

## U8 Basics:

### Practices:

- 2-3 times/week
- 60-75 minutes

### Games:

- 2 – 25 minute halves  
with a 3 minute break in the middle  
to rotate positions
- 5 minute halftimes – teams don't  
switch sides

### Staff:

- 1-2 Assistance
  - Offense/Defense
  - Offense/Defense/Bench
- Team Parent
  - Communications
  - Ordering Trophies
  - Collecting money

### Teaching Goals:

- Play in your area, not the entire field
- Throw-ins – Two feet on the ground. If one foot comes off the ground, you will lose possession.
- Offense – Center the ball toward the goal
- Defensive – Keep the ball out of the center of the field
- Passing is not to where the teammate is, but where the teammate will be.
- Shifting toward area of play without leaving area of responsibility – *cheating* or *shifting* to one side

### Parents' Guidelines:

- Encourage ALL players. You should at least clap when the other team scores
- Players can't hear both you and the coach. The best thing for everyone is for you to either cheer or volunteer to help the Coach – even if it's just for Game Days

## Practice Agenda:

- Stretching – 5-10 minutes
  - Allows time for everyone to arrive
  - Ask "ice-breaking questions" – (get to know them)
    - What school do you go to?
    - What's your favorite subject?
    - What's your favorite color?
- Run a lap ("to the fence", "around a tree", etc.)
  - Early in the season – without a ball
  - Later in the season – while dribbling their ball
- Skill training – 10 minutes
  - Demonstrate
  - Watch
  - Practice
- Game that reinforces one of the skills – 10 minutes
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- Game that reinforces one of the skills – 10 minutes
- Scrimmage
  - The game is the BEST teacher!

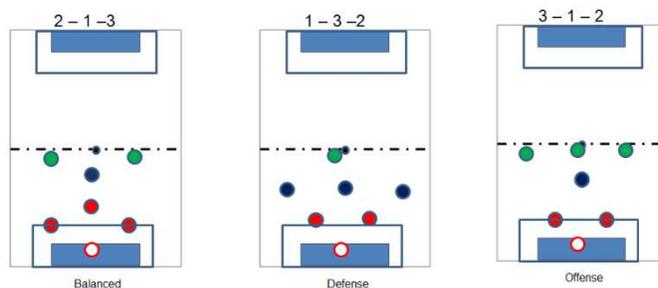
## Numerous formations to consider

Although it may be easier to use only one formation, you should consider that your opponents will not be the same from week to week. Some formations may also work better for certain players than others.

A balanced formation is easy to start with. A defensive formation may be best to prevent high scoring games and may also be advantageous if your single Forward is a 'speedster' and the other team is playing aggressive with their Defense on the center line. And then there's the Flex Formation.

A formation is called from the Defense, to the Midfielders, to the Offense by counting the number of players (it's assumed that you will have a Keeper, so they aren't mentioned).

As an example, a "2 – 1 – 3" has 2 Defenders, 1 Midfielder and 3 Forwards (and of course you have a Keeper)



