

LESS TALK. MORE ACTION.

SESSIONS DESIGNED BY COACHES FOR COACHES



compiled by
DAN WRIGHT

INTRODUCTION...

These sessions are aimed at coaches of youth football /soccer who want to deliver game related practices for their players.

Collecting session plans is a natural habit of a coach, whilst I believe the best sessions are the ones you design for your players, there are certainly some great ideas out there. Adapting and tweaking these sessions can benefit your coaching...but it will not make you.

This collection of sessions isn't the '**answer**' to developing world class footballers, its not a blueprint, you won't read them and become the next Mourinho over night.

Coaching is so much more than balls, bibs and cones. A good coach is able to connect and understand his players, this takes skill and competency, this booklet can not give you that it has to be developed and practiced.

The aim is to share; new ideas, new templates, new practices, new phrases... 1 small idea that you can take and use with your players. If we achieve that its been a success.

Hope you enjoy the sessions and thank you to everyone who took the time to contribute, people truly care about football development in this country.

As always... Read – Adapt – Share.

Thanks

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“This collection of sessions isn't the '**ANSWER**'... the aim is to **SHARE** new ideas, one small idea that you can take and **USE WITH YOUR PLAYERS.**”

ADAPTING TO SUIT YOU AND YOUR PLAYERS

These sessions are not guaranteed to work! You might have to alter and adapt them to suit you and your players.

Here are some ideas...

Add/ remove competition

Alter conditions in 'zones', add defenders, defenders can enter...etc

Add different ways to score, touches in certain areas, types of finish, work the ball to certain area

Add the offside rule

Add more balls into the same practice

Challenge individuals

Change the overload/ underload

Add neutral players or 'magic man'

Explain using visual aids: whiteboards, iPad, cones, diagrams and videos

Get the space right, make it bigger for more success, smaller to test the players

Add safe zones, channels or areas to allow the players to make better decisions

Allow time for the players to understand the practice

Check your coaching style, have you delivered the correct information? Enough/too much information in the correct manner?

Questioning is key. Don't give all the answers!

Add or remove goals

Number and types of goals

Demonstrate – coach or player?

CONTENTS

WARM UPS

Arrival Activities	
CRAIG BARCLAY	...8
3 Team Warm Up Ideas	
DAVID HAZELGROVE	...9
Pre- Match Warm Up	
TONY MEE	..10
Football Tennis	
GAVIN MEEK	..11

GOALKEEPING

Improving Distribution With Feet	
ROB PARKER	..13
Cross Taking And Distribution With Hands	
JAMIE WISEMAN	..14

OUT OF POSSESSION

Defending Out Numbered	
TONY MEE	..16
Defending Out Numbered And Counter	
Attacking	
TONY MEE	..17
Defending Outnumbered As A Unit	
ROB ATKIN	..18
Defensive Screen	
PAUL BRIGHT	..19
Keeping Play In Front	
LUKE HUSSEY	..20

Coach A Team Show Inside When Defending	
Flank Areas	
STEVEN BATES	..21

IN POSSESSION

Attacking 1v1	
DAVID HORSEMAN	..23
Try To Develop An Appreciation Of Sharing	
Information	
NICK LEVETT	..24
Penalty Box Possession	
DAVID HOOD	..25
1V1 Attacking And Defending	
DANIEL MARTIN	..26
Confidence To Create	
JAMIE HUNT	..27

CONTENTS

IN POSSESSION (continued)

4V4 +1 And Breakaway 2v1 José Manuel Figueira	..28
Receiving to shoot and Finish Early JONATHAN HENDERSON	..29
When To Pass And When To Dribble RICH HOLMES	..30
Finishing; Goals Galore ROB MILLS	..31
4 Corner Possession GARETH BYRES	..32
Combinations And Support Play LEE HURRELL	..33
Counter Attacking; Attacking Quickly On Gaining Possession JONATHAN HENDERSON	..34
Support Play Around The Ball MATT THOMAS	..35

Transition; 1v1, 2v2 And SSG BOBBY PUPPIONE	..36
Finishing; Combination Play In Around The Box MURRAY JONES	..37
Small Sided Games: 3 Pass Rule TONY TAYLOR	..38
Receiving On The Back Foot ANDY SAMUELS	..39
Finishing; Without goals! ANDY BROWN	..40
Wingers Vs. Counter Attackers CHRIS HODGSON	..41
Using Overloads Effectively WARREN GRANT	..42
Playing Through Midfield LUKE HUSSEY	..43
Playing On Opposite Lines And Rotating AARON DANKS	..44
Running With The Ball ANTHONY WILSHAW	..45
Get In, Get Out! IAN DIPPER	..46
Attacking 1v1 And 2v2 RAHIM MOHAMED	..47
Overloads And Breaking Lines AARON DANKS	..48
Passing Technique GAVIN TEEHAN	..49
Finishing; Attitude Towards Shooting HUGO LANGTON	..50
Transition Waves WAYNE THOMAS	..51

THE SESSIONS.

ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES + WARM UP

ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES

WARM UP
ALL AGES

Craig Barclay

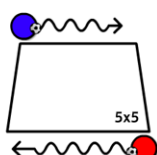
@Craigscottb_

UEFA 'B'
SOCCER SURF (SAN DIEGO) FOOTBALL COACH

Here are some arrival games from Craig. "I think these arrival games are brilliant. How early do players arrive to practice? And how often is this potential time not utilised? These are simple games that players can setup themselves and require hardly any space or equipment".

DRIBBLING 1V1

5x5yds. 2 players, both with balls. Start opposite sides from each other. On signal both travel around the square with their balls and attempting to catch each other.

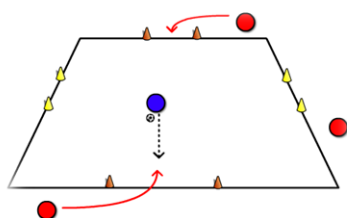


Progressions: Change the shape of the organisation.

Allow each player to cut across one or more sides to attempt to catch their partner. Introduce turns - each player can use 1/2 turns at any point to catch partner. (Think tactically).

DRIBBLING "PROTECT THE GATE"

5x5yds. 4 goals, 1 on each side of the square. 4 players, 3 RED (without a ball, on the outside of the square). 1 BLUE (with a ball, inside the square). To score the BLUE player must dribble through any goal. REDS stop the player from scoring by placing 1 foot in goal. See how many goals can be scored in 1 minute before swapping the middle player.



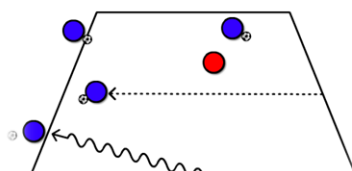
Progressions: Increase / decrease the size of the goals.

Players on the outside must also travel with a ball.

Introduce a 2nd player into the square and work as a team to try and score.

DRIBBLING: TAKING RISKS

5x5yds. 5 players, 4 BLUES (with balls,) 1 RED (without). BLUES start on the outside of the area. Players try to dribble through the square to a different side. Players score 2 points for dribbling to an opposite side or 1 point for an adjacent side. If a player gets tagged 3 times by the RED player they become the catcher.



Progressions: Condition the practice so that only 1 player can occupy 1 side at anytime.

Introduce a passing BLUE player into the middle as a passing option to combine with.

Arrival games are a great way to get players loads of touches before the session really begins. Encourage your players to take ownership and set these sessions up for themselves!

3 TEAM WARM UP IDEAS

WARM UP
ALL AGES

David Hazelgrove

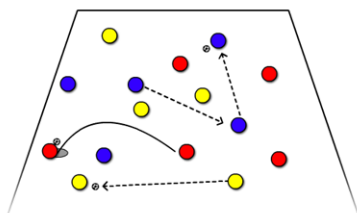
@daveyH03

**FA LEVEL 2
FOOTBALL COACH AND PE SPECIALIST**

Here is a warm up game from David. This session is suitable for most ages and gets the ball straight in from the beginning.

Some of the progressions are more suitable for older players, you could add neutrals / magic men to create overloads.

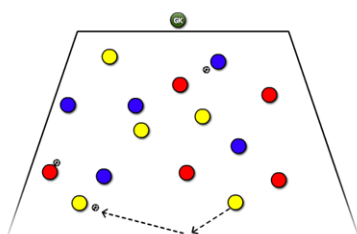
ORGANISATION



© David Hazelgrove 2014

Group split in to 3, ideally 4 or 5 per team. Each team has one football and works with 'their' colour. Players move in and around the grid. Either on coaches instructions e.g jog, run, walk, skip, side-step, backwards..etc or player decides.

Start with balls in hand throw – catch



© David Hazelgrove 2014

Add an element of control before the catch;

Throw – chest – catch

Throw – thigh – catch

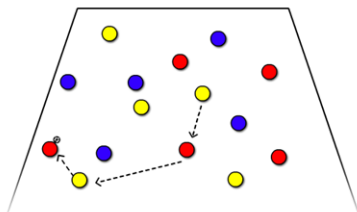
Throw – instep – catch

Ball at feet variations could include;

2 touch

1 touch

Use both feet



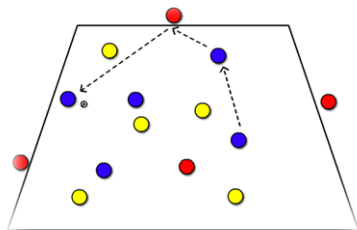
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PROGRESSIONS

To progress the practice add goalkeepers as target players, still unopposed but gives players a 'direction' to work to. (image 2) Goalkeepers could use hands or feet, depending on the pass they are given.

2 teams vs 1, make the practice competitive. (image 3)

To simplify, 1 team works as 'neutrals' or 'support players', in this image YELLOW vs BLUE, with RED as the support team.



© David Hazelgrove 2014

Space is vital with so many players, check you've got it right. If the players are struggling giving them more room, this will allow them more time on the ball to make better decisions.

PRE-MATCH WARM UP

WARM UP
YDP 12+

Tony Mee

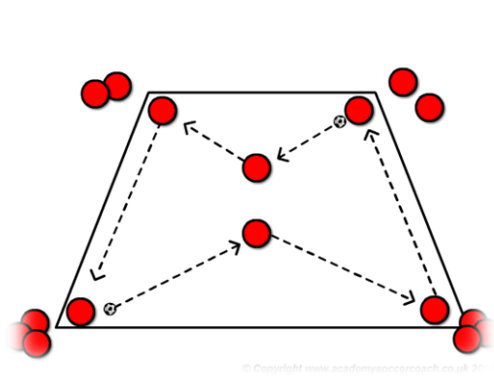
@coachtonymee

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
FA TUTOR

This session from Tony looks at preparing your team before a game.

The session progresses from a passing drill to a competitive game like situation.

This gives you a good insight but as always adapt to your players needs.

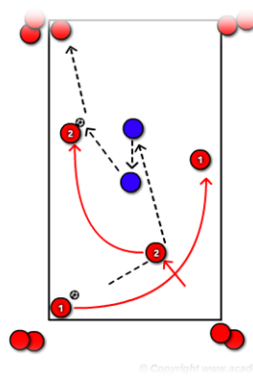


PASSING

I use the area in the corner of the pitch between the corner flag and the 18 yard box. Players pass & follow in the direction of the arrows. Play 1 or 2 touch on passes, different dynamic stretches performed on runs.

Players must change the angle of the ball with first touch. Coach calls changes of direction for the runs/passes.

This can be done with all squad players or just with the starting 10 outfield players. GK warms up separately.



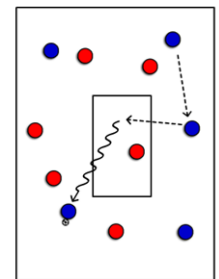
COMBINATIONS AND RUNS

Approx. 25 yards wide up to the halfway line. 1 plays to 2 and makes an overlapping run. 2 plays to either of the middle players, WHO MUST COMBINE, then runs to the opposite flank.

The middle player (BLUE) then plays to either 1 or 2 who play into the end, where the process starts again.

Rotate so that everyone plays in the middle (forwards go in together or with a midfield player).

Runs are longer and at greater pace. Allows the players to get a feel for how the pitch will play. Players perform their own dynamic stretches when not in possession. Try to encourage 1 or 2 touch play for the combination.



SSG

We play a small sided game in roughly the same area as Part 2 with the addition of a small box (10x10).

The idea being that the teams keep possession but when they can, they play into the player in the box. The player in the box then dribbles into play and the player who passed it in takes his place.

We would now go into last minute instructions & prep. When the toss up is taking place we go into a loose huddle with me in the middle and do some quick sprints, shuffles, forwards, backwards etc.

FOOTBALL TENNIS

WARM UP
ALL AGES

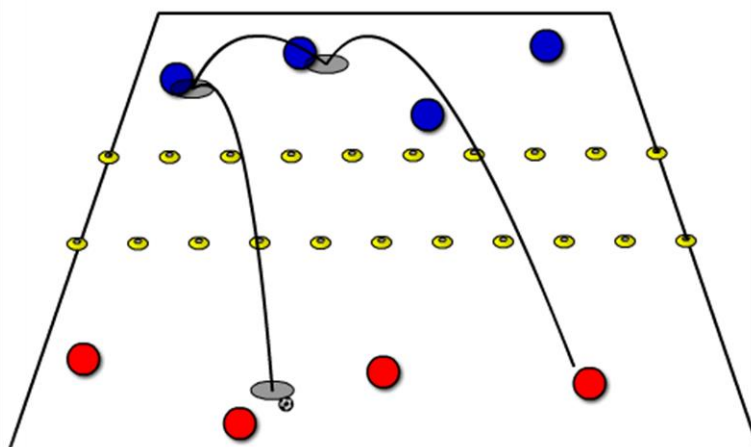
Gavin Meek

@g_guzzleguz

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
IRISH CHAMPIONSHIP 1 CLUB
ASSISTANT UNDER 19'S COACH

Here is football tennis keepie-up fun game, its played without the need of a costly net. Can be used in a warm up or a fun end to a hard session.

Can be adapted to suit the ability of player from grassroots to senior player by adjusting size of 'dead zone' & either increase or decrease number of bounces.



ORGANISATION

Set up grid as show, 30x20 yard grid with 5 yard 'Dead Zone' in middle. Ball is not allowed to drop here.

RULES

The ball is only allowed to bounce once in opposition side before being returned to serving side. All serves must be lobbed. (half volley) First to 10 wins. Play for fun, teamwork and technique

Coach good communication and team shape, this is a perfect drill to demonstrate width and depth to cover the field and be successful.

GOALKEEPING

GOALKEEPER: DISTRIBUTION WITH FEET

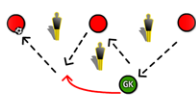
TECHNICAL PRACTICE
ALL AGES

Rob Parker

@goaliecoach00

NSCAA NATIONAL GOALKEEPER DIPLOMA
ADVANCED REGIONAL DIPLOMA
SIENNA SAINTS WOMENS (USA) ASSISTANT COACH

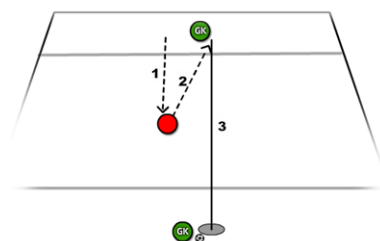
American coach Rob Parker's session focuses on goalkeepers distribution with his feet. The role of the goalkeeper has changed significantly in the past 20 years, to play out from the back and support the defenders so the modern goalkeeper must be good with his feet!



◀ **WARM UP** Server plays ball into keeper who combines with central server and plays longer ball to server on other side of grid. Drill is repeated in other direction.

