



International Coaching Seminar Journal Kansas City, February 9 - 11

Published for the world's most innovative soccer coaches



Free Email Newsletter at worldclasscoaching.com

WORLD CLASS COACHING

International Coaching Seminar

Kansas City, February 9 – 11, 2007

Over 500 coaches from 42 different states as well as Canada, France, England and the Caribbean attended the WORLD CLASS COACHING International Coaching Seminar at the Arrowhead stadium indoor facility making it the most widely attended soccer seminar in the region.

The International Coaching Seminar provided club, high school and college soccer coaches with an opportunity to learn from some of the most influential coaches in the world. The quality of sessions was excellent and many attendees said it was the best coaching seminar they have ever attended.

Tony Carr, the Academy Director of **West Ham United** conducted three sessions showing the "West Ham Way" that included an attention to detail on ensuring good technique is in place to allow tactics to be put into action. **Jan Pruijn** showed how the famous Dutch club **Ajax** develop their players with small-sided games. **Schellas Hyndman** of SMU was a master clinician demonstrating how to defend and attack with a 4-4-2 formation. **Wayne Harrison** put on a great session demonstrating his "Awareness" coaching methods that have made him a best selling author.

The clinicians conducted 12 sessions over the weekend. Everything was covered from technical, functional all the way up to 11 v 11 tactical sessions. Some of the sessions took a look at how the Dutch and EPL clubs develop their youth players. Other sessions focused on the 4-4-2 formation. This journal includes the notes of all the sessions from this seminar.

Notes of the sessions kindly provided by Ozzie White, Ankeny Soccer Club, IA.

Published by
WORLD CLASS COACHING
15004 Buena Vista Drive, Leawood, KS 66224

© WORLD CLASS COACHING 2007

CLINICIANS



Tony Carr

West Ham's Youth Academy Director Tony Carr, is the driving force behind the club's hugely successful youth policy and has spent almost 30 years with West Ham. He is responsible for bringing the likes of Joe Cole, Rio Ferdinand Frank Lampard, Jermain Defoe and Michael Carrick through the ranks (all play regularly for the England National Team). As well as bringing through the cream of London's youth players to top flight prominence Carr's players have raised well in excess of \$70m for the Club in transfer fees - an astonishing figure, and with the exception of TV revenue, is the source of the club's biggest income in the last three years.



Jan Pruijn

Jan Pruijn recently served as the head of the AJAX Amsterdam International Youth Development. In this position, he traveled throughout the world to discover the most talented soccer players in each country he visited. He was responsible for the final set-up and structure in the "AJAX-way" for their branches in South Africa, Ghana, and Belgium. After he left this job he was a consultant and clinician that brought him to Japan, Urawa Reds, China, CFA, Shanghai Spain, Real Sociedad, Portugal, FC Porto, Switzerland, FC Basel, and England. He has a full coaching badge from the Royal Dutch Soccer Federation (KNVB). Pruijn has had successful coaching careers with NEC, Helmond Sport, The Royal Dutch Soccer Federation (KNVB), Lebanon F.A. National Youth Team, Al Ain Club (UAE) and most recently, A.F.C. AJAX.



Schellas Hyndman

Longevity in coaching is rare and to be consistently successful is even more amazing. As he enters his 23rd season in fall, 2006 as SMU's head coach, Schellas Hyndman has earned the respect of his coaching peers on the national level. Since taking over the SMU soccer program in 1984, Hyndman has produced a winning season each year. According to NCAA statistics at the conclusion of the 2005 season, his winning percentage (.772) ranks second among active Division I head men's soccer coaches. His 435 victories also rank him second among active men's Division I soccer coaches. Hyndman was the NSCAA President in 2005.



Wayne Harrison

Wayne Harrison of Soccer Awareness Harrison has a wealth of knowledge at the highest levels of the game both as a player and coach. A former Academy Director at Blackpool F.C. in the English 2nd Division, he is now a "best-selling" author and presents at coaching symposiums worldwide including at the NSCAA Convention. Harrison holds the prestigious UEFA 'A' License as well as a bachelors degree in applied physiology and sports psychology. Several of his books are currently in print through Reedswain and WORLD CLASS COACHING and are recommended reading at coaching courses worldwide including the English PFA.



WORLD CLASS COACHING
International Coaching Seminar
Kansas City, February 9 – 11, 2007

Friday February 9th

4.00 pm - 5.30 pm	Registration and Exhibit Booths
5.30 pm - 6.30 pm	Jan Pruijn – <i>“The Ajax Way” – Small-Sided Games</i>
6.45 pm - 7.45 pm	Schellas Hyndman – <i>Attacking in a 4-4-2</i>
8.00 pm	Social at the Clarion Hotel Ballroom (free beer)

Saturday February 10th

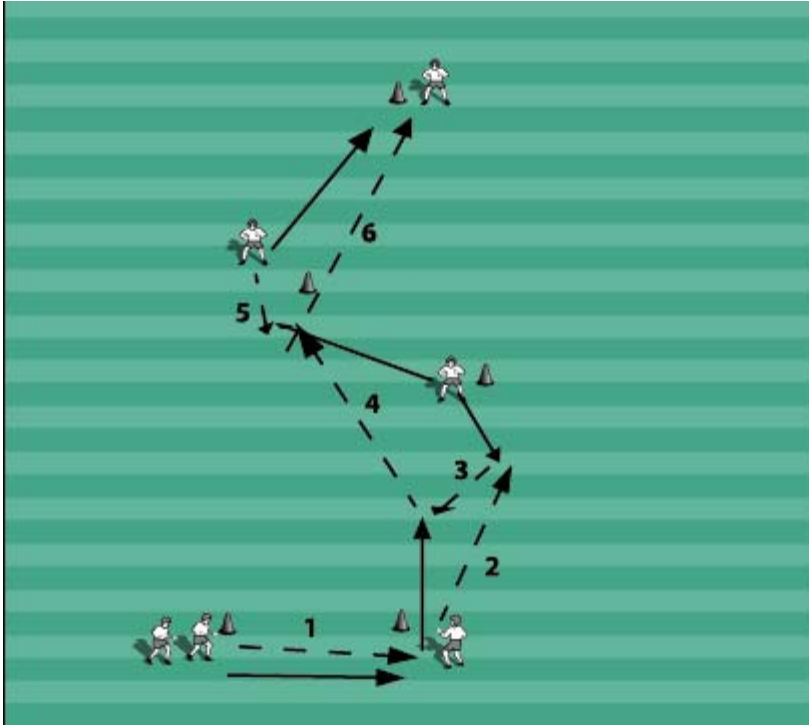
8.30 am - 9.30 am	Tony Carr – <i>“The West Ham Way” - Counter-Attacking At Speed</i>
9.45 am - 10.45 am	Jan Pruijn – <i>“The Ajax Way” – Build Up To Attack</i>
11.00 am – 12.00 pm	Q&A Forum – <i>A Look at EPL and Dutch Youth Academies</i>
12.00 pm – 12.45 pm	Lunch
12.45 pm – 1.45 pm	Schellas Hyndman – <i>Defending in a 4-4-2 (Part 1)</i>
2.00 pm – 3.00 pm	Schellas Hyndman – <i>Defending in a 4-4-2 (Part 2)</i>
3.30 pm – 4.30 pm	Wayne Harrison – <i>Coaching “Soccer Awareness”</i>
4.45 pm – 5.45 pm	Jan Pruijn – <i>“The Ajax Way” – Technical & Possession Training</i>

Sunday February 11th

8.30 am - 9.30 am	Tony Carr – <i>“The West Ham Way” - Creative Forward Movement</i>
9.45 am – 10.45 am	Tony Carr – <i>“The West Ham Way” - Coaching Combination Plays</i>
11.00 am - 12.00 pm	Schellas Hyndman – <i>Improving Speed of Play</i>

Tony Carr – “The West Ham Way” Combination Plays

Exercise #1

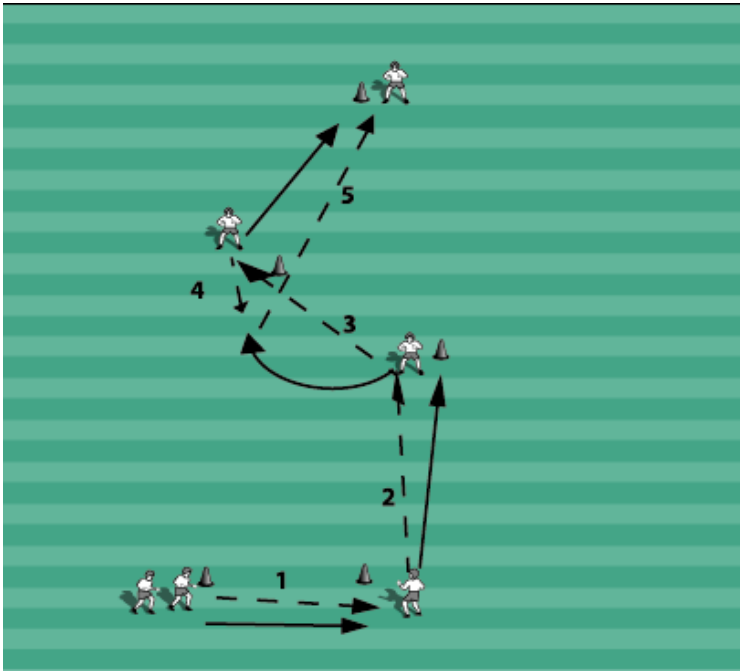


a. Coaching Points

- i. Ideally, play it first time
- ii. Show on an angle
- iii. Timing
- iv. Distance

2. Progression – Play around the corner

Exercise #2

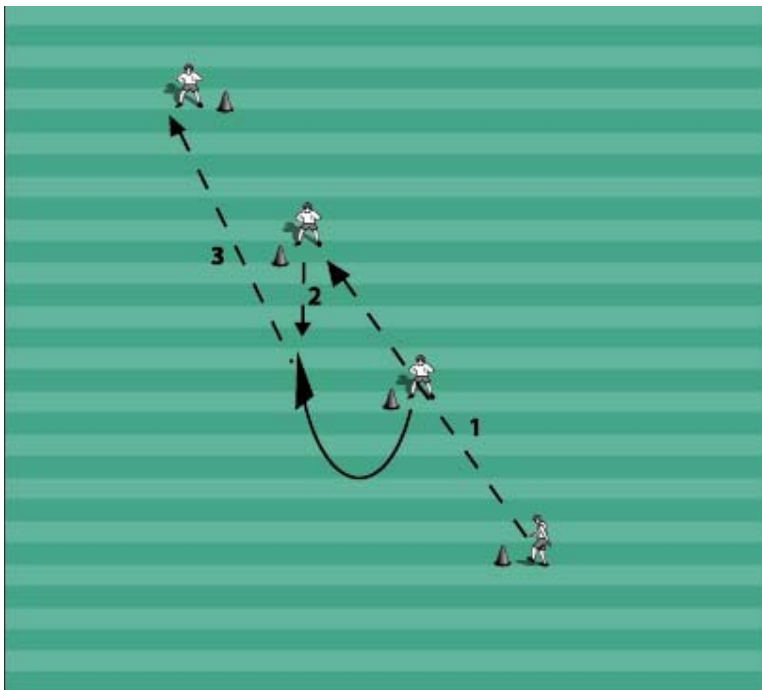


a. Coaching Points

- i. Role ball with the outside of the foot
 1. Get your body outside the line of the ball

3. Progression – Dummy and Spin

Exercise #3

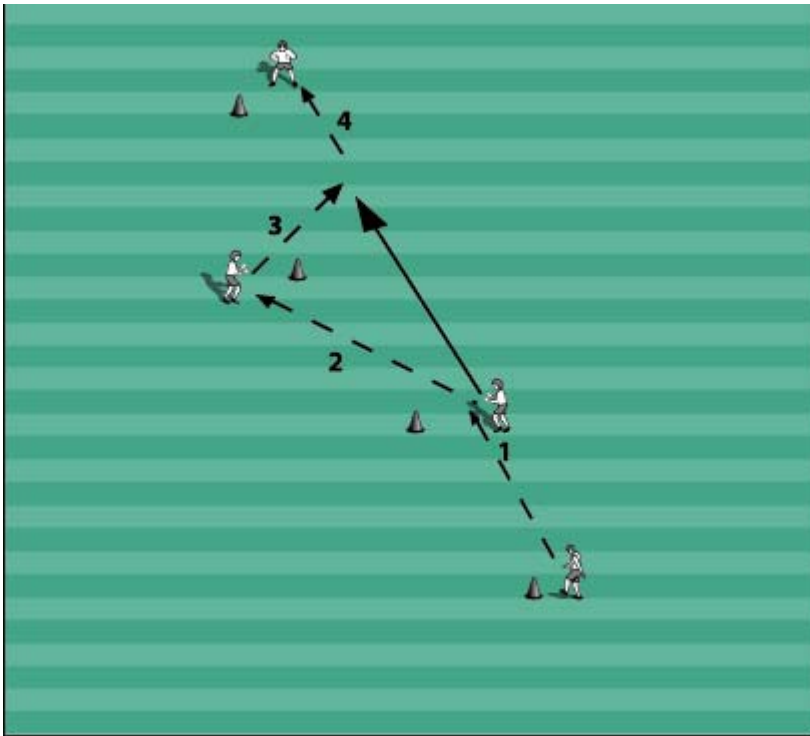


a. Coaching Points

- i. Spin out – Don't run straight to the target – Angle off the player you are supporting
- ii. Be dynamic
- iii. Let him believe you are going to play it to wrong foot him
- iv. Use the marker as a defender
- v. You don't know what your teammate is going to do – All players must be tuned into what might happen
- vi. Accuracy of the pass
- vii. Call sign for the dummy – Jacks

4. **Progression** – If the defender doesn't come with you, turn – Wall pass around the dummy

Exercise #4

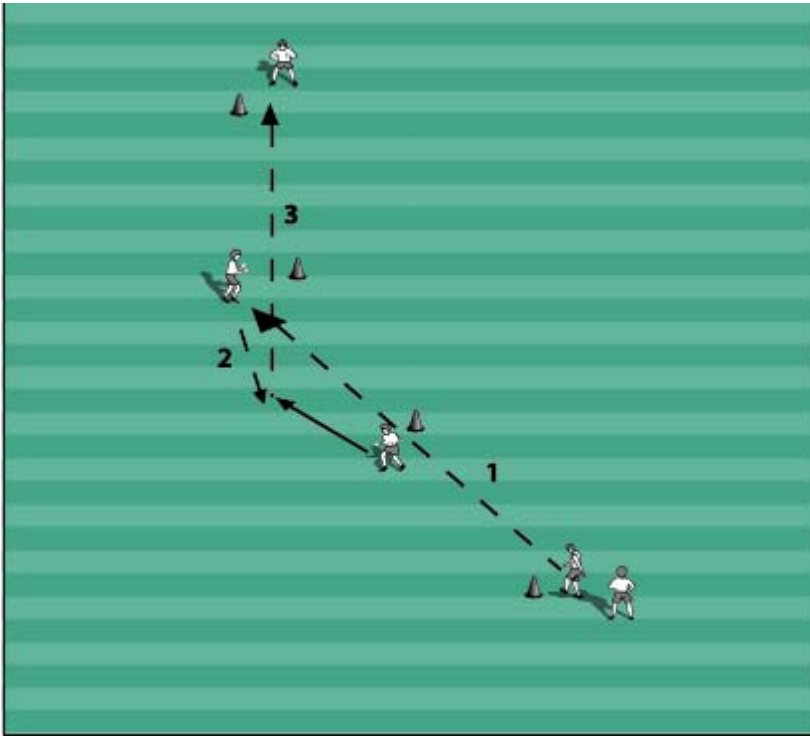


a. Coaching Points

- i. Back-foot turn
- ii. Wall-Pass: Get parallel to the dummy
- iii. Execute as quickly as your skills allow
- iv. Have a little run with it first

5. **Progression** – Bypass the first striker – clip it into the 2nd striker

Exercise #5



a. Coaching Points

- i. Never kick a dead ball – get it out of your feet first
- ii. Use appropriate surface when you receive it
- iii. First Attacker – drag the defender out
- iv. Passer – get the ball to the 2nd striker without the ball bouncing first

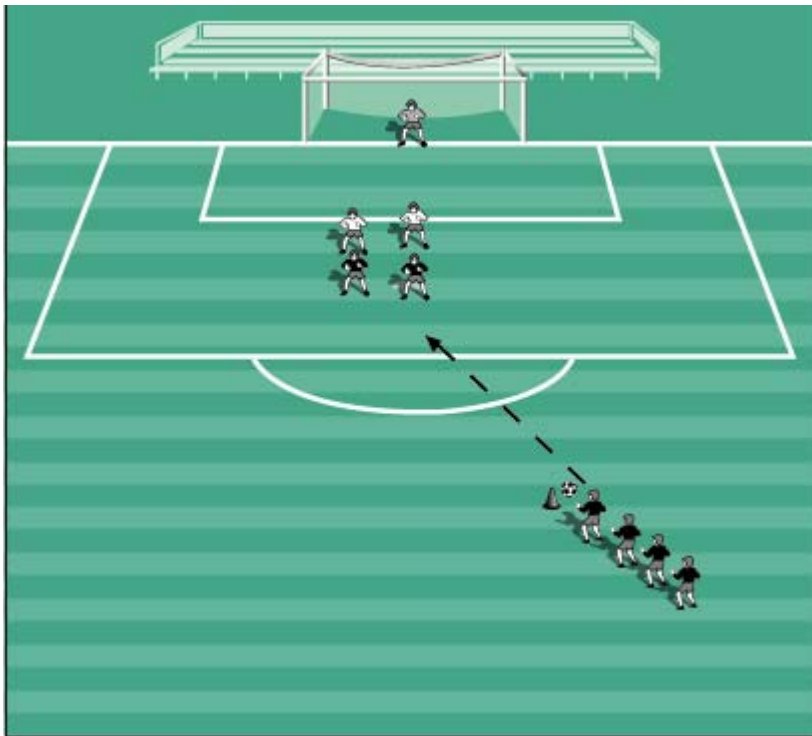
6. Progression – Let the players decide what decision to make

a. Coaching Points

- i. Verbal Communication
- ii. If you don't make the angle, can't use you

7. New Exercise – 2 vs. 2 with a GK

Exercise #6



a. Organization (use a combination of moves)

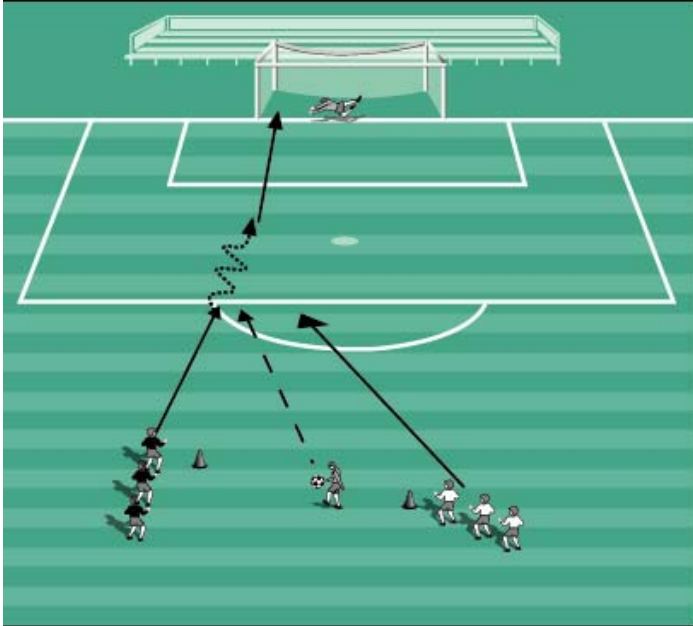
- i. Play into the striker
- ii. Turn around the corner
- iii. Score Goals
- iv. Dummy
- v. Hit 2nd attacker

b. Coaching Points

- i. Nearest to the ball is the first striker
- ii. Never kick a dead ball – move the ball first
- iii. Don't stop the ball – you'll lose the element of surprise
- iv. Angle of approach – show on a slight angle
- v. Jacks
- vi. If the ball gets set by the first striker, play the ball into the 2nd striker
- vii. Communication
- viii. As the ball gets set by the 2nd striker, the 1st striker must run across him
- ix. Shoot if you have the opportunity
- x. Improvise
- xi. If the road is blocked into the 2nd striker, play it wide and prepare for a cross
- xii. Don't take the easy option, try to make something happen
- xiii. 2nd striker communicate with the 1st striker
- xiv. Opposite Midfielder – run to the far post
- xv. Pace of the pass – firm so its less easy to read

Tony Carr – “The West Ham Way” Counter-Attacking

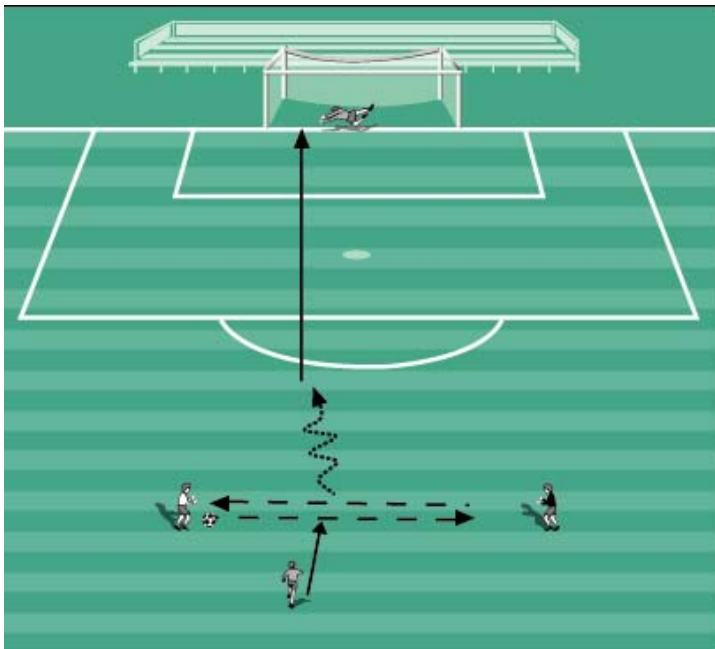
Exercise #1



a. Coaching Points

- i. Chasing Player – Really try to stop him scoring
- ii. GK – if the forward pushes it out to far – come and smother it
- iii. If you don't score – make the keeper make a save

2. **Progression** – Intercept the pass and go for goal



a. Coaching Points

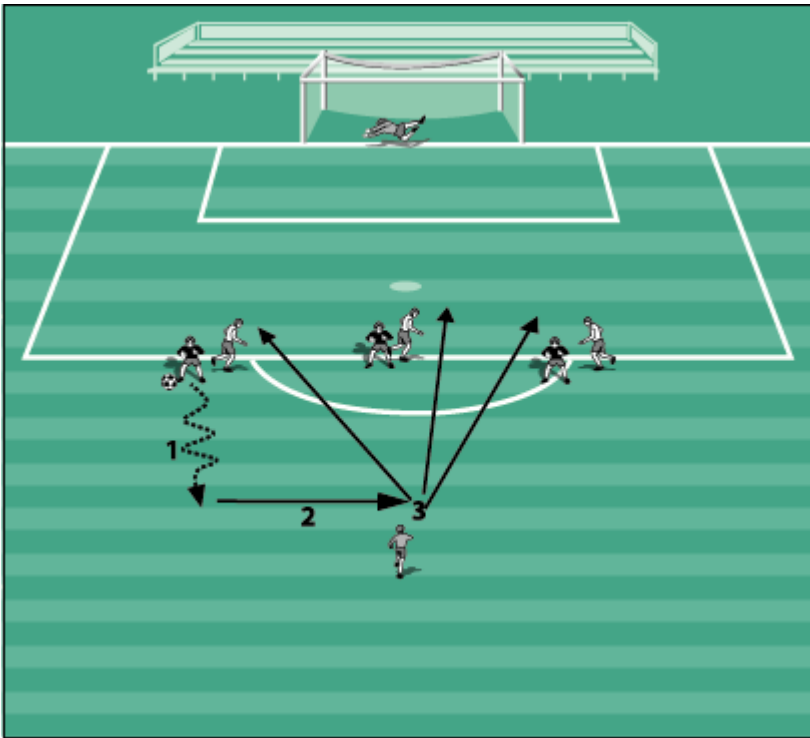
- i. Your first touch should be into the heart of the defense
- ii. Pinch it
- iii. Don't take your first touch towards the defender
 1. Take your first touch back across your body and away from the defender

b. Restriction – Attacking player has a maximum of 3 touches to score

i. Coaching Points

1. Change of Pace to lose the chasing defender
2. Protect the ball with your first touch
3. Take your first

3. **Progression** – 3 v 3 and intercepting player



a. Coaching Points

- i. After you intercept the ball – your first touch should be a pass into the striker
- ii. Striker use intercepting player as support or turn the ball around the corner
- iii. Counter Attack – play quick, fast, and direct
 1. Don't have two touches
 2. Exploit the supremacy of numbers quickly

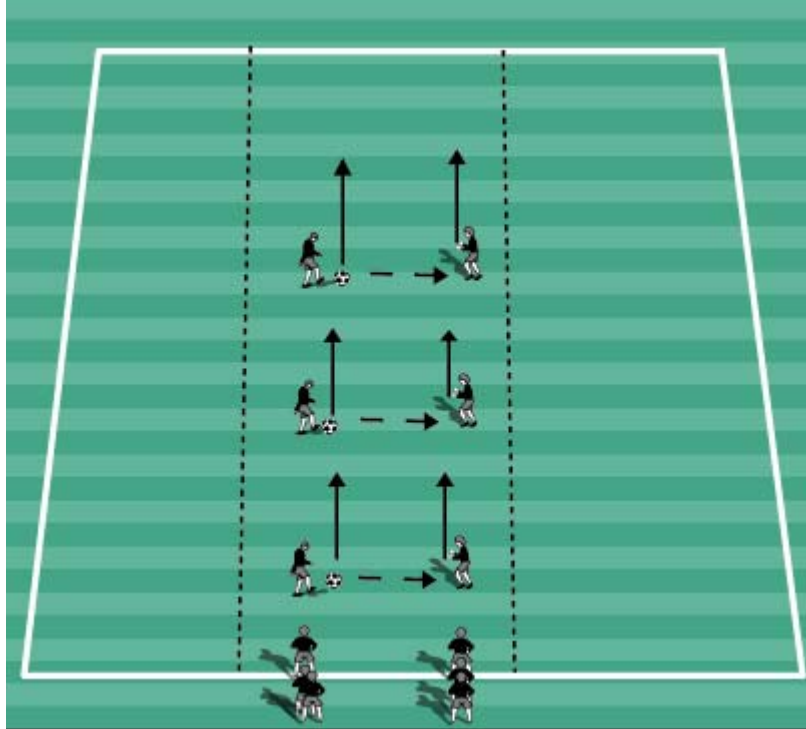
3 v. 3 +1 – Two Targets, Two GKs



Organization

1. Players in the box must touch the ball before playing into the striker
2. As the ball gets played into the striker, 2 attacking players can join into the attack
3. If the defending team intercepts, they should counter attack right away.

