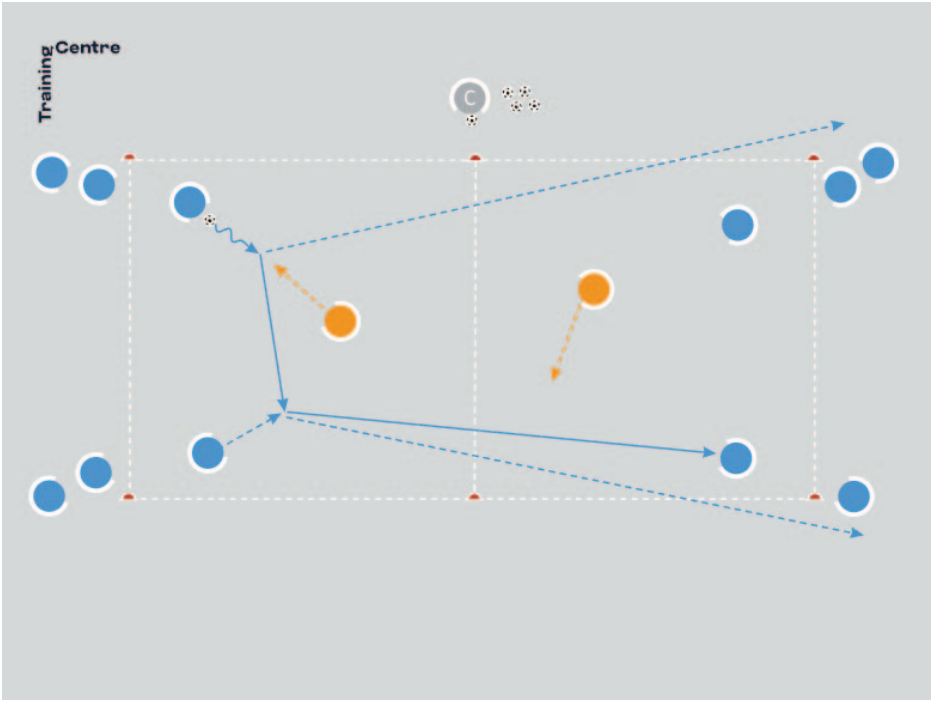
FC Twente/Heracles U-16
Finding the free player

WARM-UP

First warm-up: Activation
- Mark out two 16m-long lanes and set up 8 hurdles in the first 5m of each.
- Allocate a group to each lane.
- The players complete various ABC running drills, mobility exercises and sprints.

Second warm-up: Foot race
- Mark out 2 running lanes from the goal line to halfway.
- Allocate a group to each lane.
- The players execute 3 runs at increasing speed, trotting back at a gentle pace.
- For the fourth round, the players go in pairs: A starts 2m ahead of B. On the coach's signal, they sprint off and B attempts to catch A before they reach halfway.

