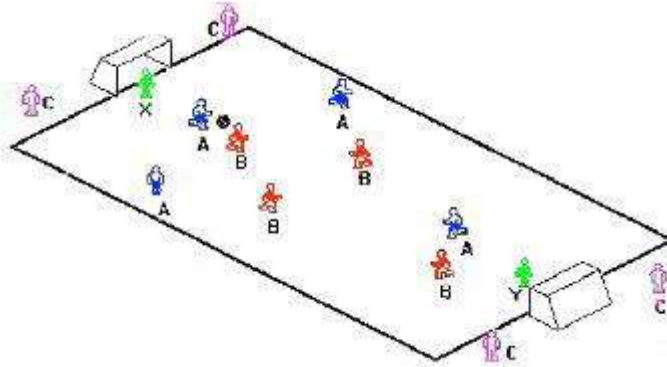


- General Comments
 - Technique is key – must get that down
 - Especially true for keepers
 - “ropes” drill for angles – Learning the Ropes - For this drill you will need at least 60, and preferably about 100 yds. of rope. Tie each end of the rope to a goal post and pull the middle of the rope out (hopefully) past the 18 yd line until you have a taught triangle. With a goalkeeper in goal, show the team how the triangle defines the possible shooting area. Have the goalkeeper start on the goal line, and then move out, staying along the dividing line of the triangle. Show how moving out of goal cuts down the shooting space. Move the top of the triangle to different shooting spots to show the different angles available to shooters. Have different players stand in goal so they can see the angles. (<http://www.bjb.org/soccer/coachinfo/drills/goalkeeping.html>)
 - HS season is compressed
 - Keep it simple – key drills that the kids like – need lots of repetition
- What should we be doing for the kids now?
 - Must be able to possess, receive and pass the ball – to send the ball where they want it to go – with power, accuracy
 - Good technique – can’t necessarily get all the kids on the team to the same level
 - Ability to play with their head up, viewing the field
 - Movement without the ball, move to space “off the ball”
 - AVHS boys like to use the outside third of the field – more space, spread the D, keep away from the other team’s best players (who are often placed in center positions)
 - Shooting – can’t do that enough – also really involves the keepers in the practice
 - Heads-up, vision, see the field
 - There are gender differences
- First few practices – how do we assess players strengths/weaknesses?
 - Lots of ball skills drills to see how they do
 - Then passing drills
 - See what their technical strengths are – play to strengths, work on weaknesses
 - Set the tone for the year – what do you want them to accomplish, what do you want them to get better at
 - Plan short drills – switch it up – make practice very active
 - Body control is important – running, jumping – play tag with U11/U12 for example
 - Watch the kids during the practice – as soon as they start to lose interest, switch it up
 - Overplan the practice – 7,8,9 drills – watch how it’s going and switch quickly
 - Practice has to be fun!

- Be ready to change
- Assessing quality is hard – kids show differently on different days and in different situations
- Put kids in different positions on the field – let the team concept dictate
- Conditioning – how, what age?
 - Plan your practices well so there is no standing/lines
 - Keep them active and that builds in great conditioning
 - “trick” them into conditioning by planning lots of fun, fast drills where everyone is moving
 - HS – conditioning is primarily pre-season – agility, running – but less during the regular season – pre-season running
 - Younger kids don’t need running, but running with the ball in the context of the practice
 - Soccer is more about – burst, jog, burst, jog – intervals, cuts, etc.
 - In drills – speed of play – how do you challenge players to go through a drill at game speed? – planning
 - In drills – jog back, don’t walk back
 - Drills – passing and moving all the time
- Conditioning – at end or at beginning?
 - Want them to concentrate on the drills, so don’t exhaust them too early in the practice
 - If they are too tired they can’t focus on their technique
 - Agility at the beginning is a good warm-up to prevent injuries
 - In games, teams break down when they are tired, not mentally focused – so conditioning at the end can simulate that
 - But... conditioning at the beginning can also simulate getting into drills when already tired
 - Mix it up and gauge based on your team
- Discipline – how do you deal with it?
 - Conversation – positive leaders, negative leaders, followers
 - Discuss this with the kid – you need their help for the team to have success
 - Find the natural leaders – help them to understand their role
 - Being able to focus and leadership – these are life skills, not just sports or soccer skills
 - Identify what the issues are, what are the specific behaviors you want to have them change
 - You can stand close to them, monitor – sometimes just standing near the offender changes their behavior

