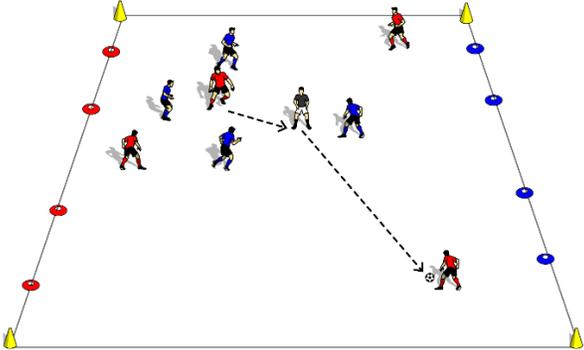


# St. Mary's SOCCER

## U6 Academy Session 6

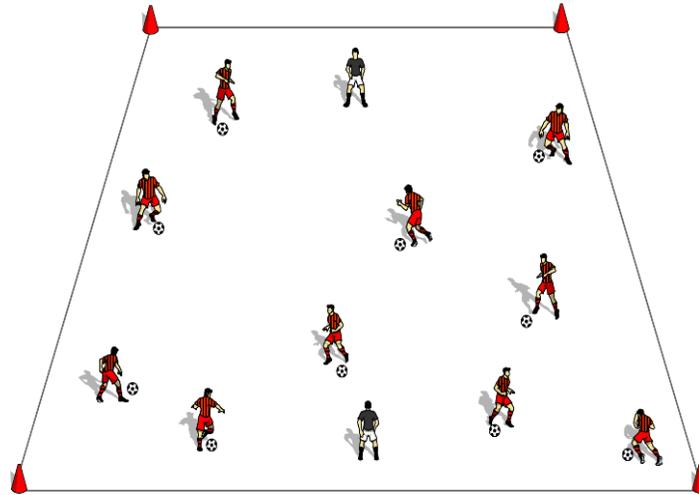
**Main Topic:** Defending 1v1. In this session we will work continue to work with the players on some basic 1v1 defending principles of a proper defensive stance and how to close down and attacking player to provide pressure on the ball.

Activity Name/Description	Diagram	Instruction/Coaching Points
<b>Warmup Activities</b>		
<p><b>Warm Up Game</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coach should have a soccer ball in their hand so if a ball goes outside the area they can immediately call "new ball" and provide one to a player.</li> <li>- BE SURE TO MAKE THE GATE GOALS WIDE SO THE PLAYERS HAVE SUCCESS SCORING BY DRIBBLING THROUGH THEM</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To encourage the players to spread out we will now require that once a team has won the ball they must pass it to the coach before scoring.</li> <li>- Coach cannot be defended.</li> <li>- When the coach receives a pass from a player he will look to find an open player to pass the ball to.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Activity – Body Awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start out with the stationary and dynamic balance and agility exercise from previous weeks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Now with a ball</b></p>	<p>WITHOUT AND WITH A BALL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have them stand on one foot and move the ball forward and backward with the sole of the foot. They should go all the way from the heel to the toe.</li> <li>- Next have them move the ball left and right with the sole of the foot.</li> <li>- Next have the player push the ball forward with their laces and then catch it with the sole of the foot. Do each foot.</li> <li>- Finally, have them push the ball forward with the laces of one foot at catch with the sole of the other foot.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to make the movements more difficult and challenging.</li> <li>- Start by demonstrating the movements and then asking the players to show you movements they can do.</li> <li>- Take it slow at first showing them the proper way to do the exercise and speed up slowly once they understand.</li> </ul>

## Individual and Group Activities

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Activity – Dribbling with the 6 parts of the foot

