

Future
At
Their
Feet

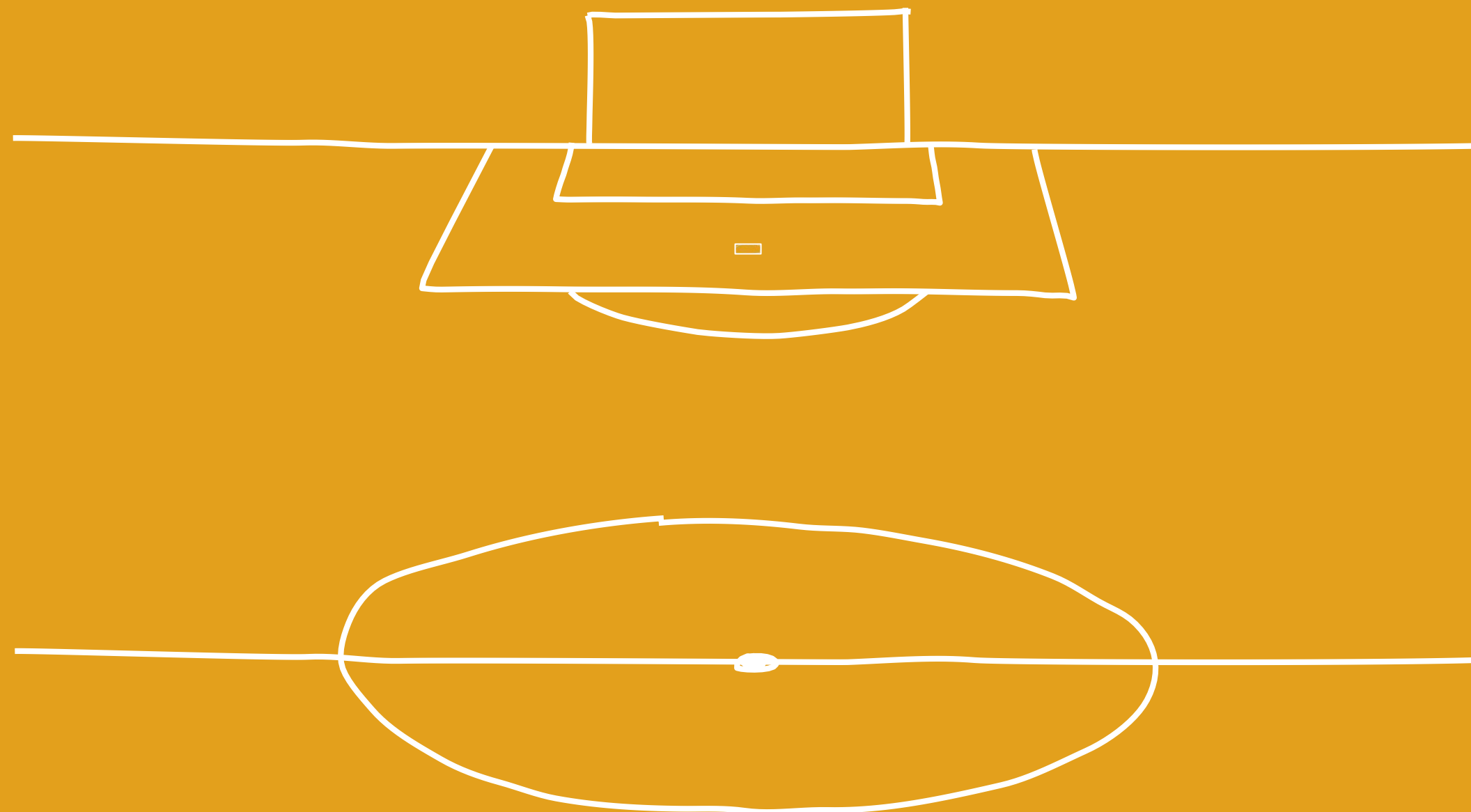
@CoachDavidBaird

Give players the freedom
to try new things,
be creative
and think for
themselves.

1 Apply Your Skills

Practice a variety of
different skills then apply
them against the defender

A session to give young players the opportunity to practice a variety of skills while the coach observes to address aspects of technique that they feel needs correcting. The session is a fun, fast paced session where players can perform chops, feints, sole roles, scissors amongst a load of other skills and ones they wish to invent themselves.



Introduction

Development



This session gives young players the opportunity to practice a variety of skills and the coach the opportunity to teach, observe and correct aspects of the players technique.

The first part looks at running with the ball. The circuit includes changes of direction to the right and to the left. At each cone a player should practice skills such as:

Chops Feints Sole Roles Scissors Fake Takes

And any other moves the coach wishes the players to work on or you can give the players freedom to practice/invent their own moves. Once through the circuit the channel back to the start is where players work on driving with the ball at pace.

A progression shown is to have a shot before rejoining the circuit. Another progression may be for each set up of the drill to race against each other to get through the circuit = first to 10 goals for example.

The pattern is the same this time but the techniques that we are working on are passing and receiving. Again the players on each set up of the drill can compete against each other to get through the circuit and score a certain amount of goals. Change the direction of the drill during the session so players can work on receiving on a different foot.

Receiving technique:

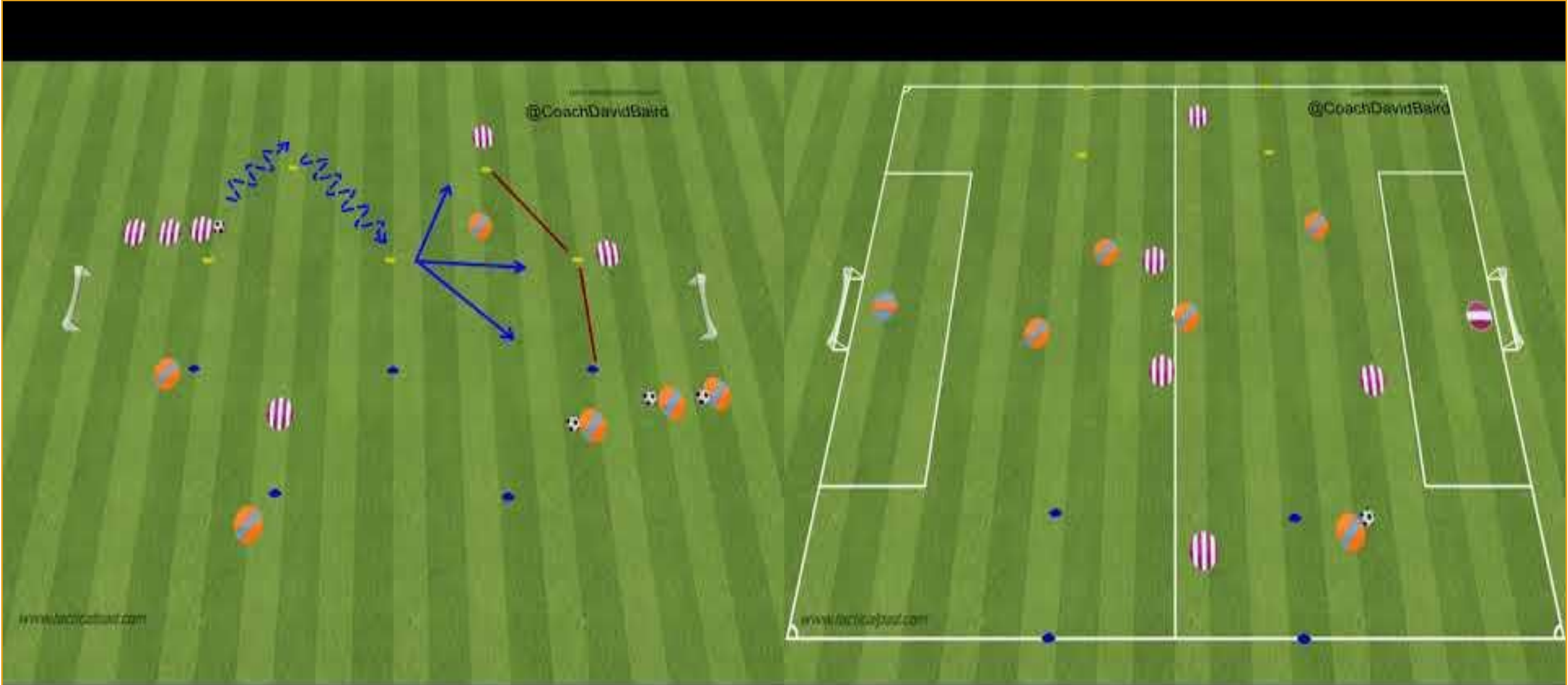
- Open body to see where the ball is coming from and where you are going to play
- Receive on the back foot and take a controlled touch in the direction of where you want
- Drop the shoulder one way before touching the ball the other way, once taken your touch usse standing foot and bod to protect the ball

Passing technique:

- Use the inside of the foot to punch through the centre of the ball
- Big toe on the standing foot should be in line with the front of the ball and aiming in the direction you want to pass
- Have correct space between standing foot and the ball (your foot and the ball should create a number 10 or 01 if you're using the left foot to pass)
- Pass and support the ball, bedding in the belief of pass and move in a game

Progression

Game



Note: This drill can work well that once you have had your shot you can simply join the other line and work coming back down the pitch, but for the sake of an easy explanation I have put the defender in a different colour and only shown the drill 1 way, but the group at the top of the animation would be doing the same so when you get the ball from the net you could join their line.

Players practice the dribbling, skills and changing direction from earlier on the first two cones in the circuit. They are then faced with a defender who is looking to win the ball and drive through a gate for success.

Using the passing or dribbling technique from earlier, look to get past the defender and through one of the two gates (either left or central, but again change the side you work from in the session to have options central or right). Then finish on goal.

Bed in the belief that the player on the ball is a playmaker (such as Messi) and should confidently run at the defender, if they choose to pass then support the ball and finish the move off. It is all about making young players confident in taking responsibility to make things happen and once practices and praised enough, they will take this into the games.

The aim of this fun game is to bring out techniques practices throughout the session and also to create the overloads from the previous drill where you had two extra players. From there work on decision making and quality to goal.

Each team starts with a player in a boxed zone in a wide area of the pitch. Before your team can score the team must unlock one or both of their locked players. When you unlock a player the closest opposition player must go in the zone, they cannot tackle the player coming out of the zone but it paints the picture of receiving the ball and having to take a touch or dribble past an oncoming player, once out of the box the player is now in live play.

Coaching:

Scanning and communicating to see if you need to unlock any players
Play with width and pace when numbers up.
Look to combine with team mates similar to what was worked on in previous exercise, pass, move, support, shoot.

Final Progression:

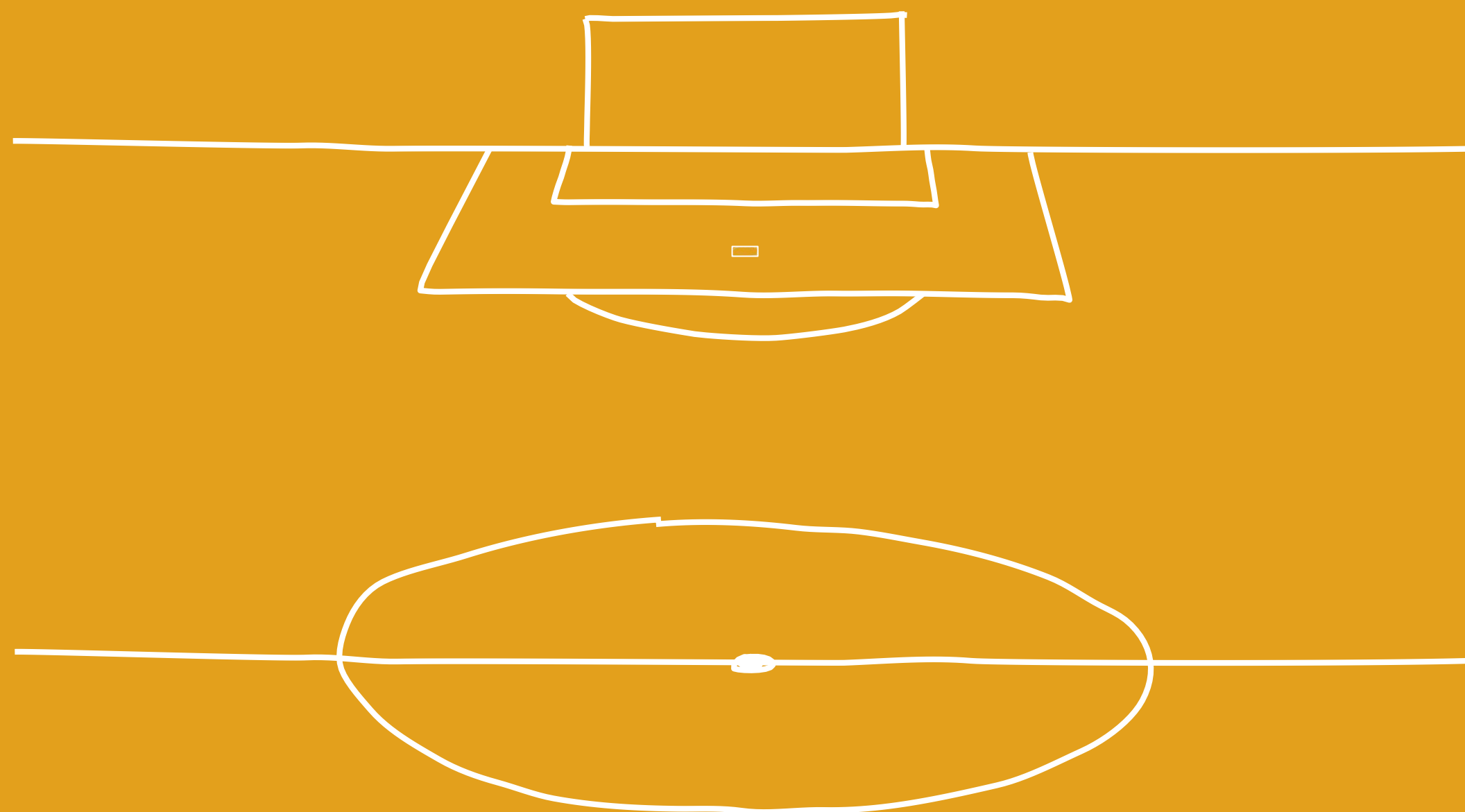
Finish on a condition free game.

2

Assist and Score

Good passes create good chances

Players will focus on teamwork to ensure they are playing good passes which will lead to good chances to shoot. The focus is on the weight of the pass and the angle in which it is played so your teammate can step onto the ball and hopefully strike it towards goal with the first or second touch. As with all session we then look to apply these skills in the game at the end of practice.



Introduction

Development



In this exercise players will not only focus on striking the ball correctly, they need to be working as a team and playing good passes. They should concentrate on making a good assist and play the type of pass they would like to receive.

Scanning is key and communication on when and where to play the ball. From there you look to run onto the weighted pass and hit it with the first or second touch, shooting early when the opportunity comes is so important as there will not be a lot of time and space around the ball.

Progressions:

For more advanced players, the wall pass progression is shown. Have a recovering defender pressing you from behind to heighten awareness.

Have a defender behind the goal who can come out and pressure once the return pass is played, putting more stress on making a good pass so the defender can't get there and meaning you have to shoot early or touch it past the defender.

A progression to the last drill still stressing the importance of quality on key passes. The drill here works a bit like a mirror where you need to constantly be scanning and communicating to make the drill work.

The routine starts with a driven pass out wide which is then set back for a switch of play. You then look to get the return and the player who sets this time will press the ball. Meaning you need to be aware of the presence of the oncoming defender and touch away from them/use your body to protect the ball so you can get your shot away.

An advantage of doing a mirrored practice like this is as a coach you can identify players who are maybe not moving the ball as quickly as they should and coach them. It's a good indication of two key factors in modern day football, the speed of the ball and the speed of the player (physically and mentally). There is a lot of thinking and problem solving in this session something that shouldn't be neglected when looking to stretch young players.

Progression

Game



The players here are faced with a 1v1 to goal and they have the option of using the wall pass player who runs the line behind the goal for a wall pass. The decisions the young players must make is whether to dribble past the defender 1v1 or play a pass and get the assist back - meaning the player behind the goal is working on a similar pass to the previous drills. If the defender wins the ball they can counter and look to score in the other goal.

Make it competitive as this always brings up the tempo of the session, maybe first to 10 points, 1 point for an assist as the wall player (meaning they will always be moving and asking for the ball) 2 points for a goal. Another way to drive the intensity and work rate up is to stipulate that if you are successful in your 1v1 you do not need to become the defender and defenders stay until they win the ball.

Progression:

As you can see on the rotation there is a player waiting behind the goal where the play starts, simply waiting on their turn. They can be working on toe taps or keepy ups but a possible progression is to have them as a recovering defender and chasing the attacker from behind. This will heighten the urgency of the player on the ball to either get past the defender and shoot or combine with the wall player quickly and support, exactly what we are looking to get out of this session.

A fun game to finish on that will look to bring out the ruthless edge we have been coaching all session, when the opportunity presents itself = look to score!

Here we have a 4 goal game with only 2 goalkeepers. When in possession look to constantly scan and create opportunities to score. This may involve taking players, switching play or shooting from distance. Goalkeepers tend to enjoy this exercise it helps them work on their diving saves as the often need to travel at pace to defend a goal.

To work on transition the coach should be ready to feed in the next ball at the earliest opportunity to whoever they wish.

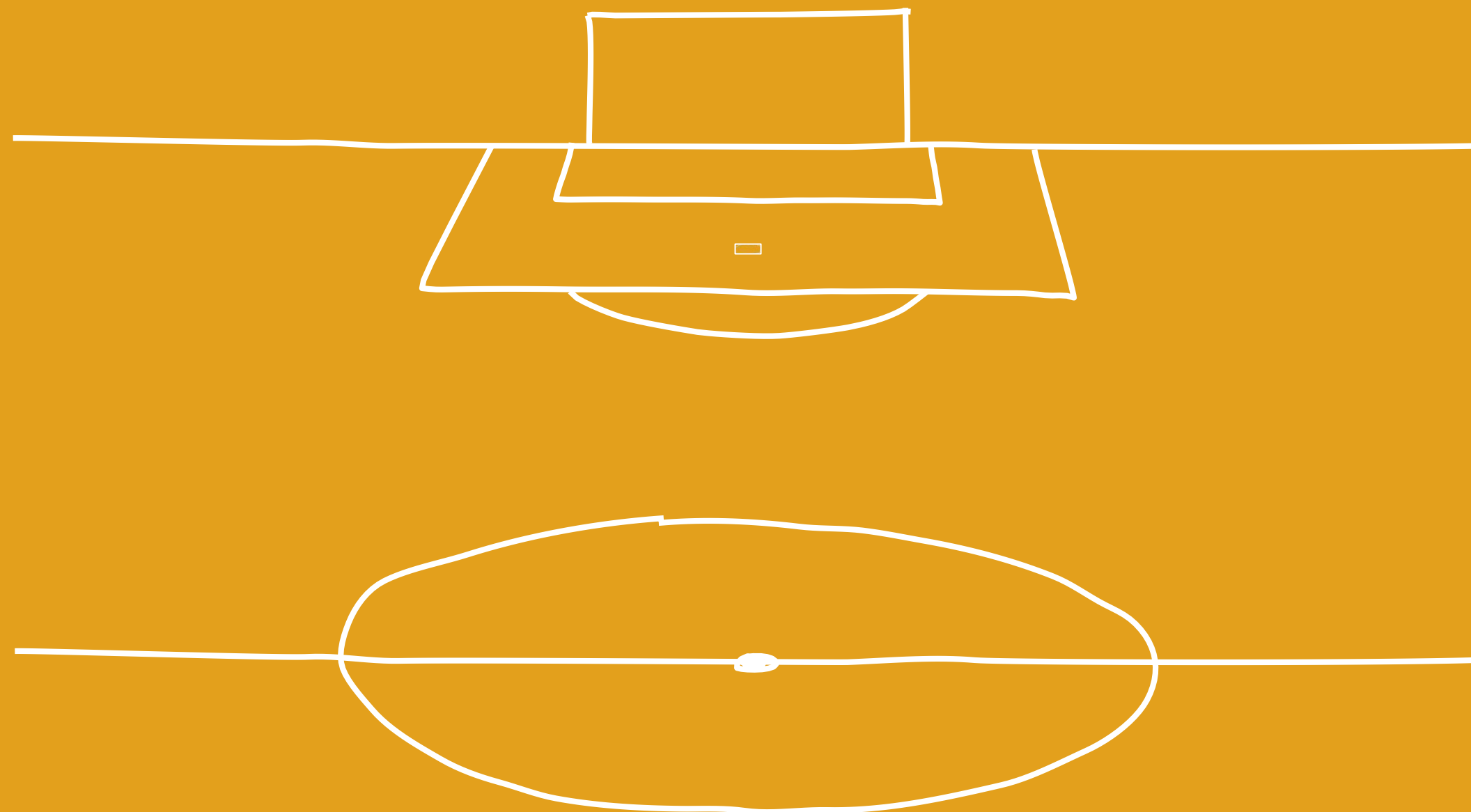
If you are not getting the outcome of lots of shots and goals then you can add a roaming player who plays for the team in possession.

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

3 Attacking Combination Play

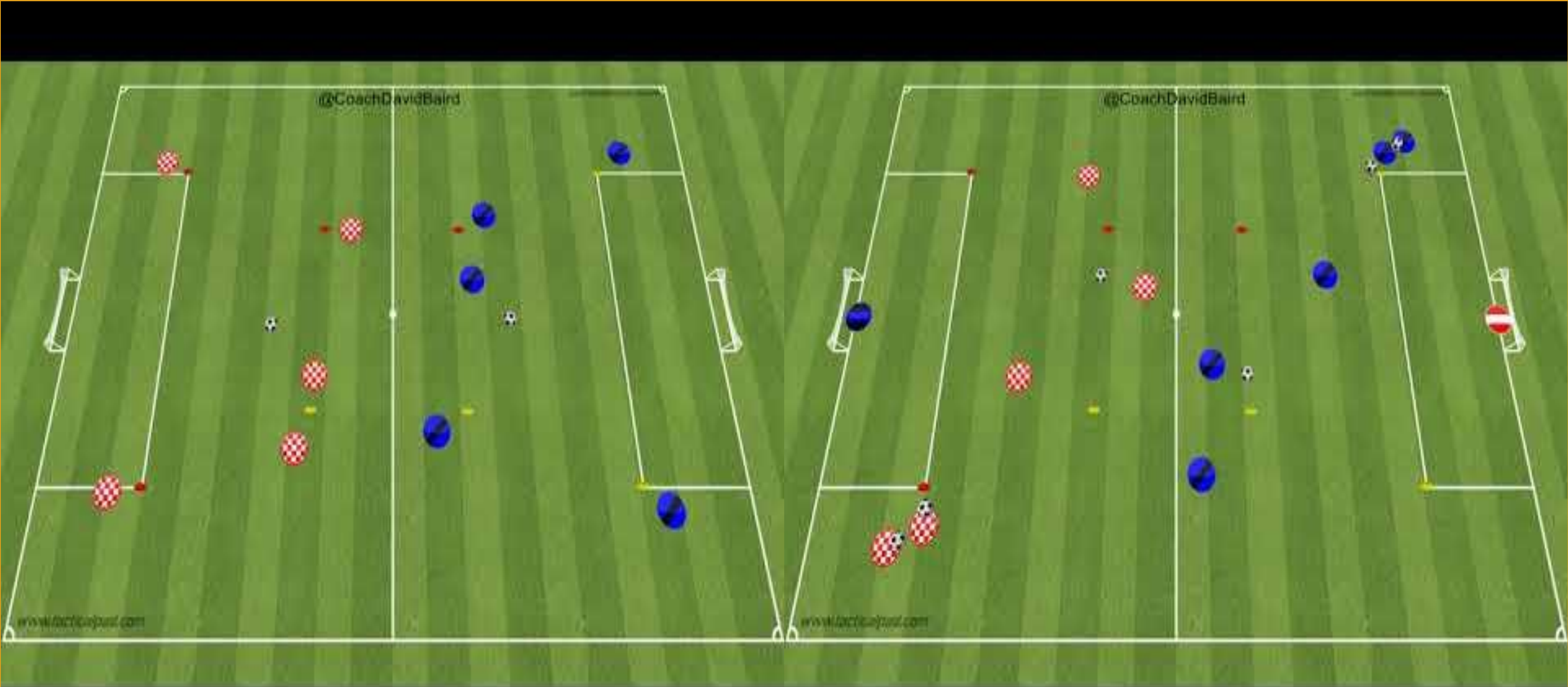
Pass, move, shoot, score,
celebrate

When playing around the other team's box, space and time will be limited. The attacking combination play session looks at moving the ball quickly to create a window of time and space for a shot on goal. Challenge players by introducing different types of finishing such as half or full volleys.



