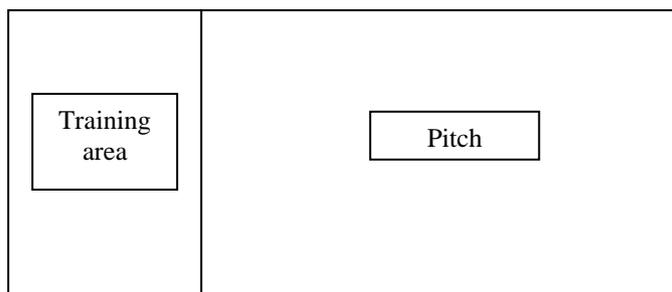


Designing a Session For Primary Coaching

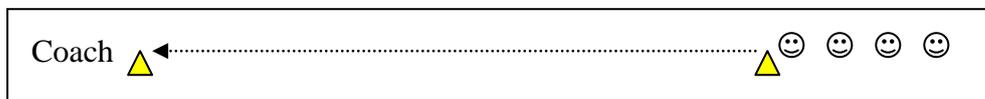
Probably the hardest part of a coach's role is to sort out the numbers attending training into manageable groups and give them meaningful practice. Once you get the organisation right, the coaching is better for player and coach alike.

Here are some tips:

- If you have more than 14 players in your group, divide them into 3 fairly even teams and bib them in 3 colours.
- Look at your area set aside for coaching. It should be big enough to make a pitch and leave a training area behind one set of goals.



- Play two teams in a small-sided game. Condition the game to let players practise different skills and improve their speed of thought [see the chapter called 'GAMES FOR THE TRAINING PITCH'].
- Take the third team and coach them to improve their technical skills [i.e. catching, kick passing, lifting, fist passing, tackling, blocking, solo running].
- Rotate the teams every 10 minutes.
- The easiest way to do this is by using simple LINE DRILLS, with a coach at one end and players at the other.

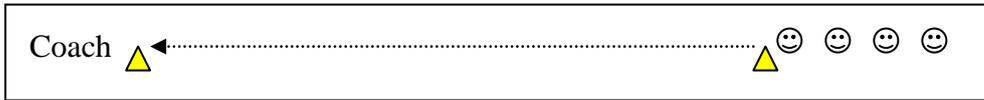


- If you have a team of six to be coached, split this into 2 x 3s and use another coach to help. NEVER FORM A QUEUE OF MORE THAN FIVE [i.e. Work to Rest Ratio = 1:4]

Remember – parents can help by copying a coach who leads the session

SIMPLE LINE DRILLS

CATCHING

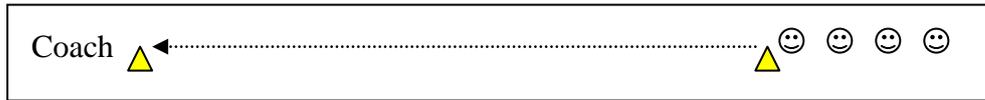


**Set up your line drill as shown in this diagram. No more than 4 in a queue.
Distance between coach and players should be 10-20 metres.**

Now think about how each of the following drills fits the diagram and try them out.

- 1. Coach lobs the ball to the first player who runs to catch, fists the ball back to the coach and moves away to allow room for the coach to lob the ball for the next player.**
- 2. Coach bounces the ball to player running to meet it. Player fists back to coach and moves away etc.**
- 3. Coach kick passes ball to running player etc.**
- 4. Player runs to coach. Coach waits until player is close and lobs the ball over player's head. This forces the player to turn, gather the ball and turn again to fist back to coach etc. etc.**
- 5. Coach lobs ball for two players to compete for the catch. Should the ball break, players still compete to gather it. Winner fists ball back to coach etc.**
- 6. Add some of your own.....**

KICKING [Each player should have a ball as he/she waits]



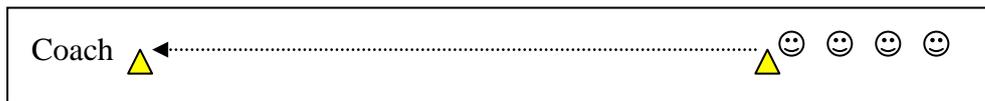
**Set up your line drill as shown in this diagram. No more than 4 in a queue.
Distance between coach and players should be 10-25 metres.**

Now think about how each of the following drills fits the diagram and try them out.

