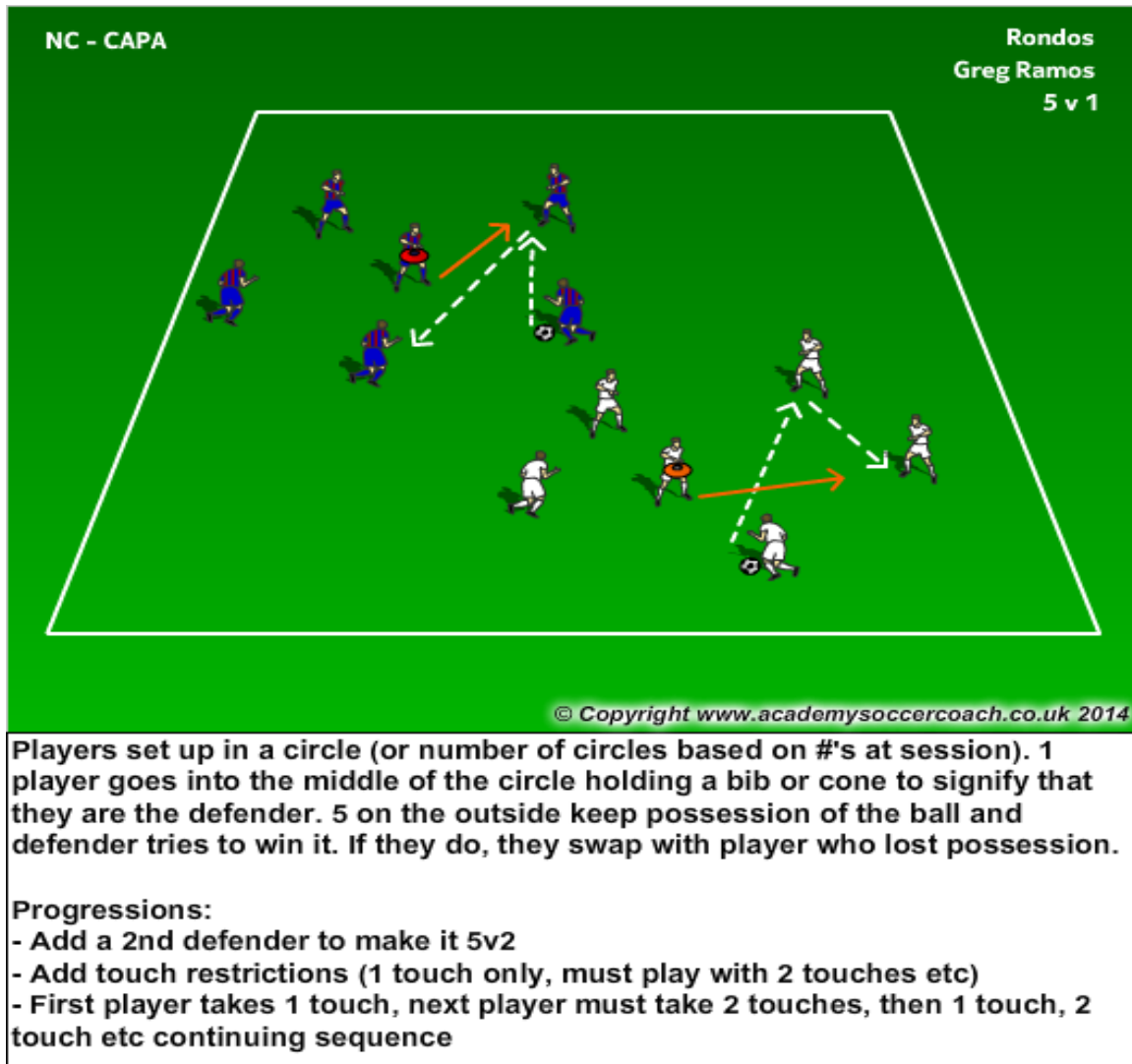


## Training Progressions and Variations Using a “Rondo” – Greg Ramos

Recently, I’ve become fascinated with rondos and how they can be used in all forms of training and not just during the warm-up phase so when I saw that there was to be a session demonstrating them, I knew that I wanted to attend. So despite Ramos’ session being at the same time as Sebastian Dremmler of Bayern Munich, I took myself along to watch.

Ramos started by briefly explaining what a rondo is. For those that still aren’t familiar with the term, it’s best described as a possession/passing exercise where the attacking team has a numerical superiority. In many rondos, the simple objective is to keep the ball away from the defending players “in the middle”.

