



Small-Sided Games

Small-Sided Games to Improve all Areas of the Game



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This section of the Member Drills Database contains sessions that focus on the use of small-sided games in sessions that were presented by various clubs and coaches from around the world.

These sessions were observed by WORLD CLASS COACHING during tours, coaching seminars and visits to professional clubs, contributed by the coach conducting the session or observed by another coach and contributed by them.

Session Topics - Tactical, Midfielders, Possession, Small Sided Games

Topic: MF Training

DATE: 8/21/2007 - 3:00pm

Warm-up

Passing Box Warm-up (15 Minutes)

- Passes of less than 10 yards
 - Passes of more than 10 yards
- Stretch between pass sequences

1:3:1 v. 2 (5 vs. 2 Possession Game in a 20 x 30 Grid)

Exercise

Triangle Box w/ Targets (3 v. 4)

Working with the three central midfielders, work with them to quickly find the targets and to keep their triangle shape. Also, work with them to force the ball wide when they are defending. The four defending midfielders should start out as a flat four midfield, been then vary it to a diamond midfield. Targets must stay within a central area.

Coaching Points

Player Movement
Receiving Clues
First Touch

Weighted Passes
Technical Speed

Technical Preparation

- Receiving
- First Touch
- Communication
- Technical Speed

In Possession

- Speed of Play
- Movement off of the ball
- Proper passing tech.
- Quick and proper support of the ball
- First Touch
- Finding the targets quickly
- Hips open
- Keeping shape

Out of Possession

- Immediate pressure
- Proper and immediate support
- DO NOT LET THEM BACK INSIDE!
- Forcing the ball wide
- Proper defensive shape

Cooldown

Normal Cooldown and Stretch



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In Possession

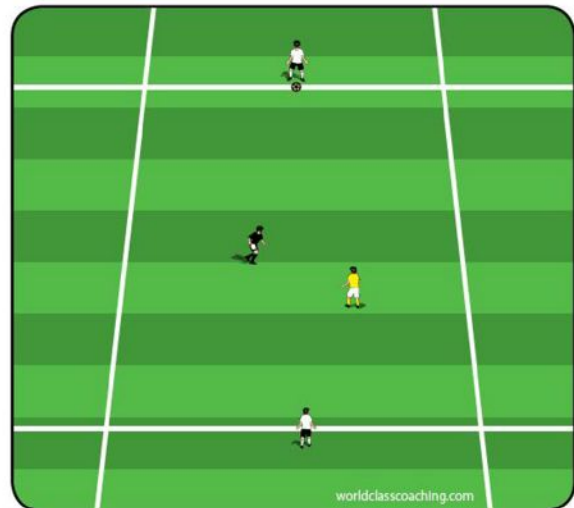
- Speed of Play
- Movement off of the ball
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Out of Possession

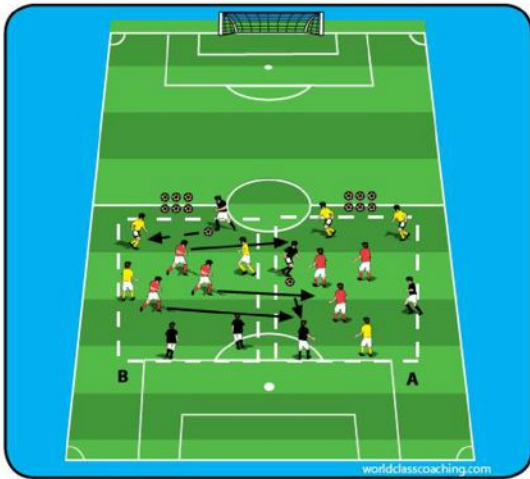
- Immediate pressure
- Forcing the ball wide
- Proper defensive shape
- Proper and immediate support
- DO NOT LET THEM BACK INSIDE!

Cooldown

Normal Cooldown and Stretch



Session Topics - Dribbling, Passing, Possession, Shooting, Defending, Small Sided Games, Circuit Training, Technical



Note:

- While players were doing the warm and exercise N:1, the goalkeepers were working with the goalkeeper coach

Tuesday, March 6th 2007

Warm-up: (10 min)

- The groups are divided into 3 teams of 6 players
- 9 players are inside square A (3 white, 3 yellow and 3 reds)
- 9 players are inside square B (3 white, 3 yellow and 3 reds)
- 1 ball per player. The players are asked to dribble with the ball inside the square using every part of their foot and doing different moves (juggling, change of speed with the ball, ect. ...)
- The exercise is alternated with dynamic and static stretching

Exercise N-1: (12 minutes + 2 min of static stretching)

- On a 20X20 grid Yellows and whites play against reds a possession game (limit of 2 touches)
- Game is played in square A and B
- Every time the coach says GO, reds from square A must sprint to square B, and reds from square B must sprint to square A
- Every minute, the coach changed the players in the middle
- Objective of the exercise: Specific strength; work of the 3 defenders (pressure and cover) and quality of passing

MODERN..... Soccer Conditioning

Condition your teams with "Global Training" and integrate **TECHNICAL & TACTICAL** elements into your conditioning sessions like Gus Hiddink did with Russia and Jose Mourinho has pioneered over the years. Forget about conditioning your players with shuttles and sprints...that is "old hat".



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Exercise N-2: Circuit training for specific strength (12 minutes)

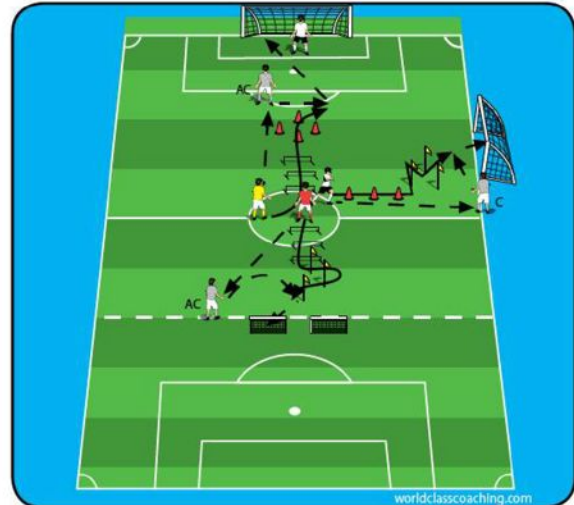
- Organization: The players stay in the same groups (6 yellows, 6 whites and 6 reds)

Yellow: The first player from the group passes the ball to the assistant coach. Afterwards he does skipping over the hurdles and makes 4 jumps (front, back, left and right). He receives a ball from the coach and finishes 1 touch. Right after, he sprints to cone number 1 and jogs to the red group

Red: The first player from the group passes the ball to the assistant coach. Afterwards he does skipping over the hurdles and goes sideways around the polls. He receives the ball, in the air, from the coach and jumps to head the ball into the small goals in the corners of the goal. Right after, he sprints to cone 3 number 2 and jogs to the white group

Yellow: The first player from the group passes the ball to the coach. Afterwards he sprints to the second cone, comes back to the first, sprints to the third, and goes sideways around the hurdles ball air the coach and 2 hurdles. He receives a ball, in the air, from finish's with one touch (volley or head). Right after, he sprints to cone number 3 and jogs to the yellow group

Note:



- The exercise was done during 12 minutes (non-stop) with the players applying themselves at 100%
- After this exercise, the players add 4 minutes for a water break and dynamic stretching

GLOBAL SOCCER CONDITIONING

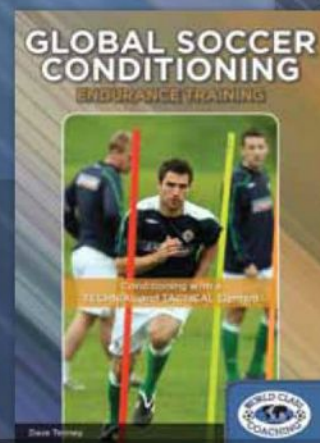
Global Soccer Training is a term used to describe the modern way of training teams. Global Soccer Training sessions include technical, tactical AND conditioning elements. In other words, the days of conducting separate training sessions for conditioning with sprints, shuttle runs and long distance runs are now considered "old hat".

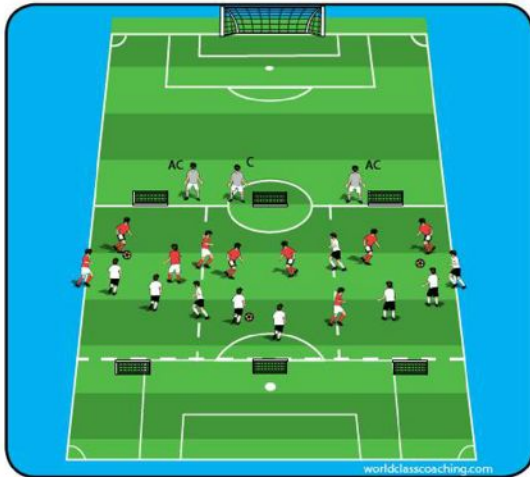
The Global Soccer Conditioning DVD series will show you how to condition your teams with "Global Training" and integrate TECHNICAL & TACTICAL elements into your conditioning sessions like Gus Hiddink did with Russia and Jose Mourinho has pioneered over the years.



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Note: While players were doing the exercise, the goalkeepers were working with the goalkeeper coach

Exercise N-3: (20 minutes)

In a 15 X 20 grid

- 2 VS 2 with targets on the side
- Players inside have unlimited touches and targets play 1 touch
- 1min and 30 seconds X 6 (1 min réc between each)
- Always change targets after each series

Objective:

Defensively: Work of the first and second defender (pressure and cover)

Offensively: Quality of passing, mobility, improvisation, penetration, support and speed of execution

Physical: Specific strength

Exercise N-4: (12 min)

- Progression of exercise number 3
- 3 VS 3
- The players have unlimited touches
- 2 min and 30 seconds X 3 (1 min réc between each)



Exercise N-5: (20 minutes)

Offensive organisation and transition from offence to defence

- 10 VS 9
- Blues are playing with 1 goalkeeper, 4 defenders, 2 midfielders and 3 forwards
- Whites are playing with 1 goalkeeper, 2 defenders, 3 midfielders and 3 forwards
- Only the wingers are full backs attacking are allowed in zone A and B.
- The team defending is not allowed in
- The coach asked for speed of execution, mobility, midfielders to play the ball wide and a lot of diagonals
- Progression: Coach holds a ball in his hands. The players play normally, with the same principles of exercise N: 5. Every time the coach played a ball to another team, everybody add to react according to the new ball that was played by the coach

Cooldown: (10 minutes)

- Abdominal work
- Lower back
- Static stretching

Total practice time: 1H40

Session Topics - Tactical, Passing, Small Sided Games, Possession

PLAN 1: THE "AWARENESS" NUMBERS GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: TEACHING PLAYERS TO BE AWARE OF THEIR NEXT OPTION "BEFORE" THEY RECEIVE THE BALL AND NOT AFTER



You can have players static to begin then have them passing and moving. Player receives from the same person and passes to the same person each time. This develops great awareness of time, space and player positions. Continuous work on and off the ball.

Awareness of: where the player you receive from is and where the player you pass to is. Because of this players begin to anticipate the pass to them and where it is coming from. Also they must

Coaching Points

- Creating Space
- Quality Passing
- Support positioning; early movement off the ball
- Players look before they receive to see own players positions, opponents players positions and space.
- Players are looking two moves ahead not just one. For instance as (1) is about to pass to (2), (3) should be looking to support (2) for the next pass already, looking two moves ahead before the ball leaves (1). Peripheral Vision Development results from this.

NON – COMPETITIVE AWARENESS NUMBERS "GAME" WITH TEAMS: PASSING IN SEQUENCE

3 teams. Within each numbered team each player is numbered off. Teams (1) and (2) work together (with two balls) and team (3) works alone (with one ball). Players must pass in sequence ie with teams (1) and (2) working together 1 passes to 2; 2 passes to 3; 3 to 4 and so on up to 8 who passes to 1 and we begin again whilst team (3) players pass 1 to 4. A Player receives from the same person and passes to the same person each time. This develops great awareness of time, space and player positions. Continuous work on and off the ball.



Awareness of: where the player you receive from is and where the player you pass to is. Because of this players begin to anticipate the pass to them and where it is coming from. Also they must look to where it is going to (where is the player they are passing to?). We are trying to create a situation where players are looking two moves ahead not just one. For instance as (1) is about to pass to (2), (3) should be looking to support (2) for the next pass already, looking two moves ahead before the ball leaves (1).

Progression

Reduce the number of touches players are allowed each time they receive a pass, all in to begin, then three touch, then two touch then one touch if it is on to do so. This speeds up the decision making process and forces them to look earlier as to where they are passing to.

SEMI – COMPETITIVE AWARENESS NUMBERS GAME: PASSING IN SEQUENCE

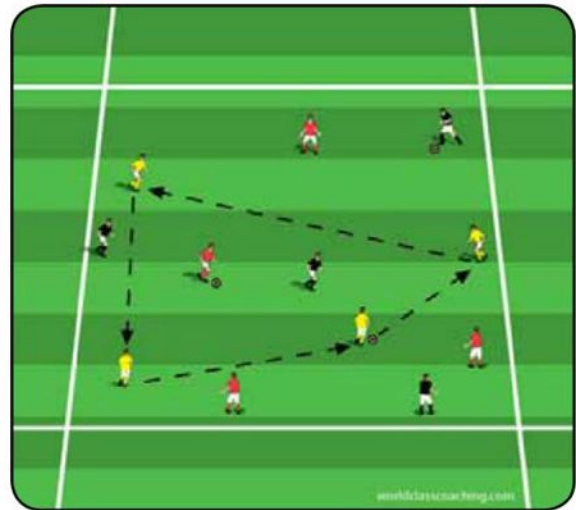
Now have 3 teams passing separately 1 to 4 in each team, with a ball each team. An example is the number One team. Of course the players are moving but it is easier to show it like this to get the idea across.

Progression

Count the number of passes each team get in a certain time frame adding a competitive element to the game. Who can get the highest number of passes made in a given time frame?

Emphasize

- Movement "off" the ball to open up angles for passes between other players.
- Communication verbally between players to help them identify where they are; passing player can call who they are passing to, receiving player can ask for the pass.
- Ensure players spread out throughout the area to have them playing both long and short passes.
- Encourage fewer touches on the ball at each reception to move it around
- the field more quickly helping players develop good transitional play.



Small-Sided Games of the World's Top Teams

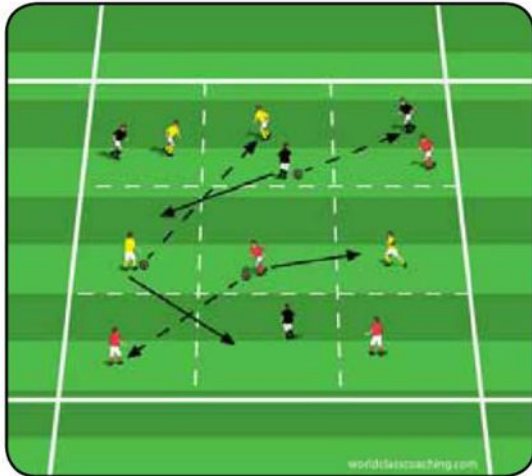
This DVD contains many small-sided games used by the world's top teams and their academies like Manchester United, Juventus, Liverpool, U.S. Women's World Cup Team, Chelsea, Glasgow Rangers as well as MLS teams and USYSA National Champions.



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AWARENESS NUMBERS GAME WORKING IN THREE ZONES

Conditioning the players to pass and move by setting the rule they need to move into another area once they have passed.

Divide the field up into sixth's and ask players to make a pass in one area then they must move to another area to receive the next pass. This can cause players to pass long or pass short and vary the range and distance of the passes and the support as they are required to move once they have made their pass.

Here we are using three teams of four players.

Here players pass and move into other zones to receive the next ball that is coming. This ensures players get the idea of passing and MOVING off the ball, not passing and then standing.

Can say players must pass to space so they pass into another zone next to the one the player they are passing to force them to move to the ball.

COMPETITIVE NON - DIRECTIONAL THREE TEAM AWARENESS POSSESSION GAME (4 v 4 v 4)

Further Progression: Making it more competitive, have each team be the defending team for a certain time span. If they win the ball they then give it back to the combined attacking teams. Count the number of times they win the ball. The defending team to win the ball the most times wins the game, or alternatively the combined teams which give up the ball the fewest times win the game.



Attacking players individually count the number of times they give the ball away as an indication to each and every one of them how well they can maintain possession under pressure.

Begin with players able to have as many touches as they like, then break it down to 3 touch, then 2 touch with one touch passing the aim if it is on to do so.

Coaching Points

- Open body stance to allow a yard or more extra space away from defenders by letting the ball run across the body into preconceived space.
- Looking before receiving to know in advance of the receiving pass; where the defending players are, where the space is, where team mates are free to receive a pass, how many options there are to move the ball on
- Movement OFF the ball is a priority both to receive it and after passing it.

COMPETITIVE DIRECTIONAL THREE TEAM AWARENESS GAME INTRODUCING GOALS AS TARGETS

Here is an interesting way to work on awareness training and passing, movement off the ball, fitness and looking for the penetrating pass. Add triangular goals to score through, this means the game continues after a goal is scored as the ball must be received and possession maintained by another player on the other side of the triangle to count as a goal. This ensures continuous play.

It is a more directional method of playing and more specific to the game in general. The defenders are NOT allowed inside the triangle so they must be constantly working their way around the triangle trying to cut off the penetrating passes.

Team (3) defends, teams (1) and (2) work together. The combined attacking teams can attack both goals alternatively. Attacking both goals encourages "Switching the Field".

Ultimately reduce the game to two equal number teams for the greatest challenge and begin with as many touches as possible reducing the number of touches each is allowed as they improve and are able to keep possession effectively. Reducing the number of touches allowed inevitably increases their awareness and forces them to look for options earlier and improves and speeds up their decision making. This should result in them keeping possession more effectively.

Further information on this Awareness training can be found in another book by the author and published by Reedswain; "Recognizing the Moment to Play".

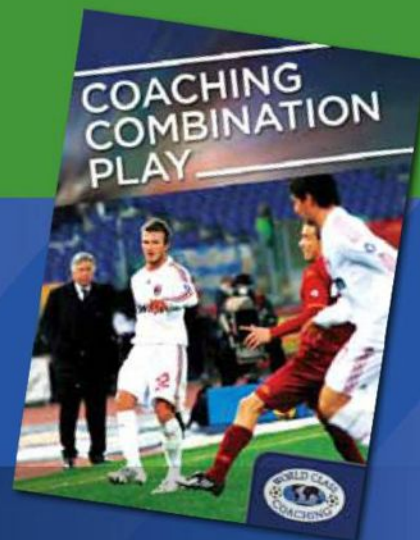


Coaching Combination Play

Coaching Combination Play will show you how to coach your team creative and effective passing combinations that will turn possession into goals. Exercises show how two players can effectively beat one defender with give-and-go's and overlaps. The double-pass, and working with target players is also included. The DVD then progresses to third man runs and small-sided games up to 6 v 6.

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Session Topics - Tactical, Passing, Finishing, Shooting, Small Sided Games

PLAN 11: PASSING AND FINISHING DEVELOPMENT GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: FOCUS ON PASSING AND QUICK FINISHING

Eighteen teen players and a 4 v 4 game with side players to support and goal line players for 1-2's to set up shooting chances. You can vary the number of players playing in the game.

No off sides to begin. Players on the outside need to keep on their toes. Game lasts until players are beginning to be fatigued. Rotate outside players in, inside players out.

Progressions - Introduce offside from the thirds

- Outside players 1 or 2 touch restriction on the ball.
- Inside players touches restriction on the ball.
- Player passes to outside player and switches, gets the players thinking especially if it is when the player coming in has only 1 touch so must immediately find a player.
- Occasionally bring in all the players so it's a 9 v 9 with the keepers, this tests how they play in a restricted space with more players to deal with.
- Reduce the size of the area to 40 x 20, go 4 v 4, this gets more shots on goal.



THREE TEAM PASSING AND FINISHING GAME

Three team game with fourteen players, when one team scores they stay on, the losing team go off and the winning team play the outside team.

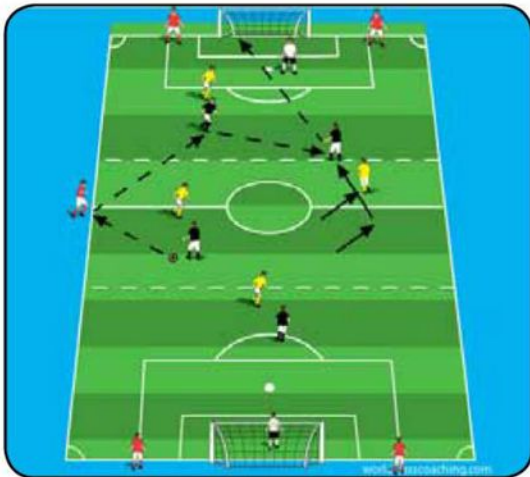
Great if you have 2 keepers and 13 outfield players but you can arrange it based on the number of players you have at the practice, there are many variations on this theme.

Competitive

Play the game over a certain time period and see which of the three teams scores the most goals in that time.

In this set up it is best if the outside support players have only one touch to pass the ball back in, which will usually set up a one touch finish to goal.





Fifteen players to work with so five on the outside one of which will be a keeper for this outside team when they get into the game.

Here (B) blocks a pass to striker (5) from (3) so the outside player is used in a support position to get the ball to (5). (4) loses the defender (A) and gets a layoff pass from (5) to score. This is just one example of many situations that can be created by this game plan.

Coaching Points

- Quality of Passing
- Quality of Support and movement off the ball
- Quality and Speed of Finishing
- Effective Team Play

WINNING SHOOTING & FINISHING

Scoring goals is perhaps the most difficult part of any soccer game and therefore, should be a major part of your training sessions.

These two DVDs focus on crossing, shooting and finishing drills that will teach you how to play effectively in and around the penalty area and how to create more goal scoring chances and score more goals. Including these exercises in your practices will give your team more attacking options and keep the opposing defenses off balance.



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Session Topics - Tactical, Small Sided Games, Transition, Movement, Possession

PLAN 19: TRANSITION DIRECTIONAL TARGET GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: DEVELOPING MOVEMENT OFF THE BALL

Rules:

Players must pass the ball to their target players to score. To score again they have to work the ball back into their own half of the field to be able to return.

Target players have two touches as do side players.

Coaching Points:

- Creating Space by running off the ball to receive or to help a teammate receive.
- Quality of Passing; long and short to targets and to teammates.
- Support play: working angles and distances incorporating switching play using the side players.
- Receiving and Turning in tight situations and dribbling in 1 v 1 situations.
- Quick decision making is required in this session because the numbers are small, the area tight and the transitions rapid.



Progressions:

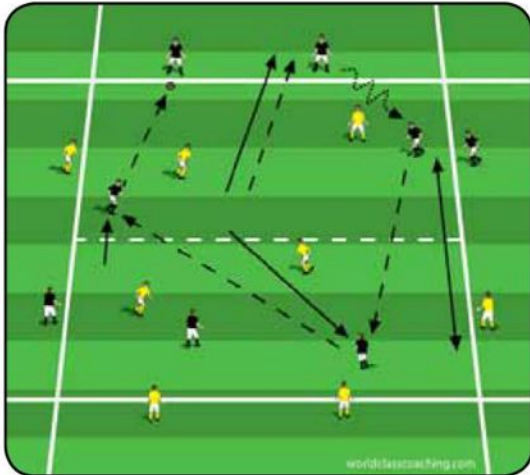
- No restriction on touches then 3, 2 or 1 touch, but only if it is on to do one touch.
- All outside and target players one touch only where possible.
- Switch with target players as they receive the ball.
- Switch with outside players
- Use the opponents target players as support players.

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With 16 Players

Here is an example of the transition and movement off the ball to make it happen. I have left the defensive players static in this situation to highlight the movement of the attacking players.



(2) passes to target player (8) who brings the ball back into the playing area.

(3) makes a run into the other half of the field on the blind side of (C) to receive the next pass. They need to get the ball into that half to be able to score.

(1) makes a forward run into space to receive the next pass off (3) and passes to target player (7) who can start the play again.

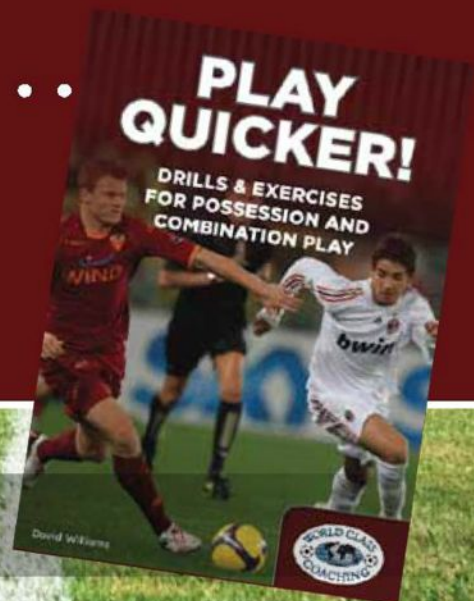
(1) switches with (7) and becomes a target player for the next phase of play.

Observe the Attacking Team

Recognize their movement off the ball for example to work the ball into their own half see if the players make runs early in there as soon as the ball is at a target, some should support short and some long so the target has choices.

Play Quicker!

In this DVD former Manchester United youth coach, David Williams shares many variations of circle drills that he has used to train possession and combination play during his time in the English Premier League. These drills force the players to think and react quickly while still maintaining a high level of accuracy in their dribbling, passing and combination play.



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Observe the Attacking Team

Recognize their movement off the ball for example to work the ball into their own half see if the players make runs early in there as soon as the ball is at a target, some should support short and some long so the target has choices.

To lessen the workload and keep everyone involved have players switch with targets and outside side players when they pass to them.

ELEMENTS OF PLAY THE TARGET GAME TEACHES

Attacking as a Team and as Individuals

- Creating Space by running off the ball to receive or to help a teammate receive.
- Developing quick support play working angles and distances incorporating switching play using the side players.
- Passing long and short to targets and to teammates.
- Receiving and Turning in tight situations and dribbling in 1 v 1 situations.
- Lots of touches on the ball for the players in this practice.
- Quick decision making is required in this session because the numbers are small, the area tight and the transitions rapid.

Defending as a Team and as Individuals

- Pressurizing players on the ball to regain possession.
- Supporting pressuring players and tracking runners off the ball.
- High pressure to regain possession in the attacking half to be able to go straight to the target to score.

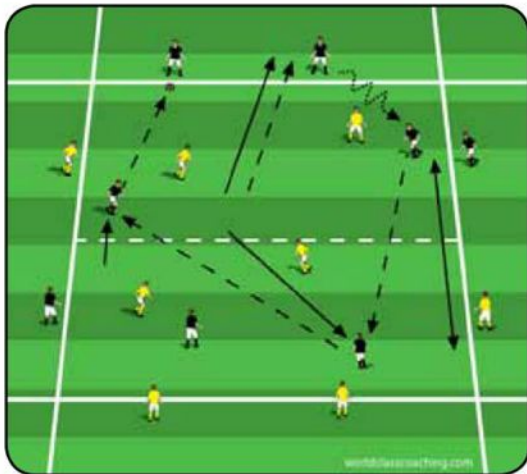
Transitions from defense to attack and attack to defense, quick decision making and improved concentration as the switch occurs. Interchanges of positions between inside players, targets and side support players.

As a coach you can work in this session how to defend properly as individuals and a team or how to attack properly as individuals and a team.

CONDITIONS TO IMPOSE TO CHANGE THE FOCUS OF THE GAME

- No restriction on touches then three, two or one touch but only if it is on to do so.
- Introduce neutral player so 5 v 4 overload in the middle if possession isn't kept easily.

