

# SOCCER-IQ



FREE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR IMPROVING  
YOUR TRAINING, COACHING & GAME

ISSN 1757-9902

## Street Soccer Skills!

Drills & Small Sided Games

## Pre-Season Training

Perfect your half time team talk

## Relative Age Effects

GOAL KEEPER  
REACTION TRAINING

# INTERVIEW WITH THE FA ELITE COACHING DIRECTOR

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*“The great teams don’t just win trophies. The great teams don’t just play attractive football. The great teams change the way the game is played.”*

Gary Lineker on Barcelona

**Winners:** Congratulations to readers Andy Jones and Paul Wiliamson who won the William Hill and Shaving Shack competitions respectively in the last issue.



# Good news...

the football season has started again. In fact, did it stop? We’ve had the U-21 European Championships, the U-17 and U-20 World Cups, the Women’s World Cup, Europa League Qualifying, and the Copa America to name but a few.



However, the second issue of Soccer IQ is about looking forward; it’s about trying something different this season and improving on whatever you and your team did last year.

Once again Soccer IQ has ideas, drills and games for you to try out on the training ground but also content to ‘get you thinking’. Read the thoughts of Dick Bate, the FA’s Elite Coaching Director on the future of Youth Coaching, consider Sports Psychologist Simon Hartley’s advice on conducting meaningful half time talks, and open your eyes to A-Licence Coach Josh Holt’s perspective on Relative Age Effects. Of course we hope there are some lighthearted features as well, as after all, coaching, playing and watching the game should be fun!

We hope we have managed to step up our own game for this second issue. If you like Soccer IQ then please PASS IT ON! Remember we provide our content ABSOLUTELY FREE!



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Enjoy our new edition and enjoy the new season...

PREVIEW VIDEO



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RELATIVE AGE EFFECTS

# Developing Dribbling Skills and Awareness

## 1 A dribbling warm up idea: **Solo Squares**

### How to do it:

Divide your area into smaller squares (12 are shown here but the number will depend on the number of players you have and how easy or difficult you want to make it).

Each player has a ball and they dribble around the main grid looking for space, moving in and out of the smaller squares, and attempting to avoid the other players.

When the coach blows the whistle all players must stop their ball under control.

If they are alone in a square they award themselves 10 points. If they are sharing the square with another player they only get 5 points - as is the case in the top left square in the animation.

## 2 A dribbling game: **Dribble Goals**

### How to do it:

Play a normal small sided game (6 a side is shown here) but create some extra 'goals' made from cones or poles (4 are shown here).

Teams can score points in the following way;  
If a player dribbles through one of the extra goals = 1 point, A normal goal = 2 points, A goal scored after a player has dribbled through one of the extra goals = 3 points

In the game shown Yellow player 4 scores 1 point for their team by dribbling through the top left extra goal and Yellow player 5 scores 3 points by scoring after dribbling through the central extra goal.

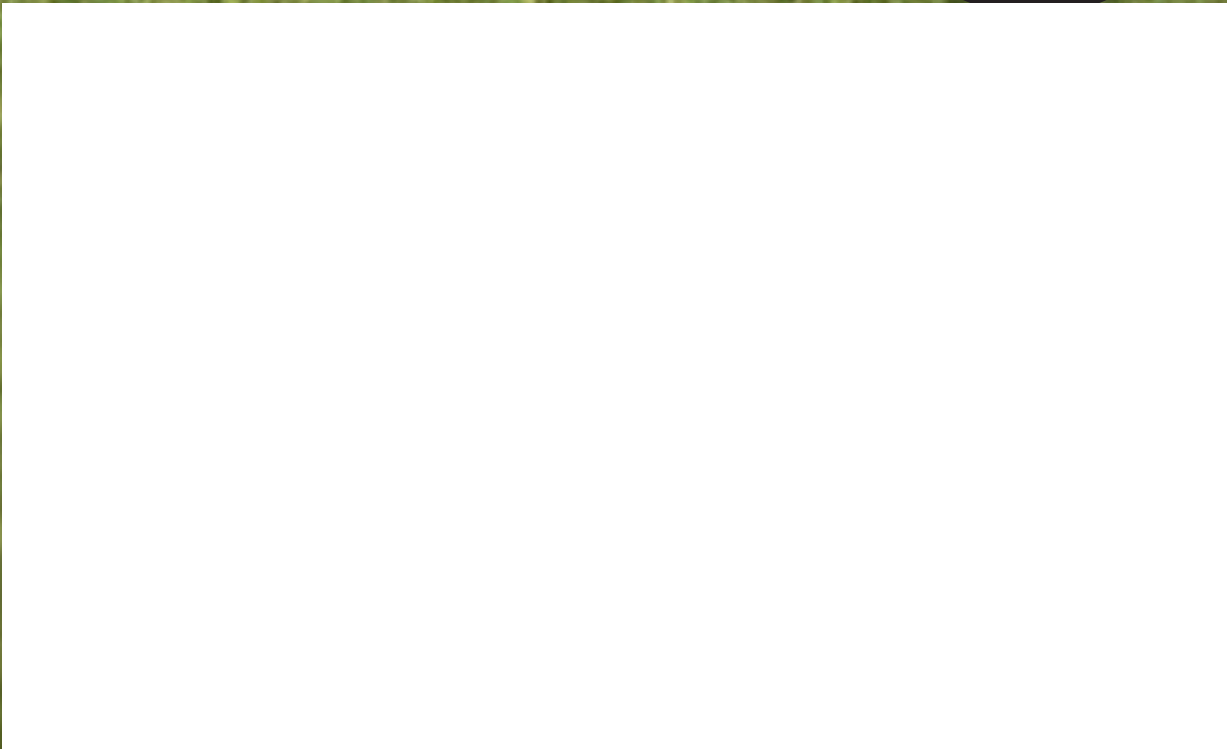
1



WATCH  
THE  
DRILLS!



2





### 3 A dribbling 1 v 1 challenge: :

# Dribble, turn or cut

---

## How to do it:

Set up a small square for two players. The size of the square will depend on the ability of your players - but a small square will make the game more challenging and exciting.

The two players have a ball each and start at opposite corners of the square.

Each player dribbles their ball in an attempt to catch up with the player in front.

However, players are allowed a pre-determined number of turns to try and deceive their opponent. In the animation the yellow player does this in the bottom right corner causing the blue player to turn.

Players also have one opportunity to cut across the grid to tag their opponent. The cut must be across the width or length of the square. If the attempt fails the player's opponent wins.

---



WATCH  
THE  
DRILL!

3

*“Players also have one opportunity to cut across the grid to tag their opponent. The cut must be across the width or length of the square. If the attempt fails the player’s opponent wins.”*

#### ANIMATION KEY:



Players



Goal Keepers



Cones



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## Coach Interview: The FA's Elite Coaching Director, Dick Bate

# Coaching in Youth Soccer

Coaching in Youth Soccer appears to be changing. The English FA seem to be driving the change as they seek to ensure that young players develop the necessary skills, techniques and attitudes required to become better footballers. Soccer IQ interviewed Dick Bate (FA Elite Coaching Director) to find out his views on coaching in youth soccer.

### Coach Profile

- Sheffield Utd Youth Team Coach: 1978
- Football Association North West Regional FA, Staff Coach: 1980
- Notts County Chief Coach: 1985
- Southend Utd Manager: 1987
- Lincoln City Assistant Manager: 1988
- Leeds Utd Coach: 1988
- Malaysian Technical Director: 1992
- Hereford Utd Coach: 1995
- England Youth Coach: 1998
- Canadian Soccer Association Technical Director: 2005
- Watford FC Technical Director: 2006
- Currently England Elite Coaching Director

**SIQ** Although coaches will always have their own unique coaching philosophies are there any 'common-characteristics' that you would like to see within youth coaches' coaching philosophies?

**DB** Youth coaching is quite literally about enjoying the game, we all know that, it's about them finding out what they can do and what they can't do, it's about good teachers being able to take them a stage further. Now what that means is that it has great implications for the development of youth coaches, if we want to produce players that can play at the highest levels of the game the coaches that are working right the way through the spectrum of the game (from the junior coaches, and the youth coaches to the senior coaches) need to understand fully what high class performance is and what it entails.

