

FYSA

Continuous Play Scrimmages Fall U7

What is Continuous Play?

No Restarts - Restarts are kick-offs, goal kicks, corner kicks, and throw-ins. Except for the start of the game, these will be eliminated.

How does this work? Easy! Coaches will begin with 5-7 game balls **on the side at midfield** (please remain OFF the field!). Play will begin with a kick-off (ball placed at midfield with “visiting team” in possession) and play begins. Each time a ball leaves the field of play or a goal is scored, one of the coaches will roll a new ball out onto the field near the midfield spot.

Parents are responsible for retrieving balls that have gone out of play and returning them to the coaches’ supply of game balls. Because action will be ongoing, a brief (2-3 minutes) “half time” for a drink will be required. If no substitutes are available or the weather is warm, more breaks may be needed. Remember, though, that the goal is for more “touches on the ball”, so frequent stoppages are counterproductive - use common sense.

Why do this?

The goal is to develop skill and a “comfort” with the ball. “Increased touches on the ball” has been proven to accomplish this. Research and statistics tell us that this format will almost double the children’s touches on the ball, effectively giving them 2 seasons for the price of one!

Children at this age want more fun and less rules! There will be plenty of time to teach restarts and other rules to them at the next phase of their development. Skill and fun are more important!

Coaches will have the ability to “help” less-active children/teams. Coaches can “help” certain players get involved. (e.g. a player who hasn’t touched the ball in a while may suddenly find a ball rolled to him/her!) Likewise, a team that can’t get over midfield to score may find a ball rolled toward their attacking goal. **Try to track players who haven’t touched the ball a lot. Get them involved!**

Deemphasizing goals (and score keeping). Because goals scored often result in unnecessary celebrations, congratulations, and time wasting, deemphasizing the score for now will help them learn. Instead of celebrating (or taunting, at times) or wasting time reorganizing for the next kick-off, players will immediately be looking for the next opportunity to get to the ball (a concept known as “Transition”) to create another scoring chance or retreat on defense.

Gets the parent involved in a way not related to game results or scores. By giving the parents something to do (re-supplying the game balls) and making it harder to keep score, there will be less reason to try to keep score.

Restarts are often difficult and “unfair” at this age. Throw-ins and corner kicks are often done incorrectly and ineffectively (and the time wasted in correcting them is time spent away from foot skill development) and goal kicks often put the kicking team at a decided disadvantage!

