



YOUTH MODULE COACHING MANUAL



IMPLICATIONS FOR COACHING SOCCER

Time of Training Sessions and Number per work week

- ✓ (U6) 45 Minutes 1 day per week with one game on weekend
- ✓ (U8) 1 Hour 1 to 2 days per week with one game on weekend
- ✓ (U10) 1 Hour 15 to 1 Hour 30 min 1 - 2 days per week and one game

*Note that these are organized training and games; players must be encouraged to do much more on their own with a ball.

Activities in a Training Session

- ✓ U6 Many of short duration, mostly individual type games.
- ✓ U8 Many of short duration using groups of two.
- ✓ U10 Fewer activities, longer periods.

*Types of activities must emphasize individual Technical Development

Nature of Training Session

- ✓ Upbeat
- ✓ Encouraging
- ✓ Stimulating
- ✓ Many short water breaks
- ✓ Very little explanation
- ✓ Short demonstration
- ✓ Lots of player participation
- ✓ Every player has a ball

Some Suggested Absolutes

- ✓ Try to have fun
- ✓ Training sessions, though fun in nature, must have a defined objective
- ✓ Player mistakes are an expected circumstance of our game
- ✓ None of these are appropriate: criticism, threats, blame, yelling, humiliating, ridiculing, and/or showing biases
- ✓ Above all leave the “winning at all cost” notion in the trash

An Approach to the game for a U6 through U8 players

- ✓ Coaches are role models
- ✓ A Coach is one of the four most important influences in a child’s life
- ✓ Players are affected by a coach’s behavior on the sidelines
- ✓ Children play soccer because they want to kick the ball
- ✓ Short verbal blips followed by a chance to move around and touch the ball will get great results
- ✓ Try to let the players have fun and you’ll keep your sanity

Some Recommended Solutions

- ✓ A key to being a successful youth soccer coach (does not mean winning) is to draw upon your life experiences
- ✓ If you grew up playing sports of any kind, you possess some knowledge of good and bad coaching technique
- ✓ Don't place yourself above the boys and girls
- ✓ Be organized, but not rigid, that could lead to boredom

Things a coach should know

Don't

- ✓ Become frustrated
- ✓ Yell or intimidate
- ✓ Be afraid to adjust your training activities if the children aren't enjoying them

Do

- ✓ Keep players active with the ball
- ✓ Vary the activities based on the attention span
- ✓ Spread positive reinforcement to all players, not just the starts
- ✓ Enjoy yourself

General Human Nature Concepts

- ✓ Understand why children play
- ✓ Every child has different needs
- ✓ Needs range from attention to development and self confidence
- ✓ Don't forget love, discipline, the desire to improve, friendships, etc
- ✓ Try to determine each child's needs and then attempt to fill at least part of it
- ✓ Use what works for you and lose what didn't work

How do you become more educated?

- ✓ Try to have fun
- ✓ Training sessions, though fun in nature, must have a defined objective
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Developing your Coaching Philosophy

- ✓ Winning VS. Losing
- ✓ Teaching skill even though you are likely to lose some games to teams that rely on play physically. The skilled players will be better in the long run.
- ✓ Total development vs. single position improvement
- ✓ Relationship with parents and spectators to players, referees and opponents
- ✓ Playing possession soccer vs. kick and run
- ✓ Development of all players on your team
- ✓ Educate your parents to understand they should not yell at players, not to applaud bad habits, not to yell at referees and opposing players and most of all to de-emphasize winning and losing

The Training Session

- ✓ Players should have a good time during the training sessions
- ✓ Players should spend the majority of their time in technical development
- ✓ Players should touch the ball as much as possible
- ✓ Some portion of each training session should emphasize shooting/finishing
- ✓ Some portion of each training session should deal with goalkeeping
- ✓ At this early age, all players should have the opportunity to practice goalkeeping

What should the training sessions consist of?

- ✓ Every session should begin with a warm-up
- ✓ The progression we should use is:
- ✓ Fundamental = low pressure
- ✓ Next we can add the following:
- ✓ The pressure of time (doing it faster)
- ✓ The pressure of space (doing it in smaller area)
- ✓ The pressure of an opponent with restrictions (replicate the game)
- ✓ Each training session should finish with two goals and no restrictions i.e. a scrimmage game

What is Player Development?

