



THE WELSH WAY

First Kick
to National Team



Let the players play.

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Don’t be afraid to dream

FOREWORD

Following on from the enthusiasm of the Euro success, how do we maintain the culture, continue to engage more young players and provide challenges for our elite players?

The historical success of our National team at Euro 2016 in France had such a positive effect on the whole country in so many different ways. This confirms and demonstrates football's rightful place as the most popular sport in Wales.

The National team's success in recent years has been achieved by a group of talented, passionate and committed players under the outstanding leadership of Manager Chris Coleman. Assisting Coleman behind the scenes has been a large team of people, the team behind the team, working diligently in all facets of the game, thus providing the approach of 'TogetherStronger'.

From a coaching point of view, since 2011, under the influence of the late Gary Speed, we have implemented a 'Welsh way' of playing, providing us with a philosophy and identity. Our national coaches have been working within this framework enabling our young players to move seamlessly throughout our age groups and squads.

I am delighted to be able to bring the 'Welsh Way' of playing and coaching to life in this document. Our National Syllabus is a framework and guide to inspire all coaches working in the grassroots and the elite level of our game. I am convinced that by providing all coaches in Wales with this information and insight we can continue to produce Welsh players and create successful National teams of the future.

Thanks to all those who contributed to the creation of this National Syllabus for Welsh football.

Thanks to all the trustees, partners, coaches, volunteers, officials, administrators, parents and supporters for their contribution to the game in Wales.

And above all, thank you to the players - you are the ones who make Welsh football come alive.

Together Stronger

Osian Roberts,
Technical Director



WHY A NATIONAL SYLLABUS?

Paving the way
for continued success

In 2016 the Welsh National team reached the finals of a major tournament for the first time in 58 years.

This is undoubtedly the biggest success story in the history of the game in Wales. The challenge now is to ensure that qualifying for and competing at major tournaments moves from being the exception and becomes the norm.

For this to be achieved we need to bring the long term vision we have for football in Wales to life. Football is the world game and there are many ways to approach it derived from many different cultures. If Wales is to continue to compete at the highest level it is imperative that throughout the country a cohesive approach to how the game is taught and played be established and introduced.

The national syllabus will aim to provide an understanding of how this can be achieved by outlining a clear and simple framework to help coaches working with players from the Grassroots through to the Elite.

To pave the way for continued success on the world stage.

To highlight the importance of the Grassroots game in Wales.

To help raise standards within all levels of the game in Wales.

To create a clear framework for learning for players and coaches within all levels of the game in Wales.

To communicate a style of play that can be worked towards regardless of team shape/structure.

To illustrate how world class player development drives but is underpinned by world class coach education.

To provide a reference point for coaches working at all levels of the game in Wales.

To help develop potential into elite players and coaches who can compete at the pinnacle of the world game.



CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

Understanding the values

RESPECT

Demonstrating respect for each other in all that we do and at all time.

FAMILY

A group of people working together to make football stronger in Wales.

EXCELLENCE

An intense desire or enthusiasm to continuously improve and strive for excellence.



CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

Our Welsh identity

Identity can be seen at the core of any high performance team and the success of our National teams is underpinned by a unique way of playing and thinking. Players and coaches share team membership collectively with a strong sense of ‘we’ and ‘us’ and are willing to sacrifice personal interests for the greater good of the team – an environment where everyone is valued. The team always supports in times of hardship and displays a strong support network in order to cope with training and game demands. Strong leadership is key for our identity and creates, advances and embeds a collective sense of ‘us’. Our leadership has the power to influence team members and strengthen what we are and what we want to be:

TogetherStronger

Winning mentality
Attitude & ability
Love the ball & defending
Emootional stability
Speed of body & mind

Developing players in “the Welsh way”:

- Welsh identity
- Technical excellence
- Tactical intelligence
- Desire to improve
- Honest reflection
- Freedom to express
- Togetherness



CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

The player's journey



First kick to National team

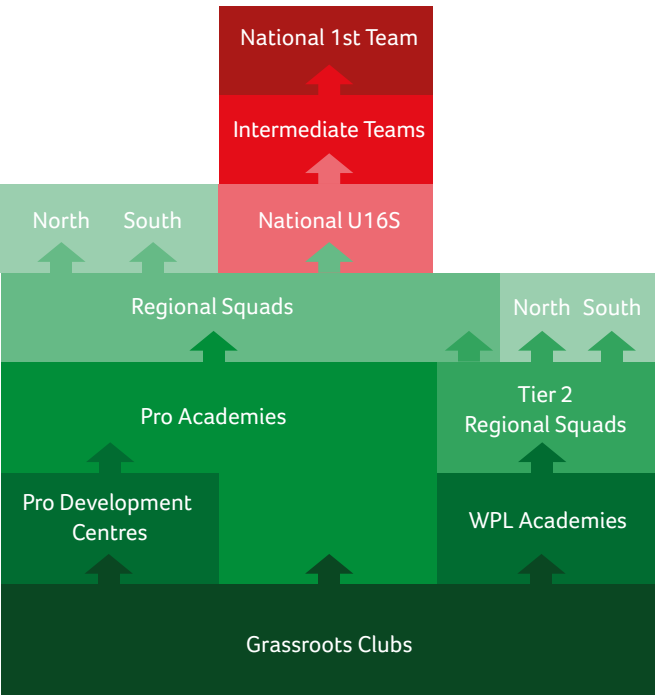
It takes time to become an elite football player.

Although it seems a simple game on the surface, the complexity of the game means a very high level of technical ability, decision making and tactical understanding.

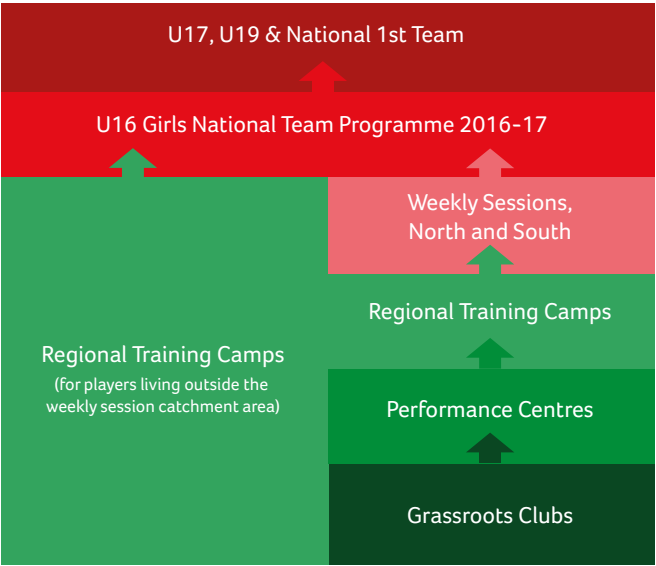
A player's football education begins the second they kick their first football and continues until they become the best player they can be.



BOYS' PATHWAY



GIRLS' PATHWAY



CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

The grassroots is key

Grassroots football relies on a huge amount of very hard working people who give up their time on a weekly basis to provide an environment for children to enjoy the game.

Some of these players may go on to make a living as a professional football player but statistics tell us that this will be unlikely for the majority. However we hope that when they grow up they remain in the game as a lifelong participant regardless. And this could be in a number of ways. They may play **semi-professional** football or **amateur** football, they may become **leaders**, **coaches** or **referees**, they may become **volunteers**, they may become **administrators** or **sponsors**, they may become **fans** or they may simply end up as **parents** with children who want to play the game.

The role of the grassroots coach cannot be underestimated because this is when young people will fall in love with the game. The grassroots coach must enthuse and inspire so that players not only want to come back every week but also to ensure future generations of football people.

Grassroots football clubs lie at the centre of Welsh communities and are a place for lifelong participation.





CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

Falling in love with the game

How do we know the players are falling in love with the game?

Do the players come back? Do they arrive with smiles on their faces? Do they leave with smiles on their faces? Are they improving? Can you hear them talking about the session/game and what they did/enjoyed about it? Do you ask the players what they're favourite sessions are?

