

Session Summary

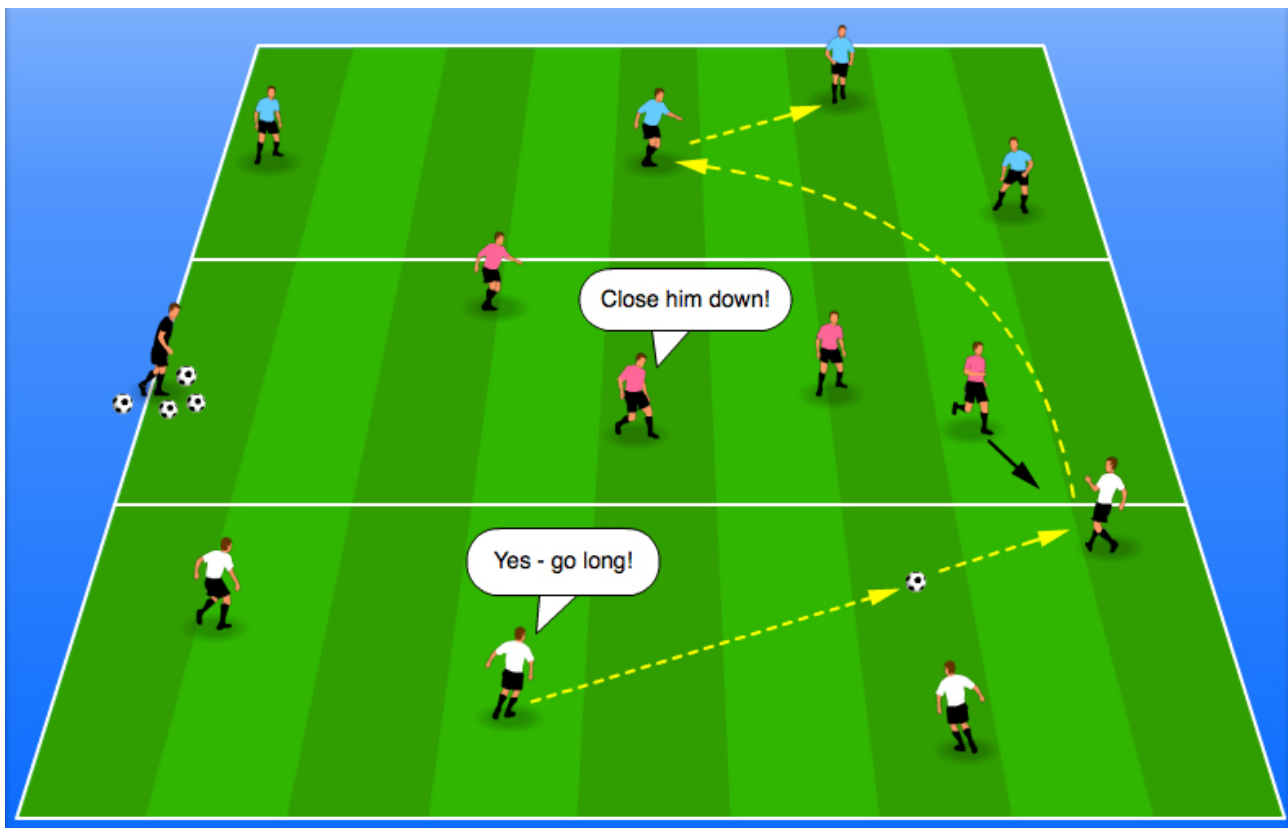
Session:	4v4v4 PASS AND DEFEND		
Date:	-	Coach:	Ian Knapp (ianknappuk@googlemail.com)
Duration:	15 - 20 mins	Equipment:	Balls, bibs, cones
#Players:	12	Age Group:	U9 - U17

Introduction

This session focuses on both long and short range passing, as well as the concept of moving the ball around until a space opens up to allow you to play a forward pass. With 3 teams, it's competitive and can be scored in various different ways. Communication, playing with your head up, passing technique, weight of pass and first touch are all tested in this exercise, that makes a great warm up or technical practice for a session on passing, whilst also giving the middle team something to think about defensively in terms of their shape and organisation.

Setup

- A large square / rectangle, split into 3 equal sized sections (side dependent on age / ability and number of players - players need to be able to pass from one end to the other at the outer range of their passing ability).
- Split the players into 3 teams. Works best with 3 x teams of 4, but teams of 3 or 5 could also work. Uneven teams can work too or one player can be a neutral player who always sits in the central area as an extra defender (rotate who this is if you do this).
- One team in each section.
- One ball in the game, others with the coach at the side of the pitch.



Rules

- All teams are locked into their individual zone.
- One of the end teams (let's say whites in the above diagram), starts with the ball.
- Their aim is to play a successful pass to the other end team (blues). Do this and they score a point.
- Encourage them to work the ball between themselves until an obvious passing opportunity opens up.
- The middle team (pink) are defenders who are trying to intercept the pass.
- If they do intercept the pass, they score a point and switch with whichever end team played the intercepted pass.
- If the ball goes out of play, whichever team touched it last switches with the middle team, so a poor pass or a poor touch where the ball goes out of play leads to a switch.
- Play for a set time limit and see which team has the most points.

Progressions & Variations

- Don't switch teams, just score points for successful passes and interceptions and then switch roles after 4 minutes. Each team gets 2 turns at the end and one turn in the middle. Add up the points and see who won.
- Don't allow passes in the air - makes it much harder to find passing gaps. I prefer this with older players as they can find it too easy if they can play aerial balls.
- Extra points for controlling the ball effectively with thigh, chest etc.
- Extra points for a first time pass without controlling the ball first.

5 Key Coaching Points / Challenges

- Can you play with your head up, so you know where your team mates and the passing options are?
- Weight, type, execution and accuracy of pass. Where does the receiving player want the ball and with what power do they want it?
- Speed of play. When a gap opens up, take advantage of it quickly. Take too long and the opportunity will disappear.
- Communication - verbal and pointing to show where you want the ball.
- Defenders - how can you make it as difficult as possible for the opposition to pass through you? Stay compact, everyone working together as a unit.

Key Coaching Points (FA's 4 Corners)

Technical

- **Can your** body shape allow you to see the player passing to you and the player you're about to pass to?
- **Weight, accuracy and type** of pass
- **First touch** - take the ball where you want it to go so you can make the next pass.
- Play with your **head up** - know where your team mates / the other team are at all times.
- **Speed of play** - don't take too long or the opportunity to pass will be gone.
- Defenders - **close off the passing options** and work as a unit.

Physical

- **Speed of play** (quick is usually better, but accuracy comes before speed)
- **Body shape**
- **Agility** to control and pass on the move.
- **Speed** of defenders to cover ground and block the options.

Psychological

- **Communication** (verbal and using body shape / pointing)
- **Thinking ahead** - decide what you're going to do next BEFORE the ball has arrived with you
- **Decision making** - what type of pass.
- **Awareness** of where everyone is on the pitch (your team mates and the other team)
- **Confidence** to try a pass and be positive.

Social

- Working as a **team**
- **Encouraging** others and not being negative
- **Communication**
- Have **fun!**