Five Ways to Make Your Practices More Competitive

Coaches want to have competitive practices, each and every single day. But just because you want it to happen, doesn't mean it actually is! Here are five ways to make your practices more competitive, starting today.

Make sure you don't miss the second attachment to this email. It includes examples of drills to incorporate & make your practices more competitive.

1 - Focus on the little things.

- **Competition is a habit. Every drill and segment of practice should have a competitive angle to it.**
- **Define the focus & competition in each drill for your team to keeps practice fresh and players more focused.**
- **Too often, coaches focus on the what of a drill. By placing the focus on the WHY and the HOW, it will keeps players more mentally engaged which will naturally make your practice more competitive.**

2 - Keep it simple.

- **Keep drills centered around the things that will happen most often in games. The more competition in practice, the more game-like your practices will become.**
- **Have no more than 2-3 main points of emphasis per drill, and reps those at a RIDICULOUSLY high standard. This forces a higher level of interest and focus from your team.**
- **No matter the drill, it should be teaching your team to play at game speed under-game like conditions.**

3 - ALWAYS have something riding on an outcome.

- **Every drill should have a time or score component to them. Winners win, losers have consequences. It can be things like 10 push ups, 30 seconds of wall sits, 15 burpees, etc. This level of competition will lead to an intense practice, which leads to more intensity in games.**
- **You can also have players compete against themselves. Do the same timed skill/drill twice. If an athlete doesn't beat their first score during the second rep, there's a consequence attached to it.**

4 - Give players responsibility.

- **When coaches give players responsibility and ownership in practice, their investment in that immediately goes up which leads to a higher level of overall competition.**
- **There are many ways a coach can do this, but some of the most rewarding ways I've found to give players responsibility include: having them plan a practice (or part of one), allowing them to pick their team (or coach) during competitions/scrimmages, letting them choose the music we play during practice (within our guidelines).**

5 - Make it harder than a real game.

- **The #1 fail by many coaches is that their practices look and feel much different than a real game. Prepare your team for their toughest competition by making practices HARDER than a game.**
- **There should be times of disadvantaged situations in every practice, and nearly every drill. This can be done through things like time and score, playing with extra defenders when focused on offense (and vice versa), taking away fouls, only awarding points on certain shots/actions, etc.**

Find more great resources like this on my website: ***www.coachmcleod.com***. You can also find more when you follow me on social media: ***@CoachMattMcLeod***.