Introduction

Development



A passing combination to introduce the theme of quick passing and moving. Communication should be high throughout with the group trying to move the ball as quickly as possible.

Have competitions between the two groups and see what team can be the first to a certain amount of passes. Progress to play 1 touch if you think the players are capable and a wall pass progression is shown.

As this is an attacking combination play session the basic themes of always being on your toes, anticipating, moving the ball quickly and scanning should be present throughout.

Continuing to pass the ball with power and accuracy across the ground is still key in this exercise but now we focus on movement and the most important element is scoring the goal.

Play a sharp wall pass and step onto the ball striking through it, aiming away from the keeper.

Coaching Points:

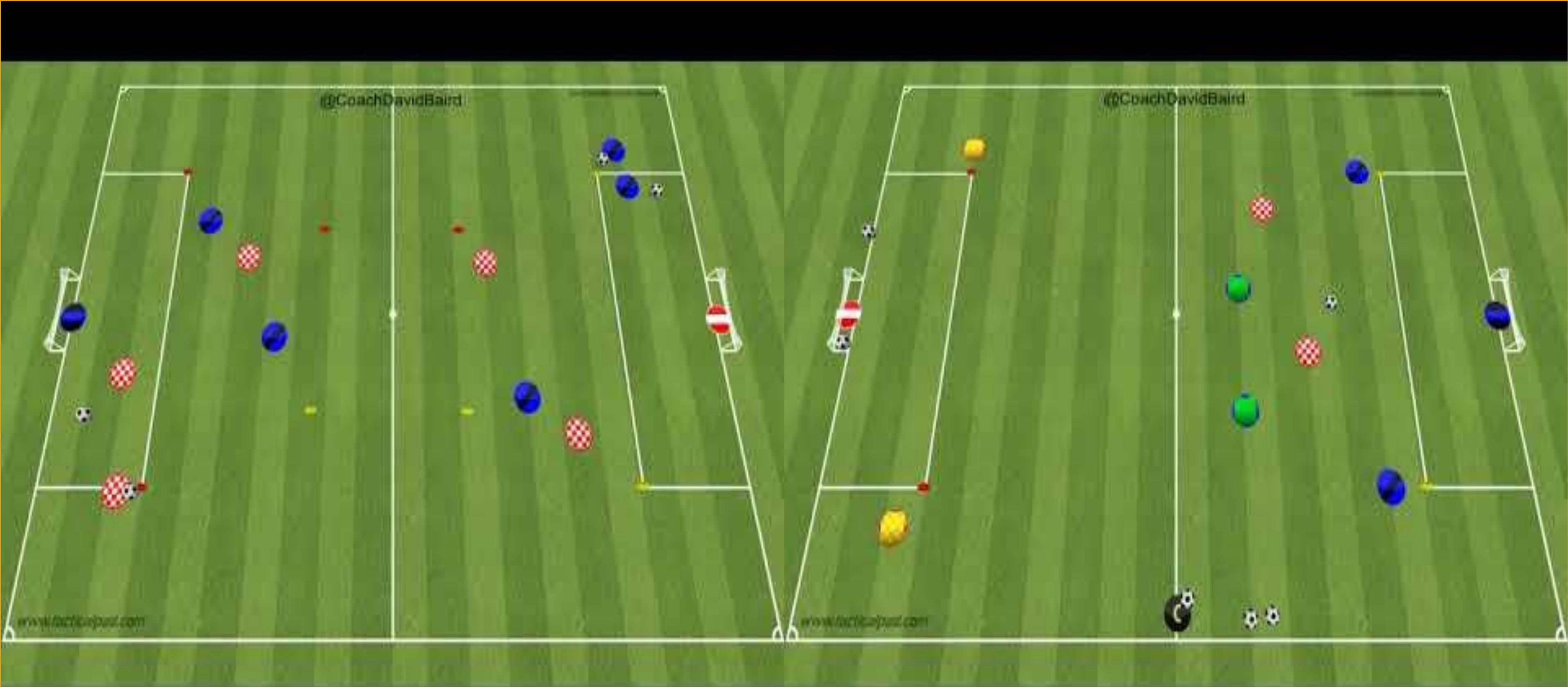
- Hit first time or take a touch but make sure the ball is set and your well balances
- The big toe of the standing foot should be in line with the back of the ball with a little space between the foot and ball
- Lift the head to scan and see where the goal is but when striking the ball get your head over it
- Shoulders can come slightly back if you want to generate height and kick through the ball just below centre
- On approach bend your knee before striking the ball, the release of this generates power from your quads to smash through the ball - tell young players to think of bringing a golf club back before releasing forward
- Don't look up and admire your striker, this will shift your centre of gravity and your likely to mis-hit the ball, keep the head down until the ball has left your foot

Possible Progressions:

- Lift the ball in the air for the longer pass
- Build on the combination by adding more wall passes/overlaps
- Be creative!

Progression

Game



The rotation of players is shown on the animation allowing all players to rotate around and work on being a recovery defender, defending/delaying when 1v2, attacking 2v1 on the ball and supporting the ball when attacking 2v1. If defenders win the ball in this drill they should be encouraged to take it forward and score on the goal opposite to the one they were defending, as an introduction to transition it is a good idea to say they play stays live blue v red until all footballs are scored or off the pitch.

The scenario painted here is a 2v1 to goal (all players are live after the long driven pass into the striker facing the goal). The 2 attackers have a defender to get past quickly as a team mate of his/hers is recovering back to help. Use the combinations worked on or keep width to give yourself a 1v1 to goal and finish with power and accuracy. Your team mate should always be following in for rebounds.

Adaptations:

If the strikers are finding it difficult and you want them to get some success to start off with, don't have the recovering defender or have them run around a cone to delay their recovery.

This is a high tempo competition between the 4 teams of 2. If you score you stay on, if you miss you swap with the team that are off on your defensive side, if the ball goes out of play at anytime, both teams are off and the other 2 teams come on. The coach should have a good supply of footballs to keep the drill flowing.

Using the quick attacking combinations practices throughout the session look to score as many goals as you can, be competitive. The coach can stipulate the first to a certain amount of goals or play for a period of time to see who can get the most goals in that allocated time period.

Adaptations dependent on age and ability level:

- Allow or don't allow the team in possession to use the 2 players behind them as wall players
- Allow or don't allow the team in possession to use the 2 players in front of them as wall players
- Minimize the touches of all wall players to 2 or 1 touch, or to make it easier allow them unlimited touches

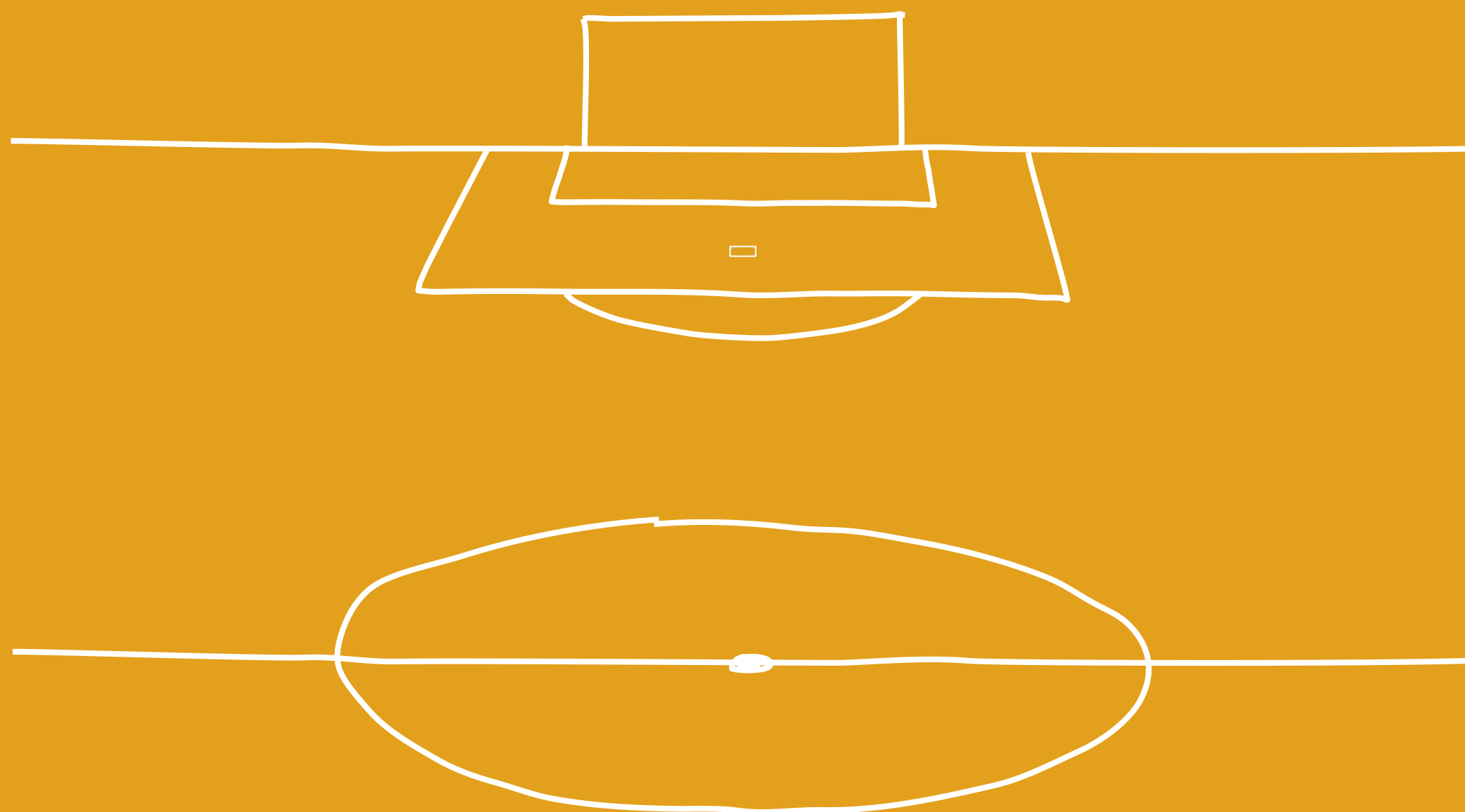
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

4

Be Ruthless in Attack

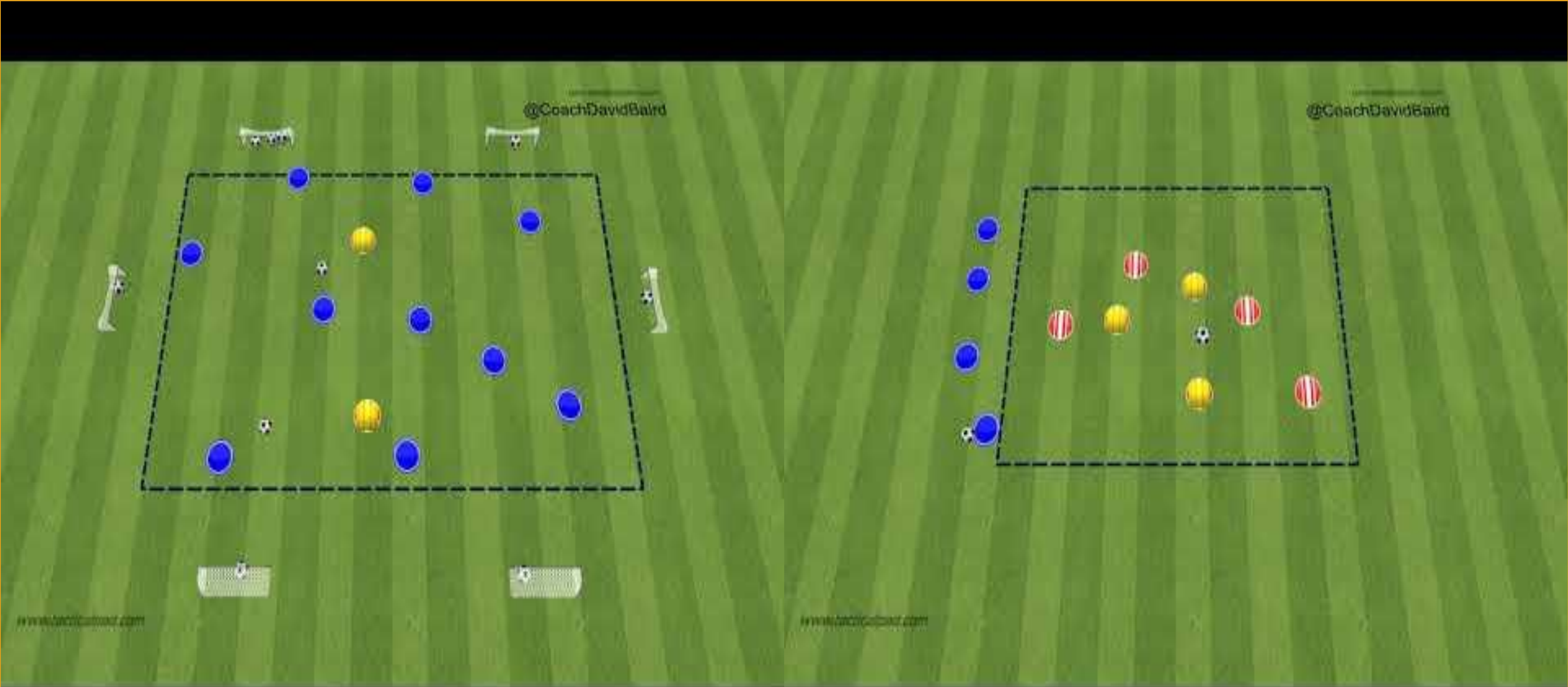
Find quick solutions to
exploit space and
opposition

Rarely will a better opportunity to score be present than when the team is driving forward with a numbers advantage towards the other teams goal. This session is all about developing positive play, not taking four or five touches to get the ball somewhere that may only take one pass. Make it fun and free-flowing this will allow some coachable moments to be more ruthless in attack.



Introduction

Development



We are focussing on being ruthless in attack. This introduction drill shows a very clear example of the qualities needed to be ruthless when you have the numbers advantage.

The players who are defending (1,2,3 or 4 players) are trying to eliminate all the footballs by winning them off the attackers and playing them off the park, preferably into a goal (see what defender can score the most?).

The attackers first work on their dribbling, turns and shielding the ball, but as their ball and others footballs are played out of the area they need to start thinking of passing and moving and being ruthless by:

- Spreading out
- Scanning to see potential passes
- Always showing for passes
- Passing and moving to get on another ball

This is also a good drill to introduce counter pressing to young players, if a defender does win a ball look to win it back immediately before it is played out, to keep this ball in the game. There are lots of variations to this drill, you can do a time limit to see how many balls the attackers can keep alive. You can introduce a new defender every 30 seconds or so or you could have a player on the side working on juggling the ball and the defenders need to see how many balls they can eliminate before that player drops the ball. The important thing is not to over work the defenders and rotate them frequently.

The message from the coach should be consistent with the previous drill. Keep width, play forward, play with speed and find quick solutions to get across the line. Once one team makes it across the line the other goes straight away in a 4v3 to get to the other side of the playing area.

The two teams in possession can compete to see who gets across the most.

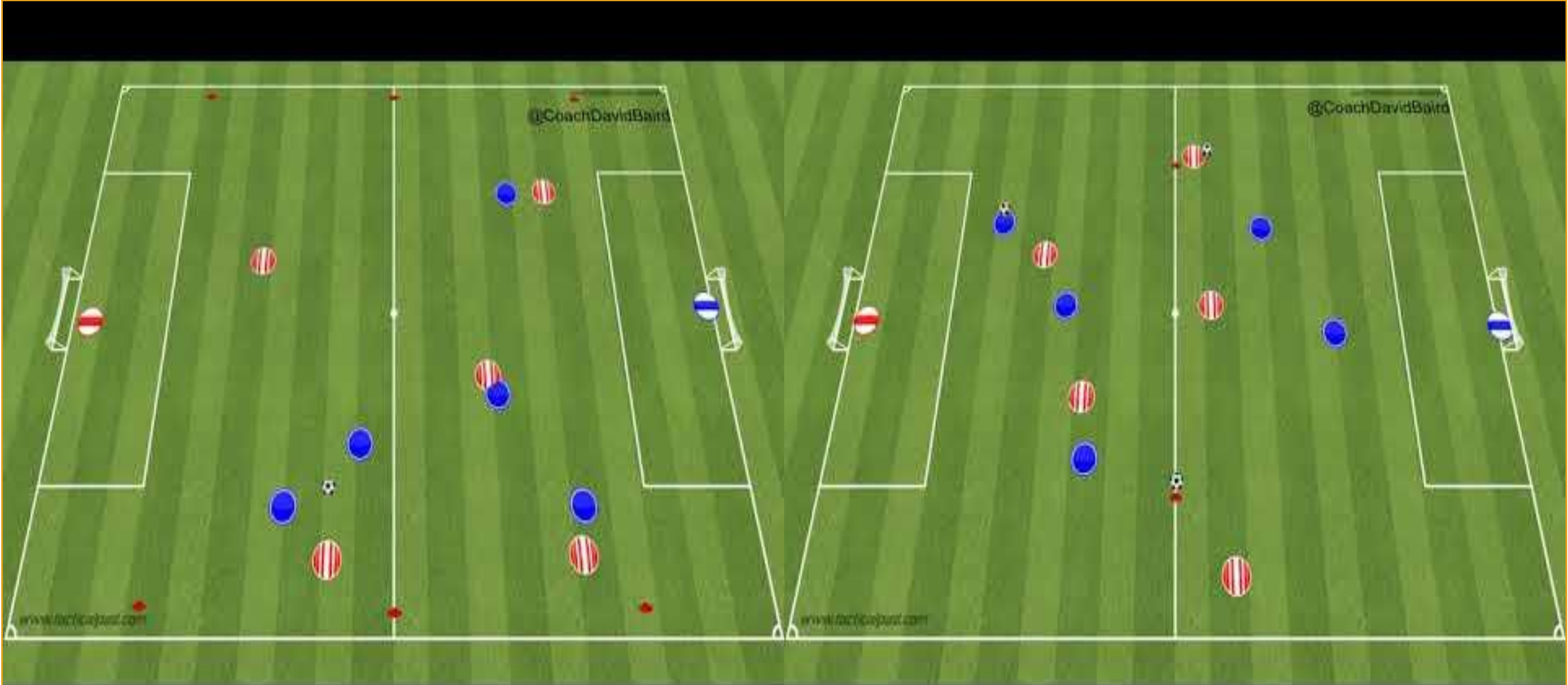
Similar to the last drill make sure there is a rotation on the defenders. You can do the player who gives it away goes in the middle or simply rotate the defenders after a certain amount of time. A key message here is to keep the play simple. Play forward passes and make forward runs across the line. If you have space in front of you and can drive across the line with the ball then do so, whatever will help your team get forward and exploit the numbers advantage that's the right thing to do.

Progressions:

- Again you can have goals for the defender who wins the ball to play into or they can drive across a line of the playing area
- Reference counter pressing again, if you lose the ball press to win it back immediately
- Minimize touches for teams in possession, meaning defenders may sit off you a bit more and longer passes over the top might need to be played.

Progression

Game



A game related practice to work on being ruthless in attack. Essentially the players are playing a normal game and all rules are the usual except there is an added rule. If you give the ball away at any point, the punishment for doing so is to run around a cone on the outside of the pitch. This will mean the team that has just gained possession has a temporary numbers advantage and should use this to go forward and be ruthless in attack.

Attacking when numbers up:

- Keep width\Play with speed
- Don't overthink things, play forward passes early
- However have transition in mind, if your teammates loses it and you are close enough to counter press it may be on to win it back
- Defenders be cautious of counter attack and may need to sit back to provide balance and work on defending outnumbered.

A progression from the last game that introduces some fun and loads of energy to the session. The two teams play a game but if you score a goal the other team can quickly take a ball from the cones on the side of the pitch and start play again. The player who scored cannot re-enter play until they get the ball out of the net and replace the new ball on the cone.

Once again this will give the attacking team an advantage going forward and if they take the speed and use of space from the previous drills they should create great chances on goal.

Scanning and communication is important for the team who have just transitioned to attack so two players don't go for a ball as they can only take one off the cone.

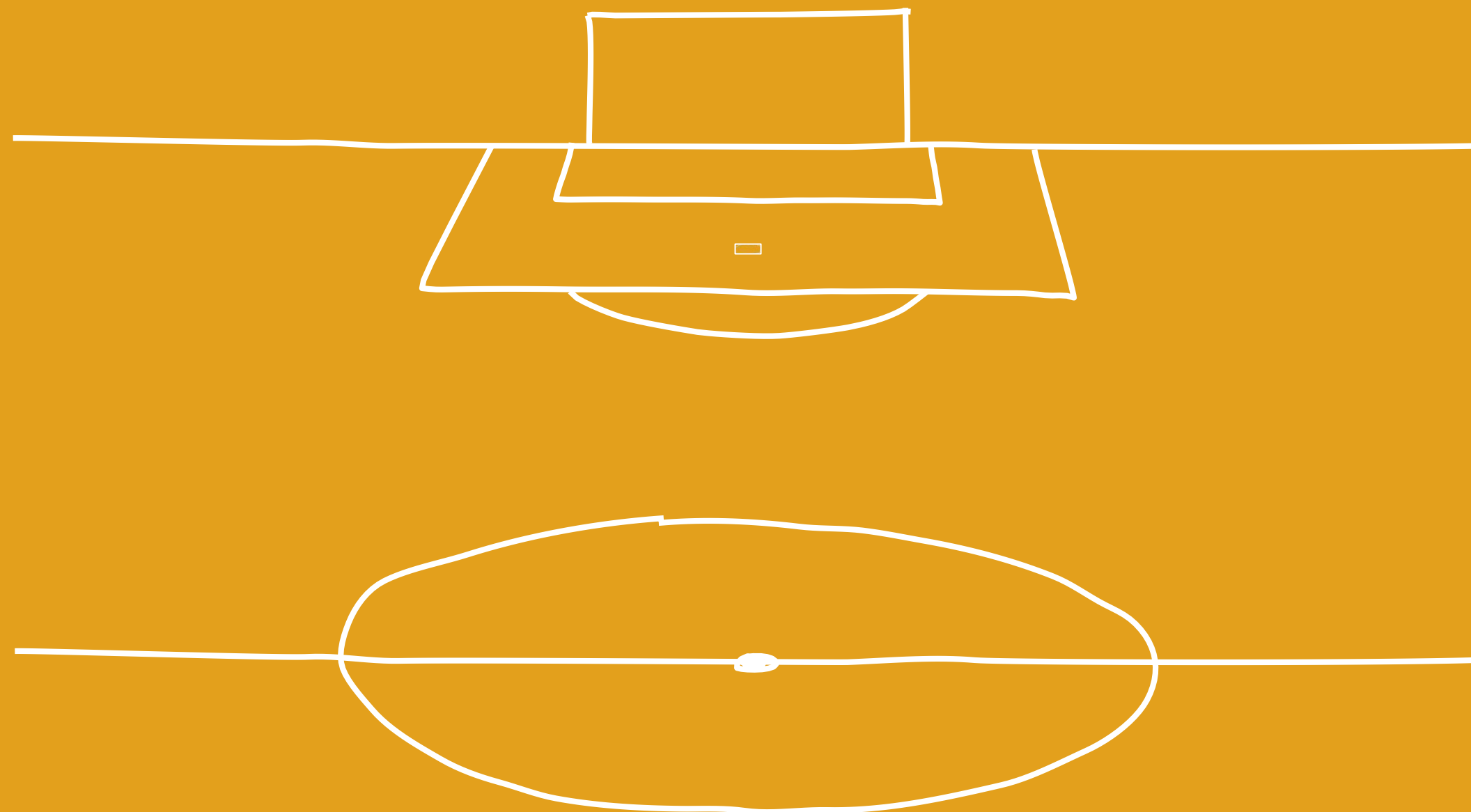
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

5

Close Control, Change Direction, Accelerate

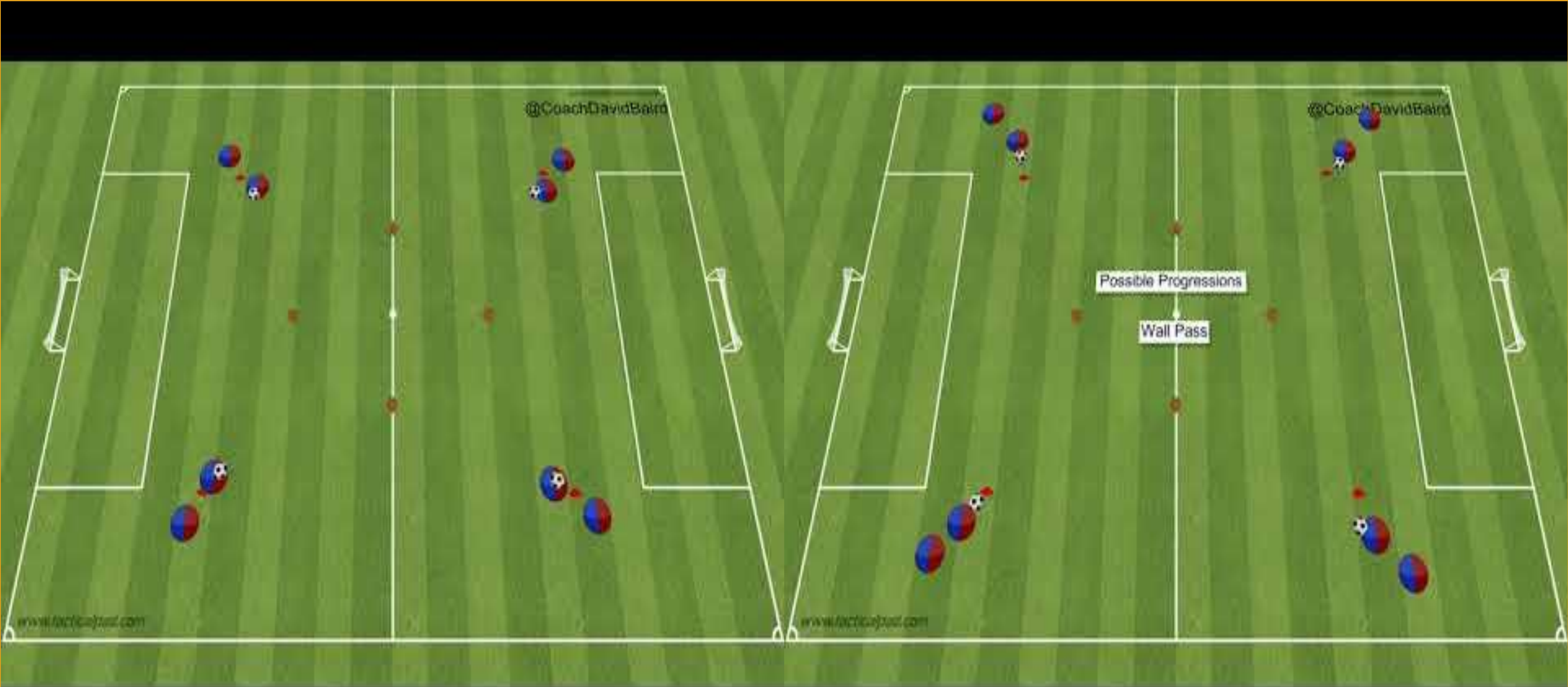
The formula for a
successful 1v1 attack

Not getting past players when attacking one v one? It is likely that young players may be losing control of the ball, not alluding players with their feints or travelling too slow. This session breaks down the key formula for success when attacking one v one and helps players work on that formula in game like situations.