1. Coach calls for a kick pass from the first player who kicks and follows the kick to get a fist pass back from the coach. Player turns away etc.
2. Coach calls for kick pass from weaker foot etc.
3. Player stands with his/her back to the coach. The coach calls for the kick pass and moves a few metres to the left or right to force the player to adjust the kick. Player follows kick etc.
4. As players improve their accuracy, replace the coach with a player and let them rotate.
5. For more advanced ideas see chapter called 'DRILLS FOR THE TRAINING PITCH'
6. Add some of your own.....

FIST PASSING [copy exercises from Kicking]

LIFTING



**Set up your line drill as shown in this diagram. No more than 4 in a queue.
Distance between coach and players should be 10-25 metres.**

Now think about how each of the following drills fits the diagram and try them out.

1. Coach rolls the ball slowly towards first player who runs to lift the ball properly and fists it or kicks it back to the coach..turns away etc.
2. Coach rolls the ball firmly for a player to run and practise chip lift [rather than the usual crouch lift].



Set up your line drill as shown in this diagram. No more than 4 in a queue.

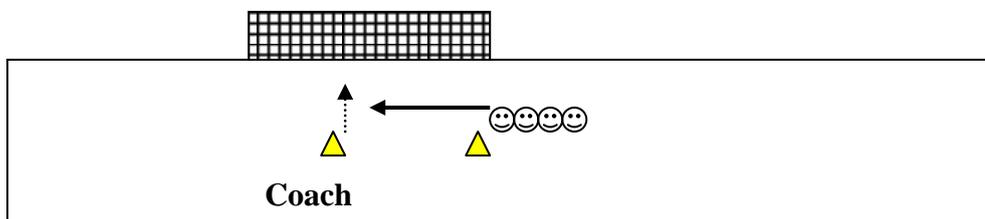
Now think about how each of the following drills fits the diagram and try them out.

3. Coach stands between players and rolls the ball away from the first player who runs to lift, turns etc...
4. Coach rolls the ball from this new position for two players to compete for the lift. Winner turns and fists to coach and players line up again.
5. Add some of your own.....

SOLO RUNNING *[Each player should have a ball]*

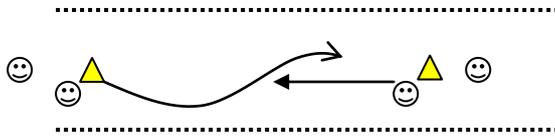
1. Coach steps aside to let players practise toe-tapping and bouncing between the two cones. Once the first player has reached the far cone, the next may go [drill will be too slow if you wait until each player returns].
2. More skilful players may use one ball per group. First player solo runs at pace to the cone, turns and passes ball back to second player etc. etc.
3. Add some of your own.....

BLOCKING *[Each player should have a ball]*



1. A really short line this time, with each player taking his/her turn to fist pass the ball to the coach who attempts to kick the ball while player runs across to block – best done against a fence or a ball stop. The reason for the coach kicking the ball is that he/she can kick softly and accurately. Should the players not be ready for this, the coach can kneel down and fist the ball against the fence.
2. Add some of your own.....

TACKLING & BREAKING THE TACKLE

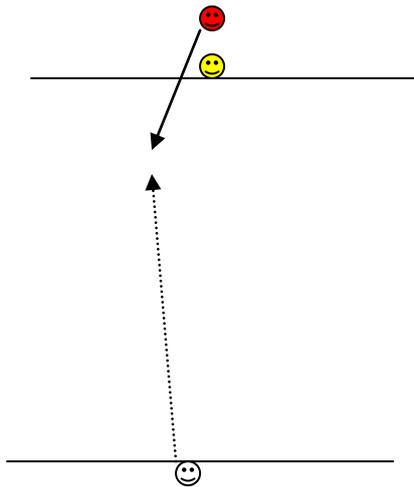


1. Stand two players opposite each other at each end of a 5m line. One has the ball. The ball player can run and bounce [or if the skill level is high – can solo run] to try and get past the tackler. The tackler can move to meet the ball player. Coach should ensure that the players work as close as possible to the line and don't stray in a big arc across the pitch. [e.g. run two lines of markers to keep them in.]



2. Coach uses a tackle shield to show players how to evade [side-step or roll]. Players line at one cone. Coach stands midway between cones and players solo the ball to break the tackle and finish at the far cone.
3. Add some of your own.....

SHOW FOR A PASS



An exercise for 3 players to be replicated across the pitch.

White player starts with the ball on the 45m line, ready to take a free kick. Yellow and Red line up on the 13m line.

Red runs from behind Yellow to show for the pass.

