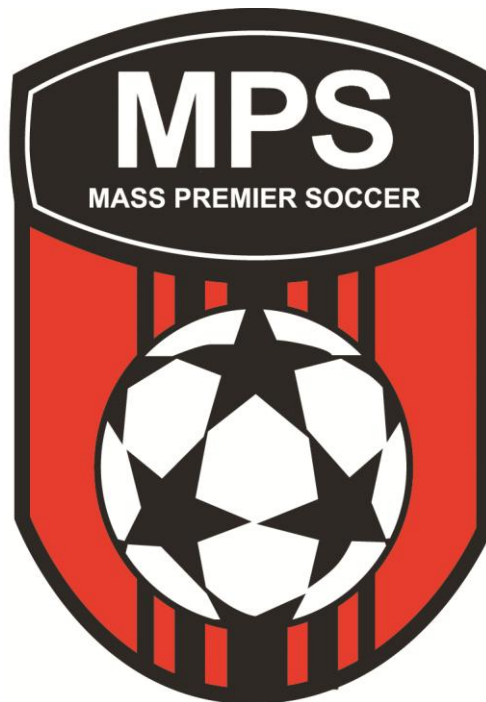




# **Massachusetts Premier Soccer Youth Development Academy**

## **U14 Coaching Manual 2010**



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# Massachusetts Premier Soccer U14 Curriculum

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## U14 Coaching Guidelines

Here are some simple steps to run a fun and successful practice for U-14's. Please remember to always set high standards of behavior, attitude and work rate.

- a) **Planning** - a successful practice will require good organization and time management. Always have a lesson plan with clearly defined goals of what you hope to achieve and always evaluate your sessions at the end to see what you actually accomplished. Make sure that you have sufficient equipment to carry out your session. Keep all players motivated and challenged by having sufficient progression.
- b) **Explanation** - have complete attention of all players. Keep explanations as brief and simple as possible and ask questions to make sure that all players understand.
- c) **Demonstration** – Keep demos simple and technically correct at the beginning. Progress to game speed. Make sure that the players can visualize what they are trying to achieve by having a clear demonstration. Do not be afraid to use a player from the group in the demo.
- d) **Practice** -Allow players ample opportunity to practice the desired technique in game-like situations. Emphasize the need to use both feet and also to perform technique at pace.
- e) **Observation** - always concentrate on the main theme of your session. The coaching points should be directly related to the topic you are working on.
- f) **Correct** - use guided questions to help players improve their technique. Be positive at all times and allow the players to figure things out for themselves.
- g) **Test** - perform the technique at game speed against an opponent. Start slowly and progress. Keep it fun!



# Massachusetts Premier Soccer U14 Curriculum

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## Coaching Guidelines

There are four main pillars of soccer, which are evident at every level of the game - technical, tactical, psychological and physical. It is important that a coach has clear goals for himself/herself and for his/her team prior to working with any age group. The goals for working with a U-14 program are outlined below:

### **1.) Technical**

#### **Dribbling:**

- Ability to perform six different turns at speed: inside cut, outside cut, Cruyff, sole drag back, stop turn and step-over turn.
- Ability to perform two attacking moves at speed: Matthews, scissors, double touch, step-over.
- Ability to perform techniques with explosive dynamic movements.
- Use of creativity and unpredictability when dribbling.

#### **Passing:**

- Ability to perform the basic push pass (inside of foot) and the outside of the foot pass.
- Ability to loft a pass in the air.
- Ability to perform 2-touch passing, and be comfortable with playing 1 touch.

#### **Control:**

- Ability to receive/control the ball with: foot (right and left), thigh, and chest
- Ability to receive the ball and turn it away from pressure in one step.

#### **Shooting:**

- Should be comfortable with all technical aspects of shooting: locked ankle, toe down, body over the ball, follow through and land on shooting foot.
- Ability to read and strike follow-up shots.
- Ability to perform first time finishes from the ground and the air.
- Aim for far post and low

#### **Goalkeeping:**

- To be technically competent with the 4 basic shot stopping techniques (Scoop and leg block for shots along the ground, and handling of stomach and head shots).
- Ability to distribute the ball with feet and hands.
- Ability to start attacks with transition.
- Maintain the proper positioning and angles in front of goal.



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- Ability to stop 1 v 1 encounters.
- Begin to communicate with, and organize defenders

### **Heading:**

- Ability to head the ball appropriately.
- Develop power using proper techniques.

### **Defending:**

- Ability to defend 1v1.
- Aware of the role of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defender
- Ability to perform the 'block' tackle and 'poke' tackle.
- Ability to communicate on defense.
- Understanding of Pressure / Cover / Balance defending.

### **Attacking:**

- Ability to attack 1v1.
- Understand the importance of creating space by making positive runs
- First time shooting and composure in front of goal
- Importance of moving towards ball and connecting with supporting players

### **2.) Tactical**

Players should know and understand the concepts of 1 v 1 attacking and defending situations. Players should familiarize themselves with 2 v 2 attacking and defending situations. Players should understand the concept of team shape, and should begin to understand their role in different systems of play. Coaches should still be stressing roles as opposed to positions.

### **3.) Psychological**

Players should still have fun and be excited about playing the game. Coaches must understand and relay the message that player and team development is the focus, not winning. Coaches need to remember that these players are still young and developing and they will require as much positive reinforcement as possible.

### **4.) Physical**

The players should get all their fitness from practicing / playing the game. Coaches should introduce fitness with the ball as much as possible. Avoid setting up fitness sessions with no ball involvement.



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## Training Session Breakdown

Most sessions will be 1.5hrs in length.

### **1.) WARM-UP / STRETCH** 15-20mins

A warm-up should be a fun and enjoyable start to your training, which gets players in the right frame of mind, physically and mentally for the session ahead. Players should break the sweat barrier and stretch appropriately. Your training should now have a clear progression and the warm-up should ideally lead into the theme for the session.

### **2.) SKILL BUILDING (TECHNIQUE)** 15-20mins

Introduce the basic skills needed to play soccer - dribbling, turning, shooting, passing, control, goalkeeping, and heading.

### **3.) GAME-RELATED ACTIVITY** 20mins

This activity should reinforce the technical activity being worked on in a game-related situation. This should involve performing technique under pressure situations.

### **4.) PLAY** 25mins

This should be a time when the players get to think for themselves. Please do not stop play on numerous occasions to make coaching points. Reinforce the key points of your session but look for appropriate 'coach able' moments to step in, correct and get back out again. Do not spend too much time talking during this period of the session.

### **5.) COOL DOWN** 5min

Spend 5 minutes at the end of your practice to cool down. Do some light jogging and gentle stretching to finish off your session.



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**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Speed of Play; Short Passing – Week 1

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Warm-up:**

- Set up a circle with a 30m diameter with cones around the perimeter.
- Place 4-6 players in middle of circle with a ball each and the remainder around the perimeter without a ball.
- To begin the exercise players will perform a push pass to a free outside player and follow the pass to replace the perimeter player.
- The outside player will receive with a positive 1<sup>st</sup> touch into the circle and repeat the technique to another free player and so on.