Introduction

Development



The set up will allow you to coach and players to practice the basic formula for a successful 1v1 attacking situation. Close control, change direction, accelerate.

Using the cone to practice on, approach with the ball under control, this can be achieved by pushing the ball using the front of your small toe and having your toes pushed towards the ground and heel facing the sky. Touch the ball with every step you take with the non kicking foot, travel at pace but not at 100%

As your reach the cone work on sharp, instant changes of direction such as body feints, step overs, scissors. Once you have successfully passed the cone accelerate into the space as the defender would turn and track you. Accelerate with a slightly bigger touch then travel still touching the ball with every step but take bigger strides to attack space.

Coaching:

- lift your head to scan with every couple of touches of the ball
- exaggerate feints as you change direction to lose defender
- burst out the other side of moves and perform skills with confidence

This exercise shows some development from the last drill and possible progressions to add to the drill. It is important that after a successful 1v1 we have an end product.

Here I show the following adaptations:

Wall Pass - aiming to have the ball under control to provide the final product with is a pass and support to a teammate

Finishing - if you are blessed with goals/goalkeepers around the pitch you could shoot coming out of your 1v1

Another Defender - there is a gate and the defender is stuck on the line of this gate, only allowed to move side to side, try and use the formula and moves worked on to go by the live defender

Tip: reference the quality of players like Leo Messi, a great example of a player taking on a player and then playing a wall pass, or having a quick shot on goal, or then taking on another player!

Progression

Game



This progression will really test your close control, scanning, changes of direction and acceleration.

Each player has a ball and is attempting to get in and out of the middle area without banging into another player or ball (will result in you not getting a point) or losing it to a defender (will result in you swapping roles with that defender). You must get through the middle zone then drive the ball outside of the bigger square to get a point, turn and go again. See who can get the most points. This drill gives coaching opportunities for each aspect of the formula and allows practice in a pressured situation:

- Close Control - Travel at a good pace towards the middle square but keep the ball close enough that you won't bang into someone, lose the ball to a defender and are ready to perform your change of direction
- Scanning - Need to know where the defenders are, where the space is to attack and where other players around you are, just like a real game
- Change of Direction - Change direction sharp to get away from defenders/other players and get out a side where there is space to drive into
- Acceleration - Once through the centre area you need to drive all the way to the outside of the bigger area before getting a point

All of the above is done with precision and in competition with the other players to see who can get in and out the most using the formula worked on.

Essentially finishing on a game with a few conditions to focus on close control, change direction, accelerate.

It is a full game but there are four wide gates on the pitch, if you go through a gate in a forward direction at any point that is a goal for your team. The middle area is the same, if you enter 1 side of the diamond and go out another with a dribble then that is a point for your team. Scoring a goal is 3 points as that is the best option.

- Decision making - sometimes the best idea is to play backwards and try and travel forward through gates to pull the opposition team towards your goal and create space to go forward.
- The defenders will be mindful of stopping you from going through a gate, it is great practice to drive towards the gate and feint as if you are going through it then you can use a change of direction to cut inside and use the final product from previous drills such as have a shot on goal - again think of Messi.

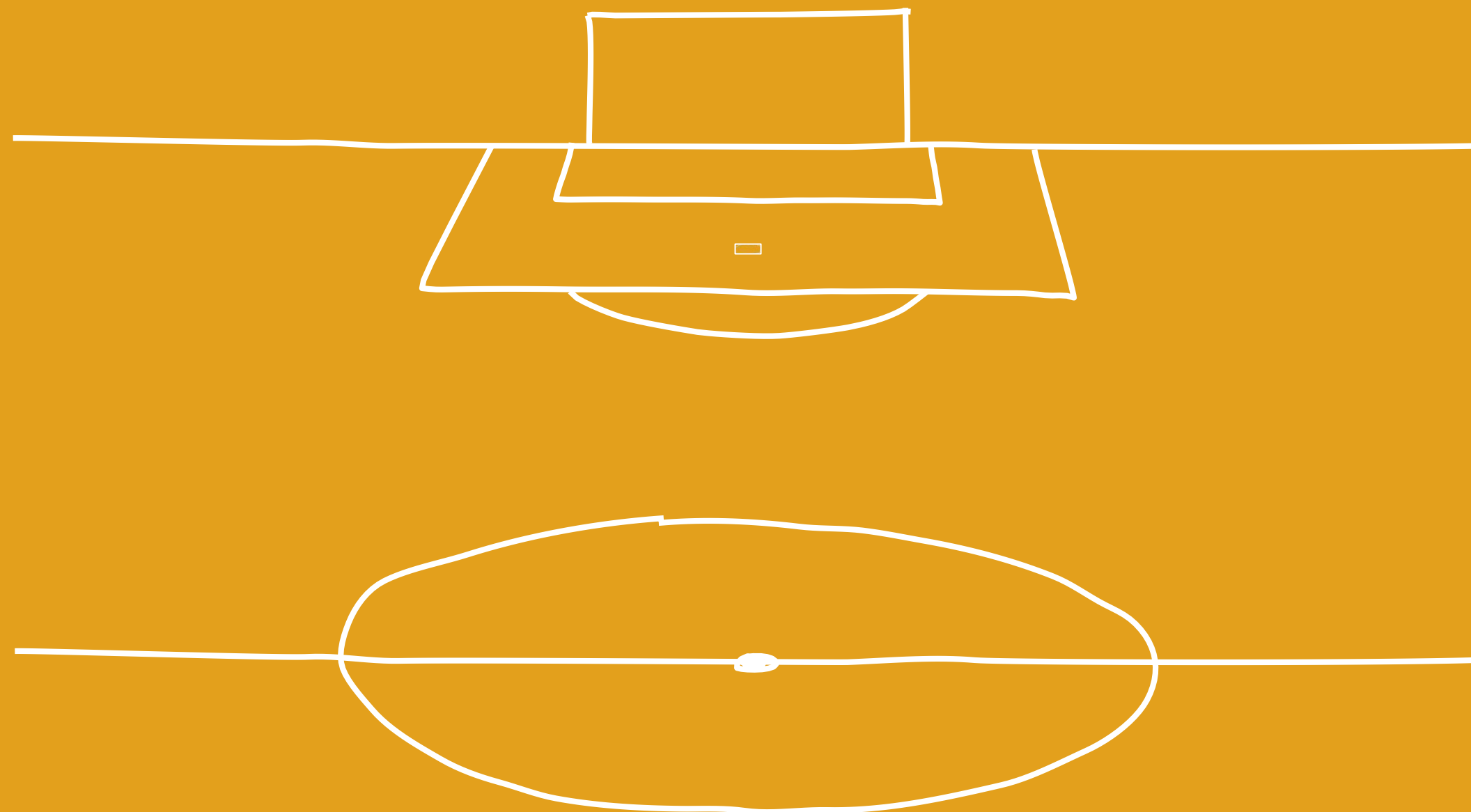
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

6

Creating Angles to Receive

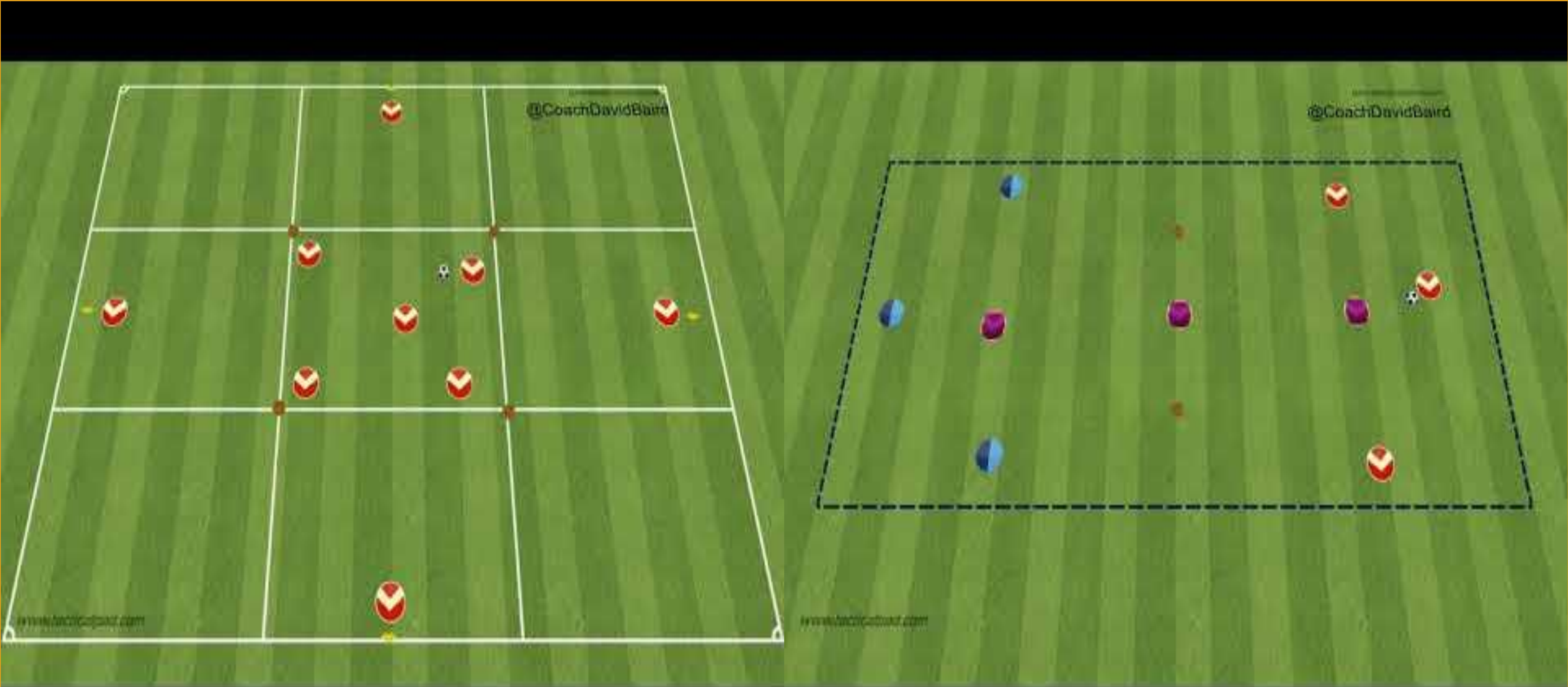
Always be looking
to get the ball

A rondo based session where I like to tell players “the ball has eyes and it must always see your feet”. Travel as the ball travels, this may just be a few quick steps to give an angle for a pass and get on the ball. Encourage all players in your team to create angles to receive making it very difficult for opposition to shut off passing lanes.



Introduction

Development



A 9 player passing pattern that will be tough to adapt with other numbers. If you don't have 9 players for this session things can easily be adapted.

For example to warm up instead of doing this exercise I would stick to a basic Rondo with 2 players in the middle and the outside players looking to give angles to receive sideways passes or the split pass through the middle.

Or use another passing pattern to bed in the idea of creating an angle to receive the ball and move it on quickly either 1 or 2 touch.

This pattern shows a routine where the ball is passed to the left then set to the player on the same line before being driven across diagonally. On timing the run the next player steps in to play a pass outside the square and the routine continues as shown in the animation. You will notice the player who sets the ball before it is played out always does this role, therefore rotate them after a certain amount of time or the coach can do this role meaning the passing pattern can work well if you have 8 players and you do the set role.

Progression:
See how many passes you can make doing it all 1 touch.

This rondo shows two 3v1 rondo's trying to move the ball and create the correct angle to pass and receive through the middle gate. The team that gives the ball away becomes the 3 defenders.

There is lots of ways to adapt this drill. It is a good one to incorporate the GK into, having him/her as the screening player looking to stop the driven pass through the gate by saving the ball.

- Adaptations:
- Make the middle gate tighter or wider depending on age and ability level
 - Make the playing area bigger or smaller depending on age and ability level
 - Play 2 touch maximum to challenge players
 - Make a minimum amount of passes before trying to play through the gate for a point

Coaching:
Creating angles is all about moving as the ball moves and making sure you're always an option for the ball. Have your body shape so your hips are open, you're on your toes ready to receive and move as the ball travels.

Progression

Game



6 v 3 Rondo. As you can see each player has a zone to stay in, the 3 defenders can go anywhere in their hunt for the ball.

Having a set zone means players must utilize space and play quickly once they receive the ball. The aim is to make at least 10 passes before playing a forward pass into a goal with a 1 touch finish.

You can also introduce pressing to the 3 defenders here and show them how to angle their body to show the play in a certain direction to then close space and win the ball as a team.

-Make the playing area bigger or smaller depending on age and ability level.

-Play 2 touch maximum to challenge players

Essentially finishing on a game with a few conditions to focus on close control, change direction, accelerate.

It is a full game but there are four wide gates on the pitch, if you go through a gate in a forward direction at any point that is a goal for your team. The middle area is the same, if you enter 1 side of the diamond and go out another with a dribble then that is a point for your team. Scoring a goal is 3 points as that is the best option.

Decision making - sometimes the best idea is to play backwards and try and travel forward through gates to pull the opposition team towards your goal and create space to go forward.

The defenders will be mindful of stopping you from going through a gate, it is great practice to drive towards the gate and feint as if you are going through it then you can use a change of direction to cut inside and use the final product from previous drills such as have a shot on goal - again think of Messi.

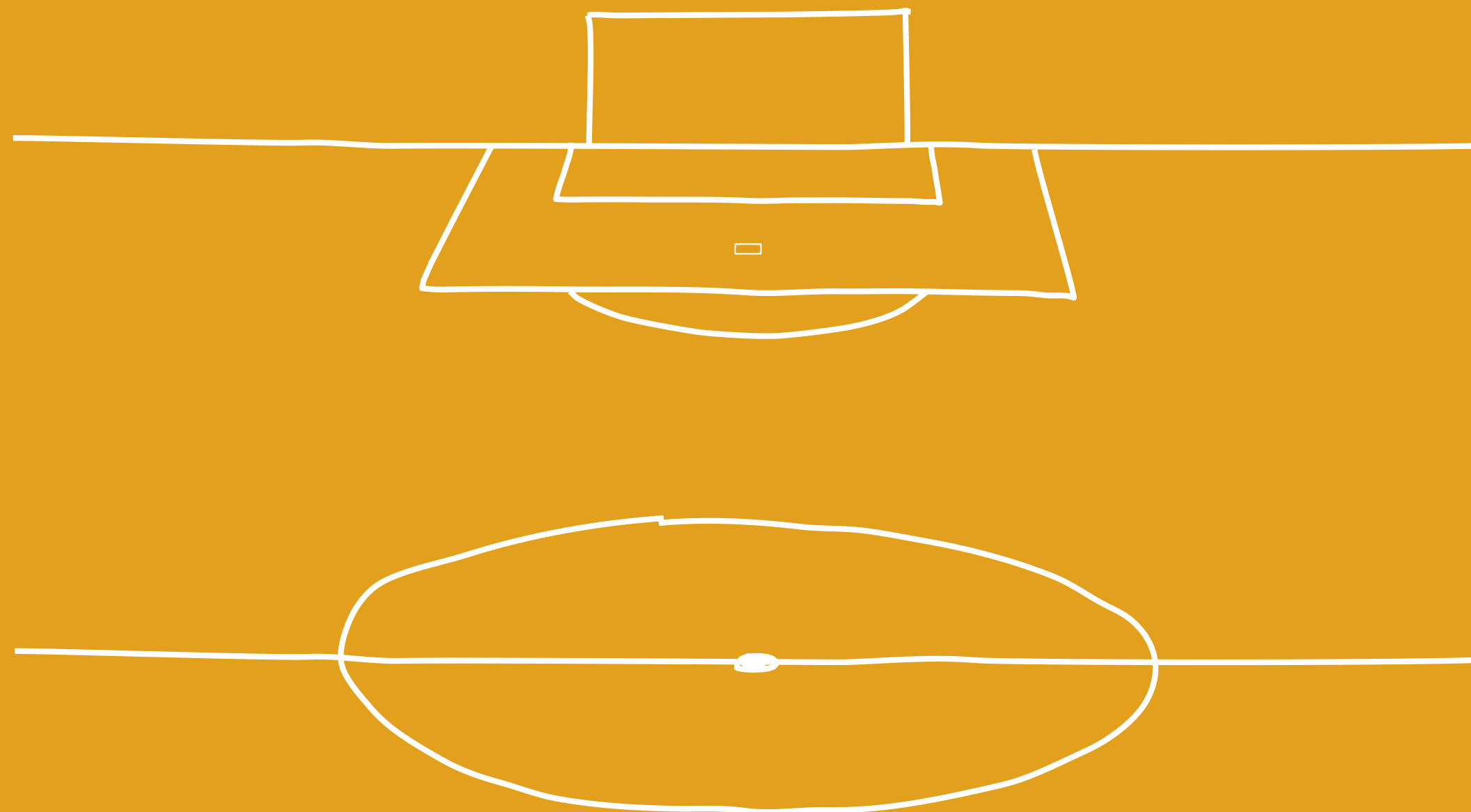
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

7

Force the Ball Wide

Prevent the opposition
having the ball in
dangerous areas

When pressing the ball and setting traps to win it off the opposition, it is important that all players are attempting to achieve the same thing. If forcing the ball into wide areas to win it is a strategy of your team, use this session to give key information to players on individually showing wide but also working as a team to keep the ball away from the dangerous central area.



Development

Progression



6 v 3 with two colors working together against the 3 pressing players. Play a time limit to see how many times the 3 pressing players can win the ball and play into a goal or back to the coach (feeder), After time limit switch the 3 in the middle.

Possession team:

Keep shape, always with a central player who can rotate in and out to get on the ball. Encourage using the middle player as much as possible but if the simple option is to keep the ball circulating then do this until you can play through the middle player. (adaptation to drill could be to have a competition between the possession team and pressing team, with the possession team getting a point every time they successfully play through the middle players and the pressing team get a point every time they win the ball)

Pressing team:

- Approach at pace and at an angle
- Always check shoulder and block passes into central player
- Avoid central passes and be ready to press your closest man
- Show player on the ball channel passes
- Set traps to crowd out and win the ball

The 3 in possession are aiming to create the opportunity to play through the middle markers avoiding the screening player winning the ball.

The team in possession must make at least 3 passes before playing forward, they can play down a channel but get no points for this as this is exactly what the pressing team want to force or they want to win the ball and score a goal.

The team that gives away the ball becomes the defenders.

Two players press but you must always have 1 screening, paint the picture of this player stopping passes through the lines, into central midfielder or strikers feet. The screening player always needs to be scanning to know what the movement is like behind him/her.

Progressions:

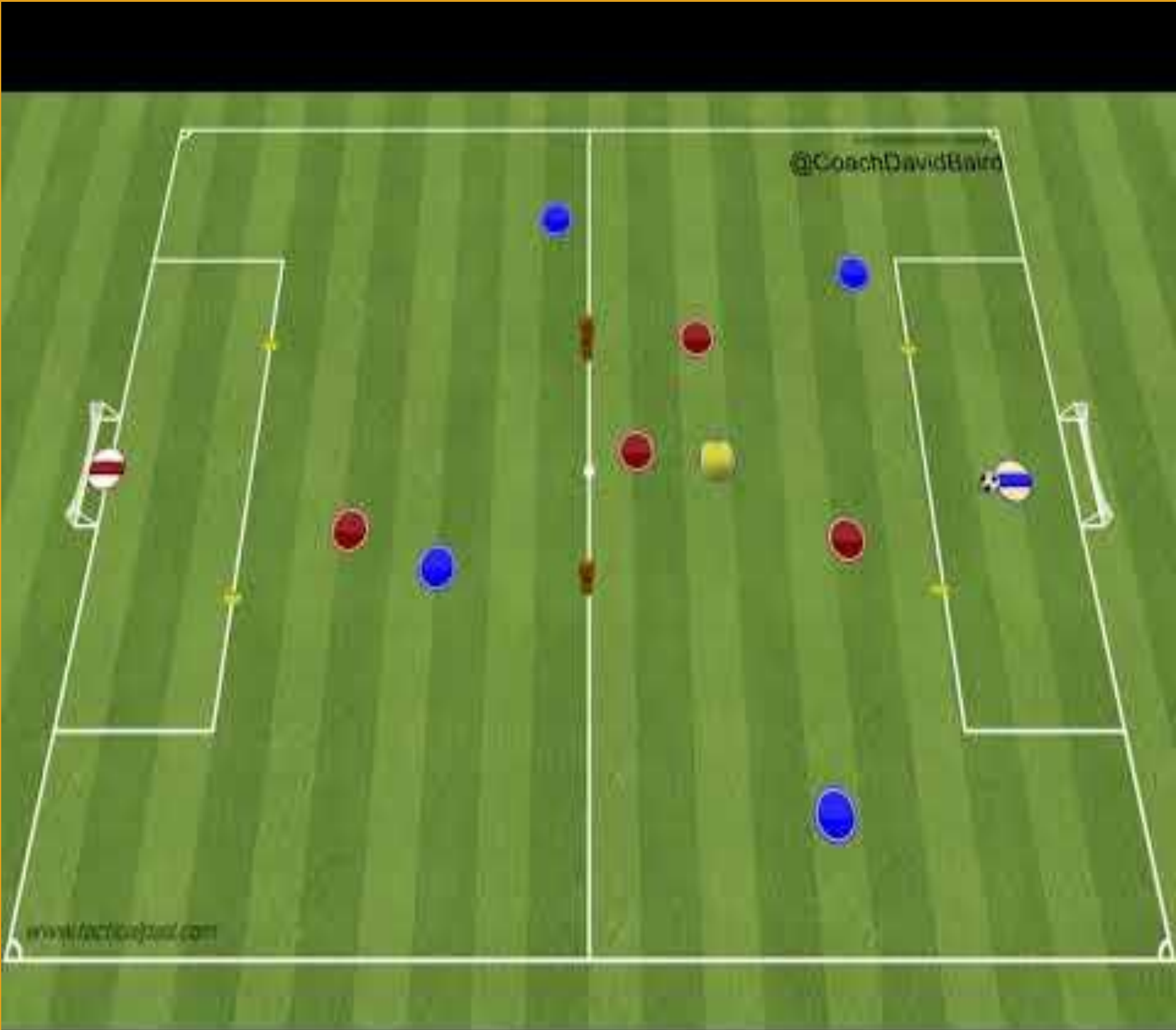
- Minimize touches

Coaching:

3 players = 1 press to show wide, 1 cut off middle and ready to press the next ball, 1 screen forward passes and mark middle

Game

#FutureAtTheirFeet



This game is simply a 3v3+1 with GK in each goal.

