



UPWARD SOCCER COACH PLAYBOOK

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| 360 Coaching Keys..... | 3 |
|------------------------|---|

Section One: Practice

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Upward Soccer Coach App..... | 6 |
| Practice Chart..... | 7 |
| Warm-Up Activities..... | 8 |
| Skills and Drills..... | 9 |
| Mid-Practice Huddles (Devotions)..... | 26 |
| Practice 1..... | 28 |
| Practice 2..... | 30 |
| Practice 3..... | 32 |
| Practice 4..... | 34 |
| Practice 5..... | 37 |
| Practice 6..... | 40 |
| Practice 7..... | 42 |
| Practice 8..... | 44 |
| Practice 9..... | 47 |
| Practice 10..... | 49 |
| Last Practice of the Season..... | 51 |

Section Two: Games

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| Field of Play..... | 56 |
| Number of Players..... | 57 |
| Ball Sizes..... | 57 |
| Game Duration..... | 58 |
| Game Format..... | 58 |
| Rules for Upward Soccer..... | 59 |
| Re-starts..... | 62 |

Section Three: Forms

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Substitution Forms..... | 66 |
| Star Distribution Form..... | 74 |
| Notes..... | 76 |



360 Coaching Keys

The 360 Progression™ is a uniquely designed sports experience that develops the total athlete mentally, athletically, spiritually, and socially. To be a 360 Coach, there are some practical keys to coaching that are necessary for success:

1. *Teach the game through drills* - The ability to execute proper drills enhances skill level and improves athletic foundations. Your practices should utilize drills that enhance skill development.
2. *Teach the rules of soccer* - For players to grow in the sport they must understand and apply the rules of the game. Take time to explain rules and why they are important.
3. *Instill sportsmanship with a competitive spirit* - In sports, winning and losing are a part of the game, just as it is for life. Knowing how to handle both in a positive way builds character in young athletes. Teach your players to play hard and play to win, but also teach them to put others before themselves with a positive attitude and sportsmanship.
4. *Communicate effectively* - In order to teach the rules, explain drills and teach sportsmanship, you have to be an effective communicator. Likewise, good communication and organization are crucial in keeping parents informed throughout the season. This includes keeping them up to date on practice and game times and having a plan in place each and every practice.



SECTION ONE PRACTICE



Upward Soccer Coach App

As a coach, it's important to stay organized and prepared for both practices and games. Upward Sports now has a way to make coaching easy through the Upward Soccer Coach App. With this app, you will be able manage your team in a simple, paperless way throughout the season. Here you will able to:

- › Manage player/guardian information
- › View practice plans
- › Substitute players on game day
- › Assign and track star distribution on game day

The Upward Soccer Coach App is available on iPhone (iPad compatible) and Android phones.

Suggested Practice Chart

Below is a suggested practice chart to you help organize your practices. For a detailed week by week plan, utilize The Coach's Sideline available at *MyUpward.org*.

| Practice | Practice Focus | Team Meeting | Rules to Cover | Skills & Drills |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Get to know each other · Evaluate skills · Set practice rules · Teach dribbling fundamentals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Get to know each other through introductions · Discuss practice ground rules · Introduce attacking basics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Practice rules | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Dribbling Page 10 |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Continue skill evaluation · Teach passing fundamentals · Teach positions and responsibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Re-introduce players and coaches · Discuss common fouls · Explain substitutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Re-start (kickoff, corner kicks, goal kicks, throw-ins) Page 62 · Game format and substitutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Passing Page 13 |
| 3 week of first game | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review re-start situations · Teach shooting fundamentals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discuss practice focus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What are the common fouls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Shooting Page 18 |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Skill development · Review positions and responsibilities · Teach defensive tactics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discuss practice focus · Discuss successes from first game | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What happens after a foul | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tactics - Defense Page 21 |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Skill development · Teach offensive tactics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discuss practice focus · Answer players' questions about the game · Discuss successes from previous game | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review all rules as a fun quiz | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tactics - Offense Page 23 |
| 6-11 through last practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Continue skill development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discuss practice focus · Discuss successes from previous game · Answer players' questions about the game | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Continue to review rules for clear understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Improvements from games |

Warm-Up Activities

(Emphasis is on a gradual warm-up, not a race)

High Knees

Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players jog slowly across the field by raising their knees toward their chests so thighs are parallel to the ground and knees are bent at a 90 degree angle. Once all players have made it to the other side of the field, have them return to the starting point by slowly jogging back across the field.

Heels to Hands

Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players jog slowly with knees pointing toward the ground and their heels kicking upward toward their backsides where their hands are. Once all players have made it to the other side of the field, have them return to the starting point by sprinting back across the field.

Sprint to Backpedal

Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players sprint across the field then backpedal to the starting point. As players backpedal, instruct them to lean slightly forward and land on the balls of their feet so they don't trip and fall backward.




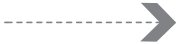

Basic Dribbling and Passing

Basic dribbling and passing work can be used in the team warm-up time. Pair players up with a teammate or two. Give each group a soccer ball and have them dribble and pass to each other within your practice area.

Skills and Drills

This section reviews the fundamental skills of soccer, explains why each is important and emphasizes the skill's key teaching points. Each skill is followed by a basic drill that reinforces it. These drills are acceptable for any age group as an introduction to the concept behind each skill. *For more advanced age-appropriate drills for each skill, as well as complete practice plans, go to MyUpward.org.*

Many of the drills described in this playbook require one ball per player. If you are limited in the number of soccer balls you have for practice, you will need to modify the drill by creating lines based on the number of soccer balls available.

| KEY TO DIAGRAMS | |
|---|---|
|  | = Player |
|  | = Player Movement Without the Ball |
|  | = Dribble |
|  | = Pass |
|  | = Cone |

Dribbling Skills

The information below will help you to teach players to control the ball when dribbling.

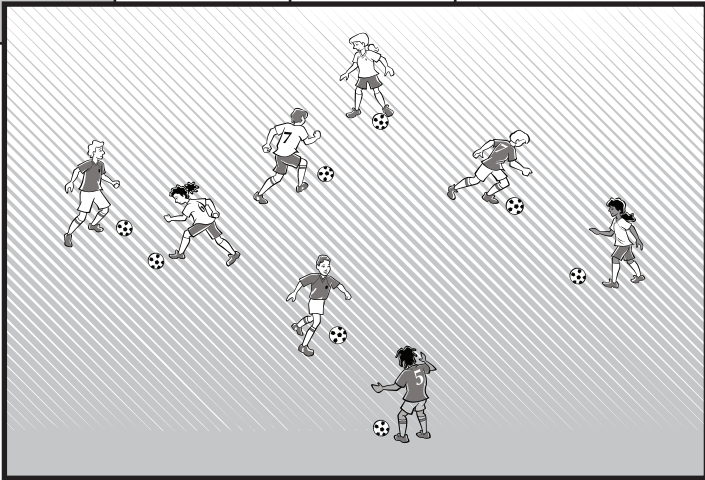
Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Get comfortable dribbling the ball in different body postures (standing straight for slower control, leaning to the side for turns and fakes or leaning forward for speed).
 - › Repetition is the key to becoming comfortable with all styles of dribbling.
 - › Activity should be done slowly to learn the technique; it is not a race.
- Focus on making clean touches on the ball; avoid being sloppy with things like balance, body positioning and loose ankles.
- Keep looking up, down and around as often as possible to know your options and to keep the ball close.
- Keep the ball close so it doesn't go out of bounds or is not lost to an opponent.

Encourage players as they begin to see success while dribbling. Dribbling is very unnatural at first, so increasing confidence is important.

