

Boise Timbers Thorns
YOUTH LEAGUE

“PREPACKAGED PRACTICES”

MANUAL

The following pages contain TEN "prepackaged" practices. Each encompasses an entire session's worth of activities, going from exercises to games. The coach may discover that she/he does not use every activity during a practice/season, but will provide an actual season for most and/or a foundation of activities for all.

The rationale behind providing the "prepackaged" practices was based upon the following conclusions concerning Youth League coaches. Many coaches: (a) reluctantly accepted a coaching position; (b) do not have the time to design practices; (c) had difficulties enjoying the coaching experience; and (d) had players who were negatively affected as a result. Because of these factors many coaches did not return for a second year of coaching.

If these conclusions are true for only 10% of Youth coaches, then it might be helpful to provide "prepackaged" practices. These predesigned practices might enable those coaches to run higher quality practices, to enjoy the coaching experience, might allow greater enjoyment for the players, and cause both to return for year after year in soccer.

Although not every exercise and game in the manual may be used, every exercise and game utilized in the TEN "prepackaged" sections helps lay a foundation or actual seasonal plan for all.

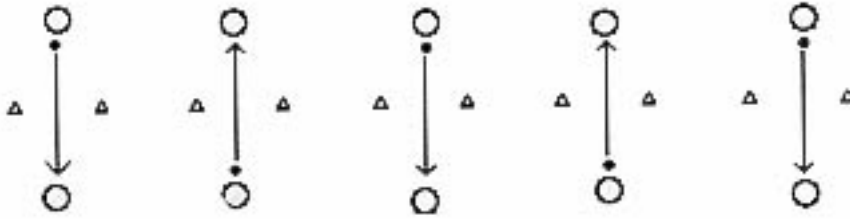
Realize that some of the dialogue that accompanies the diagrams in the "Ready-Made" practices has been abbreviated to fit the practice into a two-three page format. The activities, particularly those used in the first 25% of practice time, are explained in greater length in the section on exercises.

Feel free to take advantage of the "prepackaged" practices. The bottom line is these are for both coach, and players, to enjoy the game.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #1

Stage 1a: Exercise: Back and Forth



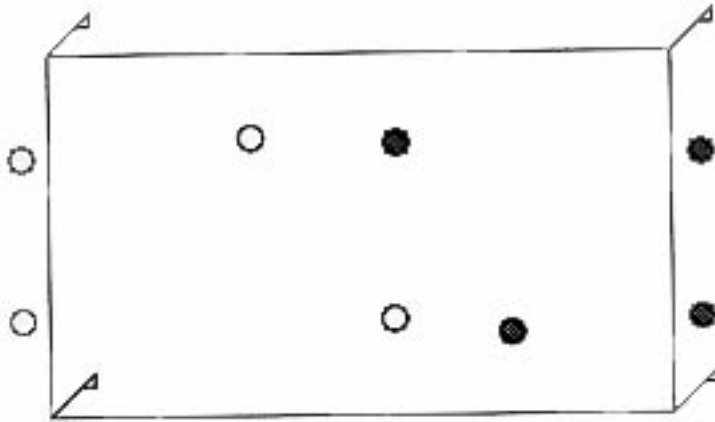
Working on striking (passing, shooting, etc.) and receiving, "Back and Forth" simply provides each player with a number of repetitions.

Players are instructed to visualize the cones as being small goals. Each should stop the ball before striking it back to a partner.

Upon receiving the ball, a good surface to teach is that of the inside, making sure to keep the foot about an inch above the ground, toe slightly up, heel slightly down. Outside is another lesson, making sure to turn the toe inside towards the plant foot.

The striking motion may consist of inside, laces, or outside foot.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Beat the End Men



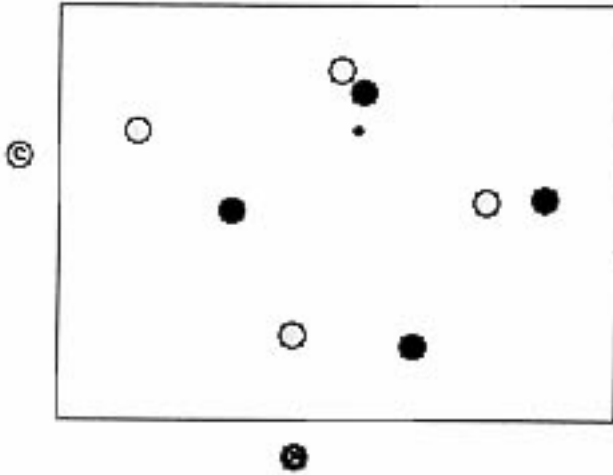
Two players from each team guard an endline. These are "end-men." Two players from each team are also inside the grid playing 2 vs. 2.

To score, a player on the inside must play a ball past the opposing end-men. This ball can be no higher than the knees. End-men may move up and down the line to defend the endline, but cannot come inside the grid. End-men may pass to teammates inside the grid.

Rotate end-men every two to three minutes.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

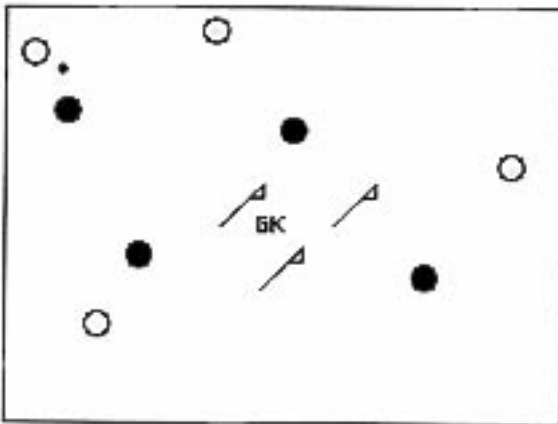
PRACTICE #1 CONTINUED...Stage II: Game : Hit the Moving Target Game



Hit the Moving Target Game

- Notice that the coaches (© and 0) are outside the field of play
- There are two teams, and a coach wearing the same colors as one team
- Teams score by playing a pass to the coach wearing their color
- Coaches should move around the perimeter of the field; do not stay stationary ; make the players find you
- If two coaches are not available, a player can be used as a moving target

Stage III : Game : Triangle-Goal Game



Triangle-Goal Game

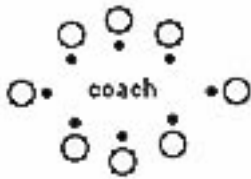
- two teams attack a three-sided goal -GK defends all three sides
- if ball goes through, it is alive on the other side
- if GK saves. throw it to open space

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #2

Stage 1a : Exercise: Can You Do This?



