

The Novice Coach: An Introduction to Coaching Youth Soccer

Presented by US Youth Soccer

The Novice Coach offers a wide range of activities that volunteer coaches can use with their team. Divided into three sections, it shows age appropriate exercises and the natural progression children go through as they grow as people and players. The DVD presents two different coaches working with young players in an effort to show that although coaches may have different personalities and coaching styles both can be successful with the kids.

The three sections:

1. **U6** promotes simple coordination movements and games that capture the Childs' imagination. The ball is involved in almost every exercise, but not always with the feet. The coach tries to be more of an activity leader and often engages the players in the decision making process. A nice phrase the coaches often used, "*I can do this, can you*". Attention span is limited so it is necessary to keep explanation brief and to have several fun little games for players to enjoy. 3 v 3 is the final game.

Some of the Activities are:

- Do this, Do That
- Simon Says
- Battleships
- Red Light Green Light
- Body Part Dribble

2. **U8** builds on the coordination movements developed in the U6 section. Now the focus is almost entirely on dribbling games. The Coach still needs to interact with his/her players, but the ball is the central focus of training. There are a number of games in this section that are core pieces of the MYSA curriculum for the U8 program in MA. There are a few games that also introduce passing, but the approach is more discovery method than actual technical training. Show and explain briefly, but allow the exercise to teach the players on their own. 4v4 is the recommended game.

Some of the Activities are:

- Math Dribble
- Pac Man
- Hospital Tag
- Freeze Tag
- Golden Gates
- Soccer Marbles

3. **U10** is the culmination of the DVD. It offers more dynamic exercises for training players, suggestions on how to position yourself (as a coach) to observe the entire group, small group exercises that move from simple to complex while promoting

Fair Play. Tactics are very limited (as they should be) to “we all go up & down the field together” and “Back each other up”. The suggested game is 6 v6.

Some of the Activities are:

- Knockout
- Musical Balls
- Junkyard Soccer
- Bull Dogs
- Get out of Here!

Summary: The Novice Coach is a very useful DVD that has a few flaws. Mass Youth Soccer recommends kick-ins’ through U8 (I agree with them), but you see coaches on the DVD stopping play and explaining how to throw the ball in. At another point the coach calls a foul. Again, unless there is a blatant foul let the play continue. “The Game is the Greatest Teacher” and kids will learn the rules and various aspects of the game as time goes on. Let them play! Having said that, the DVD offers very good exercises with clear presentations. The relaxed, but enthusiastic way the coaches present themselves is a very good model for a Novice Coach, or any experienced coach dealing with young players, to emulate.

Highly Recommend for U10 and below!

Available at Cary Memorial Library

[DVD 796.334 NOVICE](#)