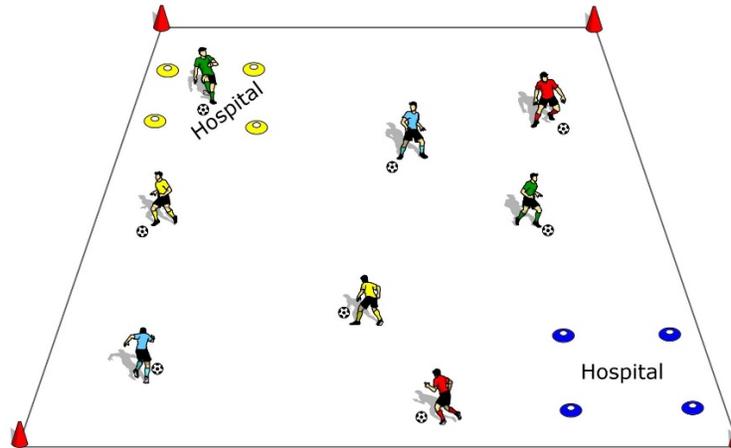
- For this activity we want the players to move around experimenting with each part of the foot they can dribble with.
- The 6 parts of the foot that can be used to dribble a soccer ball are the Inside, Outside, Toe, Heel, Sole (bottom), Instep (Laces).
- Have them practice their moves:  
Pullback, Lean and Push, Stepmover



- Have the players try using each part of their foot. They may not know their left foot from right so have them make two touches with one foot and then two touches with the other.
- Verify they are using the part of the foot that was directed and give them a high five if they are.
- For those that aren't, show them the part of the foot they are supposed to be using and then give them a high five when they use it correctly.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Activity – Hospital Tag

- Set up two small squares with four cones inside your training grid. These squares will be the "Hospital" for the players to go to "heal" after they have been tagged two times.
- Each player must keep their ball within playing distance (generally no further away than it would be if they were dribbling it like a basketball).
- Players must be in control of their ball to tag another player



- Players dribble their ball around the grid trying to tag the other players with their hand while at the same time trying not to be tagged.
- If a player is tagged they must place their hand ("Band-Aid") over the tagged area and continue to dribble.
- Once they have been tagged two times they must go to the "hospital." At the hospital they perform 5 toe taps (or another move assigned by the coach) to get well.

### Review – Defensive Stance

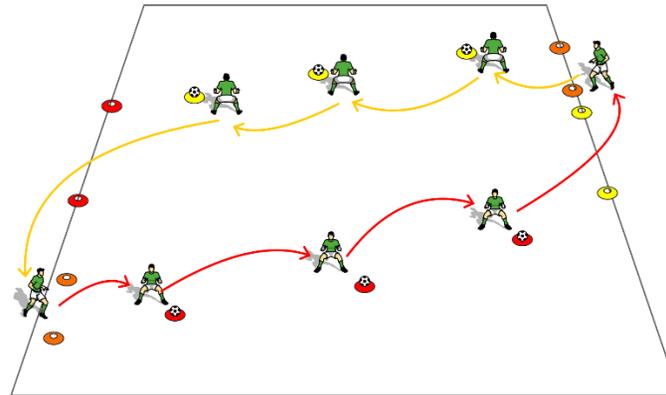
- Proper body stance is important for defending
- We want our body to be low and we want to be on the balls of our feet to allow us to change direction rapidly
- We also want to adopt a sideways stance for several reasons.
  1. The proper position to make a block tackle.
  2. The proper position to execute a poke tackle.
  3. If beaten, in position to quickly make a recovery run.

Demonstrate a good defensive stance and then have the players try it.

- Stand “side –on” with one foot forward and the other back
- Feet shoulder width apart with knees bent to get our body lower
- Be on the balls of your feet to move back and forth without crossing the feet.
- Hands to the side for balance

