



15 Session Plans – Scope and Sequence – Tactical Concepts

DEVELOPMENT
BOOKLET



**Amherst Soccer Association Youth Methodology
Development Program for U15&16**

This Methodology will be used as an outline of principles necessary to give the U15&U16 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	

U15&U16 Development targets

Tactical	Focus on possession in the game
Technical	Playing in 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 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



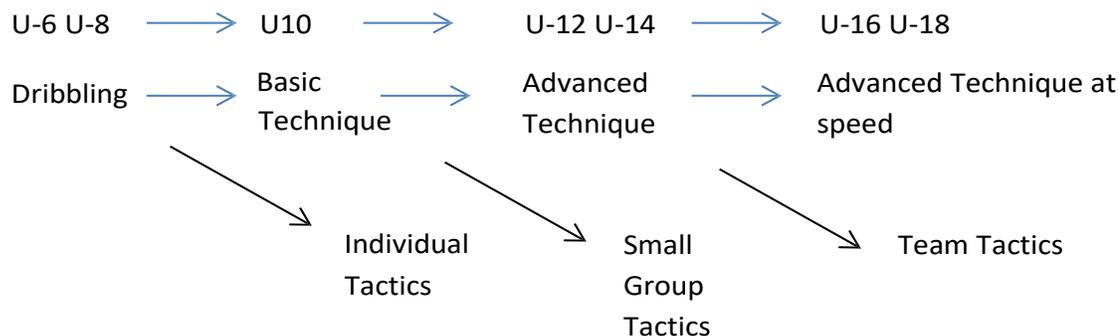
Amherst Soccer Scope and Sequence

For the U15 and U16 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.	Transitional play	Intermediate principles
4.	Playing out from the back	Width while using channels
5.	Receiving to play forward	Body positioning
6.	Team defending	Press and cover with depth
7.	Pressing in final third	Cues&triggers
8.	Overload/Underload	2v1/3v2/4v3
9.	Pass to attract	Advanced principles
10.	Spatial awareness	Head on a swivel
11.	SSG day	No coaching
12.	Counterattacking	Advanced principles
13.	Forward runs	Using 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.

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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.



THE COACHING MANUAL

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

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

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.



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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.

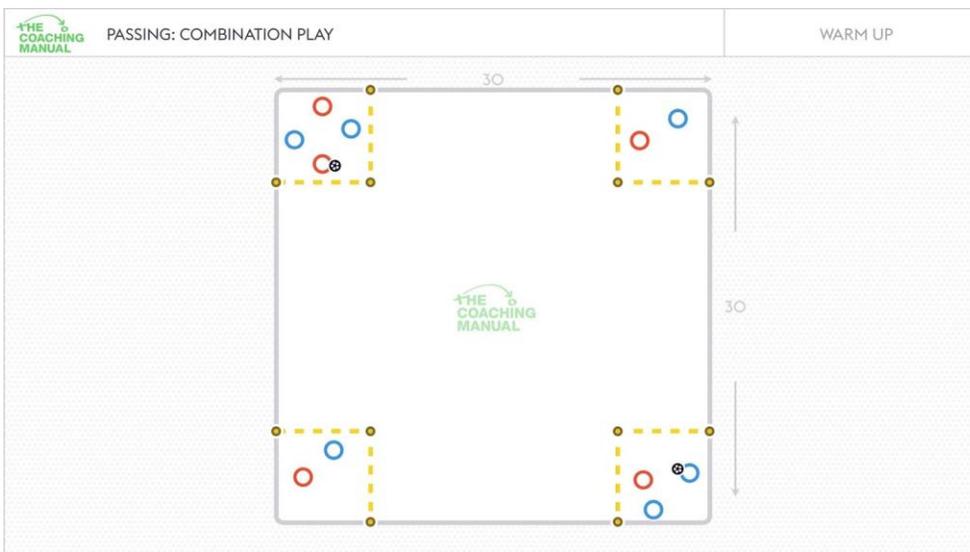


Week 1. Technical Passing –

Technical Passing - This passing practice develops players understanding of weight of passing, timing of passing and different types of passing.

Setup

Players divided into 2 x teams, with one team passing clockwise around the area to team mates in the square, and one team passing anti-clockwise. Players follow their pass to next receiving square. Change the passing to longer balls in the air. Challenge the players to receive it with different parts of the foot. **Make it easier:** Make the passing distance smaller and the receiving areas bigger **Make it challenging:** Players can come out of the square to receive and can either take ball back into square to pass or set back to the player who passed them to combine. Make the receiving areas smaller. Limit touches.



