



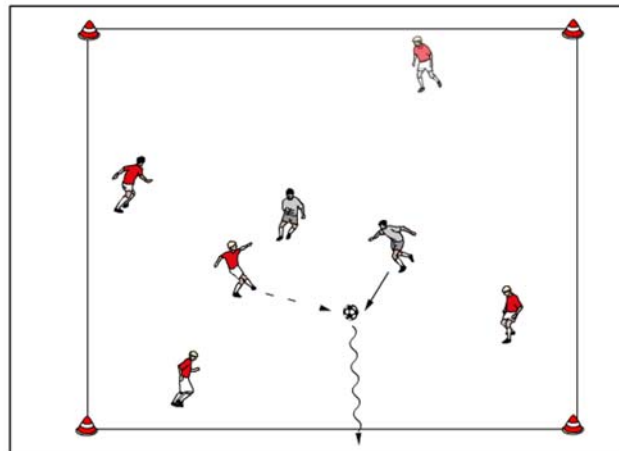
U14-U18 Attacking (In the middle 3rd)

By Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: To train your players in the middle 1/3 of the field. To provide your players with the opportunity to solve the many problems that the game presents when connecting from back to front. Players must recognize when and how to hold (possess) the ball and when to go forward (penetrate) with speed. Recognizing and responding to the varying changes in the rhythm of the game is crucial to successful play in the middle 1/3.

1. **5v2 Possession Game (15 minutes)**

In a 10x10 yard grid, five players (attackers) keep the ball away from the two (defenders). If the two defenders win the ball, they are awarded a point if they successfully dribble out of the grid. The attackers are awarded a point if they successfully make 5 consecutive passes without losing possession to the defenders or out of bounds. Change the defenders every 2-3 minutes. Stress that players must always be moving and on the balls of their feet to support play.

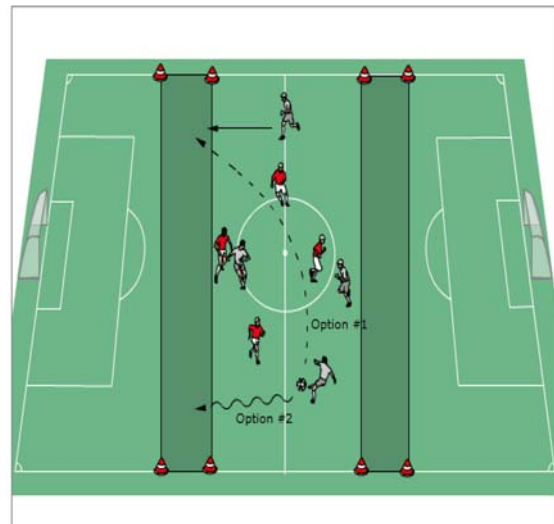


Coaching Points:

- Stress proper passing & receiving techniques
- As the players get warm, talk to them about speeding up their play (technical & tactical speed)

2. **4 vs. 4 To end zones (20 minutes)**

Game played in the middle third of the field. Teams comprised of 4 players. To score, players can dribble in to the end zone or pass the ball to a teammate into the opponent's end zone (created with discs). The player cannot go into the end zone until after the ball has been passed.



Coaching Points:

- Stress the accuracy, pace and timing of passes.
- Stress the importance of a quality 1st touch, whether receiving the ball or passing it
- Recognizing time to possess the ball and slow play down versus possession to penetrate and speed play up

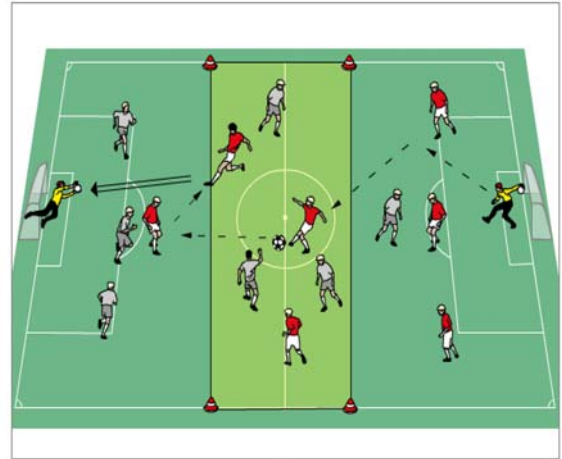
- Encourage appropriate combination play to help with possession and penetration
- Recognize opportunities to dribble to penetrate

3. **6v6+2GK'S 3 Zone game with 3 full time midfielders per team (10-15 minutes)**

Teams play a regular game but on the middle third zone only the 3 midfielder players for each team are allowed to play in, the full time midfielders can move any were but the other players are restricted to their areas; try to play the ball from the back into the offensive zone where they have one teammate.

Coaching Points:

- Recognizing how and when to support play coming out of the back...as back players, including the goalkeeper, look for supporting options from the midfield players.
- Recognizing how and when to slow play down or speed it up in the midfield...depending on pressure from the opposing team and penetrating opportunities.
- Recognizing when to change the point of attack...when a number of opponents have been attracted to the ball, opening up options on the opposite side of the field.
- Recognizing timing for penetrating passes from the midfield into the final third...forwards have created **LIVE** space for balls to be played into or deceptive runs from the midfielders and/or backs have created positive opportunities to penetrate the opponents' defense.



4. **Game to two goals with GKs (45 minutes):**

Play- 8v8 or 11v11 with 2GK'S.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session.

5. **Cool Down (5-10 minutes)**

Juggling in groups of four. First group that juggles the ball 20 times (3-touch maximum per player) is the winner. Statically stretch the large muscle groups.