

# Controlling The Ball In The Air

By Kevin Middleton  360TFT

I think that controlling the ball from the air is under-coached these days, but coaching this area of the game doesn't need to be boring!

Develop your players' aerial first touch, ball control, communication, and volleying technique through fun and competitive games

## COACHING TIPS

Coach what you see

**Control Surface Choice:** Decide based on trajectory: thigh, chest, or foot.

**Body Position:** Stay balanced with knees bent and head over the ball.

**First Touch Direction:** Take touch away from defender or into shooting path.

**Communication:** Call for throws and time movement off server.

**Finishing Mentality:** Be positive and quick with decision-making.

## CUSHION OR WEDGE

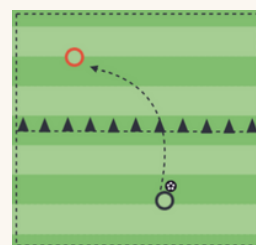
IDEAL WARM UP



- **Players do Kick/Keep Ups** - talk to them about different kinds of control (wedge and cushion)
- **Wedge** - into space, make surface hard to push ball into space
- **Cushion** - pull back controlling surface on impact to take sting out of ball

## FOOTBALL TENNIS 1

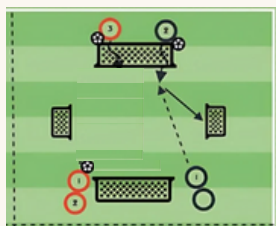
STAY LIGHT ON YOUR FEET



- The ball must be served over the "net" to start the point.
- Each player is allowed a maximum of 1 or 2 touches per player and/or 1 bounce on their side before returning the ball.
- First to 5 points wins

## CUSHION OR WEDGE 2

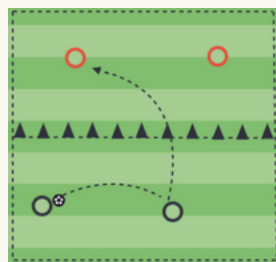
CONTROL + TURN OR INTO SPACE?



- 1 runs to goal opposite, player 2 throws ball over goal and 1 controls and finishes in the samba goal.
- Swap sides after each shot.

## FOOTBALL TENNIS 2

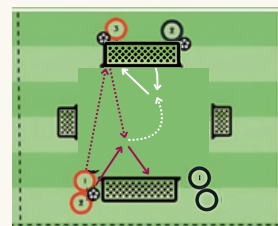
COMBINE IN THE AIR



- The ball must be served over the "net" to start the point.
- Each team is allowed a maximum of 1 or 2 touches and/or 1 bounce on their side before returning the ball.
- Players can combine to return the ball

## CUSHION OR WEDGE 2

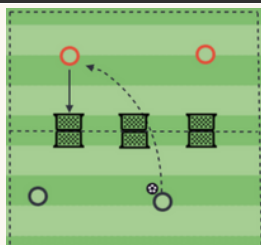
DOUBLE FINISH



- 1 runs & touches the post of the goal opposite. They then turn & rec pass from 2 and finishes.
- They then run back to opposite goal.
- 3 throws ball over goal & 1 volleys in.

## FOOTBALL TENNIS 3

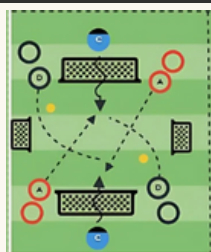
WITH GOALS



- The ball must be served over the "net" to start the point.
- Each team is allowed a maximum of 1 or 2 touches and/or 1 bounce on their side before returning the ball.
- Players can combine to return the ball
- Players can first time volley (1 touch, no bounce) into the mini goal for a point.

## 1v1

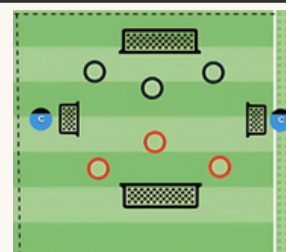
CONTROL UNDER PRESURE



- Defender has to run around a cone (yellow). Attacker runs to goal opposite, coach throws the ball over.
- Attacker controls and can score in any of the mini goals Only 2 players play at any one time - i.e. left-hand side A and D players then next turn is right-hand side A and D players.
- Players rotate after each turn.

## SSG

DEVELOP A FINISHING MENTALITY



- Players on field score in big goal, and get a bonus shot on the volley in a mini goal if they do score.
- This creates an overload/underload situation.

All content is from the [How To Coach Technique](#) course, available in our [online coaching community](#).

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