

SOCCER PRACTICE SIMPLIFIED

FOR 5-9 YEAR OLDS

**A Complete Season
Lesson Plan
For Coaches
And Parents**



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Illustrations by GIULIA RUBENNI

Foreword

This project focuses on younger soccer players ages 5-8. Our belief is that the younger the players, the more effective the work becomes and the results are the most evident.

In the real world this concept is not accepted by everybody, and often these young players are assigned to the youngest or to the most inexperienced coaches who are also starting out in their coaching careers. The consequence is that the results achieved are not the ones expected and the potential of the young players is often not reached.

We consider this work a global product because the writers are from different soccer backgrounds and it has evolved from soccer experiences that differ greatly. From sharing ideas with coaches on our trips across Europe and North America and from observing other coaching methodologies we have strengthened our beliefs that have helped to develop our own methodology which we are about to share with you.

This book is divided into two parts. The first part is the theory where we identify the main concepts of our ideas: a brief introduction to the general characteristics of children aged 5 to 9 years old, the technical-tactical and motor objectives, and the presentation of the seasonal plan.

The second part is more hands on, where we present 20 training lesson plans with proper progressions, and all the concepts indicated in the first part are easily identified.

We think of the second part as a tool to help fully understand the concepts explained in the first part of this book. Our hope is that the coaches appreciate and understand our model and that this book is not just used as a source of single and isolated drills.

This book is not meant to be a simple collection of drills and lesson plans, and the limited number of lessons is the proof, but it is meant to be the presentation of a new work methodology which we hope is appreciated and implemented by as many coaches and instructors as possible.

The effort put into the completion of this book is testament to our infinite passion for the game of soccer. We are aware that every day we can learn new things and methodologies and we are very proud to be given the opportunity to share our experience and knowledge. We are thankful to be able to produce this book and all the soccer clubs that have given us the opportunity to work with players of this age.

Mirko Mazzantini – Simone Bombardieri – Andrea Agnoloni



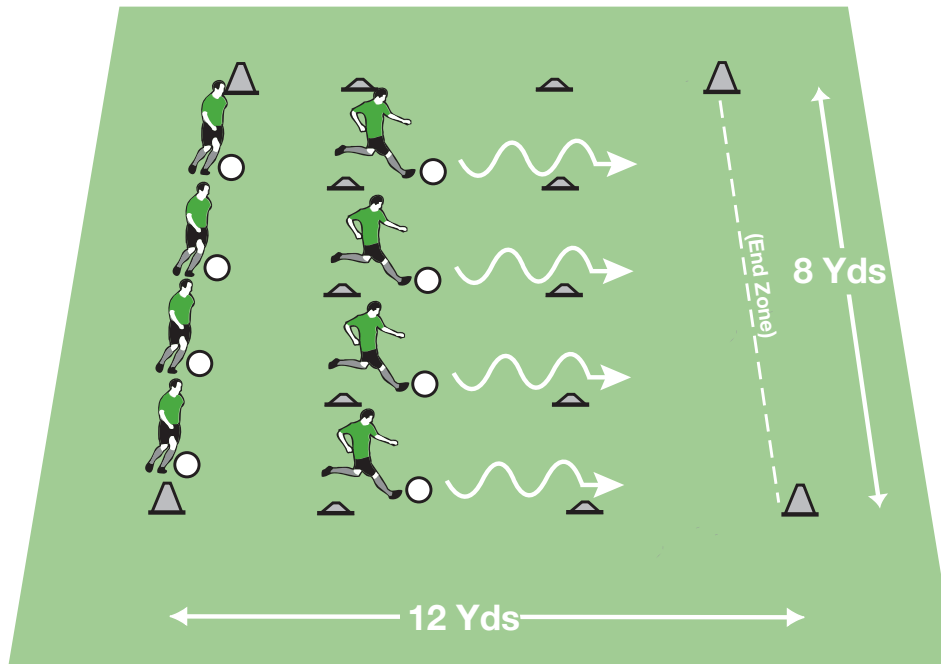
About QR Codes

The QR codes can be scanned using your smartphone. Search the Apple App Store or Google Play for “qr reader” to download a free app.

