

HOW TO TURN MISMATCHED FOOTBALL MATCHES INTO DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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In youth football, mismatched games happen. Physical development varies wildly at grassroots level, technical abilities differ enormously, and sometimes you find yourself coaching the stronger team in a completely one-sided match.

If you face this situation then how can ensure your players are still learning instead of developing bad habits?

GENERAL ADVICE

When a "stronger" team dominates completely, patterns emerge.

Your players high press, win the ball, dribble around a couple of defenders, and score. The "weaker" team loses the ball, heart, and love for football.

These can become ingrained.

To overcome this, here are challenges you can implement during games and the development outcome they target.

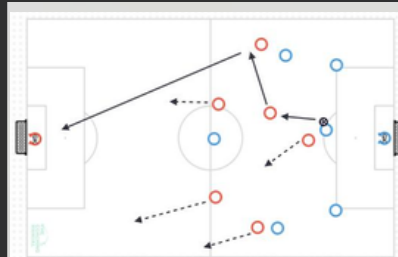
Please explain the reasoning behind each challenge to your players so they understand the "why"

RETREAT TO HALFWAY DIFFERENT DEFENSIVE CHALLENGE



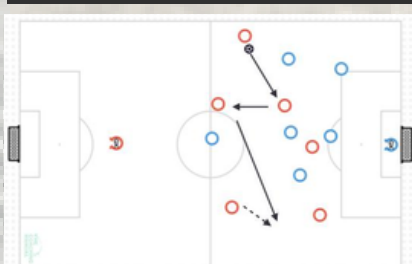
When the opposition goalkeeper has the ball, your team retreats to the halfway line. This modification creates learning opportunities for both teams. Your team has to coordinate winning the ball back from a deeper position.

START AGAIN WIDTH AND DEPTH



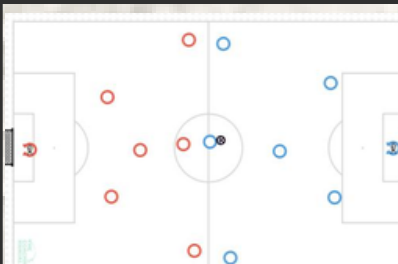
Each time your team regains possession, they must pass the ball back to a defender or goalkeeper before attempting to attack. Your team has to play through or around pressure.

SWITCH BEFORE SCORING POSITIONAL DISCIPLINE



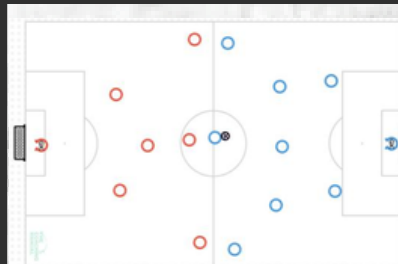
Before your team can score, they must switch the ball from one side of the pitch to the other. This creates connections across different areas whilst teaching positional principles.

POSITION ROTATION ADAPTING TO DIFFERENT ROLES



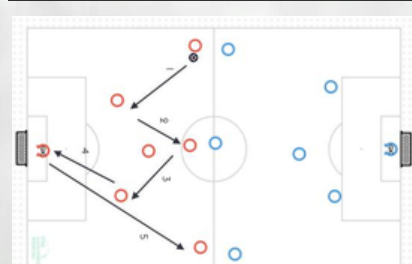
After each goal, players rotate positions. Position rotation ensures players experience different game situations and spatial challenges

EXTRA PLAYERS OVERLOADS/UNDERLOADS



Many leagues permit the team who are losing to add an extra player when trailing by a certain number of goals or more. This simple modification creates overload/underload scenarios

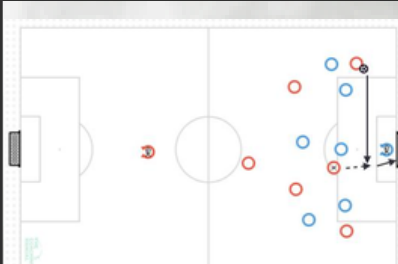
COUNT THE PASSES KEEP THE BALL



On a turnover, your team needs to complete a certain number of passes before scoring.

I am not a fan of this one, but it can help develop positional discipline to keep passing lanes open.

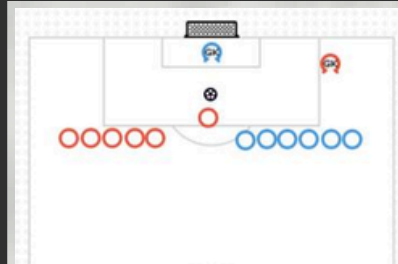
CAN'T SCORE AGAIN CONCENTRATION



Once a player scores, they cannot score again until a teammate has scored.

This allows your team to focus during games they may start to lose concentration.

PENALTIES POSITIVE SPORTING EXPERIENCES



At Full Time, the teams engage in a fun penalty shootout.

Strong/weak oversimplify grassroots football. Teams often find themselves on different sides of mismatched games throughout a season.

Send players home smiling every time

If you ever need further help with coaching, then head to [360tft.com](https://www.360tft.com)

You can check out my other work, here: <https://www.skool.com/coachingacademy>