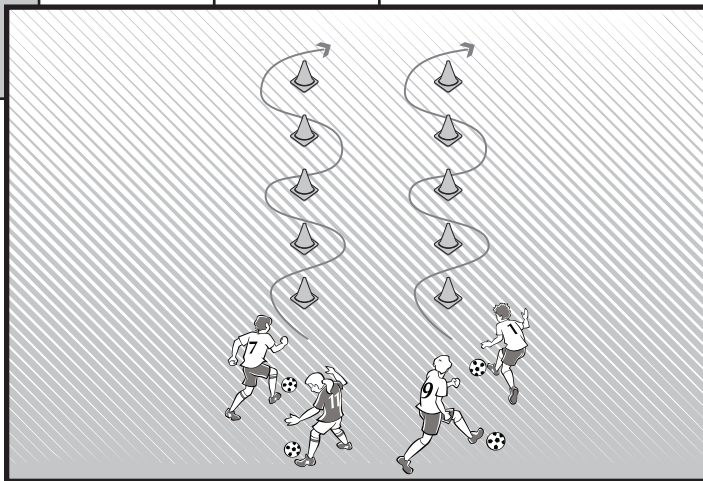
SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

| <i>Drill</i> | <i>Objective</i> | <i>Equipment</i> | <i>Procedure</i> |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Free Dribbling</i> | Training players to keep the ball in their possession by tight/clean touches on the ball. | One soccer ball per player. | On the coach's signal, players begin to freely dribble throughout the practice area using different parts of their foot. This will increase player's confidence with the ball. |



SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

| <i>Drill</i> | <i>Objective</i> | <i>Equipment</i> | <i>Procedure</i> |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
| Basic Dribbling | Training players to keep the ball in their possession by tight/clean touches on the ball | One soccer ball per player and ten markers/cones. | On the coach's signal, the first player in each group begins to dribble (weaving) through the line of markers/cones in front of their group. As players dribble through the markers/cones, give specific instructions to dribble with emphasis on different techniques of dribbling: "Inside of the foot only" (left and right foot); "Outside of the foot only"; "Inside & Outside of the foot" (alternating). |



Passing Skills

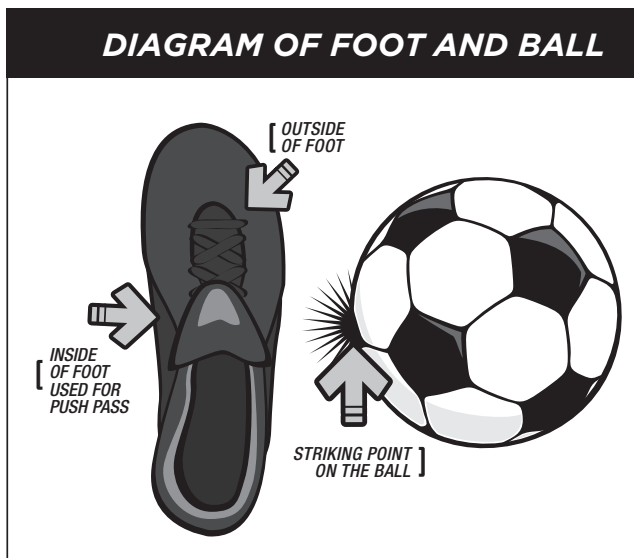
The information below will help you to teach players to become confident passers.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- The support leg holds body weight and the kicking leg strikes the ball and follows through with it in the direction of the pass.
- The ball should be struck with a “locked” ankle and toes raised toward the shin.
- When striking the ball for a pass, imagine a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the ball and strike the ball just above the line. This keeps the ball from going up in the air. If the ball is hit on the lower half, it typically pops up in the air.
- Do not pass with the toe, because it does not result in an accurate pass.
- Use both feet to pass instead of relying on the dominant foot.
- Inside-of-the-foot pass
 - › The ball is struck on the inside of the foot, right above the arch of the foot.
 - › Toes should be raised toward the shin to lock the ankle.
 - › *Posture:* Knees should be slightly bent for balance and the plant foot is pointed in the direction of the pass.
 - › *Focus:* Eyes are on the ball, which is generally hit at its center with a locked ankle.
 - › Follow through when first learning. As players progress, it is a quick “popping” motion, with more force and less follow through.

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

- Outside-of-the-foot pass
 - › The ball is struck with the outside of the foot, just behind the small toe.
 - › Toes should be turned in and down to help lock the ankle.
 - › *Posture*: Knees should be slightly bent for balance and the body stance is in a line with the ball.
 - › *Focus*: Eyes are on the ball and players crouch or hunch over for balance and to increase force on the ball.
 - › Follow through when first learning. As players progress, it is a quick “popping” motion with more focus and less follow through.



Receiving Skills

The information below will help you teach players to receive a pass.

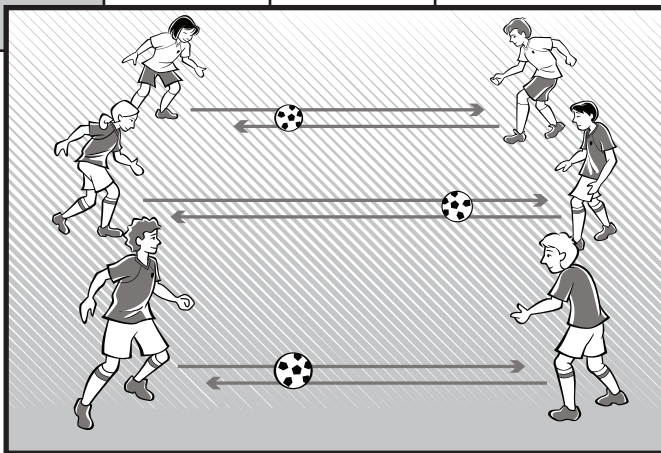
Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Anticipate a pass from your teammate by being ready. Know where the ball is at all times, don't stand flat footed, and move to an open space.
 - › Think about the options you have once you receive the ball.
 - › Be aware of teammates and opponents and their positioning on the field.
- The support leg holds body weight and the receiving foot moves back with the ball once it touches the foot. This absorbs the force of the ball and allows for better control.
 - › The force of a pass is absorbed by placing the foot in alignment with the ball while stepping forward with the support leg. The ball is absorbed into the foot by carrying it backward or wedging it against the ground with the sole of the foot.
 - › Step forward when the ball is approaching to get your body ahead of the ball as you receive it. This will prevent the ball from getting too far away and helps with balance when absorbing the ball into the foot.
- Keep your head and eyes moving up and down, left and right. This helps increase ball control and gives better awareness of other players on the field in the game.
- As players master the basics of receiving the ball, teach them to "cut-down" on the ball as it arrives, with a fast motion using the inside of the foot. This creates a backspin to keep the ball close to the body.
- Use both feet to receive passes instead of relying only on the dominant foot.

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

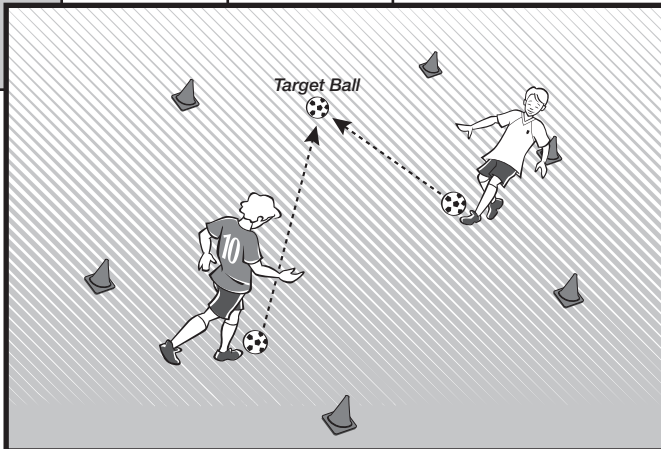
Passing/Receiving Drills

| Drill | Objective | Equipment | Procedure |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Basic Passing | Players learn the touch of good passing and receiving/controlling the ball | One soccer ball per player | On the coach's signal, players pass to each other back and forth. After players have passed for two to three minutes, change passes to seven to 10 yards apart, then progress to jogging around the field and passing. |



SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

| Drill | Objective | Equipment | Procedure |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| Hit the Target | Players learn the touch of good passing with accuracy | One soccer ball per player, one clearly identified ball to be used as the target, and four markers or cones | To begin the game, the coach will kick the target ball into play. Players attempt to hit the target ball with their own soccer ball by passing at the target ball. After a couple of players hit the target ball, the coach should kick it to another area inside the grid. Players do not have to use the same soccer ball throughout this drill. They should use the ball nearest them (other than the target ball). |



