



PRESTON NORTH END
ACADEMY

GRASSROOTS COACHING MANUAL





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FOREWORD

The Grassroots coaching manual has been developed so that we can provide assistance to the hard working coaches who give up their time to develop and educate young people in the north west.

We recognise that if we provide coaches with best practice sessions which are used within the Preston North End Academy, that together we can have a positive impact in developing future stars of the game.

As you progress through the manual you will view a number of sessions which create various situations related to the game of football. Along with the 'four corner' learning objectives, it will give you and your players all the information needed to progress as students of the game.

The Grassroots Coaching Manual has been developed by Nick Harrison (Academy Manager) and Stuart Delaney (Head of Coaching)

ACADEMY FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY

Preston North End's Academy strive to develop young footballers who are able to play attractive attacking football whilst making good decisions whilst the game is in play.

We want to encourage our teams to play out from the back, whenever possible, using the goalkeeper as a player who can create good supporting angles. Midfielders are encouraged to create angles to get on the ball and show a bravery to receive the ball in tight areas. They have to be bright in possession and look to try and create inventive play going forward, when the opportunity is on.

Players must show a good understanding of the game so that they understand what passes, runs and support should be made on and off the ball. The players must develop a good work ethic and understand the importance of being part of a team. Whenever the players are out of possession, they must look to work hard as an individual and as a team to win the ball back at the earliest opportunity.

As the players progress through the phases, a winning mentality must be developed so that the young players are ready for first team football. They must also be disciplined on the pitch and conduct themselves in a professional manner when off the pitch, always representing themselves and Preston North End in a positive manner.

OPPORTUNITY TO REALISE POTENTIAL

Children develop at different stages. Some will go on to progress within the system and create a career out of the game, but most will go on to enjoy football at whatever level they achieve.

It is important through all the information we give the young players, that they are given the opportunity to progress, develop and fulfil their potential.

We as an Academy are mindful that when a player is struggling, we provide the correct support and exit strategy so that the player remains and develops by assisting the player in finding a suitable club.



FORMATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS



PLAYING STYLE

1. To play from the back, through the thirds to create opportunities at goal.
2. Rotation, to create space to receive.
3. Look to create overloaded situations (i.e. wide players coming inside).
4. High pressurised defensive strategy.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - BOXES POSSESSION



3 v 1 Possession session in a ten yard by ten yard area

1. Players look to keep the ball off the defender for 45 seconds. They can be challenged to take a set number of touches (if the defender wins the ball they give it straight back to the opposition).

Progression - the person who gives the ball away now becomes the defender. The game can now last for a longer duration.



4 v 2 Possession session in an 18 yard by 18 yard area

1. Players look to keep the ball off the defender for 45 seconds. They can be challenged to take a set number of touches (if the defender wins the ball, they give it straight back to the opposition).

Progression - the person who gives the ball away now becomes the defender. The game can now last for a longer duration.



5 v 2 Possession session in a 16 yard by 16 yard area

1. Players look to keep the ball off the defender for 45 seconds. They can be challenged to take a set number of touches (if the defender wins the ball, they give it straight back to the opposition).

Progression - the person who gives the ball away now becomes the defender. The game can now last for a longer duration.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, firm, soft), use of different parts of the foot.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction.

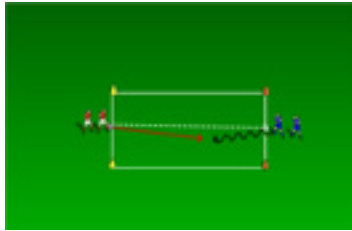
TACTICAL

Creating space to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, time of support, positive and quick play (when?).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making, communication, keeping the ball to the effect to psychological mindset of the defenders.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'DUALS' ATTACKING AND DEFENDING



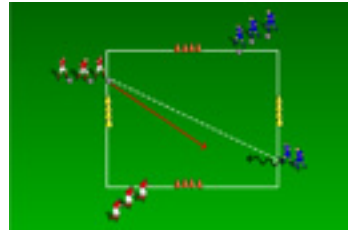
1 v 1 Attacking/defending

1. Reds pass the ball to Blue and try to defend.
2. Blues try to attack the Reds and stop the ball on the line between the yellow cones.
3. If the Reds win the ball back, they try to score on the line between the orange cones.



