ATTACKING
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ATTACKERS

THE MPS APPROACH TO PLAYER DEVELOPMENT IS BASED ON A CONSISTENT AND POSITIVE APPROACH TO GETTING YOUNG PLAYERS TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

THERE ARE 4 AREAS THAT WILL BE ADDRESSED IN THIS DOCUMENT:

- THE MPS METHODOLOGY
- ATTACKING
- ROLES OF THE FIRST ATTACKER
- ROLES OF THE SECOND ATTACKER
AIM: TO ALLOW PLAYERS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES, TO DEVELOP TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, IN AN ENJOYABLE, CHALLENGING AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

OBJECTIVES:

CREATE A CLEAR AND SIMPLE PATHWAY FOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT.

ALWAYS KEEP THE PLAYER AT THE CENTER OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.
ALLOW PLAYERS AS MUCH ACTIVE TIME WITH A BALL EACH, AS POSSIBLE.

TEACH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GAME.

TEACH “ROLES” NOT “POSITIONS”.

MAINTAIN AND FURTHER A DEEP AND UNDERLYING PASSION FOR THE SPORT OF SOCCER AT ALL AGES.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PLAYERS WILL LEARN AND DEVELOP AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS.

TO KEEP A FRESH AND CURRENT OUTLOOK ON THE CHANGES IN YOUNG PLAYER DEVELOPMENT.
MPS PHILOSOPHY

MISSION STATEMENT:

“The Mission of Mass Premier Soccer is to enhance the soccer experience of players and coaches in MA. We provide players the opportunity to develop as athletes and as people by fostering an identity of excellence. We strive to produce players who can compete at the highest level of soccer throughout the world”.

MPS METHODOLOGY

Our approach to player development is simple and based on 3 key elements:

ENJOYABLE - It is a proven educational fact that young players in any sport, or for that matter in the classroom, will be more likely to excel and reach their full potential if they are enjoying their subject matter. Making soccer fun and age appropriate is a key concept in any successful player development model.

CHALLENGING - For a young player to develop to their maximum potential they must be in an environment that is differentiated based on their ability. There needs to be a carefully laid out plan that is progressive and allows a young player to face new challenges at each stage. Young players learn at different rates and also in different ways and there has to be an opportunity for all players to be allowed to succeed in their own time.

POSITIVE - It is vital that a young player receives the necessary support structure throughout their development. There must be clarity in the expectations at each stage in the process and there cannot be unnecessary pressure applied at too young an age or players will be lost to the sport. Players should be encouraged to learn from their mistakes and not feel as if they will be berated for trying to express themselves.

THE MPS STRUCTURE

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<th>Getting Started Phase</th>
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<td>Fundamental Phase</td>
<td>3rd – 6th Grade</td>
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<td>Training To Train Phase</td>
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<td>Training To Compete Phase</td>
<td>10th – 12th Grade</td>
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<td>Training To Win Phase</td>
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ATTACKING

WINNING OR LOSING A MATCH DEPENDS ON A WIDE VARIETY OF FACTORS, NOT JUST THE TECHNICAL ABILITY OF THE PLAYERS OR THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL PREPARATION.

IN ORDER TO DEVELOP CREATIVE ATTACKING PLAYERS, THE COACH SHOULD GIVE HIS / HER PLAYERS A SERIES OF APPROPRIATE LEVEL PROBLEMS THAT THE PLAYERS COULD AND SHOULD SOLVE THEMSELVES DURING PRACTICE. THE COACHING STYLE CAN BE BEST USED BY EXPOSING THE PLAYERS TO A SERIES OF PROGRESSIVE YET SIMPLIFIED GAMES - GAMES TO STIMULATE THE PLAYERS’ MINDS AND CONDITION THEIR TACTICAL BEHAVIOUR. IN OTHER WORDS, SIMPLIFIED GAMES WITH INCREASING COMPLEXITY, DIFFICULTY AND DEMAND HELP TO DEVELOP EACH PLAYER’S GAME INTELLIGENCE IN SOCCER. THE END RESULT IS SUPERIOR LEARNING WITH A MUCH BETTER GRASP OF TACTICAL CONCEPTS - PLAYERS THAT MAKE GOOD USE OF HIS / HER TACTICAL AWARENESS WHEN HE / SHE IS FACED WITH THE MANY VARIED AND DIFFERENT SITUATIONS IN A GAME.

