

Coaches Clinic: **Developing First Touch II**

Sunday, September 7, 2008, 5:30pm-7:00pm at Holliston Youth Soccer Fields at Marshall St.
Jon Coles, Mass Premier Soccer

Reminder: adapt the practice template outlined to your age-group and level; considerations include restriction of touches, space, etc.

First Touch

1. must control the ball
2. put it in the target area

Warm Up: Juggle Challenge

{coach called everyone in; asked everyone to grab a ball and spread out in the large grid area}

Set up: large open space; one ball per player.

- Try to juggle with laces of shoe. Locked ankle (pointing far down as possible). No ball spinning.
- How many in the air in a row? Keep your record. After 1-2 minutes, check the records. Be positive.
- Begin progression. Juggle once on strong foot, then catch.
- Try once on strong foot, then strong thigh, then catch.
- Introduce right foot, right thigh, left thigh, left foot, then catch.
- Right foot, right thigh, head, left thigh, left foot, then catch – you are almost around the world.
- For fun (and you probably can't demonstrate) - Right foot, right thigh, right shoulder, head, left shoulder, left thigh, left foot, then catch.

Passing Grid

{coach called for balls in; get two players per ball and go to the grid; extra balls should be in an area touching coaches soccer ball}

Set up: 20x30 yards (and we had 22 players); adjust as required; one ball per two players to start.

- If you have a ball, find someone to pass to; if you don't have a ball, look for a pass.
- Before you receive, talk to the person with the ball ("here", "support", etc.)
- Limit to two touches. Teaches to anticipate: re-emphasize control and target area; introduce notion to have control go towards target area so 2nd touch can be a pass.
- Reduce the number of balls to 6, then to 4. There are many people. Who is showing for the ball? Are receivers able to control, etc.
- "every pass should put info on the ball"; instruct the receiver to "turn"; receiver should take space to left or right.
- "hold the ball", "time"; receiver's first touch is in front of them, and then they look to lay off to someone else
- "back", version of wall pass where receiver passes right back to passer because they have pressure.
- "1-2", "back", person making pass cuts after passing and receives wall pass in new space
- Mixture of "turn" and "wall": start with passer completing a "wall" pass with someone and then the must follow by passing to someone else and telling them to "turn"; the new person with ball starts again by finding someone to complete a "wall" pass with, etc. You need to pay attention and alternate between the two.

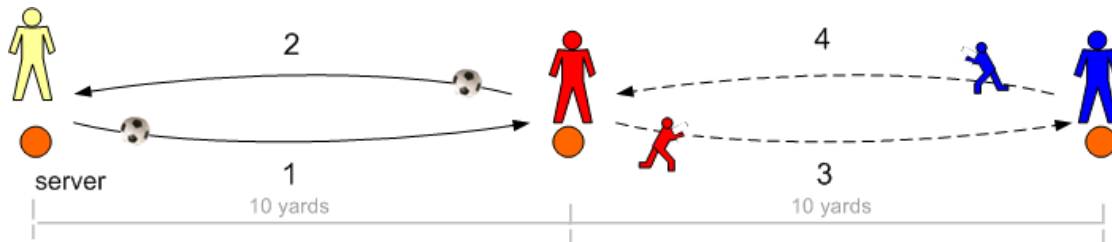
Coaching points:

- To improve 1st touch, knowing what scenarios need what touch, requires you to know before you receive the ball. The obvious 1st touch is in front of you, but it is not always the target you want. Need to keep looking and talking.
- Repetition improves 1st touch. Even home against a wall.

First Touch with Movement – Rotating Touch Players

Set up: 3 cones in a line (front cone, center cone, back cone), 10 yards apart, one ball.

- Player on each cone: server on front cone, and two one-touch receivers, each on the other cones.
- (1) Server passes to receiver on center cone, calls "back", and (2) receiver completes "wall" pass back to the server.
- (3) Receiver goes to back cone and (4) second receiver runs to center cone, and sequence is repeated.
- Continue for about 2 minutes.
- Switch the server and repeat.



Coaching points:

- One touch on inside of foot requires locked ankle.
- Non-kicking foot needs to point to target
- Put zip on the ball-don't just roll it
- Speed of play is improved with one touch

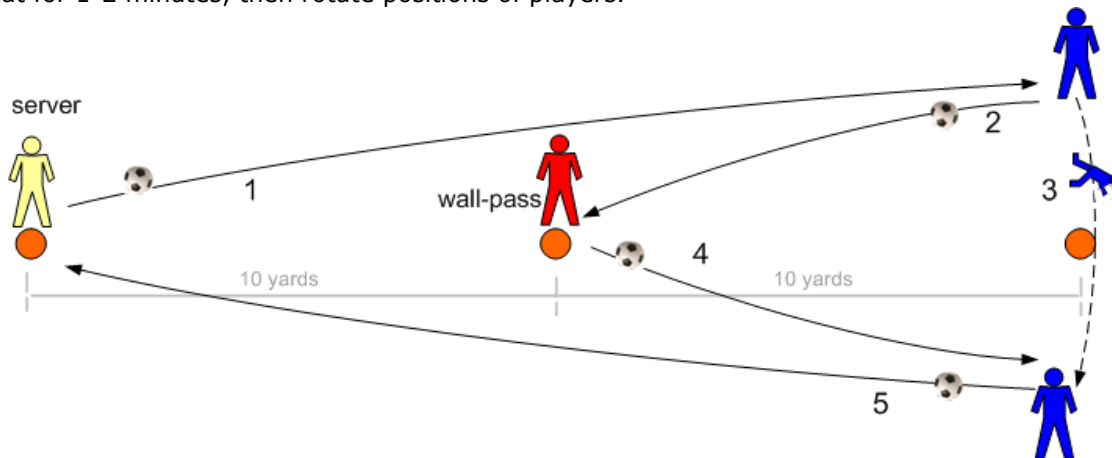
Variations:

