

IT'S IMPORTANT YOU AND YOUR PLAYERS AGREE A STRATEGY IN TRAINING

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

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> **OLIVIER GIROUD**
ARSENAL STRIKER

ART & CRAFT

SCORE LIKE GIROUD

- > TRAINING GROUND SECRETS
- > COMBINE TO SCORE
- > CREATE AND FINISH
- > SPACE FOR STRIKERS

101 SOCCER WARM-UPS:

DRIBBLE IN PAIRS

GARETH SOUTHGATE
7 TIPS TO ATTACK
FROM THE BACK



GOT A COACHING PROBLEM? LET ME SOLVE IT FOR YOU

Physical Maturity Factors



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Touchline Tales

Is there light at the end of the tunnel for young players having to sit on the subs bench, not because they weren't skilful enough but because the other kid was much bigger and so the coach preferred him?

I recently watched an Under 10s team lose 9-0 and the difference between the sides was one boy who was twice the size of everyone else. I fail to see what he is learning when he is scoring 7 goals in a game, brushing smaller players aside and kicking the ball much harder than they can – he is not better than them he is an early maturer.

His problem will be that by using his size during his golden years of learning, he will not acquire the skills necessary to play as he is doing now once the other players have caught him up in size. And they will catch him up

Dr Sean Cumming, a senior lecturer at the University of Bath's department for health, is helping Premiership rugby union side Bath conduct a six-month study evaluating bio-banding – grouping young players together according to their physical maturity, rather than their age.

He says: "You can get a boy who is



an early maturer, who is biologically 16, competing in an under-14 age group. Likewise, you get another kid playing in the same age group who is biologically 12 and is a late maturer. There are four years' difference between the two of them biologically, but still we expect them to train together and compete together.

"In a bio-banded competition, early maturers can't boss the game physically; they have to play a technical game and are forced to think faster, play as a team rather than doing it all themselves. Those early maturing boys have a great time at 13, 14, 15, but they don't have to develop their technical abilities and when the other guys physically catch up with them, they don't know how to deal with it."

I look forward to the results of his

study because what grassroots in England is crying out for is a blueprint to emerge that splits players into teams where development rather than age is the deciding factor.

There is a huge opportunity for coaches to take advantage of the early developers and field a team of giants to blast their way to the top but I felt for the boy who celebrated all of his 7 goals with enthusiasm, because just around the corner there will be a time when he is no longer the biggest player on the pitch and more skilful players will take the ball off him.



David Clarke

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Great warm up to get players dribbling and turning with the ball

8 ATTACK FROM THE BACK

Gareth Southgate gives tips and advice about attacking from the back



ASK DAVE

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when you encounter a problem with your team – and whatever your coaching problem, I'm sure I can help.

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Training Ground Secrets

Support play is a vital factor to creating a winning team – a team that can keep possession by passing their way up the pitch

As usual Pep Guardiola has wise words about support play: “In football you have to run – but the key is knowing when it’s appropriate to run.” You can almost see him tapping his nose and winking.

One player who knows when to run is Olivier Giroud at Arsenal. He told Arsenal’s official website that you have to devise your plan of attack: “You have to work with your wide players in training so they know what runs you’re going to make. Normally, if the crosser gets to the line he’ll send it to the front post, and if it’s a cross from deeper it goes to the back post.

“But if I make a run between the front post and the defender, that means he should aim for the near post. It’s important that you and your team-mates agree on the strategy in training. At

Montpellier I worked on this with [wide players] Garry Bocaly and Henri Bedimo all the time.”

Giroud believes his work in training is connected to him coping with the physical demands of spearheading the attack.

“I always try to help the team hold up the ball up front. That’s part of my job and it’s what I like to do.

“I think I’m doing quite well in that part of my job. I try to keep the ball for the team, or other times I try to deflect it.

“So that means winning headers or going for the flick-on. Sometimes I like to hold possession too which is important for the team to give the defence an opportunity to get up.

“It’s one of my specialities, if I can say.”

Theo Walcott agrees that his teammate has qualities that make him an excellent

frontman. “It’s not just his goals, it’s his general play and everything about him. The way he holds the ball up, he blocks it and defends it, and he works hard from the team from defensive corners and everything.”

