



15 Session Plans – Scope and Sequence – Tactical Concepts

DEVELOPMENT
BOOKLET



**Amherst Soccer Association Youth Methodology
Development Program for U13&14**

This Methodology will be used as an outline of principles necessary to give the U13&U14 player and coach maximum potential in development. Every team and every player have different ability levels and it is extremely important that practices and training exercises meet the needs of the players at their particular age groups.

Organization

Sessions per week 2 **Session time** 75/90min

Structure		Design	
Warm up (before practice)	15 min	Dynamic warm up with Skills	
Play	15 min	Ssg with minimal coaching - Implanting your CP's	
Practice	25/30 min	Game related practice with guided discovery - question and answer	
Play	15/20 min	Bigger game with no coaching	

U13&U14 Development targets

Tactical	Focus on possession in the game
Technical	Playing through the thirds, understanding attacking and defending concepts, when to press or delay, when to switch (pass to attract)
Physical	Develop agility, balance, coordination and speed
Psychosocial	Analyzation of team and individual tactical principles
End of season fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combinations in passing • Spatial awareness • Coordinated in movements on and off the ball • Creating space with movements



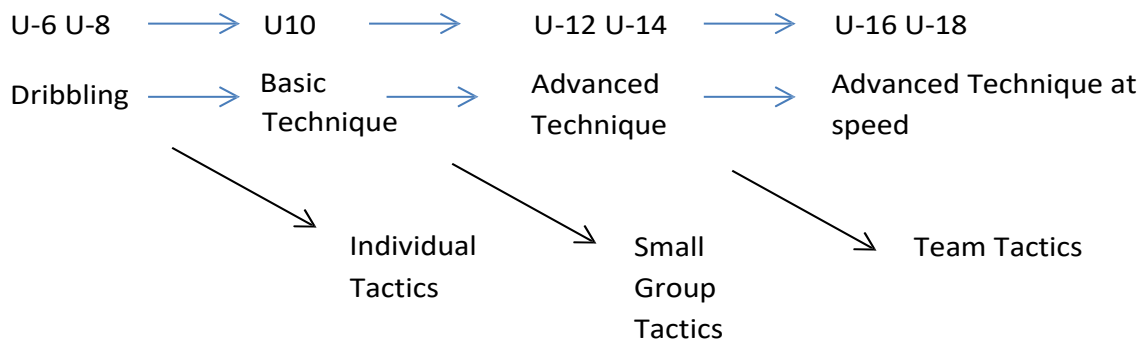
Amherst Soccer Scope and Sequence

For the U13 and U14 soccer player

Amherst Soccer scope and sequence will provide coaches and parents a key tool in the soccer development process. Each age group will have specific guidelines on the content and the order of what is to be coached. This scope and sequence will maximize development at the youth level.

Week	Topic	Coaching points
1.	Advanced technical passing #1	Curved, floated
2.	Advanced technical passing #2	Chips, pings
3.	Playing out the back	Advanced principles
4.	Combination play	Overlap
5.	Possession	Advanced principles
6.	Team defending	Press and cover with depth
7.	Pressing	Advanced principles
8.	Overload/Underload	2v1/3v2/4v3
9.	Pass to attract	Intermediate principles
10.	Team attacking	Decision making
11.	SSG day	No coaching
12.	Counterattacking	Basic principles
13.	Forward runs	Learning the different types
14.	Possession	Learning angles to keep the ball
15.	Build up play	Playing through the thirds

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL



COACHING ATTACKING PRINCIPLES

Principles and definitions

PENETRATION

In possession of the ball, a team attempts to play through the gaps between defenders or play the ball into space behind the opposition. This gives attackers the opportunity to exploit space through movement of the ball sideways or forwards and by forcing the opponents to move out of position.

SUPPORT

Supporting the player in possession through the movement of players off the ball. Important coaching points to be associated with support are: angles, timings, distances of the support provided.



CREATIVITY/IMPROVISATION

If a team becomes predictable, they become easy to defend against. Coaches can encourage creativity from individuals so that they feel confident enough to attempt skills/tricks and players combine, in unconventional ways to create goal scoring opportunities.

MOBILITY

Movement on and off the ball. This will provide support in the attack and can include rotation, exploiting space, and penetrating the defence at speed.

WIDTH

Providing options (laterally) across the pitch. This creates larger gaps between defenders which, in turn, creates opportunities to exploit the space and play forwards. The idea is to make the pitch big, look for gaps and play through or around the opposition.



RECEIVING SIGNALS



EYES

Make eye contact with your teammate before receiving the ball



eg. Making eye-contact can tell your teammate that you are ready to receive the ball.

HANDS

Use your hands to direct where you want to receive the ball



eg. Pointing to the space behind a defender

COACHING DEFENDING PRINCIPLES

Principles and definitions

PRESSURE

The nearest player(s) to the ball apply pressure in an attempt to win the ball back.

PREDICTABILITY

When the defence is organised and compact, they attempt to force the attackers into "safe" areas of the field away from goal and where they have the opportunity to win the ball back.

DELAY

Movement and shape to stop the opposition playing forwards quickly or to slow down the attack. This will also allow teammates to recover position and defensive shape.

PATIENCE

There is a risk when a defensive player challenges for the ball and does not regain possession that the attacking team now have an overload. Players should be aware of when to challenge for the ball and when to hold off and be patient.

DEPTH

Reduce the space between the defensive line and the goalkeeper to minimise the space behind the defence and remove opportunities for the attackers to penetrate behind.

COMPACTNESS

Whole team acts as a defensive unit when out of possession. Defenders, midfielders and attackers retreat into the defensive third to reduce the space in which the opposition can play in, around and behind.



BODY SHAPE

Angle your body to show where you want to receive the ball.

eg. If you are side on it tells your teammate you want to receive on the back foot.



VOICE

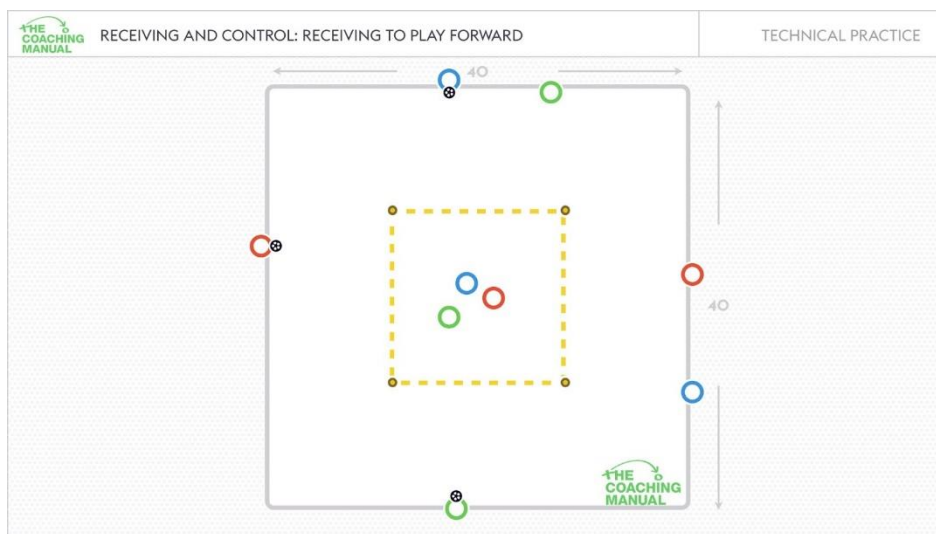
Talk to your teammates to tell them when and where you want to receive the ball

Eg. Player shouts "in behind" to receive the ball behind the defenders position or "feet" to receive the ball to feet



Week 1 - Advanced Technical Passing

Receiving - This practice will help you coach your players how to use creative movement, receiving skills and awareness to receive and control the ball to play forward. **Setup** - Players work in groups of 3, with 1 player in middle square and 2 team mates anywhere on outside of large area. Player in the middle to receive from team mate, open out and pass to other team mate to receive back. Players on the outside can move up and down their line to replicate real movement in a game. Players to stay with own ball. Rotate roles of players



Key Coaching Points

- **Movement**

Players should use movement to then receive the ball in space and pass the ball on to another player.

