



THE PROCESS

2023

DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY



BREAKING THE STATUS QUO OF GIRLS' SOCCER IN MIAMI

I was in the recovery room with my mom after her surgery at a local hospital when the resident nurse noticed my soccer jacket. She asked me if I was involved with youth soccer. I said “Yes, I’m the executive director of the Miami DA, a local non-profit which runs a girls’ soccer club.”

She went on to tell me about her playing experience at the highest levels of girls’ youth soccer in South Florida. How she played for the Girls’ DA as well as ECNL, and named all the elite clubs she bounced between. She eventually ended up playing Division 1 college soccer at a local university.

When she finished, I asked her a simple question. A question to which, honestly, I already knew the answer to: “Did you enjoy your experience?” Her response came quick, without qualification: “No. I can’t stand soccer.” She had reached the highest level of competitive youth soccer; earned a Division 1 college scholarship, what millions of young girls dream of, and hated it.

Her answer was sad but expected. As a father of three daughters who played and still play youth soccer in Miami, I have seen the mental beating these girls take. Adults wanting to win at all costs, even at the age of 10. Coaches whose egos ride on the final score. And club management that does everything to make sure the parents and coaches are happy, so the parents keep paying and their club can keep calling itself “elite”. Everything revolving around the adults, with the children as bystanders, mere numbers, with little regard as to whether they get harmed in the process because they can always be replaced.

This is why the Miami DA was created: To break this status-quo.

When a player joins our club, it is not just a one-year commitment to play for a team. It is a three-to-five-year commitment from our club to a development plan for that individual player with age specific curriculum, and specific soccer principals and skills they will learn that year, and which the following year will build upon.

This is their journey. The rest of us; the club, coaches, and parents, we are mere facilitators of their experience.

Welcome to the Development Academy!

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THE PROCESS DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY¹

We are extremely passionate about soccer here at the Academy for two main reasons. First, we love to teach. It is at the core of why and how we coach: That feeling you get when we you see a kid’s eyes sparkle when they not only learn something new; but realize they can achieve more than they once believed they could.

The second reason is that to us, soccer is more than just a game. Our style of soccer, and the way we teach and develop our kids to play it, is about their journey towards becoming young adults. It is a conscience choice of the values we find important; and reflects what we aspire our community to be and the type of neighbors we want our players to become. When we ask our winger to position themselves as wide as possible, so the midfielder can receive the ball in space and go to goal, we are asking that winger to sacrifice their personal desire for the ball, their desire to be the star of the play, in favor of their teammate and the good of the team. Our players play in service to each other.

There are other ways to play soccer that are more direct, more individualistic. Without passing judgment on others, we do not share those values, and thus we do not play that way. We are passionate about our soccer because it reflects how we want to be as a community. We are developing intelligent, skilled players of good character; and that “good character” is formed by the values reinforced by our playing style.

¹ This development methodology manual is not an original or finished product. It is a smorgasbord of knowledge and ideas engendered from our experience and studies, with many ideas taken from others more knowledgeable and experienced than ourselves. Nobody knows everything about soccer or holds the absolute soccer truth. This is our attempt to put in writing our pedagogical and soccer philosophy, and to create an explicit plan for how we intend to teach based on them. But we reiterate, this is not a final product. We will continue to learn through experience and study, question everything, and as we do, this manual will continue to evolve. This edition, for example, is already the third edition since the first version drafted in January of 2020. Thank you to all those who have helped in the creation of this manual as well as the amazing writers and soccer minds whose ideas and experiences have benefited us: Todd Beane, Doug Lemov, Romeo Jozak, Dan Blank, Patrick King, Dan Abrahams, Tom Byer, Joan Oliva, and many others. Thank you!





I
JUEGO DE POSICIÓN
(POSITION PLAY)

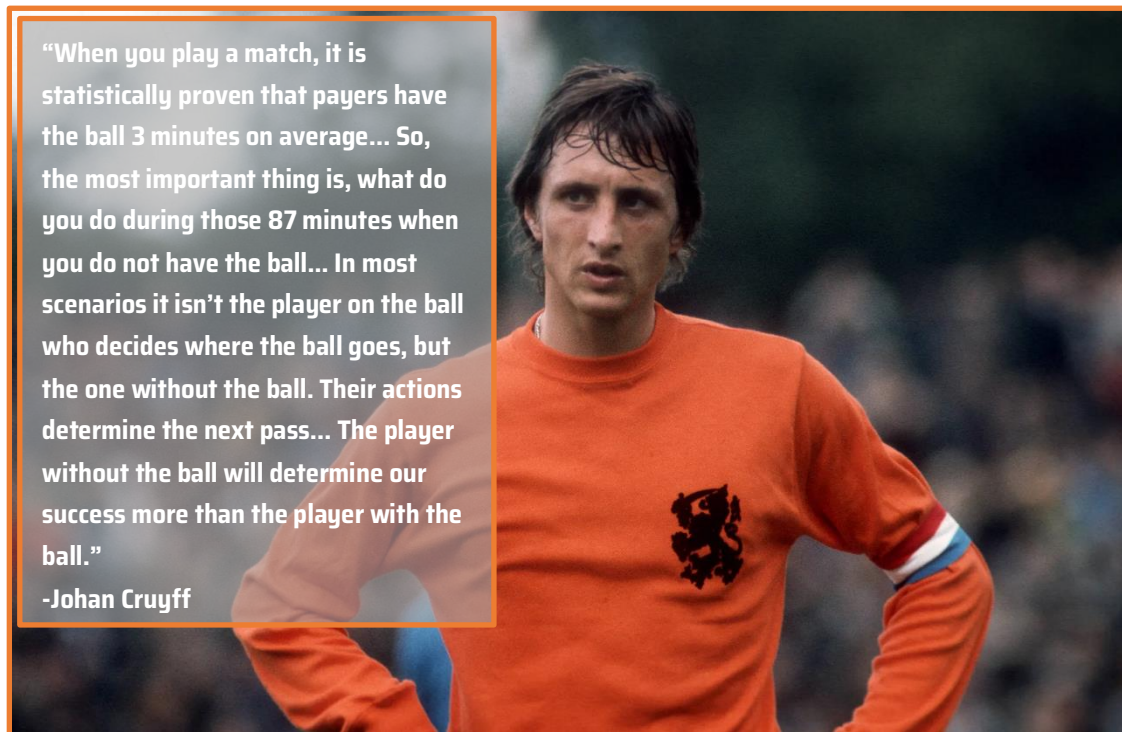
Our Style of Soccer

A. WHAT IS POSITION PLAY - JUEGO DE POSICION (JdP)?

JdP is an attractive style of soccer focused on the use of space and fluid positioning. The origins of JdP come from Total Football² developed with the Dutch National Team and Ajax by Rinus Michels. Johan Cruyff, who played for Michels brought the style to Barcelona, first as a player and then as a coach. Pep Guardiola, who played under Cruyff at Barcelona further evolved the style into modern JdP, first as coach of Barcelona, and then at Bayern Munich in Germany and Manchester City in England.



Everyone says they want to play this style, “play like Barcelona,” but few do. Why? JdP is difficult to implement because it requires a 180-degree change in how one sees and interprets the game of soccer.



Most people fail because they focus on, and train for the 3 minutes, when the player has the ball. To train JdP, one must invert the focus of training away from the ball, and train for the 87 minutes. It requires everyone to fully commit to this vision, from coaches, players to parents and club administrators. It must run through the core of the whole club. It is not just a way to play, but a different way to see the game, based on a value choice, which affects how you interpret the game, how you train it, and how you play it. It infects every corner of your soccer world. Only then, can you begin to develop technically skilled and tactically intelligent players who can play in this beautiful free flowing style of soccer that empowers them to recognize and solve problems on the field.

Accordingly, to train players to play JdP, you cannot rely on players that are just technically skilled. You need the complete package: skilled, intelligent players of good character. Everyone wants to develop intelligent players, but don't do what is necessary to achieve it. They say it, but do not train it. If you want intelligent players, you must train intelligence. If we want players of good character, every level of our club must exhibit, reflect, and explicitly train good character. Everyone wants highly skilled players, but the only way for highly skilled players to reach their full potential, is for them to also be intelligent players of good character.

B. DEVELOPING JdP PLAYERS

1. Concepts & Principles

Soccer is a free flowing, almost chaotic game that can pose innumerable different challenges and situations during a match. It would be futile to try to teach a person how to play soccer by showing them how to react to every possible situation they may face on the field. However, if a player views the game through the prism of the JdP's soccer principles, she will start to see that certain situations of play repeat themselves to form patterns of play.

To develop intelligent players, we must (1) teach these soccer principles that allow the players to see the patterns of play; (2) repeatedly expose the players to these patterns



of play so they can recognize them in a game; (3) teach the concepts and actions that come from the soccer principles and form the solutions to the different situations on the field; (4) train their cognitive (decision making) process so they can efficiently and consistently apply the correct concepts and actions to the different situations; and finally (5) develop the skills necessary to execute the concepts and actions.

When a math teacher teaches multiplication, she can ask students to memorize a multiplication table. Each example in that table (e.g., 3×3), is like a possible situation you may find on a soccer field. Memorizing those problems and their solutions may serve in some cases, but do you really know multiplication? What happens when presented with a new question with numbers outside the multiplication table? A great teacher does not make you memorize questions and answers. They teach you multiplication concepts that allow you to answer every multiplication problem you may ever face, no matter how complex, or whether you have seen it before.

We do the same in soccer. We teach concepts, not plays. We do not repeatedly drill unopposed passing activities during the week and then expect the kids to play like Barcelona on the weekend. That is like a math teacher repeatedly drilling “ 3×3 ; 3×3 ; 3×3 ”, and then expecting the student to be Newton on exam day. 3×3 is one example, one situation, not a pattern. We can use these examples to teach how a concept works in different situations, but we are teaching the concept, not the example. The lesson is the underlying Soccer Principle that helps a player recognize the pattern created by the different examples. This way, they can then solve even new problems on their own during a game.

This is why we teach our Soccer Principles over and over and over again. They are repeated in the exercises we do, the language the coaches use (as Key Terms), and the activities we train. They are discussed prior to, during, and after training and games. They are not just ideas written on paper. They are the building blocks of our intelligent players and are explicitly referenced at nauseum.



2. Cognitive Training

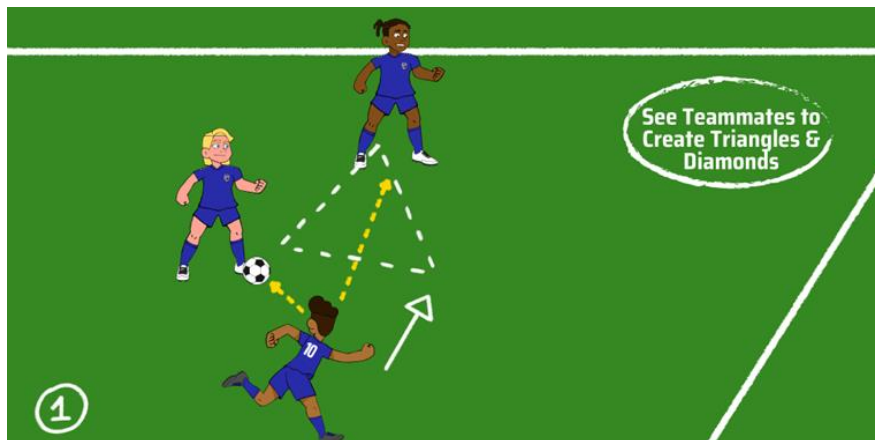
As we repeatedly expose our players to the patterns of play, they are also training their decision making, or Cognition. Every training exercise requires our players to:

1. SEE
2. CHOOSE
3. DO, and
4. REFLECT

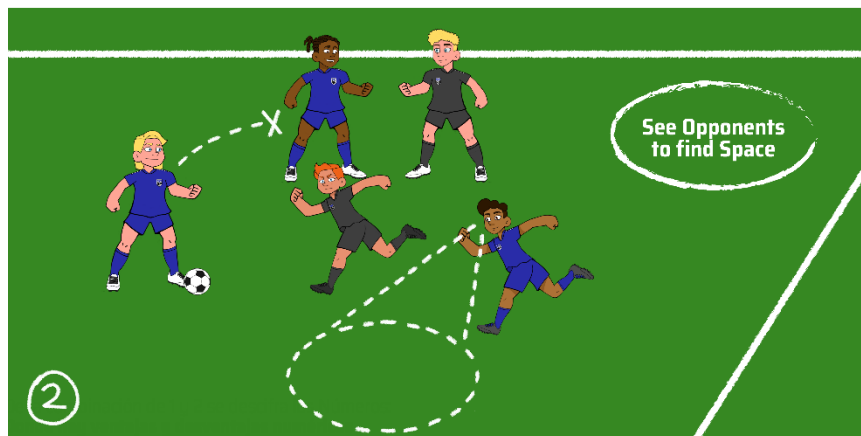


SEEING (i.e., Scanning) is the first step in a player's cognitive process. Players need to be able to See:

- a) Their **TEAMMATES**, to create **Triangles & Diamonds** with them:

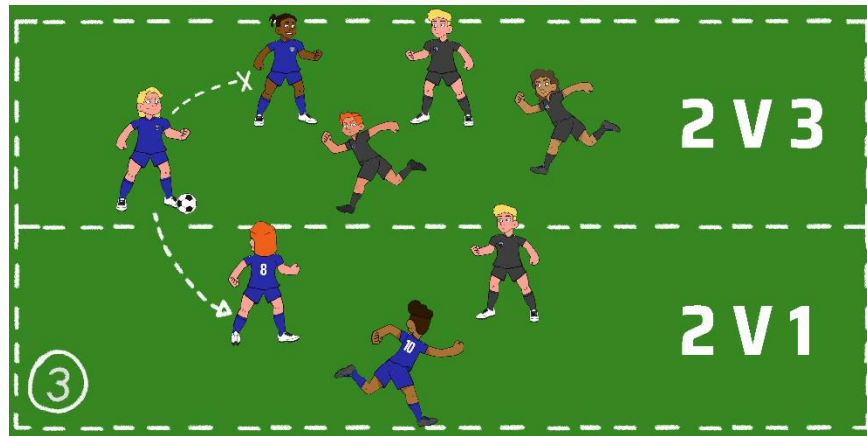


- b) Their **OPPONENTS**, to find **Space**.



c) and with Teammates and Opponents in focus:

Identify **NUMERICAL ADVANTAGES**



CHOOSING is the second step in the cognitive process. To train this element we teach players to identify certain visual cues, which are made up of the above elements (teammates, opponents, space & numbers), plus field location and the game state. The player is repeatedly put in situations where they have to choose which Individual Tactical Action³ best applies to the given Visual Cue.

DOING is the execution of the Individual Tactical Action (“ITA”). It is where skill and technique come in to play. It is the third step in the cognitive process and the reason we have discarded the traditional technique-centric way of training. Our players pass, receive, dribble, shoot, and head the ball when the moment calls for such execution. But they perform the given skill in a game context while applying our Soccer Principles. They develop these skills by repeatedly being put in positions to execute them in different scenarios. They not only learn how to do a skill, but when to do it.

The fourth and final step is REFLECTION. After a player executes a skill, they reflect on the efficiency of what they saw, chose, and did. Our training structure helps to ingrain the need for reflection by making sure that before training starts, we explicitly tell the players the concepts and principles we are training that day, and afterwards we reflect on what we learned and how well we applied that learning.

³ Individual Tactical Actions (“ITAs”) are player actions or concepts that apply our Soccer Principles.



3. Skill Development

When a player has the necessary knowledge needed to recognize the visual cues presented on the field, and to identify the soccer solutions necessitated by the situation on the field, the final step is executing that soccer solution, which requires technical skill.

Skill acquisition, however, is not only necessary to execute a decision. Being skilled also assists in the making of such a decision. This is because the more automated the execution of a skill becomes, the less it taxes the player's working memory during training, which allows them to focus more on learning the visual cues and soccer solutions.

The development of skills is a form of motor skill programming. It requires a three (3) step process which helps connect the muscle to the brain, so the player has full control of what his or her body does. The first step in motor skill programming is the performance of Simple Technique which isolates, within a stable controlled environment, the muscles that are trying to disrupt the stability of the physical performance. These activities are repeated until the disrupting muscles are isolated, and the physical performance is done with perfection, at which point the player moves into the second step: Dynamic Technique. This is when physical skill is performed with external variables introduced. This external variable serves to increase the player's cognitive load when performing the skill but should not be too overbearing preventing the player from focusing on the execution of the skill. For example, if a player is practicing their first touch and they can perform the simple technique of softly receiving the ball on their far foot with their hips open, a coach can then introduce the element of trying to receive the ball to a specific spot.