Tony Carr – “The West Ham Way” Coaching Combinations Plays



1. Exercise #1

- a. Players in pairs – one with a ball, one without a ball; two touch – on the left you work your left foot, on the right, you work your right foot –

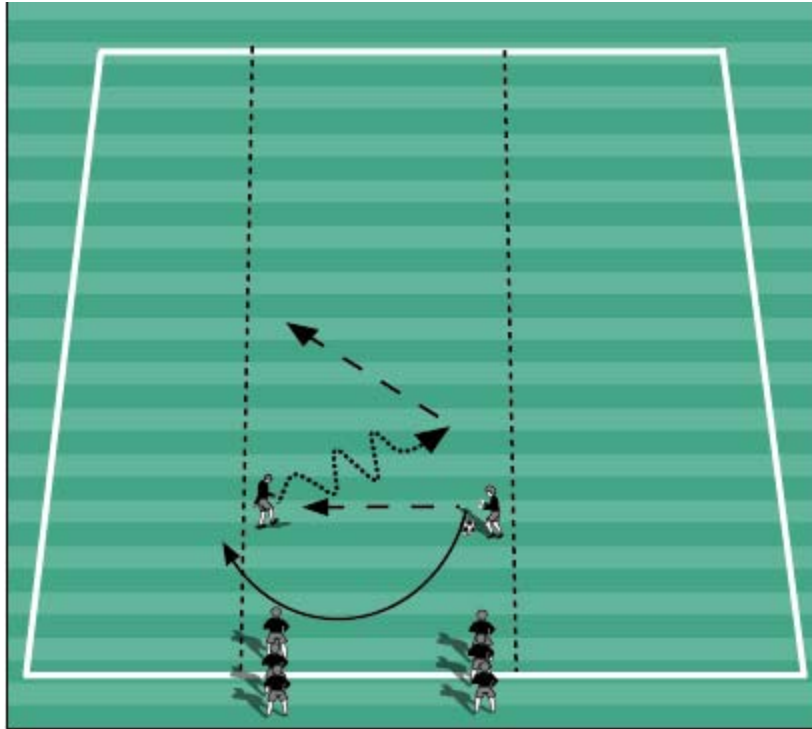
b. Coaching Points

- i. Stay in your channel
- ii. The more confident you get, push the ball further
- iii. Play the ball with your back foot – the foot furthest away from the ball
 1. Why? Can turn, play forwards – without having to adjust your body
- iv. Pick up the pace
- v. Control and Push
- vi. Receiver, don't get beyond the ball
- vii. Change of pace when you receive it – then push

- c. **Progression** – one touch

i. Coaching Points

1. Players don't break your stride
2. Problems – accuracy of the pass
3. Push it firmer as you run faster

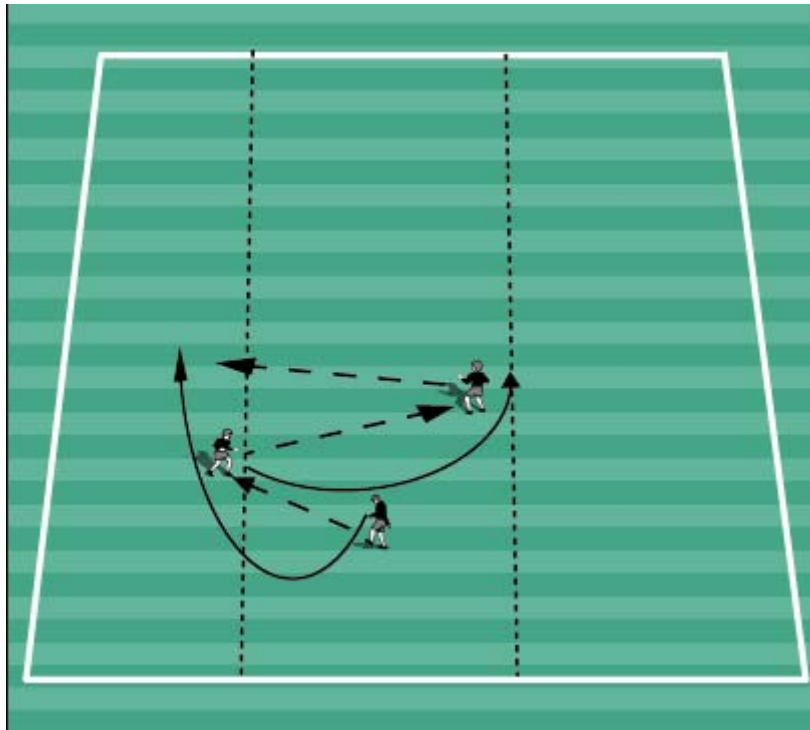


d. **Progression** – Receiver - With first touch, bring the ball into the channel, overlap

-

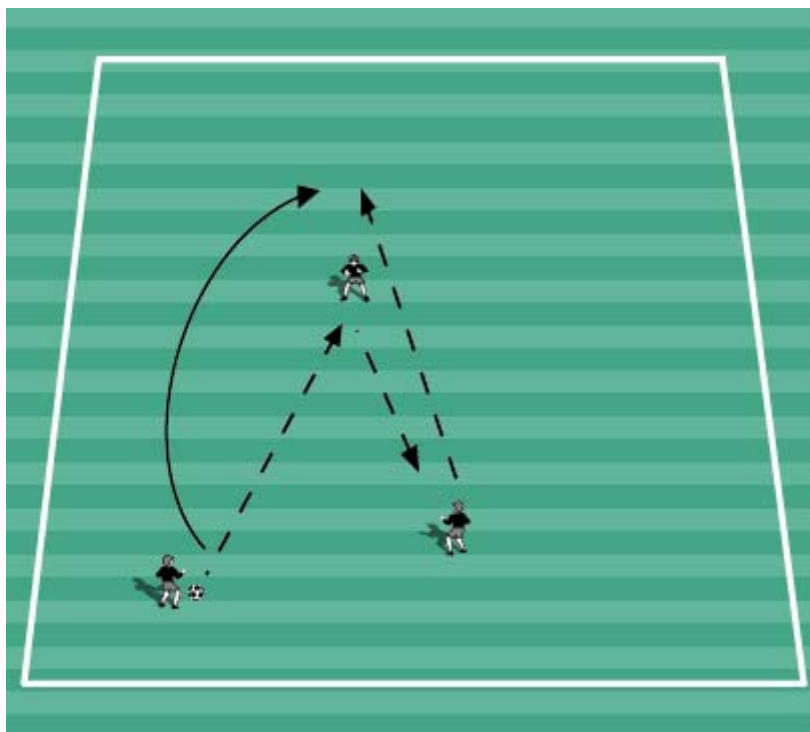
i. Coaching Points

1. Untangle your feet
2. First touch is out of your feet into space
3. One foot take, the other foot pass
4. Sharp – beyond walking pace
5. As you go around the back of your partner – let him know you are coming
 - a. Tell him when you are ready to receive it and ready to release it – “Hold it,...yes



e. **Progression:** In threes – wherever you pass, get around the back of the player (Weave)

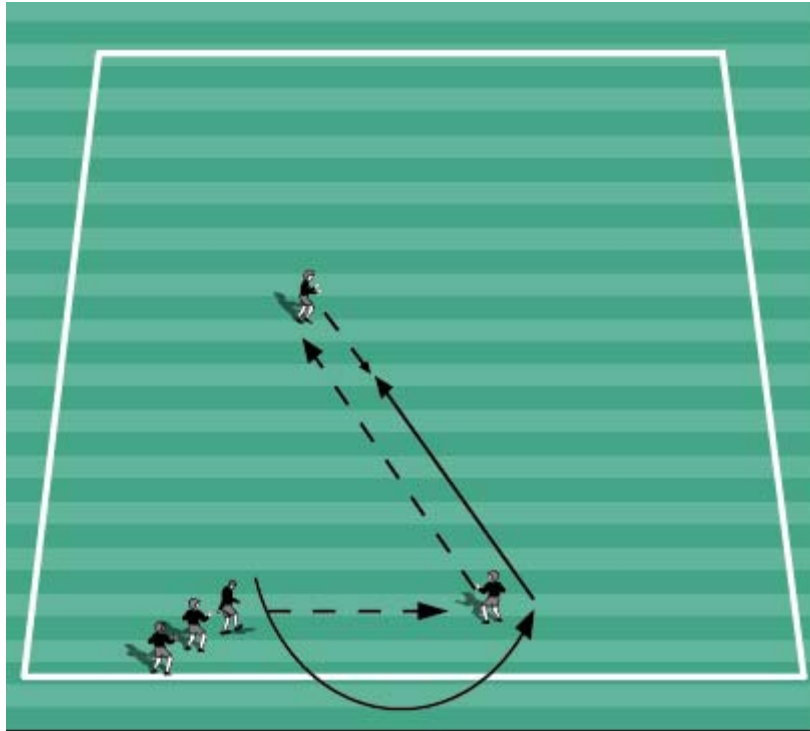
1. Sharp
2. Stretch your partner
3. Need for Accuracy
4. Timing
5. Receive on Back Foot



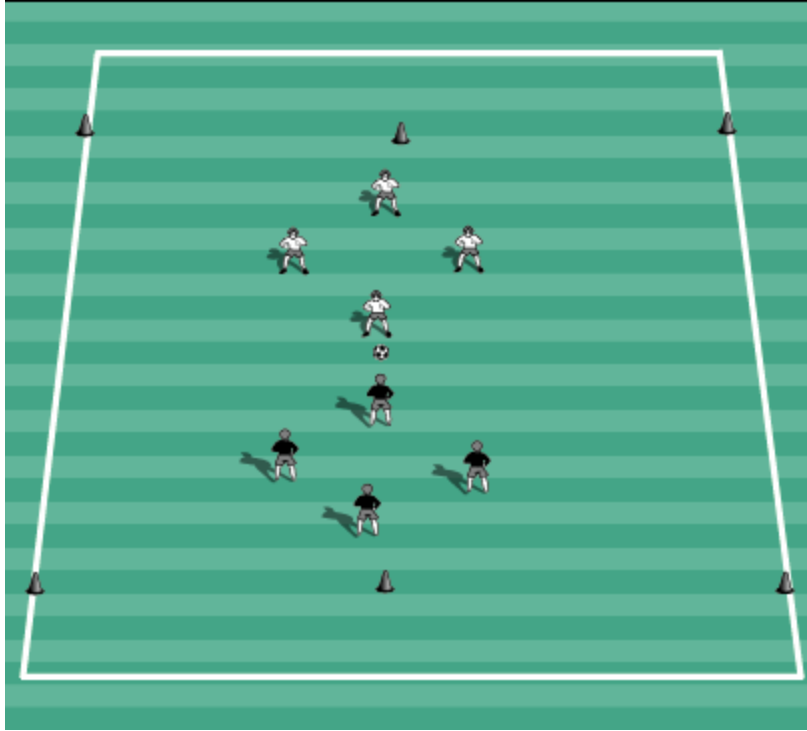
f. **Progression:** In threes (Triangle)

i. Coaching Points

1. If the player on the ball is facing you, support him
2. Point stand slightly on the half turn
3. Hit the space rather than the player
4. Verbal Communication
5. You can also run on a diagonal behind the target rather than in a straight line
6. Point in the Triangle
 - a. Be on the Half Turn so you can see the defender (Target player – body shape)
 - b. The reason you set a ball is to drag a defender out
 - c. Target – show on a slight angle to create space for the third man running



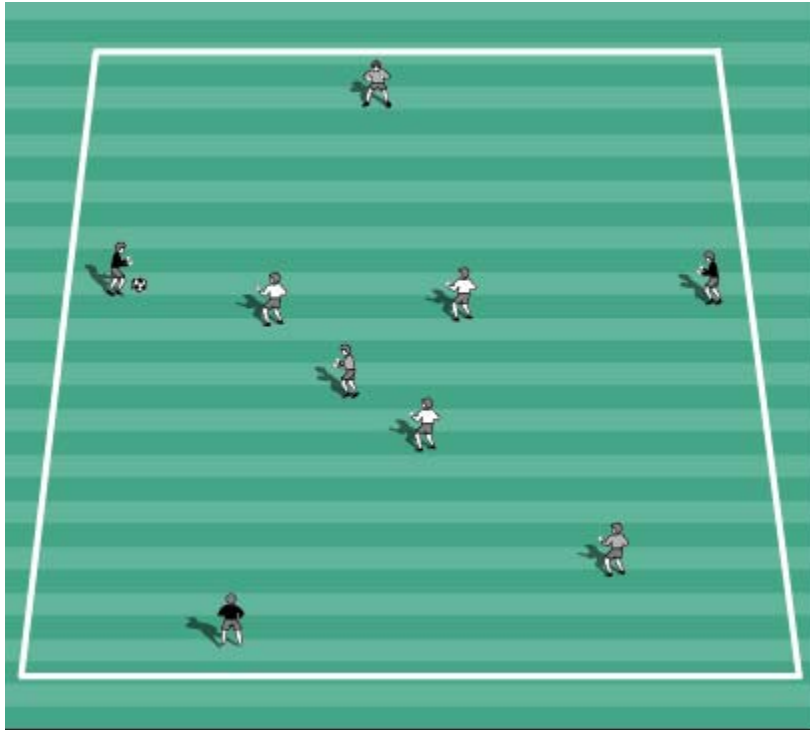
- g. **Progression:** play it square, run around the back, set, runner
 - i. Keep distance
 - ii. Communication
- h. **Progression:** Add three defenders – First pass is square, 2nd pass you have options, but the goal is to get the ball into the target
 - i. Try to play every pass below head height to promote control and accuracy
 - ii. Key is to get the ball in between the two opposition
 - iii. You can make anything happen in threes if you have depth
- iv. **Coaching Points**
 1. If the defender is on the target's left shoulder, pass it away from the defender - away from the defender; makes the target come off at an angle
 2. The reason you play a ball square is to draw in a defender
 3. If you have the ability play into the target with the first pass
 4. Give ownership of the practice to the players – Don't be prescriptive
 5. Once the ball goes into the target, that is the trigger for support and runners to get beyond the target



- i. **Progression:** 4 vs. 4 with 5 yard end zone
 - i. With four players you are trying to achieve a triangle of three
 - ii. **Coaching Point**
 - 1. Be as creative as you can in trying to get to an end zone
 - 2. Must always have a target (rotation)
 - 3. Improvisation
 - iii. Rule: If one of your team sets the ball back, another player must run forward
 - 1. This will give you a target or
 - 2. Open up space for the player on the ball to drive into
 - iv. **Coaching Point**
 - 1. Target Player
 - a. Come off at an angle to make an angle to pass for a player on the ball

Schellas Hyndman – Improving Speed of Play

Exercise #1



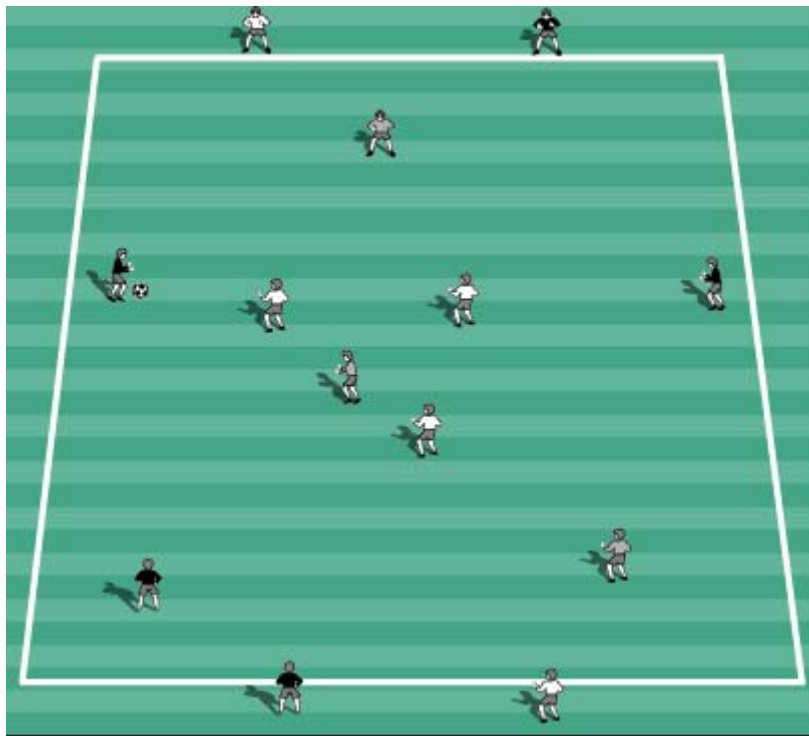
- **Organization**
 - o 3 v. 3 +3
 - o Two-touch: The team that loses possession is the defending team
- **Coaching Points**
 - o Quality of the Pass
 - o Support
 - o Check/Look
 - o Take your first touch out of pressure
 - o Don't kill the ball with your first touch
 - o Accuracy of the Pass
 - o Quality first touch to prepare you for your second touch
- **Progression:** Can't pass the ball back where it came from
 - o **Coaching Points**
 - Keep possession
 - Quality of the pass
 - Quality first touch
 - Settle down a little bit
 - Don't show for the ball without an idea of where you want to go next
- **Progression:** You cannot pass to one of your teammates

- **Coaching Points**
 - o As the ball travels, fix your shape
 - o Think a couple steps in advance
 - o Communication – Verbal

- **Progression:** One touch

- **Coaching Points**
 - o Think ahead of the game
 - o Body shape

Add targets on the end



- **Progression** – Add Direction with target players at each end
- **Coaching Points**
 - o Speed of play: Go quick
 - o Body shape
 - o Movement off the ball
 - o Quality of pass
 - o First touch
 - o Support teammate early
 - o Maintain distance so that one defender cannot cover 2 attackers
 - o Don't show on a straight line; Show on an angle
 - o Use your intelligence from movement #1 to movement #2 so that you can face in the right direction
 - o Jam – Make a decision and act

Add in goals, target players and GKs



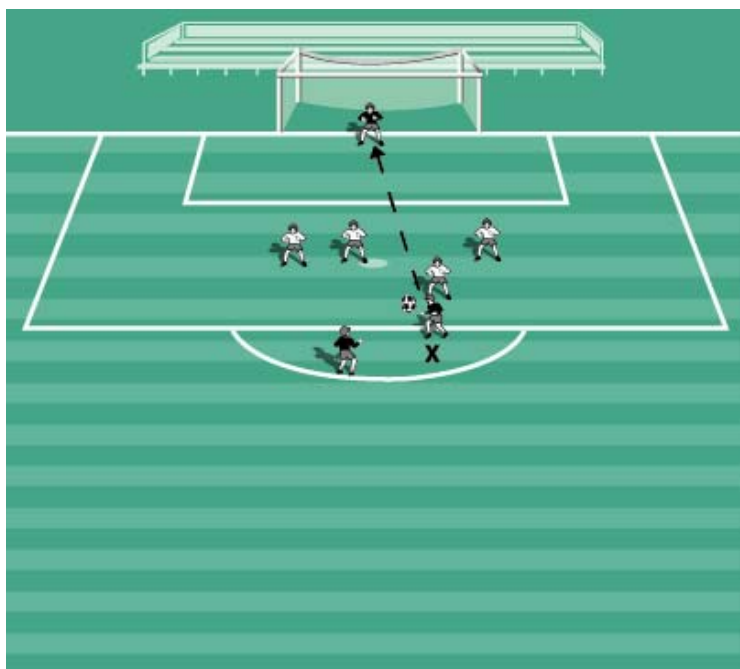
- **Coaching Points**
 - o Shape
 - o Speed of play
 - o Show on an angle
 - o Expect the release from the GK
 - o Take your first touch in the direction that you want to go.
 - o Ball from GK – defender – spin and curve your run to go forwards with the ball.

Schellas Hyndman – Attacking in a 4-4-2

Strengths of Attacking in the 4-4-2

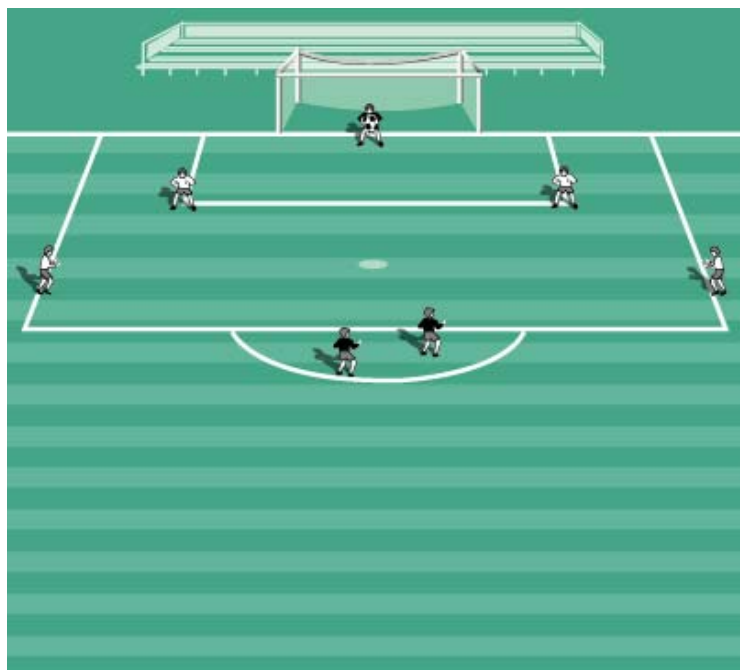
- This system is a mirror image – Whatever you teach on the left, you can also teach on the right
- If one fullback pushes forward – you still maintain a defensive integrity with three in the back
- While playing out of the back in the 4 – 4- 2 is that you always have support in midfield
- Flank Play - Can develop combinations to create problems for the opposition – i.e. Overlap
- Midfield
 - o Four midfielders can face the oppositions goal
 - o Allows for creativity and evolution within the system
 - Diamond
 - Box Midfield
 - Small Diamond to create space for attacking oriented fullbacks
- **Characteristics of Central Midfielders**
 - o Attacking Midfielder – penetrate, good passer (motor genius)
 - o Defending Midfielder – good ball winner – athletic, strong into tackles and strong in the air (talent hunter)
- **Strikers**
 - o Lots of room to play – Can survive on athleticism rather than technical ability
 - o Can use striker as a target player
 - Characteristics of a target Player
 - Big strong player – good with back to goal
 - an complement the other striker

Exercise #1 - Playing Out of the Back 4 v. 2



- **Organization:** 4 vs. 2: Play starts with a strike from A1 or A2. The four defenders go from defending to opening up to receive from the GK.
- **Coaching Points:**
 - o Umbrella, make it compact as the shot is taken

Goalkeeper Has the Ball

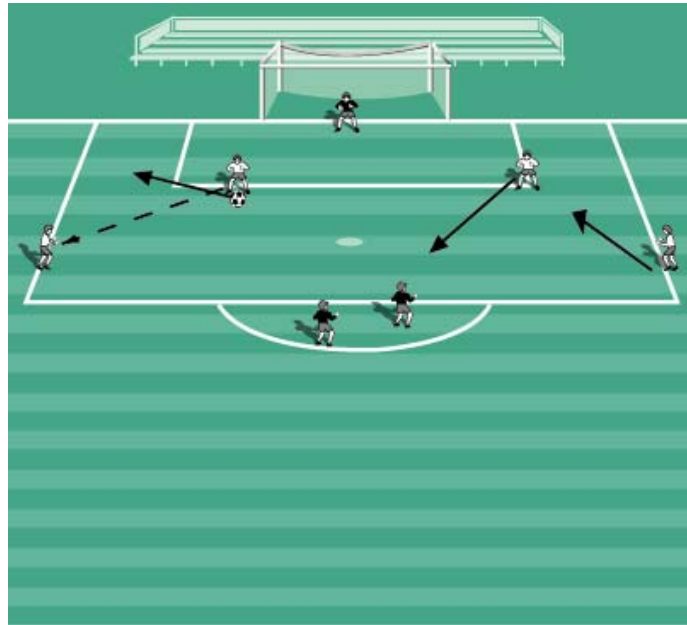


:

- **Full Backs**

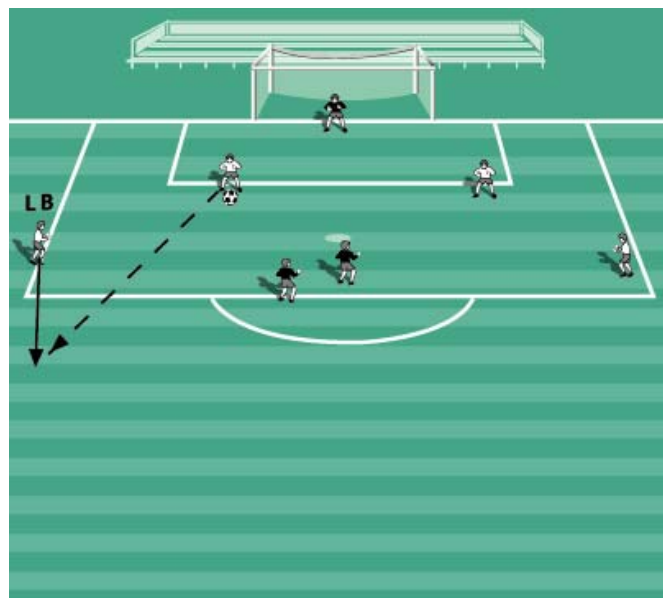
- Open up
- Always keep your eyes on the GK
- Take your first touch out of your feet and forwards
- Fix your body shape so that you can also see forwards

Center Back Has the Ball



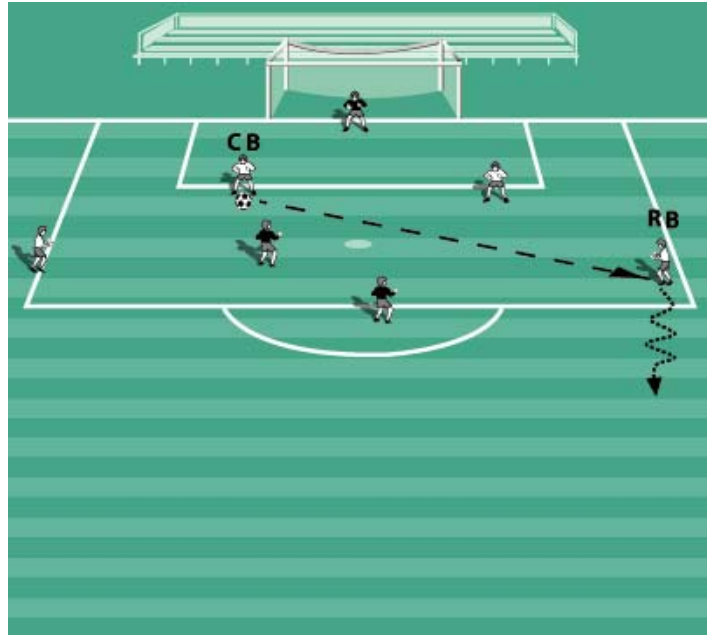
- As the ball gets played to the Left Back, Closest Center Back must rotate to give support at an angle (Create Depth)
- Goalkeeper can be used to play out of the back as well
- Other center back can push forwards to give GK angle to play out of the back

Left Back (E1D4)



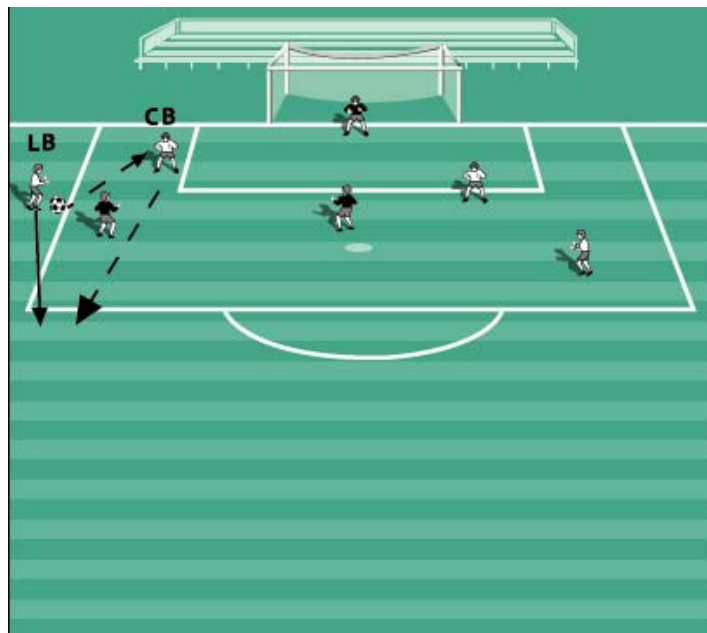
- As the ball is played to the left back (LB) – LB must already be running forwards so that the pass from the center back is penetrative beyond the defending strikers

