



**North Star F.C.**

## **Recreational Coaches Training Program** **for Defending themes**

We are developing several booklets based on important themes we teach in the Recreational Program.

These are the themes we will focus on though this list is not

These are several training themes shown below which we encourage you to work on with your players.

These are to supplement your weekly plans, slightly more advanced ideas if you feel the players are ready to work on them.

- 1. Dribbling theme (22 Sessions)**
- 2. Passing, Control and Movement theme (16 Sessions)**
- 3. Shooting and Finishing theme (18 Sessions)**
- 4. Receiving and Turning theme (8 Sessions)**
- 5. Running with the ball theme (4 Sessions)**
- 6. Awareness Training (Scanning) theme (8 Sessions)**
- 7. Combination Movements theme (4 Sessions)**
- 8. Possession based Circle Training theme (3 Sessions)**
- 9. Defending theme (7 Sessions)**
- 10. Goalkeeper Training (3 Sessions)**

## Start with some warm-up ideas

### Warmups

#### Fast footwork, co-ordination and speed training

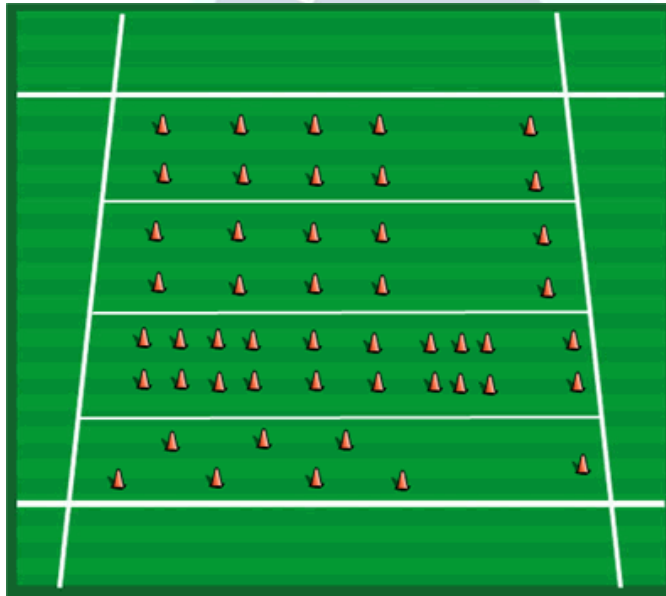
All training is specific to match play. Our work is based upon developing a balance between ball handling and functional running and sprinting in combination with jumping, stopping, and turning.

Quick feet, light feet, changing stride length exercises will be particularly important.

Repetition of the exercises is important throughout the season on a weekly basis to develop good and correct habits regarding co-ordination, comfort in running, awareness of the efficient use of arms and legs in running and the synchronization of limbs.

We are intending to develop a 6th sense in teaching the players to use the right techniques at the right times.

Quick feet, knees up: Forward and backward running. Concentrate on footwork and leg rhythm (Cones a half meter apart with a 5-meter sprint at the end). Players are racing in twos.



Side to side: Checking side to side between cones with fast feet then a sprint, practice forwards and backwards (defending movement).