The QR codes used in this book will allow you to watch supporting video clips.



Technical Block



All Technical Block exercises are played inside this field.

The players run with the ball inside the channels and they stop past the end zone and wait for their teammates.

Exercise 1-

Move Forward With The Sole

In this exercise players are in groups of four and while walking they push the ball forward using the sole of the right and left foot. The objective is to stimulate ball control and sensitivity. Ask for a soft touch and a regular rhythm.



Exercise 2-

Move The Ball Forward With The Sole While Skipping

In this exercise players are in groups of four and while skipping they push the ball forward using the sole of the right and left foot while trying to keep a regular and well coordinated rhythm.



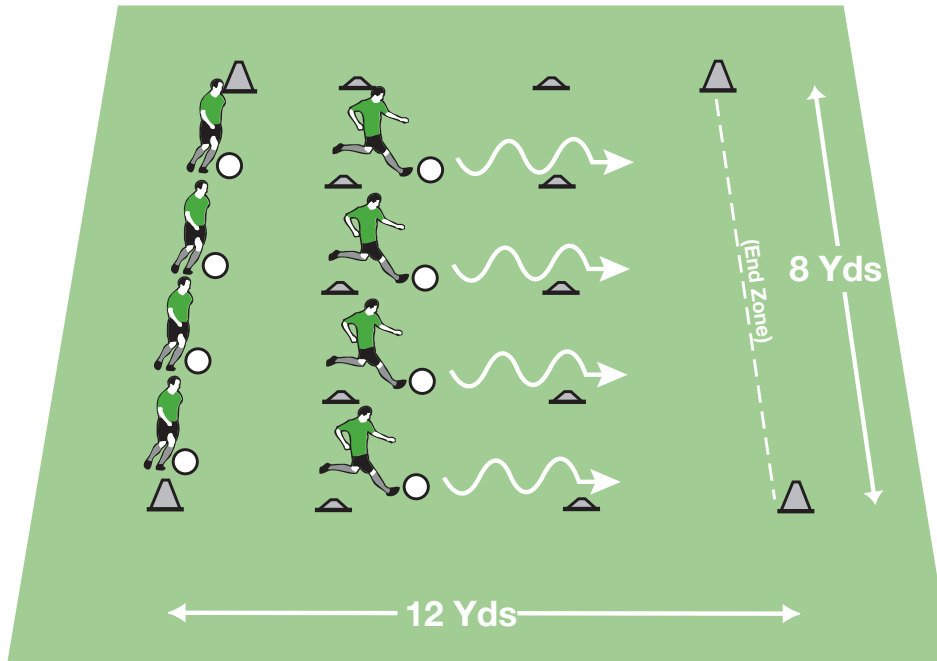
Exercise 3-

Inside Rolling With The Sole

The players progress the exercises by rolling the ball inwards with the sole. From a technical point of view the exercise stimulates the sensitivity of the foot-ball contact aimed at improving control. From a motor skill point of view it stimulates joint mobility.



Tactical Block



All Tactical Block exercises are played inside this field.

The players run with the ball inside the channels and then stop past the end zone and wait for their teammates.

Exercise 1- Running With The Ball And Scissor Move

Together the players run forward with the ball and every two or three touches make a scissor move first with the right foot and then with the left. Request a constant foot-ball contact during the exercise and ask for quick execution of the move.



Exercise 2- Running With The Ball And Double Scissor Move

Together the players run forward with the ball and every two or three touches they make a double scissor move first with the right foot and then with the left. Request a constant foot-ball contact during the exercise and ask for quick execution of the move.



