

GVSA board meeting minutes – December 7, 2020

Present: Kevin Balcer, Josh Sheldon, Sue Crabtree, John Corbett, Bruce Lane, Elissa Vire, Lizzie Hornack, Chris Denham, Bre Brendsel, Ken Lovell

Guests: Paul Kramer, Paul Doyle, Matt Galloway, Sue Constantine, Courtney Johnson, Ali Parker, Ben Rudy, Barbie Eaton

Meeting called to order by Kevin Balcer at 7:03pm

Previous meeting minutes were approved.

**Officer's reports:**

Elissa let us know that taxes were filed

**Administrator's report:**

Sue is working through drop-off options for premier and will communicate the plan with all clubs

**Old Business:**

- a. PASS Poaching Complaint - Sue and Ken will reach out to PASS to address the situation.
- b. 5v5 Build out lines - Discussion was had on changing U7 and U8 to 4v4. The group discussed the pros and cons. Chris presented some information on making the change and it is attached to the minutes. Some concerns discussed were field size, goal size, scores being more lopsided, referees and the plan with them and clubs running in-house leagues.

**New Business:**

- a. Number of referees and game coverage - John Corbett presented information to the group. See attached.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36pm.

Next meeting is January 4th, 2021, 7:00pm

Submitted,

Josh Sheldon, secretary

## 2020 Observations

John Corbett, GVSOA

- 1) After the November board meeting I explored companies that provide mobile deposit software.

Costs were prohibitive.

I contacted US Soccer. Hannah (Referee Services) responded that they do not have a system-wide solution. They permitted picture taking in Director Academy games, but a sufficient number of referees did not submit pictures, and the delay in obtaining reports + US Soccer time chasing reports eliminated the utility of the process.

- 1a) An option: create an e-mail address solely for game reports (ie [gamereports@gvsoccer.org](mailto:gamereports@gvsoccer.org))

a referee **completes** both sides of the game report and takes a picture of each side.

the pictures are forwarded as an attachment to [gamereports@gvsoccer.org](mailto:gamereports@gvsoccer.org), with the subject line containing just the game number (ie 2134-1 or GV21341).

When received, we know the game number. After opening the pictures, we know the game date and other information.

GVSA can reduce the time for the report to be received from days to minutes or hours. No matter the format, some refs will "forget" - but we can reduce the waiting time for the report before we contact the ref. GVSA would not have to supply (or create) envelopes to mail the game reports.

The e-mail (game report) can be saved by game number (2134-1) for accounting and retrieval.

This process avoids creating and filing paper. All information is electronic. Sending a game report

can be done by forwarding a copy of the pictures. The person who processes the reports can receive the e-mails.



2) The assignors completed contacting each referee from whom GVSA did not receive a game report.

2a) The outcomes were:

- found and just sent them in
- did send them in and do not know why they weren't received
- cannot find them
- did not think they were needed and discarded them with the check-in credentials
- the referee did not respond

2b) Most referees (and/or their moms) responded. Many, but not all, game reports were found and sent in.

2c) GVSOA assignors will meet after this board meeting. One item is to address those refs who did not respond. About the only definite repercussion GVSOA has is to not assign the referee to GVSA games during spring 2021. Doing so will create at least two problems:

1) other leagues (MSPSP, DA, State Cup, Super Y) can still assign those refs and those refs will have greater availability to be assigned outside GVSA

2) not assigning all refs will likely mean games that require 3 refs may not have

3, and u7 and u8 will either have a new referee or a parent in the center.

2d) GVSA could decide to accept photographs of game reports on a trial basis. For one season and evaluate its utility. Refs who normally comply would have an easier means of complying. GVSA could eliminate printing and distributing envelopes for game reports. If a game report is not received via e-mail within 48 hours of the game, we can chase the referee sooner.