- Interchanges of players outside to in, inside to out as they pass the ball observing the quality of the pass and the first touch of the receiver or performing a crossover.
- Have one teammate at each end so you are attacking both ends but once you have passed to one target you keep possession and must try to get to the other target. You can't go back unless the opposition win the ball then you get it back, only then can you go back to the same target.
- To lessen the workload and keep everyone involved have players switch with targets and outside players when they pass to them. This causes a constant transition of players and focuses the players concentration.
- The team can only score if they get an overlap, crossover or 1 – 2 in during the build up.
- No talking so players have to rely on their own vision to play.
- Players move into the target zone to receive (timing of run and pass) so we don't play with actual targets, different players can then become the target player.
- Man – Marking – Have the players man mark so they must track a player when they haven't the ball and they must lose their marker when they have the ball. This is a good test to see who is working hard and who isn't as they have a designated job to do. You as a coach can see who works to get free of their marker and who works hard to prevent the the player they are marking get the ball.
- To improve the speed of thought reward a successful one touch pass with a goal.
- This session is particularly good as a midfield play practice session as you can liken the start when the ball is at a target as it being a target defender passing it in and to get to the other side through midfield to the other target who is now a striker. Then this target player maintains possession and the team can go the other way, the target striker then becomes a defender for the attacking team starting the move and the other target becomes the striker to pass the ball to. So it is consistent movement end to end with the attacking team from a defender into midfield to a striker
- The team in possession can pass back to the opponents target players to help keep possession of the ball. Liken this to passing back to the keeper in a game situation.
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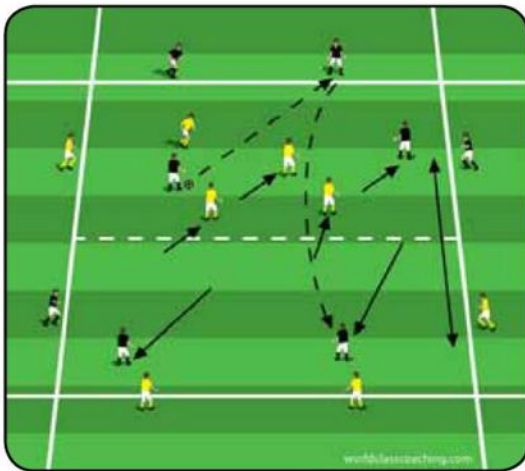
THREE TEAM TRANSITION DIRECTIONAL TARGET GAME WITH 15 PLAYERS

Make it a 3 team game for 15 players (for example). Each game lasts 10 minutes, the winning team stay on the field as a reward. You can vary the positions of the outside players, 2 target players at each end and one support player on one side or one support player on each side, one target player at one end and two at the other and so on.

To make it technically a 10 v 5 game have the team in possession able to play with the outside team. They are trying to score at one end, so these players are on their side but they are also able to work with the side player and the two target players of the other team, using them as support players also. This encourages them to pass back and open the play up and not be focused on just playing forward all the time.

GETTING IT WRONG DEFENSIVELY AND / OR GETTING IT RIGHT OFFENSIVELY

This is an example of what to look for on the defending side of things.



Here the ball has been passed to the target (8) and a goal scored. The defenders are ball watching and not seeing the runs "off the ball" of their opponents.

The idea of getting the ball back into the other half before they can score again when in possession highlights these kinds of moments you need to identify in a game situation.

(1) plays the ball to target (8) to score. (2) supports the next pass short and at a wide angle, and (3) and (4) make runs into the other side of the field and off the ball to get free and receive a pass. Defenders are all ball watching and not looking at these runs and so (3) and (4) get free. At the same time you can say it is getting it right offensively.

The coach has to identify these situations and stop the game and show the set up and ask the defending players what they need to do.

Session Topics - Tactical, Small Sided Games, Possession

PLAN 22: A COMFORT ZONE GAME USING WIDE AREAS

GAME OBJECTIVE: TO ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO USE WIDTH AND OFFER AN AREA TO PLAY WITHOUT PRESSURE

If a player breaks wide into the outside channel on either side of the field and is in possession of the ball this player cannot be tackled. Defenders are not allowed into the channel.

The players on the team in possession of the ball can run the ball into the channel or have it passed to them into the channel.

This condition plants the seed in the mind of the players to immediately play with width when in possession. Numbers for this game can be 3 v 3 and upwards.



(E) and (F) can "shadow" the outside players.

Only one player allowed in the channel on one side at any one time when the team is in possession of the ball.

Players can only stay outside in the channel with the ball for a few seconds then must make their move inside either passing it in or dribbling it in or it becomes too false a set up.

Coaching Points

- Create space wide when in possession of the ball
- Building play from the back
- Using width to attack



Striker (6) makes a run outside into the channel to offer an option of a pass for (2). Defender (B) can only "shadow" this run. By allowing the striker (6) to receive wide in the channel and have no pressure it again encourages the team to use width in attack but this time in the attacking half.

(3) is already in the channel on the other side and continues the forward run and is another option for a pass, as are the players inside the actual field of play.

Who (2) passes to can depend on the reaction of the opponents and who is left free to receive a pass or (2) may just attack with the ball with a forward run or dribble. (2) decides to pass the ball wide into the path of the run of (6).





COMFORT ZONE GAME USING TARGETS

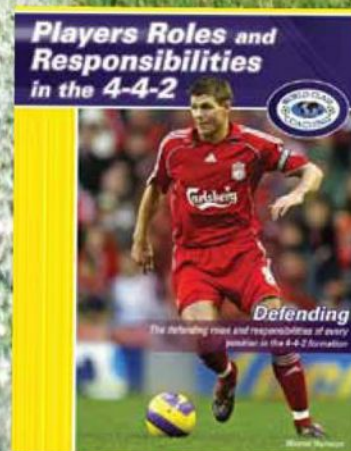
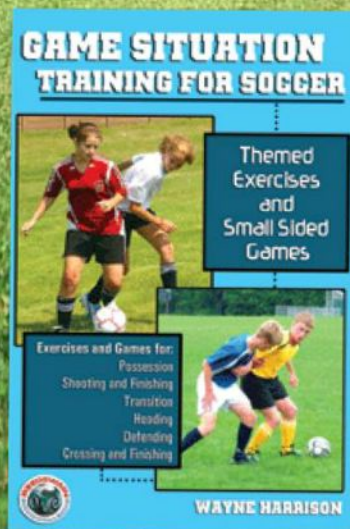
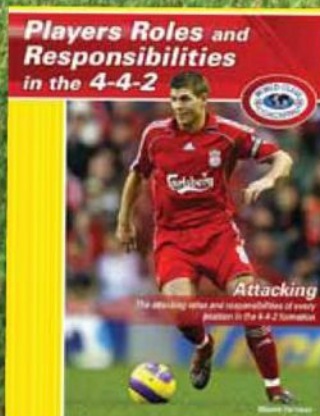
The letters team work the ball to their target. When a goal is scored this way, the ball possession is transferred to the other team and they must immediately break wide to offer options.

Here the two defending strikers (E) AND (F) have broken wide also so there is space for (4) to receive in the middle. Encourage the play to be wide or through the middle depending on the positioning of the opponents.

Coaching Points

The wide areas can be used to practice certain moves the players have been taught, especially at the younger ages where they need to be able to practice them without pressure. This allows for them playing in a game but also doing the move without pressure. For example a certain dribble can be practiced then the ball dribbled in or passed into play.

Checkout these Great Books from Wayne Harrison



Session Topics - Tactical, Small Sided Games, Possession, Composure

PLAN 31: COMPOSURE ZONES GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: TEACHING COMPOSURE ON THE BALL IN BUILDING PLAY FROM THE BACK

This is a small sided game introduction to a bigger game.

Players can bring the ball back into the composure zone and opponents can't track them.

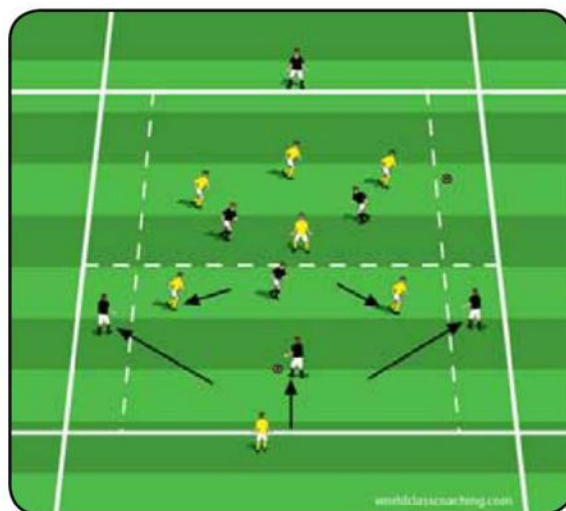
This gives the player in the composure zone time and space to relax and play and build play from the back.

Condition – Can only score if all players over the defensive third line so reinforcing keeping compact vertically.

Restrict number of touches on the ball if they are able to do so to encourage quick passing and movement and to improve the speed of decision making.

Vary play by encouraging defenders to pass directly to the forwards, midfielder players can then support them facing the opponents goal (easier to support rather than receiving and having to turn with the ball).

If you have problems making the session work with equal numbers then reduce the game to an 8 v 5 situation using one forward, one midfielder, two defenders and a keeper on the opponents team until the players are comfortable then go into the full workout.



Learn How the 4-4-2 is Played in the English Professional League

See how Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool and many other English

Professional League teams utilize the 4 - 4 - 2 formation..



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PLAN 39: FOUR ZONE DEFENDING GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: PRESSING AND DEFENDING AS A UNIT

Players must stay in their own zones.



Liken it to a midfield three unit in the middle of the field of play getting close together to stop a pass through them or forcing the player to make a pass over them. Making them play the ball into the air means it at least is forcing a pass that is harder to control for the receiver than one on the ground.

As the ball travels from (4) to (3) to (2) the team in zone 2 travel across the field as a unit also. Here they get compact and close together, cutting down the space between them for player (2) to pass the ball through. The players in zone 3 need to move to open an angle up to receive but the defending players in zone 2 have made this difficult by their collective positioning.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE



The ball is with (D) in zone 3 who has to work some passes with teammates to get the ball to the numbered team in zone 1.

The team in zone 2 have to try to stop them and win possession. They can shadow the passes but not encroach into the other teams zone. (D) passes to (B) and the three players in zone 3 close down the space in front of (B) to make it difficult to pass to the numbered team in zone 1.

The best option for (B) may be to pass to (C) who is free and in space. The three defending players in zone 2 must adjust across the field as a unit quickly to try to stop this player passing into the numbered team in zone 1.

You can limit the number of passes a team has to make before they must try to pass it to another zone so the defending team have a chance to win possession, otherwise teams get bogged down just passing in the same zone many times. This forces the team in possession to move the ball quickly and take chances.

Here (C) tries to play the pass between the two defending players and the ball is intercepted. It may have been after a sequence of 4 passes and this was the last pass they were able to make and the ball had to be transferred to the other zone.

Coaching Points for Defending

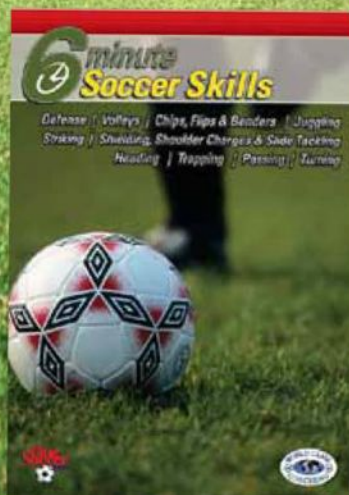
- Quick individual pressure: stepping into the passing channel or lane to intercept the pass.
- Group defensive pressure: 2 or all 3 players getting compact as a group closing down space as a unit.

Progressions

- Restrict the number of touches on the ball of the attacking team making it two touch play, speeding up the play and speeding up decision making.
- Vary the number of passes required in each zone before the ball must be transferred to another team in another zone.
- Make the game free where they can get one pass in before transferring the ball into the other zone if the best pass at that time is the long switching pass to test the defenders speed of positioning to prevent it.



Checkout these Books and DVDs that Focus on the Technical Side of the Game



Session Topics - Tactical, Small Sided Games, Defending, Counter Attack, One Touch, Two Touch

PLAN 43: PRESSING PLAY VERSUS ONE AND TWO TOUCH GAME

GAME OBJECTIVE: COUNTERING BOTH PRESSING AND ONE TOUCH PLAY

I am using an 8 v 8 set up to show the examples of playing a game focusing at various times on winning possession quickly using a high pressing style of play and also playing a quick passing one and two touch game to maintain possession of the ball. Use whatever numbers you have for training, these concepts will work from a small 3 v 3 up to as many players as you like.

The principles of each will apply during the three main moments in the game,

- when we have possession,
- when the opponents have possession, and
- when possession changes from one to another team either way, for example we have it and then lose it, they have it and then we win it.



Pressing Play

This is a pressing high pressure game to encourage the team to try to win the ball as early and as far up the field as possible both as individuals and in the team concept.

The main focus is on defending to win the ball to give our team more possession. Ask the pressing player to call "ball" so everyone knows this player is the one to make the immediate challenge. Have the next closest player, the support player, call "right" or "left" to help the pressing player decide which way to force the ball. All the other players adjust their position off this combination.

To score, the player on the ball just has to get the ball to their own keeper who is in the opposite goal which means pressure has to be immediate because this player can score from anywhere, even a chip into the keepers hands is a goal. Or just have an open goal to play into if you have no keepers.

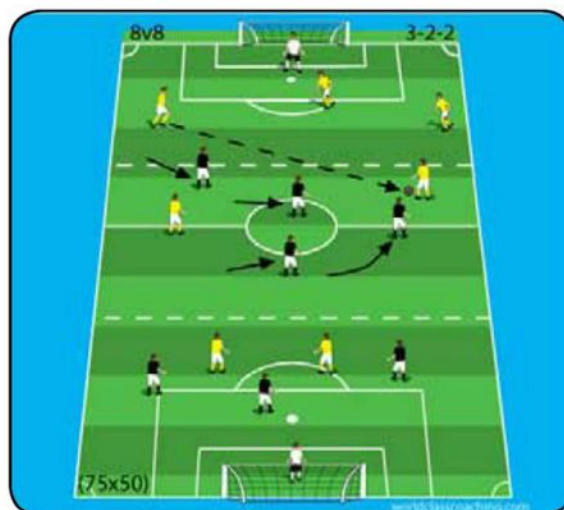


PRESSING PLAY AND ONE AND TWO TOUCH PLAY

Ask yourself, what does this force the opponents to do to change their game to counter this as effectively as they can?

High pressure means the opponent has little time on the ball. So the way to counter high pressure play is to develop one and two touch passing play to prevent the pressing players from getting too close to gain possession with a tackle or forcing a bad pass and giving possession away just through the pressure itself.

For the team with the ball, the awareness training we do is designed to teach and develop the quick thinking that this requires, looking before receiving, looking ahead of the game to where the pass will go. This means less time is needed on the ball but it is especially effective if the opponent's are pressing very quickly. Encourage the team with the ball to play this way to make it more difficult for the pressing to team to be successful then it is a good challenge for both.



Coaching Points for One and Two Touch Play

- Awareness of team mates positions, opponents positions and where space is on the field before receiving a pass.
- Quality, and especially the "Weight" of the pass to a team mate to allow a one touch pass off if necessary
- Getting feet into position to receive early
- Quick decision making
- Quality and speed of the next pass (one or two touch)
- Support positions: Movement "off the ball" of team mates to help the player on the ball move the ball quickly and have immediate options
- Maintaining possession as a team

Coaching Points for Pressing Play

- Quick Pressure by the first defender
- Support Play by the immediate second defender closest
- Balanced Covering Play behind these two by the
- Team defensive shape

Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Dutch, Academy, Ajax, Technical, Tactical

Introduction

Clinician: Jan Pruijn

Players: William Jewell Men's Soccer Team

Session Objective: Show a series of possession oriented small sided games

Coaching Principles

- Setting up the exercise is more important than the actual drill
- Keep it simple for the players
- Look for teaching moments



Exercise #1

Objective: Keep Possession

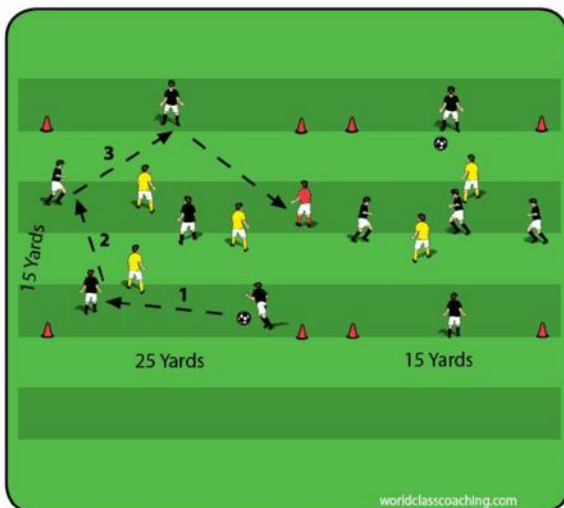
Organization

6 vs. 3 in grid #1 (15 yards by 25 yards)

5 vs. 2 in grid #2 (15 yards by 15 yards)

Coaching Points

- Play the ball in the right way
- Keep the ball on the ground if possible
- Use the appropriate surface to receive and pass the ball
- Stay inside the grid



Exercise #2

5 vs. 3 + 1 target player in grid #1 (15 yards by 25 yards)

Rules

- After 3 passes, the team in possession may play the target player
- If the defenders win possession, give the ball back to the attackers

Coaching Points

After 3 passes look for the penetrative pass into the target player

Keep the ball on the ground and under control

Support the ball into the target player early

Target Player: Control the ball with your first touch, then pass

Take responsibility: Help each other by communicating the number of accomplished passes

Body Shape: Receive the ball on a ½ turn to give yourself the option of passing first time into the target

Assess the situation and decide whether to play one touch or more than one touch

Exercise #2 (con't)

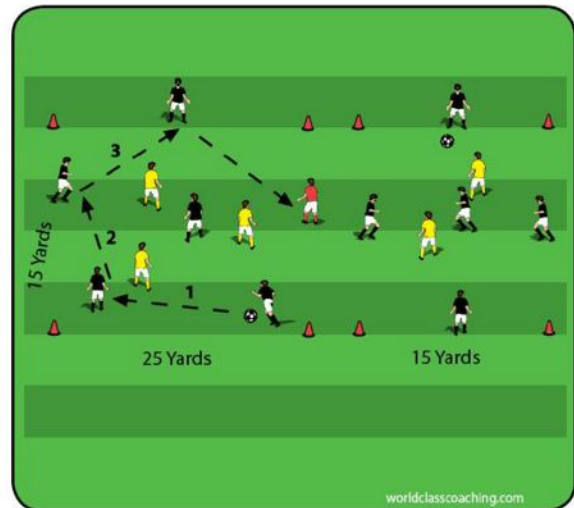
5 vs. 2 in grid #2 (15 yards by 15 yards)

Rules

- Keep possession
- Mandatory 2 touches

Attacking Coaching Points

- Pass the ball to where the defenders are not focusing
- Try to split the defenders (Look for a solution that makes it harder for the defenders to cope)



Defending Coaching Point

Pressure: Look for a bad touch and then quickly press the ball

Challenge #1: Count how many times you can consecutively pass the ball without the defenders intercepting it (2 minute interval)

Challenge #2: Connect more consecutive passes than you did under challenge #1.

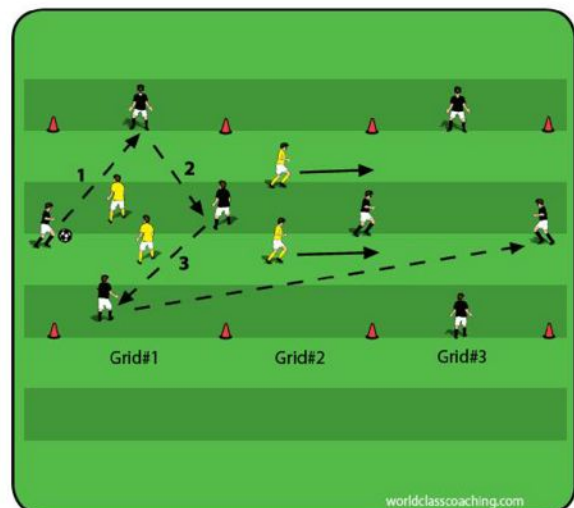
Exercise #3 (Progression)

Organization

4 vs. 2 in grid #1
2 players in grid #2
4 players in grid #3

Rules

The team in possession must complete 3 consecutive passes and transfer ball to the other side of the grid. Upon transfer of the ball to the other grid, the 2 players in the middle grid must defend against the 4 players in the other grid. The defending players in the middle grid may try to intercept the ball as it travels to the other grid.

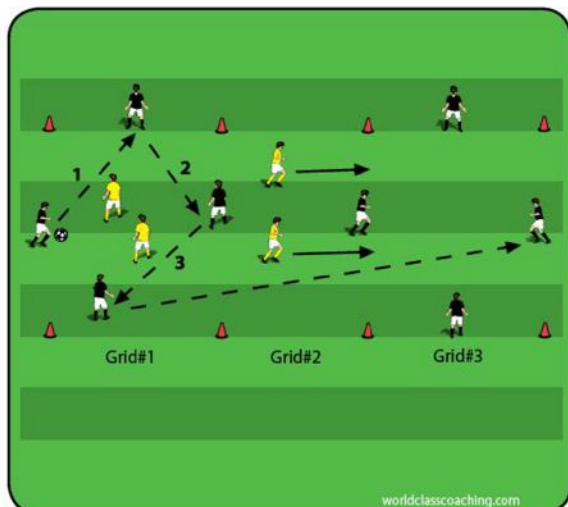


Attacking Coaching Points

- Recognize the situation and understand what the coach wants
- Prepare for the next move: preparation to receive the next pass
- Recognize the completion of the third pass
- Communication: Help each other by giving instruction

Defending Coaching Points

- Watch and Prepare
- Try to block the passing lanes



Progression

Add 4 more defenders to introduce transition. If the defenders win it, they now become attackers

Attacking Coaching Points

- Prepare yourself in every situation and expect the unexpected
- Don't let the ball bounce
- Keep the ball on the ground

Defending Coaching Points

- Recognize when to squeeze up and when to drop off
- If the pass is slow and you can get there, put pressure on the ball
- If the pass is quick and you cannot get there, concede space first and then pressure the ball



Exercise #4 (Progression)

Objective: Keep possession

Rules

Keep possession; if the defenders with the ball, dribble the ball outside the grid. As the ball is transferred to the other grid, two attacking players must also transfer to the other grid to make 5 vs. 3.

Organization

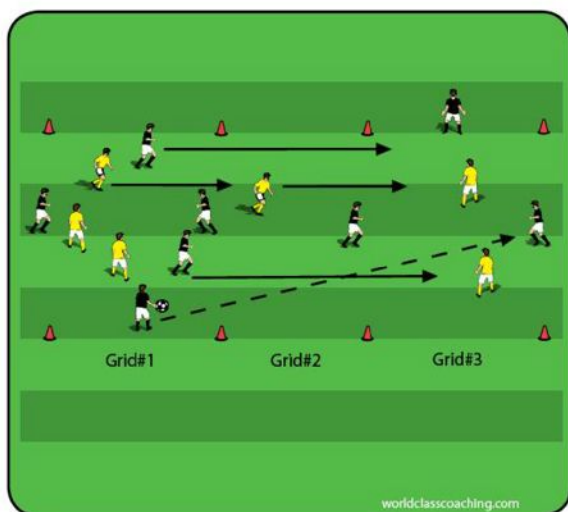
5 vs. 3 in grid #1

One player in grid #2

3 vs. 2 in grid #3

Coaching Points

- Players in the grid without the ball must be alert and mobile to provide passing options
- At least one attacking player in the grid without the ball must show for the ball to give an option to the attackers who are trying to switch the ball.
- Use the correct surface to receive and pass given the situation the game presents



Exercise #5 (Progression)

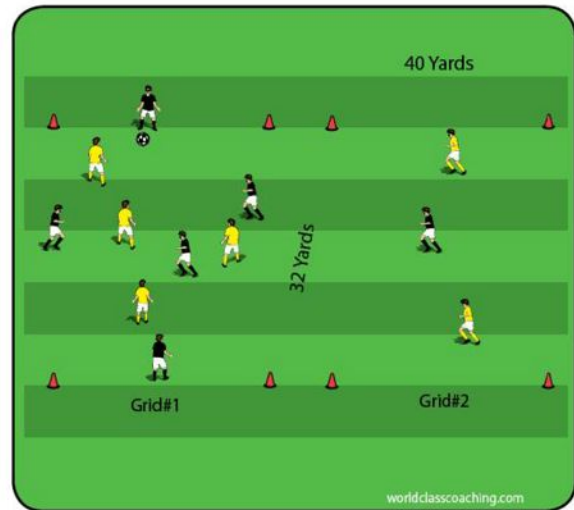
Organization:

5 vs. 4 in grid #1 (32 yards by 40 yards)

2 vs. 1 in grid #2 (32 yards by 40 yards)

Rules

- Keep possession.
- If the defenders intercept the ball, they must pass to one of their teammates in the other grid.
- Upon transfer of the ball to the other grid, players from where the ball was passed must also transfer to the other grid making the numbers 5 vs. 4 in favor of the attacking team.
- 3 minute interval (5 consecutive passes is one point)



Attacking Coaching Points

- Fix your shape – A smaller field helps the defenders
- Width and Depth
- Change your angle to provide an early solution
- Fix your shape so that you create triangles rather than straight lines
- Weight of the pass
- Use the correct surface to receive and pass
- When to pass, when to dribble
- Play one touch if you are under pressure
- Dribble to relieve pressure, then pass

Defending Coaching Points

- Put pressure on the ball – you can only score points if you win the ball, and transfer the ball to the other grid
- Look for opportunities to press hard early and for situations when it is wiser to drop off

Exercise #6 (Progression)

Objective: Keep possession recognizing moments to go forwards while in possession.

Organization

5 vs. 5 + GK in one half of the field

2 vs. 2 + GK in the other half of the field





Rules

- GK may only distribute to the 5 attacking players
- 5 attacking players must first connect 5 consecutive passes and then pass forwards to the two attacking players in the attacking half of the field
- As the ball travels into the attacking end of the field, 3 attackers and defenders join so the game becomes 5 vs. 5 in the other end of the field

Attacking Coaching Points

- Identify Roles – Attackers, defenders, movers
- Recognize the moment when to go forwards in possession
- GK take leadership and communicate

Defending Coaching Points

- If you intercept a pass, score a goal

Small-Sided Games of the World's Top Teams



This DVD contains many small-sided games used by the world's top teams and their academies like Manchester United, Juventus, Liverpool, U.S. Women's World Cup Team, Chelsea, Glasgow Rangers as well as MLS teams and USYSA National Champions.



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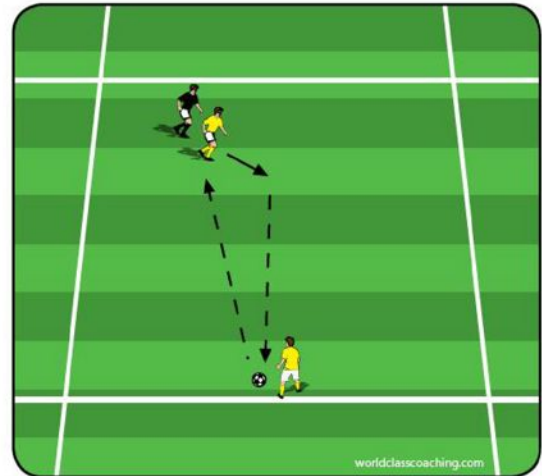
Click on the DVD tab to see all of our titles.



Session Topics - Creativing, Moves, Skill, Attacking, Defending, Goalscoring, 1v1, Turning, Games

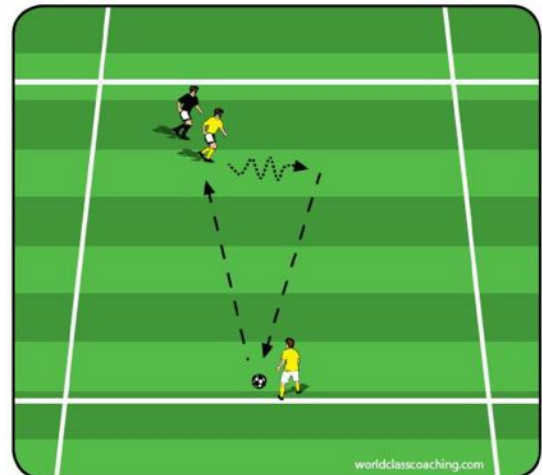
Exercise

The drill takes place in a 20 yard by 10-yard grid. At the long end of one of the grids is a player with the ball. Two players come from the other end, one as the attacker and one as the defender. The player with the ball looks to pass to the attacker inside and receive it back from them. The attacker inside needs to work on keeping the defender off of them with their arm to shield and create space.



Progression

Same as above, except the receiving player receives the ball and tries to hold possession for 30 seconds before switching players inside.

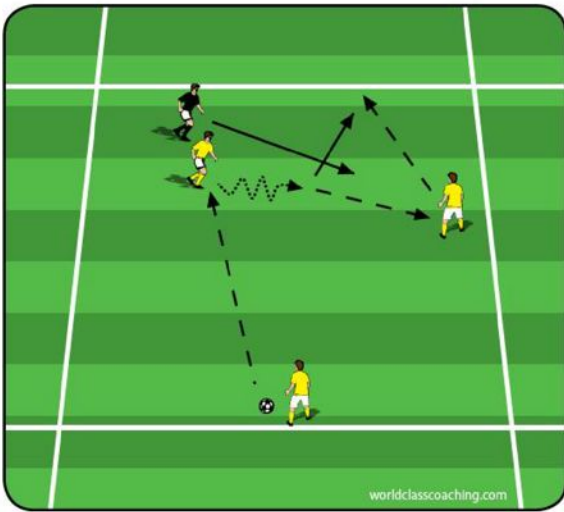


Progression

Same, except the player receiving the ball tries to turn and get behind the defender.