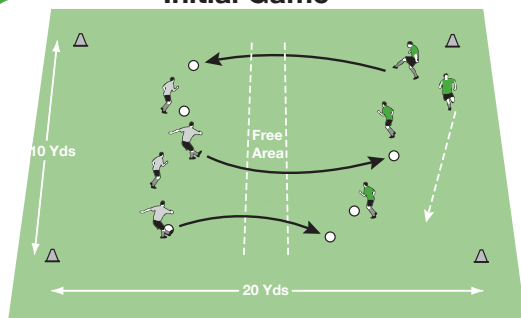
Session 1

This session is unique because the coach must present it as if it was a story. The theme of the session is “THE MOUNTAIN”. The players will pretend they are on a mountain trip. This methodology is extremely motivating and the players will be very involved in the exercises.

Initial Phase

Initial Game

10



Snow Ball Fight

On a 20x10 yd field the players are divided in two groups. The field is divided in three zones and the middle is a free zone of 2 yds. The players will throw the ball and try to hit the players on the other team while trying to dodge the “snow balls” that are coming in their field.

Variations:

5 minutes throwing with the hands

5 minutes using the feet

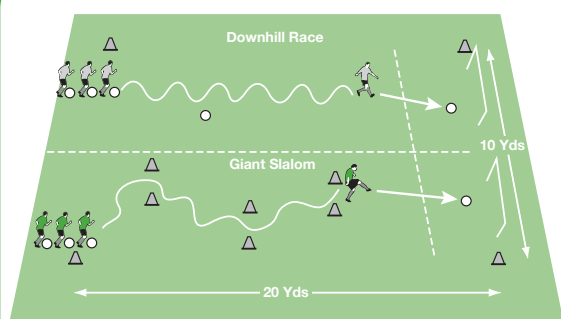
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Technical Working Block- Choose An Exercise From Pages 14-16

Central Phase

Technical Exercise

10



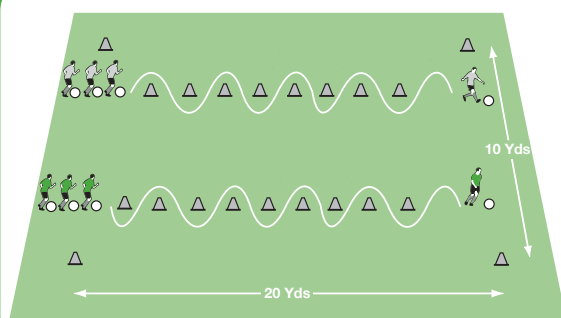
Downhill Skiing

Players are in groups of 2 or 3 and are pretending to ski down a ski slope.
a) DOWNHILL RACE- 5 minutes. For the first two minutes the players move the ball forward with the sole of both feet and when they are close to the goal they shoot. In the next two and half minutes they will run with the ball freely and finish with a shot on goal.

b) GIANT SLALOM- 5 minutes. In this exercise the player will have to cross a gate before shooting on net. For the first two and half minutes the players move the ball forward with the sole of both feet and will shoot on goal when they near it. The remaining two and half minutes the players will run with the ball freely and will finish with a shot.

15

Motor Exercise



Run In The Trees

The players will pretend to run a relay between the trees without touching cones (the trees).

Variations:

Run in a slalom

a) relay- run with no ball

b) relay- run with the ball in their hands

c) relay- run with ball on their feet

Change the rhythm of the race by varying the distance between the cones or ask the players to slalom every second or third tree instead of a single one.

Final Phase

Game

20



2v2 Mini Game

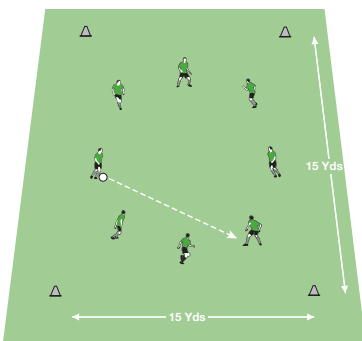
Set up two mini-fields where the players play mini games 2v2.

