



# IMAGINEERS

**U8** SOCCER COACHES MANUAL

[xarasoccer.com](http://xarasoccer.com)



# IMAGINEERS INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing Xara to support your initiatives to deliver a memorable family soccer experience. Whether your organization is using the Imagineers as a continuation of the Dinomites experience or using Xara's Age Specific Programs for the first time we know your players, coaches and parents will love being part of the Imagineers experience.

## WHY IMAGINEERS

Experts in child development and education tell us that stimulating the use of imagination is an important stage of development for children of 6 and 7 years of age. That is why the central theme of the program is encouraging the players to use their imagination to create their own memorable soccer experience.

## WHY ENGAGE THE PARENT IN THE IMAGINEERS EXPERIENCE

All studies show that children of this age enjoy every experience more when they do it with mom and dad. That is why we have created many on and off the field opportunities for mom and dad to participate in the Imagineers experience.

## COACH SUPPORT

The Imagineers program offers support for coaches by;

- Providing a ten week easy to follow curriculum that outlines a season long program.
- Making free online support materials available to every coach.
- Providing tools to motivate every child.
- Encouraging mom and dad to support the coach's effort.

## GUIDELINES FOR COACHING U8 SOCCER

The Imagineers program has been created with input from experts in child education, development and psychology. Their expertise in the areas related to physical capabilities, behavior and characteristics is the foundation of the program structure. Understanding how children learn and behave in the group environment is essential to maximize the success of the program and the organizations that use it. The following information assists you in your effort to prepare for the season ahead.



At this age players will begin to create social groups, often in pairs, though occasionally larger groups may emerge. Coaches should recognize and accept this as a normal part of the child's social development.

Most teams at this age are formed by coordinators who have limited knowledge of the players before

the teams are formed. The players on your team will likely have a diverse range of skills at the beginning of the season. The curriculum is designed to keep players of different athletic abilities engaged and allow each individual to see progress at their own pace within a short period of time.

Coaches will be working with 6 and 7 year old players, some may be new to the sport, while others may have as many as three years soccer experience. Their social and physical maturation will also likely vary as there may have as much as two year's difference in age. The curriculum assists in the effort to accommodate these differences.

A common mistake at this age is an over emphasis on the teaching of the tactical aspects of the game, or "formations and positions." The emphasis should still be placed on the development of the individual technique and allow this growth to become part of a team ethos.

Other key areas to focus on are; the continued emphasis on the enjoyment of the game, improved ball skills and the growth of the player as a whole. Your approach will impact their self esteem, social interaction skills and their life skills, this will include their understanding that "You will not always win."

If the players do not have fun or develop their techniques and skills they will not develop a love of the game, the curriculum has been designed to build the players into a unit through the development of their individual skills.



Your practice nights offer the chance for players to learn, grow individually and develop as a team. During games you should work with the opposition coach to try and keep the team's even while out on the field. Remember at U8 you are all typically coaches, players and families from the same club so making sure everyone has a good time is the ideal philosophy. The families will remember the environment you create long after they remember the results of any one game.

## COACHING RATIONALE

This curriculum has been designed to be interactive, fun, and imaginative. Here are some things that you should consider as you plan your season.

- Each session should be geared toward touching the ball as many times as possible.
- Each Practice has been designed to last 1hr (it can be extended up to 1 ½ hours).
- The time limit is based primarily on physical fatigue and limited attention span.
- Once a week should be enough to avoid burnout.
- Every player should have their own size #3 ball.



- Remember, although they may have similar birthdates, their physical and/or mental maturity may vary. Where possible, accommodate these differences in play (group U-7 and U-8 players separately).
- Passing can still be an alien concept to players.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A U-8 PLAYER

- Players will still keep possession for themselves; they will dribble the ball at one speed.
- Players are beginning to stop the ball with some thought, cushioning it on impact. (This enables the player to do something with the ball once they have obtained it).
- Players are just starting to understand support play and passing in order for the team to establish an indirect path to goal.
- Players often think kicking power is more desirable than accuracy.
- Players are starting to recognize that tackling is a key part of the game.
- As the season progresses, particularly in the second season of this age group, you might see players start to gain a greater understanding of space, movement of the ball, and changes of speed and direction.



### COACHING PLAYERS OF DIFFERENT ABILITY

One of the biggest challenges for any coach is working with players of different abilities. The following ideas can make it easier when faced with this situation.

#### Use of Space

This is the easiest way to allow for differences in ability.

- The larger the area that a player has to play a pass across or dribble across, the more difficult they will find it.
- When the players have defenders or “pressure,” a smaller area will make it more challenging for the player under pressure.

Try to ensure that the players have the correct space for the activity, if the players are finding a drill or activity difficult, do not be afraid to change the size of the area being used to make it easier for them.

#### The use of restrictions

To accommodate players of different abilities you can consider placing a restriction on the more skilled player. Examples would be;

- Challenge the better players on your team to only use their weaker foot to complete the activity.
- Restrict the number of touches of the more skilled players as they execute the desired activity.

### Adapting the Rules

The structure of the activities within the curriculum offer a good starting point. Coaches should not be afraid to adjust to best meet the needs of the players.

### Assessing Ability

To maximize the value for all players’ pair players with similar abilities when doing 1v1 activity, this will challenge each player appropriately. In larger group activities, pair all abilities but differentiate by the restrictions above.

### Reinforcing by Activity

Do not be afraid to go back to some games and drills for the less experienced players and allow the more experienced players to advance.

### Using Support

Provide an appropriate level of support for new players, in addition to more experienced and gifted players. Have your assistant coach work on specific aspects of the game for both of these groups. As you become aware of the differences in the ability of your players, stay positive and emphasize fun and skill development to ensure you deliver a positive soccer experience.

### Your won/loss record does not define your success

Try to avoid creating pressure to win and advise parents not to focus on the won/loss record. Players will respond to the creation of a positive, fun environment, do not be afraid to go down to their level of thinking as part of your effort to encourage them to use their imagination.

### CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Each week is structured to accommodate a 60 minute practice (it can be stretched to 90 minutes).

#### Upon Arrival Skills Square - 5 minutes

Before practice “officially” starts, begin with the Skills Square (see page 8). This provides a structured arrival activity that improves the development of the individual player’s techniques. Remind the players each week of what was focused on the previously and review the techniques.

The first 30 minutes of the one hour practice session;

- Passing and control of the ball – 10 minutes
- Turns – 10 minutes
- Fake or moves to evade an opponent – 10 minutes





The majority of the activities have been designed to maximize touches with each player having their own ball; this supports the best opportunity for each player to develop.

When the three individual technical skills above are introduced, try and keep the players in motion at all times. The curriculum is designed to have static opponents. Cones are used in place of opposing players to decrease the difficulty. The children love to race; some of the skills are finished with a race that includes the technical

skill. It is very important to understand that at this age, not every child will be able to accomplish every technique. However, each technique will be reinforced as you progress through the weeks in the skills square as the players arrive.

### Technical Areas - Passing / Control / Turns and Fakes

The curriculum acts as a framework- each team can progress at their own pace. Do not be afraid to adapt or change an activity from where you started; feel free to change the size of the area or duration of the activity, depending on how successful or how challenging an activity is for your players. The weather may also play a role in determining how long you choose to run each activity.

### Fun Technique Game 10-15 minutes

This takes the techniques learned into a fun game, with little pressure. Each of the activities is designed to be played 2-3 times. Each time, the coach should be asking 1-2 questions so the children can improve their techniques and, most importantly, when to use them. When you question the children, try to ask a question with multiple possible answers, to get them to think through the solutions. For example, before they play, say "I would you like you think about when you are playing this game." Once they have played, bring them in and question them, to allow them to start creating an analytical level of thinking on the field.

### Game Development 15-20 minutes

The final stage is to play a game. The best approach is to play small-sided games (i.e. 4 vs. 4,) this offers the best opportunity to maximize the involvement of all players. Some of the games are creative, playing with four goals, two balls or a goal in the middle of the field, just to vary it for the players and offer the opportunity to concentrate on the technique/skill of the day. Each of the game development activities have been carefully selected to follow the theme of the day and maximize opportunities for the children to repeat or review what they have learned. Play with boundaries. Use cones if you don't have real goals. Keep players involved. Have more than one game going at a time if necessary. It is important that every player has a chance to touch the ball and succeed at their level during the game development session.

### THE OFFICIAL IMAGINEERS BALL AND IMAGINATION LOCATIONS

The Imagineers ball is central to the players soccer experience both on and off the field. It allows the soccer experience with their coach and team mates to be much more than learning the game, it is a shared experience. When they take the ball home they can use it to share with their parents the places they have been and the things that they have learned. It encourages the family to continue the experience long after practice is over, coaches should view the ball as a key tool in engaging the players in the experience and the success of their season.

1. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY
2. THE GRAND CANYON
3. THE AMAZON JUNGLE
4. THE GREAT BARRIER REEF
5. THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA
6. MOUNT EVEREST
7. THE PYRAMIDS
8. THE SAHARA DESERT
9. THE COLISEUM
10. STONEHENGE



### GUIDE TO ICONS AND DIAGRAMS



PROGRESSION



WORLD FACT



STORY TIME



FUN GAME



# WEEK 1

## The Great Wall of China

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

Set out a 20 x 20 ft. square, inside place 8 to 10 cones randomly inside, as shown in the diagram.

#### Objectives

To engage the players when they arrive at practice, helps review techniques and skills learned previously and acts as a good warm up for the players.

#### Activity

Players will often begin to arrive 15-20 minutes before the official start of practice. In a typical scenario, the team will start to randomly kick balls into the goal or just wait for the coach to begin practice. This activity is much more productive and allows your players to review previously learnt techniques. Players dribble the ball around the area and when they approach a cone (representing a static defender) they practice one of the following:

1. Any turn away from the cone (Dino Turn from U-6 Curriculum)
2. Any fake around the cone (Pinky toe push from the U6 curriculum/ Step over)

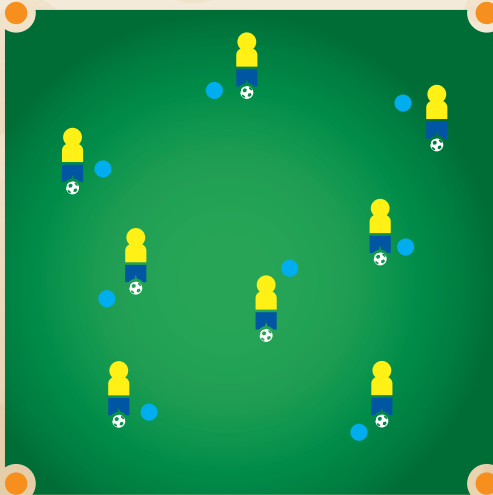
#### Coaching Points

Question the players: What two things do we need when executing a turn or fake?

1. A change of direction.
2. A change of speed to accelerate away from the defender.

### SKILLS SQUARE

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'



### PASSING ACTIVITY 1

#### Organization

Players should work in pairs, with one ball between the two. Set up the cones in a 20 x 15ft area (as shown in the diagram below) allowing enough space for each pair on the team. Practice for 4-5 minutes per activity (four activities in total).

#### Objectives

This exercise develops passing skills across a short distance. It also develops control of the ball moving toward the player.

#### Activity

The players pass the ball down the channel (back and forth) to work on correct technique of passing the ball.



#### Advanced Progression

As they progress, the players can be moved back to Cone B which will increase the distance and difficulty of the activity.



Each week we will be going on a journey around the world to visit some of the world's most famous places! When we get to these places we will practice our soccer skills. To get there we will use the map on our ball and our imagination to travel around the world. After soccer practice, you and your parents can use the internet to find out more about the exciting places we visit."

The world is made up of 7 continents; North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Antarctica. "We live in the continent of North America, can you find this on your ball?" Number 1 & 2 is the North American continent.

"Now that you have found out where we live, today we are going to travel west to China on the Asian continent. Does anyone know which way is west? If you look at your globe west is left; China is across the Pacific Ocean. Everyone find number 5 on their globe."

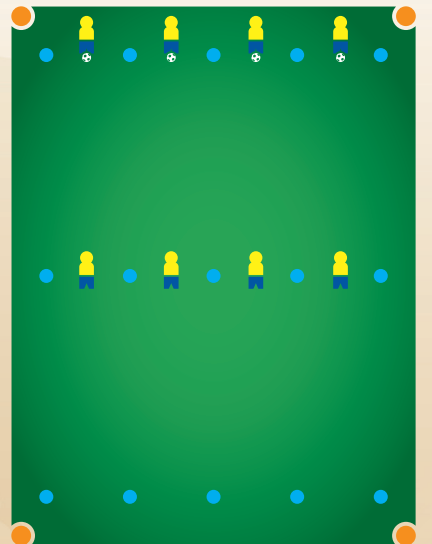


"Does anyone know what the most famous monument in China is? That's right, The Great Wall of China, so we are going to go to the Great Wall of China and practice our passing."

### PASSING

DIMENSIONS 20' x 15'

### ACTIVITY 1



The Great Wall of China #5 on the Imagineers ball. To get there, we must step on the portal of our Imagineers ball, everyone find the portal in the middle of the compass and point it to the Sky. Put your right foot on the portal close your eyes and together let's count to three. Imagine we are travelling through space and going to the Great Wall of China.



"The Great wall is 5500 miles long and in most places it is 26 ft high, that's as tall as a house and 16 ft across. Today, we are going to practice passing the ball across the Great Wall of China! The area that we will use to practice our passing is as wide as The Great Wall of China. Imagine you are passing the ball across the top of the wall."



### Coaching Points

Passing (Remember to emphasize that the accuracy of the pass and the quality of the control are more important than speed!)

1. Step into the pass.
2. Remember to stand with one foot by the side of the ball, 4-6 inches away.
3. Lock your ankle so that the foot is firm, with the knee slightly bent.
4. Pass through the ball, striking it at the center of the ball.
5. Think about the weight of the pass. Not too hard, not too soft.
6. Follow through with your foot in the direction that you want the ball to travel.

### ACTIVITY 2

#### Coaching Points

Control of the Ball Being Passed to You.



1. Be on your toes!
2. Get your body in line with the ball.
3. With the knee bent, cushion the ball with the toe up.
4. When cushioning the ball, the ideal position for the ball to end up is 1-2 ft in front of the player so that they can step into the pass or shoot with the next touch.

### ACTIVITY 3

#### Coaching Points

Player 1 will now start at Cone A, and run towards Cone B, to receive the pass and then play the pass back. They then jog backwards to Cone A, touch the line and repeat.

1. Think about the timing of the pass, as well as the weight of the pass.
2. Pass through the middle of the ball.
3. Think about which is the best foot to pass the ball to, (everyone has a stronger foot) but ensure that you practice with both.

### ACTIVITY 4

#### Coaching Points

Control of the Ball When Moving Towards the Ball

1. Keep moving towards the ball, don't stop and let the ball come to you.
2. A strong locked ankle is the key to controlling the ball.
3. Control the ball in front of you with your 1st touch and pass back with your second touch.



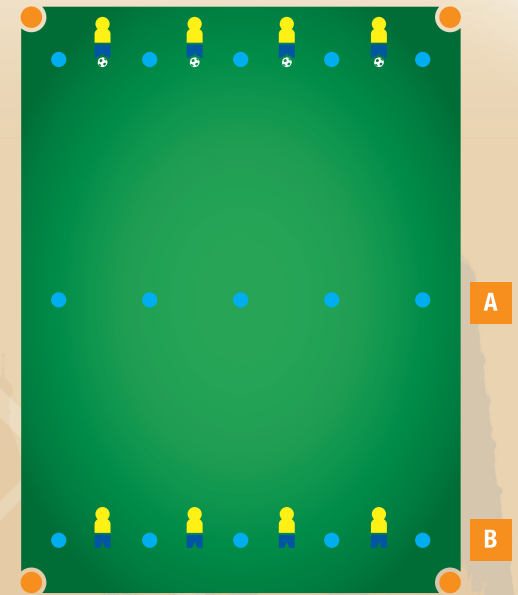
#### Advanced Progression

The player receiving the ball controls the ball with one foot playing the ball across the body and passes back with the other foot.

### PASSING

DIMENSIONS 20' x 15'

### ACTIVITY 2





## TURNING ACTIVITY 1

### The drag back turn

#### Organization

In a 15x20 area, have 1 ball for each player for all 3 turning activities: Set up as shown in diagram 1 all players on one end. The coach facing the players 10 yards away.

#### Objectives

To re-introduce and practice the drag back turn. Practice with both feet.

#### Coaching Points

Correct technique: Drag Back

1. Place your standing foot 4-6 inches away from the ball.
2. Place your other foot on the top of the ball.
3. Pull your foot back quickly behind you.
4. Turn quickly, and follow the ball.

### ACTIVITY 2

#### Turning away from the defender, mastering the technique

1. Players now walk around the area when they get to a cone (static defender). They perform the drag back turn and accelerate away to another cone.
2. Progress to jogging and then to full speed.

