

IT'S EASIER TO GET PLAYERS' ATTENTION WHEN IT'S ONE-ON-ONE

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

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300 LA LIGA GOALS

- > MESSI THE ARTIST
- > BEAT THE DEFENDER
- > 1V1 DUELS

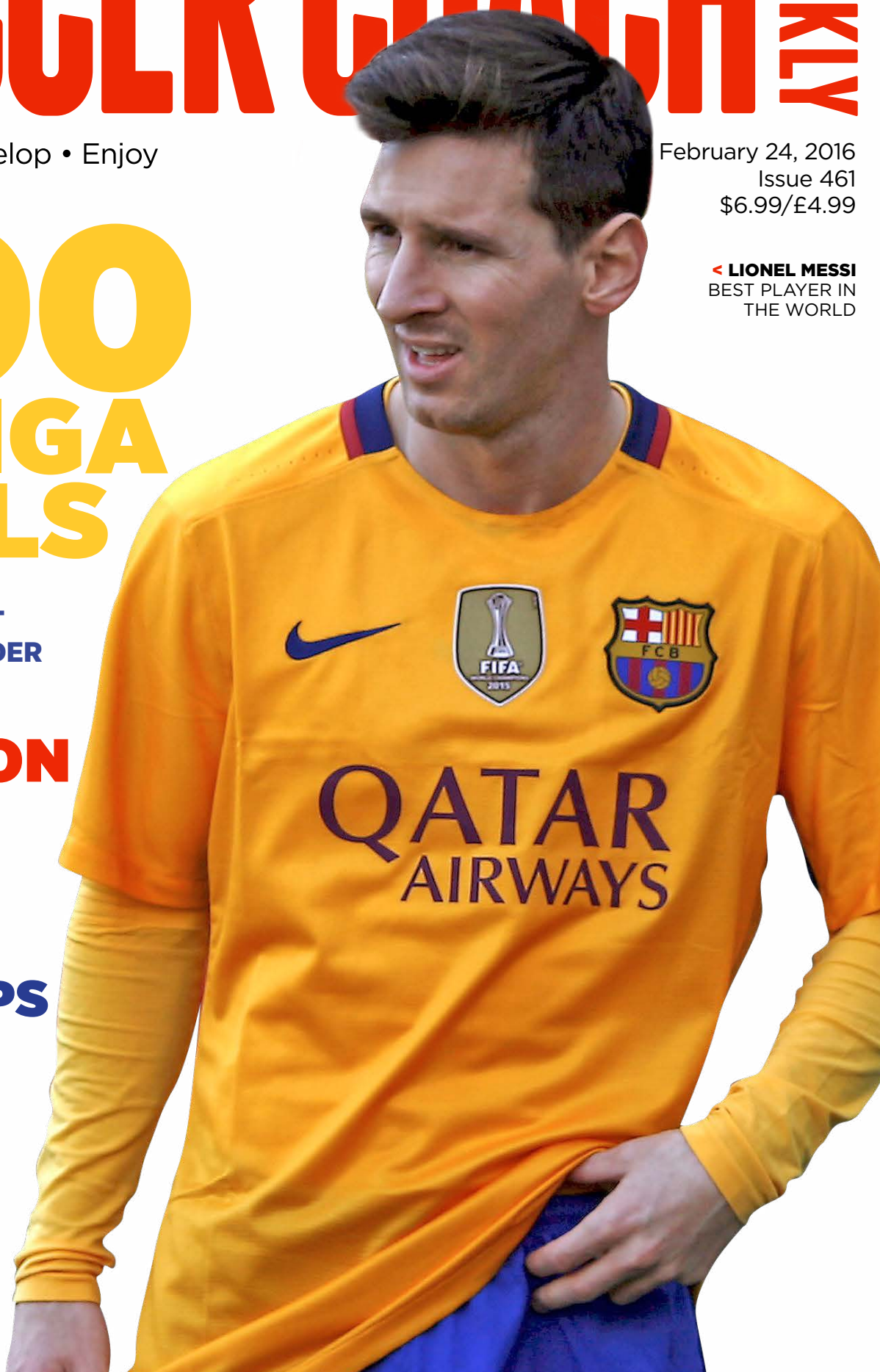
5 BALLON D'OR

101 SOCCER WARM-UPS

DODGE LIKE
MESSI

+4

FANTASTIC
PRACTICES



< **LIONEL MESSI**
BEST PLAYER IN
THE WORLD

GOT A COACHING PROBLEM? LET ME SOLVE IT FOR YOU

Team Talks... one-to-one



Soccer Coach Weekly
Issue 461



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Touchline Tales

Earlier in the season I wrote about experimenting with my half-time team talks. In the professional game, I had seen the coaching breaks before extra-time where the manager and his assistants went round each player individually rather than offering a group talk. Obviously those in charge saw this as a better way to get points across when the players are not in the dressing room. I often see players talking to their parents at half-time when they should be concentrating on what the coach has to say. So this season I have been using the 'extra-time method' for team talks - instructing the players while they are having a drink with their parents. I can tell each one exactly what I want him to do, usually giving him a positive action that provides a psychological lift. It is very interesting then that we have only 'lost' one second-half this season. Is this outcome thanks to the new half-time team talk method? Well I have to admit I find it a lot easier to get players paying attention when it's one-on-one...

EXAMPLE ONE

John playing at centre-back was

being caught out by through balls going past him when the opposition won possession and counter-attacked. It was the only time we were put under pressure and the other team had already scored from this situation. So I went over to him out of earshot of the others and told him he'd had a fantastic first-half, and to keep it up in the second. I told him when we attack the others we're leaving him to keep guard, and that he could drop a little deeper and go more central just to cover the gaps. I didn't get any of the "it's not our fault, coach" from the other players and my centre-back was clearly paying full attention. He responded to the chat and, after the restart, was in control when the opposition went on the counter.

EXAMPLE TWO

Peter, playing on the wing, was getting into great positions by running with the ball, but wasn't passing well when he got there. Instead he was holding onto the ball, and ended up losing possession as the opposition players crowded him out. Our attackers were throwing their arms up in annoyance and not communicating with their winger. At half-time I went up to him and spoke about how fantastic it was that he was running with the ball and beating