### **Progression**

- Limit the touches allowed so that the player has to play a longer push pass.
- Progress to the inside player using an outside of the foot pass when they pass.
- Progress to inside player passing with either push pass or outside pass but this time receiving the ball back from perimeter player (must communicate – “play back”). They will then turn and pass off to another free perimeter player with the appropriate communication (“Take”).

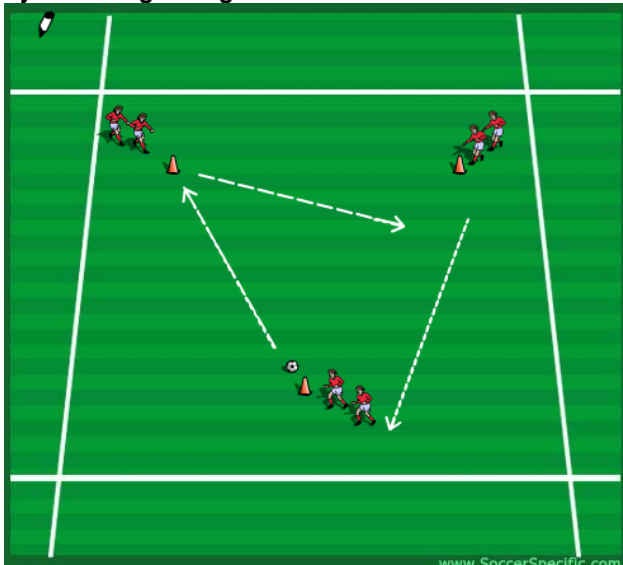
### **Coaching Points:**

- *Players on perimeter to be on their toes and alert.*
- *Players on perimeter to take a positive 1<sup>st</sup> touch into the circle.*
- *Inside players to look at accuracy and weight of pass to perimeter player.*
- *Push pass – lock ankle, strike middle of ball with inside of foot, follow through and look at position of non-kicking foot. .*
- *Outside of foot pass – again lock ankle and hit through the middle of the ball this time with outside of foot.*
- **PLEASE ENSURE THAT PLAYERS USE BOTH FEET CONSTANTLY!**

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**Technical:** Area 10 x 20

## Ajax Passing Triangle



- Set up 1 or 2 triangles and maximize the space that you have available.
- Use 6-9 players at each triangle depending on numbers.
- Place 2-3 players at each cone.
- Once this is running there is plenty of repetition so players do not get to stand around a lot even if you have to use 9.
- Player 1 starts with the ball and passes to player 2 and then follows his pass.
- Player 2 will control the ball and pass across the triangle to player 3 and then follows his pass.
- Player 3 times his run and calls for the pass and dribbles back to the starting cone.
- As soon as player 2 has released his pass the next ball is passed in from the player at cone 1.

## Progressions

- Player 1 passes to player 2's left foot.
- Player 2 must control with left foot across body and pass with right foot into space in front of player 3.
- Player 3 accelerates into space after calling for the ball. They must be patient and get the timing of the run correct. Look at each pass being a push pass – focus on weight and accuracy.
- This exercise requires technical precision to work and will take some time for young players to master.
- Pass to player 1's right foot. Player 2 must now control with right foot and make pass with left foot.
- Restrict to 2 touches if applicable.
- Have player 2 make pass with outside of foot pass.
- Player 1 passes to player 2 and receives pass straight back from player 1. Player 1 then spins around cone to receive second pass from player 1. Player 1 looks to lay ball in front of player 2's movement so that he can easily pass across to player 3. This is more complicated but achievable for this age range.

### Coaching Points:

- Player 1 must make a firm and accurate initial pass. Get players to focus on exactly where they're passing the ball to start the exercise. This is important in making the players start to think about where they are actually passing.



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- Player 2 must initially check away from the cone to make space for themselves. They must have a quality first touch across the body, so they must get in line with the initial pass and have a soft touch in front and across body. This will help stress and work on the importance of being comfortable with both feet.
- Player 2 will use the push pass initially to pass ball into space and in front of player 3 and not directly to their feet.
- Player 3 will call for the ball at the right time and time their run accordingly. This will get young players to think about their movement.
- Accelerate with a big touch back to start point.
- The key to this exercise is the focus on technical precision and quality.

### **Game Conditioned: 4v4v4**

- Select 3 teams of 4 or 5 and try to maximize space. Have each team in a different color. Use one ball but have spare balls around perimeter.
- Select one team as a defending team. The other two teams will play possession soccer against the defending team.
- Play for 4 minutes and then rotate the defending team.
- Defending team can score by successfully dribbling to any of the outside cones when they win possession.
- The two attacking teams play together and attempt to make a certain number of passes to score a goal (this is an arbitrary number that can be adjusted based on the level of the players).

### **Progression**

- Do not designate a team to be the defending team to start.
- When a team gives up possession they must all go down on one knee quickly and game continues.
- Play for 4 minutes and team that ends up as defending group at the end must do a forfeit.

### **Play – 4v4**

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session.



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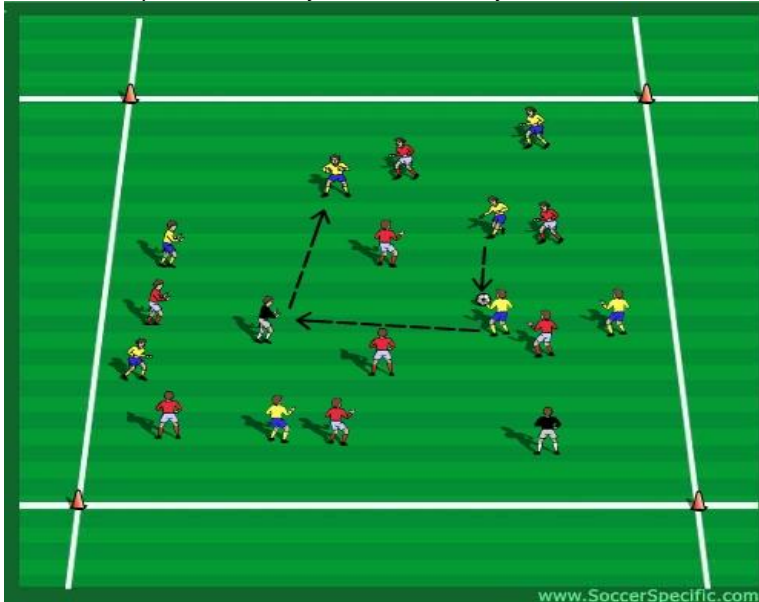
**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Speed of Play; Possession to Penetrate – Week 2

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Warm – up**

- Players are organized into an 8v8 inside a 50x30 yard grid as shown below.
- The activity is a basic keep-away or possession game.
- Goalkeepers move freely within the activity and can utilize their hands to distribute the ball.



