

Communication

The ability of a Keeper to direct his team on the field. The Goalkeeper has the best position on the field to coach his team, he or she is the start of the offense and the end of the defense. He should use clear direct 3 word max direction to players examples include (man on, face left, face right, push up, pull back, Keepers ball, time, settle it, away,) these are just a few that could be used in a game. By the keeper communicating to his defense and with them listing goals can actually be prevented. To get your keepers to talk you must give them permission to be the boss on the field and all your players must listen to him. Once the keeper knows that he is the coach on the field it should make him a little nervous but more confident knowing that his team is relying on him or her. The keeper must educate his or her self in terminology and share with team, so that everyone will be in sync. Keeper should read literature about soccer and read books and watch live games or videos and focus on how the keeper uses his verbal and physical actions to get his team to move.

Stance and Foot Work

- Keepers stance and **footwork** are very important and should be first taught to a keeper, yes even if he can not catch a ball. By using his feet a keeper can shuffle quickly without taking eyes off the most important thing on the field (the Ball), a lot of keeper saves actually hit their bodies as a deflection. The shuffle is a sideways motion that allows the keeper to skip sideways as he or she makes their way across the goal. This action automatically prepares them for a dive or stretch to extend their bodies to save ball.
- The **keepers stance** is important to keep their body coiled and in a ready position, the weight of the body should be on balls of feet which are spread to shoulder width. The knees should be slightly bent along with the hips (the movement of trying to sit on an imaginary object should get them there). The back should be straight but slightly leaned to help the weight to go forward. The arms should be bent with the elbows out just passed the waist or trunk of body. The hands should be relaxed and fingers pointed up or slightly to side. Head relaxed and in a line with the hips. The eyes focused on target ball. Upon reaction the keeper must learn to react with eyes, hands, head, feet toward the direction of the ball. The keeper must learn to step toward the ball in connection with the rest of the body to make the save. I think it is best to make the step and hands toward the ball in one motion as this gets the whole body moving. Others teach a two step method which is more time consuming. Teach your keepers that if they go down to get back up as quickly as possible using no hands or one hand only. The hands or

hand must be directed toward the ball for a follow up save.

Basic Catching Techniques

- The **contour catch** is the most widely used catch, it is in a **W** shape with the thumbs almost touching. The reverse for lower balls is the **M** shape where the pinkies are almost touching. Both should have the fingers slightly curved and some what relaxed to cushion the ball as it is caught. The shot above the head should be caught with or deflected with the **high contour catch**, the fingers and hands take the shape of trying to play a high piano, thus if the ball is struck too hard for keeper to field then it will be directed to the feet. The contour catch made to the side is called the **side contour**, it is used mostly in collapse and extended dives. Keepers should be taught to get there body behind the ball for close shots therefore the W or the M would be used. The **basket catch** is used for hard driven low balls that may be skipping or straight line shots at the goal. The basket catch has two parts to it or two sounds, it will hit the inner forearms then the stomach or ab area as the arms basket around it. Another version of this catch is called the **front smother**, it is used to lean toward the ball and scoop it when danger is close or the keeper feels pressure. This catch ends with the keeper lunging forward landing in a prone position on elbows with the ball tucked in.

Positioning (Play and Set Pieces)

- Keepers should stay involved in the game by always moving and talking to back line. If play is on **attacking third** the keeper should be at the top of his 18 or further depending on the skill of team. In this position he will be able to win a quick thru ball or breakaway, in **center third** Keeper should be around 6 or penalty mark, on **defensive third** the keeper will need to take a position closer to his line.(never on the line) this is only for penalty kicks. Goal kicks should be taken by keeper if all possible. By letting a player kick the ball you are starting out a man down. **Goal kicks** in my opinion ought be taken in the center of the 6, not on the corners. If the keeper miss kicks ball from a corner he has all that ground to cover and nearly impossible to get back on his ball line. Taken from center the keeper is already to go toward any miss kick. **Corner kicks** the keeper should be 2/3 back in the goal toward the far post, and a step or two off the line standing in a side on position to the ball, this way keeper can see the whole field. If the ball is in no danger of getting to goal the keeper must shout away to get his team in a position to trigger off-sides rule, or the congestion out of the box.

