



U13 - U16 FULL SEASON COACHING CURRICULUM (36 WEEKS)



ABOUT FOOTBALL DNA

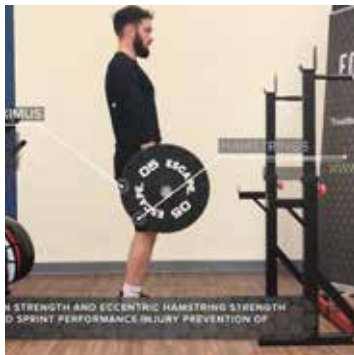
Football DNA is everything to do with our beautiful game. It's the best aspects from inside the professional game, brought to coaches, players and general lovers of football for your enjoyment and implementation. Giving you access to hundreds of coaching drills and sessions on video and in depth sports science programs and workouts. Also we have high quality Wellness and Nutrition information & recipes to help off the pitch performance! Plus even more content with top analysis videos along with interviews, webinars and coach education features.

We are determined to help all levels and age groups of the game develop, improve and aspire to be as good as they can be! From grassroots to professional coaches and players we have you covered at footballdna.co.uk! Developed by professionals in the game but for everyone to Watch, Use & Adapt.



DRILLS & SESSIONS

- Outfield
- Goalkeeping
- One To One
- SAQ



SPORT SCIENCE

- Pitch Based
- Gym Based
- Tutorials



WELLBEING & NUTRITION

- Advice
- Tutorials
- Recipes



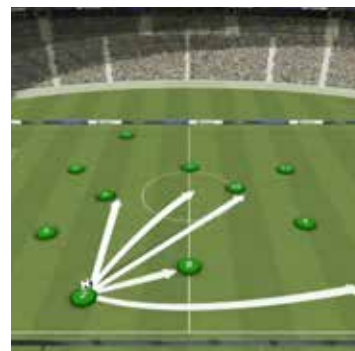
COACH EDUCATION

- Tips
- Webinars
- Q&A's



INDIVIDUAL SKILLS PROGRAM

- Over 100 Challenges
- 3 Levels
- 6 Skill Categories



FEATURES

- Analysis
- Interviews
- Masterclasses

15% OFF MONTHLY MEMBERSHIPS

Using The Code:

13-16DNA15

ABOUT THE COACHES

This curriculum consists of different practices and sessions from a host of coaches that contribute to Football DNA. These sessions have been specifically structured to link practice to practice, session to session and block to block. This has been done for maximum benefit of the players to understand and learn but also the coach to relay coaching points across the season.



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CURRICULUM STATEMENT

This Football DNA curriculum aims to provide guidance to coaches working within the U13-U16 age groups. The curriculum will cover 4 key moments of the game over 36 weeks which consist of: In Possession, Out of Possession, Attacking & Defensive Transition. All sessions are age appropriate and are designed to support players as they are exposed to larger formats of the game. The curriculum is designed to provide players with the knowledge and exposure to a range of different practices and sessions that challenge and consolidate learning throughout. The number of players in the practices can be adapted to meet the needs of your group of players along with ways to progress or regress to support players.

ABOUT THE FOCUSES



PASSING & RECEIVING

- Building from Back
- Maintaining Possession through Midfield
- Playing in the Attacking Third



CREATIVITY - COMBINE & FINISH

- Combination Play
- Finishing from Wide Areas
- Conversion - Scoring Goals



TRANSITION

- Counter Attacking
- Defending Turnovers



DEFENDING

- From the Front
- In the Midfield
- Defending Deep



SMALL SIDED GAMES

- Themed
- Topic Specific
- Fun Based

SESSION STRUCTURE

Session Intro & Technical
Based Practice
15 - 20 Minutes



Lead In Skilled &
Opposed Practice
20 Minutes



Function, Phase of Play/
Small Sided Games
20 - 30 Minutes

ABOUT THE OBJECTIVES

PURPOSEFUL POSSESSION



Scanning & Identifying to make the best decision under pressure and in larger formats.



Use of 1st touch to create space move into space and progress the ball through the pitch quickly.



Bravery to receive under pressure, making quick decisions and being purposeful with the ball.

TRANSITION MOMENTS



Able to dribble and drive with the ball quickly into space to exploit overloads.



Exploiting overload situations when in the final third of the pitch to score goals.



Clever when dealing with moments in the game which will require timing and patience to deal with situations.

COMBINE & FINISH



Use a variety of combinations to create goal scoring opportunities from different areas of the pitch.



Use a variety of different finishing techniques from various angles and distances from goal.



Able to finish off both feet with different surfaces of the feet and body.

DEFENDING



Able to defend when outnumbered 3 v 2, 4 v 3.



Able to make the right decisions when defending outnumbered.



Enthusiastic to defend and win the ball back.

PASSING & RECEIVING



Scanning & Identifying to make the best decision.



Use of 1st touch to create space or move into space.



Bravery to receive and stay on the ball under pressure.

STAYING ON THE BALL



Able to create space for yourself or for your team mate.



Able to use both feet to shield and protect the ball.



Creative and willing to take risks to beat players 1v1.

BLOCK 1 - WEEK 1 - 6

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Space - Weight & Quality Of Pass - Support & Movement - Awareness & Body Shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision Making - Supporting the Counter at Pace - Timing Forward Runs - Execution of Pass, Cross or Finish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weight & Quality of Pass - Awareness - Passing to Feet (Hold Up Play) or Space (Runs In Behind) - Types of Finishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When & How To Press - Angle of Approach - Use of Body - Communication 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Building From The Back	Counter Attacking & Overloads	Combination Play In The Final Third	Defending From The Front	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 1](#)

[Week 2](#)

[Week 3](#)

[Week 4](#)

[Week 5](#)

[Week 6](#)

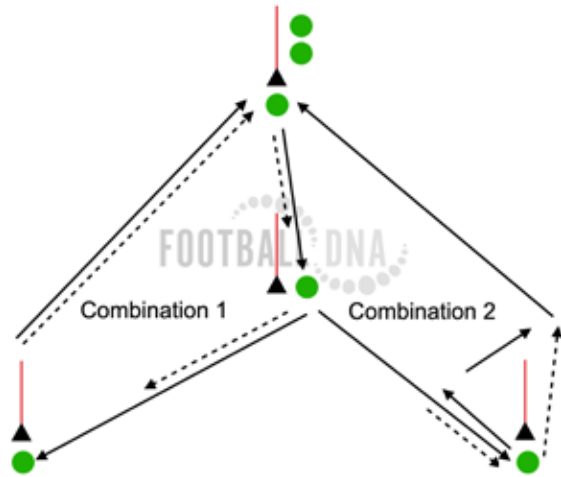
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

Y PASSING PATTERN COMBINATIONS

Mark out a Y shape using 4 poles spaced 10 yards apart from each other with 3 players on the starting point and one player on each of the remaining poles. The ball starts at the bottom of the Y with the first pass being into the next player who has checked off to receive to play out to either of the next players. The receiving player then drives the ball back to the starting point. Work alternate sides.



Equipment



6 - 12 Players



Poles & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement to Receive** - The first player receiving the pass in the middle needs to check away from the pole to create the space to control the ball on the back foot opening to pass forward to the next player. Before making their movement, players should check their shoulder 2-3 times scanning the area to see if their space to turn into. Players receiving the other passes should also pull away from the pole to create the space. With the progressions, double movements are needed from the top end players. These need to be sharp and well timed so they are coming onto the ball rather than standing still for too long.
- **Weight of Pass & Quality of Pass** - The combination play always depends on how accurate and well weighted the balls are passed. The weight is so important to play one touch and eliminate players from the game with wall passes. If passes are too hard to control another touch is needed slowing the combinations down. The accuracy is so important, so players don't need to change direction to control the ball but also play safe side. Passing safe side in some combinations are needed to protect the ball from the defender and then check in behind them. This is to the foot furthest away from the defender making it hard for them to intercept.
- **First Touch & Drive** - The top end players need to use the pace of the pass to push the ball into the space in front to then step onto the ball and attack the space ahead. A side foot touch is recommended with a big surface area making a strong connection with the ball. The foot should be angled into the direction the player wants to go. As soon as the touch has been made, they need to accelerate quickly using good sized touches with the laces remaining in control of the ball.
- **Problem Solving** - As the players check away from the pole to create space, they should look to check their shoulders to help them to see if there is space for them to turn into. Players should look to scan before, during and after they've received and played their pass.

Progressions

- Players to use different passing combinations between them in this practice. This can also be progressed by adding in a goal behind the starting point for a finish after each move.

Regression

- Take the middle pole out and work within a triangle shape.

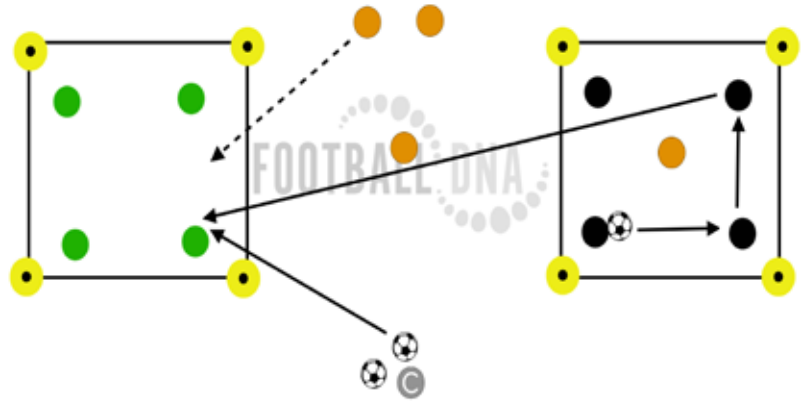
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

TRANSFER POSSESSION

Setup two 10 x 10 yards boxes which are set 15 yards apart with a group of 4 players in either box. The remaining 4 players are defenders with one of them starting in between the boxes trying to stop passes across. One defender starts in the box and the remaining outside. The group of 4 have to make 5 passes before trying to transfer the ball across to the other team avoiding the defender in the middle. Once the ball is transferred a new defender sprints in to try and stop 5 consecutive passes. Play for a period of 3-4 minutes before rotating the team of defenders.



Equipment



12 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Checking Shoulders** – Due to how quickly each of the attacking teams will be pressed by one of the defenders, players should continually be checking their shoulders to see the players on the opposite side, their team mates as well as the defender that is pressing too. Players should look to scan before, during and after they've played their pass or received the ball to help them make the best decision inside their box.
- **Movement to Receive** – Players will need to adjust their possession for their teammates when they're in possession of the ball either by moving to a different side of the box, or by standing still. Players should adjust their positioning based on where the defender and the player on the ball is to help them to always be available for their team. Due to the size of the area and how quickly the defenders will press, players should continually make themselves available to help their team keep possession but also be ready to switch play too.
- **Weight of Pass & Quality of Pass** – Players will need to get the correct weight of pass when keeping possession inside their box to either help them to beat the press of the defender or simply to slow the possession game down. If a player passes the ball too quickly or too slowly, this will affect the 1st touch of the player that is receiving the ball. When the team is looking to switch play, they will need to adjust the type of pass that they play across to the other side to ensure it isn't blocked by the defenders in the middle square. Passes may be punched in along the floor to play between the two defenders, alternatively, a lofted pass could be played over the top of the defending team in the middle too.
- **1 Touch Play** – In this game, players should look to recognise when to play 1st time whether that's when they're looking to keep possession in their box or alternatively, trying to switch play. 1st time passes will help the team to be able to catch the defenders off guard by not allowing them to reposition themselves to block the pass or press and win the ball.

Progressions

- Add a second defender in the middle trying to intercept the ball being transferred from group to group. Add another defender inside the possession box to make a 4 v 2 and take out the minimum amount of 5 passes rule.

Regression

- Remove the defender in the middle trying to intercept passes between the groups.

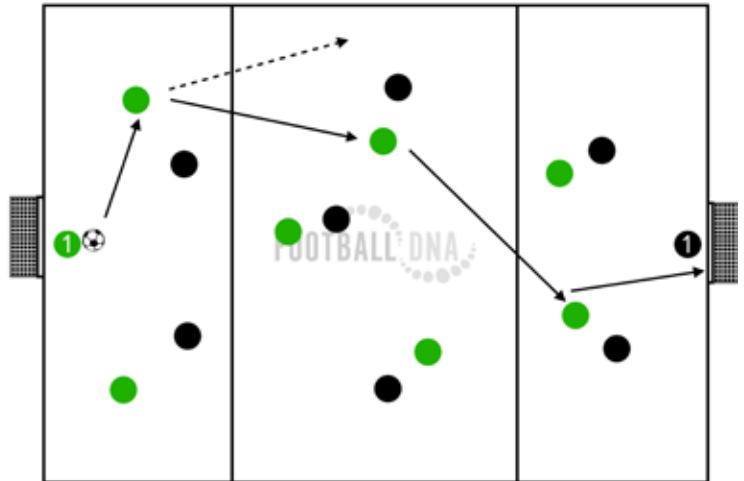
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

PLAYING THROUGH THE PITCH SSG

Setup a pitch and split the pitch into thirds. Organise players into each of the thirds and lock players into these thirds. In this game, players have to pass the ball from one third into the next and progress their way up the pitch. Once in the final third, they can score. If the defending team wins the ball back, this team then must look to do the same but going the opposite way. If a team doesn't pass from one third into the next and either dribbles in or misses out a third, the other team then is awarded a free kick. Once a player has passed into the next third they can move into that third to overload. It might be that a different player from the third the ball is passed from then supports into the next third too.



Equipment



12 - 14 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – With players being locked into their third, it's important that they look to create space for themselves but also for the player on the ball to enable them to have options to help their team progress from one third into the next. For players that are in a different third to where the ball is, they should look to move and create space in relation to the ball. It's important that you ensure players do not stand on the line receiving with a closed body shape. Players should look to create width and depth for their team and where possible try and receive between or beyond the opposition. If players cannot pass forwards into the next third, they may need to go back and switch play to help them to progress into the next third. In order to do this, players that are behind the ball also need to create depth to help the team switch play when it's appropriate to do so.
- **Awareness & Body Shape** – Players should look to receive with an open body shape throughout this game, by continually scanning and checking their shoulders to help them to see the player on the ball but also the rest of the pitch too. Players that can do this will be in a better position to make the right decision. An open body shape will also help players to be able to play 1st time passes to break lines or pass forwards to progress, which will be effective as it won't give the defending team as much time to adjust their shape to prevent the ball being played into a player in the next third.
- **Support Runs** – Players should look to use support runs behind, beyond and in advance of the ball to help the player in possession of the ball retain possession but also have options to play into the next third. Players may need to make runs behind the ball and create an angle to help the team switch play if they cannot play forwards down one side. Likewise, runs in advance and beyond the ball will help the team to be able to play through or over into the next third.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Players will need to select the right type and weight of pass to help their team to switch play or pass into the next third. Players may need to 'punch' a pass into the next third to help them to play between their opponents to break a line. Another example may be a lofted pass to play over or into the next third. Selecting the right weight and type of passes will help the attacking team to eliminate defenders and progress from one third into the next.

Progressions

- One midfield player can drop in (can't be followed) to create a 3 v 2 overload.
- One midfield player can now follow opponent into defending or attacking third.
- If a midfielder drops into the defensive third, a forward can drop into the midfield third.

Regression

- Allow one midfield player to drop in and receive at the start of the game.
- Overload the midfield area in the favour of one team.

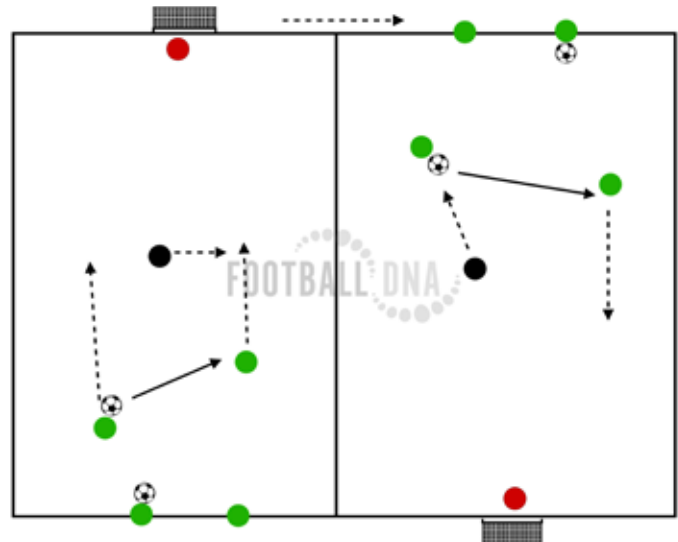
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & OVERLOADS

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third.

2 V 1 & 3 V 2 REPETITION CIRCUIT

Setup a 40 yards x 30 yards area and divide into two pitches with a single goal on each pitch which are diagonally opposite one another. One defender starts on each pitch with players in pairs with a ball at the bottom of the pitch. They try to score by combining or going alone against the defender 2 v 1. If the defender wins the ball back, they run it over the start line to score. The pairs then move onto the next pitches starting point to take on the next defender. Rotate the defenders after two minutes. Another variation is for the defender to be replaced each time with one of the pairs staying on the pitch and the defender becoming an attacker next time.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – When players enter the field and play 2v1 against the attacker, they should look to travel with the ball with their eyes up. Players during this game will need to decide in this game whether they pass, dribble or beat the defender 1v1. The player without the ball, should look to receive with an open body shape to help them to see the ball as well as the area that they are looking to move into to help them have multiple decisions available to them when they receive the ball.
- **Staying On The Ball** – The attacker with the ball should look to travel with the ball quickly and look to move the defender to create space for themselves or their team mates. By attacking quickly, the attackers will be able to potentially catch the defender off-guard and move into the space that they are not covering. If placed under pressure, players may need to shield and protect the ball by shielding it and keeping the ball on the furthest foot from the defender.
- **Movement & Support** – Players without the ball should look to move to create space for themselves or their team mate that is on the ball. Players may make movements to move the defender to allow the player with the ball to travel into that space has been vacated by the defender. Likewise, if the defender is putting the player with the ball under pressure, they may look to move to support them to ensure that they are available to receive the ball.
- **Combination Play** – Players can combine to help them to beat the defender through overlaps, underlaps and wall passes. Encourage players to explore different ways of combining to help them to beat the defender and get to the opposite side of the area. Quick one and two touch play will exploit the overload opportunities.

Progressions

- Add an extra defender and attacker to make a 3 v 2 overload situation making sure the area size allows for this.

Regression

- Play without the ball, with players simply having to get to the other side without being tagged by the defender.

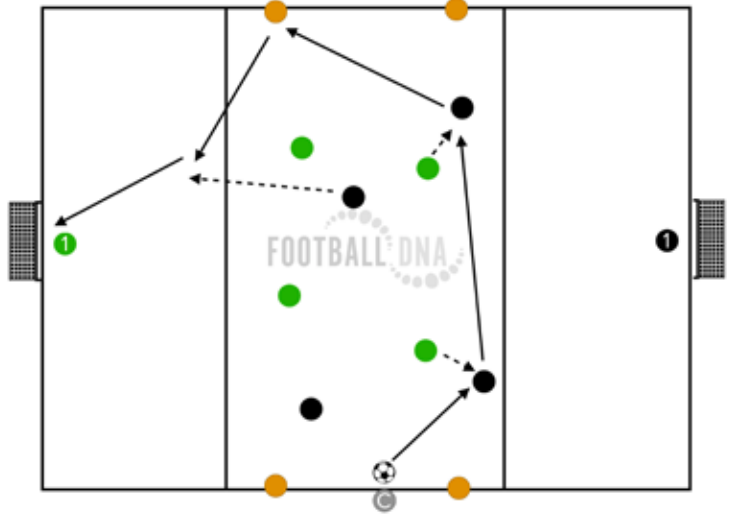
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & OVERLOADS

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third.

BREAKOUT BOX

Setup a pitch and split the pitch into thirds with a goal and a goalkeeper in both end thirds. Organise three teams (one team as target players). The game is played as a directional practice, the ball is played in by the coach into the middle third into one of the teams that have to try and keep possession and wait for the right time to pass through into the end third into one of their players making a run. Players are locked into the middle third, unless they receive the ball on the move or are able to travel with the ball themselves and moving into the final third. The target players cannot breakout of the middle third but can help the team in possession of the ball keep it as well as play through balls for attackers making runs into the end third. After each turn, the coach restarts by passing the ball into the middle third.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – In this game, players should look to create space for themselves by moving to create width and depth. By doing this, it will help players to create space around the outside of the defenders but also to move the defenders to help them to receive between them too. Players should look to exploit any spaces between defenders with penetrative passes.
- **Forward Runs** – Forward runs should take place to help players to receive in the final third. Players should look to make forward runs when their team with the ball is without pressure but also when they have their eyes up and are able to play forwards. Forwards runs will also help to create space for the player on the ball too by moving the defenders away to help them to travel into the space that has been vacated.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Players will need to select the correct weight and type of pass to help the player moving into the final third receive whilst on the move. Players will need to recognise whether they should play into the space in front of the player or play into the players feet. Punched passes may help the team eliminate defenders.
- **Execution of Finish** – When a player is played through or breaks into the end zone themselves, they should look to adjust their body shape and type of finishes when they are 1v1 with the GK. Encourage players to finish quickly and accurately in the corners or in an area of weakness the GK shows with their positioning.

Progressions

- Add one defender into each end who try to prevent goals being scored. The attacking player breaking out and only one more player is allowed into the end zone to make a 2 v 1 overload. The ball always restarts with the defender from the team attacking who receives from the coach.

Regression

- Overload the middle area in one teams favour to allow more opportunities for breakouts. If the underloaded team score they receive double goals.

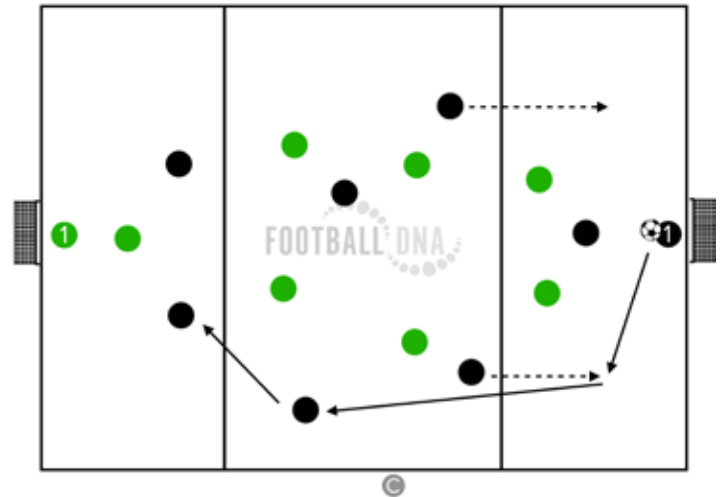
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & OVERLOADS

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third.

BREAKOUT BOX SMALL SIDED GAME

Setup a 50 yards x 30 yards pitch divided into three thirds with the middle third being 20 x 30 and the end thirds being 15 x 30. Create two equal teams from the group of players with the midfield zone being neutral 4 v 4. In the end zones are 1 defender and 2 attackers from the team. The ball starts from the GK is essentially a 1 v 2 – to support 2 players from the midfield zone can drop into the defending zone to help build the play through the pitch into the attacking third to score. If a team score, they keep the ball and restart from the GK. Players cannot move forward a third to start with until this is added as a progression.



Equipment



12 - 14 Players & 2 Gk's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – When the attacking team is playing out from the back, width and depth can be created by the 1 defender as well as the goalkeeper and the two players moving from the midfield into the defensive third. Players in the middle third should look to receive beyond and between the defenders to help the team to progress from one third to the next.
- **Movement & Space** – When playing out from the back, the two middle players may need to make runs into the defensive third to help their team to play out from the back. This movement and support will help the team playing out from the back to create an overload. Players should look to continually make themselves available beyond and behind the player that is in possession of the ball to give them options to play back if they cannot play forwards.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Players should adjust their weight of pass to their team mates to help them to control and secure the ball. As in the middle third the attacking will have an underload, players may need to adjust the type of pass that they play into the middle third to ensure that the player receiving the ball and secure it with their first touch.
- **Execution of Finish** – When a player is played through or breaks into the end zone themselves, they should look to adjust their body shape and type of finishes when they're 1v1 with the GK. Encourage players to finish quickly and accurately. As this game has a 2v1 in the final third, players should be ready to rebound any shots at goal as well as be ready for any cutbacks or crosses too.

Progressions

- Allow one player from each team to move into the attacking zone to support the attack or defence. Add an extra defender for each team using the players from midfield zone.

Regression

- Flip the overload in the attacking zones to favour the defender but allow 2 players to support into the attacking zone with no players from the defending team being able to follow.

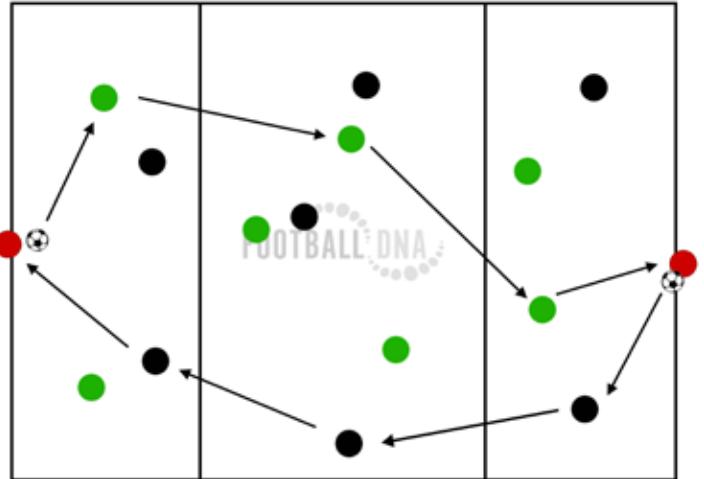
WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play in the final third to score goals.

COMBINATION PLAY & SUPPORTING MOVEMENT

Setup a pitch with two goals at either end and split the pitch into thirds. In each of the goals have a goalkeeper or a target player and organise two teams with a ball between them. Each team has to work the ball through the thirds to play into the goalkeeper/target player in the opposite goal, as soon as they have done this, they then have to do the same but now playing through the thirds in the opposite direction. Encourage players to combine between them to build through the thirds. Players are free to move within the thirds to create angles and receive. You don't need to have goals for this practice, they are in place for the progression or you do not need to have 2 teams, this can be done with just one in your team shape.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – Players should look to create width and depth when building from the back to create space for them to receive the ball with an open body shape. When the player with the ball lifts their eyes up, this should be a trigger for players to make movements to create space for themselves to receive the ball. For example, movements may consist of a double movement or a run into the space behind.
- **Body Shape** – Players should look to receive with an open body shape where they can see both the ball and the direction that they're attacking. An open body shape will help players to be able to check their shoulders before they receive the ball which will enable them to play quicker. An open body shape will also help players to play off fewer touches which will support them in playing quick, short, sharp combinations.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Players will need to be mindful of their weight of pass to ensure the player receiving the ball is able to receive it and be ready to combine quickly. If a pass is too hard, this may lead onto the attacker needing to take more touches to control the ball. Players also may need to play into space to their team mates to help them receive whilst they're on the move to help the team attack quickly.
- **Speed Play** – Encourage each team to attack with speed and play quickly. In order to do this, encourage each team to play the furthest forward pass which will enable the team to secure and retain possession of the ball as well as moving up the forward quickly.

Progressions

- Teams can now miss out a third with their pass for e.g - the defending third playing into the final third bypassing the midfield.
- Add in a finish at goal instead of playing into the GK's feet. Have a supply of balls next to the goal for the GK to restart the attack.

Regression

- Every player in the team must touch the ball before it is passed into the target.

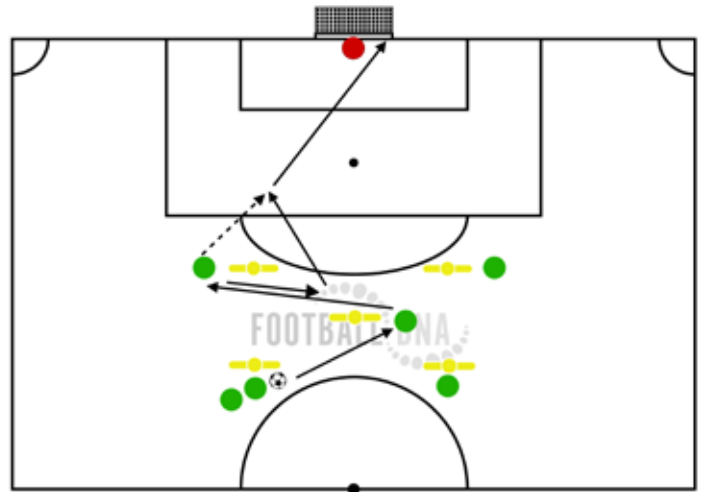
WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play in the final third to score goals.

ATTACKING COMBINATIONS

Using the final third of the pitch, set out 5 mannequins in the layout displayed with 1 player on each. Produce different combinations to create a goalscoring opportunity for either of the front two players. The aim is to move the ball quickly with one & two touch to play in behind the defensive line with a penetrating pass. To start work with one side and use 2 players who combine together through the middle player to produce an attempt at goal. Alternate the sides each time with players rotating after each combination. As players become confident and capable, start to introduce an extra player in the combination or an extra pass.



Equipment



5 - 8 Players & 1 GK



Mannequins, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Weight of Pass** – This is the most important component to produce good goalscoring opportunities. The passes have to be one & two touch to keep the speed of play high which is match realistic where you can play around and through the opposition. Players must focus on making a good connection with the ball producing a firm pass. If too hard, the receiver will have to take extra touches slowing the move down.
- **Concentration & Communication** – The combinations require players to be really focused on the pattern set out by the coach. If all players don't work together and know the move it will break down quickly. Importance should also be placed on players communication demanding the ball and the use of arm movements to signal where they would like the pass.
- **Movement Off the Ball** – Before receiving the ball, players need to perform a movement to create space. This could be simply a sharp movement away from the mannequin to receive on the back foot. Also double movements should be used to create space, especially the forward players dragging the defenders towards the ball to exploit the space in behind. It is imperative the forwards time their run and stay onside.
- **Finishing** – The final piece needs to have some quality to complete the combination play. Making good contact on the ball with a selected surface generating decent power is needed to beat the goalkeeper. Forwards being aware of the goalkeeper's position will also help identifying and large spaces to strike towards.

Progressions

- Develop different combination patterns using more than 3 players. Limit to One Touch Play to help produce quick realistic combination play.

Regression

- Start by only performing 2 passes to produce an attempt at goal for e.g – into the middle player to pass through for a runner to finish.

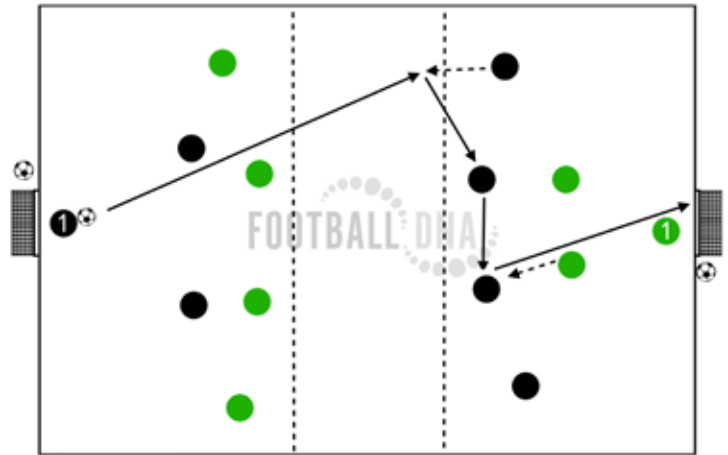
WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play in the final third to score goals.

BUILDING ATTACKS

Using just under half of a full size pitch, we start with a 4 v 2 setup in two end zones with a middle zone being the 'safe zone'. The safe zone allows players to drop deeper without being challenged to promote receiving on the half turn & moving forward. The exercise starts with the goalkeeper in possession to either play out using the defenders or directly into the 4 attackers with only one attacker allowed in the safe zone at a time. If the players are comfortable with 4 v 2, change the setup to 3 v 3 to challenge their ability to keep possession & build attacks.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Quality of Pass** – To build attacks from the back, the quality of the forward pass is important so the player receiving has a good chance of controlling the ball and then moving forward after their first touch. If the quality of pass is poor, extra touches will be needed giving defenders more time to make a block or tackle. If passing into a player who is on the half turn, can the pass be onto the back foot? On the other hand if the attacker is marked, can the passer play safe side keeping the ball as far away from the defender.
- **Hold Up Play** – In this exercise there will be times where the attacker has to receive whilst being marked. The attacker should adopt a stance that isn't square and use their arm to hold off the defender keeping the ball on the furthers foot away from the defender. Attackers should bend their knees slightly to give them a solid base. If the defender gets too tight then the attacker has the opportunity to 'roll' them. Ideally one touch play will be used in the end zones to create chances for the attacking team and exploit any overloads in place.
- **Timing & Support Runs** – Once the ball enters the end zone, the players not on the ball need to be making options for the attacker in possession. This could be keeping their width to make the area big creating space for a 1 v 1 or the players making runs inside defenders or using overlaps to create a 2 v 1. Offsides apply in this game to keep the exercise match realistic and keep the players thinking about the timing of their runs. The defenders are allowed to step in with the ball to overload the end zone which will especially work when the numbers are even at 3 v 3.
- **Execution of Finish** – To finish off the attack, quality is needed to put the ball into the back of the net. Quick combination play is needed when playing in tight areas and lots of one touch finishes to exploit the overloads at speed. Select a surface and strike through the ball with enough power directing the ball into the corners of the goal or where the goalkeeper shows a weakness with their positioning.

Progression

- Adjust the players in the end zone to create a neutral 3 v 3 so there isn't an advantage to the attackers. Take the 'safe zone' out or allows defenders to challenge and intercept.

Regression

- Start with no defenders in the end zone so combination play and finishing is unopposed to focus on the technique.

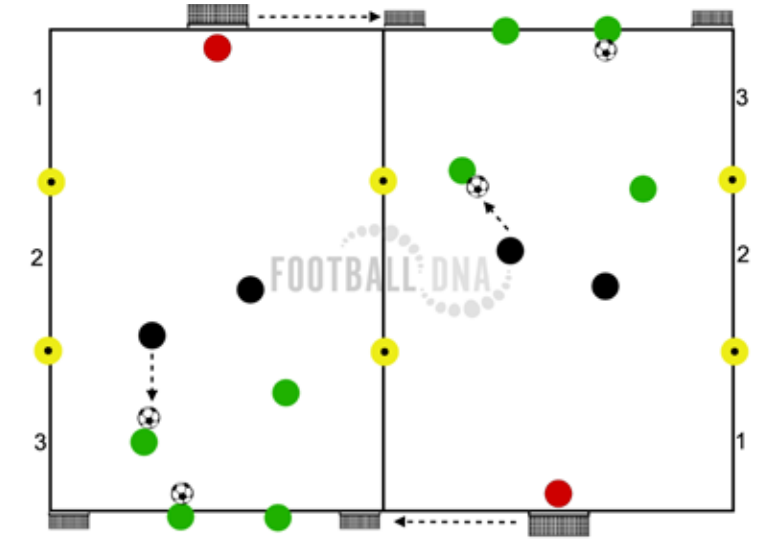
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to gain possession.

2 V 2 & 3 V 3 PRESSING GAUNTLET

Setup a 30 yards x 30 yards area and divide into two pitches with a single goal on each pitch which are diagonally opposite one another. Also have two small goals situated opposite each single goal. The pitches are setup into thirds every 10 yards. Players work in pairs throughout this practice with 2 defenders starting on each pitch. The other pairs are attackers and start with the ball, trying to score in the single goal. If the defenders score in either of their two goals the number of points it's worth will vary from where they won the ball back. The top third is worth 3, middle third is 2 and bottom third is 1. After each attack the attackers become defenders. The team that finishes defending then move onto the next pitch to repeat.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Pressing** – As soon as the attackers bring the ball in, this is the trigger for the defenders to be able to press collectively. As the defenders will gain more points if they win the ball back in the final third and score, they should look to move aggressively to press the opposition. Encourage players to work between them on who presses and who supports i.e. once player closes the ball down the other supports at an angle behind them. Players may need to slow down on their approach as they near the attacker to ensure they cannot be beaten by their opponents first touch or dribbling.
- **Body Shape** – Once the players find themselves in a 1v1 situation, they should look to force the attack the way that they wish for them to go. This may be forcing them onto their weaker foot, outside of the pitch or into their team mate that is supporting. Players should look to get on the outside of the ball and be side on to help them show them the way they wish to send them.
- **Use of Body** – Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attacker back or away from the direction that they are trying to move into. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the attacker to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they are able to win the ball back.
- **Communication** – As defenders put pressure onto the ball, they should look to communicate with one another to help them on how they will press as well where they should look to show the attack. For example players may need to communicate on whether they need to press or drop and/or force the play outside or inside.

Progressions

- Increase to groups of 3 players so now players have to work 3 v 3.

Regression

- The defenders stay defenders for a certain period of time on their own pitch, no rotating.

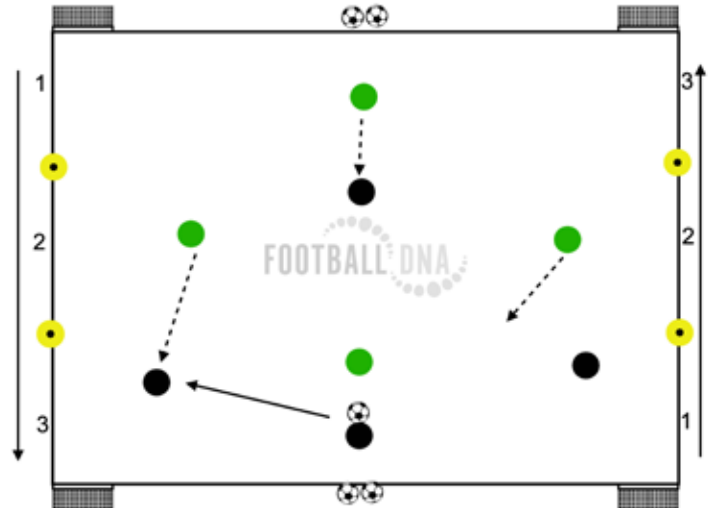
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to regain possession.

