



15 Session Plans – Scope and Sequence – Tactical Concepts

DEVELOPMENT
BOOKLET



Amherst Soccer Association Youth Methodology Development Program for U9&10

This Methodology will be used as an outline of principles necessary to give the U9&U10 player and coach maximum potential in development. Every team and every player have different ability levels and it is extremely important that practices and training exercises meet the needs of the players at their particular age groups.

Organization			
Sessions per week	2	Session time	75 min
Structure		Design	
Warm up (before practice)	15 min	Dynamic warm up with Skills	
Play	15 min	SSG with minimal coaching - Implanting your CP's	
Practice	25/30 min	Game related practice with guided discovery - question and answer	
Play	15/20 min	Bigger game with no coaching	

U9&U10 Development targets	
Tactical	Basic Skills in 1v1
Technical	Finding the game, movement away from the ball
Physical	Develop agility, balance, coordination and speed
Psychosocial	Positive interactions with teammates
End of season fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competencies in 1v1 • Ability to go forwards, backwards and sideways with the ball • Coordinated in movements on and off the ball • Creating space with movements



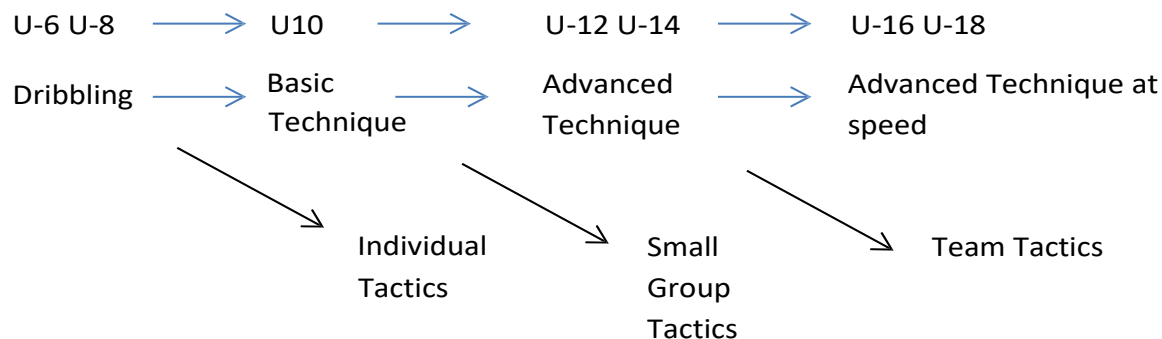
Amherst Soccer Scope and Sequence

For the U9 and U10 soccer player

Amherst Soccer scope and sequence will provide coaches and parents a key tool in the soccer development process. Each age group will have specific guidelines on the content and the order of what is to be coached. This scope and sequence will maximize development at the youth level.

Week	Topic	Coaching points
1.	Comfort on the ball (Skills)	Bend your knees/Body weight
2.	Individual attacking (1v1)	Be expressive/Beat your man
3.	Comfort on the ball (Dribbling)	Away from pressure
4.	Individual defending (1v1)	Bend your knees/Don't dive in
5.	Comfort on the ball (Speed)	Changes in direction and speed
6.	Individual Skills	Build up your skill repertoire
7.	Individual attacking (1v1)	Use your skills to beat your man
8.	Playing out the back	Basic Principles
9.	Passing and Receiving	Hip and foot placement
10.	Group play (SSG day)	No Coaching
11.	Passing and Receiving	Heel down toe up/Cushion
12.	Receiving out of the air	Eye coordination
13.	Turning	Receiving on back foot
14.	Over/Under loads	2v1/3v2/4v3
15.	Possession (small group rondo)	Quick 1 and 2 touch passing

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL



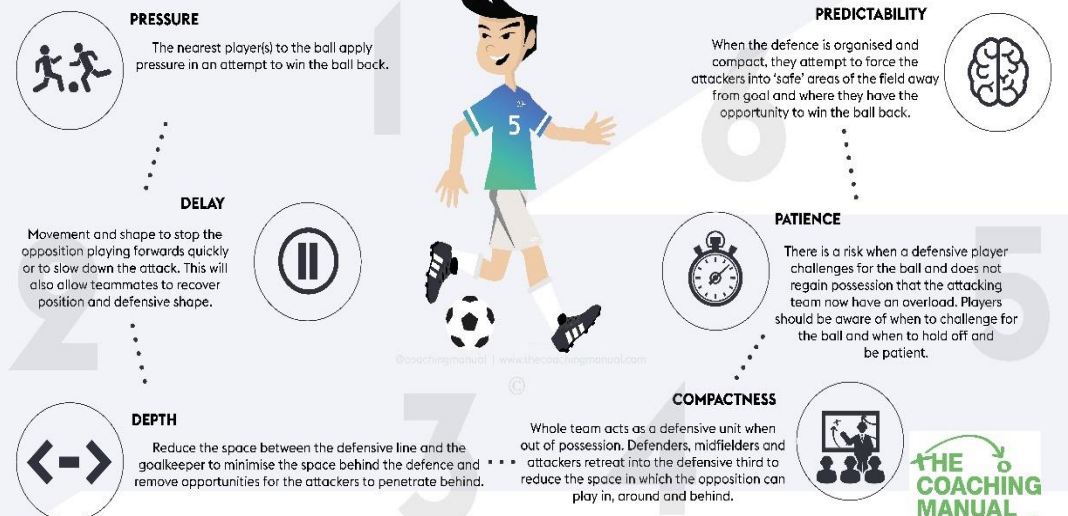
COACHING ATTACKING PRINCIPLES

Principles and definitions



COACHING DEFENDING PRINCIPLES

Principles and definitions



THE COACHING MANUAL

RECEIVING SIGNALS



EYES

Make eye contact with your teammate before receiving the ball

eg. Making eye-contact can tell your teammate that you are ready to receive the ball.



HANDS

Use your hands to direct where you want to receive the ball

eg. Pointing to the space behind a defender



BODY SHAPE

Angle your body to show where you want to receive the ball.

eg. If you are side on it tells your teammate you want to receive on the back foot.



VOICE

Talk to your teammates to tell them when and where you want to receive the ball

Eg. Player shouts "in behind" to receive the ball behind the defenders position or "feet" to receive the ball to feet



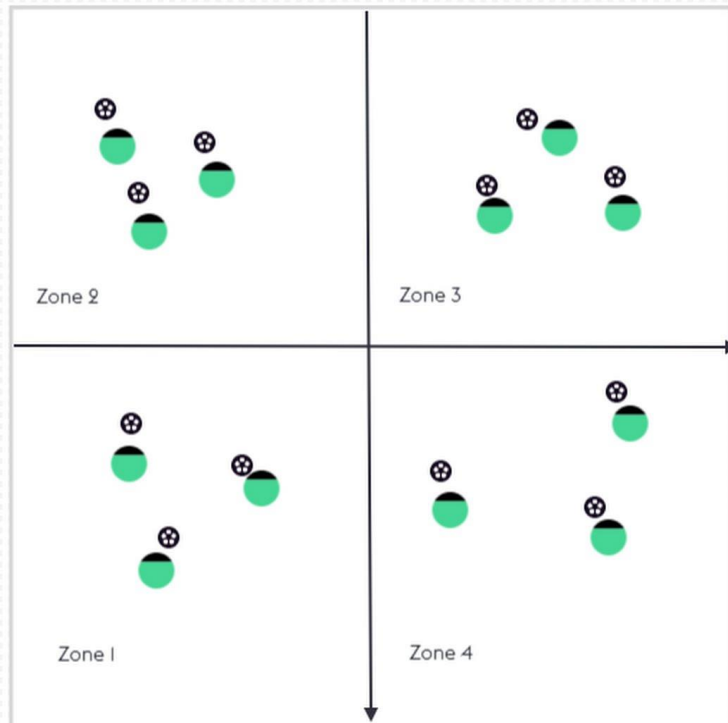
Week 1. Comfort on the ball

Objective: To improve the player's ability to manipulate the soccer ball with all parts of the foot.

Stage I Technical Warm up

4 Squares: Area: Divide a 30Lx 25W square into 4 quadrants. Place 3-4 players in each quadrant Procedure: players will perform Square 1: inside, outside, stop and switch foot. Square 2: laces, lace, laces and inside of the foot cut. Square 3: inside, outside, stop, heel and switch foot. Square 4: laces, lace, lace and outside of the foot hook. Players must have at least 5 touches on the ball before performing the task again. At the coach's command players will change squares.

Where is the space to go? How far is the ball from the player? Where should the players eyes be?



