



Cobra Coaches Training Manual

U13 – U18 Cobras

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Manual Summary

Intended audience

This manual is intended for individuals coaching competitive soccer players, ages U12 – U16.

Contents

This manual contains three parts:

1. Expectations

- **Technical** expectations outline specific standards expected of Cobras in age groups U12 – U16.
 - This includes concepts such as the number of repetitions players should get during practice, as well as moves, skills and abilities that all coaches are expected to teach through these years.
- **Tactical** expectations outline specific standards regarding tactical concepts that all Cobra coaches should adhere to, regardless of personal preference.

2. Testing

All Cobra coaches are expected to test their players at least twice during 2012 (once at the start, and once at the end of their seasons). Averages, standards, and maxes are provided in the testing portion of this manual.

3. Appendices

- Appendix A—Season Plans
 - Includes “staple” exercises for both technical and tactical development with which all players should become familiar during these ages.
 - A 15 session plan is also included for coaches who wish to use it.
- Appendix B—LTPD write-up
- Appendix C—CUSC Goalkeeper Training Program

Expectations

Technical

Each training session is to include a minimum of 30 minutes of technical work. Standard exercises and minimum requirements to this are described below.

Juggling

- In the Training to Train phase, players should progress to more difficult juggling exercises such as:
 - Juggling with a partner
 - Gradually reducing the amount of touches allowed in between passes
- Progressions from easier to more difficult might include:
 - Open juggling back and forth with a partner (unlimited touches and body parts)
 - Reduced touches, with unlimited body parts – start with 3 or 4 touches individually before you have to pass (count passes)
 - Unlimited touches using feet only
 - 2-touches between passes
 - 1-touch back and forth
 - 1-touch, with body part (e.g. feet only, heads only)
 - Player who is passing calls out a number which reflects how many touches his partner must use to pass the ball back (ie: as I pass, I say “3”, and you must use 3 touches to pass back to me, and as you pass you call out a number as well)
- To add interest and to train more than just juggling, exercises in between passes or individual juggling exercises can be performed. Some examples include:
 - In pairs – After each pass, the player who passed it must do a quick push up/summersault/burpie/spin jump/ lunge jump, etc.
 - Individuals – Throw (or eventually kick the ball up) and do a quick push up/ summersault/burpie, and then control the ball again without letting it bounce
 - Fitness exercises in pairs – One player works on a fitness or technical exercise, while the other juggles (active rest). E.g. sprints or dribbling slaloms while your partner juggles. Switch without letting the ball drop. **This is excellent for getting used to doing technical things as your body recovers from maximum efforts.**

SAQ (Speed, Agility and Quickness)

Minimum once per week, 8-10 minutes should be dedicated to speed, agility and quickness exercises at maximum effort. This is especially important at the onset of PHV. These include

- Ladder work
- Full speed explosive exercises to push players' top speed and quickness.
 - *MAXIMUM effort is used for this, and work to rest ratio should be no less than 1:5*

Fitness:

- Once players have reached PHV, they are ready to begin fitness work and harder/longer interval work aimed to push their aerobic threshold. This is done using 30 to 90 second work efforts with at least as much rest (active rest is fine).
- Please note, **prior to the onset of PHV, fitness training is meaningless** and gives the players nothing. This is wasted time that should instead be used on technical work. Please do not do aerobic fitness with U11's and under (for boys even U12 can be young for this).

Dribbling

Players are expected to be familiar with the following 1v1 moves (using both feet):

- Scissor (single and double)
- Step over
- Roll-Step-Over
- Elastico (outside-inside)
- Pull Back
- Ronaldo Chop

*These moves are covered in the Learning to Train phase; therefore, by U12 a strong player should know these moves well. In the Training to Train phase, players should be gaining confidence in applying these moves and choosing the right times to apply them. **Your role as a coach now becomes to have players apply these skills in more competitive, and pressured environments (ie: with defenders, and at greater speed), and to have them comfortably using them in increasingly complex game settings.***

Shooting

Players are expected to complete a finishing component once per week.

Players should be comfortable

- Striking a dead ball with the laces of both feet
- Striking a moving ball with the laces of both feet
- Curving shots with the insides or outsides of both feet
- Striking straight and side volleys
- Understanding “composure” in front of goal
 - Includes how to look up at the goal keeper (GK) position and make a smart decision to finish.

By U16, players should have a well-rounded arsenal of shots, with several (if not most) of these techniques beginning to be “polished”. Players should be confident and composed in their decision making around the opposing team’s goal.

Tactical

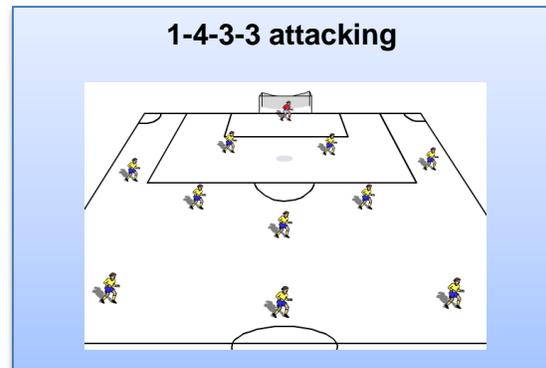
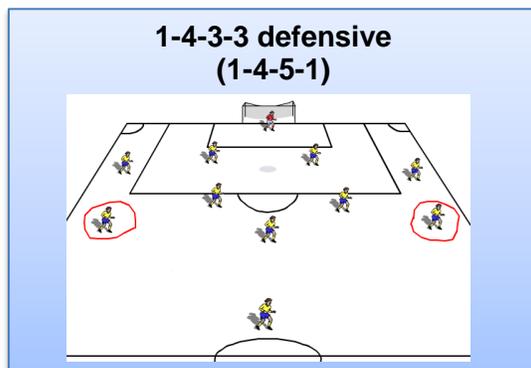
Formation

Team formations should be set to allow for both quick transitions, as well as for good build up play.

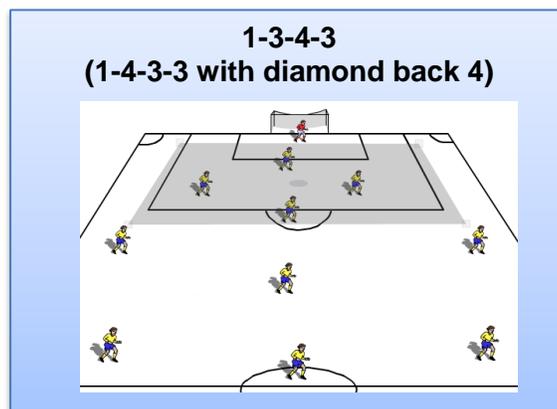
Since there are many different formations that can be effective, the main question for each team will be to use a formation that suits the types of players they have.

Some of the most typical formations our teams will use are as follows

- **1-4-3-3:** Depending on how this formation is played, it's good for teams with
 - Many options for strikers
 - Have an abundance of strong central midfielders
 - Very mobile and fit outside wingers
- The 4-3-3 formation is especially good in that it can transition seamlessly and naturally from a very defensive and sound 4-5-1, to a very aggressive/attacking minded 4-3-3.



- In the younger age groups, when players are still learning how to play with a flat back 4, teams may find it useful to go play the back 4 in a diamond (sweeper-stopper). In such cases the 4-3-3 essentially becomes a 3-4-3.



- The traditional 4-4-2: this is a formation that has been popular for a long time, and for many of you it is probably the most comfortable formation to coach. It is more defensive and safer than the 4-3-3 or 3-4-3
 - May be suited for teams who rely more on a smaller number of players

Positions

By the Training to Train phase, players generally will have a preferred position, as well as a secondary position. They should rotate between these positions frequently, so as to develop more than just one position.

When possible, try to stretch players beyond two positions; have them try positions that are outside their comfort zone.

Playing Style

A possession game with technical play is expected

- Includes **both** passing and dribbling
- Dribbling is encouraged more so in the attacking third

Note: Players are **not** to boot the ball away under pressure

Two main elements of attacking, regardless of your coaching style are acknowledged

- “Transitional or Fast Break”
- “Build up” play

Note: Both of these are a part of possession soccer, but neither is the ultimate answer 100% of the time. The top teams in the world employ both elements at different times in each of their successful games; CUSC will follow this example.

Transitional (Fast Break) – When the ball is won, opportunities usually exist for a quick counter attack or fast build up to take advantage of the opposition’s momentary weakness.