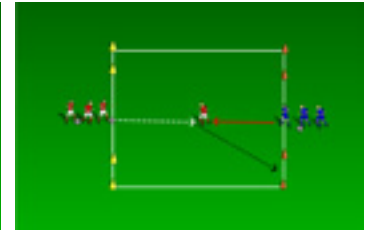
1 v 1 Defending/attacking towards the goal

- Once the forward has either scored/missed or play has broken down, he has to turn and touch a yellow pole before he goes to defend the next player.



1 v 1 Attacking/defending

1. Reds pass the ball to blue and try to defend.
2. Blues try to attack the reds and knock over the cones facing them.
3. If the Reds win the ball back, they try to knock over the Blue team's cones. Progress to 2 v 2.



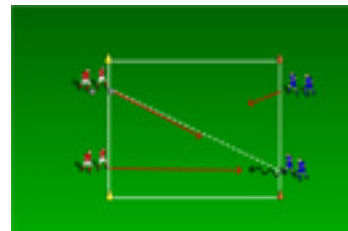
1 v 1 Attacking/defending

1. Reds pass the ball into the Red middle. He gets closed down by a Blue. Can he turn and score in the cones in the corner?
2. If the Blues win the ball they try to score in the Red team's goal. Progress to 2 v 2.



1 v 1 Defending/attacking 'recovering'

1. Reds pass the ball away square and then recover quickly.
2. Blues try to score into the goal. If the Red wins the ball back, can he run the ball over a line?



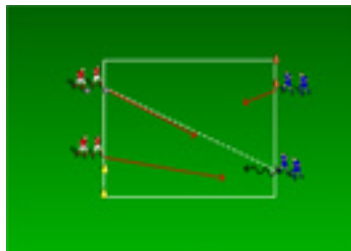
2 v 2 Attacking/defending

1. Reds pass the ball to Blue and try to defend
2. Blues try to attack the Reds and stop the ball on the line between the yellow cones.
3. If the Reds win the ball back they try to score on the line between the orange cones.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'DUALS' ATTACKING AND DEFENDING



2 v 2 Attacking/defending practice
Progress to 3 v 2.



2 v 2 Defending/attacking
1. Reds pass the ball to blue and try to defend.
2. Blues try to attack the reds and stop the ball on the line between the yellow cones.
3. If the Reds win the ball back, they try to score on the line between the orange cones.



1 v 1 Attacking/defending
1. Reds pass the ball to Blue and try to defend.
2. Blues try to attack the Reds and knock over the cones facing them.
3. If the Reds win the ball back, they try to knock over the Blue teams cones.
Progress to 2 v 2.



1 v 1 Attacking/defending
1. Reds pass the ball into the Red middle. He gets closed down by a Blue. Can he turn and score in the cones in the corner?
2. If the Blues win the ball they try to score in the Red team's goal. Progress to 2 v 2.

ATTACKING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL - First touch - direction - distance - disguise. Speed of attack (ball control). Head up. Timing/distance of dribble. Angles/distances/timing of supporting runs. End product.

PHYSIOLOGICAL - A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination). Change of pace and direction. Strength and speed.

TACTICAL - Attacking principles - make the pitch **big**. Slow into dribble - disguise - accelerate away. Space created - ball delivered - player arrives. Overlaps/underlaps/decoy runs.

PSYCHOLOGICAL - Be positive (get defenders on the back foot). Decision making (when to run with the ball, when to pass, when to dribble). Communication.

DEFENDING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL - Nearest man to the ball and apply pressure. Travel quickly as the ball moves and stop before the opponents first touch. Side on show away from **danger**.

PHYSIOLOGICAL - A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination). Change of pace and direction. Strength.

TACTICAL - Pressure - cover - balance. Intercept - spoil - hold. Show into strength and away from danger. Deny space (be compact). Delay (allow team to re-group).

PSYCHOLOGICAL - Concentration (against movement). Decision making (when to release, track). Communication. Desire to win the ball back. Be patient.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 4V4 SMALL SIDED GAME



4 v 4 Line ball game



4 v 4 End zone game



4 v 4 Target men



4 v 4 - '4' Goal game

ATTACKING LEARNING OBJECTIVES *(If focus of session is towards attacking)*

TECHNICAL

First touch - direction - distance - disguise. Speed of the attack (ball control), head up, timing/distance of dribble. Angles/distances/timing of supporting runs, end product.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction, strength and speed.

