

FULL SEASON ACADEMY TRAINING PROGRAM

48 Sessions (245 Practices) from Italian Serie 'A' Coaches

U13-U15



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Soccer Italian Style Coaches



Mirko Mazzantini
ACF Fiorentina
Academy Coach

Mirko Mazzantini coached at Empoli FC for 10 years, working with all the main age groups at academy level. In 2010 he was recruited by AFC Fiorentina to work with the U14/U15 Academy teams.

During the 2010/11 season Mirko won the U15 Italian Academy Serie 'A' championship.

In 2011/12 Mirko was the Assistant of the Fiorentina Reserve team during pre-season and he was the coach of the ACF Fiorentina U14 team who won the Academy Serie 'A' championship and some international tournaments.

Mirko is currently the ACF Fiorentina U15 coach for the 2012/13 season.

He is a qualified football coach through the "Young Players Coach" program and a UEFA 'B' Licenced Coach, as well as an author of many coaching publications, articles, books and DVDs.



Simone Bombardieri
Empoli FC
Academy Coach

Simone Bombardieri played for Empoli FC for 5 years. He then started his career as a coach for the club 15 years ago at the age of 22, where he has been coaching various academy age groups from U9-U14.

In the 2011/12 season, Simone was the coach of the Empoli FC U14 team who reached the final of the Nick Cup International Tournament, where they lost in extra time against Inter Milan. They also finished eighth in the Academy Serie 'A' championship.

Simone is currently the Empoli FC U15 coach for the 2012/13 season.

He is also a qualified football coach through the "Young Players Coach" program and a UEFA 'B' Licenced Coach, as well as an author of many coaching publications, articles, books and DVDs.

Tommaso Tanini
ACF Fiorentina
Academy Coach

We would like to give a special thanks to Tommaso Tanini for helping us produce this book. Tommaso has coached at Empoli FC for 11 years. Tommaso is now the Fitness Coach for the Fiorentina U15 team.

He is also a UEFA 'B' Licenced Coach.

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Individual Tactical Objective: Man marking from behind.

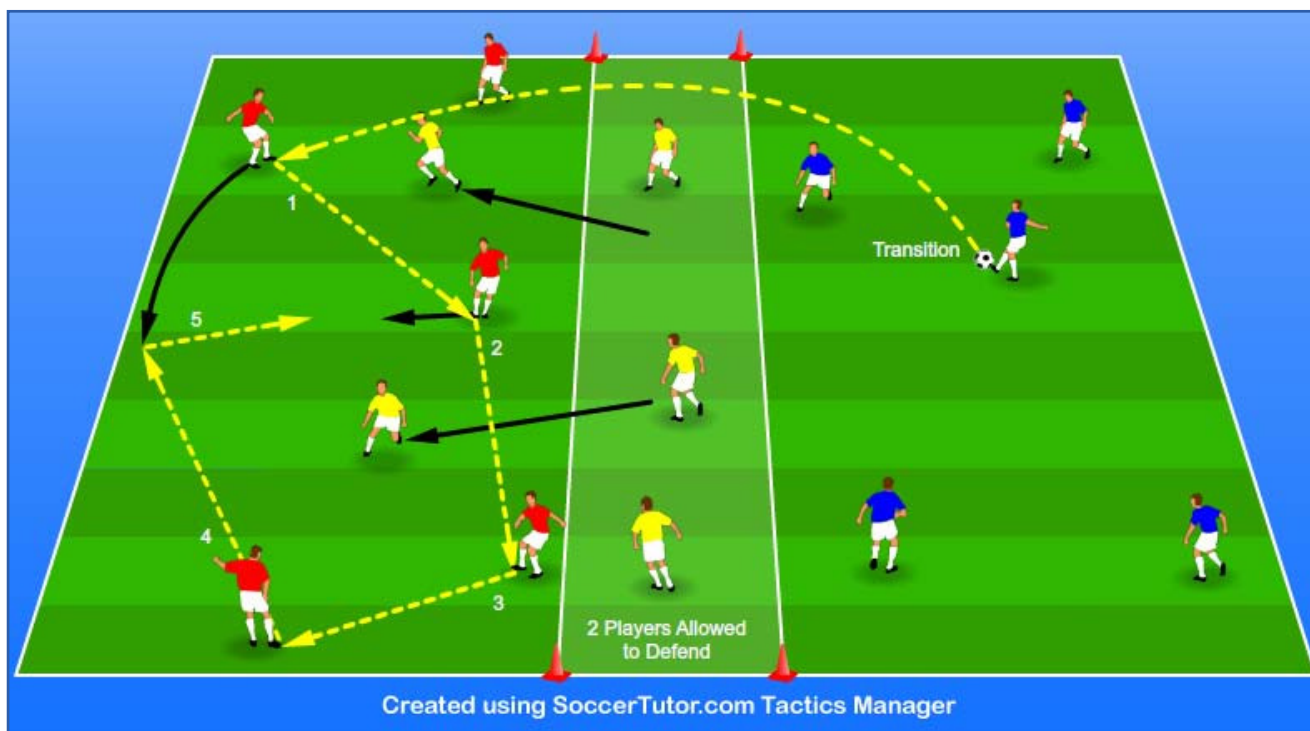
Technical Objective: Running with the ball and shooting.