The cones run the middle area of the pitch, the area we have been trying to keep the ball out of throughout the session. Play a normal game but if your team can score a goal in the breadth of the middle section it is worth 3 goals.

This means out of possession you need to show wide and be compact in the middle, knowing when to press and when to sit off and frustrate the other team when the ball is near the goal. It will also show young players that you can let the team get the ball in wide areas which will be a trap to press. If the ball is in a wide zone the team should press it and stop any central passes with the furthest away zone forgotten about, as we can shift across as the ball travels.

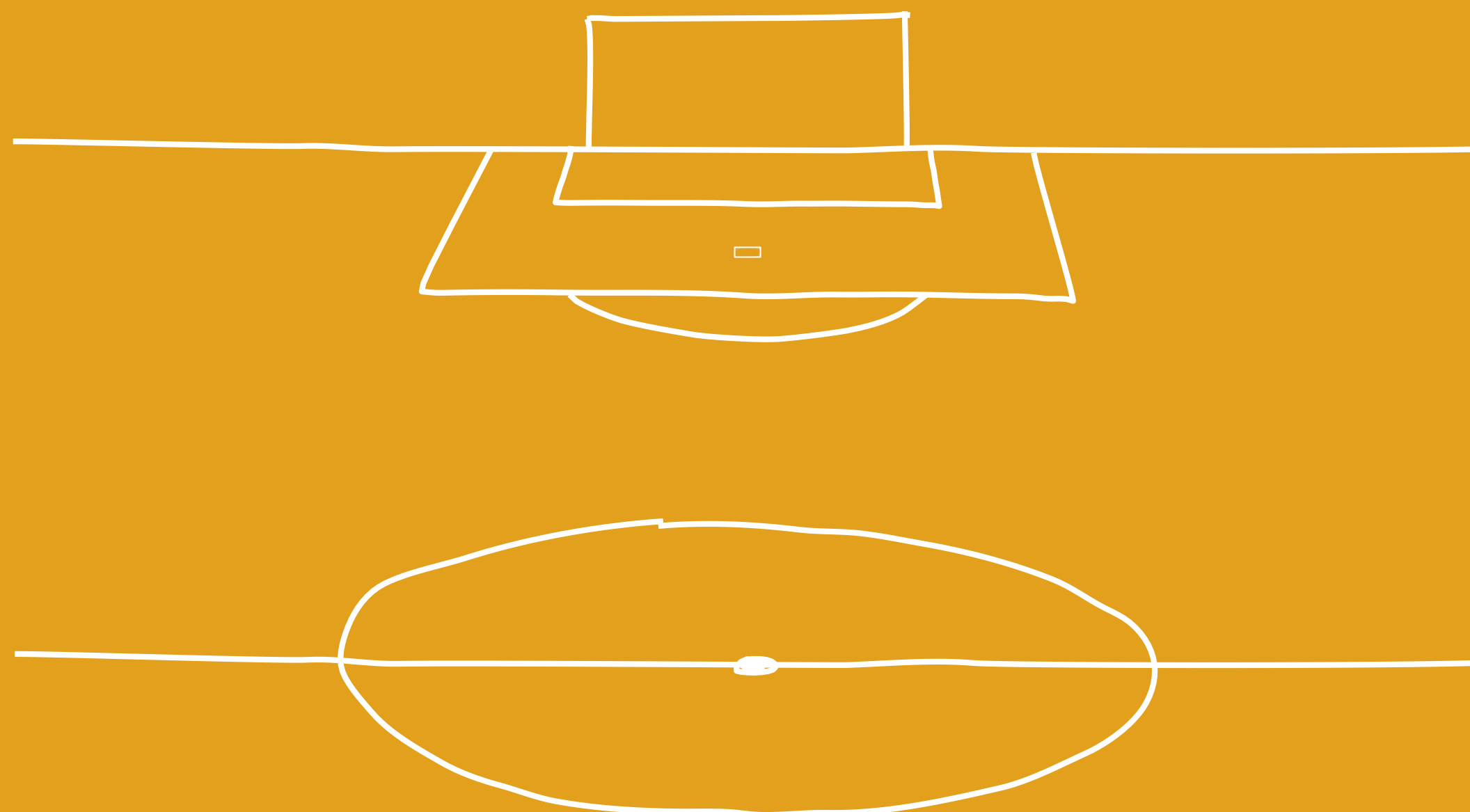
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game

8

Go Alone or Pass

A key decision for young
players make, every
situation is different

As coaches we see it all the time. Young players making poor decisions in possession, passing when the shot or dribble was the best option or shooting when there was someone in a better position. This session will help young players be more mindful of what they do with the ball in key areas of the pitch and as a coach you can pose open questions with players to assess their decision making.



Introduction

Development



2v1 with recovering defender. Painting the picture and stressing the importance of decision making for young players.

With a brief numbers advantage the aim here is to play quick and create a chance on goal. If the defender presses the player on the ball the best option may be to pass to the other player, if they stand off then going alone and taking a shot may be the best option.

Defending - coach delaying the attack by cutting off the pass with a side on body position and trying to narrow down the angle for the player on the ball, always showing away from goal and delaying for the recovering defender to get back.

If the defenders win the ball they have a goal they can score into.

Teach striker movement, scanning to know what's around you and show young players their options depending on what the defenders decide to do. Make it fun and competitive between the teams.

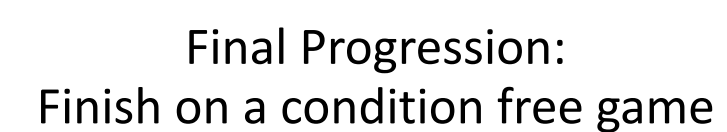
4v2 with 2 recovering defenders.

Similar to before now with more decision making. The first two passes are free then the defenders come alive as shown in the animation. Either play wide then support or play through the defensive lines and support.

As an attacking 4v2 with 2 recovering defenders it's important to keep width to stretch the other team and play quickly to make the numerical advantage count. Again paint pictures for young players in regards to where they can move to and create space to allow themselves or a teammate to get on the ball.

Progression:

The coach can throw in a 'bonus ball' if he/she thinks the quality and effort is coming out in the drill, this can be played to anyone and players must react to play 4v4. If they get the bonus ball they react to create width, 1v1s, passing lanes and shots on goal as shown throughout the session. If they do not get the ball they react to recover back in a position to defend or delay the attack for teammates to get back - again something addressed throughout.

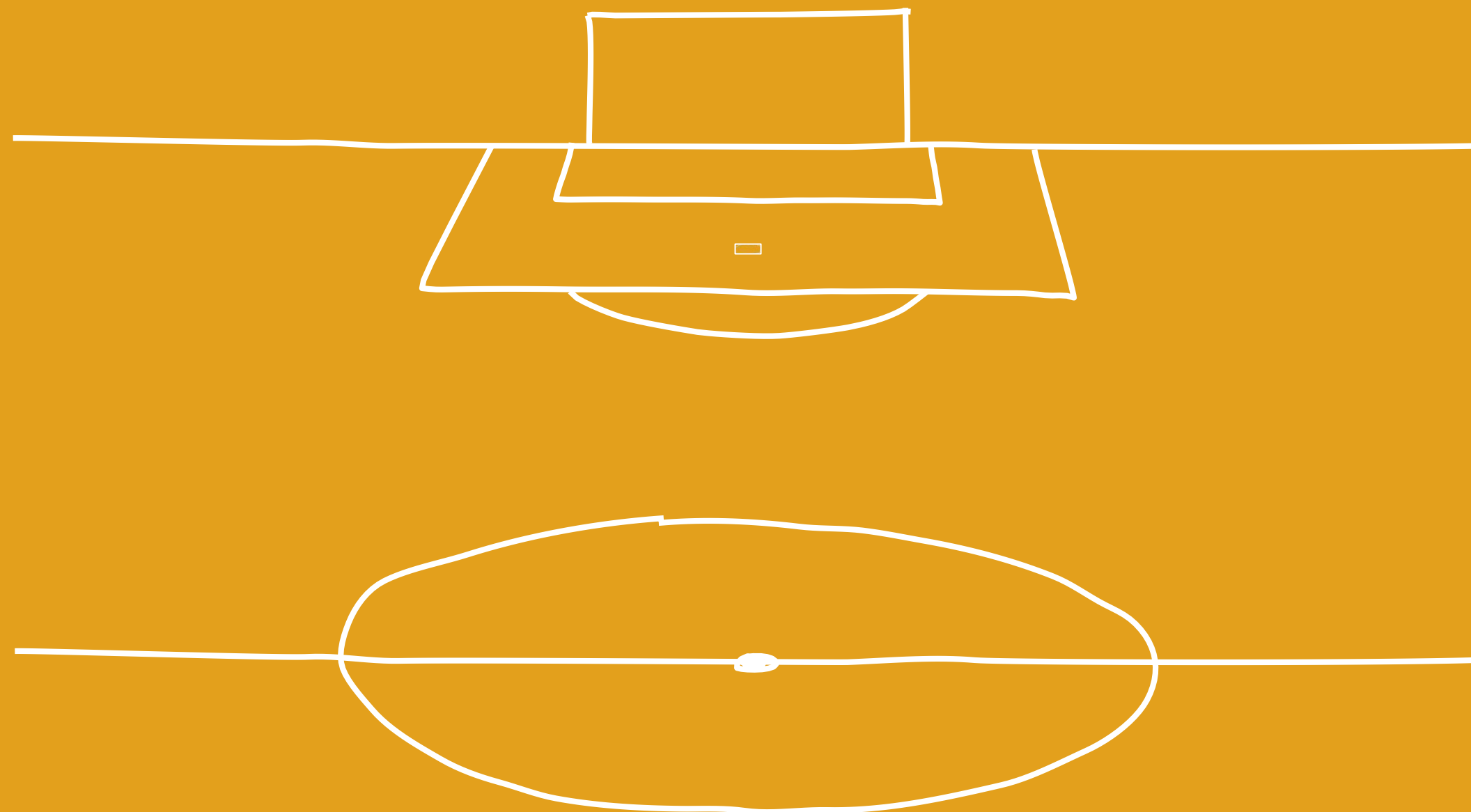


9

Identify Space

Scanning means you'll
always be one step ahead

Don't get caught in possession by not knowing what you are going to do with the ball when it arrives at your feet. A key message in this session and throughout the drills in **#FutureatTheirFeet** is to constantly be scanning to see potential passes, defending players and space to attack.



Introduction

Development



This identify the space session is all about being aware of where the defender is and where the opportunities are to dribble, move or pass into.

On this first exercise the players work together to pass and move up and through the gates, when the pass is played through the final gate the passing player runs around the top cone and presses to win the ball. The receiving player needs to be aware of where the defender is coming from and also where their target yellow gate is to take a positive touch and get the ball through that gate with either a drill then shot on goal or a driven pass through the gate into the goal if the defender is getting tight.


On returning to the start of the drill, players swap roles. Keep the game flowing by having the next team start early, perhaps once the pair before them pass through their second gate then start and see if you can move quickly enough to catch the. Work the drill down both sides.

Progression:
Make the gate smaller or take it away and make it a 1v1 to goal.

The players work in pairs in this exercise with one pair starting as the passive defenders. The defenders run around the area looking to stand in gates that the others are trying to attack to prevent them from getting points. Every time a team passes the ball through a gate they get a point and they're competing with the other teams to see who can get the most points within a time limit dictated by the coach. Encourage players to move the ball with positive dribbling and passes to get to open gates and always be scanning to identify 'space' or open gates which is the aim of this exercise.

- Progression:
- Tell attackers they can't go through the same coloured gate twice in a row to further encourage scanning and identifying space around them
 - Make the defenders live, so every time they get a touch of the ball your team goes back to 0 points. This will encourage the players to build up points quickly and avoid the defenders, always identifying space on the pitch to move into or open gates. Swap the defenders as necessary.

Game



Identify space/decision making game. This game is normally done best with 1 or 2 roaming players that helps the team in possession.

Each team can score in any of the 4 goals but before they do so they must go through at least 1 gate with a pass and a dribble. Every gate they go for is a point and if they put the ball in the net at the end of the move those points equal goals. For example if you put the ball in a net after going through 6 gates you will get 6 goals for that.

This will really encourage finding and utilizing space as players will want to get open to receive passes or dribble through gates to get points and they will be excited to see the biggest number they can make and finish off the move.

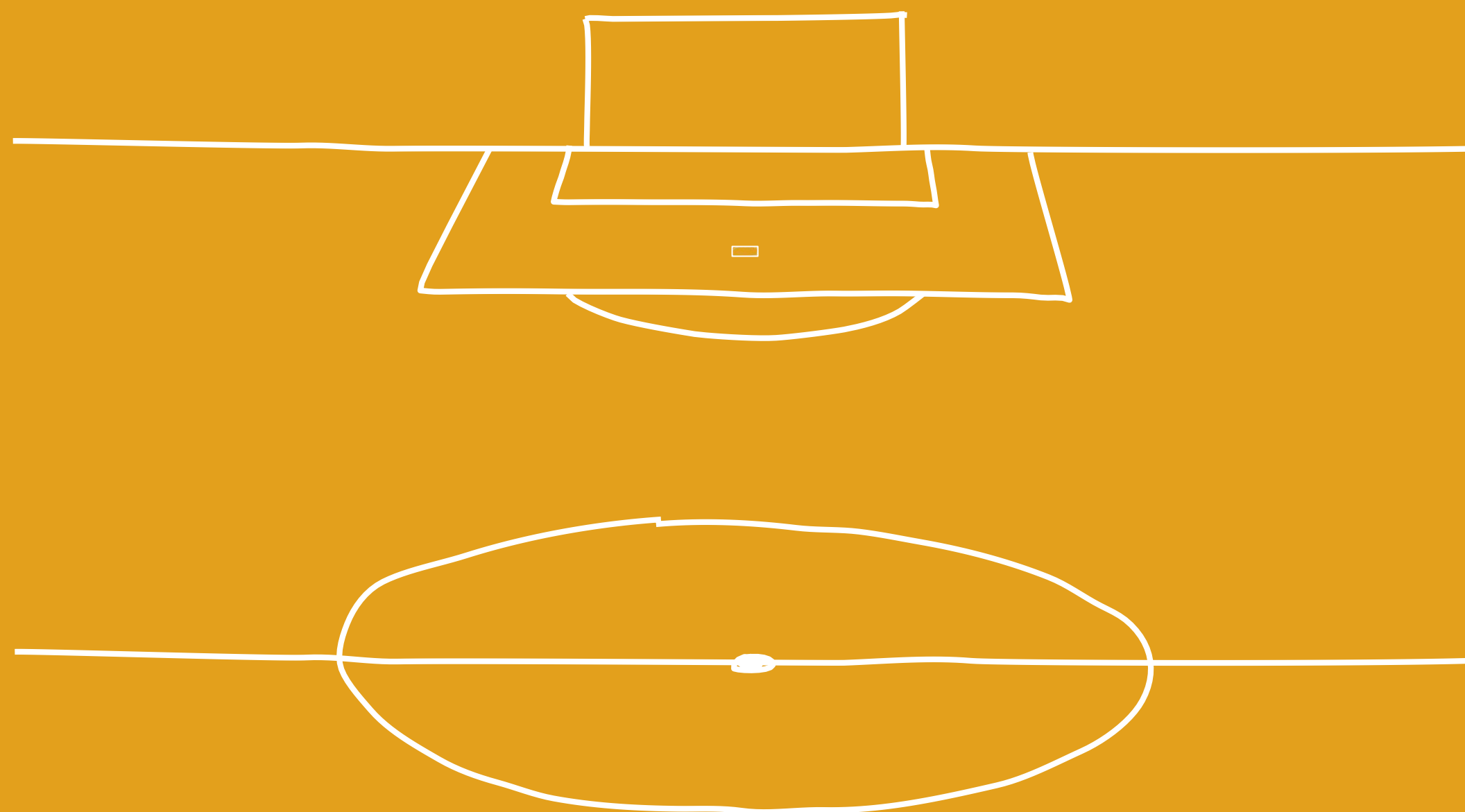
Progression:
Make it directional by attacking and defending 2 goals each

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

10 Overlapping Runs

Creative movement to
create forward play

The overlap is something defenders find very hard to deal with. Overlapping runs may allow players to get on the ball in dangerous high and wide areas or may serve as a decoy for the player on the ball to drive into an even more dangerous central position.



Introduction

Development



A passing pattern to introduce the overlapping run that will be constant throughout this session. Move the ball with pace and time the run to arrive on the ball at pace and ready to be positive, play forward and support to restart the move.

When overlapping ask for the ball and demand it just in front of you so you don't need to break stride moving onto the ball.

After you have worked the pattern down one side for a while then switch to working the other side. The trigger for the overlap is the player passing it to the opposite side and stepping into the pass, once you recognize this there is space for you to join in the attack with an overlap.

Progression:
Play one touch

A similar pattern but over a more realistic distance and going towards goal so there is an end product to the move.

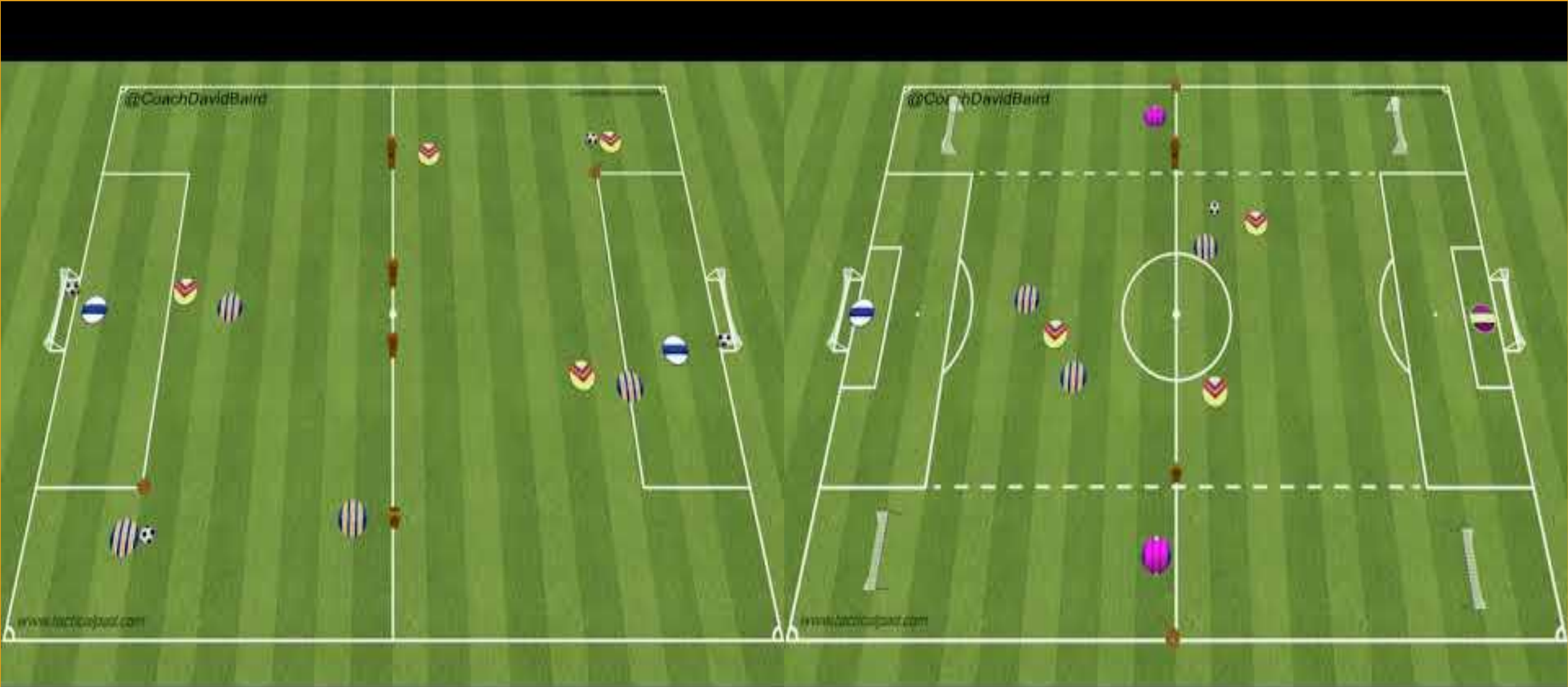
As before when the wide player who could be a winger in the game steps into the pitch, it's a trigger for the player who started the move (maybe a full back) to make the overlapping run and demand it in front of them to drive to goal. This exercise gives a good opportunity to also address finishing when 1v1 with the keeper.

Progression:

Both sides can start their move at the same time and compete to score first, make it competitive by keeping score and giving points for goals and bonus points for scoring first.

Progression

Game



A progression from the last drill where a player from the opposite team becomes a recovering defender.

Now stress the quality of the through ball to put the overlapping player in on goal, a quality through ball will take the defender out the game and not be too close to the keeper so he/she can come and collect.

If the defender is able to defend you may need to cut inside or take a touch to accelerate past the oncoming defender

Progressions:

- If the defender wins the ball have them drive across the line of cones in the middle of the field to work on defence to attack transition
- If you wish to help the players get more success the player playing the through ball can support the overlapping player to go 2v1 to goal
- If you wish to challenge the quality of the through ball more and the quality of the overlapping players run, touch and finish then have the player who played the through ball recover back to defend after making this pass making it a 1v2 to goal for the overlapping player.

In this game there are two wide players who play for the team in possession. Before scoring a goal you must get the ball to one of these players, once they get the ball they are free to drive into the pitch with the ball.

There are two ways to score, regularly in the middle goals after you have had a wide player touch the ball in the wide zone or by a central player going into the wide zone (overlapping) and this unlocks them to be allowed to score in the small goals in the zone.

Encourage the trigger, overlap, through ball and finishing from the previous exercises.