Red attacks the ball, gathers it and solo runs at pace to cross the 45m line.

Meanwhile, White jogs to stand in front of Yellow.

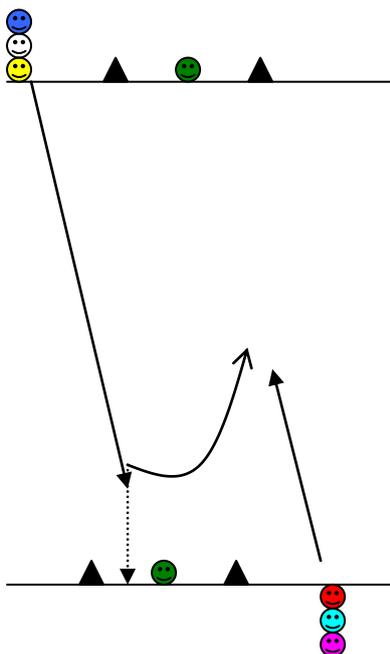
Red turns on 45m line and waits for Yellow to break from behind White and show for the pass etc. etc.

Alternative – Red shows from behind Yellow, gathers the ball and **turns sharply** to cross the 13m line.

Yellow can move to prevent Red from crossing this line, forcing Red to learn to ‘break the tackle’.

Swap roles every couple of minutes.

SHOOT & TACKLE



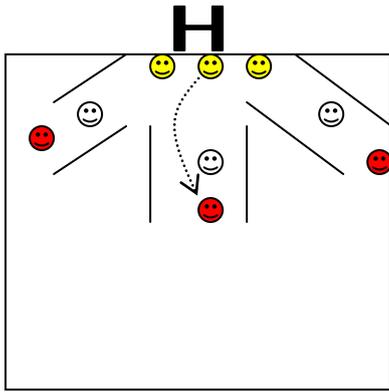
Use cones to set up two sets of goals approximately 40m apart. Put a goalkeeper in each goal and line three players a few metres to the right of each goal. Each player has a ball.

Yellow player solo runs towards the far goal and shoots low. The instant he/she shoots, the Red player sets off on a solo run towards the opposite goal.

The Yellow player must react immediately to chase the Red player and tackle before he/she can score.

Once Red shoots **or is dispossessed** by Yellow, White starts his/her run and Red must become the defender. Yellow simply lines up again etc. etc.

BREAK TO SCORE



A drill to force attackers to **BREAK THE TACKLE** before shooting.

Set up three wide channels using markers. Work players in groups of 3 [one Yellow, one Red and one White in each group].

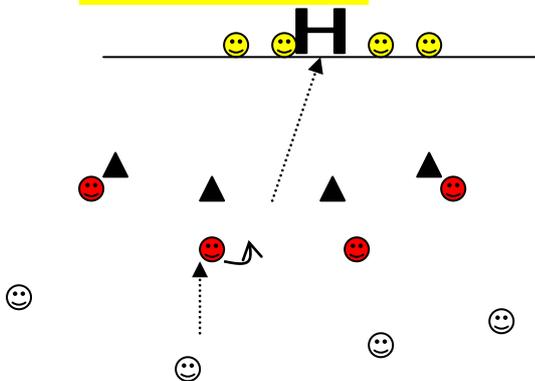
Yellow lobs ball over White's head to Red. Red then attacks. White advances to tackle Red.

Red must break White's tackle before shooting.
[NO KICKING THROUGH THE TACKLER OR STOPPING TO KICK FROM A STANDING POSITION]

Swap roles every couple of minutes.

For the exercise to be successful, the tackler must not keep backing off. Be careful that players stay inside channels to avoid them running into another group.

STANDING SCORE



A drill to work on turning sharply on the spot to score a point.

Yellows feed footballs to Whites.

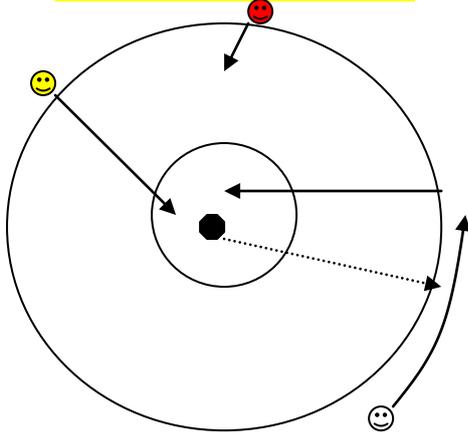
Whites fist pass to Reds.