Motor Athletic Objective: Strengthening and explosive power.

Duration of Session: 115 minutes

We recommend starting the session with exercises for general mobility to prevent injuries.

1. Warm Up Possession and Long Passing Transition Game 20 mins



Description

We have 3 teams of 5 players. Divide the area into 3 zones as shown in the diagram.

The team in possession (blue) play a long pass to the team in red. This team must make 5 passes before making a long pass back to the blue team.

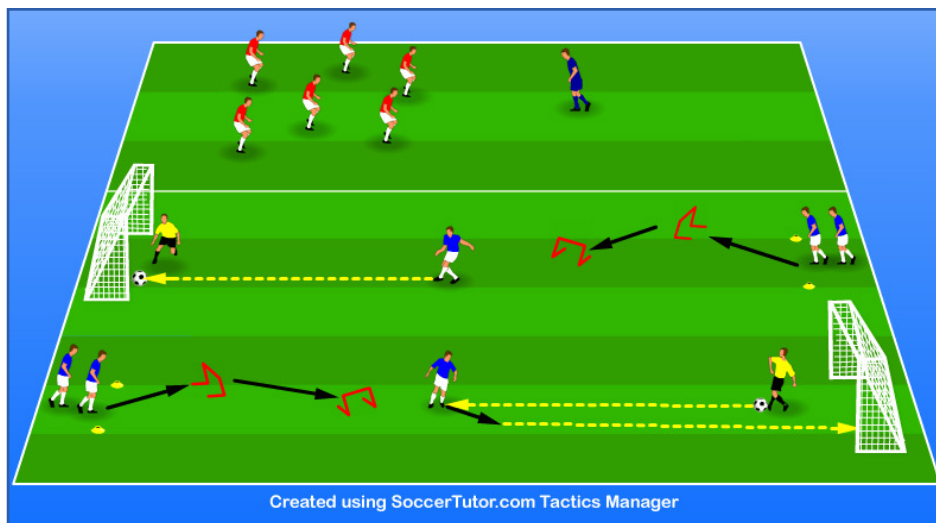
The yellow team must use 2 players to apply pressure in the appropriate zone, but 3 players must remain in the middle zone trying to intercept the ball.

If the defending team win the ball, they must pass the ball to the other team and the team who lost possession must then apply pressure (becoming the defending team).

Full warm up schedule:

- 1. Transition Game - 4 minutes.
- 2. Dynamic Stretching - 5 minutes.
- 3. Transition Game - 4 minutes.
- 4. Dynamic Stretching - 5 minutes.

2. Conditioning **Strengthening and Explosive Power** **15 mins**



Description
 4 minutes
 20 Squats (Maintain position for 10 seconds and recover for 10 seconds).
 2 minutes
 Stretching.
 4 minutes
 20 squats (Maintain position for 10 seconds, jump and recover for 10 seconds).
 5 minutes
 The players jump over the 2 hurdles, receive the ball from the goalkeeper and shoot.

