



Training for one and all

How to combine individual and team training
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Is soccer a team sport? Yes, but every player is also an individual athlete who dribbles, sprints, jumps, tackles and shoots. That's why individual training is so important. At the same time, though, for players to succeed as a team, these individual skills and abilities need to be combined into a tactical approach — a tough balancing act, but it does work. In this article, Peter Hyballa gives you exercises you can use to make the transition from individual to team

training in different technical and tactical areas.

Training the players and the team

An important training objective, especially in the preseason, is to improve every player's condition, technique and individual tactics. However, players also need to be able to bring these skills to the game as members of a team. Therefore, we coaches have a dual role to play: We have to get both our team and up to 20 individual players playing at a high level. Some of these players may be newcomers, whom we have to get to know before we can start integrating them into the existing structure of the team. So we need to organize games and

exercises that train individual players as well as the team.

As always, every practice session should be built around a concept. For example, if the concept is attacking on the wings, we might start the main part of the session with crossing exercises for small groups (individual training) and follow that with a crossing game. This method of structuring practice has its own objectives and advantages:

Individual training

- Numerous repetitions help eliminate technical, tactical and physical deficiencies (speed, coordination).
- Players get specific, individualized corrections.

Team training

- Players have to use techniques and tactics in realistic game situations.

The following sample exercises are organized according to technical concepts (heading, dribbling) and tactical concepts (wing attack, game action speed).

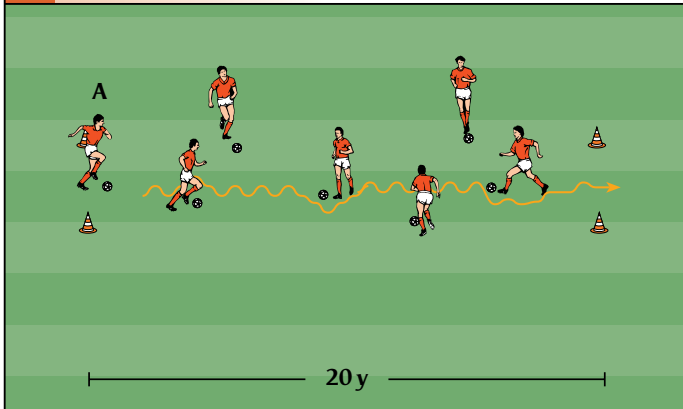




TECHNIQUE: Dribbling and heading

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

1 Dribbling: Obstacle course



Description

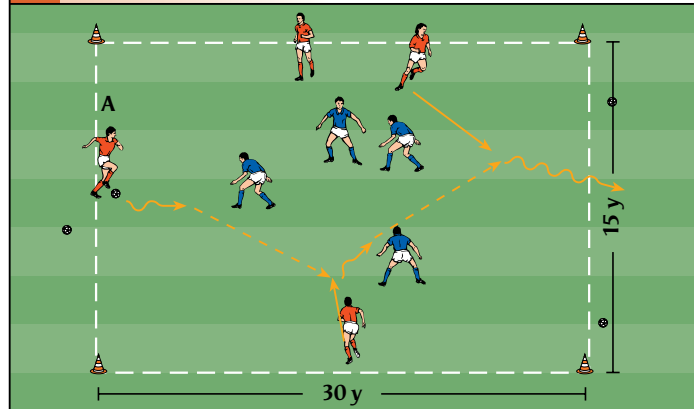
- Six to eight players dribble on a 20 x 20-yard field with two small goals.
- Player A dribbles rapidly from one goal to the other without touching any of the other players.
- Repeat four times, then B dribbles, etc.

Coaching tips

- Use both feet, include fakes and dribble fast. Head up!

TEAM TRAINING

2 4 v. 4 on goal lines



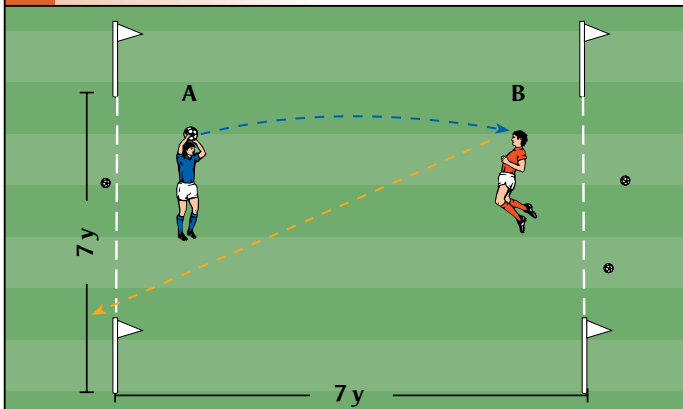
Description

- Teams play 4 v. 4 on two goal lines in a 30 x 15-yard field.

Coaching tips

- Receivers should carefully control the ball before dribbling.
- The players who don't have the ball make room for the dribbler.
- Try to incorporate lots of turns and cutting moves (don't be afraid to take risks!).

