



1v1 PRACTICE GAMES

1v1 PRACTICE GAMES



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INTRODUCTION

It's vitally important that players are able to attack and defend in 1v1 situations. Coaches often accelerate into small games of 3v3, 4v4, 5v5 etc without spending adequate time on the basic attacking and defending principles.

1v1 practice games are vital to any coach as this situation occurs naturally in any game. players must feel comfortable dealing with these situations and finding a solution whether they are in attack or defence. The practices in this Journal are designed to be unpredictable, forcing the players to make quick choices / decisions in order to come out on top.

Insights that I would give my players are:

In attack -

- “Try to slow the defender down and then accelerate”
- “All you need is half a yard”
- “Take the defender away from where you want to go, this will give you the space to attack”
- (For example a right footed player would take a defender to the left, before accelerating quickly into the space created on the right)

In defence -

- “Close the space”
- “Show away from danger or towards a team-mate”
- “Force the opponent to play backwards or sideways”
- “Be patient and stay on your feet”
- “If you delay the attacker for 3-5 seconds then you will have given your team mates enough time to recover and support you”

1v1 CHOICE



SET UP / RULES

The defender passes to the attacker and runs to defend.

The attacker receives the ball and can choose to score in one of the goals.

If the defender wins the ball they must dribble to the white line at the opposite end to score a goal.

For the next attack, the players rotate positions.

1v1 LOSE THE DEFENDER



SET UP / RULES

The defender passes to the attacker then runs to defend.

The attacker receives the ball and attempts to score in one of the goals.

For the next attack the players rotate positions.

1v1 PENALTY AREA



SET UP / RULES

Two teams of players.

One player from each team goes into the penalty box.

The other players surround the outside of the box with one ball each.

The blue player starts by receiving a ball from one of his team-mates and attempting to score.

The red player must try to defend. The game continues until all the balls have been played into the area.

1v1 RECOVER TO DEFEND



SET UP / RULES

The blue player attacking starts in the gate.

The blue player must pass to the yellow “defender”.

The yellow defender passes into space on the right or left.

Immediately the blue player runs to collect the ball and then attempts to score.

The yellow player must run through the gate and then attempt to stop the blue player from scoring.

Player rotation, after defending become the attacker and then rest.

1v1 LOSE YOUR MARKER



SET UP / RULES

Players must be in pairs and rotate between defending, attacking and serving.

The attacking player must attempt to lose the defender and receive a pass.

The attacker must then attempt to score using a maximum of two touches.

For the next attack, both players must take the positions of the two servers/passers.

1v1 FINISHING CIRCUIT



SET UP / RULES

Three station finishing circuit.

1 – the attacker has three touches to score in a 1v1 against the keeper.

2 – the defender passes to the attacker who must dribble away from the defender and score.

3 – the defender passes to the attacker who attempts to lose the defender and score in one of the goals.

After each turn, the players move onto the next station. On stations 2 and 3 you must defend first and then attack.

1v1 RANDOM



SET UP / RULES

One player works as the attacker and starts in the middle of the pitch.

The other players stand by a numbered cone and get ready to react as defenders.

To start the practice, the coach calls out a number.

Immediately, the attacker attempts to score whilst the defender whose number has been called must race back to defend.

For the next attack, the attacker replaces the defender and the defender becomes the new attacker.

1v1 CONTINUOUS – 4 GOALS



SET UP / RULES

Four mini-goals, five players and lots of footballs.

One player starts in the middle, the other four players start in front of the goals.

The player that starts in the middle must collect a ball and then attack a goal of his choice.

If the player scores, they race to retrieve a new ball in order to attack a 2nd goal.

However, if the defender stops the attacker scoring the roles are reversed and the defender runs out to receive a ball and attack.

1v1 CONTINUOUS



SET UP / RULES

Two teams.

Each team takes it in turn to attack and then defend in a 1v1 situation.