- **Receiving skills**

To receive the ball, players should have an open body position whilst asking the ball through the 4 receiving signals (hands, eyes, hips mouth), getting the ball on the back foot controlling it with the instep.

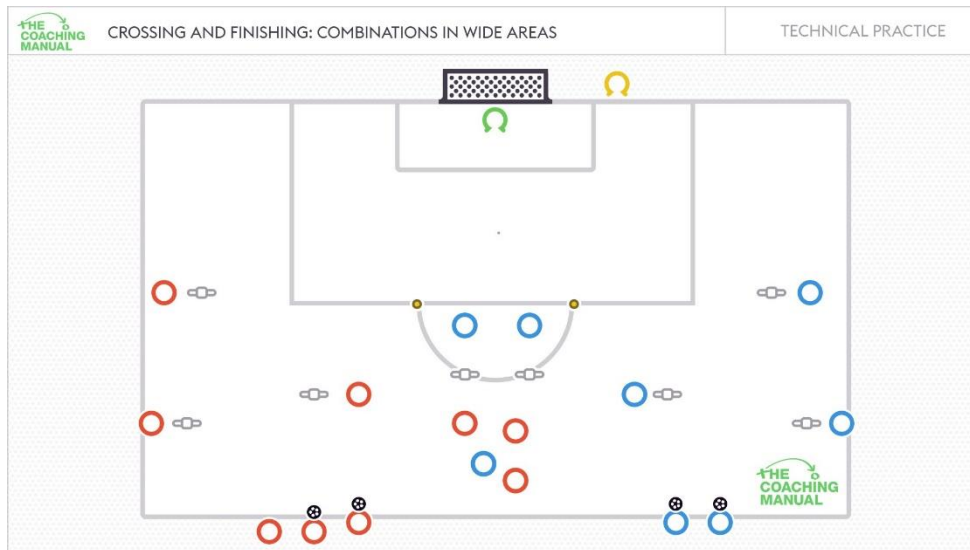
- **Awareness**

In order to play forward, players should be aware of the ball, space and teammates by keeping their head up and checking their shoulders.

Week 2 - Advanced Technical Passing

Combinations in wide areas to cross Technical Practice

This exercise will help players create patterned combinations in wide areas to finish on goal. Coach your players how to use different combinations in wide areas with good weight, accuracy and disguise in their passing to then cross and finish on goal.



Set Up

Set the area as seen in the image above, with 2 teams of Red and Blue.

Each team takes it, in turn, to attack the goal with the combinations with the Full Back overlapping to provide a cross for the central players.

Two strikers play at the same time starting in the D. The 2 attackers go around the 2 mannequins and then to the nearest cone on the edge of the box, crossover and create different angles to approach the ball and eventually attempt to score.

Teams keep score, at the end of the set time, the team with the most goals wins.

Key Coaching Points

- Quick Combination

Players should use intelligence movement to simulate losing a player to play quick combinations with quality passes in wide areas to finish with a cross.

- Quality of Cross

To have a better chance of scoring, players should concentrate on their technique to use driven and lofted crosses to create the best chances to score.

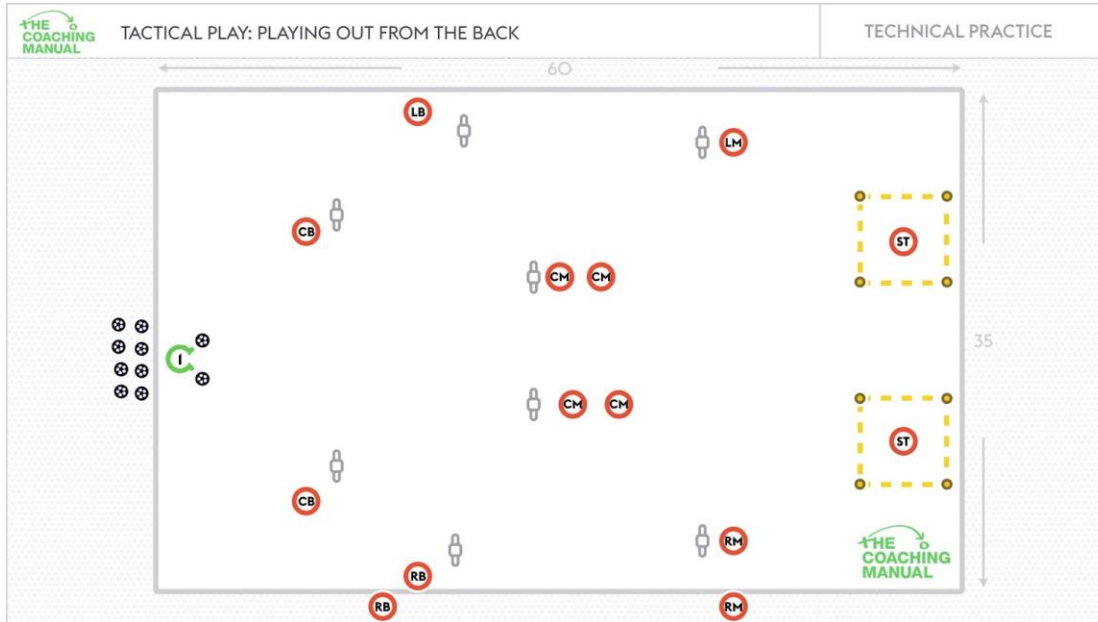
- Quality Movement in the Box

To simulate losing defenders, strikers need to use clever movement to simulate losing defenders and create space for themselves to score from crosses.

Week 3 – Playing out the back

Playing Out from The back Technical Practice

Building up from the back effectively is a great way to control possession. This technical practice paints the picture for your players, introducing movements and giving them lots of positive touches.



Set Up - Balls are worked down the left and right hand sides respectively and players stay in their position (may rotate with another player on same mannequin). Ball starts with GK, who plays to CB then plays to FB. Combination play through midfield with FB overlapping to receive and hit target player (T).

Key Coaching Points –

- **Movement** - Players should use inventive movement to create space and move off the mannequins to replicate playing out of the back and pass the ball forward.
- **Timing** - To receive the ball and replicate game realism, players should look to time their runs to receive the ball by not moving too early nor too late.
- **Midfield rotation** - To combined effectively, players should use rotation in the middle of the field to create space and passing lines to move the ball forward.

Week 4 – Combination play

Combination Play in the Final Third Skill Practice - A practice to help players pass, receive and run beyond in the final third of the pitch to create scoring opportunities. **Setup** - Half pitch with 1 x large goal at one end of the playing area and 2 x small goals at the opposite end of the area. 8 x Attackers (Blue) v 6 x Defenders (Red) as the blue team attempt to combine and unbalance the red team to score in the large goal. Red team defend the large goal and attempt to regain possession to score in any of the 2 x small goals.



Key Coaching Points

- Awareness of ball, space, team mates & defenders

Attackers players need to be aware of other players, space, and defenders in an attempt to penetrate, open spaces and look to expose overloads.

- Quick combinations to unbalance defence

Players need to combine with each other with the emphasis on quick passes to feet and space with the correct weight, pace, accuracy and disguise to unbalance defenders and find attacking players in advanced positions.

- Movement to combine & receive

Players to use inventive and creative movement to find space to receive on the half turn to play forward where possible.

Week 5 – Posses to Penetrate

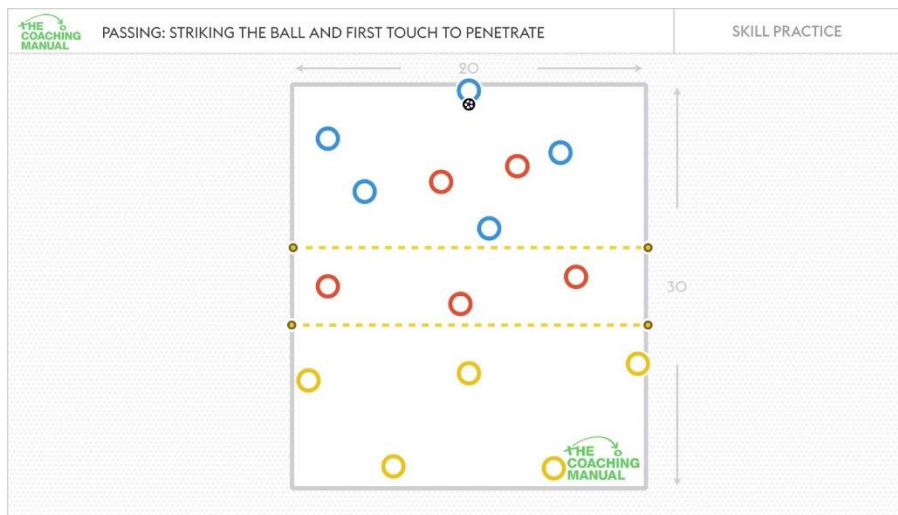
Posses To Penetrate Skill Practice - This skill practice develops players to recognise when to retain the ball and when to penetrate, whilst being pressed by opposition defenders.

