



Burlington Youth Soccer Association

Goalkeeping Clinic

05/31/09

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Challenger Sports Club Trainer



The Goalkeeper

Let us begin by stating the obvious - playing goalkeeper requires very specialized skills & is an extremely difficult position to play.

A goalkeeper is required to be flexible & agile, possess quick reactions, have great hand-eye coordination & be fearless! (crazy sometimes helps too!)

Let's look now at a goalkeepers roles/responsibilities on the field. A goalkeeper is expected to make saves, stop goals, catch high & crossed balls, command their area/box & throw themselves at opponents feet to save goals! Therefore, just like an outfield player, it is essential we are aware of the necessary skills a goalkeeper must possess & we are able to coach these points to goalkeepers in a way they can understand.

Within this clinic we will deal solely with the *fundamentals* of goalkeeping. We will be looking at *basic technique* & how we coach this to goalkeepers within your own practices/teams.

Areas we will cover during this clinic are as follows:

- Goalkeeping warm up
- Handling exercises
- Reaction drills
- Movement on line
- Scooping up low balls & dropping on knee
- Catching high balls
- Introduction to diving
- 1v1 situations

Thanks,

Ryan McConnell.

Goalkeeping Warm Up:

Just as with an outfield player the goalkeeper needs a very specific warm up too - something that is often neglected in youth soccer all over the world. It is essential goalkeepers are worked through a demanding warm up mirroring what they will face in the match. This helps them prepare their bodies & minds for the upcoming match.

Drill 1: Throw/catch in 2s.

1 ball between 2, short distance to begin. Throw the ball at varying heights to partner - focus on getting body behind the ball & consistently catching every 'feed'.

Drill 2: Pass ball around body in 2s.

1 ball between 2 again. Ball is passed side to side around body. This works on handling & warming up the core area of the body.

Drill 3: Over under in 2s.

2 players stand back to back, one ball. Ball starts above head & is passed to partner who then bends & passes ball through legs to other player who again puts it over their head - sequence continues.

Drill 4: Catching high balls.

GK throws ball up to themselves & works on getting under the ball & catching at highest point.

Drill 5: Catching crossed balls in 2s.

One 'feeder' throws balls from side on position to work on catching crossed balls.

Drill 6: Saving shots.

In goal now, work on moving body behind ball. Start with throws & progress to proper shots at goal.

Drill 7: 1v1 situations.

One 'attacker' dribbles goal ward from varying angles & the GK has to make stops by pressurizing attacker or narrowing the shooting angle.

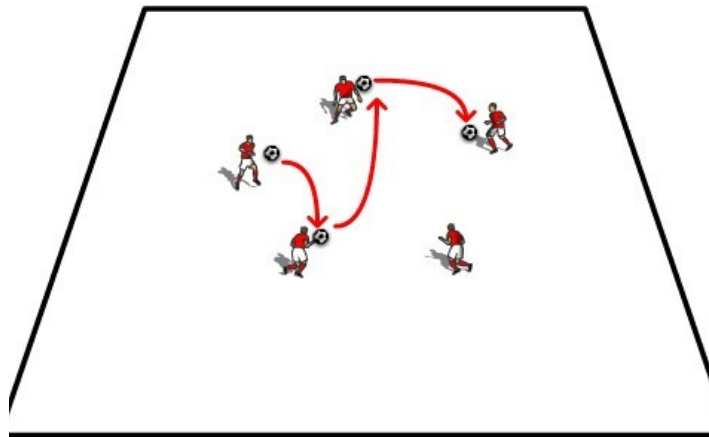
After this 20 minute physical warm up your Gk will be ready for the match as all potential situations they will face in the game have been addressed & the Gk's confidence will be increased.

Handling Exercises on own:

- *Figure of 8's* through the legs. Basic exercise but challenge the GK to do it as fast as possible whilst maintaining control over the ball.
- *Body rotations*. GK has to rotate the ball around their mid section without dropping it.
- *Front/back*s. Ball starts between legs (bent over position) left hand in front of right leg & right hand behind right leg. GK must now 'pop' ball up in front of body & catch ball with left hand behind left leg & right hand in front of left leg....confusing I know, but it's actually really simple when shown!
- *Over the head!* Starts with ball in front of body & throws it over head & attempts to catch it behind back.

