

A Coaching Primer

EIAA Coach's Meeting

Summer Season
Saturday, 5/4



Practice Suggestions:

1. Arrive early, inspect the field for any possible hazards. Organize cones, discs and balls and other equipment (gives the appearance of organization).

2. Develop a theme:

- Meet with the team and state your objectives (skills / concepts) that you will focus on that practice (passing, dribbling, defense, situational tactics, etc.). Younger players should
- focus on a single skill, while older players can plan on practicing a combination of
- individual and groups skills and team tactics.

3. Organize practices in a sequential manner – have a written plan if necessary.

- Each drill or activity should help serve as a foundation for those that follow. Map out the
- series or progression of skills you want them to work - from basic to more complex.

4. Keep players active. Maximize time on task – the more repetitions and “touches” the better.

- One player – one ball. Break up drills into smaller groups – the less standing and waiting the better!

5. Keep it simple and keep it positive.

- Resist the urge to micro-manage or “over coach.” Keep instructions and demonstrations
- clear and quick. Have older players restate directions or demonstrate drills for you.
- Speak with your players... not at them!
- No punitive drills or exercises. Time outs are all that are necessary.

6. End practice with a game – either a couple small-sided games or a full team scrimmage.

7. Debrief at the end of practice: recap what the theme was, discuss how well the players picked up what was taught. Have them evaluate their effort.

8. Always have at least one other adult (assistant coach) practice with you.

9. Speak with parents after practice.

Sample Practice Schedule

1. Meet & greet: have a short team meeting – state goal or theme for the practice, take care of business details (10 min.).
2. Warm up and stretching, exercises (10-15 min.).
3. Individual skills activities - one player-one ball (15 min.).
4. Small group activities – skill stations, drills and practice games (15-20 min.).
5. Scrimmage or practice game situation (2 x 15 min.)
6. Debrief & discuss: (5-10 min).

Common Terminology for U10, U12 and U15 Players

Change Fields: to move the ball to the other side of the field where there is more open space / fewer defenders.

Cross: a long pass, often in the air, that is played diagonally from the sides of the field to the box (area in front of opponent's goal). Crossing passes can be aimed toward the nearest goalpost (near post) or the farthest goal post (far post).

Drop (drop pass): the ball is played back to a supporting player when under pressure.

Feint: using one's motions to misdirect or "fake out" the opposing player when dribbling.

Mark ("mark up," "mark your man"): covering or guarding the opposing player so he / she cannot receive the ball to pass or shoot. On defense, marking should be **goal-side** – between the opposing player and the goal.

Post (to post up): when a player comes back toward the ball or in front of a defender to receive a pass – usually to pass it off again quickly.

Running to space (also called getting open, "show"): when a player runs to an open area of the field to receive a pass from another player. On offense, players without the ball should continually be making these "runs."

Shielding: keeping possession and control of the ball by using the player's body to protect it from opposing players.

Square Pass: a sideways or lateral pass used to move the ball to an open space and continue an attack.

Through pass: a pass which is played between two defenders for an attacker to run onto. This could be over the defenders (chip) or an angular pass splitting two defenders.

Wall Pass (also called give –n-go): a fundamental move to get past as defensemen. A player passes the ball then moves forward to receive it back once he / she is beyond the defender – like playing the ball "off the wall."

U6 Players:

Skills to Develop:

- Dribble with all sides of both feet
- Dribble out of trouble
- Dribble past someone
- Soft first touch
- Move the ball forward with passes toward the opponents goal

This is their first introduction to organized team play. We have to remember that children at this age experience the world around them very differently than do adults or even older children. make practices run as smoothly and happily as possible, it is extremely important for us to understand the following characteristics about U6 children (see below).

At this age, the goal is strictly to have fun. The thrill is often in chasing the ball - bunching together and running after the ball is to be expected. This is actually beneficial, as young children learn to dribble out of a crowded situation and jostle in close physical proximity to each other. They learn to push themselves to exhaustion – and then recover to play again.

Typical Characteristics of U6 Players

- *focused on themselves* – reality to them is solely based on what they see and feel
- *unable to see the world from another's perspective* – it is “the world according to me” time. Asking them to understand how someone else is seeing something or feels is unrealistic
- *everything is in the here and now* – forget about the past and future, they live in the moment.
- *heating and cooling systems are less efficient than adults* – we need to give frequent water breaks (every 8-10 minutes) or they may just run until they cannot run anymore
- *enjoying playing, not watching* – they feel no enjoyment from watching others play when they could be playing too. Make sure every player has a ball in practice so every player is always playing
- *limited attention span* (on average 15 seconds for listening, 10-15 minutes when engaged in a task) – keep your directions concise and to the point. When in an open environment, such as a park, their attention span will dwindle towards 10 seconds
- *effort is synonymous with performance* – if they have tried hard, they believe they have done well. This is a wonderful quality and we should be supportive of their enthusiasm
- *active imaginations* – if we utilize their imaginations in practice activities, they will love practice!

