



Maximizing Coaching Moments With Young Players

Effective Date	1 July 2002
Class Length	1 hour 15 minutes

Change Summary	
September 2002	Reviewed for format
October 2006	Reviewed for 2007 Section Conferences
October 2008	Reviewed for 2009 Section Conferences
November, 2011	Reviewed for 2012 Section Meetings
November, 2013	Reviewed for 2014 AYSO EXPO
October 2014	Reviewed for 2015 AYSO EXPO

1. Lesson Plan Goals

That all coaches in attendance fully understand that if he or she uses a systematic approach to training, players will assimilate the material in a rapid and efficient manner.

2. Class Length

1 Hour and 15 minutes

3. Instructor Requirements

Coach Instructor

4. Learning Objectives

A coach should use a systematic approach to help in communicating with and training players.

Training (practice) is an attempt to duplicate a match, in a learning environment.

The goal is to build up to match conditions.

Each segment of training should be communicated in a clear and positive manner.

Feedback is provided to the players on an individual basis.

If a coach uses a systematic approach to training, players will assimilate the material in a rapid and efficient manner.

5. Student Skills Acquired

6. Prerequisites

None

7. Materials

Power Point Presentation which is preloaded to conference laptop and also available on the website, www.ayso.org

Copy of Lesson Plan

8. Equipment

LCD projector, screen and laptop

Flip chart and markers

9. Special Instructor Notes

None

10. Body (Lesson Procedure)

Maximizing Coaching Moments with Young Players

Slide 1: Introduce all instructors involved in the presentation and any guests.

Let your participants know how you want to field questions: 1) as you go, 2) at the end of a chart or section, 3) another way.

Slide 2: Set the tone for the workshop and ask: “What do you expect to get out of this session?”

Guide the answers to fit in with the Workshop Objectives. Spend only a minute or two on this. Don't waste time getting everyone's input or looking for a perfect definition. Use the answers to gauge the mindset of the workshop participants.

Are they ready to learn techniques to help them connect with training the players? This will help you tailor the discussion to drive home the overall message at the end of the workshop that using a systematic approach, observing free play and managing the techniques and frequency of coach instruction will help you get the most of your time spent with the players.

Slide 3: Introduce the first section of the workshop...Teaching/Coaching Techniques

Before showing the one line on the slide, ask the question “Do we need to be teachers as coaches?” Then follow up with the question WHY and get answers from the workshop participants. Get a few answers and move on.

Slide 4:

In this section, we want the workshop participants to know that there is a repeatable process for teaching. They probably incorporate a number of these steps already. We want them to understand that they can be much more efficient in teaching if they consistently implement this process. Don't worry about communicating what follows verbatim. These are ideas to consider discussing for each step in the process. This process is a reflection of the Say, Show, Do and Review method of delivery.

State the tactical objective of what you are trying to accomplish.

Talk to you players. Let them know what you are trying to teach them. Use language and terms that are appropriate for their age. You will get better commitment when the players know what the objective is. AVOID LENGTHY SPEECHES. Keep instructions for activities simple and quick. Limit to one point at a time.

Demonstrate the skill, activity or game.

Like a picture is worth a thousand words, a good demonstration will let the players understand through a visualization of the activity. Get one or two demonstrators and show the proper technique(s). If you are not able to demonstrate the skill, enlist an assistant coach or a player who knows how to do it.

Involve new players.

Add more players to the activity and help them use the right techniques.

Get all remaining players involved

Give everyone the opportunity to join in. Activities that can be done on your own or in small groups are great. Some activities need larger groups...be sure to rotate everyone in and give them an opportunity to learn by doing.

Analyze level of play and skills being used by players

Are they doing the activity correctly? Are they using all the techniques available to them or is there room to add? What is their level of success? Is it too easy, too hard, just right? Make adjustments using speed, space and opposition. Drive the training activity to your desired level of difficulty and success.

Slide 5:

We continue to go through the remaining steps of the process.

Evaluate level of effort and commitment to training.

Assess your player's mental approach to the training. Are the players participating committed to performing the training? Does it have anything to do with the difficulty of the activity? If so adjust it.

Are the training groups balanced?

We are looking to make sure that every player gets the most out of training opportunities. We want the difficulty to be such that it motivates the players to continue the activity and gain proficiency. If we have one group that has superior skills, the more skilled group might not be challenged while the lesser skilled group is at risk of being frustrated because they cannot succeed. Finding balance in groups is a key to effective training.

Circulate and correct

Observe and assess if corrections are needed. Remember to make your coaching moments effective. Methods include forced stoppages where you freeze play. Get in, make your point and get out. Give them the knowledge they need and get them back to training. You can use natural stoppages or talking as the game is playing. Remember to keep it concise...let the running commentary be done on the television broadcast.

Make corrections using Positive Instruction and Encouragement.

Players respond better to you when you keep your message positive and support them as they work to improve their skills. You will ensure that your training sessions provide a developmentally rich and positive environment. Catch them being good...never underestimate the impact a positive comment.

