



KINGSTON UNITED S.C. PRESENTS: SWISS CHALET SOCCER TIP OF THE WEEK

“STRIKING THE BALL”

Striking the ball is one of the most enjoyable experiences for youngsters in the game especially when they have the opportunity to take shot on net just after having beat their opponent in a 1 vs 1 situation

A player who can execute the delivery of a well- placed corner for a team mate to run onto and finish also gives players a sense of gratification and excitement that comes from being able to strike the ball .

When breaking down the mechanics of any technique we need to look at the key elements or factors that make up that mechanic. Coaches work with players by being able to identify “Key Factors” of coaching a specific technique. So let’s look at “Striking the ball” .

Key Factors To Consider:

- See the target
- Approach to the ball on a slight angle
- Part of foot / Part of Ball - What part of foot meets what part of ball to achieve desired result
- As the part of foot meets the ball – the head is down and eyes should be on the ball
- Follow through the ball with completed full swing of kicking leg– Use the arms for balance

ACCURACY BEFORE POWER

When Coaching Players:

In the game we are continually moving and so when training and learning how to strike a ball we must train with this in mind. Coaches should vary their sessions up and try to stay away from using drills that only allow the player to strike from a dead ball position. Get that ball moving and train to strike.

Players need to experience success when first learning to strike the ball – keep the dynamics in, and the opposition out when first learning to strike the ball.

Coaches should not be concerned with where a player should plant the non-kicking foot when striking the ball. This information in most cases could never be completely accurate for the simple fact that everyone is different. Some players are short, some tall, some tiny and some bigger, heavier, lighter. Let this be a player's natural discovery based on their own comfort /stability /balance.

Part of Foot / Part of Ball and Accuracy (common mistakes)

- All too often the player does not get the head up to see the target – a quick look is all that is needed before contact with the ball is made
- Players see their target but strike the wrong part of the ball – ie, coming under the ball brings height, over top of the ball keeps the ball low - understand where the foot must meet the ball to achieve the results you want.
- Players miss-kick using the toe or the wrong part of the foot and so do not achieve the result they were hoping for.
- The kicking foot is not locked to allow for a solid strike upon contact with the ball.
- Players do not completely follow through on contact with the ball - they strike but when contact with the ball is made they do not completely follow through the ball – full swing. Stopping mid-swing will prevent the desired result.

Players get to know the mechanics of striking the ball and get out there and practice with friends.

Understand what part of the foot – laces, outside of the foot, instep. Look for accuracy in your strike before power.

PLAYERS GET IT RIGHT AND GET STRIKING!