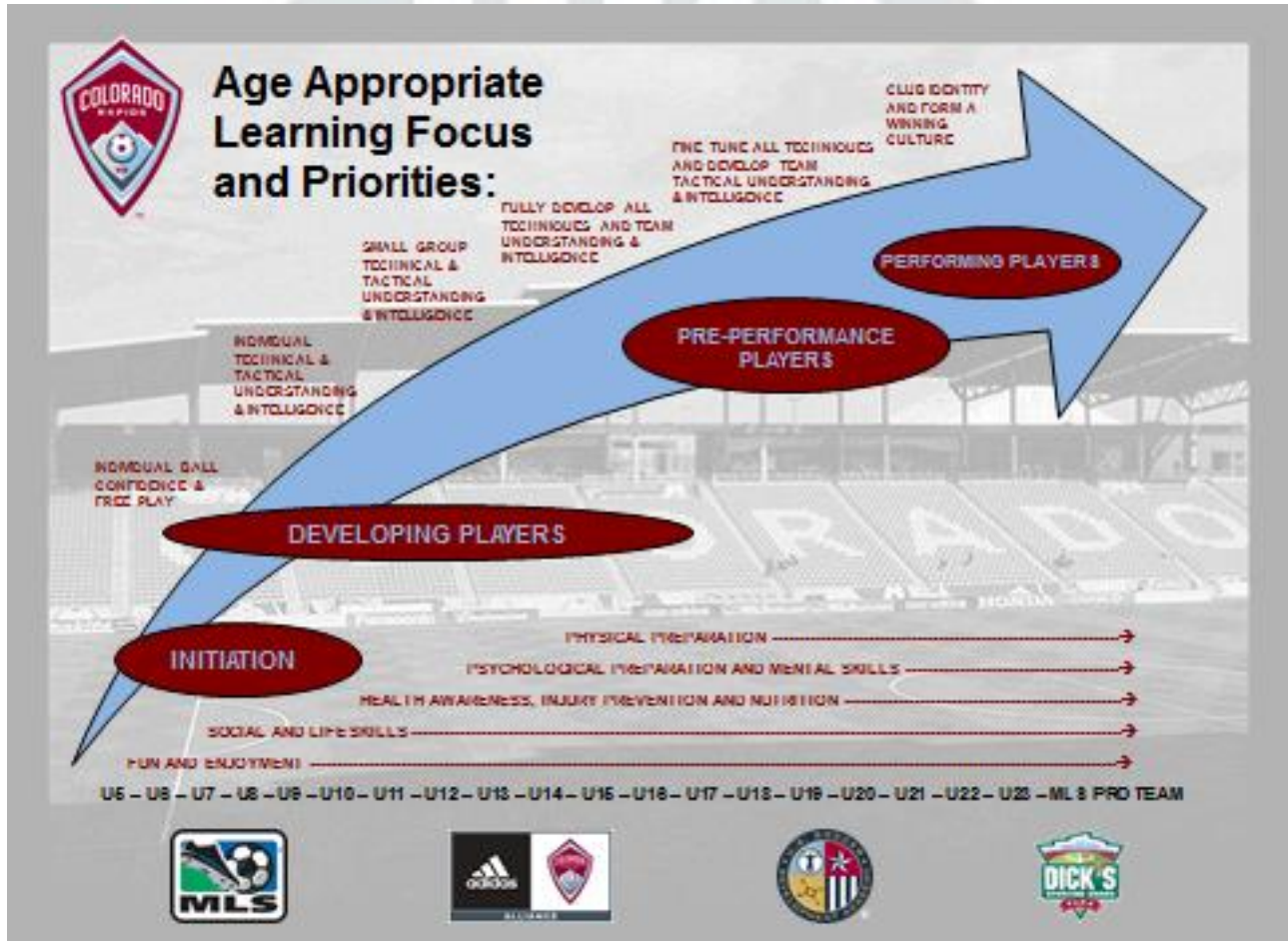




# **Rio Rapids Soccer Club**

## **U9-U12 Curriculum**

# Age Group Focus and Training Priorities



## Training and Game Cycle



## Rio Rapids SC - Style of Play Elements

### ATTACKING

*Vertical thinking, always looking to penetrate.*

- **Fast Paced Possession with purpose and with progress**
- **Technically Quick Players**
- **Mobility**

