

Goal Keeping

Introduction to the Goal Keeper

As all of us know, the goal keeper has one of the most important jobs on the field and yet we don't often find enough time to work with and train them.

Consequently the time we do get to work with our keepers must be put to the best use possible. And drills that the entire team is involved with can, and should be used, to train the keeper as well.

Too many coaches limit goal keeper training to kicking a few balls at the keeper followed by using the keeper in the team's normal shooting practice. In my opinion these shooting practices are all too often a waste of the keeper's time.

First, there is no set idea by anyone, coach, keeper, or shooters, about what the purpose of the drill is for the keeper. Is she supposed to work on low balls, high balls, or what? Coaches don't work with field players without an idea of what they expect from the practice, and keepers deserve the same.

Second, the players put the ball everywhere but on net. They kick the ball over, around, and if it were possible under the goal. If the ball is not placed on net, the keeper doesn't get any work. The players should concentrate on getting the ball on net and forget about trying to hit the corners. (Let them work on their own at hitting the corners.)

Related to the above is the desire of the shooters to put the ball where the keeper can not make the save. In order for the keeper to benefit, she MUST be able to make the save. When she doesn't make the save, the coach needs to COACH her by discussing what went wrong. Why did she miss the ball? Was the foot work wrong, was the catching technique poor, was the positioning poor, or what ever. The coach should not let her go back to the goal until the fault has been corrected. This can take a minute or so of time. Of course the shooters don't want to wait and the coach usually doesn't spend the time.

Remember that the goal keeper is the only true specialist on the team. She requires special training to properly do her job. The material presented here is aimed at making sure that the keeper makes the easy save. We don't have anything flashy, but we have tried to provide solid information on training to make sure that the keeper can make the easy save.

Keepers, like all other players, must have excellent field skills. Therefore they should be included in all of your foot skill and pass/receive warm ups. In addition there are several warm up drills that keepers should do to stretch out and prepare for their specialty

Goalkeeper Warm Up

After the foot skill and pass/receive drills that the entire team does have the goal keepers warm up with drills like these:

Bounce and Catch

1. Have them hold a ball in their hands high over their heads, bounce it down to the ground and then catch it waist high. The catch should emphasize the classic “**W**” shape, thumbs together, other four fingers angled out at 45°.
2. Keepers should be moving around and changing directions during this drill.
3. Don’t let them just drop the ball and catch it. Emphasize the over the head throw down towards the ground.

A progression of this drill is to have them walk around, bounce the ball, lift their leg over the ball and re-catch it always emphasizing the “**W**” catch. Do it ten times with the right leg, then ten times with the left, then alternate legs. A second progression of this warm-up is to have them hammer the ball out of their left hand with their right hand and then re-catch it with the “**W**”. This is tougher because the keeper must quickly position their hands after releasing the ball

Ball Between the Legs

Keepers stand with legs shoulder width apart. Bend over at the waist and pass a ball back and forth between their legs. Initially start out with the hands stationary, i.e. right hand in back, left in front. Ball moves quickly, through the legs, from hand to hand, first rolling on the ground, then off the ground.

After they have the hang of this they pass the ball between their legs in a figure 8. In this case the hands are switching positions from front to rear. Again start this drill with the ball remaining in contact with the ground and then progress to the ball in the air between the legs.

This exercise improves hand eye coordination and stretches the back and leg muscles.

A third and more difficult component of this exercise is to have the player lie on their back and scissor their legs up and down while threading the ball through their legs.

This works the leg and stomach muscles while improving their hand eye coordination.

Ball Bounce Between Legs

Have the players bounce the ball from the front through their legs and then re-catch it behind their backs. Both hands are used to serve the ball and catch the ball. Return the ball between the legs from the back to the front.

Ball Roll Down the Back

Have the keepers place the ball on the back of their necks. Let the ball roll down their back. They then catch it at the small of their back with two hands. Return the ball to the front and start again. Once players get the hang of it they can begin walking around rolling the ball and catching it.

The above two warm ups are good for letting the keepers get the feel of the ball in their hands even when it is not directly in their sight. The more they catch the ball in practice, the more comfortable they will be in a game.

Front to Back Switching Hands

I couldn't think of a better name for this drill. Basically the player bends at the waist with the ball between their legs. The right hand covers the ball from the front, the left hand from the back. Player releases the ball and switches hands not letting the ball fall and touch the ground. This drill is good for quickness and touch. Have the players count how many times that they can do this in a timed period and then challenge them to do one more, and then one more, and then one more, etc., etc., etc.

Sit Ups

Keeper lies on her back with arms extended over the head, a ball in her hands. Keeper executes a sit-up keeping the ball in her hands and extending her arms out in front of her. A player strikes the ball in her hands with their instep. This drill builds hand strength, abdominal strength and anaerobic condition.

A variation on this drill is to have the player throw the ball to you as they sit up and for you to chest pass it back to them at the top of the motion. This also builds hand strength, hand-eye coordination and quickness.

Shuffle and Roll

This is a drill to increase side to side quickness. Have the player bounce the ball hard on the ground. They then side to side shuffle under the path of the ball. If the ball goes high enough they might get two side to side shuffles in before the ball's momentum is lost. If not, then the second movement should be a side roll under the falling ball.

One Hand Catch

This next warm up involves two people, either both keepers or a keeper and a coach.

Simply have the players stand 5 to 8 yards apart and toss the ball to each other. The catch is to be made one handed and returned the same way.

Progress by having the weaker hand use. Then run a pattern where first the left is used then the right. Finally if you have three or more in the drill add a second ball to increase the difficulty.

This teaches the player to soften the blow of the ball against the hands. It also works finger strength and hand-eye coordination.

Kneeling Catch (Railroad Tracks)

This is a drill to teach the keepers proper arm position when gathering in a low ball (scoop) or a shot below their waist.

Proper arm position can be described as both arms forming “railroad tracks” That is the arms are parallel, the elbows are tucked in, the hands are palm up with the pinky and sides touching. The hands form a slight cupping position.

Have the player kneel in front of you with the arms and hands as described above. Start the drill by softly throwing the ball into her hands. Emphasize form! Gradually increase the speed of the throw. Make sure that you hit the arms, and not their head! The player should follow the ball into their arms with their eyes. The elbows must stay together or the ball will force its way through and be dropped. There must be a slight cushioning motion or the ball will hit and pop out.

High Ball Warm-up

This warm up also involves two people, preferably both keepers. One player bounces the ball so it will go over the head of his partner. Partner jumps for the ball and yells “Keeper”, catching the ball over head in a “W”.

Make sure that the catcher brings their knee up to protect their midsection. After the catch the catcher becomes the server for his partner. If a coach is warming up the only keeper have the player roll the ball back to the coach just the way they would serve it to a full back in a game situation.

Add a third player to create a distraction for the catcher. This player can lightly tap or push the catcher while he is in the act of catching the ball. This simulates some of the contact the keeper will get in the goal area.

Rolling Drills

This first drill starts with the keeper in a sitting position. The keeper has a partner who will serve the ball. The keeper rolls to the right as their partner serves the ball on the ground.

The keeper traps the ball on the ground using both hands. Keeper returns ball to server and rolls to a sitting position again in one motion. Server then rolls ball to the left and the drill is repeated.

After 5 rolls right and 5 rolls left switch keeper and server. This can be an exhausting drill when done at high tempo

Coaching Points

1. Hands still form the **'W'**.
2. Top leg bends toward the stomach to protect this area and to provide the impetus, when re-extended, to come back to the original position
3. Keeper's body should be slightly curved away from the goal so that the ball cannot simply glance off them and go in

Progression

The next progression is to serve the ball in the air as the keeper rolls right and left. The catch is therefore made in the air and the keeper must cushion the ball as they hit the ground.

The next progression is to have the keeper move slightly forward each time they make a roll. The server backs up an appropriate amount with each roll so that they maintain the distance between keeper and server.

The next progression is to start this drill from the knees and repeat as above and the final progression is to do this drill from a standing position.

Dribble and Scoop

Have the team dribble in an enclosed area. On a signal from the coach, every player leaves their ball and gets another. The keeper has to scoop the ball and clutch it to their chest.

Make sure no one kicks the keeper. Have the players just place their foot on top of the ball to "claim" it.

Do not allow diving for the ball.

Make sure the keeper is keeping on his toes, knees flexed.

