

The **Coaching** Family

Welcome to The Coaching Family session sharing book for 2016.

In putting together this edition we asked coaches who follow us on Twitter to share a practice that their players have enjoyed. The coaches were also asked to specify which age range their session has been delivered to.



As you read through you will see we have divided the book by Academy phases. The book is divided into three phases. The Foundation Phase (5-11 years), The Youth Development Phase (12-16 years) and finally The Professional Development Phase (17-21 - including adults).

Our aim, as always, is to share good practice. We consistently receive fantastic session plans for these books but with this one we wanted to up our game. In this 2016 edition you will find an insight and tips from three experienced, elite academy coaches on how they plan, deliver and review their coaching sessions. Our thanks to Michael Beale (Liverpool FC), Sam Grace (Reading FC) and Dan Bolas (Aston Villa FC) for taking the time away from their busy schedules to share their ideas and tips with us, it's greatly appreciated.

Lastly, a special thank you to all the coaches who have shared a session. We hope you enjoy and take something from what you see in the coming pages.

Ben Trinder & Liam Donovan

2016 Session Sharing Book - Contributors

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Special Thanks to:

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Dan Bolas
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Expert Tips & Advice

The
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ASTON VILLA FOOTBALL CLUB

Dan Bolas,

Aston Villa Academy Coach Dan Bolas gives us an insight into how he plans, delivers & reviews his sessions.

All views shared are that of the individual coach and not necessarily the views of the Football Club

Dan Bolas **Planning**

Plan & Prep - Working in the academy environment, I am very fortunate to have a team of staff the help plan sessions. This includes ensuring sessions are hitting physical targets and getting certain aspects of sessions filmed for group or individual analysis. Our process normally sees us meet at the start of the week and discuss out plans for the week - tying in with players individual learning outcomes and linked to the syllabus theme for the month. From here, I will tend to use a tactics board and visually set up my session. This works for me, as I can move players, make notes and change it multiple times without it feeling permanent.

A huge thing for me is having as much of the session set up as is physically possible before the players arrive. When possible, this will follow a rotation round the pitch for different aspects of the session, however when this isn't an option, I will use different coloured cones or markers, and get the players to pick up a certain colour on completion of an activity. Being 15 minutes earlier to a session and having this set up helps manage continuity, keep players active and actually helps with behaviour too.

Whilst I do plan every session, the plan for me is always a guideline that needs to be adapted based on the needs of the players. Having a structure of a session set up helps me know where I am starting, but where I end up will depend on a number of factors I won't truly know until the session gets going.

Dan Bolas **Delivering**

Delivery - Depending on what I am delivering, my style and technique will vary, If i am doing tactical work with U14+, I will be quite command style, providing positional detail and expecting players to play through scenarios a number of times to reinforce learning. On the other hand, a rondo or possession practice with U10 players will be a lot of trial and error, letting play break down and giving them the opportunity to make decisions, mistakes and try things. I try and use some observation and feedback in all sessions, giving detail to individuals or groups that I have observed and see what they make of the information / how they act differently next time.

I will normally work with at least 1 other coach, and when this is the case we will break off into two groups and deliver sessions in tandem, before swapping over. The planning aspect comes into play here, but it is also about trusting your assistant coach to deliver and support the players. Even with low numbers, taking 2 or 3 players out with a second coach gives you the chance to get some real detail.

Personally, I am not a huge fan of a floating player, something which my opinion has changed on over the last few seasons. If I have uneven numbers, I will tend to create an overload situation for one side, or use a wave practice to give players rest between goes. This is again a time where a second coach comes in to play to help manage numbers.

Dan Bolas **Reviewing**

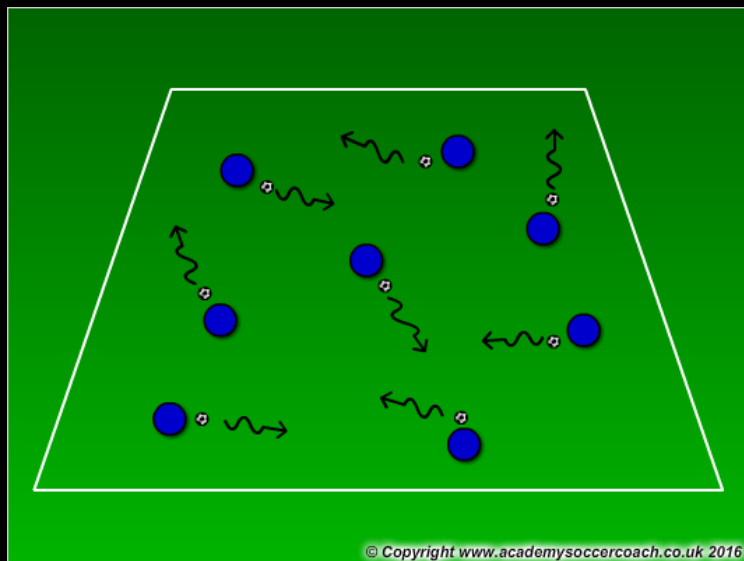
Review - I am very critical of my own coaching, both in terms of content and also the way I act during a session. From a technical and content point of view, I try to evaluate with a colleague walking off the pitch or in the changing area after, asking for honest feedback about one thing they liked and one thing they'd change. When running multiple sessions (either in a carousel form or moving from one activity to the next) I always try to ask the players which activity they liked and why, as this gives me an indication of where to take my planning with that particular group next time.

From a personal point of view, I keep a reflective journal on my iPad, where I will look at my own performance, from communication to attitude to preparation. I find it quite easy to be honest in here, and usually only use words or short sentences as it is not for anyone else's benefit. This helps me notice themes within my coaching practices, so for example if I am finding myself moving around a lot on the sidelines of a game, I will consciously try and spend 10 minutes a period sat down, and encourage my staff members to do the same.

Foundation Phase 5-11 years

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Dan Chubbock: Basic Dribbling



20x20 yard area.

Every player dribbles with a ball around the area. Players then challenged to find different ways to move the ball.

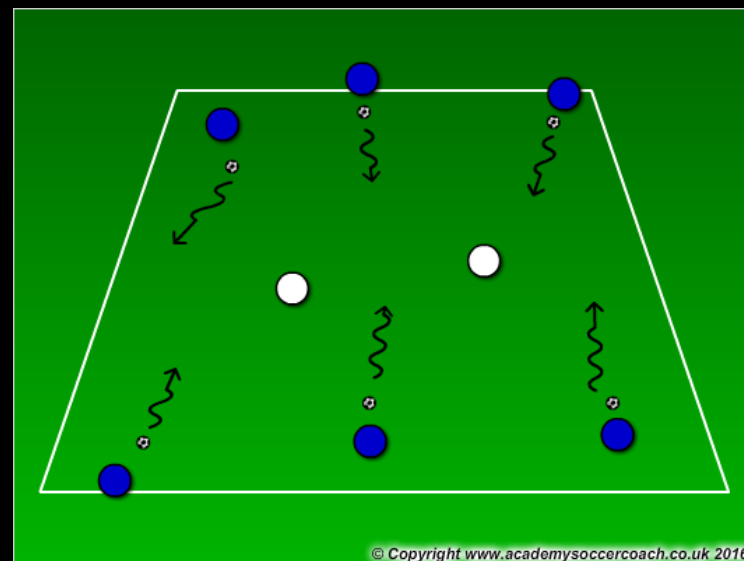
COACHING POINTS

Use different parts of the foot.

Head up.

Ball close to the feet.

Move into space.



20x20 yard area.

Blues have a ball each and must dribble through the square to the other side while doing their best to avoid being tackled by the White players.

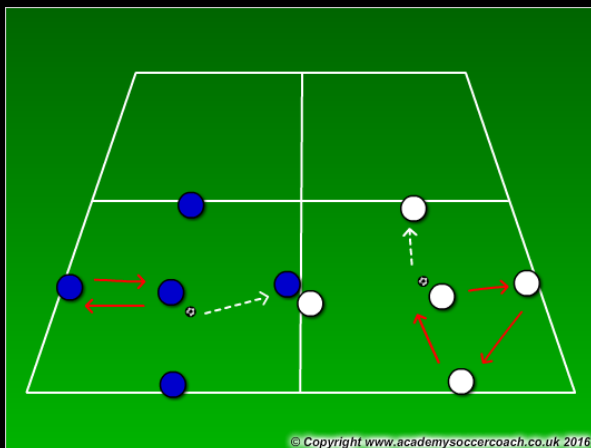
COACHING POINTS

Keep the ball close.

Take ball into space.

Use different parts of the foot to dribble.

Yiannis Tsalatsidis: Decision Making

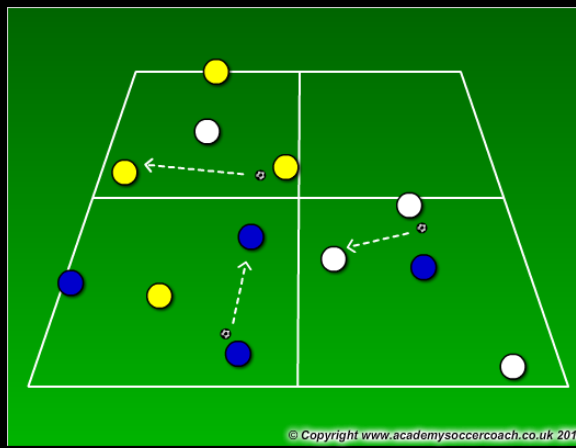


Two 12x12 boxes

Middle player passes the ball to any of his outside players and swaps places with a different player. Progress to make outside players making two runs before the centre player is switched (see white team).

COACHING POINTS

Decision making off the ball
Quality of pass
Avoid following your pass (unrealistic)

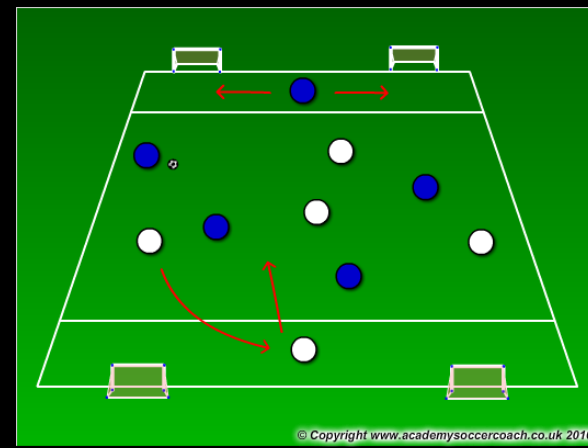


Four 12x12 boxes

3 boxes filled with 3v1 or 4v1. Centre player holds a bib. If he wins the ball swap with the player who gave it away. Progress by asking players to move to the empty box every time they reach 4 passes.

COACHING POINTS

Intelligent movement off the ball
Decision – pass or protect
Collective decision making



4v4 game.

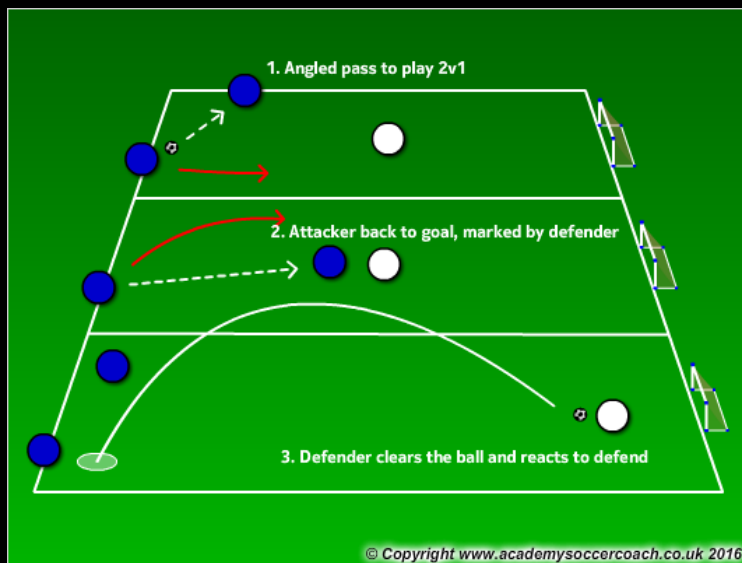
Place a 6 yard scoring zone at each end. Both teams must have one player in their defending zone who protects the goals. Teams can only score by breaking into the 6 yard scoring zone.

Players can rotate with the protecting player at any time during the game.

COACHING POINTS

Purely observation

Yiannis Tsalatsidis: **Finishing**



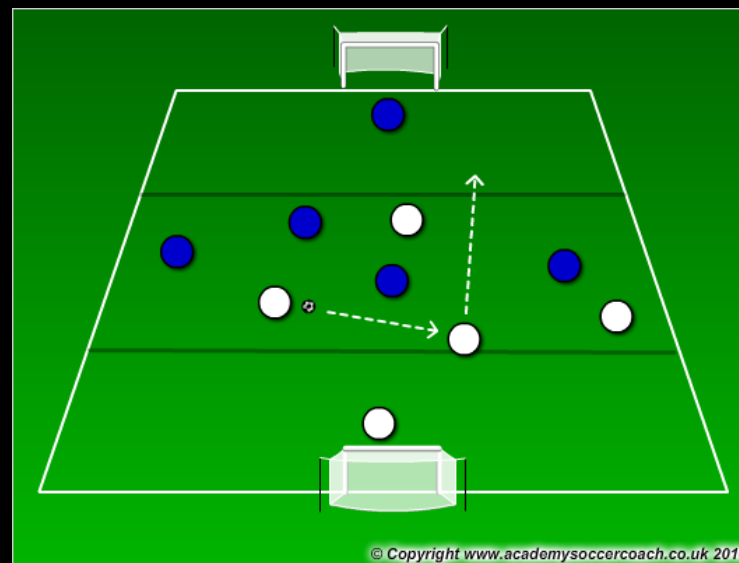
Three 20x10 areas with different 2v1 scenarios set out for the players to practice. Players work their way through all 3 scenarios.

COACHING POINTS

1st touch to provoke defender.

Movement to create space for team mate.

Decision making – when to pass, when to dribble.



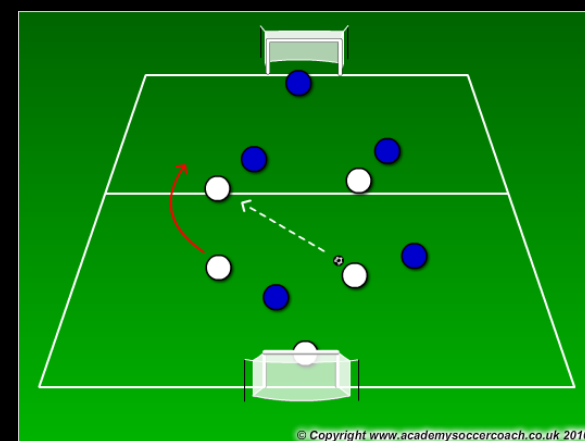
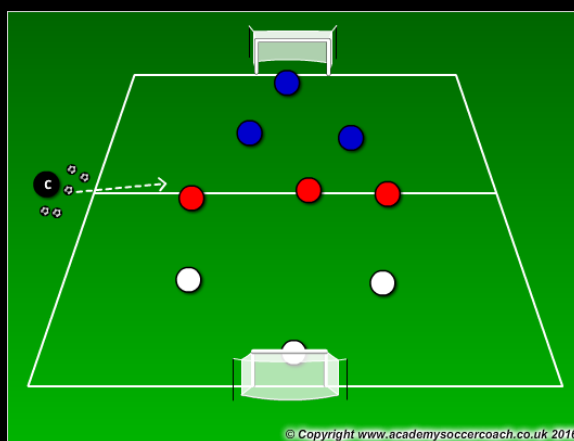
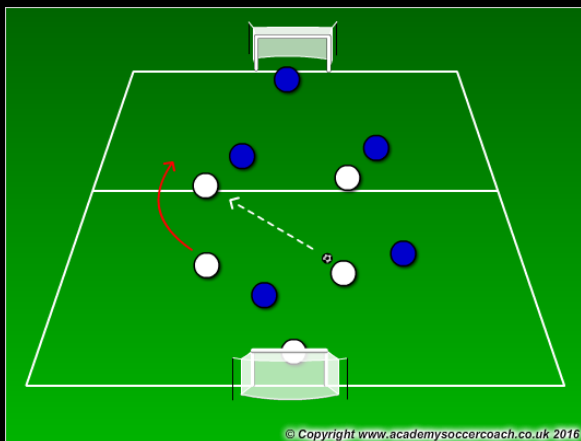
5v5 game. Two defenders must play as CB's on the defensive line. Teams must complete 3 passes in centre before trying to release an attacker., 1 player can also break forward to support. 1 defender can recover to defend.

COACHING POINTS

Composure in front of goal.

Vary the type of shot/pass selection as with the previous practice.

Warren Grant Using Overloads Effectively



Organise 2 teams of 5 players. Players positioned 2 in each half plus a GK. When the attacking team – in possession – play into the forward players, one player can break forward from the back to create a 3v2 overload. On defenders regaining possession they become the attackers.

COACHING POINTS

Recognise overloads.

Recognise when to slide in or go alone.

Attack at speed during an overload.

Organise 3 teams of 3, as shown in the diagram. Defenders (White and Blue) number themselves 1, 2, 3 with each taking a turn in goal per attack. The attacking side have 6 attacks, 3 at each goal. Each time the ball will be played in by the coach. If defenders regain possession they pass to the coach or dribble over the middle line.

COACHING POINTS

Attack at speed during overloads.

Stretch the pitch

Avoid predictable movement.

Organise 2 teams of 5 players. Players positioned 2 in each half plus a GK. When the attacking team – in possession – play into the forward players, one player can break forward from the back to create a 3v2 overload. On defenders regaining possession they become the attackers.