PRESSING POINTS - 4 V 4

Setup a 40 x 30 pitch with 2 goals either end in the corners of the pitch. Play a 4 v 4 game with normal rules apart from the restarts all being passed in (no throw ins or corners). The pitch is setup into thirds every 13 yards. If the defenders score in either of their two goals the number of points it's worth will vary from where they won the ball back. The top third is worth 3, middle third is 2 and bottom third is 1. If a team score, they restart the game with a ball from their goal line which must be passed. Play short games of 4 minutes with 2 minutes recovery which will be important if teams are pressing high.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Pressing** - Once the ball is brought into the pitch from the opposition this is the trigger for the defenders to be able to press collectively. As the defenders will gain more points if they win the ball back in the final third and score, they should look to move aggressively to press the opposition. Encourage the defending team to work between them on communicating who will press and who will support i.e. once player closes the ball down the other supports at an angle behind them. Players should look to keep 8-10 yards between them to have small distances between the units to prevent the attacking team from being able to beat the press.
- **Body Shape** - Once the players find themselves in a 1v1 situation, they should look to force the attacker the way that they wish for them to go. On their approach, players should look to angle their body shape and run to force the attacker the way that they want them to go. Examples of where they may them could be: forcing them onto their weaker foot, outside of the pitch or into their team mate that is supporting. Players should look to get on the outside of the ball and be side on to help them show them the way they wish to send them.
- **Use of Body** - Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attacker back or away from the direction that they're trying to move into. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the attacker to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they're able to win the ball back.
- **Communication** - As defenders put pressure onto the ball, they should look to communicate with one another to help them on how they will press as well where they should look to show the attack. For example players may need to communicate on whether they need to press or drop and/or force the play outside or inside.

Progression

- Once the team wins the ball back in a third, they must look to play a pass or secure possession of the ball before they can score.

Regression

- Add another goal at either end in the middle of the pitch to create a 6 goal game.

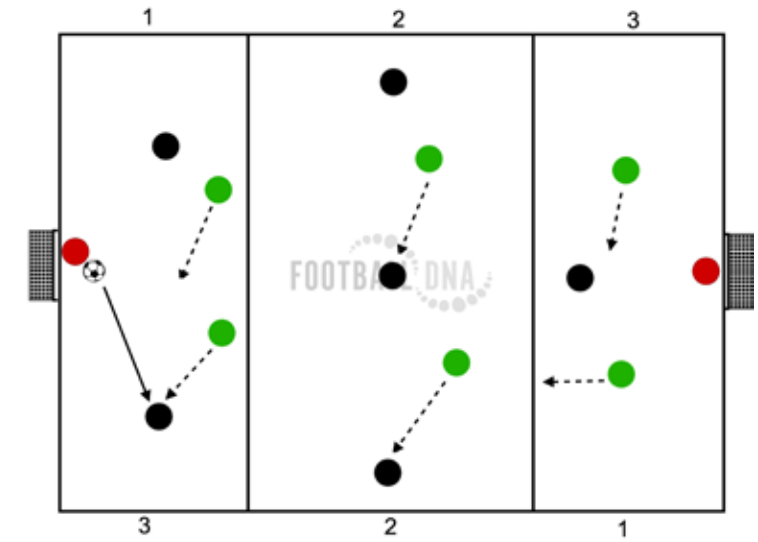
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to regain possession.

PRESSING POINTS GAME – 6 V 6 – 8 V 8

Setup a small sided pitch with 1 goal at either end with a goalkeeper in each of the goals. Play a 6v6/8v8 game with normal rules apart from the restarts all being passed in (no throw ins or corners). The pitch is setup into thirds every 20 yards. If the defenders score, it's worth will vary from where they won the ball back i.e. the top third is worth 3, middle third is 2 and bottom third is 1. If a team score, they restart the game with a ball from their goal line which must be passed. This game is the same as the previous practice but with a larger pitch and more players.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Communication** – Throughout this game as this pitch has increased in size and there are now more players in either team, players will need to communicate with one another to help them to decide upon when they will press or drop. Players will also need to communicate with one another on how / where they will show the opposition too i.e. force them back, outside or inside etc.
- **Pressing/Movement** – Each team should look to press when in balance to try and win the ball back as high up the pitch as possible. You may support teams with having a trigger or a trap set where they look to press the ball once the opponents move into a particular area of the pitch. If the team is out of balance, encourage players to win the ball back quickly themselves or to recover back into their shape and behind the ball. You may encourage defenders to try and win the ball back in 5 seconds as an example.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to move aggressively to press the ball wherever possible and angle their run to force the attack the direction that they wish to show them. As they approach, players should look to get side on and on the outside of the ball to force them one way and then look to use their body to help them win the ball and come away with it. If player cannot press, they may need to recover back into their shape or be patient and wait for the right time.
- **Regains** – Once the defenders have won the ball back from the opposition, they should look to secure possession of the ball individually or collectively as a team. Players will need to decide on whether they need to build or counter attack once they've won the ball back. Encourage players to come away with the ball in their duels to help them to start an attack once they've won it.

Progression

- The defending team must have players in no more than two out of the three thirds in order to be able to score or remove the thirds and play without them.

Regression

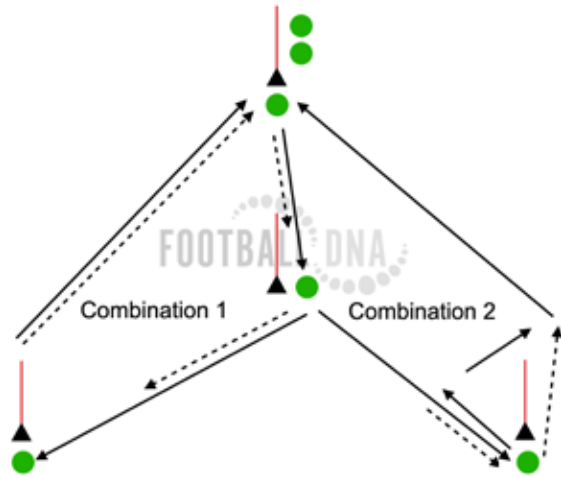
- Remove the scoring zones for the defenders if they win the ball back and play as a normal small sided game or have 2 points for winning the ball in the opposition half and 1 in the defensive half.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

Y PASSING PATTERN COMBINATIONS

Mark out a Y shape using 4 poles spaced 10 yards apart from each other with 3 players on the starting point and one player on each of the remaining poles. The ball starts at the bottom of the Y with the first pass being into the next player who has checked off to receive to play out to either of the next players. The receiving player then drives the ball back to the starting point. Work alternate sides.



Equipment



6 - 12 Players



Poles & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement to Receive** - The first player receiving the pass in the middle needs to check away from the pole to create the space to control the ball on the back foot opening to pass forward to the next player. Before making their movement, players should check their shoulder 2-3 times scanning the area to see if their space to turn into. Players receiving the other passes should also pull away from the pole to create the space. With the progressions, double movements are needed from the top end players. These need to be sharp and well timed so they are coming onto the ball rather than standing still for too long.
- **Weight of Pass & Quality of Pass** - The combination play always depends on how accurate and well weighted the balls are passed. The weight is so important to play one touch and eliminate players from the game with wall passes. If passes are too hard to control another touch is needed slowing the combinations down. The accuracy is so important, so players don't need to change direction to control the ball but also play safe side. Passing safe side in some combinations are needed to protect the ball from the defender and then check in behind them. This is to the foot furthest away from the defender making it hard for them to intercept.
- **First Touch & Drive** - The top end players need to use the pace of the pass to push the ball into the space in front to then step onto the ball and attack the space ahead. A side foot touch is recommended with a big surface area making a strong connection with the ball. The foot should be angled into the direction the player wants to go. As soon as the touch has been made, they need to accelerate quickly using good sized touches with the laces remaining in control of the ball.
- **Problem Solving** - As the players check away from the pole to create space, they should look to check their shoulders to help them to see if there is space for them to turn into. Players should look to scan before, during and after they've received and played their pass.

Progressions

- Players to use different passing combinations between them in this practice. This can also be progressed by adding in a goal behind the starting point for a finish after each move.

Regression

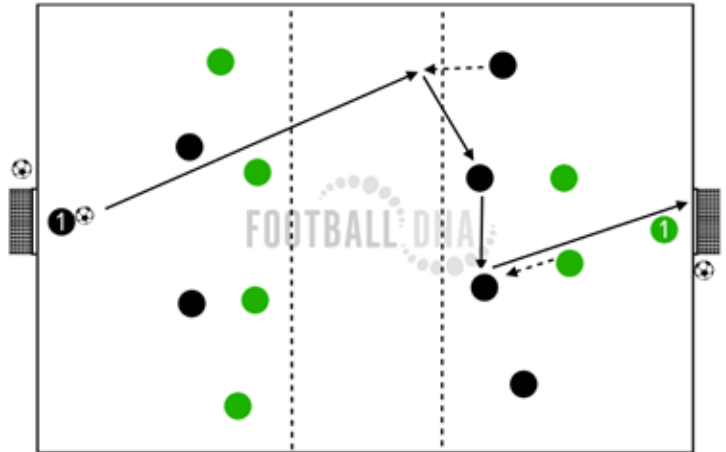
- Take the middle pole out and work within a triangle shape.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

BUILDING ATTACKS

Using just under half of a full size pitch, we start with a 4 v 2 setup in two end zones with a middle zone being the 'safe zone'. The safe zone allows players to drop deeper without being challenged to promote receiving on the half turn & moving forward. The exercise starts with the goalkeeper in possession to either play out using the defenders or directly into the 4 attackers with only one attacker allowed in the safe zone at a time. If the players are comfortable with 4 v 2, change the setup to 3 v 3 to challenge their ability to keep possession & build attacks.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Quality of Pass** – To build attacks from the back, the quality of the forward pass is important so the player receiving has a good chance of controlling the ball and then moving forward after their first touch. If the quality of pass is poor, extra touches will be needed giving defenders more time to make a block or tackle. If passing into a player who is on the half turn, can the pass be onto the back foot? On the other hand if the attacker is marked, can the passer play safe side keeping the ball as far away from the defender.
- **Hold Up Play** – In this exercise there will be times where the attacker has to receive whilst being marked. The attacker should adopt a stance that isn't square and use their arm to hold off the defender keeping the ball on the furthers foot away from the defender. Attackers should bend their knees slightly to give them a solid base. If the defender gets too tight then the attacker has the opportunity to 'roll' them. Ideally one touch play will be used in the end zones to create chances for the attacking team and exploit any overloads in place.
- **Timing & Support Runs** – Once the ball enters the end zone, the players not on the ball need to be making options for the attacker in possession. This could be keeping their width to make the area big creating space for a 1 v 1 or the players making runs inside defenders or using overlaps to create a 2 v 1. Offsides apply in this game to keep the exercise match realistic and keep the players thinking about the timing of their runs. The defenders are allowed to step in with the ball to overload the end zone which will especially work when the numbers are even at 3 v 3.
- **Execution of Finish** – To finish off the attack, quality is needed to put the ball into the back of the net. Quick combination play is needed when playing in tight areas and lots of one touch finishes to exploit the overloads at speed. Select a surface and strike through the ball with enough power directing the ball into the corners of the goal or where the goalkeeper shows a weakness with their positioning.

Progression

- Adjust the players in the end zone to create a neutral 3 v 3 so there isn't an advantage to the attackers. Take the 'safe zone' out or allows defenders to challenge and intercept.

Regression

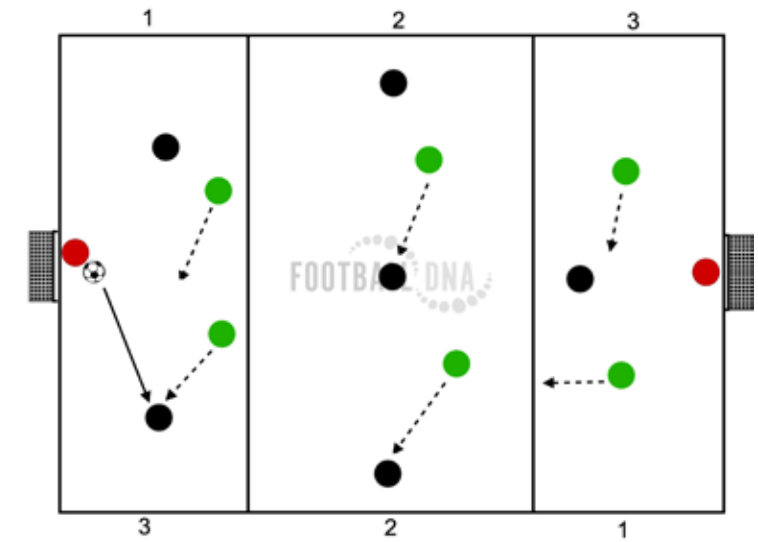
- Start with no defenders in the end zone so combination play and finishing is unopposed to focus on the technique.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

PRESSING POINTS GAME – 6 V 6 – 8 V 8

Setup a small sided pitch with 1 goal at either end with a goalkeeper in each of the goals. Play a 6v6/8v8 game with normal rules apart from the restarts all being passed in (no throw ins or corners). The pitch is setup into thirds every 20 yards. If the defenders score, it's worth will vary from where they won the ball back i.e. the top third is worth 3, middle third is 2 and bottom third is 1. If a team score, they restart the game with a ball from their goal line which must be passed. This game is the same as the previous practice but with a larger pitch and more players.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Communication** – Throughout this game as this pitch has increased in size and there are now more players in either team, players will need to communicate with one another to help them to decide upon when they will press or drop. Players will also need to communicate with one another on how / where they will show the opposition too i.e. force them back, outside or inside etc.
- **Pressing/Movement** – Each team should look to press when in balance to try and win the ball back as high up the pitch as possible. You may support teams with having a trigger or a trap set where they look to press the ball once the opponents move into a particular area of the pitch. If the team is out of balance, encourage players to win the ball back quickly themselves or to recover back into their shape and behind the ball. You may encourage defenders to try and win the ball back in 5 seconds as an example.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to move aggressively to press the ball wherever possible and angle their run to force the attack the direction that they wish to show them. As they approach, players should look to get side on and on the outside of the ball to force them one way and then look to use their body to help them win the ball and come away with it. If player cannot press, they may need to recover back into their shape or be patient and wait for the right time.
- **Regains** – Once the defenders have won the ball back from the opposition, they should look to secure possession of the ball individually or collectively as a team. Players will need to decide on whether they need to build or counter attack once they've won the ball back. Encourage players to come away with the ball in their duels to help them to start an attack once they've won it.

Progression

- The defending team must have players in no more than two out of the three thirds in order to be able to score or remove the thirds and play without them.

Regression

- Remove the scoring zones for the defenders if they win the ball back and play as a normal small sided game or have 2 points for winning the ball in the opposition half and 1 in the defensive half.

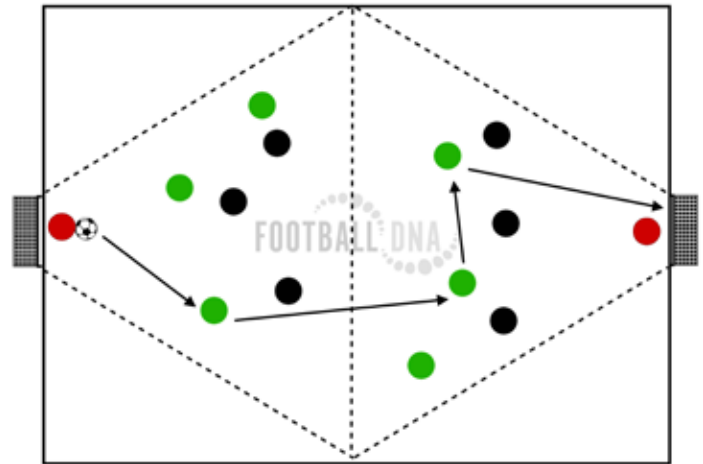
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

DIAMOND SHOOTING SSG

Setup a 40 x 30 diamond shape pitch with a goal and goalkeeper either end. Split the group into two equal teams with half the players on either side. The ball starts from the GK who plays to any of their team who then try to score in the goal they are attacking. One player from the attacking team can either drop to overload their own half or join into the attacking half once the ball has been transferred to provide an overload.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Receiving & Passing** – Throughout the game players should look to continually move to create space and look to receive with an open body shape to play forwards wherever possible. As the diamond pitch is compact, players will need to continually scan before they receive the ball to help them to recognise when they need to play of one or two touches and when they need to stay on the ball as well.
- **Decision Making** – Players throughout this game should look to keep eyes up and make good decisions of when to pass and when to dribble. The diamond pitch will make it more challenging for players when they have the ball due to the tight pitch.
- **1v1 Domination** – Players throughout this game should look to focus on dominating their 1v1s when both in and out of possession of the ball. Due to the diamond shaped area, this will increase the number of 1v1 situations for players and force them to keep their eyes up when they have the ball but also give them opportunities press and try and regain the ball quickly too.
- **Finishing** – Players will need to finish with a variety of different types of shots throughout the goal based on the position that they are on the pitch. As players are receiving and playing in tight areas in and around the goal, they will need to look to finish of one or two touch to support them in getting shots away quickly.

Progressions

- To score must be a one touch finish inside the attacking half of the pitch. If teams score from their own half they receive 2 goals.

Regression

- Overload the defensive half of the diamond in the defending teams favour to help them progress the ball into the attacking half.

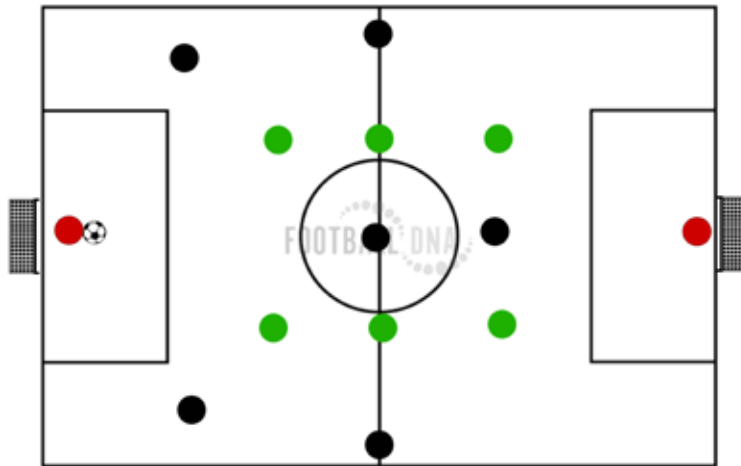
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

1,2 OR 3 TOUCH CONDITIONED SSG

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal and goalkeeper each end. Split the group into two equal teams playing as a normal small sided game with throw ins. The conditions of this game can be decided by the players or coach with the number of touches in their own half and the attacking half. For example you may want to encourage quick combination play so you limit to two touches in the attacking half, but help the teams with 3 touch in their own half to build the play so they can progress into the attacking half.



Equipment



8 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Receiving & Passing** - Players will need to adapt how they receive and pass throughout this game based on the number of touches that they decide to play with within both halves of the pitch. To support players with playing quickly, they should look to receive with an open body shape and check their shoulders before receiving the ball to help them with being able to play quickly if needed.
- **Problem Solving** - As players will decide upon how many touches they will have throughout the game in either half, they will need to be ready and able to solve problems based on the situation that they are in as well as number of touches that they are permitted. Encourage players to communicate and decide upon a strategy on how they will play based on the constraints.
- **1v1 Domination** - Players should look to adjust how they defend based on the number of touches that they agree upon in either half. For example, if the opponents are playing on one touch, it may be that they look to apply pressure onto them to force them to take more touches etc.
- **Finishing** - As per the previous game, as players will be limited to the number of touches based on what they decide in either half – each team will need to agree upon a strategy on how they will create goal scoring opportunities and what it will mean for them for how they finish them as well.

Progressions

- Add different touch restrictions in each half or third of the pitch. To score, it must be a one touch finish inside the penalty area.

Regression

- Play unlimited touches or 3 touches in each half of the pitch.

BLOCK 2 - WEEK 7 - 12

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality & Weight of Pass - Creating Angles to Support - Playing In Between & Beyond Opposition - Playing Through, Over or Around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forcing Attack Wide & Into Areas - 1 v 1 Defending - Blocking, Intercepting & Tackling - How to be a Compact Unit & Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution To Wide Players - Movement In The Box - Quality & Technique of Cross - Execution of Finish (Different Types) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compact Unit & Team Shape - Making Play Predictable - Pressure & Cover - Sliding & Screening as a Unit 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Maintaining Possession through Midfield	Defending Outnumbered In Transition	Finishing In Wide Areas	Defending In The Midfield	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 7](#)

[Week 8](#)

[Week 9](#)

[Week 10](#)

[Week 11](#)

[Week 12](#)

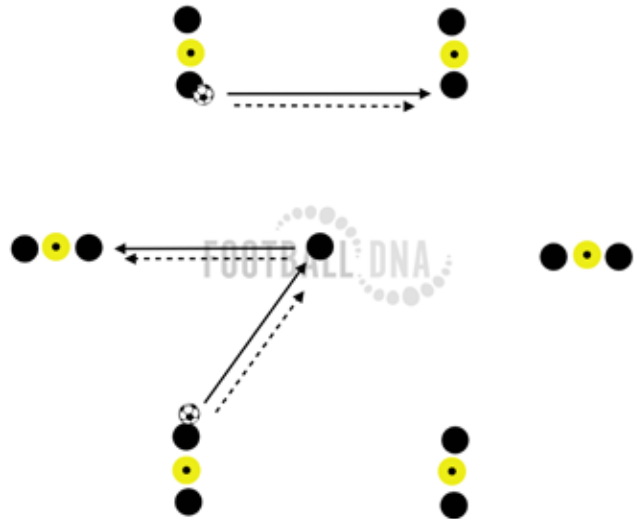
WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield and progress the ball forwards into the final third of the pitch.

RECEIVING & PASSING IN TIGHT AREAS AWARENESS EXERCISE

Set out two triangles 10 x 10 & 10 yards apart with a single cone in between the two. One player on each cone with the remaining spread out evenly behind apart from the middle cone. Using two footballs the players have to keep both moving all the time. They can pass to any player and must follow their pass. Players are on two touch to encourage quick sharp passing in a tight area. To progress when passing into the end players a wall pass must be played.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Quality & Weight Pass** - To maintain the two touch condition players must pass the ball with a weight that allows a good first touch and then a pass with the second. A pass too hard will make it difficult to control and an extra touch may be needed. The same applies if the pass is misdirected and players have to stretch to control the ball. Players need to be on their toes and ready to receive with good concentration as with two balls moving it can be challenging.
- **Creating Angles** - This applies firstly to the player in the middle who needs to create an angle to receive and setup the first touch for the pass they decide to make. They should look to pull away from the cone to receive with an open body shape to play out. When the wall pass is introduced the player passing into the end person needs to create an angle to the side opening up the space in front of the receiver.
- **Combination Play** - Quick passes are encouraged when working in tight areas playing one and two touch with the combination of good passes and movement. Wall passes need to be sharp and one touch to keep the speed of the play high replicating match pace.
- **Awareness & Decision Making** - Two balls moving at the same time can be very challenging at first so high concentration is needed always keeping the head up scanning for the position of both balls and anticipating the next pass. Good awareness is needed to pick out the right pass making sure the ball isn't going to bump into the other ball. Players in the middle need to check their shoulder before receiving the ball to see if they can turn out and pass or if playing a different pass is a better option instead.

Progressions

- To make it more challenging you can add a wall pass with the end players. Add another middle player to cause more traffic and decision making.

Regression

- Remove the player in the middle to create less confusion and more space to pass through.

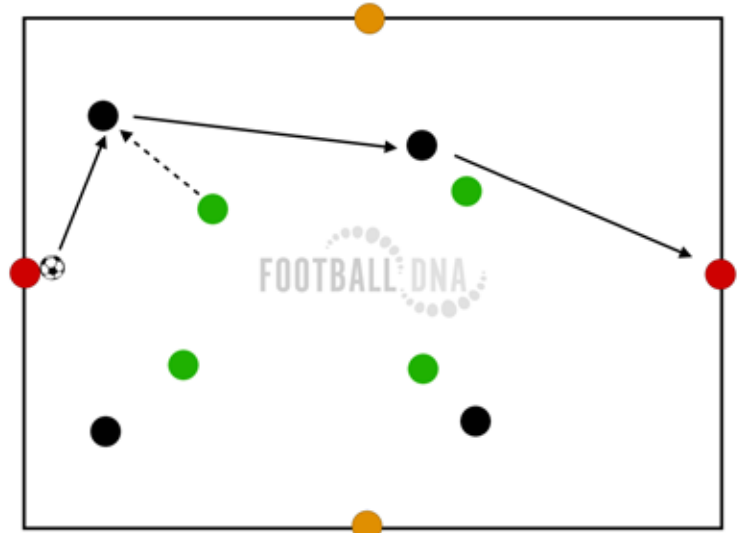
WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield and progress the ball forwards into the final third of the pitch.

DIRECTIONAL POSSESSION

Setup a 30 x 30 area with 3 teams of 4 players. 2 teams compete against each other inside the area (4 v 4) and the other team have one player on each side of the area as target/bounce players. Each team are working the ball into and from two specific target players. One is working going across and the other going vertically. To score a point, teams have to transfer the ball from one target player to another. Target players are on two touches and if they take more touches or spend too long on the ball, they will lose possession.



Equipment



12 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – Players throughout this game should look to move to create space for either themselves or their team mates. Players should look to receive and create an angle from the player in possession of the ball to enable them to receive with an open body shape and be able to play forwards if needed. Encourage players to create space by dispersing to make the pitch big to help create opportunities for players to receive between and beyond the opposition players.
- **Body Shape** – Throughout the game players should look to adjust their body shape to try and receive with an open body shape to enable them to see both the player on the ball as well as their opponents, space and the player that they want to play into. Encourage players to have their shoulders both in a position to see the ball and have their shoulders facing the way that they wish to go.
- **Awareness & Decision Making** – Throughout this game players should look to continually scan and check their shoulders to be able to see what is around them. If players focus on solely the ball and not on their surroundings this will limit their decision making. Players should look to find ways in which they can create space and exploit it both with and without the ball.
- **Receiving & Passing** – Players should look to find ways of retaining possession by receiving and passing the ball as well as exploiting space between the opposition by passing between or beyond defenders. Encourage players to adjust the speed of their pass based on what their decision is i.e. if playing between opponent players into a team mate, they may need to play a firmer pass to help eliminate the defenders.

Progressions

- Players can score by playing into any of the target players and get one point, if they are able to play between players they get two points.

Regression

- Teams can play into both sets of target players but can still only score by going the same direction throughout the game.

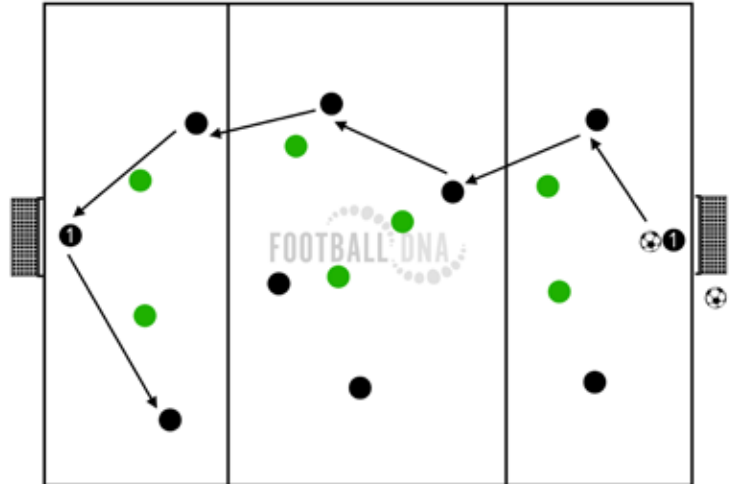
WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield and progress the ball forwards into the final third of the pitch.

MAINTAINING POSSESSION

One team keeps the ball and has to transfer from GK to GK and the other team has to try to win the ball back and score. Setup an area split the pitch into thirds with two goals at opposite ends with a goal-keeper/target player in either goal. In this practice players are locked in their zones and must pass the ball and progress from one zone into the next. Players must be in the end third to either score or pass the ball into the target players.



Equipment



12 - 15 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – As players look to build and progress from one third into the next, they should look to try and create width and depth for the player on the ball and be at an angle to enable them to receive to play forwards. Players should look to create space for themselves or their team mates through their movement and where possible look to receive between or beyond the opposition players to help them to receive between the lines.
- **Body Shape** – Throughout the game players should look to adjust their body shape to try and receive with an open body shape to enable them to see both the player on the ball as well as their opponents, space and the player that they want to play into. Encourage players to have their shoulders both in a position to see the ball and have their shoulders facing the way that they wish to go.
- **Awareness & Decision Making** – Players should look to continually scan and check their shoulders to be able to see what is around them. If players focus on solely the ball and not on their surroundings this will limit their decision making. Players should look to find ways in which they can create space and exploit it both with and without the ball to help their team to be able to progress from one third into the next. Encourage players on the ball to try and create overloads to help them to be able to play out.
- **Receiving & Passing** – Players should look to find ways of retaining possession by receiving and passing the ball as well as exploiting space between the opposition by passing between or beyond defenders. Encourage players to adjust the speed of their pass based on what their decision is i.e. if playing between opponent players into a team mate, they may need to play a firmer pass to help eliminate the defenders.

Progressions

- Switch the overload around in midfield so the defenders have an extra player 4 v 3. If the defending team win the ball and score, they become the team that maintains possession.
- Open up to a normal small sided game with players locked in their zones and only able to pass the ball into their team mates. To support players progress the ball you may allow one midfielder to drop into the defensive zone only.

Regression

- Players are able to move freely around the pitch but must progress from one third into the next.

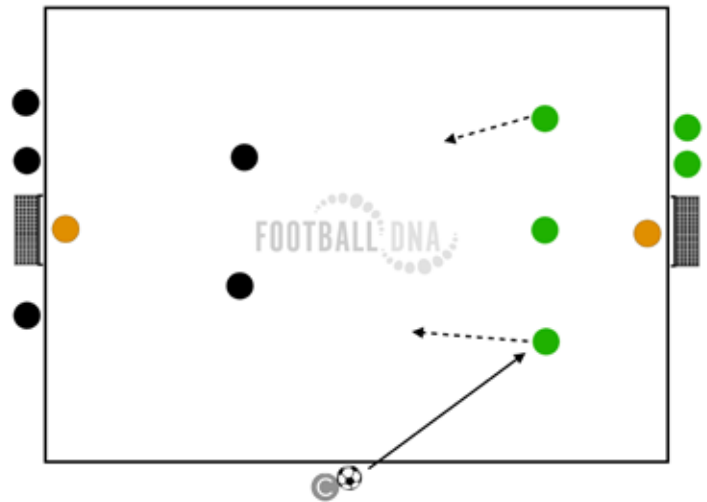
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered as an individual, unit & team.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED INDIVIDUALS & PAIRS

Setup an area of 40 x 30 with two goals either end with a GK in each. Two equal teams of 5 are stationed beside a goal each with a team receiving the ball first from the coach and attacking 3 v 2 against the other team. Once a goal has been scored or the ball has gone out of play, the team that was attacking lose 2 players who must move off the pitch to create a 2 v 1 going in the opposite direction.



Equipment



10 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Press/Drop** – Once the ball is played into the opposition or they enter the pitch with the ball, the defenders need to decide on whether they press or drop. Defenders need to communicate between them as they are defending an overload and will need to make sure collectively, they work together in how they defend. If the opponents have a heavy first touch or have their back to goal this could be the trigger for them to press, likewise, if they are attacking quickly defenders may need to retreat and get back into their shape and protect the goal (central area of the pitch).
- **Angle of Approach** – When players press or defend against their opponent, challenge them to angle their approach to be able to force the opponent one way whilst block of passing options to other players. As the defenders are having to defend with an overload, if they can position themselves to block of options for the player on the ball this will help them team to have a greater chance in winning the ball back.
- **Forcing Wide/Back** – If the defending team can force the opponents wide / back, this will keep them away from central areas and stop them from creating goalscoring opportunities. If the ball is forced into a wide area, challenge defenders to try and keep them in that wide area and prevent from being able to switch play where they could be exposed on the opposite side of the pitch.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they over-commit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit the overload that they have.

Progressions

- The team attacking first only lose one player and a 2 v 2 is created. Increase to a 4 v 3 & 3 v 2 overload.

Regression

- Rather than playing 3v2 into a 2v1, begin the game as a 2v1 with the defender learning how they can defend individually against an overload.

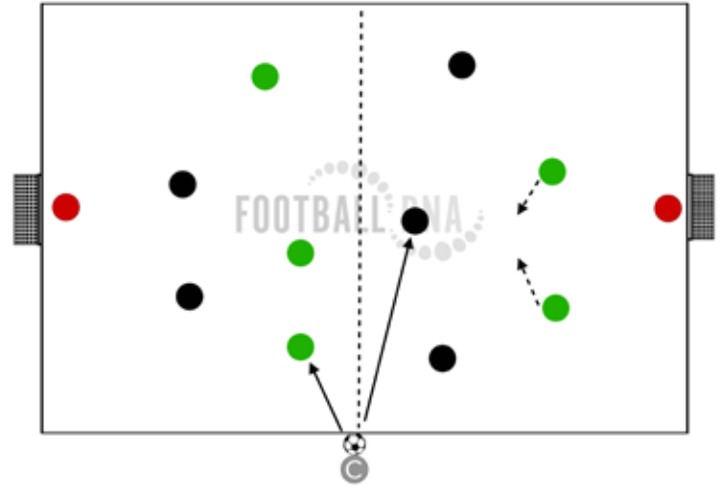
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered as an individual, unit & team.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED IN UNITS – TRANSITIONAL GAME

Setup a 40 x 30 area, split into two halves with 5 players in each side of the pitch and a goalkeeper. 2 players defend the goal and 3 players try to score. If the defenders win the ball back they can try to dribble to the halfway line for a point. The game starts with the coach serving a ball into one half for the attackers to try and score. If they score, they receive another ball to attack again. If they don't score, the coach serves a ball into the other half for the second group of players to play 3 v 2. To progress this for more advanced groups, once the defenders regain possession, they can pass into their attackers to attack 3 v 2 to create transition. If you have more players, increase the number of players in each half whilst keeping the overload.



Equipment



10 - 14 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Press/Drop** – As the opponents with the overload are close to the goal, the defending team will need to ensure that they don't drop too deep as it will give the attackers the opportunities to score from outside the box. As the opponents near the goal and are in areas that they can score, defenders should look to press to stop the opponent from getting a shot away. If the team with the overload loses the ball, they should look to win the ball back quickly to stop the other team from getting the ball to the line or being able to play into the opposite half.
- **Angle of Approach** – When defending, encourage players to force the attackers away from goal with their angle of approach and preferably into the area that they don't have another player so that they cannot be played 2v1. Through players angling their approach, they will be able to direct the attackers into the area that they want or force them onto their weaker side etc.
- **Forcing Wide/Back** – Defenders should prevent the attackers from being able to get shots away in this game and look to force the opponents wide or back. If the ball is in a wide area, they should look to prevent the opponents from crossing the ball or switching play where they may have an overload on the opposite side. Defenders should ensure that they keep 8-10 yards distance between them to stop the opponents from being able to play beyond or between them.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they overcommit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit the overload that they have.

Progressions

- Defenders pass into their attacking players once they win possession of the ball.
- Play as a small sided game with the ball starting from the goalkeeper and the 2 defenders trying to pass into their attackers to score.

Regression

- Set up footballs on the half way line and the attackers can get the ball and begin an attack by themselves without needing to receive the ball from the coach. Each half plays the game at the same time (ball in either half).

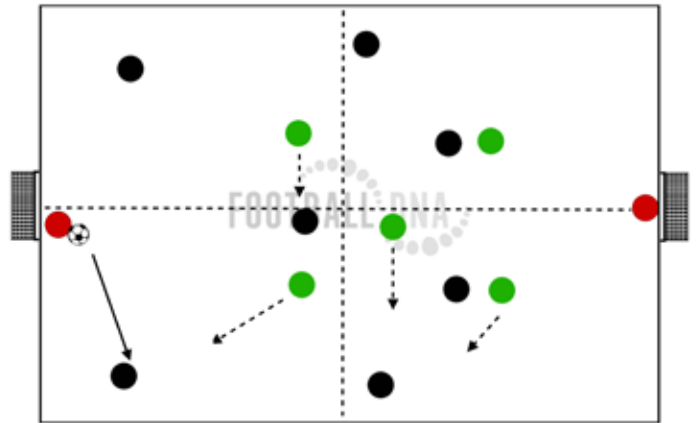
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered as an individual, unit & team.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED AS A TEAM – DOUBLE GOALS GAME

Setup a 50 x 30 pitch with two goals and goalkeepers at either end as a normal small sided game. The teams are overloaded 6 v 4 or 7 v 5 depending on the players you have. Split the pitch into half horizontally and vertically with flat markers for reference points to support the defending team. The rules are as normal but if the defenders score with the overload, they receive two goals.



Equipment



12 - 14 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Team Spacing/Compactness** – The defending team that is working against an overload should look to use the marked-out areas on the pitch to help them with their positioning and work to win the ball back. The defending team should look to defending on the same half of the pitch i.e. having all their players on one side. Use the middle line as a help line which can be used as a reference point for the defenders, meaning if the ball is on one side of the pitch the defenders furthest away from the ball should set up on the middle line to keep their compactness whilst being ready to win the ball back if the opponents can switch play.
- **Communication** – Defenders will need to communicate throughout this game with one another to discuss how they will press or drop as a team as well as helping them to understand how they will position themselves throughout the game. Communication can be between them to help them to see where the opponents are or organising themselves with their shape.
- **Forcing Wide/Back** – Due to the overload from the opposition, the defending team should look to remain compact and prevent the opponents from being able to play between or beyond them. As the attackers have a +2 overload, the defending team should look to prevent the opposition from getting into the attacking half where possible, however, if they are able to do so they should look to force them wide and back and prevent them from getting into positions where they can create goal scoring opportunities.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1 v 1 defending situations, players should look to force opponents wide or back and prevent them from playing into the overload. Defenders will need to be patient and wait for the right time to press their opponents to stop them from exploiting the overload. If defenders win the ball back, they should look to secure possession of the ball.

Progressions

- Increase the overload for the attacking team by a further number of players.

Regression

- Both teams have the same number of players, but add target players to create an overload.