Notice the players have come around the coach, and each with a ball in hand. The coach demonstrates a particular skill - such as dribbling with the outside of the foot, toe pointed in - and asks, "Can you do this?"

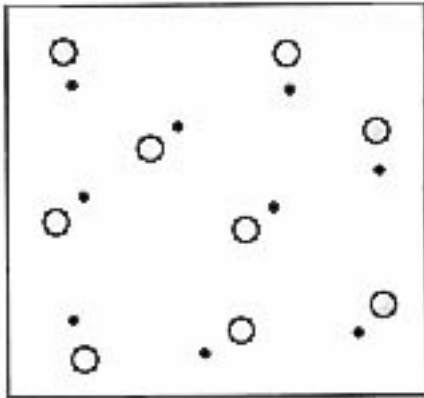
One at a time, the players hand the ball to the coach, who tosses it out about 20 yards. The players run to the ball, and bring it back using the skill requested. Balls are tossed in different directions, scattering them, so that space is available upon return.

One skill might be to toss the ball high so that it bounces, and the players must run through it with a body part. Another might be that the first touch is back towards the coach. Another could be a variety of foot surfaces on the dribble.

Allow the players to be creative by asking, "Who can show us another way of bringing it back?"

Stage 1b : Exercise : Dribble in the Square

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



As the players dribble inside the grid, the coach can have them play:

Go for a Drive: When coach says 'red light,' players stop. Yellow light (most common) means dribble under control. Green light means accelerate. Coach can add turns, moves, etc.

Follow the Leader: Leader runs, follower dribbles. Dribbler must keep ball at feet while chasing partner. If dribbler can tag partner, dribbler gets a point. After 30 seconds, switch.

Bodypart Stop: While players dribble, the coach calls out a part of the body to stop the ball, beginning with the easiest first: cleats (bottom of foot), knee, elbow, head, chest, etc.

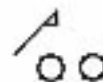
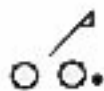
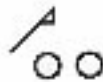
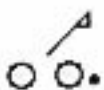
Color Dribble: Parents, coaches, or players (outside of the grid) are given different colored shirts. Players dribble inside grid; when a color is called, dribble to that color.

Tunnel Dribble: Tunnels (2 people holding hands) move around inside or outside the square. When the command "tunnel" is given, players dribble through as many tunnels as possible.

Speed Dribble and Slow Down: The command 'speed dribble,' means accelerate, while maintaining ball control (3-5 seconds). When they hear command 'slow down,' decelerate.

PRACTICE #2 - CONTINUED...

Stage 1c: Exercises : Skill Relays

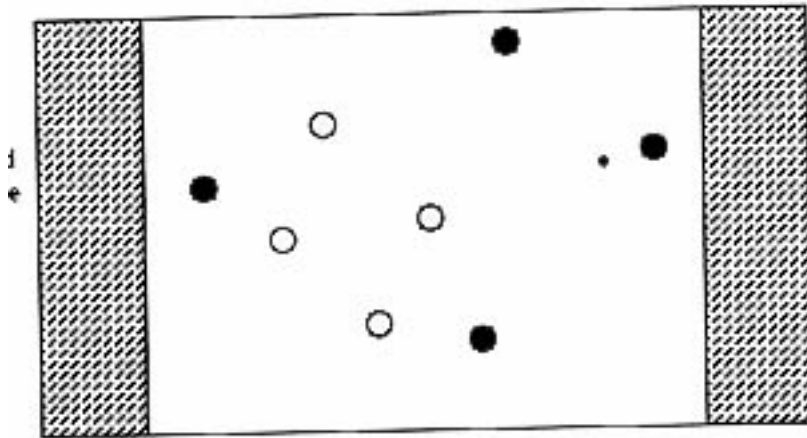


"Relays" work on dribbling skills. Two teams compete. Far end leaves when teammate arrives.

First round might be ping-pong (between legs with inside of both feet); second round, roll with bottom of foot while facing sideways; third round, outside of feet only (toe turned inside); fourth round, every step must be a touch; fifth round, roll it while moving backwards?

Stage II : Game : End Zone Game

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



End Zone Game

teams attack different ends

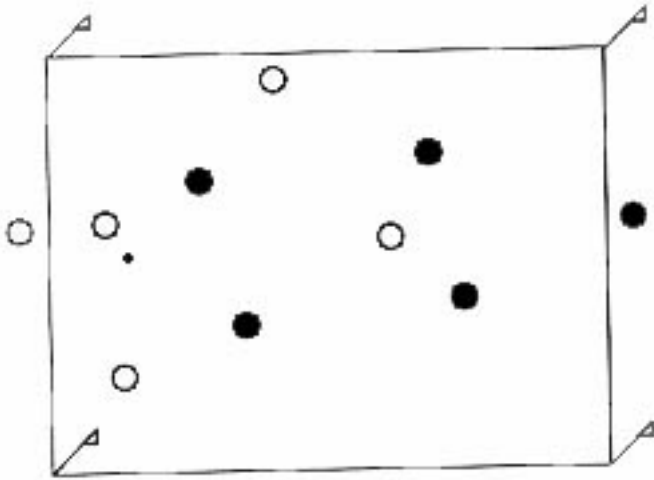
goal scored when ball is passed to teammate who rushes into the "end zone" to control the pass

or, goal could be awarded by dribbling into end zone

or, goal could be awarded by stopping ball dead in end zone

PRACTICE #2 - CONTINUED - Stage III : Game : Beat the End-Man Game

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



Beat the End-Man Game

In this example, one end-man guards the end line for each team; this could be an adult, the coaches, or additional players. Also, more than one end-man could be used.

Goals are scored when the attacking team passes the ball over the end line past the end-man

Teams attack one end line and defend one end line

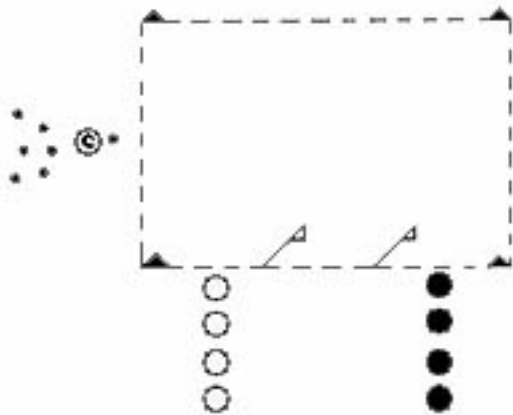
The coach can add two end-men per end to make the game more challenging

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage: **“LET THEM PLAY”**

Small-sided goals; score below knee height; even teams.

