

Pelham Soccer Club



Coaches Manual



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Soccer



The Greatest Game On Earth

Introduction

If you are reading this manual, you have probably signed up to coach a soccer team with Pelham Soccer Club. First, we thank you for your willingness to help out, and we hope that you enjoy the experience of coaching as much as the kids enjoy playing.

How to use this manual

This manual was assembled to help all PSCI coaches regardless of their experience. Novice coaches can use the practice plans and drill diagrams to help prepare for practice each week. Experienced coaches can use the skill target guidelines to focus their plans to help each player develop the skills needed to play soccer well.

Philosophy

The philosophy of PSCI is simple: if young players first learn to love playing soccer, they will want to play it well. With that in mind, we want our coaches to stress fun and fundamentals. Players should love coming to practice and leave excited about what they've learned. Hopefully, this manual will provide you with ideas and practice games that will be fun for the kids while at the same time develop the essential skills they need to feel good about themselves as players. It will also establish skill targets for each age category so you can determine how well your players are doing.

In general, though, Pelham coaches are charged with allowing each player to discover and explore his or her soccer identity. Is he a goal scoring striker? Is she a playmaking winger? Maybe a solid two-way midfielder or a steady defender? Second, coaches should encourage players to be creative, to take chances and to not be afraid to make mistakes. Encourage all your players to take on defenders one on one, to go to goal looking to score and to make



decisions on the field. Be active players, not passive. Be aggressive, not defensive. Most of all, encourage your players to use the skills they are developing in practice during the game.

Finally, remember that at the Timbit, Pre-Squirt, Squirt and older house league level, the final score and end of season record is well down the list of priorities. The emphasis here is on fun and skill development. Success is not based on standings or game statistics but on the enthusiasm of the players and, ultimately, the number of players who come back the next year.

These priorities are endorsed by Canada's national soccer program as outlined in the coaching portion of Soccer Canada's website:

A Coach's Creed

The Primary responsibility of a youth soccer coach is to help the young player to have fun, learn and improve. This responsibility makes a youth coach different from any other official in the club, league or association. We (coaches) coach for the joy and success of the players - and no other reason.

Role of the Coach

"A coach should help to improve the performance of the players (and the team) both physically and psychologically. The position of coach is demanding and multi-faceted. Parent, teacher, counselor, disciplinarian, organizer...these are some of the duties demanded of the coach. When players sign-up with a club, they expect to receive something for their registration fee. They want to play and learn and they also want to do so in an enjoyable environment...As coaches, we must try to find out what potential a player has so that we can develop that potential and make the player the best player he or she can be."

With those grand objectives, PSCI has provided this set of skill development ideas to help all of our coaches achieve success.



Skill Priorities

For many coaches, especially those new to the game of soccer, the game can be a blur of skills and demands. It is difficult, at times, to know just what the players should be learning or what they should already know at any given stage. To help, this manual has set out a series of basic skill development priorities — things every player should be able to do by the time they are eight or nine years old. These foundation abilities ensure that the player's skills are well rooted in the fundamentals, enabling them to grow and blossom to the extent that their own personal interest and dedication will allow.

Dribbling:

Fundamental to early soccer development is basic ball skill. Coaches should dedicate time every practice to improving this area, starting with warm up exercises. If you want to have your players run, make them take a ball with them. Encourage them to keep their heads up. Provide opportunities for them to dribble in a variety of situations — in open field, in crowds, in 1v1 situations — and at a variety of speeds. Have them change direction and use different parts of their feet. A single dribbling exercise can be adapted and refreshed simply by challenging the player to use a different style of dribbling.

These foundation abilities ensure that the player's skills are well rooted in the fundamentals

Use of both feet:

The primary reason many players never develop the ability to use the left foot is because they are never asked to do so. Players as young as four or five should be encouraged to use their left foot in all shooting, dribbling and passing exercises. At that age, while they may prefer the right side, they have not developed the true dominance that can lead to exclusivity. It is much easier for them to develop their left side from the beginning than it is to build it up once the dominance is established. This can be accomplished simply by requiring the players to work on their weak side. If the drill calls for the player to dribble across the field, have them dribble back using only their left foot.

Mental Game:

The difference between an average player and a good player is skill. The difference between a good player and an exceptional player is the ability to think on the field. This is a skill that can be developed, just like passing or shooting. Encourage players to make decisions and act on them. Have them ask the questions, “What do I do if the ball comes to me?”, and “What is happening and what should I be doing?”. Do not be afraid to freeze scrimmages or small-sided games

to offer instruction on what the players should be doing or where they should be going.

Fitness:

Much has been said and written about the activity level of young people in our society, too much in fact to go into here. However, it is important to note that soccer players are among the most well-conditioned athletes around. It is not necessary to send your players to run laps of the field unless you are using the time to set up the next drill. Even then, have them take a ball with them and dribble while they run. For the purposes of your practices, fitness should be an integral part of every activity. When running a drill involving lines, keep those lines short so players are involved in the play more often. Frequent water breaks are important, but keep them short and get the kids back into the exercises as quickly as possible. In short, make conditioning an integral part of every exercise for the full 60 minutes of your practice, not an isolated (and dull) 10 or 15 minute block.

