

# GAA GAMES DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



# Catering for mixed abilities in a Games Based approach to training."

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07.01.2017



# What is a Games Based approach to training?

A Games Based approach to coaching ensures that players are exposed to different types of games to develop techniques and skills in an appropriate environment.

While traditional drills (linear) provide an organised structure for gradual developing technique, fun games and modified games provide an opportunity to practice skills of the game in an open environment where decisions - such as where to move, whether to take possession, which skill to perform - are forced upon players.

# The key outcomes from a Games Based approach to coaching are:

- Increased exposure to game like situations.
- Increased self awareness of ability level.
- Increased opportunity to make decisions.
- Increased sense of responsibility for players.

# What is a mixed ability and what types can a coach have on his/her panel?

*Mixed ability refers to any person who has a different or mixed physical ability. It can also refer to anyone who has a different emotional or learning ability.*

- Skill level
- Age or maturity
- Intelligence
- Motivation/attitude towards training
- Player reliance/autonomy
- Learning style



# Possible problems which may arise when coaching a mixed ability team.

## Identifying levels of mixed abilities

- Various standards
- Individual player strengths and weaknesses
- Different levels of interest and motivation

## Balancing time evenly

- Not enough time to focus on weaker/stronger players

## Achieving effective coaching for all

- Too easy/too difficult
- Participation
- Discipline/focus

## Communication

- Do they understand what you are saying?



# How do we cater for these mixed abilities in a Games Based approach to training?

- Assess the players
- Become aware of the individuals
- Plan effective sessions
- Introduce proper communication



# Assessment





# Assessment

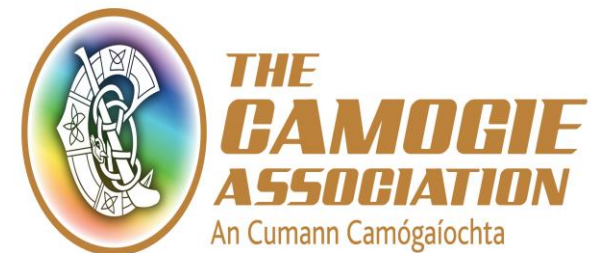
*“Man who competes with his fellow man is noble.  
But true nobility is the man who competes with his  
former self.” Aristotle*

The emphasis is improvement **based on previous self**. So often we fall into the trap of basing our improvements on other peoples levels of performance, something we cannot control.

# Assessment

## Testing

- Coaches must firstly know their players standard.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses to find a base to where the individual players and team are at.
- Assessing the players will help us in our block planning for effective coaching.



# **Dublin Camogie Skill testing**

# Sample of skill and fitness test results

Name:	5m Sprint	20m Sprint	Agility	YOYO (m)	Handpass		Short Strike		Low Strike		High Catch	
					Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right
PLAYER 1	0.96	3.13	8.4	1210	34	31	25	21	13	9	8	5
PLAYER 2	1.04	3.29	9.59	1240	36	27	25	30	13	13	12	10
PLAYER 3	0.98	3.16	8.9	760	43	46	25	28	12	13	12	14
PLAYER 4	1.02	3.25	9.6	1160	42	36	26	27	14	14	13	11
PLAYER 5	1.08	3.38	9.2	440	43	42	32	30	15	16	8	12
<b>Team Averages</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>8.94</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

# Assessment

## Goal Setting

- Provide the player with a goal at the start of the session, week, month, year and let them assess whether they have achieved it at the end.
- Identify indicators of success.
- Homework

## Retesting and Improvement charts

- Have charts based on best improvers.

	Handpass Test 1	Handpass Test 2	Improvement
Name:	Left	Left	Left
PLAYER 1	40	43	3
PLAYER 2	30	35	5
PLAYER 3	43	44	1

# Awareness of Individuals



# Awareness of Individuals

## Spot and fix

- A Games Based approach not only allows management to monitor and correct a players skill and technique but also their decision making and confidence when it comes to movement, possession and overall game sense.

## Coach the selectors

- Ensure they are familiar with the individual players' weaknesses/strengths and goals.

## Delegate roles to the other coaches

- Limited training time means it can be difficult for the head coach to monitor each player. Delegating this role to other mentors allows each of them to monitor x amount of players ensuring all players receive equal time and attention needed to improve.

# Effective Coaching





# How to manipulate the intensity in a Games Based approach to suit teams with mixed abilities.

## Number of players

- Increasing the number of players reduces intensity, decreasing the number of players increases the intensity. Group players according to ability.

## Size of area

- Decreasing the size of the area decreases the intensity, increasing the size of the area increases the intensity. However the size of the area must be appropriate to the number of players involved. If the area is too large the players will have too much time on the ball. If the area is too small the play will be too congested and the play will break down too much and there will be no intensity in the play.

## Number of touches permitted

- The less amount of touches permitted increases the intensity as the support players must work harder to provide support and options. The more amount of touches permitted decreases the intensity of play as it allows supporting players and their opposition longer rest periods.