An example would be, blue player attacks and then reacts to defend against the next yellow player.

The game is played for a set time period or until a certain amount of goals are scored.

1v1 CONTINUOUS – 2 GOALS



SET UP / RULES

The middle “attacking” player must dribble into one of the end zones and attempt to score in a 1v1 situation.

Once the attack is completed, the defending player receives a ball from the coach and attacks the opposite end.

The original attacker now takes a rest and a new defender enters the pitch.

Therefore, all players must defend a 1v1, attack in a 1v1 and then rest.

1v1 TEAMS



SET UP / RULES

Three teams, 4 goals and 16 balls.

One team as keepers, one team as defenders and one team as attackers.

The players must wait for the coaches whistle before attacking 1v1.

Once the attack is completed, the attacker moves to the next goal on their right and waits for the coach's whistle.

All attackers have four 1v1's to complete against four different defenders.

The game can be scored by counting which attacker scored the most goals or by adding the total goals of the whole team together.

1v1 SHOOT, REACT & DEFEND



SET UP / RULES

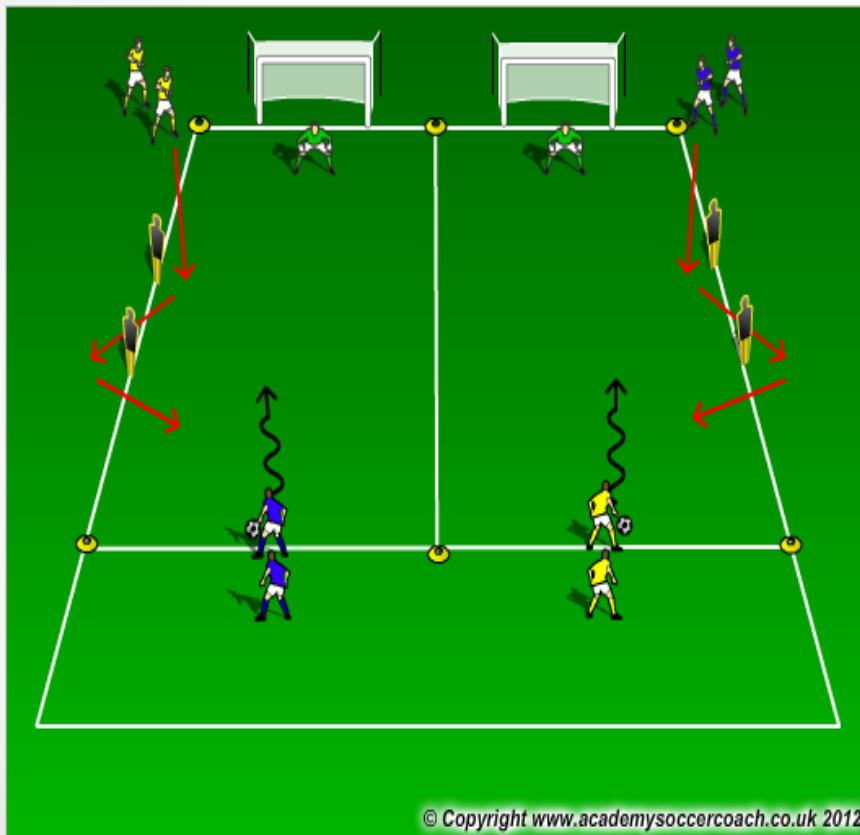
The attacker plays a one-two with the target player and then runs to shoot at goal.

Immediately the target player reacts and runs to receive a pass from the coach.

The target player then dribbles to score whilst the shooting player must react and defend 1v1.

For the next attack, the shooting player becomes the target player.

1v1 CONDITIONING & DEFEND



SET UP / RULES

The players work on the coaches whistle.