Coaches – be a part of the future success of Wales. You may have the next Gareth Bale in your group... However we still have a responsibility to inspire/educate/develop each and every child under your guidance

We can't underestimate the role of the coach/parent/guardian in the process of how players perceive themselves!

Parents/Guardians firstly ask yourselves why is the child there?

- Is it because they love football?
- Is it to be with their friends?
- Is it to improve as a player?
- Is it to stay fit and healthy?
- Is it a combination of all?

Then ask yourselves...

- What if the team loses? And continues to lose?
- What if your child is a substitute?
- What if your child gets taken off?
- What if your child makes a mistake that leads to a goal?
- What if your child scores a goal?
- What if your child is player of the match?

How does the conversation go on the way home?

- What questions do you ask them?
- Did you enjoy the game/session?
- What was your favorite part?
- What did you do well?

CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

Coaching the person

- Life skills -

*Being able to **adapt** and react **positively** to changing circumstances is vital for football and everyday life.*

It's important we understand that football is one part of a person's life and that skills learned by being a part of the football world such as teamwork, discipline, challenge and reflection can also be applied within everyday life.

When coaching players we should try to take a holistic approach with the development of the person in mind.

This approach should help develop the mentality of the person with the right level of challenge, insightful and relevant feedback which in turn should help develop confidence, composure, communication and character.

Give them the best chance

The reasons for developing life-skills are:

- Not many players that begin in the grassroots game will end up in the professional game
- However, all players can become better people by using the power of sport and football
- Players can develop skills that are transferable to education and work.

It is our role as coaches to aim to develop the person as well as the player.



CREATING A FOOTBALL CULTURE

Life skills

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Verbal communication
- Non-verbal communication
- Listening skills
- Teamwork

DISCIPLINE

- Committing to something and seeing it through
- Setting goals and seeing them through
- Managing mistakes in a thought out way

RESPECT

- Shaking hands
- Listening to different opinions
- Self hygiene
- Saying please and thank you
- Accepting decisions
- Keeping places tidy



ORGANISATION

- Planning
- Preparing
- Time keeping
- Adapting
- Reflecting

LEADERSHIP

- Accepting responsibility
- Delegating responsibility
- Supporting others



MAXIMISING PLAYER LEARNING

The importance of small-sided games

Small-sided games are very beneficial for both young and developed players. Studies have been conducted to show, and observations confirm, that children get more enjoyment and learn more from playing in small-sided games with adapted rules. They get more touches of the ball, learn quicker and have to make more decisions during the match. A higher level of concentration is also required because the ball is never far away.

Children are also much more involved in the game and enjoy it much more than playing on a large pitch. Fewer players on the pitch and smaller teams ensure that each participant gets more individual attention. There are also more goal-scoring opportunities (which is what children want) and the goalkeepers are in action more often (except in 4 v 4 matches which usually do not have goalkeepers).

Children are also more involved in attacking and defensive situations, and in this way they are more often exposed to more repetition. They enjoy themselves and learn more.

Statistically small-sided football highlights many benefits for children compared with 11-a-side football. For example:

- Players touch the ball five times more often in 4-a-side football and 50% more in 7-a-side.
- Players are three times more often in one-against-one situations in 4-a-side football and twice more often in 7-a-side.
- Goals are scored every two minutes in 4-a-side football on average and every four minutes in 7-a-side.
- Goalkeepers are involved in the action two to four times more often in 7-a-side football than in 11-a-side football.
- The ball is out of play 8% of the time in 4-a-side football, 14% in 7-a-side and 34% in 11-a-side.



From a physical viewpoint small-sided games can be very intense. They should not be underestimated and games should not last too long. Substitutes should be available at the side of the pitch and used regularly which should help the rhythm of the game/exercise to continue at a high level. We specify that mini footballers should play no longer than 60 minutes every 24 hours.

In Wales, age appropriate games should be as follows:

-U7	4 v 4 no goalkeeper
U8	5 v 5 with goalkeepers
U9	6 v 6 with goalkeepers
U10	7 v 7 with goalkeepers
U11	8 v 8 with goalkeepers
U12	9 v 9 with goalkeepers
U13+	11 v 11 with goalkeepers



MAXIMISING PLAYER LEARNING

How players learn

Learning is wonderfully messy and certainly does not happen in a straight line. Indeed, learning is not ‘paint by numbers’. In all player developmental journeys there will be set-backs, disappointments and frustrations, but also lots of wonderful experiences that will stay with the player for life. Maximising the opportunity to learn allows these moments to be captured and nurtured.

ACCOUNTABILITY

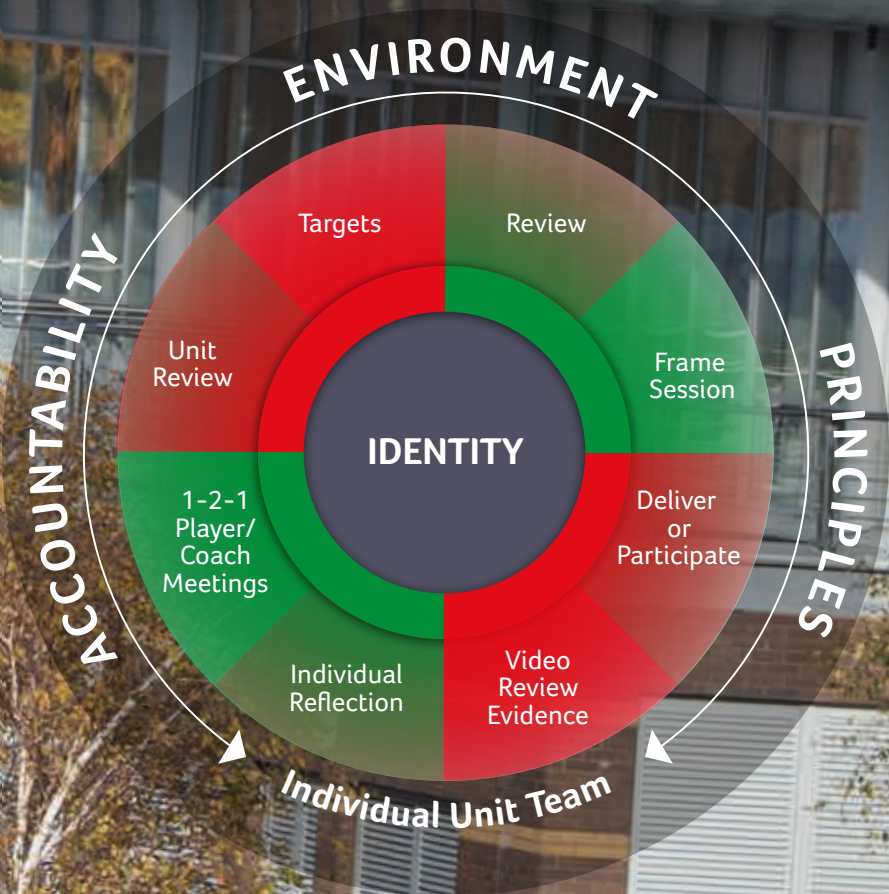
To learn effectively, players require support and guidance. This often will form a large part of the coaches role, however it is important to understand that this cannot be purely coach-led. The player has to understand their role in maximising their learning and to this end the player is accountable to themselves, their teammates and indeed their coach in committing to being the best learner they can be. In ensuring a two-way relationship, this also applies to the coach.

ENVIRONMENT

It is possible to have a player/group with a thirst for learning, yet get stifled by the environment created by the coach. It is vital that these two areas work together, where players feel free to contribute, explore and embrace. The game requires players and coaches to see problems and difficulties as opportunities. The game needs players who persevere through adversity and embrace challenges, as they know it will help their overall player and personal development.

PRINCIPLES

Our principles drive much of the coaches’ role, session content and player learning. Being guided by principles of play rather than steadfast rules of operation means learning is more transferrable to a variety of situations, therefore matching the ever-changing demands of the game. In maximising player learning, we try to develop players who are adaptable and display knowledge in a variety of situations.



MAXIMISING PLAYER LEARNING

Reflective practice



Engaging athletes in reflection improves their understanding of how to perform effectively as well as cope with the demands of performing (Faull & Cropley, 2009).

