PREMIUM

THE SOCCER GAMES AND DRILLS COMPENDIUM

350 SMART AND PRACTICAL GAMES TO FORM INTELLIGENT PLAYERS – FOR ALL LEVELS

FABIAN SEEGER

MEYER & MEYER SPORT

The Soccer Games and Drills Compendium

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PREFACE

Stephan Kerber

In my capacity as DFB (German Football Association) basecamp coordinator for the Hamburg Soccer Association (HFV), it has been my job since 2002 to expose the regional talent to cutting-edge training content.

360 basecamps are located all over Germany. Around 40 to 50 kids from age 11 to 15 are trained by over 1,200 DFB coaches and are coached with no additional costs for the talents. 29 basecamp managers coordinate the efforts nationwide. In Hamburg 300 young players are coached by 20 DFB-coaches. This system is unique—worldwide! The DFB invests huge sums in the upbringing of talents to ensure Germany's top position in soccer. By now representatives of many European soccer associations visit our training basecamps to learn about our training system.

As successful as German youth soccer has been in recent years, thanks to the increasingly better-functioning support structure, it is still important to analyze which training system will ensure success in years to come. Which new elements will be needed

to be competitive in top soccer? This compilation of attractive training exercises offers versatile content that makes it possible to specifically emphasize technical or tactical goals.

The goal was to create age-appropriate effective training units for the hard-working, hard-running, and technically accomplished team player. This was done primarily in close communication with the DFB basecamp trainers and the Hamburg Soccer Association's select team coaches, whose good ideas had to be developed further and put into a form that readers could comprehend.

This book contains many variations that did not just go straight from the desk into the book, but nearly all of the drills were tested, modified, and refined with the help of the DFB talent development program's different age groups in Hamburg and within the HFV's select soccer program, chiefly the age groups 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 (U19 to U12—a broad bandwidth).

Fabian Seeger started the process on October 1, 2009, as DFB basecamp coach at the DFB basecamp Sachsenweg in Hamburg. Working with the different age groups and constantly trying out his ideas and tips from other sources resulted in a broad spectrum that allowed for the content of this book to develop into this user-friendly version. Since then, there has been an awesome exchange, and I congratulate him on his diligence in creating something new from what he saw and for adding a new spin and realistic stimuli to standard drills. I still, today, feel greatly motivated by our joint efforts to devise complex exercises for top talent that create meaningful learning processes with a variety of guidelines. Counteracting monotony while creating experience-oriented, fun training units for long-term fun and learning success.

I hope this book will be widely read and the training exercises well used.

Enjoy!

Stephan Kerber

1 GAMES

A significant and universal goal of training is the best possible preparation for a competition. Ideally, it is particularly those movement patterns and behaviors required and practiced in a competition that are practiced during training. During a competition, a player is confronted with different situations and various decision-making options. What matters in the end is which problem-solving approach he chooses to purposefully reach the situation-specific result.

And yet successfully solving a game situation does not always consist of scoring a goal or winning the ball. In fact, there are many sub-goals that, in the end, result in successfully scoring goals and preventing goals. For the purpose of realistic training, chapter 1, Games, focuses on the development of certain drills that reproduce the complexity of 11-on-11 play on a smaller scale. The many challenges of different competitive situations can be combined as areas of focus in training to allow the conception of different drills with different objectives. In the process, individual training parameters, such as field size, team size, or number of goals, can be purposefully used to work on the current training topic. In doing so, the listed training parameters are in no way intended as mandatory factors, but rather should always be adapted to the team's respective performance and skill level as well as age group by the implementing coach.

Competitive soccer consists of widely different situations in which the players must largely act together. During training, the complexity of 11-on-11 is decreased, and segments of the game are separated. Looking at specific game situations and scaled-down game sequences generates drills that, next to fitness-related and technical requirements, focus primarily on individual and group tactics.

Depictions and descriptions of the individual drills generally leave out field measurements. Determining the field size, passing distances, or the distance between players and goals is considered part of a coach's toolbox. The coach determines measurements based on the specific training emphasis and, along with the topic's focus, is guided by variables such as age and capability of players, number of training participants, or the desired training intensity.