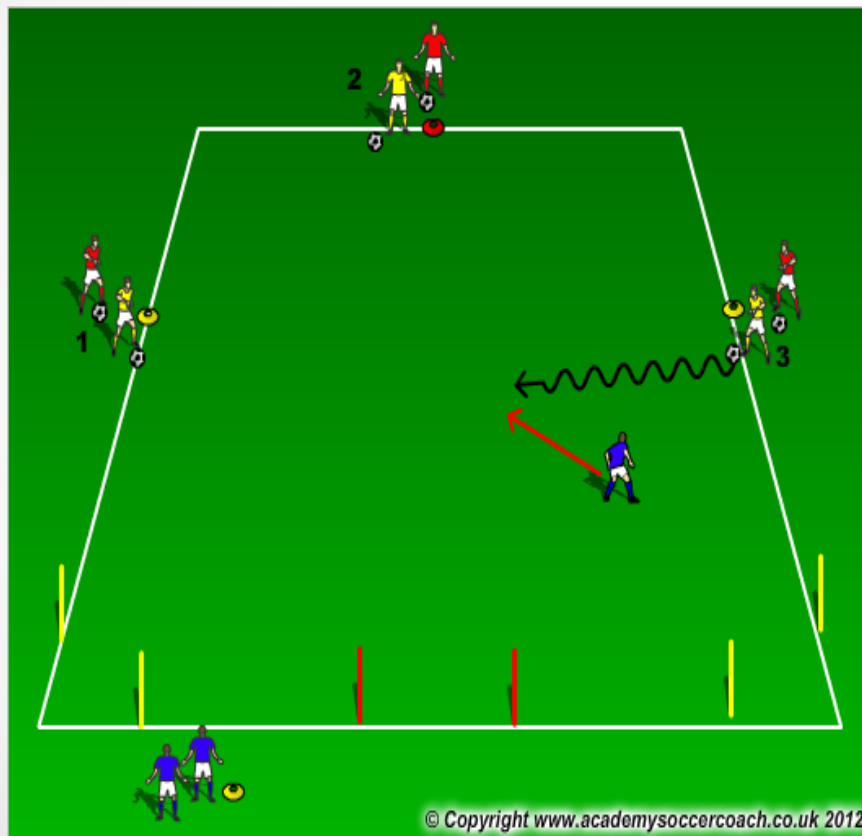
Whistle 1 – the defender must sprint and jockey the 1st mannequin.

Whistle 2 – the defender must sprint and show the 2nd mannequin inside.

Whistle 3 – the attacker dribbles onto the pitch and the defender must defend a 1v1 situation.

For the next attack, the attacker and defender must switch positions.

1v1 FORCE AWAY FROM GOAL



SET UP / RULES

The three attackers must stand by one cone each.

The defending player starts in the middle of the pitch.

To start, the coach calls a number 1,2,or 3

The attackers must react, they can only score in the goal they are facing.

The defender must now defend by forcing the attacker away from the goal.

Each team will attack and defend three times before rotating positions.