Reflective practice also increases commitment to goal setting and ownership over performance (Richards et al., 2009).

Reflective practice can also be used to open dialogue between the player and the coach (Cropley et al., 2012).

Some examples:

Benefits have been shown for using a structured written approach.

Can be used in conjunction with match analysis.

Should be used within a culture that supports reflective learning and development.

MAXIMISING PLAYER LEARNING

How to reflect

Reflective practice begins with asking questions

(either the coach asking the player, or the player asking themselves). The questions can focus on many things but should ultimately concentrate on the individual. For example, instead of asking 'what went well?' ask 'what did YOU contribute to that performance?' or 'what strengths do YOU have to improve performance?' instead of 'what needs to get better?'.

Reflective practice must result in learning (about the self, about performance, or about the game more generally) and this learning has to be put back into action. Certainly, there is not much use in learning if it does not affect future behaviour and performances. As a result, the process should end with questions about what has been learnt, what this means for the future, and how this learning will be used. An action plan should then be put into place to ensure that this happens.

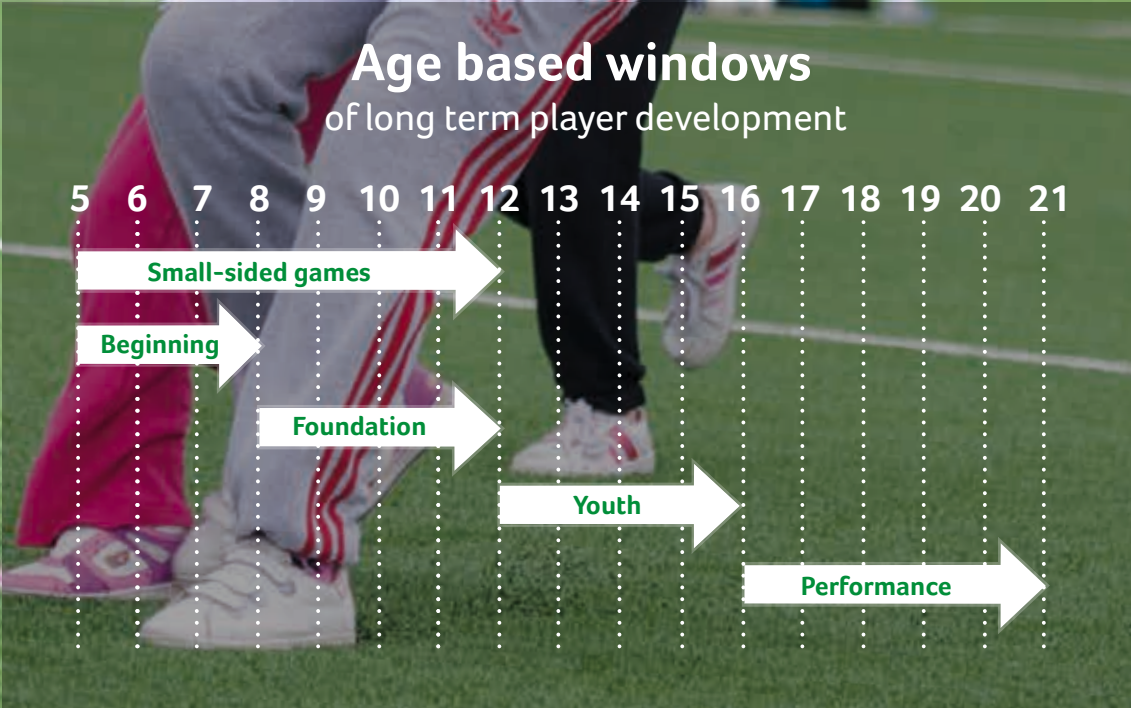
Writing answers to questions can help with the process, but it is not necessary. Conversations are equally as important to the process and equally as powerful. It is suggested, however, that the resultant action plan following reflective practice is noted so that it is not forgotten and progress on achieving the plan can be assessed.



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

The four stages

- Beginning (U6-U8)
- Foundation (U9-U12)
- Youth (U13-U16)
- Performance (U17-U21)



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Beginning (U6 – U8)
Learning football through fun game related practice

FOCUSES

Focus on fun, enjoyment and engagement.

- Basic technical development using both feet
- Creativity & inventiveness with no fear to find a way
- Use variety to stimulate and motivate the player

OUTCOMES

Players with enthusiasm and motivation with a love of the game.

- Can use a range of techniques
- A willingness to take risks and 'make things happen'
- Motivated to train and engaged on improving



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Foundation (U9 – U12)

No amount of fitness or competitive spirit will ever compensate for deficiencies in functional game skills

FOCUSES

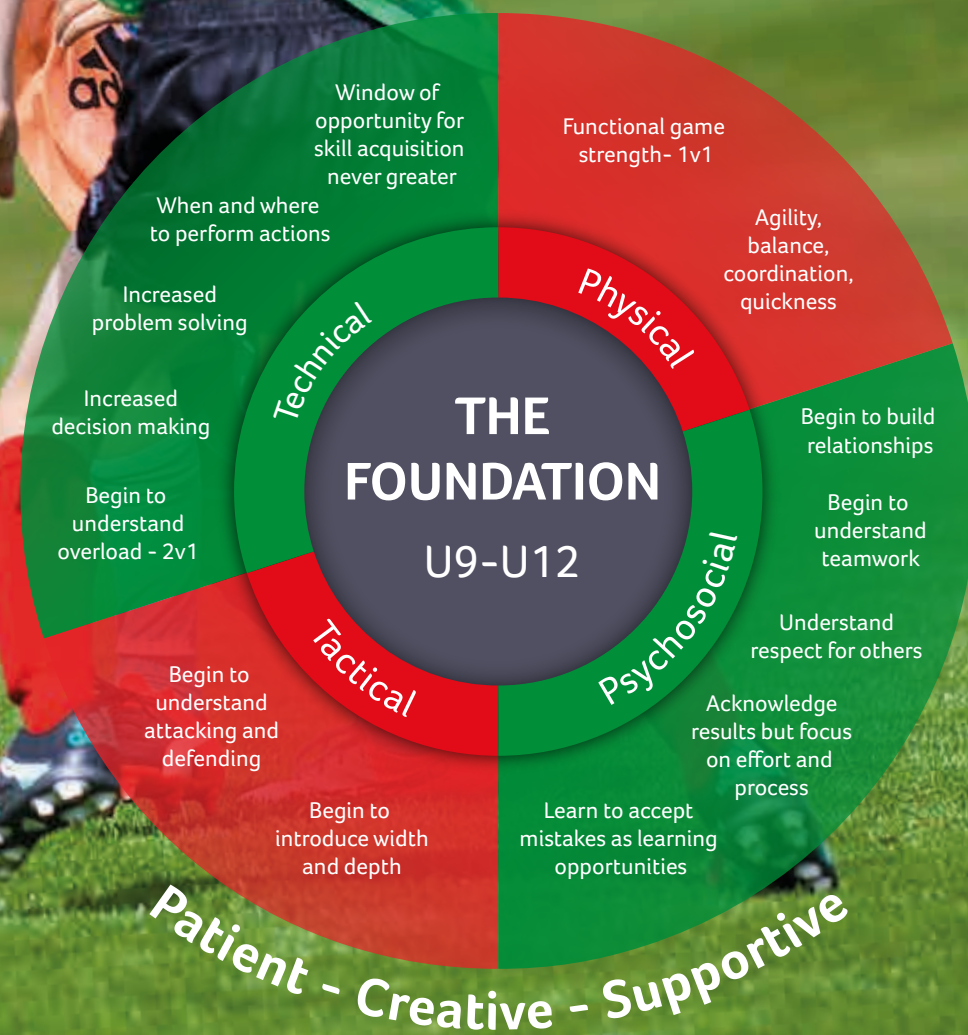
Training, learning and engaging.

- Training focused on teaching a range of techniques
- Creativity & inventiveness with no fear to find a way
- Challenge players to use both feet in all activities

OUTCOMES

Engaged players with enthusiasm and love of the game.

