



Defending Practice Guide

Defending

This guide relates to helping players develop the skills to defend. This encapsulates a range of situations and circumstances, which are covered, including:

Individual Areas

- 1 – Screening & Blocking
- 2 – Marking & Tracking
- 3 – Forcing Play
- 4 – Heading
- 5 – Recovery Runs
- 6 – Intercepting, Spoiling & Tackling

Unit & Team Areas

- 7 – Compactness
- 8 – Defending the Box
- 9 – Defending Wide Areas
- 10 - Pressing
- 11 – Cover & Support
- 12 – Predictability

There is an example of how a coach may set up a session for each of these areas of work; the suggestion is that the individual themed areas may have predominance for Foundation coaches (coloured red) and the unit and team themed areas for Youth Development coaches (coloured yellow). This certainly isn't absolute (and undoubtedly there is overlap) but encourages certain areas of focus in certain areas of development.

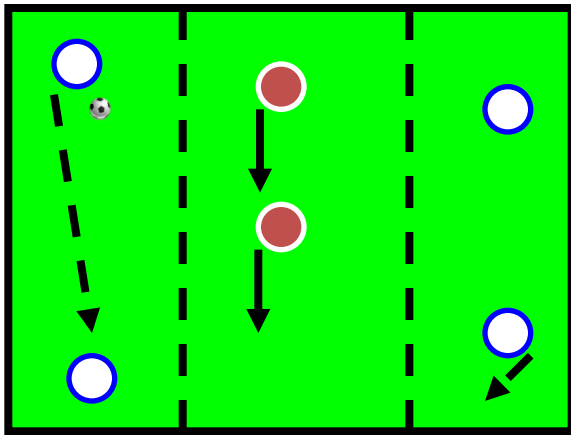
Additionally, the sessions are planned to incorporate a range of session approaches – whole – part – whole (where the coach starts within a game), up the steps (traditionally working technique – skill – game related) and carousel (where players carousel around the practices).

Finally, there are some examples of how coach may individualise work for players within the session to suit individual needs based upon them, a position they are learning to play or a particular problem they are encountering and how a coach may adapt their coaching style to encourage information to be delivered in a range of ways.

PHASE RELATED (DEFENDING ORGANISED)



FOUNDATION PHASE <i>Individual areas of work</i>	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PHASE <i>Unit & team themes</i>
▪ Marking & Tracking	▪ Pressing
▪ Intercepting, Spoiling & Tackling	▪ Cover & Support
▪ Screening & Blocking	▪ Defending In & Around the Box
▪ Recovery Runs	▪ Defending Wide Areas
▪ Heading	▪ Compactness
▪ Forcing Play	▪ Predictability



1. Screening Passes – Unopposed

1. Set two pitches up to accommodate 12 players (or more or less)
2. White's play unopposed in each area and look for moment to play pass across central area (below head height) to other end
3. Red's seek to block and intercept passes. 3 interceptions and they swap with two white. 3 end to ends by the whites equals a goal
4. Progression – one of the white's can drop into the middle area to receive and set or turn to move ball into end zone presenting challenge for players on marking and screening

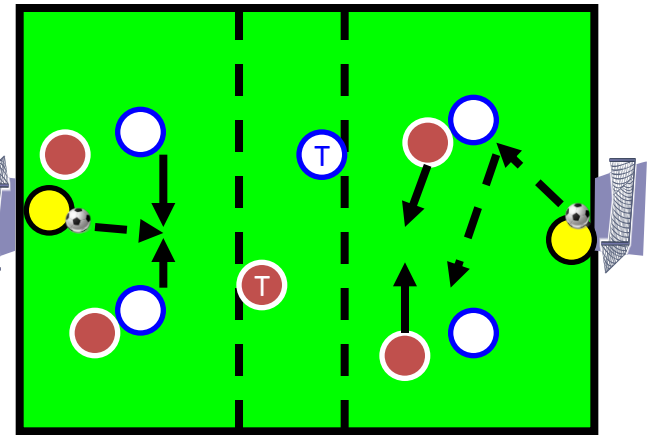
3. Half-Court Game

1. As with 2 but target players are neutral. Receive from target and try to score in the goal.
2. If you score, you get another attack. If defenders can get ball to target, they become the attackers and the attackers defend.

Screening & Blocking

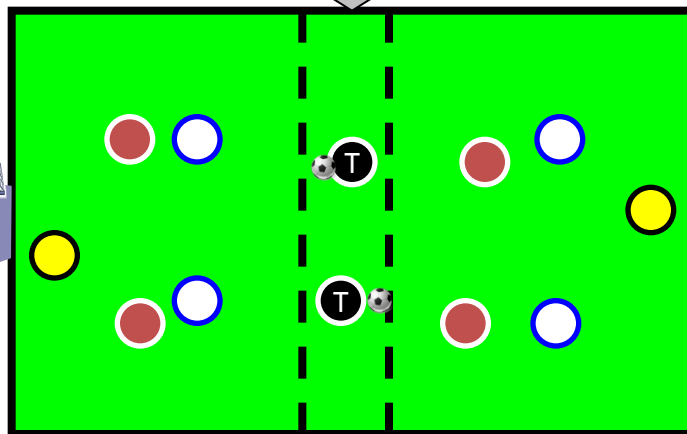
2. 2 vs. 2 (+ GK)

1. 2 pitches playing concurrently
2. GK starts with ball and plays to defenders who try to work ball to target player
3. If attackers win the ball – score in the goal.
4. If ball worked to target, target plays to attackers who try to score.

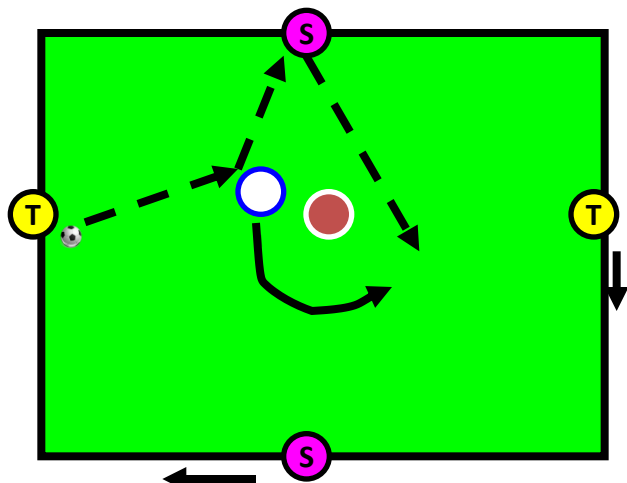


The Game

1. Working on the premise of whole-part-whole start with a 6 v 6.
2. Challenge the players to 'try to stop forward play'
3. Identify where the players most need to practice and select from the surrounding practices to support players at the necessary level.