Competition

It is virtually impossible to completely eliminate the competitive aspect from minor sports. In any situation where a score is kept, there will be a competitive element. However, it is important to realize that young players come to your team for a variety of reasons, but most commonly it is to have fun. That's why many young players enjoy playing with their friends, relatives, neighbours and classmates. Some children thrive in competitive situations and, in fact, need that to maintain interest. Others will shrink from intense competition. You will have both on your team and it is important to balance both.

As a general guideline, however, remember that you are coaching children, not professionals. Fun and fair competition is the over-arching goal. The final result in any one game is never as important as the health and wellbeing of the players. Winning at the expense of a player's self-confidence is no victory. What does that mean in a practical sense?

Balanced Playing Time:

To the best of their abilities, every coach must endeavor to share playing time equally between players. While it is virtually impossible to do so, playing the “best” player for the entire game and rotating other players around him or her is unacceptable. The goal of PSCI is the development of all players to their maximum potential, not the production of a handful of great players. A critical element to that development is playing time. A weak player will not improve if you bolt them to the bench. They improve by playing and taking on roles within the team.

Fair Competition:

This means, when possible, coaches and officials will ensure the competitive balance of the teams is maintained. Teams should always play with an equal number of players on the field even if that means playing with fewer players than the division allows. In lopsided games, the winning team should use the opportunity to develop other aspects. This doesn't mean the winning team should stop trying or good players should be relegated to the bench. Instead, require your players to pass the ball a certain number of times before taking a shot, or have them make a pass back to the defense before starting a new rush, or only allow shots generated off a cross, or quietly assign the team to set up a particular player for a goal. Whatever the case, challenge your players to work on skills. Blowouts can teach players more than the fact that after scoring six goals, they can score a seventh, eighth and ninth.

Have Fun:

Remember, if you are having fun your players will probably have fun, too. Laugh. Joke with your players. Play with them at practice. Try to incorporate fun games into every practice. Sing "Happy Birthday" to any player celebrating a birthday during the week. Cheer when a player scores.

Praise Effort:

Do not reserve your congratulations for the best players. Take time to celebrate the player whose effort is consistently high even if their successes are not. Reserve some high-fives for the player whose pass set up the goal, or whose tackle prevented a scoring chance. Also, support any player's attempt to beat a defender one on one with skill even if the attempt is unsuccessful.

Respect:

Fundamental to creating a healthy, enjoyable atmosphere is respect for everyone associated with the game — teammates, opponents, coaches and officials. It is essential, however, that you as a coach model this. Verbal abuse of referees, players or other coaches is unacceptable in any situation and can drive some players away from the game even if they are not the target of the abuse. In particular, how you treat referees is of utmost importance. Remember that most of the refs at the house league level are only a few years older than the players, and many of them are rookies. They are learning. Treat them with understanding and respect. Help them learn and improve; don't drive them out of the job by treating them badly. Abuse from parents and coaches is the main reason given by young refs to explain why they hang up the whistle.

The Best and Worst

Every coach has them. No matter what group of players

you get, you are likely to find one or two will be head and shoulders better than all of the others and one or two will make you wonder why they show up at all. The fact is, both type of players deserve special attention.



It is the nature of any coach to lean on the talents of the best player and there is nothing wrong with that. Every coach wants a player who can be counted upon to score two, three or four goals a game. However, the caution here is make sure that player is developing as a soccer player and is not getting by simply thanks to superior athletic ability. Take time in practice to break down your star's skills. Can he or she dribble with the head up? Is he or she kicking the ball with the sweet spot on the foot? How often does he or she use the opposite foot? These areas are critical to the eventual development of the player. A lot of talent has died on the vine because of complacency. If you discover a weakness, you owe it to the player to correct the mistake, which might meet with some resistance from both the player and the parent. But stick to your guns; demand that the player use proper technique and correct skills during games.

If all of those things seem to be in order, don't be afraid to challenge your player with a goal for each game. It could

Insist that they use their skills consistently either to succeed themselves or to help teammates succeed

be a minimum number of goals, but it would be better to concentrate on a specific aspect of the game. Ask the player to take on a beat at least one defender each time he or she has the ball. Show them a "trick" move and have them pull it off at least once per game. Tell them to avoid scoring until they've helped set up a goal for another player, preferably one at the bottom end of the roster. This experience will force the player to think about how they play the game and will keep the experience interesting because, believe it or not, scoring can become quite boring.

Most importantly, though, insist on a consistency of effort. Great players can get lazy, allowing their superior athletic ability to shine when they want it to, then doing nothing for long stretches of time. They can also develop practice bad habits, believing their success means they don't need to practice. Either of these can be deadly to a good player's future in the game because they will become bored from lack of development or quit when they encounter and cannot handle superior competition. Insist that these players

Drills & Skills — Pre-Squirt

Sending And Receiving A Pass:

Passing the ball is the skill of delivering the ball to a teammate using the inside of the foot. The technique has several important elements. Instruct your players to strike the ball using the arch of the foot with their heel down and toe up. Tell them their foot should look like a checkmark; that means they're doing it right. The foot should be square to the ball and the strike should be at the ball's midline. Follow through so the foot is pointing in the direction of the pass. Target a spot ahead of the receiver. Instruct

your players to pass to where the target player is going to be, not where he or she is. Demonstrate this by intentionally passing behind a running player and ask your team why it happened. Finally, harder is better. Many young players make the mistake of hitting the ball too softly, which means it stops short of the target.