3. Technical **Receiving, Turning and Dribbling with the Back to Goal** **15-20 mins**

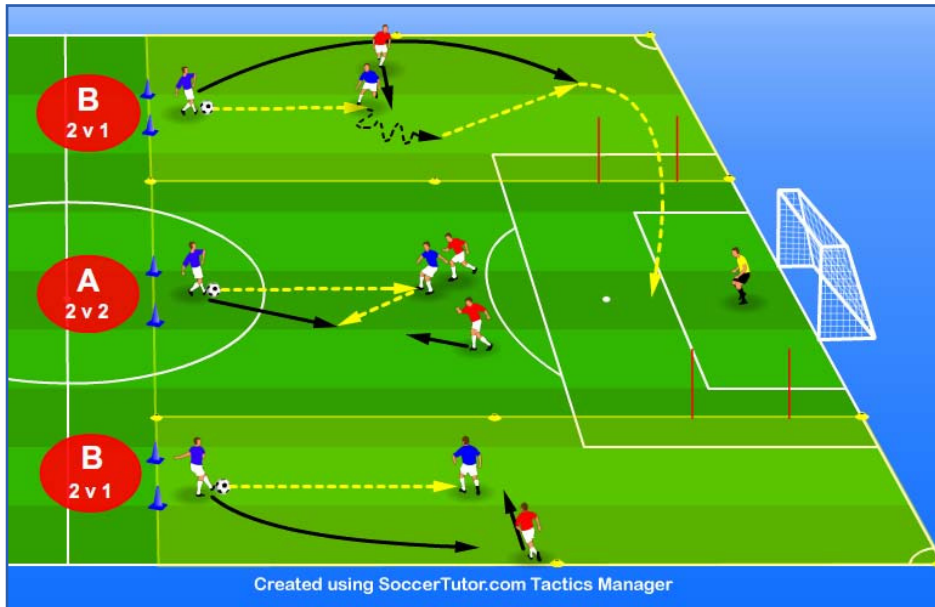


Description
 Players stand in the yellow square zones as shown in the diagram.
 They receive a pass from their teammate, turn and dribble towards the coloured goal called out by the coach.
 They must dribble through the cone goal while the teammate who passed the ball applies pressure from behind.

Coaching Points

1. The player should receive the ball on the half turn to make a quick transition to dribble the ball towards the cones.
2. A directional first touch is very important to quickly move towards the cone before the defender is able to close them down.

4. Game Situation **2v1 / 2v2 Man Marking from Behind** **20 mins**



Description

We have 3 zones with players receiving passes.

In zone A, there are 2 defenders and 1 of them marks the attacker from behind. The passer makes it a 2v2 situation.

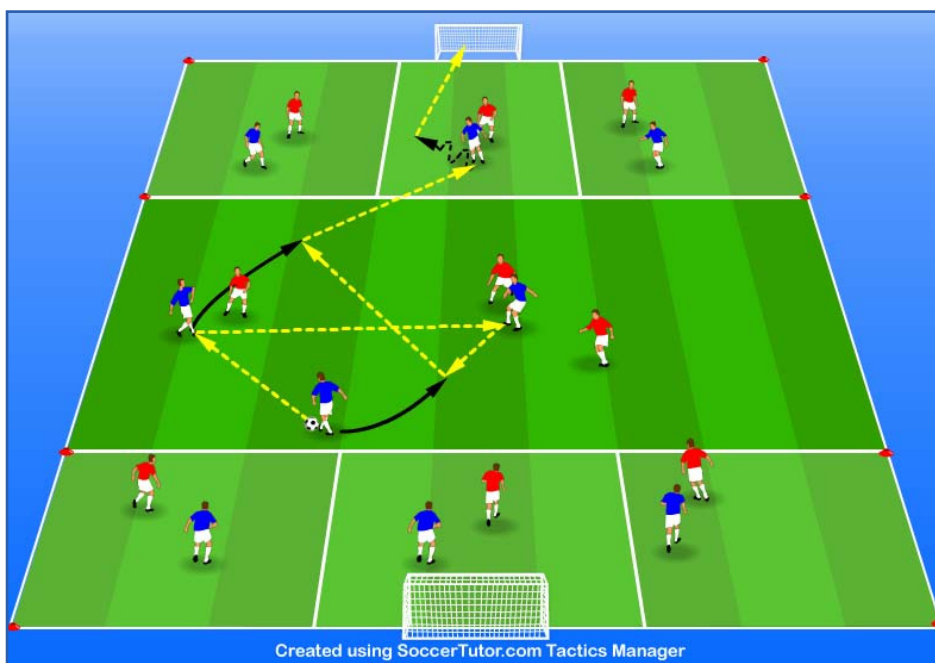
In the B zones, the defenders are positioned to the side and must try to prevent the attacker from turning towards the poles and crossing the ball.

