



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Program

Spring 2026

# Agenda

- WUSC Intros
- 3rd Grade Program
  - Safety and Certifications
  - Game Day Protocol
- Transition to BAYS
  - Tryouts
  - Team/Coach Selections
  - Coach Expectations
- Mini-Coaching Course
  - Formations
  - Practices
  - Focus Areas

# WUSC Mission

WUSC is focused on maintaining an organization that will be able to provide an **exceptional experience** for the children that participate in the programs we offer. We are committed to **helping** the children of Wellesley develop their soccer skills, understand the importance of teamwork, and learn what it means to display good sportsmanship when competing.

## 3 initiatives to accomplish our goals



# WUSC Overview

- 1600+ players this season
  - 2000+ participants in all programs
- Main Pathway
  - Intown (Pre K – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)
  - Travel (4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Additional Programs
  - Wellesley Premier Club (club) - 20 Teams (2017 – 2011)
  - Wellesley Development Program
  - Wellesley Futsal Club and Academy
  - Winter and Vacation Clinics
- Other
  - Intown Referee Program
  - Memorial Day Tournament (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

# MYSA Requirements

- **All Coaches should have completed:**

- Mass Youth Soccer Registration with photo upload if needed
- SafeSport Abuse Training and Concussion Training

These must be complete to get Lanyard ID. Sue will notify coaches that have any outstanding requirements.

**For info and link to register:** <https://www.mayouthsoccer.org/adult-registration-process/>

**Links to the required Safesport Abuse training and Concussion Training can be found on your account under the word 'Certificates'.**

**Concussion Training Certification:** You must have Concussion certificate dated within last 2 years. Keep your login/password so you can go back in to upload your concussion certificate when you complete the course.

**Abuse Prevention Training:** If you took the training last year, you need to do the shorter Refresher course now. If you took training in Fall season, you are set. Once completed via this link it should upload your certificate automatically.

# WUSC Concussion Policy

- Take the course at the CDC website
- Sit the player if you suspect a concussion
- Notify the parents
- Notify the age group coordinator in writing
- Players are not allowed to return without medical clearance

# Goal & Net Safety

- **Always inspect goals before each match and/or practice.**
- **Always ensure goals are secured with sandbags on back bar or sidebars.**
- **Never allow anyone to climb or play on the goal or net**
- **Never allow anyone to hang on the goal crossbar**
- **Instruct players on safe handling and potential dangers associated with movable goals.**
  - Coaches can move goals; If you need help, ask a WUSC staff member
  - When moving wheels should be rotated to allow easy moving. When in place replace wheels so frame contact's ground.

# Fields - General Points

- **Please have your team pick up their own trash after practice and games**
- **Please do not use goal mouths for practice on grass fields**
  - Move goal off end lines, play in between fields if possible
- **Return goals to original location if moved for practice**
- **Each goal in use has a sandbag on it**

# WUSC 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Program

- Games to begin on Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>
  - 4/11, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/30
  - Make-up Games – June 6th
  - No games on 5/23 (Memorial Day Weekend)
- All games will be played at Sprague
  - Girls games in the morning; Boys in the afternoon
- 1 practice per team, per week.
- Practice fields for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade: Use 7v7 Fields
  - Tenacre, Perrin, Sprague 1 and 4, Hardy

# Memorial Day Tournament

- Tournament hosted by WUSC for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade teams
- All Wellesley players can enter; free of charge
- 4 guaranteed games all at Sprague
- Last year 80+ teams competed
- A sign-up for players/coaches will be emailed out



# Practices

- **Practices: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade is 1 practice per week.**
  - Choose day/time/location that works for coach and players
  - Please use Appointment Plus to schedule all practices, instructions in fields section of website
  - Those with practices scheduled will be notified if field is not available
  - Do NOT “turn up” to a field if not reserved
- **Use WUSC curriculum with practice plans from WUSC website – [wellesleysoccer.org](http://wellesleysoccer.org)**
- **WUSC staff available to help with practices**
  - Contact Joe Morais with requests – [intown@wellesleysoccer.org](mailto:intown@wellesleysoccer.org)
  - Support WUSC staff will design a practice based on recommendations from coach. Be specific, concentrate on one topic.

