

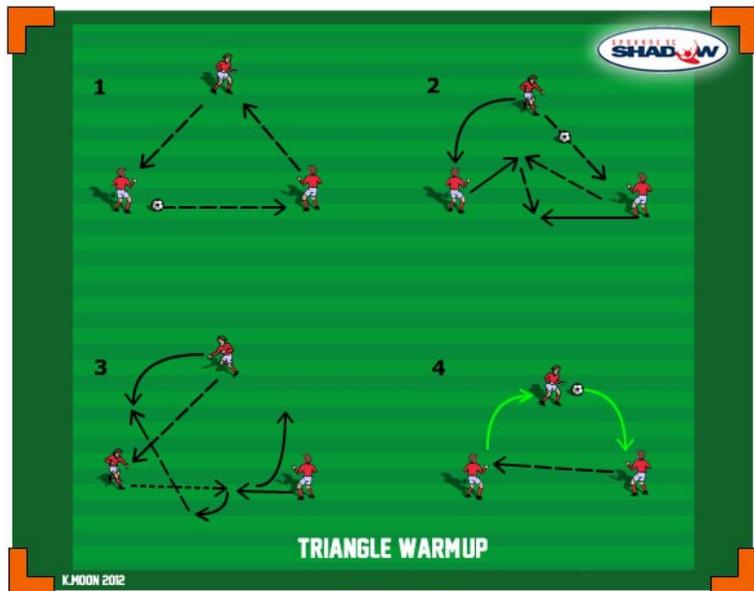
**1 v 1 Defending - Individual Pressing / Closing**

After observing the first training session with the group following the high school season and going back over game notes from the summer, decision was made to go back to the basics of defending and building into group defending over the next 3 training sessions.

**Set-up**

Layout

20 Minutes



**Description**

Explanation of the Drill with Coaching points

**TRIANGLE WARM-UP** Groups of 3 warming up in free space. Goalkeepers start with us and then move to work with our GK trainer after 5 minutes. Will stay with GK Trainer to continue their warm-up and then work on balls played back for distribution in under different scenarios. Goalkeepers will also receive repetition in taking goal kicks focusing on technique and placement.

**1. 2 touch passing**

Coach will dictate foot combinations and direction. Spacing should be about 10 -15 yards. Relaxed beginning.

- Inside / Inside same foot
- Inside / Inside opposite feet
- Outside / Inside same foot
- Outside / Inside opposite feet
- Outside / Outside opposite feet

\* Coach will have to change the direction that the ball is traveling. 1-2 min intervals (5-10 minutes)

\* Coach wants to make sure players are 'active' off the ball, not just standing with legs locked out as others are active on the ball. Just little movements with each pass, coming to get it when passed etc.

**2. 1 – 2 touch passing and moving**

Same spacing. Players are more active now moving off the ball after a pass is made and they should vary the speed at which they move and the way the move off the ball or after a pass has been made. Little bursts after the pass, running underneath, overlapping etc. – 2 to 3 minutes.

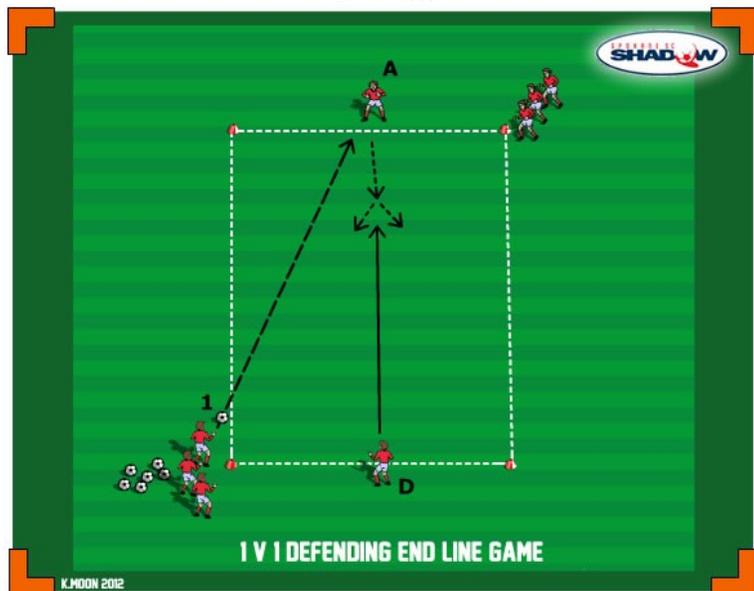
**3. Receive to dribble / cut it off and pass**

After the 4<sup>th</sup> pass is made receiving player turns to dribble at the player who did not pass her the ball (that player closes on her quickly), she then cuts it off and passes back to the player that played her. That is the first pass, count three more and repeat.