### ACTIVITY 3

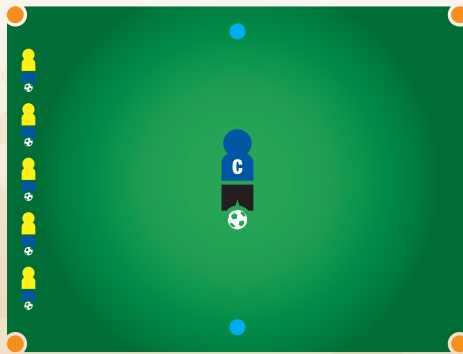
#### Drag back races, putting the turn under pressure

1. A simple race is sufficient to put young players under pressure, as they will all try to go as fast as they can and the skill level will break down.

#### DRAG BACK TURN

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

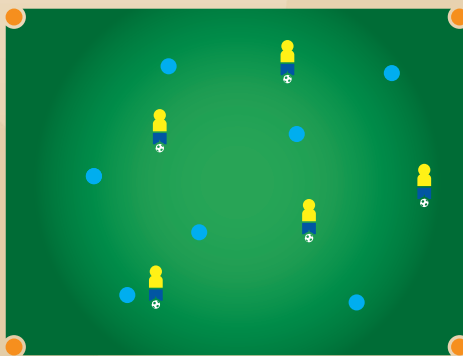
#### ACTIVITY 1



#### DRAG BACK TURN

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

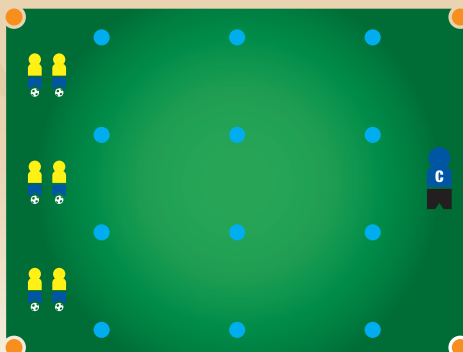
#### ACTIVITY 2



#### DRAG BACK TURN

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

#### ACTIVITY 3



2. The coach first calls out Cones 1-2-3 and the players run to those cones, do the turn, and then dribble back to the start line.
3. Do not have more than 2 players in each line, to avoid crowding.
4. Discuss with the group after several attempts going at ¾ pace and getting the turn correct each time.



#### Advanced Progression

When the player makes a turn they pass the ball back to their partner.

## FAKES ACTIVITY 1

### Shoulder Fakes

#### Organization

Each player has a ball, and there are 3 activities in total--as laid out in the diagrams below.

#### Objectives

To develop the technique and skill of a shoulder fake.

#### Coaching Points

1. Place the ball in front of the player.
2. Player will drop shoulder to left (for right footed player) with the knee and foot following in the same direction to fake going left. The foot needs to look as if it is going to play the ball but does not touch the ball.
3. Player then plays the ball with the little toe on the right foot at a 45 degree angle away and in front 2-3 paces.
4. Emphasize a rapid change of speed and direction (repeat 4-5 times from standing).

#### ACTIVITY 2

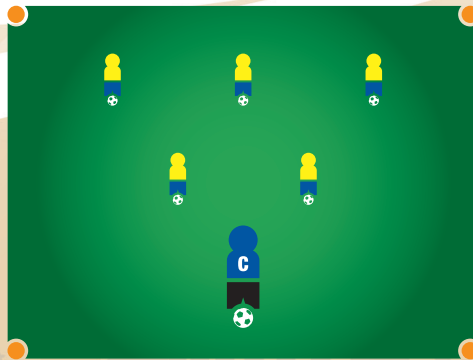
Static defenders, fake away from the defender

1. Each cone is a static defender, and each player will fake around the "defender" (cone).
2. All of the above coaching points have the players walking to start with, not running, otherwise their technique will be poor. It is important to master the technique first, and then learn to perform it with greater speed.
3. Slowly build up to a jogging speed-if you see players moving too fast and not practicing correct technique make them go back to walking.

FAKES & SHOULDER FAKES

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

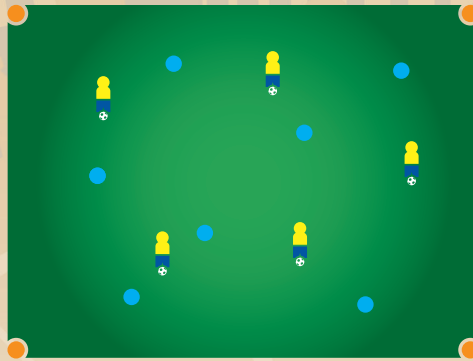
#### ACTIVITY 1



FAKES & SHOULDER FAKES

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

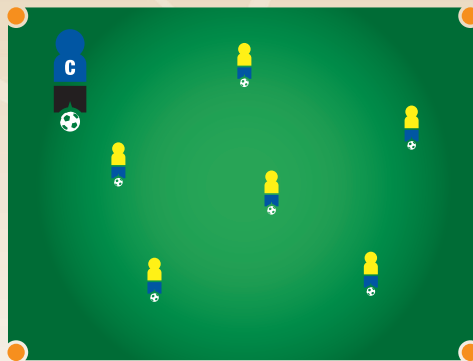
#### ACTIVITY 2



FAKES & SHOULDER FAKES

DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'

#### ACTIVITY 3



#### ACTIVITY 3

Moving towards another player; ensure technique is correct before moving on to this activity. Shoulder fakes puts the fake under pressure

1. Start from walking again and build up to ½ speed.
2. Players then dribble around the area and when they come across another player, they fake to move left and move off to the right.







## FUN GAME

Dribble tag, correct technique.

### Organization

30x30 ft. area each player has a ball. Select two taggers defined by pinnies, play several times for a total of 5-10 minutes.

### Objectives

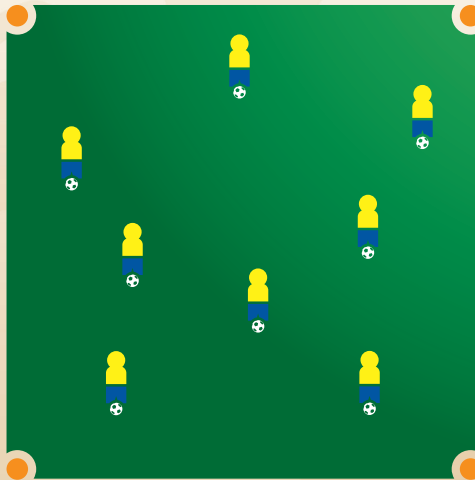
Further development building the pressure of the pass, turn and fake in a fun game environment. The two taggers dribble and pass their balls to tag the other players' balls. When tagged that player gets a pinny on and joins the tagging team. The goal of the game is to avoid being tagged with fast turns or fakes away from the taggers.

### Coaching Points

1. Keep your head up and look for the players trying to tag you.
2. When you do a turn or fake – use a rapid change of speed and direction.
3. The last two players left untagged become the taggers for the next game.

### DRIBBLE TAG

DIMENSIONS 30' x 30'



## GAME PLAY

### Section 1. Basic positions and what to do at game re-starts

Positions on a soccer field are interchangeable. Players can switch positions and move into another position depending on the circumstances of play. When a play breaks down, the ball goes out of play, or the ball is away from their position they can recover back to their "position". At this age you should never tell a player you cannot run there because that is not your position. Educate your team to support players around them without crowding them or getting too close.

The difficulty in coaching 6 and 7 year olds is not to include too much information at any, one time. Try and do all of your coaching on your practice night and not to give instruction at your weekend game time. If you need to provide instructions do so before the game, when a player is substituted, at half time and at full time.

Do not over complicate matters; focus on 3 aspects for offense and defense (These are listed below). Along with the curriculums focus on individual technical skills and ball control, these three combined aspects will provide a foundation for a team's top performance.

## GAME PLAY

DIMENSIONS FIELD



### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS FOR U8 RECREATIONAL PLAYERS

#### Section 2. Offense

1. When the ball is coming towards you always control the ball before attempting to do any of the following:

- Pass
- Dribble
- Shoot

2. If you have the ball look to pass to someone in space.

If you don't have the ball, move into a space away from a defender. A trick to teaching younger players what space is, is by saying, "Can you draw a line from the player with the ball to the person you want to pass the ball too, without the line touching the defender? If you can not, then that player is not in open space, you must then move to an open space to try and receive a pass from a teammate.

If you make a pass you should always run into a space to get the ball again. You should always be thinking; pass and move.

If players have a 1v1 opportunity in the oppositions half this is where they should use their fakes/moves and turns to try and beat the defenders. If you have no one in between you and the goal and you are close enough, shoot.

### Additional Tips

1. **Throw Ins:** Have the players in the wide positions take the majority of the throw ins. Teach the players to throw the ball to feet at this age. The majority of 6-7 year olds will duck away from a ball coming at their body. When they receive a throw always control the ball.
2. **Your Goal Kicks:** Have your defenders stand on the edge of the penalty box (goal side in between the goal and the opposition). Have your goalkeeper kick the ball into a wide position.
3. **Corner Kicks:** Dependant on the size of your field many 6-7 year olds cannot kick a ball into the area from a corner kick. Discuss with your age group or recreational coordinator moving the kick closer to the goal so that players experience a true corner kick.

### Section 3. Defense

1. When you do not have possession of the ball, players should mark (defend) a player and get goal side (in between your own goal and the player with the ball).
2. At all opposition re-starts:
  - Goal Kicks
  - Corner kicks
  - Throw ins
  - Free kicks

Mark goal side, by keeping the defender between the ball and your own goal.

3. Whenever possible delay the person with the ball. Make them go to the outside of the field with your body position. Be patient as a defender and wait for the offensive person to get a bad touch and then take the ball from them.

4. Stay alert, looking for a way to contribute or support your teammates.

## EXTENDED PRACTICE

### Objective

To develop game play, possession of the ball and to reinforce techniques learned from the day.

### END ZONE

 **DIMENSIONS** 30' x 50'

### Organization

30 x 50 Area as shown in the diagram play 6v4 or 7v5. Duration - 10-15 minutes

### Activity

Two teams play against each other to try and pass the ball to the team mate in the End Zone. Each time the ball is passed into the end zone the team scores a goal.



### Advanced Progression

When a goal is scored the passer of the ball swaps place with the end zone player. If the game is one-sided, change the players to even up the teams.

### Coaching Points

1. Get a good first touch to control the ball.
2. Keep your head up look for a pass or a person to pass to.
3. If you cannot get the ball, move into a space where you can receive the ball (remember the line rule).
4. Pass the ball with accuracy. Give a good weight on the pass enough to get to your team mate but not too much that they find it hard to control.
5. Make decisions quickly.



### WORLD FACTS

How long is the Great Wall of China? (13,171 miles)  
You can see the Great Wall of China from the Moon? (False)



# WEEK 2

## The Great Barrier Reef

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones. See diagram below.

#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills. Players should dribble within the area and when they approach a cone (representing a defender) they should practice one of the following:

1. A drag back turn away from the cone (review from week 1).
2. A shoulder fake around the cone (review from week 1).

#### Coaching Points

Ask the players: What two things do we need when executing a turn or fake?

1. A change of speed to accelerate away from the defender.
2. A change of direction.

### PASSING ACTIVITY 1

#### Organization

Players work in pairs – One ball between two players. Set up the cones in a 10 x 10 area for each pair as shown in the applicable diagram for that activity with enough space for each pair on the team. 4-5 minutes per activity (Two activities in total).

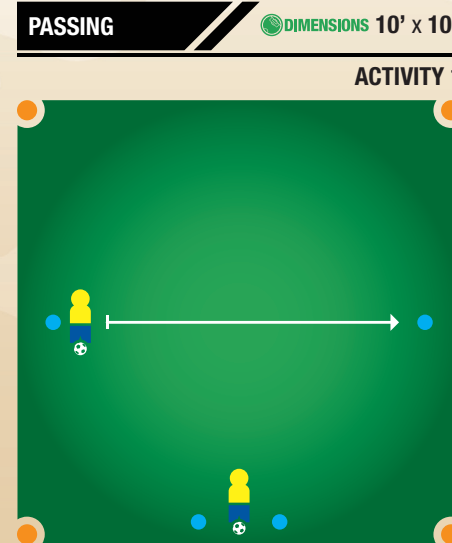
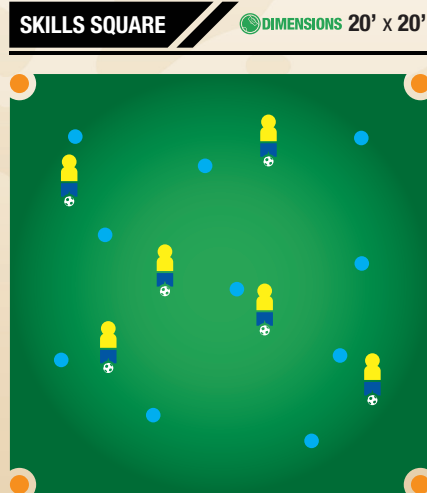
#### Objectives

Development of passing skills across a short distance: Development of control of the ball moving towards you with both feet.

The receiving player moves back and forth from cone A to B as indicated by the arrows. The player alternates passes with the left and right foot. The feeder remains static on the base line. Ensure that the player shuffles sideways between the cones so that they face the feeder all of the time.

#### ACTIVITY 2

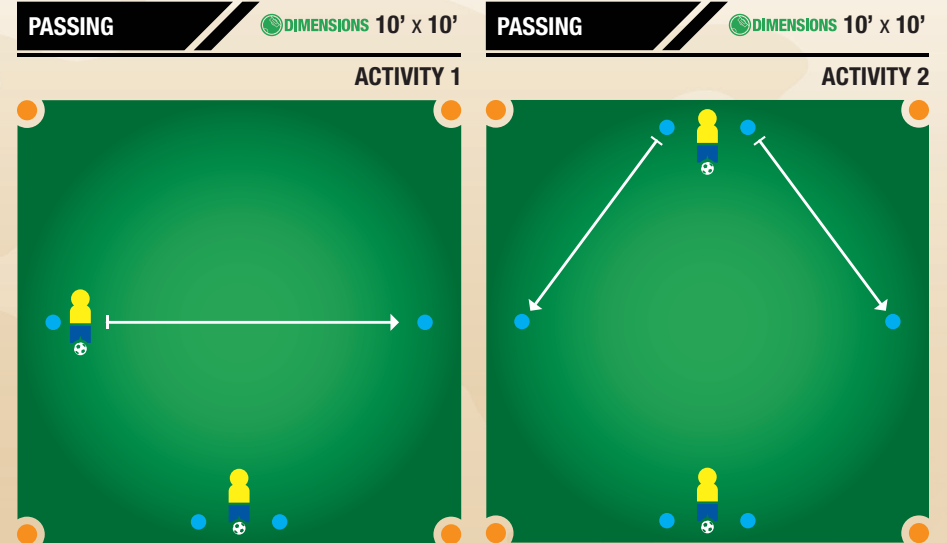
The receiving player now moves forward and to the side to receive the pass and play the ball back. When they play the ball back from cone A, they run backwards



#### Coaching Points

Emphasizing the accuracy of the pass, the quality of the ball control and the speed of the pass are important.

1. Step into the pass.
2. Standing foot (or plant foot) by the side of the ball 4-6 inches away.
3. Lock the ankle so that the foot is firm, knee slightly bent.
4. Pass through the ball striking it at the west and east points on the compass.
5. Think about the weight of the pass, not too hard, not too soft.
6. Ensure you play the pass to the correct foot.
7. Follow through with your foot in the direction that you want the ball to travel.



## TURNING ACTIVITY 1 The Cruyff Turn

### Organization

30x30 Area. 4-5 minutes per activity.

### Objectives

To introduce and practice the Cruyff Turn.

One ball for each player: Set up the diagram as shown in activity 1, all players on one end. The coach faces the players 10 yards away. After showing them how to do the turn, ask them to practice coming towards you, so you can observe and give critique.

## ACTIVITY 2

### Turning away from the defender.

Each player now takes the turn into an active environment. Setup cones inside your grid to allow players to dribble up and turn away without bumping into each other. The player dribbles up to a cone and turns away from the cone, emphasize change of speed and direction.

## ACTIVITY 3

### The coach putting the players under pressure

Each player dribbles the ball around the area, as the coach you will try and steal their ball. The player's purpose is to turn away from you when you get close to them. It is very important that to start, your role is to put the players under pressure. Not try and steal their ball. Let them practice the turn. Emphasize keeping their heads up so that they can see you. Let them see success first before you apply more pressure and attempt to steal their ball.



## Coaching Points

1. Place the ball with the compass looking away from you.
2. Position your left foot (rightly, switch for lefty) about 4-6" away from the ball in front of you.
3. Take your right foot around the outside of the ball and place your big toe on the compass, pull the ball back through your legs.
4. Pull the ball back quickly behind you so that it travels 3-4 feet behind you.
5. Turn quickly over your left shoulder and follow the ball.