A common mistake that you should look for in a keeper is slowing down to scoop the ball. The keeper should explode through the ball and after scooping veer to a

side, just like they would do in a game situation with an attacker bearing down on them.

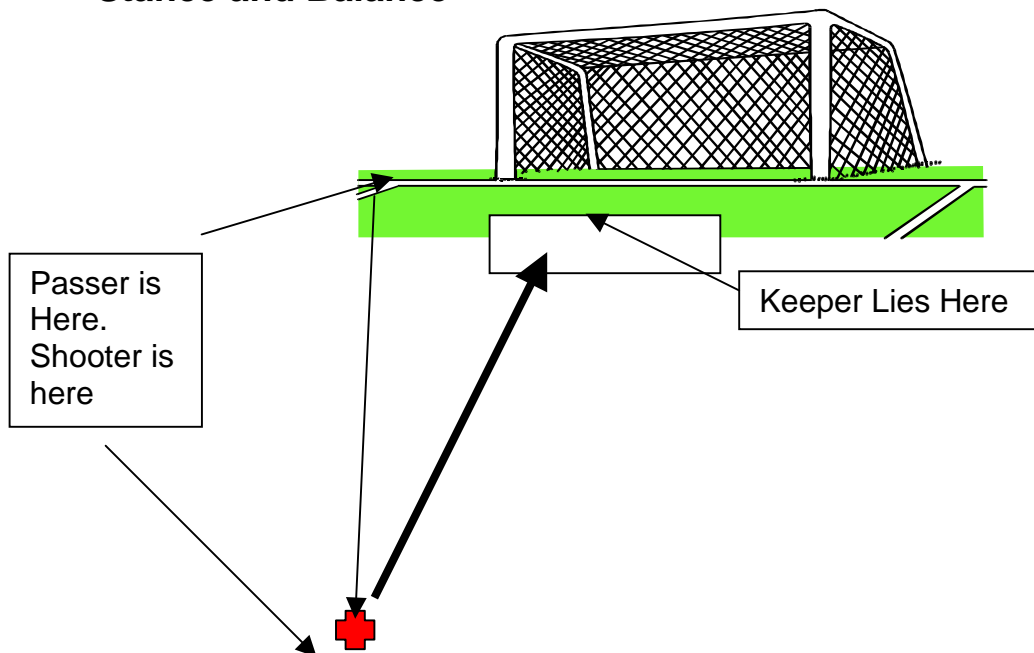
Explosive Scoop – Quick Roll Return

Have a player shoot a ground ball in to the keeper. Keeper explodes towards the ball and scoops it to his chest. He continues on and returns a roll pass to either the same player who shot it or to a third player who has gone wide.

This simulates both the explosive step towards the ball we want the keepers to employ and the quick, on the ground counter-attack which is more conducive to possession play than just punting the ball away.

It is also a good conditioning drill.

Stance and Balance



This drill is to teach stance and balance.. The keeper starts in a lying position at the near post. Player at the near post serves the ball to the top of the 18. As the ball is served the keeper comes to her feet. The player at the 18 plays the ball immediately back into the keeper.

Start the drill off simply. Have the ball played in, at a decent rate of speed to the keeper's feet. The keeper should scoop the ball if at all possible. It is always better for the keeper to have the ball in her hands than loose in the box. Play all balls towards the post. That is the keeper will always be making the save going to the outside.

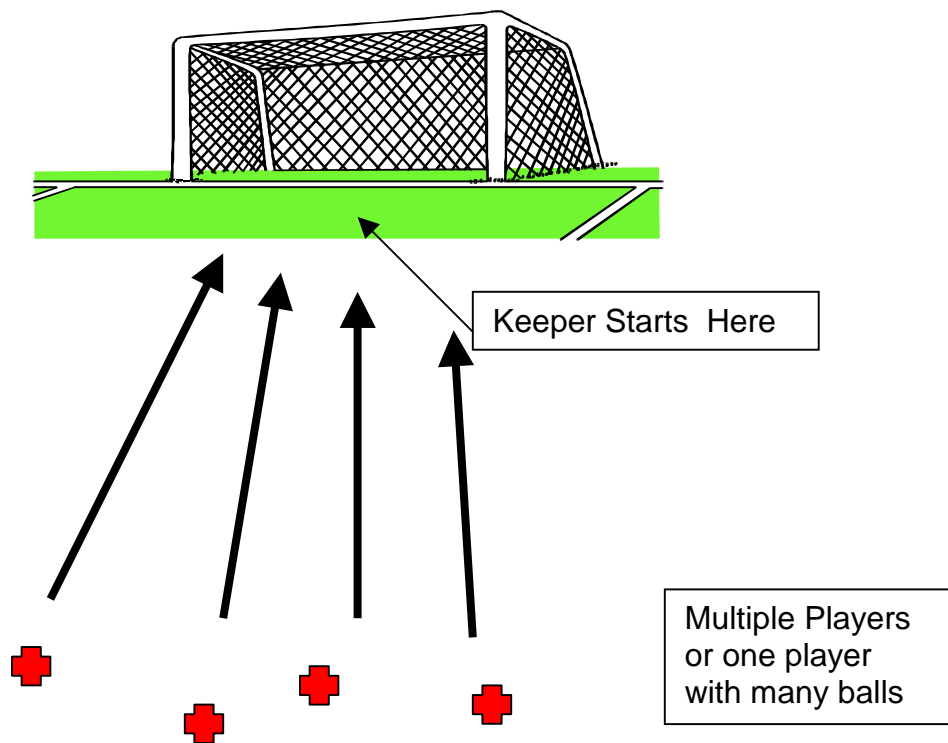
Increase the speed of play and increase the difficulty of the shots by mixing them up, high, low and in between but continue to keep them going towards the post. Finally mix the shots up by having them go both towards the post and away from the post.

Coaching Points

1. Keeper is on their feet as much as possible.
2. Keeper should distribute the ball after the shot just like they would in a game
3. If keeper goes down to make the save, make sure they protect their midsection with the top leg.

This is a good anaerobic conditioning drill. Be aware of the fatigue factor. Stress technical excellence. When you see that breaking down, give the keeper a rest.

Stance and Balance – The Turn Drill



In this drill the keeper starts with her back to the field. Player with the ball at the top of the 18 yells “**TURN!**”. Keeper turns and the ball should be right there within a second.

The object of the drill is hand-eye- coordination, decision making and obtaining the correct stance and balance quickly. The keeper should be on their toes in the turn, knees flexed so that they can go in either direction. The shots should be easy at first progressing to more difficult but not impossible. Build confidence with success.

After the save the keeper should distribute the ball as they would in a game. Make the first round a roll of the ball to a defender on the right. The next round a roll to a defender on the left, the next a one handed “grenade” throw. You might

even let them punt the ball occasionally, just don't let them make the save and drop the ball off somewhere. Make the training as game realistic as possible.

Progression

Have the keeper turn and then do a front roll, come to their feet and make the save. This is great for stance and balance and also adds an element of anaerobic conditioning.