Shooting Skills

Shooting Techniques

The information below will help you to teach good shooting fundamentals.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Striking the ball when shooting
 - › Use inside the foot (push-pass) for accuracy shooting.
 - › Use instep/laces of the foot for power shooting.
- The plant foot should be located next to the ball with the shooting leg drawn back. The shooting leg is bent at the knee at a 90 degree angle with the knee directly above the ball.
- Keep your head down and over the ball when shooting to keep the ball from going too high.
- Shooting accuracy
 - › Concentrate on shooting the ball through the openings of defenders accurately.
 - › To establish the foundation for fundamental shooting, aim for one of these areas on the goal:
 - Corners (on the ground or the upper corners)
 - Near post (post closest to the ball) with a push-pass or accuracy type shot.
 - Far post (post furthest from the ball) and strike the ball with power.
- Shooting skill progression
 - › Shoot the ball while it is stationary to develop confidence.
 - › Shoot with the ball in motion, while players take two to three steps to approach the ball and shoot.

(continued from previous page)

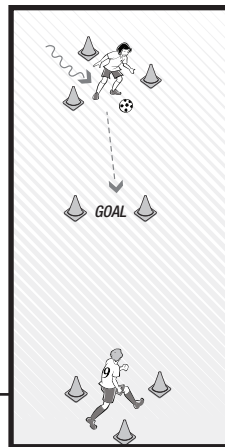
- › Shoot the ball while the player and the ball are in motion without defensive pressure.
- › Shoot the ball while the player and the ball are in motion with defensive pressure.

Shooting Drills

| Drill | Objective | Equipment | Procedure |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Instep Shooting (Stationary)</p> | <p>Teach the posture and positioning of how to shoot the ball</p> | <p>18-24 cones and one soccer ball for every two players</p> | <p>On the coach's signal, the player with the ball shoots the stationary ball through the target or goal. The ball should pass through the target or goal where the partner will retrieve it and bring it back between their markers/cones. Players should continue shooting back and forth. As players are shooting, walk from grid to grid to give more detailed shooting tips and encouragement to players as they practice.</p> <div data-bbox="678 868 899 1316" style="text-align: center;"> </div> |

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

| Drill | Objective | Equipment | Procedure |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p><i>Instep Shooting (With Movement)</i></p> | <p>Learn the posture and positioning of how to shoot the ball while moving</p> | <p>24-28 markers/ cones and one soccer ball for every two players</p> | <p>On the coach's signal, the player with the ball slowly dribbles the ball up to the line and then shoots the ball through the target or goal to their partner on the opposite side of the grid. The ball should pass through the target or goal where the partner will retrieve it and bring it back to their line. Players should continue shooting back and forth. As players are shooting, walk from grid to grid to give more detailed shooting tips and encouragement to players as they practice.</p> |



Defensive Tactical Skills

The information below will help you teach players a solid defensive philosophy.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- The objective in defending is to keep good balance. Be aware of your timing in attacking the ball from an opponent and to play defense in a clean but hard fought way.
- Be aware of the whole field when defending, including passing lanes and the support players from the opposing team in order to limit their options.
- When defending the attacking player, you should have a one foot slightly in front of the other and knees slightly bent. You should also be on the front part of the foot and slightly crouched.
- Be patient and aware of timing the tackle or “winning the ball.” If you simply wait until the attacker makes a bad touch on the ball, it allows you to win it from them. Being too aggressive and jumping into the situation without thinking can result in a good attacker dribbling right past a defender.
- Play “light-on-your-feet” so you can react quickly to the play in front of you.
- Stay in the defensive position as much as possible, keeping the player with the ball in front of you.
- Don’t cross your legs when marking an attacker. As you slant the attacker, move your legs in a shuffling motion.
- Don’t approach the ball “flat” with both feet side by side and heels on the ground. This allows the attacker to dribble around the defender much easier.

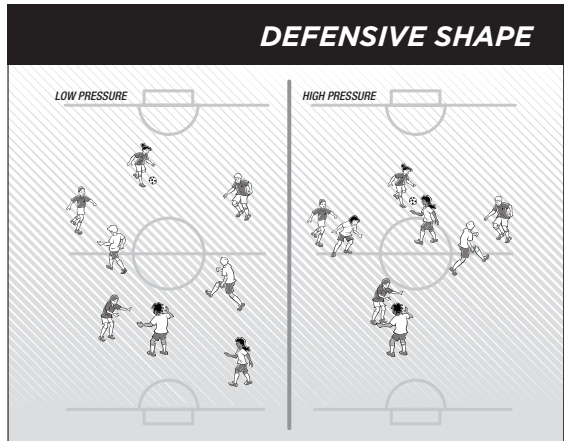
Defensive Drills: *Defensive Shape*

Objective:

Training players to work as a team by having defensive shape (positioning as a team).

Equipment:

10 markers or cones, pinnies for half of the team and one soccer ball.



Procedure: *This is meant to be a time to walk through play.* Give possession of the ball to one player and have the defense adjust to the location of the ball. The attacking team moves the ball at walking speed (instead of game speed) to another teammate. The defense should *not* attempt to win the ball at this time; they should only be working on positioning as a team. After moving the ball eight to 10 times, switch possession of the ball to the other team.

Teaching Points/Phrases:

- High-pressure defense: When a team plays high-pressure defense they are trying to win the ball from the opposing team as fast as they can. They move quickly and often with more than one player on the ball.
- Low-pressure defense: When a team plays low-pressure defense they let the other team pass the ball around and wait for a mistake before they go in to win the ball.

Offensive Tactical Skills

The information below will help you teach players a solid offensive philosophy.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Players should learn where and how to move without the ball.
 - › Often the player without the ball plays a more important role in a play than the attacker with the ball, because the player without the ball is needed for support of the player with the ball.
 - › Players should be moving to open spaces to keep possession of the ball.
 - › While moving to open space, try to maintain the triangle support positions, so players with the ball have at least two passing options.

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

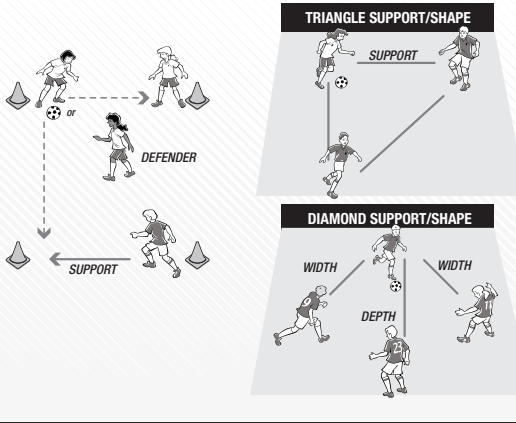
Offensive Drills

| Drill | Objective | Equipment | Procedure |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Offensive Tactics Walk Through | Teach players the general rules and guidelines for playing soccer | A ball, pinnies and lines on a field (or use cones) | <i>This is meant to be a time to walk through play.</i> Give possession of the ball to one player and have the defense adjust to the location of the ball. Assign one team to offense and the other to defense. Put players into positions and cover each of the scenarios below, ensuring each player understands their role. As time allows, have players put the ball in play using each method. |
| Offensive Shape | Teach players “shapes” of how to provide support to teammates with the ball | Eight markers or cones and two soccer balls | <p>Triangle: On the coach’s signal, players pass the ball from corner to corner. After the ball is passed, the players on the markers or cones move to support the player who now possesses the ball and keep the triangle shape. The shadow defender is passive on defense by only moving toward the player with the ball. The shadow defender should not attempt to kick or take the ball away at this time. Change players to be the shadow defender every 60-90 seconds.</p> <p>Diamond: In the diamond shape, players practice keeping the shape while passing the ball to one another. The shape of a diamond provides good width and depth so a team has good spacing.</p> |