- Broad technical proficiency
- A willingness to take risks and 'make things happen'
- Agile, co-ordinated and well-balanced footballers



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Youth (U13-U16)

Developing position specific football awareness, perception and decision-making through game-related practice.

FOCUSES

Embedding game understanding and sound decision-making skills.

- Development of position-specific techniques
- Introduction to tactics and role within a unit
- Skill-based problem solving

OUTCOMES

Well rounded technically sound footballers that can make decisions in games.

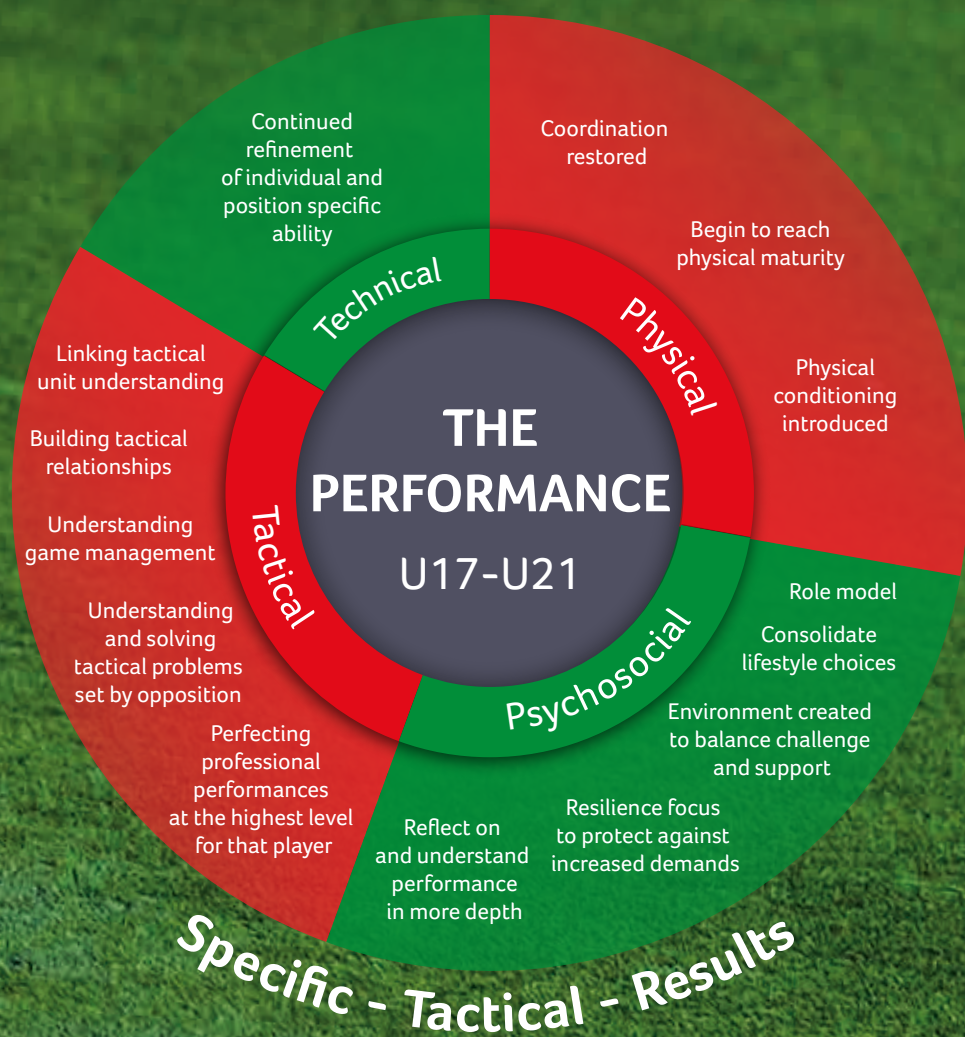
- Positional competence
- An understanding of positions and roles within the team
- Game intelligent, capable decision-makers



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Performance (U17-U21)

Developing a tactical understanding to help solve specific game related problems.



FOCUSES

Refinement of players' technical, tactical, physiological and psychosocial capabilities.

- Balance of technical refinement with decision making activities
- Tactical appreciation of roles
- Detailed understanding of how to optimally prepare for competition

OUTCOMES

Balanced players with the fundamental resources to meet the demands of the modern game.

- Technical excellence combined with game intelligence
- Positional understanding within various systems of play
- Players obsessed with technical detail, role clarity and optimal preparation



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Physical development

Peak Height Velocity

Peak Height Velocity (PHV) is the period of time in which a young person experiences their fastest upward growth in their stature – i.e. the time when they grow the fastest during their adolescent growth spurt. This usually happens earlier for girls than for boys.

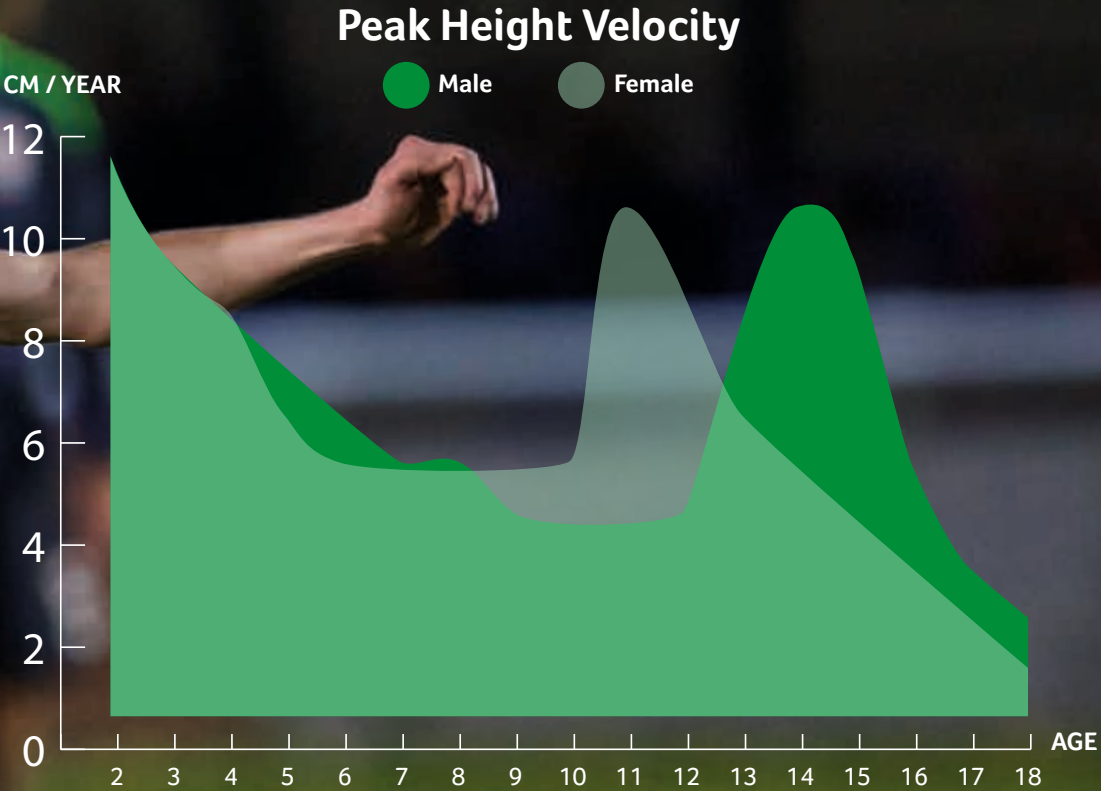
Growth spurts can have both physical and psychological effects on young players which is why patience is key during this stage of development.

Balance, coordination & speed - These components can be naturally developed through short and sharp activities including, fun competitive football activity, small-sided games, passing and receiving exercises & coordination exercises.

