

FITNESS FOR FOOTBALL: PRACTICAL SESSION

Session delivered by Scott Ainsley – Fitness Coach/Sports Scientist for Sunderland AFC

Sheepmount Sports Complex, Carlisle – 31/7/08

Warm up



X1
X2
X3
X4
X5
X6



X6
X7
X8
X9
X10
X12

Without Ball

Players Jog out to top cone, round and back down the other side performing the following movements

- (1) Swinging Arms (across body)
- (2) Twisting Hips side to side
- (3) Arm Swings (Forwards and back)
- (4) Fast Feet – make small circles
- (5) Larger circles with feet
- (6) Skips
- (7) Knees up
- (8) Knees out
- (9) Carioca (front and back foot crossing)
- (10) Hurdle walk (open up groins)
- (11) Jog forwards to 1st cone, turn and go backwards (work both sides)
- (12) Side steps facing other group/turn side steps facing out
- (13) Zig Zag Runs
- (14) Backwards to 1st cone, turn go forward (Turn both ways)

Progression

X5
X3
X1



X2
X4
X6

X11
X9
X7



X8
X10
X12

With Ball

Set out 3 cones, 10m apart

Split into 4 groups, each group has a ball each

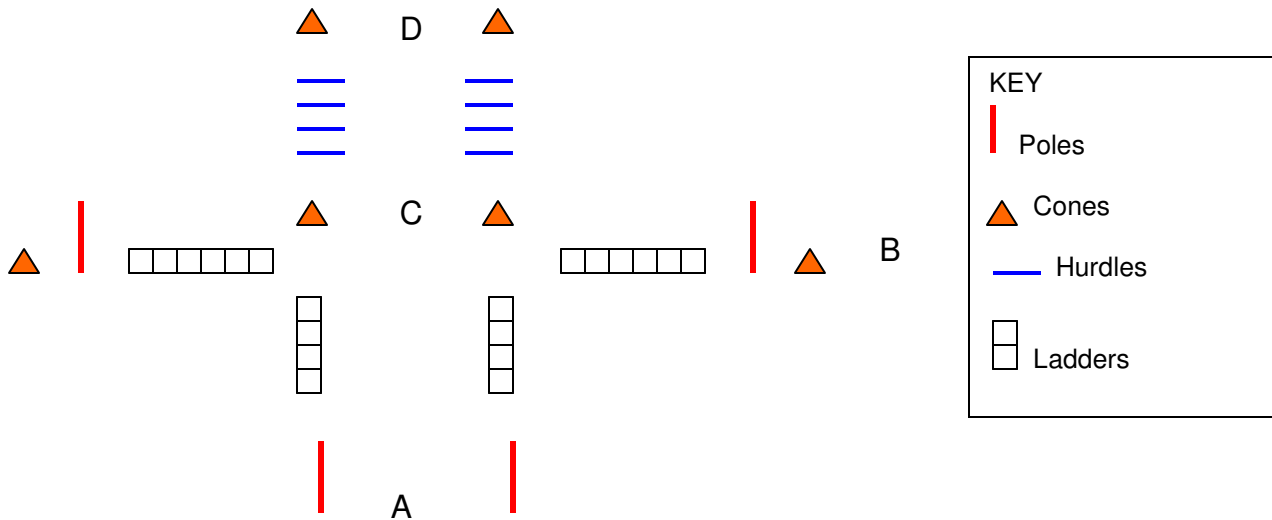
- (1) Players run with ball across to opposite group, join back of group
- (2) Get to 1st cone, perform step over, pass and follow, join back of opposite group
- (3) Get to middle, turn and go back to original group
- (4) 1st cone, pass and sprint through

Progression:

X2 and X8 start with ball

- (5) X2 plays a long pass to X1, X1 sets ball back to X2 (1-2), X2 plays ball off to X3 and joins back of group. X1 continues run and joins back of opposite group. At same time X8 and X7 perform same task.
- (6) 1 ball for group. X1 passes the ball to X7. X1 then performs an over lapping run around X7 to collect ball. X1 passes to X2. X7 joins back of X2's group. X1 joins back of X8 group. Practice continues with X2 passing to X8.