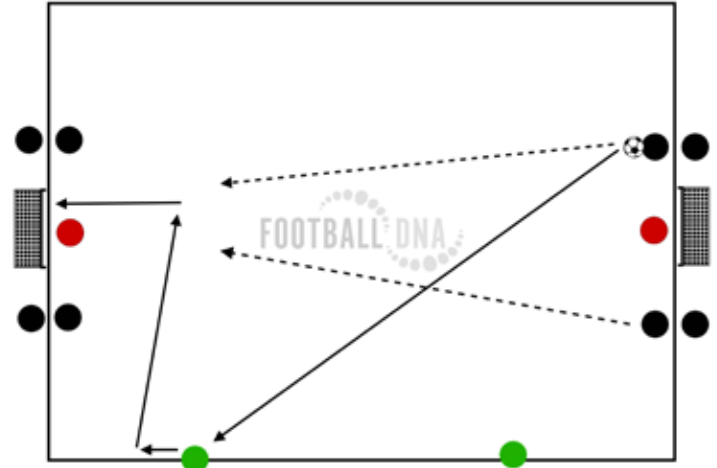
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

TECHNICAL CROSSING & FINISHING WAVE PRACTICE

Setup a 30 x 30 area with two goals and two goalkeepers either end. Players work in pairs divided evenly beside each goal at each end. Two players are the crossers from the side of the pitch with one working with each goal. The player with the ball takes a touch out of their feet and passes into the crosser who takes a touch and then delivers the ball for the pair to finish. Once the move has finished, the pair stay at the end they have attacked, and another pair now attack going the other way.



Equipment



10 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Timing of the Run** – As the ball is played into the wide player, attackers need to time their run as they approach the box from the cross. Players should time their run based on the pass that has been played into the wide player and their first touch. If the wide player looks like they can cross first time, players should look to attack the area quickly, however, if they have a touch the attackers may need to hold their run. If players run too soon, they will run ahead of the ball and not be able to finish the cross.
- **Movement** – Players should look to vary their movement as they approach the area to finish the cross, for example they may look to run from the front post to the back or the back post to the front. Alternatively, an attacker may run into the area and then hold their run to finish from a cut back etc. Players should look to work together with their movement to move in different directions between them.
- **Angle of Approach/Body Shape** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. This will help players to be able to finish on either foot with few touches or with different body parts too. If players run in advance of the ball, this will make it more difficult to see both the crosser as well as the goal.
- **Finishing Technique** – Based on the type of cross and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish off one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score.

Progressions

- Add a defender than positions themselves by each of the goal that can defend the cross or look to win the ball from the defenders.

Regression

- Remove the goalkeepers in either goal and have a target player on either side of the pitch that can act as crossers.

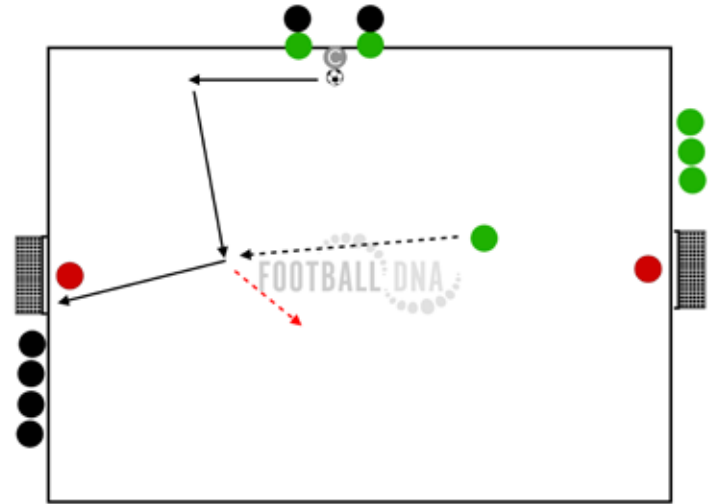
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

2 TEAM CROSSING & FINISHING COMPETITION

Set out an area using the width and length of a penalty area with two goals either end. Divide the group into two teams with 2 players being crossers on the outside and the remaining players stationed by the side of their goal. The move starts with a server passing the ball "down the line" for a cross to happen with one player from the team running to attack the ball. Once they have had their shot, they turn and then try to score in the other goal with another cross from the second crosser. This can progress to working in pairs & threes with the addition of defenders.



Equipment



10 - 16 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement** – Attackers need to display good runs to create space for themselves to finish. A run for the defender (back post) to then dart across into the front post area is a good movement to replicate. When working in pairs, attackers need to work together with differing runs to confuse defenders creating space. Crossover movements and staggered runs will do this. Attackers need to make sure they don't make the same runs and fill different areas of the goal.
- **Quality of Cross** – The crosses need to be game realistic with good pace on the delivery that they wouldn't be cut out especially when working unopposed. With the distance close in, a lot of side footed crosses can be used opening up the surface to punch the ball into the attacker. Good control on the cross is needed to apply the correct weight of cross and accuracy for the attacker to have a good chance of scoring. When the defenders come in, crossers will need to make more decisions to either pick out a runner to feet or to cross into an area for attackers to meet the ball. Before crossing the ball players need to be balanced and composed to give themselves the best chance of a successful cross.
- **Execution of Finish** – Lots of the finishes will be close in with less reaction time so attackers need to be ready and, on their toes, to apply the correct type of finish. As the ball is travelling they need to assess the pace & direction to get into position to finish confidently. They need to select the surface and try to make a strong connection on the ball. Sometimes if the cross has enough pace on it, a small touch may be all that's needed. Different types of finishes will be included with the addition of defenders, like toe pokes or outside of the foot getting across the defender.
- **Defending Crosses** – Even though mainly focusing on attacking, defenders are also important in this being able to read the cross to adjust position and deal with the delivery. Defenders need to be on their toes and ideally in an open body position to see the ball and the attacker. The first aim to get good contact on the ball and clear the ball as far away from the goal as possible. If on their toes and alert, they can be first to the ball ahead of the attacker. As a defender, we don't want the attacker to get in front as this gives them more control on a finish.

Progressions

- Add in defenders to make 2 v 1, 2 v 2.
- Expand the area for crosses from wider zones.

Regression

- Players can only cross along the ground to start with.
- Players to take a touch out of their feet and cross themselves.

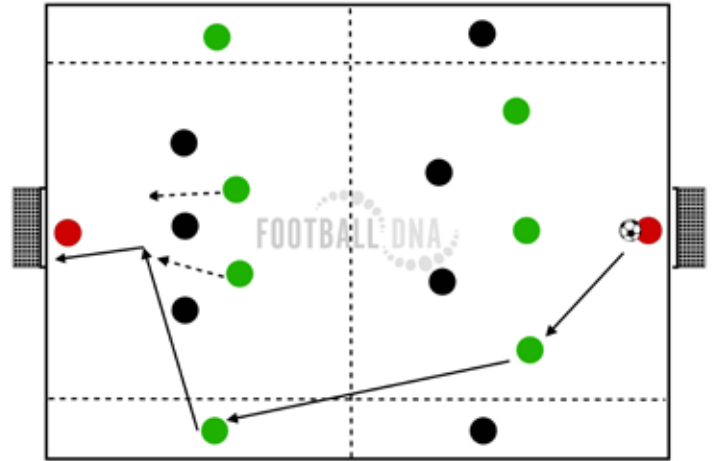
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

CREATING ATTACKS IN WIDE AREAS

In an area of 60 x 40 yards with two goals at each end and marked out zones on the outside along the length of the pitch on either side for the wide players to work in. This is a directional practice between two teams of 7 with GK's in each goal. 2 players from each side stay in the marked out wide zones of the attacking half, with 5 players from each team in the 'pitch'. The aim of the practice is to encourage players to get the ball out to the wide areas to try and create an attacking opportunity from. The defending team must try and combat this by staying with any attacking runners and defending their goal well.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Choice of Pass** – Players must choose the correct pass and timing to play the ball out wide as early as possible to create an attack. They could do this by keeping the ball at the back with short quick passing working the ball up the pitch until the time is right to play wide or they could miss out the defensive 'press' in the middle of the pitch with a lofted ball out wide over the top of the defensive press. This would be the best course of action if the defensive team are pushed high up, ready to press and win the ball back in the attacking teams half.
- **Quality from Wide** – Once the ball has been 'worked' into the wide area, the wide player must show composure and quality to choose the cross/pass that allows the optimum chance to score, this could be with an early whipped in low ball between the defenders and goalkeeper for a teammate to attack the space in behind, or with a 'stood up' cross to the back post if the defenders have left the far post area open. If the defenders have over covered the goal mouth the wide player could look to use a 'cutback' type cross for an on coming teammate to shoot/head.
- **Key Areas** – The attackers must try to attack any space left by the defensive team. Ideally they should try and attack with three players attacking the goalmouth. they should try to stagger their runs making them harder to be picked up. One should try to get across the front post for an early ball in getting across the first defender to finish or to create space for the next attacker. The 2nd attacker should take up the space created by the 1st run with a 3rd attacker 'locking in' the back post for any balls missed or 'stood up'. A 4th attacker could join in by arriving late for a cut back finish.
- **Desire** – The players must know where best to attack the goal to create the best opportunity to score or the best positions to get into to defend, but above all else the players must have the willingness and desire to run and run hard to get into these areas or overlap to get into the wide areas making the most of any space created by their teammates movement or good play.

Progression

- After starting with the wide players staying in their zones to find a pass or cross. You can then progress to after the ball is worked out to the wide players, they can then drive into the pitch if they choose, with another player being allowed to take their place and be unopposed in the wide zone.

Regression

- To get the game flowing we started with the GK or a player being able to go straight to the unopposed wide player. You can then progress to get a certain amount of passes in the middle of the pitch before working into the wide areas to attack.

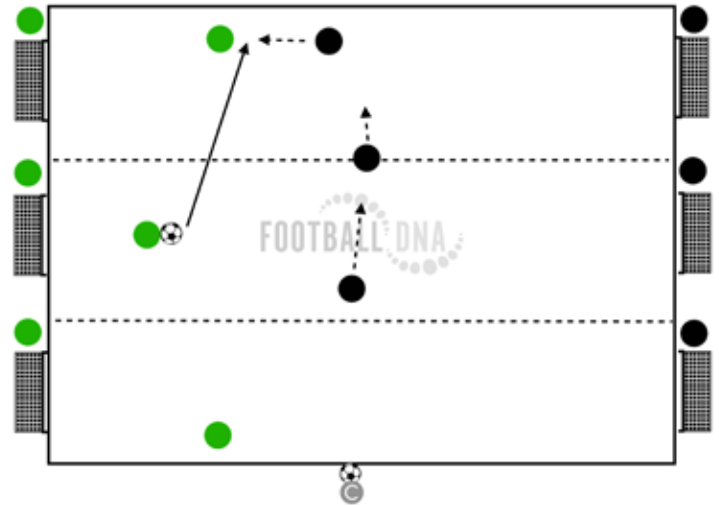
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDFIELD AREA

For players to develop the key skills on how to defend in the midfield area of the pitch.

DEFENDING IN UNITS OF 3

Setup a 30 x 20 area with three goals either end and two teams of 3 each end of the pitch. Divide the pitch into 3 vertical channels using flat markers to give the defending team reference points. The game is played as a normal small sided game with teams trying to score any of their 3 goals in the other half. The defending team must work together to prevent forward passes that break their line and aim to keep the ball in front of them as a unit. As soon as the ball is out of play, the coach is to play another ball in for the next two sets of teams to play.



Equipment



6 - 12 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement in Unit** – In this game, the defending team should look to defend two out of the three channels to help them to remain compact and keep small distances between them to be able to provide support and cover for the primary defender as well as preventing the opposition from playing between or beyond. If the team switches play, the defenders should slide across and work collectively to press the ball as well as providing support and cover between them. Supporting defenders should look to be behind the primary defender at an angle ready to cover space behind if they are beaten with a pass or in a 1v1.
- **Communication** – Defenders will need to communicate throughout this game with one another to discuss how they will press or drop as a team as well as how they slide across to defend the two out of the three channels. Communication can be between them to help them to see where the opponents are or organising themselves with their shape.
- **Team Spacing/Compactness** – The defending team should look to work together to defend two out of the three channels. This will help them to remain compact and prevent the opposition from being able to play between or beyond them, leaving space on the opposite side of the pitch. Players will need to provide support behind the player that is pressing to ensure that they are able to cover the space behind that play is beaten with a pass or a 1v1.
- **1v1 Defending** – Defenders should look to keep the ball in one of the wide channels once the ball has been moved out there and prevent the attacker from being able to play forwards as well as switching play. Encourage players to defend aggressively once the ball is played out wide to help the team to win the ball back.

Progressions

- Add a target player that can play for the team in possession of the ball that will create an overload.

Regression

- Add a half way line that the opposition must get past in order to be able to score.

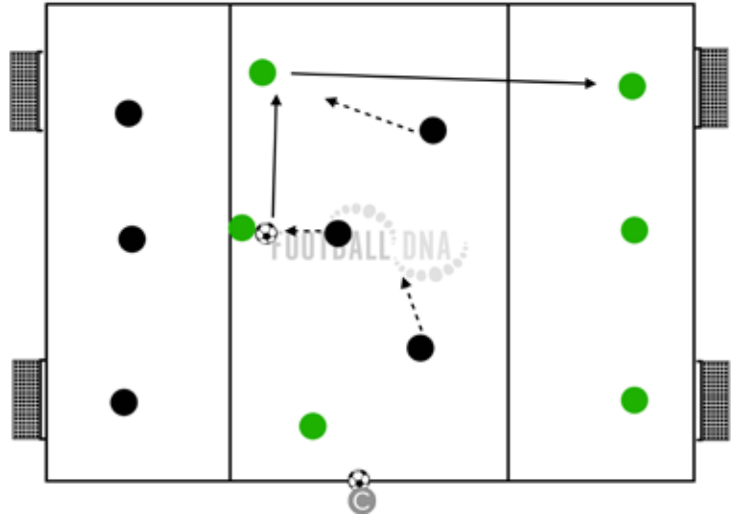
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDFIELD AREA

For players to develop the key skills on how to defend in the midfield area of the pitch.

PREVENTING FORWARD PASSES

Set out a 40 yards x 20 yards area divided into 3 equal zones. In the central zones are 3 players each with 3 players in each of the final zones with small goals either end. The aim of the practice is for the team in possession to pass forward into their 2 end zone players to score in either goal. The challenge is for the team out of possession to block the passing lanes by working as “midfield 3 unit” and prevent passes breaking through them. The aim for the end zone players is to receive on the half turn and score within 2/3 touches. Rotate the two midfield teams with the teams in the end zones.



Equipment



12 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Compactness** - To block any passing lanes, the unit must work closely together and fill in any gaps as they slide across the pitch. If the distances are not close enough and similar between players the gaps will be too large and the possession team will easily play through them. As one player presses the ball, the other two remaining players should be narrow covering the space left. If the ball shifts across, then players must react quickly and adapt to each others position. Another key point is to get into line with the ball and angle the body blocking any forward passes down the sides forcing the pass back or across instead.
- **Pressure on the Ball** - It is important that pressure is applied to stop the forward pass into the attacking players. On the progression of the practice players must decide the best time to press and release themselves from their zone. If they select a wrong time, then they could be played around through the gap they have left. When applying pressure, players should think about their angle of approach with the aim of forcing them in one direction (backwards/inside). The run should be curved slightly and slowing down towards the end of the approach getting into a 1 v 1 stance. The defender should bend their knees and not be too upright so they can adapt position quickly.
- **Decision Making** - Should I press? This is the main decision to be made by players. If a pass is too slow towards the receiving player it may be a good time to apply pressure and possibly intercept the pass. Another signal to press would be a poor touch from the receiving players, the defender may be able to quickly pinch the ball. When in possession, players need to decide if the forward pass is achievable or is it best to keep the ball and shift the defensive unit trying to create gaps.
- **Composure** - Once possession has been regained by the defending team, they must then play with quality into the 2 end zone players. A good firm pass will break the opposition defensive line and give the attackers a chance to score. If the forward pass isn't available, the team should then pass across the pitch quickly to try and create space in the opposition defensive unit.

Progression

- Once the ball has been played into the end zone, midfield players can recover and try to regain the ball.

Regression

- Make the middle zone smaller to allow more success to happen and then gradually increase size to stretch players learning.

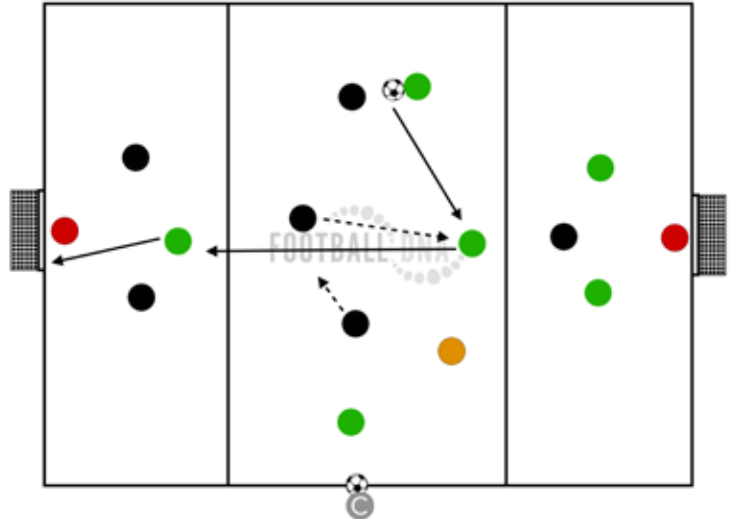
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDFIELD AREA

For players to develop the key skills on how to defend in the midfield area of the pitch.

STOPPING THE BALL INTO THE CENTRE FORWARD

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal and goalkeeper either end with the pitch divided into 3 thirds with the middle third being biggest. In the middle third is a 3 v 3 plus a floater to play with the possession team. In the final thirds are 2 defenders vs 1 centre forward. The aim of the game is for the team in possession to pass forward into their centre forward to score. The challenge for the team out of possession to block the passing lanes by working as “midfield 3 unit” and prevent passes breaking through them and into the centre forward. The defending players in the final thirds must try and win the ball back from the attacker and then look to play into the middle third and attack the opposite direction.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Compactness** – To block any passing lanes, the unit must work closely together and fill in any gaps as they slide across the pitch. If the distances are not close enough and similar between players the gaps will be too large and the possession team will easily play through them. As one player presses the ball, the other two remaining players should be narrow covering the space left. If the ball shifts across, then players must react quickly and adapt to each other's position. Another key point is to get into line with the ball and angle the body blocking any forward passes down the sides forcing the pass back or across instead. Players need to also block and screen passes into the striker when defending and should continually be checking their shoulders and scanning to help them be aware of the striker's position.
- **Pressure on the Ball** – It is important that pressure is applied to stop the forward pass into the attacking players. On the progression of the practice players must decide the best time to press and release themselves from their zone. If they select a wrong time, then they could be played around through the gap they have left. When applying pressure, players should think about their angle of approach with the aim of forcing them in one direction (backwards/inside). The run should be curved slightly and slowing down towards the end of the approach getting into a 1 v 1 stance. The defender should bend their knees and not be too upright so they can adapt position quickly.
- **Decision Making** – Should I press? This is the main decision to be made by players. If a pass is too slow towards the receiving player, it may be a good time to apply pressure and possibly intercept the pass. Another signal to press would be a poor touch from the receiving players, the defender may be able to quickly pinch the ball. When in possession, players need to decide if the forward pass is achievable or is it best to keep the ball and shift the defensive unit trying to create gaps. As soon as the ball is played into the final third, players should look to prevent the attacker from getting shots away quickly and try to force them back or wide.
- **Composure** – Once possession has been regained by the defending team, they must then play with quality into the 2 end zone players. A good firm pass will break the opposition defensive line and give the attackers a chance to score. If the forward pass isn't available, the team should then pass across the pitch quickly to try and create space in the opposition defensive unit.

Progression

- One player from the attacking team can join the attack once they have passed into the final third to create a 2v2.

Regression

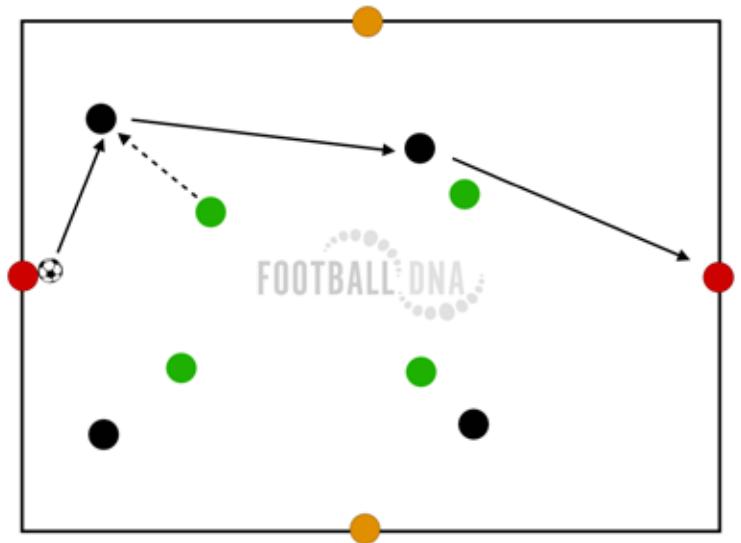
- One defender can join the defensive third from the middle third to help defend against the striker once the ball is played into the final third.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

DIRECTIONAL POSSESSION

Setup a 30 x 30 area with 3 teams of 4 players. 2 teams compete against each other inside the area (4 v 4) and the other team have one player on each side of the area as target/bounce players. Each team are working the ball into and from two specific target players. One is working going across and the other going vertically. To score a point, teams have to transfer the ball from one target player to another. Target players are on two touches and if they take more touches or spend too long on the ball, they will lose possession.



Equipment



12 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – Players throughout this game should look to move to create space for either themselves or their team mates. Players should look to receive and create an angle from the player in possession of the ball to enable them to receive with an open body shape and be able to play forwards if needed. Encourage players to create space by dispersing to make the pitch big to help create opportunities for players to receive between and beyond the opposition players.
- **Body Shape** – Throughout the game players should look to adjust their body shape to try and receive with an open body shape to enable them to see both the player on the ball as well as their opponents, space and the player that they want to play into. Encourage players to have their shoulders both in a position to see the ball and have their shoulders facing the way that they wish to go.
- **Awareness & Decision Making** – Throughout this game players should look to continually scan and check their shoulders to be able to see what is around them. If players focus on solely the ball and not on their surroundings this will limit their decision making. Players should look to find ways in which they can create space and exploit it both with and without the ball.
- **Receiving & Passing** – Players should look to find ways of retaining possession by receiving and passing the ball as well as exploiting space between the opposition by passing between or beyond defenders. Encourage players to adjust the speed of their pass based on what their decision is i.e. if playing between opponent players into a team mate, they may need to play a firmer pass to help eliminate the defenders.

Progressions

- Players can score by playing into any of the target players and get one point, if they are able to play between players they get two points.

Regression

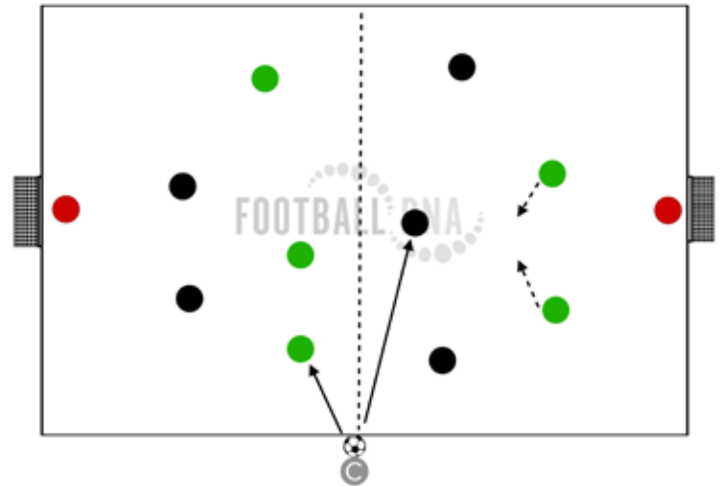
- Teams can play into both sets of target players but can still only score by going the same direction throughout the game.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

DEFENDING OUTNUMBERED IN UNITS – TRANSITIONAL GAME

Setup a 40 x 30 area, split into two halves with 5 players in each side of the pitch and a goalkeeper. 2 players defend the goal and 3 players try to score. If the defenders win the ball back they can try to dribble to the halfway line for a point. The game starts with the coach serving a ball into one half for the attackers to try and score. If they score, they receive another ball to attack again. If they don't score, the coach serves a ball into the other half for the second group of players to play 3 v 2. To progress this for more advanced groups, once the defenders regain possession, they can pass into their attackers to attack 3 v 2 to create transition. If you have more players, increase the number of players in each half whilst keeping the overload.



Equipment



10 - 14 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Press/Drop** – As the opponents with the overload are close to the goal, the defending team will need to ensure that they don't drop too deep as it will give the attackers the opportunities to score from outside the box. As the opponents near the goal and are in areas that they can score, defenders should look to press to stop the opponent from getting a shot away. If the team with the overload loses the ball, they should look to win the ball back quickly to stop the other team from getting the ball to the line or being able to play into the opposite half.
- **Angle of Approach** – When defending, encourage players to force the attackers away from goal with their angle of approach and preferably into the area that they don't have another player so that they cannot be played 2v1. Through players angling their approach, they will be able to direct the attackers into the area that they want or force them onto their weaker side etc.
- **Forcing Wide/Back** – Defenders should prevent the attackers from being able to get shots away in this game and look to force the opponents wide or back. If the ball is in a wide area, they should look to prevent the opponents from crossing the ball or switching play where they may have an overload on the opposite side. Defenders should ensure that they keep 8-10 yards distance between them to stop the opponents from being able to play beyond or between them.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they overcommit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit the overload that they have.

Progressions

- Defenders pass into their attacking players once they win possession of the ball.
- Play as a small sided game with the ball starting from the goalkeeper and the 2 defenders trying to pass into their attackers to score.

Regression

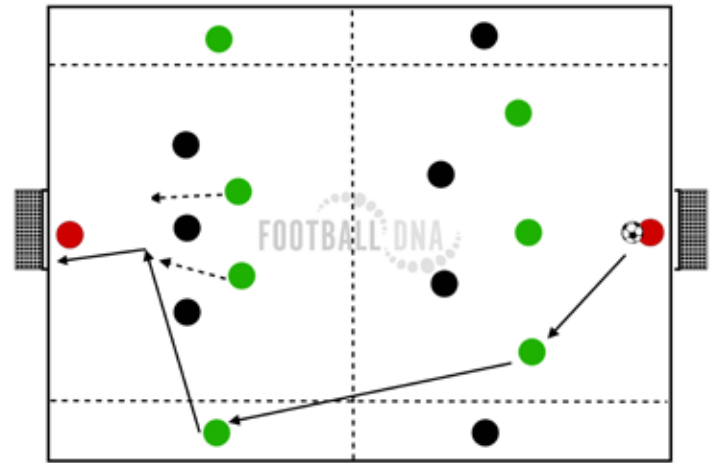
- Set up footballs on the half way line and the attackers can get the ball and begin an attack by themselves without needing to receive the ball from the coach. Each half plays the game at the same time (ball in either half).

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

CREATING ATTACKS IN WIDE AREAS

In an area of 60 x 40 yards with two goals at each end and marked out zones on the outside along the length of the pitch on either side for the wide players to work in. This is a directional practice between two teams of 7 with GK's in each goal. 2 players from each side stay in the marked out wide zones of the attacking half, with 5 players from each team in the 'pitch'. The aim of the practice is to encourage players to get the ball out to the wide areas to try and create an attacking opportunity from. The defending team must try and combat this by staying with any attacking runners and defending their goal well.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Choice of Pass** – Players must choose the correct pass and timing to play the ball out wide as early as possible to create an attack. They could do this by keeping the ball at the back with short quick passing working the ball up the pitch until the time is right to play wide or they could miss out the defensive 'press' in the middle of the pitch with a lofted ball out wide over the top of the defensive press. This would be the best course of action if the defensive team are pushed high up, ready to press and win the ball back in the attacking teams half.
- **Quality from Wide** – Once the ball has been 'worked' into the wide area, the wide player must show composure and quality to choose the cross/pass that allows the optimum chance to score, this could be with an early whipped in low ball between the defenders and goalkeeper for a teammate to attack the space in behind, or with a 'stood up' cross to the back post if the defenders have left the far post area open. If the defenders have over covered the goal mouth the wide player could look to use a 'cutback' type cross for an on coming teammate to shoot/head.
- **Key Areas** – The attackers must try to attack any space left by the defensive team. Ideally they should try and attack with three players attacking the goalmouth. they should try to stagger their runs making them harder to be picked up. One should try to get across the front post for an early ball in getting across the first defender to finish or to create space for the next attacker. The 2nd attacker should take up the space created by the 1st run with a 3rd attacker 'locking in' the back post for any balls missed or 'stood up'. A 4th attacker could join in by arriving late for a cut back finish.
- **Desire** – The players must know where best to attack the goal to create the best opportunity to score or the best positions to get into to defend, but above all else the players must have the willingness and desire to run and run hard to get into these areas or overlap to get into the wide areas making the most of any space created by their teammates movement or good play.

Progression

- After starting with the wide players staying in their zones to find a pass or cross. You can then progress to after the ball is worked out to the wide players, they can then drive into the pitch if they choose, with another player being allowed to take their place and be unopposed in the wide zone.

Regression

- To get the game flowing we started with the GK or a player being able to go straight to the unopposed wide player. You can then progress to get a certain amount of passes in the middle of the pitch before working into the wide areas to attack.

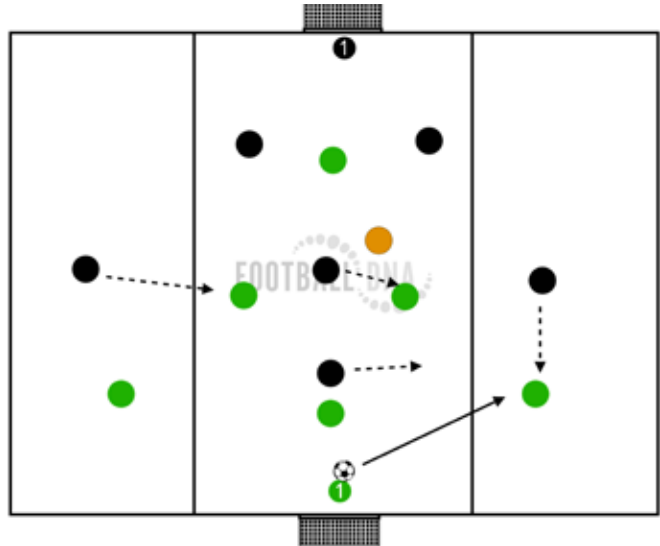
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

CONDENSING THE PLAY

This conditioned small sided game has a dual purpose which incorporates conditions & challenges. The pitch is setup into 3 vertical thirds with the first challenge is for the defending team to cover 2/3 thirds of the pitch. These 2 thirds must be the central third and the third the ball is located. This challenge encourages the defending team to be compact out of possession and condense the play to restrict the attacking team space to play in. The second challenge is for the attacking team to switch the play through the three vertical thirds. If they are successful in doing this, they will be rewarded with 2 goals shall they score.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Pressure on the Ball** – The defending team need to get close to the opposition and apply good pressure to limit the player in possession time and space on the ball. Generally this will be the nearest player to the ball. When pressing, it is important to have a good angle of approach encouraging the attacker one way to make the play predictable so the rest of the team can adjust and read the play easier.
- **Distances between Units** – To condense the play, the space between the defensive, midfield and attacking units should be small and of similar distances. This will give the attacking team less space to play in and also allow good cover when applying pressure to the ball.
- **Sliding & Screening** – As the ball is moved and switched across the pitch, the defending team must work hard and fast to get across and cover 2/3 thirds. If they don't do this quickly enough the attacking team will find it easier to play through them. The players must do this together and as a unit to keep the play condensed. The midfield unit play an important role in screening the forward pass into the opposition centre forward/s keeping the ball as far away from the goal as possible.
- **Reactions on Transition** – When possession is lost, the reaction to cover 2/3 thirds is vital to restrict the space. On the turnover of possession there is generally more space as teams are more open trying to score. Good recovery runs and desire to regain defensive positions quickly will help reduce space for the attacking team to exploit.

Progressions

- Add another floater to increase the overload against the defending team.

Regression

- The attackers must be in all three channels when in possession of the ball, if they aren't it's a free kick to the other team.

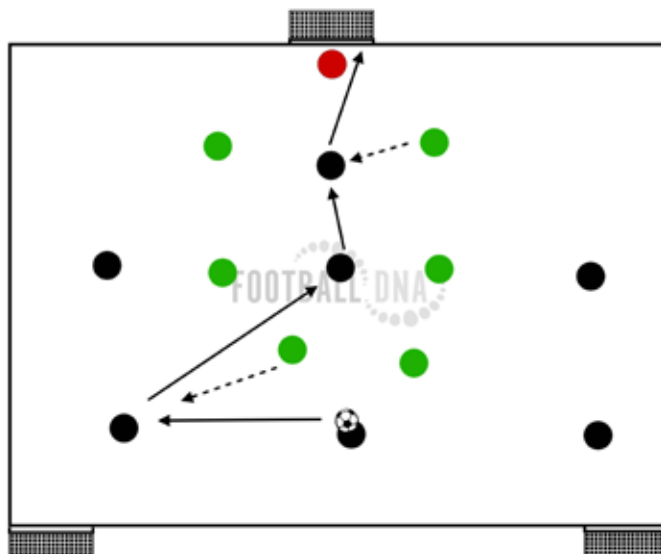
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

1 GOAL V 2 GOAL OVERLOAD

Set up a small sided game with one team attacking two goals that are one side of the area and the other team attacking one goal that is in the middle of the opposite side of the pitch. The side with one goal, has one goalkeeper. The purpose of this game is for the attacking team that is scoring in the two goals, to look to shift play from one side to the other and for the defending team to remain compact and look to win the ball and attack the opposite end quickly.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Team Spacing** - The attackers should look to maintain width and depth when in possession of the ball to create space for the player on the ball. The team that is attacking the two goals should look to create overloads in wide areas to help them to switch play quickly and score. The team attacking the central goal should look to shift the defenders from one side to the other to create space between and beyond the defenders to help them to attack centrally.
- **Awareness/Body Shape** - Players before receiving the ball should continually check their shoulders and adjust the body shape to see what is around them to help them to make the right decision before they receive the ball. Players should look to move for their team mates at an angle with an open body shape to help them to receive and play forwards as well as exploit space between & beyond the defenders.
- **Receiving & Passing** - Players will need to be patient in possession of the ball and identify the right type of pass that is needed to maintain possession or eliminate defenders with a through ball. Players should continually look to identify where the overload is in this game and look to eliminate defenders with their passing and receiving skills.
- **1v1s** - Encourage players to beat opponents in 1v1s where possible to attack either the central goal or the two goals depending on which way that they will attack. 1v1 moves can also be used for the attackers to help them to change direction to then switch play or play away from pressure.

Progressions

- Play as a turnover game, so once your team scores at one end, they then restart with the ball at that same end and attack the opposite direction.

Regression

- Both teams have one goal or two goals to defend and attack.

BLOCK 3 - WEEK 13 - 18

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Overloads - Overlaps, Underlaps, Third Man Runs & Wall Passes - Combine or Cross - Creating Chances & Finishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing the Ball - Keeping Possession On Regain - Reaction to Recover or Press on Turnover - Winning the Ball Back as a Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Striking the Ball - Finishing Off Both Feet - 1 v 1 Attacking - Variety of Finishes & Techniques Required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Denying space and recovery - Delaying the Attack - Compact Shape & Distances - Blocking shots and passes - Composure & Counter 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Playing In the Attacking Third	Possession & Transition	Converting Goalscoring Opportunities	Defending Deep	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 13](#)

[Week 14](#)

[Week 15](#)

[Week 16](#)

[Week 17](#)

[Week 18](#)

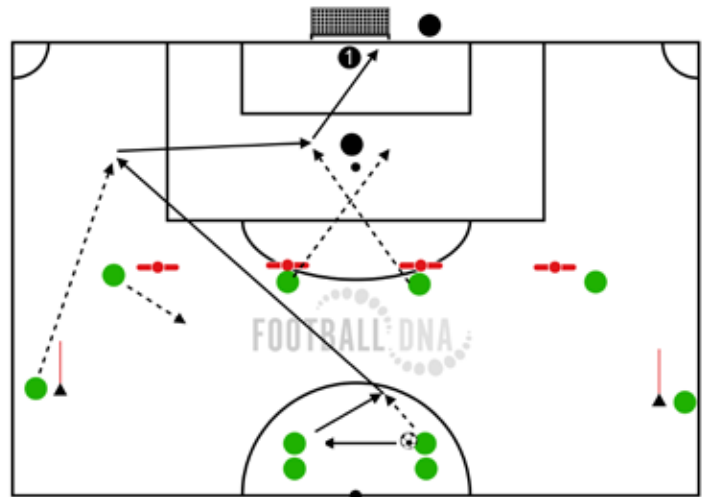
WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities in the attacking third of the pitch.

FULL BACK & WIDE PLAYER COMBINATION PLAY

Using half of a full size pitch set out mannequins as per diagram where opposition players would be in a game situation. A full back and wide player on each side of the pitch with two forwards & two defenders starting outside of the penalty area. Two central midfielders combine together to then play out wide for the following combination patterns: 1. Wide Player coming inside to play Full Back in to cross. 2. Wide player coming inside to spin & receive pass from Full Back to cross. 3. Wide player coming inside to play wall pass with Full Back to cross. 4. Wide player staying wide to pass for underlap movement from Full Back to cross. The main aim is to create space in wide areas to play in behind for a cross with this based on playing a 4-2-3-1 or 4-4-2 shape.



Equipment



10 – 16 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Mannequins, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- Quality of Pass** - The first pass from the central midfield player into either the wide player or full back is so important. It needs to be well weighted and firm enough to avoid an interception. This pass should allow the receiver to control comfortably and then play the next pass to create the opportunity of a cross. The through ball pass also needs to be well weighted so it is in front of the receiver but also not too far ahead where it runs out of play or goes too far away from the goal making the cross difficult to execute.
- Combination Play in Wide Areas** - The full back and wide player need to work together on their timing to produce the movements that will exploit the opposition. If the wide player comes inside too early, it would allow the opposition players to recognise this and adjust positions. The same applies if the full back runs forward too early also running the risk of being offside and if possession is lost in a position where they cannot recover. The movements need to be well coordinated with both players clear on their roles as do the midfield players so they identify the pass needed.
- Execution of Cross** - To create a goal scoring opportunity requires the cross to be of good quality which allows the finishing player to execute first time. Most of the crosses will be cut back deliveries when working around the edge of the penalty area. The crosser should look to pick out a runner who has shown good movement to lose their marker. The side foot technique is a good one to use in this situation showing good control and accuracy. If the crosser cannot pick someone out then a good cross would be in between the defenders and goalkeepers. This could result in own goals with defenders hesitating and facing their own goal with fear of the forward tapping in behind them.
- Awareness & Decision Making** - Once the ball is arriving with the crosser, then the forwards need to be starting to get on the move and identify the spaces they wish to attack. The pair need to work together by making staggered runs not into the same areas of the goal. A run across the first defenders usually defending the front post would be good as it can be hard to defend. Forwards must run at good pace and intent to really get across their marker and not allow the defender a chance of making any contact on the ball. Another very important coaching point is for the wide player to make a late run into the box for any cut backs or second balls falling to the edge of the area if the full back is crossing.

