



1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball and score.

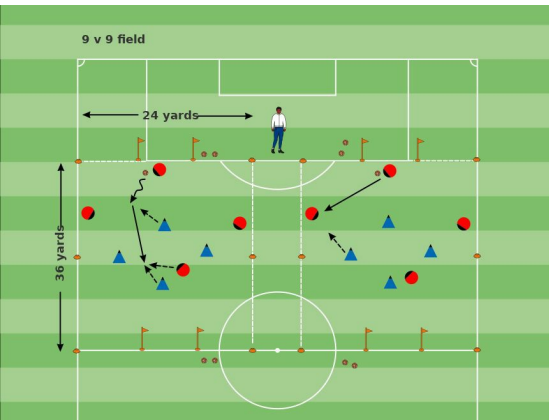
ORGANIZATION: Mark out two 36 x 24-yard fields. Divide players into four teams of four. Free play: Teams play 4 v 4 on 8-yard goal lines without goalkeepers (pass on the ground to score). Goals scored after winning the ball in the opponent's half count double. Play for 30 minutes with two-three breaks.

KEY WORDS: Block the pass, steal the ball, get tight

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) How do we work together to protect our goal? 2) What are some cues to steal the ball? 3) Who should apply pressure? 4) How do each of the the other defenders help?

ANSWERS: 1) Get compact and block the passing lanes. 2) Attacker's head is down or he/she takes a bad touch. 3) The closest defender to the ball. 4) By getting tight together and communicating the direction to force the opponents.

NOTES: First break: Coach asks questions, players continue playing to discover answers. Second break: Players share answers with coach and each other. Refer to the Training Session Manual.



PRACTICE (Core Activity): 4 v 4 to Two Large Goals

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up in the middle channel, win the ball and score.

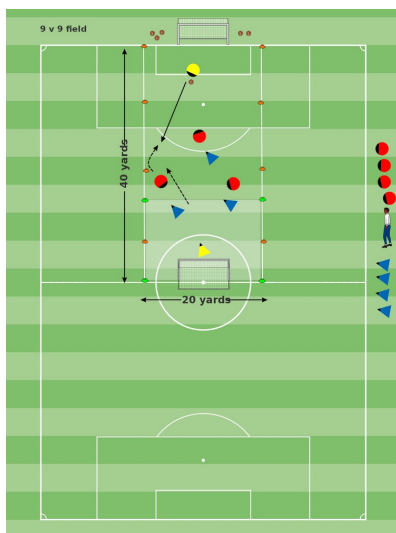
ORGANIZATION: Mark out a 40 x 20-yard field. Red (1-1-2; one defender and two midfielders) vs Blue (1-2-1; two midfielders and one central forward). Red starts outside of the box except GK who begins play feet or hands. Rotate players every 2- 3 repetitions and between teams. Option to set-up a 2nd field.

KEY WORDS: Block the pass, steal the ball, get tight.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) How should the first defender react to the opening pass? 2) What are the other cues to steal the ball? 3) Where should the other two defenders look? 4) How can the other two defenders help? 5) What are some specific communications that you can use to help?

ANSWERS: 1) Close the openings by sprinting towards the attacker with long steps and then short ones as I get close. 2) Bad pass/touch, or when his/her head is down. 3) At both the ball and the open players. 4) Block the passing lanes and provide specific communication. 5) "Force to the middle" or "shift".

NOTES: Start here at the Core Activity and determine the level of challenge. If it's too easy, move to the More Challenging Activity. If it's too difficult, move to the Less Challenging Activity. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice phase with two-three breaks.



PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 5 v 4 To Two Large Goals

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up in the middle channel, win the ball and score.

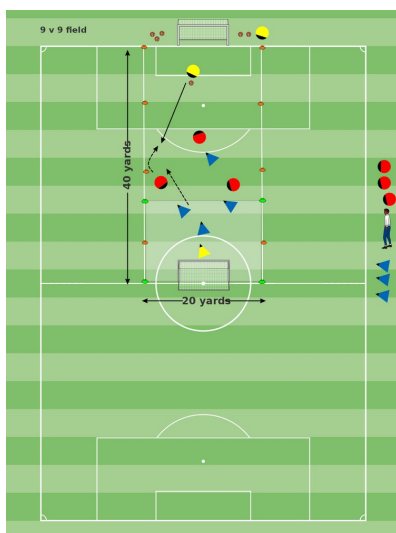
ORGANIZATION: Same as Core Activity, except Blue adds a midfielder. Option to add another goalkeeper for Red to rotate.

