

Striking a Ball

Doug Williamson, Womens Soccer Coach at Nebraska Wesleyan, National & NSCAA National Staff Coach

- ❖ The demo team was 9yr. Olds
- ❖ **Elbow Tag** (warm-up) a couple of pairs of players were selected to hook elbows and become safe spots, several other players have balls and are it, the rest of the player are potential it's, when a unattached attaches to a linked pair the other end must release, those who are it must have the ball in their hands and must tag without throwing or dropping ball – this exercise is great to warm-up legs
- ❖ **Stretched** – He said this was important at the young age to begin teaching them proper technique to use as they get older, he asked questions the players as they stretched (like hold long do you need to hold this stretch?), induced a player to count to fifteen slowly
- ❖ **Bulldog** – start with 2-3 players with balls (bulldogs), they pass to hit the other players (who don't have a ball and are avoiding being hit) below waist; when you are then you hit become a “bulldog”, retrieve a ball from outside of area and continue until all players are bulldogs
- ❖ Proceeded after a while to adjust space size to help it work
- ❖ During a rest gave suggestion via questions on what part of foot made for most accurate passes to hit a spot
- ❖ While players were playing Bulldog Doug make positive comments and coached individuals
- ❖ **Soccer Marbles** – gave them instructions on how to strike a ball with outside of the foot – plant foot beside the ball, turn toe down and in. He had them practice with parents on side after explaining the move. He then began the game as he placed them in pairs. Each player had with ball. He limited them to use only one touch each time they played the ball. The players were to alternate shooting at their partners ball. Scored a point if they hit it. He asked one player to simply push his ball forward to start the game.
- ❖ Encouraged them to face up to target before they took a shot
- ❖ Each group was to keep their own score. He paused the game and compared scores for a rest period
- ❖ After a further period of play, with lots of positive comment and some individualized coaching, he stopped the game, had them jog in, and compared scores.
- ❖ **Invisible Siamese soccer** – a pair of players with a ball (hitters) use one touch passes to hit (tag) other pairs running with no balls – had them using shoe laces to strike ball, when tagged get a ball and become hitters, champions are the last pair not hit by a ball
- ❖ After a while paused and used questions to teach how to keep ball down
- ❖ Gathered the players in and asked them to describe the 3 ways they had used to strike the ball – laces, inside, and outside
- ❖ **Defrost tag** – two equal teams one team with ball, other team moving about with no ball, if hit you are frozen. A teammate can unfreeze a player by crawling between their legs. The goal is to freeze all of other team, let them use any of the 3 types of striking methods. Doug rewarded the team with out the ball verbally for those who took risks to help teammates. Played the game twice, once with with each having the ball, and the team with most frozen at the end of a given period of time won.
- ❖ Encourage youth to strike ball with laces and then add inside of foot striking later so they can use both as they are older
- ❖ **Shooting drills** - Spread them out striking balls dropped from hands in to nets - Run with butt stuck pout and land on the kicking foot
- ❖ Moved to one touch forward, and a strike on goal from in close, worked on keeping it low by landing on the kicking foot
- ❖ Regrouped players into pairs. The partner pushed ball forward and a player takes a shot on goal. After a while he adjusted the game to working in 3's
- ❖ As the players took their shots he kept working with individuals to get them to land on shooting foot
- ❖ **Shooting Game** - All players dribbling in area divided into two different colors of vests. Coaches held a vest of each color. If your color is raised you go towards a goal and take a shot. He encouraged players to get their heads up to see when their color was raised. Visual signals are excellent queues for that type of learner.

- ❖ **Handball** – Divided into 2 equal teams. The player with the ball has 3 steps and 3 seconds to get rid of ball. You move the ball with passes with hands from one to another. Score by bowling the ball out to teammate to take shot on goal. He had keepers in goals. If the ball touches turf it becomes the other teams ball. Doug moved the goals closer to get more shots on goals and later adjusted to let them take a volleyed shot at goal.

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