If you have got some talented U8 boys at your club (let's say it's a professional club) and you want to take them on to become high class players in the Premiership, then you better well know what the Premiership demands, you better know what the high class players can do, and you'll be able to understand the biomechanics of that and the thinking behind their performance. So at 8 you have an insight into the end product, what is it they can be doing at 8, or 12, or 14 to put them on that road to help them achieve what they need to achieve. I think many of the coaches don't delve right down into the intricacies of the game, and what the real qualities or skills are needed at the top end of the game and convert them into simple, compartmentalized parts that young people can develop.

So the coaches working in the game need to be fully aware of what top class performance is. But instead they stay with what they know and as a result players don't develop and that keeps them in a box. Whereas, talented youth coaches understand the game at the higher levels and what their part is in bringing a boy towards that.

*"...more innovative coaches who are excellent teachers of the game"*

The Future Game, FA

**SIQ** In youth football there may sometimes be a conflict between winning, fun and the development of players. Do coaches working in Academies and Centre of Excellences experience that conflict?

**DB** I'm sure they do. And sometimes the 'rules' of the Academy may be to win the league – and that's not necessarily coming from the gentleman that's in charge of the team. So the U15s manager or coach may want to play a certain way and if they are involved in an Academy where the leader of the Academy (for whatever reason) wants his team to win and that may be the prime feature of why they exist. I can remember a manager at a league 2 club this season stating that "throughout this club I want a fighting spirit, I want winning teams and I want my youth team to win their league". Now if the manager is saying that

in the club it would be a pretty strong Centre of Excellence manager/Academy Director who says "No, I don't agree with that" because their job is on the line. They have a difficult philosophical argument to what should be happening in the academy, to perhaps what the manager thinks.

I know some Academy managers who get a bonus every time the U18 team wins their games, another one who has to have the results of every academy team from U8s upwards on the Chairman's desk on Monday morning, so some of them are put under severe pressure to win games, "no matter how you win games, just win games". This will eventually take its toll as you'll play to win games and you'll take no risks, so there is a conflict in some academies between winning the games and really developing players.

**SIQ** The first page of *The Future Game (The FA's Technical Guide for Young Player Development)* contains the statement that the vision is to 'produce technically excellent and innovative players with exceptional decision-making skills'. How does a coach go about producing this type of player?

**DB** We've never been that good at teaching technique in this Country; we've never seen it as a major pillar of our game. When it comes to teaching technique the Dutch, the Germans spend much more time and are much more diligent, and are much more valuing the ability of the player to have good technique/skill. In other words, cleanliness of contact, knowing exactly what you are going to do with the ball, and what they need to apply to the ball to get the ball to do what you want. We are good at it but we don't value it as much as the other nations do.

Now when it comes to decision-making what I find with coaches is that they will stop a practice and say "now you have got this option what are you going to do, you can do this or this or this" Now they don't necessarily help the player come to the best decision, but more importantly they don't teach the player how to make the decision, "what's the



criteria for making the decision"? And that's a failing by which they will put them in a game, they will stop the game and talk to the boy or girl about what they could do, they'll talk to them about what they should do but then they fail to cap it all by saying "now this is why you should do this" or "this is why this is perhaps a better alternative than others" they don't actually teach them how to make a decision. We often leave kids to make up their own mind (which is right to a certain degree) but we don't then advise them on what may well be a better course of action.

The best coaches I have ever come across have been brilliant teachers. They understand the people they are working with, their age, their stage, their abilities. They understand the game implicitly and they have terrific communication skills. They can paint the picture and get the message across very clearly.

**How would you like competition**  
**SIQ** 'to look like' for 11-12 yr olds?

**DB** I don't think the result should be the 'be all and end all'. The display or exhibition of players getting better is more important than the result, so providing players exhibit and understand they are getting better and how they are getting better, that would be better than any result. Results are not that important but they will remember the stages that they take in developing in to the player they could be or should be.

There's value in moving them around in different positions. What they will eventually start to do is to move towards a certain area of the pitch and a certain role without it necessarily being imposed on them. By the time they get to 14, 15, or 16 they

are beginning to act and look like defenders, or they have got certain facets and qualities that strikers would have. In modern football, in the very best teams, they have a certain area of the field where they spend more time but they can go and play any where they like.

In industrialized nations we like logical progressions – we like to go from 7 v 7 to 9 v 9 to 11 v 11. If you go to Africa you will play in games of 18 a side and sometimes you won't get a kick of the ball for a long time but you will learn certain things about the game, underdeveloped football countries don't care what they play, they'll play 4 v 4, 5 v 4 if there is 16 of them they'll play 8 v 8 so what they have is a mix of different experiences that will stand them in good stead. They won't always play in their own age-group, in Africa you'll find a kid of 11 or 12 playing with adults, everybody joins in the game. So you can almost say that in terms of running a league that everyone understands then yes you would have 7 v 7, 9 v 9 and 11 v 11 but it wouldn't hurt the children to play out of their own age-group or play a variety of different numbered games just to pick up on all the different experiences they would get.

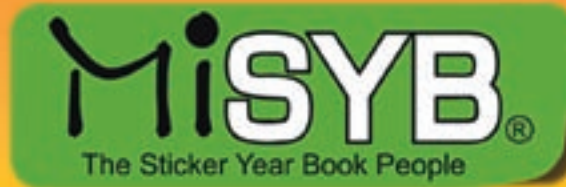
*"we need coaches who can develop environments in which players are encouraged to be creative and expressive without the fear of failure"*

The Future Game, FA



[CLICK HERE to read the full interview](#)

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## LOOK BETTER, FEEL BETTER, PLAY BETTER



*“Everything I have achieved in football is due to playing in the streets with my friends.”*

ZINEDINE ZIDANE

# SOCCER SKILLS



**Name:**  
Ian Stonebridge

**Job:**  
Undergraduate Student on Applied Sports Science and Coaching degree at UCP, Marjons. Centre of Excellence coach at Plymouth Argyle FC

International Street Soccer Association’s Darren Laver set Ex-professional footballer Ian Stonebridge the task of learning 4 new street soccer tricks in only 3 weeks. How did Ian get on? Could he master them in time...



**Name:**  
Darren Laver

**Job:**  
Managing Director of International Street Soccer Association



## Skill 1: The Stand

Difficulty Rating: ★★☆☆☆

### Why you might use it:

To tempt an opponent into trying to tackle you..

### How to do it:

Balance on top of the ball with both feet before dropping down, rolling the ball with the sole of the foot and nutmegging/panna your opponent.

## Skill 2: Seeya

Difficulty Rating: ★★★☆☆

### Why you might use it:

To lose a tight marker when protecting the ball.

### How to do it:

Starting with your foot on top of the ball, drop your foot down to push the ball away from you before quickly dragging it back in the opposite direction and accelerating away.



## Skill 3: Scarlet Sledgehammer

Difficulty Rating: ★★★★★

### Why you might use it:

To confuse an opponent and put them off-balance.

### How to do it:

Again starting with one foot on the ball, switch feet and touch the ball away then back in quick succession - first in front of the starting foot, then behind.

## Skill 4: Cross Over

Difficulty Rating: ★★★★★

### Why you might use it:

As an alternative aerial move to 'Around the world'.

### How to do it:

When keeping the ball up, quickly move the non-kicking foot over the ball whilst keeping it up with the other.

Next issue Ian will be attempting the following tricks.

**1) The Zaid, 2) The Flick, 3) Serpent Rainbow and 4) Sit Down Juggling.**

👉 Can you do better than Ian? Register at the ISSA player zone and view the tricks you need to practice- [www.issacoach.com](http://www.issacoach.com)



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# MATCH ANALYST IN THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE



**Who should get the credit when a goal is scored? Obviously the striker who applied the finishing touch gains the plaudits for their vision, movement and technique. The player whose insightful pass cut open the defence will have their assist rightly recognised. The coach who spent time on the training pitch honing the skills of their players will feel a sense of satisfaction. Anyone else?**



ell perhaps the Match Analyst who provided the analysis of the opponent's weaknesses can feel that they too played a hand in the goal.

