

Grassroots Coach

www.grassrootscoach.com

Issue 5 — Fall 2006



On the Ball — Again

Here we go again — more than a year later, and hopefully at least a year wiser — we bring back Grassroots Coach.

A big thank you to the support and encouragement we have received from coaches around the world when it comes to the re-birth of the publication. Readers from all over the soccer world told us how much they used and appreciated Grassroots Coach and asked when could they expect another issue.

Well here it is a fall issue soon to be followed by a winter issue for 2006 and the a regular monthly publication schedule starting in early in 2007.

We've streamlined things even more making for a quicker download and giving people what they said they wanted most — sticking for the most part to straight technical content and things that coaches can use every day in their sessions.

In the next few weeks we will be releasing a couple of other products — two books — one a collection of fun games, the second dedicated to small sided games. Hopefully you will find them useful as well.

The regular features of a fun game, small sided game and complete sessions for U8, U10, U12 and U14 coaches as well as goalkeeper practices are still there. Additionally we've added a homework page ideas for one, two or three players to do on their own. The web site is also a bit more user friendly and hopefully people will join in the discussions — a new feature — as well.

If you have any other suggestions please do not hesitate to contact me at editor@grassrootscoach.com — I look forward to hearing from many of you over the coming months.

Bill Ault — Editor / Publisher



*“A handful of patience is worth
a bushel of brains.”*
Dutch Proverb

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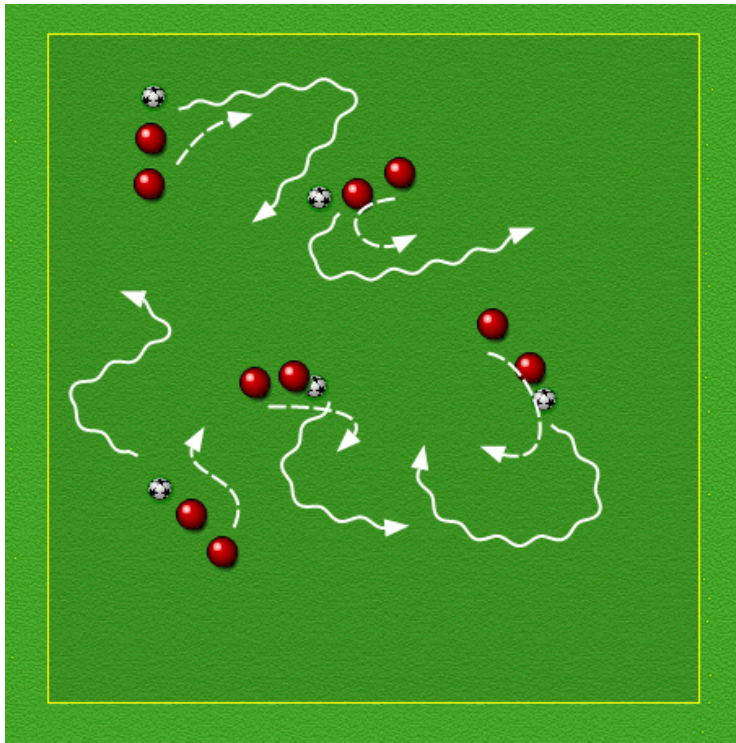
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Follow the Leader

Follow the Leader - A simple dribbling game with that makes for a great warm-up especially for the younger ones.

Level: Beginner, Intermediate (Ages 6-12)

Number of Players: Team, Adjust space to fit.



Cones: 4 to make grid — more for younger players.

Balls: One for each player.

Playing Area: 20 X 20m or larger for older players.

Background: One player is designated as the leader of their group of two or three players.

Set-up: Break team into groups of two or three or even more. The leader dribbles within in grid trying to “lose” players behind them — whatever movements the player makes must be duplicated by the players following. After set time switch the leaders. (See diagram)

The Game Ends:

- After a specified time limit.

Variation: Working in pairs the player following must tag the leader a set number of times, for example ten and then they switch places.

