



U12 Defending

Category: Tactical: Defensive principles
Difficulty: Moderate

Wakefield Soccer, Wakefield, United States of America
Individual-Adult Member

Description

Guiding Questions:

- 1) What is the job of the covering defender? (deny space behind, protect the goal, take away split passing lanes, aware of other attacking players)
- 2) How do you know where to be? (behind the pressure, cutting off a through ball, ball side of the other attacker)
- 3) What should you do after the attacker beats you or they pass the ball?
- 4) Is pressure/cover only a topic for players on the back line?

Common Language:

Pressure/Step To - Closing down the space between a defender and an attacker. Stepping towards an attacker to engage them defensively.

Cover - The defender behind the pressure. Covering the Pressure's back, covering the goal, covering other attackers and covering the through ball.

Through Pass/Split - A penetrating pass between two defenders.

Ball side - Being on the side of the attacker that is closest to the ball. Being between the extra attacker and the ball.

Slide - To move in a lateral direction as the ball has been passed. Sliding over to keep a good small group defending shape.

Drop in - Dropping back and into the middle to provide good covering depth.

Recover - After being beat, a high intensity run to get back into a covering position.

Delay - To slow the attacker, waiting for cover, waiting for the attacker to make a mistake to then attack.

Take away... - Defender positions their body to take away one side versus the other/passing lane.

Technical Warm-up (5 mins)

Refresher of Principles of Individual Defending

All at half speed, passive defending with no challenges, just delaying

Player with the ball finds an open player and passes the ball to them. Passer becomes defender and will then put pressure on the receiver, focusing on individual defending principles (angle/speed of approach, athletic stance, side on)

Player with the ball dribbles **directly** at defender. Defender delays player for a 5 second count and then releases them. Player with the ball finds an open player and then closes the space to defend.

Progression 1: Full-speed, defenders can take ball off attacker. If attacker gets around defender the 1v1 is over.

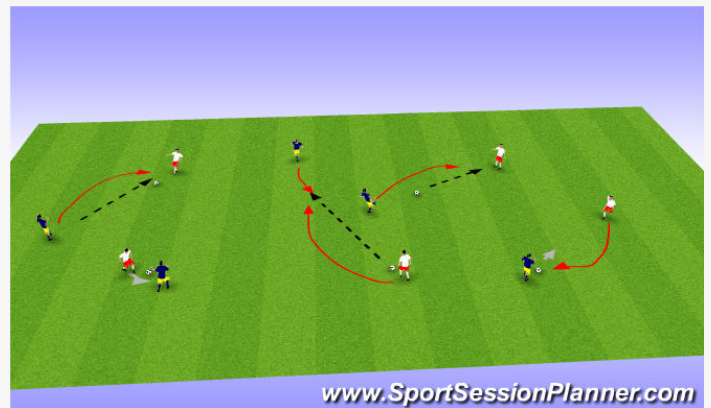
Coaching Points: Speed of Approach (Close quick and slow down 2-3 yards before attacker)

Angle of Approach (Pick a direction to push the attacker: weak foot, sideline, cover)

Athletic body stance (Knees bent, low center of gravity, on toes)

Side on (pushing attacker to one side, no megas, no square body shape)

Delay (Slow the attack, wait for the mistake and destroy)

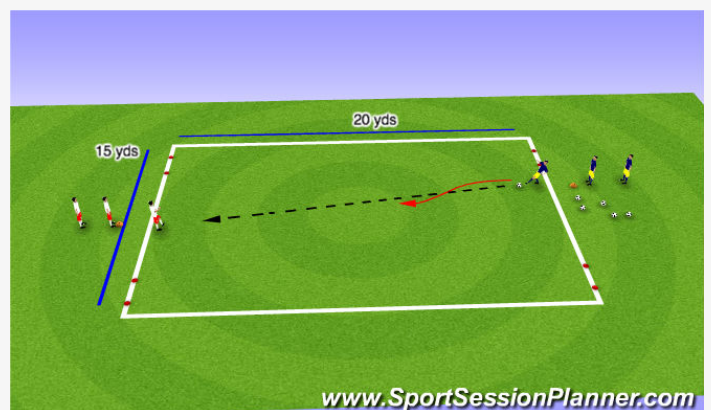


1v1 (20 mins)

Ball is passed across the grid to the attacker who will begin to try to dribble through the gates. After passing, that player will close the ball down and move with the attacking player without stealing the ball. This is called jockeying. This is purely to get the correct position as a defender and to get used to the distance between the attacker and defender.

Progression

1. Go into a competitive 1v1 where the attacking player gets a point for dribbling through the gates and the defending player gets a point for stealing the ball.

