



**Advanced
Technical Learning Outcomes
Defending**

1. Closing down – applying pressure

- From the front
- From behind

2. Tackling

- Poke Tackle
- Block Tackle

3. Heading



Technical Learning Outcomes

Applying Pressure

From the Front

- Close down quickly
- Angle of approach to make play predictable
- Slow down as you approach the attacker
- Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
- Prepare for next action - delay or tackle

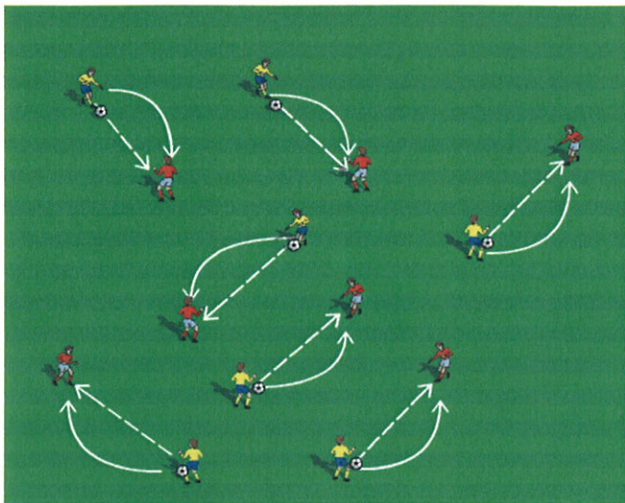
From Behind

- Close down quickly as the ball travels
- Slow down as you approach the attacker
- Get touch tight – prevent the attacker from turning
- Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
- Mirror the attackers feet
- Prepare for next action - delay or tackle



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	W1200	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Warm Up	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Angle and speed of approach		



Activity W1200 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. Open area, players work around 10 yards apart
2. 12 players work in pairs
3. One ball per pair

Instructions

1. Players pass the ball back and fourth between each other
2. When one player stops the ball the other must run into close
3. The defender then returns back to their starting position 10 yards away from the ball
4. The sequence is then repeated
5. Either player can stop the ball at anytime

Coaching Points

1. React and close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker

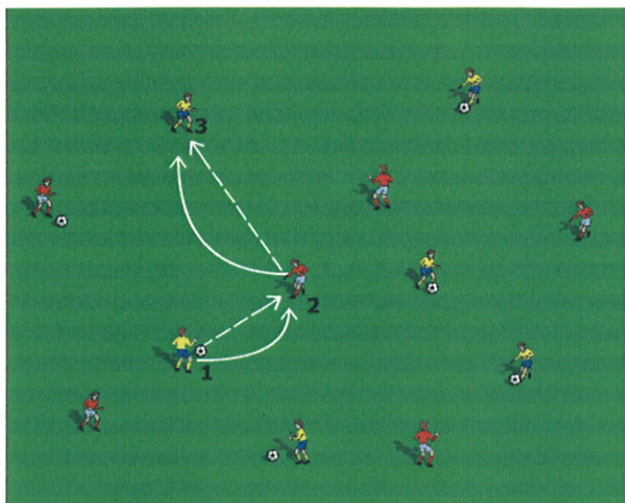
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow players to perform tackling techniques when they arrive
2. P – Allow the player that stops the ball to try and go around the defending player
3. R – The ball is stopped on every third pass so players know when to close down



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	W1201	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Warm Up	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Angle of approach to make play predictable		



Activity W1201 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. Open area – best carried out in half a field
2. 12 Players (6 vs. 6)
3. 6 balls

Instructions

1. 3 players from the red and 3 players from the yellows each start with a ball
2. The idea is to pass the ball into a player that does not have a ball and is not in the same color (e.g. red into yellow and vice versa)
3. The player that receives the ball stops it, the passer then closes down the ball
4. The exercise is then repeated by the receiving player playing into a new player and the passer moving away to become a passing option

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable, only allow receivers to pass out in one direction
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball

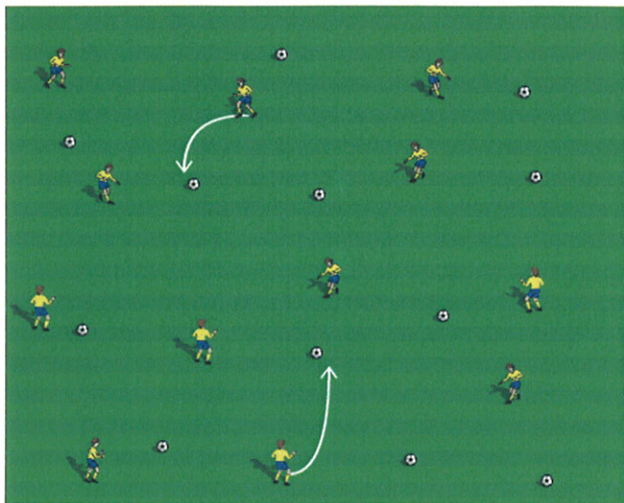
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow receiving players to move the ball into new attacking space, defender must adjust as they close down
2. P - Allow players the opportunity to tackle, the player that receives the ball must now find a pass quickly before the defender comes into close down
3. R – Move back to working in pairs



