

I realize that there is a tremendous amount to teach at U-12s, but if something is not taught or an environment not created to learn it in, then it can't be learned. Period. Just keep it positive so that the players try it in practice and in games. Also, do not forget to give parents a copy of their at-home work guide. Those 20-30 minutes each day with a parent or by themselves will do as much for them as we ever could in our short times together. They need touches on the ball to refine their skills and develop confidence.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR

Good Habits

- 1) Moving to ball and playing it as early as possible; be it in the air, on the ground, or on the SHORT HOP. Experience (practice) will develop timing and decision making as to when/where/how to play the ball in an effective manner.
- 2) Controlling the ball with one foot/leg only, with the other on the ground bearing the weight. *By doing this, the player has already begun to take the first step in their run !!!
- 3) A willingness to run through the ball with any part of their body (head included). In this way, at least the ball will be 'carried along' with the player until gravity brings it down.
- 4) Getting the ball on the ground as quickly as possible.
- 5) Accelerating on the dribble and/or making a quick, accurate delivery after control. As #1 improves, the players will develop the 'field vision' and anticipation necessary to assess the situation properly and decide on the correct play.
- 6) Early aggressiveness to the ball to gain an edge over the opponent.
- 7) Soft touch control to keep the ball close and in the chosen direction.

Bad Habits

- 1) Backing up and allowing ball to bounce high.
- 2) Knocking the ball out of control and away from body.
- 3) Trying to control the ball with both feet, shins, or thighs at the same time. BAD!!!!