

Coaching U9 to U14



Thank You!!!

Thank You for choosing to coach one of our teams! You are about to provide our players with the experience of a lifetime and they will be forever indebted to you. Our goal with this guide is to help you be the best coach you can be so that each child on your team has the opportunity to develop their personal and soccer skills to their full potential.

- Ryan Hurley

Director of Coaching PenBay Soccer Club

1. Why do you coach?

In the space below, **in one sentence**, write why you coach.

*“Your why is your departure point, your focal point, and your destination all in one.
- Todd Beane, Clear Coaching.”*

This is something we can tell ourselves on the way to training, after a hard day at work, which will ground us and give us patience and purpose.

2. The PenBay Style of Play

The style of play that our teams have should be somewhat consistent across the board for all of our PenBay teams. We hope that our own coaches and coaches from elsewhere are able to recognize the PenBay style of play. Our style is to:

- **Be able to Keep the Ball on the way to scoring goals!**
- **Play out of the Back**
- **To have players who are constantly scanning for space without the ball and finding space with and without the ball**
- **Relentlessly and immediately win back possession when we lose the ball!**
- **Have players with strong finishing and soccer problem-solving skills**
- **Be a club that is difficult to score on**
- **To play with width and depth in attack**
- **To be a Team, everyone helps in attack, everyone helps in defense**

3. PenBay Player Development

Player Development is a phrase that gets thrown around a lot in the soccer world but what does it mean to us here at PenBay? For us, Player Development is twofold and requires taking the long-term view and approach first and foremost:

- 1 – Nurturing Children in a Positive Environment
- 2 – Preparing Children to be able to play the Adult game of Soccer

Creating a Positive Environment

At PenBay we want to develop great players AND great people as well. We want not only to try and win our games but we also want to develop character. To win with grace and lose with grace. To be great teammates. To respect officials and other players and ourselves. This starts with a

Coach who is positive and supportive and who is encouraging and enthusiastic. This type of coaching helps players develop positive self-esteem, feelings, and experiences, giving them the confidence to conquer challenges they will face later in life.

The Adult Game – Increasingly the type of player that has the most success in the adult game is a player with a Universal skill set. They are a player that is able to play almost any position on the field. They are a player that understands the entire system of play so that when during the course of play there is an interchange of players and positions, they can take up new positions fluidly and support their team from anywhere on the field. This type of player:

- solves soccer problems quickly and correctly
- is always looking for space and exploiting space
- is good at attacking & defending
- plays well with both feet
- passes well, dribbles well, and has a great touch on the ball

What does this mean for you as a youth U9-U14 Coach?

- **Make sure your players play multiple positions throughout the season because that is what is needed to develop their understanding and abilities right now. With time and opportunity, they will be more of a Universal player than a one-dimensional one! Help them be comfortable with both feet! Teach them to see and exploit space on the field. Help them with basic 2v1 & 3v2 situations so they can solve problems! Help them to work equally hard at attacking & defending. This will give them the most opportunity to play and have fun as they progress in the game!**

4. What is Coaching?

“Coaching is an activity aimed at influencing the way soccer is played and the people who play it.” - Lingen, B. V. (1997). *Coaching soccer: The official coaching book of the Dutch Soccer Association*. Spring City, PA: Reedswain.

We believe that as a coach you are a facilitator and a guide, not a dictator or commander. As coaches, we are here to set the conditions for learning soccer and how to solve soccer problems. At Penbay Soccer Club we hope to Influence our players through Positive Coaching practices and by using the USSF grassroots Play-Practice-Play model and elements of the TOVO Institute program.

5. Practices

One of the requirements of Coaching in SoccerMaine’s “Fall Classic Travel Soccer League” is that you take the USSF GrassRoots course for your level of play (7v7, 9v9, or 11v11). The GrassRoots courses are excellent and we encourage you to use the practice plans you gained access to through the course located at: <https://learning.ussoccer.com/>. You can also supplement the USSF material with a few of the TOVO practice plans and exercises below. I would always encourage you to start practice with free “Play.” This is an important child-centered way to give the players back the game and allow them to play, learn, and have fun while everyone is arriving.