Stage II Small Sided Activity

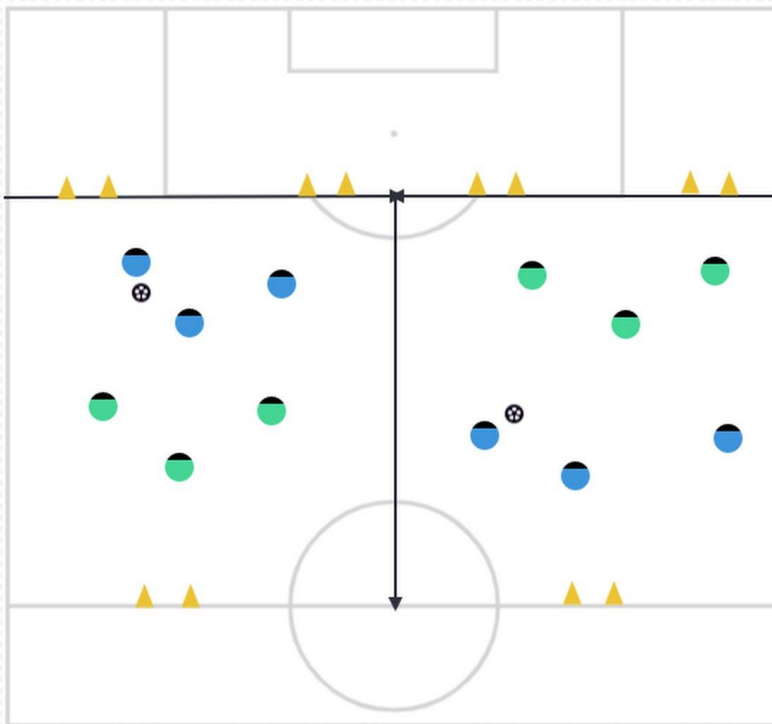
1v1 to End Zones. Area: 20Lx 15W Play 1v1 to dribble into the opponent's end zone. Yellow pass to red then yellow will defend Red. If yellow gets the ball, then he dribbles into red's end zone

What surface of the foot to use to receive and dribble the soccer ball? Where will the player's first touch be? Where is the space to attack? How far is the ball from the player? Where should the players eyes be looking? How fast should the player dribble after he beats the opponent?

Week 2. Individual Attacking

Objective – To improve the players ability to dribble the ball with regards to individual attacking

Set up – Make two 20Wx30L with two cone goals on one end and one cone goal on the opposite end. Dribbling through the goals 10 points, passing through the goal 1 point. Rotate players.



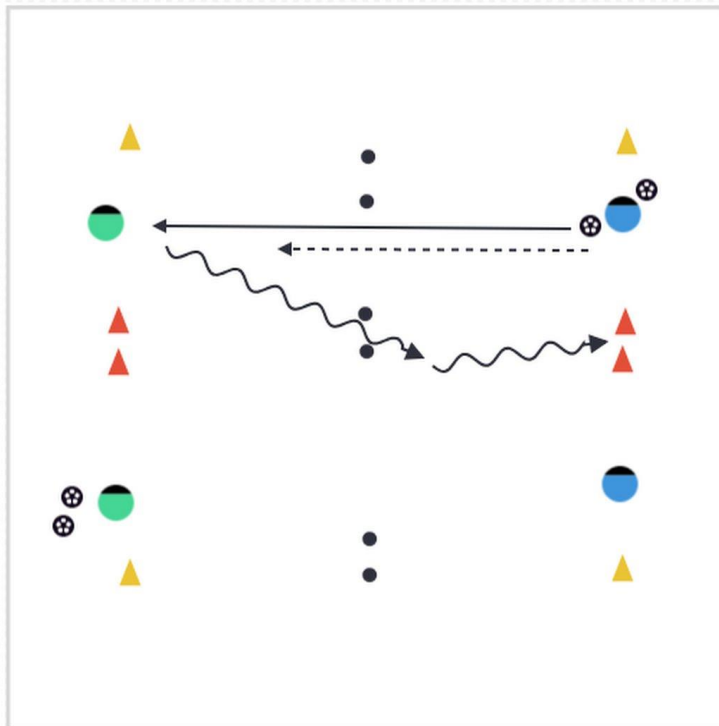
Key coaching points – Head up and eyes on the ball, change of pace after the defender is beaten. Distance of touches with pressure, what part of the foot do we use?

Key questions – When do we take a defender on? When we are confronted by a defender with space behind him or when we are near or inside the opposing teams goal area.

Week 3. Comfort on the ball

Objective: To improve the player's ability to dribble by an opponent.

Set up - 1v1 To Goal: Coach set up a field 20Lx15W with a goal at each end and 3 gates across the center line. Player 1 (Blue) plays the soccer ball to player 2 (Green). Player 2 must dribble through 1 of the 3 gates then try to score in the cone goals. Player one will defend his goal, try to win the ball and score in the opposition's goal.



Key coaching questions - How can your first touch help you attack faster? Take your touch into space away from you, don't stop the ball dead.

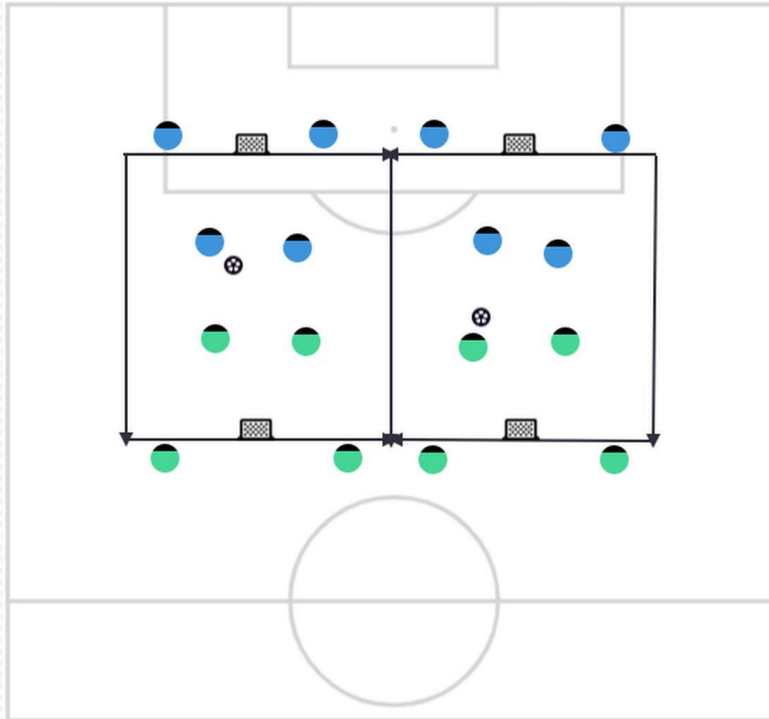
What moves can you use to go by a defender? Scissors, fake, Maradona, inside cut, outside cut.

When would you do this in a game? In a 1v1 situation with space behind.

Week 4. Individual Defending

Objective – To improve the players ability to defender against an oncoming attacker with regards to individual defending.

Set up – Make two 15Wx20L grids with small goals at each end. Both teams score in the opponent's small goal. Rotate players.

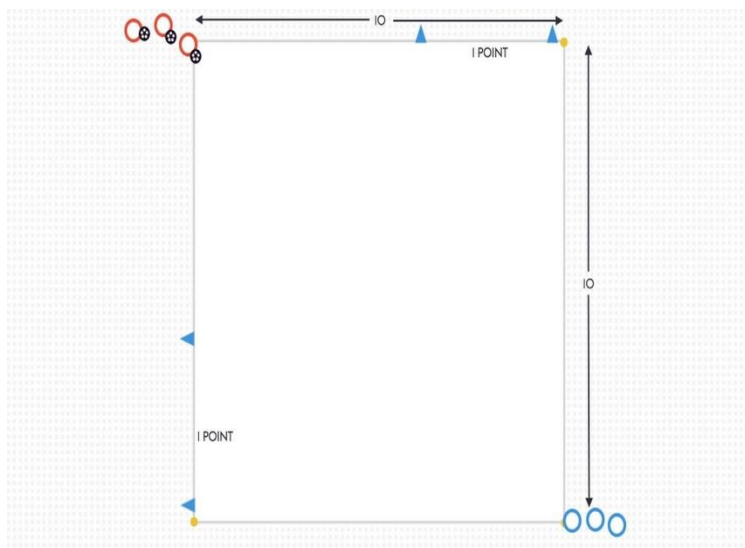


Key coaching points – Speed and angle of approach to attacker. Pressing distance, Body shape, footwork, type of tackles (poke or block)

Key questions – Who should pressure the player with the ball? The defender closest to the ball (1st defender concept)

Week 5 - 1V1 With Pressure from The Front Skill Practice — A 1v1 practice for you to coach your players

how to deal with pressure from the front to keep possession of the ball and get past their opponents in 1v1 situations.



Set Up Set up two areas, as seen in the left image, with 2 goals in the corners and 6 players per square. To begin, the defender passes across the square to the attacking player and closes them down as quickly as possible to be an active defender. Once the attacker receives the ball, they should aim to get the ball out their feet and attack one of the 2 goals to their left or right. The attacker receives one point for dribbling through one of the

goals. If the defender wins the ball, they must also dribble to one of the goals to score a point. The player who has the most points per square wins. Once the attacker has attacked, they then join the defending line and vice versa.