## FAKES ACTIVITY 1

### Organization

Each player with a ball, three activities as laid out in the diagrams below. 4-5 minutes per activity.



### Objectives

To develop the technique and skill of the “sole of the foot,” rollover.

### Coaching Points

Start from a standing position.

1. Place the ball with the compass and portal facing up in the air.
2. Player places the sole of the foot on the top of the ball.
3. Player then sweeps the foot across the top of the ball.
4. Emphasize a rapid change of speed (Repeat 6-10 times from standing).

## ACTIVITY 2

### Static defenders

1. All of the above coaching points, have the players walking to start with, not running otherwise their technique will diminish.
2. Slowly build up to jogging speed, if you see players moving too fast and not practicing correct technique make them go back to walking.
3. When they come to a cone sweep the ball across the cone and move off with a rapid change of speed.

## ACTIVITY 3

### North, South, East, West

Ensure technique is correct before moving on to this activity.

1. Start from walking again and build up to ½ speed.
2. Players can only use the sole of the foot to move the ball around the area. As the coach, discuss directions on the compass / earth that are used to navigate North, South, East and West.

Show the direction where they are in relation to the grid. Players may use one of the turns they have learned to turn 180 degrees and then use the sole of the foot for the rest of the activity.



## FUN GAME

### Crossing the Great Barrier Reef

Today we are going to travel to the Great Barrier Reef, does anyone know where the Great Barrier Reef is located? It is located in Northern Australia, so we are going to go to Australia. Does anyone know what direction we have to travel to get to Australia? (SOUTH WEST), see if you can find it on our ball, the Great Barrier Reef is number 4 on your ball map. The Great Barrier Reef is so big that it can be seen from space (1600 miles long and covers an area 133,000 square miles or bigger than New Mexico). It is the largest single structure made by living things on our planet, let's travel to Australia where we will cross part of The Great Barrier. Everyone place your foot on the portal close your eyes and count to three.

To cross the reef we have to be careful, because living in the coral are dangerous jellyfish, in fact they are the most dangerous jelly fish on earth. They are called the box jellyfish, people in Australia call them jellies. You have to cross the reef without being stung by the jellies, if they tag you with their ball you become a jelly too.

### Organization

30 x 20 area the players on the line should all have a ball. Select two players to act as “Taggers,” they will be in the middle of the grid (they should wear pinnies), the jellies will also have their ball.

### Objectives

Further development and pressure of the passing, turns and fakes in a fun game environment.

The players dribble their balls across the area to the other side. The two “Taggers” dribble and pass their balls to tag the other player’s balls as they run across. If tagged, the player gets a pinnie on and becomes a jelly. The goal of the game is to avoid being tagged by the “jellies” with sole of the foot rollovers or fakes away from the taggers. Players must remain inside the Reef, if they dribble outside of the reef they also become a jelly.

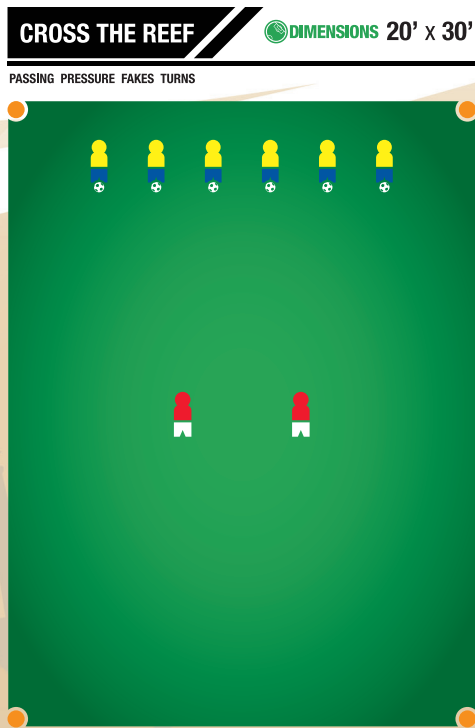
### Coaching Points Non Jellies

1. Keep your head up as you move towards the other side
2. Look for the jellies as they try to tag you.
3. When you are under pressure, do a turn or fake – Use a rapid change of speed and direction, but keep the ball close.
4. Use both feet when practicing skills and moving to the other side

### Coaching Points Jellies

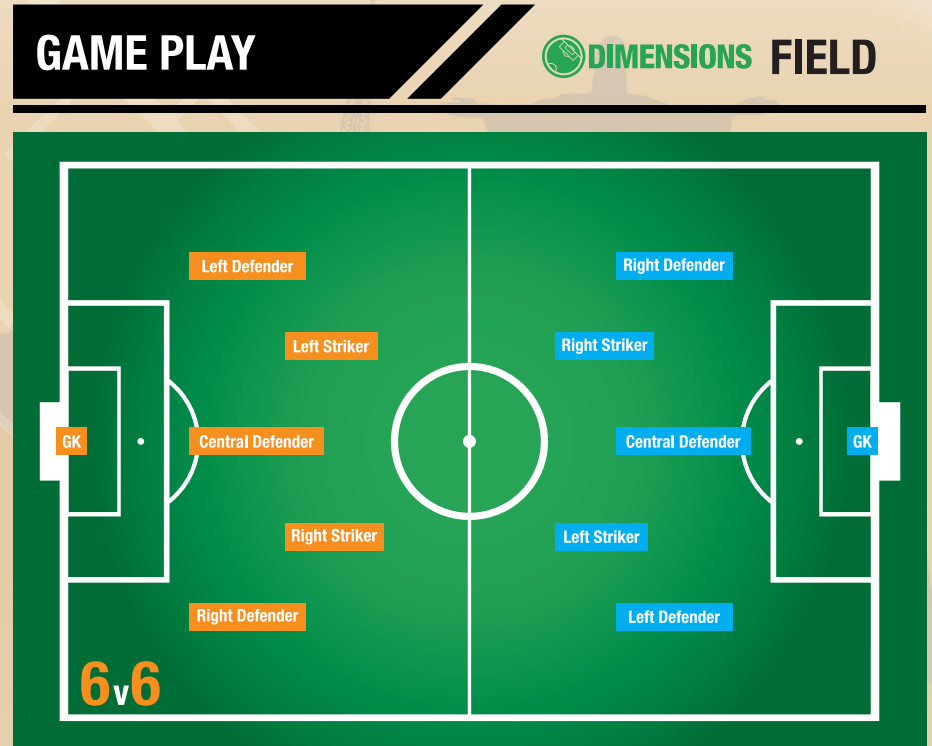
1. Use your ball to tag their ball
2. The jellies should cross in front of the players as they move towards them.
3. Place some speed on your pass so that they find it hard to move their ball away from you.
4. Fake to pass sometimes so they are never sure when you are going to get them.

Repeat the game several times for approximately 10 minutes. The last two players at the end of each game become the jellies for the next game.



## GAME PLAY

Play 6v6 focus on the three offensive and defensive points from week 1.





## EXTENDED ACTIVITY

### Objective

Further development of fakes, feints and changes of speed or direction to evade an opponent.

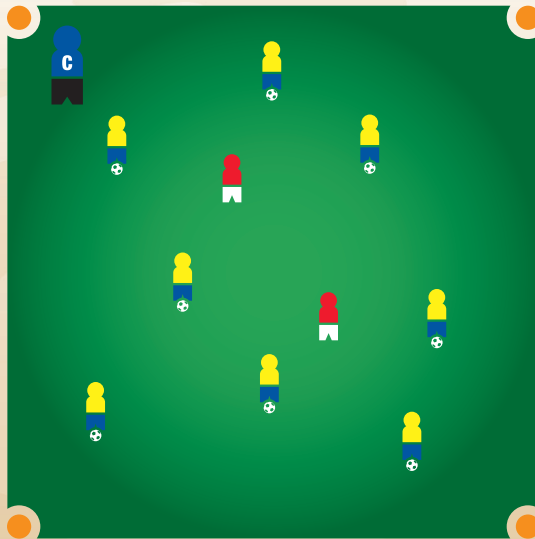
### Organization

30x30 area. Players play as individuals, each with a ball. Have two defenders without a ball. The defenders will hold one pinnie between them to make a gate.

In this activity the defenders try to take the ball away from the dribblers. If the defenders touch the ball, the person who loses the ball can now become a supporting player that other players can pass their ball to if they get into trouble from the chasing defenders. Play until the last ball is touched by the defenders.

### FAKES / FEINTS

 DIMENSIONS 30' x 30'



### Coaching Points

1. If you see the defenders coming towards you, try one of your fakes to get around them. Make sure you remember; change of speed and change of direction.
2. Keep your ball close to you.
3. If a defender touches your ball, move to help another team member keep their ball away from the defenders.
4. If you come under threat from a defender pass the ball to another player who is open.
5. Once you pass, move into a space to support your teammates.



### WORLD FACTS

The Great Barrier Reef is not one reef it is made up of lots of small reefs.

How many reefs are there? (2,900 separate reefs)

How many species of jelly fish can be found on the reef? (30 different species)

What is the biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef? (Climate change)

# WEEK 3

## GLADIATORS TO THE COLISEUM OF ROME

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones. See diagram below.

#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills. Players should dribble within the area and when they approach a cone (representing a defender) they should practice one of the following:

1. A drag back turn away from the cone (review from week 1).
2. A shoulder fake around the cone (review from week 1).

#### Coaching Points

Ask the players: What two things do we need when executing a turn or fake?

1. A change of speed to accelerate away from the defender.
2. A change of direction.

### PASSING ACTIVITY 1

#### Organization

Players work in threes – two balls between the group - Set up the cones for each group as shown in the corresponding diagram (10X10 Grid). 5-6 minutes per activity (Two activities in total).

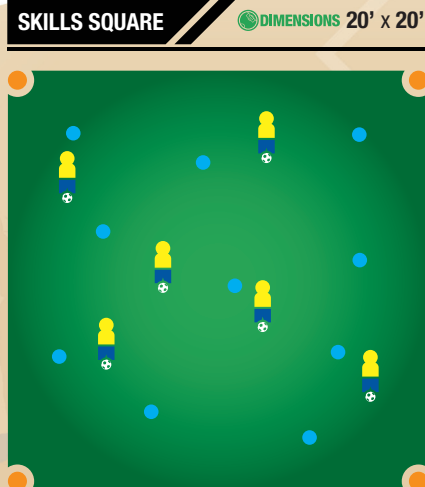
#### Objectives

Development of passing skills across a short distance: Developing control of the ball moving towards you using both feet.

The receiving player stays on the cone and plays alternate passes with the left and right foot. The feeders at the top of the diagram play a pass quickly. It is important that the players stand inside the cones.

#### Coaching Points

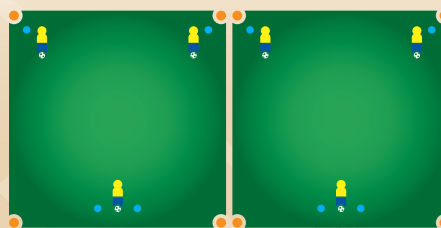
For basic passing coaching points, please see week 1. (Page 10)



#### PASSING

10' x 10' GRID

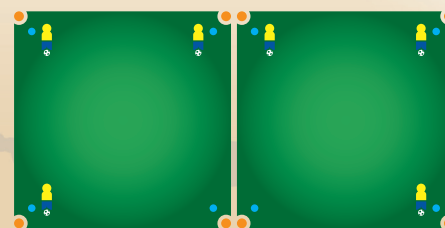
#### ACTIVITY 1



#### PASSING

10' x 10' GRID

#### ACTIVITY 2



### ACTIVITY 2

The receiving player now moves from side to side playing alternate passes with the left and right foot. When moving between the cones, shuffle across, don't run.

Emphasize the accuracy of the pass for the players feeding the ball in is key, this is more important than speed initially.

#### Coaching Points Passer

1. Think about the timing of the pass. Each player has to time the pass to reach the player at the correct time. Pass the ball when the receiving player makes the pass to the other person (passer).
2. You have to ensure that you play the pass to the correct foot of your partner shuffling side to side.

#### Coaching Points Receiver

1. Shuffle across quickly to get to the other pass.
2. Be on your toes.
3. Control the ball in front of you with 1st touch and pass back with your second touch.

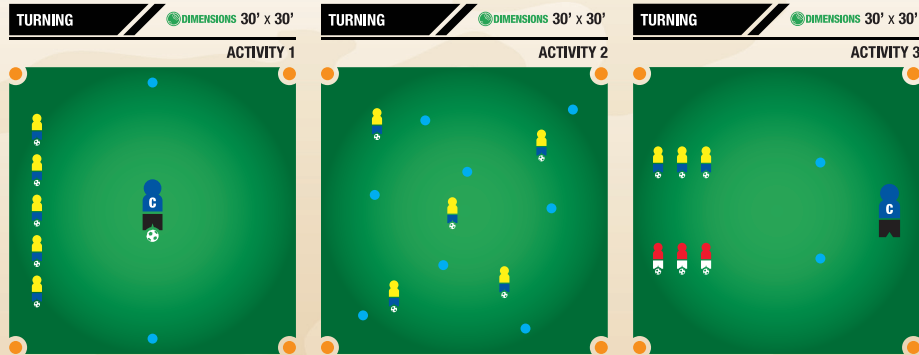


## TURNING PRACTICE ACTIVITY 1

### The inside hook turn

#### Organization

30x30 area. 4-5 minutes / activity



One ball for each player for all three turning activities: Set up as shown in Activity 1 diagram, all players on one end with the coach facing them 10 yards away. Once you demonstrate, allow them to practice the turn while you encourage and give pointers.

#### ACTIVITY 2

Each player now takes the turn into an active environment. The player dribbles up to a cone and then turns away from the cone, emphasizing change of speed and direction. This week, introduce turning away to one of the corner cones.

#### ACTIVITY 3

Three player races, divide players up into two groups of three. On your signal players race around the designated cones and back.

#### Objectives

To introduce and practice the inside Hook turn.

#### Coaching Points Inside Hook Turn

1. Start standing behind the ball.
2. Reach around the ball with your right foot.
3. With your big toe using one sharp cut pull the ball back in the opposite direction.
4. As you turn, pivot on your standing foot and pull the ball back quickly behind you so that it travels 3-4 feet.
5. Turn quickly over your left shoulder and follow the ball.



## FAKES ACTIVITY 1

### Fake to stop and go move.

#### Organization

Each player with a ball, two activities as laid out in the diagrams below. 4-5 minutes per activity



#### Objectives

To develop the technique and skill of a “fake, to stop and go,” move.

Start from a standing position. The coach must demonstrate this fake side ways on to the group.

1. Place the ball in front of the player.
2. From standing - player takes the foot over the top of the ball and fakes to bring it back as if they are move the ball backwards. (But does not touch the ball).
3. The Player then moves the ball forward with toe or instep rapidly and sprints off in a forward motion.
4. Repeat 6-10 times from standing still.
5. Move into doing the fake walking and then lightly jogging.



## ACTIVITY 2

### Players choice.

In this activity we start to empower and give the players the option to choose which fake or turn to choose at any given moment.

All of the above coaching points: have the players walking to start with not running otherwise their technique will diminish.

Slowly build up to Jogging speed, if you see players moving too fast and not practicing correct technique make them go back to walking.

As the players dribble around the area they can practice the fake to stop and move on, but now they have an option they can actually do a drag back to turn and go the other way. Give the players the flexibility to be creative in linking the turns and fakes.

As the coach, it is important that you discuss the following:

If you have a defender on you, you can choose which fake or turn to use depending if you want to go past (stop and go) or backwards (drag back turn).



## FUN GAME

### Gladiators at the Coliseum in Rome



Last week we were in Australia on the Australian Continent. Today we are going to make the journey to Europe specifically to Rome Italy. That is where the ancient Roman Coliseum is. We are going to travel North West to Italy, start from Australia #4 and move North West; the Coliseum is number 9 on the globe. The Coliseum was built almost 2000 years ago during the Roman Empire and it was used to hold plays and shows for the public but it was most famous as the place where gladiators fought each other. Many battles were held at the coliseum and today we are going to battle to see who our most outstanding gladiator is. To travel to Rome, step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three, imagine we are traveling through space to the Coliseum.

Many battles were conducted at the Coliseum, today we are going to battle to see who the most outstanding gladiator is.

## Organization

20x20 area, four players in each square. Group the players in pairs – One defender and one attacker in each pair, both start with a ball.

## Objectives

Further development of the turns and fakes in a 1v1 environment.

## Activity

The attacker chases the defender and tries to pass their ball to hit the defender's ball as many times as they can in one minute. Rotate the attacker and defender after one minute and see who the winner is.

After each has battled, take the winner from each pair and pair them up. Repeat the exercise with the new pairs; keep putting the winners together to find that day's most outstanding gladiator. Make sure the non-winners are encouraged to continue to battle, pair them up to keep them practicing, if you wish you can have everyone watch the last two Gladiators battle each other.

