



**Long Term Player Development
Stage 4-7**

Club Goalkeeping Development Manual





Wellness to World Cup Long Term Player Development

As coaches, teachers, administrators and parents, we need to look at the big picture for Canadian soccer. We want to develop “star” players who can play on the big stage, but we also want to encourage recreational players who can benefit from the health aspects of soccer and give back to the game for years to come as coaches, officials, and administrators.

Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) is the Canadian Soccer Association’s pathway to success on both fronts. LTPD is a player-centred approach that provides guidelines for correct training, competition, and recovery based on scientific principles of human development and athlete training, combined with the knowledge of expert coaches.

Player-centred means we respect the developmental needs of our players first and foremost. We ensure that our young players have fun while they learn so they want to continue playing. It also means we provide challenging opportunities for special talents so they can develop their abilities and pursue excellence. All of these needs are addressed in the seven stages of LTPD.

LTPD is designed to promote lifelong wellness for all soccer participants and optimal performances for elite players, particular in growth and development years when performances can become instable and lead to drop out.

LTPD encourages players to enjoy the game and improve their performances through:

- *Logical and integrated training and practice programs.*
- *Application of scientific principals in growth, development and maturation.*
- *Provision of an optimal structure for competition at all stages of LTPD*

LTPD and Goalkeeping

STAGE 4 'Training to Train' U11-U15 Female/U12-U16 Male

Specialization phase, but should still play field. Refine ball handling at all heights plus shots and with crosses. Catch? Deflect? Top hand situations. Develop two-handed/one-handed punching of crossed balls. Refine throwing and diving techniques, footwork, goal kicks and punts. Develop drop kicks and moving back passes. Introduce side winder, fly kick and tackling.

STAGE 5: Training to Compete U15-U19 Female/U16-U20 Male

Most players including keepers now in specialized positions. Continue refining and perfecting all techniques, including ball handling, diving, footwork, deflecting and punching, diving, and kicking. Greater emphasis on the leadership role regarding communication/positioning/directing players, particularly defenders, in tactical requirements

STAGE 6: Training to Win U18+ Female

Goalkeepers are entirely specialists. Most skills are in a maintenance or remedial mode and "perfecting" mode. The leadership/tactical role of the Sweeper/Keeper is paramount. The interaction between GKs and field players is critical to the success of the team. These should be steadily tested/refined in training and game situations with the highest level of competition and pressure.

STAGE 7: Active for Life Any age Female and Male

Whoever is willing to play in goal is still working on their skills – dreaming of being called up to the big time!

Introduction

The soccer goalkeeper is one of the most important players on the field - they are the last line of defense and the first line of attack. To play the position well requires special skills and training.

To many coaches, though, soccer goalkeeping techniques and tactics are a mystery. This is especially true at younger age levels, where often coaches have not played much soccer at all, much less played keeper. Even experienced field players and coaches may not have much experience with goalkeeping.

This manual is designed to help soccer coaches coach their goalkeepers. It outlines and demonstrates basic soccer goalkeeping techniques and tactics.

To produce goalkeepers for the next level we must prioritize and work on the following:

Handling: Ability to hold on to the ball.

Diving: Power, Technique and shape.

Feet Skills: Required to have feet skills as much as any other player on the field.

Crossing: High-low and inswing-outswing; ability to control the area.

Throwing: Decision making, accuracy, distance.

Tactics: Starting positions, set pieces, organization and communication

Even though the goalkeeper must, whenever possible, be given individual training at the hands of a specialist coach, he/she must also take part in training sessions with the whole team, therefore allowing them to be confronted with real match situations.

Club Goalkeeper Development Manual

The Club Goalkeeper Development Manual has been created to provide member clubs within British Columbia a roadmap to responsible and beneficial age appropriate development programming for stages four to seven.

The following are key components and guidelines to the implementation of these responsible and effective development practices within these stages of development.

1. Technical Leadership and Coaching Standards
2. Program Creation and Execution
3. Role of the Goalkeeper Coach
4. Goal Keeping Curriculum

1. Technical Leader Ship

Technical Leadership

It is paramount to the process of development within these stages that all member clubs have a key TECHNICAL LEAD to oversee best practices for – Club Goalkeeping Development Programming. This Technical lead is an individual who knows the position as it relates to the game and the player and who has a strong understanding of the key messages that need to be communicated. This person will have appropriate past experience to design communicate and implement Goalkeeping programming within a member club.

Evaluations

Evaluation camps are the preferred vehicle which should assist the coaching staff with the evaluation process of the p potential. These evaluation camps should be held throughout the season to aid in selection and the placement of players for ongoing programming and as it relates to the teams.

In addition to the recommended ongoing evaluation and assessment of players there are four (4) recommendations from BC Soccer for the evaluation, selection and placement of players;

Match Play and Training Environments

- This provides the coaching staff the opportunity to evaluate and assess players in environments which present appropriate dilemma and problem solving requirements within the technical, tactical, physical and emotional categories
- It provides opportunities for coaches to receive an overall understanding of the player(s) within realistic and longer term environments

Open (Positional Specific)

- These sessions should be open to any players who desire an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to participate within the proposed age group.
- A maximum number of players should be set at each session to provide for a more responsible evaluation process.

Invitation Only (Positional Specific)

- A maximum number of players should be set at each session to provide for a more responsible evaluation process. It is recommended for the evaluation and assessment of players that the ratio of player to coach be set at the following;

- o One (1) coach to every sixteen (16) players being evaluated and assessed

Evaluation and Assessment Criteria

- All evaluations and assessments should be conducted under the direction and guidance of the technical lead and supported by experienced and trained coaches within the community stream of development.
- In addition evaluations and assessments should be implemented using a universal multiple environments.

2. Program Creation and Execution

Planning the goalkeeper's general preparation is a complicated process. Drawing up the preparation plan depends on certain factors namely:

- Specific nature of the position of goalkeeper,
- Adapting to team training,
- The limited time available,
- A lack of qualified goalkeeper coaches.

Planning training for goalkeepers clearly involved adaptation.

This is why we need to analyse the issue in greater depth and take into consideration external factors which exist at all levels. Methods, tools and advice can be put forward to improve goalkeepers' day to day work. We need to ask ourselves the questions: WHO? WHEN? and WHAT? is done in goalkeeper training?

Stage 4-7

Teams with 1 or 2 training sessions a week

Who?

- Goalkeeper Coach
- Team Coach

When?

- GK Specific Training Sessions
- Before/after/during training with team.

Example of a Stage 4-7 GK Weekly Program for teams training one or twice weekly

Weekly Program Stage 4-7 (1/2 Sessions Weekly)							
Week XX	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Rest	Before/After or During Team Session	GK Specific Session with GK Coach	Rest	Before/After or During Team Session	Rest	Match Day

What?

