

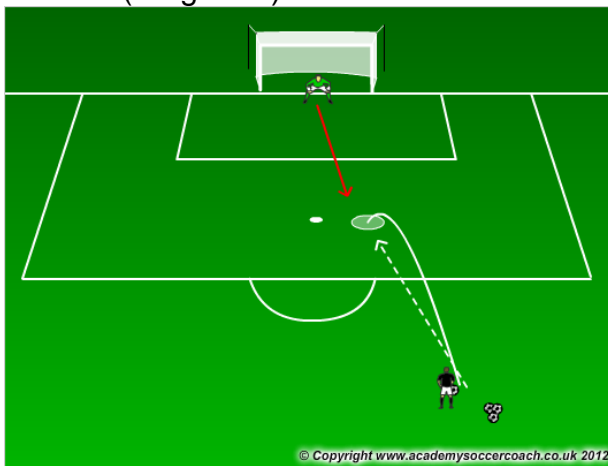
## Training to Save the Breakaway

By Amy Allmann

Following is a session on making the breakaway save as presented by Amy Allmann at recent NSCAA Academy sessions.

### I. Stage One - Warm-up

With the keeper in a large goal, the coach lines up with soccer balls 35 yards out. The coach serves balls to the goalie such that the ball is slowing down 12-15 yards away from the keeper. The coach serves the balls at different angles so the goalie can make decisions as to which balls are within their range and which are not. (Diagram I)



#### Coaching Points

- Drive the hands to the ball; make a barrier along the ground for as long as possible. You are late if you are not horizontal when the shot is taken.
- Spread the body to cover as much area as possible, with legs and arms slightly bent to protect the body.
- Time the run to the ball so that momentum is still strong when the keeper meets the ball in order to go "through the save, not just make the save."
- Keep head/face behind the "window" that the forearms create.
- Keep the body between the ball and the goal. Do not loop the run.

### II. Stage Two - Game-Related Saves

Here there are two or three players serving as attacking players. In the beginning stage, the coach plays serves that are 60/40 in favor of the keeper, then serves 50-50 balls and finally serves that are 40-60 balls with the attackers in control.

- Players have no more than two touches to get the shot off.

- A chasing/recovering defender can be added to create a more realistic "game pace." Emphasize the same technical coaching points as in Stage I.



#### Tactical Coaching Points

- The goalkeeper must possess a "next touch is mine" mentality.
- Goalkeepers must commit themselves to save the breakaway when it is a 50-50 ball or better in their favor.
- This decision should be made as soon as the player touches the ball.
- If the ball is more in the attacker's favor, or when they have control, the keeper should simply close down the angle and be set for a shot or be ready for the next touch.
- When you commit, call "KEEPER!"
- The biggest problems for goalkeepers are: lack of patience, committing to balls they cannot get and charging out to make a breakaway save when the attacker clearly is in control of the ball.
- If goalkeepers are patient and wait for the touch that they can pounce on, it will slow play down and give teammates time to recover. An impatient keeper will speed play up and rarely result in defenders being able to recover to help.

### III.Stage 3: Small-sided Games for Breakaways: "Flying Changes"

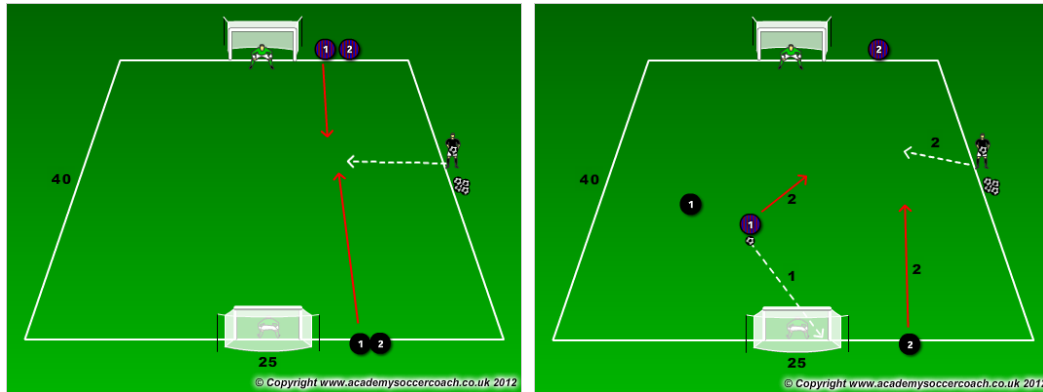
#### Organization

- Two equal teams.
- Two goalkeepers in regulation goals.
- 40 yards x 25 yards playing area.
- Ample supply of balls.
- This game can be played from 1 v. 1 to 4 v. 4.

Coach starts play with a ball to one team. Both teams then try to win the ball and shoot on goal. If there is a score or the ball goes over the end line, the attacker stays to defend and a new opposing attacker comes on with the ball. There should be plenty of breakaway situations presented in this game.

#### Coaching Points:

- Same as in Stages I and II, both technically and tactically.
- Watch for early decision-making and patience.
- Watch for approach angle to the ball and using the body as a barrier for as long as possible behind the ball.



#### IV.Stage 4: Final Game: 8 v. 8 (with Goalkeepers) to Large Goals

The field is divided into three zones. In a restricted game, the objective for the teams is to dribble into their attacking zone. Once that happens no defender can follow. This creates obvious breakaway opportunities.

The training session finishes off with unrestricted action, with the coach watching for breakaway opportunities and how they are handled by the goalkeepers.

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#### A 5 v. 5 Zonal Game for Breakaway Training

Coach Gene Klein forwards another sample match-condition exercise that offers potential for training goalkeepers to deal with the breakaway.

The field is divided into thirds, with two teams of five players opposing each other in the middle third. The team that has possession must immediately attempt to go to goal, either by dribbling or penetrating via the pass. Players are not allowed to enter the attacking zone before the ball. Once the keeper makes the save or the defending team gains possession, they attack the opposite goal. The defending team cannot pressure them in the attacking zone and must drop to the middle grid.

The exercise forces the goalkeeper not only to dominate the box, but control the entire defending third of the field. They will then frequently be exposed to a variety of breakaway situations. They also are forced to work with their defenders, who should be sprinting back to recover. If the defender can arrive in a goalside defending position before the keeper, the keeper should then remain in a covering position.