Reaction Drill:

Group of 4+ players in small circle. 1 ball per group. Idea is to react to the ball movement. It's being quickly thrown & caught between everyone - player must be ready to receive at all times & react when ball is coming toward them!



Progression of the above is the Gk's can only 'palm' the ball out to someone else. Aim is to keep the ball moving between players without ball hitting the floor.

Movement on goal line:

It is imperative we educate Gk's about the correct technique of *moving* along their line. Many youth Gk's run along their line in a side on position to the ball - we need our Gk's facing the ball at all times. The Gk must *side step* along their line always having their chest to the field/ball. This allows them to always keep their eyes on the ball!

Drill 1: Side stepping along line



Organization:

- 4 tall cones (or any cones) positioned like 4 goals as shown above
- 4 Gk's, 1 between each goal (no ball it's all shadow play)
- Coach calls either "left" or "right" & the player must side step to the right 'post', touch it & side step back to the middle.
- Gk must always have hands in the 'ready position' (in front of chest, open palms)

Coaching Points:

- On toes all time
- body always faces play
- side steps along line
- 'ready position' at all times
- always return to center of goal.

Introducing the dive.

Same drill as above except players are on their knees. Coach calls "dive left" or "dive right". The Gk then drops/dives toward the right or left cone.

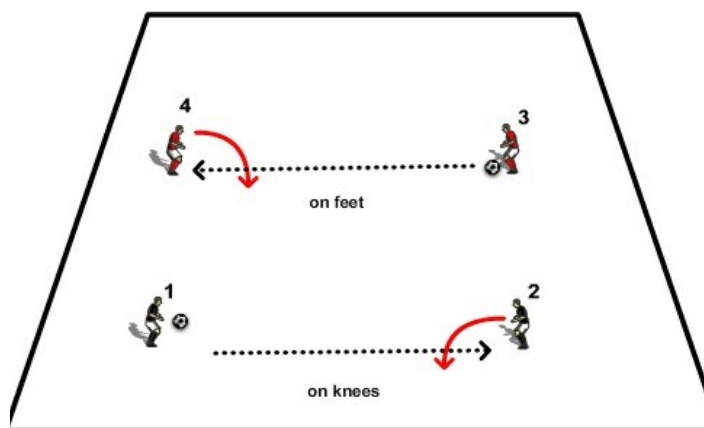
Coaching Points:

- chest always faces field - do not turn body away from ball/play
- one hand behind ball & one on top (stops forward kicking it out of hands)
- rear leg ends up straight, front leg is bent outward toward play (offers some protection from on rushing attackers)

Dealing with low balls:

How many times do we see our young Gk's just kick the ball away from goal with their feet due to the fact they do not know the correct technique for dealing with low balls? I see it often & it is something that is so simple to coach the Gk's on.

Drill 1: in 2s, on knees with progression to standing.



Organization:

- in 2s, one ball per group.
- Distance is short to begin with.
- Player 1 *rolls* the ball to player 2 who scoops ball up into chest & falls on to ball to protect it from attackers.

Progression: Standing - player 3 passes to player 4 who drops to one knee, scoops up then falls on ball.

Coaching Points:

- get body behind the ball
- drop to one knee (opposite foot should be turned inward to avoid ball going through legs)
- palms on floor let ball run up arms & scoop up ball into chest
- fall on to it to protect from attackers

Catching High Balls & Crossed Balls:

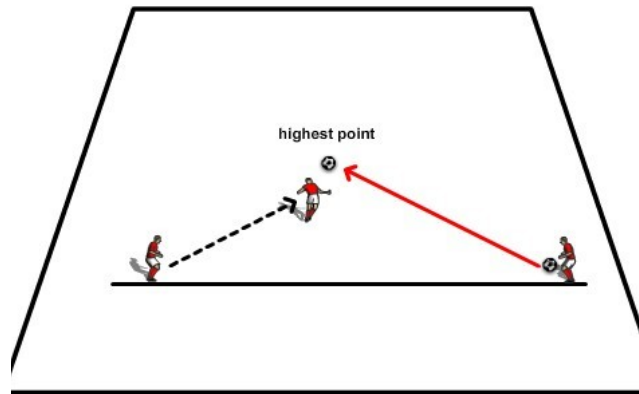
Catching high & crossed balls is one of the most important skills in goalkeeping. If a Gk can catch varying balls it breeds confidence throughout the team. However, if the Gk is not good with crossed or high balls it puts the rest of the team on edge as they do not trust the Gk to catch the ball.