Receiving the ball is not the same as trapping. Trapping is stopping a moving ball and is used for bringing down a throw in or a goal kick. The ability to receive a ball is the art of setting a passed ball up for your next play. First it is important for the players to receive the ball on their back foot; that means the player must be turned at an angle to the oncoming ball. When the ball arrives, the player allows it to pass in front and pushes it in the direction he or she wants to go. In addition to the drills below, this skill can be encouraged by reminding the players to receive the ball properly in any passing drill, scrimmage or small-sided game.

Drills

Angle Passing

Set two rows of cones approximately 15 m apart. Place a player at each cone. Start a ball at each end of the line and instruct the players to pass the ball across the angle to the next player. To receive, the player must take the ball on his or her back foot, push it by the cone and pass it on the angle to the next player across and up the line. Passes continue up the line until the end. At the end, the pass goes directly across and starts back the other way.

Lane Passing

Establish two lanes the full length of the field. Break the team into two lines, one behind each lane. Only one line needs balls. On go, the first two players run forward and pass the ball back and forth between each other as they move up field. The catch is that neither player can leave their zone. This means the passer must strike the ball hard enough to get it to the player. It also works on passing to a moving player. Encourage the players to pass where their partner is GOING TO BE, not to where he or she is.

Line Passing 1

Break the team into groups of three. Using the goal line and the top of the 18 yard box, set two rows of cones. Behind one cone put two players. Behind the other, put one. The game starts with the two player line with one ball. On Go, the player with the ball touches the ball forward, then sends a pass across the 18 yard box to the single player. The passer follows the pass a replaces the receiver at the end of the line. The receiver traps the ball, then sends the pass back

Skill Targets

Fun

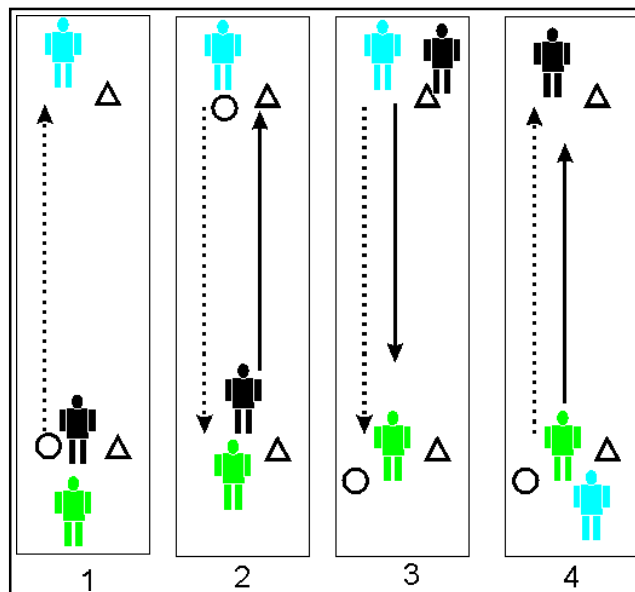
More dribbling

Use of both feet

Sending and receiving a pass

Play without the ball

Shooting



across the 18 yard box to Player 3, who returns the pass to Player 1. This game improves both passing accuracy and strength. Requiring two touch passing encourages players to receive the ball, not trap it. As a progression, after the pass, have the running player simulate a charging defender and require the receiver to play the ball a bit to the right or left to elude the runner and make a good pass back..

Line Passing 2

The set up is the same as Line Passing 1, except move the row of cones at the top of the 18 yard box back another six yards. The second difference is that one player stays in the middle. The first exercise works on turning the ball. The

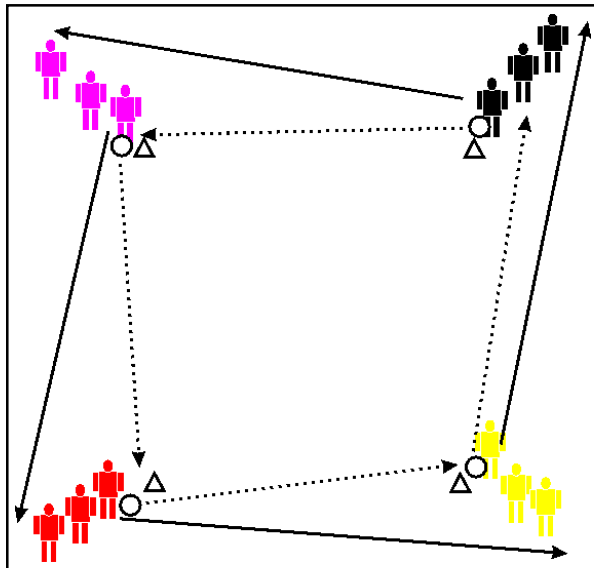
player in the centre has the ball and dribbles between the top of the six yard box and the top of the 18 yard box. At each end point, he or she passes to the outside player, who receives the ball and returns the pass. The player in the middle must turn their body slightly to receive the ball on the back foot, control it as it passes by, and push it in the opposite direction. Pick up the dribble and repeat at the opposite end of the line. Rotate all three players through the middle position so everyone gets the chance to work on turning the ball using the back foot. The next progression sets up the same way but this time after the pass, the passer turns and begins the run back. The end player must deliver a pass past the central player who picks it up as it goes by and continues the dribble.

Pitch and catch

Put players in groups of two or three. The players pass between themselves concentrating on receiving the ball with the back foot and pushing it toward their target.