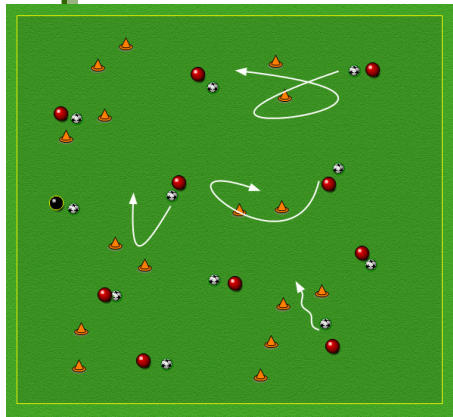
U8 — Session: Control

I. Warm-Up:

About 1 minute for each exercise. Count how many goals you can go through in the time allotted.

1. Dribble through goals.
2. Left foot only — figure 8 using the cones.
3. Right foot only — figure 8
4. Left foot only — around one cone and then through the goal.
5. Right foot only — and then through the goal.
6. Dribble to goal and then pull the ball back just as you are about to go through and find another goal — specify part of foot, sole, inside, outside to use on the pull back.

Time between each exercise can be used for juggling or ball foundation work.
Time: 10-12 minutes.



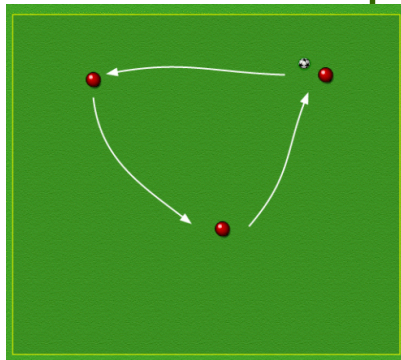
II.. Fun Game: Follow the leader. See fun game on previous page.
Time 5 minutes.

III. Technique Work

Organization: Practice controlling the ball at short distances, using both your right and left foot, in groups of threes. Pass balls along the ground and throw high balls.

Practice: Control the ball with the inside, outside, sole and top of the foot from different directions.

Time: 10 minutes.



Key Points: Feint — Fake Pass

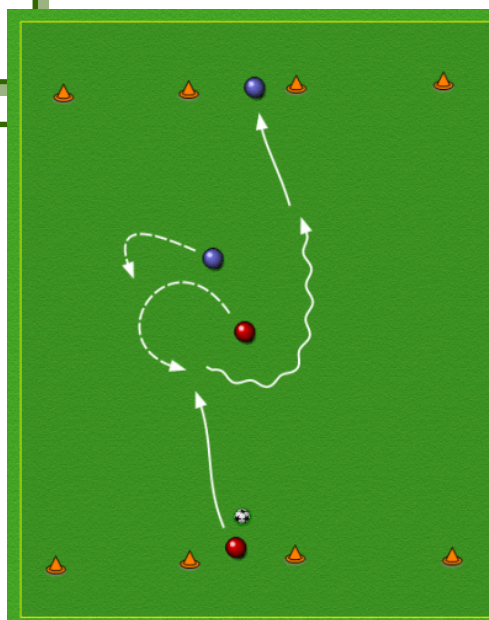
- ◆ Look up before receiving the ball to determine what you will do next.
- ◆ Determine which direction you should receive the ball.
- ◆ Then watch the ball until contact.
- ◆ Receive the ball softly with relaxed muscles.
- ◆ The fewer touches the better.
- ◆ Keep ball close if there is a defender close.

IV. Game to Build Skill

Organization: 1v1 with supporting players. Try to score by passing to your opponent's support player standing between the cones.

Variations: Score on the goal with the support player also serving as goalkeeper. Limit the number of touches to receive to encourage fast and effective control of the ball.

