



“Making friends with the ball”

A set of 18 basic skills and exercises which will assist young players to better enjoy the game.

ENQUIRES : KEVIN BEST 0243 284806

15. HEADING - JUGGLING

THE CHALLENGE :

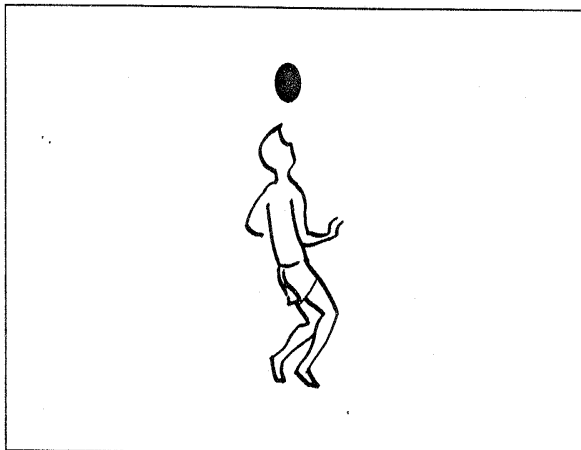
Recommended repetitions:

The recommended number of attempts in succession

Level 1- Beginners, Level 2 - 2 times. Level 3 - 5 times, Level 4 - 10 times. Level 5 - 15 times

Reasons for learning this skill

To be a complete player, heading must be mastered. Defensive players and strikers receive many high balls, which have to be dealt with instantly in the air due to the inability to control the ball on the ground in the first instance because of pressure from the opposition. Defenders head the ball to clear for safety and strikers head the ball to score goals. Juggling is the starting point to develop a good technique for heading. It provides the player with an easy practice, which can be undertaken at home. A good player at age 14 should be able to juggle 200 times if he has been practising for several years. It should be noted that a player can still play the game effectively if he/she cannot juggle. The skill, however, will enhance his/her finite touch on the ball and eradicate any fears he/she may have of heading the ball. Heading practice should not be ignored. It is a major facet of the game.



Organisation by coach or parent

N-B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

One player, one size 3 ball.

Task to practice - the challenge

Head the ball into the air - no bounces - for a set number of times in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When head juggling:

- feet apart, one slightly ahead of the other pointing forward,
- body weight on the soles, the majority being on the back foot,
- knees bent slightly,
- the whole body should be loose and easy in a bouncy motion,
- body leaning slightly back (arching back from the hips is in fact our backswing),
- arms forward for balance,
- head steady,
- appreciate flight and get as much

of the body under the ball, eyes focused on ball in an upward position,

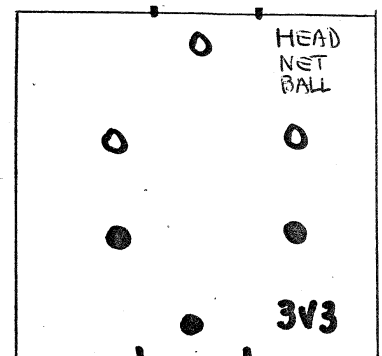
- keep the eyes open, watch ball on to head, keep the tongue in the mouth,
- gently push through the ball with the head,
- contact the ball through the forehead not the top of the head or the nose area,
- head through the bottom half of the ball in an upward movement to eliminate any body adjustment before the

next contact,

- the neck muscles are flexed (locked).

Additional skills practice

- heading for control (two touches) from different distances and angles.
- heading to setup another player in the penalty area by taking the speed off the ball.



Progressive training practice

- head tennis
- head net ball
- heading against a wall
- heading with partner

A COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

"In order to earn the respect of the players, a coach must present the team with a sound training program and with well planned and organised sessions."