



Project: Special Champions League

Deliverable: 2.5 – Special Champions League Training Manual

Project Number: 101049289

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Introduction – The Special Champions League Project

The Special Champions League is a project that aims to enhance the social inclusion of people with an intellectual disability, using football as a driver to bring them together on a local, national, and international stage. Eight European football clubs, together with EFDN, SOEE, have come together to trial a methodology for grassroots model to create and manage a football team for athletes with intellectual disabilities.

Each football club will deliver regular training sessions, matches, social activities, and educational workshops within their local community, for players with an intellectual

disability aged 15 and over. These players will be given opportunities to play in international tournaments, when the clubs join together in festivals and events across Europe. Those involved will be a benchmark for the local development of sports for people with intellectual disabilities and will be the drivers of change by disseminating activities at all levels. Their work will be spread across Europe through sharing knowledge and information in documents such as this, plus a [Best Practice Manual](#) and general [rules and guidelines](#) for other interested parties to create their own teams and programmes.





Why is the Special Champions League needed?

People with disabilities are among the most marginalised groups in the world and can face multiple obstacles during their life. Firstly, people with disabilities experience a lot of discrimination and neglect daily. For example, they experience barriers in receiving the healthcare they need (Ali et al., 2013), educational opportunities which fit their preferences and abilities (Ahmad, 2018) and being hired in any employment sector (Ravaud, Madiot & Ville, 1992).

Secondly, disabled people are having a hard time to fully engage in social life and in participation in recreation activities (Lippold & Burns, 2009; Abells, Burbidge & Minnes, 2008). This phenomenon became more visible than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. People with physical and intellectual disabilities felt more detached from society and felt more socially isolated, because they could not easily get access to their regular facilities and activities with the social distancing rules (Constantino, Sahin, Piven, Rodgers & Tschida, 2020). One of the consequences of social isolation was a lack of physical activity and social gatherings.

Thirdly, people with disabilities experience lower self-determination, less social abilities and a lower general quality of life (Nota, Ferrari, Soresi & Wehmeyer, 2007). Therefore, we can conclude that people with disabilities experience many barriers, which has a bad effect on their physical and mental health. Also, most importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the development of a greater gap between people with disabilities and without disabilities. To dismiss the development of a greater gap and to strive for a more inclusive society, the European Union set up a Union of Equality Strategy for the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the period of 2021-2030 (EMPL, 2021). The aim is to create more autonomy, equality and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The Union of Equality Strategy for the rights of Persons with Disabilities states there are around 87 million people with disabilities in Europe (EMPL, 2021). However, numbers of those with intellectual disabilities in Europe are not very clear. Individuals, diagnosed with intellectual disabilities, experience their disabilities in a different way and have diverse consequences for their engagement in society. To give people with intellectual disabilities equal access to education and the labour market, national strategies should cover the specific needs of persons with diagnoses. This starts with creating policies for children with intellectual disabilities.

One thing to worry about is that research shows us that children with intellectual disabilities are scoring significantly lower on fitness tests compared to children with a typical intellectual development (Golubović, Maksimović, Golubović & Glumbić, 2012). From guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), children and adolescents are expected to be at least 60 minutes active per day (WHO, 2020). Unfortunately, according to the WHO, 81% of non-disabled adolescents between the age of 11 and 17 years old do not meet these requirements (WHO, 2020). Girls in this age category were even less active. Currently, in Europe, people with intellectual disabilities face difficulties accessing the same opportunities to participate in different type of sports, fitness, and other physical activities (Frey, Stanish & Temple, 2008; Bartlo & Klein, 2011). This results in health disparities in the present but predicts health in later life as well (Ouellette-Kuntz, 2005). The current lack of physical activity needs to be addressed more.

By providing frequent sporting opportunities for these children, their physical health and mental health will improve. By encouraging them to exercise with others in a safe environment, children with intellectual disabilities meet new people, gain confidence in their own social and physical skills, learn about others and establish social bonds. Taking the time to listen and to adapt to their specific needs will contribute to a more inclusive society.



Objectives and Format

This training manual has various objectives that are designed to support coaches and staff delivering programmes for players with intellectual disabilities. The aim is to provide insightful exercises sourced from Special Project Partners, who have tried and tested them, ensuring that the activities are practical and effective. Moreover, the manual serves as a source of inspiration for coaches as they prepare sessions and activities, offering ideas they can draw from to include in their own sessions or adapt to fit the needs of their participants and circumstances.

The suggested number of staff is the minimum that it could be possible to manage each activity; however, it is possible that some players may require additional guidance (in some cases one-to-one support) and this should be factored into the planning and resourcing of the sessions.

The activities have been categorised into different sections (e.g. warm up, passing etc) to allow coaches to build a training session from scratch that will incorporate all of the key elements required to make it fun and beneficial to their players. It is also a useful tool for those looking to add diversity to their programmes, finding new activities to add to their databases.





Cone hunting



Level: 2-3



Group size: 8+



Duration: 10-20 min



Club: SV Werder Bremen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Dribbling/Warm up



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Tall cones that will be upturned
- Cones to mark the field of play

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Easy and quick build-up
- Few materials
- Easy to explain

Outcome(s)

- A playful competition

Description of the activity

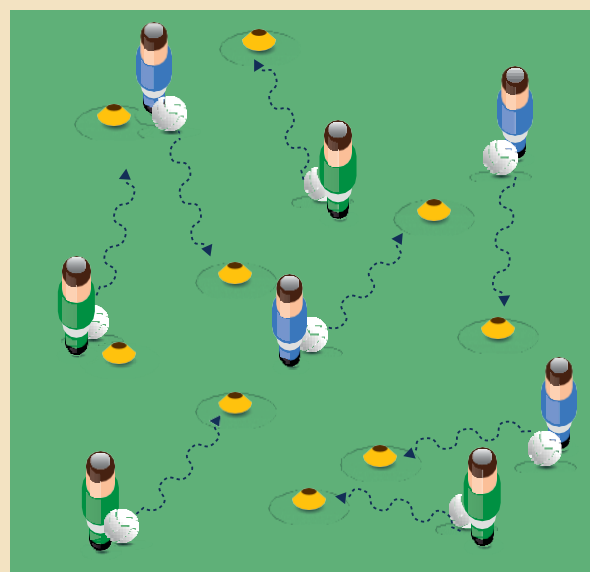
Two teams are formed, with one team attempting to overturn as many cones as possible using their hands, while the other team aims to put them upright quickly. After each round, lasting from 30 seconds to 1.5 minutes, the tasks switch, and the next round begins.