Distribution (Hands and Feet)

- The keeper will have multiple choices to **Distribute** the ball which includes bowling, slinging, baseball throw, punching, punting, drop kicking the ball. The quicker the keeper decides which to use and to get the ball to his or her player that has most time on ball or greatest position to quickly strike a counter attack, will find the opposition unbalanced and frantic to get back to stop it.

The Back Pass

- The **back pass** was developed to take pressure off the defense or switch the point of attack. The Keeper must have necessary skills to receive and redirect the ball back up the field, this could also be a one time kick. The keeper is not allowed to pick up a ball intentionally played back to them by another players foot or a throw in. However the keeper may pick up a head ball played back to him.

Diving and Progressions

- Depending on the age(kids under 10 need to be careful because there shoulder and hip joints are not fully developed by this time)of the keeper diving should be taught in a progressive manner, which will give the keeper a safe foundation to continue. The **collapse dive** is the first, which is taught in slow motion and then sped up as the keepers confidence builds. The collapse dive involves hands and feet going forward to the ball and the body falls using the ball to cushion the fall, followed by the rest of the body. The **extended dive** involves an acrobatic attempt to save the ball, by skipping sideways and leaving the closest foot to the ball with a spring and launching the body sideways toward the ball. If the ball is caught it will be used to cushion the fall. If not the keeper should roll out of the dive. I will not train keepers in extended diving until they reach the next level of training. You will sometimes see young athletes make spectacular saves but do not let that make you think that they can do it all the time (speaking from experience) it can effect them later in life.

Break Away Save

- The cool one vs one for the keeper. This save emphasizes that the keeper is the last line of defense. This save is executed when the last defender is beat or the opposition has a breakaway that is threatening for the keeper the keeper makes a decision to come out of the goal fast and hard and attack the ball and try to make the save. Once the keeper commits he should never quit and stay up as long as

possible. If the ball is passed off the keeper may return to get themselves in a better position. If the keeper stops his run he or she will find themselves in an unbalanced position running backwards or fallen backwards, either position will create a success for the opposition. The break away save if successful is one of the most spectacular saves in soccer.

Three Goal Mentality

- Keepers will be trained to expect shots from three different areas two of them are imaginary and one real.

Angles

- Keepers have imaginary but real angles if that makes any sense that they are shown in order for them to position themselves in the best possible area to make the save these angles include but not limited to **ball line** – and imaginary line between the keepers legs starting at the ball and ending on the center of the goal. I believe that this angle is the most important; if they are on the ball line they are usually in a good spot to make the save. The **angle arc** is a imaginary area starting just outside the goal poles and curving up to meet the six yard box. The keeper uses the angle arc to have a mental sense of where they need to be in the goal when the ball is in the defending third of field. **Ropes** can also be tied to the poles and moved to areas on field to give the keeper a sense of where it is safe to be. Don't forget about the **top bar angle**, this angle will teach them that if they come out fast and hard on there ball line that you can eliminate the chip shot.

Keeper on the Field

- If you are down goals in game, let your center defender put the shirt on and he can use his hands and do what he does best (defend) and your keeper becomes that extra unmarked player. He may get a couple of goals to pick morale up.

Warming Up the Keeper

- The keeper should be warmed up in a progressive manner that relates to your topic at practice or the game. For practice have a routine that they start with to get stretched and start with your topic, if it is crosses get them jumping and calling keeper for air balls. Then add a player or another goalie to give pressure then put them in scrimmage game. Just make sure it relates to session.

- In the game, same stretch routine paired up. Once there done start with ground and work your way up. Use your foot to volley and hands to throw air balls you generally only have 20 minutes to warm up, don't need them chasing balls. Bring them together with the team and do one on ones and crosses to finish up. Important to go over everything that can happen in game. Once your keeper is warm he will let you know he is ready let your starting keeper go and work the back up for the remainder of the warmup. Next topic will explain.

Psychological Tips

- Once starting keeper is warm and ready let him go off by his self and **visualize** the game. Remember he is your coach on the field and he needs to go thru the process of making saves and building confidence in his or her mind. Let your keeper lead the team in stretches during practice and games. This gets the team use to his voice and him or her use to talking to the players.
- During game encourage keeper to stay active by doing **mock saves** and **dives**. I did this and it really makes the other team and there parents think that you are not all there. That you are a little crazy; but the whole time you are just getting ready for the next save.

Thanks, I hope this helps with your Keepers so that we will be on the same page.

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