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	W1202	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Warm Up	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Close down quickly		



Activity W1202 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. Open area
2. 12 players
3. 12 balls situated throughout the area equal distance apart (around 10 yards)

Instructions

1. Players move around the area using various running techniques, sideways, forward jog, and back shuffle
2. On the coaches command of 'Ball' each player must close down the nearest ball as quickly as possible
3. The coach observes to see which players are the quickest to find a ball
4. On the coaches command of 'Moving' players then start to move around the area again
5. And the exercise is repeated

Coaching Points

1. React and close down quickly
2. Slow down as you approach the ball
3. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball

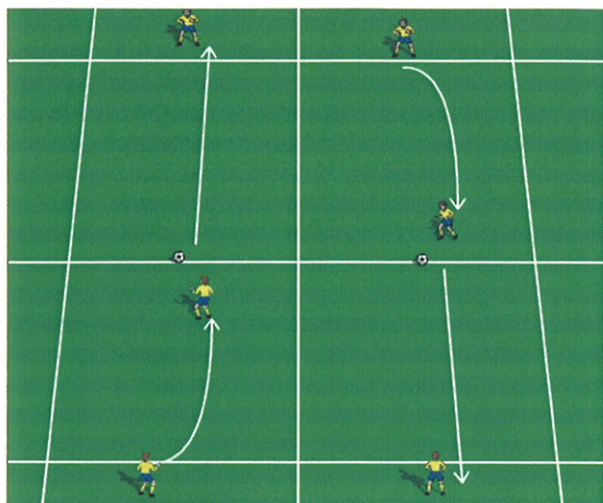
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Take away a ball each time so that there are less balls than players
2. P – Move balls into new spaces by passing them as the command is made
3. R – Work players in pairs in a straight line, closing down the same ball each time



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1200	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball		



Activity M1200 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 20 x 10 yard area
2. 3 players
3. 1 ball

Instructions

1. The ball is positioned at the centre of the area
2. Players take it in turns to close the ball down
3. As they approach the ball they need to slow down and set their body shape to defend the ball
4. After they have set and held their body position for 2 seconds, they run through to the other side of the area and the next person in the group sets off

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball

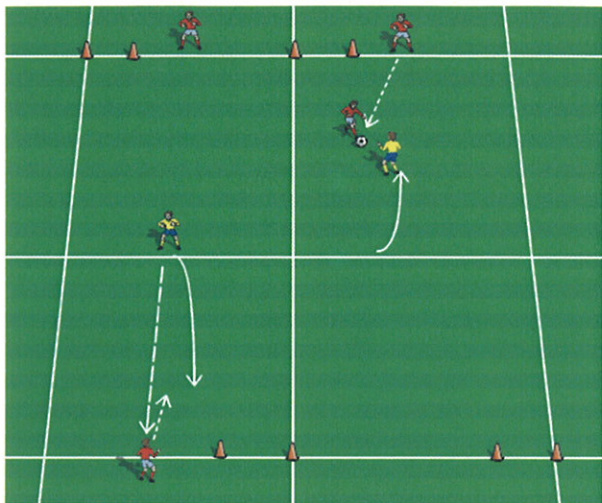
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Time the activity and have the group close the ball down as many times as they can in a set time period
2. P – Have players move the position of the ball each time so that the closing angle changes
3. R – Have players work in 4's to increase the rest to repetition ratio
4. R – Have players mirror each other from the other side so players see a picture each time they close down the ball (developing players can then copy)



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1201	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Closing down from the front		



Activity M1201 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 20 x 10 yard area
2. 3 players
3. 1 ball
4. Two 2 yard goal marked out at either end

Instructions

1. The defending player in the middle starts the exercise by passing the ball into the attacking player on one of the two end lines
2. Once the pass has been received the defending player runs in to close down the attacker
3. The attacker must attempt to score by dribbling the ball through the small goal on the opposite end line
4. A point is scored for a successful dribble or tackle
5. The defending player then repeats the exercise by playing to the second attacker
6. Rotate the defending player every 5 attempts

