

Recognising opportunities —●— for attacking transitions

Session overview

Part 1: Two-phase rondos – 3v1 and 3v5

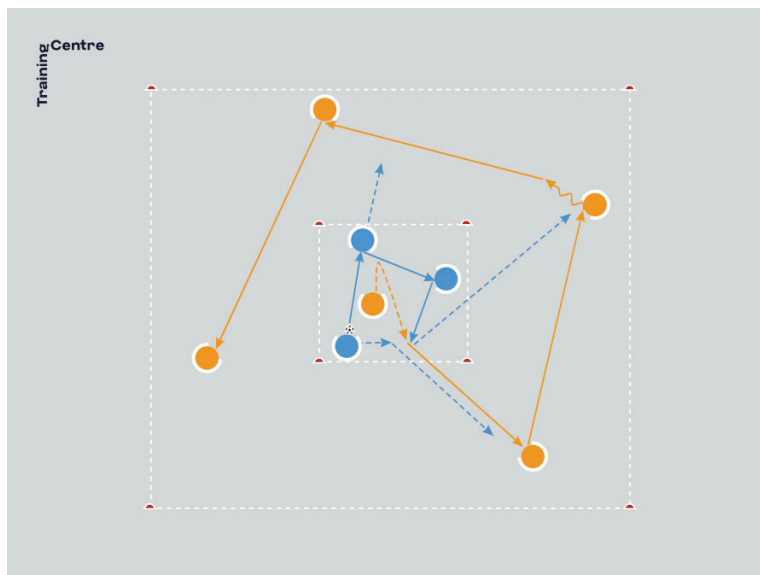
Part 2: Attack v. defence – 4v2

Part 3: 3v2 attacking wave game

Key coaching points

- Emphasise the importance of identifying and being prepared for a turnover.
- Adopting an open body shape and reading the play helps players to prepare for an attacking transition.
- A quick change of mindset from defence to attack enhances a team's chances of exposing a disorganised defence.
- Quick and aggressive off-the-ball movement can allow teams to take advantage of vulnerable defences.
- Players should recognise when and how to use the spare player(s) in scenarios involving a numerical advantage.

PART 1: TWO-PHASE RONDOS – 3V1 AND 3V5



Organisation

- Mark out two 15m x 15m exercise areas.
- Lay out a 3m x 3m square in the middle of each exercise area.
- Assign 8 players to each exercise area.
- Set up a 5 v. 3 (oranges v. blues) scenario in each exercise area.
- Place all 3 blue-team players and 1 orange-team player in the 3m x 3m square

Explanation

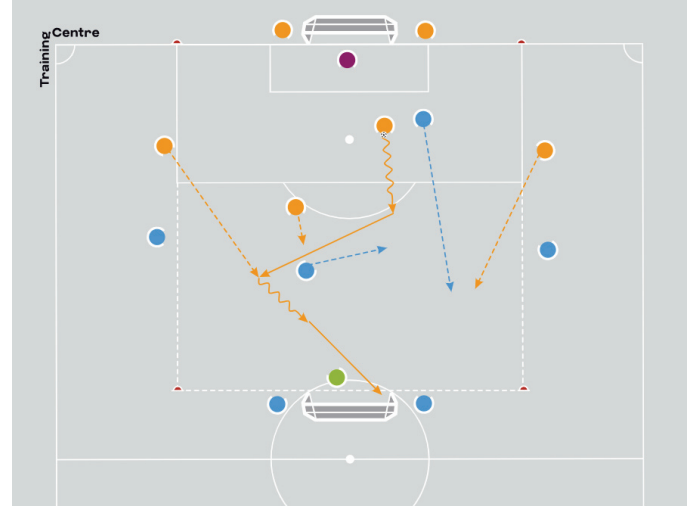
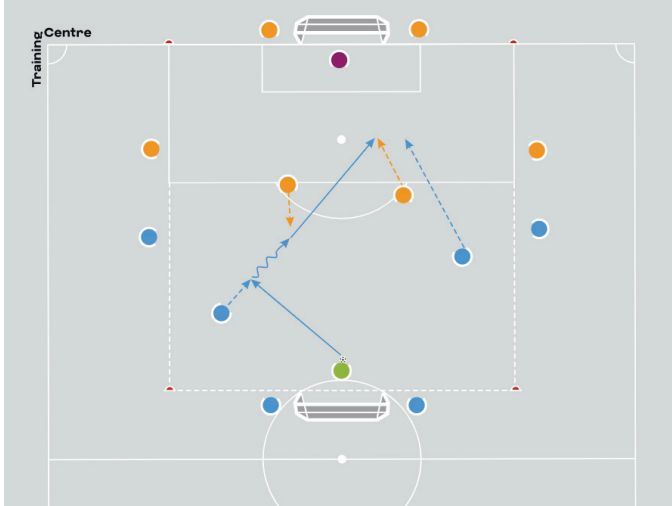
- The 3 blue-team players try to keep the ball inside the 3m x 3m square.
- The orange-team player tries to dispossess them.
- If the blues complete 6 passes, they win the game and the teams switch roles.
- If the orange-team player wins the ball, they pass it to 1 of their 4 team-mates positioned outside the 3m x 3m square.
- The oranges try to complete 6 passes, while the blues attempt to win the ball.
- If the blues regain possession, they have to dribble the ball outside the area to end the game and for it to be restarted.