## Youth 4v4 TOURNAMENT RULES

**FIELD:** The field size is approximately 40yds x 20yds. The goal size is approximately 4ft x 6ft. The goal box is approximately 2yds x 4 yds. The field is a synthetic turf surface. Regular cleats can be worn.

**BALL SIZE:** Age appropriate. Must be provided by Home Team.

**TEAMS:** Consist of a minimum four to a maximum of six players. There are no goalies in 4v4.

**SUBSTITUTION:** Free substitution any time the ball goes out of bounds, after a goal is scored, and/or any time there is a stoppage in play. There is no substitution allowed during running play.

**LENGTH OF GAME:** All games will be 15 minutes long. There is no halftime and therefore no switching ends. The clock will be a continuous running clock. No stoppage time.

**START OF GAME:** The clock will start with the sound of a double horn. If both teams and the referee are ready to go before the double horn, they may begin early and get the extra game time.

**END OF GAME:** Games will end with the sound of a single horn.

**REFEREES:** One referee will officiate each game. All referee decisions are final.

**OFFSIDES:** There are no offsides in 4v4.

**MISCONDUCT:** Any player that receives a red card will be suspended from the tournament.

**BALL OUT OF BOUNDS:** Any time the ball goes out of bounds, it results in a kick-in for the opposition. The opposing team must be 4 yards away on all kick-ins. If the ball goes out for a goal kick, the ball may be placed anywhere on the goal line. Goals cannot be scored directly from a kick-in or goal kick.

**FREE KICKS:** All free kicks are direct. Defenders must be 4 yards away. If the free kick is closer than 4 yards from the edge of the goal box, then the defenders must stand on the line of the goal box.

**KICK-OFFS:** Kick-offs can go backwards. A goal cannot be scored directly off a kick-off, therefore, it is indirect.

**GOAL BOX & VIOLATIONS:** Players are not allowed to play the ball when it is in the goal box. If a player enters the goal box the referee will remind them to move. If a defender plays the ball while in the goal box, the result is a penalty kick to be taken from half field. If an attacking player plays the ball in the goal box, it results in a free kick for the defending team. The free kick will be taken from the edge of the goal box. All goal box violations are at the discretion of the referee.

**PENALTY KICKS:** A penalty kick is taken from the kick-off line and may not be contested by the other team. All players on the field must stand behind the penalty taker. If the kick goes in, it is a goal. If the kick misses or hits the post, the result is a goal kick.

**UNIFORMS:** Home team is listed first and must change if there is a uniform conflict. Uniforms do not need to have numbers on them. Shin guards must be worn by all players.

**PLAYER CARDS:** Player cards are not required for this 4v4 tournament.

**PLAYERS, COACHES, & SPECTATORS:** Only players and coaches are allowed on the main field. All parents/spectators must stay on the perimeter of the field (SEE MAPS).

**POINT SYSTEM:** 10 point scale will be used. Win=6 points. Tie=3 points. Loss=0 points. Shutout=1 point. 1 point for each goal scored up to 3 goals.



**REPORT OF SCORES:** The referee will report the final score to the Tournament Directors Table. Coaches/Managers are encouraged to check the scoreboard to ensure proper results are recorded.

**FINALS:** The two teams with the most points from their games will play in the finals. Unless otherwise noted in the game schedule. The winner of the final is the champion, regardless of overall points.

**TIE-BREAKER:** If two teams are tied in points, the tie-breaker will be the following: 1) head-to-head 2) most goals scored 3) least goals allowed 4) penalty kicks from the penalty spot (3 kicks)

**CHECK-IN:** Teams must check in at least 30 minutes before their first game. Player Liability Waivers must be turned in at this time.



Small is Best:

# 'Why the 4v4 format is the answer for youth football'

After Newport County coach Dave Murphy visited Manchester United to see their Academy's 4v4 project, he witnessed a format and philosophy that he knew would take youth development at grass roots to a higher level. In this article we look at both the Manchester United 4v4 project and the influence it is having lower down the ladder.

