



“Just Right Challenge”

A recommendation from the NISL to maximize Player Development when your team is dominating

Teams N.I.S.L. recommends that teams play small sided games 5v5, 7v7, 9v9

If your team is ahead by 5 goals the losing team can add another player to play and continue to add another player every three additional goals to a maximum of 11 goals. If goal differential is then reduced to 4 goals players should be removed.

Hopefully you have all had the unfortunate experience of being on the losing side of a blow-out or a slaughter. If you have, you'll know that it really is no fun for you and even less fun for the kids. If you haven't had this experience, then take our word for it: it's no fun and it really isn't a positive learning experience for either team.

Thus, as coaches, we must do everything in our power to challenge our own players when we are winning by larger than 5 goals. Remember: a win, is a win, is a win. Winning by 2 or winning by 5 doesn't matter (unless you're on the losing side of things).

Here are some suggestions to challenge your players:

- DO respect the other team (the coaches, the players, the parents). This means that whatever advice you give your dominant team; make sure you do it in such a way that only your team gets the message. This means it needs to be done at an official break in the action (half time). If you already know your team is very likely to dominate, you can mention some strategies even before the game.
- DO plan ahead. If it is obvious your team is dominant, begin employing respectful strategies BEFORE you reach a 5-goal difference. You should know if your team is 3 goals up based on “luck” or “dominance”. If it's dominance, start using the strategies when you're only 3 goals up; don't wait until the difference is 5. So plan ahead!

DO continue to challenge (develop) your players AND the other team:

- all shots must be with the weaker foot (but don't make it obvious)
- no shots should be taken unless we've completed 6 passes in a row (but don't make it obvious)
- no dribbling, only 2-touch play (but don't make it obvious)
- all shots must come from outside the penalty area (but don't make it obvious)
- give different players different opportunities on the field
- have your weaker players challenging the other team's strongest players
- if you've got a great goalkeeper, don't play them in goal

There are other ways to challenge your team while not running up the score. These are just a few suggestions. The bottom line is this: Be respectful and create the **Just Right Challenge** for your players!

Examples:

5-0 Losing team, add one player

8-0 Losing team, add one 1 more additional player

11-0 Losing team, add one 1 more additional player

5-0 Losing team, add one player

5-1 Losing team, take off the extra player

6-1 Losing team, add one player

9-1 Losing team, add one 1 more additional player



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