Technique/important facts:

1. Catch the ball at the highest point. If Gk lets it drop low an attacker could jump high enough to head it in to the net.
2. Keep eye on ball at all times.

3. One knee out in front of body for protection from opposing players.
4. Communicate - so defenders know Gk is coming to claim it.
5. Be on toes - Gk's must react quickly to the flight of the ball.
6. Make good decisions - only come to claim if 100% sure you can catch it. If not, allow defender to head ball away.

Drill 1: catching high balls in 2s.



Organization:

- in 2s, 1 ball per pair (10yds apart)
- 1 feeder, 1 worker

Feeder throws high ball to worker who moves toward the ball & catches above head at the highest point of flight.

Reverse roles so both get to work on catching high balls.

Progression: have the feeder 'rush' the Gk to apply pressure!

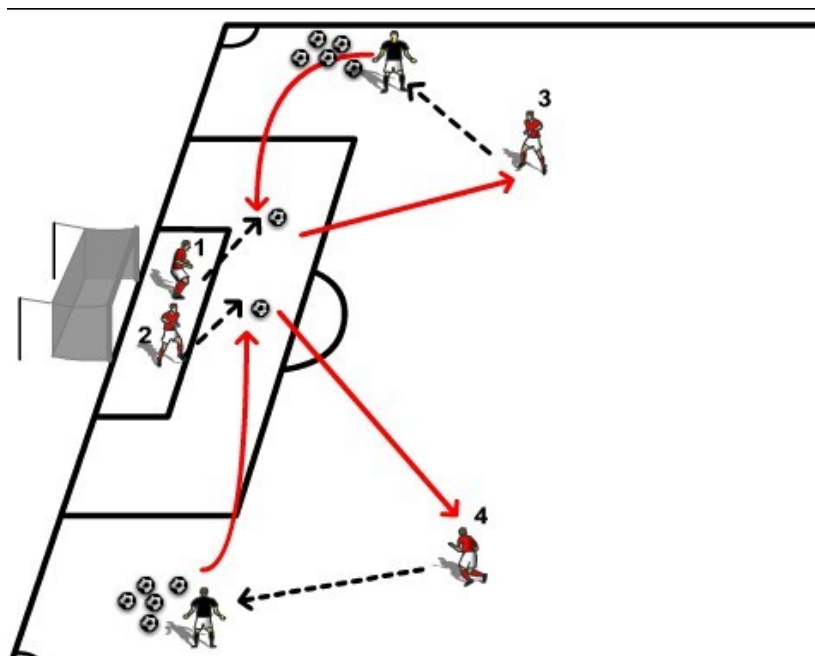
Coaching Points:

- Catch ball at highest point
- Straight arms above head (window with hands)
- bring knee up in front for protection
- call "keepers"
- Get body underneath ball
- bring ball into chest after catching.

Catching crossed balls:

Catching crossed balls requires good decision making. The Gk has a choice to make every time the ball is in the air, "do I go catch it or leave it to defenders?". We must encourage the Gk to come claim the ball as it takes the pressure off the defenders & is a great way to begin a counter attack (catch then quick throw to a mid or defender)

Drill 1: Catching from side feed



Organization:

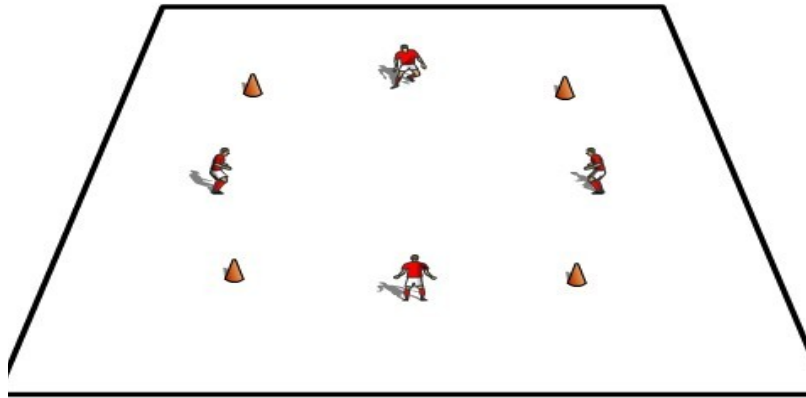
- 2 Gk's (1&2)
- 2 feeders (black)
- 2 defenders (3&4)
- Feeders throw a high arced ball into box, the Gk's come & catch the balls before quickly rolling it to defenders (counter attack)
- 3&4 then pass ball back to feeders
- Gk's swap sides after each feed so they are catching from both sides & working harder