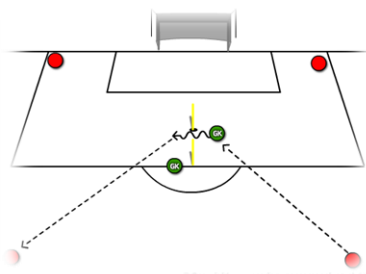
AERIAL PASS ▶

Goalkeeper with ball in one end zone areas to passes to server in centre. Server in centre lays ball back off to the side of the keeper. Keeper serves long ball into opposite box for other keeper, who repeats same exercise. Continue until the ball either goes out of bounds, bad first touch or ball does not make it into other box in the air. Award a point and continue



◀ RECEIVE - PLAY

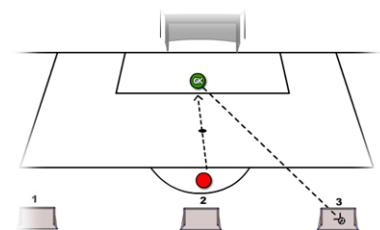
Four servers stationed in the corners of half a field. Two goalkeepers in the centre of the workspace with one gate between them. Keeper checks to passer, Server plays long ball to keeper. Keeper receives the ball and turns, dribbles through gate and then plays long ball to target on other side. Repeat.



BACK PASS (SHORT) ▶

Server back passes ball to keeper who has to control it with one touch and pass it back towards one of the target goals.

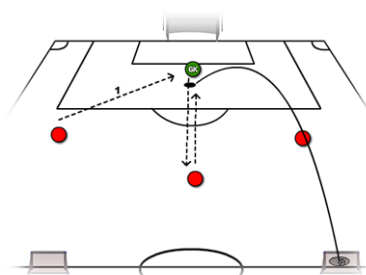
Variation: When server plays the ball, they tell the keeper which goal to play to.



◀ BACK PASS (LONG)

Server back passes back to keeper, keeper receives ball with a 2 touch maximum and plays to one of the target players.

Target player passes back to keeper one touch and keeper serves ball in air to one of the stick gates positioned at midfield.



Add pressure! With these practices you can ask the servers to press the goalkeeper to increase the realism, especially in exercise 4 and 5.

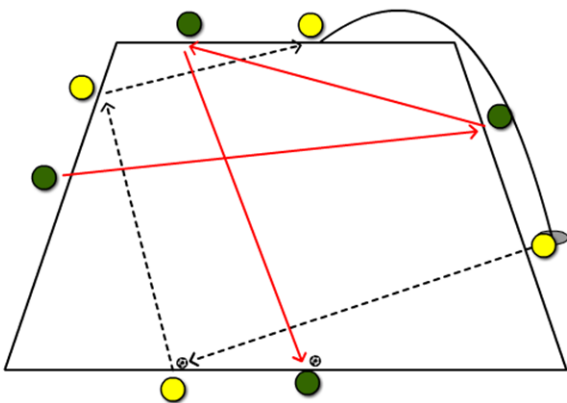
GOALKEEPING; CROSS TAKING AND DISTRIBUTION WITH HANDS TECHNICAL PRACTICE ALL AGES

Jamie Wiseman

@jamiewiseman1

**FA LEVEL 2 / FA LEVEL 2 GOALKEEPING
OWNER JW GOALKEEPER TRAINING**

Jamie's sessions look at distribution from the hands; initially in a fun warm up and progressing to a more technical practice. I like these sessions as I can see how quickly they could benefit young goalkeepers!



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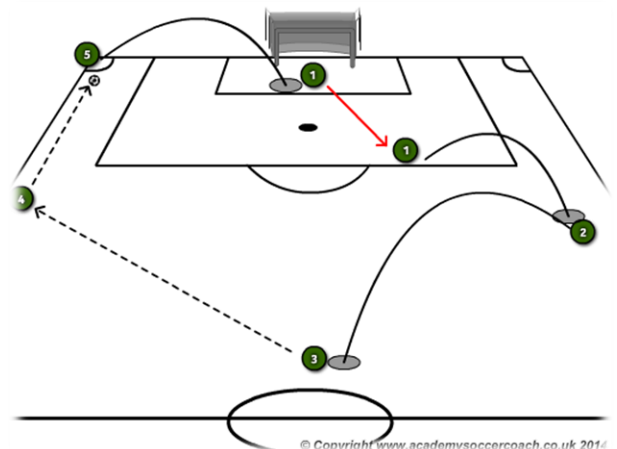
ROLL AND OVERARM DISTRIBUTION

Goalkeepers are positioned randomly around a 20 ft x 20 ft square. The keepers work in teams (GREEN and YELLOW).

Each keeper can now choose who on their team they distribute to and what type of distribution they want to use (roll or overarm).

PROGRESSION

Change size of area
Add extra ball
Play GREEN vs YELLOW, 1 ball alternate so
Green-Yellow-Green-Yellow..etc



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CROSS TAKING WITH DISTRIBUTION

Coach or GK 5 serves cross, GK claims the cross, over arm throw to GK 2, GK 2 catches throw and over to GK 3, GK 3 catches throw and rolls to GK 4, GK 4 scoops and rolls back to start.

Assess flight of the ball, early shout of "KEEPERS!", come and collect late. Ensure GK catches the ball on their way up with outside knee elevated for protection. Breaks the line quickly and distributes with accuracy.

Jamie is a firm believer that young goalkeepers should be given the time to develop just as outfield players do. As coaches are we sometimes over critical of young goalkeepers who are still "learning the game?"

**OUT OF
POSSESSION.**

DEFENDING OUT NUMBERED

SQUAD PRACTICE
AGES 12 - 16

Tony Mee

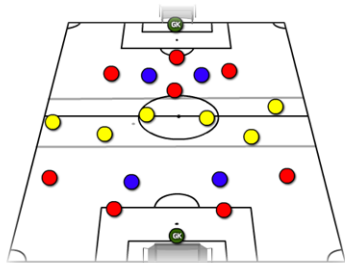
@coachtonymee

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
FA TUTOR

This squad practice from Tony looks at defending when outnumbered. By creating an overload of attackers the defending unit look to make play predictable, stop the ball into strikers feet and block shots!

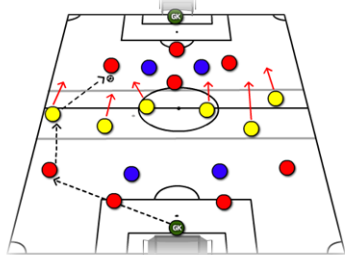
This practice is aimed at those playing the 11v11 game but could be altered for 9v9 or Mini-Soccer.

ORGANISATION



As shown, with the numbers involved we set up as shown, 3v1 and a screening MF player at one end and 4v2 and a screening MF at the other end.

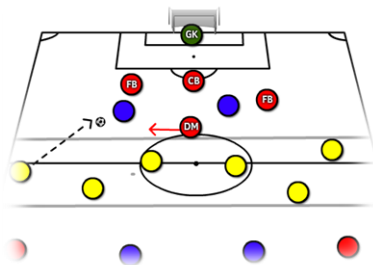
6 YELLOW midfielder players start in central zone and attack both ways.



Play starts from the Goalkeeper into the defender and onto YELLOW midfielder. He then plays in to the forwards.

YELLOW midfielders create overload by supporting the attackers.

If defenders win the ball or clear it the YELLOW midfield attack the opposite goal and the game continues.



COACHING POINTS

Screening Midfielder (image 3)

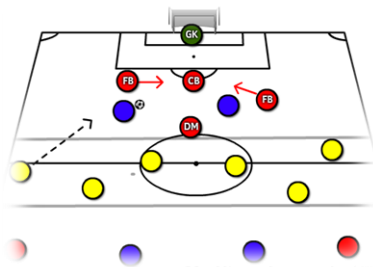
Try to prevent balls into the strikers feet. Shuffle across and around in relation to the ball.

Defenders (image 4)

Block shots! Stay compact when the ball is in central areas. Force play wide.

Goalkeepers

Distribute quickly to strikers or wide players to encourage the counter attack with throws & side volleys.



Observe... What are the areas to improve do the defenders defend well as individuals, pairs and units? You might have to simplify then build up to this practice.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED + COUNTER ATTACKING

SSG
AGES 12 - 16

Tony Mee

@coachtonymee

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
FA TUTOR

This session from Tony looks at defending when outnumbered and the transition to counter attack.

The game is for those playing the 11v11 game, its starts with a 'thirds game' and builds up to add realism.

ORGANISATION

Set up the pitch as shown. 3v3 in each area with a floater playing anywhere on the pitch (YELLOW).

Players are restricted to their zones with the exception of the floater. Play normal rules.

Image 2: The BLUE defenders play into the midfield third.

PROGRESSION

A midfield player can go forward into the attacking third to create a 4v3 or 5v3. This would also encourage quick counter attacks if the ball is regained (image 4)

To finish the session, remove the thirds and play game without conditions.

COACHING POINTS

Out of possession

Be brave, block shots, win tackles.

In possession

Move quickly to support, pass quickly and accurately. Get shots away.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED AS A UNIT

SSG
AGES 11 - 16

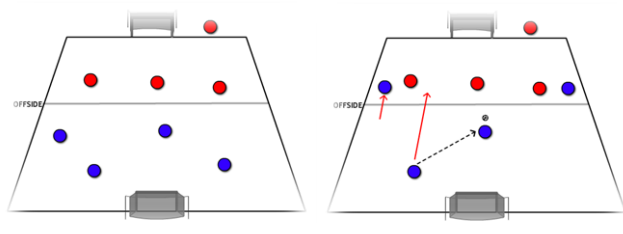
Rob Atkin

@atkin442

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

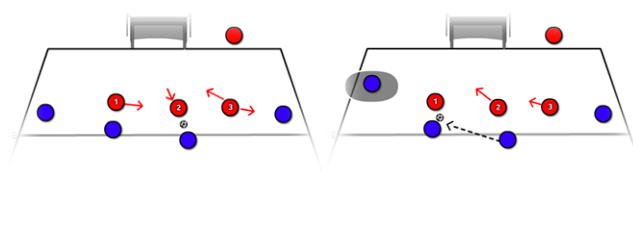
This small sided game from Rob looks to coach the basics of defending, constantly creating an overload of 4 versus 3.

This practice is also great to check players understanding of offside.



ORGANISATION

Pitch suitable for the age and ability of your players. Team in possession (BLUE) play 4 v 3 and try to invade into opposition half to score a goal. If team of 4 lose possession team of 3 (REDS) gain their extra player to attack BLUES who now play with 3.



PROGRESSIONS / VARIATIONS

Split the pitch into thirds offside applies in final thirds.

Add GK's and play 4 v 4/5v5

1 touch finish condition.

COACHING POINTS

Nearest player closes down quickly, look at body shape, where to 'force' the striker. Make play predictable. (image 3)

Second defending player supports first defender working off his/her body position. Offer covering to the first defender.

Third defender needs to be aware of oppositions support runs etc. and offers communication regarding when to step and when to hold, staying compact.

Awareness of offside, explain "Offside is our friend", can they recognise when to let players run beyond and when to track runners?

When possession is regained the need to dictate the tempo of the play is paramount, having just worked under pressure when outnumbered. Explain the concept of counter attacking.

DEFENSIVE SCREEN

SKILL TO PHASE OF PLAY
AGES 16+

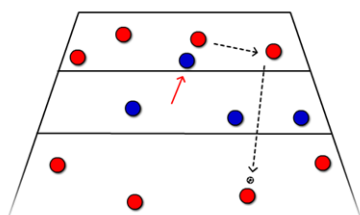
Paul Bright

@BrightyFCUM

UEFA 'B' LICENCE/ FA YOUTH AWARD
FC UNITED OF MANCHESTER ACADEMY MANAGER

Paul's session looks at developing a sides understanding of screening. This session builds up from a skill practice to a phase of play.

This session is suitable for any group playing the 11v11 game.



PRACTICE 1: SKILL

Set up area 25m x 30m and split into 1/3's. Team of 3 or 4 players in each third.

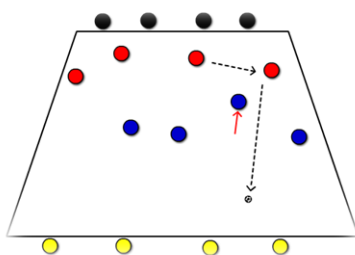
Middle team to prevent penetrating passes from 2 x end teams and act as defensive screen. 1 x player from middle can press each end team, only when ball enters that zone.

If ball is played aerially, reinforce urgency to press & also allow defender from middle to travel into end zone whilst ball is in air.

PROGRESSIONS

Allow 2 players in an end zone.

Allow attackers into middle zone to collect the ball, give and goes etc. This challenges awareness of defensive team for runners from in behind.



PRACTICE 2: 4V4V4

2 teams on & aim to be compact, high block & prevent lines being broken with opposition pass/dribble. Teams in possession attempt to pass to team behind the opposition and they then become attacking team with defensive team taking their place off pitch.

Game to be played at high tempo with lots of interchanges between teams.

KEY POINTS

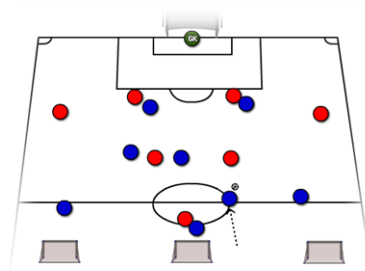
Awareness of closest defender to press the ball as quickly as possible.

Supporting players to move as a unit to cut forward passing lines.

Support, angle & distance of cover from defenders.

Delay the attackers.

Concentration and discipline from defenders.



PHASE OF PLAY

Set up area on two thirds of pitch (dependent on age/ability of players.)

Defending Team set up GK-4-2-1 & defend goal 8 x attackers in waves.

KEY POINTS

Closest player to the ball presses.

Other defenders support & cover with appropriate angle & distance.

High Block where possible.

Defenders attempt to intercept/challenge for the ball.

Defensive shape.

Move as a unit.

Prevent penetrating passes that break lines (balance & shape).

Delay the attack.

Vocabulary for players..."DELAY" to slow down opposition, especially when outnumbered or trying to re-gain shape. "SLIDE" when the ball moves from side to side, team must SLIDE as a unit.

KEEPING PLAY IN FRONT

SSG
YDP 12 - 16

Luke Hussey

@Luke_Hussey_

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
BRISTOL CITY FC UNDER 13 COACH

Luke's practice focuses on keeping play in front. Discuss what this means to your players; Why is it important? When would you want try and do it?

This session is coached through a game, which players love and makes it really relevant and realistic.

ORGANISATION

Area 60 x 40, marked into equal thirds with mid third divided into four zones. Two 5 yard channels down each side of pitch

Teams set up GK – 2xDF – 3xCM – 2xCF

Practice starts with ball fed to defenders from neutral player in flank (YELLOW).

AIM / OBJECTIVE

Defenders in mid third attempt to cover 2-3 of the 4 zones.

All attacks must pass through the middle zone.

Neutral players (YELLOW) can be used for support by both sides but must pass into middle third after receiving.

COACHING POINTS

Challenge: try to win the ball back in midfield areas to establish counter attack.

Marking positions and distances.

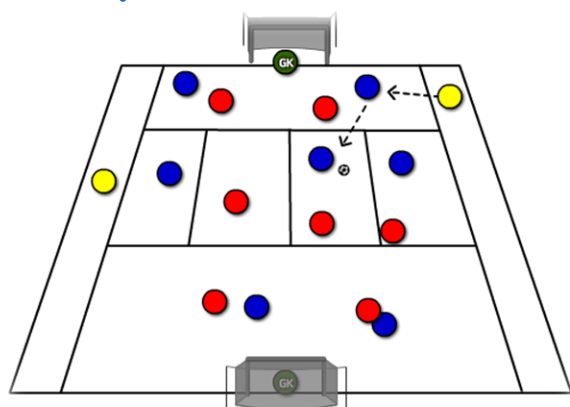
Passing opponents on to other midfield defenders.