Positive points

Two teams are formed, with one team attempting to overturn as many cones as possible using their hands, while the other team aims to put them upright quickly. After each round, lasting from 30 seconds to 1.5 minutes, the tasks switch, and the next round begins.

Impact on participants

Promotion of:
Dribbling and passing skills, Orientation on the field & Sprinting



Variations of the activity

Possible variations after one or some rounds include:

- Players can attempt to throw a ball at the cone
- Players can try to kick the cone using a ball

Things to consider

- Balls can be shot out of the field

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

- Be patient with players with disabilities and give them more time if necessary
- Reorganise teams if one is too strong



Technical Actions Square



Level: 1-2-3



Group size: 6



Duration: 10 min



Club: Fundação Benfica



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Warm up



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 2 balls
- 4 markers/cones

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Development of driving and passing actions

Outcome(s)

Improvement of individual technique

Description of the activity

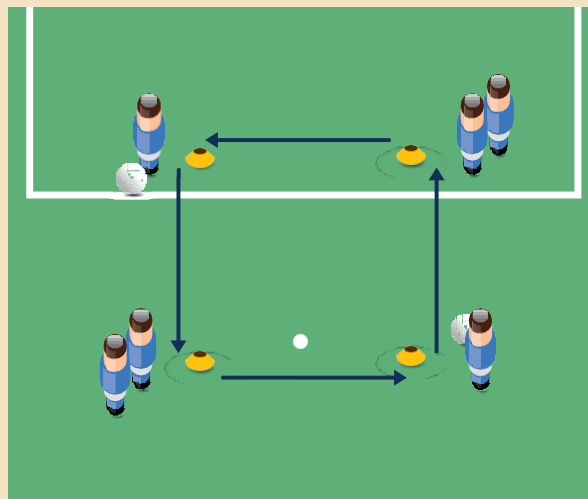
The exercise is performed in a clockwise direction with two balls simultaneously. In the first phase, the player with the ball drives to the player on the mark to their left, handing them the ball and occupying their position. In the second phase, driving is replaced by passing.

Positive points

It was a very simple exercise to do

Impact on participants

Lots of contact with the ball



Variations of the activity

- Add one more ball
- Place obstacles (cones, marks, etc.) between the corners

Things to consider

Create a number of squares if you have a lot of players to avoid some from being inactive for too long

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Too many/too few players to make the activity effective

Passing Warm-up Drill



Level: 2



Group size: Even number



Duration: 5-10 min



Club: -



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Passing/Warm- up



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Cones

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Enhance passing accuracy
- Develop movement Off the ball
- Team coordination
- Build quick decision-making skills

Outcome(s)

- Improved passing skills
- Enhanced agility and movement
- Better teamwork
- Quicker decision-making

Description of the activity

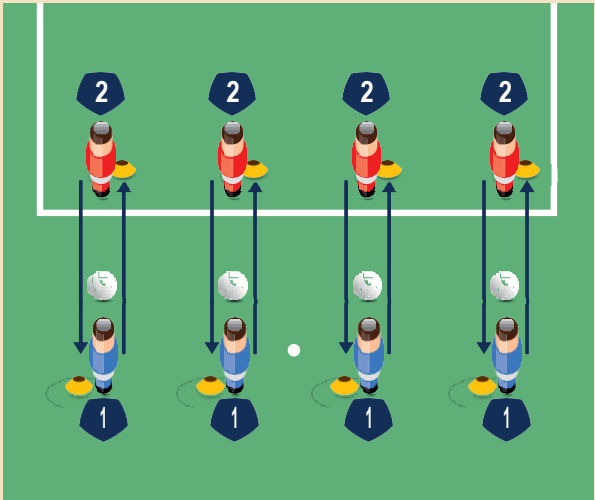
- Pass and Move: Each player passes the ball to the player directly across from them and then follows their pass by moving to the next cone (often done in a circular or straight-line motion).
- Rotation: The drill encourages constant movement, with players rotating to ensure everyone practices both receiving and passing.

Positive points

- Warmup
- A lot of touches
- Every player moves at the same time

Impact on participants

Passing skills, Warm up



Variations of the activity

- One-Touch Passing: Players are required to pass the ball with only one touch, increasing the difficulty and speed of the drill.

Things to consider

- Pass quality
- Communication
- Player focus
- Movement timing

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

- Coordination issues
- Quite intense activity for a warm-up



One-two pass with finish



Level: 1



Group size: 8



Duration: 20-30 min



Club: Bayer Leverkusen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Passing/shooting



Collabs / Partners: Two players

Equipment needed:

- Cones

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

-

Outcome(s)

-

Description of the activity

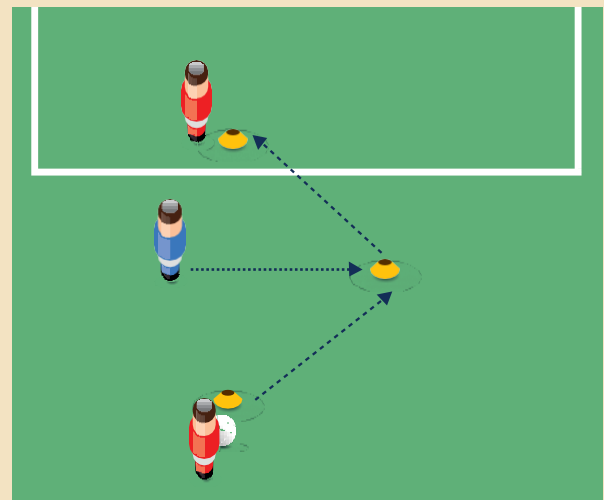
- Player 1 passes the ball from the outside to Player 2 in the middle.
- Player 2 passes the ball with one touch through the two red cones back to Player 1.
- Player 1 receives the ball and runs with it to the goal line, where he crosses it into the middle to Player 2. Subsequently, Player 2 takes the shot.