The final step is Functional Technique, which is the physical performance within the full cognitive process. If we force a player to the Functional or Dynamic Technique step before passing through the Simple Technique stages, we risk reinforcing bad habits which are later more difficult to correct.



So how do we develop our players' skills? First, everything starts with ball mastery. You cannot play our style of soccer without first desiring to keep the ball, loving the ball, and mastering the ball. This is why our Soccer Principle #1 is "Love the Ball, Master the Ball". Our first level of development focusses on developing that love of the ball. Players learn to control the ball and just have fun with it. They develop an intimate relationship with the ball and become players who want the ball; who love the ball; who protect the ball, and jealously fight to keep the ball. To achieve that, we must start by making the ball their favorite toy, their best friend. It is the foundation for growing the love of the game and ultimately for playing our style of soccer.

We encourage parents to have several balls lying around the house and to allow their kids to play in the house. The home is the perfect environment for to develop ball mastery because it forces a kid playing with the ball to control the ball within a fixed, constrained area. As Todd Byer preaches, "Soccer Starts at Home!"

This love of the ball is emphasized in our training sessions, which also repeatedly require our players to use a thus develop their skills. Notwithstanding the foregoing, there are certain foundational skill techniques that a coach must explicitly teach. But these can also be trained within our sessions. For example, at an early age it is important that players learn to dribble with their pinky toe. So instead of starting with a 2v2 exercise, the coach might start with a 2v1 or even a 3v1 which gives a player mor opportunity to dribble the ball. The coach can then introduce the foundational technique of using the pinky toe to dribble as one of the learning elements of the lesson⁴.

If, however, a coach identifies quickly a player using faulty foundational technique they should implement our skill intervention protocol, of which the first step is pulling the player to the side to provide concise and explicit instructions on how to correctly perform the drill, and then reintroduce the player into the team activity. If that intervention is not enough to correct the player's technical mistake, the coach together

⁴ See Scaffolding under the 7 Pillars of Training Design, pg24.



with the Club's Technical Director, develops a plan to work on the proper simple technique of the skill to prevent the player from reinforcing a bad habit to the point where it becomes impossible to fix later.

Sometimes a coach might also want to introduce certain skill movements used in the execution of an ITA. For example, different types of change of speed movements along the sideline (e.g., cut and go, or step and go, etc.). In this scenario the player is introduced to more than one skill move that executes the same ITA so that player can choose the one that fits her the best.

We also group these skill moves into clusters to allow them to be taught in a decision-making environment. For example, a player will be taught various settling techniques together: settling with time; settling to turn left/right/180 or going forward. Once the player passes through the Simple Technique, they are then asked to use the correct technique in the correct situation as they train and develop. We also make sure to communicate this process to parents. The reality is that three team training sessions a week is not enough for a player to become an extremely skillful player. The idea is to provide the players with the foundation to become skillful. How far they take it depends on them, their drive, and how much they love playing the game outside our team training sessions.

4. Physical Development

The physical development of players is grossly underappreciated and ignored in youth soccer. It is a priority for us.

Physical skill is another aspect we develop as a club. At young ages Physical skills are



developed naturally throughout our training sessions. As you will note below in our Training Structure, the Training Game section of our training provides sufficient opportunity to develop physical skills for these ages. As players get into the older ages, however, specific physical skill training is incorporated into our training sessions in the Activation portion of our training sessions.



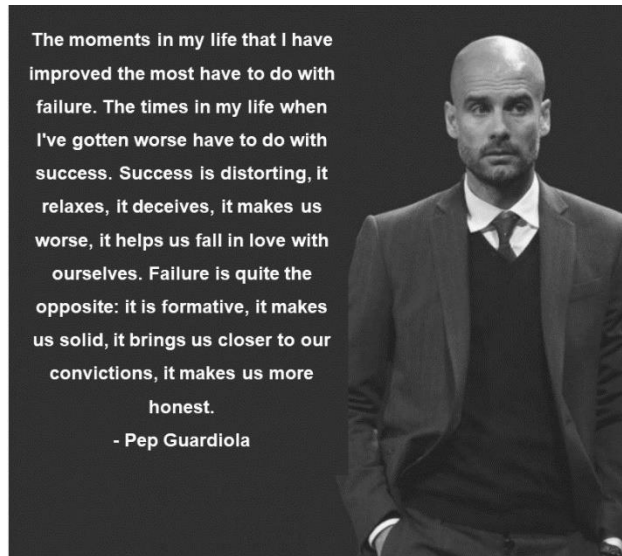


II CLUB CULTURE

All the cognitive training and the best concepts and principles will do little to develop successful JdP players if you do not have the right club culture.

A. CLUB ETHOS: “LA PROXIMA”

Our training field is a 100% judgment free zone for our players. The only way they develop and get better, is if they are willing try new things. They will only try new things if they feel comfortable failing. And then getting back up, and trying again. To create this environment our coaches, players, **and** parents must adopt what we call “La Proxima”, or “Next Time”



philosophy. It stands for responding to mistakes by a player with: “It’s OK, get it Next Time”, or “La Proxima”.

All players want to be great players. Even the ones that appear to not try hard, or shy away from moments. They want to be good soccer players. The problem almost always is confidence. That’s why we focus on encouraging our players to try. We reword effort. If they fail, that is good because it means they are try something new or something they have not mastered... yet! So, we encourage them to try, to make mistakes. And then encouraged them to get up and try it again. They know nobody will judge them for failing, and that we all support their development: the club, coaches, teammates, and parents, alike. Only in this environment will our kids feel free to take on new challenges, try new things, learn, and grow.

Accordingly, failure and mistakes are not only accepted; they are invited. Our training sessions are constantly asking our players to step outside their comfort zone, to look for challenges that first test them with failure, before ultimately succeeding. Since our training activities intrinsically punish the player—such as the player going to the middle in a rondo—failure does not have to be punished by the coach or team. It is quite the opposite. Our coaches encourage failure and mistakes. They celebrate mistakes.



Our coaches understand that players want to learn and get better. They may pull a player out to correct something, then quickly put them back in. But the coach does not remonstrate a player for making a mistake. The activity does that itself. Instead, our coaches celebrate the effort and confidence required to attempt a new skill or apply a concept. Only in an environment that celebrates the attempt, will a player have the confidence to attempt new, more difficult challenges. This environment with the coach as facilitator providing positive support and rewarding the player for their effort gives them the confidence to step out of their comfort zone to test themselves with new challenges, which is what leads to growth and development.

B. CLUB DNA: “TEACHING”

Our coaches are first and foremost teachers, and our players are students. The first question we ask when we interview a coaching candidate is: “Why do you want to coach?” If they express a passion for teaching; a passion for seeing kids learn and grow, and the understanding that it takes a huge reservoir of patience, empathy, open mindedness, and repetition, then we may be a good fit. If instead, they talk about their personal goals and aspirations, then we are probably not the right club for them.

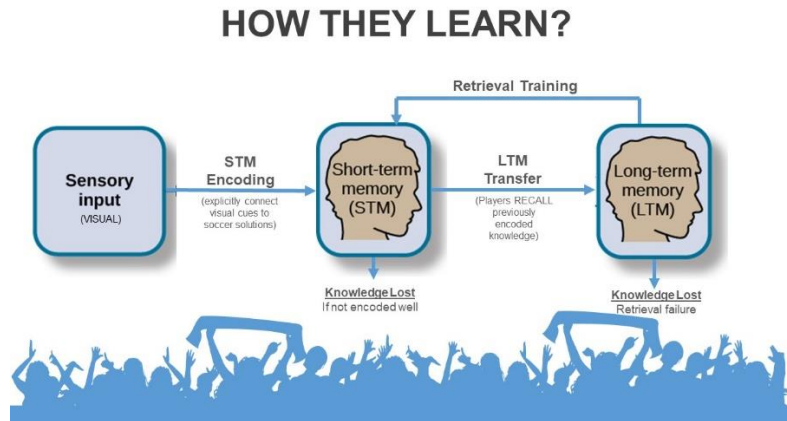
This is because when a player joins our club, it is not just a one-year commitment to play for a team. It is a three-to-five-year commitment from the club to a development plan for that player with age specific curriculum, and specific soccer principals and skills they will learn that year, and which the following year will build upon. We center our coaching method on the provocation of individual learning, using proven teaching techniques such as “checking for understanding” and retrieval lessons.

This passion for teaching is a major part of the DNA of our club, coaches, and administration. Accordingly, our club has a uniform understanding of how our players learn as we endeavor to guide them through this development journey. In this section we discuss the foundational concepts of our teaching methodology. We first distil how kids learn, and then we discuss how we set out to provoke such learning.



1. Retrieval Training

Learning is a two-step process. First knowledge is encoded into a student's short-term memory using sensory input. Then the knowledge must be transferred from short-term memory into the player's long-term through recall and retrieval training.



Learning Step 1: Encoding into Working Memory

In soccer, the first step of encoding consists of explicitly connecting a visual cue with a soccer solution. For example, if you have a 2v1 with space behind the defender, the player should attract the defender to them and then do a Wall Pass (i.e., 1-2, or “give-and-go”) with their teammate. The visual cue is recognizing the 2v1 and the space behind the defender. The soccer solution is to attract and do a wall pass. If a coach fails to properly encode the knowledge into the player's short-term memory, the knowledge is lost, and training time is wasted.

Coaches often make the mistake of not explicitly identifying the visual cue and connecting it to the soccer solution, thus failing to encode the knowledge. Many coaches were successful players who learned implicitly playing on the street, or the park. Nobody told them the visual cues or connected them to soccer solutions. They learned it implicitly. But if we are going to be teachers, we must teach. We must facilitate the provocation of learning by being clear with our players about what we want them to learn, what they should be looking for, and the solutions to those situations. We cannot just assume they will understand it on their own.

Some players will have the innate skill to pick-up knowledge without explicit teaching. And chances are, those are the special players that may go on to play at the



highest level. But we cannot set out to create a learning environment that will only work for those special players. We must create a learning environment for all our players.

Clear explicit teaching creates an environment where all the players learn and improve. It allows lesser players to learn how to play; and accelerates the learning of the higher-level players by catalyzing the innate learning process. It also creates a more competitive environment for the advanced players to further accelerate their growth.

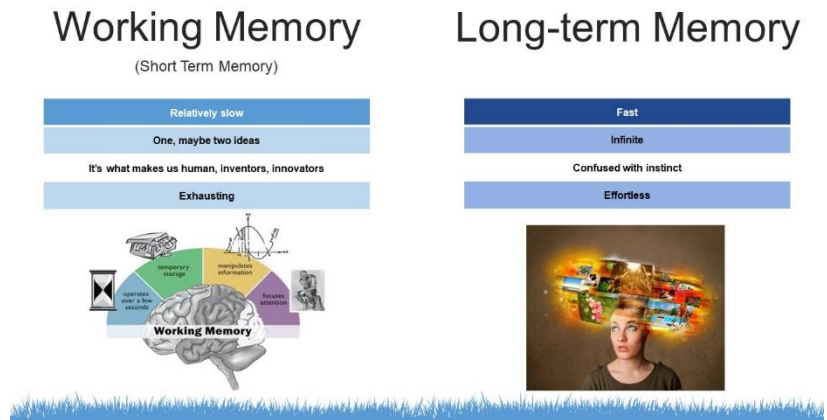
Working Memory vs. Long-Term Memory

Have you ever trained during the week with your team and had the players performing beautifully? They appeared to understand the concepts you were teaching and applied them during the sessions. Your chest puffed with pride and anticipation for that weekend's games. Then when the game comes you see none of the beauty from that week's training? Some coaches unfortunately react with frustration, asking the kids, "What's wrong? Why are you not focused?" Demanding that they, "need to want it more! Try harder!" And sometimes concluding the kids, "they must not care".

But the kids care. They all want to be good players and play well. They love playing the games. And they all want to be good players. The problem is not the kids. The problem is us. The problem is our lack of understanding of the difference between working memory and long-term memory.



When the kids performed the amazing practices, they were using their working memory. But during the game, they are using their long-term memory. The problem is not that the kids do not “want it enough”. It is that the coach failed to transfer that knowledge from working memory to long term memory. We need to look inward as coaches and do better.



Working memory is a system for temporary storing and managing of information required to carry out complex cognitive tasks such as reasoning and comprehension.⁵ Working memory is involved in the selection, initiation, and termination of information-processing functions, such as encoding, storing, and retrieving knowledge.

Working memory (“WM”) is what separates us from other animals. It is what a scientist uses when working in a lab trying to find cures and create vaccines. It is what we use when we are “thinking” and trying to solve problems. WM, however, has its limitations. WM can only hold one, or maybe two, different ideas at the same time. It is also relatively slow and takes effort to use, which causes fatigue. This is what our players are doing during training.

Long-term memory (“LTM”), in contrast, has a potentially endless capacity, is fast and almost effortless. This is what our players to use during games. An example of LTM is when a certain song or smell causes you to remember a memory you didn’t even know you still held. The memory comes to you immediately, without effort, and the capacity in your brain to hold such memories is almost unlimited. LTM memory in physical activities such as soccer is sometimes called muscle memory and is confused with “instinct” or “playing without thinking”.

⁵ See Doug Lemov, Coach’s Guide to Teaching



With LTM, players are thinking, but it is at a speed that makes others think the reaction is instinctive or unconscious. Even the player won't remember the decision-making process and instead feels as if they were "in the zone" remembering more of a blur as they acted. However, the reactions using LTM are not natural or instinctual. They are learned.

Learning Step 2: Transferring Knowledge into Long-Term Memory

So how do we get our players to transfer knowledge into LTM? Doug Lemov put it best in his book, "Coach's Guide to Teaching":

Athletes must be able to recall both knowledge and skills automatically, reliably and in a flash ... If they "know" something but they cannot recall it seamlessly, it's not much use to them. They must know it and be adept at retrieving it, and this fact has huge implications for how we design learning environments. If coaches don't pay attention to the process by which athletes learn to recall back into working memory what they know—a process known as retrieval practice—they risk developing athletes who fail to remember what coaches are sure they know.

Essentially, training must not only encode soccer knowledge, but it also needs to force the player to recall previously encoded knowledge, so they learn how to recall and use it in a game. This second type of training is what transfers knowledge into LTM; and is referred to as "retrieval training".



It's important here to underscore the vital role "forgetting" plays in retrieval training. A player starts to forget a lesson the second a training session ends. But each time the player recalls that knowledge, the more is transferred into LTM and the total amount of knowledge retained increases. The recall sessions, however, must come after a delay because allowing a level of forgetting encodes the knowledge more deeply in the brain. Such delays also

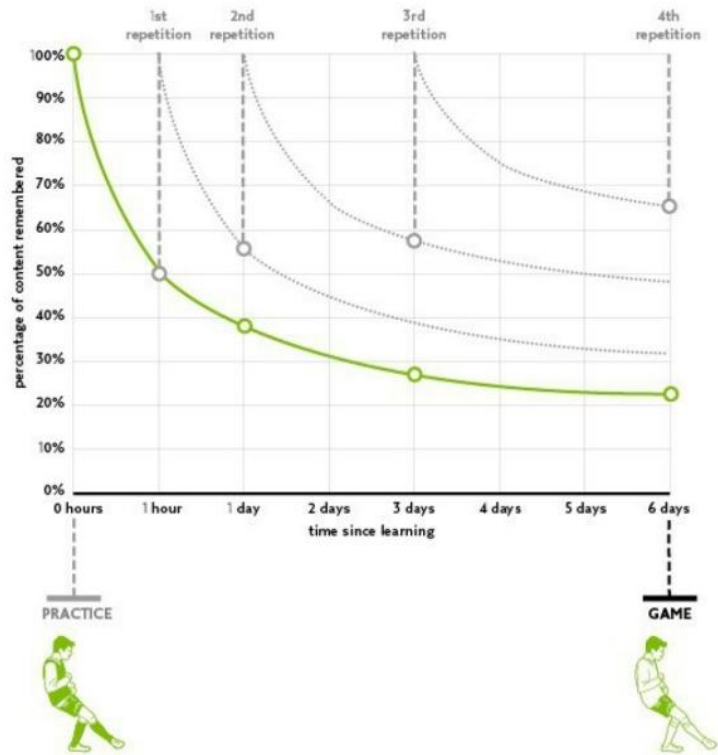


Image courtesy of Doug Lemov, [The Coach's Guide to Teaching](#)

should progressively increase in time. See the image from [Coach's Guide to Teaching](#).