Moving across pitch as a 3 man unit.

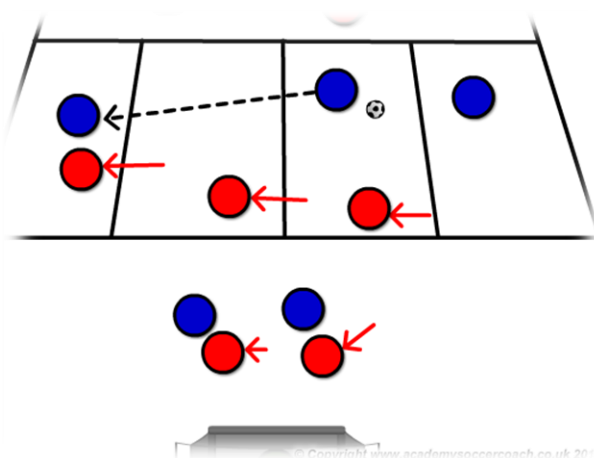
Tracking opponents as they move forward.

Blocking passes and shots.

Prevent turns.



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This session is coached through a game, try increasing the realism by removing conditions, perhaps 1 by 1 to see if players can transfer their understanding .

COACH A TEAM TO SHOW INSIDE WHEN DEFENDING FLANK AREAS

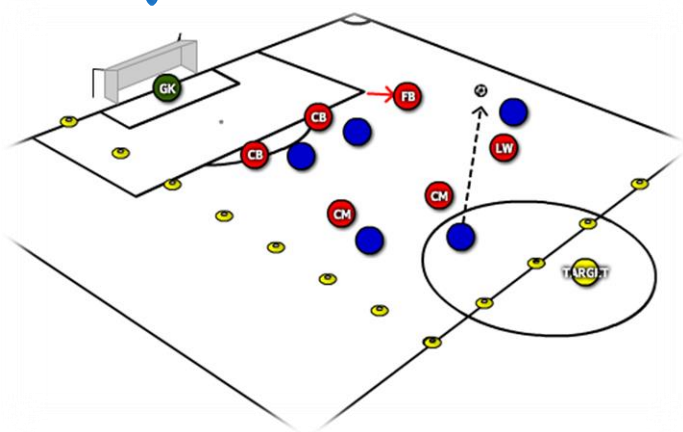
FUNCTION
YDP 12 – 16+

Steven Bates

@stevennpl

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
HAMPTON & RICHMOND U18 COACH

This is the practice Steven used for his UEFA 'B' assessment. It looks at the roles of each player out of possession, and when to try to force the opposition inside from flank areas.



ORGANISATION

Functional practice as per diagram.

BLUE team try to score as per normal game (game rules apply).

RED team if they win the ball look to play into target player (YELLOW).

DISTANCE AND BODY POSITION OF INITIAL DEFENDER

- 1) Stop attacker turning if receiving with back to goal.
- 2) Deny space and make attacker play sideways or backwards.
- 3) Travel quickly as the ball travels, close down, slow down, sit down.
- 4) Mirror attackers footwork blocking shots/crosses.

COVER AND SUPPORT OF OTHER DEFENDERS

- 1) Can you be in a position to give cover support to the fullback?
- 2) Can the defender play on the inside shoulder to steal the ball?
- 3) Defend on the front foot...

MIDFIELDERS POSITION CAN THEY APPLY PRESSURE TO THE BALL

- 1) If the ball is played past can you steal it from the front.
- 2) Stay with runners or communicate when passing them on?
- 3) Stay goal side of the ball where possible.

GK POSITION AND INFLUENCE OF DEFENDERS AND BEYOND

- 1) Support defenders from behind.
- 2) Good communication.
- 3) Take up relevant positions in relation to the ball.

To progress this session you could take it to a Phase of Play, using both full backs and a full midfield unit.

IN POSSESSION.

ATTACKING 1v1

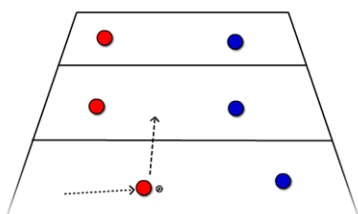
SKILL TO SSG
ALL AGES

David Horseman

@HorsemanDavid

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
BRISTOL CITY FC HEAD OF COACHING

David's session progresses from a 1v1 skill situation to a small sided game. These practices are great for players to understanding when to pass and recognising that 1v1 moment!



Pitch in thirds with 1v1 in each channel. Stopping the ball on the end lines to score. Players can only stay in the third but can pass between third.

Technique

Attacking 1v1 at pace
Using 1 move
Cutting across defenders

Intelligence

Where to receive?
Attacking opponents weaker foot
When to attack
1v1

Athleticism

12 x 4secs sprints
1 minute recovery

Personality

Reflective learner -
understanding oppositions weaknesses

SSG: 3V3 PLUS 1V1'S

1v1 in wide areas with 3v3 in centre, players have to dribble over, in to the end zone before finishing past the keeper.

Technique

Receiving to attack 1v1
Receiving to protect 1v1
Speed of attack

Intelligence

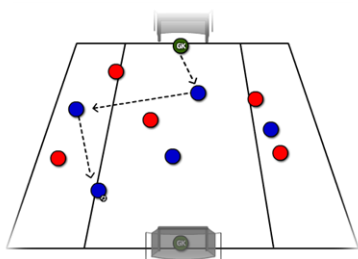
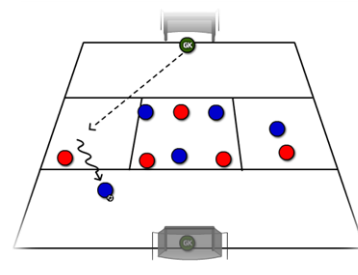
Wide to play wide
Beating a player with 1-2

Athleticism

12x4 sec sprints
1 minute recovery

Personality

Understand opp. Weaknesses



Pitch now in thirds, players can move freely between the thirds and shoot at goal.

Technique

Skills when facing opponents
Change of speed

Intelligence

Putting in to space
Attacking inside and Outside

Athleticism

12x4 second sprints
1 Minute recovery

Personality

Understanding opponents weakness

A positive first touch is so important in 1v1 situations, speed is the most effective weapon!

**TRY TO DEVELOP
AN APPRECIATION
OF SHARING
INFORMATION...**

**SKILL TO SSG
ALL AGES**

Nick Levett

@nlevett

FA National Development Manager

Nick Levett is a National Development Manager for Youth Football at The FA and an important contributor in the development of the game in England having led the FA Youth Development Review.

Nick describes this session as "something a bit different I hope and a focus on communication skills through dribbling practices!"

STARTER EXERCISE

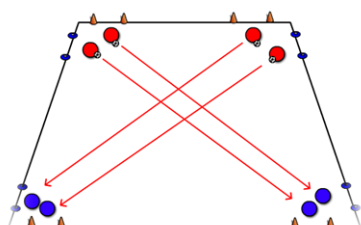
Flip chart exercise on existing level of communication knowledge..

What strengths and weaknesses can you share when you swap opponents?

What tactics did you try?

What proved successful or unsuccessful?

Focus on sharing info with team mate to develop communication skills.



1V1 GAME

1v1 game against person in opposite gate, progress to 2v2 and 4v4 after played all four 1v1's.

Divergent Discovery and Trial & Error for technical outcomes. Question and Answer for social outcomes.

4V4 GAMES

Two pitches of 4v4 to transfer dribbling skills to game.

4 scenarios:

1. Only one player can talk.
2. Everyone must talk all the time.
3. Silent or free kick.
4. Negative coach behaviour on touchline.

How did you feel during the different scenarios?

What did you find easy / hard and why?

What can we add to our list on communication skills from the start?
Command style during scenarios linked to rules and game 4.

Question and Answer during scenarios on technical outcomes.

Session aims: Skill and Game Practices – Try to develop an appreciation of sharing information to help team mates and get better at attacking strategies

Technical outcomes: Practice different 1v1 moves, when to pass and when to dribble

Physical outcomes: Develop game-functional speed and strength through attacking play as well as agility, balance and coordination through game transitions (A-D / D-A)

Psychological outcomes: Work on self-confidence and visual perceptive skills through 1v1's

Social outcomes: Build on existing understanding of communication skills, including active listening, sharing info and the impact of personal and others' body language

PENALTY BOX POSSESSION

SKILL
ALL AGES

David Hood

@VIPFootballUK

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
VIP FOOTBALL COACHING OWNER

David's session looks at the balance between keeping possession and creating a goal scoring opportunity.

This template can be adapted to coach a number of topics.

ORGANISATION

Use an area 44 x 36, four corner areas and two side areas. Players are split into two equal teams, one goalkeeper. (organisation shown uses 15 players, 4v4 in area, 6 neutral players and a GK).

Inside players must hit an outside player before they can go on to shoot at goal (this can be progressed to 2 outside areas, three, etc.).

Outside players can not enter main area and play for the team in possession.

KEY FACTORS

Create space, awareness.

Look to use outside areas if under pressure.

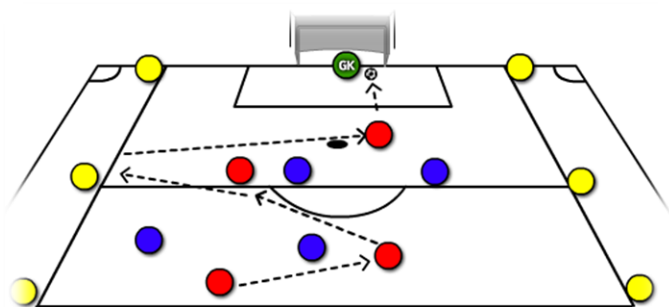
Can we look to switch play?

Can we use no touch turns appropriately?

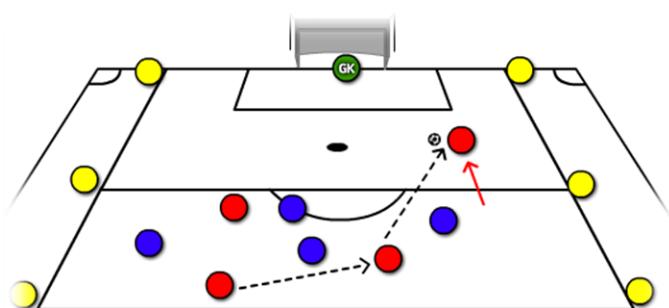
End product. Once designated number of areas hit can we shoot? we shoot?

VARIATION

Add offside (image 2) team must break the line to score a goal.



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Adapt – you could change this practice to include a specific finish...head, volley, one touch.

1v1 ATTACKING + DEFENDING

1v1
AGES 8+

Daniel Martin

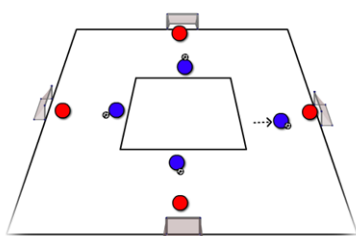
@dan_martin91

**FA LEVEL 2
FOOTBALL COACH GRASSROOTS**

Here are 3 1v1 games you can try with your players. The aim of each session is to allow players to express themselves individually and develop/try new skills.

1v1 ATTACKING AND DEFENDING

1v1, with BLUES attack goal. If a RED player gains possession and can dribble into central area the Blue will now defend the goal. Demonstrate & allow players to show possible tricks and skills that could deceive the defender.



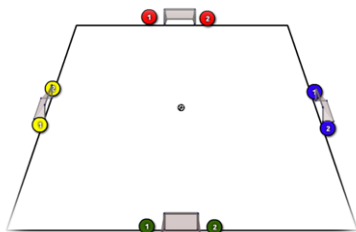
FOUR TEAM 1v1

Similar to 'Numbers Game'. Each team has a name, and each player is numbered 1 or 2. Each team is given 5 lives.

If coach calls your team name & number you contest the ball in the middle. Can only score in the goals of the teams that have an active player in the middle.

If you concede a goal your team loses a life. Team last to 0 lives wins. Work from 1v1's up to all 8 involved.

Players will work individually but suggest forming allies to work against a rival team.

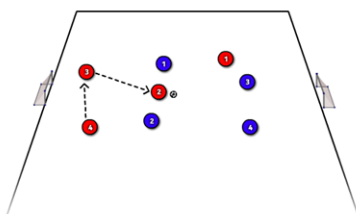


SSG

Each player given a number. Only the corresponding number from the other team can tackle you in possession and visa versa.

If, for example, blues score a goal, reds can now choose a blue player who is free to be tackled from any red player.

Encourage players to try and make space away from their marker before receiving the ball so they have the opportunity to attack space & at speed.



1V1's are great for younger players, it gives them loads of touches of the ball and lots of opportunity to learn through trying new things (sometimes failing) and getting success!

CONFIDENCE TO CREATE

1V1 TO 3V3 TO SSG
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

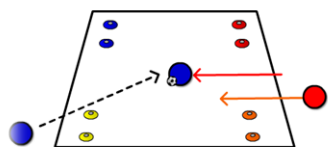
Jamie Hunt

@_Jamie_Hunt

FA LEVEL 2
GRASSROOTS COACH

The aim of Jamie's session is "To improve players' confidence on the ball leading to creative attacking play."

The session is great for younger players as it progresses from 1v1 to 3v3 and then finally a game.



PRACTICE 1: 1V1

Player receives diagonal pass and plays 1v1 against defender for 1 minute. A point is scored for every coned gate entered. Bonus point for lasting the designated time.

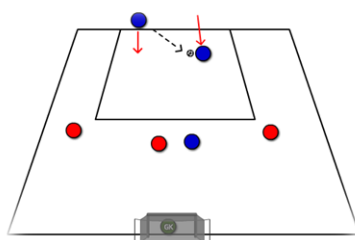
Players can go through any gate, but must choose a different gate each time. Allow players to exit area, but must return to score points. If defender wins ball, they too can score points. Rotate players.

KEY POINTS

Good pass / receiver to show which foot to receive / look for 'trigger' to make run.

Good first touch / do we need to turn or speed away from pressure?

Cleverness / trickery / positivity.



PRACTICE 2: 3V3

Remove 1 minute constraint and cones. Play 3v3 to a finish with offside; one point for goal scored, one point to defending team if they can keep ball for 30 seconds, no points if ball is played out of bounds.

Passing player enters area to support receiver. They choose to whether combine and feed wide player or work through the middle together. Allow freedom to attack; cause confusion for defenders. Rotate players.

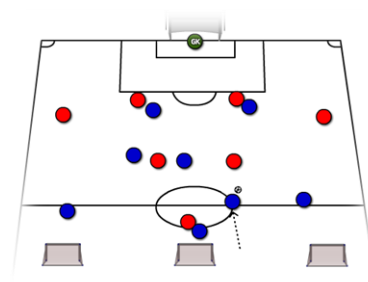
KEY POINTS

Does receiver need support? "Eyes-up" look for support.

Do you need to receive with your back to goal?

Can wide player receive / make decoy run / when to run?

How quickly can we attack? Or reload and go again? Follow up shots.



SMALL SIDED GAME

Play 6v6 inc GK
Start from GK
Allow freedom to attack; play offside to finish.

Encourage cleverness and quick play.

Encourage passers to follow pass and support.

Can receiver turn, use support/travel, to get the ball forward quickly?

Can non-receiving players move quickly behind opposition?

Can receiver attack the central space themselves?

Encourage mixture of wide and central play.

Communication.

Try not to commentate during the 1v1 and 3v3 sessions, these are perfect for players to attempt- fail and try again. (Trial and error).