Playing ability

Pressure from the opponent

Action speed

Creativity

Decision-making

Time pressure

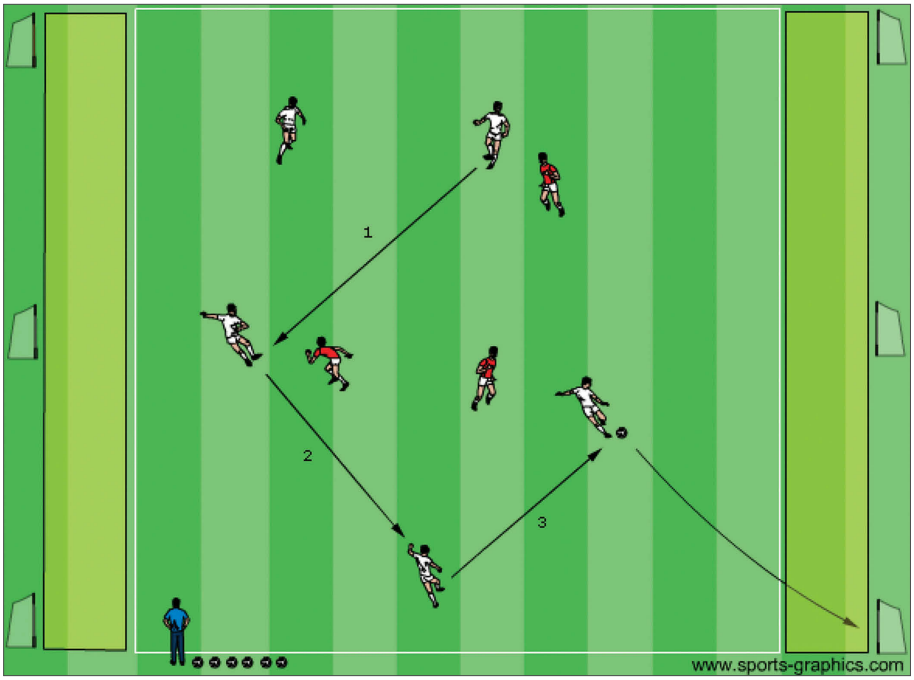
Cognition

Orientation skills

Transition skills

1.1 PASSING

1.1.1 5-on-3 (on mini goals)



Execution

The WHITE team plays the outnumbered RED team. After the finish the coach brings each new ball into the game to the WHITE team. Players are not allowed to step on the edge areas marked in YELLOW. The WHITE team must have played at least three passes within their own ranks before they can finish. The RED team can play freely and, after winning the ball, is allowed to immediately take shots on the goals with unlimited touches.