Center Back Has the Ball



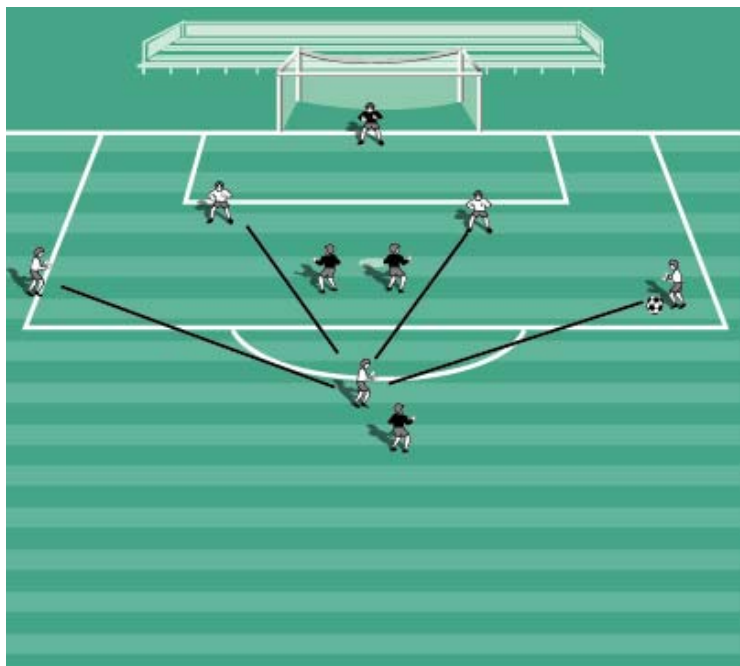
- Instead of playing a square ball to the other center back; look to bypass the center back and play it to the right full back
- Right Back – receive it and dribble to penetrate to get beyond striker

Left Back and Center Back

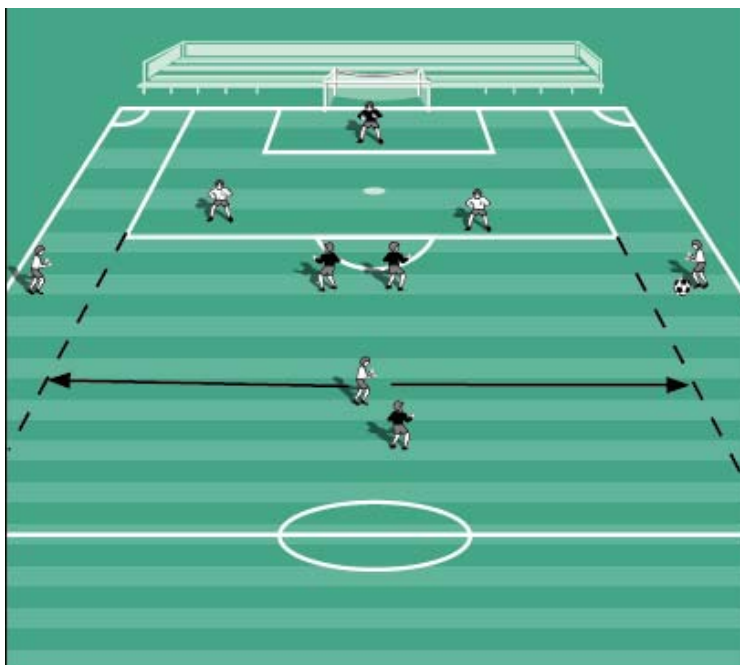


- Left back and center back, play a 1-2 to penetrate beyond the first defender

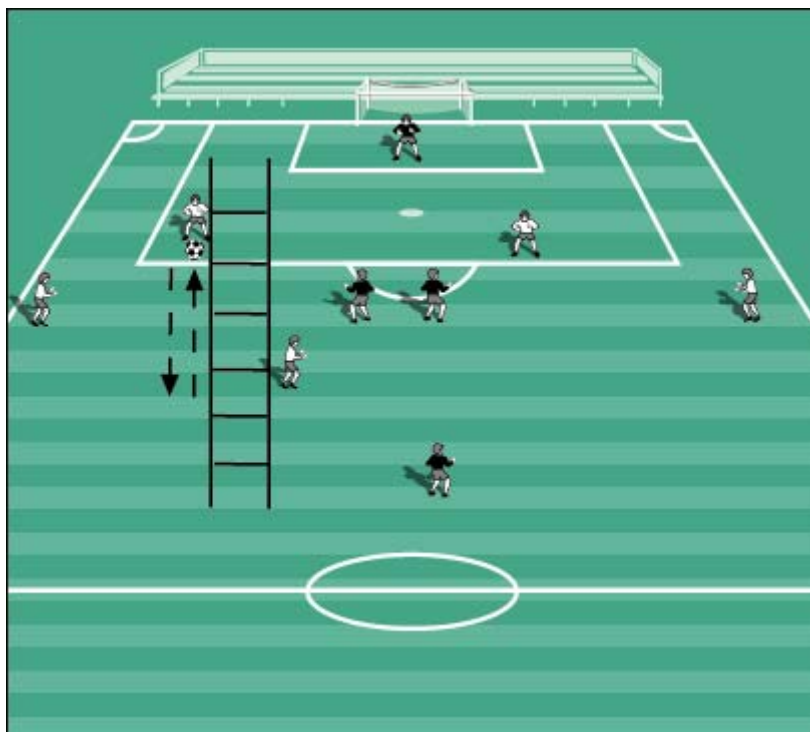
Add a Defending Central Midfielder



- Imagine a bicycle rim – all the spokes go to the center of the rim – the defensive midfielder should think of himself as the center of the rim

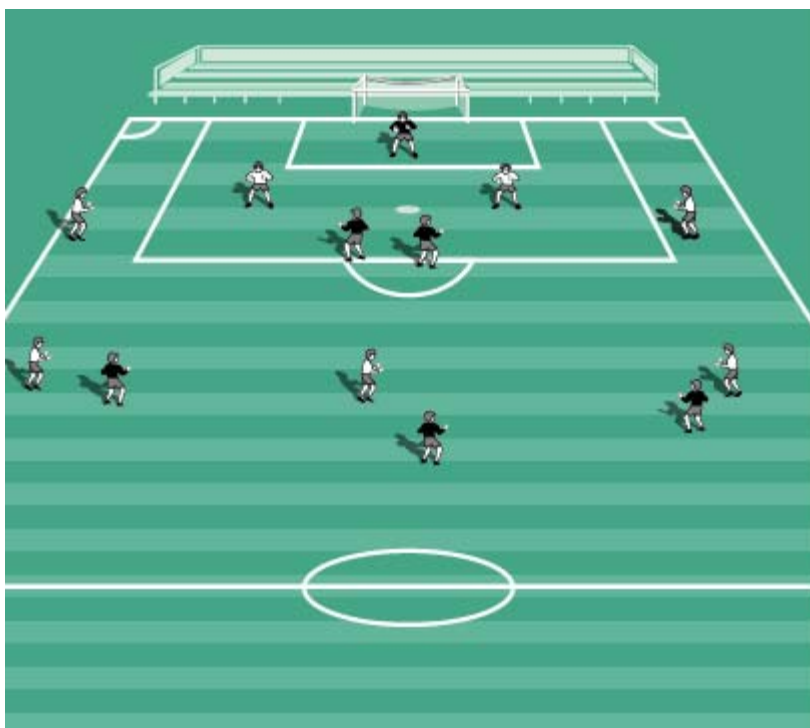


- Width of the Penalty Box – Defensive Midfielder should stay within the width of the penalty box

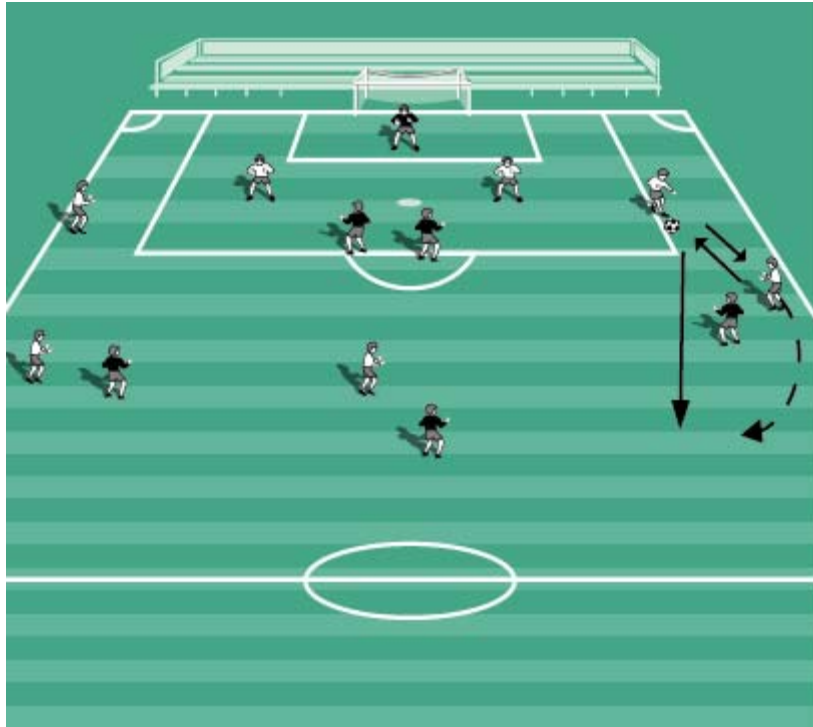


- Ladder Approach – If you climb up a ladder, every step you take you can also take a step down the ladder
- If you go up the ladder and then have players down the ladder in case you cannot go forwards (Up, Back, Through)

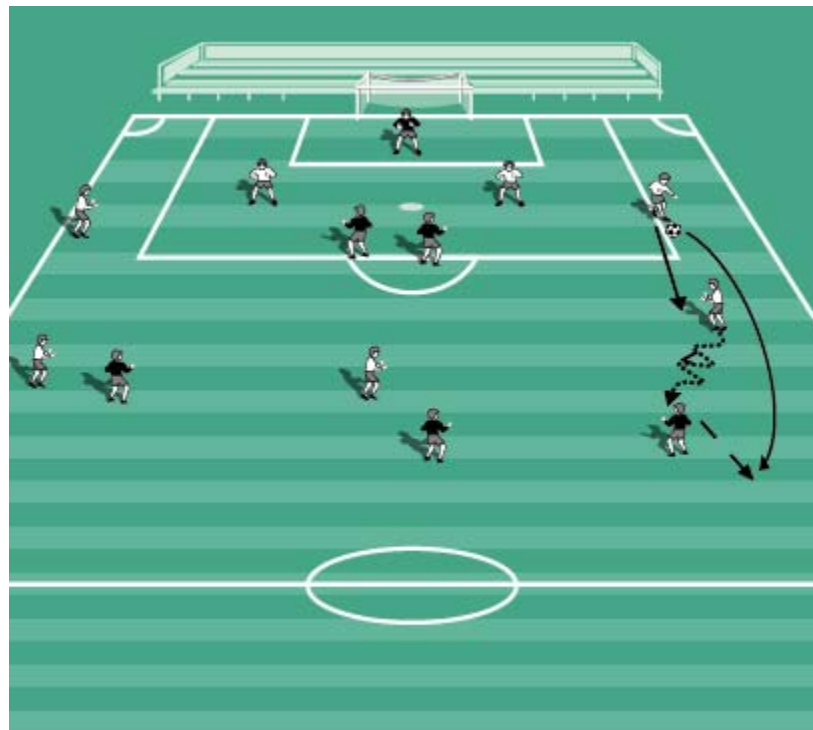
Add in the Two Flank Players (With two Defending midfielders)



Combinations working with the Left Back and Left Midfielder (E1D11)

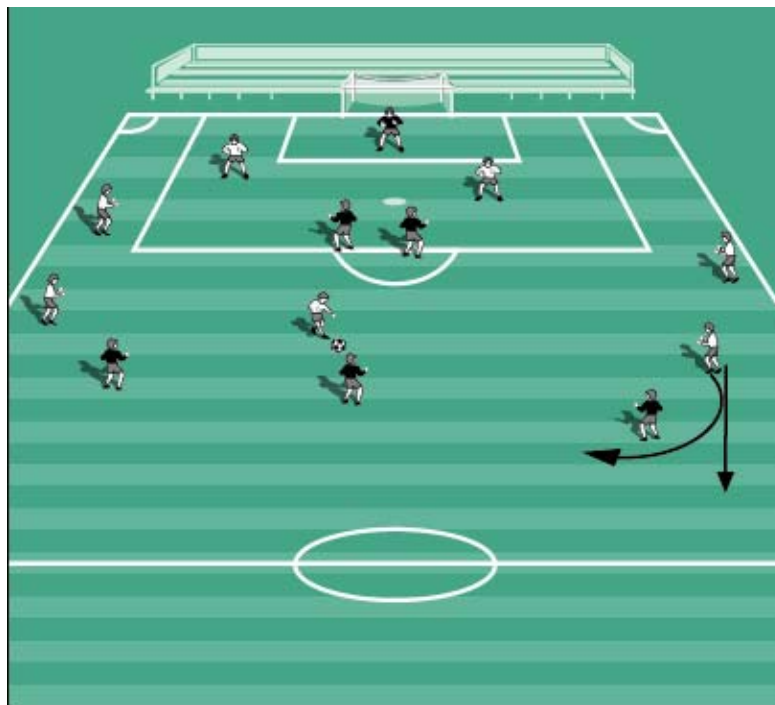
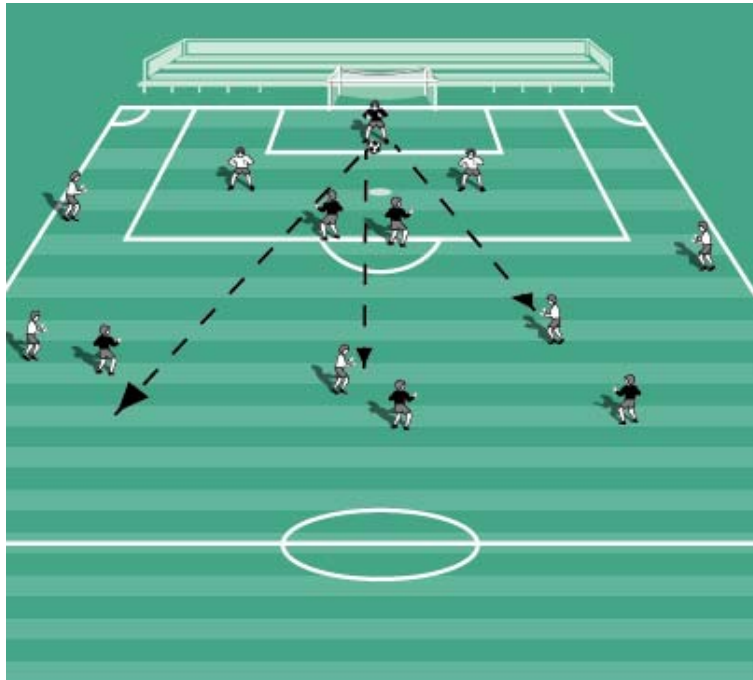


2 v 1 (play a one –two)



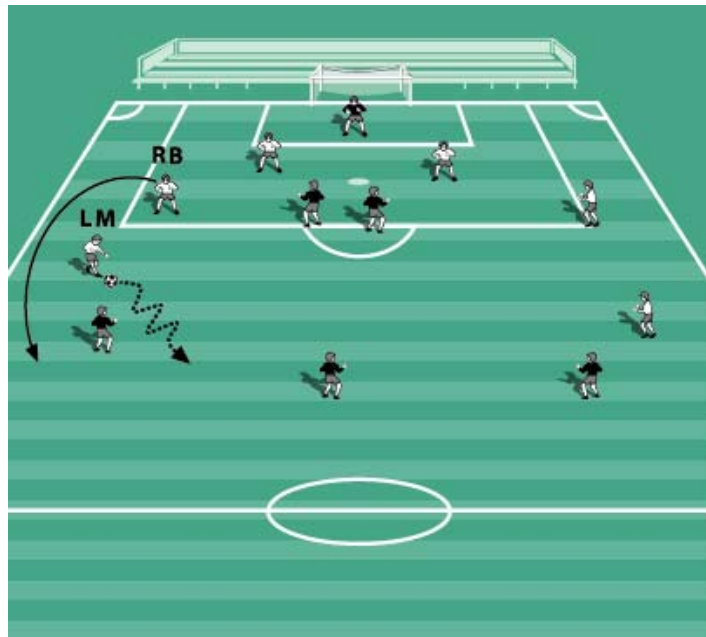
Overlap (reverse pass)

GK can also look to penetrate



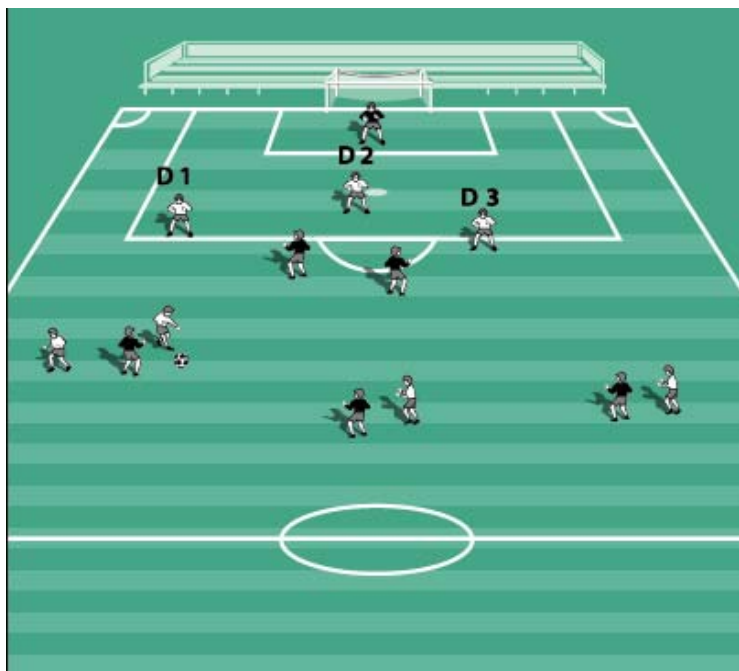
- If the ball comes to the defensive midfielder – Left Midfielder should now look for opportunities to make runs forwards
- Try to make 2 vs. 1 opportunities
- Make movements off the ball

Right Midfielder Has the Ball



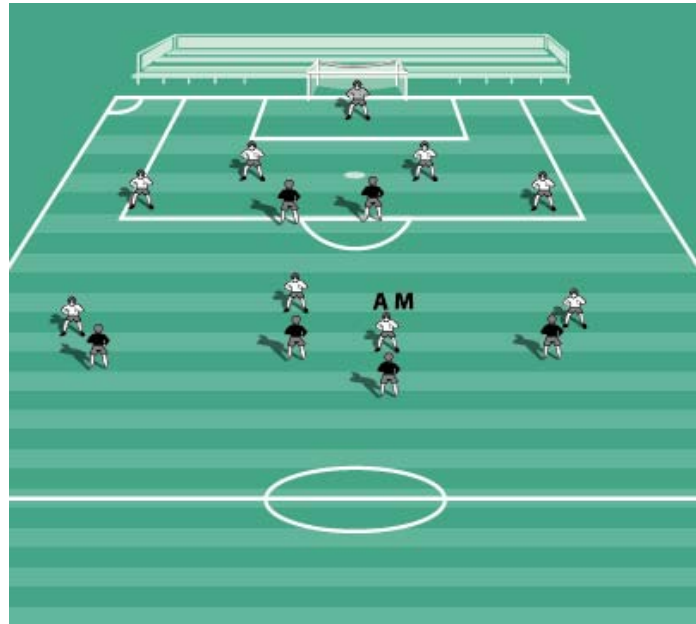
- Right back is to give support
- If the midfielder dribbles inside, the queue is that he doesn't want support from behind so the fullback can make a run forwards

Maintain the Integrity of the System



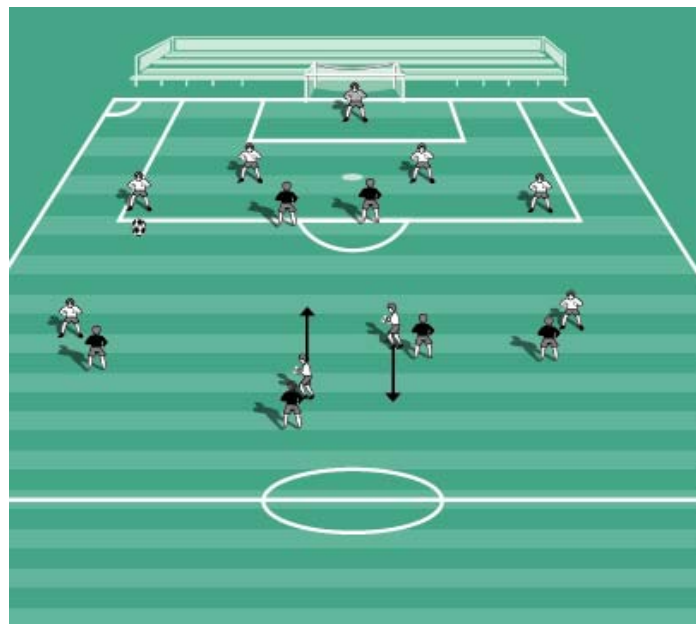
- As the ball gets played forwards keep three defenders in the back

Add the Attacking Center Midfielder – (With the Defending Midfielder)



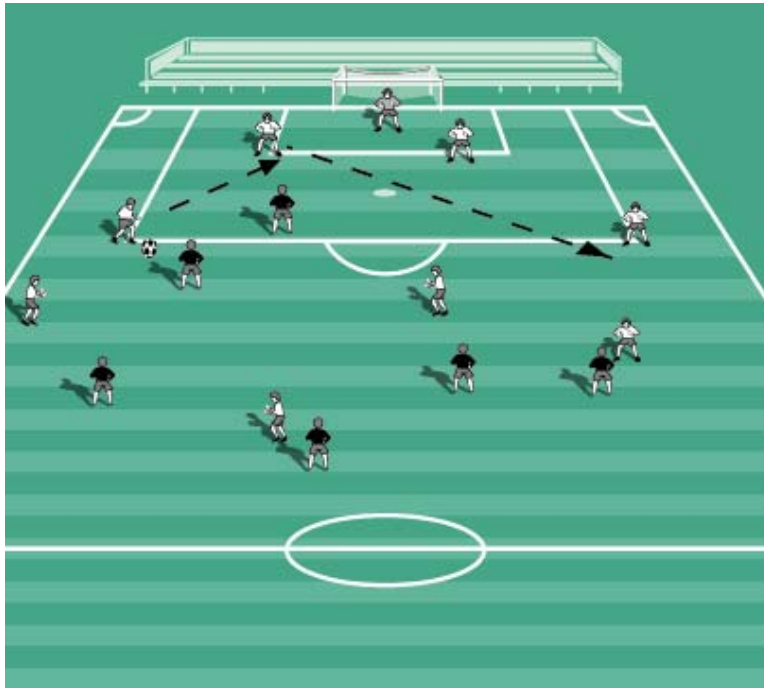
- The game is now getting closer to reality, which means it is getting more complex

Attacking Midfielder/Defending Midfielder



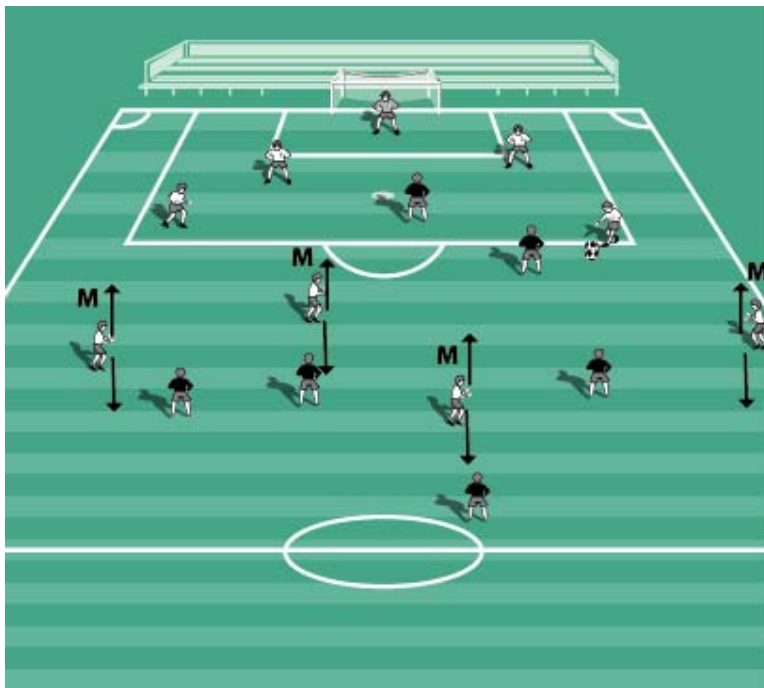
- Work off of each other
- Don't make the same runs: As the defending midfielder shows, Attacking Midfielder look for the hole
- Players must travel as the ball travels
- Be mobile – Think ahead of the game
- In central midfield, 75% of the balls that you get, you should keep

Center Back Change the Point of Attack



- Look to change the point of attack out of pressure – here the center back played the ball back from where it came from instead of changing it to the left back

Right Back Has the Ball

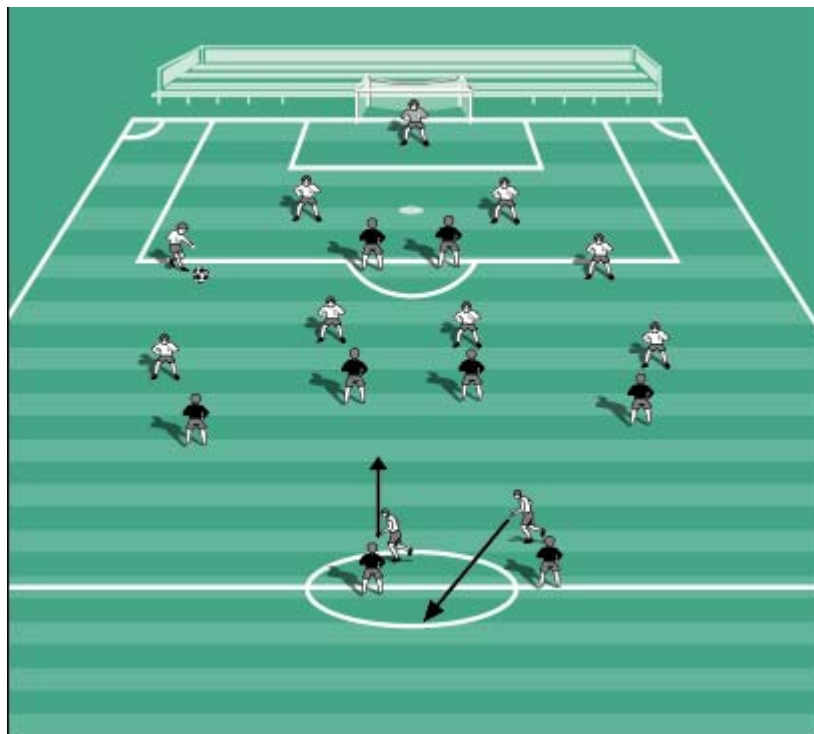


- Midfielders (M) – Change your body shape so that when you receive it you have the option to go forwards or backwards.