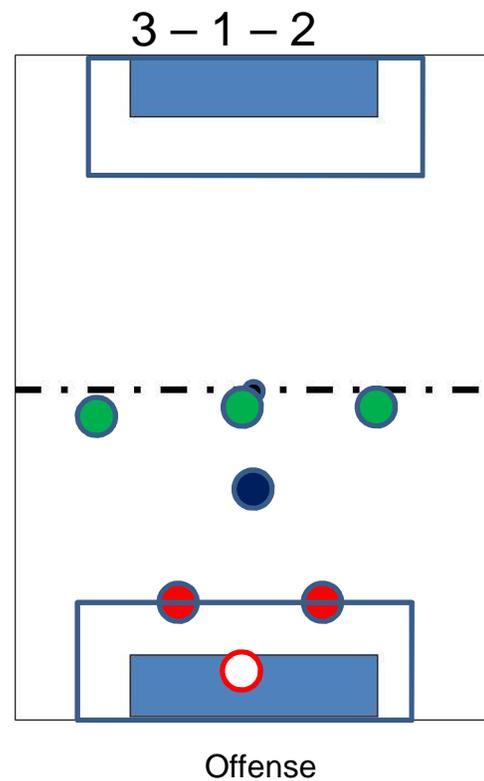
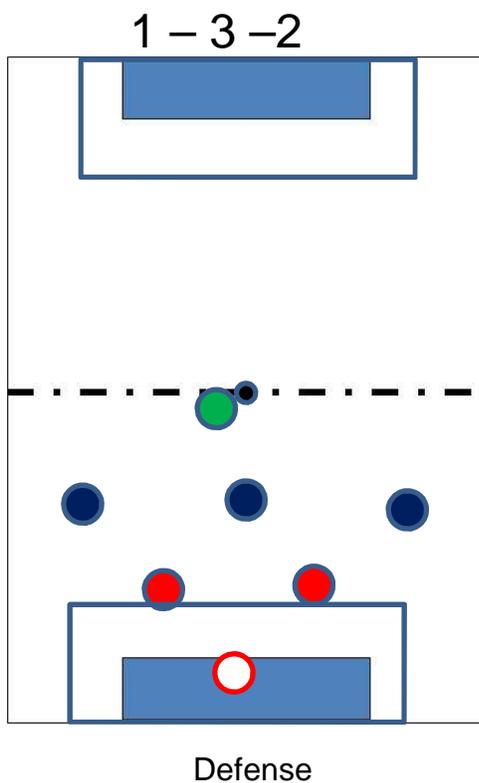
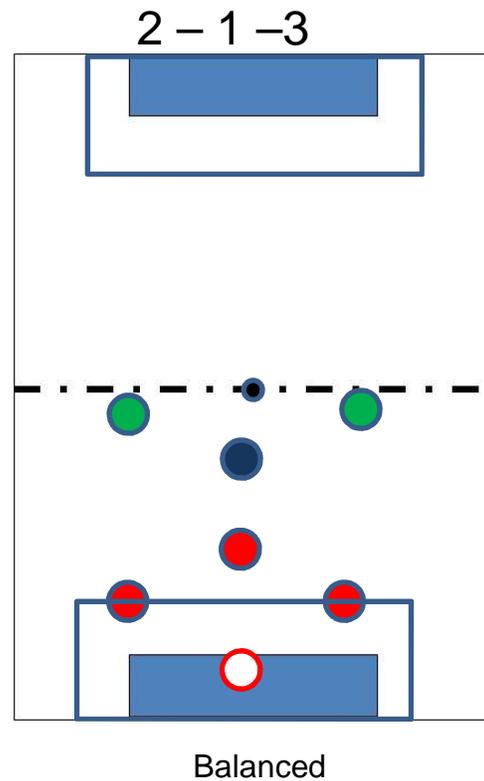
# Choosing a formation

Determine your formation based:

- Your strategy/philosophy
- Quality/caliber of players you have on the field (not necessarily your team)
  - There may be times where you will need to change your formation due to the mix of players on the field
  - You may need to change to a defensive formation if it is becoming a high-scoring game.

Formations are called from then Defense, to the Mid-Fielders to the Offense. The Keeper is assumed and not part of the formation.

- Defense
- Mid-Field – aka Rover
- Offense – aka Stiker



## NO Slide Tackle

(allowed in U12 and above)

### No Slide-Tackles

- Not even for Keepers
- Tripping over your own two feet is understandable at this age level
- Going to the ground as part of a way to take the ball away will result in a **Yellow Card** for unsafe play.
- The other team will be given an Indirect Free Kick at the point of the foul.



## NO Headers

(allowed in U12 and above)

### No Headers

For the safety of the players, Headers are reserved for U12 and above.  
A player will be given a warning and the other team will be given an Indirect Free Kick at the point of the foul



## Handball

The rule for a hand ball includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder.

### **Did the hand play the ball? Or did the ball play the hand? Was it deliberate?**

Hand Ball (or “handling” as it’s now officially known) is commonly misunderstood to be any contact of the ball to hand or arm, or any contact to the hand or arm that provides advantage to the offending team.