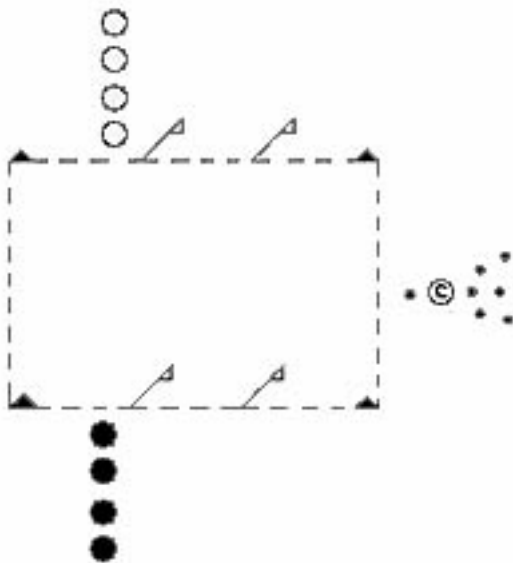
PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage 1a : Exercise : Bring It Home



Behind the poles of each goal is a line of players. When the coach plays the ball into the square, the first two race to get the ball. Whoever wins possession tries to score on the small goal.

Stage 1b : Exercise : 1 vs. 1 to Goal

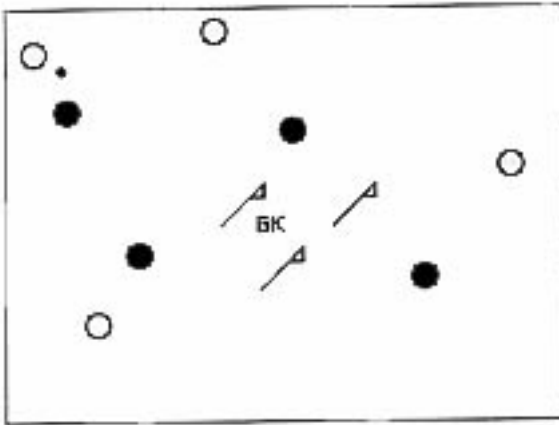


Behind the poles of each goal is a line of players. When the coach plays the ball into the square, the first two race to get the ball. Whoever wins possession tries to score on the opponent's small goal.

PRACTICE #3 CONTINUED...

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage II: Game: The Triangle Goal Game



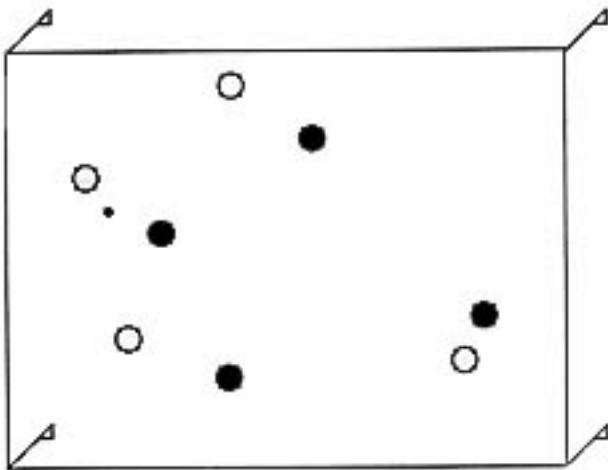
Triangle-Goal Game

two teams attack a three-sided goal -GK defends all three sides

if ball goes through, it is alive on the other side

if GK saves. throw it to open space

Stage III : Game : Line Soccer



Line Soccer

light shirts attack one direction, dark shirts the other -teams score by stopping the ball on the end line

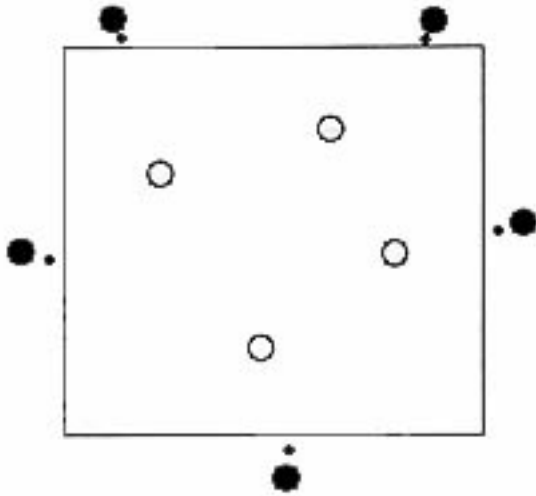
Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

PRACTICE #4

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

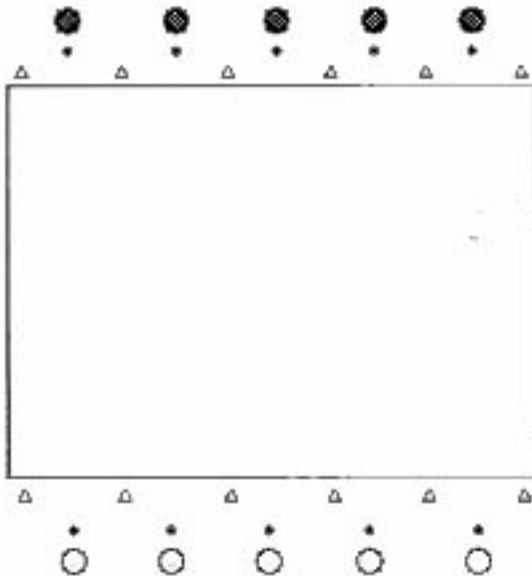
Stage 1a : Exercise : Inside-Out



Working on passing & receiving skills, contains "servers" (outside) and "receivers" (inside). "Receivers" deal with a ball being served. Receivers cannot receive a pass from the same

player two times in a row. They must "touch and move," going from server to server, in no pattern. The types of serves can be varied. Receivers can either use "one-touch," where they give the ball back on the first touch, or "two-touch," controlled then back. Distances can be varied.