## Restart of play

- When the ball goes out of play the intensity drops. In order to keep intensity high additional balls can be located at various points outside the grid and play can immediately restart from these positions once the ball in play goes dead. Running the game in this fashion prevents the intensity of play breaking down and keeps all players focused.

## Uneven teams

- Games can be set up with uneven teams e.g. 5V3 the players on the team of 3 will have to work harder and cover more ground thus increasing the intensity of the play. The players can then be swapped around to ensure everybody gets the opportunity to play at the higher intensities.

## Conditions

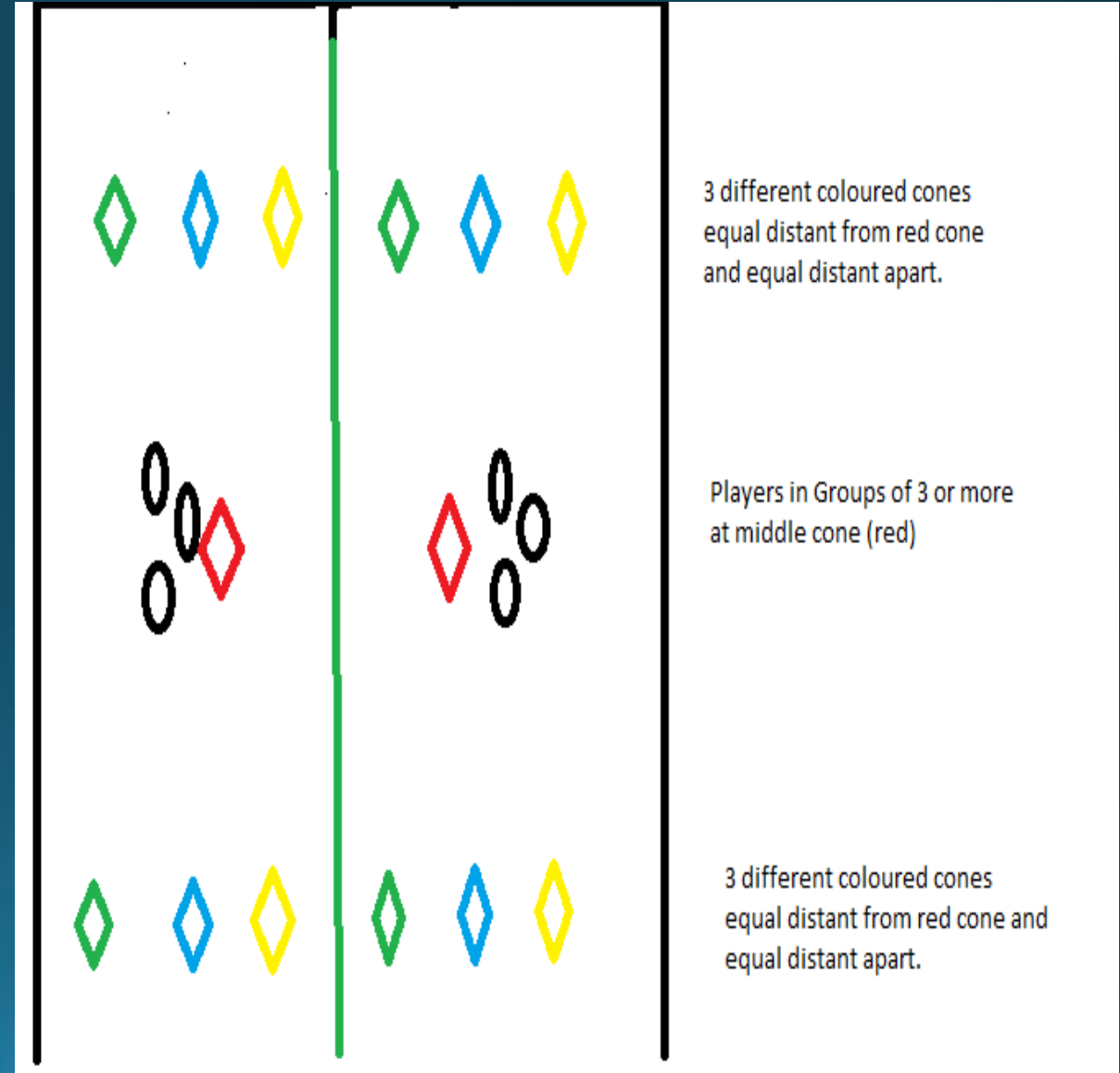
- The rules of the game influence the intensity of the game. If the game is set up for e.g. that when the player secures the possession they must take on their opposing number this will increase the intensity of the game. Other examples can be during possession games where once a player passes the ball they must run out of the square before becoming active in the play again. This variation can also be added to backs and forwards where once a whistle is blown all players must run over the side line before the ball becomes active.