TACTICAL

Attacking principles - make the pitch **big**. Slow into dribble - disguise - accelerate away. pace created - ball delivered - player arrives. Overlaps/underlaps/decoy runs.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Be positive (get defenders on the back foot). Decision making (when to run with the ball, when to pass and when to dribble). Communication.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 4V4 SSG



4 v 4 Game

One touch finish or head/volley



4 v 4 With goalkeepers



4 v 4 With goalkeepers and outside men (forward passing)

DEFENDING LEARNING OBJECTIVES *(If focus of session is towards defending)*

TECHNICAL

Nearest man close the ball and apply pressure. Travel quickly as the ball moves and stop before opponents first touch. Side on show, away from danger.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction, strength.

TACTICAL

Pressure - cover - balance. Intercept - spoil - hold. Show into strength and away from danger. Deny space (be compact, delay (allow team to re-group).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (against movement), decision making (when to release, track), communication, desire to win the ball back, be patient.



4 v 4 With goalkeepers and outside men (switching play/crossing)

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'PRESSING' POSSESSION



1. Grid/pitch size: U8 to U11 approx 30x30. U12 to U14, approx 40x40. U15 and U16, approx 50x50.
2. Number of players - three equal teams (could be six players on each team).
3. White team and orange team have a ball each. The yellow team are the defenders.
4. When the coach says 'go', the yellow team try to win the balls from the white and orange team. To win the ball they have to either:
 - (a) get a touch on the ball, or
 - (b) kick the ball out of play.
5. The players in possession work with each other (i.e. pass the ball to each other) if their ball is taken away by defenders.

COMPETITION

HOW LONG IT TAKES THE TEAM TO WIN ALL THE BALLS BACK.

THE TWO TEAMS THAT HAVE THE SLOWEST TIMES DO A FORFEIT.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, firm, soft). Basic defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

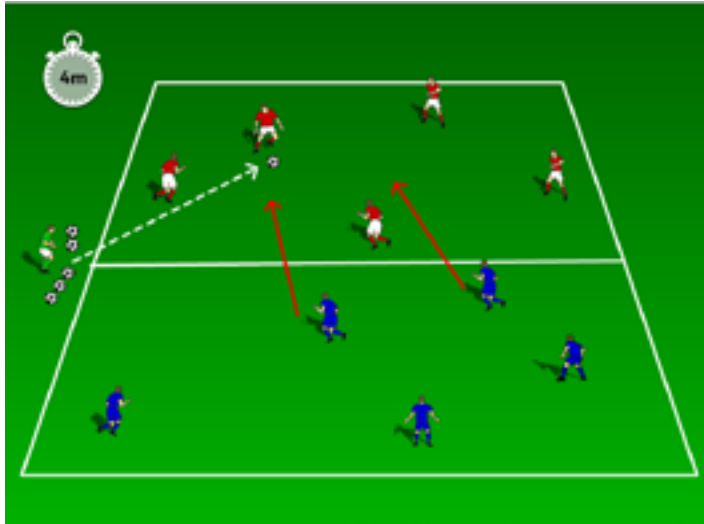
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?), defending as an individual and as a unit (pressure/cover/balance), make play predictable.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making, communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'INVASION GAME' POSSESSION



High tempo 5v2 possession session in a 14 yard by 28 yard area

1. The coach plays the ball into the Reds and they play 5v2 against the Blues.
2. The Reds have to complete ten passes to complete the goal. If they earn a goal the game stops and the coach plays another ball into the Red team again.
3. If, at the defenders touch, the ball count resets to 'zero', the only way the Blues can have a go at keeping possession is by the Blues kicking the ball out of the grid. In the event of this happening the coach then plays the ball into the Blue zone.
4. Team plays for four minutes, and the team with the most goals wins.

Progression

1. Restrict players with their touches.
2. If the defenders win the ball back they can either kick the ball out of play or if they can turn and play back into their zone, then they can start straight from 'five' passes.