Four corners

Set up four cones to create a large square and place a line

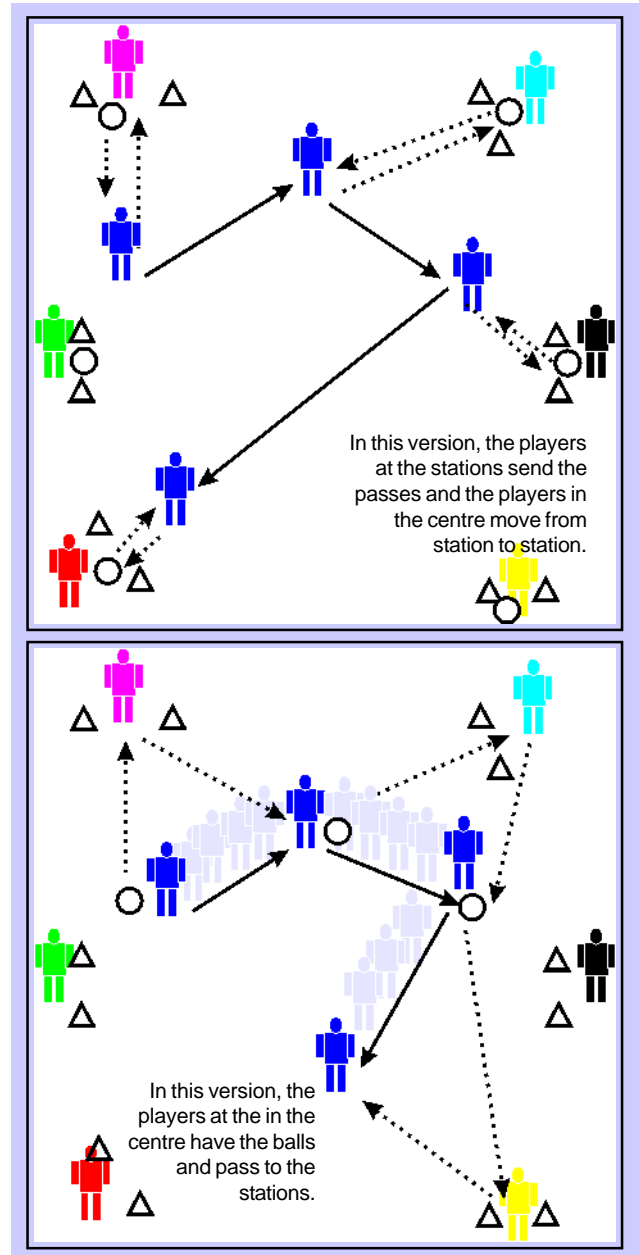


of players behind each cone. Start with one ball. Working clockwise, the player at the start of line one passes to the first player in line two, who receives the ball on his or her back foot, pushing it toward line three and sending the pass. After each pass, the passer runs to the back of the next line. Once this is mastered, add a second ball and then a third. Once this is mastered, go back to one ball and have them work the ball around counter clockwise.



Passing Stations

Establish five or six stations around a large square. Put a player with a ball at each station. The rest of the team inside the square. Players run from station to station, call for a pass and return it to the player at the station. Encourage players to move randomly, making their decisions based on where the traffic is. As a progression, give the players inside the box the balls and have them dribble from station to station, send a pass, move and receive a pass back. Be sure to rotate players from the stations into the middle regularly so everyone gets a chance to do both jobs.



Shooting

Kids love this and it's a great way to end a practice if you don't have enough players for a scrimmage. The key, however, is to teach proper shooting technique and that is complicated. There are a lot of steps in a correctly executed soccer shot, from the approach steps, to the plant foot, to the strike and the follow through. There are also the matters of locking the ankle, flexing the knee and dropping the head, but more on that later.

To simplify matters, remember a few basic rules. First, you are not teaching calculus; most kids already know how to kick a ball. What you are doing, therefore, is correcting technique. Second, you cannot expect to fix everything about a young player's shot all at once. Focus on a single element and reinforce that. Once they've mastered that aspect, move on to another.

At the early stages, encourage players to kick the ball using the "sweet spot" of their foot. This is an area of the top of the foot that is in the centre and slightly to the inside. It is the highest point of that part of the foot. Have them draw a little circle on the spot with their finger. Striking the ball with this part of the foot delivers maximum power with maximum accuracy.

Second, encourage the players to lock their ankle. To test this, have the player sit down with their feet flat on the ground in front of them and their knees bent. Tell them to pretend they are picking up a sock with their toes and to lift their foot about six inches off the ground. Their ankle should be locked, meaning the foot will not flop back and forth. Reinforce this feeling by gently tossing the ball and having them kick it back to you while they remain in this sitting position. When they are shooting the ball during practice, watch for shots with back spin. This is caused by an unlocked ankle. Shots with a locked ankle will have very little rotation or, if done perfectly, top spin.

Finally, about the approach: Young players tend to believe that the longer the run the harder the shot. This is not the case. When your students' practice shooting a stationary ball, keep them to no more than three approach steps and encourage them to deliver as much power as possible at the end of those three strides.

