



Mass Youth Soccer Skills Academy

U11 Week 9 – Small groups defending

Main Coaching Points:

- 1st defender should bend run to “take away” (block the path to) the goal, or force the ball in the direction of the 2nd defender
- The 1st defender should remember to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance, try to win ball off first touch of opponent, delay progress of opponent by jockeying the player with the ball, and try to force them out of play and in the direction of the 2nd defender
- Once opponent goes where the defender wants them to go, they should tackle with front foot, not back foot
- 1st defender says “I have ball”, 2nd says “force it left/right”
- Make sure that the 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker ASAP
- 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is forcing the attacker to
- 2nd defender tells 1st defender which way to push attacker and gets ready to step towards the second attacker
- Once the ball is passed to the 2nd attacker, the defenders’ roles change, and the previous 1st defender needs to drop off and cover (now serving as 2nd defender)

- 1.) **Pressure-Cover Warm-up** ---3 Players per ball in open space. Player A and Player B, about 8-10 yards apart, pass the ball back and forth. Player C is located about 10 yards away from Players A & B. After 3-4 passes between Players A & B, Player A passes the ball to Player C. While the ball is traveling, Player B approaches Player C to apply pressure to the ball; at the same time, Player A provides appropriate cover to Player B (positions herself behind and at an angle to Player B). Player C attempts to split Players A & B with a 1 touch pass. Repeat many times, changing the roles of the 3 players. *(10 minutes)*
- 2.) **2 vs. 2 To Two Small Goals**---In 15 x 20 yard grids, with small goals on each end line, play 2v2 matches. Rotate teams to different fields. *(20 minutes)*
- 3.) **Small Sided Scrimmage**---Create fields based on playing numbers and size of playing area. Reinforce 1st and 2nd defenders technique and their decision making. *(25 minute)*
- 4.) **Cool down and Review**---Ask players to teach you the technical coaching points to insure complete understanding in the group. *(5 minutes)*

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Optional Activities

- 1.) **3v3 to End Lines**---Play 3v3 game. Teams score by dribbling across opposing end line. Focus on 1st and 2nd defenders.
- 2.) **3v3 Six Goal Game**---In a 20yd x 25yd grid with 3 small goals on each 25 yd end line (field is wider than it is long), play a 3v3 game. The midfield line is the restraining line (off sides line). Each team of 3 attempts to score in one of the 3 goals opposite them. Focus on 1st and 2nd defenders.