

WORDS MEAN A LOT WHEN YOU WANT TO MOTIVATE YOUR PLAYERS

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

FIRMINO
LIVERPOOL

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**FIND YOUR
STRIKER**

**DISRUPT
PASSING
TEAMS**

**YOUR
PROBLEMS
SOLVED**

OVERLOADS

WORKING TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

- > **FIRMINO TAKES CHARGE**
- > **ATTACKING OVERLOADS**
- > **DEFENDING OVERLOADS**

GOT A COACHING PROBLEM? LET ME SOLVE IT FOR YOU

Choose Your Words



Soccer Coach Weekly
Issue 465



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Touchline Tales

A few years ago I went along to a psychology talk about how children respond to the words you use as a coach. How they are motivated can be crucial to your team as a whole – motivate the individuals and you will see the benefits as a team.

The gist of the talk was that the way children learn both in sport and academia is not through praising talent but through praising effort. Dozens of studies have found that the top performers – whether in mathematics, football, or music – learn no quicker than those who reach lower levels of attainment. In essence, children's talent improves at practically identical rates.

Putting it simply, if your players practise more they will become strong achievers – talent alone is not enough for them to develop into good footballers. I won't deny that some children come to the game and are naturally better than others, but if they don't put in the effort the others soon catch them up.

I often go through my notes from that talk and remind myself what it is that players respond best to. It comes down to this:

1. Phrases such as these are out: "You did that exercise really quickly, you're such a good player" "Wow what a clever move, you must be the next Messi!" "Brilliant – you scored that goal without even trying!"

2. Phrases like these are in: "You worked really hard at that exercise – keep it up" "That was a great bit of skill, your practise is really paying off" "Great goal, you must be working really hard in training"

We were given an example on the course of the findings of a study based around the praise that a leading psychologist gave her students. All 400 subjects tested were given a simple puzzle. Half were praised for intelligence – "wow you must be really smart".

And half for the effort they put in – "wow you must be hardworking". They were then given a choice of whether to take a hard or easy test. 75% of the students praised for intelligence chose the easy test because they were scared of losing the smart label, but only 10% of the students praised for effort chose the easy test; the other 90%



chose the tough test to prove how hardworking they were.

They then took a second test of the same difficulty and the group praised for intelligence showed a 20% drop in performance compared with a 30% increase for the hardworking group. Failure had spurred them on. Five words can have that profound an effect on the performance of children.

If you praise your players for their hard work you will get more out of them than if you praise them for their talent. It works with my team and I bet you can make it work for yours.



ASK DAVE

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

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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Firmino takes advantage of a 2v1 overload and scores Liverpool's third against Manchester City

Exploiting Overloads With Firmino

Under Jurgen Klopp at Liverpool Roberto Firmino has blossomed into a player who can exploit the overloads Klopp's style of play creates when he goes gegen pressing

Revenge for Liverpool was sweet as they made up for losing the Carling Cup Final to Manchester City by thrashing them 3-0 in the Premier League at Anfield.

A big part of that was the performance of Roberto Firmino and the wonderful overloads playing the way manager Jurgen Klopp wants them to play helps them exploit the situation.

City with all their superstars just couldn't settle as the Liverpool players surged into areas creating their overloads in every third of the pitch.

Ronaldinho claims Klopp should build his Liverpool team around Firmino.

Former Barcelona star Ronaldinho says his fellow Brazilian is one of the best No 10s in the world and the £29million star has bagged four goals in his last four games for Liverpool.

Klopp is planning a summer overhaul of the squad he inherited from Brendan Rodgers in October, and Ronaldinho has told the Reds boss to sign players who will complement Firmino.

"I didn't ever question if he would be a great player for Liverpool, I knew that he would be," said the World Cup winner.

"He's one of the best at what he does in the world. He's in the same class as Ozil, Silva, Iniesta, and all the other great players who play that role."

Firmino is enjoying his role as a No 10 with the resurgent style of play that comes with Klopp and he is learning a lot from his new boss.

"He's one of the best, if not the best I have worked with. We're very happy with him since he arrived, he has changed the team's style of play and

now we're playing better," Firmino said.

"In Germany, this style of pressing happens a lot. I like his mentality. He brings his own philosophy, which is working for us. We are looking forward every day to improve."

Firmino's Brazilian teammate Coutinho says: "Our understanding is improving and I am learning more and more about the way he likes to play, as well as his movement off the ball.