A key point on retrieval training. These sessions should be surprise inclusions of previously mastered knowledge. The sessions do not have to be long (10 to 15min) and must allow the players to struggle with retrieve the previously mastered knowledge so the coach will not provide much instruction at the beginning and only if required due to continual failure to remember the previous learned knowledge. This struggle to remember is the main element that helps to transfer that knowledge into Long-Term Memory. So let them struggle. We are not looking for perfection. We are looking for the struggle.

In summary, the two steps in learning are (1) the encoding of knowledge into STM and (2) the transfer of that knowledge from WM to LTM. So how do we apply that to our training?

First, we encode knowledge into working memory by explicitly and deliberately teaching our players how to recognize visual cues on the field and apply the correct



ITAs to those visual cues. Second, we incorporate retrieval training throughout the training cycles to transfer that knowledge from WM to LTM so a player can use it during a game.

2. Knowledge Base

However, there is a critical step that must come before, or simultaneously with the encoding of WM. Teaching our players to see the visual cues and understand the ITA's applicable to them is not enough. For the knowledge to be fully encoded, they need to learn not only what to do, but why. For this, we need to provide our players with a uniform base of soccer knowledge.

This soccer knowledge connects the applicability of ITA's all over the field and is developed by having, and expressly teaching, club-wide soccer principles. Our soccer principles, which include our concepts, age specific curricula and our uniform soccer vocabular ("Key Terms") used throughout the club are found later in this manual in our Training Model (Chapter III) and Game Model (Chapter IV).

These principles are not just for show. Our coaches explicitly teach them repeatedly to create the knowledge base needed to recognize visual cues and then connect the correct ITA to that visual cue. The principles are applied in training when a player sees their environment and understands the correct soccer solution needed to solve the challenge presented by that environment. With a proper knowledge base, we can train the players to use their eyes to see specific visual cues, and then explicitly link those visual cues to soccer solutions all over the field.

3. Seven Pillars of Training Design

With a base of knowledge, efficient encoding of that knowledge into working memory, and retrieval training to further encode that knowledge into long term memory, our players are on their way to become those intelligent skillful players of good character we are looking for. These strategies are further buttressed by Seven Pillars of Training Design:



1. Specific Goal: successful training requires well-defined learning goals, not vague ideas.
2. Focus: One teaching point at a time. For example, the coach introduces a single teaching point by modeling it, then let's the players try it. If they struggle, the coach provides a solution and has them try again.
3. Progressive Sequencing ("Scaffolding"): teaching points built on each other. As the players do a teaching point correctly, the coach adds a second teaching point, one at a time.
4. Checking for Understanding: Since we rely on sequencing, it is imperative that the player has encoded the knowledge into working memory prior to moving on to the next progressive topic. Accordingly, our coaches continually check for understanding. We understand that there is always a gap between what is being taught and what is learned. And a good teacher consistently probes their students to identify that gap, and then figures out a way to fill it.
5. Simple to Complex: Our activities also become progressively more difficult, not only technically, but cognitively. This progressive cycle is like most video games. First, the player is placed in a simple intro mode where they are provided clear succinct instructions. The player is allowed to practice in this environment and to experience almost immediate success. Then, difficulty is increased by adding different factors such as speed, opponents, etc., which causes failure, but that failure is not punished. Instead, the player is provided tools and solutions to the increased challenge. This causes the player to keep trying and to eventually achieve success. At which point the cycle repeats.
6. Platforming: Coaches often reuse the same exercise but change the teaching topic. This improves the encoding of knowledge into Working Memory because it allows the player to focus on the soccer knowledge they are trying to learn, rather than the procedure of the activity they are doing.
7. Doing over Watching:
The challenge in coaching soccer is that we must teach a group of individual players how to play as a collective unit. Most coaches begin this process of developing their playing style and training plans based on their image of how they want to see the collective team play. They then organize training based



on their vision of the ideal collective team movements, such as building out of the back or finishing in the final third.

This inefficiently sacrifices individual learning for collective learning. People remember 20% of what they hear and 40% of what they see, but 90% of what they do.⁶ If our strategy for teaching individuals to play as a collective relies on teaching a bunch of players different individual actions at the same time, we rely on them hearing and seeing, rather than doing. Which is inefficient.

Let's look at it another way. Let's imagine you are a math teacher and one day your director comes to you and tells you that for your class of 22 students, today you need to teach the 5 sitting to the back left multiplication. The other 6 to the back right you need to teach them division. The 5 in the front left need to be taught fractions, and the final 6 in the front right, you need to teach them decimals.

What will be the result? The task of teaching in this context is almost impossible, and the chance of provoking individual learning small. Very little knowledge will be encoded in the students' working memory.

Similarly, imagine your Technical Director saying: "Coach, today teach them how to build out of the back. This means I want the center backs to learn to split wide, receive on the "Far Foot" with their "Hips Open" and "Drive to Attract" if they have space. The fullbacks need to learn to get heels on the chalk, "Dismark" and maintain a "Passing Option" with the center back. The defensive midfielder has to "Scan" and "Check-in" to the center back by providing a "Return Ball" if they have pressure, and then "Open Up" to receive the ball on the "Far Foot" with their "Hips Open" to advance the ball. If they don't have initial pressure, they should skip the "Check-in" and immediately receive the ball on their "Far Foot" with their "Hips Open" to advance the ball. Finally, the box-to-box midfielder needs to create the top of the "Diamond" and

⁶ See Edgar Dale, Cone of Experience



make a “Third-man Run” to position themselves for a pass from the defensive midfielder or fullback.

How are you supposed to teach all that at the same time? The result, just like with the math class example, will be inefficient learning, and poor encoding of the lessons.

So how do we avoid such inefficiency? We just add an extra step to the way we conceptualize our training. So instead of imagining our ideal team actions, and basing our training on that, we take the extra step of breaking out our ideal team actions into the different individual actions that compose it, and then structure our training around teaching our players those individual actions.

Fortunately, soccer is a game of repeating patterns of play. These repeating patterns cause the individual actions discussed above to also be repeated in other parts of the field. For example, the “Check-in” described above, is an individual tactical action that the box-to-box midfielder performs further up the pitch. So do the attacking midfielder and the forwards. Heck, even the center back uses that action when playing back with the goalkeeper.

The benefit of organizing a training session around an individual tactical action (“ITA”) is that all the players are doing the action, not just hearing, or seeing what other players are doing. So, when we finally put it all together, and the defensive midfielder is performing a “Check-in”, the fullback is reading the same visual cue (whether the midfielder has pressure or not), and already knows how their teammate is going to respond because they didn’t just hear it or see it in practice. They did it. This way, our players are retaining lessons at a rate of 90% because they do it, rather than 20% or 40%. The results are parents on the sideline reacting in amazement as the fullback anticipates what his teammate is doing because he knows what they are thinking.

In summary, our training activities teach soccer by training our players to perceive their environment, to use their soccer knowledge to identify visual cues from that



environment and to understand which individual tactical actions apply, and why, and then finally to execute the ITA by utilizing the correct skill.

As a players advance, and get older, the decision-making process, otherwise known as the cognitive process, as well as the technical skills required, become more challenging as more factors and possibilities are added, and eventually the additional step of deception is introduced.

There are various advantages to our perception/cognitive-centric training methodology. First, it challenges our players mentally. They are always thinking in practice. This builds mental endurance by requiring them to stay mentally focused during training. Second, sessions contain implicit instructions, like a competitive game, which tell the player whether they are doing the exercise correctly. In a game, nobody needs to tell a player they made a mistake. The player knows it as soon as they do it. Perception/cognitive-centric activities do the same. They free the coach to focus on identifying needed learning areas⁷ and vastly increase their efficiency and efficacy by concentrating on providing solutions, rather than pointing out errors.

C. CLUB COMMUNITY: PARENTS

We are all in this together. Some clubs manage the parent/club relationship incorrectly, seeing parents as part of the problem. We see parents as part of the solution and conclude that parents mostly become a problem due to a lack of communication and engagement from the part of the club.

Our parents have three specific roles within our club. First, they are their player's nutritionist that ensures that they eat three good meals and have two healthy snacks a day. They also ensure that the players get eight to nine hours of sleep every night. Second, they are the team's sports psychologist maintaining all the players' confidence up and supporting them when they get down. Finally, the parents are their player's ball mastery facilitator. We recommend that parents have two or three size 3 balls

⁷ Our coaches assume that there is always a gap between what is being taught, and what is learned. Their duty is to test, probe and question to identify this gap, and then devise a plan to fill that gap.



around the house which allows the players to spontaneously step on and play with the ball throughout the day. The club provides educational information and support for the to the parents to help them in these roles. And our parents commit to these roles as well as to our playing style and Code of Conduct.

D. CLUB COMMUNITY: COACHES

It is impossible to develop great players without great coaches. As facilitators of our players' stories, our coaches are an integral part of their development. Accordingly, our goal is not only to be a great club in developing intelligent and skilled players of good character. It is also to be a great club in developing high quality coaches who can facilitate the development of our players. This is why we have created a detailed Coach Development Program.

1. COACHING MODEL

The first part of our Coach Development Program is our Coaching Model. This is our vision of an ideal coach, which is broken into five elements. These elements serve as the standards by which our coaches are hired, developed, and evaluated. It is the vision of how we want our coaches to coach and reflect our community's priorities and values. They are Commitment; Teaching; Role Model; Communication; and Vocation/Ambition.

1

Commitment

Our coaches must commit to two things: our players, and our club.

As the saying goes, a player does not care what you know, they want to know that you care. Our coaches must commit to developing a relationship with each individual player on their roster. The term "relationship" is rather vague, so we have a specific definition for that term, which consists of two elements. First, the coach must convince each individual player that he or she is vested in and committed to helping that player



achieve their soccer potential. And second, the coach must convince each individual player that he or she can help that player reach their soccer potential.

Our coaches also must be committed to our club. Here at Key Biscayne, we are a community with shared values working hard to do the best we can for our kids. Too many places are less clubs, and more an ephemerally convenient amalgamation of individual coaches who see themselves the lords of their limited soccer fiefdom. They collect some good players and have the vision to compete at the highest of levels. The error in that dynamic is that the players become the facilitators of the coach's aspirations; instead of the coach being the facilitator for the players.

Another mistake is income driven enterprises that have no connection to the community or expand well beyond their community to chase the money. That model also fails because it flips the facilitation dynamic. Players are the facilitators of the organization's monetary goals, instead of the organization being the facilitator of the kids' goals.

In contrast, Key Biscayne's coaches understand our player first vision. They understand our sense of community. In fact, they are attracted to being part of something that is bigger than the sum of its parts. We are a community. We are Key Biscayne. And our coaches buy-in to that vision.

This vision includes our Player Model, Training Model, and Game Model, as well as this Coaching Model. The reality is that our vision and philosophy is not for everyone; and that's fine. It's kind of the point. That does not say anything bad about a coach who disagrees, just as it does not say anything bad about us. We have strong convictions about who we are, what we want to do, and how we do it.

Having said all this, our vision is not a strait jacket which calls for robot coaches to execute explicit instructions. It is a vision for the style of soccer we want to play and the best way to develop players and coaches toward that end. But its power; its



strength; is that it provides both players and coaches with the foundation and flexibility to express their individuality within that vision. That expression is what sets the great players and coaches apart from the rest.

2

Teaching

At their core, our coaches are teachers, educators. Our methodology strives to develop the five personal attributes that lead to success on and off the field: *La Próxima/Growth Mindset, Positive, Respectful, Dedicated, and Responsible*.

For a coach to create a Growth Mindset environment, they themselves first must have a Growth Mindset. Our coaches are intimately aware of the things they cannot control and the things they can control. For example, coaches and players cannot change the weather, the state of the field, the referee or what their opponent does. We can only change how we react to these external elements. And thus, we focus on that. We focus on what we can change.

Our coaches also work to develop attributes such as being humble and establishing a player-centric learning environment. What does a player-centric environment mean? It means everything is done with the player's needs in mind and not those of the coach or the parent. It assumes the players want to learn and improve. If the player is not learning, it is the coach who must change their teaching tactic, not the child that needs to change. As educators, coaches must try different ways to reach different kids. We must be flexible and change, adapt, and adjust, to reach each individual player.

Our coaches understand that kids are humans, not robots. They have things going on that affect their behavior. Our coaches strive to make the soccer field the kids' sanctuary. Even with, for example, a bully, the anger comes from somewhere else. We need to connect with them, individually. We ask them to be their best self. The field is where they can come to not be judged; to just be. It's their sanctuary. Many times, it is the worst kid, that needs us the most.



Even though player-centric means all decisions we make are from the perspective of what is best for the individual kid, it does not mean it is easy or coddling. Quite the opposite. Coaching is oriented towards players taking ownership of their development. We place them in progressively more stressful situations, so they learn to solve problems themselves.

Here we should make a special side note on two topics: yelling and intensity. Our coaches are especially aware that if we want to train the cognitive process, we must train the part of the brain that controls cognition: the neocortex, or the front part of the brain. When coaches shout at a player, they risk shutting down the neocortex and firing up their limbic system (emotional system). This frustrates our goal of training kids to be intelligent soccer players.

Regarding intensity, our coaches try to focus mental intensity (helping players place attention on correct things) to facilitate their cognitive process. For example, in high pressure environments, our coaches focus on keeping things simple, by focusing the players on clear objectives using our Soccer Principles. This takes emotional and physical pressure off the players. In rare occasions does a coach need to add emotional intensity. For example, a coach may need to add emotional intensity sometimes when facing a weaker opponent. But in high stressful situations, the coach tries to lower the mental intensity by focusing the players on clear soccer objectives.

3

Role Model

This is self-explanatory. Coaches are role-models and need to set an example to the players. This means not only exhibiting the five personal attributes that lead to success on and off the field (*Growth Mindset, Positive, Respectful, Dedicated, and Responsible*), but also being able to maintain discipline and control of training sessions. Other examples are:

- i. *Showing up Early* to training and games
- ii. *Being Prepared*
- iii. *Dressing* in Coach Uniform
- iv. *No Cell Phone* for coaches or players once practice or games start



v. *Respect the Referee*

4

Communication

Coaches must be good communicators, not only with their players, but also with parents and club management. Coaches must be positive and honest with their players by communicating instructions in a clear and concise manner. Coaches also use club-wide Key Words so as players progress through our program they do not have to learn new terms every year.

During the week, coaches should be able to communicate to the players and parents the schedule and objectives for the week. During practice, the coach explicitly states the purpose and objective of every exercise, stating clearly, and repeatedly, the Soccer Principles and, or skill they are trying to emphasize in that activity. He or she should also communicate how such session fits into our Game Model. As part of our coaches' communication with management, they must file Training Reports with the DOC and Technical Director each Friday after that week's last training.

During the weekend, the coach should establish specific goals before a game (not just to win) and provide a positive but honest assessment afterwards. During games, the coach should focus on being concise and coaching off-the-ball, so players on-the-ball are free to make decisions and mistakes. Each Coach files a Match Report, which addresses the above, to the DOC and Technical Director before the end of each weekend.

5

Vocation & Ambition

People do not care what you know; they want to know that you care. Our coaches love coaching. They develop individual relationships with each player and care about their development. They also care about growing, learning, and developing as coaches. It is not just a job. It is a vocation. If coaching is just a way to get a little extra money, Key Biscayne Soccer Club is not the place for you.



2. COACH EDUCATION PROGRAM

We are committed to not only hiring great coaches, but also helping them in their development. To this end, our Director of Coaching has an individualized coach development and education plan for each coach in our club. This includes not only United States Soccer Federation licenses, but non-federation courses such as United Soccer Coaches, as well as other third-party courses. Every competitive level coach has attained or is on the path to earning their USSF C License, with most aspiring to attain their B License. All our intramural coaches have the Grassroots License with aspirations for the USSF D License. Our club provides funding to our coaches for the registration costs of the USSF license courses and budgets for such funding on an annual basis.

Additionally, our DOC and Technical Director hold mandatory monthly coach meetings with all the club's coaches with each meeting having a specific topic based on our model. The meeting contains a video presentation showing the best practices related to the topic, as well as do's and don'ts. It also provides an open forum for discussion and collaboration to assist coaches with obstacles they are facing and provides them the opportunity to share challenges and best practices with their colleagues.