And Arsenal defender Laurent Koscielny believes Giroud’s qualities as a target man and link-up player have been equally important to the team’s style of play, saying: “When he plays simple, he’s the best.

“He’s tall, he’s big and when you try to find him and he keeps the ball, no defender can pass him. He’s so massive and that’s one of his best qualities for a striker.

“When he can play like this, just with one or two touches and staying in the box – because we want him in the box, it’s in this zone we can score.”

3v2 Attacking Set Up

This session is played with quick tempo, including playing into space and forward runs aplenty. The timing of those runs is imperative as is the quality of the final ball into the box

WHY USE IT

This practice is about attacking from deep with a 3v2 counterattacking overload in creating a goalscoring opportunity.

SET-UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and goals. Create an area 30 x 20 yards with a goal at each end.

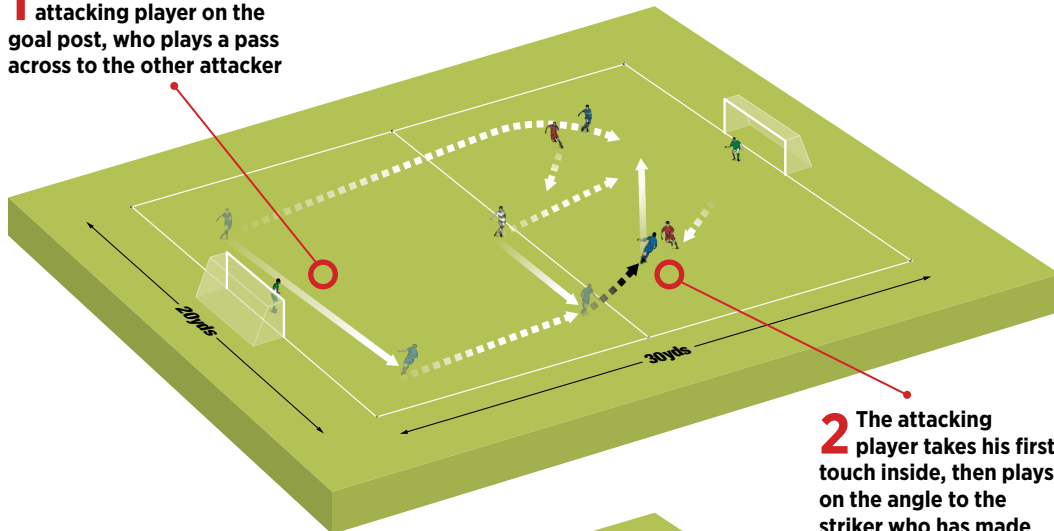
HOW TO DO IT

You need 2 players and a goalkeeper on each team plus a striker who plays for the team attacking. Start with the 2 players next to their own goal and the striker on the halfway line. The attacking team links with the striker playing out from the back. This practice is about attacking from deep with a 3v2 overload to create a goalscoring opportunity. The pair of players at each end take it in turns to attack by linking with the central attacker. The attacking group are given three attacks – one with no time limit, one capped at eight seconds and the third capped at six. Once they have completed all three, the next group of attacker and defenders work.