Add in the two strikers (along with two defenders)

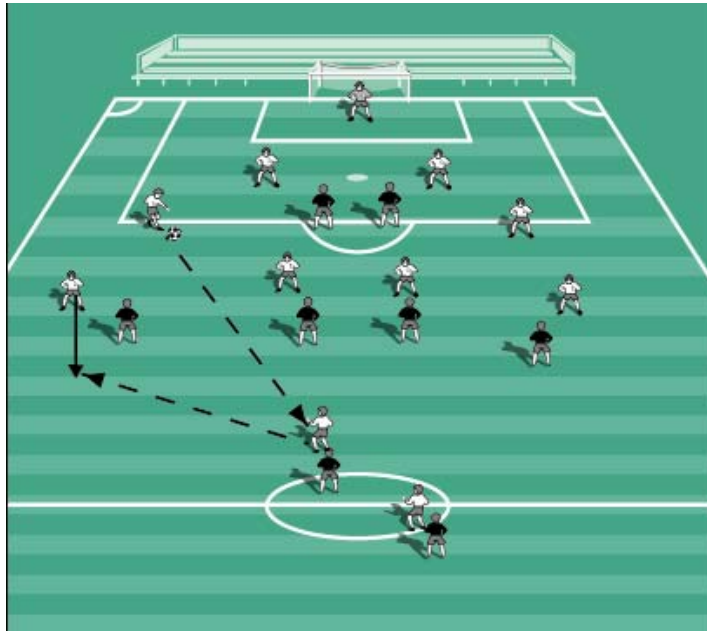


Runs – Strikers



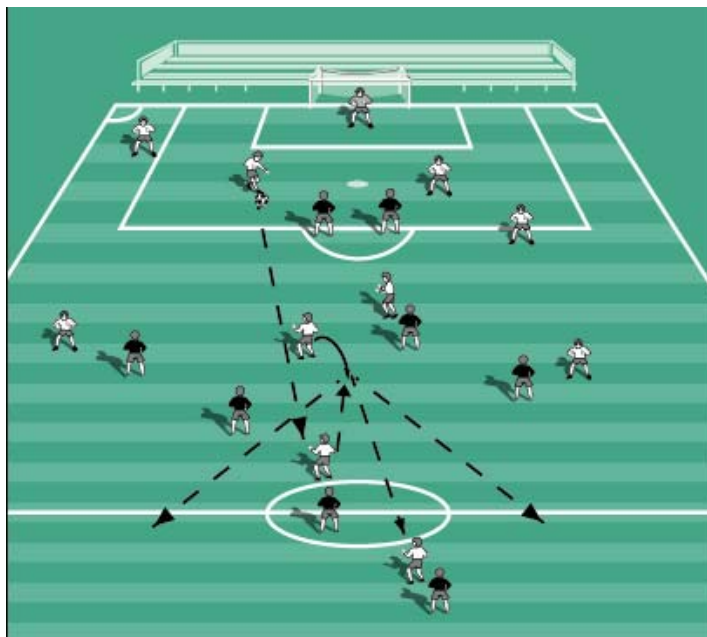
- As the first striker shows for the ball, the 2nd striker makes a diagonal run behind the first striker

Right Fullback Has the Ball

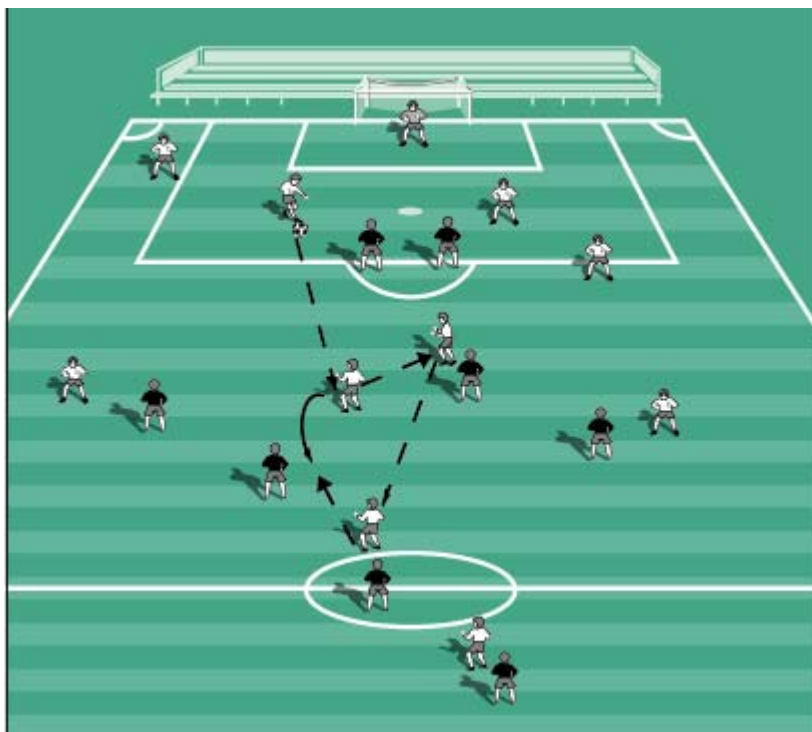


- Action/Reaction:
 - o Ball goes to the striker's foot who plays it first time to the advancing right midfielder
 - o Reaction: (Wrong Way) As soon as the striker plays the ball, then the midfielder makes his run
 - o Action: (Right Way): While the ball travels into the striker the midfielder is making an early run forwards anticipating the striker's next move

Ladder Approach (Combinations)



- Center Back to Striker – center mid spins receives from striker and looks to play forwards



- Center back to mid; mid to mid – spin; mid to striker

11 vs. 11

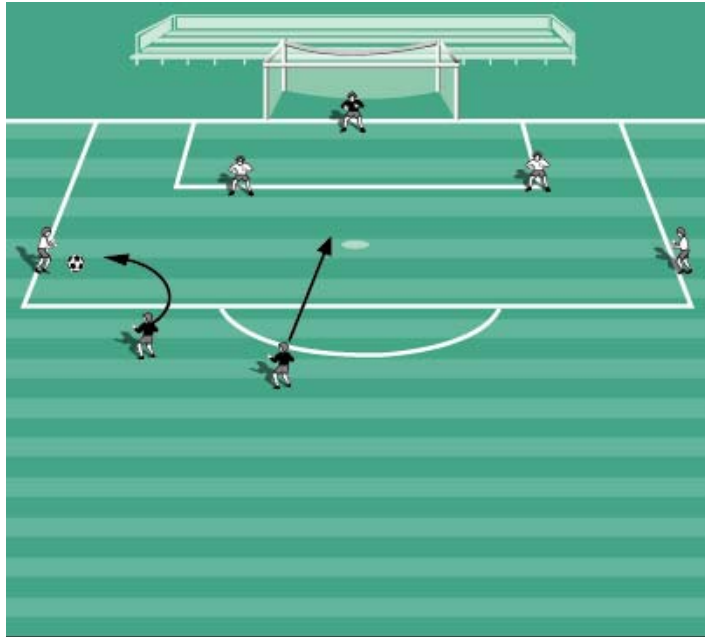


- End with 11 vs. 11 so that you can end the training session in a realistic fashion

Schellas Hyndman - Defending in the 4-4-2 Part One

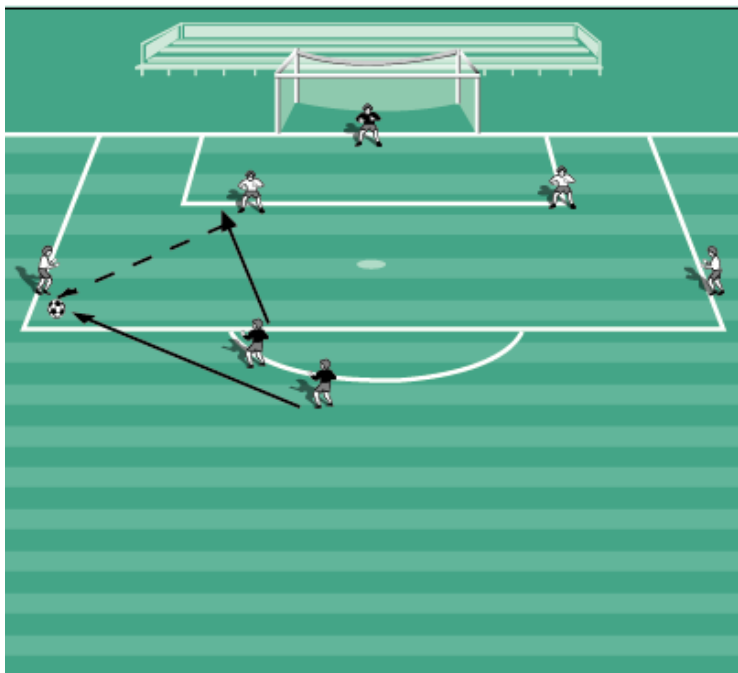
Exercise #1

2 Strikers work together to make play predictable and channel play one way



- First Defender (striker): Angle of Approach - Curved run to stop fullback from changing it
- Coordination between the strikers – Imagine that there is a rope that connects the two defending strikers together.

Variation

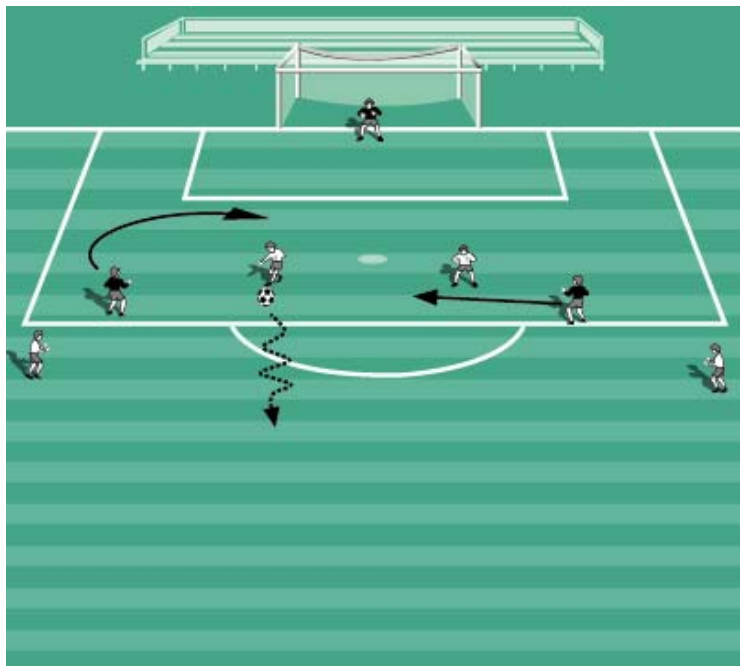


- As the ball travels to the right fullback – 1st defender run to the deepest player to prevent back pass and so that the ball cannot be switched
- Other striker pressures the ball
- Anticipate that the ball will go to the fullback – start to run early

Variation

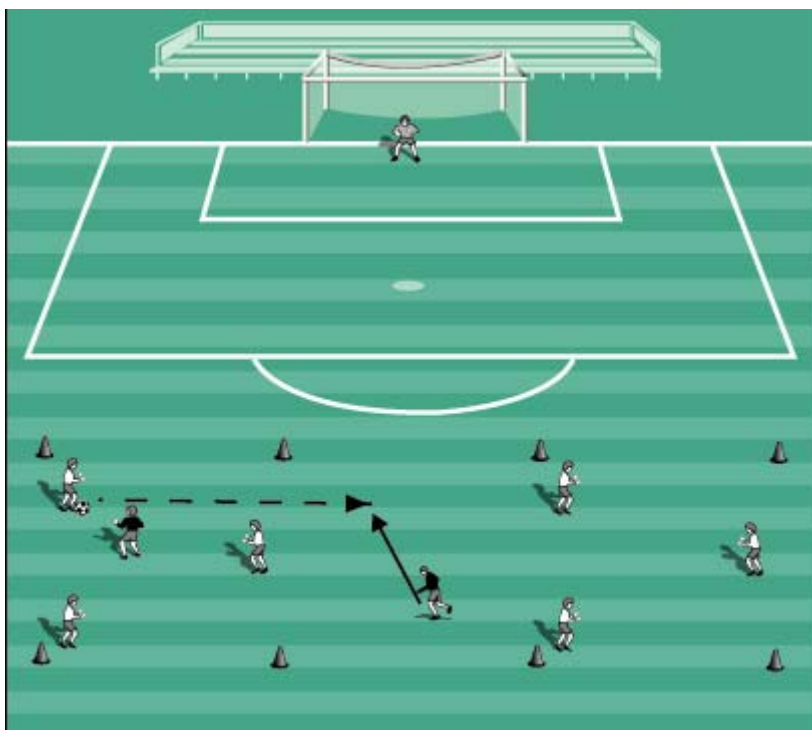


- Strikers split to encourage the center backs to play out of the back
- Let the center back get the ball, but stop the fullbacks from getting it



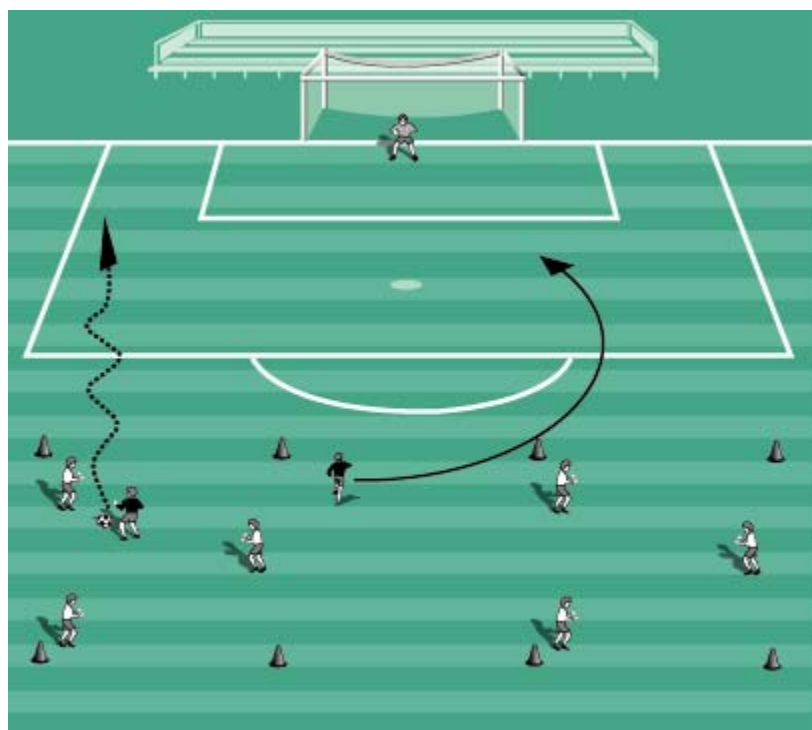
As the center back travels forward, strikers must pinch

Exercise #2



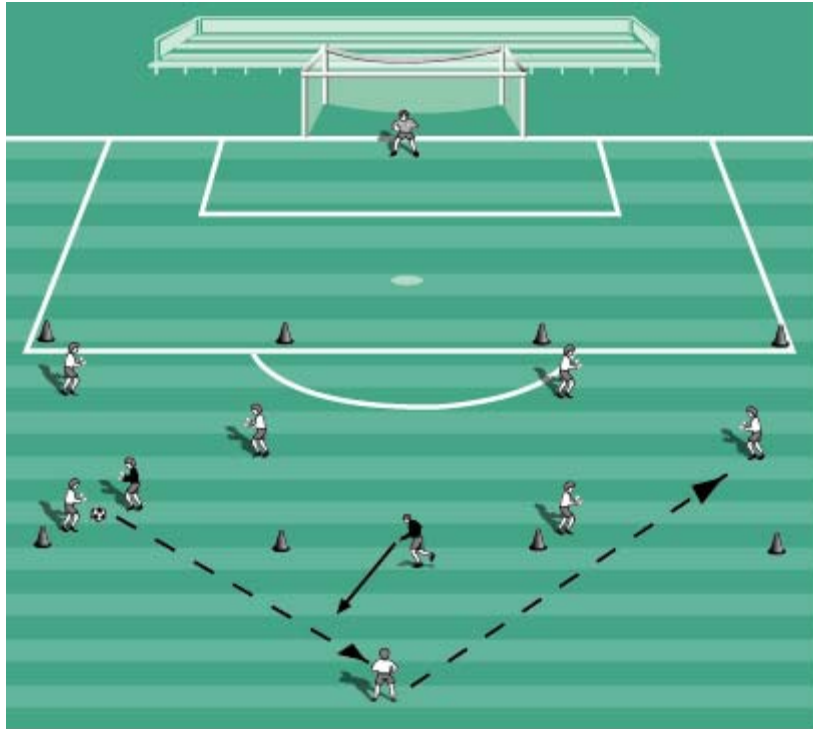
Organization

- 3 vs. 1; 2 grids – 2nd striker tries to intercept pass to other grid



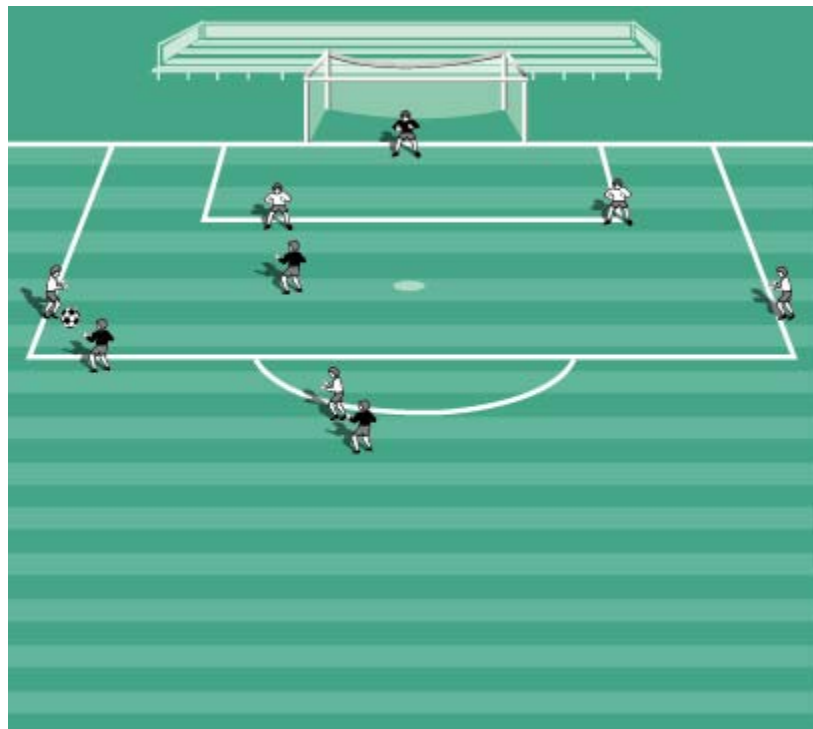
- If the first defender wins it attack to the end line – 2nd defender who is now an attacker goes into the box to prepare for a cross

Add a center back who can change it

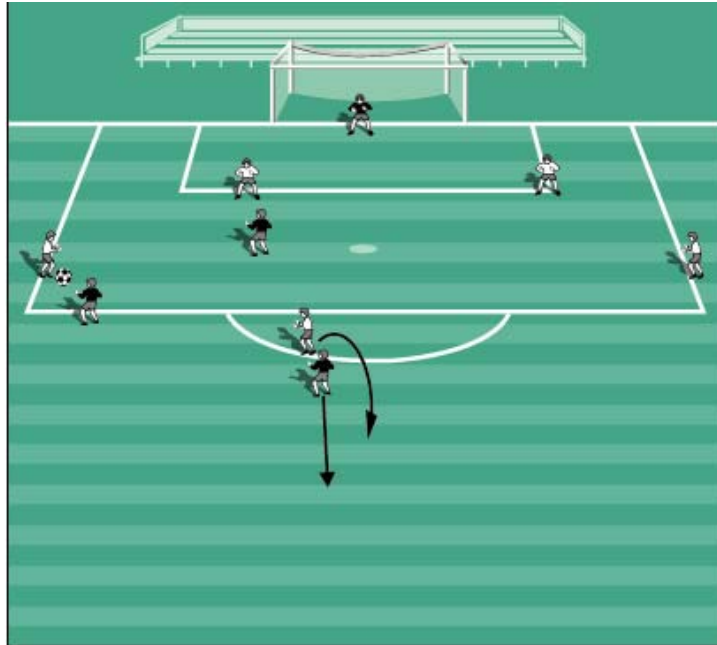


- 2nd defender cheat or anticipate the pass to the center back.

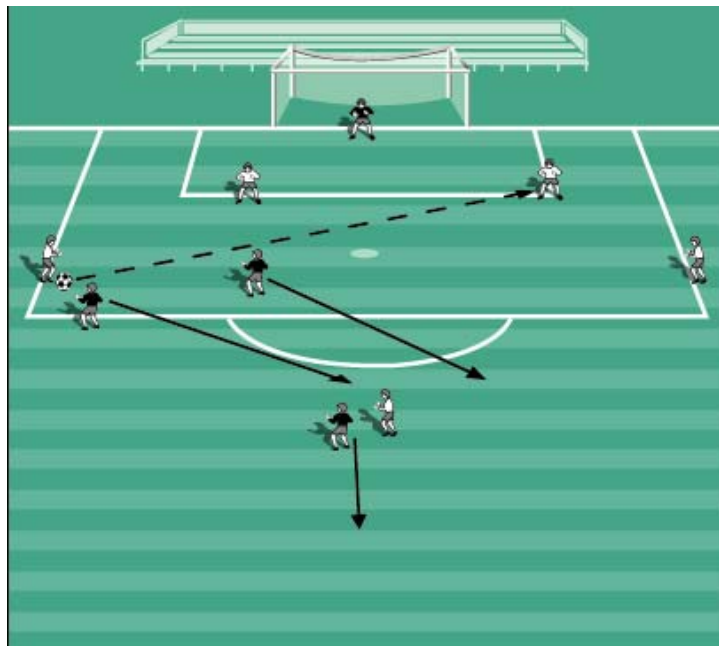
Add a Defending Central Midfielder



- Central midfielder marks another central midfielder
- Don't let attacking mid behind you
- Try to nick the pass
- You can't defend somebody in front

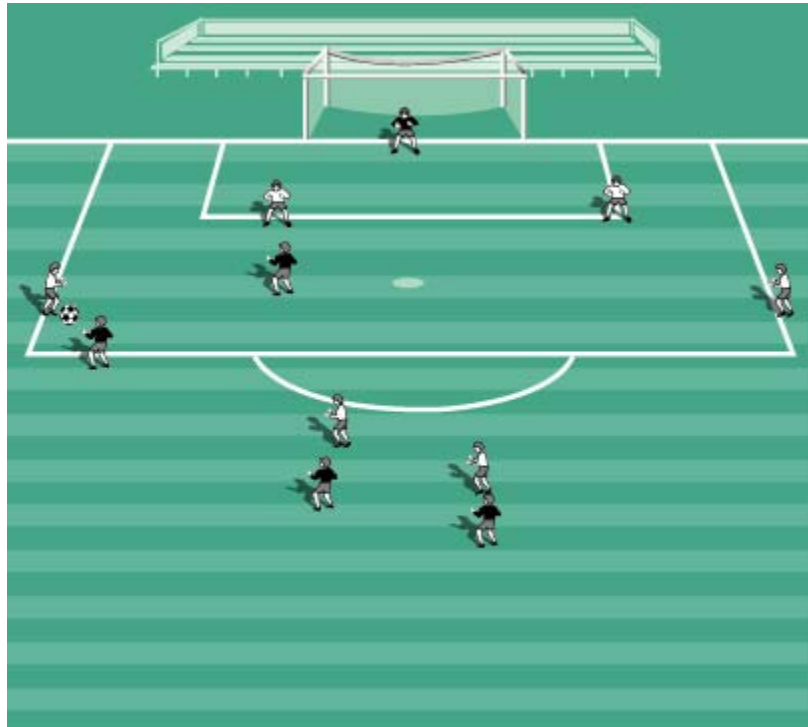


- If the midfielder tries to run behind – defending midfielder drop with the advancing runner to stay goal side
- Never let midfielder behind



- If the ball gets changed quickly – give ground and drop
- Don't expect the players to cover the entire width of the field

Add another attacking central midfielder

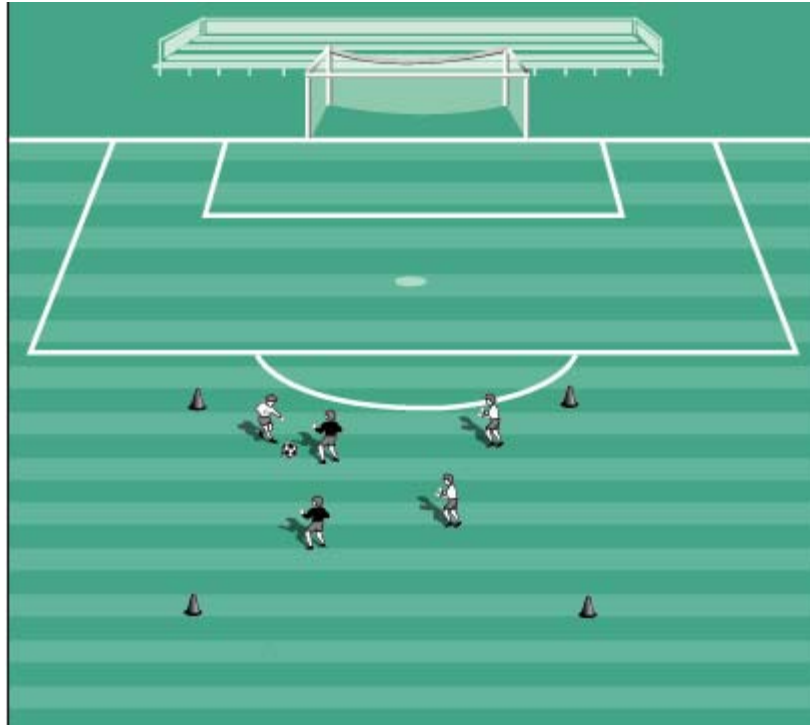


2 vs. 2: Center Midfielder Mark each other



- 1st Defender Immediate Pressure on the ball
- 2nd defender support/cover
- Be willing to give up back passes and lateral passes, but not penetrative passes
- Don't get split
- If both center midfielders attack, then you are vulnerable in a counter attack
- Help your teammates by giving direction