- Players must adapt to eleven a side football on a full-sized pitch (aerial balls/goalkeepers place in formation)
- Potential must be carefully assessed noting quality and faults to better focus specific training

- Respecting the different stages of development, but work can be down progressively on the four pillars of development. (Technical, Physical, Tactical, Mental)

It may be better to work in short cycles where technical qualities can be associated with physical qualities:

- aerial Balls, distribution and jumping,
- 1 on 1 challenges, reflex saves and speed,
- Standing saves, diving and coordination.

Stage 4-7

Teams with 2 or more training sessions a week

Who?

- Goalkeeper Coach
- Team Coach

When?

- GK Specific Training Sessions
- Before/after/during training with team

Example of a Stage 4-7 GK Weekly Program for teams training more than twice weekly

Weekly Program Stage 4-7 (more than 2 sessions weekly)							
Week XX	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Rest	Before/After or During Team Session	GK Specific Session with GK Coach	Before/After or During Team Session	Before/After or During Team Session	Rest	Match Day

What?

- Players must adapt to eleven a side football on a full-sized pitch (aerial balls/goalkeepers place in formation)
- Potential must be carefully assessed noting quality and faults to better focus specific training
- Respecting the different stages of development, but work can be down progressively on the four pillars of development. (Technical, Physical, Tactical, Mental)

It may be better to work in short cycles where technical qualities can be associated with physical qualities:

- aerial Balls, distribution and jumping,
- 1 on 1 challenges, reflex saves and speed,
- Standing saves, diving and coordination.

Technical Preparation: Weekly Program and the Training Unit

The time allocated to individual in the group session can be used to make progress in different technical areas. The choice of exercises and the number of repetitions depends on the objective but also on the content of the team session.

Example: if during the session there is 20 minutes of specific GK work before moving on to 1v1 challenges with the players, it is not a good idea to work on high balls. A good preparation for challenges means the goalkeeper can make the most of the session with the team. Daily training with the team naturally enhances the goalkeepers' technical qualities:

- Shooting session; making saves with or without diving
- Small sided games; reflex saves, 1v1's
- Possession Drills; playing the ball with the feet.

Physical Preparation: Weekly Program and the Training Unit

Some coaches have a standard week with certain days that focus on physical qualities, and they may follow this pattern for several months. Other coaches have a specific objective for the development of a physical quality for each weekly program.

Tactical Preparation: Weekly Program and the Training Unit

A goalkeeper's tactical preparation takes two forms:

- Group training with the team
- Individual
 - Preparation linked to the players own game on the field,
 - Adaptation to the next opponents strengths

Any problems arising during match play must be addressed the following week. These can even be watched on video the recreated in training.

Mental Preparation: Weekly Program and the Training Unit

Mental Work is carried out in two portions if possible:

- Professional work with sports psychologist (if club has one)
- Practical work with the goalkeeper coach, consisting of observation, discussion, and reactions to goalkeeping problems.

3. Role of the Goalkeeper Coach

The goalkeeper coach has to work together with the head coach to enhance the quality of coaching overall, and to assist with the preparation of the goalkeeper. This working relationship might encompass the following aspects:

- The Goalkeeping coaches vision and understanding of the goalkeepers role;
- The role of the goalkeeper in the team's playing system;

- The choice of targets/objectives for training;
- The planning of targets/objectives for training;
- Specific training with the goalkeepers;
- Coaching the whole team (simulated match situations);
- Mental preparation for the goalkeeper;
- Selection of the goalkeeper for the match;
- Post-match analysis: assessing the goalkeepers performance;
- Scouting for goalkeeper talent.

The goalkeeper coach also forms an integral part of the coaching staff as a whole.

*****It is recommended that the Club or team GK coach obtains BC Soccer Goalkeeper Diploma. *****

4. Goalkeeper Curriculum

How to Use the Matrix Information

Throughout this document, the matrix tables provide guidance on highlighted with a black box. You can review the skill set for each LTPD stage by reading the table vertically beneath the heading for each LTPD stage. By reading the tables as a series of vertical columns, you can see:

1. The abilities expected for players entering each stage
2. The abilities to be trained during each stage
3. The abilities expected for players exiting each stage

After each highlighted skill you will find a series of exercises that can be used to help develop the highlighted skill.

The Learning Continuum

The tables (matrixes) and notes in this document describe a sequential process for coaching soccer skills that includes the Introduction, Development, Refinement, Perfecting, and Maintenance of those skills over specific timelines. Coaches and administrators need to incorporate this “learning continuum” into the design of their soccer training programs as the recommended sequences reflect the natural progression of learning, and the matrix tables identify the optimal training ages for each stage and skill.

The five stages of the learning continuum are dictated by player developmental age, not chronological age. In the ideal coaching scenario, players will begin learning and playing soccer during pre-adolescence and coaches will thereby be able to apply the enclosed coaching, monitoring, and testing guidelines according to the “optimal” training timeline for producing long-term player excellence.

In some cases, some players will begin to learn and train in soccer at a much later developmental age (e.g. post-adolescence). In these instances, coaches must be prepared to customize portions of their training programs to accommodate these latecomers.

Throughout the learning continuum, coaches should understand that the learning and training of these skills and capacities is an integrated process, where techniques and tactics are learned and developed in combination with each other. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, this document presents skills and tactics separately in a “matrix” format, but this should not be construed to mean that different training capacities and elements of game knowledge are intended to be learned in isolation from one another. Words and tables do not capture the integrated nature of the game – in this sense, the matrixes are a “best effort” to highlight the components required in an integrated training program.

1. Skill Introduction

The purpose of skill Introduction is to ensure that players correctly understand the fundamental movements needed to execute a particular skill; development and mastery of that skill will follow in later stages of the learning continuum. Under ideal circumstances where soccer learning and training begins with pre-adolescent youth, different soccer skills are introduced to players at different developmental ages according to a sequential plan. That is, fundamental skills such as kicking and dribbling that form the basic building blocks of soccer will be introduced first, followed by progressively more sophisticated skills that represent the combining or refining of the fundamental skills, such as shooting or passing while dribbling. More sophisticated skills generally require greater subtlety of movement and decision making, so physiological and cognitive development play a large role in determining when they are introduced.

2. Skill Development

After players have been introduced to a skill and clearly understand the elements of its correct execution, they must be engaged in repeated practice of the skill so its basic execution becomes reliable. Many hours of formal training will be required, along with opportunities to apply the skill in practices and competitive settings. Qualified coaches must lead technical sessions so players can receive appropriate feedback and correction of the skill. Skills are then incorporated into game situations, forging the link between “theory and practice” (e.g. controlling a ball out of the air and dribbling with a change of direction).