#### **It is neither of these.**

Instead, the question of if contact of the ball to the arm or hand is a foul is not is one of mere contact, but rather did the player **deliberately** make contact (or not avoid contact) with the ball with that area of the body? If the answer is yes (and the player isn’t a goalkeeper in the penalty area), you have a foul; but if the referee believes



### **Deliberate Handball in the Penalty Area – Red Card**

U10 and above – Any defensive player (other than the Keeper) that deliberately uses their hand in the Penalty Area or Goal area to prevent a goal will be ejected from the game.

## Drop Kicks and Keeper Throws/Rolls

### **Keepers can’t use their hands if they receive a pass from a teammate**

The Keeper **CAN’T** use his/her hands if a teammate ‘pass’ the ball to them. If the ball is deflected (even if it’s deflected by a teammate), the Keeper can use their hands.

### **Contact with Keeper may result in either a Yellow Card or Red Card**

If the Keeper has their hands on the ball prior to an opponent contacting the ball, the opponent may not contact either the ball or the Keeper

-  – any inadvertent contact may result in a Yellow Card
-  – any intentional contact may result in a Red Card.

If the opponent is guilty of a foul and the Keeper leaves the game due to injury, a Red Card will be given. If the Keeper “Flops”, they will be given either a Yellow Card or a Red Card (see below for details).

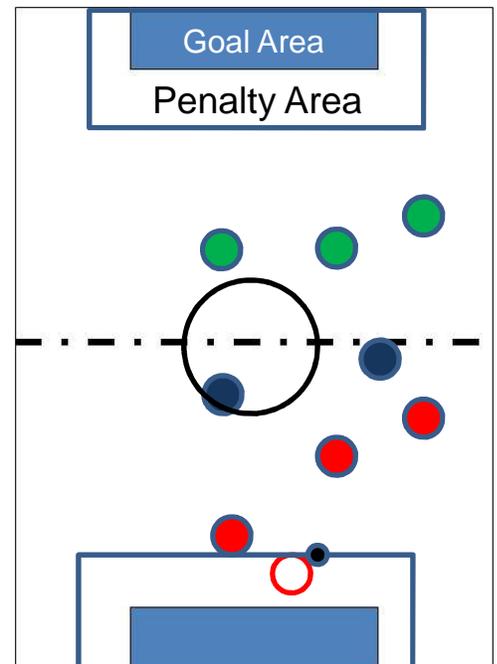
### **Keepers can kick, throw or roll; they can’t place the ball on the ground**

The Keeper may use their hands in both the Goal Area and the Penalty Area. After picking up the ball, the Keeper may:

- Drop kick the ball
- Throw the ball
- Roll the ball

### The Keeper **MAY NOT:**

- Set the ball down on the ground – as soon as the ball is out of their hands, the opponent may attack the ball.



# Goal Kicks – Defending vs. Attacking

(Yet to be modified from U8)

## Defensive objective –

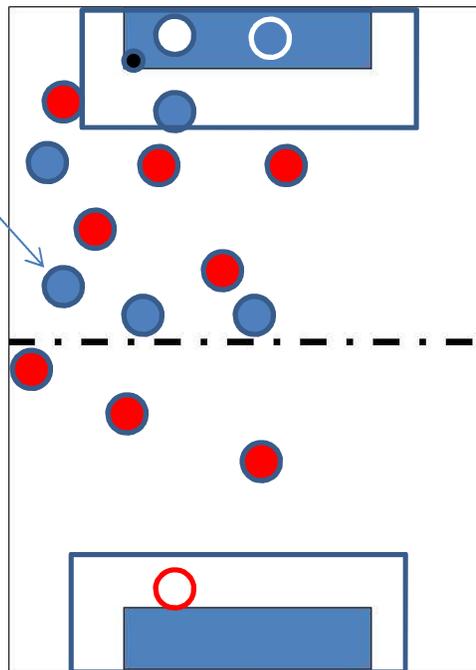
- Keeper may place the ball anywhere inside the inner box; generally, the ball is placed in the upper corner. The ball must be stationary before it can be kicked.
- The ball **MUST** clear the Penalty Box (if it doesn't, someone else should take the kick)
- The ball should be kicked "up and out, NOT down the middle"
- Alternative plan: A Defender can kick the ball instead of the Keeper

**Defenders** one Defender should back up and cover the goal in case the Keeper doesn't kick the ball to the outside. Defender can't use his/her hands

**Midfielder** should anticipate that the Keeper will be trying to get the ball **UP** and **OUT**; therefore, should be to the outside.

