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# HOME TRAINING PROGRAMS

## A NECESSITY FOR ALL HIGH LEVEL SOCCER PLAYERS

BY RICHARD BUCCIARELLI

**In my career, I have been fortunate to work with teams at several different levels in soccer, including hundreds of club/academy teams, men's and women's university teams, the Ontario Provincial and Canadian national Teams, and the Toronto FC Academy.**

In most of these environments, even though I always tried to be present at as many training sessions as possible, there was always a sense that the players needed more physical training than they got from the work I was able to do with them on the field and in the gym. In most cases, coaches felt they did not have enough total training time, and so there was not always a lot of the training time devoted to my physical fitness work. As a result, one common denominator existed – one which I believe also exists in most if not all high level soccer environments here in Canada: the need for an at-home fitness training program.

At-home fitness training programs allow soccer players to take care of some of the necessary components of their physical fitness training (for example, strength training, mobility/flexibility training, and supplemental aerobic endurance and speed training, on their own time, without forcing coaches to take time away from their regularly

scheduled on-field training sessions). As I mentioned, I have created and assigned at-home fitness training programs to almost all of the athletes and teams I have worked with, both in the past and presently. There are, however, a few problems and challenges associated with assigning fitness work for players to complete on their own. In general, two main challenges exist:

Monitoring and tracking whether or not the home training program is being completed, and;

Obtaining an accurate measure of the intensity of the players' training.

As a general rule, without any direct supervision, coaches and fitness coaches must rely on players to be both honest about reporting/tracking the completion of their workouts, and diligent in pushing themselves to attain the correct training intensity in every

session. In my experience, even at the elite levels (National Team, Professional Academy), players are not always as honest and diligent as they should be. I have always felt the need to keep in mind that I am dealing with children or young adults, many of whom have very busy schedules including schoolwork and soccer commitments, and often their free time gets monopolized by the use of technology, including cell phones, TV, video games, and the internet. As such, it has always been challenging for me to ensure that the young athletes I am working with are able to complete their home fitness programs, as well as for me to be able to monitor their progress in completing them.

It was with these challenges in mind that I created the Soccer Fitness Gols mobile fitness app. Spanning three different difficulty levels, the Gols app features 8-week, 2 training sessions per-week soccer-specific exercise programs categorized into 5 different components of fitness (strength, speed, power, endurance, and flexibility). All of the exercises in the program are soccer-specific, and the workouts can be completed in any location at all (including on a soccer pitch) and with no equipment required. Perhaps the best features of the Gols app, however, are the customized workouts and the performance monitoring it offers users.

Since the intensity and training load of the workouts are customized to each individual player based on their fitness test results, the Gols app is an effective tool to use as a home training program for any number of players, including an entire team. Players and their coaches can choose the specific areas of physical fitness (from among the 5 different components in the Gols app) that they want to focus on, and can thus target and customize their home training program workouts and scheduling. Furthermore, the app's built-in performance tracking system allows players, their parents and their coaches to view live/instantaneous records of the fitness assessment and workouts they have completed, and track their performance in assessments and workouts over time. As mentioned previously,

young soccer players are already spending their free time using cell phones and are very familiar with mobile technology and applications. Thus, integrating the use of the Gols app into their busy schedules is much more convenient than having them read paper or electronic documents and fill out workout logs.

The fact remains that home training programs are a necessity for any high level soccer player and/or team. Among the biggest challenges to coaches and fitness coaches when administering home training programs to their athletes are ensuring players' adherence, and tracking their performance. The Soccer Fitness Gols mobile fitness app provides a quick, simple, easy-to-use, and cost-effective way to solve both of these problems.

Richard Bucciarelli is the co-founder of Soccer Fitness Gols, developers of the 'Gols' mobile fitness app, available NOW through Android and Apple smartphone platforms.

For more information about Richard and Soccer Fitness Gols, please visit [www.soccerfitnessgols.com](http://www.soccerfitnessgols.com)

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