



Penetration Session #2 (dribbling, passing, and/or shooting)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players recognize when to penetrate by dribbling, passing and/or shooting.

1) Colors Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

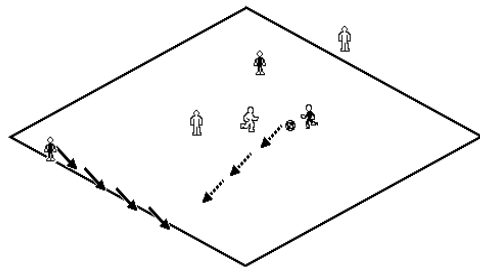
Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in a 40 x 30 yard grid passing in the sequence: blue-blue-red-red-blue-blue-red-red etc. etc. The ball can never stop moving, the players can never stop moving, and the ball cannot leave the grid. Coach can limit touch, mandate which foot to pass with or which part of foot to pass with. When players can do first sequence adequately and without frequent errors, change the sequence to blue-blue-blue-red-red-red-blue-blue-blue etc. etc. Stress communication and technical passing points throughout.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce dribbling technique – all parts of foot / keep ball close / on toes / push vs. kick
- Reinforce passing technique – inside of the foot - ankle locked / toe up-heel down / hit middle part of inside of foot / follow through-land on kicking foot / plant foot next to ball and facing where you want the ball to go // outside of the foot – ankle locked / front part on the outside part of foot
- Reinforce shooting technique – ankle of shooting foot locked with toe pointed down / plant foot next to the ball / land on kicking foot / head down / lean over ball as you kick / strike through the middle of the ball (encourage players to always keep ball low when using the laces for this activity)

2) 2v2+2 (15 to 20 minutes):

In a 20x20 yard grid, two teams look to play to a target player on opposite sides of the grid. If they play to the target and receive the ball back, they look to switch directions and play to the other target player. If they just play to one target it counts as 1 point. If they play to two consecutive targets without losing possession it counts as 3 points. Target players must constantly move along their line to show for the ball. Every three minutes matches and then rotate the players.

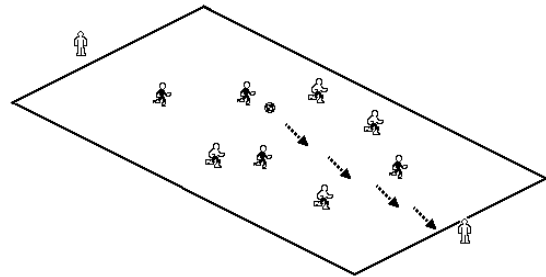


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Get player with the ball to penetrate on the dribble or the pass to the target player on the outside as quickly as possible by checking to ball, checking over shoulder, opening hips up to the field, making sure both players do not check into the same space
- To combine, make defender commit to person with the ball
- Explode into space on the dribble if defender doesn't commit

3) **4v4 + 2 Targets (15-20 minutes):**

In a 50x40 yard grid, 4 red versus 4 yellow with Targets on opposite end lines. In order to get a point, team must find the Target, look to get the ball back (either the same player who played the ball to the Target or another player moving off the ball) and then dribble across end line. *Version 2:* Team must look to find a Target, get the ball back and attack the opposite end and try to get the ball to the other target. Two points if a player finds the Target in one long penetrating pass and one point if a player finds the Target through shorter combinations. *Version 3:* If a player finds the Target, someone other than the original passer must get the ball back and maintain possession of it. Important: Want players to capitalize on finding target and maintaining possession.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2 and #3
- Encourage finding the end line/target as quickly as possible (whether attacking on the dribble or combining with teammate)

4) **6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress first look is always to penetrate
- The decision becomes...can the player with the ball penetrate on the dribble, with a pass or a shot?
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (seeing space to dribble for self, finding the best penetrating pass forward, or taking a shot for self, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player. Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.