1 1 v. 1 heading



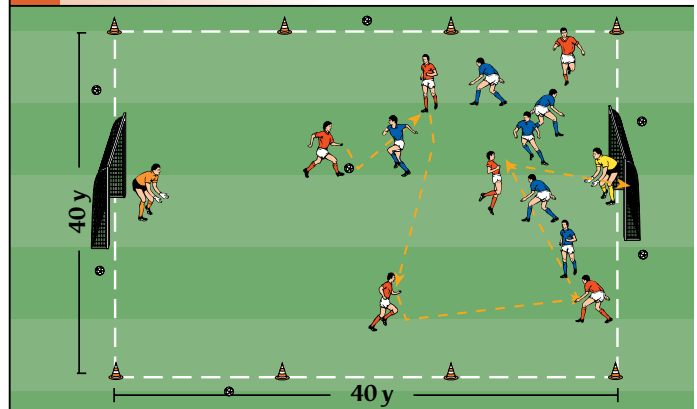
Description

- Two players face each other between two seven-yard-wide goals.
- Player A throws the ball up for B to head. B tries to score; A is not allowed to block with his hands.

Coaching tips

- Draw back the torso and stiffen the neck.
- Take off from one foot.
- Keep your eye on the ball!

2 Volleying and heading



Description

- Teams play 7 v. 7 on a 40 x 40-yard field with two goals with goalkeepers. Passers must either volley or drop-kick.
- Attackers can only score on a header.

Coaching tips

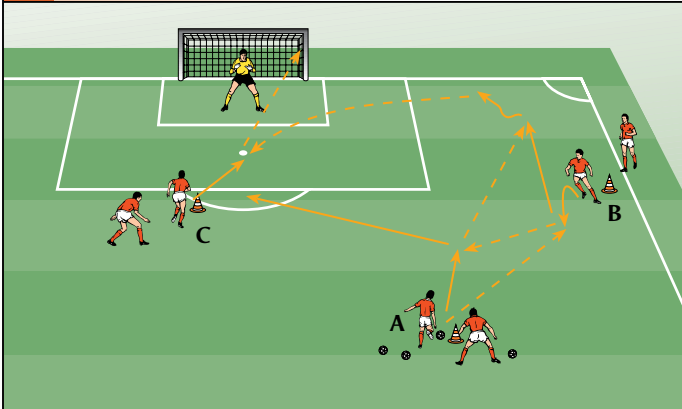
- Get open and show for passes.
- Play fast forward passes.
- Take off from one foot.



TACTICS: Wing attacks and game action speed

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

1 Wing attack: Two-player run



Description

- Player A stands 30 yards from the goal with a ball (in line with the penalty box sideline). B stands on the wing outside the penalty box.
- B receives the ball from A, drops it back and immediately runs toward the endline. Player A passes into B's path, and B crosses to C.

Coaching tips

- A's pass should go to B's outside foot.
- Take turns crossing from the endline and from inside positions.

TEAM TRAINING

2 8 v. 8 with wing zones



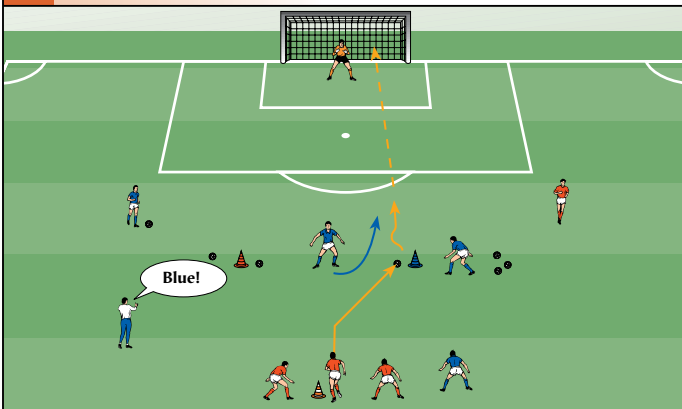
Description

- Teams play 8 v. 8 on two goals with goalkeepers on two-thirds of a field with 15-yard-wide wing zones. Players have unlimited touches on the wings, two in the middle. Goals set up by a cross count double.

Coaching tips

- Attackers should try to cross through the defense whenever possible.
- Take advantage of defenders' sloppy positioning and attack up the middle!

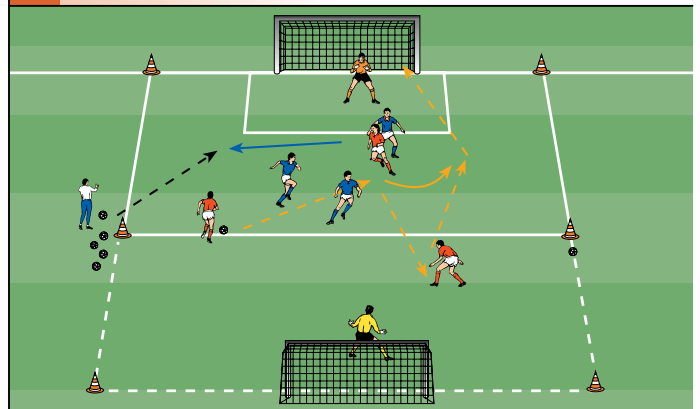
1 Which ball?



Description

- Place two cones of different colors 25 yards in front of the goal, 10 yards apart, with a ball at each one.
- A defender stands between the cones, and an attacker stands 15 yards in front of him without a ball.
- The attacker runs toward the defender, and after five to seven yards the coach calls out a cone color. The attacker sprints for the corresponding ball and tries to score against the defender.

2 New ball!



Description

- Teams play 3 v. 3 in a field twice the size of the penalty box.
- The coach stands in the middle of one sideline with a number of balls. If the ball goes out (including corner kick situations), the coach passes a new ball to the appropriate team.
- Play four two-minute rounds with four- to six-minute rest periods.

Variation

- The coach can play in a new ball to replace the old ball at any time.