

7v7 Defending- Improve Preventing the Opponent from Building Up in Their Own Half (B)

GOAL: Improve preventing the opponent from building-up in their own half

PLAYER ACTIONS: Steal, Get compact, Stay compact

KEY QUALITIES: Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U9-U10 / 7v7 / 12 players

MOMENT: Defending

DURATION: 90 min



1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball back and score.

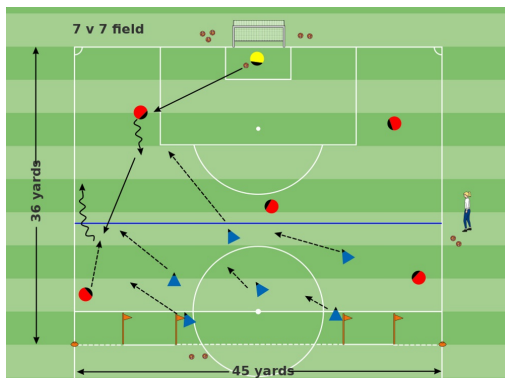
ORGANIZATION: Mark out two 24 x 16-yard fields. Divide players into four teams of three. Teams play 3 v 3 on 6-yard goal lines without goalkeepers. Free play, kick-ins. Play for 30 minutes with two to three breaks.

KEY WORDS: Hunt the ball, get together, move together

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) What does the closest defender to the ball need to do? 2) What are some cues to steal the ball? 3) What do the other two defenders need to do? 4) How do we deal with the opponent when they spread out and create passing options?

ANSWERS: 1) Protect the goal by blocking the path towards our goal. 2) When the attacker's head is down or takes a bad touch. 3) Get compact to close openings. 4) Continue to protect the goal by staying compact/together to keep the openings closed.

NOTES: First break: Coach asks questions, players continue playing to discover answers. Second break: Players share answers with coach and each other. Refer to the Training Session Manual.



PRACTICE (Core Activity): 6 v 5 + GK (Two Small Goals to Large Goal)

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball back and score.

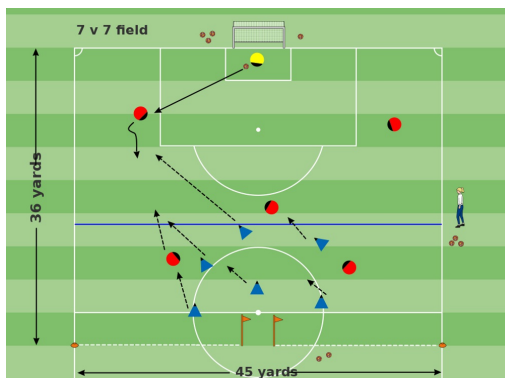
ORGANIZATION: Mark out a 36X45 yard field and include the build-out line. 6 blues (2-3-1) attack large goal vs. 6 reds (1-2-3) to two small goals. Mostly begin from red goal kick, but vary the restarts (from GK hands, throw-ins, play blue team attack, etc). Play for 30 minutes with 2-3 breaks.

KEY WORDS: Hunt the ball, stay together, move together

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Who should pressure the opponent with the ball? 2) When do you step to steal the ball? 3) How do you step to steal the ball? 4) Why do the other defenders need to get compact and stay connected?

ANSWERS: 1) The closest defender. 2) When the attacker's head is down, takes a bad touch, or makes a soft pass. 3) Fast approach (long steps) while the ball is moving, and then slow arrival (short steps) when close. 4) To keep openings closed and keep them closed by moving together.

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity after the first Play Phase. If it's too difficult, switch to the Less Challenging Activity. If it's too easy, switch to the More Challenging Activity. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase. Refer to the Training Session Manual/Coach's Toolkit.



PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 6 v 5 + GK (Two Small Goals to Large Goal)

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball back and score.

ORGANIZATION: Same as core activity, except with just one 15-yard goal line in the middle. Be sure to vary restarts from the red team (goal kick, from GK hands, throw-ins, start with blue team, etc).

KEY WORDS: Look for a soft pass, hunt the ball, stay together, move together

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Who should pressure the opponent with the ball? 2) When do you step to steal the ball? 3) How do you step to steal the ball? 4) Why do the other defenders need to get compact and stay connected?