By: Paul Cooper

4v4 is not a new concept; the Dutch have been playing it since the mid 1980s. The godfather of football in Holland, the great, late Rinus Michels said: "Good coaches use the basic criteria of street football for their vision of grass roots development; they realise that these elements produce a natural process which gives the most efficient training for young kids." And there we have it, logical thinking from a coach who understands that because of modern society, street football is no more and that 'the children's game' must be continued in some form if we are really serious about development. Some twenty years later in the UK we are still wrestling with the dilemma, "Is it the proper game?"

The 4v4 pilot scheme for the U9s at Manchester United's Academy was studied in depth by Rick Fenoglio from the Department of Exercise and Sport Science, Manchester

Metropolitan University. Rick published his results of his research in both the FA's Insight magazine and in a major report he compiled. In the report Rick highlights the underlying philosophy of the pilot study.

*The scheme was to re-create, as much as possible, a match day environment that was more child and player-centered. This guiding concept led the developers of the scheme to reflect upon football environments where the young player was free to learn, practice and develop their football skills without being shackled by the imposed structures, expectations, attentions and scrutiny of significant others. The environments, which were considered to provide these qualities the most, were the playgrounds, parks, streets, back alleys, beaches and barrios around the world - areas where the world's greatest players first learned their skills. At this time, Manchester United FC were re-considering their approach to the development of young players and were concerned that the overall gap in skill levels between English players and European players (and, increasingly, the rest of the world) was widening. If true, this is an interesting situation given that one of the primary aims of the initiation of Football Academies in England was the development and enhancement of technical skills. The 4 v 4 games and format of the pilot scheme were selected because it was felt that they would give players more opportunities to practice and develop their game-related skills in a less pressurized, but*





nonetheless challenging game format. The environment of the pilot scheme was developed from a desire to produce a more child-centered and ethical learning environment.' A 4v4 Pilot Scheme for U9 Academy Football Players – Rick Fenoglio

There is something deeper here, and not just in a football sense. Remember childhood today is very different from when I was growing up in the 1960s, kids are hardly allowed out to play now. They don't climb trees, ride bikes and build dens like they used to.

Sue Palmer, child expert and writer puts it a little more succinctly; "Play-unstructured, free range, loosely supervised play – is the birthright of every child. For the next generation to grow up healthy, balanced and able to benefit from their education, we must ensure that children once again go out to play."

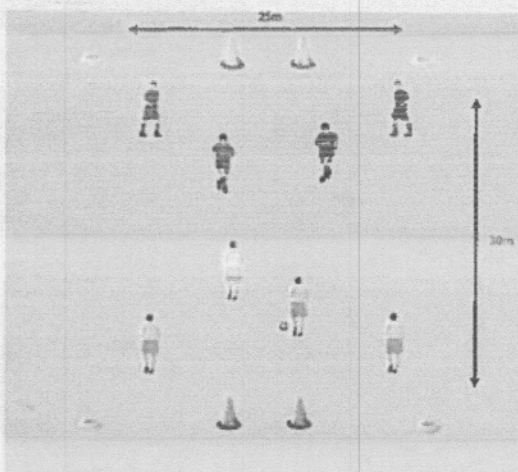
If we are always going to tell children what to do and treat them like mini adult professionals at eight and nine, when are they ever going to think for themselves? In terms of technique and problem solving skills, I feel there is a definite link between the England team's inability to cope in last summer's World Cup and what is happening on the fields of England at the youngest age levels in both the grass roots and professional game.

Fear is everywhere in football in this country, fear of losing, fear of change, fear that the next coach knows more than you and the fear of giving control on the pitch to the kids.

### The games

United picked four different 4v4 games (8 minutes each) and the players rotate so that they play all the games. On average each child played about six games.

