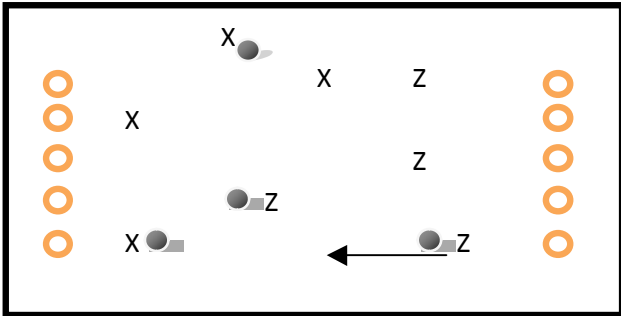


BFSC U11-U12 Training Session #2: Individual Defending.

<u>Exercise</u>	<u>Environment</u>	<u>Description / Coach</u>
Cone Stealers	25x30 yard grid	<p>Place two lines of 8-10 tall cones at opposite ends of the playing area. Divide the team into two groups (one in scrimmage vests). Introduce soccer balls so that there are ½ as many balls as total players in the game (balls should be divided evenly between the teams). Explain that this game is similar to “capture the flag” in that the goal is to use a ball to knock down the opposing team’s cones and then return them to one’s own team’s cone supply. As only half the players on the field have a ball at any given time, this is a good warm-up to prime players for a session on individual defending. Explain that the players with balls can knock down as many cones as possible (i.e. until they lose the ball) before carrying the cones back to their end and placing them in line with the remainder of the team’s cones. If one team captures all of the cones, that team wins the game. Otherwise, play for three minutes and then check to see which team has more cones.</p>
Jockey	20x20 yard grid	<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"> <li data-bbox="840 1104 1908 1282">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.</li> <li data-bbox="840 1282 1908 1390">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.</li> </ol>



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.

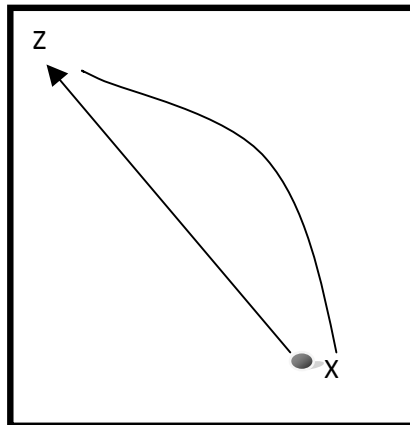
Work the pairs back and forth across the grid, being sure to integrate each of the above concepts into the habits of the defenders.

Place players in grids in groups of four. Two players begin on each end of the grid (in line). Put a ball supply on one end. This exercise is designed to introduce the precursor to jockeying, which is closing down. Through a demonstration, show that the player who starts with the ball begins the exercise by passing to the first player on the other end of the grid, simulating a turnover. The receiving player is the attacker and it is her goal to dribble over her partner's endline as quickly as possible after receiving. The defender takes the following steps to try to contain the attacker:

1. Adopt a bent run to pin the attacker to one side of the grid (it is useful to start the players in opposite corners of the grid to make the bent run concept easier to adopt). Explain that by limiting the attacker's options, the defender is making defending easier for her and for the entire team.
2. The size of the steps in closing down is very important. The first few steps should be longer with an eye toward closing the space quickly. As the defender draws within about five yards, she must shorten her steps to a chop. The reason for this is that the short steps allow her to adjust to changes in the angle and speed that the ball is travelling.
3. Once again, the spacing is critical here. If the defender adopts an improper angle of approach, the attacker will either not be under sufficient pressure (if the space remains more than 2-3 yards) or will be able to run past the defender, winning the duel.

Closing down

15x10 yard grids



4. Shift to jockeying. Once the defender has closed down the attacker, then the defender jockeys the attacker, remaining goal side and working to delay the ball.
5. Mentality. Explain that the defender is not allowed to tackle in this exercise. Typically players are discouraged by this restriction, so it is important to address the mentality required to be an accomplished defender. How long can the defender jockey and keep the ball in the grid? Have the defender count aloud the time she is able to delay the attacker and give her a point each successive time that she increases that time.

Block tackle

20x20 yard grid

At the end of each duel, the players change ends of the grid and the other pair play.

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.
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

Controlled block tackle	20x20 yard grid	<p>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.</p>
1v1 continuous	10x12 yard grids	<p>Build enough grids to accommodate four players in each grid. Create a ball supply on one end. As in the shutting down/jockeying exercise above, two players start on each end (in lines). The player with the ball passes to the first player on the other end of the grid and proceeds to shut down and jockey with an eye toward block tackling. Players earn points by dribbling over their opponent's endline. The duel lasts as long as the ball remains in the grid. At the conclusion of the duel, the players change ends and the resting players duel. Play for five minutes and then check scores to see who won in each grid.</p>
3v3 to goals	20x25 yard fields	<p>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.</p>