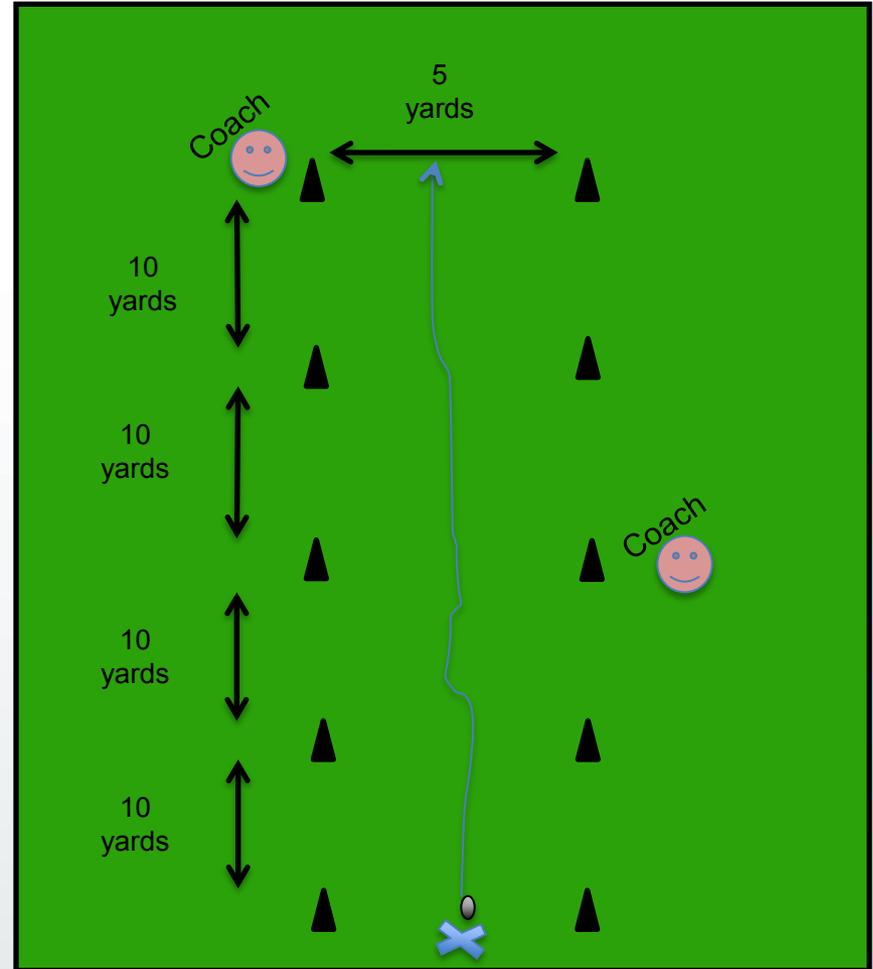
- ▶ Purpose: This test is designed to assess the ability to dribble in tight spaces, with control, speed and agility.
- ▶ Equipment and Field Organization:
 - 1 ball; 3 cones; stopwatch and tape measure
 - 10 yard line marked with three cones, each 5 yards apart
- ▶ Instructions:
 - The player starts on one side of the first cone.
 - Player must dribble around each cone in a figure-8 pattern, without touching the cone, using both feet and trying to use both the inside and outside of her feet; she may also use the sole of her feet.
- ▶ Scoring:
 - The player has **45 seconds** to score as many points as possible.
 - Each time the player passes a cone, the player scores a point; a full 'figure 8' counts as 4 points.
 - 1 point is taken away for every cone touched.
 - The player's total score is recorded.



Controlled Speed Dribbling - Test



- ▶ Purpose: This test is designed to assess the ability to dribble at speed and in control.
- ▶ Equipment and Field Organization:
 - 1 ball; 10 cones; stopwatch and tape measure
 - 4 consecutive 5 x 10 yard grids (to create one long 5 x 40 yard channel).
- ▶ Instructions:
 - The player starts on one end of the channel.
 - Time starts when the player starts the dribble.
 - The player must take a **minimum of four touches** in each 5 x 10 yard grid.
 - The total time is recorded once both the player and the ball cross the finish line.
 - The player takes the test three times.
- ▶ Scoring:
 - Player must dribble using both feet from one end to the other, taking a minimum of 4 touches in each grid and finish within **8.0-8.5 seconds** to successfully accomplish this test.
 - Each player will be given 3 attempts.
 - The player's **lowest time on a successful 8.0-8.5 seconds or less dribble** is recorded.