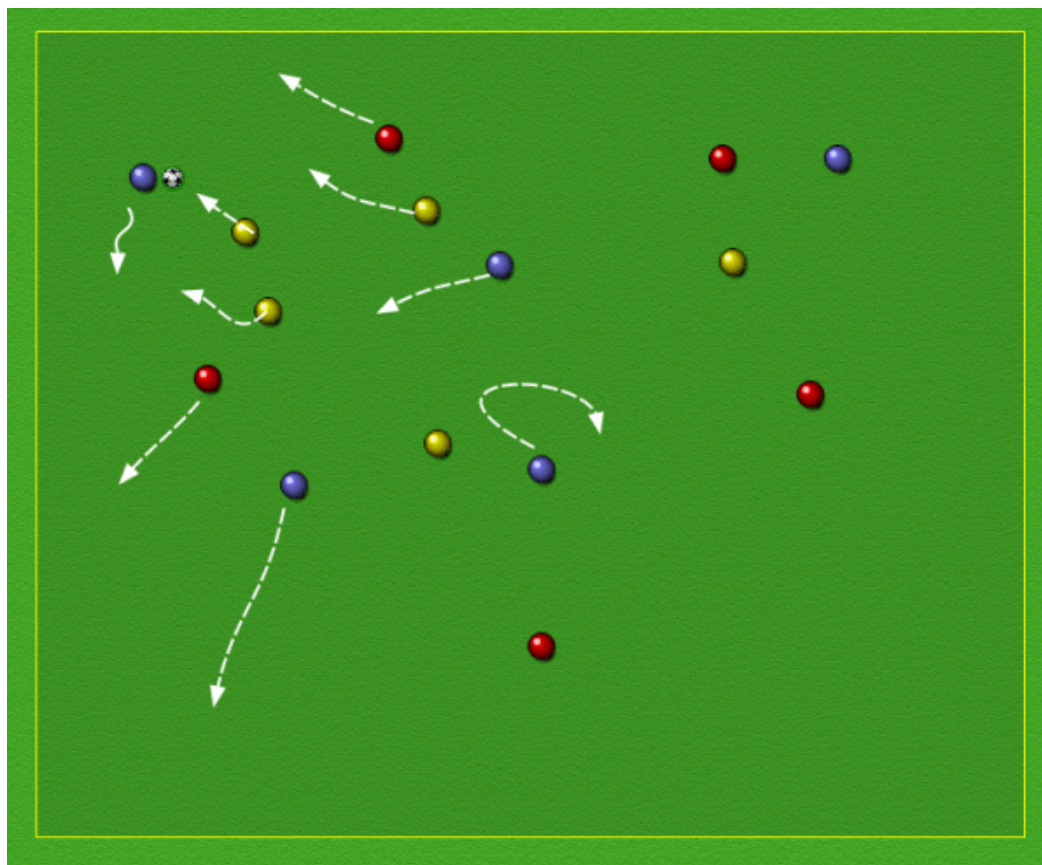
Time: 10-15 minutes



Scrimmage:

Finish with 3v3 or 4v4 game without keepers. Watch for good examples of control and praise players for getting it right.

Small Sided Game of the Month



Three Team Possession

Game Set-Up	Objects of the Game	
<p>Basic Rules and Set-Up:</p> <p>Three teams of equal numbers.</p> <p>Two teams combine to keep possession from the third. Team that loses possession becomes the defenders.</p> <p>Variation: Add cone goals for teams in possession to pass through for goals.</p>	<p>Your Team in Possession:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Control the ball well. ◆ Play quickly, look to pass directly to player in a open position ◆ Look to play the ball away from defensive pressure. ◆ Make runs to support the player with the ball. 	<p>Other Team in Possession:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Keep the ball in sight and in front of you. ◆ Compress the space around the ball by working as a group. ◆ Take away the passing lanes and force play in the direction you want. ◆ See the field, be aware of more than just your direct opponent.

U10 — Session: Possession & Support

I. Warm-Up

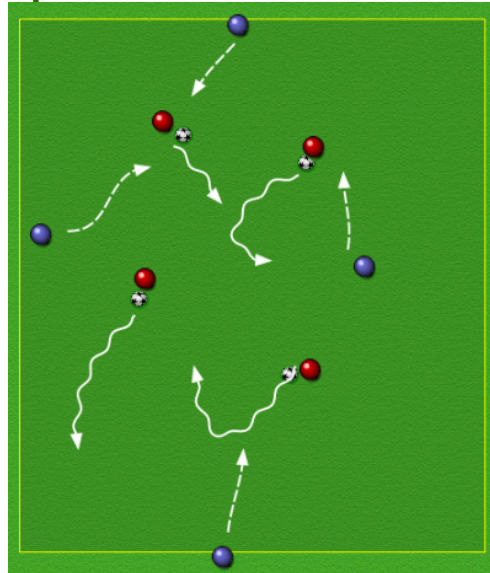
Team Kick-Out.
Groups of 3 or 4. Two groups play together one group inside of grid with a ball each, 2nd group outside of area. On signal group without balls enters grid and tries to kick out Group A's ball. If player loses his ball he supports his team-mates.