Coach Walker works with the defenders on getting side on when they cannot win the ball outright. If the attacker begins to drop back they should continue to stay side on and keep the pressure on. If they try to turn, the defender should step in and make contact with the attacker.

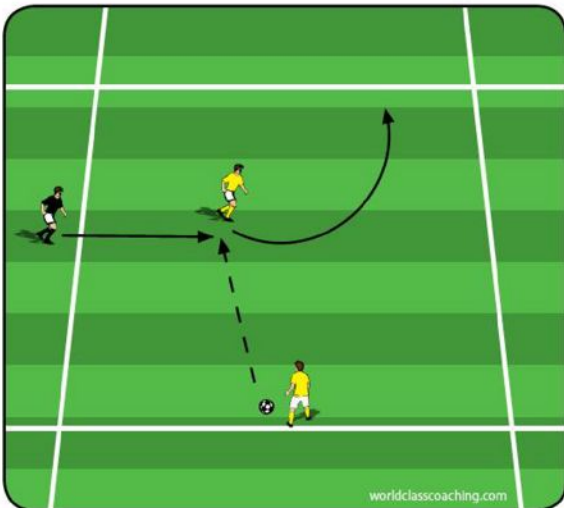




Progression

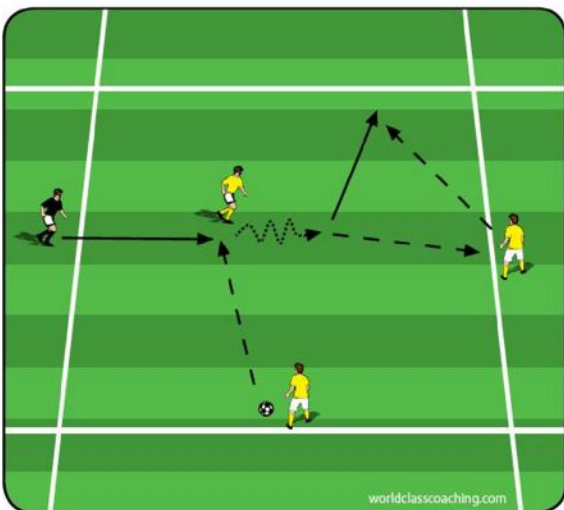
A supporting player is added to the drill positioned in the middle on the side. The receiving attacking player looks to play the ball immediately to the supporting player then checks away and back to receive the ball again. The objective is for the attacking player to be able to turn and get behind the defender.

Coach Walker instructs the defenders that when the attacker passes the ball off to keep their shoulder open to the attacker so as not to get caught watching the ball.



Progression

The drill is changed by placing the defenders on the outside line at the middle of the grid. They have the soccer balls and look to play the ball into the attacker and enter to defend. This way the defenders are coming at the attackers at an angle. The attackers look to quickly gain possession and attack quickly. The defender looks to play the ball in and come and defend right away.

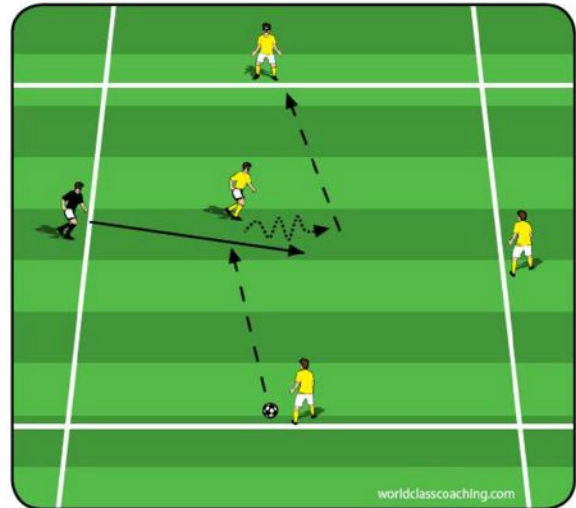


Progression

Same, except a supporting player is placed on the other outside line in the middle. The receiving attacker looks to control, commit the defender, then pass it to the supporting player and make a run around the defender to receive the ball back. This is a standard give-and-go concept.

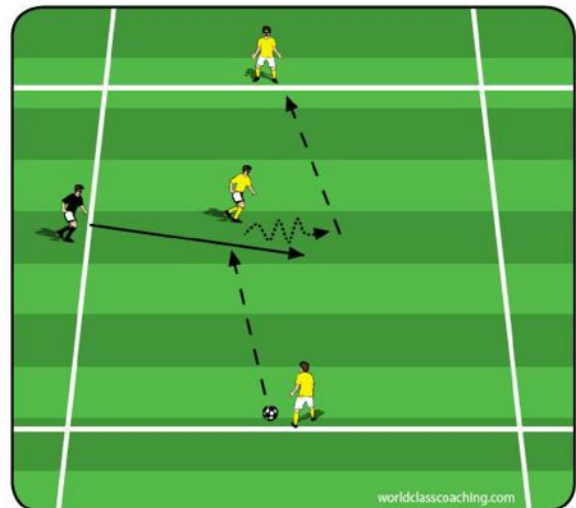
Progression

Same, except a player is also placed at the end of the grid on the opposite line in the middle. The receiving attacker can look to play to the supporting player wide or the drop player deep.



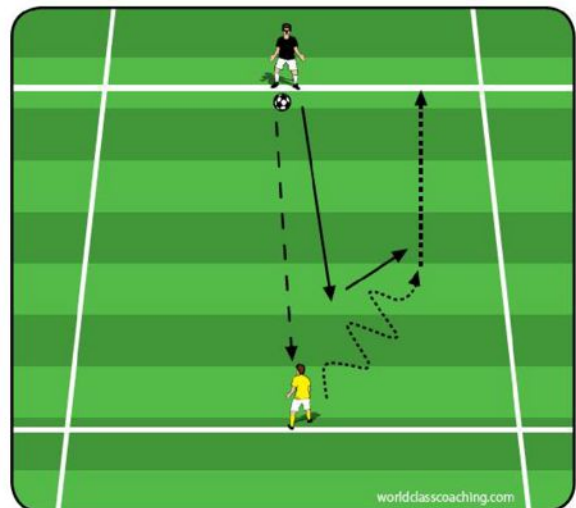
Progression

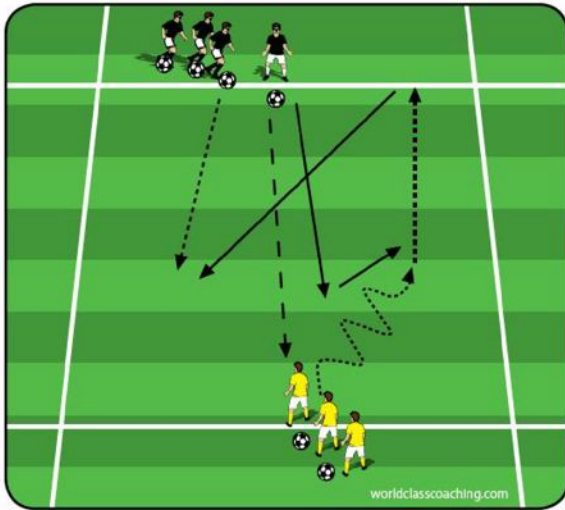
The support player is removed that is wide and only the drop player remains. The defender is coached to eliminate the penetrating pass or forward pass.



Progression

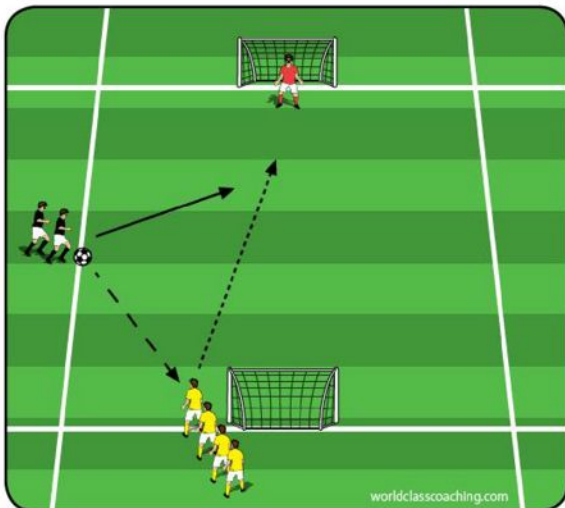
In the grid the defender plays the ball in to the attacker and enters to play 1v1 to the end line. The attacker tries to control and beat the defender to the opposite end line. The defender looks to win the ball and dribble over the other end line.





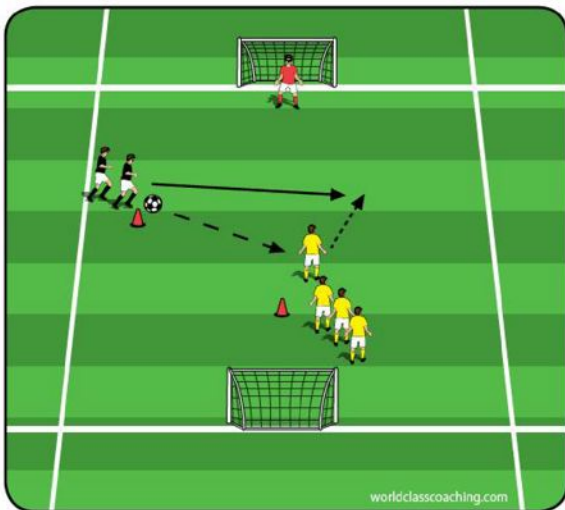
Progression

Players are lined up on each end of the grid. One player begins the drill by passing the ball into the first player on the other line. To score either player looks to control the ball and stop it on the other player's end line. Whoever scores becomes the defender as the next player in that line begins by dribbling in.



Exercise

Using an area 30 yards by 35 yards with two large goals and one goalkeeper in the far goal, attackers line up on the near post and the defenders line up ten yards away from them on the outside of the grid with the soccer balls. The drill begins with the defender passing the ball into the attacker and entering to defend. The attackers look to quickly attack and get a shot on a goal that is 30 yards away with a goalkeeper in goal. The defender looks to win the ball and play it into the open goal.

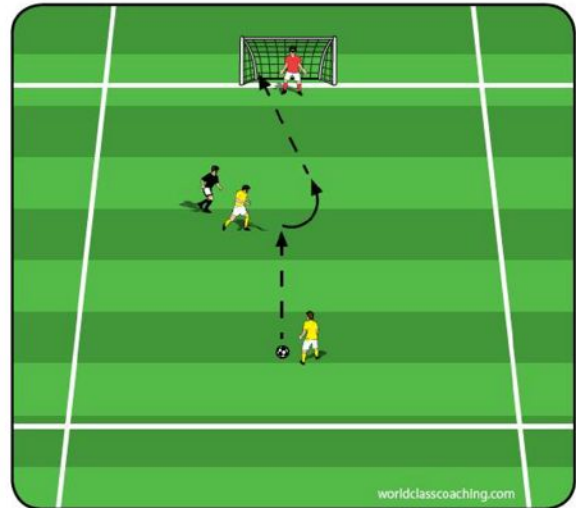


Progression

Same as above, except the attackers are moved on to the playing area in the middle 20 yards from goal. The defenders are positioned 10 yards in front of them at an angle. The drill begins with the forwards passing the ball to the defenders and receiving a pass back right away. Play is then 1v1 to goal. Emphasize getting possession quickly and getting a shot on goal as quickly as possible.

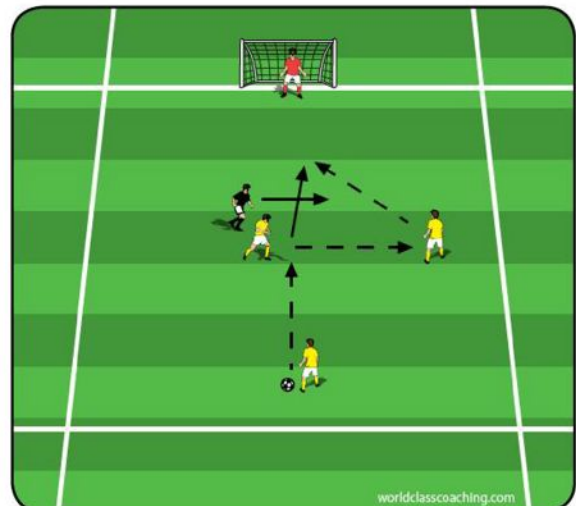
Progression

A server is positioned ten yards behind an attacker centrally who is 20 yards from goal. The attacker has a defender right behind them. The server passes the ball into the attacker's feet with the defender on them. The attacker looks to hold possession, turn and beat the defender to get a shot on goal.



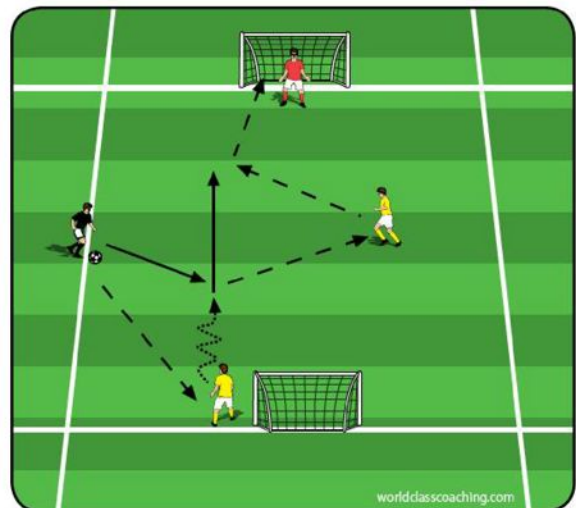
Progression

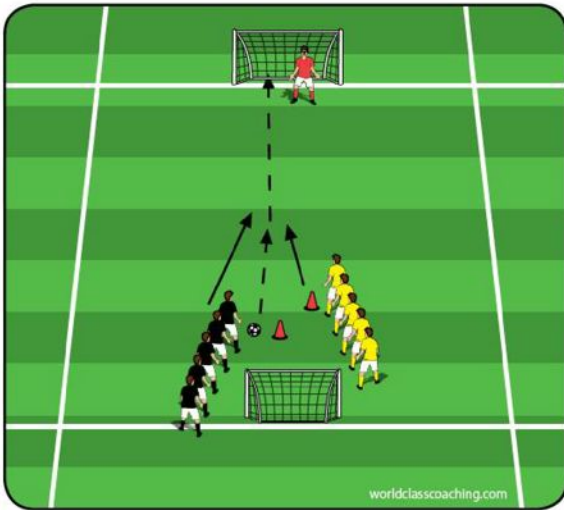
Same as above, except a supporting player is placed on the opposite side to support the attacking player. The server passes the ball in and the attacker tries to maintain possession and pass to the supporting player. The supporting player tries to pass the ball behind the defender and back to the attacker for a chance to shoot at goal.



Progression

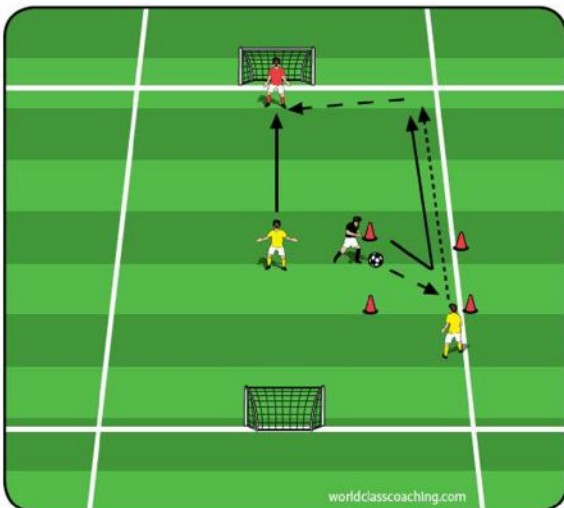
Same as above, except the attackers are positioned back on the near post and the defenders back outside 10 yards away from them. There is also a supporting player on the opposite side. The defender passes the ball into the attacker and comes to defend. The attacker receives and makes the defender commit before passing to the supporting player wide. The supporting player looks to pass the ball back to the attacker in the space behind the defender.





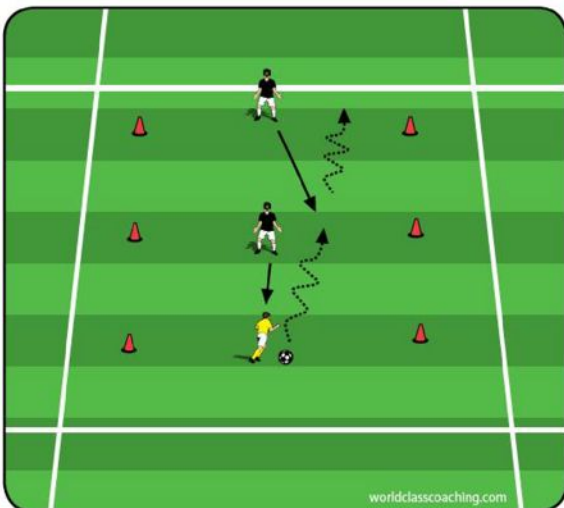
Progression

The attackers are lined up on the end line and the defenders are five yards behind them with the soccer balls. The drill begins with the defender passing the ball forward in front of the attackers. The defenders try to recover while the attackers gain possession and quickly go to goal to shoot and score. The emphasis is that their first touch should be across their body towards the goal.



Progression

Using the same space, both goals have goalkeepers. There is a 10 yard by 10 yard grid positioned in the middle on the very outside of the grid. On the far corner on the outside are the forwards. On the near corner diagonally are the defenders with the soccer balls. A supporting player is placed in the middle of the larger field. The defender passes the ball into the attacker and comes to defend. If the attacker cuts the ball inside, they must pass the ball between the cones to the supporting player who looks to collect the ball and shoot. If they attack down the line they look to serve into the supporting player or to win the set piece.

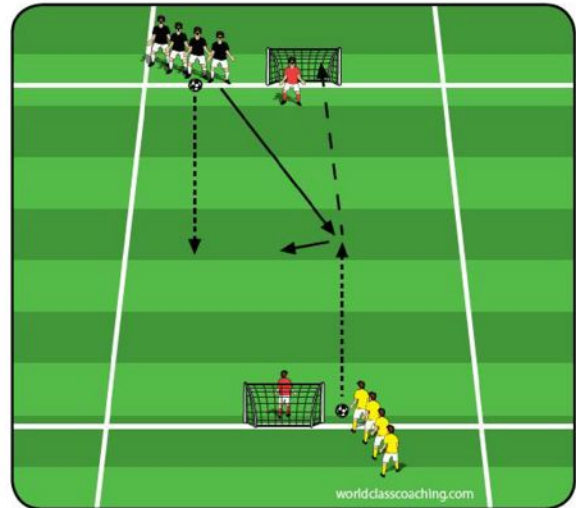


Progression

Using the middle of the area between the two large goals create two small grids that are 20 yards wide by 10 yards long. The attackers are in the middle on the end line. There is one defender in each of the small grids. The drill begins with the attacker dribbling out in an attempt to beat the first defender. If successful, they then must beat the second defender.

Progression

Same large area, players are lined up with soccer balls on each post diagonally across from one another. The drill begins with one player dribbling in towards the far goal and one player defending. Whoever scores or gets the shot when the play is dead stays on the field to defend right away. Once a shot is taken and a goal scored or the play is dead the player on that goal with a ball immediately enters the area and starts to attack the far goal.



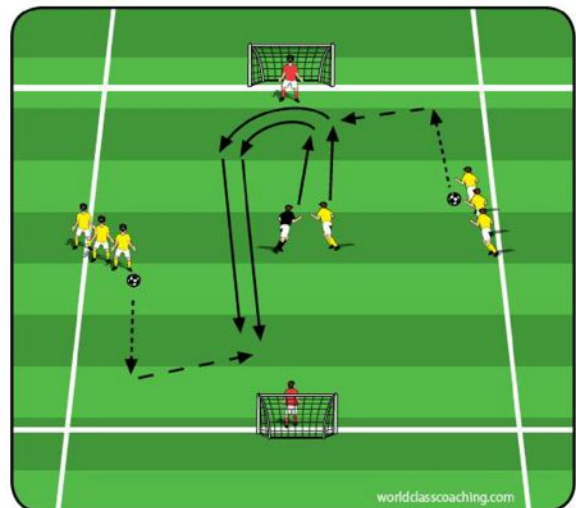
Progression

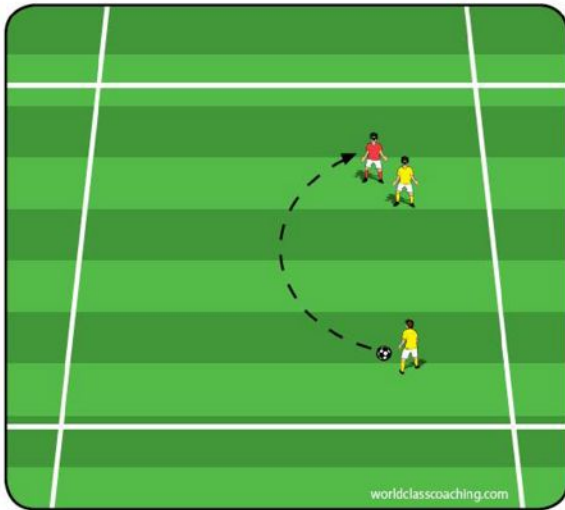
Two players inside the large area and two servers on the outside ten yards from the end line of each goal. Both players centrally act as attackers and try to win the ball in that is played. Both players are trying to win it and score. If one wins the ball, then the other is trying to steal it from them and score themselves. The servers look to pass the ball in for the attackers to quickly shoot, preferably one-touch.



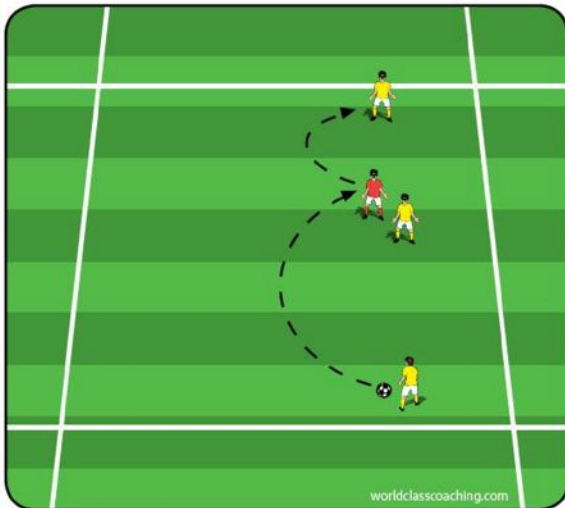
Progression

Same, except one player is designated as attacking one goal and defending the other goal. Also condition the servers to vary the serves into the area. The serves should be low, but they can be passed in or driven and/or bounced in.



**Progression**

The coach stands with the soccer balls while the players line up 20 yards away. The coach serves the ball high in the air while two players come out and try to challenge to win the ball in the air.

**Progression**

Designate one as an attacker and the other as a defender. The attacker is trying to flick the ball behind them. The defender is trying to head the ball back to the server.

25 Exercises to Train Competitive 1v1 Play



In *25 Exercises to Train Competitive 1v1 Play* Walker demonstrates 25 different exercises he uses with his Huskers teams to improve 1v1 play. These cover a wide range of attacking situations including breakaways, back to pressure, holding the ball under pressure and many more.

Session Topics - Defending, Small-Sided Games, Systems of Play, English Premier League, England, Pressure, Cover Balance



Exercise

This drill uses half of the field with a full-sized goal and a goalkeeper. The defending team has 8 players in a 4-4 formation. The attacking team has 9 players in a 3-4-2 formation. The coach works with the defending unit shifting behind the ball to support and deny space and penetration. The attacking team is looking to generate chances at goal. If the defending team wins possession then they look to keep possession and play it to the feet of the coach to score. This encourages the attackers to pressure to win the ball back when they lose it.

Coach Williams works with central and wide defenders on how to organize and defend a crossed ball into the area. The closest central defender is responsible to cover the near post. The far central defender is responsible for the middle of the goal. The outside defender on the weak side is responsible to cover the far post.



Progression

11v11 with both teams playing a 4-4-2. Made several coaching points involving defensive shape and positioning. Had the team in defending work on denying forward penetration by the other team.



Progression

Creates three zones out of half the field. In the defending zone he places four white defenders and two attackers in red. In the middle zone he places two defending white players and 3 red players. In the final zone he places two white players and 3 red players. You must be in your own zone when you are defending. You can go anywhere when you are attacking. This works on teams having to receiver as quickly as possible when possession is lost. This game is very effective for working on transition.

Progression

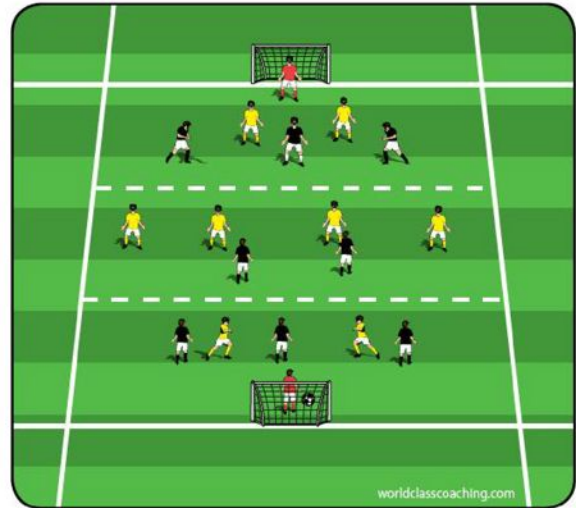
If the red team makes three passes in the middle zone without going forward, then an extra white forward can join in the middle zone to help defend. This should encourage quicker play and possession through the middle.

Progression

Change the formation up for each team to where white is now playing a 2-4-2 and the red team is playing a 3-2-3. This puts more demand on the two white defenders and is a very good exercise for training your central defenders.

Progression

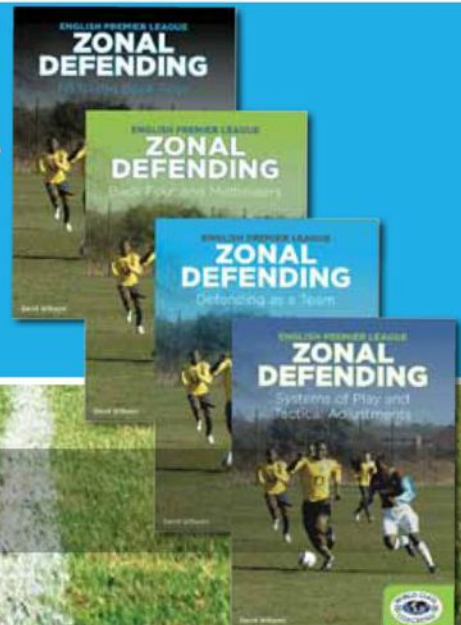
If the red players in the attacking 3rd of the field make three passes without shooting, then one of the white midfielders can join in and help to defend.



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Zonal Defending Four DVD Set

Condition your teams with "Global Training" and integrate **TECHNICAL & TACTICAL** elements into your conditioning sessions like Gus Hiddink did with Russia and Jose Mourinho has pioneered over the years. Forget about conditioning your players with shuttles and sprints...that is "old hat".



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Click the **RED "Specials"** link for Special Pricing

Session Topics - Technical, Tactical, Small-Sided Games, 4v4

Here is a [link](#) to three books by Terry Michler and one, 'Find a Way to Win', that relates his coaching philosophy to effective management practices.

Coaching Clinic - Why 4 v 4

Terry Michler - Soccer Coach - CBC High School

Introduction

- Why 4 v 4
- Objectives
- Elements of Soccer
- Shape
- Involvement / Fun
- Learning Process / Problem Solving
- Three Main Moments
- Coaching in 4 v 4
- Training for 4 v 4
- Manchester United 4 v 4 Pilot Scheme
- Buildup Activities
- Training Drills

Small – Sided Games

- In simplified, modified games, players learn to be aware and to improvise, to concentrate and to recognize the situation.
- Skills are important, but the value of skill is to be able to use them efficiently in a fraction of a second.
- Practices should be one quarter skill training and three quarters applying those skills in endless situations." --- Rinus Michels – Former Dutch National Team Coach and the FIFA Coach of the Century

Gary Lineker -- former English international

- We could drastically improve the standard of English football immediately if we made small children play on small pitches with small goals, so that they can be in the vicinity of each other and learn to pass the ball to each other instead of having to hoof it.
- They should ban playing on big pitches until children get to 13 or 14.