### GAME INTELLIGENCE

*Principle based vs Position based.*

- **Speed of Thought**
- **Synchronized Technique and Movement**
- **Sharp in Transition**
- **Role Understanding**
- **Rotation in flow of game**

### DEFENDING

*Recover the ball high on the field when possible.*

- **Concentration**
- **Organized**
- **Brave**
- **Mentally tough**

## Guiding Principles for Curriculum Implementation

- Developing the Rio Rapids SC Style of Play Elements should be the over-arching goal and objective of curriculum implementation.
- Use the single page curriculum handout to map out your plans for the fall or spring season and review them with your age group director before the start of each season
- Cover each topic at some point over the course of the year. Cover each topic in blocks of 3-4 training sessions to maximize learning and retention. Repeat those curriculum topics that are most pertinent based on the age and level of the team
- Recommend 2 or 3 training sessions (all types) per game/scrimmage (2/3:1 ratio) over the course of a season

## Training Session Composition

- Recommended session length: 60 – 75 minutes maximum for U9/U10 players, 75-90 minutes maximum for U11/U12 players
- Each session should focus on one of the 12 technical topics, the 5 W's related to the topic and direct tie-ins/relation to the associated Game Situations (Phase and Principle).
- Utilize the whole-part-whole methodology when designing the session.
- Each session should aim to teach players the technical, tactical, physical and mental tools required to enhance their performances in game like and functional environments.
- Delivered in an educational, enthusiastic and challenging atmosphere.
- Session Time Guidelines:
  - i. Physical movement/activation activities: approx.10% of session
  - ii. Focus on Technical Topic, the 5W's and related Game Situations: approx. 60% of session
  - iii. Small-sided games: approx. 30% of session

# Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

## Ball Mastery – Topics 1-4

<b>1) 1v1 to Maintain Possession</b>	
Who	Player on/in possession of the ball
What	Player keeping possession of ball
Where	Anywhere
When	Player on the ball is defended
Why	To solve defensive pressure and maintain possession of the ball
Cover Week Beginning	

<b>2) Turning/Changing Direction with the Ball</b>	
Who	Player on/in possession of the ball
What	Player turning/changing direction with the ball on the dribble
Where	Anywhere
When	Player on the ball is defended
Why	To solve defensive pressure/create space and maintain possession of the ball
Cover Week Beginning	

<b>3) Running with the Ball</b>	
Who	Player on/in possession of the ball
What	Taking space with the ball at speed
Where	Anywhere
When	Large open spaces in front of the ball
Why	To attack space and advance the ball
Cover Week Beginning	

<b>4) 1v1 to Beat an Opponent</b>	
Who	Player on/in possession of the ball
What	Dribbling to get past a defender
Where	Attacking and midfield thirds
When	Facing an isolated defender
Why	To penetrate and create goal scoring opportunities
Cover Week Beginning	

## Passing and Receiving – Topics 5-8

<b>5) Short Passing and Receiving</b>	
Who	Player on/in possession of the ball
What	First touch and passing
Where	Anywhere
When	Team is in possession
Why	To advance, penetrate or create a scoring chance
Cover Week Beginning	

<b>6) Receiving to Face Forward</b>	
Who	Player receiving a pass
What	Facing forward when receiving the ball
Where	Anywhere
When	Whenever possible
Why	To be an attacking threat
Cover Week Beginning	

Team \_\_\_\_\_ Age Group \_\_\_\_\_ Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

7) Long Passing and Receiving	
Who	Player passing and receiving the ball
What	Ball striking, receiving the ball out of the air
Where	Anywhere
When	Team is in possession
Why	To advance or penetrate over longer distances
Cover Week Beginning	