3. Skill Refinement

Following basic development of each skill, players refine their execution of the skill by combining it with other skills and tactics under conditions of game pressure and pace. Players will also adapt the skill to their own unique physiology. For example, some soccer players may be able to dribble quickly and rely less on control or “finesse” as they outrun opponents based on their superior speed. Meanwhile, some slower players may come to rely to a much larger degree on finer ball handling skills or deceptions as they dribble, frequently executing such refinements as “nutmegs” and step-overs in their dribbling to gain advantage on a quicker opponent. Both player types may possess the same variety of dribbling skills, but they will have adapted them differently to suit differences in stature, speed, stamina, strength, and suppleness. As with all stages of skill development, many hours of practice are required in a

variety of training and competitive settings to refine skills. The significant difference is that players refine their skills under increasing pressure as the speed of the game increases.

4. Skill Perfecting

Players begin perfecting skills once they have completely adapted the skills to suit their particular physiology and they have reached their highest level of competition. Now begins the process of improving the most subtle aspects of their skills – such as speed, suppleness, and power – under the greatest conditions of pressure and performance. Players need to train and apply their skill sets regularly at the greatest level of competitive difficulty in order to challenge their skills at their optimal limits. Also note: improvements in performance may be partially contingent on training elements that are not visible on the soccer field, such as diet and nutritional programming, weight training, and suppleness and flexibility regimens.

5. Skill Maintenance

When playing careers shift from high performance competition to competitive recreational soccer, players no longer seek to refine and perfect new soccer skills. However, it is beneficial that they maintain their existing skills so they can remain active in the sport in a variety of playing, coaching, and officiating roles.

Goalkeeping

Goalkeeping represents a specialized array of skill sets that include abilities in ball handling (i.e. using the hands to catch, punch, or deflect the ball), diving, throwing, receiving, kicking, foot movement, and agility.

Handling

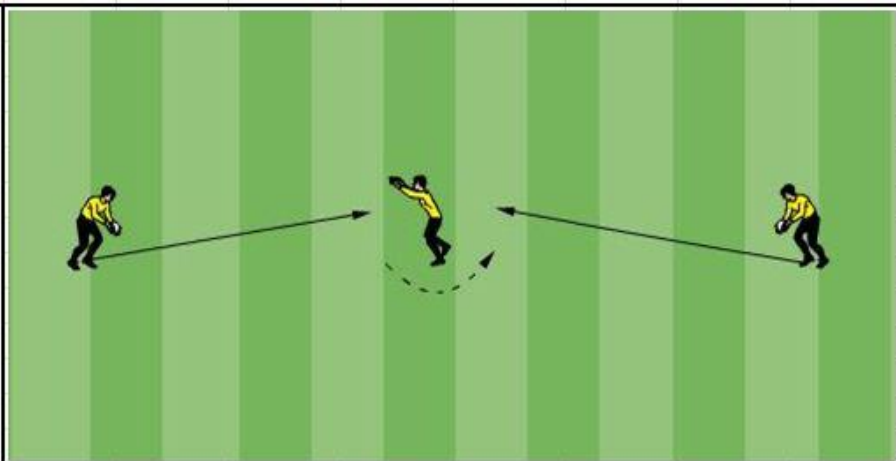
Ball Handling describes the goalkeepers ability to use their hands effectively to catch, parry and punch the ball from a number of angles and in a variety of positions

Ages	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	Any Age
Males	Training to Train				Training to Compete			T2W	A4L
Females	Training to Train			Training to Compete			Train to Win		A4L
Handling									
Ground	Refining			Perfect					Maint.
Waist	Refining			Perfect					Maint.
Chest	Refining			Perfect					Maint.
Head Height	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint.
Above Height	Develop		Refining			Perfect			Maint.
Deflecting	Develop			Refining			Perfect		Maint.
Punching	Develop			Refining			Perfect		Maint.

Handling Exercises

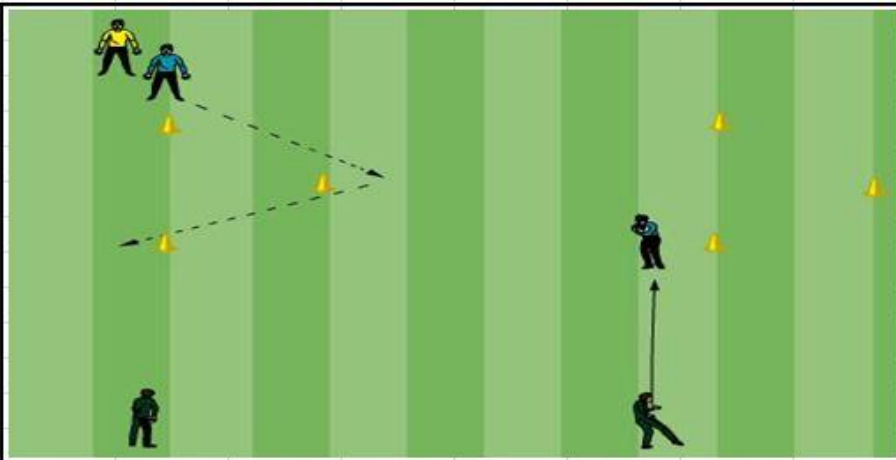
Handling Warm-Up-

- Two servers 12 yards apart with one keeper in the middle of those two.
- Outside servers serve different service into keeper in middle, once received the keeper working throws back to server; spins out to other server.
- Service working from group up.



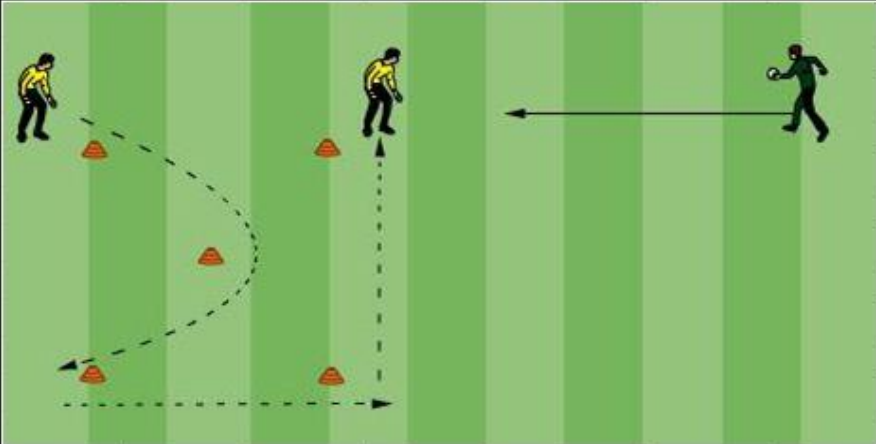
Handling Exercise 1

- Movement out around cone.
- Catch ball from server.
- Use service starting from ground up, make sure to work both sides.