SOME ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER WHEN RESOLVING ATTACKING PLAY: -

- WHAT IS THE OPTIMUM DISTANCE BETWEEN THE ATTACKERS?
- WHERE SHOULD A PASS BE TO A PLAYER – INTO FEET OR INTO SPACE?
- HOW CAN AN ATTACKER FORCE A DEFENDER TO DO WHAT HE / SHE WANTS THEM TO DO?
- WHICH SIDE IS EASIER TO BEAT A DEFENDER – TO THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT?
- WHERE IS BEST PLACE FOR THE ATTACKER TO HAVE TO BALL BEFORE PASSING OR STARTING TO DRIBBLE – IN FRONT OF HIS FEET, TO THE SIDE (LEFT OR RIGHT)?
- DOES THE ATTACKER HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF VARIOUS PASSING TECHNIQUES?
- BENEFITS OF PASSING A DEFENDER TO HIS / HER LEFT OR RIGHT (LEFT / RIGHT FOOTED DEFENDER)?
- DOES THE DEFENDER PREFER AN ATTACKER TO DRIBBLE OR PASS THE BALL?
- WHEN IS THE IDEAL MOMENT TO PASS TO A TEAM MATE IN SUPPORT?
- WHEN IS IT MOST EFFECTIVE TO PLAY A ONE-TWO OR A FIRST TIME PASS?

SHOTS ON GOAL – THINGS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHEN SHOOTING: -

DISTANCE BETWEEN THE BALL AND THE GOAL
ANGLE OF THE SHOT
POSITION OF THE GOALKEEPER
THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS BETWEEN THE SHOOTER AND THE GOAL
THE TRAJECTORY OF THE PASS TO THE SHOOTER

ALL THESE VARIABLES MUST BE ANALYZED QUICKLY IN ORDER TO DECIDE WHICH PART OF THE FOOT TO SHOOT WITH (INSIDE, OUTSIDE, LACES, INSTEP...), WHETHER TO TAKE THE SHOT FIRST TIME OR TAKE A TOUCH TO SET UP THEN SHOOT, SHOT LOW INTO THE CORNER OR HIGH AND POWERFUL INTO THE TOP CORNER IS THE BEST WAY TO BEAT THE GOALKEEPER ETC. THE MORE PLAYERS PRACTICE THESE VARIABLES, THE MORE QUICKLY THEY WILL LEARN TO READ THE SITUATION CORRECTLY, MAKE A GOOD DECISION AND EXECUTE DIFFERENT SHOOTING TECHNIQUES WITH ACCURACY.
THE FIRST ATTACKER

THE PRIMARY ROLE FROM THE FIRST ATTACKER IS PENETRATION. WE ARE LOOKING FOR OUR ATTACKER TO DECIDE ON THE QUICKEST ROUTE TO GOAL VIA:

SHOOTING.
THE PRIMARY GOAL IS SCORING GOALS. THE FIRST ATTACKER SHOULD ALWAYS ASSESS FIRST WHETHER A SHOT ON GOAL IS POSSIBLE.

PASSING.
THE BALL MOVES QUICKER THAN A PLAYER – IS THERE AN ATTACKING PLAYER IN A BETTER GOAL-SCORING POSITION THAT CAN BE PASSED TO?

Dribbling.
IS THERE SPACE BETWEEN THE ATTACKER AND THE GOAL THAT CAN BE EXPLOITED IN ORDER TO GET NEARER TO GOAL?

