



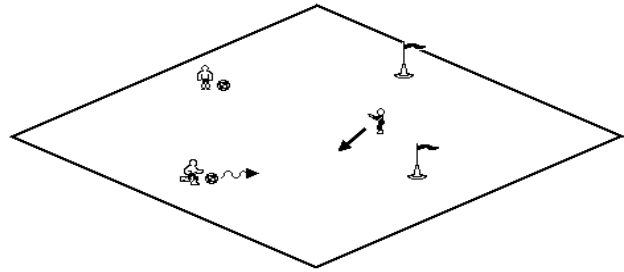
Goalkeeping - Breakaways

By Krista Fulton, Mass Youth Soccer Olympic Development Coach

Objectives: To teach the goalkeeper proper technique and decision making when confronting attacking players in 1 v1 situations where the attacker is in control of the ball.

1) Crouch Warm Up 1 (10-12 minutes):

Create groups of three with at least 2 balls per group. One player is the working goalkeeper and the other two are servers. The servers stand 5 yards away facing the goalkeeper, one on the goalkeeper's left side, the other on the right side. The first server dribbles toward the goalkeeper simulating a breakaway. The goalkeeper starts in a crouch position and goes to the ground to make the save. The goalkeeper returns to the crouch position and the second server repeats the breakaway from the other side. Repeat the exercise – you can either go for time or number of repetitions. Rotate players through as the working goalkeeper.



Coaching Points:

- Crouch position – arms down with hands almost touching the ground, palms facing forward, bend knees and shoulders, head and upper body forward
- The goalkeeper should explode down to the ball with their hands and upper body so that they go in strong. *Common mistake: Goalkeeper will reach with their hands to the ball only and will not go in strong for the challenge.*
- The hands should be in a W shape, extended away from the body with the elbows slightly bent, and the nose behind the thumbs to protect the head and face. The nose and face should be 6-10 inches away from the hands. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper will raise their head above their hands exposing it to the feet of the attacker.*
- The goalkeeper should go down to the ground sideways to create a barrier behind the ball. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper goes down on their stomach.*

2) Partner Warm Up (10-12 minutes):

Two goalkeepers stand facing each other at a distance of 20 yards. The goalkeeper with the ball is the attacker and dribbles on a breakaway toward the other goalkeeper who starts their approach from the ready position and approaches the attacker at a controlled speed. As the space closes down between the attacker and goalkeeper, the goalkeeper crouches down towards the ground before going down to make the save. Goalkeepers return to their starting positions and repeat. Switch roles after 10 breakaways.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points from Activity #1.
- Stay low – don't stand up! The goalkeeper should get lower to the ground the closer they get to the attacker. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper stands up as they get closer to the attacker allowing space to play directly under the goalkeeper.*
- Approach the attacker at a controlled speed. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper runs at the attacker at top speed when the attacker is in control of the ball.*



3) 1v1 Grid Challenge (12-15 minutes):

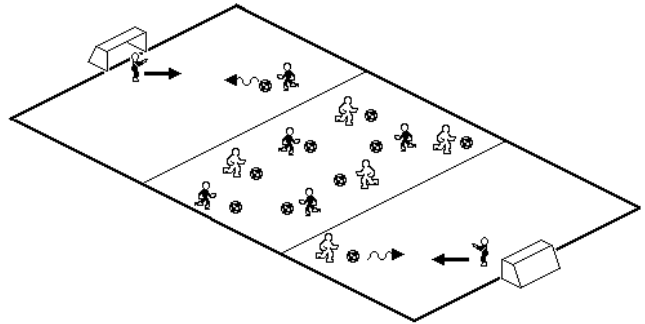
Attacking line sets up at one end of the grid (10x12 yds) and the goalkeeping line at the opposite end. The attacker starts with the ball and must dribble over the opposite endline with possession to score a point. Players can switch between goalkeeping and attacking line. You can make this exercise a challenge – either individual or team – by keeping track of goals scored. The individual or team with the lowest number of goals scored against wins.

Coaching points:

- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from Activities 1 & 2.
- The goalkeeper should try to force the attacker to go around the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper can then try to win the ball on the push around. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper dives forward on their stomach to try to win the ball at the attacker's feet.*
- The goalkeeper should get off the goal line to engage the attacker as far away from goal as possible. *Common mistakes: The goalkeeper waits for the attacker on the goal line or the goalkeeper approaches the attacker too quickly and the attacker pushes the ball around the goalkeeper.*

4) Game Situation Breakaways (20-25 minutes):

Version 1: Divide a regulation size field into three equal size areas horizontally (thirds of the field). Position goals at each end of the vertical field with goalkeepers. Create two teams of 5-6 field players (a blue team and a red team). Number the players 1 through 5. Every player has a ball dribbling freely in the middle third. The blue team will shoot at one of the goals and the red team will shoot at the other. Number 1 dribbles out of the middle third going to goal on a break-away. Then number 2 goes, etc. Players dribble out of the middle in consecutive order and repeat many times. *Version 2:* Designate a couple of players (in yellow) as recovering defenders (bandits) to chase down the attacking players from behind when they enter the shooting zone.



Coaching Points:

- Make sure that the goalkeeper is fully recovered before the next player goes to goal
- Give the goalkeeper breaks by alternating other players in the goal
- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from the previous activities.

5) 8v8 scrimmage (25-30 minutes)

Depending on numbers, space may change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes)

Juggling in groups of 2 or 3. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.