



DEVELOPING POSITIONAL UNDERSTANDING

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INTRODUCTION

HELPING PLAYERS UNDERSTAND WHERE, WHEN, HOW AND WHY TO MOVE IN RELATION TO THE GAME IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT THAT IS GENERALLY OVERLOOKED OR IGNORED BY DRILL-MINDED COACHES.

SOCCER IS A POSITIONAL GAME AND "PLAYING" SOCCER MUST BE MORE THAN THE AFTERTHOUGHT TO END PRACTICE. "DEVELOPING POSITIONAL UNDERSTANDING" EXPLORES WAYS COACHES CAN STRUCTURE PRACTICE GAMES TO HELP PLAYERS LEARN SOCCER BY PLAYING SOCCER.

Playing System

#9
Striker

#8
Center
Midfielder

#8
Center
Midfielder

#3 / #5
Left Sided
Defender

#2 / #4
Right Sided
Defender

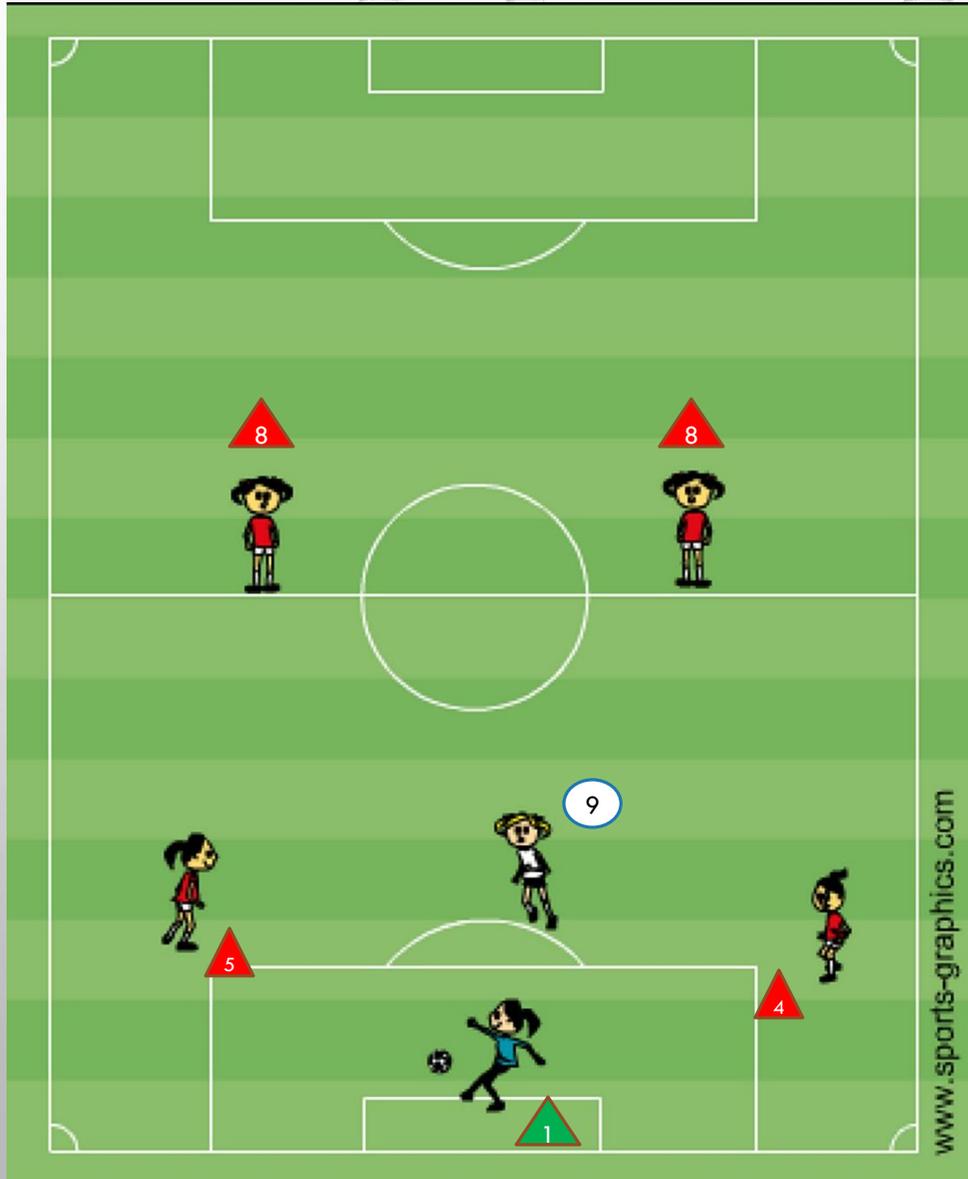
#1
Goalkeeper

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6v6
1-2-2-1

Building From The Back-1

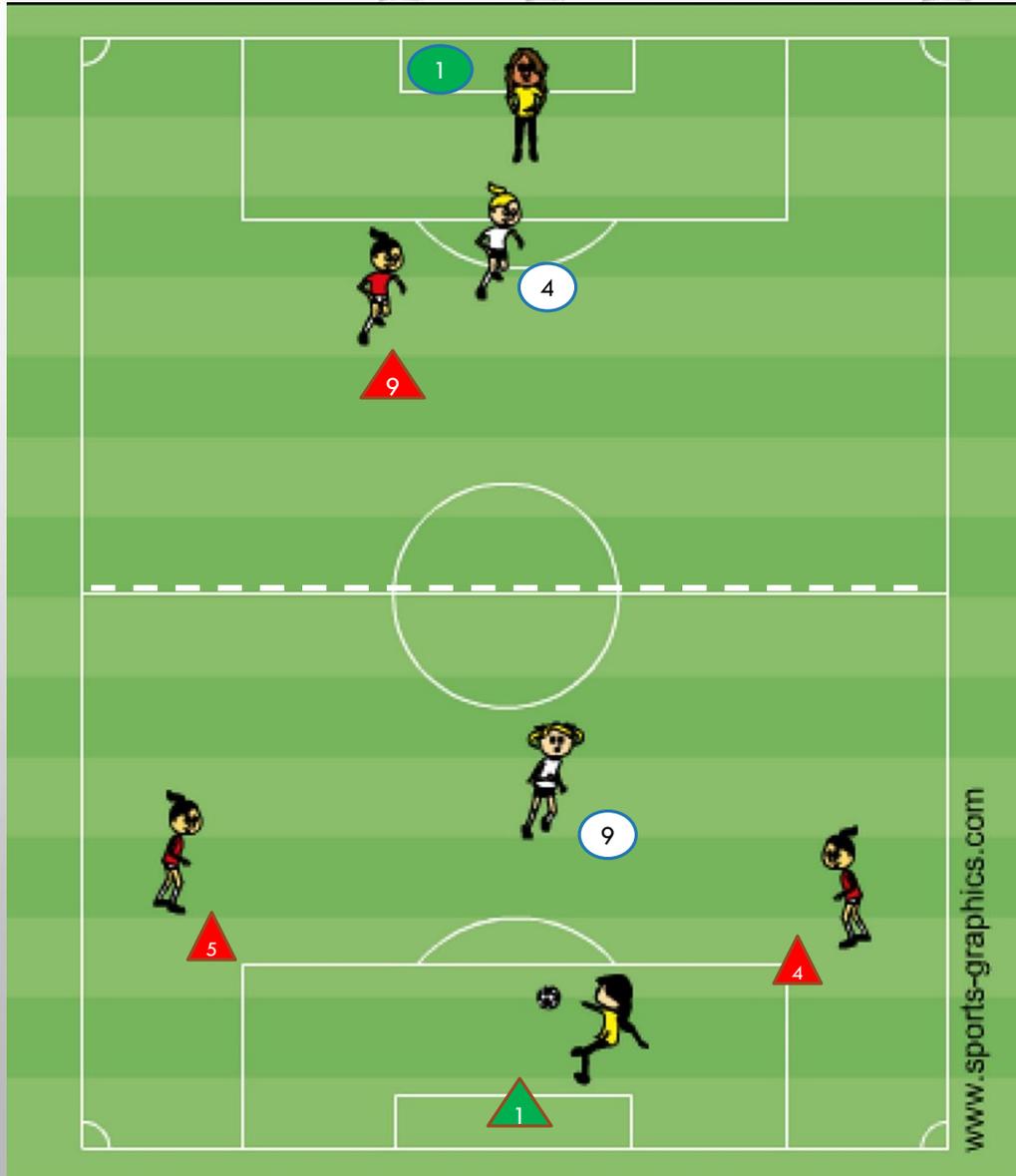


In this game, the objective is to help the Red defenders (#3/5, #2/4) understand how to create space away from the goalkeeper (#1) to build the ball into the midfield third.