Play until all balls are out.

Encourage shielding and dribbling. Win the ball back and find space.

Variation: Add goals when defenders win ball they must score.

Duration: 10 — 15minutes.



Key Points: Feint — Fake Shot

- ◆ Feint with your whole body, using your arms to help.
- ◆ Use your eyes to convince the defender of the direction of your shot.
- ◆ Make your fake look realistic so the defender moves to cover the shot.
- ◆ Instead of shooting push ball to the side and forward diagonally with the outside of your foot.
- ◆ Learn to use the move in both directions using both feet.
- ◆ After your feint you will usually have to increase your speed.

II. Technique Work

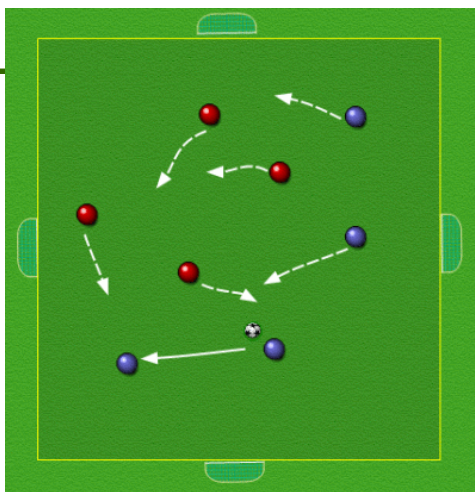
Four Goal Game

Two groups of four. Both groups defend adjacent goals. Teams score by shooting into either of the two goals.

Coaching Points:

Support the player with the ball.
If one goal defended, encourage players to attack the other.
Concentrate on passing technique.

Duration: 10 — 15 minutes



III. Game to Build Skill

4v4 to end lines. The ball cannot be passed forward on open play but from kick-ins only. This condition encourages players to attack defenders and space quickly.

Coaching Point:
Attack the space / defender—coach the mentality into the players.

Duration: 10 –15 minutes.

IV. Scrimmage

4v4 Free scrimmage with or without goalkeepers. Special praise for good attacking play.

Duration: 15 minutes

U12 — Session: Feints — Fake Shot

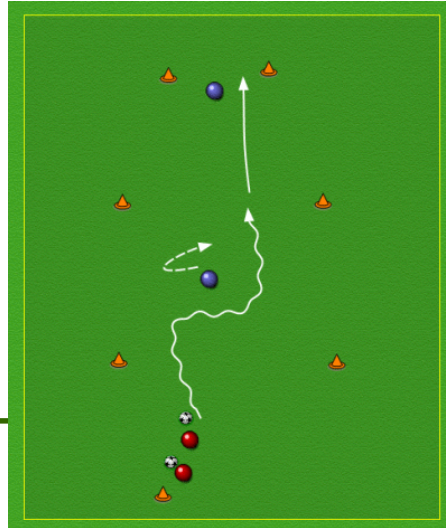
I. Warm-Up

Shark — coach plays the role of the shark. Players dribble in grid while coach attempts to kick their ball out of bounds.

Players can use “shark repellent” by performing one of the feints that they have learned previously.

If kicked out, player performs five juggle movements before coming back in.

Duration: 10 minutes.



Key Points:

Feint — Fake Shot

- ◆ Feint with your whole body, using your arms to help.
- ◆ Use your eyes to convince the defender of the direction of your shot.
- ◆ Make your fake look realistic so the defender moves to cover the shot.
- ◆ Instead of shooting push ball to the side and forward diagonally with the outside of your foot.
- ◆ Learn to use the move in both directions using both feet.
- ◆ After your feint you will usually have to increase your speed.