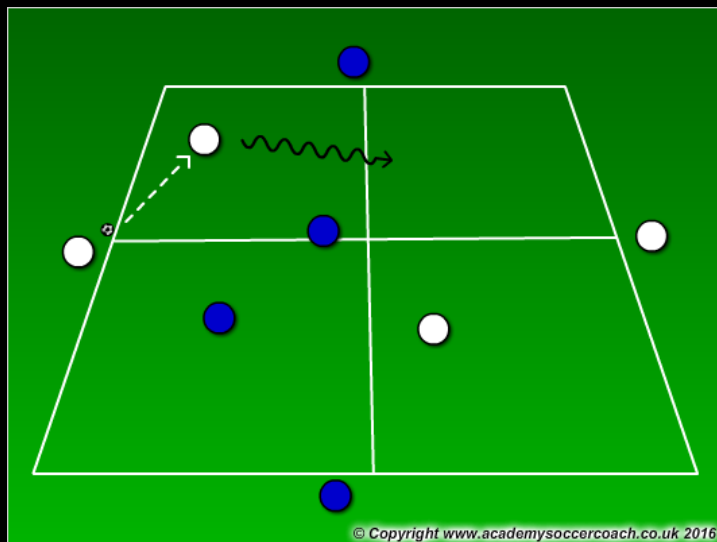
COACHING POINTS

Recognise overloads.

Recognise when to slide in or go alone.

Attack at speed during an overload.

Ben Trinder: Decision Making - First Touch



Max 20x20 square. 2v2 in middle with 2 bounce players for each team opposite each other outside the square. Players in middle try to take their first touch into a different sections of the pitch. Bounce players are used to retain possession.

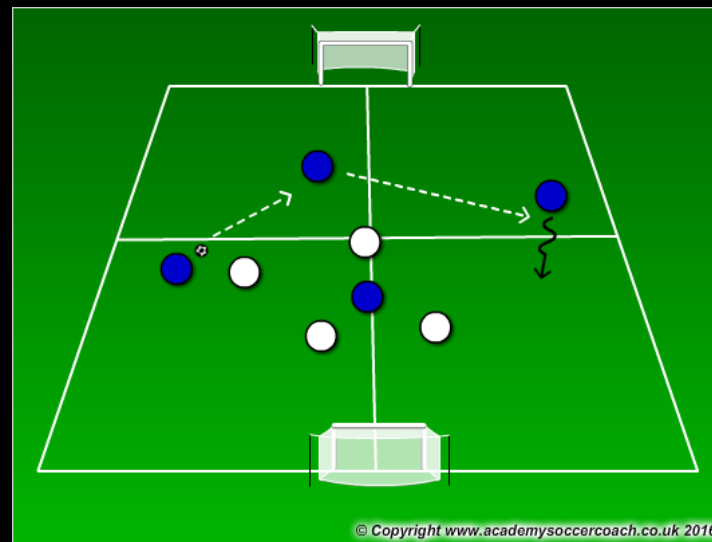
COACHING POINTS

Play forward or protect and retain possession.

Create space. How?

Good decisions - What affects your decision on first touch?

Rotate positions with outside players



20x30 area. 4v4 directional game with both teams attacking and defending the goals. No goalkeepers. Pitch divided into quarters. Both teams challenged to choose the right time to have their first touch into a different box to risk or retain possession.

COACHING POINTS

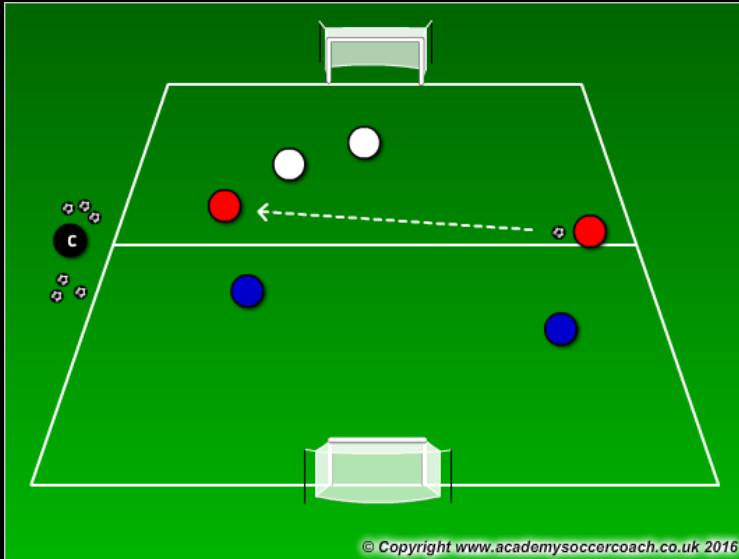
Create space away from the ball (width/depth)

Decision making with the ball. Learn from mistakes.

Awareness – scanning as the ball moves.

Challenge – can you do a no touch turn starting in one quarter and moving into another.

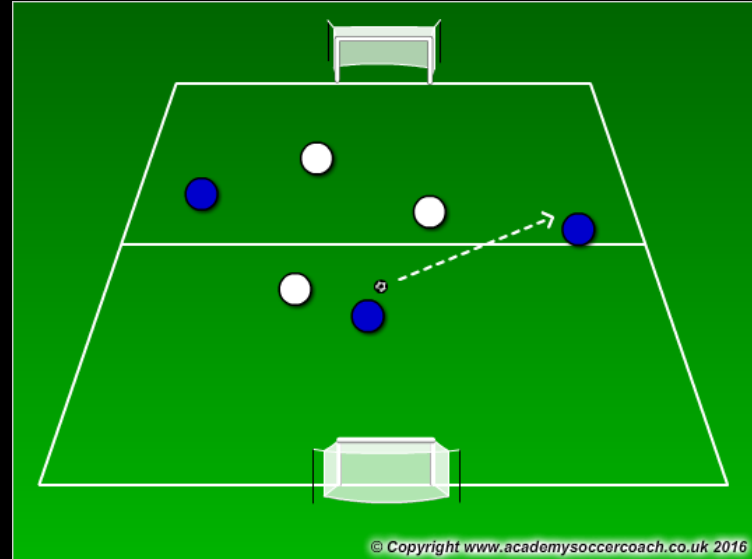
Ben Trinder: Defending to Counter Attack



3 separate teams of 2. Set up the practice 2v2 in one half with 2 players waiting in the opposite half off the pitch as shown. The white team work together to force a mistake or win the ball from the reds so they can take possession and counter attack against the Blues. The practice works continuously from here.

COACHING POINTS

Delay, deny space and try to force a mistake.
Work as a pair, pressure and support.
On winning the ball, drive into space.

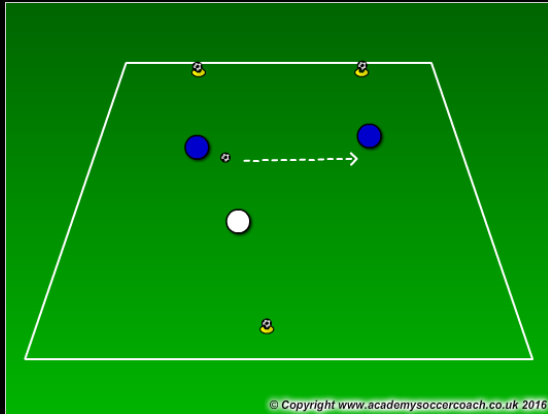


3v3 game with one condition – both teams must keep one player in the attacking half at all times. This could mean the defending players might be 2v2 or outnumbered 2v3. Score with a 1 touch finish only. No offsides.

COACHING POINTS

Work as a team to close spaces and win possession.
Body shape, low, bent knees ready to react.
On winning the ball, drive forward but make sure you
prepare for a loss of possession.

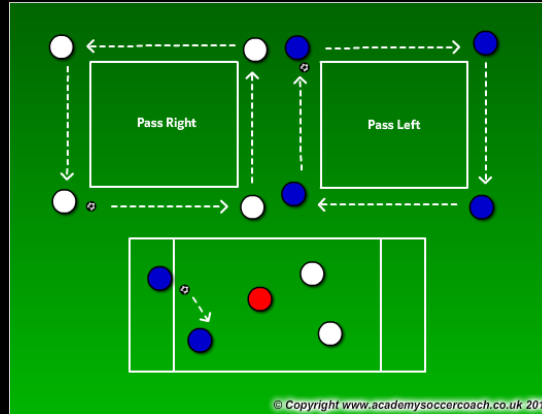
Ben Pinnington **Receiving to Play Forwards**



10x6 area with one football on a cone at one end and two footballs on 2 cones at the opposite end. 2v1 practice the 2 Blue players try to knock the White defenders ball off the cone. If White wins the ball can he find a pass to knock one of the Blue footballs off.

COACHING POINTS

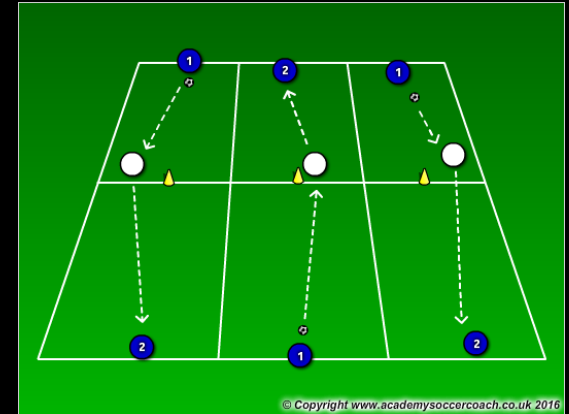
Aim to receive the ball on back foot.
Scan and check your surroundings.



3 areas set up. Two passing squares – one with the ball moving clockwise so players receive on their left foot. The other moving anti-clockwise to receive on their right foot. 2v2 + 1 magic man at the bottom. Score by passing to a team mate in the end zone.

COACHING POINTS

Aim to receive the ball on back foot.
Scan and check your surroundings.

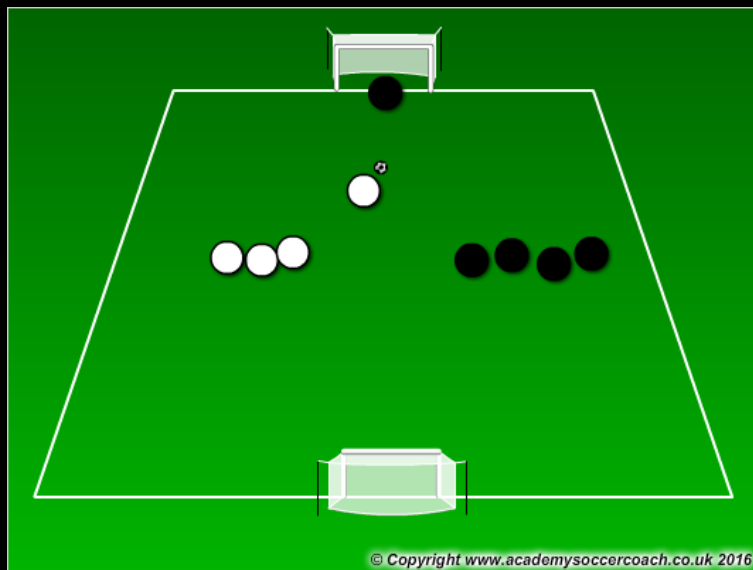


15x6 Channels with one cone placed in the centre. Players arranged as shown. The centre player receives on the back foot to play out to the opposite Blue player. 1 and 2 must sprint and touch the cone in the centre after each pass they make then return to their start position.

COACHING POINTS

Aim to receive the ball on back foot.
Scan and check your surroundings.

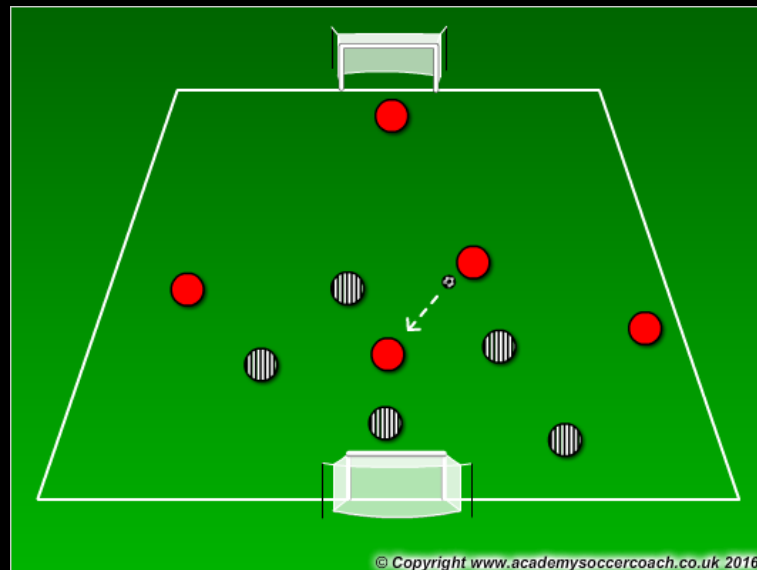
Martin Lee Herdman: Problem Solving Scenarios



SCENARIO 1 – England v Germany

It's the World Cup Final. Start the game with a penalty shoot out. These scores are taken into an 8 minute game, no half time. After the game finishes, organise another penalty shoot out.

Add up total scores to find the winner.

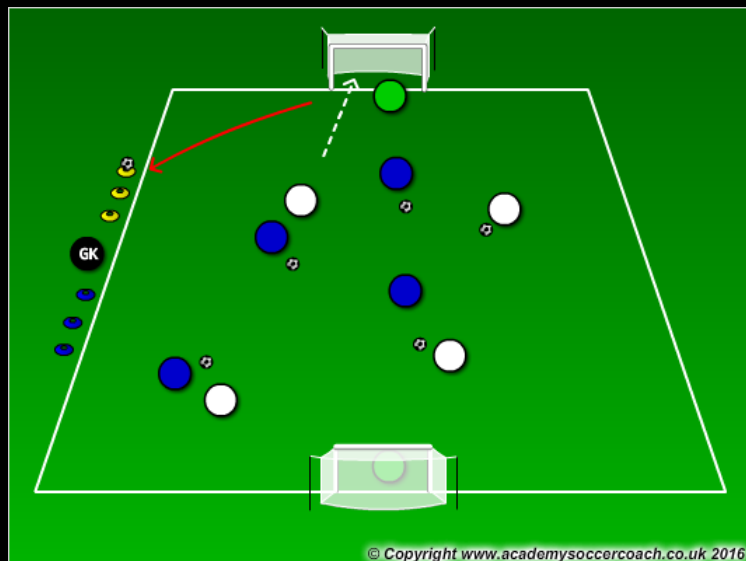


SCENARIO 2 – Newcastle v Arsenal

One team play as Newcastle and the other as Arsenal. Arsenal lead 4-0 with 12 minutes left. Newcastle need to score 4 goals to draw the game and 5 to win. If Arsenal score, take 30 seconds off the clock.

If Newcastle are struggling, the referee may have to lend a helping hand.

Lee Fielden Fun Games



Set up an area size to suit the age of your players. Distribute 6 footballs among the players. Both teams play with the aim of scoring 3 goals first. If a player scores he goes to receive the ball from the net and places it on his team's cone.

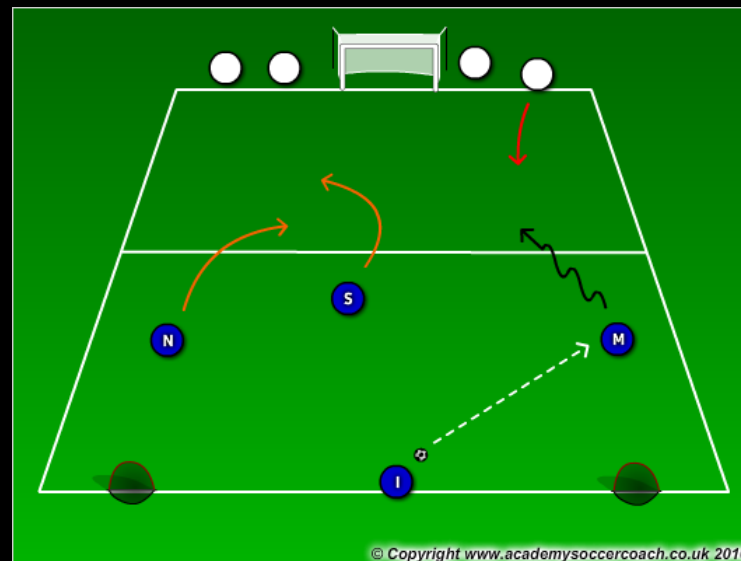
If the opposite team equalise both footballs are thrown back into the game. First to score three wins.

COACHING POINTS

Strategy – how do you plan to win.

Awareness of surroundings.

Quick reactions to support team mates.



Set up the area as shown. Two teams, including GKs. Both teams compete to get to the highest level possible. They have 5 lives to do so. The 4 attackers play as Messi, Suarez, Neymar and Iniesta, Iniesta is locked into his half.

-Level 1 – 3 v 0

-Level 2 – 3 v 1

-Level 3 – 3 v 2

-Level 4 – 3 v 3

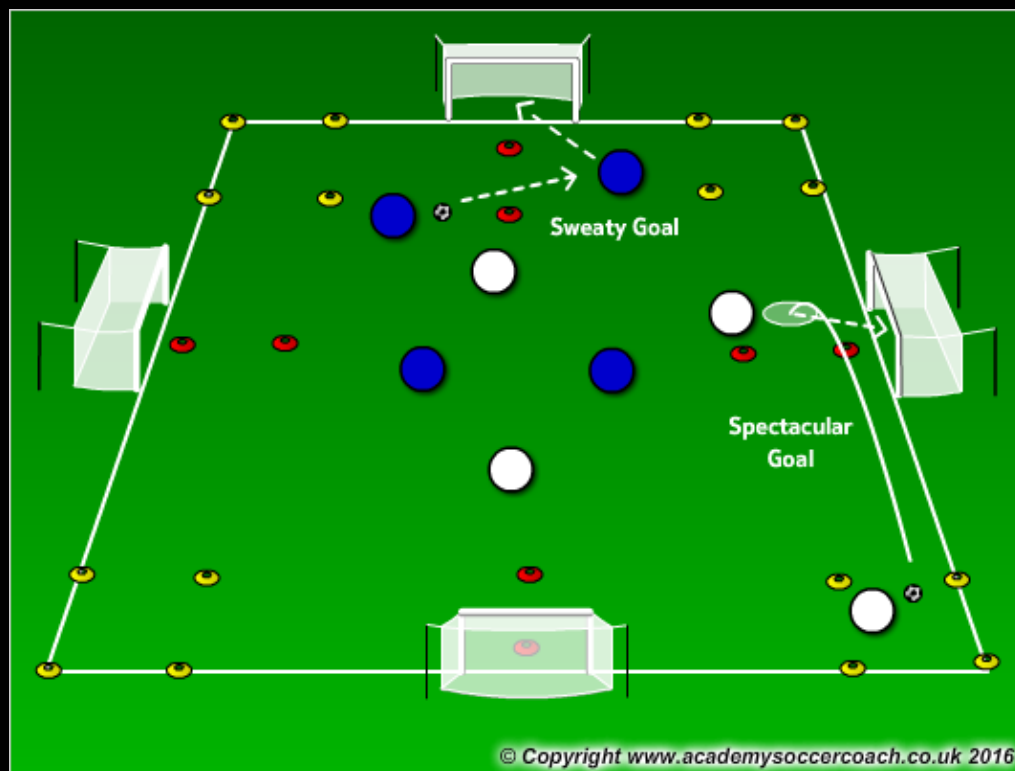
-Level 5 – 3 v 4

-Level 6 – 2 v 4

-Level 7 – 1 v 4

Defenders score in mini goals if they win the ball.