Coaching points

- Players must avoid being static and should constantly be ready to receive the ball with an open body shape and be on their toes.

- To perform the exercise efficiently, players must display close control, precise passing and quick decision-making.
- Excellent body orientation and the ability to read the game are key to retaining possession and can help a team to keep the ball and circulate it in transitions.
- Encourage players to play passes through pressure and not just around the opposition. This can draw players out of position and create space for team-mates to receive the ball.

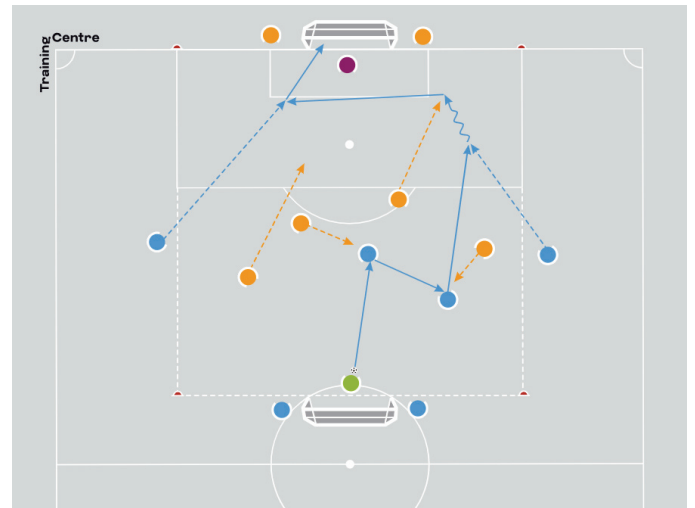
PART 2: ATTACK V. DEFENCE – FROM 2V2 TO 4V4



The second exercise works on the players' mindsets to help them to react to a turnover and launch an attacking transition. Players must be switched-on and adapt their positioning, mentality and actions to the situation unfolding in front of them.

Organisation

- Use just under 1 half of a full-size pitch as the exercise area.
- Reduce the width of the exercise area to 30m.
- Position a full-size goal at either end of the exercise area.
- Place a goalkeeper in each goal.
- Split the group into 2 teams of 8 (oranges v. blues).
- Set up a 2v2 scenario inside the exercise area.
- Place 2 players from each team along the outer lines on opposite sides of the exercise area ("wide players").
- Ask the remaining players to stand beside their team's goal.