## Coaching Points Attacker with the ball

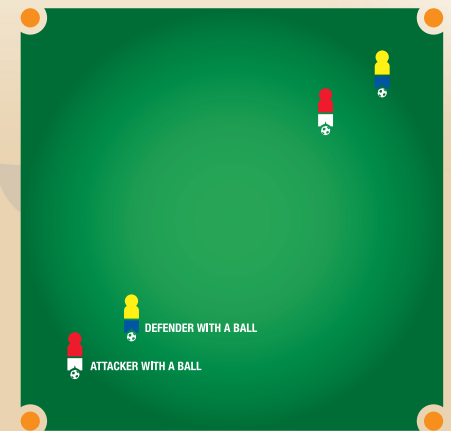
1. Keep the ball in front of you and be ready to turn at moment.
2. Pass with speed to hit the other player's ball.
3. Fake to pass sometimes so that the other player is never sure when you are going to get them.

## Coaching Points Defenders

1. Keep your head up and look for the players trying to tag your ball.
2. Use a quick change of speed and direction with a turn to get away.
3. Use the fake to stop and go to evade the chaser.
4. Encourage shielding of the ball (putting themselves in between their ball and the opponent) to protect it from being hit.

## GLADIATORS

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'





## GAME PLAY

Play a 5v5. Focus on the defenders getting "Goal Side" from all restarts, goal kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins as a follow up from today's session.

If a defender is "goal side" this means that they have their body between the attacker and their own goal. This forms the basics of defending from all re-starts, goal kicks, corner kicks, and throw ins. This will make it more difficult for the opposition to score. (See pictures below for correct application of goal side)  
Progress to trying to get each player into a "goal side" position when your team loses possession of the ball. Ask each player to "mark" the nearest opposing player they are closest to. By "marking" we refer to being "goal side" on that player.

Duration 10-15 minutes

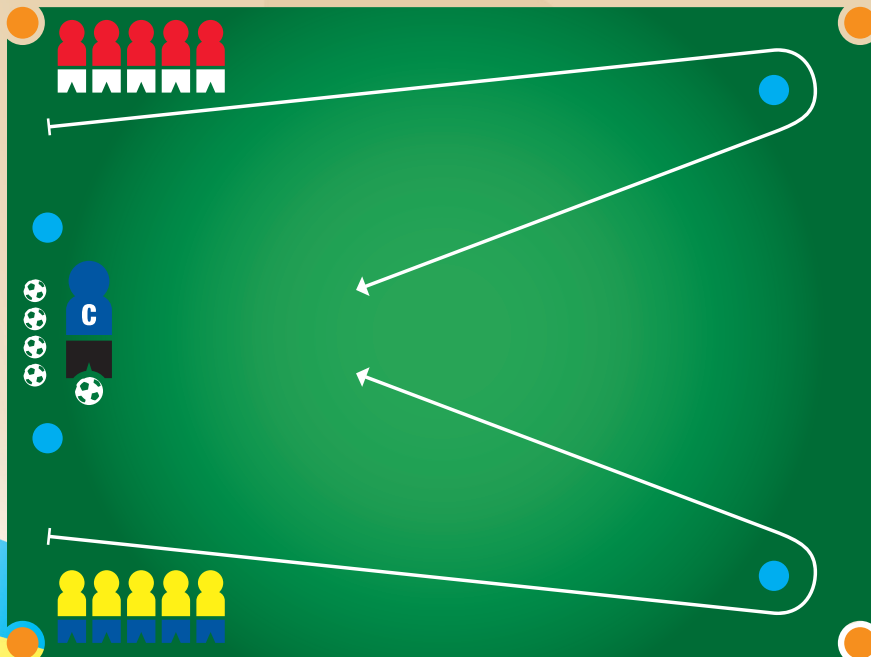
### Organization

Layout a 15 x 20 ft square. The coach plays the goal keeper with a stack of balls inside the goal. Two teams which are numbered are split evenly on each side of the goal.

## GAME PLAY

 **DIMENSIONS** 15' x 20'

## EXTENDED ACTIVITY



### Objective

2nd player to the ball's objective is to get "goal side" to defend the space between the attacker and their goal and not the ball. The 1st person to the ball should attempt to score.

The coach will call out a number from each team and they will run around the cone at the top and play 1v1 to score. Either player can be a defender and attacker both players are trying to score.

### Progressions

Feed the ball in on the ground to start with and then progress to feeding the ball in bouncing or in the air.

1v1 scoring and defending.



## WORLD FACTS

The Coliseum could hold up to 80,000 people? (True)

The floor of the coliseum could be flooded so that they could have water performances? (True)

Under the floor there are tunnels and cages where they kept animals? (True)

## WEEK 4

### STONEHENGE

#### SKILLS SQUARE

##### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones. See diagram below.

##### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills. Players should dribble within the area and when they approach a cone (representing a defender) they should practice one of the following:

1. A drag back turn away from the cone (review from week 1).
2. A shoulder fake around the cone (review from week 1).

##### Coaching Points

Ask the players: What two things do we need when executing a turn or fake?

1. A change of speed to accelerate away from the defender.
2. A change of direction.

#### PASSING ACTIVITY 1

##### Circle Drills

##### Organization

Set up a circle 40' in diameter. Split the group in two. Half start inside the circle, half start outside with a ball. Players are instructed to get open (it's the act of getting open when they are in a game situation, here it's important for them to change direction and speed as there is no defenders) and receive a pass, trap and play it back to the player they received it from.

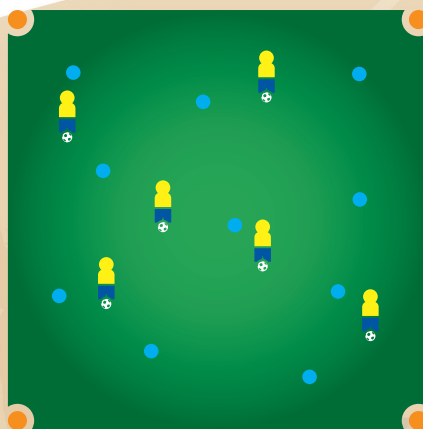
It's a good idea if you have extra balls handy as sometimes you may have them skyrocketing all over the place! Assistant coaches/parents can help shag.

##### Objectives

Development of passing skills across a short distance & ball control with both feet. Receiving a pass and passing it back to the same person. Player One in the middle

#### SKILLS SQUARE

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'



of the circle moves randomly around the circle receiving a pass from players on the outside and passing the back to the same person they received it from.

##### Coaching Points

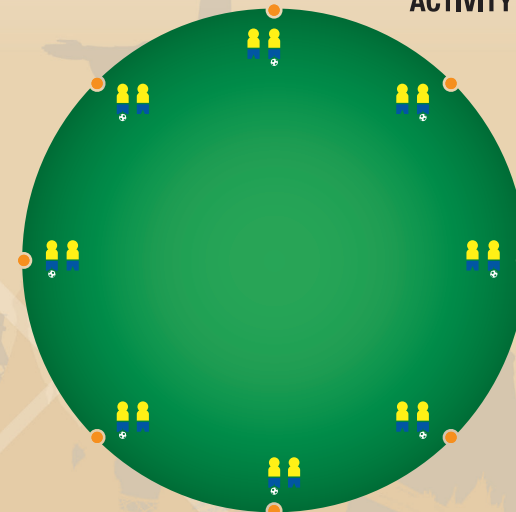
1. Emphasis on the accuracy of the pass and the quality of the ball control are more important than speed.
2. Ensure that the players are not too close when receiving the passes.
3. Ensure that players are not just moving from one person to the next on the outside. Have them change direction and speed across the circle to mock getting away from defenders.

Repeat 2-3 times.

#### PASSING CIRCLE

40' x 40' CIRCLE

##### ACTIVITY 1



#### ACTIVITY 2

Players now receive a pass, control, turn and then pass the ball to another player outside circle; not the one they received the pass from.

##### Coaching Points

1. Move towards the ball.
2. Be on your toes.
3. Control the ball in front of you with 1st touch and then a quick turn with your second touch.
4. When you turn, keep your head up and look for someone on the outside without a ball (In a game situation this is teaching the players to look for an open teammate and teach field awareness). Give a pass to a player on the outside with a ball.



## TURNING ACTIVITY 1

### Outside Hook

#### Organization

30x30 area. 4-5 minutes per activity.

One ball per player for all three turning activities: Set up as shown in diagram 1, all players on one end, with the coach facing them 10 yards away. Demonstrate the turn, then have them practice so you can encourage and critique.

### ACTIVITY 2

Each player now takes the turn into an active environment. The player dribbles up to a cone and turns away from the cone, emphasizing change of speed and direction. This week introduce turning away to one of the corner cones. Giving them a target to turn to.

### ACTIVITY 3

Three player races, up around a cone and back (same as week 3).

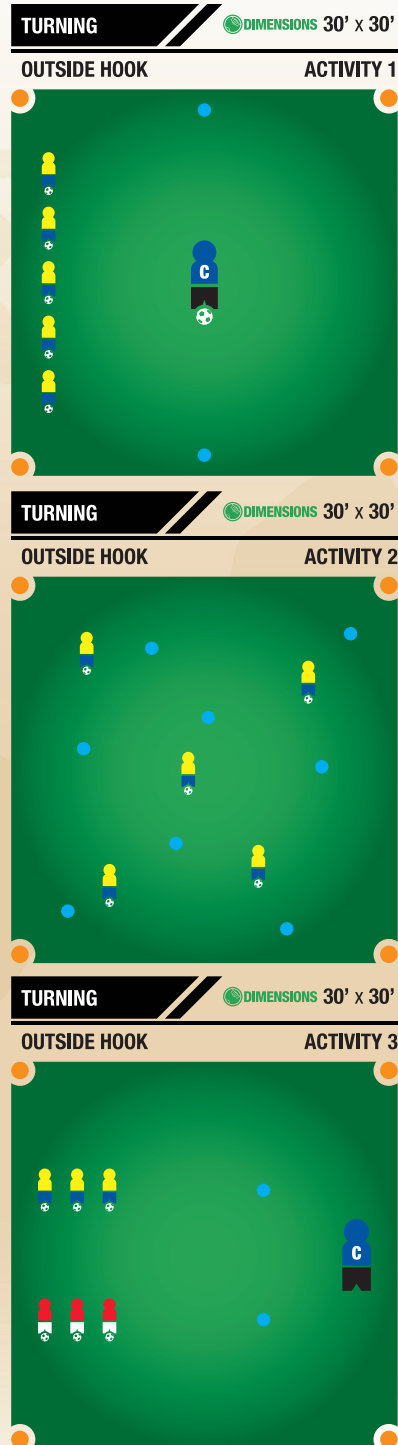
#### Objectives

To introduce and practice the outside Hook turn.

#### Coaching Points

##### Outside Hook Turn

1. Stand behind the ball, with the compass on the ball facing away from you.
2. Reach around the inside of the ball with your right foot, leading with the outside of the foot so that your little toe is touching the compass.
3. When your toe touches the compass, using one sharp move, pull the ball back in the opposite direction behind you.
4. Pivot on your standing foot as you turn and pull the ball back quickly behind you so that it travels 3-4 feet.
5. Turn quickly over your right shoulder and follow the ball.



## FAKES ACTIVITY 1

### Reverse step over to protect the ball

#### Organization

Each player with a ball, two activities. 4-5 minutes per activity.

#### Objectives

To develop the technique and skill of a reverse step over.



#### Coaching Points

Start from a standing position. The coach should demonstrate this fake both ways with the defender behind him facing the group. And also facing the same way as the players to ensure the players know which way to turn.

1. Place the ball in front of the player in the classic starting position.
2. From Standing - Player fakes taking his right foot around over the front of the ball the player touches the ground briefly with the right foot and takes the same foot back towards the ball pushing it away in the opposite direction with the little toe.
3. Repeat 5-8 times from standing still.



## ACTIVITY 2

Away from the defender / Players work in pairs. One defender and One attacker to start. The defender can only use their weaker foot to make a challenge. As you progress the defender can use any foot to steal the ball.

In this activity we start to think about protecting the ball and moving away from the defender. The players have the option to choose to fake or turn at any given moment. The attacking player tries to lose the defending player using the whole area using all of the above coaching points:

As the players dribble around the area, they can perform any turn they have learned, to evade their partner.

Encourage the players to have a very quick change of speed and direction to get away from their partner.



## FUN GAME Visiting Stonehenge



Has anyone heard of a place called Stonehenge? Stonehenge is the name of a mysterious group of huge stones. Does anyone know where Stonehenge is? Stonehenge is in Salisbury, England? No one knows for sure who built Stonehenge but there are legends that say they may have been built by giants. Some of the stones are so big they weigh as much as 25 cars. Stonehenge was built almost 5000 years ago and legend says the Giants don't like people touching them, so we are going to play a fun game where a Giant chases you around the stones. First we have to go to Stonehenge, we were in Rome last week, find Rome (#9) on your Imagineers ball and we have to go to #10 to get to England – England is an island in Europe. We have to travel northwest from Italy to get to England, so step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to Stonehenge.

In your pairs, one of you is going to be dribbling your ball in and out of the stones and the other partner is going to play the Giant. The Giant has a ball also and tries to tag you or your ball with their ball by kicking the ball to hit you (emphasize below the knees). As the Giants are so big they cannot run between or the pillars (cones) they have to run around them.

### Objectives

Further development of fakes and passing.

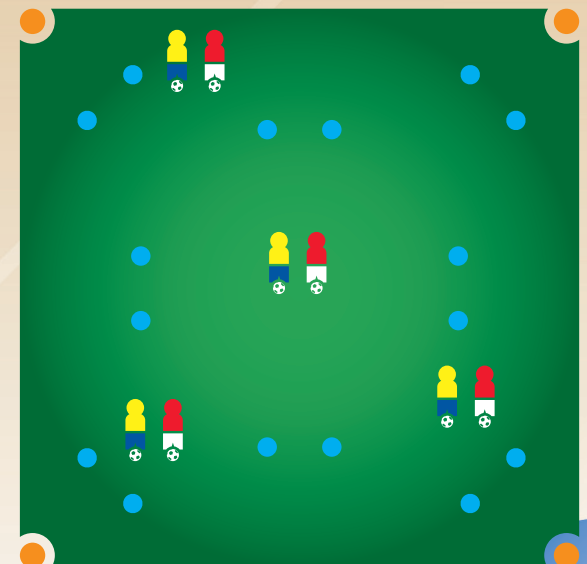
### Organization

Set up the cones as the pillars like Stonehenge. If you have coaching sticks or corner flags you may use these in place of cones.

Players work in pairs each with a ball to start. The giant is chasing the attacker, trying to tag them with the ball.

### GAME PLAY

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'





Once the giant tags the attacker they swap roles.

1. Only the attacker can run through the stone pillars. The giant must run around the Stone Pillars.
2. The giant must use their variety of skills to get around the gates and tag the other person or their ball with their ball, by passing it to hit them on the knee or below.

### Coaching Points Giants

1. Keep the ball in front of you and be ready to turn in another direction at any moment.
2. Pass with Speed.
3. Fake to pass and then pass so that they are not sure when you are going to tag them.

### Coaching Points Attackers

1. Keep your head up always be aware of where the giants are.
2. Use a rapid change of speed and direction to get away.



### Advanced Progression

Take the ball away from the non-Giant, this will make it more difficult for the chaser to keep up.

## GAME PLAY

Play a regular scrimmage, focus again on getting “goal side” when you do not have the ball. (See week 1-3 for coaching points.)

### Objective

To develop game play, possession of the ball and to reinforce techniques learned from the day.

### Organization

30 x 50 Area as shown in the diagram play 6v4 or 7v5. Use Pinnies to distinguish between teams. Duration - 10-15 Minutes

Two teams play against each other to try and pass the ball to the teammate in the End Zone. Each time the ball is passed into the end zone the team scores a goal.



### Advanced Progression

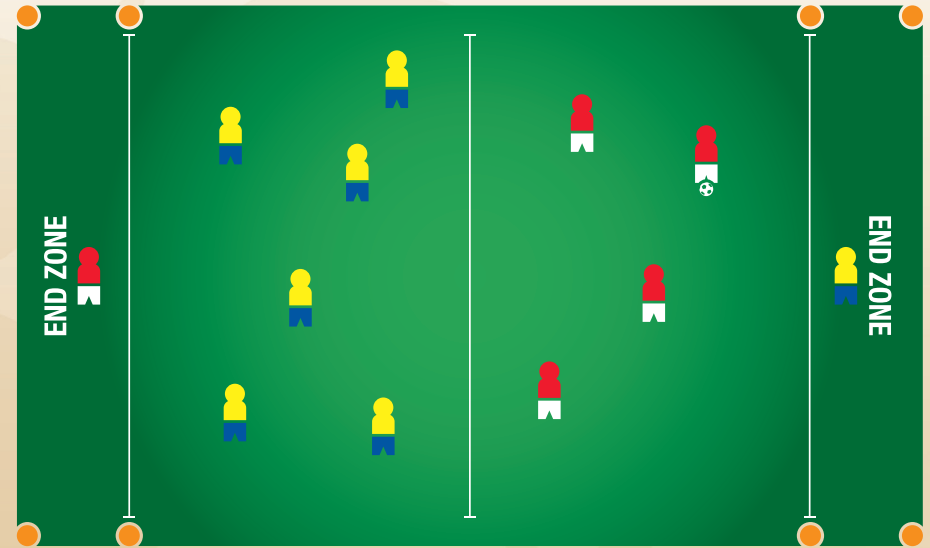
When a goal is scored the passer of the ball swaps place with the end zone player.

