

# **TEAM PLAY**

All our work with our players is based on three aspects of play:

1. POSSESSION
2. OPPONENTS POSSESSION
3. TRANSITION (when possession changes).

Players must be aware of what they have to do in each of these three situations. A number of general principles apply to each of them and can serve as guidelines for the players. These will be discussed as follows:

## **1. POSSESSION**

### **Game Plan**

- a) Move the ball down the field in order to create chances (build up).
- b) Score Goals.

### **General Principles**

- a) Create as much space as possible using width and depth.
- b) Retain possession of the ball.
- c) Aim to get forward as much as possible.
- d) Maintain a good team shape.

## **2. OPPONENTS IN POSSESSION**

### **Game Plan**

- a) Disrupt the build up of the opposition.
- b) Win the ball back.
- c) Avoid conceding goals.

### **General Principles**

Make the field of play as small as possible, depending on the strengths of the opposition.

- a) Move towards the ball (pressing)
- b) Move towards your own goal (dropping off)
- c) Push towards the touchline (squeezing)
  1. Pressure the player on the ball.
  2. Mark closely in the vicinity of the ball.
  3. Positional / zonal marking further away from the ball.
  4. Making yourself available to defend, individually and collectively.
  5. Avoid committing fouls.

### **3.CHANGES OF POSSESSION (TRANSITION)**

#### **Game Plan**

Concentration and switching game plan from possession to opponents in possession and visa-versa as quickly as possible.

#### **General Principles**

#### **Loss of Possession**

- a) Nearest player to try to stop the ball being played forward by pressurizing the player on the ball so they will play it square, hold it, or pass it back.
- b) All players switch to marking and contribute towards preventing a goal being scored by squeezing the opposing players eg cutting off options for moving inside.
- c) Blocking opponent's shots.
- d) Choosing a position, which will diminish any direct threat (pressing).
- e) Marking tight close to the ball, delaying if enough teammates are available.
- f) Positional / zonal marking if not enough players are available (delaying not diving in, allowing others to make recovery runs).

#### **Winning the ball**

- a) The player who gains possession (by intercepting or tackling) first look to play it forward.
- b) Players ask for the ball (communication).
- c) The player who gains possession can pass forward into space or run with the ball.
- d) Spread out to create as much space as possible.
- e) Try to stay out of your opponent's field of vision.

Teammates of the player with the ball can make runs to draw attention away from where the ball is anticipated to go.

All the above points are a simplified breakdown of the types of team play we expect our teams to produce.

# **SMALL SIDED GAME PRACTICES FOR U9 TO U11**

## **BASIC PRINCIPLES WHEN IN POSSESSION (ATTACKING PLAY)**

1. Creating Width – Spreading Out as far as possible.
2. Creating Depth – In support (in front and behind).
3. Mobility of the players.
4. Switching Play –from side to side.
5. Developing imagination in play (comes from within).
6. Penetration in Attack (scoring goals).

## **BASIC PRINCIPLES WHEN NOT IN POSSESSION (DEFENDING)**

1. Pressurizing Tackling.
2. Getting Compact as a Team (width and depth; tight and short).
3. Recovering behind the ball.
4. Concentration / Composure.
5. Winning the ball back.

## **BASIC PRINCIPLES WHEN WINNING POSSESSION**

1. Spreading out Quickly.

## **BASIC PRINCIPLES WHEN LOSING POSSESSION**

1. Recovering / Denying Space Quickly.