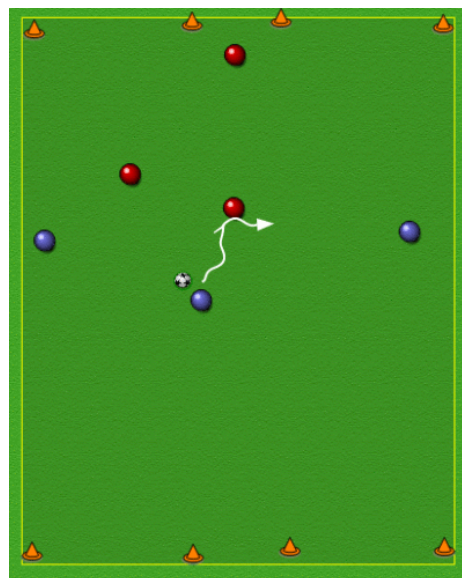
II. Technique Work

Groups of four. Two players as attacker one each as defender and goalkeeper.

Players attack defender and perform fake shot move and then take a shot on goal. Players rotate.

Defenders begin in passive mode and then take more live role as work proceeds.

Duration: 10-15 minutes



III. Game to Build Skill

Play 3v3 where the last man back must play goal when the other team attacks.

Due to the numbers up situation there will be plenty of opportunities to perform the fake shot.

Award an extra point when a goal is scored after a fake shot.

Duration: 10 –15 minutes.

IV. Game to Build Skill

Play in two equal teams with goalkeepers. Practice shooting moves frequently and feel free to award extra points for goals scored after a successful feint.

Use the move to set up a pass to a team-mate. Also try dribbling and getting into a shooting position or getting open after the feint.

Duration: 10 — 15 minutes

V. Scrimmage

Free scrimmage with praise for good attacking moves.

Duration: 15 minutes

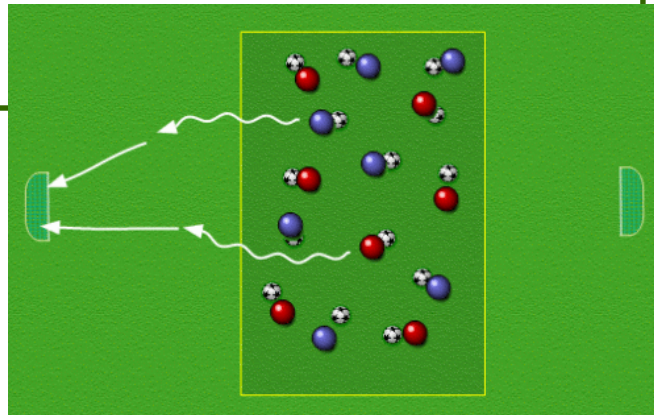
U14 — Session: Finishing Under Pressure

I. Warm-Up

Dribbling warm-up in central area. Various techniques and exercise to get players focused.

Two groups dribbling in central area — each player is given a number when coach shouts number players attack the goal indicated by the coach. First player to score gets point for his team. First team to ten wins.

Duration: 8 — 10 minutes



Key Points: Finishing Under Pressure

- ◆ Keep the ball close to your feet at all times.
- ◆ You may be able to fake the goalkeeper by looking away from where you intend to shoot.
- ◆ Try to relax and concentrate.
- ◆ Try to cut in front, or stay in front of the defender as this forces them to slow down.
- ◆ Try to shoot low and without much of a “wind-up” in able to surprise the keeper.
- ◆ Often the far side of the goal will be open.

II. Technique Work

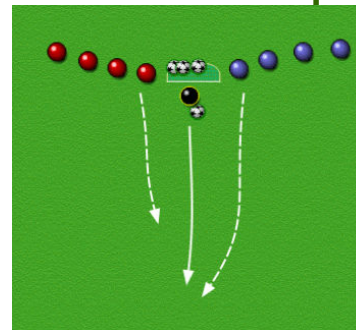
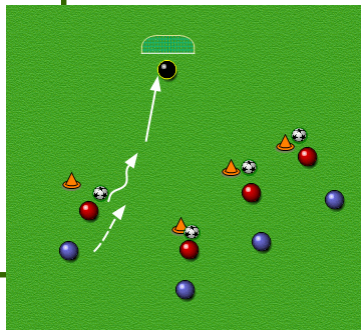
Working in pairs at various angles and distances from the goal. Person with the ball starts the race to goal with their first touch.