ANSWERS: 1) The closest defender. 2) When the attacker's head is down, takes a bad touch, or makes a soft pass. 3) Fast approach (long steps) while the ball is moving, and then slow arrival (short steps) when close. 4) To close openings and keep them closed by moving together.

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this Less Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too difficult. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase. Refer to Training Session Manual/Coach's Toolkit.

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GOAL: Improve preventing the opponent from building-up in their own half

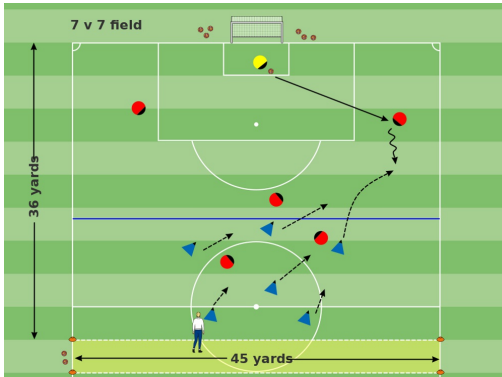
PLAYER ACTIONS: Steal, Get compact, Stay compact

KEY QUALITIES: Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U9-U10 / 7v7 / 12 players

MOMENT: Defending

DURATION: 90 min



PRACTICE (More Challenging): 6 v 5 +GK (End Zone to Large Goal)

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball back and score.

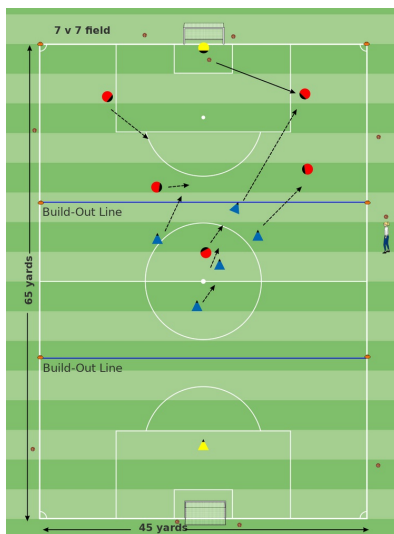
ORGANIZATION: Same as core activity, except use an end zone instead of goal lines for the Red team to score, and red must dribble into it or pass to the coach there to score. Be sure to vary the restarts so that the red team uses different options to try to build up.

KEY WORDS: Delay, force inside/outside, step, hold, slide

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Where should the first defender try to force the opponent? 2) When do the other defenders hold position or drop back? 3) What do we do if the opponent tries to change the point of attack? 4) What can we say to help us prevent their build-up?

ANSWERS: 1) Towards our help defenders or to a weaker opponent (could be inside or outside). 2) When we do NOT get pressure on the ball. 3) Stay in a compact block and slide across together to keep the openings closed. 4) Be specific- "Delay, Force inside/outside, Step, Hold, Slide right/left"

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this More Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase.



2ND PLAY PHASE: The Game

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball back and score.

ORGANIZATION: Mark out a regular 7 v 7 field with build-out lines. Play 6v6 (Blue 1-1-3-1 vs Red 1-2-2-1). Play for ~30 minutes including one "halftime" (5 min.) using the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and according to the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs).

KEY WORDS: Hunt the ball, stay together, move together, force inside/outside

GUIDED QUESTIONS: Half-Time- Repeat all questions previously used as needed. End of Game- 1) How did you do in stealing the ball? Where and when should we move to do it? 2) Why is it important to focus as a team to get compact and stay compact? 3) How did you take initiative and confront the situation?

ANSWERS: Half-Time- Repeat all questions/answers previously used as needed. Players provide examples (specific communication, forming a compact block, forcing the opponent in a certain direction).

NOTES: Refer to the Training Session Manual and U.S. Soccer Coach's Tool Kit for the appropriate Teaching Actions during specific Teaching Moments (in flow and at "halftime"). Allow the players to play freely; observe to check for player's understanding on today's training session goal.

Five Elements of a Training Activity

1. **Organized:** Is the activity organized in the right way?
2. **Game-like:** Is the activity game-like?
3. **Repetition:** Is there repetition, when looking at the overall goal of the session?
4. **Challenging:** Are the players being challenged? (Is there the right balance between being successful and unsuccessful?)
5. **Coaching:** Is there effective coaching. based on the age and level of the player?

Training Session Self-Reflection Questions

1. How did you do in achieving the goals of the training session?
2. What did you do well?
3. What could you do better?