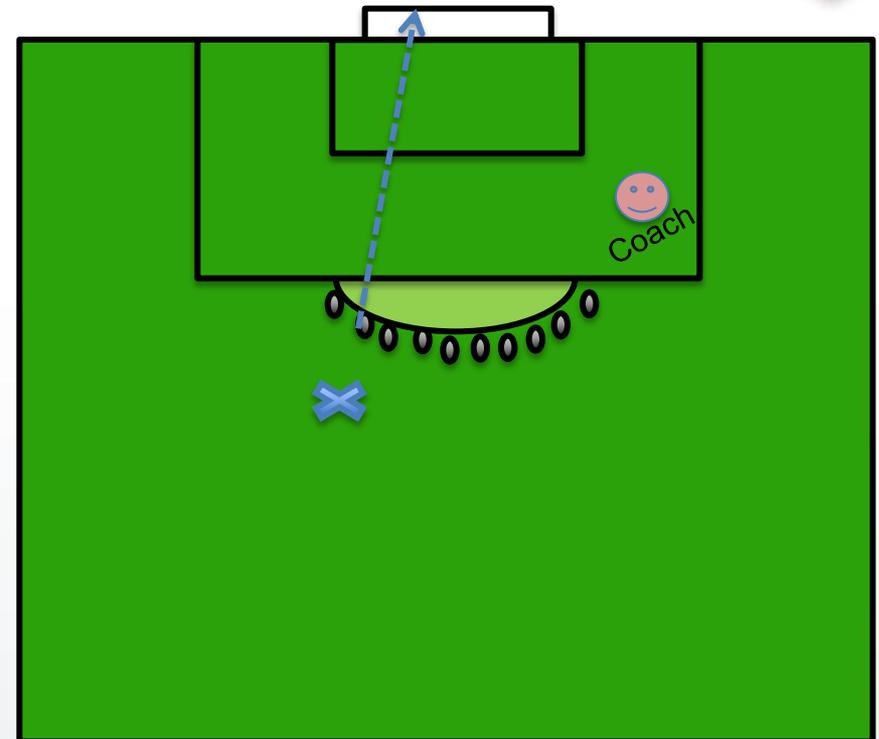


NOTE: U16 players should complete test within 8.5 seconds, and, 17+ year olds should complete test within 8.0 seconds.

Power Shooting - Test



- ▶ **Purpose:** This test is designed to assess the ability to shoot with power and accuracy with the **instep** of both feet.
- ▶ **Equipment and Field Organization**
 - 1 goal; 10 balls; stopwatch and tape measure
 - The shooting area is outside of the penalty box
 - 10 balls set up at the top of the “D” (22 yards from goal)
- ▶ **Instructions:**
 - Player must touch and shoot a moving ball before it crosses the 15 or 18 yard line.
 - The shot must be taken **with the instep**.
 - The player shoots 5 balls consecutively with her preferred instep, player then shoots the remaining 5 balls with her opposite instep.
- ▶ **Scoring:**
 - The player scores a point for each shot with the instep that crosses the goal line in the air, between the posts, below the crossbar, and without a bend on the ball.
 - Shot must be with power and not bending to be considered successful.
 - Player must complete **all 10 shots within 45 seconds**.
 - The player’s maximum score out of **10 attempts** is recorded.