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

*Look after the
players and the team
will look after itself*

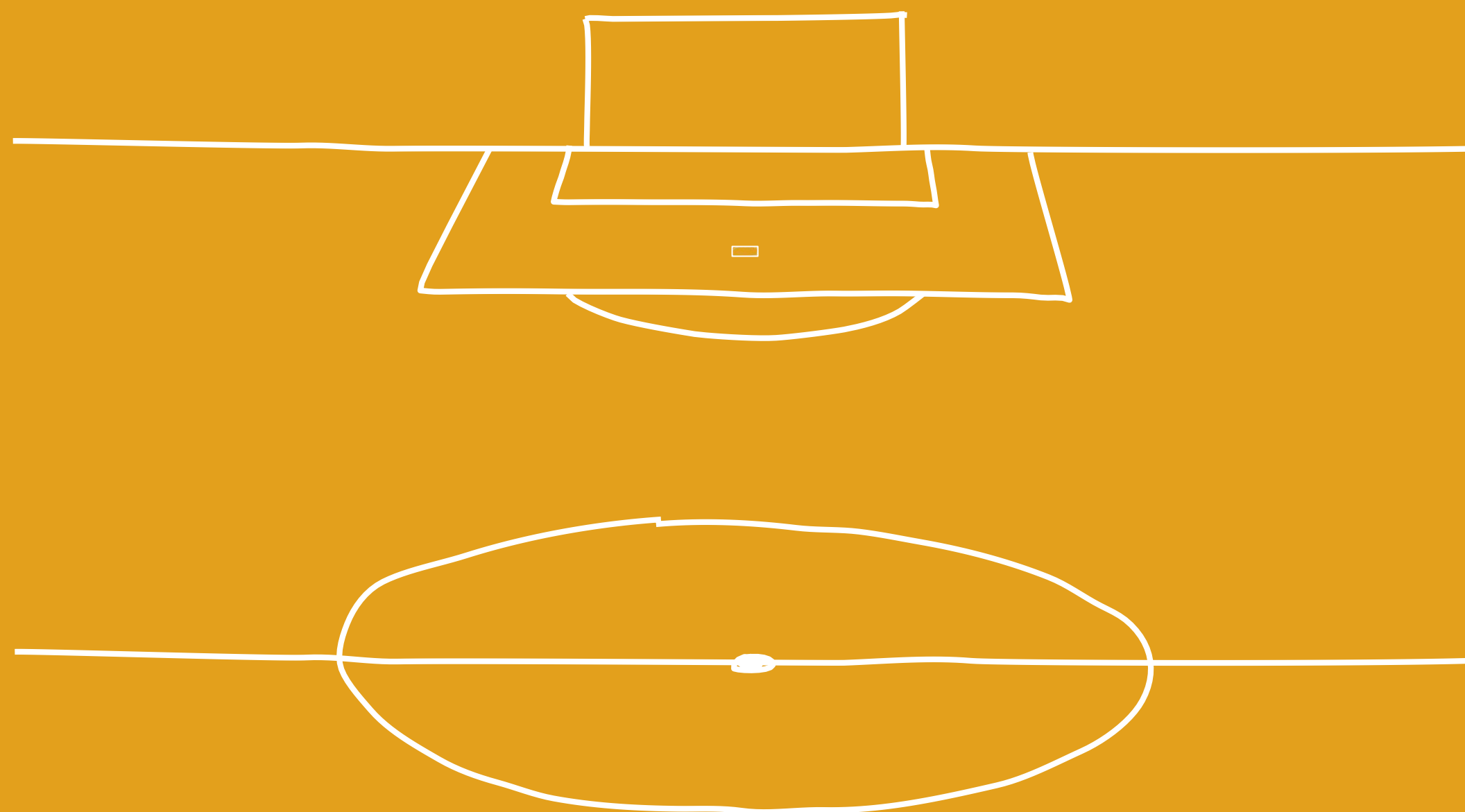
Coaches Notes:

11

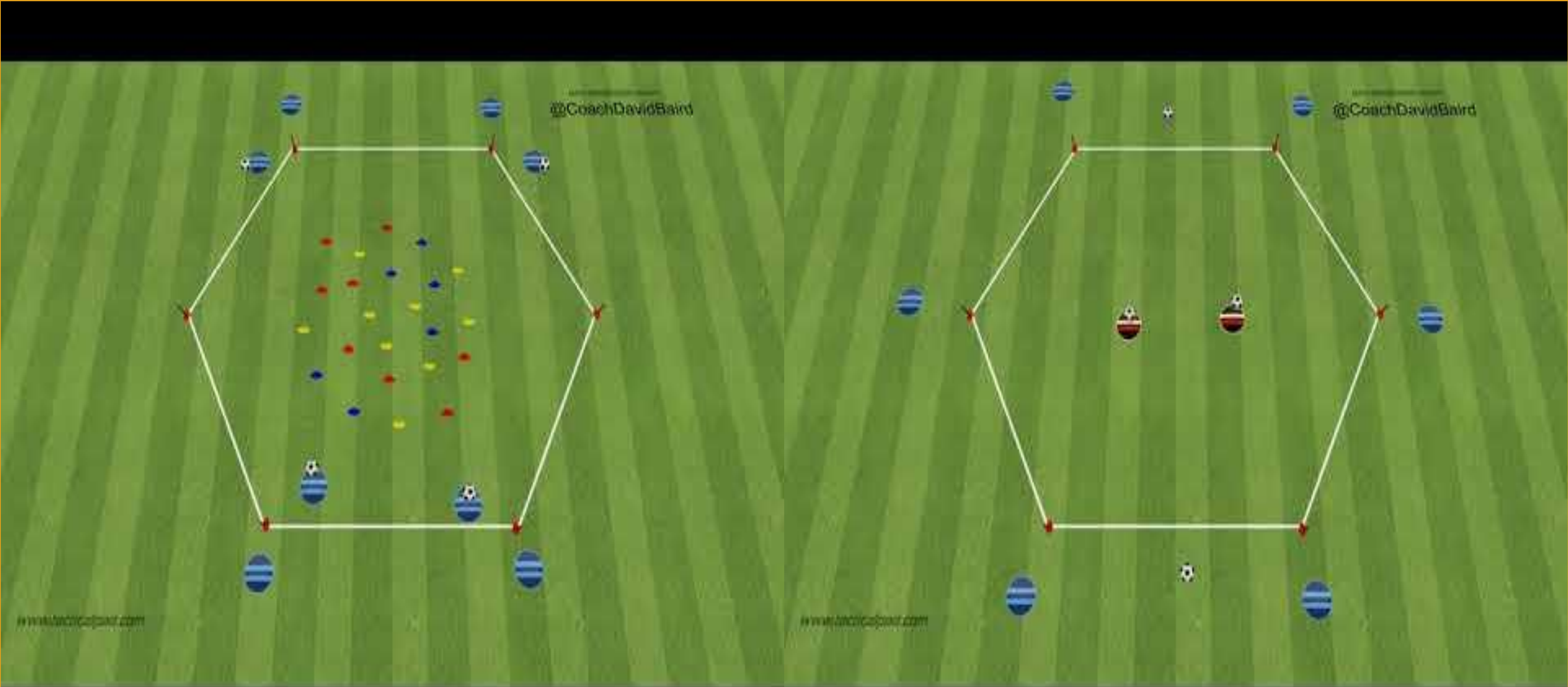
Pass with Tempo

Let the ball do the work

A simple and straight forward passing session that most players will be able to have success with, however the real challenge is not just to be able to do the drills, but to do them with great tempo. The modern game of football is played at lightning speed and players should constantly challenge themselves to move the ball quicker.



Introduction



This warm up circuit will work on technique and give the players plenty of touches of the ball. Stress the importance of players using both feet and using all different parts to perform different skills during this warm up.

From the bottom of the grid players work diagonally through the cones, getting as many touches as they can and keeping the ball close to their feet, this section is close control and foot skills and players should count how many touches they get going through the grid at a steady speed, the next time they go through they should aim to beat the number of touches achieved last time.

From the top of the grid players work back using a different method of running with the ball, here they are driving with the ball under control at a good tempo attacking space, when they come to the cone they use a skill as if to take on a defender in the game, going past with a quick change of direction and change of speed, all the while keeping the ball under control.

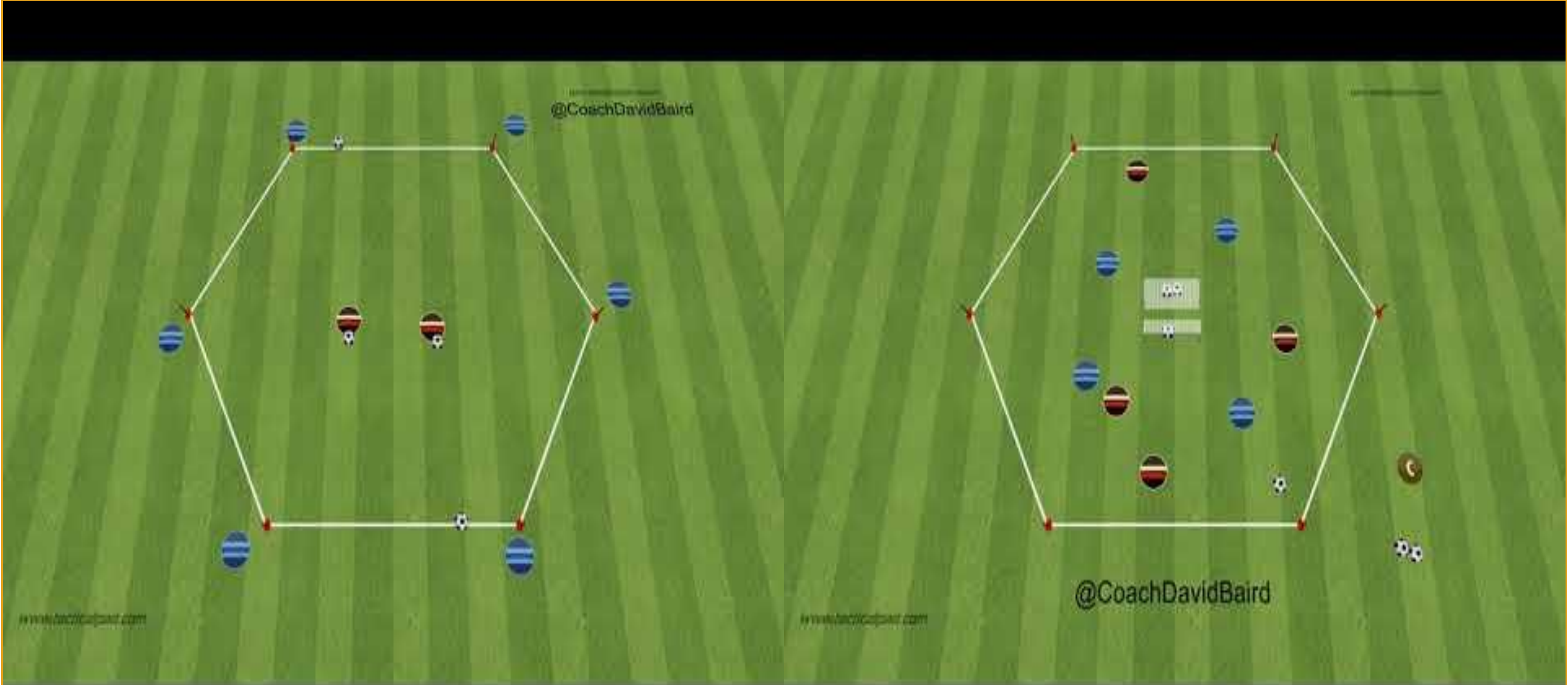
Development

A passing sequence shown using 6 players. I have 2 extra players in my session who will sub in and out of the drills, when not involved here they are working on their keepy ups in the middle of the drill. Or they could be passing to each other or keeping a ball up between them. Be creative with ideas to keep all players involved, maximum participation is key and there is always ways to use all players, here I could simply add them to the drill and have players follow their pass, or I could give them a role as coach and they can shout ‘change direction’ while doing their keepy ups to prompt the working players to think and perform the drill in the opposite direction without losing tempo.

This session is all about tempo and tiki taka. Demand that players drive passes into team mates, stress the importance of strong firm passes on the ground and little checks off the cone to receive open body while constantly scanning.

Progression

Game



Triangular passing comes into play now and the idea of the ‘set pass.’ The first ball is driven in and then the next ball is set back so the player behind the ball can step onto it and drive the next pass. Drive, set, drive set, always thinking about the weight of our pass and moving at the best possible tempo we can.

Keep the ball on the ground by punching through the centre of the ball with a firm ankle and head down. A good skill to add and work on here is concentration, time how long players can keep performing this tempo exercise before a laps of concentration leads to a poor pass. No player will want to be the one to make the first poor pass and all players should want to beat the previous time they set.

Here the team in possession look to work the ball around the playing area and create the chance to score in either middle goal. An optional stipulation is that teams must make a certain number of passes before scoring.

This game should allow players to work on their foot skills and moves from the first drill and they will have opportunity to go 1v1 to goal. Or to tire out the opposition and create gaps to pass the ball into the net they can circulate the ball like in the previous drills. Using the driven and set pass to dictate the tempo of the game.

Adaptation:

- Add a roaming player to help the team in possession
- Test technique by making the area smaller or aid payers by making it bigger
- Dictate minimum or maximum amount of touches players can take
- Reward goal scoring by allowing the team that scored to start with the ball

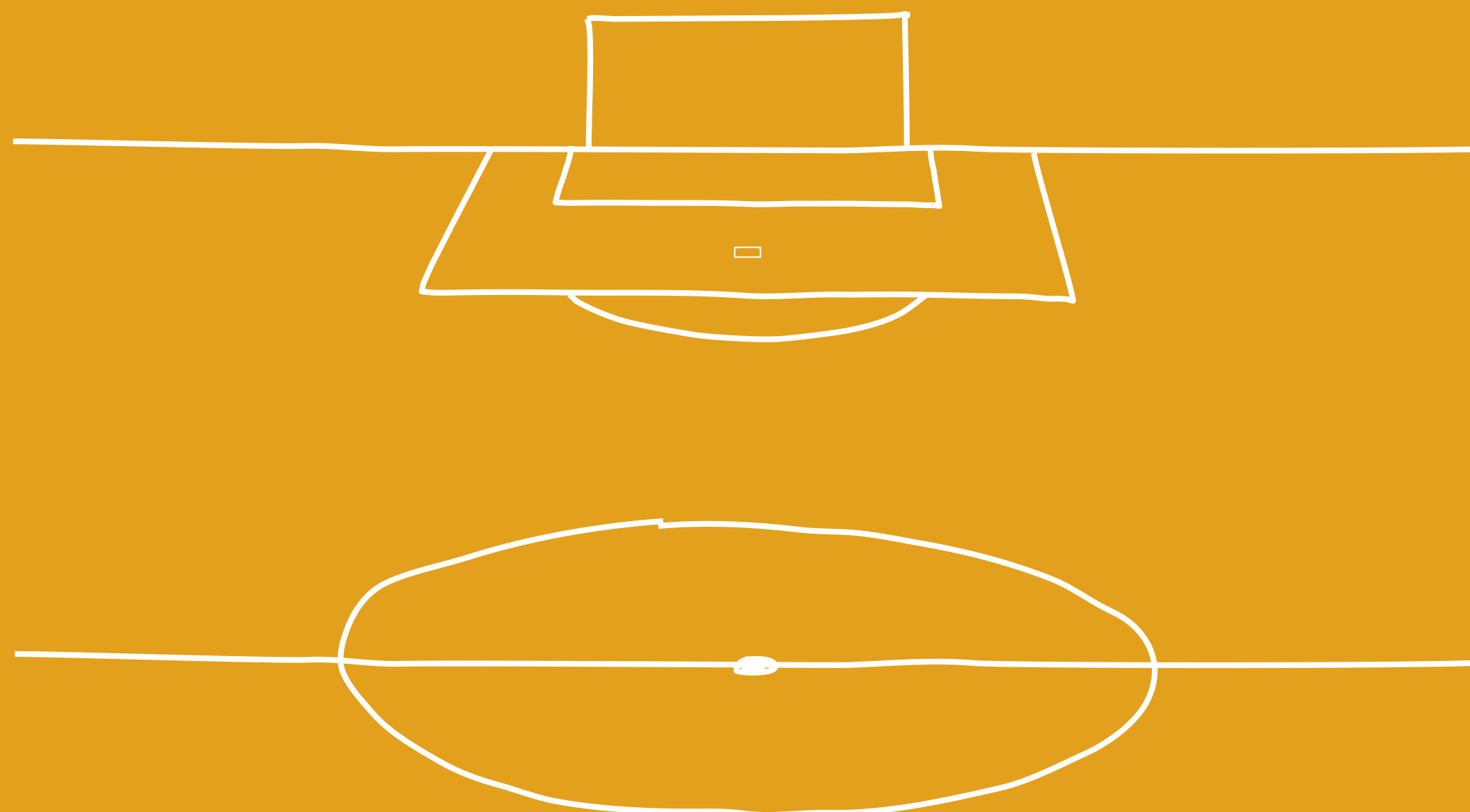
Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

12

Playing Out of Tight Areas

Never panic, always play
and always learn

A session that starts by being comfortable in possession in tight areas. This then progresses to the realization that the only reason we play in tight areas is to give ourselves possession of the ball in bigger areas once we have played out of trouble and hopefully find ourselves with space to move forward towards goal.



Introduction

Development



This session will layer a passing pattern, showing some complex progressions that you can do with your team depending on age and ability level. Depending on how many players you are working with try and set up as many grids as you can to allow maximum touches on the ball. The session is all about tidy technique in a tight area, moving the ball with 1 touch or at the very most 2. As we see later this tidy technique will allow us to get out of the tight area and towards a goal.

The first drill involved making a long driven pass and pressing to shut the pass down, painting the picture for your team mate of a ball arriving followed by the defenders. As will happen in the game. Look to play a wall pass around the oncoming defender then repeat the sequence on the other side of the drill. Although the animation shows the players very static, it's important to always be on your toes and moving to support the ball and be ready to make the pass once it comes to you, this drill should always be done at a high tempo. Having races to be the first grid to 20/30 passes can always help this.

Progression Shown:

- Support your driven pass demanding the ball back. The play a wall pass so your teammate can overlap you and get on it at the other side. Timing of runs and constantly adjusting your body and feet are key.

Once the previous drill has been practiced and perfected the challenge is now to make the even area tight by doing it with two footballs. This will mean technique has to be excellent and control in a tight area. You may also need to take extra touches to shift the ball into the appropriate passing lane or alter a bad pass.

I have also shown how to rotate so the wall players aren't always the same players, this rotation involves having to constantly lift your head to make sure the next pass is on, if not you need to take a touch to allow the player to get there.

Progress Further:

- Make the area even tighter to really challenge players.

Progression

Game



The reward for all the players hard work is to take this to goal. Paint the picture of your young players being a playmaker and they need to create an opportunity on goal. They do this by playing a driven pass, bouncing it off a wide player, demanding they switch it to an open teammate, overlapping and looking for the through ball. And then of course finishing on goal.

3 v 3 Competition:

The first 3 have 60 seconds to score as many goals as possible, with the next player not going until the shot before them has been played. Any bad passes from the wall players result in a point to the team who are playing first. After 60 seconds swap roles and see which 3 score the most.

Progression Shown:

The top wall player makes a third man run after bouncing it back and instead of the through ball going through on goal now it puts the player wide for a driven or high cross to the back post. Your ultimate aim for teams of a good level is to perform this entire sequence 1 touch and of course hit the back of the net.

A game to work in tight areas and to find that final out ball. You may want to add a roaming player to play for the team in possession. The two teams on the main playing surface are looking to make at least 3 passes before trying to play their striker to score. This game also works on rebounds and reactions because if the striker misses the ball just comes back into play - great to keep the tempo and attention high.

Possible Adaptation:

- You can use your centre back as a wall player to keep possession
- Make strikers first touch free initially and build up to full pressure from the defender
- Allow the striker to drop into the pitch and someone else to go high, rotations to get on the ball
- Challenge players by saying it must be a 1 touch finish which will put emphasis on a good pass and finish

Final Progression:

Finish on a condition free game.

Attitude is
everything but don't
discard those who
need work in
that area. Get to
know them and
relate to them.
Coaching attitude
can be a long term
investment that
pays off.

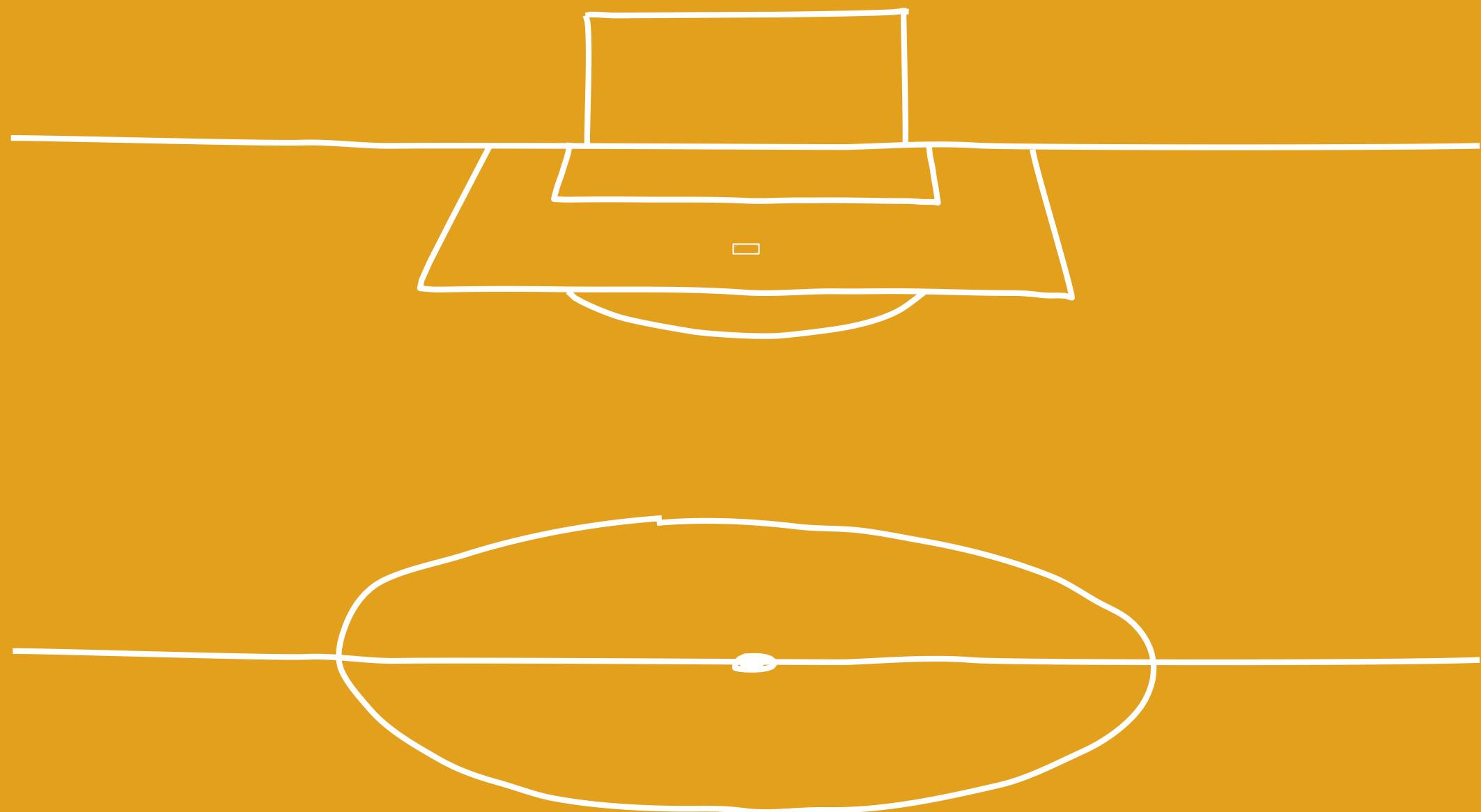
Coaches Notes:

13

Switching Play

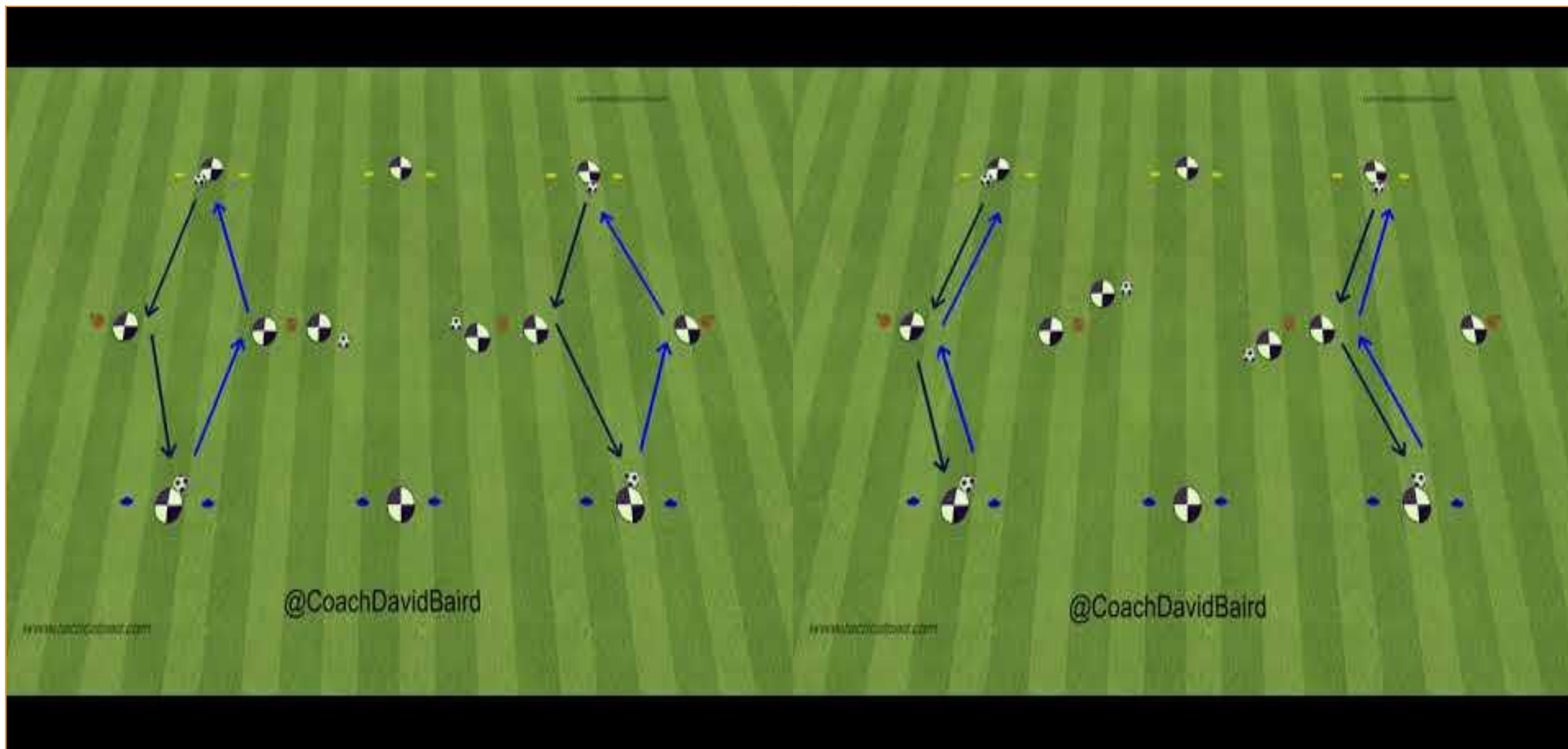
Change the point of attack to go forward

A team that can switch play with speed and efficiency will score goals. Pulling the opposition players out wide in the pitch will allow you to quickly switch the ball and go down the other side or create space in the middle to penetrate. Challenge young players to move the ball quicker than the other team can shift their defence.