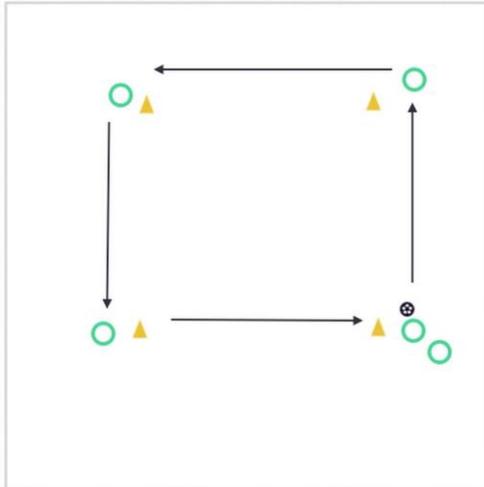
Key Coaching Points

- **Awareness**
Players should be aware of the space, ball, teammates and other players by checking their shoulder and playing with their head up to move the ball quickly.
- **Quality of the pass**
Players are encouraged to pass the ball firmly (punch pass) to each other to move the ball quickly with good accuracy.
- **First touch**
Playing on different angles, players should control the ball close to their body receiving on the back foot to move the ball quickly with two touches.

Week 2. Technical Passing

Technical Passing - This passing practice develops players understanding of weight of passing, timing of passing and different types of passing.

Setup - One team passing clockwise around the area to team mates in the square. Players follow their pass to next receiving player. Add a give and go at a certain cone. Make the area larger for longer passing.



Key Coaching Points

- **Awareness**
Players should be aware of the space, ball, teammates and other players by checking their shoulder and playing with their head up to move the ball quickly.
- **Quality of the pass**
Players are encouraged to pass the ball firmly (punch pass) to each other to move the ball quickly with good accuracy.
- **First touch**
Playing on different angles, players should control the ball close to their body receiving on the back foot to move the ball quickly with two touches.

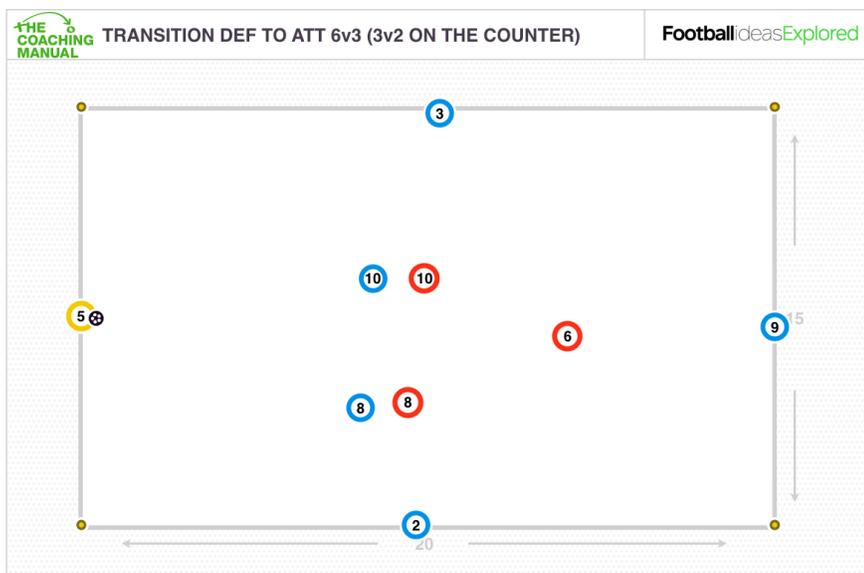
Week 3. Transitional Play

Transitional 6v3 Rondo- A 6v3 practice that helps players stay compact and press at the correct moments to then counter-attack quickly. **Set Up** 6 x Attackers (Blues and Yellow) positioned with the ball always starting with the Centre Back (Yellow 5) on the end line when out of play. 3 x Defenders (Red) in the central area to prevent the Blue team playing from Centre Back to Centre Forward. Centre Backs (Yellow 5) can occupy positions on the lines designated. Centre Midfielders (Blue 8 10) can move anywhere in the centre. The Centre Forward (Blue 9) can also move along their designated line. The Defenders (Red 6, 8 and 10) can move anywhere but in a realistic shape of a defensive unit. The objective of the attacking team is to complete a pass from Centre Backs (Yellow 5) to Centre Forward (Blue 9) where they are award one point. If the ball is won by the Red team their objective is to score by passing to Yellow 5. This is a 3 v 2 game in the central area when the ball is won by the red team (In transition) and players on the outside can not help the Blues in the middle. The Red team get 5 points if they can achieve this in under 3 passes, 3 points in under 4 passes and 3 points

in under 5 passes. They score only one point if they have to pass more than 5 times.

Key Coaching Points

- **Speed of Transition**
Players to focus on the speed of the transition, players need to try and attack quickly by trying to hit the furthest play forward (Yellow 5) as early as possible.
- **Find the space**
To counter attack effectively players should look to exposes the newly



defending team and the spaces to the side and in behind as quickly as possible to counter attack with success.