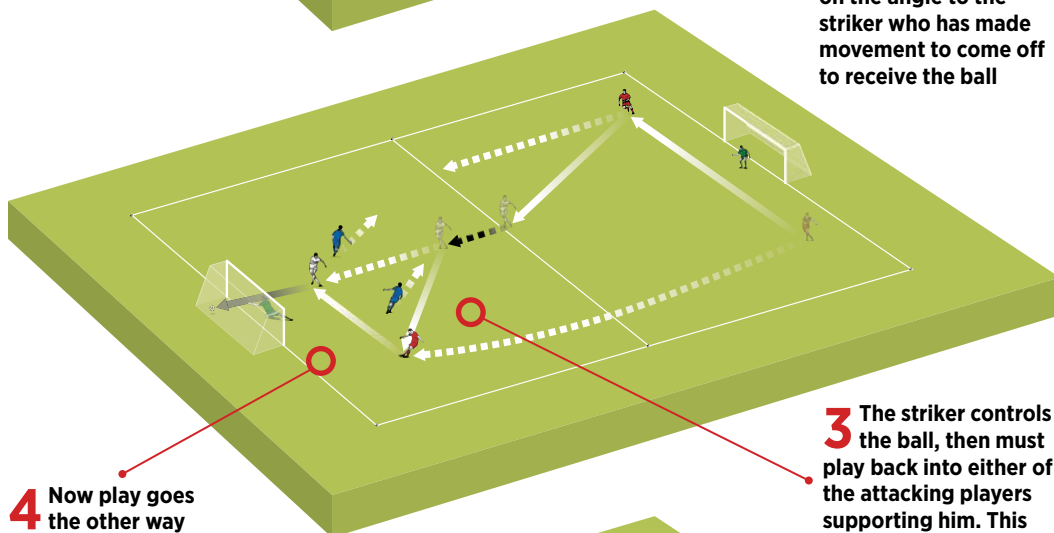
TECHNIQUE

Players must be able to receive and pass quickly with good technique making use of the overload in attacking the goal.

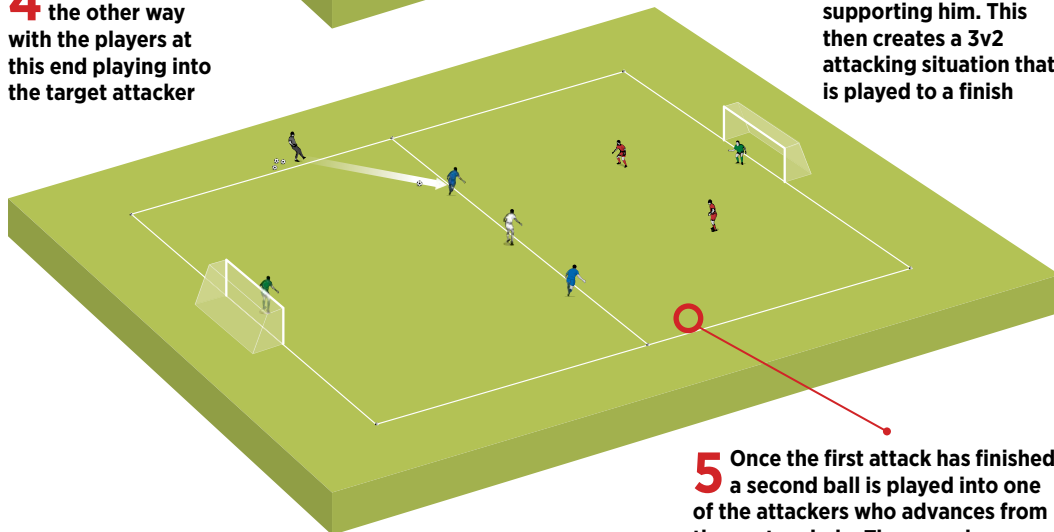
1 The ball starts with an attacking player on the goal post, who plays a pass across to the other attacker



2 The attacking player takes his first touch inside, then plays on the angle to the striker who has made movement to come off to receive the ball



4 Now play goes the other way with the players at this end playing into the target attacker



3 The striker controls the ball, then must play back into either of the attacking players supporting him. This then creates a 3v2 attacking situation that is played to a finish

5 Once the first attack has finished a second ball is played into one of the attackers who advances from the centre circle. They now have eight seconds to score

Player movement ■■■■

Ball movement ———→

Run with ball ■■■■

Shot ———→

Combine To Support

This session is played with quick tempo – passing, link play and support play to create fast combinations that can be deadly in the final third

WHY USE IT

This practice improves the technique of passing, receiving and combination play in attack.

SET-UP

You need balls, bibs, and cones. Create an area 15 x 15 yards. We used 5 players in the session.