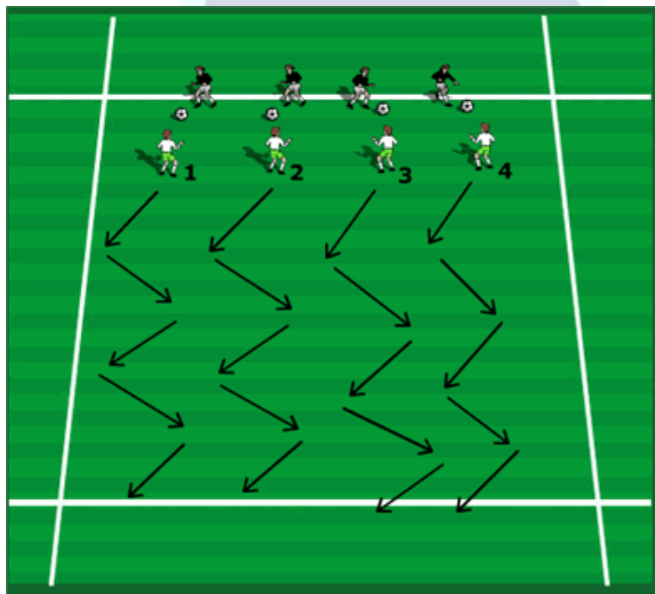
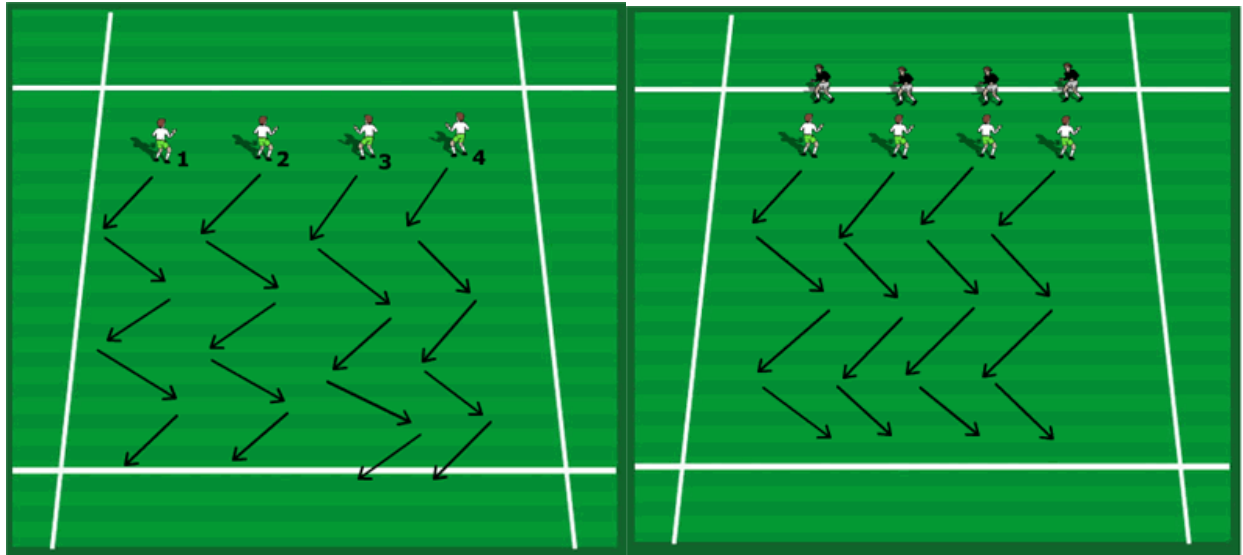
High Frequency: long and short strides changing the stride length, adjusting the feet. Stepping between the cones.

Checking and Dummying: Bouncing side to side in one movement, with feet wider apart, as fast as possible, throwing a dummy with the upper body, good for the dribbling movement dropping the shoulder one side and moving to the other side.

## Defending sessions

For small-sided game situations for defending see the SSG section.

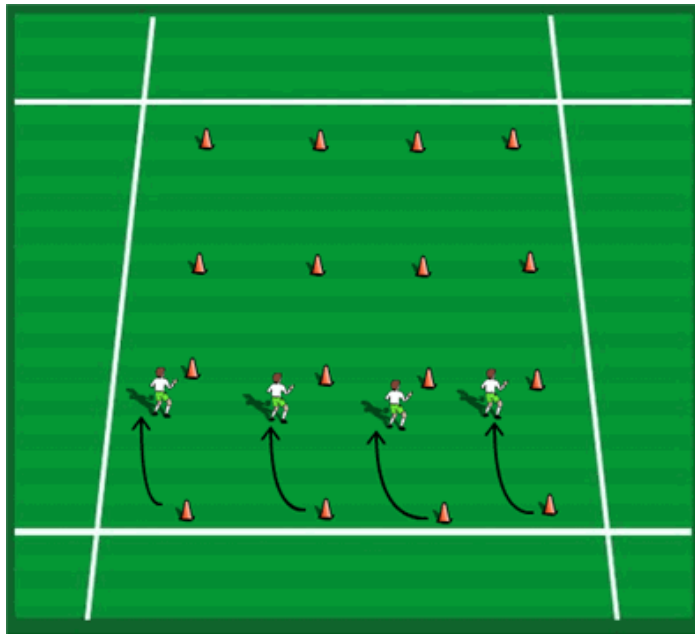
### SESSION 1: PRACTICING DEFENDING; 1ST AND 2ND DEFENDER.