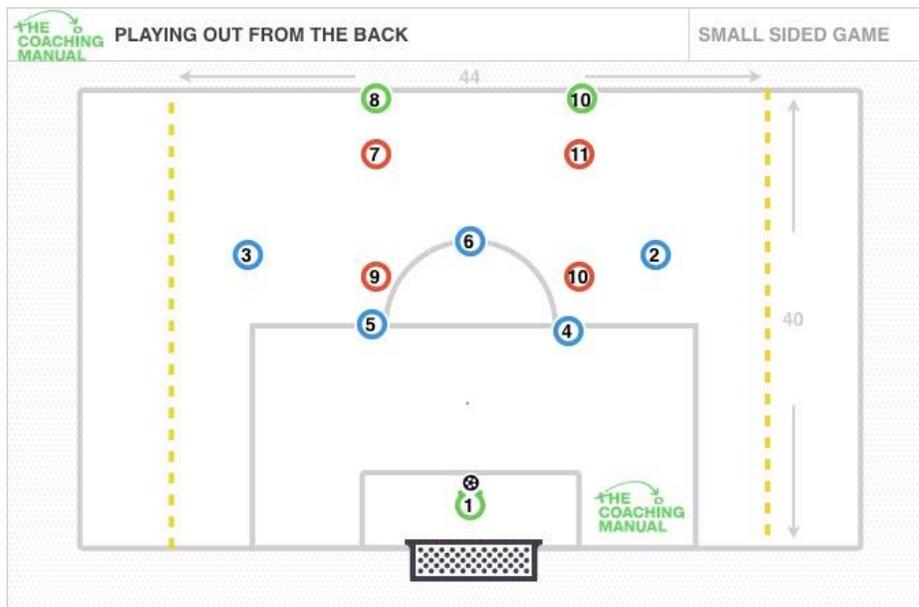
- **1 v 1 situations**

Attackers to expose the 1v1 situations as much as possible in the transition phase with players off the ball offering different positions and runs to free the player on the ball.

Week 4. Playing out of the back

Playing out from the back skill practice - In this practice help your players identify patterns to play out from the back. Encourage players to move and create space for each other.

Set Up - A back 4 with a pivot (Blue team) with the objective to play to the green players who represent 2 advanced midfielders by playing out from the back. When the Blue team pass successfully to the Green players, the Red team now need to attack the goal to score a goal passed the goalkeeper using the Green players if needed.



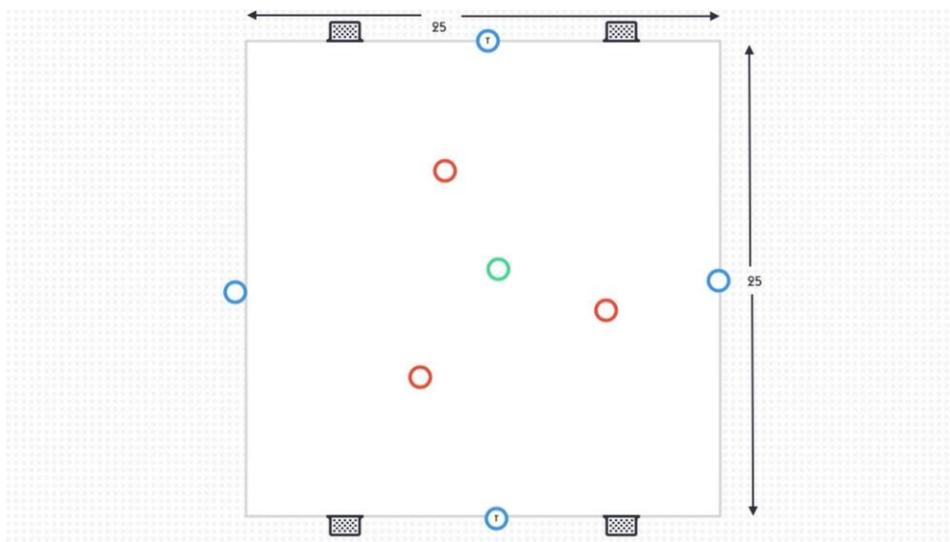
Key Coaching Points

- **Speed of play**
Players should look to play accurate and weighted passes quickly in order to combine and play out from the back to move forward.
- **Awareness of movements**
Utilising space and triangulate in unit and team movement, players need to create passing options ahead of the ball to unbalance and disorganise the opponent by creating diagonal passing lines and communicating.
- **Exploiting space**
Using varied types of runs, spreading out and occupy space based on positions, players need to try and get behind/between the defenders by recognising when and how to exploit the opponent when unbalanced/disorganised.

Week 5. Receiving to play forward

Playing Forwards on the Inside Rondo - This Rondo will help players find the free man to pass forward.

Set Up a pitch as seen below with 4 goals on the outside. Blues and Greens play together. Blue players need to move the ball to the 2 target players to score a goal, however this only counts if the Green player passes to the target player. If the Reds win the ball, players must look to pass into the mini goals to replicate a counter attack. Players have 5 seconds to score in the mini goal once winning the ball.



Key Coaching Points

- **Body Shape**

Players to use their open body shape to create passing angles whilst also looking to move forward as quickly as possible.