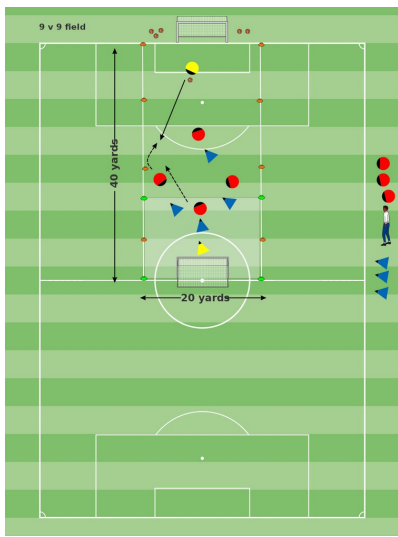
KEY WORDS: Block the pass, steal the ball, get tight

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) How should the first defender react to the opening pass? 2) What are the other cues to steal the ball? 3) Where should the other two defenders look? 4) How can the other three defenders help? 5) What are some specific communications that you can use to help?

ANSWERS: 1) Close the openings by sprinting towards the attacker with long steps and then short ones as I get close. 2) Bad pass/touch, or when his/her head is down. 3) At both the ball and the open players. 4) Block the passing lanes and provide specific communication. 5) "Force to the middle" or "shift."

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this Less Challenging activity if the Core Activity is too difficult. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase with two-three breaks. Refer to the Training Session Manual.





PRACTICE (More Challenging): 5 v 5 to Two Large Goals

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent's buildup in the middle channel, regain the ball and score

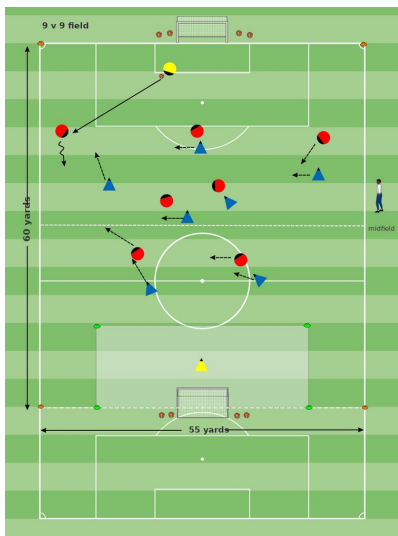
ORGANIZATION: Same as Core Activity, except both teams add a midfielder.

KEY WORDS: Block the pass, steal the ball, get tight

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) How should the first defender react to the opening pass? 2) What are the other cues to steal the ball? 3) Where should the other two defenders look? 4) How can the other three defenders help? 5) What are some specific communications that you can use to help?

ANSWERS: 1) Close the openings by sprinting towards the attacker with long steps and then short ones as I get close. 2) Bad pass/touch, or when his/her head is down. 3) At both the ball and the open players. 4) Block the passing lanes and provide specific communication. 5) "Force to the middle" or "shift"

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this More Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase with two-three breaks. Refer to the Training Session Manual.



2ND PLAY PHASE: The Game

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from building up, win the ball and score

ORGANIZATION: Mark out a 60 x 55-yard field. Play 8v8. Red plays in a 1-3-2-2 formation and Blue plays 1-2-2-3. Each team tries to disrupt the other's buildup as quickly as possible. Play according to the Laws of the Game and the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives. Play for 30 minutes including one "halftime" (5 minutes max).

KEY WORDS: Block the pass, steal the ball, get tight

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) How can we close the openings? 2) What are the other cues to steal the ball? 3) Who should steal the ball? 4) How can the other defenders help? 5) What are some specific communications that you can use to help?

ANSWERS: 1) Form a compact unit and block forward passing lanes. 2) Bad pass/touch, or when his/her head is down. 3) The defender closest to the ball. 4) Block the passing lanes and provide specific communication. 5) "Force to the middle" or "shift".

NOTES:

Five Elements of a Training Activity

1. **Organized:** Is the activity organized in the right way?
2. **Game-like:** Is the activity game-like?
3. **Repetition:** Is there repetition, when looking at the overall goal of the session?
4. **Challenging:** Are the players being challenged? (Is there the right balance between being successful and unsuccessful?)
5. **Coaching:** Is there effective coaching, based on the age and level of the player?

Training Session Self-Reflection Questions

1. How did you do in achieving the goals of the training session?
2. What did you do well?
3. What could you do better?