Positive points

Ball control, cross, finish

Impact on participants

- Quick, controlled passing
- Improved finishing skills



Things to consider

- It could be a struggle to succeed with one-touch

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

- One-touch one-two pass is too difficult for some



Dribbling game



Level: 2-3



Group size: 3+



Duration: 10-20 min



Club: Fundação Benfica



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Pass/Shoot



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Ball
- Cones
- Goal

Staff needed:

1 Coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Improve passing accuracy
- Enhance quick decision-making
- Develop shooting skills

Outcome(s)

A playful competition

Description of the activity

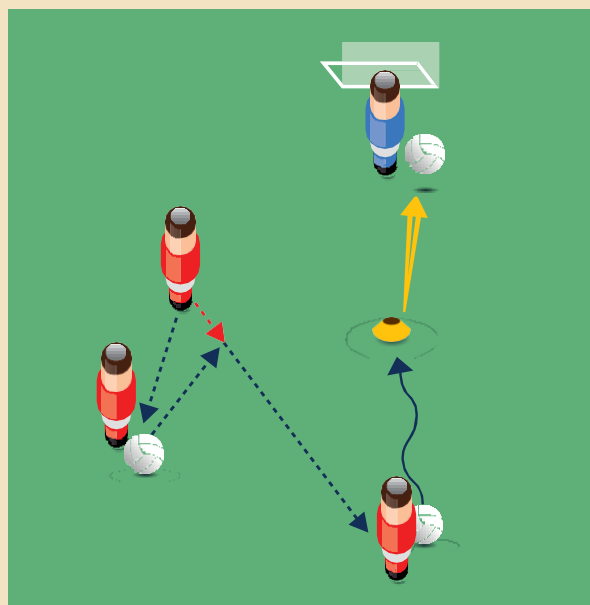
Players pass the ball in sequence Player 1 to Player 2, then Player 2 to Player 3 who then shoots at the goal. The drill focuses on quick, accurate passes and finishes with a shot. Players rotate positions after each sequence.

Positive points

- Enhances passing accuracy
- Improves shooting under pressure
- Encourages quick decision-making
- Builds teamwork and coordination

Impact on participants

- Boosts confidence in passing and shooting
- Develops quicker on-field decision-making
- Strengthens team dynamics and communication
- Enhances overall game performance



Variations of the activity

Possible variations after one or some rounds include:

- One-Touch Passing: Players must pass and shoot with one touch, increasing the drill's intensity.
- Timed Drill: Set a time limit for each sequence to add pressure, focusing on speed and precision.
- Defender Introduction: Add a defender to pressure the shooter or

Things to consider

- Ensure passes are sharp and accurate
- Focus on proper shooting technique
- Keep the drill pace high for realism
- Encourage communication between players

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Be patient with players with disabilities and give them more time if necessary, spacing and Positioning, fitness Level

Passing and Control- 2 touch



Level: All



Group size: 5, 10, 15, 20



Duration: 15-20 min



Club: -



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Passing/Controlling



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Cones
- Balls
- Bibs

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

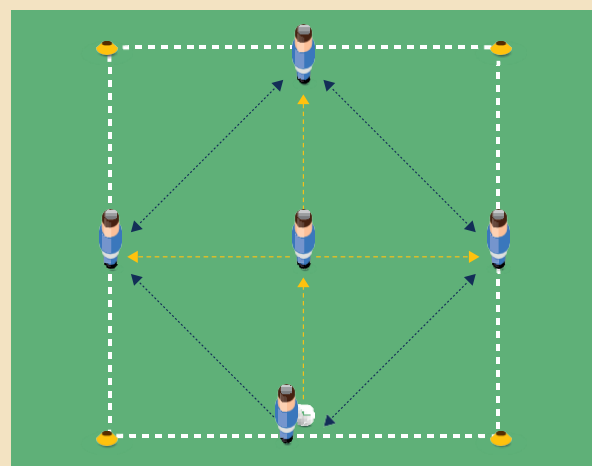
Improve players passing and control

Outcome(s)

- Improved high tempo
- No sloppy passes

Description of the activity

- Area: 10x10 meters, gates 1 meter
- 5 players, use mannequins or cones for middle area
- Pass to the middle player, with max 2 touches he plays it out to any of the 3 other outside players, they lay diagonal to another player and process starts again.
- Rotate the middle player every two minutes- can play competition middle player gets point for 2 touch play and scoring through outside gates.



Variations of the activity

- **Stationary Passing:** Players stay at their cones without moving after passing. The focus is on making accurate, short passes to the next player in the sequence.
- **Pass and Clap:** After making a pass, the player claps their hands to signal that they are ready to receive the ball again. This simple action helps keep them engaged and focused.
- **Use Both Feet:** Encourage players to alternate feet when passing the ball. First, they use their dominant foot, then try with their weaker foot on the next turn. This helps in developing basic coordination and comfort with both feet.

- Encourage Communication: Players should call out the name of the player they are passing to. This introduces the concept of communication in the field in a fun and simple way.

Positive points

Improves basic passing, builds confidence, enhances coordination, and encourages communication.

Impact on participants

- Builds confidence
- Improves basic skills
- Enhances teamwork
- Fosters love for the game

Recommendations to share

- Keep sessions short and fun
- Praise effort over results
- Use simple, clear instructions
- Rotate players to different positions
- Encourage teamwork and communication

Things to consider

- Keep it fun
- Use simple language
- Encourage effort
- Focus on technique
- Maintain a slow pace
- Watch attention span

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

- Before: Difficulty in maintaining focus and enthusiasm
- During: Frustration with skill level, potential boredom
- After: Retention of learned skills, maintaining interest in future sessions.



Triangle passing



Level: All



Group size: 3/6/9



Duration: 10-25 min



Club: -



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Passing/Movement



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 1 ball
- Cones

Staff needed:

1 or 2 coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Improve passing accuracy and receiving skills
- Practice passing at different angles
- Promote communication and teamwork

Outcome(s)

- Learn to pass and control the ball

Description of the activity

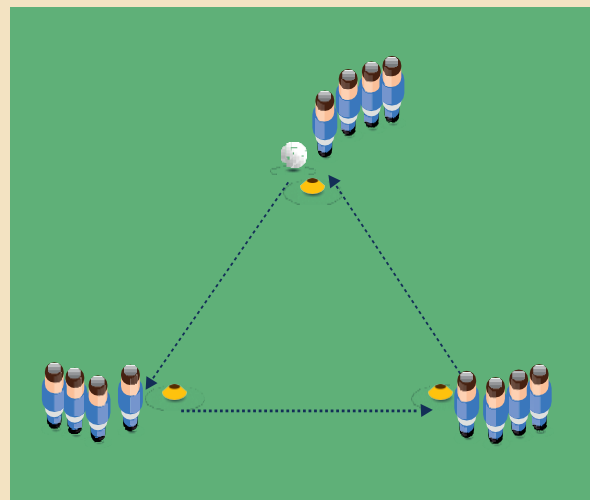
Players pass the ball to each other following a specific order, either clockwise or counter-clockwise. Encourage one-touch passes and proper receiving techniques. After a while, you can increase the difficulty by enlarging the triangle or introducing a defender.