Jamie Roberts, Match Analyst at Premier League's Wigan FC explains his role at the club and provides an insight in to what it takes to help the team gain success on the pitch.

**Name:** Jamie Roberts

**Position:** Match Analyst at Wigan Athletic FC

**Job Description:**

It is the Match Analyst's job to provide the manager and coaching team with both statistical and video analysis of the opposition pre match, and their own team during the match and following it.

**A Typical Day:**

In the early part of the week I will focus initially on post match analysis from the previous weekend's game. Following that, I'll complete my pre match pack for that weekend's game which provides the manager and coaching staff with video and statistical analysis of the opposition.

Towards the back end of the week I will begin preparing for the following week's game and also use this time for any ad-hoc work such as motivational DVDs for players or further analysis requests on the work I've already done.

On matchday I like to be at the ground at least 2 hours before kick-off. Once the team arrive I will meet with the coaching staff to check that they have all information that they need, and following that get set up on the gantry with our club cameraman to record the first half for half time analysis of key events with the coaching staff. Immediately following the game I have a quick debrief with the manager to give him certain statistics from the game.



**Careers in Sport:**  
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*“On matchday I like to be at the ground at least 2 hours before kick-off. Once the team arrive I will meet with the coaching staff to check that they have all information that they need”*

## Advice to young people interesting in becoming a Match Analyst

**Qualifications:** There is no industry standard qualification for this job. Any sports based qualification will obviously help.

**Experience:** Experience at a club is difficult to come by, and is generally gained on a voluntary basis. Computer software skills are massively important and easier to gain.

**Personal qualities:** You have to be willing to live and breathe the job. It can quite literally take over your life at times and work you to the point of exhaustion. However, I can't think of many jobs that are as rewarding.

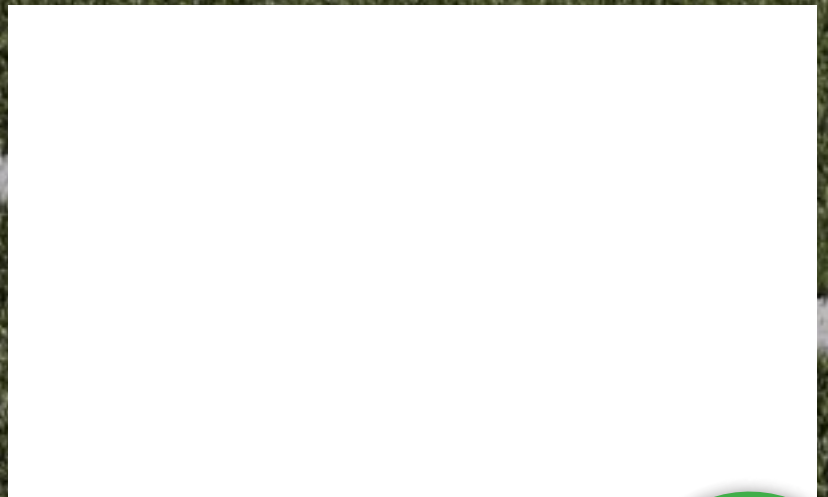


# 3 Small-sided games to vary your training

## Game 1: PENALTY PRESSURE

### How to do it

- 1 Set up a pitch for a small-sided game
- 2 Play continues as normal until a goal is scored
- 3 The player that scores the goal must then take a penalty
- 4 If the penalty is scored then 2 goals are awarded to that team
- 5 If the penalty is missed or saved then no goals are awarded (i.e. the first goal scored is eradicated)
- 6 So in the animation the yellow player does not score the penalty so the game is still 0-0.



WATCH  
GAME  
1

WATCH  
GAME  
2

## Game 2: PICK YOUR GOAL

### How to do it

- 1 Set up a pitch with multiple goals and three teams
- 2 Team A play Team B (Team C act as Goalkeepers)
- 3 Play continues until a team scores a goal (in the animation the Yellow team score in the left hand goal).
- 4 Play resumes but the Yellow team are now not allowed to score in the same goal (i.e. they only have 3 goals to score in whilst the blue team can still score in all 4 goals).
- 5 Each time a goal is scored the same thing happens (e.g. in the animation the yellow team score in the left hand goal and in the bottom goal so they only have 2 goals left in which they can shoot)
- 6 The first team to score in all 4 goals are the winners and another team goes in goal.

## Game 3: GET IN YOUR HALF

### How to do it

- 1 Set up a pitch for a small-sided game (in the animation Goalkeepers are not used)
- 2 A goal only counts if all the team's players are in the attacking half when the ball hits the back of the net (in the animation the goal counts as all yellow players are in the attacking half)
- 3 Another rule that can be added is that the goal can count double if any of the defending team are not in their defending half when the goal is scored (in the animation the goal would count double as one of the blue players is stranded in the wrong half).

WATCH  
GAME  
3



# A DEBATE OF 2 HALVES





---

**The Argument:** Is diving the most annoying thing in football?

---

**Yes or No? [Click here to vote for your choice](#)**



# YES

Argued by Dr. Andrew Parker, Burnley fan, and Professor of Sport and Christian Outreach at the University of Gloucestershire.

I grew up playing football amidst the derelict cotton mills of Lancashire where the two things that irritated grown men more than anything were warm beer and lippy kids. Such vagaries were the plague of any respectable man's social landscape; the worst things that could possibly blight one's existence - perish the thought. Until, that is, footballers began to dive.

---

*“Footballers: men who were once the standard bearers of all things masculine blatantly tarnishing a game.”*

---

Footballers: men who were once the standard bearers of all things masculine blatantly tarnishing a game that was once the epitome of fair play and physicality. What's a bit of drama between friends, I hear you ask? All grist to the footballing mill some would argue. We could wax lyrically, of course, about the reasons why diving has become such a common-sense part of the modern-day circus which we call professional football: the influx of overseas players, the (allegedly) laissez-faire approach of match officials, the increased commercial pressures burdening our sporting heroes.

Whatever the reason, the fact is this, diving is by far the worst thing in football simply because players are so bad at it. I wouldn't care so much if players would at least try to make things a little more realistic, plausible, believable, authentic. As it is, what we get is a myriad of exaggerated sideways rolls, agonising squirms, and over-cooked belly-flops. Aren't good divers at least supposed to be able to take-off smoothly, glide gracefully and point their fingers and toes in the process? Whoever's teaching modern-day footballers to dive needs sacking. And here's me thinking that we had some of the best managers in the world. Funny old game.



Argued by Dr. Neil Casey,  
Sociologist and Portsmouth FC  
supporter from the University  
of Gloucestershire.

# INO

Ethics in sport seem to be so clear, don't they? Some things are ethically wrong, or bad. Diving is bad, isn't it? Or is it...

With dreary predictability football is periodically pockmarked with the British media sounding off about the phenomenon of "diving". We are told that the 'beautiful game' is trying to cope with the 'ugly problem of cheating', and that diving is undermining the morality of football' in what the Daily Mail calmly called the 'the cancer of diving'.

Strangely the media seem less exercised by other crimes in football. Players kick the ball away, growl at referees, grapple with each other at corners and even 'take a booking' for the team with a professional foul, without attracting the same vitriol. So, why the moral panic around 'diving'?

Well diving isn't 'British'. It's labelled as foreign (imported into the pure realms of the Premiership), somehow 'devious', feminine (it's a man's game...), and even gay (because 'real men' wouldn't do it). But in reality forwards cleverly luring tackles and drawing attention to opponents' fouls is a challenge to British football culture with its neanderthal focus on strength, aggression and traditional masculinity. In other countries these skills are rightly lauded as those of the toreador making a fool of the lumbering bull. But in Britain, there's nothing worse.

Diving is massively over exaggerated and an attack on skilful forwards articulated by the British media, coaches and, sadly, fans. There are so many worse things going on in football.