"Hopefully that can be beneficial to both Liverpool and Brazil.

"He's a great player who brings a lot of quality into the squad, but it is not just about two players and a partnership.

"The whole squad is working to improve as our main objective is to win trophies as a unit."

Attacking Overloads

This is all about playing in the attacking overloads that realistically happen often in a game – 3v2 and 2v1 plus a passing sequence to get players ready for the session ahead

WHY USE IT

This session is all about making the most of overload situations to score goals.

SET UP

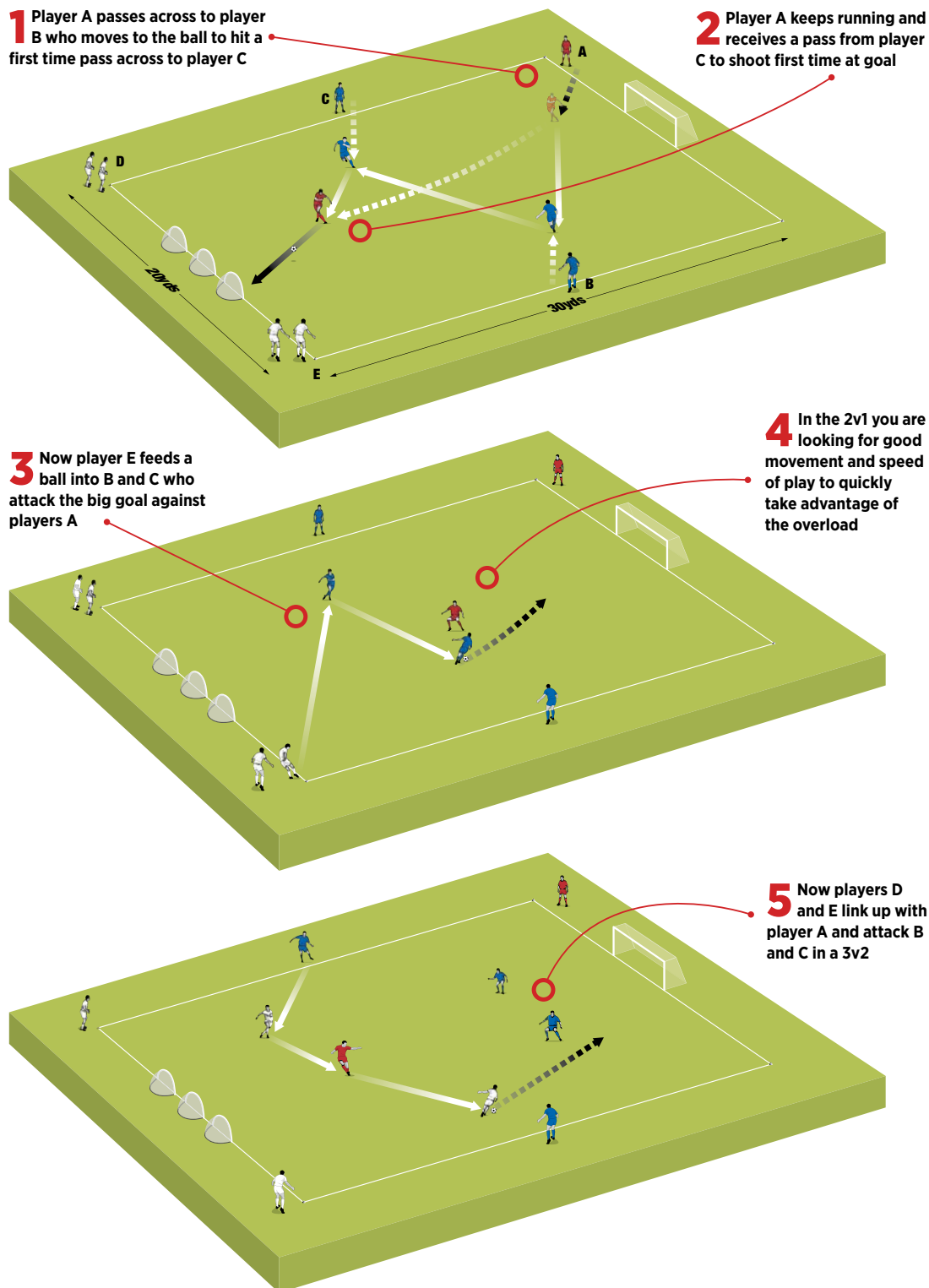
You need balls, bibs, cones and 1 large and 3 small target goals (or use cones). Set up an area 30 x 20 yards (smaller is harder bigger is easier). We used 10 players in the session.