Positive points

- Increased Communication
- Enhanced Passing Accuracy
- Improved Receiving Skills

Impact on participants

- Skill improvement
- Increased confidence
- Physical fitness



Variations of the activity

Possible variations after one or some rounds include:

- **Defender Added:** Introduce a defender to apply pressure and challenge passing accuracy.
- **One-Touch Passing:** Require players to use only one touch to pass the ball.
- **Passing with Weak Foot:** Encourage use of the weaker foot to improve versatility.

Things to consider

- Communication
- Intensity Level

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

- Lack of communication
- Player movement
- Pass quality
- Spacing



Dribbling game



Level: 1-2-3



Group size: 10



Duration: 15 min



Club: Fundação Benfica



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Dribbling



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 2 goals
- 4 balls
- 6 markers/cones

Staff needed:

2 Coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

To develop dribbling abilities

Outcome(s)

Improvement of individual technique

Description of the activity

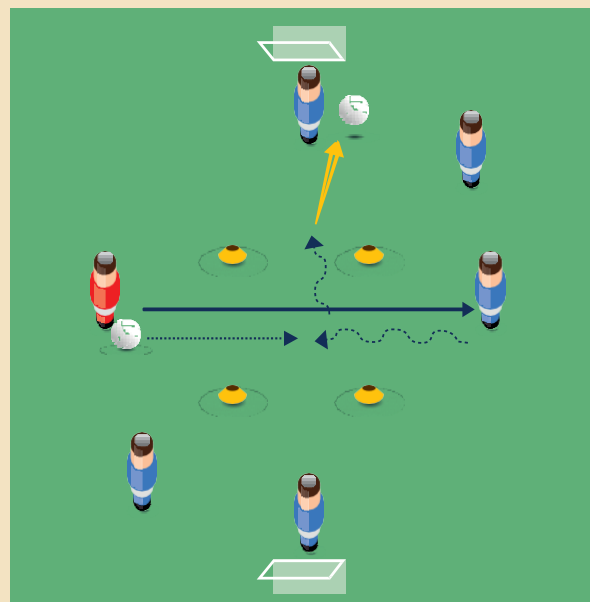
The red player 2 executes a pass to the blue player 2. Subsequently, the blue player 2 is tasked with advancing the ball to the red square. Upon reaching the square, they must navigate past the player who delivered the pass and proceed to conclude the play by scoring in one of the two goals. Following this sequence, the players switch queues to continue the exercise.

Positive points

- Encouraging players to showcase creativity in feints
- Highly competitive drill

Impact on participants

Opportunity for the player to surpass the opponent and score a multitude of goals



Variations of the activity

- Substituting the pass with a driving action
- Prescribing a specific feint technique
- Establishing a distinct goal or target

Things to consider

When players are not of similar levels, the less fit participant may lose motivation due to the challenges faced and a sense of inability to keep up with others.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

If the square is too small, clashes between players may occur



Finishing with slalom



Level: 1-2-3



Group size: 12



Duration: 15 min



Club: NAC Breda



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Rounding practice



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 14 cones/markers
- 10 balls
- 2 small goals
- Field size: 20x15 m per field

Staff needed:

2 trainers

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Rounding practice: finishing with slalom

Outcome(s)

The participants shoot better on target

Description of the activity

The coach instructs the participants to form two groups. The players are required to navigate through a slalom to reach the goal. A single point is awarded for successfully reaching the goal. Additionally, two extra points are scored by the player who manages to shoot one of the cones (totaling three points) into the goal. For larger groups, an extra course is added.

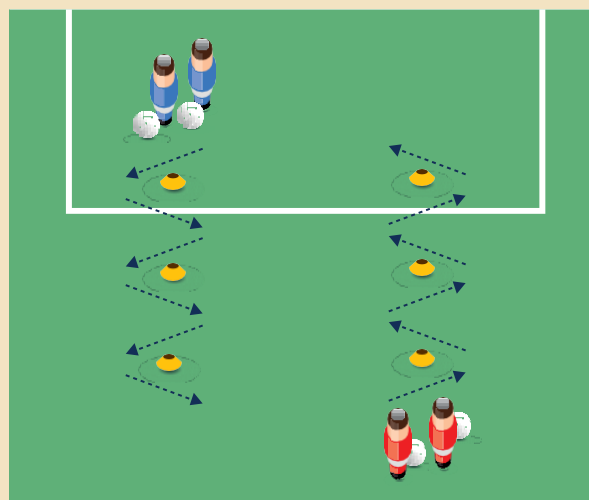
During coaching, emphasis is placed on the ball being kept close to the foot throughout the action. The instructor encourages an enthusiastic, inspiring, and stimulating atmosphere.

Positive points

It is structured and clearly laid out

Impact on participants

They get more confident when shooting on target



Variations of the activity

In the alternative version, participants are encouraged to shoot using their weaker leg. Another variation involves introducing a goalkeeper to the goal, creating a one-on-one situation with the goalkeeper.

Things to consider

- Pass quality
- Communication
- Player focus
- Movement timing

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Observing how the children cope with defeat is important. It's crucial to be attentive to their reactions, especially if they experience difficulties scoring.

Dribbling game

	Level:	1-2
	Group size:	8
	Duration:	15 min
	Club:	NAC Breda

	Venue / Location:	Football field
	Topic:	Technique
	Collabs / Partners:	-



Equipment needed:

- Field size: 15m x 15m
- 4 markers/cones
 - 4 balls

Staff needed:

2 Coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

To improve dribbling skills, to protect the ball from defenders

Outcome(s)

Better attacks, protect the ball better

Description of the activity

Pairs should be formed, with one participant possessing a ball and dribbling through the designated area, while the other attempts to follow closely. Upon receiving a signal from the trainer, the player with the ball is tasked with shielding it. If the ball is successfully taken away, the players switch roles.