1v1 STOP THE TURN



SET UP / RULES

Two teams

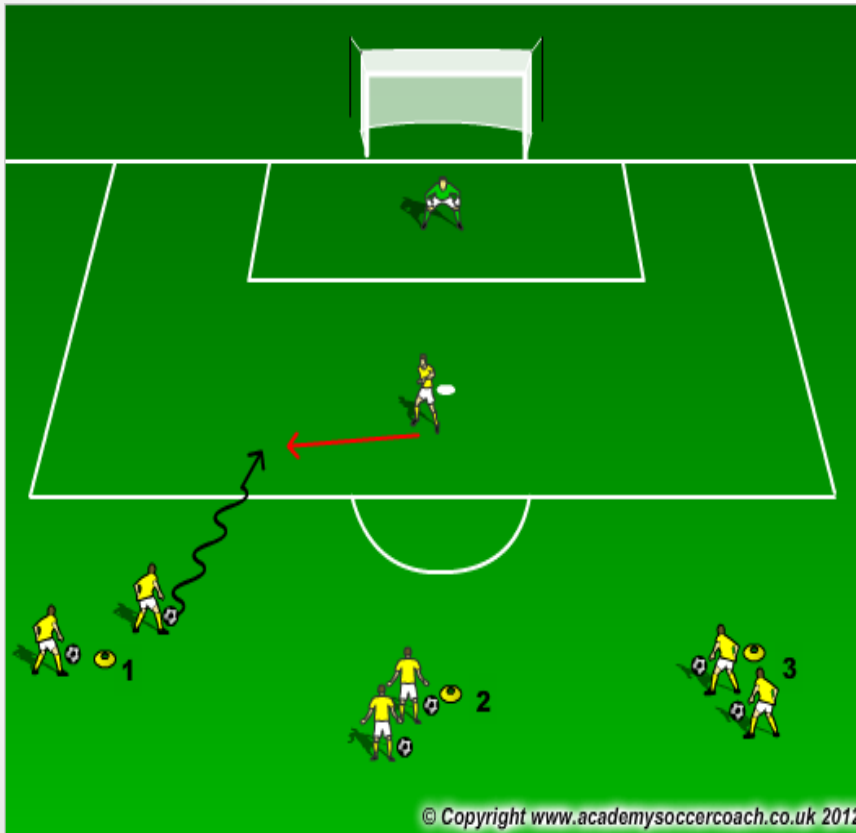
The 1st goalkeeper starts the practice by rolling the ball to a team of their choice.

Immediately the receiving player must attempt to turn and score.

The player who does not receive the pass must now react and become the defender.

The next attack is started by the 2nd goalkeeper.

1V1 ATTACK, DEFEND & REACT



SET UP / RULES

The players are spread out across the three cones.

One player is nominated as the first defender.

The keeper controls the practice by calling out a number (the attacker).

The player called must dribble onto the pitch and attempt to score a goal.

The defender must react to defend a 1v1 situation.

If the attacker scores then the defender must defend for the next attack, but if the defender stops the attacker scoring the roles are quickly reversed.

1v1 DEFENDING TECHNIQUE



SET UP / RULES

The players react to the coach's call of "jockey", show left, show right" and quickly run to put the mannequin under the correct pressure.

Once the players are comfortable with this exercise, the coach can now introduce the balls and "real" 1v1 situations.

The layout of the pitch has three goals/gates. Firstly, play the ball diagonally to the right, then diagonally to the left and finally have the defender defend straight forward.

This will allow the defenders to experience forcing the attacking player both sides and work on jockeying.

1v1 DEFEND YOUR BOX



SET UP / RULES

Four stations A, B, C, D.

Station A is the defender.

To start, the player at station B throws a ball for the defender to make a headed clearance.

Immediately, player D dribbles and crosses for player B, player A “defender” must recover and attempt to stop him from scoring.

Once this ball has been played, player C dribbles into the box and attempts to score, now player A must react and defend 1v1.

For the next attack, the players move to the next station (example A to B, B to C , etc).

1v1 CLEAR & REACT



SET UP / RULES

One blue player goes out to defend.

The next blue player throws a ball into the air for the defender to jump and make a headed clearance.

Immediately after the coach calls “left” or “right”.

The attacker called, quickly dribbles to score. The defender must react and try to stop him.

For the next attack, the defender and attacker rotate positions.

1v1 DRIBBLE WITH DANGER



SET UP / RULES

The defender starts in the middle.

The first attacker attempts to get past the defender and across to the opposite side.

The defender must attempt to force him out of the area or win possession of the ball.

If the attacker is successful in getting across the area then the defender must continue to defend.

However, if the attacker is forced out or tackled, the roles are reversed.

The game is played for a set time period.

1v1 PROTECT YOUR BALL



SET UP / RULES

Pairs of players.

One player starts with the ball.

On the coaches whistle, the players compete 1v1 for 10 seconds.

The player in possession of the ball is the winner.