Progressions

- Allow players to select which pattern to use. Different combinations - switch the play from side to side before performing combinations.

Regression

- Work with one side of the pitch to support full back and wide player with coaching position. Remove wall pass to start move, instead central midfielder touches and pass into wide player or full back.

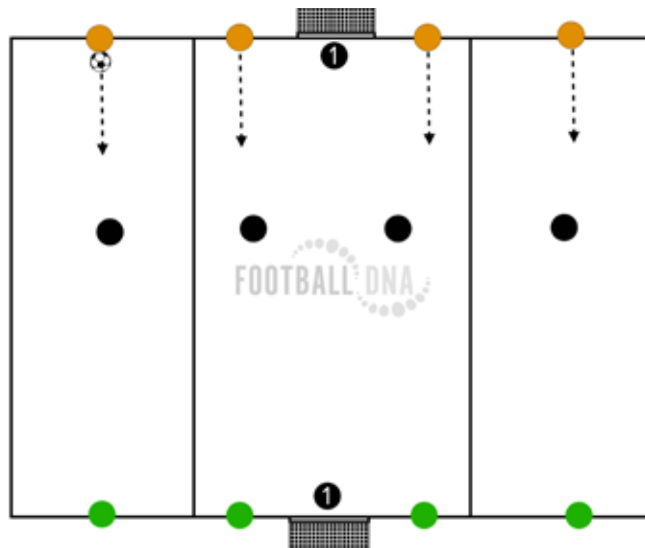
WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities in the attacking third of the pitch.

4 V 4 WAVE PRACTICE COMBINING & FINISHING

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal either end along with a goalkeeper, with the pitch split into 3 channels with flat markers. Players are divided into groups of 4 at either end of the pitch. A team of 4 start on the pitch, with 1 defender in each outside channel and two in the central channel. The ball starts with an attacking team who can only have the same number of players in each channel too. 1 v 1 in outside channels and a 2 v 2 centrally. The attacking team simply have to score but are locked in their zones, with the defending team scoring in the opposite goal if they win the ball. Once the ball has gone out or a goal has been scored, the team that attacked become the defending team and the next set of 4 players attack going the other way.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – Players without the ball should look to move to create space for themselves to receive the ball or to move a defender to create space for one of their team mates. Players may look to make movements that support players both either behind or in advance of the ball.
- **Combination Play** – As players are locked into their zones, players may need to work between one another to help them to combine. Combinations in this game can help players to play around defenders to help them to get into goalscoring positions. Encourage the middle players not only to combine between them, but also with the wide players to help them to create crossing opportunities.
- **Awareness / Decision Making** – Players in this game should be continually looking to scan what's around them to help them to identify spaces that they can exploit. The players in the middle will need to be able to position their body where they can see both sides to help them to switch play quickly if needed. Likewise, players on the outside will need to get their eyes up to identify any movement from the players in the middle area as they look to cross the ball into them.
- **Finishing** – The area of the pitch will change the types of finishes that players need. Attackers should look to adapt the finishing techniques that they're using based on whether it's coming from a central area or wide area. Players should look to finish of one or two touches where possible.

Progressions

- The defending team remain locked in, but the attacking team can create a +1 overload in any of the channels. This could be in the outside channels to make a 2 v 1 to exploit with an over/underlap.

Regression

- Unlock both the defending and attacking team from their channels as a standard 4 v 4 game. If you have spare players, you can use as overload players in the channels to make a 2 v 1 or 3 v 2.

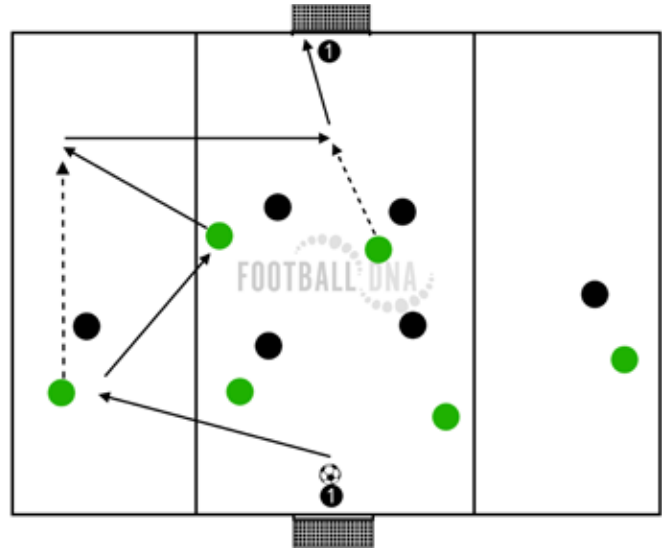
WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities in the attacking third of the pitch.

CREATING OVERLOADS TO COMBINE & FINISH

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal either end along with a goalkeeper, with the pitch split into 3 channels with flat markers. Players are divided into two equal teams that are separated into the channels with more players in the central channel. For example, a 4 v 4 centrally and 1 v 1 on the outside channels. The ball starts with either goalkeeper and is played like a normal small sided game but players are locked into their channels. One player from the attacking team at a time can move into any channel to create a +1 overload. You can have rules in the game such as if a goal is scored from an assist through the central area it's worth 2 goals or through wide areas it's worth 1 goal depending on which area of the pitch you would like to focus on in the session.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – Players without the ball should look to move to create space for themselves to receive the ball or to move a defender to create space for one of their team mates. Players may look to make movements that support players both either behind or in advance of the ball. As players can move into wide areas to create an overload, they should look to time their runs of when they move into the wide channels to help them to take advantage of the overload that they have created.
- **Combination Play** – Combinations can be used in wide areas throughout this game as players can move to make a 2v1. Likewise, players may need to combine quickly between them to create a goal scoring opportunity in a central area, or to switch play to the opposite side.
- **Awareness / Decision Making** – Players in this game should be continually looking to scan what is around them to help them to identify spaces that they can exploit. The players in the middle will need to be able to position their body where they can see both sides to help them to switch play quickly if needed. Likewise, players on the outside will need to get their eyes up to identify any movement from the players in the middle area as they look to cross the ball into them.
- **Finishing** – The area of the pitch will change the types of finishes that players need. Attackers should look to adapt the finishing techniques that they're using based on whether it's coming from a central area or wide area. Players should look to finish of one or two touches where possible. Players will need to decide quickly the type of finish to use depending on angle, distance and weight of the ball.

Progressions

- Unlock all players from their channels and play as a normal small sided game. You can add constraints and conditions such as two touch in any of the channels.

Regression

- Overload the middle area of the pitch in one teams favour by a player being on both teams when in possession.

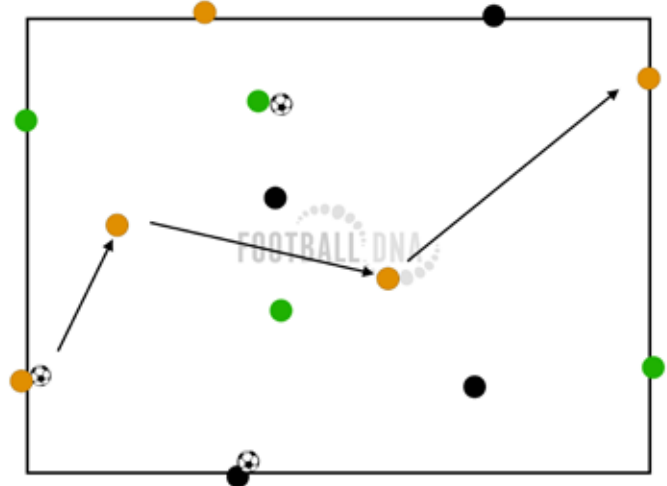
WEEK 2

POSSESSION & TRANSITION

For players to learn and implement possession skills and have positive reactions to transition.

PASSING & RECEIVING WITH AWARENESS SKILLS

Mark out a 20 x 20 yard area and divide the group into 4's with each group wearing bibs. 2 players are nominated to start in the middle and 2 on the outside of the area. Working with one ball players transfer the ball from an outside player to the opposite outside player by the pair in the middle combining with each other. After passing, players on the outside must move to a different side of the area but cannot be on the same side as their team mate. This exercise can be made easier by increasing the area size to give players more space and time to make decisions and perform the actions needed.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- Awareness** – A key component of this exercise is the ability for players to know who is around them and where the space is to move into and receive. The players inside have to be aware of each others position to provide the correct angles to combine and transfer the ball to the outside. With 2 other groups inside the same area, it can become congested with a good chance of players turning into each other if they are not aware of what is near them. To develop awareness players have to play with their head up and be always scanning the area behind, in front and to the side. Before receiving players should check their shoulder to see if they can turn or to check the position of their partner and the players position on the outside as this constantly changes.
- Angles & Movement** – With good awareness, players can now move into the best spaces to receive the ball. Every player is involved in creating good angles to support each player on the ball. The middle pair have to work with each other with the first receiver setting the ball for their partner. The second player has to move their position to receive off the setting player. If the distances are too big it will not produce quick combination play in tight areas which is the purpose of the exercise. Outside players can also help the middle players by moving sides to provide an option to play out, they do not have to stay on the same side.
- Decision Making** – As it can become congested at times and with the addition of 2 taggers, players need to be alert and concentrating to make quick and good decisions. With the help of their awareness, players have to think about whether they can turn with the ball, can they pass the first time or do they need to control and wait for support from their team mates. When taggers are introduced, groups must work as a team to provide angles to release the ball so the player cannot be tagged.
- Quality of Pass** – Passing has to be of good weight so players have the option to set the ball first time or pass first time. The pass needs to be firm with the ball running smoothly across the pitch giving the receiver a good ball to play with. If the pass is too hard or bobbled in it becomes more difficult to produce quick combination play. Accuracy is also important so the receiver doesn't have to move their body too much after creating the angle to receive the ball. This also will allow the combinations to be at a good pace and give players the best chance of playing one touch football through the middle. Focus is needed when passing to check team mates body position and then deliver a good side footed pass.

Progressions

- Players can combine with a wall pass to swap outside players.
- Introduce 2 taggers who try to tag players on the ball.

Regression

- Only work with two teams in the middle with 3 players inside and 3 outside

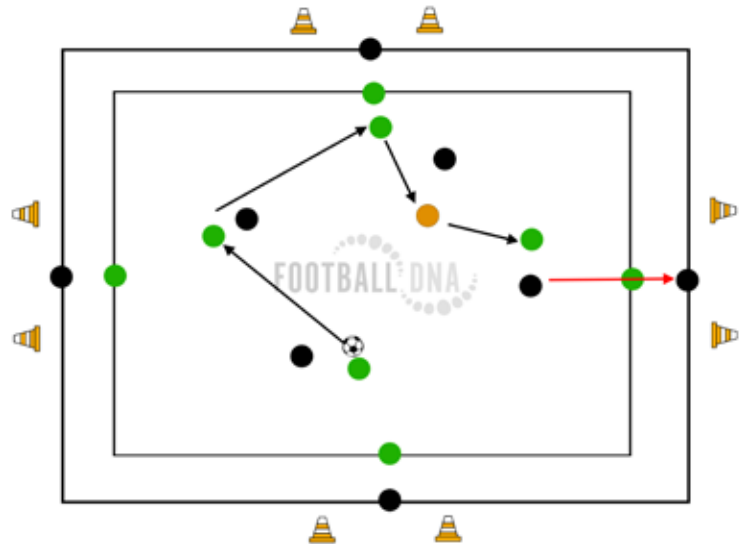
WEEK 2

POSSESSION & TRANSITION

For players to learn and implement possession skills and have positive reactions to transition.

COMBINATION OR COUNTER POSSESSION

Setup a 20 x 20 area and another area outside which is 3 yards bigger. 1 gate is situated 5 yards on each side of the area. In the smaller area we play 4 v 4 with a floater, one team is designated the combination team. On the outside of the smaller area is a player each from the combination team who they can also use to create a further overload. This team have to make 5 passes to score a goal. The other team are called the countering team. When this team win the ball they are trying to find one of their team mates who are on the outside of the larger area to then turn & drive through the nearest gate. Players on the outside areas can slide across to prevent passes or open a passing lane to receive. This session is based on 17 players but you can adapt to play 3 v 3 plus one floater for 15 players or reduce to two gates.



Equipment



15+ Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – With every possession exercise, the quality of passing is the most important part. The accuracy needs to be on point to give their team mate the best chance of controlling the ball or to play one touch. The weight is also crucial to allow a good first touch that sets up the pass. The tempo needs to be high to shift the team out of possession around and create space for players to receive. Passes should be crisp along the ground giving players the best chance to maintain possession of the football. Slow under hit passes will cause pressure and close down the space to play in.
- **Movement Off The Ball** – To allow possession to be retained and score goals for the team, players away from the ball need to be constantly moving into positions that either create space for others or to receive themselves. The team in possession need to make the area as big as possible by stretching wide and long with their shape but also not blocking the bounce players. The bounce players need to also be moving providing another option and really creating a large overload. The “countering” team need to also provide angles when they regain the ball to keep the ball for a few passes until an outside player becomes available. Ideally on regain they will be able to play directly into an outside player within a small number of passes.
- **Sliding & Screening** – The combination teams players on the outside also need to show these skills to try and prevent the opposition “countering”. They will need to try and move in relation to the position of the ball and the player behind them. These players have to keep moving to block the passing lanes and make it hard for the countering team to break out. They will need to check their shoulders constantly to see the position of the player behind them.
- **Decision Making** – A key decision here is for the countering team to whether they can counter directly or do they need to make a few passes to wait for the opportunity to play into one of their outside players. The players on this team need to identify if a pass can be made without being intercepted or if it is better to complete passes changing the angle of attack to wait for the right opportunity.

Progressions

- Increase number of passes for a goal.
- Limit outside players to one touch.

Regression

- Increase size of gates for countering team. For possession team reduce number of passes for a goal to 3, this will also make the countering team work harder to regain the ball.

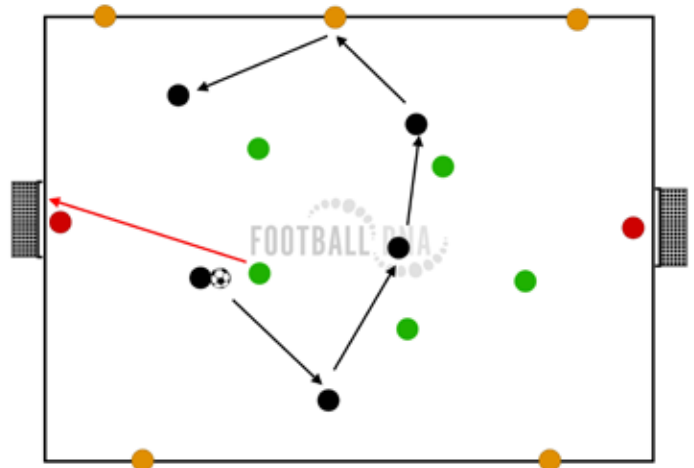
WEEK 2

POSSESSION & TRANSITION

For players to learn and implement possession skills and have positive reactions to transition.

POSSESSION RETENTION & TRANSITION

Setup an area of 40 x 40 yards. Divide the group into 3 equal teams with 2 teams starting on the pitch and one spaced around the outside with a goalkeeper in each goal. One team has the objective of keeping possession and score a goal by making 5 completed passes. They can use the team on the outside to retain possession making a large overload. The other team score by regaining possession and finishing in either goal. Once that team has scored, the possession team restart with a serve from the coach or goalkeeper.



Equipment



15 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Quality & Weight of Pass** – To retain possession, the quality of pass needs to be clean and directed well so the receiving player can have a good first touch to setup the next action. The weight of pass is also critical allowing the ball to be moved around the team easily not putting each other under pressure with an overhit pass making it hard to control the ball. Likewise an under hit pass could lead to an interception and then being countered. Players should be aware of pressure around them and their team mates to decide either to pass into feet or space. The team on the outside should be always ready on their toes.
- **Creating Angles** – To create an option for the person on the ball, the remaining players need to create angles which will open up passing lanes to allow retention of the ball. This could be a few simple steps to either side or a case of making a run off the ball into space to receive. The outside players should move up and down the touchline as well offering support through the overload. The team scoring into the goals also need to create angles having quick reactions as soon as possession is won to provide quick options.
- **Creating Space** – The possession team need to make the area really big by stretching the pitch with height and width making use of the whole area. It is important when they create space they do not block any potential passing lanes into the outside players so the overload is still a big advantage. Movement off the ball by both teams is also important to exploit the space created and either retain the ball or create opportunities to score. On the other hand when the possession team lose the ball they need to react really quick on transition putting pressure on the ball and making strong recovery runs to block space and passing lanes.
- **Execution of Finishing** – As soon as possession has been won by the goal scoring team, can they get their shot off quickly or make the final pass to setup an opportunity? The moment of regain is the point where the opposition are out of shape and this can be exploited with quick ball to supporting runners or driving into space themselves to strike at goal. The execution is crucial selecting an appropriate surface depending on the distance from goal or the weight of pass. A good connection and conviction will give them a great chance of scoring.

Progressions

- Once one team score they then change method of scoring.
- Increase number of passes for a goal.
- Turn into a normal small sided game with or without bounce players.

Regression

- Reduce the area size if you want more transition to happen.

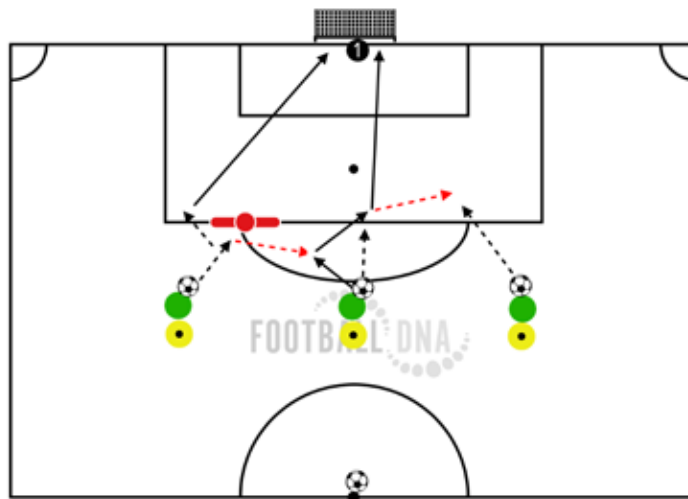
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

3 GROUP MULTI PHASE FINISHING EXERCISE

This is a multi-phase finishing exercise which focuses on the players reaction after having a shot at goal. This is a realistic game scenario whether it is to react to rebounds, initiate a regain or commence a recovery run. The number of players can be varied but make sure players are not waiting around too long. The distance from the goal can be relevant to the ability and age of the players. Part 1 is the player driving at a mannequin, shifting the ball and getting a shot away. Part 2 is the original player turns and sets for the player on the second station to have a shot. Part 3 is the second player turns after his shot and defends against player 3 in a 1v1 situation. All players move on a station after their shot.



Equipment



9 – 16 Players & 1 GK



Cones, Mannequins, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Quick Reactions** – After the first two parts, the player who strikes at goal must react quickly to assist with a wall pass for part 2 or defend a 1 v 1 for part 3. Quick reactions are needed to keep the tempo of the drill high at a match realistic pace. If the reaction isn't quick enough for part the attacker will have a much better chance of scoring without any pressure. When working with players this is great for not reflecting too long on a previous action i.e admiring a shot.
- **Quality of Set** – This component is important to allow the player finishing a good chance of scoring with a well weighted pass that allows a first time shot. The set also needs to be aimed towards the finishers preferred foot left or right which should be communicated by the finisher with a hand signal. The movement needs to be sharp for the wall pass to be effective and gain enough pace on the ball.
- **Attack at Speed** – Get the opponent off balance with a 1 v 1 move then accelerate with the ball under control away quickly and finish. If attacking too slow it will give the defender an opportunity to recover into position and get set, slowing the attacker down forcing them away from goal. This part could be timed to encourage the attacker to be direct and quick.
- **Hitting the Target** – The final execution of all three parts is the most important. The minimum should be to hit the target by gaining a good connection with the ball using a pre determined surface. The side foot may be a good option for part 2 using the pace of the set to guide the ball into net. Whichever finish is selected, the player should decide quickly and hit the ball firmly.

Progressions

- Work in the opposite direction to develop finishing off both feet.
- Bounce player to chip the ball in the air for a volleyed finish from central.

Regression

- On the central station, remove the wall pass with players driving to the penalty spot for a 1 v 1 finish.
- On the final station, remove the 1 v 1 and instead players dribble take two, three touches and strike on an angle.

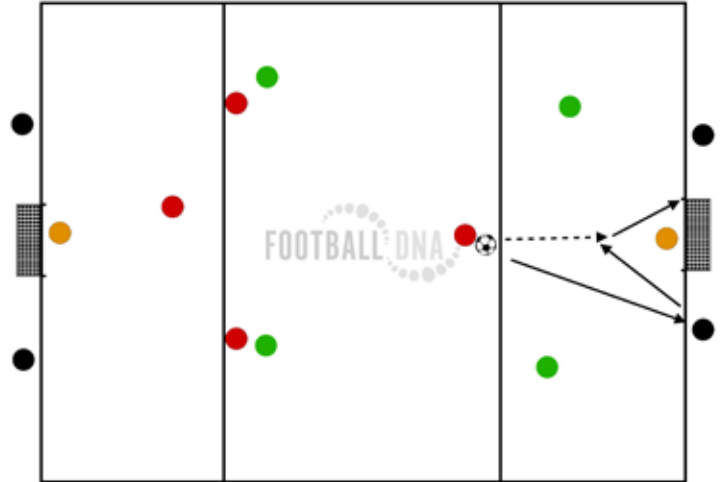
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

4 V 4 SMALL SIDED GAME - BOUNCE & ROTATE

Setup a 40 x 25 and organise three teams of four as well as a goalkeeper in either goal. Two teams are playing against each other, with the other team acting as target players on the outside of the pitch. As soon as a goal is scored, the team that has conceded leaves the pitch and the target players replace them. Add a time limit in case the games last too long.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement** – Players are encouraged to create space by moving to create both width and depth on the pitch. Players off the ball should look to identify how they can make an overload with their movement to help the player on the ball as well as moving to help them combine with their team mates as well.
- **Decision Making (Finding Overload)** – The player on the ball should look to play with their eyes up looking to make overloads and selecting the appropriate skills to change direction and find their team mates. As they will be able to play to the outside target players they can use them to combine as well.
- **Receiving Skills** – Players should look to receive where they're able to play forwards to enable them to attack quickly with an open body shape. If there is space in front of them, they should look to move into that space with a large first touch when receiving. If they're under pressure when they receive, they may need to receive to protect the ball from the defenders.
- **Combination Types** – Within the small sided game, a Give & Go will help the players combine around the defenders, particularly when they have an overload. Underlaps and Overlaps should be used to create space for the player on the ball but also to make forwards runs towards the goal that you're looking to attack too. Use the outside players to help with different combinations as well to create goal scoring opportunities.

Progressions

- Players must make a designated number of passes before they can move from one third into the next.

Regression

- Play unopposed and each team having a ball each whilst also being able to use the outside target players to combine too.

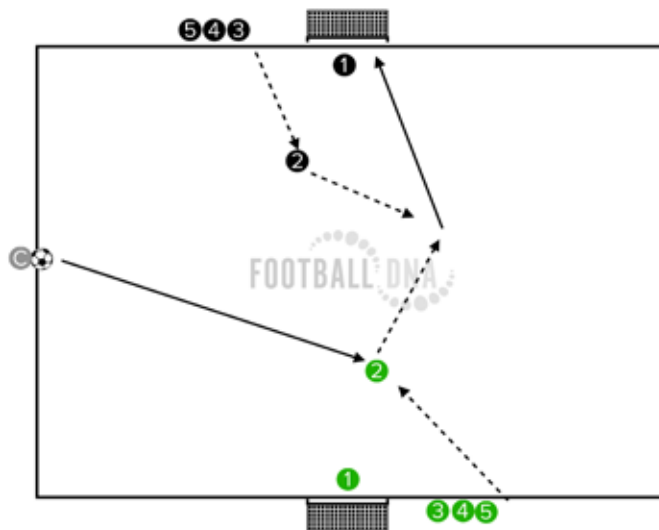
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

1 V 1 TO 4 V 4 GAMES

Using an area 20 yards x 25 yards, divide the group into two teams and number them individually. Teams are located beside each goal, attacking the goal they are facing. The coach shouts a number out for e.g “1”. This number then plays against the same number from the opposite team in a 1 v 1 game. If a goal isn’t scored the coach can add in another number to make 2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4, The coach can decide to start with more than one number if they wish.



Equipment



8 - 12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement off the Ball** – When playing 2 v 2 upwards, it’s important the other players are constantly looking to support the player on the ball to provide an option for a pass or to create space for the player on the ball. A run off the ball like an over or underlap may create that bit of space needed for a shot at goal. The more the numbers increase the more important it becomes that players create angles and passing lanes for each other with less space available on the pitch.
- **Combination Play** – Players need to work together to produce opportunities to score by playing wall passes/give and goes. The quality of these combinations can really unlock tight spaces if they are performed quickly and accurately. The timing and weight of pass are important considerations as the return pass on a wall pass might be a through ball to finish. Ideally these balls want to be in front of the receiver and at a weight to strike first time.
- **Using the Overload** – With the addition of a floater comes an overload which can really help break down a compact shape. The floater needs to be always looking to receive the ball by creating angles and making runs off the ball to receive or distract defenders. The overload is pointless if not used, lots of movement off the ball and quick interplay with the floater is needed.
- **Execution of Finish** – These games produce lots of moments to develop finishing skills from a variety of angles and situations. Composure is needed to keep a calm head in tight areas when also under pressure. Quick decision making is needed to select the right type of finish/surface to use. In 1 v 1 situations players need to create a bit of space for the strike at goal with a 1 v 1 move or the use of their pace. As soon as an opportunity comes to strike at goal, the attacker should take it without hesitation being confident with their attempt.

Progression

- Put a countdown on each game - for e.g 10 seconds to score 1 v 1 before another number is called in.

Regression

- Start with a floater on the pitch to create an overload.

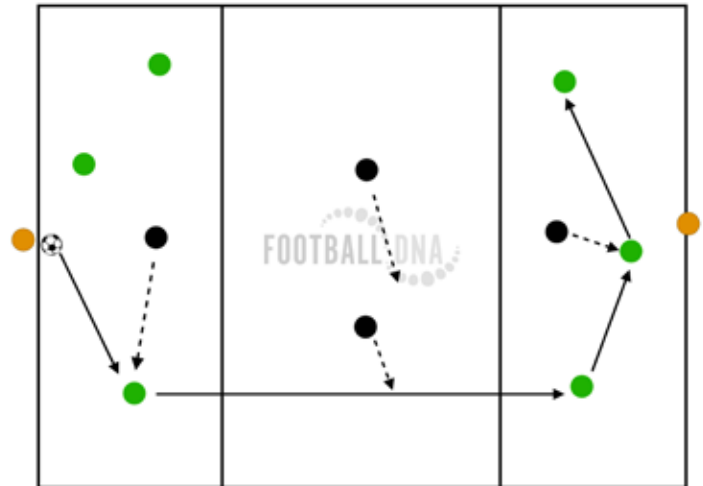
WEEK 4

DEFENDING DEEP

For players to learn and understand how deny space in behind in with a compact shape.

READING THE PLAY PRESS OR DROP

Setup a pitch and split the pitch into thirds. Organise a 3 v 1 in each of the end zones with a supporting bounce player on the outside who starts the practice. In the middle zone, there are two defenders who must prevent the team in possession playing through or over them into the opposite end zone. The attackers can drive out of their zone with the ball and enter the middle zone, with support from one other attacker to create a 2 v 2. Once in this position, they should look to find a way to pass through, over or around. Encourage the defenders in this game to decide when is the right time to press but also to drop as well.



Equipment



12 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – Players throughout this game should look to identify how they will work together as a team to regain possession. To delay the opposition, they need to decide on whether they should press or drop. If the defending team cannot press, they should look to retreat into their shape and organisation whilst maintaining balance and support between them.
- **Compactness** – Defenders should look to defend with compactness preventing the opposition team from being able to play beyond or between the defenders. To maintain compactness, players should shift across as a team once the ball is on one side of the pitch to provide support whilst maintaining balance to ensure the team can quickly shift to the opposite side if the ball is switched play.
- **Forcing Wide / Back** – The nearest defender to the ball should look to force the ball in one direction to help the supporting players to be able to shift across to one side of the pitch to help them to win possession of the ball. The nearest defender may also delay how they press the ball if the team is unbalanced and simply recover back into their shape to help the team to regain compactness.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they over-commit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit space that they have left. Encourage the defenders to win possession of the ball and look to regain it by securing possession of it by staying on the ball or by finding a team mate with a pass.

Progressions

- Add a goal each end on the middle third with players now able to finish in the goal or play into the end zone themselves as before.

Regression

- Set up the practice so it goes one way, with the attacking the team attacking one target player with the ball always restarting from the same side.

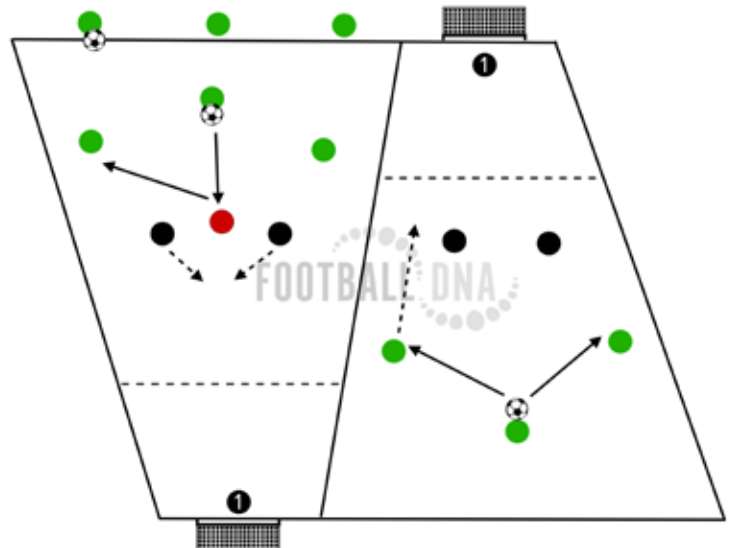
WEEK 4

DEFENDING DEEP

For players to learn and understand how deny space in behind in with a compact shape.

DEFENDING FUNNEL CIRCUIT

Set up two funnel pitches side by side going in opposite directions with a goal at the opposite end. Set up a drop zone that the defenders cannot enter with the distance (12-18 yards) relative to the goal size and age/ability of players. Organise attackers into groups of three on the outside of each pitch with a ball between and set up a floater on one of the pitches as well. The attackers must work together as a group of three to try and score, once they have had a turn attacking one way, they then move into the other half to attack the other way on the next pitch. If defenders win the ball, they then must score by running over the start line or put target goals in. Rotate the attackers and defenders regularly and keep score to make the game competitive.



Equipment



10 - 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Press / Drop** - The defenders in this game should work together and decide whether they should press or drop. If they can apply pressure on the ball as they are positioned high up the pitch, they should look to do so and win the ball high up. Otherwise, if they are positioned high up they may need to drop to and protect the space behind them. Players will need to put pressure on the player on the ball as they near the drop zone line to ensure that they don't drop deeper than this and can prevent the opposition from getting shots away at goal.
- **Compactness** - The defenders should work collectively to prevent the opposition from playing beyond and between them. Due to the funnel pitch, they should use this to their advantage and force play wide and their team mates support the player that is pressurising the ball to prevent them from playing between or through them.
- **Forcing Wide/Back** - If the defending team can force the opponents wide / back, this will keep them away from central areas and stop them from creating goalscoring opportunities. If the ball is forced into a wide area, challenge defenders to try and keep them in that wide area and prevent from being able to switch play where they could be exposed on the opposite side of the pitch.
- **1v1 Defending** - In 1 v 1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they over-commit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit the overload that they have. Encourage the defenders once they have won the ball to either secure possession or begin an attack.

Progression

- The team without the ball that are waiting can be passed back into and subsequently join the attack.

Regression

- The floater acts as an additional defender rather than attacker and can move from one pitch to the other to help create a defensive overload.

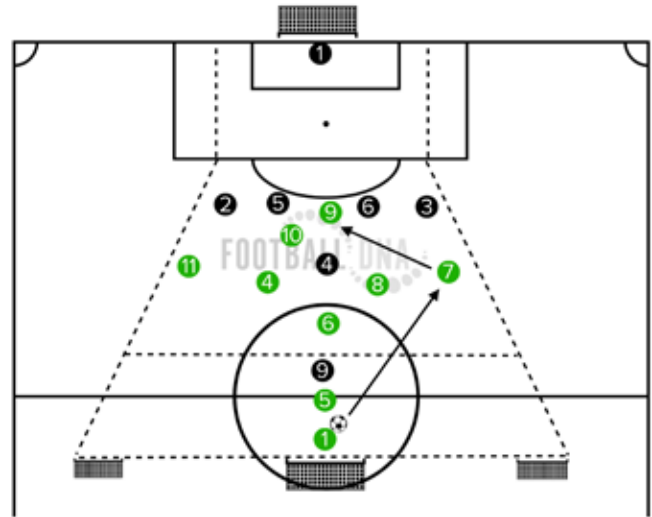
WEEK 4

DEFENDING DEEP

For players to learn and understand how deny space in behind in with a compact shape.

DEFENDING DEEP HALF PITCH FUNNEL

Setup on just over half a pitch a funnel from the 18 yard box to the half way line with a goal either end. Organise two teams with one team attacking the large goal and the other team with their goalkeeper defending the large goal and scoring in one of the 3 target goals. Mark out a zone for a 1 v 1 inside the half way line. The attacking team have a 7 v 5 overload in their favour. If the defending team win the ball from the opposition they can play into their centre forward who tries to beat the defender or lay the ball off for supporting players who then have to try and score into one of the target goals. The defending team may want to bypass their centre forward by playing into the target goals situated wide.



Equipment



14 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Press / Drop** – Encourage the no.9 to force play one and either press the ball or drop and be ready to block passes into the next third. The other defenders should look to then take up their position based of that player by either squeezing up and limiting space for their opponent or dropping deeper to protect space in behind them that the attackers may look to exploit.
- **Compactness** – The defenders should work collectively to prevent the opposition from playing beyond and between them. Due to the funnel pitch, they should use this to their advantage and force play wide and their team mates support the player that is pressurising the ball to prevent them from playing between or through them.
- **Forcing Wide / Back** – If the defending team can force the opponents wide / back, this will keep them away from central areas and stop them from creating goalscoring opportunities. If the ball is forced into a wide area, challenge defenders to try and keep them in that wide area and prevent from being able to switch play where they could be exposed on the opposite side of the pitch.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations, players should look to get side on and look to win the ball and come away with it themselves to help retain possession for their team. Players need to be patient with their defending, if they overcommit too early or too late, this will allow the attacking team to be able to exploit the overload that they have. Encourage the defenders once they have won the ball to either secure possession or begin an attack.

Progression

- Remove the funnel and set up the pitch as a small sided game or the players in the zone can move/drop into the pitch to make it an 8v6.

Regression

- One player from the attacking team can drop into the zone on the half way line to create an overload to help them to be able to play out from the back.

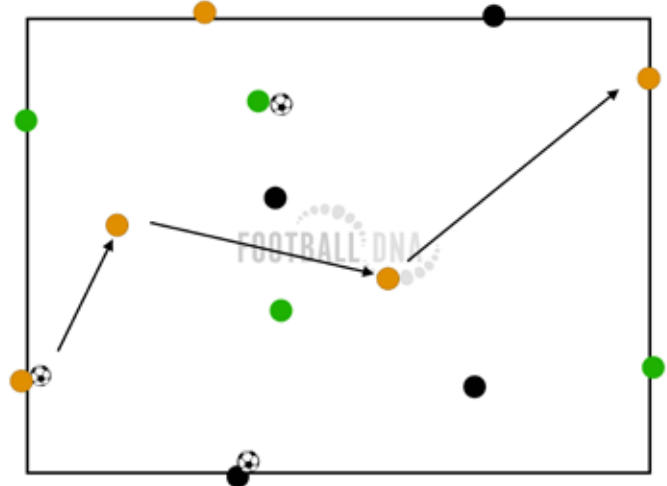
WEEK 5

CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

PASSING & RECEIVING WITH AWARENESS SKILLS

Mark out a 20 x 20 yard area and divide the group into 4's with each group wearing bibs. 2 players are nominated to start in the middle and 2 on the outside of the area. Working with one ball players transfer the ball from an outside player to the opposite outside player by the pair in the middle combining with each other. After passing, players on the outside must move to a different side of the area but cannot be on the same side as their team mate. This exercise can be made easier by increasing the area size to give players more space and time to make decisions and perform the actions needed.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- Awareness** – A key component of this exercise is the ability for players to know who is around them and where the space is to move into and receive. The players inside have to be aware of each others position to provide the correct angles to combine and transfer the ball to the outside. With 2 other groups inside the same area, it can become congested with a good chance of players turning into each other if they are not aware of what is near them. To develop awareness players have to play with their head up and be always scanning the area behind, in front and to the side. Before receiving players should check their shoulder to see if they can turn or to check the position of their partner and the players position on the outside as this constantly changes.
- Angles & Movement** – With good awareness, players can now move into the best spaces to receive the ball. Every player is involved in creating good angles to support each player on the ball. The middle pair have to work with each other with the first receiver setting the ball for their partner. The second player has to move their position to receive off the setting player. If the distances are too big it will not produce quick combination play in tight areas which is the purpose of the exercise. Outside players can also help the middle players by moving sides to provide an option to play out, they do not have to stay on the same side.
- Decision Making** – As it can become congested at times and with the addition of 2 taggers, players need to be alert and concentrating to make quick and good decisions. With the help of their awareness, players have to think about whether they can turn with the ball, can they pass the first time or do they need to control and wait for support from their team mates. When taggers are introduced, groups must work as a team to provide angles to release the ball so the player cannot be tagged.
- Quality of Pass** – Passing has to be of good weight so players have the option to set the ball first time or pass first time. The pass needs to be firm with the ball running smoothly across the pitch giving the receiver a good ball to play with. If the pass is too hard or bobbled in it becomes more difficult to produce quick combination play. Accuracy is also important so the receiver doesn't have to move their body too much after creating the angle to receive the ball. This also will allow the combinations to be at a good pace and give players the best chance of playing one touch football through the middle. Focus is needed when passing to check team mates body position and then deliver a good side footed pass.