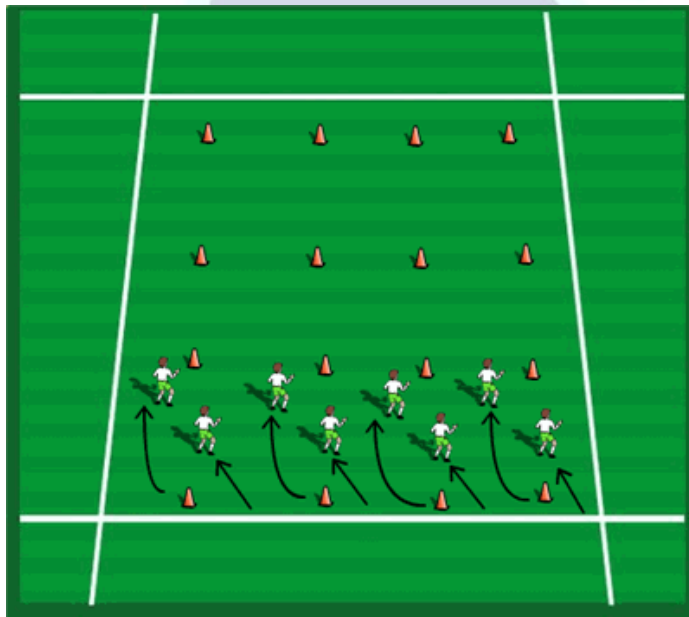
1. Players are sideways on; running backwards to the other line, changing sides in defensive mode. Increase pace.
2. Shadow heading and running back on coach's command.
3. In two, one running moving side to side, the other running backwards changing sideways on stance checking opponents run.
4. A ball between two working as above, working back and forward, defender shadowing the ball not winning possession.
5. Practice feinting to tackle with your front foot, forcing the attacker to protect the ball.

## **SESSION 2: WORKING ON DEFENDING USING A BASIC SHADOW DEFENDING IDEA**

### **INDIVIDUAL PRESSING**



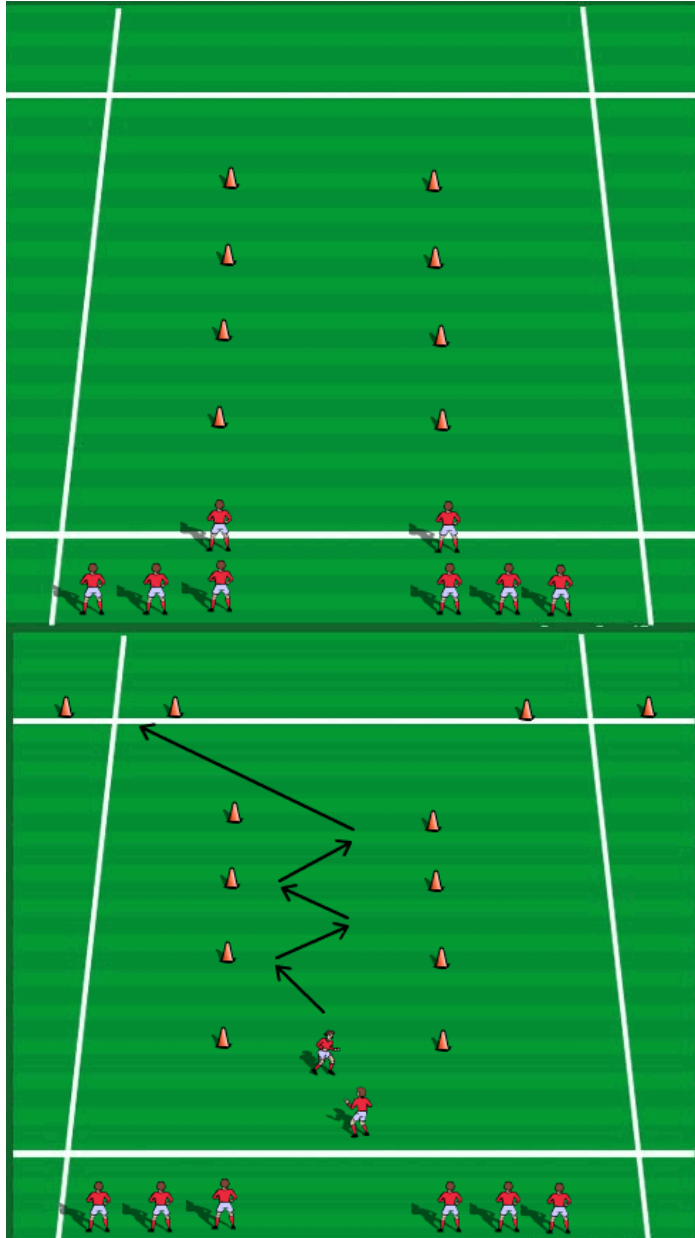
1. Here the individual players close the player (represented by a cone) down, forcing them to go to their right by a curved run. Insist on the players talking by each calling “pressure”.
2. Each group of four (but working individually) go to the next line of cones (representing the opponents) in sequence. Once they get to the cone they stop and you as the coach can adjust their positions, if need be, to show them how to get it correctly, it may be distance or angle problems for example. Have them touch the cone with their hand so they must bend down and get low as they would when defending in a 1 v 1 situation.



