



BILL BARRETT

Advice from Sigi

PLAYERS. "If you really enjoy the game, you'll want to get out and touch the ball every day. On your own, take shots against a wall or juggle. Ideally, get out with a group of friends, playing 2-v-2, 3-v-3, 4-v-4 or 5-v-5. That has to be one of the fun things. At UCLA,

we always encouraged guys to come early to practice and play 5-v-5. When you see players standing around or sitting on the ball before practice, waiting for the coach, you have to wonder if they really enjoy the game."

Best known for coaching the Los Angeles Galaxy to the 2002 MLS title and UCLA to three NCAA titles, Sigi Schmid has also coached youth soccer at every age level from under-9 on up. Soccer America asked him to offer some advice for ...

COACHES. "The greatest teacher is the game. The training environment should stimulate, be fun and put players in game situations. Take, for example, overlaps or one-two combinations. Sometimes there tends to be too much emphasis on the *how*. The real emphasis should be on the *when*. Putting players into game situations is how they learn the *when*. Also, there needs to be still

greater emphasis on striking the ball. When it comes to passing the ball accurately over various distances, you'll find it's a much stronger discipline in other countries."

PARENTS. "I sometimes see the over-involvement of parents. A player has to make soccer his or her thing. They should carry their own bag, take care of their shoes, bring their own water, etc. Parents should continue to let their children enjoy the game and they should support them — without taking control of their game."

— Mike Woitalla