- **Quick Passing**

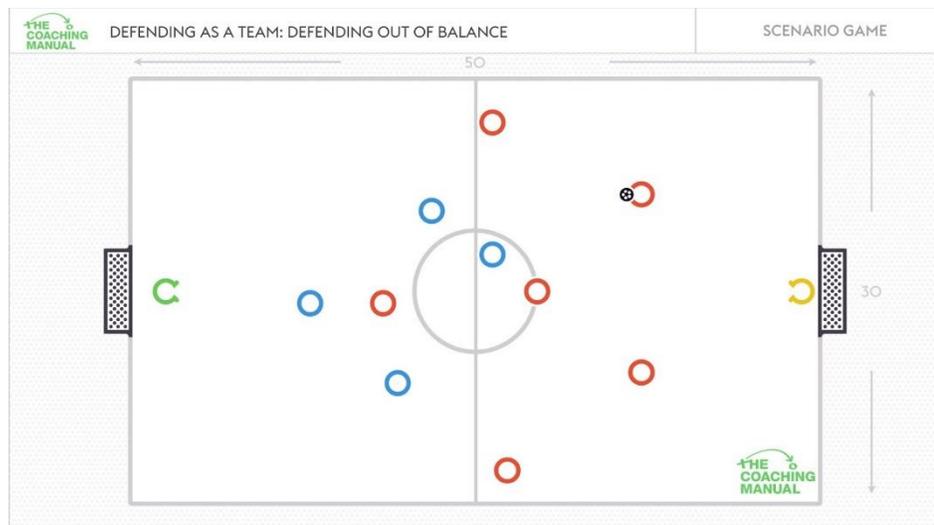
Players need to unbalance the opposition with quick passing and combinations to find and release the free man in the centre of the field and play forward.

- **Free Player (Spare Player)**

Players should use different and creative movement to lose defenders and create passing angles to move the ball forward and work the ball to the target players.

Week 6. Team Defending

Defending out of balance scenario Game - A scenario game that challenges players to come up with game strategies to defend and why it is important to remain compact; isolate attackers and press quickly when the opportunity opens. **Set Up** - Set up with goalkeeper at each end. Play 6vs.4 game with the following scenario; in the final third you find yourself in a 6v4. How can you delay and defend? **Make it more challenging:** Increase size of playing area. Increase the number of attackers. Challenge players individually



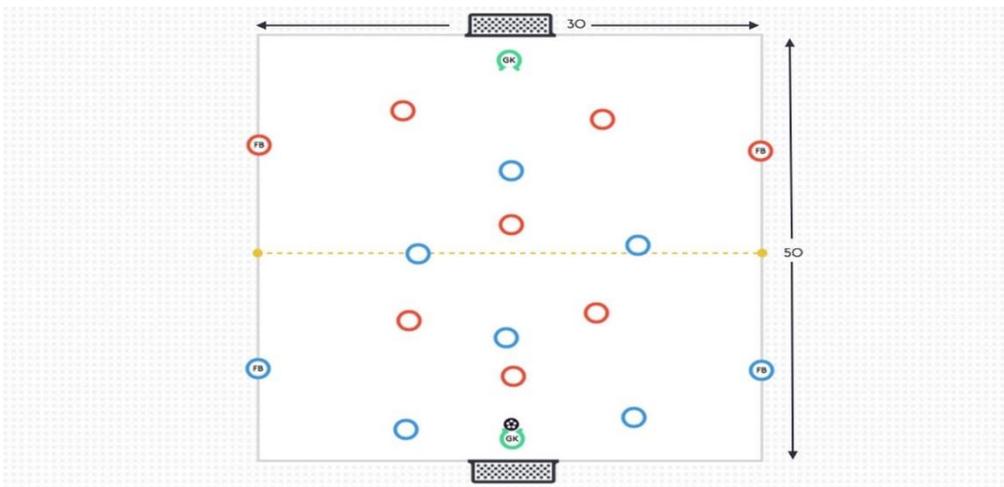
Key Coaching Points

- **Drop off**
To delay the play, players should look to drop off and gain a compact and balanced shape before engaging.
- **Isolate the player**
When the attack has the ball, the defender should look to restrict passing options by attempting to isolate the player in wide areas.
- **Press & squeeze the ball**
Defenders should recognise opportunities to apply pressure and compete for the ball if the attacker makes a mistake.

Week 7. Pressing in the final third

Pressing from the front small sided Game - This conditioned game in which players will understand pressing from the front in a game situation.

Set Up - Players to set up like the image above. With 2 Full Backs from each team in their own half and must stay in between their cones at all times (can not support forward). Defenders to press the opposite team (ideally in their half) as a team with the objective of winning the ball back. Upon winning the ball back, players should look to counter attack quickly. When attacking, players should look to build from the back and score goals in the opposition goal.