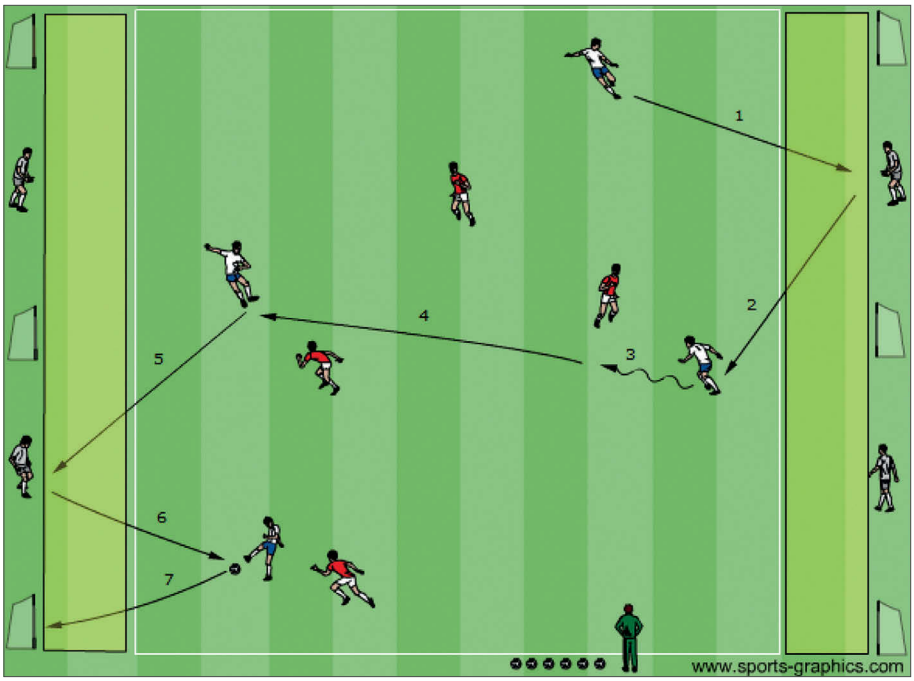
Concept

The superior number simplifies and prompts the desired passing game. Playing on mini goals also facilitates precise passing during the finish. The YELLOW areas (passing zone) induce and prompt forceful passes and finishes across the field.

Variations

- Limit the number of touches for the superior number team.
- Direct play with every other pass from the superior number team.
- Prerequisite for a shot on goal: 4 or 5 passes within the ranks of the superior number team.
- Specify the technique for the shot on goal: inside foot/laces kick/direct finish.

1.1.2 4-on-4 plus 4 (on mini goals)



Execution

Two teams of four players each play in the center of the field. Four additional players are positioned in the outside zones. The team in possession is allowed to involve all four players. No players are allowed to enter the YELLOW zones. Shots on goal must be direct (see 7) and after first involving an outside player (double pass or third man running). If a direct finish is not possible after the pass from outside (see 3), the team remains in possession. After a finish, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

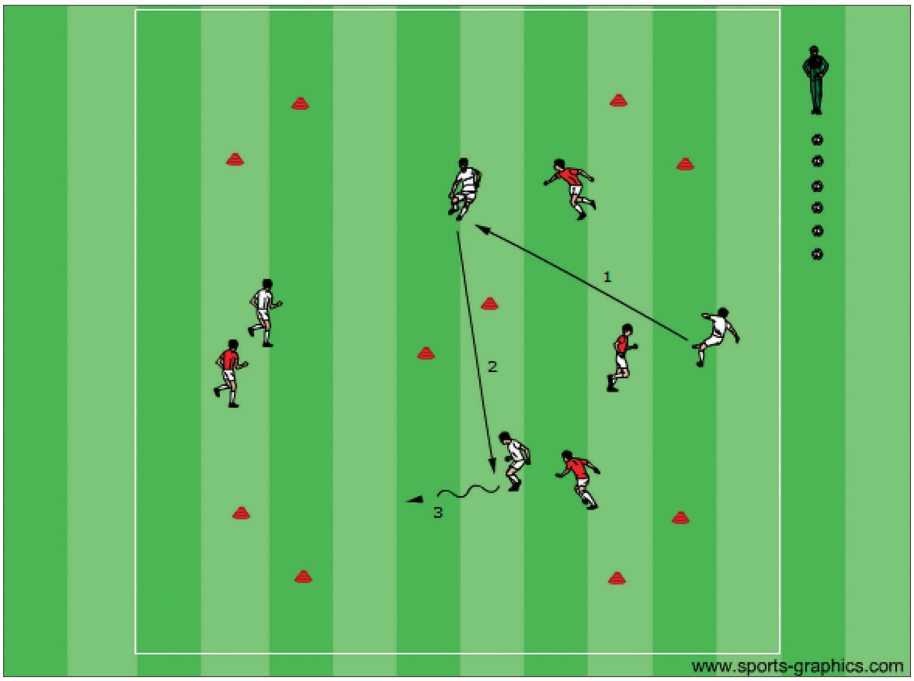
Concept

Involving the outside players forces double passes, third man running, and deep forward passes. The YELLOW passing zone prompts forceful passes. Since only direct finishes are possible, precision is required during the finish. In addition, the finishing situation must be well prepared using reliable combination play.

Variations

- Limited touches for the team in possession.
- Limited touches for outside players.
- Double score for finishes with the weak leg.