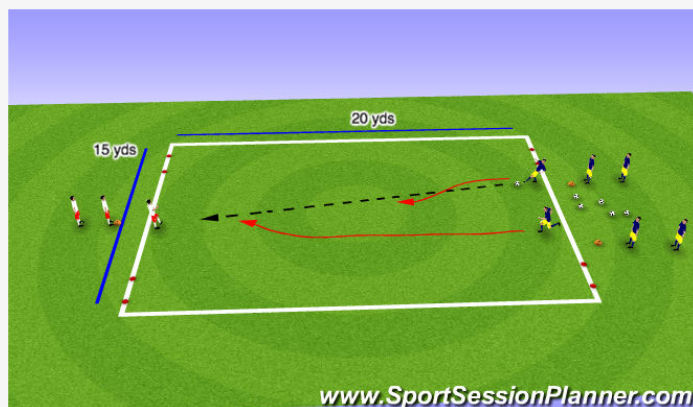


1v2 (20 mins)

Ball is passed across the grid to the attacker who will begin to try to dribble through the gates. After passing, two players come out to work pressure and cover concept. The closest player to the ball will put pressure on the ball while the second player will provide the cover.

Coaching Points:

1. Individual principles for the pressuring defender.
2. Cover will deny space behind pressure
3. Cover is ready to become pressuring if teammate is beat
4. If beat, Pressuring defender recovers into space to become covering defender
5. Stay compact (don't become too stretched)



1v2 Progression (20 mins)

Only one defender allowed to pressure and challenge the ball at a time.

If defenders win the ball, they can counter quickly to opposite gates.

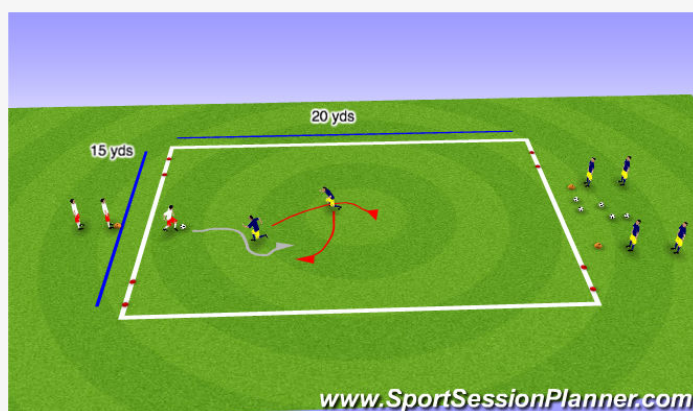
5 Minutes, switch defending teams

Progression 1: 2v2

Progression 2: 3 attackers v 2

Coaching Points:

1. Individual principles for the pressuring defender.
2. Cover will deny space behind pressure
3. Cover is ready to become pressuring if teammate is beat
4. If beat, Pressuring defender recovers into space to become covering defender
5. Stay compact (don't become too stretched)



3v3 3 Goal Game (20 mins)

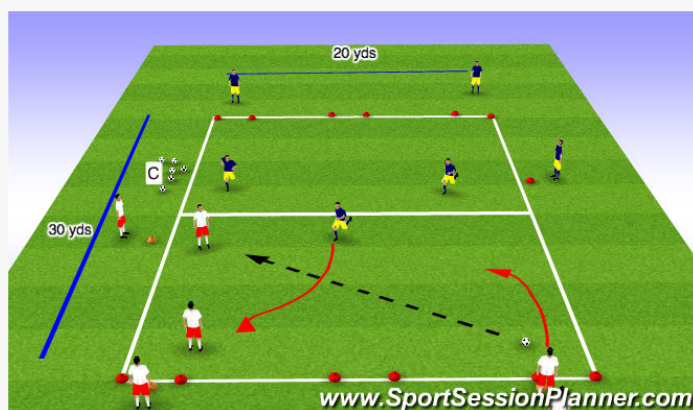
3v3

Coach will start play by sending a ball to a team. Both teams enter the field of play, with closest defender applying pressure on the ball. Coach will focus on the defending team, specifically the covering defender.

When the ball goes out, Coach will send a new ball and two new teams will enter.

Coaching Points:

1. Individual principles for the pressuring defender.
2. Cover will deny space behind pressure (don't get split)
3. Cover is ready to become pressuring if teammate is beat
4. If beat, Pressuring defender recovers into space to become covering defender
5. Stay compact (don't become too stretched)



6v6 to Endlines (25 mins)

Scrimmage: 6v6 - 7v7 with Neutrals to Endlines

Depending on numbers. Adjust the size according to skill and number.

Dictate different formations for both teams during scrimmages.

Example 1-3-2-1 vs 1-2-3-1

Praising players with focus on pressure and cover.