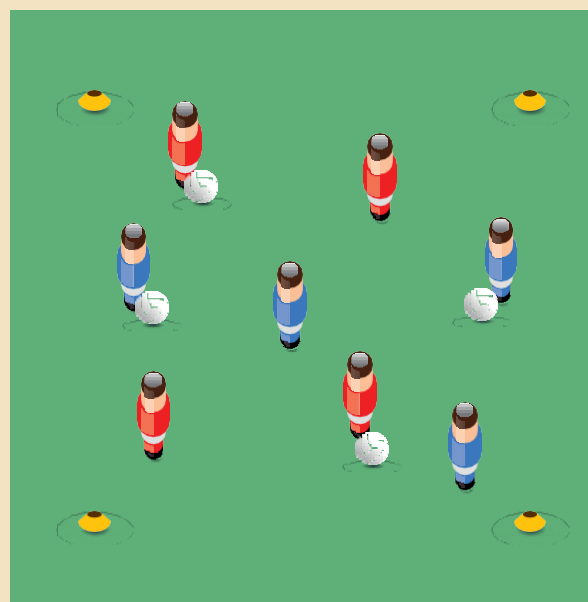
Coaching moments during this activity involve maintaining motivation and encouragement. Emphasize the importance of tight play, encouraging participants to keep the play close and controlled.

Positive points

They learn to retain possession of the ball.

Impact on participants

Opportunity for the player to surpass the opponent and score a multitude of goals



Variations of the activity

- Reduce the size of the field.
- Allow the defender to incorporate cutting movements during the activity.

Things to consider

The players are mainly focused on the ball.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

As the players' skill levels may differ, create pairs that are evenly matched in terms of abilities.



Dribble king



Level: 3



Group size: 12



Duration: 15 min



Club: Bayer Leverkusen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Dribbling with finish



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Cones
- Bibs
- 1 small goal
- 1 ball

Staff needed:

1 coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- To improve dribbling skills
- To practice accuracy of passes and shots

Description of the activity

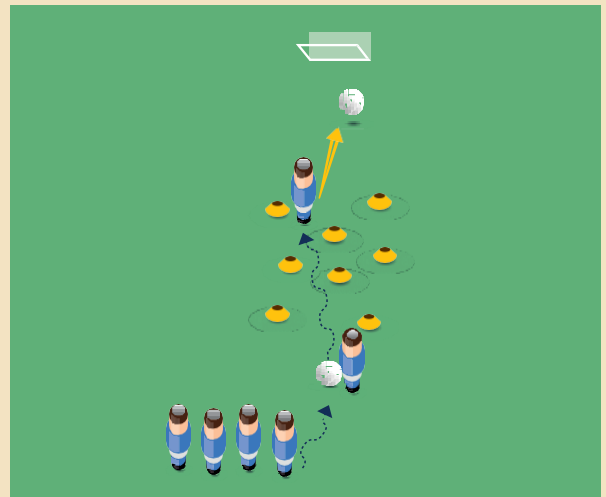
The player dribbles the ball between the objects without touching them, and then proceeds with a targeted shot towards the mini goal.

Positive points

Targeted finishes

Impact on participants

The participants found it fun and had to work on concentrating



Variations of the activity

- Set paths
- Subsequent one-two pass

Things to consider

There were at times too frequent touches of the objects. Make spaces bigger if too challenging.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Too difficult for some (remove some objects in that case)



Dribble king



Level: 3



Group size: 12



Duration: 15 min



Club: Bayer Leverkusen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Dribbling with finish



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Cones
- Bibs
- 1 small goal
- 1 ball

Staff needed:

1 coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- To improve dribbling skills
- To practice accuracy of passes and shots

Description of the activity

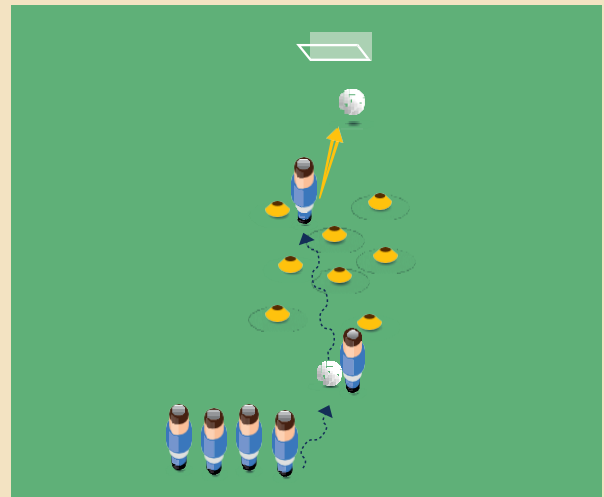
The player dribbles the ball between the objects without touching them, and then proceeds with a targeted shot towards the mini goal.

Positive points

Targeted finishes

Impact on participants

The participants found it fun and had to work on concentrating



Variations of the activity

- Set paths
- Subsequent one-two pass

Things to consider

There were at times too frequent touches of the objects. Make spaces bigger if too challenging.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Too difficult for some (remove some objects in that case)



One-two pass with finish



Level: 1



Group size: 8



Duration: 20-30 min



Club: Bayer Leverkusen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Passing/shooting



Collabs / Partners: Two players

Equipment needed:

- 1 Goal
- Balls
- Cones/placement markers

Staff needed:

1-2 Coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- To improve passing skills
- To practice one-touch shooting

Description of the activity

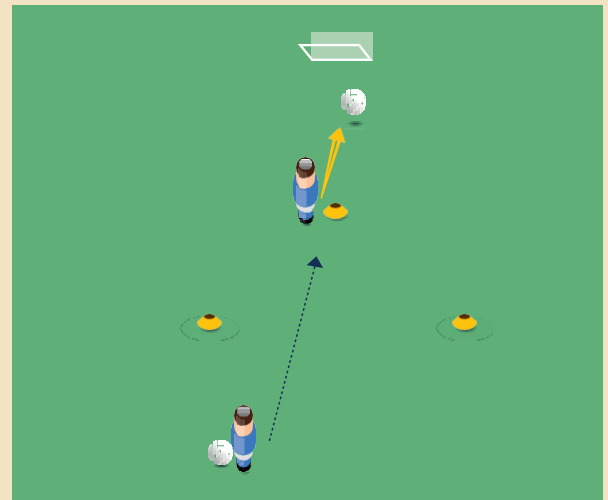
Player 1 passes the ball from the outside to Player 2 in the middle. Player 2 executes a one-touch pass through the two red cones back to Player 1. Upon receiving the ball, Player 1 runs with it toward the goal line and crosses it into the middle for Player 2. Subsequently, Player 2 takes the shot.