**Ensure that players stretch every few minutes!**

### **Coaching Points:**

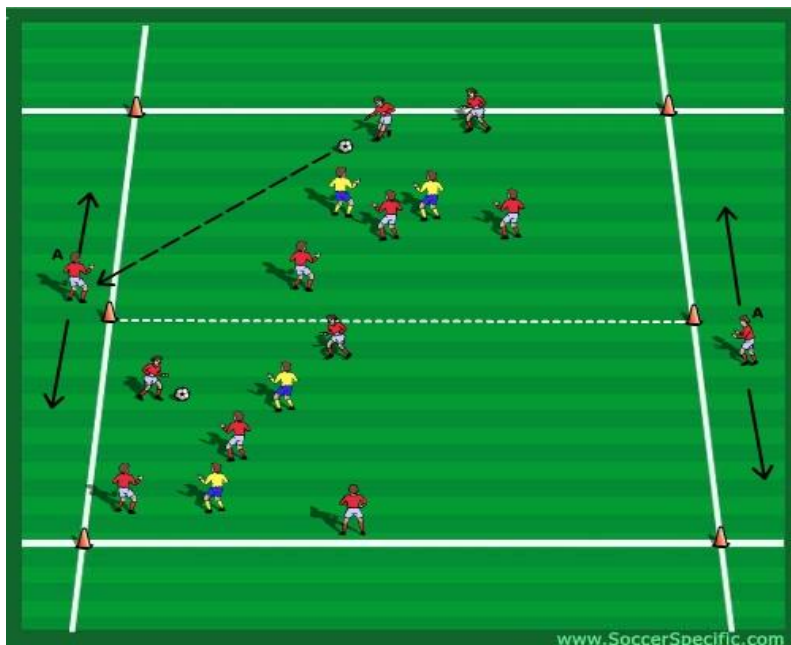
- *Encourage good shape*
- *Movement*
- *Communication*
- *Combinations and speed of Play*



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### 5v2 with wide players:

- Two 30x35 yard grids are created side-by-side as shown below.
- A 5v2 organized inside each 30x30 grid as shown.
- Target players (A), are positioned on each side of the grid as shown.



- The 5 players in possession attempt to keep the ball away from the 2 defensive players.
- Points are awarded for passing to one of the target players.
- The game is continuous with the 5 attacking players attempting to transition from one target player to the other.
- The target players must work the full length of the sideline (basically, must be aware of both 5v2 games going on at the same time!)
- Players are restricted to 2-touch and each player must get a touch on the ball before any transition to the target player. The player that passes to the target player then becomes the target player - this ensures constant rotation of target players.
- If defenders win possession of the ball they must return it to the attacking team.
- Rotate defenders often to avoid fatigue.

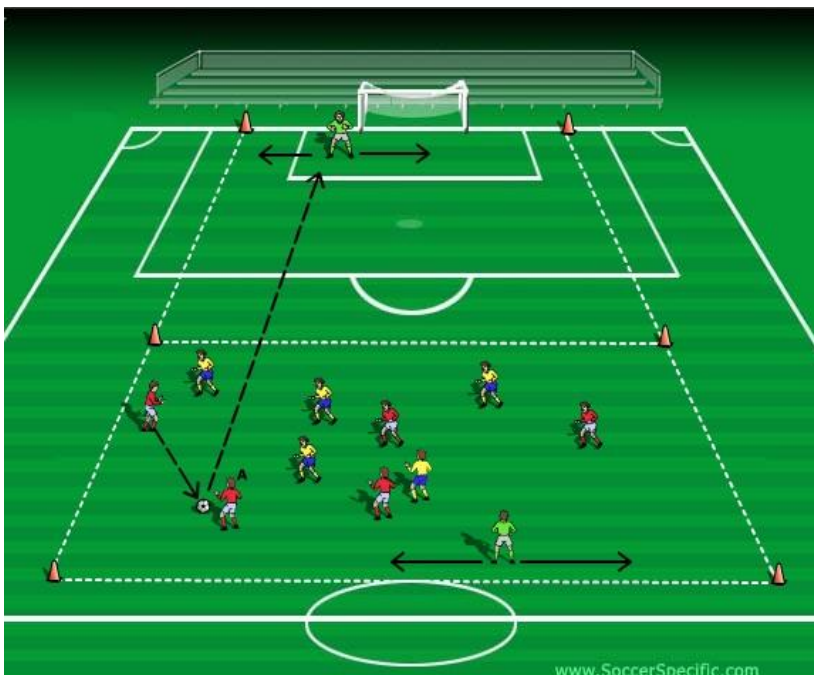
### Coaching Points:

- Encourage movement and creativity - quick thinking
- Encourage players to play to the target if they are facing the target - don't turn into pressure.
- Target players must be sharp since they are working to support two groups of players
- Attacking players must be aware of the positioning of the target player since he/she may be on the other half supporting the other group.
- Quick transitions to support the target players.

### Game Conditioned: 4v4/5v5; Switching the Point of Attack

- A 5v5 is organized inside one of the 25x30 yard grids as shown below.
- Target players (green) are positioned at each end of the playing area as shown.

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- Both teams compete for possession of the ball. Players must attempt to play the ball to the target player and transition into the other half of the field.
- Players may pass to the target player in the half that they are currently playing in - this creates a 6v5 situation in favor of the team in possession.
- The pass to the target player must be one-touch. Target players are encouraged to move anywhere along the end-line.
- In the above Diagram, Player (A) has passed the ball to the target player at the opposite end of the grid.
- Both teams must now quickly transition to continue the possession game in the other half.
- The target players must pass to the team that passed to them.
- Points are awarded for successful passes to the target players in the opposite half.

### Progressions

- Target to two players
- The target player receiving the transitional pass must pass to the other target player. This target player must now pass the ball back to the supporting team to continue the activity.
- The target player must lay the ball back to a supporting player and this player must attempt to find the other target player with one-touch
- Add Goalkeepers to the game

### Coaching Points:

- Speed of transition - travel quickly as the ball is traveling!
- Vision of field - location and movement of targets.
- Quick decision making.
- Diagonal passes to targets.

### Cool Down

Ensure that all players cool down for at least 5 minutes at the conclusion of each session. This should involve light movement and stretching plus a recap of the session.



# Massachusetts Premier Soccer U14 Curriculum

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**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Speed of Play Combinations 1 – Week 3

## **ORGANIZATION**

**Warm – up:**

- 4 teams of 4 players each are positioned inside a 40x40 yard grid as shown below.
- Each team is numbered in sequence. Players must work on a crossover sequence i.e. Red and Green work together. Yellow and White work together.
- Players must move constantly around the grid passing in sequence. For example – Red (1) passes to Green (2), Green (2) passes to Red (3) and so on.



In this warm up activity we are trying to create a situation where players are looking **two moves** ahead not just one. For instance as (1) is about to pass to (2), (3) should be looking to support (2) for the next pass already, looking two moves ahead before the ball leaves (1).

