

Training Circuit

A variation for a training session could be to manage the training environment by using a circuit of three to four activities taking place simultaneously. At the beginning of training the coach divides the players into each grid. He explains the activity in one grid to that group of players and they begin play. The coach then goes to the next grid to explain that activity and so on to each grid. In this way all players have begun their activity in their grid in a short time. Players rotate from one activity to the next. Players rotate from the grids thusly: 1 to 2; 2 to 3; 3 to 1. The coach can keep all of the players active and there is good variety. The coach can observe playing behavior as he moves from group to group. Players participate in an environment with little coaching and a good bit of self direction as players change from one activity grid to the next the kids can tell each other how to do the next activity.

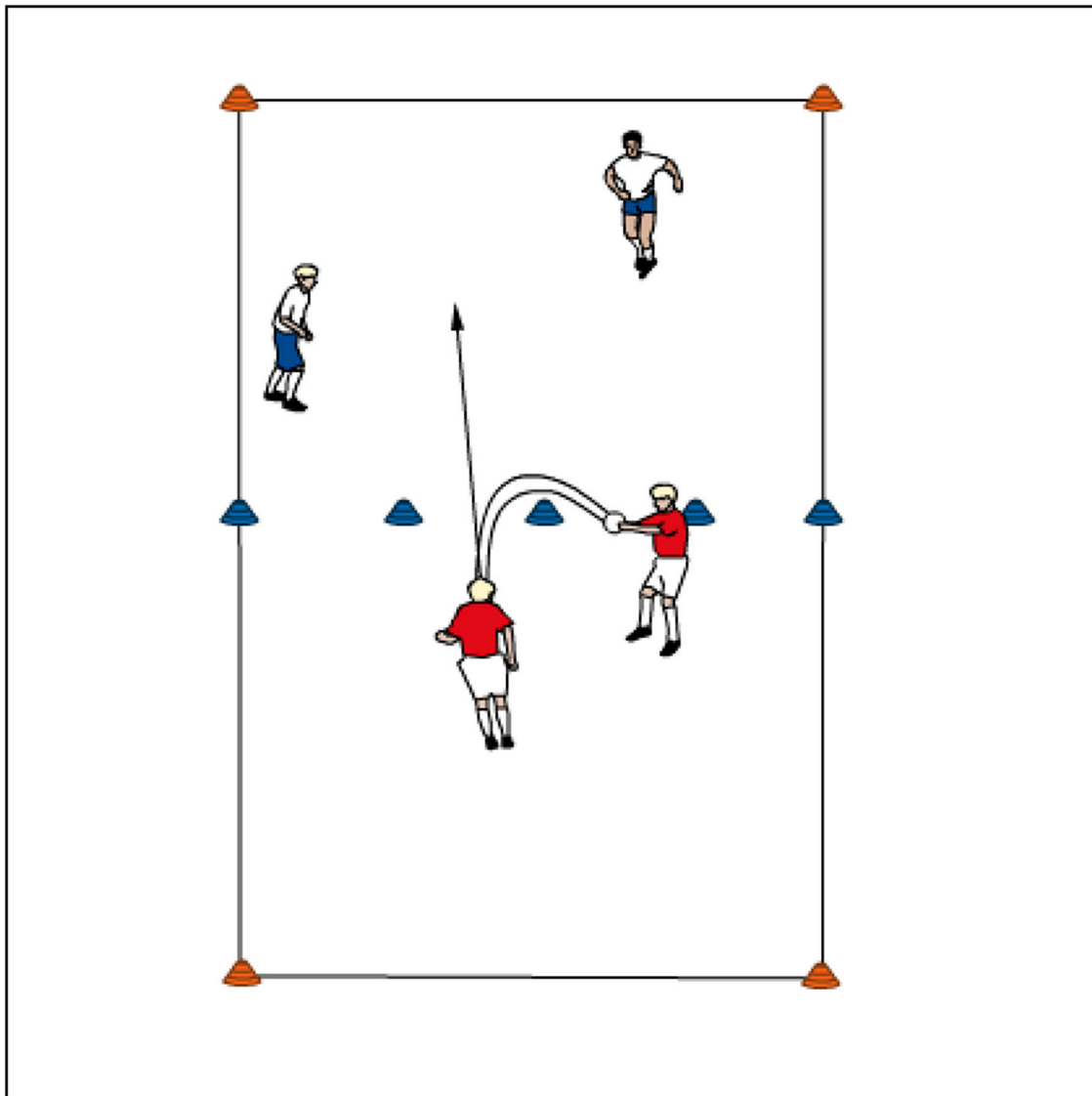
Training sessions objectives with this method include giving the players ownership of the activity, to allow leadership skills to grow, to improve speaking and listening skills among the players, to work on both cooperation and competition and to place the players in a positive decision making situation.

Clearly too from the activities described below it is clear that all four components of the game will be impacted. The duration of each activity round is determined by the coach dependent upon the age of the players, attention span and fitness level. Water breaks should be taken between each round. During this time too the players explain the activity rules to the new group of players going into the new grid.