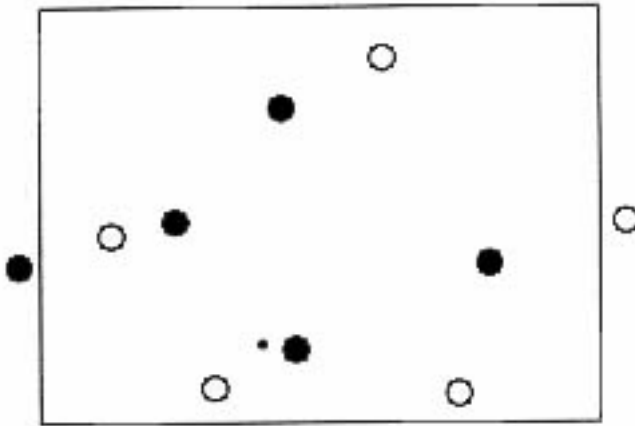
Stage 1b: Shoot-out



The objective here is to knock down the opponent's cones before they knock down yours. Blocking is not allowed. Down time should be next to none, as players grab available balls and strike them back quickly. Coaches praise good form and offer demonstrations for assimilation.

PRACTICE #4 CONTINUED...Stage II : Game : Targetman Game

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



Targetman Game

both teams try to work ball into teammate on the end, the "target"

target can and should move laterally to get open

target cannot move vertically onto the field

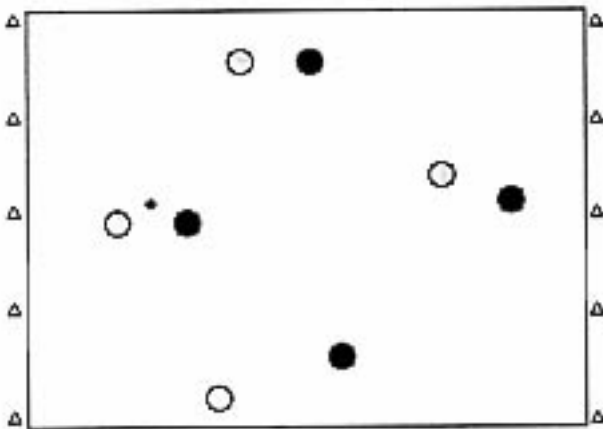
target can be changed periodically, or with whoever plays pass into him

teaches players to play to "feet" downfield

Stage III: Game: Knock Down the Cones (Or Hit the Soccer Balls) Game

Knock-Down-the-Cones-Game

Object is to knock over all of the opponents cones with the ball idea is to attack the cones that are least defended



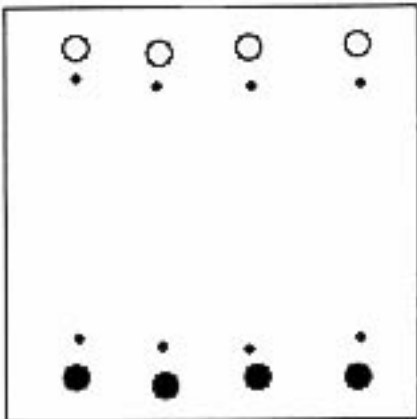
Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

PRACTICE #5

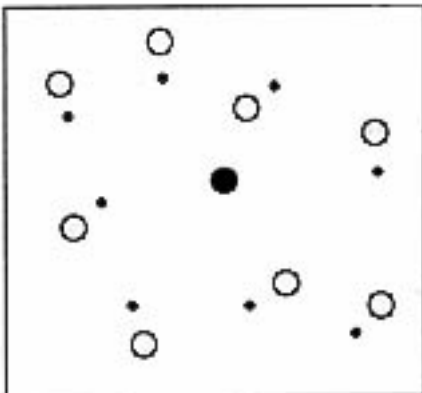
PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage 1a: Exercise: Passing Ships



The object is, once the coach gives the signal to start, for each player to stop the ball on the other team's starting line. The team that can do this first is the winner.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Alligator

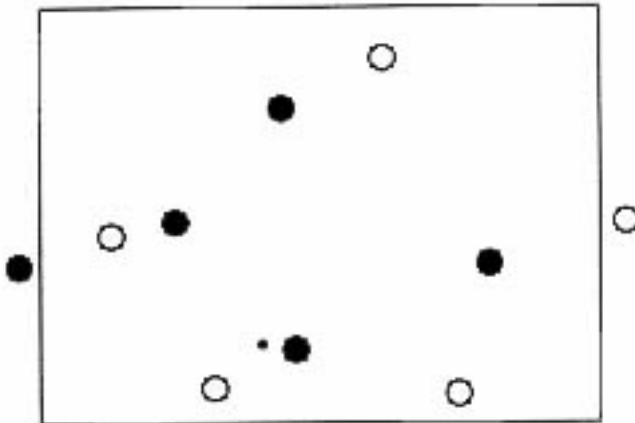


The idea is for each player to keep his ball inside the grid, while moving away from the 'alligator.' The alligator, or the one defender, tries to send any ball out of the square possible. The last person to remain in the square with the ball is the winner.

PRACTICE #5 - CONTINUED...

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage II: Game: Targetman Game



Targetman Game

both teams try to work ball into teammate on the end, the "target"

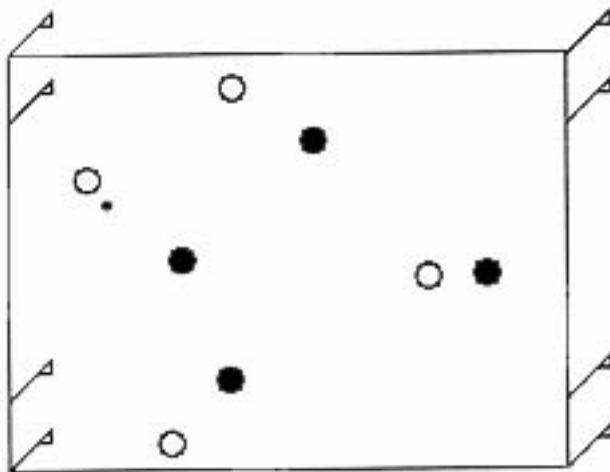
target can and should move laterally to get open

target cannot move vertically onto the field

target can be changed periodically, or with whoever plays pass into him

teaches players to play to "feet" downfield

Stage III: Game: The Four Corner Game



Four Corner Game

Two teams

Each team attacks one direction

A goal can be scored through the flags in either corner, i.e. each team can score on 2 goals

