

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

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Issue 402
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SHOOT AND SCORE!

HOW TO PACK MORE 'PUNCH'

- ✓ THREE WAYS TO PRACTICE SHOOTING
- ✓ POSSESSION WITH RONDO SQUARES
- ✓ CLEVER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES
- ✓ SHAPE UP TO SHOOT

COACH OF THE MONTH

- > LET THEM PLAY
- > FOUR CORNERS
- > DON'T MANAGE ON THE SIDELINES

DRILLS FOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

BEST SESSIONS EVERY WEEK

< **ALEX MORGAN**
SHOWS GREAT
TECHNIQUE FOR
POWER AND POISE



TOUCHLINE TALES FACE TO FACE INTERACTION

LEARN FROM OTHER SPORTS

- > BECKHAM BASKETBALL
- > IBRAHIMOVIC TENNIS
- > DON'T SPECIALISE EARLY
- > REPETITIVE STRESS INJURY

The Social Club



Soccer Coach Weekly Issue 402



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Touchline Tales

I had a great conversation this week with a coach who was moaning about all the social media his kids get exposed to and how they are constantly on their mobiles. It made me realize that sports clubs are one of the few remaining areas where kids get face to face contact and interaction with each other.

And for that we should be grateful. I am amazed at the number of different backgrounds the children, parents and match day officials that I meet every week come from. Certainly my team has played clubs from the upmarket end of the scale and clubs from the lower end.

But kids being kids they treat them both the same, they have none of the prejudice I feel emanating from the parents on the touchline or look on in awe at the array of Ferraris and Rolls Royces that fill the car park at one team's ground we regularly play at.

I love the fact that these worlds all collide and they play against each other on a level playing field. They are not sitting behind a screen hitting a controller a hundred times a second, their brains are working overtime on creating space or blocking a shot.

One of my best players had to come to training and matches on his bike because his parents were not capable of taking him - his biggest fear was losing his bike or being beaten up as he cycled to and from his house. He had an irrational fear



Picture: Danone 2014

“Sports clubs are one of the few remaining areas where kids get face to face contact and interaction”

of parents shouting on the touchline and on a few occasions he did walk over to me and say he couldn't play because the opposition parents were making comments and he felt uncomfortable.

When he eventually left my team to play for one closer to home, he only stayed with the club for a few games because he hated the aggressive win, win nature of the coach and his team. We welcomed him back with open arms.

One of his best friends played in our team, and his huge white Range Rover would pull up on the side of the pitch, the back door would open and out he would tumble. Always on time, though, so I wasn't complaining!

They play side by side supporting each other in defence and encouraging each other in attack then go home, one to cook for himself the other to moan to his cook. Wonderful how these two different lives can affect each other in a team.

Society as a whole benefits from the amount of work coaches put in every week bringing together kids from all walks of life.

You just have to love this thing we do!



David Clarke

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Young players should embrace all sports to help their soccer development

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Train to score like Alex Morgan

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Possession means more chance to create goals and win games

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An activity to play as players turn up

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Steve Grimes of Berkeley Heights Utd

10 FOUR CORNERS

Creativity in the final third is the thought behind this passing and shooting session



ASK DAVE GOT A COACHING PROBLEM? LET ME SOLVE IT FOR YOU!

It's good to have somebody to ask for advice when you encounter a problem with your team - and whatever your coaching problem, I'm sure I can help.

I'm delighted to offer you a personal service exclusive to SCW subscribers. Just email me your query on any soccer coaching matter and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. I'll give you the advice you need to solve your particular problem, and I'll even send you the resources you need from our archive of coaching sessions.

Just email me today: askdave@soccercoachweekly.net



Ellie Robertson, on the ball, with Berkeley Heights (Shooters) U8 girls

Learning From Other Sports

I'm always being asked should parents allow their kids to play other sports or is diluting their time spent on soccer detrimental to their chances of becoming a good player?

In this winner takes all society where we are constantly being told about the 10,000 hours of practice to create sporting genius, parents are beginning to question whether their kids should specialize in just one sport so they become the 'best' at it.

However, physicians at the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine are concerned that early specialization is the cause of several issues, including overuse injuries and psychological burnout for kids.

Their latest research suggests that specialization should not take place until children are in their teens at the earliest. Indeed Manchester City and Spain player David Silva played basketball as well as soccer until he 14.

And the latest figures in the US show that of 296 NCAA Division 1 male and female athletes 88% played two to three sports when they were young. And 70% of them did not specialize in one sport until they were in their teens.

Mark Robertson is a coach who runs an Under-8s tournament team and is in charge of the Soccer Development Academy at Berkeley Heights Youth Soccer Club. His daughter is a soccer fanatic, but she is also playing baseball, softball and is a strong swimmer – so she is getting coaching in other sporting disciplines

that help her long term soccer development. Mark says it is the competition which drives her.

It is always interesting to look at the athletes at the top of their game and find out what they did as youngsters. Writer Emily Cohen has a son who plays varsity high school baseball and a daughter who plays high school soccer and tennis. She has been a team manager for a number of her children's sports teams.

She interviewed US Women's National Soccer Team player and Olympic Gold Medallist Alex Morgan. During the interview she touched on the subject of other sports played at college and high school.

