

# St. Patrick's –Elkhorn Micro Soccer

## Coaching Tips

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### Structure

- Who: Preschoolers and Kindergarteners
- When: Saturday mornings, 9:00am to 10:00am, starting April 9
- Where: Bethany Lutheran Church (1 block north of St. Pat's fields, Southwest corner)

### Preseason - Items to take care of at or prior to the first session

- Phone or e-mail your players parents as soon as possible to introduce yourself
- Assign schedule for drinks and snack

### Clothing & Equipment

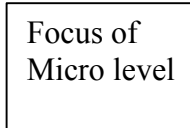
- Shin guards are mandatory
- Soccer shoes are optional
- Water bottle with child's name
- Soccer ball (size #3) with child's name
- For cold weather: sweat pants, long sleeve shirt, hat

### Goals & Coaching

It is the clubs goal that all players, coaches and parents enjoy the micro program. This program is designed to be fun while players are taught the basics of soccer. Coaches must use good ethical and moral standards at all times. Parents are encouraged to gain a basic knowledge of the game.

- Four Pillars of the game
  - 1. Technical
  - 2. Tactical
  - 3. Psychological
  - 4. Fitness
- Support the child – hard work and honest effort are more important than victory in scrimmage
- Always be positive
- Children play for the fun of playing – no stress
- Reinforce positive behavior – best way to help the children achieve their goals & develop confidence

Focus of  
Micro level



### Play

- Focus on dribbling, ball control, passing, receiving, team understanding.
- Don't keep them idle or waiting in line
- Games of inclusion, no loser sits out
- Children should be given equal playing time
- Parents should only yell comments of affirmation to their kids. Instruction should only be given by coach(es)
- Exception: Parents can be encouraged to participate in lesson/drills
- Coaches should minimize field instruction during game play. Too much instruction can lead to less confidence or confusion.
- Give them a 90 second drink break every 15 minutes

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### One Hour Agenda

Teaching Technique – fundamental, match related, match condition

- Warm up (5 min)
- Lesson (5 min)
- Drills (25 min)
- Scrimmage (25 min)

### Warm up (5 min)

"Always warm up your muscles before you play. Muscles pull on bones to move them.

Warming up makes muscles stretchy so they work more easily. If you don't, you might strain or injure them"

- **Jog**
  - start with a fast walk then jog.
  - play follow the coach, the leader, or give them a target to run to.
  - swing your arms as you jog, turn around, and/or jog backward.
- **Ankle circles**
  - lift one foot off the ground
  - draw a circle in the air with your toe
  - first one foot then the other
- **Calf stretch**
  - put one foot behind you
  - bend the other leg until you feel a stretch. Back straight
  - change legs
- **Groin stretch**
  - stand with your feet very wide apart and bend one knee
  - hold for a few seconds
  - change legs
- **Neck and shoulders**
  - lift your shoulders up to your ears, so you're hunched up
  - Then let them drop back down
- **Thigh stretch**
  - put one leg out straight in front and bend the other knee
  - lean forward until you feel a stretch
  - switch

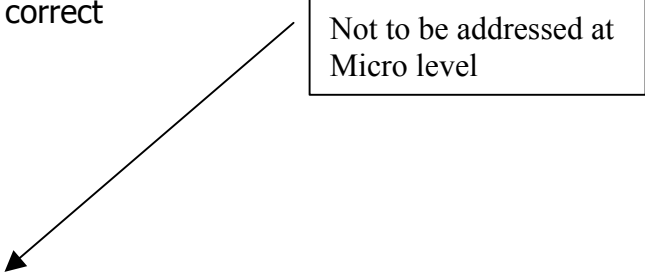
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### Lesson (5 min)

- Teaching process
  1. Demonstrate
  2. Kids practice
  3. Watch players and correct
  4. Practice again
- Basics techniques
  1. Dribbling
  2. Passing
  3. Receiving
  4. Shooting
  5. Heading
  6. goalkeeping
- Focus on one technique per practice
- **Dribbling**
  - You can move the ball with different parts of your foot. Instep, outside, laces, heel & sole,
  - First kicks – imagine a line around your ball, halfway down. Kick on the line to make the ball go straight and low. Kick below the line and it will fly in the air
  - Close control – control the ball or others will take it away from you. Keep the ball with a couple of feet from you.
  - Keep the ball ahead of you so you can see it and watch for other players
  - Change speed and direction
  - Shielding helps to defend your ball – placing your body between the ball and your opponent
  - For speed dribbling, contact should be made with laces (top of foot) with toe pointed down.
  - NO kicking with the TOE
- **Passing**
  - Aim the ball carefully
  - Pass toward the front of your receiver
  - Instep – easiest to make the ball go where you want
    - Put one foot alongside the ball. Keep that foot facing forward
    - Turn your body a little to the side
    - Lock ankle with the toe up and the heel down
    - Strike the middle of the ball with your instep
    - Let your leg swing up as the ball moves
    - Hands out for balance
  - NO kicking with the TOE
- **Receiving/Trapping** (stopping)
  - Cushion the ball with Foot
    - Bend your knees slightly
    - Move foot back as the ball hits it
    - Keep the ball in front of you