# First Touch Drill – Change of Direction

1. Players start at middle cone (red) in groups of 3 minimum.
2. Player 1 runs to blue cone and returns ball to Player 2 and he in turn returns to red.
3. Player 2 must run to blue cone behind him (Player receiving ball always goes to cone behind him)
4. This forces all players to receive a ball from one direction and carry ball in the opposite direction, thus encouraging change of direction.

## Progressions:

1. Change method of delivery and reception
2. Instruct Deliverer to go to a different coloured cone and Receptor must go to same coloured cone in opposite direction.
3. Instruct Deliverer he must go round 2 coloured cones and Receptor must go round 2 same coloured cones but in opposite direction.
4. Introduce a tackling component where player 3 tackles player 2 on receipt of ball at red cone.

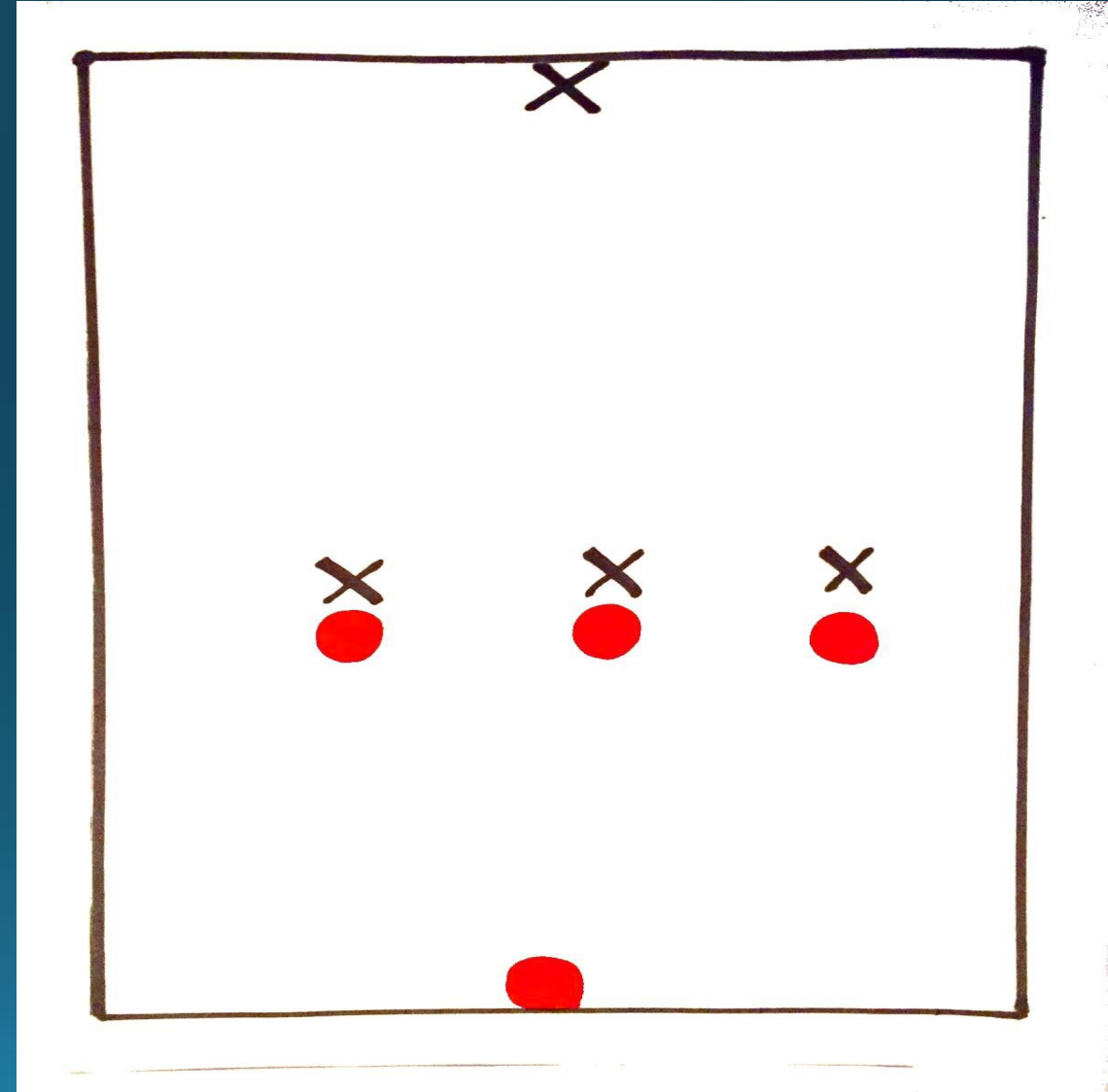


# Support play/breaking tackle drill

1. Using a rectangular grid 3 v3 line up in the middle. Each team has a last man back(LMB) that protects the end line.
2. The ball starts on the ground where players must battle to rise it.
3. The team that wins possession must handpass the ball to each other working the ball past the opposition LMB over the line.
4. When a score is achieved the LMB is changed and play begins with the ball starting again in the middle.