Introduction

Development



This switching play session works a lot on the technique and detail to switch the play with quality and speed. In this intro exercise the players in the middle are working for 10 passes and then switching with the feeders on the outside. 5 passes will be received and played from left to right and the next 5 from right to left.

Feeders: Take a touch to control the ball and keep it at your feet, scan quickly and look to play the switching player as soon as they are ready to receive, aiming to play their back foot so they can take a touch in the direction that they wish to go and release the ball quickly

Switching Players: Scan to see your option to switch the ball and communicate for the ball. As the ball travels scan again to make sure the switch option is still on. Receive on the back foot taking a touch in the direction you want to go (a drop of the shoulder in the opposite direction if you have time can win you an extra yard) then drive the ball into the wall player.

During a game there is little space in the middle of the pitch, it's important to hit the feet of the central players and once they get it they must shift it quickly as they will have limited time and space to work with as opposition players will be closing down quickly.

We have now worked on receiving and playing from both sides, this progression shows the the switching player always works with the same ball. Switching it right to left then going to support there pass to switch it again left to right. This will give a lot of technical repetition (scanning, receive back foot, play quickly, protect ball) but is also something that may be needed in games when switching the ball and having to support it to switch it again and ultimately shift the opposition to find forward passes.

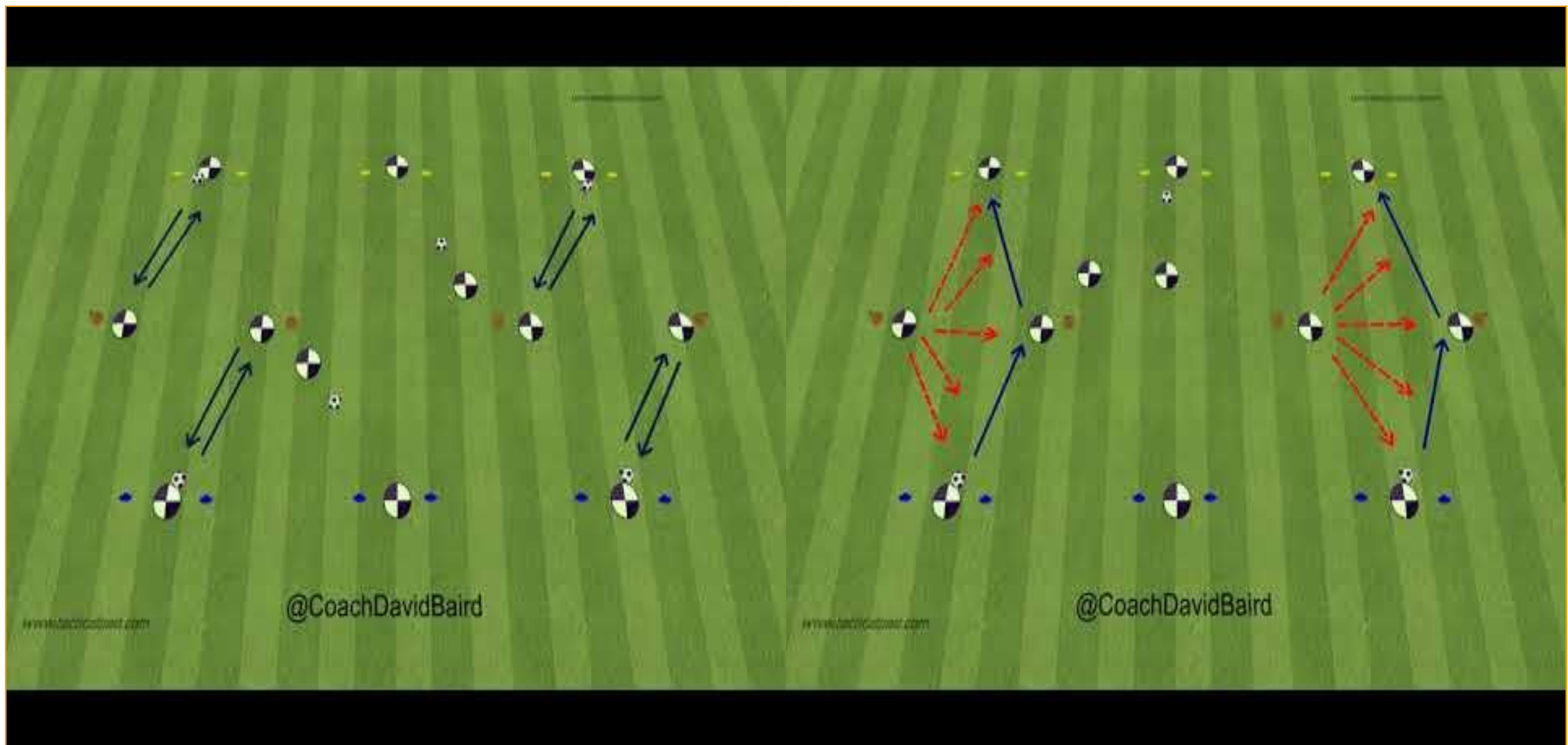
Progression:

Have a competition/race between each group to see who can complete the most passes/switches in a given time or first to a certain amount of passes.

Be sure to educate players throughout to gauge understanding, asking open questions such as “can someone tell me why we would look to switch the ball in this way?”.

Progression 1

Progression 2



Switching the play is a great tool to tire opposition, create gaps in their defence and give us options to play forward and penetrate. This exercise introduces the concept of “what if?”.

Here on scanning we realize the switch is not on, and in this case the bounce pass is played instead of the switch.

It’s important that players don’t get complacent in this drill and just practice the technique of the bounce pass without scanning. Explain they must scan as the switch may be the best option in the game but we always have the bounce pass to fall back on. A good progression is for 1 of the wall players to play as a ‘captain’ who on passing the ball shouts “switch” or “bounce” meaning the middle players must react and play the demanded pass.”

There is now unopposed pressure in the drill. One of the two central players acts as a passive defender as the other one works on switching the play then they reverse roles.

The working player receives and switches the ball twice as the defender presses to make it difficult. Once the ball has been switched twice we would imagine this is enough to create a forward pass through the oppositions lines so the passive player will move to the high cone and receive a driven forward pass. From there they will take their turn as the player who switches twice (under pressure) and then plays a forward pass.

Progression:

Allocate a working player and make the other player a live defender. The working players aim is to hit the cone with a forward pass when it is on. They may need to be patient and switch the play a couple of times and may also need to use bounce passes. The wall players may also need to play to each other but only the working player can make the forward pass to hit the cone so they need to work really hard to get open and get on the ball - just like a centre midfielder in a game. Swap roles and compete to be the first player to hit the cone 3 times.

Game

#FutureAtTheirFeet



The session involves a lot of unopposed practice to bed in technique and let young players work on scanning, passing and receiving. Once coached and the players are familiar with the coaching points and the technique/standard being asked of them, I would spend the majority of the session on this game related practice as it paints better pictures of switching play under pressure and in game like situations.

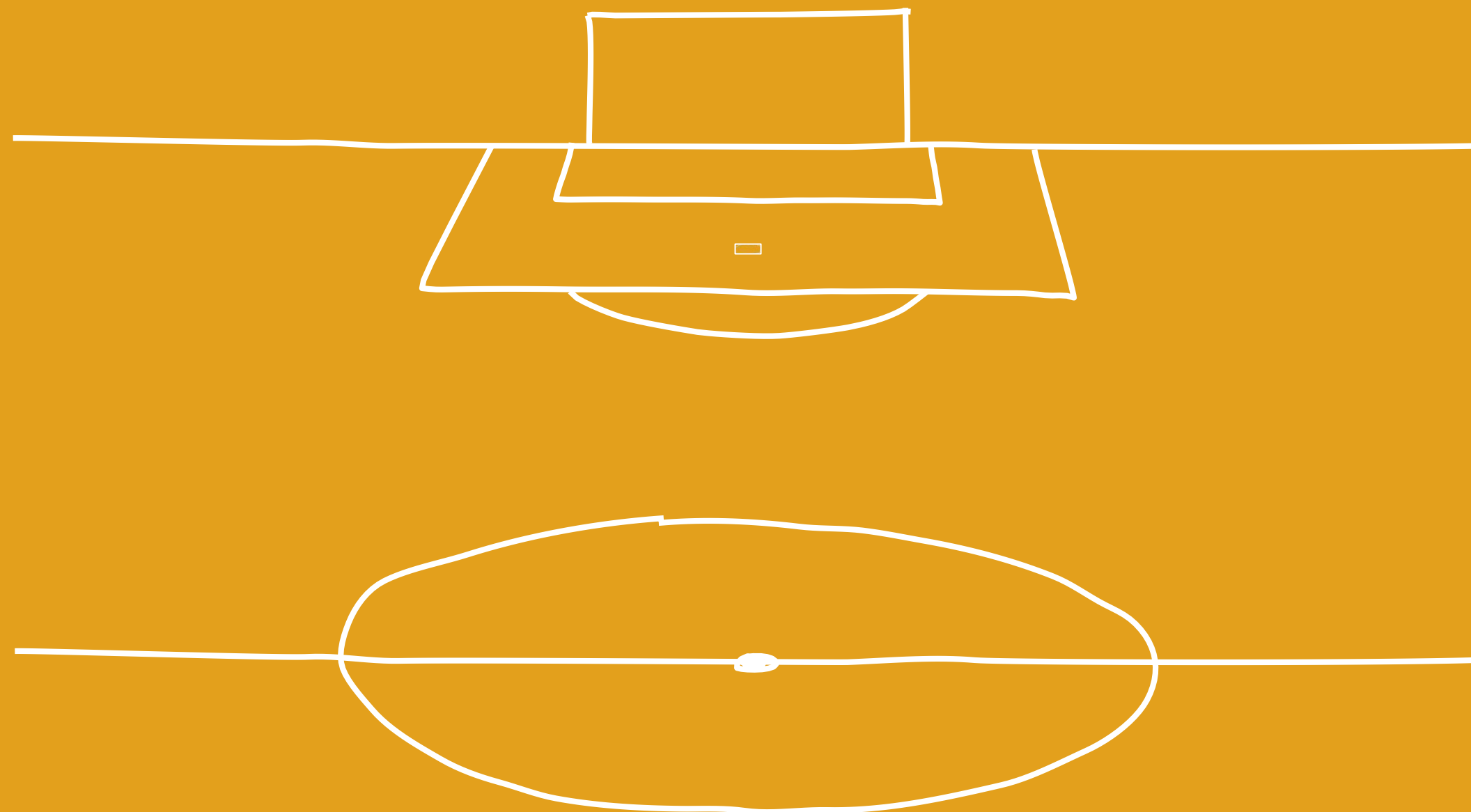
Numbers may vary depending on how many players are in your session, I have shown this drill as 5v5 + 1 roaming player who plays for the team in possession in the middle. Each team has a player behind and defending their 3 gates - it can work well if you use any goalkeepers in your session to do this role and allow them to use their hands or feet to prevent the opposition passing the ball through a gate. In possession you are aiming to use a switch of play to create forward passes and score through any of the 3 gates that the opponent is defending, ultimately try and move the ball quicker than the other team shift to defend which is the essence of why we may switch the play in a game.

If the gate player stops the ball then their team resumes the drill with possession, if the ball goes through the gate then a goal is given to the team that passed through. I have allowed the team in possession to use their gate player to build up play, this is completely optional depending on how much success you are getting with the drill. Finish on a condition free game.

14 Take Players On

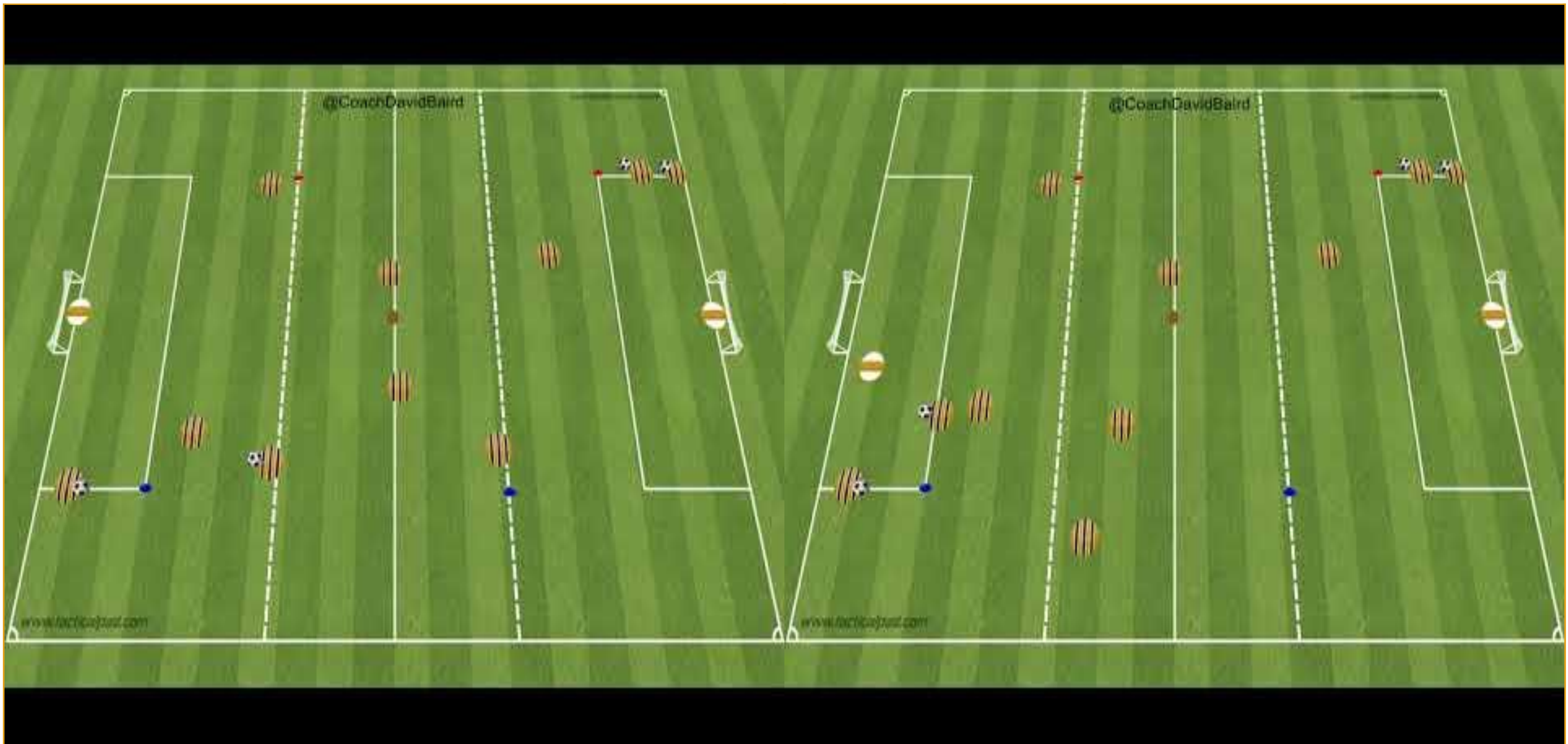
Be confident in your
ability to go past players

The essence of the game. Win your one v one battles. Look to develop confidence in your ability and practice taking players on to give your team the numbers advantage going forward or to continue your run to score goals.



Development

Progression



The key to this session is to create a situation where players are going 1v1 to goal and work on the skills needed to be successful in these situations.

After a warm up the players go into this drill. It starts with a pass where the attacker meets the ball and plays a give and go with a wall player before playing 1v1 beyond the white line.

The first slides show the player roles and player rotations, the group at the top of the screen will be performing the same drill.

If the defender wins the ball they should aim to carry it over the white line to work on defence to attack transition.

1v1 to goal coaching:

- Carry the ball with close control
- Run at the defender to commit them
- Once close enough perform a skill/sharp change of direction
- Accelerate out the other side so momentum takes you to goal
- Finish early
- Always scan the pitch to know where the defender is/GK/space.

Set up and rotation is as before. But now we have a 2v1 and either attacker can be the player to carry the ball into the final 1v1. So decision making is added early in regards to go alone or play a team mate to drive forward.

If either defender wins the ball they are encouraged to drive with it across the white line in front of them.

Possible progressions:

- Defender from 2v1 can recover into the 1v1 to force the attacker to play quickly/effectively
- Other attacker can come into the final third for passing option/decoy pass/rebounds
- Add a time limit for the 1v1 to goal.

Game



Game related practice:

The team that starts with the ball plays 3v2 with the aim of having someone in their time dribble the ball forward into the 1v1 to goal. Everytime your team scores a goal they get to go again, turning to face the team on the other half of the pitch.

When defenders prevent a goal or win the ball they get to become the 3 attackers.

Essentially a 3v2 aiming to create a 1v1 to goal.

Possible progressions:

Similar to before depending on what you wish to work on/add to your session. You can start to allow attackers to join in the final zone meaning it is 2 or even 3v1, you can allow defenders to recover into this zone once the ball goes in or you can build all this up gradually and finish on a full game.

To aid success you can add a player who plays for the team in possession. To challenge players you can minimize touches.

To work on forward runs you can take away being allowed to dribble into the final zone and it now must be a pass.

Final Progression:

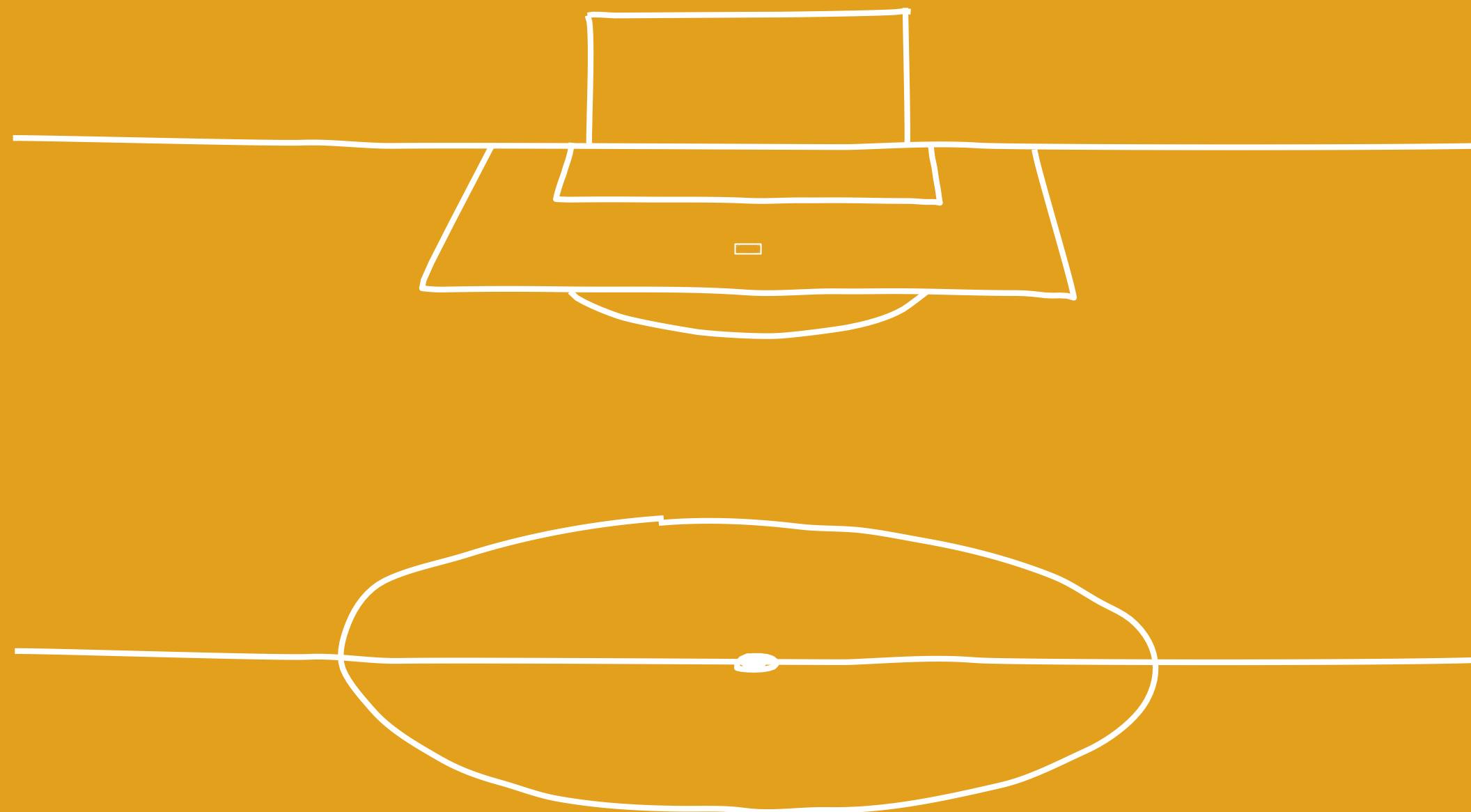
Finish on a condition free game.