- *look for adult approval* – watch how often players look to you for approval or to see if you are looking. Also be encouraging when they say “Coach, look what I can do!”
- *unable to think abstractly* – asking them to think about spatial relations or runs off the ball is unrealistic
- *typically have 2 speeds* -- extremely fast and stopped
- *usually unaware of game scores* – we should keep it that way
- *often cannot identify left foot vs. right foot* – they know which foot they use most and if they point to their feet you can help teach them left and right

Some Recommended Games for U6 Players:

Tag---Every child dribbles a soccer ball in the space defined while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing twice in a row, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players on their knees.

Hospital tag---Same as tag in that each player dribbles a soccer ball and that they try to tag each other with their hands. In this game, each time a player is tagged he/she must place their hand on the spot on their body at which they were tagged. Obviously, if tagged a third time, players have no more hands to cover those spots, so they must go to the hospital to see the doctor. The coach acts as the doctor and performs a magical task (pretend) to heal all the little soccer players so they can continue playing the game.

Red light/Green light---All players have a ball and dribble in a limited space (or towards the coach). When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with frequency of light changes and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add light of other colors and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.)

Freeze Tag---Break up the group into two teams. Everyone must dribble their soccer ball, but one team tries to tag (freeze) the other team. If they do tag a player on the other team, that player must freeze, place their ball above their head and spread their legs. Another player on their team must kick his/her ball through the frozen player’s legs to unfreeze the teammate. If all players are frozen, game ends and the frozen team becomes the taggers. Otherwise, stop game after a few minutes and have team reverse roles. *Version 2:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players with players unfreezing each other in same fashion

Planets---Set up cones into multiple squares or triangles that serve as planets (or cities). All players must follow coach’s order and dribble into the planet he calls out. Coach can have all players follow same directions or break up team so they start at different planet

and then have them dribble through the solar system in clockwise or counterclockwise fashion. Coach can have groups dribble in opposite direction through the solar system.

Kangaroo Jack---All players except two or three begin with a ball. Players without balls are kangaroo jacks and must hop like a kangaroo and try to tag players. If a player gets tagged, he/she becomes a kangaroo as well until all players are turned into kangaroos.

Snake---In an appropriate space for the numbers you have, have all players dribbling soccer balls except for 2-3 players to start. These players hold hands and work together as one snake to tag the other players, The players with balls try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. If they are tagged, they join hands with players making up the snake the snake grows until all players are part of the snake. The snake must stay together as one animal and not break off into little parts. Encourage fun by having the snake hiss.

Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball instead of their hand. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. Have the tag count if their ball hits another player or that player's ball. Can have the players tag the coach for 10 or 20 points. Then can have players tag other selected players for 50 or 100 points etc. etc. *Version 2:* Rather than having players tag each other, have them tag the coach by kicking their soccer ball. The coach moves around without a ball to avoid being tagged. Have players count up how many they got and can do the same variations as in the other game by affixing a lot of points to players.

Capture the Balls---Set up three or four "home bases"(squares) with cones roughly 2-3 yards wide. Break up the players into teams and have each team get together in their home base. Place all the balls in the center of the space between the home bases. On the coaches command the teams are free to gather as many soccer balls as they can into their home base. Players cannot use hands and there is no pushing each other or sitting/laying on the balls. Teams try to gather as many balls as possible into their home bases. Teams can steal balls from each others' home bases. Coach calls time and counts up how many balls are in each space to determine a winner. Coach allows team 1 minute to make up a new team strategy before playing again.