Variation: Other starting positions. Play ball through defenders legs (who is facing attacker).

Defender lying on ground.

Defender sitting down.

Duration: 10 — 15



III. Game to Build Skill

Two teams each beside a post. The goalkeeper rolls the ball straight forward — first player from each team races to ball tries to turn and shoot on goal.

Make sure the same players do not always face each other.

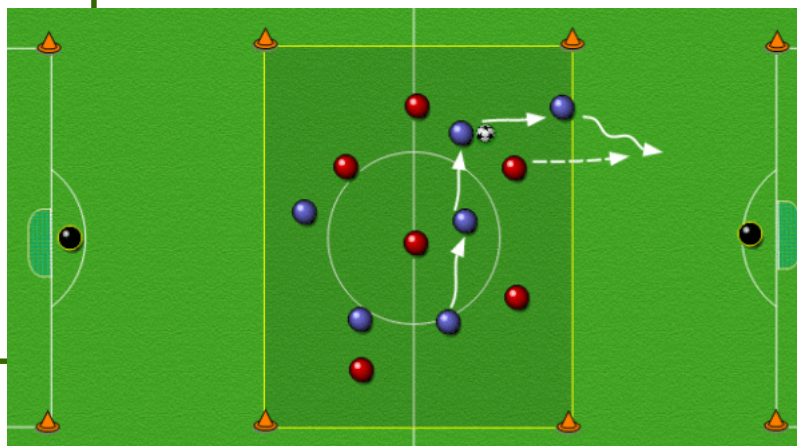
Duration: 15 minutes

IV. Game to Build Skill

Play even teams in central area of field when player can be played through on goal only one defender is allowed to pressure.

Offside rule is in effect outside of central area of field.

Duration 15 — 20 minutes.



5. Scrimmage

Play even sided game with goalkeepers and no conditions.

Duration: 15 — 20 minutes.

Goalkeepers: Breakaways

Unfortunately most developmental coaches do not have the luxury of setting aside an entire training session just for goalkeepers.

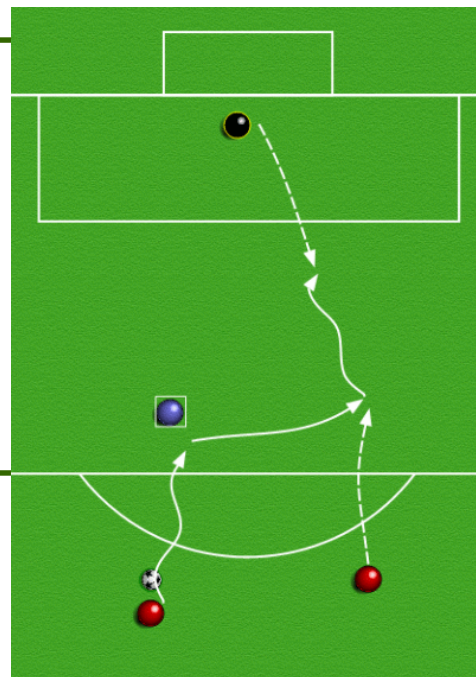
What coaches can do though is dedicate 20 — 30 minutes to goalkeeper training prior to or immediately following a regular training session. Coaches can also make one team exercise focus on the needs of the goalkeepers on a regular basis.

Even better have your assistant coach take responsibility for taking the goalkeepers aside and working with them for a part of each session.

Organization: A goalkeeper practices two or three outfield players and another goalkeeper, who take turns in goal.

The attackers may pass once on the way to goal and this should take place well in advance of the goal.

