

PRACTICE OVERVIEW

COUNTER-ATTACKING/
EMERGENCY DEFENDING

LEVEL

- U8-U11

SMALL-SIDED GAME 2

- This practice draws on constraints to promote certain types of behaviour among the players, linked to both exploiting and defending against attacking overloads.
- The practice requires a minimum of 18 players, including two goalkeepers.



AGE PHASE: U8-11

SMALL-SIDED GAME 2

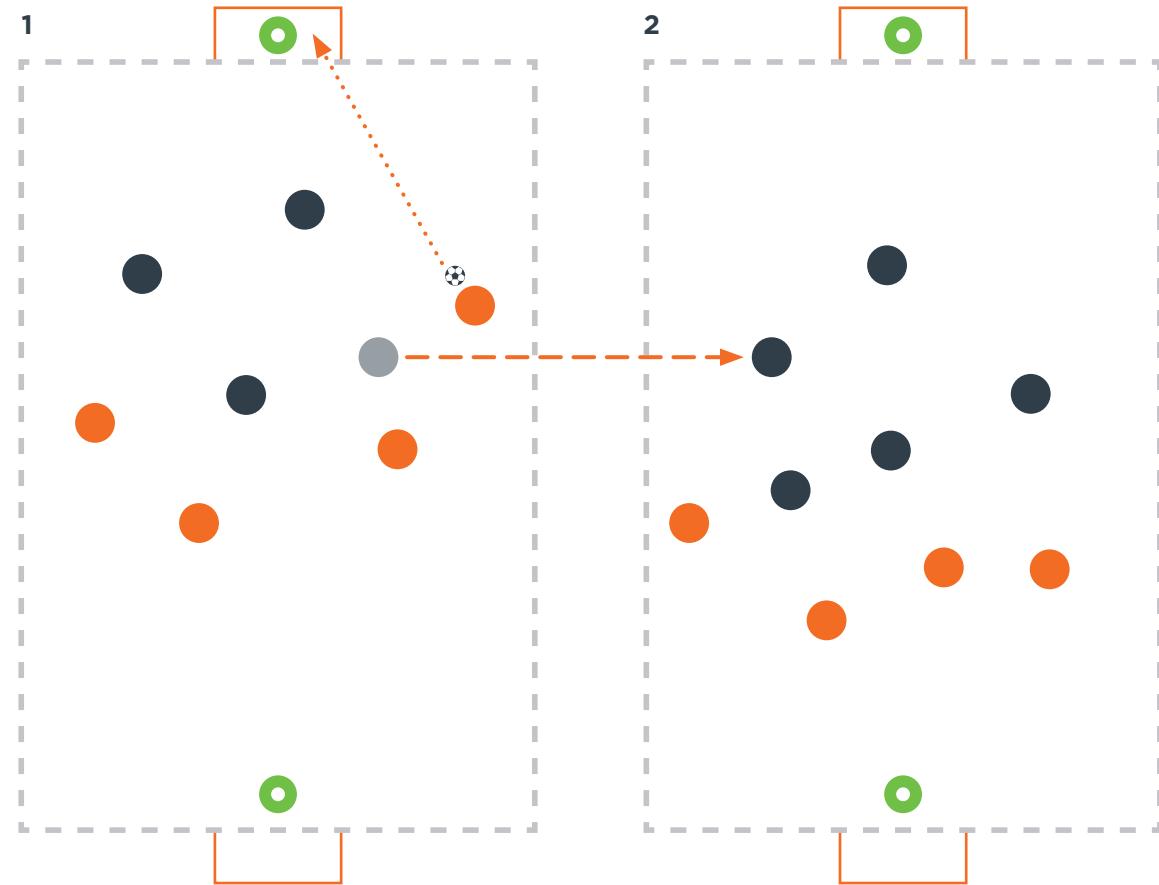
COUNTER-ATTACKING/
EMERGENCY DEFENDING

FUNCTION

- Two simultaneous small-sided games take place in which the players on each pitch are linked.
- If one team scores on one pitch, a member of the opposition have to transfer across to the other pitch. Here, the attacking team score on **Pitch 1**, so an opposition player must move to join the equivalent team on **Pitch 2**.
- This creates a variety of underload/overload situations for players to deal with. In this case, two 4v4 games become a 4v3 and a 4v5.
- The aim of the game is to remove all of the opposition's players off one field entirely.

VARIATIONS

- A one-touch finish sends two players across.
- A team with an overload can only finish using one touch.
- If a team have only one player left and they score, two opposition players have to move pitches.



COACHING FOCUSES

PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Try to get the players to discuss how to solve the different challenges that the game poses them.
- If a particular game lasts a long time, stop it and ask teams to discuss with each other how they can be more successful at eliminating the opposition.
- Similarly, if a game finishes particularly early, ask the players to discuss why that might have been.
- Use a coach on the shoulders of the players to ensure conversation is on task, using questions to probe players for more detail if necessary.

MANAGING THE GAME

- Teams should be aware of the game state on the other pitch. If one team is close to eliminating all of the opposition players, it might be that their teammates on the other pitch – who will be underloaded – have more of a focus on retaining possession rather than scoring.

EXPLOITING AN OVERLOAD

- The incentive is to score quickly, to eliminate players from the opposition and then exploit the subsequent overload.
- Explore different ways of doing that with the focus steered towards quick combinations, finding spare players, creating 2v1 situations and exploiting 1v1s.

DEFENDING WHEN UNDERLOADED

- The emphasis on the team defending with reduced numbers is to delay the opposition for as long as possible, to give their teammates on the other pitch the best opportunity to win the game with their overload.
- It is important to encourage the team defending against an overload to consider the following: pressure, cover, support, defending the goal, directing play away from goal and emergency blocks and tackles.