Positive points

Ball control, crosses, finishing

Impact on participants

- Quick, controlled passing
- Finishing



Variations of the activity

- Switch sides
- Reducing the distances between the cones

Things to consider

Things to consider included instances where players did not consistently use one touch on the ball.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

One-touch one-two pass is too difficult for some



Football activity



Level: 1-2



Group size: 8



Duration: 20 min



Club: KAS Eupen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Shooting



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 16 cones (4 colours)
- 1 goal

Staff needed:

1 coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Practice of fast reaction, dribbling and finishing on goal

Outcome(s)

Improvement of individual technique

Description of the activity

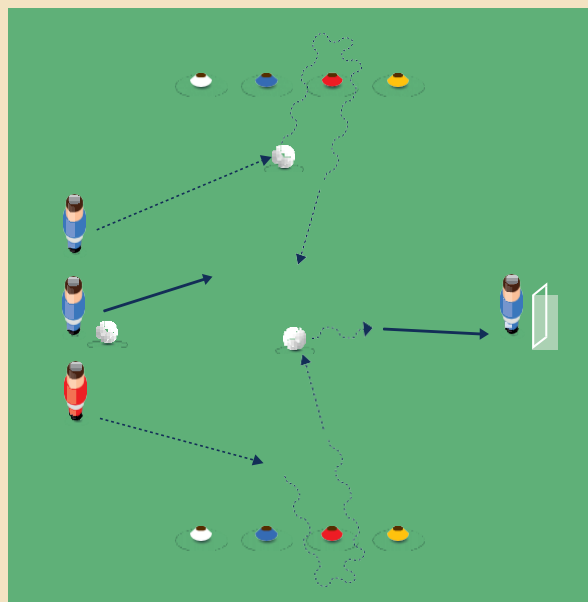
The coach instructs a colour, and the players are required to dribble around that specified colour before being granted the opportunity to take a shot on goal.

Positive points

- Dribbling
- Finishing on goal
- Fun Highly competitive drill

Impact on participants

Feeling of motivation



Variations of the activity

Progression involves providing specific directions or techniques for dribbling around the cone.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

The emphasis on the number of goals scored by players or a team may create a competitive environment. The rule of awarding a point to the first player to score could lead to rushed or overly aggressive play.

Shooting after diagonal pass



Level: 1-2-3



Group size: 12



Duration: 15 min



Club: Fundação Benfica



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Shooting



Collabs / Partners: -



Equipment needed:

- 1 Goal
- Balls
- Cones/placement markers

Staff needed:

1 Coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Develop shooting ability

Outcome(s)

Improvement of individual technique

Description of the activity

The player positioned adjacent to the goal initiates a pass to their teammate diagonally positioned on their side. The receiving player then takes a shot at the goal. The exercise is executed alternately by the red and yellow players.

Positive points

A dynamic and stimulating exercise is created when there is competition between groups.

Impact on participants

There is a possibility of scoring a lot of goals.



Variations of the activity

Conditioning the shot with the non-dominant foot.

In a one-on-one (1x1) scenario after making the pass, the player endeavors to regain possession of the ball.

Things to consider

If the distance between the players is too large, it can prove challenging for the pass to be successful.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

-



Run behind



Level: 1



Group size: 8



Duration: 20-30 min



Club: Bayer Leverkusen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Shooting



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Balls
- 1 goal
- Cones/poles/placement markers

Staff needed:

2 coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- To practice passing
- To train running without the ball to the space

Outcome(s)

-

Description of the activity

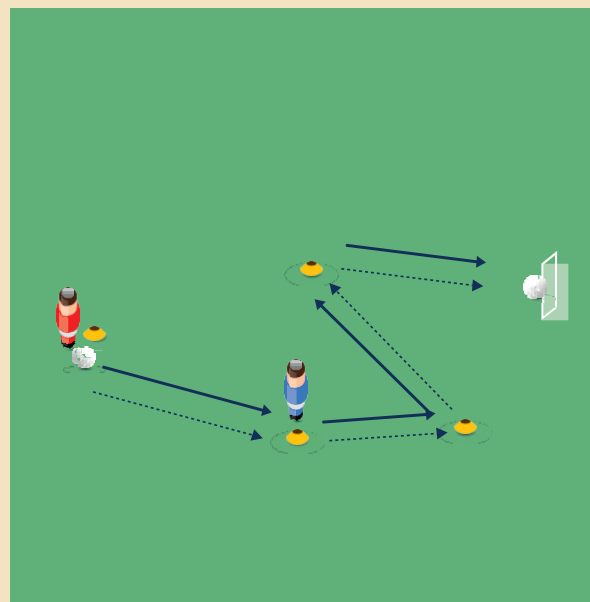
Player 1 passes the ball to the outside to Player 2. Subsequently, Player 1 runs behind the back of Player 2. Player 2 controls the ball, turns, and passes to Player 1 in stride. Afterward, Player 2 runs into the middle in front of the goal and shoots at the goal. There, the player receives the ball from Player 1 from the outside.

Positive points

Cross and finish

Impact on participants

Tactical understanding, finishing



Variations of the activity

Cross with the weaker foot (switch sides)

Things to consider

Incorrect running paths
Difficulties with ball control

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Issues with applying in game situations



Shooting after diagonal pass



Level: 1



Group size: 10



Duration: 20 min



Club: KAS Eupen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Duel



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 5 cones
- 1 big goal,
- 2 small goals

Staff needed:

1 Coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Dribbling
- Finishing on goal
- Duels
- Reaction

Outcome(s)

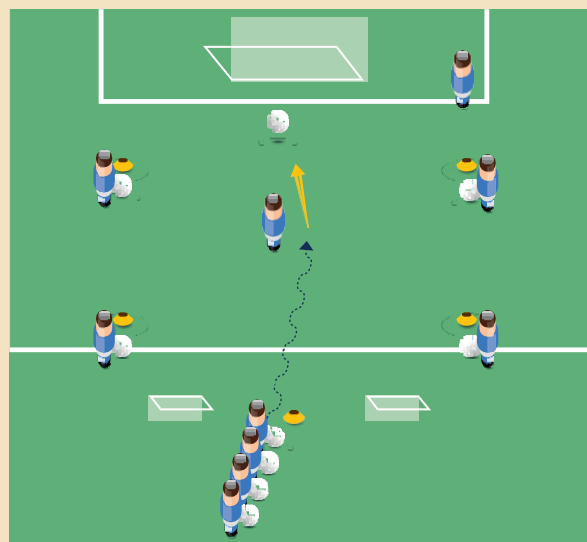
-

Description of the activity

The striker (Player 1) initiates with the ball and dribbles towards the goal. The coach calls out a number (e.g., 2), and the defender associated with that number attempts to win the ball. If the defender successfully captures the ball, they are then allowed to dribble towards the two small goals.

Positive points

Fun, dribbling, finishing



Variations of the activity

- Change defender positions
- Change the starting point of the defenders

Things to consider

-

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

-

Impact on participants

There is a possibility of scoring a lot of goals.



