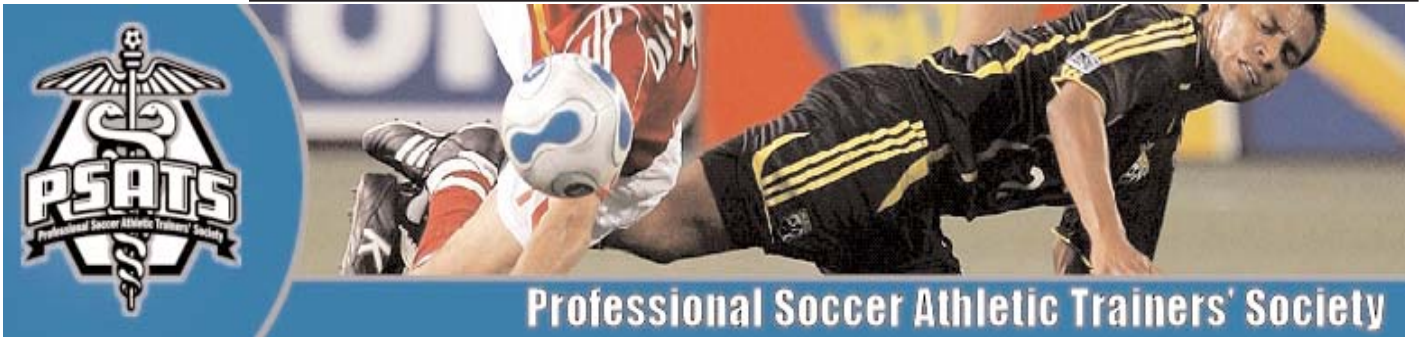




PERFORMANCE SOCCER CONDITIONING

A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO IMPROVING SOCCER PLAYERS

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Soccer Injury Prevention Strategies Keeper Performance Enhancement



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We welcome a new regular contributor the Professional Soccer Athletic Trainers Society (PSATS) to Performance Conditioning Soccer. Each submission will provide coaches, parents and athletes with the latest strategies in prevention injury and maintaining a healthy soccer lifestyle. The mission of the Professional Soccer Athletic Trainers Society (PSATS) is to serve as an educational resource for the Major League Soccer athletic trainers. PSATS serves its members by providing for the continuing education of the athletic trainer as it relates to the profession thereby improving the athletic trainers understanding of sports medicine as it relates to soccer. PSATS strives to improve the education of its members so that they may better serve Major League Soccer, their organizations, and the professional soccer players under their care. PSATS also serves as an educational resource for those outside of the professional soccer community to better educate them on the role of the athletic trainer within the sports medicine team. Thank you PSATS!-ed

Pete Calabrese is in his third season as D.C. United's strength and conditioning coach and assistant athletic trainer. He came to United after stints with Velocity Sports Performance and the United Soccer League's Virginia Beach Mariners, where he also served as the team's assistant trainer and strength and



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conditioning coach. Calabrese works with the first team and youth academy.

Calabrese received his Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sports Science from the University of South Carolina-Aiken and his Master of Science in Athletic Training from the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga.

The goalkeeper (GK) position requires a different type of training both mentally and physically. They may not see action until the 90th minute and be required to make a save to preserve a win. Reaction time, footwork, and lower extremity power are three key areas to focus on during a GK training session. Working on these three areas will help the GK with close range shots, getting from post to post, and collecting the ball at its highest point during service and crosses. The following are simple GK drills to aid in these three areas.

Reaction time

Hand eye coordination and reaction is key to a GK success. They must be able to get the hands in the proper position to make saves from all starting positions.

Tennis ball catching: Using a tennis ball, play catch from a close range. Alter your throws high/low left/right to change their hand positioning. Bouncing them into your

GK or using two throwers at a faster pace will increase the difficulty. Use one and two handed catches as well.

Turn and catch: Have the GK turn their back to you and give a command to turn. Upon turning, strike a ball to their chest emphasizing a quick turn and positioning the hands in the ready position while turning. Closer distances or a harder shot will increase the difficulty. Having them start with their hands by their side or overhead will teach them to get their hands set from an abnormal position.

High/low catching: With 2 balls, have the GK throw one ball high into the air. The coach, having the other ball will strike a ball into their hands while the first is still in the air. Have the GK immediately throw the caught ball back and then attempt to catch the first ball before it hits the ground.

Footwork/speed

Diving should be a GK's last option. With good positioning and footwork, the GK should try to remain on their feet to make saves. In other words, the feet get the hands to the ball. With simple footwork drills, the GK will be able to remain upright for shots closer to their body

Cone drill: Line disks up 12inches apart and have the GK move laterally over them. Instruct the GK to not touch any cones during movement. Once through, strike a ball to their chest; having them set their feet in preparation for the shot. Force them to keep their head and body facing forward to see the ball. Change the pattern to increase difficulty.