NOTE

The size of area and number of players/defenders can be altered to cater for the ability and age of group.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, firm, soft). Using different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

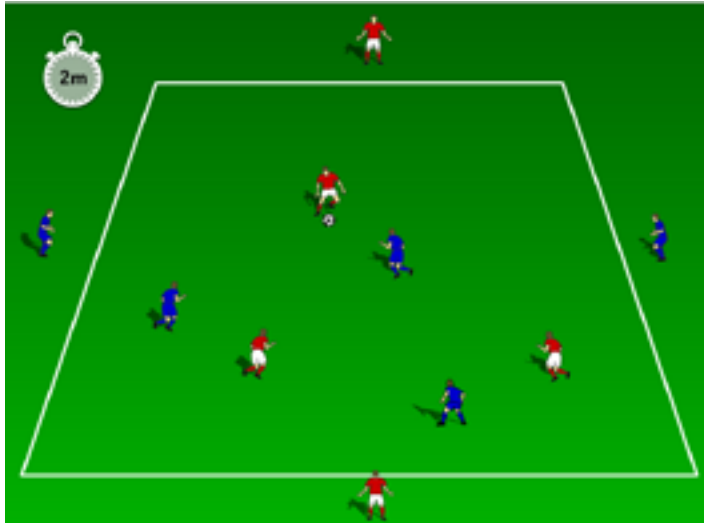
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making, communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 3V3 POSSESSION



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, firm, soft). Use of different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

High tempo session - 3v3 with outside players in a 12 yard by 12 yard area

1. Players on the outside play on one touch and players on the inside can play multi-touch.

Progression

If a player passes out from the middle, then he follows his pass and the outside player steps inside with the ball.

NOTE

The size of area and number of players/defenders can be altered to cater for the ability and age of group.

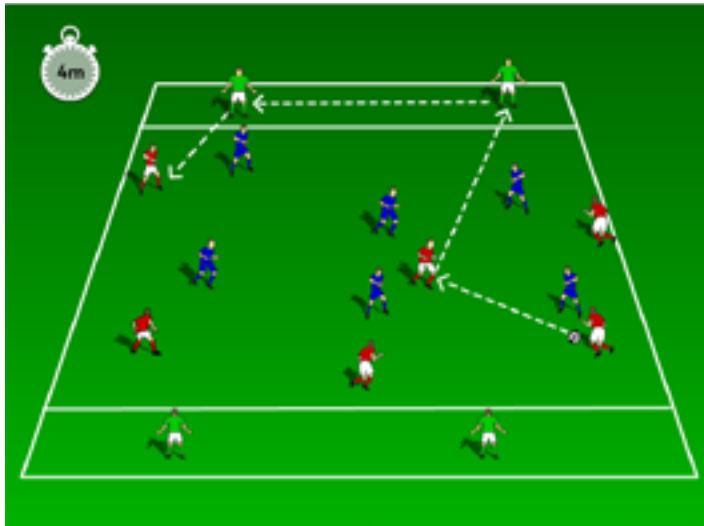
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making, communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - TARGET POSSESSION



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, firm, soft). Using different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

High tempo 5v2 possession - Target

1. Teams look to keep possession with the aim of progressing with the ball into one of the target men. If the target man decides to play first time then he must play the ball straight back into the middle area. If he decides to take a touch, then he can pass the ball across the other target player who then would pass in the middle (therefore changing the angle of pass, allowing movement and rotation in the middle area).

Scoring

Teams can score a goal if they can play the ball from one end of the grid to the other.

NOTE

The size of area and number of players/defenders can be altered to cater for the ability and age of group.

TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?). Forward play.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making (awareness), communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'END ZONE' POSSESSION



High tempo possession - End zone

1. Teams look to keep possession with the aim of progressing with the ball into the opposition 'end zone'.

Scoring

1. Initially the teams can only score by running the ball into the 'end zone'.
2. Teams can only score by receiving the ball whilst in the 'end zone' (players must time their run into the zone and they must not be stood still).

NOTE

The size of area and number of players/defenders can be altered to cater for the ability and age of group.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, long, forward, firm, soft). Use of different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

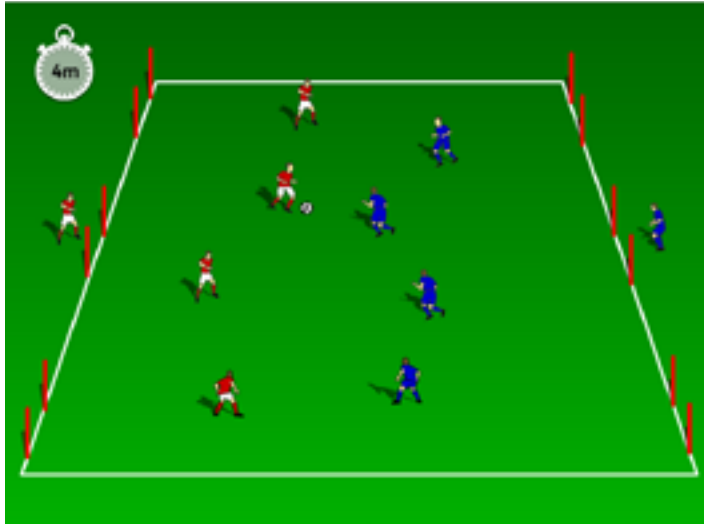
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?), forward play.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making (awareness), communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'GUARD' POSSESSION