If one team is dominating, switch the teams to level the playing field.

## GAME PLAY

 **DIMENSIONS** 30' x 50'

## EXTENDED ACTIVITY



### Coaching Points

1. Get a good first touch to control the ball.
2. Keep your head up look for a pass or a person to pass to.
3. If you cannot get the ball move into a space where you can receive the ball (remember the line rule).
4. Pass the ball with accuracy. Give a good weight on the pass enough to get to your team mate but not too much that they find it hard to control.
5. Make decisions quickly.
6. Defenders; you are trying to clog the passing lanes to create turnovers (so the person with the ball has nobody to pass to).



### WORLD FACTS

The largest stones weighed 50 tons? (True)  
No one knows who actually built Stonehenge? (True)

# WEEK 5

## THE GRAND CANYON

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones. See diagram below.

#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills. Players should dribble within the area and when they approach a cone (representing a defender) they should practice one of the following:

1. A drag back turn away from the cone (review from week 1).
2. A shoulder fake around the cone (review from week 1).

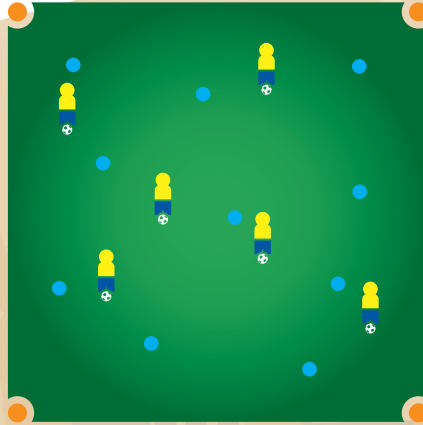
#### Coaching Points

Ask the players: What two things do we need when executing a turn or fake?

1. A change of speed to accelerate away from the defender.
2. A change of direction.

### SKILLS SQUARE

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'



### PASSING ACTIVITY 1

#### Circle Drills

#### Organization

Set up a circle 40' in diameter. Players work in pairs with two balls, one in play and one the outside of the circle as a spare.

#### Objectives

1. Development of passing skills across a short distance and turning with the ball.
2. Development of control of the ball moving towards you with both feet.

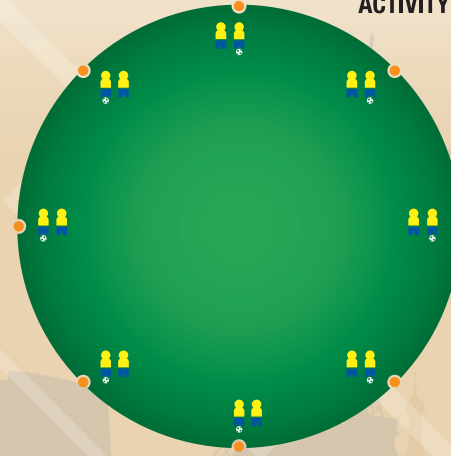
### PASSING CIRCLE

40' x 40' CIRCLE

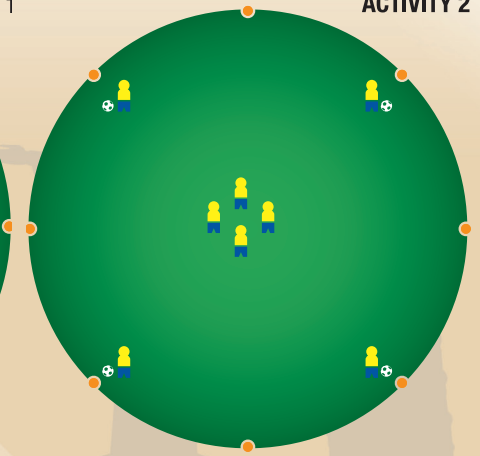
### PASSING CIRCLE

40' x 40' CIRCLE

#### ACTIVITY 1



#### ACTIVITY 2



First review the previous week. Spend 2-3 minutes reviewing last week's activity of passing back to the player you received the ball from and moving around the circle.

Progression from last week. For this activity the player on the inside will now receive a pass from the outside server and look for another outside feeder to play the ball to (this forces them to pick their head up and look around for an open player). The first touch should control the ball just in front of them. Instead of playing the ball back to the server the player will then make a turn away from the server and then look to pass the ball to a different server on the opposite side.



#### Advanced Progression

Rapid passing and turning. Players now receive a pass, controlling the ball and they make two quick passes with the person on the outside before turning and passing to someone else on the outside. So the sequence should be the following:

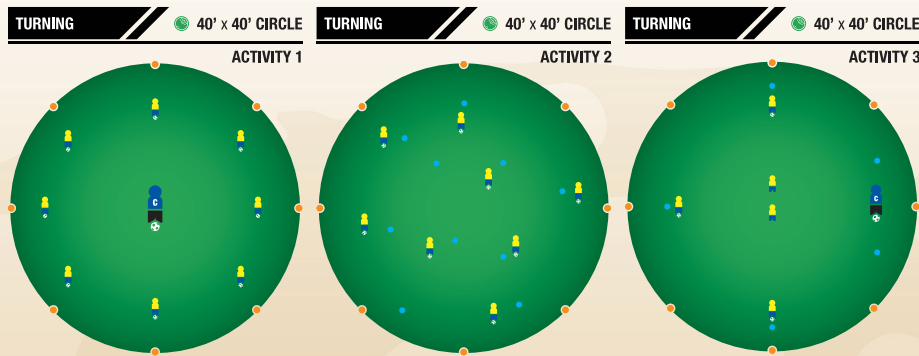
1. Player on the outside passes the ball.
2. Player on the inside passes back to the same person on the outside.
3. Player on the outside passes the ball back to the same person again.
4. Player on the inside now controls the ball and turns away passing the ball to someone else on the outside.

Look for quick touches to control the ball and a quick pass, by now they should feel confident with their ability to control the ball, pass it at a fairly rapid pace.



## TURNING ACTIVITY 1

### Using the outside of the foot



#### Organization

In the circle used for the first activity 4-5 minutes per activity. One Ball each player for all three turning activities:

#### Objectives

To introduce and practice moving the ball with the outside of the foot.

1. Moving the ball with the outside of the foot.
2. Stand with the ball on the outside of the strongest foot.
3. By bending at the knee, take the foot away from the ball and then back towards the ball with the outside of the foot pushing the ball away from the body.
4. Practice with both feet.

## ACTIVITY 2

1. Dribble towards a cone and move the ball away from the cone with the outside of the foot.
2. Dribble the ball around the circle, when they arrive at a cone, take the foot away from the ball first (almost a fake across the ball) and then push the ball with the outside of the foot.
3. Work with both Feet.

## ACTIVITY 3

Receiving the ball from a pass and taking it with the outside of the foot. Split the group in half with half on the outside of the circle with a ball (player 1) and half on the inside (player 2) (similar to previous drill using the circle with trapping/passing).

Player 1 passes the ball to player 2 who controls the ball with the outside of the foot as before. Player 2 emphasizes control of the ball (using both feet, outside of the foot) and passes back to the same player who passed them the ball. Progression would be if you feel that the players can execute with good technique then player

2 can play a pass to the person on their right (or left depending on foot being used) on the outside of the circle (instead of back to the player that passed to them which would apply in a game where they are developing the movement of the ball).

## FAKES & V CUTS ACTIVITY 1

#### Organization

Each player with a ball, two activities as laid out in the diagrams below. 3-5 minutes per activity.



#### Objectives

To develop the technique and skill of a V cut (This fake can be a challenging fake for younger players, keep coaching the basic technique).

#### Coaching Points

Start from a standing position. Each player stands behind a cone. The cone is the static defender. The coach must demonstrate this fake with a cone in front of him and then facing the same way as the group is facing. Have assistant coaches work with the other players.

1. The ball is placed in front of the player. The player plays the ball forward and to the left 1 ft at a 45 degree angle with the sole of the foot all of the time keeping the sole of the foot in contact with the ball. The player then pulls the foot back again keeping the sole of the foot on the ball. As the ball returns to the starting position the player then open their body up and plays the ball to the right at a 45 degree angle away from the cone moving off at speed.
2. Have the players work slowly to begin with.

- Repeat several times from standing until the player has developed a sound technique, if the player has not mastered the technique do not progress to activity 2.



## ACTIVITY 2

Fakes and cuts away from the static defender. For this activity, the players will do the same fake but will be moving towards the cones. Start from walking to light jogging to  $\frac{3}{4}$  pace as their technique develops.



### FUN GAME

Trip through the Grand Canyon, down the river



Last week we were in England at Stonehenge. Today we are going to take a trip across the Atlantic Ocean back to America and go to visit the Grand Canyon. Let's find out where we were last week; #10 in England. Does anyone know which number the Grand Canyon is? (#2) The Grand Canyon is 277 miles long and at some points a mile high and 18 miles wide. The Colorado River runs all the way through the gorge. We are going to take a raft

journey down the river but we will have to watch out for the rapids. Sometimes we have to go backwards, sideways and move really fast to avoid large rocks. Which way do we have to travel to go from England to the Grand Canyon? (West), let's step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to the Grand Canyon.

### Organization

Each player has a ball at their feet. Group the team together in the middle.

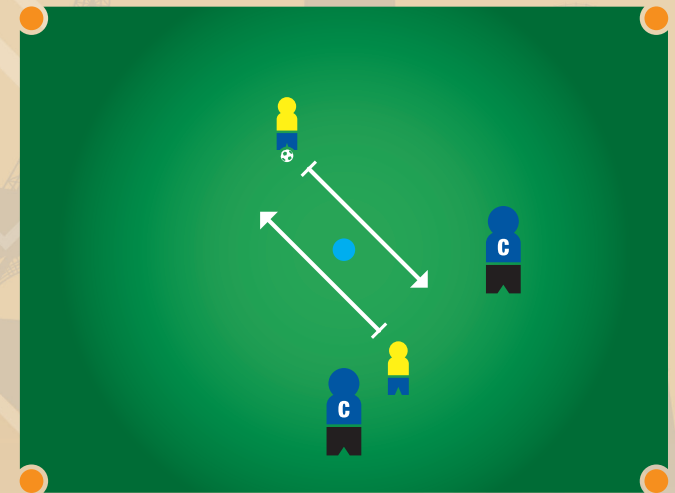
### Objectives

Further development of dribbling and evading.

Activity description- As the coach you are the group leader on a boat going down the river. Call out commands as if you were going down the rapids.

### FUN GAME

 DIMENSIONS 15' x 20'



- Calm Water. Now we can move around the river slowly.
- Faster water. We will go a lot quicker now.
- Large rocks ahead, let's all move backwards or to a side of your choice.
- Lets rest for a moment, dribble the ball to the side and anchor the boat.
- Boat over turned (everyone throws their ball into the air and falls on the ground getting up quickly to place their foot on top of the ball).
- Make up your own activities to form an extended experience down the river.

If you are playing this activity on a very hot day, as the coach (or assistants/parents), you can carry a couple of bottles of water with you and then you can spray a little water over the players to make the adventure seem real.



## GAME PLAY

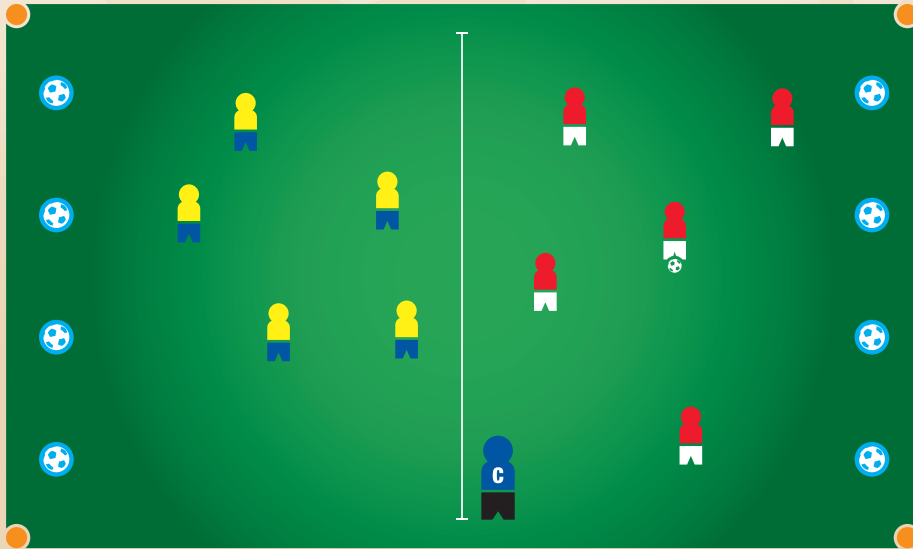
### Objective

To develop passing and movement techniques.

## GAME PLAY

 **DIMENSIONS** 30' x 50'

## EXTENDED ACTIVITY



### Organization

Set up a 50x30 field with 4-5 cones on each end of the area with a ball on top of each cone.

Play 5v5 6v6. A point is scored by knocking off a ball from the cone. Balls are replaced after they are knocked off.

### Coaching Points Attackers

1. Keep possession of the ball.
2. Focus on good, quick passes with a good pace to your team mates.
3. In order to receive a pass move into an open space.
4. Make sure that they control the ball before making another pass.

### Coaching Points Defenders

1. When your team does not have the ball, make sure that they “mark” an opposing player to stop them from receiving the ball.

2. Don't rush into a tackle; hold the play up (which allows the other players to get back and re-group) and wait for the right time to make a challenge.



## WORLD FACTS

The Grand Canyon is the deepest in the world? (False)

The Canyon is 17 Million years Old? (True)

The Grand Canyon is one of the 7 wonders of the world? (True)

# WEEK 6

## STATUE OF LIBERTY

### SKILLS SQUARE

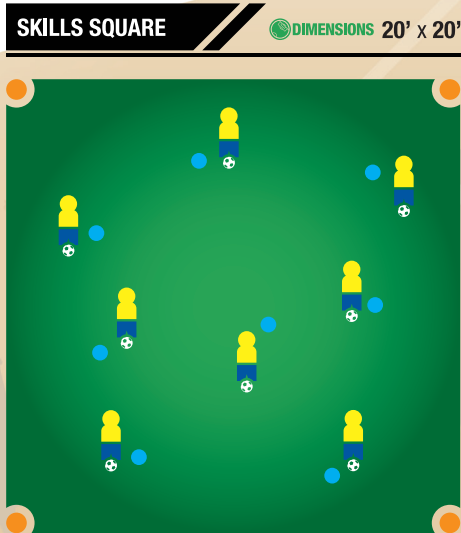
#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones - see diagram below.

#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills.

Players should focus on the turns and fakes learnt in weeks 1-5, they should start to build up speed coming into and coming out of each fake and turn. Players should also practice executing these skills using both feet.



### RESTARTS

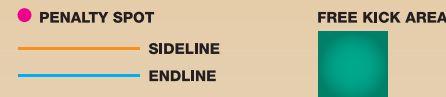
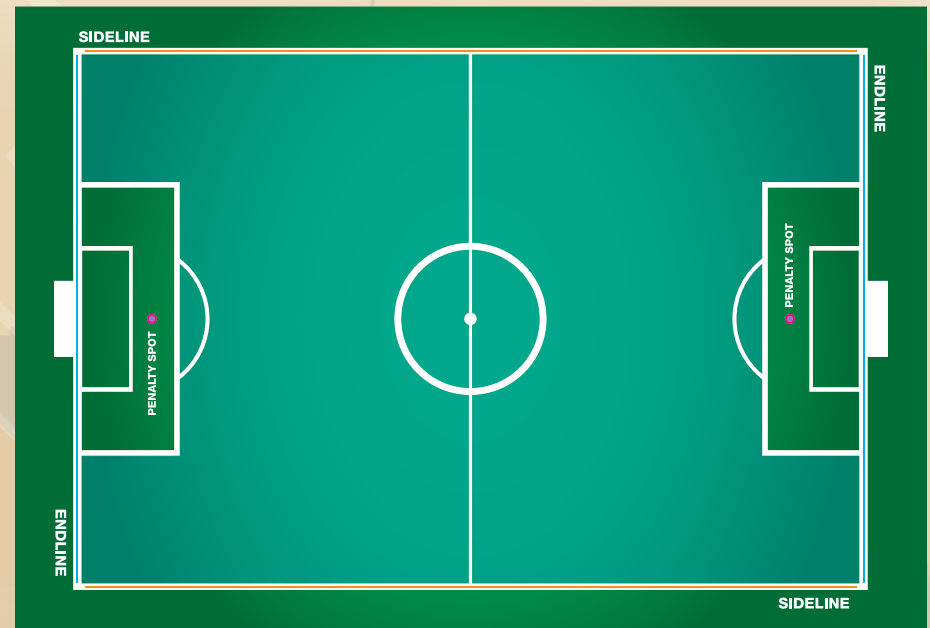
This week will focus on the basic aspects of game play, in particular the organization during a restart in play. The work will include basic positioning for the defending team which as a general rule will be “goal side” positioning. This positioning requires the defending team player to get between the attacking player and their own goal.