EMILY COHEN: What about the fact that kids are specialising in one sport earlier than they used to?

ALEX MORGAN: The early teens are a difficult age because definitely you want your kids to grow up and do whatever they want to do; you don't want to push them too hard in one

particular sport. My parents allowed me to play volleyball and softball and basketball and soccer at one time and I loved it. I was playing all these other sports so it wasn't too much wear on the soccer field and it wasn't too much wear on a repetitive exercise.

EC: So you played on your club and school soccer teams, and you continued to play volleyball and run track throughout high school, right?

AM: Track was more something I did for fun; volleyball I was actually pretty committed to in my freshman and sophomore year. But after that time, my high school volleyball was in the same season as club soccer so I had to pretty much choose one sport from then on. I chose club soccer because I was missing either high school volleyball practice or club



< Alex Morgan keeps the ball from Guatemala player Coralia Monterroso



soccer practice and I knew I needed to choose one. After sophomore year, I stuck with soccer.

EC: So you think continuing to play multiple sports helped you in the long term?

AM: For me, it helped – but since I think recruiting for colleges has transitioned to an earlier age group – it used to be 15, 16, 17 and now it's 13, 14, 15 – so parents and coaches are put in a difficult position where they need to ask themselves if they should push their kids a little bit harder because if they don't an opportunity will pass them by. It's definitely a hard decision



Zlatan Ibrahimovic loves to play tennis

all around whether to create more practices, have more training for kids in that age group.

Emily also spoke to Dr Dev Mishra, team physician for the US Soccer Federation about repetitive injuries to young players. He sees the modern trend to year round sport as being a problem for overuse injuries.

He told Emily: “The trend towards single sports is detrimental to the overall development of young players.

“Year round soccer and lacrosse for girls and year round baseball for boys is creating overuse injuries. There needs to be an off season when players can rest and recover from injury.”

Dr Dev explained that problems occur when kids are going through their growth phase and the core areas of the body are susceptible to repetitive injury.

He put the emphasis on the parents spotting these injuries: “ Kids don't want to stop. Parents should try to be aware of their child on the field of play and spot a limp or irregular timing of movements.”

Coaches and parents need to be aware and watch out for any drop in performance and then get professional help for the player.

Emily is the host of the TeamSnap Youth Sports Podcast, you can hear more of her thoughts on this and other subjects at www.teamsnap.com/podcast.

THREE ‘WRONG’ SPORTS



Soccer star Ronaldo plays golf



NBA star Steve Nash plays soccer



British boxer Amir Khan plays soccer

Key Attacking Skills

Alex Morgan of the US Women's National Team works hard in training so she plays at her best on match days. Try these sessions based on her style of play

WHY USE IT

This is a session to get your players doing great passing, shooting and lung-busting bursts from box to box plus immaculate timing.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and goals, in the three areas shown in the diagrams. We used 8 players in each practice.

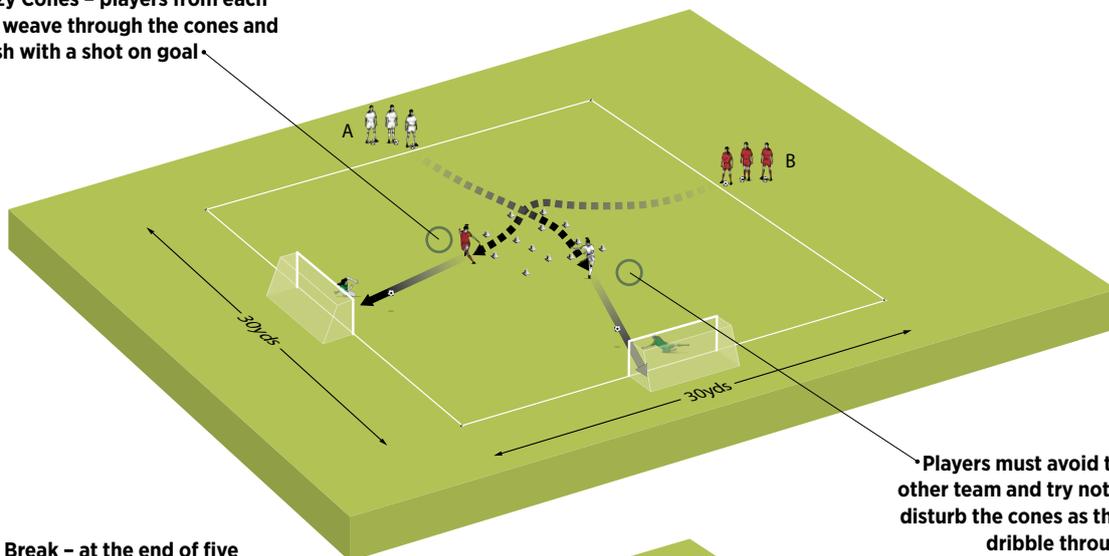
HOW TO PLAY

Each practice requires eight players – you can run them side-by-side, rotating players between each practice, or play one at a time. The first task, **Crazy Cones**, requires players to negotiate a path through the cones whilst avoiding each other, before shooting at goal. In the second, **Box Break**, attackers must retain possession in a 3v1 in the 10 x 10 yard box, making a minimum of five passes before releasing to attackers in a 2v2. Again, a shot at goal is required. Whether a move ends in a goal or not, restart play in the 3v1 box. In **End Zone Dash**, there are two fixed keepers. Players can only enter the zone in front of goal by running onto a through pass. Rotate players regularly.