In zone A, the objective is to score in the goal. In the B zones, the objective is to cross the ball through the 2 poles as shown in the diagram.

Variation

Defenders start from a distance of 4 yards away from the attacker (much nearer).

5. Specific Game **1v1 Man Marking in a 7 Zone Game** **20 mins**



Description

The area is divided into 1 central zone and 6 smaller zones.

1 attacker and 1 defender are in each small zone and the attackers have their backs to goal. After 4 passes in the central zone the ball can be passed to any of the attackers.

If the attacker beats the defender, they can shoot in the goal

Variation

1 midfielder can move into one of the zones to create a 2v1 against the 1 defender.

Practice 6 **Free Small Sided Game** **20 mins**

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Individual Tactical Objective: Creating space.

Group Tactical Objective: Quick counter attacks.

Technical Objective: Penetrating passes.

Motor Athletic Objective: Specific work: Centre backs and forwards work on explosive power, midfielders work on aerobic power and wide players work on acceleration and deceleration.

Duration of Session: 110 minutes

We recommend starting the session with exercises for general mobility to prevent injuries.

1. Warm Up

4v4v4 Dynamic 3 Zone Possession Game

20 mins



Description

Set up a long and narrow area. The objective is to make a lofted pass to the team in the opposite end zone after successfully completing 6 passes.

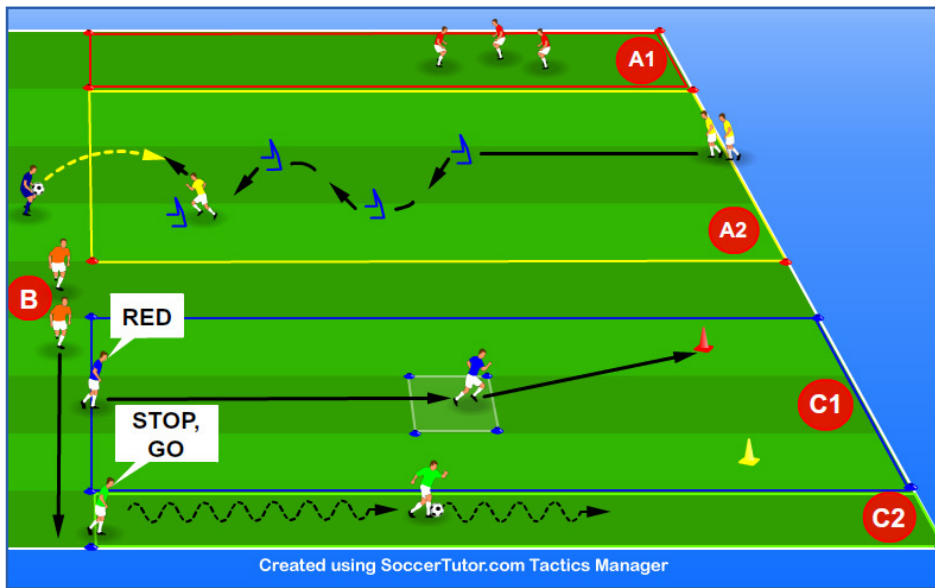
The coach passes to a team in an end zone and the defending team move 2 players to apply pressure on the team in possession (4v2 as shown).

If a team loses possession or does not complete the lofted pass to the other team, they become the defending team who must apply pressure and try to intercept the ball.

Coaching Points

1. This practice requires all types of passes (short, medium, long, to feet and into space).
2. The defending players need to apply collective pressure to close off the passing angles.