During training, we encourage you to:

- **Catch a Player Doing Something Well!**
- **Look for success relative to the day's concept!**
- **Be specific as to what he/she did well!**
- **BE A PLAYER'S ADVOCATE** instead of a constant critic
- **Have fun, it's a game!**

From a behavioral standpoint, you will get more of what you want... by focusing on what you want! If you would like to utilize the TOVO 7v7 curriculum below to supplement the USSF curriculum I would encourage you to insert it into the "Practice" part of Play-Practice-Play and shorten each element by 5 minutes. One Rondo and One Positional Game between play sessions works great.

- Individual Development "Scanning"
- Team Development - use the "Team Organization" time to put players on the field in your playing shape and play vs. first 1 then 2 then 3 then 4 then 5 opponents. One day play out from the goal to two pugs at half-field, then the next practice try playing from half field attacking the goal.

SCAN

F7 Training 1A

ID: P#1 Perceive & Conceive (Scan)

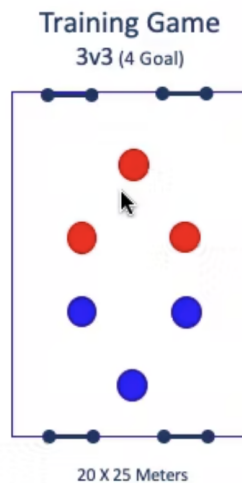
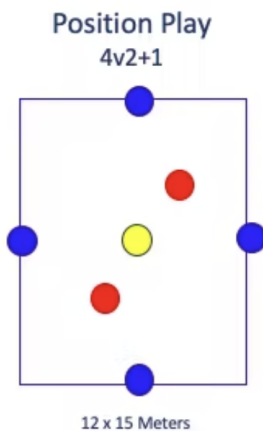
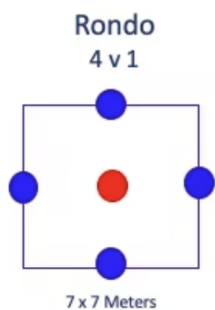
TO: 1.3.2.1 Structure

TO: 1.3.2.1 vs 0,1,2,3 Defenders – 2 Touches (10 Min.)

R: 4v1 + Movement (16 Min. 4+4+4+4)

PP: 4v2+1 (25 Min.)

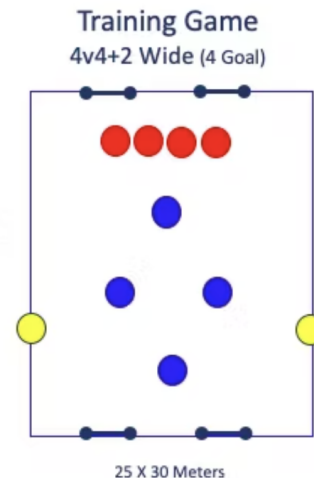
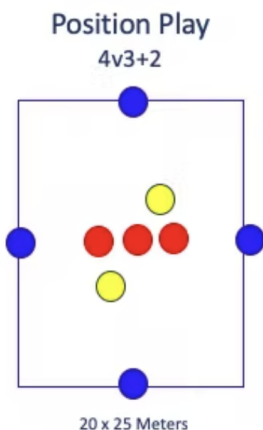
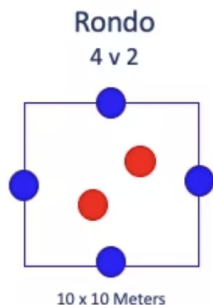
TG: 3v3 (30 Min.)



F7 Training 2A

ID: P#1 Perceive & Conceive (Scan)
TO: 1.3.2.1 Structure

TO: 1.3.2.1 v 4 Defenders (10 Min.)
R: 4v2 + Movement (16 Min: 4+4+4+4)
PP: 4v3+2 Neutral (25 Min.)
TG: 4v4+2 Wide (30 Min.)

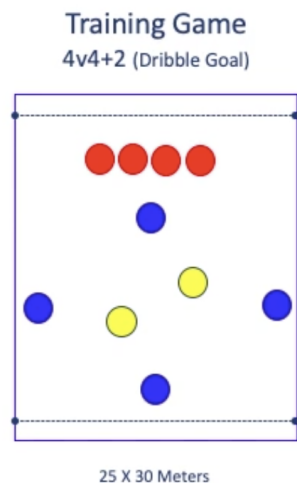
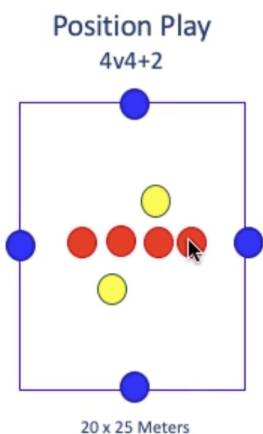
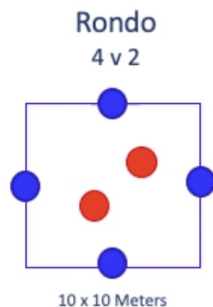