Set Up

5 yard middle zone. 3 x teams of 5/6 players.

Players in end zones must retain the ball for minimum of 5 passes before they can play a penetrating pass to the team in the opposite end zone. Passes cannot be played over head height to begin with (must be penetrating through or around).

2 x players from the middle zone enter the end zone to press the ball, creating a 5v2. If defending team win the ball they must pass the ball to team mates in the middle zone and they then become the end zone team.

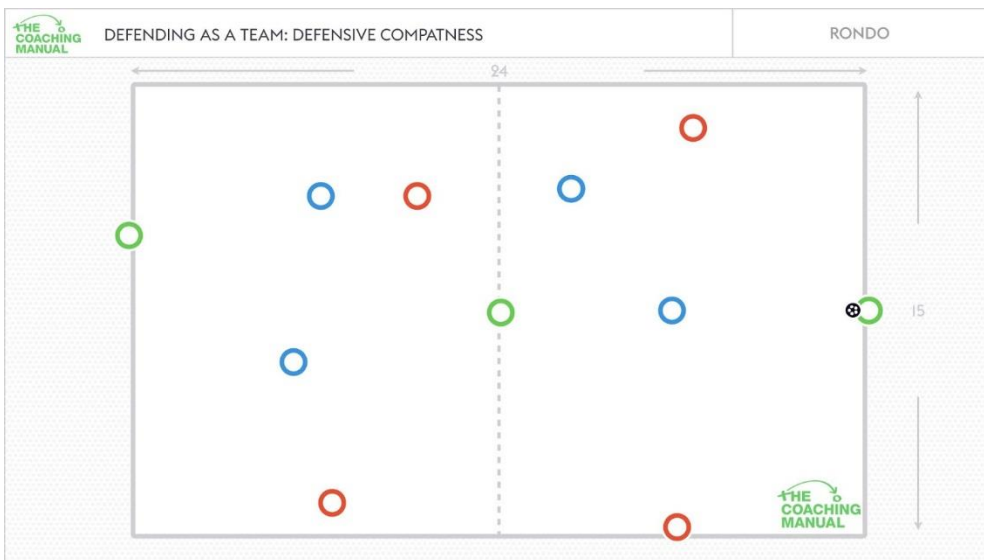


Key Coaching Points

- **Quality of pass** - To pass effectively players should focus on the disguise, weight and accuracy of passes to each player in the sequence.
- **Receiving skills** - Players need to concentrate on receiving the ball on their back foot to cushion the ball and pass with the front foot.
- **Game management** - To move the ball effectively, players should recognise when to retain possession and when to penetrate by using passing lines to either play in front, around and through.

Week 6 – Team Defending

Defensive Compactness Rondo - This 4v4+3 rondo is designed to coach defensive compactness to your players. **Set Up** - 4 Reds v 4 Blues inside the area + 2 x Green target players at each end of the area and 1 x joker/floater (Green) inside the area. The team in possession attempt to get the ball from 1 x target player to the opposite target player for 1 point. The 'joker' always plays for the team in possession to create an attacking overload inside the area. The defending team score 1 point if they regain possession AND all player are in the same half of the area, as this encourages defensive compactness when possession is lost. Rotate roles of players to allow target players to play inside the area.

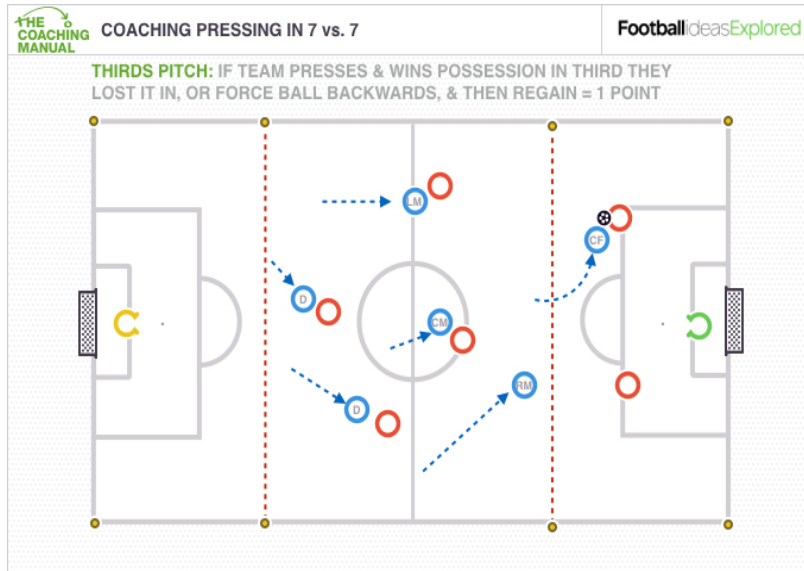


Key Coaching Points

- **When to press and when to drop-** Players should recognise and read pressing cues (bad touch, bad pass, negative transition just occurred, position in relation to the goal) and decide to either press the ball or drop off in order to remain defensively compact.
- **Balance and Cover** - Out of possession, team mates should support the nearest player to the ball and if the player presses, everybody presses. If the player drops off then everybody drops off and remains compact. This provides balance and cover in defence.
- **Be patient** - When possession is lost, players must remain patient whilst being in a position to protect the goal (target players in this practice). Compactness will restrict space for opposition to play forwards and defending team should also shift and slide as a compact unit.

Week 7 – Pressing

We aim to explore the roles and responsibilities of the defenders and suggest practices that coaches can use to help develop them. **Pressing - When to press and pressing cues.** Condition - If a team presses and wins back possession in the third in which they lost it, or if they force the ball backwards and regain it, they earn a point.



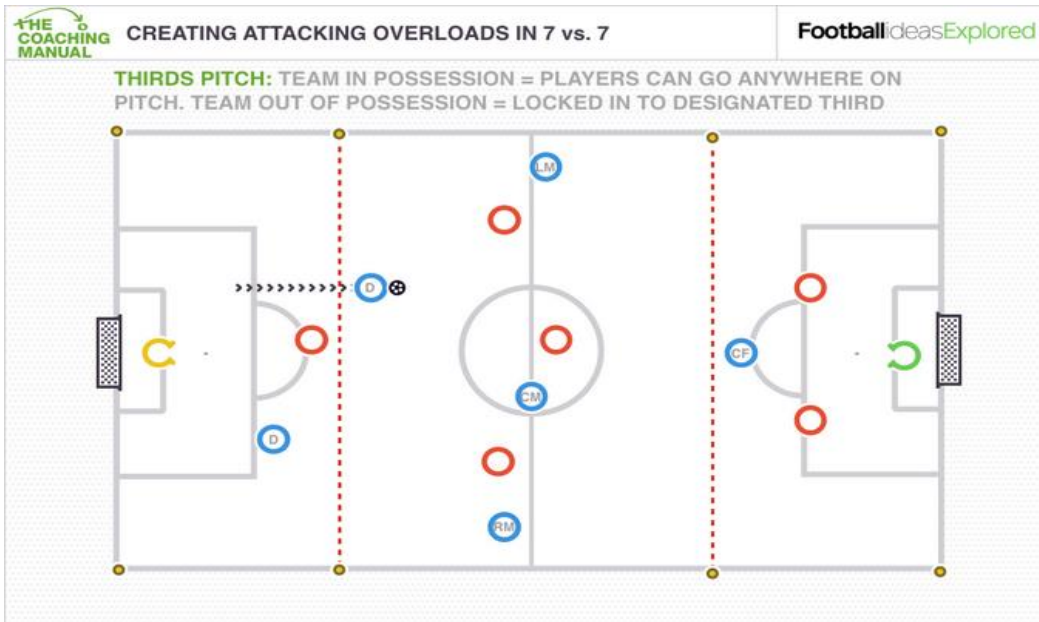
For example, if Centre Midfielder loses ball in the midfield third and the team presses and regains in possession in the same third, they'll win a point. Or, if they get into position and force the ball into the opposition's defensive third and then regain possession, they'll also win a point. The objectives of pressing are to delay the attack, to regain possession and to stop the opposition from playing

forward. The same principle applies if you lose the ball in your own defensive third; you want to regain possession as quickly as possible. Ideally, you want the players to start to recognise pressing cues. Players should be learning to recognise the right moments to close the ball down. If you play a team that are technically gifted and can keep the ball well, your team may be exposed if the opponents can pass around them. Therefore, learning to press can be a useful tool to prevent this from happening. **How to recognise the four pressing cues;**