The Red goalkeeper (#1) participates as a supporting player (technically, creating 3v1), but cannot advance the ball out of the defensive third. Each round ends when the ball is passed to the midfield players (#8).

If the White attacker (#9) comes into possession, she attacks the goal / passes to the goalkeeper.

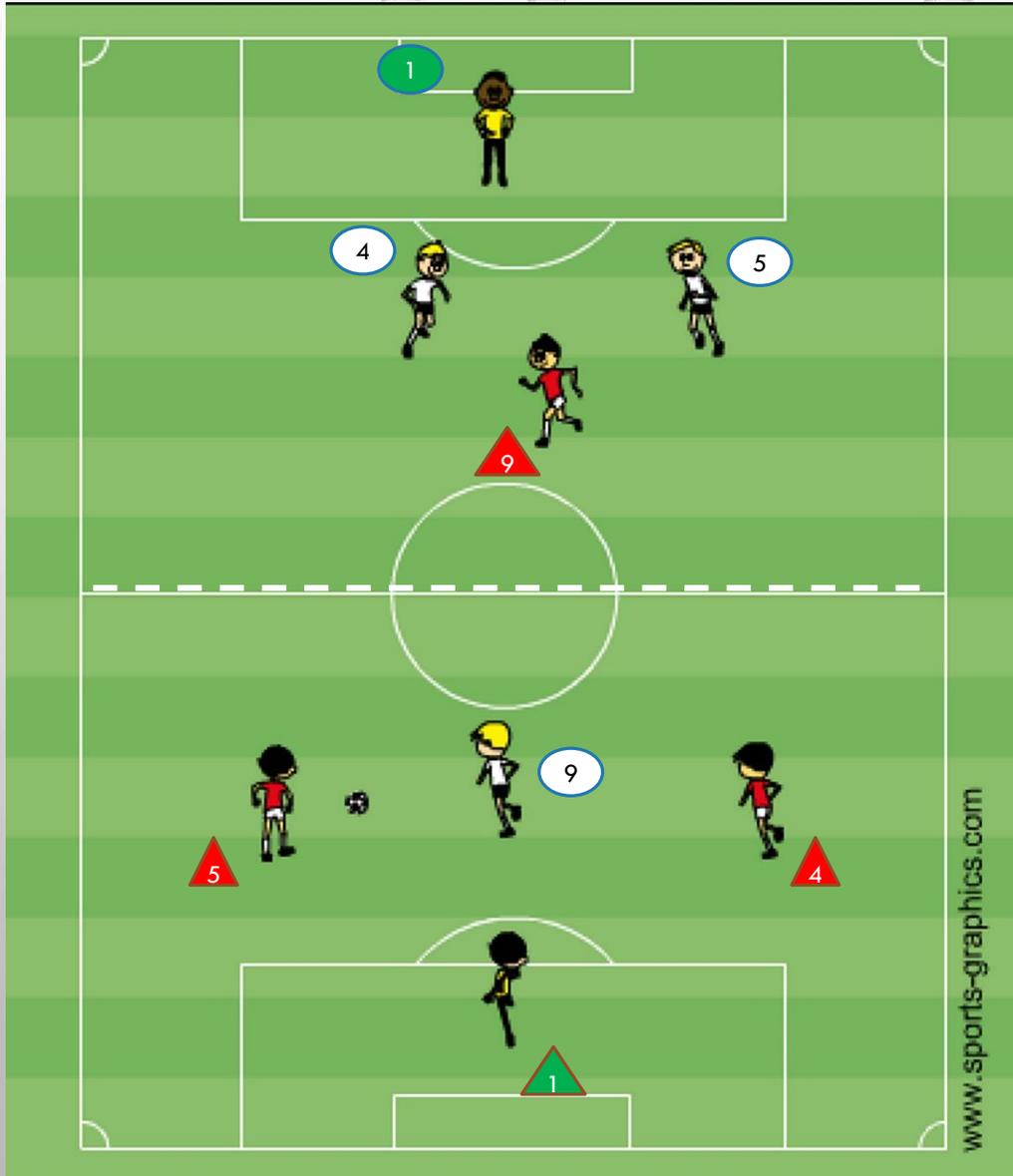
Building From The Back-2



In this game, the ball always begins with the Red goalkeeper (#1), who can build out of the back with the #2/4 and #3/5; or play directly to the forward (#9). The ball must be passed over the half-way line and one of the Red defenders can join the forward to create a 2v1 in the attacking half.