The player not in possession is now eliminated.

The winning players must now find a new opponent for the next game.

This game continues until only one player is left.



1v1 NO-ONE WILL PASS



SET UP / RULES

The blue player must defend each line and stop the attackers one by one.

To start, player 3 serves player 1 for a header. The defender must stop the ball from going past the line.

Immediately, player 2 passes a ball towards the opposite line, the defender must react and run to slide and stop the ball crossing the line.

Now player 3 dribbles onto the pitch and attempts to get to the line opposite.

Finally, player 4 throws the ball over the defenders head and attempts to get it to the other side, the defender must shield the ball.

The defender gets 1 point for each ball successfully defended. The player rotate positions for the next game 1 to 2, 3 to 4 etc.



1v1 FRONT AND BACK



SET UP / RULES

The keeper passes to player 1.

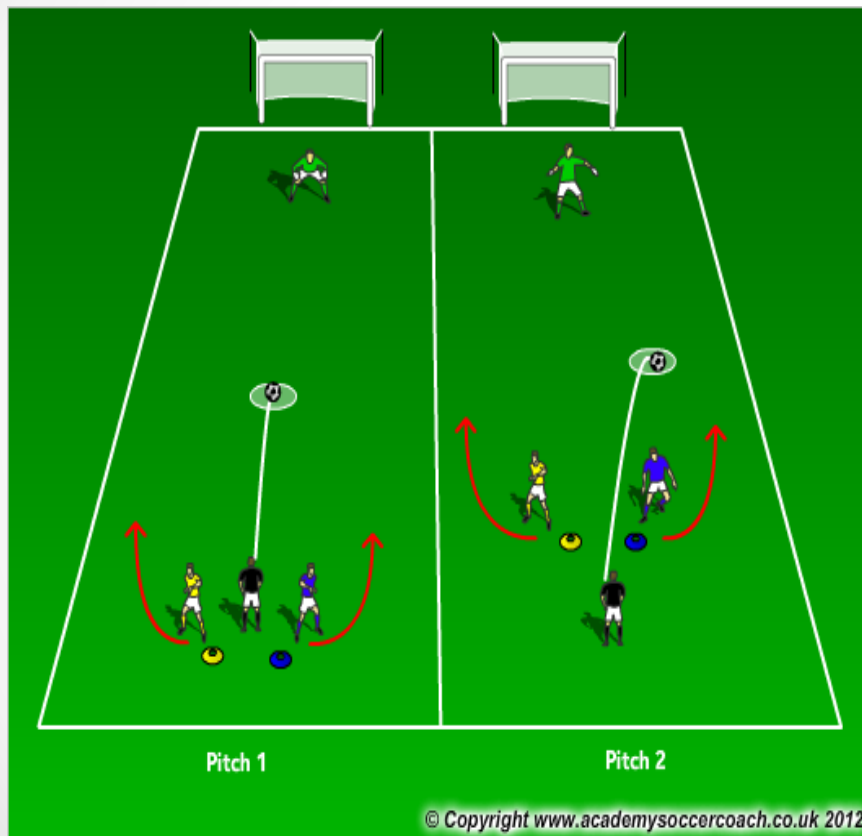
Player 1 now attacks 1v1 against player 3.

Immediately after this attack the coach passes to player 3.

Player 2 must now run out and stop player 3 from turning to shoot.

For the next attack, player 1 becomes player 2 and player 2 becomes player 3.

1v1 BATTLES



SET UP / RULES

Pitch 1

The players stand to the side of the coach and away from the goal.

The players must react to the coaches throw and race to the ball.

