

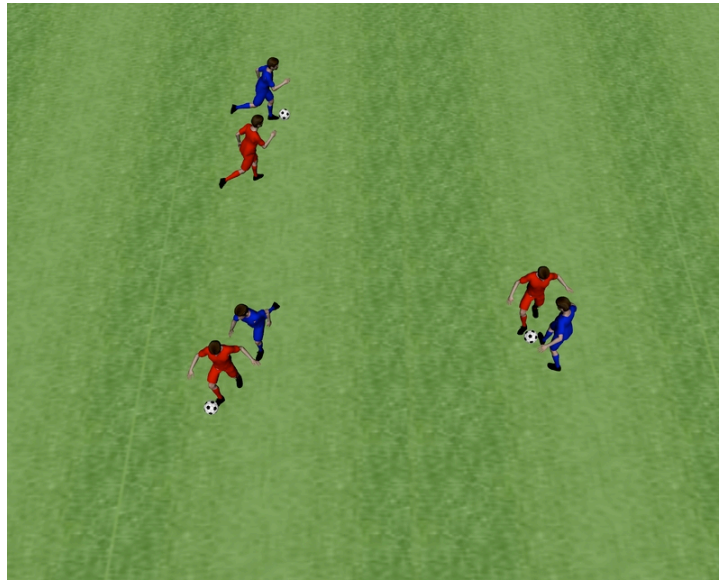


Activities to Develop Competitiveness

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Placing players in small sided environments forces them to be a part of the game. There is nowhere to “hide” like in the big game. Keeping track of the score during the following activities helps the coach highlight and develop a competitive mentality in the players.

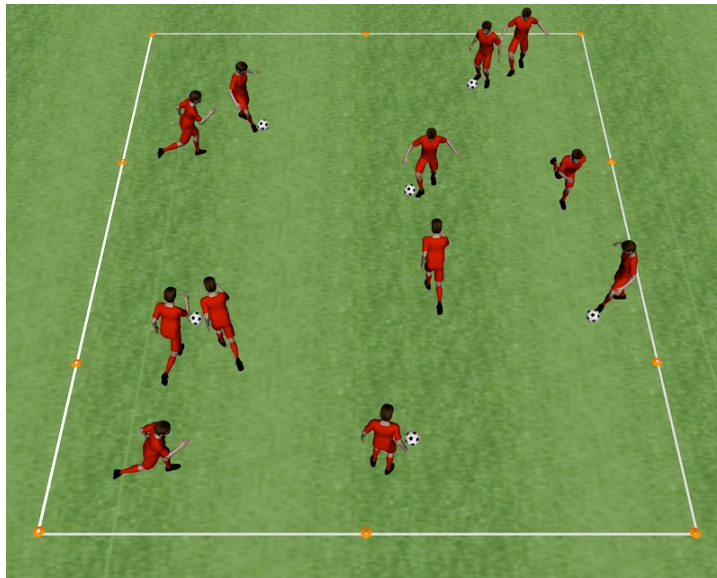
Activity 1 (1 vs. 1 Keep Away)



1. Each player has a partner and there is a ball between the two.
2. Each player starts with their right foot on the ball.
3. On coach's signal the players try to get the ball for themselves to keep away from their partner.
4. The partner who has possession of the ball after a predetermined time (30 secs. / 45 secs. / 1 min. / etc.) is the winner.
5. Find a new partner and play again.
6. Who can win the most matches?

