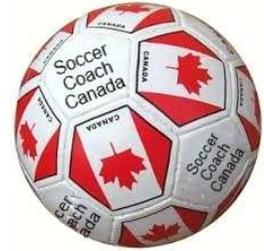


Soccer Coach Canada Practice Plans



U-8 Defending Practice Plan

Coaches Tip

Don't worry about players playing in specific formations or positions at this age. Although you will line up with a specific formation it is best to stress the concept that "when we have the ball everyone is on offense and when we don't everyone is on defense."

Warm Up: Box Tag (works great for U-6 to U-16)

Objective: Develop defensive skills. Emphasize bending knees, stay on balls of feet, and coming in under control.

Set up: Divide team into two even teams. One team lines up in single file while the other will all be in the 12' x 12' square you have created with cones.

Rules: At your command the first player in single file enters the box and must tag every player within the box before leaving the box. As soon as a player is tagged they take a knee until the next player enters the square. As soon as everyone that was in the single file has had their turn the entire team sits down. Use your stop watch to time both teams and declare a winner.

Game: War (U-8 to U-16)

Objective: Develop dribbling skills and defensive skills including shielding the ball.

Set up: Use cones to outline a 20' by 30' playing area with a goal at each end.

How to play: Divide team into two groups. # the first group 1,2,3,4,5 and 6. # the second group 6,8,9,10,11 and 12. Call a number from each group. These two players must first run through their own net and then chase down the ball the coach has thrown into play. The object is to score on the opponents net. Progress to calling 2 #'s from each side and so on.

Scrimmage: Play 4 vs 4 on a 40' x 30' pitch. Encourage the defender closest to the ball to challenge aggressively yet under control.

Cool Down....a structured cool down is not necessary for U-8 however some static stretches and a slow jog around the pitch is never a bad idea after a practice or game.