15

Technical Skills Circuit

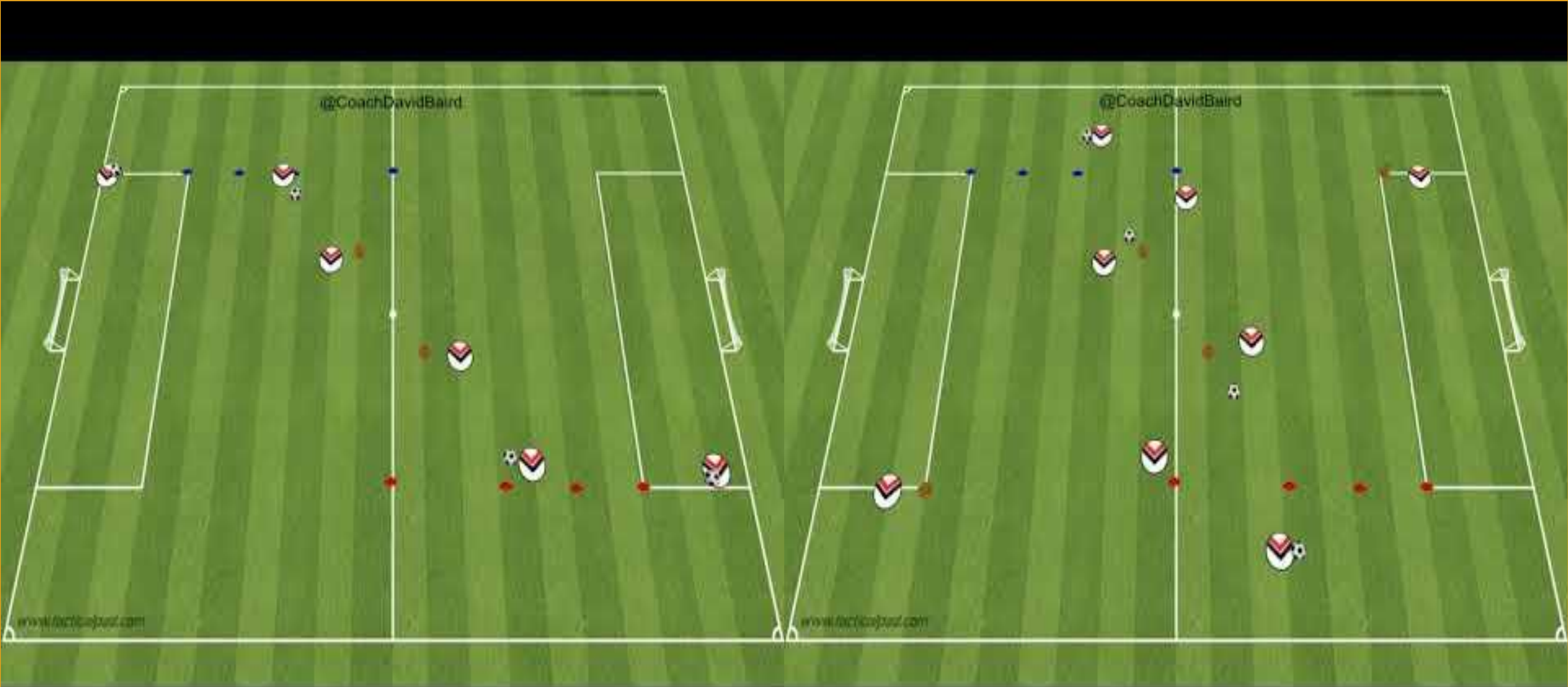
Foot skills, short passing,
long passing and
shooting circuit

A technical skills circuit that engulfs a variety of key skills for young players to learn, practice and perfect. This session is easily adapted to include even more aspects of football and the session should finish with a game so players can look to use these skills against the opposition.



Introduction

Development



This technical skills circuit focusses on different aspects of technique for young players, gradually introducing more and more technical skills.

Here we focus on running with the ball and changing direction. Encourage players to use all parts of the foot and to use both feet. Coach them to touch the ball with every step, keeping the ball close, exaggerate changes of direction and try and lift the head with every couple of touches.

The is also a short pass which to do well the ball should be driven into the receiving players back foot as he/she checks of the cone to receive and scans to see the space tat they will take a positive touch into, then drive back to restart the drill.

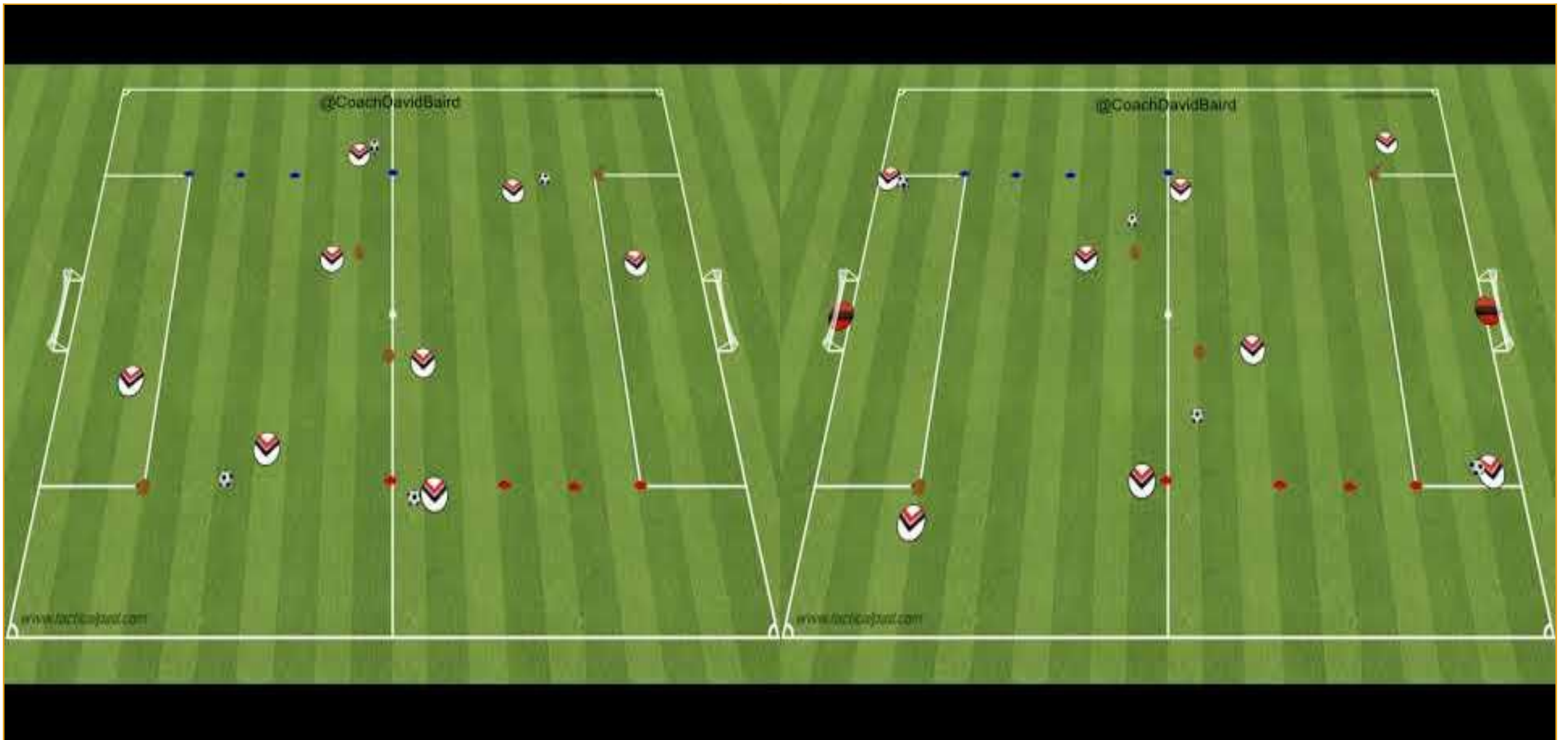
Once the previous drill has been practices and perfected the challenge is now to make the evn area tight by doing it with two footballs. This will mean technique has to be excellent and control in a tight area. You may also need to take extra touches to shift the ball into the appropriate passing lane or alter a bad pass.

I have also shown how to rotate so the wall players aren’t always the same players, this rotation involves having to constantly lift your head to make sure the next pass is on, if not you need to take a touch to allow the player to get there.

- Progress Further:
- Make the area even tighter to really challenge players.

Progression 1

Progression 2



We have now introduced the technique of the give and go. The first one being performed tight around a cone and including a short pass and the second give and go from a longer pass that the player must be quick to go and support, at an angle that will make it easy for his/her team mate to find them and also to play a pass into the space the receiving player wishes to attack.

Stress quality throughout - tell players not to neglect the current skills being worked on as we introduce more, it's about becoming all around technically proficient.

Scanning throughout is key. Lifting the head when running with the ball, scanning to see where players have checked off to, to see where you will take your first touch and to see players moving around you.

Possible progressions:

Have both sides start at the same time and race to compete to get back to the start of the circuit. Points for the players in the winning group each time.

We now come to the part of the circuit which you are aiming to get to as early as you can, once players have had enough time to work on the skills unopposed.

We simple now add finishing, stressing power and accuracy and the player who sets the ball should always get into the habit of going in for the rebound.

The final progression is creating a 1v1 to goal, which will allow players to work on their dribbling, changing direction and changing speed skills that we have been doing throughout the drill and of course the shot at the end.

Have a target for the defender to hit if they win the ball to encourage attacking transition.

Possible progressions here include 2v1s to bring out the give and go technique that was worked on and also encourage decision making and going in for rebounds. This can then be progressed again to 2v2 to further challenge the decision making and technical skills.

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

Watch and learn
from other coaches,
professional matches
and from your own
training and game
day coaching.

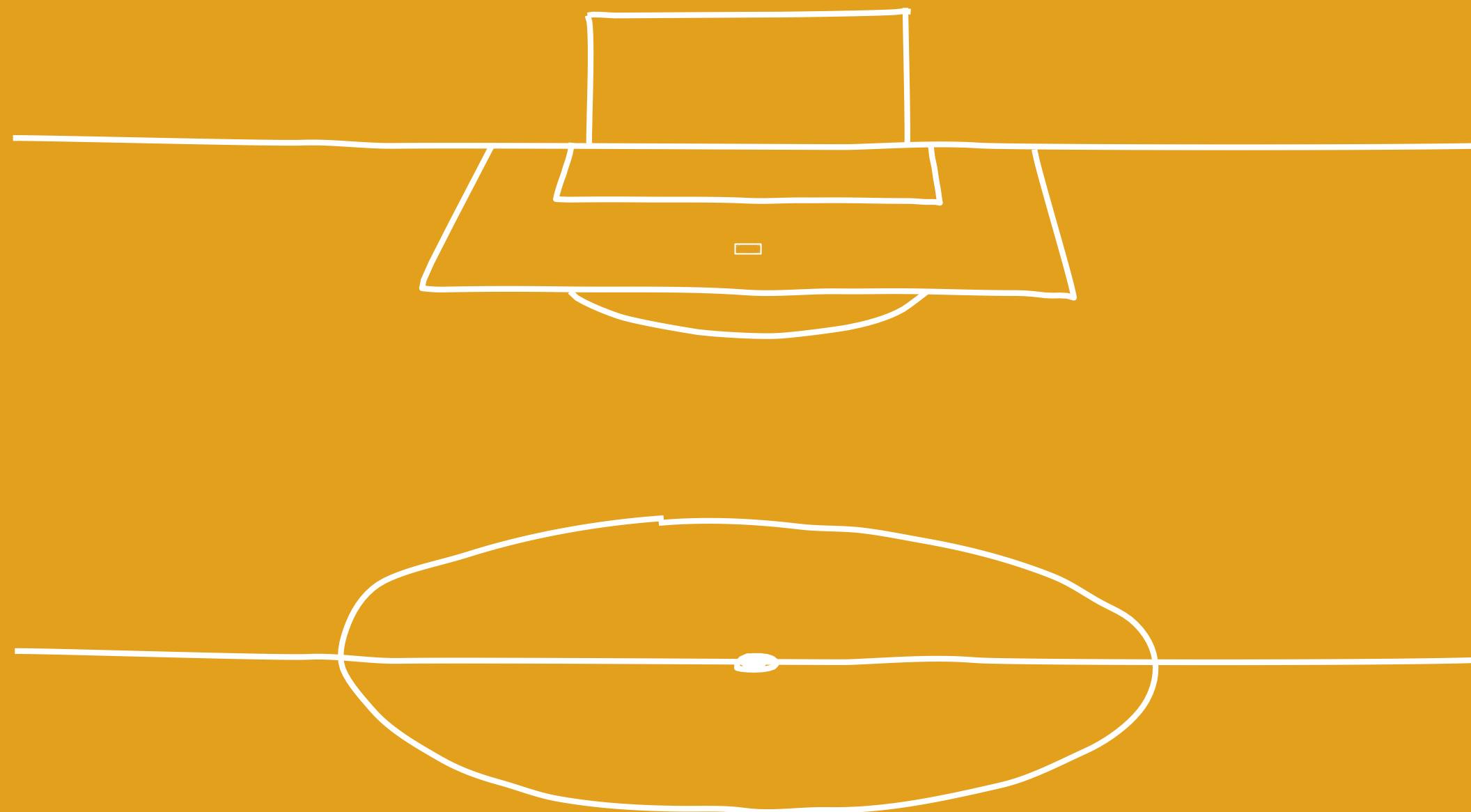
Coaches Notes:

16

The Accurate Driven Pass

Make line breaking passes

Use the coaching point's outlines in this session to teach players to drive the ball along the ground, with power and accuracy to break oppositions lines. The pass itself will also test the first touch and scanning of receiving players meaning the ability of the group will start to rise as a whole.



Introduction

Development



This session will work on the accurate driven pass but will also cover a lot of other aspects that will allow you to make that pass. The ball is played to the player at the bottom of the screen and unopposed pressure is applied, meaning the receiving player will need to touch the ball to his/her safe side and set up a driven pass through the small gate to their team mate.

When a player makes a successful driven pass they get a point.

It is key to scan before to play the pass to see what foot to pass to, in this exercise the player receiving through the gate is going to the right and the passing player should aim to hit the right foot to make this earlier for them.

The player who passed the ball should follow their pass at pace to paint the picture of an approaching defender, meaning the player receiving the ball through the gate can work on feints and dropping the shoulder one way before taking the ball the other.

The exercise runs the same as before but when the player scans before player the firm, accurate pass through the gate they will see the receiving player now wants to receive on the left foot.

Driven Pass Coaching Points:

- Scan to see opponent and how they would like to receive the ball
- Head over the ball when punching through it with centre of foot
- Hit the middle of the ball with the aim of keeping it driving along the ground and arriving with pace.
- Lock your ankle when striking the ball by pushing your toes up and heel to the ground.

Progression 1



As before but trying to keep two balls moving in this drill brings it's challenges to push players further in regards to technique.

The receiving player of the long pass will now have to scan as the ball is traveling to know what way to take their touch. The picture they will see is the ball approaching quickly, a defender shutting down, and a cone to one side that has a player there and an empty cone to the other side. The challenge is to drop the shoulder and fake to the cone where there is a player then take a positive touch (but with the ball under control) to the empty cone.

The passing player should keep the coaching points in mind from the previous drill, but also must scan - not only to see who they are passing to, but to see what they will do next and what side they need to go to, meaning you need to make a quick decision as to what foot you are going to drive the ball into (accuracy).

Progression 2

The exercise runs the same as before but when the player scans before player the firm, accurate pass through the gate they will see the receiving player now wants to receive on the left foot.

Driven Pass Coaching Points:

- Scan to see opponent and how they would like to receive the ball
- Head over the ball when punching through it with centre of foot
- Hit the middle of the ball with the aim of keeping it driving along the ground and arriving with pace.
- Lock your ankle when striking the ball by pushing your toes up and heel to the ground.

@CoachDavidBaird

Game



A great game with lots of coachable moments. It is 3v3 + 1 roaming player that plays for the team in possession, although numbers will vary depending on your session, you may want to do this game x2 to allow players maximum touches and it works well as a competition with each team playing each other for points, adding competition to drills always aids tempo with youth players.

The aim is to hit the middle cone after a stipulated number of passes (3 for example)
The ball can travel through the middle triangle but not the players.

Using good firm passes and touches away from pressure, you are looking to move the ball to an open side of the triangle quicker than the opposition can shift to protect the cone. Once this has been achieved use the coaching points from earlier in an attempt to hit the cone.

If you miss the cone there is some rebound and reaction work to get the ball first.

- use first touch to set up pass towards cone
- big toe of the standing foot is used to aim at the cone, with the big toe being in line with the front of the ball.

- lock ankle, use inside of the foot to punch through the middle of the ball.

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

#FutureAtTheirFeet

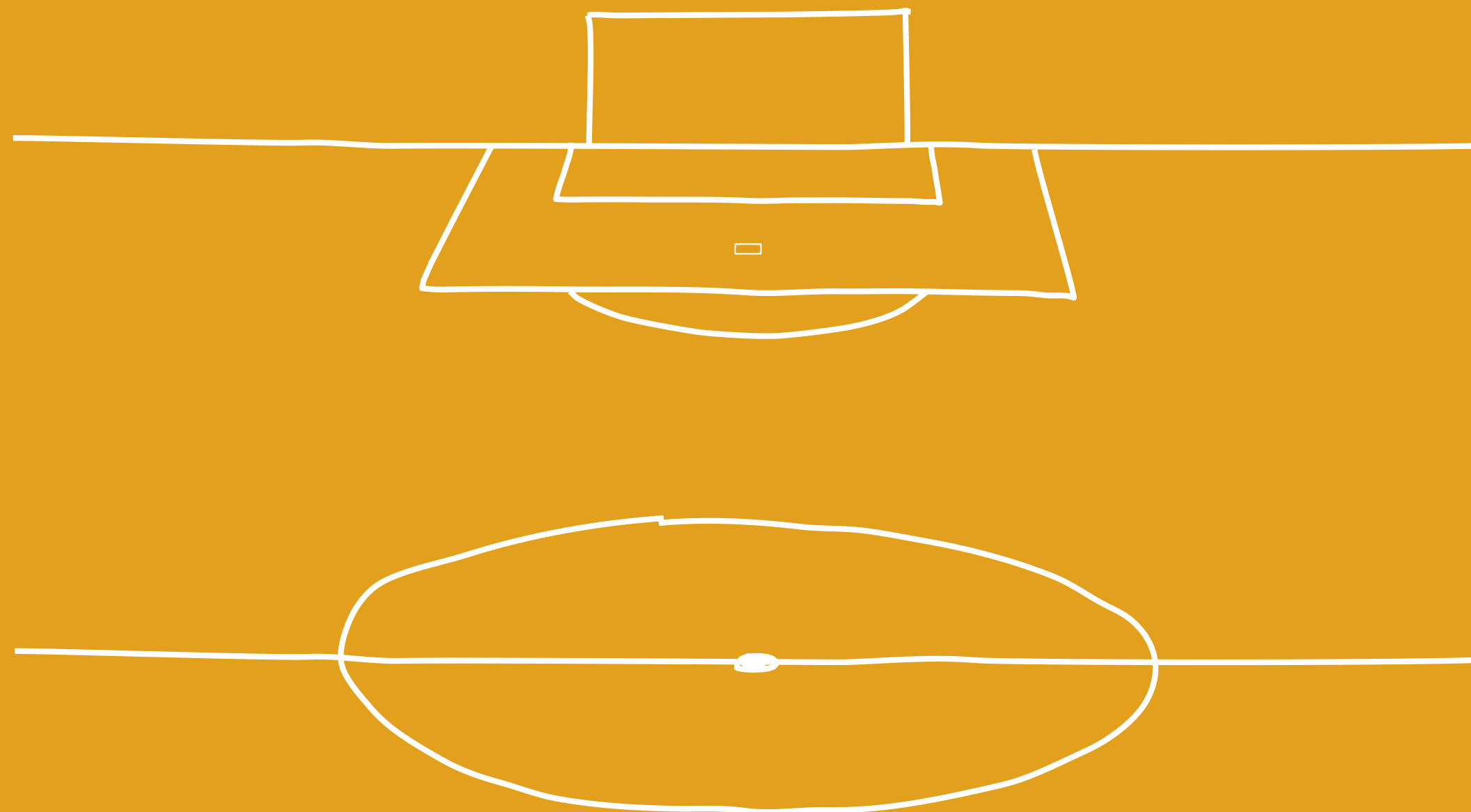
Coaches Notes:

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The Awareness Small Sided Game

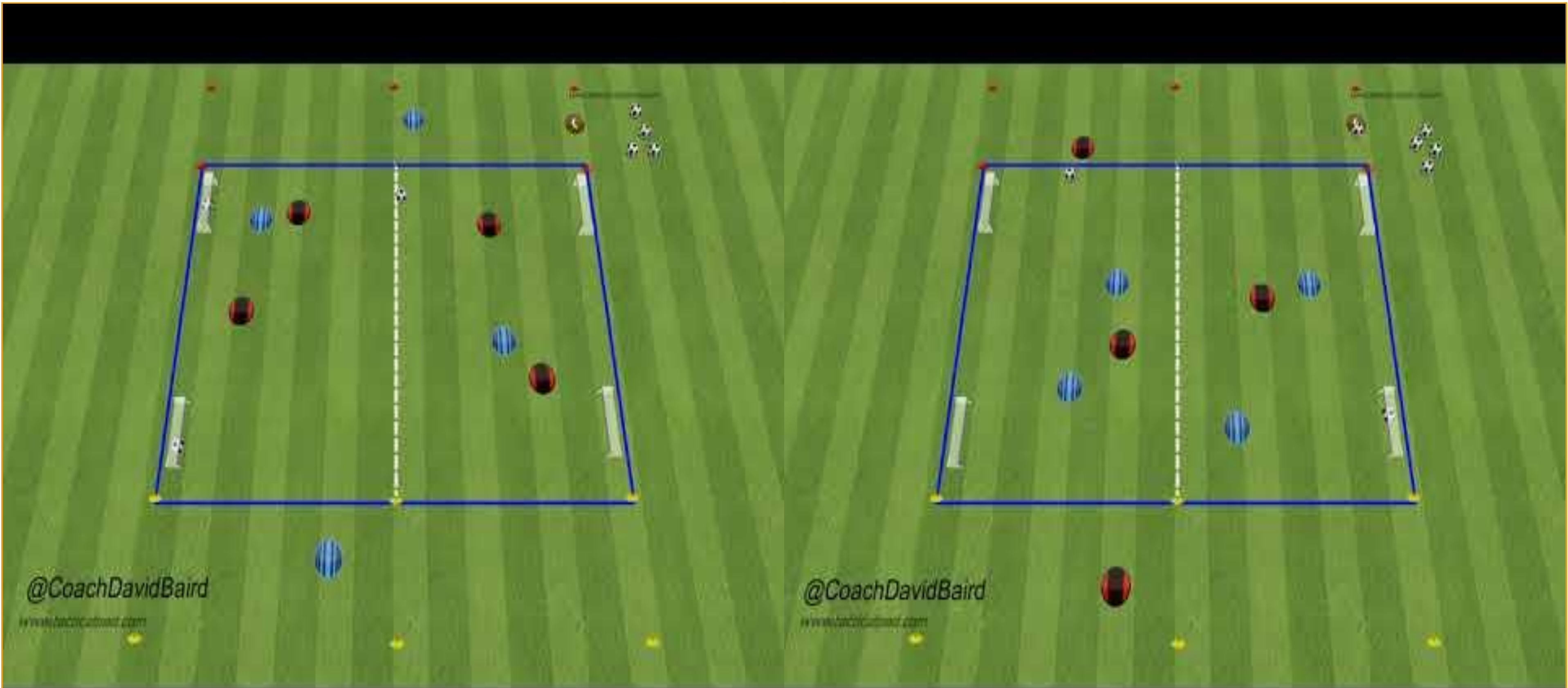
A competitive rondo where
good decision making
will keep you as attackers

Making good decisions and working very hard in possession should equal success in the awareness rondo. A four v four rondo where defenders are in one area and the attackers gradually work on free flowing movements to create chances on goal. A lack of movement or desire will result in being stuck in the middle for potentially a very long time.



Introduction

Progression 1



Rules:

The attackers have their zones as do the defenders. The attackers play 2 touch and any player can score in any goal (after a minimum of 2 passes). Their aim is to score as many goals as possible, when a defender gets the ball then the teams switch and the other team try and score more goals.

Technique/Decision Making:

1v1 attacking/turning/finishing

Combination play and movement off the ball Firm short and long passes

Scanning

Through balls

Give and go, wall passes

Movement to create space for others

Awareness and decision making, score? possess?

Progression 1:

2 central attackers can rotate zones

Progression 2:

4 attackers can freely rotate zones but when a goal is scored all 4 zones must be occupied.

Rules:

The attackers have their zones as do the defenders. The attackers play 2 touch and any player can score in any goal (after a minimum of 2 passes). Their aim is to score as many goals as possible, when a defender gets the ball then the teams switch and the other team try and score more goals.

As above, which is the previous drill however the two central players can rotate zones.