Ian Dipper **Sweaties or Spectaculars**



Two teams . 4 Goals with gates in front of them. 4 squares in each corner of the playing area.

Two teams try to score in any of the four goals

To score in the goals each team can either
Pass through a gate before scoring
Or
From a cross from the squares in the corners .

Players can double the score by trying a spectacular goal from a cross. From the boxes the cross can go to any goal. The player has 4 secs to deliver the cross

No defender is allowed in the squares.
First team to 10 points win the game
Play the best of 3 games.

The game can be played with one or more footballs depending on age and ability.

To simplify each team has a given way to score either through the gates only or crosses only.

Expert Tips & Advice

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Sam Grace

Reading FC Academy Coach, Sam Grace talks us through how he plans, delivers and reviews his coaching sessions.

All views shared are that of the individual coach and not necessarily the views of the Football Club

Sam Grace **Planning**

- Establish primary aim of the session, e.g. Playing through midfield.
- Create positional specific challenges, based on elite performers, e.g. 5/6 try to play first time whenever possible into 4 or 8.
- Challenges for those that need stretching, be it technical, tactical, social or psychological.
- Progressions for your session, e.g. Trying to play through a compact, deep lying 4-4-2 or against a 4-3-3 with man marking opposition midfielders.
- Session practices structured so that there's a flow from one to the next. Maximise practice time.
- Practices that relate to the skills, scenarios and pictures that are relevant to the game.
- Be aware of possible social outcomes that may arise, e.g. Dealing with mistakes or playing under pressure.
- Use goals where possible. Scoring is how the game's won and is a major motivating factor.
- Keep scores where possible, it can raise competitiveness and pressure to succeed. This can stimulate players to find a way to win, and give an intensity that mirrors matches.
- Plan probable interventions for each practice, although use most suitable to that moment.
- Inform support staff of intended aims and practices prior to session, and discuss their role.

Sam Grace **Delivering**

- Use of support material. Email clips or relevant examples prior to session? Use of whiteboard before or during session?
- Session areas set up from the start so players and coach can move seamlessly between practices.
- Give yourself observation time. Is the practice running as planned? Who's thriving, who's coping, who's struggling and why?
- Are different outcomes becoming apparent that may be more beneficial than those planned?
- Do players need the current practice adapted? To challenge or meet different needs.
- Aware of time, whilst being flexible with its allocation to each practice.
- Use praise to establish with the group what you want. By praising "John" for his movement the rest of the group become aware, and can improve or maintain their performance.
- Who can I support without stopping the session? (challenge, praise, feedback)
- Question players. Do they see the relevance of the practice? How does it relate to the game and their roles. A question following a question will often give greater insight. For example "When would you come off the line to receive?" "When the CB looks up." "What would you need to be aware of?" "If I'm marked, the space, and the runs of the 2/9"

Sam Grace **Reviewing**

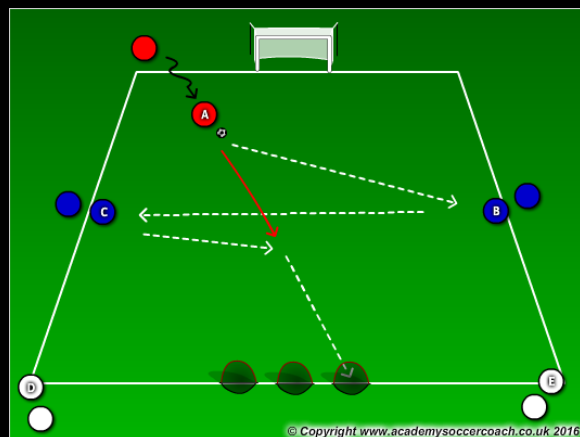
- Were the session aims met, and to what degree?
- Did the practices meet the player needs? Could they be improved on?
- Who struggled and who thrived and why?
- Were those that required stretching challenged?
- Were my interventions relevant and well timed?
- Do the players need more time on this topic and practices? Performance in match will help answer this question.
- How did the players feel at the end of the session?
- Review all interactions with participants, not just coaching points. How are they as a person?
- Were all support staff utilised to the fullest? What were their thoughts on the session?
- What would I change if I did the session again?

Youth Development Phase 12-16 years

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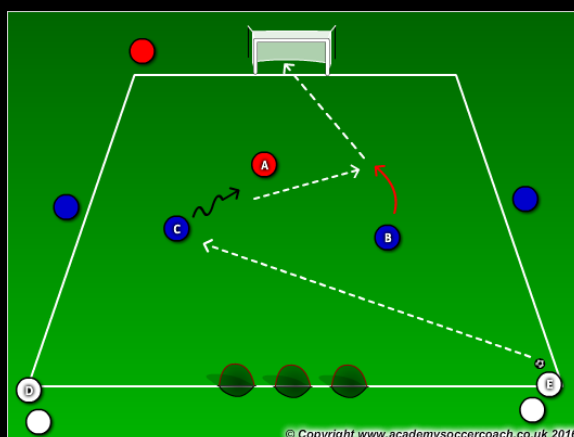
David Clarke **Attacking Overloads**



Set up a 20 x 30 yard area and distribute players as shown. To start the practice A dribbles out and plays to B who then plays to C. C then sets the ball for A to finish in the 3 mini goals.

COACHING POINTS

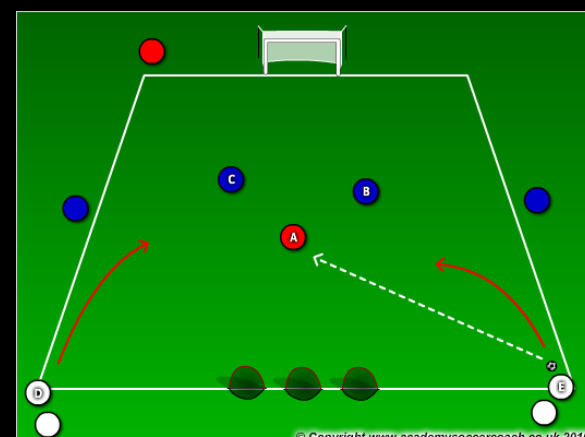
Speed of play.
Angles of attack.
Pass, dribble or shoot.
Positive attitudes to attack the goal.



Continue from the first part, E now plays to B or C who play 2v1 against A to the big goal.

COACHING POINTS

Speed of play.
Angles of attack.
Pass, dribble or shoot.
Positive attitudes to attack the goal.

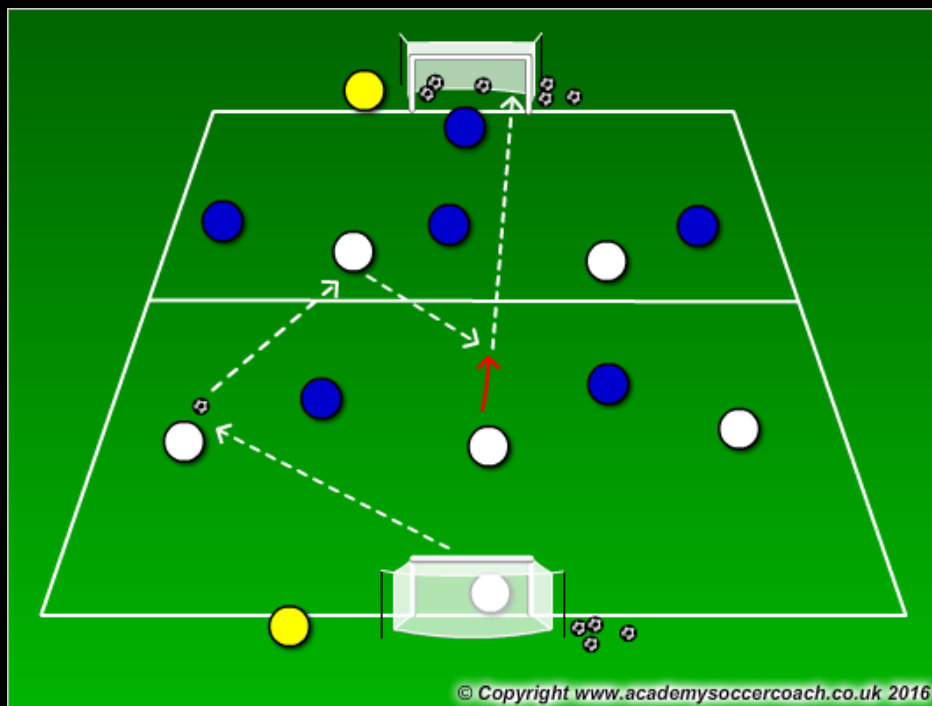


To continue, E now plays a new ball to A. E and D now join A to play 3v2 against B and C to the big goal.

COACHING POINTS

Speed of play.
Angles of attack.
Pass, dribble or shoot.
Positive attitudes to attack the goal.

Scott Mackenzie **Short & Long Range Shooting**



20x40 area split into 2 halves.

2 teams of 5v5 + goalkeepers and a bounce player at either end.

Each half has 3 defenders and 2 attackers, with the goalkeepers in goal and bounce players to the side of the goals.

The objective of the game is to get a shot off as quickly as possible.

Goalkeepers start and restart the game whenever the ball leaves the pitch by rolling the ball to a defender.

PROGRESSIONS

Shots only permitted from one half of the pitch.

1 Defender can join the attacking half during an attack.

COACHING POINTS

Scan – Make quick decisions – Can you shoot?

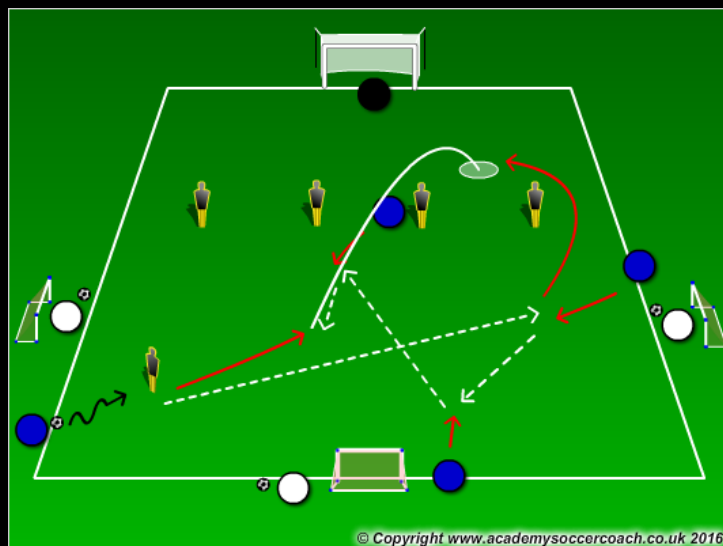
Receive to play forwards.

Move as the ball moves.

Movement to create space off the ball.

Improvise in tight areas.

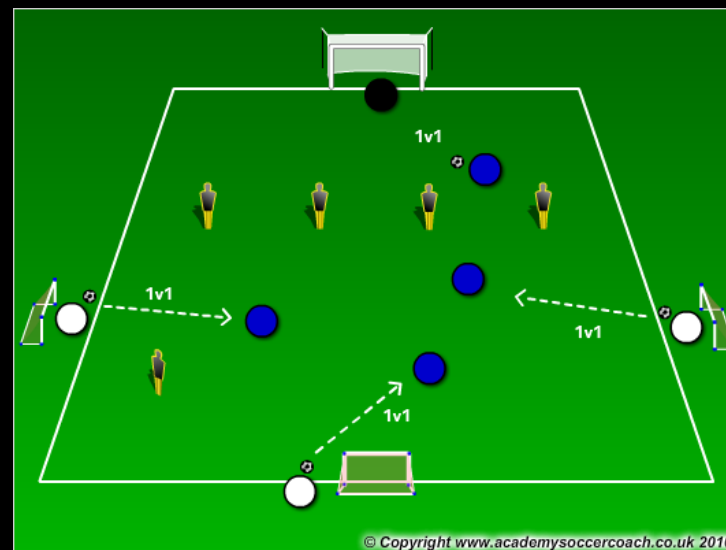
Harry Watling Combination Play



60x40 area with players distributed around the pitch as shown. Blues work through the combination to play over or through the 4 mannequins. Encourage players involved in the combinations to think about their role before, during and after each pass.

COACHING POINTS

Weight of pass – set, punch, driven?
Angle, distance and timing of supporting runs.
Short, sharp passes.

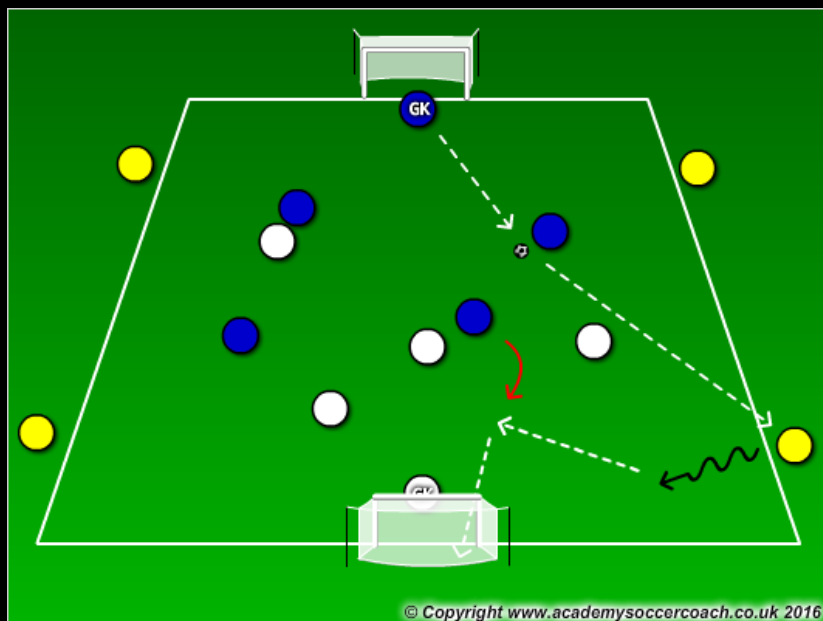


In the same area, following on from the combination practice, each Blue disperses to receive a pass from a White player to then play 1v1 to goal. This can be pre planned so all players know where to go, or can be more random to create some confusion.

COACHING POINTS

Quick reactions after the combination practice.
Positive first touch.
Skills and tricks to beat the defender.

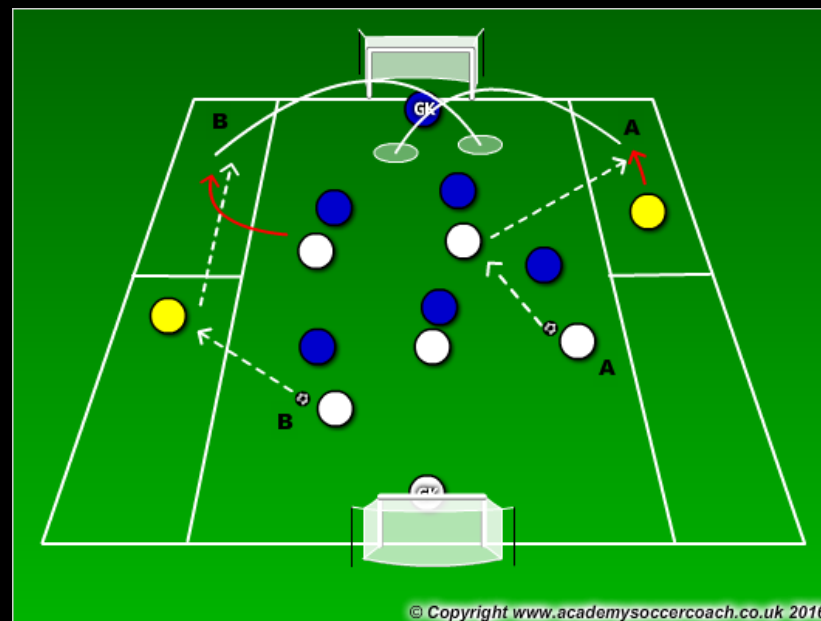
Louis Lancaster **Crossing and Finishing**



Set up the area and players as shown. The Blue and White players fight in the middle where each team is allowed a max 5 passes before they must play to a wide, Yellow player.

The team in possession can score centrally before they make 5 passes.

If a yellow receives in the attacking teams defending half they deliver a deep cross. If they receive in the attacking teams attacking half the look to drive in and get a cut back or death pass.