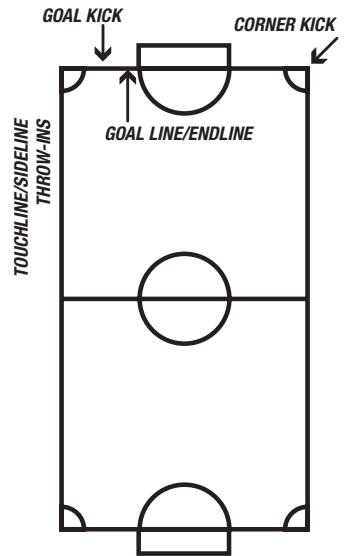
Offensive Methods - For the Offensive Tactics Walk-Through Drill, go through the following offensive methods. More information on these methods can be found on page 23:

- Kickoffs · Out-of-bounds restarts · Corner kicks · Goal kicks · Throw-ins

OFFENSIVE SHAPE



GENERAL SOCCER RE-STARTS



Mid-Practice Huddles (Devotions)

As an Upward Soccer Coach, you are not only teaching skills for the sports arena but also values for life. The mid-practice huddle, or devotion time, allows you to teach the character of Christ through the virtues he modeled. This season will focus on three virtues, each of which are taught for three practices and is highlighted by one Bible verse. The chart on the next page shows the virtues and verses for each group of practices and is designed to assist you as you organize and prepare for your mid-practice huddle.

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

| Practice Number | Virtue | Verse |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Practice 1 | None ("Get to Know You" time) | None (<i>Scripture learning begins at Practice 2.</i>) |
| Practice 2-4 | Knowledge | <i>The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.</i> Proverbs 2:6 (NIRV) |
| Practice 5-7 | Respect | <i>Show proper respect to everyone.</i> 1 Peter 2:17 (a) (NIRV) |
| Practice 8-10 | Faith | <i>Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain of what we do not see.</i> Hebrews 11:1 (NIRV) |
| Last practice of the season | Virtue Review/ Big Story Preview | Built around John 3:16, this devotion reviews the season's virtues while setting up a gospel presentation at the awards celebration through the Big Story DVD. This devotion comes standard in your coach resources. |

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 1

Coach: Gather the players together and get them to sit in a circle.

Let's have some fun! Everyone has heard of superheroes, right? Maybe your favorite superhero is someone like Batman, Superman or Wonder Woman. If you had just one superpower you could have, what would it be and why? The only thing you can't choose is the power to do anything you want. It has to be something specific like being super strong, super smart, having super vision or whatever. Ready? Let's see what superpowers everyone would like to have! *(Allow each player to tell about their power.)*

As you play games during your Upward Soccer Season, you will be rewarded afterward with different colored stars that each means something special. Your actions, attitudes and words on game day will determine what star you will get.

These are the game day stars and what they mean:

- › The blue star represents **EFFORT**: What does it mean to show effort? It means working hard to try your best at all times.
- › The gold star represents **SPORTSMANSHIP**: What does it mean to show sportsmanship? It means treating the people you play with and against the same way you want to be treated. You show respect for yourself, your teammates, opponents, the referees and the coach. You play fair and follow the rules.
- › The gray star represents **OFFENSE**: What should you do when you play offense? The offense is responsible for scoring goals. This means working together as a team to move the ball towards the goal.

- › The red star represents **DEFENSE:** What should you do when you play defense? The defense is responsible for preventing goals from being scored. This requires coordination, agility, speed and awareness along with moving together as a team.
- › The white star represents **CHRISTLIKENESS:** What does it mean to be Christlike? Being Christlike means to do your best to imitate Jesus in every way – through words, attitude and actions. It means loving others and following God’s Word in the Bible; choosing God over the temptations in the world around you.

At each practice we will stop to have a Mid-Practice Huddle. We will learn about God and learn a verse from the Bible together. During this time you will have a chance to earn a green star.

- › The green star represents **SCRIPTURE LEARNING:** What is a Scripture? Scriptures are verses from the Bible. How can I learn scripture? At different practices this season I will give you a practice card that has a Scripture verse on it. Memorize it, think about it, and talk about it with others. Come prepared to say it during practice and learn more about it!

Our team is going to have a great season! Let’s pray and then get back to practice. *(Lead the team in short prayer as you thank God for all the players and a great season ahead.)*

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 2

Practice Card Reminder: At the end of practice, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled “Practice 2.”

Introduce:

- › **Virtue:** KNOWLEDGE - Learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.*
Proverbs 2:6 (NIRV)

Bottom Line: Knowing and doing what God says makes me strong.

(My World Example)

Do you guys know why we have practice once a week? Well, one reason we practice is so we can learn new skills to help us on the field. And with every new skill you learn, you become a better player. I guess you could say your knowledge of soccer—learning the plays, the positions, the strategy—is improving each time we practice or play a game. Can someone raise your hand and tell me one of the *first* skills or rules you learned about playing soccer? (*Pause as players respond.*)

Those are some great answers. One thing you learn right away is that in soccer, you don't touch the ball with your hands—unless the ball goes out of bounds. In soccer, you use your feet to move the ball down the field. Another skill you have to learn is how to dribble the ball with your feet. These are just a few examples—but there are a lot more things you have to master as you add to your knowledge of the game.

That's what we're going to talk about today and for the next few weeks—knowledge! Knowledge is learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do. You have to learn, even when you really want to just pick up the ball, to only move it with your feet. Once you get that knowledge or skill down, you become stronger—you get better at soccer. But we're not just talking about soccer smarts today!

Did you know that there is someone who knows everything about everything, including soccer? Nope, it's not me! It's God. Imagine knowing everything about everything. Wouldn't that be amazing? And do you know how we know that's true? Because God made us. He made the world we live in. He's basically the inventor of everything. So that means his way, what his Word says, is the best way to live!

The more you practice your soccer skills, the stronger you become as a soccer player. But what about off the field? When it comes to the best way to live, the best way to treat others, the best way to think about the world around us, God's way is the best way. And the more we learn about how God wants us to live, the stronger we become. But knowledge isn't *just* about knowing—it's also about doing. After all, it's not enough to know that you need to move the ball with your feet. At some point, you have to get out there and dribble that ball toward your goal!

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. If knowing what God says makes us strong, how can we figure out what he says?
2. What do you already know about how God wants us to live (how to treat others, how to trust him, what kind of attitude(s) to have, etc.)?
3. Knowing these things is just the first step. How easy is it for you to *do* what God says?

Knowing and doing what God says makes us strong. Let's pray and ask God to help us learn about how he wants us to live so we can grow stronger!

Prayer

Dear God, thanks for reminding us today that your way is the best way. You're the Creator of everything! And we want to know what you say so we can grow stronger! Thanks for loving us and sending Jesus. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 3

Coach: Do **NOT** distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › **Virtue:** KNOWLEDGE - Learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.*
Proverbs 2:6 (NIRV)

Bottom Line: Since God knows everything, it's important to discover what God says.

(Biblical Example)

Can anyone remember what we talked about at our last practice? It's knowledge! Knowledge is learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do. You might say that knowledge is being smart or having wisdom to know what to do. You can read dozens of how-to books, pay attention in school and study every single night but do you know where real knowledge comes from?

Proverbs 2:6 says, “*The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.*” Just to make sure you’re still paying attention—where does the Bible say that knowledge comes from? (*Pause and take answers from the team.*) That’s right! According to the Bible, knowledge comes from God. So if we want to be smart—or even more than that, if we want to be wise—it’s important to discover what God says.

But how do we know what God says? God has given us his Word—the Bible—to help us know how to live. The Bible is a collection of books—written over thousands of years ago about real people who really encountered God. It’s easy for us to get our hands on a Bible today, but that’s actually an amazing thing. The Bible was written so long ago, but God has protected it for all these years so we could read it today!

There’s a really cool story in the book of Luke about Jesus as a teenager. Jesus had traveled with his parents to the temple for a special celebration with a large group of people. When it was time to travel back home, his parents left thinking Jesus was with the group. But he wasn’t. Do you know where Jesus was? He was in the temple, discussing what God says with the teachers there.