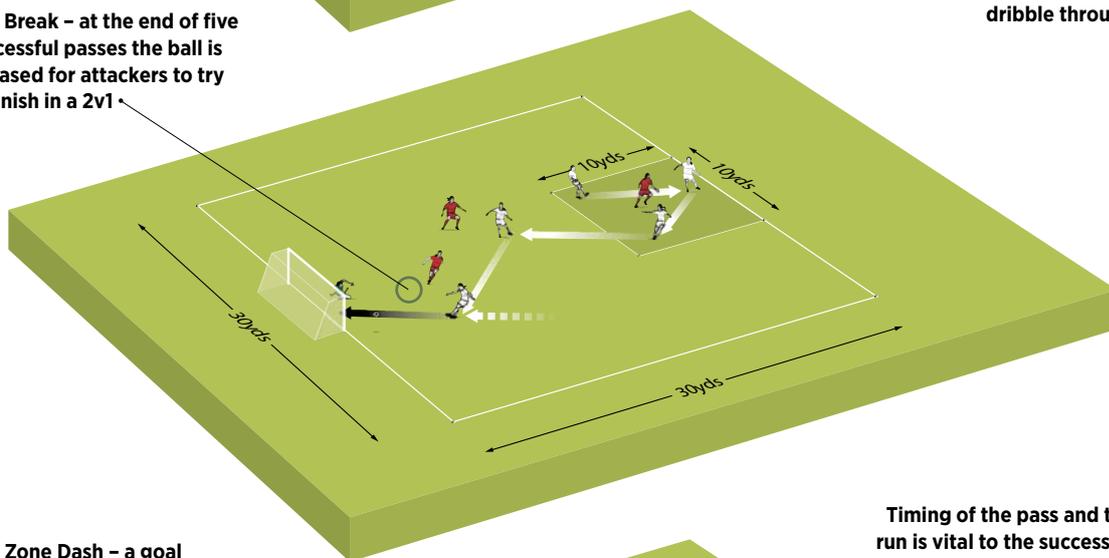
TECHNIQUE

In Crazy Cones, close control is essential, as well each player being aware of an opponent crossing his path. In Box Break, possession with an end result is the aim. In End Zone Dash, this is all about good timing in running on to a pass.

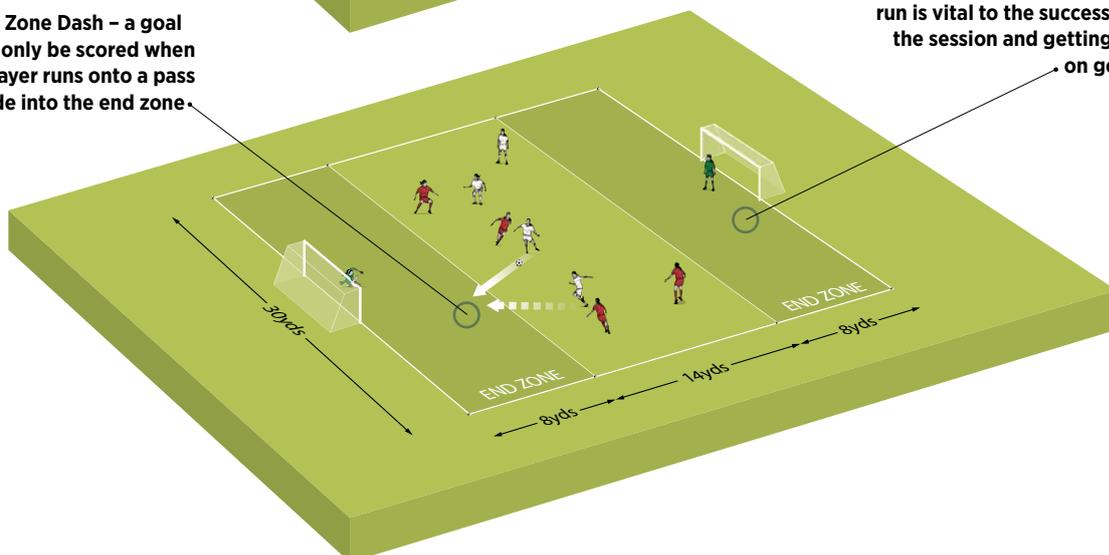
Crazy Cones – players from each line weave through the cones and finish with a shot on goal



Box Break – at the end of five successful passes the ball is released for attackers to try to finish in a 2v1



End Zone Dash – a goal can only be scored when a player runs onto a pass made into the end zone



Player movement ■■■■➔

Ball movement ➔

Run with ball ■■■➔

Shot ➔

Rondo Squares

Based on the Barcelona possession game Rondo, this session will help your players to keep the ball off the opposition giving themselves more chance of scoring goals

WHY USE IT

Great possession game to get players battling for the ball and encouraging passing and moving.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs and cones. Create a 40 x 40 yard square with a 30 x 30 yard square inside it. We used 12 players in the session.