If one goal is well defended, it means that the other goal is probably available

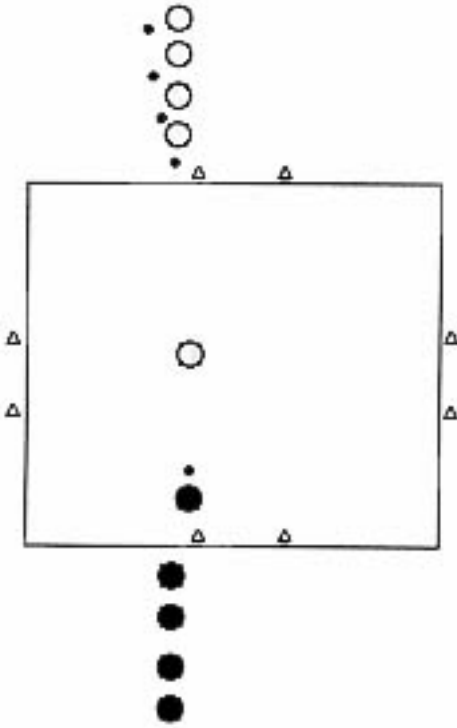
This game fosters the decision about where, when, and why to attack

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

PRACTICE #6

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage 1a: Exercise: Lateral & Vertical Gates



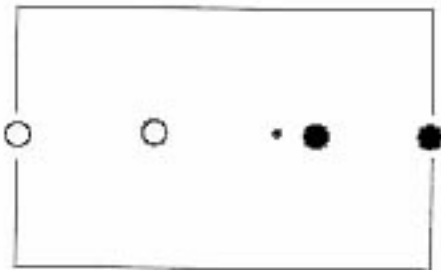
Notice there are four 'gates.' Notice also that only one line of players has a ball. A point is

scored only by dribbling thru the cones - the gates. Dribble through, no shots.

A player steps out, plays a ball to a player from the other line. This exercise can then progress through three stages: (1) receive the ball and try to dribble thru one of the two lateral gates; (2) try to dribble through the lateral gates [1 point] or the vertical gates [3 points] on far end; (3) try to dribble through only the far end vertical gate. At any time, if defense steals ball, defense dribbles thru gate.

Serves may be varied - air balls, rolls, bounces, etc.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Thru the Arches

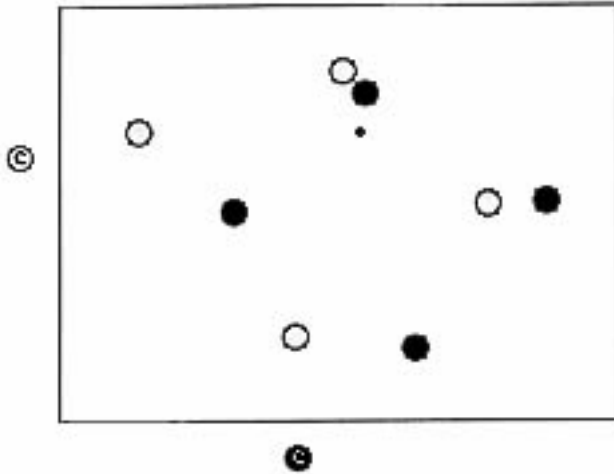


The players on the end of the grid have their legs spread open, and serve as goals. The players in the middle play 1 vs. 1 and try to score by pushing the ball thru the "arches" on the other end.

"Thru the arches" can also incorporate 2 vs. 2.

PRACTICE #6 CONTINUED...Stage II : Game : Hit the Moving Target Game

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



Hit the Moving Target Game

Notice that the coaches (ã and ©) are outside the field of play

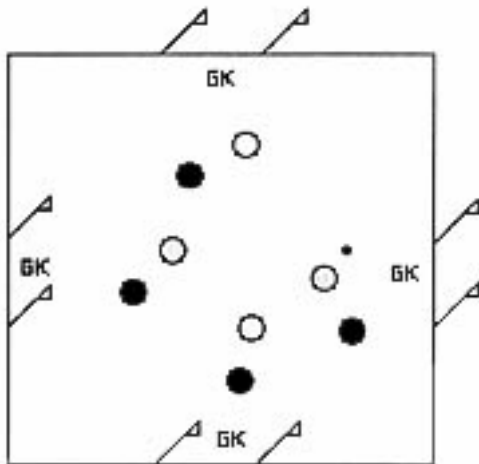
There are two teams, and a coach wearing the same colors as one team

Teams score by playing a pass to the coach wearing their color

Coaches should move around the perimeter of the field; do not stay stationary; make the players find you

If two coaches are not available, a player can be used as a moving target

Stage III : Game : 3-6-9-12 O'Clock Game



3-6-9-12 O'clock Game

in reality, 3 teams: the light shirts, the dark shirts, and the temporary keepers

GK's switch out every 3 to 5 minutes

one team attacks the goals located at 3 and 6 o'clock -other team attacks goals located at 9 and 12 o'clock

notice that the field is square

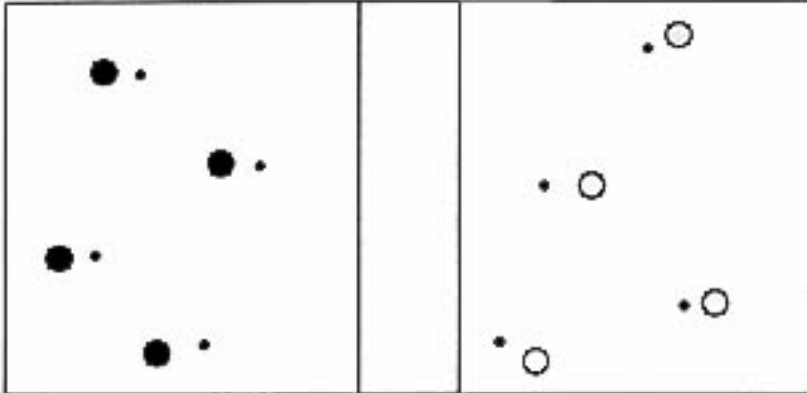
Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #7

Stage 1a: Exercise: Clean Your Yard!

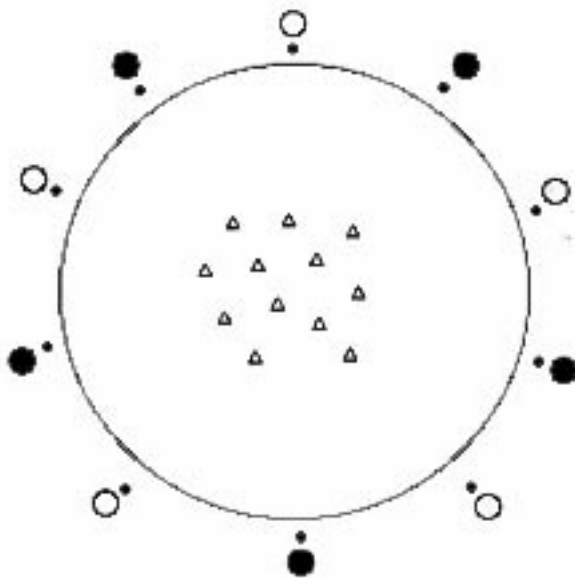


What would happen if lots of soccer balls were left out in the front yard, and mom came home? Obviously, the yard would have to be cleaned!

