



# CORNER KICKS

UNITED...WE CAN DEVELOP THE FUTURE OF THE GAME

## MANITOBA SOCCER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2010

Welcome to the Manitoba Soccer Association quarterly newsletter Summer Edition. The MSA will include news on players, coaches, referees, special events and feature stories. We hope you find this newsletter informative and enjoy reading it. If you have any suggestions or comments please email the office at [mbsoccer@manitobasoccer.ca](mailto:mbsoccer@manitobasoccer.ca) with subject: corner kicks.

### Inside this issue:

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Home                | 1    |
| Player Development  | 2, 3 |
| Coach Development   | 4    |
| Referee Development | 5    |
| Photo Page          | 6    |



### REMINDERS

- April 6—25, 2010  
15th Annual Mini World Cup
- April 26—May 2, 2010 Soccer Coaches Week
- April 26, 2010  
MSA Referee Fitness Test
- April 28, 2010  
MSA Referee Fitness Test
- May 3, 2010  
Youth Provincial Championship Entry deadline
- May 12, 2010  
MSA Board Meeting



### No World Cup Officials Added

French soccer player Thierry Henry's illegal handling of the ball, which led to a goal in a November 18, 2009, World Cup qualification game against Ireland, resulted in FIFA meeting to discuss using additional assistant referees at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. But the FIFA executive committee announced December 2 that no change would be made. FIFA President Sepp Blatter said there wasn't enough time to use a new system.

### Mbombela Stadium (FIFA.com)

The Mbombela Stadium is one of the newly-built stadia for the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa and it takes its name from the local municipality which incorporates the city of Nelspruit. Mbombela is siSwati (one of the 11 official languages in South Africa) and literally means 'many people together in a small space.'

The stadium, with a capacity of 46,000 is located in the city of Nelspruit in Mpumalanga Province. It is situated approximately seven kilometers from the city centre and 12 kilometers from the nearby Kruger-Mpumalanga Airport. The ground also enjoys a close proximity to various game parks, giving spectators the opportunity to see the wildlife during rest days.

The Mbombela comes as a welcome addition to football life in Nelspruit, and will leave a legacy of the beautiful game for all the people of Mpumalanga. Before the Stadium's construction, Nelspruit had no top football venue to host international matches.

### Green Point Stadium (FIFA.com)

One of the most artistic football venues in South Africa, the newly-built Green Point Stadium is situated in one of the much sought-after areas in the city of Cape Town. Green Point Stadium is one of the two semi-final venues for the FIFA World Cup.

This multi-purpose venue is also going to be used to stage major events and concerts. Fans will be a stone's throw away from the ocean and the mountains of Cape Town will also provide the backdrop for matches. The location is ideal as it is a short walk from the transportation hub of the city. The new stadium has been partly built on land that was previously used as a golf course.

The stadium, which has an exterior that is covered with noise-reducing cladding has a capacity of 70,000. The Green Point Common, on which the new 2010 stadium is built, was originally much larger than what now remains and included most the land between the sea and Signal Hill, stretching from the city centre towards Sea Point.



# Player Development

## 5 Crucial Tips for First-Time Soccer Coaches (Ohioclubsoccer.com)

The start of the soccer season draws upwards of 19 million players to the fields—many for the first time. Among these soccer warriors are the moms and dads that volunteer to serve as coaches. These well-intended surrogates, many with no soccer or coaching experience, are central to the success of the season. Here are five crucial tips for first-time soccer coaches.

1. **Team Meeting:** Hold a team meeting with the parents. This is an important step to establishing dialogue with the team. You'll figure out straight away who will be your allies and who may become troubling families. During this meeting, you must communicate your expectations for the season. Explain that the kids are your central focus and that the goal is to make the season as fun and as development as possible. The goal is to develop players. Winning or losing just happens to be a part of this development, but it is never the goal. Since you are only one person, ask for assistant coaches. These people fulfill the important roles that will otherwise distract you from coaching; tying shoelaces, blowing noses and holding a hand for a bump or bruise. Finally, before you leave, gather the best contact information for each family as you will encounter many different situations including separation and divorce.

2. **Plan your Sessions:** Inexperience in the sport either as a player or as a coach means that you have to be more prepared for your sessions. Even experienced soccer players may be new to coaching young players. It is a different dynamic of holding the attention of young players that may or may not want to be at practice. While preparing:

### Focus on the basics;

Don't be afraid to experiment if your plan isn't working;

Don't form lines. Lines are boring, allowing only one player at a time to participate will ensure players lose interest;

Have a ball for every player. Soccer is an amazing sport that everyone can play at once to grow and develop. One ball per player is critical;

Talk for 30 seconds or less to young players. Quick short instructions are best;

Give frequent water breaks. This allows you to change the activity and keep the kids interest fresh;

Elevate your mind to the kids level and talk about the game in terms they'll understand. Use references to superheroes or relevant cartoon characters to illustrate your points. You can't imagine the progress when you put the game on their level.