With those things in mind, here are a few drills to help you develop shooting:

Drills

Feed the Dragon

Place 10-15 balls at the top of the 18 yard box and have the players form lines behind each goal post. On go, the first player in each line runs to the balls, collects one, dribbles in a short distance and shoots the ball. Once the shot is taken the player runs back to the line and tags the next player who runs forward, collects a ball, dribbles and shoots. This continues down the line until all of the balls are shot. To extend the game, set ball chasers behind the net to collect the balls and throw them back to the top of the 18 yard box where they can be reset. If this is done quickly, it is possible for the game to continue for several minutes.

Soccer Bowling

Set up six to 10 "pins" approximately 20m from the start of the line. You can use plastic pins from a toy bowling set, dish soap jugs, plant containers, etc. The object is simple. The players must shoot (or pass) the ball toward the cones and knock down as many as possible.

Jailbreak

Split the team into two groups and place them behind cones on opposite sides of the offensive half of the field. Set a cone at the top of the 18 yard box. Put a collection of balls beside the net. One at a time, the players run in toward the goal. As they get closer, the coach passes the ball out to them. The player must receive the ball with one touch and

shoot on goal with the second touch (a two-touch shot). After the shot, the player retreats behind the 18 yard cone and runs back in toward the goal. The coach now passes a second ball out and the player must shoot the ball without trapping (one-touch shot). If the player misses both shots (or the goalie saves both), that player goes to "jail" and sits down beside the net. If he or she scores on one of the shots, that player stays in the game and can return to his or her team. If the player scores on both shots, all of the players on his or her team who are in jail are set free and can rejoin their line to shoot. The game continues until one team runs out of players. This game can be adapted simply by changing the position of the passer, i.e. left and right goal posts, left and right sides of the top of the 18 yard box, the centre spot to create a through-ball situation, etc.

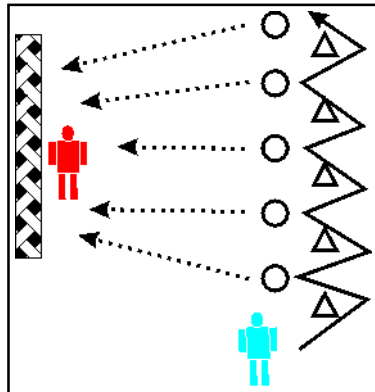
Shooting Gallery 1

This is good for practices when you are missing a number of players. Have all of the players circle the 18 yard box with a ball. Put one player in the middle. On Go, the middle player runs toward the circle of players and calls for a pass using the sender's name. The passer delivers the ball and the receiver receives the ball, turns it and shoots on net. Limit the number of touches and encourage the players to work quickly. Encourage the players to receive the ball and, with the first touch, move the ball away from the source of defensive pressure, then shoot with the second. Use the

appropriate foot. As a progression, have the passer charge in to create defensive pressure.

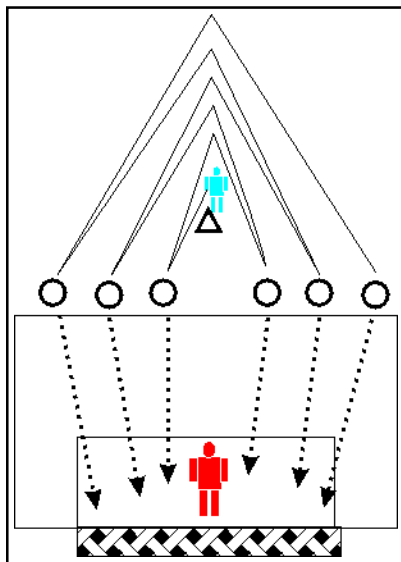
Attack and Retreat

Set five balls along the top of the 18 yard box and five cones behind them approximately 5 metres, offset so it creates a zigzag. Form a line at one side of the 18 yard line. On go, the player runs around the cone, up to the ball and shoots. The player then retreats around the second cone and up for another shot. This continues until all five shots have been taken. To speed up the transition, assign players to set up new balls for the next player before the current shooter is finished.



Pendulum

Set this game up similar to Attack and Retreat, with six balls at the top of the 18 yard box, but this time put one cone about 15 metres further upfield. Three of the balls should be to the left of the cone and three should be to the right. The balls should also be placed at a distance from each other. The shooter starts behind the cone and runs up to shoot the first ball on the right. When the shot is taken, he or she runs back around the cone and up to shoot the first ball on the left, then back behind the cone and up to shoot the next ball on the right and so on until all six balls have been shot. The effect is that each shot requires a longer run and a shot from an increasingly bad angle. A requirement of this is that the players must use their right foot on the right side and their left foot on the left side.

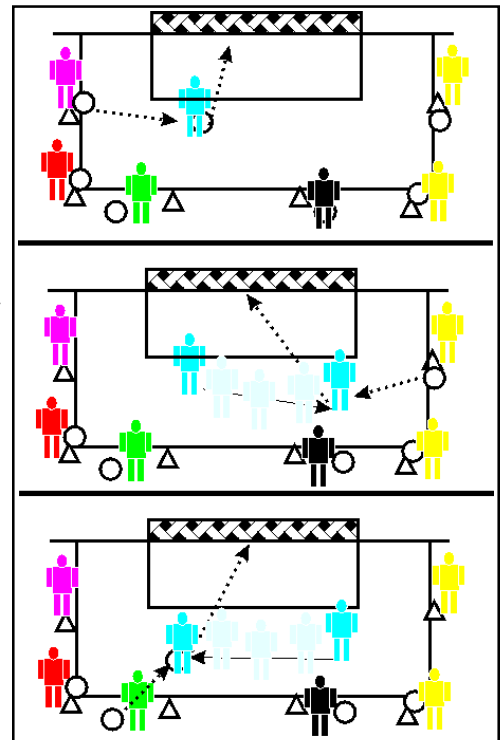


Around the world

Players circle the 18 yard box, each with a ball. A player is selected to be in the middle. On Go, the player runs out