Not to be addressed at  
Micro level



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- Foot Wedge
  - Legs bent and heel lower than your toes
  - Let ball get stuck between your foot and the ground
- Receive with thigh
  - Get in path of ball
  - Lift thigh early enough
  - Let ball hit thigh muscle not knee and let thigh give and absorb power from ball
- **Shooting**
  - Laces (top of foot) – make the ball go a long way, harder and faster
    - Run up and plant non kicking foot alongside the ball
    - Both legs slightly bent
    - Kick with toe down (like a ballerina)
    - Follow through - let your leg swing up after kicking
  - Finishing - follow-up after kicking by continuing to run toward the ball
  - NO kicking with the TOE
- **Tactics**
  - Attacking
    - Identify open space
    - When near enough to defender perform a fake to cause the defender to lose balance
    - Immediately after faking , accelerate past defender
  - Defense
    - Immediately chase the ball when ball is not in possession
    - If lost, put yourself between ball and goal
    - Be patient and keep balance

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### Drills (25 min)

- Only effective if you focus on each child making sure that he/she understands and attempts (opportunity for parent involvement)
- **Dribbling**
  - Toe taps
    - One foot on top of ball and other on the ground, then jump and switch
    - Variation – have them dance around the ball
    - Variation – have them move the ball in different directions
    - Variation – call out a body part and they must touch that part to the top of the ball
  - Ring the bell
    - Ball between the legs
    - Hit it from foot to foot using instep, keeping it between your legs
  - Walk the dog
    - Roll the ball around with the sole of your foot any way you like
    - Hold your foot steady on the top of the ball, then roll the ball to the side until your foot touches the ground, go back the other way, foot must touch ball at all times
  - Dribbling races
    - Dribble between cones
    - Variation – use outside of foot only or use left or right foot only
  - Pit bulls and poodles
    - Make a circle with cones
    - One child is the pit bull trying to kick the balls out of the circle
    - All other children are poodles trying to dribble and control their ball within the circle
    - If the child's ball gets kicked out they must run around the circle and become a pit bull
  - Redlight / Greenlight
    - Each player has a ball lines up about 30 yards from the coach.
    - When the coach yells "green light" and turns away they move forward
    - When the coach yells "red light" they must stop, the coach quickly turns back toward the players
    - if the light catches the players or ball still moving then that player must take 5 steps back
- **Passing**
  - Simple pairs passing/receiving
    - Divide players into partners and space them apart by 10-15 feet
    - Each player takes a turn passing to the other player who receives
  - Soccer marbles
    - Divide players into partners and space them apart by 10-15 feet
    - Each player takes a turn trying to pass and hit the other player's ball
  - Numbers game
    - Kids in a line with their ball

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- Coach stands 10-15ft away
- Coach raises hand and shows 1-5 fingers
- Player has to call out the number and then pass the ball to coach
- This teaches player to look up before passing
- Passing through Gates
  - Use cones to set up several 2 yard wide gates randomly in a large area
  - Divide players into partners
  - Partners must pass to each other through the gates
  - Cannot dribble through gates and cannot go through same gate twice in a row
- **Receiving/Trapping** (stopping)
  - Simple pairs passing/receiving
    - Divide players into partners and space them apart by 10-15 feet
    - Each player takes a turn passing to the other player who receives
  - Ball fetch
    - Players line up with ball
    - Coach throws player's ball about 15-20 away in the air
    - Player runs and receives ball and dribbles back in line
    - Make a couple lines to give players more turns
- **Shooting**
  - Simple pairs shooting
    - Divide players into partners and space them apart by 15-25 feet
    - Each player takes a turn passing to the other player
  - Target shooting
    - Divide players into partners and space them apart by 15-25 feet
    - Place a cone halfway between them
    - Each player takes a turn and gets a point each time they hit the cone
  - Goal shooting
    - Line up players 30 feet in front of goal each with ball
    - Players take turns passing the ball to coach, coach passes ball back between player and goal
    - Player shoots
  - Goal shooting with goalie
    - Same as above except add parent goalie
- **Tactics** (simple attacking and defence)
  - Piggy in the middle
    - Three players try to pass one ball back and forth to each other
    - One player is in the middle and tries to steal it from the others
    - Stolen ball allows "piggy" to switch with the player at fault
  - Ball fetch
    - Same as above except have two players chase the ball and the one that initially takes possession tries to dribble back to a cone
    - The other player attempts to defend

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### **Scrimmage (25 min)**

- The game is the best teacher
- Keep the game moving – do not wait for the players to “get ready”
- No goalies
- No throw-ins, kick-ins only, no direct kicks, no penalty kicks
- No referee, coaches' act as referee on the field of play
- No score or standings are kept
- Equal playing time is enforced
- No slide-tackling will be allowed

### **Preschool vs. Kindergarten**

- Objectives for Preschoolers (U5 and U6)
  - Basic dribbling with dominant foot
  - Basic control and direction with the ball.
  - Simple passing and moving to team mates.
  - Simple receiving of ground balls.
  - Small Group games to promote team understanding and solving problems as a group.
  - Fun games must be included throughout this program to promote fundamentals in passing and receiving.
- Objectives for Kindergarteners (U7)
  - All of above areas and to Include
  - Basic dribbling with a change of direction.
  - Basic dribbling with both feet.
  - Basic receiving with chest, thigh, and feet.
  - Fun games can be competitive at this age.