- Example of Fast Break (possession style)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9B5QYo8Pp0>

Build Up – When the defending team has had a chance to recover their proper defensive shape, the attacking team will look to build up a more patient attack. This is the case on most goal kicks, throw-ins, free kicks, or when the ball has been won and played backwards or sideways slowly enough to allow the other team to recover as a unit.

- Examples of build-up play – Barcelona <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Khi7kgHYHgA>

Other Tactical Considerations

With possession



Players are expected to understand

- The importance of stretching the field as much as possible by getting as wide and deep as possible
- How to “switch” the point of attack from one wing to the other, and should be encouraged to do so through the CM or CB
- When to play to feet and when to play into space
- Overlaps, and covering for one another (for example when a defender makes a run forward)
- being able to play 4v4 with outstanding shape, but with a fluid interchange of positions.

Players are expected to

- **ALWAYS COMMUNICATE**

The **goal keeper** should

- Be used whenever appropriate to retain possession and switch the point of attack
- Stay connected with the rest of the team and push up with the defence rather than standing on his/her goal line all game

Without Possession

Players are expected to understand

- The importance of timing and angles of pressuring the ball carrier
- How to pressure a player/team in a certain direction collectively
- The concept of defensive support... the first player pressures the ball, the second player supports him/her
- The transition from zonal to man-marking
 - Stress the importance of man to man marking in and around the penalty area, as well as pressuring any opponent who is in a position to shoot
- How to shift as a unit (defensive, midfield, strikers)
- How to “pinch together” in order to eliminate opportunities for through passes.
- How to Compress the field to make it difficult for the opposing team to combine.

The **goal keeper** supports the defence by sometimes playing “high” up the field.

- Communication is also encouraged from the goal keeper at all times

General Game Analysis:

What to look for when analyzing a team (opponent or your own) – From UEFA manual:

- Formation
- What systems do they use on attack (possession, direct, quick counter attack) and defense (high pressure, low pressure, zonal, man marked, etc)
- Set pieces (signals, strengths, weaknesses, weak/strong players)
- How much of the field are they using (and which portions)?
- Fluidity and rhythm of their game (where do they keep the ball and how)
- How does the team keep the ball, and where, when and why do they lose it?
- Does every player partake in attacking/defending?
- How does the team react when they lose the ball? And when they win the ball?
- How does the team get dangerous?

Testing: U13-U18 Cobras

Coaches are expected to test their team a minimum of two times during the 2012 season in various categories.

- One test is to be completed early in the season.
- A second test is to be completed towards the end of the season.

Testing categories and guidelines are as follows

Juggling Test

Players have one minute to complete as many consecutive juggles as possible in several juggling categories.

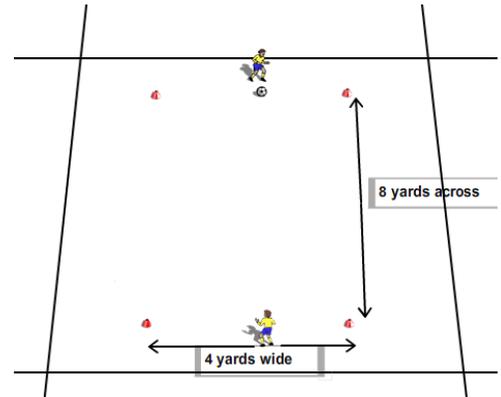
If a player starts juggling and gets six juggles, he/she uses the remainder of the minute to beat six. The best streak is recorded. The ball can start in the hands, and the categories used are:

- **Open Juggling:** Any body part can be used.
- **Feet only:** Only feet can be used. If the ball bumps the player's chest or thigh in the process, he may continue, but doesn't count that touch towards the total.
- **Weak/Strong Leg only:** The thigh and foot of only the players' strong or weak leg.
- **Headers:** Only headers.

Passing Tests

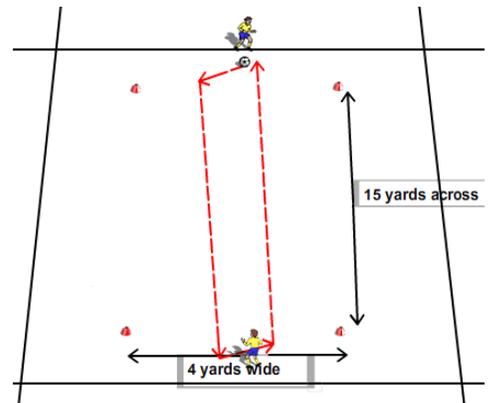
1. One-touch passing across eight yards:

- Players work in pairs to get as many one-touch passes across eight yards as possible.
- Players may step into the gate (so closer than eight yards), but must always step back out of the gate before the next pass.



2. Two-touch passing across 15 yards

- Players work in pairs to get as many two or more touch passes across 15 yards.
- Every pass must be made from outside of the four yard gate.
- Players must actually receive a little beyond the 15 yards so that their first touch stays outside of the gate.
- Every single pass is a point towards the total that is recorded for both players.



Testing Sheets are available in an electronic format (Excel) through email (cusheadcoach@cumberlandsoccer.com).

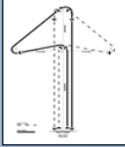
Physical Testing

Physical testing for 2012 at CUSC has been conducted as per the Nike SPARQ training battery of soccer specific tests.

These tests include:



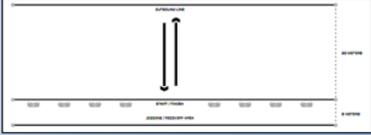
Vertical Jump



Arrow Head Sprint



20 Meter Standing Sprint



Yo-Yo Intermittent Recovery Test (fitness)

Results for these tests from our Cobra evaluations are available to coaches upon request, and the detailed protocol for each test can be found at the following link:
http://www.nike.com/nikefootball/content/training/downloads/pdf/SPARQ_en_US.pdf

Technical Standards Summary

Below are the standards and benchmarks collected over past years across the club.

Juggling

The “standard” represents the average result of the stronger group in any given category. The standard is what is expected for each player to achieve.

The “strong” is what players could aim to achieve.

Boys						
Juggling		Open	Feet Only	Weak Leg	Strong Leg	Headers
U12	Strong	100	36	16	22	11
	Standard	30	14	8	14	6
U13	Strong	100	46	18	60	15
	Standard	35	17	10	30	8
U14	Strong	100	56	23	75	34
	Standard	50	25	11	35	10
U15	Strong	120	55	31	84	35
	Standard	55	30	15	40	12

Girls						
Juggling		Open	Feet Only	Weak Leg	Strong Leg	Headers
U12	Strong	20	13	16	28	7
	Standard	15	8	7	14	5
U13	Strong	26	15	18	30	9
	Standard	18	10	10	18	7
U14	Strong	35	20	25	35	12
	Standard	24	12	15	20	8

Passing

8 yards: One-touch passing in pairs (number of passes made in a minute)

8 Yards - 1 touch passing		
Boys:	Max	Average
U12	56	48
U13	68	60
U14	67	61
U15	70	63

8 yards - 1 touch passing		
Girls:	Max	Average
U12	60	53
U13	64	58
U14	66	60
U15	68	61

15 Yards: Two-touch passing in pairs (4 yard gates, number of passes made in a minute)

15 Yards: two-touch passing		
Boys	Max	Average
U12	25	20
U13	27	23
U14	28	24
U15	28	25

15 Yards: two-touch passing		
Girls	Max	Average
U12	26	21
U13	27	22
U14	28	23
U15	27	24

Physical Testing:

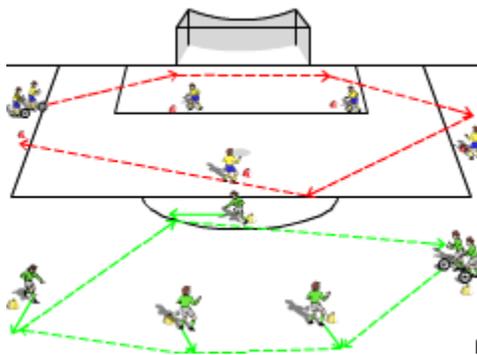
Boys						
		<u>20M DASH</u>	<u>VERTICAL JUMP(")</u>	<u>ARROW LEFT</u>	<u>ARROW RIGHT</u>	<u>YO-YO TEST</u>
U12	Strong	3.44	21.5	8.40	8.60	8.5
	Standard	3.66	17.2	9.16	9.14	7.2
U13	Strong	3.41	25.0	8.60	8.60	9.8
	Standard	3.66	19.6	9.18	9.12	7.4
U14	Strong	3.21	22.0	8.30	8.40	9.4
	Standard	3.54	18.0	8.89	8.77	7.5
U15	Strong	3.16	24.5	8.40	8.20	9.5
	Standard	3.58	19.0	8.87	8.73	7.2
U16	Strong	3.17	23.0	8.00	7.80	10.0
	Standard	3.44	20.0	8.47	8.34	8.4