Have the keeper roll the ball through their legs and then turn

Cutting Down the Angle

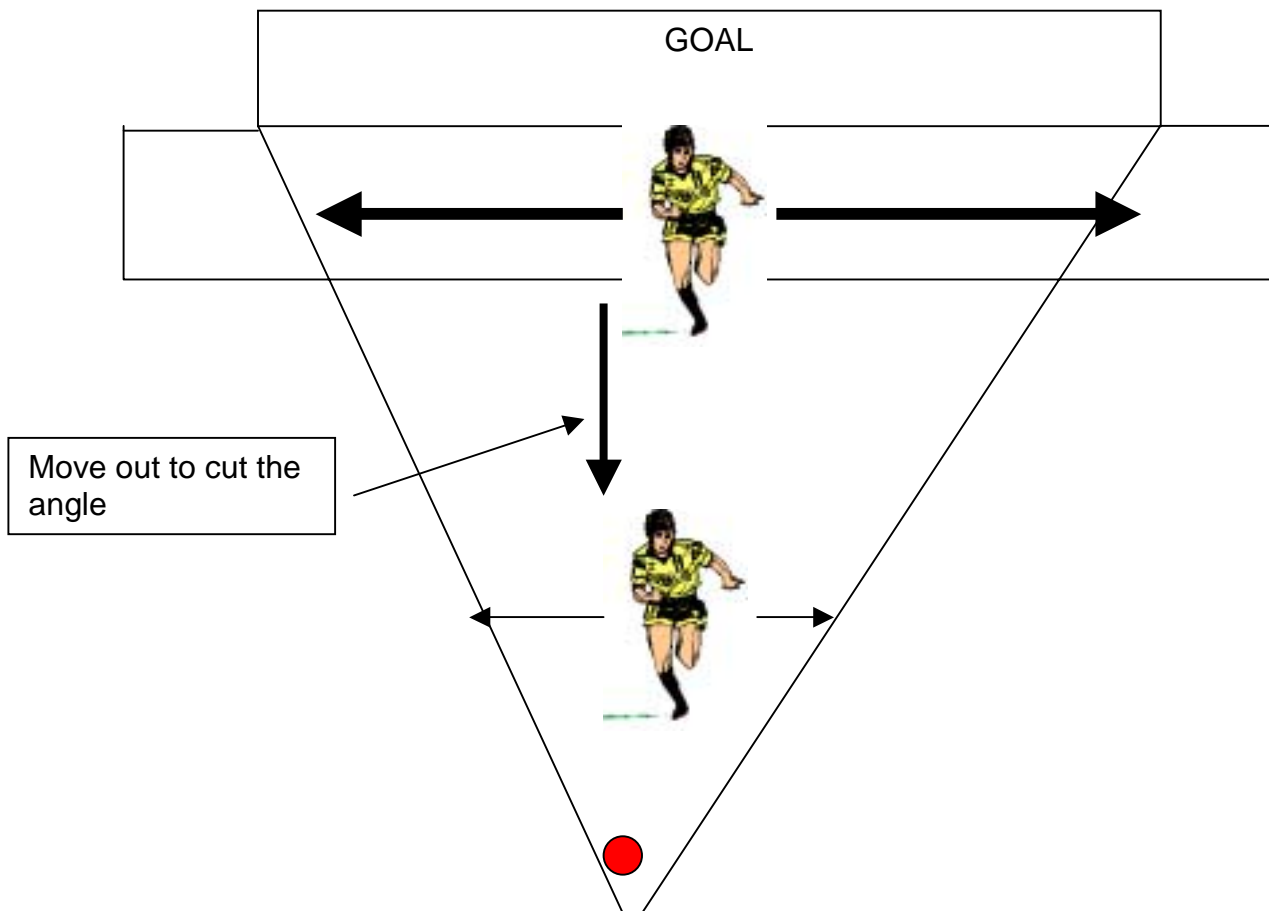
One of the tougher concepts for the young keeper is that of cutting down the angle of the shooter. At the younger ages you generally have two extremes, keepers who never come off their lines, and keepers who just charge at anything.

What the keepers lack is the perspective of how much net is left exposed if they do or do not move. This is so basically because there are no real visual cues for the keeper to lock in on.

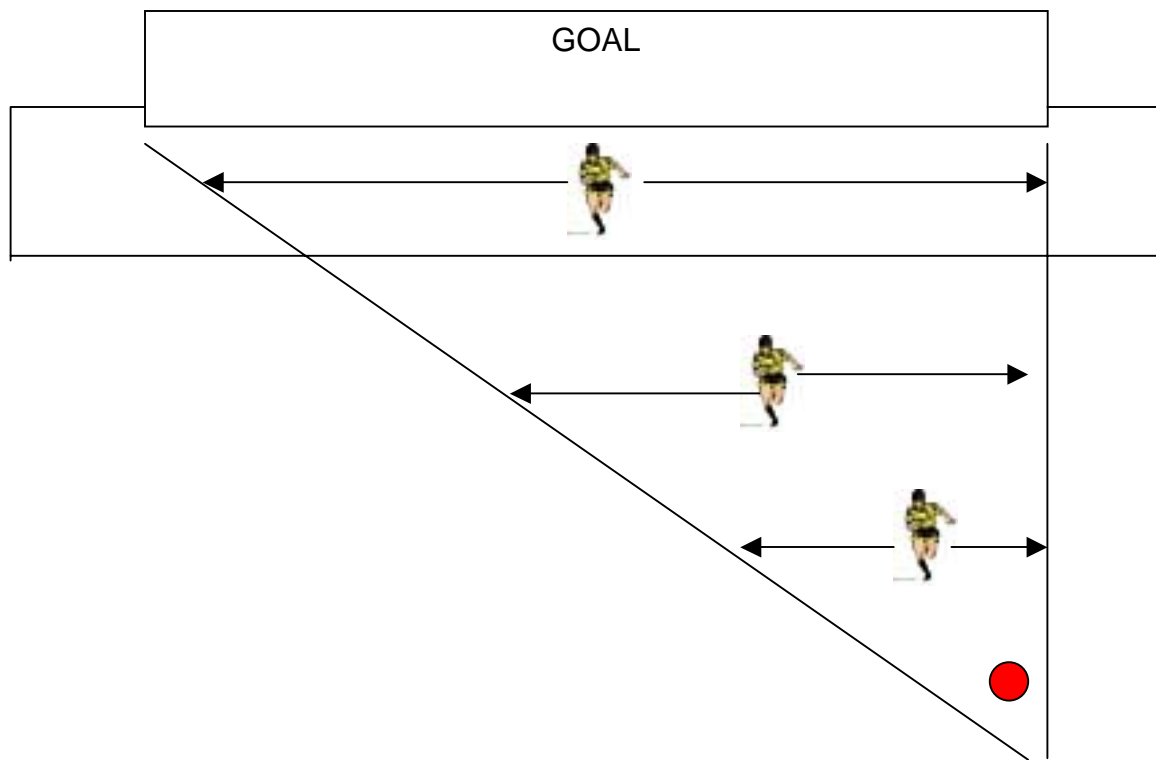
Depicted below is a simple, visual way to show the keeper how much of the net is exposed based on the ball's position and his position relative to it and the shooter.

All you need to demonstrate this is a net, a length of cord (a 150 foot extension cord does nicely) a ball and the keeper. Tie one end of the cord to the near post, the other end to the far post. Then you simply pull the cord out as depicted below and set the ball at the apex of the triangle.

Obviously everything outside the cord line will miss the net when shot, everything inside will hit the net. (There is of course the third dimension, height, but we'll get to this later.)



It is clear to see from the depiction above that as the keeper moves out to cut down the angle there is less and less room to her sides for the ball to pass her and still be on goal.



It is also easy to move the cords around to show how different angles of approach by the attacker yield different angles that the keeper can cut down.

The Height Dimension

Now of course there is also the issue of a shot being played over the head of the keeper. At the younger ages this is usually a line shot that just clears their hands.

At the older levels, as players come off their lines more there are chipped shots for which the keeper must drop back quickly for to punch away.

For the younger ages however, where we just want to show them the basic perspective of how cutting down the angle helps them, use this simple technique.

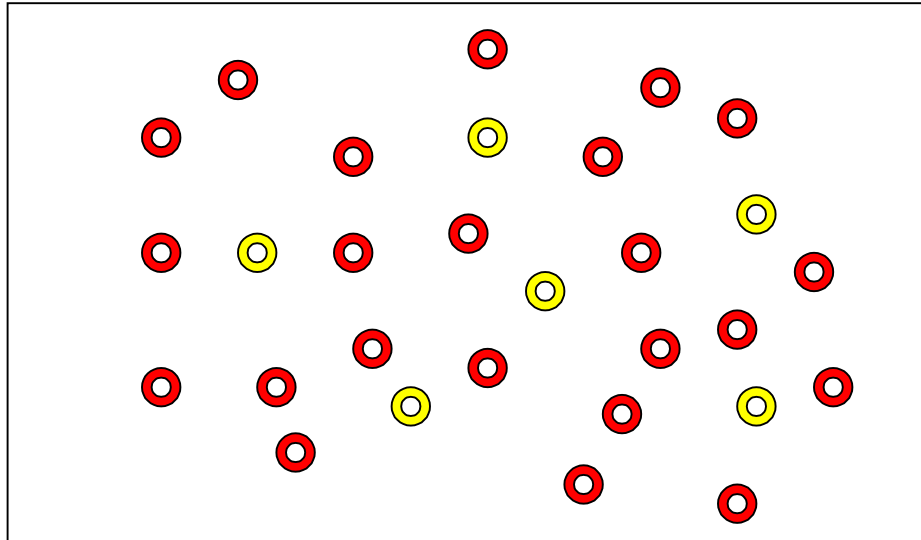
With the cords still in place, put a ball at the apex of the triangle. Then have the keeper go out and lie on the ground with their head on the ball. This gives them a “**balls eye view**”. Have a second player be the keeper in the net and have them slowly approach the ball. The keeper with their head on the ball will see how the player approaching “miraculously” grows in relation to the net, giving the shooter less and less of a target....simple, yet effective.

