



WEEKLY DRILL

Controlling the ball...

WHEN you watch the top players in the world you'll notice they are never worried about receiving the ball anywhere on the pitch.

The really top players are thinking (as the ball is travelling to them) what they'll do next.

Getting the ball under control as soon as it is passed to you can gain vital seconds, especially useful for maintaining possession or quick counter-attacking.

Mastering ball control needs more practice than any other skill.

Players need to be happy controlling the ball with the inside, outside and instep of each foot.

Practice controlling the ball with a teammate.

To take the pace out of a pass and bring it under control, let the ball come to you — don't push at it.

We will look at three different types of control to start with.

1 The inside of the foot is the easiest way to control the ball.

With this action make sure your teammate passes to you with a bit of pace on the ball, as we normally use this control when the ball is coming to the player at speed.

Make sure that, just as the ball is making contact, to draw the foot back to cushion the ball.

Make sure your first touch nudges the ball slightly ahead of you, enabling you to pass, shoot or move quickly away.

2 The outside of the foot. To make a quick turn use the out-

side of the foot to take your first touch.

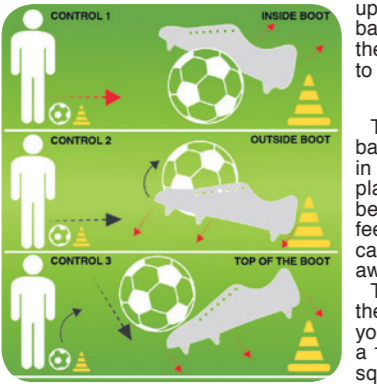
It is an excellent tool to have as you can change the direction of your team's attack.

3 Top of the foot. Depending on the air or on the ground, there is two different ideas for this one.

For the ball on the ground we should stop the ball with our toes pointing downward and let your instep cushion the ball.

You can use this technique to push the ball forward and move off quickly. For the ball dropping from the air we have to extend our receiving foot straight out.

Bring your foot up to meet the ball, then drop the foot down to cushion it.



Land

Try to get the ball to land just in front of the player and not between his feet so that we can dribble away quickly.

To practice these drills get yourselves into a 15x15-yard square with three players

and one ball.

Get the three players on three corners of the square with one starting with the ball.

Start with a diagonal pass. The player who passes the ball then goes to the empty corner and the player who received it plays a straight pass to his other teammate and he goes to the next empty corner etc.

The players must control the ball quickly to set themselves up to play a pass.

Check out...

CESC FABREGAS

■ CESC began his career at Barcelona's academy and became Arsenal's youngest debutant and goalscorer.

To make over 90 appearances in one of the best Spanish (footballing) teams of all time says a lot about his ability.

Everything about this team screamed at coaches. The ability to receive a pass and know where your next pass was going was very apparent.

■ Any team Fabregas has played with is known for their sublime style.

From Arsenal back to Barcelona, where he played a huge part of their success in the tika tika era, to Chelsea now.

■ Chelsea haven't been known for their neat style of play over the last few years, but with Fabregas in the middle of the park this year, they have been a joy to watch.

Ball to



GREAT DISPLAY OF FOOTBALL

FOOTBALLING legend Johan Cruyff once said, "the ball is an essential part of the game", and although it's quite a simple statement, many seem to forget it.

That was not the case on Sunday morning, however, when St Josephs Boys took on Malahide in the DDSL's U9 non-competitive division in Pears Park.

The 5vs5 format offers every player an equal opportunity in terms of playing time, and with two games taking place simultaneously, the ball receives plenty of attention.

Both teams demonstrated their skills before the first whistle had even been blown as they went through their

intervals every 10 minutes allowed for team-talks, with positive reinforcement coming from both managerial teams.

The Malahide quartet of Brian Stenson, Edward Stenson, Hugh Smith and Jordi Tortell certainly caught the eye as the second period got underway, and all showed brilliant awareness and maturity in their passing.

Over on the other pitch Kian De Sousa, Callum Davis, Rory Griffin and Leonard Devries were simply sublime to watch, and showed what the game should be about at this age.

They stroked the ball from wing to wing with ease, had a keen eye for goal, and were happy to play in the fast-paced atmosphere that the format creates.

And when goals were scored there was no sense of defeat, instead the players were happy to have the ball back in their possession, and they launched into another attack.

Tom McLoughlin epitomised this for the visitors, while Shane Gough and Jack Luff tested their range from distance with powerful strikes on the Malahide target.

Another short break allowed for further encouragement, and fun was at the centre of every message that came from both managers.

On the second pitch, Harry Taylor, Daragh Hughes and Hugh Smith continued to probe the Joey's backline, and they were rewarded for their endeavour with some excellent team goals.

The home side also showed how teamwork can lead to goals, and once Alex Kane and Jamie Shorten found their groove, they had the net rippling.



ALL SET: St Joseph's boys line out

respective warm-ups, and they raced into the match.

Lorcan Moore and Kyle Finnegan had their sights firmly set on the Malahide goal from the first minute, and both had the net bulging.

