

Session Design Considerations

by Kevin Middleton



In order to create sessions to help your players, there are considerations a coach must think about... No one said it was easy!

These considerations help you manage physical load, intensity, and the core behaviours that you want to see from your players.

GENERAL TIPS

Use these considerations systematically when designing a session.

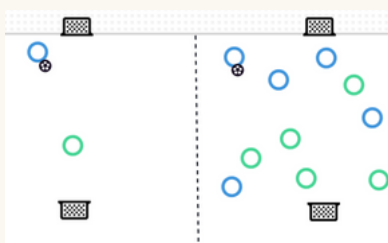
Each of the 8 considerations can be flexed, even mid session, to gain a different intensity or outcome from the session.

If you use a Game Model or Development Framework, then this can help inform the behaviours you want to see and objectives you want from the session.

I hope this one-pager helps you think about session design on a deeper level.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

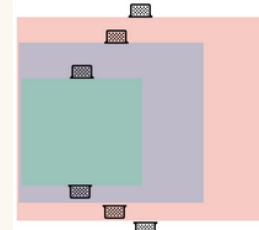
MANAGE PHYSICAL DEMAND



- **1v1**
 - Physically intense
 - More time spent on the ball
- **to**
- **11v11**
 - Less physically intense
 - Less time spent on the ball

AREA

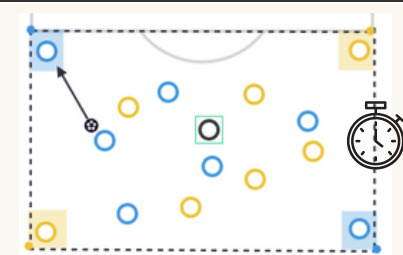
CONTROL TIME AND SPACE



- **Big & more players** = Less time & Space. Less intense physically
- **Big & less players** = More time & space. More intense physically
- **Small & more players** = Less time & space. More body contact
- **Small & less players** = Slightly less time & space. Less body contact

DURATION

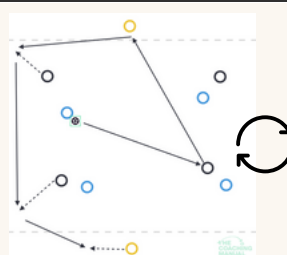
OPTIMUM TIME, OPTIMAL QUALITY



- The optimum time before quality and interest reduces
- Impacted by Number of Players and Area
- If you push the duration beyond the point quality dips, does the competitiveness level drop?

REPTITIONS

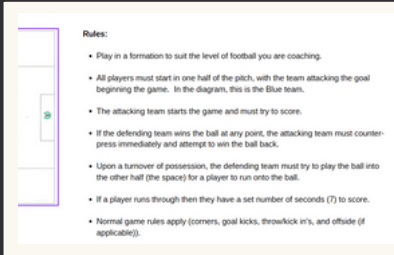
MANAGE QUALITY



- How many rounds should you play?
- How much rest between rounds?
- More rounds + less rest = risk of injury
- Impact quality and intensity

RULES

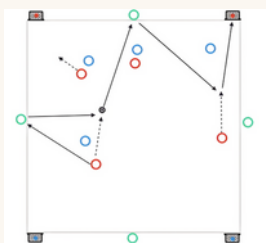
MANAGE SESSION



- The rules, not the conditions
- Should be clear so that the full focus is on the activity, and not arguing about the rules
- Should not be overly complicated
- Should align with the rules of a matchday

CONDITIONS

HELP FORM HABITS



- How do the conditions work towards the objective or development outcome?
- Conditions should inform decisions
- Example conditions:
 - Number of passes = a goal
 - Score in Mini Goals = simulate a passing target in a game
 - 2 touch = Speed of play
 - Is the condition directional?

COACHING POINTS

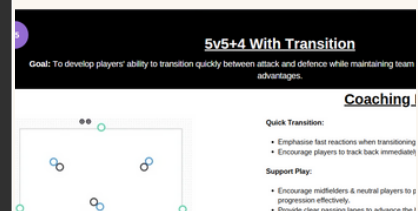
HELP THE PLAYERS



- The coaching points should be linked to the objective
- Feedback helps manage intensity
- Praise effort, not only outcomes
- Encourage players to provide feedback to each other
- Ahead of the exercise, consider what could break down & note down some coaching points you *could* use
- However, coach what you see

OBJECTIVE

WHAT ARE WE WORKING ON



- What are you working on?
 - Just letting them play?
 - Think about how everyone can be involved
 - Working on a theme/topic?
 - How can all of the considerations help
 - Working on technique
 - Repetitions under pressure and intensity is key

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