



# U10 CURRICULUM

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# THE U10 PLAYER: **CONSIDERATIONS**

# U10 PLAYER CONSIDERATIONS

## 1 Athletic performance still under-developed.

Teaching proper mechanics of movement is necessary.

## 2 The U10 Player is motivated by the process of play, not the outcome.

Therefore 'winning' won't make them work harder. Coaches should ask for players to try their best.

## 3 Players equate effort with individual performance regardless of outcome.

Work rate and consistency should be nurtured slowly by coaches and parents.

# U10 PLAYER CONSIDERATIONS

**4** The U10 Player is starting to be able to think ahead slightly in the game.

Get the player to 'look ahead' by scanning the field for information about what decision they'll make.

**5** Visual tracking is developing quickly at this age.

Controlling a bouncing ball becomes very important. Players should start the process of learning to head with squishy balls.

**6** At this age group, players are often coached towards 'competing' before they have learned how to play.

This leads to a much slower rate of development, and should be avoided at all costs.

THE 7-V-7  
**FORMATION**  
(1-2-3-1)

# THE 7-V-7

# FORMATION



# 1-2-3-1

## **#1 – Goalkeeper.**

The GK should learn to provide support to defenders in possession, how to distribute balls on the ground and how to stay connected with the team in possession.

## **#4 & 5 – Center Backs.**

CB's should learn how to support the midfield in possession, how to switch the point of attack and how to make the field larger in possession.

## **#2 & 3 – Wide players.**

These players should learn how to create width in attack, penetration out wide and how to keep their body open to the field of play.

## **#6 – Defensive Midfielder.**

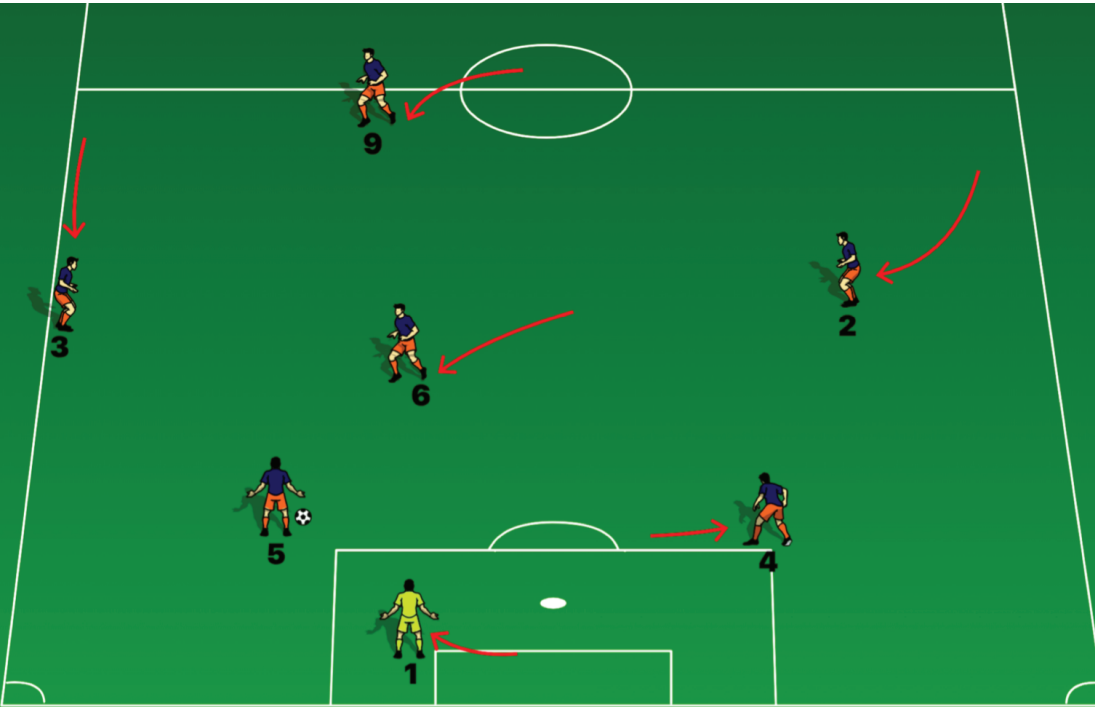
The Defensive Midfielder should learn how to support the attacking players and how to provide good options to defenders in possession. They should learn how to play on the half-turn and look for penetrating passes.

