

BFSC U9-U10 Training Session #6: Individual Defending.

<u>Exercise</u>	<u>Environment</u>	<u>Description / Coach</u>
Knee tag	¼ field	<p>Players work in pairs (no soccer balls). This is a fun warm-up game that also highlights the posture and footwork essential to quality jockeying, a building block for defending. Partners stand arms' length away. Demonstrate with one group. Explain that the goal of the game is to tag one's partner on the knee as many times as possible during play. At the same time, one tries not to allow one's partner to tag her knees. Play for thirty seconds and then check scores and change partners.</p> <p>Coaching cues for the second round:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Players must adopt a crouched stance.2. To be able to move quickly, keep the weight on the front half of one's feet.3. Players should neither run away nor stand still, but rather constantly shift their feet to make it difficult for their partner to tag their knees.4. In the second and later rounds, compel players to alternate the knee that they tag on their partners. This restriction will create an advantage for players who adopt the closed stance that is central to proper jockeying.5. Demonstrate the utility of faking to jump to tag, which will also be useful in duels for the ball.
Jockey	20x20 yard grid	<p>Play four games, checking scores and changing partners with each restart.</p> <p>Begin a progression to introduce the basic concepts involved in individual defending. Players work in pairs along the endline of the grid with one ball for two people. The attacker is on the endline with the defender two yards away and facing the ball and the attacker. Explain that the ultimate goal of the session is to create opportunities to win the ball back. Footwork is critical to setting up tackles. Jockeying is the footwork used to set up the tackle. The attacking player will dribble slowly across the grid allowing the defending player to practice drop-stepping to stay goal-side (that is, between the ball and the endline). Emphasize that the attacking player is not trying to beat the defender at this point and the defender may not tackle. Here are more concepts to introduce into this exercise as the players get comfortable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The defender must learn to only "show" one foot to the attacker. That is, the foot work here is staggered and a drop-step is employed to remain in good tackling position. This will help drive the attacker to one side and make play more predictable and also prevent the attacker from playing the ball between

the defender's legs.

2. The defender's attention must be on the ball. Most fakes used by attackers involve body swerves or foot movements that do not affect the path of the ball. Defenders must learn to focus on the ball.
3. Defenders should adopt a semi-crouched approach to the ball. Standing upright slows reaction time and the bent approach increases focus as well.
4. Can the defender channel the attacker to one side only? Attackers are taught to cross the defender by attacking their lead foot, so defenders work to contain the ball and player and avoid being crossed. If they do get crossed, defenders must learn to switch their footwork to try to contain the ball on the other side.
5. Finally, pay careful attention to the spacing between the attacker and the defender. This is the most critical concept in jockeying. If the defender gets too close, the attacker can touch the ball beyond the defender and win the duel. If the defender is too far away, the attacker can look up and assess options (i.e. not enough pressure is being applied). A balance must be maintained.

Block tackle

20x20 yard grid

There are three types of tackle in soccer: Block, poke, and slide. Block tackling will be introduced here and slide tackling will be dealt with at a later date. Demonstrate using two players with a ball between them. Here are the basic cues for block tackling:

1. This tackle is typically used in tight space where it is possible to catch the ball on the foot of the attacker.
2. If the attacker is about to use her right foot to touch the ball, the defender must be faced up on the attacker and she should use her right foot to effect the tackle.
3. The tackle is made by trapping the ball between the attacker's foot and the defender's foot. The ankle of the tackling players must be locked (both to control the ball and also to avoid injury). In addition, the surface used to tackle is the inside, long surface of the foot. The heel should be just above the ground and the front of the foot needs to be held higher. This will prevent the ball rolling over the tackling foot.
4. The other cues for a sound tackle include: The distance between the tackling and standing foot should be smaller than the ball so that the ball cannot be pushed between the feet in the course of the tackle; the knee of the tackling foot should be pushed slightly forward. This will help trap the ball between the two feet of the tackler and the attacker and will prevent the ball from popping up in the air.

Controlled block tackle 20x20 yard grid

1v1 to a central cone goal 12x10 yard grids



3v3 to goals 20x25 yard fields

5. The final instruction is to “stay in the tackle.” The most common mistake in block tackling is that the defender walks through the tackle. It is critical that the tackler remain goal-side of both the attacker and the ball until the tackle is won.

Have players practice block tackling in pairs in a grid. The ball is placed between the players and one player says, “Go!”. The players then work to take a plant step and tackle. There is a tendency to swing the tackling foot at the ball and make a popping sound. However, swinging at the ball can create timing problems and will make it hard to disguise the tackle. The tackler should make a sharp, but controlled stab at the ball. The pairs should train the right foot for a minute and then the left foot for a minute. Give one-half of the players a ball. Players with balls dribble around the grid and those without a ball practice block tackling. Each time, the player with the ball walks through the tackle, allowing the defender to win the ball. Then the player who lost ball wins a ball off of another player. Play for two minutes, reminding players of the basic tenets of good tackling as outlined above.

Players work in pairs in 10x10 yard grids with a 2-yard central cone goal. Demonstrate with one pair. The attacking player starts on any part of the perimeter of the grid. She may score by dribbling through the central goal from either direction. Show the defender how to work to remain *goal-side* (between the attacker and the goal) of the attacker at all times and then remind the defender that her goal is to jockey and then block tackle the attacker. If the attacker scores, she give the ball to her partner, who restarts play from the perimeter. If the defender wins the ball, she must dribble to the perimeter then roles change and play restarts. Play for three minutes and then check scores. Assign new partners/grids and play a second and third round.

Play a standard 3v3 game to cone goals. Reinforce strong individual defending by awarding a point for a strong tackle and two points for a goal. After five minutes, just award a point for a goal and let the players play.