Why 4 v 4

- Smallest manifestation of real soccer
- All of the elements are present to experience real soccer
- Players will get more touches on the ball
- Involved physically and mentally

- Quicker action sharpens concentration
- Constant action and always on or around the ball

Objectives

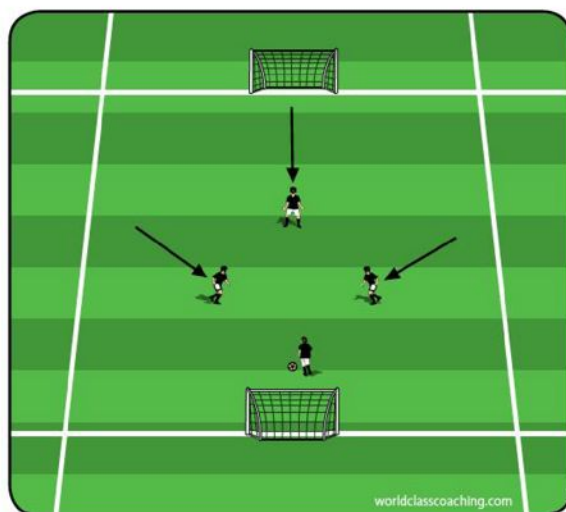
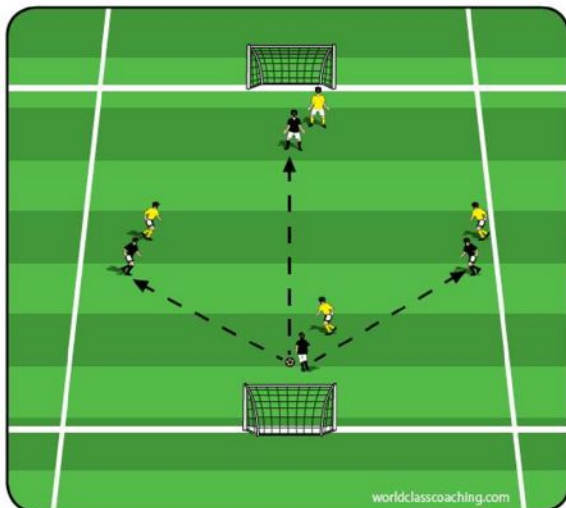
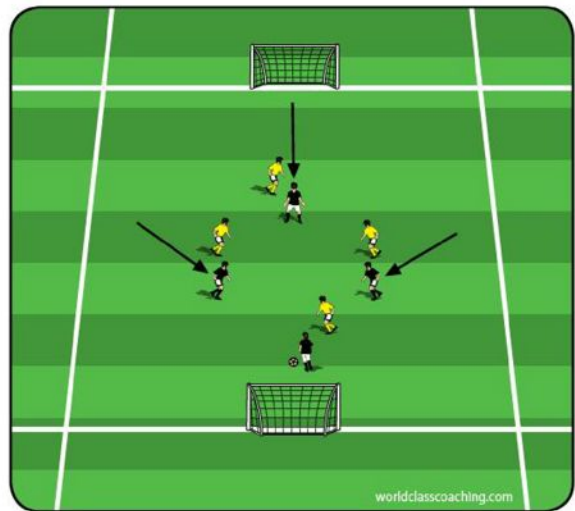
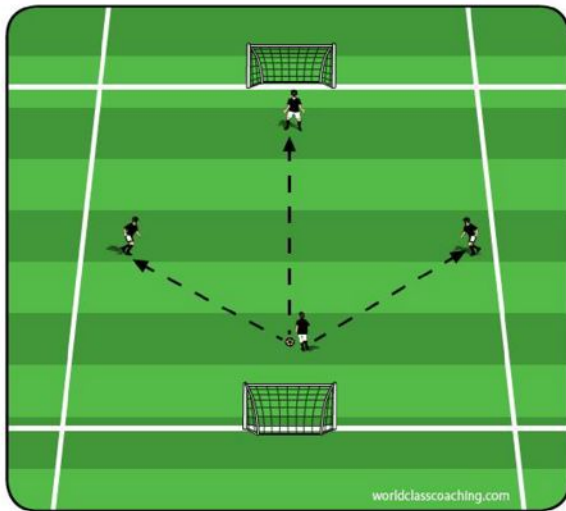
- To play real soccer
- To build up and score --- defend --- play in transition as the ball exchanges
- Fewer players and more confined space – more involvement
- Simple framework to learn the elements of soccer

Elements of Soccer

- The minimum # of players needed for all the principles of play
- Penetration – width – depth – support
- Free movement develops mobility
- Ball, goals, rectangular playing field, boundary lines, teammates, opponents, space, pressure, rules and direction of play

Shape

- 1 player up top for penetration
- 2 players wide for width
- 1 player stays back for depth
- In possession, make field big
- Look to play deep, early
- Loss of possession, make field small
- A diamond shape



Involvement / Fun

- An area (40 x 25 yards) that relates to their age and physical development
- Generates many soccer situations
- Involves all the players
- Better cooperation among the players
- Involved in nearly every play
- Competitive

Learning Process / Problem Solving

- Opponents were seen as posing a problem that had to be solved
- The element of "chaos" exists constantly as the ball, teammates and opponents are in perpetual motion
- Split-second decisions
- Bring order out of "chaos"

Learning Process -- 2

- Recognize recurring situations bring quicker response
- No two situations are identical
- Recognize and interpret from own experiences and arrive at the proper solution
- Through repetition, develop ability to "read" the game

Three Main Moments

- We have the ball
- Opponent has the ball
- Transition – exchange of the ball

Possession of the Ball

- Build up to create chances
- Scoring goals
- Make playing area as large as possible (width and depth)
- Think deep and play deep whenever possible
- Maintain ball possession
- Use the width to spread the defense

Possession of the Ball by the Opponent

- Disturb the build up
- Recover the ball quickly

- Prevent any goals and goals scoring chances
- Shrink the playing area
- Pressure opponent with ball
- Tight marking around ball
- Cover away from ball
- Everybody be useful

Transition Phase

From possession of the ball to loss of the ball

- Act quickly – player nearest the ball prevent a direct long pass
- All players participate in the active defense
- Press on the ball or fall back and defend

From loss of the ball to the possession of the ball

- Look to play deep first
- Players furthest from the ball, ask for the ball
- Stay onside
- Support the ball and go to goal

Coaching in 4 v 4

- Freeze the moment
- Don't over coach
- Coach those that need coaching
- Ask questions, avoid statements
- Coach what is real
- Stand where you can see
- Bring the game to life

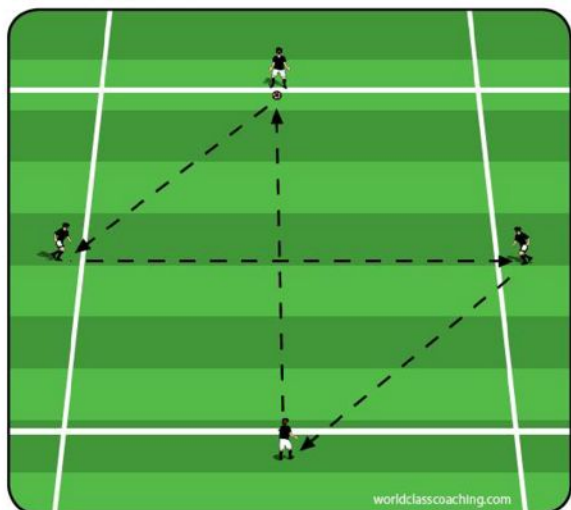
Coaching -- 2

- Think of 3 moments
- 1 -- give just enough directions to get the game going
- 2 -- what are the big mistakes can they solve the soccer problem
- 3 -- fine tune, introduce changes

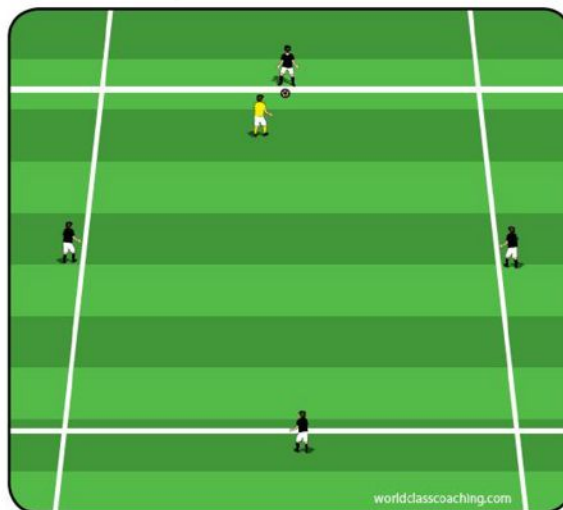
Training Activities for 4 v 4

- A progression of drills and activities that lead up to the concept and shape of the 4 v 4 setup.

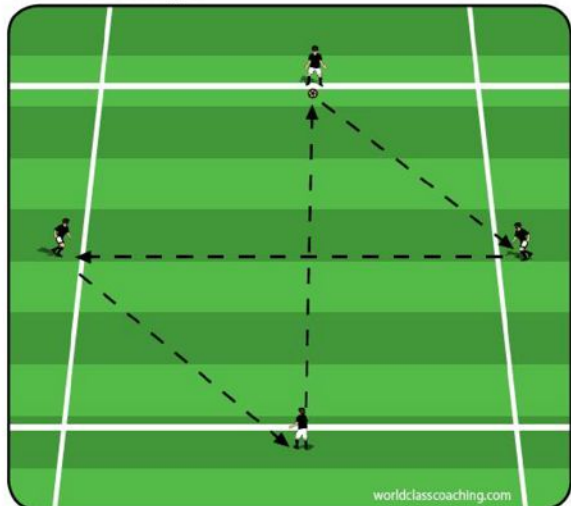
4 v 0 - 15 x 10 yd



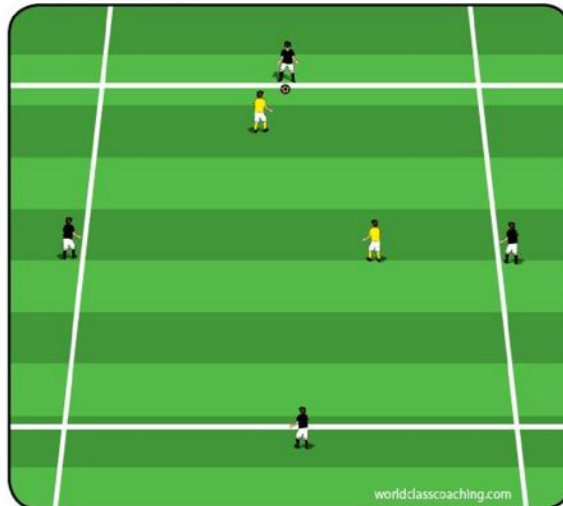
4 v 1 - 15 x 10 yd



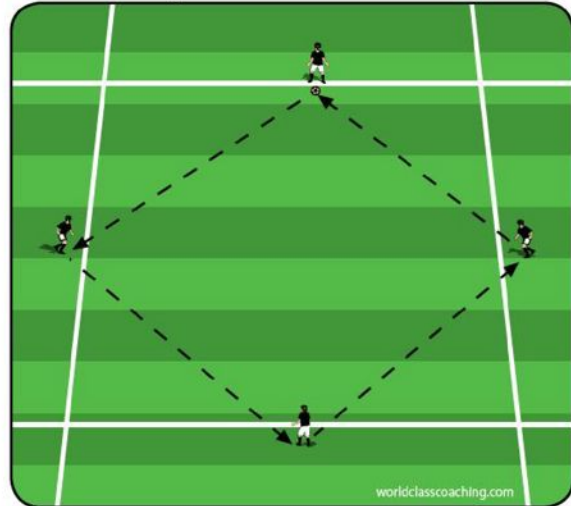
4 v 0 - 15 x 10 yd



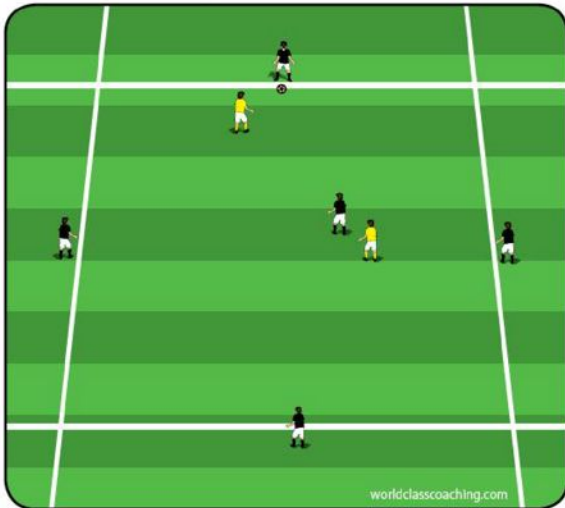
4 v 2 - 15 x 10 yd



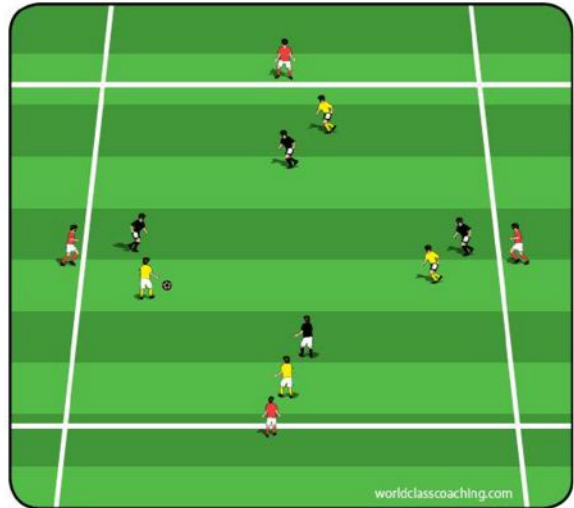
4 v 0 - 15 x 10 yd



4 v 2 + 1 - 15 x 10 yd



4 v 4 - 4 Neutrals



6 v 3 + 1 - 20 x 15 yd



6 v 4 + 2 - 30 x 25 yd



Small-Sided Games of the World's Top Teams

This DVD contains many small-sided games used by the world's top teams and their academies like Manchester United, Juventus, Liverpool, U.S. Women's World Cup Team, Chelsea, Glasgow Rangers as well as MLS teams and USYSA National Champions.



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The Manchester United - 4 v 4 Pilot Scheme

Source: "FA Insight", Based upon study performed by the Department of Exercise and Sport Science at the Manchester Metropolitan University.

4 v 4 Program

- Scheme format
 - Goalkeepers game: 4v4 plus two Goalkeepers
 - Two goal game: 4v4 with four large cones as goals
 - Four goal game: 4v4 with eight large cones as goals
 - Line Ball: 4v4 with dotted line as a scoring line
- Scheme Construct
 - Game Duration: 8 minutes/station, 2 min break (Exercise-to-rest ratio increases energy and mental awareness)
 - Scoring/Goals: No score is kept (Emphasis on development, de-emphasis of winning)
 - Coaching: Very little overt coaching (Encouragement only. No raised voices and no disciplining)

On Average 4v4 versus 8v8 had:

1. 135% more passes
2. 260% more Scoring Attempts
3. 500% more Goals Scored
4. 225% more 1v1 Encounters
5. 280% more Dribbling Skills (tricks)

Qualitative Summary

Club Directors/Coaches/Administrators:

- 80% positive comments

Other Observers:

- 97% positive comments

Parents:

- 68% positive comments

Players:

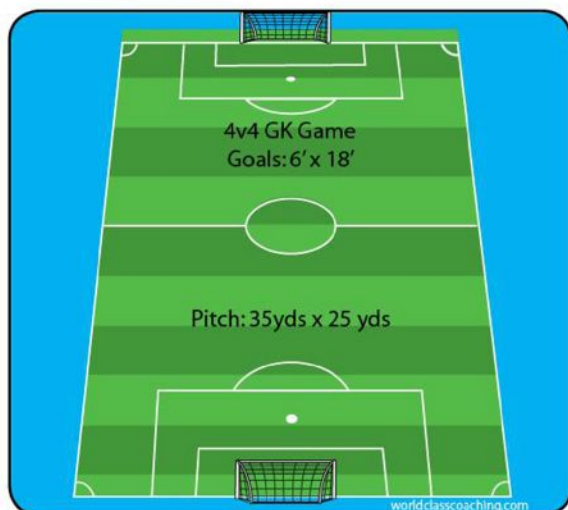
- 75% positive comments

Quantitative Analysis*

- Recognize recurring situations bring quicker response
- No two situations are identical
- Recognize and interpret from own experiences and arrive at the proper solution
- Through repetition, develop ability to "read" the game

	# of Passes	Scoring Attempts	Goals	1v1 Encounter	Dribbling Skills
2-Goal Game	<u>170</u>	44	18	51	39
Line Ball	160	NA	<u>37</u>	56	<u>58</u>
GK Game	149	49	17	<u>92</u>	36
4-Goal Game	106	<u>62</u>	28	52	45
8 v 8	108	20	5	28	16

Scheme Set-up

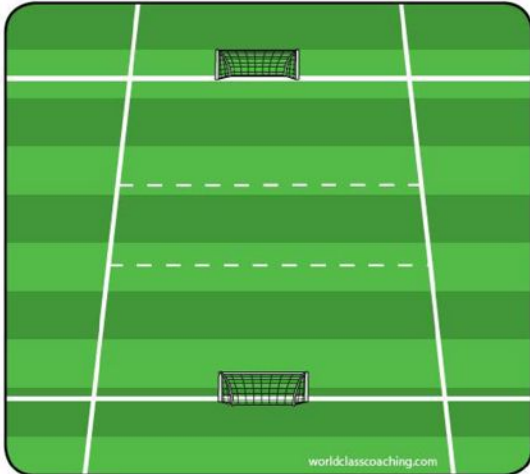


Buildup Activities

- Tag
- Team handball
- Possession game of 4 v 2
- Dribble tag
- 4 v 4 with 4 outside players as neutrals

Session Topics - Transition, Attacking, Defending, Small Sided Game

This entire session was recorded during the seminar. Click [here](#) to see more information about this DVDs.



The drill is organized in an area approximately 75 yards long by 50 yards wide. There are three separate zones in the large grid. Each end zone is 30 yards long by 50 yards wide. The middle zone is 15 yards long by 50 yards wide.



7 v 7

The drill is set up as a 7v7 exercise. Each team is organized in a 3-2-2 shape with each large goal being protected by goalkeepers. The exercise begins with the player with the ball looking to play through the middle zone and into one of the strikers. The strikers need to be checking to create space. The defenders defend passively to allow the strikers to create openings to receive the ball. As the drill progresses, then have the defenders start playing more aggressively. Once the ball is played into one of the strikers, then the striker passes the ball to one of the opposing defenders who repeats the drill to their own strikers.

Progression

Try to build the drill so that the entire exercise is 1-touch. The defender with possession plays the ball through the middle to the forward, the forward 1-touches the ball into space in front of the other defender, the other defender 1-touch passes the ball through the middle to one of their forwards, and the drill is continuous.

Coaching Point

Work with the central midfield players to open the space in the middle so the ball can be played through the middle more quickly.

Progression- The drill is the same, except now you must play the ball through the midfielders to the forwards. The exercise should again be built up to all 1-touch play.

Progression- Incorporate one connecting pass between the strikers (i.e. the receiving striker finds the second striker).

CP: Can we build this process to play 1-touch. This means the second striker has to quickly gain position to support the ball right away. In most cases, this means in front of the ball. Once we build up to goal it could be a simple flick into space behind the defender for the second forward to run on to.

Progression- The drill now builds to allow the strikers to go to goal and try to finish. The defenders are now live and look to defend aggressively.

Progression- As the ball goes into the strikers, one of the midfielders can join into the attack.

CP: Be sure to work with the midfield players on their positioning. They have to be very aware of runs that will create opportunities in the attacking third. In addition, they should be in position to quickly receive/touch the ball into the forwards. Remember, the objective of this drill is quick transition into the attacking third. This is done through quick touches and 1-touch play.

CP: Midfielders attacking into the final third should be looking to make runs behind the defense. Encourage quick touches and quick play in the attacking third of the field.

Progression- Add a flank player on one side who starts in midfield (the middle zone) and makes all attacking runs into the attacking third of the field.

Progression

Look to make everything 1-touch play. The only time you don't have to play 1-touch is the moment when the defender wins the ball. You can then give that defender 2-touch play.

Coaching Point

Always look to go forward when attacking.



Session Topics - Shooting, Finishing, Small Sided Game

This entire session was recorded during the seminar. Click [here](#) to see more information about this DVDs.

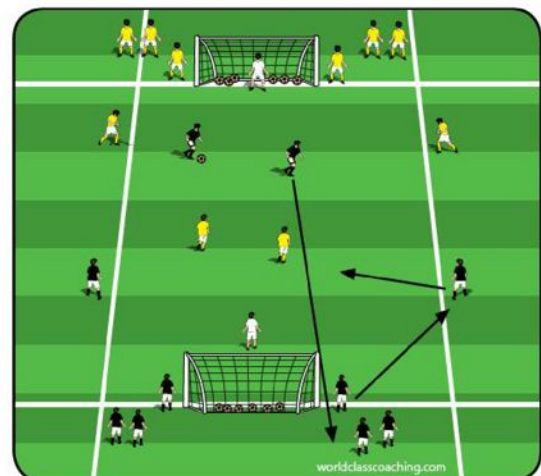
The exercise is set up in a grid size that is approximately 20 yards wide by 30 yards long. There are two full-sized goals and goalkeepers included in the drill. Play is 2v2 with four support players per team on the outside. Outside players have 1-touch.



The following diagram illustrates how the players rotate in the drill when a goal is scored or a shot is taken. If a goal is scored, the team that scores must run back to their own goal to retrieve a ball. The other team rotates their players while this is happening. The two players in the playing area go to the end of the line for their team by each post (one player each post). The two players that are first by the post acting as supporting players take the positions as supporting players wide. The two wide players enter the field of play.

Coaching Point

Outside players have only 1-touch to play the ball into their teammates

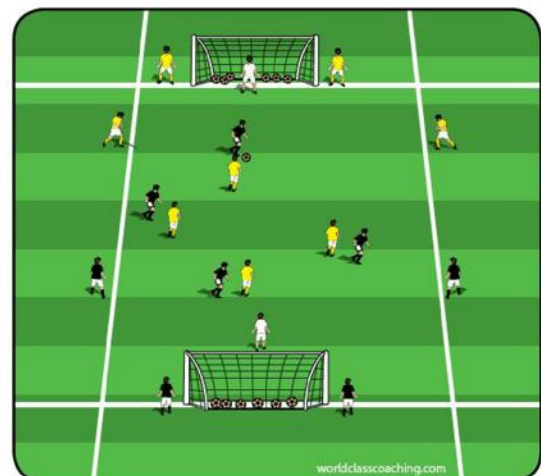


Progression

Progression- The grid size is expanded to 44 yards wide (the width of the 18-yard box) by 36 yards long (twice the length of the 18-yard box). Play inside the grid is 4v4 with the same number of support players on the outside. Players don't rotate, though, as they did before. Play for approximately 3 minutes, then switch the players on the inside with the support players on the outside.

Coaching Point

Outside players have 1-touch. All re-starts start with the goalkeeper in the half where the ball went out of bounds.

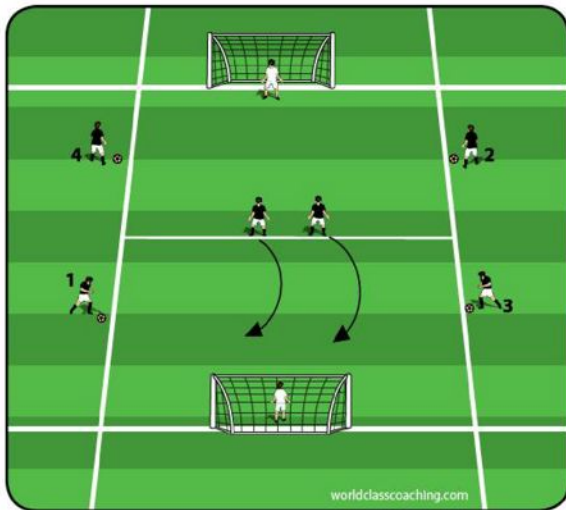


Progression

The grid size is increased to 70 yards long by 44 yards wide. Play inside the grid increases to 8v8 with no support players on the outside. Give conditions when playing:

- The blue team has to win by two goals. They get every ball out of bounds from their own goal.
- The opposite team can put the game away with one goal.
- Games are 8 minutes long.

This progression was explained by Coach Waldrum, but not done at the session.



Finishing Exercise

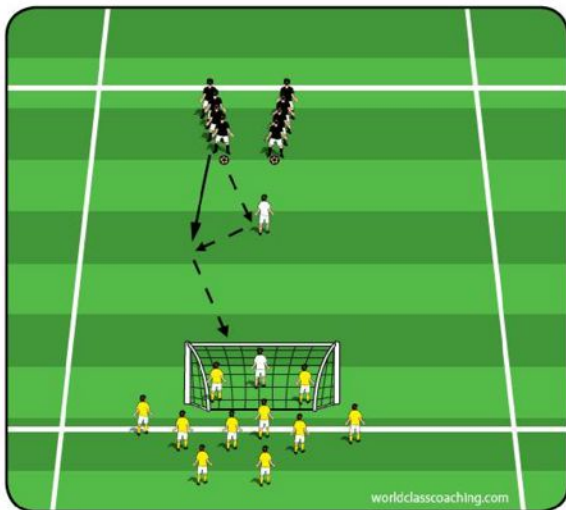
The grid size is expanded to 44 yards wide (the width of the 18-yard box) by 36 yards long (twice the length of the 18-yard box). There are two strikers inside the grid that attack the goal and every ball played in. There are four players on the outside of the grid and are numbered 1-4. Numbers 1 and 4 are on one side of the grid and numbers 2 and 3 are on the other side of the grid. The drill begins with the first player making an early serve into the grid for the two strikers to attack and finish. Once the first ball is dead they immediately go towards the other goal to finish that ball and the drill continues through the four deliveries into the grid.

The drill is continuous through the four serves. You can change the drill by changing the services into the area. Start by making the serves early driven balls. You can then change it by making the

serves run to the end and cutting the serves back. You can also serve them in the air. Be sure to vary them to prepare them for different challenges.

Coaching Point

Make sure the two forwards are making their runs correctly. You need to have a near post and a far post run



Scoring Competition Game

The players are divided into two equal teams. One team makes two lines approximately 25 yards from goal with the coach standing 5-6 yards in front of them. The other team places two players in the goal, one on each post, and the rest of the players behind the goal. The game lasts for 90 seconds. The team shooting tries to score as many goals as they can. The defenders in the goal can defend and prevent the goal with their bodies, but not their hands. The goalkeeper defends the goal normally. The players behind the goal wait for a ball in the air. If they can juggle the ball in the air three times without it hitting the ground, then they get 1 point. The shooting team gets 1 point for every goal they score. Switch every 90 seconds. The game should be played until the first team gets 20 points.

Session Topics - Tactical, Defending, Small Sided Games, Systems of Play, 4-3-3

Team Defending (4-3-3 Pressing) - Greg Ryan

Training Session Goals:

Train understanding and execution of pressing style of defending utilizing a 4-3-3 system.

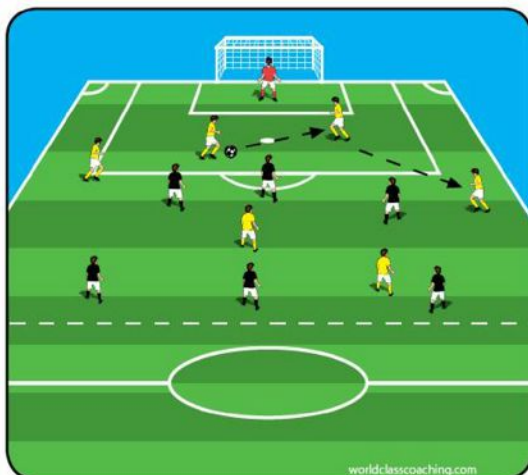
I. Warm-up

- Individual and small group defending techniques... 1v1, 2v2, etc...

II. 6 v 3

- 12 x 18 Grid
- 6 players attempt to possess the ball against 3 opponents
- The 3 players defending work to force the ball into the middle defender
- Utilize forwards and attacking midfielders as the 3 players defending

Comments: Generally, teams force the ball inside when playing a 4-3-3. This exercise provides an opportunity for forwards and attacking midfielders to work together to force balls into the middle in order to win possession.



Options:

- Have the GK initiate the first ball to the team in possession.
- Have the coach initiate the first ball to the team in possession. This allows the coach to force play to different areas of field.

III. 6 v 6 + GK

- 50 x 70
- Play with a GK, Zonal Back 4 and 2 CM's – This team attempts to build out of the back and possess the ball across a line 50 yards from goal. To keep the exercise realistic, the CM's should stay within the width of the penalty box
- The pressing team will play with 3 forwards and 3 CM's. The goal for this team is to force the ball inside, win possession back in the attacking half and immediately attack.