toward the ring players and calls for a pass from one of the players. The passer feeds the ball in to the shooter who receives the ball, turns it and shoots on goal. The shooter then selects

another passer, calls for the pass and the action is repeated. The game continues until all of the balls have been shot. Select a new player to be in the middle and the old shooter becomes a passer. Be sure to stress to the passers the importance of a good feed, and, if possible, restrict the number of touches to no more than three. Emphasize speed. As a progression, allow the passer to enter the box to pressure the shooter just as a defender would in a game situation.



Shooting Gallery 2

Assign each of the players a number and line them up just outside the 18 yard box. Put a supply of balls beside the net. Have one adult play goal while another is the passer. The passer calls two numbers. The player whose number is called first runs out, receives the pass and shoots on goal. The goalie strives to make the save and produce a rebound. The player whose number is called second is responsible for collecting the rebound and scoring. This drill improves aggressiveness and touch around the net. Variations to this drill can be made simply by changing the location of the passer or by requiring one or two touch shots from one or both of the players. If you have a particularly good goalie, you might be able to call three numbers and produce two rebounds.

Shooting Lanes

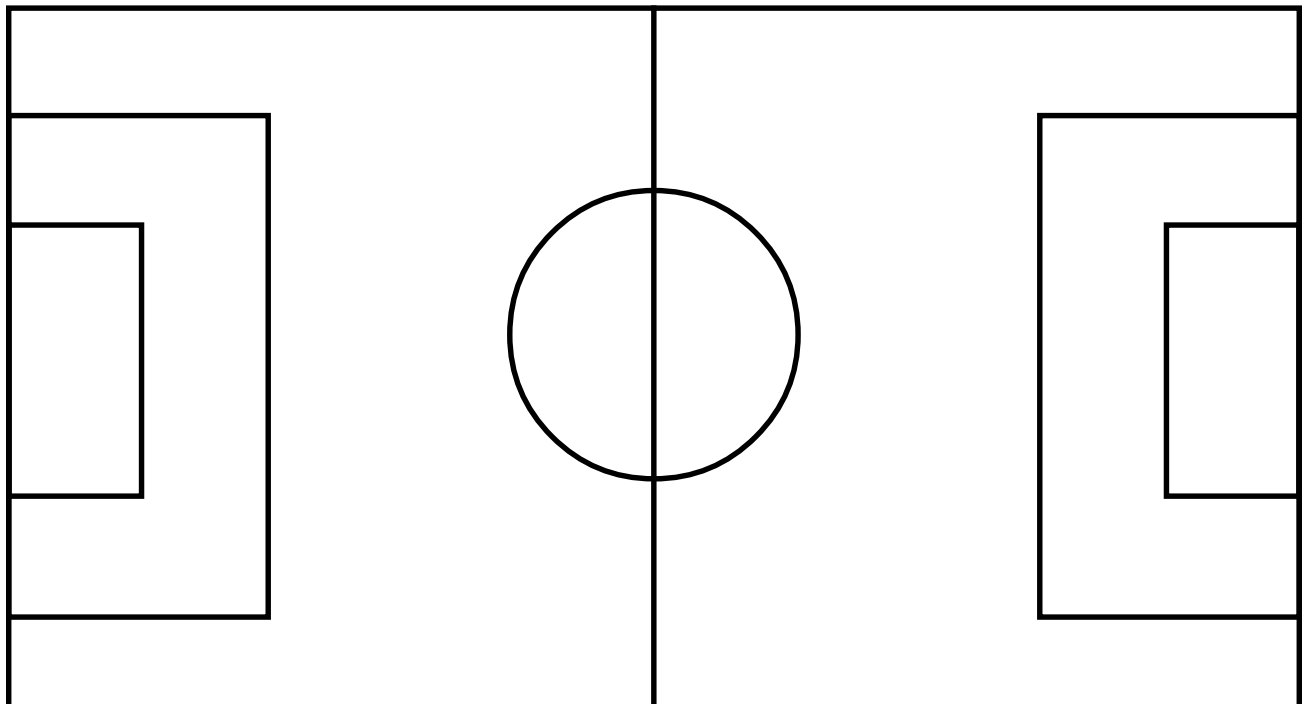
Create two lines, one in front of the goal, one behind the goal. Each player has a ball. One player starts in net. The first player in one of the lines touches the ball, shoots on goal, then runs forward to replace the player in net, who



runs to join the end of the first line. As soon as the first shot is taken, the first player at the beginning of the other line touches the ball and shoots on net. The new goalie tries to stop the ball. Once the shot has either been saved or gone through the net, the goalie runs to the end of their line. A

Never sacrifice technique in favour of speed. Players should first become good; then get fast

variation is to have the players switch lines after their short stint in goal. The game continues with each shooter, in turn, taking shots then charging forward to attempt to stop the other team's shot. This is a very high-energy game and really works on shooting to score. Stress proper shooting technique and remember to have them use their weak side equally.



