



SOCCER COACH
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Possession

(In larger groups/open spaces)

by Arthur Dimitrakopoulos,

OBJECTIVE: Possession with a purpose. Soccer is a multi-directional game and players must know how and where to possess the ball and recognize when opportunities open up for attacking. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability of players the more demands we place on them.

Warm-up (15-20 minutes including stretching): Split players evenly into three colors. Open space. Start with half the players with a ball and the other half without a ball. The ball and player do not stop moving. If you have a ball, find someone without a ball to pass to (colors do not matter, passes can go to any color). Make it challenging by placing conditions on the players: **1.** Perform a move after receiving a pass. **2.** Take a long first touch into space and away from traffic. **3.** Sprint 2-3 steps in any direction with the ball after receiving a pass. **4.** Turn with the ball in the opposite direction from where the ball came from.

Coaching Points:

- Don't be in a hurry to pass it, make sure the pass is on
- Communication: Verbal, visual, always thinking
- Direction of the pass - non-kicking foot: knee slightly bent with foot next to the ball and toe pointing at target
- Passing foot: ankle locked (stiff) with heel to the ground and toe to the sky, strike the upper middle part of the ball with the inside of foot for short to medium long passes. For longer passes use laces with toe pointing to the ground
- Which foot and what surface of your foot are you receiving the ball with and which way are you turning? And why?
- Receiving foot: cushion the impact of the ball and re-direct it; do not stop it

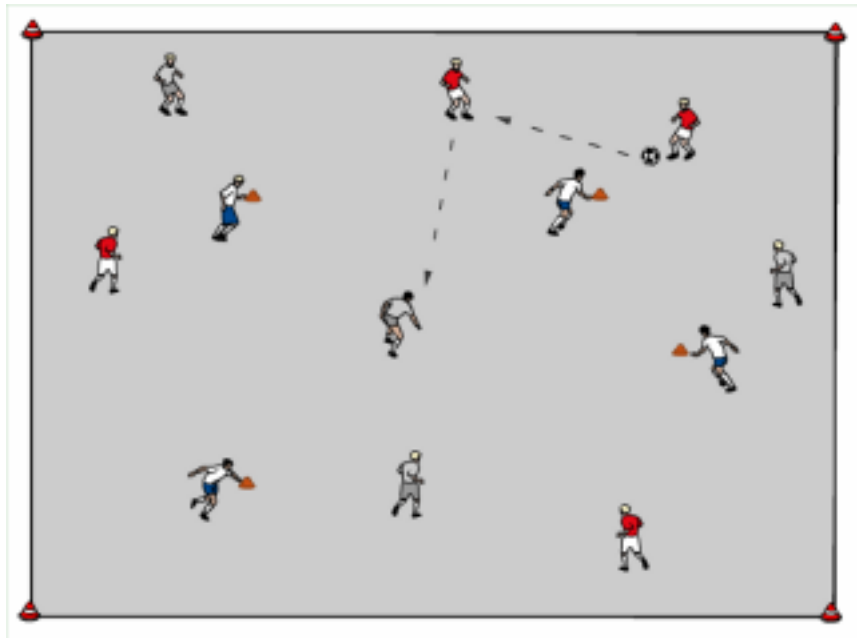
GAME #1 - 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

40 x 40 yard grid. Split team in 3 colors. Two colors keep the ball away from the other color. Defending team must (all players) pick-up and hold a disk before they CAN start defending. When defending team wins the ball they drop discs and the new defending team (the team that lost possession) pick up the discs and start defending. This causes defending team to communicate and players in possession time to organize. Each player on the two teams in possession has a maximum of three touches on the ball.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

Coaching Points:

- Stress on the quality of the first touch (which surface of which foot, which direction and why) and the quality of the pass.
- Stress communication and organization.





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GAME #2: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now the field is divided into four quarters. Defending team does not have to hold discs. Players have unlimited touches on the ball BUT have 3 PASS limit in each quarter or the ball goes the defending team.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

Coaching Points:

- All of the above points, plus speed of play, stretching the field north-south and east-west.
- Are the supporting players offering options close and far from the ball?

GAME # 3: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now we play with no restrictions.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

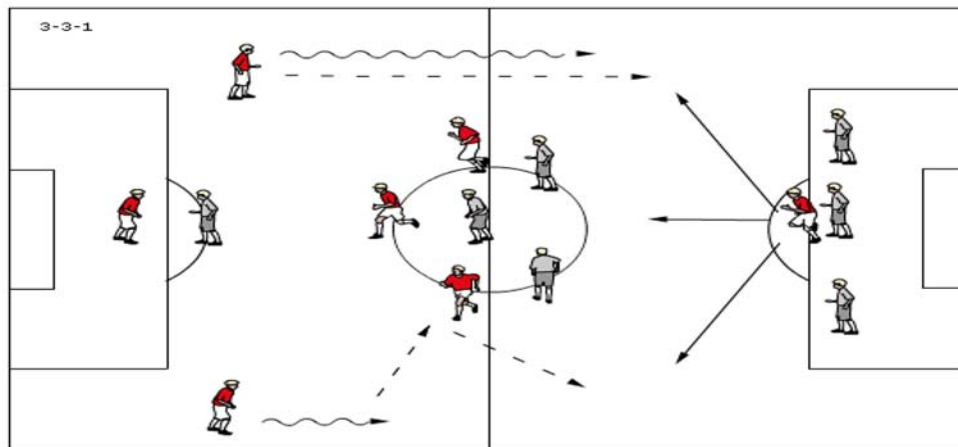


THE GAME: Game to two goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

Play - 6 v 6 or 8 v 8 or 11 v 11 with GKPR's. We always try to finish with a free scrimmage as close to the numbers per team that we play in our league games. A 3-3-1 formation is shown below.

Coaching Points:

- Are players recognizing when to keep the ball and when to attack?
- Are they switching the point of attack to unbalance defending team and create scoring opportunities?



COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): in 3's, one and two touch point passing. A passes to B, B back to A, then A passes C, C back to A. A is the point person. After 2 minutes, change the point person. Include static stretching of the large muscle groups.