Key Coaching Points

- **Receiving signals and first touch**

Players should ask for the ball using their eyes, hands, hips and voice to receive the ball whilst looking for the space in front of them. Players need to take their first touch towards a goal they have selected or that is more open depending on the approach of the defender.

- **Retain possession**

If the defender comes close, players need to retain the ball by turning away from the defender 'hiding' the ball with their back, with the attacker being in-between the defender and the ball. Attackers should then use inside and outside cuts/hooks to turn and lose their defender.

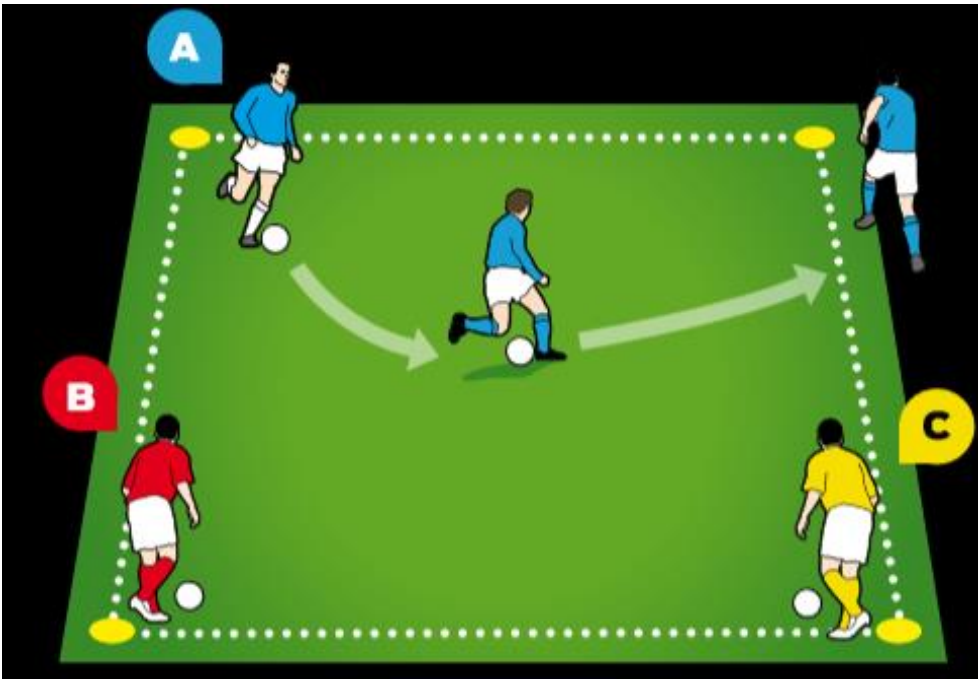
- **Power away into space**

Once getting past the defender, players should look to power into space at speed to get to one of the goals as quickly as possible.

Week 6 – Comfort on the ball – Individual skills

Objective – To improve the players ability to perform two necessary skills

Set up – 15x15 square – A, B, and C all with a ball starting at a corner. Players take turns moving into the middle of the square and performing their move and then accelerate to the cone on the outside without anyone on that cone. **Progression –** You can make this activity limited or full pressure by adding a defender in the middle.



Key soccer moves

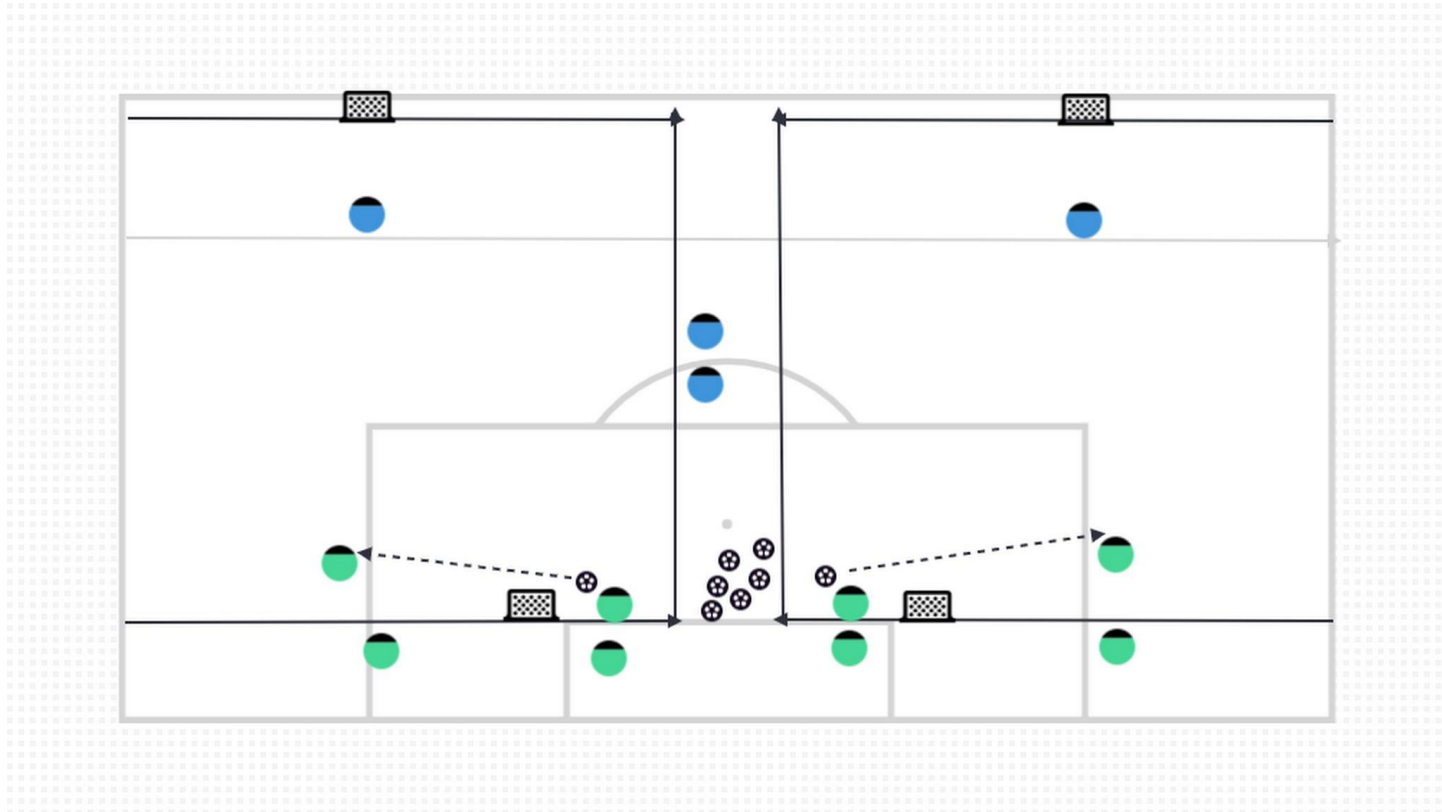
Step over – approach the ball as if your going to pass or strike it, step around the ball so your foot lands on the other side, with that same foot use the outside of stepover foot push the ball in the opposite direction.

Scissor – approach the ball if your going to pass or strike it, stop over the ball with the outside of the foot leading, fake by bending your knee and dropping your shoulder. With the other foot using the outside part knock the ball away from your body.

Week 7 – Individual attacking

Objective – To improve the players ability to recognize when to dribble and when to pass

Set up - 20Wx35L with build out lines and mini goals as shown in the diagram. 4 attackers and 2 defenders for each field. The first two attackers start the game with the ball from the GK box to the player outside the penalty box. Once the ball is kicked, the 1 defender can now pressure the ball. The game is now a 2v1. Rotate players.



Key coaching points - Head up and eyes on the ball, change of pace after the defender is beaten. Distance of touches with pressure, what part of the foot do we use? Back foot?

Key questions – What options does the player with the ball have? The player with the ball can dribble past the defender into the open space or pass the ball to his attacking partner.