Communicate individual instructions using concept of psychological motivation.

Remember characteristics of the age group you are coaching. What stage of development are they in? Motivate them in ways that are natural to them. It's appropriate to circulate and give individual instructions to help players learn. Find positive ways to communicate your message. Remember they are children—don't embarrass them.

Slide 6:

Age and Skill Appropriate

Would you use the Big Bad Bear game to instruct U-19? How about using a 40-yard lofted cross to change the point of attack for U-6 players? How well might that work for even a U-19 team? Remember to keep your training session active and engaging for the skill and maturity level of your players.

A reason to play (tactical objective)

Let the players know what they need to accomplish. For older teams, relate that objective to a game and possibly how they can use it. For younger players, let them know what the point of the game is. Players will train better if they know the reason.

A person or team who finishes first (competition)

Set your activities up to encourage friendly competition. The competitive juices will get the players to commit to the activity and get them to do their best.

Manageable groups

Consider how you structure an activity because it can affect your ability to circulate and make corrections. If you have only two coaches, you may find it difficult to provide feedback on 1 v 1 drills if you have 16 players.

Restrictions

Restrictions can be used to force skill work (3 passes before you can shoot), work on proficiency (one or two touches), or increase intensity (must complete the activity in 5 seconds). Restrictions help you control the activities so you can train more effectively.

Consequences

The competition could have consequences. Motivate with rewards (U-10s get to pick up the cones) or penalties (U-19s get to pick up the cones). Push ups, selecting captains, going out for ice cream, or any other motivator you can think of can be used to encourage the players.

Work to establish match-type situations

As you build up your training session, create an environment where you can get your players to use the skills/techniques/tactics trained during the session in match-like conditions of speed, space and opposition. When you simulate match conditions, the players have a true sense of what they can do in matches.

Coaching points and corrections

Avoid lengthy speeches. Keep instructions simple and quick. Get in, make your point, and get out. Remember, the Game is the Best Teacher.

Re-evaluation

Assess how your players are applying the learning from Activities I and II from your session and see how they are applying them in the small sided match/game. You should see how much they have taken in and what remains to be learned. Don't forget about the coaching cycle. You will be looking to see if they have applied what they learn in training to game situations. You will do this over and over throughout the course of a season.

Able to transfer training to the game...

You want to make sure that you work with your players so they can understand on

their own terms what you are training and how they can apply it during a match. Remember to use terms and language appropriate to their age.

Slide 7: This slide's purpose is to get the coaches thinking about how to make training transfer into performance during a match.

Let the coaches know that they can use games and activities to create situations that occur in matches. It can be a skill, set of skills or a tactic. The idea is to understand the match condition you want to address and design the game/activity (including speed, space and opposition choices) that achieves the intensity of a match.

Remind them about the concept of build up. They need to breakdown the skill or tactic into its basic parts and use build up to work toward simulating match problems in games/activities. You can't accomplish a tactic that requires a 20yd loft if you don't have a player who can make the kick and players who can receive and control the pass. You may have to work on a lofted pass, ball control, and a dribble or shot before you can combine them into an activity/game.

Starting simple allows you to introduce techniques and allows you to focus on each skill in an isolated manner. It helps build skill with the fundamental movements required to complete the skill. Once proficiency is reached, you are ready to add more to the training and build it's complexity.

Working on a drill statically is a good way to train some techniques. It provides a controlled environment (not a lot of running around with balls flying everywhere) and allows for repetition of the activity. Once you have achieved success, move on to using the skill in a more dynamic environment. The training activity section of the manuals or Activity I and II of the Training Plans are good references for finding games/drills to use the skill in a dynamic environment.

Remember to use language and provide descriptions in details appropriate for their age group. U-6s probably aren't going to get marking up, ball side/goal side on a corner kick and U-16s aren't interested in Sharks and Minnows.

We will talk more about coaching moment methods at slide 12...so don't go into great detail here.

End with letting them know getting their players to think about their technique and tactics is where you want them to be mentally. In soccer, players need to identify and solve problems in a match. If they are thinking about it in practice, they can bring it to the game.

Slide 8:

So we have discussed our teaching technique and then discussed how to approach a training session to solve match problems. Now we have to assess where our players stand in their abilities and understanding. We have to evaluate.

Ask the class the question at hand...why do we evaluate? Solicit answers for a few moments. Reveal the answers provided to validate their inputs.

Now the tougher question is at hand: How can we create opportunities to evaluate? You can ask your group or just let them know. The answer may not be the first answers on anyone's minds.

Don't get bogged down here...you want to get into the discussion on FREE PLAY

Slide 9:

The question and title come up right away. Spend a moment discussing and get right into describing it.

Reinforce that it is a relaxed, coach free environment...LET THEM PLAY...this is a time for observation to understand what they can do on their own. Don't give them instructions. Isolate your glance to specific techniques or tactics you are focusing on. Take notes...it's your time to figure out where training needs to go next.

