

Dacula Soccer Club

“New Ball Method” for U5/U6 Age Groups

Rationale

The “New Ball Method” was developed to maintain a constant flow of the game for young players. In addition, it aims to increase the number of ball touches by all players on both teams. Through the elimination of restarts (irrelevant in game results except at the highest levels) the ball is in play continuously for the entire game. Research shows that the ball is in play approximately 45% of the time under traditional rules. However, under the “New Ball Method” an increase to nearly 100% is common!

Implementation: Both coaches will be involved with the “New Ball Method”. Each coach will have a ball in his or her hand throughout the game.

- When the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells “new ball!” and throws a new one in. Players will quickly learn to react to the new ball.
- The ball should be thrown to an open area of the field, preferably on the ground.
- Coaches should attempt to stay on the side of the field (each coach working one sideline). This can be difficult with young ones, but the players will soon adjust.
- **All balls that cross the end-line will be treated as goal kicks.** Defending team will move to midfield and allow room for the kick.

Advantages of the New Ball Method:

- Coaches can use the method to get non-assertive players involved in the game. Just roll the ball to them! Watching a player from either team score their first goal is a huge reward for coaches, players, and parents.
- If one team is dominating a game, the advantage can be shifted to a weaker team with a few “guided rolls”. (Remember competitors...they are only 4-6 years old!)
- Breaking up a “beehive” of players is simple...just yell “new ball” and roll one in.

The New Ball Method will increase touches on the ball, increase speed of play (a necessity at higher levels), and create more goals. Therefore, the level of excitement will rise resulting in more FUN!

References: KINS (Kicking is not Soccer) Implementation Manual for GYSA Clubs. 2002