## **#9 – Striker.**

The striker should learn how to provide depth in attack, how to stay high and central and how to receive longer passes from the backs. Receiving balls sideways-on with the outside of the foot is a crucial technique.

# THE 7-V-7

# FORMATION



## BASIC MOVEMENTS FROM THE BACK

**#1:** Supports the ball at an angle.

**#2/7:** Creates width and plays sideways with body position open to the field.

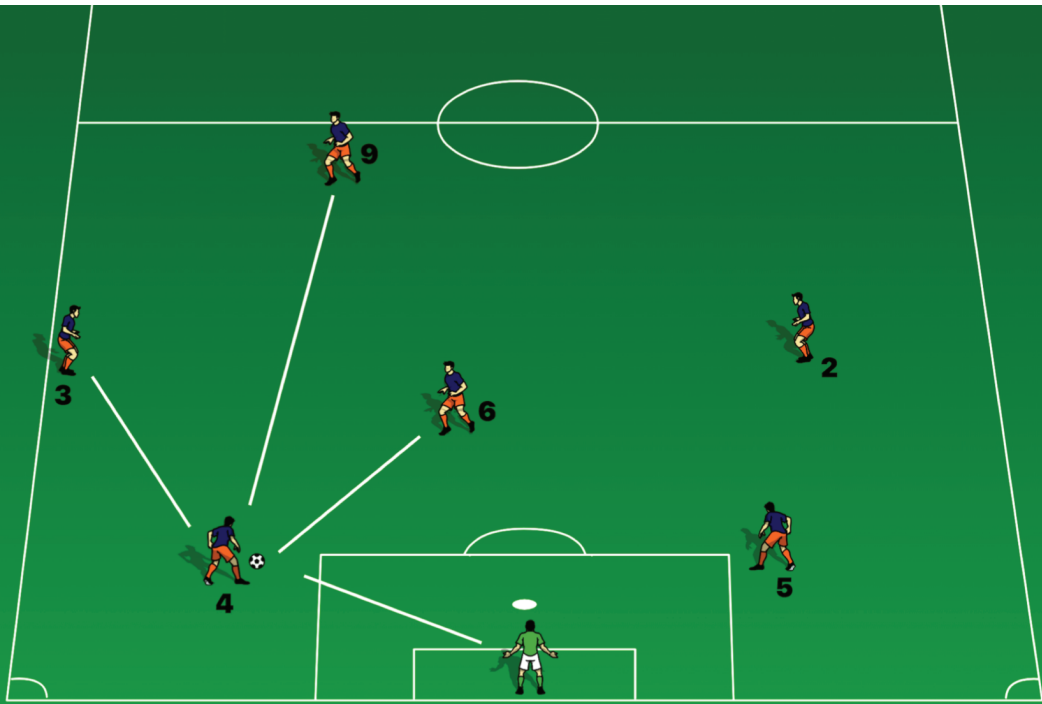
**#4:** Opens the field to potentially switch the point of attack.