4v4 +1 AND BREAKAWAY 2v1

SSG
ALL AGES

José Manuel Figueira

@JoseCoaching

UEFA 'B' LICENCE/ NZ LEVEL 3
NEW ZEALAND FOOTBALL U17 MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM
HEAD COACH

Jose's game looks at creating a breakaway situation and supporting the striker to form a 2v1. This template is great and can be used to coach many topics.

ORGANISATION

30x50 area set up as shown. Smaller 30x20 area set up as shown.
10 players 4v4 and 2, the two plays as CF or Defender.
Optional support player (YELLOW) to create 4v5.
3-4 Target gates (orange cones).
2 Mini goals.
1 Ball (additional on outside).

ACTIVITY

Each team has one defender/target player standing in the next zone ready to play.

Attacking team aims to dribble or pass through gates to score point. After scoring second point players can break out into the attacking zone (image 2).

Once entering attacking zone the player in possession aims to score in either mini goal, using their team mate to create a 2v1.

Once goal is scored or attack breaks down the attack who entered the zone swaps with the target player.

COACHING POINTS

Possession – circulation of the ball to stretch and separate the opposition. Exploit the gaps!

Support – Be in a position to receive the ball to dribble through the gate or keep possession.

Awareness – always scan and take snapshots of your space and surroundings. What's the picture?

Finishing – Be positive and go for goal. Check position of defender. Can you shoot early?

Progression – allow one defender to follow to create a 2v2 (recovery run).

Remove Gates – Team must make 4 passes before entering the attacking zone.

RECEIVING TO SHOOT AND FINISHING EARLY

TECHNIQUE TO SSG
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

Jonathan Henderson

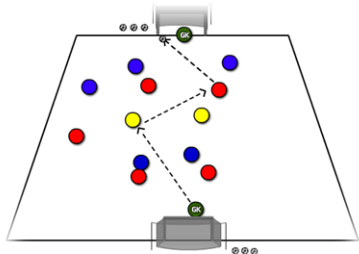
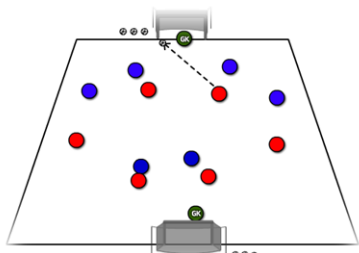
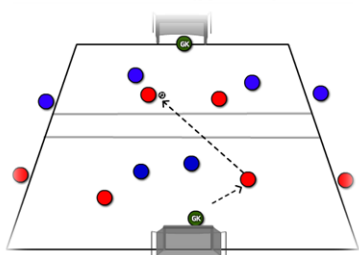
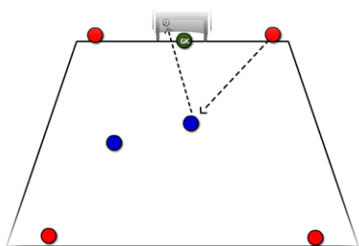
@JonnyHenderson

UEFA 'A' LICENCE / FA YOUTH AWARD
BRISTOL ROVERS FC HEAD OF COACHING

This session encourages players to create goal scoring opportunities and shoot early. The session progresses from unopposed through to a small sided game.

TECHNIQUE

Area 20 x 20 yards. Feeders on outside with supply of balls. Players on inside work one at a time to receive from players on outside to finish with variety. Rotate players after either set amount of time or set number of shots **NB:** Duplicate practice in 2nd grid to have more players working at same time.



CONDITIONED SSG

Area 25 x 50 yards split in 2 halves (with 10 yard free zone) 2v2 in end zone with target players on outside. Play starts from GK looking to play forward into attacking players (can play through defender or wide target players who are restricted to their own half to start). Player can drop into free zone to receive unopposed – limited time permitted in free zone. If defending team win possession can counter attack.

Progressions can allow the wide players to work the entire line and/or Defender can drive into attacking half to create overload.

SMALL SIDED GAME

Area 40 x 40 with goals at each end. 2 teams, with goalkeepers Supply of balls with each goalkeeper. Play to restart from GK, If team score, game restarts from their own goalkeeper. Team to shoot at earliest opportunity

ADAPTIONS

Can start with 2 neutral players to play with team in possession to create overload in attack.

COACHING POINTS

Receive to play forward and set to shoot.
Shoot with accuracy and power using a range of techniques.
Movement to create space Positive attitude in attack.
Confidence to get on the ball under pressure.
Speed of movement to receive.
Strength in 1v1 situations.

Challenge the players: Can we try and score as early as possible? What will be important for us to do that?

WHEN TO PASS AND WHEN TO DRIBBLE

SKILL TO WAVE PRACTICE
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

Rich Holmes

@Richhhhhh

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
WEST BROMWICH ALBION FC FOUNDATION COACH

Rich's includes 3 different practices which develop up to a wave. The aim of the session is to develop the technical detail of passing and dribbling, whilst also developing the ability to make correct decisions quickly – when and where is the right place to pass/dribble?

PRACTICE ONE: BALL MANIPULATION

Players with ball each. Ball manipulation, unopposed technical. Set individual & group challenges within practice.

Qs: When/how/where/why can I increase tempo? When/why/how/where may I need to turn?
How can I keep the ball safe from danger?
Which different surfaces of the foot can you use?

PRACTICE TWO: TECHNICAL SESSION - PASSING

Ball passed square across box, receives & plays to back-middle player, who sets ball to other middle player to play out of box. Setting player stays, all others follow pass. Process repeats from other side.

Challenge: Encourage imagination on passing & link up play.

CP: Detail on pass, type of pass, weight & quality of pass, receiving touch, body shape to receive.

PRACTICE THREE: OPPOSED SKILL PRACTICE

Teams have a ball each – to score a point, ball must be dribbled /passed through middle triangle before being dribbled/passed through one of the corner gates.

Challenge: How many points can a team score in x minutes?

CP: Appropriate supporting movements to help player in possession, combination play, passing technique, when to pass & when to dribble? Progression: One team can only score by dribbling through, one by passing – rotate.

PRACTICE THREE: OPPOSED SKILL PRACTICE

44x36yds (2 penalty areas) 2 permanent GKs, 3 teams of 4. 2 teams play to one goal, the team that concede leave the pitch and the waiting team come on.

CP: Dispersal, movement & support, penetration, innovation, creativity, combination play, when to risk or maintain possession, when to pass or dribble

This session progresses from unopposed, semi opposed to fully opposed. This can help players transfer pictures they seen in a practice to a competitive situation.

FINISHING: GOALS GALORE

SSG
ALL AGES

Rob Mills

@millszia

GRASSROOTS COACH

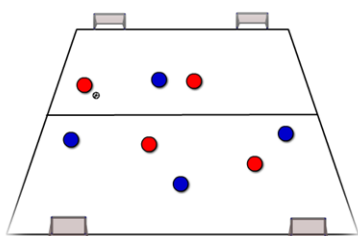
Rob's session is one that he uses with his Under 8 side. This small sided game is a variation of the 4 goal game, its fast paced and fun...with lots opportunities to score!

The session will be a favourite with players but will also produce lots of coaching points.

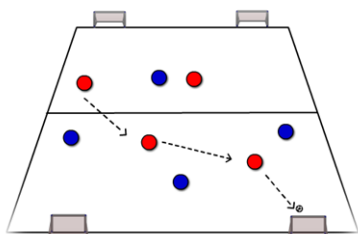
ORGANISATION

Pitch suitable for the age and ability of your players.

4 goals or coned goals, set up as per diagram. Initially each team attack 2 goals and defends to goals.

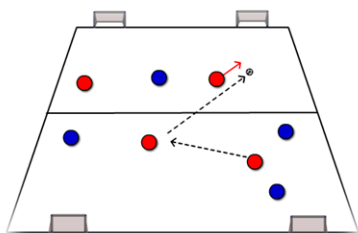


The team in possession must pass the half way line before they can score. (image 2) REDS play out from their half and look to score in opponents goal.

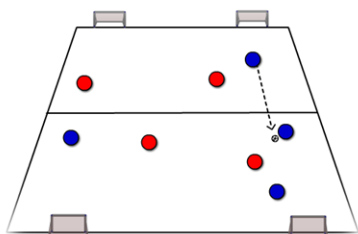


PROGRESSION

Once the team in possession has entered the opponents half, they can now score in any goal. (image 3) RED player recognises he can't score so they turn to attack the opposite end.



If possession is lost the team that wins it must attack the goal in the opposite half. (image 4).



COACHING POINTS

Encourage quick attacks and counter attacks.

Constant scanning – Where are my teammates? The defenders? Which goal shall we attack?

Encourages problem solving out of possession – man mark? block shots?

Young players love small sided games as it gives them opportunity to express themselves and score goals! Choose drinks breaks and 1-to-1 moments to coach, rather than stopping the game.

4 CORNER POSSESSION

SSG
ALL AGES

Gareth Byres

@garethbyres

**FA LEVEL 2
PE SPECIALIST AND FOOTBALL COACH**

Gareth's session can be used to coach a number of elements regarding possession, such as...

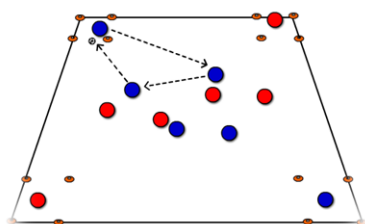
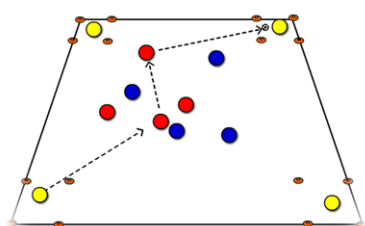
Switching play.
Receiving to play forwards.
Combining in midfield.
When to run with the ball.

ORGANISATION

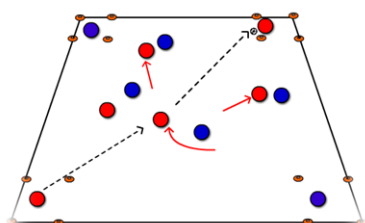
Set up as per diagram. 30 x 20 with 5x5 boxes in each corner.

4v4 in middle + 2 from each team in boxes initially playing as targets.

Teams look to keep possession using corner target players.

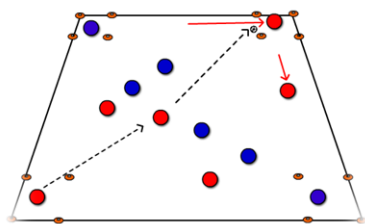


Target players now play for a colour, each team now works diagonally from corner to corner. Patience in possession (image 2) team can not play forwards looks to keep possession.



Try and play forwards (image 3), RED attackers clear passing line for teammate to play into the target player. Players must recognise when to 'patient' and when to 'play forwards'.

Rotation (image 4), RED player 'clears' the target area and is filled by a teammate.



COACHING POINTS

4 R's of possession;
Receiving the ball (*different techniques / areas of the body*).
Retaining the ball (*decision safe vs risk*).
Running with the ball (*when and where?*).
Releasing the ball (*when and how?*).

Variation: This game can be played unopposed initially, so each team has a ball and works from corner to corner.

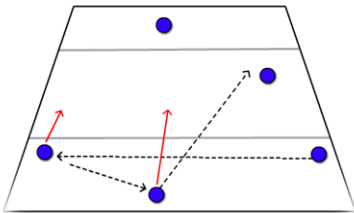
COMBINATIONS AND SUPPORT PLAY

SKILL TO SSG
ALL AGES

Combination play is really important if you want your side to control possession. Lee's session will encourage players to 'keep' possession and recognise when to take risks and break lines.

ORGANISATION

Set up two rectangular areas, roughly 15x30 (adapt area depending on age/ability). In each area, split into thirds. Use flat discs if possible as these can be passed over. 5 players on each pitch, with 3 in one third, 1 in the middle and 1 at the other end.



The 3 start with the ball and every player must touch the ball before they can pass into the next third. When they do, 2 players move into the next third with 1 staying. Players must try and fill all thirds, not just the one with the ball in. Move the ball up and down the pitch.

If players are comfortable with this, combine the pitches and have both teams working at the same time as interference.

ADD DEFENDERS

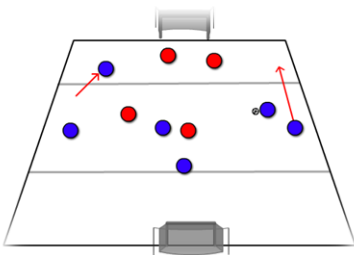
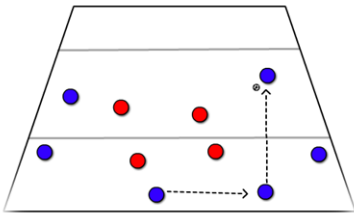
Now combine both areas, making a 30x60 (depending on the original area size used). Split the players into 6 attackers and 4 defenders. 4 attackers will start in one third with 2 defenders, the middle third will have 2 of each and the last third will be vacant. Each player must touch the ball before it can be transferred into the next third (either a pass or running with the ball). When it is transferred, 2 attackers go in to support, the other 2 attackers and defenders must then run to the vacant last third.

If defenders win the ball, can they break out and stop the ball off the pitch? Rather than just 'clearing'.

SSG

Add in goals. Keep the same setup, but now when the ball goes into the final third, it's 4 vs 2 with the aim of scoring. If the attackers score or the ball goes dead, start the practice again attacking towards the other goal.

Finally, revert the teams to 5v5 and go into a game, no restrictions. See whether the players look to pass the ball forward and are they giving good support to those forward passes?



COUNTER ATTACKING: ATTACKING QUICKLY ON GAINING POSSESSION

TECHNIQUE TO SSG
YDP AGES 12 – 16

Jonathan Henderson

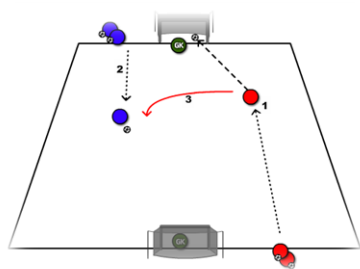
@JonnyHenderson

UEFA 'A' LICENCE / FA YOUTH AWARD
BRISTOL ROVERS FC HEAD OF COACHING

This session from Jonathan looks to exploit counter attacking opportunities and score as quickly as possible on gaining possession

COACHING POINTS

Concentration and reactions to transition
Positive in 1v1 situations
Dribble or pass to exploit space
Create and utilise overloads
Forward movement to create space and/or support player on the ball
End Product



TECHNICAL PRACTICE

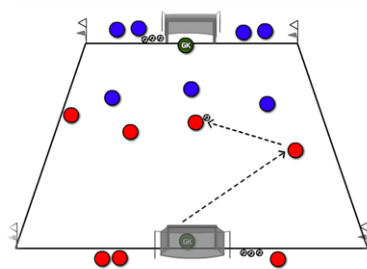
Area 30 x 20 yards.
Players are split equally
behind each goal.

Objective of the practice
is for players to score as
quickly as possible (time
limit may be imposed).

Once player has shot,
player behind opposite
goal starts attack. Switch
starting position to ensure
players work both left and
right.

PROGRESSION

Once player has shot,
recover to put pressure on
opposite attacker, as per
diagram.

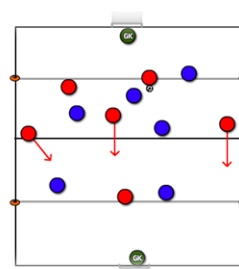


3V4 CONDITIONED SSG

Area 40 x 50 yards
4 attackers v 3 defenders
Start from goalkeeper.
Objective of practice is
for attackers to exploit
overload and score within
imposed time limit.

As soon as shot is taken
(regardless of outcome)
GK restarts quickly (or
play from a turnover of
possession), 2 of the
original attackers must run
around attacking corner
flags before recovering as
defenders. This creates a
3v2 going opposite
direction.

After both attacks restart
opposite way with new
4v3.