2:2/3:3 Game



Level: 1-2



Group size: 4-8



Duration: 15 min



Club: NAC Breda



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Game training



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 4 cones/markers per field
- 1 ball per field

Field size: 14mx10m (2:2) and 16mx12m (3:3)

Staff needed:

1 or 2 coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Specific game training 2:2 or 3:3

Outcome(s)

Better ball contact

Description of the activity

In this game format, the game is played in a 2v2 or 3v3 configuration. The teams have the opportunity to score by dribbling over the opposing side's line. Emphasis is placed on maximising ball contacts, and substitutions are recommended every 2 minutes. If there are eight or more players, a second pitch should be set up.

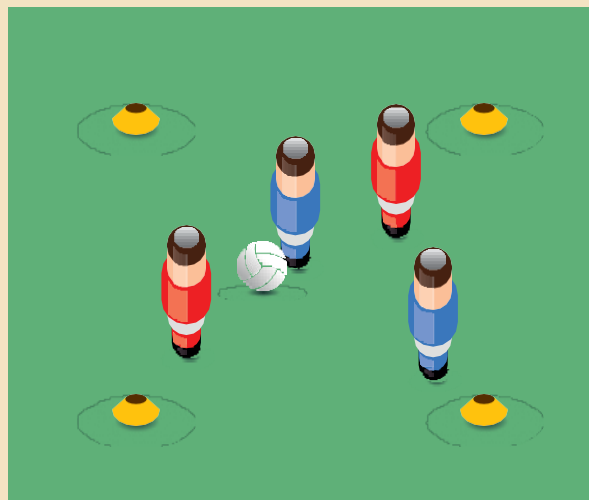
Coaching moments involve being stimulating, motivating, and enthusiastic.

Positive points

The players work well together

Impact on participants

Players learn to work together, pass the ball, and keep track of the ball all the way to the goal.



Variations of the activity

Players are encouraged to engage in the game (e.g. minimum touches) before being eligible to score.

An additional option is to permit one extra player to participate.

Alternatively, a player from the team in possession of the ball can join the game.

Things to consider

-

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

In order to accommodate varying skill levels among players, the instruction is to create teams that are evenly matched.



2v2 mini tournament

("champions league" with ascent and descent)



Level: All



Group size: Minimum 6



Duration: >10 min



Club: SV Werder Bremen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Game



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- Goals can be built with: Mini-goals, cones, rods...
- Cones to mark the fields

Staff needed:

One or more coaches

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Easy build-up of the activity
- High activity time

Outcome(s)

- Everybody moves at the same time
- Playing a small-sided game leads to more interaction of every player

Description of the activity

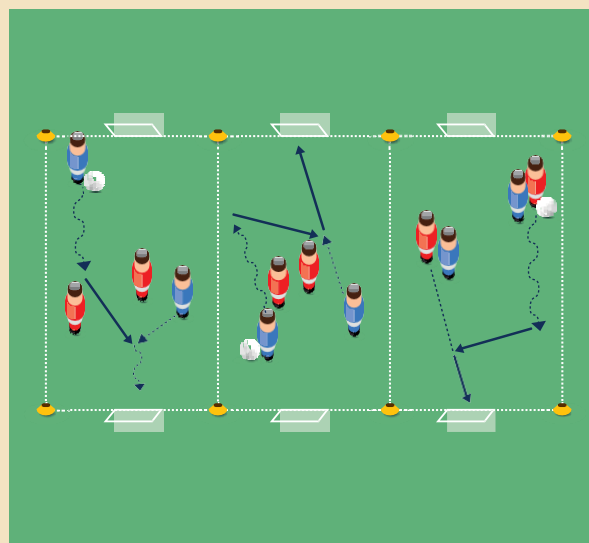
Two players engage in a match against two other players in a small field/ zone with small goals. If their team emerges victorious, they ascend one field higher (in a direction specified by the coach), and in the case of a loss, they descend one field down. In the event of a draw, the teams may play "scissor-rock-paper," and the winner of this game earns a point for ascending. Each team tallies points for a win.

Possible leagues (for the field labelling):

- ...2nd League, 1st League, Europa League, Champions League...
- Points can be assigned as follows:
- 2nd League: 1 Point, 1st League: 2 Points, and so on.

Positive points

Easy build-up of the activity



Variations of the activity

- Change defender positions
- Change the starting point of the defenders

Things to consider

- Challenging to build equal teams
- Motivate and praise players whether they are winning or losing

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

Teams which don't win could get frustrated rebranding of fields, switch players of teams

Impact on participants

Promotion of:

- Interaction on the field
- Dribbling and passing skills
- Decision-making ability



Football activity



Level: 1



Group size: 10



Duration: 20 min



Club: KAS Eupen



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Game form



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

2 goals

Staff needed:

1 coach

Main objective(s) of the activity:

Fun, game situation, small side games

Outcome(s)

-

Description of the activity

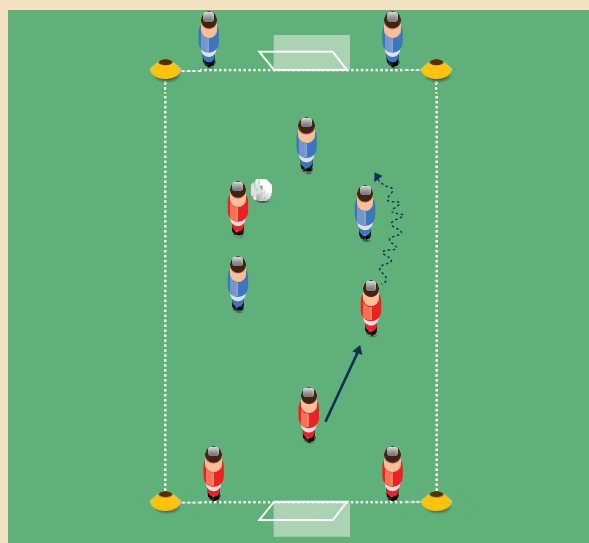
The teams begin with a 3 vs. 3 setup. If a team concedes a goal, that team is granted an extra player. This progression continues until the game evolves into a 5 vs 5 match.

Positive points

Positive points included fun, effective dribbling, successful goal shots, precise passing, realistic game situations, adept defender pressure, and a positive team spirit.

Impact on participants

Motivation, team spirit



Variations of the activity

Start the game with 2 vs 2

Things to consider

-

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

In order to accommodate varying skill levels among players, the instruction is to create teams that are evenly matched.