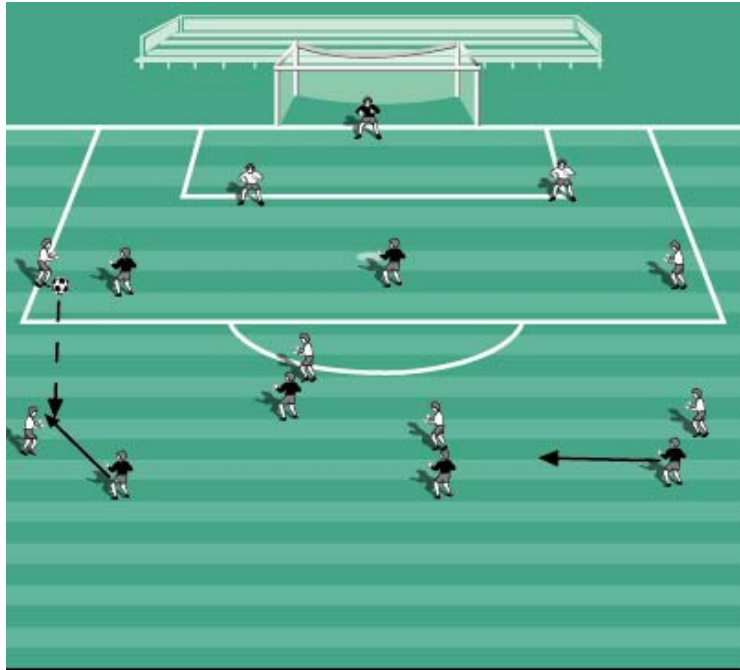
Progression: 3 vs. 2



- Force the ball wide to use the line and create a 1 vs. 2 situation

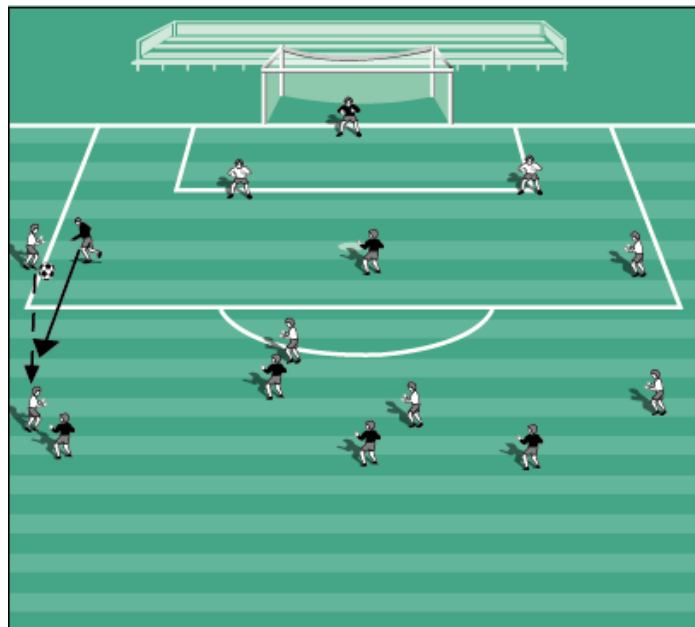
Schellas Hyndman - Defending in the 4-4-2 Part Two

Add two flank players



- Flank player keep pressing the outside midfielder – try to nick the ball
- Opposite flank player – pinch across only as far as post (Balance)
- Body Shape - Rule: see the ball and see the man

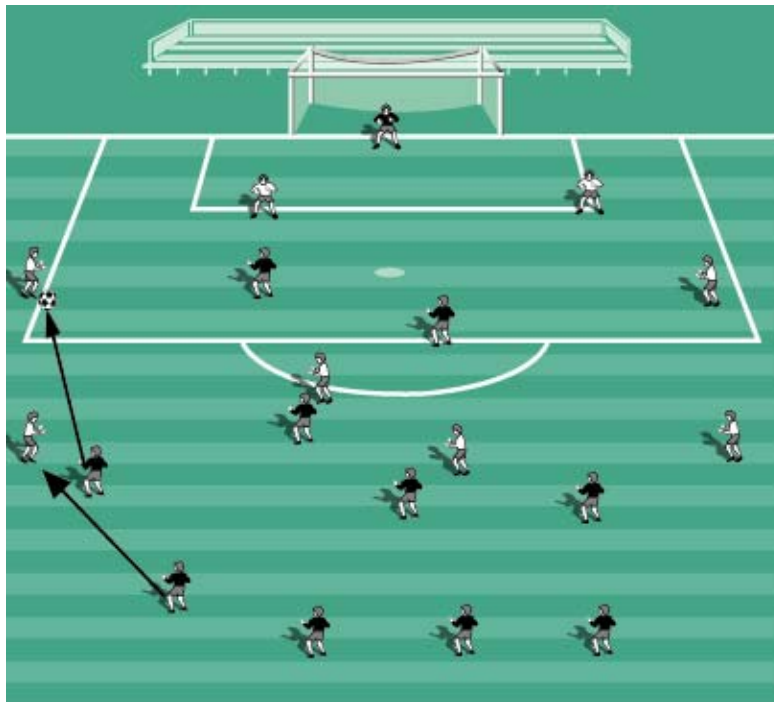
Find opportunities to double down



- Any time the ball is played past you, chase the ball

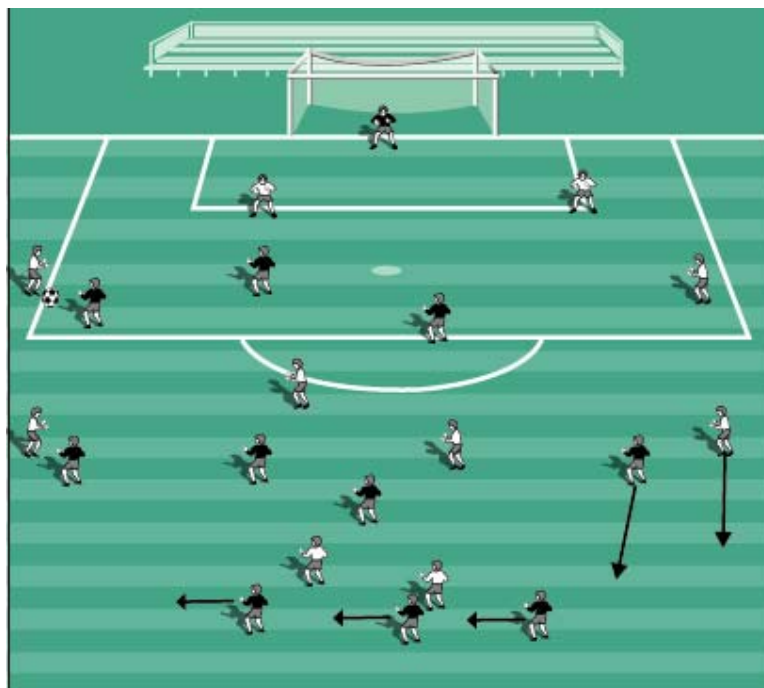
- Get in the passing lane when you chase so it can't be passed backwards

Add in the 4 defenders



- If the striker can't pressure the ball – send the flank player
- Fullback “bump,” the flank player to pressure
- Communication – encouraging/convincing

Add in the two strikers for the attacking team



- When the "Bump," occurs, the 4 defenders need to slide across
- Fullback – be channel side of the striker
- Bump – if the attacking outside midfielder turns and runs forward, the defending outside midfielder must drop with him
- Hard work/organization – buy into working for each other

11 v. 11 - Schellas ended the session with a 11 vs. 11 game under two different scenarios

1. Losing 1-0 – play high pressure
2. Winning 1-0 – play low pressure

Question and Answer Forum

A look at EPL and Dutch Youth Academies

Question #1 - How many hours per week do the young kids train in the youth academies?

Jan – It depends on the age of the player. At Ajax, U8 – U13 players train three times a week. Our U14 –U19 players train four times a week.

Tony – At West ham, it also depends on the age of the player. Our U9 – U12 players train for 75 minutes three times a week and also play a morning match every Sunday. U12 – U16 players train four times a week, and our U16 – U19 players train four times a week and play a match on every Saturday.

Question #2 - What qualities do you look for when recruiting a Young player

Jan – Technical quality of the player is the main criteria.

Tony – At West Ham, the criteria we look for includes but is not limited to: natural ability, good technique, speed/size (these become more of a factor when deciding whether or not to take a player on a full time basis), and a player's ability to effect a match.

Question # 3 - How important are small sided games? Who often are they used and when do you bring them in?

Jan – At Ajax small sided games make up a significant portion of our training regimen; approximately 35-40%.

Tony – At West Ham, most of training consists of small sided games. We rarely play 11 vs. 11 matches in training, especially at the younger ages. Our U8 – U11 players never play more than 4 vs. 4. A smaller sided game gets players more touches/contact on the ball but also brings out all aspects of the games allowing you to isolate both groups and individuals.

Question #4 – What is your clubs developmental philosophy by age group?

Jan – At Ajax we expose our players to 11 vs. 11 as soon as possible.

Tony – At West Ham, the player development is very specific to individuals and individual age groups. We recognize the fact that players develop at different rates. To a certain extent, tailoring player development to individuals allows us decide whether we wait for a slow developer to improve or cut them loose. In a nut shell, at West Ham we're looking for every player and every group/team to improve every year. You really don't know what your finished product will look like until the end.

Question # 5 - If a player is technically and tactically better than other players, will you move him up to a higher age group if he is not physically ready?

Jan – At Ajax, it's not based on individual aspects of a player's game. These types of decisions are based on a total combination of qualities. If a player is small, but can compensate based due in part to strengths in other parts of his game, we will move that player up.

Tony – At West Ham, we make the judgment based on the individual. We believe that we need to constantly challenge our more talented players. Therefore if their physical stature is a factor,

we find ways to cope with that impediment. For example, we may move up a player who struggles physically, but play him for shorter periods of time in a game. If the age group that an individual is not appropriate, we simply move the player up or down to an appropriate level.

Question #6 - Do you do most of technical work unopposed or opposed?

Jan – At Ajax, approximately 60% of technical drills are done without pressure, which leaves 40% consisting of an exercise with some degree of pressure

Tony – At West Ham, most of our technical work is unopposed so that the players acquire good habits and build confidence. In order to develop technique it must be taught in the early stages unopposed. We build in pressure in the small sided games.

Question #7 - How do you structure your midfield? i.e. Is it flat, or a diamond?

Tony – At West Ham, it depends on the players that we have in each team. A good coach will look at his players and decide what suits his team best; then develop those players for those positions. I personally like one player to get forward and one to hold.

Jan – At Ajax, before the players reach the age of 15, all of our teams play in a 4-3-3. From age 15-19, many factors dictate the shape of our midfield. One of those factors is who we have available as players and what characteristics the players possess. The coaches who work with the older age groups choose what shape suits their teams best. -

Question #8 - At what age do you start working on heading drills?

Tony - Heading was once an intricate part of the English game. However, the game today is more European than it has been. To what it once was, heading is somewhat of a lost art in the English game. At West Ham, we start to encourage the kids to use their head if the ball is in the air at a very young age. As the players age heading starts to become more and more important.

Wayne Harrison – Areas of Awareness

AREAS OF AWARENESS

The Awareness process is having an awareness (an understanding) of all options available “**before you get the ball**” and looking ahead of the ball (and getting the feet right to receive the ball), and once you get it to make the correct decisions based on this prior and ongoing information. This is designed to help the player keep possession more easily and not get caught and lose it.

Possession of it can then be broken down into “**possession with few touches**” (which is epitomized by the way Arsenal in England plays the game using lots of one and two touch plays) and possession with many touches (such as dribbling or running with the ball). This awareness before possession of the ball includes keeping the head up whilst about to control the ball, knowing where team mates are, where opponents are, where the spaces are, but at the same time keeping an eye on and possession of the ball.

On the other hand once the player has the ball, if they decide the right option is to dribble or run with this and thus maintain possession of it themselves with more touches, then that brings in another type of awareness which is that of what to do **during possession and the ensuing maintenance of the ball**, as opposed to an awareness of what to do with it **before receiving and as they receive it**. Learning all types of awareness takes a lot of work, practice and training.

We can further break down awareness to that “**On the Ball**” and also that “**Off the Ball**”.

“**On the Ball**” signifies the player about to receive it or who has just received it, “**Off the Ball**” refers to all the other players who are not directly involved in possession of the ball, yet, basically the other 10 players on the field but particularly those around and close to the ball who may be in the best positions to help the player on the ball. They need to be moving into good open space to help the player about to receive the ball to help them keep possession by moving it on quickly if that is the required decision. So 4 areas of awareness; On the Ball Awareness before receiving, On the Ball awareness as the player receives it and moves it on quickly using 1 or 2 touches only; On the Ball awareness if the player keeps it using several touches; and “Off the Ball”, awareness of players getting open early to help the player On the Ball. This works if **all players** are in synch and thinking ahead of the ball and not just the player **on** the ball.

Our focus here in this session is mainly Awareness On the Ball with few touches on it (the beautiful way Arsenal in England play for example), moving the ball on quickly with one or two touches and being able to psychologically think ahead and identify the next correct pass to keep possession. We will finish the clinic by combining “Awareness On the ball with few touches” and Awareness “Off the ball” with two fast moving themed games to link the two.

We are trying to establish the following in the players make up:

- A. WHAT they do? (The technique or skill used; and what are the options to move or pass the ball depending on the position on the field of play).
- B. WHERE they do it? (Position on the field can dictate this in the decision making process).
- C. WHEN they do it? (The timing of the technique or skill used).
- D. HOW they do it? (The selection of the technique or skill used).
- E. WHY they do it? (The tactical objective).
- F. What is the END PRODUCT?

Introduction

I first got the idea of this type of training when Alan Ball, (for the older ones amongst us who will know of him), whom I played with at Blackpool Football Club in England when he joined us as player – head coach as he was winding down his career. Alan Ball was a World Cup winner with England in 1966

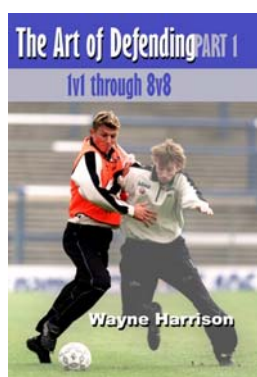
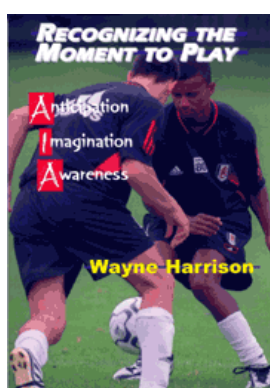
playing 72 times for his country and who had a distinguished career in England. He epitomized the one touch play this type of training develops, rather like Paul Scholes of Manchester United, Fabregas of Arsenal, and Alonso of Liverpool do today. Bally actually used to say he only needed **HALF A TOUCH!!** I believe him - having seen him play if there is such a thing!!

The fact no one could get near him (because by the time you had closed him down the ball had gone) and he rarely lost possession in games or in training even at 37 years old at the time proved that.

Alan Ball was my inspiration for this method of play, as was Eric Harrison who is referenced to later.

It has never been more important in soccer to be able to be good at this type of play as the game continues to get faster and faster at all levels of play so decision making has to be faster too.

So, based on their simple concepts, I have developed the idea further that had lead to a book on the topic (Recognizing the Moment to Play).

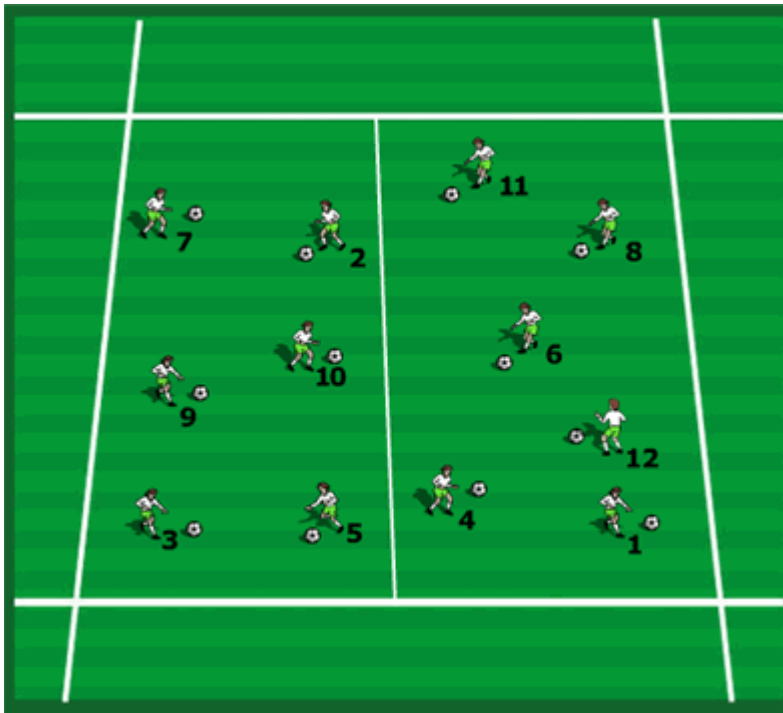


THE DECISION MAKING THOUGHT PROCESSES THE PLAYER IS GOING THROUGH AT ANY ONE TIME IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. OBSERVING WHERE THE BALL IS COMING FROM.
2. OBSERVING HOW THE BALL IS COMING.
3. KNOWING WHERE THEIR TEAMMATES ARE.
4. KNOWING WHERE THE OPPOSITION PLAYERS ARE.
5. DECIDING "WHAT" SHOULD THE PLAYER DO WITH THE BALL. THE TECHNIQUE / SKILL TO USE (EMPHASIS ON A GOOD FIRST TOUCH) - PASS, RUN, SHOOT, CROSS, DRIBBLE, DUMMY / LEAVE. (NARROW THE LIST OF POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FROM ALL AVAILABLE OPTIONS).
6. OBSERVING "WHERE" TO PLAY THE BALL. (ASSESS OPEN SPACES AND SUPPORTING OPTIONS ON THE FIELD).
7. DECIDING "WHEN" TO PLAY THE BALL. (TIMING OF THE TECHNIQUE / SKILL USED).
8. DECIDING "HOW" TO PLAY THE BALL. (SELECT A SPECIFIC SKILL TO USE).
9. DECIDING "WHY" A GIVEN CHOICE IS BEST. (COMPARE ALL OPTIONS WITH THE TEAM'S TACTICAL OBJECTIVES).

PROGRESSION 1

DEVELOPING AWARENESS IN POSSESSION OF THE BALL THROUGH A FUN POSSESSION GAME WITH A BALL EACH



This is a good Warm Up

1. Each of 12 players has a ball to play with. They must protect their own soccer ball but at the same time try to kick someone else's ball out the area. When your ball is kicked out you cannot kick anyone else's ball out. You can vary the game by allowing them chances, maybe up to three each before they are ultimately out of the game. When they are out have them juggle the ball to keep practicing skills.
2. Play until the last player is left with their own ball still and everyone else's ball has been kicked out. This player is the winner.

3. Variations can be you have three areas of play they can work in. They start in one then if they are kicked out they go to the next and so on, this way they get two chances but also you can have two winners in each group with an overall winner at the end. Or you can just decrease the area they are playing in to make it harder as there is less space to work in.

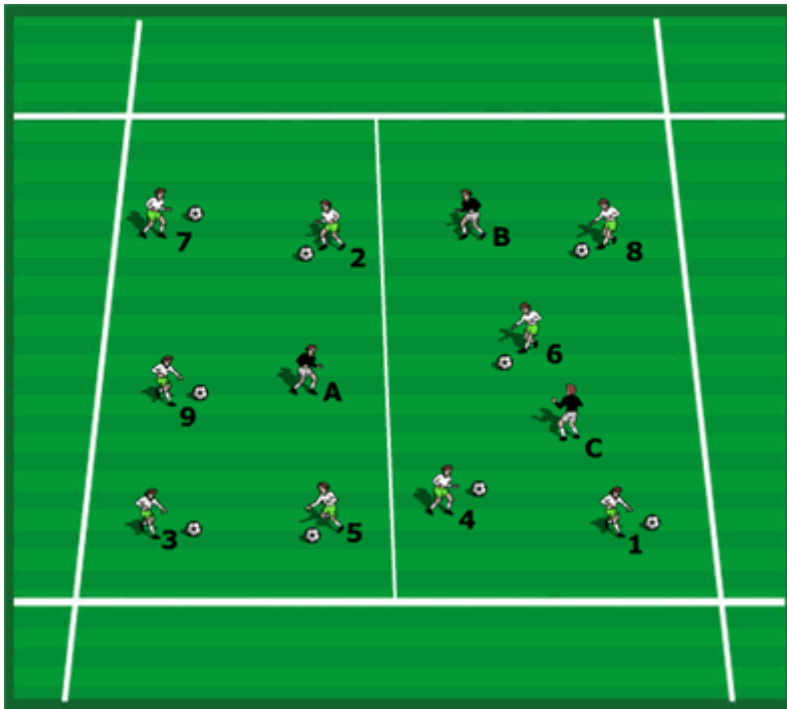
4. Coaching Points

- a) Awareness of where other players are whilst maintaining possession of the ball ensuring players are looking around away from their own ball not just down at it.
- b) Dribbling and Turning,
- c) Shielding,
- d) Tackling,
- e) Anaerobic Fitness work.

This is a practice that is fun but ensures relevant skills are practiced by the players.

PROGRESSION 2

A GAME WORKING ON AWARENESS IN POSSESSION OF THE BALL



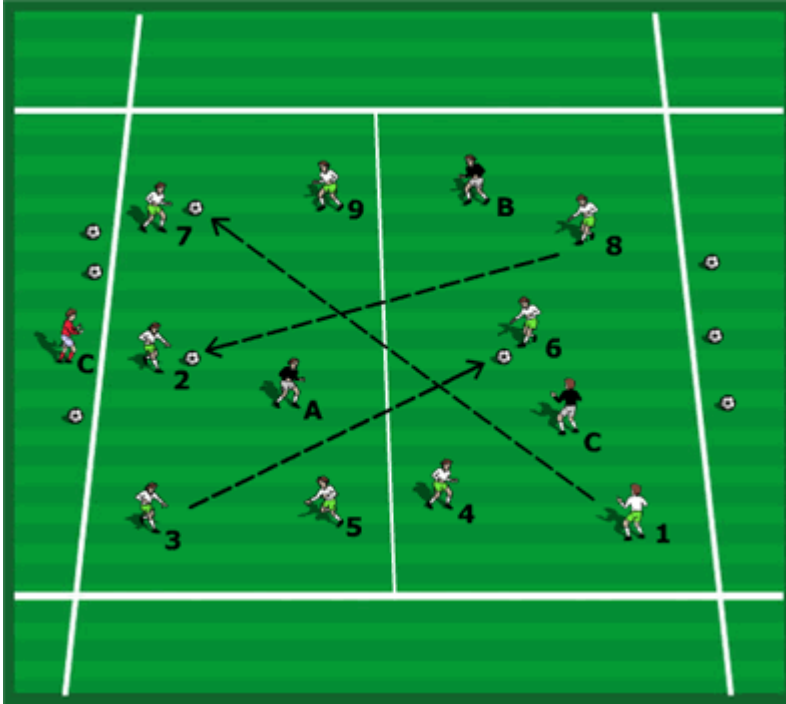
1. There are 12 players in this clinic (it can be any number), 9 with a ball, 3 without. The 3 players without a ball have to try and win a ball off a player with a ball and pass it to the coach. If a player has lost their soccer ball then they can join in with the other players helping them keep possession by passing and support play.

EMPHASISE LOOKING AROUND, LOOKING OVER THE SHOULDER.

2. To make this competitive rotate the players so different groups of 3 work together, **time** each group to see who does this in the quickest time.

3. This represents winning the ball and keeping possession in a game, rather than kicking it out of play and losing possession again in a game.

4. The session develops from an individual 1 v 1 attacking / defending work out to a passing and support situation. You can work on the defenders by encouraging them to work as a team, maybe in 2's for instance to have a better chance of winning the soccer balls. The defenders can pass the ball around between themselves until one can find the coach with a pass. Attackers during this time can try to win it back before it goes out the area and keep possession.



1. This is showing the progression of the session where the defenders have won 6 balls and got 3 to the coach thus maintaining possession if it were likened to a game.

2. Coaches can move around so the players have to have an awareness of where the coach is to pass to.

Coaching Points

Attackers with the ball –

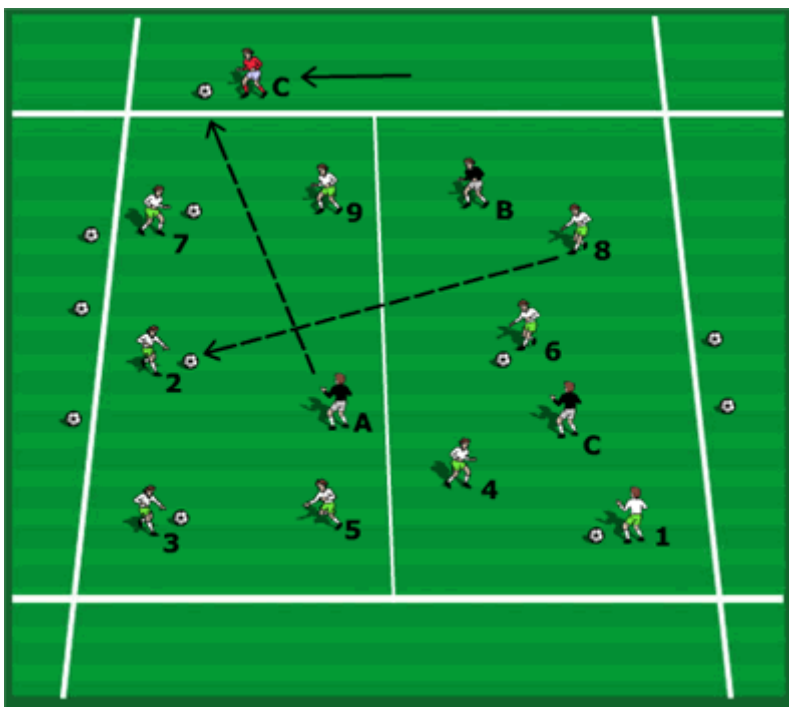
- a) Dribbling and turning practice,
- b) Shielding the ball,
- c) Moving and support play,
- d) Quality of passing, players keep possession by passing between each other once one or more lose their ball.
- e) Awareness of positions of both sets of players and where the spaces are.

Defenders without the ball –

- a) Practicing defensive pressurizing skills,
- b) Team work (in 2's or more) to win the ball using supporting defensive skills – Angle / Distance / Communication,
- c) Maintaining possession after winning the ball,
- d) Awareness of the player to pass to (the coach or a team mate to get it to the coach),
- e) Quality of the pass once they win the ball.

4. The essence of this game is it is fun and competitive for the players but it also provides a situation where they are learning important skills.

5. **Every ball** won by a defender **must** be passed to the coach to show they have won the ball but also **kept possession** of the ball. This teaches the players the importance of not just winning possession of the ball but also trying to maintain possession after winning it. If the defending player passes the ball to the coach and it is not accurate and does not get to the coaches feet then the attacker who had the ball gets it back to continue in possession. This ensures quality of passing from the defender who has won back the ball in the first place.



6. **Develop** – Make it a two team game, one defends, one attacks, time each team as to how long it takes for them to win possession of each ball and make a successful pass to the coach. The clock stops when all the 6 balls have been passed successfully to the coach.

7. Now defenders need to have awareness too as when they win the ball they need to know quickly where the coach is to pass the ball to and consequently be successful. So, whilst they are defending trying to win the ball they are also watching the coach in their peripheral vision to see where he or she is.

PROGRESSION 3

DEVELOPING AWARENESS “BEFORE” RECEIVING THE BALL: TWO TEAMS PLAYING “THROUGH” EACH OTHER

Divide the players into two teams, a ball each team, passing and moving in the same area passing through each other, but not playing against each other. Each team can't take the other team's ball.

This is an incredibly simple exercise but one I watched a famous Youth coach, Eric Harrison at Manchester United do many years ago at an FA Symposium with Beckham, Scholes, the Neville's and Ryan Giggs to name a few famous players he developed through the youth academy. He told us he used this for his warm up every day to develop his player's awareness on and off the ball.