THIS ILLUSTRATES THE FIRST AND SECOND ATTACKERS – ATTACKER 2 HAS STAYED WIDE TO CREATE SPACE FOR ATTACKER 1 – AS HE HAS PULLED HIS MARKER WIDE, THIS HAS CREATED A 1 v 1 SITUATION TOWARDS GOAL.
THE SECOND ATTACKER

IF THE FIRST ATTACK IS LOOKING TO PENETRATE THE OPPOSITION, WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE SECOND DEFENDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THE FIRST ATTACKER I.E. IF THE 1ST ATTACKER CANNOT SHOOT OR Dribble INTO A GOAL-SCORING OPPORTUNITY, CAN THE 1ST ATTACKER CREATE A CHANCE FOR THE 2ND ATTACKER WITH A PASS OR CROSS?

WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL SUPPORT FROM THE 2ND ATTACKER:

ANGLE, DISTANCE AND SPEED OF SUPPORT.
ENSURE THAT THE 2ND ATTACKER MOVES QUICKLY INTO A GOOD POSITION TO SUPPORT THE FIRST ATTACKER.

COMMUNICATION.
INFORM THE FIRST ATTACKER THAT HE / SHE IS IN A PRIME POSITION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE BALL.

OFF THE BALL MOVEMENT.
CREATE SPACE AS AN INDIVIDUAL TO RECEIVE THE BALL OR FOR THE FIRST ATTACKER TO MOVE INTO (BY MOVING YOUR MARKER).

SECOND ATTACKER HOLDING HIS POSITION IN A WIDE AREA - HE IS FIRST ATTACKER’S OPTION IF DEFENDER 2 MOVES INSIDE.

SECOND ATTACKER CREATING SPACE WITH AN OVERLAPPING RUN.

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**Age Group/Program: U5 Town**

**Theme: 1v1 Attacking/Power Rangers**

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<th>Session Goals:</th>
<th>Coaching Points:</th>
<th>Understand Your Audience:</th>
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</table>
| ★ Increase ball control  
★ 1v1 Attacking | ★ Look around – awareness of friends, space and balls.  
★ Stop/hop/turn- place sole of foot on ball; hop over with same foot and plant foot past ball, turn and use other foot to take ball away in opposite direction.  
★ Change of speed and direction in 1v1 attacking. Introduce simple feint. | ★ Short attention span  
★ Make players aware of area by walking them around it  
★ Allow players to learn at own pace  
★ Have parents join in with the players |

**Warm up: Tag**

**Set up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

**Progression**

1. Each player has a ball at their feet

**Core Game 1: Ranger Race**

**Set up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

**Progression**

1. Place 4 balls in small square. On coach command players must run out, get a ball and bring it back to their corner.
2. Dribble instead of hands.
3. Introduce turns.

**Core Game 2: 4 Gates**

**Set up: 15 x 10 Yard Area**

**Progression**

1. Pass the ball through the gate

**Small Sided Game**

**Set up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

4 periods of 6 minutes and then 3 x 8 minutes. Have a supply of balls at the side to keep the game flowing. NO RULES; no throw in’s, corners, goal kicks or punting. Limit stoppages. FUN, FUN, AND FUN. Reduce stoppages and encourage lots of dribbling. Award extra points/goals for turns (drag backs) and moves.

**Homework:**

**Ball Mastery:**

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**Age Group/Program: U6 Town**

**Theme: 1v1 Attacking/Silver Surfer**

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**www.masspremiersoccer.com**
**Session Goals:**
- 1v1 attacking
- Dealing with defenders
- Playing as a team

**Coaching Points:**
- Use both feet.
- Keep head up and look around – awareness.
- Push ball out of feet with laces into space.
- Accelerate.

**Understand Your Audience:**
- Short attention span
- Allow players to learn at own pace
- Have parents join in with the players

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**Warm Up: Ball Exchange**

**Set Up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

Players dribble around area and can exchange balls with anyone they see. Players should explore various ways to exchange soccer from various distances using the inside of their feet only.

Progress stipulating that all players must exchange balls at a distance of 5 yards away, using their right foot.

