

Grasshopper Soccer®  
“Big Soccer for Little People™”

Micro Soccer™ and Its Background

“A Blinding Glimpse of the Obvious” - Tony Waiters

## **Structured Spontaneity**

In the mining villages of Durham and Northumberland in the northeast of England, they used to say that if you needed a soccer player, go to the pit head and whistle, and three center forwards would appear.

This was one of England's great breeding grounds of high quality soccer players. The “Northeast”, particularly in the 1930's, was a depressed area with high unemployment. There was little to do. So the kids and the young men played soccer morning, noon and night.

Similar conditions have been prevalent in the other soccer breeding grounds of the world, such as Europe and South America. Those conditions also continue today in some parts of South America and in the emerging soccer nations of Africa.

Given those circumstances, where do the kids learn their soccer skills? Not by coaching! They play small-sided soccer - 2-a-side, 3-a-side, 4-a-side - almost always with an improvised soccer field and often with an improvised soccer ball.

It is from this kind of environment that most of the great players have emerged.....along with the average player who was still highly skilled in the basics of the game. Generally speaking, those conditions do not exist in North America - and no longer exist in Europe. But the requirement to have fun, kick the ball and develop skills most certainly does.

How to do it? By “structured spontaneity”. This play on words is indeed a contradiction of terms, but it is one for a purpose. Coaches need to recreate the conditions under which kids had great fun and learned the game. This is the purpose of *Micro Soccer™*.

*by Tony Waiters*



# **GRASSHOPPER SOCCER**