7V7 SSG

Area 60 x 40 yards (or 70 x 50 if
older players) 2 equal teams.
Normal game, offside lines in play
(flags). Teams to decide defensive
tactics (drop to leave space/ high
press to win early for example).

Ensure one player is left high as
outlet on gaining possession.

On transition can we attack
quickly, create and exploit
overloads.

Can we play forward as early as
possible? If not can we move the
ball quickly to someone who can.

Position specific Individual roles
and responsibilities can be
introduced if suitable.

Depth and the ability to play forwards are vital to counter attack, discuss the role of the centre forward and how he/she allows the team to adopt a counter attacking attitude.

SUPPORT PLAY AROUND THE BALL

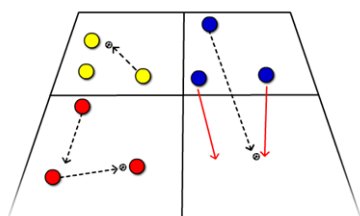
TECHNIQUE TO SSG
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

Matt Thomas

@GoalIn_One

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
OWNER GOAL IN ONE ACADEMY

Matt's session on support play follows the FA Level 2 formula of Technique to Skill to Small Sided Game.

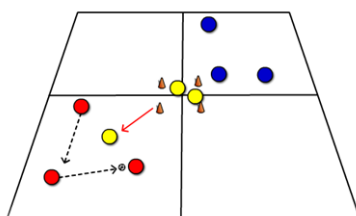


TECHNICAL PRACTICE

Set up 4 squares in a 40x40 area.

All 3 teams have a ball for each, players must make a minimum of 3 passes in their area before they move into another area.

Once the play is transferred from box to box the supporting players follow.

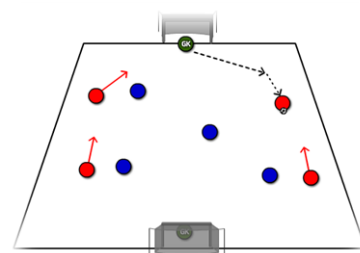


SKILL

Opposed as above 3 defenders now stay in coned area in middle of field.

Once the play starts defenders shut down the team with the ball.

Once they pass to another team then another defender joins in first defender returns back to coned area attackers can move from grid to grid.



SSG

2 Keepers.
4v4 Outfield.

Coach one team encourage team to play out from the back. Make sure players offer support, forward, backwards and side wards, help players how to lose defenders and create space with good passing angles.

COACHING POINTS

Awareness – recognise the moment to play, when can we penetrate to a new box?

Movement off the ball – Timing, when shall we become a 'target'?

Support play – recognise the trigger to support.

Quality and accuracy of pass.

Players off the ball – join the target player in the new box.

If the players are struggling with this topic, address the overload and make it more achievable for the attackers.

TRANSITION:

1V1

2V2

SSG

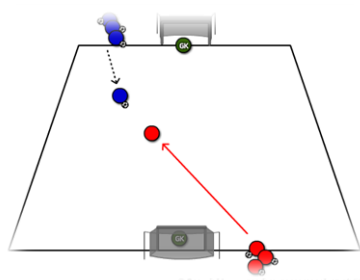
TECHNIQUE TO SSG
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

Bobby Puppione

@Bobbypup

USSF 'A' LICENCE
CINCINNATI UNITED SOCCER CLUB
DIRECTOR OF COACHING

Bobby Puppione serves as Cincinnati United Premier Boys and Girls Youth Director of Coaching, managing the CUP U11-U13 age groups and overseeing the transition from U10 CU into U11 CUP. He has been a Director of Coaching with the club since January of 2009 and has worked with many boys and girls teams across Cincinnati United.



TECHNICAL PRACTICE

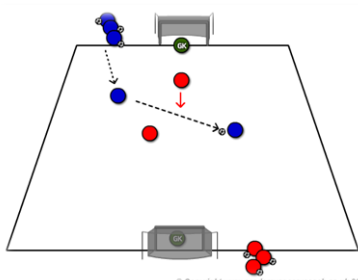
Player dribbles and tries to beat defender to score a goal.

Defender looks to win the ball and counter to the other goal. Once the player has shot, the attacker RED takes on the BLUE who becomes the defender.

COACHING POINTS

Attacking: Quickly transition and go to goal, use moves / speed to beat defender, quality / type of finish.

Defending: Recovery run, get in between dribbler and goal, force away from goal, win and counter.



2v2/2v1 TRANSITION (shooter has to touch)

Transition on any shot, no rebounds. Can not play back to the goalkeeper.

When the shot is taken, 2 new players come out with ball to transition. The player who shot must touch the goal post before coming back to defend...creating a 2v1 for the attacking team.

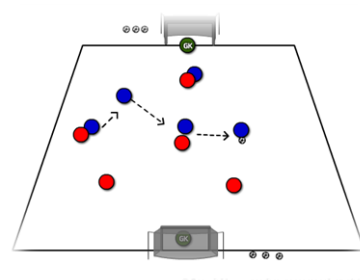
PROGRESSIONS

Allow rebounds.

Allow use of GK.

Progress to 3v3/3v2.

The new attacker must overlap before going for goal.



6v6 SSG

Finish the session with a 6v6 including goalkeepers.

Do players recognise the moment to turn defence in to attack?

Do individuals quickly look to go to goal?

FINISHING: COMBINATION PLAY IN AND AROUND THE BOX

FUNCTION
YDP AGES 12-16

Murray Jones

@uk64murray

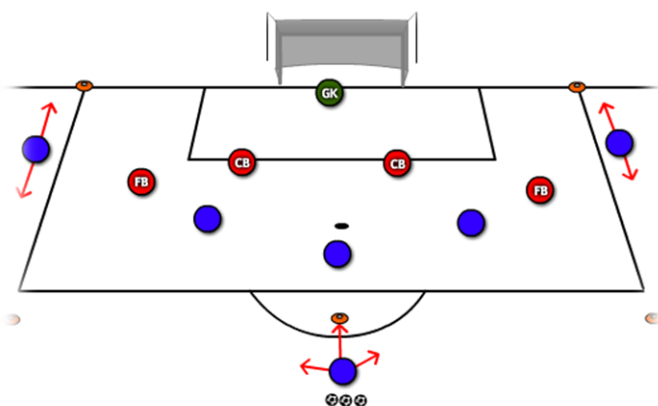
UEFA 'A' LICENCE
QUEENS PARK RANGERS FC U16 COACH

Murray's session looks at developing understanding of combination play in and around the box.

This function is suitable for players playing the 11v11 game.

ORGANISATION

Set up practice around 18 yard box. 3 Forwards vs. 4 Defenders inside playing/penalty area. Unopposed wide players x2 work outside the box, but offside rule applies. 1 Centre Midfielder works across the penalty box to support passing/combinations into Forwards.



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COACHING CHALLENGES

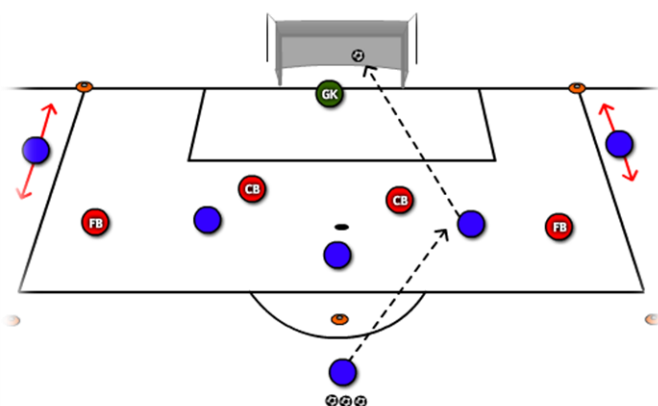
Forwards to receive, combine into scoring situations.

1v1 receiving and turning skills.

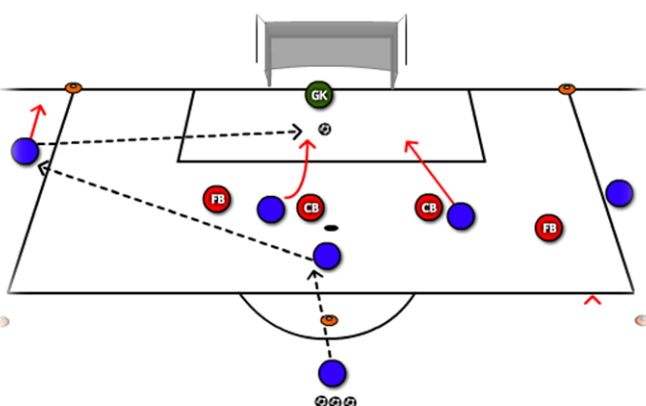
Combination play of forwards.

Movement to create space; for yourself and your team mate.

Defenders to defend penalty box, work the ball back to the central midfielder.



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Keep the practice realistic by enforcing offsides, this will benefit the attackers and defenders and build understanding that they can transfer to match days.

SSG: 3 PASS RULE

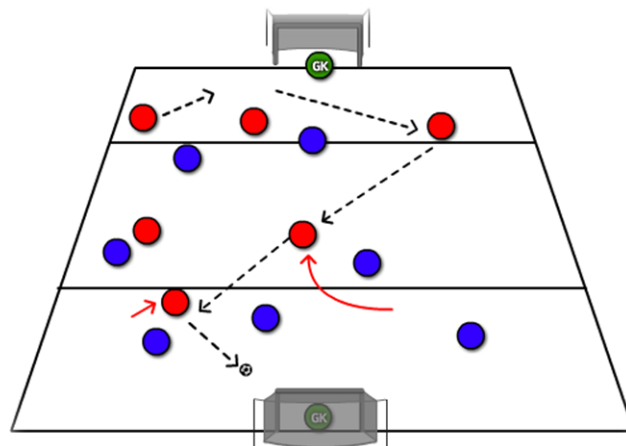
SSG
ALL AGES

Tony Taylor
@fad690

UEFA 'B' / UEFA 'A' LICENCE PART 1
BURTON ALBION FC
HEAD OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PHASE

This session from Tony can be adapted to suit a number of topic and abilities, it really is a template that every coach should have in his toolbox!

If you don't follow Tony on Twitter already...you should!! Always happy to discuss ideas and concepts.



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ORGANISATION

The aim of this game is to encourage positive play and make the transition between patient possession to positive penetration.

You can set the number of passes (in the title) to suit your needs / the needs of the players.

Set up area with 2 goals and split into 3 equal areas (thirds).

Players are allowed in any zone but the condition is you are only allowed a set number of passes maximum in each zone before you have to play into another zone (forwards or backwards).

KEY POINTS (DEPENDANT ON TOPIC)

Awareness.

Support (angles and distances).

Pass selection.

Quality of pass.

Body position to receive.

Timing of movement (runs).

Positivity – Bravery on the ball and to receive the ball in tight areas.

When to play to feet and when to play to space.

There is plenty to work on with this game, you can alter the conditions to suit...even down to the type of finish!

RECEIVING ON THE BACK FOOT

TECHNICAL
ALL AGES

Andy Samuels

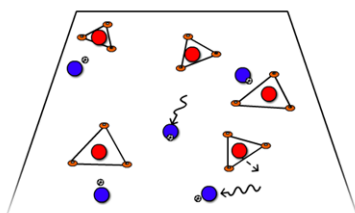
@Andy_Samuels

**FA LEVEL 2
ROMSEY TOWN YOUTH COACH**

The focus of this session is to encourage players to receive the ball on the back foot, so that they can open out to play forwards.

The use of triangles allows players to receive from one side and play out another.

WARM UP



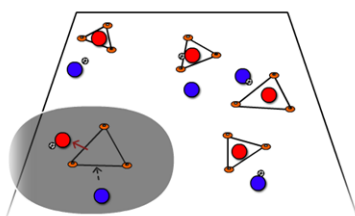
Players pair up - one player starts inside triangle, other outside with ball. Player with ball makes a bounce pass with partner, then dribbles around area making other bounce passes with other target players in the triangles. Work for about 1/2mins - then change over with target players.

Encourage accurate passing, weight/direction of pass, communication, player with ball to get head up early to assess space/open target player.

PRACTICE 1

Once player with ball has passed ball into target player, they change places, so target player then moves out of triangle with the ball and dribbles to find another target to pass into. Work for about 2/3 minutes each.

Encourage accuracy of pass, one touch to get them out the triangle, play at med/high intensity, get head up early to assess space/open target player, communication. Once the players are familiar with the first part of the technique session, can then move onto focusing on receiving on the back foot.



Again, same set up as before, but once player with ball has played into target player, they follow pass in so they close off the side the ball has entered the triangle, adding some passive pressure to the target player. Target player then has to decide which of the 2 sides to exit the triangle, ensuring they receive on back foot and start to get their body in between defender and ball. Work for about 10/15mins each.

Encourage good body position to receive, one touch to get away from defender quickly, assess pitch to help decide where to travel into (away from danger/other players/side of pitch). Protect the ball(body in between defender), focus on using both feet for receiving and passing.

PROGRESSION

To finish you could play a 5V5 Game using the triangles as goal scoring areas.

Explain the session to the players and allow them to set up their triangle, based on their perception of the challenge they will make the triangle small or large.

FINISHING: WITHOUT GOALS!

TECHNICAL TO SSG
AGES 10-12

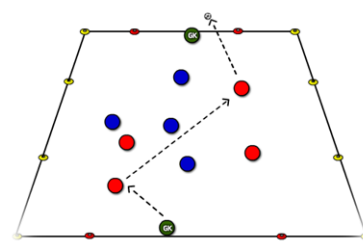
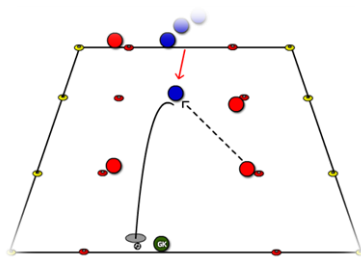
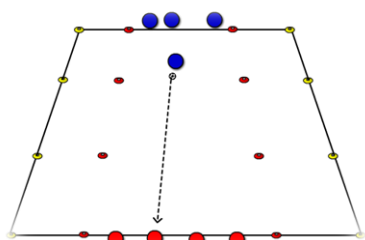
Andy Brown

@Youthsoccerblog

GRASSROOTS COACH

Andy's session looks at Improving the ability to finish working with both the left and right foot.

There are no goals in this session, a common problem in grassroots soccer...here is how Andy deals with it.



ORGANISATION

The practice takes place in an area 30x30 yards, you may need to adjust the area depending on the age and ability of the players you are coaching.

Players are split into two groups and stand opposite each other in the middle channel. Each player has a ball and they take it in turns (a player from one end, then a player from the other end) to strike to the ball to the opposite end.

Encourage players to try different techniques, striking the ball with the laces, inside and outside of the foot, as well as their less dominant foot.

(Image 2) One team now becomes servers for the other team. Ask the serving team to serve from different areas, from behind, to the side and in front. Progress to allow the servers to becoming active defenders on the strikers first touch.

Continue to encourage the strikers to use both feet and shoot with different parts of the foot and remember to rotate the players.

Finish with a small sided game with big goals to create lots of shooting opportunities. For each of the practices it is a good idea to have plenty of balls behind each end.

COACHING POINTS

- Timing.
- Eye on the ball.
- Keepers position.
- Position of standing foot.
- Type of contact.

Breaking down the technique for young players is really important, but also allow them opportunity to practice! This session is great as it gives lots of repetition.

WINGERS VS. COUNTER ATTACKERS SSG ALL AGES

Chris Hodgson
@hodgaa

1ST TEAM MANAGER AT MIDDLESBOROUGH FUTSAL

Chris' session is a real favourite with kids and adults, its delivered through a SSG and is really enjoyable!