## Progressions:

1. When the team wins the ball off the opposition, they must work the ball back to their LMB first before beginning their attack back towards the opposition line.
2. Players are allowed strike pass to each other or back to their keeper.
3. Add players to increase intensity.

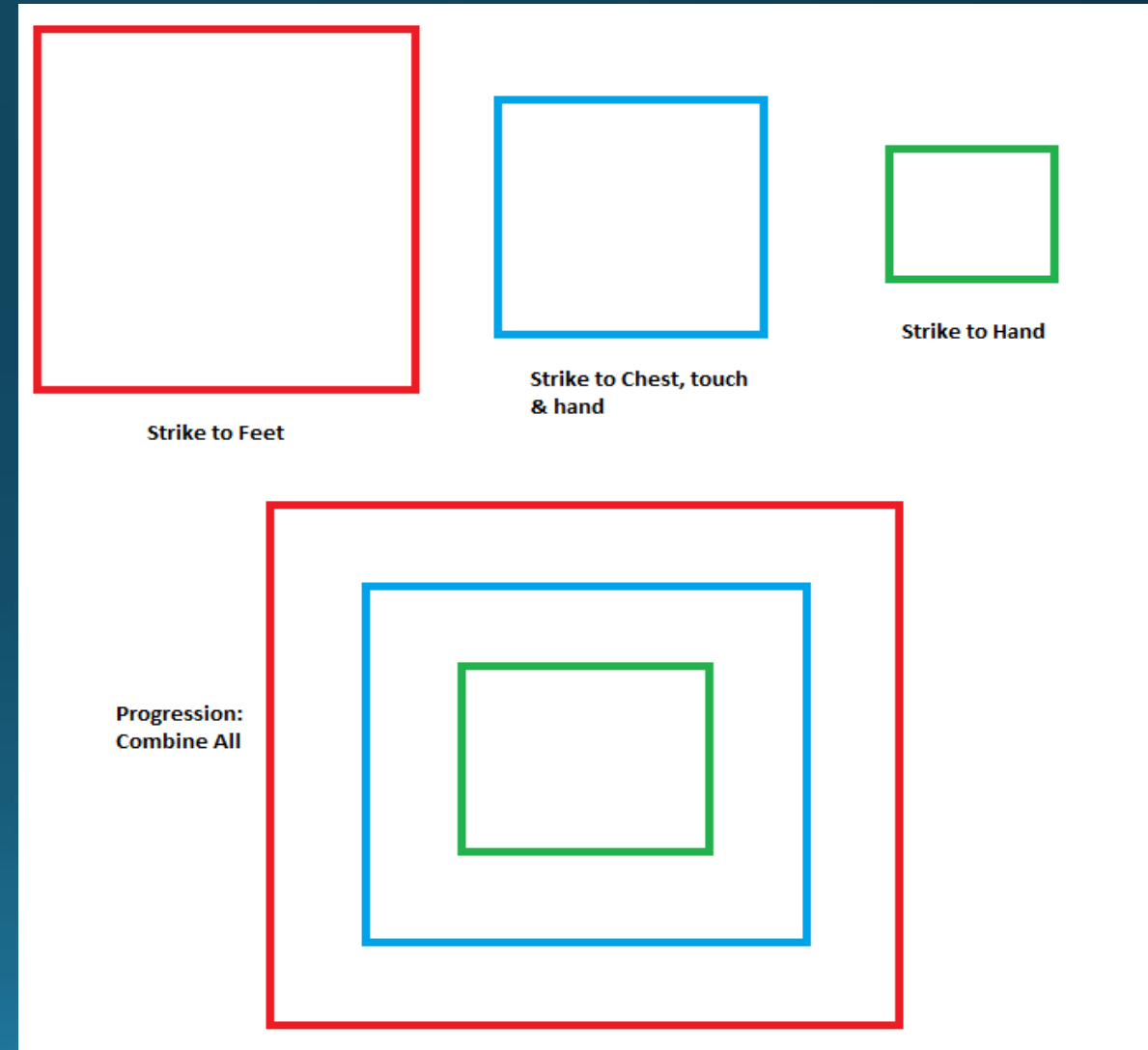


# Ball Control Drill

1. Using 4 corner cones to create different sized squares
2. Place 1 or 2 players at the corner of each square and strike diagonal balls with players alternating. (Stay at Cone)
3. The size of the square will determine how a player delivers the ball and receives the ball.
4. Rotate the players through all squares to improve skills.

## Progressions:

1. Combine all squares into one.
2. Coach calls a colour which dictates both starting position and method of delivery and reception.
3. Coach can increase intensity of drill by changing starting positions numerous times.
4. Players enter the square, they move into space when striking and receiving the ball.
5. Player in possession can only strike to furthest player away in the square encouraging movement into space.
6. Extra players can be added.