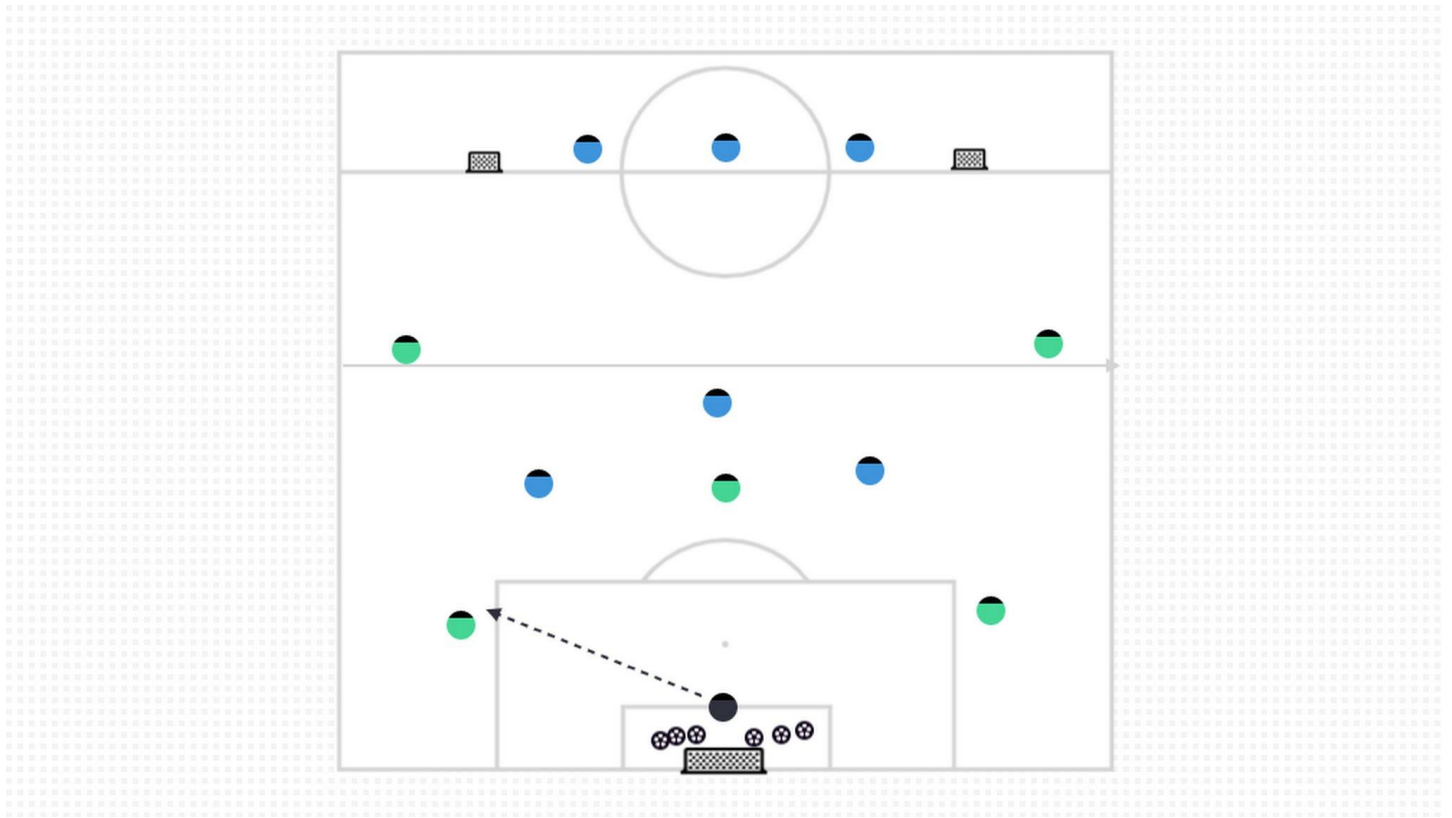
Where should the other attacker be to support his/her teammate? He/she should be in an open space to the sides or in front of the ball.

When can you dribble? When the defender thinks you are going to pass the ball and goes towards the player without the ball.

Week 8 – Playing out the back

Objective – To improve the team’s ability to play the ball out from the back.

Set up – 40Wx30L with a big goal and 2 counter goals. 5 green attackers and 3 blue defenders. Blue team score in counter goals, Red in big goals. Play with build out line. Ball always starts with GK. Rotate players.



Key questions – Why do we need to get open? To create better options for a pass.

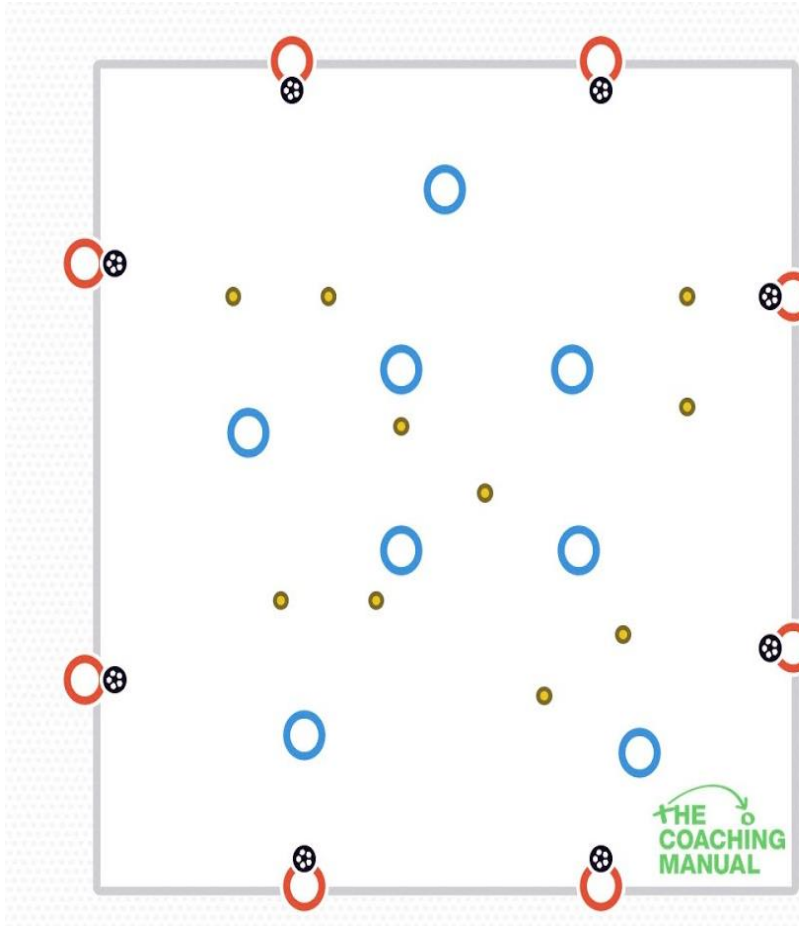
When do we pass or dribble forward? Pass forward if we can connect with a teammate.

How can we help the player with the ball? Moving and creating diagonal passing lanes.

When should we switch the attack? When we have too many opponents in front of us.

Week 9 - Passing and Receiving

Objective – To improve the players ability to pass and receive the ball.



Setup

5/6 x gates set up with cones inside the area. 2 x groups of 8 players with a group positioned around the outside of the area and a group inside the area. Players complete the following challenges and ensure rotation of players on the outside to inside. 45seconds to 1 minute each challenge;

1. Players on the outside have the ball and players on the inside look to receive and play back to the outside player, and then find another ball
2. Players on the inside have possession of the ball and look to combine and play a 1-2 with as many outside players as

possible

3. Players on the inside receive the ball and dribble through 2 x gates before combining again with an outside player

Key Coaching Points

- **Scanning**

Players need to have their head up and be aware of the ball space and other players to pass and maintain possession of the ball.

First Touch

When receiving players should focus on their first touch, depending on the space the touch should be into space and aware of the body or close to the body to protect the ball and maintain complete control.