1. **Lost possession** - When your team lose possession, they should pressurise the ball immediately in order to win it back as quickly as possible.
2. **The opposition do not have full control of the ball** - For example, it might be on the individual players weaker foot, the ball is in the air between opposition players or the opposition have their back to you (If they have their back to you they cannot see you coming).
3. **Set traps** - When the opposition player has the ball, wait until he makes his decision to pass, before pressing the passer, pressing to intercept the ball or pressing the intended recipient.
4. **Position of ball in relation to goal** - If the opposition have the ball in your defensive third (danger zone) you must press. Deny the opposition space to prevent goal scoring opportunities.

Week 8 – Over/Underload

Attacking players perform forward runs to outnumber the defenders. This creates passing options and forces defenders to move out of position. The practice design we've created below, to help coach attacking overloads, includes a pitch divided into thirds.



This condition allows the blue team, when in possession, to move into space and break lines. It also develops a player's ability to recognise when to move to support the attack and when to hold position. Holding position will provide balance and cover if possession is lost. In our example, the defender steps in and creates a 4v3 in the middle third of the pitch.

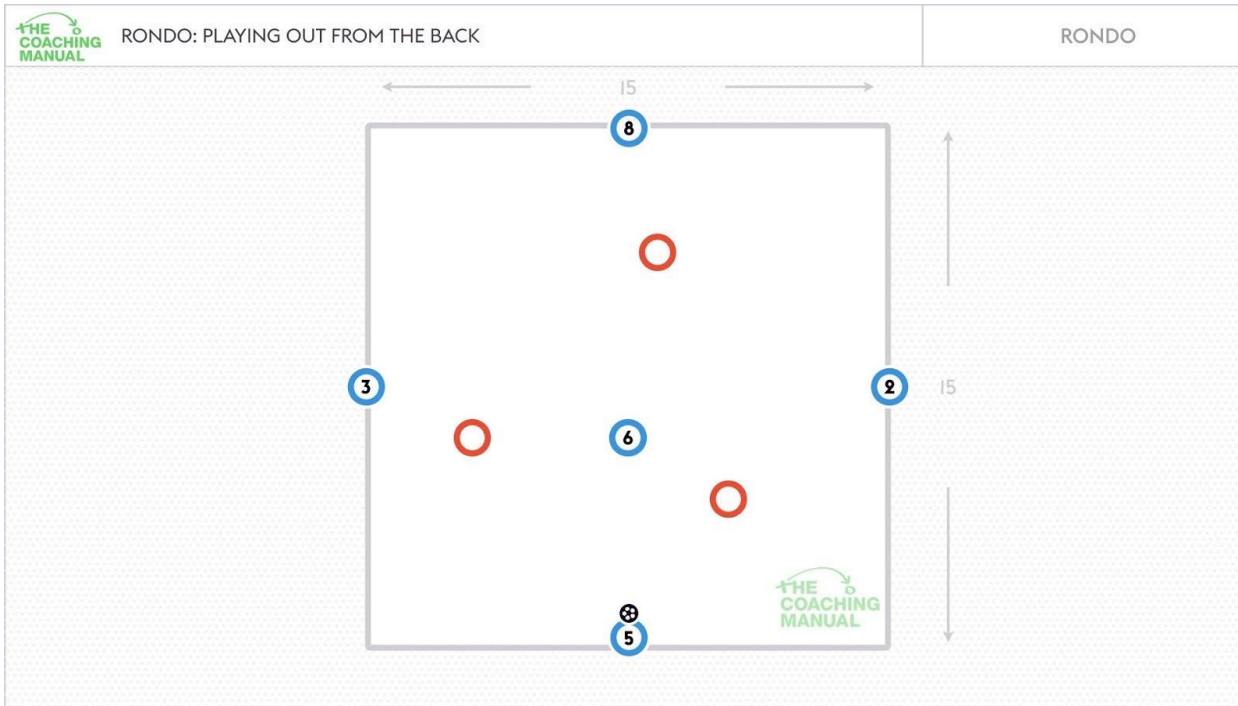
This creates questions for the remaining defender. Does he step out? This would leave the opposing forward unmarked which may be problematic for the defender if his team loses possession. Does the defender shift across and mark the player? It's important to recognise that the team need to support each other and are set up to defend, even when in possession

If required, the centre forward can also drop deep and create a 5v3 in midfield. When the ball does go into the forward in the final third, how are the midfielders moving to support the attack? Have they got security behind if possession breaks down? Do they advance beyond the forward? Again there are lots of opportunities to coach different scenarios within this practice design.

Week 9 – Pass to attract

Pass to attract

Teach your players how to use this rondo to work on playing out from the back. Understanding positions and movements whilst coaching them to use non-verbal and verbal communication and passing and receiving skills.



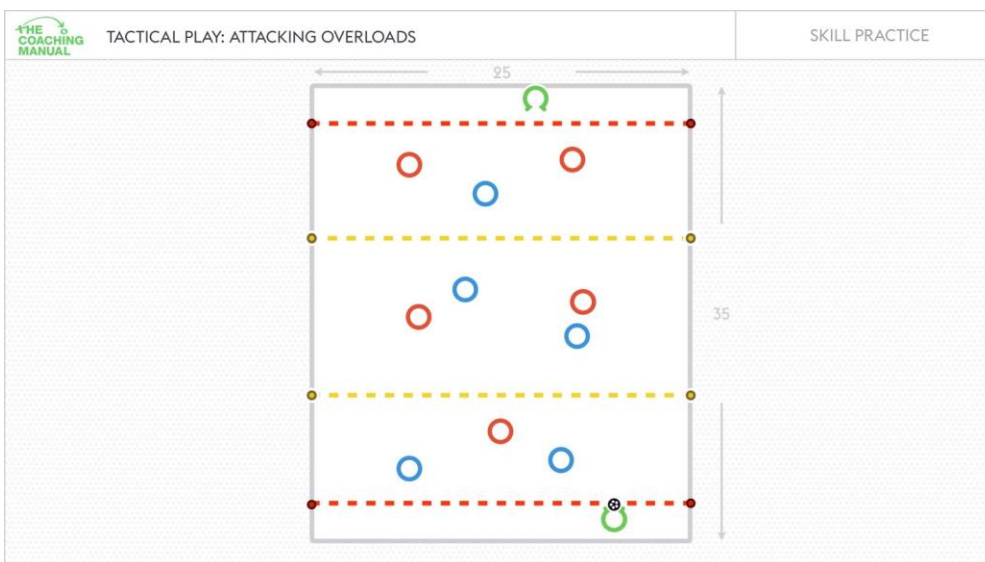
Key Coaching Points

- **Angles and distances**
Players around the rondo to provide diagonal angles with sufficient distances between the attackers to move the ball forward.
- **Using the passing lines**
Players should be able to use slow and quick passes to recognise when and where to move the ball in front, around or to penetrate the defence.
- **Positioning when playing out of the back**
Depending on the position of the defenders attackers should hold positions to open the defensive units and create the passing lines.