3. COACH EVALUATIONS

Our coaches are evaluated based on our Coaching Model using the Coach Evaluation Form found in the Appendix. However, the evaluation process is less about critiquing our coaches and more about creating a formalized self-assessment program combined with a peer-feedback program to allow for on-going learning and development of our coaches.

We have regular weekly meetings of full-time technical staff to review, discuss, and assess technical topics and the success of current training sessions, methodologies, and plans. Along with the above-mentioned monthly coach meeting, our technical staff



regularly film our coaches' training sessions and conduct semesterly small group or one-on-one coach training sessions to review the videos of training sessions and games, as well as to discuss best practices and challenges faced by our coaches. Our club also has a coaching mentoring program allowing young staff the opportunity to observe and learn from senior staff within the training and competition environment.

4. COACHING RESOURCES

Our coaches are provided the following resources to assist in their professional development and growth:

1. Monthly Coaching Staff Meetings
2. Semester Coach Training Meetings
3. Physical Library: coaches can check-out books
4. Academy Roadmap:
5. Online Library: online library of material related to coaching methodology, training sessions, sports psychology, etc.:
 - a. Books
 - b. Videos of Training Sessions
 - c. Articles
6. Podcasts: Access to various coaching related podcasts such as:
 - a. The Sports Psych Show by Dan Abrahams
 - b. Youth Soccer Coaching Player Development Podcast (MPFC)
 - c. The Coaching Journey
 - d. 3Four3
1. Reports: coaches are required to file the following regular reports with the DOC and Technical Director:
 - a. Training Report: due Friday evening every week (one per training session)
 - b. Game Report: post-match written evaluations, due Sunday evening after all weekend games are played, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and areas for future focus and training emphasis (one per game)



- c. Middle of the year Player Evaluation: due in early January to assist players in identifying areas of strength and weakness, especially in technical areas, and areas for future training focus.
- d. End of the year Player Evaluations: due by the 15th of May, to assist players in identifying areas of strength and weakness
- e. Player Manual: each player shall receive a Player Manual at the start of the season. This manual contains many of the same material contained in this Game Model, but also includes specific information for individual teams and players. For example, it includes Position Profiles, which are prepared by each coach and are due on August 1st, to allow for the preparation of the Player Manual.



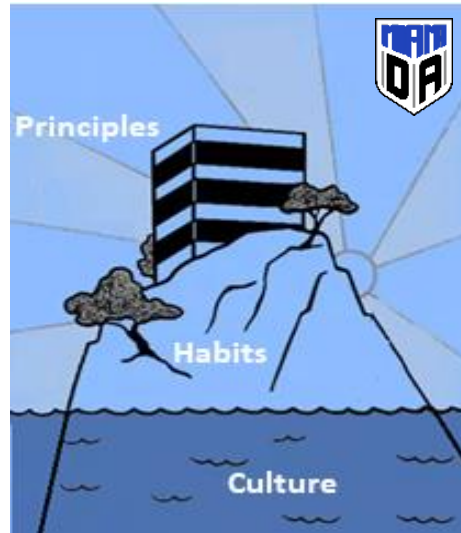


III

SOCCKER PRINCIPLES

A. SOCCER HABITS

If our Soccer Principles provide the structure of our development process, and our culture is the foundation of that process, our Soccer Habits are the base, built on that foundation, upon which our Soccer Principles stand. These Soccer Habits are actions that do not require skill; but are critical to developing intelligent and skilled soccer players. Whether a player has high technical ability, or plays at the recreational level, they all adopt our Soccer Habits. They are



fundamental characteristics of all our players. When you watch them play, you can tell from these habits that they play for us. We have four Soccer Habits: Scanning; Open Hips/Far Foot, Both Feet, and Posture.

1. SCANNING. As mentioned above, scanning is the first step of a player's cognitive process. Our players play with their eyes. Their feet are just instruments utilized depending on what they see. Players need to know where their teammates and opponents are, and from that, identify where there is space and numerical advantages.
2. OPEN HIPS/FAR FOOT. In Spanish, it is called Perfilación. It is the almost sideways body angle our players consistently use when receiving the ball, which allows them to receive the ball on their far foot. Others refer to it as “receiving across the body”, “on the half turn”, or “on the back foot”. As the ball is approaching the player, and after that player Scans to start the cognitive process, the player must have the correct body shape to receive the ball with Open Hips, on their Far Foot, so they are facing the direction they want to play when they receive the ball. This is a critical habit that takes no skill but allows a player to play fast. If a player instead faces the direction from which they receive the ball, or receives the ball on the wrong foot, they will have to take multiple steps to turn around. The incorrect body shape also makes scanning



harder because the player is facing the wrong way and gives the defender time to press while the player is turning around.

3. **BOTH FEET**. All players should feel comfortable using both feet in training when passing and receiving the ball. Players should not be allowed to adjust their body shape to use their stronger foot when the more efficient play is to use their weaker foot. The focus here is not on the execution of the pass or control, but rather that the player attempts to use both, regardless of the technical outcome. This is the only way to ensure they develop comfort in using of both feet.

Our goal is to create the habit of using the correct foot by providing an environment that allows mistakes using their weaker foot. The “habit” we want to create is not that they are great technically at using their weaker foot, but instead, that they know they need to use their weaker foot, and they are not afraid to make mistakes using that weaker foot. This, in turn, forms the foundation of our players developing their weaker foot.

4. **POSTURE**. Good Posture is the foundation of good technique. Players must be ready to receive the ball or defend standing with their feet slightly wider than their shoulders, on the balls of their feet, knees slightly bent, chest over the ball, back straight and arms wide.

B. SOCCER PRINCIPLES

With the correct habits established, our players can better learn and apply our Soccer Principles so they can develop playing our Position Play style of soccer. Our fourteen Soccer Principles are as follows:

P1 – Love the Ball/Dominate the Ball

The ball is our best friend. We jealously protect it from the opponent. We share it with our friends. We fight for it. When it comes to us, we establish control



over it, and when we pass it to our teammate, we are sending them a gift, a message, not a problem or burden. In the young ages and introduction phase we focus on ball mastery and believe in Tom Byers' Soccer Starts at Home® philosophy.

P2 – Play with Eyes

A player's decision-making process on the field is as follows⁸:

1. See
2. Choose
3. Do
4. Reflect

Taking Pirlo's quote to its

logical next step, before the head can choose, the eyes must see. So, the first body part we must train are the eyes.



Players need to learn how and when to take their eyes off the ball, to know, first, where their TEAMMATES are, and then where their OPPONENTS are. From the information about their teammates, they need to create triangles and diamonds with them (see Principle #3). From the information about where their opponents are, they need to deduce where there is space (see Principle #6). And once they can see both their teammates and opponents, the players can find numerical advantages (see Principle #7).

But this all starts with the eyes, and understanding the timing of different types of scans:

- a. Scanning (when you don't have the ball): medium speed to take mental picture.

⁸ Todd Beane



- b. Peeking (as ball is arriving): a quick peek to see any changes from previous mental picture.
- c. Glance (with ball): quick glances to see any changes and opponent body shape.

This scanning can only happen in a game if it is trained in practice. Accordingly, all our training activities require our players to scan, find their teammates and opponents, and make decision based on what they see.

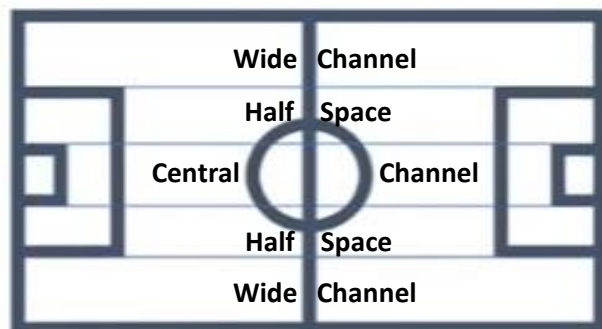
P3 – Triangles & Diamonds

Triangles are the fundamental geometry of the game. The goal is to create as many triangles as we can all over the field. At younger ages, the focus is on creating two attacking triangles and one defensive triangle. The defensive triangle is an early introduction to the concept of a Pivot. Two triangles whether vertical or horizontal, create a **Diamond**, the higher order geometry of the game.

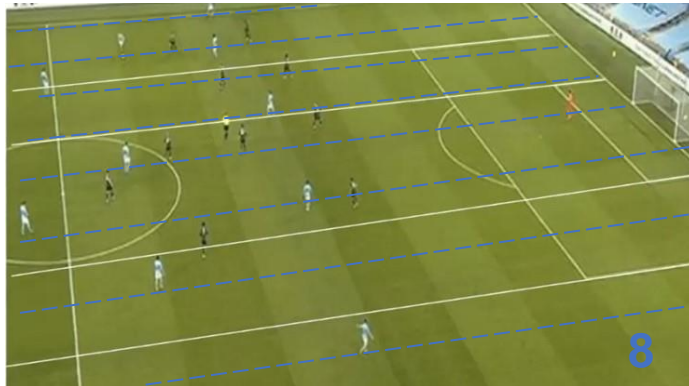
Why is a Wall Pass such a useful tactic? Because it is the creation of a Triangle with only two players. Why is a 3rd Man Run so impossible to defend? Because it is the creation of a Diamond with only three players. Our players “off the ball” are constantly looking for their teammates to create triangles and diamonds. The creation of these shapes is facilitated by our next principle, Width & Depth.

P4: Width & Depth

The soccer field has 5 main **Channels**. We create **Width** by making sure we occupy all 5 Channels (see the image to the right).



Imagine also that each player creates a vertical line, which we refer to as personal **Lanes** (see image below). We strive to have a maximum number of **Lanes** (i.e., players at different verticals) and never have more than two in the same **Lane**. The creation of multiple **Lanes** not only stretches the field wide, but it also facilitates the creation of **Triangles**.



Lines – Each player on the field creates an imaginary horizontal line. The distances between these lines, and a player’s positioning between these lines determines the effectiveness of defending and attacking. In possession the more **Lines** we have the easier it is to progress the ball forward. But we cannot have the **Lines** so far apart that our lines are disconnected. The **Distance** between **Lines** is critical to maintain our **Lines Connected**, and to provide **Balance** and **Support** while attacking to protect in case of transition, one example of this is the use of a **Pivot**. As the ball is advanced forward there must be a pivot to **Support** in behind, providing a **Diagonal** passing angle for a **Back Pass**. A **Pivot** covers two responsibilities: offensively it allows for the team to **Switch the Field** or **Pause**, and defensively it provides **Cover** in case of a turnover to be able to **Counter Press**. (see Principle 10 – “ATT-END”).

P5: Diagonality

Diagonality is the key to our movement patterns and the relationships our players want to create between themselves. **Diagonal Runs** are key to exploiting a disorganized defense as well as in disorganizing them in the first place. They also are key to creating Numerical Advantages (see Principle 6 “Numbers”) from Numerical Parity (e.g., turning a 2v2 into a 2v1).



The application of **Lanes** (vertical) with multiple **Lines** (horizontal), naturally create **Diagonal** relationships between each other. These diagonal relationships form the previously mentioned fundamental geometry of soccer: **Triangles & Diamonds (P3)**.

P6: Space

Not to sound like a science fiction novel, but Soccer, at its essence, is all about the manipulation of Time and Space. The more Space a player has, the more time they have to see, choose and do, and the better player they will be. Soccer is all about the *Manipulation of Space*.

At any given moment, every player is either *Creating, Using, or Eliminating* Space.

- In Possession we want to create and use Space.
- Out of Possession we want to eliminate Space by being **Compact**. Space is also critical in 1v1 defending (**Pressure**) and when providing **Cover & Balance**.
- Players must understand the proper **Distance** between teammates and opponents. This Distance also considers skill level. For example, in training, if your team is of lower technical ability, you increase the Space and Time a player has to act. And as the players improve technically, the Space can be reduced.
- Players can **Attract** an opponent to create Space, or a Free Player (P8).

P7: Numbers

It's simple, if we have more players than you, we have a better chance of winning. Players must be able to **See Numerical Advantages**; learn to take advantage of them, and understand how to create them.

Once we move our opponent and see they are disorganized, and find the Numerical Advantage, we **Advance** the ball



aggressively. Our goal is not to play horizontal. We use horizontal width to create space and Numerical Advantages to play the ball forward through the lines: to *Go Vertical*, *Break Lines*, and advance the Free Player through the *Zones*. We **Advance the Ball** by passing or dribbling, so this informs us when to do which, and when to take-on an opponent 1v1 on a dribble. An important concept which applies this principle it to **Look Far First**. This means we look for the longer pass first before settling for the closer pass, but this concept is an advanced concept that does not get introduced until the later in development.

P8: Free Player

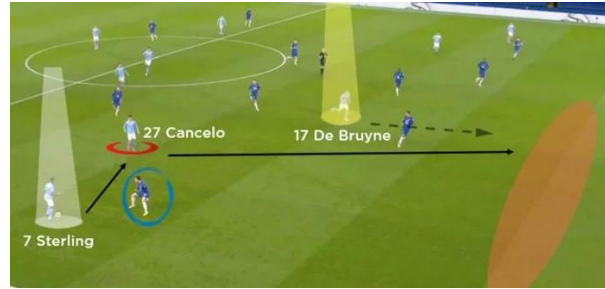
The Free Player is a player who is unmarked and has the **Space**, **Time**, and **Capacity** to advance the ball up the field. There is almost always a Free Player, the difficulty is finding them. He or she varies depending on the game situation, or where the ball is on the field. Being able to create and see the Free Player is fundamental to the construction of the game. Certain concepts are useful in creating a Free Player:

Attract – When a player has the ball, with no pressure, and takes a touch to try to attract a particular opponent away from their teammate, and instead engage with the ball carrier. This turns the previously marked teammate into the Free Player.

Wall Pass – sometimes called a “give-and-go” or “one-two”, the term wall pass comes from street football where a player would use a wall to hit the ball on and run around the defender and collect it again. In a regular game, a teammate becomes the wall as a player passes the ball to the teammate, and the passing player sprints forward after making the pass to receive the quickly returned ball. The successful wall pass allows an attacking team to create numerical advantages as they advance the ball forward.



Third Man – although the actual action is simple, the Third Man is the most important concept in creating the Free Player. It is also almost impossible to defend. A Third



Man action is when a player not directly involved in a pass (#17 in the image) moves as the pass is traveling to their teammate (#27), so they are in position for the succeeding pass at the exact moment the 2nd Player (#27) receives the pass from #7. These 3rd man movements are almost invisible to opponents and allow the offensive action to flow and continue by continuously maintaining the triangles between teammates.

Timing – Timing is another critical concept in creating and finding the Free Player. It refers to the moment when a player must arrive in space. A player cannot arrive too early, or too late. They must arrive at the right time, making their movements to create or use space; or staying still to allow others to occupy space. Timing also has its defensive aspects in eliminating the other teams Free Player as one closes space and performs a tackle at the correct time.

Dismarking – Dismarking is how a player “off the ball” attempts to lose a defender. It can either be done aggressively with a **Double Move**, or more subtle by **Drifting** or **Going Dark**.

P9: Pack of Wolves

We defend, we hunt, like a Pack of Wolves: Organized and Together.

Team Defending:

We have 3 main Team Defending Concepts: **Organize Centrally**, **Push Wide**, and **Retreat**.

1. **Organize Centrally** – Our bodies are tools that occupy space to make it harder for opponent to play there. Accordingly, we organize our pack



centrally in a Compact group, subconsciously telling the opponent, this space (central) will be hard to play in, that space (wide) will be easier.

2. **Push Wide** – Once Organized Centrally, we push the ball wide, with our positioning, movement, and body shape. Once wide, we **Call the Trigger** and begin to Press Together, staying Connected & **Compact**, with a lead **Press to Stress** and the others providing **Cover** and **Balance**. The intention is to shrink the opponent's space to stress them into mistakes.
3. **Retreat** – if our opponent breaks our pressure, we then Retreat as a team centrally, re-organize, and then begin the process of pushing them wide all over again, albeit in a deeper position. During the retreat, one player must **Delay** the advancement of the ball to give time to the rest of the team to retreat and organize centrally.

Individual Defending:

Everyone defends. We do not have attackers and defenders. Everyone has a part to play in the attack, and likewise, in defense. In defense, every player always has two concerns: (1) Defending a Player, and (2) Defending a Space.

Which of the two is a higher priority depends on the location of the ball, the player's position on the field, the opponent, and other game dynamics. Understanding this balance between defending the player and defending the space is the key to becoming a good defender.