Girls						
		<u>20M DASH</u>	<u>VERTICAL JUMP(")</u>	<u>ARROW LEFT</u>	<u>ARROW RIGHT</u>	<u>YO-YO TEST</u>
U12	Strong	3.35	21.5	9.10	9.00	7.7
	Standard	3.79	17.1	9.70	9.70	6.5
U13	Strong	3.44	23.0	8.30	8.70	8.5
	Standard	3.78	18.6	9.30	9.25	6.8
U14	Strong	3.34	21.5	8.70	8.40	8.5
	Standard	3.56	18.7	9.19	9.12	6.7
U15	Strong	3.28	17.0	8.60	8.80	7.6
	Standard	3.63	13.9	9.29	9.35	6.3

Appendix A—CUSC Season Plan, U12–U18

Session 1: Defending as a unit

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. U12-U14 Wide Passing Warm-up



ACTIVITY #1

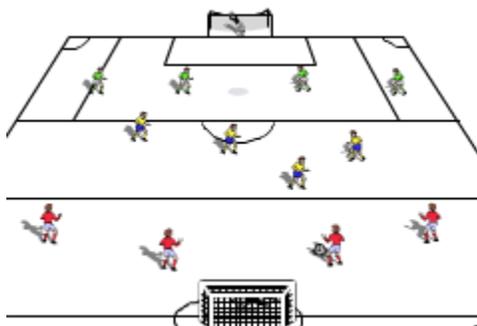
Set up: 2 grids with 5 positions as positioned above. A player at each cone with the over flow players beginning on one of the wings where the ball starts.

Instructions: Players knock the ball around with 2 touches, following their pass to begin with. Variations:

- Every other pass is in the air
- 1-2s are played at each station
- 1-2s to the third man are played at each station
- Ball is thrown into the first player's feet
- Free passes from one end to the other.

Coaching Points: Players check off of their cone to improve the angle for the player with the ball. Passes are played as firm as possible, and the proper foot is always used to open up.

3. SAQ ladders
4. 4v4v4
 - a. Focus on always having a player pressure as much as possible in order to reduce the angle, and on the other players squeezing together to eliminate any gaps for through passes.
 - b. Force teams to play on the ground initially.
 - c. 2 extra players can be keepers (to use 14 players), leaving two to 3 subs who can rotate in while doing an alternate technical activity on the side.

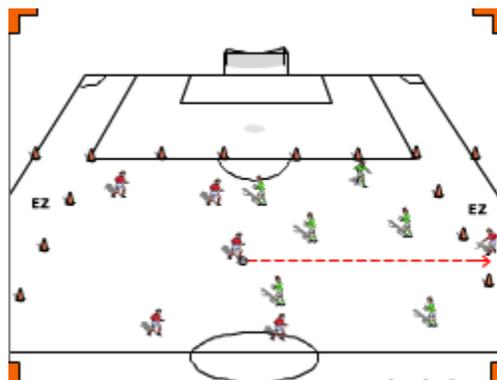


Set up: 4 teams split into 3 zones with a goal behind the two end teams. Adjust the size of the field according to the quality of the players. For U12s, I would make the field probably 20-25 yards wide and about 10-15 yards for each zone.

Instructions: The two outside teams make passes amongst each other, and score points by making passes through the defending group in the middle. The middle group works as unit to prevent through passes. If the middle group wins the ball, they immediately attack that team and try to score. If they're able to get a shot off, they switch spots with the team that lost the ball. When the ball is won by the team in the middle, all boundaries are off, and the field may be stretched as wide as necessary (this is encouraged to practice spreading out as soon as the ball is won).

Coaching Points: Focus on shifting and pressuring/covering as a unit for the middle team.

5. End-zone possession leading to open game with offsides
 - a. Instead of having the end-zones wide as pictured below, put them vertically, so that players are attacking towards goal.



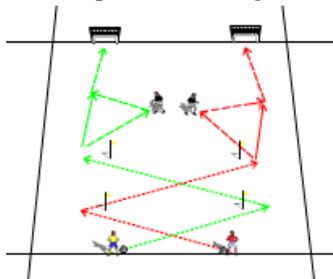
Set up: A large grid is made, the width of the field. Ideally, 2 teams of 7 are made.

Instructions: Possession is played where 3 passes need to be made before a point can be scored by either running or passing into an endzone. If you can retain possession after scoring, you're free to try and score on the other side.

Coaching Points: Recognize which side we have numbers on in order to attack. If need be, add a neutral player on either side line to encourage players to use a safe option.

Session 2: Shifting as a unit in the back

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up – dynamic warm-up and stretching
3. SAQ slaloms



4. Shifting as a unit in defense –
 - a. Using a rope, get the defense used to staying connected and working as a unit to close and pressure the ball.
 - b. 10-15 minutes of this max.



ACTIVITY #2
Set up: 3 teams of 3 or 4 players depending on numbers. 3 strands of 10 yard rope.
Instructions: red team is the attacking team and will initially just keep the ball until we tell them to pass it. Yellow team is holding the rope and works on shifting and pressuring as a unit, while the green team shadows them without the rope. We'll work for 2 minutes each and then move on, hopefully by the end playing without a rope and moving the ball fairly quickly (ie: 3 touch or so).
Coaching Points:

5. 5v4 attack vs Defense
 - a. The field is kept wide, so that the defenders have to stay connected in order to defend properly

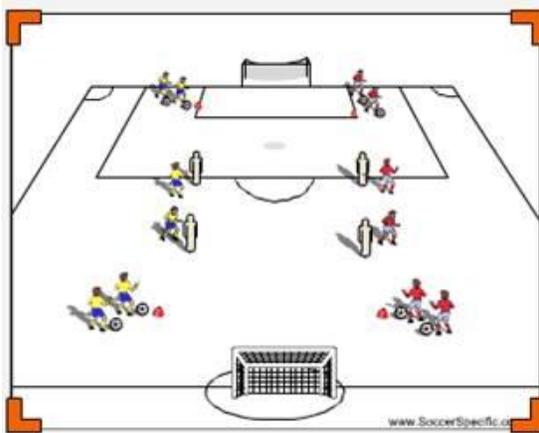


ACTIVITY #3
Set up: 3 defenders and a GK vs 5 attackers
Instructions: Play starts with a pass back from winger to midfielder. Attackers try to score while defenders look to win the ball and play it wide through gates.
Coaching Points: We'll start by letting the attacking team switch the ball and working on the transition defensively as a unit. We can then work on allowing it to be more open and coaching the defenders to keep them on one side as much as possible. We'll work towards adding a 4th recovering defender.

6. Wide Scrimmage – keep the field wide, and give clear positions especially in the back that will mimic how you wish to play (ie: 3 or 4 backs)

Session 3: Defending against a numeric disadvantage

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: UEFA passing and moving technical warm-up



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: Technical warm-up with 4 lines, 4 manequins or stakes, and at least 4 balls
Instructions: Pass into the first player, get it back, and pass into him/her again on the other side of the manequin. After each combo, switch lines.
Progress to: Throw ins, turning the ball, receiving with different parts of the foot or body.
Coaching Points:

3. 2v1 with recovering defender
 - a. Organize by putting players in pairs that they are likely to work beside in a game (ie: CM's together, CB's together, etc).
 - b. Rotate from defense to offense after every repetition (ie: once you've attacked, get in line to defend)... lines should not be more than 3 teams long, and ideally just 2 teams long, so you may need to set up 2 grids.



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: a relatively narrow but large field for 2v1 to 2v2.
Instructions: Game starts with a ball played from A to B, who together attack 2v1 against the one defender. As soon as B touches the ball, the second defender (C) can start to recover and help his team mate.
Coaching Points: Looking for the first defender to slow down the attack and try to isolate one of the players to create a 1v1 until the second defender returns. Recovery run should always be more or less to goal first, and not at the player.