ORGANISATION

Pitch Size: 40x30 (5 yard zones for the wingers)

Players: 10+

Match Length: 4x5 minutes

◀ WINGERS

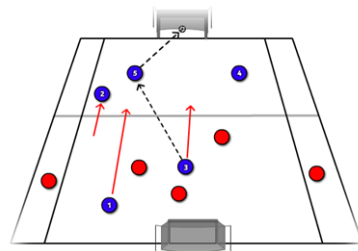
Wingers on right side must cross ball with RIGHT FOOT, on left side with LEFT FOOT

Wingers: To score, player No.2 in the central zone must pass the ball out wide to player No.4 the winger (or player No.5), wingers hold onto the ball and player No.2 who passed it must overlap player No.4 and receive a pass still in the zone for him to cross the ball. Player No.4 who was the winger then joins play in the central zone, all players must be in the oppositions half for the goal to count. Goals only count if they were scored from a cross. So whenever the ball is passed to the winger the player that passed MUST OVERLAP then cross the ball and becomes the new winger.

Note: The zone that the wingers play in is a safe zone and the counterattacking team cannot enter the wingers zone

COUNTER ATTACKERS ▶

Counter Attackers: Two Forward players must always stay in the oppositions half, not allowed into their own half, When the defender No.3 wins the ball they must play the ball to one of the forwards or build up the play to eventually find one of the forwards. The Forwards can not score, but must set up any one of the 3 players (No.2 in Picture) running into the oppositions half to score. Again like the wingers all players must be in oppositions half for the goal to count. Player No.3 who passed the ball to Forward No.5 must follow their pass and replace Forward No.5 to become the new Forward and player No.5 resumes play with player No.1 and 2. So whenever a player passes the ball to a forward player, they follow their pass to replace them.



COACHING POINTS

Counter Attackers: Can you draw the opposition into your own half, win the ball and attack quickly by finding the Forward players and working hard to support by running quickly into attacking half to be set up by the forward players, also when attacking, there will be an overload, in this example its 5v3. If conceding a goal don't be forced to try and find a forward can we retain possession and again draw the opposition into your own half and hit them with a quality pass to one of the forwards and attack aggressively.

Wingers: Again when attacking there will be an overload as their two forward players are not allowed to come back to defend. We are looking for the supporting players to exploit the gaps ready to attack the crosses. When overlapping do it with pace, be confident when running with the ball and delivering the cross.

This game is end to end and very tiring thats why I suggest 4 x 5 minute games swapping over roles, counter attacking team becoming the wingers and so on.

Keep score of all the games and see which Style wins, wingers or counter attacks, might give you an idea of how your team prefer to play.

USING OVERLOADS EFFECTIVELY

TECHNICAL TO SSG
AGES 9-11

Warren Grant

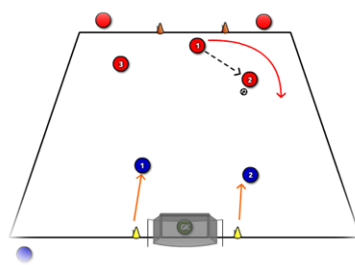
@coachWG

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
WEST BROMWICH ALBION FC ACADEMY COACH

Warren's session is about overloads, creating 3v1 and 3v2 opportunities. "This is a session I would do at grassroots working with 9-11's. Very basic but a part of the game I think needs improving across English football."

ATTACKING OVERLOAD TECHNICAL PRACTICE 3V2

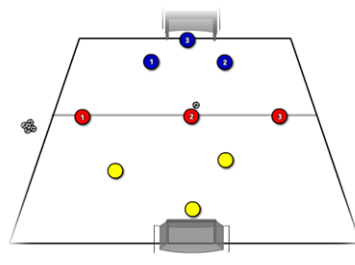
RED 1 plays RED 2 or RED 3.
RED 1 overlaps/underlaps player passed too.
On travel of pass BLUE 1 and BLUE 2 become live defenders.
Ball is live until goal scored/out of play.
Attackers (REDS) play to goal.
Defenders (BLUES) play to win ball and drive through gates.



3V2 WITH GOALKEEPER

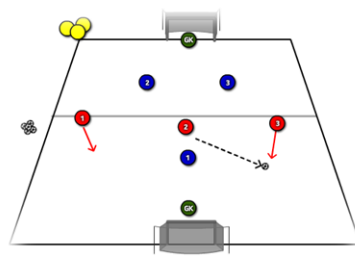
Organisation is 3 teams of 3.
Defenders (BLUES and YELLOWS) number themselves 1,2,3 with each taking a turn in goal per attack.
Attackers (REDS) have 6 attacks, 3 at each goal, balls played in by the coach.

On defenders regaining possession they must pass to the coach or dribble to midline to score.



WAVE PRACTICE; 3V1, 3V2 AND 3V3

Attackers (REDS) will play out 3 consecutive attacks on receiving a pass from the coach.
1st attack will be 3v1 to goal.
2nd attack will be 3v2 to goal.
Final attack is a 3v3 to goal.
On defenders regaining possession they must pass to the coach or dribble to midline to score.



COACHING POINTS

Recognition of space for overload.
Decision making whether to slide in or go alone.
Timing of release of pass.
Execution of dribbling moves when necessary
End Product.

Can I make selfish/selfless movements to aid the team?
When do I go alone or slide a team mate in?
How can we create overload opportunities?

This session allows the child (player) to fix the problem, rather than the coach dishing out the answers. Give them opportunity to 'work it out', question instead of 'giving' knowledge.

PLAYING THROUGH MIDFIELD

SSG
YDP 12 - 16

Luke Hussey

@Luke_Hussey_

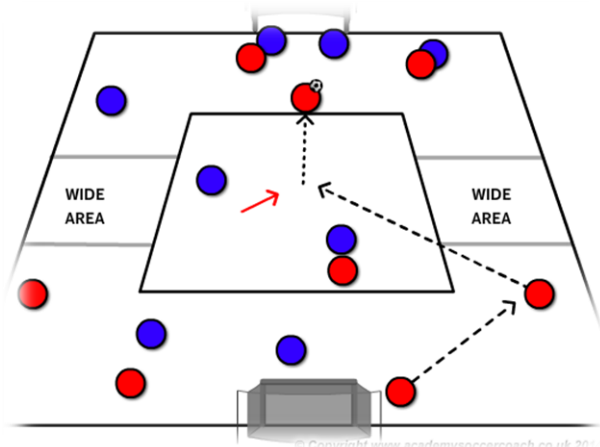
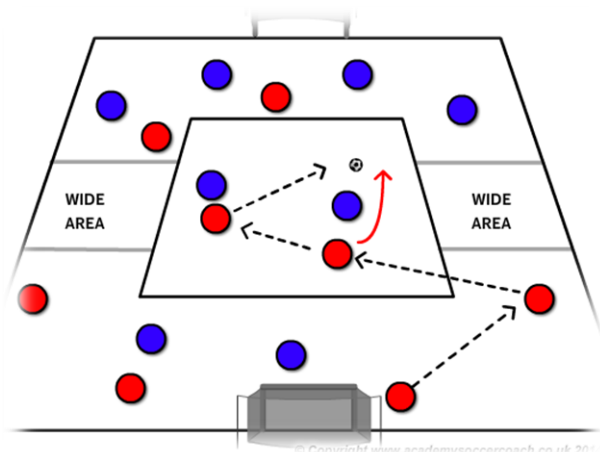
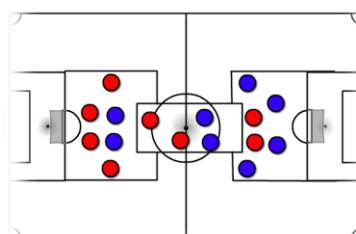
UEFA 'B' LICENCE
BRISTOL CITY FC UNDER 13 COACH

This practice looks at playing through midfield, specifically using central midfielders. This is a form of a 'thirds' game, it simplifies the pictures for the midfielders by initially locking the defenders and attackers in end zones.

ORGANISATION

As per image (right) Luke uses 2 large end zones the width of the box, with one narrower central zone.

Each end zone is 4v2 (defenders v attackers) and the central zone is 2v2 matched up with central midfielders.



COMBINATION PLAY

Encourage the midfielders to work as pair and try and combine to play forwards. Combinations could include; 1-2/wall pass, dummy, 1 high and 1 to the ball or even clearing the midfield so the defenders can play straight through.

DRIVE THROUGH

As a progression allow the midfielders to drive from their central zone to the attacking end zone (image 3). Players will need to recognise how and when to do this? What is the role of the strikers here?

VARIATIONS / PROGRESSIONS

Ask the players "How could we progress the session?" Ideas may include...

- Add goalkeepers.
- Allow players in wide areas (no. limit? Time limit?)
- Allow defenders to "join".
- Allow centre forwards to "drop in" to receive.

Luke is a big believer in allowing the players to decide the practice, as your players "how you could progress this practice?" This builds understanding and allows the coach to discuss key topics with individuals if needed.

PLAYING ON OPPOSITE LINES AND ROTATING

TECHNIQUE TO SSG
YDP or PDP (12+)

Aaron Danks

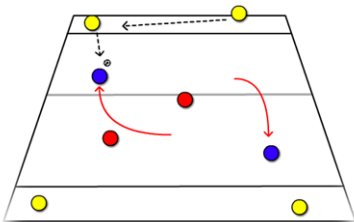
@coachdanks

UEFA 'A' LICENCE/ FA YOUTH AWARD
WEST BROMWICH ALBION PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PHASE COACH

If you don't follow Aaron on twitter...you should!
Some of the most insightful coaching messages
online.

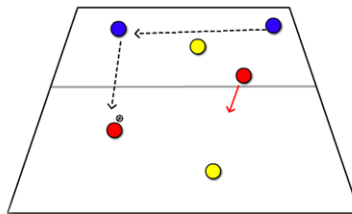
COACHING POINTS - Vocabulary

Ability to take eyes away from the ball
Don't be caught on the same lines
Timings of rotations...1st movement early and obvious, 2nd
movement late and disguised
Checking, receiving and passing whilst on the move



TECHNICAL PRACTICE

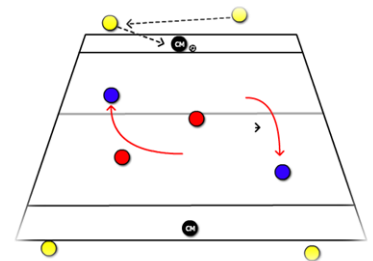
2 target players play square before playing forwards to the 2 players in possession, who look to get the ball forward to the opposite target player. If the pair can get the ball from north to south and back again a goal is awarded. Simplify: Begin with ball in hands or 2 balls in the middle (unopposed).



OPPOSED PRACTICE 1

A 4v2 possession game, by splitting the area in half, the session become directional. 1 defender from can only occupy 1 half area.

If you give the ball away you instantly defend in transition.



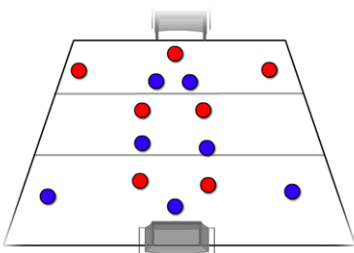
OPPOSED PRACTICE 2

North-South practice, 2 target players (YELLOW) play square before playing in the 'pocket player' (BLACK) or CM (RED/BLUE).

2 CM either play directly to opposite target players or through opposition.

On next square target player pass (YELLOW) 2 CM in possession rotate with pocket players.

Pocket players initially on 2 touch if bounced back to them now on 1 touch.



SSG

Players play a SSG which is zoned into 3 areas. Out of possession the players are locked in their own zone, however in possession they can overload by one player – either from behind the ball or ahead. Players are encouraged to play 'through the thirds' and rotate well as replace one another.

Note how this session build up; unopposed – to opposed – to opposed, but more difficult and then SSG. This scaffolds the players learning so they build from each step.

RUNNING WITH THE BALL

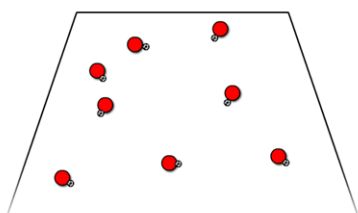
TECHNIQUE TO SSG
FOUNDATION AGES 7-11

Anthony Wilshaw

@anthonywilshaw

**QUALITY TOUCH SOCCER ACADEMY
DIRECTOR OF COACHING**

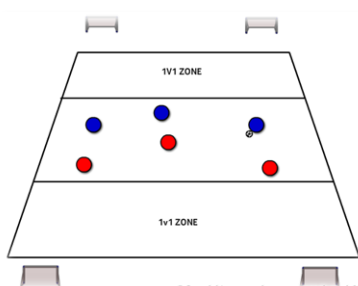
Anthony's session follows the "Whole-Part-Whole" format. The objective is "To help players develop and understanding of how/when to run with the ball and the movements off the ball to create spaces to run with the ball".



BALL BASED WARM UP

Players have a ball each and can dribble anywhere inside the playing area.

Move in to tag game. Pairs, numbered 1 and 2 with a ball each and face each other. Player must manipulate the ball to avoid getting tagged.



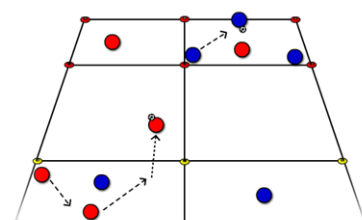
WHOLE: RUNNING WITH THE BALL

Attacking team tries to get a player to dribble into the 1v1 zone and then score beyond in the small goals. The attacker must dribble in to the 1v1 zone can't receive a pass in there.

What type of touches do we take to keep the ball safe from defenders?

What 1v1 moves can we use to change direction or go past a defender?

What do we need to know before we receive the ball?

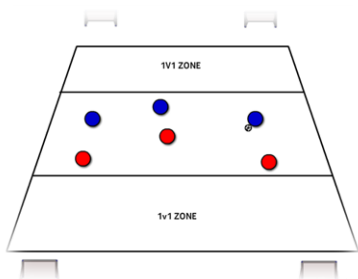


PART: 3V1 RUNNING WITH THE BALL

3V1 in the yellow areas. Once the attacking team complete 3 or more passes, a player can break out of the yellow area and run with the ball to the red area. The waiting player takes the ball from the dribbler and heads back to the yellow area where the 3v1 resumes.

PROGRESSIONS

Play 3v1 in end zone before exploding to the other end.



WHOLE: SSG

Back to the SSG, progressions if ready. Defender can chase back in to the shoot zone now.

Attacker has a time limit to score a goal once entering the 1v1 zone.

Play with central goals and add goalkeepers.

This practice follows the WHOLE-PART-WHOLE formula, this is great for players as its competitive straight away which they enjoy. It also gives the coach chance to observe the players before the 'part' which could be key!

GET IN, GET OUT!

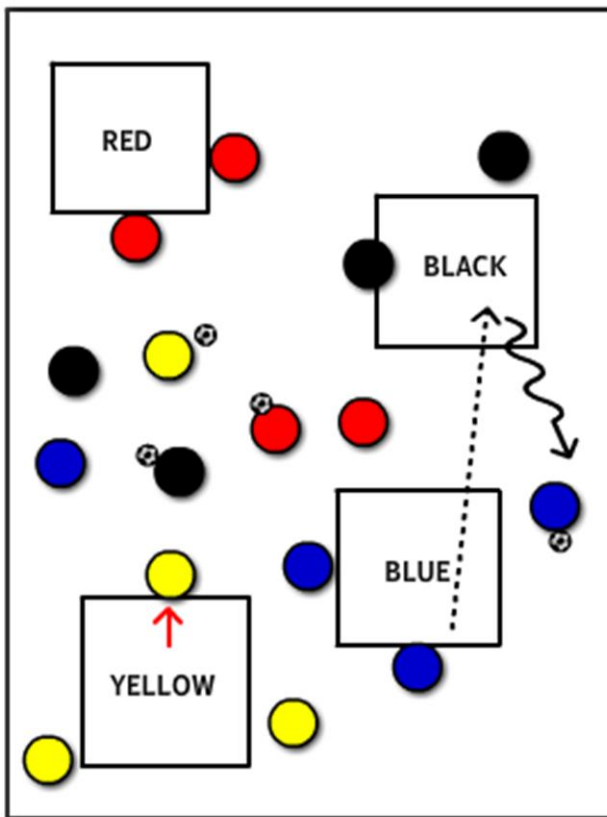
SKILL
ALL AGES

Ian Dipper

@dipandswerve

UEFA 'B' LICENCE
DIP AND SWERVE COACHING OWNER
PE MENTOR FOR SUNDERLAND FOUNDATION OF LIGHT

This session from Ian gives the players lots of touches of the ball, lots of decisions to make and encourages the players to work together.



