

TOOLS, TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

1v1s in the final third

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The ultimate player battle

They may have fallen short in the final, but Italy's attacking intent surprised many at Euro 2012. A big part of this was the Azzuri's speed and agility in the final third, notably in the semi-final when striker Mario Balotelli embarrassed Germany's Philipp Lahm in a couple of classic 1v1 duels. After all, winning 1v1s in the final third can be one of the most rewarding attacking instances in a game.

In this practice, we replicate 1v1s – the task is for the defender to try to recover quickly against an onrushing attacker. After the initial drill, move on to a 1v1 game at the end – it's great fun, and a fantastic way to develop skills further.

How to play it

- Set up as shown on a half-pitch - I have used a keeper, a server, three defenders and four attackers.
- The attacker starts on the halfway line. He dribbles through the cones then plays a one-two with the server. When the server touches the ball, the defender becomes active and is allowed to turn and approach.
- The attacker must hold him off and shoot at goal.
- This is a fast drill that requires energy, so both defender and attacker must swap with team mates after each 1v1 attempt.

Developing the session

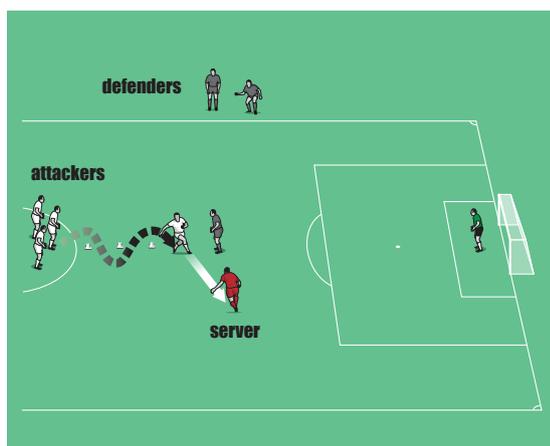
- I can develop the drill by adding another defender in the penalty area, or by putting a time restriction on the attacker.

Technique and tactics

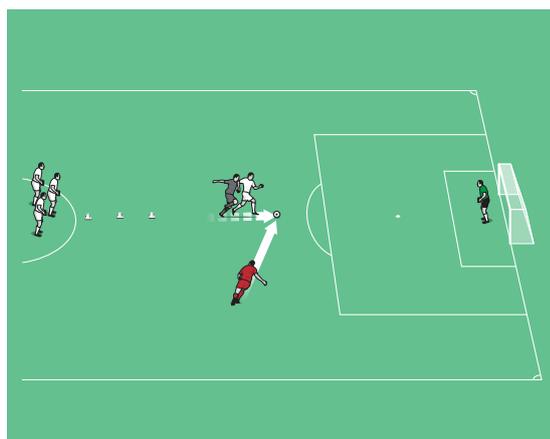
- The idea is to create 1v1s at pace so that everything is game realistic.
- Having negotiated the chicane, the forward is under pressure to make an accurate wall pass.
- Then, the placement of the ball past the defender must be well planned - he should push the ball on no more than a couple of yards, then unleash a controlled shot.

The game situation

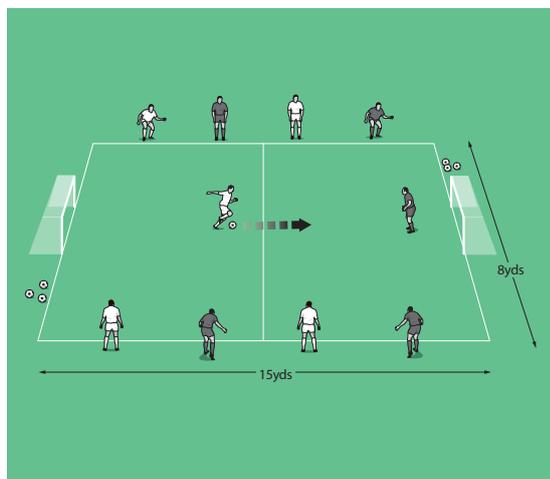
- Set up a small 15x8-yard pitch, with a target goal at each end, and a collection of balls beside each goal.
- Split your squad into two teams and place players around the area on each side.
- One player from each team goes 1v1. He uses team mates either to play wall passes or as a way of keeping the ball in play.
- Players can only shoot in the opposition half, and when a player scores he must sprint back to his goal and touch the crossbar before defending the 1v1, as opposition players switch.
- Members of the new attacking team must move quickly to get a ball, and attack before the retreating player has touched the bar.
- Each 1v1 lasts for one minute, then change players.



The attacker moves through the chicane and lays a pass to the server



He receives the ball back and must push it past the defender in finding a way to goal



In the game situation, players can go alone or use supporting team mates around the edge of the practice area

player movement run with ball