In transition, the White team scores by passing the ball to either goalkeeper, while the Red team (4v3) can look to recover possession while the ball remains in play.

Building From The Back-3

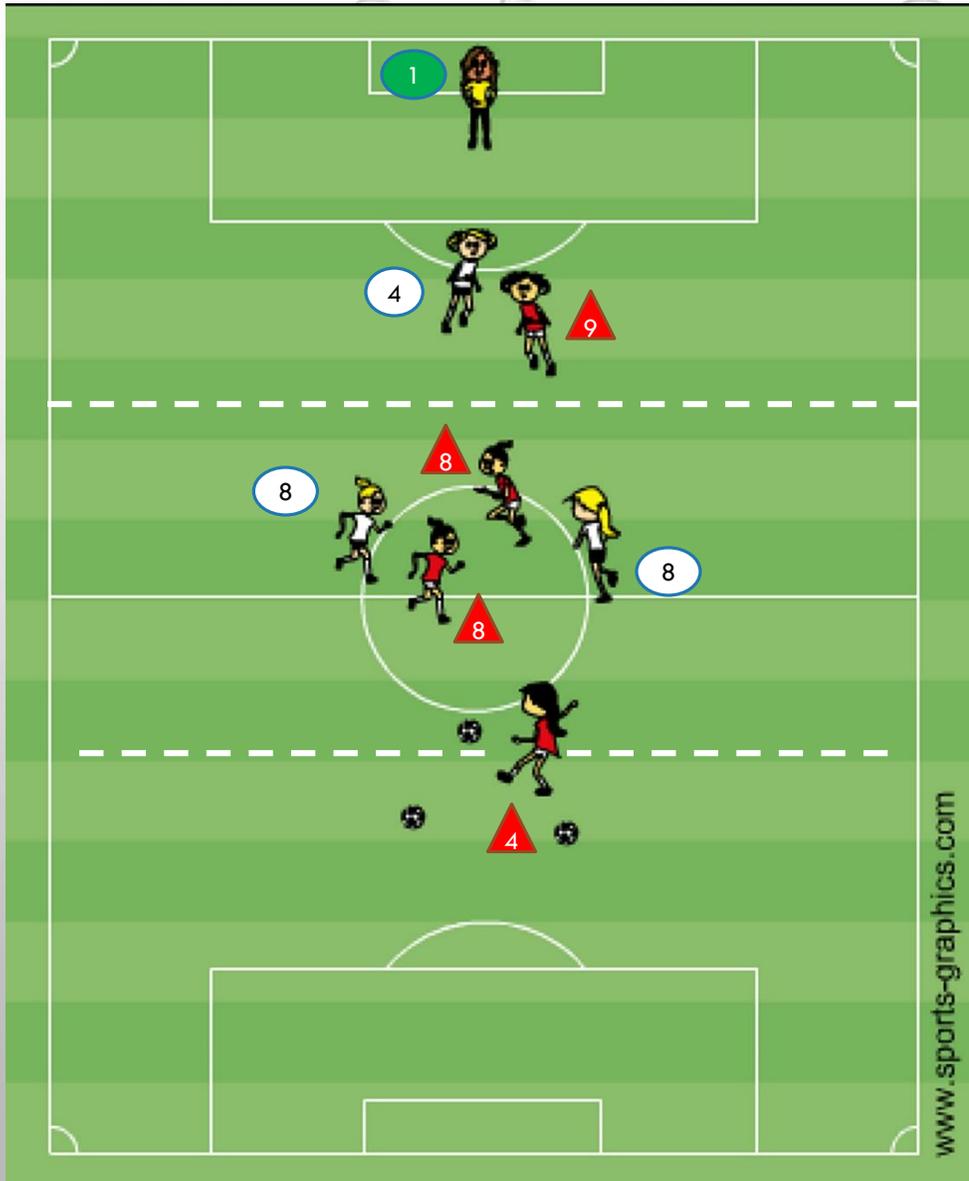


In this game, all three field players (#4, #5, #9) cannot be in the same half at the same time. Dribbling the ball over the half-way line “may” be required to encourage the forward(s) to communicate (eye contact / movement) with the defenders.

The offside law may be applied after the first pass forward; or when the ball is dribbled into the attacking half.