2 vs. 2 Heading

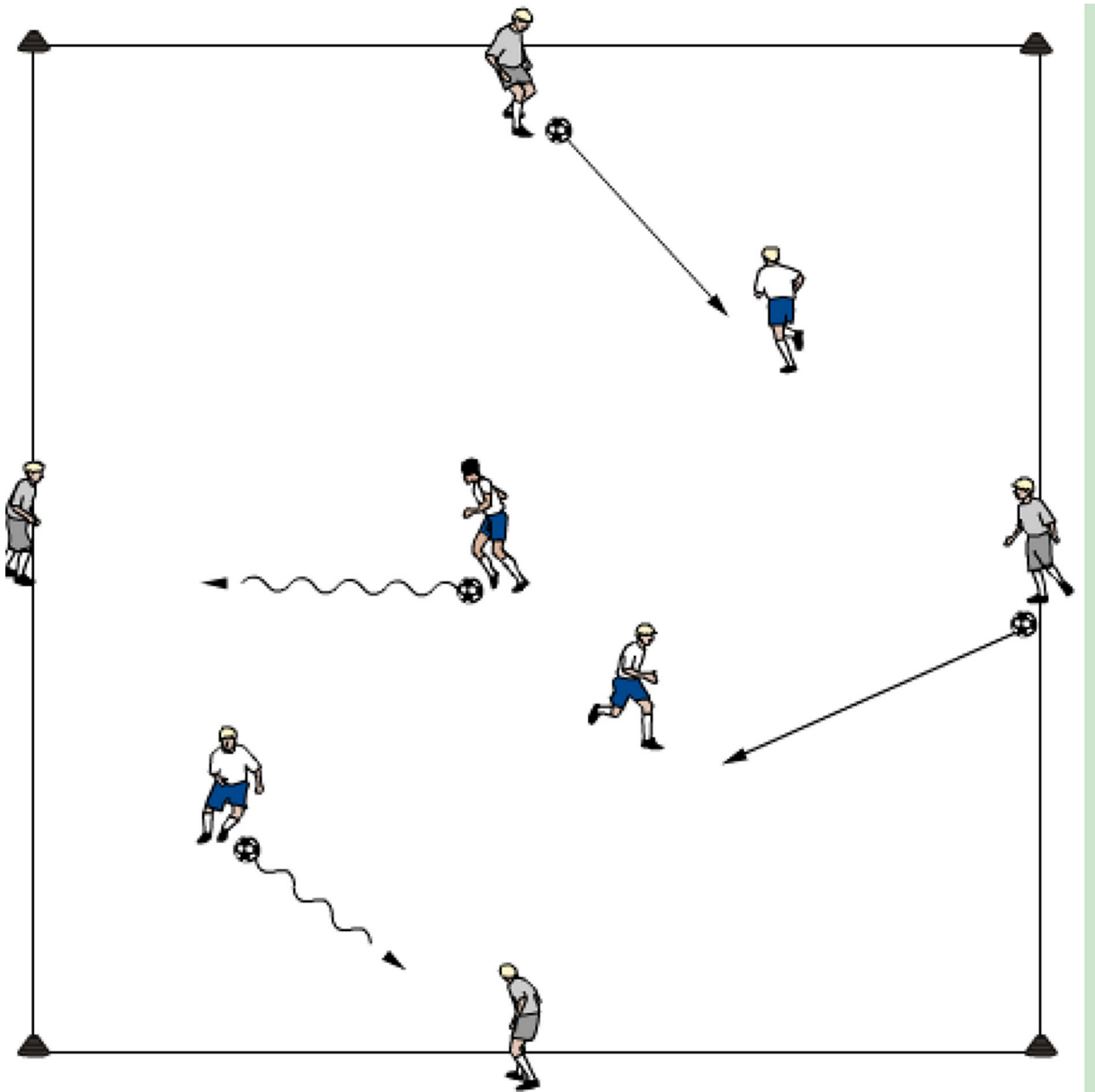
Players must stay on their half of the grid. A halfway line divides the grid in two. A pair tosses and heads the ball back and forth to work their way up the grid toward the halfway line. The pair must now head the ball over into the other pair's half. That pair try to keep the ball from hitting the ground and must get the ball into the air to head back over the line. If a pair can head the ball into the other half and it hits the ground then a point is scored. Play to 11 or for a set amount of time.

Heading technique is improved in this activity. By allowing a partner to serve underhand tosses to his or her partner to head the ball the height, pace and spin of the ball is controlled. This more accurate serve allows for more repetitions at heading. The heading technique will be to pass (flat trajectory) back to the server as the pair move in their half of the grid, to score (downward trajectory) and perhaps a few clearance headers by the defending team (upward trajectory).



Windows

The activity allows for practice at receiving. Basic passes can be rehearsed too. The players are divided into two groups. Group 1 spread out along the outside of the grid. Group 2 players are on the inside of the grid each with a ball and from the dribble pass to an open player on the outside of the grid. Group 1 players can make a one touch or two touch return pass. Group 2 players receive the return pass and turn with the ball to dribble and find another open player on the outside of the grid. Switch the groups every two minutes. Practice first receiving with different parts of the foot and alternate feet. Next have the outside players hit the return pass in the air so that the inside players take the ball out of the air or off the bounce.



Knee Tag

This activity allows for realistic dribbling and the chance to practice shielding. Each player has a ball and while dribbling tries to tag another player on the kneecap. Each tag counts one point and players should keep their score. To get into a posture where it is not possible to be tagged on the knee a shielding type stance is taken. Also players must dribble while changing speed and direction and thus use both feet and different surfaces of the foot. Play for one minute rounds and ask the players their scores at the end of each round. In the ensuing rounds the players try to break their best score. Play for a set number of rounds or a set amount of time.