# Curriculum

We recommend that all practice sessions follow the **S.C.O.R.E.** method:

**SIMPLE.** Stick to one theme during your practice session. Choose 2 or 3 core coaching points and reinforce them throughout the session.

**CHALLENGING.** Ensure that the players are posed problems that they need to find solutions to. Provide guidance and help when they need it.

**ORGANISED.** Plan every detail of your session - how many players, space and equipment. Ensure that your sessions have the appropriate pace and progression to challenge all of your players.

**RELEVANT.** Ensure that the exercises in your session are relevant to the game.

**ENJOYABLE.** The players should walk away from every practice having thoroughly enjoyed the session and learning at least one new aspect of the game. Ask questions of your players throughout.

WUSC Curriculums, available online, are coach login and password protected

**Password - WUSC2026**

# Curriculum Continued

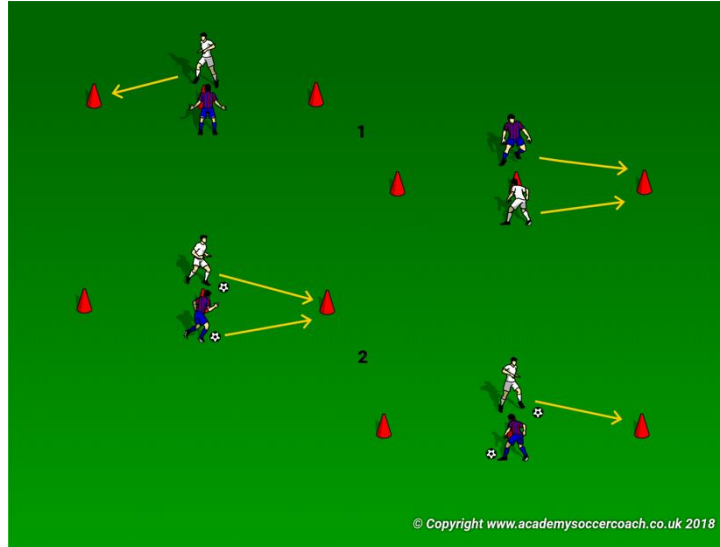


Diagram 1. Cones set up as shown, players get into two's go to an area with the three cones. Players go 1v1 trying to beat their opponent to the cone and back to the middle using dummies and feints to gain an advantage. Rotate who is the attacker and the defender every 2/3 goes.  
Diagram 2. Introduce a ball to each player so they can start to use skill moves to create the advantage. Encourage different skill moves and ask players to demonstrate their skills to the group.

Curriculum is available on our website – [wellesleysoccer.org](http://wellesleysoccer.org). We have archived sessions from previous years as well as this season's curriculum.

We will also give you the opportunity to work directly with Joe Morais for your team practices. If you have certain areas you would like to work on with the team, please contact [intown@wellesleysoccer.org](mailto:intown@wellesleysoccer.org).

# Coaching Resources

The image is a screenshot of the Wellesley United Soccer Club website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Latest News", "Upcoming Events", and "2026 Memorial Day Tournament". Below this is the club's logo and name, "WELLESLEY UNITED SOCCER CLUB". A main navigation menu includes "ABOUT WUSC", "PROGRAMS", "COACHES", and "REFEREES". The "COACHES" menu is highlighted with a blue circle and has a dropdown menu open, listing the following options: "VOLUNTEER TO COACH", "COACHING REQUIREMENTS", "PRACTICE RESOURCES", "COACHING EDUCATION", and "COACHING FAQ". A red banner across the middle of the page contains the text: "Spring 2026 registration is now open! Registration deadlines vary by program. Please secure your player's spot. View". Below the banner is a large photograph of young girls in soccer uniforms. Overlaid on the bottom of the photo is the text: "WELLESLEY UNITED SOCCER CLUB" and "WUSC is a volunteer-run, community-based youth soccer organization serving more than 1,800 players from Pre-K through Grade 12 in Wellesley, Massachusetts."