3. **Praise –not criticize:** Invest some time into getting to know your players personally. It will pay dividends in motivating them. Kids at younger ages respond to positive enforcement at far greater levels than negative criticism. Use the "sandwich" technique when correcting an issue: 1 compliment, 1 critique finalized with 1 compliment. Kids will learn and grow at their own pace. Exercise patience in their skill development.

4. **Make it Fun:** If you make it fun, the kids will learn and grow. Why? If your players love soccer, they'll play it in the backyard with mom and dad and sister and brother. This is where the real development happens-in the backyard. Imagine how each player will want to show off their new move each week. As a coach, be as enthusiastic and positive as possible and you'll see the kids faces light up. Turn them onto the game. You'll be amazed at the results.

5. **End of Season Party:** Hold an end of season party and recognize each player with a "funny award". This would include things like "most enthusiastic", but should never include "Best Player" which only pleases one player and disappoints the rest. You (and the players) will find it extremely rewarding to see first hand the development over the course of the season. If the kids have had fun and you've turned them onto the game of soccer, you have successfully completed your job as a coach.

Congratulations on your first (of many) successful soccer seasons!



# Player Development

## Young Soccer Players & the Stages of Learning (Ohioclubsoccer.com)

When a new skill is learned there are three stages of the development, the mental, practice and automatic stage. Throughout these three stages your input into the learning cycle will differ according to the phase the player is in.

### The Mental Stage

When a player first learns a new skill their key goal is to understand what to do to perform the technique correctly. They draw upon all of their awareness to search for information to map the correct technique.

It's more about internalizing "mentally" the physical technique of what's to be done. The mental map is made from previous activities, similar actions and looks, visual input as the player attempts to make neural connections so that their physical body can perform.

### Coaching during the Mental Stage

Patience is the key. Some players will make the connections a lot quicker and will be able to perform the technique sooner than others. Only key information should be given to the players at this stage as there is a tendency for player to become overwhelmed with information if they are given too much instruction. Visual indicators are very important during this development phase, which is why we encourage you to demonstrate new techniques and skills.

### The Practice Stage

The next phase of mastering a technique is to have a go. There is some overlap with the mental stage here as the players will be having a go at the technique, but they will be making mental connections as the neural paths start to give information too. Refinement is the key here and so the more opportunities that the players have to execute the skill the better.

As players practice the errors they make, they should start to reduce over time as the sensory, visual and touch functions will start to give feedback to the players on how well they are performing the technique.

For example, when under 6's practice dribbling just keeping the ball close is a major battle, any adjustments they make can often lead to the ball being toe poked away even further!

But as the young players see the ball moving away from them, and make small jumpy movements to keep the ball under control, all of the feedback signals will be computing and assisting in their development.

### Coaching in the Practice Stage

Observation, accurate feedback, encouragement and praise are all key skills during this phase.

Very young players will need more feedback whereas youth players should be able to self analyze their performance, some well structured questions can also assist.

### The Automatic Stage

As practice continues so the players become far more proficient at the technique; this then frees up some mental capacity to take the learning even further. This is why some techniques lend themselves to a chaining type coaching method, or when using a functional phase practice and build it through to extended play. Players in the automatic stage know when they have made mistakes and also have the knowledge internally on how to put things right without much input from the coach. However, complacency can creep in, so too can over-analyzing a technique which can be harmful to performance.

### Coaching in the Automatic Stage

Rather than coaching specifics, the coaches duty now shifts to present more challenging situations to practice the technique and develop it into a full functioning skill.



# Coach Development

## FAQ's of Coaching by Tom Hart ([usyouthsoccer.org](http://usyouthsoccer.org))

### Question: I've played soccer all of my life-why would I need to attend a coaching clinic?

"Doing" is not the same as "teaching!" Having a playing background is very helpful when demonstrating skills but the ability to teach is the priority in coaching. A basic understanding of the psychological, social, and cognitive characteristics of our players allows for far greater opportunities than "do what I do" coaching.

### Question: What should a Coach Avoid?

Laps, Lines, & Lectures-First let's talk about "laps"-not the most original method of fitness training and one of the least effective for soccer players-better yet, play high intensity games with a ball that encourage "fast play" of short duration. A heck of a lot more fun than running laps! Lines-Name one line you enjoy waiting your turn. Since kindergarten we've been trained to "lineup." One of the reasons kids like to play soccer is the continuous action-let's not spoil the attraction of the sport by making them wait! Any longer than thirty seconds until their "turn" and you've lost them! Using game activities rather than "drills" creates a realistic approach to teaching soccer. Lectures? Brings up memories of school. Sitting. Listening. Passive. Non-participatory. Please! Our players come to play! Use the "Thirty Second Rule" - Quick, concise information and get them moving! You cannot improve your skills listening to someone talk about soccer!