**Forwards** should shift to the side the Keeper has placed the ball. **BE AWARE:** the Keeper can pick-up the ball and move it to the other corner if he/she sees an opportunity

**Keeper** must put the ball down in the inner box and the ball must be still for at least 1 second



**Forwards** are anticipating that the ball will be kicked to the outside, but hopeful that the ball will be kicked in the middle of the field. They may not touch the ball until it leaves the Penalty Box.

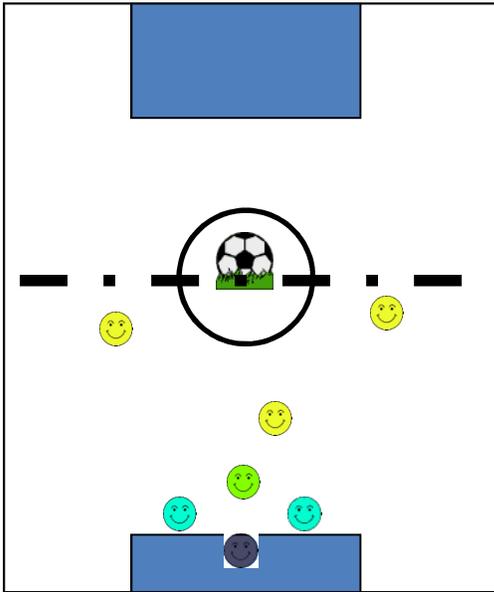
**Midfielder** 'cheats' to one side anticipating where the ball will be kicked

**Defenders** have all 'shifted' to the side where the ball will be kicked

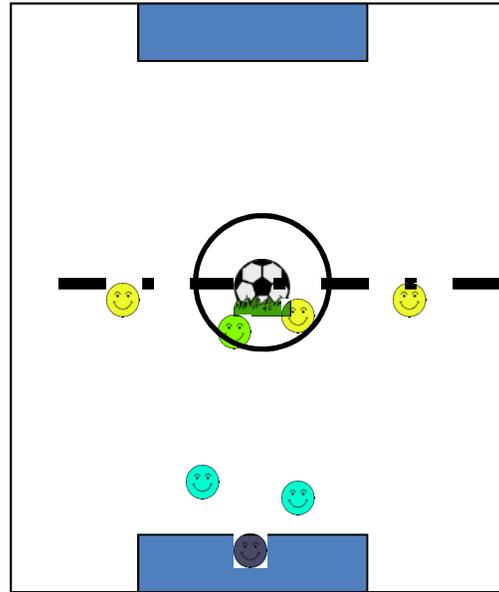
**Keeper** the other team has the advantage and the Keeper should be prepared

## Offensive objective –

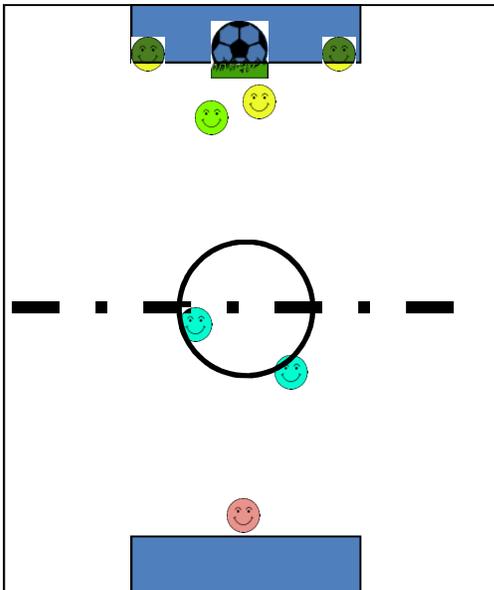
- If the Keeper makes the mistake of kicking the ball to the center of the field, the Forwards have an opportunity for a quick rebound into the net.
- Mid-Fielder should be 'cheated' to the side that he/she anticipates the ball will be kicked
- Defenders should 'shift' to the side that the ball will be kicked to