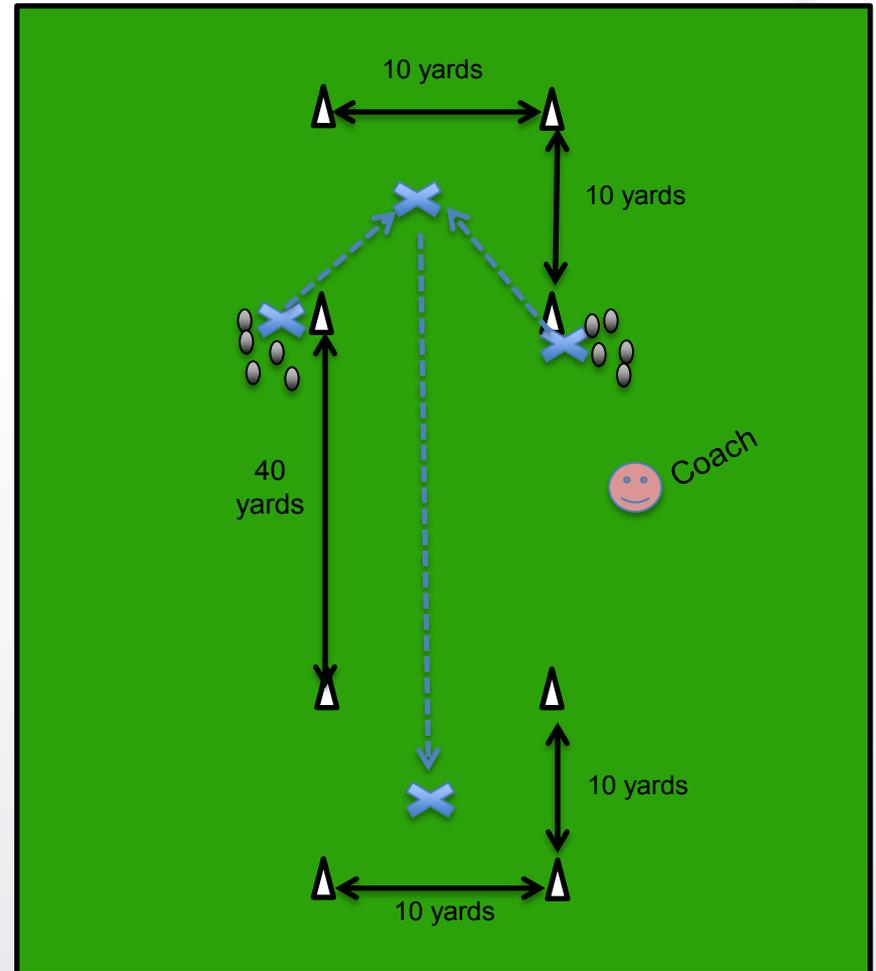


NOTE: U16 players should strike balls from the 15 yard line, and, 17+ year olds should strike ball from the 18 yard line.

Driven Long Ball - Test



- ▶ **Purpose:** This test is designed to assess the ability to accurately and consistently hit a long driven ball (without a bend) with the instep of both feet.
- ▶ **Equipment and Field Organization:**
 - 8 Cones; 10 Balls and a tape measure
 - Two 10 x 10 yard grids 40 yards apart
- ▶ **Instructions:**
 - The player receives a ball from outside the grid, and has 2-3 touches to receive and serve a moving ball driven and long into the opposite grid.
 - Player must hit 5 moving balls with her preferred instep and 5 moving balls with her opposite instep.
 - There is no time component to the test.
 - A ball that is not hit with the instep, or, is a bending ball is considered an unsuccessful attempt.
 - If the player takes a bad first touch and does not serve the ball, the player may request a re-do.
- ▶ **Scoring:**
 - Every ball that lands on the fly in the opposite grid from an instep driven ball is a successful attempt.
 - Any serve landing outside the grid is unsuccessful.
 - The player's maximum score out of **10 attempts** is recorded.



NOTE: U14 players should drive balls over 25 yards, U16 players should drive balls over 30 yards, and, 17+ year olds should drive balls over 40 yards.