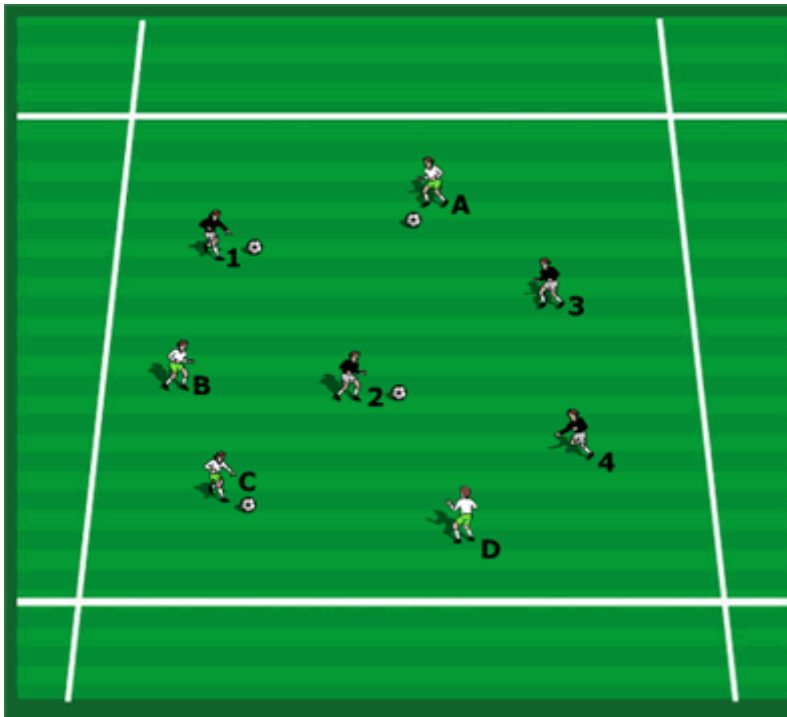
Technical/Tactical Design

Lots of touches on the ball are achieved in this practice.

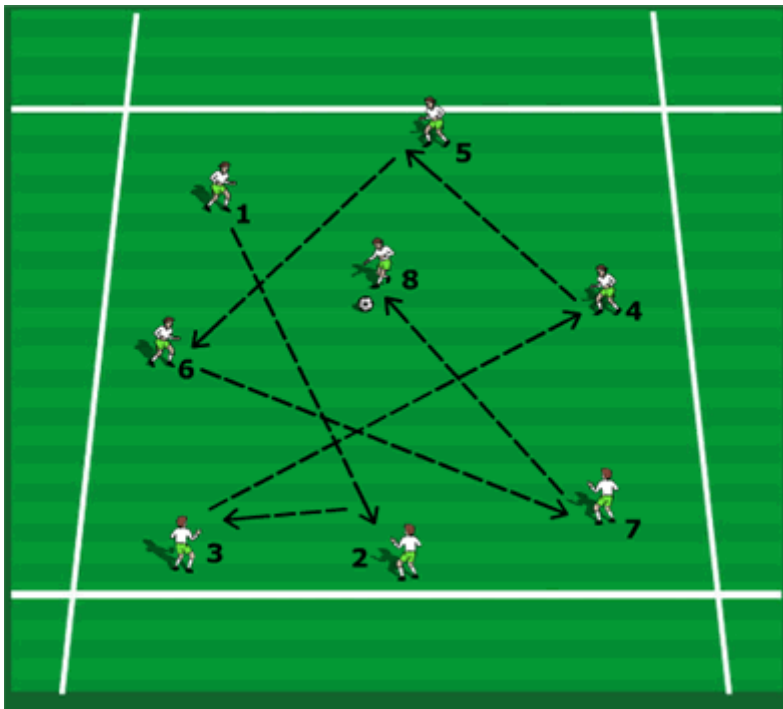
- a) The players must play with their heads up (so they view what is around).
- b) Look over the shoulder before receiving the ball.
- c) Body stance open to receive the ball.
- d) Move the ball on the 1st touch away from pressure and into space or towards where you are passing it or **one touch transfer** if that pass is on.
- e) Awareness of teammates positions on the field in advance.
- f) Awareness of opponents positions on the field in advance.
- g) Passing to space to move players into a better position on the field
- h) Passing to feet.
- i) Turns / dribbles / 1t / 2t, free play.
- j) Communication (key words).
- k) Support Angles / distances to help the player on the ball.

Develop

- a) Increase the **number** of soccer balls per team.
- b) Pass to **opposite** colors. Below we have several balls being passed.
- c) Progress to an **overload game**, for example 3 v 3 v 3, before going to an equal numbers two team game of **possession**.



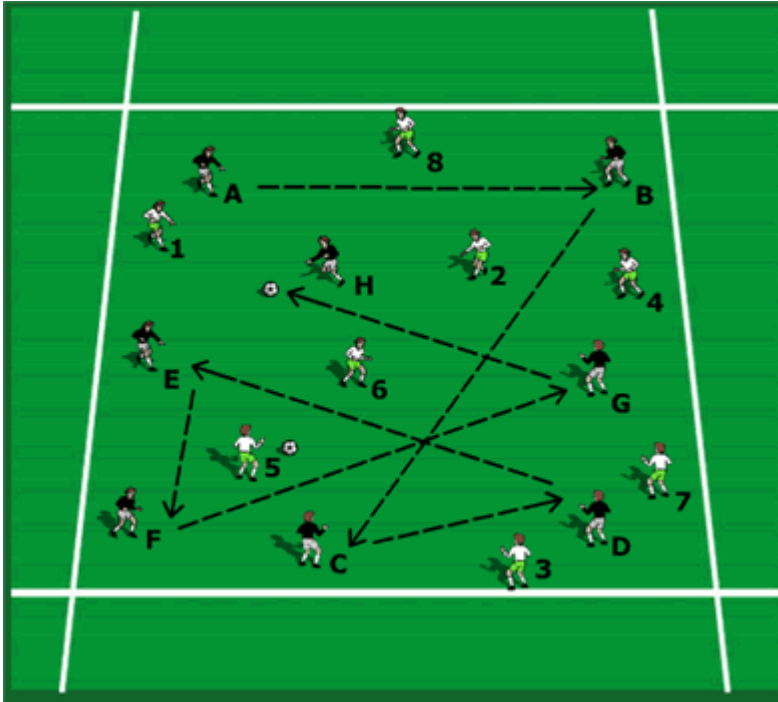
PROGRESSION 4
IMPROVING AWARENESS “BEFORE” RECEIVING THE BALL THROUGH A SIMPLE
NUMBERS CONDITIONED GAME



1. The numbers game **FORCES** the players to look before they receive by the very condition placed on them. There are 6 Players and only 1 ball to begin. Players must pass in **sequence** i.e. 1 passes to 2; 2 passes to 3; 3 to 4 and so on to 6 who passes to 1 and we begin again. You can have player's **static** to begin as easy introductions to the theme then have them passing and **moving**. In a roster of 12 players 2 groups of 6 can do this in **different areas separately** to begin.
2. Player **receives** from the same person and **passes** to the same person each time. This develops great awareness of time, space and player positions. This is continuous work on and off the ball. Awareness of: **where** the player you **receive** from is and **where** the player you **pass** to is. Because of this players begin to **anticipate** the pass to them and where it is coming from. Also they must look to where it is going to (where is the player they are passing to?).
3. We are trying to create a situation where players are looking **two moves** ahead not just one. For instance as (1) is about to pass to (2), (3) should be looking to support (2) for the next pass already, looking two moves ahead before the ball leaves (1). Likewise, (2) should already know where (3) is to pass to.
4. **Peripheral Vision Development** results from this.
5. **Develop:** Use **two** balls then **three** balls at the same time. Start with a ball at (1) and (5) then at (1), (4) and (6). To keep the sequence going players must move the balls quickly with few touches hence their peripheral vision development improves dramatically. As soon as they have passed one ball off the next one is arriving so **quick thinking** is needed to make the correct decisions.
6. **Coaching Points:**
 - a) Awareness of where the player to receive from is before receiving the pass

- b) Getting into position to help the passer make a successful pass
- c) Awareness of where the player to pass to is before receiving the pass
- d) Open Body position to receive the pass to enable a resulting one touch pass if necessary

PROGRESSION 5: SEMI – COMPETITIVE AWARENESS NUMBERS GAME: PASSING IN SEQUENCE



1. Now have 2 teams passing separately **1 to 6** in “**each team**”, with a ball each team in the same area. The example shows the passing of the numbers team, of course players will be **moving** but for the simplicity of the idea I show it this way.

2. Develop:

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

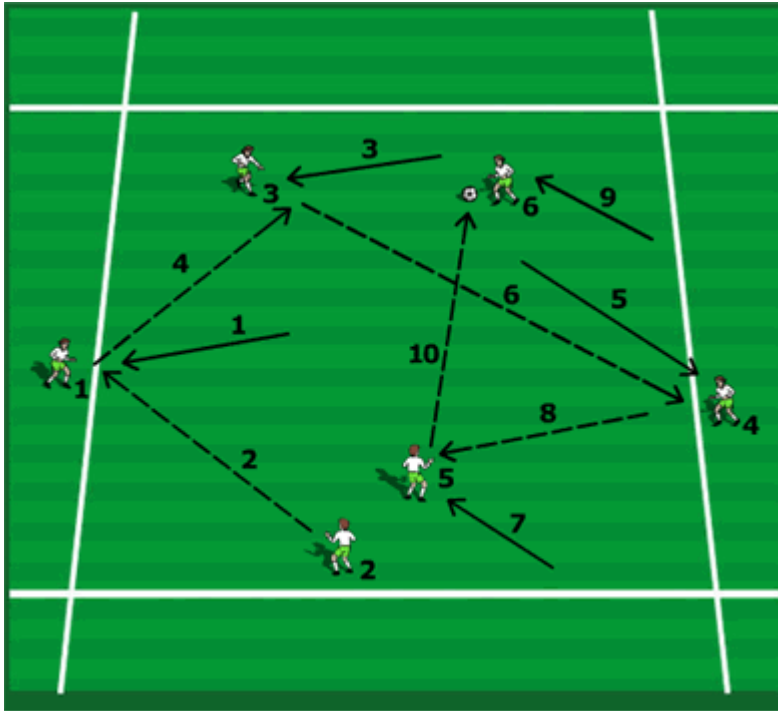
3. Emphasize:

- a) Movement “**off**” the ball to **open up angles** for passes between other players.
- b) **Communication** verbally between players to help them identify where they are; passing player can call who they are passing to, receiving player can ask for the pass.
- c) Ensure players spread out throughout the area to have them playing both **long and short passes**.
- d) Encourage **fewer touches on the ball** at each reception to move it around the field more quickly helping players develop good transitional play. The actual game is played so **quickly** now they have to develop this talent **as well as** having good individual dribbling and turning ball skills.

PROGRESSION 6

WORKING ON PERIPHERAL VISION “BEFORE” RECEIVING THE BALL THROUGH THE SPECIFIC PERIPHERAL VISION COACHING GAME

A 40x30 area is organized as shown in the Diagram below. Six players are used within the activity. Repeat the setup to accommodate the entire team.



This is a simplified set up to get initial understanding. Increase numbers as previously e.g. two teams of six. We started earlier with one ball and six players for example so each person on the ball had five choices of pass to make and that was easy.

Now we must **identify one** and **only one** pass and must try to make it. That pass is to the person who runs outside the zone. This player is the **free** player (unmarked). The session goes as follows and numbers are used only as a reference only, the players can pass to anyone, in any order, but always looking for that vital run by a player to the outside area:

1. Player (1) runs **outside** the area (perhaps after several passes within the zone).
2. Player (2) on the ball **sees the run** and must **pass** to (1).
3. As (1) is about to receive (as the ball is traveling to him or her) (3) moves into a position to **support** (1) showing anticipation and awareness.
- 4 (3) has **already** seen the run by (4) and passes. (4) Brings the ball back in and the game continues, (4) passes to (5) who has moved into position in anticipation and (5) passes to (6) who also has done the same. This is an indicator of how quickly players recognize the run and consequently make the pass.
5. Hence players are beginning to look one and two moves ahead of the ball. It doesn't need to happen so quickly in terms of the next player running outside but it serves as an example. The run can be likened to a penetrating run into the attacking third where the player hasn't been picked up or tracked and is in a great position to attack and score if the passer sees them and makes that pass.

6. Coaching Points:

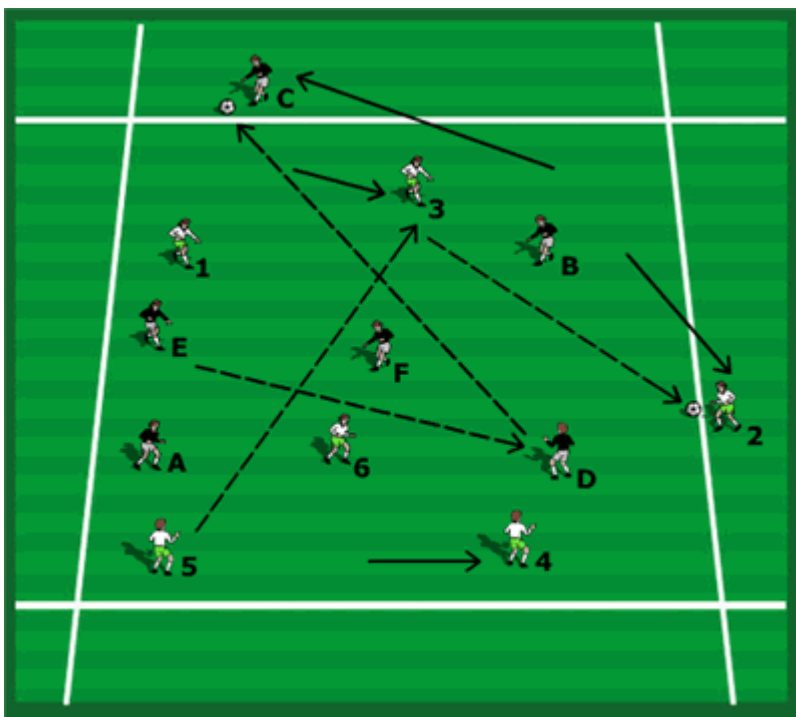
- a) Decision: Movement of the player running out of the area to initiate the move

- b) Observation of this movement or run by this player by the other players
- c) Observation by the **one player** receiving the pass as this movement of a run outside the area is taking place
- d) Decision by this player to make the one pass they need to the outside player
- e) Quality of Passing: A one or two touch pass to the outside player for speed of action to show the run was spotted
- f) Weight of pass to the next passing player so they have the choice of making a one touch pass if they have seen the run
- g) Observation of the receiving player on the outside of the runs of others to receive the next pass
- h) Support Positions: Other players already making movements to help the receiving outside player have options to move the ball quickly with good support in terms of angles, distances and timing.

SPECIFIC PERIPHERAL VISION COACHING SESSION

Further development, ideas and ideals of this practice leading to the introduction of defenders as opposition but in an attacking overload situation.

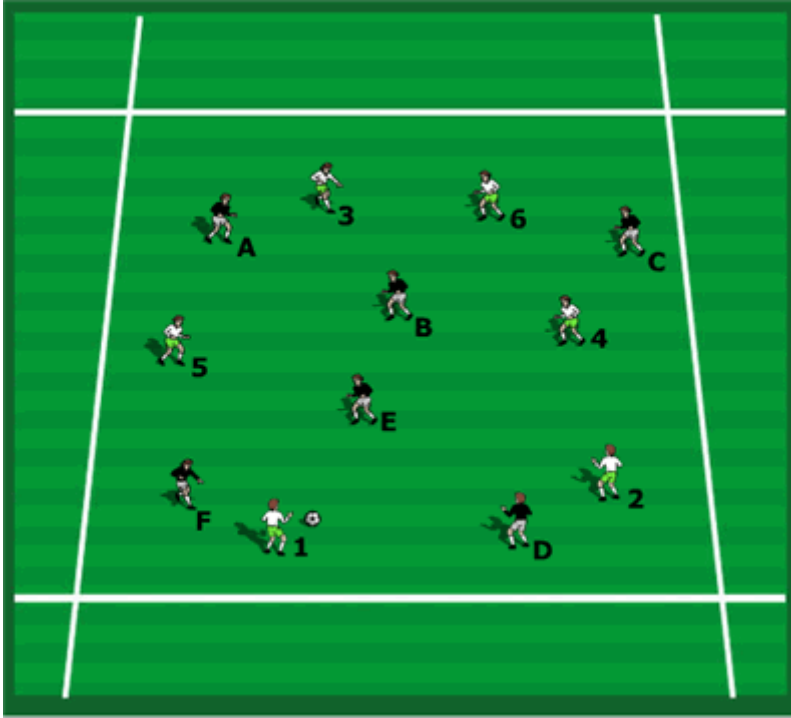
1. Within the zone there are many choices of pass but as soon as a player makes the run outside that is **the** pass to make. Coach can determine the **tempo** of the game e.g. to avoid too many running out at the same time the coach can signal to an individual player to move out without the others knowing so only one at a time goes out.
2. Once the free player is outside and waiting for a pass see how many passes are made inside the zone before someone sees the right pass i.e. to the outside player. This is an indication of which players play with their heads up (and hence have good peripheral vision) and which don't, (hence have poor peripheral vision or even none at all).
3. The fewer touches on the ball the player needs to get the ball there the greater their anticipation of the run. (One touch is the ultimate aim to develop where as the ball is traveling to the player, at the same time another player makes their run out; they see the run and make the pass at the same time).
4. More touches means more reaction time needed and in a game situation this may mean the player being caught in possession before they get around to making the pass.
5. Initially the coach may see several passes made within the area whilst a player stands and waits outside until someone sees them; this will happen less and less as you practice and as the players improve their peripheral vision.
6. The exciting part of this is when the coach sees one of their players make the right pass quickly in a game situation due to the work they have done in this session.



1. Here we have two teams playing in the same area, player (5) passes to player (3). Player (2) as the ball is traveling runs outside the area, player (3) has to see this movement and make the next pass to that player. If (3) makes it with a one touch pass that is excellent as it shows they have seen the run as the ball is arriving and made the quickest pass possible to get the ball to (2). Player (2) then brings the ball back into play and the passing sequences start again.
2. Likewise player (E) on the other team passes to player (D), player (C) runs out of the area and the set up continues.

PROGRESSION 7

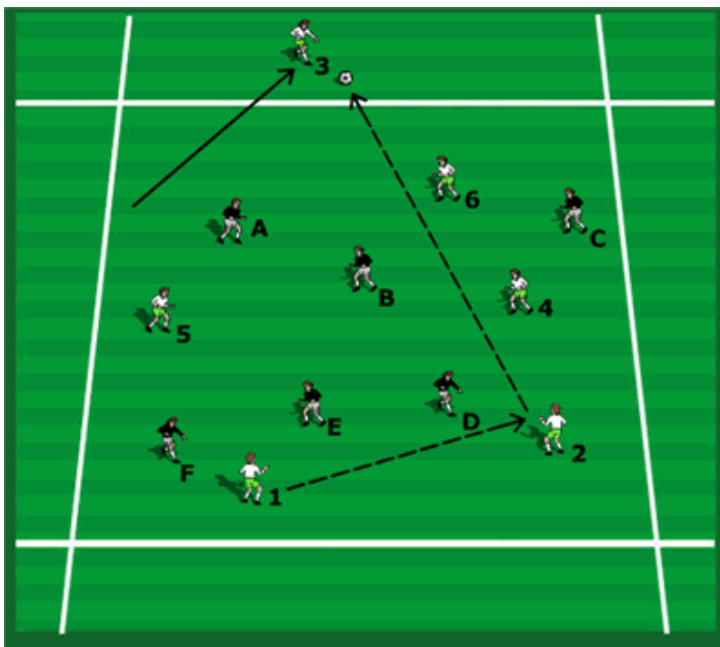
GAME SITUATION (WE WILL USE A 2 TEAM GAME HERE FOR EASE OF TRANSITION BUT AN OVERLOAD THREE TEAM GAME CAN OFTEN BE A BETTER PROGRESSION MOVING TO THE TWO TEAM GAME EVENTUALLY).



1. A two team game for ease of transition in this clinic with limited time (you can use neutral players to make it easier to work initially it is always best to begin with an overload situation to help them make it work). Five passes a goal. The winner is the team who scores the most 5 pass - goals, you may do the first to score ten goals.

4. **Develop**: Include **running out of the area** in the game and if a player does this and receives a pass successfully they get **three goals** for it. Defending players can't track them outside the area.

5. This will encourage players to make outside runs as there is a reward and it will also test the players on the ball as to their peripheral vision and how quickly they identify that particular run. This must happen in less than 6 seconds though and if after a short time the player does not receive a pass then they come back into the game.



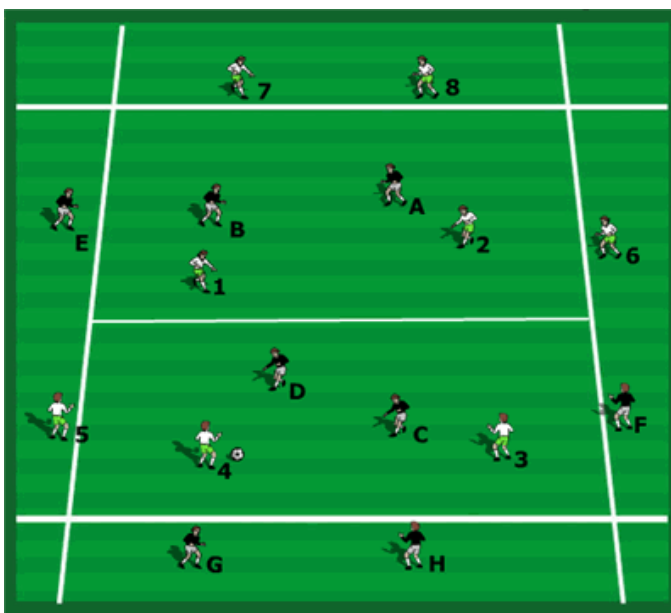
6. Player (3) makes a run out of the area as (1) passes to (2). (2) Sees the run and passes and scores 3 goals. (3) Brings the ball back in and the game continues.

7. You are looking for players to anticipate where (3) needs support and move into position to help.

8. Other players need to move off the ball to get into open positions for the first pass or in anticipation of the next ones.

9. You can also reward a one touch pass with a goal to encourage quick play..

PROGRESSION 8
TEACHING AWARENESS AND MOVEMENT “OFF THE BALL” THROUGH THE
TRANSITION DIRECTIONAL TARGET GAME



1. **Rules:**

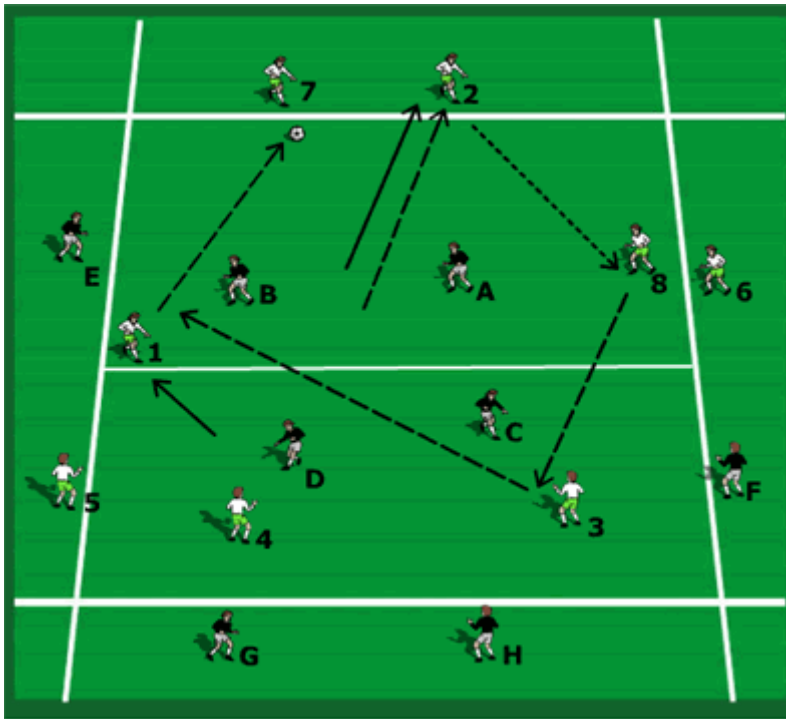
- a) Players must pass the ball to their target players to score. To score again they have to work the ball back into their **own half of the field** to be able to return.
- b) Target players have two touches as do side players.

2. **Coaching Points:**

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

3. **Develop:**

- a) **No** restriction on touches **then** 3, 2 or 1 touch, but only if it is on to do one touch.
- b) All outside and target players have one touch only where possible
- c) switch with target players as they receive the ball.
- d) Switch with outside players



- 1. Here is an example of the transition and movement off the ball to make it happen.
- 2. (2) passes to target player (8) who brings the ball back into the playing area.
- 3. (3) makes a run into the other half of the field on the blind side of (C) to receive the next pass. They need to get the ball into that half to be able to score.
- 4. (1) makes a forward run into space to receive the next pass off (3) and passes to target player (7) who can start the play again.
- 5. (1) switches with (7) and becomes a target player for the next phase of play.
- 6. **Observe the Attacking Team** – Recognize their movement **off** the ball for example to work the ball into their own half see if the players make runs early in there as soon as the ball is at a target, some should support short and some long so the target has choices.

7. **Observe the Defending Team** – see if they are sucked to the ball or they recognize runs **off** the ball and track players making runs away from the ball into the other half.

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

9. **Elements of play the target game teaches**

Attacking as Individuals and as Team

a) **Creating Space** by running **off** the ball to receive or to help a teammate receive.

b) Developing **quick support** play working angles and distances incorporating **switching** play using the side players.

c) **Passing** long and short to targets and to teammates.

d) **Receiving and turning** in tight situations and dribbling in 1 v 1 situation's.

e) Lots of **touches** on the ball for the players in this practice.

f) **Quick decision** making is required in this session because the numbers are small, the area tight and the transitions rapid.

Defending as Individuals and as a Team

a) **Pressurizing** players on the ball to **regain** possession.

b) **Supporting** pressuring players and **tracking** runners off the ball.

c) **High** pressure to regain possession in the attacking half to be able to go straight to the target to score.

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

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

Conditions to impose to change the focus of the game

1. **No** restriction on touches **then** three, two or one touch but only if it is on to do so.

2. Introduce **neutral** player so a 5 v 4 overload in the middle if possession isn't kept easily.

3. **Interchanges** of players outside to in, inside to out as they pass the ball observing the quality of the pass and the first touch of the receiver or performing a crossover.

4. Have one teammate at each end so you are **attacking both ends** but once you have passed to one target you keep possession and must try to get to the other target. You can't go back unless the opposition win the ball and then you get it back, only then can you go back to the same target.

5. To lessen the workload and keep everyone involved have players **switch** with targets and outside players when they pass to them. This causes a constant **transition** of players and focuses the player's concentration.

6. The team can only score if they get an **overlap, crossover or 1 – 2** in during the build up.

7. **No talking** so players have to rely on their own vision to play.

8. Players **move into** the target zone to **receive** (timing of run and pass) so we don't play with actual targets, different players can then become the target player.