WUSC Curriculums, available online, are coach login and password protected

**Password - WUSC2026**

# Appointment Plus

**Appointment plus website will be open after this zoom call**

To login to Appointment Plus to schedule practice times:

- [www.wellesleysoccer.org](http://www.wellesleysoccer.org)- Coaches Corner/Fields/Practice Field Schedule
- use direct link to login: <https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/36qnegh0/>
- Coach's Login:
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade coaches will be their team's name
    - Example: NERevolution3B
  - Stick to the practice time booked on the system, do not book two slots.
  - Please note that WPC will practice Mon/Wed
  - Scheduling will open for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade on when we send out the logins

# TeamSnap App

We will be using the TeamSnap app this season to organize all team's practices and games. It's a great way to keep updates on who is going to be available for practice and games each week and to send updates on anything game/practice related.

Coaches are responsible for inputting the practice / game schedule into Teamsnap. Arrival time should be noted as well. Assigning a team manager (another parent) can help in data input / communication to the team.

# Game Day Cancellation

- Rules for game-day cancellation (weather/other):
  - WUSC will make decision:
    - Morning games by 7:30 am
    - Afternoon games by 1:00 pm
  - Please check WUSC website ([www.wellesleysoccer.org](http://www.wellesleysoccer.org)- or twitter feed)
  - Emails will be sent out from WUSC to players and coaches
  - We will cancel for lightning/thunder
  - **If the Town closes the fields, we will cancel**
  - Make-up dates are scheduled for June 6th

# Rules for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Program

- 7v7 Format – 6 Field Players and 1 Goalkeeper
- Two 25 min halves; 5 min for halftime
- Referees are told to be lenient while players learn the game
- Normal soccer rules
  - Full 7v7 Field
  - Corners, goal kicks, throw-ins
- No heading – indirect free kick
- No offsides call – Same as 4<sup>th</sup> grade Travel
- No punting over half
  
- Additional Rules on website

# Game Management

- Goals of the season:
  - **Competitive league**
    - Close scorelines
  - **Player retention**
    - All players are enjoying themselves and want to sign up next year
- Follow the BAYS 5-Goal scoreline rule
- Ideas for managing a scoreline
  - Put scoring player in net
  - Take off a player; *7 vs. 6 players*
  - Only x player can score

# Referee Feedback

We asked our Referees this year for feedback on how we can improve our program and here are some of the questions and feedback given

## Why do you referee?

I referee because I love soccer and I wanted to see a new perspective on the game

exercise, help the community in Wellesley

Interested in the game and seeing how I can help the younger players.

## How can WUSC make the experience better?

Maybe notify all the coaches the rules you gave us, because sometimes, coaches will stand on the field, and it's hard to tell them to move when you are paying attention to the game

No comments from coaches or parents toward referees.

Reminders to the parent coaches from WUSC to be respectful of the refs.

Educate coaches about their responsibilities (e.g, preparing field for play) and encourage them to "model" better behavior for their players and respect for referees.