ORGANISATION

Four teams
Four squares
Four footballs

Each team tries to score in other teams squares.

If they dribble into the square without being tackled they receive two points.

They then move the ball onto a teammate.

At the same time you must try to deny other teams from scoring in your square.

Maybe look to use coloured cones in each square. When you score you take it back to base.

Plenty of returns based around decision making as an individual and working as a team.

Players can lose their ball from others tackling.

ADAPTATIONS

Less players
More balls
Each player can play one "safety card" that allows them free access to a square.

The size of this practice will determine the outcomes, if the areas to score are large the defenders will find it difficult to stop players scoring. Adapt to suit the needs of your players.

ATTACKING 1V1 AND 2V2

**SKILL TO SSG
AGES 9-11**

Rahim Mohamed

@RahimzMohamed

**USSF 'B' LICENCE
FC LONDON ACADEMY (CANADA)
ASSISTANT ACADEMY MANAGER U6-11**

Rahim was voted one of NSCAA Top 30 Coaches Under 30 and has vast experience coaching in Canada and the US. He has kindly submitted a full session plan which is aimed at 9-11 year olds.

DRIBBLING TECHNIQUE

Walking to running – work on both feet

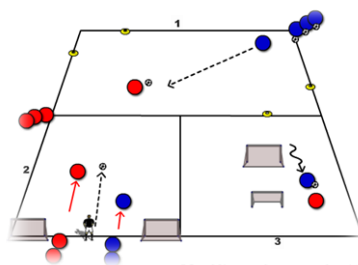
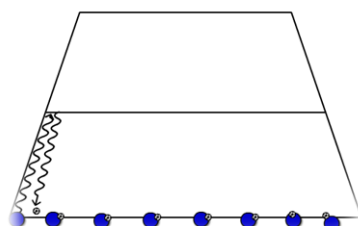
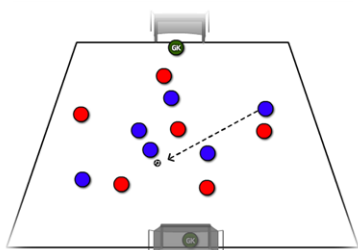
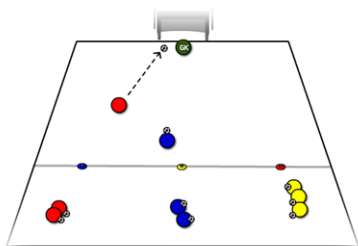
Every step is a touch

Turns – inside cut, outside cut, step-on, pull-back, step-over, cruyff, double cut

Speed of execution, body position and deception

SMALL SIDED ACTIVITIES

1. 1V1 Corner goals, defender serves and then attempts to prevent attacker dribbling into corner. If defender wins the ball they can counter.
2. 1v1 goals – cut turn. Coach serves and players compete to win ball and dribble to score.
3. 1v1 opposite goals. Players can score in either goal.



3 LINE FINISHING

RED takes a touch and strikes at the goal.
BLUE then attacks RED in 1v1 and tries to score.
YELLOW attacks BLUE in 1v1.

Work both ways so reverse the lines.

SSG: 7V7

Coaches observe and ensure rules are being followed.

Players / Teams are asked to devise their own strategies in a 2-3-1 formation.

Variation: You can alter the shooting practice to include a 2v1.

Variation: You could add different 1v1 games, ask the players to create their own.

OVERLOADS AND BREAKING LINES

SKILL TO SSG
YDP or PDP (12+)

Aaron Danks

@coachdanks

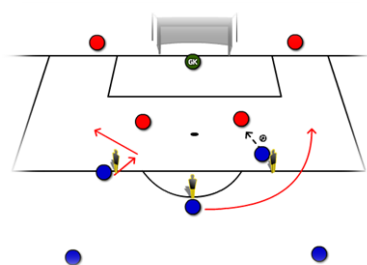
UEFA 'A' LICENCE/ FA YOUTH AWARD
WEST BROMWICH ALBION PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PHASE COACH

The learning objective for these sessions is develop understanding of recognising overloads, effective use of combinations to exploit overloads and movement off the ball to create / exploit space.

TECHNICAL PRACTICE

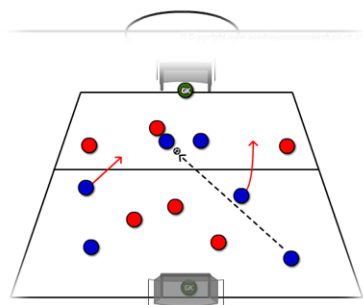
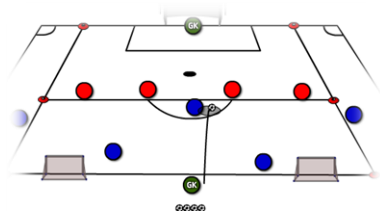
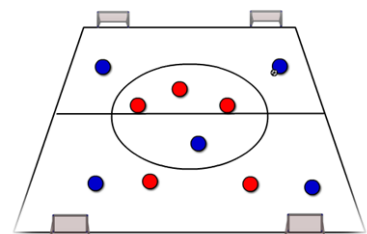
3V2 overload practice. Attacker bounces pass off first defender then attack the goal in a 3v2. If the defenders win the ball they can score in either target goal.

Progression: Start on man as a CF up against 2 CB bounce pass off him for start position.



OPPOSED PRACTICE 1

The playing area is split into 2 halves with 3v2 in each half. The 3 attackers aim to score against the 2 defenders, when they score all 3 players must quickly retreat to the centre circle as shown. Now the 2 players that were originally defending have to get the ball into their 3 attacking players in the opposite half who must score against the 2 defenders.



OPPOSED PRACTICE 2

A second 18 yard box is marked out (zone 14). A back four defend against a front 3 and 2 CM. 5v4 overload. In transition the defenders can attack the target goals positioned at the top of zone 14.

The attackers must exploit overload opportunities but also recognise when to attack quickly and when to attack carefully.

GAME RELATED PRACTICE

BLUE team play out from the back 5v3 (inc GK). Upon completion of 2 passes they can play into the CF.

2 players now break out from the back to create 4v3 overload in attacking area. Play to a finish. Opposition now attack the opposite way with same overload principle.

Key coaching points in this practice; Awareness of the spare players, efficient ball movement, individual movement to support ahead and behind.

PASSING TECHNIQUE

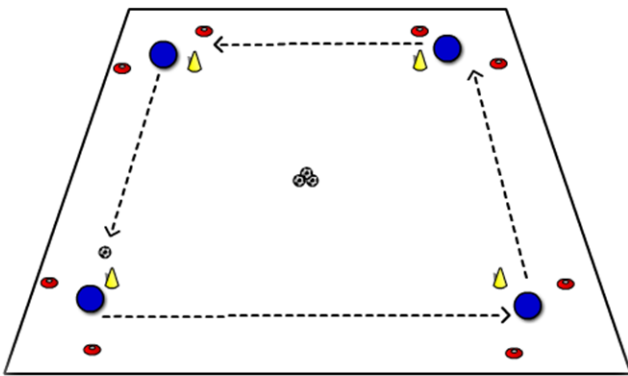
TECHNIQUE
ALL AGES

Gavin Teehan

@coachingbadges

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
MOUNT MERRION FC DIRECTOR OF COACHING

Here is a technical passing session from Gavin. Although this session looks quite basic, the format allows the coach to focus on the technique and the constant repetition allows players to improve a fundamental component of the game.



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ORGANISATION

Passing drill. Works with players from very young through to senior.

Size of the area and width of the gates can be adjusted on age and ability.

Players work in groups of 4 in area 10x10, size of passing gates 1m.

COACHING POINTS

Players begin with free passing the ball on the outside of the square using both feet and as many touches as they like.

After a few minutes begin to introduce some basic instructions. Examples as follows:

1. Work in single direction.
2. Concentrate on one foot at time.
3. Establish good 'open' body position to receive the pass.
4. Highlight the importance of first touch both in terms of controlling the received pass and the direction of the next pass.
5. Ensure players are not standing still when they receive.
6. Change direction regularly so that players work on both feet (passing and receiving).
7. Count the passes made without error and encourage a little completion with other groups.
8. Once good passing established in terms of accuracy, weight, timing and disguise. Move on to movement when not in possession of the ball.
9. Physical work can be introduced, such as following your pass and returning to your station before the ball goes around the area again.
10. Other progression include incorporating 1-2's / wall pass / dribbling out of square.
11. Insist on good communication, passing accuracy, control movement and good tempo.

FINISHING: ATTITUDE TOWARDS SHOOTING

SKILL PRACTICE
YDP+ AGES 11-16+

Hugo Langton

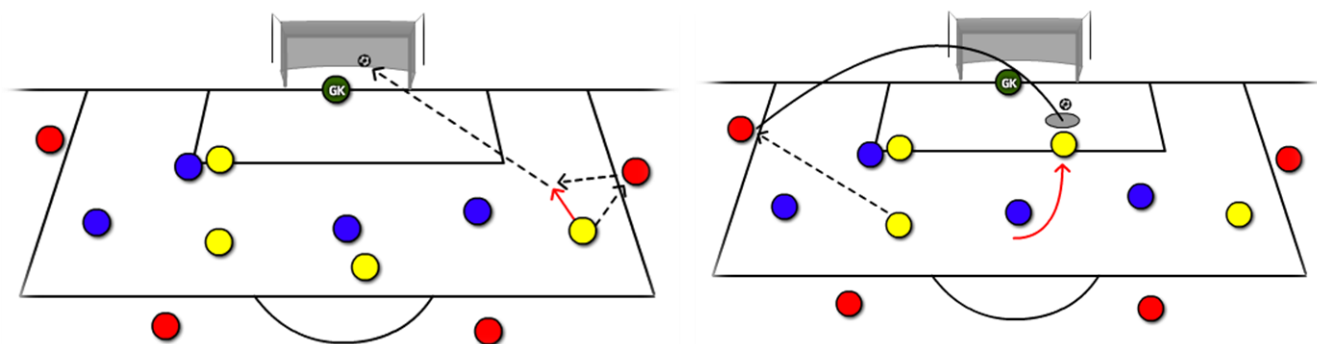
@baldy1974

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
BROMLEY FC COACH

Hugo loves an attacking session and here is one he uses regularly with his players. This session has a bit of trade off in terms of realism, to allow for lots of goal scoring action!

ORGANISATION

Here's a fast moving game I do frequently with my players. We set up in 3 teams (4 per side here). One team is spread out around the penalty area, and the two other teams play 4v4 in the penalty area. The keeper always starts with the ball and tosses it in the air so both teams can compete to win it.



The aim of the game is simple. When you win possession of the ball from the keeper or back from the other team, you must play a one two with one of the outside players before getting your shot off. The player on the outside can pass to any of the team mates of the player who passed to him. Wider players on the outside can also cross the ball.

I play games for up to 2 minutes then rotate the team on the outside.

COACHING POINTS

Get the ball out of your body and shoot – mindset to shoot first, pass second if need be.

Follow in shots in case the keeper spills.

If wide player has the ball, can someone get across the near post from a cross, or can one player offer an angle of support for a pull back to shoot.

Movement to support player on the ball to create space for him to shoot (take defenders away), dummy runs etc.

Encourage individual skill and creativity.

To progress the session limit the touches to one or two touch per player.

TRANSITION WAVES

WAVE PRACTICE
ALL AGES

Wayne Thomas

@tommaldinho

UEFA 'A' LICENCE
STOKE CITY FC ACADEMY COACH

Wayne session looks at transition from attacking to defending. "A session that I feel is fun, hard work, very game related and can be used to coach all manner of topics both defensive and attacking. There are goals which all players want (an element of shooting) and gives all teams chance to both defend and attack (as we know all defenders fancy themselves as attackers and love shooting too!!).

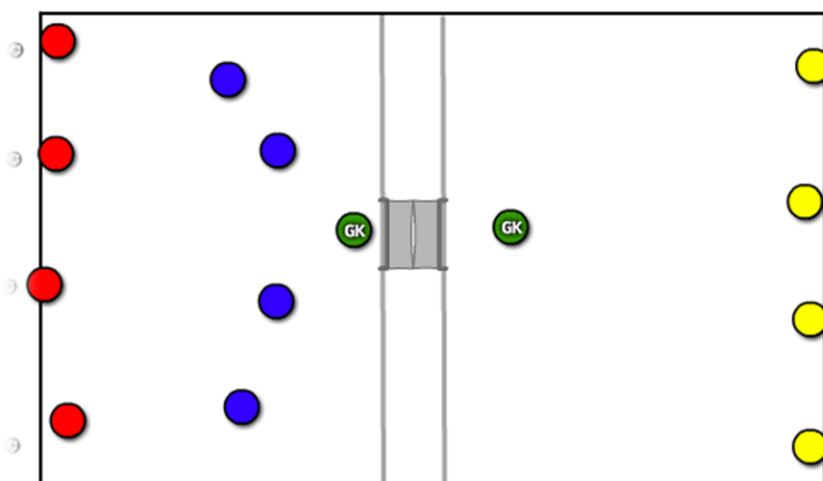
It has an element of everything 1v1, 2v1 etc. attacking, defending, creating space, dribbling, running with the ball, skills/flair, creative play, passing, shooting and lots of decision making so can be used regularly, but just change the focus depending on what you want and what you would like the players to get from the session. I've personally used this session with an under 11 Premier League Academy and it worked very well the feedback from players was hard work but great and they wanted to play longer and revisit in following weeks.

I've also seen session used with adults at an elite professional level but the focus was more on fitness as it was pre-season. The session can be adapted in pitch size, numbers of players, numbers of teams, time etc etc etc. I personally love the session and hope it will give other coaches another session to add to their collection or a base to improve or adapt this session to suit their own needs. Enjoy!"

ORGANISATION

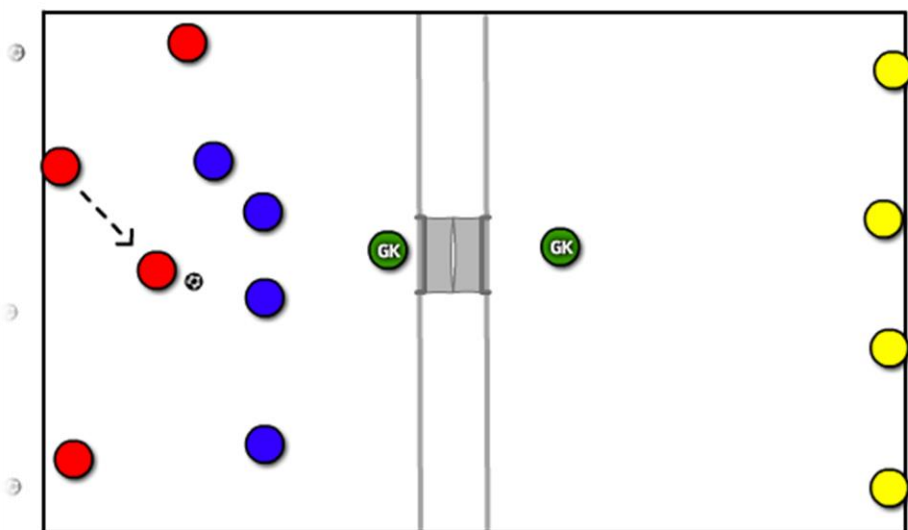
3 Teams: RED,
BLUES and
YELLOW.