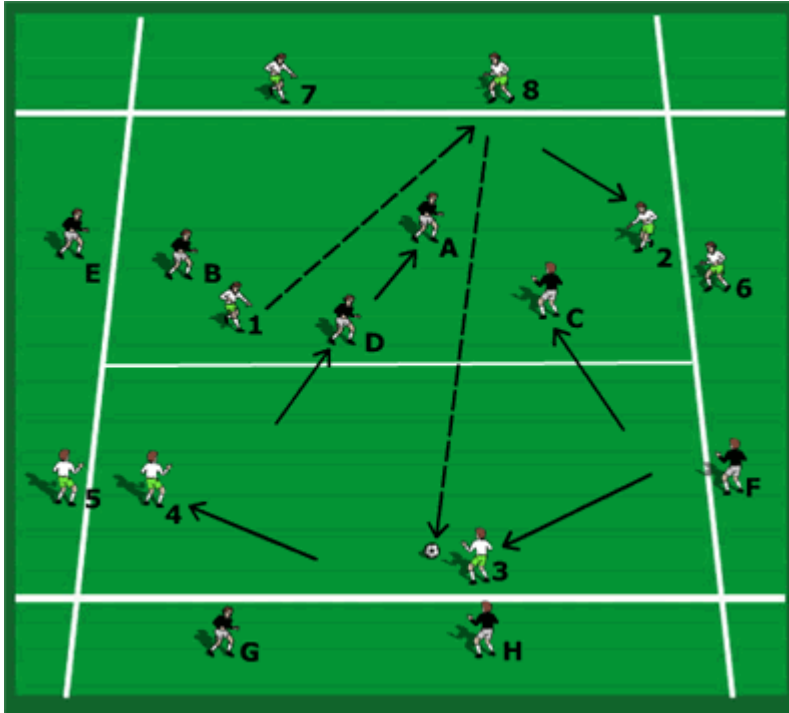
9. **Man – Marking** – Have the players man mark so they must track a player when they haven't the ball and they must lose their marker when they have the ball. This is a good test to see who is working hard and who isn't as they have a designated job to do. You as a coach can see who works to get free of their marker and who works hard to prevent the player they are marking get the ball.

10. This session is particularly good as a **midfield play practice session** as you can liken the start when the ball is at a target as it being a target defender passing it in and to get to the other side through midfield to the other target who is now a striker. Then this target player maintains possession and the team can go the other way, the target striker then becomes a defender for the attacking team starting the move and the other target becomes the striker to pass the ball to. So it is consistent movement end to end with the attacking team from a defender into midfield to a striker.

11. To improve the **speed of thought** reward a successful one touch pass with a goal or point. To score a goal by passing to the target player now reward this with three goals or 3 points.

12. The team in possession can pass back to the opponents target players to help keep possession of the ball. Liken this to passing back to the keeper in a game situation.

GETTING IT WRONG DEFENSIVELY AND / OR GETTING IT RIGHT OFFENSIVELY



1. This is an example of what to look for on the defending side of things.
2. Here the ball has been passed to the target (8) and a goal scored. The defenders are ball watching and not seeing the runs “off the ball” of their opponents.
3. The idea of getting the ball back into the other half before they can score again when in possession highlights these kinds of moments you need to identify in a game situation.
4. (1) plays the ball to target (8) to score. (2) Supports the next pass short and at a wide angle, and (3) and (4) make runs into the other side of the field and off the ball to get free and receive a pass. Defenders are all ball watching and not looking at these runs and so (3) and (4) get free. At the same time you can say it is getting it right offensively.
5. The coach has to identify these situations and stop the game and show the set up and ask the defending players what they need to do.

Things to Identify and Coach

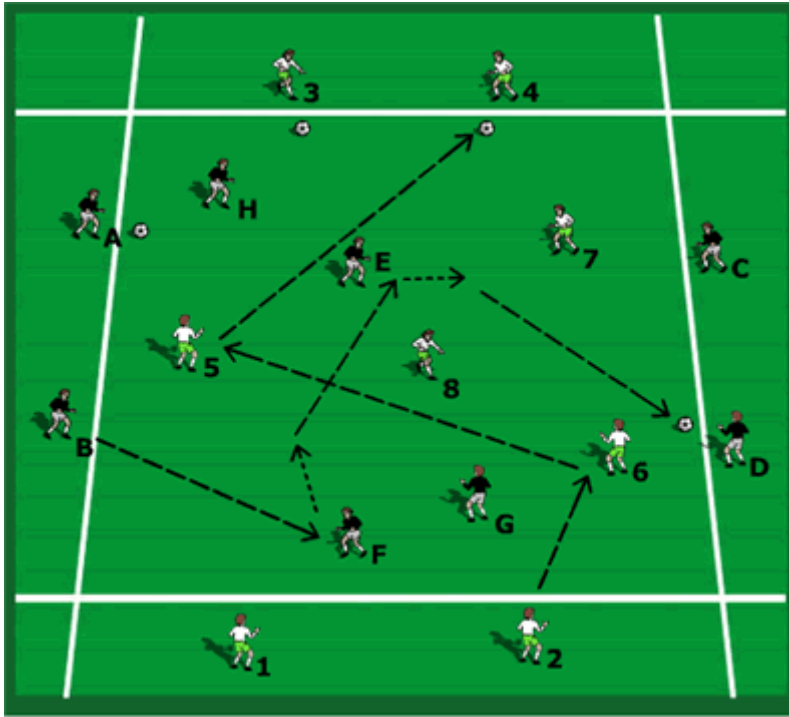
Offensively

1. Lack of movement off the ball of the players in both halves of the field.
2. Poor quality of the passing.
3. Awareness of the players identifying correct decision making of when and where to pass.
4. Poor Communication to help each other.
5. Poor angles and distance of support and lack of variation of these concepts (long; short and wide are needed so lots of options)
6. Mentally slow change from attack to defense when possession changes.

Defensively

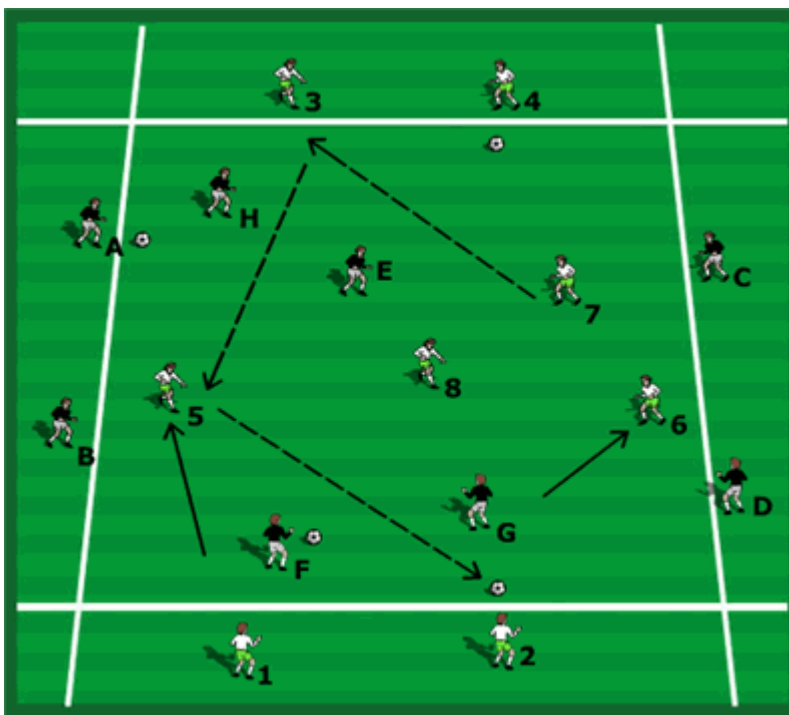
1. Not seeing movements off the ball of the players on the team in possession of the ball and not tracking these runs.
2. Ball watching allowing players to get in behind them.
3. Not pressing the ball quickly enough.
4. Working too much individually and not as a unit.
5. Mentally slow change from defense to attack when possession changes.

PROGRESSION 9
DEVELOPING TEAM PLAY THROUGH A DIRECTIONAL TWO TEAM AWARENESS GAME
EMPHASIZING AWARENESS AND MOVEMENT “OFF THE BALL” THUS HELPING THE PLAYER
“ON THE BALL”



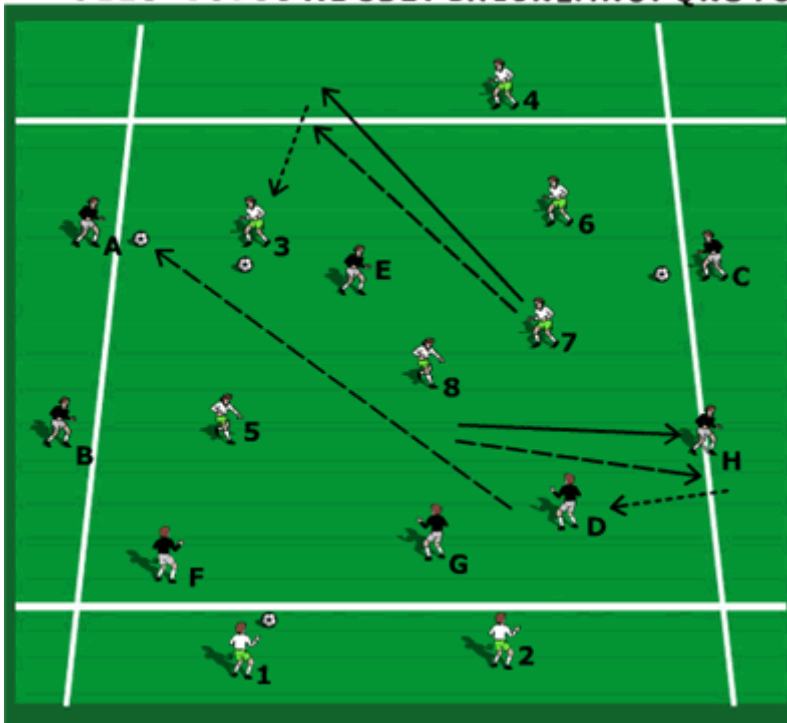
1. Coaching Points:

- a) Awareness of where own players are and where the other teams players are before you get the ball
 - b) Awareness of where the spaces are to move into before you get the ball.
 - c) Quality of the First Touch: First touch into the path you are taking to get the ball to the outside player or one touch transfer if possible
 - d) Support positions of teammates off the ball
 - e) Playing through the other team in the opposite direction testing positional ability
 - f) Directional movement as in a game
 - g) Everything done at pace.
2. Example above of playing through the midfield with another inside player to reach one of the targets.
 3. Each player takes one touch to take the ball in the direction they want to go and the second touch is a pass to the next player.
 4. It may be a one touch pass that is needed depending on the distances involved. It may be they need more touches on the ball because no one is immediately available to receive a pass. Or you may condition it that they need to do a dribble of some sort in the middle before they pass to the next player. There are many variables you can introduce to suit your needs from the clinic.



1. Encouraging players to look ahead of the play. Here (7) passes to outside player (3) and another player (5) is supporting (3) for the next pass, working a triangle of support.
2. (3) Needs someone to pass to and to help (3) make a one touch pass quickly, (5) has already moved as shown and got into position to receive and do this.
3. As (5), who is receiving the pass from (3), gets into an angled support position ensuring their body is open, he or she has to have these things in **mind before** they receive the pass;
 - a) Where is the space to go to in order to receive the pass from (3)?
 - b) who is free at the other end to make the next pass to (so is already looking before the ball arrives)?
 - c) Where is the space to take my next touch (if it open it could be towards the player they are about to pass to), or can I pass it one touch to (1) or (2) on the other side? Here (5) decides to pass to (2) and (6) is already in a position to support (2).

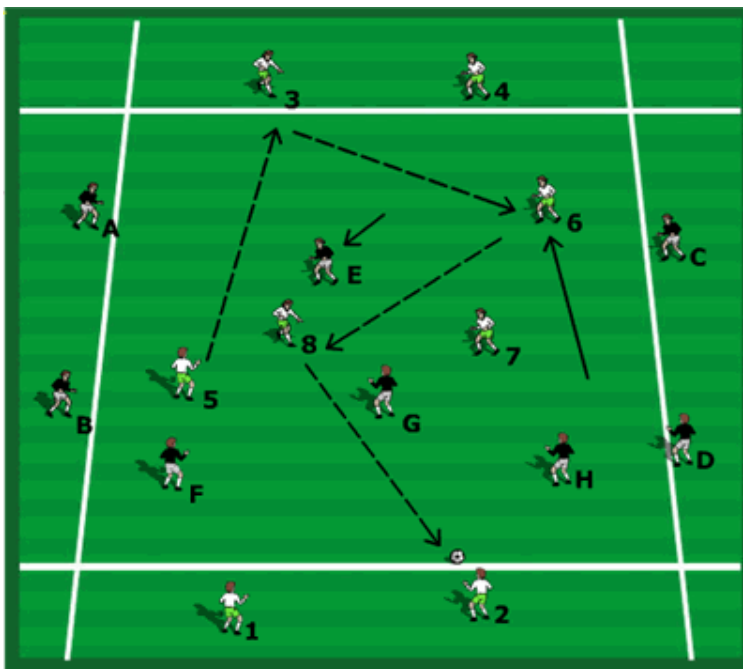
SWITCHING POSITIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE PLAYER



1. Now to involve everyone in the middle have the players **switch positions** when they
2. Pass to an outside player. (7) Passes to (3), and (3) then takes the ball back in with a good first touch to then look to pass to another player and get the ball to the other side.
3. Likewise (D) receives from (H) and runs the ball into the middle to continue the movement, and (H) runs out of the area to be an outside receiver. (D) Then passes to (A) player and switches with them.

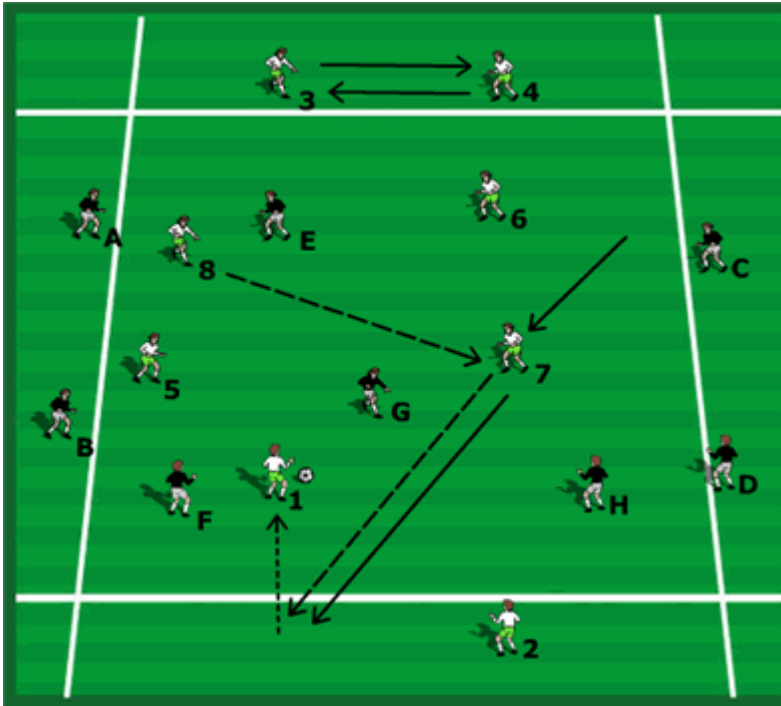
PROGRESSION 10

GAME SITUATION



1. Now we take the session into a game. It is a 4 v 4 game.
2. The inside numbered players work with outside numbered players and score by completing a pass to the outside players. They then have to get the ball to the other side to score again. Inside Letters players work with the outside letters players so teams play in opposite directions.
3. **GAME:** Play to 10 goals then rotate the players so all players get the chance to play.
4. Rotate the teams.
5. Here the number team have scored one goal at one end then switched the play to the other end by quick and accurate passing to score another goal.

GAME SITUATION SWITCHING WITH OUTSIDE PLAYERS



1. Developing the idea with outside players switching with inside players on scoring a goal with a pass.
2. **Progression:** Introduce scoring a goal by making a successful **one touch pass** within the game to encourage the players to think quickly and make instant decisions when they receive the ball.
3. Have outside players switching positions so when they receive the pass it is to a moving player and not one stood still. This is more passing to space than to feet, to where the players is going to on the outside as they switch with their teammate.

Conclusion

These are just a few ideas of many ways you can begin to teach your players the essentials of Awareness on and off the ball. This concept is an increasingly important part of the game that players have to develop to be able to improve their play and better maintain possession of the ball during the ever increasing pace of the game.

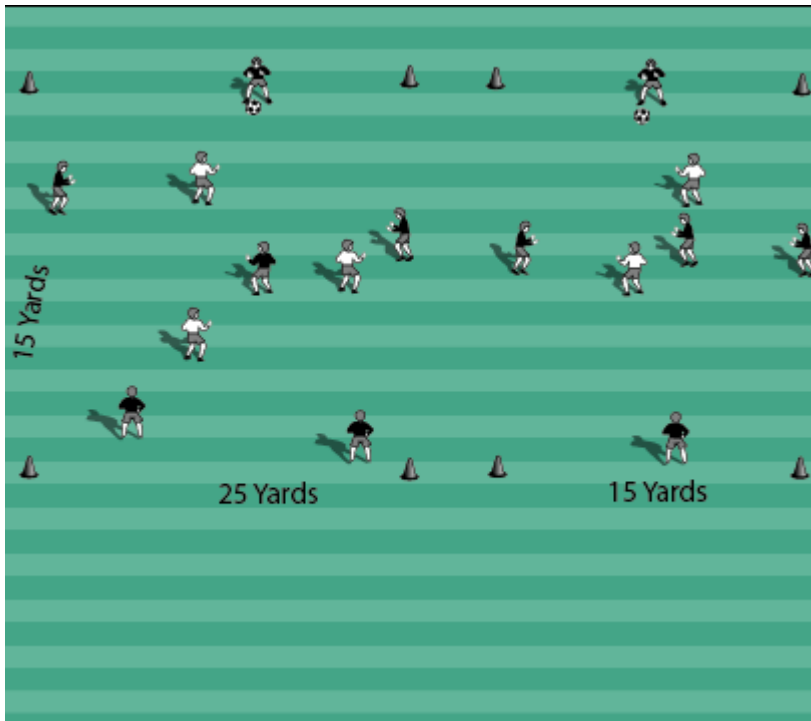
Jan Pruijn – “The Ajax Way”

Small-Sided Games

Introduction

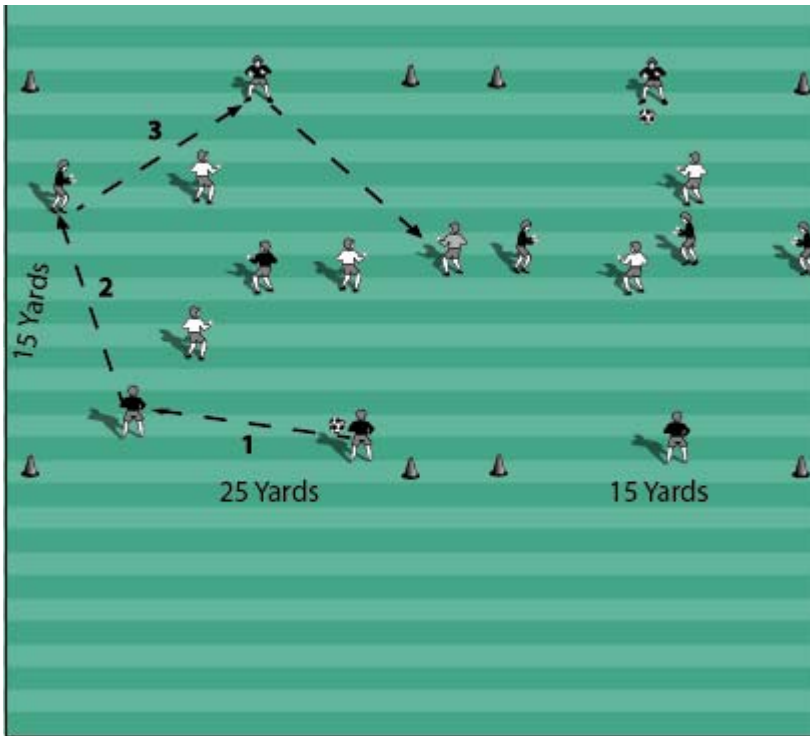
- a. Clinician: Jan Pruijn
- b. Players: William Jewell Men's Soccer Team
- c. Session Objective: Show a series of possession oriented small sided games
- d. Coaching Principles
 - i. Setting up the exercise is more important than the actual drill
 - ii. Keep it simple for the players
 - iii. Look for teaching moments

Exercise #1



- e. Objective: Keep Possession
- f. **Organization**
 - i. 6 vs. 3 in grid #1 (15 yards by 25 yards)
 - ii. 5 vs. 2 in grid #2 (15 yards by 15 yards)
- g. **Coaching Points**
 - i. Play the ball in the right way
 - 1. Keep the ball on the ground if possible
 - 2. Use the appropriate surface to receive and pass the ball
 - ii. Stay inside the grid

Exercise #2 (Progression)



h. Objective: Keep Possession

i. **Organization**

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

1. Rules:

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

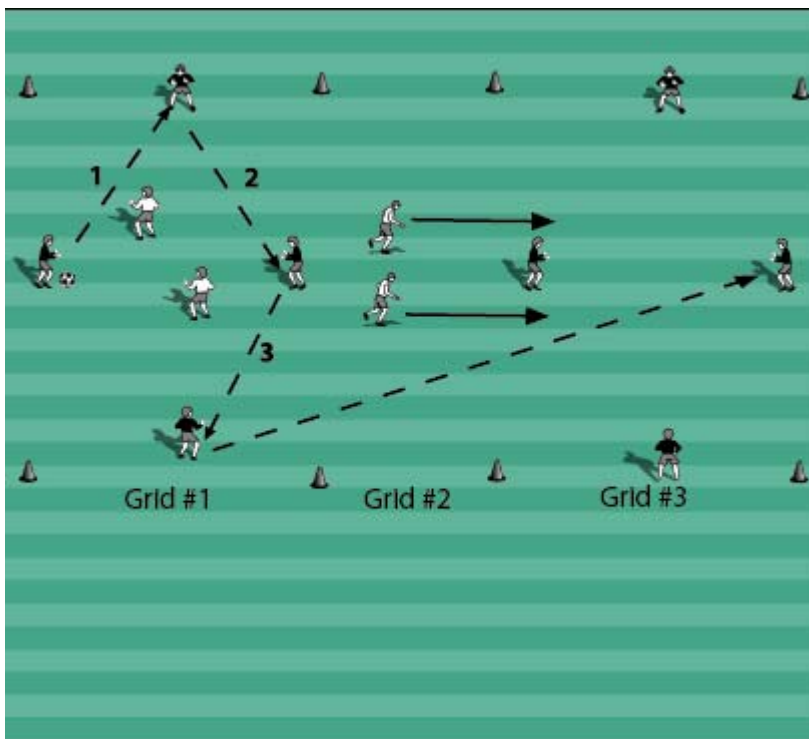
2. **Coaching Points**

- After 3 passes look for the penetrative pass into the target rather than the square $\frac{1}{2}$ pass
- It is better to control and pass along the ground than to play a poor first time pass in the air
- Support the ball into the target player early
- Target Player: Control the ball with your first touch, then pass
- Take responsibility: Help each other by communicating the number of accomplished passes
- Body Shape: Receive the ball on a $\frac{1}{2}$ turn to give yourself the option of passing first time into the target
- Assess the situation and decide whether to play one touch or more than one touch

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

1. Rules:
 - a. Keep possession
 - b. Mandatory 2 touches
2. **Attacking Coaching Points**
 - a. Pass the ball to where the defenders are not focusing
 - b. Try to split the defenders (Look for a solution that makes it harder for the defenders to cope)
3. **Defending Coaching Points**
 - a. Pressure: Look for a bad touch and then quickly press the ball
4. Challenge #1: Count how many times you can consecutively pass the ball without the defenders intercepting it (2 minute interval)
5. Challenge #2: Connect more consecutive passes than you did under challenge #1.

