

Functional Training of the Wing Backs

Objective: To help improve wing backs' play in the attack.

1) **6v0 Shadow Play with Goalkeeper (Warm-up – 10-15 minutes):** Begin by having the four backs and two midfielders passing the ball around freely, without pressure, in the defensive third of the field. On the coach's command, wing backs are to find central midfielder, center back or the coach.

Coaching Points:

- Wing backs must receive the ball with their hips open to the field, so that they can see the entire field ahead of them.
- Proper technique of receiving and passing whether the ball is in the air or on the ground.
- Proper angle of support to receive the ball from center back or midfielders.
- Good first touch forward, into space when available.
- Eye contact must be made when passes are made.

2) **6v3 to Counter Goals with Goalkeeper (15-20 minutes):**

In the defensive third of the field, four backs are trying to combine with the two midfielders to score on the counter goals at midfield. Two forwards and one midfielder apply pressure and attack the full size goal when they win the ball.

Coaching Points:

- Wing backs need to recognize when they can play forward and when to retain possession.
- If wing backs have open midfielder or space to play ball forward to goals, they must do so (no pressure).
- If wing backs see defender taking the goals they must find midfielders or backs to retain possession.
- Wing backs may dribble penetrate if space and pressure is not applied in the defensive third.
- Reinforce points mentioned in warm-up.



3) **8v6 to Counter Goals with Goalkeeper (20-25 minutes):** Build to playing with four backs three midfielders and one forward to counter goals against two forwards and three midfielders and one defender scoring on the full size goal.

Coaching Points:

- Wing backs should look to pass to the forward when possible, recognizing where pressure is coming from and if the forward is available to receive the ball.
- When under pressure from the forward from the inside of the field, wing backs need to recognize if they can either pass to the forward or to an outside midfielder in order to build the attack.
- Wing backs can look to overlap when outside midfielder dribbles the ball towards the middle of the field and space is open on the outside of the field, creating a 2v1 situation.
- Reinforce points made previously.



4) 9v9 Scrimmage to Two Goals with Goalkeepers (25-30 minutes): Using a 4-3-1 v a 3-3-2 formation, play a match to two goals. Move the goals up 12 yards from the goal line on each end and use the full width of the field. Moving to 11v11 if your team has the numbers is advised as well.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points made throughout session.

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

In groups of four, choose one “captain” per group who will lead them on a slow jog in different directions around the field. During the jog they are to perform various dynamic stretches while cooling-down. Finish with static stretching of major muscle groups.