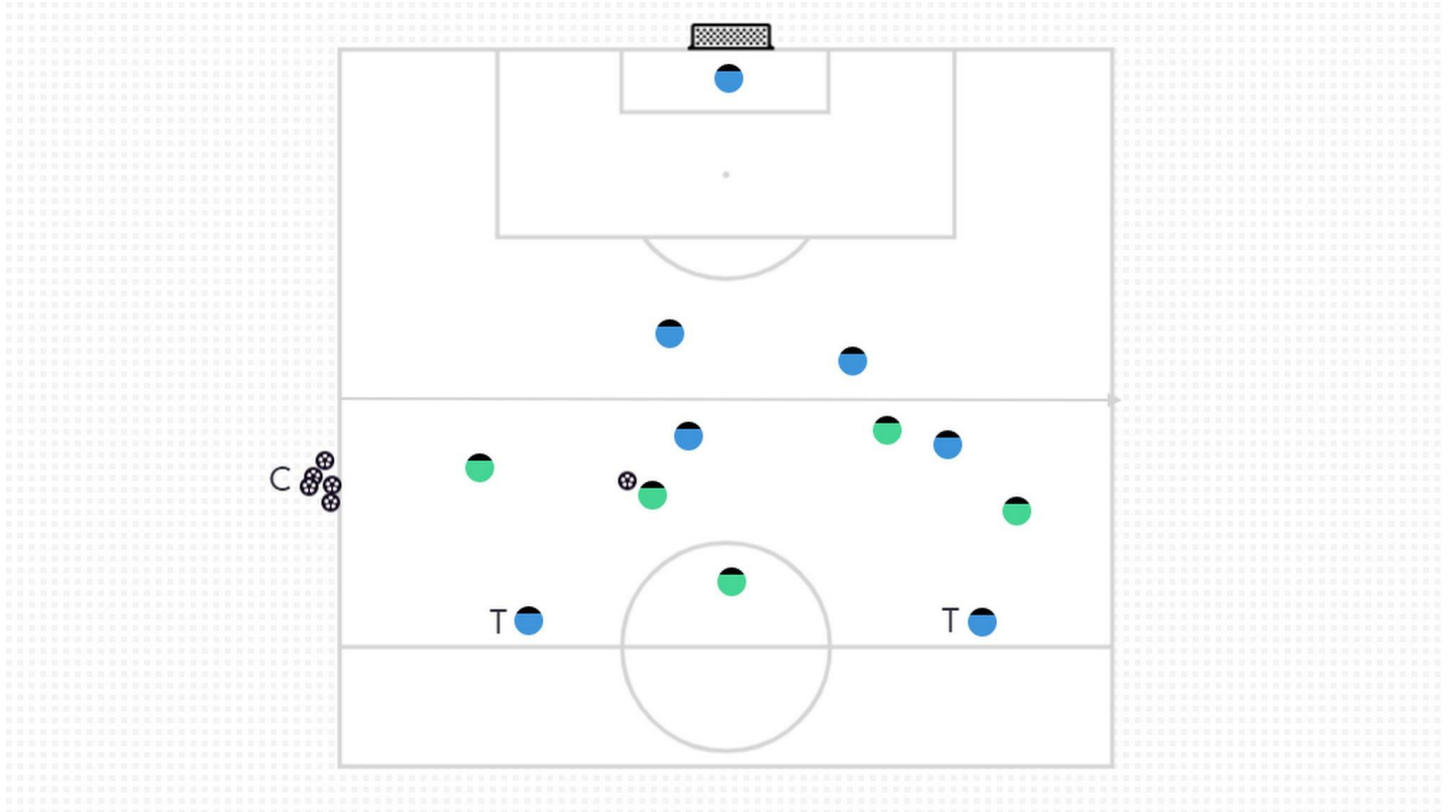
Communication

Players must also always communicate both verbally and nonverbal to work with the outside players.

Week 11 – Passing and Receiving

Objective – To improve the players decision making with regards to passing and receiving.

Set up – 40Wx35L with a regular goal and two target players. Green team scores in regular goal, blue try to pass to target players. Rotate players. Coach plays ball into green team when ball is out of bounds.



Key Questions – If you are confronted by a defender out wide what would you like the player to do? That player should dribble the defender 1v1.

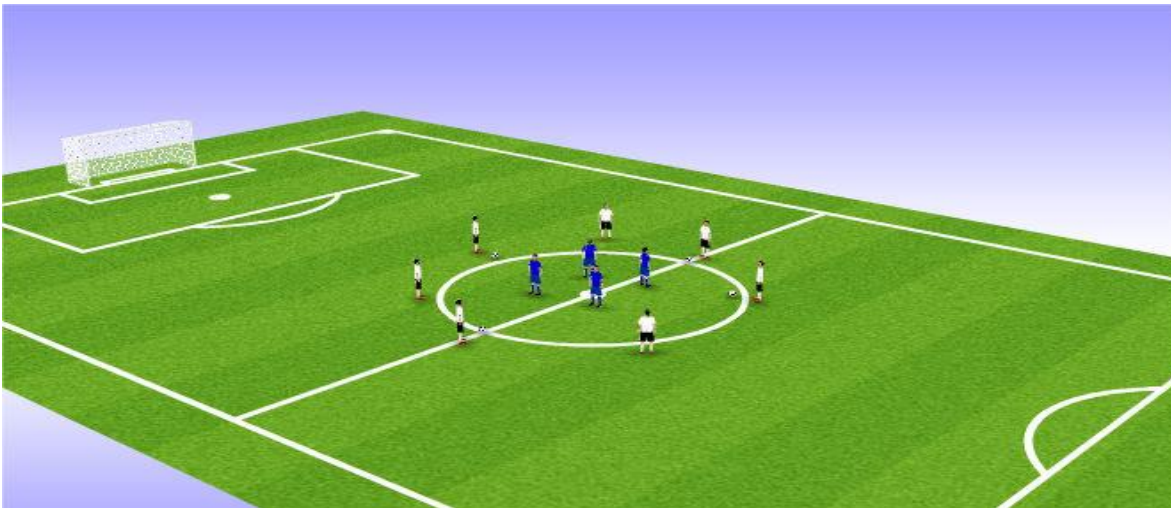
What if another defender comes to help? The attacker should look to make a pass preferably a split pass between those two defenders.

If there is pressure on you as a pass is being made to you what should you do? Take your touch away from that pressure.

Week 12 - Receiving out of the Air

Objectives – To improve players technique in receive the ball out of the air

Dutch Circle: (15 minutes) Half of the players create a 25-35 yd outer circle and have soccer balls. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The inner players check to players on the outside to receive a pass from them. The players on the outside toss the ball in the air to the players on the inside. The players on the inside receive with different surfaces and then turn and find another player on the outside. Variation 2: top of foot, thigh, chest, any of the three. Variation 3: add in a 'dummy' defender to put pressure on player receiving ball in the air. Have one group go for about 1 minute with one surface, then switch players on outside and inside. Repeat until all surfaces are covered and variations completed (if possible). Focus on receiving with the thigh, chest and laces.



Coaching Points
(receiving in air):
General: be on balls of feet and get body behind ball move to the ball (do not wait for it) try to drop ball in front of body so it is in your control but not under you.

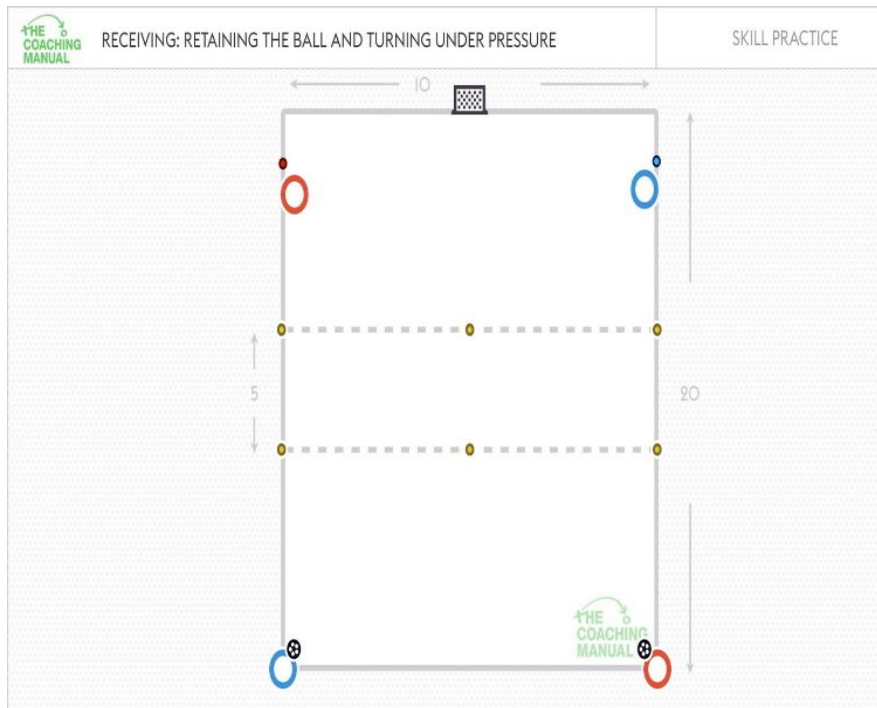
Laces: when using laces, lift foot up to meet the ball as ball is about to make contact, drop foot down and cushion ball on top of foot (laces) to the ground

Thigh: when using thigh (not knee), lift thigh up to meet ball once ball touches thigh, drop leg down to cushion the ball make sure you push ball slightly in front of you so you can handle it easily ball should not pop up as you cushion it make sure players use middle of thigh to cushion balls

Chest: when using chest, bend knees with feet staggered and slightly arch back while using arms for balance cushion ball (collapse chest) as it hits chest and guide it to feet do not push out chest to pop the ball out too far in front of you

Week 13 – Turning

Objective – To improve the players ability to turn with the ball under pressure.



Set Up - Set up 3 areas, as seen in the image. The two players at the bottom (Red and Blue) have a ball each. Blue player passes to the Blue Player and Red to Red. The ball starts with the Blue team (in this example).

Blue attacker passes to the other Blue player, who aims to receive it within the zone in the centre. At the same time, the Red

player can try to intercept the ball and take it from the attacker. The Red player can only go, as the Blue player has passed the ball. Once the player has received, they must retain the ball as an individual and look to turn and pass in the mini goal behind them. Once the exercise has finished, the Red becomes the attacker and the Blue becomes the defender. After ever 2 passes per player, receivers and passes change. After everyone has been the attacker, change sides to experience the alternate angle to receive.

Key Coaching Points

Receiving Signals & First Touch

Players should check the space around them whilst also asking for the ball with the 4 receiving signals (hips, hands, eyes, mouth) before receiving the ball to either look to turn or keep the ball away from the defender, positioning themselves between the ball and the defender.

- **Retain the ball**

To keep the ball, players must make decisions to pass back to their teammate or retain the ball as an individual by keeping the ball away from the defender (the attacker needs to be positioned in between the defender and the ball).

- **Turn**

Players should look to use inside, and outside hook turns to try and move the ball past the defender and pass to the opposite player.