players... but to make it even better, I told him, he should try to pass the ball earlier so the defenders didn't have time to crowd him out. "Oh yes, that's a good idea!" he said. Then I went to the attackers and told each one individually to try to help out the winger by encouraging an early pass. Again it worked. Again no-one felt they were being made a scapegoat or being given negative advice. It confirmed my theory that you can motivate and correct individuals at the same time. It worked for me, let me know if it works for you.



David Clarke

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ASK DAVE

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It's good to have somebody to ask for advice when you encounter a problem with your team - and whatever your coaching problem, I'm sure I can help. I'm delighted to offer you a personal service exclusive to SCW subscribers. Just email me your query on any soccer coaching matter and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. I'll give you the advice you need to solve your particular problem, and I'll even send you the resources you need from our archive of coaching sessions.

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Barcelona's Lionel Messi
against Sporting Gijon

The role model

Lionel Messi scored his 500th career goal as Barcelona ran riot against Gary Neville's hapless Valencia side in the Nou Camp then got his record 300th La Liga goal

Barcelona's star man has broken the 300-goal mark in Spain's top tier and his form over the past decade has created some of the most spectacular statistics in the history of world football.

Messi scored his 300th league goal against Sporting Gijon last week, firing home from outside the area to write his name in the history books once more.

Earlier this month the Argentine also hit his 499th goal for club and country in the Copa Del Rey semi final, before striking for the 500th and 501st time in his illustrious career in the second half contributing towards a 7-0 annihilation.

This all comes after his performances in 2015 won him FIFA's Ballon d'Or at the ceremony in January. There were many superlative performances in 2015 but one of the best was the Champions League

semi-final first leg against his old manager Pep Guardiola at Bayern Munich.

In the biggest game of the season Messi was simply mesmerising. For 80 minutes he tickled and jabbed and lulled a team of world-class footballers into submission. The decisive blow was a truly wonderful Messi moment as he drifted past Jérôme Boateng, who collapsed almost gratefully like a sleepwalker being ushered into an armchair, and then floated the ball over Manuel Neuer and Rafinha, leaving three opponents flat on their backs and an entire defence put to sleep in five perfect strides.