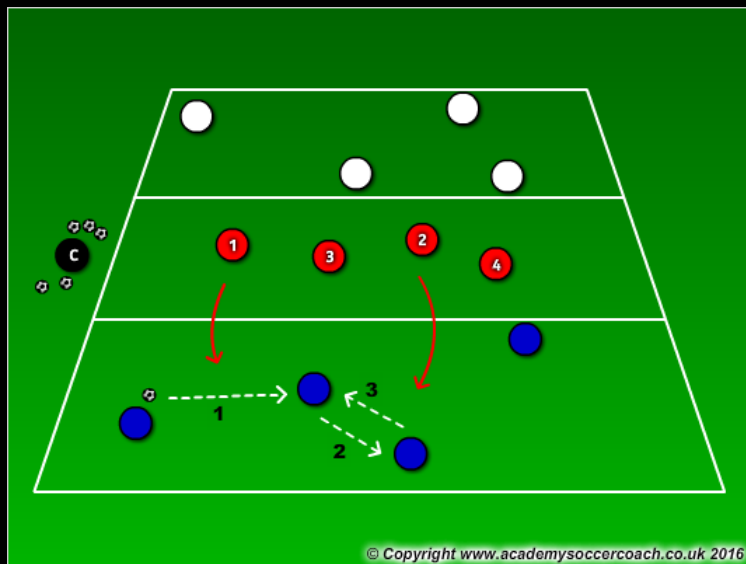
Set up the area and players as shown above. Again, Blues and Whites fight in the middle area.

Each team must score from a cross. Both teams look to find the Yellow players to deliver a cross for them.

A – If a Yellow receives in the attacking half they can deliver a cross.

B – If a yellow receives the ball from the attacking team, in their defensive half, he looks to play in a runner to deliver a cross.

Rob Quilter: **Playing Out Of Pressure**



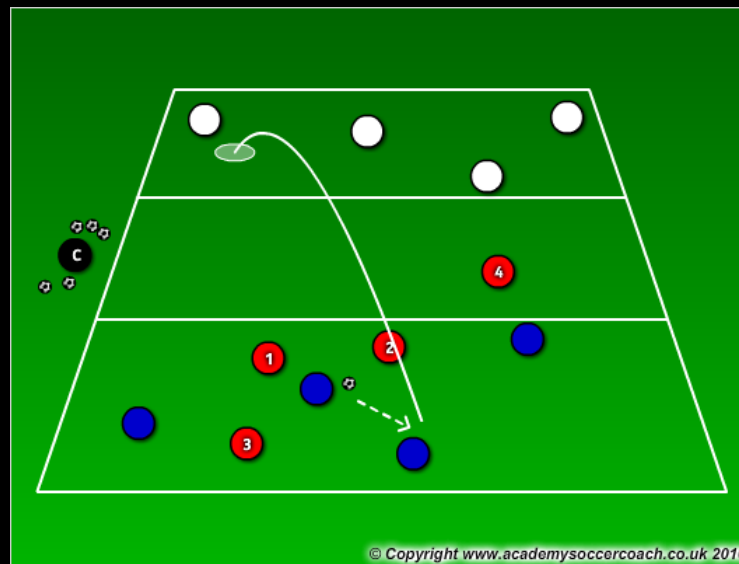
Coach plays a ball to one of the side teams (Blue or White). Once they complete 1 pass, 1 Red defender from the middle can go to pressure the Blues. On 2 passes, a second Red player goes in to make a 4v2. If Red win the ball they replace Blue.

COACHING POINTS

Dispersal – make the area big.

1 and 2 touches if you can.

Open body shape to receive the ball.



As before, Blue team start the practice. On the first 3 passes the Blues make, 1 Red player can go and apply pressure. Once the Blue team make 5 passes they switch play to the White team. If Red win the ball they take the place of the team surrendering possession.

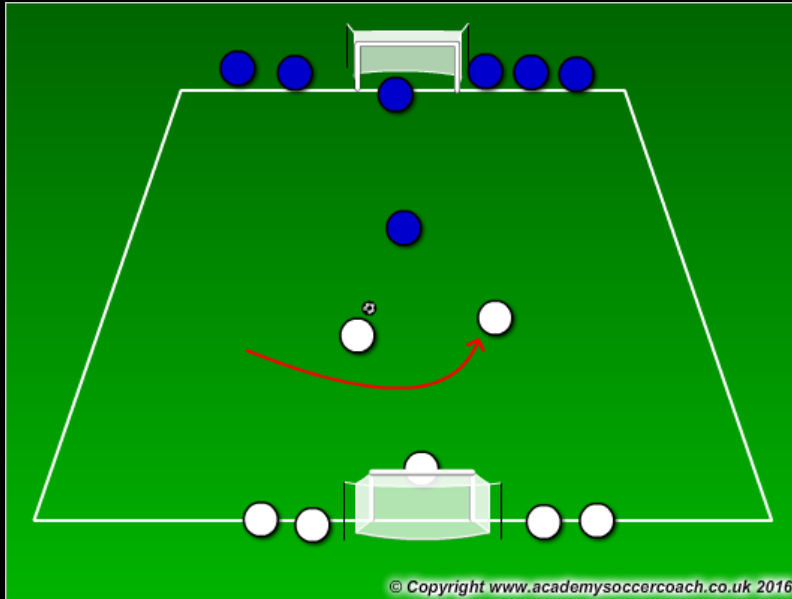
COACHING POINTS

Dispersal – make the area big.

1 and 2 touches if you can.

Decision making – 6th pass doesn't have to go long!

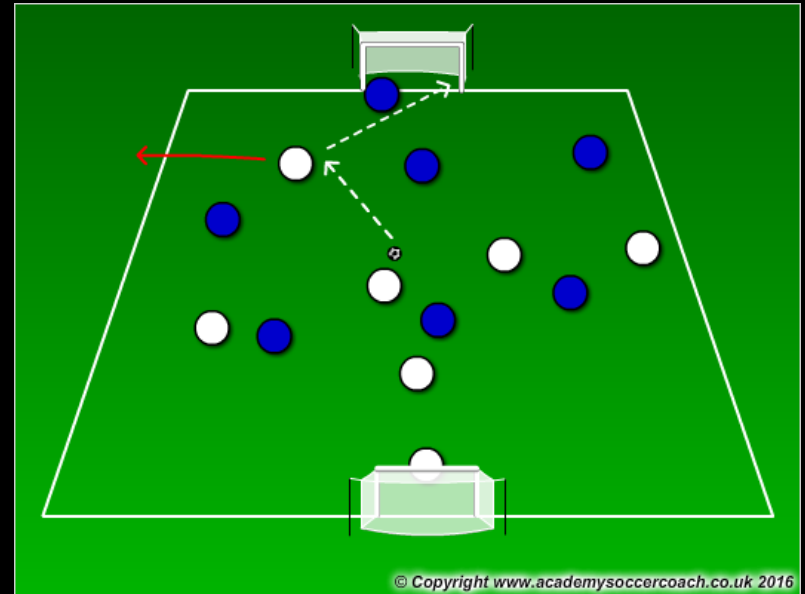
Aaron Garvey Overloads



One team starts attacking 2v1 (+GK) . Once the ball goes dead or a goal is scored, 1 player joins each team to make 3v2. Continue until you get to 6v5 +GKs then add the last defender to make 6v6. If the defending side win the ball they can counter attack. Progress to put a time limit on each game.

COACHING POINTS

Speed of attack/Counter attack
End product
Movement off the ball

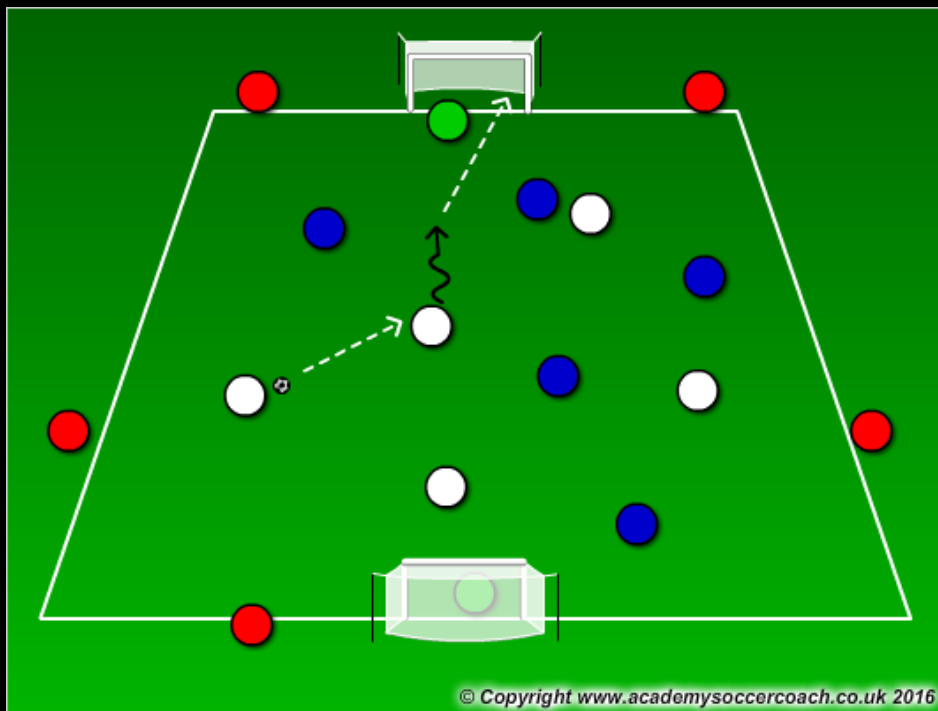


7v7 game. When a team scores a goal they lose a player, for example, the White team score and the goalscorer leaves the pitch. The team in the lead is challenged to work harder than the opposition who are trailing. Progress to give players a certain time off the pitch then they can rejoin the game.

COACHING POINTS

Risk or reward – Manage the state of the game.
Transitions.
Using overloads.

Neil Winskill 3 Team Transitions (Counter Attacking)



60x40 yard pitch.

3 teams of 5 players.

Can be played with GK's (Large goals) or without GK's (Smaller goals).

Resting teams players MUST distribute themselves at each end of the field, to ensure overloads happen.

First team to score wins. They regain the ball and attack the opposite way.

The losing team leave the pitch and is replaced by the team waiting.

The game NEVER stops.

Each game lasts 4 minutes max. If still 0-0 after 4 minutes the team that won the last game stays on. (Players must be inside the end zone to score if the game is played without GK's)

COACHING POINTS

Defensive shape and strategy.

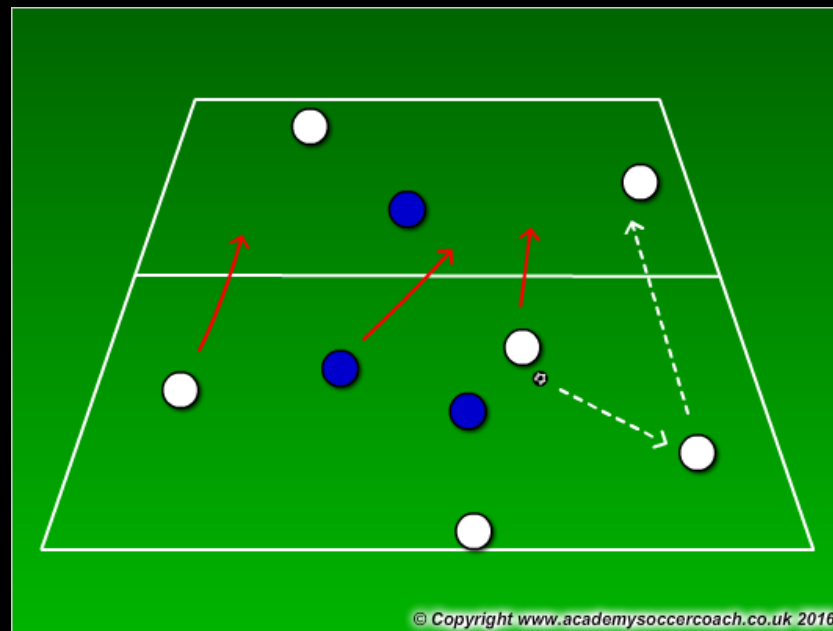
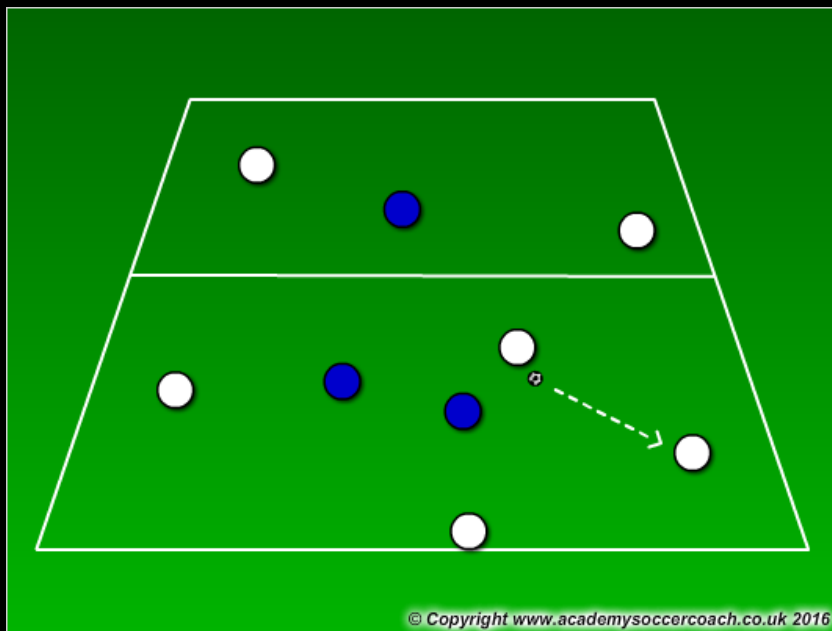
Transition from defence to attack.

Team dispersal.

Move the ball quickly.

Support the attack – End product!

Geoff Hearn 4v2 Switch Possession

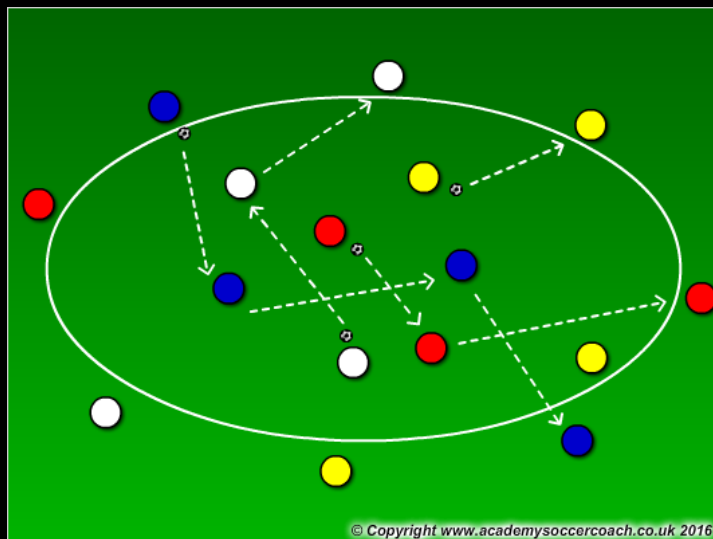


Set up two 15x15 areas with players distributed 4v2 in one half with a 2v1 waiting in the opposite half. The white team aim to keep possession of the ball 4v2 – if they are under pressure they can switch play to the opposite half where they have an instant 2v1 advantage. Two White and one Blue can then move between areas to support. On arriving in the square they must announce their arrival.

COACHING POINTS

Angles of support. Communication. Quick decision making. Quick response to transition.

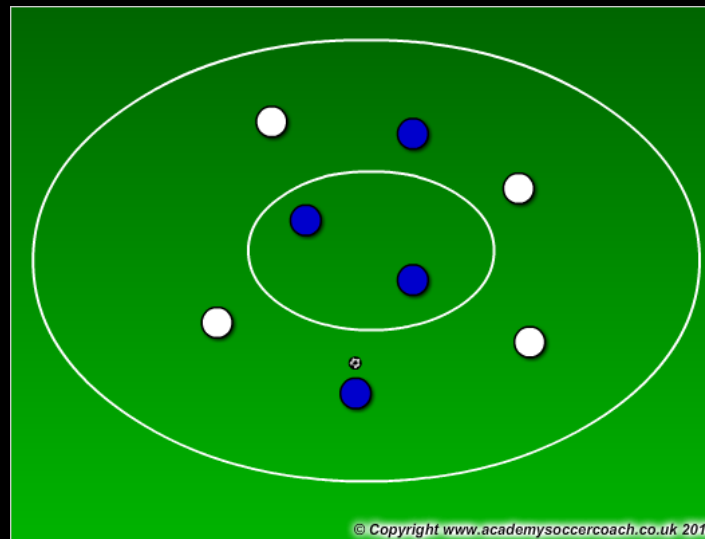
Lee Hayes **Combination Play**



Organise 4 teams of 4 players. Two players from each team play outside the circle and the other two players play in the centre. All four players look to combine to play through the area. Always play to the same colour.

COACHING POINTS

Receive and play quickly if possible.
Scan the pitch – Awareness.
Type of combination play.
Decision making.
Body shape.

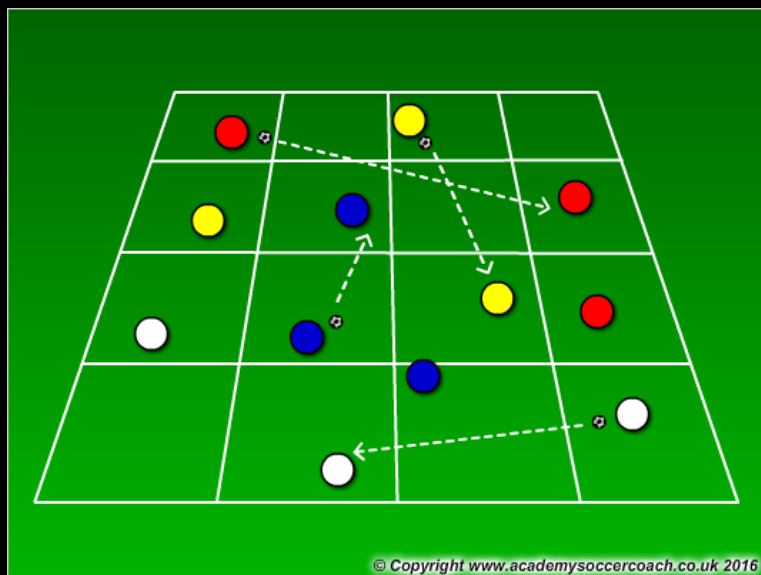


4v4 with two players playing in the middle circle. The Whites aim to play through the smaller circle to maintain possession. If the two Blue players win the ball both teams play 4v4.

