

Second Attacker Support

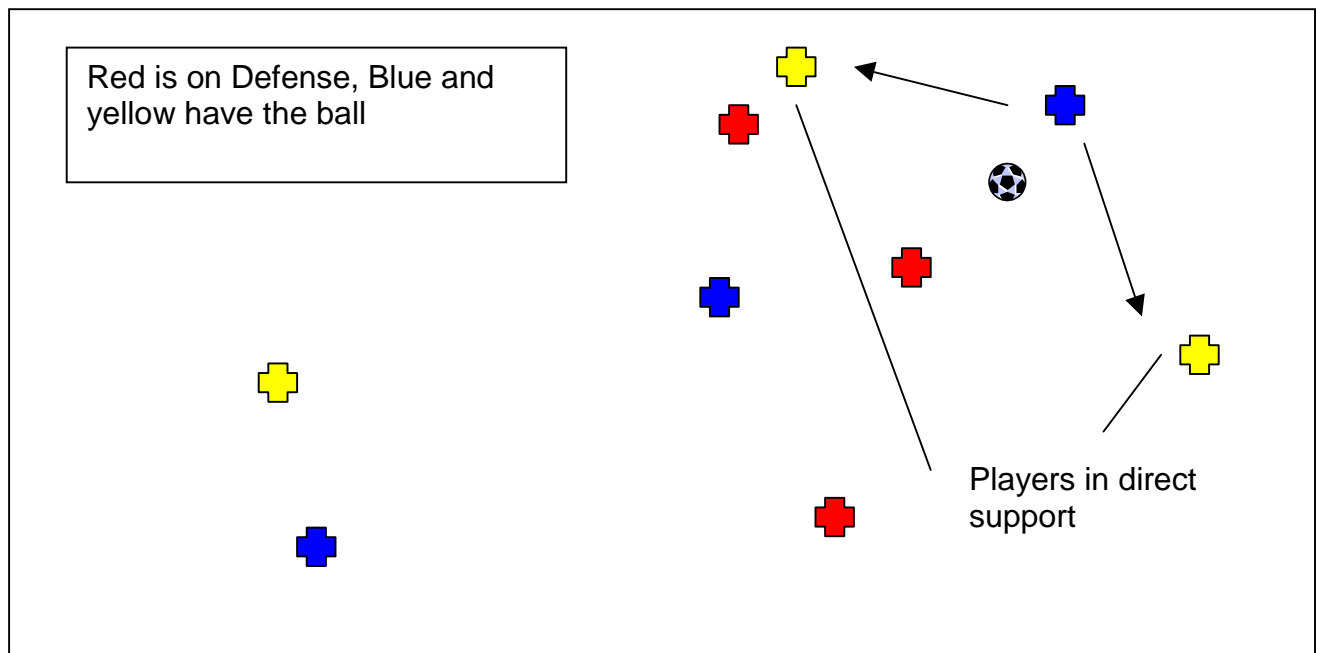
The next exercise was suggested by Gary Rue a high school soccer coach from Kentucky. This is a possession, speed of play exercise that once again builds vision, decision making and communication by all players.

The person in control of the ball is, as we know, designated the **first attacker**. She obviously has a lot of responsibility when it comes to ball possession and establishing an effective passing game. But the **second attackers**, those in **direct support** of the first attacker, probably have equal, or perhaps even greater, responsibility for maintaining possession.

Why? Because the second attacker must make herself available to the passer. She does this through movement to space or by a check back towards the ball. Communication is key, whether verbal, or non-verbal. Even when they are not good passing options, second attackers can affect the possession and passing game by clearing the area and perhaps opening it up for a teammate to make a supporting run into the vacated space.

Second Attacker Support Set Up

Set up a 20 x 20 area with three (3) teams. Each team has either 3 or 4 players and each team **MUST** wear a different color pennie. One team is on defense and the other 2 teams possess the ball. When the defensive team gains possession of the ball, they switch to offense and the team that lost possession switches to defense. Therefore you always have 6 v 3 or 8 v 4.