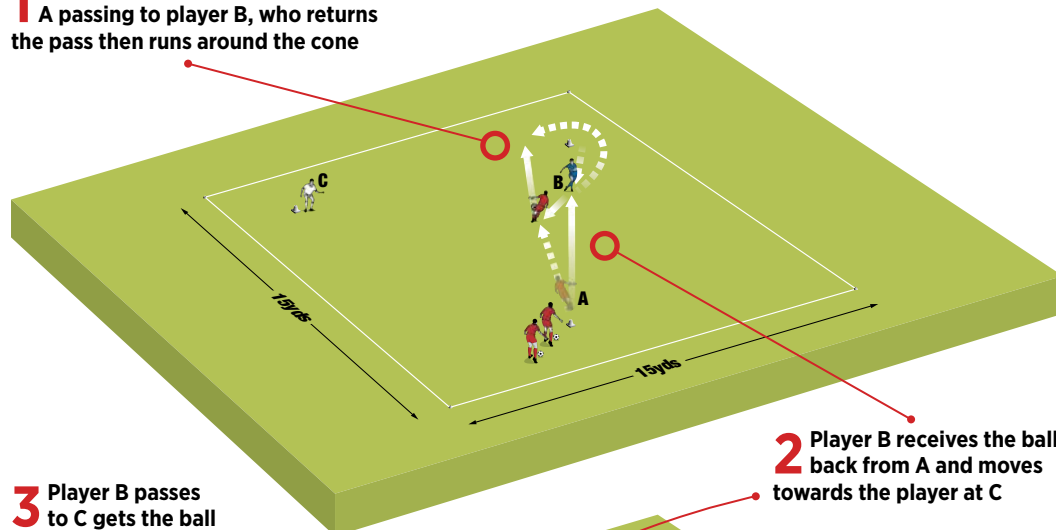
HOW TO DO IT

Start your players with 3 at cone A and 1 at the other two cones. The player at A starts with a pass to B then sprints towards B who returns the ball, runs around the cone to receive it back from A. Player B now passes to C who returns it, runs around the cone and gets a pass from B then dribbles back to the start. Keep the movement going with the next player quickly starting immediately player C gets back to the start. A moves to B, B moves to C and C goes back to the start. Try cone A in different positions and playing both ways.

TECHNIQUE

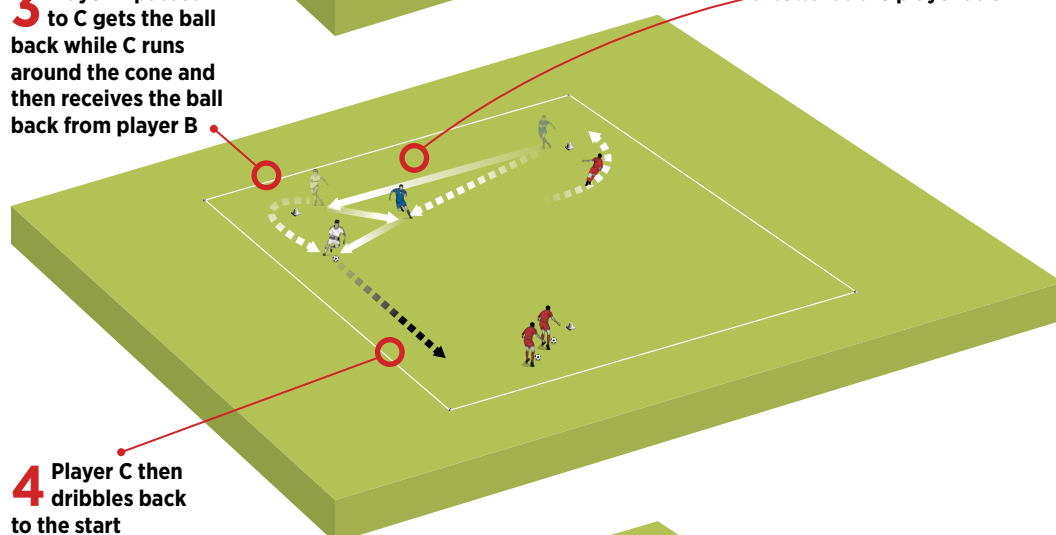
This needs accurate well weighted passing and quick movement to get into position.