The team that wins is the team with the least amount of soccer balls left in their yard after one minute. Send them to the other yard!

This exercise works on striking. The middle zone is about 5 yards wide, while the end zones closer to 20. If a ball does not make it across the middle, go get it. Coaches help keep the balls in.

Stage 1b : Exercise : The Holy Grail



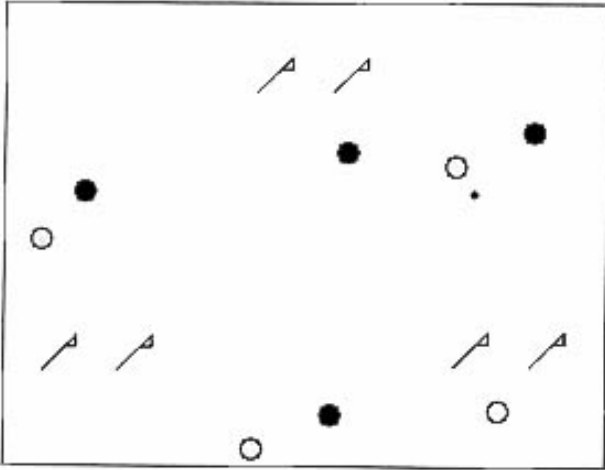
Divide the players into two teams. Both teams spread around the circle with a ball. Notice the teams are intermixed. When signal is given, players strike the balls at the cones (the small kind that fall over when hit with a ball). Team that wins is team that knocks down last cone - the "Holy Grail."

This exercise works on striking. Coaches, keep a good eye out for form - is ankle locked? Is plant foot pointed at target? Is center of gravity lowered? Is foot touching the ball center?

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #7 CONTINUED...

Stage II : Game : Pass Thru Game



Pass Thru Game - Two teams

The goals are approximately five feet wide

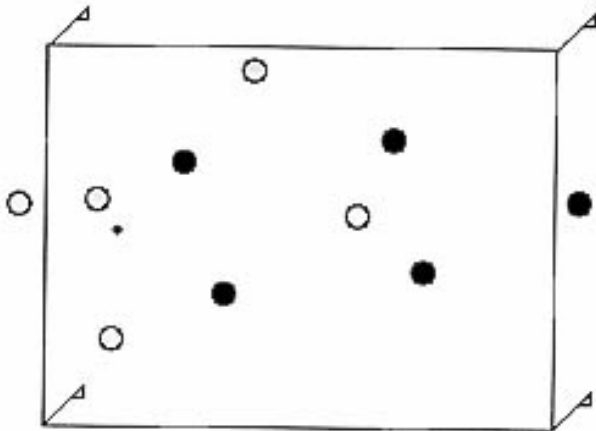
One point is given for passing the ball through the big goals to a teammate on the other side

No team may score two consecutive goals on the same goal; must go to another goal to score the next goal

Players are allowed to go behind the goals

The distance between each goal is approximately 30 yds.

Stage III : Game : Beat the End-Man Game



Beat the End-Man Game - Two teams

In this example, one end-man guards the end line for each team; this could be an adult, the coaches, or additional players. Also, more than one end-man could be used.

Goals are scored when the attacking team passes the ball over the end line past the end-man

Teams attack one end line and defend one end line

The coach can add two end-men per end to make the game more challenging

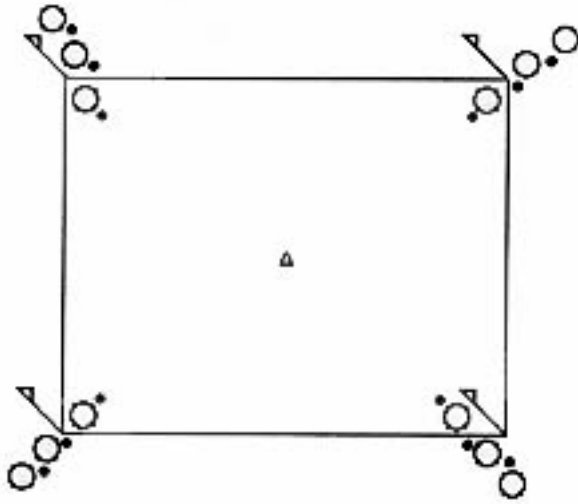
If using only one end man, the field can be made narrower to better challenge offense

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #8

Stage 1a: Exercise: Cone & Back

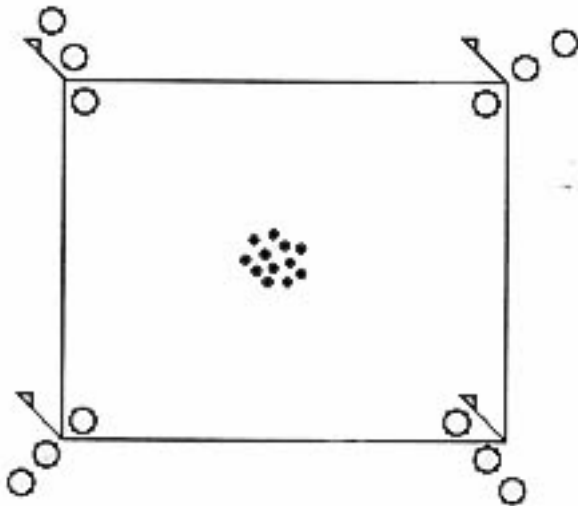


The first player from each line dribbles towards the cone. Once reaching the cone, each player turns and dribbles back.

The exercise is designed to work on controlling body and ball, particularly teaching the players how to turn while on the dribble.

A number of surfaces can be used to turn the ball: the bottom of the foot, the outside, the inside, the heel, a fake kick and then pull back, behind the plant foot (Cruyff), fake one way and then turn the other, etc.