Moving Goal---2 coaches use a piece of rope or string to form a movable goal with each coach serving as a post and the string serving as the crossbar. Players each have a ball and try to score by kicking their ball through the goal. However, the coaches constantly move and turn to force the players to keep their head up and to change direction

U8 Players:

Skills to Develop:

- Dribble with both feet
- Dribble out of trouble / past a defender
- Shielding the ball from pressure
- Trapping – soft first touch

Skills & ideas to Introduce:

- Passing – push pass / instep pass
- Shooting technique
- Calling and helping
- Good sportsmanship

As this is often the first experience with soccer (or any organized team sport) we must remain patient, and not try to force U8 players to develop too quickly. Dribbling still needs to be the primary focus of our efforts, though passing and shooting should be introduced at this age as well. U8 players tend to work best when in pairs and we should allow them to work in pairs often. In games, players will tend to bunch together and want to chase the ball. Although some strategies and games can help players learn to open up and spread out, understanding abstract concepts such as “field position” and playing to open space is still a couple years away. We need to make sure that fun is the focus in practice. Player development will occur most naturally if all players are enjoying themselves.

Typical Age Characteristics of U8 Players:

- *limited attention span (on average 15-20 seconds for listening, up to 20 minutes when engaged in a task)* – this may vary greatly on any given day! They are very chatty – and need prompts to help them focus and listen.
- *tend to play well in pairs and small groups* - try to set up the pairs yourself to control activities and manage the personalities.
- *are now able to take another’s perspective* – they now have a sense of how other’s are feeling
- *still unable to think abstractly* – still do not have this capability, be patient
- *heating and cooling system still less efficient than adults* – still make sure to give frequent water breaks
- *much prefer playing to watching* – keep everyone active during practice and remember, no lines when possible.

- *have an understanding of causation and sequence* – they now understand “if I do this, then that happens”
- *can play at various speeds (not just run and stop)* – not all players, but many players can “pace themselves.”
- *extremely aware of adult reactions* – be very aware of your verbal and nonverbal reactions, as they look for your reaction frequently
- *often still want to be the center of attention* – especially younger players on the team.
- *still have active imaginations* – still have active imaginations by adult standards. Use stories, metaphors and analogies when possible.
- *begin to become aware of peer perception* – a social order is beginning to develop. Be sensitive to this
- *some will keep score* – but we do not need to stress winning and losing at this age.
- *beginning to develop motor memories* – by attempting fundamental technical skills they are training their bodies to remember certain movements
- *wide range of abilities between children at this age* – children all develop at varying paces. You may have an 8 year-old who seems more like a 10 year-old and one that seems more like a 6 year-old on the same team. Your challenge to is to manage this range in your practice in a way that challenges each player at a level that is reasonable for that player

Some Recommended Games for U8 Players:

Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction.

Knock Out---In same space as previous activity, have players dribble balls while trying to knock other player’s balls outside of the grid. Players can never leave their own ball. If their ball gets knocked out have them retrieve it quickly and get back into the game. (You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times).

Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

Marbles---Players are in pairs, each with a ball. This time instead of chasing each other, one player plays out his ball and the partner passes his own ball in an attempt to strike the ball his partner played out. Players should keep track of how many times they hit their partner's ball. *Version 2:* Once players understand this game, make it fast paced by having the players take turns at trying to hit each other's ball without ever stopping. If player 2 misses player 1's ball, then player 1 immediately runs to his own ball and tries to hit player 2's ball (player 2 does not get to touch his ball after missing player 1's ball). After player 1 has a chance, then player 2 immediately tries to hit player 1's ball right back. etc. etc. This game is continuous and players should keep score. Hint: If 2 balls are very close to each other a player should kick their ball hard at the other ball so when they hit it, it is more difficult for the other to hit their ball back.

Get Outta Here---Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. Place half of team behind each goal and coach stands at halfway line with all balls. When coach plays out a ball the first two players run out and try to score on each other's goal. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells "get outta here" and plays in a new ball immediately for the next two players. *Version 2:* Coach can stop yelling "get outta here" after a while and see if players recognize when balls go out and are attentive. *Version 3:* Coach can vary service of ball.

Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. *Version 4:* Have the first two or three players from each group come out each time a new ball is played and play 2 vs. 2 or 3 vs. 3.

Clean Your Room--- Break group into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (2-3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at other team's goals in an attempt to score through anyone of the small goals (below knee height). Players cannot cross the buffer zone or go into the other half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense though no hands. Only shots with laces count as goals.

2 or 3 vs. 1 keep away---In a grid 10x15 yds, three players play 2 vs. 1 continuous keep away. Two attackers combine to keep the ball away from one defender. When the defender wins the ball, he or she immediately combines with the attacker he or she did not win the ball from and the attacker who lost the ball becomes the defender. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed in.

1 vs. 1 to End lines---In a space that is wider than long (15 x 20 yds) each player defends one end line and attacks the other. Players score by dribbling the ball in control over the opposing player's end line. *Version 2:* You can make this 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 3 or 4 vs. 4.