4. 3v2 with recovering defender

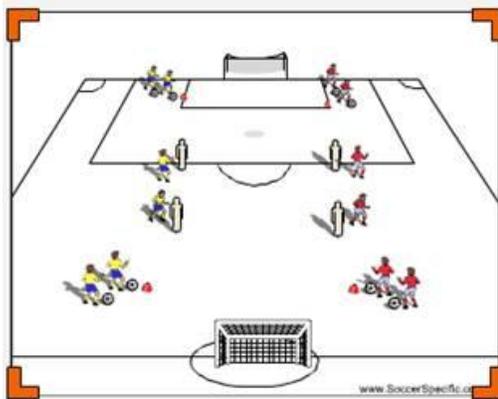


ACTIVITY #2

Set up: relatively narrow but large field for 3v2.
Instructions: Game starts with a pass from A to B or vice versa. 3 players attack to from that point on, with a 3rd defender recovering to defend.
Coaching Points: Again, the purpose is to first slow the attack down, and second to try and isolate either a 1v1 or 2v2 scenario, and ultimately even a 1v2 scenario or double team.

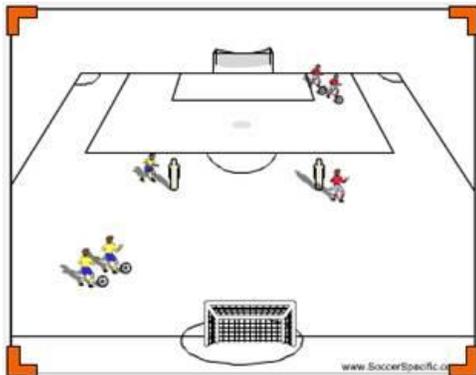
Session 4: Attacking at Speed (defending in 3's and 4's review)

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm up
2. UEFA passing and receiving technical warm-up



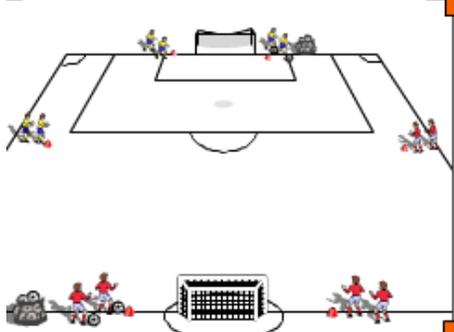
ACTIVITY #1
Set up: Technical warm-up with 4 lines, 4 mannequins or stakes, and at least 4 balls
Instructions: Pass into the first player, get it back, and pass into him/her again on the other side of the mannequin. After each combo, switch lines.
Progress to: Throw ins, turning the ball, receiving with different parts of the foot or body.
Coaching Points:

3. SAQ Ladder work
4. UEFA finishing progression:
 - a. Progress to putting a live defender in where the stake/mannequin is.
 - i. First the defender will let the attacker play the first pass back and then will play live for the second pass
 - ii. Progress to just 1 pass into the striker, after which he must do whatever it takes to turn and finish.



ACTIVITY #2
Set up: Same setup as the technical warm-up, but with just one line behind each mannequin/stake, and a goal lined up 18-20 yards beyond the mannequin in either direction.
Instructions: Players perform various technical exercises leading to a shot on goal:
 - pass back, turn
 - React to the passers call (either man-on, or turn)
 - throw in to various body parts (either pass back the first one, or turn right away)
 - in pairs, pass back, second pass into space down the flank for a cross and finish
 - be creative
Coaching Points: We're working on keeping width on the attack, so throw in some wide combinations.

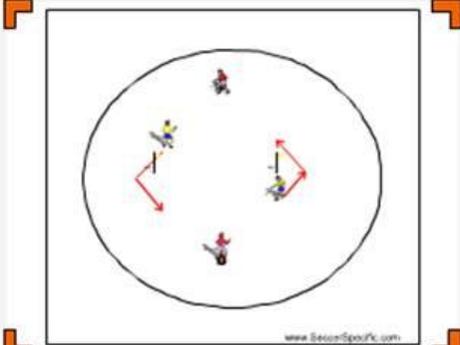
5. 3v3 or 4v4 flying changes across the width



ACTIVITY #6
Set up: 2 lines beside the posts, and one more line on the side line at half
Instructions: 3v3 flying changes, but one of the players begins on the half way line so that depth is established immediately and transitions have to be much sharper.
Coaching Points: Look for the early ball to the wide player to gain ground. Defensively, early pressure is important to discourage an easy pass forward that eliminates to players.

Session 5: Possession with Direction

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: The staple switching warm-up – stakes are not necessary, just make sure players make angles when they work from side to side.



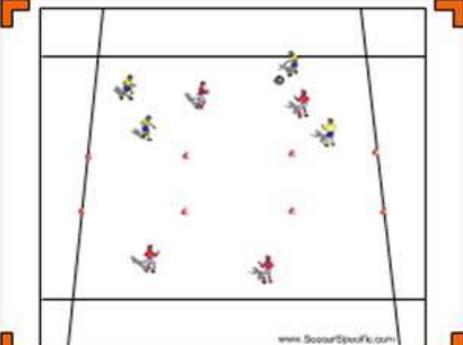
ACTIVITY #1

Set up: diamond shape with flags on two corners. A ball at each server's feet.

Instructions: Working players loop around the flag in either direction to get alternating one two's from the servers. Get to volleys, chest volleys, turning with the ball (inside of foot, outside of foot, with the chest, with the head, etc). Eventually you can have them play a pass and then switch flags and go to the other side to make it different.

Coaching Points: Sharp runs, sharp touches, hard work and concentration.

3. SAQ ladder work
4. CSA tennis: Focus is on good solid possession, and defensively on not only winning the ball, but winning it clean, turning and making a pass across... max here would be 12 players in each group... minimum 8 (4v4), so if you have 16 players, make 2 grids.



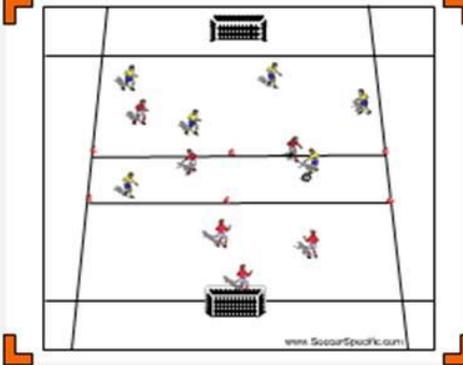
ACTIVITY #2

Set up: 2 grids roughly 5-10 yards apart.

Instructions: 2 equal teams, one in each grid. 2 defenders are sent in against 4 or 5 attackers to try and win the ball. Points are scored in 2 ways, either by attaining a pre-determined amount of passes, or by winning the ball as the 2 defenders, and making a pass back into your team mates.

Coaching Points: Encourage clean winning of the ball, and of course the concepts of possession. Adjust numbers accordingly playing 6v3 or 7v4 or whatever is necessary to make it challenging and still possible to succeed.

Progression to goal:



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: 2 large grids with goals behind them, and a neutral zone that is roughly 8-10 yards wide and the length of the pitch.

Instructions: Progression from simple CSA tennis. Teams now occupy larger grids and play the same type of possession game but in larger numbers that are catered to the caliber and number of players participating (ie: 6v3 or 6v4, 8v4, 8v5, 8v6). Progression - once the pass requirement is met (ie: 6 passes for a goal), the team in possession can look to go to goal by dribbling or passing into the neutral zone and having a shot at the other team's goal. The defenders who were defending the possession sequence can recover and put pressure. The players who were waiting in their own zone, must remain in their square but can look to block shots or win the ball over if it is dribbled into their zone.

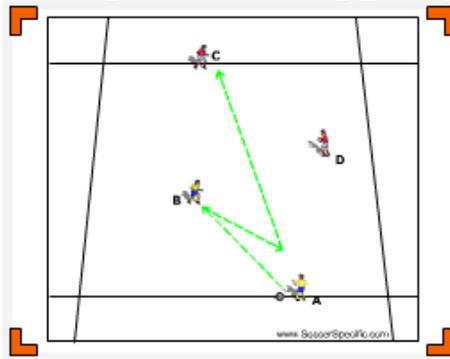
Progression 2 - slowly build this into a more and more open game by removing restrictions.