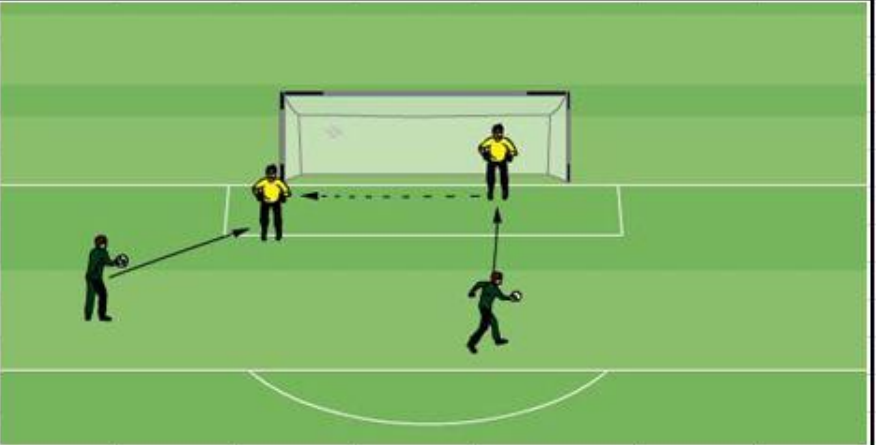
Handling Exercise 2

- Movement out around cones
- Catch ball from server.
- Use service starting from ground up, make sure to work both sides.
- Can include diving both on ground and in air



Handling Exercise 3

- Catch ball from server.
- Movement over to post.
- Catch the ball after correct positioning (focus on quality not speed of execution)
- Movement back to first server
- Make sure to work both side



Diving

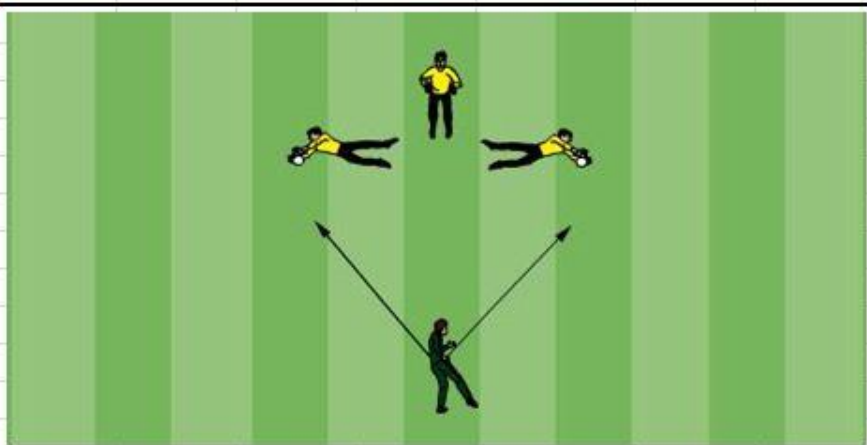
Diving normally occurs when a goalkeeper is unable to safely collect a ball while staying on their feet. Usually, but not always, it is when the ball, either from a shot or a dribble, is passing outside of the vertical position of the body.

Ages	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	Any Age
Males	Training to Train				Training to Compete			T2W	A4L
Females	Training to Train			Training to Compete			Train to Win		A4L
Diving									
Collaspe	Refining			Perfect				Maint.	
Breakaways	Refining			Perfect				Maint.	
Body Shape	Refining			Perfect				Maint.	
Side Dive	Develop	Refining			Perfect			Maint.	
Power Dive	Intro	Develop			Refining	Perfect			Maint.
Aerial Dive	Intro	Develop			Refining		Perfect	Maint.	
Forward Dive	Intro	Develop			Refining		Perfect	Maint.	
High Dive	Intro	Develop			Refining		Perfect	Maint.	
Wrong Hand	Intro			Develop			Refining	Perfect	Maint.

Diving Exercises

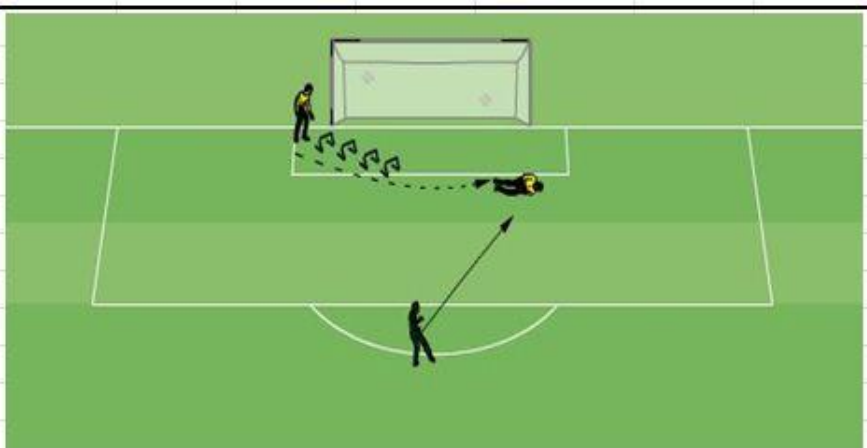
Diving Exercise 1

- Dive for a ball on the ground left side
- Dive for a ball on the ground right side.
- Do the same both sides for medium height and bounced balls.
- 6/8 reps each side



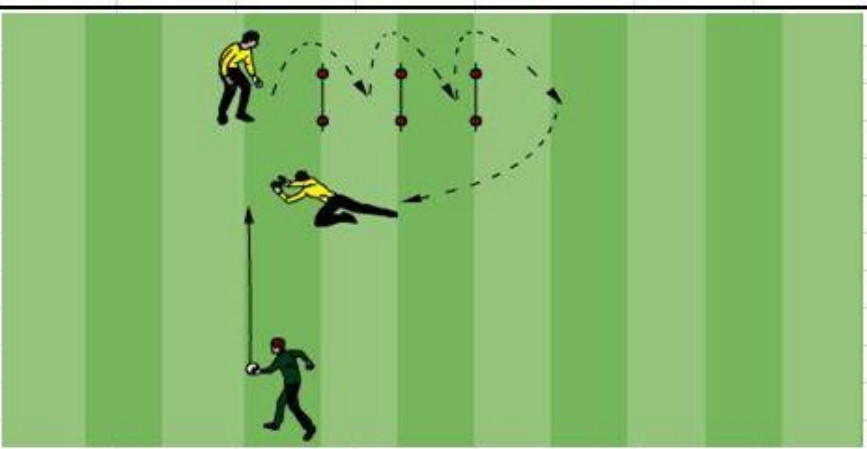
Diving Exercise 2

- Two foot jumps over hurdles
- Movement across to make diving save
- Do the same both sides for medium height and bounced balls.
- 6/8 reps each side