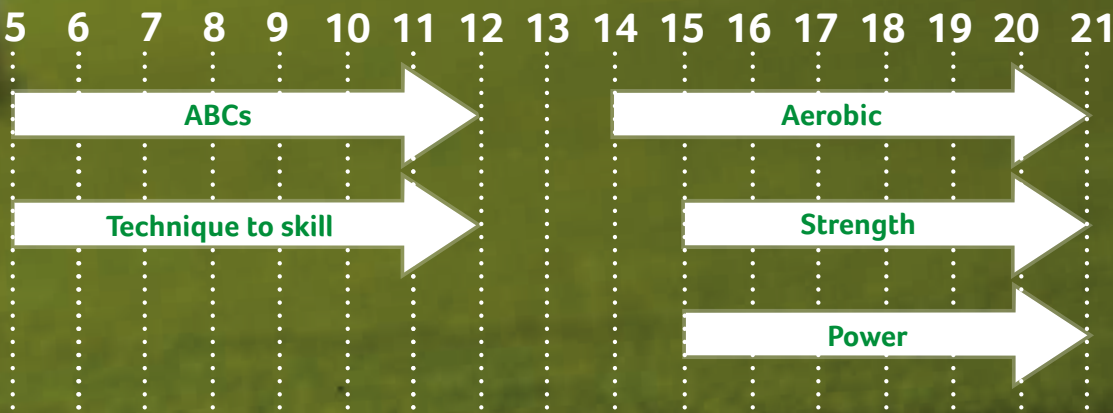
Technique to skill - This period is widely recognised as a key time to develop technique using both feet (how to pass, dribble, shoot, receive the ball etc.) and then progress to skill based activity (when and where to use the right technique under pressure).

Aerobic - following increases in growth and maturity the players' capacity to work for longer periods in small sided games and activities can be used to develop overall fitness.

Strength & power - following increases in growth and maturity the players' capacity to generate force and repeatedly complete high intensity work will be greater during this period.



Age based windows of opportunity for physical development



KEY STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Physical implications

BIRTH BIAS

There is a tendency across world football to select players at the youngest ages who stand out due to physical stature, known as birth bias.

Always consider:

1. If the physical barrier was removed which players would be most effective?
2. Are the best players in the team born in the early part of the year?
3. Are the best players reliant purely on being stronger and quicker than the other children?
4. Compared to other children in the age group would these players be classified as early developers? (i.e. a similar size/ stature to children in older age groups)



Birth date distribution of 8857 players at professional clubs, aged 9-16 years



THE GAME

The future player

How the game is changing

The amount of sprints and high intensity activities performed by players at the highest level of the game has doubled since 2002.

The time that the ball is live in play is almost 12 minutes more than in 1990.

Consequently speed, agility and acceleration are now central to the athleticism of the best players performing at the highest levels.

The future player?

- Football intelligence
- Flexibility – roles
- Athleticism
- Defending 1v1
- Attacking 1v1 – flair in the final third
- Ability to manage situations in the game
- Ability to interchange positions
- Solving problems in real time
- 1 touch passing



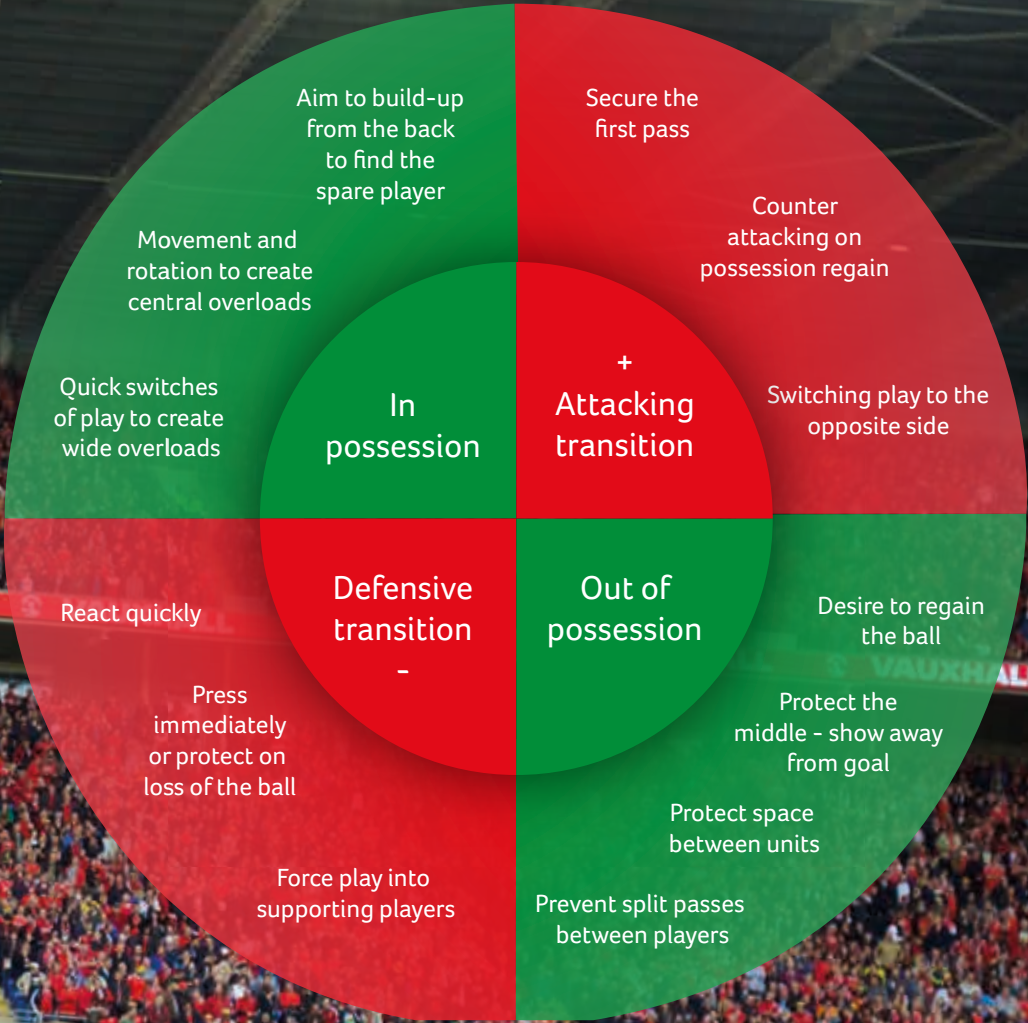
THE GAME

Team environment

Attributes of high performing teams

Dysfunctional		Functional
A focus on personal ego and status.	RESULTS	High focus on the process to gain results.
Avoidance of responsibility.	ACCOUNTABILITY	Hold each other accountable for achievement of the task.
Vague understanding of the task.	COMMITMENT	A clear and collective commitment to the task.
Reluctant to disagree & challenge.	CONFLICT	Engage with healthy, constructive feedback.
Reluctant to allow concerns to surface.	TRUST	Accept mistakes and weaknesses and tap into support.

The Game Model



THE GAME

Introducing the principles of play

We have a domestic landscape in Wales where young players are exposed to various playing philosophies adopted by their individual clubs. Additionally, the majority of young players making up Welsh Regional and National squads from U12 through to U21 play outside of Welsh club football competition, and are therefore also exposed to differing styles and strategies. Due to this diverse nature of player development, it's important that the 'Welsh way' playing philosophy adopts clear principles of play that are always present regardless of team shape, tactics or the animation of tactics.

The principal challenge and ultimate gauge for success of developing players is facilitating the transition of youth players to first team. A major factor in achieving this goal is determined by the linkage between the various development phases that cover regional, intermediate and first team squads.

“We have a seamless pathway, a Welsh way of playing from top to bottom”

Neil Ward, 2016, for Telegraph

“Our [country] size is a weakness but also our strength. You can develop that club ethos which players like. What has been achieved is by design and not default and, in terms of the quality of players coming through, the future looks healthy”

Neil Ward, 2016, for Telegraph



THE GAME

Explaining the principles of play



Create and exploit overload
Understand when and how to exploit a numerical advantage against the opposition.

Switching play
Understand when and how to switch the point of an attack based on the pressure applied from the opposition.