Coaching Points:

5. End with Scrimmage with mandatory number of passes (4-5 passes before scoring)

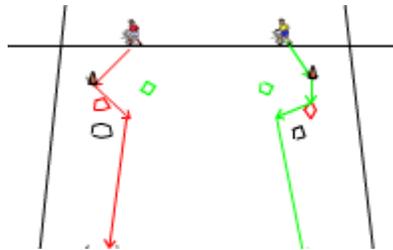
Session 6: Possession with Direction

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: short-short-long passing patterns



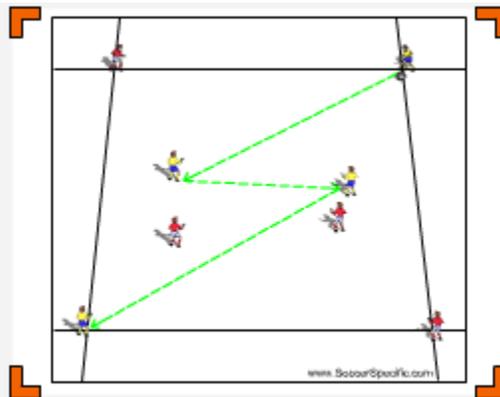
ACTIVITY #1
Set up: 4 players working together, roughly 30 yards apart between the 2 furthest players
Instructions: Passing patterns working on short and long passes:
 1. A-B-A- long pass to opposite side (A and B switch)
 2. A-B (TURN) and play to C
 3. Same as 1 and 2 but play the long ball in the air and try to settle with 1 or 2 touches on the other side
 4. A-D-B-C (D and B work for a minute in the middle and then switch with A and D)
 5. Same as 4 but ball is played in the air to the first CM
 6. A plays to B or D and either calls turn or man on
 7. If you have enough coaches, have a coach defend at 50% and force players to either turn or combine with the CM.... basically working to get the ball across the space without losing it to the 1 defender.
Coaching Points: Combination play moving from purely technical to eventually involving a live defender forcing decisions.

3. SAQ –



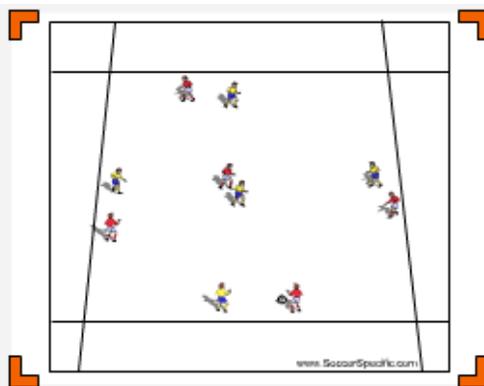
4. 2v2+2 (or 3v3 + 2)

Focus on the players making two good supporting angles for the neutral to start, and have the far neutral making an angle in between them to receive the ball in the middle.



ACTIVITY #2
Set up: a square roughly 20x20 yards. 2 teams of 4. 2 players from each team are free inside of the square, and 2 others are in opposite corners as targets.
Instructions: Players must work together to score points by switching the ball from one target player to the other. If the ball is won or intercepted, the new attacking team must first find a target and then switch the ball in order to get a point.
Coaching Points: Attacking team: Players should make the square as large as possible by moving away from the ball first before checking in for a pass.
 Defenders: Both pressure and cover is required to deny the simple pass, but push the player with the ball into a position where the ball can be won.

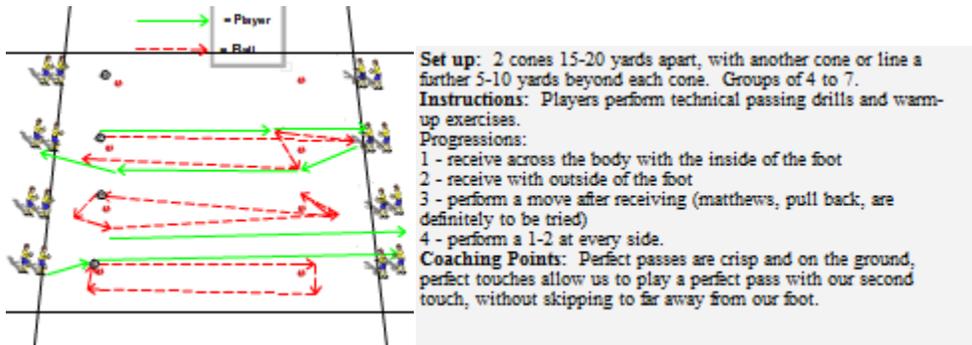
5. End-zone Possession (Open)



ACTIVITY #3
Set up: Same as for 2v2 + 2. A grid for possession with an endzone on all sides.
Instructions: Teams score points by moving the ball from one endzone to the other successfully. Each team scores in just one direction (so either from side to side, or up and down).
 Progressions - must make a few passes in between.
 - can't dribble into the endzone, can only pass
 - endzones are like the offside line, so the ball must be passed before the run is made
 - you can score by moving the ball from any endzone to any other of the 4 endzones.
Coaching Points: Players must think ahead, and move off the ball for each other.

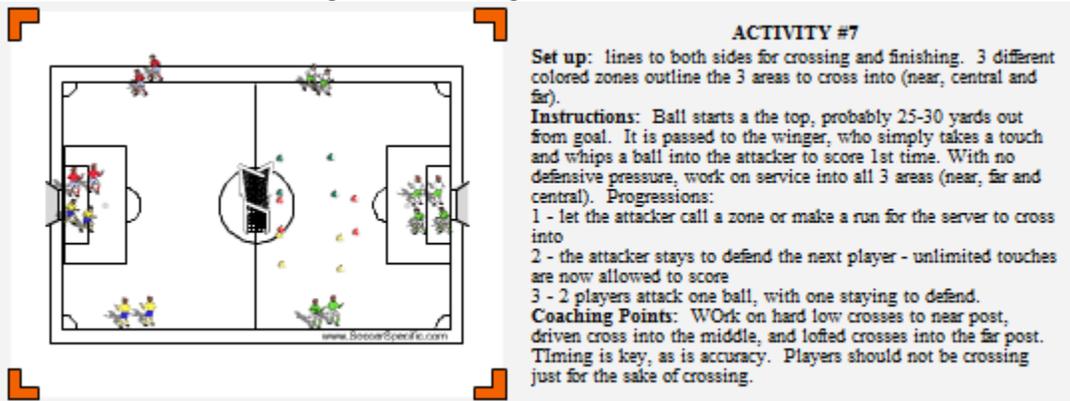
Session 7: Individual Crossing and Finishing

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: Simple line passing
 - a. Work on various ways of striking the ball to warm-up for crossing:
 - i. HARD passes
 - ii. Driven low with the laces
 - iii. Lofted (chipped)
 - iv. Curled in the air



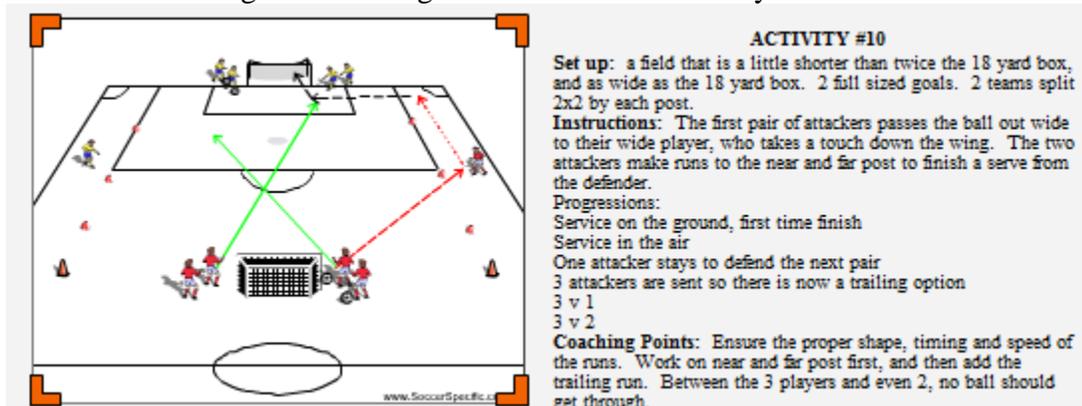
3. SAQ - Ladders

4. Individual Crossing and Finishing:



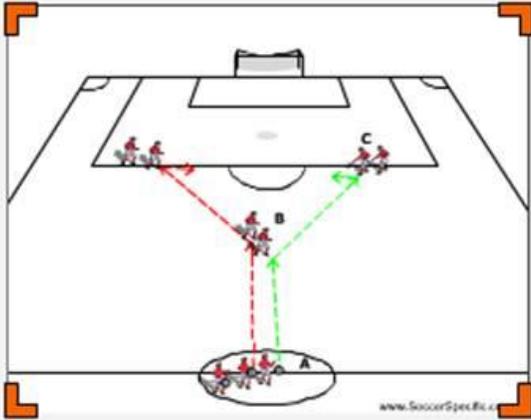
5. Crossing and Finishing in pairs:

- a. Progress to having a defender and eventually even 2 defenders



Session 8: Crossing and Finishing in Numbers (Trailing runs)

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Y passing pattern to finishing



ACTIVITY #2

Set up: a large Y shape is setup with at least 10 yards between each cone. 2 players are at each cone with excess players at the bottom of the Y with a ball each

Instructions: Several Progressions are done, ending with a shot on goal.