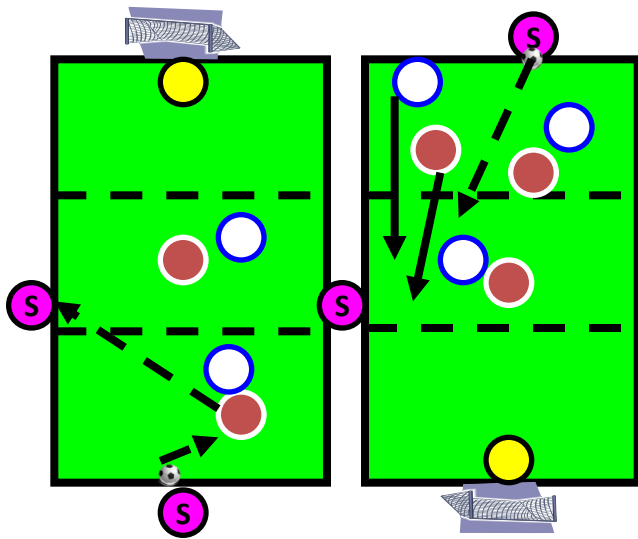


Foundation Stage



1 v 1 + (can use 1, 2 or 3 pitches)

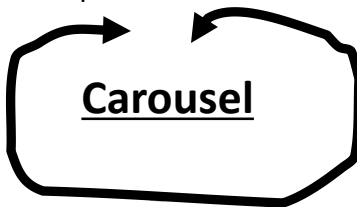
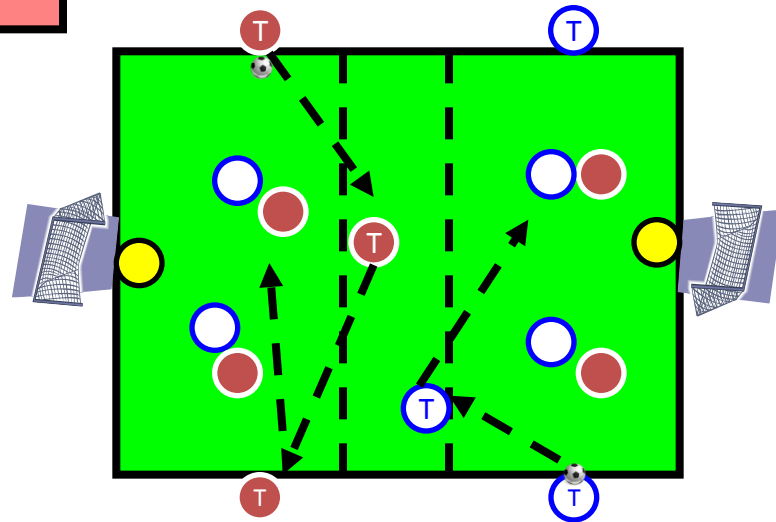
1. Try to move ball from 'T' to 'T' to score.
2. Can use 'S' to set up but 'S' cannot play straight into 'T'
3. Rotate players



Marking & Tracking

2 vs. 2's

1. Concurrent pitches
2. 'T's pass around the perimeter of the area and at any point can play into the attackers who try to score
3. If defenders win ball – play to 'T's to score – repeat.



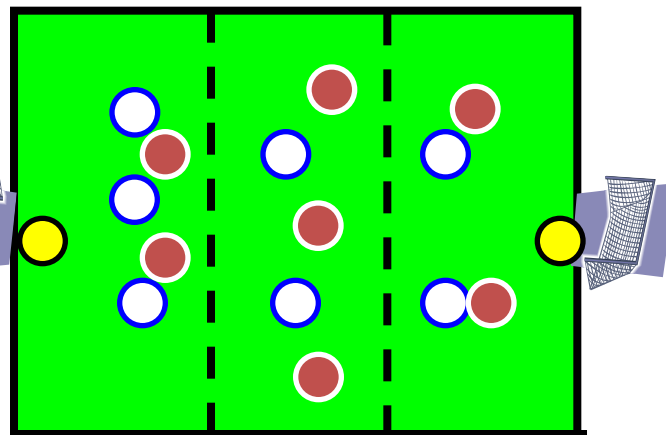
Carousel

Game – 8 v 8

1. Different formations which present different marking and tracking circumstances

Repetition Circuit

1. Different circumstances
2. Pitch 1 – 1 – staggered 2 v 2 with 3 'S' to support attackers
3. Pitch 2 – 2 v 2 + 1 v 1 with 1 'S' to feed in
4. Servers can play to any attacker. Def try to stop goals and if regaining play to S
5. Try to mark and track opponent

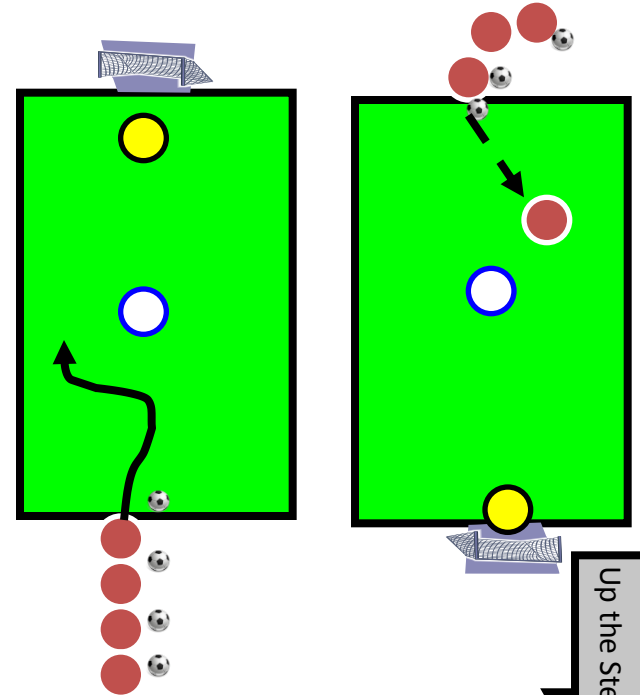


Foundation Stage

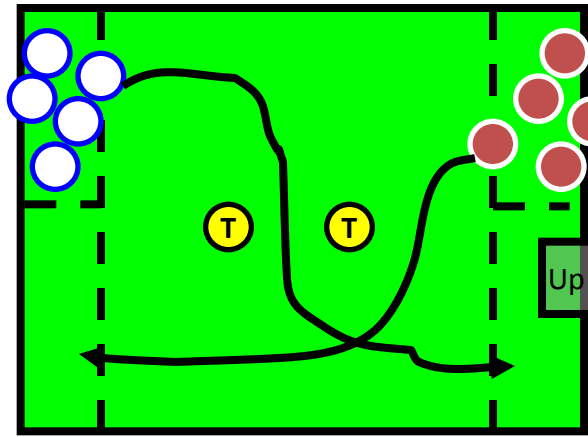
Forcing Play

Repetition Circuit

1. 2 x pitches – players revolve from one onto the other
2. Pitch 1 – attacker runs ball onto pitch and seeks to beat the def and score
3. Pitch 2 – 1st attacker enters pitch and receives a pass before trying to beat def to score



Up the Steps



Tag Game

- Reds try to run from one corner to the other (whites do the same but opposite corners. Can go one at a time all together or intermittently)
- Taggers (yellows) try to prevent the players making it from corner to corner and score a point for every tag
- Rotate taggers

Up the Steps

Game

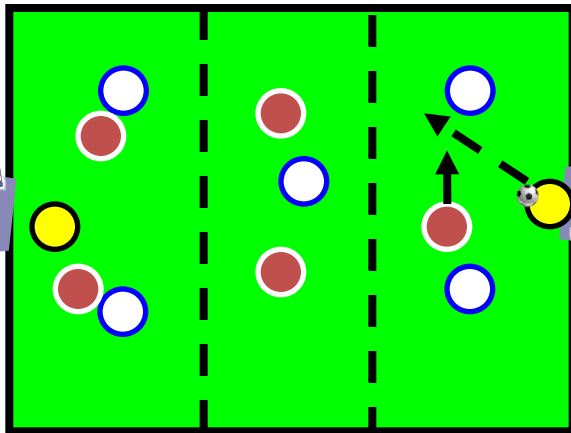
1. 2-2-1 vs. 2-1-2
2. Try to force play to advantage

Up the Steps

Game Related

1. 4 v 4 - + targets. Get ball from one corner to the other to score
2. If corner players want to, they can run ball onto the pitch – a team-mate replaces them.