### **WORKING IN UNITS OF TWO**

3. Players can call “press right” or “press left” as they close the cone down that represents a player.
4. Introduce players first touching the cone, then dropping back, then feinting to tackle (I call it “having a bite”) with the front foot and dropping back into position.

### **SESSION 3: TEACHING BASIC FOOTWORK FOR DEFENDING**



1. Working on agility, balance coordination and speed; doing small group defending.
2. This training can be used with different age groups and can also be used with different age groups working together because there is no contact at all. Much of it is suitable for ages from U8 to U18.

1. In pairs jogging up and down. Two rows of cones in straight lines.
2. Backwards then forwards coming back to the start. How many fingers does the coach has in the air (when playing defenders need to check left shoulder / right shoulder because the ball is one place the attacking player is somewhere else, so always checking both).
3. Zig – zagging backwards left and right, looking at the fingers still as they do this then jog forward and back again. They must keep checking, left shoulder and right shoulder because the ball may be on one side and the player they are

against is on the other side of them.

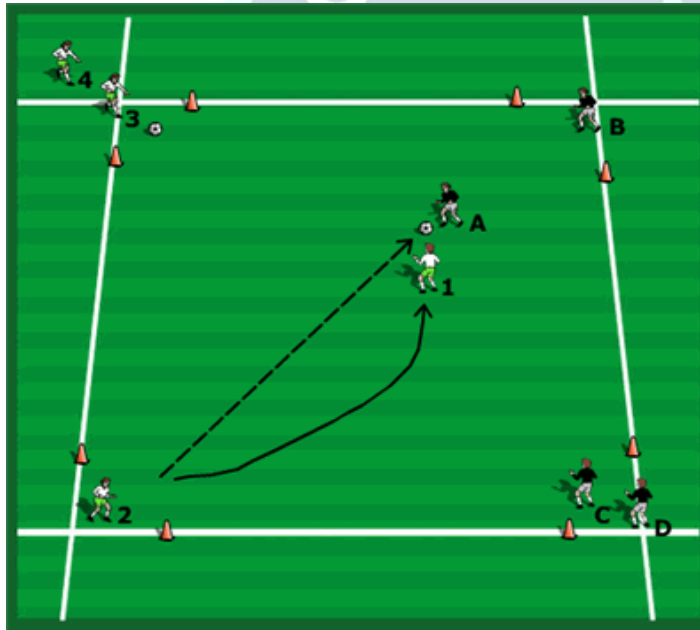
4. In 2's; the defender / attacker moving left to right, right to left; make the defender change his feet and his hips. The defender is always turning their hips as they shadow the attacker's movement, and again the coach is holding fingers up.
5. Attackers go quicker, defenders must change the shape of their feet and hips; so, getting very side on and running backwards (or running with the body more sideways than backwards); but still running backwards against the attackers' movements.

## SESSION 4: HOW TO DEFEND EFFECTIVELY

### COACHING POINTS OF INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING – CLOSING DOWN

1. Travel as fast as possible as the ball travels to close an opponent.
2. Close the opponent down with a curved run forcing the player the way you want them to go (if you have time to do so).
3. Slow down the last few yards, get balanced, bend knees, sideways on stance forcing the play your way, and slow the attacker up (making play predictable).
4. Feint to tackle – use your front foot this forces the opponent to protect the ball and ultimately look down at the ball and away from you the defender (also prevents awareness of where support players are in a game situation). Try to steal with your front foot.
5. Watch the ball not the player so you aren't thrown by body movement.
6. Stay on your feet and be patient; your chance will come to win the ball if you go to the ground, you give the initiative to the attacker.

### DEFENDING IN A 1 v 1 SITUATION



7. Think about the way you want the player to go, it can be onto your opponent's weakest foot or to the side you are strongest and most confident to tackle on. It can depend on the side where there is less space to work in for the attacker to restrict their movement and options and to make play predictable.
8. Encourage the players to not only win the ball but also to maintain possession of it if they can. In this session, participants may gain possession and attempt to score in the opposite goal as a result. In this instance both players will get a chance to practice defending in the same sequence.

### Session Plan

1. Receiver (A) tries to score through defender (1)'s goal. Work both sides and alternate numbered players and lettered players.
2. All players get the chance to attack or defend.
3. Encourage and praise good defending.
4. Correct the faults.
5. Step in and demonstrate to show the players what is needed if required, demonstration is better than explanation.