- 1- A to B who turns and plays C, who turns and finishes (everyone follows pass)
- 2- A to B who turns and plays C, laid off for B to finish (everyone follows pass except for shooter who becomes C)
- 3 - A to B back to A to C
- 4 - all of the previous progressions with some of the passes played in the air
- 5 - A starts the play with a throw in instead of an easy pass.

Coaching Points: Proper passing and solid touches through the progressions. Proper finishing technique at end. Force players to attack the shot at full speed instead of waiting for the perfect bounce.

3. Crossing and Finishing – Near, Far and Trailing runs



ACTIVITY #5

Set up: 2 groups of 3 players behind each goal. one player in each wide channel.

Instructions: Crossing and finishing game focused on near post, far post, and trailing runs. Ball is played out to the wing, and the 3 players make various runs but cover the three target spots (near, far and trailing). Runs cannot be straight. Progress to an overlap where the ball is played to the winger, who is overlapped and plays the ball to the overlapping player. Eventually add 1 and even 2 attackers.

Coaching Points: Depending on ability of players, force 1 touch finishes when there is no opposition, and allow 2 or 3 touches once defenders are introduced. Walk through the 3 position clearly and explain their importance. You can even put down cones as markers for roughly where the runs should end.

4. King of the Court Scrimmage with Wide Neutrals:



ACTIVITY #4

Set up: 3 teams with a small field about twice the size of the 18 yard box.

Instructions: 2 teams play against each other on the inside, with the 3rd team playing as neutrals on the perimeter of the field. Neutrals have only 2 touches, while the players in the middle have unlimited. Play this as a "king of the court" tournament, where the winning team stays on, or if the game is still tied after a predetermined amount of time (usually 3 minutes), the team that has been on longest goes off and plays as neutrals

Coaching Points: Watch for proper runs into the box, and ask neutrals to look to play the ball into dangerous areas whenever possible.

Session 9: Attacking Combinations with Crossing and Finishing

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Ajax Star passing warm-up (20min)



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: 6 cones placed as above. Roughly 10-12 yards between A and B.

Instructions: Passing progressions:

A to B who turns and place C into space

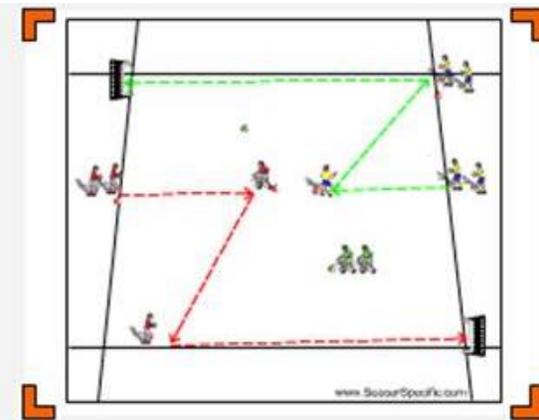
A to B (twice) before B turns and passes to C into space

A to B to A who plays C through

A to B to C who has made a supporting angle for B... B then performs give and go to send C

Coaching Points: Looking for all elements - checking, communicating, good passes, turning properly, leading players with passes, playing their proper foot, opening up at proper angles, etc.

3. Ajax Progression to Goal (10-15min)



ACTIVITY #2

Set up: Same setup as the passing pattern warm-up, except 2 nets are placed as shown above.

Instructions: Players now perform their move and finish on goal. Progressions:

- 1 touch finish with both feet

- finish out of the air

- once the ball is passed to the shooter, the CM defends him and puts pressure to finish quickly.

- a defender comes out to defend the shooter directly

- 2 v 1 with the shooter, and the CM playing against a defender.

Coaching Points:

4. Striker Combo's to crossing and finishing (20-30 min)



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: 4 stakes to mark off defenders and starting position for 2 mids and 2 strikers. 2 identical setups are created side by side (red is one, yellow is the other)

Instructions: Various combinations are done to work on timing of runs, accuracy of passes, angles, and crossing/finishing.

Variations will include:

D - B - A - C (who crosses)

A - C - B - D (who crosses)

A - B - D - C (who crosses)

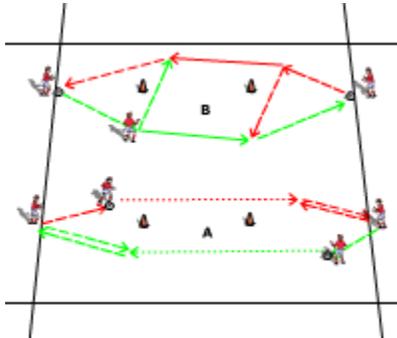
A - B - D (who crosses)

Coaching Points: Timing of runs, and accurate passes are most important here. Focus will be on arriving to cross and finish at full speed. 3 players will attack the box, one near post, one far post, and one top of 18. 2 or 1 touch finishes will be permitted.

5. King of the Court Scrimmage with Neutrals (see Session 7)

Session 10: Finishing after combination plays

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: THE warmup



Set up: 3 squares 10x10 each with a player at each cone and a ball with the server on each extreme corner.

Instructions: Progression 1 (A): Players open up with their first touch (using inside of foot), and dribble across to the opposite side where they do a quick 1-2 with the server and repeat.

Progression 2: After the working player turns and dribbles across, he/she plays to the server, and then runs back across to get the ball from the opposite server.

Progression 3 (B): After the players open up, they switch balls by laying their ball in the opposing workers path. Progress to throw ins so that players must turn a ball in the air. With strong teams you can progress to performing this with a single touch.

Coaching Points: Rotate every 40-70 seconds.

Progressions:

- Simple passes
- opening up with inside/outside of foot
- throw in to feet (open up)
- turn with chest
- turn with head
- switch ball with 1 touch

3. SAQ Ladders
4. Give and Go finishing:



ACTIVITY #2

Set up: Technical passing and finishing exercise building up to 2v1 and 3v2 target play.

Instructions: Players perform technical passing and finishing exercises at the fastest speed they can execute them.

Progressions: Everyone follows their pass

- player at the top receives, dribbles past first dummy and plays a 1-2 around the second to finish first time.
- player at the top plays a 1-2 around the first and second dummies, ideally all with 1 or 2 touches.
- turn the second mannequin into a passive defender who forces either a dribble or 1-2

Coaching Points: Make sure player dribble at the mannequin and are performing tight 1-2's as opposed to sloppy 1-2's that force widely adjusted runs. Also focus on first touch at all times to potentially force a move or 1-2.

5. 2v1 Finishing (live from the above finishing drill)



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: 2 large rectangles with a defender in each. teams of 2 ready to attack at the top, with one team of 2 serving balls in.

Instructions: A ball is served into one of the first to attackers, who then try to pass or dribble through the 2 defenders to produce a shooting opportunity.

Progressions:

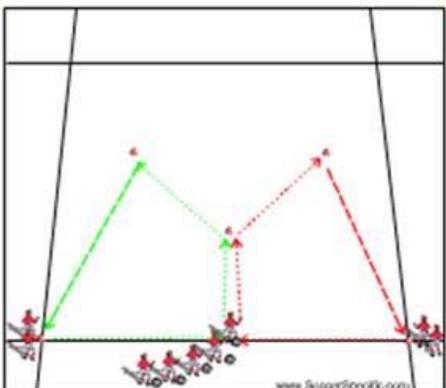
- Vary the service
- Defender 2 must stay in his box
- Defenders can go anywhere
- one attacker starts at the top of the last square, back to goal with the last defender

Coaching Points: Look for: good angles created by supporting players, not passing for no reason (draw a defender first), be selfish when it's on, don't always dribble and move straight, but dribble and move across the box, don't crowd your team mate when you are the target player, remain patient.

6. Scrimmage – must finish with 1 touch

Session 11: Quick shooting (touch-step-shoot)

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: Y dribbling to Passing
 - a. Include a progression where players do a “touch-step-pass” at the central cone, to introduce the concept of stepping quickly and finishing



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: 6 cones placed as shown above with a ball at each players' feet who is in line in the middle.