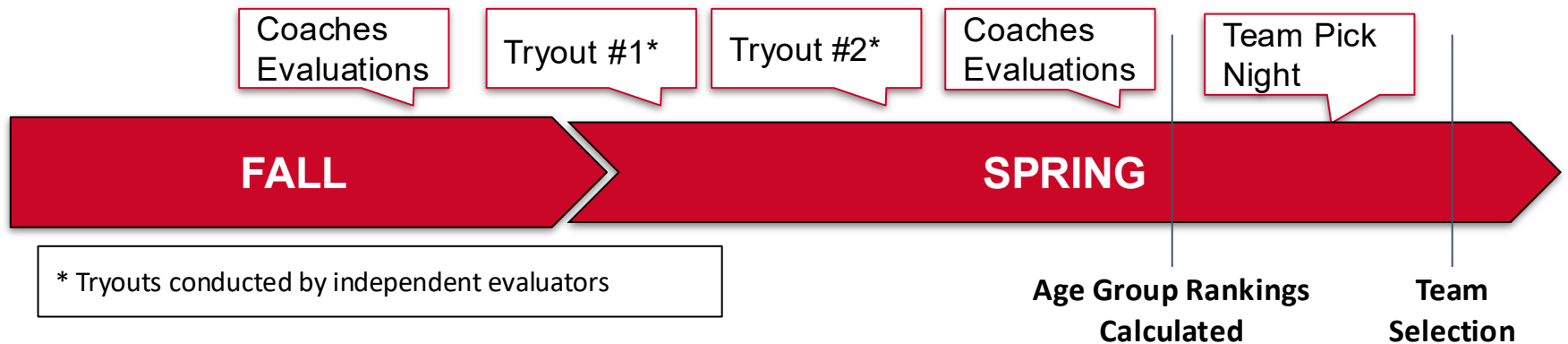
# Transition to BAYS

- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is the final year for Intown
- Players will move to the Travel Program in 4<sup>th</sup> grade
- Players can tryout for a Stratified team
- All players make a team regardless if they tryout or not
  - Stratified or Balanced

# Team Selection for Travel

- Each player who attends tryouts is eligible for a Stratified team
- Players are given an Aggregate Score based on:
  - Tryout data
  - Fall Coach Evaluations
  - Spring Coach Evaluations
  - Staff Spring Game Evaluations
- A committee of our board members selects the teams at the end of the year

# Team Selection



**Inputs:** Coaches evaluations and tryout data from the Fall and Spring are combined to calculate an overall age group ranking.

**Review:** At the Coaches Meeting in the Spring, Coaches review the rankings and get a chance to flag any player who they believe is not slotted properly.

**Team Selection:** The Selection Committee takes the quantitative rankings and qualitative feedback from the coaches to make the teams. Team sizes are based on the number of players signed up across the age group to ensure evenly sized teams.

**Coaching Assignments:** Only once the teams are made are the coaches assigned to teams.

# Spring Tryouts

- Tryouts are scored by independent assessors
- Players are assigned a number and play scrimmages
- All times are to be confirmed
  - Spring Tryout dates TBD
- Team Pick Night will be held after the season
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams come out after public school year ends

# Coach Selection

- **Feedback** from parents after every season
- **WUSC staff observations** of practice and games (please utilize the WUSC curriculum for drills, scrimmaging for entire practice is not acceptable).
- **Volunteer experience** (number of years coaching in town program and other WUSC volunteer positions)
- **Soccer knowledge and experience** (this includes understanding game rules and following BAYS guidelines)
- **Diversity** of coaching staff
- **BAYS ZT violations** and/or incidents
- **Each season is independently evaluated and coaching positions are not guaranteed year to year**

# Coach Expectation

- Qualities WUSC looks for in a coach:
  - **Positive:** We see coaches as a role model for the kids on their team. Help kids learn to develop and maintain a positive attitude even under adverse circumstances.
  - **Encouraging and Supportive:** Encourage their players to try new skills and positions throughout their development. Support the players as they work on developing the required skills to achieve success
  - **Communicative:** Communicate and interact positively and effectively with players and parents throughout the season
  - **Differentiation:** Work with the individual skill sets of each player on the team so that the players develop individually, to develop the team collectively. We expect coaches to monitor player progress based on each player's own trajectory and not against other players on the team.



