YOUTH ACADEMY TRAINING PROGRAM

NEW METHODOLOGY FROM ITALIAN SERIE 'A' COACHES

U5–U8

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Mirko Mazzantini coached at Empoli FC for 10 years, working with all the main age groups at academy level. In 2010 he was recruited by AFC Fiorentina to work with the U14/U15 Academy teams.

During the 2010/11 season Mirko won the U15 Italian Academy Serie ‘A’ championship.

In 2011/12 Mirko was the Assistant of the Fiorentina Reserve team during pre-season and he was the coach of the ACF Fiorentina U14 team who won the Academy Serie ‘A’ championship and some international tournaments.

Mirko is currently the ACF Fiorentina U15 coach for the 2012/13 season.

He is a qualified football coach through the “Young Players Coach” program and a UEFA ‘B’ Licenced Coach, as well as an author of many coaching publications, articles, books and DVDs.

Simone Bombardieri played for Empoli FC for 5 years. He then started his career as a coach for the club 15 years ago at the age of 22, where he has been coaching various academy age groups from U9-U14.

In the 2011/12 season, Simone was the coach of the Empoli FC U14 team who reached the final of the Nick Cup International Tournament, where they lost in extra time against Inter Milan. They also finished eighth in the Academy Serie ‘A’ championship.

Simone is currently the Empoli FC U15 coach for the 2012/13 season.

He is also a qualified football coach through the “Young Players Coach” program and a UEFA ‘B’ Licenced Coach, as well as an author of many coaching publications, articles, books and DVDs.
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As mentioned in the introduction, this book is not meant to be a list of training sessions but an attempt to share our methodology, which can be very rewarding when applied to this particular age level.

The “Italian style” methodology of training represents the structure on which all the training sessions will be based.

All the sessions will follow the same logical structure and are composed of 3 phases:

1) Initial phase
2) Central phase
3) Final phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Initial Phase</td>
<td>Initial Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>Working Block (Technical and Tactical)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Central Phase</td>
<td>Technical Game</td>
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<td>15 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Motor Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Final Phase</td>
<td>Final Game</td>
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CHAPTEER 5

Practice 3

RWTB in Channels & Shooting - ‘The Canoe’ 10 mins

**Technical objective:** Running with the ball, stopping the ball (control) and shooting.

**Motor Skills Objective:** Running, kicking and quickness of execution.

**Description**
In an area 20 yards x 20 yards, 2 goals are placed on the pitch connected by 2 ‘Rivers’. The players must run with the ball inside the river pretending to be in a canoe. Without going outside of the river, they must stop the ball and shoot in the goal.

After the shot, the player picks up the ball out of the goal and starts dribbling the ball along the other river towards the other goal.

**Variations:** 1) Shooting without stopping the ball. 2) Set some obstacles to be avoided inside the rivers.

**Coaching Points**
1. Players need to keep the ball close to their feet, especially around the turns.
2. When shooting, the head should be over the ball and the non-striking foot should be placed next to the ball to maximise accuracy.
SESSION 16

Practice 1

Quick Reactions Dribbling Race - ‘The Colours’ 10 mins

Technical objective: Ball control/mastery and dribbling at speed.

Motor Skills Objective: Running, coordination, adapting and motor reactions.

Description
The players dribble the ball in an area 12 yards x 12 yards. On the outside there are 4 coloured zones. The coach calls a colour and all the players must quickly run towards the coloured zone called out by the coach. The last player to arrive in the zone will be subject to a penalty or lose a point.

Variation: Associate the colour to an object or image, such as ‘Lets go to the sea’ (blue).

Coaching Points
1. When dribbling within the square players need to use small touches (keeping the ball close to their feet) and have good concentration/awareness to avoid collisions.
2. Make sure the players react quickly to your call, encouraging them to dribble quickly to the correct coloured zone.

Practice 2 - Individual Tactics Block

15 mins

See Pages 32-36
Soccer Italian Style coaches Mirko Mazzantini (AFC Fiorentina) and Simone Bombardieri (Empoli FC) are both professional academy coaches and in this book demonstrate their brand new training program for U5-8 year olds.

This book contains their detailed philosophy and methodology to train technique, individual tactics, motor skills and coordination, as well as 20 full sessions (100 practices).

Have you got the DVD / Video Download?
- Includes 20 exclusive practices not in the book.
- Buy now from www.soccertutor.com