P10: Att-End

There is no ATTACK separate from DEFENSE. Our structure does both. We are ready to defend when in possession and ready to attack when out of possession. Balance and Support while attacking to protect in case of transition, but also ready for the Counter as we defend.

The **Pivot** is a central concept to in the application of ATT-END, ensuring the team "**Travels Together**", as we attack. When we lose the ball, there should always be a Pivot to **Counter Press** quickly to recover the ball as soon as possible, or at least force the opponent to play a poor first ball backwards,



quickly, and desperately. The Pivot cannot get beat 1v1. Upon losing the ball, the goal is to recover the ball within 5 seconds of losing it by either the Pivot recovering the ball or forcing a bad touch or pass which allows another teammate to recover the ball.

If our team is **Compact** in defense, and **Travels Together**, upon recovering the ball, the **Counterattack** is even more efficient. The goal in a counterattack is to score within 7 seconds of recovering the ball. The specific plan is for the player who recovers the ball to perform a progressive **Wall Pass** immediately with nearest teammate and then find a **Third Man**.

P11: Move to Move

This is an overarching principle that is imbued in everything we do on the field and incorporates all the previous Principles. Every pass, dribble, or run; everything we do has a why, and that why is to **Move our Opponent**: to disorganize them, and then **Advance the ball** quickly when the have a Numerical Advantage. If we start in possession on the left, it's to attract them there so we can then switch the ball to the right. Everything has a "Why?" We do not possess the ball just for possession's sake. We move the ball to move the defense, which leads to the creation of space and numerical advantages. We also make runs to create space and Dismark to create space for ourselves. We **Switch Field**, and **Test; Stretch & Probe** against a bunkered defense to provoke movement.

This also applies to defending and how we position ourselves individually (body-shape) and as a team. This is even applicable in 1v1 situations. A step over, a scissor, or feint, is intended to move the defender in a direction so the dribbler can go in the other direction.

P12: Dynamic Rotations

A team's formation is just the starting point. It is the coach's initial set-up to try to position his or her players in position to take care of the different responsibilities on the field. But more important than a team's formation, is



understanding the different responsibilities that are required to be met during different moments of a game, on different parts of the field.

Soccer is a fluid game, and thus opportunities may arise when players find themselves in a different spot, which require that they cover a different responsibility. For example, if we lose the ball with our right fullback far up the field, the 6 (holding midfielder) must cover the right fullback's responsibility in the wide channel. This also means the 8 must cover the 6's responsibility in the half-space in front of the back line. In possession, this principle also applies to dynamic position switches when making runs and utilizing space.

All players must understand all these different responsibilities and be willing to cover such responsibilities when the opportunity calls for it. This is why, at early ages, especially before a player advances through puberty, we develop soccer players; not position specific players. We expose our players to different areas of the field so they can be challenged by the wide breath of roles and responsibilities that may appear during a soccer game.

These Dynamic Rotations, however, do not mean chaos. Though it might seem counterintuitive, the team maintaining **Positional Discipline** is key to being able to have dynamic rotations. A teammate can only cover for someone if they know where the other is supposed to be because easily recognize when the teammate moves out of their space and understands the need to rotate. If instead, a player does not have positional discipline, and is all over the place, a teammate cannot understand the role they are covering on the field and thus cannot recognize when that role has been left uncovered. If a player can process the image of where their teammates should be, they play faster. It's like when you are at home, in your kitchen. You know where everything is, so you do things faster. But if you are cooking the same recipe in someone else's kitchen, and you don't know where anything is, and it takes you almost twice as long to get anything done.



P13: Deception

The act of deciding and disguising that decision from your opponent. Our opponents are reading our intentions, so sometimes we need to hide those intentions to gain a competitive advantage.

P14: Keep It Simple

If we focus on understanding and working together during the 87 minutes when we do not have the ball, what we do during the 3 minutes when we do have the ball, becomes simple. See your teammates, create triangles. See your opponents, see the Space. See your teammates and opponents, see the Numerical Advantages. Do a wall pass. Make a Third Man Run, and suddenly, we are in on goal with a quality scoring opportunity.

All the previous principles lead to this overriding idea: **Keep it Simple. Play what you See.** Soccer, at its most fundamental, is simple. But do not confuse simple, with easy. Soccer is hard. But it is hard because our instinct is to focus 100% on the ball, and to leave everything that goes on around the ball, up to chance or natural instinct.

This is why we focus on the 87 minutes, “Off the Ball.” That is where the intelligent player plays and why we teach and train our principles every day: To play **SIMPLE, FAST, & PRECISE.**



C. INDIVIDUAL TACTICAL ACTIONS

Create Passing Angle	Pull Back Cross
Attract	Early Cross
Fill the Channels	Dummy
Create your Lane	Second Run
Check-in	Change Speeds
1-2 (vertical)	Pause
1-2 (horizontal)	Shielding
3 rd Man Run	Move Defender with eyes/body shape
Up-Back-Through	Nutmeg
Switch Field	Behind & In-Between
Reset	No-look pass
Overlap	Fake Pass
Underlap	Fake Shot
Diagonal Run	50/50 Ball – directed ball
Double Move Diagonal Run	Lay-off
Pivot Support	Oopti-doop
Line Breaking Pass	
Line Breaking Dribble	
Call for ball to foot	1v1 Defending (approach)
Call for though ball	1v1 Defending
Through Ball Run	Cover and Balance
Through Ball Pass	Bait to Intercept
Return Pass	Offside Trap
Throw-in to Feet	Setting the Line
Throw-in, return to thrower	Maintaining the Line
Recognize Overload	Press to Stress
Recognize Numerical Advantage	Press Call-out
Attack with Numbers	Press Body shape and approach (step
Dismark (2 moves)	Goal Side Marking
Go Dark	Touch Marking
Rotate position (relevo)	Shadow Cover
Attack Space (off ball)	Shielding
Timing	Drop and Mark
Change Direction of Ball	Press Trigger
Attack the halfspace	
Attack the pull back halfspace	



D. KEY TERMS





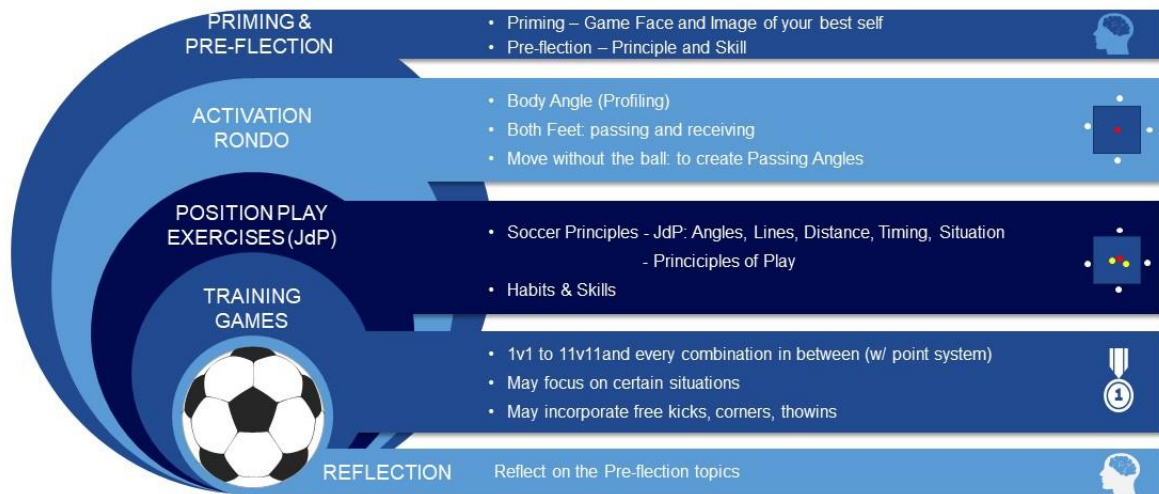
IV TRAINING STRUCTURE

There are two rules to our Training sessions.

1. EVERY activity must force EVERY player to Think, Decide and Execute⁹. This not only requires cognition, competence, and character, but it also requires participation, in that every player must be participating in the activity. No lines.
2. EVERY activity relates back to our Game Model.

Our training sessions are split into five parts, with the first and last parts being only a minute or two long. The second part is our activation phase which consists of Rondos. The third part entails a Position Play activity, which is then followed by the Training Game.

TRAINING STRUCTURE



STEP 1 – PRIMING AND PREFLECTION

⁹ The only exception is when doing I-Skills, discussed below, to help a player get through the Simple Technique step of learning a skill.



Before training starts, we circle together and take a few mindful breaths. While doing so we ask players to imagine their best selves. We ask them to find their game face and prime the process with positive imagery imagining themselves having the perfect practice or game. This technique is used by the most elite athletes and is proven to be effective in enhancing performance in many areas, including sports.

We also use this time to Pre-flect about a Soccer Principle or some other item that we would like to place in the forefront of a player's mind. Some may call this mindful intentionality. Sometimes the coach selects the focus, sometimes they allow the players to select. In any case, it is just a simple way to pave the path toward a focused session.

This step normally lasts one or two minutes.

STEP 2 – RONDOS (Activation)

The Rondo reinforces the skills required to keep the ball – precise positioning and brilliant technique in tight spaces while under intense defensive pressure. It is the initial step of our training, which serves to activate the players from minute one.

Rondos are both fun and fundamental. But do not mistake them for frivolous drills that kids do to warm up. This is not Monkey in the Middle where players on the outside stand still kicking the ball around. In a Rondo, everyone without the ball is moving, either to create Passing Angles (outside players), or eliminate Passing Angles (inside player(s)). Too many coaches do not reap the benefits of this activity. A Rondo is the beginning of many components of our methodology. It must activate the cognitive process, the competence of passing and receiving, the application of principles such as Passing Angles and Body Angles, and the character of competing, self-regulation, cooperation, respect, dedication, and resilience when faced with failure. It is the first and very important step in training.

We setup the difficulty level of our Rondos so players target 10 consecutive passes as a rule of thumb. If they can consistently accomplish the target, the coach increases the difficulty by reducing the space of the exercises or by adding a player in the middle.

For kids 12 and younger they can jump straight into playing the Rondo, which last 15 minutes for a one-hour practice. But bigger kids need to warm-up. We organize the Rondos for the bigger kids by mixing them in with Movement exercises which work on Mobility, Stability and Forces. Here is an example:

- Rondo (4v2) (4 minutes) + Movement (Mobility) (4 minutes)
- Rondo (4v2) (4 minutes) + Movement (Stability) (4 minutes)
- Rondo (4v2) (4 minutes) + Movement (Force) (4 minutes)



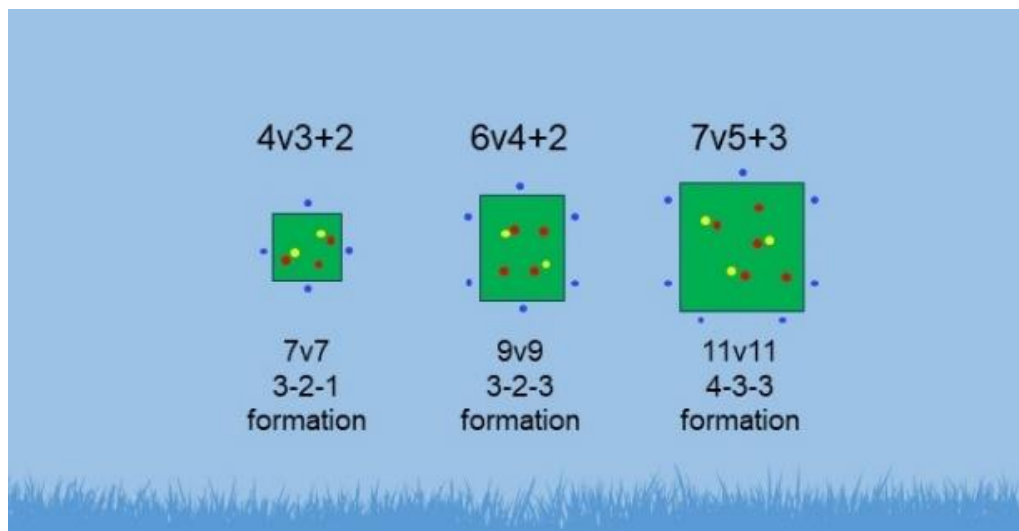
Studies show that soccer players do not activate their brains until they touch the ball. Using the above sequence prevents inefficient mindless stretching and allows us to get the most out of the time spent on preparing the body for training.

STEP 3 – POSITION PLAY EXERCISES (JdP)

Position Play Exercises look like Rondos, except they contain one or more “jokers” in the middle (+1; +2). These jokers allow players to develop a more profound understanding of the geometric aspect of the elements of Position Play: Angles, Liens, Distance, Timing, and Situation.

For example, from a 4v2 Rondo, we can introduce a joker to transform that rondo into a 4v2+1 Position Play Exercise. The central +1 player must look for space between the defenders, and the external players now have options wide (right and left), deep and internally (+1).

Position Play Exercises can also be constructed to simulate the different age specific game situations. For example, a 4v3+2 simulates our 7 v 7 games using a 3-2-1 formation. A 6v3+2 Position Play Exercises, or 6v4+2, simulates our 9 v 9 games using a 3-2-3 formation. And a 7v5+3 simulates an 11 v 11 game using a 4-3-3 formation. The goal of each age group is to start with a simpler Position Play Exercises, and progress through increased difficulty levels until arriving to these specific exercises as soon as the players are able.



This part of the training session lasts approximately 15 to 20 minutes for a one-hour practice, and 25 to 30 minutes for an hour and a half practice.



STEP 4 – TRAINING GAMES

Training Games are the meat of our practices. They can consist of matches from 1v1 to 11v11 and every combination in between, including unequal combinations. They incorporate all elements of the game forcing players to make decisions and execute skills in context. A coach can use them to incorporate dead ball practice such as corners, throw-ins, or free kicks. Or use them to focus on certain game situations they feel need focus, such as building out of the back or attacking on the right wing. For example, we can use a 5 (including GK) v 3 to work on building out of the back, or 6 v 3 to allow the offense to gain confidence and become comfortable with Keeping & Move the Ball (Principle 15). This way, when they face those circumstances during the pressure of a real game, they can rely upon their repeated exposure to similar situations in training. Recognition of these patterns is critical to our players' ability to respond quickly and effectively in games.

Training Games demand concentration and they simultaneously build the behaviors we want players to demonstrate in a game. Our players must respect their teammates and come to terms with success and failure during these intense and competitive small-sided games. Accordingly, these games include a scoring system with a clear winner and loser at the end.

Training Games reinforce the elements of ball control, movement, and position play. They also demand an applied understanding of our Principles of Play. During the Training Games our coaches observe our players and through these small-sided games take note of the strengths and weaknesses of our individual players and the collective team. We restrict and manipulate training games to reinforce a particular skill or to pinpoint certain components of our Soccer Principles we need to train.

Training Games also serve to build fitness as we monitor the space, time, and intensity of a small-sided game. Players will build endurance and do so while they are engaged in activities directly related to the demands of a real match.

All players enjoy Training Games. A point system is always used to create competition and this additional motivation creates added concentration and allow players to demonstrate what they know, what they can do, and how to behave (win or lose).

STEP 5 – REFLECTION

After the training is over, we come together in a circle again the same as when we started. We reflect on our Pre-reflection topics and ask ourselves how close we came to our better self. We also reflect on what we did well and take note of what we can improve so we can work on it in the next training. Everything is positive.



We then reiterate again the importance of Nutrition, Study and Sleep. We remind the kids they need to eat 3 to 4 decent meals a day; sleep 10 hours a day (9 for 15+); and keep up with their studies. We also remind them to always be respectful and have a positive mindset in everything we do. We repeat this every practice. The players may make fun of us and be able to finish our coach's sentences; but that's exactly the point. That means the message is sticking.

In summary, we tend to over-complicate training when everything we want can be executed through a well-choreographed training regimen. At our core, we ask our players to create triangles and diamonds, based upon the position of the ball. If they do this quickly, we can create numerical advantage and exploit the space with precise passing. We use Rondos, Position Play Exercises and Training Games to help our players develop a capacity to put geometry into action. We also underestimate the value of having a club-wide training routine. When the player understands the routine, they can focus on the learning. They find comfort in the structure which allows practice and the soccer field to become a sanctuary from any issues they may be having off the field.

SPECIAL NOTE ON GAMES AND SKILL TRAINING

GAMES

Many clubs practice to play the game. At KBSA, however, the game is part of our training. It is an expression of what we have learned and a test of what we still have to learn. In this way, opponents are our allies, not our enemies. They provide us an opportunity to test what we have learned and to teach us new lessons.