Progressions

- Players can combine with a wall pass to swap outside players.
- Introduce 2 taggers who try to tag players on the ball.

Regression

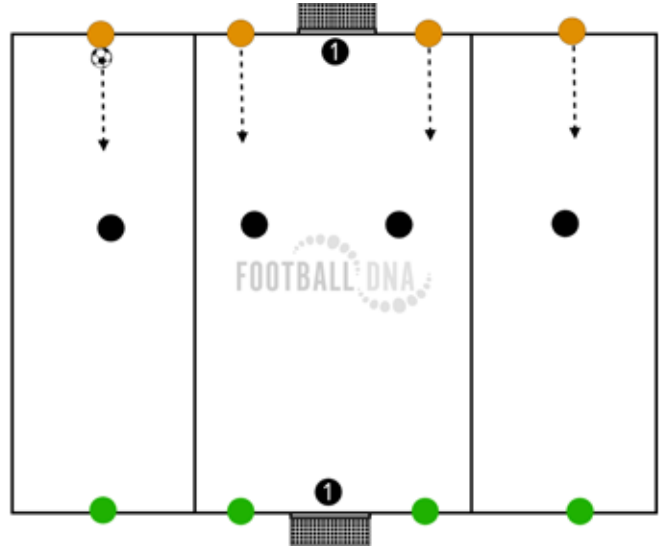
- Only work with two teams in the middle with 3 players inside and 3 outside

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

4 V 4 WAVE PRACTICE COMBINING & FINISHING

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal either end along with a goalkeeper, with the pitch split into 3 channels with flat markers. Players are divided into groups of 4 at either end of the pitch. A team of 4 start on the pitch, with 1 defender in each outside channel and two in the central channel. The ball starts with an attacking team who can only have the same number of players in each channel too. 1 v 1 in outside channels and a 2 v 2 centrally. The attacking team simply have to score but are locked in their zones, with the defending team scoring in the opposite goal if they win the ball. Once the ball has gone out or a goal has been scored, the team that attacked become the defending team and the next set of 4 players attack going the other way.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement/Creating Space** – Players without the ball should look to move to create space for themselves to receive the ball or to move a defender to create space for one of their team mates. Players may look to make movements that support players both either behind or in advance of the ball.
- **Combination Play** – As players are locked into their zones, players may need to work between one another to help them to combine. Combinations in this game can help players to play around defenders to help them to get into goalscoring positions. Encourage the middle players not only to combine between them, but also with the wide players to help them to create crossing opportunities.
- **Awareness / Decision Making** – Players in this game should be continually looking to scan what's around them to help them to identify spaces that they can exploit. The players in the middle will need to be able to position their body where they can see both sides to help them to switch play quickly if needed. Likewise, players on the outside will need to get their eyes up to identify any movement from the players in the middle area as they look to cross the ball into them.
- **Finishing** – The area of the pitch will change the types of finishes that players need. Attackers should look to adapt the finishing techniques that they're using based on whether it's coming from a central area or wide area. Players should look to finish of one or two touches where possible.

Progressions

- The defending team remain locked in, but the attacking team can create a +1 overload in any of the channels. This could be in the outside channels to make a 2 v 1 to exploit with an over/underlap.

Regression

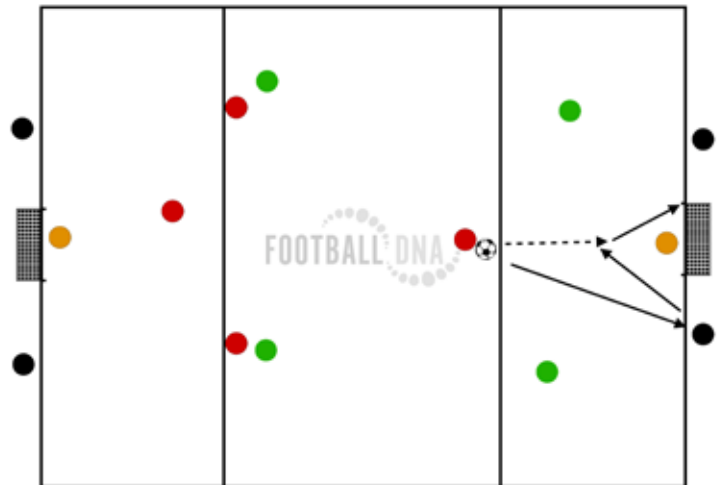
- Unlock both the defending and attacking team from their channels as a standard 4 v 4 game. If you have spare players, you can use as overload players in the channels to make a 2 v 1 or 3 v 2.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

4 V 4 SMALL SIDED GAME - BOUNCE & ROTATE

Setup a 40 x 25 and organise three teams of four as well as a goalkeeper in either goal. Two teams are playing against each other, with the other team acting as target players on the outside of the pitch. As soon as a goal is scored, the team that has conceded leaves the pitch and the target players replace them. Add a time limit in case the games last too long.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK's



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement** – Players are encouraged to create space by moving to create both width and depth on the pitch. Players off the ball should look to identify how they can make an overload with their movement to help the player on the ball as well as moving to help them combine with their team mates as well.
- **Decision Making (Finding Overload)** – The player on the ball should look to play with their eyes up looking to make overloads and selecting the appropriate skills to change direction and find their team mates. As they will be able to play to the outside target players they can use them to combine as well.
- **Receiving Skills** – Players should look to receive where they're able to play forwards to enable them to attack quickly with an open body shape. If there is space in front of them, they should look to move into that space with a large first touch when receiving. If they're under pressure when they receive, they may need to receive to protect the ball from the defenders.
- **Combination Types** – Within the small sided game, a Give & Go will help the players combine around the defenders, particularly when they have an overload. Underlaps and Overlaps should be used to create space for the player on the ball but also to make forwards runs towards the goal that you're looking to attack too. Use the outside players to help with different combinations as well to create goal scoring opportunities.

Progressions

- Players must make a designated number of passes before they can move from one third into the next.

Regression

- Play unopposed and each team having a ball each whilst also being able to use the outside target players to combine too.

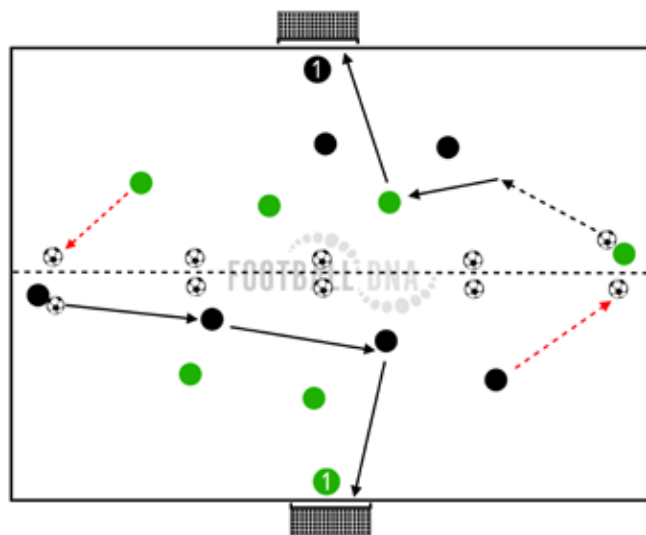
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

SCORE 1ST TO WIN

Setup an area and split the pitch into two with a goal at either end. Organise two teams with each team having five balls each and play 3 v 2 with the attackers scoring past the goalkeeper. To make it competitive, the team that scores the most within two minutes wins. Defenders score by running the ball over the half way line and if they do this, they get a point. If the ball goes out of play, or the defenders score, one attacker must collect the ball from the middle to relaunch the attack. Add all the points together after each round of 5 footballs and regularly change the attackers and defenders.



Equipment



10 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Creating Space** – As the attacking team has an overload, they should look to create width and depth to help them to play between and beyond the opposition team. Players should look to move to create overloads which will help them to exploit space. If a defender follows an attacker, other attackers may look to move into that space that has been vacated.
- **Combination Play** – In this game, attackers will need to combine quickly to move the two defenders as well as to help them to create opportunities to be able to score. Encourage players to combine in areas where they have an overload against the defender with movements such as over and underlaps.
- **Awareness / Decision Making** – Players in this game should be continually looking to scan what's around them to help them to identify spaces that they can exploit. In this game as the attackers are playing 3 v 2, they should look to identify with and without the ball opportunities to create overloads as well as space that they can exploit too.
- **Finishing** – The area of the pitch will change the types of finishes that players need. Players may be able to get shots away from crosses, outside of the box as well as inside of the box too. Encourage players to get shots away on both feet to ensure they don't lose opportunities to shoot and give the defenders time to block shots.

Progressions

- Coach passes the ball into one group who attack 3 v 2. After the defenders have won the ball back, they now play into their attackers to make the game transitional.

Regression

- Add a target player that can play between either half to increase the overload for the attacking team.

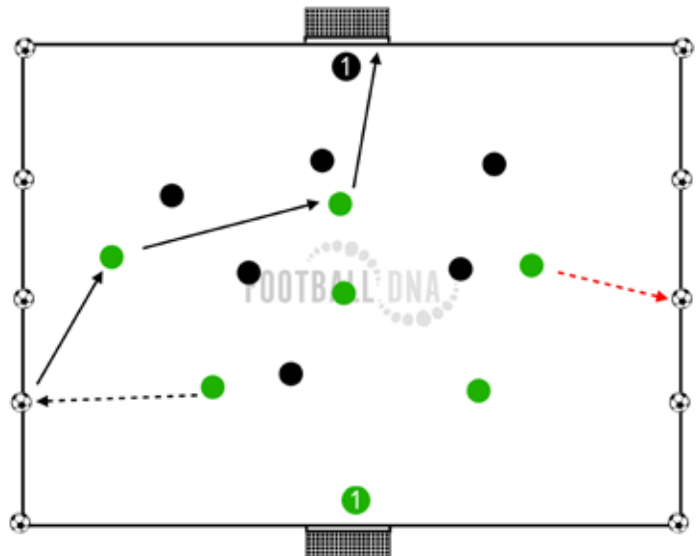
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

MULTI BALL

Setup a small sided game with two goals and organise two teams with a goalkeeper in either goal. Make the game directional. Line footballs up around the outside off the pitch and the game starts by a player collecting the ball on the outside and then attacking their goal. Once a ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, the team who would normally get possession collect a ball from anywhere and attack. Play until all footballs have been used and then restart the game by placing the footballs back around the outside of the pitch.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Creating Space** - As the attacking team brings the ball into play from the outside of the pitch, the team should look to create both width and depth to help them to be able to be in a position to retain possession of the ball as well as exploit spaces left by the opposition.
- **Combination Play** - Quick, short sharp combinations will help players to enter the pitch with their ball and create goalscoring opportunities for them and their team. Encourage players to use combinations between them, but also to move to create overloads where they can use these combinations to exploit space/eliminate defenders.
- **Awareness / Decision Making** - Players in this game should be continually looking to scan what's around them to help them to identify spaces that they can exploit. If a team restarts with their ball, they should look to choose a ball which is going to help them to retain but also create a goalscoring opportunity too.
- **Finishing** - The area of the pitch will change the types of finishes that players need. Players may be able to get shots away from crosses, outside of the box as well as inside of the box too. Encourage players to get shots away on both feet to ensure they don't lose opportunities to shoot and give the defenders time to block shots.

Progressions

- Make the game multi-directional with teams being able to score in either goal.

Regression

- A football can only be brought into play once a goal has been scored, which will increase the length of each round.

BLOCK 4 - WEEK 19 - 24

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Space - Weight & Quality Of Pass - Support & Movement - Awareness & Body Shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision Making - Supporting the Counter at Pace - Timing Forward Runs - Execution of Pass, Cross or Finish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weight & Quality of Pass - Awareness - Passing to Feet (Hold Up Play) or Space (Runs In Behind) - Types of Finishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When & How To Press - Angle of Approach - Use of Body - Communication 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Building From The Back	Counter Attacking & Overloads	Combination Play In The Final Third	Defending From The Front	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 19	Week 20	Week 21	Week 22	Week 23	Week 24

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 19](#)

[Week 20](#)

[Week 21](#)

[Week 22](#)

[Week 23](#)

[Week 24](#)

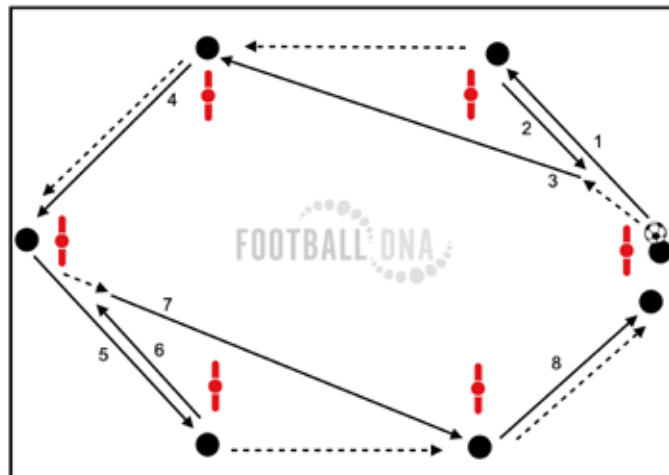
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

CENTRE BACKS STEPPING IN PASSING

A passing practice that can be used specifically for centre back's stepping in as well as an activation passing warm up to practice the weight & quality of pass & first touch to help progress through the pitch. Setup 6 mannequins 10-15 yards apart in a hexagon shape with a player stood on each. The ball starts at one of the single points of the hexagon and is transferred around the shape with the first pass being a wall pass for the centre back to receive and drive on and pass or play first time into midfield'. Once the ball arrives at the next single point (5), the wall pass is repeated again. Players move to the next mannequin after the ball is transferred to the next player. Practice circulating the ball in both directions.



Equipment



7 - 16 Players



Cones, Mannequins, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **First Touch** - The first touch is so important to setup the next pass. The receiver should select a surface early make sure they gain good contact and push the ball forward into the space and direction of the next pass.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** - The weight of pass to keep it 1 & 2 touch needs to be right. If the pass is too heavy, it will mean players having to take 2 & 3 touches which slows the drill down. Passes should be punched in with the side foot and played safe side.
- **Decision Making** - As the practice progresses and different variations are added the selection of pass becomes a decision to make. This will depend on the quality of the first touch and if the ball is in a suitable position to strike long. The decision could be to strike the longer pass or take an extra touch and find a short pass.
- **Timing of Movement** - Players should create space by providing angles for the player in possession, It is important the movements are not performed too early to receive the ball as this would mean them being stood still and in a match scenario become marked or pressed.

Progressions

- Add another combination at a different mannequin or miss out mannequins with passes to introduce longer passes.

Regression

- Circulate the ball around the hexagon shape without any combination play, simple pass and follow.

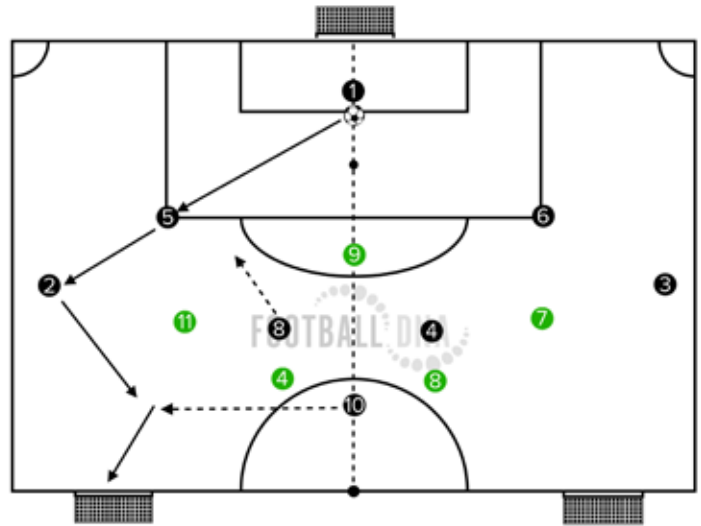
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

LOCKED IN 7 V 5 HALF PITCH PRACTICE

Set up 7 attackers v 5 defenders using half a pitch with it split down the middle vertically with one goal on the goal line and two goals halfway. Organise the attacking team and set them out in 4-2-1 shape. Attackers must stay on their side of the pitch apart from the number 10 with the defending team being able to move freely across the pitch. The attacking team are scoring in either of the two goals and the defending team score in the bigger goal or completing 5 passes. The ball always starts with the single goalkeeper. Rotate the attacking and defending teams regularly if appropriate.



Equipment



12 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – Players should look to create width and depth when in possession of both sides of the pitch to allow them to both be able to exploit space on the side of the pitch that they're in as well as be able to switch play to the opposite side if needed too. As the No.10 can create the overload with their movement, players should look to find ways of utilising this player who is in a 'free role' to fill spaces that are vacated by their team mates but also that are left by the defenders as well.
- **Angles & Support** – Encourage attackers to be on different lines to one another to ensure that they're always available to receive the ball. The attacking team should look to create options for the player on the ball: behind, beside and ahead of them. By having players at different angles it will help players to receive to see the whole pitch and ascertain when is the right time to: play through, round or back.
- **Passing & Receiving** – Encourage players to receive with an open body shape to enable them to see the whole pitch as well as play forwards too. Players will need to adapt their weight of pass based on how/where/who they're passing too i.e. if they are switching play to exploit an overload/space they may need to use a firm weight of pass to be able to do this.
- **End Product** – Players will need to adjust their types of finishes both in and outside of the box to capitalise upon any goal scoring opportunities that they create. Likewise, players will need to ensure they are clinical with how they create opportunities for themselves or their team mates as well.

Progressions

- Attackers can move from one side of the pitch to the other once they have passed or travelled with the ball into the other half.

Regression

- Increase the overload for the attackers or the size of the pitch to give them more space. Alternatively, you can have two footballs in play at one time.

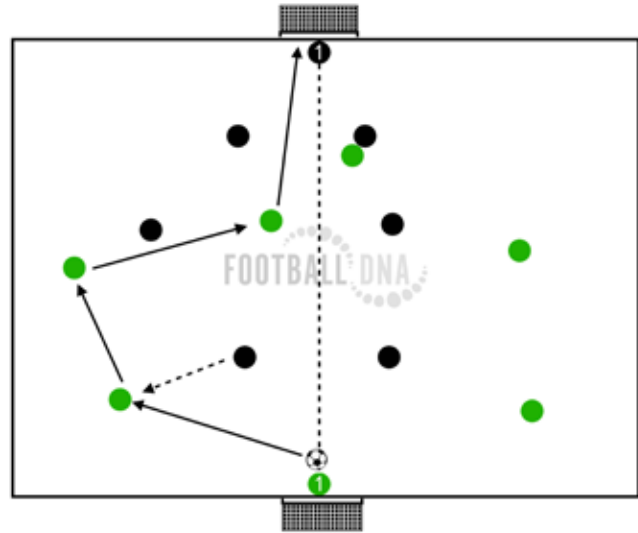
WEEK 1

Building From The Back

To support players with the ability to progress the ball from the back and throughout the pitch.

LOCKED IN SMALL SIDED GAME

Setup a small sided game with two goals and a goal-keeper in either goal. You will need to organise two teams and split the pitch vertically in half as well. In this game, attackers locked in, defenders free. Organise both teams to have a set number of players that they must have in each half when they are in possession of the ball. In doing this, it will enable the attacking team to create space across both halves of the pitch. Both teams in this game are trying to score and the rules should be the same as a normal small sided game except for the conditions stated.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – Players should look to create width and depth when in possession of both sides of the pitch to allow them to both be able to exploit space on the side of the pitch that they're in as well as be able to switch play to the opposite side if needed too. Once the team has won possession of the ball, they will need to disperse quickly to create that width and depth across both sides of the pitch to create space for the player in possession of the ball as well as themselves.
- **Angles & Support** – Encourage attackers to be on different lines to one another to ensure that they're always available to receive the ball. The attacking team should look to create options for the player on the ball: behind, beside and ahead of them. By having players at different angles, it will help players to receive to see the whole pitch and ascertain when is the right time to: play through, round or back.
- **Passing & Receiving** – Encourage players to receive with an open body shape to enable them to see the whole pitch as well as play forwards too. Players will need to adapt their weight of pass based on how/where/who they're passing too i.e. if they are switching play to exploit an overload/space they may need to use a firm weight of pass to be able to do this.
- **End Product** – Players will need to adjust their types of finishes both in and outside of the box to capitalise upon any goal scoring opportunities that they create. As this game is played with one goal at either end, players may need to vary the types of opportunities that they create and look to finish with players in the opposite half. This will lead to teams trying to cross the ball etc.

Progressions

- Have a set number of players that must be in one half at one time when you are in possession of the ball, giving the players freedom to rotate providing they maintain their offensive shape.

Regression

- Add a magic man that can play for either team in possession of the ball and is able to move into either half of the pitch. This will help to create an overload for the attacking team.

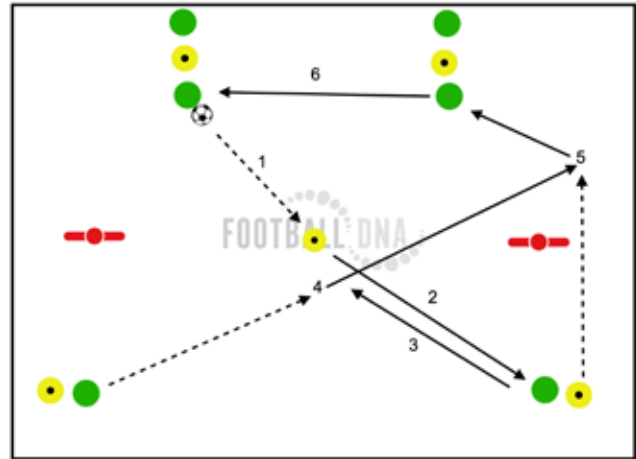
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & PENETRATION

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third with penetration.

PASSING WITH PENETRATION

A passing exercise with the objective of leading into the penetration practice afterwards. This exercise develops the ability for players to play quick combination play to penetrate against the opposition with forward movement. The first part of the move replicates a centre back driving into and overloading midfield to find a team mate on the angle who plays a wall pass back for a runner to move onto the ball and play a through ball and pass to the next player like a full back or wide player. After each pass players move onto the next outside cone in the direction of play.



Equipment



6 – 12 Players



Cones, Mannequins & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Combination Play** – Players need to think about the combination pattern set out and concentrate on each individual action. To allow the combination play to occur, the weight of pass is important along with making good contact on the ball. If players are flat footed and are not ready to receive this will often result in a poor touch and not being able to move the feet to adjust for any poor passes.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Circulating the ball requires a high level of concentration on the delivery of the pass making sure it is firm along the ground to allow the receiver to have a good first touch without having to deviate their position. The weight is also critical so the pass can be controlled easily or a first time set can happen.
- **Timing of Movement** – This applies for the “full back/wide player” running onto the penetrating through pass. If they go too early they will be ahead of the ball and either have to check back and receive slowing the move down or will completely be missed out. The moment to set off is just as the player before receives the ball arriving onto the ball carrying on in their stride.
- **Speed of Play** – The movement and passing needs to be quick and sharp replicating match tempo. This relies on the ability of players to play one and two touch when required. Movement that is well timed will keep the speed high along with clean and well directed passes into the next player.

Progressions

- Add different combinations & movements working on both sides.

Regression

- Have a player on each cone with players passing and following from cone to cone. Challenge players to pass to feet first and then into space for the receiver to run onto.

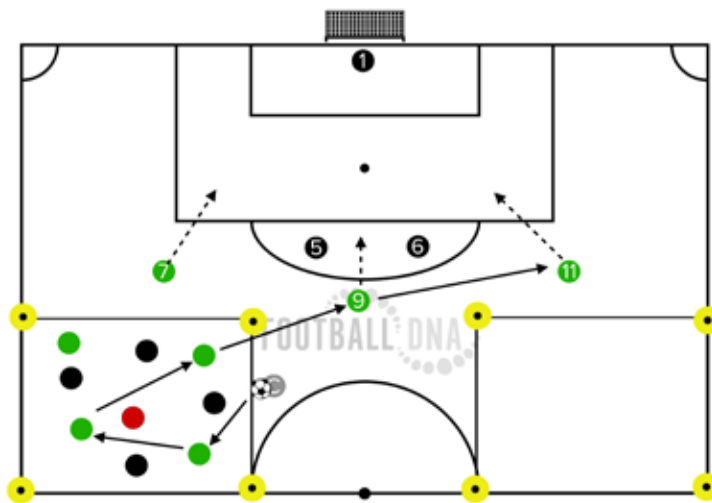
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & PENETRATION

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third with penetration.

PLAYING WITH PENETRATION

Setup three possession boxes across the pitch each measuring 20 x 20 yards approximately (can be changed depending on ability, numbers and age). Play 4 v 4 plus 1 floater in each of the boxes. In the attacking third outside of the boxes we have 2 centre backs, 2 strikers and a number 10. The objective for the team that starts with possession of the ball in the box is to make 4 passes and then pass to the striker or number 10 who attack in a 3 v 2 situation. If the other team in the possession box wins possession of the ball they can immediately pass out of the box into one of the 3 attacking players. This represents our behaviour in defending to attacking transition situations. The scores are kept to see which of the teams in the box can create the most goals. Note if you have more defenders or attackers they can rotate in and out.



Equipment



14 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Building Possession** – To complete the 4 passes players must move the ball quickly using 1 & 2 touch. They need to use the overload of the floating player to their advantage creating a 5 v 4 in their favour. The team in possession should stretch the area long and wide creating space to play in. If after 4 passes the opportunity to play into the final third isn't available, the team should retain possession until the correct opportunity is created.
- **Quality of Pass** – Linked to building possession, the weight of pass is important to keep touches to a minimum. The pass into the final third needs to be of good quality so the forward players can get it under control easily or set first time. If the pass is poor, the move will slow/break down. When in the final third the pass selection is important to create the best chance possible. Passes should aim to be slightly in front for players to step onto.
- **Penetrating Runs** – When the ball is played into the final third area, the forward should be looking to make runs in behind/down the sides of centre half's being on the shoulder creating space for themselves or for the no.10 to receive & drive with the ball. As the session progresses, players from the possession can join in and run beyond the forwards into the box.
- **Finishing Techniques** – Once in and around the penalty area, encourage players to strike at goal when there is a chance. Focus should be on hitting the target, making a good connection with the ball to make the goalkeeper work. As the session builds up, the use of one touch finishes may be more applicable when there is more bodies in the penalty area. In 1 v 1 situations against centre half's players need to be positive and attack with pace and conviction.

Progressions

- Work from different areas of the pitch – left, central & right. Allow defenders and attackers from the possession box to join in the attack with a focus on penetrating support runs and recovery runs.

Regression

- Overload one team in the possession box to make it easier for them to transfer the ball into the strikers.

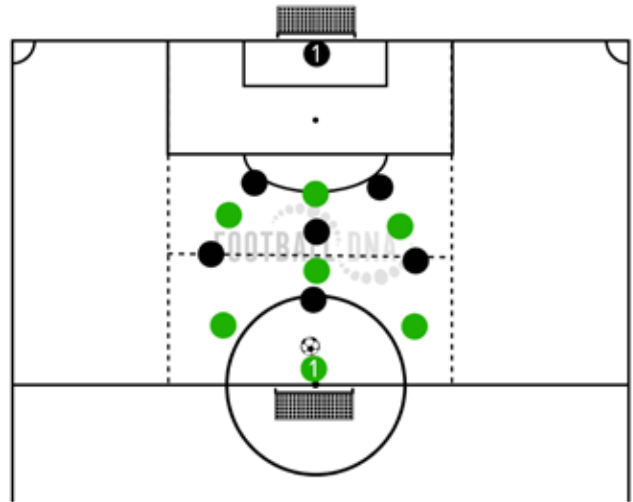
WEEK 2

COUNTER ATTACKING & PENETRATION

To support players with the ability to transition into attack quickly and exploit overloads in the final third with penetration.

HALFWAY LINE COUNTER ATTACKING SSG

Set up a small sided game using half a pitch with two goals at either end with a goalkeeper in each goal. Organise two teams to create a 6v6/7v7 game. Split the pitch into half by placing a half way line in and play as a normal small sided game but one attacker must always be in their attacking half. In this game, focus on counter attacking from defending deep.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Team Defending** – The defending team should work collectively when out of possession to organise themselves to defend team. They should aim to be compact and deny the opposition spaces between and beyond them and try to make play predictable. By doing this, it will enable the defenders to anticipate where the ball will go so that they can then look to intercept and launch an attack.
- **Movement / Creating Space** – Once the defenders have won possession of the ball, encourage them to disperse creating both width and depth for their team. This will help to create space for the player on the ball as well as themselves as they look to support either: behind, beside or beyond the player in possession of the ball. Players should look to create and exploit space for themselves or their team mates.
- **Passing & Receiving** – Encourage the attacker that has won possession of the ball to secure the ball with their first pass. This will help the attacking team to either retain possession or launch a counter attack. If they have won possession and there is space in front of them, encourage them to move into this space or play the furthest forward pass to help the team to counter attack. The quicker and fewer passes that they can counter with, the less time that they give for the defenders to reorganise themselves.
- **Finishing** – Encourage players to be clinical with their finishing to maximise the opportunities that they have created for themselves on the counter attack. Attackers should look to take opportunities to shoot where possible, preventing the defenders to get back into their shape and block/intercept an goal scoring opportunities.

Progressions

- If the attacking team can score from a regain in their own half it's worth double goals. This will encourage defenders to launch counter attacks once they have won possession of the ball.

Regression

- Add a retreat line for the defending team when the attackers have possession of the ball, to encourage them to defend deep within their own half.

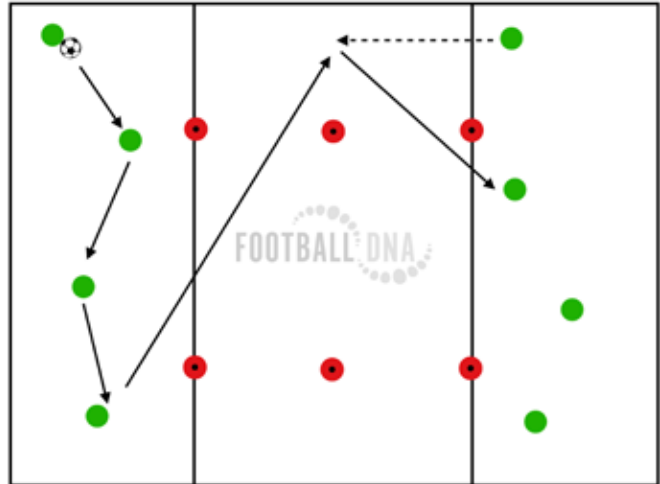
WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY IN MIDFIELD

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play from middle third into the final third to score goals.

PLAYING THROUGH THE THIRDS WITH ROTATION

Setup a 30 x 20 area with three thirds and the middle area split into 3 boxes. 2 groups of 4 players in each end third, with the middle zone left empty. The players in the end thirds keep possession by passing & moving within the zone. On the whistle, one player from the opposite group step out of their third and into the middle third to receive a pass and then transfer to their own group. The players moving into the middle should use the middle boxes as a guide to receive the ball on an angle.



Equipment



8 Players



Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – This possession based drill requires players to constantly pass the ball to each other before waiting for the coaches command. Players should pass with purpose and a good weight to make the pass get to the receiver and have the ability to keep the sequence going. On the command, players need to work the ball into position for a angled pass. This pass needs to have good contact, be firm and target the players back foot as they will be on the half turn. When the drill develops to combination play, the set from the player who has created the angle needs to be a soft cushioned one into the path of the runner to play first time. A side foot cushion, opening the foot up gaining a large contact area is recommended.
- **Movement to Create Angles** – While the ball is being circulated in the opposite zone, players are encouraged to keep on the move and be ready for the command. Upon the command, one player needs to step out of the zone and into either of the 3 wide channels depending where the ball is. The angle created should enable a diagonal pass with the receiver being on the half turn wanting the ball on the back foot to play forward. The player creating the angle needs to be at a distance where they can receive away from the defender to get on the half turn. Players receiving on the angle, are recommended to position themselves in the middle between the two zones.
- **Timing of Rotation & Combination Play** – As the drill progresses, players are asked to combine and rotate in the same sequence. Combination play needs to be quick and 1/2 touch max. For the rotation to be smooth and quick, players need to concentrate and communicate with team mates. The player receiving the lay off in the middle to play out, shouldn't get too close to the passer and at a distance where they can run onto the ball in their normal stride. Rotation should be seamless because, if caught in between two minds their positions will be out of balance and in a match could mean the loss of possession and being countered.

Progressions

- Add rotation of players, once the ball has been transferred from the middle third, the two players who combine swap groups.
- The player moving into the middle now sets the ball for a runner to play into the next group. The player setting moves to the other group and the player passing out follows the pass. This could also be done as an overlap movement.
- Have two balls going at the same time with one for each group of 4 players.

Regression

- Have one ball between each group and instead of playing into the middle third, players swap balls with the other group.

WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY IN MIDFIELD

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play from middle third into the final third to score goals.

COMBINING TO PLAY THROUGH THE PITCH

Setup two areas opposite one another with a space between both the areas. In each area, organise a 3 v 2 and have two 'link' players that are placed in the space between the two areas. There is also two target players at the back of each area. Teams must try to play through the link players and transfer the ball to the opposite target players. You can stipulate a certain number of passes before passing out if needed. If the defenders win the ball, they also must transfer the ball into the bounce players who then look to transfer it to the other team to restart possession.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – In this possession based practice, players should look to retain possession between one another with short, quick passes between them. Encourage players to use different weights of passes to commit defenders but also to bypass them as well. Players should look to make good decisions on where they pass the ball i.e. front foot, back foot etc.
- **Movement to Create Angles** – Encourage players to move throughout their possession box to enable them to be available for the player on the ball. Player should look to receive at different angles to one another to ensure the player in possession of the ball as multiple options whether that be round or between the defenders.
- **Awareness / Body Shape** – Players should look to continually be checking their shoulders throughout the possession game to see the opponent, space as well as their team mates. Encourage players to scan before they receive the ball to help them to make quick decisions as well as recognise when they can play into the bounce players too. It is important the link players can see the ball and the opposite area where they wish to transfer the ball into.
- **Combination Play** – Quick, short sharp combinations will allow the attackers to retain possession between them but also exploit space and eliminate defenders. Encourage attackers to use bounce passes or 1 – 2s around the defenders to keep possession but also to play into the target players. The aim is to play forward as much as possible so after any good combination play, ideally the next pass would be in this direction to “break lines”

Progressions

- Players must pass out of the area into the 1st player who then plays to the 2nd player to transfer or add a wall pass between the two players.
- Players must pass out of the area to the furthest player first, who can combine with team mate or transfer into the next area.
- Add a defender in between the areas for a 2 v 1.

Regression

- Instead of two target players on the outside of the box, have another player inside or make the areas bigger.

WEEK 3

COMBINATION PLAY IN MIDFIELD

To support players to combine with team mates together to produce combination play from middle third into the final third to score goals.

COMBINING TO PLAY THROUGH THE PITCH & FINISH

Setup two areas opposite one another with a space between both the areas. In each area, organise a 3 v 2 and have two 'link' players that are placed in the space between the two areas. Setup a goal at either end as well with a goalkeeper in each goal. The goalkeeper starts with the ball and tries to play out into the attacking team who have to play into the link players who then transfer the ball into the next area for players to try and break out 1 v 1 against the goalkeeper. Once they have broken out, they cannot be followed. If the defenders win the ball from when teams are trying to build play, they can score in the goal the attack has started from. If they win the ball once transferred into their area, they can pass to their team mates in the opposite area to try and score



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Combination Play** – Players will need to use quick, short sharp combinations between them to help them to retain possession in their square as well as to play into the bounce players. Combinations will also be needed in their final third to help them to create goal scoring opportunities for themselves or their team mates.
- **Movement to Create Angles** – Encourage players to move throughout their possession box to enable them to be available for the player on the ball. Player should look to receive at different angles to one another to ensure the player in possession of the ball as multiple options whether that be round or between the defenders.
- **Awareness / Body Shape** – Players should look to continually be checking their shoulders throughout the possession game to see the opponent, space as well as their team mates. Encourage players to scan before they receive the ball to help them to make quick decisions as well as recognise when they can play into the bounce players too.
- **Finishing** – Players will need to take opportunities to get shots at goal but also to be ready to pounce on any rebounds as well. Due to the size of the area, players should be encouraged to use both feet to take shots when they see it's appropriate to do so.

Progression

- Players must pass out of the box into the 1st player who then plays to the 2nd player to transfer or add a wall pass between the two players.
- Players must pass out of the box to the furthest player first, who can combine with team mate or transfer into the next box.
- Add a defender in between the areas for a 2 v 1.

Regression

- Instead of two bounce players on the outside of the box, have another player inside or make the areas bigger.

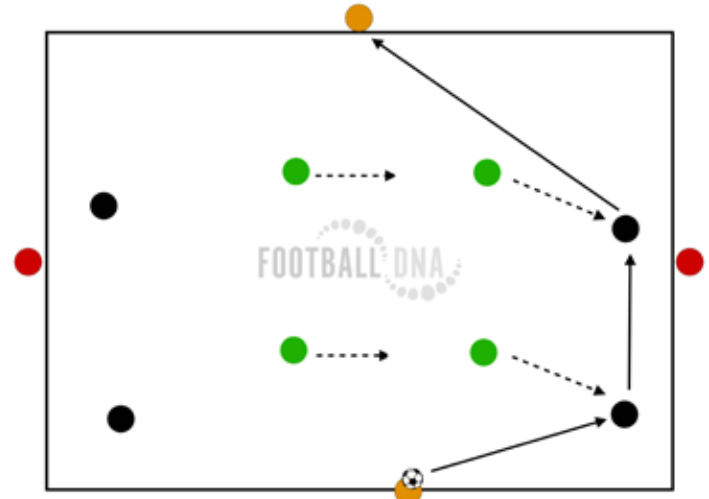
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to regain possession.