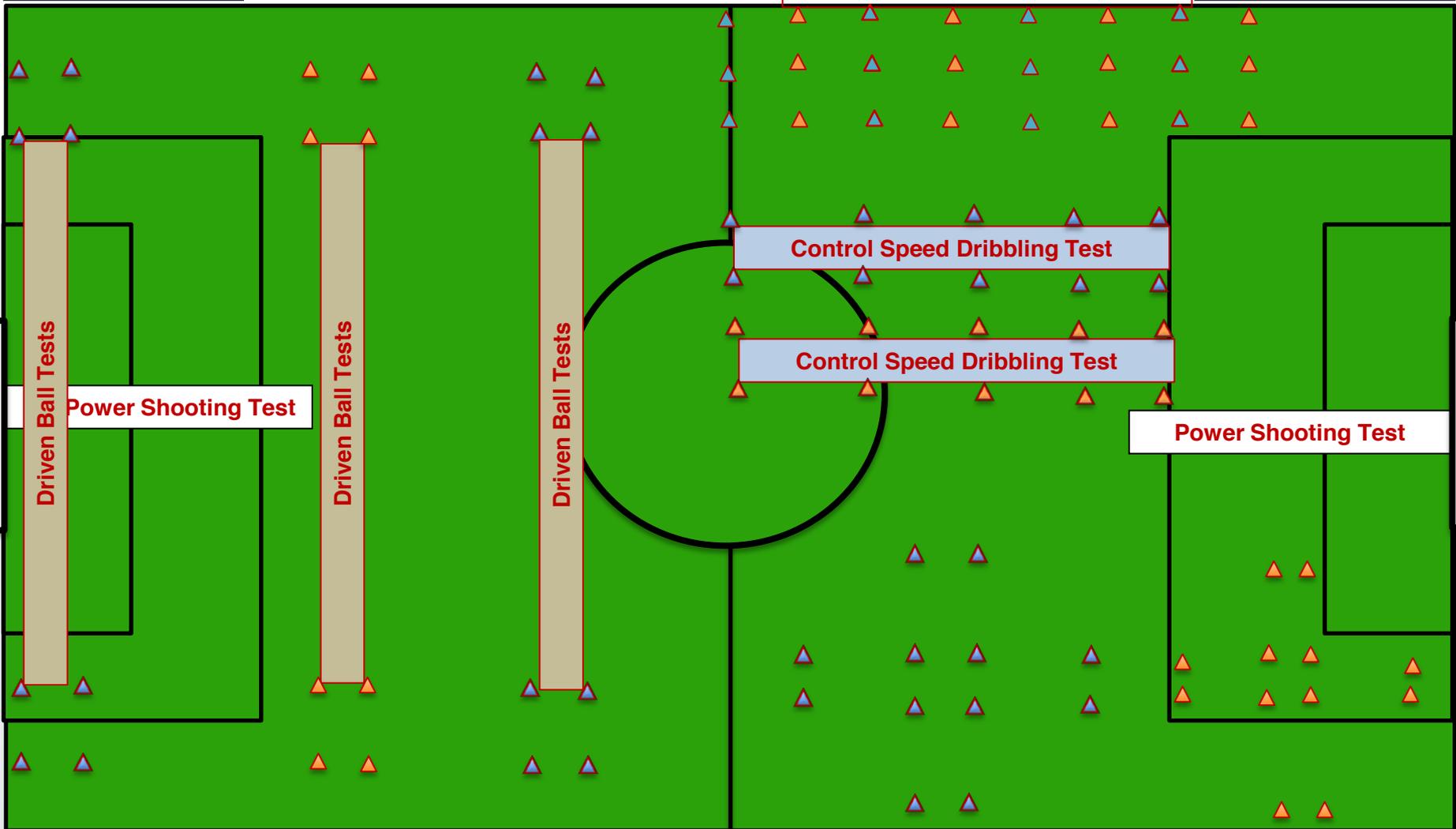
Field Set Up



Field set up to scale

Head & Instep Juggling Tests
&
Figure 8 Dribbling Test

Grids used for warm-up



*Use tape measure for accuracy and 94 cones to set up entire field, or, with fewer cones set up half the tests and then set up the other half of the tests.

Receiving & Passing Test

Preliminary Test Results



<i>Tests & Scores</i>	JUGGLING		DRIBBLING		PASSING & RECEIVING	SHOOTING	LONG BALLS
	HEAD	INSTEP left and right combined	FIGURE 8s	CONTROLLED / SPEED	PASS & RECEIVE	SHOOTING	LONG BALLS
Highest	137	100	28	6.67	19	10	6
Highest GK	33	21	28	7.50	13	6	4
17+ average	32	48	24	7.59	13	5	4
U16 average	27	26	23	7.70	11	4	3

**Results are from U15, U16, U17, U18 youth national team players.*

On-Line Links at ussoccer.com



- ▶ Video examples of each test
- ▶ Data Spreadsheet - automatically calculating individual and overall ranks

Summary



Goals of Technical Testing:

1. Measure fundamental technical skills at the Youth National Team level.
2. Measure fundamental technical skills at the Club level.
3. Use results as feedback to players on skills to improve.
4. Encourage players to spend time on their own mastering the ball.
5. Test players 3 times a year; to provide feedback and personal reward for measureable improvement.

Reminders:

1. Tests require only: balls, cones, tape measure, stop watches, score cards and pencils.
2. All the tests can be completed within 1:45 with 2-4 people (less time for teams smaller than 24 players).
3. Pay special attention to how coaches 'judge' the technical quality of execution (first, be technically correct, then build to more success on each test).

USA v Brazil – FIFA WWC 2011 Quarter-Finals

“The Cross Before & The Header”



*Techniques
executed at
the highest
level under
pressure!*



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