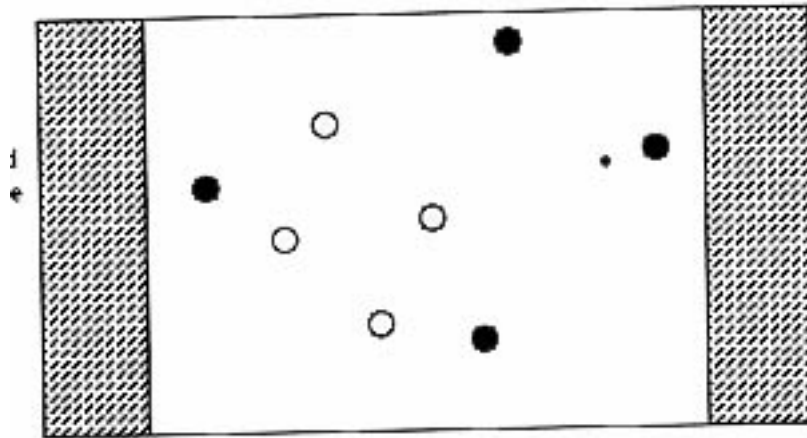
Stage 1b: Exercise: Easter Egg Hunt



This exercise can be done in conjunction with the "Cone & Back" exercise, as they are very similar. Players can either dribble in and leave the balls in the middle, or, as is diagrammed below, they can come to the middle to retrieve a ball. Again, the surface of the foot that is used both in dribbling, leaving it, or turning - can be designated.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #8 CONTINUED - Stage II : Game : End Zone Game



End Zone Game

Two teams

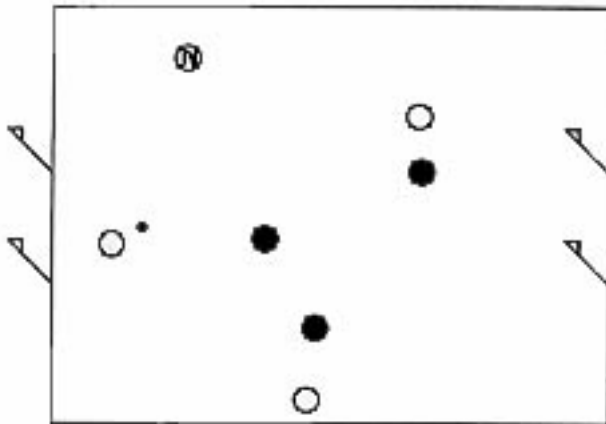
Both teams attack one direction

A goal is scored when the ball can be passed to a teammate standing in the end zone; this teammate cannot be stationed there; he must be in the field like everyone else, but must rush in to get the ball

Or, a goal could be awarded by dribbling into this zone

Or, a goal could be awarded to those who can stop the ball 'dead' in this zone

Stage III: Game: 3 vs. 3 + 1 Game



3 vs. 3 + 1 Game

the neutral player plays with whatever team has the ball

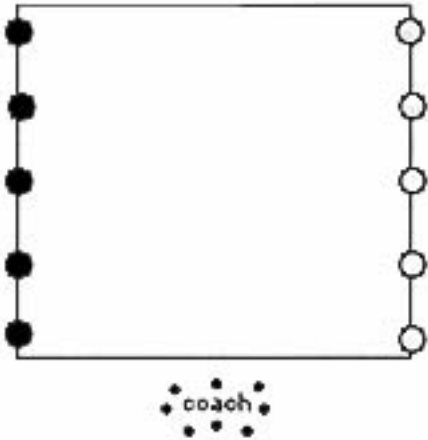
in reality, the game is always 4 vs. 3

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage - "LET THEM PLAY"

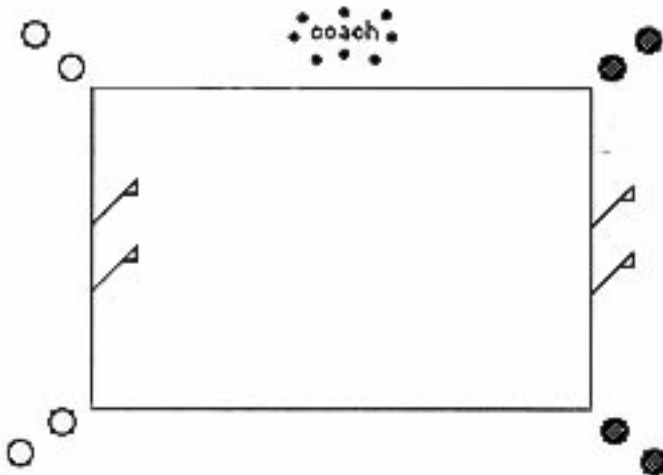
PRACTICE #9

Stage 1a: Exercise: Farm Animals Escape!



This exercise is hilarious! Divide the players into two teams, and set them up accordingly. Assign one player, each team, to be an animal - a cow, duck, sheep, pig, and horse, for instance. When each player receives his assignment, he must make the sound that animal makes, i.e. a duck 'quacks,' cow 'moos,' etc. When the coach calls out "SHEEP!," he sends a ball into the grid. The two players assigned sheep (one from each team) make the 'baaaaaa' sound, and rush into the grid to play 1 vs. 1, trying to score by playing a ball past the other players, who guard the end line. When the ball goes out, they clear out, and the coach calls another animal. The coach can call 2 vs. 2, if desired. Change animals periodically.

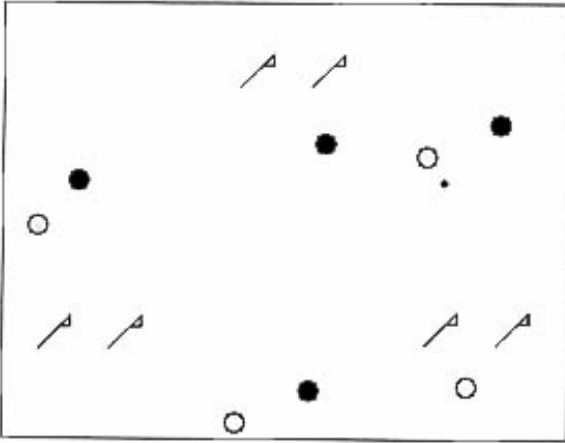
Stage 1b: Exercise: Scram!