EXERCISE 1: 4V2 WITH CHANGING POSITIONS

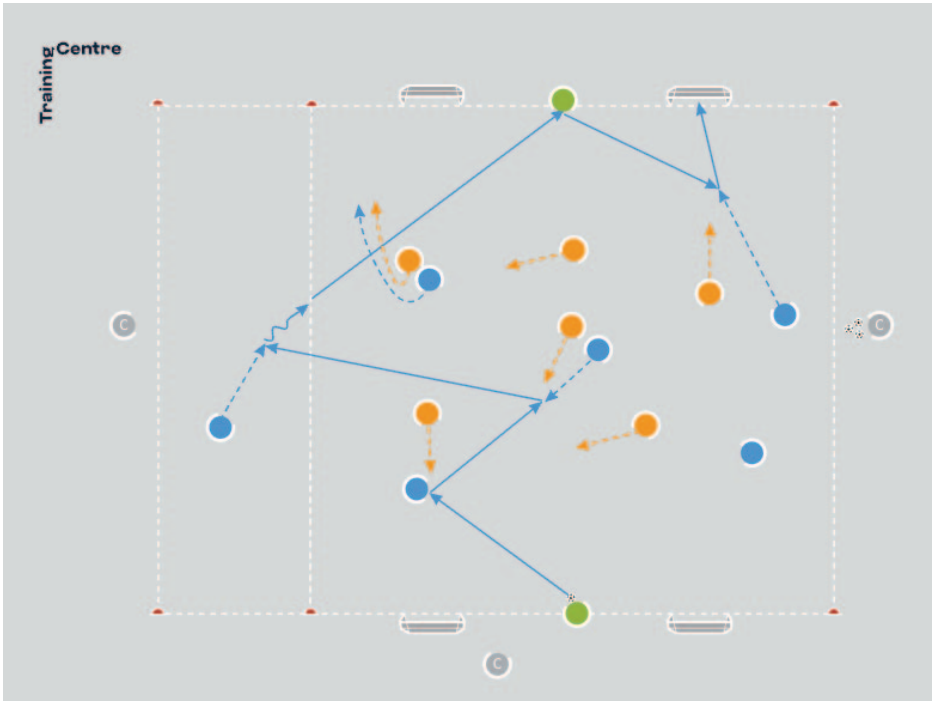


Organisation
- Mark out a 20x10m pitch with a halfway line.
- Nominate 2 defenders and position them inside the pitch. Distribute the other players across the 4 corners.
- Set up a supply of balls for the coach on the halfway line.

Explanation
- 4v2
- After making a pass, the player runs to the position opposite and the next player enters the pitch.
- After losing possession, the player responsible swaps positions with the defender who has spent more time in the middle. The coach puts a new ball into play.

Coaching points
- Making sound decisions quickly when under pressure
- Using the first touch to set up follow-on actions
- Finding space and always showing for the pass
- Readiness and vision
- Transitioning swiftly after losing possession

EXERCISE 2: 6V6+2 ON AN ASYMMETRICAL PITCH



Organisation

- Mark out a 35x45m pitch with a 10m-wide channel on one side wing (as shown on the left of the image).
- On each goal line, position 2 mini-goals centrally within the area outside the wide channel.
- Set up a supply of balls for the coach in the centre of the pitch.
- Form 2 teams of 6 players. Position 1 outfield player or 1 goalkeeper as a neutral player at each end, between the mini-goals.
- Goalkeepers should have already completed their own separate training session before joining team training at the start of this exercise.

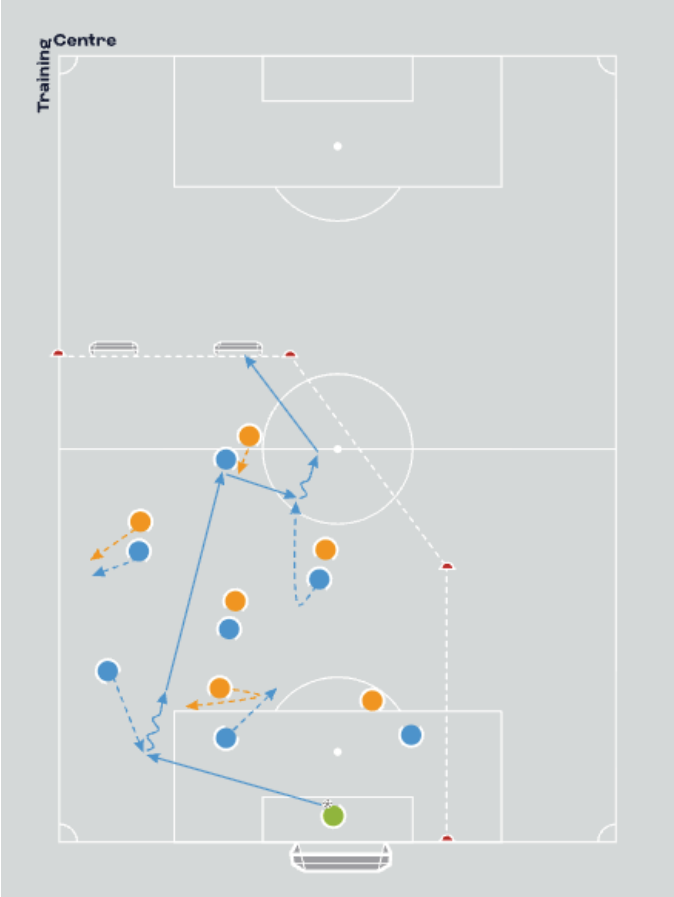
Explanation

- 6v6+2
- The attacking team can enter the wide channel at any time, while defenders must pass or dribble into it.
- After a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the coach puts another ball into play.