Jesus knew how important it was to know what God says about how to live. It’s important for us to know these things too! God doesn’t want us to wonder what we should do when we have questions about how to get along with others, or how to make wise choices or what to do when someone is mean to you. God has given us his Word, the Bible, so we can find out what we need to know about the best way to live. Since God knows everything, it’s important to discover what God says.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between being smart and being wise?
2. What knowledge do you already have from the Bible? What do you know from God's Word?
3. Is it enough to just know what God says? Once you know how God wants you to live, what should you do with that knowledge?

Let's pray and thank God for giving us his Word so we can know him better.

Prayer

God, thank you for giving us your Word, the Bible, so we can know you. Thank you for Jesus' example that shows us how important it is to learn what you have to say about the best way to live. Thanks for allowing us to have your Word, the Bible, so we can know about you. Please help us get to know you better. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 4

Coach: Do NOT distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › ***Virtue:*** KNOWLEDGE - Learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do.
- › ***Scripture Verse:*** *The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.*
Proverbs 2:6 (NirV)

Bottom Line: Discovering what God says helps me make the wise choice.

(Peer Example)

Have you ever heard the phrase, “I need to make the wise choice” before? Can anyone tell me what that might mean? *(Pause and let players respond.)*

You probably remember that over the last couple of practices we’ve been talking about knowledge—learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do. But knowledge isn’t just about knowing a lot about soccer or other book smarts. The kind of knowledge that God wants us to have is called *wisdom*. Wisdom is looking at a choice you have to make and deciding what God would want you to do based on what you know about what he says in his Word.

Let me give you a few examples.

1. You have a friend at school who is brand new and the other kids make fun of his accent. What would be the wise choice in a situation like this?
 - a. Stop hanging out with him since all the other kids think he’s different.
 - b. Try to introduce him to the other kids and tell them a little about where he’s from so they can get to know him.
 - c. Ditch the new friend and your other friends who are making fun of him and sit at lunch by yourself.

Before you answer, check this out. Proverbs 17:17 (NIV) says, “*A friend loves at all times.*” Knowing what God’s Word says, what would be the wise choice? It’s B! Being a good friend means loving and not leaving your friend, at *all* times—even if it might mean getting made fun of, too.

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

Okay, here's another one.

2. You're playing outside at a friend's house and he offers to let you ride his bike. But his helmet doesn't fit and you don't want to go all the way home and get yours. Do you:
 - a. Tell him that you have to go home because you can't ride his bike and everything else you could do seems boring.
 - b. Ride the bike without your helmet even though your friend has a super-steep driveway.
 - c. Ask him to play something else with you instead since you know it wouldn't be safe to ride without your helmet on.

Proverbs 27:12 (NIV) says, "*Wise people see danger and go to a safe place. But childish people keep on going and suffer for it.*" What's the wise choice? It's C! This verse tells us it's important to see the danger ahead—possibly going head first over the handlebars with no helmet—and do what's safe instead!

These are just two examples of how knowing what God's Word says can help you make the wise choice. As you learn more and more about what's in the Bible, you'll begin to understand what it means to make wise choices. Because discovering what God says helps you make the wise choice.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been in a situation when you knew the wise choice because of something you read in God's Word?
2. God's Word tells us to love everyone—even our enemies. It says we should help those in need. What else does God's Word say?
3. Is there something you *know* God's Word says, but it is still really hard for you to do?

Prayer

Dear God, thanks so much for the wisdom we find in the Bible. Help us to learn new things from your Word each day. And help us to use that knowledge to make wise choices. We want to honor and please you. Thanks for loving us so much, God. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 5

Practice Card Reminder: *At the end of practice, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 5."*

Introduce:

- › **Virtue:** RESPECT - Showing others they are important by what you say and do.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *Show proper respect to everyone.*
1 Peter 2:17a (NirV)

Bottom Line: Respect God by respecting people he's put in charge.

(My World Example)

For the next few practices, I want to talk about the word respect. Respect is showing others they are important by what you say and do. Can someone give me an example of how you show respect to your mom? (*Pause and let players respond.*) What about your teacher? What about me, your coach?

There are certain people like your parents, teachers and even me, your coach, who are in charge of you. For example, I'm responsible to help you learn the skills you need to be a successful soccer team. Your parents trust me to keep you safe on the field, to teach you how to work together and to help you grow as an athlete. When you're at soccer practice, your parents are trusting that I'm taking care of you.

Having someone in charge is actually a good thing. Imagine what soccer practice would be like if you just showed up and didn't have a coach? You probably wouldn't learn a lot about the game. Or what about after practice? What if your parents decided to take a night off? That would stink right? First of all, how would you get home? And what about dinner? Who'd help you finish your homework?

God puts people in your life to be in charge of you—to protect you, to provide for you, to teach you and to care for you. I'm sure you think it would be fun to be the teacher for a day or to spend a day at your house with no parents. But you need these people. They are important in your daily life. And you need to make sure they know you see how important they are. That's where respect comes in. When you use kind words toward your mom, she knows you appreciate all she does for you. When you do kind things for your teacher, he knows you see the importance of how he is helping you to learn.

But when you do these things, you aren't just respecting the people in charge, you are respecting God! He chose your

parents to be your parents. He chose your teachers, coaches and leaders. And when you understand that each of these people was put in your life by God, it's even more reason to show them respect! Remember, respect God by respecting people he's put in charge.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. Who has God put in charge of you?
2. Why do you think they are important?
3. What are some ways you can show respect to these people?

That's really easy to talk about but it's not always easy to do. So let's pray and ask God to help us show respect.

Prayer

God, we know you've put people in charge of us because you care about us. Help us to show them respect by the way we respond with our words and our actions. Thanks for loving us enough to give us people like our parents, teachers and coaches. We are grateful, even when we don't always show it. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 6

Coach: Do *NOT* distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › **Virtue:** RESPECT - Showing others they are important by what you say and do.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *Show proper respect to everyone.*
1 Peter 2:17a (NIRV)

Bottom Line: Respect God because he's in charge of everything.

(Biblical Example)

Can anyone remember what we talked about at our last practice? (*Pause as players respond.*) Right! Respect. Respect is showing others they are important to you by what you say and do.

Today I want to tell you about a man, a soldier actually, who amazed Jesus with his great faith. The soldier was called a centurion. He was in charge of lots and lots of soldiers. And all those soldiers respected the centurion. When the centurion said, "Go!" they went. And when he said, "Fight!" they fought. He understood what it meant to be respected and to show respect to others.

But this centurion had a problem. His servant was paralyzed; he couldn't walk and was in a lot of pain. Wanting to get some help, the centurion found Jesus and told him about his sick servant. When Jesus asked if he would take him to see the servant, the centurion replied, "*Lord, I am not good enough to have you come into my house. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.*" (Matthew 8:8 - NIRV) When Jesus heard this, he was amazed by the man's faith! See, the centurion knew that Jesus could heal his servant with just a word because everything is under his power. The

centurion saw that Jesus wasn't just some man. He was God's own Son and was in charge of everything.

Jesus said, *"Go! It will be done just as you believed it would."* (Matthew 8:8 - NIV) And just like that, his servant was healed! The centurion had faith that Jesus could heal someone even without seeing the person! The centurion respected Jesus as the Son of God.

When we understand how awesome our God is, we must give him the respect he deserves. Respect means showing someone they are important by what you say and do. And no one is as important as God! God spoke the world into existence. He said "mountain" and a mountain appeared. He gave you that red hair and love of chocolate ice cream. He knows you so well that he could tell you at this moment just exactly how many of those red hairs you have on your head. He controls the winds and waves. God can paint a rainbow in the sky or cover the whole earth in darkness. He is in charge of *everything*. No one deserves more respect than God—the Master of the universe! And when we realize who he is, just like the centurion did, we can't help but show him respect. That's why it's important to respect God because he's in charge of everything.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. How did the centurion show respect to Jesus?
2. What are some ways in which you can respect God?
3. Are there things you do that show disrespect to God? What are they and how can you change those habits?

