



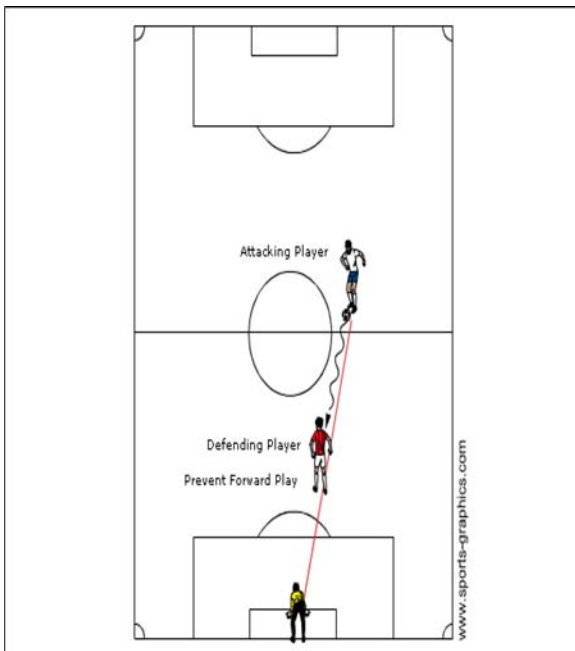
## **DEFENDING - MINI SOCCER**

### **Defending at Minis – What To Teach When**

All soccer players need to know how to defend. Coaches, however, need to understand that defending can be a simple skill performed under difficult and stressful conditions especially for young players who do not have the experience nor the cognitive abilities required to make defending decisions quickly and without errors. Therefore all coaches must bear in mind the age (most important), the ability and the experience of young players who may be overwhelmed by having to make defensive decisions in stressful situations where the consequences of error may result in a goal scoring opportunity by the opponent. Coaches must be cognizant of this stress and to understand that learning new and complex skills is best achieved in stress free environments. Coaches can then add more stressful situations and make more demands of the players as they age, gain experience and develop the cognitive and technical abilities necessary to defend successfully by the time they really need it which is after puberty or around the ages of 13 or 14 years. Players will progress at different rates but it is critical that coaches do not push player development before the players are ready. Patience and understanding are critical to player development. Keep the verbal information to a minimum and guide them as they develop as players.

**NOTE!** It is imperative that “ALL” players learn defending techniques.

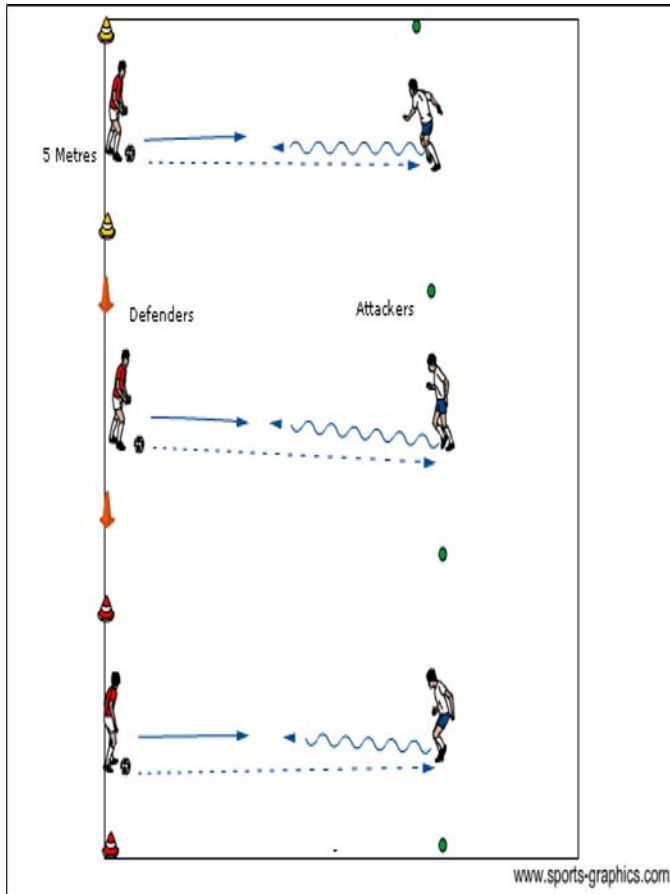
### **Individual Defending**



#### **Basic Principles – Keep It Simple**

- 1. Defend goal side**
- 2. Prevent forward play (dribble or pass)**
- 3. Slow down when getting close to the attacking player**
- 4. Start to move backwards with the attacking player**
- 5. Attempt to win the ball or kick it away from the attacker**