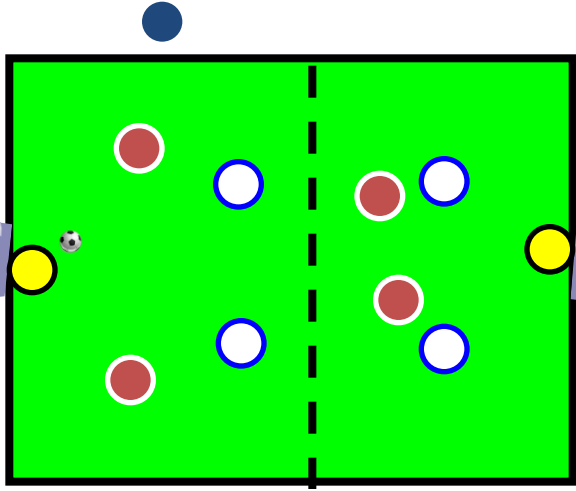
Foundation Stage



Heading

3. Game Related

1. 4 v 4 plus servers
2. Reds to play 6 v 4
3. If defenders win direct ball play



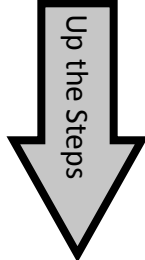
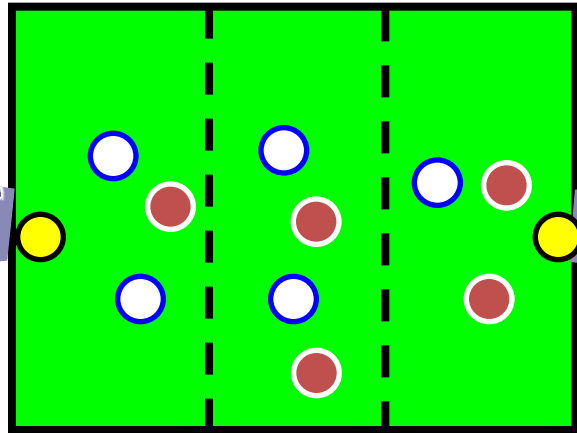
Up the Steps

4. Game – 6 v 6

1. 2-2-1 v 2-2-1

1. Skills

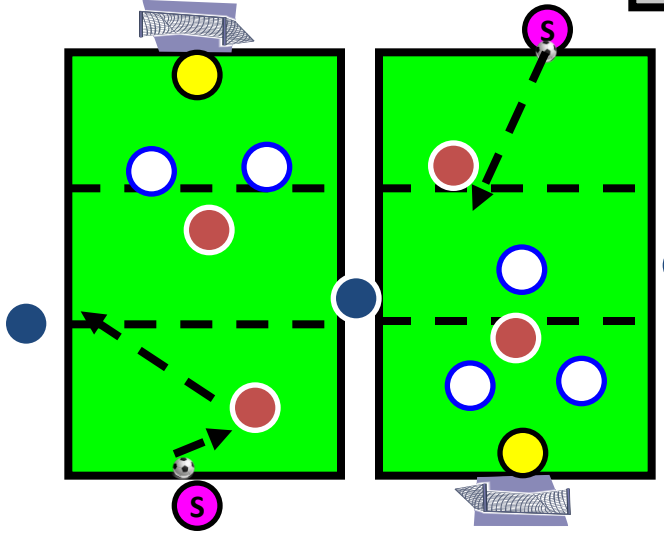
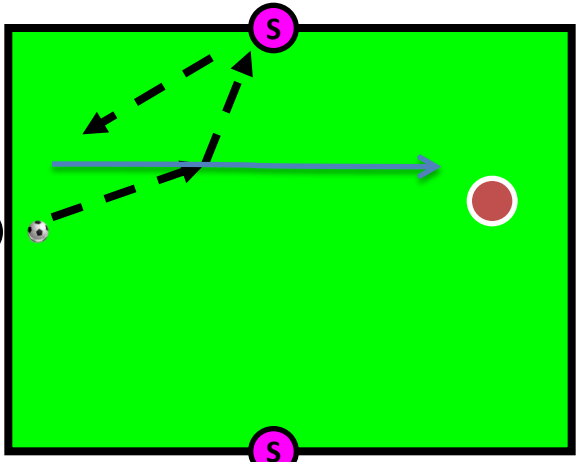
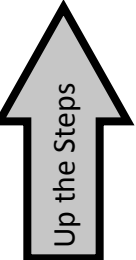
1. Create different circumstances through the Reds
2. Organisation in favour
3. In possession try to hit furthest forward player
4. Try to defend accordingly



Foundation Stage

2. Recognising the Triggers

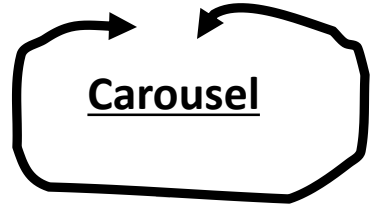
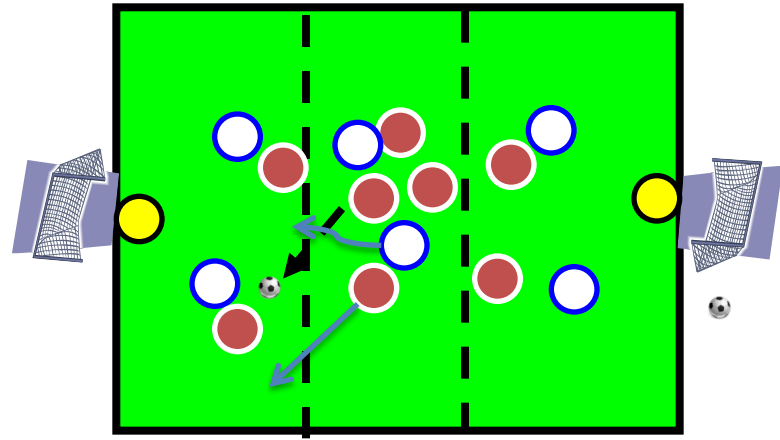
1. Servers to move the ball to create movement.
2. Servers to create heading opportunities. Defender to recycle
3. Rotate players



Recovery runs

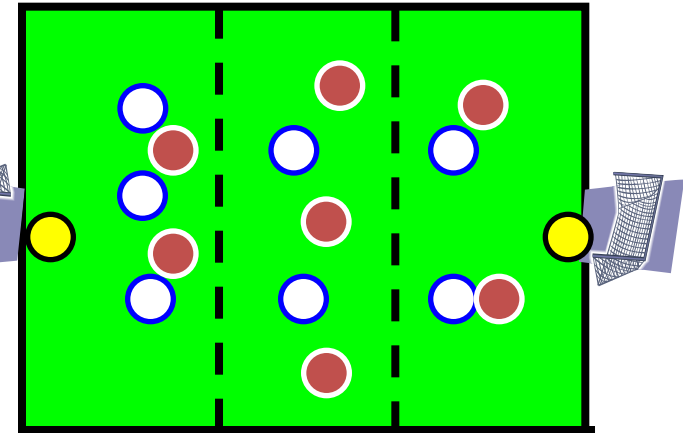
Break out

1. 4 v 2 in favour of reds
2. Reds to make 3 pass in central area to break out either end. Whites recognise triggers to win it
3. Recover accordingly. If win combine with any team mate