**Peripheral Vision Development** results from this to create more intelligent, aware players.

### **Progression**

- Reduce the number of touches players are allowed each time they receive a pass. Three touch two touch, one touch, etc. if the players are ready to do so.  
This speeds up the decision making process and forces them to look earlier as to where they are passing to.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Create space
- Quality Passing
- Support play
- Passing angles
- Early movement off the ball.
- Players look before they receive. Players are looking **two moves** ahead not just one.



## Combination Play to Targets 3 v 3+2:

- A 3 v 3 is organized inside a 20x30 grid as shown below.
- Target players are positioned at each end of the grid as shown
- Two fields can be set up side by side as needed, or 2 v 2 +1 can be played centrally in a smaller space.



- Both teams compete for possession of the ball and score points by successfully passing to a target player.
- Quick combination play must be used to create opportunities to play into targets.
- Players must look to combine with the target players with the goal of receiving a quick return pass.
- In the above diagram, Player (A) has played a quick 1-2 with teammate (B)
- Please take this opportunity to coach inside this small sided game!!

### Coaching Points:

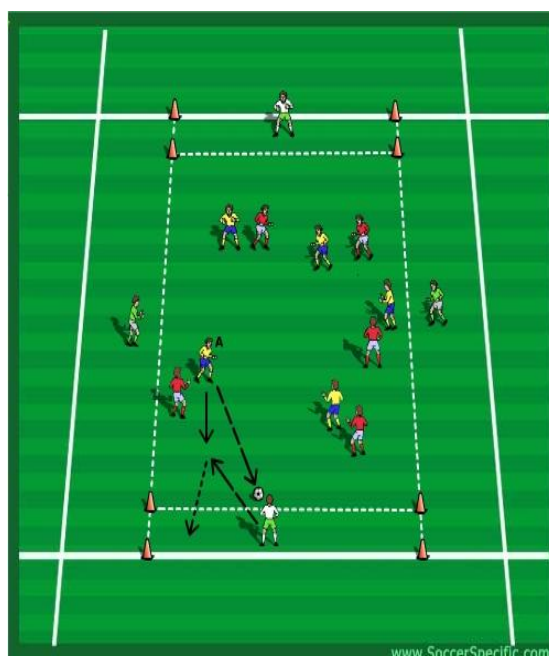
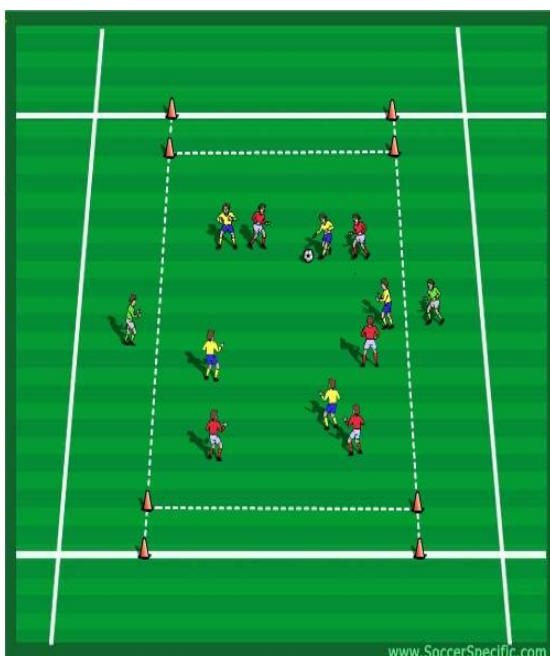
- Keep the ball moving quickly – sharp passing and movement
- Communication
- Encourage and review various combination possibilities
- Decision making



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### Combination Play to Targets 5v5+2 /5v5+4

- A 5v5 is organized inside the grid and two “floaters” are positioned on the outside of the playing area.
- Target players are later added. (See second diagram).
- You may need to rotate a team depending on numbers and space.



- Both teams compete for possession of the ball.
- Either team can utilize the floaters on the outside of the field at any time.
- Floaters are limited to 2-touch.
- Points are scored by successfully dribbling into either end-zone.
- If a point is scored the same team maintains possession and immediately attacks in the opposite direction.
- Play is continuous for the designated period of time.

### Progression

- Targets are added to each end-zone area.
- Points awarded for passing to a target player, receiving the return pass and then dribbling into the end-zone.
- Target players are restricted to 1 or 2 touch (depending on ability)

### Coaching Points:

- Sharp, crisp passing is essential.
- Movement off-the-ball must be constant.
- Angles and distance of support.
- Communication.



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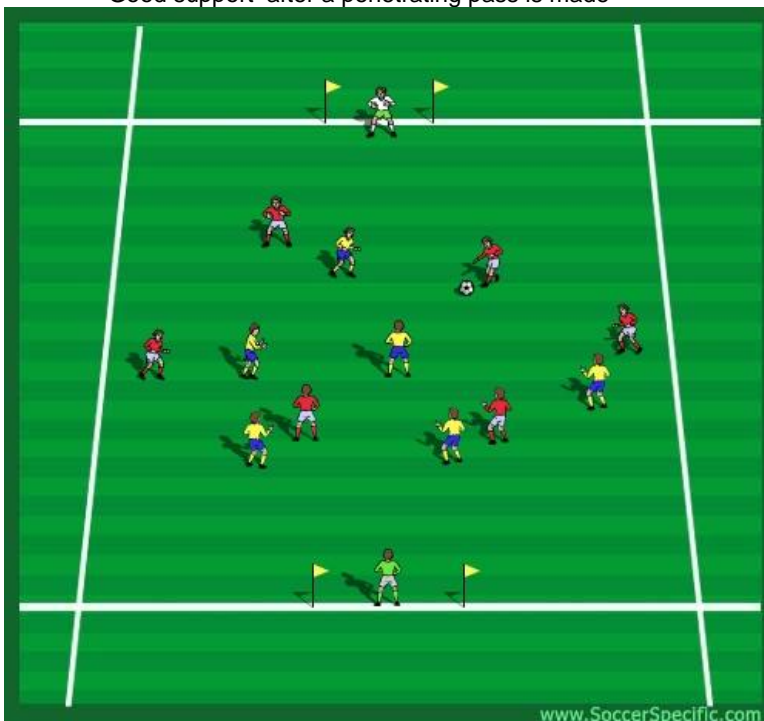
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- Transition from defending to attack and vice versa.

### 6v6/7v7 Game

Finish the session with a 6v6 or 7v7 game depending on the space of the facility and numbers. The coach should focus on the following areas to mark the success of the session.

- Each teams ability to possess the ball to open channels to attack
- Recognizing the opportunity and pass selection
- Good support after a penetrating pass is made



- Note -You may play numbers up to begin i.e. 6v5/7v6 to gain initial success.
- If your space is small you may have to reduce the numbers to a 5v5 to create enough space to create initial success.

25 minutes

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session.

