



GOAL:	Improve preventing the opponent from building up in their own half - 1				AGE GROUP
PLAYER ACTIONS	Protect the goal, Steal the ball, Pressure, Cover & Balance				U11/U12
KEY QUALITIES	Make decisions, Focus, Optimal physical abilities				
MOMENT	Defending	DURATION	60 min	PLAYERS	16
					9v9

1st PLAY PHASE (Intentional Free Play): 4v4 to Goal | **DURATION: 20 min -- INTERVALS: 3 -- ACTIVITY: 5 min -- REST: 1.5 min**



OBJECTIVE: To regain the ball in the opponent's half.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect the goal, Steal the ball, Pressure/Cover and Balance.

ORGANIZATION: In a 9v9 field set up two 22Wx35L fields with a small goal at each end. Play 1v1, 2v1, up to 4v4. Play 3 rounds for a total of 20 minutes. Play with kick-ins and dribble-ins when the ball goes out of bounds.

KEY WORDS: Shut the opening, Angle, Speed, Distance of approach and Types of Tackle - Poke or Block.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1. What should you do to block the way to the goal? 2. Who pressures the ball? 3. When is a good time to steal the ball?

ANSWERS: 1. Get in front of the ball to protect the goal - 2. The defender closest to the ball - 3. When the defender is close enough to tackle it or poke it.

Note – First break, the coach asks questions to the players, players do not answer them but play to discover the answers. Second break, the coach asks questions and players will answer them.

PRACTICE (Core Activity): 5v6 to goal & an End Zone | **DURATION: 20 min -- INTERVALS: 3 -- ACTIVITY: 5 min -- REST: 1.5 min**



OBJECTIVE: To regain the ball closer to the opponent's goal.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect the goal, Steal the ball, Pressure/Cover and Balance.

ORGANIZATION: In the attacking half of a 9v9 field, set up a 50Wx44L field with a regular goal and an End Zone. The 5 Blue defenders score in the regular goal, Red team scores by dribbling into the end zone or passing to a teammate entering the end zone. Rotate players every round.

KEY WORDS: Shut the opening, Angle, Speed, Distance of approach and Types of Tackle - Poke or Block.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1. Who should step up to protect the goal? 2. What can the defender in front of the ball do? 3. How will the other defenders close the openings?

ANSWERS: 1. The closest defender to the ball - 2. Pressure the attacker and try to steal the ball - 3. By providing cover and balance.

Note: Switch to the Less Challenging activity if it is too difficult or to the More Challenging if it is too easy.

PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 7v6 to Goal & an End Zone | **DURATION: 20 min -- INTERVALS: 3 -- ACTIVITY: 5 min -- REST: 1.5 min**



OBJECTIVE: To regain the ball closer to the opponent's goal.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect the goal, Steal the ball, Pressure/Cover and Balance.

ORGANIZATION: In the attacking half of a 9v9 field, set up a 50Wx44L field with a regular goal and an End Zone. The 5 Blue defenders score in the regular goal, Red team scores by dribbling into the end zone or passing to a teammate entering the end zone. Rotate players every round.

KEY WORDS: Shut the opening, Angle, Speed, Distance of approach and Types of Tackle - Poke or Block.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1. What should you do to block the way to the goal? 2. Who pressures the ball? 3. When is a good time to steal the ball? 4. Who provides cover?

ANSWERS: 1. Get in front of the ball to protect the goal - 2. The defender closest to the ball - 3. When I am close enough to tackle it or poke it - 4. The Defenders who are behind the defender pressing the ball.

Note: Switch to this activity if the Core is too difficult for the players.

2nd. PLAY PHASE: The Game – 8v8 (GK+7v7+GK) | **DURATION: 20 min -- INTERVALS: 2 -- ACTIVITY: 8 min -- REST: 2 min**



OBJECTIVE: To regain the ball closer to the opponent's goal.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect the goal, Steal the ball, Pressure/Cover and Balance.

ORGANIZATION: In a 9v9 field (50Wx80L) play 9v9. The Blue team will play in a 1-2-3-2 formation. The Red team will play in 1-3-3-1.

KEY WORDS: Shut the opening, Angle, Speed, Distance of approach and Types of Tackle - Poke or Block.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1. How can we prevent the opponent from playing forward? 2. What can the defender in front of the ball do? 3. How will the other defenders close the openings?

ANSWERS: 1. The closest defender to the ball gets in front of the ball to protect the goal - 2. Pressure the attacker and try to steal the ball - 3. By providing cover and balance.

Note: All Laws of the game and US Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDI) are in effect.