In 4v3+2 you can handicap the red defenders by holding hands, then release 1. On attack use the game to reinforce your structure (1-3-2-1), center back, wing backs, striker, internal players

F7 Training 3A

ID: P#1 Perceive & Conceive (Scan)
TO: 1.3.2.1 Structure

TO: 1.3.2.1 v 4,5 Defenders (10 Min.)
R: 4v2 + Movement (16 Min: 4+4+4+4)
PP: 4v4+2 Neutral (25 Min.)
TG: 4v4+2 Dribble Goals (30 Min.)



● Blue Team ● Red Team ● Neutral Players

TOVO

4v4+2 = When Red wins the Ball, Blue comes to the center and must touch hands before defending, Before the game starts the reds must know which assigned spot they will have when they win the ball.

Coaching the Goal Keepers.

If you have the good fortune of having a player or players that are very interested in Goal Keeping that is super! If you do not then you should rotate players through the position at U9/10 so that they can get the experience and see if it is something they might like. We don't have a lot of time to train and usually not enough bodies to train specific goal-keeping skills. One way to get some goal-keeping training in is to warm up your keeper as the other players arrive for the "Play" part of your play-practice-play practice. Use the time to get their feet and hands moving and to work on scooping up ground balls, receiving balls at their chest using a W or Diamond hand shape, and the basics of diving while seated = **bottom hand makes a backstop, top hand on top of the**

ball, leg up for balance. Then they need to participate in your rondo's as a field player bc we expect them to use their feet and they can mind the net for your 4v2 and 3v1 to goal sessions to see live shots etc.

Homework

Coerver skills are an excellent addition to practice that can help your players “master the ball.” They should be used as 2-3 minutes of your warm-up **OR** when transitioning between practice stages **OR** ideally as assigned weekly Homework for your players to spend time with the ball by themselves outside of designated team practice times.

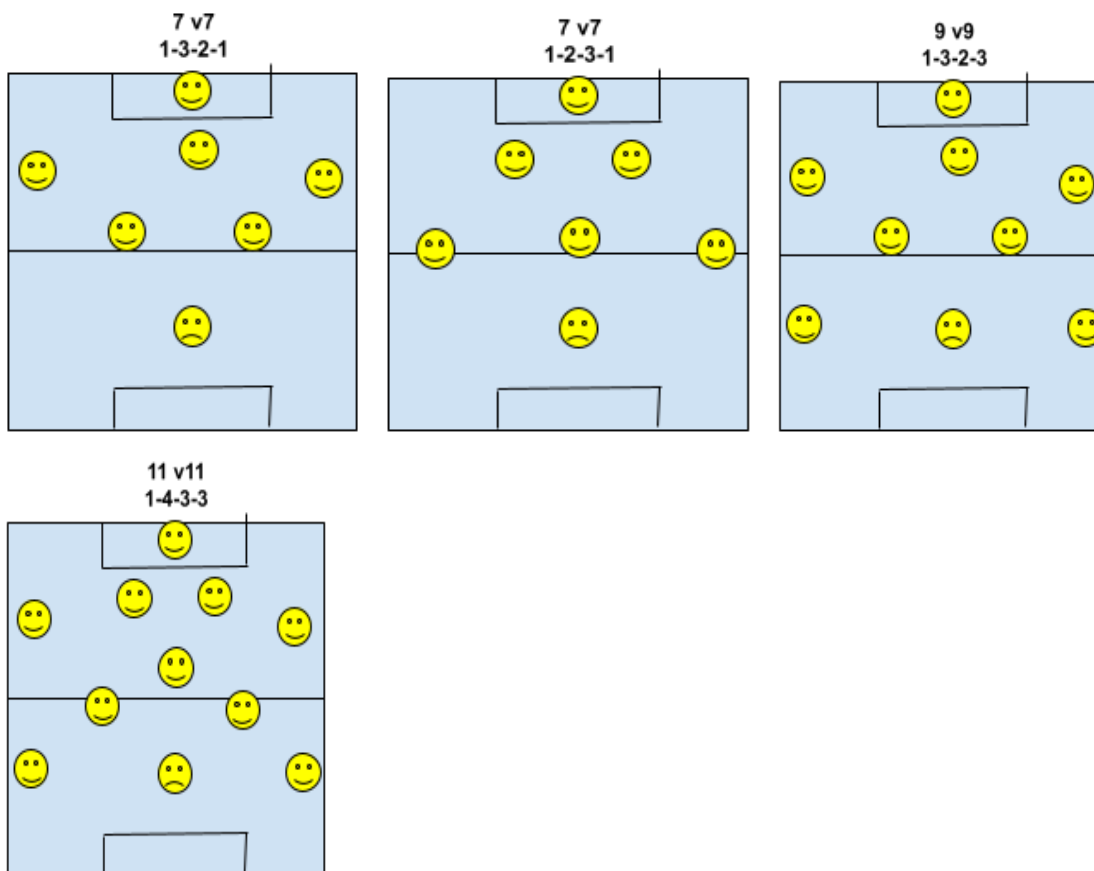
Download the app here:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/99-skills-to-soccer-ball-mastery/id804376953?mt=8>