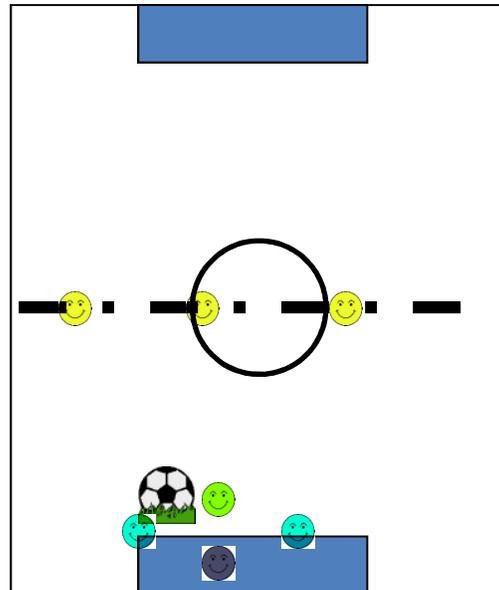
When the other team is kicking-off, we move back. On the kick-off, they have to pass the ball forward or kick it deep. We need to anticipate the pass or send a deep kick back.



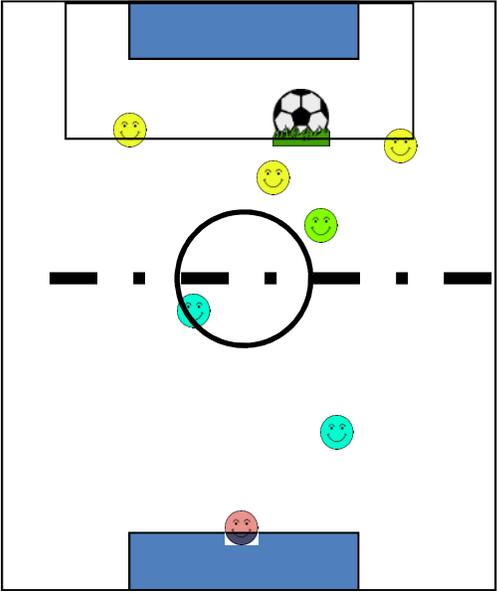
When we kick off, we move forward. The Rover moves to forward and the defense is staggered. We must pass the ball forward or kick it deep.



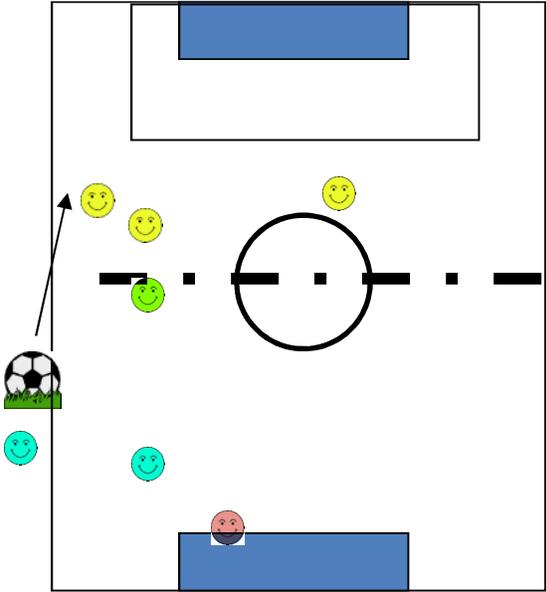
When we have the ball in their box, the Forwards are all in the box, the Rover is pushing in and the Defense is up.



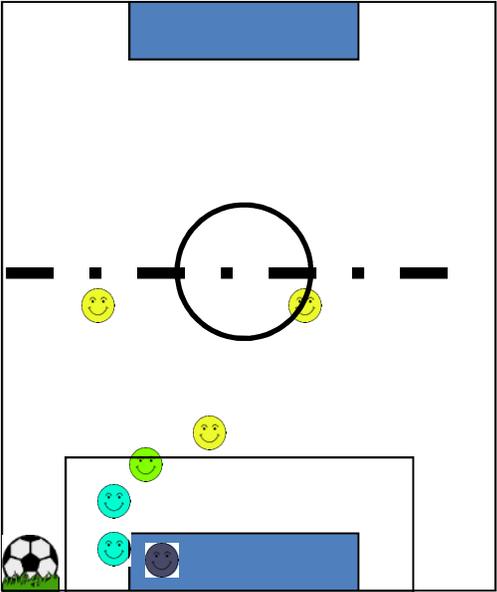
When they have the ball in our area, the Keeper is deep in the box, the defense is between the ball and the goal, the Rover is helping the defense and the Forwards are waiting for their opportunity.