Key elements are:

- Starting positions of forwards – linked together but covering the width of the field
- Establishing the point at which the forwards will confront the opponents.
- Forcing the ball inside between the winger and central forward
- AM's playing high and in the passing lanes, denying opportunities for opponents to possess through the midfield.
- Holding midfielder giving direction to attacking midfielders and dealing with midfield runners behind the attacking midfielders
- Pressing mentality – ready to aggressively pressure any ball played into the midfield and immediately attack after winning the ball

IV. 11 v 10

- 70 x 70
- The team with 11 attempts to play out of the back and possess the ball past a line 70 yards from goal.
- The pressing team will attempt to force play inside, win the ball in the attacking half and immediately attack.

Options:

- Goalkeeper or coach can initiate the first ball.
- Play the team with 11 players in a variety of systems so that your players learn how to adapt their pressing to different systems.

Key Elements:

- If playing against an opponent with two strikers, the near side wing defender will need to rotate into the midfield in order to pressure the opponent's wing midfielder. If they cannot get good pressure on the wing midfielder, they should stay back with the back 4 and absorb the pressure as the opponents come forward.



V. 11 v 11

- Play 11 v 11

Options:

- Play one team in the system(s) of your upcoming opponents and work with the other team on pressing.

Comments: When the opponents break pressure, it is critical to work on recovery and reorganization behind the ball. The approach at this point is to delay as a team rather than pressure, protect the space behind the defense by dropping the back line and get the rest of the players recovering into good defending positions in front of the back 4 until you can reestablish good pressure.

Summary: The US Women's National Team trained pressing in a 4-3-3 regularly using this session or elements of this session. Creating pressure on opponents in the attacking half was one of the most important keys to the success of this team which lost only one game in three years, going 45-1-9.



Coaching the 4-3-3 Defending

This DVD breaks down the 4-3-3 from a defensive standpoint and looks at the defensive responsibilities of the back four, midfield three and the three attackers. It explains the roles of each unit and shows exercises you can use to train your team to understand the defensive responsibilities that are important when playing the 4-3-3 formation.

Session Topics - 4 v 4, Small-Sided Game, Technical, Tactical

Four more insight into the coaching methods and philosophies of the Dutch check out [Dutch Total Football](#).

A2 Team (Age 18) Fourteen Players (two injured) and Two Goalkeepers

The first hour was all fitness, movement and running technique exercises, which were similar to the exercises I had seen on the Ajax tapes. This part of the practice was held in the club's parking lot and the players worked very hard. The sprint work included plyometrics using hurdles and various movements (bunny hops, skips, bounding, etc. before sprinting). Distances varied, but were no more than 30 yards per run. The two injured players jogged around the complex on their own while their teammates were working. The players were on the field for the second hour.



Warm-Up

8 v 2 keep away in a 5 x 5 grid.

4 v 4 + 4

40 x 30 yard field with full size goals and keepers. Play 4 v 4 plus goalkeepers with two target players on either side of both goals. The target players can move along the goal line but are restricted to one touch. The target players must play balls back for the attacking team to get a shot on goal. Outfield players don't have to play to the target players and have free play. Games are five minutes with players rotating in and out. This game was played for the whole hour.

There was no team cool down. The players stretched on their own then went in to the dressing room.

Observations

- The coach never stopped any of the games. All coaching points were made in the changeover between games.
- There was constant talking from every player and they placed tremendous demands for perfection and effort on each other.
- The standards were very high and players got upset when they made mistakes.
- The players played with lots of attitude. They always looked to score when they had the ball and always looked to win it back quickly when they lost possession.
- There was very little dribbling and most goals and quality play involved short, crisp passing.
- 90% of the time the players tried to do the simple thing.
- If it wasn't 'on' to pass forward or shoot, the ball was played back to the keeper to maintain possession.
- The only time players did anything elaborate was in the warm-up activity.

Session Topics - PSV Eindhoven, First Team, Functional Training, Passing, Shooting, Small-Sided Games

Click [here](#) to see a DVD with ton of small-sided games.

Warm up (30 minutes)

Bobby Robson called the team together, spoke for a few seconds and then sent the players off to warm up individually, or in small groups. The players did four to five laps each and most did various stretching and loosening exercises. No one was fooling around and the players were all very disciplined in their preparations.

Warm-Up

Two groups of ten players in two 10 x 10 grids played 8 v 2 one-touch keep-away for 10-15 minutes. The two players in the middle only needed to touch the ball to get out. They had to stay in another turn if they were nutmegged with the ball, or if they were split by a pass. The players on the outside could only play one touch and they had to stay on the line to pass and receive. One of the groups varied the game by playing one touch in the air (15 minutes).



Diagram 28

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Every PSV team from the U10's to the first team plays this game prior to practice and all seem to enjoy the game. It is their free time within the practice to have fun and express themselves. At the first team level it required exceptional technique, quick feet and quickness of thought.

Two groups were divided up into starters and non-starters. Bobby Robson spent 15 minutes watching the non-starters to see who was working hard, to make sure that those players carrying knocks were playing at 100% and to keep an eye on certain players he feels relax when he's not watching.

Small-Sided Game (30 minutes)

In the 18-yard penalty area, two teams (starters v non-starters) played 9 v 9. The game was free-play with no restrictions. The purpose was to get the ball into a two-yard zone on either end of the penalty area by dribbling or passing to a teammate. Each team defended one zone. Assistant coach Ernie Brandts had a supply of balls to quickly restart the game when needed. Play was always restarted with a throw-in. This game was usually played 11 v 11, but one keeper did some work with Pete Schrijvers and some injured players did a fitness testing session with the team's Sports Physiologist.

Players could not tackle in the end zone to reduce the risk of injury, but tackles were fierce and competitive everywhere else. Not one player wore shin guards which was interesting considering the competitiveness of the game and the importance of the following day's league game to PSV's season. Fortunately, no player got hurt.



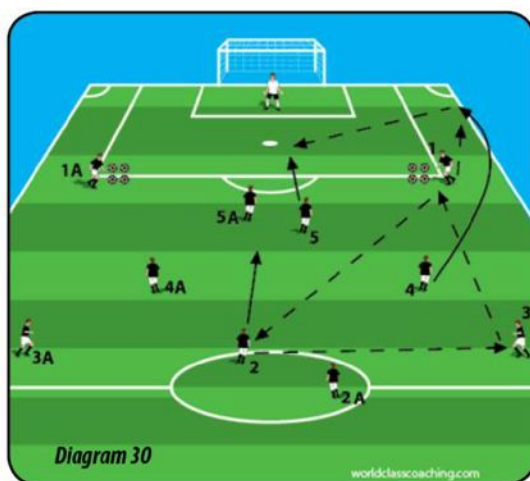
The ball was hardly ever out of play for such a crowded area. The ability of the players to pass under extreme pressure and find space where none seemed to exist was tremendous. The game was very competitive, everyone wanted to win and all goals were celebrated by the scoring team. When possession was lost, the defending team worked extremely hard to get the ball back. It was a surprisingly tough and tiring game the day before an important league match.

Bobby Robson and Ernie Brandts rarely said anything to the players. They spent most of the session observing them play and making final decisions on the starting line up for the game with De Graafschap.

After the game, Luc Nilis and Ruudvan Nistelrooy (the two starting forwards) worked on individual shooting with one of the goalkeepers. There was no coach with them and they basically had a relaxed, but disciplined session together. They worked on bending balls, half and full volleys, one on ones, heading and finishing low balls. They were very disciplined when they worked together and did not do anything in the practice that they would not probably do in a game situation.

Functional Finishing Practice (30 minutes)

The rest of the team worked with Bobby Robson on a half-field functional passing and finishing practice. Players were placed according to the position they played for the team. Nilis and van Nistelrooy were kept out of this practice because Bobby Robson felt that they worked too hard in the finishing games and he wanted the players to conserve their energy for the game with De Graafschap.



Attacking Combinations

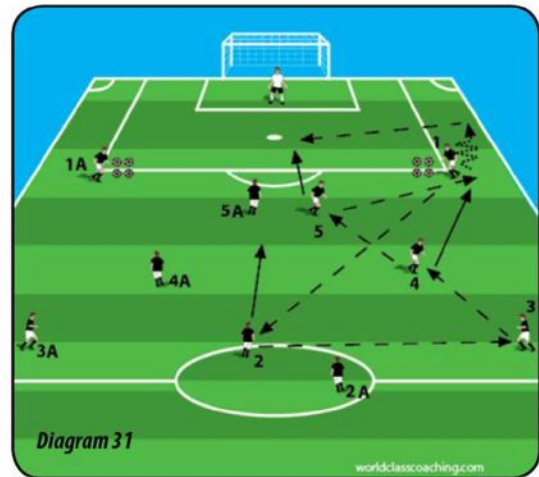
- 1 has a supply of balls.
 - 1 plays long in the air to 2.
 - 2 controls and plays wide to 3 then continues a forward run into the penalty area.
 - 3 plays down the line for 1.
 - 4 makes an overlapping run around 1.
 - 1 plays the ball to 4.
 - 4 crosses into the penalty area for 5 and 2 to finish.
- One group worked on the right side of the field while the other group (A players) worked on the left side of the field. Players were rotated to different positions.

Coaching Points

- Players in the group on the other side can make late runs into the penalty area
- Players were allowed to decide which player to pass to when they received the ball

Variation

- 1 plays long in the air to 2.
- 2 controls and plays wide to 3 then continues a forward run into the penalty area.
- 3 plays to 4.
- 4 plays a give-and-go with 5.
- 4 crosses the ball into the penalty area for 5 and 2 to finish.



Variation

- 1 plays long in the air to 2.
- 2 controls and plays wide to 3 then continues a forward run into the penalty area.
- 3 plays to 1 then runs down the flank.
- 1 lays the ball back for 4.
- 4 plays the ball down the line for 3.
- 3 crosses into the penalty area for 5 and 2 to finish.



Variation

- 1 plays long in the air to 2.
- 2 controls and plays to 3 then continues a forward run into the penalty area.
- 3 plays to 4 then runs down the flank.
- 4 plays to 1 or down the line for 3.
- 3 crosses into the penalty area for 5 and 2 to finish.

Cool Down

Once the practice was finished at noon, Bobby Robson told his players they could go in and shower. There was no team or group cool down and Robson didn't speak to the players to end the practice. Half the players went in while the rest stayed out and did various activities: stretching, extra fitness work, sit-ups, and crossing and finishing.



Observations of this activity

- There was constant movement in the practice and very little standing around.
- The running was done on and off the ball and each execution involved eight players.
- No defenders were introduced, so the success rate of finishing was high. On another day, defenders would have been introduced to the session.
- The standard of passing, runs off the ball, crossing and finishing was very high.
- Bobby Robson was constantly demanding high standards from his players and he got upset with them if they were not maintained.
- He constantly demanded quality passing, discipline, work rate and quality finishing.
- All shots were followed in by the shooter and the second forward. Rebounds were finished with authority.
- Crosses were varied: driven, bent, near post, far post, flighted, etc.
- Talking was non-stop with and without the ball. Players demanded the ball like they were playing in a real game.
- No coaching was done in the session.

Bobby Robson and I talked for a while together after the practice about the attitude of the players. He said that van Nistelrooy has to be kicked off the field because he will stay out and shoot all day, then at game time he will be tired. On this particular day he asked the forward to go inside, but he stayed out and played for a few minutes more. Robson told him to go inside once more and again van Nistelrooy still stayed out. Finally Robson said he would be fined 3000 Guilders if he didn't go in to the dressing room, so the player reluctantly went in. Maybe van Nistelrooy's extra work paid off because the 23 year old was named to the Dutch squad for the upcoming friendly game against Morocco.

The Sports Physiologist continued to work for another 30 minutes with the injured players who were not in contention for playing time in the game against De Graafschap.

By 12:30 p.m. the whole squad was inside the club house for a team meal which no one other than the playing staff and coaching staff is allowed to attend. Robson said this is a policy that is sacrosanct to the inner workings of the club.

After the team left, Bobby Robson and I had lunch together and we had an in-depth discussion on coaching, coaching education and the game with De Graafschap.

For an hour after our lunch Mr. Robson dealt with some of the administrative aspects of his job as first team coach of PSV Eindhoven.

- He spoke to a representative of a Portuguese club regarding a scouting report on a player they were interested in signing.
- He returned a call to a foreign player who wanted a trial with PSV.
- He called a soccer reporter to do an interview for Total Sport Magazine.
- He gave an interview to Finnish television regarding Joonas Kolkka, a Finnish national team player at PSV.
- He autographed PSV merchandise for supporters.

Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, 4v4, 8v8, Possession, Technical



D1 Team (Age 11) : Fourteen Players and Two Goalkeepers

Warm-Up

The kids came out on their own and immediately played 8 v 2 in a 5 x 5 grid.

Small-Sided Game

Mark a grid 30 x 20 yards. Two teams playing 7 v 7 inside the grid with a target player on each end.

Play keep-away and use the target players to make the game 9 v 7.

Practice continued with a 4 v 4 game with no restrictions on a field 40 x 30 yards with full sized goals and keepers.

Coaching Points

- Playing the way they were facing
- Setting each other up for the next pass
- Quality talking
- Quality movement and support.

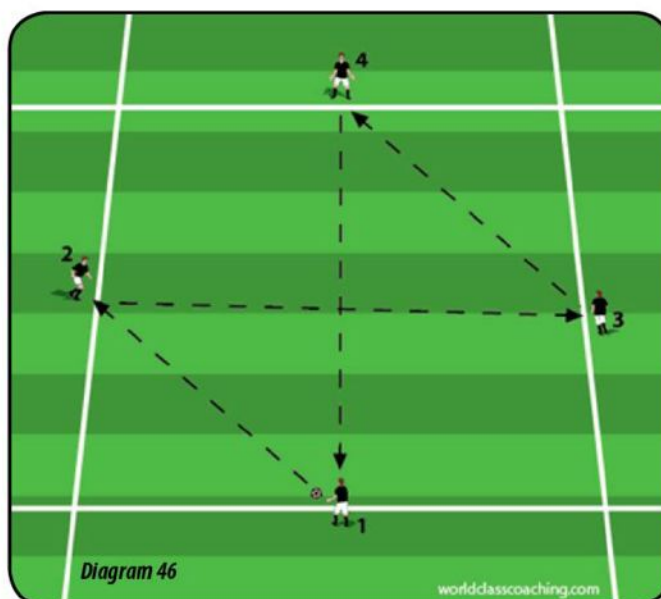
While the 4 v 4 game was going on, the coach worked with four players beside the field in a 10 x 10 yard grid with one player on each side.

Player 1 passes to player 2.
Player 2 passes to player 3.
Player 3 passes to player 4.
Player 4 passes to Player 1.
Repeat back and forward.

Practice ended with an 8 v 8 game on half-field with full goals and no restrictions.

Cool Down

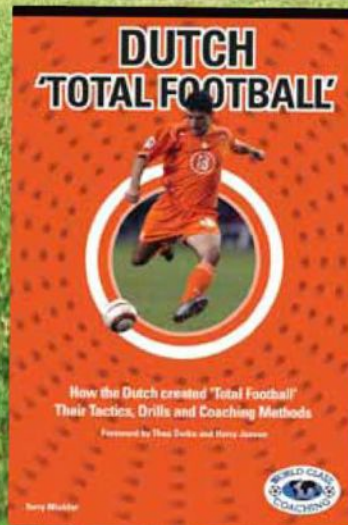
Jogging and stretching.



Observations

- Despite their young age, the players got themselves organized into an activity without coaching supervision. They really had fun playing keep-away, usually at the expense of the players in the middle.
- The discipline of the players to do the simple thing and play the way they were facing was evident even at this early age.
- The players really got into the 7 v 7 possession game and never got bored playing it. I am not sure that American players at the same age could play at the same pace, with the same attitude and discipline, or with the same proficiency.
- You can tell the young players are exposed to higher levels of the game and are surrounded by good players just by the mannerisms that they possess when they are playing.

Learn How the Dutch Create Some of the Best Players in the World



Session Topics - Technical, Tactical, Defending, Small Sided Game,

Working With Defenders Ron Reid & Kevin Fogg

Defending - Facing an Opponent

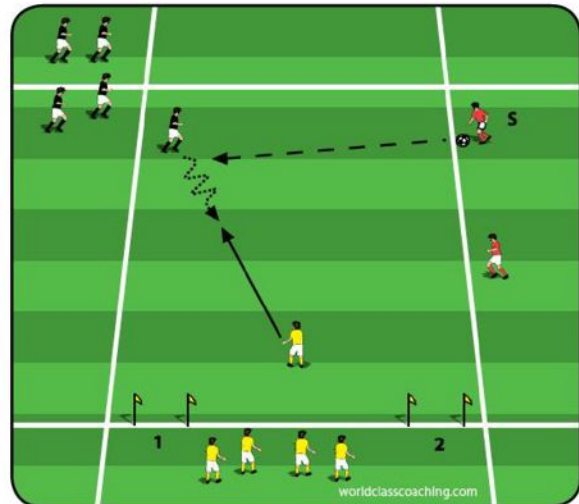
The server plays the ball to the attacker and calls "Gate 1" or "Gate 2". The defender closes down the attacker and prevents them from playing the ball through the gate. The attacker can use the wall player if needed. The wall player should be limited to one or two-touch. Repeat with waiting players.

Coaching Points

- Approach - speed/angle/distance from ball
- Body shape - Jockey position to show in or out

Progression

- Play 2 v 2 - pressure/cover
- Introduce a recovering defender to chase the attacker from behind
- Play 3 v 3 - pressure/cover/balance and unit shape

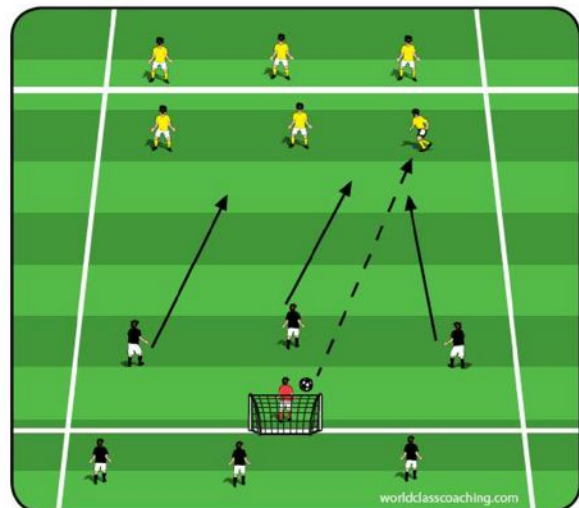


Defending - Facing an Opponent

The Goalkeeper throws the ball to one of the attackers. The three defenders close down the three attackers and defend the goal. Repeat with second group of attackers and defenders.

Coaching Points

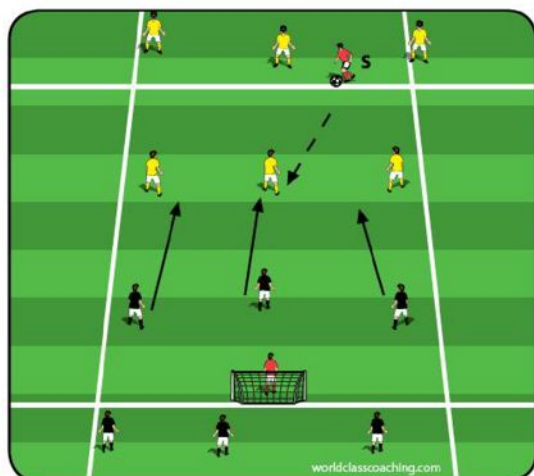
- Approach - speed/angle/distance from ball
- Body shape - Jockey position to show in or out



Coaching the 4-3-3 Defending

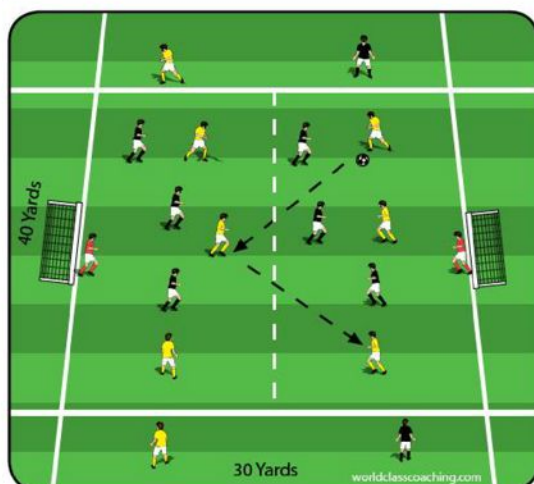
This DVD breaks down the 4-3-3 from a defensive standpoint and looks at the defensive responsibilities of the back four, midfield three and the three attackers. It explains the roles of each unit and shows exercises you can use to train your team to understand the defensive responsibilities that are important when playing the 4-3-3 formation.





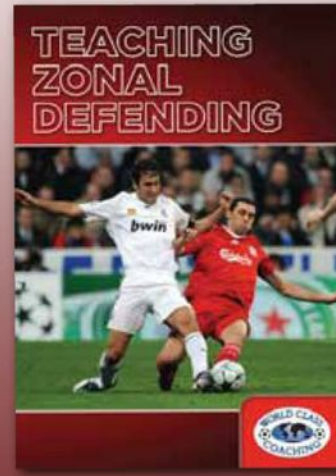
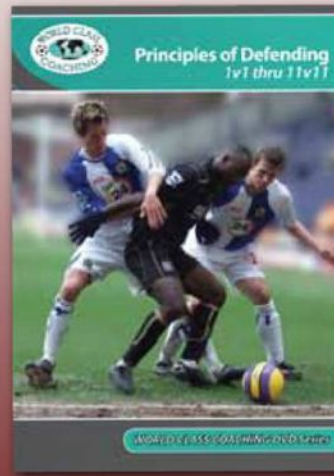
Defending - Preventing Opponents Turning

The server plays to one of the forwards. The defenders close down as quickly as possible to prevent the forwards from turning. The server plays as a support player behind.



Defending - All Aspects

Two teams of six play inside the area. Two additional players for each team are on the sidelines. The sideline layers must cross the ball with one or two touches. The coach can put various conditions on the game to coach various aspects of defending (heading, tracking, blocking, etc.).



Session Topics - Technical, Tactical, Strikers, Attacking, Small Sided Games,

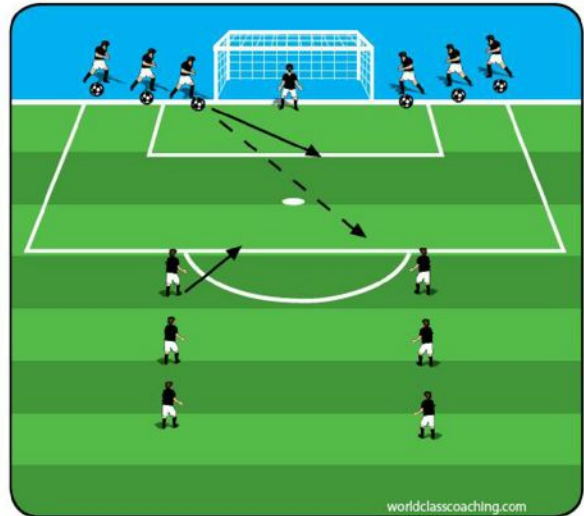
Working With Strikers Ron Reid & Kevin Fogg

Working With Strikers

The servers pass the ball into the forwards. The defenders attempt to prevent the forwards from turning.

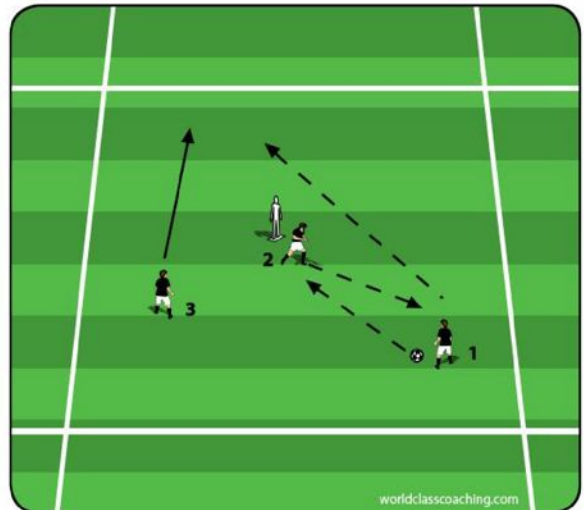
Coaching Points

- Movement - Make space in front to receive (safe side)
- Technique - Stop just before receiving the ball
- Strength - Shield the ball from the defender
- Awareness - Move away to pass and receive from a different server
- Repeat - Rotate functions and roles



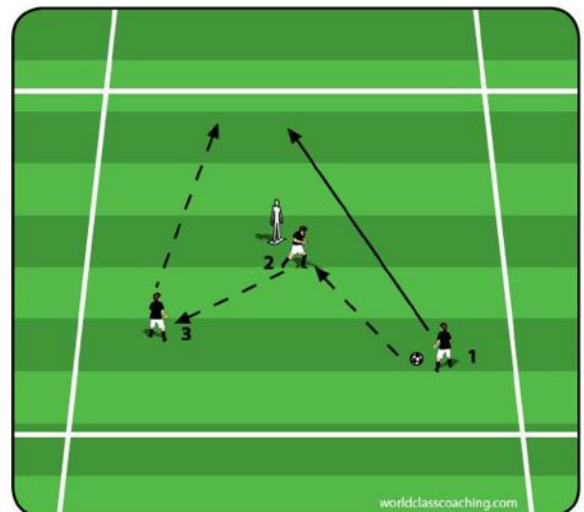
Working With Strikers

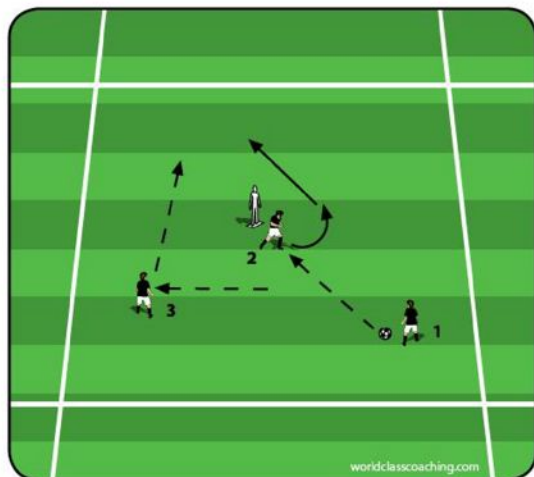
Player 1 plays to Player 2 with a mannequin at his back. Player 2 sets the ball back to Player 1. Player 1 plays the ball behind the defender (mannequin) for Player 3 to run onto.



Working With Strikers

Player 1 plays the ball to Player 2 with a mannequin at his back. Player 2 sets the ball back to Player 3. Player 3 plays the ball behind the defender (mannequin) for Player 1 to run onto.





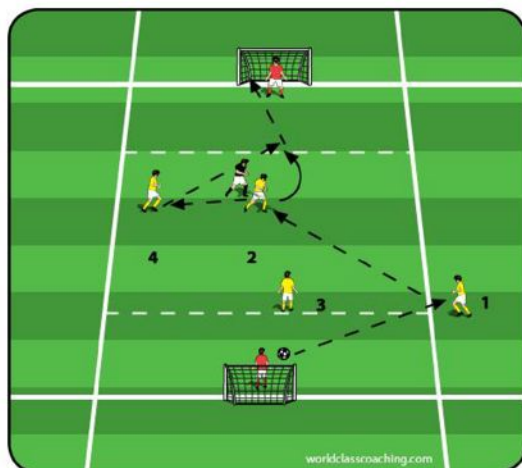
Working With Strikers

Player 1 plays to Player 2 with a mannequin at his back. Player 2 sets the ball back to Player 1. Player 3 plays the ball behind the defender (mannequin in) for Player 2 to spin onto.



Working With Strikers

The GK throws wide to Player 1. Player 1 passes inside to Player 2. Player 2 sets the ball back to Midfielder 3. Midfielder 3 passes the ball outside the defender for Player 4 how makes a flat/bent run behind the defender. Player 4 has the choice of a shot or a pass wide for a cross. Repeat on the opposite flank.



Working With Strikers

The GK throws wide to Player 1. Player 1 passes inside to Player 2. Player 2 passes to Player 3 and spins around the defender. Player 3 passes with one touch into the path of Player 2.

Small-Sided Game

Play 6 v 6 on a 60 x 40 field with six pairs of mannequins placed as shown.

To Score a Point

- Pass between mannequins to another player as shown
- Run the ball between mannequins
- Play a give-and-go between mannequins (two points)

Coaching Points

- Awareness
- Supporting runs
- One and two-touch passing
- Defending - Tracking and isolating players and goals



Small-Sided Game

Mark a 35 x 35-yard field with a smaller 6 x 6-yard square in the center. The five white players pass the ball with the objective of trying to pass the ball to the two white players inside the small square.

The three defenders (dark players) work as a unit to stop the white players passing to the smaller square.