Prayer

God, thank you for this cool story about the centurion who showed so much respect to Jesus. Help us to do the same by showing you the respect you deserve. Help us to honor you with our words and our actions so that you are pleased by what you see. Thanks for sending Jesus to show us who you are. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 7

Coach: Do NOT distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › **Virtue:** RESPECT - Showing others they are important by what you say and do.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *Show proper respect to everyone.*
1 Peter 2:17a (NirV)

Bottom Line: When you respect others with your words, you show respect to God.

(Peer Example)

Have you ever heard the phrase, "Think before you speak?" How about, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all?" The words you choose are really important. Your words have the ability to hurt or help. The big problem with hurtful words is that once you've said something, it's hard to take it back.

Here are few examples. I want you to give me a thumbs up if these are respectful, helpful words and a thumbs down if these are disrespectful, hurtful words.

"Great job! Way to dribble the ball down the field!"

“Because you missed my pass, we totally lost the game. You are such a loser.”

“I can’t believe you broke my new remote-control car. Why can’t you do anything right?”

“Thanks for helping me with my math homework. You’re really good at math!”

“When you finish playing with that can I have a turn please?”

“You ate the last cookie! I was gonna eat it. You ruin everything. I’m never having you over to play again.”

Great job! It’s pretty easy to figure out which words are helpful and which words are hurtful. But if it’s so easy for us to recognize helpful words now, why don’t we choose them in the moment? I think it goes back to thinking before we speak. Is your new remote-control car more important than a friendship you’ve had since preschool? What’s worse? Losing a soccer game or losing a friend?

Showing respect means choosing words that help people instead of hurt them. When we choose to encourage our friends instead of making fun of them, we show respect. And when we respect others with our words, we show respect to God. How? Because God *loves* every person we meet. And just like it would hurt your feelings and make you feel disrespected if someone said something mean to someone you love, it hurts God when we say mean things to others.

So I have a challenge for you. I want you to think before you speak. When you’re tempted to say something hurtful because you’re frustrated, I want you to pause, take a deep breath and think about whether the words you’re about to say show respect. I challenge you to stop and decide if what you’re about to say might hurt your friendship in the long run. Think before you speak knowing that when you respect others with your words, you show respect to God.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to say only helpful words to our friends?
2. Why is it important to say only helpful words to people we aren't necessarily friends with?
3. What is something we could come up with as a reminder to think before we speak?

Let's pray and ask God to help us choose our words carefully.

Prayer

God, thanks for the big reminder that our words make a huge impact on others. We want to show respect to them and to you by choosing words that help instead of hurt. Help us to really think before we speak. Thanks, God. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 8

Practice Card Reminder: At the end of practice, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 8."

Introduce:

- › ***Virtue:*** FAITH - Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.
- › ***Scripture Verse: Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain of what we do not see.***
Hebrews 11:1 (NIRV)

Bottom Line: When I hear what Jesus has done, it helps me believe who Jesus is.

(My World Example)

For the next few practices we're going to talk about a word you've probably heard a lot before. In fact, this is one of those words people use a lot but may not actually know what it means. I'm talking about *faith*. Faith is trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see. Whoa. Anyone else a bit confused?

Everybody hold up your hand in front of your face like this. Now I want to you blow on your hand. Do you feel that? Absolutely. Okay, do it again. Could you see the wind you made? Have you ever watched the wind blow the leaves on the trees? While you can't actually see the wind itself, you can know that it's there because of the way it moves the leaves around. The leaves moving is what we see that helps us trust what we *can't* see—the wind. You following me?

So how do we know if all this stuff we read about in the Bible is true? After all, we can't see God face-to-face right now. Well, that's where faith comes in. It requires trust. In fact, God knew that we would have questions. So he gave us the Bible. He knew we would wonder about what he's really like, so he sent Jesus to the earth over 2,000 years ago.

When Jesus was on the earth, he did a lot of amazing things. He fed a huge crowd of thousands of people with just one boy's small lunch. He healed a man who had been paralyzed—unable to walk—since birth. He gave sight to the blind and healed people who had been sick for years on end. But why?

Do you think he did these things so people would like him? Did he perform these miracles to become a powerful leader? Was he looking to control the world and get whatever money and power he could? No way. Jesus did these things, these amazing, unbelievable, “did-you-see-that?” stuff so that the people in those crowds would have no reason not to believe he was God's Son. And at the end of his time on earth, Jesus

gave his life for you and for me so that we could have a relationship with God forever. Because when you and I hear what Jesus has done, it helps us believe who Jesus is.

While we can't see God, we can see evidence of his work all around us. We see God in the thunderstorm followed by a rainbow and in the way no two people are exactly alike. We see God in the people he's placed in our lives who love and care for us. There are a *million* ways God shows us who he is every single day. But it's up to us to choose to believe that he really is who he says he is. It takes faith.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things that make you doubt if God really is who he says he is?
2. What are some things that help you see who God is and have faith in him?
3. If you saw Jesus perform all those miracles, it would be pretty easy to believe he is the Son of God. How does hearing all the incredible stories in the Bible help you have faith?

Let's pray and ask God to help us understand this today.

Prayer

God, sometimes we wish we could just see you with our own eyes or have all our questions answered at once. But we know that you want us to trust your Word and believe with faith that you really are *real*! When we have doubts, help us to look at the things we *can* see so that we can trust you in the things we can't. We love you, God, and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 9

Coach: Do NOT distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › **Virtue:** FAITH - Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain of what we do not see.*
Hebrews 11:1 (NirV)

Bottom Line: When I believe who Jesus is, I'll live with God forever.

(Biblical Example)

Last time we had practice we talked about faith—trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see. Today, I want to tell you about a guy named Nicodemus who had a few big questions about faith. Nicodemus was a religious man. In fact, the Bible tells us that he was a member of the Jewish ruling council. Basically, that meant he knew a lot about what the Old Testament part of the Bible had to say. Nicodemus thought that maybe Jesus was the Savior the Old Testament talked about—the one sent from God to make a way to live forever with him. But Nicodemus had his doubts, too.

One night, Nicodemus went to see Jesus. He needed some answers and Jesus certainly gave him some! Nicodemus asked questions like: How can a person have faith? How do you have a relationship with God forever? Check out what Jesus said: I'm reading from John 3. *"God loved the world so much"—the world means everybody!—"that he gave his one and only Son."* Who's that? It's Jesus! *"Anyone"*—which means *anyone!*—*"who **believes** in him will not die but will have eternal life."* Did you catch that big word in the middle?

Believes! What do you have to do? Believe! Did it say that anyone who tries to do the right thing all the time can have eternal life? Did it say that anyone who never tells a lie can have eternal life? Or how about that anyone who never even thinks one mean thought toward someone else can live with God forever? Is that it?

No way! No one is perfect. We've all been dishonest. We've *all* thought a mean thought before. We've all messed up. The Bible calls that *sin*. And sin separates us from a perfect God. But God doesn't want us to be separated from him so he sent Jesus to pay the price for our sin once and for all by dying on the cross for us. And when you believe that, when you accept that gift, you can have a relationship with God *forever*.

I've actually made that choice to believe in Jesus.

(Take a few moments to share how you became a believer or follower of Jesus. Briefly—and appropriately—tell about your life before, what led you to the decision and then a bit about how your life has changed since that day. It would be good to write it out beforehand and read it. Keep it to around 300 words to keep it focused.)

I'm so thankful that I made the choice to trust in Jesus as my Savior. I have no doubt that because I have faith in what Jesus did for me that I will one day live with God forever. And I hope the same for you. Would you mind if I prayed for you guys today about that decision?