High tempo 5v2 possession session - 'Guard' game

1. Players keep possession and look to play the ball through any of the three gates to score.
2. The two players who stand off the pitch move and try to block the gate in which the opposition are trying to attack. Therefore the team in possession, must look to pass quickly in order to score.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, long, forward, firm, soft). Using different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

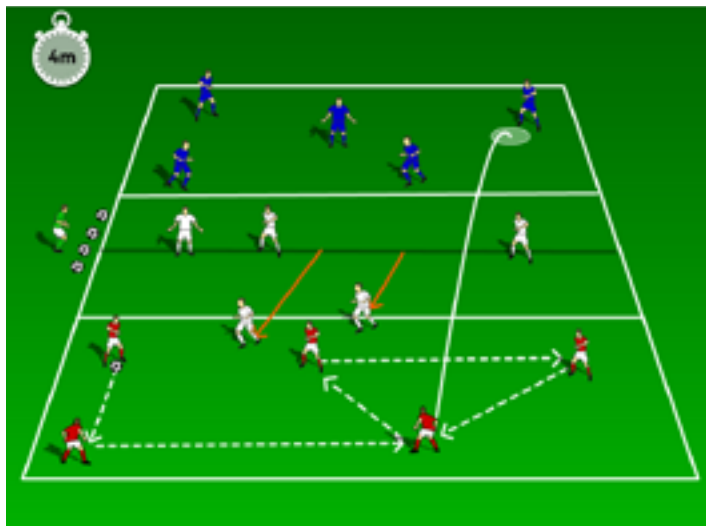
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?). Defensive play (deny space).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making (awareness), communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'SWITCHING' POSSESSION



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, long, forward, firm, soft). Use of different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

High tempo 'switch' possession game

1. Defenders start on the middle line and when the coach passes the ball into one of the end grids, then two of them can go in and try to win the ball back.
2. The Reds have to try and get five passes then look to try and pass the ball into the Blues grid without it being intercepted by the Whites.
3. If the Whites win the ball back they swap with the team who gave it away.

Progression

1. Restrict the amount of touches used by the players.
2. Increase or decrease the amount of passes required depending on intended learning outcome.

Scoring

1. A goal is scored every time a pass is successfully completed from one end to the other.

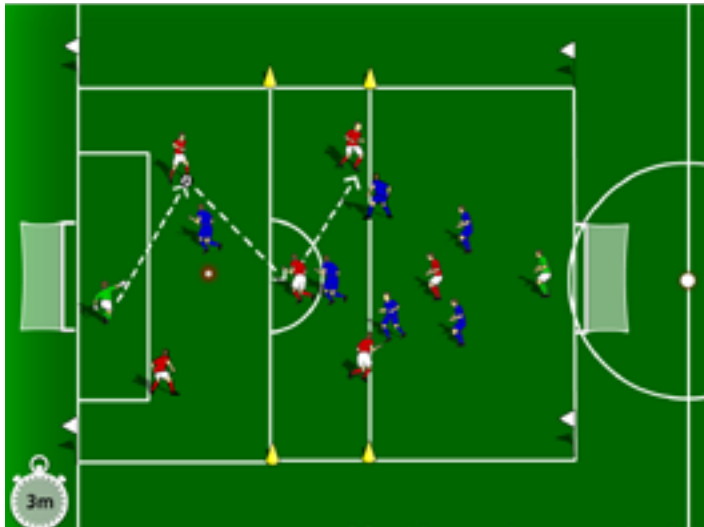
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?), forward play.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making (awareness), communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'PLAYING THROUGH' SMALL SIDED GAME



High tempo small sided game - Teams have to play through the middle section of the pitch before they can attack the opponent's goal.

1. The teams are restricted at first that they cannot go directly into the middle section, therefore encouraging teams to play out from the back.
2. The session can then be developed so that the ball can be played directly into the middle section, so you can work on players finding pace in order to receive a forward pass.

Progression

1. Restrict the number of touches that the players can have, depending on the individuals ability.

NOTE

Our Philosophy at Preston north End is to finish off the session with a free flowing small side game, without restrictions being placed upon the game. This allows the coaches to observe the practice to see if learning around the session topic has taken place.

