



**COACHING
SOCCER
WEEKLY** WITH
TOM MURA



Four Favorite Fun Warm-Ups



Presented by **WORLDCLASSCOACHING.com**

In this Episode I look at the warm-up phase of your training session. This is what sets the tone for your entire session to follow. Having the warm-up relate to the session is important. But maybe more importantly it must engage your players and get them as ready psychologically and emotionally just as much as it does physically and technically.



I know your team will enjoy these warm-up activities and you'll find that when you start your sessions the way I describe, your players are more prepared and engaged right from the start.

Fun Warm-Ups

The warm-up activity you choose is important to get your players mentally and physically ready for the session. Your players are usually coming from school or other activities and you need to get their attention and focus before they're ready to learn what you have to teach.

Fun warm-up games are a great way to engage players of any age. I think we sometimes forget that unless we're working with professional teams (and I doubt that anyone listen to this podcast is)we're coaching kids. These kids are playing soccer mostly because they enjoy it. The more they enjoy what they're doing the more eager they will be to listen and learn what you have to teach them.

Some of these games have names that might indicate to you that they are only for young players. I've used them with teams of every age from U8 to U18. I suggest that you use them with any team you work with.

I'm confident that your player will get as much out of them as mine do.

Stuck in the Mud



Rules

- One 'It' player
- Everyone else dribbling
- Stuck if your ball is tagged
- Unstuck by teammate
- Start with one 'It' player progress to more

Focus

- Always be moving
- Keep the ball close and under control
- Protect Ball
- Use the foot farthest from the defender
- Shield
- Face up
- Help teammates

Progressions

- Set time to get everyone stuck
- Work in pairs

Hospital Tag



Rules

- Everyone dribbles
- Everyone is 'It'
- Tag a player with your hand
- They have to hold that spot
- When tagged a third time they go to the 'Hospital'
- Perform five moves or physical exercise before returning

Variations

- Have players only tag shinguards
- Have players touch the ball

- Tagged player holds a certain part of the body
- Designate one or more 'It' players without a ball

Tag



Begin with basic game of tag – no soccer balls. One or more 'It' players hold a penny or scrimmage vest. The 'It' player tags other player with their hand. That player then becomes 'It'

Next, EVERY player has a ball – including 'It' players. All other rules are the same.

Then progress to having the 'It' players run without a ball. They try to touch the soccer ball of the dribblers with their foot. If they do then they get the ball and the other player gets the shirt.

You can progress this further by saying that the 'It' player has to TAKE the ball, not just touch it. This means that the players have to fight for possession even if there ball is touched away by the 'It' player.

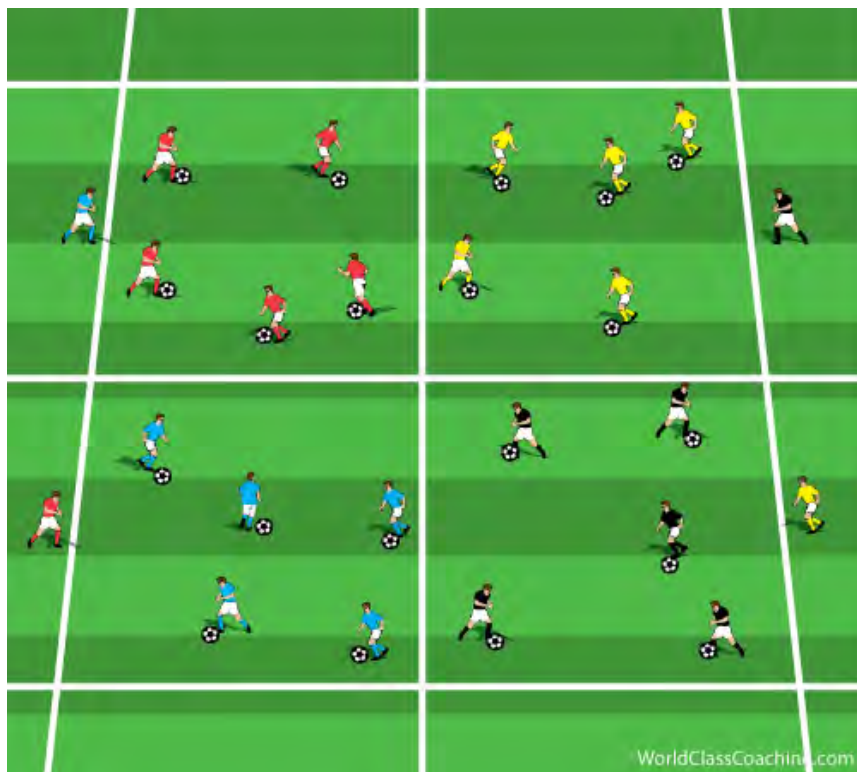
Possession Coaching Points

- Protect your ball
- Keep the ball away from the defender
- Use the farthest foot
- Bend your knees and move the ball farther away
- Keep the ball moving
- Look to turn into space
- Don't just run away
- Be strong on the ball

Defensive Coaching Points

- Work hard to win the ball
- Tough but Fair
- Give the ball back if accidentally foul dribbler

American Gladiators



Set-Up

Create two or more 10 to 15 yard grids. Six to eight players are on a team in each area. One player from each team is designated as the 'Gladiator'. On the coach's signal the 'Gladiators' enter the other team's area and try to knock all of the player's soccer balls out of the area. The team who lasts the longest wins that round. Play until one team has won certain number of rounds.

Stress of the the coaching points from the previous games that will help the players protect the ball as in the other games.

Variation

- When a player loses their ball they stay in the area
- Support their teammates who are under pressure
- Receive passes and move the ball away from pressure
- This takes the game from individual to team possession
- When to pass and when to keep the ball
- Spread out and make the area the defenders have to cover large
- Move the ball away from pressure and into space

All of these games require every play to be moving and active. The players each have a ball most of the time so there is a strong technical component to each of these games.

You can have the players perform dynamic stretches between each round to form a complete warm-up. This will have your players physical and technically ready for the session. They will also be engaged and excited about what you have planned for them next.

Books to Teach Team Shape in Different Formations



One of the biggest challenges when coaching young players is getting them to stay in position. Time and again, you see them charging for the ball, before huddling around it in a clumsy effort to get a kick. Even senior players can succumb to over enthusiasm, creating huge gaps for the opposition to exploit and break through on goal.

These books provide an innovative new approach to using grids that forces players to stay in the correct position and able to react to the players around them. This stops them huddling around the ball and engaging in a mindless strategy of 'kick and run'. Instead, the system breaks this mindset and increases their understanding of how to spread out and make the best use of space.

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