COACHING POINTS

Receive and play quickly if possible.
Scan the pitch – Awareness.
Type of combination play.
Decision making.
Body shape.

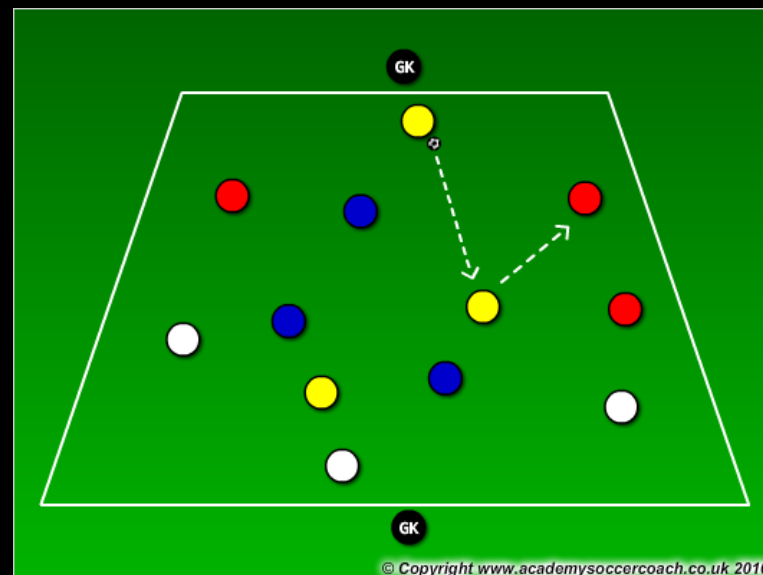
Grassroots Coach Share **Passing & Possession**



In teams of 3 with one ball between each team, players must pass between their team mates to move the ball between grids. Players cannot play in the same grid.

COACHING POINTS

Scan – Be aware of what's around you.
Body shape to receive the ball.
Angles, distance and timing of passes.

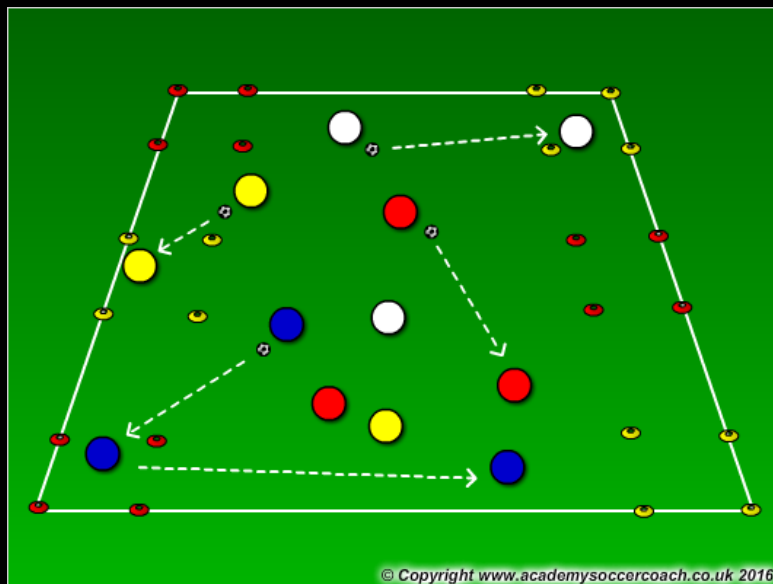


All 4 teams play with one football. Two teams play together at once, in the picture Red and Yellow have joined up to play against Blue and White. The coach can call 2 teams at any time to play together. Play to the GK to score a goal.

COACHING POINTS

Awareness of space
Quick reactions
First touch away from pressure.

Lee Suter Snooker Game



60x40 area – Four teams of three players, 1 ball between each team. Teams score by 1 player on the team receiving the ball in one of the coloured boxes. Teams must work in a Red – Yellow – Red – Yellow sequence. Teams given 1 minute to score the highest break.

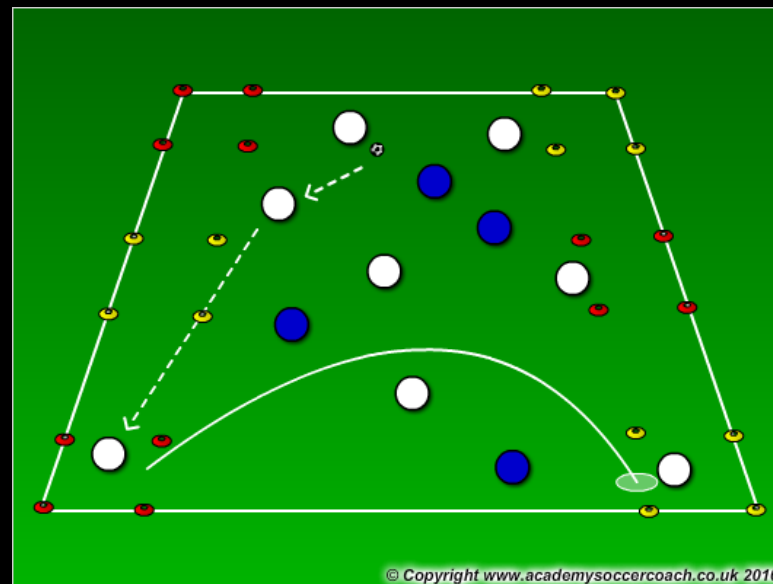
COACHING POINTS

Awareness.

Create space – Clever movement.

Body shape to Receive.

Weight and timing of pass.



Create an 8v4 overload – The 8 players are challenged to make the highest break they can following the structure established in the first part of the practice. The 4 defenders aim to break up play, if they win the ball they can end the game by dribbling into a pocket. Progressions could involve changing the overload.

COACHING POINTS

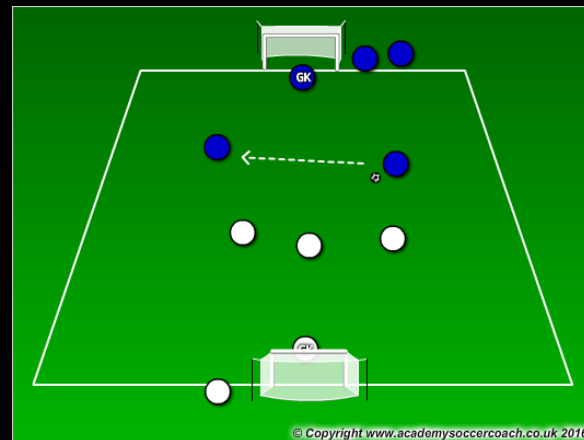
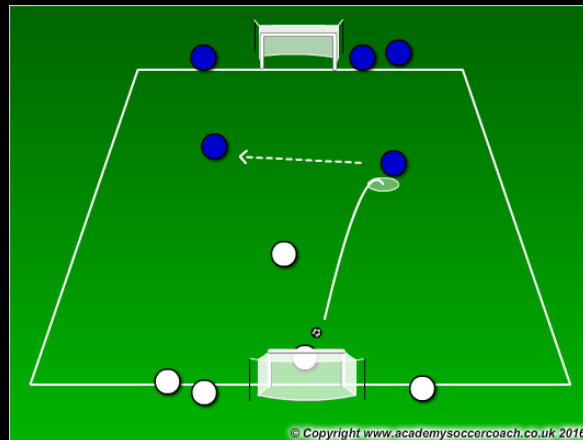
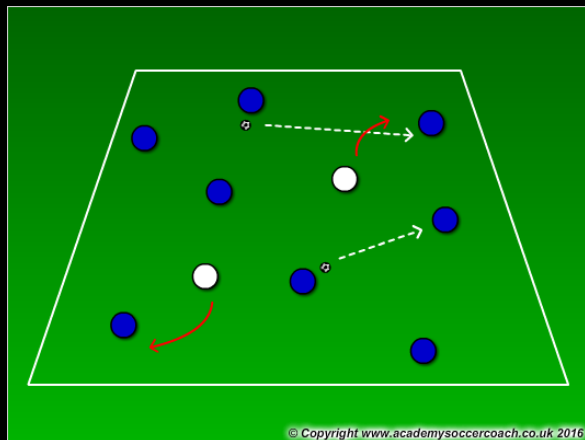
Awareness.

Create space – Clever movement.

Body shape to Receive.

Weight and timing of pass.

Tony Mee Overloads/Underloads



A fun warm up with decision making, tactics, strategies and SAQ worked in. Can be a straightforward game of tag. Coach decides on number of taggers and size of area,

Players in possession of the ball cannot be tagged. Add as many footballs as you like. Pause for dynamic stretching every few minutes.

COACHING POINTS

Awareness.

Quick feet and changes of speed to get away from taggers.

35x25 yard area with a goal or mini goal at either end.

The White team GK plays a long pass to the Blues and we play 2v1 to goal. If the White defender wins the ball, he should play to his GK to initiate a counter attack. One of the Blues then needs to drop into goal. Max 1 attack per team.

COACHING POINTS

Awareness

Decision making – Pass, dribble or shoot?
Quick reaction to a turnover in possession.

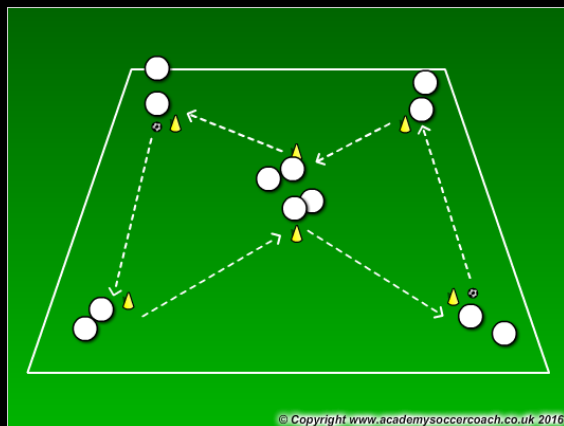
Pitch is the same size as before but players now arranged 2v3 + a GK in each goal.

The 2 attackers (Blue) are trying to score against the 3 defenders (White). White GK kicks long to the Blue GK who starts the attack by rolling out to one of his players. If Whites win the ball they try to counter attack on the Blue goal.

COACHING POINTS

Create half a yard and shoot.
Quick decisions with the ball.
Awareness of surroundings.

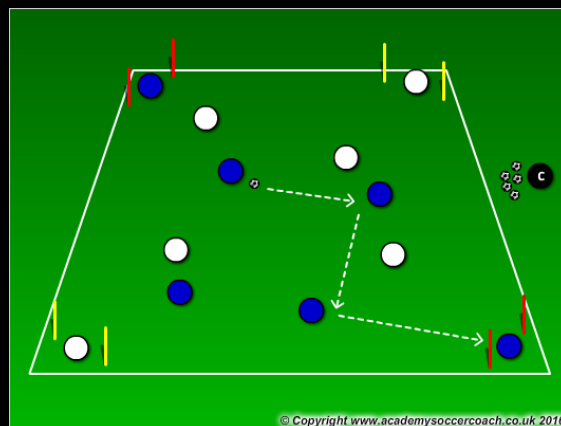
Bobby Puppione **Speed of Play**



Hourglass passing. Two footballs working at the same time, in the same direction. Players follow their pass.

COACHING POINTS

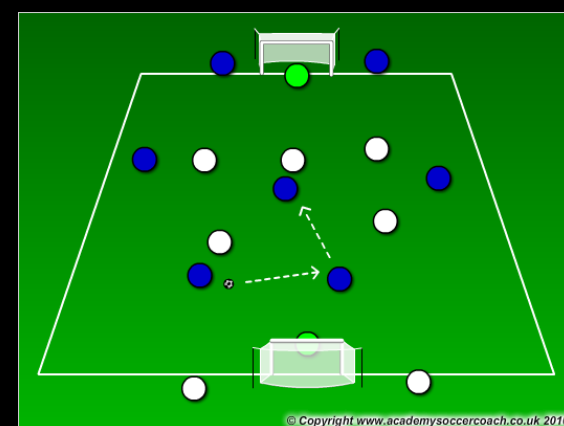
Quality of passing/receiving.
Players check away and back as the ball travels to create space.
Receiving on back foot.
Timing and weight of pass.



Teams play 4v4 in the centre with diagonal target players across the pitch. Teams aim to win the ball and play to one target, receive it back, then play to the opposite target player to score a point. Neutrals can be added if needed.

COACHING POINTS

Technique on pass/receive.
Playing away from pressure.
Connecting with the target early.
Movement off the ball.
Body shape when receiving.

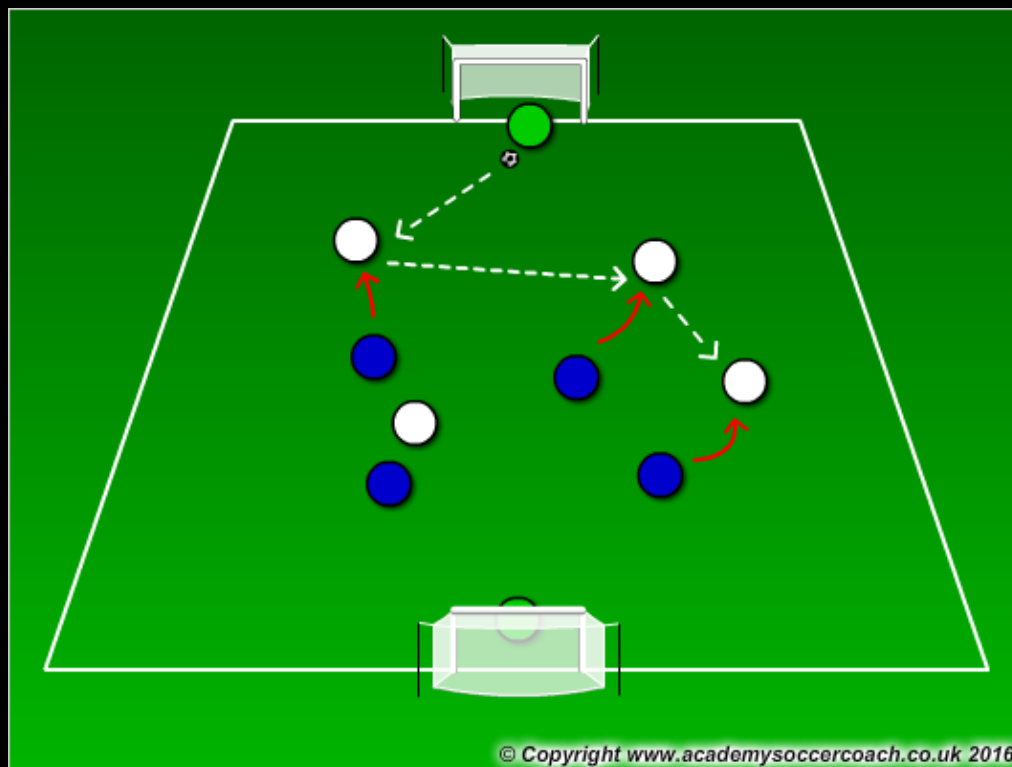


5v5 in the centre. Goalkeepers in the goals. Both teams have two bounce players positioned either side of the goal they are attacking. Teams look to combine and play off the target players to score in the goals.

COACHING POINTS

Combination play.
Angle distance and timing of supporting runs.
Body shape when receiving.
Decision making with and without the ball.

Liam Bramley **Pressing – Conditioned Game**



Set up as shown, 4v4 with GK's.
40x30 yard pitch.

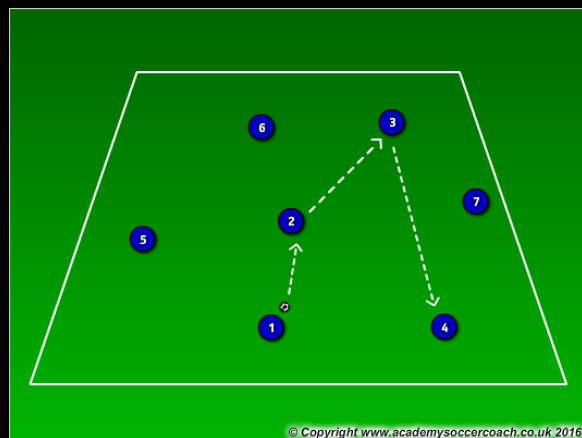
Small Sided Game with both teams conditioned to make at least 2 passes from the GK possession before they can attempt to score. The 2 passes should encourage the team out of possession to try to press to win possession within the first 2 passes. All set plays go from the GK.

Progress by increasing the size of the pitch to 40x50 yards and the team in possession must make 3 passes before attempting to score.

COACHING POINTS

Recover positions after a transition to press your nearest attacker.
Prevent passes by cutting off passing angles.
Prepare to intercept by predicting the intentions of the opposition.
Pinch or patience? Intercept, spoil or jockey?

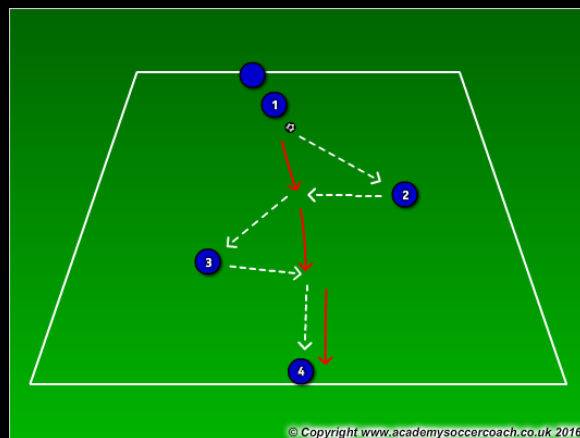
Rob Polkinghorn Quick Passing



Players pass the ball in number sequence. Start with the ball in hands to establish the key principles. Progress to ball at feet.