**#6:** Takes an angle toward the ball.

**#9:** Stays high up the field and enters the space between 3/6 for passing option.

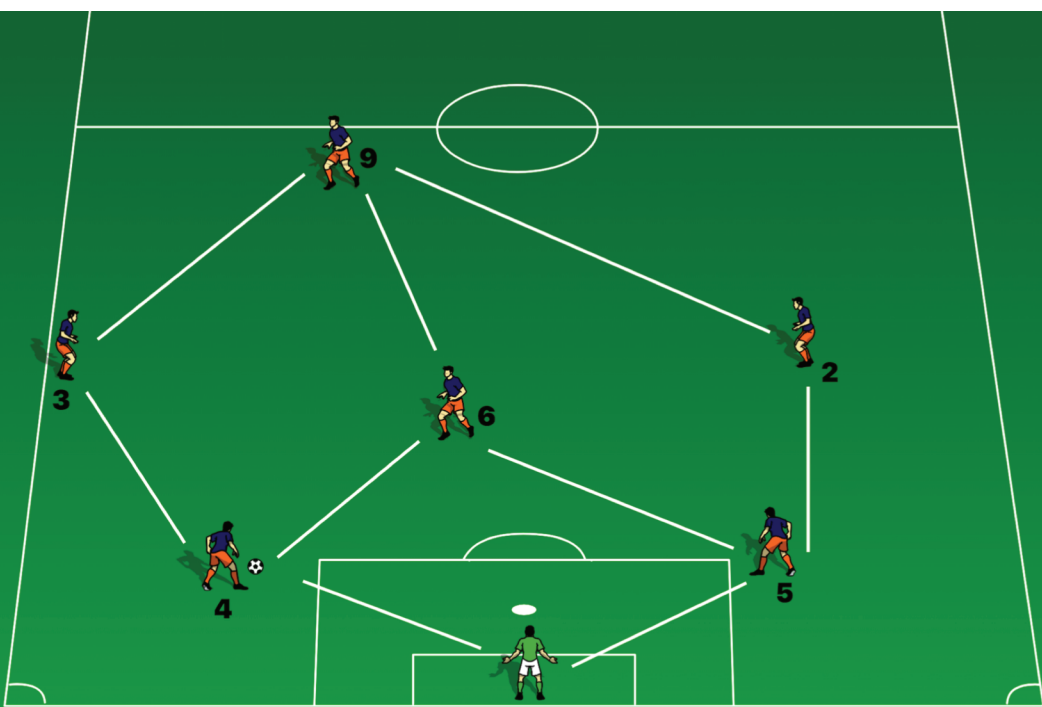


# THE 7-V-7 FORMATION



**OPTIONS  
FROM 4/5**

FROM THE BACK



**BASIC  
SHAPES TO  
MAINTAIN**

FROM THE BACK

# TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

# TECHNICAL

## THEORY

Players at this age have fine motor skills that are rapidly developing, which makes it the right time to increase their abilities of many different techniques.

Players need repetition and a positive feedback loop. The right feedback at the right time is key.

Players need opportunities to produce their techniques in decision-making environments. This 'pressure' can be done with opposition, space, time, or a combination of all three.

A skill is the ability to choose the right technique at the right time, and is what we should aim for.

- **Passing**

- High quality inside-foot
- Outside-foot on the move
- Driving the ball with instep

- **Bouncing Ball**

- Cushion with instep
- Wedge with sole/inside/outside to produce backspin

# LESSONS

- **Receiving**

- Inside-foot
- Outside-foot sideways-on

- **Dribbling**

- Fakes and movement deception
- Turning quickly

- **Finishing**

- Different types of finishing (all parts of foot)
- Instep drive

- **Throw-ins**

- Teach these and allow time to practice

- **Heading**

- Use a soft/squishy ball
- Contact point with the forehead
- Core/body engagement for stability

- **Crossing**

- Body position facing field on plant step
- Lofting the ball
- Balls cut back diagonally

# TACTICAL

## THEORY

Players at this age now have a desire to problem solve in groups and can start to see tactical patterns in very small groups.

This is why 1v1, 2v1, and 2v2 small group decisions are very important with this age.

Forming shapes on the field with groups of 3 and 4 should be shown and reinforced in many various exercises during training.

Segmenting the field to show situations where players would be in the same 'group' during the game will help them start to break the game into smaller pieces to solve. This is the foundation for implementing larger group tactics!

# LESSONS

- **Principles of Defending**

- Pressure and 1v1 Defending
- Cover and 1v2 Defending
- Getting goal-side

- **Principles of Attack**

- Role of first attacker and ways to penetrate
- Support and the role of secondary attackers (2v1, 2v2)
- Depth and Width

- **Playing Together in Small Groups**

- Triangle shape of 3 players
- Diamond Shape of 4 players

- **Restarts**

- Players should know all the different restarts
- Taking up good positions on restarts

# PHYSICAL

## THEORY

Players at this age are now starting to sit in school for long periods of time, this leads to a shortening of anterior muscle groups of the core and legs.