1 The ball starts with the player at A passing to player B, who returns the pass then runs around the cone

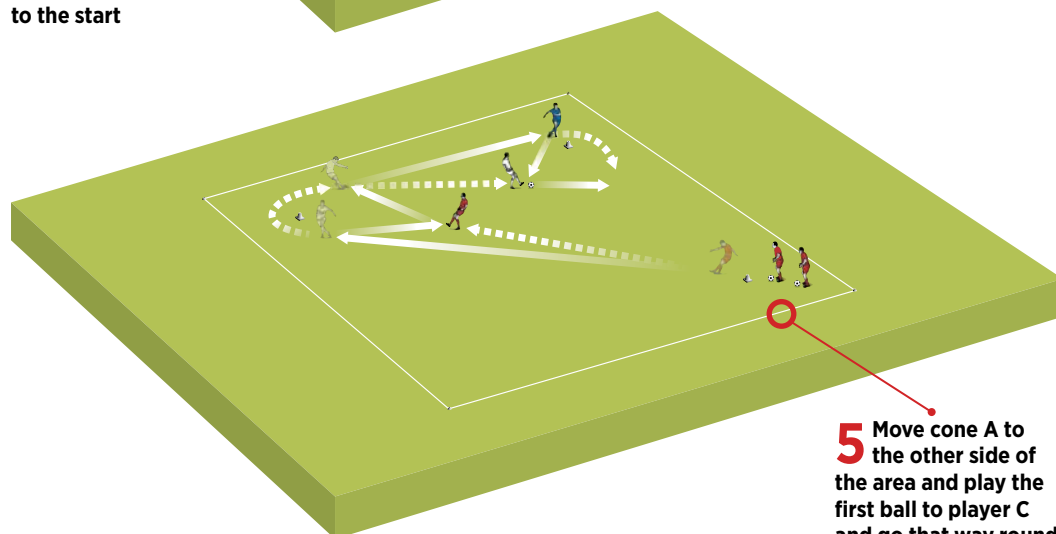


2 Player B receives the ball back from A and moves towards the player at C

3 Player B passes to C gets the ball back while C runs around the cone and then receives the ball back from player B



4 Player C then dribbles back to the start



5 Move cone A to the other side of the area and play the first ball to player C and go that way round

Player movement ■■■■

Ball movement ———

Run with ball ■■■■

Shot ———

Space For Strikers

Arsenal create space all around the penalty area – here wingers create space for the striker. Use this session to get your players to attack into space like Olivier Giroud

WHY USE IT

This session concentrates on the use of wingers linking with probing attacks on one side of the penalty area to pick defensive locks.

SET UP

Use the penalty area of your pitch coned off so play is going down the attacking team's right flank. Put two small goals at the opposite end to the penalty area on the wings. We've used 14 players in this session. You will need bibs, balls, cones and a goal.

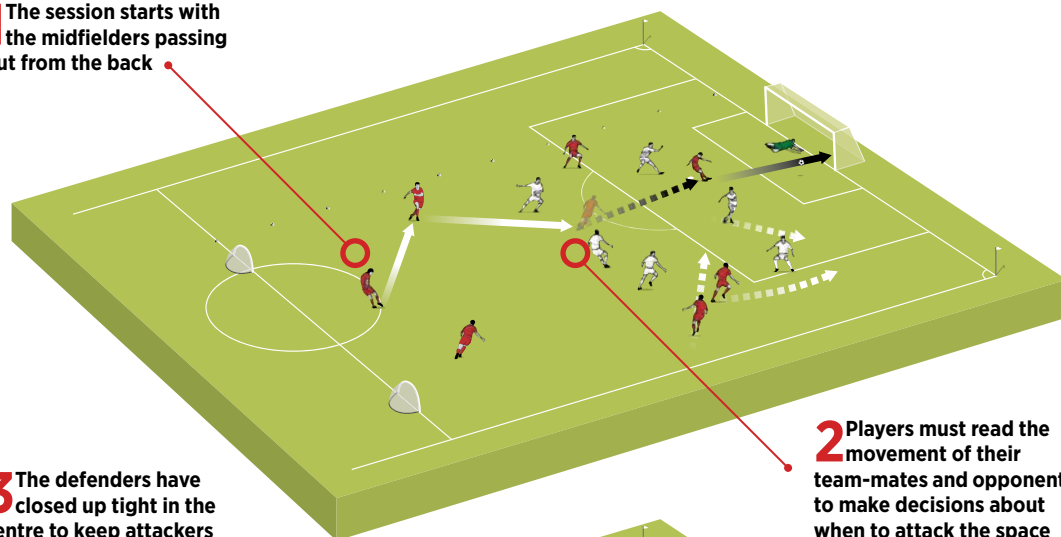
HOW TO PLAY

Split your players into a 7v7 with the defending team playing a goalkeeper and two banks of three players. The attacking team needs three midfielders, two wingers and two strikers. Allow your players a few minutes to work out their own strategy for attack and defence. Play starts with the midfielders of the attacking team.