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
5. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

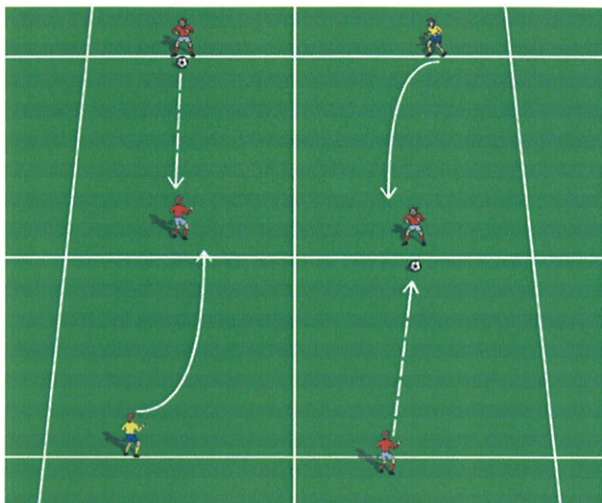
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow defending players to go to goal if they win the ball
2. P – Increase the size of the scoring area to include the entire end line
3. R – Allow defenders to close down as soon as they make the pass
4. R – Reduce the width of the area so there is less attacking space



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1202	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Closing down from behind		



Activity M1202 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 20 x 10 yard area
2. 3 players
3. 1 ball

Instructions

1. The attacking player positioned on the end line starts the exercise with a pass into the centrally positioned attacker
2. As the pass is made the defending player comes into close down the attacker
3. The attacker must attempt to score by dribbling the ball over the end line the defender has just come from
4. Points are scored for a successful tackle
5. Forwards rotate positions after each attempt
6. Defenders have five attempts before changing with an attacking player

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly as the ball travels
2. Slow down as you approach the attacker
3. Get touch tight – prevent the attacker from turning
4. Mirror the attacker's feet

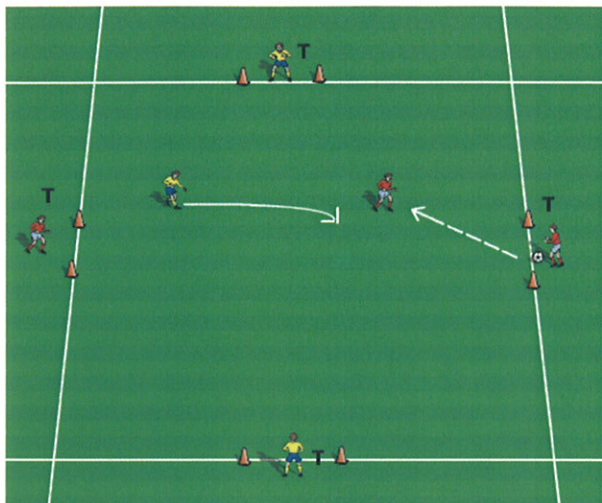
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Increase the width of the area to 15 or 20 yards
2. P – Allow the 2nd attacker to join in to make 2 vs. 1
3. R – Reduce the width of the area to reduce the amount of attacking space
4. R – Shorten the starting position of the defending player



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1203	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Closing down from behind		



Activity M1203 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 20 x 20 yard area
2. 6 Players (1 attacker, 1 defender, 4 targets)
3. Four 5 yard areas marked on each side
4. 1 ball

Instructions

1. Players score by receiving the ball from one target player on the outside and making a pass to the other
2. If the defending player wins the ball they look to repeat with their own target players
3. Players are permitted as many touches as required
4. The ball is not permitted go backwards to target players once the ball is passed in
5. If the ball leaves the area the game is re-started by the opposing players target player
6. Play to a set time limit and ensure that targets are rotated at regular intervals

Coaching Points

1. Get touch tight – prevent the attacker from turning
2. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
3. Mirror the attacker's feet
4. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

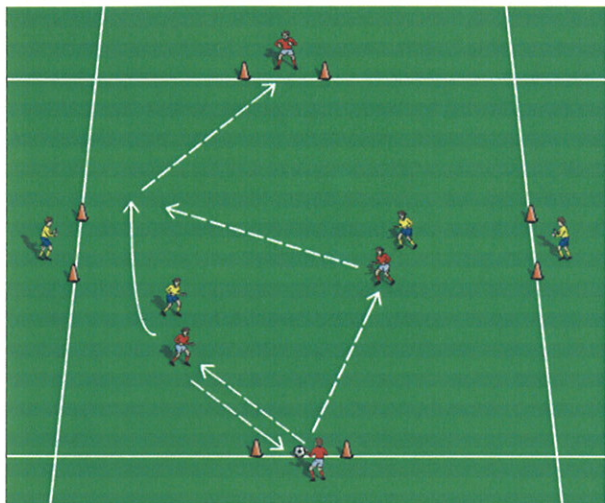
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow attacking players the opportunity to pass backward to target players
2. R – Reduce the size of the area so that defending players have less space to