HOW TO PLAY

You need 2 players by the large goal, 2 players on each side of the half way line and 2 players on each of the corners by the 3 small goals. Play starts with a pass from player A who passes towards player B who moves to the ball and passes across to player C on the opposite side. Player A continues his run to receive the ball from player C and shoot at goal. The three players on the pitch stay on with B and C linking up against A. Player E passes a ball in and they play from there. Once the ball goes dead a player from D and E now link up with A against B and C.

TECHNIQUE

Speed of play, angles of attack, linking up with passing, receiving and shooting prominent.



Player movement ■■■■

Ball movement ———>

Run with ball ■■■■

Shot ———>

Defending Overloads

This is all about a typical defensive backline playing against an overload to try to stop them scoring and win the ball to counter attack

WHY USE IT

Defending against overloads is a great session for coaching a back four or a back three.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and 2 goals. Set up using half your normal pitch and cone off the area from the edge of the penalty area to the half way line. We used 13 players in the session.

HOW TO PLAY

Set up with 5 defenders and 7 attackers. The 5 defenders should be in position in front of the goal and the 7 attackers should be spread around the area as shown. 1 attacker receives the ball from the goalkeeper and on his touch the other attackers join the game. All attackers must get onside as quickly as possible and cannot touch the ball until they are. When the attack is over the defenders and attackers reshape with the defenders at the other end this time so the attackers face different situations.

TECHNIQUE

Working in a team situation coaching defenders how to play against the overload.

1 The defenders line up to defend the goal in a back four

2 Play begins when the attacker has touched the pass from the goalkeeper

3 The attackers are spread out around the area and they must get onside when the session starts

4 Here the overload attacker links up and scores in the goal

5 If the defenders win the ball they attack the goal at the opposite end and try to score

Player movement ■■■■

Ball movement ———>

Run with ball ■■■■

Shot ———>

Pick Your Striker

In this game the strikers on each team stay on the pitch and cope with different overload situations

WHY USE IT

The target man links with his team mates to quickly take advantage of the 3v2 situations.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and two goals. Set up an area 40 x 30 yards with a goal at each end and the centre line marked.

HOW TO PLAY

Divide the players into two teams of 5 plus a goalkeeper. Each team selects a forward who stays on the pitch but can only go in the opposition half. Each team has two players either side of their half of the pitch. One of the goalkeepers starts with the ball and play begins. As soon as each attack has finished the players swap with the ones on the side of the pitch and the defending team can attack quickly the players only swap when they are the attacking team.

TECHNIQUE

Communication, passing and movement quick response to overloads and transitions of play.