1.1.3 4-on-4 (on passing goals)



Execution

The RED team plays 4-on-4 (see 1) against the WHITE team. The team in possession tries to play a pass to a teammate through one of the passing goals (see 2). After a successful pass through a passing goal (see 2), the team stays in possession and continues the game without interruption (see 3). If a ball goes off the field, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

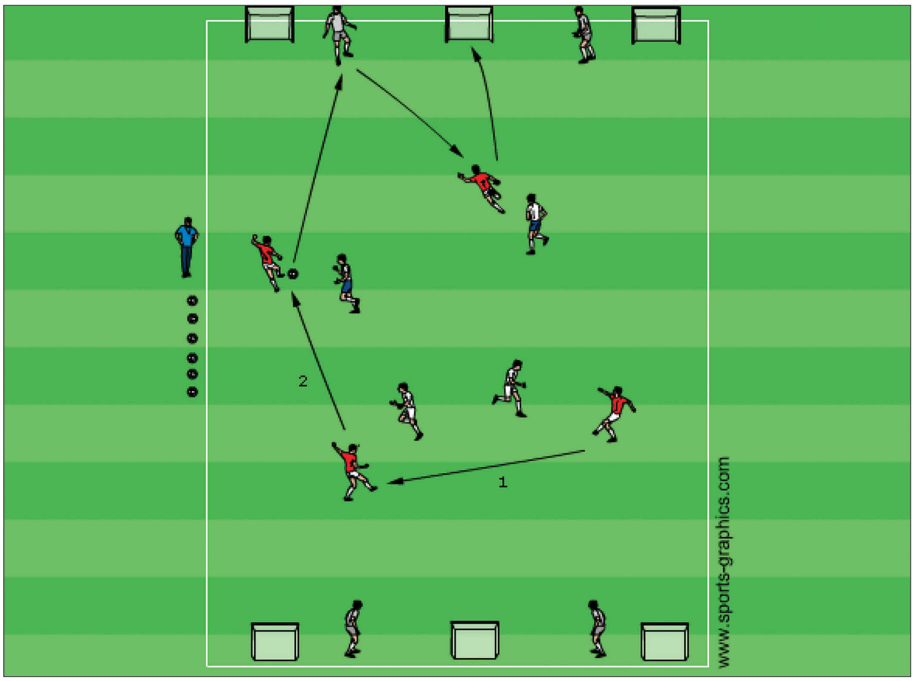
Concept

Playing a pass through one of the passing goals requires primarily well-timed and practical offers to help get open.

Variations

- Simplify or expand to 4-on-4 (plus two neutral players in possession).
- Specify the passing technique for playing through cone goals: direct passing.
- Vary or modify the array of passing goals.
- Limit touches for the team in possession.

1.1.4 4-on-4 plus 4 (playing deep)



Execution

The teams play 4-on-4 on the field. After two passes in the own ranks, the team in possession is allowed to involve the outside players. A shot on the mini goals is only possible if a pass from outside is turned into a direct shot. If a pass from outside is not turned into a direct shot but is handled and kept in the game, another outside player can be involved in an attempt to score through him as the game continues. After the finish, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