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1204	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Closing down from the front, back and side		



Activity M1204 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 30 x 30 yard area
2. 8 players (2 attackers, 2 defenders, 4 targets)
3. Four 5 yard areas marked on each side
4. 1 ball

Instructions

1. Teams score by receiving the ball from one target player on the outside and making a pass to the other
2. If the defending team wins the ball they look to repeat with their own target players
3. Players are permitted as many touches as required and can combine with one another in the middle
4. The ball is not allowed to be passed back to target players once the ball is in play
5. If the ball leaves the area the game is re-started by the opposing teams target player
6. Play to a set time limit and ensure that targets are rotated at regular intervals

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly as the ball travels
2. Slow down as you approach the attacker
3. Get touch tight – prevent the attacker from turning
4. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

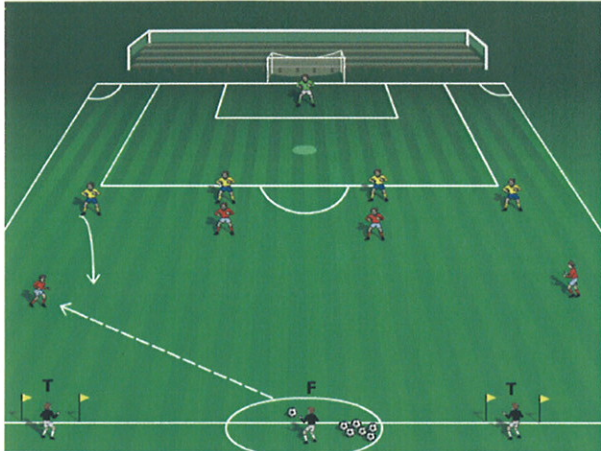
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow attacking players the opportunity to pass backward to target players
2. R – Reduce the size of the area so that defending players have less space to protect



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	M1205	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Main Theme	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	When and where to close down		



Activity M1205 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. Half field
2. 12 Players (4 attackers, 4 defenders, 2 targets, 1 feeder, 1 goalkeeper)
3. Two counter goals on the halfway line
4. Age specific goal
5. 1 ball (additional balls positioned by feeder)

Instructions

1. The feeder (F) starts the game by passing the ball into one of the checking attacking players
2. The attacking team attempts to combine to score on the goal
3. The defending team attempts to win the ball and pass to one of the two target players (T)
4. The exercise is restarted by the feeder
5. If the ball leaves the field, play is restarted with normal game rules (throw ins, goal kick, corner)
6. Coach keeps the score and rotates players at set time intervals

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
5. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

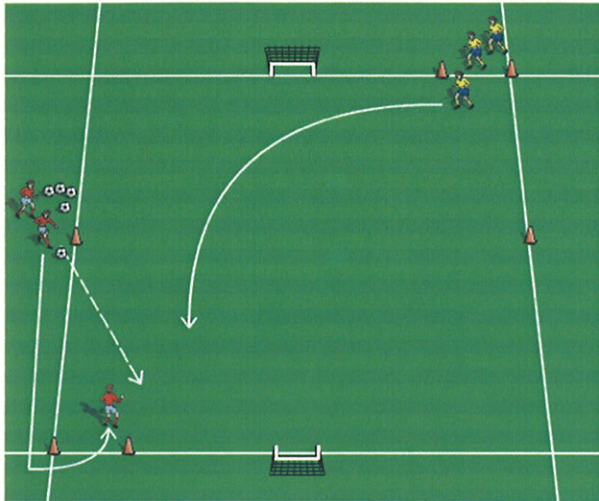
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow feeder to join in after making initial pass to make a 5 vs. 4
2. R – Start with shadow play, feeder passes the ball into attacking players, attacking players hold the ball, defenders run into close, practice is repeated with feeder passing into new attacking player. Defenders start from the same starting position each time



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	C1200	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Condition Game	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Application of correct technique in game setting		



Activity C1200 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 20 x 20 yard area
2. 6 players (3 attackers, 3 defenders)
3. Two 3 yard goals, markers used to define starting positions
4. 1 ball (additional balls around the outside)

