



FULL-BACK & WIDE PLAYER RELATIONSHIP

SESSION OVERVIEW

The main focus of this training session is to enhance the relationship between the full-backs and wide players during offensive situations. The session aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve the speed of play in offensive transitions.
- Encourage effective collaboration between full-backs and wide players to create goal-scoring opportunities.
- Enhance the quality of the final pass to deliver accurate and effective crosses or through balls.

PART 1: MOVING AND RECEIVING DRILL

- This drill emphasises maximising ball contacts and works best with smaller groups of players.
- Eight players are divided into two teams of 2v2, with an additional four players acting as neutrals.
- The practice area can be set up with dimensions of 12m x 12m, but it can be adjusted based on the number and skill level of the participants.

PART 2: SUCCESS DOWN THE SIDES

- This practice involves 18 players, with one team playing in a 1-4-2-3 formation (attacking team) and the opposition in a 1-3-3-1 setup.
- The drill is ideally played in an area measuring 36m x the full width of the field, with eight-yard channels on each side. Each wide channel is occupied by two players from the attacking team.
- Adjustments can be made to the number of players involved, as long as the attacking team maintains a numerical advantage.
- The focus here is on exploiting the wide areas and creating attacking opportunities from the flanks.

PART 3: 10v10 SMALL SIDED GAME

- This final segment retains the same field dimensions as Part 2 but removes the wide channels.
- The objective is to challenge the players to apply the lessons learned in a more realistic game setting.
- The coach can balance the teams to make it a 10v10 game, further promoting cohesion and decision-making in real-game scenarios.

By incorporating these three parts into the session, the players will develop a deeper understanding of the roles and responsibilities of full-backs and wide players in offensive play. The increased emphasis on speed, collaboration, and precision will ultimately contribute to a more effective and cohesive attacking unit on the field.



MOVING AND RECEIVING DRILL (PART 1)

In this practice, players engage in a 2v2 game within a designated grid. The objective for the team in possession, Team A, is to connect with the neutral target players (C) positioned at both ends of the grid.

OBJECTIVE

- There are four neutral players (C) available for both teams, positioned in pairs at the top and bottom of the grid. These neutrals play alongside the team in possession (Team A).
- Success is achieved by effectively transferring the ball from one end of the grid to the other, either by utilising the neutral players in the middle or by playing directly to the target players at the ends.

PROGRESSION

- To further challenge the players' decision-making abilities, the two neutral players located at the ends of the grid must execute a square pass before rejoining the game within the grid. This encourages more thoughtful passing sequences, as shown in Diagram 2.
- As an additional progression, the coach can impose a touch limitation on all players, requiring them to think quickly and make well-informed decisions under pressure.

The primary goals of this session are to enhance possession skills, improve communication and coordination among players, and foster intelligent decision-making in the 2v2 setting. By involving neutral target players and introducing specific conditions, the players will develop a deeper understanding of effective ball movement and develop the ability to adapt to different scenarios during gameplay.

COACHING PROCESS

In this coaching process, the focus is on improving players' abilities in possession and their link play, particularly in 1v1 scenarios. The primary objective is to help central players (A) create space for themselves and their teammates, enabling effective ball circulation and opportunities for split passes. The coach should emphasise specific techniques and strategies to achieve these goals.

CREATING SPACE

- The central players (A) should prioritise receiving the ball on the back foot, positioning themselves on the shoulder of defenders. This can be achieved by moving into wider areas of the pitch. By doing so, the players challenge the defenders, who must prevent passes that break the defensive line while staying tight to their opponents to restrict their turning options.

MOVEMENT

- Players should be educated on how to create space with intelligent and delayed movements. Emphasise the importance of timing and quality of movement, as it sets the stage for the most effective actions during possession.



SUPPORT

- When a teammate receives the ball in a central area, they should focus on providing appropriate angles of support. This involves recognising when to stay away from the ball to create space for potential split passes.

DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES

- The coach should give specific instructions to the defending team on how to create different challenges for the team in possession. For instance, the defenders might prioritise stopping split passes and decide to drop off slightly, allowing the possession team more time on the ball. Alternatively, they might aim to prevent the opposition from turning when receiving the ball, forcing them to play more creatively.

PASS DETAIL

- The possession team is encouraged to look for opportunities to execute split passes from neutral players (C) at one end of the grid to neutral players at the opposite end. These split passes can be valuable for breaking through defensive lines and creating scoring chances.

By focusing on these coaching points, players will develop a better understanding of spatial awareness, timing, and decision-making in possession. The emphasis on clever movement and link play will enable them to effectively navigate 1v1 situations, break down defensive lines, and create goal-scoring opportunities through split passes.

SUCCESS DOWN THE SIDES (PART 2)

This practice focuses on improving possession play and building up from the back while incorporating wide attacks. It is a 10v8 drill with Team A as the attacking team and Team B as the defending team. Team A sets up in a 1-4-2-3 formation, while Team B adopts a 1-3-3-1 shape. The playing area measures 36m x the full width, featuring eight-yard channels on each side.

SET UP

- The possession phase starts with the goalkeeper of Team A, who initiates the build-up. Team A expands to create both width and depth, aiming to create space for passing options.
- The full-backs of Team A move wide into the channels and push high onto the midfield line. The wingers also position themselves in the wide channels, level with Team B's last defensive line, ensuring stretching of the defensive shape, as shown in Diagram 1.
- The Team A goalkeeper and centre-backs now have a 3v1 advantage to build up play. The first pass from the goalkeeper must be directed to one of the central defenders.
- Team B is instructed to defend as a compact block and protect the space behind their defensive line.
- If Team A cannot penetrate through Team B's defensive shape, they are encouraged to play the ball wide and exploit the channels.
- The wide channels are exclusively accessible to Team A's full-backs and wide players. Initially, they should have uncontested access to these channels, allowing them to gain confidence in combining effectively.



- When the winger of Team A is positioned narrowly, the full-back should be encouraged to overlap, as depicted in Diagram 2. Conversely, if the winger is wide, the full-back should look to underlap, providing dynamic attacking options.
- To increase the difficulty and add more defensive pressure, one defending player is allowed to enter either wide channel when the ball is in that area, as shown in Diagram 2.
- Upon winning possession, Team B is encouraged to play directly and launch quick attacks.

This session enhances players' ability to maintain possession, build-up effectively from the back, and exploit the wide areas during attacks. It emphasises strategic movements and decision-making to break down the opposition's defensive shape and create goal-scoring opportunities. Additionally, it provides opportunities for both teams to work on defensive compactness and quick transitions upon regaining possession.

COACHING PROCESS

In this coaching process, the main focus is on building attacks with an emphasis on utilising width through the involvement of full-backs and wide players. The practice should quickly become opposed to add realism and challenge the players effectively.

CREATING WIDTH

- Encourage the possession team to create width on the field. This can be achieved through the strategic positioning of full-backs or wide players, depending on the coach's preferred philosophy.

REALISM

- To promote a more realistic training environment, swiftly introduce opposition pressure to the possession team.

MOVEMENT

- Challenge wide players and full-backs to find space inside the field, rather than solely focusing on creating space in wide areas for their teammates. Utilising the central spaces effectively adds variety and unpredictability to the attack.

DECISION MAKING

- Encourage wide players to make thoughtful decisions regarding their actions. This includes determining when to combine with teammates, when to attempt a cross, and what type of cross to deliver for maximum impact.

DEFENSIVE TRANSITION

- Emphasise the importance of quick and effective defensive transition for the possession team. Upon losing possession, players should immediately switch to defensive roles and regain control of the ball.

OPPOSITION OBJECTIVE

- Instruct the opposition team to focus on not conceding goals. Maintain motivation by keeping score during the practice.



DIRECT ATTACKING

- Upon winning possession, challenge the opposition team to initiate swift and direct attacking play. Set targets for them, such as getting a shot off within a certain number of passes or within a specified timeframe.