St Joseph's Boys v Malahide United DDSL U-9 SUNDAY RED

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SHOT: Joey's Callum Davis fires a volley from the edge of the box and (left) Alex Norman watches on as Shane Gough clears the ball

Sacred's day in the sun

AN EMPHATIC comeback from Sacred Heart saw the Tallaght side eventually run out comfortable winners over St Patrick's Athletic on Saturday morning.

Shane Fitzpatrick registered what is likely to be one of the quickest hat-tricks this season in the second half, while several others also hit the back of the net.

The game began with Pat's pressuring from the front through Jack Cummins, and he was rewarded for his efforts when he ran onto Eoghan Connolly's pass.

Guided

Evan Griffin then made it 2-0 just two minutes later when he guided his shot from the edge of the box past Darragh Nagle, but the Heart fight-back soon began.

Nathan Caswell forced the ball over the line after a scramble in the box to pull one back, and Gary Moore levelled proceedings with a strike from distance.

In a first half that was played at a frantic pace, Griffin nabbed his second of the game to put the homeside back in front, but just like before, Sacred Heart drew level.

Tiarnan O'Hanlon latched onto Jake McDonald's through-ball, settled himself in front of goal and dispatched a powerful shot past



GOAL FEST: St Patrick's Athletic; (below) Sacred Heart beforehand



St Pat's Ath 3 Sacred Heart 10 DDSL U-12 B1

Marciewski.

No-one could have foreseen what was to come in the second half after such a tight opening period, but Sacred Heart were ruthless in their approach.

McDonald put the eventual winners into the lead for the first time soon after the restart, and Fitzpatrick then scored a blisteringly quick treble.

His first came at the back post thanks to Jayden Chacko's perfect delivery, while his second was from close range, and his third was a superbly struck shot from wide on the right.

Neither gave an inch in their pursuit of the ball, and brave tackles ended with both players shaking hands as the ball was hoisted up field.

Superb

As for the youngsters tasked with keeping the ball out of the net, Alex Norman and Cian Mulligan cleaned up any loose ball at the back for Joey's, while Hugh Smith, Jordi Tortell and Jack O'Flaherty were superb between the United posts.

O'Flaherty went on to show his full array of talent in the third period when he emerged from the Malahide goal and set about gaining more offensive experience.

He dazzled with some tricky footwork, and Finnegan, Kane and Devries did likewise on the adjacent pitch for the homeside.

At the final whistle every player had had the ball at his feet for a considerable amount of time, and, most importantly, they had enjoyed themselves without any pressure.

ST JOSEPHS BOYS: Alex Norman, Cian Mulligan, Lorcan De Sousa, Kyle Finnegan, Callum Davis, Rory Griffin, Jamie Shorten, Shane Gough, Jack Luff, Leonard Devries, Alex Kane.

MALAHIDE UNITED: Harrison Maker, Rory Guiden, Brian Stenson, Harry Taylor, Daragh Hughes, Edward Stenson, Hugh Smith, Tom McLoughlin, Jack O'Flaherty, Jordi Tortell.



CLASS: Kyle Finnegan gives a cheeky grin after he scored for Joey's and (right) Malahide



KNOCK-ING IT OUT OF THE PARK!

CASTLEKNOCK Celtic and Glasgow Celtic have embarked on an ambitious twinning programme.

And one, perhaps, far more grounded in reality than previous cross-channel link-ups.

Castleknock's hope, says Director of Coaching Lisa Fallon, is to replicate the good habits developed by the Scottish giants over the years.

And while the Irish operation isn't a professional outfit, it can benefit from 'borrowing' coaching staff from time to time.

Castleknock's ambition is just as impressive; they want to be — a club for ALL the community.

"We are already a big club, you are talking about the logistics of close to 1,000 players — which translates to 45 teams," explained Fallon.

Time

"Each of those teams needs a manager, they need training slots, they also need insurance, balls, bibs, cones, travel, you need a lot of time."

"Most of all though, you need great people and that's one of the real assets of this club, there are so many dedicated people."

Perhaps Castleknock Celtic is a tale for our times, springing from modest beginnings to bedrocking a community.

Fallon added: "The club was only established with

just the one team in 1987 and here we are in 2014 with 45 teams, that's a real testament to the people here at this club who have made it happen."

Testing

Thus the next step, positioning the best of Glasgow Celtic's practices within their area, testing the top end to its limits and bulwarking everything beneath.

"Celtic will be able bring in coaching experience to us, experience of developing elite players, developing core value in players such as education, nutrition, health, good social skills, helping them becoming good people."

"You look at the number of people in the Celtic Academy, not all of those players will make it to be a full time professional — that's a reality."

"So you have to make sure that you cater for all of those players and make sure every one of the individuals gets the opportunity to reach their own personal potential."

"That what Celtic have — the expertise to help us. We are a community club and they can help us to retain our best players and, after, for all the players down the line."

"This is a squad with big possibilities for the next five, 10 years"

HOOPY DAYS: Castleknock Celtic's John O'Leary, Min Joan Burton TD, Celtic's Willie McNab, and Lisa Fallon, Castleknock Celtic's Director of Football

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