We play to win, but we keep it in perspective because we know it is all part of our long-term development. It is not the end game. It is a tool to learn, assess, and to create a baseline from which to continue developing, individually and as a team. A game is also a reward for our players who work hard so they may put their learning within the ultimate context.

GAME PROTOCOL

Accordingly, our pre-game preparation parallels our Training Structure. We start with Rondos and Movement, move into Position Play Exercises and then are ready to play the Training Game, which in this case is the actual game. Position Play Exercise may include transitions and the goalie taking shots. This continuity makes games coherently part of our regular routine. Players take comfort in this and grow to understand that we “play the way we train.”

SKILL TRAINING

As previously discussed, we teach our Soccer Principles together since they are interconnected within the natural chaos of the game of soccer. Technical Skills, however, are taught in a more linear fashion.



We organize skill development into Levels and Clusters. Our players progress through the Levels by attaining certain proficiency in the skill cluster of that level, which mirror the way we teach skills: Simple Technique to Dynamic Technique to Functional Technique. Expertise in a skill is achieved when the player acquires the functional technique and uses it within the context of our Soccer Principles. Accordingly, our players are graded on the following 5-point system:

- 0 – Cannot perform Simple Technique,
- 1 – Simple Technique: Can perform skill in an isolated environment w/o pressure (the “HOW”),
- 2 – Dynamic Technique: Can perform skill in environment with one or more external variable w/o pressure,
- 3 – Functional Technique (Training): Can perform the skill in training with pressure (the “WHEN”),
- 4 – Functional Technique (Game): Performs the skill in a game,
- 5 – Functional Technique (Expert): Understands the “Why” by being able to tie the technical skill to one of our Soccer Principles.

Additionally, we group the skills into clusters, which eventually allows them to be taught in a decision-making environment (Functional Technique). For example, a player will be taught various settling techniques together: settling with time; settling to turn left/right/180 or going forward. Once the player has passed through the Simple Technique and Dynamic Technique steps, they are then asked to use the correct technique in the correct situation as they train and develop (Functional Technique). Since our Game Model is based on a possession style of soccer, the first level of skills focusses on developing Ball Mastery, which parallels our first Principle: Love the Ball/Dominate the Ball. Our Skill Levels become progressively more difficult and can be found in the Appendix.

We try to dedicate our team sessions to activities which contain Cognitive and Pattern Recognition training. But asking a player who has not acquired at least the Simple Technique of a given skill to use it in a Cognitive and Pattern Recognition training activity will only serve to reinforce bad technical habits, which will be harder to correct in the future.

If during training a player exhibits incorrect form on a skill, the first level of coaching intervention is to pull the player aside to provide clear and concise instruction on how to execute the skill correctly. A pertinent point or specific help from a coach may be just what the player needs to understand how to execute the skill. The coach provides clear and concise instruction and then reintroduces the player back into the team activity.

If the player continues to struggle with the technique the second level of coaching intervention is the coach noting such technical deficiency in their Training Report



and together with our Technical Director, developing a training plan so the player can work to overcome the deficiency.

This can take the form of Technical Homework and, or Technical Training Sessions. Technical Homework is when the coach assigns the player technical activities to be done at home on their own. The coach engages the parent in this process by not only explaining the proper technique to the player, but also the parent. For example, a coach may note that a player fails to Point his Foot Down and dribble with his Pinky Toe; or is not Opening Their Hips and receiving the ball with their Far Foot in a Profile position. The coach reports this in the Training Report, discusses the issue with the Technical Director, and they design individual drills to be practiced at home. This way we motivate our players to take time to play with the ball on their own, and to learn to dominate the ball in a skillful manner, which is critical to the style of soccer we want to play.

The coach and Technical Director may also organize Technical Training Sessions which are individual or small group training sessions designed to work on either a Simple Technique or Dynamic Technique of a given cluster of skills.

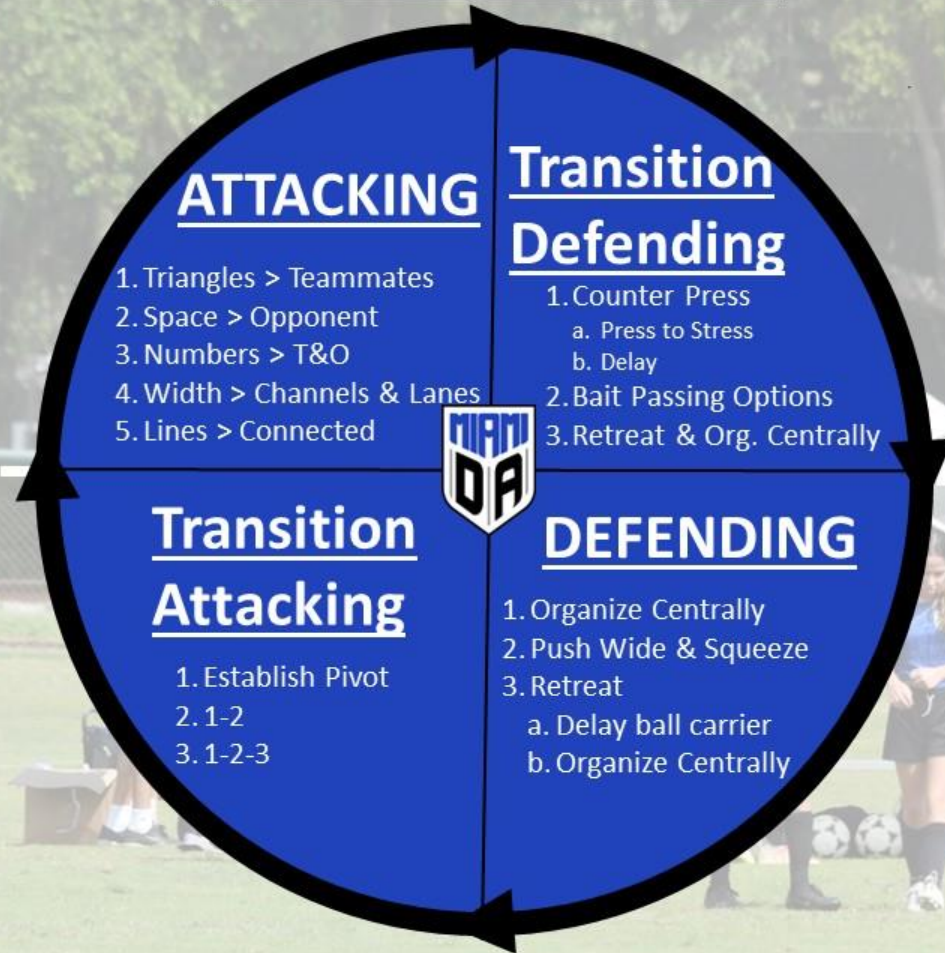




V
GAME MODEL



GAME MODEL



ATTACKING

In attack we are constantly creating triangles and diamonds around the ball, utilizing the width of the field through channels and lanes, identifying, creating, and using space, and aggressively taking advantage of numerical advantages to advance the ball forward through connected lines.

PRINCIPLES & CONCEPTS

1. Possess the ball
 - a. Control Speed and Rythm
2. Scanning:
 - a. What?
 - i. See teammates to create triangles
 - ii. See opponents to find space
 - iii. See teammates and opponents to see Numerical Advantages
 - b. How?
 - i. Scan
 - ii. Peek
 - iii. Glance
3. Triangles & Diamonds
 - a. 2 Attacking Triangles
 - b. 1 Defensive Triangle – Pivot
 - c. 1-2 = two-player triangle
 - d. 1-2-3 = three-player diamond
4. Width & Depth
 - a. Channels (5)
 - b. Lanes
 - i. Maximum
 - ii. Never more than 2
 - iii. Create your Lane
 - c. Lines
 - i. Connected
 - ii. P10 – Att-End
 - d. Zones
 - i. Build-out
 - ii. Creation
 - iii. Scoring
5. Diagonality
 - a. Diagonal Runs
 - b. Break a Flat Line
 - c. Diagonal pass
 - d. Through Ball
6. Space
 - a. Distance
 - b. Second Runs
 - c. Attract
 - d. Actions
 - i. Create
 - ii. Use



- iii. Eliminate
- 7. Numbers
 - a. Advance
 - i. Go vertical
 - ii. Break Lines
 - b. Zones
 - c. Look far first
- 8. Free Player
 - a. Attract
 - b. Timing
 - c. Dismark
 - i. Double Move
 - ii. Going Dark
 - d. Rhythm - Pause
- 9. –
- 10. Att-End
 - a. Pivot
 - b. Travel Together
 - c. Counter Press
 - d. Counter
- 11. Play with Purpose: Move to move
 - a. Switch Field
 - b. Stretch
 - c. Probe
 - d. Body Shape
- 12. Dynamic Rotations
 - a. Positional Discipline
 - b. Roles of Positions
- 13. Deception
- 14. Keep it Simple
 - a. Play what you See
 - b. Know when to be creative
 - c. Simple, Fast & Precise



DEFENSIVE TRANSITION

Transition Defending

1. Counter Press
 - a. Press to Stress
 - b. Delay
2. Bait Passing Options
3. Retreat & Org Centrally

Immediate ball pressure and cutting-off of passing options to (i) recover the ball, or (ii) at least interrupt the opponent's counterattack by forcing a pass backwards, not getting beat 1v1, and giving our team time to regain our defensive shape, which is coordinated with constant communication

SUBPRINCIPLES

1. Immediate ball pressure from nearest goal-side defender (P11)
2. Cutoff ball carrier's passing options (P11)
3. Cutoff the middle of field (P4)
4. Don't get beat 1v1 (P8)
5. Regain defensive form
6. Backside Pressure

MICROPRINCIPLES

1. Immediate ball pressure
 - a. Identify our nearest goal-side ball defender
 - b. Shout "I GOT BALL!"
 - c. Principles of defending 1v1: (Be Active: Dictate; Not Passive: Wait)
 1. Approaching Ball
 - a. Round your approach
 - b. Tall to small
 - c. Get there quick
 - d. Decelerate on approach
 - e. Distance from Opponent
 - f. Weight on which foot
 2. Body Shape
 - a. Side Body Shape
 - b. On Toes
 - c. Wide Base
 - d. Knees bent
 - e. Arms for balance
 - f. Tackling/Poking
2. Cutoff ball carrier's passing options
 - a. Identify opponent's passing options
 - b. Identify our player closest to those options
 - c. Position our players to intercept passes or cover player



- d. Shout "I GOT HIM/HER!"
3. Covering the Middle: Usually the #6 (P4)
4. Recover Defensive Shape
 - a. The rest of the team regains their defensive position
 - b. Rotate - in case a player is out of position
 - c. Players out of position run to get goal side
 - d. If not the #6, a CB or goalkeeper must give verbal directions helping to cover the risk areas
5. Backside Pressure
 - a. If there is a player behind the ball, try to recover
 - b. Either a forward, or the player who lost the ball

DEFENSE

Defending

1. Organize Centrally
2. Push Wide & Squeeze
3. Retreat
 - a. Delay
 - b. Org Centrally

An organized and compact all player defense that constantly communicates and shifts in unison to protect the middle of the field, and dictates where the opponent plays by established a discrete line of confrontation, reducing the space the opponent can exploit, preventing penetration, and using the forwards to funnel the ball wide to high pressure trigger areas to recover the ball.

SUBPRINCIPLES

1. Compact Block
2. Communication
3. Line of Confrontation
4. Dictate Where Opponent Plays
5. High Pressure Trigger

MICROPRINCIPIOS

1. Compact Block
 - a. Close Space
 - b. Shifting in unison as the ball is moved from flank to flank
 - c. Midfielders Track Runners & Defenders Step to Players playing between lines
 - d. Rotate: Player fills-in when defender is pulled out or tracks a run
 - e. Handing-off when runner crosses zones



- f. Weak-side players must be aware of their man, but Tucking-In to strong side
- g. Protect dangerous areas (middle)
 - 1. Always have Numerical parity or advantage in the Middle
 - 2. Don't let players cut in from wide areas and Deny Penetration
- 2. Communication
 - a. Loud communication of who has got who
 - b. Loud in handing off
 - c. Loud identification of runners
 - d. Loud Organization of Lines
- 3. Line of Confrontation
 - a. Establish Line
 - b. Compact – If MF Line moves up, D line must do the same
- 4. Dictate Where Opponent Plays
 - a. Forwards funnel Ball Wide to High Pressure Area (areas 1,3,4,6)
 - b. Forward cuts off switching the field
 - c. AM cuts of middle
 - d. Winger Pressures wide player
- 5. High Pressure Triggers
 - a. High Pressure Areas (1,3,4,6)
 - b. High Pressure Events
 - 1. Loose touch
 - 2. Back to goal
 - c. Press – Pressure/Cover/Balance

OFFENSIVE TRANSITION

Transition Attack

- 1. Establish Pivot
- 2. 1-2
- 3. 1-2-3

Quick and organized counterattack that exploits the middle of the disorganized defense by vertically advancing the ball into dangerous positions using give and goes with attacking players filling the channels with speed to create a goal scoring opportunity within 10 seconds, while the rest of the team moves up in a block to provide a pivot and support in case the counter is stopped so a fast switch of play can create an attacking opportunity in another areas

SUBPRINCIPLES



1. Quick and Organized Attack through Middle
2. Give and Go
3. Filling the Channels
4. 10 Seconds
5. #6 and D Move up in a Block

MICROPRINCIPLES

2. Quick and Organized Attack through Middle
 - a. FAST
 - b. Not a crazy scramble – there is a step by step plan
 - c. Exploit the middle, don't go wide
3. Give and Go (immediate)
 - a. Immediate Attack 1, 2, 3
 - b. Ball winner (1) immediately looks to pass the ball to start a give and go
 - c. Teammates in Cooperation Zone (2) make themselves available to receive to start Give & Go
 - d. Third player (3) provides third man run to provide multiple Give & Goes
4. Filling the Channels
 - a. Attacking players not involved in Attack 1, 2, 3 immediately fill channels to continue Attack 1, 2, 3
 - b. If players find themselves too close to each other
 1. Utilize diagonal runs, overlaps, underlaps, or handoffs
5. 10 Seconds
 - a. Create goal scoring opportunity within 10 seconds of recovering the ball
 - b. If not successful, maintain possession use Pivot for fast switch of field
6. #6 and Defense Move up in a Block
 - a. Maintain defensive shape
 - b. Provide cover and balance in case ball is lost
 - c. If counter is stopped, use Pivot for quick switch of field,
 - d. CB's must bowl-up





VI
HANDBOOK & CODE OF CONDUCT

A. ACADEMY HANDBOOK

MISSION

Our mission is to develop our kids as players and as people so they can compete at the highest level their potential allows, in soccer and in life. This balance between development and competition is what we manage. Our players are the protagonists of our stories. Our coaches and our club are mere facilitators, supported by parents, who guide and support them through their learning process. This is about them. It is why every decision we make as a club starts with answering the question: What is best for the individual player? This “Player First” framework does not mean catering to players' whims and making things easier for them, quite the opposite. A “Player First” focus challenges the player more and empowers them to learn to manage themselves and their surroundings.

CULTURE

Our training field is a 100% judgment free zone for our players. The only way they develop and get better, is if they are willing to try new things. And they will only try new things if they feel comfortable failing, getting back up, and trying again.

To create this environment, the Club, our coaches, players, and parents must adopt our “La Proxima”, or “Next Time” culture, which means responding to mistakes by a player with: “Don’t worry, get it Next Time”, or “La Proxima”.

Players are encouraged to try new things, and to make mistakes doing so. And then encouraged to get up and try it again. They know we will not judge them for failing, and that we all support their development. Only in this environment will our kids feel free to take on new challenges, try new things, learn, and grow.

DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

Our Development Philosophy is a comprehensive, yet constantly evolving methodology which brings together several schools of thought and pedagogical strategies, coupled with our technical staff’s extensive experience in not only playing soccer, but teaching it. Our coaches are first and foremost teachers, who guide each individual player through a development plan that progressively challenges them both cognitively and technically, and involves explicit, detailed instruction. Our methodology focuses on developing each player’s technical, tactical, physical, and psychological abilities so all our players achieve a high soccer IQ, regardless of their natural ability. You can refer to our Academy Methodology for more detailed information.

DEVELOPMENT, COMPETITION, SUCCESS & WINNING

As we balance the need to develop our kids, with the need to compete, winning takes a back seat, and “success” is redefined.



