

## U4 PRACTICE #2

### **Appendix B**

#### U4 SOCCER PRACTICE SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

<p><b><u>Practice #1</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular Tag</li> <li>- Screamers</li> <li>- Touches</li> <li>- Space Invaders</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Practice #2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freeze tag</li> <li>- Touches</li> <li>- Red light / green light</li> <li>- Space Invaders</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Practice #3</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chain tag</li> <li>- Anatomy Soccer</li> <li>- Red light / green light, switch</li> <li>- Bulldozers and Builders</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Practice #4</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freeze tag</li> <li>- Follow the leader</li> <li>- Relays without the ball</li> <li>- Relays with the ball</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Practice #5</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular tag</li> <li>- Touches</li> <li>- Dribbling to a net then shooting</li> <li>- Bulldozers and Builders</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Practice #6</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow the leader</li> <li>- Relay races with shooting</li> <li>- Easter Egg Hunt</li> <li>- Alligator Pit</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Practice #7</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relays without Balls</li> <li>- Ball tag</li> <li>- Easter Egg Hunt</li> <li>- 4 nets</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Practice #8</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Touches</li> <li>- Follow the Leader with a ball</li> <li>- Passing with a partner</li> <li>- 4 Nets</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Practice #9</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freeze Tag</li> <li>- Juggling</li> <li>- Alligator Pit</li> <li>- Small Sided Scrimmage</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Practice #10</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freeze tag</li> <li>- Juggling</li> <li>- Relays with Shooting</li> <li>- Small Sided Scrimmage</li> </ul>

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### **3.0 - Practices** *\*Refer to Appendix B for a 10 practice lay-out example*

For the first practice ensure that the time and location is clear to all of the parents. A good way to contact parents is through email but also make sure to have their phone numbers in case you need to contact them immediately.

The first thing that you want to do when you have your first practice is to play a fun ice breaker game to give you a chance to get to know their names and to begin to get them more comfortable with a group setting.

#### **3.1 - What are the activities of a coach before a practice?**

- Plan the practice remembering that some things may not work. Have a lot of different ideas so if something doesn't work you can do something else.
- Check for safety of the field and the equipment

#### **3.2 - What are the activities of a coach during a practice?**

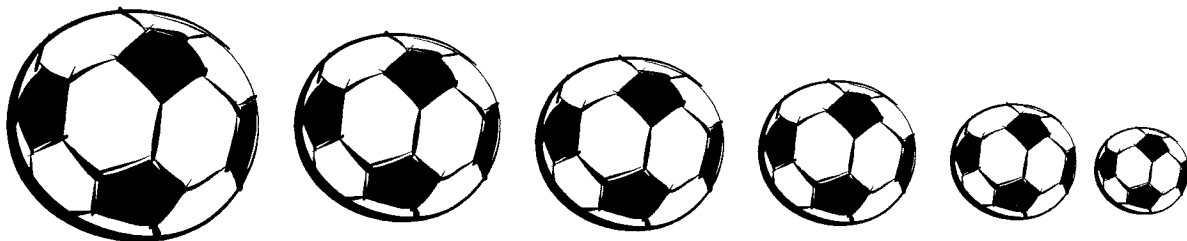
- Encourage and praise
- Control the practice. This is a task in itself. Here patience is a virtue.
- Coach? – If in doubt, “let the game be the teacher”

### **4.0 - Activities**

**It is important to build on activities. The best method for this is to start without a ball doing something and then move into giving each player a ball. Remember that once a child sees another kid with a ball then they will want one to.**

#### **4.1 - Soccer Related activities without a ball include:**

1. **Tag of any kind** - Freeze tag (when you are tagged you stand with your arms outstretched and cannot move until someone runs under one of your arms), chain tag (when you are tagged you make a chain by holding hands), or normal tag are some examples. \*Remember to change who is it a few times\*
2. **Screamers** - Kids line up on a line and then run as fast as they can to another line about 15 – 20 yards away and scream as loud as they can (not a good one if you have a headache but the kids love it)
3. **Relays** - Line ALL of the kids up and have them go at once and have them run to the other line (15 – 20 yards away) then mix it up and have them do things like hop on one foot or both feet etc.
4. **Follow the leader** - Have them follow you around the field as you do different things like crab walk or hop on both feet etc.



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### **4.2 - Soccer Skill Activities with a ball include:**

1. **Touches** - Have them dribbling in a square and moving around
2. **Relays** - Do the same as above "Relays" but have them dribbling and then only using their right foot or their left etc.
3. **Anatomy Soccer** - Players have soccer balls and dribble around inside the square when the coach calls out a body part, each player stops the ball with the sole of the foot and touches that body part on the top of the soccer ball
  - *Combination examples: right knee & left elbow and left knee and chin*
4. **Red Light / Green Light, Switch** - Players dribble around inside the square and the coach shouts out "green light" and players begin to dribble and then "red light" and players have to stop the ball using the sole of their foot then when the coach shouts "switch", a player must leave their ball and find another ball and put their foot on it.

### **4.3 - An example of a practice could be as follows:**

- |                                    |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| 1) Freeze Tag (to warm up)         | (10mins) |
| 2) Relay Races Without Balls       | (10mins) |
| 3) Relay Races With Balls          | (10mins) |
| 4) Red Light / Green Light, Switch | (10mins) |

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(40mins)

### **4.4 – Key Concepts**

#### 1. Running with the Ball

- It is most important that players at this age are encouraged and learn how to run and dribble with the ball before entering the U6 age group where team possession starts to come more into play.

#### 2. Kick and Run

- Discourage players from simply kicking the ball and running after it. This is detrimental to player development. Encourage them to control the ball and then run or dribble with it.

#### 3. Keep Ball on the Ground

- At this age group, it is important to have the players learn to play with the ball on the ground. Since these players do not have the physical coordination to control the ball on their bodies, the game can turn into a ping-pong game. Encourage the ball to be played on the ground for both player success and player development. It is hard enough for these players to control the ball when on the ground, let alone when it is in the air. This includes using their hands. Really stress the importance of using their feet not their hands.

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### **5.0 - Fun Games and Introductory Activities**

Most games can be played in a square made out of flat pylons. It gives the kids a focus point. Though they may not stay in the square at the beginning repetition and reminders will eventually help them to remain in the square. Making a square at the start of practice makes coaching easier because so many games can be played in squares. The square size will be dictated by the number of kids you have.

Some extra games include the following;

#### **5.1 Touches**

- Game is played in a square
- Each player has a ball
- The players move the ball around inside the square with their feet
  - Coaching Points
    - Keep ball close (touch, touch, etc)
    - Use both feet (left foot only, right foot only, bottom of the foot only)
    - Stop the ball with the bottom of the foot

#### **5.2 - Space Invaders**

- Game is played in a square
- All players have soccer balls and dribble around inside of the square
- A few parents are space invaders; they try to kick the balls of the players out of the square
  - No ball can be kicked out if a player stops the ball with the bottom of the foot as a space invader approaches

#### **5.3 - Bulldog Soccer**

- This game is played from one point to another on the field about 15 - 20 yards apart.
- All players line up on a goal line for example
- When the coach says "Bulldog" the players have to run to get to the other marker without being tagged by the coach
- If the coach tags them then they come to the middle and help to tag the next group
- You can then progress into doing this with a ball