5 minutes





# Massachusetts Premier Soccer U14 Curriculum

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**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Speed of Play Combinations 2 – Week 4

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Warm- up – Champion:**

- Split up players into groups of 3 with one ball between 3.
- Players will get themselves into a triangle and will be passing and moving in this shape.
- All players must begin by taking 3 touches – 2 touches before they pass.
- Focus on weight and accuracy of pass and incorporating push pass and outside of foot pass.
- On coach command group must make 15 passes – as soon as they complete 15 they go down on one knee and shout “Champion”.

### **Progressions**

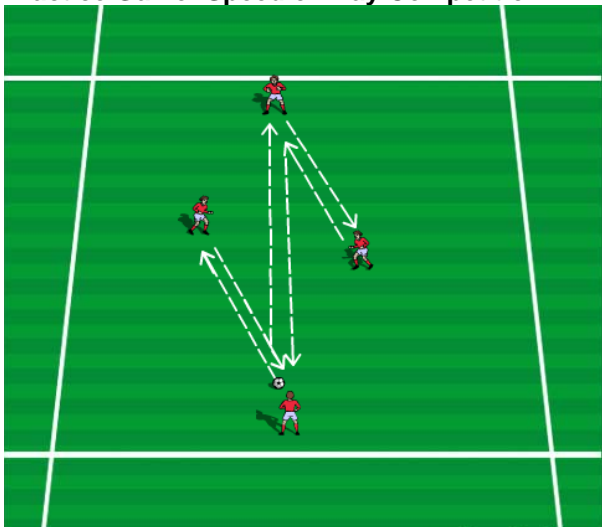
- Players must take 2 touches but must use the same foot for control and pass.
- Players must take 2 touches but must use alternate feet.
- Players must take 1 touch – can increase the number of passes that they must complete to 25.
- Remove the number of passes rule but now introduce the rule that a player can call out a number between 1 and 3. This is communicated before they pass and the next player must take the required number of touches.

15 minutes

### **Coaching Points:**

- *Player 1 must make a firm and accurate initial pass. Get player to focus on exactly where he is passing the ball to start the exercise. This is important in making the players start to think about where they are actually passing.*
- *Player 2 must initially check away from the cone to make space for themselves. They must have a quality first touch across the body, so they must get in line with the initial pass and have a soft touch in front and across body. This will help stress and work on the importance of being comfortable with both feet.*
- *Player 2 will use the push pass initially to pass ball into space and in front of player 3 and not directly to their feet.*
- *Player 3 will call for the ball at the right time and time their run accordingly. This will get young players to think about their movement.*
- *Accelerate with a big touch back to start point.*
- *The key to this exercise is the focus on technical precision and quality.*

### **Practice Game: Speed of Play Competition**







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- Set up players in groups of 4 with one ball per group. Ideally have the 2 end players about 20 yards apart.
- Have two players at each end and two in the middle.
- Player 1 on the end makes a short pass into player 2 in the middle.
- Player 2 makes short pass back to player 1. Player 1 then makes a longer pass across the area to player 3 on the opposite end line.
- Player 3 receives and makes short pass to player 4.
- Player 4 makes a short pass back to player 3 who then plays a long pass back to player 1.
- This completes the rotation and counts as 1 goal. After 5-6 goals switch the inside players with the outside players.
- Make it competitive by making it a race between teams but demand technical quality over speed initially to ensure that they are being technically clean.

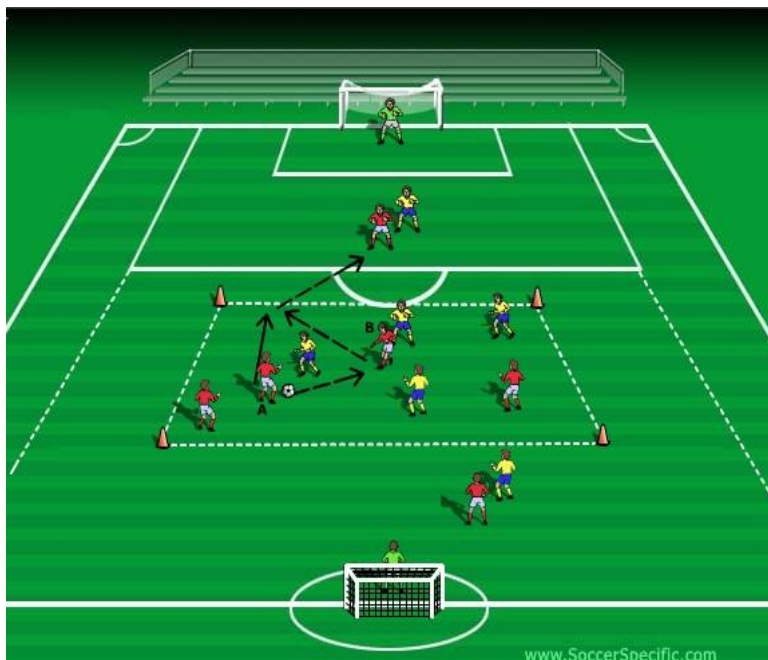
15 minutes

### Progression

- All players must take 3 touches.
- All players must take 2 touches.
- End players must take 2 but inside players can only take 1.
- All players must take 1 touch – this is a challenge and only the best groups will succeed
- Coach can also place demands on the longer pass from end player to end player – introduce low driven pass if appropriate

### Combination Play to Goal

- Players are organized inside a central grid as shown below.
- A 4v4/5v5 is organized inside the central grid as shown.
- A target player and one defender are positioned outside the central playing area as shown.
- Goalkeepers are in each goal as shown.
- Players can rotate into the central grid to accommodate larger numbers.
- Defenders and attackers can also rotate in.



- Both teams compete in the central playing area.



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- Players must create opportunities to play to their forward target player through quick ball movement and combination play.
- Central players must attempt to play a minimum of three passes before searching for a penetrating pass to the target forward.
- After passing to the target player the central player may leave the central area to join the attack creating a 2v1 to goal.

### Progression

- Play with two defenders creating 2v2 situations to goal
- Add another supporting player creating a 3v2 to goal

### Coaching Points:

- Combinations within the central playing area should be encouraged.
- Combination play off the target player must be emphasized.
- Communication
- Sharp passing and movement
- Accuracy and weight of passing

### 6v6/7v7 Game

As per previous session, finish with a 6v6 or 7v7 game depending on the space of the facility and numbers. The coach should focus on the following areas to mark the success of the session.

- Each teams ability to possess the ball to open channels to attack
- Recognizing the opportunity and pass selection
- Good support after a penetrating pass is made



- Note -You may play numbers up to begin i.e. 6v5/7v6 to gain initial success.
- If your space is small you may have to reduce the numbers to a 5v5 to create enough space to create initial success.

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session.