When a child joins our club, they don't just become part of a team for one year. They become part of a club with a three-to-seven-year development plan for that specific child. This is why each age group has its own curriculum, with specific skills and soccer principals for that year, and which the following year will build upon.

Having said that, though our priority is development, we recognize a kid cannot develop unless they compete. Accordingly, we are constantly placing our kids in competitive environments to provoke their development. Sometimes, like in the final minutes of a close game, or in the final of a tournament, the competition takes precedent, but only because of its value in the long-term development of the players.

So, though winning is not the main goal, it is an element in the development experience. But winning is not how we define success. Let's be honest, nobody is remembered for how many games they won when they were 13 years old. They are remembered for how they play the game and what type of person they become as a young adult. Accordingly, as we get to the U17 and U19 ages, winning becomes more important, but only because it is a data point in measuring our success in developing those players.

PLAYING STYLE

The style of soccer we want to play results from our club-wide soccer identity and incorporates the principles our teams demonstrate in the four moments of a soccer game. This model is based on wanting to play an inspiring, expansive, offensive possession style of soccer with calculated smothering defensive pressure.

Almost everyone says they want to play beautiful position-based soccer, or *Juego de Posición* (JdP), but then you go to their training, and they don't train to play that way. Playing position-based soccer is not the same as possession-based soccer. It's not about possessing the ball for the sake of possession. It is about the highly cognitive understanding of your position on the field, along with your opponents, your teammates, and the ball, and making purposeful movements to create and maximize positional and numerical advantages. You can refer to our Academy Methodology for more detailed information about how we go about training position-based play.

TRYOUTS

Tryouts are held annually at the beginning of May and are open to all players who meet the pertinent age requirements. Each prospective player will be given a fair opportunity to make a team. Players will be selected by our technical staff and coaches based on various factors, including but not limited to, technical and tactical skill, soccer fundamentals and habits, fit within our value system, and the conduct of the player and parents.

We will announce the open tryouts to inform the public of the specific tryout dates and times. Players may also try out for a team during the season if the team has an



opening, and the player has a non-conflicting affiliation status or receives a waiver from their current club. If a team roster is full, or if a player is close to the required level of play, they may be added as a “developmental player” who trains with the team but does not participate in league games until invited to join the team as a full player.

Current players are evaluated throughout the season during practices, scrimmages, and games, as well as during annual tryouts. Prospective new players are evaluated during annual tryouts, special clinics, scrimmages, and under game situations when possible. Current and prospective new players will be evaluated by our technical staff in four areas:

- Mental (character, discipline, and leadership),
- Physical (endurance, strength, and speed),
- Technical competence (skill level), and
- Tactical awareness (understanding/reading game situations)

TRAINING POLICY

All players must be present on the training ground 10 minutes before training, fully dressed, wearing proper footwear and shin guards. Showing up at the exact training time is considered late. Players are expected to be warmed-up and ready to train at the training start time. Players will be taught a player-led warm-up routine which they are expected to perform and finish prior to training. Similarly, players will be taught a player-led cool-down routine which shall be performed at the end of training. In addition to proper uniforms, players are required to bring a water bottle no smaller than 36 oz to training and games.

PLAYING UP

As mentioned above, players do not develop unless they compete, and it's tough to compete if you're not on the field. Having said that, playing time is not the only way to compete, and our training sessions are often more competitive than games. As we try to balance these needs, we provide the following guidance to our coaches:

- In age groups 8U-12U players are guaranteed 33% to 40% playing time per game.
- In age groups 13U+ there is no guaranteed playing time.

Playing time is earned through performance, mainly in training, and is a decision made by the coach. That said, we are focused on developing all our players to help them achieve their individual goals. We do not place players on a team if we believe they will not get playing time. If a player has very limited playing time, we will discuss options to get them more playing time on another team within the club, when available and appropriate. Coaches are encouraged to manage playing time for every player and to communicate openly and honestly with parents when playing time issues are anticipated or occurring.



PLAYER POSITIONS

We are developing soccer players, not center backs, wingers, or forwards. Modern soccer positions are increasingly interchangeable: center backs can charge forward, fullbacks can dip into the center of the midfield, a forwards can drop deep into the midfield. Accordingly, we focus on developing complete soccer players, not position specific robots. This is especially true for players that have not reached puberty or finished growing.

At the older levels we have position profiles, but a player cannot be fitted to such a profile until they have finished growing into their body. Accordingly, until a player gets to U16 or U17, positions should be flexible, and players should focus on developing as an all-around player, not a position limited player.

DUAL ROSTERED PLAYERS

A player may be dual rostered, with approval from the secondary team Coach and the Technical Director, if it is in the best interest of the player to (1) get more playing time, or (2) allow them to get tested at a higher level. The coaches of the Primary Team and Secondary Team, facilitated by the Technical Director, are responsible for discussing, deciding, and communicating the training and game schedule for any dual-rostered player. Priority is determined by our Technical Director.

PLAYER COMMITMENT

We are a competitive soccer club geared toward players who love the sport of soccer and are serious about their development as soccer players. It is important to recognize that players and parents invest significant time and resources in playing club soccer and expect us to create and foster an environment that will allow players to compete at the highest level of soccer possible given individual talent and commitment levels.

Your commitment to us, and vice versa, is for one soccer year (August 1 – July 31). At the conclusion of the year your commitment to us is over and you are free to leave if you feel it is in your best interest, or instead try-out again for the following year. The aim of this policy is to create an appropriate competitive environment for the proper development of our players. The intention is not, however, to create an environment where coaches are unnecessarily recruiting large numbers of new players each year simply to win games and move up the competitive ladder of the league. Also, no player will be cut from a team during a seasonal year except because of disciplinary issues or failure to fulfill financial obligations.

Players are expected to commit to the club as their first recreational activity priority during the season.

We expect our players and parents to be ethical and honest and to honor their commitments. Therefore, you should only play for a team if you are prepared to make



the required level of commitment. Once your commitment is made, we expect your full participation and support for the entire soccer season. You should be mindful of the fact that when you make your commitment, the coach or manager may need to inform another prospective player that he or she did not make the team. Please be sensitive to others and consider your decision carefully. If you have committed to us, we will also be ethical and honest, honoring our commitment to you.

If a player or parent, after signing the Player/Parent Agreement, fails to demonstrate the requisite commitment level to his or her team, the team coach may recommend that the club take disciplinary action, including but not limited to a player suspension.

Attendance at games, including scheduled tournaments, is mandatory. During games, players are expected to follow the instructions of their coaches. Players not on the field are expected to sit and watch their teammates from the sideline. Players are expected to try their best within the rules of the game and always compete aggressively but fairly.

Players are expected to condition themselves both during the season and in the off-season. Failure to be in good physical condition will necessarily affect a player's ability to perform and will likely cut a player's playing time during the season. Likewise, players are expected to work on soccer skills year-round either on a formal or informal basis. Players need touches on the ball as much as possible throughout the year to develop. Practices are mandatory and should only be missed on account of illness, religious obligation, or other special circumstances. Coaches must be informed no less than 12 hours in advance if player cannot attend a training.

Nutrition and rest are also the responsibility of the player. We expect players to eat nutritious, healthy food in a timely fashion so as not to interfere with performance. If you have questions about which foods are best for performing athletes, please ask the team coach.

As a member, you are responsible for their own performance and conduct. Honesty, communication, and reliability are always expected. We ask that you care about yourself and the sport of soccer. This requires that you maintain a healthy lifestyle and a healthy team attitude. Any use of drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes is not acceptable and may result in temporary suspension or removal. In addition, we insist that you maintain a positive team attitude and a personal sense of sportsmanship and fair play.

Off the field our players are expected to carry themselves as ladies and gentlemen both on and off the field. At tournaments, player behavior is expected to be exemplary before, during and after games. As elite athletes, players are further expected to conduct themselves with dignity and respect at home and at school. Disrespect of



adults, including teachers and parents, will not be tolerated. Poor behavior by one player reflects badly on the whole club.

SCHOOLWORK

Part of the commitment to playing for us is a commitment to being able to handle all the obligations that a student has in his or her daily life. It is expected that all players be prepared to play soccer at games and practices. This demands that players do their best in school and budget their time to fulfill their obligations as students. Players who are not doing their best in school and/or are not meeting their homework obligations are jeopardizing their position on their team and letting their teammates down.

TOURNAMENTS

Our focus is on competitive league and cup matches being the main vehicle for our player development process. However, tournaments have a limited role in this process as: (1) showcase events to allow players to play in front of college and professional scouts, (2) extra games for teams that have lacked competitive matches, and (3) special bonding events to foment club and team level comradery. At tournaments, players must stay together in the same hotel as their team and are expected to abide by the same Code of Conduct. Teams may only participate in tournaments approved by the club's Directors. Only coaches, a director, or the registrar may register a team for a tournament.

PARENTS

Parental support and involvement in the club are essential. Parents must ensure that their child attends all team events (practices, games, meetings, etc.). We understand there will be times when conflicts cannot be avoided and that your son or daughter simply cannot attend a team event. We require your communication, planning, and understanding so we can minimize conflicts. It is the team's responsibility to present a periodic schedule to allow time for your planning. When parents or players have an unavoidable conflict, we expect timely communication to allow the club or team adequate time to make any possible adjustments. Parents are also an important element in the creation of a positive culture within the team. Please note that if a parent is found to be detrimental to the team culture and environment, it may be used as a factor in the evaluation of the player for future teams.

There will be no coaching by parents. "Go," "shoot," "pass," "send it," and the like are interpreted as instructions and as such are not desirable. No matter how good your intentions are, the club insists that there be no shouting of instructions to your child or any other player on the team. We also insist there be absolutely no yelling or complaining to referees or officials during or after games. Your vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome after a good play. Encouragement such as "Don't worry, get it next time", or "La Proxima" is encouraged after a mistake. Please do not criticize or "moan" with disappointment when mistakes are made either by players or



game officials. The players are aware of mistakes they make, and we strive to teach our players that overcoming and learning from mistakes are important parts of the learning process.

It is important that players are not distracted at practices or during games and that players are given only one set of instructions by one voice before, during, and after games. For this reason, we insist that the coach be the only voice before, during, and after all games. No one other than those listed on the official game roster may sit on or near the team bench before and during games. Please respect the space and privacy necessary for the coaches and team to carry out their game responsibilities.

Please respect all the other players on the team and do not make critical remarks to others about other players on your team. Many times, these comments are overheard by the players or others and can be quite hurtful and foster an unhealthy team environment.

Please respect your coach and manager and do not make negative remarks to others about coaching decisions. Our priority is the growth and development of our players as individuals along with their soccer abilities under pressure. Team and player development take priority over winning, especially in the younger age groups. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this philosophy to maintain a healthy team environment. Playing only to win without taking team and player development into account benefits no one.

We believe in and teach our players the benefit of having mental toughness to guide their intense focus on the game of soccer. We will instruct your child to ignore adverse conditions such as bad referees, name-calling, foul language, rough play, cheating, poor weather, negative behavior by parents or opponents, etc. We expect our parents (as well as our coaches and managers) to have this same mental toughness.

Team parents must cooperate fully with their team manager. Be courteous and respond to telephone calls and e-mails in a timely fashion to allow the manager to fulfill his or her vital role.

TEAM MANAGERS

Team Managers are vital to our success. As liaisons between the club, coaches & parents, they:

1. Support the coach by directing all questions concerning player selection, player positions and playing time to the Technical Director
2. Communicate parent concerns and questions to the Coach and Technical Director
3. Keep the team organized and running smoothly by communicating practice information and game schedules. It is important that the Team Manager works with parents to ensure player availability is kept up to date for all games and practices



4. Keep the "pulse" on the team and parents by listening and passing concerns on to the coach and Technical Director
5. Work with the Registrar to collect information and documents needed to register players
6. Coordinate hotels for tournaments and travel games, as well as transportation, if applicable
7. Attend Team Manager meetings
8. Team Treasurer - handle financial duties for the team; collecting money from families to cover team expenses (e.g., tournament registration fees, coach per diem, etc.)
9. Coordinate tent responsibilities with other parents for away games
10. Coordinate uniform orders

If you are interested in being a Team Manager, please inform the coach. Please note that Team Managers do receive a discount on the dues.

TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY

All parents shall be informed of the leagues, cups, and tournaments their child will play prior to September 15th. Parents must inform the Team Manager prior to October 1, if they will not be able to participate in any scheduled event. Past that date, unless the player cannot participate due to a proven long-term injury, parents will be responsible for their fair share of the event costs. Parents are responsible for their players' travel expenses.

Registration and Referee Fees ("Event Fees")

The club is responsible for Event Fees for: FYSA Cups, FSPL, Sunshine Conference, State Cup, FCL Florida Cup, ECNL, ECNL-RL, NPL, FCL and SFUYSA games. The coach is responsible for receiving advance from the club and paying the referee fee on game day.

Parents are responsible for Event Fees for all tournaments, non-FYSA or FCL cups, friendlies or leagues not mentioned above.

Coach Per Diem

Parents are responsible for paying the following per diems, with the coach receiving the respective amount the Thursday before the start of the event:

1. Tournaments, Cups, or Multiple League Games with Overnight Stays
 - Coaches shall receive from parents a daily per diem rate for each player (only for days in which a game is played):
 - i. U9-U12: \$15/player
 - ii. U13-U19: \$13/player



- Coaches shall be covered by parents for other expenses such as lodging and transportation (airfare, taxi, Uber, rental car)
 - Parents are also responsible for tournament registration and referee fees
2. Local Tournaments with no Overnight Stay
 - Coaches shall receive from parents a daily per diem rate for each player (only for days in which a game is played):
 - i.U9-U12: \$15/player
 - ii.U13-U19: \$13/player
 - Parents are also responsible for tournament registration and referee fees
 3. Cups or League Games with no Overnight Stay
 - Per diem is calculated per the following formula:
(Roundtrip miles - 40) x \$0.70 up to a maximum of \$235
 - Total is paid at the end of the Cup or League competition
 - Roundtrip miles are calculated from coach's residence to the field site

PLAYER TRAVEL POLICY

1. All players and parents must comply with our Code of Conduct when attending away games, tournaments, or travel events.
2. Players are required to stay at the same hotel as their team for away tournaments, cups, or travel games. Please consult the team Manager if there is a problem.
3. All players must follow any specific event instructions, including all scheduled team events, meetings and arrival times outlined in the team's travel itinerary.
4. Curfews and hotel policy will apply to tournament and league travel.
5. Players may be sent home if rules are not followed.
6. Players should use the "Buddy System" (don't go anywhere alone) at all times when traveling to tournaments and away games for safety reasons.

UNIFORM POLICY

1. The full required uniform package must be purchased through:
2. All gear worn by players at training and games must be official club gear.
3. Shin guards are required for all training and games
4. No modifications are allowed to game uniforms, unless approved in writing by the club.
5. Parents must label all items with the player's name.
6. Game jersey's may not be worn at training.



7. Practice jerseys or warm-up jerseys, as instructed by the coach, shall be uniformly worn to games for team warm up. Players will change into game jerseys after warming up.
8. Our primary uniform is color is blue. Our secondary uniform is white.
9. Players must bring both jerseys to all games.
10. Uniform numbers are designated by the team coach.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key, but proper protocols must be followed for the communication to be productive and beneficial. For example, conversations at the field with a coach, whether before, during or after a games or training, is not allowed. Our policy also prohibits parents from communicating with the coach until twenty-four hours after a game or practice about any issue arising during that game or practice, except in the event of safety issues.

Our goal is to empower our players to communicate any concerns directly with their coach. Accordingly, our communication policy strongly recommends that our parents also empower their players to approach their coach about any concern. Thus, one-on-one conversations between a parent and the coach (verbal or virtual) are not allowed unless initiated by the coach for an exceptional reason. If the parent desires to speak with their child's coach, they must request a meeting with the Technical Director who will coordinate the meeting between the parents, coach, Technical Director, and player if deemed advisable.

There are times when changes are made (sometimes last minute) to practice and/or game dates, times and/or locations. Most teams communicate primarily via chat groups and e-mail. It is the player and parents' responsibility to check e-mail and team chat groups daily. If you are unable to attend a practice or game (or if you plan to arrive late or leave early), you must notify your coach and/or manager as described above or be considered an unexcused tardy or absence.