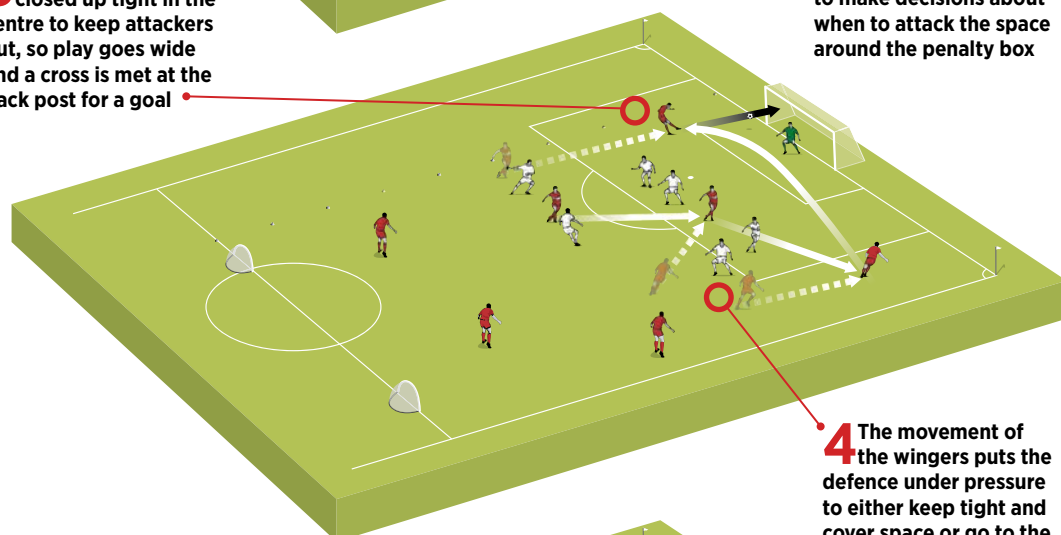
TECHNIQUE

Players will learn about attacking the penalty area and there will be lots of opportunities to attack from wide and dribble into space. There are lots of decisions for the attacking team to make to try to pick the defensive lock. Pass or dribble? Wide or direct into the box? Cross or play back?

1 The session starts with the midfielders passing out from the back

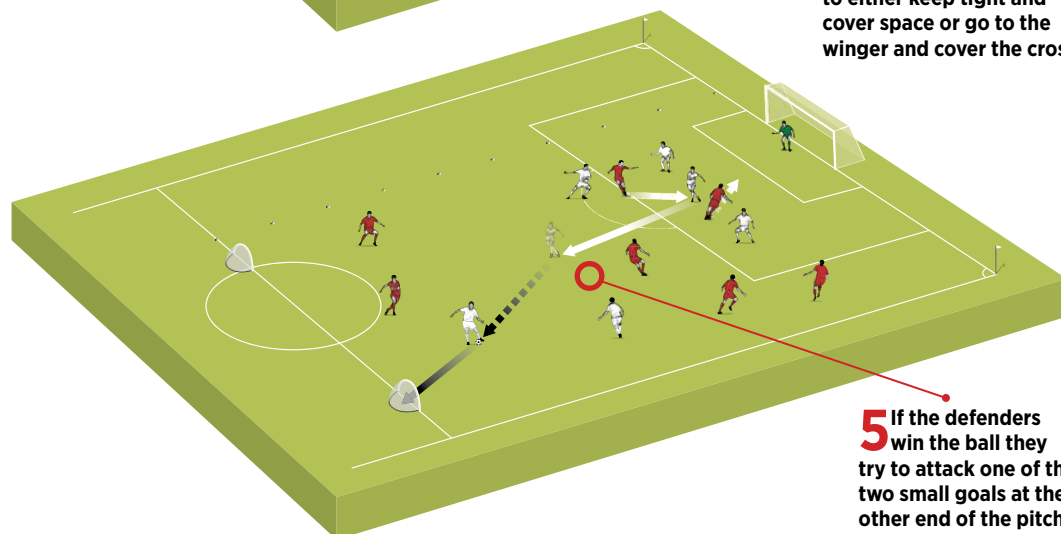


3 The defenders have closed up tight in the centre to keep attackers out, so play goes wide and a cross is met at the back post for a goal