More Advanced Keeper Drills

Square of Death

The next series of exercises come from Bobby Muuss, Goalkeeping Coach at the University of Connecticut. The name of the drill is his, not ours.

Set up a grid of cones about 10 to 15 yards on a side. It helps if you have multiple color cones like a set of red and a few yellows (or vice versa).



Keepers start in a crouch, hands out for balance and on the balls of their feet. At the coaches signal they **shuffle** through the maze touching the cones with their hands. The object is to keep your head up, feet moving in **small, quick steps**, touching as many cones as you can in a 60 second span. The rest interval of this drill is a 60 second stretching period.

Coaching Points

1. Small, quick steps
2. Do not lift from the crouch position
3. Head up, explode to the next cone
4. Do not step on the cones
5. No diving

Progression of Square of Death

Concentration

- Make every third cone touch a yellow cone.

- Put the yellows on the outside and make the keeper explode to the outside every third cone.
- Have the drill end when every yellow cone in the group has been touched.

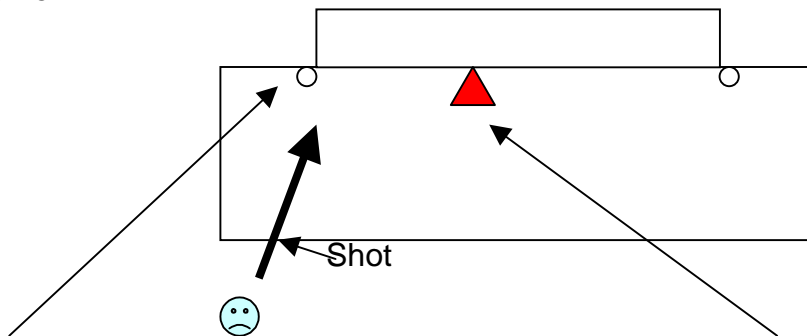
Hopping/Agility

- Have player two-foot hop over the cones and touch every third one.

Scooping

- Within the square have players scoop the ball, lay it down and then scoop another one. Have an equal number of balls and players at first and then progress to fewer and fewer balls to instill competition.
- Have the players scoop a ball, skip three others by touching 3 cones and scoop a "distant" ball.

Shuffle Drill



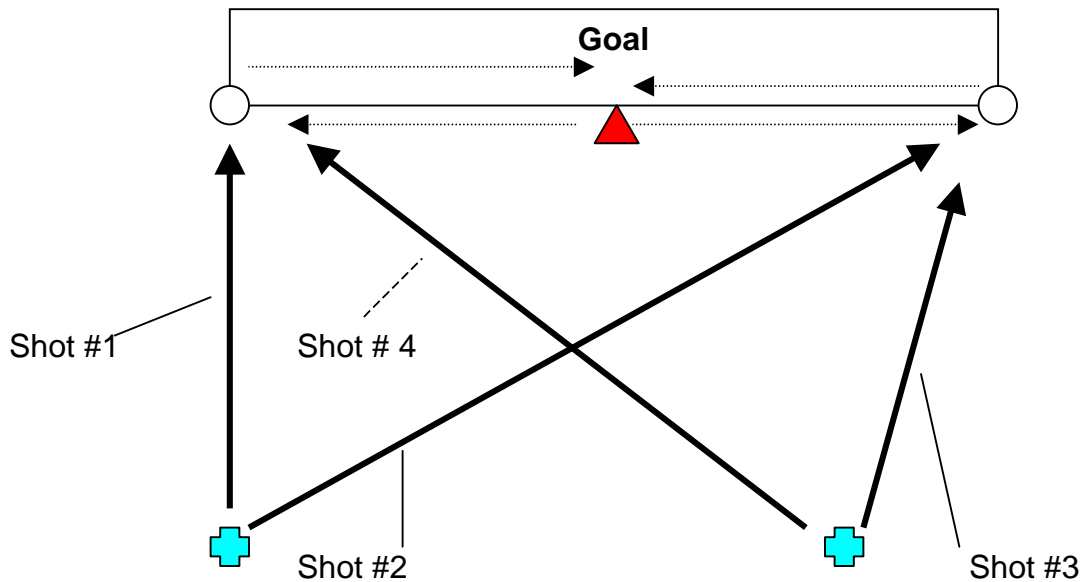
Keeper starts at near post in a properly balanced position. Keeper shuffles to first cone always keeping their body facing the shooter. Keeper touches the cone with their hand and then shuffles back to the post that they started from. Shooter delivers the ball to the keeper at the post for a save.

Keeper then distributes the ball back to the shooter and shuffles all the way to the far post and the shooter delivers the ball to the keeper there for a second save.

Coaching Points

1. Get low
2. Short quick steps
3. Maintain proper stance and balance
4. Try not to leave feet to make the save

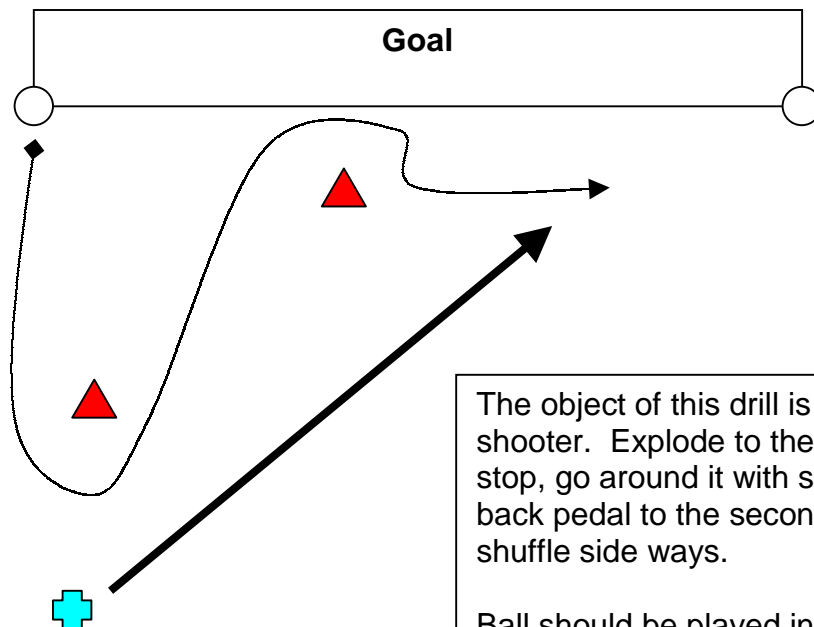
Rapid Fire 4 Ball Exercise



This is a progression of the shuffle – shot drill. There are now two shooters and 4 balls. The sequence is shuffle to cone – touch – shuffle to post – save, then shuffle to far post and make a second save.

After the second save the keeper “reloads and repeats the sequence in the opposite direction .

Forward- Back Footwork Drill



The object of this drill is to always face the shooter. Explode to the first cone and then stop, go around it with small choppy steps, back pedal to the second cone and then shuffle side ways.

Ball should be played in the direction the keeper is moving. Keeper should distribute the ball back and “reload”.