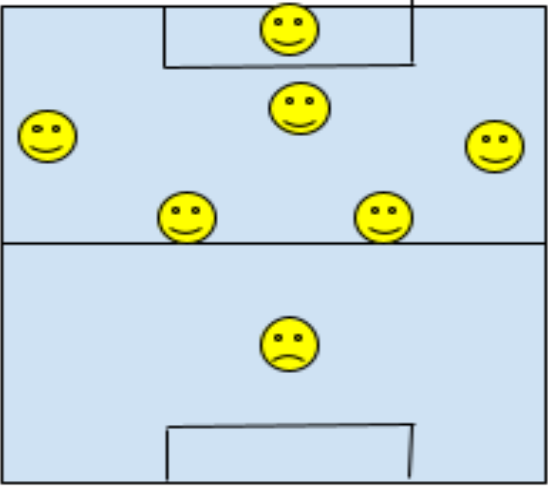
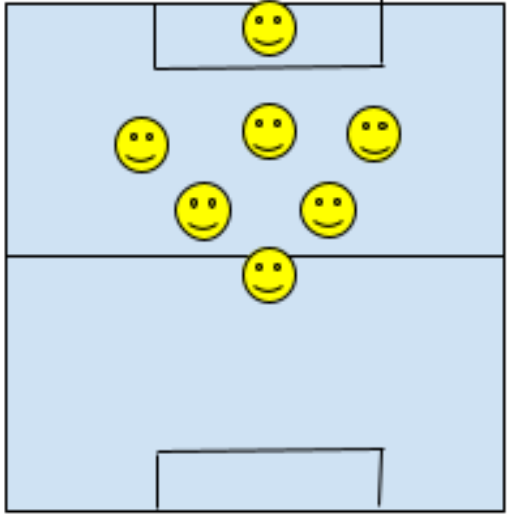
2 or 3 Ball Mastery Essential Skills max each session or **choose 1 for HomeWork:** Sole Taps – Shuffles – Shuffle Stop – Take Stops – Shuffle Stop Take – Shuffle Take – Shuffle Stop Slide – Slides – Roll Up Inside – Roll Up Outside – Heel Toe Rolls – Inside Outside Rolls – Roll Overs – Take Stop Scissor etc....

7. GAMES

A) System: At PenBay we play **7v7** at U9 & U10, **9v9** at U11 & U12 and **11v11** at U13 & U14. Field sizes get progressively bigger as the kids move through the program. To reinforce our Style of Play we'd like you to use the following shapes as a base for your games (you always have the latitude to change shape during a game at your discretion).



All Shapes = Expansive in possession, Compact in defense

1-3-2-1 In Possession	1-3-2-1 Out of Possession
<p style="text-align: center;">7 v 7 1-3-2-1</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">7 v 7 1-3-2-1</p> 
<p>- Create Width with the wide players – Depth With the Striker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mind the space between each line in the system and the space between each player in the line – try to keep the equal distances as we move the ball towards goal. Encourage the wide backs to make attacking runs. 	<p>-Shrink the space for your opponent to play and then move as a group towards the ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the whole team in roughly 20 x 20-yard space (30 x 30 yards U11-14) – Make it as hard as possible for the other team to get to the goal.