Coaching Points - Defenders

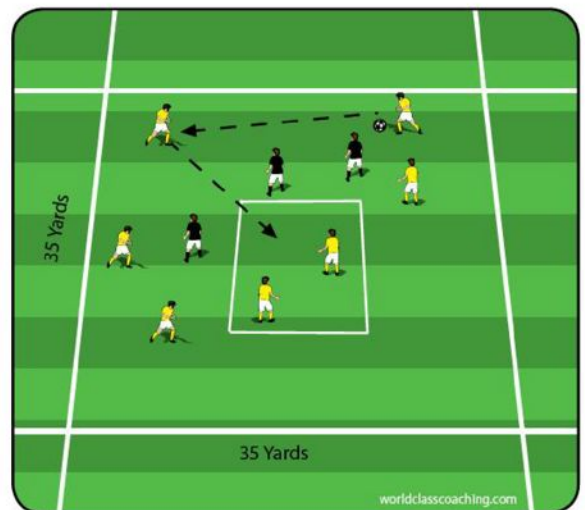
- Press the ball
- Look to intercept or block passes

Coaching Points - Attackers

- Keep possession - Be patient
- Pass the ball quickly and keep it moving
- Good supporting angles

Progressions

- Players inside the smaller square follow their pass out of the square and the player making the pass inside the square takes his place
- Play 4 v 4 with both teams looking to play into the smaller square



Session Topics - Technical, Small Sided Games, 4 v 4, Passing

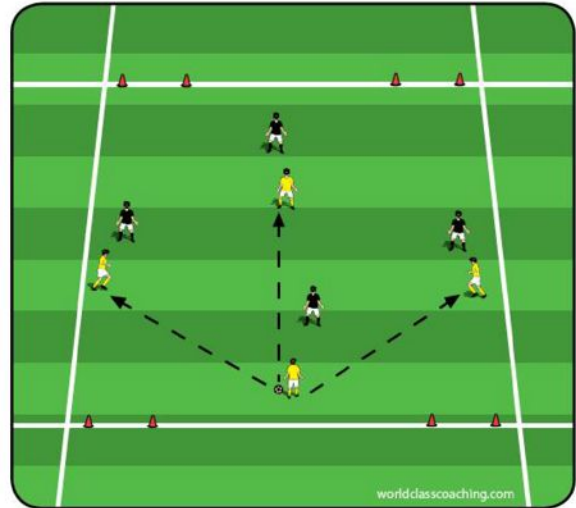
4v4 Small-Sided Game

INTRODUCTION

Being able to recognise the constantly changing nature of the game of football, being able to see the situation as it is developing, making the right decisions for the circumstances and executing the required skill or technique with precision is what makes great players stand out. 4 v 4 football allows players to practice all these elements of match play and also allows freedom, fun and fitness for the players to develop.

ORGANISATION

In an area approximately the size of the penalty area this practice works with 8 players (4v4). Split the players into 2 teams and give one team bibs to distinguish them from the other players. 4 goals have been placed either side of the pitch and each team defends two goals. The objective of the game is to score in either of your opponents goals. 4v4 comes closest to presenting the most match-like situations where the number of players is small enough to allow a high percentage of ball contacts, whilst also encouraging width, depth and movement in all directions. Repetition, problems solving and ball contact are key elements of this game. Modify the game by changing the shape size (i.e. bigger area or long and thin pitch) and conditions of the games (i.e. 2 touch or 1 touch).



KEY COACHING POINTS

Do

- Apply the basic passing technique in the practice
- Encourage the players to play quick passes to each other to keep the ball away from the defending players
- Work on the first touch to help find space in the area away from the defenders
- Play the ball first time (one touch only) if in a tight area and under pressure from the defender
- Encourage movement of the players and passes in all directions.
- Encourage players to apply all techniques and skills available to them, e.g. different types of passes, dribbling and running with the ball, defending etc.
- Play short and sharp games – i.e. 2 to 8 minute games in duration.

Don't

- Make the area the same for every game. Vary the shape and size to create different types of problems for them to solve.
- Just kick the ball anywhere. Aim to pass to team mates with quality, (pass the ball as you would like to receive it).
- Play the games for too long and expect the players to produce quality when fatigued.
- Be too critical if the players loose the ball. Allow them time to practice their techniques and encourage them to use them.

Session Topics -Technical, Shooting, Small Sided Games,

Small-Sided Shooting Game

INTRODUCTION

Everybody loves shooting and the opportunity to hit the back of the net. This element of the game often separates the average player from the elite, where the ability to score is a combination of basic technique, the skill in being able to apply the techniques at the right time in the right place, (that is good decision making ability) and a strong mental attitude. Often the psychological confidence of players being able to score is often overlooked. Practicing shooting in a competitive game setting will help to develop a positive mental attitude along with the skill required to score. The game is designed to encourage a high number of shots.

ORGANISATION

In an area approximately the size of two 18 yard box goalkeepers area facing each other, play a maximum of 6v6. 3 defending players play against 2 attacking players and must stay inside their half of the pitch. With a good supply of footballs by the goals the objective of the game is to shoot and score from anywhere on the pitch. The 3 defending players get the opportunity to shoot from distance and the 2 attacking players are effectively playing inside the penalty box. Keep records of each player that shoots and how many times they hit /miss the target and score. See if they improve over time.

KEY COACHING POINTS

Do

- Apply the basic shooting technique in the practice.
- Encourage the players to shoot every opportunity they have. The pitch is small and wherever they receive the ball the opportunity to shoot will arise.
- Encourage individual skill to find space in front of the defender and shoot. Taking a shot only requires $\frac{1}{2}$ a yard of space not an open goal.
- Interplay between forwards and defenders should be encouraged when other players get into better scoring positions. This will develop good decision making from the player in possession.
- Encourage the players to develop a variety of shooting techniques to suit the situation in front of them – e.g. chipping the goalkeeper, curling the shots, driving the shots with power.
- Emphasise the importance of hitting the target. Develop accuracy first and develop power later.



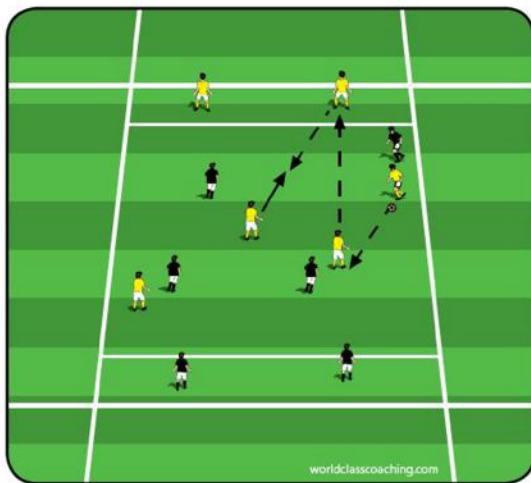
Don't

- Be negative and opt to pass when a shot is available.
- Allow the same players to shoot all the time. Encourage all players to develop this skill as opportunities will arise to all players – defender, midfield and forwards.
- Allow the practice to become unrealistic – e.g. forwards shooting from 2 yards.
- Criticise the players if they miss and discourage them from shooting. Encourage them to take the opportunity to shoot and try breed confidence.

Possession On The Half-Turn

INTRODUCTION

This practice tries to encourage players "off the ball" (that is the players not directly involved with the ball, either passing or receiving it), to make runs into areas where they can receive the ball in advanced and attacking positions. All too often players off the ball will remain inactive until the ball is in their immediate vicinity and involving them. This practice therefore tries to prompt players into creating options for the player passing the ball. This type of movement is called "third man running". One player sets up the ball another player passes the ball whilst a third player makes a run forward to receive it.



ORGANISATION

In an area approximately 60 x 40 yards an end zone is coned off the width of the pitch about 8 yards deep. In the end zone two players from the same team stay inside whilst in the central area of the pitch a 4v4 game is played. The aim of the practice is to play passes into one of the end players who passes it out to the "third man" who then has to run the ball into the end zone. For example - Player 1 sets the pass for player 2. Player 2 passes the ball into a player in the end zone. The end zone player passes the ball to player 3 who has made a run off the ball, who then runs the ball into the end zone. Condition on the game must be that the player who has set the pass or passed the ball is not allowed to run the ball into the end zone, thus forcing players off the ball to make runs forward.

KEY COACHING POINTS

Don't

- Let the session turn into a dribbling session and become sloppy with the 2v2 in the middle.
- Let the player run directly towards the person passing the ball to them so their back is facing where they want to go.
- Let them play back to the person who has just given them the ball

Do

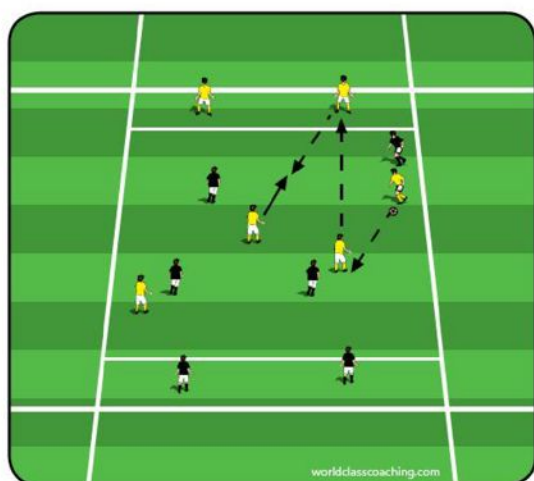
- Set passes and make passes quickly into end zone players.
- Passes must be of good quality so play doesn't break down
- One of the two players off the ball (i.e. not setting or passing) must be alert and make runs forward off the ball.
- Encourage players to keep possession and create a chance to pass and run rather than forcing play.
- Encourage the players to be patient and not give the ball away through unforced errors.
- Make runs off the ball and try and lose your opponent.
- Keep possession in the middle 4v4 game so chances to run forward can be created.

Session Topics - Technical, Small Sided Games, Passing,

Forward Runs From Deep

INTRODUCTION

This practice tries to encourage players "off the ball" (that is the players not directly involved with the ball, either passing or receiving it), to make runs into areas where they can receive the ball in advanced and attacking positions. All too often players off the ball will remain inactive until the ball is in their immediate vicinity and involving them. This practice therefore tries to prompt players into creating options for the player passing the ball. This type of movement is called "third man running". One player sets up the ball another player passes the ball whilst a third player makes a run forward to receive it.



ORGANISATION

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KEY COACHING POINTS

Do

- Set passes and make passes quickly into end zone players.
- Passes must be off good quality so play doesn't break down
- One of the two players off the ball (i.e. not setting or passing) must be alert and make runs forward off the ball.
- Encourage players to keep possession and create a chance to pass and run rather than forcing play.
- Encourage the players to be patient and not give the ball away through unforced errors.
- Make runs off the ball and try and lose your opponent.
- Keep possession in the middle 4v4 game so chances to run forward can be created.

Don't

- Be static during this game - all 4 players in the middle must be alert, involved, moving and either setting passing or making runs forward.
- Make small and short runs - try making runs from deep areas, over 20 to 30 yards distance to lose your opponent.
- Allow the game to be all short passes, try making the players pass over long distances into the end zone, thus encouraging long runs to support.

Session Topics - Technical, Small Sided Game, Attacking, Defending

The Wave

INTRODUCTION

This is a practice that combines three teams in an attacking and defending game. The aim of the practice is to attack and defend each end of the pitch with two teams playing and one team resting waiting for the next wave of attack. You can develop many elements within this practice but try and focus on one or two key points each time. For example – passing and switching play, or defending and dribbling.

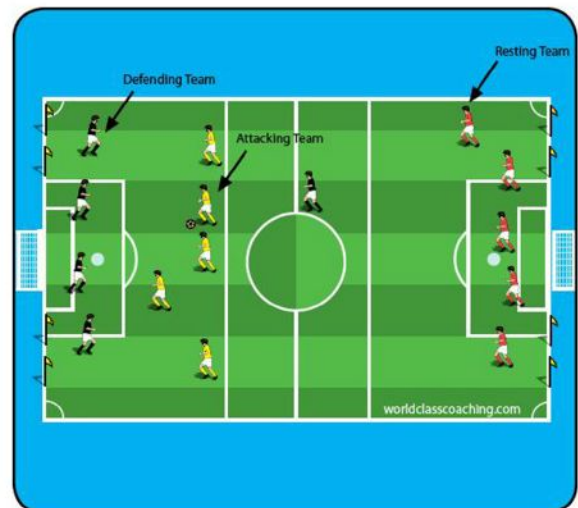
ORGANISATION

In an area approximately 60x40 yards (vary bigger if more players are involved) three teams of 5 a side play. One team each end of the pitch with another team in the middle attacking one end. The aim of the practice is to attack one end and try and score in the goal by running the ball through the goal. If the team scores the defending team then attack the other end. If the defending team intercepts the ball they have to try and pass the ball to their spare man in the middle of the pitch. All this team then runs over the middle zone and attacks the other end. The team that scores the most goals wins.

KEY COACHING POINTS

Do

- Defending team (x) must defend as a team to prevent the attacking team (o) from scoring in either of the goals.
- Score a goal by running the ball through either of the goals.
- Defend as a team and try and cover both goals
- Passing and movement of the attacking team must be good quality. Aim to keep possession and work an opening to score a goal.
- Encourage the attacking team to be patient in their attack and not give the ball away from unforced errors. However attack and score when the opportunity arises.
- Attacking team to switch play to find space to attack either goal.
- If the defending team (x) intercept the ball they must try and pass the ball to their resting player in the central area. (No other players are allowed in this area and there is no tackling in this area.)
- Once possession has been made and secured in the central resting area the attacking team must move at pace to get into the opposite area.
- Encourage players to work at a high tempo when attacking and defending and earn their recovery when they are the resting team.



Session Topics - Technical, Tactical, Goalscoring, Defending, Attacking

This is an excerpt from 'Improving Your Teams' Speed of Play' by David Williams. The book contains 124 drills, exercises and small-sided games that Williams has conducted during his many years as a coach with various English Premier League teams. This section deals with just a couple of examples of small-sided games that are included in the book. Visit www.worldclasscoaching.com for more information on this book.

The design of this field may possibly surprise most of you. Again, the area can be tailored to suit the needs of your group, as can the size of the goals, and the end zones do not have to be the same size as the middle area. Each team has one goal to attack and one to defend as in a normal match. Games that can be played vary from quite technical to physical sessions where the players improve their fitness levels without realising it.

So consider some suggestions on how this field can be used. Firstly, the defending zone, where the key player here is the goalkeeper. Any time that he has possession of the ball in this area he must pass to his team in this area. That is to say he cannot kick or throw the ball into the middle zone or into the attacking zone at the far end of the field. This rule compels his team mates to look to support quickly whenever the goalkeeper has possession. How play develops from there is then a matter for you to choose, and you might well return to some of the previous ideas.

Should the ball be run out of this zone or must it be passed? If you decide on a pass to go forward, will you insist on a one touch pass?

To help you decide I will again give you two examples of how this field can be utilised.

Session one is designed to get the players fitter. This time I have a group of eighteen players, including two goalkeepers. With no team formation as such, all the outfield players are free to go where they feel they can be most effective. There are no restrictions on the number of touches, but to transfer the ball into the attacking third in order to score a goal, a player has to run the ball not pass it. The goalkeepers are restricted as previously explained, but the fitness aspect comes from the final rule of how a goal can be scored.

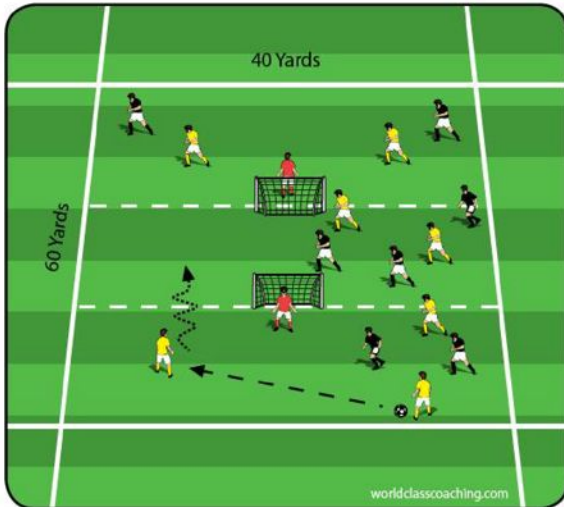
The most effective condition here would require the whole team to be in the attacking zone for a goal to count. In this way, end to end play develops with players at the rear of the team having to sprint forward



to keep up with the attack. On the occasions when one or two members of the team have still to reach the end zone, then those already there would need to retain possession until everybody is present.

From such a position the ball is often lost, allowing the defending team to counter attack and play quickly moving the length of the field to the opposite attacking zone. If you look at the diagram above, the black team have possession of the ball in their attacking zone but cannot score until the whole team is in the area. If they lose the ball while they wait for the last two players then the white team have the chance to counter attack. If this happens then ALL the players will need to travel quickly to the other end of the field and this will certainly improve fitness levels.

If you feel that expecting all the attacking team to be in the end zone is too demanding, then adjust the rule. Allow one, or maybe two players to be outside the attacking third for a goal to count. Such a decision will depend on how well the game is flowing and whether enough attempts on goal are occurring. Too few and the players will lose interest because of the lack of an end product the tempo of the practice will drop and consequently the target of better fitness levels will not be achieved.



Session two concerns a technical aspect, in this instance, passing. The aim is to improve the players' ability to retain possession of the ball within this structured game. I am focusing mainly on the defending third and the middle third because in the attacking zone I want the team to get a strike on goal as early as possible. Initially the game will be restricted to three touch, with emphasis on the receiver's first contact and his body position when accepting the ball. This is just the first point that needs to be addressed. As important are the supporting positions of other team members, their angle and distance, but crucially the timing. If there is support for the man on the ball before he receives it, then the decision of where to pass next will be made a lot easier, especially if there is more than one supporting player available, which should be the target for the team in possession.

The design of the field with the position of the goals, lends itself to switching play. A white player has the ball but the black players in front of him make progress difficult on the right side of the field. By moving the ball to his left, he can switch the play around his own goal, retaining possession and changing the point of the attack.

If there needs to be an increase in the challenge, then reduce the touches or insist on a certain number of passes in a zone before moving forward. At some point, you could allow free play in the end zone for the attacking team to encourage the strikers to be positive and try to beat defenders.

Where you find the rules too restricting remove them and allow the game to be played with no limit on the number of touches. It simply depends on how you feel the practice is developing and whether it is achieving the aims you are after.

Obviously offside is not an issue here and throw-ins are taken as usual or by passing the ball in any time it goes out of play. The only time there can be some confusion is if the ball becomes trapped in the outside of the goal net. On these occasions the ball can be returned to the appropriate goalkeeper or played as a cornerkick from the side.



The next game is always a favourite with the players because it involves plenty of goal scoring opportunities.

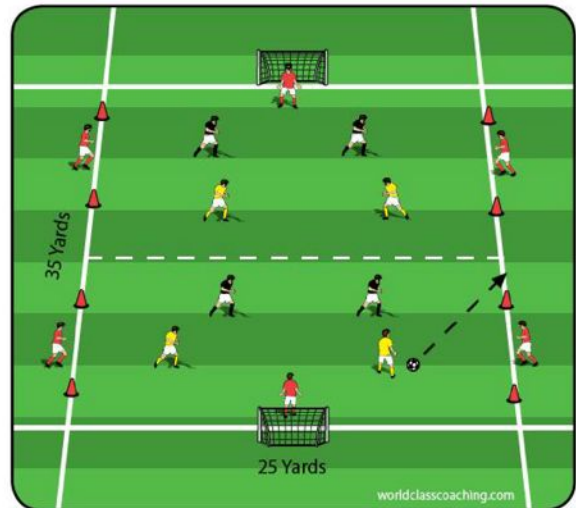
You will see from the diagram that 12 players and two goalkeepers are shown. The outfield players are split into three teams, two teams on the field and the third positioned around the perimeter. However, there are ways to involve fewer or more players, but I will discuss those later.

The game illustrated in the diagram is played on an appropriate field with full size goals, where the shooting distances are realistic for the group you are working with. On the field the game can be conditioned using many of the rules already mentioned. For example, free play but with a one or two-touch finish, which encourages players to shoot early, either first time or on their second touch.

The team on the outside are also part of the game, available to the team in possession, but usually limited on their number of touches. Of course they are not permitted to score and they cannot be tackled, and neither are they allowed to pass to each other. In some cases, the position that these players take up is determined by markers, (usually discs), and where a pass to them is inaccurate, possession is lost.

In this diagram, where the pass from the white player misses the neutral player within the markers, play here could be restarted with a throw-in or a pass-in. As described previously, an alternative condition for ALL ball out of play situations is for the goalkeeper of the team winning possession, to be the one who gets the game going again.

The tempo of the game is dictated by the quality of the group and the conditions you as the coach decide are appropriate. It is also useful to have a good supply of balls because of the number of attempts at goal and the percentage that are likely to miss the target. Don't forget that there is also a very good defending session here in working with players to stop and block shots at goal, testing their bravery, as well as their mobility, when faced with forwards trying to dribble past them.



For those occasions when the ideal numbers are not available look at the following list of suggestions, in each case I am assuming that two goalkeepers are already in place.

With nine, play 4 v 4 and involve the extra player as a floater in the game but restrict him from scoring and limit his touches. Alternatively, if you feel that YOU could participate on the side, put the spare player on one side line and you take the other. Each player would need to take their turn on the outside.

With 10 players simply have one player on each side line as a floater and then rotate as before.

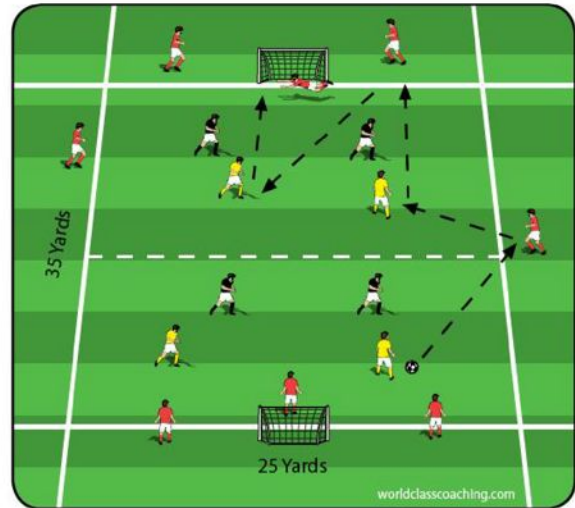


Eleven players is obviously one short of 12, so if you as coach, can fill the vacant space, the game can go ahead as initially described. In this instance, I would number the group one to eleven, then begin the practice with 1, 2, 3, 4 as one team and 5, 6, 7, 8 as the other. 9, 10, 11 would start as the floaters on the outside. Once this game had been played for an appropriate time, maybe five minutes, then change the teams using the numbers. Firstly, the floaters, 9, 10, 11 are joined by number one, to play against 2, 3, 4, and 5. This means that 6, 7, and 8 move to the outside as the floaters.

To accommodate 13 use the numbering system again, which accounts for eight players on the field playing 4 v 4. The next four (9, 10, 11 and 12) can take up the stations off the field, while number 13 can be a floater on the field, but with restrictions. Then at the change, rotate the numbers as previously to keep everyone involved.

With 14 players, more possibilities present themselves. By continuing the game as a 4 v 4, there are six players still to be involved. Look at this diagram to understand how four of these extras can be positioned either side of each goal, once again within a defined zone. They are still available to the team in possession, but now consider how they might be used by the attacking side.

Any time they receive a pass from the team attacking the goal they are alongside, these free players must set the ball across the front of the goal, ideally first time, to maintain the tempo of the game. This is great for the reactions of both attackers and defenders. The tendency of defenders once the ball goes behind them is to “switch off”. However, to do that in these circumstances is likely to prove costly as the ball will find its way into the danger area. Similarly with the attackers have to be ready to get themselves into goal scoring positions once the ball is played to the side of the goal.



Probably the maximum number that could be accommodated playing this format would be 16 plus the two goalkeepers, where you could divide the group into four teams of four. With 15, one extra player would have to go onto the field. So the set up would be 4 v 4 on the field, four players stationed to the sides of the goals, one along each side of the field leaving one player as a floater to play for the team in possession in the game itself.

Session Topics - Technical, Passing, Possession, Shooting, Finishing, Defending

This is an excerpt from our latest book, "Coaching Soccer Through Small-Sided Games". One of the most important components of a training session is the small-sided game. These games help the players to make the transition from drills and exercises to real game situations. The book contains small-sided games that have been used by professional teams from around the world including: Manchester United, Real Madrid, AC Milan, Liverpool and many more. This article contains three different sessions: passing and possession, shooting / finishing and defending

These games were part of a session observed and submitted by Brian Matzke. Brian currently coaches with the West Hartford Girls Soccer Club in Connecticut. The session was in preparation for A.C. Milan's Champions World Series game against Manchester United in August 2004. The session lasted roughly 90 minutes and involved 16 field players and three goalkeepers.



8 v 6 Keep-Away

Mark a field with cones approximately 10 yards in from each touch line and three yards in from the halfway line and edge of penalty area. Play with two teams, one having a numerical advantage (8 v 6). Play using one or two touches. There is very little dribbling. Play focuses through the middle of the field. The game speed is below regular game pace. The main focus is on forcing the team with the ball, to maintain possession with quick passing and combination play.



8 v 8 Keep-Away To Targets

Using the same field dimensions as the previous exercise, the teams are now evenly numbered (8 v 8). Each team has a target player in the end zone. Upon change of possession, the players switch the target player. The focus of the session is to play quick one or two-touch combination play with the middle players before playing a ball out to a wide player who serves a long ball in the air to the target player.

Upon receiving the ball, the target player passes back out to the feet of a teammate, who then turns and plays to the opposite side before attempting to return play back to target player. The pace of the play increases with more intense defensive pressure.

8 v 8 Half Field With Keepers

The game progresses to a half field 8 v 8 game with keepers in each goal. The tempo is now game speed with hard aggressive defense and tackles. The game continues with fast combination play through the middle whenever possible.



The next two games are from a session that is part of the youth academy curriculum of Italian Serie "A" club A.C. Perugia and was provided by Bruno Redolfi, Technical Director of A.C Perugia and Antonio Saviano.

3 v 3 and Shoot

A 15-yard space is created as a middle section. Within this space, a 3 v 3 situation is set up where the objective is to cross the opponent's "line" via a pass or by dribbling, and creating a goal scoring situation.

Objectives

- Offensive and defensive collaboration
- Creating space, movement without the ball
- Zone defense



Find The Goal 4 v 4

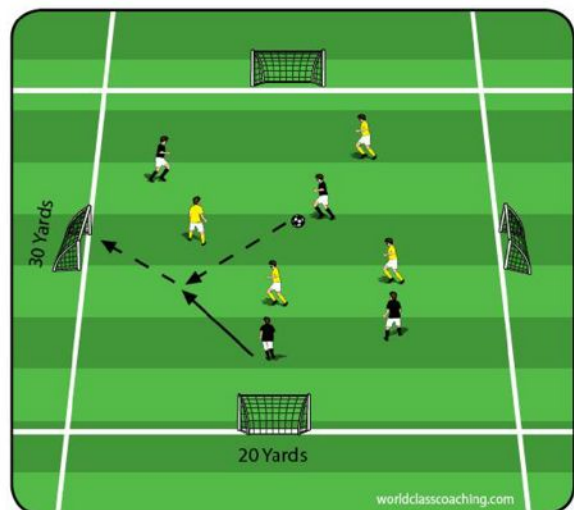
In a 30 x 20-yard area, two teams try to score in four small goals (which are colored). The team that scores maintains possession of the ball. Teams cannot score in the same goal consecutively.

Variations

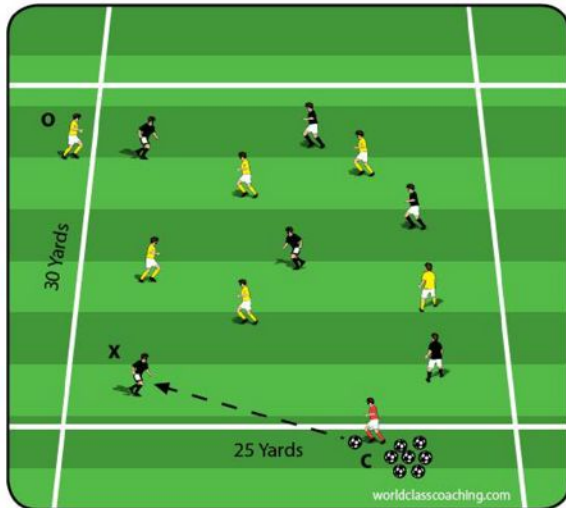
The coach indicates in which goal the goal can be scored by lifting the same colored jersey in the air.

Objectives

- Switching play
- Finishing



These games are a part of a defending session by then Sheffield United U15 coach, Sam Saif. Saif holds a UEFA "A" License and has over 15 years experience coaching at youth academies for professional clubs in England.



