

NEW BALL METHOD

The idea behind the 'new ball method' is to keep the flow of the game constant and increase the number of ball touches by all the players. The 'new ball method' eliminates restarts such as throw-ins and corner kicks and keeps the ball in play continuously. Restarts might be important to the game results at the highest level of play, but they have no relevance or developmental benefits at the U-6 or U-8 level. Since the objective of the KINS Program is to teach players to dribble, every aspect of the traditional game that reduces the opportunity to dribble is removed.

The basic principle of this method is that, when a ball goes out of bounds, the coach throws a new ball into play. Experiments with this method, conducted at Richmond Hill SA in 2001/02, found that the players caught on to the method very quickly and loved it. The parents and coaches at Richmond Hill embraced the concept as soon as they witnessed it firsthand. The experiments also proved that, on average, players' ball touches increased two and threefold.

This was determined by counting the number of touches per player under the traditional rules and comparing to the number of touches under the 'new ball method'. Tracking the amount of actual playing time revealed that the ball was in play for only 45% of the time under the traditional rules, and almost 100% of the time under the 'new ball method'.

To implement the 'new ball method', use either one coach, or two coaches, to throw the balls. If using two coaches, each coach should be in charge of half a field. The coach(s) should hold a number of balls, ready to be thrown, one at a time.

- When a ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells "new ball!" and throws a new one in. The players will learn quickly to react to the new ball.
- Always throw the ball into the unoccupied space. Players will learn to move towards the ball. Do not throw the ball too high in the air since the players are not yet skilled enough to control a bouncing ball.
- Coaches can also use this method to get the non-assertive players involved, by throwing the ball towards them. This will help bring them out of their shell. If the players are really shy, simply place the ball at their feet.
- If one team is dominating the game, the advantage can be shifted to the other team by throwing the ball accordingly.
- This method can also be used to break up a 'beehive'. If all the players are bunched up around the ball, shout "new ball" and throw one into the open space.
- Remember to always praise the players for every attempt. Keep them excited and motivated.

This method will speed up the game, will produce more goals and more excitement. For more information or assistance in implementing it, please contact the State Director of Coaching.

-From the Kicking Is Not Soccer (KINS) Program implementation manual for Georgia Soccer – Youth Clubs