8) Combination Play / 2v1's	
Who	Players on and near the ball
What	Players working together to get past a defender
Where	Anywhere
When	Team is in possession with numbers up around the ball
Why	To advance, penetrate or create a scoring chance
Cover Week Beginning	

### Finishing / Shooting – Topics 9-10

9) Close Range Finishing	
Who	Team in possession
What	Creating and finishing scoring chances near goal – including crossing and finishing
Where	Near the goal
When	Whenever possible
Why	To score goals
Cover Week Beginning	

10) Long Range Finishing	
Who	Team in possession
What	Creating and finishing scoring chances farther from goal
Where	Within scoring range but further from goal
When	Whenever possible
Why	To score goals
Cover Week Beginning	

### Defending – Topics 11-12

11) 1v1 Defending	
Who	Defending player nearest the ball
What	Preventing the player with ball from advancing / attempt to win the ball
Where	Anywhere
When	Opponent has possession
Why	Preventing the player with ball from advancing / attempt to win the ball
Cover Week Beginning	

12) Defending in Pairs / Small Group Defending	
Who	Defending players near the ball
What	Preventing the opponent from advancing / attempt to win the ball
Where	Anywhere
When	Opponent has possession
Why	Preventing the opponent from advancing / attempt to win the ball
Cover Week Beginning	

Team \_\_\_\_\_ Age Group \_\_\_\_\_ Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

## Topic 1: Ball Mastery - 1v1 to Maintain Possession

<b>Who</b>	Player on/in possession of the ball
<b>What</b>	Player keeping possession of ball
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Player on the ball is defended
<b>Why</b>	To solve defensive pressure and maintain possession of the ball

### Key Elements to Teach

- Manipulating and controlling the ball with all surfaces of the foot – change in foot positions based on surface used
- Manipulating and controlling the ball with both feet
- Good first touch out of feet and be very positive
- Head up between touches to be aware of defensive pressure and space to move into
- Keeping ball the proper distance from body – smaller touches as you near defender
- Varying types of ball manipulations: foundations, side-forward-backward rolls, inside-outside, etc.
- Body between ball and defender
- Low center of gravity with good balance and ability to change direction

Specifics for shielding the ball (last resort – face up defender with ball whenever possible):

- Body sideways on to create greatest separation between defender and ball
- Play ball with foot opposite from defender
- Sink at the knees, low center of gravity, good balance, engage defender and use forearm to protect space

### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 1 (Ball Mastery):	1v1 to Maintain Possession			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
Phase:	Possession to Advance			
Getting Unmarked/Open – Create Separation from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 2: Ball Mastery – Turning/Changing Direction with the Ball

<b>Who</b>	Player on/in possession of the ball
<b>What</b>	Player turning/changing direction with the ball on the dribble
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Player on the ball is defended
<b>Why</b>	To solve defensive pressure/attack space and maintain possession of the ball

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Turns to teach (with both feet): 180 degree turns-inside hook, outside hook, drag/pull back, squash & turn/step-on, step-over turn, Cruyff turn; 90 degree turns-V's, L's
- Low center of gravity – knees bent with arms out for balance and to protect space
- Hips/body turn with the ball – not separate movements
- Head up between touches to be aware of defensive pressure and space to move into
- Keeping body between ball and defender on turn
- Small controlled touches in and explode out
- Explosive change of speed/direction on turn – explode away from opponent
- Using body to sell fake
- Using all surfaces of foot

#### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 2 (Ball Mastery):	Turning/Changing Direction with the Ball			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Getting Unmarked/Open – Create Separation from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Switching the Point of Attack			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Put Yourself in a Position to Score – Adjust Body Shape and Touch to Shoot	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Change Speed/Direction with the Ball to Beat Opponent	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 3: Ball Mastery - Running with the Ball

<b>Who</b>	Player on/in possession of the ball
<b>What</b>	Taking space with the ball at speed
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Large open spaces in front of the ball
<b>Why</b>	To attack space and advance the ball