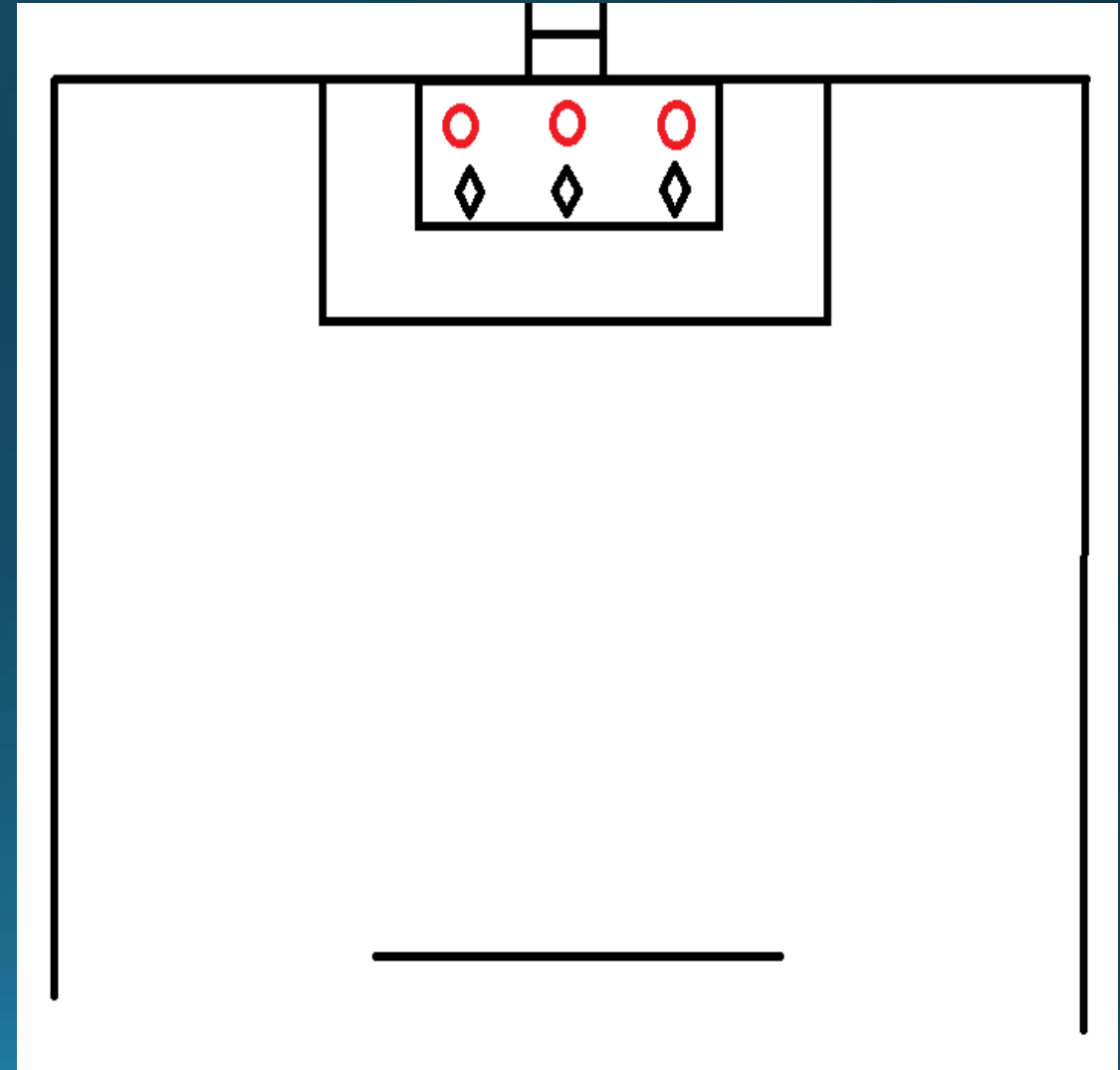


# Conditioned Game – Forwards Drill

1. Place 3 backs and 3 forwards in the small square.
2. Place one goalkeeper in goals and your second goalkeeper on the half way line with all the balls
3. On the whistle, the goalkeeper on the half way line strikes a ball in the direction of the forwards.
4. The forwards must win possession under pressure from the backs and get a score.

## Progressions:

1. Inform the forwards that they cannot score until all 3 forwards have touched the ball (this encourages support play).
2. Backs cannot clear the ball until at least two of them have touched the ball (this encourages the forwards to win back possession once they lose it).
3. Goals Only increases intensity in the tackle.