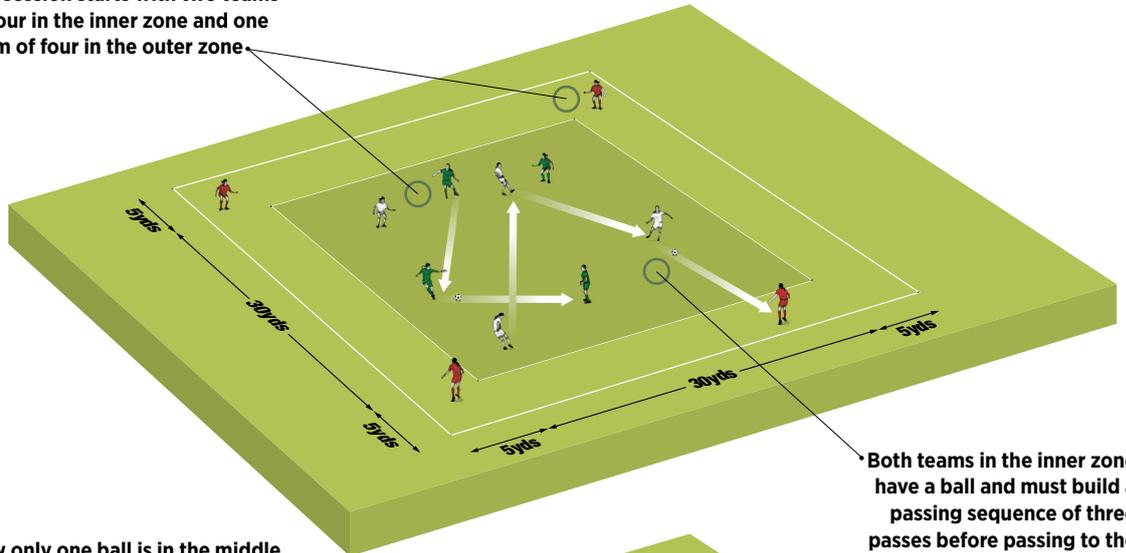
HOW TO PLAY

Split your squad into three teams – four players in each team. Two teams, both with a ball, go in the inner square, with the other team in the outer square. Each team must make a minimum of three passes before playing to the team in the outer square. There, two passes must be made before the ball is returned back inside. If a pass is successfully made back to the starting team, a point is scored. After 3 minutes, remove one of the balls so that inner square teams are now trying to gain possession of the ball. And after a further 3 minutes, outer square players must attempt to pass to the opposite team when the ball is sent back into the inner square. Now, the team that passed out must intercept the ball coming back in if they are to score a point.

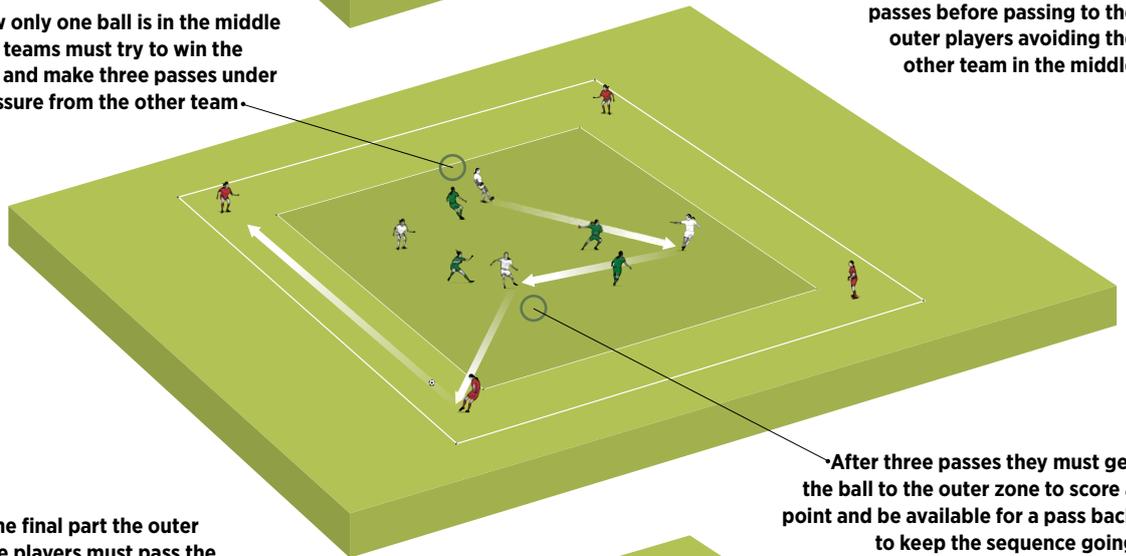
TECHNIQUE

This is a match-realistic session that requires a good first touch, excellent positional awareness and good passing.