### Two Goal Game



4v4

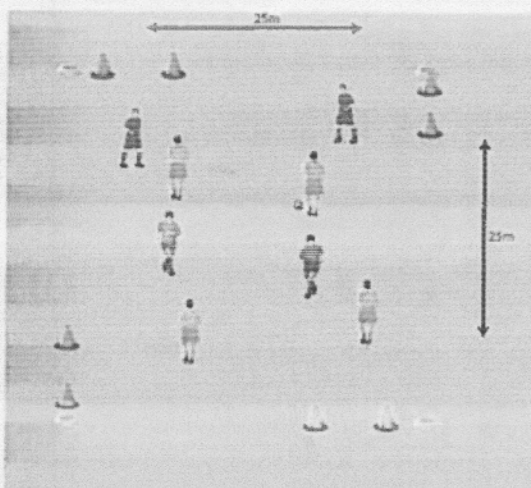
Pitch size: 30x25m

Goals: 2 large traffic cones at each end

No keepers, dribble or pass the ball on

**"Play – unstructured, free range,  
loosely supervised play – is the  
birthright of every child."**

### Four Goal Game



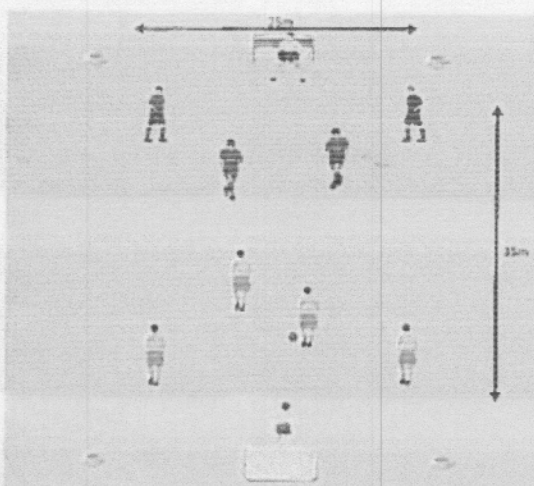
4v4

Pitch size: 25x25

Goals: 2 goals at each end (4 goals in total) by the corners, using traffic cones

Dribble or pass the ball on

### Goalkeeper Game



4v4 + keepers

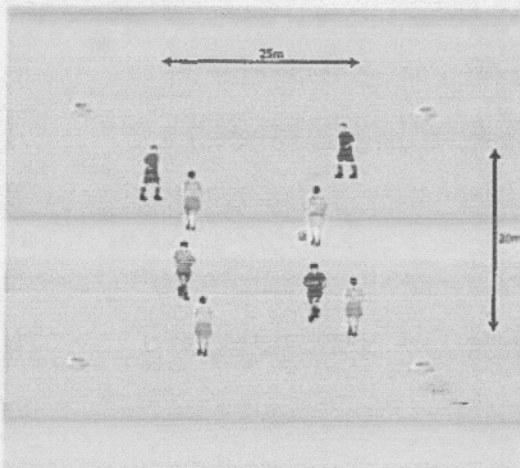
Pitch size: 35 x 25m

Goals: Junior size goals 18x6 feet

Normal throw ins and corners



## Line Ball



4v4

Pitch Size: 25x20

Goals: The length of the line at each end (to score go over the line and put your foot on the ball)

Dribble or pass the ball on.

Each game is 8 minutes long and very importantly the children referee their own games. This allows them to take responsibility, communicate with the opposition and sort out any problems. This helps with their social development skills. The coaches also take a back seat and just encourage. This allows children to express themselves more and problem solve and think for themselves.

The study looked at game data as well as interviews with players, coaches and parents.

The results were nothing short of staggering. Compared to the 8v8 game the data was as follows for the 4v4 games:

*Number of passes – Increase of 135%*

*Scoring attempts – Increase of 260%*

*Number of goals scored – Increase of 500%*

*Number of 1v1 encounters – Increase of 225%*

*Number of dribbling skills (tricks) – Increase of 280%*

From the interviews conducted, 80% were positive regarding the 4v4 pilot scheme and 20% were negative.

