11-a-side

Tips for coaches

1. Squad size should be 16/17 players.
2. Football weight 370 gram (U13 & U14), 450 gram (U15 & U16).
3. Match times vary depending on age. Each player should get from 25% - 50% game time.
4. Opposition analysis should be the focus of one coach. Observe the game without distractions, look at the opposition’s formation, strengths and weaknesses.
5. Use this analysis to relay information during natural breaks and at half time. A tactics board is recommended for visual purposes.
6. Attacking – encourage game awareness and play sensibly. If playing out from the back is too much of a risk, play directly using a height advantage and setup players to win the 2nd ball to play in areas of the pitch suitable to your team. Play both ways so the opposition don’t know where to concentrate defensive duties.
7. Defending – pressure should be applied where and when appropriate, depending on the abilities of players available. High pressure, pressing in the middle third with a high defensive line or defending deep are some options.
8. Familiarise yourself with various formations, the strengths & weaknesses and how to exploit aspects of these formations, especially in transitions. Some examples:
   1. 1-4-3-3 vs 1-4-4-2 has a 3v2 advantage in central areas.
   2. 1-4-4-1-1 vs 1-3-5-2 has a 2v1 advantage in wide areas.
9. Work on attacking and defending set pieces. Be creative.
10. It is vital your goalkeeper gets both specialised training and is involved in passing drills and small sided games at training.
11. As players get older, football fitness will become a focus for training sessions. Rotate players taking the lead in warm ups to encourage leadership.
12. Build a squad of players who trust each other and appreciate teamwork.
13. Try and use different formations, especially in friendlies.
14. Respect the referee and decisions that are made, be a role model.

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