Foam rolling should be introduced, as should hip flexor, quad and hamstring lengthening stretches.

Imprinting kids with physical rhythm is much easier done at this stage than in later stages of development, and provides a unique opportunity to incorporate this into their 1v1 movements of dribbling and defending.

Educating players and families about healthy nutrition options for school, home, and pre/post playing is extremely important.

We want to help form these good habits as early as possible.

# LESSONS

- **Warm-up**

- Players should get in the routine of starting with a warm-up
- Include multi-directional movements and agilities- But avoid high 'plyometric' type of activities

- **Endurance**

- This should be done with a ball or in small-sided-games

- **Rhythm and Fluidity**

- Use activities that promote rhythm and cadence
- Dribbling to a cadence promotes more fluid movements

- **Body Resistance**

- Introduce body-weight exercises (Push-up, Sit-up, Lunges, Planks)

- **Cool Down**

- Players should get in the habit of a cool down at this age

# PSYCHOSOCIAL

## THEORY

Players at this age are still emotionally fragile, and should not be treated as adults.

Encouragement and positive feedback should be the coaches' main tool.

This age player is ready for more responsibility, so giving them all a chance to 'lead' is extremely important. This can be done with team equipment, warm-up activities, leading discussions, etc.

Their perception of their social environment will largely influence their satisfaction with the sport, regardless of ability. Peer to peer positivity is of high importance and should be closely monitored.

Negative interactions should be handled immediately and all players should feel safe and welcome in the environment.

# LESSONS

- **The Need for Fun**

- Allow for time that is light-hearted in nature at practices
- Give lots of praise and encouragement

- **Winning/Losing Gracefully**

- Coach the players about their behaviors in these moments

- **Give Players More Responsibility**

- Practice equipment cleanup
- Their practice bag and own equipment

- **Communication**

- Teach them how peer-to-peer positivity helps the team

- **Respect**

- Coaches/ Teammates/ Referees/ The Game

# SESSION OUTLINE

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## **PART 1** 20 MINUTES

- Warm-up
- Club Rondo
- Technical work with ball



## **PART 2** 30 MINUTES

- Small-sided games
- Add directional activities



## **PART 3** 20 MINUTES

- Scrimmage
- 7v7 including GKs
- 1-2-3-1 formation



## **PART 4** 5 MINUTES

- Cool-down activity
- Debrief



## Warm-up

To be done off the field (except agilities) and prior to the teams' scheduled training time.

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- **Plank** – 4 x 10 sec hard squeezes
- **Push-ups** – 10 reps
- **Single Leg 1/4 Squats** – 2 x 10 per side
- **Lunges** – 2 x 10 per side
- **Agilities**
  - Forward/backward/sideways movements
  - Transitioning between each of those movements

## Club Rondos

To be done immediately after warm-up and during the first few minutes of each practice session.

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- **4 Players** – 3v1
- **5 Players** – 4v1
- **6 Players** – 5v1
- **7 Players** – 5v2
- **8 Players** – 3v1 x2

Once you get to 8+ players, start two and three groups of the same games above.

# PART 2

30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## 1/4/5/6 vs 9/10 PROGRESSION

