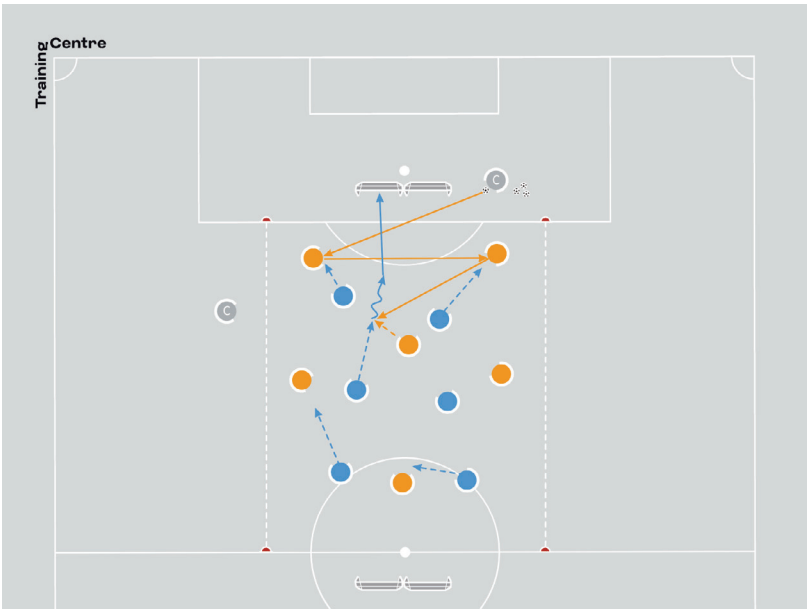
NEC Nijmegen U-19
Denying central progression

PART 1: BEGINNING WITH THE REDUCED 2-2-2



Organisation

- Mark out a 35x32m playing area with 1 mini-goal at each end, positioned 1m behind the goal line.
- Form 2 teams of 6 players:
- The defenders (grey in video below) are in a 2-2-2 shape.
- The attackers (orange) are in a 2-1-2-1 shape.
- The assistant coach stands next to the attackers' mini-goals with a supply of balls. The head coach stands next to the field..

Explanation

- The assistant coach starts the drill with a pass to the attacking team.
- The 6v6 begins with the attackers trying to pass the ball into the mini-goals.
- The defending team applies a high press and, after winning the ball, counter-attacks towards the mini-goal at the other end.
- After a goal or the ball goes out of play, restart with the assistant coach.
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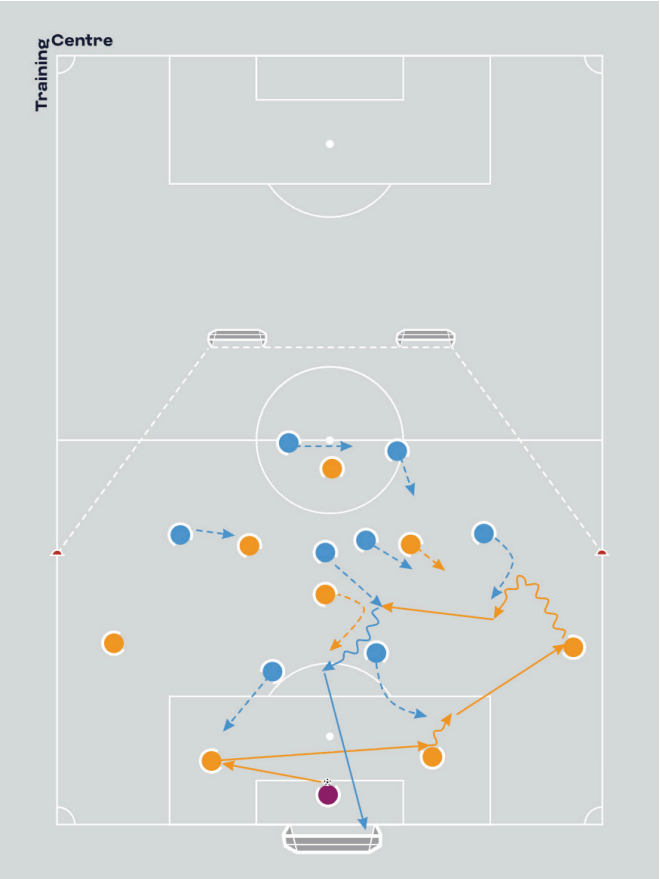
Coaching points

- Compactness: keep tight distances between units; protect the centre first.
- Press timing: step up aggressively at the moment of the pass (use clear triggers).
- Two-striker defending: alternate – one striker presses, the other screens the central lane. Swap as the ball moves.
- Pressing direction: angle pressure to show play to one side; avoid straight-line chasing.
- Defending team's transitions: win it and counter quickly – first pass forward/out of pressure, support runs to mini-goals.
- Attacking team's transitions: immediate counter-press; if bypassed, recover centrally and get compact.
- Attacking execution: create triangles with quick tempo change; final pass into a mini-goal must be firm and timed.