Pressing

Two teams play 6 v 6 for 45 seconds using approximately one quarter of a regular field. One player rests and counts the interceptions and losses of possession as a result of the "pressing tactic". X's (the majority) play possession football. O's (the minority) press to destroy possession. Change teams and roles at the end of 45 seconds.

Coach starts each game by passing to team in majority. O's press as a team to destroy possession by forcing the ball out of playing area. Coach immediately releases another ball to the majority. At the end of 45 seconds, count the losses of possession.

Coaching Points

- Who? presses the ball
- How? with what intention
- When? does the press begin
- Reaction/responsibilities of others
- Prevent the change of play



Pressing

Two teams play 6 v 6, 7 v 7, 8 v 8, etc. Have a supply of balls behind each goal. Coach calls a color, and the GK can distribute to any of those players.

Coaching Points

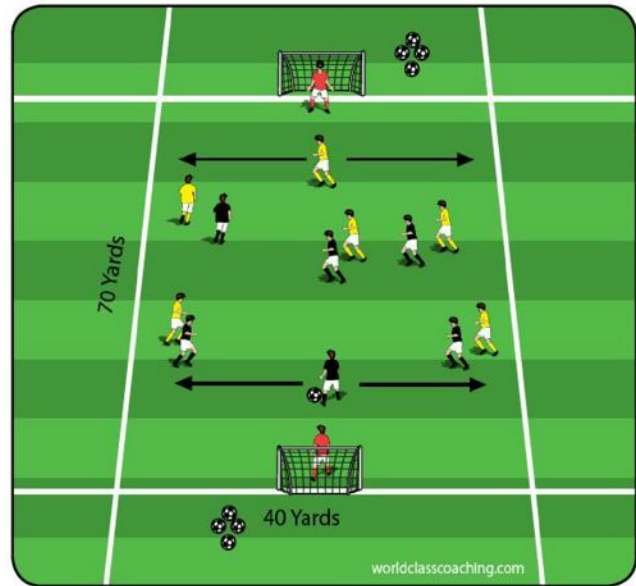
- Team "out" of possession works on pressing
- Who? presses the ball
- How? with what intention
- When? does the press begin
- Reaction/responsibilities of others
 - Mark
 - Track
 - Cover
 - Recover

Man Marking

Two teams play 7 v 7 on a 40 x 70-yard field. Five pairs of players who mark on a man-for-man basis. One sweeper on each team with three-touch limit and can play in their own half only.

Coaching Points

- Who to mark?
- How to mark?
- Tight and loose marking
- Defending in 1 v 1 situations
- Responsibilities "off the ball"
- Defending against "combination play"
- Defending when the ball is played beyond you, towards your goal
- Defending for player beaten in 1 v 1 situations



Half Field Practice 5 v 5

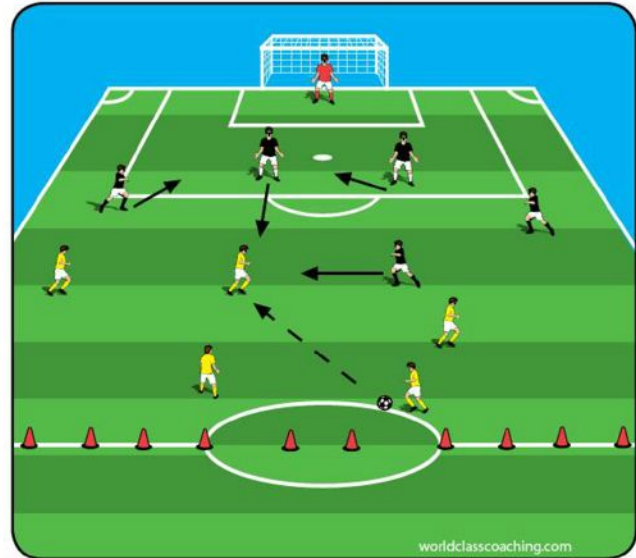
Using one half a regular sized field, one large goal is placed at one end with five mini goals placed on the half line. Five players attack the mini goals and must dribble the ball through to score a goal. Five players defend the mini goals and must attack the normal goal.

Coaching Points

- Defenders defending the mini goals must defend as a unit
- Apply pressure
- Make play predictable
- Provide pressure, cover, balance
- Move together when the ball moves

Progression

- Rotate so both teams get to defend the full sized goal.



Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Technical, Tactical

This session is contributed by Les Reed, former manager of Charlton Athletic and Technical Director of the English FA. These small-sided games were conducted with the Great Britain Team that participated in the recent Maccabi Games which are held every four years and is the third largest sporting event in the world.

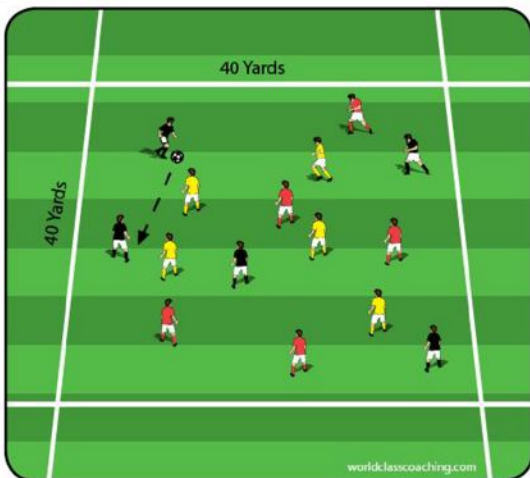


4 v 4 v 4 Possession Game

Two teams are on the field and one team is positioned outside the field. The teams on the inside score by combining to make five passes (not counting passes to and from the outside players) before controlling the ball on one of the endlines.

Progression

Condition the inside players to play two- touch.



5 v 5 v 5 Colors Game

The game is played in a 40 x 40-yard area. Each team of five players is in a different color. Two teams play keepaway from the third team. The defending team must win the ball three times before they change places with one of the offensive teams. The offensive groups play two-touch.

The game is played three times for four minutes each time with a one minute rest in between.



6 v 6 Pressing Game

The game is played on a 60 x 40-yard field between the two penalty boxes. The goalkeeper is positioned inside the 'D' at the top of the penalty area. The team in possession scores by playing the ball to the goalkeeper in the air from the other half of the field.

Coaching Points

- The defending team must prevent forward play with early pressure
- Reshape quickly when the ball is lost
- Create space quickly and set up for early forward play when in possession
- Allow goals to be scored from one-touch passes to the goalkeeper's hands from inside the half line

End Zone Game with Conditions

The game is played across the width of a field. Each zone has specific guidelines. Two defenders and one attacker are positioned in the defending third of each half. Three players from each team are in the middle third.

Each team tries to score by combining from the back and controlling the ball with composed possession in the end zone.

Variations

- Score only from a wall pass
- Scorer must dribble the ball into the end zone



Channel Game with Conditions

A goalkeeper is added to the end zone. There's also a neutral flank player on each wing.

Each team tries to score by combining from the back and playing through the front to set the ball wide and deliver it into the keeper's hands in the end zone.

Variations

- The assist must be one touch
- Score by headers into keeper's hand from the attacking third



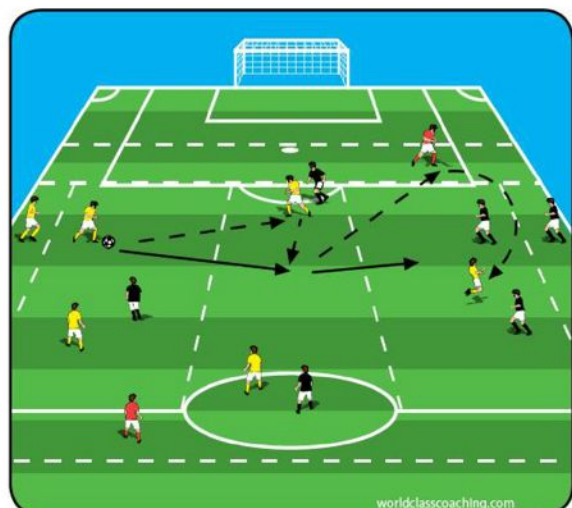
Pass and Follow Overload

The field set-up is the same as in the previous games but now there are only two defender, two midfielders and a forward for each team. A player making a forward pass into the next zone may join that zone. The player must recover to their original zone when the ball is lost.

Variations

- Assist must be one touch
- All play in the attacking third is one touch
- All play is two touch

When there are odd numbers for any of these game, use a floater who plays for the attacking team. You can restrict the floater to a particular zone. The Floater may be restricted to one or two touches.



Session Topics - Tactical, Shape, Small-Sided Games, SSG

This session was conducted by England U17 National Team Coach, John Peacock, at our International Coaching Seminar in Omaha, Nebraska, December 2004. The session focuses on pressuring, being compact as a team and keeping shape in 7 v 7, 4 v 4 and 8 v 8 exercises.

7 v 7 +1

The game starts with the GK distributing the ball. The GK must kick/throw ball in air to begin each possession. No free passes in! Each game starts with a 50/50 ball.

Defend high up the field and press the ball carrier.

Neutral player does not defend. Therefore, the defending team will always be at a numerical disadvantage. If the defending team does not organize quickly, they will be dissected by the players in the majority.



4 v 4 With Passer For Each Team

The team without the ball is asked to put themselves in a position to pressure the ball quickly and force a change of possession. The passer plays the ball in to a teammate. One team plays to goal. The other team plays to the target player at the top of the grid.

How fast can your team win ball and make a completed pass? Keep time to score.

The defending team will force a change of possession by employing high pressure, double teams and using dynamic defensive skills such as the slide-tackle. Prevent the forward from turning!



8 v 8

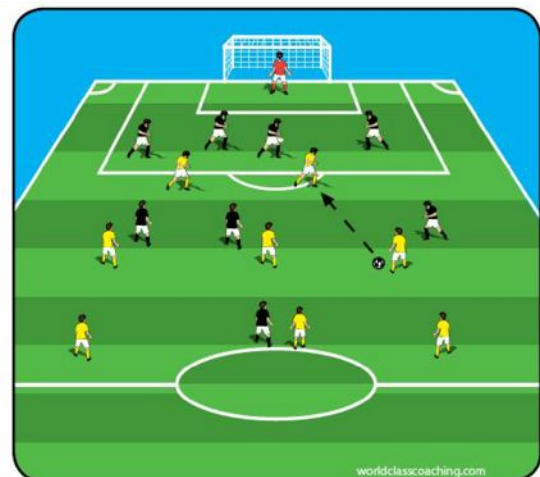
The light colored team attempts to score. The dark colored team defends and attempts to keep possession as high up the field as possible. The defending team play in a 4-3-1 formation. The attacking team play in a 3-3-2 formation.

Coaching Points - Defending

Closest player must press the ball and teammates move up to stay compact.

Coaching Points - Attacking

Players must be in good starting positions enabling them to be able to intercept.





8 v 8 Continued

Continue to compact the field by closing down quickly with pressure on the ball. Use double teams when appropriate. Recognizing the right time to pressure is key to good defending. Initiating late pressure could expose your own defense.

Coaching Points

- Defenders should drop if there is no pressure on the ball
- Defenders step up if there is pressure on the ball

Small-Sided Games of the World's Top Teams

This DVD contains many small-sided games used by the world's top teams and their academies like Manchester United, Juventus, Liverpool, U.S. Women's World Cup Team, Chelsea, Glasgow Rangers as well as MLS teams and USYSA National Champions.



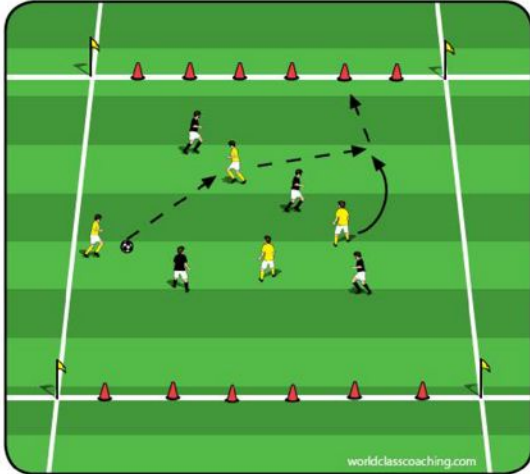
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Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, SSG, Technical, Tactical

This session is an excerpt from our book, "Coaching Soccer Champions", authored by Terry Michler. As the coach for Christian Brothers College in St. Louis, Michler has compiled more than 720 wins, 22 District Championships, 15 Final Four appearances, 11 State Final appearances and five State Championship. 266 of his players have gone on to play college soccer and 32 have played at the professional level. This excerpt is a series of 4 v 4 games from "Coaching Soccer Champions", that Michler has used with his championship teams.



Cone Game

Place cones along the end-line -- spacing them apart. A goal is scored by knocking a cone down with a pass. Once the cone is down, it stays down.

A great game for passing accuracy.



Long, Narrow Field (40 x 15 yards)

The game is played over the length of the field, so the shape will start with a deep forward. The first look should be deep and then build from there. There is no width to speak of, so the shape will be determined by the length. Link up quickly with the deep set forward and go to goal. In the transition, it is very important for the deepest front player to break out and establish the shape.



Combination Game-- One Keeper and an End Zone Goal Area

One team will attack the full size goal with a keeper. The other team will play to the end zone. To score in the end zone, the ball must be dribbled in or received and controlled. No control of the ball, no goal!

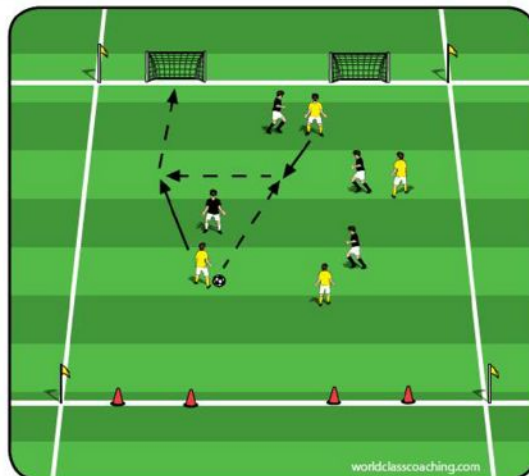
The team attacking the end zone plays through the entire width of the field, while the other team then must defend the same area.

Switch direction of play so that both teams have a chance to attack and defend both the goal and the end zone.

Two Small Goals and Two Line Goals

Play directly into the small goals and play controlled through the line goals.

The ball must be controlled as it passes the line goal -- received by a teammate or controlled by the dribbler.



Off-Set Goals

Place the goals on the end-line and at the corner of the field. This will create a game that is focused on one side of the field. Move the goals so as to play a right and left sided game. This is a great game to work on crosses or to isolate one side of the field and the interaction of the teammates on that side of the field. A different set-up than usual, but very functional.

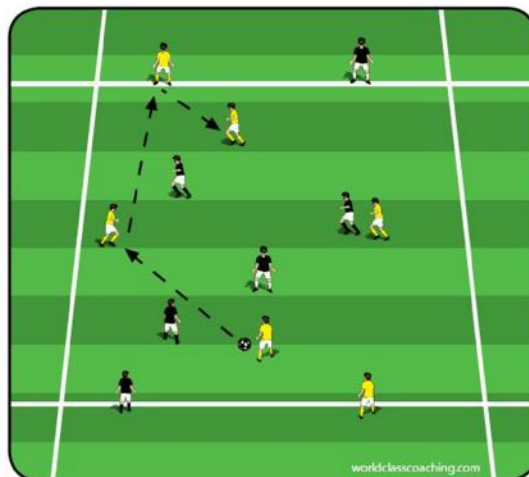
Move the goals to the opposite corners so that the teams have the opportunity to work on playing from the right and left side of the field.

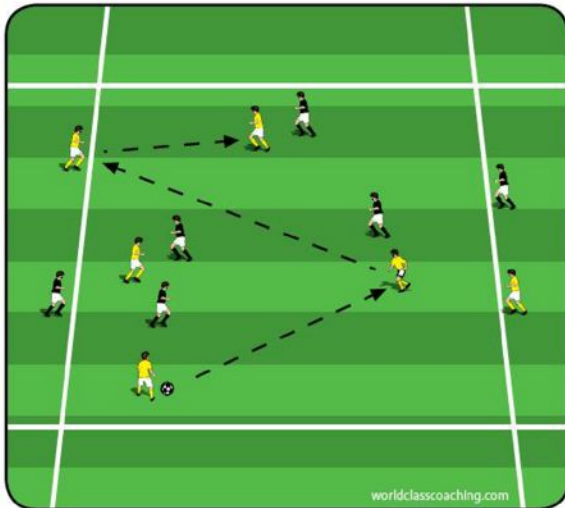


4 v 4 + 2 – Change the Direction of Play

Play in the direction of the end-line, play out to a target player and play back in and then go to the other end. You can have the passers switch with the target on the play-out.

Every time the ball is played out to the end-line target player, play is restarted in the opposite direction. Play in a 30 x 25 yard area.

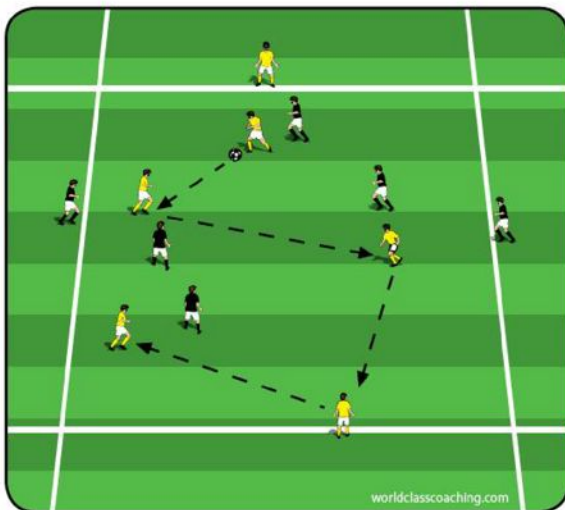




4 v 4 + 2 Off-Set Target Players on the Sidelines

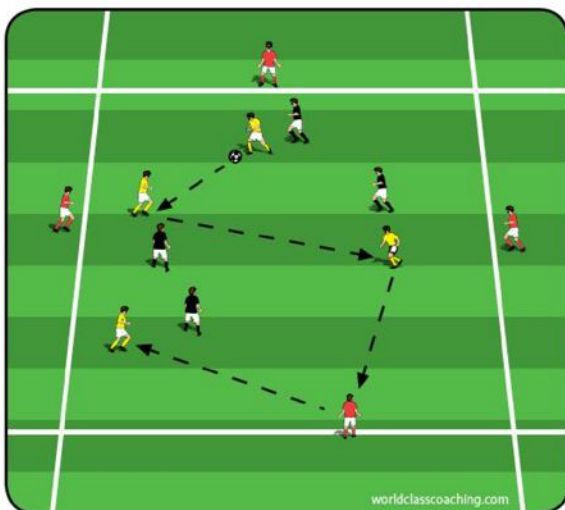
Similar to the last game, but the target players are now on the sidelines and at opposite ends. The target players are positioned diagonally from each other.

Play in a 30 x 25 yard area.



4 v 4 + 2 Directional Game

The outside players set the direction of play for the team. Each team plays in a different direction. This creates an interesting rhythm of play as the direction of play is different for both teams. You can allow the passing player to switch with the target player on the play-out if you wish.



4 v 4 + Four Neutrals

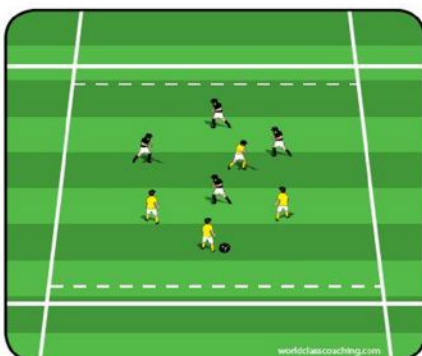
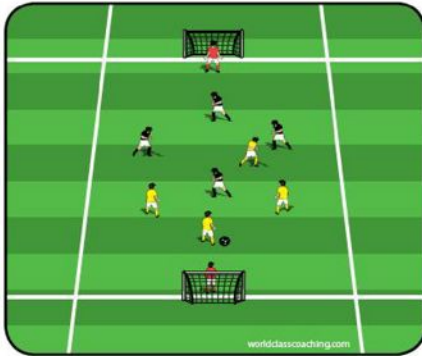
The four neutrals on the outside make the game 8 v 4 -- four team players plus four neutral players. This creates many options to maintain possession. The Neutrals should play one-touch. The inside players are allowed two touches.

Coaching Points

- Keep the ball moving quickly and find the open player
- Look for a change of direction

Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Technical/Tactical, Young Players

This article, contributed by Rick Fenoglio, discusses the grass roots movement called, 'Give Us Back Our Game'. Fenoglio founded the movement along with Paul Cooper to create an environment that removes nearly all of the influence of parents and coaches, leaving the players to take responsibility for THEIR game. The format is based on the scheme that Les Kershaw put into place with Manchester United while he was the Academy Director. This article originally appeared in INSIGHT magazine.



Academy coaches around the world have identified many of the characteristics that make 4 v 4 an excellent training method for young players. The goals of this article are to highlight the key features of a bold and innovative 4 v 4 games format and to contribute to the ongoing discussion about the future development of young players and youth football.

Initial Developments

Les Kershaw, the former Academy Director of Manchester United Football Club, was granted permission by the FA Premier League to play an alternative under 9's games format in the Northern Academy Football League. Instead of playing a single 8 v 8 competitive match, players of teams agreeing to take part in the scheme are divided into teams of four, and then play in four different conditioned small-sided games on a rotational basis. The four different games are:

- **Goalkeepers Game:**
4 v 4 plus two Goalkeepers. Normal throw-ins and corner kicks apply.
- **Two Goal Game:**
4 v 4 with four large traffic cones as goals. No goalkeepers.
- **Four Goal Game:**
4 v 4 with eight marker cones as four small goals. No goalkeepers.
- **Line Ball:**
4 v 4 with a dotted line as a scoring line.

Re-Creating the Environment

A fundamental concept guiding the primary developers of the scheme - Paul McGuinness, Assistant Academy Director, Tony Whelan, Deputy Assistant Academy Director and Rene Meulensteen, the MUFC Skills Development Coach - was an attempt to re-create, as much as possible, the playing environments in which the world's greatest players first learned and then developed the skills they needed for top-level performance. To accomplish this, the scheme has incorporated some of the competitive values and best features of youth football as it used to be played in the parks, playgrounds, streets and back alleyways around the world, into the more formalised structure of modern Academy football. These features, known to most players, include:

- Plenty of individual possession, ball control and touches
- Trying new skills without fear of ridicule or recrimination
- Taking players on and challenging defenders
- Little or no pressure from significant others (parents, coaches, etc)
- A vibrant, creative and fun atmosphere

By initially re-evaluating the traditional 8 v 8 games format from the perspective of the experiences of the young player, the scheme has attempted to re-balance the dynamic of the match day programme and give more ownership of the play back to the young players themselves.

The Format

Besides the training benefits noted by Allpress, there are several other innovative characteristics to be found in the MUFC scheme:

Program

The games format is adaptable and can easily accommodate up to 68 players, including goalkeepers, at very short notice.

Teams

No player sits out any game; and, because of the varied 4 v 4 formats, teams of four from the same club may even play against each other!

Substitutions

If a team has more than four players then substitutes are brought into the game on a strict rotational basis.

Game Duration / Referees

Each game lasts for eight minutes and there are no referees! By refereeing themselves, player cooperation is fostered and the young players consistently learn to take more responsibility for their own actions.

Scoring / Goals

Because so many goals are scored in the conditioned 4 v 4 games, scoring itself is de-emphasised and no scores are recorded. Except for the Goalkeeper's Game, the use of cones instead of real goals and nets re-directs the emphasis of the games back onto build-up play and technical execution.

Playing Time

Each boy plays a minimum of six games and there is a minimum two minute break in between each game for rest, re-hydration and game organisation. This work-to-rest ratio increases energy levels and mental awareness during competitive play.

Pitch Layout / Viewing Areas

The 'roping off' of pitches and the control of viewing areas purposely ensures that the influence of parents, fans and others is kept strictly

to a minimum. MUFC parents are routinely briefed on the aims and underlying philosophy of the scheme.

Coaching

The MUFC coaches are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the scheme and its player-centered values. Interestingly, there is very little overt coaching performed during competitive matches – no raised voices, no disciplining and no playing-the-game-for-the-players. Instead, consistent encouragement and praise is given to players of both teams for brave attempts and creative decision making.

Related to Training

Underlying this novel approach to the games format is the technical and skills development programme of Manchester United. In short, 4 v 4 matches are the focal point for the systematic technical training and 'skills homework' undertaken by the club's U9 youth team members. In training and in matches, players are routinely taught to take the initiative, take players on and 'show their tricks'. On the pitch, players are repeatedly encouraged to make their own decisions. It is also considered that players who are routinely instructed to play simply will, eventually, be only able to play simply. Players at this age, it is felt, need time and encouragement to build the toolkit of skills they will use in future years.

Assessment

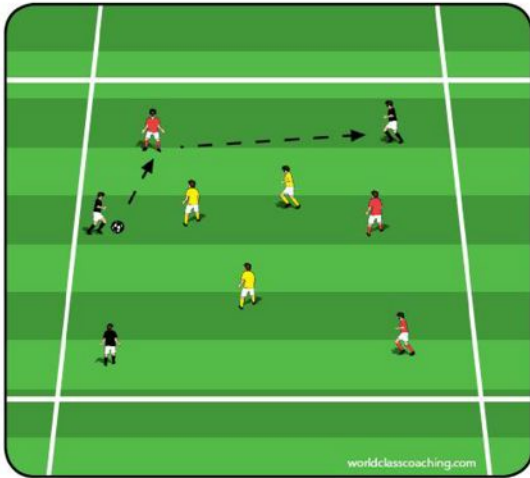
In order to evaluate the scheme's overall effectiveness, MUFC openly requested and received ongoing written feedback from home and visiting team coaches, players and parents; and from representatives of the game's ruling bodies, amongst others. Staff and students from Manchester Metropolitan University also collected match data during Academy matches and, experimentally, on U9 players from a local development team (F.C. Alderley Edge), as well as additional qualitative information.

Summary

The MUFC scheme is an exciting pilot programme that is attempting to optimise the 'window of opportunity' that exists for skill development in the U9 age range. Great players learned and perfected their talents in secure, vibrant and challenging football environments. In the advancement of a way forward for young players as they progress up to full 11-a-side football, the benefits of 4 v 4, and the playing environments in which competitive matches take place, require careful consideration.

Session Topics - Technical, Tactical, Passing, Possession

This session was observed by Ozzie White of Ankeny Soccer Club, during our International Coaching Seminar in Kansas City, February 9-11, 2007. The session was conducted by Schellas Hyndman, the head coach at SMU located in Dallas, TX. Hyndman has been at SMU for 23 years. This past season SMU were ranked #1 for most of the season. The session is focused on increasing a team's speed of play.



3 v 3 + 3

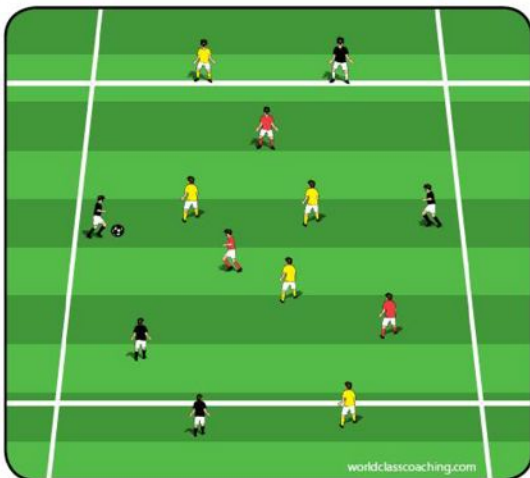
Two teams of three keep the ball away from the third team. If the defending team wins the ball, the team that lost possession becomes the defending team. The teams in possession are limited to two touches.

Coaching Points

- Take your first touch away from pressure
- Don't 'kill' or stop the ball with your first touch
- Support the player who is receiving the ball

Progressions

- You can't pass to the person that just passed to you
- You can't pass to your teammates



Progression #1

Add directional target players at each end. The teams in possession attempt to move the ball from one end of the grid to the other.

Coaching Points

- Movement off the ball
- 'Open' body shape so that you are facing the center of the area
- Quality first touch
- Support teammates early
- Maintain distance so that one defender cannot cover two attackers
- Don't show in a straight line; Show on an angle
- Think ahead so you can play quickly once you receive the ball



Progression #2

Add a goal and goalkeeper to each end of the field.