Change to all use the left foot: important that all players use the same foot.

**Progression**

1. Increase distance
2. Who can make the most exchanges?

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**Core Game 1: 1v1**

**Set Up: 15 x 10 Yard Area**

Split the group into two. Have the attackers start at one end and the defenders at the other. The play starts with an attacker dribbling the ball into the area and attempting to dribble the ball through any of the three corner gates.

The defender moves on the attacker’s first touch and tries to stop them, if the defender wins the ball, can they dribble through a gate for double points?

If the attacker dribbles through the gate where the defender starts they get 5 points and only 1 point for the side gates.

1. Pass the ball through the gate

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**Core Game 2: 4 Gates**

**Set Up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

With 3x3 teams, both teams compete for the ball and try to score in anyone of the four gates. If one gate is heavily defended can the player in possession turn and run with the ball to another gates.

Make the gates (6 Yards) big to start with.

1. Narrow gates
2. Award points for moves

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**Small Sided Game**

**Set Up: 30 x 20 Yard Area**

4 periods of 6 minutes and then 3 x 8 minutes. Have a supply of balls at the side to keep the game flowing. NO RULES; no throw in’s, corners, goal kicks or punting. Limit stoppages. FUN, FUN, AND FUN. Reduce stoppages and encourage lots of dribbling. Award extra points/goals for turns (drag backs) and moves.

**Homework:**

**Ball Mastery:**

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**Age Group/Program: U8 Town**

**Theme: 1v1 Attacking/Dempsey Magic**
**Warm Up: Touches**

Players start on one side of the area. Coach spreads balls around playing area.

Coach tells players to run around and see who can the touch the most balls using the soles of their feet – play for 60 seconds.

Repeat to see if they can beat their score.

**Core Game 1: 1v1 To Gates**

Have 2-3 players with ball each at one end of the area. Set up 2 small goals using cones opposite players with ball (attackers).

Place 2-3 defenders between the 2 goals and opposite the attackers. Attacker started with ball and tries to dribble through either goal.

Defender is active on attacker’s first touch. A point is scored by dribbling the ball through either of the two gates. Defender can score a point by passing the ball to the next attacker if they win possession.

**Core Game 2: Numbers Game**

Split group into two teams and ask players to number themselves 1 through 5.

When coach calls out number 1, the #1’s from both teams compete for the ball that the coach has played and try to score in the opposition’s goal.

If ball goes out of bounds, have players return and call out next number.

**Small Sided Game**


**Homework:**

**Ball Mastery:**

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<th>Age Group/Program: U10 Town</th>
<th>Theme: Attacking 2 v 1/Man City</th>
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<td>Session Goals:</td>
<td>Coaching Points:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand Your Audience:</td>
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</table>

[Website: www.masspremiersoccer.com]
Dribbling at speed
Angles of support
Quality of finish

Speed of play
Quick decisions
Quality in execution
Awareness

Lengthened attention span
Refined gross & motor skills
Developing an understanding of team play
Desire to play rather than being told

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARM UP: BALL MASTERY</th>
<th>SET UP: 30 x 25 YARD AREA</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each player has a ball and performs the required ball mastery, turns and moves. Give them 60 seconds to perform each one as many times as they can, and for the turns and moves they should perform each one after 5 touches whilst dribbling around the area for 60 seconds.</td>
<td>1. Make sure they use both feet. 2. Make it competitive by getting them to keep their scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE GAME 1: 2 v 1 COMBOS TO GOAL</th>
<th>SET UP: 25 x 15 YARD AREA</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put a GK in goal. Have 2 attackers. Play starts with one attacker passing to other attacker and then attacking goal for a shot. Vary starting position by having attackers receive the ball in different situations – side by side, one in front of the other etc.</td>
<td>1. Introduce defender. Defender starts by passing ball to either attacker and then defends the goal. Create a counter goal for defender to score in if they win possession. 2. Introduce certain combinations – overlap, give and go.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE GAME 2: NUMBERS &amp; LETTERS</th>
<th>SET UP: 60 x 40 YARD AREA</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Split group into 2 teams. Put GKS in each goal. Place each team next to a goal at opposite ends. Give the players of team 1 numbers 1-6 and players of team 2 letters A-F. The coach rolls out a ball and shouts out one number and two letters to create a 2v1 scenario. When the ball goes out of play, all players go back and another number and two other letters are called out.</td>
<td>1. Call out two numbers and one letter 2. Create even number situations by having 2v2 also.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>SMALL SIDED GAME</th>
<th>SET UP: 30 x 20 YARD AREA</th>
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<tr>
<td>6v6 with normal rules. Play 2 periods of 12-15 minutes.</td>
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**HOMEWORK:**
**BALL MASTERY:**