Then I saw the best performance in England. In February Messi produced a 20-minute spell of dribbling, passing and combination play that was one of the best displays of attacking football I have

seen. Manchester City, Guardiola's next destination, were torn apart.

In addition to Messi being such an extraordinary dribbler at high pace, he also is a very intelligent player. He is able to decide the tempo of the game during possession of the ball and execute the right actions to decide games.

Guardiola says: "Messi wins the ball playing as the false No.9. If you put him at the left-back, he would be just as good. He is the best defender in the world."

When it comes to coaching young players to be like Messi, it is possible to coach the skills – but to read the game and make fast decisions like he does...

Messi is one of the best players to use as a role model for the young players in your team. Get them watching now!

1v1 Duel

PART ONE The 1v1 duel pitches two players in a tight situation where there can only be one winner. Who has the determination and skill to claim the ball and dribble past an opponent to score a goal?

WHY USE IT

Players need to be coached in the skills to beat players in 1v1 situations.

SET-UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and goals in an area 50x30 yards with a 10x10 yard square in the centre. We used 10 players and a server in the session.

HOW TO DO IT

> Two teams line up outside the square. The players enter the square and wait for you to pass to one of them. Once you make the pass the 1v1 duel commences.

> The aim is for one of the players to dribble out of the opponent's end line and into a 1v1 situation against the goalkeeper to score.

The next two players enter the square.