Exercise #3 (Progression)



- j. Objective: Keep possession and change the point of attack
- k. **Organization**
 - i. 4 vs. 2 in grid #1
 - ii. 2 players in grid #2
 - iii. 4 players in grid #3
- l. Rules: The team in possession must complete 3 consecutive passes and transfer ball to the other side of the grid. Upon transfer of the ball to the other grid, the 2

players in the middle grid must defend against the 4 players in the other grid. The defending players in the middle grid may try to intercept the ball as it travels to the other grid.

m. Attacking Coaching Points

- i. Recognize the situation and understand what the coach is asking from you as a player
- ii. Prepare for the next move: After you have passed the ball to the other grid, fix your shape in preparation to receive the next pass
- iii. Recognize the completion of the third pass and play the ball to the other grid
- iv. Communication: Help each other by giving instruction

n. Defending Coaching Points

- i. Watch and Prepare
 - ii. Try to block the passing lanes
- o. Progression: Add 4 more defenders to introduce transition. If the defenders win it, they now become attackers

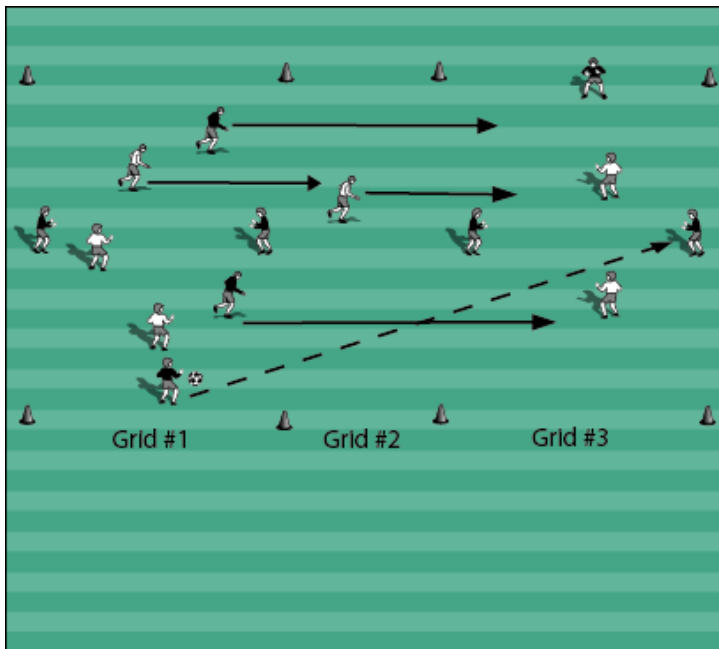
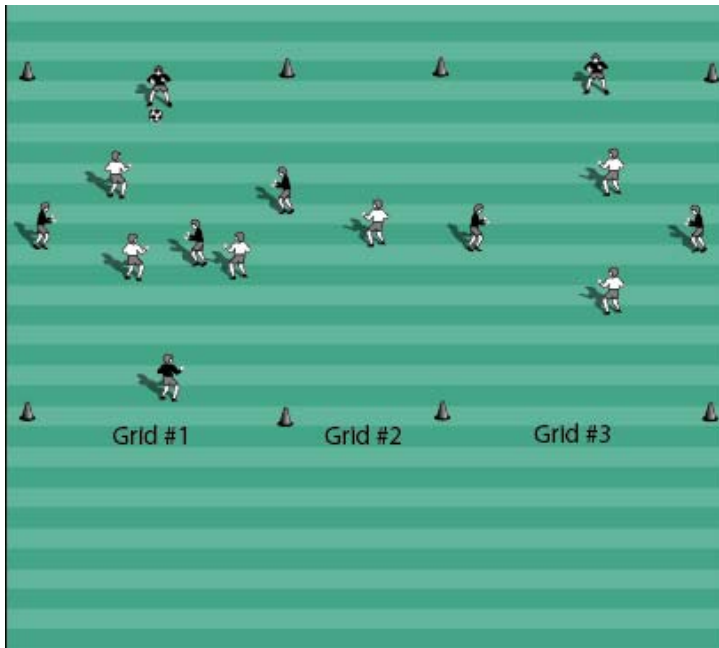
i. Attacking Coaching Points

1. Prepare yourself in every situation and expect the unexpected
2. Don't let the ball bounce
3. Keep the ball on the ground

ii. Defending Coaching Points

1. Recognize when to squeeze up and when to drop off
 - a. If the pass is slow and you can get there, put immediate pressure on the ball
 - b. If the pass is quick and you cannot get there, concede space first and then pressure the ball
2. Be prepared to transition from defending to attacking quickly

Exercise #4 (Progression)



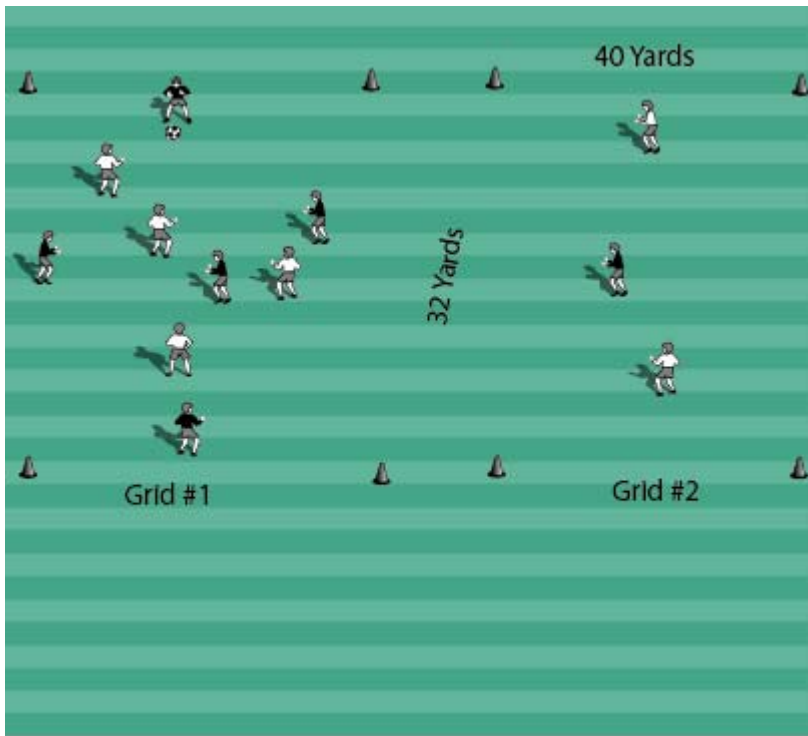
- p. Objective: Keep possession
- q. Rules: Keep possession; if the defenders with the ball, dribble the ball outside the grid. As the ball is transferred to the other grid, two attacking players must also transfer to the other grid to make 5 vs. 3.
- r. **Organization**
 - i. 5 vs. 3 in grid #1
 - ii. One player in grid #2
 - iii. 3 vs. 2 in grid #3

s. Coaching Points

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

Exercise #5 (Progression)

Objective: Keep Possession



t. Organization:

- i. 5 vs. 4 in grid #1 (32 yards by 40 yards)
- ii. 2 vs. 1 in grid #2 (32 yards by 40 yards)

u. Rules:

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

v. Attacking Coaching Points

- i. Fix your shape – If you make the field too small, you help the defenders
- ii. Width and Depth
- iii. Change your angle to provide an early solution
- iv. Fix your shape so that you create triangles rather than straight lines

- v. Weight of the pass
- vi. Use the correct surface to receive and pass
- vii. When to pass, when to dribble
 - 1. Play one touch if you are under pressure
 - 2. Dribble to relieve pressure, then pass

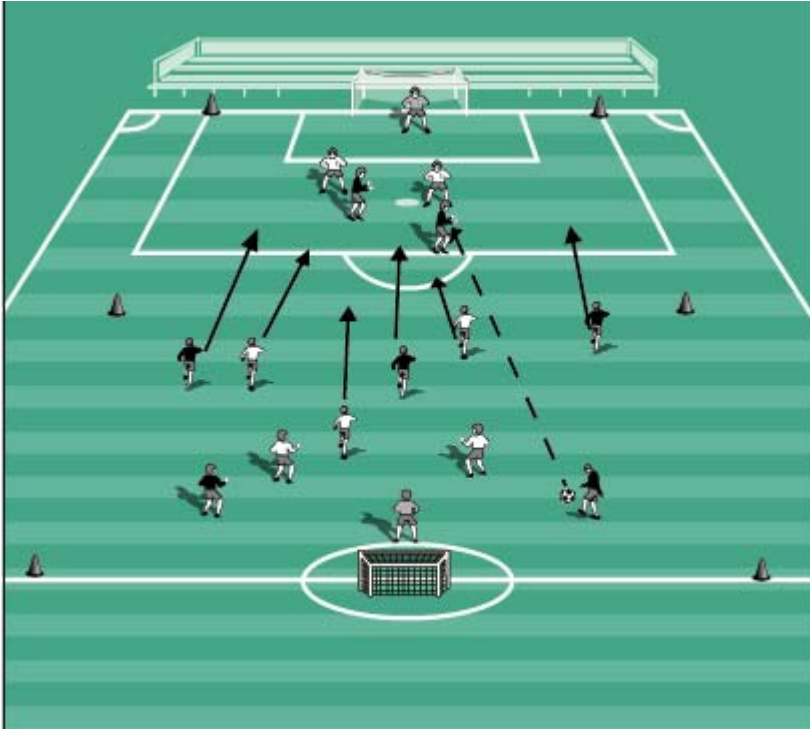
w. Defending Coaching Points

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

Exercise #6 (Progression)

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





x. Organization

- i. 5 vs. 5 + GK in one half of the field
- ii. 2 vs. 2 + GK in the other half of the field

y. Rules

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

z. Attacking Coaching Points

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

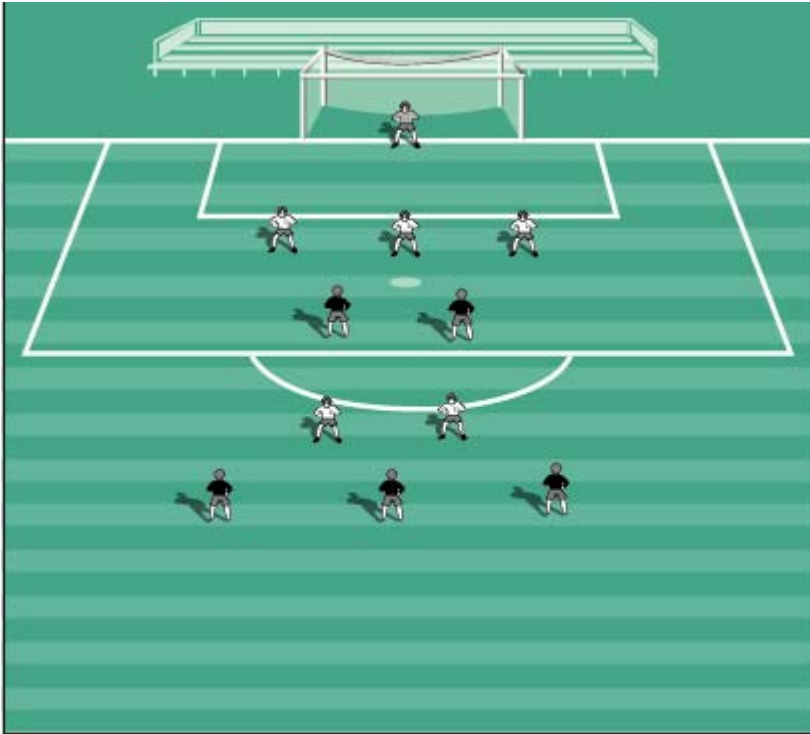
aa. Defending Coaching Points

- i. If you intercept a pass, score a goal

Jan Pruijn – “The Ajax Way”

Build Up To Attack

Exercise #1



a. 5 v. 5 First passive pressure by the defending team

b. Coaching Points

- i. Fullback ask for the ball going forwards
- ii. Travel as the ball travels (side to side)
- iii. Play the ball forwards if you can (Pass or Dribble)
- iv. Keep it sharp – Control and proper pass

c. **Progression:** Now the defending team can apply full pressure

i. Coaching Points

1. Take every opportunity to go forwards
2. If the ball is with the center back, fullback start to run forwards
3. If the defending strikers separate, one of the center backs push into midfield
 - a. Support the strikers
 - b. Create an angle so that you can receive the ball and go forwards
4. Look to the right and left full back to receive from the GK

d. Progression: 7 vs. 7

Exercise #2

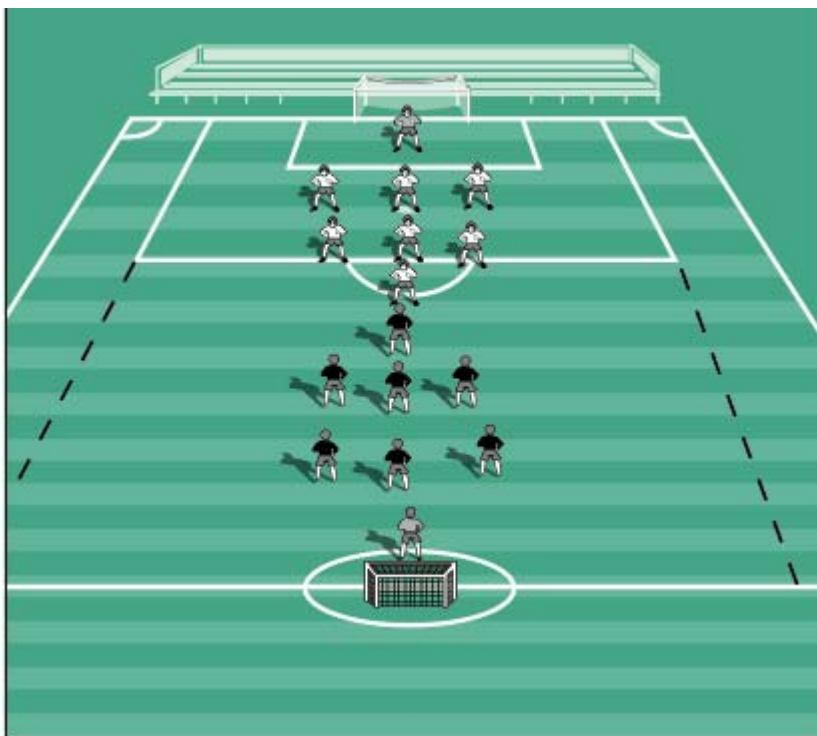


i. Coaching Points

1. Full Back Options

- Play ball on ground to advancing midfielder
- Play ball in behind defenders to opposite midfielder

e. **Progression:** 8 v. 8, Add a channel

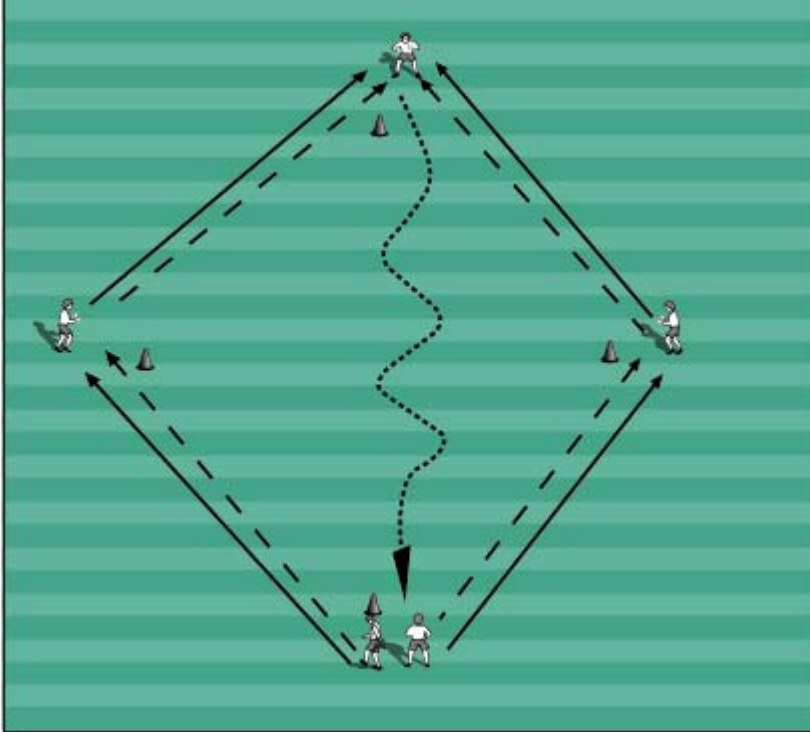


i. Coaching Points

1. If the ball goes to the strikers, two midfielders support, and one full back support
2. If one full back moves forward, then the other full back must stay
3. When the right fullback has the ball, right midfielder come inside sometimes (The channel is only for the two outside fullbacks)
4. Think forward, play forward
5. Take every opportunity you have to go forwards

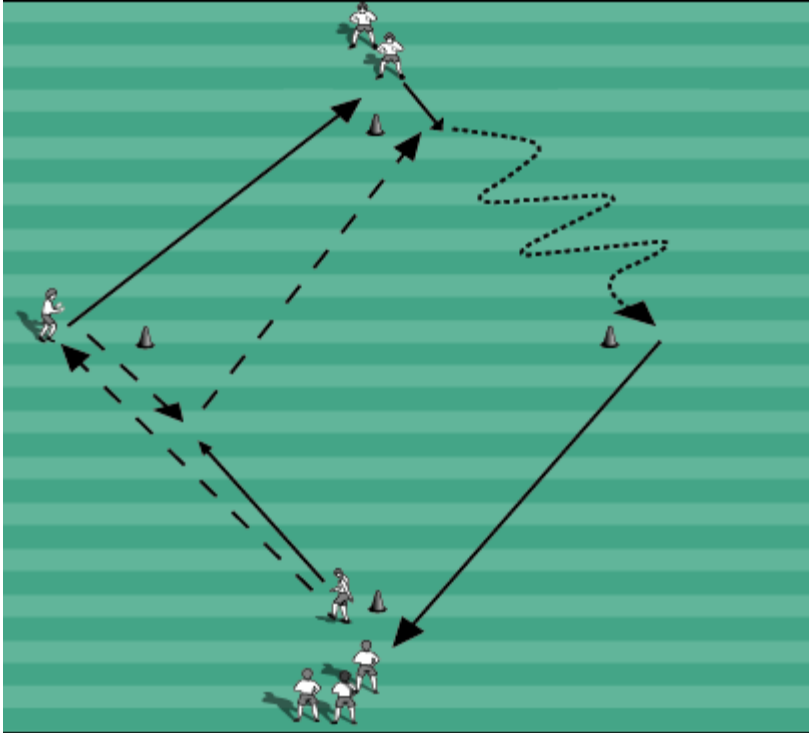
Jan Pruijn – “The Ajax Way” Technical and Possession Training

Diamond Exercises – This session began with many variations of Dutch style “Diamond” exercises.



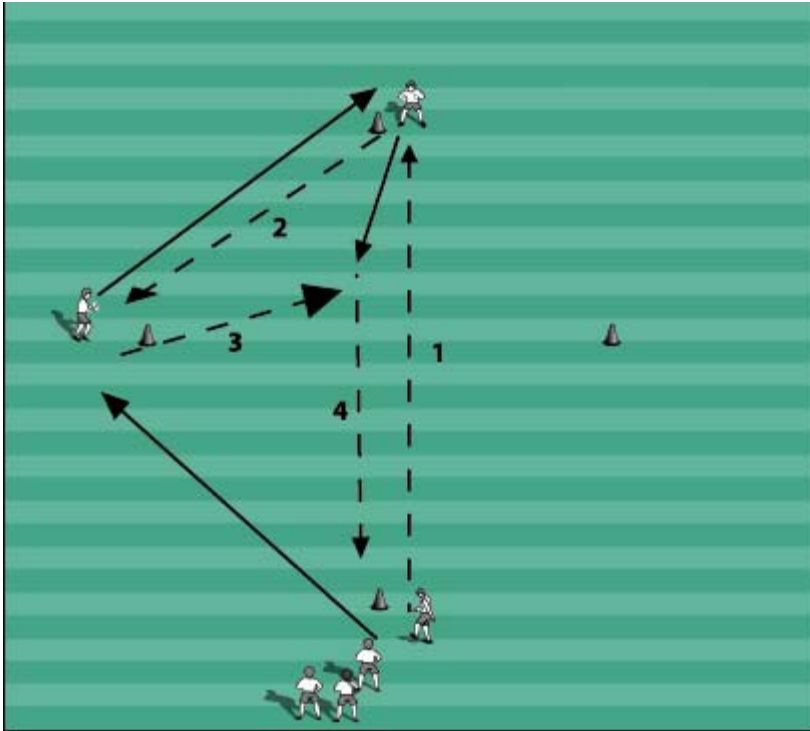
Organization:

1. Player at the bottom cone passes to his left and follows his pass.
2. Player on the left cone receives back foot, passes to player at the top cone, and follows his pass.
3. Player at the top cone receives back foot and dribbles towards remaining player on the bottom cone.
4. Repeat Rotation on the right side.



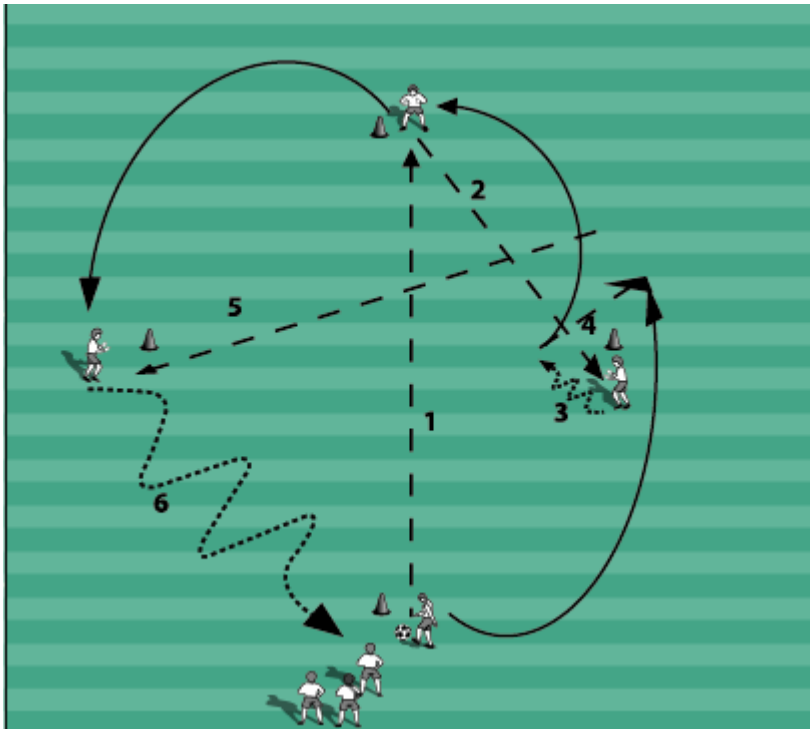
Organization:

1. Player 1 at bottom cone passes to player 2 on the left cone and runs towards the left cone.
2. Player 2 on left cone passes back to advancing player, spins, and runs towards top cone.
3. Player 1 receives pass, plays to player 3 on top cone, and completes his run towards the left cone.
4. Player 3 receives pass back foot, dribbles around right cone, passes to player 4 on bottom cone, and completes his run to the bottom cone.
5. Repeat Rotation.



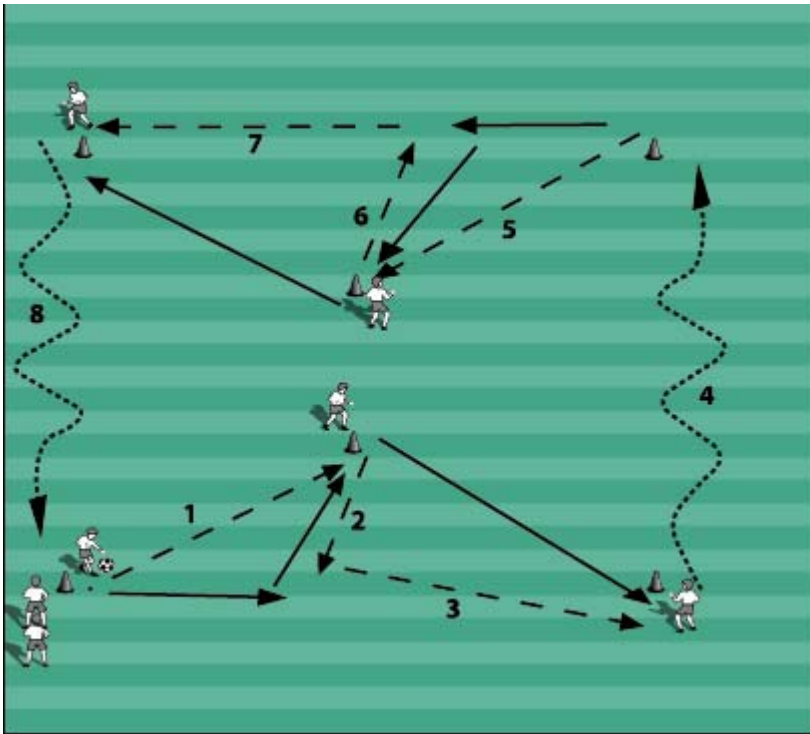
Organization:

1. Player on bottom cone passes to player on top cone and runs to the left cone.
2. Player at top cone receives pass, plays a 1-2 with player on the left cone, passes to player on the bottom cone, and completes his run to the bottom cone.
3. Upon completion of 1-2, player on left cone runs to the top cone.
4. Repeat Rotation.



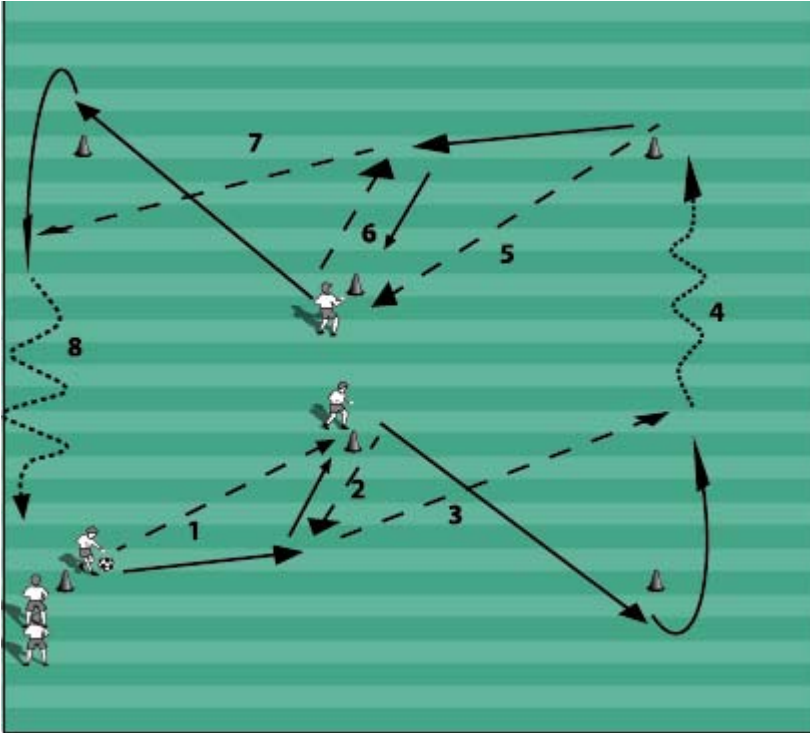
Organization:

1. Player on bottom cone passes to player on top cone and runs to his right in preparation for an overlap.
2. Player on top cone receives, plays a pass to player on the right cone, and runs to the right cone.
3. Player on the right cone receives, dribbles, plays a reverse pass to overlapping player from the bottom cone, and completes his run to the top cone.
4. Overlapping player from the bottom cone receives, plays a reverse pass to the player on the left cone and rotates to the right cone.
5. Player on left cone dribbles to the bottom cone.
6. Repeat Rotation.



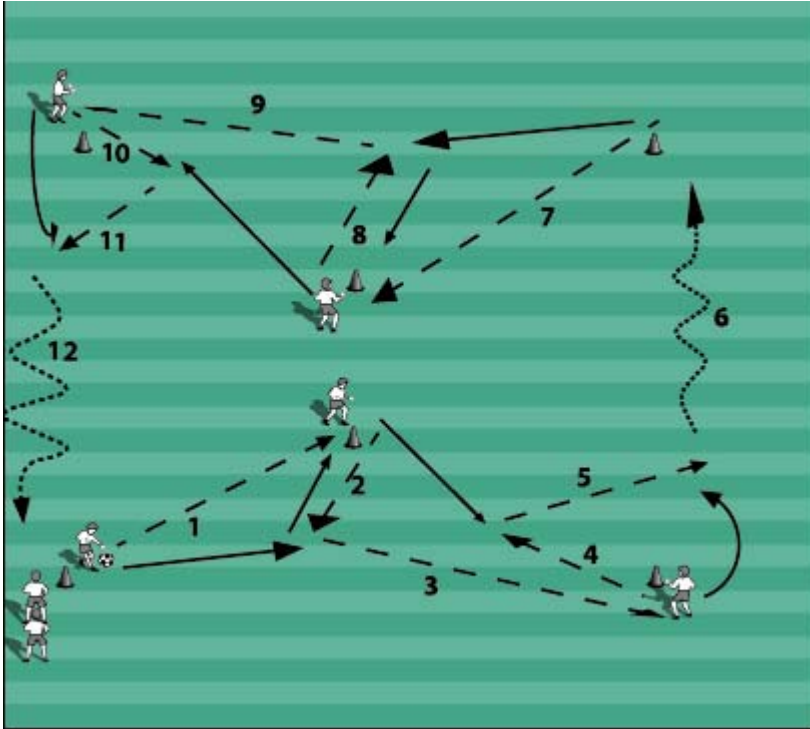
Organization:

1. Player on the bottom left cone completes a 1-2 with player on the bottom middle cone then passes to player on the bottom right cone. Player from the bottom left cone completes his run to the bottom middle cone. Player from the bottom middle cone completes his run to the bottom right cone.
2. Player on bottom right cone receives and dribbles around top right cone.
3. Repeat sequence on top cones.



Organization:

1. Player on bottom left cone plays 1-2 with player on bottom middle cone.
2. Upon completion of 1-2, player on bottom middle cone runs around bottom right cone
3. Player from bottom left cone completes pass to player who ran around the bottom right cone and completes run to bottom middle cone.
4. Player who receives pass around bottom right cone dribbles to top right cone.
5. Repeat sequence on the top cones.



Organization:

1. Player from bottom left cone plays 1-2 with player at bottom middle cone then passes to player on bottom right cone and completes his run to the bottom middle cone.
2. Player at bottom right cone sets ball back to player from bottom middle cone, spins around cone, and receives return pass from the player from bottom middle cone. Player from bottom middle cone completes his run to the bottom right cone.
3. Player from bottom right cone dribbles to top right cone.
4. Repeat sequence at the top cones.

Coaching Points

- a. Play the ball to the outside of the cone
- b. If its played on the inside of the cone, turn outside of the foot
 - i. Side on – for 2 options
 - ii. Pass the ball to the players front foot
 - iii. Use both feet
 - iv. Timing of the run – don't go too early
 - v. Check
 - vi. Prepare yourself for the next situation
 - vii. Timing – change of pace
 - viii. Indicate where and when you want the pass
 - ix. Stay behind the ball
 - x. Accelerate
 - xi. Use your left foot in the middle

The session ended with a game on a half field.