2. Conditioning Position Specific Training Exercises 15 mins



Description

Centre backs and forwards
 A1) 4 series of 10 x squats with 30 seconds recovery in between.

A2) Jump over 3 hurdles and at the fourth head the ball launched by the coach (2 x 10 repetitions).

Midfielders
 B) 7 minutes running around the field alternating 45 seconds of jogging to 15 seconds sprinting.

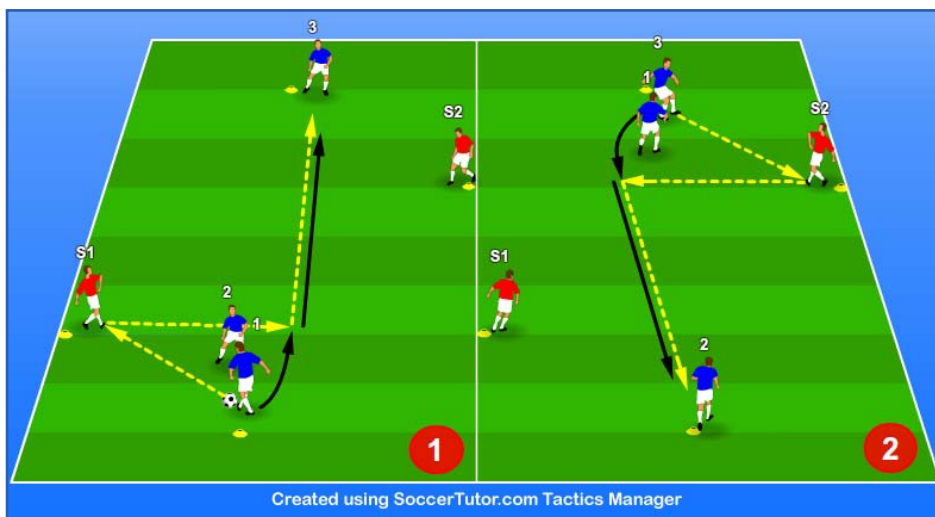
(Twice with 2 minutes recovery in between).

Full backs and wide Midfielders

C1) 15 yard sprint, stop in the square and sprint towards the cone called out by a teammate (2 x 10 repetitions with 2 minutes recovery in between).

C2) Running with the ball over 60 yards with teammate calling 'stop' and 'go.' (2 x 5 repetitions with 2 minutes recovery).

3. Technical 1-2 Combination Play with Close Pressure 15 mins



Description

In an area 15 x 10 yards, we have 2 players positioned at the sides.

Player 1 starts by playing a 1-2 combination with the outside player (S1). Player 2 applies passive pressure.

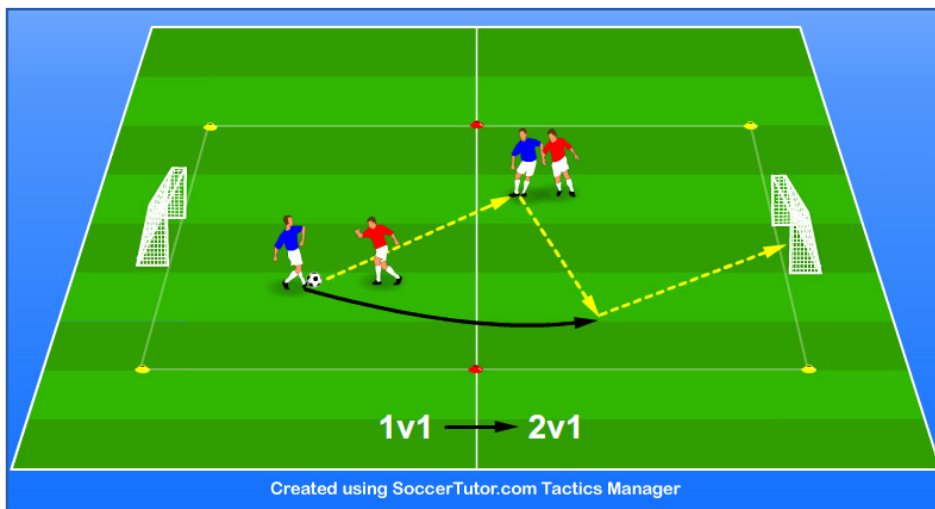
When Player 1 receives the ball back, he passes to Player 2 and moves to apply passive pressure.