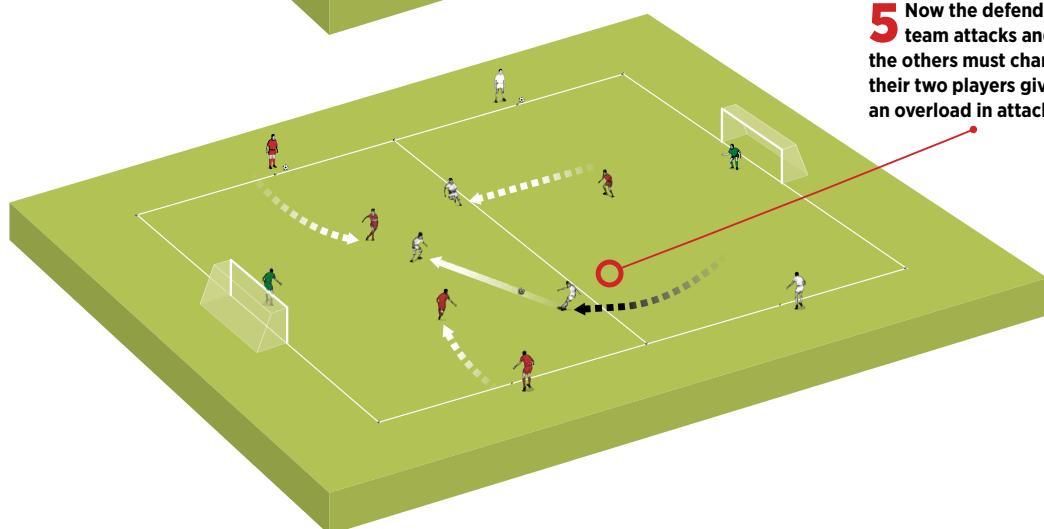
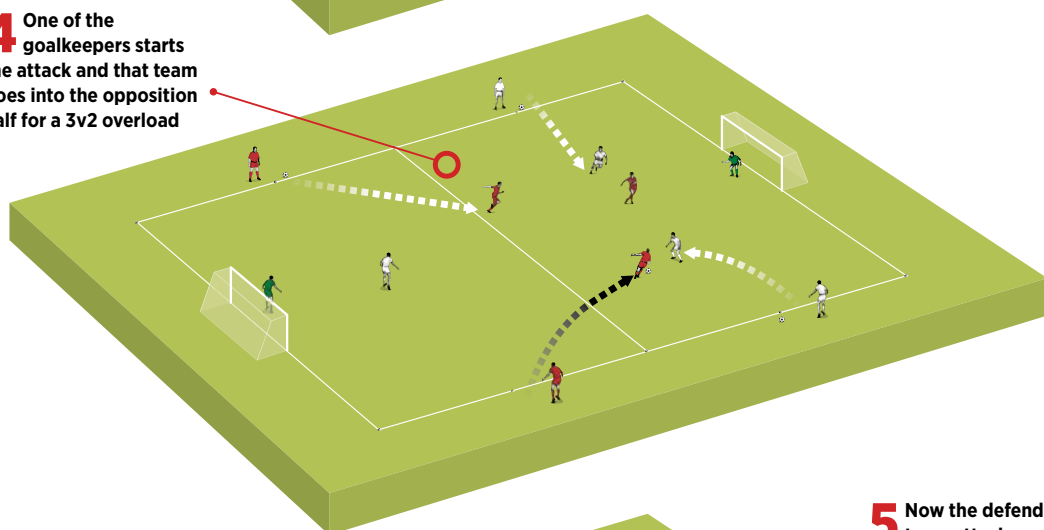
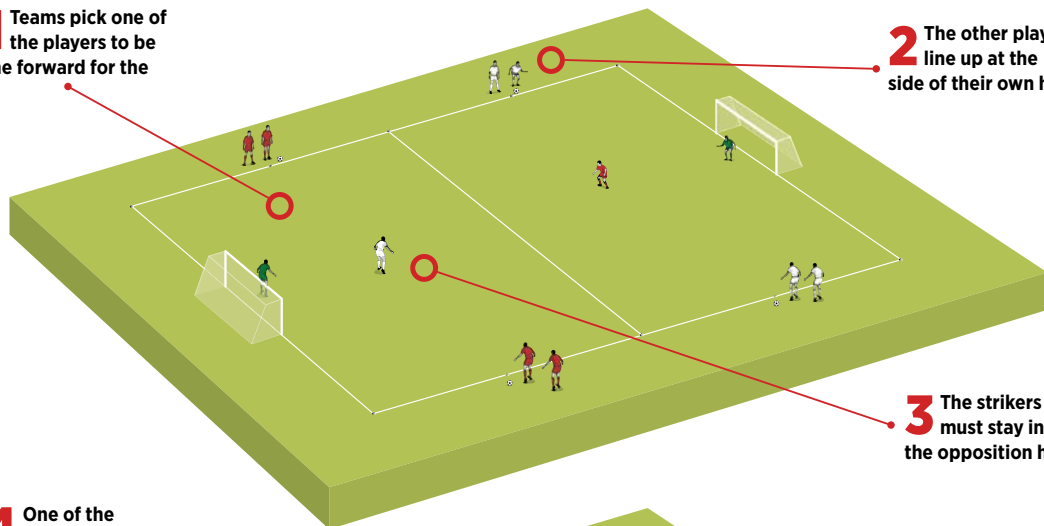
1 Teams pick one of the players to be the forward for the

2 The other players line up at the side of their own half

3 The strikers must stay in the opposition half

4 One of the goalkeepers starts the attack and that team goes into the opposition half for a 3v2 overload

5 Now the defending team attacks and the others must change their two players giving an overload in attack



Player movement ■■■■

Ball movement ———>

Run with ball ■■■■

Shot ———>

Overload To Cover

Working in pairs in midfield or attack is an ideal way to disrupt passing teams by positioning and support play

WHY USE IT

Working in pairs in midfield or attack is an ideal way to disrupt passing teams by positioning and support play. Anticipation is also important when players attempt to intercept.

