

Improving Team's Speed of Play

By: **Steve Franklin** - Indiana Soccer DOC

Provided by: [NSCAA](#)



Coaching Academy

Coaching Methodology: Functional Training

Warm-Up Exercise



Organization/Instructions

Players take up starting positions outside the training circle, with 4-5 players inside the center hexagon each with a ball. After each receiving sequence, player with the ball dribbles into hexagon and demonstrates a change of directions move. All players follow their passes into the next position.

Combinations:

A - Player dribbles to outside player and either passes or combines with a takeover. (another variation can be a give and go combination)

B - Three player passing combination, with second player providing a one touch pass to the right or left. Receiving player takes a positive first touch and accelerates centrally.

C - Same sequence as B, with an overlap provided by the second player (Third player should take a diagonal first touch inwards to open space to the outside).

D - Same as B, with a double pass coming from the third player while overlap occurs. First player plays into the run of the overlapping player.

Note: Goalkeepers utilize proper technique for their position.

Main Theme Exercise 1



Organization

"21"

Two groups with goalkeepers.
Attempt to connect 21 passes before your opponent does. GK can play with hands or feet. Score is kept with a running total.

Variation: Only one touch passes count towards total

Main Theme Exercise 2



Organization

7 Cone passing with a finish. Work both sides simultaneously.
Passing sequence follows a diagonal progression, with the final pass leading to a turn and shot. Goalkeepers distribute out the opposite side to restart the activity.
Variation: Include combinations at cones.

Coaching Points: (Include Visual Cues)

- *The receiver's useful first touch must be in the direction of the next intended receiver: A useful first touch is a first touch on the ball that accomplishes the receiver's purpose upon initial receipt of the ball.
- * During the run of the play, a receiver's useful first touch should be to set up the pass, away from the defender, facing the receiver toward space, if possible.
- * Checking to, or away, must be crisp but with the intent of first opening space and then moving into the open space.
- * Emphasize curved and diagonal off-the-ball runs: the runner will be in space and open to receive a pass at more times during the run than if the run were straight because curved and diagonal runs are more difficult to defend against and because the runner is usually facing the passer for longer period of time during the run.

Main Theme Exercise 3

Organization



7v7v7 (full field to large goals)
 Progression: * Attacking team of seven with ball attacks large goal, while opposing team of seven defends. (A third team is waiting at opposite end).
 * The defending team, upon regaining possession and transitioning to a counter attack against the waiting team at the opposite end.
 * Should the original attacking team recover the ball prior to the counter attack crossing midfield - they continue their attack to goal.
 * If the counter attacking team crosses midfield in possession, the third team steps out of the 18 yard box and the play continues with the same progression.

Coaching Points: (Include Visual Cues)

- Attacking team must get in early shape and have support/depth, width, and penetration.
- * Body positioning of all players must face the game. Tilt the hips. Getting in early shape helps this.
 - * Early movement by the team while the ball is played and movement from the player playing the ball.
 - * Taking looks, having deception.
 - * Proper solving of pressure-when to play one-touch (perfect pass; or poor pass and the player does not have time to clean it up) and when to play two-touch (poor pass and the player has time; or to control the tempo)
 - * Playing away from the numbers

**Diagram Team Shape -
 Provide Field Dimensions**



11 v 11 game with a 4-3-3 vs. 4-4-2

Organization

- Play 11v11 with Attention on the following:
- * Movement without the ball / support angle
 - * Body positioning for receiving and distribution of the ball
 - * First Touch quality, playing away from pressure
 - * Speed of attack
 - * Decision-making, where is the best opportunity for attack
 - * Communication