# Massachusetts Premier Soccer U14 Curriculum

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**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Defending 1 – Week 5

## **ORGANIZATION**

**Warm – up:**

SAQ

- Using cones, ladders or hurdles incorporate 5-10 minutes of speed and agility training.  
4 Stations usually works well with one and a half minutes on and the same rest in between.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Technique is everything, movement on balls of feet, body upright and compact

### **1v1 Shielding (Defending)**

- Players will pass and move in full area.
- On coaches call the player on the ball will aim to shield the ball for 45 seconds.
- The defender will aim to:
  1. Score a point each time he/she successfully performs a poke tackle and touches the ball. The ball is always returned to the attacker (First 3 minutes)
  2. Win possession.
  3. This will rotate defensive responsibility's (Second 3 minutes)

### **Coaching Points:**

- Strength and Determination
- Good Defensive Shape
- Patience and timing.
- Concentration

### **2v3 to a Line**

- In groups of 6 in a 25 (wide) x 20 (long) grid you play with 3 attackers vs. 2 defenders as shown in the diagram below.
- One defender is not used but rotates into the next play.





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- A defender passes the ball to the three players at the opposite end of the grid.
- Both defenders immediately step out to defend.
- The 3 attackers must attempt to dribble over the opposite end-line.
- The defenders must attempt to stop/delay and win the ball.
- A point is scored if the attackers cross the line on the dribble.
- Two points are scored if the defenders intercept and get over the opponents end-line.
- The coach should focus on the role of the first and second defender and coach both players where possible.
- Rotate the defenders each time.

### Progression

- Add in the extra defender and play 3V3 to finish.
- The role of the 3<sup>rd</sup> defender will be looked at in more depth in the next practice.
- Play 4v2 keep away looking at group defending and shape.
- Look at defensive pair working together. Don't get split and force the mistake.
- Rotate three times so that everyone works in a defensive pair.

### Coaching Points:

- DELAY for as long as possible! Don't dive in - be patient!
- Communication/Working as a unit
- Shift your feet to maintain balance. Keep a low center of gravity.
- Close the angles and try and force an error
- Making the pass predictable
- Patience/Decision-making

### Game Conditioned: 6v6/7v5

1. Play 6v6 Initially (Include Goalkeepers).  
Two teams play in a 2-2-1 formation.
2. Work with the forward in terms of their defending angle of approach in order to make play predictable for their teammates. They are the players who initiate the channeling of the ball, hopefully into an area where the team can quickly retain possession.
3. Take a player away from one team creating a 5v4 on the field. This should encourage patient and tactical defending. Extra points can be awarded to the defensive team if they score

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session



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**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Defending 2 – Week 6

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Warm - up**

- Players are numbered 1 and 2 with one ball.
- Players begin by passing and moving. Stretching can be incorporated after a short time.
- On coaches call the player without the ball will approach the player with ball in a strong defensive shape.
- The defensive player will aim to slow/delay play by staying close to the dribbling player.
- At this time the player on the ball should dribble at a medium pace.

### **Progression**

- The 1v1 should now become competitive with the dribbling player now shielding the ball and the defender aiming to get a touch by poking the ball away.
- The defensive player counts the amount of times he/she touches the ball.
- 1v1 Possession. Defensive player becomes the attacker if the ball is won.

### **1v1 Positive Defending and Stepping**

- In group of three players will work in the same space as before. One player will be positioned at one side of the grid and the other two, at the opposite side.
- A ball is passed across the grid to player one who begins as the receiving player.
- Player two will begin as a defender and be positioned behind player one.
- The defensive player on the pass must step in front of player one and intercept.
- Player one is aiming to pass the ball successfully back to the server.
- Player two is trying to step in front of player one and do the same.
- Points are awarded to the defender each time he is successful.
- Rotate positions after 10 serves.

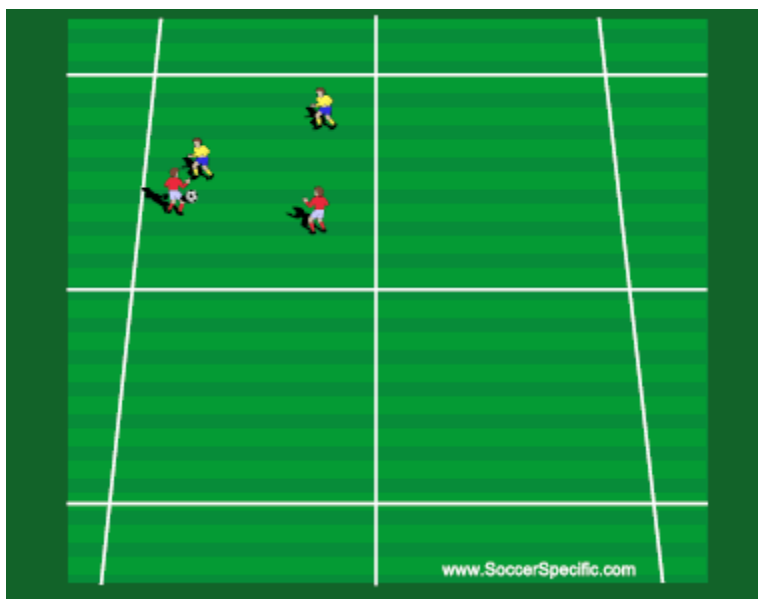
### **Coaching Points:**

- Firm pass into the attacking player who is playing back to pressure.
- Players cannot move until the ball is played.
- Defender must time his movement to step and intercept
- Attacker must physically protect the ball and make things difficult
- Defender must work hard to get his arm and body across the attacker and physically put him in the attacking space. Strength is a critical defensive quality
- This should be both physically demanding and competitive.

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### 2V2 to a Line



- Focus on the role of the first and second defender
- If space is an issue 4 players can play while 2 rest and keep score.
- This should create a competition between teams using a normal ladder format.

### Progression

- Once players comfortable with 2v2 try 3v3.

### Coaching Points (Second Defender):

- The second defender has three responsibilities – these are:
  1. Provide cover for the first defender.
  2. Cover the 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker
- Ensure the two defenders cannot easily be beaten with a through ball.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> defender should also be taught to communicate with the first defender

Again teach young players the language of defending, for example, “get tight”, “delay”, “channel to me”, “tackle now” and perhaps most importantly, “track the runner” (attempt to stay goal side of a player who makes a run towards the goal without the ball.)

