

# **LAKEHEAD EXPRESS**

## ***LONG RANGE PLAN FOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT***

### **Stage 1: FUNdamentals (boys & girls 6-9 yrs.)**

At this stage, coaches should create a stimulating learning environment where the atmosphere is “Freedom and Fun.”

Technical instruction is introduced through movement exercises and games that promote a feel for the ball. This includes gaining ball control in receiving passes, dribbling, passing less than 25 m, kicking the ball forward, and shooting on goal.

Basic tactical concepts involving basic cooperation between players can be introduced.

Game formats can range from 3v3 to 5v5 as the children grow through this stage. In order to help de-emphasize competitiveness between coaches and parents, no league standings should be kept. The emphasis is clearly on FUN.

All players should play equal time and try all team positions, including goalkeeping.

### **Stage 2: (boys & girls 10-12 yrs.)**

Skill demonstration is very important during these years, and the players learn best by “doing.” This is an important time to teach basic principles of play and to establish a training ethic. Repetition is important to develop technical excellence, but creating a fun and challenging environment is still essential for stimulating learning.

Technical training focuses on building a greater repertoire of soccer related movements within the context of basic soccer games.

Tactical training is designed to develop field awareness and encourage decision-making. Players should be taught simple combinations, marking, and running into space. A Continued effort

to develop each player's intrinsic motivation through fun and enjoyment should be employed.

House league game formats are 4v4 as children grow through this stage. All players play equal time and try all team positions, including goalkeeping.

### **Stage 3: (boys & girls 13-15 yrs.)**

Awareness of tactics within the game becomes an important facet of the learning process during this stage.

Physical training emphasizes flexibility, disciplined warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, balance, and core strength and stability.

Technical instruction introduces advanced techniques to those players who are capable, and the skills are presented within a more complex environment with position-specific emphasis.

Tactical training emphasizes teamwork, including developing tasks per unit (defence, midfield, and forward units) and positional awareness through small-sided games and large-sided competitive matches.

House league game formats can range from 8v8 to 11v11 as players grow through this stage. Complimentary sports are encouraged which support movement and athleticism suitable to soccer.

### **Stage 4: (boys & girls 16-20 yrs.)**

At this stage players must be exposed to quality playing and training environments which extend their mental, physical, technical, and tactical capabilities to their limit. They must have a sound understanding of soccer principles and concepts, and show a good sense of emotional stability when confronted with pressure situations.

Physical training further develops flexibility, correct warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, balance, and core strength and stability.

Technical training emphasizes the refinement of core skills and position specific skills, and advanced techniques and skills are introduced as appropriate.

Tactical instruction teaches decision-making tactical awareness, game appreciation, game analysis, productivity, and competitive proficiency.

The game format is according to FIFA rules for 11-aside soccer.

**\*This Long Range Developmental Plan is created in conjunction with the guidelines of the Canadian Soccer Association.**