



New Ball Method

Under 5, Under 6 & Under 7 Leagues

Rationale

The idea behind the 'new ball method' is to keep the flow of the game constant and increase the number of ball touches by all the players. The 'new ball method' eliminates restarts such as throw-ins and corner kicks and keeps the ball in play continuously. Restarts might be important to the game results at the highest level of play, but they have no relevance or developmental benefits at the U5, U6 and U7 level. Since the objective of the Youth Development Program is to teach players to dribble, every aspect of the traditional game that reduces the opportunity to dribble is removed. The basic principle of this method is that, when a ball goes out of bounds, the coach kicks a new ball into play. Experiments with this method, conducted at Richmond Hill SA in 2001/02, found that the players caught on to the method very quickly and loved it. The parents and coaches at Richmond Hill embraced the concept as soon as they witnessed it first hand. The experiments also proved that, on average, players' ball touches increased two and threefold. This was determined by counting the number of touches per player under the traditional rules and comparing to the number of touches under the 'new ball method'. Tracking the amount of actual playing time revealed that the ball was in play for only 45% of the time under the traditional rules, and almost 100% of the time under the 'new ball method'.

Implementation

1 coach per half will be responsible for playing balls into field when the ball goes out of bounds. All the balls should be collected together, in the outside middle of the field, (ie. Coach should NOT be on field .) Whenever a ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells BALL and plays a ball into the field of play. The ball should be played on the ground and NOT in the air. Balls should be distributed by coach in an even manner where the player receiving the ball can not just walk right in and score. Try and distribute the following ways:

1. First player to call for ball or come to ball.



2. Team A is beating Team B pretty bad. Try to play the ball into Team B in an attacking spot.
3. Player X is not involved into the game, try and get player X the ball.

Benefits for your child

1. Play with New Ball Method equates to almost 100% play during the game.
2. More touches on the ball for your child. The single most important developmental tool.
3. Concentration on Technical Skill and Not Tactical.
4. No more standing around for 2-3 minutes while your child gets "lined up."
5. This method will speed up the game, which will produce more goals and more excitement.