Make it easier: Make the space bigger - Reduce defender **Make it more challenging:** Decrease size of playing area - Challenge players individually

Week 10 – Team Attacking

Team Attacking Overloads Skill Practice - To improve your teams attacking qualities, coach your attackers how to make forward runs into space with good timing whilst also considering the support and cover in the defence areas. **Setup** - Pitch divided into thirds. 2 x teams of 6 players with GK (T) 2 defenders in the defensive third, 2 midfielders in middle third 1 attacker in attacking third. In possession, players can enter any third of the pitch. Out of possession players must stay in their designated third. Players play out from GK (T) attempt to create attacking overloads to get the ball into the attacking player in the final third. Encourage overlapping runs into boxes.



Key Coaching Points –

- **Movement to receive** - It is important that players understand why they are moving. Players are moving off the ball to either receive the ball themselves or to create space for a teammate. Here are two ways a player can move off the ball to receive. 1. The player moves away from the ball dragging the defender with them and then checks into the space to receive a pass. 2. The player pushes off the defender and performs a 2-yard movement which will create a passing line to receive the ball.
- **Timing of runs** - Encourage players to time their runs so they are running onto the ball. Players may need to vary the speed of their runs to either lose the defenders or receive the ball. –
- **Security/Cover in defence** - Players should have the understanding of security in possession and how important that is. The reason for this is because if the team in possession lose the ball they are open to a counter attack.

Week 12 – Counterattacking

Counter Attacking Small Sided Game

To transition to attack effectively, coach your players how to produce movements to provide options ahead of the ball whilst trying to attack at speed to take advantage of an unbalanced opposition. **Setup** - The ball is played in from Green defender into the 3 attackers and player in central area joins in to make a 5v3 to score. 3 red defenders look to win possession and play quickly to 1 x red in attacking half to counter-attack, as reds support the attack. Greens recover to defend and then set the practice up to repeat in the other half.



Key Coaching Points

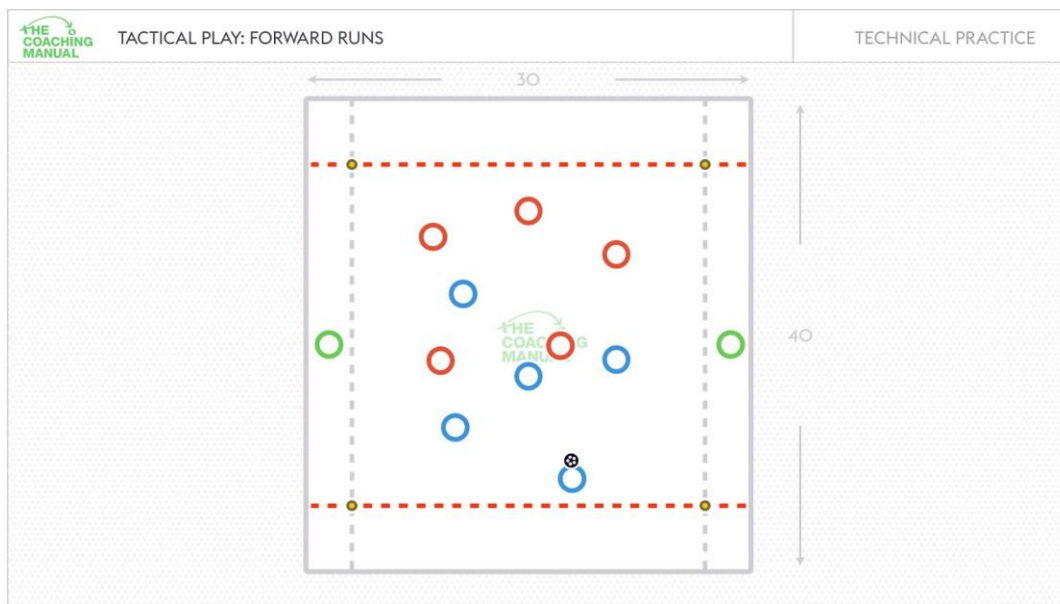
- **Speed of the attacks to catch defence unbalanced** - Teams need to come up with a strategy to regain possession and then attack quickly, with width and depth, to attack the opposition goal through quick individual or collective play.
- **Options ahead of the ball** - In order to counter-attack, the team in possession must penetrate the opposition through dribbling, long passing or combinations and a passing option ahead of the ball can help to disorganise the defence.
- **Movements to attack space and receive** - Player movements can support the attack with overlaps, underlaps, come short and to spin in behind, go long to drop short and receive.

Week 13 – Forward Runs

Forward Runs to an End Zone Practice

Forward runs unbalance and overload opposition teams. Teach your players when and how to advance forwards, with or without the ball, to score in the end zone through receiving a pass or by dribbling.

Set Up Place channels either side end zone either side. 2 x teams of 5 players + wide player in each channel floater (S) in middle. Players can score by running with the ball or receiving a pass in the end zone. Players cannot stand in end zone to receive or they are offside (must travel onto a pass). Players in the middle can combine pass to S or to wide players to create attacking options.



Key Coaching Points –

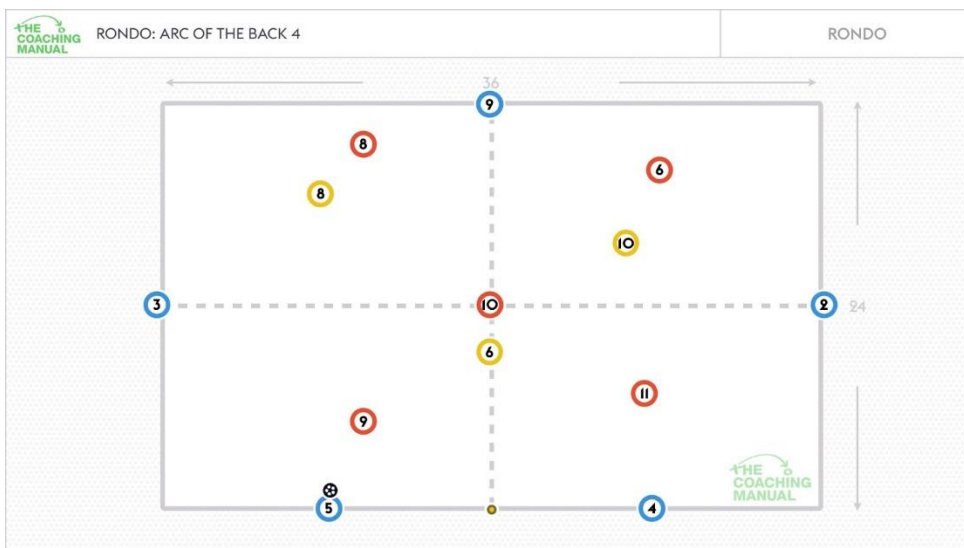
- **Support around the ball -** Supporting players need to be aware of the position of their team mates with and without the ball and the opposition players. Supporting players must provide communication so that the player in possession is aware of their options.
- **Quality of the pass -** With good weight, speed, disguise and accuracy players should look to pass to each other with great quality to keep the exercise as fluid as possible playing 1 or 2 touches.
- **Timing of forward runs -** Beat the offside line. Encourage players to be positive and make forward runs with a purpose of creating space for others or receiving the ball to score.

Week 14 – Possession

Possession Rondo - This Rondo will help you coach your players how to support the ball, have good body shape and positioning to maintain possession of the ball.

Setup

Set up the area as seen in the image above with 4 zones. 8 x Attackers (Blue and Yellows) positioned along the lines or inside the area against 5 x Defenders (Reds) inside the area, with only 2 x Defenders allowed in a zone at any one time to defend. Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) can play on the length of their designated line and can also move inside zones 1 and 2 when the Full Backs advance along the lines of zones 3 and 4 (beyond the halfway line). Full Backs (Blue 2 and 3) can play on the length of their line, and Centre Forward (Blue 9) plays along the length of the line. Midfielders (Yellow 6, 8 and 10) can play anywhere in the area and Yellow 8 and 10 cannot occupy the same zone.