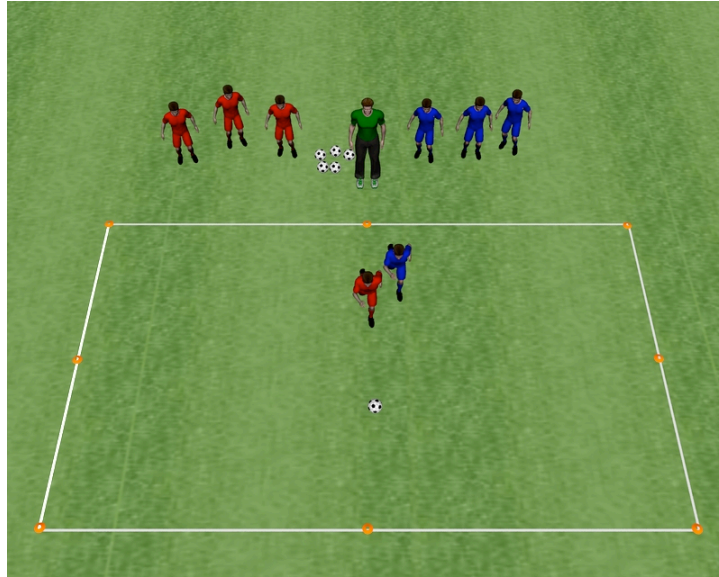
*Note: The coach may want to have them play in a grid to increase interaction => Less room to just “Run Away” when you have the ball. In this environment, if Partner A dribbles out of bounds, Partner B Automatically gets the ball.

Activity 2 (Keep a Ball or Get a Ball)



1. Whole group game
2. Half the players have a ball
3. If you have a ball you are trying to “Keep It” and if you do not have a ball you are trying to get one.
4. A player can tackle the ball away from anyone.
5. There are no “Tag Backs” => If Player A takes the ball from Player B, Player B must find a third person to challenge.
6. Play for 1 minute. Any player with a ball gets a point.
7. Play a few rounds. Who has the most points at the end of the game?

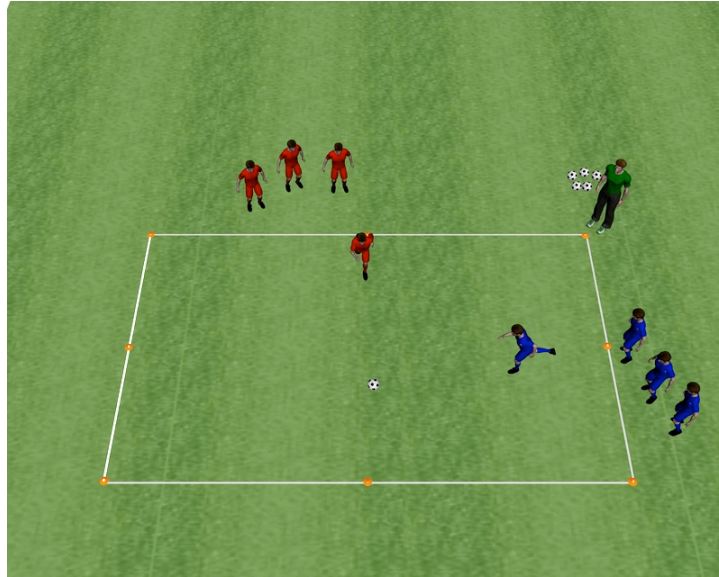
Activity 3 (1 vs. 1 Possession or 1 vs. 1 Dribble over the line) - Version 1



1. Two Teams. Each team in a line just out of bounds. Coach has pile of soccer balls.
2. Coach plays a ball into grid.
3. First player from each team runs in to get possession.
4. After play is done, players return to their team's lines and coach plays ball for next two players.
5. Ways to award points
 - a) First player to get clear possession earns a point for his team.
 - b) Player must get possession and dribble out of bounds over any line under control gets a point.
 - c) Player must dribble over a designated line to score. (Example: Red team must dribble over the end line on the Blue Team's Side and Blue must dribble over the line on the Red Team's Side.
 - d) Coach gives a number to each of the four lines. After coach plays the ball in he calls a number and that is the line the player in possession must dribble over to score.
6. First team to score 5 points wins. Start a new game.