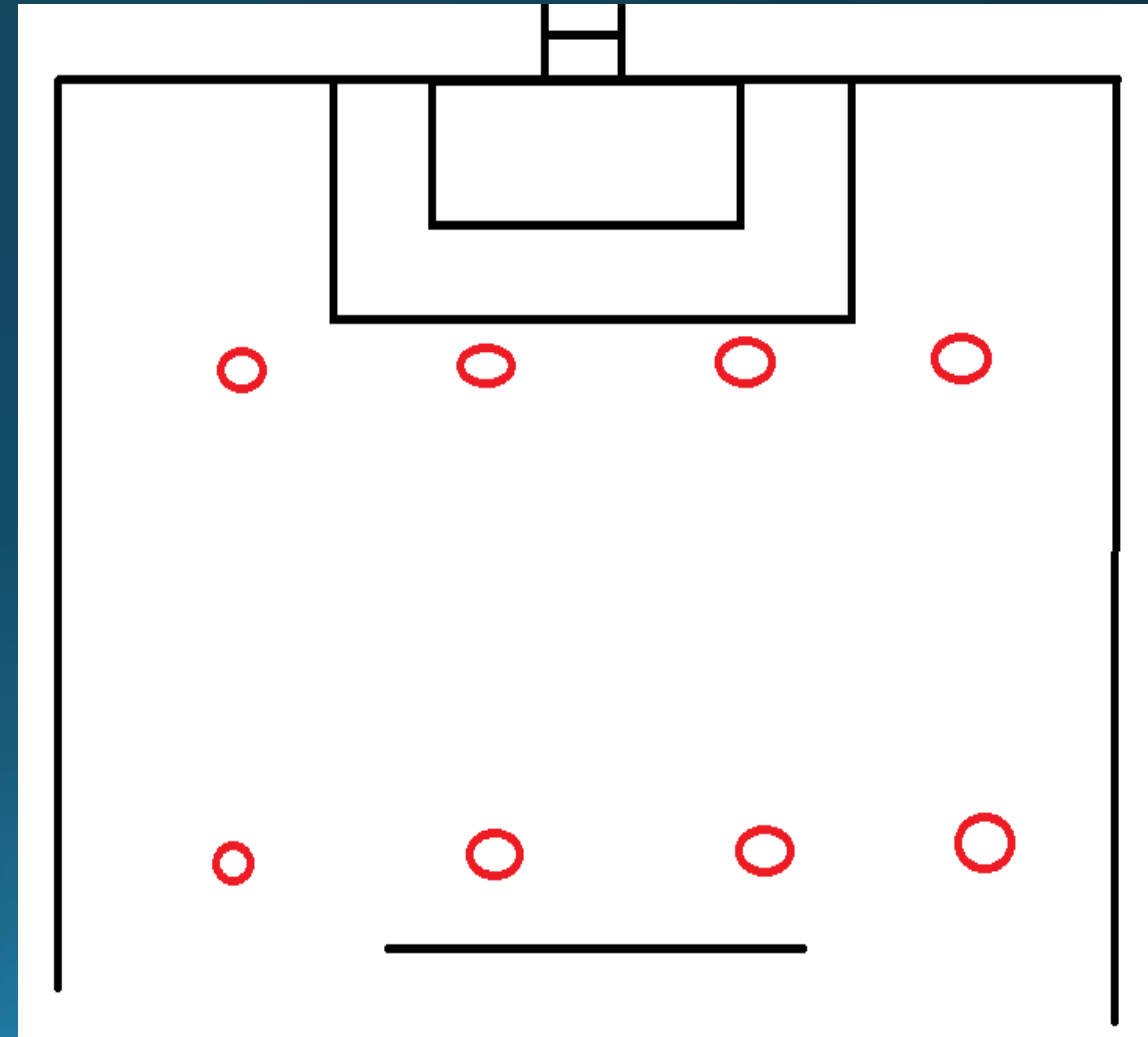


# Shooting Drill

1. Place 4 cones equal distance apart along the 21 yard line and the equivalent along the 65 yard line.
2. Place one player at each cone on the 21 yard line with as many balls as possible at each.
3. Divide the remaining players into groups at the four cones along the 65.
4. For 90 seconds ball is delivered along the ground at speed, the outside players take it in turns to attack the ball, control it and strike it over the bar from distance. They return to their own cone after they have struck the ball and repeat.
5. After 90 seconds all groups move to the next cone and you also change the player delivering the ball. For the next 90 seconds all balls are delivered direct to hand so each player is attacking the ball, taking it in his hand at speed and striking it over the bar from distance.
6. Keep rotating the groups to different cones so they are shooting from different angles.

## Progressions:

1. Change the method of delivery (low to feet, chest height, head height etc.) and method of reception (catch, touch and catch, touch and carry, knock down to ground) on every rotation.
2. Introduce a marker for each recipient to work on hooking and blocking.
3. Introduce a middle man on the 21 yard line to encourage combination play.