#### **Key Elements to Teach**

- Awareness of defensive pressure and space to run into – when to run with the ball and when to dribble
- Head up between touches to continue to evaluate defensive pressure and playing options
- Positive and explosive 1<sup>st</sup> touch that gets ball out away from feet and attacks open space
- Toe down using natural running motion to run with the ball – use of instep/pinky toe
- Extend stride with large touches
- Big touches to small touches as you approach defender or opportunity to shoot/pass (slow and control)
- Using both feet

#### **Game Situations**

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 3 (Ball Mastery):	Running with the Ball			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Play in the Gaps and Between Lines			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Penetrate the Opponent’s Back Line		Introduce	Focus	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Put Yourself in a Position to Score – Adjust Body Shape and Touch to Shoot	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 4: Ball Mastery - 1v1 to Beat an Opponent

<b>Who</b>	Player on/in possession of the ball
<b>What</b>	Dribbling to get past a defender
<b>Where</b>	Attacking and midfield thirds
<b>When</b>	Facing an isolated defender
<b>Why</b>	To penetrate and create goal scoring opportunities

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Moves to teach (with both feet): outside-inside, scissors, double scissors, shoulder drop/side step, slow and go/hesitation dribble, Mathews/little-big, step-over, roll-over & go
- Head up between touches to be aware of defensive pressure and spaces to attack
- Face up towards goal and defender
- Recognizing when to take a defender on 1v1 – isolated defender without nearby cover
- Attack front foot of defender with pace, small touches and body balance
- How to unbalance/wrong foot defender – explosive change of speed, explosive change of direction, body or ball feints/deception
- Protect ball, explode past and cut off recovery run of defender as you beat them
- Aggressive mentality to take players on 1v1

#### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 4 (Ball Mastery):		1v1 to Beat an Opponent			
Principle		U9	U10	U11	U12
	<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate		Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
	<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Isolate Defenders and Take Them on 1v1		Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Penetrate the Opponent’s Back Line			Introduce	Focus	Focus
	<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Change Speed/Direction with the Ball to Beat Opponent		Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus

# Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

## Topic 5: Passing and Receiving - Short Passing and Receiving

<b>Who</b>	Player on/in possession of the ball
<b>What</b>	First touch and passing
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Team is in possession
<b>Why</b>	To advance, penetrate or create a scoring chance

### Key Elements to Teach

#### *Passing:*

- Choosing target for pass – players feet or space
- Choosing and using most appropriate/effective foot and surface (inside, outside, laces, sole, heel)
- Fundamentals: positive step to side of ball, bend non-kicking leg into the pass, body balanced centrally, ankle locked, firm contact with middle of ball, follow through to target, pass becomes first step in next movement
- Weight/pace of pass – when and how to deliver crisp and soft passes (punch/roll/spin)
- Passes played smoothly on the ground – exceptions when ball might be lifted
- Delivering passes to appropriate foot of teammate – to face up when they have space or away from defender when marked tightly
- Using disguise – looking elsewhere, body and ball feints
- Loaning the ball – passing and getting it right back

#### *Receiving:*

- Move body into flight/path of ball
- Moving towards ball or holding ground depending on pace of pass and pressure
- Choosing and using most appropriate/effective foot (to face up or to protect the ball from pressure) and surface (inside, outside, laces, sole)
- Bend/sink at the knees and hips to maintain balance and cushion first touch through solid contact with the middle of the ball
- Quick flowing movement into the ball, first touch is the first step of pass
- Moving at an angle with an open body shape – getting half turned
- Peeking/checking shoulder before/during/after pass to find pressure and identify options
- Across body and faced up whenever possible
- Away from pressure and to set up next option
- Using disguise – body and ball feints

#### *General:*

- Teach players how to give and read information related to their body shape, eye contact and body movement so that they can coordinate their play to the correct space or foot.