Box drill: set out a 5yd x 5yd box and number the cones. Call out a number or sequence of numbers to the GK having them react to the cone/cones. Emphasize good body stance and quick change of direction.

Lateral shuffle: working in the goal, set a cone or flag 2 yds off the post. Have the GK touch the flag and shuffle to the post in preparation for a shot from the coach. The focus should be on good athletic/ready positioning as well on keeping the feet facing forward, i.e. not opening the lead foot or crossing over the feet. Instruct the GK to make the save without leaving their feet. Change the pace of the shot and how soon you shoot to change the difficulty.

Lower Extremity power

Goalkeepers must display lower extremity power when making saves that require diving, collecting crosses, and coming out on through balls. Power is the speed at which the force is produced. Plyometric exercises are the most effective in improving power. Here are simple exercises to increase the lower extremity power for your goalkeepers

Tuck jump: Have the player standing in place and repeatedly jump while pulling the knees into their chest. Emphasize quick ground touches, minimizing the time spent on the ground between jumps. 3 sets of 6 reps (Figure 1).

Hurdle jumps: Using a 6 or 12 inch hurdle have the player repeatedly jump back and forth over the hurdle. Again, emphasize quick ground touches. Progress from this by adding additional hurdles up to 5 and have them move laterally or forward through them.

Bench step down: On a bench, step off with one foot and land with equal weight on both feet. Upon landing, flex at the ankles, knees and hips while keeping the chest up and hands by your side to finish in an athletic position. "Give" with the jump, similar to a compressed spring. By doing this you avoid injury and increase muscle strength while elongation the muscle. To progress, have the goalkeeper immediately jump as high as possible upon landing. 3 sets of 6 reps (Figure 2).

Bungee Training

In addition to plyometric training, resistance bands/bungee cords aid in training for lower body and core power. Using waist

cords force the GK to develop proper acceleration mechanics, most importantly the contact of the ground with the ball of the foot. This should be emphasized when working in a linear and lateral direction.

Forward/Lateral resistance: check the tension in your cord and mark an end point goal. It should be at near max tension of the cord, but allow your GK to still work within his limits and perform all movements mechanically correct. When working forward, focus on punching the knees up and forward to hip height then driving the ball of the foot into the ground. At the end point have them set their feet and catch a driven ball.

When working laterally, focus on keep the head, shoulders and hips facing forward. The trail leg should do all the work. Punch the knee up and across the body then drive the ball of foot into the ground for contact. Work the leg as rapidly as possible; it should resemble a piston in a car. This movement will develop lateral power when moving across the goal and collecting services to the back of the box.

Footwork with Resistance: Set up cones as described earlier. Work your way through them then accelerate to the end point. To increase difficulty, add an additional cone at the end and have them collect a played ball between the two. This will force them to transfer their footwork directly into acceleration and make it more game like. The ball should be played as soon as they finish the footwork.

The training described here should be done weekly with your GK. Proper body management should be taken into account. Listen to your player and be prepared to alter your session if needed. For example, the further out you are from a game, the more workload you can place on the player, since they will have more recovery time. As you get closer to match day, change your focus to reaction work. Finally, always coach proper mechanics. Without the correct form you will not see the full benefits.●



Figure 1

More Information Please!

Contact Pete at pcalabrese@dcunited.com

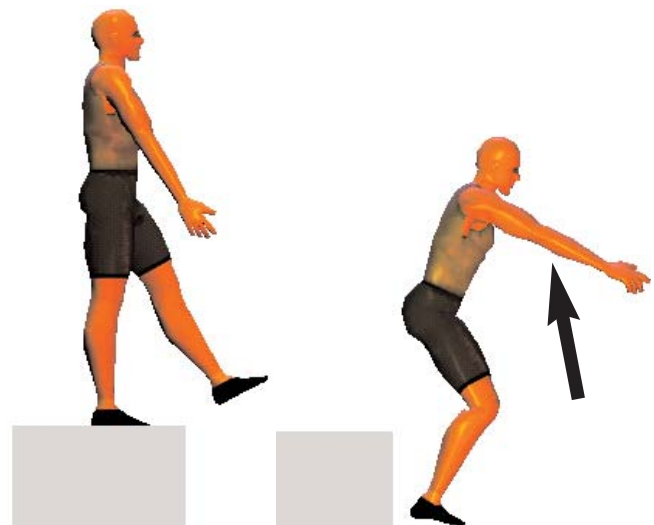


Figure 2