Coaching Points:

- Keep eye on ball
- catch ball above head
- knee up for protection
- Call "keepers"
- Side on body position (can see where ball's coming from & can see everything in front)
- Make good decision on when to come for ball & when to leave it (depends on the feed)

Progression: have players kick the ball in to the box, add defenders & attackers who are trying to score/defend. More people in box = more game specific & improved decision making by Gk!

Drill which incorporates all of the above: Shadow Play



Organization:

- 4 cones to make 4 goals
- 1 Gk in each goal

Coach calls all of the below instructions & the Gk must react & display the correct technique for each!

- "touch left" or "touch right" (side stepping along line)
- "dive left" or "dive right" (diving technique)
- "high ball" (catching above head with knee out in front)
- "drop" (scooping up a low/grounded ball on knee before falling on to it)

This drill forces the Gk to react to the call from the coach & demonstrate the correct technique without the ball. It allows us as coaches to ensure they have the correct technique & are ready to be introduced to the ball.

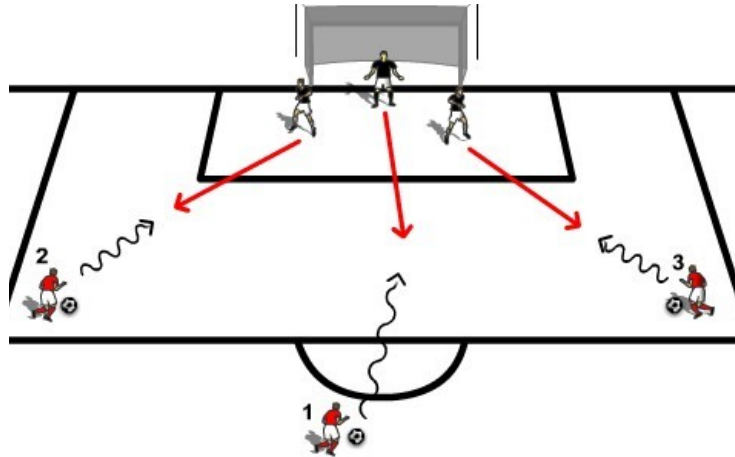
If we just give them the ball straight away they are so focused on just catching the ball they don't care how they do it. We must preach how important adopting the correct technique in every situation is.

1v1 Situations against attacker/opponent:

In 1v1 situations it's essential the Gk reacts quickly to the 1v1 situation & forces the attacker into making a mistake/rushed decision. The Gk again has a decision to make about staying on the line, coming & putting attacker under pressure or trying to force the attacker away from goal which is called 'narrowing the shooting angle'.

- It is important that the Gk decides early which action is best & **commits** to it.

Drill 1: 1v1 frontal position, angled positions



Organization:

- 1 Gk in goal
- 3 groups of players (1,2 & 3 who all attack from different angles)

Player 1 dribbles toward Goal & attempts to score on the goal. Player 2 then does the same followed by player 3. Allow the Gk 10secs rest between each attempt & allow them to recover back to their line.

Coaching Points:

- rush the attacker & apply pressure
- cut down the shooting angle - force attacker into difficult shot
- commit to decision
- dive at feet if confident of winning the ball
- keep eye on ball, don't be fooled by attackers body shapes!

Conclusion:

As I stated in the introduction this clinic concentrates solely on the basics of Goalkeeping & how to coach all the necessary skills.

For more in depth goalkeeping drills visit the following websites:

www.insidesoccer.com

www.worldclasscoaching.com

www.thefa.com

I hope you feel you have learned about goalkeeping today at this clinic & I hope the content will help you in future practices with your teams. I would advise every coach to run *goalkeeper specific sessions* for every player so each player gets to learn the basics of the position & gets to experience for themselves just how difficult a position it actually is to play.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any of the content in this clinic. My email address is rmcconnell11984@hotmail.com & my cell number is 828-290-6849.

Thanks & good luck with your teams in the Fall season of '09.

Ryan McConnell,
Challenger Sports Club Trainer for Burlington Soccer Association, Ma.