**4. Toss it / volley it / catch it progression – this is a form of dynamic stretching with the ball**

- Toss – volley – catch (player that volleys and player that catches the ball interchange)
- Toss – volley – volley – catch (interchange)
- Keep the ball under control in the air while volleying and interchanging without catching. How many can your group get (team competition).

20 minutes



**1 v 1 Defending – End line game**

**25 x 15 yard grid (coaches can reduce the space to fit their needs / age groups)**

Player off to the side plays across the grid to Player A (attacking player; as the pass is made Player D (Defender) closes the space and starts to break down and get their feet under them as the ball arrives at Player A. Player D works to prevent Player A from getting across the end line. If Player D wins the ball they transition into attack with Player A now defending their end line.

Spoke to the players about the following areas for this drill and tried to break it down a little.

- **Deny** – In the game we want to close down players on the ball quickly to deny that player the ability to penetrate (off the dribble, through a pass or by taking a shot) by closing the space between you quickly. Deny them the chance to look up and find space or teammates
- **Delay** – Stay in front and try to slow them down be patient and avoid stabbing at the ball unless sure you are going to win it, be light on your feet (bounce) and low so you can move freely ( coaches watch body shape)
- **Drop** – In situations where they have control and they try to burst by you drop off, stay in front and maintain good spacing (not too tight not too far away). If the pass to another player drop inside and track their run (game scenario).
- **Deflect** – Deflect them away from central positions or areas you want to keep them away from (body shape). This can be the goal if in the defensive third, or a strong central playmaker you want to keep from having the ball, etc.
- **Decide** – this actually starts from the first moment you start to close down an attacking player. Can I win it? Should I wait? Where is the ball (location of the field)? Who is the player on the ball (has this player run by me with pace or cut me back)? Where are my teammates? What is the situation (killing the game / chasing the game etc.)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If the opportunity to win the ball presents itself always take advantage that moment! Ultimately we want the ball but we must not expose ourselves with an ill-advised lunge or mistimed tackle.

| <p><b>Set-up</b><br/>Layout</p>  | <p><b>Description</b><br/>Explanation of the Drill with Coaching points</p>   |
|--|---|
| <p>25 minutes</p>  | <p><b>25 x 45 yard field - Goalkeepers rejoin the team here for the rest of training.</b></p> <p>Team that is attacking first starts with the ball, red in this case. Red player wide plays across the goal to the far yellow player on the end line (yellow needs to come get the ball so they do not receive it on the endline). Yellow player then plays it to the red player diagonally across from them and then looks to close the space between them quickly (red line in diagram) and the game is live from that point. After a goal has been scored or the ball goes out of bound both teams are off and yellow would start the ball this time. Note: as soon as the first pass is made all three players on both teams should enter the field and are live.</p> <p>Prior to starting inform the players that staff would be looking at the individual defending actions of players nearest the ball and in the way they closed on the ball. This is the area that we want to be better in. Remind them that when their team is attacking we want them to make good decisions but we also need them to be decisive, aggressive and look for scoring opportunities as often as possible!</p> <p>The coaching staff needs to focus on what players were told. Help them improve in that area, encourage the work and reward players performing well. Do not stop the flow very often and coach players as they come off and coach within the activity. Keep the points in mind: DECIDE, DENY, DELAY, DROP and DEFLECT (away from goal in this case).</p> <p><b>At training we added this progression: about 15 minutes in, after the team has a firm grip on how this activity is played and we have seen good results in terms of pressing and individual defending the yellow player can choose to play any of the three red players. This results in players having to read who should press instead of the pressing player always being the player passing the ball. This actually happened by mistake and the defending team adjusted by having someone else press the ball, it was a good and immediate decision that was rewarded with praise for continuing to play and making a great decision on who should press given the situation.</b></p> <p>Post Training Note: this was the first time we used this and most players improved in their pressing and individual defending. Players also commented that they enjoyed it. Players have to have extremely high work rates while in the game and at times needed to be encouraged to bring their work rate up a notch. We also saw group defending improve as players started to try to work together more and stay compact even though we had not coached that.</p> |
| <p>25 minutes</p>  | <p><b>9 v 9 Half Field</b></p> <p>Allow the game to play out rarely (if ever) stopping it to coach. Allow the game to flow and the players to problem solve. Coach within the game and to the points that were worked on to this point.</p>   |