SET UP

Play on a 16x8-yard area divided in two. We've used 11 players.

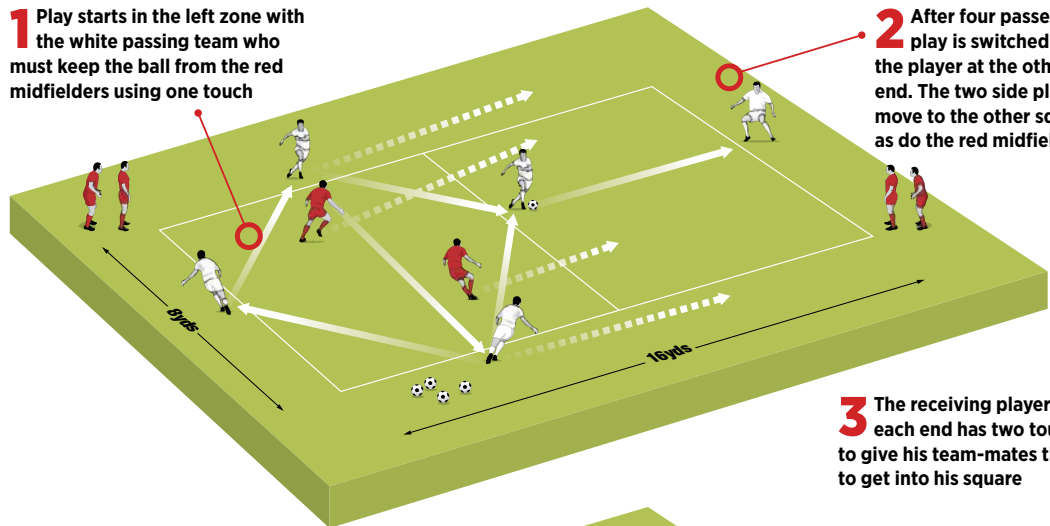
HOW TO PLAY

Start with four white passers on the outside of the first zone, with two red midfielders in the centre. One white player is on the far side of the second zone and the other four red players wait in pairs to replace the midfielders. The passing team must make four consecutive passes without midfielders touching the ball. After the fourth pass the ball is passed to the player on the far side of the second zone and all the players move to that zone to make four passes again. The passing team have only one touch so passes must be accurate (make this two touch if needed). The player in the opposite half has two touches to allow team mates to reach him. If the red midfielders win the ball they dribble out of the area to win a point.

TECHNIQUE

Your team will benefit from learning how to close down and pressure players passing through midfield.

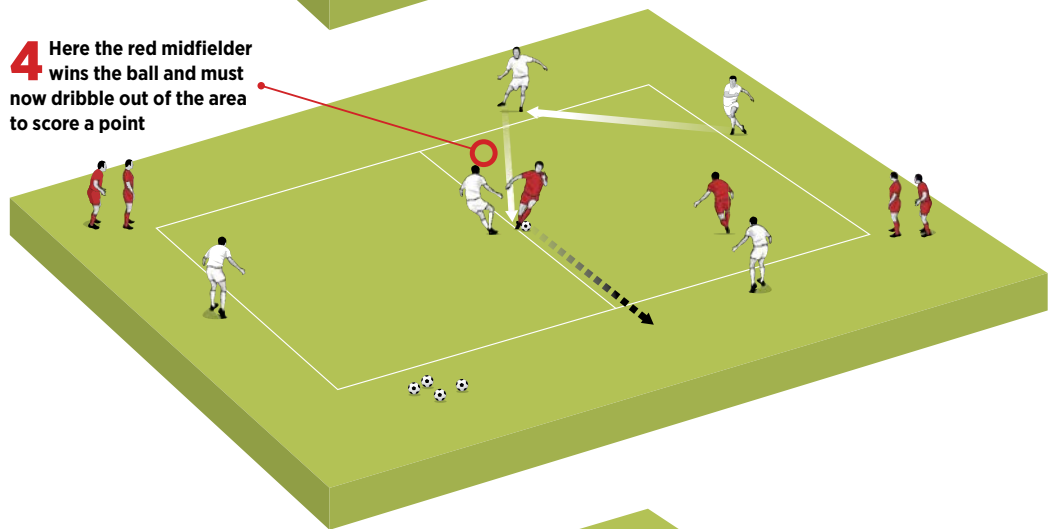
1 Play starts in the left zone with the white passing team who must keep the ball from the red midfielders using one touch