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

<b>U9-U12 Topic 5 (Passing and Receiving):</b>	<b>Short Passing and Receiving</b>			
<b>Principle</b>	<b>U9</b>	<b>U10</b>	<b>U11</b>	<b>U12</b>
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Getting Unmarked/Open – Create Separation from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Play in the Gaps and Between Lines			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Penetrate the Opponent’s Back Line		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Switching the Point of Attack			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 6: Passing and Receiving – Receiving to Face Forward

<b>Who</b>	Player receiving a pass
<b>What</b>	Facing forward when receiving the ball
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Whenever possible
<b>Why</b>	To be an attacking threat

#### **Key Elements to Teach**

- Moving to create an angle with an open body shape – getting half turned
- Across body and faced up whenever possible
- Moving towards ball or holding ground depending on pace of pass and pressure
- Choosing and using most appropriate/effective foot (to face up or to protect the ball from pressure) and surface (inside, outside, laces, sole)
- Bend/sink at the knees and hips to maintain balance and cushion first touch through solid contact with the middle of the ball
- Quick flowing movement into the ball, first touch is the first step of pass
- Peeking/checking shoulder before/during/after pass to find pressure and identify options
- Efficiency/speed of handling to limit time required between first touch and pass
- Away from pressure and to set up next option
- Turns to spin off/advance past tight defender
- Teach players how to give and read information related to their body shape, eye contact and body movement so that they can coordinate their play to the correct space or foot.

#### **Game Situations**

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 6 (Passing and Receiving):	Receiving to Face Forward			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Getting Unmarked/Open – Create Separation from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Play in the Gaps and Between Lines			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Penetrate the Opponent’s Back Line		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Isolate Defenders and Take Them on 1v1	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Put Yourself in a Position to Score – Adjust Body Shape and Touch to Shoot	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum



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## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 7: Passing and Receiving – Long Passing and Receiving

<b>Who</b>	Player passing and receiving the ball
<b>What</b>	Ball striking and receiving the ball out of the air
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Team is in possession
<b>Why</b>	To advance or penetrate over longer distances

#### Key Elements to Teach

##### Passing:

- Choosing target for pass – players feet or space
- Choosing and using most appropriate/effective foot and surface (inside, outside, laces)
- Ability to drive the ball in the air or on the ground, chip the ball and spin the ball to bend/texture passes
- Fundamentals: approach angle (more angle to loft, less angle to drive/spin), non-kicking foot slightly behind and to the side of the back of the ball (further away to loft, closer to drive/spin), knees bent, contact surface on foot (laces for driven, laces/inside for lofted, inside/outside laces for spin), ball contact location (middle of ball to keep ball on ground/low, bottom half of ball to lift, side of ball to spin), accelerate through contact with ball to generate power/increase passing range (use of upper body/arms for balance, proper backswing), follow-through (direction and length dependent on type of pass - towards target or to generate spin)
- Pace/spin of pass – when and how to deliver driven, lofted, bent and textured passes (drive/chip/bent)

##### Receiving ball out of the air:

- Move body into flight/path of ball
- Moving towards ball or holding ground depending on pace of pass and pressure
- Choosing and using most appropriate/effective body part (foot, thigh, chest, head) and surface (to face up or to protect the ball from pressure)
- Bend/sink at the knees and hips to maintain balance and cushion first touch through solid contact with the middle of the ball
- Quick flowing movement into the ball, first touch is the first step of pass
- Peeking/checking shoulder before/during/after pass to find pressure and identify options
- Across body and faced up whenever possible
- Away from pressure and to set up next option

##### General:

- Teach players how to give and read information related to their body shape, eye contact and body movement so that they can coordinate their play to the correct space or foot.