PREVENTING BUILD UP PLAY

Setup an area with two teams in the middle with four players on each team. Both teams have two target players working on opposite sides of the area. These players are to act as target players. Teams must transfer from one target to the other. If the defending team wins possession of the ball, they must then look to transfer the ball from one side to the other through their target players. The focus of this session is to focus on defending and preventing penetrative passes through whilst trying to win the ball high.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Pressing** – Once the ball has been transferred to a target player on the outside, the defending team should aim to move collectively prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them. Once the ball has been passed into one of the attackers from a target player, the defending team should look to move aggressively to win the ball back.
- **Body Shape** – Once the players find themselves in a 1v1 situation, they should look to force the attacker the way that they wish for them to go. This may be forcing them onto their weaker foot, outside of the pitch or into their team mate that is supporting. Players should look to get on the outside of the ball and be side on to help them show them the way they wish to send them. Defenders should look to force the opponents on the outside and prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them.
- **Use of Body** – Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attackers back or around to prevent them from playing into their target players. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the defender to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they're able to win the ball back and then look to secure possession once they've won it.
- **Communication** – As defenders put pressure onto the ball, they should look to communicate with one another to help them on how they will press as well where they should look to show the attack. For example players may need to communicate on whether they need to press or drop and/or force the play outside or inside.

Progressions

- To score players can now play a bounce pass with their target player who can rotate in.

Regression

- All four outside target players can get passed to, to help the team in possession retain the ball.

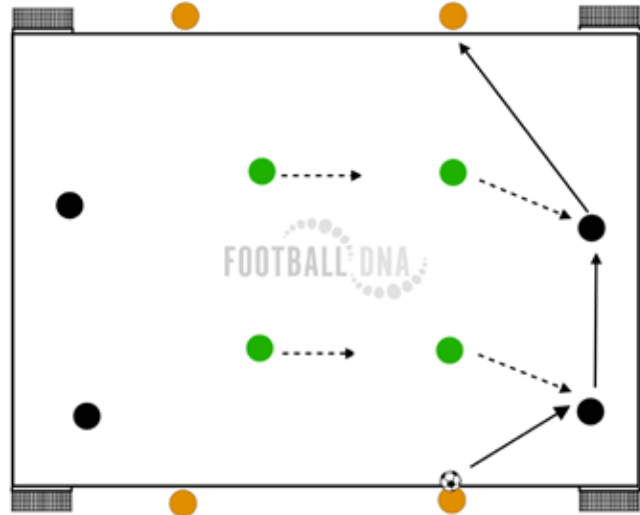
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to regain possession.

PRESSING HIGH TO SCORE GOALS

Setup an area with 2 teams and organise a 4 v 4 with 2 players as targets at either end. One team is to be nominated as a possession team who always start with the ball if it goes out or goal is scored when defenders win the ball back. The possession team will score by transferring the ball from target to target or making 5 passes. If the defenders win the ball back, they can score in the goals in the direction the attack is coming from. Regularly rotate the possession and defending teams.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Pressing** - Once the ball has been transferred to a target player on the outside, the defending team should aim to move collectively prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them. Once the ball has been passed into one of the attackers from a target player, the defending team should look to move aggressively to win the ball back and then subsequently score into one of their target goals.
- **Body Shape** - Once the players find themselves in a 1v1 situation, they should look to force the attacker the way that they wish for them to go. This may be forcing them onto their weaker foot, outside of the pitch or into their team mate that is supporting. Players should look to get on the outside of the ball and be side on to help them show them the way they wish to send them. Defenders should look to force the opponents on the outside and prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them.
- **Use of Body** - Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attackers back or around to prevent them from playing into their target players. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the defender to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they're able to win the ball back and then look to secure possession once they've won it.
- **Communication** - As defenders put pressure onto the ball, they should look to communicate with one another to help them on how they will press as well where they should look to show the attack. For example players may need to communicate on whether they need to press or drop and/or force the play outside or inside.

Progression

- Teams now swap roles once the defenders score who become the possession team.

Regression

- Split the pitch into thirds, with the possession team needing to get into the final third before they can play into one of the target players.

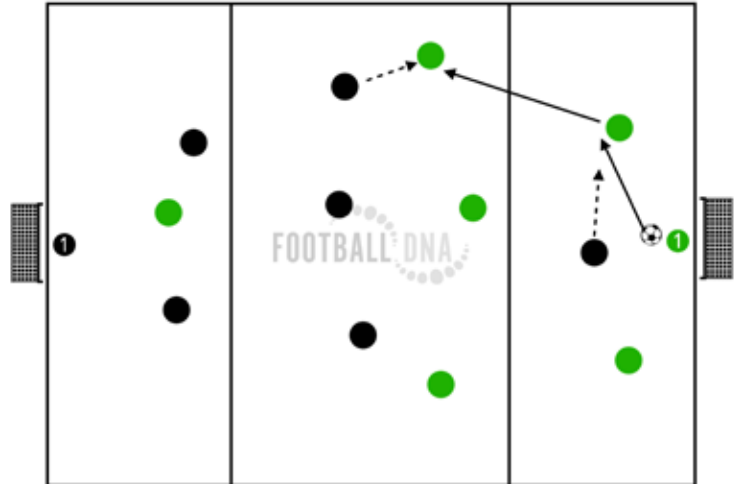
WEEK 4

DEFENDING FROM THE FRONT

To encourage & support players to defend from the front as an individual, unit & team to regain possession.

PRESSING TEAMS ONE WAY SSG

Setup a normal small sided game with 2 GK'S & organise two teams to create a 6 v 6. Split the pitch into thirds with the centre forward and 2 defenders locked in to their zones. Midfield players can only move into the final third but not the defensive third. GK must play to defenders to start attack and the team must then progress through the thirds. If the defending team wins possession of the ball, they must then look to attack the opposite goal.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Pressing** – The forward should look to angle their approach once the goalkeeper plays into one of their defenders to try and force them wide. When angling their approach, the forward pressing should aim to stop them from being able to switch play.
- **Support** – Once the forward has pressed, the supporting defenders should look to then support behind the ball and slide across to the side that the forward has forced them to. Supporting defenders should look to remain compact and prevent the opposition from being able to play beyond and between them.
- **1v1 Defending** – Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attackers back or around to prevent them from playing into their target players. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the defender to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they're able to win the ball back and then look to secure possession once they've won it.
- **Communication** – As the forward applies pressure onto the player in possession of the ball, they should look to communicate with their team mates to help them with how they can support. Communication may also come from players furthest away from the ball as they're able to see the whole pitch and may be able to support players pressing on how/ where they should show them.

Progression

- Players can play across thirds; rather than needing to pass / move from one third into the next.

Regression

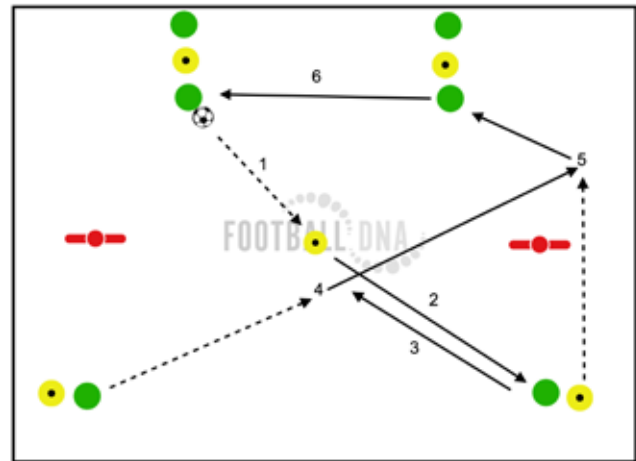
- Always restart at the same end to give the defending team opportunities to practice how they will press, rotate which team is attacking and defending regularly.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

PASSING WITH PENETRATION

A passing exercise with the objective of leading into the penetration practice afterwards. This exercise develops the ability for players to play quick combination play to penetrate against the opposition with forward movement. The first part of the move replicates a centre back driving into and overloading midfield to find a team mate on the angle who plays a wall pass back for a runner to move onto the ball and play a through ball and pass to the next player like a full back or wide player. After each pass players move onto the next outside cone in the direction of play.



Equipment



6 – 12 Players



Cones, Mannequins & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – Circulating the ball requires a high level of concentration on the delivery of the pass making sure it is firm along the ground to allow the receiver to have a good first touch without having to deviate their position. The weight is also critical so the pass can be controlled easily or a first time set can happen.
- **Body Shape** – This is important for the player who checks off the middle cone to receive on the half turn on the first progression. They need to quickly open up their body as they step off the cone after setting/passing the ball. The ball should be controlled using the back foot to play quickly into the next player.
- **Timing of Movement** – This applies for the “full back/wide player” running onto the penetrating through pass. If they go too early they will be ahead of the ball and either have to check back and receive slowing the move down or will completely be missed out. The moment to set off is just as the player before receives the ball arriving onto the ball carrying on in their stride.
- **Speed of Play** – The movement and passing needs to be quick and sharp replicating match tempo. This relies on the ability of players to play one and two touch when required. Movement that is well timed will keep the speed high along with clean and well directed passes into the next player.

Progressions

- Add different combinations & movements working on both sides.

Regression

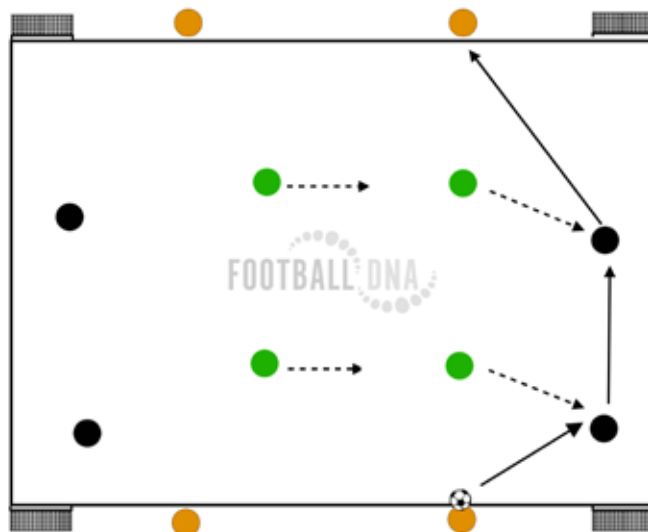
- Have a player on each cone with players passing and following from cone to cone. Challenge players to pass to feet first and then into space for the receiver to run onto.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

PRESSING HIGH TO SCORE GOALS

Setup an area with 2 teams and organise a 4 v 4 with 2 players as targets at either end. One team is to be nominated as a possession team who always start with the ball if it goes out or goal is scored when defenders win the ball back. The possession team will score by transferring the ball from target to target or making 5 passes. If the defenders win the ball back, they can score in the goals at either end, however, the ball must be played into a target player before they can score. Regularly rotate the possession and defending teams.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement / Pressing** - Once the ball has been transferred to a target player on the outside, the defending team should aim to move collectively prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them. Once the ball has been passed into one of the attackers from a target player, the defending team should look to move aggressively to win the ball back and then subsequently score into one of their target goals.
- **Body Shape** - Once the players find themselves in a 1v1 situation, they should look to force the attack the way that they wish for them to go. This may be forcing them onto their weaker foot, outside of the pitch or into their team mate that is supporting. Players should look to get on the outside of the ball and be side on to help them show them the way they wish to send them. Defenders should look to force the opponents on the outside and prevent the attackers from being able to play beyond and between them.
- **Use of Body** - Players should look to use their body to help them to force the attackers back or around to prevent them from playing into their target players. Defenders can use their nearest arm and hip to the defender to apply pressure as they try to win the ball back and come away from the ball. Players should look to use their body once they're able to win the ball back and then look to secure possession once they've won it.
- **Communication** - As defenders put pressure onto the ball, they should look to communicate with one another to help them on how they will press as well where they should look to show the attack. For example players may need to communicate on whether they need to press or drop and/or force the play outside or inside.

Progression

- Teams now swap roles once the defenders score who become the possession team.

Regression

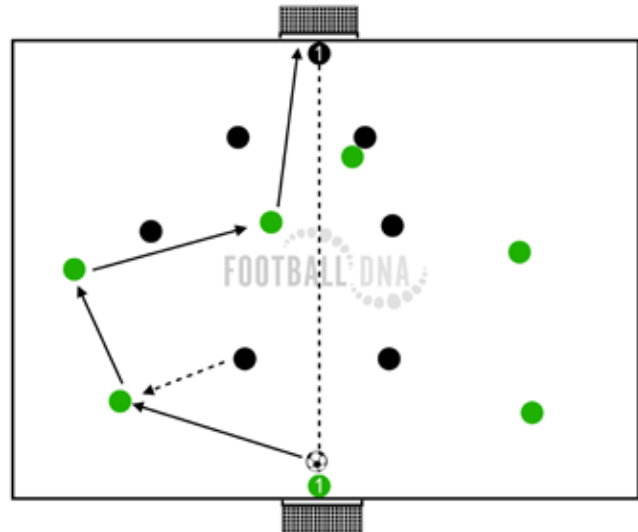
- Split the pitch into thirds, with the possession team needing to get into the final third before they can play into one of the target players.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

LOCKED IN SMALL SIDED GAME

Setup a small sided game with two goals and a goal-keeper in either goal. You will need to organise two teams and split the pitch vertically in half as well. In this game, attackers locked in, defenders free. Organise both teams to have a set number of players that they must have in each half when they are in possession of the ball. In doing this, it will enable the attacking team to create space across both halves of the pitch. Both teams in this game are trying to score and the rules should be the same as a normal small sided game except for the conditions stated.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals & Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – Players should look to create width and depth when in possession of both sides of the pitch to allow them to both be able to exploit space on the side of the pitch that they're in as well as be able to switch play to the opposite side if needed too. Once the team has won possession of the ball, they will need to disperse quickly to create that width and depth across both sides of the pitch to create space for the player in possession of the ball as well as themselves.
- **Angles & Support** – Encourage attackers to be on different lines to one another to ensure that they're always available to receive the ball. The attacking team should look to create options for the player on the ball: behind, beside and ahead of them. By having players at different angles, it will help players to receive to see the whole pitch and ascertain when is the right time to: play through, round or back.
- **Passing & Receiving** – Encourage players to receive with an open body shape to enable them to see the whole pitch as well as play forwards too. Players will need to adapt their weight of pass based on how/where/who they're passing too i.e. if they are switching play to exploit an overload/space they may need to use a firm weight of pass to be able to do this.
- **End Product** – Players will need to adjust their types of finishes both in and outside of the box to capitalise upon any goal scoring opportunities that they create. As this game is played with one goal at either end, players may need to vary the types of opportunities that they create and look to finish with players in the opposite half. This will lead to teams trying to cross the ball etc.

Progressions

- Have a set number of players that must be in one half at one time when you are in possession of the ball, giving the players freedom to rotate providing they maintain their offensive shape.

Regression

- Add a magic man that can play for either team in possession of the ball and is able to move into either half of the pitch. This will help to create an overload for the attacking team.

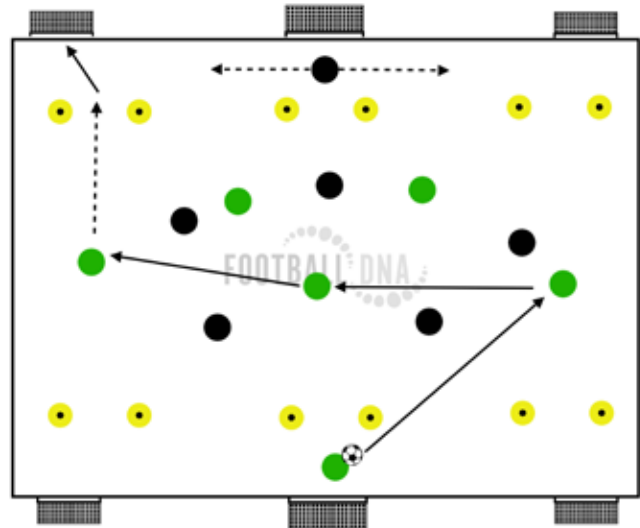
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

SWITCHING THE PLAY VARIATIONS

Setup a 30 x 40 yards area with 3 goals spaced out along each end line & 3 gates in front inside a marked end zone. Play 5 v 5 in the middle area with 1 player from each team playing behind the gates to block & start attacks. To score a player must take the ball through one of the 3 blue gates first. The progression is to play 4 v 4 with 2 blockers each end but this time with the blockers have a football each and then to remove the footballs once success has happened enough times. The aim of the game is to find the empty gate by switching the ball across the pitch. Another variation is to have goalkeepers in the middle goals to score in normally along with the two mini goals outside.



Equipment



10 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – To keep the ball effectively and switch the play, the quality of passing needs to suit. The aim should be to move the ball quickly two touch exploiting space to drag the opposition around to free up one of the gates to score. The passing needs to be crisp and firm to make sure it's not intercepted easily for a counter attack. The type of pass may be a longer one to switch the play using a driven or lofted technique.
- **Creating Space to Switch** – The team in possession should make the pitch as big as possible allowing switches of play to happen. This means penetration at the top end and width from the side lines giving options in both directions. Movement off the ball is key here to with forward runs beyond important to drag defenders towards one side of the pitch to free up other areas & gates to score in.
- **Decision Making** – To switch the play or not? Can I switch the ball in one pass or is it better to make a couple of passes? Can I make it through the gate or do I need to turn out and keep possession? These are decisions that will need to be made in the moment at speed to maximise the opportunities created.
- **Execution of Finish** – Once broken through the gates, a quality finish with concentration is needed. A clean side footed pass will suffice, focusing on making good contact but finishing quickly before the blocker recovers to make a tackle/block.

Progressions

- Add another blocker each end with a football to manipulate whilst still trying to block gates.

Regression

- Play a 6 v 6 normal game scoring in any of the 3 goals.

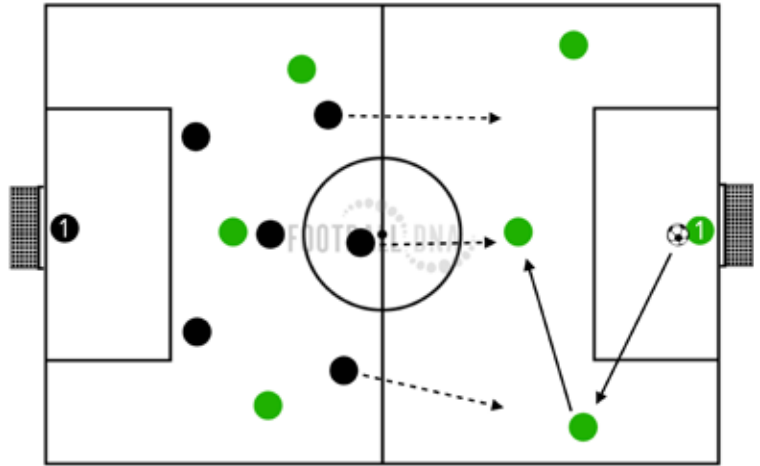
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

PLAYING THROUGH THE PRESS

Setup a small sided pitch with a goal and goalkeeper either end and a halfway line marked across the pitch. Teams are split evenly 5 v 5 – 7 v 7. One team starts with the ball from the GK whilst the other team have to start in their own half of the pitch. Once the GK passes out, the opposition can then press. After a goal is scored the 'scoring' team then retreats to their own half to become the defensive team, with the GK on the opposite team starting. You can use throw ins or kick ons if the ball goes out of play or start the practice again from the GK. To encourage the starting defensive team to try and win the ball back early, you could put a stipulation in place that five passes (dependant on players skill level) is a 'goal'. As this encourages the defensive team to press the ball it may leave more space in their defensive set up for the attacking team to penetrate and score.



Equipment



12 – 14 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs & Goals

Coaching Points

- **Creating Angles** - Players may look to stretch the pitch to enable more space to exploit between the oppositions defence. Good angles instead of square passes may be able to make the most of these spaces created by good crisp passing or dribbling the ball into these areas. When being pressed by the opposition it is important players stay composed and look to make the area as big as possible to open up passing lanes to allow team to play through the press.
- **Decision Making** - The players must choose the correct time and type of skill/pass to use, to either take their opposition on or pass to a teammate in a better position to attack the goal. Players must decide quickly when being pressed to what the best pass is to make or instead dribble past them. Before receiving the ball, players should be constantly scanning and assessing the best options.
- **Awareness** - Players must remain aware of their teammates positioning and also the 'press' of the opposition, choosing when to keep the ball at the back to encourage the 'press' or move/pass into a better area of the pitch to exploit any space created by clever movement.
- **Combination Play & Finish** - Players must remain composed having got into a good attacking area, moving the ball quickly but under control will create more goal scoring chances in the last third of the pitch. When the player gets an opportunity at goal they must stay composed choosing the correct type of finish to execute the opportunity.

Progressions

- Start with 1 or 2 opposition players being allowed in the attacking half to create a 6 v 1/2 when playing out.
- 5 Passes counts as a goal to encourage the opposition to press.
- Reward defending team 2 goals if they regain and score in the opposition's half.

Regression

- Team must perform 3 passes before opposition can enter their half.
- Create an overload with the addition of a floater who plays for both teams.

BLOCK 5 - WEEK 25 - 30

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality & Weight of Pass - Creating Angles to Support - Playing In Between & Beyond Opposition - Playing Through, Over or Around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forcing Attack Wide & Into Areas - 1 v 1 Defending - Blocking, Intercepting & Tackling - How to be a Compact Unit & Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution To Wide Players - Movement In The Box - Quality & Technique of Cross - Execution of Finish (Different Types) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compact Unit & Team Shape - Making Play Predictable - Pressure & Cover - Sliding & Screening as a Unit 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Maintaining Possession Through Midfield	Defending Outnumbered In Transition	Finishing In Wide Areas	Defending In The Midfield	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 25	Week 26	Week 27	Week 28	Week 29	Week 30

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 25](#)

[Week 26](#)

[Week 27](#)

[Week 28](#)

[Week 29](#)

[Week 30](#)

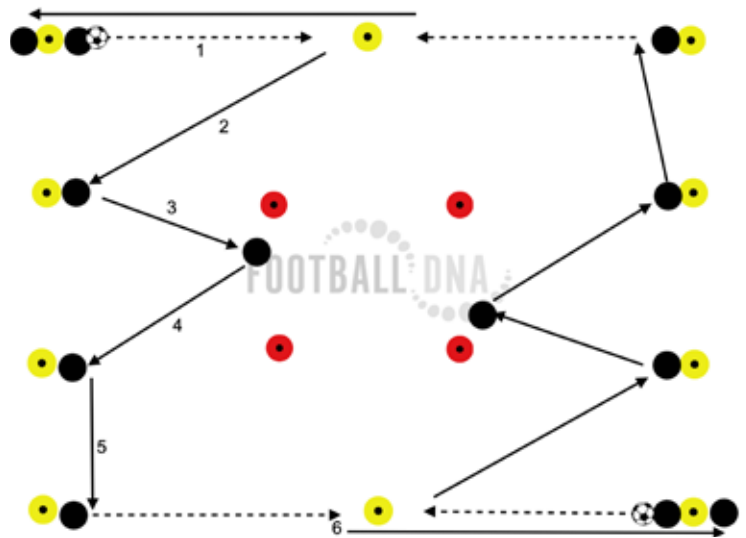
WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield centrally or switch play to exploit space and overloads.

SWITCHING PLAY PASSING PATTERNS

This passing pattern is specific to the principles of switching play using a back 4 & 1 central midfielder player. The pattern has two start points (where the ball starts) with two balls moving at the same time. The first player dribbles to the first cone and turns to pass into the next player ahead of them. This continues all the way until the ball reaches final player who dribbles and then passes across to the second start point. Players are to follow their pass each time. The two start points replicate a full back who turns out after not being able to play forward so instead switch the play across the pitch using a central midfielder and back 4 unit.



Equipment



12 Players



Cones & Footballs

Coaching Points

- Weight & Quality of Pass** - The weight of pass will allow the speed of play to be quick and the switch of play to happen. The quality will also impact this with a firm smooth pass being needed which means the player receiving can play first time or have a good first touch. Passes should be punched in and made sure they get to the player at a good pace.
- Movement to Receive** - The central midfielder needs to time their movement effectively, if they move into the space too early they would be marked. As the centre half is about to take their first touch, they should then create their angle to receive. Important they don't come too much towards the ball but more creating an angle with good distance between themselves and the centre half.
- 1 & 2 Touch Play** - This is essential to moving the ball quickly to switch the play. Players need to take no more than 2 touches which means the first touch must be good and the weight of pass into them needs to be excellent. One touch play will depend on the weight and quality of passing.
- Timing of Movement** - The full back needs to take a good first touch into the space and drive forward at speed. When they reach the cone they must perform a turn that takes the ball away from "pressure" of a recovering defender on the inside. This turn should be a good sized touch to evade the defender and set the next pass up. Encourage players to try using different turns and parts of the feet. Some disguise on the turn too would be beneficial using the body to do this.

Progressions

- Add a second pattern with the central midfielder who passes into the Full Back to then play a wall pass with the "Centre Back" to release the full back. Combine both patterns together with one side of the practice performing the first pattern and the opposite side performing the second pattern.

Regression

- Use only one ball to start and add a second when players grasp the pattern of play.

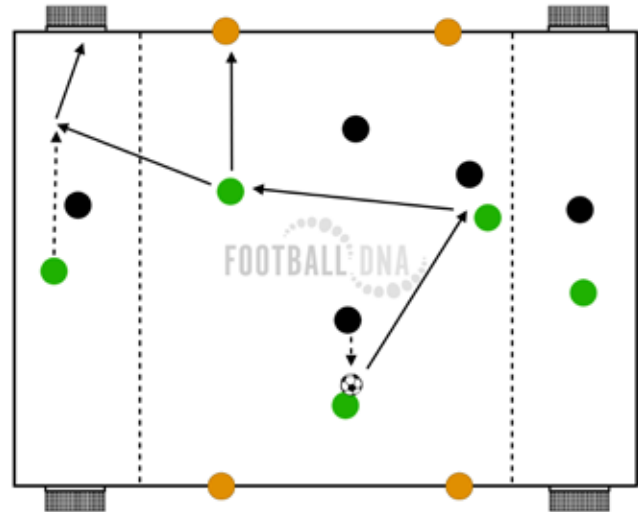
WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield centrally or switch play to exploit space and overloads.

MAINTAIN & BUILD THROUGH CENTRAL AREAS OR SWITCH PLAY

Setup a pitch and split the pitch into thirds with the middle third being larger than the outside thirds. In each of the outside thirds, have a goal at either end. Organise two teams that play a 3 v 3 in central zone and a 1 v 1 in each wide area with players locked in. Setup two target players at the opposite end between both the goals that can play for any team that is in possession of the ball. In this game, each team has to transfer the ball from one target player to another target player at the opposite end to score or in this game they can score through their wide players into one of the small goals for 2 points.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement to Receive** – Throughout the game whilst the team is maintaining possession of the ball, they should look to create width to help to create space between the defenders to help them to play into the target players to combine and try and score. Players should look to move between lines to help them to receive the ball to play forwards and drag opponents out of their position to help them to create opportunities for their team. This will also help to support them in being able to switch play.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – The weight of pass will allow the speed of play to be quick and the switch of play to happen. The quality will also impact this with a firm smooth pass being needed which means the player receiving can play first time or have a good first touch. Passes should be punched in and made sure they get to the player at a good pace. This will also help the attacking team to eliminate opponents by playing between the lines to help them to play into the target players.
- **Switching Play** – Throughout this game, players should look to identify when is the right time to switch play. Switching play will enable the attackers to find space on the opposite side and potentially take advantage of a possible overload on the opposite side. Likewise, the switch of play may enable the team in possession of the ball to evade pressure from their opponent.
- **Receiving to Play Forwards** – Throughout this game, players should try to adjust their body shape to allow them to play forwards before they receive the ball. Encourage players to scan and see what is around them to adjust their body shape to help them to recognise and identify where their team mates are, space and opposition is too.

Progressions

- Target players to produce a bounce pass with the same or another player to score a point and then attack opposite direction.
- Target players can bounce the ball into the wide player to score 2 goals. One central player can support wide player in their area with an under/overlap.
- Defending players (Full Backs) that are locked in can come into the central area to create compact shape.

Regression

- Take out the wide areas but keep the goals so teams have the option to score centrally and wide areas without players being restricted.

WEEK 1

Maintaining Possession Through Midfield

To support the players ability to maintain possession in midfield centrally or switch play to exploit space and overloads.

PLAYING THROUGH, AROUND & OVER MIDFIELD INTO THE FINAL THIRD

Setup an area that is three quarters the width and length of an 11-a-side pitch. Organise two goals at opposite ends with a goalkeeper in each of the goals as well as organise a half way line. Setup two teams with the defending teams are locked into each half (organise players into two halves, with only the attacking teams #8 & #10 players being able to drop into the zone into the build-up zone to create overload. In this game the attacking team can score by getting the ball into the final third and finishing in the goal.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Creating Space** – When the attacking team is in possession of the ball, they should look to create width and depth. The teams width whilst in possession of the ball will help them to create spaces between the defenders which they can then look to exploit, or if the defence remains narrow allows them to play around them. Attackers should look to move to create space by supporting behind, beside and beyond the ball to ensure their team always has an option.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – The weight of pass will allow the speed of play to be quick but also help them to play over, round or through their opponents. The quality will also impact this with a firm smooth pass being needed which means the player receiving can play first time or have a good first touch. Passes should be punched in and made sure they get to the player at a good pace. This will also help the attacking team to eliminate opponents by playing between the lines.
- **Forward Runs** – The number 8 and 10 have the freedom to drop into their own half to receive the ball, but also to join the attack as well. Therefore, encourage these players to work collectively to try and receive on different lines to one another i.e. one going short, the other going long. Players should adjust their timing of when to make a forward run when team has no pressure on the ball but the defenders are positioned high, or when the defending team has left space that can be exploited.
- **Creating Overloads** – To help the team to be able to build from the back, they should look to create overloads which will give them a numerical advantage to their opponents which will help them to maintain possession of the ball. Likewise, players should look to move forward runs where they can create overloads too which will give them an advantage in the attacking half of the pitch.

Progressions

- Both teams are no longer locked into halves and can move freely around the pitch both when in and out of possession.

Regression

- Add a target player on the outside of the pitch that can play in either half to help the attacking team to be able to play around the opposition, but also to switch play which may help them to play over or through as well.

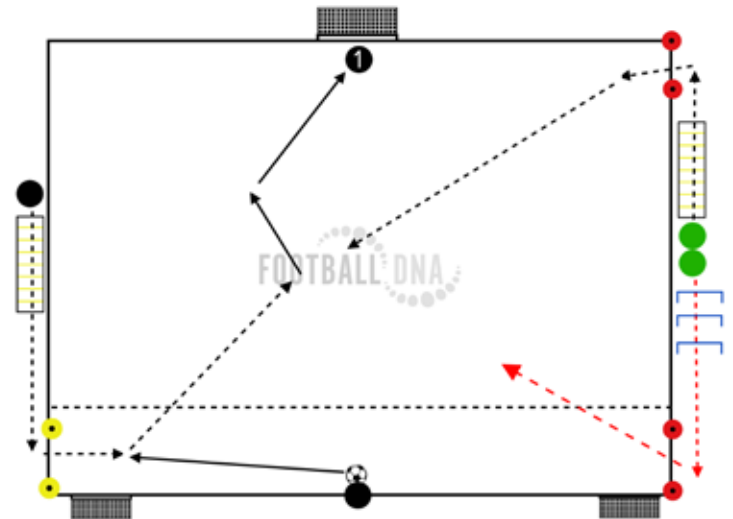
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS & RECOVERY RUNS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered and delay waiting for recovering defenders.

SAQ OVER & UNDERLOADS

Setup a pitch with one goal and GK at one end and two goals at the opposite end. The attackers have one player who moves through the ladder and through the gate onto the pitch to receive a pass from their team mate to start the attack, whilst at the same time one defender is doing the same movements on the opposite side of the pitch. In addition, they also have a partner who moves through hurdles with a double foot jumps and then through their gate onto the pitch to recover and support their team mate. The 2nd defender can only go once their team mate has reached the end of the ladder. For the attackers to score they must finish against the goalkeeper, whilst the defenders must score in either mini – goal. Rotate the attackers and defenders regularly.



Equipment



6 - 12 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Ladders, Footballs, Goals, Hurdles

Coaching Points

- **Movement Skills** – Players should use correct form as they move through the ladders and hurdles with the coach supporting their movement skills through the SAQ equipment. Challenge players with using a variety of different movements through the equipment to vary the challenge.
- **Speed** – Players should look to use their speed to react to the coach beginning the game and then to begin to move through the equipment. Players should look to move through the equipment quickly, whilst maintaining good form. The quicker the defender can enter the pitch, the more able they will be to position themselves to defend in the game.
- **1v2 Defending** – Defending in a 1v2, will challenge the defender on their decision making of how they will defend throughout the game. Defending outnumbered will challenge the defender to recognise how they will look to position themselves to force the attackers away from the goal and force them wide and onto one side of the pitch. Defenders should look to block attackers from combining between each of them.
- **Attacking Play** – Encourage attackers to attack quickly between them and combine with one another to make it more difficult for the defender to be able to defend against their overload. Attackers should look to recognise when to combine and when to go 1v1.

Progressions

- Add an extra attacker and defender who go straight after their team mate has reached the end of the ladder.

Regression

- Players race onto the pitch with no movement through SAQ equipment. The recovering defender goes once the first defender has reached the gate. Start 1 v 1 with players moving through the ladders and the first one to be on the pitch receives a ball from the coach to attack.

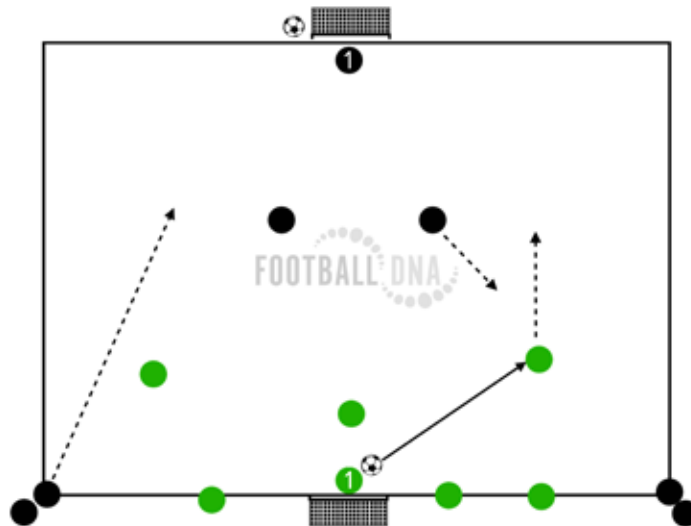
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS & RECOVERY RUNS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered and delay waiting for recovering defenders.

DEFENDING ATTACKS WITH RECOVERING DEFENDERS WAVE GAME

Setup a pitch with a goal either end and a goalkeeper. 2 defenders play against 3 attackers with one defender able to recover once the attacker takes their first touch after receiving the ball from their goalkeeper. If the defenders win the ball they can score. Play until the ball goes out of play. Defenders rotate after each attack with the recovering defender staying on the pitch.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – As the attackers begin the game with an overload, the defenders should look to delay the attackers either by pressing or dropping off. By delaying the attack, this will allow for the recovering defender to join the other two defenders to help them to defend in balance.
- **Recovery Runs** – The recovery defender should recognise the right time to recover to the ball, a vacant position or to the goal. Recovering quickly will enable the recovering defender to help the defenders to get back in balance and be in a better position to win the ball back from the attackers.
- **Individual Defending** – Players should look to make decisions on how they will defend against the attackers with how they press, drop but also how they adjust their body shape to defend against the attackers. Successful individual defending in this game will also allow for the recovering defender to get back into their shape. Defenders should look to force the attackers away from the goal and prevent the attackers from creating goal scoring opportunities.
- **Defending as a Unit** – Defenders should work collectively between them to collectively win the ball back. Defenders should work together to provide pressure, support and cover between them to delay the attack, but also to force the opponents away from goalscoring positions too.

Progressions

- Increase to starting with a 4 v 3 overload in the attacker's favour. Decrease to starting with a 1 v 2 overload in the attacker's favour.

Regression

- Remove the recovering defender or they can recover as soon as the goalkeeper distributes the ball.

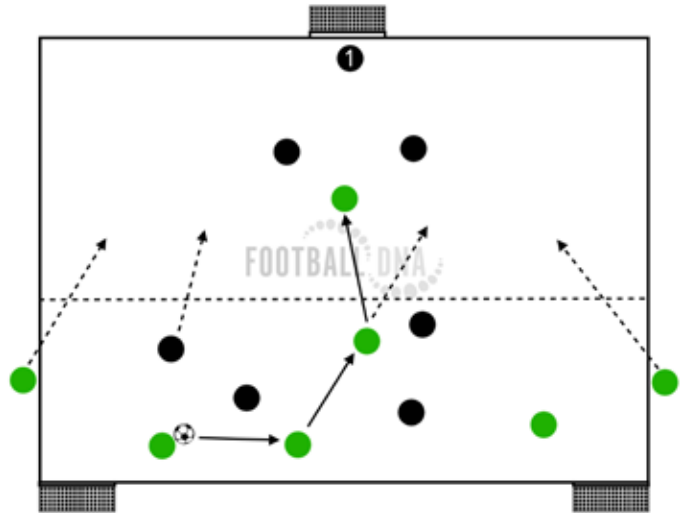
WEEK 2

DEFENDING OVERLOADS & RECOVERY RUNS

For players to understand and learn how to defend when outnumbered and delay waiting for recovering defenders.

DEFENDING TRANSITION BREAKOUT

Setup a 40 x 30 area and divide it into two with a 6 v 4 in one half with 2 players working on the outsides of the area. The defending team of 4 have to prevent the attacking team of 6 breaking out or playing into their centre forward who stays in the other half of the area against 2 defenders. When the attacking team breakout they can only have 3 attackers join in to support the centre forward. Only one player from the defending team can recover. If the defending team win the ball, they score in either of the two mini goals.



Equipment



13 Players + 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – Once the attackers break into the opposite half, defenders should look to delay the attack and allow for their team mates to recover into their half to provide support for the two defenders already in the half. The two defenders should look to work together to either prevent the attackers from being able to play into the forward or to break into space in their half.
- **Recovery Runs** – The recovery defender should recognise the right time to recover to the ball, a vacant position or to the goal. Recovering quickly will enable the recovering defender to help the defenders to get back in balance and be in a better position to win the ball back from the attackers.
- **Individual Defending** – Players should look to make decisions on how they will defend against the attackers with how they press, drop but also how they adjust their body shape to defend against the attackers. The two defenders in their half may need to press and prevent the forward from being able to play forwards as well as adjusting to oncoming attackers as they begin their break.
- **Defending as a Unit** – Defenders should work collectively between them to collectively win the ball back but also to prevent the opposition from being able to play between and beyond them. Defenders should work together to provide pressure, support and cover between them to delay the attack, but also to force the opponents away from goalscoring positions too.

