

Fitness with the Ball

Warm Up

Each coach with a ball. In the warm up, I like to work not only the physical side but also the mental side. I put a lot of conditions on the coaches keeping the ball off the ground. Also, this emphasizes that we need to get the blood going before doing our stretches. I like to up the pace of the warm up so at the end of the warm up they are ready to play in a game.

General Endurance (aerobic)

In soccer, having endurance is very important for a player, so that they can last the whole game. The Horse Shoe is a endurance exercise I like to use. Depending on how old and how fit the players are will depend on what size area you would use. Split the pool of players into 2 groups. Each group will start at diagonal corners of the soccer field.



Group A

Both groups start to jog at same time, when they get to the other corner flag they will run to the half way line, they then jog all the way around to where they started the 1st run, but this time they sprint the whole side of the field. The groups keep adding on 1/6 of the field to the run until they end up doing a horse shoe. This exercise is done with the ball.

Group B

Another endurance exercise I do is again to put the pool of players into 2 groups, have them jog in their groups around the goals. On command one group takes off running and tries to catch up with the group who is jogging. Now, when the group who is running catches the other group, then that group will take off running, again using the ball.



Local Muscle (anaerobic)

Depending on the fitness of the players I would decide what ratio I would use: 3 to 1, 2 to 1, or 1 to 1. The exercise I like to use is quickly running with the ball to stations that are 5, 10, 15 and 20 yards away. First of all do exercise x5. Before doing the exercise I would have the players take the pulse. Secondly do x10 of one another and again

measure pulse straight after the exercise, plus after x15, see how long it takes for each player to fully recover. Finish with x20.

SUMMARY

Depending on the age of the players, fitness can be a big part of winning and losing a game. But, whatever the age, using the ball is a **must** in your training sessions.