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 7 (Passing and Receiving):		Long Passing and Receiving			
Principle	Phase:	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>		<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate		Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Play in the Gaps and Between Lines				Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>		<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Switching the Point of Attack				Introduce	Focus
Penetrate the Opponent’s Back Line			Introduce	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 8: Passing and Receiving – Combination Play / 2v1's

<b>Who</b>	Players on and near the ball
<b>What</b>	Players working together to get past a defender
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Team is in possession with numbers up around the ball
<b>Why</b>	To advance, penetrate or create a scoring chance

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Combinations to teach: fading off defender, diagonal run, takeover, wall pass/give-and-go/1-2, overlap, double pass
- Fading off defender (starting position near defender): back-pedal away from and to side of defender to make them choose between marking you and defending ball
- Diagonal run (starting position wide and away from defender): make angled run to get ball behind the defender
- Takeover (dribbler marked tightly and under pressure): dribbler on the move with head down and shielding the ball with foot away from defender, player off ball moves by teammate on side away from defender, player with ball leaves ball for teammate who takes ball and immediately attacks up field if possible
- Wall pass (starting position in front of ball and teammate under pressure): dribbler attacks defender at speed to engage them, player off ball moves to the side and slightly away from defender, dribbler pass the ball to teammate using outside of foot, pass becomes first stride and player explodes around and behind defender, wall player plays 1-touch pass back to teammate using the foot closest to goal
- Overlap (starting position level with or behind ball): attacker dribbles into space at an angle, teammate bends run around and away from dribbler, dribbler allows teammate to get upfield of them and then passes them the ball leading them into space
- Double pass (marked player out wide): marked players shows back for ball, dribbler passes to foot away from the defender, player receiving pass plays pass directly back to teammate using foot away from defender and spins off and wide of defender to make run up field, teammate delivers ball to teammate into space behind defender
- Recognizing where and when players can create 2v1
- Dribble drive at opponent to engage defender and create 2v1
- Attack defender at an angle that doesn't allow them to isolate you 1v1
- Positive movement and timing of player off ball to enable/facilitate combination
- Fast-paced, attack minded and accurate
- Teach players how to give and read information related to their body shape, eye contact and body movement so that they can coordinate their play to the correct space or foot.

#### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

<b>U9-U12 Topic 8 (Passing and Receiving):</b>	<b>Combination Play / 2v1's</b>			
<b>Principle</b>	<b>U9</b>	<b>U10</b>	<b>U11</b>	<b>U12</b>
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Possession to Advance</b>			
Creation and Use of Space – Movement of Players to Create Space and Time for Themselves or to Create Passing Lanes/Space for a Teammate	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Getting Unmarked/Open – Create Separation from Defenders	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Outnumber the Opponent Around the Ball			Introduce	Focus
Combine with Teammates			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Open Up Opponent to Penetrate</b>			
Outnumber the Opponent Around the Ball and Combine with Teammates			Introduce	Focus
Penetrate the Opponent's Back Line			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Change Speed/Direction with or Without the Ball to Beat Opponent		Introduce	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 9: Finishing / Shooting – Close Range Finishing

<b>Who</b>	Team in possession
<b>What</b>	Creating and finishing scoring chances near goal – including crossing and finishing
<b>Where</b>	Near the goal
<b>When</b>	Whenever possible
<b>Why</b>	To score goals

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Goal scoring mentality – positive and aggressive
- Preparation of body (footwork, balance, efficiency of movement) and ball to shoot (location and quality of first touch)
- Selection of appropriate foot, surface and technique to shoot (inside, outside, laces, toe, heel, thigh, chest, head, half and full volleys)
- When to shoot first time and when to take a prep touch
- Power versus placement
- Shooting/heading the ball down
- Movement off ball to create space to receive pass for shot – attacking the ball going towards goal
- Movement with ball to beat/create space from defender to shoot
- Shot location based on goalkeeper position and movement
- Awareness and readiness to score off rebounds
- Finishing 1v1 vs the goalkeeper – big touches to small touches as you near shooting distance, head up to observe goalkeeper position and movement, slot between goalkeeper and post when they are moving to close you, recognizing when and how to chip or clip the goalkeeper if they come off their line or got to the ground early, placement over power

#### *Heading (11 and 12 year olds only – no heading for 10 and younger):*

- Introduce heading in a non-intimidating/non-contact way
- Limited to the lesser of 30 minutes or 15-20 headers per week with regular soccer balls
- More repetitions/time may be spent if using foam/beach/other soft balls