2 Players must read the movement of their team-mates and opponents to make decisions about when to attack the space around the penalty box

4 The movement of the wingers puts the defence under pressure to either keep tight and cover space or go to the winger and cover the cross



5 If the defenders win the ball they try to attack one of the two small goals at the other end of the pitch

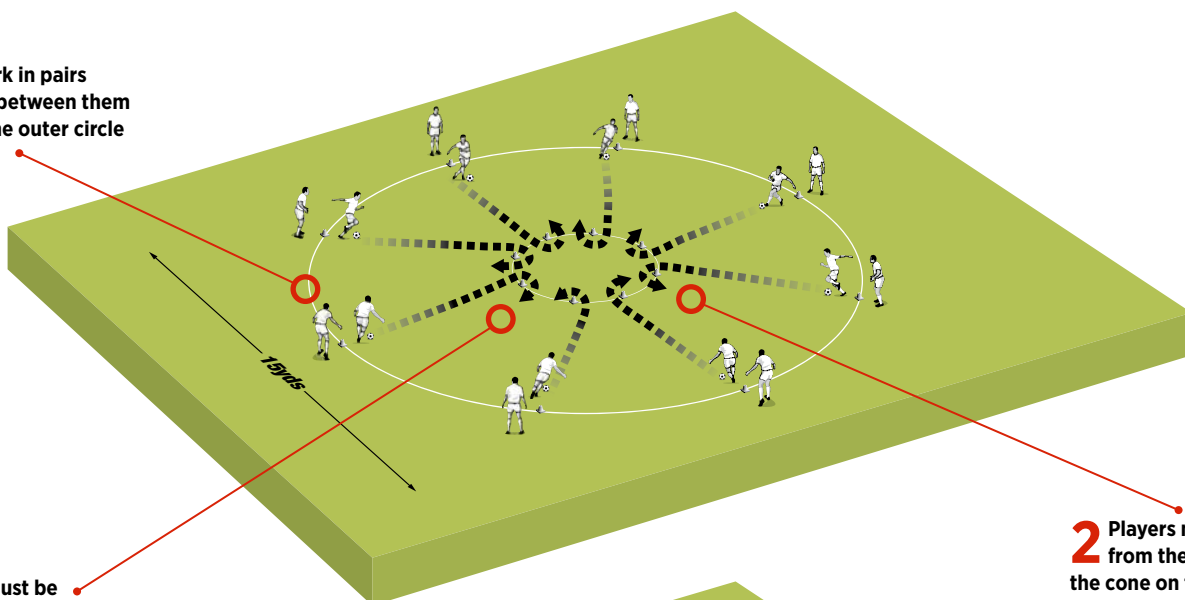
Player movement ■■■■➔

Ball movement ➔

Run with ball ■■■➔

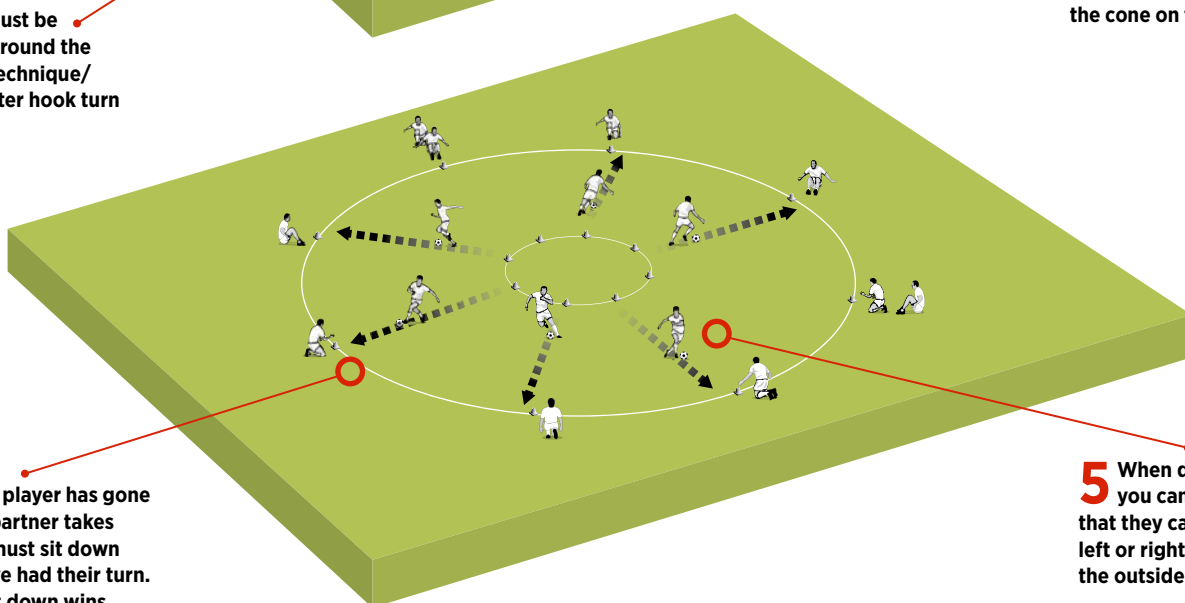
Shot ➔

1 Players work in pairs with a ball between them and start on the outer circle



3 The ball must be dribbled around the cone using a technique/skill like an outer hook turn

2 Players must dribble from the outer circle to the cone on the inner circle



4 When the player has gone once his partner takes over. Players must sit down when they have had their turn. First pair to sit down wins

5 When dribbling back you can make it a rule that they can only use their left or right foot, or only the outside of the foot

101 Soccer Warm-ups

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

DIFFICULTY RATING



Good warm-up to get players touching and turning with the ball. Difficulty rating comes from the turn around the centre cone using hook turn or similar and pressure from time.

SET UP

Set up a circle with an 15 yard diameter and a smaller circle inside. Players work in pairs – each pair needs two cones and a ball.

HOW TO PLAY

Each pair needs a cone on the outer circle and a cone to run to on the circle in the centre. Each player dribbles to the cone and turns around it then dribbles back. As

soon as they get back they sit down and the first pair sitting down wins. If players lose control of the ball the player must go back to the start. You can specify players only use one foot or the outside of one foot when they dribble back.

TECHNIQUE

Look for good dribbling and players using both feet, turning should be by a hook turn or similar.

Player movement **■■■■**

Ball movement **—————>**

Run with ball **■■■■**

Shot **—————>**



England U21 Manager Gareth Southgate puts his players through their paces

Attack From The Back

Former England defender and current England Under 21 manager Gareth Southgate offers seven tips to help your defence to become your first line of attack

1 IMPROVE BALL CONTROL