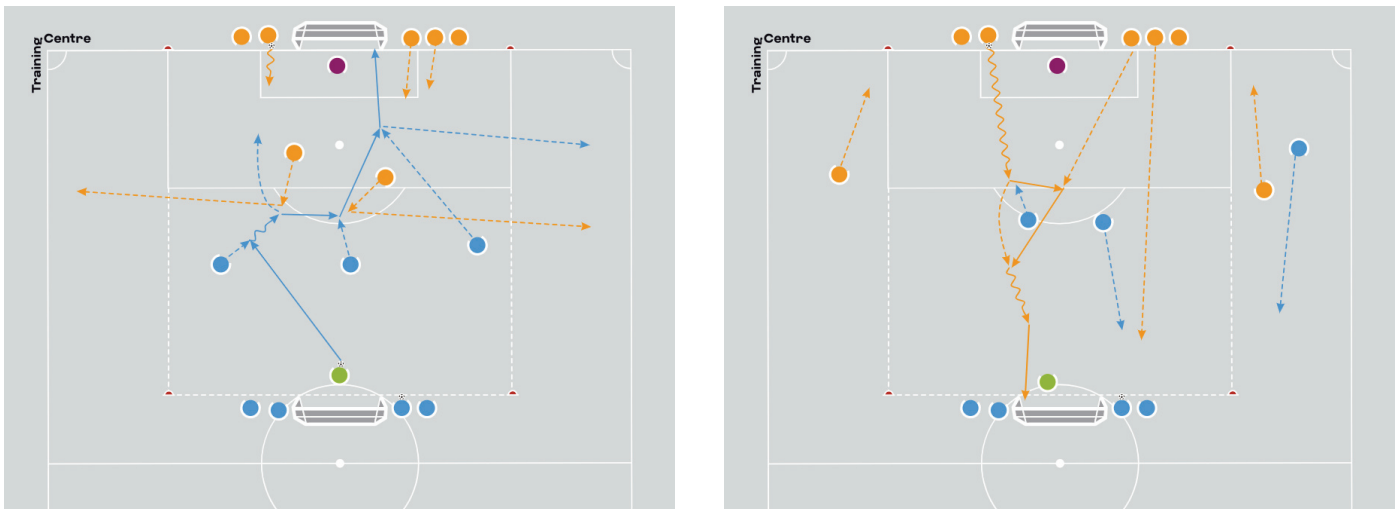
Explanation

- The exercise starts with the goalkeeper.
- They pass the ball out to 1 of the 2 blue-team players.
- The blues look to score into the oranges' goal.
- The 2 orange-team players try to dispossess them.
- After an attempt on goal or a turnover, the 2 orange-team wide players are activated and enter the exercise area to create a 4v2 overload.
- After the next attempt on goal or turnover, the 2 blue-team wide players enter the exercise area to create a 4v4 scenario.
- The teams contest a 4v4 until a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play.
- When this happens, the players return to their starting positions (2v2 scenario), and the exercise restarts with the goalkeeper.
- Rotate the players after a set period of time so that the players beside the goals get an opportunity to take part.

Coaching points

- Players should pay attention to the play at all times, even when occupying a passive role, to ensure that they are ready for the transition.
- By being constantly aware of their surroundings, players can prepare themselves for their team losing or regaining possession.
- Players must react quickly after their team have scored by immediately adopting an aggressive defensive approach.
- Players positioned beside the goals and the goalkeepers must communicate with each other to decide who puts the next ball into play.
- Goalkeepers must restart play as quickly as possible to take advantage of a disorganised defence.

PART 3: 3V2 ATTACKING WAVE GAME



The final exercise provides players with exposure to ideal scenarios in which to launch quick counter-attacks. The drill replicates a 3v2 attacking transition in which players are asked to show good movement and perform aggressive actions.

Organisation

- Use just under 1 half of a full-size pitch as the exercise area
- Position a full-size goal at either end of the exercise area.
- Place a goalkeeper in each goal.
- Reduce the width of the exercise area to 30m.
- Split the group into 2 teams of 8.
- Set up a 3v2 (blues v. oranges) scenario inside the exercise area.
- Ask the remaining players to stand beside their team's goal.

Explanation

- The 3 blue-team players attack the oranges' goal.
- The 2 orange-team defenders try to prevent the blues from scoring.
- If the blue team score or the oranges win the ball, the 2 orange-team defenders leave the exercise area and are replaced by 3 team-mates from beside the goal, who now have possession of the ball.
- The blue-team player who scored or lost the ball leaves the exercise area, meaning that there are 2 blue-team defenders inside the exercise area.
- The 3v2 scenario is repeated but now in the opposite direction.
- Once the players are familiar with the game, add an element of competition by keeping count of the goals scored.

Coaching points

- Players must enter the exercise area as quickly as possible to take advantage of the opposition's disorganised defence and maintain the fluency of the exercise.
- Players should take advantage of overloads by finding the free player as often as possible.
- By running at defenders, the ball carrier can create space for team-mates off the ball.
- Clever off-the-ball movement can help to create goalscoring chances. Players must overlap, make crossover runs and decoy runs.
- Players must be prepared to quickly change their mindset and approach from defence to attack and vice versa.