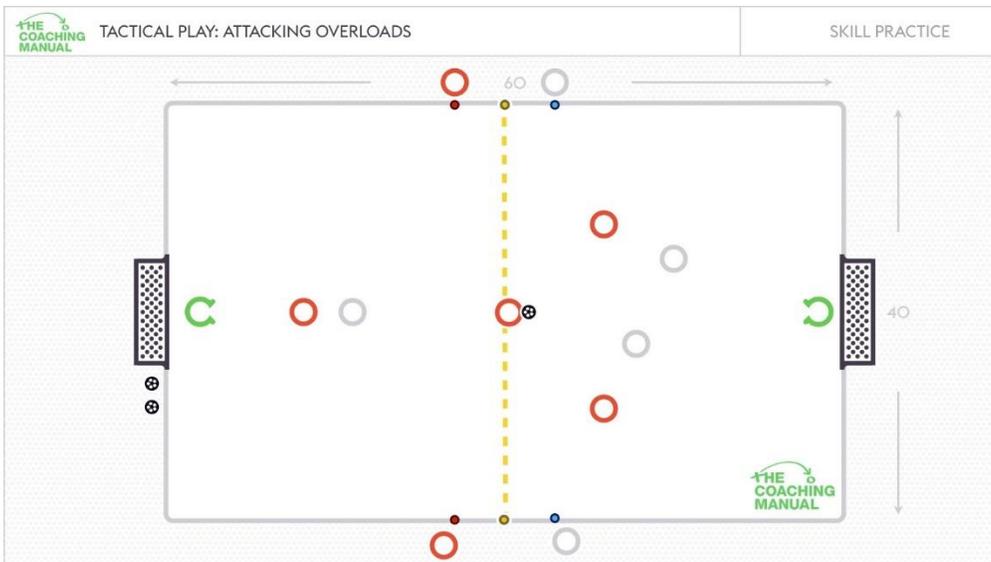
Key Coaching Points

- **Compact**
Players need to communicate verbally and non-verbally as a team to remain compact and restrict penetrative passes, with sufficient depth and patience looking to protect the goal.
- **Pressing Triggers**
Players should not rush into the tackles, but look to time when to press and when to hold, in line with the pressing triggers.
- **Make Play Predictable**
Whilst remaining compact, players should make play predictable and look to force the opposition to make mistakes or into areas where they can win the ball easier (for example wide areas).

Week 8. Over/Underload

Attacking Overloads Skill Practice - To take advantage of overloads when attacking, coach your players how to attack at speed and to space whilst also using creative movement to find the extra players.

Setup - Practice starts with 3 x attackers (reds) vs 2 x defenders (whites). All remaining players are positioned on the side of the pitch. 3 x attackers attempt to score in the goal. If they score or if the GK saves the ball then 1 x attacker (red) 1 x defender (white) leave the pitch. The GK plays the ball to an outside white. The remaining red becomes a recovering defender and 2 x whites enter the pitch as attackers to create a 3v2 to the opposite goal. Repeat with players interchanging to create 3v2 attacking overloads.



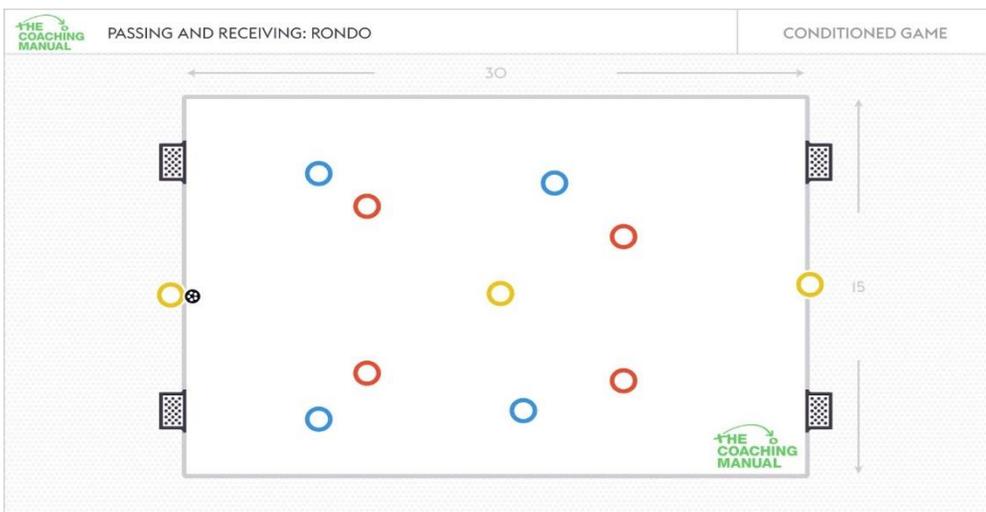
Key Coaching Points

- **Attack at speed**
Players should utilise the attacking overload and attack the goal quickly and unbalance the opposition defenders.
- **Movement to be an option to receive the ball or create space for teammate**
Movement off the ball can unbalance the defence and allow the player to receive or create space for a teammate.
- **Use the overload player**
In the attack, the additional player should be used to combine, create space and finish on goal.

Week 9. Pass to attract

Pass to attract 4v4+3 Rondo - Set Up

Set up the area as seen above with a 4v4+3 exercise with 4 goals at the end. A 4v4 game in the middle with 2 yellows placing themselves on the outside and one Yellow in the middle. Blues play from left to right and Reds from right to left. Both teams can use the yellow players when in possession. The ball always starts with the yellow player on the outside to move forward (In the direction they are playing representing a goalkeeper and playing out from the back). The attacking team must hit the Yellow target player before finishing one touch inside the mini goals they are shooting towards. If the defenders (this case Red) win the ball, they must pass to an outside yellow before they can start to attack again. When attacking, players should be encouraged to be on the outside, with the defenders in the middle. When the ball is won, this should change, defenders going to the outside and the attackers now defenders on the inside. This helps the players understand the challenge of creating space for themselves when attacking, and condensing the field when defending.