This encourages a competitive environment to develop a winning mentality.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Weight of pass, receiving skills (body shape, touch), type of pass (short, angled, long, forward, firm, soft). Using different parts of the foot. Defending.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

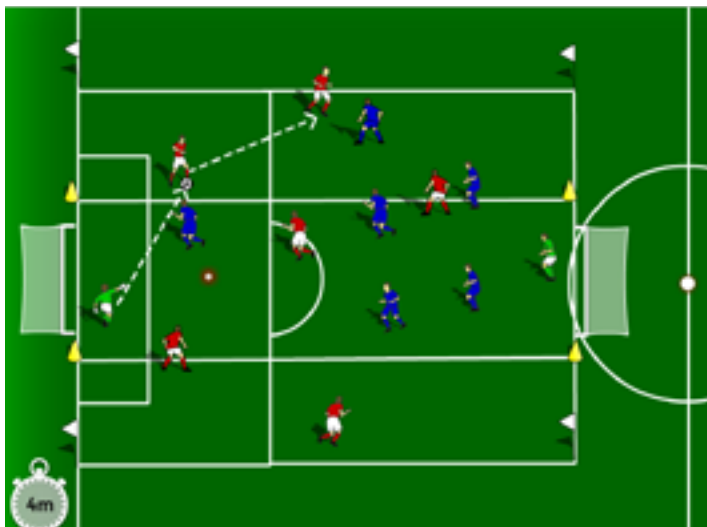
TACTICAL

Creating space as a team and to receive, support play, making safe angles to support, timing of support, positive and quick play (when?). Forward play.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (pass completion), decision making (awareness), communication, desire to win the ball back.

BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS - 'DEFEND' SMALL SIDED GAME



High tempo small sided game - Defending - the pitch is split up into thirds along its length.

1. The players are challenged that if the ball is on one side of the pitch, then as a defensive unit they squeeze across the pitch and leave the furthest channel free of players. This will make the team compact and if the opposition tried to switch the ball quickly, the defence can move across accordingly.
2. If the attacking team is in the central area again, the defending team are encouraged to remain central and invite the ball to be played wide (away from goal), and again, as the ball goes wide, the team will adjust their defensive positions, leaving the furthest channel free.

NOTE

Our Philosophy at Preston north End is to finish off the session with a free flowing small side game, without restrictions being placed upon the game. This allows the coaches to observe the practice to see if learning around the session topic has taken place. This encourages a competitive environment to develop a winning mentality.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

TECHNICAL

Nearest man close to the ball and apply pressure. Travel quickly as the ball moves and stop before opponents first touch. Side on show away from danger.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

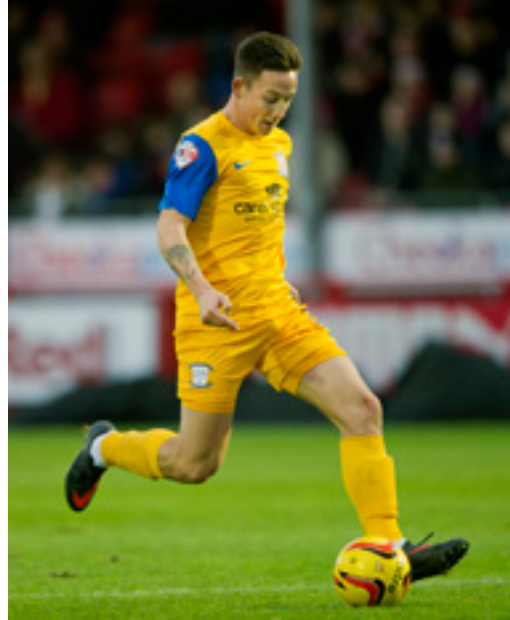
A, B, Cs (agility, balance, co-ordination), change of pace and direction. Strength.

TACTICAL

Pressure - cover - balance. Intercept - spoil - hold. Show into strength and away from danger, deny space (be compact), delay (allow team to re-group).

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Concentration (against movement), decision making (when to release, track), communication, desire to win the ball back, be patient.





PRESTON NORTH END ACADEMY

DEVELOPMENT CENTRE OPPORTUNITIES

Quality coaching working on the Preston North End philosophy can be organised for individuals, small groups or even teams upon request. For information on development centre courses or for team events please email youthadmin@pne.com

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