All grievances shall follow the following protocol:

- For U13+: Empower Player to Discuss with Coach > Team Manager > Technical Director > Sporting Director
- For U3 to U12: > Team Manager > Technical Director > Sporting Director

PLAYERS LEFT AT FACILITIES

If there are any children left at a field and their parents have not arrived, we expect adults (coaches and parents of other players) to:

1. Wait with the child or children, but make sure there is another adult with you waiting. Never put yourself in a situation where you are the only adult present with someone else's child.
2. Never leave a child unattended.

Under no circumstances should coaches give a child a ride home.



CLUB FEE PAYMENT POLICY

Teams are financially supported through seasonal player dues. Our registration fee will be the same for all players. However, the team fees may vary depending on the number of players on a given team, ages, and participating leagues, tournaments, or other third-party activities. Depending on how the third-party activity is organized, fees may include league registration, referees, insurance coverage, training equipment, league dues, tournament entry fees, professional training, etc. Each player will also be responsible for the cost of a uniform. Should a player quit or leave his or her team to join another club or team, he or she will still be responsible for the payment of team fees. There will be no refunds once any payments are made for team fees. The Parent will receive a link to pay the player due after registration. If the player fails to pay on time, we reserve the right to drop the player from the team.

- The Registration Fee (non-refundable/non-transferable) is required with a card or bank account number online at Registration. Players are rostered to their team when Registration is submitted and received by the club.
- Monthly payment plan options are available at registration. There is a monthly convenience fee for payment plans imposed by our processor. The full payment option does not include this fee.
- Credit Card payments include a processing fee per transaction. This will show on your invoice. Check or cash payments received prior to payment due dates, can avoid the card processing fee. Checks need to be sent at least 2 days prior to their due date.
- A late fee of \$30 will be assessed for payments not received within 30 days of the scheduled due date. Please make sure your credit card information is current and up to date to avoid this fee.
- A returned check fee of \$50 will be assessed for checks returned from your financial institution for non-sufficient funds, closed account or other returned reason.
- Failure to pay your scheduled fees within thirty (30) days of the payment due date will invoke the “NO PAY-NO PLAY” Club Disciplinary Policy. Players will not be eligible to participate in team practices, games, or tournaments until your account is made current.
- We are committed to a player rostered to their team for the entire season. The Player is committed to their team and payment of their Fee for the season. No fee payment or parts thereof will be refunded or forgiven because of player injuries, absences, withdrawals, or early separation from a team. Notify your coach immediately of an injury. Documentation of an injury must be submitted within two weeks of an injury to the club Registrar.

FINANCIAL AID

A limited amount of Financial Aid is available for families that demonstrate need. Financial Aid applications are available on our website. Any family applying for



Financial Aid must submit a copy of their prior year's Tax Return and complete the application. Those families receiving Financial Aid will be required to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours assisting with Club Fundraising Events. Families receiving financial aid must also see that their player has the current season's required uniform kit and they are current in paying their share of their team's fees.

WEATHER CANCELLATION/DELAY POLICY & LIGHTNING PROTOCOL

Rain will rarely be a reason to cancel training or games. Flooded fields, however, may cause cancellation.

Lightning is another possible cause for cancelation of games and training. Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind, which may be signs of an approaching thunderstorm. If we see lightning or hear thunder, we will postpone outdoor activity promptly. Players, families, and coaches should go immediately inside a completely enclosed building or vehicle, not a carport, open garage, under a tree or covered patio. If an official facility or league "weather safety device" is at the fields indicating a lightning strike within 5 miles, we will leave the field, even if we cannot see or hear lightning/thunder and follow this same protocol.

Each time lightning is sighted, or thunder is heard, soccer may not resume play until 25 minutes have passed. The 25-minute watch is restarted with every newly occurring lightning strike. Coaches will monitor conditions during this time. NO ONE should take the field until 25 minutes have passed since the last lightning strike that was sighted or thunder heard. After the 25-minute wait, if you have less than 25 minutes of possible training time remaining, your session will likely be canceled, and players advised to leave with their parents.

If you can't get to an enclosed building or vehicle Stay away from trees; keeping twice as far away from a tree as it is tall. Avoid bicycles and motorcycles. Don't stand in puddles of water, even if wearing rubber boots. Move away from a group of people. Stay several yards away from other people. Don't share a bleacher bench or huddle in a group.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Players, Parents and Coaches must be committed to our Code of Conduct.

The purpose of this Handbook is to present a clear and detailed understanding of what is expected of you and what you can expect from the club, the team, and the coach. If you are uncertain as to what is expected, please contact the team manager for clarification. Knowing and understanding these things is vital to making your participation a positive experience as you or your child develop their soccer abilities to the highest level possible. We have high expectations at our club, the teams, the coaches, and you. It is imperative that all players and parents abide by our rules,



regulations, and policies. Everyone has issues that arise from time to time, and we will make every effort to work with you to help resolve any issues you may have. After we have exhausted all efforts to resolve issues that have been identified, we will have no alternative but to pursue disciplinary action as outlined below. The same procedures will apply to situations where the actions of parents or coaches are judged by the Board of Directors to warrant appropriate discipline.

1. The coach will discuss the issue directly and privately with the player, with the assumption that the problem will be corrected immediately.
2. If the issue persists, the manager will communicate with the player's parents to discuss the issue and the lack of appropriate response on the part of the player. Parents will have the opportunity to be involved with the correction of the issue at this time.
3. If the issue persists, the coach may temporarily suspend the player. If the situation warrants, the coach may recommend to the Directors that the player be removed from the club. The parents will be notified by the Directors of the manager's recommendation.
4. The parents of any player recommended for removal from the club may request to meet with the Directors.

COACHES

Coaches shall conduct themselves first as teachers and second as soccer coaches. Nothing positive will come of our efforts if we produce world-class players who do not know how to conduct themselves as successful human beings. In this regard, you can expect coaches to conduct themselves as positive role models and display appropriate behavior. Our coaches recognize they are dealing in an important way with young people and cannot overlook the impact they have on players' lives. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their teams, both on and off the field, whenever the team is together as a group. We insist that our players are polite, well-behaved, and respectful. Players and parents can expect honesty, appropriate communication, consistency, and reliability from the coach. Coaches must be committed to giving players the tools and skills to enable them to become as good as their ability, desire, commitment, and effort allow. Coaches are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to the development of quality competitive soccer. We recognize that in life there are far more important things than soccer. In terms of priority, family and schoolwork come first. However, if the coach sees that you are not willing to put soccer above other recreational activities during the season, it may affect your playing time and/or your status with the club. Do not expect coaches to praise everything you do well. After a time, there are things the coach will come to expect from every player. There are times when coaches will say very little, and times they may yell out instructions. There are times they will be critical of players, and other times they will be generous with praise. Players and parents are expected to take constructive criticism along with praise for a job well done and be able to deal with both. The coach will attend practices and will coach at games. In situations where conflicts do occur,



which is inevitable, the club will attempt to designate another coach to cover that practice or game. It is important for players and parents to understand that coaching in soccer is overrated. Once players reach a certain level of skill, maturity, and experience, they become more important to the team's success than the coach.

The coaches will make decisions as to player selections, game lineup, player positions, amount of playing time, etc. Players must be positive in fulfilling the role they are asked to perform for the team at any moment, even if that role has them coming off the bench or playing a new position. If conflicts or issues arise between a player and/or his or her parents and the team, then the coach will be responsible for addressing and responding to the conflicts or issues and making decisions for the good of the team. These decisions will be made at the coach's absolute discretion. The coach's decision will be final. The player and his or her parents must agree to abide by the coach's decision.

There are some coaches who train two or more teams. All such coaches will attend all training sessions and games to the extent possible. There will be times when conflicts occur and, in those situations, a backup coach will be asked to cover the pertinent training session or game.

We hold our coaches to secure to the highest standards. There may be times when you do not agree with the coach's conduct. If you have tried to communicate with the coach about an issue that is of concern to you and you are still unsatisfied, please contact the appropriate age group coordinator to investigate the matter.

CLUB & TEAM NAMING

The following format should be used, in full, whenever using the club or a team name, for example when signing the team up for a tournament, or in social media posts:

Team Name Format – Gender Letter / Birth Year / Team Descriptor (e.g. ECNL, ECNL-RL, NPL, Pre-ECNL, Blue)

Examples of team name:

- B05 ECNL
- G05 NPL
- G11 Pre-ECNL
- B11 Blue

MARKETING “OPT-IN” – PLAYER LIKENESS USAGE

To market the club, representatives might take photographs or videos of training sessions or league games. Your registration grants us a perpetual unlimited license to use these photographs and/or videos marketing opportunities such as our website(s), social media platforms, printed and electronically distributed program flyers, and marketing videos.



We will NEVER provide names of our boys and girls and connect the likeness of them with their names or other identifying characteristics, without prior parental consent.

INSURANCE COVERAGE & MEDICAL INJURIES

A player's contribution to the team will never be more important than their individual well-being. If it is suspected that a player has suffered a concussion or any other injury, the coach will not put that player back onto the field. If a player's injury requires them to seek professional medical attention, the coach will defer to the guidance provided by the doctor. Parents must inform the coach of any suspected injury.

All parents or legal guardians are required to complete and authorize a Medical Release form for each player. You will enter the medical information necessary during the Registration process as it is included in the US Club Soccer Youth Player Registration and FYSA forms.

Excess accident coverage is automatically provided to registered members of USYS and US Club Soccer as a part of the registration fees. These Policies provide coverage for registered players, coaches, and other officials, during sanctioned events including regularly scheduled practices and games. This coverage is excess above the player's own family health insurance. For players or members that do not have any health insurance, this will be considered a primary insurance.

Claims must be filed within 90 days of the date of injury online with the Association you are registered through (US Club, USYS). Itemized medical bills are not required at the time of claim submission but will be required to process the claim. DO NOT wait until all bills are received to submit the claim. If you have questions regarding filing a claim or need information on the claim process, please contact the Club Administrator.

All parents or legal guardians are required to complete and authorize a Medical Release form for each player. You will enter the medical information necessary during the Registration process as it is included in the US Club Soccer Youth Player Registration and FYSA forms. If an injury occurs, please use the link to our Health Forms Page at www.miamida.org to begin the claims process.



B. CODE OF CONDUCT

While part of our club, it is necessary for all of us to understand that our actions not only reflect on us individually, but also our family, our team and our club, and our community.

We take issues of intimidation, harassment, aggression, and bullying—be it physical or verbal—very seriously and they will not be tolerated. Members found culpable of such action will be subject to a review with the team's Directors to determine the appropriate course of action which can include discipline up to and including expulsion from the club without refund.

PLAYERS shall:

1. Exhibit a positive “La Proxima” mentality towards their teammates
2. Be positive, with and about, their teammates, team, club, and coach.
3. Honor the commitment to the club
4. Understand the team’s objectives and goals
5. Commit to our Game and Development Model
6. Take full responsibility of actions and maintain a positive attitude
7. Understand the role on the team
8. Maintain good physical condition which includes healthy eating, proper sleep and exercise
9. Recognize training are as important as games, if not more so
10. Take full responsibility for attending team events, which includes being prepared and on time
11. Notify the coach if unable to attend a team event with as much notice as possible
12. Display good sportsmanship regardless of game outcome
13. Show respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials at all times
14. Play by the rules of soccer and in the spirit of the game
15. Accept the decisions made by coaches and game officials
16. Remain in control of actions at all times
17. Respect facility rules and report damage to facilities
18. Clean-up after themselves after training and games
19. Understand that serious infractions may result in disciplinary action
20. Not use, possess, or distribute illegal drugs, controlled substances and/or alcohol
21. Represent our club on and off the field at ALL times
22. Be positive about your teammates, team and club on Social Media platforms.
 - (1) If you would not say it to your team, coach or potential college coach, do not put it on social media.
 - (2) If you might be unhappy at someone saying it about you, or a family member of yours, do not put it on social media. Remember, everything you put out there on SM is out there for good, and your future



college coach, college admissions, employers will all have access to it, and many will actively look.

23. Read, subscribe to, and follow our Academy Handbook

PARENTS shall:

1. Exhibit a positive “La Proxima” mentality towards their kid’s teammates
2. Be positive, with and about, your child’s teammates, team, club, coach. If you have concerns, address them through the correct organizational channels.
3. Honor the commitment to the club
4. Make sure players arrive for scheduled games and practices at the time designated by the coach
5. Inform the coach of any injury, mental or physical disability that may affect the safety of any player
6. Understand team objectives and goals as it relates to development
7. Commit to our Game and Development Model
8. Help maintain a positive environment
9. Support all players on the team at all times
10. Offer positive encouragement for effort given at practice and games and for competing fairly
11. Set a positive example for all players with how they behave at team events
12. Encourage players to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without intimidation or violence
13. Encourage open player and coach communication
14. Respect the coach’s role and instruct the players to do so
15. Refrain from creating confusion by yelling commands like “Kick it” or “Shoot”
16. Support play on the field with supportive comments like “Nice Try” or “Good Hustle”
17. Stay calm and not interrupt a coach during a game or practice to resolve any issues
18. Observe the 24-hour rule, waiting a full day after a game or practice to communicate or schedule a meeting
19. Never ridicule or verbally abuse any player, coach or official
20. Watch the game exclusively from the sideline as the facility permits and never enter the field of play or sideline
21. Wait for the coach to signal for their help in case of an injury
22. Be responsible for any punishment earned through poor behavior (including guests behavior)
23. Respect any request by a coach or referee to leave the vicinity of the field
24. Respect referees and all officials of the game
25. Respect facility rules and report damage
26. Support a drug and alcohol-free environment and report any suspect behavior to the Director of Coaching
27. Be positive about your child’s team and club on Social Media platforms. (1) If you would not say it to your child, the team, the coach or your child’s potential



college coach, do not put it on social media. (2) If you might be unhappy at someone saying it about you, or a family member of yours, do not put it on social media. Remember, everything you put out there on SM is out there for good, for the most part

28. Read, subscribe to, and follow our Club Handbook

COACHES shall:

1. Exhibit a positive “La Proxima” mentality towards their players
2. Learn and follow the rules of the game, leagues, and club policies
3. Have training plans prepared before training and arriving prepared for training and games 15 minutes early, ready to start
4. Turn in training plans, game reports and player evaluations on time
5. Care for the mental and physical well-being of every player
6. Never ask a player to perform any actions that knowingly puts them in harm's way
7. Help players understand the team objectives and goals as it relates to development
8. Maintain a positive environment
9. Develop an individual relationship with each individual player by (i) convincing each player that you are committed to helping them develop to their individual potential, and (ii) conducting yourself in a manner that engenders confidence in the player that you have the ability to help each player reach that potential
10. Support all players on the team at all times
11. Commit to our Methodology, and Training Curricula. We welcome adjustments to them, but they need to be discussed with the Technical Director immediately. Our methodology is constantly evolving and thus we welcome comments and discussions about it. However, this communication must be open, include the club's Directors, add to the collaborative culture of our staff, and not be derogatory in nature or disparaging of our directors or leadership team
12. Understand each and every player develops at a unique pace
13. Foster an environment where players feel comfortable and able to communicate
14. Treat everyone fairly and with respect
15. Never use vulgar or profane language around the players or parents
16. Never ridicule or verbally abuse any player, opponent, coach or official
17. Be a positive role model for the players by maintaining professionalism and integrity
18. Never use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substances before, during or at practices and games
19. Respect referees and all officials of the game
20. Provide evaluations of each and every player as directed by the Technical Director



21. Avoid direct interaction with any child via social media
22. Have direct phone or text message communication for players only if they are U16 or older and authorized by the player's parents
23. Be positive about all teams and the club on Social Media platforms
24. Read, subscribe to, and follow our Club Handbook, and various protocols

PROCEDURE FOR VIOLATIONS TO CODE

The following summarizes procedures regarding parent, guest of parent, player, and coach violation of the Code of Conduct and for airing grievances. Players, parents, and coaches are required to adhere to their Code of Conduct. Violations will be presented to our Directors. If a player or parent demonstrates unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct at a game or training session, as determined by the player's Coach, the Coach can take any of the following actions:

1. Immediately remove the player from the practice or the game for inappropriate behavior.
2. Direct the Parent or guest of a parent to leave the field.
3. Refer the matter to a Director for review. The matter will be investigated by the Directors to determine if further action is warranted. Actions may include but are not limited to (i) Written Warning, (ii) Suspension, (iii) Probation, and, or (iv) Dismissal of the parent and/or player from the club.

A Code of Conduct Violation may be reported to the club on the Code of Conduct page located at www.miamida.org.

In all cases of disciplinary action, the decision of the club is final and not subject to appeal. If there is a suspension or dismissal from participation, no refunds shall be given.