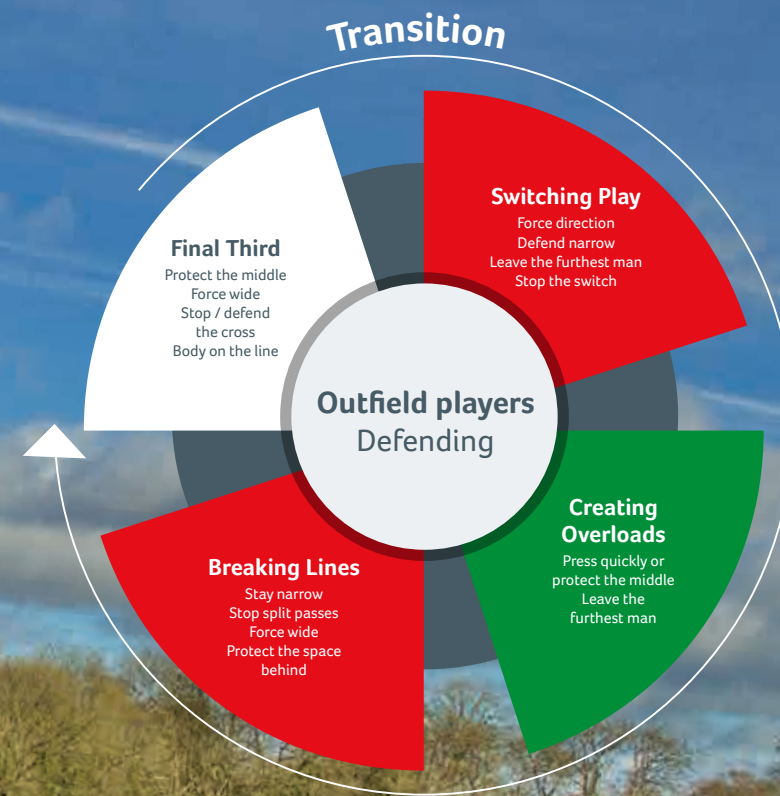
Breaking lines
Understand when and how to play through, around or over the opposition based on the type of pressure applied.

Final 3rd
Understand when and how to combine, create and finish in the attacking 3rd of the pitch.



THE GAME

Principles of play approach



THE GAME

Sessions overview

Beginners	Foundation	Youth	Performance	General sessions
	Foundation (for Goalkeepers only)	Youth	Performance	Specific sessions

GENERAL FOCUS

Once the “principle of play” for a session has been established i.e. breaking lines, the general part is used to train the principle in practices that provide the players with repeated opportunities to develop that particular part of the game. For example in a general session based on breaking lines the players should repeatedly have the opportunity to make decisions on where and how to play forward based on where the pressure in front of them is coming from.

SPECIFIC FOCUS

In this part of the session the practice used will allow the players to work on the principle of play in a more “match like” scenario featuring actual positions and/or formations relevant to an agreed philosophy/game plan.

Specific sessions will usually be introduced during the youth phase where players are beginning to be taught position specific understanding and its relevance to the game.

Prior to the youth phase players should be taught general principles of play which will provide a grounding of the main moments of the game through repetition and fun.

NB: Specific goalkeeper focus may begin earlier in a players’ development based on the unique nature of the role. This can be trained as a specific part within fun small sided games.



THE GAME

General session example

Breaking lines – multidirectional game

ORGANISATION

Area size

20m long x 15m wide with a halfway line.

Play 4 v 4 + 3 common players playing on each line (in white).

Play 4 x 3 minute periods with 2 min break.

Explanation

The objective of the team in possession is to try and transfer the ball from one end to the other. If they do so successfully they maintain possession.

The team in possession can use the 3 common players to create a 7 v 4 in possession.

Conditions that can be applied:

1. Both teams must always have 2 players in each half (This would create a 4 v 2 in each half).
2. The ball must be played into the closest half to the end player on the ball first.
3. The ball cannot be played from end to end only using the common players.

Key points

In possession

- Make the pitch big (width and depth).
- Use limited touches and move the ball quickly.
- Try to play in areas that allow you to see both end of the pitch.

Out of possession

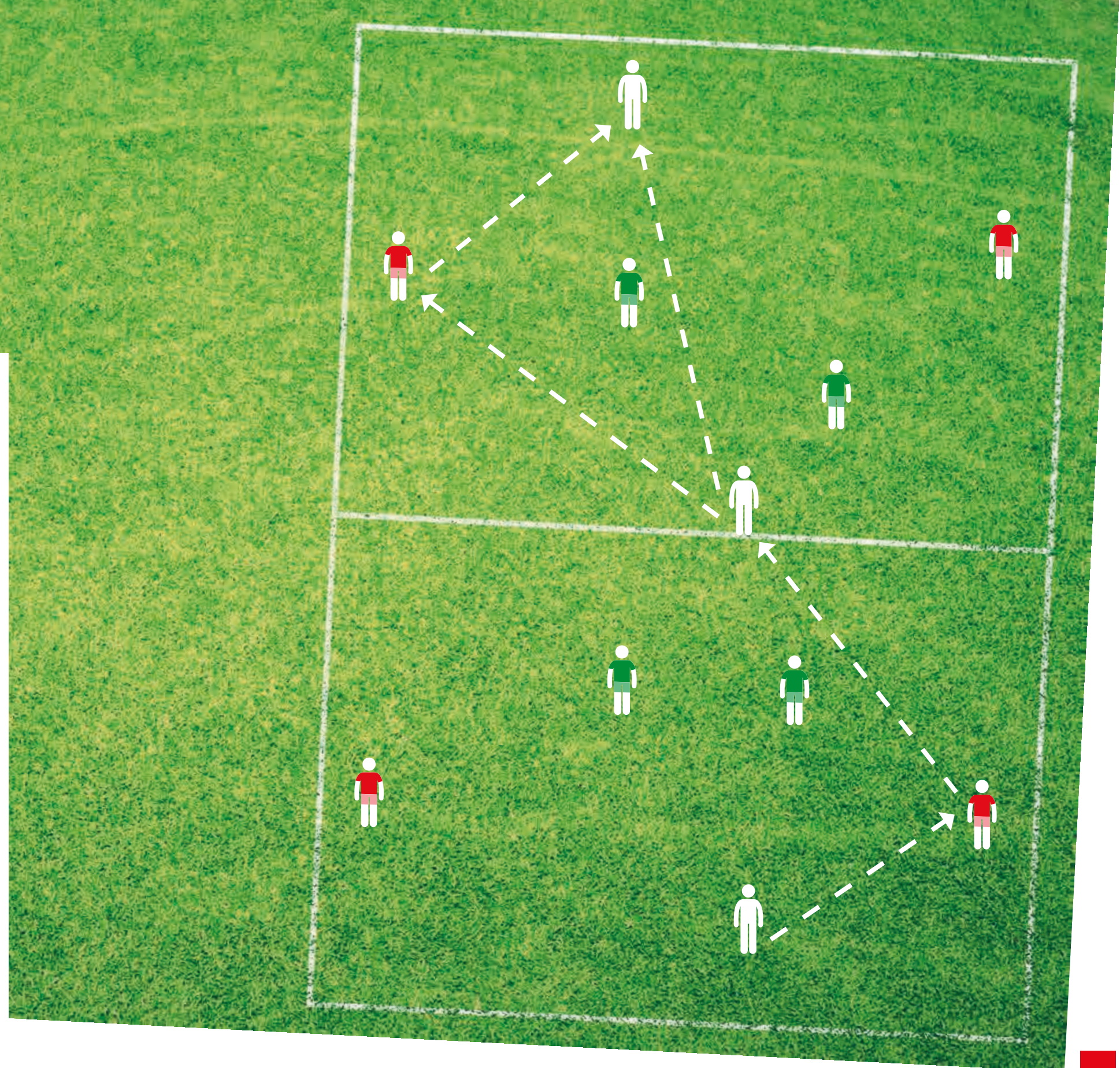
- Be compact and narrow.
- Show wide and press.
- Stop split passes.

Transition in to out

- Press fast.
- Stop forward passes.
- Support the pressing players.

Transition out to in

- Make the area big quickly.
- Keep the first pass.



THE GAME

Specific session example Breaking lines – small-sided games

ORGANISATION

Area size

60m long x 30m wide split into 3 zones.

Play 6 v 6 + GKs – Can add common player (in white) if needed.