Play Without The Ball

The greatest weakness Canadian soccer players have, in general, is their play without the ball. The fact is, however, playing without the ball is a skill, no different from dribbling, passing or shooting, and can be developed the same way. Many coaches make a mistake by telling their players to “spread out”. To an eight year old, spread out is a vague concept. How do I spread out? Where do I spread out to? How do I know when I’m done? When do I come back? Instead, use phrases like, “Find open space!” or “Always be alone!” Even the youngest players can identify open space and they know when they are alone. They might not do it, but it is essential that play without the ball be introduced early as an individual skill and responsibility.

To an eight year old, spread out is a vague concept.

The next step is to make the players understand the importance of space — how to find space and how to make it when there isn’t any. The following games are designed to develop the players’ understanding of this difficult concept.

Drills

Gimme Five

Have the team make a large circle around one player. Give the player in the centre a ball. Now assign either a one or a two to the rest of the team. Once this is done, tell everyone to get as close to the player in the centre of the circle as possible. The players will crowd in creating a squashy knot of players. Now ask the player with the ball to make a pass. This will be nearly impossible. Ask why, and the players will immediately answer that it is because it is too crowded. Now ask all of the players to take five giant steps away from the player with the ball. When they have done that, ask only the two’s to take five more giant steps out and away from the centre. Now ask the player with the ball to make a pass. It will be much easier. This is a great way to introduce the concept of allowing space.

Give and Go

Players form a line behind one cone. In turn, each player dribbles forward to a second cone and delivers a good pass to the coach. The player then makes quick run past a third cone to receive a return pass from the coach. Emphasize that the players accelerate quickly between the cones, and call for the pass. Once they’ve mastered the drill, add a second stage where they must control the ball, then make a second pass to a coach on the other side of the line.

Touch The Line

Create a 30m x 30m square with cones. Create two teams, both of which are in the box at the same time. Around the outside of the box, create a barrier using field lines, cones, flower pots, string, etc. To start, each team gets one ball. The game works this way. The player with the ball must find an open teammate to pass to. After the pass, the passer must run out of the box, touch the barrier line, then run back in and find open space to receive a return pass. The progression is to add a second ball per team. A variation on this game is to require the players to pass to members of the opposite team only. This means possession alternates

between Team 1 and Team 2 and requires the players to continually consider who is open for a pass, and who is looking for a target to pass to.

Scoring Zones

Create 10m x 10m squares at key points in the offensive half of the field and divide the team into two groups. To score a goal, the team must pass the ball to a teammate in the square. The game encourages players without the ball to run into areas where the ball carrier will need a target.

Hand Ball

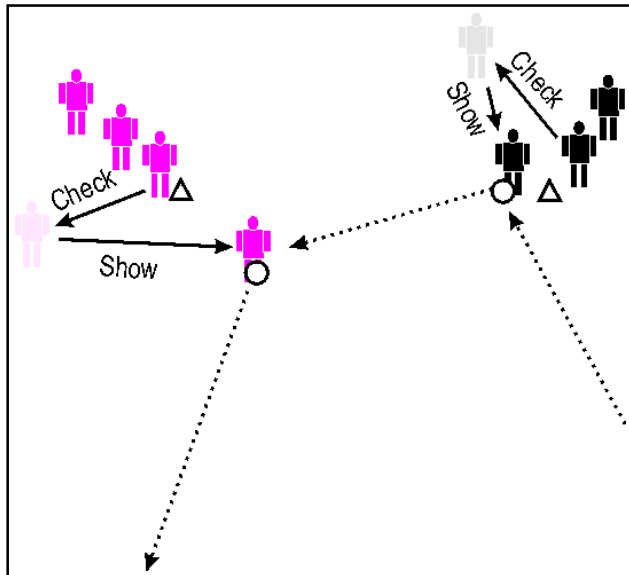
Divide into two teams for a traditional game of handball. Players pass the ball by throwing between teammates. The trick is that once the ball is caught, the player is not allowed to run. This means, in order to move the ball upfield, teammates must run ahead and get open quickly. Once the players get the hang of the rules, switch the game to traditional soccer — that is, using their feet — but keep the rule about running with the ball.

The Torpedo

Players form two lines facing each other, but off-set by 10m. Line one has its back to the goal; Line two is facing the goal and set out just past the centre dot. The first player in line one begins to dribble the ball toward Line 2. At the half way point, the player passes the ball to Player 2, then turns and sprints up the middle of the field toward the goal. Player 2 receives the ball and sends a deep ball past the charging player (the torpedo). The runner catches up with



the ball and walks in for a breakaway. The players then switch lines. This is a fun way to introduce movement after a pass in a drill that masquerades as a scoring drill.



Check and Show

This drill introduces the difficult concept that to make space, it is necessary to first move away from the ball, then break back into the gap that is created. Break the team into groups of four. Each quartet creates a large square using four cones. Place another marker approximately 10 m away from the beginning of each line. Start with one ball. The game begins with the first player in Line 1 with the ball. Player 1 must pass the ball to the first player in Line 2. The responsibility of Player 2, however, is more complex. He or she must “check away” behind the second marker before the ball is passed, then “show back” to receive the pass

(always on their back foot). As Player 2 receives the ball, the first player in Line 3 checks away behind his or her second cone, then shows back as Player 2 sends a pass. As Player 3 receives the ball, the first player in Line 4 checks away behind his or her marker, then shows back as the pass comes. This process continues clockwise around and around the square. Once the players get the hang of the drill, have them perform the same activity counter clockwise. When they can perform this drill in small groups, do the same thing but use lines of players behind each cone and have the passers follow the pass to the end of the next line.

