Youth Players Information Thread

Posted by STLCoach - 20 Mar 2009 09:01

When a long ball is played into the opponents defensive players and you aren't able to win the first ball (meaning, the opponent will get to the ball before you will), many players will realize that they can try to win the second ball. This simply means conceding that the opponent will make the first touch of the ball so you try to take advantage of what might be a bad first touch and you win the second touch.

For example, the red player plays a long ball because they are under pressure and it goes toward the red central defender. A yellow forward is laying back with the idea that they will be able to win the second ball.
The problem with this is that the yellow central defender isn't being put under any pressure at all and as a result of this, most likely will be able to receive the ball with the first touch and keep it under control and away from the red player.
In order to win the second touch, the first touch usually needs to be pressured. When possible, this would be done with a second player. Next example, The same ball is played in but now, instead of the red player staying back and hoping to win a second touch, he pressures the player and a second player on his team comes in to win the bad touch.
By pressuring the ball, it changes things from hoping for a bad touch to creating the bad touch by the opponent. This greatly increases the likelihood of you, or your teammate, winning the ball and creating a goal scoring opportunity.

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YOUTH THREAD WINNING HEAD BALLS

Posted by STLCoach - 19 Aug 2010 05:28

Today’s article deals with winning headers.

A lot of young players struggle with judging high balls. This becomes real apparent when watching them try to judge punts.

The most obvious way to get better at judging high balls is to have them hit over and over again and work on seeing where they come down. I would not recommend trying to head hundreds of balls at a time (I don’t need a medical background to know that doesn’t seem to be smart) so rather than trying to head the ball over and over, start by catching the ball just above your head so you get accustomed to judging the ball without actually having it make contact with your head.

When you see the ball coming down, try to get a few steps back from where you think you will make contact with the ball so you can take a good step or two forward to attack the ball. This accomplishes a few things. First, it’s much easier to go forward than backward so if you have misjudged the ball, you most likely wil misjudge it in front of you and can adjust accordingly (instead of trying to backpedal to get back to the ball).

The other thing this accomplishes is you can jump higher by stepping into the jump as opposed to trying to jump from a stationary position.

To work on heading high balls, get behind the ball, step into it and at first catch the ball. Get used to

seeing where the ball is coming down. Then once you have become good at judging the ball, then start by heading the ball. Don't just let them ball hit your head, go up and attack the ball and head with a purpose.

The reason people aren't better at heading high balls is they don't practice judging the ball and they don't get back behind the ball before stepping forward. By judging the ball better and being able to practice without it hurting your head, it will make it easier when it's time to win the ball in a game. You will want to do a few real headers near the end of these sessions to get used to the feel.

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AVOIDING INJURY

Posted by STLCoach - 26 Aug 2010 04:53

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Today's topic deals with avoiding injuries.

The reality is, people sometimes get hurt playing soccer. Not as often as some other sports but it's still something that occasionally happens. Some injuries are unavoidable but many others are the result of one of three reasons:

Poor conditioning
Poor warm up
Being afraid of injury

The frustrating thing with these injuries are they are avoidable.

If your coach doesn't get you in shape with fitness work built into your training sessions, than you need to take responsibility and do this on your own time. There are many resources available for soccer fitness including www.worldclasscoaching.com/productcart/p...es.asp?idCategory=45

If your team doesn't do a dynamic warm up, consider doing one on your own before training sessions and games (and if you don't know how to do this, email me and I'll help you find one)

The third cause of unnecessary injuries is the fear of being injured. Players go into tackles softly because they are afraid they will get hurt and if they go in softly and the other player goes in hard, they are the ones most likely to get injured. If you shy away when a player in front of you is about to shoot, there is a greater chance the ball will hit you in the face than if you were to challenge for the ball and get closer.

If you are a keeper and are afraid the dive will hurt you are more likely to put your hands down to break your fall and as a result, will more likely break your wrist.

It's ironic but when you are afraid to get injured, you are more likely to get injured. Be brave and be healthy!

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Youth Players -WALL PASS

Posted by STLCoach - 16 Sep 2010 09:11

Today's topic deals with wall passes to move sideways.