Key Coaching Points

- **Spare Player** - Players need to look to use combinations and movement to create free space to ultimately free a spare man to receive in. Player should look to receive diagonal and vertical passes in their

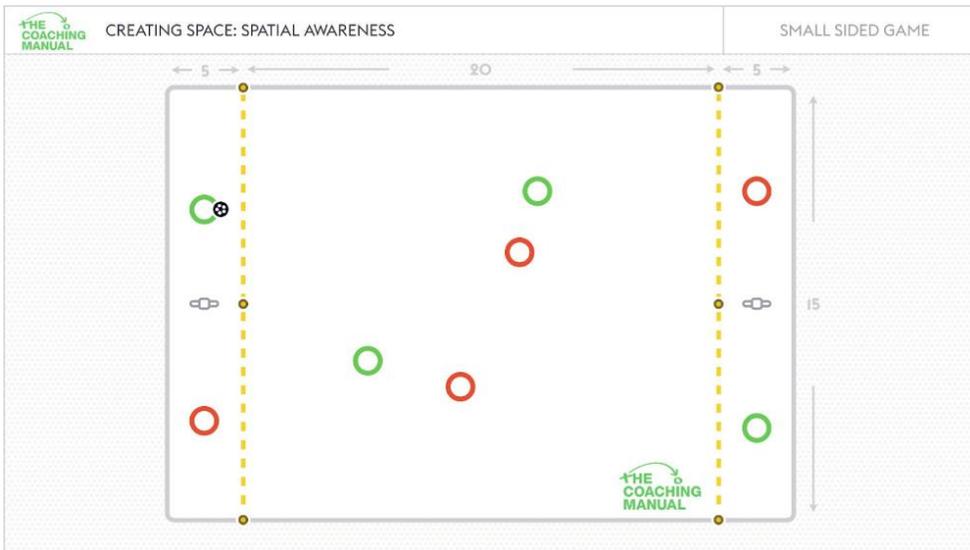
designated zones and look to play forward on the half turn or play back to potentially move forward (Up-Back-Through).

- **Breaking Lines** - Players should be encouraged to break lines by seeking out the furthest pass forward. If this pass isn't available, they should look to work backwards with short combinations to play through or around.
- **Maintain Possession and Body Shape** - Players to maintain possession until and invite pressure to free space and players to move forward at the right time whilst also maintaining the correct body shape throughout the exercise depending on the area of the field they are playing.

Week 10. Spatial Awareness

Spatial Awareness to Receive and Play to Targets 2v2 Practice - This practice allows you to coach your players when and how to move, in order to create angles to receive and play forwards.

Setup - 2 x teams of 4 players. Each team has a target player at each end and 2v2 in the middle area. Teams attempt to pass and combine from one end player to the other end player, playing through spaces and opposition team. If opposition win the ball they play from their target players. Rotate roles of players.



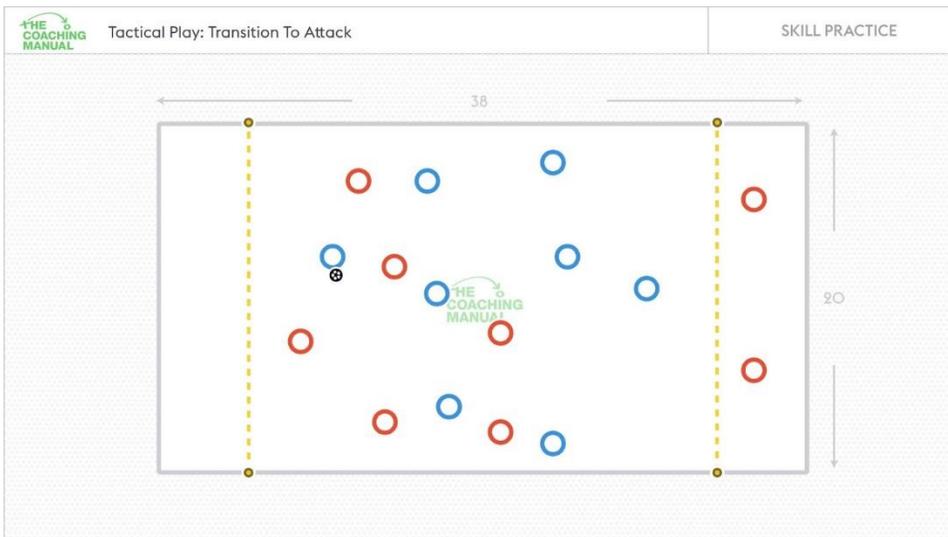
Key Coaching Points

- **Receive on the half turn to play forward**
In order to receive on the half turn the body shape has to be correct. Players should not be square to where the pass is coming from. Open body so player can see the whole pitch. When receiving on the back foot the player should look to receive with one touch then play with the front foot with their second touch.
- **Create and complete "triangles" to pass & combine**
A triangle creates 2 passing options for the player on the ball. This will also provide opportunities to split defenders and play a penetrating pass.
- **Movements to receive**
Slow defenders down to then accelerate and receive the ball. Short sharp movements to push away from the defender to create a passing line.

Week 12. Counterattacking

Counter Attacking Skill Practice - This overloaded practice shows how and when your players can make decisions to play forward early whilst also support the transition at great speed.