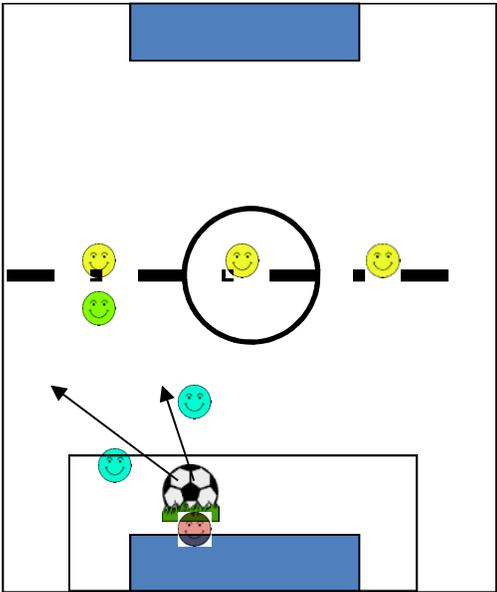
On offense, the forwards move toward the goal, the Rover helps the forwards and the defense moves up and is staggered.



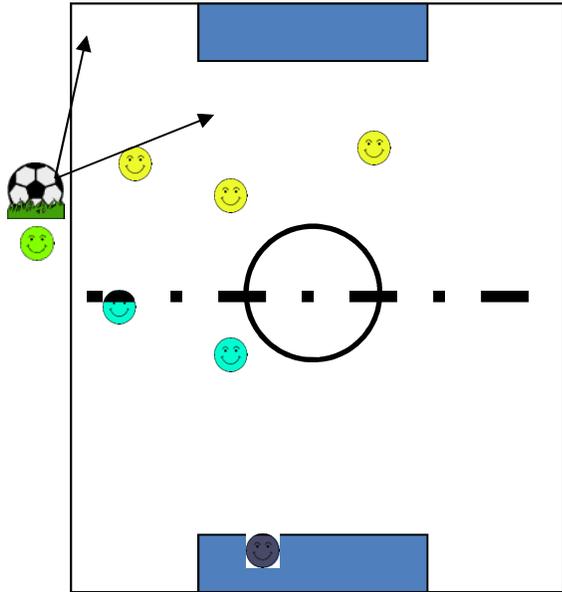
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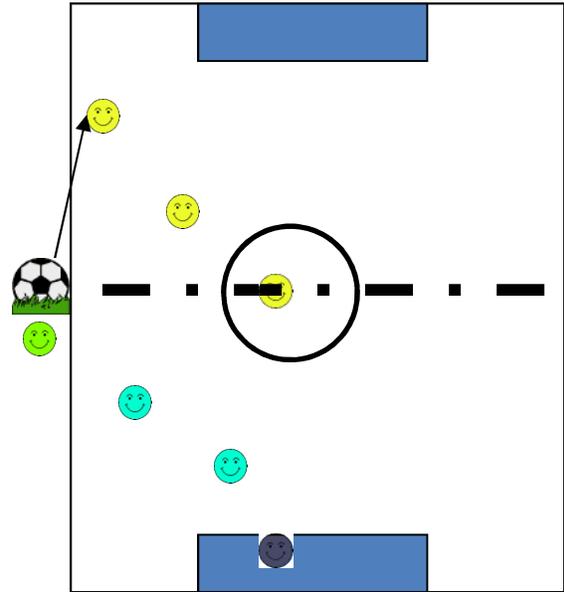
On their corner-kick, our Goalie is in the corner, the Defense is in front of the goal, the Rover and the Center Forward are back to help Defense and the two other Forwards 'cheat' to the side and wait.