Any kind of dribbling race (individual or relay) helps develop dribbling speed and dribbling skill. Dribbling obstacle courses are also fun, as is anything that involves a version of "tag." Accurate passing and shooting can be practiced with various versions of soccer golf.

U10 Players:

Skill to develop / continue developing:

- Continue with dribbling and passing skills from U8
- Passing with inside and outside of both feet
- Shooting with both feet---using instep (toe down – striking with laces)
- Trapping and receiving the ball with all parts of body – feet, thigh and chest,
- Heading

Skills & concepts to Introduce:

- Basic Attacking Ideas
 - passing to open players
 - moving into open spaces to receive passes
 - putting passing combinations together
- Basic Defending Ideas
 - role of 1st defender - tackling techniques
 - role of 2nd defender – covering assigned players
 - clearing the ball out of the goal area

As we move up from the U8 level to the U10 level there are many differences we must recognize in order to provide a good experience for young players of this age. However, there are still many similarities with younger players. We need to continue to focus on technique during our practices. Creating environments in which players get maximum repetitions of technical skills is very important.

Players at this age should still work on ball mastery and demonstrate growing familiarity and comfort with a ball at their feet. They should develop a sense of “field vision” – and be able to see where their teammates are on the field, as well as the positions of opposing players. Players at this age should begin to learn how to get open – “move into open space” to receive the ball. They should learn to gauge how far they need to be from other players, and resist the urge to bunch together. Defensive coverage should be taught, as well as how to quickly transition from offense to defense (and back again).

Typical Characteristics of U10 Players

- *attention span lengthens from U8* - they start to show the ability to sequence thought and actions. They are still chatty, and need to be prompted and refocused from time to time.
- *they start to think ahead and think “If this, then that”*- they can predict consequences.

- *they are more inclined towards wanting to play soccer rather than being told to play* – they will often continue practicing what they learn at home, and try new skills on their own.
- *demonstrate increased self-responsibility* – bringing a ball, water and all gear should now be their complete responsibility
- *they start to recognize fundamental tactical concepts* – field positioning and spacing.
- *they begin to become aware of peer pressure* – they also begin to look up to older players
- *they strongly identify with their team or their coach* – they take pride in their team
- *they are extremely rule bound*—remember to be fair and consistent when coaching!
- *there is a wide continuum of physical maturity* – but this is still a crucial age for technical skill development and motor memory. The more repetitions or “touches” the better.

Some Recommended Games for U10 Players:

Skill building drills are essential at this age – as well as small “box” games. Here are some suggestions for competitive games to add variation to the practice:

Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. *Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other’s balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. Note: You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

Gates Passing---Same set up as previous game. However players are now paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Similar to previous game, have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

1 vs. 1 Two lines---In a grid 10x10 yards, players line up on opposite sides. The first player in each line alternates attacking the player opposite them. When the attacker dribbles over the line they score a goal. If the defender wins the ball he or she can counter attack to the opposite line to also score a goal. The players switch to the opposite line if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other. *Version 2:* Make the grid larger and make this a 2 vs. 2 or a 3 vs. 3 game.

2 vs. 2 to Four Cross Goals---Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 10yd X 10yd. Have one team of 2 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.

4 vs. 4 End zone Game---Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. To score you must pass the ball to a teammate into the opponent's end zone (created with discs). The player cannot go into the end zone until after the ball has been passed. Stress recognizing opportunities and timing of passes.

And of course... lots of time scrimmaging! Scrimmages are controlled practice games. Make sure to emphasize what specific skills or ideas are being worked in and reinforced in a scrimmage situation. Coaches act as referees, so players get used to having authorities figures teach and enforce the rules of the game.

U12 Players:

Skills to develop & continue practicing:

U-12 Continue with all U-10 skills and concepts

- Dribbling
 - in traffic and under defensive pressure
 - stop the ball / change direction quickly with control
 - ability to feint (fake) opposing players
 - speed dribbling for long. straight runs
- Passing / receiving
 - play longer passes – crosses and changes of field
 - chip the ball over defenders
 - recognize and routinely use square passes, drop passes, attacking passes / through passes
 - basic support positions – how to support the ball with positioning
 - receiving the ball away from pressure – moving to open space
 - using 1-touch passing (wall or pass or “give and go”)
- Shooting – with power, accuracy
- Offensive/Defensive Heading
- Throw ins
- Communication – routinely using basic commands and assistance
- Defensive skills
 - direct pressure (tackling) v. containment
 - how to contain to the weak side (away from other players)
 - to anticipate and intercept passes
 - goal-side man coverage
 - 2nd defender overlap when 1st defender is beaten
 - defender coverage of the goal when goalkeeper is out
- Tactical decisions and play – how and when to...
 - switch the point of attack
 - overload one side of the field or the other
 - run overlapping routes and switch positions
 - play the ball back to the goalkeeper
- Situational play
 - corner kicks (take and defend)
 - goal kicks (take and defend)
 - direct / indirect kicks (take and defend)
 - penalty kicks