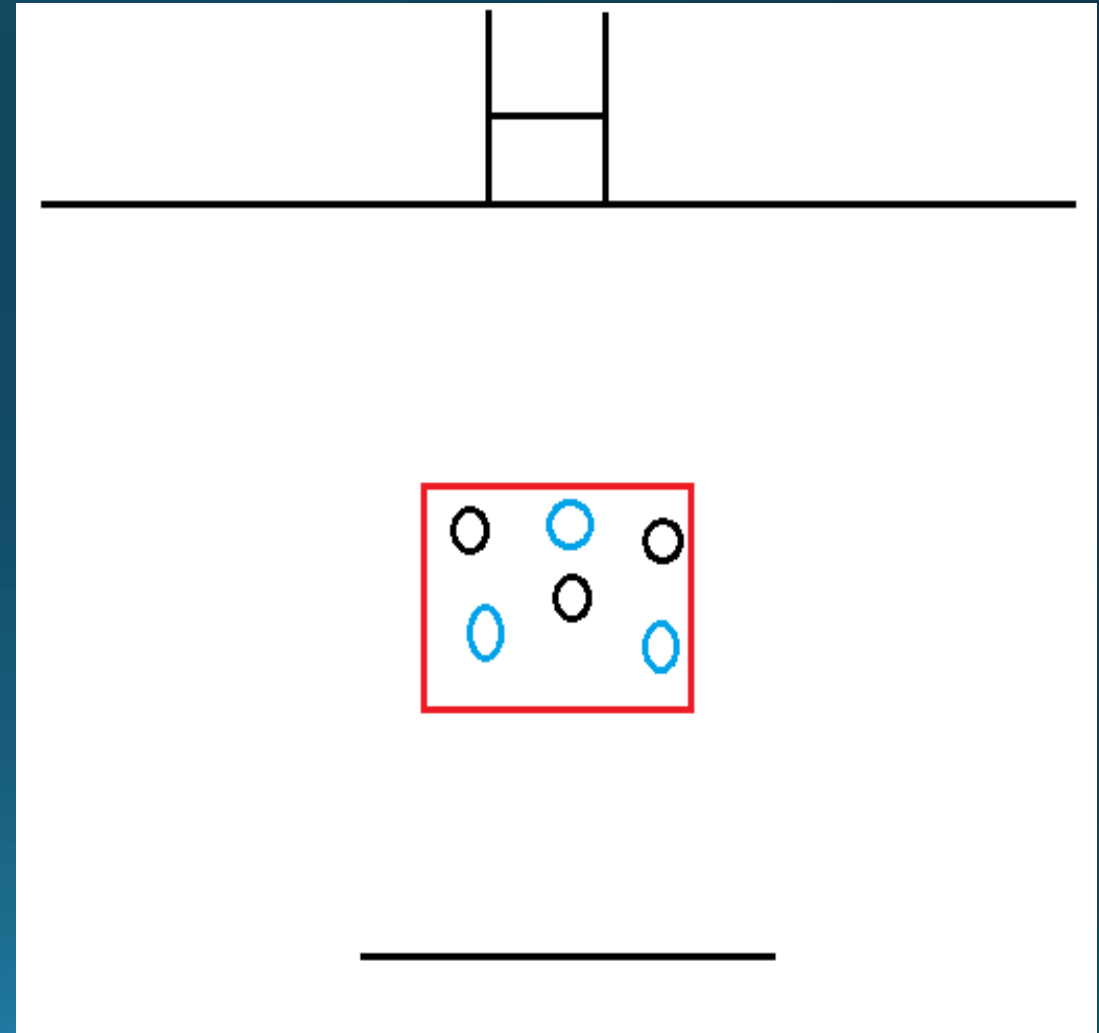


# Small Sided Game – Game Based

1. Place one goalkeeper with balls in the goals and the other goalkeeper with balls on the half way line.
2. Place 3 backs and 3 forwards in a grid in the middle.
3. Put a ball in the grid and all 6 players must play a possession game inside the grid.
4. Backs always defend big goals, forwards always attack big goals.
5. At any stage during the possession game the coach can call 'BACKS'. All backs will ignore the ball in the grid, disperse from the grid and make themselves available for a puckout from the goalkeeper in the goals.
6. Coach could also call 'FORWARDS' where all forwards will ignore the ball in the grid, disperse from the grid and make themselves available for a delivery from the goalkeeper on the half way line.