For defenders to be used effectively to start an attacking movement, they need to be as confident and comfortable on the ball as any other outfield player. Passing drills are an important practice, as is training defenders to run with the ball at their feet.

2 TRAIN FULLBACKS TO ATTACK

The role of both fullbacks and centre backs has certainly evolved and fullbacks especially are being used as a first line of attack. Speed, strength and crossing ability are all important attributes for modern fullbacks, so plenty of gym work, sprinting and endurance running are all vital in training, as well as practising crosses.

3 REPLICATE MATCH PRESSURE

To combat teams attacking from the back, your opponents will pressure your back line to test how comfortable they are in possession of the ball. As a coach, you could work with your defenders on passing the ball amongst each other in a small area, while you get other players to press them to replicate the pressure they will face in a match.

4 TRY THREE AT THE BACK

Playing in a back three, as I did at stages of my career, seems to be more conducive to a team starting attacking moves from the back. It allows one of the centre backs to step forward and it also encourages your fullbacks to operate higher up the field. The player that goes forward always has the security of two defenders behind.

5 PLAY A HIGH LINE

Playing a high line will help teams attack from the back more quickly and effectively. The obvious downside to this is that it can leave your defence exposed if an attack breaks down. To play a high line, clearly you need defenders with good pace both to make attacks work and also to chase back if the attack breaks down.

6 MOVE THE BALL QUICKLY

Attacking from the back isn't only about defenders coming forward with the ball. Being able to move the ball quickly and accurately is really important too and if you have defenders that can pick out a team-mate in an advanced position

in space, this will instantly help to start an attacking move. One-touch passing exercises are good training for this.

7 MAKE DEFENDING A PRIORITY

Many coaches, especially at grassroots level, focus on simply getting their defenders to defend well in matches, which is the greatest priority. If you feel using your defenders to attack will compromise your solidity at the back, then it's best to work on your defence operating more conventionally.



By David Clarke