Session 11

Initial Phase

Initial Game

10



Learn The Names

Players are in a circle and one of them has a ball. The players start with their hands and the objective is to carry or pass the ball to one teammate call the player's name first and then take their place.

Variations:

- 1) dribble the ball to the other player
- 2) dribble the ball to the other player and stop it in front of him

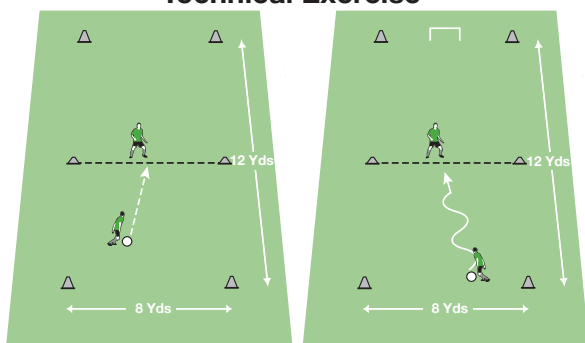
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Tactical Working Block- Choose An Exercise From Pages 17-19

Central Phase

Technical Exercise

10



Field 1

Field 2

The Guardian

Set up more mini-fields depending on the number of players

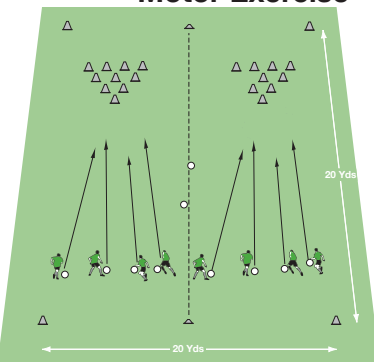
FIELD 1
Set up a field 12x8 yds. One player must run beyond the line watched by the guardian without getting tagged. Every time the guardian tags the player, the players exchange roles.

FIELD 2

Once the players are good at using their body to make feints, a ball and a mini-goal is introduced and the players try to score by shooting in goal.

15

Motor Exercise



Bowling

Competitive game between 2 teams in an area 20x20 yds. The game is played at first with the hands. At the coach's command, one team must hit as many cones as possible. Then the other team has their turn. The team that hits all the cones win the game.

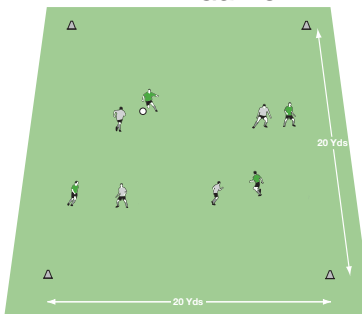
Variations:

- 1) change the method of throw: with one hand, like a throw-in, etc.
- 2) play with feet: using the instep, inside of the foot, etc.

Final Phase

Game

20



4v4 Score In The End Zone

Set up 2 mini-fields 20x20 yds for free games of 4v4. Players play a game scoring a goal every time the players dribble through the end zone .

Variation:

the point is scored if the ball is stopped on the end zone line

SOCCER PRACTICE SIMPLIFIED FOR 5-9 YEAR OLDS

A Complete Season Lesson Plan For Coaches And Parents

Maximize your players potential with this simple, effective and progressive modern soccer coaching methodology specifically designed for young soccer players. The book has two main parts- The first part is the theory where we identify the main concepts of our ideas: a brief introduction to the general characteristics of children aged 5 to 9 years old, the technical-tactical and physical objectives, and the presentation of the season plan.



The second part is where we present 20 practice lesson plans with proper progressions and all the concepts indicated in the first part are easily identified. All the sessions will follow the same logical structure and are composed of 3 phases:

- Initial phase consisting of a warm up game and a technical activity
- Central phase with a technical activity and a physical exercise
- Final phase where the kids play soccer in small sided games

This book is not meant to be a simple collection of drills and lesson plans, but it is meant to be the presentation of a progressive season-long coaching methodology.



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