---

*"Diving is massively over exaggerated and an attack on skilful forwards articulated by the British media"*

---

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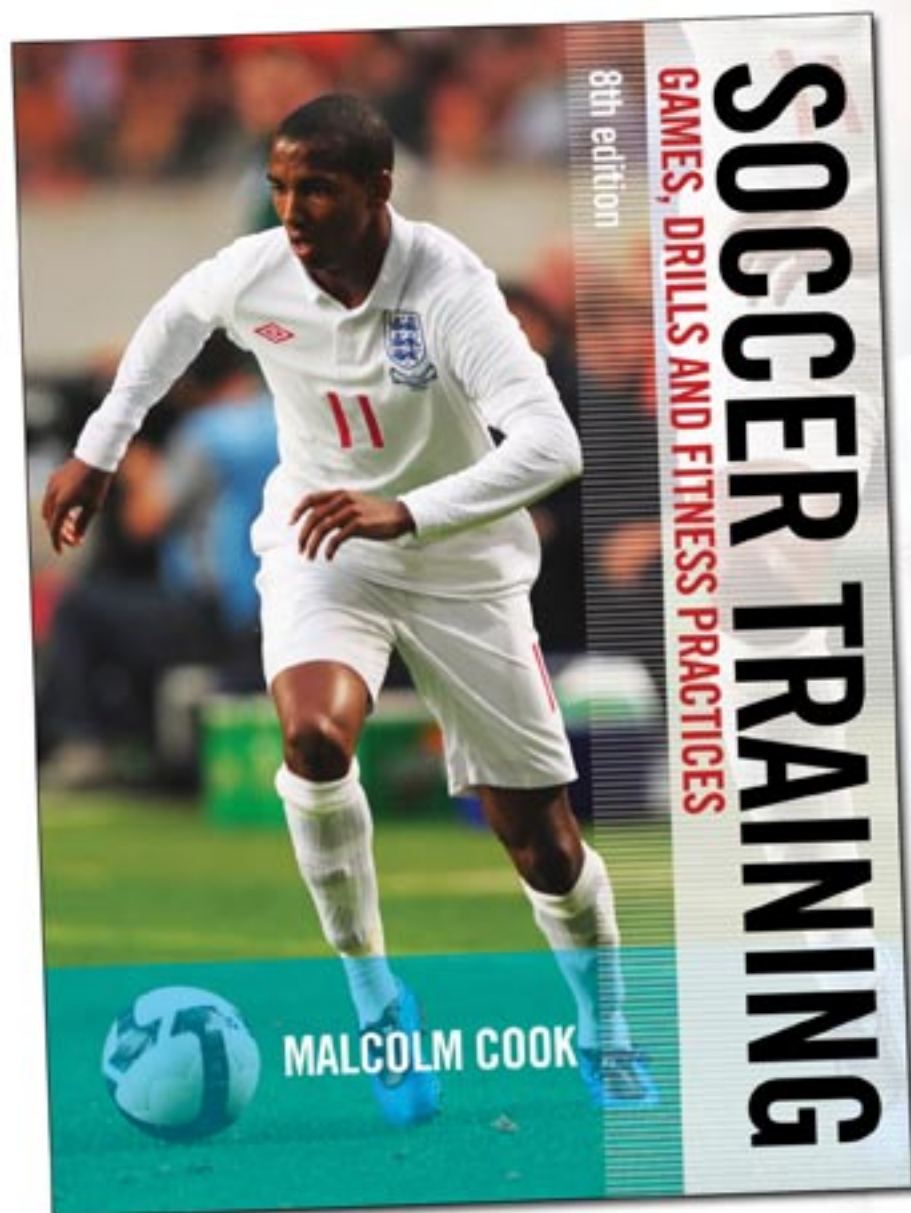
“

All the lecturers are highly qualified in the area and a range of teaching methods are used to fully engage us in the learning journey.”

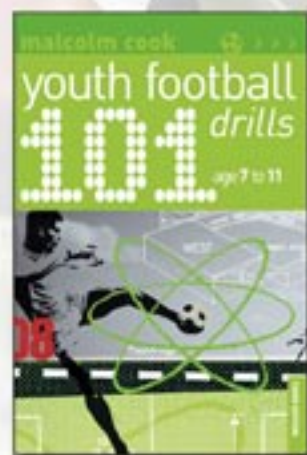
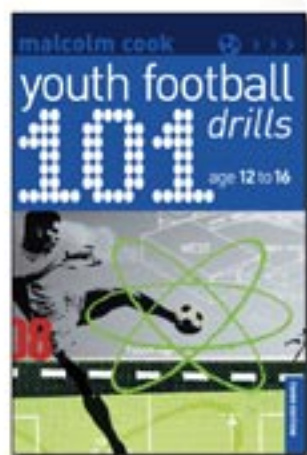
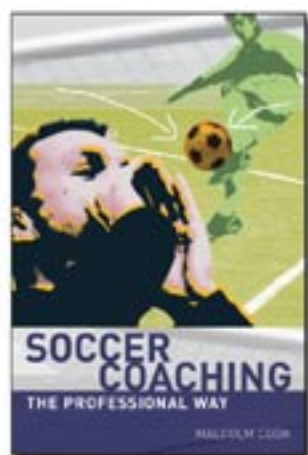
**Dan Parrott** BSc (Hons) Sports Education

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# How to be a **GREAT PLAYER** and **PERSON**

---

**A SUCCESS SERIES  
FOR YOUNG FOOTBALLERS**

---

*By Malcolm Cook*

The second in Master Coach Malcolm Cook's series on how young players can develop themselves as players and people by highlighting the **KEY SUCCESS FACTORS!**



---

Cut this out and give to your players, post it on the changing room wall, carry it in your kit bag.

---



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THE MAGAZINE



# 2 | HOW TO DEAL WITH MISTAKES

Too often young players 'go to pieces' after they make a mistake during the game. This has the 'carry-on' effect of making them blame themselves, feel they have let their teammates down and start to think they are no good as players. NO! Mistakes are OK and part of the game. When you make one you have the chance to LEARN more about yourself and the game.

Remember, when you watch the great players perform, it took them thousands of mistakes before they reached their present high performance level. They worked on their weaknesses and turned them into strengths, so remember it takes time to learn new skills, it won't happen overnight.

*"I have missed more than 9,000 shots at the basket during my career and lost 300 games. I have made mistakes over and over again in my life – that's exactly why I succeed."*

Michael Jordan – US Basketball legend

## SLOGAN TO REMEMBER

"Mistakes are what you have to make to become great!" Coaches can help young players by not criticising them when they make mistakes but encouraging them to persevere."

## COACH TIPS

- 1 USE POSITIVE TALK BE POSITIVE** – Say to yourself "I haven't got it yet but I will with practice". NOT "I can't do it and will never get it". Change your inner talk.
- 2 LEARN.** Don't just ignore your mistakes – they are attempts on the way to getting better so to learn your skills you need to put in practice time.
- 3 DON'T FEAR** mistakes as it will hold you back as a player. Take a few RISKS with difficult skills in practice – when you feel confident in them, try them out in actual matches.

## ACTION TO TAKE

I will... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# From Mini Soccer to 11 a side: Coaching the game.

---

*By Aaron Cusack, Plymouth Argyle FC Centre of Excellence Coach and Lecturer in Applied Sports Science for Coaching.*

---

## Introduction to Build-Up Play from the Back

This activity is an introduction to building up from the back in an unopposed fashion.

**Set-up: Half a pitch (relevant size to age group); Series of footballs; 1 x GK; 4 x Defenders**

The purpose of the squares/zones is to provide the players with a visual understanding of space and balance from each other when in possession of the ball. As part of the Centre of Excellence Development Programme I have the responsibility of introducing players into the transition from mini soccer to 11-a-side football. The biggest collective concern for these young players at this early stage in their development is their lack of perception and awareness to the pitch size and positioning. Therefore, my job is to provide a stimulating coaching environment that replicates game-like-scenarios and conditions. The animations are taken from a session designed to introduce a Back 4 and a GK into the concepts relating to build-up play. The 3 main aspects that this practice focuses on are

- 1 Width
- 2 Depth
- 3 Height

The pitch is sub-divided into grids to encourage the players to utilise the space in front; to the side; and behind. Another reason for the grids is to encourage players to develop a spatial awareness to their positioning when in possession and when not in possession of the ball. Both these aspects will enable each player to obtain an early understanding of working as a unit which is paramount in the 11-a-side format. It also provides an opportunity for the players to apply their technical skills and combine these with the required tactical attributes.