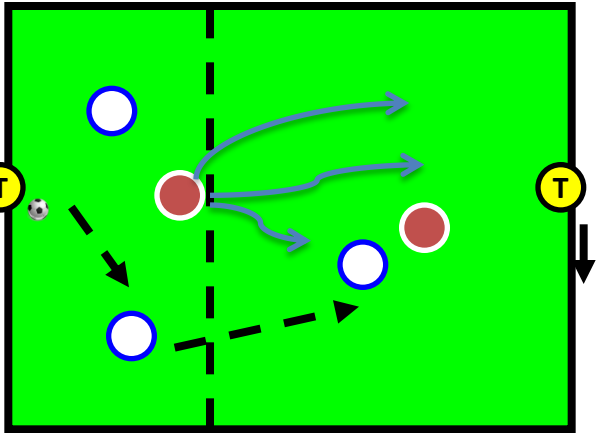


Repetition Circuit

1. Different circumstances
2. Pitch 1 – 2v1 play out to go 2 v 2
3. Pitch 2 – 3 v 3 + 1 for team in possession
4. Try to recognise when to press or when to recover

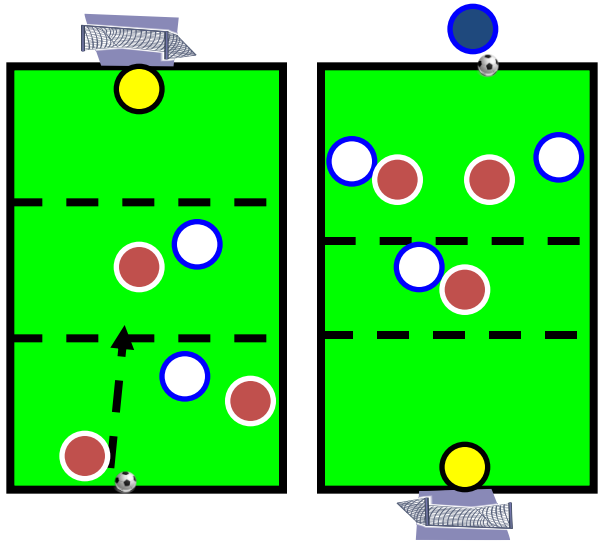


Foundation Stage



1 v 1 + (can use 1, 2 or 3 pitches)

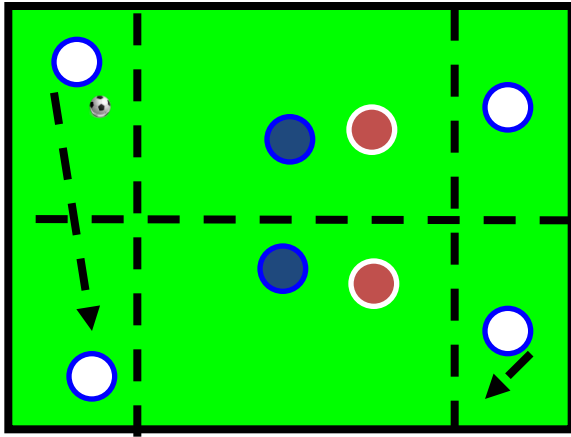
1. Try to move ball from 'T' to 'T' to score.
2. Can use 'S' to set up but 'S' cannot play straight into 'T'
3. Rotate players



Game – 8 v 8

1. Different formations which present different marking and tracking circumstances

Intercepting, Spoiling and Tackling

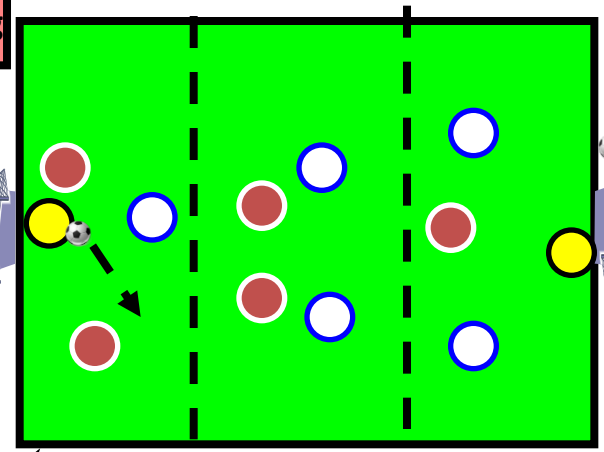


1. Recognising movement and ball

1. Utilise the players according to the practice
2. White's look to play into blue to find their team mate
3. Red's seek to intercept pass, spoil or block.
4. If reds regain look to play to teammate. Ball recycled
5. Progression – red drops to play 2 v 1 against whites

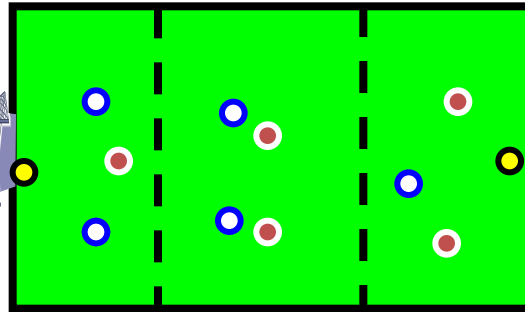
2. 2 v 2 in MF

1. Allow ball to be played out from defensive 1/3
2. Red team try to play forward
3. Whites try to recognise when to win the ball back
4. Progression – pass in join in

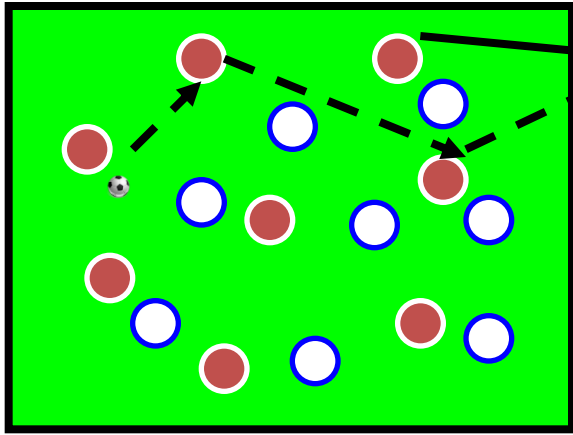


The Game

1. Working on the premise of whole-part-whole start with a 6 v 6.
2. Challenge the players to 'try to recognise when to win the ball back'
3. Identify where the players most need to practice and select from the surrounding practices to support players at the necessary level.



Foundation Stage

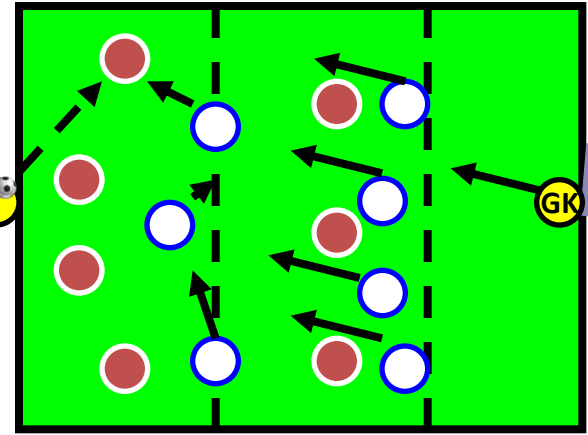


End Zone 8 v 8

Compactness

Alternate Outcome Practice

1. Reds attack goal – whites to a target player (rotate roles)
2. Try to compact play into two thirds and decide when to compact high and when to be compact late
3. E.g. Reds may defend late more as are more vulnerable behind with whites aiming for a target player



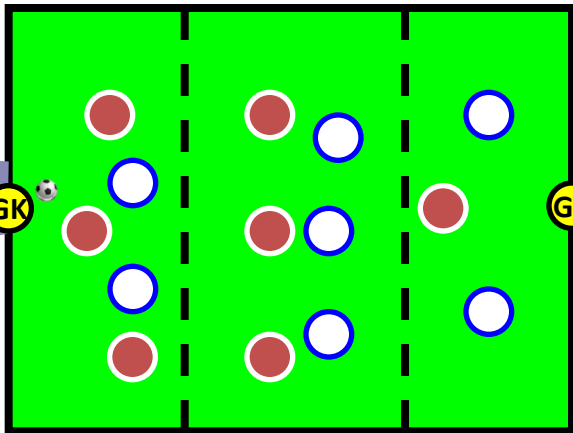
Thirds Game

1. 3-3-1 vs. 2-3-2
2. Try to keep space between lines small and spot when to defend early and when to defend late