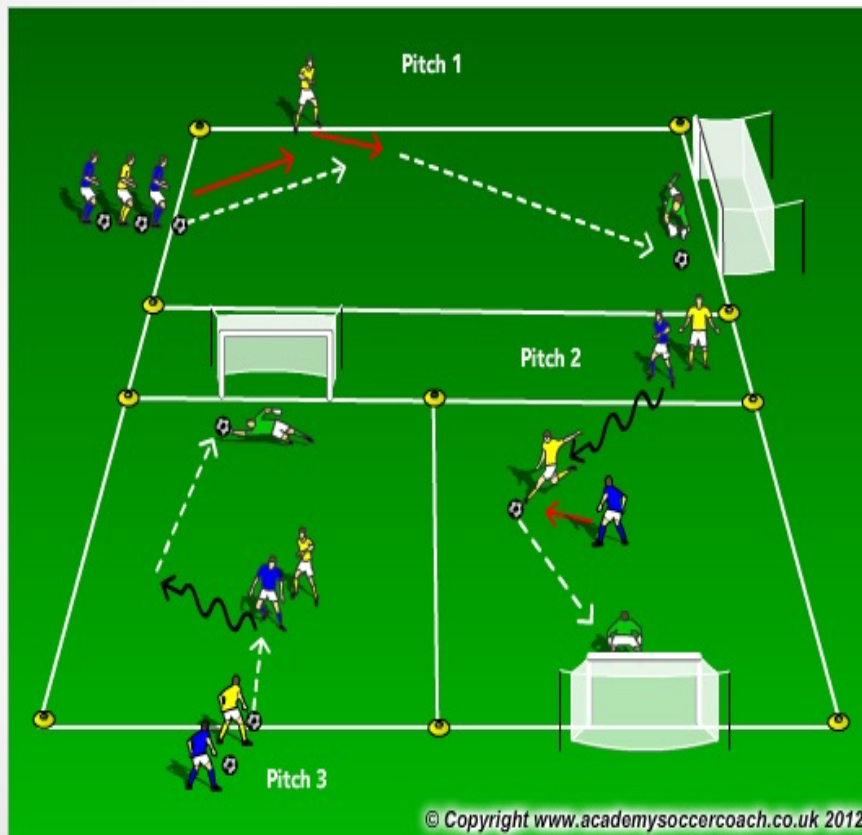
Pitch 2

The players stand side by side (away from or facing the goal).

The players must react to the coaches throw and race to the ball.

Both games continue until the ball leaves play.

ULTIMATE 1v1 CIRCUIT



SET UP / RULES

Pitch 1

The defender passes to the attacker and the runs back to recover. The attacker attempts to race away and score.

Pitch 2

The attacker dribbles to score in a 1v1 against the defender.

Pitch 3

The serving player passes into the attacker who must attempt to hold off the defender and turn to score.

Player rotation

After defending on pitch 1, become the attacker. Then move on to attack on Pitch 2 and then defend. Finally, be the server, attacker and then defender on Pitch 3.

CONCLUSION

1v1 practice games are vital to any coach as this situation occurs naturally in any game. Players must feel comfortable dealing with these situations and finding a solution whether they are in attack or defence. The practices in this journal are designed to be unpredictable, forcing the players to make quick choices / decisions in order to come out on top.

I hope this games journal will help you to develop sessions that motivate and inspire your players to improve. I was once asked what session I would work on if I was coaching a group of players for the very first time. I replied with 1v1's. The simple reasoning is that even the best forward in the world is tackled sometimes and likewise even the best defender in the world is taken on, therefore footballers at all levels constantly need to work and develop their 1v1 skills.

Michael Beale

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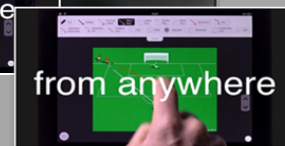
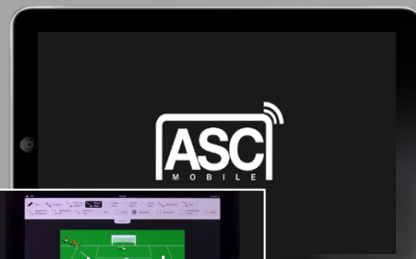
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