Diving Exercise 3

- Two foot jumps over hurdles
- Movement across to make diving save
- Do the same both sides for medium height and bounced balls.
- 6/8 reps each side



Diving Exercise 4

- Keepers dive before ball hits obstacle (poles)
- Alternate sides of service
- Do the same both sides for ground/medium height balls

Feet Skills

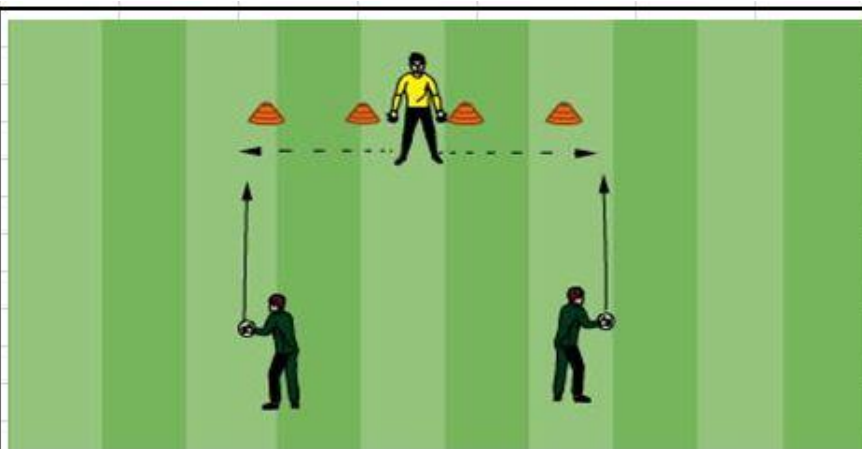
In addition to hand skills, goalkeepers are required to have feet skills as much as any other player on the field. Feet skills include everything from the ability to adjust feet positioning to passing, receiving, kicking and tackling.

Ages	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	Any Age
Males	Training to Train				Training to Compete			T2W	A4L
Females	Training to Train			Training to Compete			Train to Win		A4L
Feet									
Footwork:	Refining			Perfect					Maint
add starting position									Maint
Goal Kick	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint
Punt	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint
Drop Kick	Intro	Develop			Refining			Perfect	Maint
Moving Pass	Intro	Develop			Refining		Perfect		Maint
Back Pass	Intro			Develop			Refining	Perfect	Maint
Side Winder	Intro			Develop			Refining	Perfect	Maint
Tackle	Intro			Develop			Refining	Perfect	Maint

Foot Skills Exercises

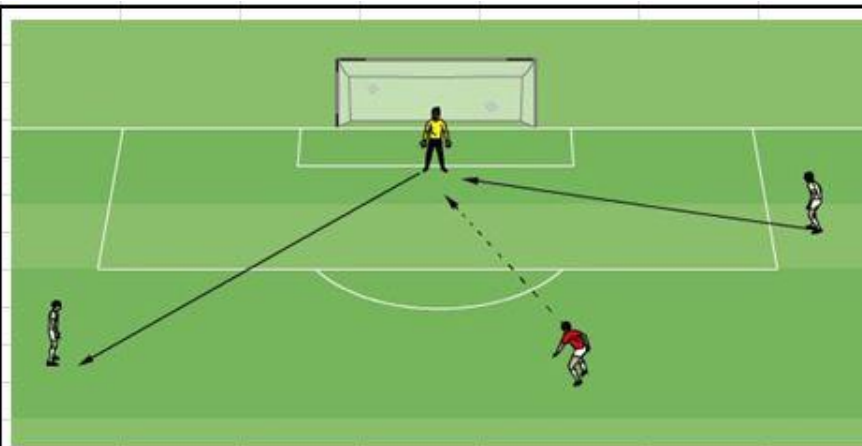
Feet Skills Exercise 1

- Work in 3's, keeper to start in front cones, moving laterally to receive different service from the servers.
- Service; passing on ground/thigh control pass/chest control pass/headers
- 10/12 of each



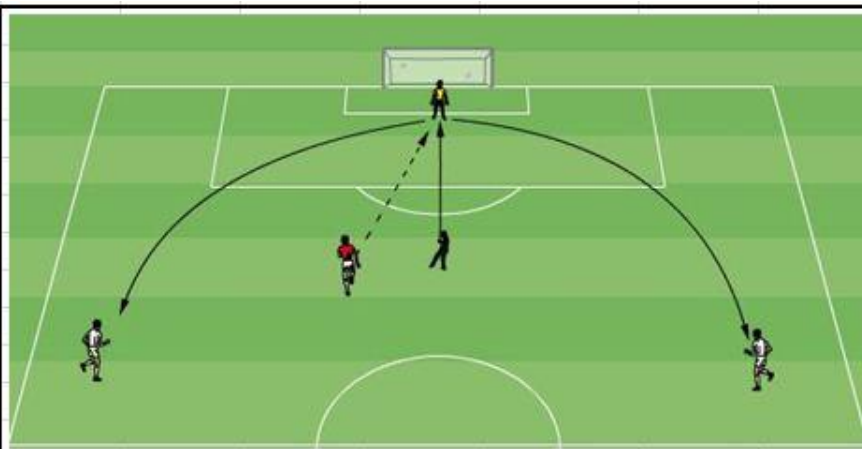
Feet Skills Exercise 2

- Defender passes ball back to Goalkeeper, who takes a touch to switch the play to other side.
- Service; passing on ground/bouncing balls/high balls
- 10 reps work both feet
- Progression add pressure on GK



Feet Skills Exercise 2

- Coach passes ball back to Goalkeeper, who clears the ball long first time or after one or two touches
- Service; passing on ground/bouncing balls/high balls
- 10 reps work both feet
- Progression add pressure on GK