1. Throw in
2. Corner Kicks
3. Goal Kicks
4. Free Kicks
5. Penalty Kicks (Rarely used at this age)

The basic principal for all re-starts at this age is “to try to keep possession of the ball”, too many times at restarts the focus is on “just getting the ball back into the field of play”. This does not focus the players on the importance of maintaining possession of the ball; this should be an important consideration on all restarts. This principle will assist players greatly as they progress through their soccer playing ages. There will also be information regarding movement off the ball to evade a defender during a restart but before looking at these areas the focus will initially be on basic techniques for getting the ball back in play.

## GAME PLAY

## DIMENSIONS FIELD



#### • Sideline

If the ball goes out of play a throw in is taken.

#### • End Line

If the ball goes out over this line it is either a goal kick (attacking team kicks the ball out) or a corner kick( defending team kicks the ball out).

#### • Free Kick

Anywhere on the field of play outside of the penalty area, when a foul is called.

#### • Penalty Kick

A foul committed inside the penalty area will lead to a penalty kick. The only time a penalty kick is not awarded is for obstruction (this would result in an “in-direct” free kick).

### Defending all Re-Starts

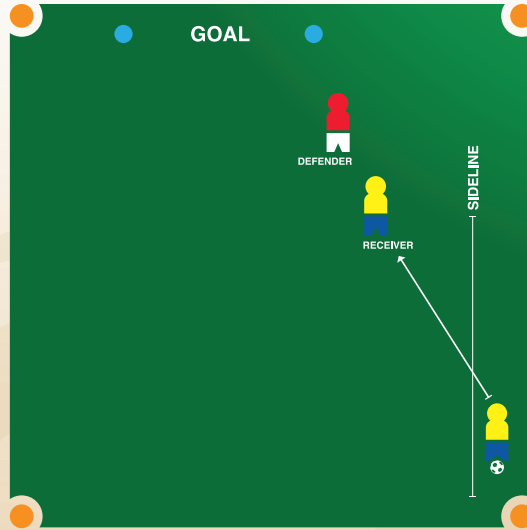
Regardless of the type of re-start the defenders should be taught to get “goal side.” Goal side can be defined as the defending player having their body between either the ball and the goal or the opponent and the goal.



## THROW INS

This is the most commonly used “re-start” in a game, statistics show that you are 10 times more likely to have a throw in than a corner kick or a goal kick.

While most players can execute a throw in, many players are afraid of receiving the ball from the throw. To help overcome this fear we will look at the technique for both the throwing of the ball and receiving of the ball from a throw in.



### Receiving a Throw In

Many coaches ask their players to “throw the ball over a players head” or “down the line,” this instruction presents a challenge in two ways;

1. Most players don’t have the power to throw the ball over a players head and often it ends up hitting the player in the face or body.
2. If they throw the ball over the players head, 9 out of 10 times possession of the ball is lost to the opposing team.

So ideally the player throwing the ball in should execute the throw to one of their team mates feet, this offers the team the best chance to maintain possession of the ball.



### Advanced Progression

1. Players throwing the ball to each other just focusing on throwing technique.
2. Players receiving the ball at their feet from an under arm throw from a team mate.
3. Players throwing the ball in and trying to control the ball with their feet.

### Movement for a Basic Throw In

If a player wants to control the ball they must have space to do so, they should therefore not get too close to the person throwing the ball in. To create space, they can move away from the thrower, taking the defender away from the space and then move back towards the thrower into the space.

## Throw in with a Decoy

One player takes the defender away to create the space for the other player to receive the ball. This player can either pass the ball back to the thrower or play the ball into the decoy.

### Corner Kicks and Free Kicks

The distances involved in re starting the game from a corner kick make maintaining possession more difficult. There is the option to play a “short corner” but at this age is a very difficult concept for them to understand and execute. It is best to encourage the players to kick the ball to the feet of one of their team mates. Even if you have a player who can kick the ball in the air the vast majority of players will duck out of the way so playing the ball on the ground provides the best option for maintaining possession.

For both corner kicks and free kicks encourage your players to play the ball on the ground to feet, the players should look to control the ball in front of them before attempting to shoot on goal.

Creating space is important and the same principles as covered for throw ins can be applied – moving away from the ball, taking the defender with you and then coming back into the space. This will give the players time and space to control the ball (Same principle as a throw in).

Many attacking teams stand in the penalty area before the ball is kicked, it is far better to teach the players to start on the outside edge of the box and when signaled by the person taking the corner, they start to run into the penalty area.

At the older levels of the game the player taking the kick will signal to their team mates by putting their hand in the air, (like the Statue of Liberty) and then drop it as they move in to take the kick. This is the signal for their team mates to move into the penalty area. This is the activity that introduces this week’s travel destination “The Statue of liberty.”



### Fun Game

#### Being the Statue of Liberty



Last week we were in the Amazon jungle, today we are going to take a trip back to America and go to visit the Statue of Liberty. Does anyone know where the Statue of Liberty is? Can you find the number on your Imagineers ball (#1). Let’s find out where we were last week; #3 in Brazil. So we have to travel North West to get to New York, let’s step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to New York.

We are going to practice taking corners and free kicks today and as part of the practice the player taking the corner or a free kick the player can pretend to be the Statue of Liberty.

**Organization**

Practice free kicks and corner kicks.

**Objectives**

To have the kicker learn to signal their team mates when they are going to kick the ball and have the players moving to create space to receive the ball at their feet.

At free kicks and corner kicks the kicker can copy the pose of the Statue of Liberty – hold their arm up in the air. When they are going to kick the ball they drop their arm to indicate to their team mates that they are about to kick the ball. The attacking players can move into space when the kicker signals – drops their arm, that they are about to kick the ball.

1. Players kicking the ball raise their arm and copy the pose of the statue
2. The receiving players should move into space when the kicking player lowers their arm.

**Penalty Kicks**

Many players will step up and try and kick the ball as hard as they can from the penalty spot, this often leads to them losing the ability to direct the ball correctly. Practice having them pass the ball into the corner of the goal (which is much more accurate).

**WORLD FACTS**

The Statue of liberty was actually designed and built by a French person? (True)

The Statue of Liberty has a sister statue, can you find out which statue this is? This second Statue of Liberty in Paris is near the Grenelle Bridge on the Île aux Cygnes, a man-made island in the river Seine. Inaugurated on July 4, 1889, it looks southwest, down river along the Seine. Its tablet bears two dates: “IV JUILLET 1776” (July 4, 1776: the United States Declaration of Independence) like the New York statue, and “XIV JUILLET 1789” (July 14, 1789: the storming of the Bastille).



# WEEK 7

## THE SAHARA DESERT

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones - see diagram below.

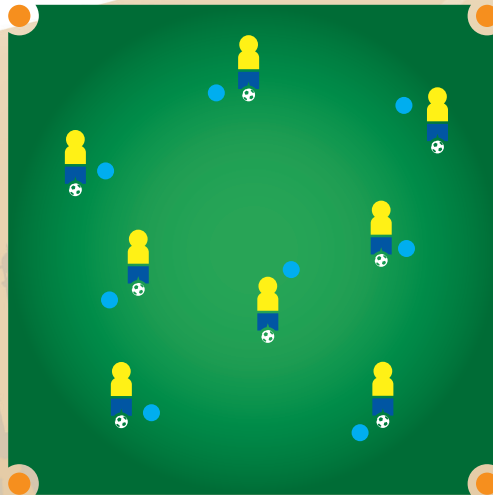
#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills.

Players should focus on the turns and fakes learned in weeks 1-5, they should start to build up speed coming into and coming out of each fake and turn. Players should also practice executing these skills using both feet.

### SKILLS SQUARE

DIMENSIONS 20' x 20'



### FUNDAMENTALS OF THE GAME

This part of the season will focus on the key fundamentals of playing the game. For the younger U8 player some of the practical aspects of execution of the skills may be challenging but players of 7 years of age and older can begin to grasp the concepts required and begin to put them into play during practice and games.

#### Keeping Possession of the ball.

A basic principal to emphasize to your players about keeping possession is that if the other team does not have the ball they cannot:

1. Pass the Ball
2. Cannot Shoot
3. Cannot Score

The ability to maintain possession is a key learning point for all age groups. At U8 it is not expected that they be able to possess the ball for as long as older players but the ability to keep the ball away from the opposing team for short periods of time is an important skill to learn. In the coming weeks there will be practices that look at keeping possession of the ball and how to delay the other team when they have possession of the ball.

### WARM UP

#### Organization

30x30 randomly place pairs of cones two feet apart around the area. Split the players into pairs.

#### Objectives

To keep the ball moving and develop simple passing strategies.

#### Activity

The players pass through the cones to a teammate and perform a wall pass. The ball is passed through the gate by player 1. Player 1 then moves to either side of the gate to receive the return pass. The players will then dribble to another set of cones and repeat. Switch players roles during the exercise.

#### Organization

Players work in pairs with 1 ball.

#### Objectives

Further development of passing and moving.

#### Coaching Points

1. Pass using the instep. Person receiving the ball ensure you control it before passing it back quickly. Pass the ball at an angle around the outside the cone.
2. If your teammate is not ready for the pass delay the pass – get used to both timing and the pace of the pass.
3. Try to keep the ball moving at all times.

Let the players play for 2-3 minutes and then ask the following questions.

1. Focus on a change of speed from the initial pass. Should they move into space slowly or at pace?
2. Should they control the ball before they pass it back?



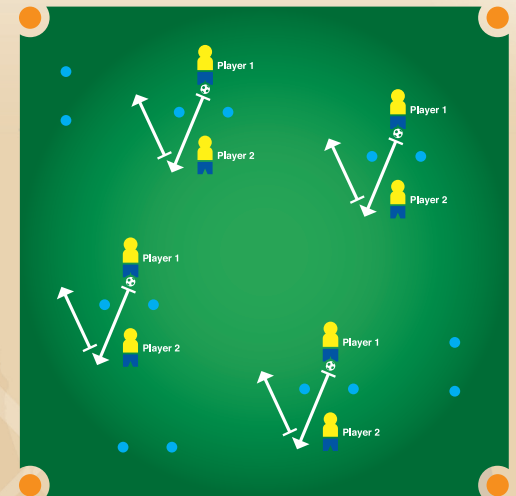
#### Advanced Progression

If you have players of advanced ability they can progress to passing the ball with just 1 touch.

### WARM UP

DIMENSIONS 30' x 30'

### KEEP THE BALL MOVING



## ACTIVITY 1

### Losing your defender

#### Organization

Split the team into groups of three to four each. In a 20x20 area, Set up as shown in the diagram. 2/3 balls per group.

#### Objectives

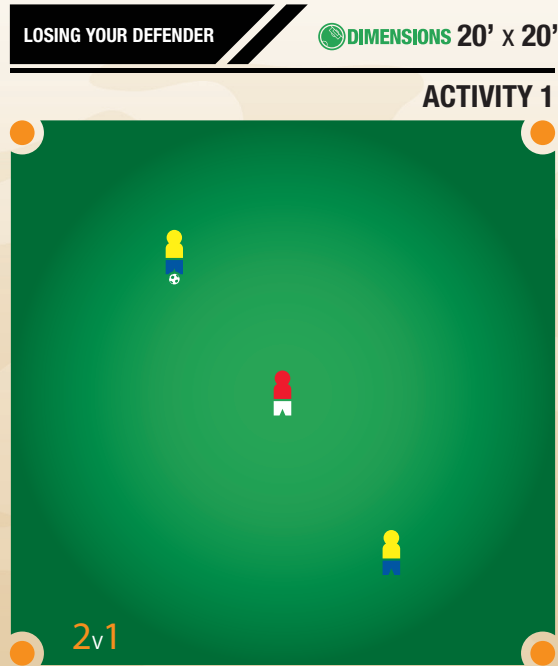
To place the technique of a wall pass under pressure.

Players play 2v1. The defender cannot approach the person with the ball. They can only try and stop the person without the ball from receiving it. The player must move the defender out of position and sharply cut back to receive the ball.

#### Coaching Points

1. Try to bring out coaching points by asking questions not telling them.
2. The defender should "mark" (stand close to) the attacker to stop them from receiving the pass.
3. The attacker must move to get open (take the defender away from where you want to receive it and cut back sharply).
4. Fake to go one way and go the other.
5. Call for the ball when you are ready to receive it not when you make your move.
6. The passer should immediately make a move into space as soon as the pass is completed.
7. The players should always be thinking; control the ball, pass the ball, move to receive the ball again.

The coach can challenge the more advanced players by restricting them to use their weaker foot only.



## ACTIVITY 2

### Keep the ball

#### Organization

Using a 20x20 area. Groups of four. One defender identified with a pinny.

#### Objectives

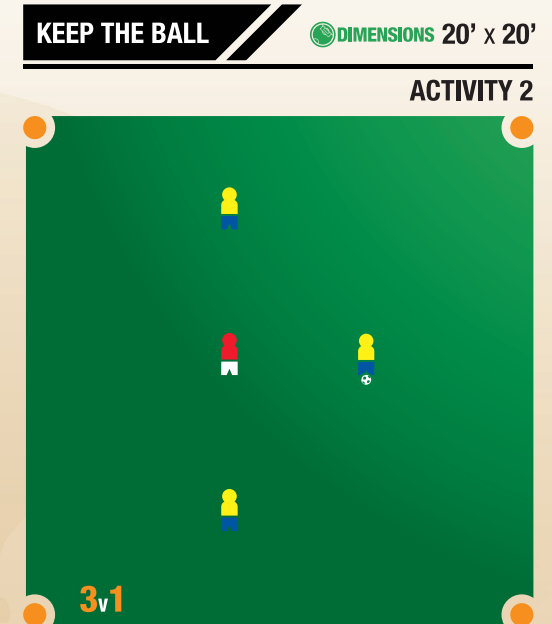
To develop Ball retention, passing and movement.

Play 3v1 when the defending player puts the attacker under pressure they must learn to make quick decisions. Player 1 starts with the ball and the defender aims to gain possession of the ball by putting the attacker under pressure. The player with the ball should always have 2 passing options left and right, thus the players on the outside should always be moving. Swap the defenders after 45 seconds to 1 minute.

#### Coaching Points

1. Draw the defender in close before passing (this gives the other players more time on the ball).
2. Fake to pass to one player pass then to the other.
3. Call for the ball in an open space.
4. You should never have the defender between you and the ball (when you don't have the ball).
5. If you do not have a pass available place your body in between the defender and the ball to shield the ball.

The coach can differentiate and make it easier for the attackers by restricting the defender to use their weaker foot only.



#### Advanced Progression

Progress to the defender being able to challenge either player.





Last week we were at? The Statue of Liberty, today we are going to travel to the Sahara Desert does anyone know where the Sahara desert is? On the African continent. Does anyone know what number on your Imagineers ball the Sahara Desert is (#8)? We have to cross the Atlantic

Ocean heading east to the Sahara let's step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to the Sahara Desert. In the desert it is very hot it can reach temperatures of up to 140 degrees and the sand is so hot you cannot stand on it for long so you have to keep moving quickly. In this game we have to keep the ball moving at all times and also keep moving at all times. You will play a pass to your partner and then move to receive the ball again, neither you nor the ball should stop moving at any time.

## GAME PLAY

Play a regular scrimmage focus on the team with the ball keeping possession of the ball. If the player is under pressure focus on keeping them calm and not just kicking the ball away as many younger players will do. Teach them to shield the ball and then turn away from the defender creating space for themselves and then look for a pass.

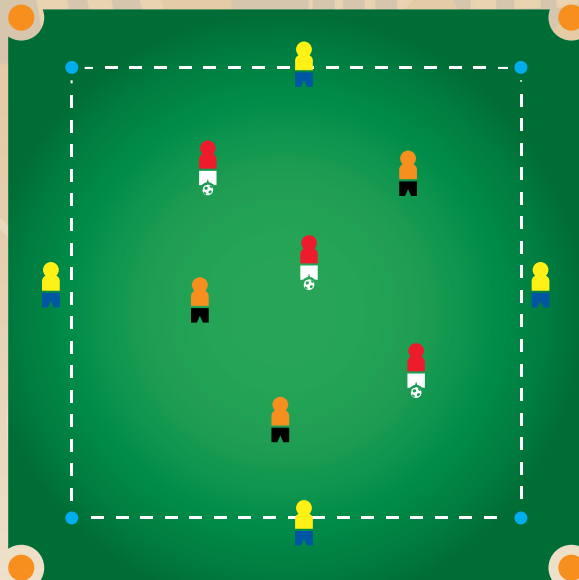
### Organization

Three even groups set up a 50x50 square with a smaller square inside as shown in the diagram. Place a different color pinnie on two of the teams. Players can play 1v1 to start with. The other team, (yellow) are the passers on the outside. The person in possession can use the extra players on the outside of the square to keep possession. The team on the outside can only pass back to the person that gave them the ball.