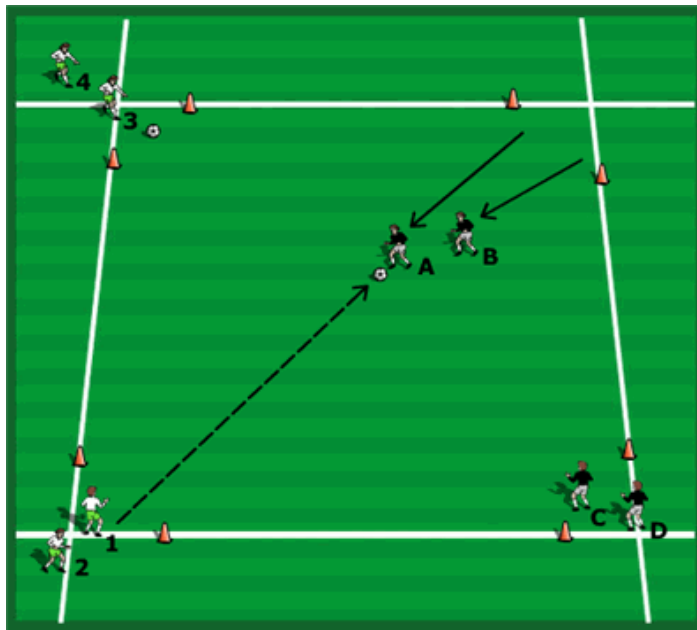


## 1 v 1 PREVENTING AN OPPONENT TURNING

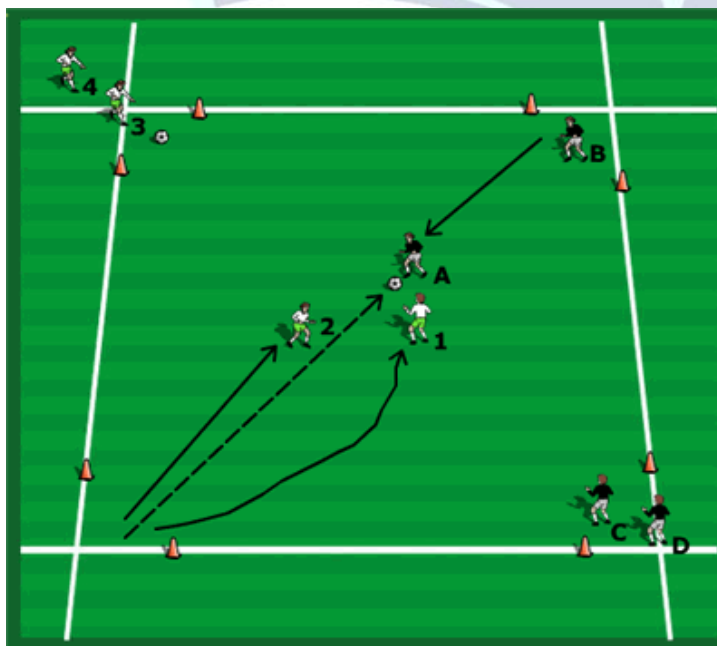
1. (1) passes to (A), (B) closes and stops (A) from turning and scoring. Previous coaching points but also gets touch tight to attacker. You can judge the distance by touching the back of the player.

2. Move with the player to maintain the same distances between you, if the attacking player goes back away from your goal, keep the same spacing between you by moving with them, not allowing them to turn and face you by increasing the distances between you both. If the distance between you is too far away the attacker can and will turn and face up to you creating a 1 v 1 situation which is a great advantage to the attacker. Too close and the attacker can spin off you are using the feel of your body as momentum to spin away quickly into space behind you.

3. The time to tackle is when the attacking player is half turned and consequently not protecting the ball with their body. Until then be patient and wait for the moment to strike.



## DEFENDING WITH a 2 v 1 ADVANTAGE: PRESSURE AND SUPPORT



### Session Plan

1. (1) passes to (A) and closes quickly with (2) in a support position.

2. Here (1) closes (A) with a curved run forcing the attacker to have to play towards the supporting player (2) thus creating a 2 v 1 situation in favor of the defenders.

3. The two defenders between them should be able to create a situation where they can win and maintain possession of the ball.