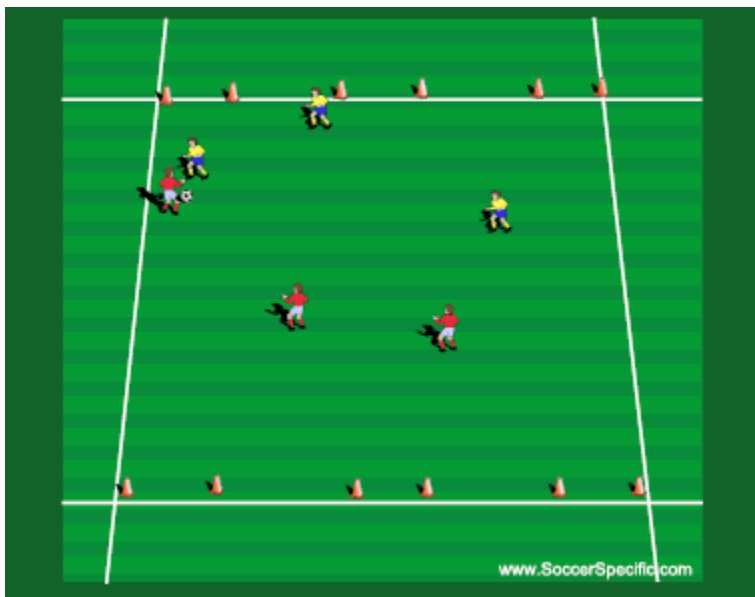


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### 3v3 (to 3 goals)

- Play 3v3 in a 30x20 space using six small goals as shown below



- Coach will now focus on the role of the third defender (Balance)
- Coach will now look at how effectively the team works the pressure, cover and balance.
- The coach will focus on the speed of rotation and how the roles change based on the position of the ball.
- The weak side goal is a good tool to coach the balancing player.

#### **Coaching Points (The role of the third defender):**

- The role of the third defender is to provide **balance** away from the ball and
- to protect against a simple pass from the first attacker to the weak side of the field.
- Teams that understand and employ the principle of **balance** separate themselves from "kick-and-chase" teams, where all of a team's players closely surround the ball.
- Third defenders cover space on the side of the field away from the ball and also track runners who run at space behind the defense.
- One can see that a simple change of field would be disastrous to a defense without the concept of balance.
- A huge defensive given is that, while at any given moment a player is able to define their defensive role, this role can change in a fraction of a second with a simple pass from one offensive player to another.

### **Game Conditioned – 6v6 Game**

Attempt to bring out key defensive points for pressure, cover and balance.

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session



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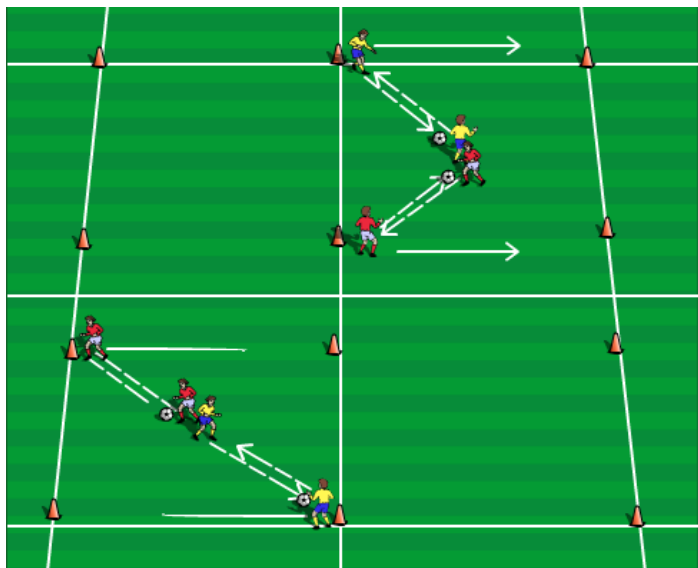
**Age Group:** U14

**Theme of Session:** Attacking and Finishing 1 – Week 7

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Warm - up**

- Light movement and dynamic stretching to be incorporated
- Set up Triangle Grids approximately 5 yards each side
- Central player is the feeder. The feeder serves the ball 2/3 yards in the air so that the attacker can volley the ball back to hands. The attacker then shifts across to the other cone to volley with the opposite foot. Work for 1 minute and rotate
- Attacker turns his back to the feeder and shifts from side to side blind to the ball.
- On the feeder call they turn and must play the ball back in the air with two touch max. This increases awareness and reaction time. Work for one minute and rotate.
- Feeder takes a knee and as before serves a ball into the blind attacker. This time the ball can be on the ground (rolled) or in the air. The attacker must be prepared for both alternatives. Work for one minute and rotate.



### **Coaching Points:**

- Don't be surprised...Adjust!!
- Both feet working
- Communication
- Confidence
- Technical Quality on touch and short pass





## 2v2 Continuous Attack and Finish



- Split group into two teams and positioned as above.
  - A supply of balls is placed with each group.
  - Goalkeepers are in each goal.
  - Teams play 2v2 inside the playing area and attempt to score in their opponent's goal.
  - Red (A) and (B) start with the ball and try to beat Yellow (A) and (B).
  - As soon as a shot is taken, Reds become the defenders and two new Yellow players (C) and (D) become the attackers.
- Note:** After you shoot or the ball goes out of play, you become the defenders.  
Play is continuous for a designated period of time or predetermined number of goals. **Players have 10 seconds to score to encourage speed of attack and finish.**

### Coaching Points

- Attackers must go at pace – do not allow the defensive players to get ready!
- Find the penetrating option quickly.
- Game must have a high tempo – quick transitions and finish with efficiency



## **Progression 1**

### **2v2+1 Continuous Attack and Finish**

Players are organized as shown in Diagram (c) below. An extra player (green) is positioned inside the playing area as shown.



- Game is played in a 2v2 + 1 format.
- The “plus” player plays for the attacking team.
- The attacking team must find the “plus” player prior to going for goal.
- After the attack the game continues in the opposite direction.
- Quick combinations and patterns are encouraged in this section.
- The game is continuous. Rotate the plus player to avoid fatigue.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Find the penetrating option quickly – pass, shoot, dribble etc.
- Solve it! It is a 3v2 situation that should be successful.
- Third Player running patterns
- No long passing sequences – quick transitions into the attack.
- Clinical finishing



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## Progression 2

### 3v3 Continuous Attack and Finish

- Two teams are positioned as shown below.
- The playing area is the width of the 18-yard box to the halfway line.
- Goalkeepers are positioned in each of the goals as shown.



- As in first practice but in a 3v3 format.
- Coaching points as above

### 6v6 Game

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session



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**Age Group:** U14

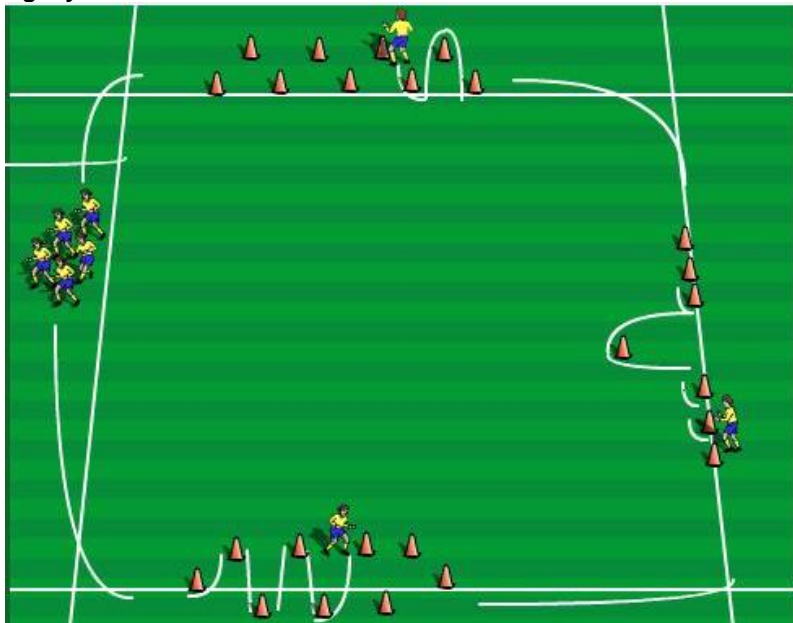
**Theme of Session:** Attacking and Finishing 2 – Week 8

### **ORGANIZATION**

#### **Warm - up**

Light movement and dynamic stretching.