Instructions

1. Attacking player sets off from the mid point marker and rounds the marker at the corner to enter the playing area
2. The second attacking player passes the ball inside the area for the first attacker
3. On the pass the defender sets off to close the first attacker down
4. The attacker then looks to score on the defending player's goal
5. If the defenders win the ball they attack the other goal
6. Points are awarded for each goal scored
7. Groups switch roles and starting points after a set number of reps or time limit

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
5. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

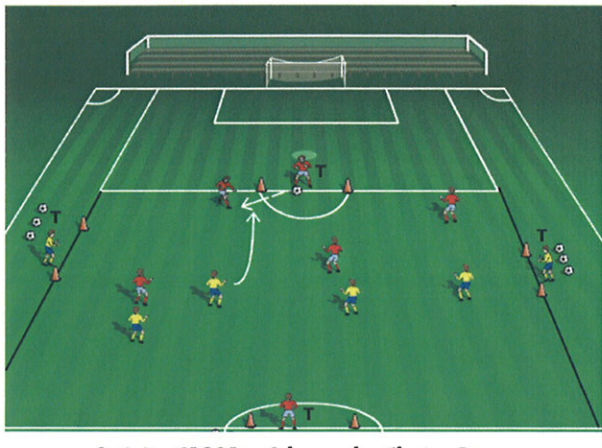
Progression/Regression:

1. P – 2 vs. 1
2. P – 2 vs. 2
3. R – Defending player can set off to close the player down on there initial run and not the pass
4. R – 1 vs. 2 so that the player now has cover



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	C1201	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Conditioned Game	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Application of correct technique in game setting		



Activity C1201 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 44 x 44 yard area
2. 12 Players (4 vs. 4, 2 targets)
3. Four 3 yard target goals marked on the outside of area
4. 1 ball (additional around the outside)

Instructions

1. Teams score by receiving the ball from one target player and then making a pass to the other
2. If the defending team wins the ball they look to repeat with their own target players
3. Players are allowed as many touches as required and can combine with one another in the middle
4. The ball is not allowed go backwards to target players once the ball is passed in
5. If the ball leaves the area the game is re-started by the opposing teams target player
6. Play to a set time limit and ensure that targets are rotated at regular intervals

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly as the ball travels
2. Slow down as you approach the attacker
3. Get touch tight – prevent the attacker from turning
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
5. Mirror the attacker's feet
6. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

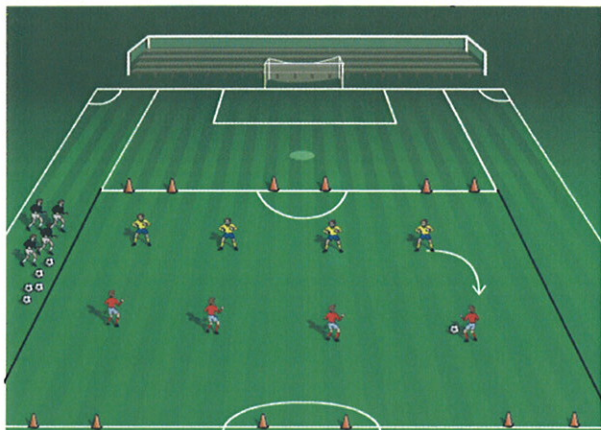
Progression/Regression:

1. P – Allow attacking players the opportunity to pass backward to target players
2. R – Reduce the size of the area so that defending players have less space to protect



New York Red Bulls – Practice Activity

Activity #	C1202	Curriculum	Advanced
Section	Conditioned Game	Topic	Closing Down
Key Learning Outcome(s)	Application of correct technique in game setting		



Activity C1202 – Advanced – Closing Down

Organization

1. 44 x 44 yard area
2. 12 Players (4 vs. 4 vs. 4)
3. Two teams play, one team rests
4. Six 2 yard goals (3 on each side)
5. 1 ball (additional around the outside)

Instructions

1. The attacking teams attempts to score in one of the three target goals by dribbling the through
2. The defending team attempts to win the ball and score in one of the opposite teams goals
3. If the ball leaves the area the game is restarted with a kick in (no goal kicks or corners)
4. Teams rotate every five minutes to ensure a good rest to repetition ratio as the activity is very demanding

Coaching Points

1. Close down quickly
2. Angle of approach to make play predictable
3. Slow down as you approach the attacker
4. Bend the knees stay sideways on to the ball
5. Prepare for next action - Delay or Tackle

Progression/Regression:

1. P – Teams can now shoot to score
2. R – Reduce the size of the area so that defending players have less space to protect