Key Coaching Points

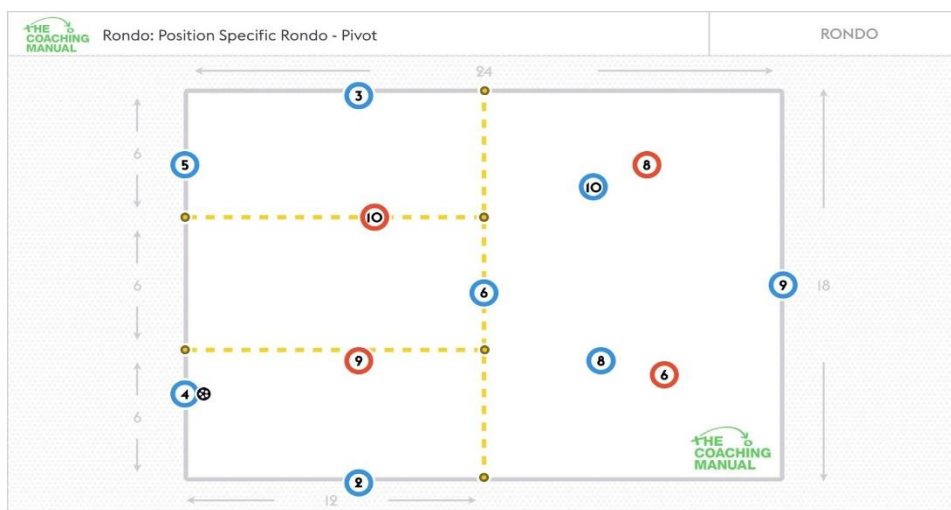
- **Positioning-** To provide an arc shape, the players on the outside need to maintain positioning and move along the outside to maintain shape to

advance the ball to the centre of the field.

- **Support play -** By communicating both verbally and non-verbally, Midfielders 3 players should look to support the players long the outside by giving appropriate angles and distances around away from the ball whilst also being on different vertical and horizontal lines.
- **Decision making -** In order to penetrate, whilst in possession, attackers should make decisions on when to maintain, play around or retain possession depending on the position of the defenders and their defensive shape.

Week 15 – Build Up Play

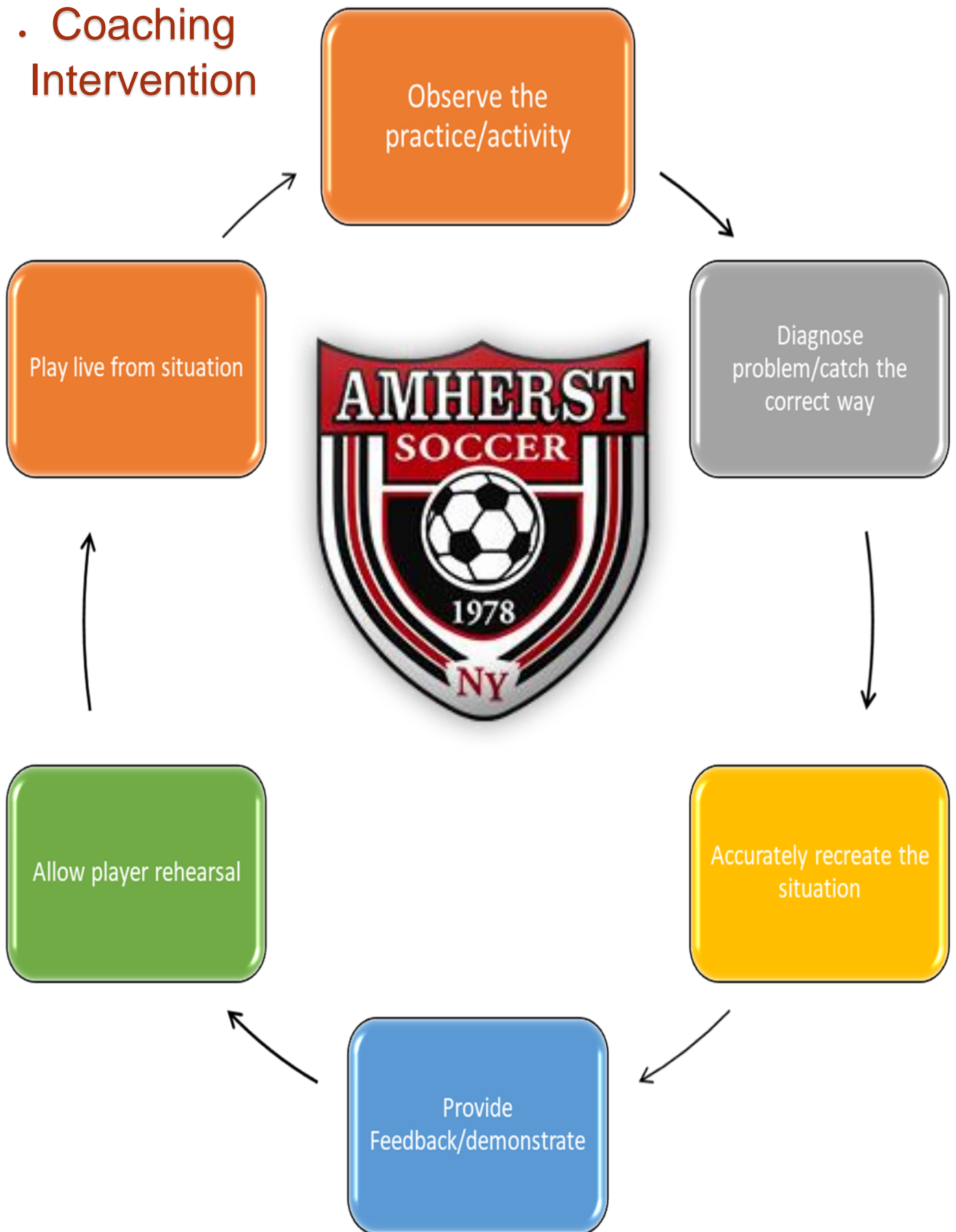
Pivot 8v4 Rondo Skill Practice - This rondo practice focuses on the pivot position and its importance in build up play. **Set Up** - Defensive half of the area divided into 3 areas 12x5 to provide Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) and the Pivot (Blue 6) with reference points for when, where and how they can take up positions to maintain possession and play forwards. 8 x Attackers (Blue) against 4 x Defenders (Red) and only 2 Red defenders may enter the 3 channeled zones to defend. Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) can move anywhere in the 3 channels, Centre Midfielders (Blue 8 and 10) can move anywhere in the attacking half and Pivot (Blue 6) can move anywhere in the area. Full Backs (Blue 2 and 3) and Centre Forward (Blue 9) can move along their designated lines. Blue Team (Attackers): Maintain positions and possession of the ball with the emphasis on playing forward from Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) to Centre Forward (Blue 9) with the Pivot (Blue 6) dropping in between the Centre Backs to receive and pass forward. Red Team (Defenders): If the ball is won, pass or dribble the ball over the Blue team's end line to simulate a counter attack in a game, or maintain possession for 5 passes as the Blues press.



Key Coaching Points –

- **Pivot play-** To identify when and when not to drop into the defence to overload the area numerically and positionally to create 3v2 situations to advance forward.
- **Co-ordinated movements to take up positions to receive the ball -** Players playing in the pivot position need to be aware of where to drop into the backline and in between the centre backs at the correct time. Being aware of the angle of support, body position when in-between Centre Backs (facing forward) to play forward.
- **Quality, weight and decision of the pass -** Players should use a range of passes to build play from the back and utilise when to play in front, around or through defences to create opportunities to go forward.
- **Make it easier:** Reduce the numbers. Make the area bigger.
- **Make it more challenging:** Reduce size of playing area. Increase the number of defenders. Reduce the number of touches (2 touch, 1 touch). Players must look to play to 9 within 5 passes

. Coaching Intervention



7 Concepts for Amherst Soccer

Concept	Content
1	Playing Out From the Back
2	Defending in the Defensive Third
3	Playing Through the Middle Third
4	Defending in the Middle Third
5	Playing in the Final Third
6	Defending From the Front
7	Counter Attacking

Playing Out From the Back

Passing Priorities

- Practice Themes
- * When to play long or short
 - * When to play to feet or space
 - * Variation in passing

Movement and Support Play

- Practice Themes
- * In front/beside/behind?
 - Clearing space
 - Showing feet or going long?
 - * Rotation in midfield

Building Attacks

- Practice Themes
- Changing the speed of play
 - Patience in possession
 - Using FBs to develop play
 - * GK as an outfield player

Carrying the Ball

- Practice Themes
- Running with the Ball
 - Receiving and turning
 - Releasing on the move
 - * When to retain and when to release