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**AGE GROUP/PROGRAM: U12 TOWN**

<table>
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<th>THEME: ATTACKING IN THE FINAL 3RD/SPURS</th>
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<td><strong>SESSION GOALS:</strong></td>
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- Improve quality & composure in front of goal
- Decision making in the final 3rd
- First touch out of feet
- Get head up and look to cross to the front post
- Attack the front post
- Attackers need to get in front of defenders
- Look for rebounds
- Developing more physically
- Beginning to understand tactics
- Enjoys being part of the team
- Individual targets & achievement set

### Warm Up: Long Range Passing  
**Set Up:** 30x15 yard area

Players in pairs are to pass to each other whilst trying to keep the ball in their channel.

### Core Game 1: Crossing & Finishing  
**Set Up:** Final 3rd

The exercise starts with one player passing to themselves down the line; they then run after their ball and cross it for two forwards who are making runs in to the box. One forwards will finish the other will look for rebounds. Work both sides of the field.

**Progression:**
1. Use both feet
2. Inside and outside of the foot to curl the ball
3. Laces
4. Number of passes race

### Core Game 2: Channel Game  
**Set Up:** 30x30 yard area

Players must attempt to get wide into a channel with the ball. Here they cannot be challenged. Once in the channel players must cross or pass only before rejoining play. Players cannot dribble back into play.

**Progression:**
1. Allow player only 7 seconds within the channel before passing or crossing
2. Take away the channels
3. Allow a point if the run with the ball for more than 3 seconds

### Small Sided Game

8v8 with normal rules. Play 2 periods of 12-15 minutes.

**Homework:**

**Ball Mastery:**

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**Age Group/Program: U14 Town**

**Theme:** Attacking & Moving In The Final 3rd Brazil

**Session Goals:**  
** Coaching Points:**  
** Understand Your Audience:**

[Link to Mass Premier Soccer website]
**Warm Up: 4 v 1**

**Set Up:** 15 x 15 Yard Area

Players must keep possession of the ball. The defender adds passive pressure at first, to ensure player success.

**Progression**

1. Limit player touches
2. Left foot / right foot only
3. Inside / outside of the foot passes
4. Chipped passes

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**Core Game 1: Play Around The Box**

**Set Up:**

Player A dribbles the ball up to B. B takes the ball and passes in front of the C. C runs up and shoots at goal.

Players go to the next group to their right when finishing their turn.

**Progression**

1. B picks the ball up and throws into C who controls then shoots
2. A passes to C and C plays into B who shoots on goal

---

**Core Game 2: Waves Of Attack**

**Set Up:** 40 x 30 Yard Area

Team A starts with the ball and attack as a wave of three against team B. They are attempting to score on goal. The ball will go dead from a goal, or interception etc. which freezes team A. (Team A will stay up the field.)

Now team B attacks the opposite goal which team C will now defend. When the ball is dead then team C attack team A. (Team B will stay up the field) and so on.

**Progression**

1. Every time a new play is started the GK must begin with the ball playing it wide
2. First team to score 3 goals wins. If you are scored on, you have a point/goal removed

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**Small Sided Game**

**Set Up:**

Play 11v11 normal rules for 25-30 minutes

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**Homework:**

**Ball Mastery:**