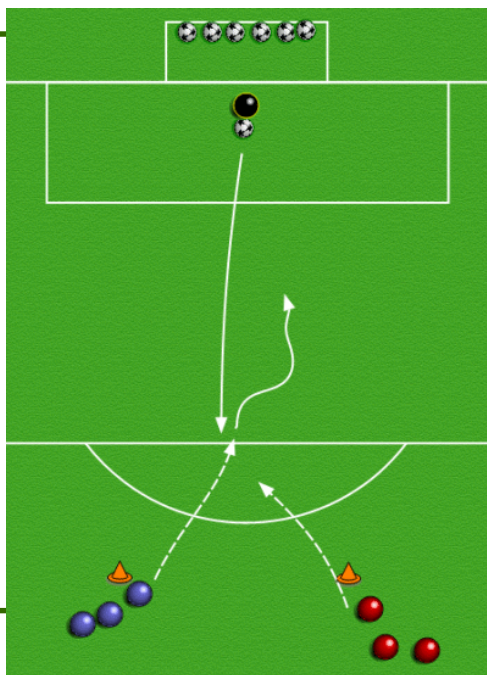
The goalkeeper practices the basics in one on ones.



Organization: The field players stand in two short lines. The goalkeeper rolls the ball out midway between the lines.

The player who wins the ball tries to score, including from rebounds, while the other player tries to intercept. The goalkeeper tries to save. The outfield players compete in two teams.

Practice: Practice shot stopping during 1v1s near the goal.

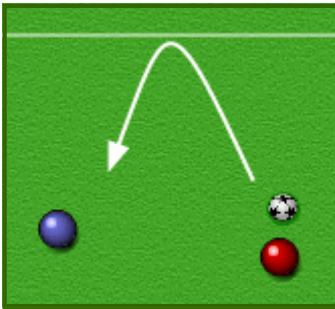


Key Points: Breakaways

- ◆ First make sure you are on the shooting line.
- ◆ Move forward along the shooting line.
- ◆ When you move towards the shooter you move cover the goal better and narrow the angle.
- ◆ Maintain a lower starting position and keep your hands lower and wider apart than normal.
- ◆ Keep both feet in contact with the ground so you move immediately if a shot is taken.
- ◆ Move out when the shooter can neither shoot or dribble due to the position of the ball.
- ◆ Stop in your starting position as soon as the shooter is in a position to shoot.
- ◆ Concentrate entirely on the ball.
- ◆ Try to stay on your feet as long as possible.

Homework: For 1 or 2 Players

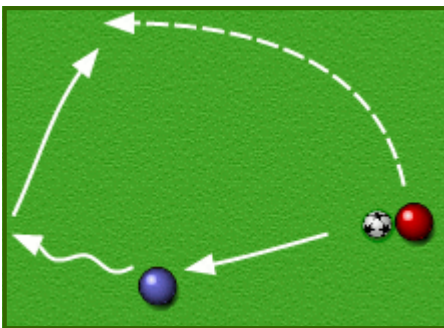
Exercises for 1, 2 or 3 players to do on their own time. Based on the themes of the sessions in this months magazine.



Work on Control

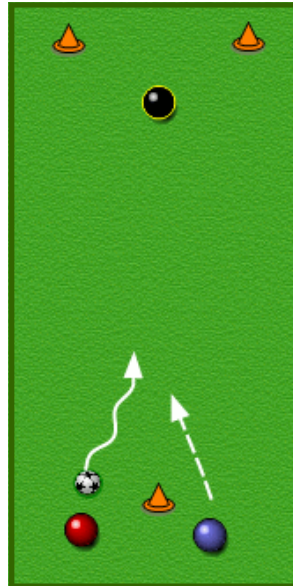
Soccer Raquetball

Play against a wall or board to your friend who controls the ball with their foot and has a limited (one or two) number of touches to return the ball to you.



Work on Passing

Run and pass to each other at various distances. Take care to pass so that your team-mate can control the ball easily.



Finishing

Take turns playing in goal and practicing one on one situations. The person with the ball is allowed start first.

Change goals when a save is made or when a goal is scored.



Work on Feinting

Challenge an object at low speed. Practice your move in both directions and with both feet in your own way.

After your move shoot against wall or into a goal.



Grassroots Coaching Clinics

To arrange for a Grassroots Coaching Clinic for your club or community please contact us at editor@grassrootscoach.com