Teaching How to Defend Crosses

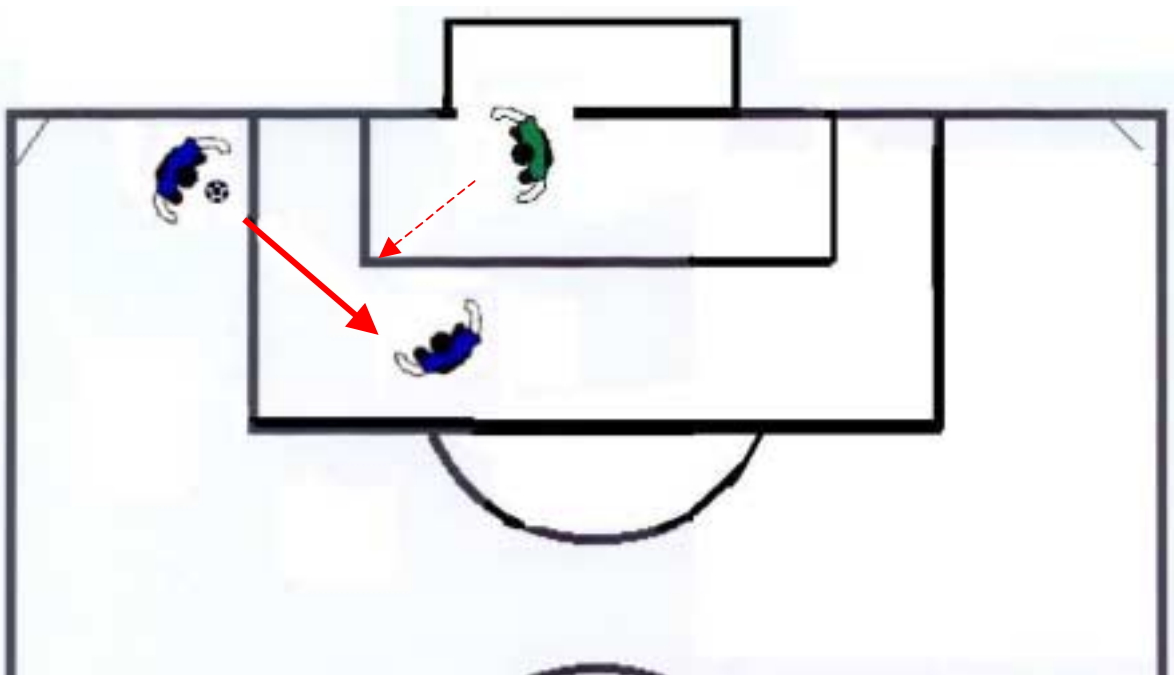
Defending the Low Cross

Note: The "low cross" discussed below is defined for this topic as a ball that is played from the side near the opponents goal line and below head height.

One of the biggest problems for a GK is the low cross, especially if the cross is angled back away from the goal.

This type of pass is difficult to the GK for a couple of reasons. First, the GK is often trained to make the diving save across the goal mouth. On a low cross, the save must be made away from the goal, which takes the GK off his line.

The next big problem is the cross itself. If the cross is moving away from the goal line, the GK must make the save on a ball moving away from him. This requires good timing, absolute commitment, and courage.



To complicate matters, the GK has to deal with attackers that approach the ball at different angles to the GK. Normally, the GK faces the attacker(s). With the low cross, the attacker comes from the side or more often from behind the GK. A well timed near post run will usually beat a GK trying to guard the near post to the ball. The GK must be aware of and assess these runs in his decision to go out after the ball.

Not only are opponents a problem, but also the GK's teammates can get in the way. Many own goals have resulted from the low cross.

Training to save this type of cross should start with the GK at the near post (NP). A server should play low hard balls from near the goal line. The server position should fluctuate from wide of, to close to the NP. The angle of the cross should be from parallel to the goal line to a spot on the six extended from the NP (coach should decide the maximum angle). It is important that the GK see many different serves to assess which saves can be made and which can't.

Technically, the GK should be near the NP on a line from the NP to the center of the goal mouth, 3-4 yards out. The GK's body should be in alignment with this line--in other words, he should not be facing the server, because if the GK faces the ball he will be blind to the runs behind him.

On the save, the GK should go out to meet the ball as its earliest point. This is very important on angled crosses as the longer it takes the GK get to the ball, the further away the ball will be from the GK.

If the GK cannot make the save, he needs to adjust his movement to the ball, being at the 3-4 yard center mark as the ball crosses the center of the goal. Footwork to recover into a ready position is very important as the GK may take a quick step or two out before deciding the cross is un-savable.

Progress the session to sending in near post runs from in front of the NP (where the GK can see the attacker). Then add NP runs from behind the GK across the goal mouth. Add defenders at the NP and on the six that are to deflect the ball if they get a chance or until the GK calls them off. Lastly, add marking defenders on the NP attacking runs.

The low near post cross or back angle cross is a killer ball to a defense and it is important that a GK is trained to recognize **savable** balls and to make the save.

Defending the High Cross

High Cross Warm Up

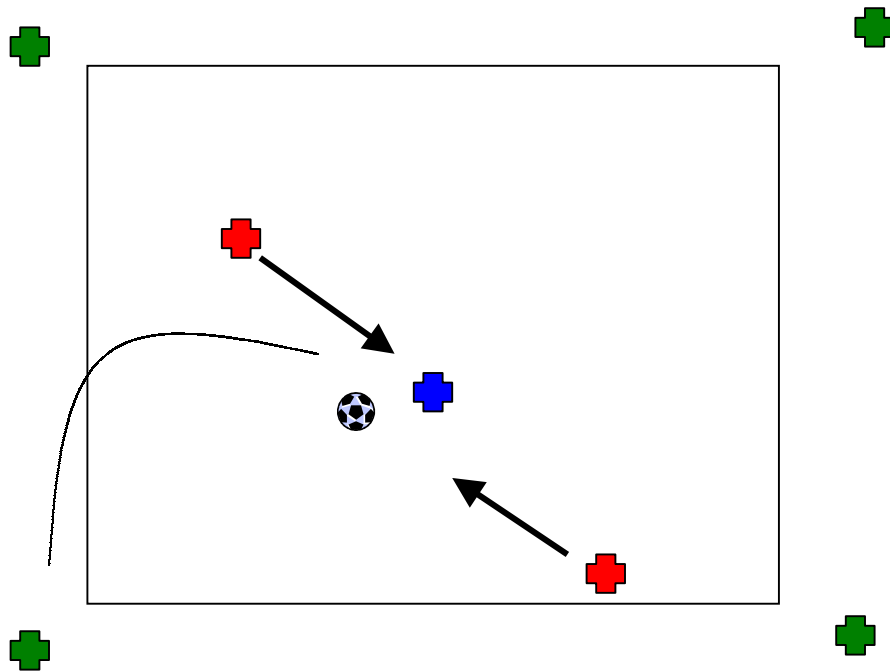
Players stand back to back and pass the ball over head and then through legs and then side to side.

Bounce ball hard and high as you can. Reach hands over head and catch as high as you can without leaving your feet. Get directly underneath the ball.

Progression: Leave feet to catch at the highest point.

Team up with a second player. One player bounces the ball and then harasses the catcher. Second player catches the ball. Arms and legs working together get you in the air.

Training for the High Cross

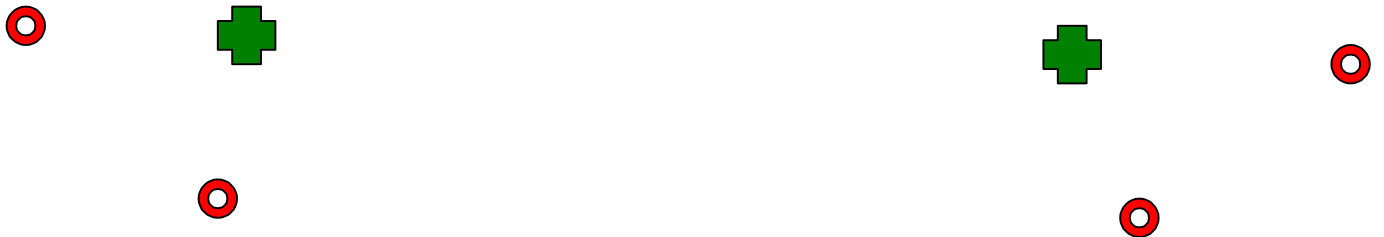
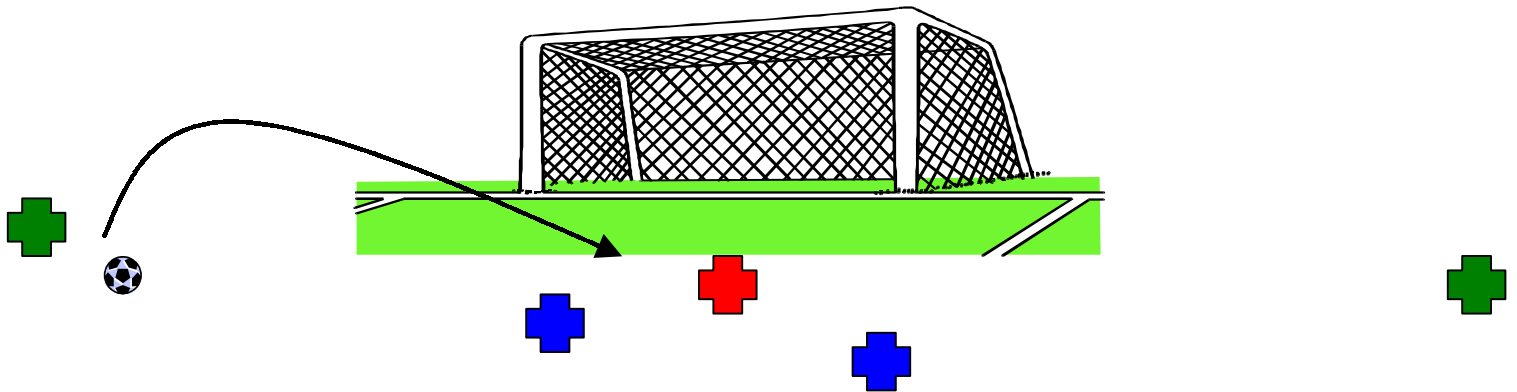


Make a 15 yard by 15 yard square. Place one catcher and two “blockers within the square. Place a man at each corner with a ball.