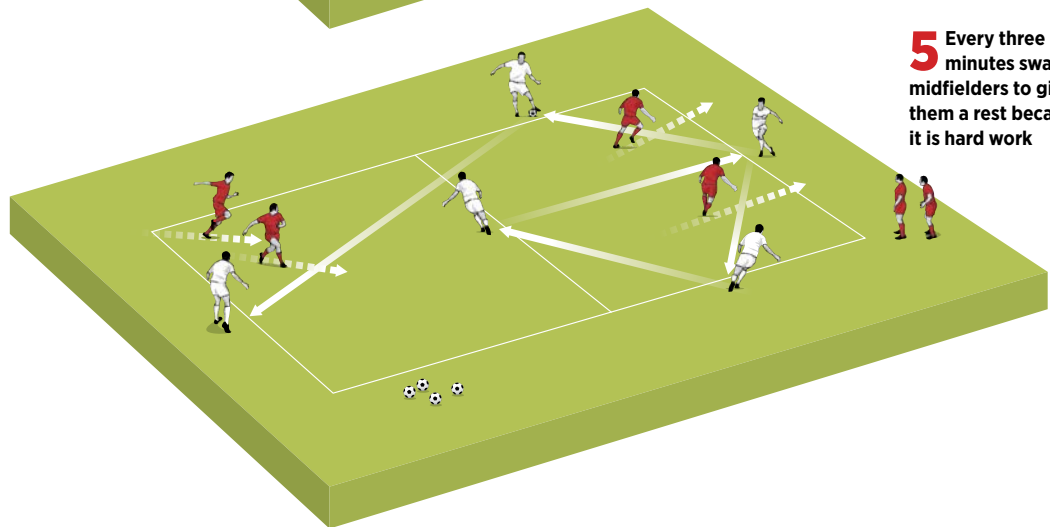
2 After four passes play is switched to the player at the other end. The two side players move to the other square, as do the red midfielders

3 The receiving player at each end has two touches to give his team-mates time to get into his square

4 Here the red midfielder wins the ball and must now dribble out of the area to score a point



5 Every three minutes swap the midfielders to give them a rest because it is hard work



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 “My young players won't listen to me when I'm trying to explain the plan for our training session. What can I do to hold their attention?”

A Getting players to listen to what you say when they are gathered as a group at training sessions is so important, but it's something you'll probably need to perfect over the course of a few weeks.

Firstly, you will need to ensure there are no distractions around you when you're speaking to them.

Also, you must never coach so that players are staring directly into the sun, and if there are other kids playing around you when you are trying to speak, move the chat to a quieter area of the training ground.

COMPLETE SILENCE

It's very important that you only begin talking when you have complete silence from your players. No one else should be speaking when you are – it's a key ground rule that you must stick to.

Just say nothing until everyone is quiet and the chatter will soon die down.

Also keep your instructions brief – young children will switch off if they are spoken to continuously for more than about 60 seconds.

Try to get positive feedback on instructions and make sure you ask plenty of questions, so that kids know they need to listen carefully in order to be able to respond.

And bring some practical demonstration into what you do, as that way players can visualise your coaching rather than just listening to it.

You can build these techniques over a period of time and your players will soon learn the routine.

They'll also have more respect for your coaching if it is given the proper platform it deserves.



Ben Bartlett has the players' attention at Fulham

Q “I told my players how David Beckham used to stay behind after training to practise free-kicks. Now they want to stay behind too!”

A I did smile at this quandary because it's one of those classic situations where a good idea or a nice gesture ends up costing you even more time, in what must already seem a thankless and unrelenting coaching schedule.

However, in this instance I think you've made your bed and you're going to have to lie in it – for the time being at least.

Referencing the training habits of a great player like Beckham will always provoke players to want to replicate them in some way, so

you probably should have seen this coming. On the plus side, any coach who gets players to undertake extra training is on to a really good thing, and you should take a lot of heart because you're obviously doing something special. I'd give it a couple of weeks.

This may be a fad that dies out quickly. And if it doesn't, it's time to call on your network of player parents – surely one would relieve you of your duties at the end of training and supervise?

Just email me today: askdave@soccercoachweekly.net