Crossing

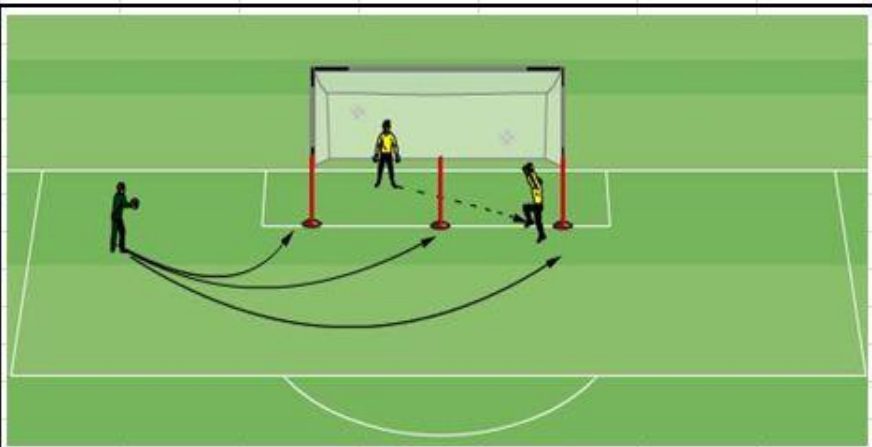
Crosses from the flanks are some of the most difficult balls for goalkeepers to defend. Goalkeepers are required to make several quick decisions regarding; positioning, communicating, whether to come for the cross or stay, whether to catch or punch in successfully defending a cross.

Ages	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	Any Age
Males	Training to Train				Training to Compete			T2W	A4L
Females	Training to Train			Training to Compete			Train to Win		A4L
Crossing									
Catching Tech	Develop			Refining		Pefect			Maint.
Punching Tech	Develop			Refining		Pefect			Maint.
One Hand	Develop			Refining		Pefect			Maint.
Two Hand	Develop			Refining		Pefect			Maint.
Start Position	Intro		Develop			Refining		Perfect	Maint.
Angle of Appr.	Intro		Develop			Refining		Perfect	Maint.

Crossing Exercises

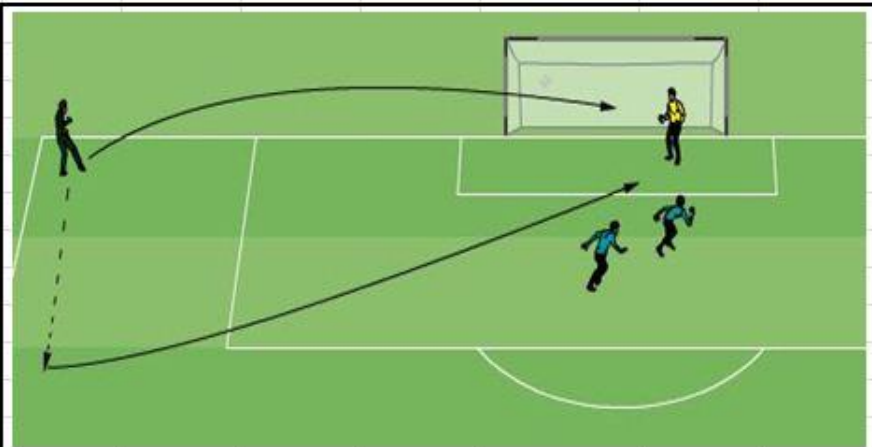
Crossing Exercise 1

- Coach throws ball to near/middle and back post for goalkeeper to collect.
- Vary height of service.
- 6/8 reps of each, make sure to work both sides



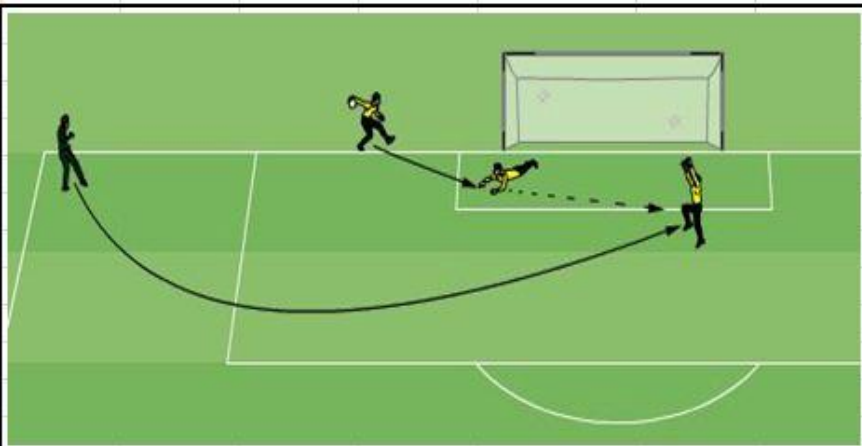
Crossing Exercise 2

- Coach crosses ball in from various positions around 18 yard box
- 10 reps of each, make sure to work both sides
- Progression adding opposition



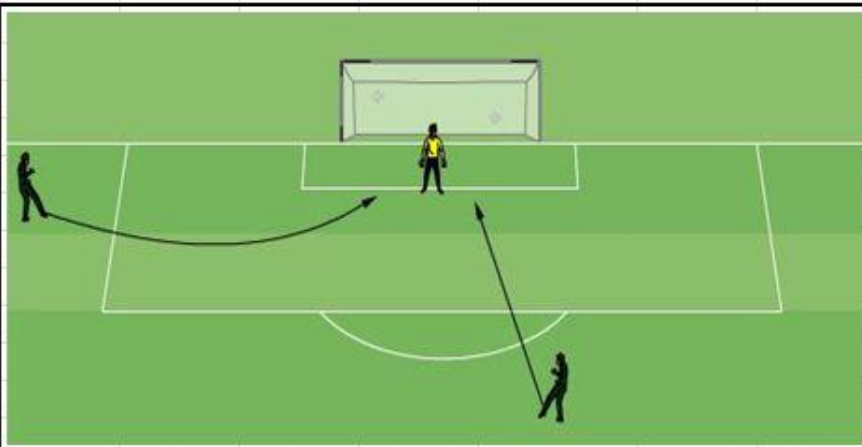
Crossing Exercise 3

- Cut back at near post for Goalkeeper to collect, after cutback is collected
- Goalkeeper is up to face a cross from the coach.
- 8 reps of each, make sure to work both sides



Crossing Exercise 4

- Coach delivers a cross for Goalkeeper to collect, after cross is collected and delivered back to coach
- Goalkeeper is up to face a shot from a player or coach
- 8 reps of each, make sure to work both sides



Principles and Tactical Role

Goalkeepers must understand their role in the team organization, and they must understand a variety of basic tactical principles and technical practices to be effective in their role.

