

Unreal Soccer





If we never look, listen, ask or learn, we will never know if we can improve a kid in 5 minutes.

Real Soccer

Not everybody can teach or coach but everybody can learn.

Real Soccer is a coaching system that teaches techniques and tactics so that teams can win games. Freestyle Soccer is a learning program

that identifies the strengths, weaknesses, skills, talents, fears, needs and limits of every kid so that we can target their training. Imagine if we could discover the skills and drills that each kid needs to improve.

The aim of Unreal Soccer is to combine a coaching system with a learning program, integrate Soccer skills with natural skills and activate the energy, intelligence and natural talent that all kids have.

Anyone can observe players at training and matches to learn about their natural talent. We all have the ability to look, listen, observe, think, research, discover, analyse, assess, study, develop and measure performance so that every kid can achieve their full potential.



It's Only Natural

We're teaching Soccer kids without learning anything about them.

When Soccer kids keep making the same mistakes, it's only natural for coaches to assume that kids lack the talent to reach the top. It's not natural for coaches to think that they need to improve their coaching. Unreal Soccer questions everything we do so we can find better ways, faster ways, smarter ways and different ways to improve every kid.

We're teaching perfect striking technique to kids who don't know how to move their feet or what to look at when they kick a ball. We're trying to improve Soccer skills without looking at the natural skills.

When things go wrong in a game, it's the natural skills that coaches shout about: 'Why don't you look?', 'Why don't you listen?', 'Give him a call', 'Somebody make a move', 'Talk to each other', 'Think about it', 'Look around', 'Make a run'. The more we can learn about natural skills, the more we can teach kids about their Soccer skills.



Calling

We teach kids what not to call, not what to call.

The most common calls in Soccer are ‘mine’ and ‘leave it’ because we keep teaching kids not to say ‘mine’ and ‘leave it’. These are the words that stick in their minds. We need to teach players **what** to call.

We teach kids to call for the ball. So, Nick has the ball and four team mates shout out his name. Nick really needs to know **where** he can pass the ball. Calling is the communication of information. Two team mates clash simply because neither of them call a name. Calling is the most effective way to turn eleven individuals into a cohesive team.

There are at least 20 calls that teams can use to keep possession. An unreal coach will ask questions to make kids think for themselves. He will keep asking players to name 20 calls until they all remember. He will run a grid game in silence so kids can appreciate the need to call.



Striking the Ball

Kids become conditioned to play the way they train.

When we teach basic ball control, we separate the Soccer skills from the natural skills and isolate the control surface so we can focus on the technique. We get kids to stand flat footed and kick in slow motion while the rest of their body stays rigid. They do the same in the game.

When we teach teams to shoot, kids are standing in line and getting one touch of the ball every two minutes. Each kid shoots and then goes to the back of the line where they spend 90% of their time talking to their mates and forgetting what their last shot was like.

When we prepare teams to play a game, we get kids to stand around in a circle and share one ball. The average player gets 10 ball touches before kickoff and spends the next 20 minutes making unforced errors. They learn to stand around in a game and wait for the pass before they run. Freestyle kids keep thinking, controlling and moving.



Shooting

Shooting at goal is the simplest and most neglected skill in Soccer.

Any kid can score a goal. Soccer goals are huge. You can fit 34 balls between the two posts and 10 balls from the ground to the crossbar. That's 340 places to score. As soon as we put a goalkeeper in there, kids shoot wide and high. Most kids struggle to get a ball on target.

Some kids miss because they try too hard to kick the ball too hard. Some kids kick the ball straight at the keeper. Some kids take their eyes off the ball when they shoot. Some kids lift their heads and blast the ball over the bar. Some kids pass to their mates because they're scared to miss. Most kids miss big simply because they aim big.

Kids don't know what to aim for or what to look at when they shoot. Every coach can observe shooting drills and discover why kids miss. Every club can establish a shooting gallery where kids can practice their skills and coaches can research their drills. Every major Soccer region should have a goal scoring academy for leading strikers. Every kid should have the opportunity to learn how to shoot and score goals.



Heading

If kids stand still to head the ball at training, it's understandable that their feet are glued to the ground when they head in a game.

When we teach kids to head a ball, we look at their head and their heading technique so we can correct their mistakes. We never look at their feet. When they make mistakes, we correct their technique. Kids spend years repeating the same mistakes that we keep correcting.

The difference with a learning program is that we observe mistakes so that we can discover their underlying cause. We learn about players. We soon discover that a lot of kids stand flat footed to head the ball. This makes them lunge at the ball awkwardly. It takes 5 minutes to show kids how to use their whole body when they control the ball.

Some kids close their eyes when they head the ball because they're scared of getting hurt. The ball hurts because kids let the ball hit them instead of them hitting the ball. Freestyle Soccer uses close repetition drills to develop heading confidence. We can help any kid head a ball by observing them and discovering what each kid needs to improve.



Juggling

We can teach control but we need to learn about human movement.

When we teach kids to juggle, we get them to stand still and kick the ball back into their hands. When we learn about kids, we see that they only move one foot and they kick too high. The secret to juggling is as simple as walking and running. Kids need to alternate their feet so that they regain balance with every kick they make, every step they take. There's a limit to how long kids can hop around on one foot.

In a learning program, we can measure performance and improvement and actually show kids how much progress they're making. Short term results can inspire kids to try harder. Most kids will never realise how good they are if we never give them feedback. Juggling is easy for kids to practice on their own or with their mates and they can keep a record of their juggling figures so that they always have a target to aim for. Too many talented kids only practice when they're told to practice. Juggling enables kids to practice and improve every day.



Juggling Circle

Any kid can look the same when we tell them what to do but they all look different when they have to think for themselves.