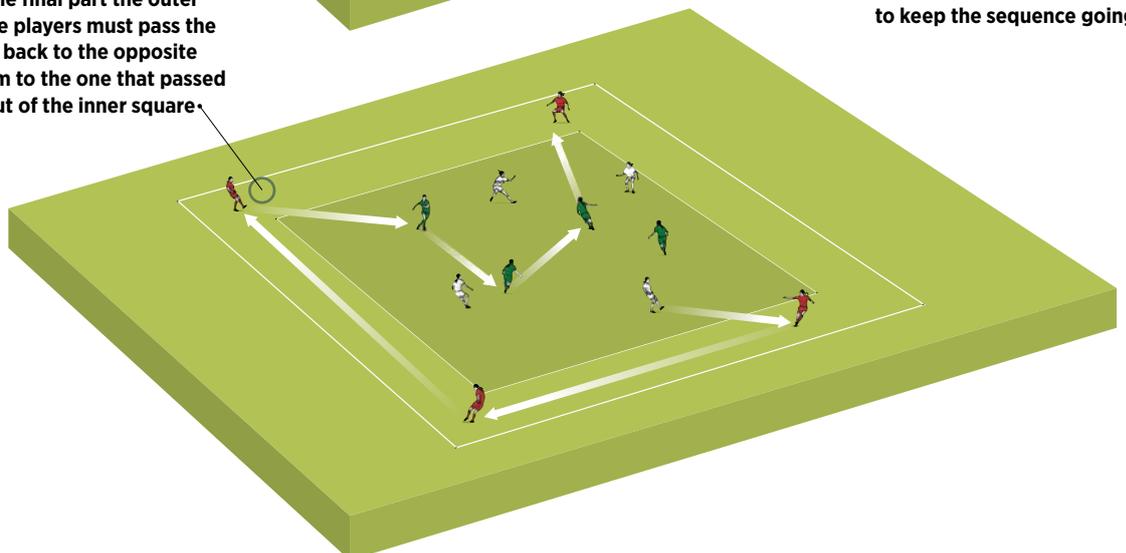
The session starts with two teams of four in the inner zone and one team of four in the outer zone.



Now only one ball is in the middle and teams must try to win the ball and make three passes under pressure from the other team.



In the final part the outer zone players must pass the ball back to the opposite team to the one that passed it out of the inner square.



Player movement ■■■■➔

Ball movement ➔

Run with ball ■■■➔

Shot ➔

Waiting For Players

A few coaches have enquired recently as to how they can make the most of training sessions with the disadvantage of players turning up late.

WHY USE IT

This session is set up so that as players arrive they can easily join in without you needing to stop or change the session.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs and cones in an area 20 x 20 yards. Numbers build up as players arrive.

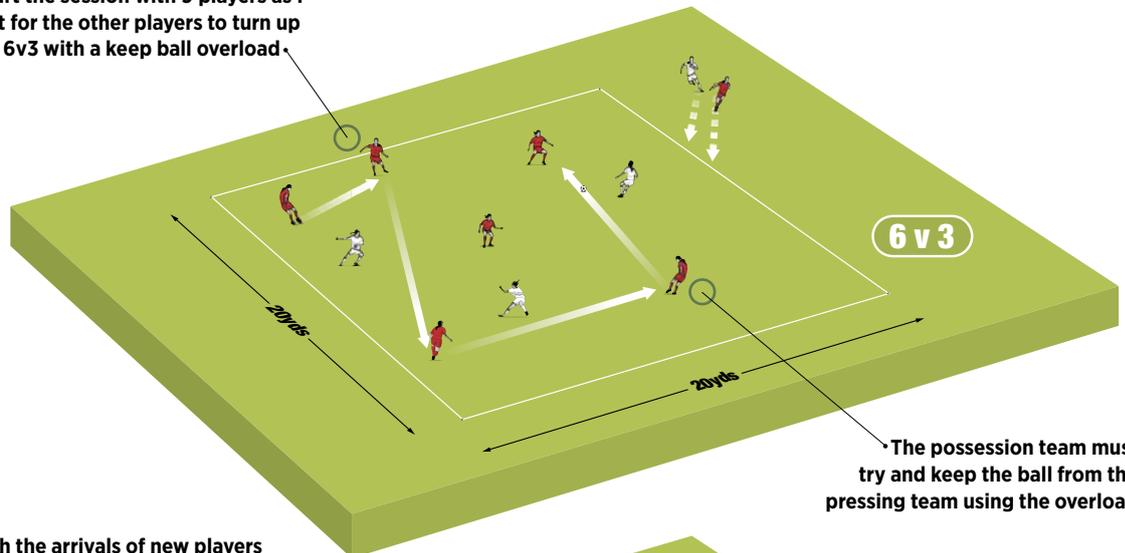
HOW TO PLAY

The size of the space is important – it's an inclusive activity, so must have an element of realism and your players will need to show the right attitude. In this session I am using nine players and waiting for three others to arrive. I start with a 6v3 – the team of six must try to keep possession for as long as possible. See how many times their opponents can win the ball. If they do win it or it goes out of play, it's returned to the team of six. Play for 90 seconds then pause. If in that time a new player has arrived, and the overload team are finding it hard to keep possession, the 6v3 can become a 7v3. Alternatively, if they're achieving the task quite comfortably, change the parameters so this is a 6v4 instead. Play until all players have arrived. You can now move on to the main session.