- Goalkeeper skills
 - save techniques – catching, tipping, blocking, smothering and redirecting
 - cutting off angles
 - stopping breakaways
 - distribution – punting and throwing
 - communication - leadership and command of the backfield

Typically players of this age begin to understand the basic tactical situations of the game and are more aware of movement off the ball and the reasons for tactical choices. Problem-solving becomes systematic and these players tend to learn quickly. Children of this age typically are beginning to develop abstract awareness, so they can understand coaches when we talk about field positioning and running to open space. However, just because they understand these basic tactical concepts does not mean we should focus on them entirely. Players are still developing physically at this age, especially as they go through growth spurts and awkward phases. These players are all growing at different rates and undergoing physical, mental, emotional, and social changes. As coaches, we need to be sensitive to these changes and their social implications when coaching this age group. Some players may pick up skills quickly, where as others may struggle. However, it may be the case that this is simply the result of differences in maturation. In a year, the slower developer may surpass the player who developed earlier. For this reason we need to be patient and keep open minds about all players through these years. They are aware of their struggles more than anyone else as peer evaluation is omnipresent at these ages. When we see them struggling, it is important for us to help them and to keep the game fun.

Again, skill building through repetition and drill is important.

Typical Characteristics of U12 Players

- *all children are maturing at different rates-* motor coordination may vary greatly from player to player
- *players need to warm-up and stretch---*muscle pulls and other nagging injuries are common otherwise
- *players will typically understand elemental abstract concepts and hypothetical situations* – they are ready to learn tactics and strategy.
- *they like to solve problems – let them be creative in their thinking as you teach the game*
- *peer evaluation is constant / egos are sensitive*
- *technique still needs to be reinforced constantly*
- *playing too much can lead to overuse injuries and burn-out.*
- *ask for feedback from them---*they will tell you how things are going, and can tell you what they need to improve on as individual players and a team.
- *let them try different positions around the field.*

- *try to hand over more leadership and ownership of the team to them* – weekly captains for practices and games
- ***keep it fun!!!***

Some Recommended Games for U12 Players:

Four Square Passing---Form a grid 35x35 with squares roughly 4 yards across in each corner. Two teams of 4 to 6 players try to score by passing the ball to a teammate who makes a run into one of the four squares. Players in the squares cannot be defended against they can pass or dribble the ball out. Balls out of play can be passed or dribbled back into play.

Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. *Version 2:* make this competitive by breaking the group into two teams and seeing which team has more balls at the end of the time.

5 Goal Game---4v4+2 in 35x40 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The plus 2 players are always on the attacking team. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. Must receive with inside of foot, then outside, weak foot inside/outside are different expectations that can be put on the players. First team to 10 points wins. Players need to be able to see where the open goals are, and receive with a “picture” of what is around them. With this in mind, if the players are advanced enough, the player receiving through the goal must play 1 touch. Coach could require receiving player to perform a feint before touching ball.

3v3 or 4v4 - Four Small Goals---In a 30x30 yard grid, two teams attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The goals are three feet wide and setup near each corner. With three attackers the players now have the 1st attacker (ball) and 2nd attackers (support) and a triangle shape in attack, looking to change the point of attack away from pressure. The defending team now has the 1st defender (pressure), 2nd defender (cover), and 3rd defender (balance). This game can be played to lines, goals with keepers, four squares or targets.

Once again – lots of time scrimmaging. Get the goalkeepers involved as much as possible. You can move portable goals closer to each other to shorten the field and maximize offensive / defensive play, shots and saves.

Helpful Websites:

Footballer21.com – a free coaching site

<http://footballer21.com/>

Coaching American Soccer

<http://coachingamericansoccer.com/>

Inside Soccer: Drills, Skills and Tools for Teams and Clubs

<http://www.insidesoccer.com/>

National Soccer Coaches Association of America

<http://www.nscaa.com/>

Some information in this Primer used with permission of Massachusetts Youth Soccer,,
Ian Mulliner, Technical Director. <http://www.mayouthsoccer.org>

Thanks Ian!