## The players are encouraged to consider:

- 1 Travelling with the ball into the space immediately in front of them.
- 2 When the ball reaches the half way line the player in possession turns around and works the ball back towards the goal where then it is transferred to the opposite side of the pitch.
- 3 The players are not allowed to position themselves in the same grid as another team-mate. This encourages an ability to affect the game when not in possession.
- 4 Players are encouraged to not turn their back on the ball when providing an option. Thus, focussing on the development of multi-direction movement. (Forward/Backward/Sideways)

It must be expressed that build up play from the back is a gradual progress and requires patience and repetition in an attempt to allow the players to develop, physical, technical and psychological attributes.

To increase the difficulty of the session and to challenge the players the coach can introduce partial pressure in the form of opposition players.

Have you picked your fantasy football team yet? Have you decided who your team should sign for the new season? Admittedly we have been discussing both questions ourselves but we have become a little bit distracted on more important issues; who would get picked in the best ever Hairdo XI? Would the 'Samson' effect mean the best ever Baldie XI would lose to them?

---

# Hairdo XI v Baldies XI

---

Jamie Harris is back with his two new fantasy football teams, the men with the dodgy haircuts take on the follicley challenged. Perms, dyed hair, comb overs, Mohicans and mullets were all considered for the home team, whilst the shaven headed were eligible to play alongside their naturally smooth headed teammates.

Take a look in the mirror and decide who you support, who would win...



## Introducing the Hairdo XI (4-3-3)

1



Rene Higuita (Colombia)

2



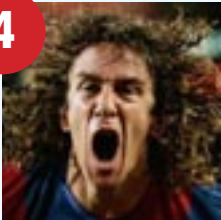
Bacary Sanga (France)

3



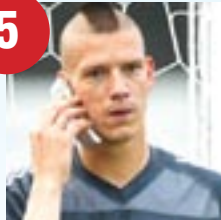
Taribo West (Nigeria)

4



Carles Puyol (Spain)

5



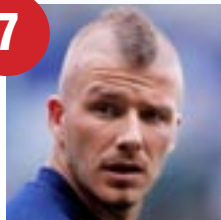
Christian Ziege (Germany)

6



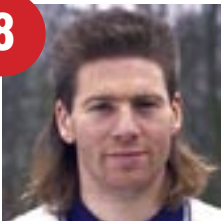
Carlos Valderrama (Colombia)

7



David Beckham (England)

8



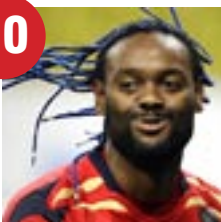
Chris Waddle (England)

9



Ronaldinho (Brazil)

10



Wagner Love (Brazil)

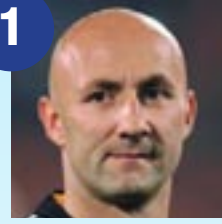
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Ronaldo (Brazil)

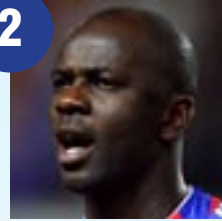
## Introducing the Baldies XI (4-5-1)

1



Fabien Barthez (France)

2



Lilian Thuram (France)

3



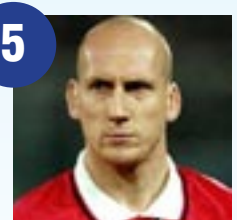
Roberto Carlos (Brazil)

4



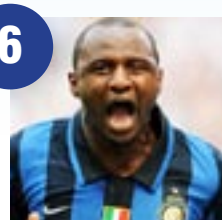
Frank Leboeuf (France)

5



Jaap Stam (Netherlands)

6



Patrick Vieira (France)

7



Bobby Charlton (England)

8



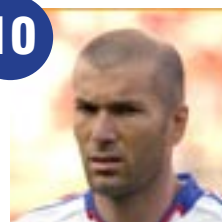
Atilio Lombardo (Italy)

9



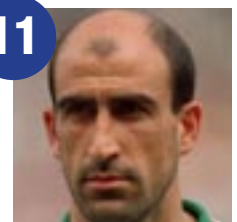
Gianluca Vialli (Italy)

10



Zinedine Zidane (France)

11



Yordan Letchkov (Bulgaria)



# The Beauty of the Small Sided Game: Tactics for 6-a-side soccer

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**LEISURE LEAGUES**

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**I**n the last issue the experts at LeisureLeagues showed the winning moves for success in the 5-a-side game; this issue Alex Zielski switches the focus to 6-a-side soccer. Read on to find out the key tactics.

---

Johan Cruyff was undoubtedly one of the greatest players to grace the football field, his idealism on how the game should be played proved refreshing, and ultimately groundbreaking.

The Dutchman played a pivotal part in the 'total football' revolution for both club and country during the 1970's, the central figure as Ajax and The Netherlands opened up their opponents for fun with ruthless attacking prowess. Although arguably not as fruitful in management as he was with a ball at his feet, Cruyff still brought some landmark ideas to the table. For example he swore by a more common theme witnessed in training sessions across the globe, and that is playing on a smaller, compact pitch, often adapting to 5 vs 5, or 6 against 6, whilst also having his own modified version where players switched sides.

# THE CRUYFF GAME



WATCH  
THIS

*“In a small area, the movement is necessarily fast and the passes must be pinpoint. Two of the six play wide and change team whenever the other four gain possession. It is always six with the ball against four trying to retrieve it. This possession principle should operate in any area of the normal field of play, so our training is intense and is the basis of our game. You can close down space more effectively by accurate passing when you have the ball, forcing opponents into certain positions, than you can by man-marking without the ball.” ”*

Johan Cruyff

These are merely suggestions on how to tackle 6 a side football and every team will have their own ideals and methods on how to succeed. But one thing with which top class managers agree on is its ability to improve their players' games in numerous ways. So what are you waiting for?

## SIX TACTICS FOR 6 A-SIDE SOCCER...

### 1 How to defend as a team

Most sides will set up with two players at the back, two, possibly three in the middle, then either a lone man, or two up top. This provides an even balance to the side, a core setup which should result in flowing football. With the ball Zonal marking is a prominent feature in the modern day 11 a side game but in 6 a side football, this can result in confusion. Man marking is key. What can be simpler than agreeing at kick off, “he is your man, stick with him”? The two dedicated defenders will know their men, as will the midfielders.

What is pivotal however, is the importance that the forwards are also aware of their responsibilities, and that, unlike in the traditional game, they will be required to lend a helping hand in defending. Players at the back can quite easily burst forward, and if the top man isn't sharp enough to spot the opposition's movement it can leave the backline outnumbered and exposed. The key message to defending in 5 or 6 a side football, is that it is everyone's responsibility – defend as one.

towards the opposite corner at roughly the same time. This is where the timing and the skill of the defender's pass is paramount.





## 2 Playing off a Target Man

One unique feature of 6 a side football is its pace. Something which can be very effective, is to have a target man (especially for those teams consisting of the mature, for want of a better word, players). Facing a bunch of youngsters with bags of energy can be a daunting prospect so it is key to utilise any strengths available, and playing with a target man could well be one.

Having a Jon Parkin in your setup, someone who the ball sticks to, even if it is just to take the sting out of a game and slow it down, can be greatly advantageous. There is nothing wrong playing with a striker who spends large periods with his back to goal – feed him, let him knock the ball back and then spin off to create more space which the midfielders can subsequently exploit.

## 3 Breaking quickly

Much like wing backs on an 11 a side pitch, the defenders play an important part in attacking. Perhaps surprisingly, an alert goalkeeper can create chances. Pulling off a fine save is obviously what is required, but one who can then bounce up and release the ball straight away is a massive asset. At Leisure Leagues, the shot-stopper is only permitted to roll the ball out so it is useful if the defenders can also react quickly and make themselves available promptly.

## 4 Quick Free Kicks

Every free kick in 6 a side football is direct so to get the ball moving again quickly can catch teams off guard. On the other hand, on conceding a free kick, ensure that someone stands on the ball in an attempt to quash any impending threats.