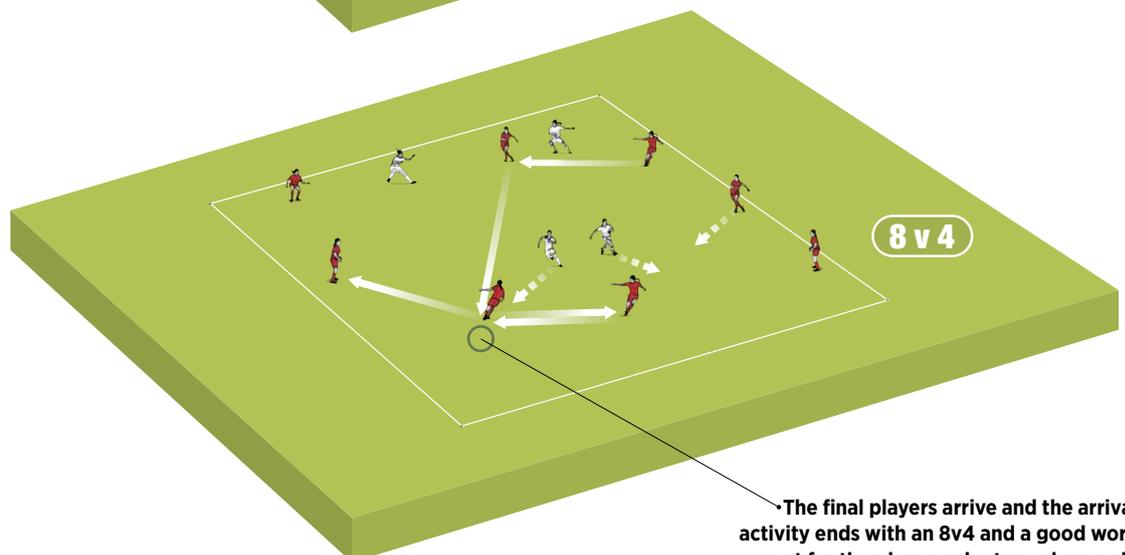
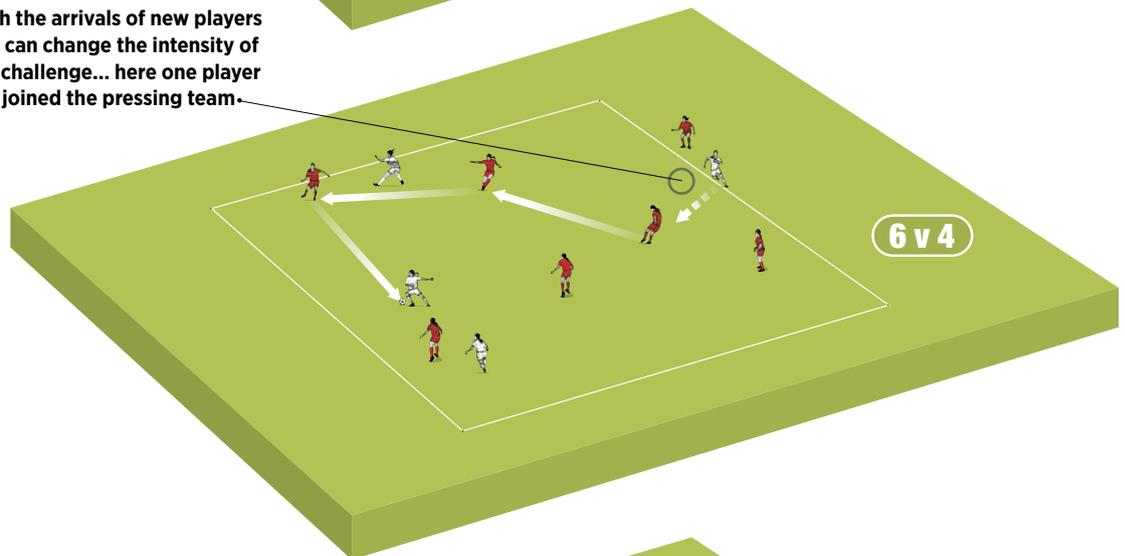
TECHNIQUE

Make sure players get close to the opposition in order to cut out passing lines. Defensive intelligence is essential, and closing down should be done by the player nearest the ball.

I start the session with 9 players as I wait for the other players to turn up in a 6v3 with a keep ball overload.



With the arrivals of new players you can change the intensity of the challenge... here one player has joined the pressing team.



Player movement 

Ball movement 

Run with ball 

Shot 



Steve and his U13B Berkeley Heights United team

Coach Steve Grimes

Each month Soccer Coach Weekly recognizes a grassroots coach who has given more than taken out of the game. This month we celebrate Steve Grimes of Berkeley Heights United

★ **What inspired you to get into coaching in the first place?**

As an Englishman in the US I was asked to coach the town team my son had joined aged 8. I quickly came to love teaching the boys the sport I loved and grew up playing and realized I could offer them an international perspective on the game.

★ **What's the biggest satisfaction you take from coaching?**

Any youth coach will agree that seeing kids develop over the years and grow into players is tremendously satisfying. To see boys who you coached from 8 years old now playing and winning at the Varsity level is a real thrill. On a week-by-week basis I'm always



Name: Steve Grimes **Age:** 47
Years Coaching: 8
Teams: U13B Berkeley Heights United
 Previously Berkeley Heights Blitz (2007-2013)
Qualifications: New Jersey State Youth Soccer - E License

Steve believes in letting the kids play during matches and does not coach from the sidelines. He says if you give players what they need during training they should be able to make their own decisions – set the team up and let them play.

delighted when you see a few moments on the pitch and you can say, they are really playing football

★ **Have you encountered any problems dealing with problem children or pushy parents?**

How have you dealt with these problems? I give a lot of credit to our town club and Mid

New Jersey Youth Soccer for constantly reinforcing the need for good behaviour from the parents and players.