# Mini Coaching Course

# First Day Success

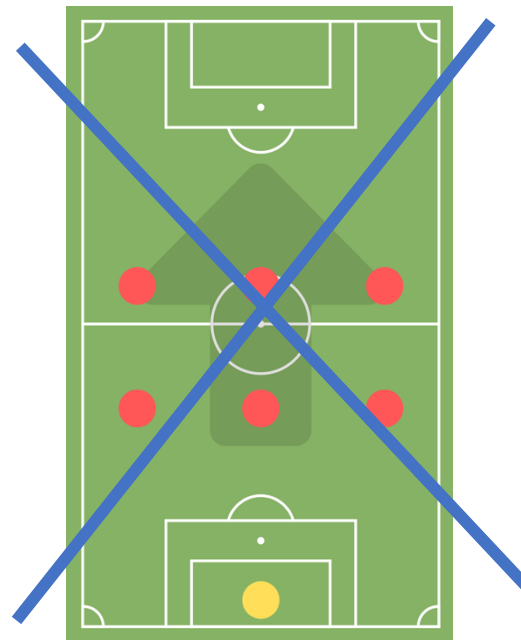
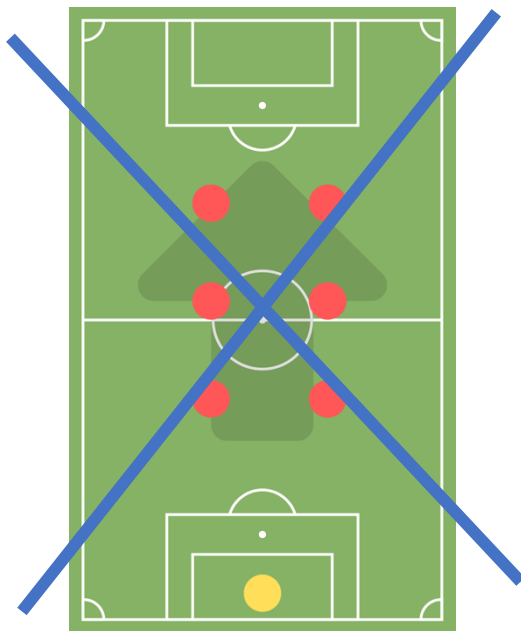
- Pick a formation and go over it the first few practices
  - Each player understands the shape and roles
- Use the first few practices going over the rules and what to do in certain situations
  - Goal kicks and Keeper saves
  - Proper Throw Ins
    - Feet behind on the line
    - Both feet on the ground
    - Both hands behind their head
  - Give players a chance to play in net
- Keep it fun

# Formations

- We want players understanding formations and roles/responsibilities of each position
- This can be the hardest thing for players to understand at this level
- Good formations should have 3 levels (forward, midfield, defense)
- Spread out – don't bunch up
- Formations in soccer are read out as numbers; starting with the defense
  - A 2-3-1 would be 2 defenders, 3 midfielders, 1 forward
  - A lot of players at this age won't understand the numbers. I find it's easier to refer to it as a shape (*shown of next slides*)
    - 2-3-1 (star)
    - 3-1-2 (smiley face)
    - 3-2-1 (Christmas tree)

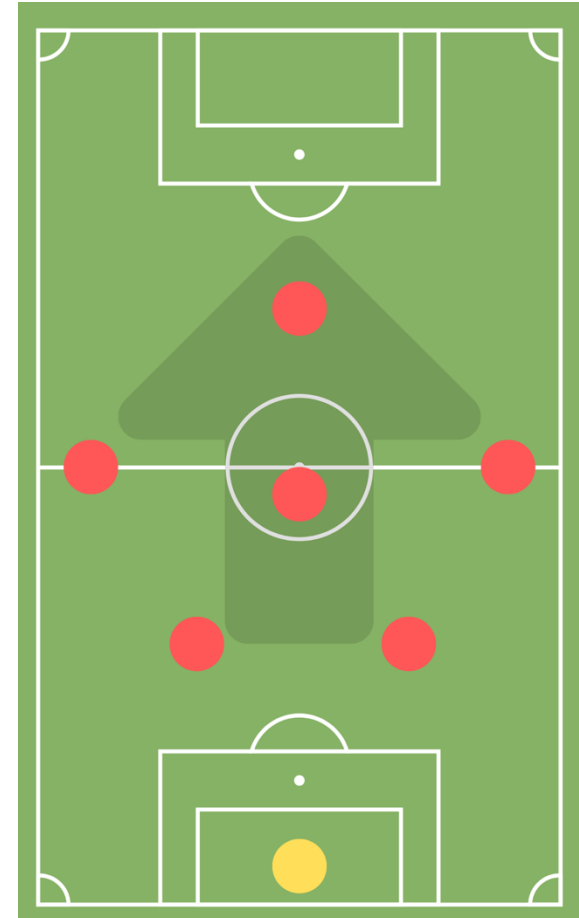
# Formations I've Seen (not recommended)