Read the quote from Sonny Askew. This quote is the lead in to the FREE PLAY section of the coach manuals. We are using it here to reinforce it is appropriate to give the children time to train without the need for continual correction.

Slide 10:

The point of this slide is to enlighten the coaches on the benefits of free play. Go over each point.

Free play often occurs in a game like situations where points can be earned by either putting the ball through a goal or repetition of a skill or tactic. As such, you aren't running a "mechanical drill" where lines are formed or need to be maintained. You get your players engaged and moving dynamically from the onset. It's great for conditioning.

With basic instruction and little interference, the players are free to use whatever skill, techniques or tactics they want. You will see creativity emerge as players experiment with new ways to achieve their tactical goal.

Of course, they are going to make mistakes...but that is ok as making mistakes are a great way to learn. Don't be afraid to let them try something and fail. Much can be learned from the attempt.

Free play also simulates the game environment because it allows freedom of motion, the need to find and create space and be aware of your surroundings.

Your get off the stage remark is to remind the coaches. FREE PLAY is about them too. This is where you really can observe. Watch what is going on. Don't get tied up in trying to correct. Watch the flow; really SEE what they are doing.

Slide 11:

When do we use free play...the manuals suggests that you can use it in any stage of the

training session.

When you use it in a pre-warm up, you can observe the current skill level of your players as you set out to implement your training session.

When you use it in an activity or a scrimmage, you may be making another evaluation as a reference point. Using Free Play as a scrimmage at the end of the session is a good way to assess what they learned.

Remember to LET THEM PLAY...it's a key component of FREE PLAY.

Slide 12:

Coaching Moment methods are the opportunities we to teach (correct) or validate (approving comment) the performance of our players.

Introduce the four methods to them in summary here. Don't go into detail, that's the next slide.

Slide 13:

Each topic comes up in its entirety. This is meant to help you conserve time if you are feeling pressed.

Each topic is fairly self evident. Discuss each line. Reinforce that we want to always keep our communication short, simple, and positive. Remind the students that our choice of words have an impact on our players. Be sure not to embarrass them...remember they are children

End the session strong with the reminders to

AVOID LENGTHY SPEECHES...the players are there to play
KEEP INSTRUCTIONS SIMPLE...don't make things overly complex.

Slide 14:

Summarize the main points of the workshop.

Slide 15:

Ask for any remaining questions.

Thank your participants for attending..

All coaches must be able to create an opportunity to evaluate a player's ability to execute a certain skill or task so that what training is required can be achieved.

More simply put, at what level is the player performing a particular skill?

One of the best ways to evaluate the level of competency is to use Free Play.

Good coaches use free play to observe a player's capabilities.

Free play describes the condition where individuals play without restrictions on time or space.

Players are given general directions on time or space.

Players are given general directions on what they should attempt to accomplish and then left on their own.

The players should play hard and stop when rest is warranted.

Free play allows players to develop natural abilities.

Free play avoids wasting time in organizing lines, capturing wandering players, etc.

During free play, players avoid others, seek open space, and become more aware of the action around them.

A coach' observational powers will increase as they are forced to isolate individual action in a group.

Provide an environment for teaching solutions (options) to match problems.

Typical methods include:

Games (drills) are used to duplicate match conditions.

A game (drill) requires organization of the players to repeatedly execute a specific skill or tactic, or combination thereof.

As a coach you must think static and progress to dynamic as quickly as possible.

When playing games:

Age and skill appropriate

A reason to play (tactical objective)

A person or team who finish first

Manageable groups (number of groups)

Restrictions (grids, touch, time)

Consequences

Establishes a match-type situation

Coaching points and corrections

Reevaluation

Able to transfer training to the game

The coach must always remember to go from the simple to the complex, communication in a language appropriate to the age of the players they are working with.

Teaching and Coaching Techniques

So, now you are ready to teach.

There are steps that are required that a coach must follow in order to be an effective teacher (coach):

State the tactical objective of what you are trying to accomplish.

Demonstrate the skill or the drill.

Involve new players let the players try it.

Get all remaining players involved.

Analyze level of play and skills being used by players.

Evaluate level of effort, commitment to training.

Are the training groups balanced?

Circulate and correct (use assistant coaches to supervise play and keep the organization going).

Communicate individual instructions, using concepts of psychological motivation (remember they are kids, don't embarrass them).

Summary

A coach should use a systematic approach to help in communicating with and training players.

Training (practice) is an attempt to duplicate a match, in a learning environment.

The goal is to build up to match conditions.

Each segment of training should be communicated in a clear and positive manner.

Feedback is provided to the players on an individual basis.

If a coach uses a systematic approach to training players will assimilate the material in a rapid and efficient manner.

11. Conclusion (Closure)

None

12. Confirmation (Testing, Assessment, Evaluation)

None

13. Bridge (Transition)

None

14. Attachments