Instructions: Players dribble at the first cone, and accelerate to the next cone with various moves and skills, at that cone they turn, and pass the ball to the next player and take his spot. That player dribbles back in line. Progressions:

- 1 - small touches (foundation) to big one, 1v1 moves to the next cone,
- 2 - turns at the first cone (back to goal)
- 3 - ball is passed through the legs of a standing player who must react to get there in time
- 4 - Ball is thrown over the shoulder or by player himself to settle in the direction of the next cone

Coaching Points: Technical warm-up involving dribbling, 1st touches, and passing/receiving.

3. Finishing quickly:
 - a. Once players have had a chance to repeat this many time (ie: 15-20 minutes), put a defender on the 18 yard line (he cannot move from the line), and force players to shoot from outside the 18 yard line, so that they have to create an angle and shoot quickly before the defender can block the shot.



ACTIVITY #2

Set up: setup using flags and cones as above.

Instructions: Variations that include technical execution, SAQ's and finishing (always rotate by following pass):

- 1 - A plays the ball into B after B has slalomed through stakes
- 2 - A plays ball into B who touches it forward and slaloms through stakes
- 3 - A plays ball into C in the who takes a long touch, and skips through just 1 stake
- 4 - A plays the ball into B who does a 1-2 with A around the entire set of flags
- 5 - after shooting, B has to spring to touch a color
- 6 - after shooting, B defends the opposing shooter (stagger shooters)

Coaching Points: execution, speed, technical proficiency at speed, and for the younger ones, watch the technique of striking the ball.

4. 3 team possession – defending team shoots on goal, and must shoot quickly



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: 3 equal teams in an appropriate grid for possession

Instructions: 2 teams possess the ball against a third defending team. Progressions:

- 1 - team defends for a set amount of time 2-3 minutes depending on age and fitness level. The best series of passes wins.
- 2 - Defending team scores on the goals when they are able to win the ball
- 3 - on the fly... whoever loses it, defends immediately... this is done best when the defending team holds pinneys in their hands and drops them on the spot as soon as they win the ball.

Coaching Points: Work on spreading out quickly to possess, and collapsing when the ball is lost...defending starts immediately after losing the ball... the best chance to win it back is right after losing it.

Session 12: Possession with Direction

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: Hand ball to zone possession



ACTIVITY #12

Set up: 5 squares 10x10 are arranged in a pattern as outlined in the picture. two equal teams

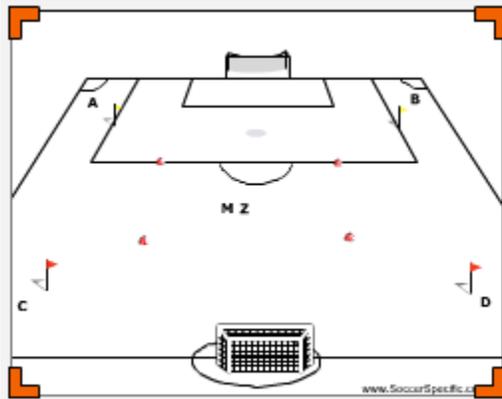
Instructions: Variation 1: Players pass the ball around with their hands. If the ball is dropped, possession is lost. To score a point, the ball must be put down in one of the squares, and picked up by another player.

Variation 2: Passes are made with volleys to the hands. Players can now attack the others to win the ball.

Variation 3: Ball is played with feet only on the ground. To score, players must stop the ball in a square, and it must be taken over by another player.

Coaching Points: Encourage intensity, hard work and fun, as this is a warm-up. This is also a good drill to coach decision making, and the use of support. If one area is congested, players should look to switch the play to somewhere else. When players are allowed to tackle each other, it is also important to make passes early and quickly.

3. SAQ
4. Wide to Mid to Wide Possession:
 - a. Progress to having teams work from a wide zone, to the middle, and then shooting on target.



ACTIVITY #13

Set up: 4 zones in the corners of half a field. A middle zone that is 20x20 to 30x30.

Instructions: Possession games that lead to scrimmage where the focus is on getting the ball into the middle, out wide, and back in the middle, simulating a well worked possession based attack.

Progression 1: Teams play simple possession, and score points by getting the ball through the middle zone, and then successfully to one of the 4 corners. This can be done either by passing or dribbling, but a player has to touch the ball inside of the MZ, and in one of the corners for the point to count. Consecutive points can be scored by returning to the middle and back to a corner.

Progression 2: Same as progression 1 but ball must be played into a corner in the air.

Progression 3: directional (one team defends A and B, the other defends C and D)

Progression 4: Same as 3, but after getting in a corner, teams can score on goal.

Coaching Points:

5. King of the Court, must go wide before scoring



ACTIVITY #4

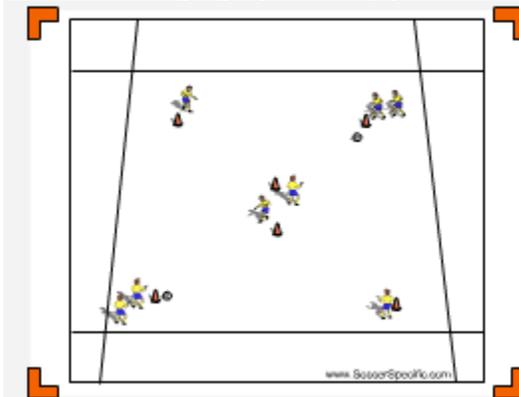
Set up: 3 teams with a small field about twice the size of the 18 yard box.

Instructions: 2 teams play against each other on the inside, with the 3rd team playing as neutrals on the perimeter of the field. Neutrals have only 2 touches, while the players in the middle have unlimited. Play this as a "king of the court" tournament, where the winning team stays on, or if the game is still tied after a predetermined amount of time (usually 3 minutes), the team that has been on longest goes off and plays as neutrals

Coaching Points: Watch for proper runs into the box, and ask neutrals to look to play the ball into dangerous areas whenever possible.

Session 13: Progressive Attack

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. W-M warm-up: play the way you face



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: same as the first drill with two patterns setup back to back.

Instructions: Ball travels in the direction shown above, with each player following his or her pass. You can still work on various receiving techniques, but have now added a long pass into the mix so that more accuracy and a better touch are required.

Coaching Points: To speed up the drill and add a conditioning component, stronger teams can attempt to cut this drill down to 1 touch passes. Plenty of communication is required.

3. Battle in the 18 – Progressive build up
 - a. Ask players to value the ball, use their support and wait for a good opportunity. Careful on how long you run this because it can be exhausting!



ACTIVITY #4

Set up: 3 equal teams in the 18 yard box or slightly larger area.

Instructions: 2 teams battle on the inside of the 18 trying to score, while the 3rd team plays as neutrals on the outsidess. The ball must be played out to a neutral before a team can score. If the ball goes out or in the net, it always starts at the top of the grid with the neutral player.

Coaching Points: Players should not only work on taking tight touches and tight shots, but should also be smart about when to turn and when to return to a neutral. Look for angles made by the receiving players in the grid, and for defensive positioning of the defending players.

4. Attack vs defense (6 vs 6)
 - a. If need be, start with only 5 defenders so that the attacking team has an advantage and can easily possess the ball as they look for a way through.



ACTIVITY #4

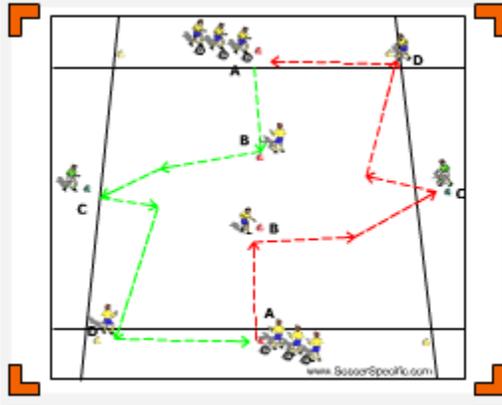
Set up: 7 v 6 attack vs defense drill.

Instructions: Ball can either start with the attacking team at the top of the circle, or it can start with the defending teams' keeper throwing/kicking it out to the attackers. This is a good drill to move to after working on shape or functional things.

Coaching Points: Mids must decide when to pressure and when to stay compact. They should also be aware of passing lanes behind them. Defender shift and pressure as a unit as well, always communicating to those in front of them.