RULES

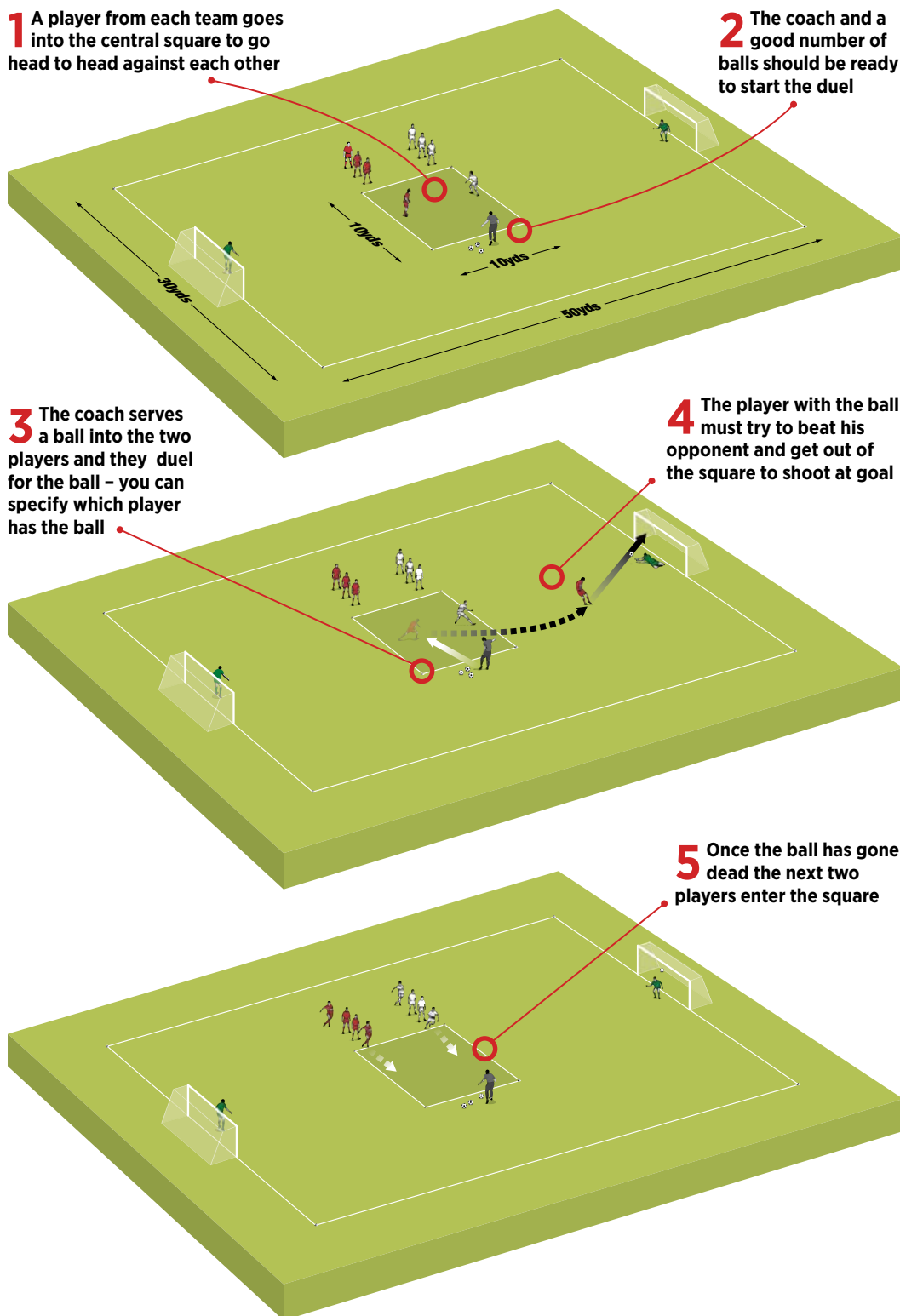
> The game is played for 10 minutes

> The teams must keep count of the number of goals they score

> The players must go out of their opponent's end line. If the ball goes out of the side line then the 1v1 duel must restart with a new pass from you

TECHNIQUE

> To increase the difficulty for the player shooting, insist that once the player has dribbled out of the square they are then only allowed two touches prior to shooting at goal.



Player movement ■■■→

Ball movement →

Run with ball ■■■→

Shot →

Now Beat The Defender

PART TWO This is a dream practice for players who love to show off skills and dribbling ability. Players must compete to dribble outside the opponent's end line and into a second 1v1 situation where a quick change of direction can give them the opportunity to shoot

WHY USE IT

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SET-UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and goals in an area 50x30 yards with a 10x10 yard square in the centre. We used 10 players and a server in the session.

HOW TO DO IT

> Two teams line up outside the square. The players enter the square and wait for you to pass to one of them. Once you make the pass the 1v1 duel commences.

> One of the players has to dribble out of the opponent's end line and into a 1v1 situation with the second defender who they must beat in order to score. The next two players enter the square.