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have any questions about what it means to live with God forever?
2. Has anyone on the team made the decision to have faith in Jesus? Would anyone like to share about that decision?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you so much for loving us enough to send Jesus so that we could have a relationship with you. I pray for every student on this team that you would help them to ask questions when they need to so that one day they trust you as their Savior. Thank you for sending Jesus to save us. Thank you that we don't have to do anything to be saved, only believe in and accept what Jesus has done for us. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Devotion 10

Coach: Do **NOT** distribute practice cards at this practice

Review:

- › **Virtue:** FAITH - Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.
- › **Scripture Verse:** *Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain of what we do not see.*
Hebrews 11:1 (NIRV)

Bottom Line: When you know what God says, you can stand for what's right.

(Peer Example)

Spiders. The dark. Heights. What do all these things have in common? They're all things that people are afraid of. When I was a kid, I was *really* afraid of _____. (Fill in the blank and tell the players a bit about why you were afraid of this particular thing.)

Okay, okay. It's easy to talk about things we're afraid of that are common—like the dark. Lots of people are afraid of the dark. But what about fears related to other people? What about fears you have about not being liked, or accepted, or

fears you have when it comes to fitting in? Those are a little bit harder to admit, right?

If we're really honest, I think we'd all say that deep down, we just want people to like us. We want to have friends who care about us and who want to hang out with us. And sometimes, we're willing to do whatever it takes to fit in and keep those friends. What if you move to a new school and everyone already seems to have enough friends? What if you miss the goal and cause the team to lose? What if you are the only one who stands up and tells the truth and everyone calls you a goody-two-shoes? What are you supposed to do when the fear of making and keeping friends seems overwhelming?

One way to conquer these fears is to remember that God is with you. He created friendship. And because He loves you, you can trust that God wants you to have great friends who care about you. God wants all of us to know that we can find friends—the right kind of friends—to support and encourage us, to hang out with us and to help us do the right thing. I hope you found some of those friends on this team this season.

If you are afraid that you won't find good friends who will stick up for you and help you do the right thing, know this: God wants you to find the right kind of friends! And since God can calm storms and create amazing animals like anteaters and hippos, He can certainly point you to the right friends. Don't let the fear of not fitting in get bigger than your view of God. He is God. He is more powerful than anything, and He will take care of you!

And guess what? The kind of friend who won't include you on his team at recess because he doesn't think you're a good enough player, or the kind of friend who teases you for doing the right thing or the kind of friend who laughs at you when you trip and fall in front of everyone isn't the kind of friend that God has in mind for you anyway. And when you

remember what God can do, it helps you face your fears. He's always with you. He wants to help you face your fears. And He can be trusted.

3rd GRADE AND UP ONLY: INTERACTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things you are afraid of?
2. Are you afraid of anything when it comes to making and keeping friends?
3. What are some amazing things you know God has done? How do these things help you trust him to face your fears?

Why don't we pray and ask God to help us face our fears this week?

Prayer

God, thanks for reminding us today that you are with us and that you can do *anything*. We don't have to be afraid because you are with us. Help us to remember that you want us to have strong friendships with friends who help us do the right thing. Help us to choose our friends wisely. We love you and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mid-Practice Huddle - Last Practice

Practice Card Reminder: *At the end of this practice, remember to distribute the last practice card to your players.*

Bottom Line: God loves you and gave us Jesus to trust and follow.

INTRODUCE:

- › ***You are part of God's Big Story!***
- › ***Scripture Verse: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*** John 3:16 (NIV)

Introduction:

We've had a GREAT season! It's been so much fun watching each of you become better soccer players and better friends with each other! We've learned a lot about soccer...but we've also learned a lot about ourselves and about others.

Think about the things that we've learned during our huddle time this year. Do you remember the three virtues we've discussed? What were they?

(Allow players to answer the question.)

First we learned about **Knowledge**. Knowledge is discovering something new so you can be better at whatever you do. God gives us knowledge so that we can be better at the things we do. This knowledge also allows us to make wise choices in life. He also wants us to know about him and what he says so that we know how to treat people and be a friend to others.

Then we learned about **Respect**. Respect is showing others they are important by what you say and do. We learned

how important it is to show respect for God because he is in charge. We show respect to him by doing what he says to do. Respecting other people who have been placed in charge of us...people like your parents, teachers, coaches is another way to show God that we respect him. It's also very important to think before we speak...because we can't undo word we say. Always show respect with your actions and words.

We also learned about **Faith**. Faith is believing in what you can't see because of what you can see. God gave us all of his creation...this whole world to see him through it! He gave us his son Jesus to show us what he is like. He also gave us the Bible, his word, to tell us what he is like. Even though we can't see God with our eyes, we know he is there because of all these things...and we know that we can trust in everything he tells us in every situation.

Listen to this week's verse, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* John 3:16 (NIV)

We have all made mistakes. The Bible tells us that because of sin, we are separated from God. But because God loves us so much, he provides a way back to him. Our verse teaches us that this way is through his son, Jesus. He sent his only Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life on earth and then pay the price for all of our sins on the cross. And because of that act of forgiveness, we can be with God forever.

I've got something else to tell you. Did you know that you are part of God's BIG STORY? That's right...he has a BIG STORY and each one of you are in it! You will learn more about that BIG STORY at the awards celebration. It's gonna be great!

SECTION ONE: PRACTICE

Let's pray to God and thank him for all he's done for us.

Prayer:

- › Thank God for an awesome season!
- › Thank God for teaching us about Knowledge, Respect and Faith.
- › Thank God for sending his son Jesus for each one of us and always forgiving us when we mess up.



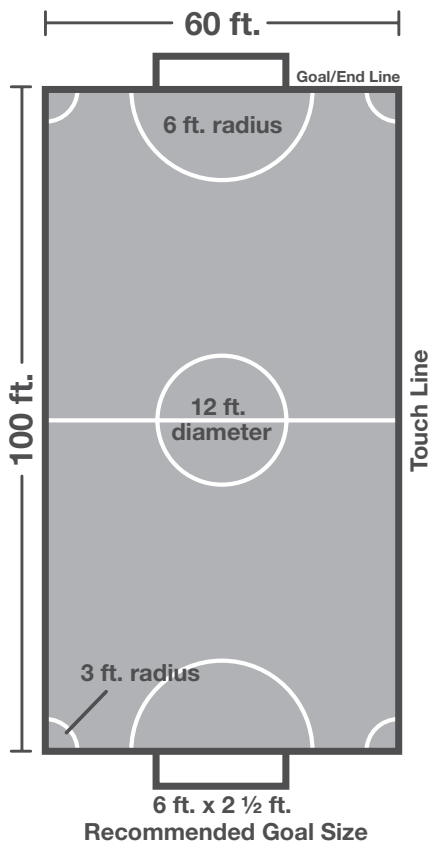
SECTION TWO
GAME DAY



Rules Unique to Upward Soccer

The rules unique to Upward Soccer are designed to provide healthy competition and sportsmanship while also teaching the objectives of game play. They include not only the rules of play, but also information on the field of play, ball sizes, game duration and overall game format. For more details on the rules unique to Upward Soccer, please refer to your coach training guide or visit the coach resources at MyUpward.org.

Field of Play



Number of Players

Team Size: Eight is the maximum number of players per team.

Team Format: 4v4

No Goalkeeper: Because of the goal arc and the size of the goal, as well as to keep all players active on the field, there is no goalkeeper in Upward Soccer. Players should not be positioned in front of the goal arc to act as a goalkeeper and not be an active part of the game. As a compromise, coaches may position a player around midfield to play as a defender.

Additional Players: One additional player may be added to the field of play by a team that is four goals behind. The additional player may remain on the field until the score differential is two goals.

The Ball

| <i>Age Division</i> | <i>Ball Size</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>K5</i> | <i>Size 3</i> |
| <i>1st - 2nd Grade</i> | <i>Size 3</i> |
| <i>3rd - 4th Grade</i> | <i>Size 4</i> |
| <i>5th - 6th Grade</i> | <i>Size 4</i> |

Game Duration

Game Clock: The game clock will be maintained by the referee.

Periods of Play: The game will consist of two 18-minute halves with each half divided into three six-minute periods for first through sixth grades. K5 will play two 18-minute halves being divided in six three-minute periods.

Half-Time: Halftime will be an eight-minute interval between the two 18-minute halves.