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show for the ball to feet
Q&A - When might you look to play in behind the opposition?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam lets the ball roll
across his body to turn...
Guided Discovery - Show me when to play quickly
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to retain and when to
release the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Playing Through the Middle Third

Breaking Lines

- Practice Themes
- * When to pass or dribble
 - * Forward passing
 - * Carrying the ball

Possession

- Practice Themes
- * Switching play
 - Combination play
 - Receiving and turning

Playing in Tight Areas

- Practice Themes
- Finding space
 - Disguise
 - When to play quick

Staying on the Ball

- Practice Themes
- Shielding
 - Dribbling
 - Receiving under pressure

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to check your shoulder before receiving
Q&A - When might be a good time to play one touch?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam uses his first touch to
bypass the defender
Guided Discovery - Show me when to RWTB
Trial & Error - Try to have a picture of what you want to do
before receiving the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Playing In the Final Third

Playing in Wide Areas

- Practice Themes
- * Coming in off the line
 - * Driving inside
 - * Combining wide/inside

In and Around the Box

- Practice Themes
- * Receiving under pressure
 - Turning to shoot
 - Combination play
 - * Shooting early

Crossing and Finishing

- Practice Themes
- Variation in crossing
 - Heading and volleying to goal
- * When to shoot/pass?

Beating Opponents

- Practice Themes
- 1v1 skills and tricks
 - When to dribble and when to pass
 - Shifting to shoot

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration - Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour - Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to cross early
Q&A - When might you set up a team mate rather than take a shot yourself?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam shifts the ball before shooting to create space around the defender
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can finish aerial crosses
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to come in off the line

Practice Types

Play - Practice – Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending in the Defensive Third

Where and When to Press

- Practice Themes
- * First line of engagement
 - * Positioning around and away from the ball
 - * Marking and intercepting

Sliding and Screening

- Practice Themes
- * Keeping play in front
 - Marking ball/goal side
 - Intercepting and spoiling
 - * Angles and distances of support

Forcing Play

- Practice Themes
- Wide or inside?
 - Passing players on
 - * Triggers/cues to press

Counter Attacking

- Practice Themes
- Where and when to regain
 - Dispersal
 - Passing priorities
 - Support play
 - End product

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to mark ball side
Q&A - When might you need to drop and defend deeper?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam positions his body to force the attacker wide
Guided Discovery - Show me where to mark the attacker so that you can look to intercept
Trial & Error - Try to create opportunities to counter attack

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending in the Middle Third

Compactness

- Practice Themes
- Sliding and screening
 - Protecting key areas
 - Regaining possession

Defending When Organised

- Practice Themes
- When to press or drop
 - Marking positions
 - Angles and distances
 - Marking players or space?

Defending in Wide Areas

- Practice Themes
- Wide or inside?
 - Preventing crosses
 - Defending crosses
 - Supporting positions

Defending When Out of Balance

- Practice Themes
- Recovery runs
 - Dropping and delaying
 - Deflecting Play
 - Defending the goal

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show attackers outside
Q&A - How can you prevent passes into strikers' feet?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam matches the
attackers' movements to prevent crossing opportunities
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can try to prevent passes
splitting you as a pair
Trial & Error - Try to recognise when to press and when to drop

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Defending from the Front

When to Press

- Practice Themes
- Cues and triggers to press
 - Marking positions
 - Supporting the press

Making Play Predictable

- Practice Themes
- Inside or outside?
 - Forcing play
 - Support and Cover

Individual/Unit

- Practice Themes
- Starting positions
 - 1v1 defending
 - Support and cover

Counter Attacking

- Practice Themes
- Regain
 - Release
 - Support
 - Finish

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to show attackers inside
Q&A - What might trigger a press from our side?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam slows down on his approach to prevent the attacker going past him
Guided Discovery - Show me where you can support the 1st def
Trial & Error - Try to create a shooting opportunity within 6 seconds of regaining the ball

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Counter Attacking

Creating Opportunities

- Practice Themes
- Defending late
 - Inviting pressure
 - Patience in defending
 - Forcing play

Playing Quickly

- Practice Themes
- Passing Priorities
 - Playing to space

Support Play

- Practice Themes
- Midfield runners beyond
 - Creating/clearing space
 - Support in front/beside/behind

Creating and Converting

- Practice Themes
- Combinations
 - Shooting early
 - Rebounds

Psychological

Confidence - Commitment - Control - Concentration -
Communication - Creativity

Social

Enjoyment - Positivity - Coping - Sharing - Behaviour -
Challenging

Coaching Interventions

Command - I want you to play into space
Q&A - Why do we play quickly on regain?
Observation & Feedback - Watch how Sam uses his first touch to
bypass players
Guided Discovery - Show me how you can move the ball quickly
Trial & Error - Try to create counter attacking opportunities

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play
Teaching Games for Understanding
Technique - Skill - Game
Phase/Function

Coaching Interventions

Command

Coach tells and shows the required outcome. Decision making comes from the coach.

Question and Answer

Coach leads with question to gain a response from players. Used to check or develop understanding.

Observation and Feedback

Coach and player(s) observe and discuss feedback. What went well? What can be improved?

Guided Discovery

Coach sets a challenge to guide players to develop solutions. Often coupled with Q&A to develop ideas.

Trial and Error

Player and/or coach set a challenge and players develop their own solutions with minimal intervention.

Coaching Interventions

Effective coaches will be skilled at using a variety of coaching interventions and will recognise when appropriate to use with specific teams, units or individual players.

Coaches are encouraged to use trial and error and guided discovery in order to promote creative play and autonomous learning. Allowing players to formulate their own solutions, trial them out, make mistakes and refine their responses is seen as an integral part of the learning process.

Practice Types

Play - Practice - Play

Players are provided the opportunity to play the 'game' with a specific focus or theme. This can be a team focus or can be used as an opportunity to work on unit or individual challenges. By playing the game, players are able to see the purpose and context of a specific technique, skill or tactic and how it fits into the game.

The coach is then able to move 'back' to a part practise that can emphasise a certain set of skills that players can practise . The part practice is often used to work on skills that players are finding difficult in the full version of the game. Part practices can take a variety of forms including technical practices, skill practices, functions, phases of play, smaller sided games etc.

The coach then may take the session back into the game in order to give players the opportunity to try and out the skills into practice in the 'whole' format.

Practice Types

Technique - Skill - Game

A traditional approach to coaching where players are introduced to a new technique which they are given time to develop in an unopposed situation. This is then moved onto a skill practice where players use previous techniques in a (semi) opposed environment. This is then transferred into a game where play is fully opposed. The view is that this approach allows players time to develop techniques and skills before using what they have learnt in a game.

Although technical practices are unopposed, coaches can design practices that still require some level of decision making, perceptual awareness and problem solving from players. Using low end variable practices where players can develop their techniques in a changing environment without direct pressure (using other players as 'traffic' for example) will mean players still need to make decisions on how to perform.

Phase of Play / Functional Practice

A phase of play practice is designed to simulate a specific phase, or moment, in the game (for example, playing out from the back). It provides opportunity to develop whole units' understanding of their roles in the phase of play. It is usually played with two full units against two full units plus any other players required.

A functional practice is more specific, looking at a particular player or unit of players' roles in the game (coaching a full back on their passing priorities, for example).

Both practice types could be used as 'part' practices in a whole-part-whole method in order to develop a player, or players', understanding of a particular moment in the game.

Coaching 'the scope and sequence'

Player Centred

Whilst this document sets out a syllabus of what is expected to be taught throughout the season, it is by no means prescriptive. The main themes of the blocks of work should be used as a guiding template for structuring practice. Coaches should use their knowledge and understanding of their players to adapt the programme to suit the needs of groups and individuals.

No syllabus will ever be a one size fits all and this is no different.

It is also expected that coaches will work with players to develop personal learning goals. Whilst these can fit in with the current block of the programme, players can work towards their own learning goals outside of this theme. For example, whilst the team focus may be on pressing in the final third, one player may have a personal learning goal of developing their distribution from the defensive third.

In these instances, it is the responsibility of the coach to design practices that allow for multiple outcomes for different players.

Match Day Coaching

Make it Specific

Each match day should contribute towards players' learning and as such are part of the 'coaching programme'. They are not viewed as a special event and are an opportunity to extend players' learning.

