

## Roger Schmidt: 11v11 game with two imposed rules

### Setup

The session is built around a standard 11v11 game, played box-to-box with all official rules in place — offside, throw-ins, corner kicks, and so on. Both teams are set up in a 1-4-2-3-1 formation, mirroring the tactical structure Schmidt often prefers.



This graphic shows the setup of the game, including formation and field dimensions.



If a team scores a goal while all players are in the opponent's half, they are awarded an additional penalty kick.

### Rule 1

If a team scores a goal while all players are in the opponent's half, they are awarded an additional penalty kick.

### Tactical rationale

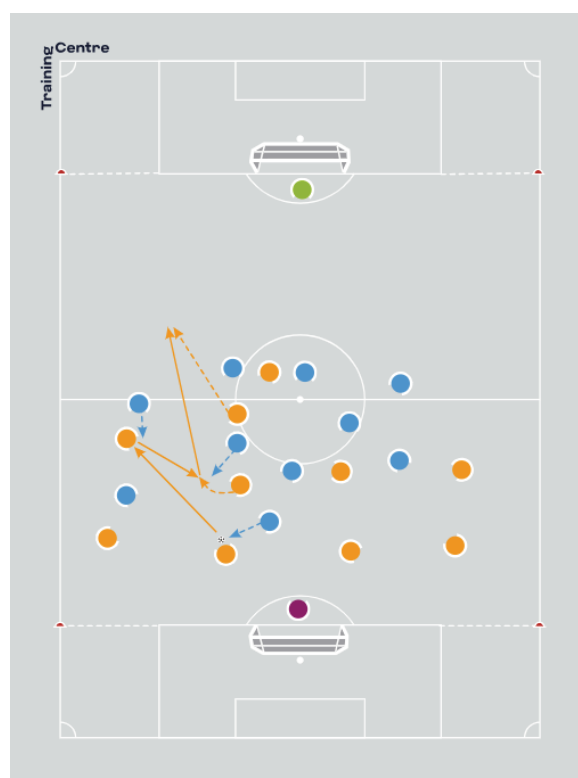
This rule encourages team compactness in possession. By staying close together, the team is better positioned to counter-press immediately after losing the ball. This compact shape increases the likelihood of regaining possession quickly and creates more attacking opportunities.

### Rule 2

When a player passes backwards in their own half, the receiving player must play the next pass forward. Multiple touches are allowed, but the direction must be forward.

### Tactical rationale

This constraint promotes a forward-thinking mindset in build-up play. Schmidt wants his teams to avoid passive sequences of backwards passes that lead to stagnation. Instead, players are trained to read the game early, anticipate forward options, and act decisively.



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The rule stretches players to be courageous — to choose the more difficult but impactful option. Schmidt notes that players often have the ability to play forward under pressure but lack the confidence. This rule helps unlock that potential.

But it's not just about development — it's also tactical. Backwards passes often trigger pressing movements from the opposition. These movements create exploitable spaces:

- behind the pressing player (if vertical compactness is lost);
- behind the defensive line (if the block pushes up);
- on the far side (if wide players collapse centrally).

By attracting pressure and then playing forward, Schmidt's teams can unlock compact defences and create dynamic attacking sequences.