COACHING POINTS

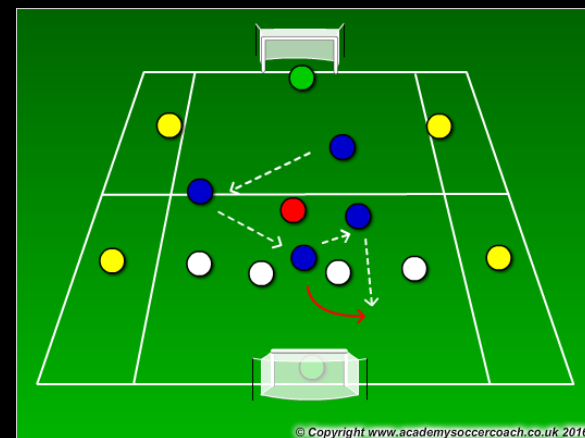
Type of pass.
Support, distance, angle.
Communication
Spacing
Awareness



Set up players as shown. 1 plays to 2 and gets the ball back. He then plays a 1-2 with 3 before passing to 4. Each player moves up a place each time e.g 1 moves to 2.

COACHING POINTS

Technique of pass.
Timing of the pass and movement.
Movement.
Communication.

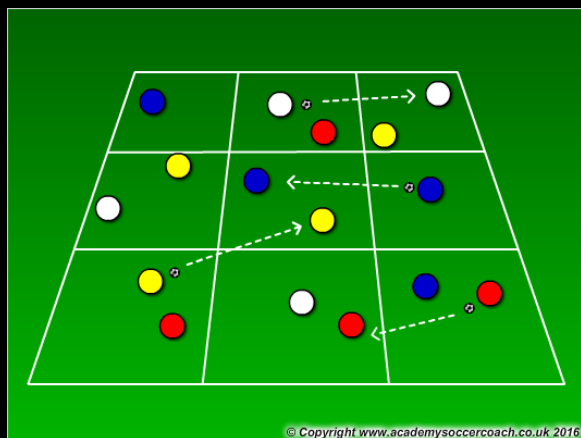


Teams play 4v4 with 4 bounce players in wide channels. 1 floating player plays as a defensive midfielder for both teams. The aim is to complete 4 passes, the position of the fourth pass determines which goal they attack. Teams always attack the opposite half to where they complete the fourth pass.

COACHING POINTS

Shape – high and wide.
Stay outside.
Decision making
Quick passing 1-2's and combo's

Noel Dempsey **Passing & Receiving**



4v4v4v4 in 9 squares with a ball for each team. Teams work to share the ball with their team mates. Players must receive the ball in a different square with every pass. Start on 4 touches, move to 3 and if players are doing well challenge them to play on 2 touches.

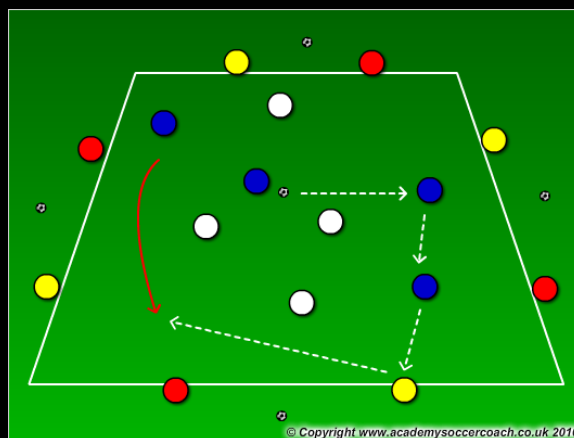
COACHING POINTS

Check around you – awareness.

Receive on the half turn.

Support a pass – move for the next pass.

Detail on the pass – weight, timing, distance.



4v4 in the centre with 8 bounce players around the outside. Play for 2 minutes then rotate teams. Players inside can use the bounce players to retain possession. Bounce players limited to one touch.

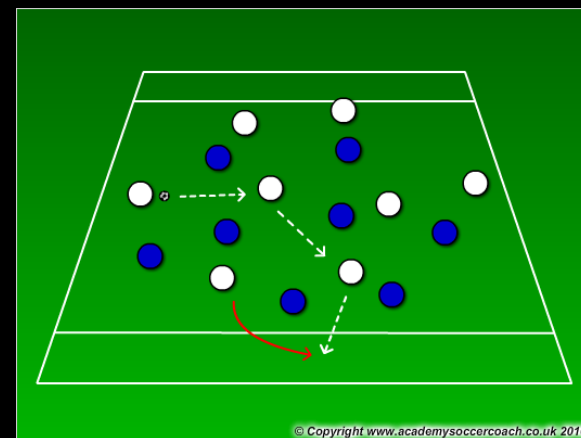
COACHING POINTS

Check around you before receiving.

Try to receive on the half turn.

Detail on the pass – weight, timing, distance.

Support a pass – move for the next pass.



Skill practice. 8v8 with end zones. Teams aim to control the ball in the end zone to score a point. Adopt a 2-4-2 formation for both teams. Focus the players on quick decision making and moving the ball quickly.

COACHING POINTS

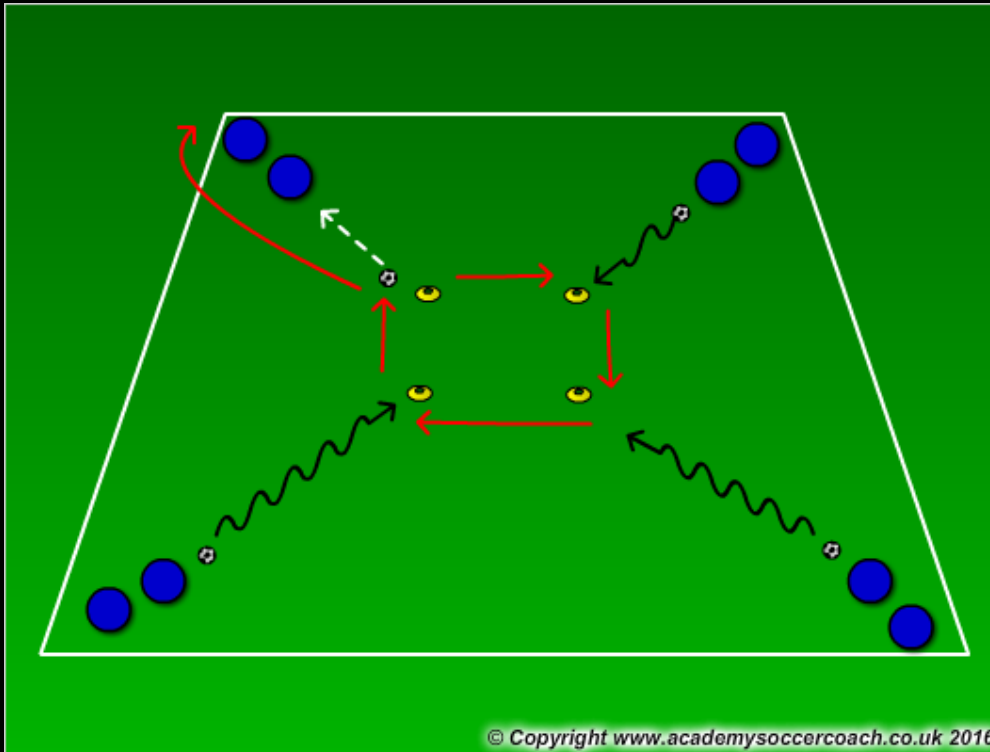
Check around you – awareness.

Receive on the half turn.

Support a pass – move for the next pass.

Detail on the pass – weight, timing, distance.

Kelly Timms **Barcelona Passing Box**



Players split off into 4 groups and wait at the corners of the outside box.

The first player on each corner dribbles towards the cone and stops the ball dead. The player then moves to the left and passes the waiting ball to the waiting player in the next corner. The practice is continuous.

Progress to moving Right or making a diagonal run across the central square.

COACHING POINTS

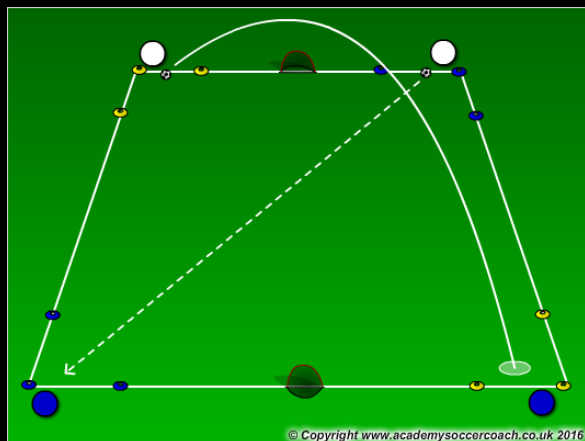
Foot on the ball and accelerate.

Passes should be first time, no need for extra touches.

Accuracy, timing and distance on passes.

Good pace, Good control on the ball.

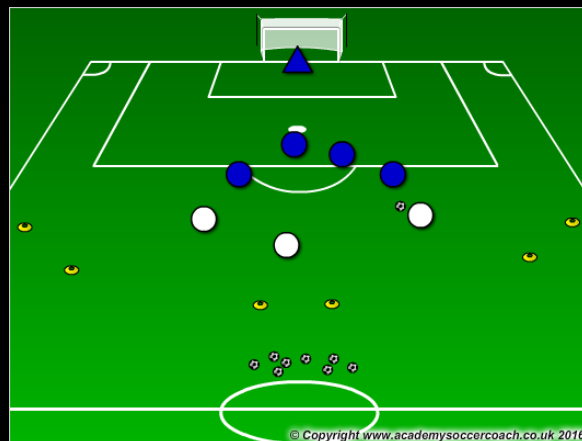
Jordan Cardinale Defending Individually & as a Unit



15 x 20 yard area. White diagonal pass to Blue and play 1v1 to score in Yellow or Blue gate. There can be more than one game going on at once to promote awareness.

PROGRESSIONS

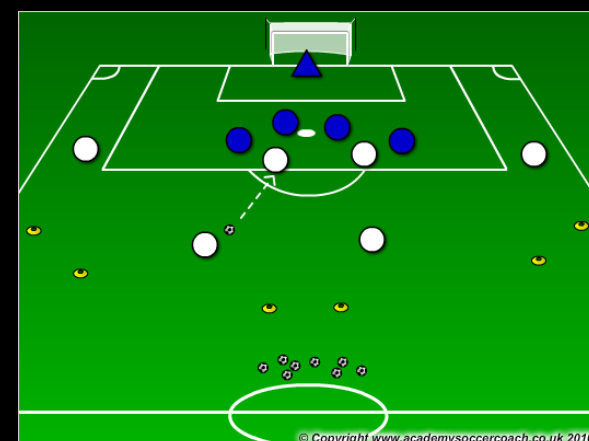
Lofted pass to serve.
Coach holds up a coloured cone, score in that coloured gate for double points.
To goal, not to gates.



Defenders v Attackers. 3 White players score in the Big goal vs 4 Blue who can counter attack into one of the three gates.

QUESTIONING FOR DEFENDERS

Were we tight and compact?
Were there many gaps for White to play through.
What did the attackers do to move you around and break you up?
How could we adapt to them?

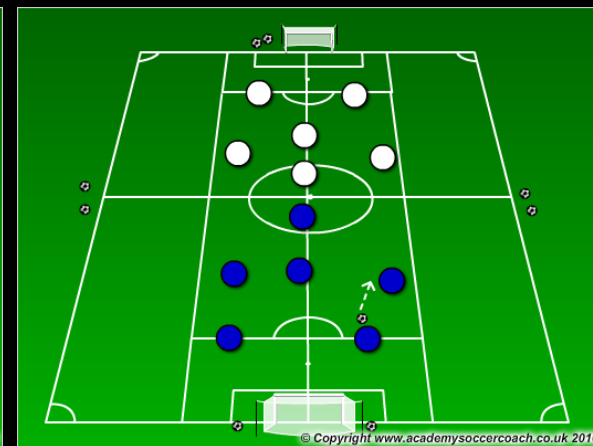
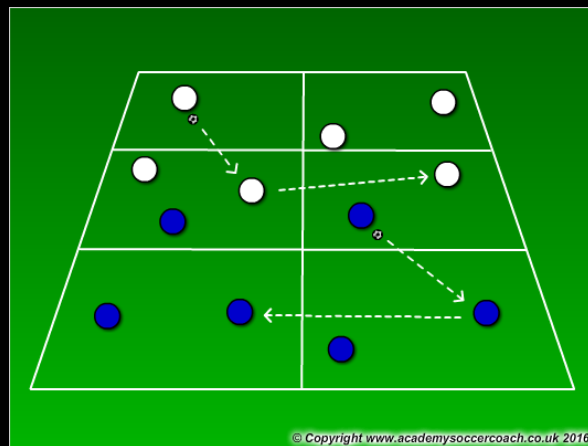
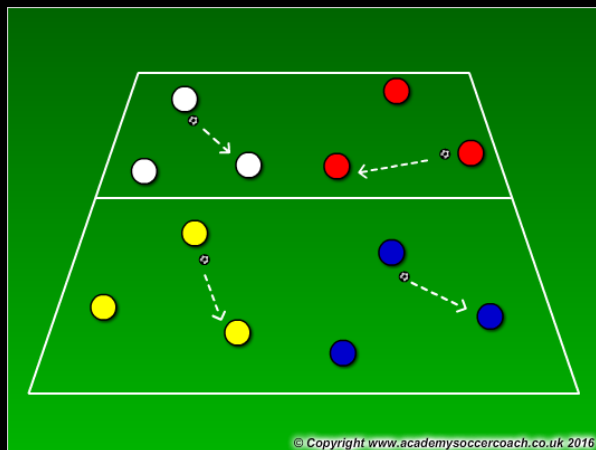


6 White score in big goal v 4 Blue defenders. As before, if Blue can win the ball they can counter attack through one of the three gates.

COACHING POINTS

Communication, Urgency and Leadership around the goal.
If the ball goes wide can we stop the supply?
Can you see the ball and the attacker?
Body shape.

Ross Ensor Retaining & Building Possession



Players split into teams of three, one ball for each team. All teams aim to share the ball between the players and retain possession while moving around the playing area.

COACHING POINTS

Support positions – angle, timing, distance.

Passing technique – Different parts of the foot. Make your pass easy to control when it reaches its target.

Players organised into 2 teams with one ball for each team. Players aim to retain possession of their football while also attempting to break the lines of the opposing team.

COACHING POINTS

Pass to feet or space.

Positioning – Check for space.

Passing technique – weight, distance, timing and surface selection.

Penetration – can a player receive the ball in amongst the opposing players.

Players arranged in a 2-3-1 set up. Players compete in a semi-conditioned small sided game, provide the players with team and individual challenges based around the session topic.

COACHING POINTS

Team challenge – When in possession try to position one player in each quarter.

Team challenge - When in possession try to move the ball in and through or in and out.

Expert Tips & Advice

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A photograph of Michael Beale, a man with short brown hair and a beard, wearing a dark blue Liverpool FC jacket with the club crest and 'L.F.C.' visible. He is standing on a green football pitch, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The background is a blurred green field.

Plan. Deliver. Review.

Michael Beale,

Liverpool FC Academy u23 Manager and A Licence coach, gives us his tips on how to plan, deliver and review your coaching sessions.

All views shared are that of the individual coach and not necessarily the views of the Football Club

Michael Beale **Planning**

1. Make sure you are coaching and are not just putting on a session. The two things are completely different. Don't get caught in a trap of planning rules for practices or how the players have to rotate to the next station in the practice. This is all jargon.

2. Instead - plan your communication. What are you going to say? and who are you going to say it to? This is essential. Be specific. Who is the session for? (Player, units or specific team development)

3. Now allocate your time in the session by working backwards. For example A session at LFC will run in the following order - 1. Warm up + technical 2. Game related 3. individual development 4. Game

We all know that the warm up comes first in a session. But the game is the most important part. This is where players will be in a competitive environment and executing/rehearsing all the things you would like them to do in a real match. Therefore allocate your time for the game first and then work backwards. It's vitally important that you don't get to the end of the session and only have a small amount of time to actually play the game because you have got caught up in other parts of the session. Young children need to be playing the game as much as possible.

4. Work to improve strengths and clarity - A players strengths are what give them a unique identity as a player and we must always plan for players around making their strengths stronger. For example a goal scorer who is right footed must practice this strength everyday and the combine it with (an action area) left footed shooting. But the focus should be on why this will make them a better player and how it improves the strength in their game and their identity on the pitch. In short, training should give players and team clarity - not confusion. It's also essential to develop players and not teams. Work to improve the level of each player and they will in turn raise the level of the whole group.

Individual development = team development.

Michael Beale **Delivering**

1. Inspire with your personality and energy. Try to make the players respond to how positive you are both in your communication and body language. Be calm and see each training day as a journey to improvement.
2. If the session is running perfectly, have you pitched it below the level of the players and group?

When you are developing something or working to improve an area of your game then you should see mistakes taking place and then players having the opportunity to correct themselves or being guided/supported by the coach.

3. The session must flow from the start to the end. Try to have your practices laid out so that the players can move from one thing to another in a short period of time. Use 60 second drink breaks to give you time to move into the next practice.
4. Start and end with fun and always use goals to attack and defend. This is essential and is common sense as it both engages the players and makes sure the session is direction (attack and defend) and realistic. Starting the session with fun is to engage with your players and get everyone into the session, ending with fun is simple as this is your game and we all do this naturally.

"Players come to your session to play football so they arrive with energy and wanting to play, your role is to enhance this further as they go through the session. If you are struggling to see motivation and a spark then is it YOU or is it the Players?"