Progressions

- More players can breakout or recover.
- The support players can play with both teams when in possession.

Regression

- Rather than one defender being able to recover into the half if the opposition team break, increase the number of players that can recover into their own half.
- Likewise, you may adjust the numbers so they're in balance rather than defending against an overload.

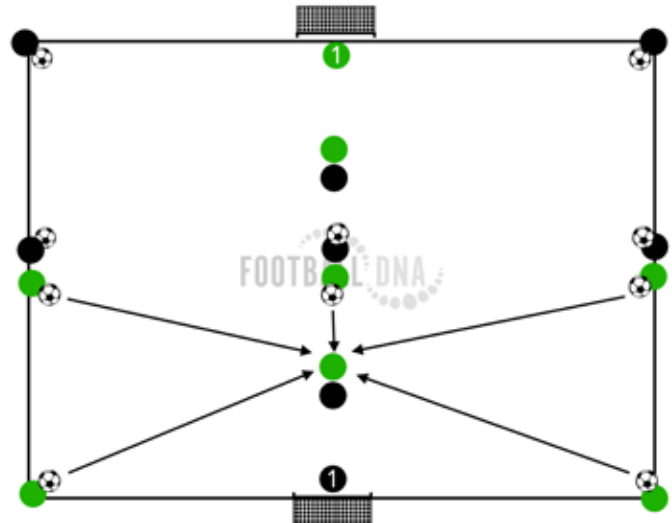
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

1 V 1 IN THE PENALTY AREA

Setup two goals at opposite ends of a 20 x 40 area with a goalkeeper in each of the goals. Organise a 1v1 in each of the areas and four target players with a ball each on the outside of the area. The game is played in a 1 v 1 in an area with the attacker receiving a ball from different angles. Once the attacker has received and attempted to score all the footballs, rotate the attackers and defenders again. The defenders in this game must try and prevent the attackers from being able to score.



Equipment



12 Players + 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Timing of the Run** – The attacker should time their run based on the position the ball is coming in from as well as where the defender is too. If the attacker moves too early in this game, it will give both the goalkeeper and defender time to be able to adapt their position to the attacker. The attacker should look to use double movements to receive the ball.
- **Movement** – The attacker should look to vary their movement to help them to receive from the players based around the outside of the area to make themselves available to but also to evade the defender too. An example of this may be to run from the front post to the back or the back post to the front. Alternatively, an attacker may move behind the defender to then receive in front and finish at goal.
- **Angle of Approach/Body Shape** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. This will help players to be able to finish on either foot with few touches or with different body parts too. If players run in advance of the ball, this will make it more difficult to see both the crosser as well as the goal.
- **Finishing Technique** – Based on where the ball has come from and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish using one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score.

Progressions

- Attackers serving can be brought into play if they receive the ball from the forward, therefore increasing the number of attackers against the defender.

Regression

- Remove the defender and simply play an attacker in the middle who must try and score without pressure.

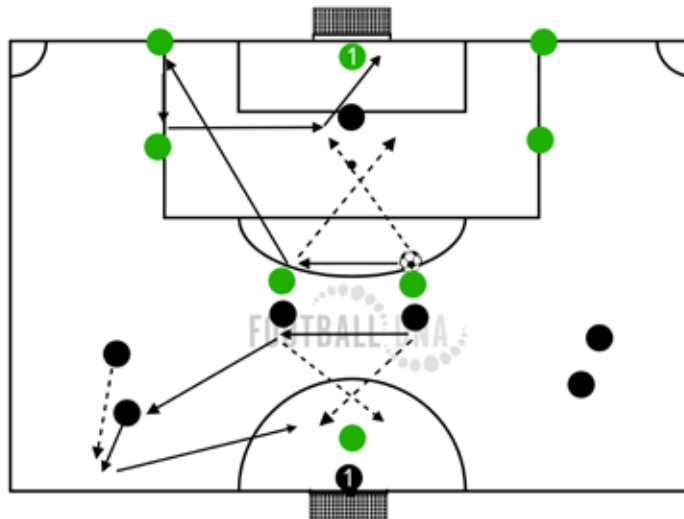
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

PENALTY AREA FINISHING FROM WIDE COMBINATIONS

Organise a 30 x 60 pitch with goals at either end and a goalkeeper in each of the goals. Divide the group into two and then into pairs (attackers) with one defender defending each goal. Also have a pair who are the crossers from wide. The attacking pairs work the ball out to the crossing players with one group of crossers performing a setback cross and the other group executing an overlap cross. Rotate attackers and defenders throughout this practice and make it competitive. Also swap over the groups so attackers experience different types of crosses.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Timing of the Run** – Attackers once they have passed the ball into the central or wide player should time their run based on the weight of pass that is played into the crossing players as well as their first touch. Attackers should work together in varying their movements between them to help them to evade the defender and create space to finish.
- **Movement** – Attackers should look to vary their movement to create space and finish. An example of this may be to run from the front post with the other attacker making a move to the back post when the ball is in a wide area. Alternatively, an attacker may run into the area and then hold their run to finish from a cut back etc.
- **Angle of Approach/Body Shape** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. This will help players to be able to finish on either foot with few touches or with different body parts too. If players run in advance of the ball, this will make it more difficult to see both the crosser as well as the goal.
- **Finishing Technique** – Based on where the ball is come from and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish using one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score.

Progressions

- Increase the volume of defenders in the game to challenge the forwards so they aren't overloading the defenders.

Regression

- Remove the defender and make the practice unopposed.

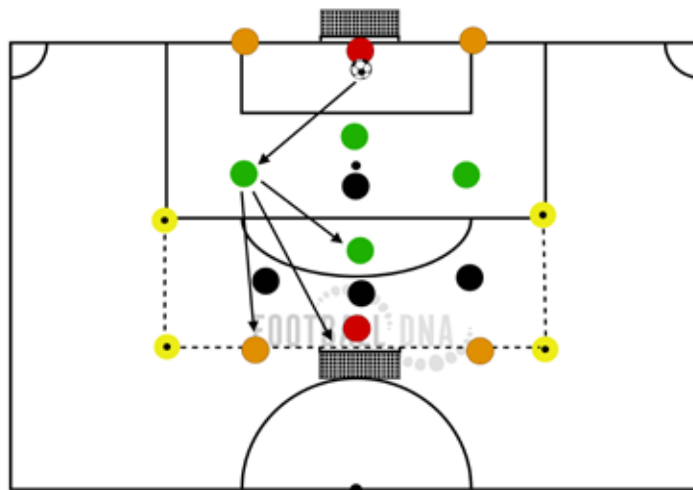
WEEK 3

COMBINING & FINISHING FROM WIDE AREAS

For players to develop the technique to cross the ball from wide areas and execute finishing inside the penalty area.

SHOOTING OR COMBINATION FINISHING GAME

Setup a small sided game that is the width of the 18-yard box and double in length. Organise a goalkeeper in a goal at either end of the pitch. Organise two teams that are playing against one another and must try and score in the opposite goal. There is an overload of 3 v 1 in the defending half of the pitch. Four target players are based around the outside of the pitch and can be played into to combine with other attackers. Rotate the attackers, defenders and target players regularly i.e. winner stays on.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – Throughout the game and due to the size of the area, players should be continually looking to scan both when they are in and out of possession of the ball to help them to recognise who and where they should look to play into. Players should look to use the outside target players to help them to combine to score.
- **Combination Play** – Players should look to play off one or two touches to help them to create opportunities to finish. Players may need to speed up their weight of pass and how they work with one another to create goalscoring opportunities.
- **Movement** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. Players should look to create space through width and depth which will either help them to combine in central and wide areas. Encourage players to move to create overloads as well as run in advance of the ball too.
- **Finishing** – Based on where the ball is come from and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish using one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score.

Progression

- The target players are limited to play one touch throughout the game.

Regression

- Both teams have a football and can play between one another to combine with the outside target players without playing against the opposition team.

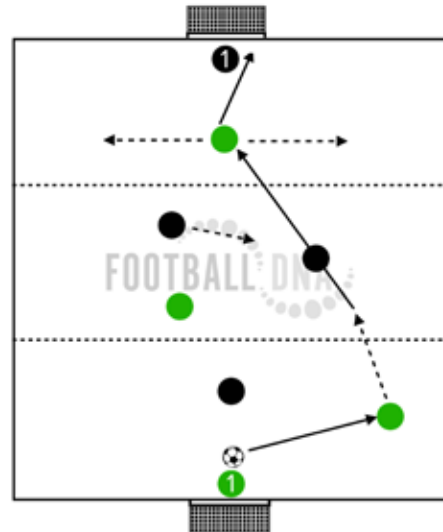
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDDLE THIRD

For players to learn and understand how to protect the middle third of the pitch to prevent forward passes in between or over.

PREVENTING PASSES THROUGH MIDFIELD

Setup a pitch of 40 x 20 yards with a goal and goalkeeper in each with the pitch divided into thirds. Make the end thirds 15 x 20 and the middle third 10 x 15. Create two equal teams with a 2 v 2 in the middle third and with each team having a centre forward in the final third. The aim for the team in possession is to play into their centre forward to finish. The ball starts with the goalkeeper who plays into their 2 midfielders with one being able to drop in and receive. The centre forward is only active when their team is in possession of the ball. The midfielders can only play into their centre forward from the middle third.



Equipment



8 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – The nearest player to the ball should look to either press to win the ball back, or alternatively drop and prevent the attackers from being able to play into the space behind. Encourage the nearest defender to apply pressure onto the attacker on the ball by forcing play one way / making it predictable for the other defending players that are providing support and cover. If the defenders cannot press the player on the ball, they should look to retreat and drop back into their shape to stop the opponent from being able to play forwards.
- **Compactness** – Defenders should look to be compact and prevent the opposition team from being able to play through or between defenders. Encourage players to prevent opponents from being able to play between them by maintaining good spacing between each of the players, which will require players to move collectively whether they are pressing or dropping from the attacker on the ball.
- **Supporting Defender** – When the nearest player presses the ball, the supporting defender should look to be at an angle slightly behind them to cover the primary defender in case they're beaten in a 1v1. The supporting defender can also cover, and screen passes into players in advance of the ball.
- **1v1 Defending** – In 1v1 defending situations players should look to get side on and force their opponents the direction that they wish to make them go (i.e. inside, outside or back). Correct distance and body shape will help players to be able to dictate the direction that they want their opponent wants to go as well as help them to win the duel and come away with the ball.

Progressions

- The centre forward is now active and can tackle if an opposing midfielder drops into their third. A midfield player can recover into the final third if the ball bypasses them into the centre forward.

Regression

- The centre forward from the opposing team can support the team in possession if needed.

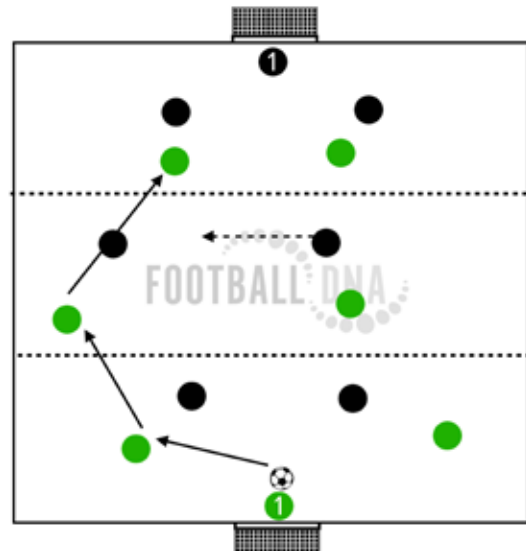
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDDLE THIRD

For players to learn and understand how to protect the middle third of the pitch to prevent forward passes in between or over.

PREVENTING PASSES INTO & THROUGH MIDFIELD

Setup a small sided pitch around 50 x 30 with two goals either end and divide the pitch into thirds. A goalkeeper in each goal and 2 players from each team in every third to create a 2 v 2. The defending team players are locked into their thirds. The attacking team can overload the middle third by a centre forward dropping in to create a 3 v 2. The aim is for the defending team to stop the midfield players receiving the ball, turning and passing forward.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- Delay** - Due to their being a 3v2 overload in the final third in favour of the attacking team, players should look to recover and force the attackers one way by setting a trap with how they provide pressure and support to the player in possession of the ball. To do this, the nearest defender to the ball should look to adjust the angle of approach and body shape to force play one way with the supporting defender being ready to cover and provide protection to ensure the attackers go the way that they're showing them. If players can win the ball, without being played around (due to the overload) they should look to press high, otherwise they should look to retreat and make play predictable.
- Compactness** - Defenders should look to be compact and prevent the opposition team from being able to play through or between defenders. In the final third, the front two need to be compact to make play predictable but also to ensure they aren't played through as well. The players in the middle third also need to remain compact too, so when the ball is played into the middle third, they are in a position to press and regain possession from their opponents as well as prevent passes from being played into the forward.
- Screening** - When defenders aren't pressing the ball, they should look to check their shoulders and prevent attackers from being able to play through into the midfield and forward players. Players should look to be side on and adjust their body shape and position based on where the ball is as well as where the attacking players are too.
- Defending a Unit** - Players need to defend collectively to apply pressure and cover to work together to not only prevent the attacking team from being able to play forwards into the midfield and forward players as well as to help them to regain possession of the ball to begin the counter attack. Encourage players to maintain good distancing between them to prevent opponents from being able to play between or beyond them.

Progression

- A player from the attacking team who is in the defending third can step in with the ball and overload 3 v 2. The overload can still only be 3 v 2.
- Remove the thirds and play as a normal small sided game.

Regression

- No overloads are to occur, players must stay within their third of the pitch.

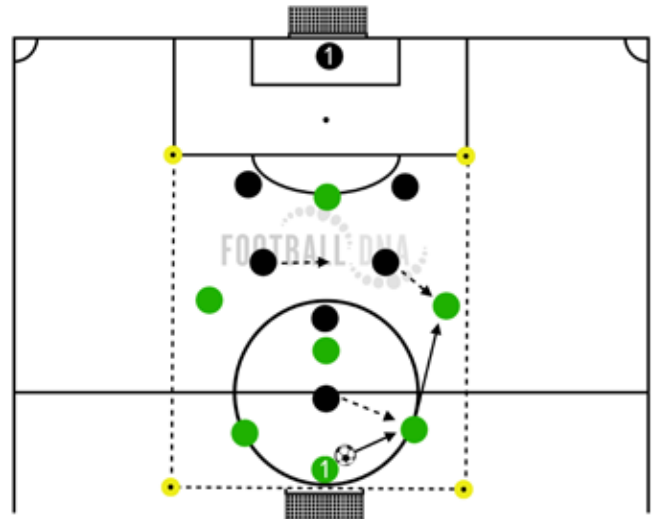
WEEK 4

DEFENDING IN THE MIDDLE THIRD

For players to learn and understand how to protect the middle third of the pitch to prevent forward passes in between or over.

DEFENDING AS A MIDFIELD 3 FUNCTION

Setup a 50 x 30 pitch across three quarters of a pitch within the width of the 18 yard area with a goal at either end of the pitch and goalkeeper in each goal. Organise two teams with one team as a defending team and the other as an attacking team. The game is played as an attack v defence game using the central area of the pitch working on midfielders stopping forward passes working on distances etc. If the defending team can regain possession, they can then look to score in the opposition goal.



Equipment



12 Players + 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – The defenders should look to recover and force the attackers one way by setting a trap with how they provide pressure and support to the player in possession of the ball. To do this, the nearest defender to the ball should look to adjust the angle of approach and body shape to force play one way with the supporting defender being ready to cover and provide protection to ensure the attackers go the way that they are showing them. If players can win the ball, without being played around (due to overload) they should look to press high, otherwise they should look to retreat and make play predictable.
- **Compactness** – Defenders should look to be compact and prevent the opposition team from being able to play through or between defenders. In the final third, the front two need to be compact to make play predictable but also to ensure they aren't played through as well. The players in the middle third also need to remain compact too, so when the ball is played into the middle third, they are in a position to press and regain possession from their opponents as well as prevent passes from being played into the forward.
- **Screening** – When defenders aren't pressing the ball, they should look to check their shoulders and prevent attackers from being able to play through into the midfield and forward players. Players should look to be side on and adjust their body shape and position based on where the ball is as well as where the attacking players are too.
- **Defending a Unit** – Players need to defend collectively to apply pressure and cover to work together to not only prevent the attacking team from being able to play forwards into the midfield and forward players as well as to help them to regain possession of the ball to begin the counter attack. Encourage players to maintain good distancing between them to prevent opponents from being able to play between or beyond them.

Progression

- Increase the size of the pitch to make defenders have to cover bigger distances which will make it more challenging for them to work collectively to prevent opponents from playing between and beyond them.

Regression

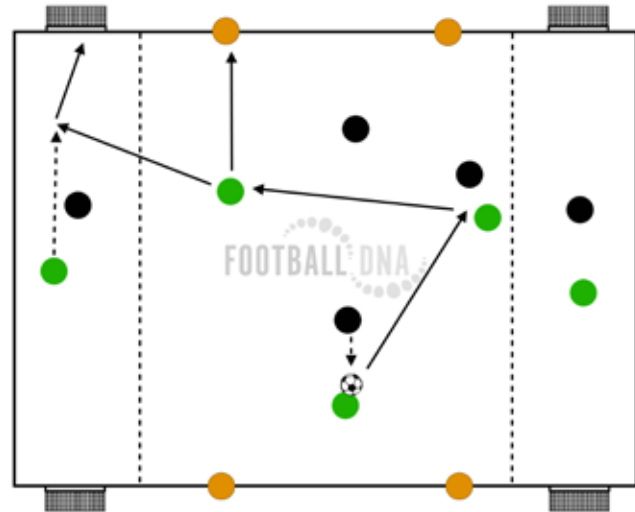
- Split the pitch into thirds and organise players in each third which they play within.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

MAINTAIN & BUILD THROUGH CENTRAL AREAS OR SWITCH PLAY

Setup a pitch and split the pitch into thirds with the middle third being larger than the outside thirds. In each of the outside thirds, have a goal at either end. Organise two teams that play a 3 v 3 in central zone and a 1 v 1 in each wide area with players locked in. Setup two target players at the opposite end between both the goals that can play for any team that is in possession of the ball. In this game, each team has to transfer the ball from one target player to another target player at the opposite end to score or in this game they can score through their wide players into one of the small goals for 2 points.



Equipment



12 - 16 Players



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Movement to Receive** – Throughout the game whilst the team is maintaining possession of the ball, they should look to create width to help to create space between the defenders to help them to play into the target players to combine and try and score. Players should look to move between lines to help them to receive the ball to play forwards and drag opponents out of their position to help them to create opportunities for their team. This will also help to support them in being able to switch play.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – The weight of pass will allow the speed of play to be quick and the switch of play to happen. The quality will also impact this with a firm smooth pass being needed which means the player receiving can play first time or have a good first touch. Passes should be punched in and made sure they get to the player at a good pace. This will also help the attacking team to eliminate opponents by playing between the lines to help them to play into the target players.
- **Switching Play** – Throughout this game, players should look to identify when is the right time to switch play. Switching play will enable the attackers to find space on the opposite side and potentially take advantage of a possible overload on the opposite side. Likewise, the switch of play may enable the team in possession of the ball to evade pressure from their opponent.
- **Receiving to Play Forwards** – Throughout this game, players should try to adjust their body shape to allow them to play forwards before they receive the ball. Encourage players to scan and see what is around them to adjust their body shape to help them to recognise and identify where their team mates are, space and opposition is too.

Progressions

- Target players to produce a bounce pass with the same or another player to score a point and then attack opposite direction.
- Target players can bounce the ball into the wide player to score 2 goals. One central player can support wide player in their area with an under/overlap.
- Defending players (Full Backs) that are locked in can come into the central area to create compact shape.

Regression

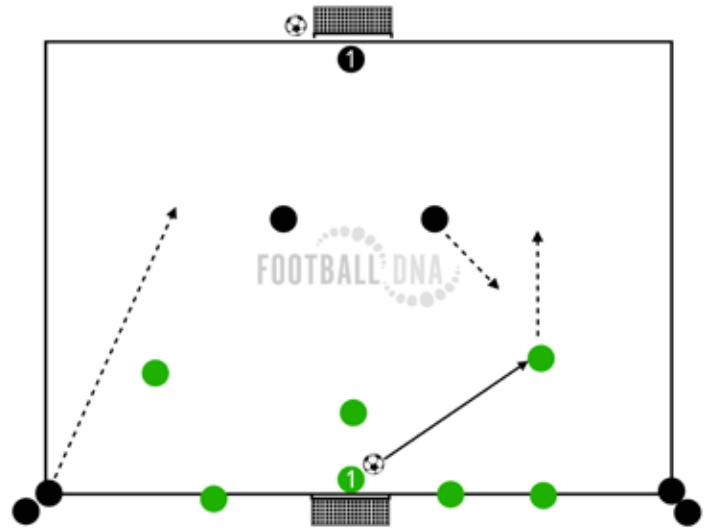
- Take out the wide areas but keep the goals so teams have the option to score centrally and wide areas without players being restricted.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

DEFENDING ATTACKS WITH RECOVERING DEFENDERS WAVE GAME

Setup a pitch with a goal either end and a goalkeeper. 2 defenders play against 3 attackers with one defender able to recover once the attacker takes their first touch after receiving the ball from their goalkeeper. If the defenders win the ball they can score. Play until the ball goes out of play. Defenders rotate after each attack with the recovering defender staying on the pitch.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Delay** – As the attackers begin the game with an overload, the defenders should look to delay the attackers either by pressing or dropping off. By delaying the attack, this will allow for the recovering defender to join the other two defenders to help them to defend in balance.
- **Recovery Runs** – The recovery defender should recognise the right time to recover to the ball, a vacant position or to the goal. Recovering quickly will enable the recovering defender to help the defenders to get back in balance and be in a better position to win the ball back from the attackers.
- **Individual Defending** – Players should look to make decisions on how they will defend against the attackers with how they press, drop but also how they adjust their body shape to defend against the attackers. Successful individual defending in this game will also allow for the recovering defend to get back into their shape. Defenders should look to force the attackers away from the goal and prevent the attackers from creating goal scoring opportunities.
- **Defending as a Unit** – Defenders should work collectively between them to collectively win the ball back. Defenders should work together to provide pressure, support and cover between them to delay the attack, but also to force the opponents away from goalscoring positions too.

Progressions

- Increase to starting with a 4 v 3 overload in the attacker's favour. Decrease to starting with a 1 v 2 overload in the attacker's favour.

Regression

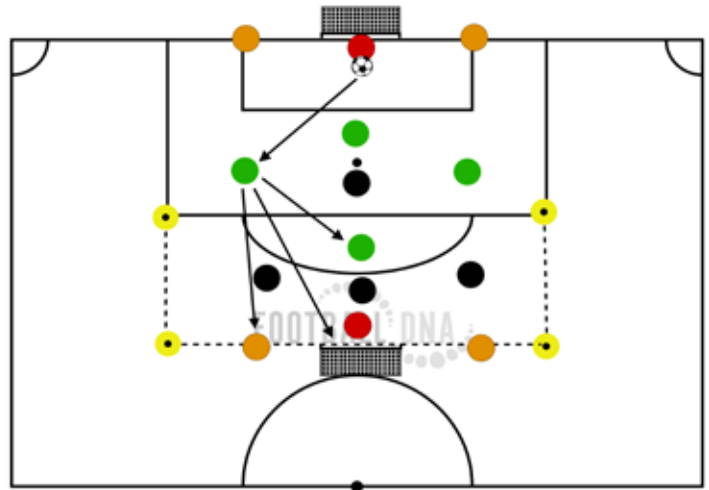
- Remove the recovering defender or they can recover as soon as the goalkeeper distributes the ball.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

SHOOTING OR COMBINATION FINISHING GAME

Setup a small sided game that is the width of the 18-yard box and double in length. Organise a goalkeeper in a goal at either end of the pitch. Organise two teams that are playing against one another and must try and score in the opposite goal. There is an overload of 3 v 1 in the defending half of the pitch. Four target players are based around the outside of the pitch and can be played into to combine with other attackers. Rotate the attackers, defenders and target players regularly i.e. winner stays on.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – Throughout the game and due to the size of the area, players should be continually looking to scan both when they are in and out of possession of the ball to help them to recognise who and where they should look to play into. Players should look to use the outside target players to help them to combine to score.
- **Combination Play** – Players should look to play off one or two touches to help them to create opportunities to finish. Players may need to speed up their weight of pass and how they work with one another to create goalscoring opportunities.
- **Movement** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. Players should look to create space through width and depth which will either help them to combine in central and wide areas. Encourage players to move to create overloads as well as run in advance of the ball too.
- **Finishing** – Based on where the ball is come from and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish using one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score.

Progression

- The target players are limited to play one touch throughout the game.

Regression

- Both teams have a football and can play between one another to combine with the outside target players without playing against the opposition team.

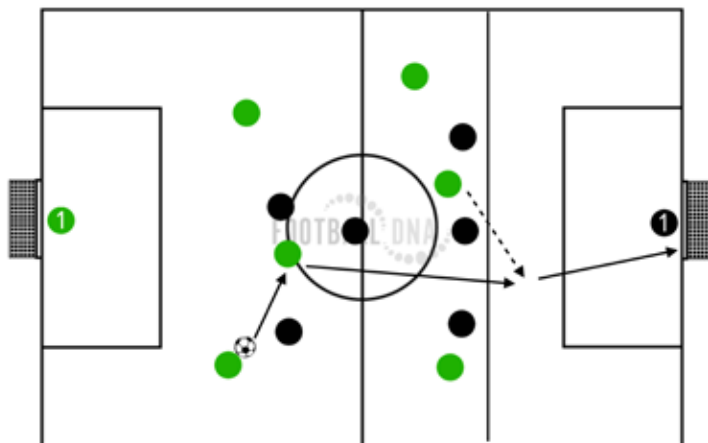
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

THE OFFSIDE LINE SMALL SIDED GAME

Setup a small sided pitch with a goalkeeper and a goal either end. Playing a 6 v 6 – 8 v 8 depending on numbers with only one end having an offside line in place on the pitch. This line lasts as the last defender for the team attacking in that direction. Going in the opposite direction are no restrictions.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Communication** – For players to work together to organise how they will use the offside line to help them with how they defend as a team. Players will need to communicate when they will press and drop as well as organise who is marking and following opposition players.
- **Defending in a Unit** – Throughout the game players should look to press or drop collectively as a team to delay the attack whilst maintain compactness between the units and depth to prevent the attacking team from being able to play between or beyond them.
- **Decision Making** – Whether players are part of the attacking or defending team, they will need to make decisions throughout the game to attack without being caught out by the offside line as well as decide upon how they defending individual based on where the ball is situated too.
- **Timing of Pass/Run** – The timing of the attacker's movement and runs will affect how much success they will have in order to create and convert attacks. Players should look to time their run based on the trigger of when the player with the ball is about to play their pass.

Progressions

- Have both a high and low offside line which will change the position where the attackers can be caught offside from.

Regression

- Play with a normal offside line on the half way line rather than across a different area of the pitch.

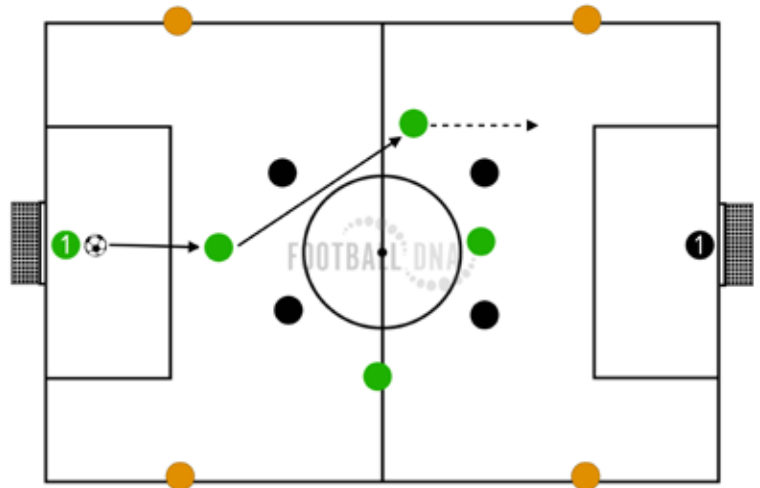
WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

FIRST TO SCORE 2 GOALS WIN

Setup a small sided pitch with a goalkeeper and a goal either end. Create 3 teams of 4 with 2 teams playing against each other and the third team supporting around the outside of the pitch. Once one team score 2 goals, the losing team swap with the outside team.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Team Spacing** - Encourage the team when in possession of the ball to create width and depth to help the team to have more options as well as create space which they can play between or beyond. Also, the defending team should look to remain compact and make their defensive shape as small as possible to prevent the opponents from exploiting space.
- **Decision Making** - Individuals will need to make decisions based on where the ball is both whether they're an attacker or defender. Encourage players to continually check their shoulders and scan to look at their surroundings and make the appropriate decision based on what they see to help them to resolve problems.
- **Speed of Play** - Teams that can work collectively when defending either to press or to drop will be in a better position to prevent the opponent from being able to score. Likewise, attackers should look to play quickly particularly through switching play to utilise the target players to create and convert goalscoring opportunities.
- **Individual Play** - Players will need to be able to individual manipulate and move their way out of situations to help the team to retain possession of the ball as well as create goalscoring opportunities. Individuals effort to defend will also help the team to be able to win the ball back from their opponents.

Progressions

- The team on the outside are on one touch.
- Teams must score with a one touch finish.

Regression

- Play with two teams rather than three and simply play first to two goals wins.

BLOCK 6 - WEEK 31 - 37

Key Coaching Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Overloads - Overlaps, Underlaps, Third Man Runs & Wall Passes - Combine or Cross - Creating Chances & Finishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing the Ball - Keeping Possession On Regain - Reaction to Recover or Press on Turnover - Winning the Ball Back as a Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Striking the Ball - Finishing Off Both Feet - 1 v 1 Attacking - Variety of Finishes & Techniques Required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defending as a Unit - Balance & Cover - Clearances - Positioning 	N/A	N/A
Coaching Focus	Purposeful Possession	Transition Moments	Combine & Finishing	Defending	Review of Previous Topics & Practices	Games Based Around Focus Topics
Topic	Playing In The Attacking Third	Possession & Transition	Converting Goalscoring Opportunities	Defending Around the Box	Consolidation Week	Small Sided Games
	Week 31	Week 32	Week 33	Week 34	Week 35	Week 36

All of the sessions are available on our website. You can find them with the links below.

[Week 31](#)

[Week 32](#)

[Week 33](#)

[Week 34](#)

[Week 35](#)

[Week 36](#)

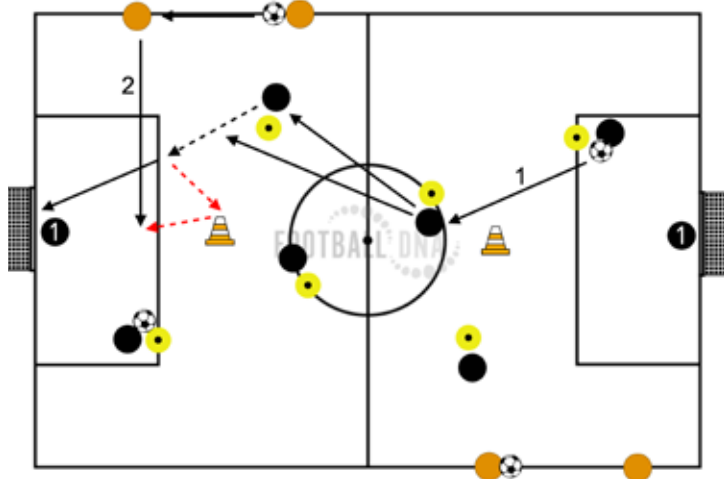
WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities through central or wide areas.

COMBINATION PLAY CENTRAL & WIDE TO FINISH

Organise two goals at either end with a goalkeeper in each of the goals. In this practice there are two types of finishes which are a: Passing pattern (pass and follow) into a finish then receive a cross from wide after touching the cone. After completing 2 finishes move onto the next set of cones to repeat in a circuit. Crossing players to progress with different combinations – set back, overlap, underlaps.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Timing of the Run** - The attacker should time their run based on the position the ball is coming from, for example on the first finish, attackers should stay level with cone before the ball is passed to them to stay onside. For scoring from crosses, if the attacker gets into the box too early they will be ahead of the ball.
- **Detail in Passing** - As players progress through pitch, encourage players to play the ball into either the attackers back foot to enable them to play forwards or into space to allow them to move onto the ball at pace.
- **Angle of Approach/Body Shape** - Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal when receiving and play through the pitch quickly. Encourage players to finish on either foot with few touches or with different body parts too.
- **Finishing Technique** - Based on where the ball has come from and their position/body shape players should look to adjust the type of finish that they will use to attempt to score. Players should look to finish off one or two touches where possible to ensure they don't lose the opportunity to score. They should also look to apply the correct technique of using the side foot to place the ball into the goal or strike across the goal with the laces keeping their bodyweight forward.

Progressions

- Add a player inside the box that is a defender that plays against the attacker that is trying to score.

Regression

- Only have one type of finish that takes place rather than two.

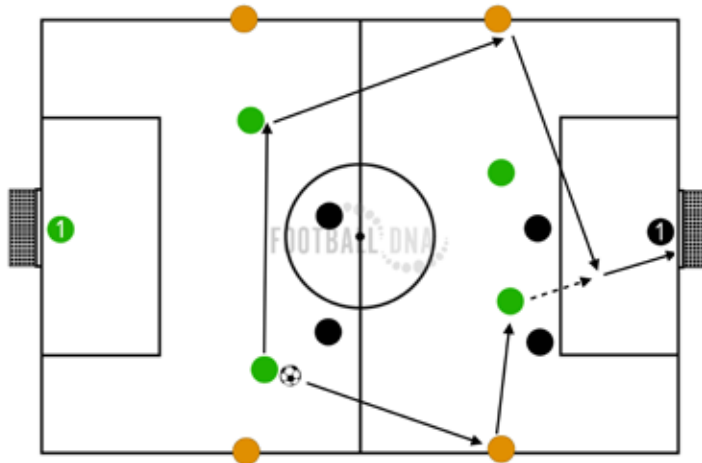
WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities through central or wide areas.

4 V 4 COMBINE CENTRAL OR WIDE

Setup a small sided pitch and have 3 teams play 4 v 4 with the third team spread out on the outside. To score the attacking team must play through the wide players either combining or from a cross. Wide players are to work together and can overlap or set the ball back to one another if they wish. They must stay on the outside of the pitch and cannot enter the inside.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – Throughout the game and due to the size of the area, players should be continually looking to scan both when they are in and out of possession of the ball to help them to recognise who and where they should look to play into. Players should look to use the outside target players to help them to combine to score.
- **Combination Play** – Encourage players to use the target players in wide areas to combine with to help them to retain possession but also to create goal scoring opportunities. The target players will help to create overloads particularly on the opposite side of the pitch which may encourage attackers to switch play quickly to exploit space.
- **Crossing & Finishing** – Once the ball has been played into the target players, they will be in a position to get crosses into players inside the box to finish opportunities that may have been created. Players should look to vary their types of finishes based on whether they're in and around the box, but you should encourage players to finish of one or two touches. It might be a headed finish where players have to focus on making good contact with the forehead and guide the ball towards goal.
- **Movement** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. Players should look to create space through width and depth which will either help them to combine in central or wide areas. Encourage players to move to create overloads as well as run in advance of the ball to receive passes beyond.

Progressions

- Play winner stays on, so once a goal is scored the team that has conceded it rotates with the target players.

Regression

- Players can either score through the wide players or as a normal goal

WEEK 1

Playing in the Attacking Third

To support the players ability to create goalscoring opportunities through central or wide areas.

COMBINING CENTRAL V WIDE PHASE OF PLAY

Setup an 8 v 6 using half a pitch working against a back 4 and midfield 2 as well as a goalkeeper inside the goal. The attacking team can score as usual in the goal for 2 points or if they progress the ball through the gates in the wide areas for 1 goal. If the defending team win the ball they can score in the target goals on the halfway line or by making 3 consecutive passes. Players can move anywhere on the pitch, you can layout markers as per diagram to help players understand the different areas of the pitch.



Equipment



14 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – Players need to decide throughout this game on whether they will score through playing through the central area or by using the wide players too. Encourage the players in the initial area to continually adjust their body shape to allow them to play forwards as well through scanning to help them to identify where their team mates, space and opponents are too.
- **Combination Play** – Encourage players to use the wide players who must look to combine with one another to create opportunities for their team from wide areas. However, if attackers look to play in the central area they should look to combine through short, sharp combinations to help them to play between and beyond their opponents whilst exploiting space.
- **Crossing & Finishing** – Once the ball has been played into the wide players attackers should look to get into a position to finish opportunities from wide areas. Players should look to vary their types of finishes based on whether they're in and around the box, but you should encourage players to finish of one or two touches. The forwards should scatter their runs to fill different areas of the penalty area.
- **Movement** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. Players should look to create space through width and depth which will either help them to combine in central and wide areas. Encourage players to move to create overloads as well as run in advance of the ball too.

Progressions

- Take out the wide gates and the points systems for the different types of goals.

Regression

- Start with just using the central area of the pitch, then progress to including the wide areas to break down the two components attacking centrally and then attacking in wide areas.

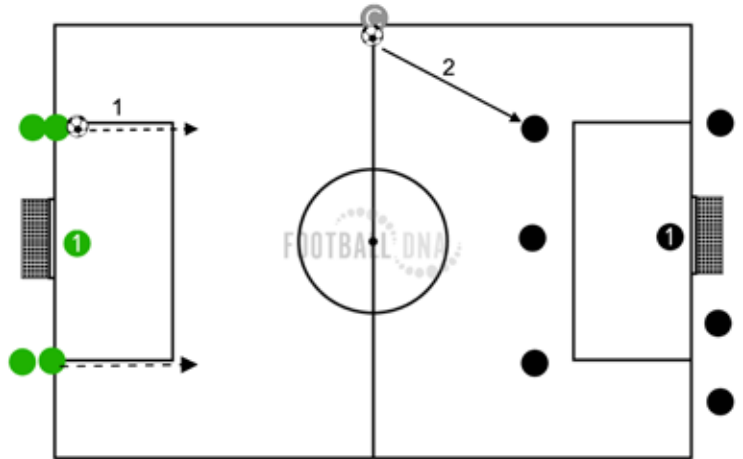
WEEK 2

EXPLOITING SPACE IN ATTACKING TRANSITION

For players to identify and exploit spaces on the turnover of possession into an attacking moment.