- Make it exciting, make it fun; have a competition! The receivers must always touch the back cone. First team to 30 wall passes takes a knee and shouts "Champions".

First Touch with Movement – Long and Short with Movement

Set up: 3 cones in a line (front cone, center cone, back cone), 10 yards apart (same as previous); one ball

- Player on each cone: server on front cone, and two one-touch receivers, each on the other cones.
- (1) Server sends pass to back cone receiver (to the side/angle).
- (2) Back receiver one-touches to middle receiver, then (3) moves to the other side.
- (4) Middle receiver plays one-touch back to back receiver, who (5) one-touches long to initial server.
- Repeat for 1-2 minutes, then rotate positions of players.



Coaching points:

- Incorporate movement with one touch; remind the players to talk – "back"; focus on the wall pass player (center cone) and then move to others as this improves.

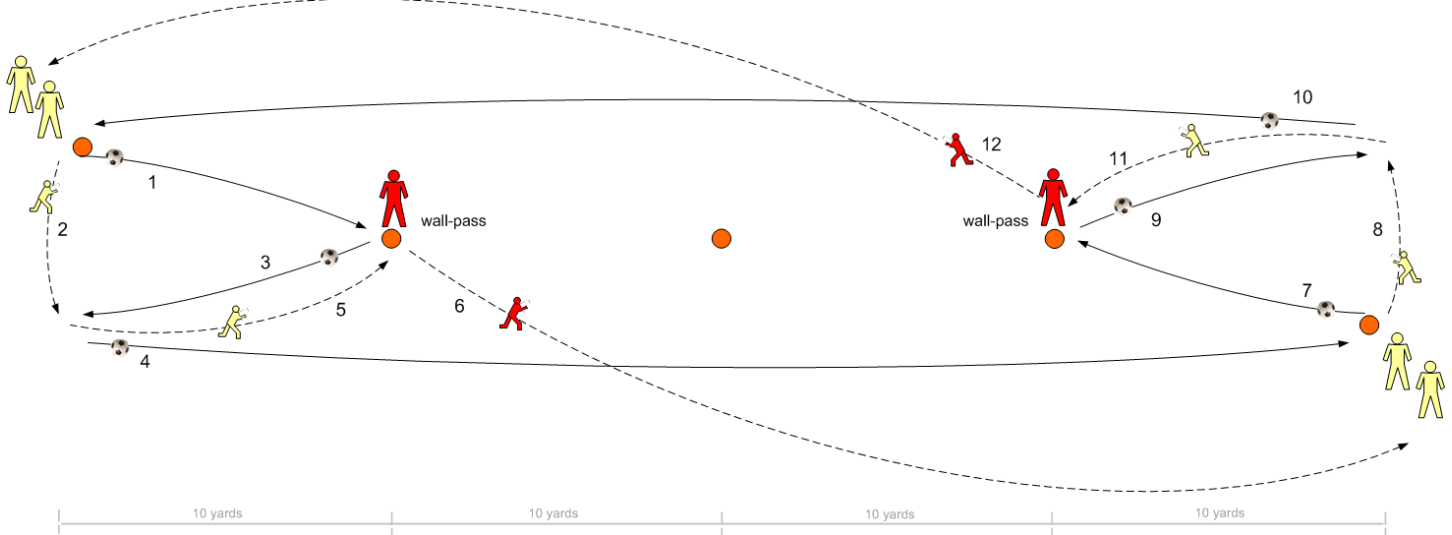
Variations:

- have center receiver and back receiver switch after each sequence (as ball is played back to original receiver)
- have the player "mirrored" on both ends (i.e. initial server will behave like initial receiver when the ball eventually comes back)

Norwegian Passing Drill

Set up: 4 cones, one ball. Practice area about 20x40 yards. Each end of the practice area has 2 cones: long cone and short cone. Six players total – two at each long cone and one each at the short cones.

- Ball starts at one end at long cone with a start player.
- (1) Start player serves to short cone and (2) moves to side for wall-pass.
- (3) Start player receives ball back from short cone player and (4) serves it long to long cone player at other end.
- (5) Start player becomes short cone player. (6) Short cone player make long rounded run to back of line of long cone players at other end.
- At the other end, (7) the long cone player (now the receiver) does one touch into the short cone, and then (8) moves to side for wall-pass.
- (9) The long cone player receives ball back from short cone player and (10) serves it long back to other end's long cone.
- (11) Long cone player becomes short cone player. (12) Short cone player makes long rounded run to back of line of long cone players at the other end.