- Easy to manage for coach
- Easy to understand for players
- Wouldn't recommend for development
  - Doesn't help transition to 9v9
    - Players should have 3 levels of positions (forward, midfield, defense)
    - Doesn't help players understand width/spacing



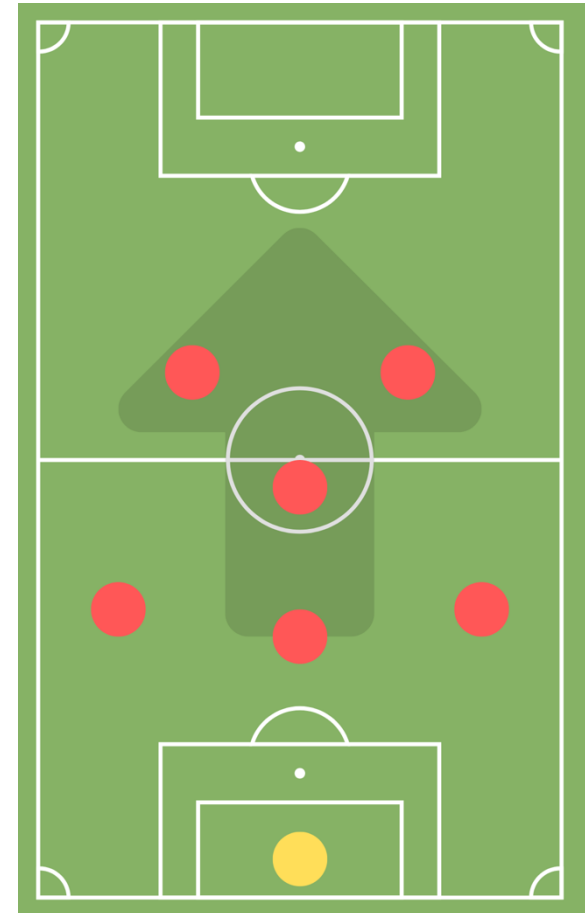
# Formations: 2-3-1 (Star)

- Most popular 7v7 Formation
- Good transition to 9v9
- 3 Levels of players
- Helps players learn spacing
- Only 1 forward
  - Can be hard because the striker will go forward before their team joined the attack
  - Leads to a lot of 1v2's or 1v3's which is tough to score
  - A lot of players at this age want to play forward so this doesn't leave many options to rotate players



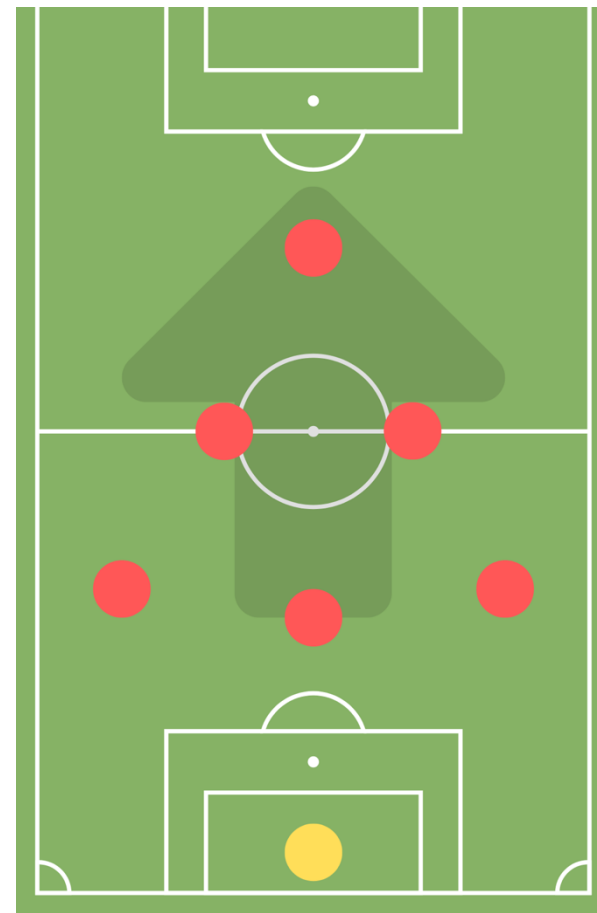
# Formations: 3-1-2 (Smiley Face)