While Ramos talked, the players started with a 5 or 6v1 rondo that can be found below:




After a period of time, Ramos started to add some of the conditions that are highlighted within the “progressions” to get the players to think about something other than just the rondo itself. For example, when they had to take 2 touches, he encouraged the players to take their first touch away from where the defender was.

After working through the progressions, Ramos moved onto the exercise below:

NC - CAPA

Rondos  
Greg Ramos  
Moving Rondos



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Exercise begins with a 7v1 in one of the 4 boxes on the field. Boxes are 10x10 - 15x15. Players follow regular rondo format but must now follow their pass after they've made it.

**Coaching Points:**

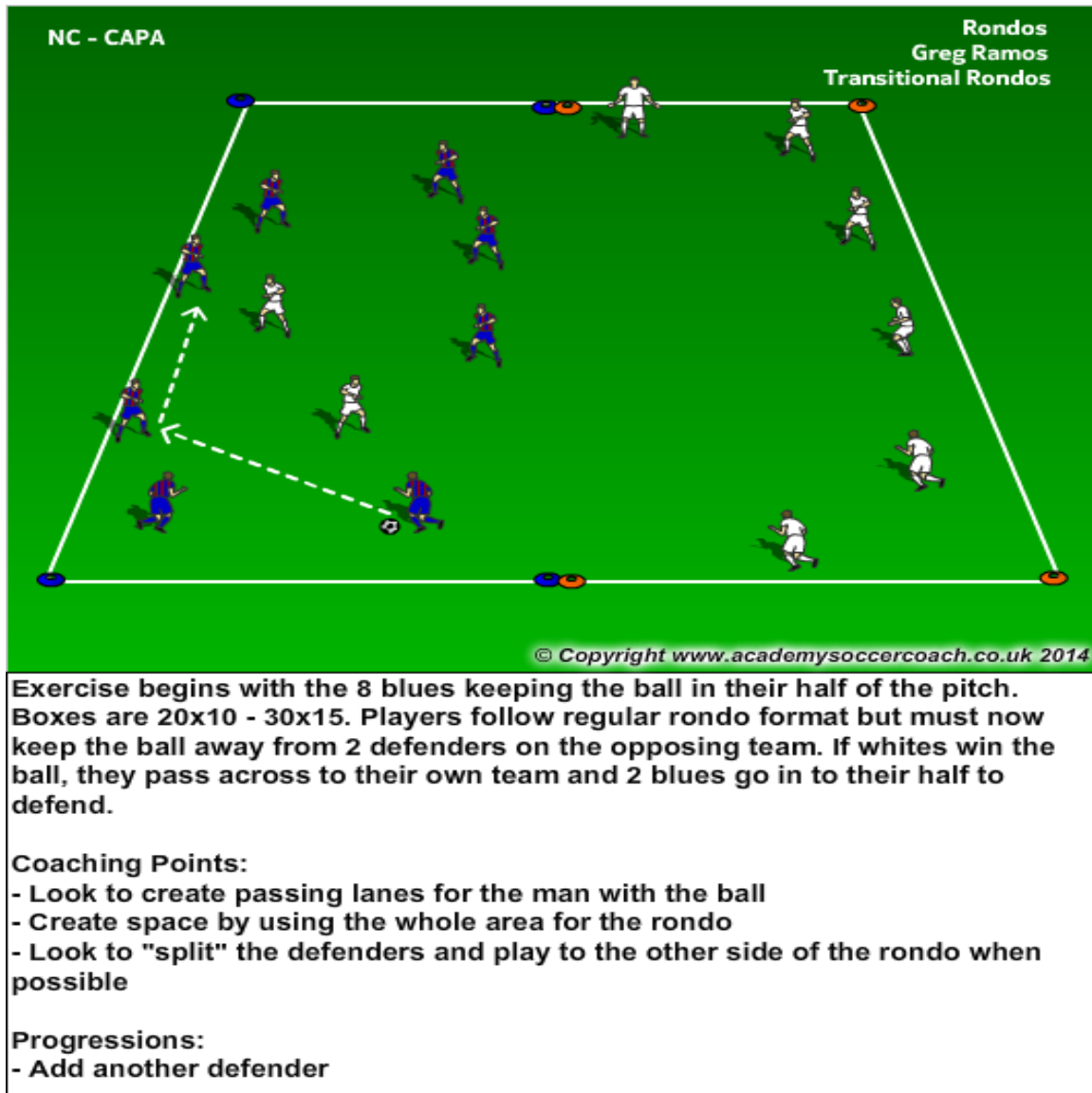
- Follow the pass immediately. Don't pause before you support the pass
- Make the pass part of your first step towards following the ball
- Look around to see where the other group is in order to avoid them (progression)