Each corner man has a number 1 to 4. The coach calls out a number (1 to 4) and that player serves a high ball to the center keeper. The keeper has to **attack** the high ball and win it in the air while being harassed by the other two players in the box.

Keeper immediately returns the ball to the server where upon the coach calls out a second number.

Defending the High Cross and Clearing

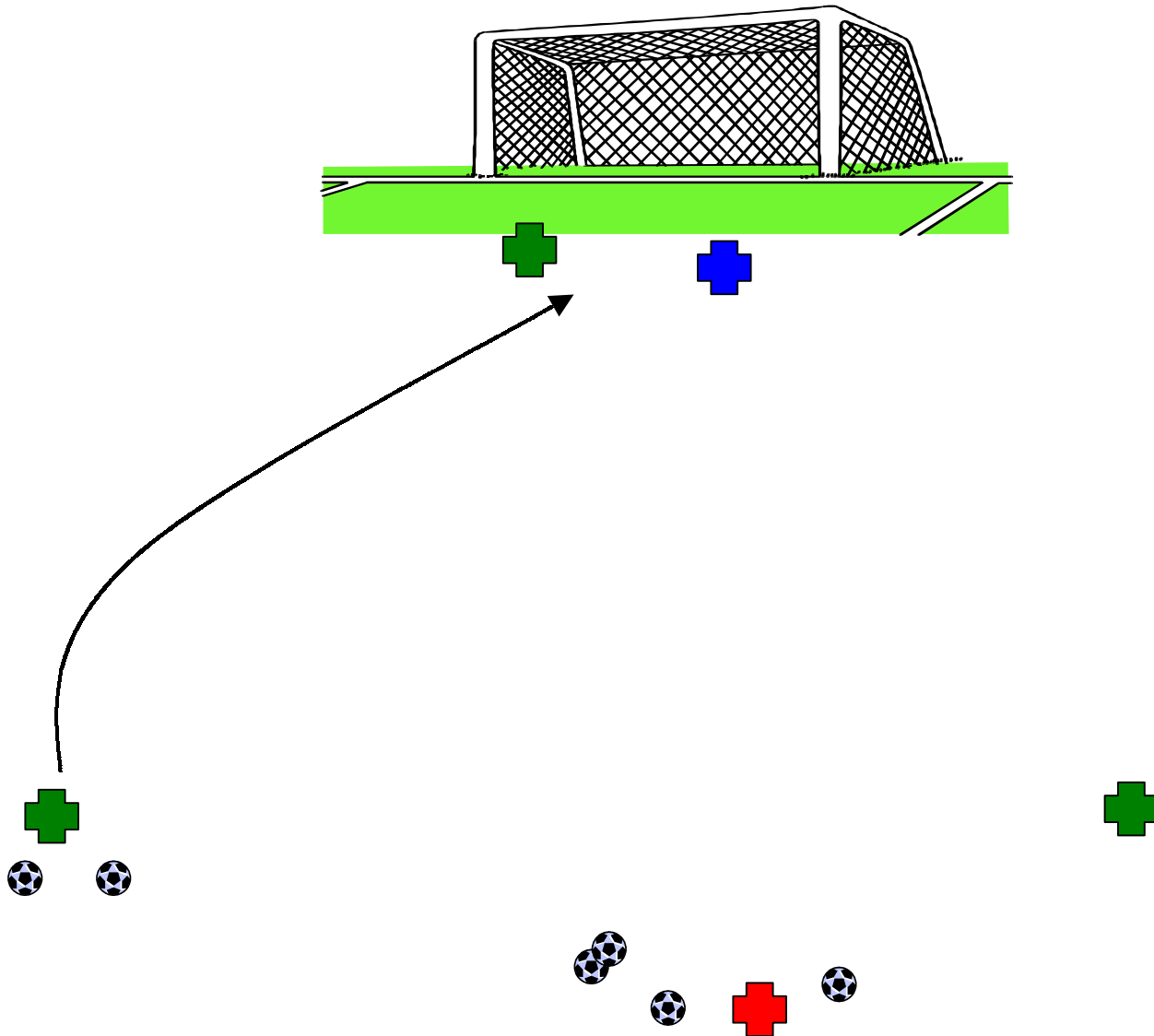


Set Up and Execution

Place one keeper in the goal with two blockers to harass her. Two players with multiple balls stand outside the 18 to serve high balls across the box. Two other players are 25 yards down field in side a marked off target (cones will do)

Keeper attacks the high ball, wins it in the air and immediately turns and throws it downfield **opposite** the direction from which the cross came. This switches the field and hopefully catches the offense still charging at the goal.

After the throw has been made, a second cross, from the opposite side is made and the process repeated.



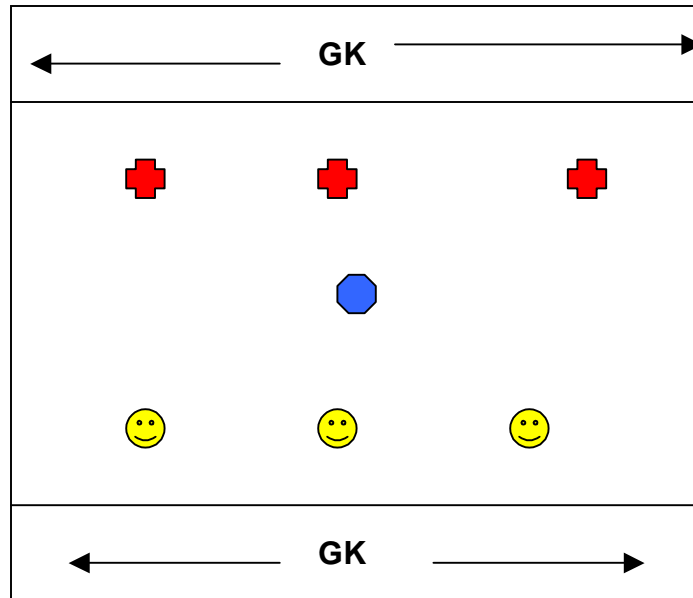
High Cross Knockout

Place two (2) keepers in goal. High cross is served into the box. Both keepers must legally go for the ball. No pushing, no shoving. Whoever wins the ball steps out and the remaining keeper defends a shot from the second player standing at the top of the 18. Play to 3 goals allowed. Whoever loses, stays in and defends again.