8. B) Solving Soccer Problems – The Coach AS Observer & Problem Solver in Chief

During Games you will have many obligations to fill. Who plays where and when? Keeping your players motivated and working hard. Keeping a positive mindset that everything that happens in a game is an opportunity to learn, helping parents on the sideline engage in no directions cheering etc... But one of your most important roles is to try and quiet all the running thoughts we typically have re: individual players and their actions and to just watch your team play and evaluate the team on how they are doing:

- Keeping Possession on the way to Goal
- Winning Possession back from the other team and defending our goal

- And the Key Moments between these two game situations ie, how and what do we do when we have just lost the ball **OR** how and what do we do when we have just won the ball back

On Game day Our Job is really to identify what is going well and what is going wrong in these areas and then find a way to help our players understand 1)what the problem is? 2)Why it is a problem? and 3) what are the steps we can take to solve it?

Formulating Soccer Problems: What Exactly is Going Wrong?

- What is going wrong re: keeping possession, winning possession, and the moments in between?
- Who are the key players – what are their positions?
- When does the problem arise?
- In which area of the pitch does the problem occur?

Example *Our GK plays the ball out within the buildup line to one of our backs but we can't complete the next pass to advance the ball. The problem is that we can't keep possession (The What). This is a problem because in order to score goals and win the game we must have the ball in order to shoot and score (the Why that our players need to understand is "We can't score if we don't have the ball") Finally the solution: Our Goal Keeper needs to put a bit more pace on the ball, our receiver must get side on to receive so that they can see all their upfield options when they take their first touch, our other teammates must take up better positions in between the spaces of our opponents so that we can get the ball to their feet. If we can show our team the solution at halftime – especially using our disc cones laid out on the ground or a whiteboard so they can see it visually – they will have a better chance to keep possession and advance the ball. We can then also practice this situation at practice to further their learning.*

What are we doing well and let's celebrate that. What do we need to do a better job of? Keep it as simple as possible, show them how to fix it using cones or a tactics board, and your players will really grow. Engage them so they are thinking about the game.

9. POSITIVE COACHING

PenBay Soccer Club is committed to creating a positive environment for our players. As such, any coach who takes the “Double Goal Coach: Coaching for Winning & Life Lessons” online course from the Positive Coaching Alliance (<http://positivecoach.org/>) will be fully reimbursed by PenBay soccer (just e-mail us a copy of your certificate upon course completion). This is a 1-hour course that includes such speakers as Julie Foudy, Phil Jackson, Doc Rivers & Dusty Baker. All extolling the power of positive coaching to help athletes be their best, as athletes **and** people. It is a goal of ours to have every coach in our organization certified as a “Double-Goal Coach.” It's a research-based program with proven results that will help you become a truly positive force in the lives of your players. You will learn about such things as the magic ratio of 5:1 which is the optimal number of positive to negative comments that you can use to get the best out of your players. You will also learn about the importance of having a mistake ritual for your players so that they can quickly and effortlessly move past the mistakes they have made. Below is an excerpt about teaching the players about what PCA calls the ELM tree of mastery.

The Tree of Mastery is an ELM Tree. ELM stands for E for Effort, L for Learning, M for bouncing back from Mistakes

- **Research shows athletes who focus on ELM improve faster and do better on the scoreboard. To be our best we should focus on ELM.**
- **If you give your best effort every time, I'll be proud of you no matter what the score is.**
- **Learning requires having a Teachable Spirit. Let's try to learn something to get better every practice and every game.**
- **The best players don't throw a tantrum when they make a mistake, they reset on the next play and then later they try to learn from their mistake.**
- **I want you to play with enthusiasm and be aggressive. It's okay to make a mistake – the key is to bounce back quickly from it so you can make the next play. We'll learn a mistake ritual we can use to recover quickly from mistakes.**

You might reinforce the L in ELM by giving your players a “homework” assignment to watch their sport at the college or professional level on TV and write down at least one thing they learned that they could try in their own practice.

There are many more facets to the program that you will learn when you take the online course. I've been using many parts of the program for about a decade now with my high school players and with our Penbay players and can say that the results have been excellent! Give it a shot, you won't regret it and we'll pay for it!

9. Additional Resources

<http://devzone.positivecoach.org/>