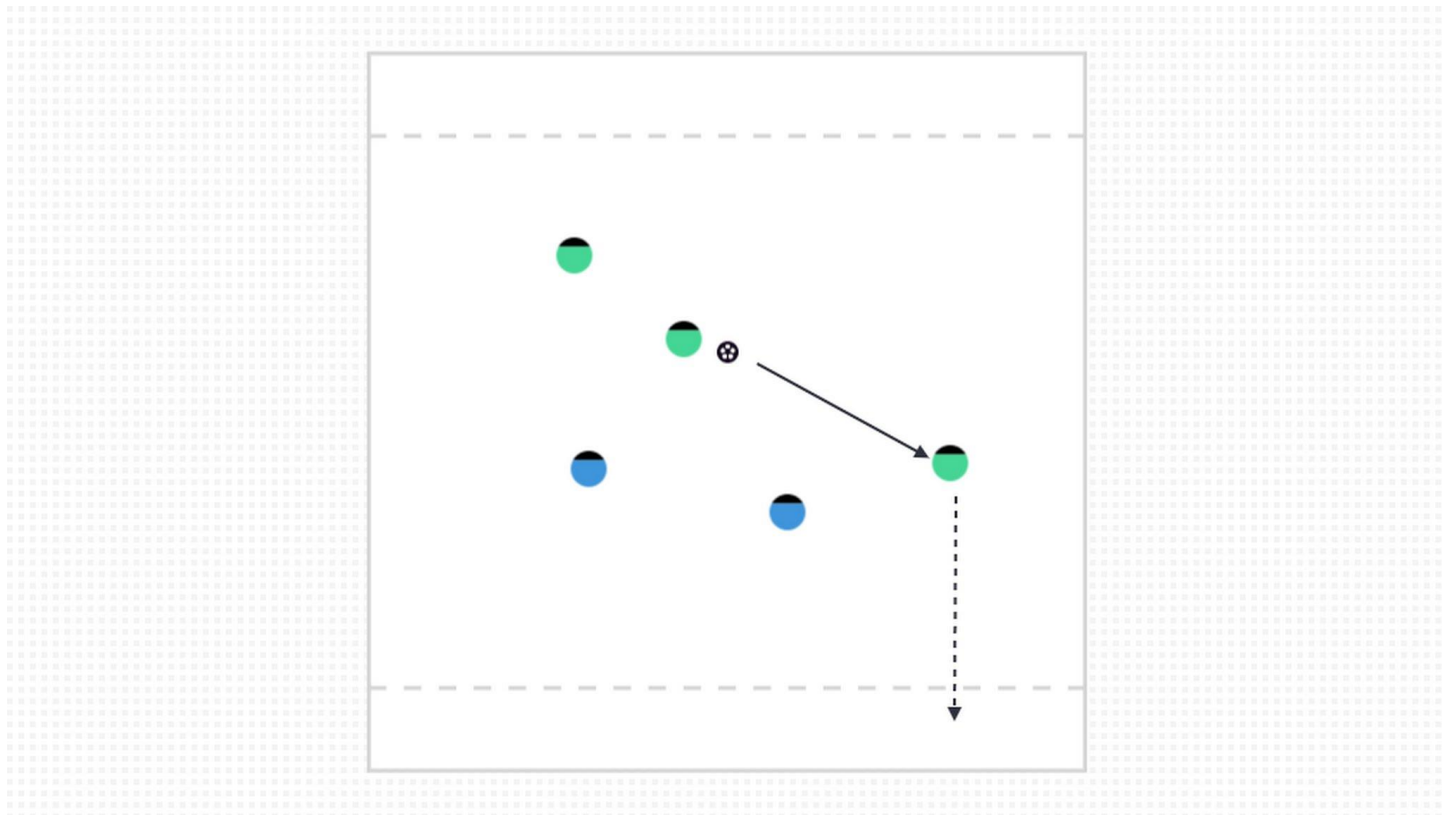
Week 14 – Over/Underloads

Objective – To understand over/underloads and the decision making behind it.

Overload – 3v2/4v3/2v1

Underload – 1v2/3v4/2v3

Set Up – 24Wx30L with an end zone at both ends. Both teams try to dribble into the end zone to score. Rotate players. Play with different over/underloads.



Key coaching questions – Try to recognize when we can play forward? When we have space in front of us/ if there is a 2v1 in a certain area.

Try to recognize when we must recycle the ball? When we find ourselves in a underload.

When can we make a 2v1? When I have the ball and I notice a 1v1 in a certain area, I should dribble towards my teammate to make it a 2v1.

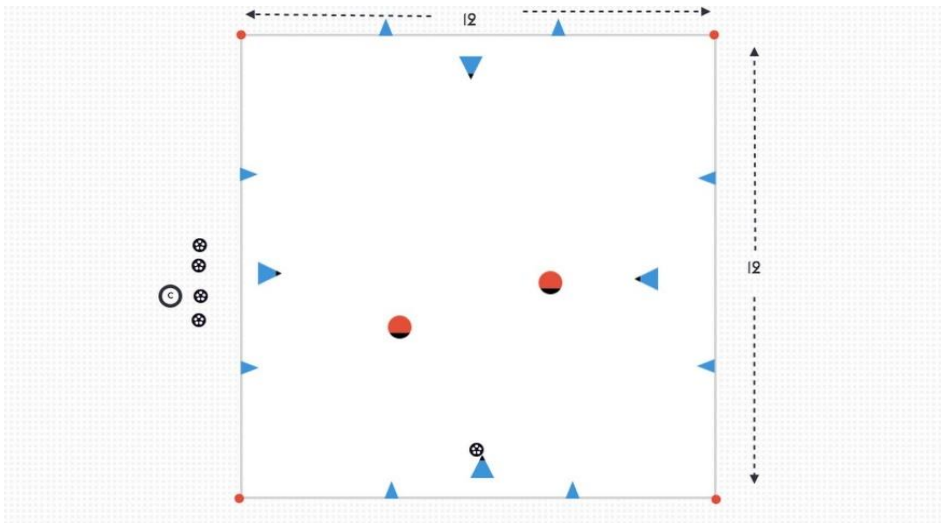
Week 15 – Possession (small group rondo)

Objective – To improve the players ability to possess the ball in a small space

4v2 Rondo with Transition Dribble to Score

Coach your players when and how to take up positions to maintain possession and to react quickly to combine and dribble forwards when the ball is won.

Set Up – 12x12 square with 4 small goals on the outside of the square



Key Coaching Points

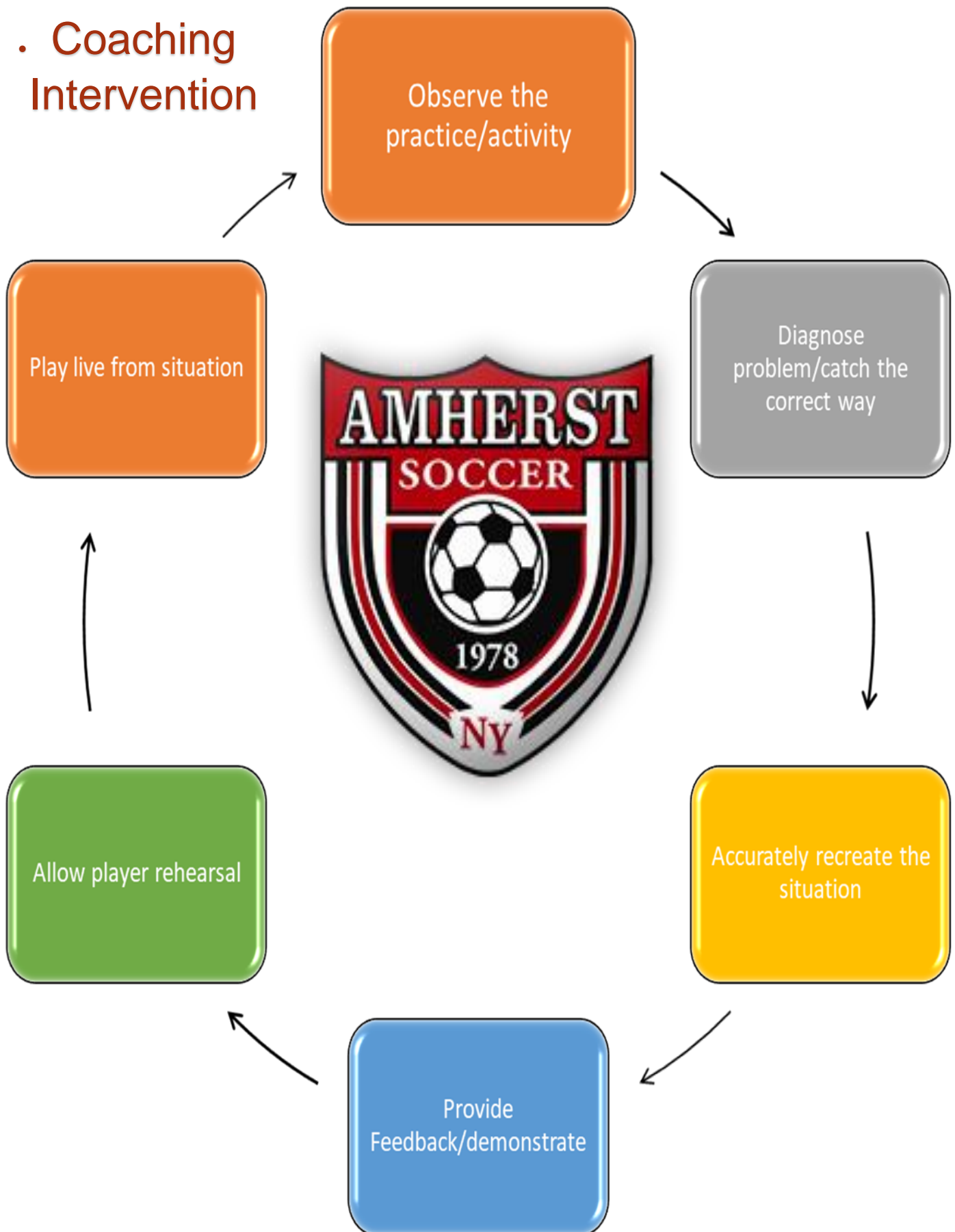
Technical

- Can we pass accurately to the furthest foot of teammate? Can we control it with the back foot?