Typically, when we think of a wall pass we think of passing the ball to the side and running forward to receive the return pass to get behind the defender

A sideways wall pass involves passing the ball forward, and then moving sideways to receive the return pass

The advantage in doing this is it gives the player a different angle to work with. Also, when the pass gets played forward, the player defending the passer will frequently relax and follow the ball giving the passing player the opportunity to get into a position to receive the ball without pressure.

This combination might be done between two center midfielders or between a midfielder and a forward. It's usually done in tight spaces and does require accurate passing and a good first touch.

When done properly, this type of simple combination is an extremely effective way to create space to work with in the midfield.

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Be a Good Winner

Posted by STLCoach - 16 Dec 2010 07:09

Be a Good Winner

By Donna Olmstead

It was cold outside -- in the 30s. The game didn't count for district standings. And only diehard parents showed up. The kind I'd expect to know enough about soccer that I wouldn't have the urge to wrap duct tape around their mouths and stuff them under the stands until the game was over.

As the game progressed, it became fairly obvious that the players on the opposing team didn't play soccer except during high school. I talked to the mother in front of us who told me she was the only parent who ever showed up to support the team.

She also said that none of the girls had the funds to join club teams and that half of the players didn't speak English yet, so there was definitely a communication problem.

Given the circumstances, of course our girls started scoring shortly after the game began. And we mercied out well before halftime.

I should have been grateful that we could go home early and get out of the cold, but I felt really bad for the opposing team. And our parents, who should have known better, got on my absolute last nerve.

They cheered loudly after each goal. All eight goals. And shouted, “Way to go!” And hooted. And stomped on the metal bleachers. Each time they cheered, I cringed.

It’s my philosophy that you should keep your mouth shut when you’re three or four goals up. And you should tell your players ahead of time that, while you’re proud of them, you’re not going to cheer at the top of your lungs after that point. That while “crushing” the opposing team sometimes happens on the field, it doesn’t have to emanate from the stands as well. That, although you want to “beat” them during the game, you don’t want them to feel beat down well after the game is over. They know they lost, but we don’t have to make sure they feel like losers.

I know I may be in the minority with this philosophy. I hope not. I just can’t help putting myself in the place of the players who perhaps don’t play soccer 13 months a year. The players who, at least in this case, have only one real fan cheering for them.

(Florida resident Donna Olmstead has been involved in soccer through both her children and her grandchildren, as well as having housed professional players and owning and running an indoor soccer facility. She is a freelance writer and spends weekends trying to remember at which tournament she's supposed to be cheering.)

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FAKE RUNS

Posted by STLCoach - 09 Feb 2011 03:36

Today’s topic deals with creating space for yourself with a simple fake run.

When a player has the ball and then passes it to a teammate the defender marking him will be concerned with a wall pass. Because of this, if the first place takes one hard step forward, the defender will have to go back hard and this will open up space for a return pass.

In the diagram below, the black player out wide makes a pass to the center midfielder

The passing player than takes a hard step forward which forces the defender to try to beat him back by going hard himself. In most cases, this will result in the defender taking many more steps back (not realizing the first step was just a fake

This allows for an easy pass back out wide to a player who now has space to work with

The key to this method of creating space is to really sell the first step so the defender might even turn and run to take away the wall pass or through ball.

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Re: Youth Players -D.O.C.R.

Posted by STLCoach - 21 Feb 2011 05:20

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Today's topic deals with D.O.C.R.

Many players, will go out and try something in practice or try something in a pickup game or try something in their backyard but will be afraid to try this same thing in an organized game.

Other players will try something in an organized game and keep trying it, whether it works or not.

A recommended way to do things would be to utilize the D.O.C.R. method

* Do
* Observe
* Correct
* Repeat

Do - Take a chance, go ahead to try something. "Just do it"

Observe - After trying something, see what worked, what didn't work and why it worked and why it didn't work.

Correct - Make corrections based on what you observed.

Repeat - Go ahead and do it again. Start the process over.

It's important to be willing to try new things and to try them in game situations, but it's equally important to learn from what you tried, make corrections and then try again with the corrected version.

Try the D.O.C.S. method out and see how it works for you.

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