#### **Agility Circuit**



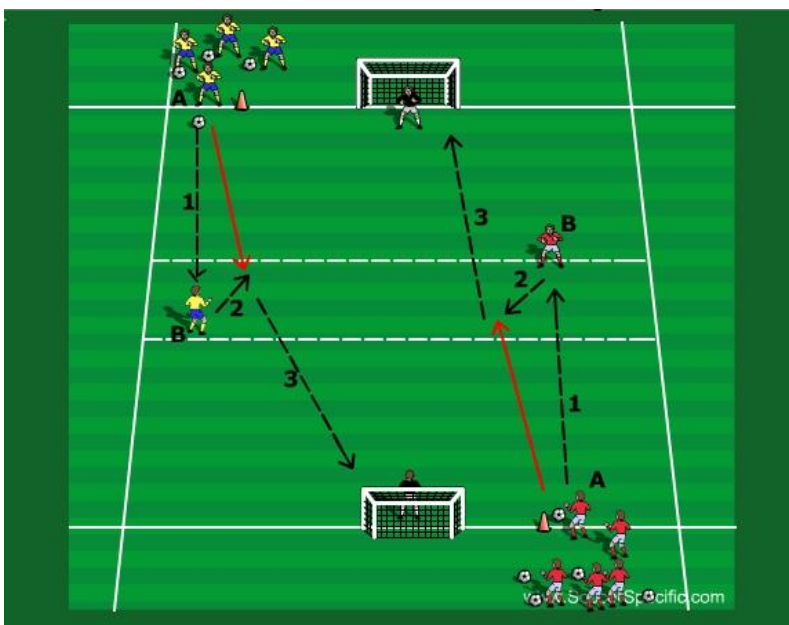
- All players begin at top right corner and go at 3 second intervals.
  1. Slalom (Forward and side ways)
  2. Free jog
  3. Slalom (Sideways)
  4. Jumper (Two feet to two feet/knees high) forward and back around middle cone repeat
- Complete a circuit and jog a circuit. Repeat 3 times in total.

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### Inside Run Finishing

- Two groups of players are positioned at either end of a 30 yard grid as shown.
- A "target" player, (B), is positioned in the central channel as shown.
- Player (A) begins the sequence with a firm pass to (B).
- Player (B) must lay-the-ball-off for oncoming (A) for a strike on goal.
- Both sides of the pitch work at the same time.
- Player (A) advances to become the next target player (B) after the shot.
- Player (B) runs round the back of the goal and joins the back of the yellow / red line.



### Progression

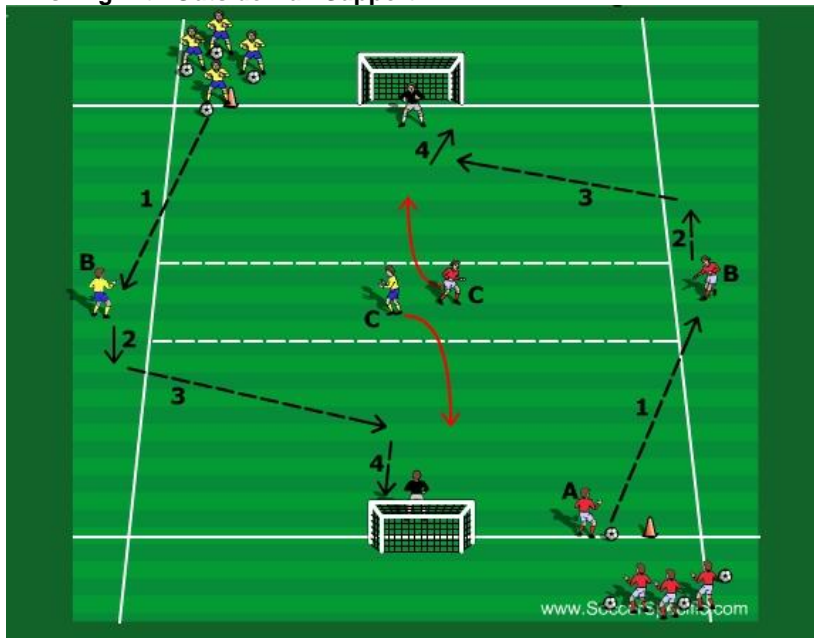
- The ball is chipped into (B) for the lay-off.
- A defender can be added later. Who will advance from the end-line

### Coaching Points:

- Quality and pace of the entrance pass.
- Accuracy and weight of the lay-off from (B)
- Quality of shot / Variation of shots - low, high, driven, lofted, bending etc



## Finishing with Outside Run Support



- Player (A) passes to (B), who is standing in a slightly wide position.
- Player (B) turns quickly and drives forward and slips a ball inside to the oncoming central player C.
- Player (A) takes (B's) position out wide, (B) takes (C's) place in the middle, (C) joins the back of the yellow/red line.

## Progression

- Wider player receives the ball and plays an immediate pass inside to C. The wide then spins to get into a further forward position receives the ball closer to the end-line and cuts across or back to C to finish

## Coaching Points:

- As above but with quality combination inside.
- Timing of central run, don't get there too early.

## Sectional Attacking and Finishing

- Players are organized on a full indoor field to play a 6v6 (1-3-2) or 7v7 (1-4-2).
- The centerline is clearly marked with cones.
- Taking 6v6 as an example Set up three defenders against two attackers in each half. They must stay in this half for the duration of the game.
- Each team is trying to score on the opposite goal. Since players must stay in their halves, attackers in the defense half must pass across the center line to an attacker who can score – solo or in combination with teammates.
- The focal points of this practice are effective and decisive combination play and effective finishing

## Progression



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*Attacker may follow his pass across the center and create numbers up in attack*

*Attackers that cross are restricted to two touches.*

*Attacking team can bring more than one player across.*

### **Coaching Points:**

- Make checking runs to receive.
- Get clear of opponent.
- Combine effectively.
- Take advantage of scoring opportunities.

### **Play 6v6**

Look to incorporate learning's from this session

### **Progression**

- Take line away and play 6v6 to Finish

**Cool Down:** Light jog across the field with stretches and a recap on the session