There are always going to be those who step over the line, but in my experience the majority of parents just want to enjoy seeing their children play and can be helpful in quelling the obnoxious few.

★ **What is your key coaching belief or philosophy? (the principle that underpins everything you do)**

At the core, football (soccer) is a simple game, don't over coach the kids.

★ **What kind of training regime do you use for the players?**

We typically will have both training sessions with a professional trainer and practices with the volunteer coaches each week and usually one or two games. We have found a combination of indoor futsal-type games and practices on both turf and grass have helped the boys adapt to different conditions.

★ **What are your coaching ambitions?**

Once my youngest

“Best achievement has been seeing 11 of the boys I coached in elementary school playing for the high school team”

son heads off to college, I will probably hang up the coaches whistle unless I can help with other teams in town.

★ **What’s your best coaching achievement?** Overall I would have to say it has been seeing 11 of the boys I coached in elementary school playing for the high school team. In a small town dominated by baseball instilling a love of soccer in these boys and seeing them progress feels like a major achievement. On the field, coaching the 157th ranked team in New Jersey to the State Cup Quarterfinals has to be the highlight.

★ **What’s the funniest thing that’s happened to you when coaching?** I always find the funniest moments are on the drives to and from the games with a group of kids who forget there’s a parent in the front.

★ **Your key piece of advice for any other coach?** For American

The partnership of Brian Clough and Peter Taylor (Derby/Nottingham Forrest) has inspired Steve to work with his friends.



coaches I would stress that soccer is a game where the players have to make decisions. Unlike American football or basketball you can’t draw up plays or direct everyone what to do.

Your job as the coach is to give them the tools to make the best decisions on the field and then let them do it. Don’t try to manage the game from the sidelines, set the team up and let them play.

★ **Who is your coaching hero (the coach you respect the most) and why? (do you share any similar qualities with them?)** Hero might not be the right description, but I would say the partnership of Brian Clough and Peter Taylor (Derby/Nottingham Forrest) is something I have always found inspiring. Two very different personalities working together to achieve a level of success

far above the level those teams seemed capable of. I have been lucky to always coach with good friends alongside me and having someone to bounce ideas off or to step in when needed has made coaching much easier and much more fun.

Send your Coach Of The Month nominations to askdave@soccercoachweekly.net





Four Corners

Coach of the month Steve Grimes has shared one of his favourite drills with us which is creativity in the final third with passing and movement to encourage good play

WHY USE IT

Great session for movement and combination play in the final third. Also has 1v1 against the attacker and shots on goal.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs and a goal using the penalty area of your normal pitch. The session uses 13 players.

HOW TO PLAY

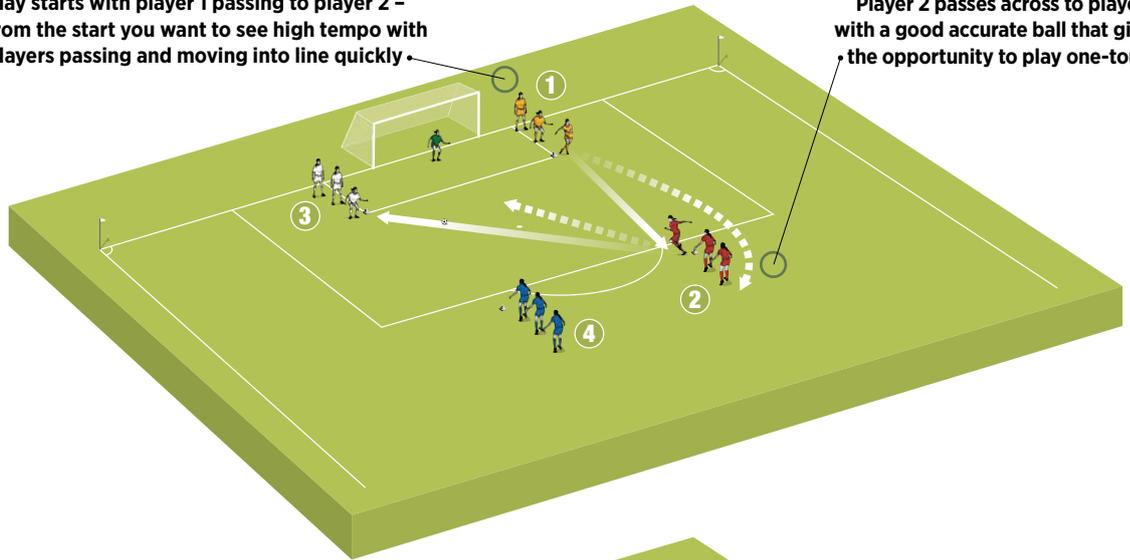
Three players line up on each of the "four corners". Play starts at 1. They pass the ball across the box to group 2, then run to join the back of that group. Player 2 passes diagonally across the area to group 3. Player 2 then becomes a defender (passive or active depending on skill level). Player 3 makes a leading pass to player 4 (then joins group 4). Player 4 receives the ball, has to beat the defender and shoot. Once the play is over the defender joins group 3 and the attacker group 1.