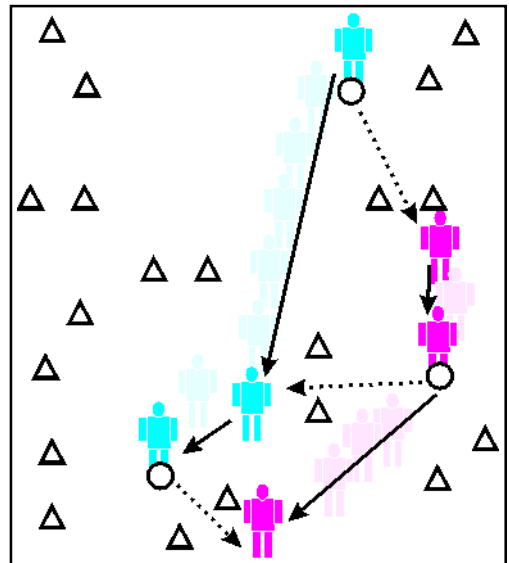
Gates

Create a large area with a series of 1m gates throughout.

Break your

team into pairs. To score a goal, each pair must pass a ball from one partner to the other through a gate. The players will discover that the only way to be

successful is to find an open gate and run to it without the ball so their partner can feed the pass.



Need Cones?

Most of the drills and games in this book call for cones. Your club includes some cones in your kit, but there are times when you don't have enough to run the games you want. What to do?

There are, in fact, a number of inexpensive (or free) items you can use instead of the traditional orange pylon. Flower pots, laundry soap jugs, pails or cardboard boxes all work just as well.

The point is to provide each player with as many touches on the ball as possible. If that means creating another line of players, or setting up another grid for those players to work in, then that's what you need to do. Don't let a lack of field markers force you to sacrifice player involvement.



The Line Change Sheet

One of the most difficult jobs a coach has is managing the bench during a game. Ensuring every player gets an equal opportunity to play is a laudable goal, but it can drive you to distraction. Worst of all, if you fail in achieving equitable playing time, you are most likely going to find out about it the hard way. In the excitement of the game, it is easy to forget who's been on the whole game, who just came off, and who really needs to go on. Especially early in the season when your team is a jumble of names, numbers and faces, mistakes happen.

There is no sure-fire way to eliminate mistakes, and as discussed earlier in this manual, equal play is a virtual impossibility in a single game. However, using a line change form like the one illustrated below is a good way to track your substitute rotations during a particular game and, if kept on file, over a season.

This form is just one idea, and a full-size version is included here for you to photocopy if you wish. It can be adapted for your needs or used as a model to create something more appropriate to your personal style. In summary, this tool allows you to list your whole roster on one side, set your starting line up, track your substitutes and determine who's due to come off. Using arrows, you

can determine at a glance if one player has been on too long, or is playing their proper position on the field. This reduces the chance that one player will see action for the entire game, while another will rot on the bench because they are too timid to speak up.

If you fail in achieving equitable playing time, you are most likely going to find out about it the hard way

It will also give you a quick reference to see who started the game before and who came off the bench. This way you can ensure every player gets the experience of starting a game and of joining the play mid-way through the half.

Using a system will cut down on accidental inequities, and give you a reference point should a parent complain. What it will not do, however, is protect you from intentional benching. Those will become glaringly obvious and will be up to you to explain.

1st Half

List your available players in this section. → **Roster**

Plan your starting lineup here. → **Starters**

Names of players who will start the game → **1st Sub**

Name of the substitute → **2nd Sub**

Shift number. → **3rd Sub**

On-field positions in short form → (1-19)

Arrow indicates a player replacement → (Arrows pointing from Starters to 1st Sub, 2nd Sub, and 3rd Sub)

List of available substitutes → (Bottom section of the form)

Position	Starters	1st Sub	2nd Sub	3rd Sub
G	Kendal			
LD	Emma S.	Alannah		
RD	Emma R.		Olivia	
SW	Tiffany			
ST	Becky	Jillian		
LM	Brianne			Becky
CLM	Amanda			
CRM	Vanessa			
RM	Taylor	Charlotte		
RF	Jessica			Taylor
LF	Courtney			Bryn
	Charlotte	Taylor	Taylor	Brianne
	Jillian	Becky	Becky	Jessica
	Alannah	Emma S.	Emma S.	Emma S.
	Olivia	Olivia	Emma R.	Emma R.
	Bryn	Bryn	Courtney	Courtney

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____
11 _____
12 _____
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16 _____
17 _____
18 _____
19 _____

G _____	G _____	G _____	G _____
LD _____	LD _____	LD _____	LD _____
RD _____	RD _____	RD _____	RD _____
SW _____	SW _____	SW _____	SW _____
ST _____	ST _____	ST _____	ST _____
LM _____	LM _____	LM _____	LM _____
CLM _____	CLM _____	CLM _____	CLM _____
CRM _____	CRM _____	CRM _____	CRM _____
RM _____	RM _____	RM _____	RM _____
RF _____	RF _____	RF _____	RF _____
LF _____	LF _____	LF _____	LF _____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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