Michael Beale **Reviewing**

1. What did you plan to work on? Did it actually happen? For example - if you wanted to work on improving crossing How many crosses where in the session? How many different types of crossing situation? How much jargon was in the way of getting to the vital areas so that crossing and attacking/defending of crosses took place? Next time, do you need to strip the session back in order to get right into the area you want (the crossing moment)?
2. Count or Mark down the number of times things happen in a session that you wanted to see. If it's a shooting session, maybe give yourself an aim before the session on the number of shots you want to see in the session. Now you can evaluate after the session whether shooting actually took place
3. Which players did you want to effect in the session? What was their take home message? Did you communicate this enough with them? Did you notice something a player needs to work on? How did you/will you communicate this to them?
4. Always, Always, Always ask yourself. Did football take place? Was it realistic? Was it simple In rules and allowed players to play and rehearse the game? If it feels too much like your organising practices to recreate the game. Then your doing something wrong. Let the game be the strongest guide and then be very clear and precise with your communication.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

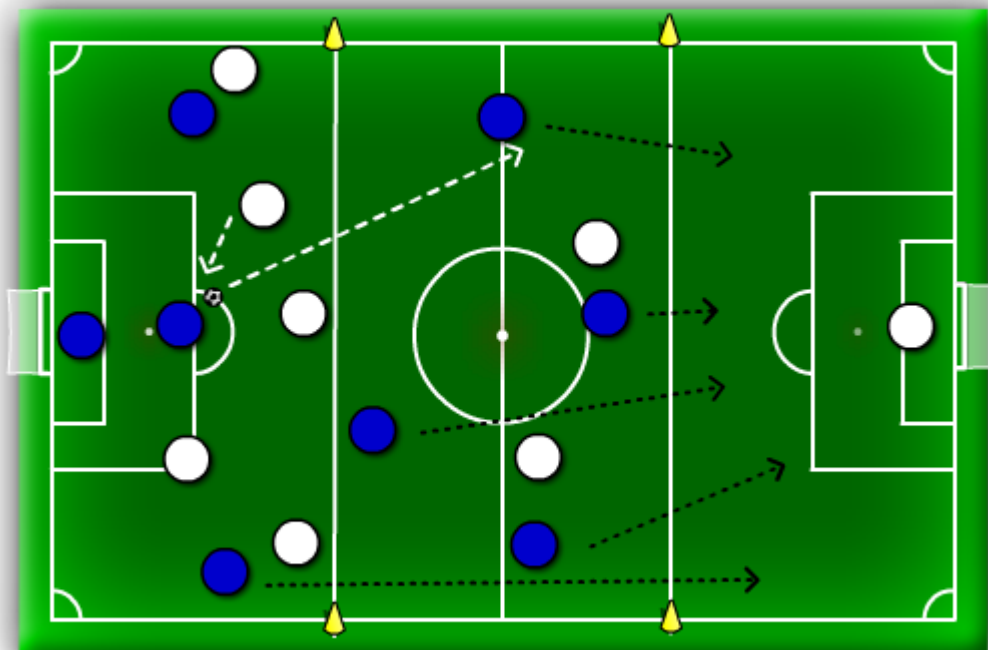
Communication is key. Do your players know their strengths and identity as a player? Can you give them clarity? Can you be clear and precise in your messages to the individual and group. Communication is the key area missing on all FA coaching courses around the world but it's the key area that separates the level of a coach

All the worlds top coaches - across all sports - are top communicators.

Pro Development Phase 17-21 years

The
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Chris Holt Counter Attacking from Defending Third



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To score, 1 team must have 5 players in the attacking third of the pitch thus creating an opportunity for their opposition to counter attack. On regaining possession the now attacking team play through the thirds with combination play and individual trickery.

COACHING POINTS

-Technical-

Move up the pitch as a team.

Close spaces to secure the ball.

Look to penetrate behind opposition with clever runs or well placed passes.

-Tactical-

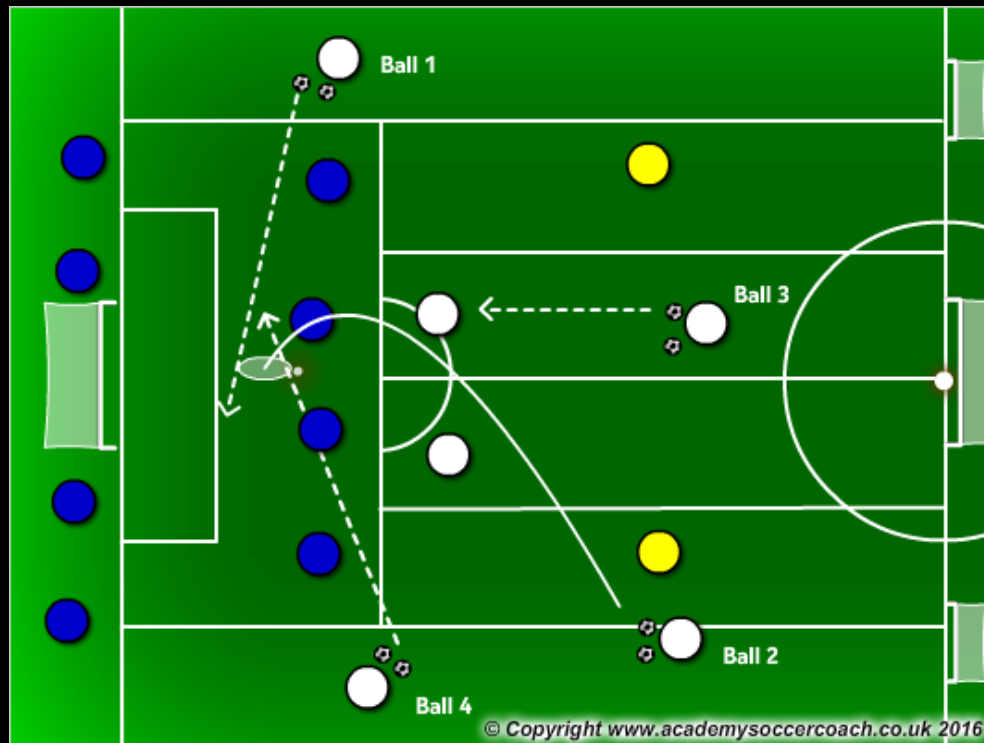
Decision making – how to counter attack.

Go long? Quick combinations? Dribble?

Supporting runs, distances, angles of support, when and where to release forward passes.

Risk or retain possession.

Onside Soccer Consulting **Defending in a 4-1-4-1** 1/2



Half pitch practice. 1 GK 4 defenders 4 servers 2 strikers and 2 target players (yellow).

Dealing with passes or crosses into the defending third.

Ball 1 – Out swinging cross.

Ball 2 – High ball into box from full back.

Ball 3 – Ball into strikers feet.

Ball 4 – In swinging cross.

Defenders start on the goal line and run out to the 18 then drop to defend as the ball is played into the server. When playing the ball into the server ensure players move how they would in the game.

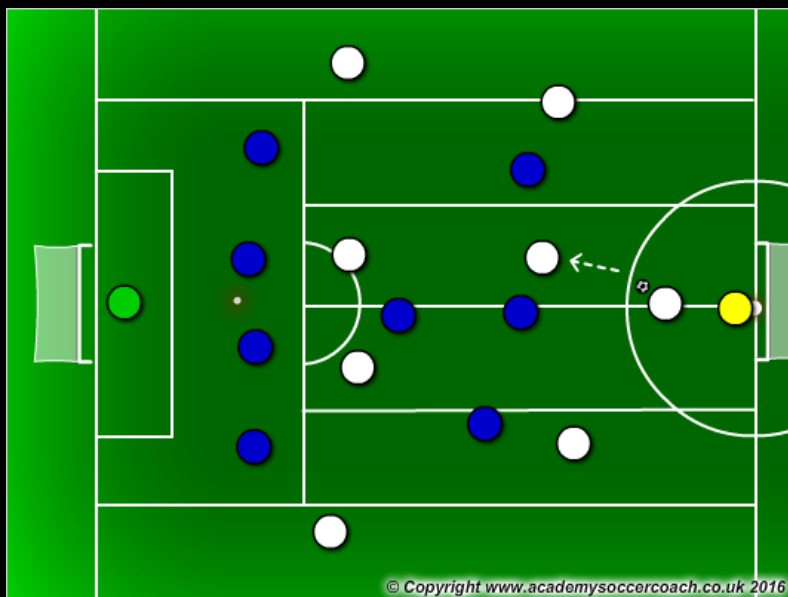
Progress to drop in a Blue defensive midfielder and allow servers not delivering a ball to apply pressure to the Blue defenders.

Ensure defenders react to where the ball moves, pressure on the ball – close spaces. No pressure on the ball – drop and defend spaces between them and the GK.

Onside Soccer Consulting

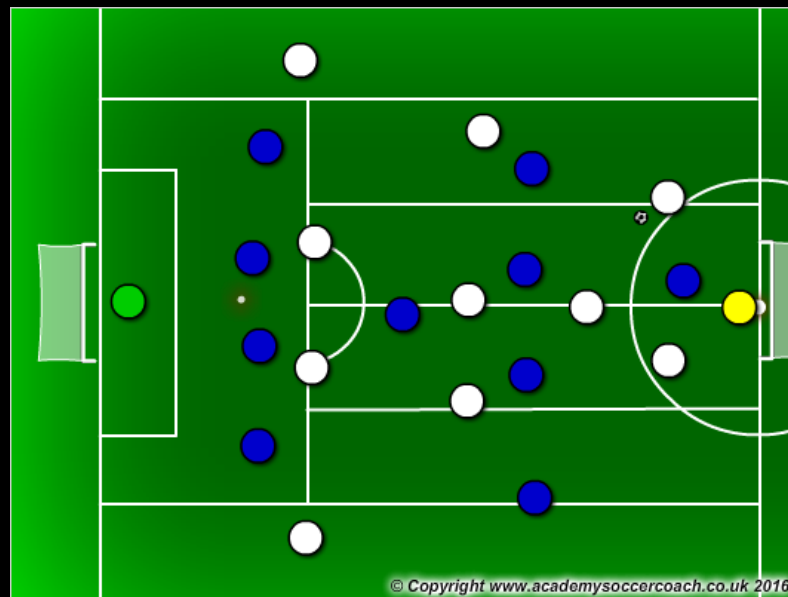
Defending in a 4-1-4-1

2/2



Arrange players as in the diagram. Blues 1-4-1-3 and Whites 1-3-4. Play starts from the Yellow target player.

Using the ideas you have worked on in the previous practice we progress into this 9v9 phase of play. As the ball is passed from Yellow we need to force play back to allow the defence to organise. Midfield 4 should aim to cover all the 4 channels marked out on the pitch. The holding midfielder is deeper to allow for an extra line between midfield and defence. Work using principles of play to coach on around and away from the ball.



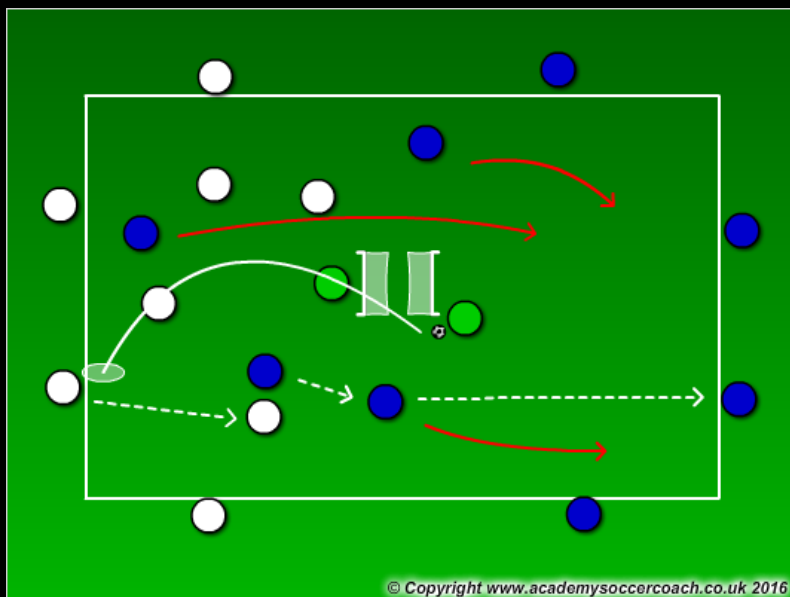
Arrange the players as shown. Blues 1-4-1-4-1 and Whites 1-2-1-3-4.

Play always starts with the Yellow Gk/target player. Work on the following;

- Low block
- Ball on halfway line
- CB press out of line, CDM drops in to cover

Continue to work around the 4 different passes into the final third you have been working on. Finish with 11v11 1-4-1-4-1 defending against a 1-4-3-3

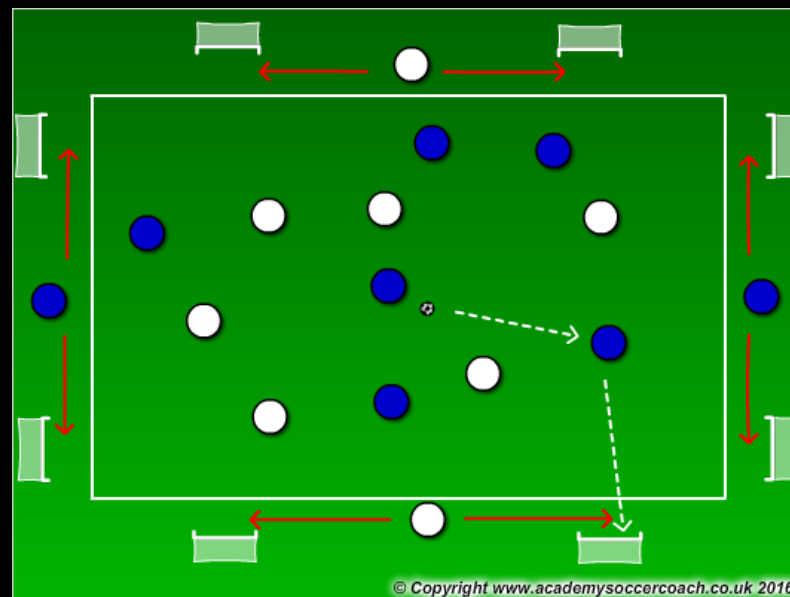
Tomas Boyle **Switching Play & Transitions**



2 goalkeepers, 8 Whites, 8 Blues – both teams need 4 players outside one half of the pitch and 4 players in the centre. Play begins from the goalkeeper serving to an end bounce player who then plays to a team mate. If Blue win the ball they must transfer the ball to one of their servers before they can score in the goal at their end.

COACHING POINTS

Quick reaction to a switch in play.
Awareness – can you switch the play?
Dispersal – to cover both goals.

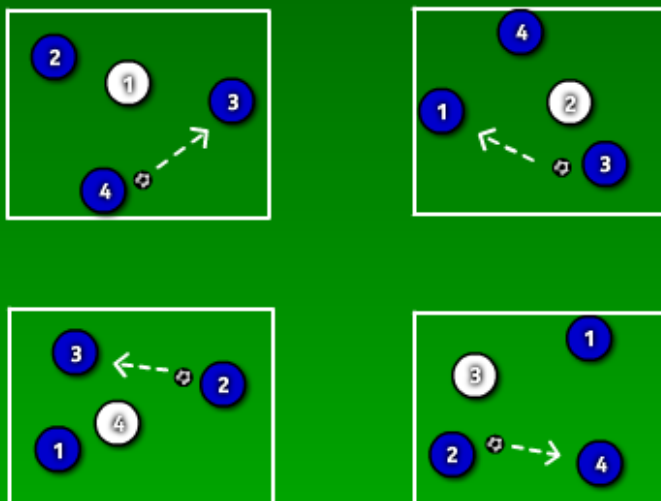


8 White players, 8 Blue players – both teams play 6 in the centre and two players on the outside as shown. Play starts with the coach. Both teams must play the ball off both wall players before they can attack one of the opposition goals. Wall players protect both goals on their line while their team don't have possession.

COACHING POINTS

Dispersal – to stretch the opposition.
Quick passing and decisions making on the ball.
Clever movement to receive the ball in space.

David Cockings **Four Square Rondo**



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Set out 4 Rondo squares – each square has 4 players inside it. The practice starts off with a 3v1 inside each square. If the White player intercepts, the player who made the pass goes into the middle.

The practice progresses with all players inside the squares numbering themselves 1-4. On the coaches call, a player with that number moves pitches in a clockwise direction and becomes the middle player chasing the ball.

Run the practice for no more than 15 minutes.

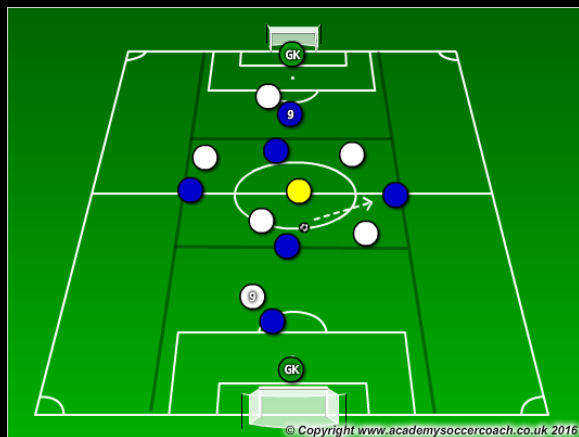
COACHING POINTS

Move into space to receive the ball.

Know where your pass is going as you receive the ball.

Can the chaser force a mistake or win the ball.

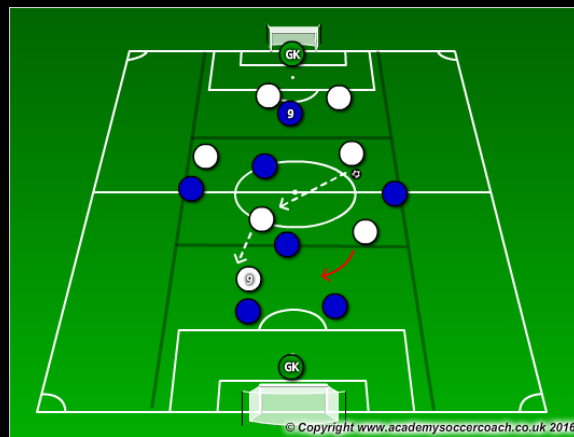
Dan Chubbock **Playing into the No.9**



Set up a 40x30 grid in the centre of the pitch, play 4v4 +1 possession. After a set amount of passes, the team in possession looks to play to their no.9. One extra player can break forward to play 2v1 against the defender to goal.

COACHING POINTS

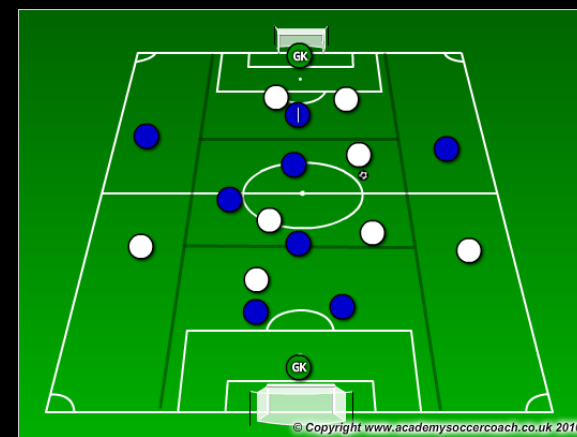
- Movement of 9 to get open.
- Decision making, hold up or risk a turn.
- Timing and weight of pass.
- Distance/angle of supporting players.