Implementing Goal Keepers in Team Training

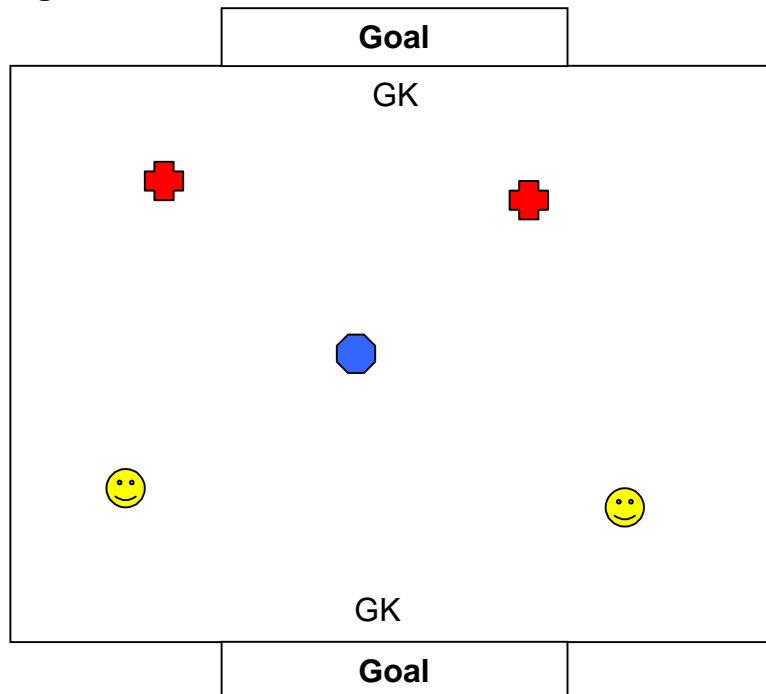
The following is a simple progression of team training wherein the goalkeeper is an integral part of the effort

3 v 3 +1



Goalkeepers run the end line. Players quickly try to get the ball into the goalkeeper, **at his feet**. The object is not to beat the goal keeper but use him as a fifth player. GK plays ball back to team that gave him the pass. Neutral player plays for whomever is on offense. This is a keep away type game.

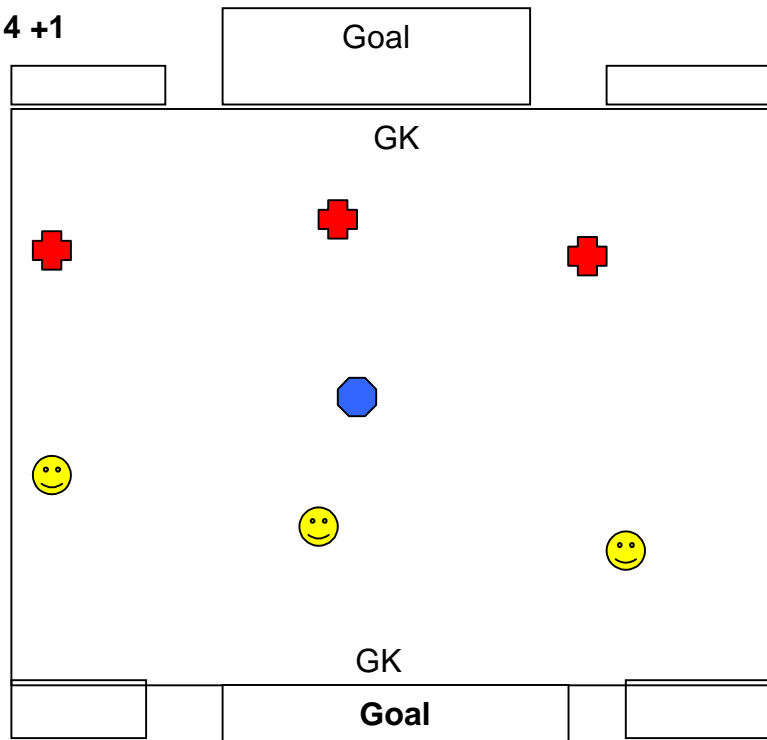
2 v 2 + 1 Going to Goal



In this game the object is to score. Neutral player again plays offense for whichever team possesses the ball. Play two goals wins. Stress quick movements and shoot at every opportunity. Keeper must transition ball quickly to offense. Don't let them kick the ball away.

Run two games on two fields simultaneously and switch the teams often.

3 v 3 or 4 v 4 +1



In this game the players are trying to score on one of three goals. The team gets one point for scoring in the large goal and two points for scoring in either of the two small goals.

Emphasize the goal keeper's mobility, quickness, speed and shot stopping.

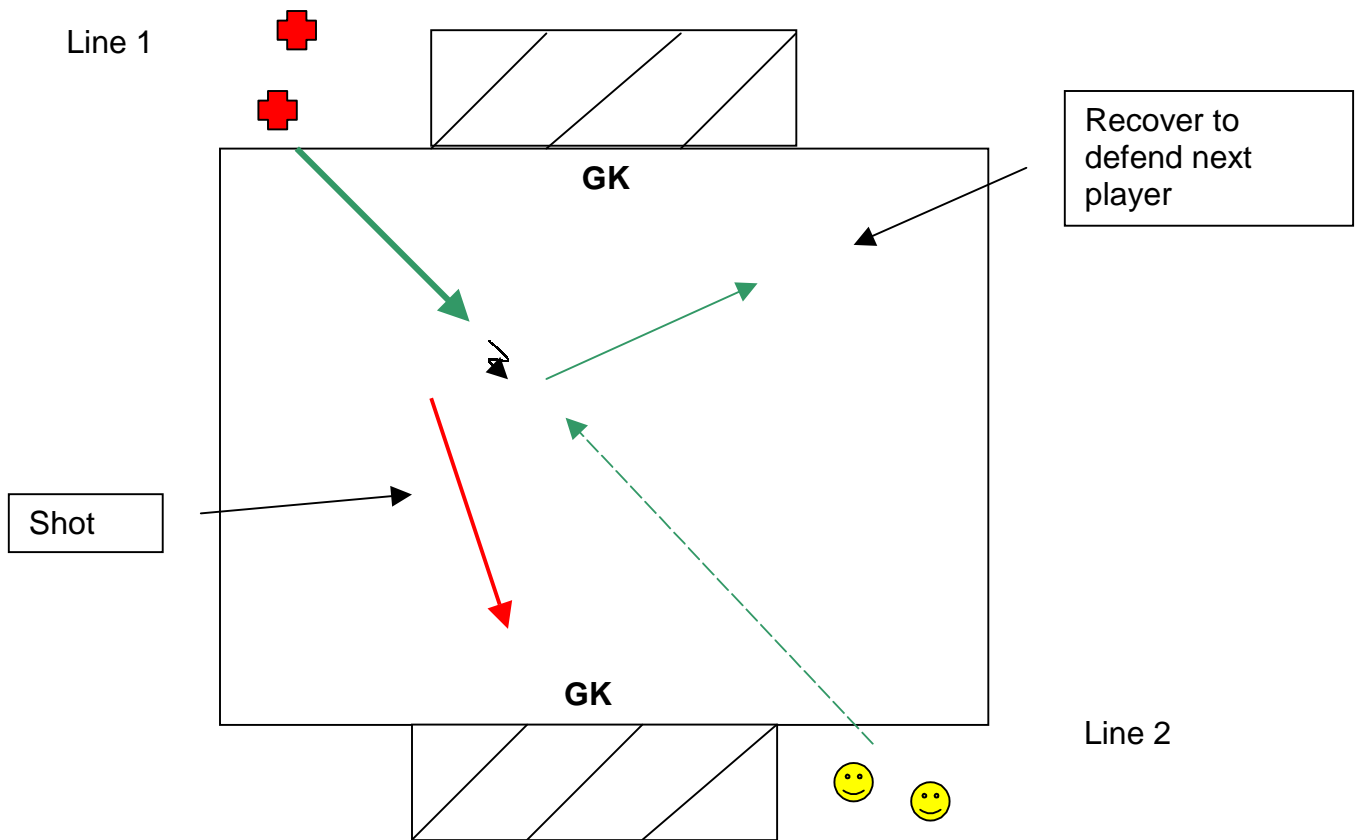
1 v 1 with Two Keepers

Set Up and Execution

Set up a short field with two goals and two keepers. Two lines of players are at the right side of each goal each with a set of balls at their feet. Designate one line to go first (line 1). Player 1 dribbles out with a ball. Player 2 (on the opposite line) comes out without a ball to defend 1 v 1 .

Have the defenders play 50% to start so that the keepers get some shots on them. Once the player has made her move and taken her shot she must **immediately** recover and play defense.

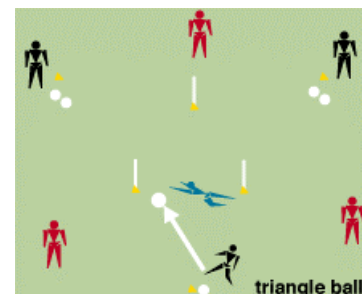
Her opponent is the next player in line 2 who dribbles out with a ball and plays for a shot on keeper #1. Process is then repeated



More Advanced Keeper Drills

The Triangle Drill

A three-goal triangle of normal full-size goal dimensions is set up on a good diving area. Three cones are positioned about 15-20 yards away facing the center of the goals. One player stands at each cone, with at least two balls, while three retrievers stand around the area to get the balls back quickly to those at the cones.