On match days, coaches should use a variety of team, unit and individual challenges to support players' learning.

Team Challenges

These should be aligned to the coaching programme and should have clear links to the previous week's work.

Example

As a team, try to create opportunities to counter attack.

Unit Challenges

Again, these should be aligned to the weekly coaching programme and to the team challenge.

Example

GK and Def - on regain, try to play the most positive pass you can see

Mid - try to mark in a position where you can intercept passes

Forwards - try to force play in one direction

Individual Challenges

Can be aligned to coaching programme but can also be separate in order to support players' individual learning.

Example

Sam - Try to recognise when to play quickly on regain

Joe - Try to recognise opportunities to run with the ball

James - Try to let the ball roll across your body when receiving

Match Day Coaching

A Match Day Philosophy...

Teams, coaches and players should approach match days with the following philosophy:

1. Try to play football in line with our team's philosophy and style of play
2. Try to work on my team, unit and individual challenges
3. Play within the laws of the game and with respect to opponents, team mates and officials
4. Try to win the game, but not at the expense of the above points

Players should be given the opportunity to play in a variety of positions in order to support their learning. In the early years of their development (12s, 13s, 14s), players should play across two units of play (def, mid and attack) and be encouraged to play left, centre and right. As they move into U15+, players should begin to specialise in two or three positions (across one or two units).

The Psychological Corner

Confidence

Describes the players' self belief in their skills and ability to reach their goals.

A confident player:

- wants the ball under pressure
- displays positive body language
 - shows creativity in their play
- offers ideas and feedback to the team

Commitment

Describes the players' motivation to play, develop and learn.

A committed player:

- gives high effort in training and matches
 - takes on difficult challenges
 - is not afraid to make mistakes
- works hard to achieve individual challenges
 - refocuses after set backs

Control

Describes the players' ability to control their emotions.

A player with excellent control:

- stays calm in pressured situations
- refocuses quickly after mistakes
- recognises opportunities for learning after mistakes
- is able to motivate themselves for training and games

Communication

Describes the players' ability to listen and talk to team mates and coaches.

A player with excellent communication:

- encourages and motivates team mates
- listens to team mates' and coaches' views
 - shares ideas with team mates and coaches
- helps to refocus team mates after mistakes

Concentration

Describes the players' ability to focus their attention on relative tasks.

A player with excellent concentration:

- stays focussed on their individual tasks
 - is able to refocus after mistakes
 - is not easily distracted
- does not let complacency set in and sticks to their roles

Creativity

Describes the players' ability to generate ideas and problem solve.

A creative player:

- tries new ideas
- is not afraid to 'get it wrong'
- challenges and questions the 'norm'
- recognises opportunities to change and develop

Developing the 'Psych' Corner

Confidence

- * Use personal praise and specific feedback to recognise personal accomplishments.
- * Give players opportunities to do their feel good games. Build confidence through success.
 - * Recognise and reward effort to develop growth mindset and build confidence.
- * Increased exposure to game like scenarios allows players to build experiences which they can recall in matches
- * Give players different roles (team captain, manager, coach) during training and allow them to share ideas with teams to develop their ideas.

Commitment

- * Reward efforts, attitude and intentions beyond the mere outcome
- * Allow players to showcase skills and ideas that they have worked hard to develop
- * Ask players to rate their commitment out of 10, challenge them to improve it by 1 point in the next 5 minutes
- * Avoid correcting every mistake, we want players to take risks and not fear being pulled up each time they do
 - * Praise players who work hard after a mistake, make it specific so they understand why they are being praised

Control

- Recreate pressured scenarios in training i.e. 1-0 down with 5 minutes to go - how do you react? How do you play?
- * Use bad officiating decisions in training. Work on positive reactions when things are not going their way.
- * Use short games (5-10 minutes) with regular winners and losers. Work on players positive reaction to refocus for the next game.
- * Regular exposure to game like scenarios and playing under pressure will allow players to develop their own coping mechanisms.

Communication

- * Praise players who are ready to start, listening and displaying positive body language
- * Praise players who give specific information to team mates during games
- * Use conditions in play that highlight the importance of communication i.e. silent football, one player able to talk
- * Provide regular breaks where players can discuss their tactics and ideas (what is working? What is not working? Where is it not working? When is it not working? How can we change?)
- * Work on cues/triggers that players can give as a form of non verbal communication

Concentration

- Playing games and match scenarios means that players always have roles to play. Develop their understanding of triggers and cues for specific movements when off the ball.
- * Game related practices require players to have a picture of what is happening around them. They will need to scan space and refocus on the ball regularly.
- * Stretch players concentration by adding or removing rules and conditions during play
- * Ask players to develop trigger words for specific movements which can refocus concentration (i.e. squeeze, press, drop)

Creativity

- Use game scenarios and modified games to allow players the opportunity to develop their own solutions to problems
- Avoid correcting every mistake as this may deter players from trying new things
- Praise players for risk taking and trying new ideas. Remember that it will not always work first time and players need to be given time.
- Use open questioning techniques to stimulate 'possibility' thinking
- Promote creative play across the whole pitch
 - it is not just for attacking players!

The Social Corner

Enjoyment

A player who enjoys their football:

- has excellent attendance levels at training and matches
 - plays with a smile on their face
- is willing to share ideas and ask questions
 - plays with confidence and creativity

Attitude

A player with an excellent attitude:

- is well behaved
- is on time for training and matches
- is focussed during training and matches
 - recognises that they represent the football club in everything they do
- follows the club's code of conduct and expected behaviours

Team Player

An excellent team player:

- recognises their role within the team
- demonstrates leadership but can also recognise when to follow others
- is willing to help others work towards achieving their goals
- helps to set up and take down equipment at sessions and matches

Sharing

Sharing players will:

- discuss ideas, tactics and solutions with their team mates
 - offer and take on board constructive criticism and feedback from team mates and coaches
- offer encouragement, support and praise to their team mates

Learning

A player committed to learning will:

- work hard to complete tasks and challenges
- use mistakes and set backs as an opportunity to learn and develop
- ask questions of team mates and coaches to develop their understanding
 - Recognise that working hard is key to learning new skills

Challenge

Players who enjoy a challenge will:

- take on new tasks
- ask for the 'next step' in their development
 - play in a variety of positions
- try things that they find difficult

Developing the 'Social' Corner

Enjoyment

- Ensure that players play an active part in the session. Consider use of specific individual challenges throughout blocks of work.
 - Give players opportunity to shape their learning and decide how to set up practices to make it relevant to them.
- Ensure that sessions are pitched at the right level - players should be both challenged and supported where necessary to maintain a good level of engagement
 - Avoid queues and lines when practising
- Allow players opportunities to develop their own ideas and solutions

Attitude

- Recognise and reward players who are on time (early) for training and matches
- Give players specific roles on training and match days
- Recognise and reward players who behave in line with the club's code of conduct

Team Player

- Provide opportunities for players to take the lead during sessions. - appoint coach/captain for different parts
- Provide game/match scenarios and allow players to discuss and develop their own solutions and individual roles within the team
- Ask players to delegate roles for training and match days (i.e. set up warm up, corner flags, water bottles etc)
- Condition games to play to different players' strengths - players will need to recognise who has strengths in different areas

Sharing

- Give players opportunities to discuss, evaluate and offer suggestions to team improvements during drinks breaks
 - Use observation and feedback as an intervention to give players opportunities to watch others perform and give evaluative feedback
- Use prompting questions to get teams/units to discuss their performance during games
- Provide unavailable (injured) players with opportunities to observe and feedback on specific elements during training/matches

Learning

- Recognise and reward players who have worked hard to achieve specific tasks or challenges
- Praise players who take on new challenges
- Provide players with opportunities to ask questions of coaches and their team mates to develop their understanding
 - Avoid pulling players up for every mistake they make - give them time to self correct
- Provide additional opportunities for players to practise (homework tasks, self directed practise at training, arrival activities)

Challenge

- Take players outside of their comfort zones. Develop training sessions that will challenge and put stress on players' ability
- Play with different formations and styles of play to challenge players' understanding of specific themes
- Conduct regular player reviews that highlight players strengths and areas for development - give clear ideas of where their 'next step' is