Speed, Agility and Co-ordination Drills



Exercise 1

Split into 2 groups and start behind poles at position A.
 Players go out and straight through ladders to cone and position C
 Slowly jog back to starting position
 Progression
 Get players performing different moves through ladders e.g. two feet in each rung etc

Exercise 2

Split into 2 groups, with a group standing behind poles (left and right) (position B)
 Players go through first set of ladders, then turn off front foot, go through 2nd set of ladders and sprint through poles to position A
 Players then slowly jog to join line on opposite side (working both feet)

Exercise 3

2 groups, in front of poles at position A
 Players move back, around pole and then through the ladders (double feet)
 Players then move off to left/right and go through second set of ladders laterally (still facing forward) both must go feet in and then out at each rung.
 Then go round respective pole at position B
 Sprint back to the start.

Exercise 4

Split into 2 groups at Position C
 Players drive through hurdles and past end cone at position D
 Slowly jog back to starting position
 Progression
 Can vary size of hurdles
 Vary movement over hurdles (make more plyometric by using 2 footed ankle jumps or jumping over and back)

For younger children, maybe use poles or cones so that they don't have to jump as high – work more on technique

You can make football specific by adding a ball into practice

E.g. start at position B

Player is served a ball and does an instep volley with left foot, then right foot.

Go through the ladder, turn/spin out.

Service could be a pass/header/chest etc

You can make it position specific

E.g. defenders lots of sideways movement, backwards, turning etc

Forwards lots of checking in and out, turning spinning, short sprints etc

Remember to use your imagination with this stuff.

Think about the movements used in football and replicate them in the practice

This makes a really good warm up and allows you to work on a number of different fitness components within your session

Strength Drills

In pairs

Ex1

Players stand side to side and link arms

On coaches command players must try and move their partner by using their shoulder (shoulder barge the other player)

Work for a short duration and then change sides (link other arm)

Ex 2

Players stand side to side with arms extended (holding onto partners shoulder)

Again on the coaches' command they try and push their partner

Work for a short duration and then change arms

Ex 3

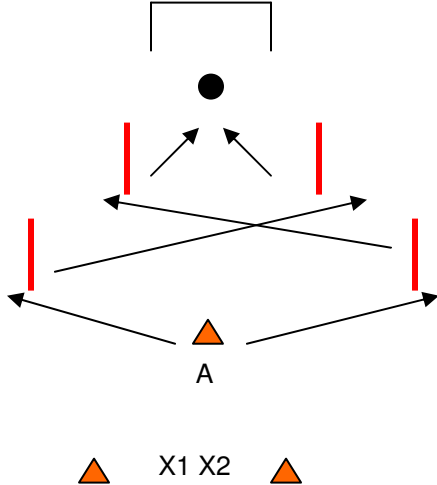
1 player is in front, 1 player is behind (both facing forward)

Player in front must back into his partner to try and push them back

Player behind tries to hold their ground and stay still

Again work for a short duration and then change positions

These practices can easily be included along with other physical fitness components into a football specific practice e.g.



X1 and X2 perform exercise 1 up until position A
Once there the players break and sprint out to past first pole
They then cross and go around the 2nd pole
Both players then compete to get a strike on goal

Balance Drills

Ex 1

Players find a space and lift one leg off the ground and hold that position

Progression

- (1) Change legs (work both legs)
- (2) Fold arms across chest (again work both legs)
- (3) Close your eyes (both legs)

Ex 2

Players perform a repeated kicking movement

Progression

- (1) Close eyes and repeat movement
- (2) Change legs and repeat kicking movement
- (3) Close eyes and repeat movement

Ex 3

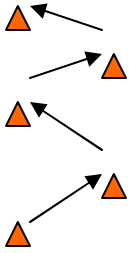


Set out a number of hurdles, players perform 1 footed hop's over the hurdles
Players must hold position on landing (for a second) before taking off again
Remember to work both sides

Progression

Movements can be sideways over the hurdles (again work both sides)

Ex 4



Set up a number of cones in a zig-zag shape

Players must leap from cone to cone, making sure they hold their landing before leaping across to the next cone

Like the majority of these drills, the time to progress, is when the player is performing the move successfully (how you want them to) and on a regular basis.