Players can be position specific.

Play 4 x 3 minute periods with 2 min break.

Explanation

The objective of the team in possession is to try and play through the zones to score.

The team in possession can use the common player to create an 8 v 7 in possession.

Conditions that can be applied:

1. Both teams must play 1-2-3-1 and are restricted to each zone when not in possession. In possession 1 player is able to move forward into the next zone to create overload.
2. Players are restricted to zones out of possession and the ball must be played through each zone to score.
3. Players are not restricted to zones out of possession but the ball must be played through each third to score.
4. Players are not restricted to zones out of possession and the ball does not have to be played through each third to score.

Key points

In possession

- Make the pitch big (width and depth)
- Use limited touches and move the ball quickly
- Try to play in areas that allow you to see both end of the pitch.

Out of possession

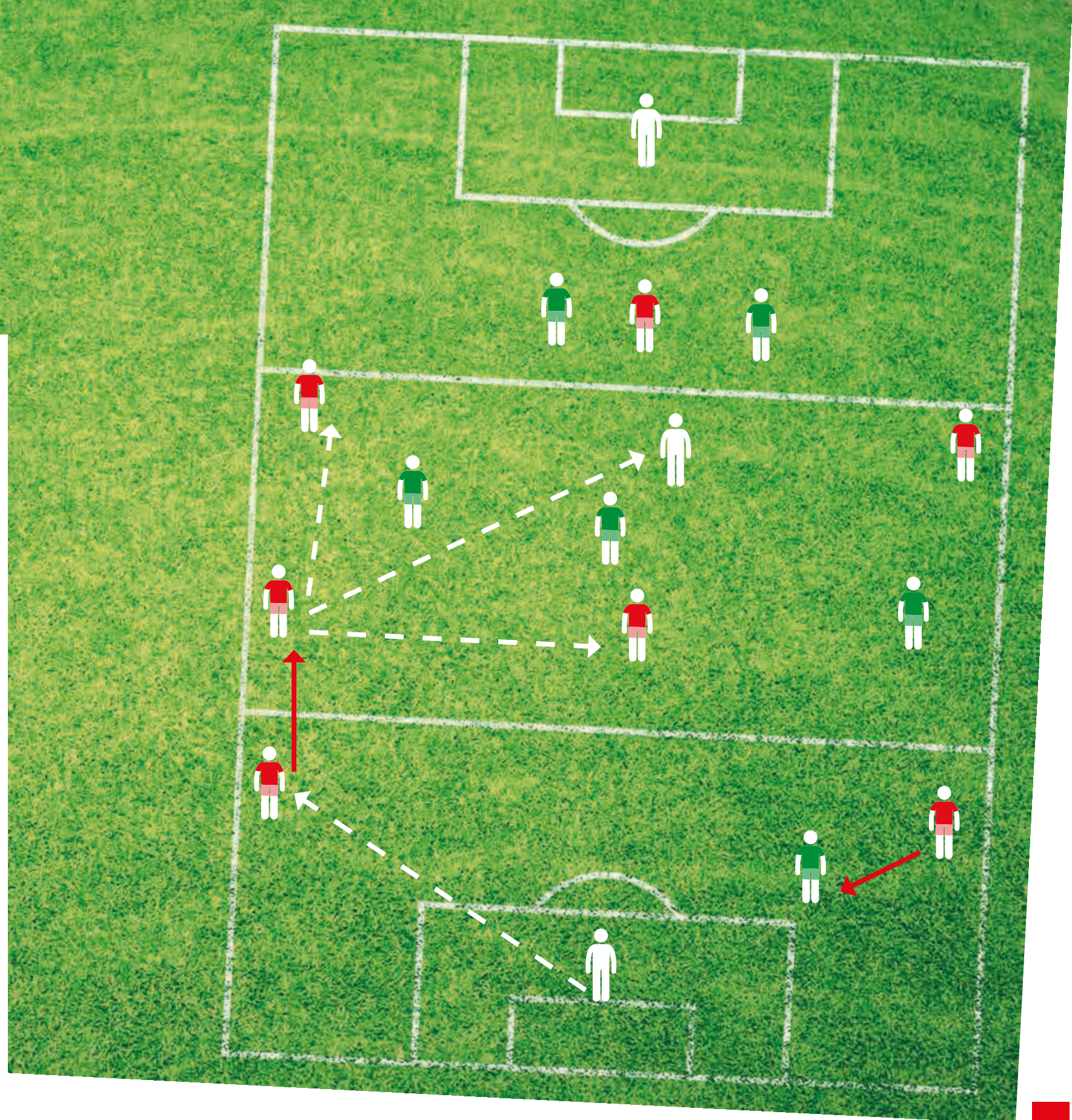
- Be compact and narrow
- Show wide and press
- Stop split passes

Transition in to out

- Press fast
- Stop forward passes
- Support the pressing players
- Protect the middle if unable to press

Transition out to in

- Make the area big quickly
- Play the first pass forward if able to
- Secure the first pass



COACHING

A world class coaching nation

The Welsh coach education program is at the forefront of the world game. Welsh Coach Education programs not only educate and upskill all coaches working within Wales but they have also educated some of the biggest names in world football. Former players such as Thierry Henry, Sol Campbell, Marcel Desailly, Jens Lehmann, Patrick Vieira, Mikel Arleta and Freddy Ljungberg chose Wales to complete their coach education at the end of hugely successful playing careers. Wales is globally recognised for its coach education culture and excellence.

Arsenal, Barcelona and France great Thierry Henry said:

“The way they see the game is how I see the game. The way they do things in Wales, the philosophy, is the perfect match.”



The Welsh coach education programs from Level 1 through to Level 5 support both elite player development and the grassroots game.

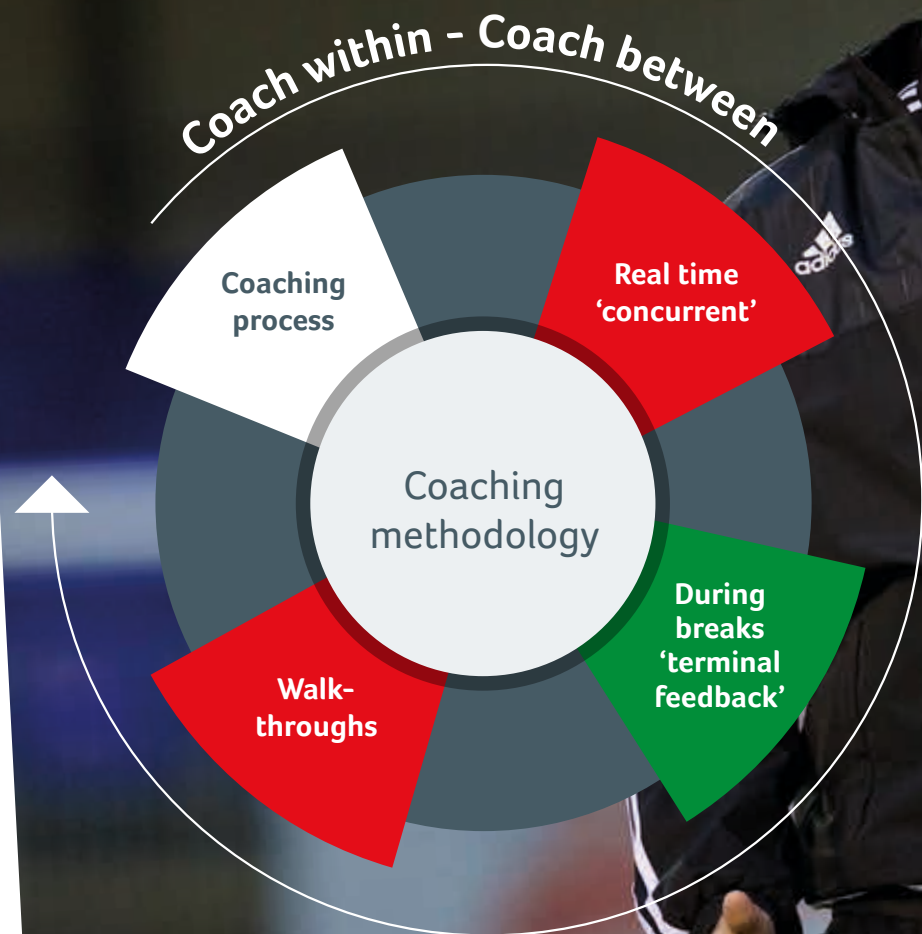
COACHING

Coach education structure



COACHING

Coaching methodology



Coaching process

The coach identifies a problem during play, pauses play, provides feedback, rehearsal and restarts practice from the same to reinforce the solution.