Setup - Play 8 vs. 6 in middle area with 2 x players from one team in end zone. Team of 8 keep possession in middle zone. If team of 6 win possession they attempt to play quickly to end zone players and they enter the middle zone, whilst 2 players from opposition team drop into opposite end zone to create an 8 vs. 6.

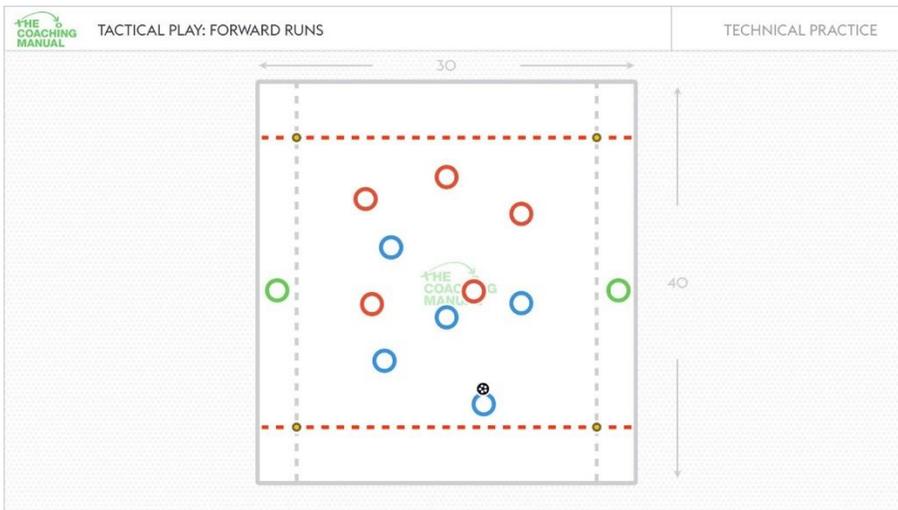


Key Coaching Points

- **Movement**
To combine receive within the transition, players should use creative and inventive movement to create space and move the ball forward.
- **Early decision making**
When regain possession, attackers should try to make decisions early to expose the space behind or to the side of an unbalanced defensive shape.
- **Counter attack**
When in the transition to attack, movement and support around and away from the ball should be early as well as traveling or passing the ball forward to take advantage of an unbalanced opposition.

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**

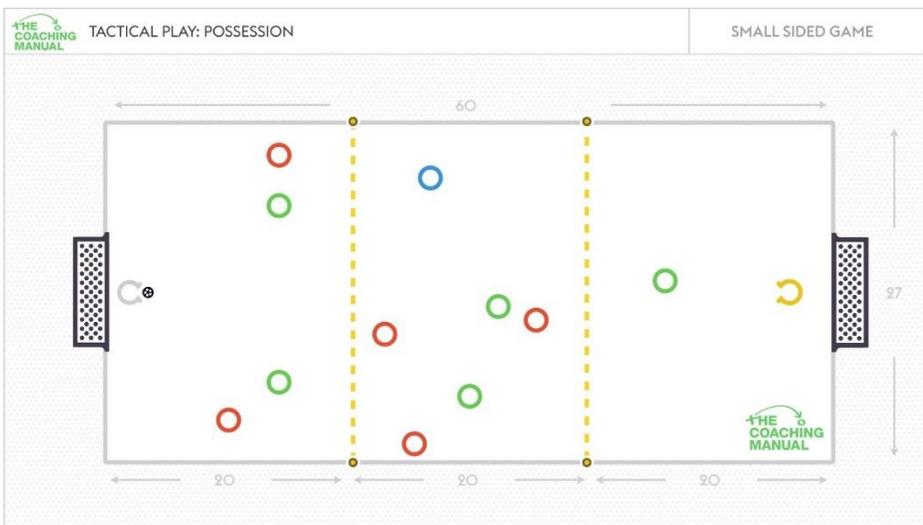
With good weight, speed, disguise and accuracy players should look to pass to each other with great quality to keep the exercise as fluid as possible playing 1 or 2 touches.

- **Timing of forward runs**

Beat the offside line. Encourage players to be positive and make forward runs with a purpose of creating space especially diagonal runs for others or receiving the ball to score.

Week 14. Possession

Possession with an Overload Small Sided Game - When attacking your players will have a numerical advantage. This game allows you to coach your players to recognise when and how to use the spare players when playing through the thirds. **Setup** - Players divided into 2 x teams of 5 + floating player (S) who can play for team in possession. When a team is without possession 1 player must retreat to defensive third. Teams look to establish effective possession to create goal scoring opportunities.