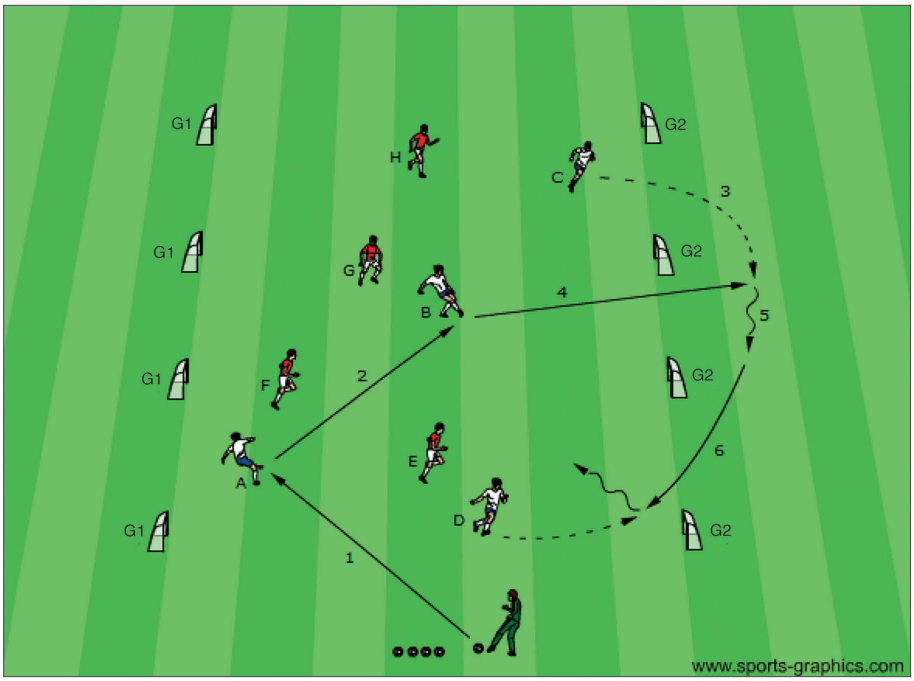
Concept

After playing 4-on-4 in a tight space, the game is opened up to the outside after two forward passes. After a pass to an outside player, immediate reaction and pursuit, or rather getting open, is required to bring on the finish. The direct finish in the form of a pass on a mini goal requires major concentration and precision.

Variations

- Vary or modify the array of passing goals (e.g., diagonally staggered).
- Specify the direction of play (e.g., RED team can only finish on the three upper goals).
- Prerequisite for a shot on goal: 3 (or 4) passes in the ranks of the team in possession.
- Outside players are not allowed to play direct return passes to the passing player.

1.1.5 4-on-4 (playing deep with changing direction)



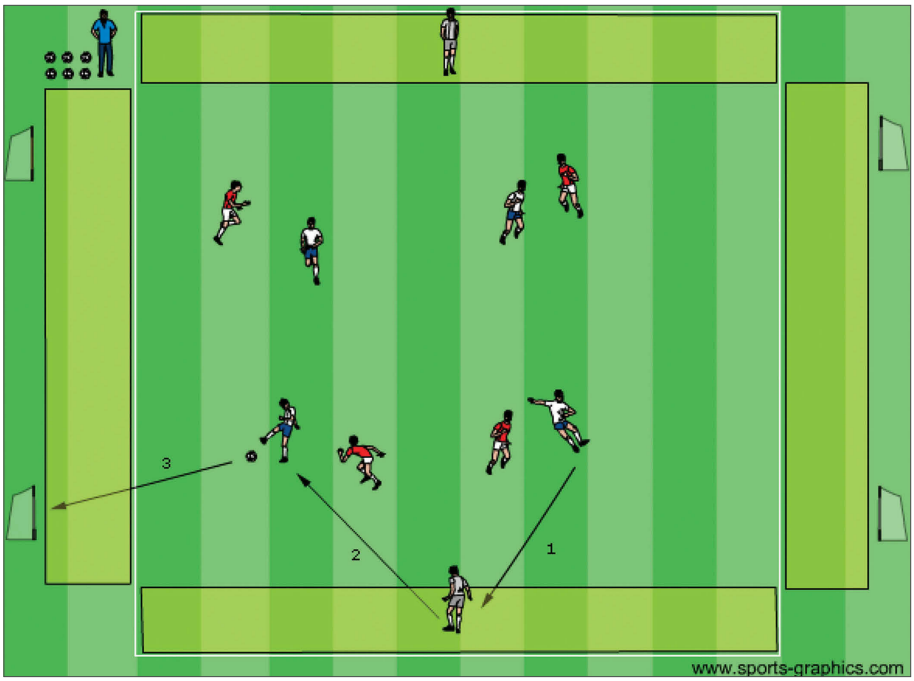
Execution

The RED team plays 4-on-4 against the BLUE team. Initially, players cannot play on the mini goals. After the coach's opening ball (see 1), the players pass each other the ball within the own ranks (see 2). Initially, the objective is to play a deep pass to a teammate through two mini goals (see 4). The player who gets open behind the mini goals (see 3) controls the ball (see 5) and dribbles back onto the field or plays a direct pass to a teammate on the field (passing game; see 6). Playing on the mini goals becomes possible after the successful deep pass. The direction of play depends on the deep pass. If the deep pass is played between the G2 goals, the team in possession attacks the goals on the opposite side (see figure). The defending team (here the RED team) attacks the G2 goals and can immediately start pressing. After a team finishes, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

Variations

- Simplify or expand to 4-on-4 (plus two neutral players in possession).
- Prerequisite for the deep pass: 3 (or 4) passes in the own ranks.
- Limit the number of passes prior to deep pass (e.g., no more than five).
- Limit touches for the teammate receiving the deep pass.