Coaches must be mindful that this approach is time consuming and can disrupt the flow of the session and player motivation.

Real time 'concurrent'

Player-Coach interaction during periods of play; the practice remains uninterrupted.

The coach uses the technique to 'reinforce' or 'correct' in a concise manner.

Example: 'Excellent pass Gareth; great use of weight to break the line.'



During breaks 'terminal feedback'

Player-Coach interaction during pre-determined breaks in play.

Feedback can take a variety of forms (individual, unit or collective). The coach can draw upon a variety of resources (e.g. tactics board or video clips).

Example: Using a tactics board to show the 2 strikers how to press from the front.

Walk-throughs

The coach utilises this technique to give players a clear idea of what is required from a practice or block of work.

They are drawn upon in a bid to prevent the necessity to intervene during play and can be used to address 'what-ifs'.

Example: Showing players how you would like them to defend against a counter-attacking overload prior to commencing a 3v2 'wave-game'.



COACHING

What type of feedback will be most appropriate?

DEMONSTRATION

- Practical exhibition of a skill or technique.
- Realism and accuracy is key in painting a clear picture.
- Adept players within a group may be called upon.

A demonstration of a one-touch, 'round the corner', disguised pass as an element of a passing practice.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

- Issuing a clear and concise directive to a player/group.
- Used as a tool to ensure a practice's flow.
- Well-aligned with 'concurrent feedback'.

"Try to play forward as often as possible".

"You must attempt to face forward using a one-touch turn".

GUIDED DISCOVERY

- Prompting a player toward self-solving a problem.
- Well-chosen prompts such as 'show me how you might...' or 'what options do you have?'.

"Show me how you might link-up with the #10 in this position".

"See if you can use a disguised pass to break their midfield line".

CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

- Facilitating group discussion among players.
- Players collaborate toward solving a specific problem.
- The strategy goes hand-in-hand with scenario-based coaching.

"As a group of defenders, discuss how you might deal with their striker who keeps dropping between lines".

CONDITIONS & RESTRICTIONS

- Using realistic conditions on players linked to his/her needs.
- Also can be implemented to support session topic.

"When switching play the ball must go through a central midfielder".

"Before scoring the ball must visit all three thirds of pitch".

CHALLENGES

- Placing tailored challenges upon a individual to support learning.
- Challenges can be based technically, tactically, psychosocially or physically.

"Gareth, in this block you must look to find a way to beat the full back in 1v1 situations".



COACHING

Developing a positive youth environment

To develop a positive youth environment as a coach:

- Try not to stop the practice too often
- Opportunities to explore and problem solve during practice
- Present information the player can see, hear and experience in real time
- Don't always offer an immediate solution - alter the rules and conditions first
- Have breaks for social interaction, giving the players opportunities to discuss strategies and tactics for solving game related problems
- Give frequent praise for good play AND effort, but avoid a running commentary



COACHING

How to adapt



When observing a practice, the coach should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is it working?
- Is it too easy?
- Is it too hard?

Then based on the answer, the coach should be able to adapt the practice to ensure it's pitched at the right level for the players being coached.

CHALLENGE - PLAYERS

Examples:

- **Rules/Conditions** - Less touches/no tackling
- **Numbers** - Overload/floater
- **Time** - Less/More - Challenge
- **Inclusion** - Players make the rules
- **Individuals** - Player specific targets

CONDITION - AREAS

Examples:

- **Area Size** - Bigger/smaller/wider/longer
- **Pitch Geography** - Specific pitch area
- **Pitch Zones** - Wide channels / pitch in thirds

VARY - TARGETS

Examples:

- **Goals** - How to score a goal
 - One goal each end
 - Two goals each end
 - End zones
 - Target players
 - Number of passes.
- **Equipment** - Bigger goal / smaller goal

PLAYER PROFILES

Talent ID

How does it work?

Our network of regional scouts work across Wales, the UK and beyond observing players whilst assessing them on several aspects of the game, in turn providing a holistic report on the potential of the player and the most suitable outcome for them in moving forward.

From a technical perspective players will always need to have excellent receiving and passing ability, and the capacity to decide how best to adopt these attributes dependent on the type of pressure they are subject to. In addition to this, players will need to master specific techniques and skills depending on the position they play within the team.

Questions will then be asked on how the players conduct themselves from a psychological point of view. What happens when they lose the ball? Who takes responsibility on and off the pitch? Do they interact amongst their peers? Does their game demonstrate a good level of understanding? The socio-psyche aspect of the game is vitally important if a player is to enter the Welsh national pathway and progress. Demonstrating such attributes provides the scout with a great insight into the players' potential upon entering the programme.

The scouts will approach all games with the same philosophy irrespective of the playing level. The decision-making process of the scout is influenced by 3 key areas

- The technical ability demonstrated by the player.
- The football intelligence of the player.
- The attitude and application of the player.

Within the player profile you will fail to see any reference to 'specific height' etc. Why? Quite simply because we try to see past the physical attributes of the player that has yet to go through maturation, yet not losing sight of their potential physical ability in the years to come.



PLAYER PROFILES

Goalkeepers



Shot stopping
Excellent handling
Collect crosses
Distribution range



Excellent decision maker
Resilient
Calm under pressure
Concentrated
Reflective



Lives to defend
Brave in contact
Aggressive
Fearless



Body weight forward
Set position
Quick footwork
Distribution range



PLAYER PROFILES

Wide defenders



Lives to defend
Resilient
Calm under pressure
You v them?
Sees danger early
Great work ethic



Never gives up
Physically strong
Deals with contact
Forces away from goal
Quick over short distances



Excellent in the 1v1
Great distribution
Travels with the ball
Energetic forward runs
Recovery runs
Timing of tackles/
interceptions



PLAYER PROFILES

Central defenders



Great Communicator
Composed under pressure
Organises others
Sees danger early
Excellent heading ability



Lives to defend
Aggressive
Desire to defend the goal
Brave in the box
Forces away from goal



Times tackles
Excellent in the 1v1
Defends crosses well
Range of distribution
Comfortable in possession
Quick over short distances



PLAYER PROFILES

Defensive midfielders



- Great awareness
- Looks forward
- Sees danger early
- Winning mentality
- Controls game tempo



- Great Endurance
- Competitive edge
- Wins 1v1 contacts
- Block shots
- Brave in possession



- Comfortable in possession
- Extensive passing range
- Tracks runners
- Strong in the tackle
- Screens back four
- Supports across width of pitch



PLAYER PROFILES

Attacking midfielders



- Great awareness
- Excellent decision maker
- Plays in the future
- Finds dangerous spaces
- Composed in possession
- Sees opposition weaknesses
- Creative in the final 3rd



- Brave in possession
- Strong in 1v1 contact
- Resilient
- Dominates opponents
- Desire to get forward



- Manipulate ball with both feet
- Clever first touch
- Keeps the ball
- Travels with the ball
- Fast distribution
- Clinical
- Scores Goals



PLAYER PROFILES

Central attackers



Ruthless
Confident
Composed in possession
Finds space in the box
Resilient



Strong in contact
Desire to score goals
Powerful
Protects the ball
Brave in the box



Strong back to goal
Links play well
Mobile
Times runs well
Assists goals
Clinical finisher



PLAYER PROFILES

Wide attackers



Creative
Self-confident
Excellent game awareness
Composed in attacking situations
Sees space in front
Sees space behind



Strong in the 1v1
Excellent endurance
Wants the ball
Protects the ball
Dominates opponents



Mobile
Quick
Travels with the ball
Ability to cross the ball
Assists goals
Scores goals





MORE THAN A GAME



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