- Activities for the children's participation that focuses on the involvement with the ball to ensure fun and enjoyment
- Players exposed to playing every position
- One player one ball
- Activities designed to maximize the number of touches by each player at practice
- Rules and equipment modification according to the players age group
- Activities designed to promote thinking, not just doing drills
- Emphasize player development, de-emphasize winning and losing. The philosophy of "player development" needs to be conveyed to all players and parents

Role of the Coach

- Serve as a facilitator (set up conditions and environment for learning)
- Players need to have fun and receive positive feedback
- Coach must be enthusiastic
- Practices should be conducted in the spirit of enjoyment and learning
- Activities need to be geared toward achieving success
- A Positive Role Model
- Demonstrates respect for team members, opponents, referees, parents, spectators, and opposing coaches
- To have a responsibility to the game itself
- Understands who they are coaching
- Children are not defined by chronological age only; children mature and develop at their own pace
- Treat each child as an individual
- Not all children participate for the same reasons
- As a teacher (“The game is a great teacher”)

The Three main areas of a practice session

Step one a fundamental warm up

- Your age appropriate warm up should prepare the players both physically and mentally for the training session
- The warm up must incorporate a technical or tactical element and both static and ballistic stretching

Step two individual activities

- As appropriate for the age, although this may be addressed during the warm up period or within the small group activities. The need for this portion of practice will depend upon the ability of the players

Step three individual activities

- This area includes small-sided games that will lead into larger group games
- Small group activities or games will provide a majority of your coaching sessions
- Large group/team activities (This does not mean 11v11 games) will be situations that require you playing 6v6 or 6v7 (numbers up or down etc)

Team Administration

How to evaluate yourself as a good coach

- ✓ A good coach is someone who knows that winning is wonderful but not get caught up in this aspect
- ✓ A good coach is someone who gets to practice on time and sets up and stays after to be sure every player has a safe ride home
- ✓ A good coach is someone who makes sure that everyone gets to play
- ✓ A good coach is someone who can help a child learn and allow players to make mistakes
- ✓ A good coach is someone who helps a child to develop ability and confidence that sometimes did not exist before
- ✓ A good coach is someone the player will remember long after the last game has ended and the season is over and them wanting to play another season

Principles of Coaching Youth Soccer

1. Developmentally Appropriate
2. Clear – Concise – Correct
3. Information (Brevity – Clarity – Relevance)
4. Simple to Complex
5. Safe and Appropriate Training Area
6. Decision Making
7. Implications of the Game
8. Elements of the Game

Principles of Coaching Youth Soccer

- Patience
- Sense of Humor
- Generosity
- Common Sense
- Mature Outlook and Disposition
- Professional approach to training and game preparation
- Leadership and Self-Confidence
- Determination
- Humility

PRACTICE SESSION PLAN

(1) Warm up

10 – 20
MINUTES

- Movements that get the blood pumping
- Include the ball
- Stretching
- Preparing for demands of the game
- Group/equipment organization to move into next activity

(2) 1st Activity (s)

15 – 25
MINUTES

- 1 ball per player/partners
- Technical skill development
- Challenge and success

(3) 2nd Activity (s)

15 – 25
MINUTES

- Game related activities
- Direction
- Large Group

(4) Final Activity

10 – 20
MINUTES

- The Game!
- Freedom
- Opportunities to score goals

TIPS FOR GOOD PRACTICES

1. Kids love playing games & keeping score. **In practice, try to use games & not drills.**
2. Everyone should stay active & participate. Avoid lines.
3. Maximize "touches" on the ball. At least 100 touches per practice for each player.
4. Teach proper technique and emphasize games that practice technique or simulate play or playing situations.
5. Run games by keeping time (e.g., so they last 1, 3, or 5 minutes) or by keeping score (e.g., first to 3, 12, etc.).
6. Praise hustle, improvement and a good attitude. Measure each player's performance by his or her personal improvement and effort, and not by comparing them to someone else. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem.
7. A good game must be easy & quick to set up and should be simple to explain and manage. If you are spending too much time on set up or instruction, simplify it.
8. If it's not fun, it's not a good game.
9. You must have at least one ball per player.
10. Avoid general scrimmaging for more than 10 minutes per hour. In general scrimmages players don't get enough touches on the ball, the weaker players tend to get the fewest touches and bad habits can be reinforced because players tend to do the same things they have always done. If you scrimmage, do so without a goalkeeper.
11. Adopt this philosophy: **Keep it simple, keep them active, keep it fun & at least 100 touches per player per practice".**