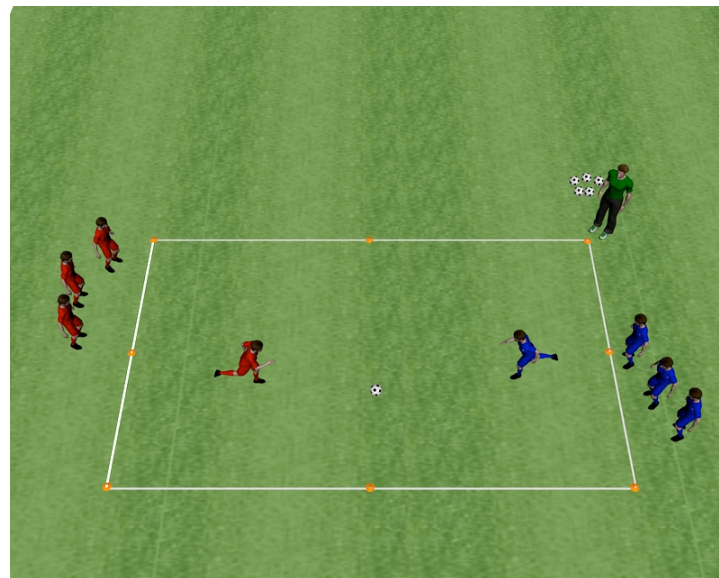
Note: The coach can have players "lean in on each other" (Shoulder to Shoulder) before serving the ball to get them comfortable with body contact.

Activity 4 (1 vs. 1 Possession or 1 vs. 1 Dribble over the line) - Version 2



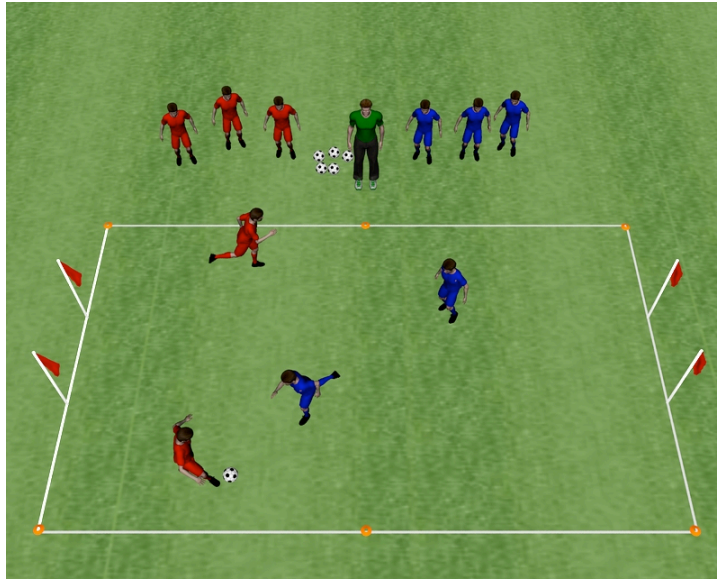
1. Same rules as Activity 3 but now players approach from a more “aggressive” angle.

Activity 5 (1 vs. 1 Possession or 1 vs. 1 Dribble over the line) - Version 3



1. Same rules as Activity 3 but now players approach from a more “aggressive” angle.

Activity 6 (2 vs. 2)



1. Game starts like Activity 3 but now Two Players from each team enter the game.
2. Players try to score by kicking the ball through their opponents goal knee high or lower to score.

*Note: Like the games above, the coach can maintain a high work rate by serving the next ball in as soon as the play is done. Quick rhythm to all of these games helps create an atmosphere of immediacy which helps increase intensity.

*Variations:

- a) This can be played 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, etc.
- b) Coach can call out how many players as he is serving the ball to mix it up.
- c) Coach can let Blue send 2 and Red send 3 to create numbers up / down situations.

*** Obviously this is just a small sample of games that can be used for the purpose of instilling a competitive attitude in young players. There are numerous ways to recreate the same atmosphere found in these activities.**

*** Once good competitive habits are formed in small sided environments it's easier to get players to transfer that mentality to a large group setting (6 vs 6 / 8 vs 8 / 11 vs 11)**