



Speed of Play

by Arthur Dimitrakopoulos, MYSA Staff Coach

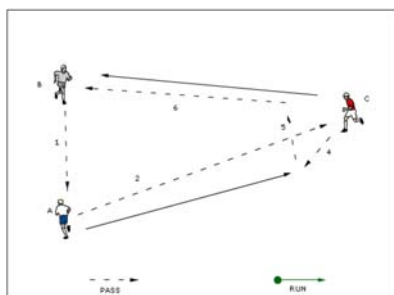
OBJECTIVE: To improve and increase speed of execution and speed of thought. Players must think ahead (anticipate) to decide what to do with ball and therefore play quicker. Players without the ball must always stay connected to the game. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability players the more demands we place on them. This is a 90 minute session.

Warm-Up. (15-20 minutes including stretching):

Groups of three players. B passes short to A, who passes long to C and follows pass and executes a 1-2 pass with C who passes long to B and follows pass and repeats process. After a few minutes of successful combinations have them execute an overlap instead of 1-2 pass. After a few more minutes, have them execute a take-over.

Coaching Points:

- Quality of pass; proper weight, proper direction
- The quality of the support runs, angle, distance
- Speed of play. Gradually increase speed as performance improves
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking



GAME #1 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes): In a 30 x 40 yard grid, two teams play 4 vs. 4 inside the grid with the support of the 4 players (bumpers) outside the grid. Field size depends on players' age, ability and training objectives. Outside players have one or two touches on the ball or two seconds. Five pass = transition: When the team in possession completes five consecutive passes, they remain in the middle while the other two teams switch roles (play is continuous). *Variations:* (5 v 5 + 5, 6 v 6 + 6)

Coaching Points:

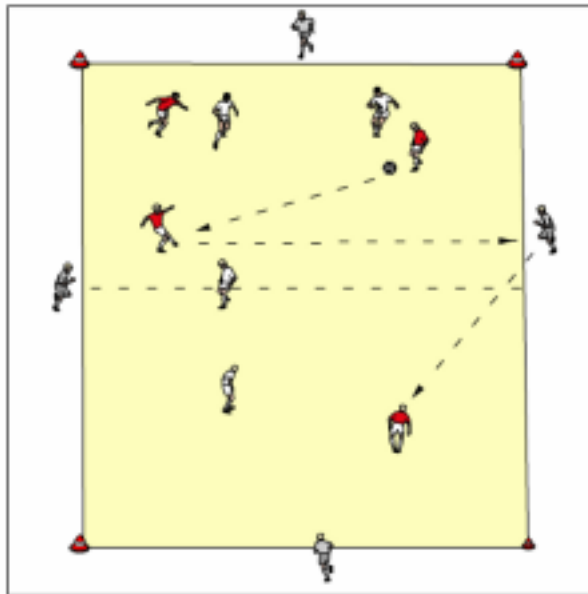
- Stress speed of play and organization.
- Don't take the same space as your teammate
- Quality of the 1st touch
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking
- Keep ball moving, always

GAME #2 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as game #1 but now outside players must play a long ball if they take two touches. With one touch they can play short or long. The team in possession must complete at least three consecutive passes before playing to a neutral player.

Coaching Points:

- Outside players must move along the line and offer supporting angles
- Outside players must see the whole field and not just in front of them
- Team in possession must execute quickly using 1-2 pass, overlap and take-over





GAME #3 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

The neutral team occupies the four corners (which are 5x5 yard grids made of cones). Ball must be played into a grid to a neutral player and back to the team that passed it in. Every time a team regains possession they must play a short corner first (that is determined by the ball being in that half of the field). After completing a short corner, the attacking team must complete a long corner by passing from the far half of the field to either of the other two corners on the other side of the mid-line. This completes the sequence. **Two goal option:** Award a goal for a complete sequence. After two goals the winning team stays in the middle while the other two team switch roles (play is continuous).

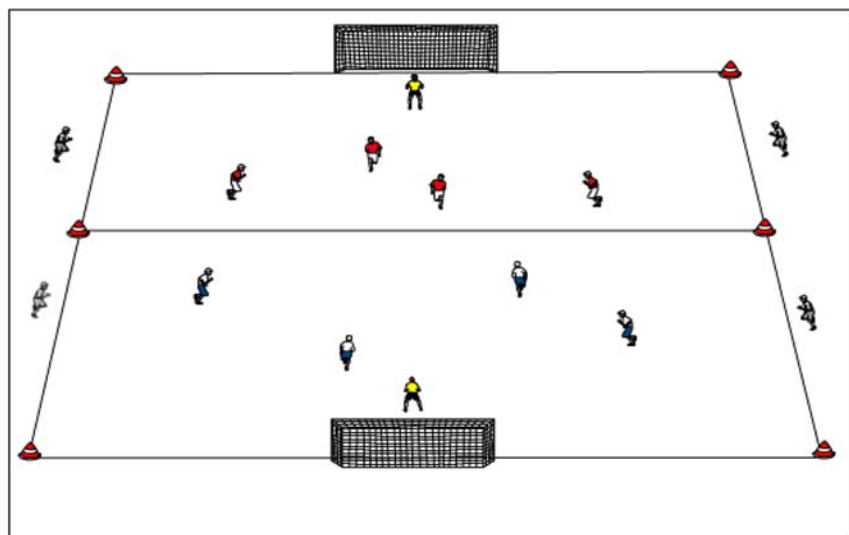


Coaching Points:

- Organization, communication
- Quick transition from defense to attack
- Must transition from one half of the field to the other
- Must offer several passing options to corner players
- Corner players must recognize better option

THE GAME - Game to two Goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

4v4+4+GKs: Two teams play 4v4 in the field while the third team plays as neutrals or bumpers outside of the field. A win is 3 points a tie 1 point and loss 0 points. Each team keeps score. Play 5 minute games or to 2 goals. Winning team stays and losing team switches with bumpers. One team plays maximum 2 games in a row. Regular rules. Bumpers have 2 touches or 2 seconds and always play for the team that gave them the ball. At the end of the designated time, the winning team goes automatically to the final and the other 2 teams play for the other spot. Semi-final and final are 5 minutes. In case of a tie in the semi-final, the team with most shots on goal is the winner. Use penalty kicks to break a tie in the championship game.



COOL- DOWN

(10 minutes): A low intensity activity to help players unwind mentally and physically, including static stretching of the large muscle groups.