

SPRING SPORTS

“The more you sweat in practice, the less you bleed in battle.” - Unknown



SHIELDING IS ESSENTIAL FOR GREAT SOCCER PLAYERS

Brian Chiasson

Soccer is the most popular sport on the entire planet. Nothing compares to it.

And, oddly enough, it's one sport where you can literally use your head for directing the ball.

In other sports, experts try to shield the head, but in soccer the professional players are skilled at shielding the ball and throwing their head into the game.

Regarding shielding the ball, it's essential if you want to be a phenomenal soccer player. Without it, you cannot be an expert.

Shielding Tips

Here are some shielding tips to practice if you ever want to be great.

► First, dribble your ball in a small square and ask a friend to take it away. Use your body to guard the ball. Tell your friend to struggle for the ball, pushing you without fouling you.

Pushing is only a foul under three conditions:

- (1) Careless pushing.
- (2) Reckless pushing.
- (3) Pushing with excessive force.

► Move the ball with the inside of your foot. This provides control, chaperoning the ball as your friend pushes.

Make sure you bend your knees. This gives you stability and confidence.

Use Both Feet

Try to maneuver the ball, back and forth, while shielding. Guide the ball several yards with the inside of your foot and, without warning, turn back with the outside of your foot.

► When you're good, use both feet and try shielding with every part of each foot.

You can also carry the ball a few yards with the inside of your right foot, pass it to your left foot, and then, guide it in the opposite direction.

► Next, use the sole of your foot to reverse directions.

► You can also swirl and face your challenger occasionally to see if you can still protect the ball without using your body as a shield.

Punishment

► If you find it easy to shield, ask another friend to help. If either friend gets the ball, switch roles with them.

► With several friends, you can play a game of possession. Each player shields or passes to a teammate.

You can set an alarm for two minutes, when everyone immediately stops. The team that doesn't have the ball must do push-ups or some other punishment.

► Finally, when shielding, as long as you protect the ball, you will never suffer a concussion, unlike in hockey or football where they shield their heads.

Brian Chiasson has 24 years in newspapers & radio.

“The trouble with referees is that they just don't care which side wins.” - Tom Canterbury



George Lomaga Photo

DOMES OFFERS LOCAL ATHLETES EXTRA WINTER FIELD

A new dome is built over an outdoor field at the Hershey Centre.

This means Hershey now offers twice the capacity of indoor sports fields, since this particular artificial turf arena is now protected from the winter weather.

It will allow athletes to train during their off season and provides local community-based sports organiza-

tions more access.

This year the dome opens from March 3 to the end of April. It will be removed in May to allow regular outdoor activities.

Starting next fall, the dome will be in place from the middle of November until the middle of April of 2013, depending on the weather.

Additionally, rookies of all ages will have greater opportunities to develop to their full potential.

The field that is covered by the dome measures 100 metres by 64 metres (328 feet by 209 feet.)

The apex of the roof is 22.5 metres (74 feet).

This means it's wide, it's long and it's high, providing young and old with an extra winter field.