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**USC Travel Soccer Fall 2020**  
**Week #7 Practice Plan**  
**Topic: Individual Attack & Defense (1v1 tactics)**



The 1 v 1 match-up is the starting point for introducing “**tactics**” with young players. **Tactics deal with decision-making – what to do, when to do it, where to position, etc!** Even though soccer is a team game, each match can be broken down into a series of 1 vs 1 mini games – the player with the ball (attacker) versus the opponent (defender) responsible for marking her/him. Players must be able to successfully compete in these situations.

## Coaching Points of Emphasis --- 1v1 situations

### Attacker

1. **Protect the ball from opponent**



**Player (green jersey) shields the ball with his body to maintain possession**

2. **Turn with ball to face defender.** The attacker can gain the advantage if he/she turns to face the opponent’s goal. She/he must first create space (*separate from the defender*) in which to turn

3. **Attack (dribble) at speed.** Do not delay, as additional defenders will quickly withdraw to a position goal-side of the ball.
4. **Bypass defender via the pass or dribble**

## **Defender**

1. **Approach to the ball**

Quickly close the distance to the ball. In the sport of soccer "*space equals time*". The less space allowed an opponent, the less time he or she will have to make decisions and play the ball.

2. **Proper defensive posture**

Assume a slightly crouched posture with low center of gravity for balance and maximum body control. Position feet approximately shoulder-width apart in a staggered stance with one slightly forward of the other.

3. **Delay/Contain**

Channel the attacker into area where space is limited (toward the sideline or into a covering teammate).

4. **Tackle the ball**

At the opportune moment tackle the ball with power and determination.

## **SUGGESTED PRACTICE PLAN (90-minute session)**

### **Warm-up: Dribble Freeze Tag (10 minutes)**

*Dribbling is an essential skill in 1v1 situations. The suggested warm-up utilizes a dribbling "fun game".*

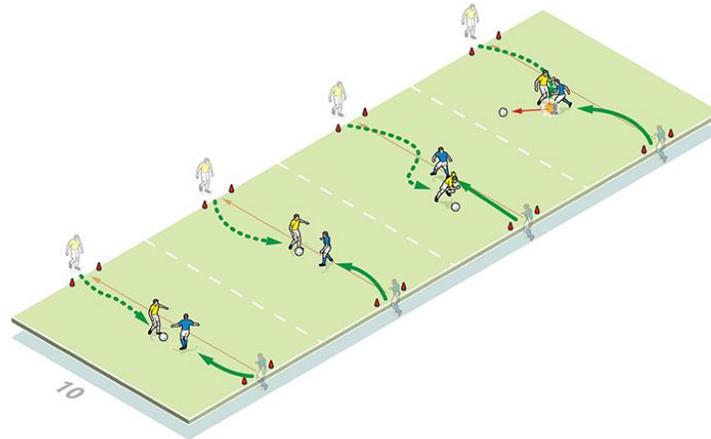
Play within the penalty area of a regulation field. To begin, designate 2 players as "chasers", who position outside the area without balls. All remaining "free" players station within the area, each with a ball. To begin, the "free" players dribble randomly within the area. On the coach command the 2 chasers enter the area and attempt to tag the free players, who must dribble a ball while trying to evade the chasers. A dribbler who is tagged is considered "frozen" and must sit on his or her ball. Free players can release "frozen" teammates by dribbling close and touching them on the shoulder. Continue the game for 3 minutes or until all players are frozen, whichever comes first. Repeat the game several times, with different chasers for each game.

## Progress to....

### 1v1 warm-up (10 minutes)

*We used this exercise in a previous session and it is appropriate for 1v1*

Players pair with a partner in each 15×10-yard channel (see illustration below). Partners position at opposing ends of the channel – to begin one has a ball. The player with ball passes to his/her partner and immediately closes the space to challenge. This is a warm-up --- so the defending player applies only passive pressure (50%) and does not actually attempt to win the ball. He/she merely “shadows” the dribbler’s movements to the end line of the channel. Partners return to their original starting positions and repeat after switching roles. Repeat several times with each player taking several turns as the attacker.



## Progress to....

### 1 v 1 Training Exercises (total of 40-50 minutes)

\*\*\* Choose several of the following exercises designed to reinforce proper execution of attacking and defending principles in 1v1 situation. The exercises can be adapted to virtually all ages and ability levels. Coaches can impose restrictions to create varying degrees of difficulty within the same drill.