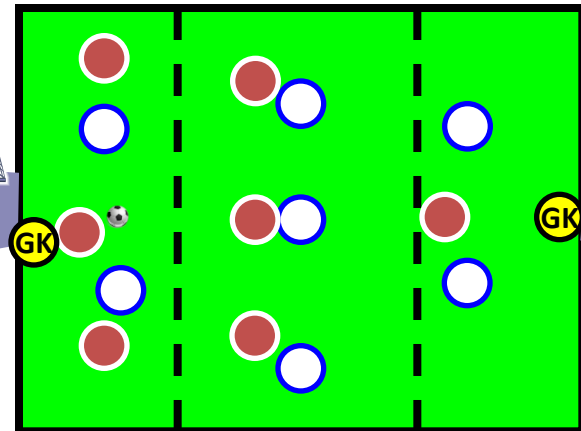
Carousel

Locked in Thirds Game

1. 3-3-1 vs. 2-3-2
2. Players locked into zones. Try to prevent your opponents playing into next third.



Development

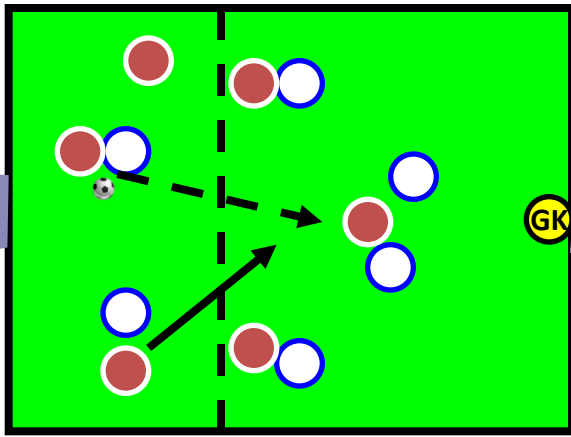


1. End to end game – try to play ball into end zone for player running onto to score. After scoring – attack other way.
2. Team out of possession tries to prevent passes between lines and deal with players playing between lines
3. Offside applies in end zone

Defending the Box

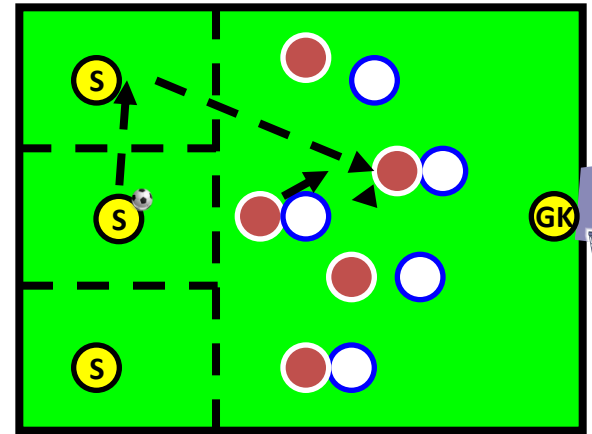
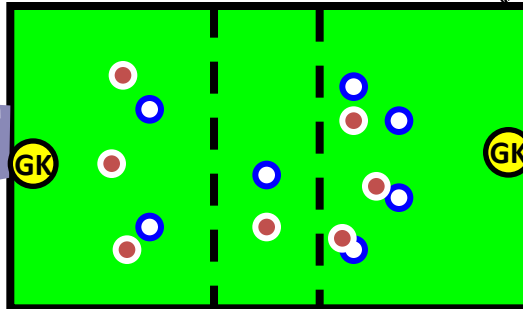
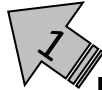
50 yard x 30 yard Practice

1. Yellows pass and play in to reds who try to score
2. Whites try to prevent shots and regain ball to play out to yellows.
3. 1 yellow can join and support attacking team



6 vs. 6 + GK

1. Reds attack goal and try to score – whites try to win ball and hit empty goal on the full (no bounce)
2. Try to keep one player in empty goal half
3. White's focus on marking, blocking and tracking.



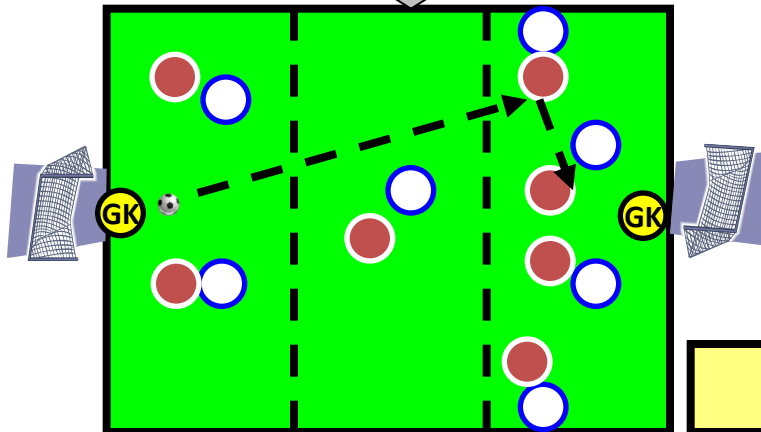
Game

1. Working on principle of whole-part-whole – seek to start with the game and move to whichever practice (s) the players required/

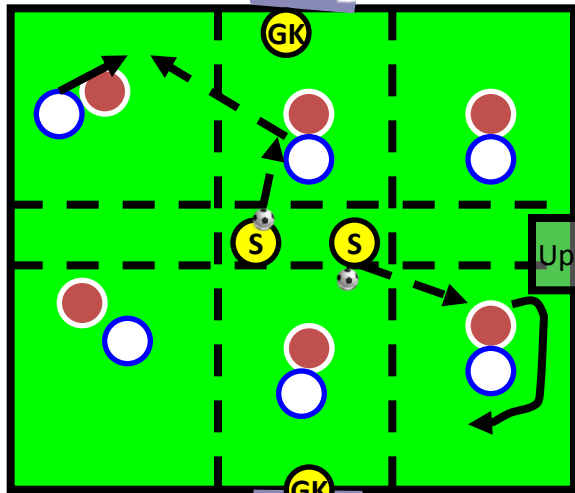


Matched Up, Locked In

1. 2-1-4 for the reds and 4-1-2 for the whites
2. Players locked into areas – try to set up attacks to score
3. Team out of possession tries to regain and set up attacks



Development



Concurrent Practice

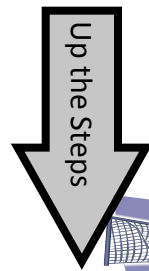
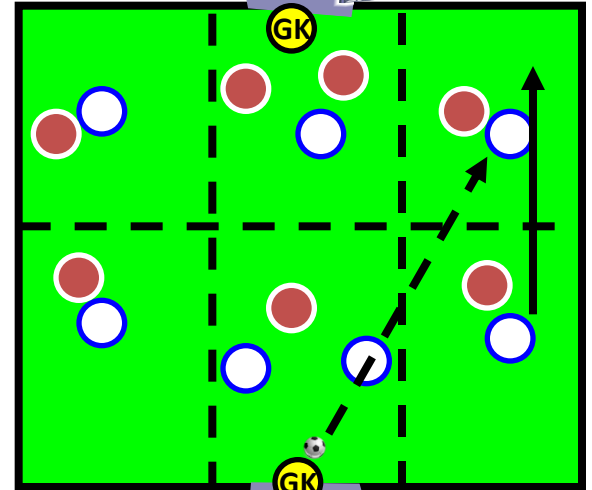
1. Two pitches playing concurrently of 3 vs. 3.
2. Server plays to attackers who try to score on goal – defenders try to prevent goals and get ball to server



