



On the Defensive



Pressure the opposition quickly to deny them space and time on the ball

Conditioned Tactical Games in Defence.

When your training session draws to a close, it is important to end them with a small-sided game. I usually spend half the time with a conditioned tactical game and end the second half of the small pitch game with free expression.

With free expression, I just let the players enjoy themselves with no stop-start and encourage them to be inventive with their play.

The following are examples of small pitch conditioned tactical games in defence.

1 BALANCE IN DEFENCE

Balance is the ability to limit the creation of space, penetration and passing angles by the attacking team. Good positioning of defending players will help to reduce the passing angles and creation of playing space for the attacking team.

In this conditioned tactical game, the ball is passed between attacking players with the defending players adjusting their position to give the nearer defender to the ball support and reduce space and passing angles for the attacking team. This co-ordinated adjustment in defence is important as it creates balance and breeds confidence. As soon as the defender nearer to the ball applies a ball press

the other defenders go on an aggressive player, ball or space press until they gain possession. When possession is gained the attacking team goes on a counter-attack with the defending team applying token pressure. The attack ends with a shot at goal. After a shot at goal the conditioned tactical game commences with the other goalkeeper.

2 PRESSING THE BALL IN DEFENCE

Pressing the ball in defence is the ability to reduce the time and space an attacking player will have to receive, pass, dribble or shoot at goal.

The defending players recover behind the 1/4 line while the attacking players position themselves to support their goalkeeper.

The exercise starts when the ball is played by the goalkeeper to a supporting team player in the back 1/4. The team with the ball must now play possession game of football in their half. The nearest defending player quickly goes on the ball press with the others supporting in a block press. When the ball is passed the press continues until the team in possession is able to make five passes or the defending team wins possession and has a shot at goal.

The conditioned tactical game continues with the other goalkeeper. As this conditioned exercise is of high intensity, have several recovery periods during the game.

End the second half of the game with free expression.

3 PRESSING THE PLAYER IN DEFENCE

Pressing the player in defence is the ability to reduce the time and playing space an attacking player will have when receiving the ball. Players mark a player

their own height and size and must press that player all over the playing pitch. The goalkeepers play in their zone and cannot be pressurised. They have a limit of three seconds before releasing the ball.

The exercise starts with the goalkeeper passing the ball to a supporting player in a pressed situation. All defending players must apply player pressure to their player all over the pitch in a normal game.

During this pressure conditioned game I usually apply the following:

1. If a defending player is two or more metres away from their attacking player, he does one push-up.
2. If a defending player applies pressure to another player, he does two push-ups.
3. If a defending player allows his attacking player to score a goal, he does three push-ups.

The exercise ends with a shot at goal or loss of possession. This conditioned tactical game now continues with a pass from the other goalkeeper. As this conditioned exercise is also of high intensity, have several recovery periods during the game.

End the second half of the small pitch conditioned game with free expression.

4 ZONE-COMBINED ZONE IN DEFENCE

Zone is the ability to recover goalside of the ball, cover an area, and press any player entering that zone. The small pitch game is played with the offside rule.

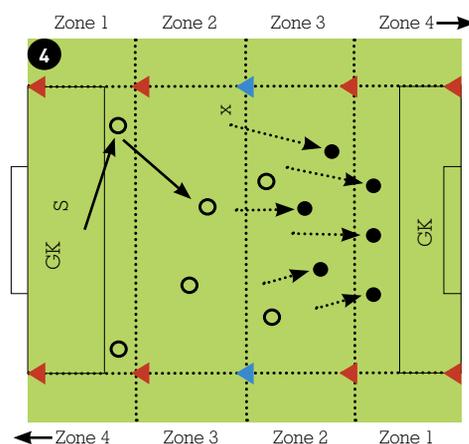
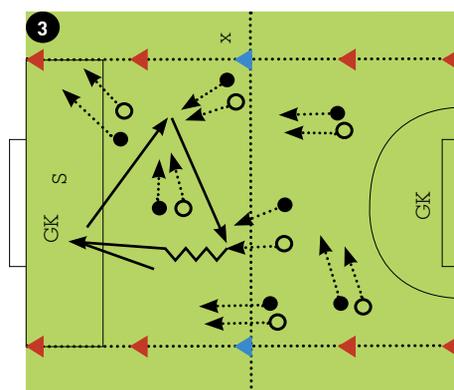
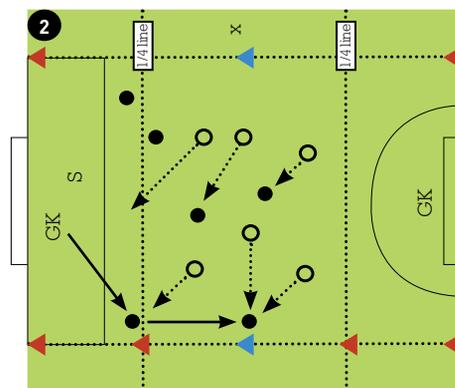
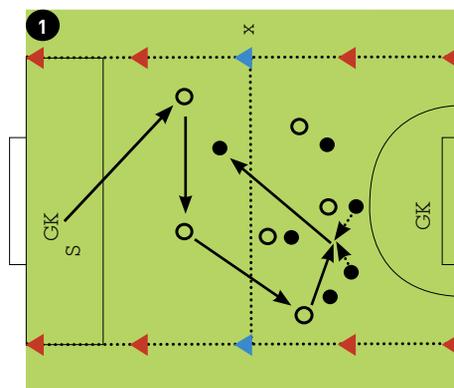
The game starts when the ball is played by the goalkeeper to a supporting player in zone one. All defending players have to recover into a zone formation to zones three and four by the count of five. If any defending player is in the attacking half by the count of five attacking team.

When the ball is played into zone four the defending team go on a player and ball press and execute a counter-attack against a token defence. In this conditioned game the ball cannot be played back to the goalkeeper.

Combined zone in defence is the same as above but with the condition of pressing one or more key players in attack. After a shot at goal the conditioned tactical game commences with the other goalkeeper.

End the game with free expression, no conditions. **SI**

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LEGEND

- Player ●
- Coach X
- Flag ▲
- Markers ●
- Run without ball →
- Movement of ball →
- Movement in possession →
- Shot at goal →
- Start of exercise S
- Movement not in possession →