*Keep in mind that 1v1 exercises are typically very physically demanding, so kids will need brief rest between exercises*

## #1. One (1) v One (1) to a Central Goal

Players pair with a partner for competition. Mark a 15-yard square playing area for each pair. Use discs or cones to represent a common 2-yard wide goal in the center of the area. Partners compete 1 v 1 within the area and score by passing or dribbling the ball through either side of the common goal. Change of possession occurs when the defending player steals the ball, after a goal is scored, or when the ball travels out of the area. Play is continuous - players reverse roles immediately with each change of possession. Play a series of 45-second games with 30-45 seconds rest between games. Player scoring the most points wins. **The exercise emphasizes both attacking and defending principles of the 1v1 match-up.**

## #2. Penetrate to the End Line (1v1)



Divide the team into 2 groups of equal numbers. Use markers to create a 25-yard long by 15-yard wide field channel. Teams position on opposite end lines facing one another. Each player pairs with an opponent on the opposite team for 1 v 1 competition.

To begin, player A, with the ball, passes to his/her partner/opponent positioned on the opposite end line, and immediately moves forward to play as a defender. The player receiving the ball attempts to score a point by dribbling past the defender and crossing the end line with control of the ball. After a score, change of possession, or when the ball travels out of the field area, both players return to their respective end lines and the next pair go. Partners alternate playing as the defender and attacker. Award 1 point for each score. The team scoring the most points wins the match.

### #3. One (1) v One (1) to Full Goal

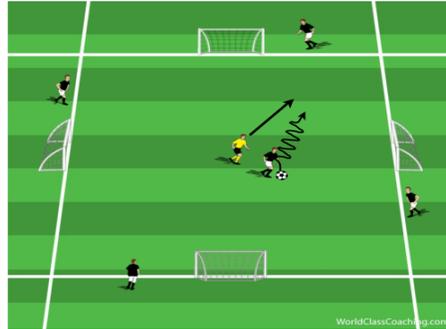


Divide the team into 2 groups of equal numbers. Play on  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a regulation field ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of field for younger players) with a regulation goal centered on the end line. Teams position on opposite sides of the center circle facing the goal. Each player pairs with a partner on the opposite team for 1 v 1 competition. The coach acts as a “server”, and positions in the center circle with a supply of balls. To begin, the coach passes a ball directly towards goal (**see illustration above**). **Partners** immediately sprint forward and attempt to gain possession of the ball. Whichever player gains possession attempts to score, his/her partner defends. Play until a shot on goal, the ball goes out of bounds, or a goal is scored.

### #4. One (1) v One (1) in the Penalty Area

Players pair with teammate for 1v1 competition within the penalty area. Position a regulation goal on the end line and neutral goalkeeper in goal. The coach (server) positions at the top of the penalty area with a supply of balls. To begin, 2 players station within the penalty area. The coach initiates play by kicking a ball into the area where players vie for possession. The player that wins the ball attempts to score, his/her opponent defends. Roles immediately switch upon change of possession. After a shot on goal, ball out of bounds, or a goal scored the coach immediately plays another ball into the area and players again compete 1v1. Repeat for 1 more ball served into the area (total of 3 balls played per pair). After the 3<sup>rd</sup> ball has been played a different pair of players enter the area and compete 1v1.

## #5. Four Goal 1 v 1 Game



This exercise provides the attacking player with 2 scoring options (can score in 2 goals), which increases difficulty for the defending player. Players pair with a partner for 1 v1 competition. Play within a 25-yard square area with a small goal (3 yards wide) at the center of each sideline. Each player must defend 2 goals and can score in either of the opponent's goals. To begin, partners position at opposite ends of the field. The coach passes a ball into the center of the area and partners compete for possession. Whichever player wins the ball attempts to score, the partner defends. Points are scored by passing the ball thru an opponent's goal. Play until a point is scored, the ball leaves the area, or 45 seconds, whichever comes first. Then repeat with a different pair of players.

**Progress to.....**

## #6. Multiple Goal Game

Play within a 40-yard square area. Organize 2 teams of equal numbers. Use discs or cones to represent 8 mini-goals, each 2 yards wide, spaced randomly throughout the field area at different angles. One ball required per game (have extra balls nearby in case ball is kicked away). Goals are scored by dribbling or passing the ball through either side of a mini-goal. Play is continuous and does not stop with a goal scored. Team scoring the most goals wins the game.

## **CONCLUDING EXERCISE: SMALL-SIDED GAMES:**

Form teams of 3 (or 4) players each. Outline a playing area of 20 by 25 yards for each game. Position a small goal (4 yards wide) at the midpoint of each end line. Do not use goalkeepers (GK's can play as field players to get practice with their foot skills). **Require strict marking of opponents to create 1v1 situations all over the**

**field.** Otherwise, regular soccer rules in effect. Goals are scored by passing the ball on the ground thru the opponent's goal. Team scoring the most goals wins the game.

**COOL DOWN: Jog, stretch, review important points of the session.**