1/4/5/6 keep the ball  
against 9/10



1/4/5/6 play to PUGGs  
against 9/10

# PART 2

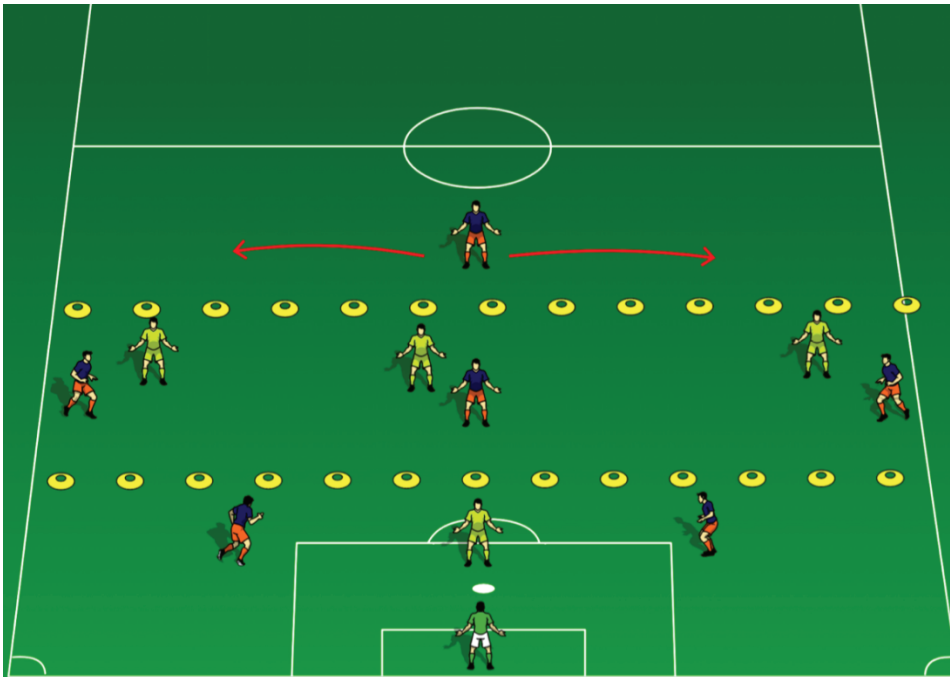
30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## ADDING 2/3 AND 9

1-6 vs 8/10/9 to  
PUGGs and Gates.  
2/3/6 can score into  
puggs or by dribbling  
through a gate.



1-6+9 vs 7/11/10/9 to  
finding target (9). Score  
by finding target (9)  
feet from 4/5 or 2/3/6  
who can turn and play  
quickly.

# PART 2

30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## ADDING OPPOSITION 4

Variations:

- 2/3/6 can dribble across line to make 2v1 with 9.
- 2/3/6 must find 9's feet before entering to make 2v1.



Variations:

- Same as previous game to PUGGS
- Once the attacking line is crossed 2/3/6 and opposition 8/10 can enter that high zone.

# PART 2

30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## REMOVING BARRIERS

Remove the attacking zone and/or defending zone and allow free play in those areas.



See if the players have understood their roles and have spatial awareness.

# PART 2

30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## ADDING OPPOSITION 5

Variations:

- A player may dribble across the attacking line and another may join to make a 3v2 in final zone.
- A player must pass across the zone first to either 9 or an oncoming 2/3/6, once that occurs another may join to make 3v2 in final zone.
- A player must find the feet of the 9 to 'unlock' a 3v2 in final zone.

# PART 2

30 MINUTES

# SMALL SIDED GAMES



## REMOVING BARRIERS

Remove barriers and allow free play in those larger areas to check spatial awareness in players.