They can only rotate when a wide player has the ball as they should not find themselves in the same zone at the same time - a goal only counts when all 4 zones are occupied (scanning). If you score when there are two players in 1 zone, the attackers lose and swap with the defending team.

“THE FUN, ENERGY AND TEMPO HERE COMES FROM BEING COMPETITIVE, TRYING TO SCORE AS MANY GOALS AS POSSIBLE AND SET A RECORD THAT WON’T BE BEATEN BY THE OTHER TEAM”.

Progression 2

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Rules:

The attackers have their zones as do the defenders. The attackers play 2 touch and any player can score in any goal (after a minimum of 2 passes). Their aim is to score as many goals as possible, when a defender gets the ball then the teams switch and the other team try and score more goals.

In this progression all 4 players in possession can rotate around the zones freely (defenders stick to their zones) however when a goal is scored the team in possession must have a player in each zone.

THE FUN, ENERGY AND TEMPO HERE COMES FROM BEING COMPETITIVE, TRYING TO SCORE AS MANY GOALS AS POSSIBLE AND SET A RECORD THAT WON'T BE BEATEN BY THE OTHER TEAM.

Final Progression:

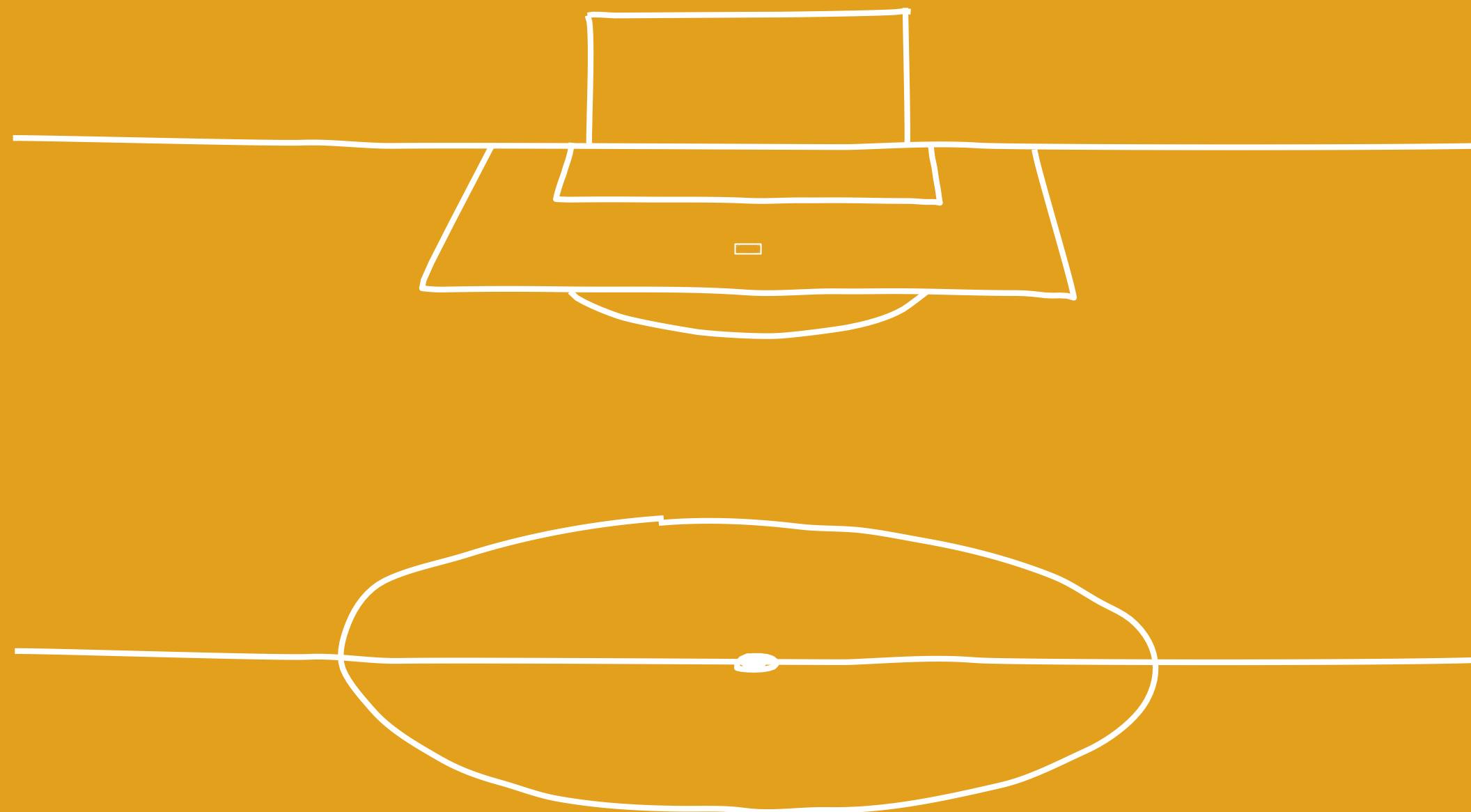
Finish on a condition free game.

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The Edge of the Box

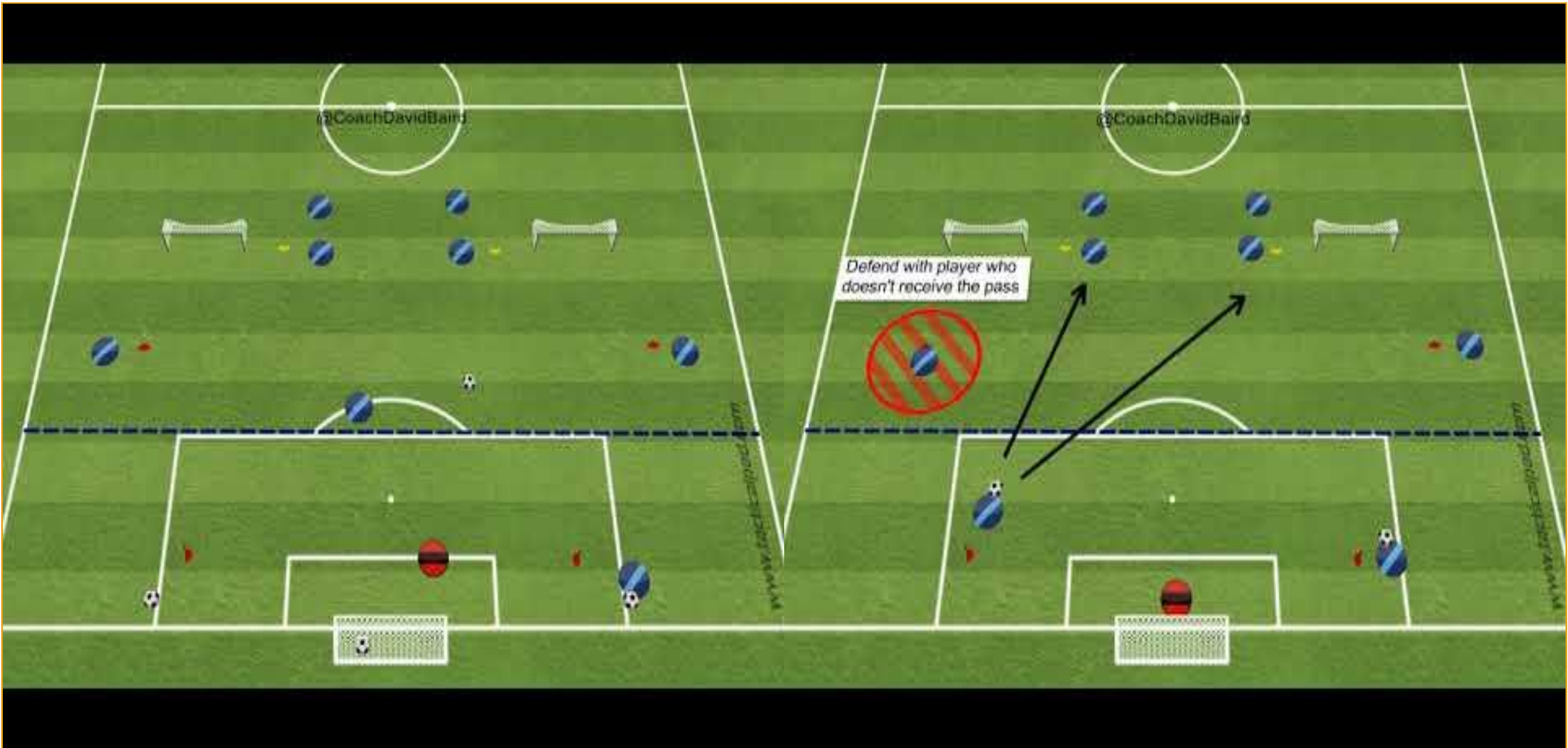
Scanning means you'll
always be one step ahead

Don't get caught in possession by not knowing what you are going to do with the ball when it arrives at your feet. A key message in this session and throughout the drills in **#FutureatTheirFeet** is to constantly be scanning to see potential passes, defending players and space to attack.



Development

Progression



This high tempo shooting exercise involves a short combination and then a shot on goal from the edge of the box. After shooting the striker starts the next move to keep the drill constantly flowing.

It's important to stress speed and quality here as these are vital around the box to get a shot off.

Progression:

- As shown the player who set the ball back will now press, meaning the striker must shoot first time or take a touch to their safe side and protect the ball
- If the defender wins the ball they start an attack and pass into the small goals

Always tell the strikers to practice shooting early, maybe as a coach countdown from 3 quickly when they get the ball. This is important as later in the session we add more pressure which is realistic to shooting from the edge of the box

In this progression players need to be on their toes as the ball may come to them so they need to attack or they may need to quickly react and defend. The player who was pressing in the last drill still presses but so does the player who does not receive the pass to the edge of the box.

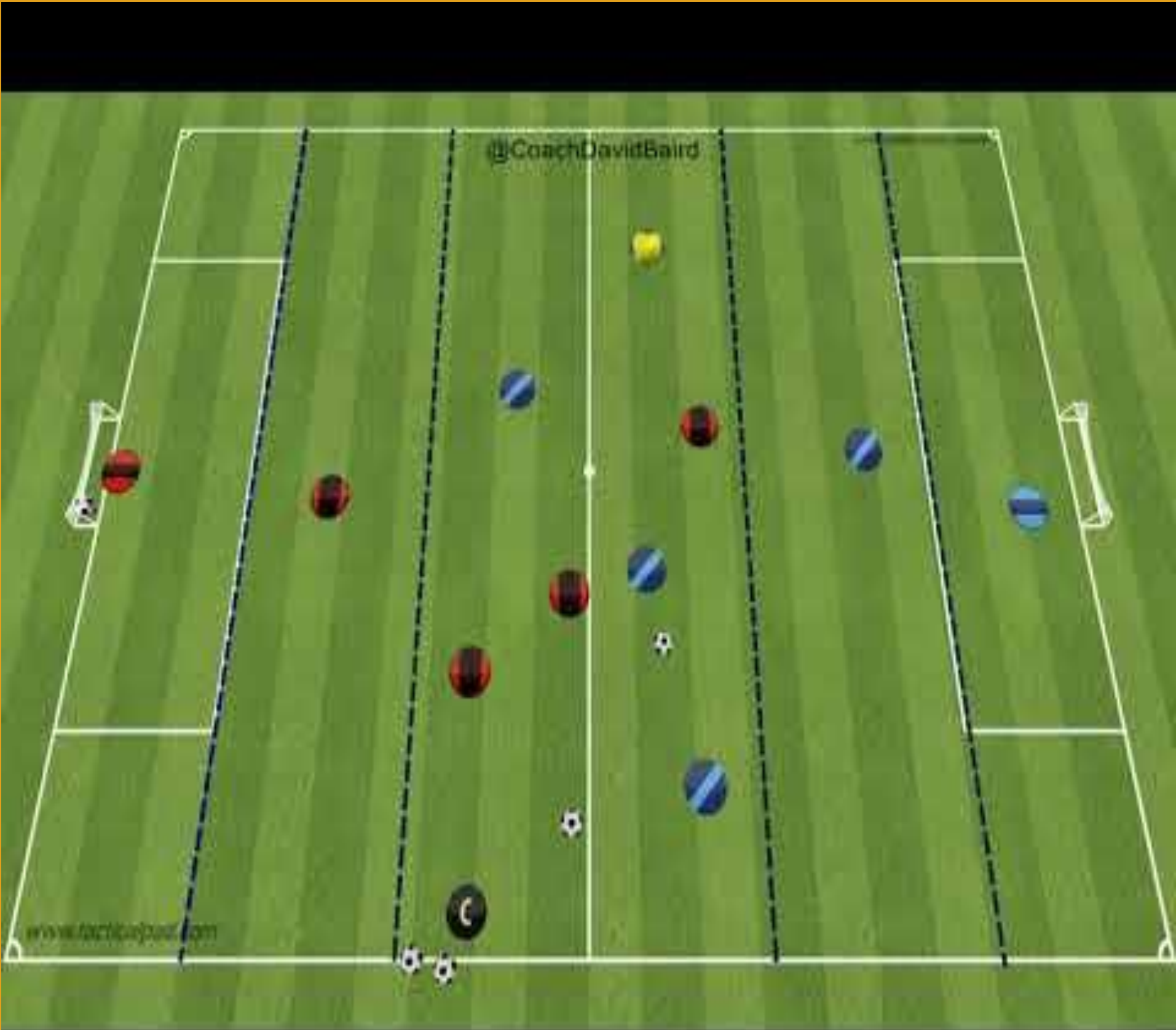
The player who receives the ball has to be scanning as the ball is traveling towards them to know how much time and space they have to work with:

- Do they need to finish first time?
- Is there space to touch the ball into and maybe cut off some oncoming defenders?
- Do they need to dribble, use feints and turns to create a shooting opportunity?

As before if the defenders win the ball they transition to score in one of the mini goals"

Game

#FutureAtTheirFeet



This game can be adapted to suit the numbers and ability level in your group. Here is a 3v3 in a central area with a player who plays for the team in possession to aid the drill and help bring out the topic, We want to create a scenario where a player has the ball around the edge of the box with limited options, time and space.

A player can break into the attacking zone at the edge of the box via a pass or dribble but only 1 attacker is allowed in the zone against the 1 defender. The defending team is allowed a defender to recover into the zone to create a 1v2 at the edge of the box.

Additional/Optional rules:

- The defender can be used during the build up to create a good chance to go forward
- The team in possession must make at least 2 passes before breaking into the attacking zone
- If the team without the ball wins it they can break immediately into the attacking zone if on (no need to make 2 passes)

Progress to allowing extra attackers/defenders into the zones and build up to a game to finish the session

Final Progression:

Finish on a condition free game.

Introduction

Development



Put a defender who is free to roam around the playing area, they can only win the ball by intercepting a pass they cannot tackle - meaning players involved in the drill must improve the quality of their passes and play the ball where teammates wish to receive it to avoid the defender.

Possible Progressions:

Red cone - check off the cone to come and receive

First pass - take a touch and drive the ball into feet of the player on the red cone at a good pace

Very similar to the last exercise but we now add the end product of a shot on goal.

This can be further progressed by adding a defender to make it a 1v1 to goal. If you do add a defender make sure they have a target to go and hit once they win the ball to work on transition.

Work the drill down both side to help work both feet of players and demand a high tempo and lots of communication.

Progression 1



The exercise here is shown 3v3 but you may want to adjust this depending on numbers. The game is played on half of the pitch. In possession you can use the green roaming player and the green wall player who runs the line between the yellow cones.

The red cones create wide gates which players are looking to travel through (make a third man run) to get on a pass. If your team is successful in doing this and make a pass in the next half to demonstrate success then they get a point. The green wall player turn to support the forward pass and the roaming player becomes the wall player as shown in the animation.

Ways to transfer:

- Hit the wall player who will set the ball for a player to play a through ball
- Hit the wall player who will give you it back as a wall pass into the other half
- Hit the wall player who will make a reverse pass to a third man run through the gate on the other side of the pitch

Possible Progression:

The ball does not have to hit the wall player but you must make 3 passes before a through ball is made. Once you do the drill for a while the defenders just screen the wallplayer so this is a progression you may need to keep it realistic.

Use the half way line shows as a pretend offside line to aid understanding and timing of forward runs.

Progression 2

This exercise is the same as the previous exercise but similar to the drills earlier we add the end product. Once a successful third man run and transfer has been made you are attempting to score.

Progress by challenging players when needed: Give them a time limit or touch limit to score within once the ball is transferred

Make it fun: be competitive and keep score. Encourage good finishing by allowing the team who transfers to start in possession of the ball again only if they score

Decision making: if the transfer gives a goal scoring opportunity then look to shoot, but if not you can tell players they can just keep the ball and look to transfer again. They need to think if they are going to waste a chance maybe they should just keep it and try again

Advanced Progression:

Take away the roaming players and make the teams even. They must recognize they need a player playing as a wall player at all times so someone must stay high and if this person drops to get on the ball someone else must go beyond and play as the highest (wall). This will encourage scanning and player rotations.

Game



A game to encourage third man runs in wide areas. The pitch has 4 designated wide areas and before scoring a goal the team in possession must touch the ball in a minimum of two different areas, the ball must transfer via the middle area to count it can't go direct from 1 designated to another.

This will encourage the runs and movements from the session. Players looking to make runs into these areas and playing passes via a central area. It will also encourage wall passes, for example if you have the ball in zone 1 you can play a central player and get it back in zone 2 which would mean you can now go to goal.

It will also encourage scanning to see if the switch of play is on, for example zone 1 to central to zone 3 or 4 would allow you to then go and score.

Fun progression:

Advance the drill by telling players every time they touch the ball in a zone (via the middle area) that is a point and if they score in that sequence the goal is worth those amount of points. For example if they can travel the ball from zone 1 - central - 2 - central - 3 - central - 4 - central - goal they will get 8 goals! I have done this to great success with young players starting to get excited about possession, switching, passing and making loads of third man runs to stretch the pitch, get on the ball and get points. Once they get a load of points they are keen to finish the move off to get all the goals!

Final Progression:

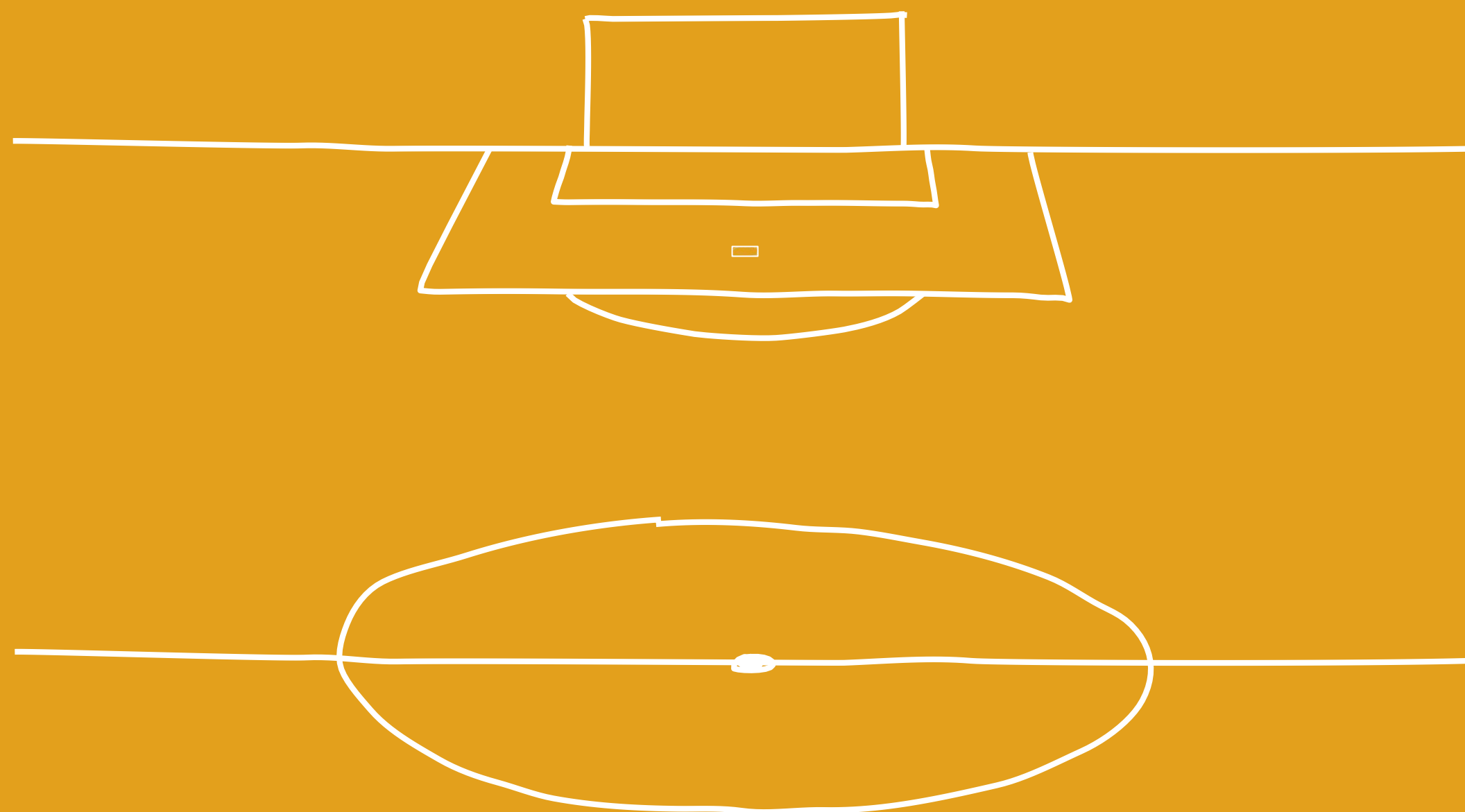
Finish on a condition free game.

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Two v One to Goal

Use speed and space to
make the extra player
count

Linking in with previous overload sessions this two v one to goal session is all about creating width and playing with speed to efficiently work towards goal. As always scanning will aid decision making and make the drills competitive by keeping score to keep the tempo high throughout the session.



Introduction

Development



This session will focus on 2v1 attacking and will stress decision making, playing with width and playing with speed.

The first drill here is all about speed and a 1v1 which will occur often within 2v2s. The player with the ball will dribble and stop the ball in front of the other player who will immediately attack the middle marker while the initial player looks to get around a cone and come and defend.

The pressure from behind means the player on the ball must be quick, decisive and be aware of the player behind them. Do you have time to drive into space away from the oncoming player? Or perhaps they are catching you and you need to cut in front of them to protect the ball.

Key coaching points for this 1v1/1v0 is to drive at pace and finish early.

The other player is now supporting you as opposed to defending against you. Picture the marker you drive towards as the defender and practice in preparation of real defenders being introduced soon. Before this we work on potential 2v1 runs and options. Underlaps, overlaps and wall passes.

Again stress playing with width and playing with speed - perhaps have a time limit to score within. The players swap roles every time.

Progression:

Use the marker as a pretend offside line to any passes being played the receiving player cannot be in front of the marker when the ball is played.

Progression 1



Now we have a defender in who comes live when the first player stops the ball in front of his/her teammate. Use the runs to get success in the 2v1 and again play with speed and width. Width will make it harder for the defender and speed is important as teammates of the defender will be recovering back as we see later. Width can also create 1v1s which we have already worked on.

Have a rotation on the defender and if the defender wins the ball they can transition quickly to score in a mini goal behind the attackers area.

A further progression to put pressure on the speed and quality of our 2v1, I have shown it here with 2 recovering defenders but you can make it one if you wish, again have a rotation on the defenders.

Key is to be aware of what is going on around you by always scanning and communicating. To encourage young players you can make this session competitive, have teams of two and compete to see who scores the most goals.

Likely mistakes to step in and coach include lack of width, too many touches, traveling too slow or making the wrong decision when in possession of the ball.

#FutureAtTheirFeet

Game



As shown in the diagram this fun game exercise gives a lot of opportunity to go 2v1, 2v0 or 2v2 all worked in throughout the drill. The second the other team shoot you have a brief advantage to drive forward again success will come by playing with pace.

Make sure young players know that 2v1s in the game will not last long (especially to goal) and it's important to make the most of them.

Final Progression:
Finish on a condition free game.

*Be sure
to
check out*

Scoreboard Soccer

*A new coaching
concept developed
by
David Baird*

Coaches Notes:

Other
resources
available

Scoreboard Soccer

Always Attack,
Sometimes Score,
Never Give Up

Practice Through Play

Practice By Numbers