Tactical

- Angles and distance of support – We need to be constantly moving, creating angles.

. Coaching Intervention



7 Concepts for Amherst Soccer

Concept	Content
1	Playing Out From the Back
2	Defending in the Defensive Third
3	Playing Through the Middle Third
4	Defending in the Middle Third
5	Playing in the Final Third
6	Defending From the Front
7	Counter Attacking

Playing Out From the Back

Passing Priorities

- Practice Themes
- * When to play long or short
 - * When to play to feet or space
 - * Variation in passing

Movement and Support Play

- Practice Themes
- * In front/beside/behind?
 - Clearing space
 - Showing feet or going long?
 - * Rotation in midfield

Building Attacks

- Practice Themes
- Changing the speed of play
 - Patience in possession
 - Using FBs to develop play
 - * GK as an outfield player

Carrying the Ball

- Practice Themes
- Running with the Ball
 - Receiving and turning
 - Releasing on the move
 - * When to retain and when to release

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show for the ball to feet
Q&A - When might you look to play in behind the opposition?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam lets the ball roll
across his body to turn...
Guided Discovery - Show me when to play quickly
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to retain and when to
release the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Playing Through the Middle Third

Breaking Lines

- Practice Themes
- * When to pass or dribble
 - * Forward passing
 - * Carrying the ball

Possession

- Practice Themes
- * Switching play
 - Combination play
 - Receiving and turning

Playing in Tight Areas

- Practice Themes
- Finding space
 - Disguise
 - When to play quick

Staying on the Ball

- Practice Themes
- Shielding
 - Dribbling
 - Receiving under pressure

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to check your shoulder before receiving
Q&A - When might be a good time to play one touch?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam uses his first touch to
bypass the defender
Guided Discovery - Show me when to RWTB
Trial & Error - Try to have a picture of what you want to do
before receiving the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Playing In the Final Third

Playing in Wide Areas

- Practice Themes
- * Coming in off the line
 - * Driving inside
 - * Combining wide/inside

In and Around the Box

- Practice Themes
- * Receiving under pressure
 - Turning to shoot
 - Combination play
 - * Shooting early

Crossing and Finishing

- Practice Themes
- Variation in crossing
 - Heading and volleying to goal
 - * When to shoot/pass?

Beating Opponents

- Practice Themes
- 1v1 skills and tricks
 - When to dribble and when to pass
 - Shifting to shoot

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to cross early
Q&A - When might you set up a team mate rather than take a shot yourself?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam shifts the ball before shooting to create space around the defender
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can finish aerial crosses
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to come in off the line

Practice Types

Play - Practice – Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending in the Defensive Third

Where and When to Press

- Practice Themes
- * First line of engagement
 - * Positioning around and away from the ball
 - * Marking and intercepting

Sliding and Screening

- Practice Themes
- * Keeping play in front
 - Marking ball/goal side
 - Intercepting and spoiling
 - * Angles and distances of support

Forcing Play

- Practice Themes
- Wide or inside?
 - Passing players on
 - * Triggers/cues to press

Counter Attacking

- Practice Themes
- Where and when to regain
 - Dispersal
 - Passing priorities
 - Support play
 - End product

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to mark ball side
Q&A - When might you need to drop and defend deeper?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam positions his body to force the attacker wide
Guided Discovery - Show me where to mark the attacker so that you can look to intercept
Trial & Error - Try to create opportunities to counter attack

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending in the Middle Third

Compactness

- Practice Themes
- Sliding and screening
 - Protecting key areas
 - Regaining possession

Defending When Organised

- Practice Themes
- When to press or drop
 - Marking positions
 - Angles and distances
 - Marking players or space?

Defending in Wide Areas

- Practice Themes
- Wide or inside?
 - Preventing crosses
 - Defending crosses
 - Supporting positions

Defending When Out of Balance

- Practice Themes
- Recovery runs
 - Dropping and delaying
 - Deflecting Play
 - Defending the goal

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show attackers outside
Q&A - How can you prevent passes into strikers' feet?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam matches the
attackers' movements to prevent crossing opportunities
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can try to prevent passes
splitting you as a pair
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to press and when to drop

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending from the Front

When to Press

- Practice Themes
- Cues and triggers to press
 - Marking positions
 - Supporting the press

Making Play Predictable

- Practice Themes
- Inside or outside?
 - Forcing play
 - Support and Cover

Individual/Unit

- Practice Themes
- Starting positions
 - 1v1 defending
 - Support and cover

Counter Attacking

- Practice Themes
- Regain
 - Release
 - Support
 - Finish

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show attackers inside
Q&A - What might trigger a press from our side?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam slows down on his approach to prevent the attacker going past him
Guided Discovery - Show me where you can support the 1st def
Trial & Error - Try to create a shooting opportunity within 6 seconds of regaining the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Counter Attacking

Creating Opportunities

- Practice Themes
- Defending late
 - Inviting pressure
 - Patience in defending
 - Forcing play

Playing Quickly

- Practice Themes
- Passing Priorities
 - Playing to space

Support Play

- Practice Themes
- Midfield runners beyond
 - Creating/clearing space
 - Support in front/beside/behind

Creating and Converting

- Practice Themes
- Combinations
 - Shooting early
 - Rebounds

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to play into space
Q&A - Why do we play quickly on regain?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam uses his first touch to
bypass players
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can move the ball quickly
Trial & Error - Try to create counter attacking opportunities

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Coaching Interventions

Command

Coach tells and shows the required outcome. Decision making comes from the coach.

Question and Answer

Coach leads with question to gain a response from players. Used to check or develop understanding.

Observation and Feedback

Coach and player(s) observe and discuss feedback. What went well? What can be improved?

Guided Discovery

Coach sets a challenge to guide players to develop solutions. Often coupled with Q&A to develop ideas.

Trial and Error

Player and/or coach set a challenge and players develop their own solutions with minimal intervention.

Coaching Interventions

Effective coaches will be skilled at using a variety of coaching interventions and will recognise when appropriate to use with specific teams, units or individual players.

Coaches are encouraged to use trial and error and guided discovery in order to promote creative play and autonomous learning. Allowing players to formulate their own solutions, trial them out, make mistakes and refine their responses is seen as an integral part of the learning process.

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play

Players are provided the opportunity to play the 'game' with a specific focus or theme. This can be a team focus or can be used as an opportunity to work on unit or individual challenges. By playing the game, players are able to see the purpose and context of a specific technique, skill or tactic and how it fits into the game.

The coach is then able to move 'back' to a part practise that can emphasise a certain set of skills that players can practise . The part practice is often used to work on skills that players are finding difficult in the full version of the game. Part practices can take a variety of forms including technical practices, skill practices, functions, phases of play, smaller sided games etc.

The coach then may take the session back into the game in order to give players the opportunity to try and out the skills into practice in the 'whole' format.

Practice Types

Technique - Skill - Game

A traditional approach to coaching where players are introduced to a new technique which they are given time to develop in an unopposed situation. This is then moved onto a skill practice where players use previous techniques in a (semi) opposed environment. This is then transferred into a game where play is fully opposed. The view is that this approach allows players time to develop techniques and skills before using what they have learnt in a game.

Although technical practices are unopposed, coaches can design practices that still require some level of decision making, perceptual awareness and problem solving from players. Using low end variable practices where players can develop their techniques in a changing environment without direct pressure (using other players as 'traffic' for example) will mean players still need to make decisions on how to perform.

Phase of Play / Functional Practice

A phase of play practice is designed to simulate a specific phase, or moment, in the game (for example, playing out from the back). It provides opportunity to develop whole units' understanding of their roles in the phase of play. It is usually played with two full units against two full units plus any other players required.

A functional practice is more specific, looking at a particular player or unit of players' roles in the game (coaching a full back on their passing priorities, for example).

Both practice types could be used as 'part' practices in a whole-part-whole method in order to develop a player, or players', understanding of a particular moment in the game.

