

Coaching Recommendations for U7 and U8.

Practice Sessions

At this age group there needs to be two main areas of emphasis. Players must learn the basic fundamentals of the game while at the same time having fun.

We must ensure that whilst improving their ball skills players are also improving their listening skills, agility, balance and hand to eye coordination.

It is important that players in these age groups have a ball each or a ball between two during practice.

75% of the practices must be on technique.

1V1 practices towards a goal are also encouraged.

There are a variety of fun games which can be used to help develop all of the above concepts of our program.

At this young age group try and get your players to understand restarts and ball out of bounds.

Passing.

Short Passes – Push pass

Players need to learn how to pass the ball accurately and at the right speed over short distances.

Players need to be encouraged to pass the ball with either foot.

Players need to learn how to play simple passes and to play the way they are facing.

Players must learn the following fundamentals of passing:

- Accuracy
- Speed/Pace
- The plant foot and the contact with the kicking foot are important factors at this age.

Control.

Players need to learn to control the ball with either foot.

Players need to learn to control a ball with one foot and pass it with the other.

Players must learn the following basic fundamentals of ball control:

- To get their body behind the ball
- To use their instep to control the ball
- It is important that players learn to control the ball with one foot and then pass it with their other foot
- Players need to practice using their knee and chest to control the ball
- Relaxing on contact is a very important factor at this age
- Players do not use their head to control a ball. They should step back and take it on their chest or knee

Dribbling.

All players must be encouraged to take risks when dribbling.

Players need to learn to be comfortable dribbling a ball in small areas.

Players need to learn as many tricks/moves as they can.

Players need to learn as many turns as they can.

Players need to learn the first two basic fundamentals of dribbling:

- Change of pace/speed
- Change of direction
- You must encourage your players to dribble at speed and take risks

Defending.

Players need to learn the block tackle.

Players need to learn the importance of patience when challenging for the ball.

Players need to learn and understand the basics of challenging for the ball:

- To get in a sideways position when challenging for the ball
- To keep their eye on the ball
- They must be patient and not dive in
- Good defenders stay on their feet

Shooting.

Players need to learn how to shoot correctly.

Players need to know the importance of hitting the target.

Players need to understand the difference between power and finesse.

Players need to know the following basics of power shooting:

- Their plant foot goes next to the ball
- They strike the ball with their laces
- To get their head and knee over the ball
- They must concentrate on hitting the target
- They must look at the target before they strike the ball
- They must follow in for rebounds

Heading.

Heading is not to be done at this age group.

Games

It is important that at this young age the players understand the importance of teamwork.

It is important that at this age group league results are not recorded. Players therefore have an opportunity to improve their skills and at the same time have fun.

All players should be given the opportunity to play in different positions and also different teams.

Players need an opportunity to make new friends.

Player should be given an equal amount of playing time as this is important for their development. If possible teams should be selected where everyone is taking part.

I believe we as a club should use small sized fields and have small sized teams so that players get more touches on the ball.

As coaches you only need to encourage players to have an understanding of spreading out during play.

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