Key Coaching Points

- **Keeping possession to play forward**
The team should look to keep possession to play forward through the thirds. Encourage the team to use the spare players to play through the thirds when gaining possession.
- **Movement off the ball**
Make the pitch big to create space to keep effective possession. Encourage players to create angles to combine and play forward to create goal scoring opportunities.
- **Decision Making**
Players should make the correct decisions when gaining possession. For example, when is the time to keep safe possession? (when the opposing team are in shape then the team in possession have to be patient and use their movement off the ball to create passing lines to play forward) When is the time to play forward quickly? (when the team in opposition team are un-balanced and the team in possession have an overload)

Week 15. Build Up Play

Playing In Central Areas Skill Practice - An 8v8 skill practice that focuses on central build up play in the final third. **Set Up** - 8v8 Skill Practice. Half pitch with goal at each end and clearly marked final third. Wide areas in final third are also coned off to promote central play in the final third. Blue team play towards the penalty area and attack the goal. Promote the blue team to look for opportunities to play forwards quickly, combine and create goalscoring chances in the final third while encouraging them to recycle the ball if

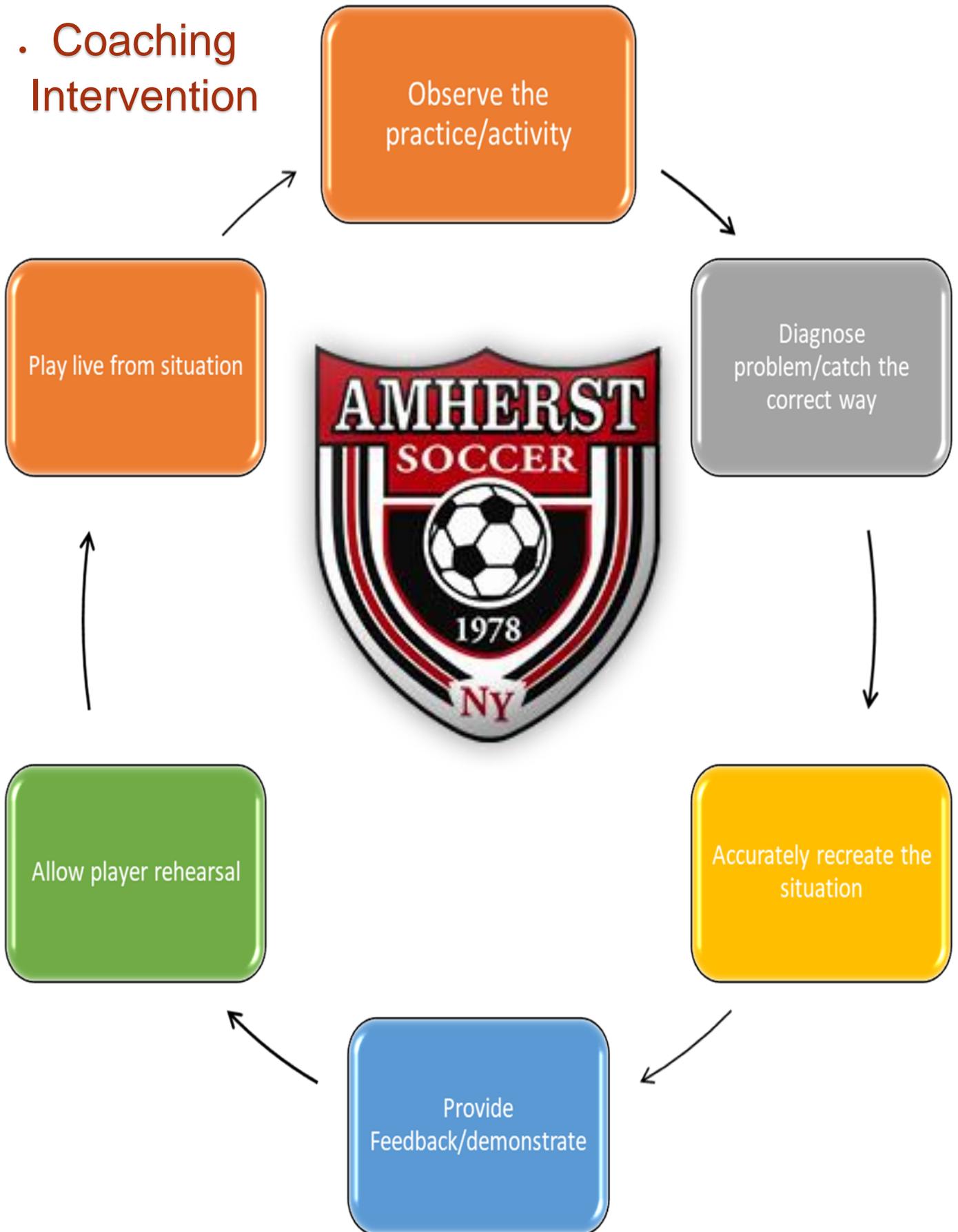


necessary. If the red team gain possession, they counter attack quickly and attempt to score in the goal on the halfway line.

Key Coaching Points

- **Movement**
Attacking players need to create passing options ahead of the ball by moving to unbalance the opposition defenders. The movement may be to create space for themselves to receive, or to draw a defender out of position for a team mate to receive. Timing and type of movement is key so that defenders cannot react and prevent scoring opportunities, and players may need to move a number of times before receiving the ball.
- **Support**
In the final third, supporting runs from central and wide midfielders are crucial to unbalance the opposition defence, provide passing options around, behind or ahead of the ball and to combine quickly to create goalscoring opportunities.
- **Be clinical**
As the ball enters the final third/penalty area and scoring opportunities are created, players need to be clinical in front of goal and make decisions quickly to shoot or play to a team mate in an optimum position to score.

. 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
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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
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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
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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