RULES

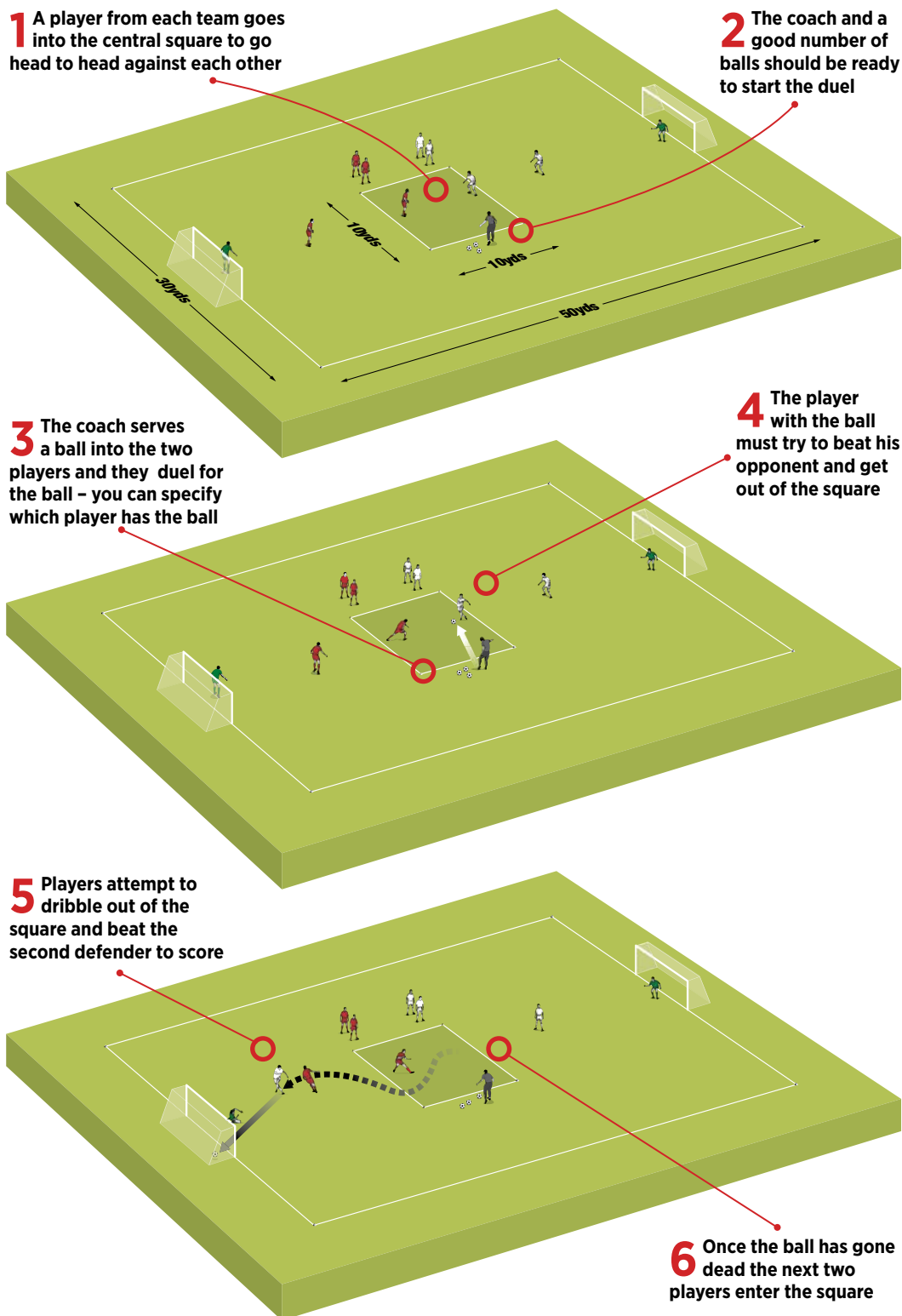
- > The game is played for 10 minutes
- > The teams must keep count of the number of goals they score
- > The players must go out of their opponent's end line. If the ball goes out of the side line then the 1v1 duel must restart with a new pass from you
- > Rotate the second defender every two minutes

DEVELOPMENT/ PROGRESSION

> If the player going outside the area is tackled by the second defender, then the second defender can pass back to their team mate in the square who can turn and dribble to attack the opposite goal and second defender.

TECHNIQUE

> To increase the difficulty for the player shooting, insist that once the player has dribbled out of the square they are then only allowed two touches prior to shooting at goal.



Player movement ■■■➔

Ball movement ➡

Run with ball ■■■➔

Shot ➡

Turn Like Messi

Every single match he plays Lionel Messi twists and turns his way through a jungle of players to create for himself and score the simplest of goals... here's how he does it



Get your players running at pace like a car with great acceleration and superb brakes



Tell your players to put one foot on top of ball to halt its path, and stop their run



They must use their balancing foot to turn and push off in another direction, fooling the defender

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 1 A player is alongside or facing an opponent dribbling at speed.

STEP 2 He stops suddenly, halting the ball with his foot.

STEP 3 The player pivots on his standing leg to move off with the ball in the opposite direction. Make sure the player turns away from the opponent, keeping his body between himself and the ball.

STEP 4 Pushing the ball out from under his feet he pushes off on his standing leg and accelerates away.



You must coach your players to push the ball with the other foot and move away into the space