Defending Wide Areas

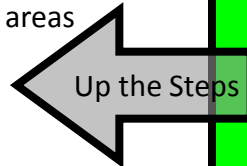
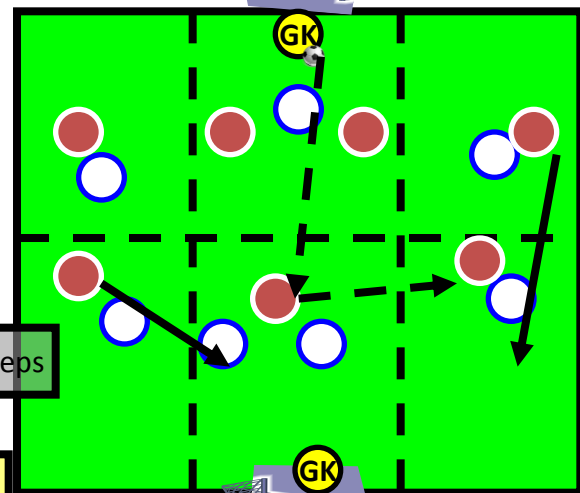
Full Back Joining In

1. 7 v 7 + GK's
2. Wide players locked into areas except when their team has possession – try to join in to overload opposition FB's
3. On turnover – recovery runs and CH deciding when to go out and defend wide.



Opening Up

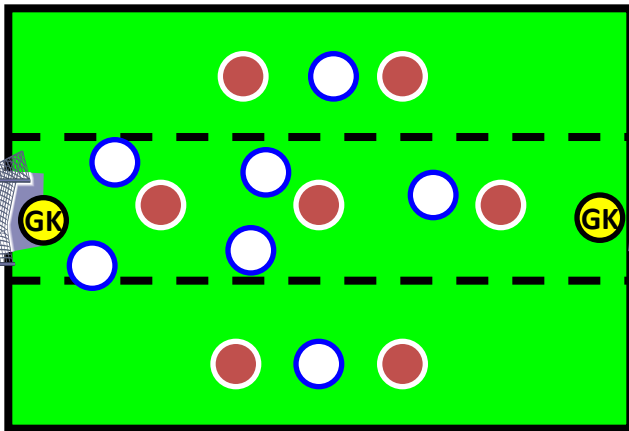
1. As previous but no movement restrictions

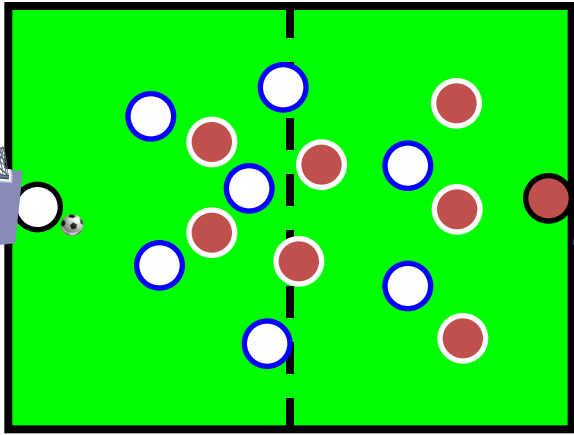


Development

Game

1. 3-3-1 vs. 2-4-1
2. Try to set up attacks using wide areas





Whole

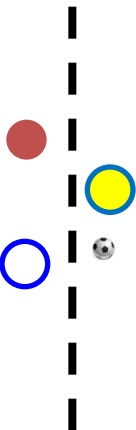
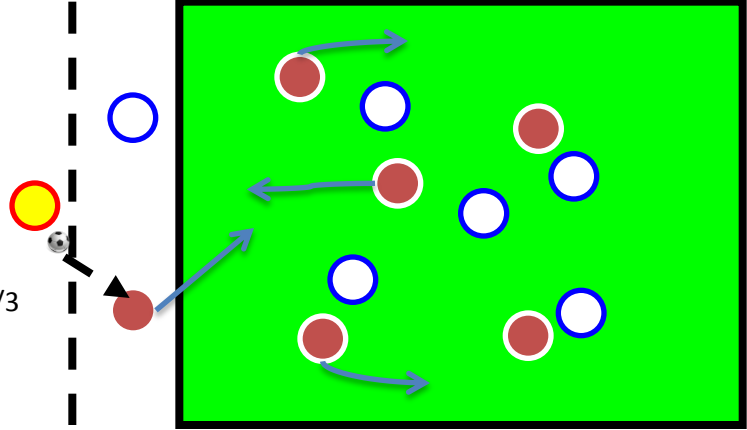
1. Try to recognise when to press the ball
2. In possession try to move (player or ball) quickly

Pressing



Pressing

1. Directional Middle 1/3 play out + through
2. Triggering the press
3. Principles

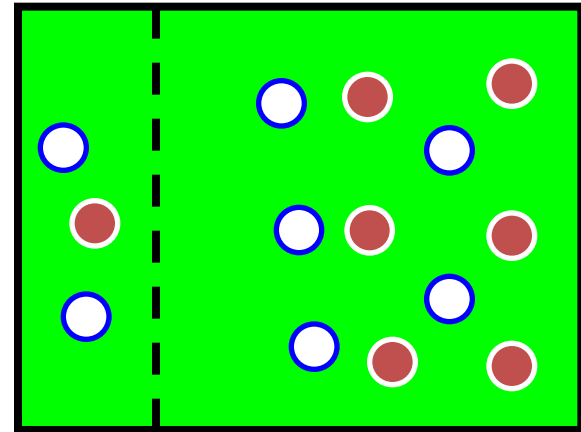
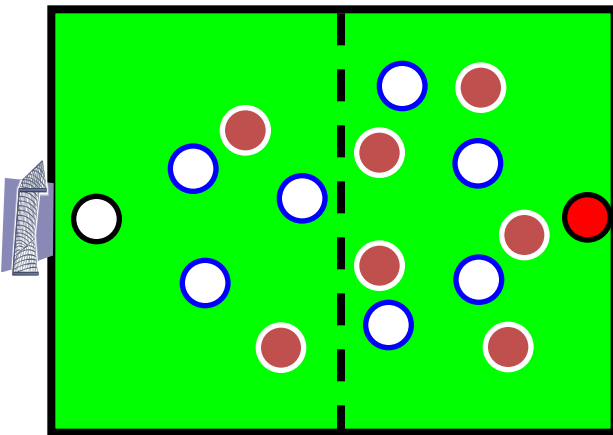