4. **Coaching points include:**

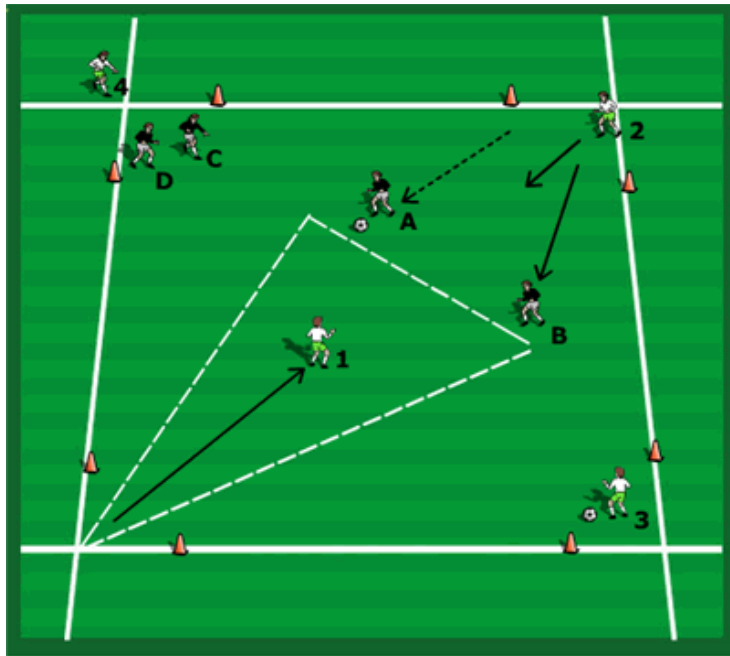
a) Support Angle: 45 degrees to the pressured player.

b) Support Distance: close enough to be able to affect the ball if the pressing player is beaten.

c) Communication: the supporting player can advise the pressured player where to force the attacking player to go. A simple command is best such as right or left or right shoulder, left shoulder so the pressing player knows where the support is behind them.







1. (1) takes up a position inside the guiding triangle. The guiding triangle is determined by the position of the ball, the supporting player, and the goal. Here a balanced position between the ball, the support player and the center of the goal has been achieved by (1). (1) Must constantly adjust position to accommodate the movement of the player on the ball and the support player with the view of keeping the ball in front.
2. To help the defender, because there is no keeper in the goal, the attackers must run the ball into the goal.

## **SESSION 6: FRONT FOOT DEFENDING**

**To teach proper positioning while defending – defending off the front foot.**

### **Warm-up:**

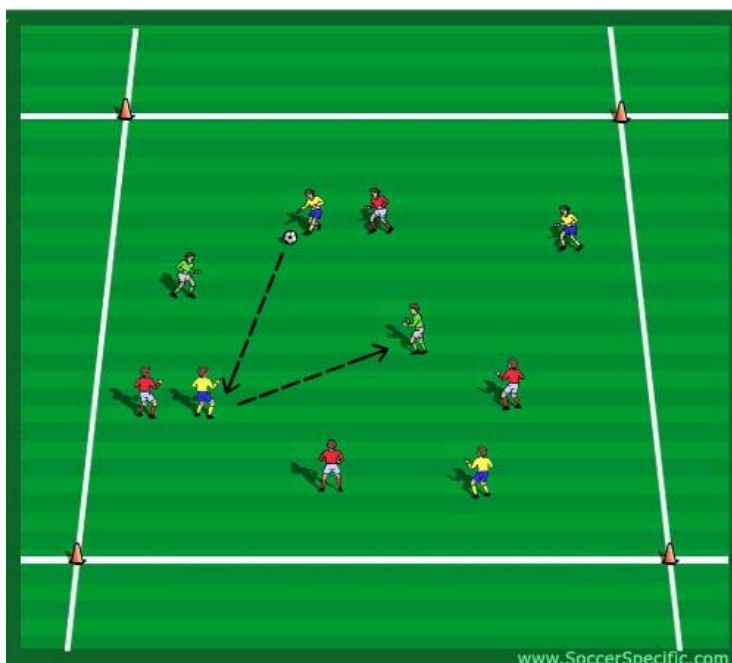
Players are positioned in a 20x30 yard grid as shown below. Players pass and move continuously. No one-touch passing is allowed. Players must take a positive touch before passing the ball to a teammate.



### **Activity #1:**

Players are positioned in a 20x30 yard grid.

A 4v4 plus two “floaters” is organized inside the playing area.



The following restrictions are applied as the warm-up progresses.

Players must get their studs on the ball (i.e.: roll the ball with the sole) before passing. Players perform a Cruyff turn before passing.

Perform a move and attack the space before passing.

Perform ANY move before passing.

Players receiving the pass are encouraged to point where they want to receive the ball.