### 4<sup>th</sup> Activity – Goal Side Defending

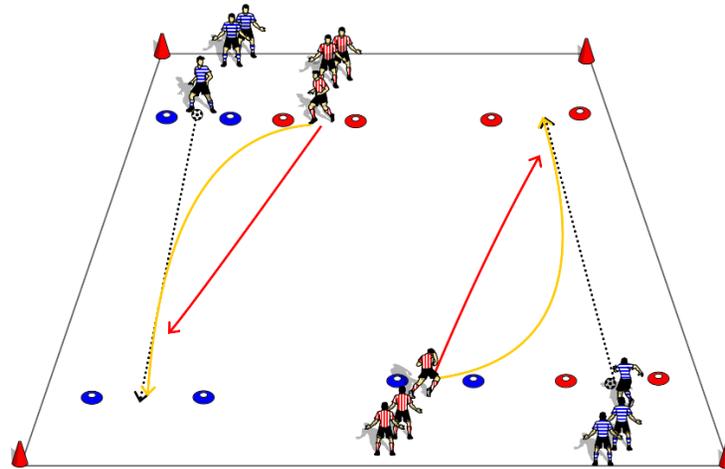
- In this activity we will work with the players to get in the proper defensive stance goal side of the attacking player (cone with ball).
- We want the first cone to be out wide and following cones to be more inward to force the players to have to move inward to get goal side.
- Focus on the defender getting to each cone as quickly as possible to provide “pressure” and stopping in a good defensive shape between the attacking player and our goal.



- Players form two lines, one on each side of the training space.
- When coach yells “go”, first player moves out quickly to get goal side (between the cone w/ball and the goal) in a defensive stance.
- When the coach yells “go” again that player moves to the next cone and a new player comes out.
- Continue with the players joining the line going the opposite direction once they finish each side.

**5<sup>th</sup> Activity – Angled Recoveries**  
**INTRODUCE THIS ACTIVITY**  
**WITHOUT A BALL**

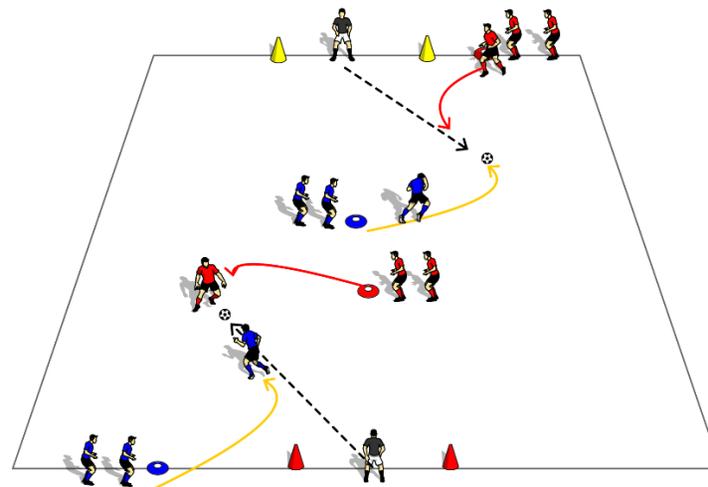
- Set up cone gates at both ends of the training space. Next to the start ~10 ft apart set up another cone gate.
- Once the coach says go the attacking player goes as fast as they can to the end gate.
- Initially have the defending player attempts to tag the attacking player before reaching the end gate.
- Once the players understand the concept of the activity, have them try to defend by getting in front of the attacking player before reaching the end gate. The players switch roles and join the lines going in the opposite direction.



- The primary coaching point in this activity is to start working with the player on making an angled recovery run instead of getting in a tail chase with the attacking player.
- The defending player wants to make as straight a run as possible to get ahead of the attacking player.
- Showing the players how much further it is when they make the curved run instead of a straight run is

**6<sup>th</sup> Activity – Closing Down**

- In this activity we will work with the defenders to make a bending run to close down and get goal side of the attacking player.
- Place a central goal on each side of the grid. The coach will position himself/herself inside the goal.
- Roll the ball out to the attacking player. The attacking player will try to pass the ball back to the coach or beat the defender by dribbling to the goal.