Second Attacker Support Play

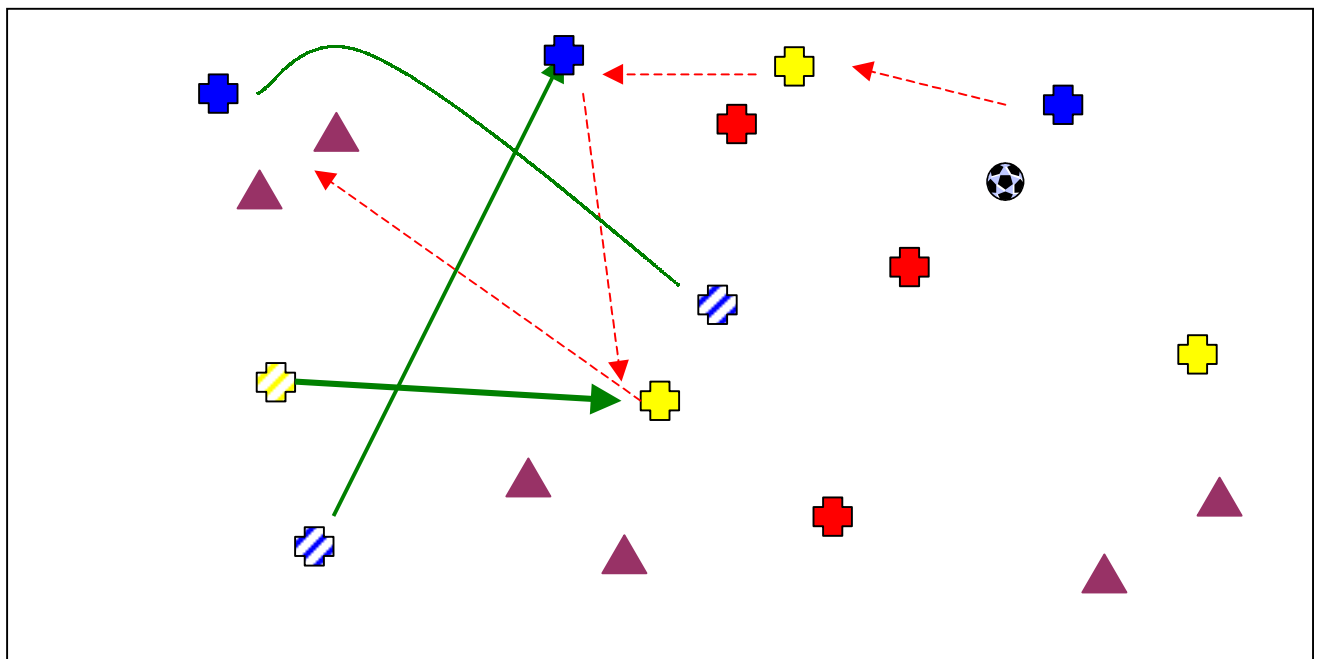
Restrict players to two (2) touches on the ball. Restrict players to pass to players wearing the opposite color jersey. That is if you have blue and yellow on offense, the blue players may pass only to yellow and the yellow players only to blue.

The coach should be stressing the need for the second attacker to be communicating via voice and movement to the first attacker. Ideally this should be done *prior* to the first attacker receiving the ball.




What you should see with this exercise is the players tending to talk more, sometimes it's to argue who is on defense. Reinforce the importance of communication as much as possible and the role of the second attacker.

Progression of the Second Attacker Support – Match Related

A simple progression of the second attacker support is to add a few 3 yard goals randomly within the playing area. This is then a non-directional game. The attacking team scores a point every time they complete a pass, between the cones, to a teammate wearing the opposite color jersey. Each of the two attacking teams gets a point.



Indicates where the player ends up after a run

-  Indicates where a player started from
-  Indicates a run
-  Indicates a pass

As you can see from the above example, it is important for the off color players to make runs to space so that they are in a position to take the next pass.

Communication, verbal and non-verbal are crucial.

Progression of the Second Attacker Support – Match Condition

The next progression is to play a directional game. In this case we keep the 3 v 3 concept but we designate one of the groups of three as the permanent neutral players, i.e. they play for what ever side has the ball.

The same two touch and pass to someone not in your color apply. The only difference is that we put either a single goal, or two goals on each end of the field. The offense plays to one end just like in a “real” game”.

Play either a time limit or goal limit and either round robin the tournament or player winners stay on the field. The losers become the neutral players.