- 3 Levels of players
- Helps players learn width
- Has 2 forwards
  - More options to rotate players as strikers
  - Starts with more players going forward
- Wide players on defense get forward to join the attack
  - When we're defending, wide players get back to help the center-back
  - When we're attacking, our face is 'really happy' and wide players go forward to join the attack



# Formations: 3-2-1 (Xmas Tree)

- 3 Levels of players
- Helps players learn width
- Players start behind the ball
  - Most players at this age don't have a problem going forward on the attack, they have a problem getting back to defend
  - This formation helps start with players on defense
- Wide players on defense get forward to join the attack
- Only 1 forward
  - Can be hard because the striker will go forward before their team joined the attack
  - Leads to a lot of 1v2's or 1v3's which is tough to score
  - A lot of players at this age want to play forward so this doesn't leave many options to rotate players



# Practice Planning

- Two Methodologies
  - Game – Practice – Play
    - Get the players moving and focused for practice with an easy game/icebreaker
    - Move to a drill that focuses on the topic for that session
    - End with a scrimmage where you reinforce the topic
  - Play – Practice – Play
    - Recommended from US Soccer
    - Start practice with a scrimmage (free play; no coaching)
      - Can start as soon as you have two players, other players can join the scrimmage as they get to practice
      - Gets players engaged and involved right from the start
    - Move to a drill that focuses on the topic for that session
    - End with a scrimmage with the topic of the session in mind (coaching to reinforce topic from drill)

# Focuses for Development

- Basic rules of the game
  - Familiar with corner kicks, goal kicks, throw ins
  - Goalkeeper rules when making a save vs goal kick
- Shape/Formation
  - Players understand roles and positions
  - Able to stay in their formation as the ball moves around the field
  - Staying spread out vs bunching up
    - “If you ordered a pepperoni pizza , you’d be upset if all of the pepperoni’s were in one spot. We want our pepperoni’s spread out evenly around the pizza”
- Take time on the ball
  - Not just kicking the ball when it comes to them
    - “Take a touch” and “two touch minimum”
  - If a player has space/time = dribbling
  - If a player doesn’t have time/space = passing

# 90% of what I say from the sidelines...

- “Find your shape”
- “Take a touch”
- “Spread out”
  
- If your players understand these concepts or at least thinking about it by the end of the season, you went above and beyond as a coach.



**THANK YOU FOR COACHING!**

# AppointmentPlus Logins

## 3rd Grade Girls

SanDiegoW - Jonathan Jenkins  
ChicagoRS - Mauricio Cortes  
NCCourage - Matt Kane  
GothamFC - Meagan Occhialini  
BAYFC - Jill Maher  
KansasCC - Lauren Crowley

## 3rd Grade Boys

PhiladelphiaU - John Kyrios  
NYCFC - Jeff Jablow  
AtlantaUtd - Dan Finkle  
LAFC - Michael Cashman  
InterM - David Shuman  
LAGalaxy - Tom Clifford  
NERevolution - Stefano Marchese  
HoustonD - Pete Kell

To login to Appointment Plus to schedule practice times:

Direct link to login: <https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/36qnegh0/>