1.1.6 4-on-4 plus 2 (play through the wing player)



Execution

4-on-4-play in the center. Shots on the mini goals can only be taken after first passing to an outside player (see 1 and 2). Players cannot enter the outside zones where the outside players are positioned. The same applies to the passing zones in front of the mini goals. After the finish, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

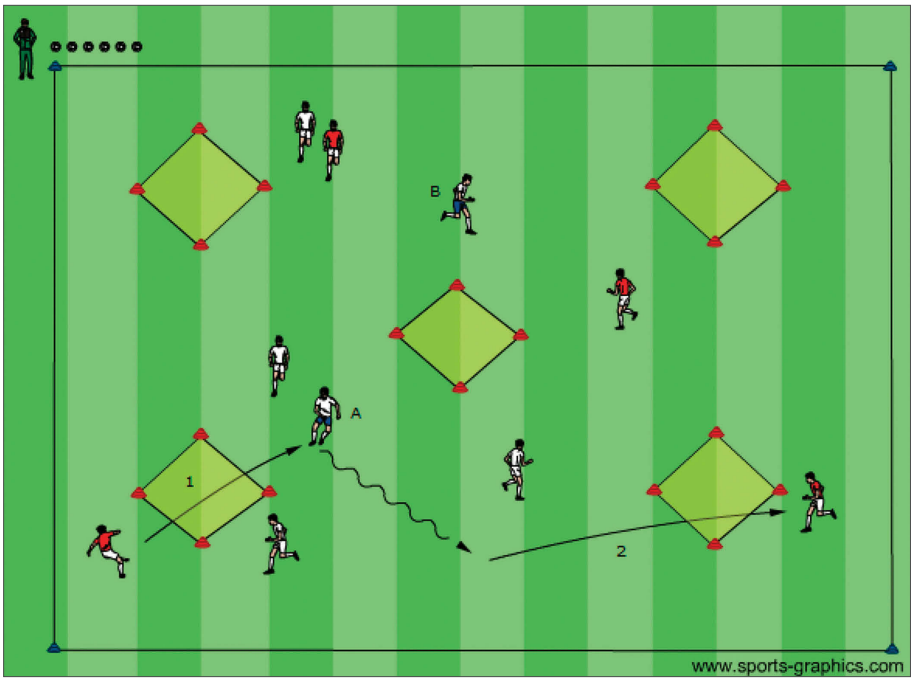
Concept

Play through the outside player must be initiated prior to the finish. Passing zones in front of the mini goals prompt forceful shots on goal. The possession team's superior number makes play through the outside player easier.

Variations

- Specify the shooting technique (see 3): inside foot/instep/direct shot.
- Prerequisite for a shot on goal: Involve both outside players (switching play).
- Prerequisite for a shot on goal: Additional pass after a pass from an outside player.
- Prerequisite for a pass to the outside player: 3 (or 4) passes within the own ranks.

1.1.7 4-on-4 plus 2 (passing squares)



Execution

The RED team plays 4-on-4 against the WHITE team on the field. The team in possession can also pass to the neutral players (see players A and B). Players cannot enter the cone squares (passing squares). The game's objective is to pass the ball to a teammate through the passing square. After scoring, or rather successfully passing the ball, the game continues without interruption. The successful team remains in possession and can score additional points.

