The main objectives of pre-season training are to improve all the four components of soccer, namely, technique, tactics, fitness, and mental training. This is especially true this year, after the long lockdown and inactivity due to the corona virus.

The ideal approach is to use activities in practice that are game-like and fun which will fully engage the players and motivate them to work at high intensity. Below are six examples that have a built-in fitness component and are fun.

**MOVING SCRIMMAGE**

**Organization:** use a large field and split it into 4 quadrants. Each quadrant will be set up for a scrimmage. The scrimmage could either use small goals or large goals and keepers. Coach stands in the middle with 10-20 balls. The scrimmage starts at one of the four quadrants. Every 3-4 minutes, coach plays a new ball into one of the empty quadrants and whistles or shouts to signal that the scrimmage has moved to a new quadrant. All the players must sprint into the new quadrant and whichever team wins the new ball attacks right away. The scrimmage orientation is the same in all quadrants, so teams know which goal to attack as they enter the new quadrant. Play 8-10 minutes and rest for 1-2 minutes. Play a total of 30 minutes, excluding the rest periods.
**STAY COMPACT**

**Organization:** play a scrimmage with the rule that when a team scores, all the players in the team except the keeper must be in the attacking half for the goal to count. Progress to two touch maximum if players are good enough to handle a two-touch game. Play 8-10 minutes games with a 1-2 minute rest periods.

**MAN-TO-MAN MARKING**

**Organization:** play a scrimmage but assign each player an opponent to mark by pairing the players, one from each team. Players cannot mark anyone else. Play 8-10 minutes games with a 1-2 minute rest periods.

**THE NUMBERS GAME**

**Organization:** split group into two teams. Give each player a number so that both teams have players with the same numbers. The two teams line up on the side-line either side of the coach. Coach throws a ball and calls out 2-4 numbers. For example, if coach calls out numbers 1,3,5, the three players from each team assigned these numbers quickly enter the field to play 3v3. When ball goes out of bounds or a goal is scored, the players quickly return to the side-line and the coach calls out new numbers. To keep the games flowing, add the rule that each player from the team must touch the ball at least once before the team can score. Also, can have the players vary the starting position on the side-line. For example, lying on the ground, or must do ten push ups before entering the field, or sprint around a cone before entering the field, etc.
**THE PRESSING GAME**

**Organization:** play a scrimmage. Divide the field into thirds: the defending third, middle third and attacking third. Play with the following rule: a goal scored after winning the ball in the attacking third counts as 3 goals. A goal scored after winning the ball in the middle third counts as 2 goals. A goal scored after winning the ball in the defending third counts as 1 goal.

**SMALL-SIDED ON LARGE FIELD**

**Organization:** play a small-sided scrimmage on a large field. For example, 5v5 in half a full-sided field. Play 5 minute games with 2 minute rest periods. Build up to 10 minute games with 2 minute rest periods.