Coaching points:

- Idea is to pass the ball quickly.
- Must lock ankle.
- Must move to space.

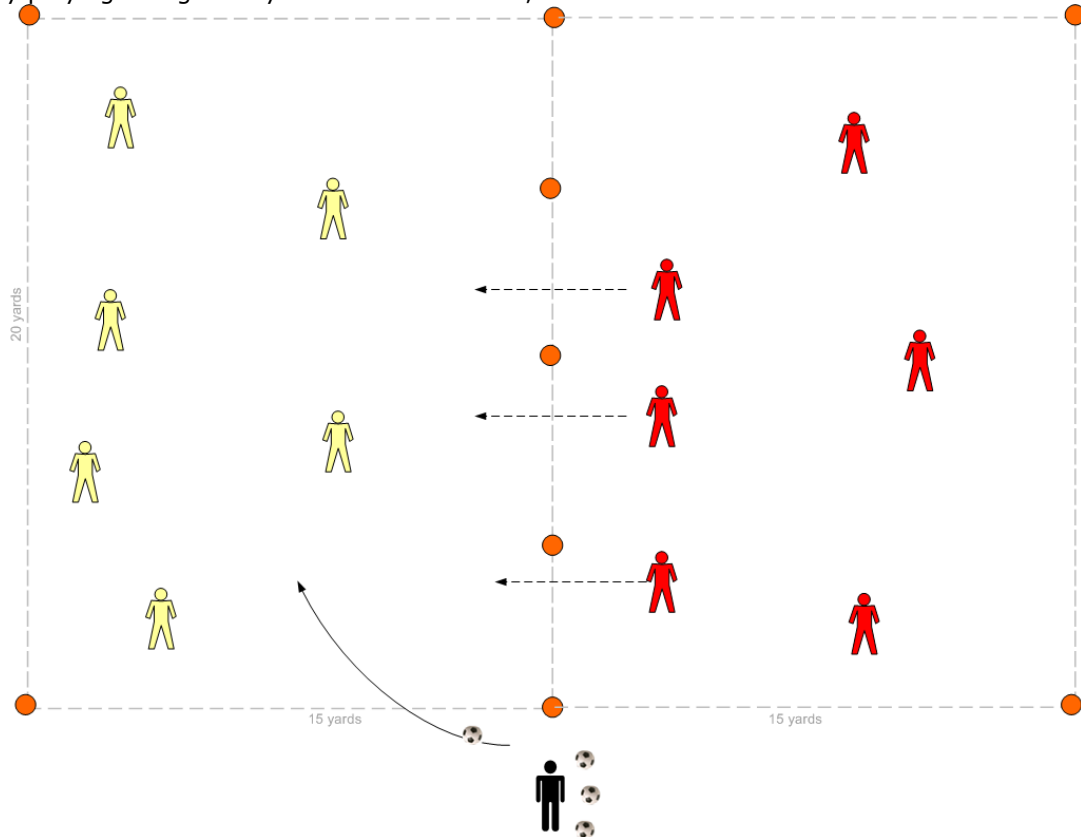
Variations:

- For younger groups, move closer and allow multiple touches.
- For older groups, introduce lofted long ball and continue with one touch.
- Make it competitive again – first to 18 (each player does full cycle 3 times) call takes a knee and calls "Champions".

Overloaded Possession

Set up: for 12 players (six per team with pinnies), two grids connected grids, 20x15 each with a half line. One ball.

- Begin with each team in their own grid.
- The coach will serve the ball into one grid.
- The goal is for a team to get 5 passes in a row to score a point.
- After the ball is served, three opponents are allowed to leave their grid to try to steal the ball. If they steal it, they return it to their grid, and also try to get 5 passes for a point..
- If the ball goes out of a grid and it belongs to the team of that grid, they do a kick-in from where it left the grid.
- If the ball goes out of a grid and belongs to the defensive side, the coach will serve a new ball into the opposite grid.
- Start by playing straightaway – unlimited touches, etc.



Coaching Points:

- Be a 360 player – look before receiving and after receiving.
- Take first touch towards your target.
- One touch is good, but remember to take ball across your body and then towards your target.

Variations:

- Make it a two touch game.
- Make it a one touch game.
- Change the size of the field appropriately. Make it bigger to ensure some success if required.

Scrimmage

- Always end the practice with a scrimmage.
- Start with unrestricted scrimmage.
- Modify to go to 3-touch, 2-touch or 1-touch as needed.
- In addition to regular goals, scoring also comes from 5 complete passes.
- At end, leave time to return to unrestricted scrimmage and observe their behavior – are they applying the lessons from the day?

Closing

- If the team has gotten the points and executed on the practice plan, tell them you are pleased and “job well done”.
- If they have not, take a couple of minutes to take them through it. Be positive and constructive.