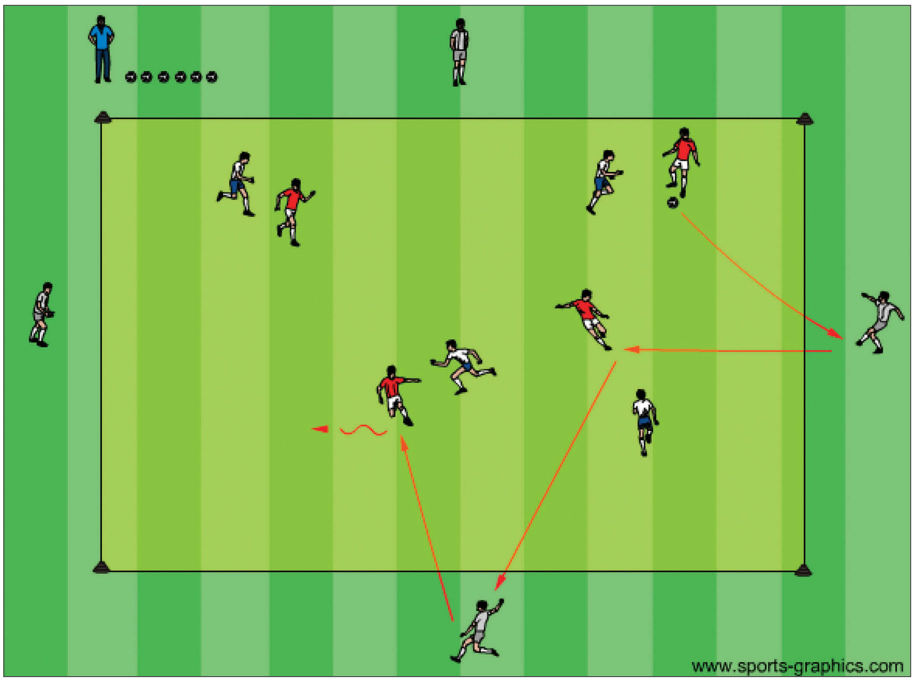
Concept

Having to play through the passing squares prompts forceful and sometimes longer passes. The array of the passing squares also facilitates demand for diagonal passes. Receiving the ball through one of the passing squares requires purposefully getting open and signaling availability.

Variations

- Specify the passing technique for playing through passing squares: direct passing.
- Scoring: short pass (one point; see 2) and long pass (two points; see 1).
- Even numbers play without neutral players (e.g., 4-on-4).

1.1.8 4-on-4 plus 4 (for possession)



Execution

The RED team and the BLUE team play 4-on-4 on the marked field. The team in possession is allowed to involve the outside players. The game's objective is to play as many passes as possible in the own ranks. One player from each team counts the passes out loud.

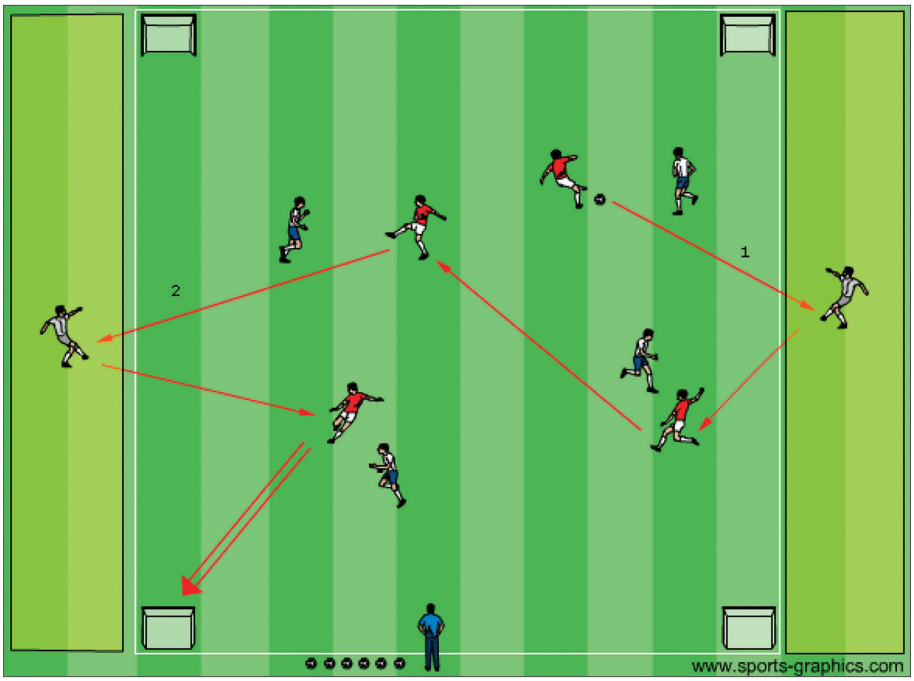
Concept

The large superior number makes passing or keeping the ball in the own ranks relatively easy. This drill facilitates lots of back-to-back passes in the own ranks and practicing passing techniques without too much pressure from the opponents.