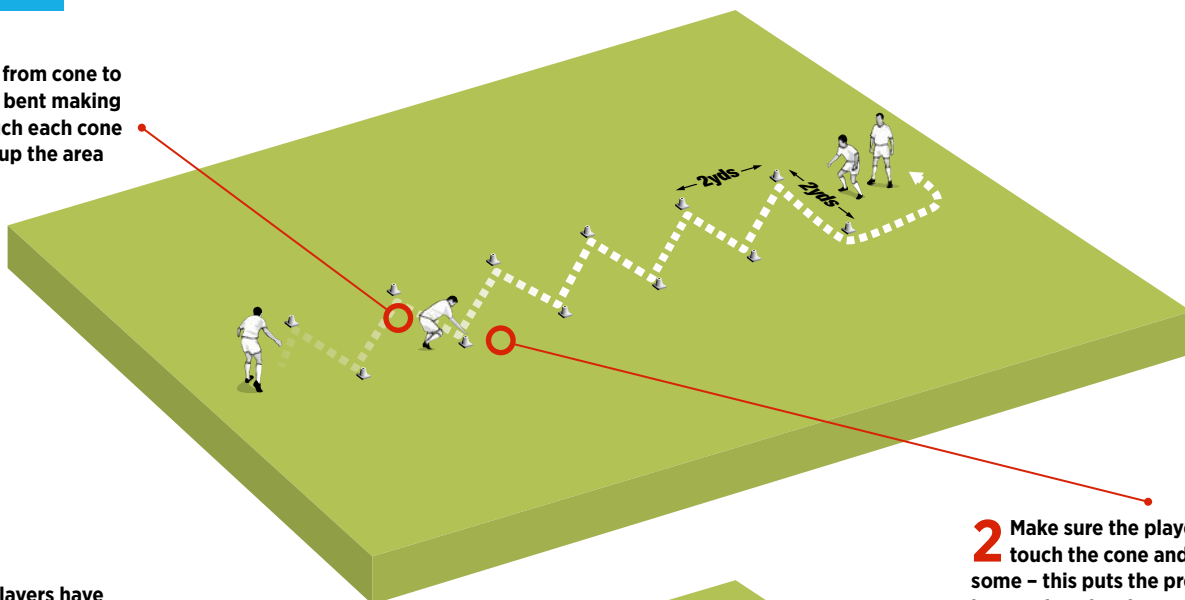
NEYMA, SUAREZ AND MESSI

Messi can drop deep for the ball, drift left, drift right, dictate the play and lure opponents into areas they don't want to visit, thus creating space for Neymar and Luis Suarez.

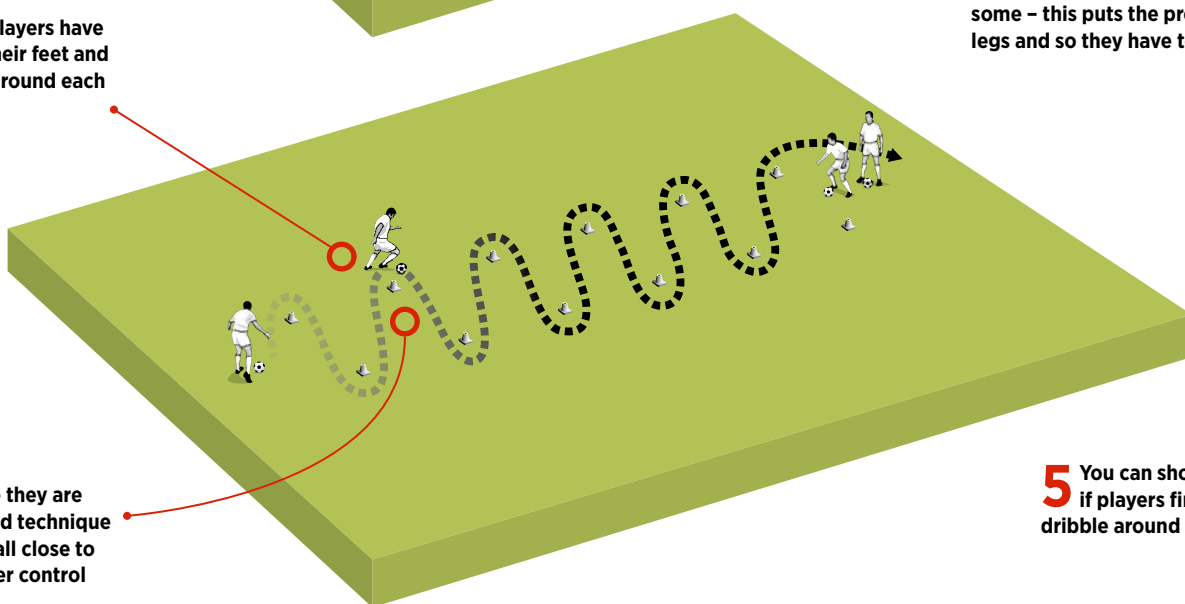
Messi is a player who always wants the ball, always wants to keep it moving at pace and he has the aforementioned players who are on the same wavelength, and who make space to receive the ball.