ROTATION

- Regularly switch between attacking and defending roles for both teams to provide equal opportunities for players to practice different aspects of the game.

PROGRESSION

- If the possession team consistently performs well, consider awarding the defending team two goals for each goal scored against them. This incentivizes strong defensive efforts and keeps the game engaging for all participants.

By implementing these coaching points, the players will develop a deeper understanding of building attacks using width and making intelligent decisions in various situations. The emphasis on realism, tactical awareness, and efficient transitions will contribute to their overall development as well-rounded and adaptable players.

10v10 SMALL SIDED GAME (PART 3)

The primary objective of this practice is to reinforce and apply the principles of possession when the ball is played wide, simulating real-game scenarios. The teams are set up in a 10v10 formation, with both adopting a 1-4-2-3 shape.

OBJECTIVES

REALISM

- The focus of the session is to encourage the team in possession to transfer their possession principles effectively when the ball is played wide. This ensures that players practice applying their skills in a realistic and dynamic setting.

AREA SIZE

- The coach has the flexibility to adjust the pitch size while ensuring it still allows for ample space to play in wide areas. The layout should facilitate the development of attacking play down the flanks.

CONDITIONS

- The coach may introduce specific conditions to suit the learning objectives, such as awarding a bonus goal when the final pass originates from a wide area. These conditions motivate players to focus on effective play in the wide zones.

CHALLENGES

- If the teams encounter difficulties in achieving success in wide areas, the coach can reintroduce wide channels or place limitations on the defending team. This adjustment provides additional opportunities for players to practice and develop their skills in attacking from the flanks.



CREATIVITY

- Players should be motivated to showcase their creativity in wide, attacking areas of the pitch. Encouraging freedom and inventiveness allows players to explore different solutions and develop their individual playing styles.

Through this session, players will gain valuable experience in transitioning possession effectively in wide areas, which is a crucial aspect of modern football. The dynamic 10v10 setup ensures that players experience realistic game scenarios, while the coach's adaptability allows for targeted challenges and improvements based on the team's progress. The emphasis on creativity empowers players to express themselves and become more confident and skilful in attacking from the flanks.

COACHING PROCESS

Transitioning from practice to competition, the focus should be on reinforcing the relationship between the full-backs and wide players, which has been developed in the preceding training sessions. The coach should encourage attacking opportunities in wide areas, with an emphasis on the forward players' aggressiveness in capitalising on crosses, passes in behind, or pull-backs.

RELATIONSHIP

- Players should continue to strengthen the understanding between full-backs and wide players, applying the lessons learned in previous practices to enhance their effectiveness in game situations.

ATTACKING APPROACH

- When attacking in wide areas, the forward players in central positions should be encouraged to display a proactive and assertive approach in attacking the ball. This includes making well-timed runs to get on the end of crosses, passes in behind, or pull-backs.

TIMING OF RUNS

- The coach should emphasise the importance of well-timed runs to stay onside and maintain attacking threats. Reinforcing the offside law can help players understand the significance of proper timing in their movements.

DEFENSIVE TRANSITIONS.

- Game-like Defensive Transitions: The coach should ensure that defensive transition from attack to defence mirrors real-game situations. Special attention should be given to the roles played by full-backs and wide players during these transitional moments

FOCUS

- By maintaining focus on critical aspects of the practice, players will be better equipped to adapt to changing game scenarios and apply their learning effectively.

TRANSITION

- Players should understand the significance of transitional periods both with and without the ball. This includes transitioning quickly and efficiently from attacking to defensive positions to prevent counter-attacks.



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Through this coaching process, players will be well-prepared to apply their developed skills and understanding of the full-back and wide player relationship in competitive situations. Encouraging aggressive attacking approaches and proper timing of runs will enhance the team's attacking threat. Simultaneously, emphasising defensive transition will ensure players remain attentive to both offensive and defensive responsibilities throughout the game.