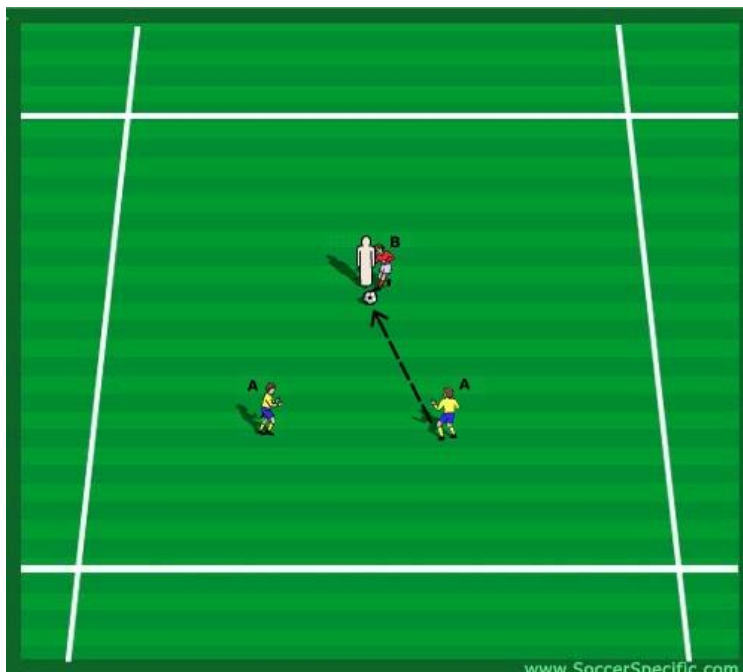
Both teams compete for possession of the ball. Emphasis is placed on the floaters determining the tempo of the game. Floaters are encouraged to either:

Calm it down.

Increase the tempo – play quick.

Play slow.

## Activity #2: Defending in Small Groups



Three players are organized as shown.

Two yellow players (A) are positioned 15 yards from the red defender (B). A mannequin is placed in front of the red defender. Players (A) are approximately 5 yards apart with one ball.

1. Both (A) players act as attackers and pass the ball back and forth.

The red defender must continually adjust his position as the ball travels.

2. The mannequin acts as a stationary opponent for the defender. The attackers must attempt to hit the mannequin with a pass to score a point.

3. The defender must mark the mannequin on the near-side shoulder to attempt to intercept the pass before it strikes the mannequin.

### Coaching Points:

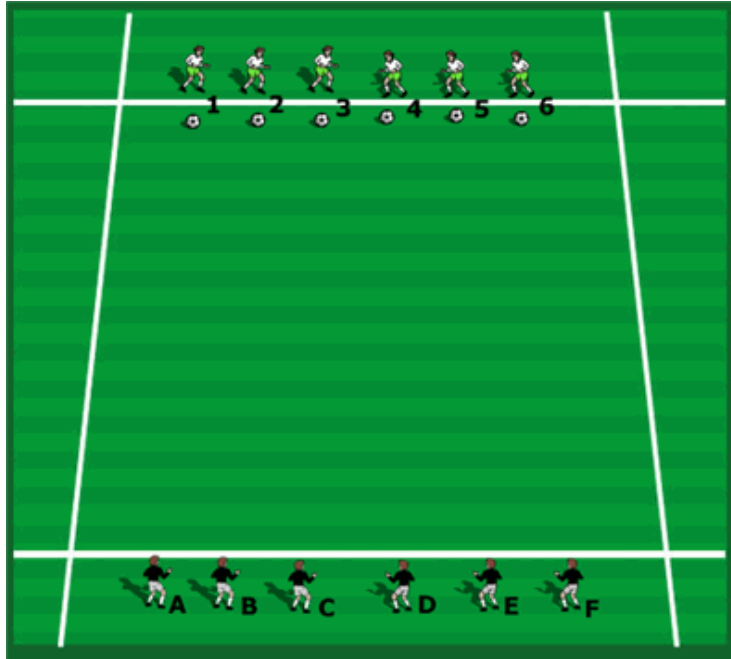
Mark on the near-side shoulder.

Keep the mannequin in touching distance.

How far the ball is away will determine how tight you can get to the mannequin.

Make sure that defenders are not standing in front of the mannequin.

