

DESCRIPTION

24x24 Yard grid - players find a partner, one ball, and situate themselves at a set of cones five yards apart. Players begin by passing around the cones - the idea is that the receiving player will receive and move the ball to the opposite side of the cones. When they get the rhythm we can challenge our players to do this in one touch. Make sure we reverse the direction of the ball to engage both feet. Players can then progress to throwing the ball to each other and taking turns to control and aerial ball. Start by asking players to control the ball in front of them, in they succeed you can ask them to control and change the direction of the ball. Other parts of the body to consider (introduce one-at-a-time): inside of foot for looped balls, laces for flat balls, thigh for high balls, chest for high balls.

Make it easier - decrease the distance between the cones

Make it harder - increase the distance between the cones, add a bounce to the aerial balls

WARM UP

24x24 yard grid. Divide your team in two - half with balls around the outside, the other half in the middle without a ball. Middle players check to an outside player to receive a ball. They must control and give it back - challenge them to do this in two, moving to one touch. Players do this for sixty seconds before switching with one of the outside players. You can repeat this for ground and aerial control of the ball. Next, you and your co-coaches step in to add numbers to the outside square, you do not have a ball. Players will now do the same thing but they will seek to give the ball to a different player than the one who gave it to them. again, players work for sixty seconds in the middle before switching to the outside.

Make it easier - allow receivers to take more touches and to be as close as they need to be to the server

Make it harder - server plays the ball in with a bounce, server plays the ball in as a throw-in

TECHNICAL

24x24 yard field -similar set-up as above, but this time the middle players will work against each other - only two will be in the middle at a time, the rest around the outside, half have balls. Player one will try to receive the ball and connect to a new player, player 2 will try to stop them. Work for sixty seconds then switch out both players. Each pairing should get two turns. On their next go around they will switch roles, the previous receiver will become the defender.

Make it easier - only allow defenders to shadow

Make it harder - servers play the ball in with a bounce, servers play the ball in with a throw-in

TACTICAL

Small-sided game, we suggest 5v5 but try to keep all players engaged. We suggest no goalkeepers and the use of small goals to encourage accuracy. To start with put in two small boxes (4x4 yards) that each team are aiming towards. To score a point they may have a player inside that box who controls the ball inside of it with two touches. We always advise that you should allow time for players to enjoy the scrimmage without any conditions.

Make it real -

- 1) Assign positions
- 2) Set a formation
- 3) Help players understand their role

GAME

COACHING POINTS

FIRST COACHING POINT - GROUND BALLS

A receiving player should be on the balls of their feet - knees bent - weight over their toes. As the ball comes in a player must seek to receive slightly to their left or right side (outside of their hip)

SECOND COACHING POINT - AERIAL BALLS

As the ball comes in now the player must analyze the trajectory - if the ball is coming in flat they are more likely to keep the ball within their hips to trap. If it is looped then they may wish to move and trap to the side of their body to set-up their second touch.

FIRST COACHING POINT - PREPARATION

As the receiver arrives to the ball they need to check their shoulder for space and decide which direction they are going to go. They should be choosing to go to the side less crowded. When the receiver is ready they should be giving verbal (shouts) and visual (hands) cues to the server.

SECOND COACHING POINT - TYPE OF TOUCH

Receiving players will need to decide if they are going to receive straight to them or in to space - again, teach your players to position their body to do both. If the receiver has space around them encourage a larger touch towards the open area. If it is tight then encourage a safer, protective touch.

FIRST COACHING POINT - SPACIAL AWARENESS

The receiver must now analyze two things:

- 1) Where is the defender
- 2) Where can I play to

We teach our players to try and keep their body in between the ball and the defender at all times, they now need to approach with a body position slightly open, take a touch away from the defender and seek to release quickly in order to neutralize the defender.

COACHING SUMMARY

Try to find instances in the game to freeze the play when your coaching points are relevant. Keep your freeze short and concise - try to find opportunities when a defender is easily beaten or when a defender does a good job with their approach and position. These can be positive or negative pieces of play.

Some examples:

- 1) A dribbling player beats a defender due to a poor approach or body shape
- 2) A defender approaches the ball and the attacker is allowed to go inside toward as goal
- 3) A defender runs at the ball and fails to prepare to fall backwards

DIAGRAM