Same pitch set up as before. Add another defending player and remove the +1 neutral player in the centre. 4v4 in the centre, aiming to find the no.9. Two players can now break out and join the attack. Ball can now start from the GK who has a 3v1 to play out of defence.

COACHING POINTS

- No.9 must move as play develops.
- Midfielders can look to get beyond the no.9.
- Decision making of the no.9.

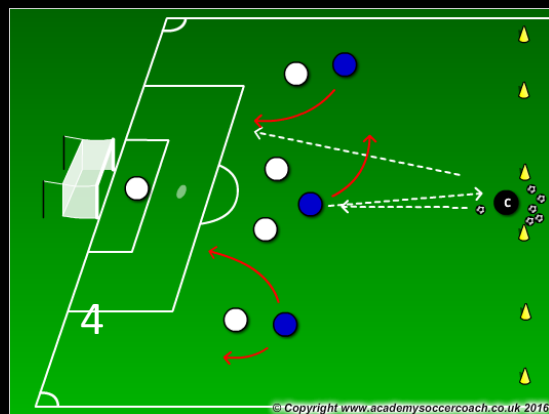
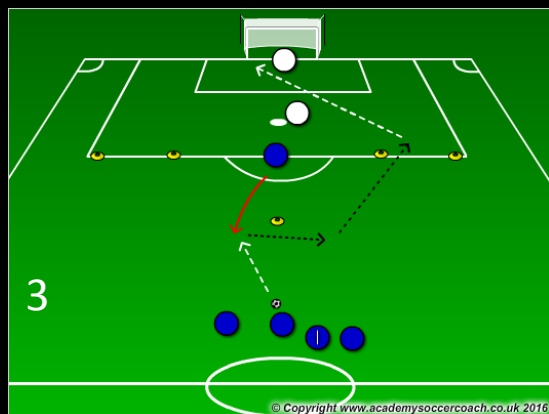
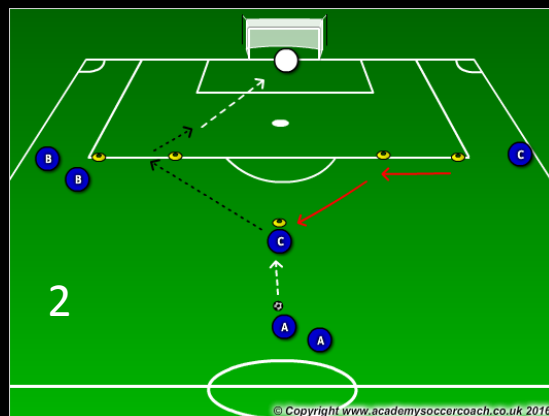
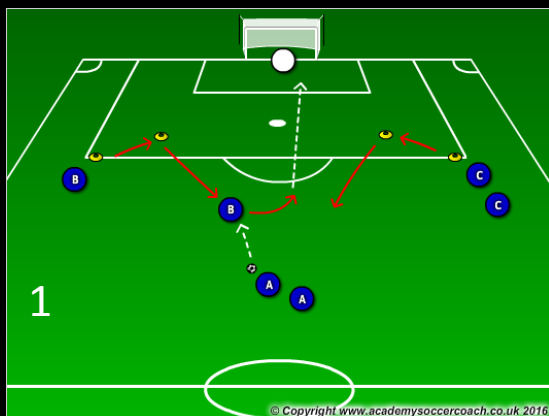


3v3 in central zone. Add wide players for both teams to allow play to develop in wide channels. Each winger is not permitted to track back to defend, they must not cross the halfway line. Ball starts with either GK or starts in the middle grid.

COACHING POINTS

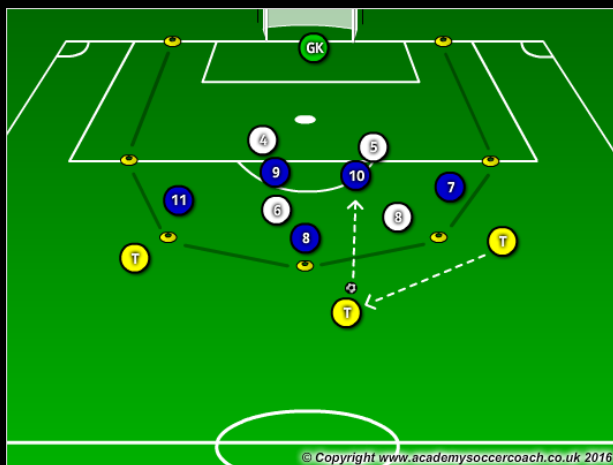
- Good decision making in the central zone to make the right pass.
- Timing of passes and runs.

Keith Boanas **Fit to Finish – Explosive Finishing**



1. B makes movement to goal then out to A who serves the ball. B spins and shoots at goal. Then C plays.
2. C moves across the box and back towards A who serves. C then goes through the opposite gate to strike at goal.
3. Striker plays against a defender in this part. Server plays the ball in and the striker follows the pattern shown to receive and then turn the defender. Attacker can go either right or left. Progress to add another defender, the server now runs through the opposite side to which the striker goes so there's a 2v2 in the box.
4. 3 strikers v 4 defenders + GK. Coach acts as a midfielder to serve the ball to one of the strikers who have the option of going back to the server or turning. Emphasis on moving and checking as the ball moves.

Dan Wright **Defending In and Around the Box**



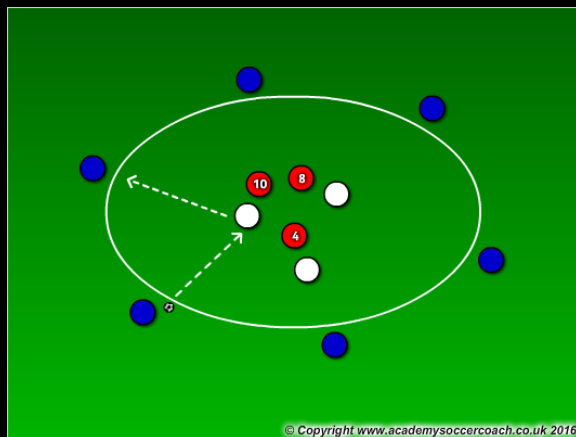
ORGANISATION:

Central Function.
Coach the White team in a GK-2-2 (4-3-3).
Manage the Blues in a 3-2 formation.
Yellow players act as targets for the Whites if they win possession.

COACHING POINTS:

Delay – slow the attack down.
Deny – shots, forward passes and dribbles.
Deflect – Coach to stop shots rather than dive into tackles.
Communication – to hold the line, squeeze or pass a man on.
Don't neglect the GK – Distance to back line, communication and act as a sweeper keeper.

Tutu Henriques Coaching the Defensive Unit

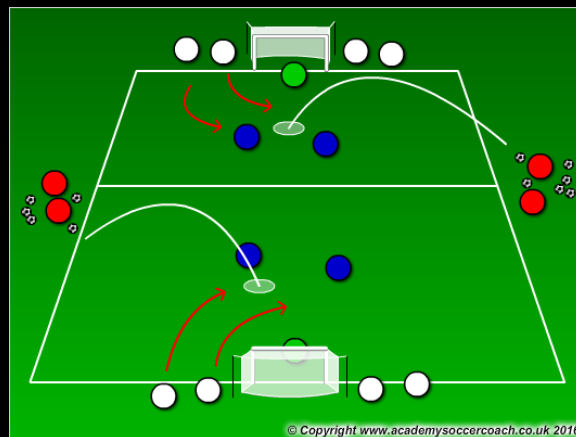


Set up the area and arrange the players as shown, 3 v 3 centrally with 6 outside players.

Outside players have 2 touches. 3v3 centrally can play unlimited touches.

COACHING POINTS

Press, cover, anticipate a pass.
Position to delay, deny and deflect.
Think about first, second and third passing lines. Can you affect the ball.



Defending crosses.

Set up as shown with two groups working in opposite halves of an area.

Whites defend in 2's against the 2 Blue attackers. Ensure all players defend and attack. Crossers can switch to deliver crosses from the right to the left by moving into the opposite half.

COACHING POINTS

Body shape, physical contact, surface selection.



Game Scenario

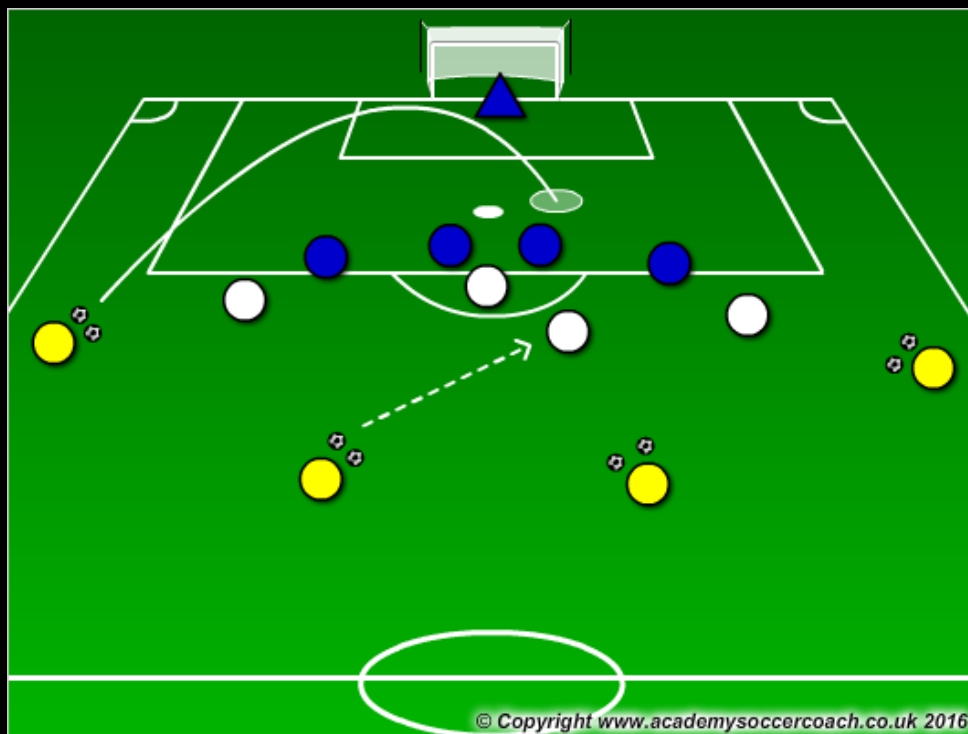
10 v 10 - both teams set up 1-4-2-3.
Start play with Gk rolling to FB to play long to attackers.

8 min – Score with a chip to the GK from opposition half.

8 min – Play through the thirds.

8 min – Score from a cross or cut back.

Steve Bates **Continuous Defending**



Set up using half pitch as shown in the diagram. One goalkeeper, 4 defenders, 4 Attackers and 4 servers.

Servers to serve the ball in different ways.

CF can drop to receive.

Servers can join in to create overloads.

Defenders play to servers if they win the ball.

COACHING POINTS

Deny scoring opportunities. Positive attitude to win the ball – 1st and 2nd man. Mark man or space?

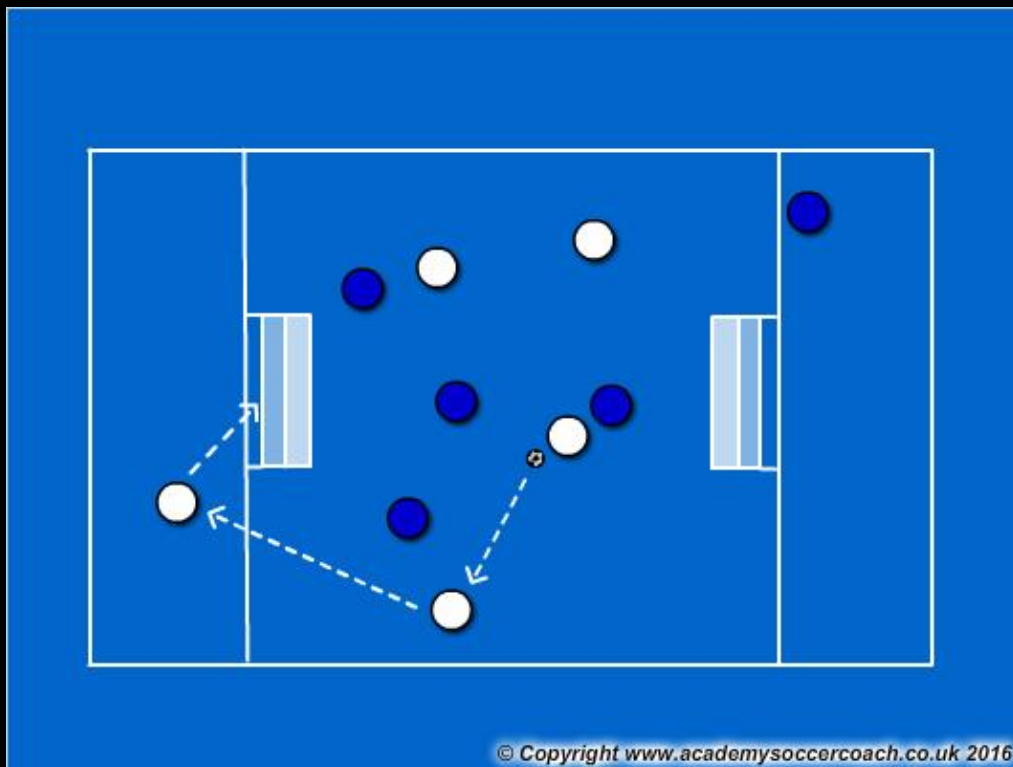
Nearest player to press the ball.

Decision on winning the ball – Clear or play out?

Timing of tackles and blocks – stay on your feet, delay attackers.

Cover and give the unit balance as the ball moves.

Peter Prickett **Feed the Moving Pivot** [Futsal Session]



Court divided into thirds. 10 players. The majority of play takes place in the middle section, 4v4. Both teams aim to play into their pivot who has to finish in two touches. Only the pivot is allowed into the final third.

Challenge for the attackers – How do we get the ball to the pivot.

Challenge for the defenders – How do we stop the ball into the pivot.

Progress to allow defenders to drop into the final third after the ball has been played in. Add goalkeepers too to increase difficulty.

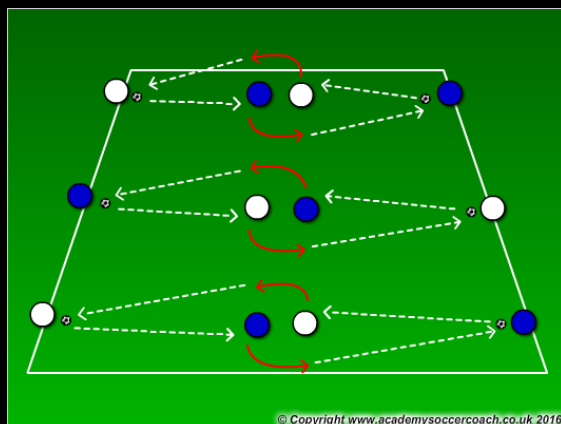
COACHING POINTS

Pivots movement to find space.

Body shape and first touch of the pivot to set up a finish.

Combinations in the centre, use of 1-2's and quick sharp passing.

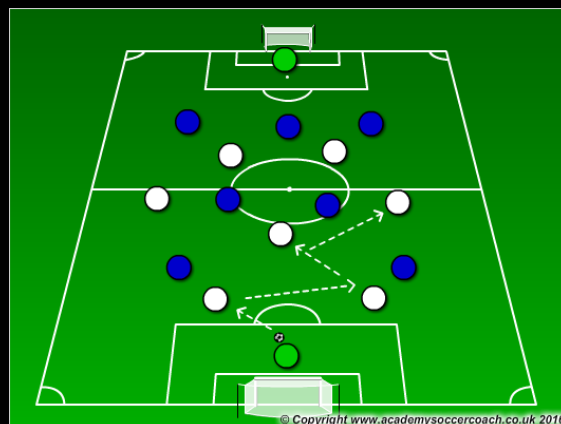
Laurie McGinley **Developing Possession**



Four players work together using 2 footballs. Footballs start on the outside. Central players receive a ball from one side player, turn and play out to the opposite side player.

COACHING POINTS

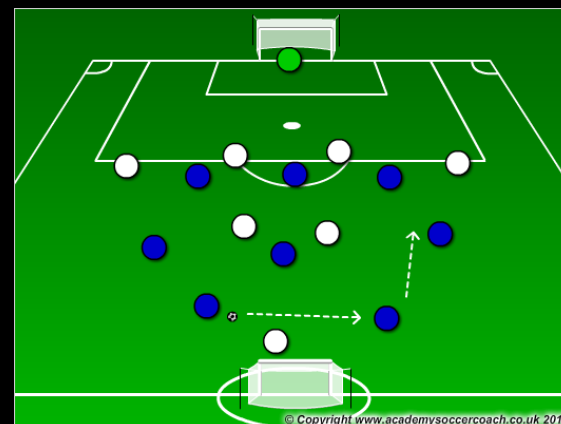
Check in and out to receive.
Check your shoulder as the ball travels.
Awareness.
Communication, where to pass etc.
Weight and timing of the pass



8v8 game. Both teams restricted to a minimum 5 passes before they can shoot. Teams take turns to build up attacks with the aim of creating a shot on goal.

COACHING POINTS

Pass quickly and accurately.
Create good passing angles off the ball.
Players always moving and ready for the ball.
Communication on, around and away from the ball.



Phase of play. Blue attackers set up 2-3-3. White defenders positioned 1-4-2-1. Attacks start from the White team's striker losing possession. Blues then look to build an attack.

COACHING POINTS

Quality of pass.
Varied delivery, driven, floated, punched.
Movement away from the ball to stretch the pitch.
Timing of runs and movements.



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