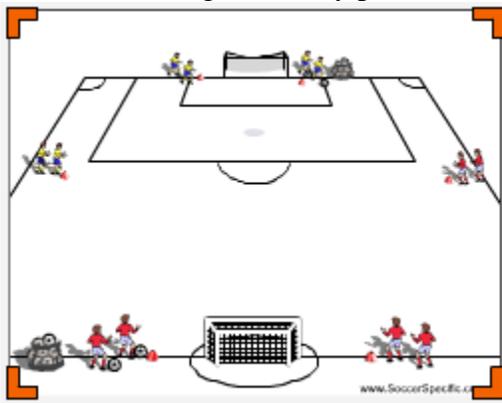
Session 14: Quick Counter attacks

1. Passing to 1v1 moves pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: Pav's Circus of quick passing



ACTIVITY #1
Set up: Set up is a huge square as shown above. 20 yards by 20 yards is as small as it should be.
Instructions: Players work on different turns and technical receiving skills, as well as tight clean combination plays.
Progressions:
 1 - first player receives from the same line he came from, opens up, plays 1-2 with C and into D who dribbles back.
 2 - first player receives the ball from the opposite line from where he came, and turns across his body
 3 - give and go's with the first player
 4 - out of the air receiving in various ways
Coaching Points: Very tight and crisp passing combos, and dead on technique...

3. SAQ
4. 3v3 flying changes with depth:
 - a. Encourage the early pass forward and wide



ACTIVITY #5
Set up: 2 lines beside the posts, and one more line on the side line at half.
Instructions: 3v3 flying changes, but one of the players begins on the half way line so that depth is established immediately and transitions have to be much sharper.
Coaching Points: Look for the early ball to the wide player to gain ground. Defensively, early pressure is important to discourage an easy pass forward that eliminates to players.

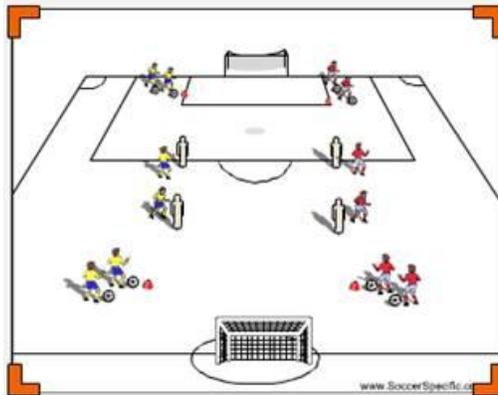
5. Scrimmage with both teams forced into the opposing teams half
 - a. To add further “quickness” to the scrimmage, have the coach start with all the balls and whenever the ball goes out of bounds, have the coach play the ball quickly into the attacking team in a decent position to attack from.



ACTIVITY #6
Set up: playing field, split in half, with two equal teams.
Instructions: Regular scrimmage is played with the following restrictions:
 - defending team must be inside of their own half when a goal is scored, or else it counts for 2
 - attacking team must be inside of the attacking half when a goal is scored, or else it doesn't count.
Coaching Points: The drill should lead to more distinct transitions from attack to defense, and should create opportunities for counter attacks and quick breaks. With the pressure cover emphasis of the other two stations, let's make sure that the same principle is applied through this scrimmage - high pressure can still be a tactic, trying to eliminate the other team's ability to counter attack.

Session 15: When to Possess and When to Attack

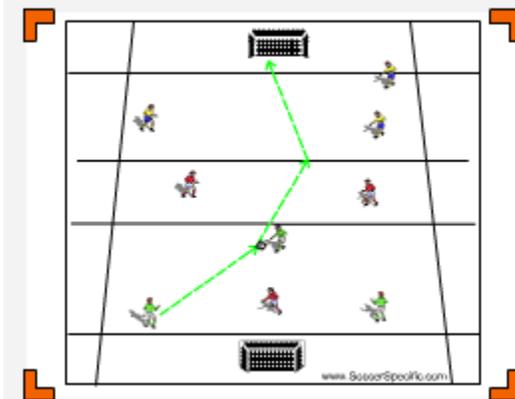
1. Passing to 1v1 moves Pre-warm-up
2. Warm-up: UEFA Passing and Receiving Warm-up



ACTIVITY #1

Set up: Technical warm-up with 4 lines, 4 mannequins or stakes, and at least 4 balls
Instructions: Pass into the first player, get it back, and pass into him/her again on the other side of the mannequin. After each combo, switch lines.
Progress to: Throw ins, turning the ball, receiving with different parts of the foot or body.
Coaching Points:

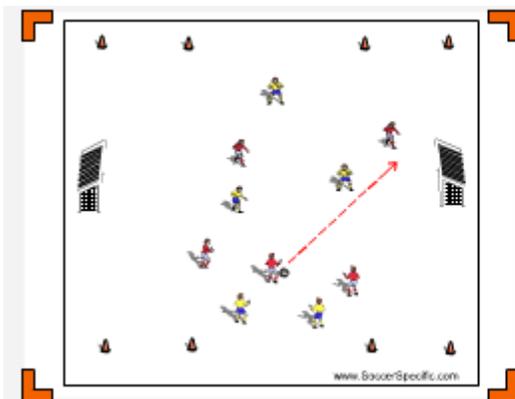
3. SAQ
4. Dribbling Tennis:



ACTIVITY #7

Set up: Same setup as soccer tennis. 3 zones, with 3 or 4 players in each, a goal at each end.
Instructions: the team in the middle is the defending team. They send 1 or 2 defenders (depending on numbers and quality of the group) to defend the attacking team. That team passes the ball around until they create an opportunity to dribble through the middle and have a shot on the opposing goal. If the ball is turned over, then the defending team switches with the attacking one, and the ball starts on the opposing side.
Progressions:
 - must make a certain amount of passes before dribbling in
 - an attacker can receive a pass in the middle zone
 - ball must be passed through to the other side, where it is laid back for a finish.
Coaching Points: Players should be moving a lot off the ball and should be patient in waiting for their opportunity to dribble

5. Yo-Yo possession
 - a. Look for the proper times when teams should possess and when they should attack, and call “yo” and “yo-yo” accordingly:
 - i. Possess: when the other team has lots of players behind the ball and is in good position to defend
 - ii. Attack quickly: when the other team is unbalanced (ie: the ball has been well switched across the field, a team has just won the ball in a dangerous area, or a player has just dribbled past his/her defender creating a numeric advantage).



ACTIVITY #8

Set up: roughly 20x20 yard field with 2 endzones. 2 teams.
Instructions: The coach controls the purpose of the game with 2 commands, YO!, and YOYO!
 YO! - teams play simple possession inside the middle grid, trying to keep the ball for as long as possible
 YOYO! - teams try to find a pass into the endzone to score a point (each team attacks just one direction).
Coaching Points: As the session focus is on transition, let the teams play YO (possession) until you see a good point of transition from which to attack. For example, right after a good tackle that gives a team numerical advantage, or right after the ball has been switched from one side to the other, or when attacking shape is good and someone has initiated a good run.

Appendix B— Training to Train Summary

Training to Train (11-16)

At this stage, elite soccer groups may express interest in recruiting talented youth players. Care must be taken to recognize and protect the long-term interests of each player. Risks and issues can be avoided by ensuring that the development model remains “player-centered.”

The optimal window of trainability for stamina begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV), more commonly known as the adolescent growth spurt. The demands of skill training as well as training loads should increase, thus provoking improvement in mental toughness, concentration and diligence. Awareness of tactics within the game becomes an important facet of the learning process. Players tend to be self-critical and rebellious, but they have a strong commitment to the team.

Physical training emphasizes flexibility, disciplined warm-up and cool down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, balance, and core strength and stability. Players are also introduced to nutrition and proper diet (pre-game, post-game, tournaments), prevention and care of injuries, and the importance of rest and recovery. Coaches may be required to design personalized training programs in order to respect the growth spurt.

Technical instruction introduces advanced techniques to those players who are capable, and the skills are presented within a more complex environment with position-specific emphasis. Tactical training emphasizes team work, including developing tasks per unit (defense, midfield, and forward units) and positional awareness through small-sided games and large-sided competitive matches.

Mental training introduces a pre-competition routine, mental preparation, goal setting, and coping with winning and losing.

Game formats should progress from 8v8 to 11v11 as players grow through this stage (game transitions to 11v11 at U13 age), and the season moves toward year-round play that includes appropriate rest and recovery periods. Off-sides are introduced at the beginning of this stage.

There must be an appropriate ratio of training, competition, and rest throughout the year. Periodized planning is critical to ensuring players are healthy and performing to their potential. The training to competition ratio should be between 5 and 10 for every game. National competitions held for regional all-star teams at U14 and U16. Soccer is now the player’s primary sport, but complimentary sports are encouraged which support movement and athleticism suitable to soccer (e.g. basketball, track & field). (Taken from the LTPD)