## GAME PLAY

 **DIMENSIONS** 50' x 50'

## EXTENDED ACTIVITY



### Advanced Progression

Two teams will play keep ball against each other in the middle.

The red team have to try and lose their partners (the orange defenders) to receive a pass from the outside and then play the ball back to the same person on the outside.

## Coaching Points

1. Take the defender away from where you want to receive the ball.
2. Cut back sharply with a change of speed.
3. Your first touch should take the ball away from the defender and towards the person on the outside.



### Advanced Progression

Play with one ball – the red team play keep ball with the yellow on the outside against the orange team. Essentially you play 8v4 but the blue team are not allowed inside the area. Rotate teams every 3 to 4 minutes.



## WORLD FACTS

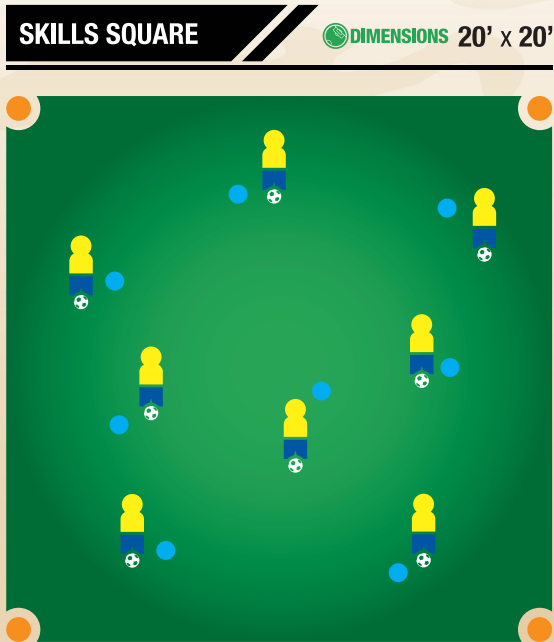
The Sahara desert is the largest desert in the world? (True) 3,500,000 square miles.

How many countries does the Sahara touch? (10) Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Sudan and Tunisia.

# WEEK 8

## The Pyramids

### SKILLS SQUARE



**Organization**  
20x20 square with 10-12 cones randomly placed inside as shown in the diagram.

**Objectives**  
This represents an activity for players when they first arrive at practice – It may review techniques and skills learned previously and warm players up.

**Activity**  
Even though practice starts at a specific time your players will start to arrive 15-20 minutes before the official start. In a typical scenario the team will start to randomly kick balls into the goal or just wait for the coach to start. Instead of this exercise in futility consider the

following. Your players can review previously learned techniques. Players dribble around the area and when they come across a cone (static defender) they practice one of the following:

1. All turns learned in weeks 1-5
2. All Fakes learned in weeks 1-5

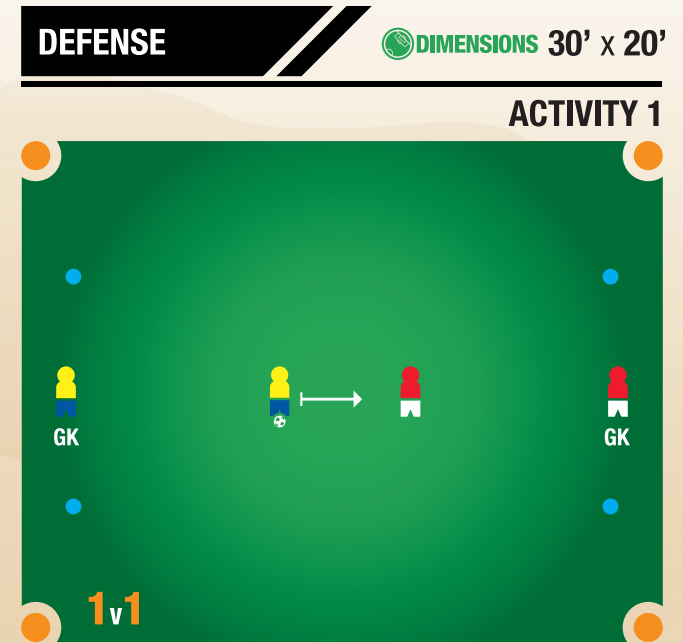
### ACTIVITY 1

#### 1v1 Stopping the attacker from shooting

**Organization**  
20 x 30 area, Set up as shown in the diagram. 2/4 balls per group.

**Objectives**  
To develop the technique of defending an opponent 1 on 1.

Players play 1v1 in the middle attempting to score in the oppositions goal. The defender should attempt to hold the player up (delay) by jockeying technique and then gain possession with a tackle. Encourage the defender to force the attacker to the outside of the grid and push them wide. Encourage the attacker to drive towards goal as soon as they create space and get a quick shot away.



**Coaching Points**  
Try to bring out coaching points by asking questions, not telling them.

1. Don't rush into a challenge.
2. Jockey (stay right on top of) the attacker and force them to the side.
3. If the attacker miscontrols the ball or plays the ball too far in front of them make a swift challenge.
4. If the defender is beaten, defend the space don't attack the ball (anticipate where the attacker will be in 3 seconds).
5. Discuss and demonstrate goal side marking.

The coach can challenge the more advanced players by restricting them to use their weaker foot only.



## ACTIVITY 2

### Last man defending

#### Organization

Using a 30x20 area. Groups of 4. One Defender identified with a pinny.

#### Objectives

To develop defending of the space. Play 2v1 when the defending player puts the attacker under pressure they must learn to make quick decisions. Player 1 starts with the ball and the defender aims to gain possession of the ball by putting the attacker under pressure. Player 1 has two options to pass to player 2 who should be in a wide advanced position or beat the defender with a fake. Player 3 (defender) starts in the corner and comes out to cover the attackers.

Rotate teams every 3-4 attempts.

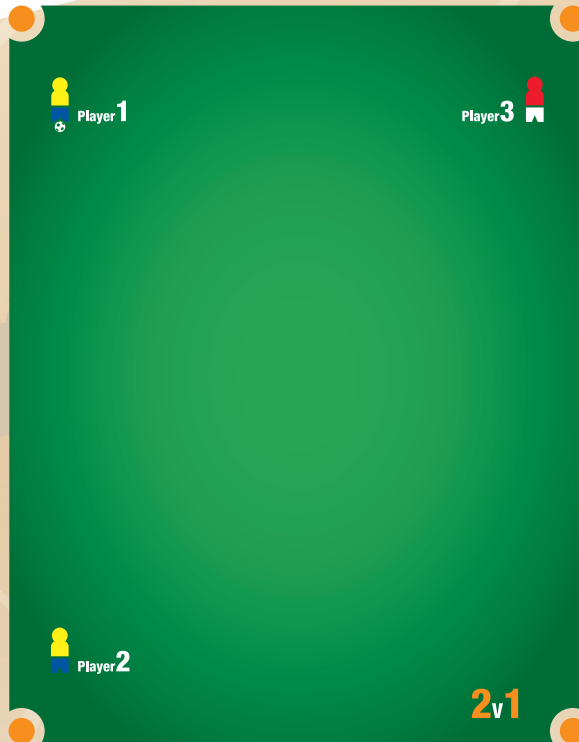
#### Coaching Points

1. Attackers draw the defender in close before passing (this gives the other players more time on the ball)
2. Fake to pass to the team mate go around and shoot yourself.
3. Player 2 should be as wide as possible. If the ball is passed to player 2 control the ball before shooting.
4. Defender. Out fast to the attacker but remember last 3 strides slow down a little
5. Position yourself to cut off the path to goal but also the easy pass to the other player.
6. If the offensive player passes to the other attacker go for the space not the ball

DEFENSE

DIMENSIONS 30' x 20'

ACTIVITY2



Last week we were in the Sahara Desert, today we are going to take a trip across Africa to Egypt and visit the Pyramids. Let's find out where we were last week; #8 in Africa. Does anyone know which number the Pyramids are? (#7) The Pyramids are also in the desert and it is hot and sandy in Egypt. In Egypt they love soccer and we are going to play a game of soccer, deep in one of the Pyramids. Let's step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to the The Pyramids.

You are deep in the heart of a pyramid in ancient Egypt with your Imagineers ball playing a game and you have woken up one of the mummies. The mummy loves soccer and wants to play, so it wants to steal your ball, if the mummy steals your ball, you become part of the mummies team and have to steal someone else's ball.

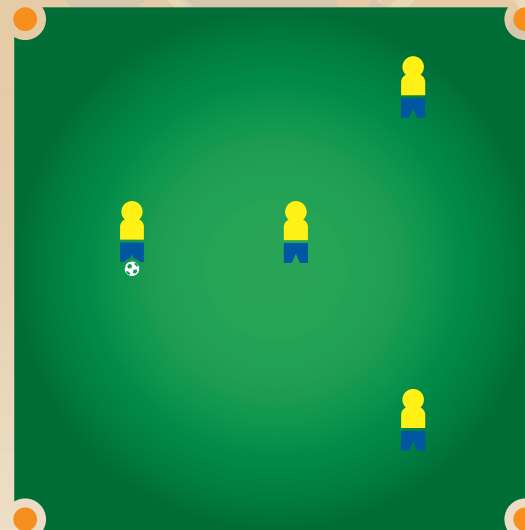


## FUN GAME

Playing soccer in the Pyramids

FUN GAME

DIMENSIONS 25' x 25'



#### Organization

25x25 square each player with a ball.

#### Objective

To introduce the block tackle.

Each player (except 1) starts with their own ball the objective of the game is for each player to keep their ball in the square (in play) using deception and ball protection techniques. The player without a ball (mummy) tries to steal a ball from another player.

If a player loses possession of their ball they become a mummy and must try to tackle an opponent and steal their ball. Encourage the players to NOT just kick the players ball out of the square.

Play 2-3 times and then introduce the correct technique for the block tackle.

#### Coaching Points

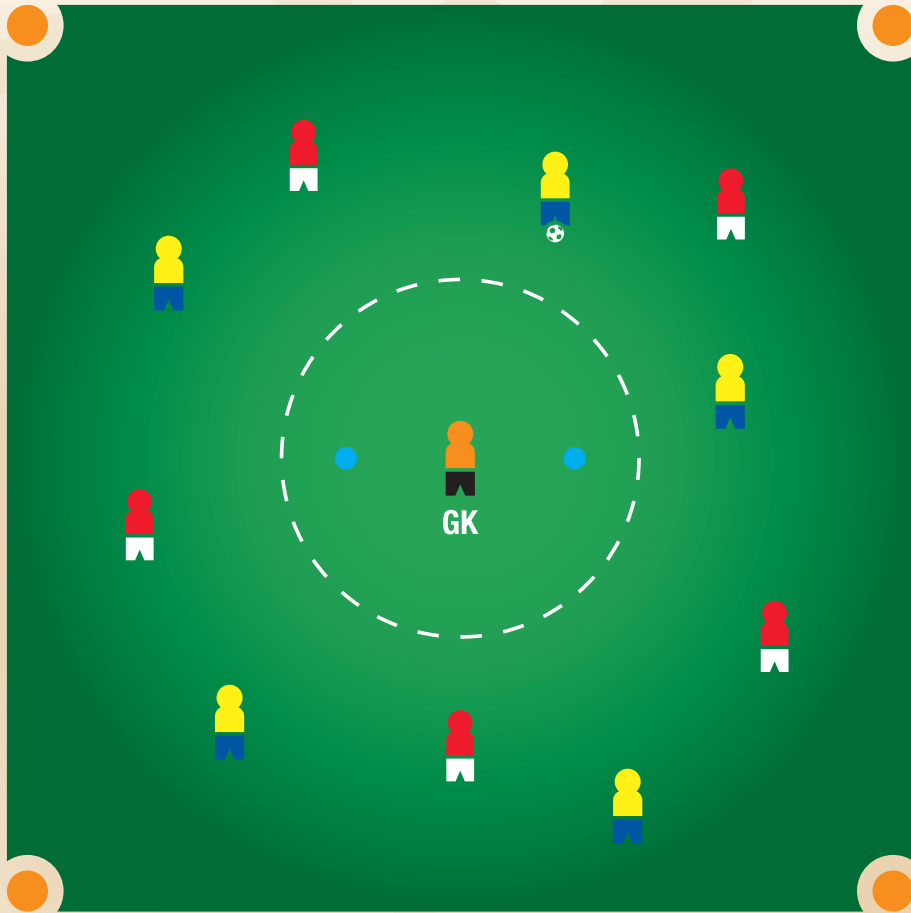
1. Move towards the player but the last 2-3 strides slow down.
2. Go in low and slow.
3. Lock the ankle and leg at a slight right angle, and tense the leg muscles.

## GAME PLAY

Man marking scrimmage with one goal

## GAME PLAY

 **DIMENSIONS** 50' x 50'



### Organization

Two teams, set up a 50x50 area as shown in the diagram. Place a small circle eight yards across as shown in the diagram place a goal in the center. One person (coach) plays goal keeper for both teams. No players except the GK are allowed in the circle. Partner up players to someone of equal ability. Players will play against each other for their respective teams. They may only challenge their designated partner.

Both teams attack both sides of the goal, and try and score. Players may only challenge their respective partner on the other team.

## Coaching Points

1. Take the defender away from where you want to receive the ball.
2. When defending get goal side.
3. When attacking move the ball quickly to both sides.
4. Any clear shot on goal, do not hesitate.



### Advanced Progression

Remove the restrictions about what player can be challenged.

## EXTENDED ACTIVITY

Play a regular scrimmage



## WORLD FACTS

Find out the following. How many pyramids are there? (138)

How many stone blocks are used to build a pyramid? (Estimated 2 million)



# WEEK 9

## In the Amazon Jungle

### SKILLS SQUARE

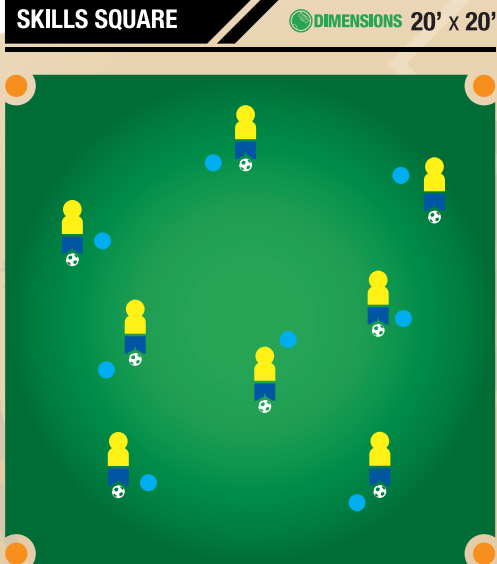
#### Organization

Layout a 20 x 20 ft square, inside the square randomly place 10 cones - see diagram below.

#### Objectives

Warm up the players. Review & practice previously learned techniques and skills.

Players should focus on the turns and fakes learnt in weeks 1-5, they should start to build up speed coming into and coming out of each fake and turn. Players should also practice executing these skills using both feet.



### FINISHING ACTIVITY 1

#### Organization

In a 10x20 area, Set up as shown in the diagram. Players work in pairs.

#### Objectives

To breakdown the technique of shooting in pressure.

Players will attempt to shoot the ball past their partner who is a goal Keeper. The goalkeepers must stay on the line. Players score 1 point for a shot on target, 5 for a goal and 10 for a goal in the corners. Keep scores.



### Coaching Points

Try to bring out coaching points by asking questions not telling them.

1. Pass the ball into the corners.
2. Fake to shoot to wrong foot the goal keeper and then shoot.
3. Keep the ball low.

The coach can challenge the more advanced players by restricting them to use their weaker foot only.

### ACTIVITY 2

#### Organization

Using the 15 x 20 area in the previous activity. Add two pairs together – Have multiple balls in the net ready.

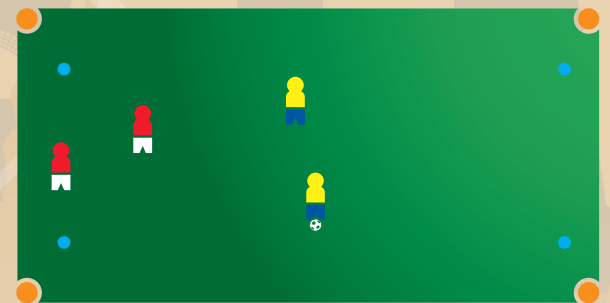
#### Objectives

To develop finishing under the pressure of a defender. Play 2 v 1 when the defending team (black) does not have the ball one of the players must go back and stay on the line as a goal keeper.