## 5 Goals Win Games

If you don't like having a pop at goal, then 6 a side football may not be for you. As discussed, the small sided game requires defenders to attack and forwards to work back so it is a great advantage if the deeper players aren't afraid to hit one from distance. Depending on the size of the pitch it can be more than plausible to have a dig from the half way line, test the keeper and see if he is up to scratch.

## 6 Training/Preparation

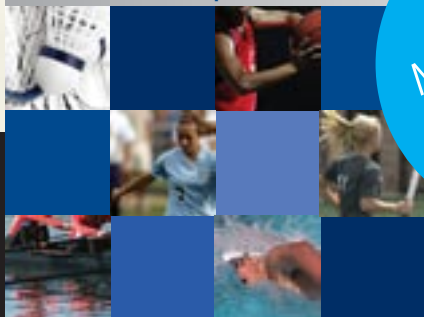
Not all 6 a side teams will train but it is of course, useful to do so. Getting use to playing alongside teammates can provide familiarity with each others styles and help to determine tactics and positioning. One thing which would be advisable is to get accustomed to the goals; practice shooting at a smaller target area. Other exercises such as playing 'two-touch' will only enhance a team's ability to knock the ball around.

 Find out more about small sided football at [www.leisureleagues.net](http://www.leisureleagues.net)

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**Mick Abrahams, afPE Lead Regional Physical Education Subject Adviser**

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# BACK TO BASICS: 1 V 1 GAMES

Got a ball? Got at least one mate? Good, that's all you need! Here are three street games that you can play to have fun, develop your touch and technique and get the bragging rights over your mate...



## 1 One v One Battle

Set up a small pitch with a goal for each player. You can use cones if you have them but wheelie bins, kerbs (anything!) can be used.

- 1 Play to a set score or until one of you is three goals ahead
- 2 A panna/nutmeg is worth two goals

## 2 In the Hoop

The challenge in this game is to be the first player to be able to volley/half volley the ball through a basketball hoop. Players try to keep the ball bouncing and take it in turns to try and kick the ball through the hoop.

- 1 Award points if you hit the rim of the hoop but the ball fails to go through
- 2 You are allowed to spend as many touches as you like before attempting to kick the ball through the hoop



## 3 Wimbledon

Set up a small 'tennis court'. The 'net' can be cones, a line, or a space/gap. Play to see who is first to get to a set score.

- 1 The ball can only be returned after one bounce – or you could allow volleys in the front half of the court.
- 2 Decide how many touches the ball can be kept up for until it must be returned
- 3 You can add a rule that the ball cannot be returned over the net in the same way consecutively (e.g. if you return the ball with your right foot you might choose your shoulder to return the ball next time)



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By Simon Hartley  
[www.be-world-class.com](http://www.be-world-class.com)

# It's half time and we're getting thrashed. What do I say to the players?



**A few years ago I worked in the Premier League. During the course of the seasons, I sat in on many half time team talks. Often, the manager would sit the players down at half time and explain to them where they were going wrong. He'd then send them out for the second half and was always amazed that they didn't simply go out and put things right.**

**I** used to see the constant frustration in the manager. The problem was, the manager had made a common mistake. He assumed that pointing out the errors would automatically lead to the solution. The fact is, as human beings, we often need more than that. Understanding where we went wrong is fine, but is not enough. We also need to know how we should be performing and we need to be able to practice it! Practicing is absolutely crucial if we're going to change our performance.

Often the manager would ask the team to change their tactics or their formation on the field, to counter what the opposition was doing. The problem was, our players hadn't practiced doing that. They'd never played in the formation before or practiced the new tactics. It was not simply a case of switching to something they knew and were confident in. Therefore they tried it for a while, found that it didn't work very well, and they reverted back to what they did know. As the manager moaned at them for making the same mistakes time after time, the players' confidence started to drain away. The players didn't know what to do or how to do it.

I'm sure you will have seen it, been on the receiving end of it, or maybe even fallen that trap yourself at some point. So, what's the alternative? How do we turn around performances during a 15 minute half time interval?

Let's start with some basic principles.

Firstly, the players will only retain a few key pieces of information. Over 90% of most team talks are forgotten by the time the players walk back down the tunnel. So, make sure you focus on a couple of key elements.

Secondly, players normally perform well when they have three things:

- **Focus**
- **Confidence**
- **Motivation**

Fortunately, these three feed off of each other. Very simply, when we have a simple, clear focus we tend to execute our tasks well. When we execute our task well, we become confident and enjoy what we're doing. As we become

confident and enjoy what we're doing, we are motivated to do it again.

If we want to start this positive spiral of increasing focus, confidence and motivation, we normally need to start at the beginning; focus. Make sure the players know their job and understand what they need to do, in order to do that job really well. There will be some simple processes that they can focus on. Once they know these (and they are focused on them) we can start to evaluate players by looking at how well they execute those processes. Coaches and managers often make the mistake of judging the players according to the results, rather than evaluating how well they are delivering the processes. Former England Rugby coach, Clive Woodward, was often heard commenting on areas of the game that his team performed well in and those areas that they needed to improve. If they won 70-0, he'd still highlight the areas that were working well and those they needed to work on. If they lost 70-0, he would do exactly the same. This kept his team focused on ensuring they delivered the processes. Woodward knew that when the processes were delivered well, the results would follow!

Although there are no magic wands, making positive changes in how players think and feel can have a significant impact on performance. There are very few things in sport that can change in a very short period of time. We don't suddenly lose or gain skill, or suddenly become more or less athletic. The things that tend to change more quickly are tactics and mind-set. If we can take control of mind-set, we're in a far stronger position.



# Pre-Season for Soccer Players; simple yet effective!



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**Andy Lindegaard (Ex-Professional Footballer and Performance Director of DYMONDstrength LTD) guides coaches through some basic information to be considered and applied in order to put their team ahead of the game!**

## 1 Know your athletes!

Firstly before doing any work it is important to get an understanding of what level your athletes are at following their season break, often this is a time when muscle mass will have decreased and fat percentage will have increased, along with a reduction in cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength. The tests listed have been selected as they require minimal equipment and can be applied to a number of players.

Component	Testing Technique
Aerobic	12 minute cooper run
Lower body strength	Free standing/ Wall Squat hold
Lower body power	Vertical jump
Trunk strength	Plank
Anthropometric	Height and Weight
Agility	T-Test
Plyometric ability	Standing countermovement jump

*If you are working with pre-pubescent athletes ensure that you monitor their limb growth as this can result in injury risks if this factor is neglected and not considered when preparing training specifics.*

**A good coach should monitor these variables throughout the season at regular intervals especially if coaching young development players as growth factors play a major role in both male and female performance.**

## 2 Hit me!

No, don't actually hit me; this stands for high intensity interval training and is a great method to adopt after the off-season. Training should target intervals of high intensity work followed by a rest period varying from 30seconds to 3 minutes depending on the area of work and your training goal. As many players rarely sprint for longer than 40m, use this distance to set your players sprinting at and vary the intensity using different rest periods i.e.

Example	Task	Rest	Repeat
1	40m sprint in straight direction, jog back to start	Active rest in jog back	6 times and rest for 3 minutes.
	Repeat this method 3 times in your first session and increase the number of times you repeat this every week until the beginning of the season		
2	Pitch width medium speed run	Passive rest for 1 minute	6 times
	Repeat this method 3 times in your first session and increase the number of times you repeat this every week until the beginning of the season		

## 3 Nutrition guide

Due to the nature of intensity in preseason your body will be run through the mill, so it is important to repair those broken muscles, and we don't mean injured muscles... when you do exercise essentially you are damaging muscles, protein helps to repair this! Therefore a balanced diet of protein and carbohydrate to repair damaged muscles and refuel energy for the next session is key. Due to the rested state players will be in, it is important to protect their immune system and enhance these by ensuring a good range of fruit and vegetables are consumed. As well as ensuring adequate hydration is adhered to both pre, during and post training, especially if training in hot and humid conditions.



DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

OPPONENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

HALF TIME SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

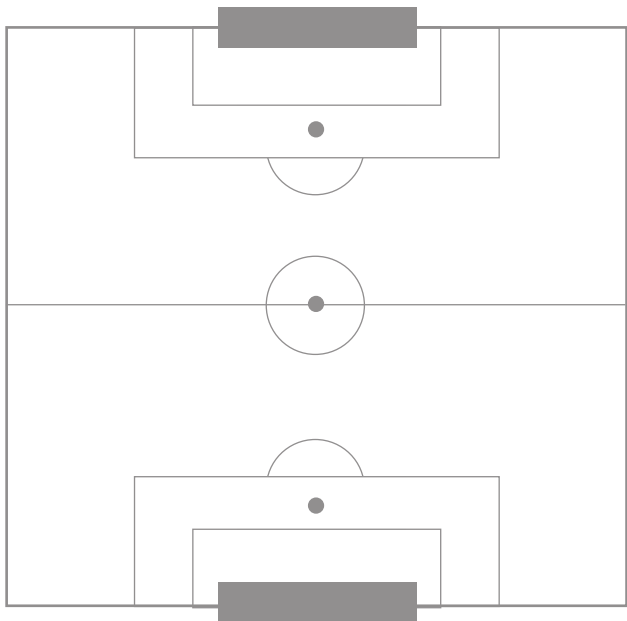
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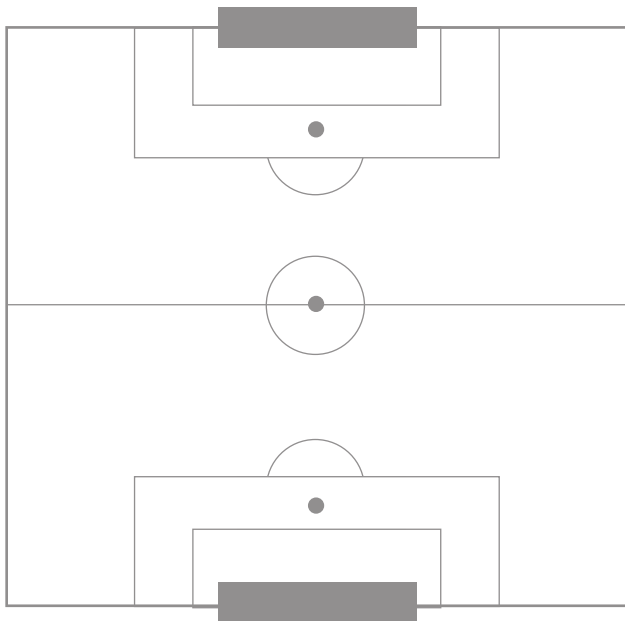
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**OUR STARTING FORMATION** \_\_\_\_\_



**OPPONENT'S STARTING FORMATION** \_\_\_\_\_



**KEY MESSAGES SAID DURING THE HALF TIME TALK:**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**CHANGES MADE DURING THE GAME:**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**THINGS WE LEARNT ABOUT OUR TEAM;**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**THINGS WE LEARNT ABOUT OUR OPPONENTS;**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**THINGS WE WILL WORK ON AT TRAINING AND IN OUR NEXT GAME:**



# Keeper Corner

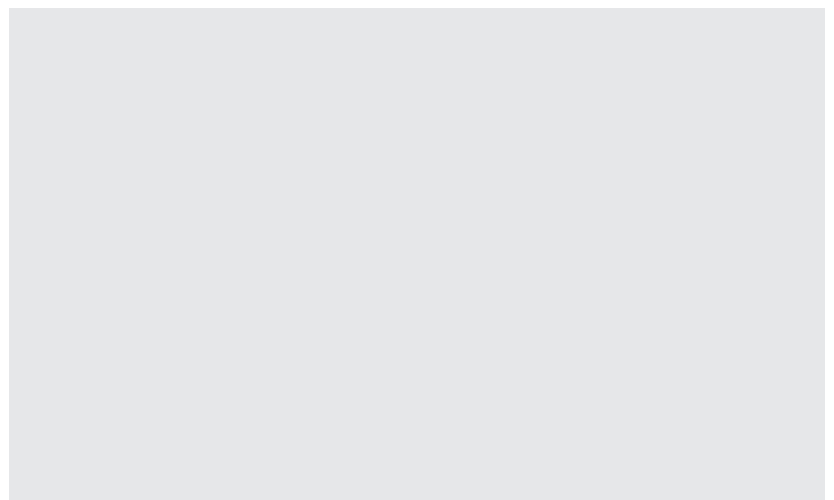
## Reaction Training

**Don't neglect the keepers in your training sessions! In this issue Keeper Corner provides three ideas for sharpening those reactions for the new season. Each idea focuses on situations which require the keeper to assess a situation and react quickly to prevent the ball from hitting the back of the net.**

### 1 Rebound Wall

This drill simulates a situation where a player pulls the ball back from the byline for an oncoming striker. As such the GK has to change position from covering their front post to then be ready to save a shot at any part of the goal

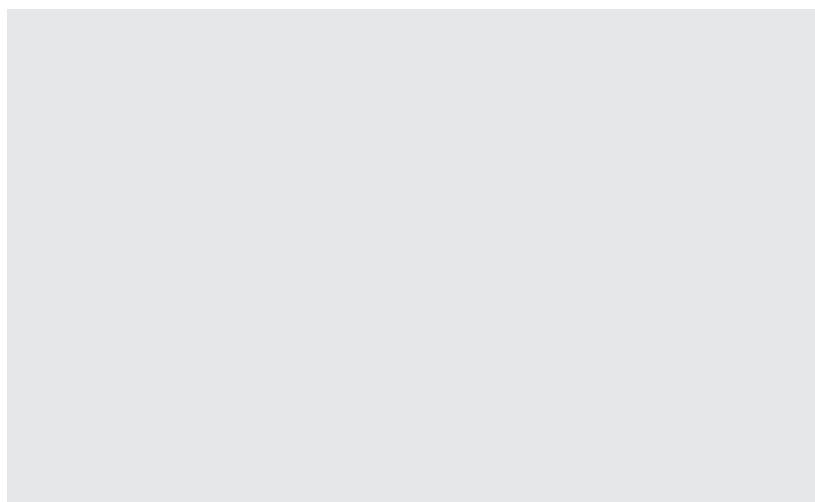
- 1 The Coach volleys, kicks or throws the ball at a wall, rebound net, bench, or players.
- 2 What is important is that the GK should be faced with a variety of different angles but the 'wall' should be close enough to force the GK into a reaction save moments after changing their position.
- 3 The GK should work on both sides of the goal



## 2 Reaction Alley

This drill tries to recreate situations where a ball is struck through a crowded penalty area and often a deflection can leave the keeper wrong footed.

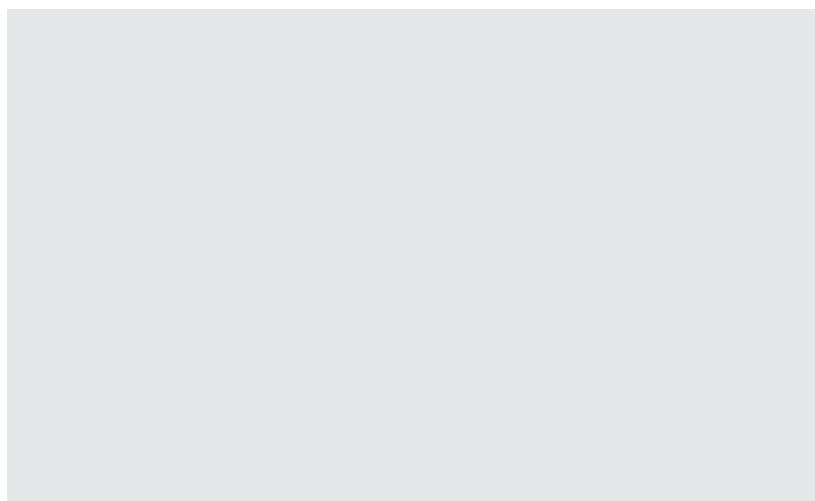
- 1 Set up some cones in front of the keeper (sturdy traffic cones are the best)
- 2 The coach strikes the ball goalward trying to cause a deflection off the cones
- 3 Whatever happens the keeper must react to keep the ball out of the net
- 4 If a ball comes back of the cone the coach can follow up their shot and shoot again



## 3 Turn, Set and Save

The purpose of this activity is to replicate a game scenario when an opponent's clever disguised pass sets up an unexpected shooting opportunity.