## SESSION 7: 1 v 1 DEFENDING CONFRONTATIONS

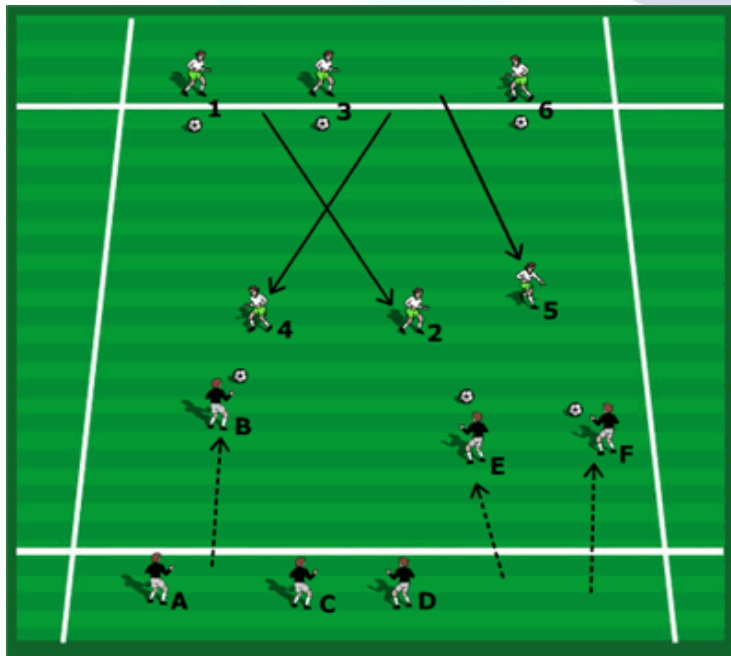


1. This set up creates lots of opportunities for 1 v 1 confrontations with different players against each other.
2. Each numbered player has a ball, and they can pass to any lettered player. They call their name, pass the ball, and close them down quickly and the numbered player then must win back the ball and try to score a goal by stopping the ball anywhere along the line where the lettered players begin.
3. Have at least three 1 v 1 's going at any one time, players dictate when and where they do this depending on how many others are live in their 1 v 1's. Players need to be aware of the positions

of the other 1 v 1 confrontations, so they do not clash with them. Ensure all players can be the DEFENDING player in the 1 v 1. Defenders need to close the space for the attacking player and force them into tight areas.

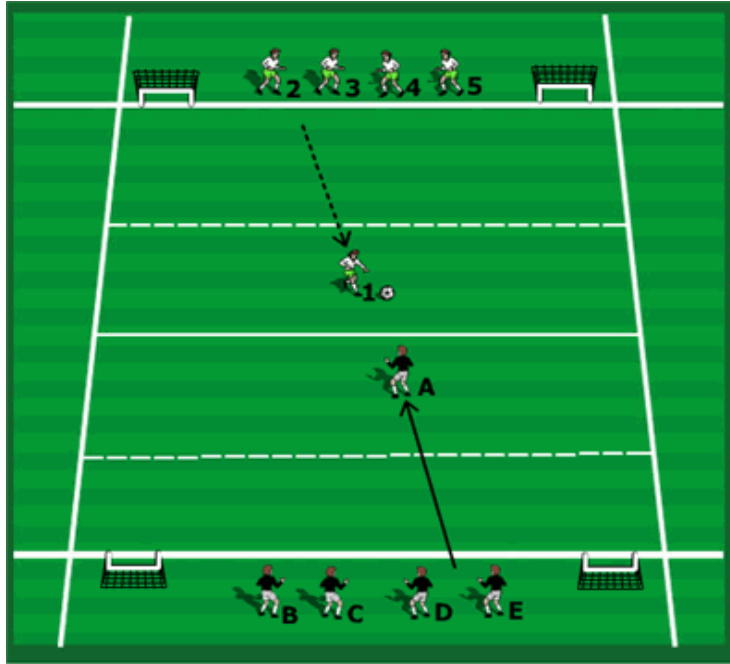
4. **Competitive:** Each player counts the number of times they win the ball through good defending, use this on an individual and team basis so there is a winning team and ultimately a winning player.

### A GAME SITUATION FOR 1 v 1 DEFENDING



Divide the teams up into two 3 v 3 games with teams attacking the short side lines to score a goal. Play with one ball then two balls so there are some 1 v 1's and some support play. Then they attack the long sides as targets making it a little harder to defend successfully.

## DEFENDING IN 1 v 1's, 2 v 1's AND 2 v 2's



1. Two goals for each team to attack, players must attack 1 v 1 to score. Defenders must stop them and try to score themselves as soon as the attack is over; the attacker becomes the defender and the other team attacks. If a defender wins the ball, they can attack and score, but they must defend again. To score the player must be over the shooting line (5 yards out).

2. Develop – A 2 v 1 situation, the attacker who doesn't finish the move becomes the new defender. The new defender must position outside the shooting zone. New attackers must begin with a pass and overlap to make it more difficult for the defenders.

3. Develop – 2 v 2 situation, the team who take a shot become the defenders. The same rules apply as above. If the ball goes out of bounds a new team starts.