### FINISHING 2v1

DIMENSIONS 15 x 25'

### ACTIVITY 2



### Coaching Points

1. Attack the defender at a quick pace.
2. Make a decision does your teammate have a better shooting opportunity?
3. Can you fake to pass to move the defender then shoot yourself.
4. As soon as you get a clear shot, shoot.
5. Pass the ball into the corners.

### Helpful Hint

The coach can differentiate and make it easier for the attackers by restricting the defenders to use their weaker foot only.



Today we are going to the Amazon rain forest, does anyone know where the Amazon jungle is (South American continent, Brazil is the largest of 9 countries touched by the Amazon region)? Last week we were on the African Continent, this week are going to be on the South America Continent. What number on the Imagineers ball is the Amazon jungle (3)? So what direction do we need to travel to get there travel to get from Egypt (#7) west? Let's step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to the Amazon jungle.

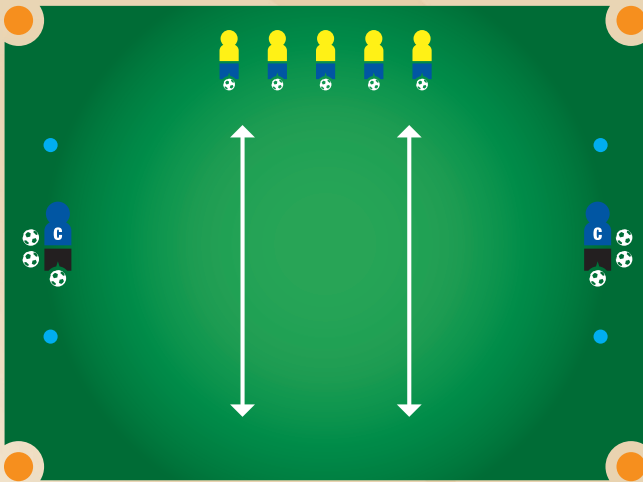
Part of the Amazon jungle is covered with a massive area of trees called the Rain Forest. The Rain Forest has millions of trees is very hot and humid with lots of animals. The animals include Jaguars, Lemurs and Orangutans; they are not used to seeing people in their jungle so they will definitely chase after you and your ball. We have to get across the jungle as quickly as possible without having your ball stolen. If you get tagged you become one of the animals.



## FUN GAME The Amazon Jungle

### FUN GAME

**DIMENSIONS** 20 x 30'



### Coaching Points

1. Shoot quickly when you spot someone.
2. Keep a count of how many people you tag.
3. Players: Keep the ball close.
4. Change speed and direction to make it difficult for the animals to steal/tag you or your ball.

Recognize the players that have the best number of tags during the game.

## GAME PLAY

### Organization

40 x 25 area. Make the area wide and short to encourage shooting at every opportunity. Set up the area and make 3 equal teams, teams will play until one team scores two goals. The team that scores two goals stays on playing and the other team rotates in.

### Objectives

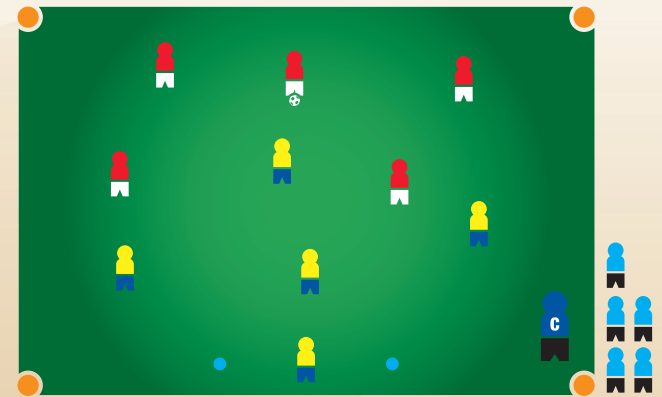
Further development of game play with an emphasis on the finishing.

### Coaching Points

1. Control the ball as it comes towards you. If you can, control the ball into space towards the goal.
2. Get your head up and look for the early shot on your second touch.
3. Shoot low, a deflection may help you.
4. Follow up on any shots your team has as the goalkeeper may drop the ball.

### GAME PLAY

**DIMENSIONS** 25' x 40'





## EXTENDED ACTIVITY

### Organization

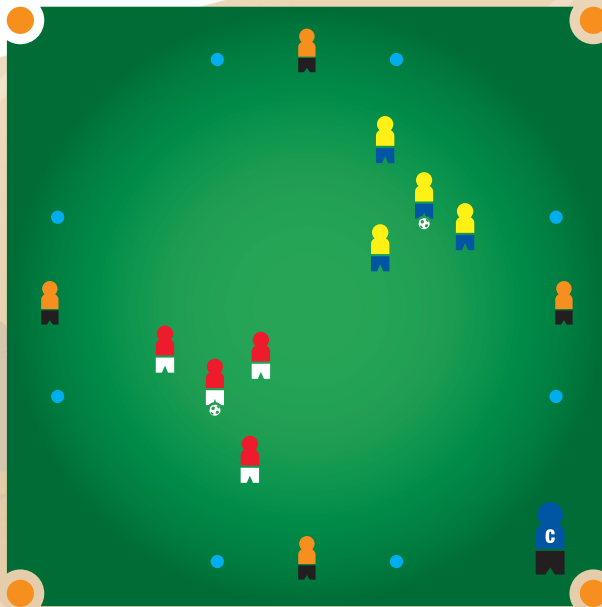
Three even groups set up a 60 X 60 square as shown in the diagram with the four goals, one on each side. Position players from two teams randomly within the area. The third team makes up the four goalkeepers on the outside of the area.

Each of the players in the middle play 1v1. The coach throws multiple balls into the area. The players can only challenge their partner. Encourage the players to turn away from their opponent and shoot quickly.

### GAME PLAY

 DIMENSIONS 60 x 60'

### EXTENDED ACTIVITY



### Advanced Progression

1. Make the goals two paces wide and play two teams.
2. Reduce the number of balls thrown in and encourage the players to pass to team mates.
3. Play a regular scrimmage with small goals.



### WORLD FACTS

The Amazon rain forest covers 9 countries (True)  
 2.5 million different insects live in the rain forest (True)  
 The rain forest is one of the 7 wonders of the world (False)

# WEEK 10

## Mount Everest

### SKILLS SQUARE

#### Organization

20x20 square with 10-12 cones randomly placed inside as shown in the diagram.

#### Objectives

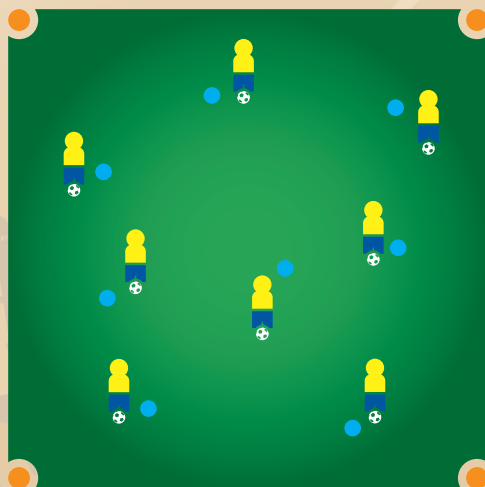
This represents an activity for players when they first arrive at practice. It may review techniques and skills learned previously and warm players up.

Even though practice starts at a specific time your players will start to arrive 15-20 minutes before the official start. In a typical scenario the team will start to randomly kick balls into the goal or just wait for the coach to start. Instead of this exercise in futility consider the following. Your players can review previously learnt techniques. Players dribble around the area and when they come across a cone (static defender) they practice one of the following:

1. All turns learned in weeks 1-5
2. All Fakes learned in weeks 1-5

### SKILLS SQUARE

**DIMENSIONS** 20' x 20'



other. The 2-3 defenders in the middle have to try and stop them getting across. After a player loses possession of his/her ball they stay in the game and help other players get their ball across by supporting a pass. Focus on good supporting angles and good quality passes to feet.

Each game count how many times the team can get from end to end without losing possession of all of the balls.

### ACTIVITY 1

**Feeling comfortable receiving and giving a pass with a defender in close proximity**

#### Organization

30 x 30 area, Set up as shown in the diagram. 4 balls per group.

#### Objectives

To develop the technique of receiving and giving a pass under pressure

Players play 1v1 in the middle attempting to receive a pass from the outside player and give a pass straight back. The defender should attempt to hold the player up (delay) by jockeying technique and then gain possession with a tackle. Encourage the attacking player to take the defender to the space and push them wide and then cut back to receive the pass. Encourage the attacker to always take 2 touches at this age group. The first touch should be with the inside of the foot away from the defender and the second touch should be a good solid pass back to the person on the outside.

#### Coaching Points

Try to bring out coaching points by asking questions not telling them.

1. Take the defender away from where you want to receive the ball.
2. Cut back sharply
3. Feel confident to receive the ball to feet even if the defender is behind you.

### WARM UP

**DIMENSIONS** 25' x 35'

### WARM UP

**Possession. Team Bulldog**

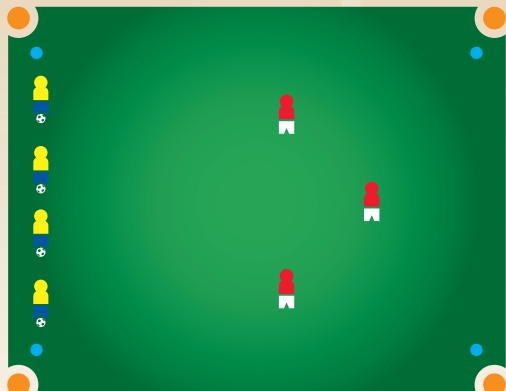
#### Organization

25x35 area each attacking player starts with a ball.

#### Objectives

To develop passing techniques to evade a defender.

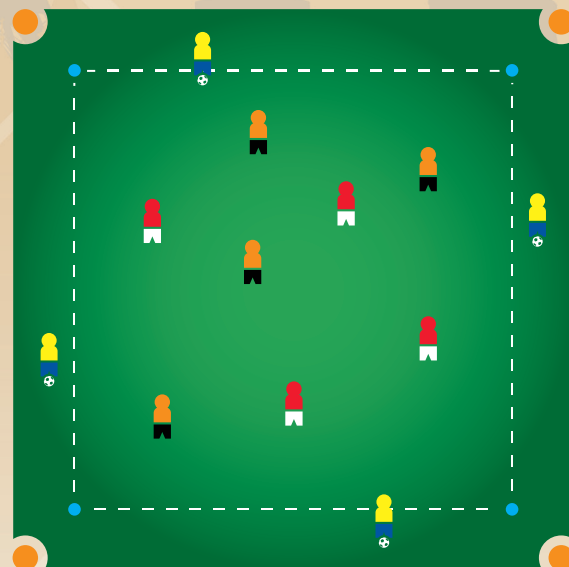
Each player starts with their own ball on the end line. The objective of the game is initially to get the ball from one end of the field to the



### ACTIVITY 1

### PASSING

**DIMENSIONS** 30' x 30'





4. Make a good first touch with the inside of the foot (play the ball in front of you at an angle away from the defender)
5. Give a good solid pass back to the person on the outside.

Important note. The pass from the outside must be a good accurate pass to feet. If the players are unable to pass the ball in with accuracy have them roll the ball in.

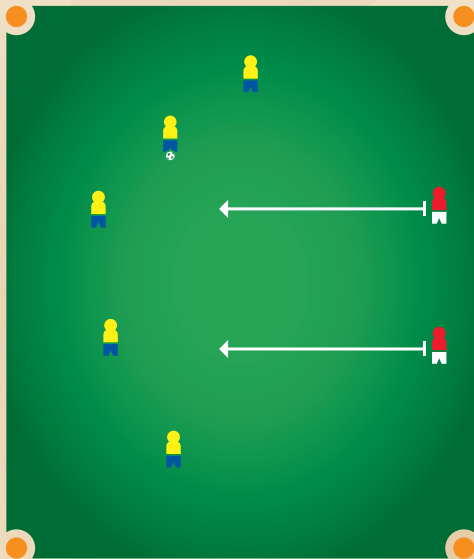
## ACTIVITY 2

### Possession of the ball under pressure

#### BALL POSSESSION

**DIMENSIONS** 30' x 40'

#### ACTIVITY 2



#### Organization

Using a 30x40 area. Two teams of equal numbers, the field is split into two halves.

#### Objectives

To develop ball retention and decision making under pressure.

Each team has a goal of playing five passes without the opposition touching the ball. The opposing team can send across two players to try and intercept the passes. If the two players that go across into the other teams half get possession of the ball they can immediately pass the pass into their half and start the process of five passes on their side of the field.

#### Coaching Points

1. Use all of the space in the area.
2. Make sure you have a good first touch with the ball in front of you.
3. Draw the defender in close before passing (this gives the other players more time on the ball).
4. Defenders. Move out fast into the other area the first two that are ready get across to the other team but remember last 3 strides slow down a little.
5. Position yourself to cut off the pass.
6. Once you have possession get the ball across to your team and get into your area fast.



## Advanced Progression

Send across three defenders instead of two.



Today we are going to go to Mount Everest, does anyone know why Mount Everest is famous? (The world's tallest mountain) Does anyone know what number Mount Everest is on the Imagineers ball? (#6) Let's find Everest on the ball. Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world and today we are going to try to get the whole team to the top of the mountain. Mount Everest is 29,029 feet high so it is going to take a lot of hard work for us all to get to the top. Last week we were at The Amazon jungle #3 on your ball, we are going to travel east to get to Mount Everest (#6), let's step on the portal of your Imagineers ball, close your eyes and count to three and imagine we are traveling through space to the Mount Everest.

## GAME PLAY

Get all of your players to the top of Mount Everest

#### Objectives

Further development of ball retention and passing.

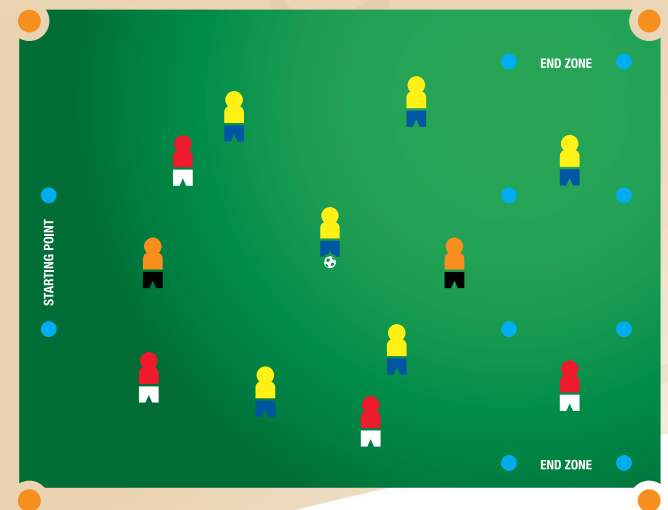
#### Organization

40x50 area: two equal teams and two wild Players (the wild players can be coaches to start with).

Two teams play against each other. The idea of the game is to get all of your players into the end zone (the coned areas is the top of Everest).

#### GAME PLAY

**DIMENSIONS** 40' x 50'



5v5 OR 6v6

Each team begins the game with one player in the end zone (on the Everest summit) to receive the pass. The attacking team has to pass and move so as to create the space to be able to pass the ball to their team mate on the top of Everest. The defending team is trying to stop them from passing to the summit and at the same

## Week 10

time win back possession of the ball. The two extra players play for whichever team is attacking (this gives the attacking team a numerical advantage). Possession switches when the defending team wins the ball back or when a successful pass to the summit is made. The team member who makes the pass to the summit gets to join their team mate at the top. If the defending team steals the ball they automatically become the attacking team and the two extra players immediately switch and play for them. When a player reaches the summit the possession changes and the re start takes place at the base of Everest (between the two cones).

The two wild players on the summit (in the end zone) should be active participants in the game; the attacking player tries to get open to receive the pass, the defender tries to prevent the attacker from getting open or receiving a pass.

If the ball goes out restarts are kick ins from the side.

### **Coaching Points** Attackers

1. Use all of the space in the area.
2. Make sure you have a good first touch with the ball in front of you.
3. Draw the defender in close before passing (this gives the other players more time on the ball).

### **Coaching Points** Defenders

1. Pressure the ball but don't rush into challenges.
2. Mark a player.
3. Once you have possession transition the ball to your end zone as quickly as you can.

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## **EXTENDED ACTIVITY**

Play a full game against the parents if time allows.

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### **WORLD FACT**

Over 10,000 lbs of trash is left on Mount Everest each year from climbers. (True)

How tall is Mount Everest? (29,029 ft)

What is the name of the mountain range that Mount Everest is part of? (Himalayas)

**Congratulations on completing the Imagineers Soccer Program! We hope the season for you, the players and the parents has been enjoyable. We would love to receive your pictures and stories of how your imagination has made this season a memorable soccer adventure.**

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