The purpose of this drill is to develop agility, positional sense and shot stopping.

Organization of the Triangle Drill

The drill starts with each player firing a shot at goal in strict rotation. The goalkeeper moves quickly from goal to goal to reposition himself for each shot. The coach should signal to players when they should shoot so that the goalkeeper is kept working hard to save shots. A reasonable time period for the goalkeeper is about 30-60 seconds, which the coach should monitor since the work is very strenuous.

Progression of the Triangle Drill

- Create a competition among the goalkeepers to see who can lose the least number of goals in given time periods.
- Some of the players shooting the ball can be asked to play a certain type of shot, to give the goalkeeper practice in that situation, e.g. a player may attempt to chip the ball over the goalkeeper's head.
- The coach can increase the tempo of the practice whereby each player shoots just as the goalkeeper recovers from the last shot, thus putting him under greater pressure.
- Add a cone at the center of the triangle. The keeper has to make his save, run around the cone and make another save at the next "window".

Goalkeeping - Pressure Drill

The purpose of the goalkeeper pressure drill is to develop quick reaction, positional sense and to practice handling and agility.



A goalkeeper stands in a goal, made up with posts, and faces varied serves from A,B,C and D in quick succession, for a set time period,

Organization of the Pressure Drill

- A: who stands approximately 10 yards away, kicks a hard ball directly to the goalkeeper at chest level;
- B: stands approximately 15 yards away at an angle and drives a hard low shot for the near or far post region
- C: stands about 40 yards away in a flank position and crosses a high ball in front of the goal
- D: who is positioned near the goal line and approximately 15 yards away from the goal, hits the ball across the face of the goal
- The goalkeeper defends each service: if he saves the ball by catching it he returns it to the server, if not, the three retrievers get the ball and keep the practice continuous

.Progression of the Pressure Drill

- Count the number of successful saves made by each goalkeeper during a given time period.

- The coach can direct the servers to quicken up the service, thus creating more pressure for the goalkeeper.
- Add an attacker who 'listens' near goal, generally challenges the goalkeeper and tries to score from anything that the goalkeeper fails to save.

Goalkeeper Mental Preparedness

The following is from a seminar given by Dan Gaspar at the NSCAA convention and is courtesy of Gary Rue and Jim Turpin.

Dan Gaspar runs Star Goalkeeper Academy, trained Portuguese National Team keepers, was the MetroStars keeper coach, coached last year in Japanese J - League, holds an NSCAA advanced national license, and is a technical consultant for US Soccer Project 2010.

Gaspar started the session by asking the coaches to cite reasons for keeper mental failure. Some of the responses were:

1. Poor concentration.
2. Fear
3. Anxiety
4. Poor preparation
5. Lack of team work
6. Poor decision making
7. Lack of specialized training
8. Poor communication
9. Leadership problems
10. Technical deficiency
11. Negative self talk
12. Not getting to position
13. Lack of ability to forgive

What the Pros Say

Dan then gave the responses from some of the top level goalkeepers on what sets them apart from the rest – their responses were:

1. Leave all outside life in the locker room
2. Try to stay in line with the ball throughout the game
3. Focus on the present, don't worry about past mistakes
4. Staying in the game through communication
5. The ability to rebound after a mistake;

Tony Meola, former Metro Stars and US National Team Keeper) told about how he responded after one of his worst mistakes (occurred in the Romania WC game, he gave up a near post goal, of course); but he went on to play the best game of his career.

Vision

The visual functions are very important to goalkeeping - what the goalkeeper sees and how he processes what he sees is important.

Visual acuity - Write letters on goal post 10 feet above eye level and ten feet below; jump up and down and stay focused on a certain letter

Ocular mobility – the ability to track; it's important to keep the eyes moving and the head stationary; train by watching a mini-ball move in a circle.

Speed of recognition – one goalkeeper in goal with two goalkeepers seated near the penalty spot; a server take shots from outside the area; the seated keepers save what they can and deflect what they can't save to create problems for the keeper in goal

Peripheral vision - focus on one object, yet be aware of details around them; two players passing, but looking each other in the eye, not ball watching. Players can also practice by walking down the hall or street, being aware of surrounding things, without looking at them.

The Gift Of Failure

1. It is the BIG fear, but it is really a gift;
2. Teach players how to fail
3. Taking risks (winners take more risks but fail more often);
4. Mistakes are the perfect stepping stones;
5. There is absolutely nothing you can do about mistakes except learn from them and then forget them;
6. Post competition analysis is very important
7. One must fail to succeed

Why do most players fail to develop mental toughness – they don't pay the mental dues; it all starts with training; you must train with emotion in order to cope with emotion during prime time. The Japanese cultural history makes it difficult for them to recover from failure. They tend to dwell on the failures. It is not uncommon to see a team win many matches in a row and start a long losing skid after one bad outing.

98% and 2% - 98% of a group will just show up day in and day out. The other 2% are emotionally involved in what they do, they are mentally plugged in everything they can to learn.

The body mind connection - Your mind thinks and your body follows. The birth of excellence is the understanding that you have the choice of how you feel. You don't HAVE to feel bad if you don't want to.

Inner Coach – Self-fulfilling Prophecy; it ensures all cylinders are working. Be persistent and motivated

GIGO factor - garbage in, garbage out; you are what you tell yourself. You wouldn't let someone dump garbage in your room, so why put garbage in your brain?

Recognize negative thoughts and delete them - self-suggestions have an impact on the entire body.

GOYA factor - get off your backside; go for it; fantasize in as complete as possible detail; no matter what, act as if everything is okay. Be in control and stay positive; always stay cool and calm, in control of the emotions.

- Have A Game Plan
- Create A Big Enough **WHY**;-
- Have An Impassioned Focus;
- Paint Clear And Positive Pictures;
- Positive Pressure –
 - Know Where You Want To Go;
- Link Pleasure With Achieving –
 - Know What Pleasure You Will Get When You Achieve
- Link Pain With Not Achieving Which Is Just As Important;
- Develop A Hunger And Desire To Achieve

Coping - the power of questions

- Avoid endless loop questions because they put you in a negative rut.
- ..

The power of questioning, what makes you:

- happy;
- proud;
- grateful;
- excited;
- enjoy;
- feel commitment

Concentration - fully connected to what you are doing, you are aware of nothing else; it is a paradoxical skill; when anxiety increases, performance decreases; on recognition, you should quickly bring yourself back to the positive forces; whose side is your brain on? is it your friend?

Broom demo – two different volunteers tried to balance a broom; one was told to look at top; the other was told to look at bottom; one performed the other didn't; what you concentrate on is most important; it better be the right thing.

Ball stare – train concentration by staring at ball for 5 minutes; this is difficult to do without losing focus; raise the ante by adding the TV on in the background; then add moving people.

Here and now rule - this is where you mentally crumble; mental time and place violations;

- the NOW is all you have control over;
- you can't change the PAST;
- TOMORROW has no guarantees;
- what are you telling yourself in that 200 words per minute self talk;
- the most important self conversation you can have will link pleasure with achieving.

Uncontrollable - other players, field conditions, weather, referees, etc.

Controllable - you can control your eyes and ears; i.e. you can only control your individual performance.

- watch out for goals that depend on others.
- create an image before the game of the best you can do.
- have focal points. For instance, go out early before the game and sit in stands and visualize the game, mentally create waste baskets that you can crinkle up a mistake and quickly throw it in, after game go to waste basket and review to learn, then discard.
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Stress and performance – the greater the stress, the more performance suffers.

Forgive yourself - switch away from mistake and replace it with positive talk,

Don't Hang Onto It - breathe slower, let it go, develop a ritual to handle this (for example, after a bad play pick a blade of grass, refocus, breathe slower acknowledge that you can't change the mistake, relax and throw away the grass). Do what works for you.

When Is World Cup ? – it is now! - Play and practice as if now is the most important moment in your life.

Avoid The Words Can't/Never/Impossible - at least add the word YET behind them.

Success - doing the best with what you have.

The Line – once you cross the line onto the pitch, you are a player, nothing else. When you cross the line going back, you become a student, son/daughter, etc.

The Power Of Choice - you choose how you feel about yourself - hit cancel button - takes training and time to get good at this

When Is The World Cup? Your World Cup Is Right NOW !