Coaching points

- Deliberately creating a one-player overload around the ball
- Quickly creating a passing angle
- Finding the free player
- Pushing up dynamically after switching
- Transitioning immediately after losing possession and quickly closing down space around the ball

EXERCISE 3: 8V6 ON A TRUNCATED PITCH



Organisation

- Mark out a 60x45m pitch, truncated diagonally on the right-hand side (at the opposite end to the full-size goal, as shown in the image), with 1 full-size goal guarded by a goalkeeper and 2 mini-goals.
- Form a team with 8 players, including a goalkeeper, and another team of 6.
- Place balls in the full-size goal.
- Important note: in the video, this exercise was initially an 8v6, but due to an injury mid-session, turned into a 7v6.

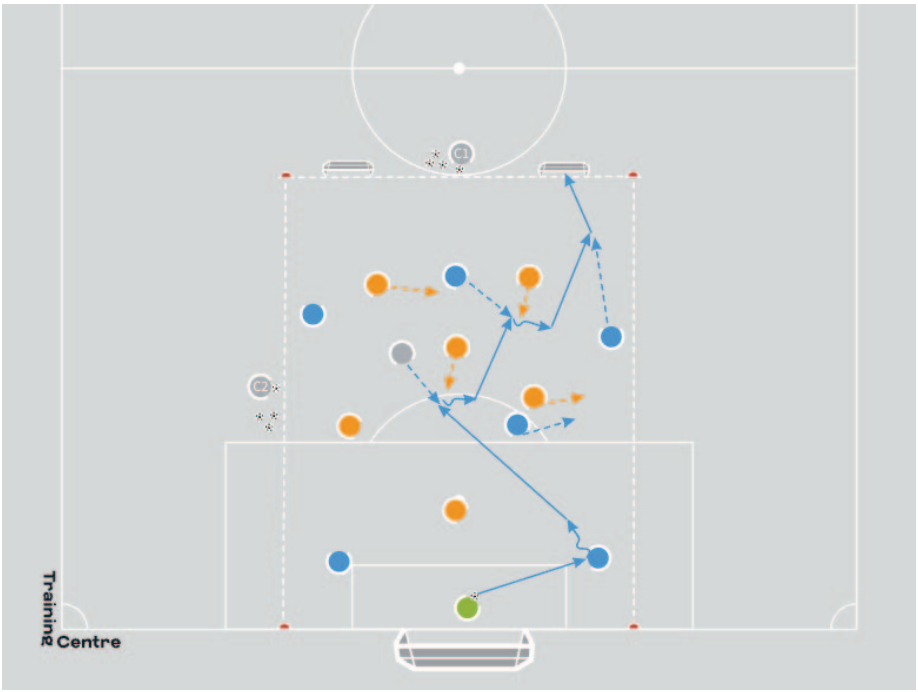
Explanation

- 8v6 (turns into 7v6 in the video due to injury)
- The goalkeeper starts each attack.
- The blues attack the mini-goals, while the reds counter-attack towards the full-size goal guarded by the goalkeeper.

Coaching points

- Creating structured and controlled build-up play, starting from the goalkeeper
- Generating dynamism down the left with clear follow-on actions
- Mimicking in-game situations by recognising and using space when attacking on the left
- Taking the overload to the next level
- Creating overloads around the ball
- Switching immediately to counter-pressing after losing possession, or staying compact and closing down

EXERCISE 4: 6+1V5 WITH CHANGING ENDS



Organisation

- Mark out a 42.5x27.5m pitch, with 1 full-size goal guarded by a goalkeeper and 2 mini-goals.
- Form 1 team of 6 players, including a goalkeeper, and a second team of five. The goalkeeper plays in the full-size goal.
- Nominate 1 neutral player.
- Coaches with a supply of balls should be stationed behind the goal line between the mini-goals and at the halfway point along the left touchline (from the perspective of the team with the goalkeeper).
- Important note: due to several players needing to withdraw from practice, the exercise in the video is a 6+1v5. This exercise can also be played as a 7+1v6 (as shown in the pitch graphic above).

Explanation

- The goalkeeper initiates play and the blue team attack the mini-goals together with the neutral player.
- The reds counter-attack towards the goal with the goalkeeper.
- If a goal is scored in either mini-goal, both teams run around them. The teams now switch sides and the coach behind the mini-goals restarts play by passing the ball to the blues, who are now attacking the goal with the goalkeeper.
- If a goal is scored against the goalkeeper, the coach along the touchline restarts play by passing to the team that conceded the goal (in this case, the blue team).

Coaching points

- Targeted overloads with the neutral player
- Spreading out and establishing passing angles around the ball
- Focused attacks on the mini-goals and full-size goal
- Transitioning consistently after losing possession and scoring goals
- High levels of awareness and intensity when play is restarted