## Progressions:

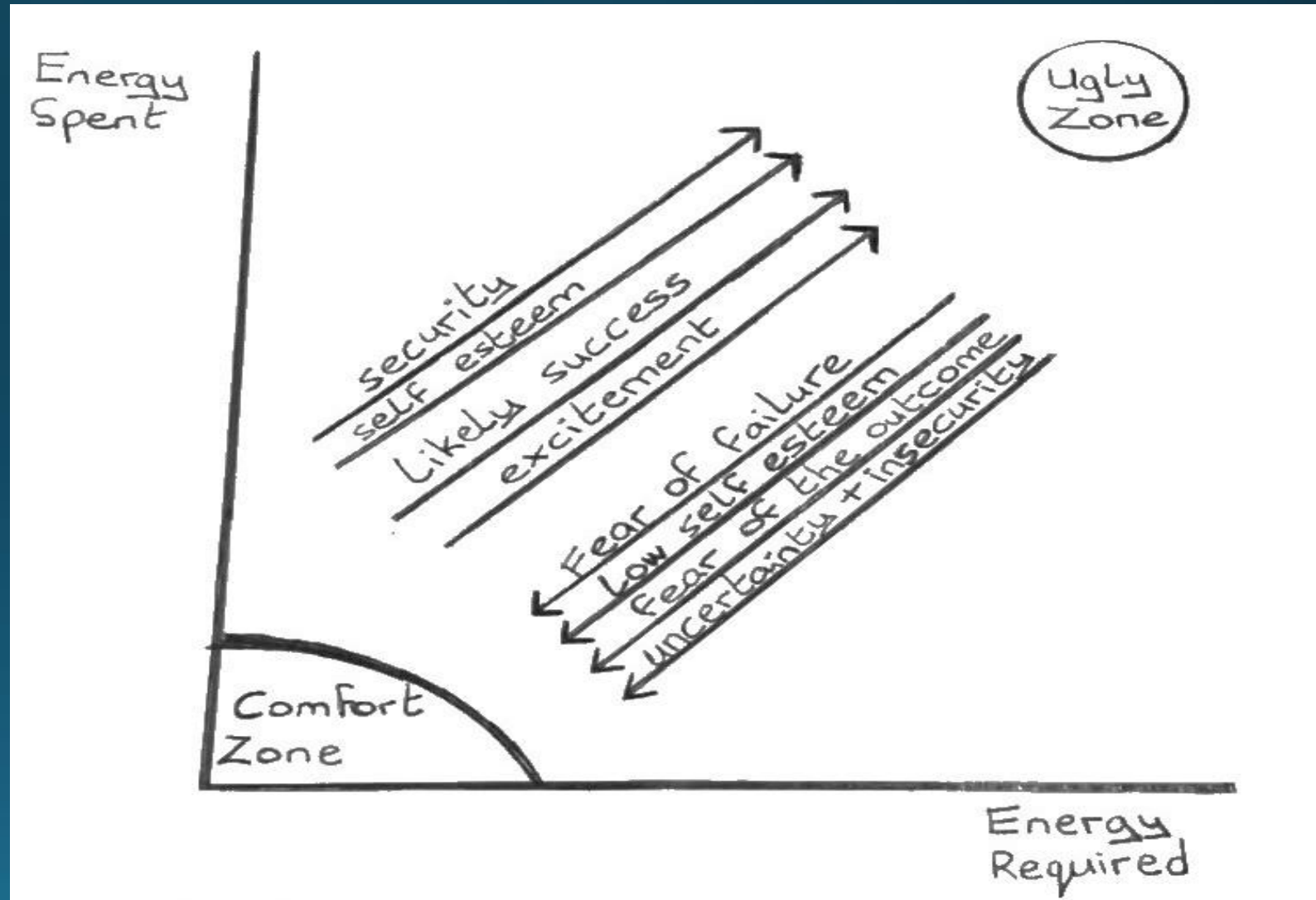
1. Change the method of delivery from the goalkeepers.
2. Two forwards must touch the ball before you score.
3. Two backs must touch the ball before they clear.





# Find the Ugly zone for everyone.

*"The ugly zone is a place where you try and fail, try again and fail and continue trying and failing. It's the area just beyond your present ability." - Dr Dave Alred, The Pressure Principle.*



# Communication



# Communication

## Create a supportive coaching environment

- Mentors are patient and show empathy towards the skills being performed. e.g. trial and error, allow mistakes.

## Collaboration

- Allow players chat, exchange ideas, after all they are the ones that will be on the field. Let them develop their player autonomy and learn from their peers. Let the players respond, not always taking instruction. This is a good way of knowing if they understand the drill being coached.

## Keep instructions few and limited/simplistic

- Keep the amount of details to remember to the absolute essential minimum because it won't get any easier to remember them when things get stressful.

# Language

- Praise what they do right but keep challenging them during each drill e.g. faster, strike from further away. Create challenge and uncertainty.
- Avoid generalisation and clichés e.g. "Great stuff," "Well done" "That's it," "Move," "Really good." Instead be exact with correction and praise e.g. Good + why?
- Show empathy. " I know you are finding this difficult but I know you'll do it."
- Its important to praise what they do right but make sure the praise matches the challenge achieved.
- Positive negative positive.
- Avoid only drawing attention to mistakes.
- Negative deletion e.g. "No dropped balls." "No no that was terrible.."
- Paralysis by analysis.

# Conclusion

- Variety generates interest and motivation and different drills will accommodate different players levels of abilities and playing styles.
- Players act the way you expect them to.
- Remember children develop at different rates and stages. A child at 11 includes a range of different physical shapes, abilities, sizes and maturities.
- Always end training on a positive note. Keep training fun so players are motivated and enthusiastic to start the next training session.

# Thank you