## Basic 1 V 1 Defending – Prevent Forward Play U9s – U11



### Set Up

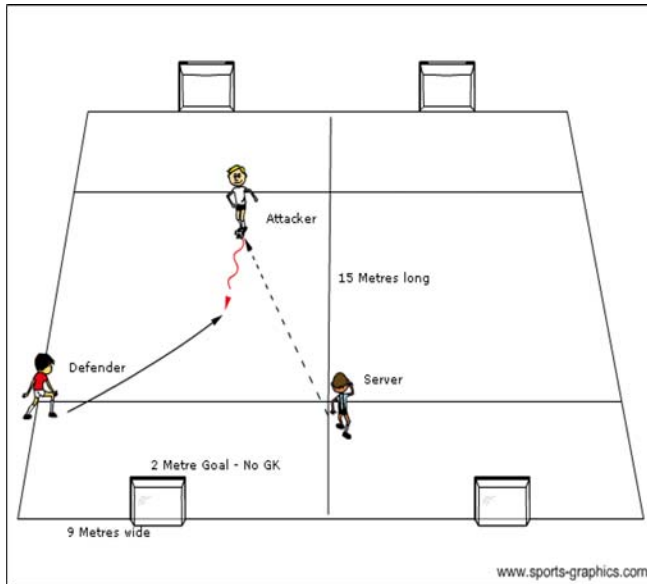
- Players work in pairs in a grid:
  - a. U9s and below: 5 yards by 10 yards long. With 5 metre goal
  - b. U10: 7 metres by 12 metres with 4 metre goal
  - c. U11: 9 metres by 15 with 3 metre goal placed to one side of the goal line
  - d. U12 and above (full field): 10 metres by 20 Metres with 2 metre goal placed to one side of the goal line

### Sequence

Play begins the defending player passing the ball to the attacker who attacks the goal line:

- a. U9s:and younger: The attacking player then attacks the defender and attempts to dribble the ball over the 5 metre line
- b. U10: T he attacking player again must dribble the ball between the 4 metre cones. The smaller goal requires the defending player to have to move the attacking player away from the goal
- c. U11: 9 metres by 15 with 2 metre goal. Move the goal after several attempts to help the defender learn to adjust his/her position. Attacker may now shoot at goal.

## U10 – Jockey Technique



### Set Up

- A 9 x 15 metre grid with a 2 metre goal placed in the center of the goal line
- One defending player starts on the side line 3 metres from the goal line
- A server stands on one sideline with a supply of balls..

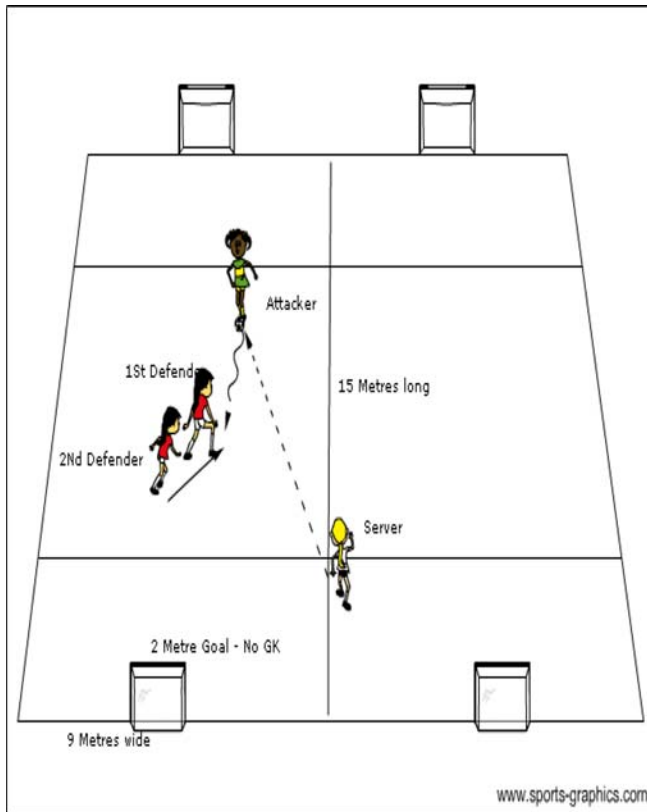
### Sequence

1. The server passes to the attacking player who attacks the goal.
2. The defender must intersect the path of the attacker and takes up a jockeying position moving backwards, preventing forward play and attempting to force the attacker away from goal.
3. The defender attempts to win the ball or kick it away when the opportunity arises.

### Coaching Points

- A. Defender must close on the attacker as the ball is being passed – Travel with the ball
- B. Defender must slow down as he/she gets close (2 metres) to the attacker
- C. Defender takes up a jockey position while moving backwards and jockey
- D. Force the attacker away from the goal
- E. Attempt to win the ball
- F. Keep it VERY SIMPLE

## U11 – 1 v 2 Defending



### Set Up

- A 9 x 15 metre grid with a 2 metre goal placed in the center of the goal line
- 2 defending players start on the goal line
- A server stands on one sideline with a supply of balls.

### Sequence

1. Server passes to the attacking player who attacks the 2 metre goal. The 1<sup>st</sup> defender goes to meet the attacker and to prevent forward play.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> defender takes up a jockey position and attempts to force the attacker away from the goal area
3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> defender supports the 1<sup>st</sup> attacker by staying behind the 1<sup>st</sup> defender and assisting in directing

### Coaching Points:

- G. Defenders must have patience
- H. 1<sup>st</sup> Defender must slow down as they get close (2 metres) to the attacker and jockey
- I. 2<sup>nd</sup> defender communicates to 1<sup>st</sup> defender the direction to push the attacker
- J. Keep it SIMPLE