Training session



Level: All



Group size: 8



Duration: 90 min



Club: Levante Foundation



Venue / Location: Football field



Topic: Football for people with intellectual disabilities



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

10 Balls, 20 Cones, 5 Hoops, 5 Fences, 2 Goals, 4 Bibs

Staff needed:

2 coaches and 1 physiotherapist

Main objective(s) of the activity:

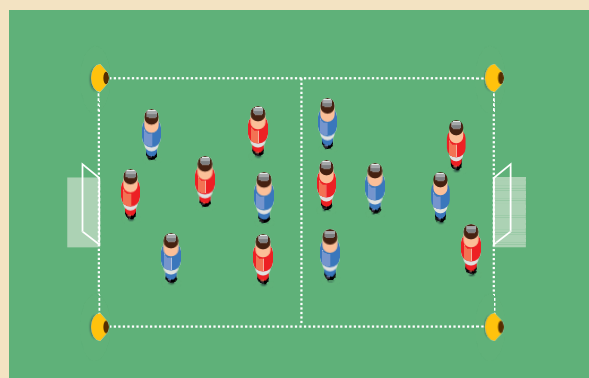
Objectives in attack for the players include working on driving with both legs from a technical standpoint and understanding positions on the field tactically. The ABP focus is on the throw-in, and the overarching value emphasised is humility.

Outcome(s)

Low control capacity is observed in driving with both legs. There is also a low attention span for driving and looking ahead. Half of the team demonstrates the ability to avoid obstacles while doing the exercise, while the other half does not possess this skill. Additionally, some players find it challenging to position themselves effectively on the field.

Description of the activity

The training session is divided into three parts for the players. In the warm-up, they engage in the spider game with a ball, followed by postures to enhance physical preparation. The main part consists of three exercises: the traffic light, focusing on running with the ball while raising the head; a skill circuit to practice avoiding obstacles; and finally, a match. The training session is divided into three parts for the players. In the warm-up, they engage in the spider game with a ball, followed by postures to enhance physical preparation. The main part consists of three exercises: the traffic light, focusing on running with the ball while raising the head; a skill circuit to practice avoiding obstacles; and finally, a match. The cooldown involves a dynamic activity to work on the value of humility while lowering the pulse rate. Each player, in the process, shares two positive aspects and two areas for improvement.



Variations of the activity

The variables to be worked on, in addition to sports, will be at a psychological level: Attention, Concentration, Motivation, Communication

Things to consider

Understanding the positional aspects of football, consider different ways of explaining (verbal, visual etc.) to meet the needs of the group.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity

However, considering the low level of the group, one of the challenges they face is learning how to position themselves effectively on the field during competitions.

Impact on participants

The impact on the players is positive as they enhance their skills through the game of football.

Positive points

Perfect number to perform exercises and not to stand still at any time.



Healthy habits workshop



Level: All levels



Group size: 20 people



Duration: 1h



Club: Fundación Levante UD



Venue / Location: Classroom or indoor hall/space



Topic: Nutrition



Collabs / Partners: -

Equipment needed:

- 1 room
- Projector
- Computer
- Food cards

Staff needed:

Session leads/coordinators and supervising staff

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Learning the basics of nutrition
- Learning to eat like an athlete

Outcome(s):

- Improved ability to make food choices
- Improved awareness of nutritional habits

Description of the activity:

Session leader conducts a workshop where they explain fundamental aspects of sports nutrition. The workshop is divided into two parts: theory and practice. With a duration

of an hour, athletes gain knowledge about food groups, the significance of hydration, foods that should be limited, and guidelines on how to maintain a proper diet during championships.

Variations of the activity:

Athletes who are going to compete in championships have improved when it comes to preparing their own food.

Impact on participants:

The positive impact extends to all athletes in our school, providing them with valuable insights into habits, applicable in both their sporting endeavors and daily life.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity:

Ensuring the level of the session meets the needs of the players and participants. Presenting the topic in a way that recognises that people with disabilities face additional challenges to maintaining healthy weight and ensure no shame is attached to the conversation.





Levante UD Museum



Level: All levels



Group size: 30 people



Duration: 45 min



Club: Levante Foundation



Venue / Location: Valencia



Topic: History of Levante UD



Collabs / Partners: Diputació de Valencia, Generalitat de Valencia, Ajuntament de Valencia, Caixa Popular, L'éleman, Enfrío, Marcos Automoción, Gastroedictos, Timpers, Amariló, EFDN, Erasmus+

Equipment needed:

No materials are needed, beyond what is provided by the museum itself.

Staff needed:

- 1 coach for every 5 players
- Museum guide

Main objective(s) of the activity:

- Learn about the history of Levante UD
- To encourage social relations between the athletes
- Positively encourage the growth of a feeling of belonging to the club

Outcome(s):

The response from athletes and families was excellent. They left the activity knowing more about the club.

Description of the activity:

The players visit the Levante museum to learn about the history of the club from a guide.

Variations of the activity:

Level of knowledge about Levante UD

What worked well:

The duration of the activity is arranged to ensure their participation. The accessibility of the museum is also taken into consideration.

Things to consider:

Ensuring the level of the session meets the needs of the players and participants. Presenting the topic in a way that recognises that people with disabilities face additional challenges to maintaining healthy weight and ensure no shame is attached to the conversation.

Impact on participants:

The impact is positive because anything that involves group activities favours the personal development of the athletes.

Challenges and/or risks you could face before, during, and after the activity:

The challenge was to get a large number of athletes to sign up, as it could be related to the feeling of belonging to the team.

Recommendations to share:

Activities that encourage social interaction with some direct link to the team will contribute to a growing sense of belonging. This is something to keep in mind for the athletes we work with.





Conclusions

This manual is designed to give coaches and staff the tools and insights needed to work effectively with players who have intellectual disabilities. The exercises included have been tested and successfully used by Special Project Partners, proving their practicality and effectiveness. This gives coaches confidence that what's provided here works in real-world situations.

While the manual offers a solid foundation, it's important for coaches to be flexible and adapt the exercises to suit their players' individual needs. It's not just about following instructions but about using the ideas here to create sessions

that are fun, engaging, and supportive for everyone. The aim is to help all players, regardless of ability, enjoy and grow through football.

By using this manual, coaches are not just helping players develop football skills. They're creating a space where everyone feels included and valued, which can have a lasting impact on the players both on and off the pitch. In doing so, coaches play a part in building a more inclusive society, where football becomes a tool for positive change and growth for all.



main coordinator



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