Variations

- Limited touches for outside players.
- Limited touches for field players.
- No passes allowed between two outside players.
- Points scored after every 10 passes in a row.

1.1.9 4-on-4 plus 2 (switching play)



Execution

The RED team and the BLUE team play 4-on-4 on the field. The team in possession is allowed to pass to the two permanent outside players. Once the possession team has involved both players (see 1 and 2), they are allowed to shoot on the mini goals. After the finish, the coach brings a new ball into the game.

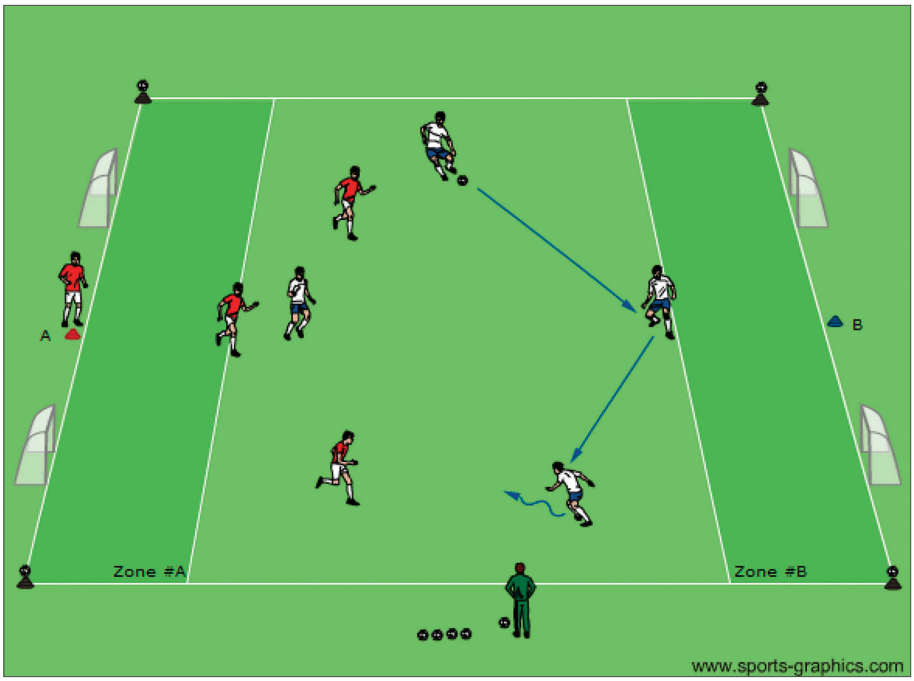
Concept

The possession team's superior number situation makes passing easier. The specified prerequisites for the finish force switching play. In terms of training emphasis, the required behavior for finishing on the mini goals prompts forceful passes instead of shots on goal.

Variations

- Specify the technique for shots on goal: inside foot/instep/direct finish.
- Limited touches for outside players.
- Limited touches for field players.

1.1.10 4-on-4 (superior number in possession)



Execution

The RED team and the BLUE team play 4-on-4 on the field, whereby possession creates a constant majority–minority relationship. Each team has a position between its own mini goals (see A and B) where there is always a player from the defending team who does not participate in the game (here from team A). As soon as a team has possession, that player is once again allowed to complete his team. When the opponent has possession, one player must always withdraw and fall back to that position.

Concept

The superior number during possession makes passing play easier.

Variations

- Option for the team in possession: Involve the waiting opponent.
- Active players are not allowed to run into zones #A and #B.
- Shots on goal from zones #A and #B are not allowed.
- Game is continued with a ball from the coach.
- Game is continued with a ball placed in a corner.