

Hello Again Player and Parents –
March 2009

This month I thought I would share some of the things that we have focused on in training for the U10 and U11 players this winter season. Both the boys and girls have worked very hard this season and many of the players are showcasing their improvement in their weekly game play.

During indoor training we use a circuit training method for players to work through our topics for the week, usually rotating in 20 minute sessions around the fields. The stations are made up of topics that expose the players to things like game play, speed and agility training, technical work on ball mastery with both feet, and small group tactics. Often it takes a player somewhere in the neighborhood of 6 hours of training a particular skill to be confident enough to perform it in competition.

With this in mind most of our topics have been developed over 2 separate 5 week periods. Early in the indoor season we spent time really breaking down the art of 1v1 attacking, showing players how to read the cues of a defender and how to unbalance them with fakes, feints, and a variety of foot skills. This has really proven helpful to the players in the tight confines of the indoor field. The next time you are watching a game look to see how our players use subtle and sometimes not so subtle body and ball movements and we are able to manipulate a defenders movement with it. This is especially helpful to commit a defender to you before passing the ball on to a teammate.

In the second half of the indoor season we have spent some time on passing and receiving and attacking with numbers up. We have been teaching the players tactics to use in 2v1 situations, and ways to keep team shape when in possession. This has shown in the general ability to keep the ball more than our opponents at the Sportsplex and to create many scoring chances. Regardless of the score each game I see most of our teams making the better soccer decisions and having more scoring opportunities than the other teams we play. This style is both better to watch as a spectator and better at long term soccer development than the kick and chase that most opponents showcase. I look forward to seeing our younger players adapt the 2v1 tactics to running free kicks and corner kicks in the outdoor season. Short corner kicks that are played to a teammate can be a very dangerous tool to get scoring chances on opponents.

While we have only a short time left indoor this year I am confident that our players are continuing to grow and develop. As most of you I am looking forward to warmer weather and more daylight in the coming months.