Choose 6 to 8 elite kids who have a high level of ball control and an understanding of basic tactics. Ask them to juggle a ball in a circle and let them use one bounce between passes to keep the ball going. Observe the kids and keep a score of the number of passes they get.

Most groups can't put 10 passes together without dropping the ball. They stand dead still and keep dead quiet. The Juggling Circle gives you a quick assessment of how these players behave in a game.

Some kids rush. Some stab at the ball. Two kids go for the same ball because they don't call. One kid chases the ball out of the circle and the rest stand still and watch. There's nothing wrong with their Soccer skills but they can't develop them if they don't use their natural skills.



Match Preparation

Kids who stand in a circle sharing one ball are not warming up for the game. They're learning to stand around and wait for the pass.

We don't know how many ball touches kids need before they're ready to play a game. We don't think about it because we haven't been told to think about it. Think about it. The average kid gets 10 kicks before kickoff. Any coach can easily research this. Kids need at least 200 ball touches before their eye/foot coordination kicks in. Anyone can discover this if they think about it and measure player performance.

Close repetition training drills keep improving touch until kids reach the intuitive level where their control becomes second nature. Any kid can get 200 ball touches in 5 minutes by juggling on their own, close repetition drills in pairs or by kicking a ball against a wall. Any coach can discover how many ball touches each kid needs before a game.



Match Play

A skilful player can dominate the game with the ball. A talented player can dominate the game without the ball.

The central attacking midfielder has control of the ball and is desperately looking for a run and listening for a call. Three forwards are standing with their markers and waiting for the pass so that they know where to run. When we all focus on the ball and the ball player, it's easy to understand why so many forwards get caught offside and so many defenders forget to watch the blindside.

Ordinary players think 'ball and goal'. They chase the ball until they catch it and then rush towards goal until they lose it again. Freestyle kids think 'call and move'. They constantly provide support options for the ball player and disrupt the opposition. Unreal kids think 'space and possession'. They create space to receive the ball and then they keep possession until an opportunity arises to score a goal. Each kid plays 95% of the game without a ball. They need to know what to do.



Freestyle Soccer

In the 10 years it takes to coach each Soccer kid, nobody will spend 15 minutes with that kid to give them an individual assessment.

Freestyle Soccer is a learning program that identifies the strengths, weaknesses, skills, talents, fears, needs and limits so that all kids can achieve their full potential. Freestyle Soccer consists of six principles. All kids are different. All kids have talent. All kids make mistakes. All kids can practice. All kids can improve. All kids need is a ball.

Ordinary training produces ordinary kids. Extra training produces extraordinary kids. Freestyle training creates unreal Soccer players. With an efficient coaching system, we can easily hold our position in the Top 100 Football nations of the world. With an effective learning program, we can develop specific training drills for each kid, we can measure their performance and improvement and we can inspire kids to practice more so that we can become a Top 20 Football nation.



Unreal Soccer

We need to look for better ways to coach Australian Soccer kids.

We can all do a lot better. There are different stages that Unreal Soccer players need to pass before they achieve their full potential. Skill development is the lowest level of player improvement. Any kid can learn how to develop skill by practising close repetition drills. Talent is what we do with our skill. We all have talent but we don't all use it. There are talented ball players who are too selfish to pass the ball and gifted, athletic players who are too lazy to run for it.

Character is what we do with our talent. Unreal Soccer looks for kids with character. In a team game, character identifies the kids that we can depend on when other kids give up and look for the easy way out. Belief is what we do with our character. We won't search for talent if we don't believe that all kids have talent. Kids develop self belief by measuring their performance and recording their improvement. Creativity is what unreal kids do with their belief. They have the confidence to make decisions and the freedom to improvise moves.



Freestyle Kids

Freestyle kids may not have the best theory but they have the best practice. They make practice and practice makes perfect.

There are thousands of Australian Freestyle kids who learn by teaching themselves to surf, skate, ride, play basketball or juggle a Soccer ball. These kids don't fall apart without parental supervision. They manage to keep improving without being directed, corrected, protected or rejected by well meaning adults. It's nearly impossible for a coach to learn about Freestyle kids without constantly stopping them to correct their mistakes and tell them what's wrong with them. Parents who stand behind the goal to help the keeper are not helping.

Freestyle kids provide an insight into how talented players really are when left to think for themselves and make their own decisions. They don't stand in a line waiting to kick a ball. They don't all practice the same drills. Each kid practices what they need to learn and improve. They don't allocate a set time for each skill or drill. Freestyle kids develop respect, responsibility, resourcefulness and resilience.



Training Drills

We can teach the same every day or learn something new every day.

A teaching system can use the same drills for every kid regardless of their level of intelligence, talent, motivation, experience or position on the field. A learning program adapts to the needs of each player.

There's a key to every kid and a drill for every skill. Some drills improve skills, some drills identify talents, some drills measure performance, some drills challenge limits, some test character, some encourage creativity and some inspire confidence.

Any kid can learn to kick a ball. Freestyle kids learn different ways to control a ball so that nothing can catch them out in a game. They can take a drill to the next level such as a rotational chip or juggling on the move. Freestyle kids invent their own power drills and fire drills.



Talent

If we think kids lack skill, we've got a lot to teach. If we think kids lack talent, we've got a lot to learn.

Skill comes from the coach and talent comes from players. Coaches can't teach talent. They can discover it by learning about players. All kids have talent. They can develop their talent if coaches give them the freedom to think for themselves and play their own game.

There is absolutely no reason why Australia can't be a Top 20 Football nation. Lack of talented Soccer kids is a weak excuse for giving up. If we don't look at players, ask them questions, listen to them or learn about them, we can't tell that they lack talent. We can easily improve any Soccer kid in 5 minutes because nobody teaches kids how to move, where to move, what to look at or what to call.

