

## Session Summary

<b>Session:</b>	<b>SWITCHING PITCHES</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	-	<b>Coach:</b>	Ian Knapp (ianknappuk@googlemail.com)
<b>Duration:</b>	15 - 25 mins	<b>Equipment:</b>	Balls, bibs, cones (lots of 2 colours)
<b>#Players:</b>	12 or more	<b>Age Group:</b>	U9 - U17

## Introduction

This exercise is great fun first and foremost. It involves speed of thought, defending (matched up and outnumbered), attacking overloads, scoring, passing, 1v1 skills, tackling and loads more. It's a great warm up to introduce topics where numbers are uneven, like defending outnumbered or creating overloads.

## Setup

- Set up several small "pitches", each about 18 x 12 yards, but this should be judged on the age and ability of your players. The number of pitches should allow you to start with a 2v2 on each pitch.
- Cones or poles as small "goals" at each end.
- Either a tactics board with a pen OR 2 different colours of cone (at least 20 of each colour) placed at the side of the area for the players to use as scoring.
- Split the group in two and give one half one colour bibs and the other half another colour.
- Then split each group into pairs and send them to their respective pitches to play a 2v2 (if you have an odd number then play 3v2 on one pitch)
- One ball per pitch, more at the side with coach in case they go flying half way across the field.



## Rules

- Players play normal matches on the mini pitches.
- When a player scores, they leave the pitch, go and put a mark under their team's name on the tactics board (either "Whites" or "Pinks" in the above example). If using cones to score then take a cone from your team's pile and place it in a "scoring pool".
- The player who scored then rejoins the game on a different pitch to the one they just scored on.
- If a player clears a pitch (i.e they score when they are the last player on that pitch), then their team gets 5 points, we stop the game and redistribute a couple of players to that pitch to keep things running.
- Play for a set time period and then tot up the scores.

## 5 Key Coaching Points / Challenges

- Which pitch will you rejoin the game on? Have a look where your team mates are most in need of your help. For example if you have one player in a 1v3 then you need to get there and help them out!!
- How can you exploit a numerical advantage? Movement off the ball to create good overloads.
- How can you defend when outnumbered? Hold up play and wait for a team mate to come and help you.
- Attacking skills - movement off the ball, 1v1 skills, first touch, passing empathy, combination play, counter attacking, communication.
- Defensive skills - body shape, positioning, communication, showing your opponent onto their weaker foot or into a part of the pitch they don't want to be, tackling.

Because this game introduces so many different topics, we haven't included the FA's 4 corner coaching points as it would just be a very long list of muddled points. The points you'd want to make would probably be based on what the rest of your session was based around.

So for example, if you were using this as an introduction to "Defending Outnumbered" (which would seem sensible as the nature of the game creates lots of defending outnumbered scenarios), you may want to have a look at the coaching points we've included for that topic. A list of topics below that this game may suit being used as an introduction for is below (but it's by no means exhaustive). Or it can just be a fun game the players use as a warm up or to let off steam.

- Defending outnumbered
- Creating overloads
- Defending 1v1 / 2v2 / matched up
- Counter attacking
- Defence vs attack practices
- Combination play
- Communication