**Progressions:**

- Add a second defender
- Don't make them follow the pass but now, when they complete 4 passes as a group, they must move their rondo to a different square (for example: Blue to yellow; Orange to Blue)

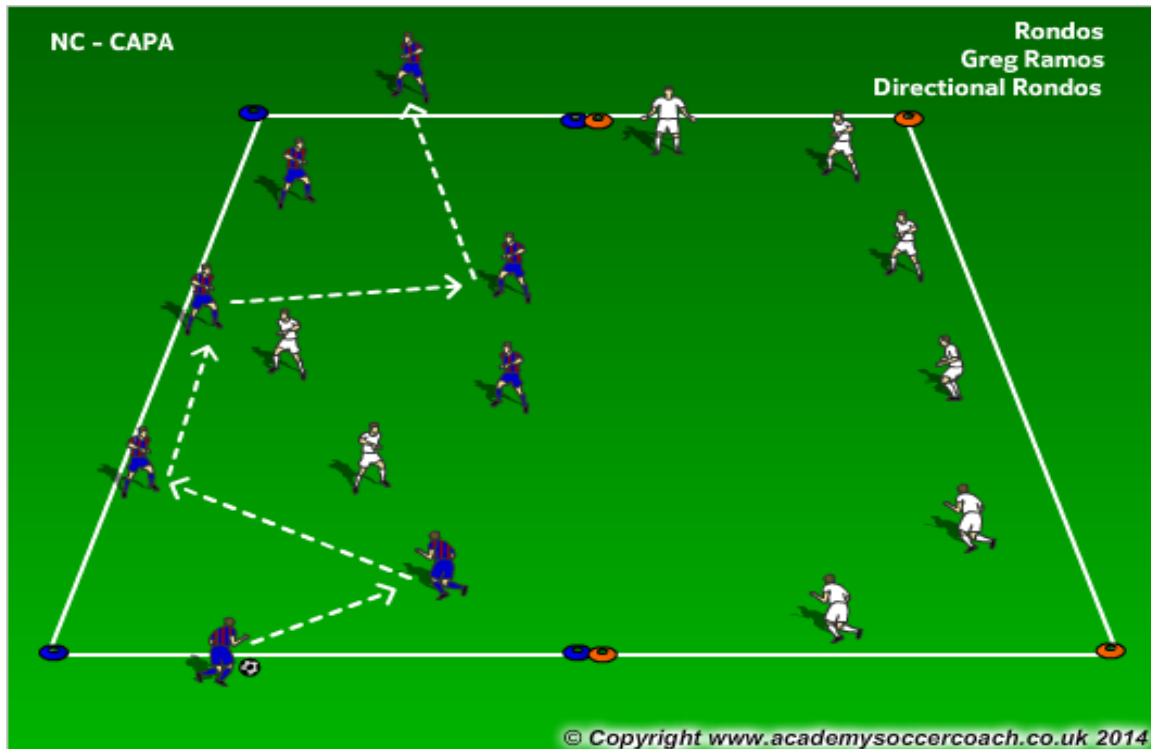
He was quick to point out that the reason he used such large numbers was because he didn't want any players sitting out and that ideally, he would use them in a 5v1 rondo. This is understandable as there were long periods of time where the defender was stuck in the middle, unable to pressure the ball enough to get out.

From here, he progressed to rondos that he felt were more game like by adding a transitional element. The exercise can be found below:



Ramos allowed any touch of the ball by the defenders to count as a win of possession and the ball would be transferred to the other team to continue. When I have used these types of rondos before, I like to have the defenders win and keep possession of the ball in order to truly transition to the other side. The only time I would have that change is if they force the attacking team to put the ball out of play. If that happens, I would allow them to immediately transition back into their own half of the field. For me, just allowing them to touch the ball doesn't encourage them to win and keep the ball. I want them to be able to not only win possession, but to also keep it. This may have been due to the age of players that he had (u9 - u12s) but that wasn't stated.

From the transitional rondos, Ramos moved onto directional ones. The next exercise can be found below:



Exercise begins with the 8 blues keeping the ball in their half of the pitch. Boxes are 20x10 - 30x15. Players follow regular rondo format but must now play to the target players outside the box in order to score a point. If whites win the ball, they pass across to their own team and 2 blues go in to their half to defend. White target players don't move outside the box until the ball transitions to their team.