Ages	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	Any Age
Males	Training to Train				Training to Compete			T2W	A4L
Females	Training to Train			Training to Compete			Train to Win		A4L
Principals									
Body Shape	Refining			Perfect					Maint.
Decisions,	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint.
Communication,									Maint.
Organization									Maint.
1st Attacker	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint.
Set Position	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Stay on Feet	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Reaction v Anticipation	Develop			Refining		Perfect		Maint.	
Technical/Tactical									
Crossing- co-oprating	Develop	Refining			Perfect				Maint.
Narrowing Angle	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Cutbacks	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Through Balls	Intro			Refining		Perfect		Maint.	
Tactical Role									
Sweeper Keeper	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Space Behind Defens	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
Communication	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	
osition relative to bal	Develop		Refining			Perfect		Maint.	

Positioning

Inexperienced keepers struggle with trying to decide when to come off their line. This is certainly a difficult decision to make, since it depends on both the situation on the field - attacker's speed and ability, positions of other players on both offense and defense - and the keeper's ability and confidence.

The decision will be made a little easier if the keeper starts from a good position. In general, the position of the keeper in the penalty area should match the position of the ball on the soccer field. If the ball is in the attacking third, the keeper should be in the front third of the penalty area; ball at midfield, keeper about 6-12 yards out, ball in the defensive end, and keeper close to their line. If the keeper is young and small, or the opposing team like to shoot long, high looping shots, adjust the position back towards the goals a few yards.

Position from the middle to the top of the penalty area helps the goalkeeper get to long through balls more quickly (even intercepting and clearing them outside the area if necessary), and also puts the keeper in the play for use as an outlet for a defender under pressure. Even when they are back, the keeper should stay a minimum of 1-2 yards off the goal line to maintain some angle. A goalkeeper who stays rooted on the line not only concedes the better part of the penalty area to the attacking team, but gives them the most net to shoot at when they do get close.

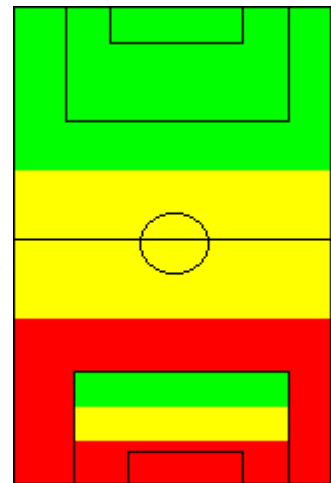


Fig. 1: Keeper's position in penalty area should match ball's position on the field

A very common question I get asked is, "When should I come out?" I think this is the wrong question. It should be, "How should I come out?" I think that the exact timing is much less critical than coming out hard and decisively and not second-guessing. This is not just for breakaways, but applies to any attempt at the ball (handling crosses, long through balls, etc).

The goalkeeper should:

- Pick a moment when they have a clear shot at the ball, and then
- Come hard for the ball without hesitating or stopping.
- Slow down just as they reach the ball carrier, leaving a couple of arms' lengths of space as a cushion.

The second item here is key. Many a goal has been scored because the keeper was indecisive and got caught in "no-man's land", neither attacking the ball nor being in good shot-stopping position. Once the keeper decides they're going for the ball, they must go through with it; they must at least make some contact with the ball. Once the keeper gets near the ball, they must slow down and leave some space to prevent being dribbled by the attacker.

Never start a run by backing up. They should check the posts, look around at the situation, wait for the right moment, but the keeper should do all of this while on their toes and ready to move forward. (Any backpedalling should have been done previously, well before the keeper's charge.

Young and inexperienced goalkeepers may lack the confidence to come hard on a breakaway or out for a high cross. Build confidence by first teaching them proper techniques, and slowly building into game situations - no pressure, then light pressure, then heavy traffic. A keeper who is confident in their footwork, catching ability, and other techniques will have less to worry about when the time comes to be aggressive.

Communication on the pitch

One of the goalkeeper's roles on the pitch is to supervise his team-mates, taking advantage of his position facing play. The goalkeeper can anticipate situations and react quickly. The goalkeeper has two methods of communication on the pitch to fulfil this role: calling and gesturing.

Verbal communication:

The goalkeeper reacts verbally in the following situations:

- directing team-mates during play

Examples:

- indicating unmarked opponents,
- providing team-mates with information when involved in 1-on-1 situations: "TIME!", "MAN ON!", "CLEAR IT!" "MAN TO THE RIGHT!",
- communicating to team-mates for back passes: "TO ME!",
- making sure that the game plan is respected,
- calling when he comes for the ball: "MINE", "LEAVE IT!"

- organising the defence in dead-ball situations,

Examples:

- directing and positioning the defence before the ball is struck,
- the goalkeeper must be fully aware of each player's role,
- calling when he comes for the ball: "MINE", "LEAVE IT!",
- if the goalkeeper does not come out, he still directs his team-mates: "CLEAR IT!", "AWAY!"

- warning his team-mates when he is going to intervene,

Examples:

- calling when he comes for the ball: "MINE", "LEAVE IT!"

Every verbal intervention that the goalkeeper makes should be short, precise and forceful. Communication on the pitch should flow in both directions. Outfield players should also warn their goalkeeper of the presence of an opponent as he intervenes.

Communication by gesture

In some situations (if there is a lot of noise in the stadium), shouts may not be heard and gestures have to be used:

- dead-ball situation – positioning of the wall,
- back pass – the goalkeeper indicates where he wants to receive the ball,
- getting the defensive line back up the pitch,
- using the whole width of the pitch,
- changing the rhythm of play.

Remember!

- If the goalkeeper shouts that he is coming out, he must not collide with a team-mate.
- He can alert the player to whom he will distribute the ball.

The Goalkeeper and the Match

In order to examine the goalkeeper and the match, we must identify the goalkeeper's place, role and position in everything relating to the match:

- preparation for the match,
- the warm-up before the match,
- observation and evaluation of the match,
- recovery after the match.

Before analysing individual relationships, the issue of a team squad having two or three goalkeepers must be discussed.

The Goalkeeping Partnership

The match represents the culmination of the goalkeeper's preparation. When a squad has two goalkeepers, it is precisely at this time that one of them cannot show what he has learned during all those exhausting training sessions. We describe how the goalkeeper's sporting performance is characterised by goalkeeping play (technical, tactical and theoretical preparation) and by physical and psychological preparation, but we intentionally did not mention a secondary factor: "luck". More simply "being in the right place at the right time". This consideration is entirely valid for goalkeepers. An individual save, a missed match, the injury of a teammate, etc. – these events can all have a considerable influence on a goalkeeper's career. Many talented, high quality goalkeepers find that their careers grind to a halt whereas others have excellent careers, even if they are less skilful.

Why do we only talk about the first goalkeeper, while the second goalkeeper is seen as a substitute? The reasons for this relate to the specific nature of the position:

- there is only one place available (outfield players have 10),
- the goalkeeper cannot be changed every other match (youth teams are an exception) because the stability of the team must be maintained,
- clearly if the team achieves good results, the choice of goalkeeper is consistent,
- the first goalkeeper enjoys the coach's trust even if he makes a mistake,
- tactical manoeuvres (substituting a player or players to use up time at the end of a match) do not apply to the position of the goalkeeper.