Notice players occupy four corners of the field - greys on one end, white shirts on other. When the coach plays a ball in, one player from each line enters, making it 2 vs. 2. As soon as the ball is out, the coach calls out "SCRAM!," and the players leave the grid. Balls are served in quickly, and players asked to be ready. Small goals have no keepers.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

PRACTICE #9 CONTINUED...Stage II : Game : Pass Thru Game



Pass Thru Game - Two teams

The goals are approximately five feet wide

One point is given for passing the ball through the big goals to a teammate on the other side

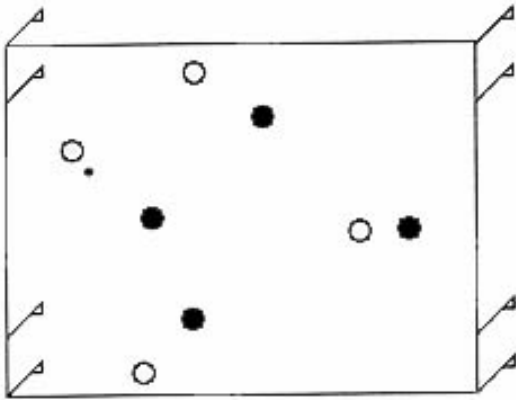
No team may score two consecutive goals on the same goal; must go to another goal to score the next goal

Players are allowed to go behind the goals

The distance between each goal is approximately 30 yards.

Stage III: Game: The Four Corner Game

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



Four Corner Game - Two teams

Each team attacks one direction -A goal can be scored through the flags in either corner, i.e. each team can score on 2 goals

If one goal is well defended, it means that the other goal is probably available

This game fosters the decision about where, when, and why to attack

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage - LET THE KIDS PLAY - COACH!!!!

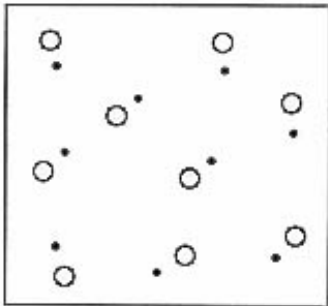
Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

PRACTICE #10

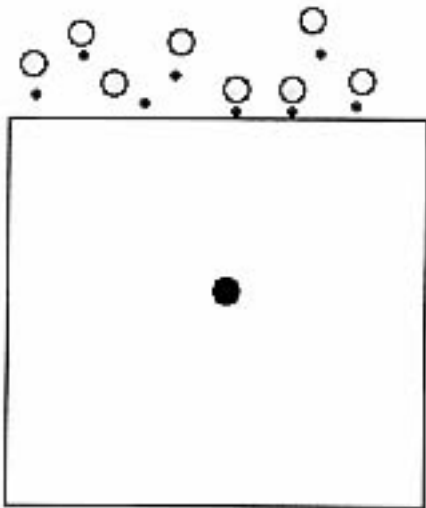
Stage 1a: Exercise: Dribble in the Square

- **Hold Up the Numbers:** As players dribble, the coach walks around holding up fingers. Players must count how many. Also, what color is my shirt? Where is the nearest tree?
- **Change or Clear Out:** When players hear the 'change' command, they leave the ball they are dribbling and get a different one. When they hear 'clear out,' they quickly dribble out of grid.
- **Freeze Tag:** The one "freeze tagger" chases the others, who each dribble a ball. If touched, they "freeze," only unfrozen if a teammate rolls the ball between their legs. Rotate taggers.
- **Nutmeggers:** Players partner up. One player has ball at feet, other no ball. Those with no ball spread legs a little wider than shoulder width. Dribblers tap ball between legs (nutmegging) of standers. Dribblers should not go to same person two times in a row. How many nutmegs in 30 sec.?
- **Bridge Builders:** Players partner up. One player has ball, other no ball. Those without ball spread out inside the square, stand feet together. Players with ball dribble around inside square, touching ball around one side of stander while running around other to get ball (bridge). In other words, if you touch ball around right side of stander, run around left. Switch after 30 seconds?
- **Change Tag:** One "tagger" chases dribblers. When tagged, tagger gets ball, "tagged" becomes tagger. Players keep eyes on tagger at all times, since tagger constantly changing.

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES



Stage Ib : Exercise: Shark and Minnows

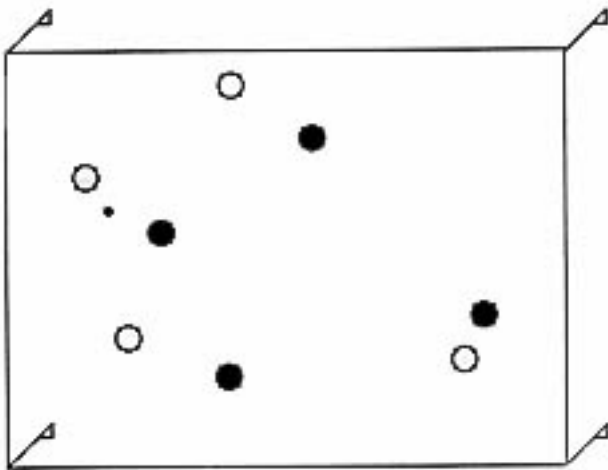


One player designated as defender in grid (shark). The rest (minnows) get ball and align themselves at end of grid. The minnows job: dribble to other side. The shark's job is to win any ball, and send it out of grid. Those who make it to other side must wait until everyone else's fate is decided, and coach signals second round to begin. Those whose balls get sent out, become sharks. Each round increasingly difficult.

Last minnow declared "Minnow of Year," gets year's supply of worms, and picture on cover of FishWorld Magazine.

PRACTICE #10 CONTINUED...Stage II : Game : Line Soccer

PREPACKAGED PRACTICES

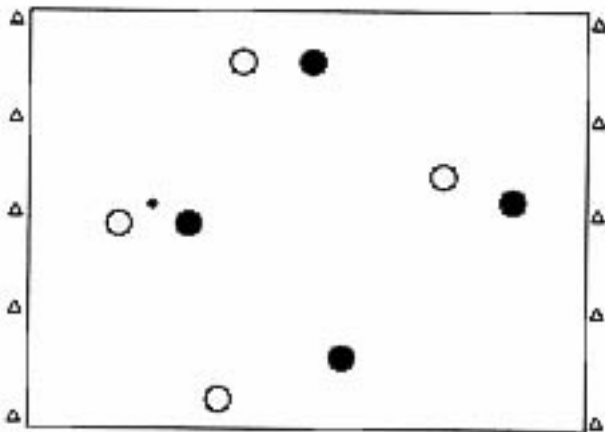


Line Soccer

light shirts attack one direction, dark shirts the other

teams score by stopping the ball on the end line

Stage III : Game : Knock Down the Cones



Knock-Down-the-Cones-Game

object of game is to knock over all of the opponents cones with the ball

idea is to attack the cones that are least defended

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage: Small-sided goals.

LET THEM PLAY!!! THAT IS WHAT THEY COME TO DO!!!