Goals set up back to back with a GK in each, however practice can use one keeper who defends both goals as session develops.



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Wayne is former professional his clubs include... Torquay, Stoke, Burnley, Southampton, Doncaster Rovers, Atromitos, Veria and Luton Town.



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The practice begins by RED taking a ball from the base line and attacking BLUES. YELLOWS are at this point just observing but need to be ready to go quickly.

KEY POINTS (TOPIC DEPENDANT) :

(Attackers) - Can we attack with speed, is there space to exploit and run straight through to score?

Can movement off the ball create space for man on the ball? If yes how?, where?

Can attackers use creative ideas and skills/techniques to beat defence? if yes go for it was it successful?

If not, why not? How could the idea/skill be changed if needs be for a positive outcome?

Was a pass the more effective option? (straight pass diagonal run, diagonal pass straight run), Pass weight, speed, direction, Type? Lofted, inside/outside of foot, reversed pass, one two, wall pass, 3rd man run.

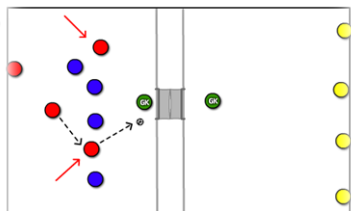
Shot weight, speed, direction, across keeper for rebound, which part of the foot to shoot? Inside, outside, laces, side foot, toe poke (surprise element no backlit),

Did we score? What worked what didn't,? What would we do again? What could we change? What did we learn? (Defending) - Nearest man close down space quickly, then apply brakes (Deny).

Body shape, angle of approach, can we force attacker to get their head down thus limiting his offensive options? (Delay) Can we make play predictable? Show the attackers where we want them to go (personal preference here I would always show outside) (Deflect). If nearest man presses ball positioning of defending team mates narrowed off to cover but not so narrow that if you need to press when ball is passed that you cant make up the ground.

Communication throughout the group including the Goalkeeper.

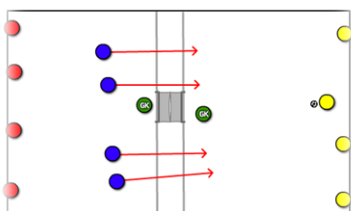
Positive attitude and desire to want to defend and prevent a goal, willingness to help out a team mate if they get beaten in a 1v1.



REDS can attack however they want to and depending upon the focus of your clubs particular cycle ie (1v1, overlapping, 2v1, dribbling, running with ball, space creation, passing, etc). But the ultimate goal is for REDS to score against BLUES.

Note that if your focus is defending this practice can be managed differently. Whereby your primary focus would be on the defending team at this point Team (BLUES). Primary objective is to score a goal for attacking teams!!

If RED attack is successful i.e. goal is scored the following will happen...



RED team after a goal is scored can now jog back to the baseline they started at and wait there with a ball for their next attack.

BLUE team after conceding a goal must now sprint to the other pitch to defend a new wave of attack from YELLOW team.

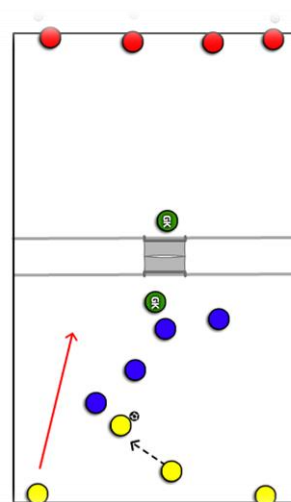
You can add conditions here i.e. YELLOW team cant take first touch until all, 1, 2 or 3 players have crossed the shaded area between goals. Maybe a minimum number of passes before YELLOWS can shoot (as teams will at some point take a touch and shoot given the opportunity less work!!). Add players must be within a certain distance before shooting?

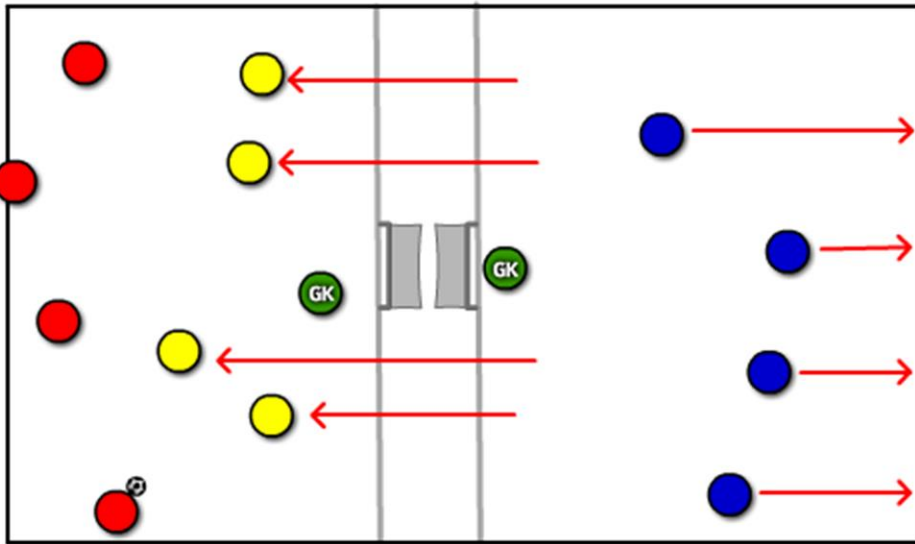
Now the YELLOWS are attacking BLUES exactly the same scenario as REDS vs BLUES. You will find however that given the amount of running/work BLUES have had to do and no opportunity to attack that they will be a lot more motivated to win back possession or deny a goal.

You can set an amount of time for the practice or winning team with a certain number of goals, all age, ability, pitch size and time before or after a match day dependant (maybe preseason as more of a speed endurance exercise?)

Whatever the situation lets presume an angry BLUE wins back possession with a fantastic tackle, from a YELLOW who wasn't really paying attention whilst they were inactive. Or a long range shot from a YELLOW sails over the bar.

This is where the transition work applies...





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After their unsuccessful attack YELLOW now must transition from attacking to defending and must sprint across to become defenders against the RED team. BLUES as reward for successfully defending now rest at baseline in preparation to attack either unsuccessful attackers RED or unsuccessful defenders YELLOW.

KEY POINTS

Sprint nearest man to ball closes down.

Work as a team one switching off could cost the team a goal and result in an extended period defending (lots of running).

The sequence is continuous in waves successful attack results in another attack unsuccessful results in quick transition to defend other pitch, successful defence results in opportunity to attack next

Unsuccessful results in defending the other pitch.

(Small goals can be added at base lines for counter attacking if required)

Next progression see image 1 however RED team will now be attacking YELLOW team with BLUE team observing, recovering and preparing to attack.

ROTATIONAL MIDFIELD IN A FLEXIBLE 4-3-3

PATTERN OF PLAY
AGES 16+

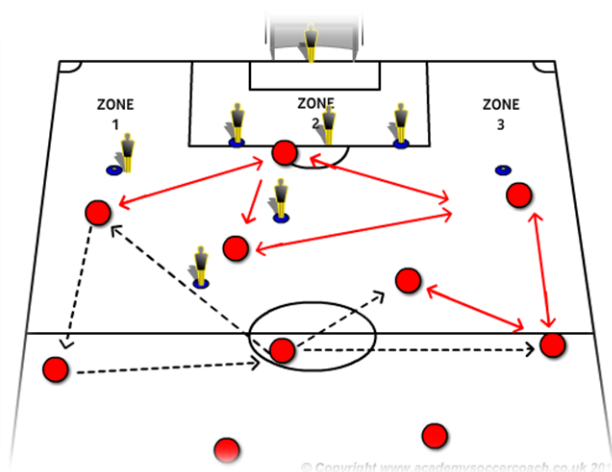
Darren Kelly
@darren6kelly

UEFA PRO LICENCE
YORK CITY FC COACH

Darren is a former pro turned coach and currently holds the UEFA PRO Licence.

This session looks at midfield rotation in a 4-3-3. The session is unopposed but allows the players to make passes and movements they would see in a game.

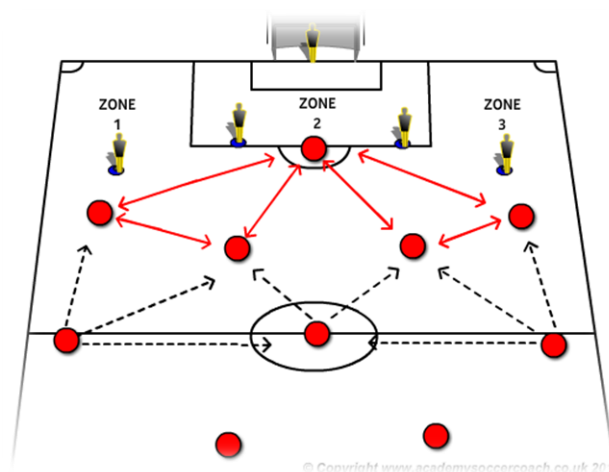
This practice is aimed at those playing the 11v11 game.



ZONE 3 ATTACK

This Diagram represents the 4 areas of rotational attacking possibilities and the 4 areas of defensive consolidation.

Specifically; displayed here is a zone 3 attacking focus where the ball has been played out of zone 1.



ZONE 2 ATTACK

This Diagram represents the 3 areas of rotational attacking possibilities and the 5 areas of defensive consolidation.

Specifically; displayed here is a zone 2* attacking focus where the ball has been played directly through zone 2. In this situation with a flat 8 and 10 the areas of rotational attacking possibilities are reduced and the areas for defensive consolidation are increased. This leads to a more structured focus in midfield possession. However it also increases opportunity of a direct pass to the 9 from three to four as well as increasing the availability of the 8 from four to five.

You could build this practice up to include defenders once they players have understand the patterns you are trying to paint.

ZONE 2 ATTACK WITH FULL BACK

Same as previous with a zone 2 through zone 2 attack. However this time the full back 'joining in' is considered. For the 2 to get forward; the 8 drops to cover, 10 shifts right and the 4 drifts left.

Need to consider the 7 and 11's movement here also.

Notice that the 4 and 8's adventures of pass into midfield have been reduced/removed. The 10 should not be looking to receive the ball to feet with a disorganised defence. The 8's 'out ball' if options are reduced is the 11 or 7 in behind, who should have sufficient support from the 10.

ZONE 1 ATTACK

This Diagram represents the 4 areas of rotational attacking possibilities and the 4 areas of defensive consolidation.

Specifically; displayed here is a zone 1 attacking focus where the ball has been played out of zone 3.



ACADEMY SOCCER COACH.

Academy Soccer Coach has grown significantly over the last 5 years and has established itself as an essential resource for soccer coaches and players as well as many others that work within football education and development across the world.

There are versions for PC and iPad and a host of interactive session plans and forms to download.



www.academyfootballcoach.co.uk

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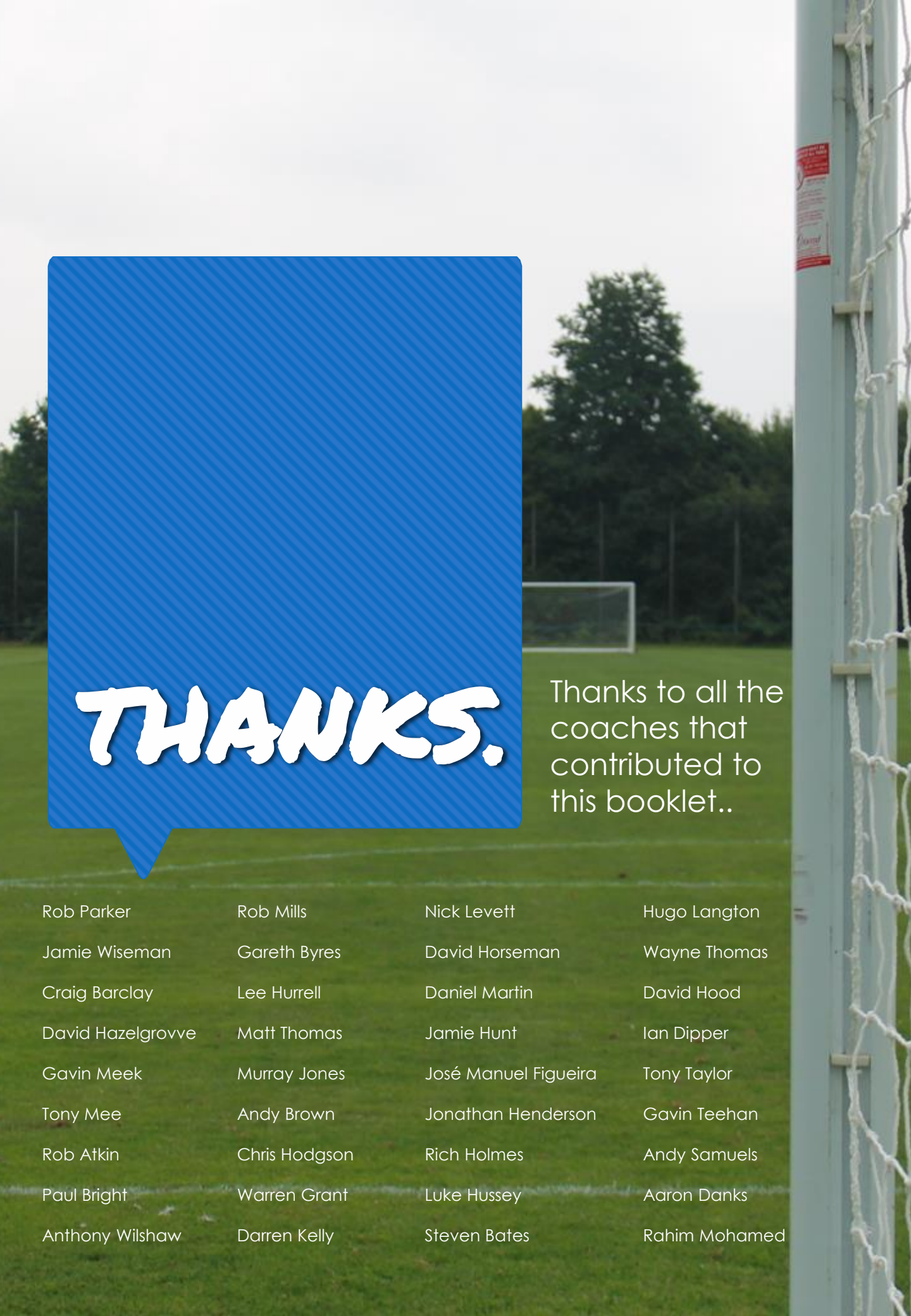


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THANKS.

Thanks to all the coaches that contributed to this booklet..

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Gareth Byres

David Horseman

Wayne Thomas

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Lee Hurrell

Daniel Martin

David Hood

David Hazelgrove

Matt Thomas

Jamie Hunt

Ian Dipper

Gavin Meek

Murray Jones

José Manuel Figueira

Tony Taylor

Tony Mee

Andy Brown

Jonathan Henderson

Gavin Teehan

Rob Atkin

Chris Hodgson

Rich Holmes

Andy Samuels

Paul Bright

Warren Grant

Luke Hussey

Aaron Danks

Anthony Wilshaw

Darren Kelly

Steven Bates

Rahim Mohamed