From there, it's a case of these forward players carving out opportunities, or a return ball for Messi to create his own magic.

1 Players run from cone to cone knees bent making it easier to touch each cone as they move up the area



3 Now the players have a ball at their feet and must dribble around each cone in turn



2 Make sure the players bend to touch the cone and don't skip some - this puts the pressure on their legs and so they have to twist and turn

4 Make sure they are using good technique keeping the ball close to them and under control

5 You can shorten the course if players find it difficult to dribble around all the cones

101 Soccer Warm-ups

No.21 Dodge Like Messi This simple and fun activity is perfect for use on match and training days, allowing you to warm up your players with ball control and good touch

DIFFICULTY RATING



Great for agility skills and getting players to dodge and weave, changing direction like they would during a match. Difficulty hugely increased when the ball is added for the progression but players can go more slowly until they get the hang of it.

SET UP

You need 12 cones and a ball for each player, setting out the row of cones in 2x2 yard squares. Use up to 6 players for each set up.

HOW TO PLAY

Players take it in turns to run and touch each cone in turn right the way up the area. Players can go each way setting off

once the player from the other side has tagged them. In the progression players do the same thing but this time with a ball and they must dribble around each cone.

TECHNIQUE

This helps to recreate the type of mazy runs Messi makes around the area using deft movements to lose his opponents.

Player movement ■■■➔

Ball movement ➡

Run with ball ■■■➔

Shot ➡

Ask Dave

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

Just email me your query on any soccer coaching matter and I'll get back to you as soon as I can

Q “A parent asked how we monitor our coaches in terms of their background and police record. I had to admit we don’t. Should we?”

A The guidelines over child protection can vary widely between countries, organisations and clubs, but one rule that should be uniform is that parents need to be given as much information as possible (and access to information) when it comes to reassurance that their child is in safe hands.

In England, the FA has a long stream of guidelines aimed at protecting kids in schools and organised club environments, and these are built using the knowledge and backing of organisations such as the National Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Children, Sport England and others.

The nature of coaching means that many volunteers simply fall into their roles quite informally. That doesn’t mean that parents shouldn’t still need to check the person coaching their child, and any club should gather such information.

References should be sought, and must be written by individuals who are not related to the applicant (one from his/her place of work is often used).

The Criminal Records Bureau can and should also be consulted. Bigger youth football clubs have Child Welfare Officers and these can be used as a direct point of contact for parents. Clubs should also check other documents, such as qualifications, and should introduce a general child protection policy, plus further policies on selection, recruitment, whistle blowing, health and safety, and anti-bullying.

This collation of paperwork need only be done once, but it is important to react quickly and efficiently when a parent enquires, and it’s essential in verifying coaches in the first place.

Answered by Darren Stane, a child protection officer from Brigg

Q “We’re often caught out on the break. How can I get my team to repel counterattacks?”



A It’s strange how most of the talk of counterattacks revolves around how to pull them off, yet few coaches take time to explain how to defend against them.

And let’s be clear, when you’re a lone centre back with two attackers and a winger bearing down on you, it can be a fearful sight! The trick is to slow a counterattack down. Defenders should be coached in the art of jockeying – keeping a wide stance and backtracking slowly, attempting to block the attacker’s progress without tackling.

This is all about balance and positioning, and can be practised in 1v1 situations. The defender should attempt to slow the attack, steering the forward onto his weaker side. An awareness of other opposition players is crucial so that a simple switch doesn’t offer another attacker a clear route to goal.

While one or more players slow the attack

down, others must be determined to get back and support. You can practise defending against the counterattack by starting a 2v1 attack 30 yards from goal, with two additional defenders a further 10 yards back down the pitch. The ability of a lone defender to jockey, slow, position well and communicate with retreating team-mates will decide whether defenders can recover in time to help.

Practice makes permanent in every aspect of soccer, but I do feel it’s especially prevalent when defending against the counterattack. Why? Because it’s a technique that, firstly, requires commitment and aggression on the part of defenders looking to get back to help; and secondly, it demands positioning sense, patience, concentration and of nerve on the part of the overloaded defender or defenders.

Answered by William East, a Level 3 coach from Aberdeen Scotland

Just email me today: askdave@soccercoachweekly.net