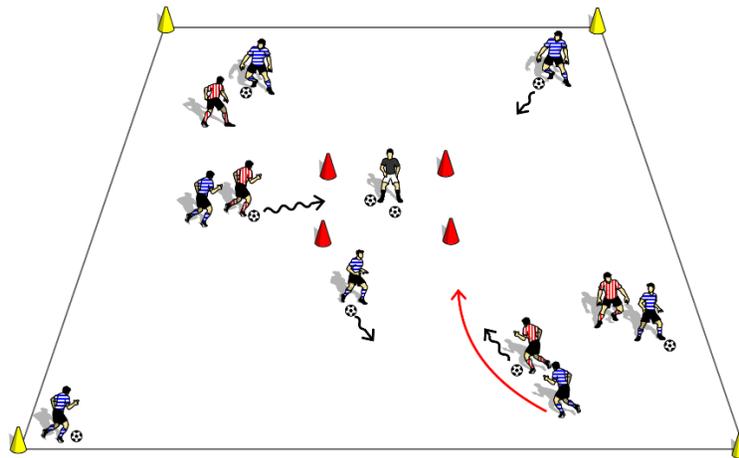


- As soon as the coach rolls the ball out to the attacker, we want the defending player to close down the player and protect the goal by making a bending run to place themselves between the attacker and the goal.
- The defender should start closing down the attacker as soon as the coach rolls the ball instead of waiting until the attacker receives it.
- Close down to a distance close enough to block the pass back to coach but not so close they can get beaten by the dribble.

## Final Games

### 7<sup>th</sup> Activity – Pirate Game

- Set up a 10 ft by 10 ft square “pirate ship” in the middle of the grid.
- Designate two players as the pirates with every player except the pirates having a soccer ball.
- Once the coach says go, the player dribble around the grid (but outside the pirate ship) trying to avoid the pirates.
- The pirates attempt to steal the soccer balls and dribble them to the pirate ship.
- Once a player’s ball is inside the ship, that player becomes a pirate trying to steal the remaining soccer balls.
- Play until there are two players with soccer balls remaining who become the pirates in the next game.

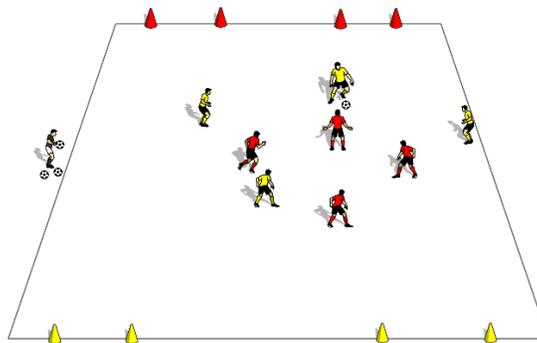


### Key coaching points

1. Pirates want to win the ball and not just kick it away from the attacking players.
2. Once an attacking player loses their ball they immediately become a defender and try to win their ball back from the pirate before it gets inside the pirate ship.
3. Encourage pirates to work together to team up on one attacking player.
4. Once the pirates win a ball, have them work together to get it back to the pirate ship.

### Final Game

- A 4v4 with goals scored when a player dribbles through the cone goal.
- This provides appropriate targets to attack and numerous 1v1 opportunities.



- Set up two cone goals at each end of the grid.
- BE SURE TO MAKE THE GATE GOALS WIDE. WE WANT THE PLAYERS TO HAVE SUCCESS SCORING BY DRIBBLING THROUGH THEM
- Additionally, having two goals at each end will encourage players not to just stand in front of a goal.

### Cool Down

#### **Ball Toss with Partner**

- Players partner up with one ball per pair.
- Players stand a few feet apart and start gently tossing the ball back and forth in the air and catching it.
- We want the players to be successful and not drop the ball so they should be close enough to catch it but far enough to challenge themselves.

- Start out with the partners being closer but expand out once they get the hang of it.
- For those pairs that are able to catch every ball, have them challenge themselves by standing on one leg while they toss the ball back and forth.
- After a few tosses back and forth, have them stand on the other leg.