

BFSC U11-U12 Training Session #8: Possession.

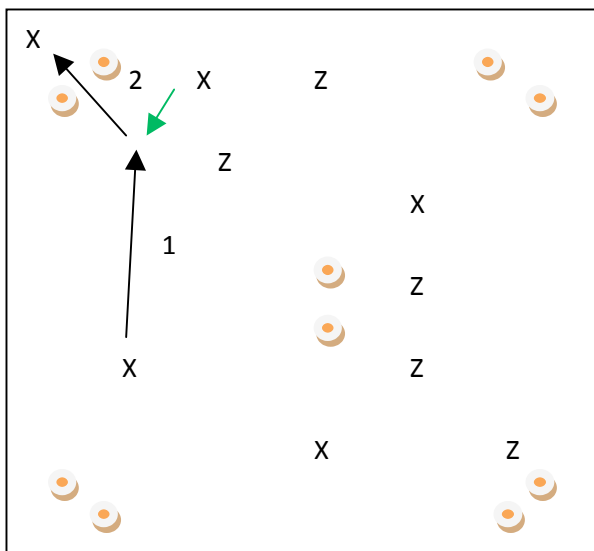
Exercise

Environment

Description / Coach

Gates

30x30 yard grid



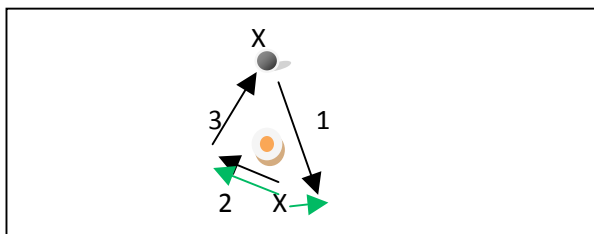
Create two equal teams (one in vests). The coach will need to have a supply of balls near the perimeter of the grid for restarting play when the ball leaves the grid. The two teams play a possession game inside the grid with the goal of passing the ball through any of the “gates” (pairs of cones one yard apart scattered throughout the grid as shown in the diagram).

Rules and coaching points:

1. To score, a pass must travel through a gate and be received by a teammate on the other side.
2. Explain to the players before beginning that it is very easy to defend a single gate as a defender can simply stand between the cones. Therefore, the teams need to look to possess the ball with an eye toward working to find an open gate. If a gate draws a defender, the attackers must look elsewhere.
3. The most common breakdown in this game is a tendency to crowd the ball. The coach should stop the action if need be a couple of times early on to demonstrate the need to spread out the game. Longer passes typically create open gates and relieve pressure for the attackers.
4. Play for seven minutes, using the game to assess the team’s ability to possess the ball under pressure.

Pairs pass and receive with a cone.

20x30 yard area



Arrange players in pairs with a ball. One player stands on the touchline with the ball and her partner stands behind a cone placed four yards from the touchline. Demonstrate with one pair. The player behind the cone works on the balls of her feet, alternately stepping around one side of the cone and then the other to receive. In receiving, she needs to touch the ball around the cone and play back on the other side. For example, if she steps around to her right, she should receive with the inside of the right foot and touch the ball behind the cone (forward, at an angle) and play back to her partner on left side of the cone using her left foot. Play for one minute and then change roles.

Variations:

1. Play one touch for the working player.
2. Play one touch for both players. This requires a very high work rate for the active player and will require rotation after thirty seconds.

No pressure possession in groups

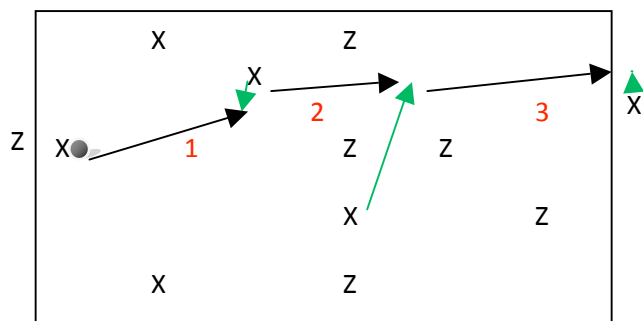
½ field

Put the players in two teams (one in vests). Each team has a ball. This environment is designed to allow players to focus on: Their technical ability; their speed of play; their communication; and their movement off of the ball. The two teams play in the field at the same time (they do not interfere with the other team's possession). Play each of the following variations for two minutes.

1. Communication. Before a pass can be made, the passer and the target must get eye contact (visual) and call out one-another's names (verbal communication).
2. Pass and sprint. As the team knocks the ball around, the player who just passed the ball makes a five yard sprint away from the ball. Emphasize that all players must continue to jog and to use the entire space as their team plays. Explain that these rules apply throughout the exercise.
3. Off foot only. Require players to both pass and receive with their off foot.
4. Check runs. Players must sprint away from the ball and then come back to it before receiving. Explain that the purpose of this restriction is to create space in which to receive. Here communication becomes critical, and visual and verbal communication between the passer and target must be required by the coach.
5. Think ahead. The passer must call out the name of the target before she plays. If the players do well with this restriction, then try having them call out the name of their target before the passer receives the ball. These restrictions compel players to plan ahead and to think quickly.
6. Short pass, long pass. Here, the players must think about the use of space. If the pass to them was a short pass (i.e. ten yards or less), then they must make a longer pass as they release the ball.
7. Change direction. After receiving, each player must use a cut or pull-back to change the direction of play before passing. This restriction is designed to force players to check multiple options (both targets and the direction of play) in possession.

6v6 to endline targets

40x35 yard field



Organize two teams (one in vests). Each team places a target player on their opponents' endline. The purpose of the game is to keep possession and play to the endline target. The player passing in to the target then takes her place. As the target re-enters play, she passes the ball to the nearest player from the opposing team and play continues. Remind players of the possession cues trained above. Keep a ball supply just outside the perimeter of the field (near the center) where the coach can restart play if the ball is played out of the field area.

This game also introduces the concept of transition. As even after a point is scored play

6v6 to goal

½ or full field

continues, players must change roles from offense to defense and constantly remain alert for their team to be successful. Encourage the targets to be active on the endlines, communicating with their teammates and moving to create open passing lanes. The coach can use any of the restrictions outlined in the previous exercise to require players to work to improve possession under pressure. Another useful restriction is to require a given number of passes (i.e. 3 or 4) before a pass can be made to a target. Play a standard scrimmage, at first requiring four passes before a shot can be taken. After five minutes, remove the restriction and let the players play.