



Coaching School Lecture



STATION WORK

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At Churchill we still divide our off-season into three phases. In phase one, we spend three days on weights and two days on skills. The second phase reverses the schedule to spend two days on weights and two days on skill with one day playing soccer tennis. Finally, in phase three, we spend every day outside working skills and building team play in preparation for the season. As we make our way into and through the season, we may work on specific tactics or discuss certain game matchups. But the one constant in everything we do is our station work. Our station work will usually occupy approximately 30-40 minutes of time, and we will vary the time due to the day of the week or part of the season. The following are seven of the drills we do on any given day and also a conditioning regiment that works soccer specific sprints

Fartlek -

After our initial stretching routine, we begin every practice with this drill. The players will partner up with one ball between them. Using the penalty area for this. (typically there will be 24 to 26 players involved at one time.) The players begin at a jog (20 seconds) and on the whistle go to a full sprint (10 seconds) and back to a jog on the next whistle. We will vary the time of this drill from 5 minutes to 8 minutes. During the drill the players are working on ball control (2 to 3 touches maximum), passing accuracy (playing to a partner), and field vision as well as some conditioning. After we finish

with this drill we will get a short stretch in once again.

Shooting –

We have three main shooting drills, and of these we will only do one per day during our station work. The first of these drills is slalom dribbling. The players will begin at a designated cone and then alternating sides they will slalom through a set of cones and finish with a shot on goal from approximately 18 yards away. The key points to this drill are for players to use both right and left feet while dribbling and then shooting with both feet as well. We will typically do this drill the day after a game to work out any soreness and the lack of contact allows them to go full speed as well.

The second shooting drill is three point shooting. Again the players will begin at a designated cone (approximately 35 yards), they will send the ball out towards one of three cones positioned at 20 yards and then sprint after the ball for a one touch shot on goal. The idea is for the ball to have enough pace on it so the player can just catch up to it at 18 yards. Other keys are for players to strike the ball at full speed without having to adjust their run or steps and to be able to shoot with both feet.

The third shooting drill is 1 v 1. We will vary how we start this drill whether it is off a punt or from a goal kick. We focus on offense here as much as defense. For the offensive player, I am looking for him to make a decisive move to gain an advantage and

take a good shot on goal. Defensively, I want the player to close out of the man with the ball and then to work with the keeper to cut down the angle for a shot. Also, I am looking for the keeper to communicate with the defender as well.

Headers –

For this station we will use a grid that is 5 yds x 5 yds. The players really love this drill because they will keep score and it can be very competitive. Players work in pairs and try to score points using only headers to score. To score a ball must be below shoulder height and between the cones. The keys are to strike the ball with power, and play the ball downward. The team on defense must stay on the end line between the cones; however, they may use their hands to stop the ball. The team on offense may only use headers to control the ball and get off a shot.

Horseshoes –

In this drill we are working on precision in the long pass. We will set two cones approx. 40 yards apart. (shorter for younger players) The players will partner up and get one ball for each pair. One player will serve the ball to his partner in the air (his aiming point is the other cone). The player receiving the ball must trap the ball with one touch and place the ball as close as possible to his cone. Pairs can score points by being closest to the cone (1 pt) or by knocking over the cone (2 pt). This drill also helps players to be able to receive long balls



with a good first touch as well as the placement of long passes. Players must also be able to adjust to poorly played balls.

Small games –

When we play small games in a station setting we try to stay with 4 v 3 or 3 v 3. Our space for this station is 20 yards x 15 yards but, can be varied as needed. When we are working in small games, we emphasize movement without the ball, communication with each other and playing simple. By playing simple, I tell the players that applies to a pass or a move and so on. With the older players, I will limit their touches on the ball to force them to think while they play.

Triangle drill –

This drill will typically be done in October or November, but it can be

brought back at any time to give your keeper a little extra work. We will set up a triangle (5 yds x 5 yds x 5 yds) using small cones and make a perimeter (15 yds square) with cones. There will be two teams of 4 players going at once with one keeper guarding the sides of the triangle. Teams can score by sending the ball through a side of the triangle. The keeper must defend all sides of the triangle by quick movements. The other teams not playing will be positioned at the corner of the perimeter square for passes to be played off of them. This drill is an excellent work out for your keepers.

Shootaround –

On game days we still go outside for any final game preparations. We also will have our shootaround. The players look forward to this drill because they make a game out of it.

The players divide up into 5 lines on the 18 yard line, and the keepers will be in goal. Players will shoot from one spot at a time, and the keepers will rotate after each round of shots (every 5 shots). The players like to try different shots from different angles and the keepers get to have shots on them as well. I know most coaches don't touch a ball on game day, but this type of drill gets the players focused on the game that day.

Conditioning –

We will do this conditioning either in the fall or in our off season (April and May). The players don't like running, but they can see the benefits of these sprints whether in club or high school games. The benefits of this type of running are that we get lots of reps in minimum time and the sprints are soccer specific.



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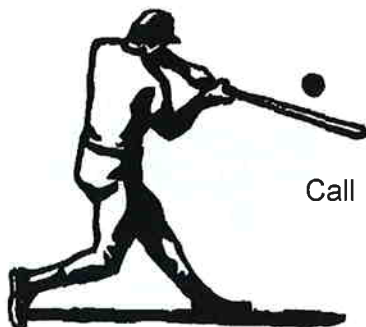
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