Whole Part Whole

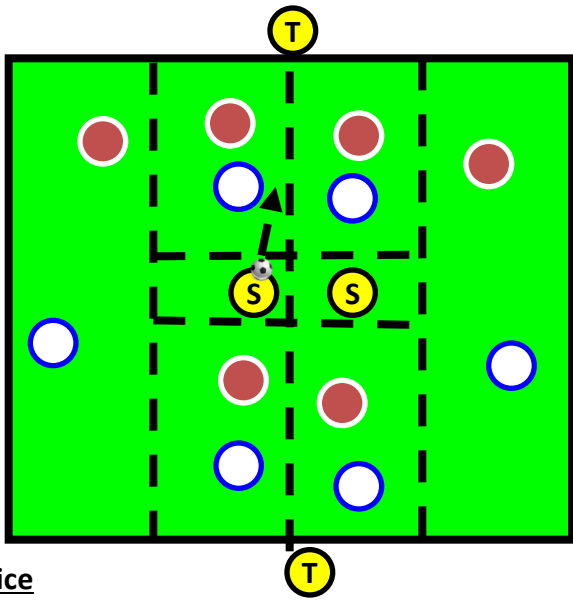


Part Attacking half

1. Pressing from the front
2. Whites to press and recycle, reds to play through to target



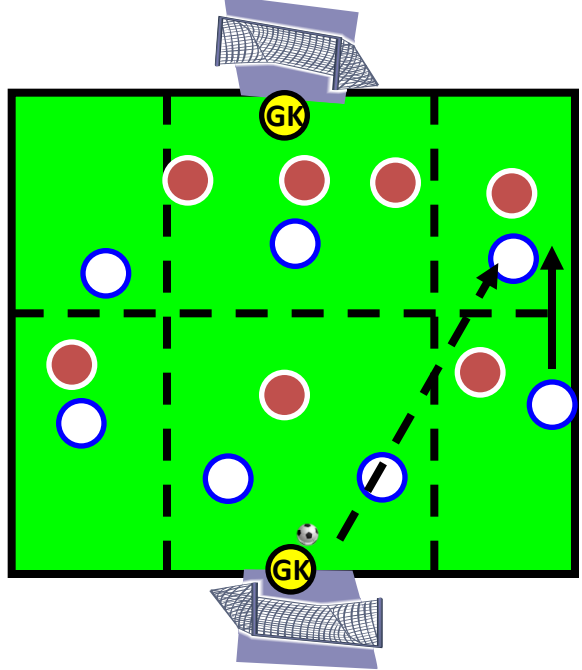
Development



Cover and Support

Affecting the Full Back

1. 7 v 7 + GK's
2. Opposite FB to stay – try to shift the ball to allow FB's to play in or join in
3. On regain look to play forward quickly



Recognition

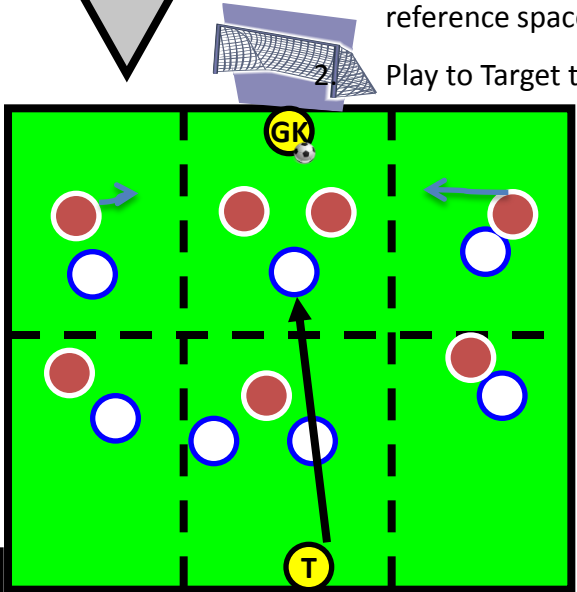
1. Out of possession try to reference space and players
2. Play to Target to recycle

Practice

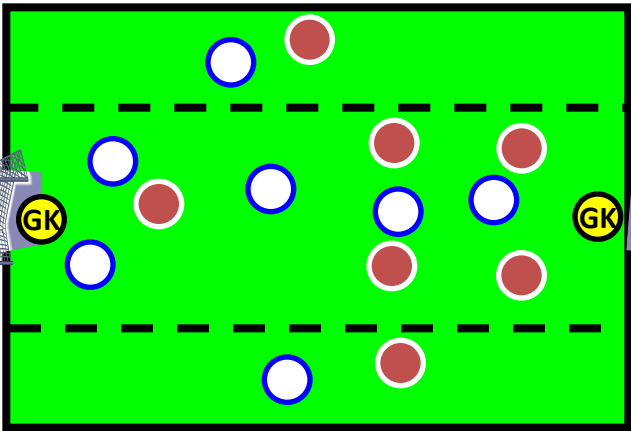
1. Identical set up - defending movements and support of CB's and supporting FB's
2. Server plays to attackers who try to score on goal – defenders try to prevent goals and get ball to server
3. Progression T to play to FB to join in attack

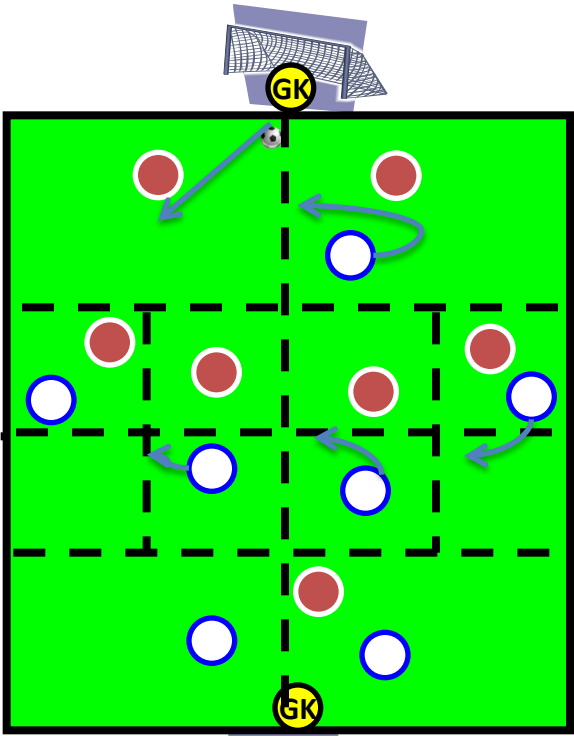
Game

1. 2-3-1-1 vs. 2-4-1
2. Try to set up attacks using each 1/3



Development





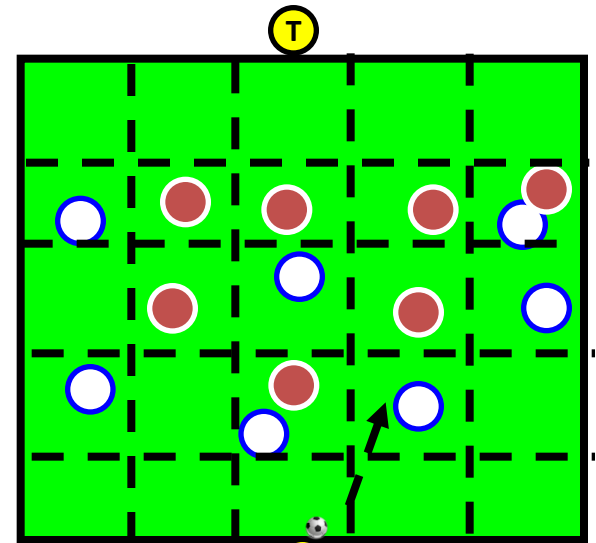
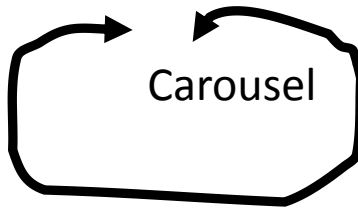
Units working front to back