TECHNIQUE

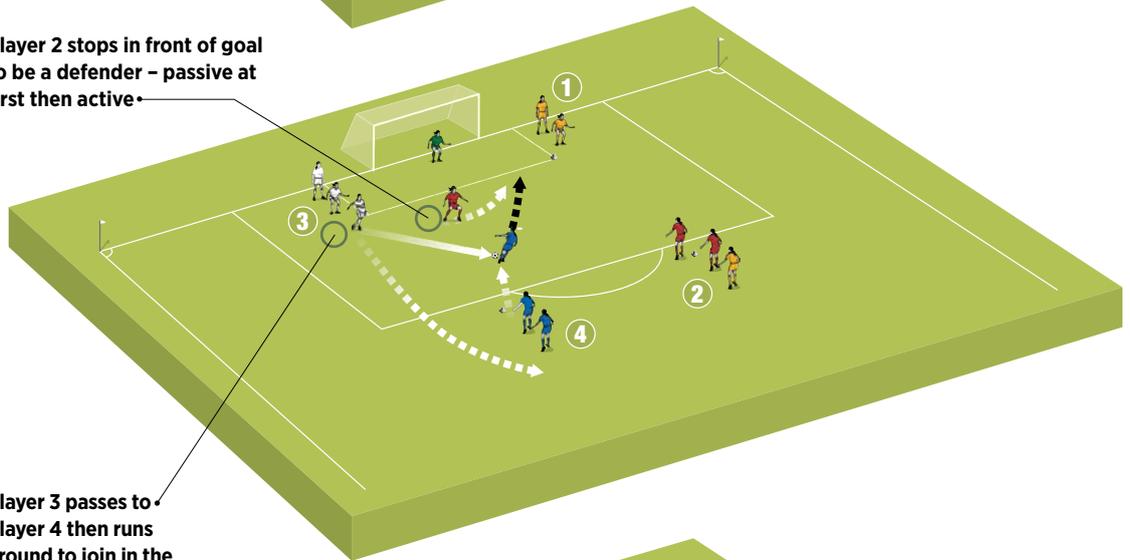
This drill improves passing accuracy, passing and then moving, to encourage the pass, 1v1 finishing and defending. Best of all you don't need to use cones or equipment so can be set up by the kids and used as a pre-game warm up. Start without the defender, then progress to a passive "obstacle" and then eventually to active defending. Players rotate quickly through each position.

Play starts with player 1 passing to player 2 - from the start you want to see high tempo with players passing and moving into line quickly

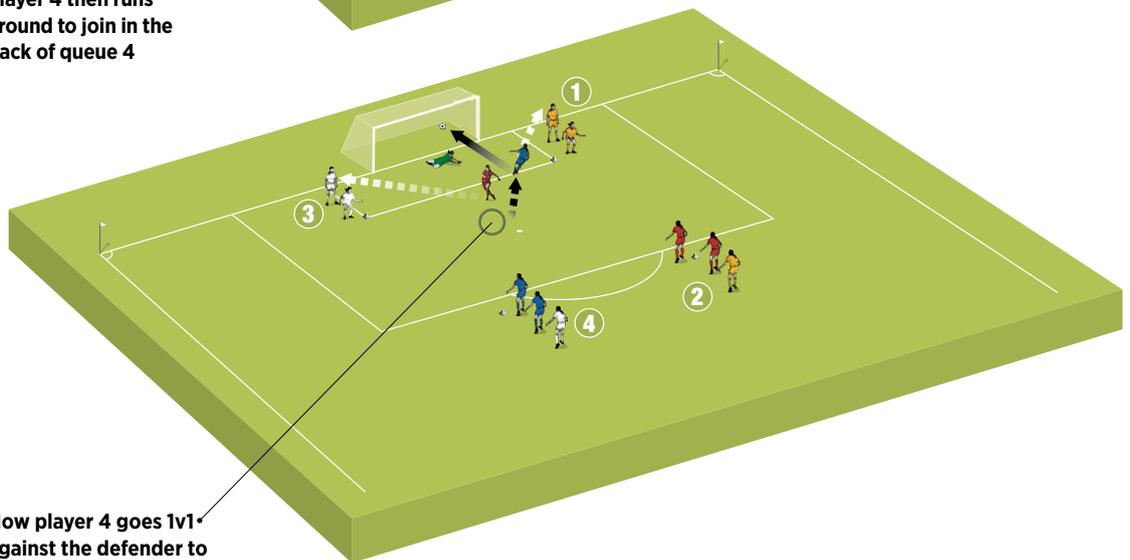
Player 2 passes across to player 3 with a good accurate ball that gives the opportunity to play one-touch



Player 2 stops in front of goal to be a defender - passive at first then active



Player 3 passes to player 4 then runs around to join in the back of queue 4



Now player 4 goes 1v1 against the defender to try and beat him and score

Player movement Ball movement Run with ball Shot

SMART COACHES USE...

64 SMALL-SIDED SOCCER GAMES



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