PART 2: EXPANDING TO A 2-4-2

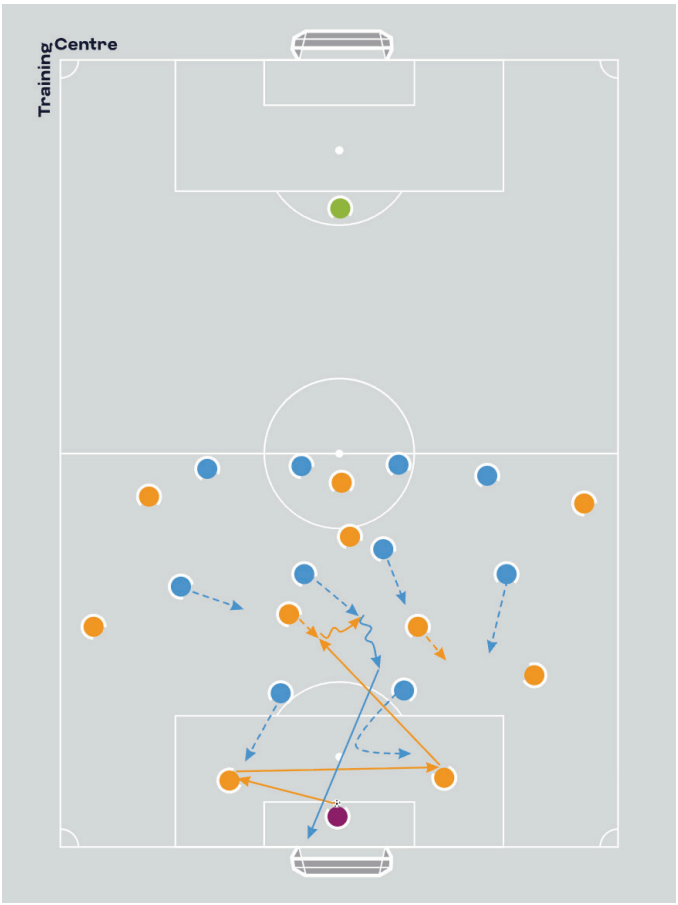


Organisation
- Mark out a 60m-long field with 1 full-size goal and a goalkeeper, plus 2 mini-goals, as shown in the diagram.
- Form two teams of 8 players and position the defending team in a 2-4-2 (orange in video below) and the attacking team in a 1-4-3-1.
- Set up a supply of balls in the goal.

Explanation
- The goalkeeper starts the 8v8+GK with a goal kick.
- The attacking team tries to pass the ball into one of the mini-goals.
- The defending team counter-attacks to the full-size goal after winning possession.
- After a goal or the ball goes out of play, restart with the goalkeeper.

Coaching points
- Start with composure from the goalkeeper and make the first action break pressure.
- Prevent the forward pass to force the ball carrier to cut back and thereby reduce the opponent's attacking momentum.
- Stay compact when defending, protect central lanes and shift together as a unit.
- Press on clear triggers like a bad touch, back pass or receiver facing their own goal, with one player pressing and others covering lanes.
- React fast in transition, counter quickly to the big goal after winning it, and counter-press or recover centrally after losing it.
- Keep width and depth, create triangles, and switch play to find the mini-goals.
- Play the final pass into the mini-goal with the right timing and a firm, accurate weight.

PART 3:CONCLUDING WITH THE FULL-FLEDGED 4-4-2



Organisation
- Use the full-size pitch, including both goals.
- Form two teams of 11 players, including goalkeepers.
- The defending team plays in a 1-4-4-2 and the attacking team in a 1-4-3-3.
- Set up supplies of balls in the goals.

Explanation
- Full-sized 11v11 honing the points introduced earlier in the session.
- The defending team applies high pressing (attacking press).

Coaching points
- The two strikers must lead the high press by pressing together with curved runs that block central passes and force play to one side.
- When the opponent plays a pass between the strikers, the nearest central midfielder steps up aggressively to close the space and win or disrupt possession while team-mates cover behind.
- After regaining the ball, attack immediately with a direct forward pass or quick play into space before the opponent can reorganise.