TRANSITION TO ATTACK AFTER DEFENDING

Setup a 40 x 30 area with a goal and goalkeeper each end. The 2 attackers start with the ball and attack against 3 defenders trying to score as normal. If the defenders win the ball back, they then try and score. If the ball goes out of play when the team who start with the ball attacks, the coach quickly feeds in a new ball to initiate the transition moment.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – The two attackers will need to work together to combine but also individually to stay on the ball to create space for themselves or their team mates. The player in possession of the ball will need to decide how they will do this successfully. Once the coach passes the ball into play, defenders will need to react quickly to either press or drop against their opponents. For the attackers, they will need to make decisions based on the position of their team mates, defenders but also what space is available.
- **Speed of Attack** – Encourage attackers to attack quickly, particularly in the transition to take advantage of the defenders being out of position / balance to help them to create goal scoring opportunities. If the attack is too slow, this will allow the defenders to get back into their shape.
- **Movement** – Players away from the ball whilst the attackers are in possession of the ball should look to move to create overloads and space for their team mates as well as themselves. Players may look to make movement to create space behind, beside or in advance of the player in possession of the ball.
- **Combination Play** – Quick, short sharp combination play will help the attackers to attack quickly but also to take advantage of any numerical advantage they may have when attacking. Encourage players to explore the use of overlaps, underlaps, give and go's and third man runs to help them to create goal scoring opportunities for their team.

Progressions

- Increase the numbers to 3 v 4, 4 v 5.

Regression

- Play as a wave game without defenders where players simply try to attack and score as quickly as they can whilst combining with one another (as a wave game).

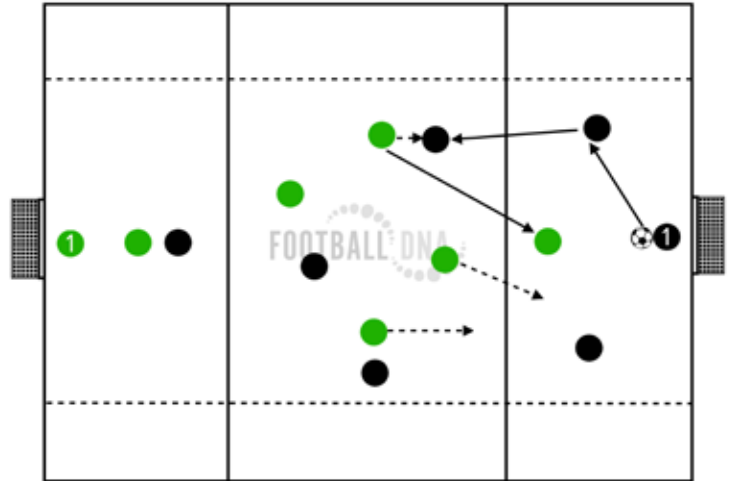
WEEK 2

EXPLOITING SPACE IN ATTACKING TRANSITION

For players to identify and exploit spaces on the turnover of possession into an attacking moment.

TRANSITIONING TO EXPLOIT SPACE

Setup a small sided pitch divided into thirds and also mark two channels in wide areas. The ball starts with one teams goalkeeper who can only attack through the central channel of the pitch trying to score in the opposite goal. When the defending team wins the ball, they can use the whole pitch including the outside channels. If the ball is won in open play by the attacking team from the defenders i.e., the team that are restricted to attacking in the central channel can then play freely. If the ball goes out of play, then the game always restarts with the goalkeeper.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – The attacking team in this game will need to work together to decide upon when to play forwards and when to play back to retain possession of the ball. Due to them playing inside the smaller pitch, they will need to continually scan to help them to be aware of what is around them.
- **Speed of Attack** – Encourage attackers to attack quickly, particularly in the transition to take advantage of the defenders being out of position / balance to help them to create goal scoring opportunities. If the attack is too slow, this will allow the defenders to get back into their shape. Encourage attackers to take advantage of overloads to increase their chances of scoring whilst they have a numerical advantage and also exploiting the space in the wider areas.
- **Movement** – Players away from the ball whilst the attackers are in possession of the ball should look to move to create overloads and space for their team mates as well as themselves. Players may look to make movement to create space behind, beside or in advance of the player in possession of the ball like overlapping into the wider areas.
- **Combination Play** – Quick, short sharp combination play will help attackers to attack quickly but also to take advantage of any numerical advantage they may have when attacking. Encourage players to explore the use of overlaps, underlaps, give and go's and third man runs to help them to create goal scoring opportunities for their team.

Progressions

- Lock players into thirds of the pitch both when in and out of possession throughout the game.

Regression

- Every time a goal is scored the game changes from being played in the small pitch into being played in the larger pitch.

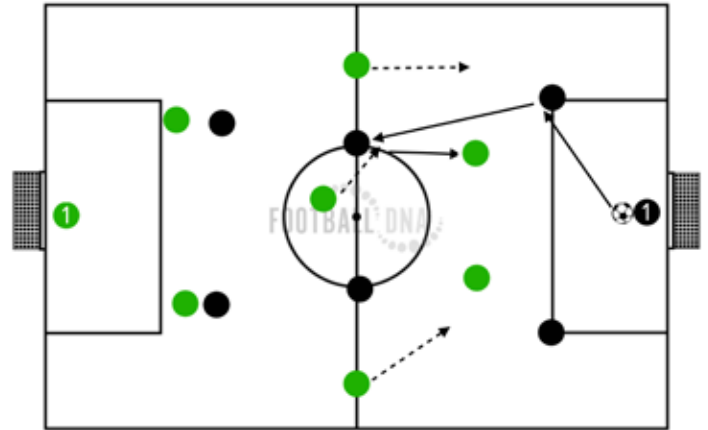
WEEK 2

EXPLOITING SPACE IN ATTACKING TRANSITION

For players to identify and exploit spaces on the turnover of possession into an attacking moment.

EXPLOITING OVERLOADS ON TRANSITION

Setup a small sided pitch with two teams and a goal/ goalkeeper either end. One team is overloaded with an extra player 6 v 7/7 v 8. Rotate the team that has an overload to vary the challenge for all players.



Equipment



13 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – The team that has the overload will be able to take advantage of their opponents throughout the game and may need to be patient to recognise when is the right time to create and finish. The team with the underload will need to look at ways that they can play with a player less and evade pressure and players should continually scan to identify solutions to the problems throughout the game.
- **Speed of Attack** – Encourage the team with a player less to attack quickly, particularly in the transition to take advantage of the defenders being out of position / balance to help them to create goal scoring opportunities. If the attack is not quick enough, the defending team will be able to regain shape and get behind the ball making it harder to break down.
- **Movement** – Players away from the ball whilst the attackers are in possession of the ball should look to support with different types of runs such as over and underlaps that can exploit those overload opportunities.
- **Combination Play** – Quick, short sharp combination play will help attackers to attack quickly but also to take advantage of any numerical advantage they may have when attacking. One and two touch play will really increase the speed of the attack with the addition of passing forward.

Progressions

- Increase the overload by more than one player.

Regression

- Add a magic man that allows the team whenever in possession of the ball to have an overload.

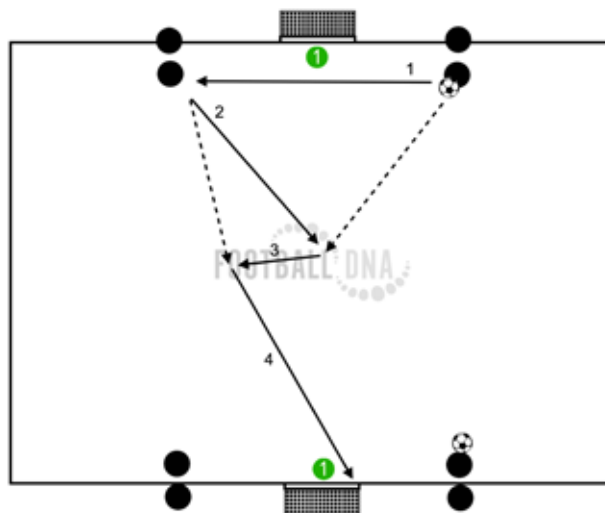
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

WAVE FINISHING PRACTICE IN PAIRS

Set out two goals 30 yards apart with players paired together either side of the goal at each end with a ball between them. To start the move the player with the ball passes to their partner and then sprints into the middle to face back to goal receiving the return pass. The middle player then sets their partner for a strike at goal. After one pair have finished the next pair go from the opposite end to replicate waves. To progress the bounce player sets the ball backwards to then defend 1 v 1 against their partner.



Equipment



8 – 12 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – All passes must be completed at a good intensity punching the ball into their partner at a good weight. The weight must allow two touches to be taken at the start and one touch when passed into the middle. The weight of pass will dictate the rhythm of the move and produce good combination play if performed correctly. Passes that are too hard will slow the move down needing extra touches to be taken. The same applies to the quality of pass with the direction being into feet so the player receiving doesn't have to change direction. The set for the finish should be in front of the oncoming player to continue their running stride to strike at goal.
- **Speed of Movement** – To ensure the attacking play is quick, players must move at full speed when sprinting into the middle. If the player takes too long it will kill the pace and the player will be left on the ball too long. The same applies once the ball has been set from the middle player that the second player is already on the move so the ball is always moving as it's struck.
- **1 v 1 Technique** – When the attacker faces the defender up they must try to get beyond them as soon as possible. This may be on their first touch as the defender is trying to set themselves and the attacker uses their pace to accelerate away. If the defender does well and prevents this then the attacker needs to off balance them with a 1 v 1 move shifting the ball and using body feints to create space for a strike. The defender wants to try and force the attacker away from goal and prevent them from getting space for a shot in central areas. Using their body shape to angle them onto their weaker foot will be a good tactic and then stopping them coming back inside.
- **Finishing Technique** – Players need to make a good connection with the ball and direct it into the corners of the goal. They must select the appropriate surface to finish either the side foot or laces. Whichever they decide, good concentration is needed to focus on keeping balanced and in control of their body to then strike through the ball. If finishing low then the body weight should be forward.

Progressions

- Instead of a lay off to finish, the middle player sets the ball back to their partner for a 1 v 1.

Regression

- Players work individually and have a ball each. Have two players that stay on the pitch and combine with players with a wall pass.

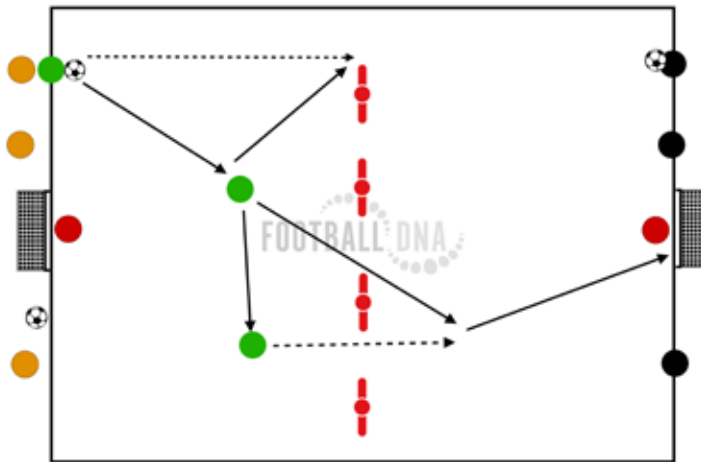
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

COMBINATION PLAY & FINISHING

A progressive wave practice that encourages quick one & two touch play to produce combinations around the goal. 3 Groups of players in 3's perform different combinations to result in a shot on goal before progressing to adding wide players for different types of crosses. Encourage players to produce wall passes, under and overlaps.



Equipment



9 – 15 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs, Mannequins

Coaching Points

- **Awareness & Coordination** – Producing quick combination play to create a goal requires choosing the right pass and having the vision to see it. When playing quickly the player in possession has to make decisions as fast as possible so they can choose which is the best pass and how to execute it while making a run after their pass.
- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – The quality of the passes is so important to the fluidity and speed of the attack. Touches should be a maximum of 2/3. If the weight of the pass is too much it will force the receiver to have an extra touch slowing the combination down. The pass to setup the finishing player should be in front to allow them to run onto the ball not breaking stride. If the passes are good and well weighted it will mean a quicker combination which in a game scenario will be much more effective to create a goal scoring opportunity.
- **Timing of Movement** – To make the combination effective the movement off the ball has to be well timed so the players are only using one or two touches. If the players run too early and get on top of each other more touches will have to be taken to get the ball out of their feet. The pass into the finishing player should be in front of them to allow them to strike first time. This will depend on the timing of the run to not get ahead of the ball.
- **Execution of Finish** – The final part of the drill requires quality and accuracy to produce an attempt on target. The player that finishes the move off should try to get good clean contact on the ball and select the surface they wish to use early to enable quick footwork into position. The finish should aim to be within one touch to keep the speed of play quick. Crossing players should aim to put the ball into good zones of the area towards the runs of oncoming players. Different types of crosses like cut backs for combination play should be practised which can be developed further with the progression of adding defenders and a goalkeeper.

Progressions

- Limit to 1 touch per player.
- Add a crossing player on each side for groups to play wide and finish.

Regression

- Allow extra touches to be taken - 3 touch max still.

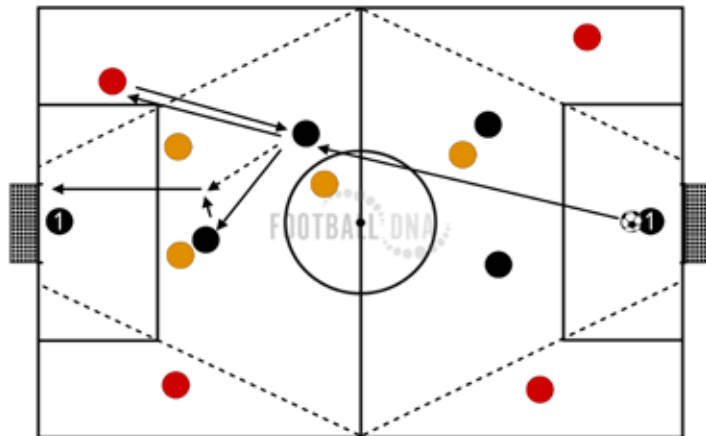
WEEK 3

CONVERTING GOALSCORING OPPORTUNITIES

For players to develop goalscoring skills through multiple finishing practices and small sided games.

THREE TEAM DIAMOND COMBINATION

Setup a small sided game with two goals and organise three teams as well as two goalkeepers in either goal. Use cones or flat markers to put the pitch into a diamond and organise one of the teams to act as target players based around four corners of the pitch. In this game, players must play into a target player before they can score. Use the half way line as an offside line too. If a team scores, they stay on and the other team then leaves the field and swaps places with the target players. Keep scores and make the games competitive.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Body Shape** – Encourage players to play forwards wherever possible and challenge them to have an open body shape before they receive the ball. Players should look to see the target players in the attacking half and use them whenever they can to help them to exploit space and combine with them in and around the goal.
- **Checking Shoulders/Awareness** – Players should continually scan and check their shoulders throughout the game to help them to see space, opponents and their team mates. Scanning throughout this game will help the attackers to be able to see the target players that they need to play into to be able to score and decide upon the right time to do so.
- **Disguise** – Encourage attackers to add disguise whilst in possession of the ball to help them to combine quickly between them. Players should be encouraged to not play the way that they're facing and explore using different surfaces of their feet to receive and pass between them and their team mates.
- **1 or 2 Touch Play** – To help attackers to combine quickly in and around the goal, they will need to recognise when they should play off one or two touches. Playing off one or two touches will help attackers to exploit spaces left by the defenders by not giving them time to adjust their body shape / organisation.

Progression

- Limit the number of touches both teams can have in possession of the ball as well as the target players too.

Regression

- Split the pitch into two and have two balls in play with a game taking place in either half of the pitch.

WEEK 4

DEFENDING AS BACK 4 , INDIVIDUAL, UNIT & TEAM

To improve players ability to defend as a back 4 together and as a complete unit.

DEFENDING 1 V 1, 2 V 2, 3 V 3, 4 V 4

Split the pitch in front of the 18 yard box into 4 equal channels. This can be widened depending on how much room you need to give your players according to ages and abilities. For this practice we have split in front of the 18 yard box equally. One defender and one attacker works in each channel and must stay inside the area until inside the 18 yard box where they can go anywhere to try and score/defend. Put the defenders in their desired positions and attackers likewise. The practice starts with the attacker (one at a time) who have a ball and must try and beat the defender in their area to get a chance on goal. This then evolves to a 2v2 with the players in the next channel joining in the play, then 3v3 and 4v4 so the whole back 4 is working. You could put mini goals at the end of the channels for he defenders to score in if they win the ball.



Equipment



8 – 16 Players & 1 GK



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Engage High** – The defender should try to engage the attacker as high as possible, giving them less time to build any attacking pace which would be harder to defend. It will also might make the attacking player have a poor first touch which could be intercepted. Speed of approach in important slowing down closer to the attacker protecting the space in behind.
- **Force One Way** – Once the defender has got to the attacker early they should stay balanced trying to dictate the way they would prefer the attacker to go, preferably showing them away from goal onto the defenders stronger side. Defenders should be on their toes ready to adjust their position and have soft knees not going to low but not being too upright & stiff.
- **Decision Making** – Choose the correct time to jockey the attacker before committing to the tackle or blocking a shot if they have got into an area to shoot. Once the attacker has entered the penalty area, it is important the defenders stay on their feet and force an error.
- **Quality on Transition** – If the defender can win the ball cleanly they should then try to make the most of the transition by counter attacking at pace, whether that be running the ball into a forward area or passing to a target.

Progressions

- Progress to a 2 v 2, 3 v 3 & 4 v 4. Start by using two players next to each other for example a full back and the nearest centre back.

Regression

- Split the channels into two instead of 4 so there is more space for the attacker. This could also be a progression if it is too easy for the defenders.

WEEK 4

DEFENDING AS BACK 4 , INDIVIDUAL, UNIT & TEAM

To improve players ability to defend as a back 4 together and as a complete unit.

PRINCIPLES OF DEFENDING WITH A BACK 4

Using half of a pitch, set out 4 defensive channels with mini discs. Each zone has 3 lines which are spaced 5 yards apart. The lines are numbered 1,2 and 3 with the defenders starting on line 1. 3 small goals are spread across the half way line. The defending team have a back 4 and 1 defensive midfielder against a front 4. Four other players are positioned on the half way line with a pile of balls as servers for the attacking team. The coach calls 1,2 or 3 for the defenders to move up to that line. When the coach blows the whistle the designated player plays a penetrating pass to the 4 attackers who look to create a scoring opportunity. If defenders win the ball back they can try to score in the small goals.



Equipment



13 Players & 1 GK



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- Body Shape** - The ability to move backwards and forwards allowing defenders to quickly get into a sprint by having an angled body shape. A square on body shape will mean having to do 360 degrees turn to run towards their own goal, which will take too long. Players need to be on their toes ready to turn and accelerate quickly.
- Communication and Awareness** - The defensive unit should be constantly talking to each other to squeeze up, move across, drop off. The GK is important in this too helping set the defensive line as they can see the whole pitch in front. Defenders also need to be aware of the balls position and adjust to suit. They will also need to be aware of the forwards movement recognising to drop or step up.
- Quality of Clearance** - Height and distance away from the danger area. Defenders should aim to make as much contact with a large surface directing the ball with accuracy and power. Concentration is needed on connecting with the ball and focusing on clearing the area allowing the team to squeeze up and be organised. If the clearance is poor it will allow the attacking team to have another phase of attack putting the defensive unit under further pressure. If possible can defenders bring the ball down or play 1 touch to gain control of possession and keep the ball to counter or retain possession.
- Goalkeeper Start Position** - The goalkeeper needs to be on the front foot ready to anticipate any through balls behind or over the top of the defence. The position needs to be relative to the ball, the further the ball is away from the goal the higher the GK should be. When the ball is around the halfway line, on the penalty spot/edge of the area is good depending on the defensive line. If the GK decides to come out and deal with a through ball they should be positive and not hesitate making a clean clearance into a safe area.

Progression

- On the whistle the designated passing player plays an extra pass to one of the other servers who plays a penetrating pass so the defending team have to slide across.

Regression

- Take out the cones for the defenders to move their line forward and backwards.

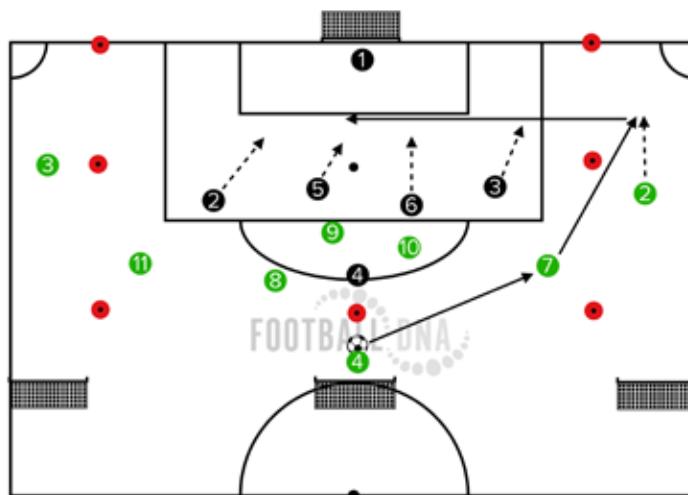
WEEK 4

DEFENDING AS BACK 4 , INDIVIDUAL, UNIT & TEAM

To improve players ability to defend as a back 4 together and as a complete unit.

DEFENDING AROUND THE BOX

Setup an area slightly outside the 18 yard box with a back 4 defensive unit and a defensive midfielder playing against 4 attackers inside the marked area. A full back plays on the outside of each side of the area plus a midfield player in a central position to start attacks. Players on the outside cannot enter the inside of the area but can carry the ball to deliver crosses. The aim is to defend as a compact unit against the attackers to prevent any goal scoring opportunities. If the defenders win the ball they can score in two goals stationed 15 yards outside of the penalty area.



Equipment



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Distances** – To remain in a compact defensive shape, players need to work together and move across the area with small distances in between them. This limits the chance of any through balls for runners to get onto. It also means that players are close enough to cover one another and fill any spaces vacated. If the full back closes down out wide, then the central defender needs to edge over and cover behind but not going too far where they leave space centrally.
- **Clearances**– To defend effectively, defenders will need to clear the ball out of the area. To do this defenders have to be ready on their toes to adjust to the flight of the ball or ready to intercept to then score into the goals using the correct technique. When clearing the ball, defenders need to focus on making good contact with the ball to make a firm connection that generates enough power and distance. Ideally clearances will be high and wide away from the goal. Defenders will need to make quick decisions to select the type of clearance needed and then apply the technique required.
- **Body Shape** – When the ball is in wide areas the defenders need to try and have an open body shape so they can see the ball and the attackers. Having this open body shape will allow them to see the attackers movement and then be able to react much quicker. If they have a closed body shape, they will be unaware of attackers movement around them. When full backs are in 1 v 1 situations, the aim should be to force them away from goal by not allowing them to come inside the pitch to finish.
- **Communication** – The goalkeeper plays a big part in this, organising the defensive unit with instructions to slide across, stop the cross, mark up. The GK can see everything in front including runners and the movement of the attackers. This information needs to be communicated to the defenders so they can adjust their positioning as required.

Progression

- Add more players to both teams building it up to 11 v 11.

Regression

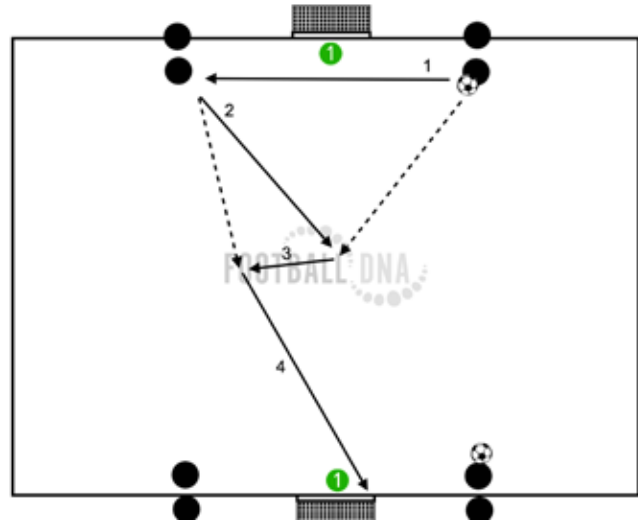
- Play 4 v 4 in the central area with the 2 full backs remaining outside.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

WAVE FINISHING PRACTICE IN PAIRS

Set out two goals 30 yards apart with players paired together either side of the goal at each end with a ball between them. To start the move the player with the ball passes to their partner and then sprints into the middle to face back to goal receiving the return pass. The middle player then sets their partner for a strike at goal. After one pair have finished the next pair go from the opposite end to replicate waves. To progress the bounce player sets the ball backwards to then defend 1 v 1 against their partner.



Equipment



8 – 12 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Weight & Quality of Pass** – All passes must be completed at a good intensity punching the ball into their partner at a good weight. The weight must allow two touches to be taken at the start and one touch when passed into the middle. The weight of pass will dictate the rhythm of the move and produce good combination play if performed correctly. Passes that are too hard will slow the move down needing extra touches to be taken. The same applies to the quality of pass with the direction being into feet so the player receiving doesn't have to change direction. The set for the finish should be in front of the oncoming player to continue their running stride to strike at goal.
- **Speed of Movement** – To ensure the attacking play is quick, players must move at full speed when sprinting into the middle. If the player takes too long it will kill the pace and the player will be left on the ball too long. The same applies once the ball has been set from the middle player that the second player is already on the move so the ball is always moving as it's struck.
- **1 v 1 Technique** – When the attacker faces the defender up they must try to get beyond them as soon as possible. This may be on their first touch as the defender is trying to set themselves and the attacker uses their pace to accelerate away. If the defender does well and prevents this then the attacker needs to off balance them with a 1 v 1 move shifting the ball and using body feints to create space for a strike. The defender wants to try and force the attacker away from goal and prevent them from getting space for a shot in central areas. Using their body shape to angle them onto their weaker foot will be a good tactic and then stopping them coming back inside.
- **Finishing Technique** – Players need to make a good connection with the ball and direct it into the corners of the goal. They must select the appropriate surface to finish either the side foot or laces. Whichever they decide, good concentration is needed to focus on keeping balanced and in control of their body to then strike through the ball. If finishing low then the body weight should be forward.

Progressions

- Instead of a lay off to finish, the middle player sets the ball back to their partner for a 1 v 1.

Regression

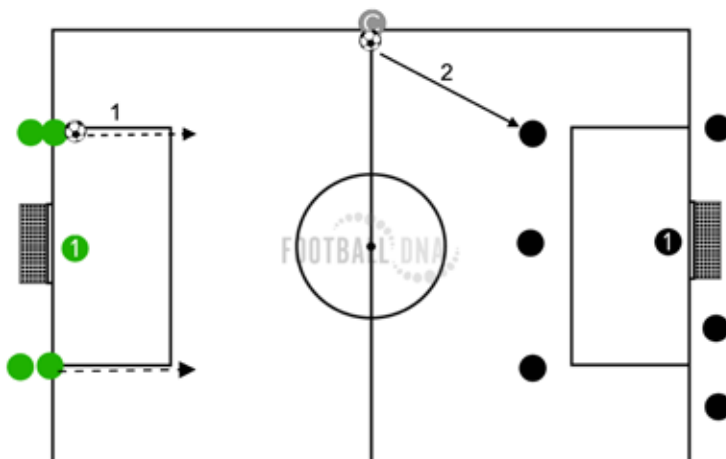
- Players work individually and have a ball each. Have two players that stay on the pitch and combine with players with a wall pass.

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

TRANSITION TO ATTACK AFTER DEFENDING

Setup a 40 x 30 area with a goal and goalkeeper each end. The 2 attackers start with the ball and attack against 3 defenders trying to score as normal. If the defenders win the ball back, they then try and score. If the ball goes out of play when the team who start with the ball attacks, the coach quickly feeds in a new ball to initiate the transition moment.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Footballs, Goals

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – The two attackers will need to work together to combine but also individually to stay on the ball to create space for themselves or their team mates. The player in possession of the ball will need to decide how they will do this successfully. Once the coach passes the ball into play, defenders will need to react quickly to either press or drop against their opponents. For the attackers, they will need to make decisions based on the position of their team mates, defenders but also what space is available.
- **Speed of Attack** – Encourage attackers to attack quickly, particularly in the transition to take advantage of the defenders being out of position / balance to help them to create goal scoring opportunities. If the attack is too slow, this will allow the defenders to get back into their shape.
- **Movement** – Players away from the ball whilst the attackers are in possession of the ball should look to move to create overloads and space for their team mates as well as themselves. Players may look to make movement to create space behind, beside or in advance of the player in possession of the ball.
- **Combination Play** – Quick, short sharp combination play will help the attackers to attack quickly but also to take advantage of any numerical advantage they may have when attacking. Encourage players to explore the use of overlaps, underlaps, give and go's and third man runs to help them to create goal scoring opportunities for their team.

Progressions

- Increase the numbers to 3 v 4, 4 v 5.

Regression

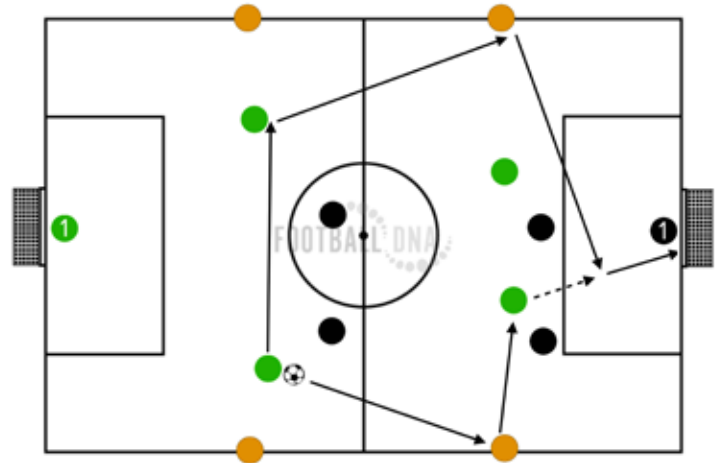
- Play as a wave game without defenders where players simply try to attack and score as quickly as they can whilst combining with one another (as a wave game).

WEEK 5 CONSOLIDATION

To consolidate players learning from the previous 4 weeks of sessions.

4 V 4 COMBINE CENTRAL OR WIDE

Setup a small sided pitch and have 3. 2 teams play 4 v 4 with the third team on spread out on the outside. To score the attacking team must play through the wide players either combining or from a cross. Wide players are to work together and can overlap or set the ball back to one another if they wish. They must stay on the outside of the pitch and cannot enter the inside.



Equipment



12 Players & 2 GK'S



Bibs, Cones, Goals, Footballs

Coaching Points

- **Decision Making** – Throughout the game and due to the size of the area, players should be continually looking to scan both when they are in and out of possession of the ball to help them to recognise who and where they should look to play into. Players should look to use the outside target players to help them to combine to score.
- **Combination Play** – Encourage players to use the target players in wide areas to combine with to help them to retain possession but also to create goal scoring opportunities. The target players will help to create overloads particularly on the opposite side of the pitch which may encourage attackers to switch play quickly to exploit space.
- **Crossing & Finishing** – Once the ball has been played into the target players, they will be in a position to get crosses into players inside the box to finish opportunities that may have been created. Players should look to vary their types of finishes based on whether they're in and around the box, but you should encourage players to finish of one or two touches. It might be a headed finish where players have to focus on making good contact with the forehead and guide the ball towards goal.
- **Movement** – Players should look to position themselves to see both the ball as well as the goal. Players should look to create space through width and depth which will either help them to combine in central or wide areas. Encourage players to move to create overloads as well as run in advance of the ball too to receive passes beyond.

Progressions

- Play winner stays on, so once a goal is scored the team that has conceded it rotates with the target players.

Regression

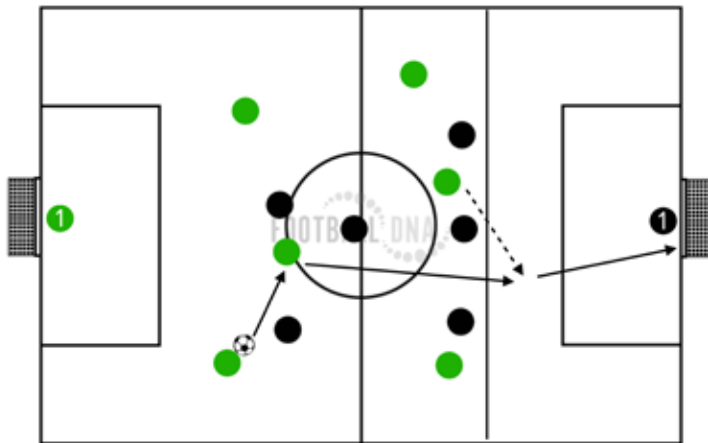
- Players can either score through the wide players or as a normal goal

WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

OPTION 1: THE OFFSIDE LINE SMALL SIDED GAME



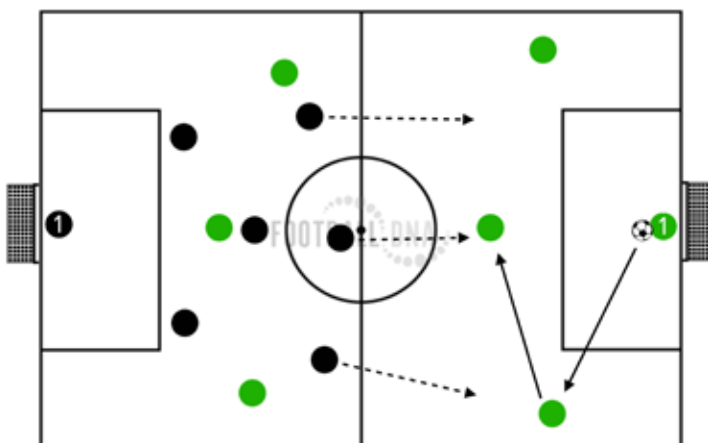
12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

Setup a small sided pitch with a goalkeeper and a goal either end. Playing a 6 v 6 – 8 v 8 depending on numbers with only one end having an offside line in place on the pitch. This line lasts as the last defender for the team attacking in that direction. Going in the opposite direction are no restrictions.

OPTION 2: PLAYING THROUGH THE PRESS



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

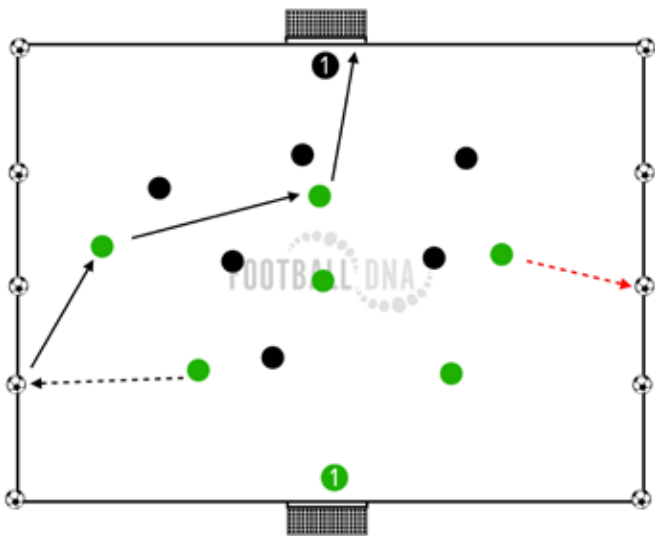
Setup a small sided pitch with a goal and goal-keeper either and a halfway line marked across the pitch. Teams are split evenly 5 v 5 – 7 v 7. One team starts with the ball from the GK whilst the other team have to start in their own half of the pitch. Once the GK passes out, the opposition can then press. After a goal is scored the 'scoring' team then retreats to their own half to become the defensive team, with the GK on the opposite team starting. You can use throw ins or kick ons if the ball goes out of play or start the practice again from the GK. To encourage the starting defensive team to try and win the ball back early, you could put a stipulation in place that five passes (dependant on players skill level) is a 'goal'. As this encourages the defensive team to press the ball it may leave more space in their defensive set up for the attacking team to penetrate and score.

WEEK 6

SMALL SIDED GAMES

To expose players to two different small sided games that recap the previous block of learning.

OPTION 3: MULTI BALL



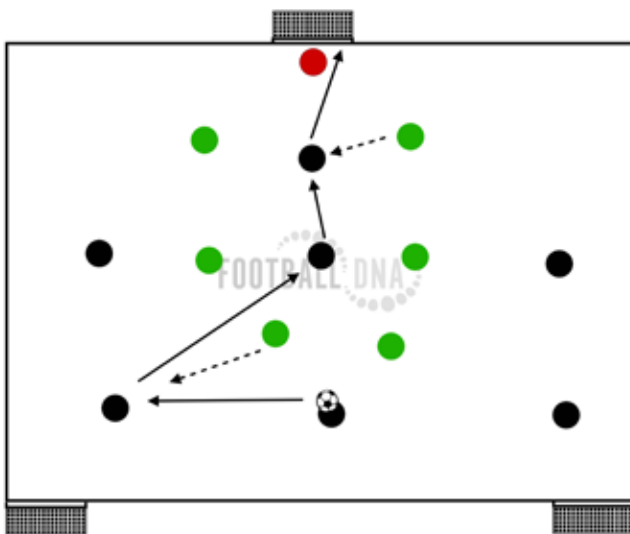
12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

Setup a small sided game with two goals and organise two teams with a goalkeeper in either goal. Make the game directional. Line footballs up around the outside of the pitch and the game starts by a player collecting the ball on the outside and then attacking their goal. Once a ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, the team who would normally get possession collect a ball from anywhere and attack. Play until all footballs have been used and then restart the game by placing the footballs back around the outside of the pitch.

OPTION 4: 1 GOAL V 2 GOAL OVERLOAD



12 – 16 Players & 2 GK'S



Cones, Bibs, Goals, Footballs

Setup a small sided game with one team attacking two goals that are one side of the area and the other team attacking one goal that is in the middle of the opposite side of the pitch. The side with one goal, has one goalkeeper. The purpose of this game is for the attacking team that is scoring in the two goals, to look to shift play from one side to the other and for the defending team to remain compact and look to win the ball and attack the opposite end quickly.



FOOTBALL DNA



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