- Ask yourself – why is the kid here? Do they want to play? Or were they just signed up by a parent?
- Catch them doing something good – don't let all the interactions be negative
- Consistency
- Coaches should learn from their own mistakes
- Subbing – when they come off the field, tell them what they did well and what they need to improve
- Last resort – they may need to go
- Player leadership – at younger teams do you have captains?
 - Younger – rotate captains
 - Older – can choose dedicated captains
 - HS – regularly meet with the captains
 - How do you institutionalize a team culture for your team? That is up to the coach. But the players must help “drive the bus”.
 - Set the tone in the first few practices – get the players to buy in
- On field communication – do you set expectations for how players talk to each other?
 - “negative” peer pressure
 - Coach needs to set that expectation. Let them know what is or is not appropriate.
 - Different for boys and girls
 - Need to tell the players what you expect, what you want them to say, what words/terms you want them to use
 - Use consistent language, be on the same page
 - The negative stuff may happen – then ask them afterwards how they could do it differently
 - Electronic stuff – texting, facebook or other messages away from the team structure – not appropriate and needs to be dealt with
 - Positive team communication on the field
 - The player always knows when they made a mistake – one kid doesn't lose a game – it takes a team effort either way
 - Promote the team concept over individual
 - Fair and consistent treatment by the coach
- How do you teach the kids to pass the ball?
 - Technique
 - Repetition – kicking the ball against a wall
 - You can talk about it all day, but they need to “feel” it
 - Keeper – bounce and catch the ball off a wall
 - Repetition is the key

- In drills – vary your pairings
- Allow different kids to take free kicks in games
- How do we teach transition between attack/defense?
 - Four corners drill with goals in opposite corners – can score in either goal so can switch field
(one example is <http://www.eteamz.com/soccer/pills/pill038.htm> - can also modify to be goals to kick through)
 - 3 team drill – 3rd team switches in on score – look wide to move the ball



(one example from <http://www.bjb.org/soccer/coachinfo/drills/gameplay.html>)

4v4v4 + transition - Three teams of 4 (A, B, C) and two keepers (X, Y). Team A attacks against keeper Y. If they score, they then quickly try to attack keeper X. At this time, team B leaves the field and takes the place of team C who were the supporting players on the endlines, supporting both teams. The supporting players support for both teams and can move along the end line. They are limited to one touch on the ball. Have an ample supply of balls ready in each net. After scoring a goal, attacking players look to play quickly before the other team has a chance to come on and get organized. (there are many variations of this drill, which is often called "Get Out of Here")

- End zone game – team can score in either end zone, point scored by scoring in 1 end zone, then turning around and immediately scoring in the other end zone – must transition fast – can change to chip into end zone (maybe to a keeper who catches and distributes)
(one example is <http://www.eteamz.com/soccer/pills/pill012.htm>)
- End player drill – complete pass to teammate on end line and switch with that player – must complete pass on both ends to score

(one example from <http://www.bjb.org/soccer/coachinfo/drills/Transition to D prac plan.txt>)

**Corners transition game

40x20 grid, 6v6 - 4v4 inside grid w/ 1 target player outside each corner (on short side) (players from same team at opposite corners). Play 4v4. Score by completing pass to target player. Passer and player from same team switch on completed pass (corner player must receive ball outside of the grid). Cannot score at the same corner twice in a row.

coaching points: D must quickly react to pass and change in direction, immediate pressure on the ball, 2nd D cut off passing lanes, 3rd D removes other attacking options.

- 6v6 40yd length field with halfway line – whole team must cross halfway line before shot
- Speed of play – have a mini-tournament
 - **2v2 contest (many, many variations!)
 - 1. 10x15 grids, players in pairs
 - 2. play 2v2 to pugg or cone goals on all grids
 - 3. play 2 min. winning team moves up a grid, losing team moves down a grid. tie is broken by rock/paper/scissors
 - 4. play 3-4 rounds. Team that wins on grid 1 in last round is the overall winner.
 - coaching points: Heads up, Passing pace and accuracy, Communicate, Move toward ball to receive, Check away/to ball, Diagonal pass on ground
- How do we encourage movement off the ball?
 - 6v3 game – start with passive D to work possession, then blow whistle for active D – or 7v3
 - (HS boys like to play to outside of field – if other team picks up on this then play ball to strikers, the D collapses and that opens up the wings)
 - How do we make them move?
 - Grid of squares game – after pass must move to a different adjacent square
 - Body position and rule of 3 – must receive a ball in a way I can see 2 teammates
 - Player moves to be the 2nd or 3rd for their teammate
 - After shot, run and touch the goalpost – just get them into the habit of moving after a kick
 - Different color cones – after pass must move to a different color cone
- Can follow up with Keith Randa (AVHS girls varsity coach – Keith.Randa@district196.org) or Chris Lee (AVHS boys asst coach and keeper coach – Christopher.Lee@district196.org) for any questions/drills – but HS coaches cannot have direct contact with their players in the off season (except for black-out dates)