

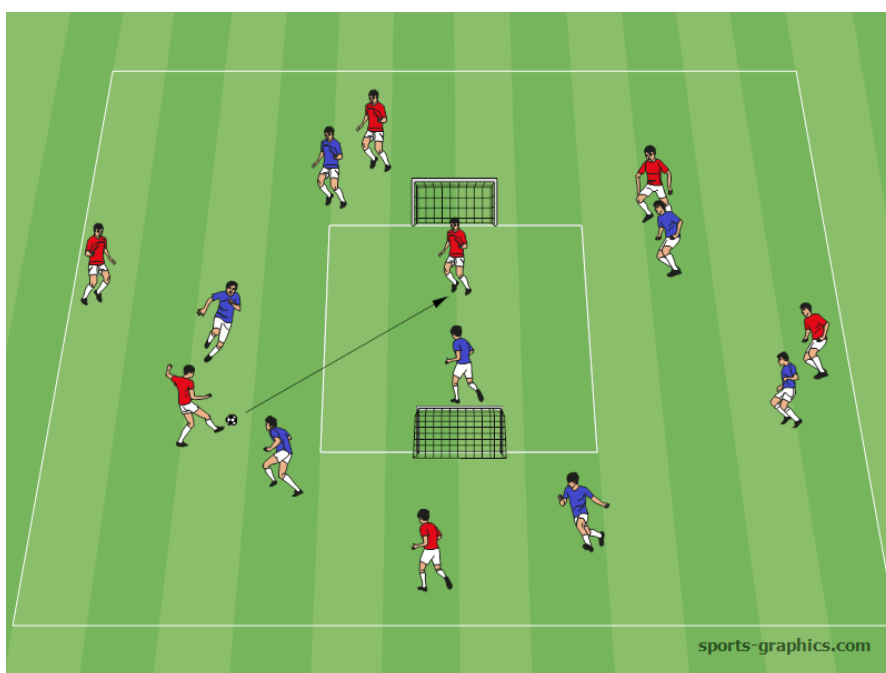
THE MIDDLE ZONE

Develop good passing and support play

TACTICAL

Passing

Support Play



Set up a 35x40 playing area with a 10x10 square in the middle with two small goals. Split players into two equal teams. The size of the playing area is ideal for 7v7 and can be modified to suit numbers. One player from each team is positioned in the small square to play 1v1. Teams score by passing the ball into the central teammate who attempts to score in their designated goal. The ball can be played across the central square if needed, but no player (apart from the two assigned) are allowed inside or an 'own goal' is awarded. Change the middle players after each goal. Emphasise that the 1v1 dual only have a maximum of 10 seconds to score.

VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

Each practice can be varied to adapt to the needs of players. Simple changes can increase or decrease the challenge. Examples such as changing the rules, the size of the area, overloading the advantage of one team, varying the focus, or setting team challenges will keep players motivated and all attribute to good coaching methodology.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Correct technique to receive.
- How to make space as individuals.
- The importance of forming lots of imaginary triangles and diamonds to give good supporting passing angles.
- To understand how and when to support the player with the ball.
- To understand passing priorities and select the appropriate pass for the situation.

KEY FACTORS

- Communication
- Create space to receive
- Good angles and distances of support
- Good first touch
- Head up
- Keep the ball moving into space
- Move the ball off straight lines
- Positive attitude to score
- Quality of pass (accuracy, timing and disguise of the pass)
- Selection of pass - technique

FOCUS AREAS

- Angles and distances of support - diamonds and triangles.
- Awareness of passing options.
- Change of pace and angle of attack according to pressure, varying tempo to suit situation (not always fast).
- Creating space and movement to receive the pass.
- Encourage communication between the players.
- Encourage players to maintain their receiving and passing standards - insides of feet, furthest foot, and change of feet to move the ball away from defenders etc.
- Ensure players spread out wide and long.
- Ensure that all players are affected in the session.
- Good movement to show for the ball.
- Observe the quality of the pass (accuracy, weight and timing).
- Observe the session from different vantage points and make any key points quickly and precisely.
- Rotation of movement and quick play when appropriate, maintaining security behind (do not attack in a flat wave).

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