A playing background while helpful if not necessary to coach effectively. The "want" to coach is probably the most important element. Knowledge of soccer is less important than your skill dealing with children. The role of a youth coach is that of a facilitator: Let the Game Teach!

### Question: How do I teach Strategy?

We do not teach algebra to first graders and we don't teach strategy to them either! Youth coaches who attempt to teach strategy or team tactics are doing so in the mistaken belief that it will help their team. Youth players must develop ball skills and individual play before they can grasp team concepts. The best planned strategy fails if a player lacks the skill necessary to play the game.



# Referee Development

## Is the Field Safe for Play? (Vince DeFranco)

It's Sunday morning. You wake up to head out to referee after a long night of steady rainfall, followed by a strong cold front coming through. It's happened to most officials. You think to yourself, "Do I really have to referee in this weather?" You get in your vehicle, drive to the complex and, upon going out to the field, you come across a surface that has you scratching your head, saying to yourself, "I can't believe the owner of the field hasn't closed it."

**The Challenge.** If you're doing mostly travel games or higher level competition, teams have gone a good distance to get to the game. They stand to be put at considerable expense both in time and money should the game get canceled due to poor field conditions. Regardless of the level, you must make a fair and accurate decision regarding a cancellation for the safety and enjoyment of the participants.

**Wet field.** On wet playing surfaces, it is imperative that players have enough traction so that when they make a cut, they don't slip and fall. When fields are muddy, not only should the players be wearing longer studs, so should the referee. If you cannot jog around the field to warm up without slipping, then how are the players going to be able to move safely at game time. On patches that are in poorer-than-average shape, you will find a good amount of standing water. Puddles are not reason alone to abandon a match, however location and size of puddles can affect your decision. If players cannot predict when they will be able to stop and plant their feet, they might pull muscles and twist ankles, which is not the safest field for them to be playing on. Standing water in one or both goal-mouths affects fairness. Abandonment should be a consideration. Water that has drained to the field edges might be a minor consideration.

Anthony Vasoli, a FIFA assistant referee, who frequently works top-level professional games in the U.S., says, "In order to determine if a drenched field of play is acceptable and safe, the following method works quite well: Take a soccer ball and drop it to the ground from the chest level on several locations on the field of play. If the ball does not bounce back up at all—merely splashing down or worse, floating-at several locations on the field, the field is probably too wet to play on safely."

Keep your assistants in mind, too—that is one reason to practice using the right-wing/left-back diagonal system. Since your assistants cannot vary their position like the referee can, you should be well-versed in how to operate effectively in a "reverse" diagonal, so they don't have to slog through the mud of the previous game.

**Hot weather.** Non-professional competition authorities may dictate mandatory water breaks in hot weather or they may shorten halves or take similar measures. What if no such authority exists? Use common sense—give players and your referee team the necessary means to hydrate. Don't forget to add time or stop the clock. Many leagues make judgments based on a heat index chart (combination of temperature and humidity), which is often color-coded in green, yellow and red.

**Cold weather.** When the weather is cold, how cold is too cold? Obviously if it is snowing and you can no longer see the markings, abandon. Or, if it has snowed but is not presently snowing, use brightly colored spray paint for critical markings. In general, games are played in the cold, but if the participants can no longer feel body parts, it's time to abandon. Again, many leagues consult a wind chill index (combination of outside temperature and wind). **Ice.** Icy fields are perhaps the most dangerous for all concerned. Starting, stopping and falling all present dangers. If yesterday's matches "chewed up" a grassy field and overnight temperatures froze the turf, do not play on a field with rough, jagged ridges.

**Wind.** Referees need to keep a few things in mind on windy days. As always, make certain portable goals are anchored securely. Can a free kick be taken without the ball rolling because of the wind? If that cannot happen (or you can't devise a workaround like tiny piles of sand), the game needs to be abandoned. **Dusk/fog.** If you have a match scheduled without lights, check what time the sun sets before you leave. Considering clouds, matches can typically be played from 10-30 minutes after sunset before you will need to abandon. Knowing that before the game, and knowing that the game could not play full halves, discuss shortening the halves with both team managers. If you must abandon the match due to insufficient daylight, include those details in the match report (time in the game of abandonment, score at the time, etc.). Knowing what competition rules say about abandonment will aid you in making an effective decision. If you can't tell the color difference between the teams' jerseys from halfway across the field (even though you won't be judging play from there), then the conditions are not adequate for the match to continue. Consider what type of sightlines your assistants have to put up with as well.



# Photo Memory Page



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