



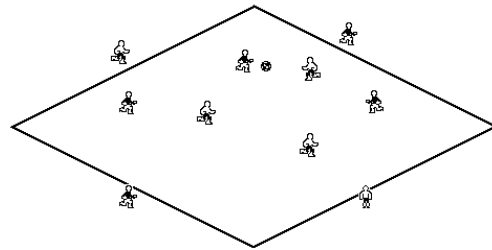
Changing the Point of Attack

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players recognize when and how to change the point of the attack (switch fields) in relationship to situations that the game presents.

1) 3v3 with 2+2 (15 to 20 minutes):

In a grid 35yds x 25yds, three players are in Red and three players are in Yellow on the inside of the grid, with two Red targets on opposite sides from each other and two Yellow targets on opposite sides from each other on the outside of the field. The target players can move freely along their sideline. Red team tries to keep possession and find Red target players on the outside. Yellow team attempts to do the same. To get points, the team in possession must pass the ball to one of their target players on the outside; then the target player must pass it back to the same player or another player on their team, to get a point. First team to 10 points wins. *Version 2:* Target player must pass the ball back to another player on their team to get a point. Target player on outside should not force the ball into a third player, important to keep possession, so it is OK to pass the ball back to the person who passed it to them (they just do not get a point, but they do maintain possession for their team). **Note:** Must find one Target player to get a point, then to get the next point, must find other target player on opposite side (do not force it).

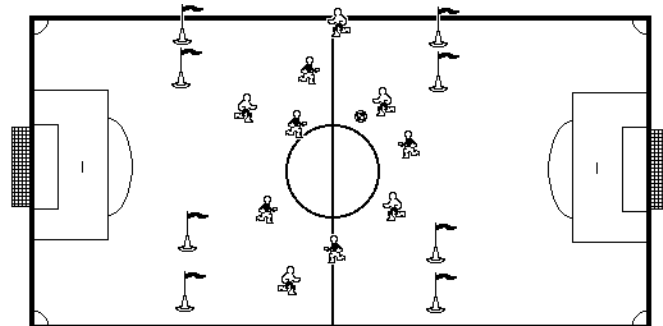


Coaching Points:

- Inside players receiving ball across body to see all options, if possible.
- Get players to open up hips to field (left and right) to be able to find target player on opposite side as quickly as possible
- Communication
- Simplicity, play the way you are facing
- Visual cues of target players (head up, eye contact, lateral movement) and inside players (head up, eye contact, movement into space, movement of body)

2) 5v5 (or 6v6) to 4 goals (15 to 20 minutes):

In a 40-45 yd x 55-60 yd grid set up in the midfield area of the field, have 5 Red and 5 Yellow players. Place two 5 yard goals on the far left and far right of either end line. Red is going in one direction and attacking two goals and Yellow is going in the opposite direction attacking the other two goals.

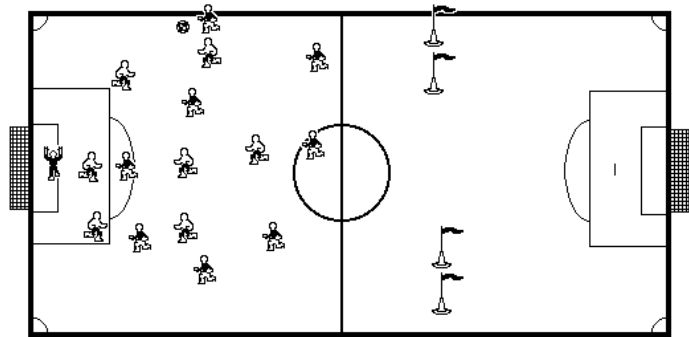


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Play quick 1-2 touch passes to draw defenders in
- Be sure players are in good supporting positions behind (left and/or right), next too (left and/or right) and/or in front (left and/or right) of the ball as it is being possessed.
- Visual cue: Attacking team has possessed the ball for enough time to attract many players from the defending team toward the ball, leaving the weak side open.
- Weak side player who is looking to get the ball on the switch, gets wide (near touchline) as the ball is being moved centrally, then begins to 'attack' or move into the open space in front of them on the weak side, calling for the ball verbally and visually, by their movement forward.

3) 7 plus GK v 8 to 1 big goal and 2 small counter goals (15-20 minutes):

In a 70 yd x 60 yd grid, 8 red attacks the one big goal and the 7 yellow plus GK attack the two wide counter goals.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Patience
- Look to play the ball that is switched in front of the other outside midfielder or back (this is to ensure the pass beats as many defenders as possible to "get in and behind the defense")

4) 11v11 Scrimmage (35-45 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (patience, angles and distance of support prior to switch, timing of the switch, etc.).

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player.

Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.