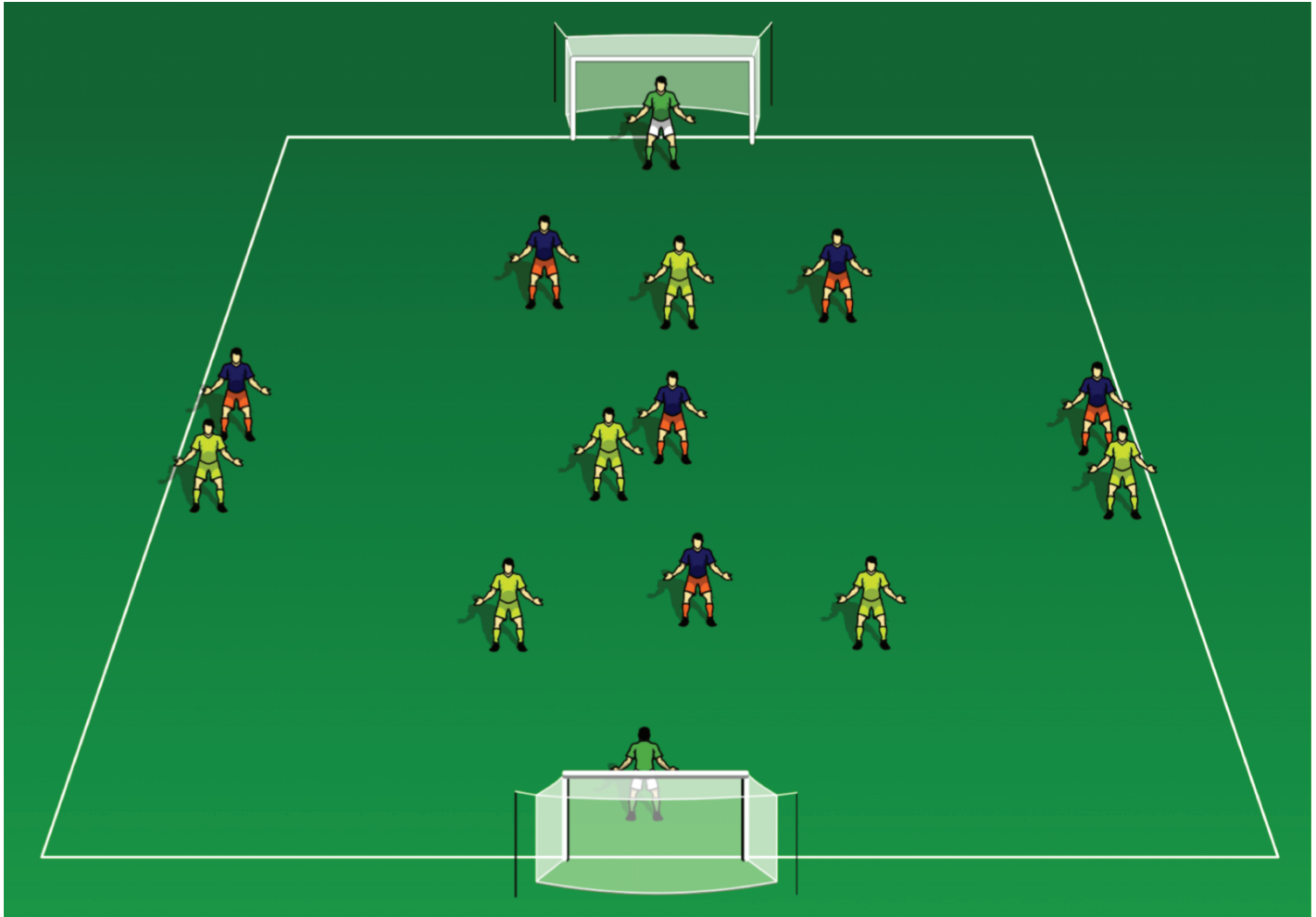
Also allow for movement across lines by attacking players.

Either 4/5 can cross the defensive line to make a 5v4, or any combination of 2/3/6 can cross attacking line to create numbers up in attacking zone.

# PART 3

30 MINUTES

# SCRIMMAGE



## Scrimmage

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- 7v7
- 20 minutes



## Cool Down

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- **1/2 Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch**
  - Arms above head
  - Head looking up
- **1/2 Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch with Twist**
  - Hands in front of body
  - Twist upper torso toward knee that's up
- **1/2 Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch with Diagonal Reach**
  - Hand reaches across/up and in front of face
  - Reach with opposite hand of knee that's up
- **Ankle Rolls**
  - While standing, roll one ankle out and feel the 'stretch' on outside of foot

## Debrief

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- **Ask:**
  - What did you learn?
  - What did we do well?
  - What can we improve on?
- **Positive Recap**
  - Individual & Group
- **Encore Effect**
  - Leave them wanting more!
  - Team Cheer

# GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

# GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

- ALL players should play ALL field positions.
- All players who are confident with trying goalkeeping should be given the opportunity and chance.
- No player should always be the goalkeeper, at this age they should all still be identified as ‘soccer players’ and not as ‘positions.’
- Playing time should be as close to equal as possible.
- Opportunities and rosters should rotate equally and evenly based on team numbers.
- This will be the first experience on one of our SDA teams for many families. Coaches should monitor and reinforce parent behaviors that will help the group:
  - Stay together in following years.
  - Respect all parties in the process (players, other parents, referees, coaches, etc.)
  - Understand that player development is our mission, and what that looks and feels like in various situations.
  - Create a positive team culture that is attractive and fun.