**Coaching Points:**

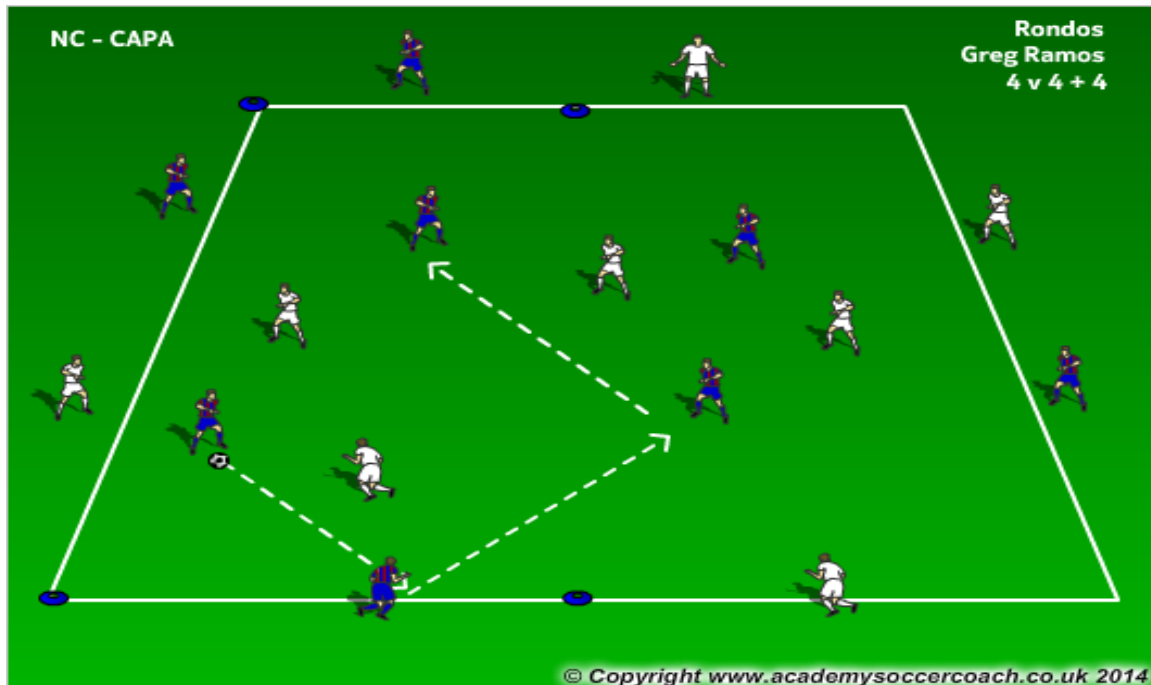
- Look to create passing lanes for the man with the ball
- Create space by using the whole area for the rondo
- Look to "split" the defenders and play to the other side of the rondo when possible

**Progressions:**

- Add another defender
- Play players in their regular playing positions to make them positional

With this exercise, Ramos briefly explained that this was now like playing within a game. The target players act as a goalkeeper and forward at opposite ends of the field with the other players acting as the defenders and midfielders between them.

The directional game lasted for a short period of time before he moved to another exercise that is below:



Exercise begins with blues and whites playing a 4 v 4 game in the middle of the pitch with each team also having 4 teammates spread around the outside of the box. Players follow regular rondo format but can use their teammates on the outside in order to keep possession (making it an 8 v 4). If whites win the ball, they do the same. Outside players cannot be tackled.

**Coaching Points:**

- Look to create passing lanes for the man with the ball
- Create space by using the whole area for the rondo
- Look to "split" the defenders and play to the other side of the rondo when possible
- Use the outside players to maintain possession when under pressure

**Progressions:**

- Add touch restrictions for all players
- Add touch restriction for outside players
- Allow the 4 in the middle to tackle the 4 outside players
- Player that passes to an outside player causes them to switch place

With this, I felt like the session went backwards with a progression. They had a directional game going beforehand and now they were moving back to a non-directional game where the objective was just to keep the ball.

At this point, I needed to leave for another appointment so didn't see the final 5 minutes of the session so cannot comment on what went after.

I was a little disappointed when I found that an almost identical session could be viewed on Youtube ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THEcl\\_pIXOk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THEcl_pIXOk)). Had I known that before, I definitely would have attended the Dremmler session instead.

If you missed the session, or don't understand any of these notes, you can find an almost identical session on the link above.

If you're new to the concept of rondos, I would certainly recommend that you watch the video. If you're not new to the idea that they can be used as more than just a warm-up for your players, there are probably better places to gain information.