

# **FROM DISCUSSION PAPER - JUNIOR GIRLS DEVELOPMENT MODEL**

## **Development Squad Session Planning (DSSP)**

This was a critical component of success and something that the writer had to be very disciplined with, noting:

- (a) the number of Coaches (4) and Players involved in each session (30 on Wednesday's and 25 on Thursday's), and
- (a) being mindful of the need for variety and fun, yet
- (b) ensuring good structure and discipline

## **Session Plan Template (SPT)**

This is shared to enable the reader to understand the practical and simple nature of Development Model activities.

### **(1) Pre 4.00pm Warm up**

Players were encouraged to warm up upon arrival and not wait for others. Simple tasks such as "happy feet", jogging with and without the ball were included. It was important for the social chit chat to occur prior to the commencement of the Session

For the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Grade we used "Ladders" as part of their warm up routine, this is an exercise that should be used more often as great for co-ordination.

### **(2) 4.00pm to 4.08pm Shuttles**

#### **Disc Cones**

- 5 with spacing 2m apart for 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 6 with spacing 3m apart for 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 4 Rows (one for each Team)

#### **Coaches Tip**

- space each Row such that two players from each team can participate at one time
- ensure each player completes properly each shuttle

#### **Mandatory**

- # 1 - half pace – 3 times – focus on proper turning and acceleration from cone
- # 2 - full pace – 2 times – focus on agility, balance and turn

#### **Additional Options (Minimum of 2 utilised each Session)**

- # 3 - hopping -1 time – focus on timing of hop, change leg each way
- # 4 - skipping – 2 times – focus on "bounce", co-ordination of arms & legs
- # 5 - Ball dribble – 2 times – focus with foot on top of ball to stop at cone
- # 6 - Ball dribble – 2 times – focus with foot to back heel or drag back at cone
- # 7 - Piggy back – 1 time – focus on leg drive and balance
- # 8 - Backwards – 1 time – focus on balance and push off toes

### **(3) 4.08 to 4.20pm Balance / Weaving**

#### **Weave Poles**

- with spacing 2m / 3m apart
- 1 row for each Grade
- either spaced straight line or staggered left / right (favoured by the writer)

#### **Mandatory**

- # 1 - half pace – 2 times – focus on balance, use of arms, with tight pole turn
- # 2 - full pace – 2 times – focus on speed (fast – slow into pole and fast out), agility, balance and turn

#### **Additional Options (Minimum of 1 utilised each Session)**

- # 3 - hopping -1 time – focus on timing of hop, change leg each pole
- # 4 - skipping – 2 times – focus on “bounce”, co-ordination of arms & legs
- # 5 - ball dribble – 2 times – focus with strong then weak foot

### **(4) 4.20 to 4.50pm New or Re-visited Weekly Task**

A range of tasks were covered in sessions throughout the Season and a number were re-visited by the Teams either collectively or individually.

A non exhaustive list has been included for reference and it is to be noted that a number of these are focussed on areas where the Girls have lacked exposure, development or are weak.

- Inside foot – trap and pass between players (5m)
- Chesting the ball down (very simple)
- Headers (very simple defensive)
- Clearing kick (balance – arms - place foot plant – striking foot under ball – and leg swing thru)
- The high ball (get some body part underneath!!) – this is the most difficult of tasks for Junior Girls – 99% of Girls will initially shy away from the high ball and it takes both coach and player patience and perseverance to coach to competence level
- Passing between Cones 1m apart – from 5m / 10m / 15m distance
- Hill work – develop leg strength and arm drive
- Throw In's – (hands position, behind head and feet on the ground)
- 400m run with the ball (push and run - looking for touch control while moving)

## **(5) 4.50 to 5.05pm Saturday Team Coaches Time**

This time slot allowed the individual Team and assisting Coaches to spend specific time with their Saturday Team and focus on specific tasks.

This was also an important time for individual and team bonding, and development of the team spirit.

As Head Coach, I would assist in some tasks or invest some specific time with the Team 1's from each Grade. From a developmental viewpoint, the players in the Team 1's from the four grades required additional coaching in the form of expanding an existing task difficulty or introducing a new task.

In addition, there were a number of individual players across the four grades who the writer would rate as the best in New Zealand in a position for their age group, and these players needed to be communicated with such that they were challenged appropriately and so they understood specific requirements particularly at game time.

Whenever there was an upcoming Tournament, a specific lead up program would be implemented so that the conditioning, playing structures and team balance components were in place.

## **(6) 5.05 to 5.25pm Game Time**

The playing format used for Saturday games would be used and game time was usually full on – the Girls would be keen to play each other and there were no half hearted efforts.

From a Head Coach perspective, it was important to use this also as a coaching opportunity and at least 70% of the time I would be actively involved in the game, either to balance team numbers or the teams playing ability.

For example if Team One 9<sup>th</sup> Grade were playing Team Two 8<sup>th</sup> Grade then by playing for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade it would create certain playing conditions that would cause the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade team to have to think about how they could for example, get past with the writer in defence, or how to defend against body feints and other simple techniques.

For the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, for example, it would assist in discovering better field positions for receiving the ball from the defence or for the forwards to present a target for a through ball.

The message from this is that the “show and tell”, re-enactment and reinforcement by the coaches was a very powerful coaching method.

The Girls also enjoyed the challenge of taking on and beating their Coach!

## **(7) 5.25 to 5.30pm Shuttles**

These were conducted in the same format as in 2) of the SPT however at full pace for three attempts. It was considered important to ensure each player carried out this task properly and with no short cuts.

The discipline of task completion at end of session and ensuring the thinking process was active is important.

This task was completed enthusiastically and team bonding was very evident in the “loud” encouragement between team mates and the competitive nature the girls displayed.

A mention must be made of the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls (Age 5 and 6), they were invariably first to line up for shuttles and so enjoyed this task!!

As mentioned above there was significant noise throughout and often the Girls would demand re-runs and keep their parents / caregivers waiting.

### **End of Session**

Often it was obligatory for the writer at the end of the Session, and sometimes during, to be involved in fun activities such as giving piggy-back rides, spinning in circles with player after player or if the Girls felt the writer needed “discipline’ then shuttles or push ups with someone on his back was the norm.

This end of session activity is in reflection, an important part of their personal experience and enjoyment at attending development squad training and I am sure for some, “payback” on the writer by being able to act out and reverse the coach / player roles.

Needless to say the attitudes and energy levels contributed to some quite amazing sessions – parts of some sessions were self managing because of this.