- 1 4 players pass a ball randomly but sharply between themselves
- 2 As this is happening the GK is moving around their goal (the coach/GK can decide the type of movement and whether they are facing play or facing away from play)
- 3 When the coach shouts "GO" the next player to receive the ball has one touch to set up a shot and one touch to shoot.
- 4 The GK must react to the position of the ball and set themselves ready to make the save



*"As a goalkeeper you need to be good at organising the people in front of you and motivating them. You need to see what's going on and react to the threats."*

Peter Shilton

### ANIMATION KEY:

- Coach/Players
- Goal Keepers
- Cones

 See more ideas in PLANS @ [WWW.SOCCER-IQ.CO.UK](http://WWW.SOCCER-IQ.CO.UK)

# Tweet FA

Let's be honest, apart from the odd exception interviews with players and managers have become a bit dull and predictable. Luckily Twitter means that we don't have to put up with "Take it one game at a time", "over the moon" any more. To join our Tweet FA players and managers just have to say something interesting... (and they don't even have to spell it correctly).

**@3gerardpique** (Gerard Piqué)  
A year ago from today, we obtained the victory in South Africa! July 11th of 2010 will be forever remembered by all of us!

[not sure if any of the England players tweeted any WC anniversary messages..]

**@RyanBabel** (Ryan Babel)  
Never let what a few fools have done to you allow you to ruin the gracious nice person you used 2 b - RR !!!

[the unexpected Mr Miyagi of the football world]

**@Joey7Barton**  
Visa story is correct, they told me am not allowed in until I have 5yrs without any trouble. 3yrs down, 2yrs to go.....

[3 years down?]



**@stuholden** (Stuart Holden)  
Got bullied last night.. Fell asleep with my door open somehow and awoke to a couple of the lads scaring the \$h!t outta me! #schoolboy error

[those crazy footballers!]

**@WayneRooney**  
The lad who went to watch Liverpool train in mufc top with my name on the back is a legend.

[from one legend to another]

**@RobbieSavage8**  
Your only allowed 20 kg so I have to put my wallet in my hand luggage otherwise I'd have to pay for overweight baggage !! See you haters  
xxx

[love him or hate him...]

👉 For more intelligent football tweets follow us @soccerIQ

# Back of the Net

Find it difficult to score with your back to goal? Liven up your shooting practice and make it more realistic by trying these innovative techniques.



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*In this feature Josh Holt examines the academic theory and research relating to Soccer and explains its relevance to coaches and players operating at all levels of the game. In this issue Josh outlines what is meant by Relative Age Effects, potential causes and implications for youth soccer.*

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# Tackling the Relative Age Effects Part 1.

*A great satisfaction of teaching and coaching youth soccer is helping young people progress into competent and enthusiastic players. You might manage a club side for local kids or be responsible for developing talented and future international players.*

**Whatever the situation, all youngsters deserve a fair chance to play the game and progress to their full potential. However, a hidden problem exists at every level of youth soccer that hinders the enjoyment and improvement of young players. To ensure children receive equal opportunities for coaching and playing, teachers and coaches need to tackle the Relative Age Effects.**

**R**esearch examining the RAE phenomenon has demonstrated an 'un-level' playing field for younger members of a cohort at all standards of the game, from local club and school sport to academy soccer.

## RAE in talent development

Children born early in the selection year (September to November) who benefit from up to a year more growth, development and practice than their youngest peers (born in June to August) are more likely to be identified as talented and recruited by pro-clubs. In other words, a child's date of birth is a greater indicator of talent or a perceived lack of talent than

his or her ability to master and apply the necessary skills of the game.

During a recent season at one highly respected English professional soccer club academy there were 5.5 times more players (aged u9 to u16) born in the first compared to the last quartile of the selection year. 78% of players were born in the first half of the year and only 8% of boys had birthdays in June, July or August. Clearly, the processes of initial and on-going player assessment based largely on the subjective opinion of game performance by coaches and scouts have deficiencies that the professional game must address. It is likely that a feature of the English academy system that occurs when the physical disparity between players is greatest has also increased the problem. Without an u15 games programme, academy boys at the end of their u14 season are expected to cope with the physical demands of u16 soccer. If this situation existed when the player voted the best in the English Premier League was 13 years old it is probable that he would have been released by his academy and Harry Redknapp, Spurs fans and Wales might not be enjoying their £50 million rated, prized asset.



**A definition:** The Relative Age Effect or Effects (RAE) describes the biased situation that favours older children in each age group due to their superior physical, emotional and psychological development relative to their younger peers.



# Case Studies



## RAE survivor:

**Name:** Gareth Bale  
[Spurs & Wales; PFA player of the Year, 2011]

**DoB:** 16 July 1989

As one of the youngest in the year Gareth was small for his age and was second choice left back in his u15 academy team. His outstanding technical ability and athletic potential were obscured by the physical dominance of other players and after seven seasons with the Academy it came down to a one-match 'trial' to be offered a last-minute scholarship. He had a good game and inside 18 months was a first team and senior international player but it might have been very different. Gareth's elevation to one of the World's best players makes it hard to believe that just a few years ago his future was in the balance.



## RAE survivor:

**Name:** Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain  
[Arsenal & England u21; Saints Young Player of the Year, 2011]

**DoB:** 15 August 1993

Similar to Gareth, Alex's technical ability was overshadowed by the superior physical development of his peers. As a u15 player he played down an age group and only became a starter in the u16 academy team towards the end of that season. Alex was not offered a scholarship initially and having been at Southampton since the age of 7, was given extra-time to prove his ability. After a rapid period of growth and physical development, Alex made his debut for the Saints aged 16 years, having progressed from the u14 to first team in less than two seasons! Today, Alex is one of British soccer's brightest young talents having just sealed a multi-million pound transfer to Arsenal.



Gareth and Alex were fortunate to have developed physically before their 16th birthday, but these high profile cases suggest many players did not survive the disadvantage of a late birth date. Due to their relative young age numerous other worthy players also fail to be identified and recruited into elite coaching programmes resulting in a waste of potential talent.



Josh Holt gained the FA Advanced/ UEFA 'A' Coaching Licence aged 23 years and was an academy coach at Southampton FC, England for over 12 years. As the Head Coach at the Club's successful Bath Satellite Academy he had responsibility for the development of Gareth Bale (PFA Player of the Year, 2011) from age 9 to u16 and numerous other international and first team players including Nathan Dyer (Swansea City Player of the Year, 2011) and Martin Cranie (England u21; UEFA Championship finalist, 2009). He is an experienced teacher of primary and secondary physical education and trained at Loughborough, Ohio State and Southampton Universities. Josh's research has developed systems to measure technical learning during academy coaching to better determine and develop the most talented players.

## RAEs in grass roots and school soccer

Competition has a causal role in RAEs, which are not restricted to player selection in talent development programmes. Participation and drop-out from club soccer also suffer from RAEs. A recent study has shown that across the u9 to u18 ages, players who are born late in the age group are more likely to stop playing competitive youth soccer. This is more concerning when the youngest children in the competitive year are also less likely to start playing in the first place.

An unfair bias also exists in terms of attainment in school physical education by the relatively older students in 11 to 16 age year groups. Similarly, an over-representation by older children in competitive school teams is common. Assessment and team selection by teachers, as with youth coaches, might unknowingly be based on faulty notions that advanced physical characteristics are associated with performance.

British soccer is not alone in suffering the RAEs. France, Germany and Spain for example share the same issues as do numerous other youth sports such as ice hockey in Canada and ski racing in Austria.

**NEXT ISSUE:** Part II in the next edition of SoccerIQ will describe some practical steps for every youth coach, teacher or manager to examine and improve their own practice to help tackle and attack the Relative Age Effects. A three stage 'R-A-E' process is suggested that guides coaching action to (1) REFLECT and take RESPONSIBILITY for the issues, (2) ANALYSE personal coaching and contexts to know the extent of your problem and (3) ERASE the effects with a proactive, personal response.

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