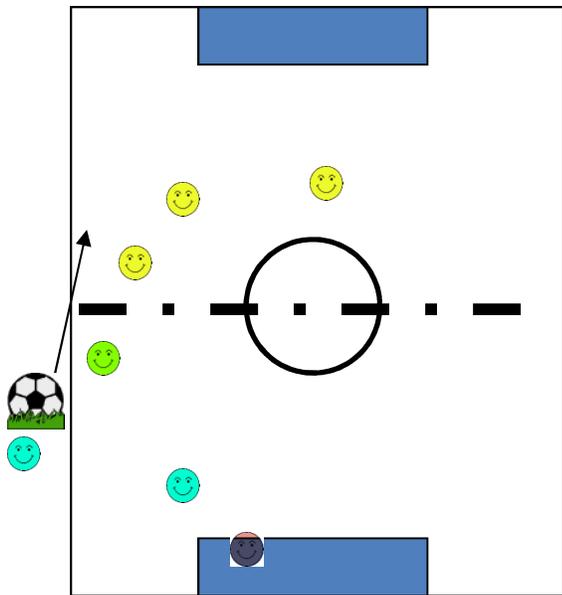
When we have a drop-kick (or punt), kick the ball up-and-out. NEVER over the middle.



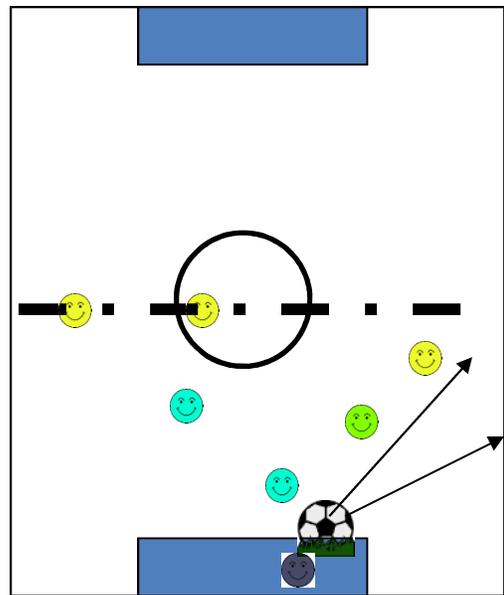
When we have a throw-in, near their goal, the Rover- throws it up-the-line or toward the goal.



When we have a throw-in at mid-filed, the Rover throws it up-the-line.



When we have a throw-in on defense, a defender throws it up-the-line.



When we have a Goal-Kick, the Keeper kicks it up-and-out. NEVER down the middle.



# Game Day Information

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Player Development means that every player should play every position and have **EQUAL** playing time over the season in **ALL** positions

- Offense
- Mid-Field
- Defense
- Keeper – maybe not on game days, but try to make this up to them during practices
- Bench

Although this may not be entirely possible, it's the ideal. Remember: This is about teaching players to be a part of a team. It's not about winning – oh, I want to win, but I want to win by 1-2 goals and I want ALL my players to feel successful. This frequently means that it's more about my planning and strategy than their ability. Challenge yourself to use all your players equally.

More things to consider:

- Be prepared to take notes during the game – they will be useful during next week's practice
- Coach's children must NOT be given preferential consideration.
- Start with identifying which players will be your Keepers for all four quarters
- Match strong players and weak players in each area
- Decide which quarter each player will be sitting out. A good time to sit out is after a player has been a mid-fielder (they should be tired)

Be flexible in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of the game

- Bench any player that hasn't sat out a quarter
- If you winning, put your best players on defense or sitting out.
- If you're behind, try to put together a line-up that takes advantage of each player's strengths

	Positions				Goals			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Matthew	X	CF	M	Keeper				
Thomas	LD	X	RF					
Ben	RD	Keeper	X					
Steve	CF	RD	Keeper	X				
Sam	RF	X	RD					
Isaac	LF	M	X					
Cameron	M	X	CF					
Riley	Keeper	RF	X					
Noah	X	LF	LD					
Peyton	X	LD	LF					

Players should play the whistle **and** play with integrity

- If the ball is clearly out of play, your players should be trained enough to know that they should stop
- Play doesn't stop until the **ENTIRE** ball crosses the line. Unlike football, if ANY portion of the ball hasn't crossed the line, there's no goal and the ball isn't out of play.