Coaching Points

- Organize your team shape to spread the field and create space
- Show on an angle to receive a pass
- Quality first touch
- Anticipate the release from the goalkeeper
- Maintain distance so that one defender cannot cover two attackers
- Take your first touch in the direction that you want to go

Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Brazilian, Technical/Tactical

These small-sided games are from our new book, 'Brazilian Training Games'. This book gives you an in-depth look at how the Brazilians incorporate small-sided games into their coaching methodology. Incorporating these games into your training sessions will help you breakdown the game into realistic situations while focusing your players on competing and adding an element of fun to the practice that will increase their motivation to train and learn



Attack v Defense with Four Goals

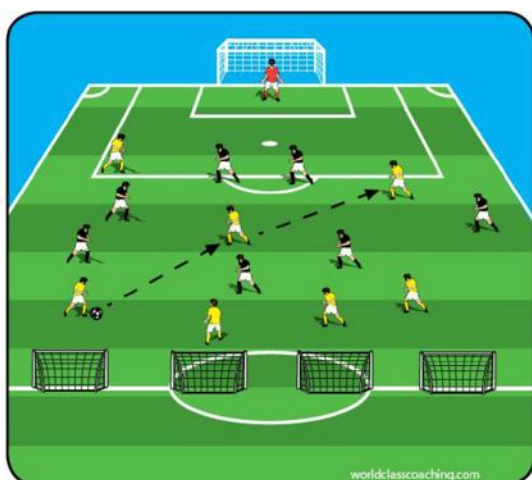
This is a classic Brazilian attack v defense game with four goals on the midfield line. In all the attack v defense games, if the defenders score in the small goals they attack the large goal.

Coaching Points

- Link midfield - forwards and defenders - midfielders
- Speed of the game with and without the ball
- Change of direction

Variation

The team attacking the large goal plays two-touch while the team attacking the small goals has three touches.



Attack v Defense – Minimum Touches on the Ball

This game is similar to the previous game. In this case the offensive team (attacking the large goal) is limited to one or two touches on the ball, if they take two touches, the second must be forward. Defenders get two or three touches; the third touch must be forward.

Coaching Points

- Fast link between the midfielders – forwards
- Speed of the game with and without the ball
- Build up from the back



Attack v Defense – Outside Channels

This game is similar to the first two games but now two free outside channels have been added. Players can only stay in the channel for five seconds.

Coaching Points

- Link midfield - forwards and defenders - midfielders
- Speed of the game with and without the ball
- Crosses from the channels

Variation

All players must play two-touch.

Attack v Defense – Shooting Bonus

In this game, every time that the offensive team shoots, the coach crosses an extra ball into the box.

Coaching Points

- Faster link from midfield to the offensive sector
- Shooting/finishing
- Defensive adjustment
- Attacker must look for the second ball



Attack v Defense with Restart Zone

This is a classical Brazilian Attack v Defense game with a free restart zone for the offensive team. The defensive team try to keep the possession for as long they can. Every time the ball goes out the coach plays in a new ball.

Each game lasts five minutes and then the defensive and offensive teams switch.

Coaching Points

- Offensive ball possession while looking for the gap
- Defensive compactness behind the ball line
- Speed of support and possession when they win the ball



Attack v Defense + 3 Neutral Players

Each team must complete five passes before they can score. One group attacks the large goal with a goalkeeper while the other group tries to score into the three small goals at the halfway line.

Coaching Points

- Numerical superiority in each sector of the field
- Faster connection between the sectors
- Switch the field

Variation

Two-touch restriction





Attack v Defense – Low Pressure Marking

Attack v Defense with low pressure marking. The defending team can only pressure the ball in their defensive half of the field. The offensive team, attacking the large goal, has three minutes to score. If they don't score the teams switch so that the defending team gets to attack the large goal.

Coaching Points

- Emphasize in the team compactness
- Positional adjustment

Variation

Two-touch restriction



Attack v Defense + Target

Attack v Defense with the defenders trying to pass the ball to the target's hands inside the semi-circle. The offensive team tries to score in a full-sized goal. If the defending team is successful, they become the offensive team and the offensive becomes the defensive team.

Coaching Points

- Pressure on the ball
- Fast connection between defenders and midfield
- Long crossing and passing

Variation

Two-touch restriction



Attack v Defense + Crossing Zone

This game is similar to the previous game. In this game a crossing line is added around 15 yards of the half line. Only the defensive team can enter this area and cross the ball to the target inside the crossing zone.

Coaching Points

- Fast connection between defenders and midfield
- Outside plays
- Long/short crossing

Attack v Defense + Knock Cones Down

The offensive team is trying to score in the regular goal, and the defensive team has five targets with three cones each to knock down.

Coaching Points

- Fast connection between defenders and midfield
- Switch the point of the attack
- Passing accuracy



Attack v Defense with Color Goals

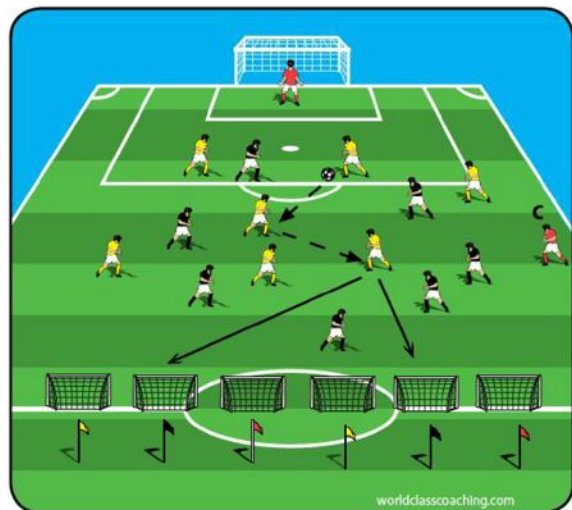
The offensive team is trying to score in the regular goal, and the defensive team has six small goals with three different color flags behind each of them. The coach calls the color of the goal that the defensive team will try to score into.

Coaching Points

- Adjustment
- Change of direction
- Communication

Variation

The offensive team plays two-touch.



Attack v Defense with Two-Sided Goal

This game is played in half of the field with a two-side goal in the middle. The offensive team must make two passes before they can score. The defensive team must win the ball and bring it to the restart zone to become the offensive team.

Coaching Points

- Fast transition offensive through defensive situation and vice-versa
- Ball possession
- Speed of thought

Variation

Two-touch restriction



Session Topics - Technical, Passing, Possession, Keep Away

This session with the five favorite possession drills of Mick Hennigan, was presented at the WORLD CLASS COACHING International Coaching Seminar, Kansas City, February 2006. Hennigan is the former Assistant Coach of 1992 English Premier League Champions, Leeds United.

Three Groups of Five

The players are separated into three groups by wearing different color jerseys. The three groups spread out on half of a field and pass one ball between all of the players.

Coaching Points

- Mingle and interact within the groups
- Scan the field and be aware of the surroundings
- Communicate
- Focus on the quality of the first touch



Progression #1

The players can only use two touches, one to control and one to pass.

Progression #2

The player with the ball cannot pass to a player on his team.

Coaching Points

- Intensify the communication
- Demand the ball
- Continue to require a good first touch and quality pass

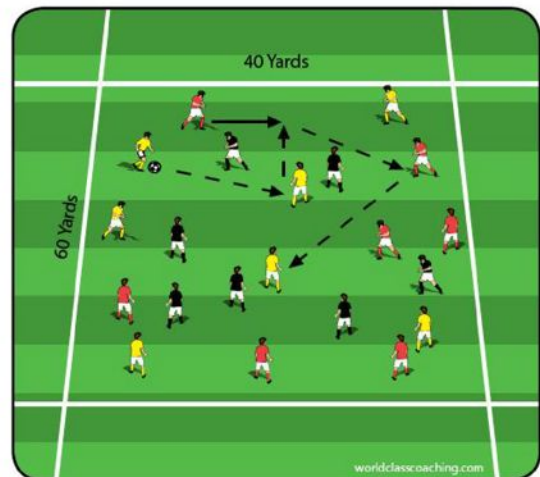


7 v 7 + 7

Two teams of seven play keep-away from the third team. The team that loses possession becomes the defending team.

Coaching Points

- Encourage quick passes
- Discourage dribbling as it is not the focus of the session
- Variety of passes: short, -short, -long or long-short-long
- Limit certain players to a touch restriction

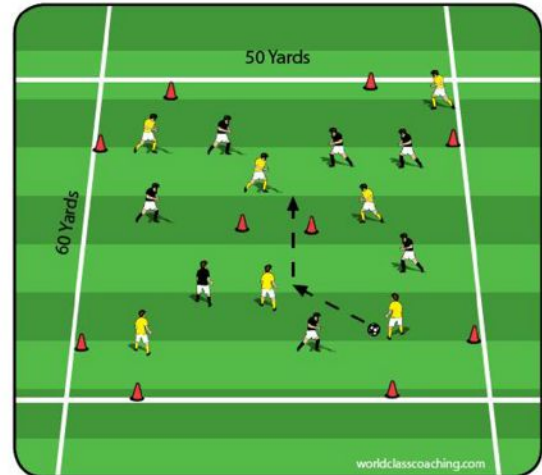


7 v 7

The teams score one point for every pass that is made to a teammate on the other side of one of the five cone goals that are positioned around the field.

Coaching Points

- Encourage good spacing
- Scan the field all the time
- Open the game up and spread out as a team
- Vary type of passes



Progression

Add a neutral player to create a 7 v 7 + 1.



8 v 8

Have one team organize in a 2-3-2 formation and have the other team play a 3-2-2.

Coaching Points

- Create space as a team
- Ultimate 'goal' is to take a shot
- Don't give the ball away



Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Half Field

This series of games is contributed by Thailand National Team Coach, Stephen Darby, who has more than 30 years of coaching experience at the highest levels of the game. Darby has served as a FIFA Staff Coach, coached with numerous professional teams around the world as well as working with the National Teams of Fiji, Vietnam and most recently Thailand. In this second of two articles the training games are focused on those that use a full field.

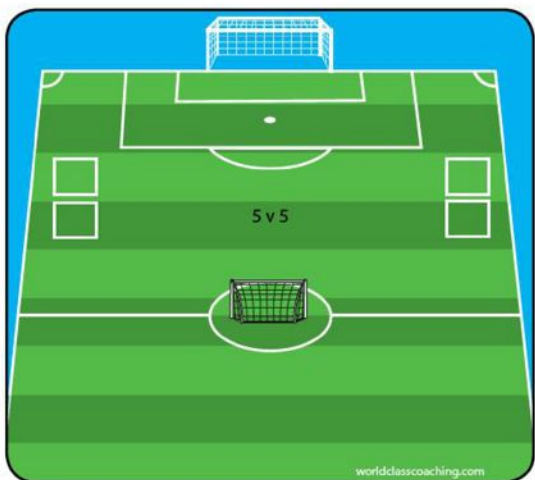


10 v 10

The players must stay in their zone. The ball has to move into each zone before a goal can be scored.

The ball must go into all three zones before a goal is scored. You can change this to two zones if the defending team begins to overplay an zone to prevent the attacking team from switching it.

This game requires everything to be quicker because of the tighter space.

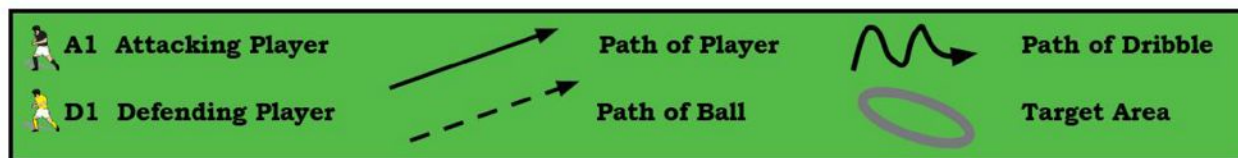


7 v 7

Two players from each team are restricted to 10 x 5 yard boxes. The box players are limited to playing two-touch.

Coaching Points

- Good first touch by players in the boxes (a bad touch may leave the box)
- Quality early crosses
- Good passing to wide players

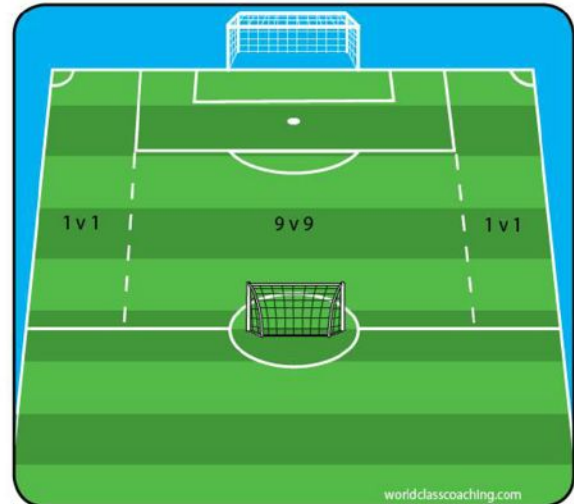


11 v 11

Players must stay in their zones. The ball must go to a wide man before a team can score.

The focus of this game is on the wide players and getting them to beat their defender and deliver a cross.

The defending team tries to force players in one direction to make them predictable.



7 v 7

The midfield area is intentionally very tight. It can be as little as 15 yards long depending on the quality of the players.

The attacker in the end zone has only the goalkeeper to beat and is restricted to two touches. Reduce this to one touch if the attacker needs a greater challenge.

Coaching Points

- Quality passing to striker
- Body position of striker
- Finishing



7 v 7

This is the same as the previous game except that the midfielders can enter the corner zones in order to provide a one-touch cross for the attacker.

Coaching Points

- Timing of runs
- Quality of crosses





7 v 7

This game is played in an area equal to the size of two penalty areas which is 44 yards wide and 36 yards long.

There are three defenders and four attackers in each half.

Coaching Points

- Defending when outnumbered
- Blocking shots
- Staying on your feet

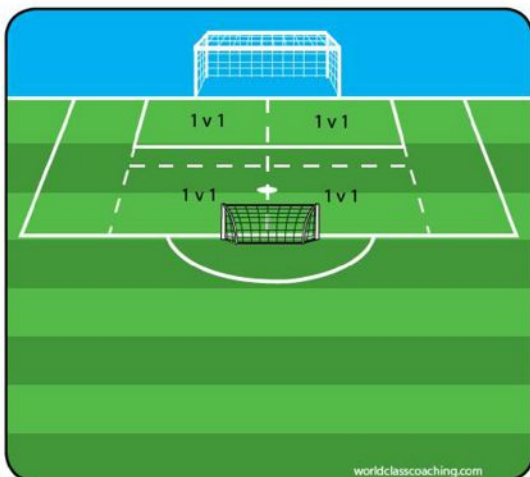


6 v 6

The four players receive the ball from their goalkeeper and attempt to score in the opposite goal without crossing the 'half line', which is the top of the box.

Coaching Points

- Shooting from outside the box
- Rebounds for strikers
- Strikers closing down



4 v 4

You'll need a good supply of balls for this game. The players stay in their box.

Coaching Points

- Rapid shooting
- Rebounds
- Closing down/blocking
- 1 v 1's
- Body strength
- No fouling!

7 v 7 + Goalkeepers

Each group of players stay in their area of the field except that a defender who passes to a midfielder is allowed to support his pass by moving into the midfield area.

Coaching Points

- Timing of runs
- Overlaps
- Give-and-Go's
- Communication



Session Topics - Goalkeeping, Tactical, Small-Sided Game

Frans Hoek was an assistant/goalkeeper coach at Ajax for 12 years, Barcelona for six years and the Dutch National Team for two years. He has also played at the highest level with FC Volendam of the Eredivisie as well as representing his country on the national team. This session was presented at the WORLD CLASS COACHING International Coaching Seminar, Kansas City, February 2006.

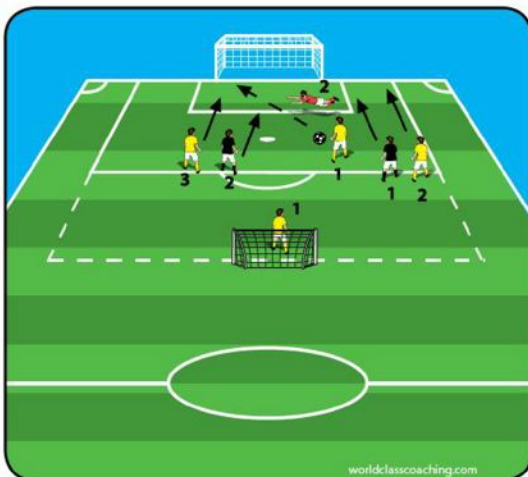


3 v 2 Breakaway

GK #1 rolls the ball in front of white player #1 to encourage him to take an early shot. Black #1 and #2 are defenders. White #2 and #3 are supporting attackers. Once the ball is rolled by the GK, all of the players are live.

Coaching Point

- The GK needs to have a good roll out to create a shooting opportunity.



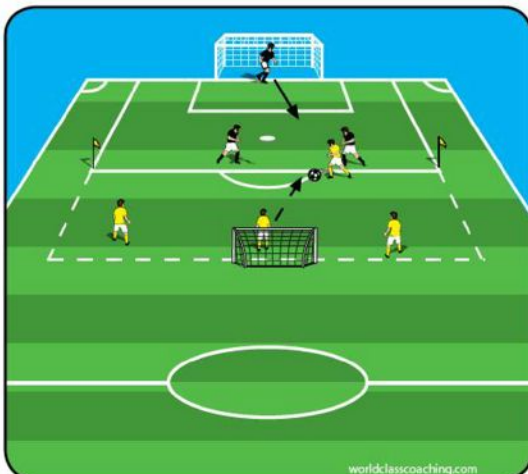
Working with GK and Defenders

3 v 2 Breakaway Continued...

GK #2 must get out to a good starting position. The defenders should keep running and repositioning until the ball is dead. Don't stop and watch, the ball may come off the post.

Coaching Points

- Stay on your feet
- Low and strong
- Play until the ball is dead



3 v 2 with Offside

The GK rolls the ball to an attacker who works with his two teammates to score in the opposite goal. This should be easy if they use the GK as an outlet to retain possession and switch the point of attack creating a 4 v 2.

Coaching Points

- Defenders must defend high
- Use the offside line as a mark to start defending
- GK pushes up with defenders
- Limit the space the attackers can use



Progression #1

Bring in the sidelines and flags 5 or 10 yards to make the area narrower. The smaller space to defend should make it easier for the defenders.

Coaching Points

- Defend the line - do not drop and do not chase the ball too high
- GK closes down the space behind the defenders
- Defenders must work back if beaten by a through ball
- Pressure the shot or look to clean up an rebounds
- Be aggressive and don't give up
- Always keep score to increase motivation and create game like atmosphere

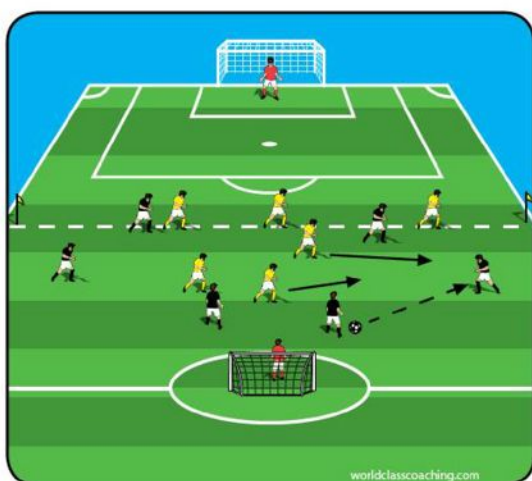


6 v 6 on Half a Field

One team should play with four defenders one midfielder and one forward. The other team should play with four attackers and two defenders. The coach should focus on coaching the team with four defenders. The back four defend the half-line with the midfielder and forward chasing the ball and trying to force a turnover. Both teams try to score.

Coaching Points

- Defenders push up to the half-line
- The GK must talk to defenders and keep them organized
- If the back line is beaten by a wall pass or dribble, the defenders must work back hard



Progression

Change the defending formation to 3-1-1-1. Defend the half-line with three players and pressure with three. This will make it more difficult for the team in possession to pass.

Coaching Points for the Attackers

- Use longer passes and shots to make the GK think about positioning
- Keep good spacing between players, use the GK and get players wide so defenders have more space to defend

Coaching Points for the Defenders

- If a mistake is made, KEEP PLAYING
- If you're beaten by a pass or dribble, get back and help win it back
- Discuss how to play depending on the score (press, drop, defend high or low)

Session Topics - Dutch, Small-Sided Games, Technical/Tactical

These two training sessions from Ajax Amsterdam and NEC Nijmegen were observed and contributed by Terry Michler while leading a tour of the Netherlands with a selected group from the 'Dutch Touch' Soccer Camp. The dates for the spring 2010 trip to Holland are March 24 through April 4.

Tour Overview

Our visit to Holland coincided with World Cup Qualification, so our opportunities to watch training sessions were limited. However, we were able to see Ajax Amsterdam and NEC Nijmegen train just before they went on a short break. The training facilities are awesome and the enthusiasm, spirit and the intensity create a great atmosphere.

Perhaps the three most impressive points in observing the training sessions were; 1) the intensity of the players at all times, 2) the speed of play, and 3) the communication between players, which was constantly loud. I told our group of young players to close their eyes and just listen for a few minutes.

The pressure on the ball was constant and a clean first touch was absolutely necessary, there was no other option! For the most part, the coaches let the players play without many interruptions. There was a nice flow to the session. Coaching points were made when needed, but only at the most critical moment. There was very little time on the ball and decisions and actions had to be carried out very quickly.



Ajax Drill #1

Two teams of five players with three target players compete for possession in a 50 x 30-yard area. The field is divided into two equal halves. The team in possession pass the ball in one half of the field until they can pass to the target on the center line. The center-line target then passes to the target on the opposite end line. Once the target on the end line has received the ball both teams move into the other half of the field. The target player passes to the team that was originally in possession and the game continues.

Coaching Points

- Fast ball circulation with an "eye" for the center-line target player
- Play to the target player as soon as possible
- Defensive pressure and rapid closing-down must be stressed
- Coaching moments will be available on both sides of the ball



Ajax Drill #2

This is a 7 v 6 game with each team defending a full sized goal with a goalkeeper. The team of seven attack the defending team of six and work to 'open them up'. They are encouraged to be patient and maintain possession while probing for openings. The six defend in a compact shape and stay organized while under pressure. They can work on a types of defending: offside trap, press, drop deep, etc. If the defensive group wins the ball they can attack a the goal.

Coaching Points

- Attacker should open up and strike when the opportunity presents itself
- If no opportunity exist, patient possession is the answer
- The defenders must communicate, stay organized and not be drawn out

Ajax Drill #3

This is an 8 v 7 game where the team of eight attacks the full sized goal and the team of seven attack three small goals when they win the ball.

The field is compact so possession is of great importance. The team of eight must try to keep the ball while exploring good scoring opportunities. They must also organize quickly when the ball is lost.

Coaching Points

- Pressure, support and balance are key concepts for the team of eight when they lose the ball
- The team of seven use their keeper when attacking
- The team of seven must be patient and ready in attack
- Keep extra balls ready to keep the activity lively



NEC Nijmegen Drill #1

The players are divided into four teams of five. The two goalkeepers stay on the field throughout the game. The teams rotate after a set period of time or until a certain number of goals are scored.

The focus is on scoring as quickly as possible. The defending team must pressure the ball so that it's difficult for the attacking team to shoot.

Coaching Points

- Keep the game moving, intensity high
- Adjust the size of the field as needed to keep the game lively
- Encourage shooting and closing down
- Keep a supply of balls available



NEC Nijmegen Drill #2

Two teams of four plus two neutral players work to keep the ball in an area that extends from the top of the penalty area to the halfway line and is only as wide as the penalty area. Neutral players work with the team in possession. A team receives one point for a certain number of passes. As a variation you can also give a point for every give-and-go or short-short-long combination.

Coaching Points

- Concentrate on proper positioning and shape when in possession
- Clean receiving and releasing touch
- Open up off the ball and be available to the player with the ball
- Coach the players without the ball to be useful
- Transition quickly and use the neutral players to relieve pressure





NEC Nijmegen Drill #3

Two teams of six players plus goalkeepers and four target players play on half of a field that is only as wide as the penalty area. The ball must be passed to the targets before a goal can be scored. The target players passes it back one-touch to a player on the attacking team.

Play for a set amount of time or until a certain number of goals are scored. Rotate the target players regularly.

Coaching Points

- Look for early opportunities to play the ball in to the target player
- Get up into scoring positions quickly
- Shoot first time
- Quality pass to the target so the target player can make a good pass

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Contact information

World Headquarters USA – Mike Saif
WORLD CLASS COACHING
15004 Buena Vista Drive
Leawood KS 66224
Tel: 913-583-0030
Email: info@worldclasscoaching.com
Web site: www.worldclasscoaching.com

Canada Contact - Ken McGuinness

1287 Matheson Blvd. East
Mississauga, ON L4W 1R1
Tel: 905-629-4155 Fax: 905-629-7249
Toll-Free: 1-877-678-4349
Email: info@deltasoccer.com
Web site: www.deltasoccer.com

United Kingdom Contact

Soccer Tutor.com
Wellington House
6 Wellington Passage
London E11 2AL, United Kingdom
Tel: 207 193 0778
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Session Topics - Small-Sided Games, Full Field, Technical/Tactical

This series of games is contributed by Thailand National Team Coach, Stephen Darby, who has more than 30 years of coaching experience at the highest levels of the game. Darby has served as a FIFA Staff Coach, coached with numerous professional teams around the world as well as working with the National Teams of Fiji, Vietnam and most recently Thailand. In this first of two articles, the training games are focused on those that use a full size field.

Training Practices on the Full Pitch

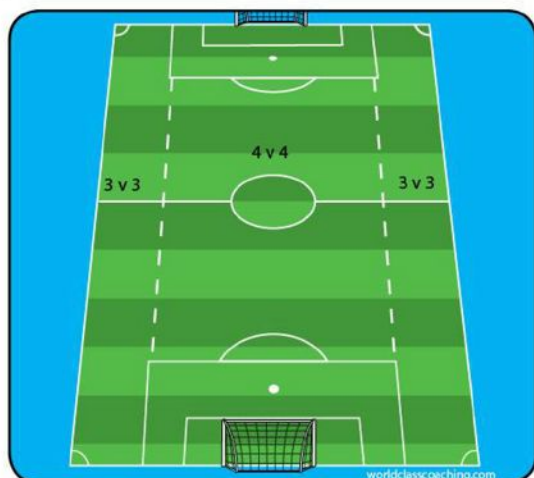
Listed below are a number of practices that we have found to be successful. Some started out as technical sessions and ended up as fitness work. Others just evolved as we went on. Some went great.sometimes they were disasters! On one day awful, and on the next day great with another team. But aren't these the realities of coaching for all of us?

I'm not saying they are all original, I may have pinched some off you!!

The best feedback I've had from players was that they were "realistic", "made me think", "do what I had to do in a game" and "I'm knackered. I didn't know I was working so hard"

The areas/zones/team size are of course flexible to suit your needs and the ability of your players.

Most of the time we focus the coaching points on what we see the players have difficulty with and just coaching what we see.



11 v 11 with Channels

The players must stay in their zone. The ball has to move into each zone before a goal can be scored.

This is an especially challenging game for the eight players in the middle zone. The smartest of the players will not try to run the full length of the field.

This game emphasizes switching the play from one side to the other as well as crossing and finishing.



Attack v Defense in the Final Third

There are five defenders and three attackers in front of each goal. The middle third can be empty or there can be one player from each team there to retrieve passes that are hit short or collect knockdowns.

Coaching Points

- Long balls from defenders should bypass the middle zone
- Accuracy of long ball as there are only three attackers
- Heading technique, organization and tactics



9 v 9 with Dedicated Wingers

The players must stay in their zone so there is a 9 v 7 overload for the attacking team when they have the ball. The ball must be played to one of the wide players before a team can attack the goal.



8 v 8 Large Midfield Area

The midfield zone for this game extends to within 25 yards of each goal. There are five midfielders from each team in the middle zone. Each team has two attackers in front of goal who are met by only one defender so there should be plenty of shots.

The goalkeeper must kick or throw to their players in the middle zone.



8 v 8 Small Midfield Area

This game has the same player organization as before but now the midfield zone includes only the 30 yards in the center of the field.

This layout creates a more competitive environment in the midfield and puts a premium on winning balls from the goalkeeper, including the second ball after headers and maintaining possession.

10 v 10 Heading in the End zone

The teams play as usual between the two end zone areas. To score, the ball must be headed by a player that is inside the end zone area. As a progression, the player can continue playing and try to score in the goal.

Coaching Points

- Heading technique
- Timing of runs
- Tracking players defensively
- Keeping possession until a pass is on



8 v 8 Pressing or Sitting Back

One team plays a high pressure or pressing defense while the other team retreats behind the halfway line before applying pressure to the opponent. This format requires tactical discipline, communication and fitness.



9 v 9 Midfield Support

This is a regular game except that all players must stay in their area of the field. Progress to allow the midfielder who passes the ball to an attacking player to join him in the final third.

Coaching Points

- Quick passing
- Strikers holding up the ball
- Timing of runs from midfielders