Substitutions: Playing time for each player is determined by the substitution system

Game Format

- Referees lead both teams in prayer at midfield before the game.
- Referees will call and explain *all* violations.
- The coaches should determine which team will start the game with the ball. The other team will start the second half.
- Games consist of two 18 minute halves, one minute for substitutions and an eight-minute halftime.
- The game clock is maintained by the referee and will only stop every six minutes for the predetermined substitutions.
- Teams will switch goals at halftime (except in the K5 division).
- Scores are not kept in K5-2nd grade divisions.
- No division standings are maintained in any division.

- Coaches are allowed to walk the sidelines to support players. Coaches are encouraged to be on the field with K5 players to help instruct during games.
- All coaches will adhere to the substitution rules as detailed in this coach playbook.
- No yellow cards or red cards are used in Upward Soccer.
- There is no extended time in Upward Soccer.

Rules for Upward Soccer

- A kickoff begins each half and after a goal has been scored. Opposing players must remain outside the center circle or four yards away until the ball has been put in play.
- The team in possession of the ball at the end of the first, second, fourth and fifth six-minute period retains possession of the ball. The team with possession of the ball will start the next six-minute period with a throw-in at the closest point on the sideline when play was stopped. The team that did not start the game with the kickoff will begin the second half of the game with a kickoff.
- *Shooting Arc:* There is no ball contact allowed within the shooting arc. If the ball comes to a stop within the arc, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team regardless of who touched the ball last. Any part of the ball or player's body on the line is considered in the shooting arc. If the ball has broken the plane of the shooting arc and a defensive player touches the ball, but the referee determines that the ball would not have gone in the goal, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team. (See Penalty Kick on page 58 for additional information.) If the attacking player touches the ball inside the arc, a goal kick is awarded. The plane of the shooting arc extends upward.

SECTION TWO: GAME DAY

- Fouls will result in either an indirect or direct kick. Opposing players must be five yards away from the ball. Indirect kick: A player other than the kicker must touch the ball before a goal can be scored. Direct kick: The kicker may score directly without another player *touching the ball*.
- *Indirect kicks* are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed:
 - › Dangerous Play
 - › Obstructing an opponent
 - › Delay of game
- *Direct kicks* are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed:
 - › Handling the ball
 - › Kicking an opponent
 - › Hitting an opponent
 - › Pushing an opponent
 - › Tripping an opponent
 - › Holding an opponent
 - › Any unsportsmanlike conduct
 - › Slide tackling or any contact with the ball while the player is on the ground.
- A penalty kick is awarded for deliberate handling or kicking of the ball inside the goal arc that denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. The penalty kick will be taken five yards from the top of the shooting arc and all players should be positioned behind the player taking the penalty kick. If the kick does not result in a goal and the ball is still in the playing field, it is a live ball and play continues from the spot of the ball.

- A goal is not scored if a player kicks or throws the ball into his or her own goal. A corner kick is awarded for the opposing team. This removes the possibility of a player scoring for the other team and prevents further embarrassing a player for making this mistake.
- A goal may only be scored from a player's offensive end of the field. This prohibits a player from scoring a goal from the center circle on a kickoff or from a goal kick and encourages them to pass the ball and work as a team rather than attempting to kick the ball the length of the field.
- Offside is not called in Upward Soccer because of the field size.
- Referees should monitor substitutions and help coaches who have questions. Review the substitution section found in the playbook for additional information.
- Slide tackling is not allowed in Upward Soccer. Players must stay upright and on their feet and may not make contact with an opposing player. Slide tackling is not a skill covered by Upward Sports, since most players between the ages of five and twelve do not have the coordination to execute the tackle without injuring themselves or other players. This does not prevent a player from sliding to stop or intercept a ball, but no contact may be made with opposing players.
- Players who commit two fouls resulting in direct kicks, excluding handballs, in the same six-minute segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. Those players may return during their next scheduled substitution. This rule allows the offending player time to regroup during the remainder of the segment while realizing that there is a consequence for the fouls committed.

Re-starts

Kickoffs

A kickoff is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. Kicks must go forward, toward the defending goal. The ball must touch another attacking player or defensive player before the initial kicker touches the ball again. If the kick does not go forward or if the ball is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the ball, the kickoff should be retaken. A goal may not be scored from the kickoff, because all goals must be scored from the offensive side of the field. The kickoff is treated similar to a free kick. This means the opposing team must stay outside of the center circle (at least four yards away). Both teams must be on their own half of the field and outside of the center circle until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball.

Out-of-bounds

The entire ball must go out of bounds to be out of play. If part of the ball is still touching the line, play continues uninterrupted.

Corner Kicks

When the ball passes over the goal line by the defending team, the ball should be placed inside the corner arc on the side it went out of bounds. The defensive team must be at least five yards away when the kick is taken.

Goal Kicks

When the attacking team kicks the ball over the goal line or if the ball comes to a stop within the shooting arc before entering the goal, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. The ball should be placed on the end line or goal line, five yards from the shooting arc on the side where the ball went out. The defending team must be at least 10 yards away

from the player taking the goal. K5 and first- and second-grade divisions must retreat behind midfield until the ball is kicked.

Throw-ins

When the ball passes over the sidelines, the last team to touch it loses possession and the opposing team takes a throw-in. The player throwing the ball back into play must stay behind the sideline and throw the ball over their head with both hands, while both feet are touching the ground. The defensive team must be at least two yards away from the thrower. It is recommended that the K5 players place the ball on the touchline and kick it back into play. A throw-in is used to restart play at the beginning of the second, third, fifth and sixth six-minute segment of play. The throw-in is taken by the team in possession of the ball at the end of the first, second, fourth and fifth six-minute segment of play.

Drop-Ball

A drop-ball will occur between two players, one from each team, to restart the game anytime an official has to stop play for a no-penalty situation. The ball is dropped at the spot where it was last in play unless this happens in the goal arc, in which case it is dropped at the nearest point five yards outside the goal arc. The ball may only be kicked after it has touched the ground. A goal may be scored directly from a drop-ball.



SECTION THREE FORMS



SECTION THREE: FORMS

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
| A | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | |
| D | | | | | | | |
| E | | | | | | | |
| F | | | | | | | |
| G | | | | | | | |
| H | | | | | | | |

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
| A | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | |
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SECTION THREE: FORMS

Week ____

| | Player's Name | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---|---------------|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
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Week ____

| | Player's Name | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---|---------------|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
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| B | | | | | | | |
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SECTION THREE: FORMS

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
| A | | | | | | | |
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| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
| A | | | | | | | |
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SECTION THREE: FORMS

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
| A | | | | | | | |
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| Week ____ | | First Half | | | Second Half | | |
|---------------|--|------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Player's Name | | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min | 18 min | 12 min | 6 min |
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| F | | | | | | | |
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K5 Substitution Forms

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| G | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| H | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

K5 Substitution Forms

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| (A) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (B) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (C) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (D) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (E) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (F) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| (H) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| (A) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (B) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (C) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| (E) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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K5 Substitution Forms

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| H | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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K5 Substitution Forms

| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
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| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Week ____ | | First Half | | | | | | Second Half | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------|----|----|---|---|---|-------------|----|----|---|---|---|
| Player's Name | | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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SECTION THREE: FORMS

STAR DISTRIBUTION FORM (sample)

Use a pencil to record the color of star that the players receive each day.

| Name | Game 1 | Game 2 | Game 3 | Game 4 | Game 5 | Game 6 | Game 7 | Game 8 |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gabrielle | B | W | W | GO | W | | | |
| Rachel | GO | R | W | GR | B | | | |
| Emily | GR | W | B | R | GO | | | |
| Madison | R | GO | GO | W | GR | | | |
| Samantha | W | GR | R | W | R | | | |
| Ashley | B | GO | GR | B | W | | | |
| Grace | W | B | R | GR | B | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

Blue (B): Effort
Red (R): Defense

Gold (Go): Sportsmanship
White (W): Christlikeness

Gray (Gr): Offense

