

4v4- Defending- Improve Preventing the Opponent from Building Up in their Own Half (A)

GOAL: Improve preventing the opponent from building-up in their own half

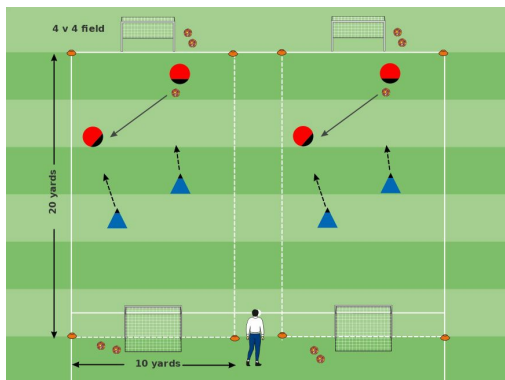
PLAYER ACTIONS: Steal

KEY QUALITIES: Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U7-U8 / 4v4 / 8 players

MOMENT: Defending

DURATION: 60 min



1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play

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

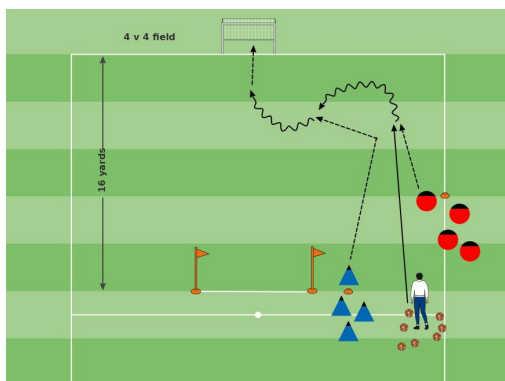
ORGANIZATION: Mark out two narrow fields (20 x 10 yards), each with two mini goals. Players are divided into pairs and take turns playing 2 v 2. Play for 20 minutes with two breaks. Rotate players between the fields.

KEY WORDS: Steal the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) What are you supposed to do if you lose the ball? 2) What else could you do? 3) What's the advantage of defending higher up the field?

ANSWERS: 1) Drop back and protect our goal. 2) Stay forward and try to win the ball back right away. 3) The opponent never gets near our goal. And if we do win the ball back, we can immediately shoot.

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



PRACTICE (Core Activity): 1 v 1 after Pass behind Attacker

OBJECTIVE: To win the ball back.

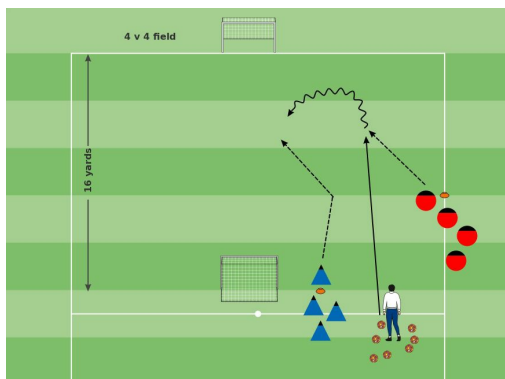
ORGANIZATION: Set up one small goal and one goal line 16 yards apart (25 yards wide). Choose four attackers (Red) and four defenders (Blue) to position them as shown. Play the ball behind the attackers so the 1st attacker and defender run in after it to play 1 v 1 until a goal is scored. Red scores on the goal line, Blue the small goal. At the breaks, switch the

KEY WORDS: Steal the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Defenders, what should you do when the ball is played in behind the attacker? 2) What don't you want the attacker to do? 3) Why?

ANSWERS: 1) Quickly run in after the ball and immediately put pressure on him/her. 2) Turn around and start dribbling toward you. 3) Because then the attacker can shoot.

NOTES: Start here at the Core Activity after the first Play Phase. If the challenge is too difficult, move to the Less Challenging Activity. If it's too easy, move to the More Challenging Activity. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase.



PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 1 v 1 after Pass behind Attacker

OBJECTIVE: To win the ball back.

ORGANIZATION: Same as core activity, except both players attack on small goals.

KEY WORDS: Steal the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Defenders, what should you do when the ball is played in behind the attacker? 2) What don't you want the attacker to do? 3) Why?

ANSWERS: 1) Quickly run in after the ball and immediately put pressure on the attacker. 2) Turn around and start dribbling toward you. 3) Because then the attacker can shoot.

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Move to this Less Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too difficult. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase.

4v4- Defending- Improve Preventing the Opponent from Building Up in their Own Half (A)

GOAL: Improve preventing the opponent from building-up in their own half

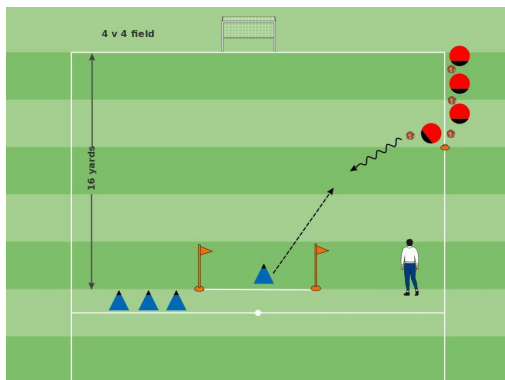
PLAYER ACTIONS: Steal

KEY QUALITIES: Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U7-U8 / 4v4 / 8 players

MOMENT: Defending

DURATION: 60 min



PRACTICE (More Challenging): 1 v 1 from Sideline

OBJECTIVE: To stop the opponent's attack and win the ball back.

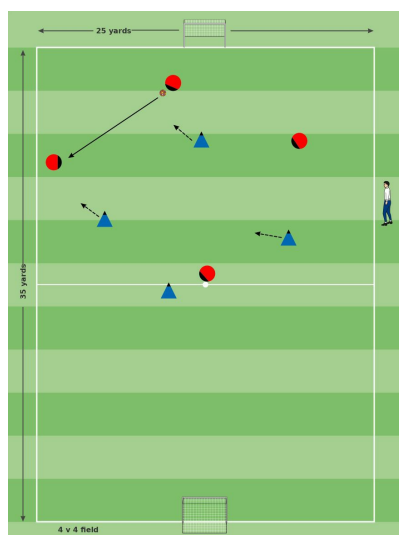
ORGANIZATION: Same as Core Activity, except the attackers dribble in from the sideline to start the 1 v 1. Be sure to rotate the teams and change the side of the field.

KEY WORDS: Steal the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Defenders, how can you keep the attacker from scoring? 2) What don't you want the attacker to do? 3) So what do you need to do? 4.) And when should you try to steal the ball?

ANSWERS: 1) By running toward the attacker. 2) Get the ball past you. 3) Don't run at the attacker too fast - keep a little distance. 4) When his/her head is down, or he/she lets the ball get too far away or tries to dribble past.

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Move to this More Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase.



2ND PLAY PHASE: The Game

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

ORGANIZATION: Mark out a regular 4 v 4 field (35 x 25 yards) with two mini goals. Teams play 4 v 4 using the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and according to the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs). Play for 20 minutes including one "halftime" (5 min.).

KEY WORDS: Steal the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) What are your options after you lose the ball? 2) What have we been practicing today? 3) And what's the advantage of that?

ANSWERS: 1) Drop back and protect our goal, or stay forward and try to win the ball back. 2) Staying forward and winning the ball back right away. 3) The opponent never gets near our goal. And if we do win the ball back, we can immediately shoot.

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?