Player 3 then starts the same sequence again, as shown in part 2.

Coaching Points

1. The rhythm of the movement together with the pass is key.
2. The second pass of the 1-2 needs to be out in front of the player to run onto and make a 1 touch pass.
3. The side players should move to meet the ball and approach it half turned.

4. Game Situation **Creating a Numerical Advantage (1v1 → 2v1)** **20 mins**



Description

Set out areas of 20 x 10 yards split into 2 zones. In each zone we have a 1v1.

Once the ball is passed to the teammate in the other zone, the player can join in the attack to form a 2v1 situation. The players use this advantage to score.

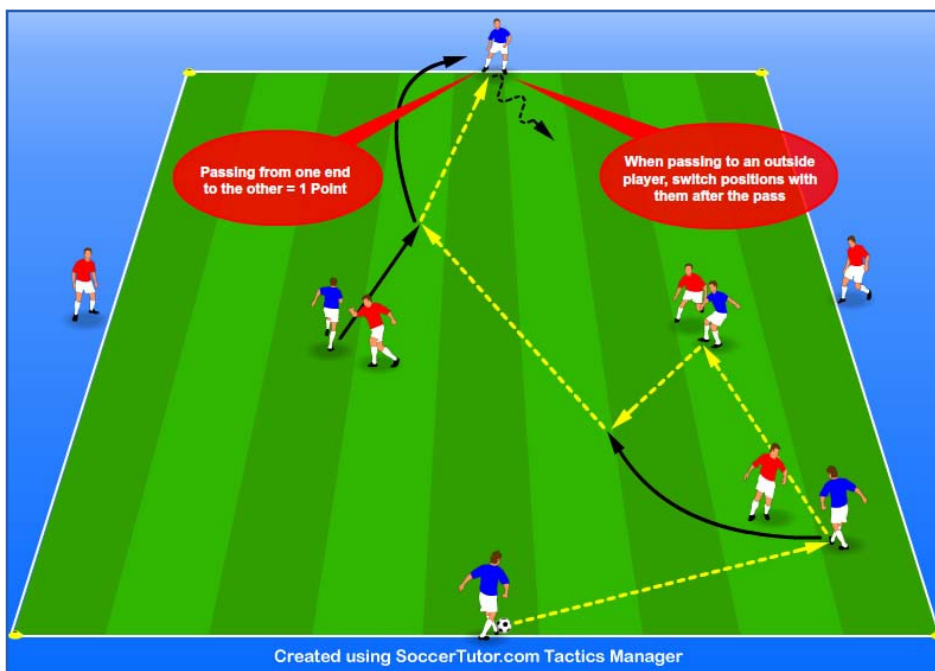
Variation

2v2 game.

Coaching Points

1. The pass should be made quickly forward, combined with a run into the space.
2. The player waiting in the attacking half should check away from the defender before moving into space to receive.

5. Specific Game **3v3 (+4) Switching Play with Outside Support Players Possession Game** **20 mins**



Description

In an area 30 x 30 yards, we play a 3v3 game and each team has 2 additional outside players.

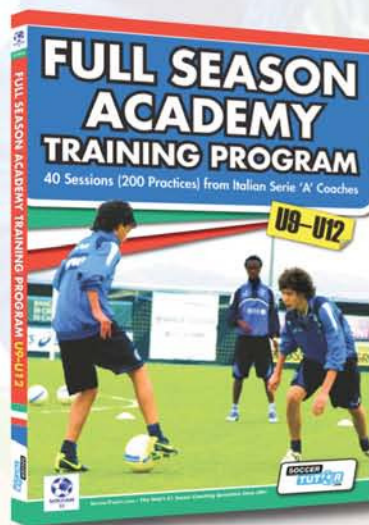
A goal is scored every time the ball is passed from one end to the other end of the area using the outside players.

A player who passes the ball to the outside player then switches with them to take their position.

Practice 6 **Free Small Sided Game** **20 mins**

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