Everyone has heard of Cech, Casillas and Buffon, but we can ask:

“Do you know the names of the team-mate goalkeepers who work with these famous players every day?”

Of course, at very big clubs, there are several good goalkeepers. But at ordinary clubs, we only know the regular first-team choice. Each “substitute” may play many fewer matches than a first-choice goalkeeper at another club even though his sporting performance may be superior:

- is the goalkeeper happy with this situation?
- what are the goalkeeper’s ambitions?
- what about his career?
- what is his relationship with the first-choice goalkeeper?

The composition, functioning and relationships of the goalkeeping duet (or trio) are extremely important for the stability of the position. There can be positive or negative consequences for the team. For this reason, the criteria and parameters of choosing the goalkeeper must be considered with great care.

Match preparation

Two types of match preparation apply (to all age and sporting performance levels):

- group,
- individual.

The goalkeeper is an integral part of the team but also has the specific individual considerations of his position. The number of parameters influencing the goalkeeper’s match preparation increases as the importance of the match increases (amateurs • professionals, children • adults).

• **group match preparation includes:**

- analysis and evaluation of the previous match; this also represents the initial preparation for the subsequent match,
- observation of the opponents,
- video,
- hotel stay or meal before the match,
- pre-match talk.

• **individual match preparation:**

- this form of preparation is highly personal as each goalkeeper is different, with his own habits, rituals, beliefs, etc.
- a good knowledge of the goalkeeper’s personality allows the coach to better assist him in his preparation,
- observation of the opponents and analysis of their qualities makes the goalkeeper’s task on the pitch easier,
- some goalkeepers compile their own statistics on other teams’ attackers (penalties, free kicks, etc.).

In practical terms, it can be said that the goalkeeper’s match preparation takes place both:

- **on the pitch:**

- group and individual training (during the week),
- warm-up before the match,

- **off the pitch:**

- analysis of the previous match,
- mental preparation (group and individual sessions, relaxation, etc.),
- the day before and the day of the match (group obligations and individual habits),
- in the changing room before the match (changing, massage, focus, suppleness exercises, stretching, last pieces of advice, etc.).

Warm-up before the match

The aim of the warm-up is, on the one hand, for the goalkeeper to prepare his body for the match (injury prevention), and on the other hand to quickly review technical manoeuvres that have already been acquired. The goalkeeper's warm-up before the match is, above all, a kind of psychological preparation for the match carried out directly on the pitch.

Catching a few balls and being complimented by the coach and confidently dealing with a few crosses reassures the goalkeeper. Anything that the goalkeeper has not yet learned, he will certainly not acquire during these exercises. When the coach observes a problem, he must react in a very sensitive way, taking into account the goalkeeper's character (calm him down, encourage, say nothing, raise his voice, etc.).

How to warm up

It is important for young goalkeepers to learn how to be independent when warming up. This may provide the answer to the two main questions which arise:

- **what should be done during the warm-up?**

The warm-up must be simple and useful and revise the basic manoeuvres:

- catching the ball (10-12 repetitions),
- diving practice (on ground and medium height 3 or 4 dives on each side),
- catching an aerial ball thrown in (in 11-a-side matches, crosses should be kicked in, 4 or 5 on each side),
- some medium-distance shots,
- playing the ball with feet (short passing and various clearances).

The exercises conducted should not be excessive and take the goalkeeper's age into account.

- **who should do the warm-up with the goalkeeper?**

For younger children, the coach should initially conduct the warm-up with the goalkeeper. However, when the goalkeeper knows the warm-up procedures, he can be assisted by another goalkeeper, outfield player, assistant coach, etc.

The warm-up for older goalkeepers can introduce suitable elements to give the goalkeeper confidence. If you watch a top-level goalkeeper before a match, you'll notice that the warm-up is a very individual, personalised affair. The goalkeeping coach is there simply to throw and kick the ball in, give some last-minute instructions and answer any questions that the goalkeeper may have. This is a good approach because it respects the goalkeeper's

personality and obliges him to take responsibility for his performance right from the warm-up.

The paradox is that the goalkeeper is more active during the warm-up than during the match.

Observation, analysis and evaluation of the match

There is no universally-used form for observations of the goalkeeper's activities during a match. Each coach draws up his own form, adapted to what he wants to concentrate on:

- observation of a specific activity:
 - goalkeeper's movements,
 - playing the ball with feet,
 - a specific save.
- analysis of all the match situations in which the goalkeeper is in contact with the ball:
 - this conveys an overall image of the goalkeeper during the match,
 - it provides sufficient information to determine any faults in the goalkeeper's play,
 - we can determine in which game situations goals are most frequently scored (also an interesting statistic for the head coach regarding the play of the team as a whole),
 - the information obtained can be used in the preparation of a new cycle and indicates the direction in which work should be carried out.

Observation is also essential in youth football at higher levels (from U15, 11-a-side on a full-sized pitch). But there remains the issue of who should carry out these observations in youth football. Even if the club has a goalkeeping coach, this coach cannot be expected to attend all matches of all categories. The mission could be carried out by the second goalkeeper, who would be obliged to closely monitor and analyse important match situations, which could also be a useful exercise for him. Comprehensive observations are not useful for younger players. The performance of teams of players of younger ages varies considerably and sometimes the goalkeeper hardly touches the ball.

Observation and analysis are directly related to the evaluation of the goalkeeper's individual performance. We can review the match collectively with all the goalkeepers or just with the goalkeeper concerned. It is also possible to combine both these methods, especially with younger players. Technical resources have developed and evaluations can now be carried out with the aid of video. Starting on the screen and then following up on the pitch, we can review problematic situations and demonstrate the most suitable solutions. There are now plenty of televised matches that can be used to provide additional examples.

Recovery after the match

Recovery procedures (warm-down, massage, bath, etc.) reflect the head coach's preferences. Recovery sessions can be scheduled after the match or on the following day. Some coaches do not schedule any recovery sessions and give the players time off. Taking into account the specific nature of his position, the goalkeeper may be tired after the match, particularly

mentally. This does not require a special recovery procedure, but rather is an organisational consideration for each goalkeeper (habits).

- the goalkeeper who played the match can:
 - join in with the programme followed by the other players (cool-down),
 - carry out a strength-building session,
 - carry out individual training on the pitch,
- the second-choice goalkeeper can:
 - join in with the other substitutes' programme,
 - carry out a specific additional training session.