Coaching 'the scope and sequence'

Player Centred

Whilst this document sets out a syllabus of what is expected to be taught throughout the season, it is by no means prescriptive. The main themes of the blocks of work should be used as a guiding template for structuring practice. Coaches should use their knowledge and understanding of their players to adapt the programme to suit the needs of groups and individuals.

No syllabus will ever be a one size fits all and this is no different.

It is also expected that coaches will work with players to develop personal learning goals. Whilst these can fit in with the current block of the programme, players can work towards their own learning goals outside of this theme. For example, whilst the team focus may be on pressing in the final third, one player may have a personal learning goal of developing their distribution from the defensive third.

In these instances, it is the responsibility of the coach to design practices that allow for multiple outcomes for different players.

Match Day Coaching

Make it Specific

Each match day should contribute towards players' learning and as such are part of the 'coaching programme'. They are not viewed as a special event and are an opportunity to extend players' learning.

On match days, coaches should use a variety of team, unit and individual challenges to support players' learning.

Team Challenges

These should be aligned to the coaching programme and should have clear links to the previous week's work.

Example

As a team, try to create opportunities to counter attack.

Unit Challenges

Again, these should be aligned to the weekly coaching programme and to the team challenge.

Example

GK and Def - on regain, try to play the most positive pass you can see

Mid - try to mark in a position where you can intercept passes

Forwards - try to force play in one direction

Individual Challenges

Can be aligned to coaching programme but can also be separate in order to support players' individual learning.

Example

Sam - Try to recognise when to play quickly on regain

Joe - Try to recognise opportunities to run with the ball

James - Try to let the ball roll across your body when receiving

Match Day Coaching

A Match Day Philosophy...

Teams, coaches and players should approach match days with the following philosophy:

1. Try to play football in line with our team's philosophy and style of play
2. Try to work on my team, unit and individual challenges
3. Play within the laws of the game and with respect to opponents, team mates and officials
4. Try to win the game, but not at the expense of the above points

Players should be given the opportunity to play in a variety of positions in order to support their learning. In the early years of their development (12s, 13s, 14s), players should play across two units of play (def, mid and attack) and be encouraged to play left, centre and right. As they move into U15+, players should begin to specialise in two or three positions (across one or two units).

The Psychological Corner

Confidence

Describes the players' self belief in their skills and ability to reach their goals.

A confident player:

- wants the ball under pressure
- displays positive body language
 - shows creativity in their play
- offers ideas and feedback to the team

Commitment

Describes the players' motivation to play, develop and learn.

A committed player:

- gives high effort in training and matches
 - takes on difficult challenges
 - is not afraid to make mistakes
- works hard to achieve individual challenges
 - refocuses after set backs

Control

Describes the players' ability to control their emotions.

A player with excellent control:

- stays calm in pressured situations
- refocuses quickly after mistakes
- recognises opportunities for learning after mistakes
- is able to motivate themselves for training and games

Communication

Describes the players' ability to listen and talk to team mates and coaches.

A player with excellent communication:

- encourages and motivates team mates
- listens to team mates' and coaches' views
 - shares ideas with team mates and coaches
- helps to refocus team mates after mistakes

Concentration

Describes the players' ability to focus their attention on relative tasks.

A player with excellent concentration:

- stays focussed on their individual tasks
 - is able to refocus after mistakes
 - is not easily distracted
- does not let complacency set in and sticks to their roles

Creativity

Describes the players' ability to generate ideas and problem solve.

A creative player:

- tries new ideas
 - is not afraid to 'get it wrong'
- challenges and questions the 'norm'
- recognises opportunities to change and develop

Developing the 'Psych' Corner

Confidence

- * Use personal praise and specific feedback to recognise personal accomplishments.
- * Give players opportunities to do their feel good games. Build confidence through success.
- * Recognise and reward effort to develop growth mindset and build confidence.
- * Increased exposure to game like scenarios allows players to build experiences which they can recall in matches
- * Give players different roles (team captain, manager, coach) during training and allow them to share ideas with teams to develop their ideas.

Commitment

- * Reward efforts, attitude and intentions beyond the mere outcome
- * Allow players to showcase skills and ideas that they have worked hard to develop
- * Ask players to rate their commitment out of 10, challenge them to improve it by 1 point in the next 5 minutes
- * Avoid correcting every mistake, we want players to take risks and not fear being pulled up each time they do
- * Praise players who work hard after a mistake, make it specific so they understand why they are being praised

Control

- Recreate pressured scenarios in training i.e. 1-0 down with 5 minutes to go - how do you react? How do you play?
- * Use bad officiating decisions in training. Work on positive reactions when things are not going their way.
- * Use short games (5-10 minutes) with regular winners and losers. Work on players positive reaction to refocus for the next game.
- * Regular exposure to game like scenarios and playing under pressure will allow players to develop their own coping mechanisms.

Communication

- * Praise players who are ready to start, listening and displaying positive body language
- * Praise players who give specific information to team mates during games
- * Use conditions in play that highlight the importance of communication i.e. silent football, one player able to talk
- * Provide regular breaks where players can discuss their tactics and ideas (what is working? What is not working? Where is it not working? When is it not working? How can we change?)
- * Work on cues/triggers that players can give as a form of non verbal communication

Concentration

- Playing games and match scenarios means that players always have roles to play. Develop their understanding of triggers and cues for specific movements when off the ball.
- * Game related practices require players to have a picture of what is happening around them. They will need to scan space and refocus on the ball regularly.
- * Stretch players concentration by adding or removing rules and conditions during play
- * Ask players to develop trigger words for specific movements which can refocus concentration (i.e. squeeze, press, drop)

Creativity

- Use game scenarios and modified games to allow players the opportunity to develop their own solutions to problems
- Avoid correcting every mistake as this may deter players from trying new things
- Praise players for risk taking and trying new ideas. Remember that it will not always work first time and players need to be given time.
- Use open questioning techniques to stimulate 'possibility' thinking
- Promote creative play across the whole pitch - it is not just for attacking players!

The Social Corner

Enjoyment

A player who enjoys their football:

- has excellent attendance levels at training and matches
 - plays with a smile on their face
- is willing to share ideas and ask questions
 - plays with confidence and creativity

Attitude

A player with an excellent attitude:

- is well behaved
- is on time for training and matches
- is focussed during training and matches
 - recognises that they represent the football club in everything they do
- follows the club's code of conduct and expected behaviours

Team Player

An excellent team player:

- recognises their role within the team
- demonstrates leadership but can also recognise when to follow others
- is willing to help others work towards achieving their goals
- helps to set up and take down equipment at sessions and matches

Sharing

Sharing players will:

- discuss ideas, tactics and solutions with their team mates
 - offer and take on board constructive criticism and feedback from team mates and coaches
- offer encouragement, support and praise to their team mates

Learning

A player committed to learning will:

- work hard to complete tasks and challenges
- use mistakes and set backs as an opportunity to learn and develop
- ask questions of team mates and coaches to develop their understanding
- Recognise that working hard is key to learning new skills

Challenge

Players who enjoy a challenge will:

- take on new tasks
- ask for the 'next step' in their development
- play in a variety of positions
- try things that they find difficult

Developing the 'Social' Corner

Enjoyment

- Ensure that players play an active part in the session. Consider use of specific individual challenges throughout blocks of work.
 - Give players opportunity to shape their learning and decide how to set up practices to make it relevant to them.
- Ensure that sessions are pitched at the right level - players should be both challenged and supported where necessary to maintain a good level of engagement
 - Avoid queues and lines when practising
- Allow players opportunities to develop their own ideas and solutions

Attitude

- Recognise and reward players who are on time (early) for training and matches
- Give players specific roles on training and match days
- Recognise and reward players who behave in line with the club's code of conduct

Team Player

- Provide opportunities for players to take the lead during sessions. - appoint coach/captain for different parts
 - Provide game/match scenarios and allow players to discuss and develop their own solutions and individual roles within the team
- Ask players to delegate roles for training and match days (i.e. set up warm up, corner flags, water bottles etc)
- Condition games to play to different players' strengths - players will need to recognise who has strengths in different areas

Sharing

- Give players opportunities to discuss, evaluate and offer suggestions to team improvements during drinks breaks
 - Use observation and feedback as an intervention to give players opportunities to watch others perform and give evaluative feedback
- Use prompting questions to get teams/units to discuss their performance during games
 - Provide unavailable (injured) players with opportunities to observe and feedback on specific elements during training/matches

Learning

- Recognise and reward players who have worked hard to achieve specific tasks or challenges
- Praise players who take on new challenges
 - Provide players with opportunities to ask questions of coaches and their team mates to develop their understanding
- Avoid pulling players up for every mistake they make - give them time to self correct
- Provide additional opportunities for players to practise (homework tasks, self directed practise at training, arrival activities)

Challenge

- Take players outside of their comfort zones. Develop training sessions that will challenge and put stress on players' ability
- Play with different formations and styles of play to challenge players' understanding of specific themes
- Conduct regular player reviews that highlight players strengths and areas for development - give clear ideas of where their 'next step' is