

Grades 4-5th Soccer Drills

- 1) **Inter-passing in 3's With Defensive Approach** (15 minutes): Player #1 and Player #2 pass the ball back and forth over a 5-10 yard distance while Player #3 drifts 15-20 yards away from the other two players. After 4-5 passes, Player #1 passes the ball to Player #3. As the ball is traveling to Player #3, Player #2 provides immediate pressure to Player #3 and Player #1 immediately moves into a cover position behind Player #2. Player #3 can either try to dribble past Player #2 or player #3 can try to split the two players with a pass. The warm-up activity then continues with Player #2 and Player #3 passing while Player #1 drifts away, etc.

- a. Coaching Points:

- i. The 1st defender needs to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance: be on their toes, with knees bent, one foot forward, one back. The 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker, approximately arm's length
- ii. The 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is showing the 1st attacker; cannot be too far back or too close to 1st defender. If the first defender is tighter to the ball, the 2nd defender provides closer cover. If the 1st defender is closer to the ball, the 2nd defender is more detached from the 1st defender.
- iii. The 2nd defender communicates where to steer the ball; tells 1st defender which way to push the attacker.

- 2) **2 v 2 To End Lines** (20 Minutes): (Grid is wider than it is long) This is a 2v2 game. A point is awarded when a team dribbles over the opposite 20 yard end line.

- a. Coaching Points:

- i. Reinforce 1st and 2nd defender responsibilities as the 2v2 game proceeds. It is crucial that Pressure and Cover, the relationship and connection between the 1st and 2nd defenders, is given plenty of time and repetition.
- ii. Defensive decisions to pressure or cover must be anticipated and made as the ball is traveling (as the attacking players are playing the ball).
- iii. Knowing when to pressure or cover is crucial to winning the ball back. Verbal and visual communication between the 1st and 2nd defenders is imperative!

- 3) **4v4 SIX GOAL GAME** (20 minutes. (Field is wider than it is long) The midfield line is the restraining line (offsides line). Simply a 4v4 game. Each team of 4 attempts to score in one of the 3 goals opposite them. Work with one of the teams to help them maintain the flat shape of the defending action.

- a. Coaching Points:

- i. There must always be pressure on the ball. There may be one or two 2nd defenders depending on where the ball and supporting attack players are located.
- ii. 3rd defender play/positioning is now crucial to the defensive success. The 3rd defender must provide balance to the defensive action by being in a position that not too deep (some what flat in relation to the 2nd

defender(s)) and not too detached. The 3rd defender works on squeezing space centrally.

iii. Changing roles quickly as the ball moves is vital to the success of the flat defense. It takes discipline, fitness and tactical speed.

- 4) **6v6 plus 4 to Goals** (15-20 minutes): Using full half field Play 6v6 to goals, with goalkeepers, and position 2 neutral players on each sideline (neutral players can move up and down the sidelines). Play a regular game...the 4 neutral players always play with the attacking team (team in possession of the ball). This activity will stimulate combination play.
- 5) **4v4 or 5v5 to Zones** (15 minutes): In a 30yd x 40yd grid, add 30yd x 5yd end zones at each end. Play a 4v4 or 5v5 game to end zones. Each team defends one end zone and attacks the other end zone. If a team successfully plays a ball into the end zone opposite them to a teammate, they receive one point (the player must arrive in the end zone as the ball arrives...NO attacking player is allowed to "hang out" in the end zone). The defending team can only defend in front of their end zone...they cannot enter the end zone that they are defending.
 - a. Coaching Points
 - i. Constantly survey the playing area
 - ii. Develop & keep individual and group shape under the pressures of a game
 - iii. Develop rhythm of play based on what the game presents...increase speed of play at the right time