The consensus was that the children became a lot more skillful playing the 4v4 games. The games were varied which also brought out different skills. It was also not so obvious who was a defender and who was an attacker as the children became more complete footballers.

## The Future

Despite the overwhelming statistical evidence and the positive

feedback, the Academy clubs decided to stick with the traditional 8v8 format. Manchester United continue to play 4v4 at under 9s. I personally feel this is an opportunity missed, but I do understand that the 8v8 game is a good format on the road to playing 11v11, but at what age do you bring it in?

Our football culture is one of passion and commitment, two very important factors in both successful players and teams, and if those attributes were the only important ones, as a nation we would probably win a few trophies, however skill and decision-making are also involved and if you take away the chance to develop that further at eight and nine years old, you are always going to be playing catch up.

## Dave Murphy

You meet many coaches in youth football, some make no impact, but every now and then you meet someone who re-kindles your enthusiasm in the struggle to put development first in youth football. Just over the bridge in South Wales is such a coach. He started by taking his son for a kick about down the local park and before long he had 20 kids playing, such is his infectious enthusiasm to involve everyone.

The Dutch 4v4 format is a central part of Dave's coaching philosophy at Newport County and after a trip to see the 4v4 scheme in action at Manchester United; I met Dave on a coaching course. Although I convert myself to 4v4s I had only ever used the games in training sessions and had not thought of playing a number of different games as a 'match day' substitute.

It makes so much sense. The mini soccer leagues play 7v7 and very often at clubs it is impossible to play all the kids. A number of different 4v4 games are the answer. The benefits at grass roots level are obvious:

- It is a very flexible format, pitches can be marked out with cones and you can have as many different 4v4 games as you have kids.
- Everyone plays
- Many touches of the ball
- The different games bring out different skills
- Many opportunities for everyone to score goals
- Lots of problem solving opportunities without coaches talking you through the game
- Kids are not just a defender or an attacker but a footballer and have a much better all round understanding of the game
- You don't even need to play another club, you can make it in-house if you have enough kids

*Actually the list is endless.*





I knew it would be a good afternoon but I had not anticipated just how many touches each child had and when left to their own devices how quickly they adapted to the games and how advanced the children's problem solving skills were.

### Street football

As I mentioned earlier, the Dutch addressed the decline in street football, 'the children's game' over twenty years ago but I feel we have never properly done that in the UK. In a world where children can no longer play outside wit-

*"I must admit that  
football in the streets  
gave us a great  
sense of freedom  
and liberty."*

### Newport County come to town

Dave and twenty of Newport County's U9s and 10s as well as coaches and parents traveled to Cirencester Town one Saturday afternoon in September for a 4v4 fun day. The U9s and U10s were mixed up and four pitches were laid out, the same as at Manchester United, (all except the goalkeeper game which was changed to a most interesting game Dave got from some Real Madrid coaches, which involves two goals back to back in the middle of the pitch. More of that in the next issue)

hout supervision, parents and coaches have taken over. And the competitive drive adults bring to the game means youngsters no longer have time to fall in love with football, to play for fun and thus truly to develop their skills.

Maybe, if the 4v4 message can spread, we can rear a generation of footballers who play with creativity and without fear, who solve their own problems on the pitch, and who enjoy the game. Footballers who play to win, instead of losing through fear.



*If you have any comment  
to make about this article  
or you are interested  
in the 4v4 format  
please email Paul Cooper:  
[gill\\_cooper@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gill_cooper@tiscali.co.uk)*



## TEAM SPONSORSHIP

(Duplicate this form as necessary to list all teams sponsored for this season only)

Name of League or Association: GVSA

Age: U- 15 Gender: Boys Team Name: USA Red Premier

Reg. Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name: Wade Schumann

Age: U- 13 Gender: Boys Team Name: USA Boys Premier 08

Reg. Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name: Juan Gonzalez

Age: U- \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reg. Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: U- \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reg. Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: U- \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reg. Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name: \_\_\_\_\_