#### Fundamentals-

- Light on feet and ready to move into flight of ball to attack it
- Eyes on ball and mouth closed
- Plant with both feet shoulder width apart, sink at knees/hips and extend arms
- Explode upward using legs, core and by thrusting elbows back to meet the ball
- Time leap to get height of head above or level with ball as far above the ground as possible
- Neck muscles flexed to stabilize head on contact
- Attack the ball with contact on hairline
- Head top half of ball for attacking header, bottom half of ball for defensive header

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### *Crossing and Finishing (U11 and U12):*

#### *Crosser-*

- Head up to observe position of GK, tracking defenders and attackers
- Use visual information to choose correct type of cross/pass – early, pull-back, whipped in, lofted (see long passing technique for fundamentals)
- Choose appropriate technique/surface to complete cross/pass with pace and quality (see long passing for technical fundamentals)
- Aim to put the ball in the danger areas around second six-yard box – near, far or slot

#### *Finisher-*

- Observe and read the body language of the crosser
- Body position and movement of attacker into danger areas around the second six-yard box – near, far and slot
- Timing and pace of runs
- Angles of runs towards to ball to meet early and across defenders
- Staggered runs into penalty area if more than one attacker
- Mostly one touch finishing
- Good footwork to adjust to pace and bounce of the ball
- Choose appropriate surface to complete finish with accuracy.

#### *General:*

- Teach players how to give and read information related to their body shape, eye contact and body movement so that they can coordinate their play to the correct space or foot.

### **Game Situations**

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

<b>U9-U12 Topic 9 (Finishing/Shooting):</b>	<b>Close Range Finishing</b>			
<b>Principle</b>	<b>U9</b>	<b>U10</b>	<b>U11</b>	<b>U12</b>
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Put Yourself in a Position to Score – Adjust Body Shape and Touch to Shoot	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Change Speed/Direction with or Without the Ball to Beat Opponent		Introduce	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 10: Finishing / Shooting – Long Range Finishing

<b>Who</b>	Team in possession
<b>What</b>	Creating and finishing scoring chances farther from goal
<b>Where</b>	Within scoring range but further from goal
<b>When</b>	Whenever possible
<b>Why</b>	To score goals

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Goal scoring mentality – positive and aggressive
- Preparation of body (footwork, balance, efficiency of movement) and ball to shoot (location and quality of first touch)
- Selection of appropriate foot, surface (laces, outside, inside) and technique to shoot – when and how to drive, loft or bend the shot
- When to shoot first time and when to take a prep touch
- Power versus placement
- Movement off ball to create space to receive pass for shot – attacking the ball going towards goal
- Movement with ball to beat/create space from defender to shoot
- Shot location based on goalkeeper position and movement

#### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

U9-U12 Topic 10 (Finishing/Shooting):	Long Range Finishing			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Create Scoring Chances</b>			
Put Yourself in a Position to Score – Adjust Body Shape and Touch to Shoot	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Create Space for Yourself Away from Defenders		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Change Speed/Direction with or Without the Ball to Beat Opponent		Introduce	Focus	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 11: Defending – 1v1 Defending

<b>Who</b>	Defending player nearest the ball
<b>What</b>	Preventing the player with ball from advancing / attempt to win the ball
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Opponent has possession
<b>Why</b>	Preventing the player with ball from advancing / attempt to win the ball

#### Key Elements to Teach

- Emphasis on winning the ball back
- Separate the attacker from the ball (body across line of defender, use of body/arms)
- Defending body shape and footwork: staggered stance, knees bent with low center of gravity, small quick steps, tall to short, quick step back as you arrive at attacker to balance your body, don't reach out or lean onto front foot
- Speed of approach: slow as you get close to the attacker, big steps to small steps, last step forward is your first step back, slow down as attacker takes a touch
- Angle of approach: to deny shot/penetration, to force play to sideline/help, to make play predictable, to force attacker on to weak foot
- Defending checklist: 1) deny the ball, 2) deny the turn, 3) deny the shot/penetration
- When to be patient and when to win the ball
- Defending players in different situations: facing you, dribbling sideways (touch tight and don't allow to face up), back to you (touch tight and deny turn), after pass (deny return pass, drop off and cover)
- When and how to mark a player and to mark space
- When and how to and timing of tackle (poke – front foot, block – back foot/best for passes, slide-for desperate moments)
- Recovering when beaten
- Clearing the ball (volleys, half volleys, defensive heading)

#### Game Situations

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.



## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

U9-U12 Topic 11 (Defending):	1v1 Defending			
Principle	U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Prevent Opponent from Advancing and Win the Ball</b>			
Apply Pressure on the Ball Carrier – Attempt to Win the Ball	Introduce	Focus	Focus	Focus
Close/Compact the Shape Between the Ball and the Goal (Direct Channel)	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Mark Opponents and Get Numbers Behind the Ball			Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Prevent Penetration and Win the Ball</b>			
Prevent Dribble Penetration and Forward Passes	Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Deny Scoring Chances and Win the Ball</b>			
Player Positioning to Protect the Goal and Win the Ball		Introduce	Focus	Focus
Anticipate the Play, Prevent/Block Shots and Time Your Tackle			Introduce	Focus
Starting the Counter Attack When the Ball is Won			Introduce	Focus

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

### Topic 12: Defending – Defending in Pairs / Small Group Defending

<b>Who</b>	Defending players near the ball
<b>What</b>	Preventing the opponent from advancing / attempt to win the ball
<b>Where</b>	Anywhere
<b>When</b>	Opponent has possession
<b>Why</b>	Preventing the opponent from advancing / attempt to win the ball

#### **Key Elements to Teach**

- Emphasis on winning the ball back whenever possible
- When to be patient and when to win the ball
- Cover for pressuring defender – angle and distance considerations
- Rapid transition between pressure and cover and vice-versa – don't get split
- Specific, actionable and loud communication between defenders
- Deny the direct path to goal – get defenders between the ball and the goal
- Keep track of your mark when they pass the ball
- Recognizing and applying double teams to win the ball
- Basic zonal defending principles: when to stay with a mark and when to pass them on, communicating the passing of marks, distances/gaps between defenders and lines
- Working together to make play predictable by forcing play to help/sideline
- Defensive compactness around ball and between ball and goal
- Defensive balance and spacing

#### **Game Situations**

When teaching this curriculum topic in a training session, introduce it in connection to one of the Phase/Principle combinations listed in the table below. You should facilitate player understanding of this context for and application of the curriculum topic. Those Phase/Principle combinations shown as Focus should be addressed multiple times and those shown as Introduce should be touched on at least once over the course of your season.

## Rio Rapids SC – U9-U12 Curriculum

U9-U12 Topic 12 (Defending):		Defending in Pairs/Small Group Defending			
Principle		U9	U10	U11	U12
<b>Phase:</b>		<b>Prevent Opponent from Advancing and Win the Ball</b>			
Close/Compact the Shape Between the Ball and the Goal (Direct Channel)			Introduce	Focus	Focus
Mark Opponents and Get Numbers Behind the Ball				Introduce	Focus
Protecting Space Behind the Back Line When There is No Pressure on the Ball				Introduce	Focus
Recognizing Cues to Press as a Group and Win the Ball				Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>		<b>Prevent Penetration and Win the Ball</b>			
Get a Compact Team Shape Between the Ball and the Goal (Direct Channel)			Introduce	Focus	Focus
Prevent Dribble Penetration and Forward Passes		Introduce	Introduce	Focus	Focus
Defensive Numerical Superiority: Providing Pressure, Cover and Balance as a Group				Introduce	Focus
<b>Phase:</b>		<b>Deny Scoring Chances and Win the Ball</b>			
Player Positioning to Protect the Goal and Win the Ball			Introduce	Focus	Focus
Anticipate the Play, Prevent/Block Shots and Time Your Tackle				Introduce	Focus
Starting the Counter Attack When the Ball is Won					Introduce