Reds turn **sharply** at the cone to shoot. NO BOUNCE OR TOE-TAP!

Coach decides distances for shooting

Swap roles and shooting positions regularly.

THE TWO-RING DRILL



A drill to work on clean lifting and fist passing in a congested area and with lots of movement about.

Set up two circles [one about 30m diameter, the other about 5m diameter]. Work players in groups of three. Up to six groups may work on this at the one time.

Set one ball per group in the smaller circle. All players begin to jog anticlockwise around the bigger circle.

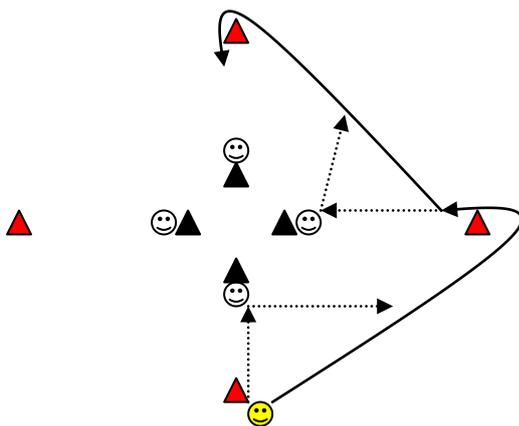
On the whistle, Yellow sprints to lift a ball cleanly and looks up to find White jogging around the big circle. Yellow fist passes to White and rejoins joggers on big circle.

White gathers the ball and immediately turns to solo run to the smaller circle and set the ball down. White rejoins group.

As the ball is set down, Red sprints to lift the ball cleanly and looks up to find Yellow etc. etc.

Run for about two minutes, then reverse direction.

FIST PASS RACE



Four Whites stand at black cones set 5m apart. Four Yellows [only one shown in diagram] start at red cones set 15m away from each black cone.

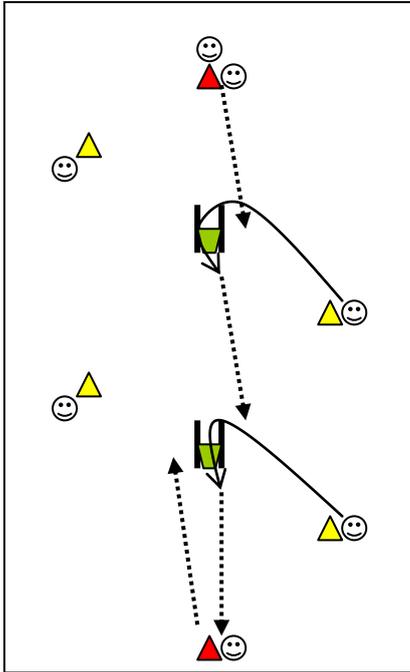
Whistle start. Yellows fist pass to Whites and break right for return pass from Whites. Yellows solo run at pace to next red cone, turn sharply and fist pass to Whites. They break right again for return pass etc. etc.

Race the four Yellows against each other, then swap roles.

The Ultimate Passing Drill

ATTACK & BREAK

H



A drill to be set up for 7 players. Remember – copy this elsewhere on the pitch and you can run it as a race to get players to work at match pace.

Set out the centre spine of red cones and poles [set as narrow gates – 2m between poles]. Make sure the distance between red cones and gates is approx. 25-30m. The yellow cones are set approx. 10m diagonally from the gates.

In each gate, place a coach or player holding a tackle shield.

Start the seven players as shown, with two on the first cone, one of these with the ball.

The first player kick passes towards the gate. This forces the player on yellow to attack the ball, gather it and turn quickly to run through the gate.

The tackle shield should only be used to force the player to break the tackle, burst through the gate and make room for the next kick pass.

All kickers follow their passes to the next cone and get ready for the ball to come round again..

Any player at one of the red cones simply receives and kick passes as if taking a 'free'. He/she does not attack the ball or break a tackle.

The solid lines show sample runs made. The dashed line shows the ball path. This drill calls for accurate kick passing [off the laces – not in the clouds] and swift running between cones.

REMEMBER – IT IS BEST RUN AS A COMPETITION BETWEEN TWO OR THREE GROUPS!

SET IT UP AND RUN IT FOR A SHORT WHILE DURING EVERY SESSION AND WORK TO IMPROVE THOSE PLAYERS WHO DON'T NATURALLY ATTACK THE BALL AND WHO NORMALLY GET THEIR KICKS BLOCKED TOO EASILY!