



Fall Season Training Themes - Week 4

Defending

U8s

Technical: 1v1 Defending

- Mechanics- Teach approach angle and to avoid being square when defending 1v1, knees bent with low center of gravity to help change direction quickly, arms out for balance and to make contact with the attacker (touch tight), quick steps and avoid crossing over feet. Teach how to poke tackle (outside of front foot, mainly used when behind or chasing lateral/diagonal) and block tackle (inside of back foot, mainly used when diagonal, straight ahead or side to side) and when to use both.
- Change of Speed- Cover ground quickly to close down space, then slow down when a few yards away from the attacker and prepare to change direction. Teach approaching at an angle to “show” the attacker where you want them to go.
- Direction- Show players how to cover ground correctly and defend from different angles (diagonal, straight ahead, behind, side by side, chasing lateral/diagonal).
- Pressure- Start with no pressure and simply how to close down space correctly and “show” the attacker where to go. Then introduce pressure with 1 attacker penetrating a line or small goal, for example. Angles of pressure should vary continuously. Use many different activities to work on the same topic, providing players lots of repetitions.

Motor Movements: Defensive shuffle, ability to change direction quickly from forwards to backwards, backwards to forwards, moving diagonally after moving forwards or backwards.

U9-U10s

Technical: 1v1 Defending

- Mechanics- Teach approach angle and to avoid being square when defending 1v1, knees bent with low center of gravity to help change direction quickly, arms out for balance and to make contact with the attacker (touch tight), quick steps and avoid crossing over feet. Teach how to poke tackle (outside of front foot, mainly used when behind or chasing lateral/diagonal) and block tackle (inside of back foot, mainly used when diagonal, straight ahead or side to side) and when to use both.
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Motor Movements: Defensive shuffle, ability to change direction quickly from forwards to backwards, backwards to forwards, moving diagonally after moving forwards or backwards.

Game Knowledge: Defending corners



Fall Season Training Themes - Week 3

U11-U12s

Technical: Defending

- Mechanics- When to tackle and when to delay based on where they are on the field and where help is available: Teach how and when to use poke tackles and block tackles (absolutely teach them to go in hard, but not recklessly). When side by side, teach how to get body between the attacker and the ball.
- Change of Speed- Cover ground quickly to close down space, then slow down when a few yards away from the attacker and prepare to change direction. Teach approaching at an angle to “show” the attacker where you want them to go, force them to where help will be. If the attacker beats you, how should you turn and chase.
- Direction- Show players how to cover ground correctly and defend from different angles (diagonal, straight ahead, behind, side by side, chasing lateral/diagonal).

Tactical Implications: Training the 4 and 5 specifically how to react when the ball is played into the attacker’s feet between the midfield and defensive lines.

- Pressure & Cover (When, Where, Why to step, to pressure, to provide cover)
- Communication between 4 and 5 (who steps, who drops, where to “show” the attacker)

Motor Movements: Defensive shuffle, ability to change direction quickly from forwards to backwards, backwards to forwards, moving diagonally after moving forwards or backwards.

Game Knowledge: Defending corners

U13-U14s

Technical: Defending

- Mechanics- When to tackle and when to delay based on where they are on the field and where help is available: Teach how and when to use poke tackles and block tackles (absolutely teach them to go in hard, but not recklessly). When side by side, teach how to get body between the attacker and the ball.
- Change of Speed- Cover ground quickly to close down space, then slow down when a few yards away from the attacker and prepare to change direction. Teach approaching at an angle to “show” the attacker where you want them to go, force them to where help will be. If the attacker beats you, how should you turn and chase?
- Direction- Show players how to cover ground correctly and defend from different angles (diagonal, straight ahead, behind, side by side, chasing lateral/diagonal).

Tactical Implications: Training the 4 and 5 specifically how to react when the ball is played into the attacker’s feet between the midfield and defensive lines. What do we do differently in the middle third compared to what we do when the ball is near our 18 yard box?

- Pressure & Cover (When, Where, Why to step, to pressure, to provide cover)
- Communication between 4 and 5 and with 6 and 8 to not drop too deep (who steps, who drops, where to “show” the attacker)

Motor Movements: Defensive shuffle, ability to change direction quickly from forwards to backwards, backwards to forwards, moving diagonally after moving forwards or backwards.

Game Knowledge: Defending corners