1. Roles and responsibilities in each area
2. Try to make play predictable
3. Protect switch

Predictability

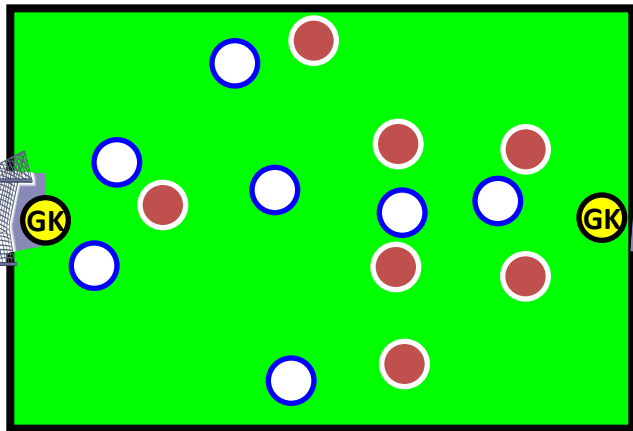
Grids

1. Reference movements as a unit and team
2. Recognise the overloads
3. Protect space
4. Whites possession based to play out – Reds defends accordingly



Repetition Focus

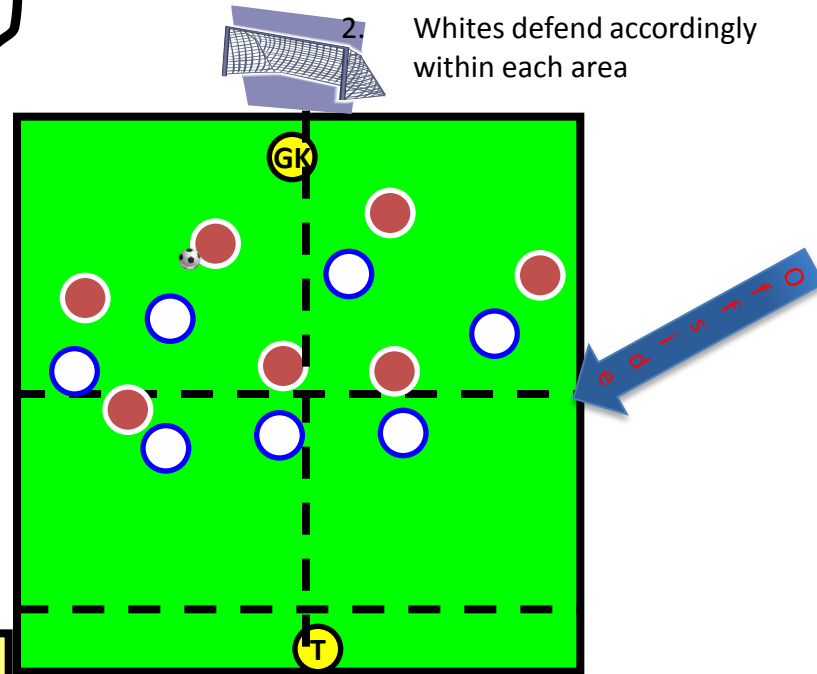
1. Reds look to play out to target
2. Whites defend accordingly within each area



Development

Game

1. Varied formations



Match-day Task Sheet - Coach and/or players write in player challenge



Team Challenges (YDP)

1 – When to press and when not to

2 – Changing the speed of the game

• Team Challenges (FP)

1 – When to try to intercept

2 – When to pass and when to run with the ball

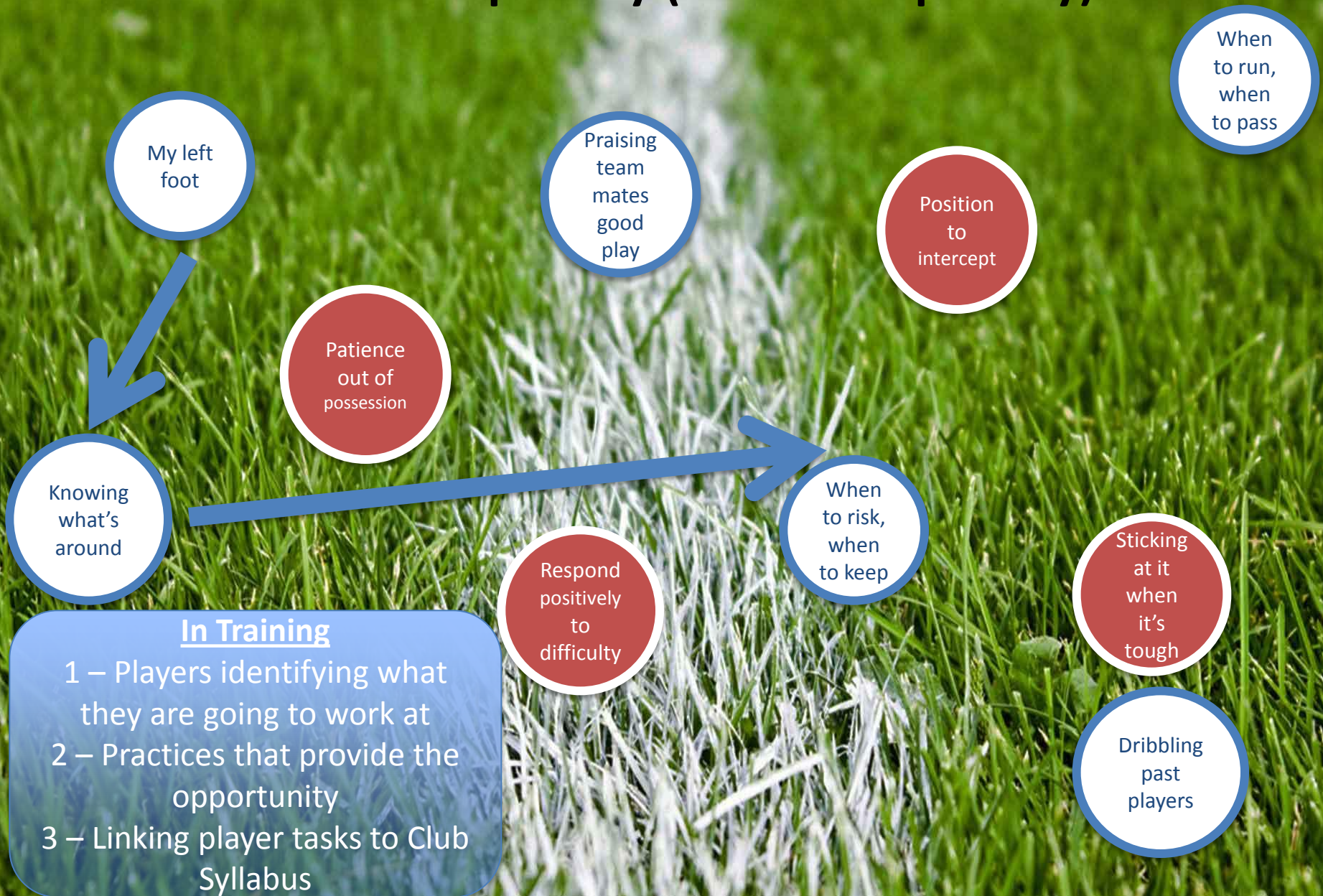
Interval Discussions

1 – Player discussions – how am I getting on against my individual task?

2 – Subs feedback – Team Challenges
- 1 good thing
- 1 thing to try to improve

3 – Coach details changes and any reminders

6 vs. 4 Keep Away (4 vs. 6 Keep Away)



Trial & Error

Set up a game and ask players to try to position themselves to intercept the ball

Command

Mark goal side and ball side

Question & Answer

When might the distance you mark your player from change? Why?

Sometimes problem set and leave – questions don't always need to be verbally answered

Coaching Styles

Guided Discovery

Columbus – Tried to find a new trade route to India – found The America's – mistake?

Show me how you can position yourself to help the pressing player

Observation & Feedback

Watch TJ – see how it sticks at it and keeps working to stop the attacker

Skilful Neglect

Jess Ennis' 18 step run up at The Olympic long jump.

Coach or leave?