The players are not required to return to their own half of the field (as shown) after each change of possession.

Building Through Midfield-1



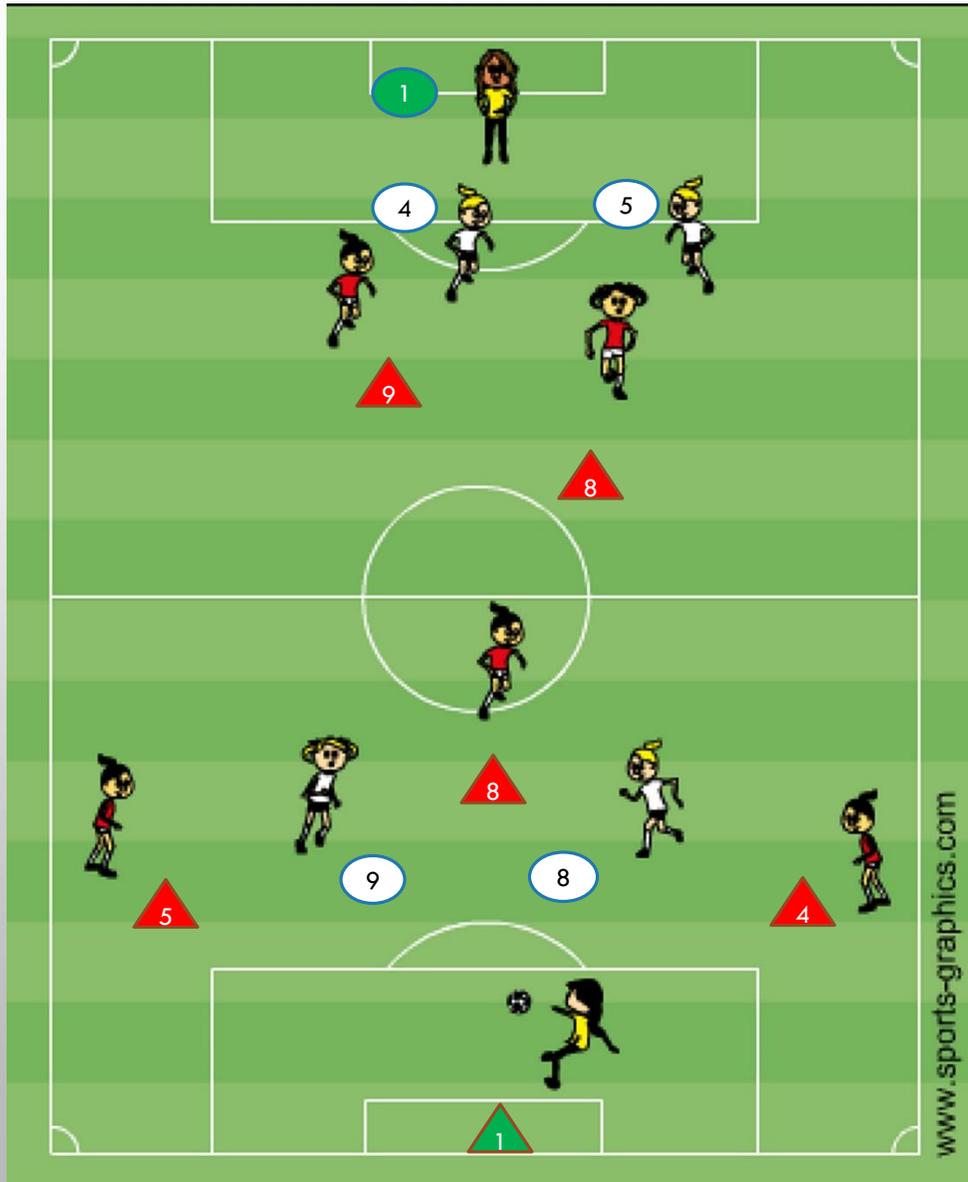
In this game, the ball always begins with the Red defender (#4) who supports behind her midfielders (#8, #8), who are playing 2v2.

When the ball reaches the striker (#9), one of the midfielders joins the attack in the final third to create 2v1. The ball can be played directly to the Red forward (#9) by the Red defender (#4).

Offside can be applied at the top of the penalty area; or after the striker receives the first pass. The White team scores by passing to the Red target (#4) or through small goals (not shown).

In transition, the Red team can look to recover possession while the ball is in play.

Building Through Midfield-2



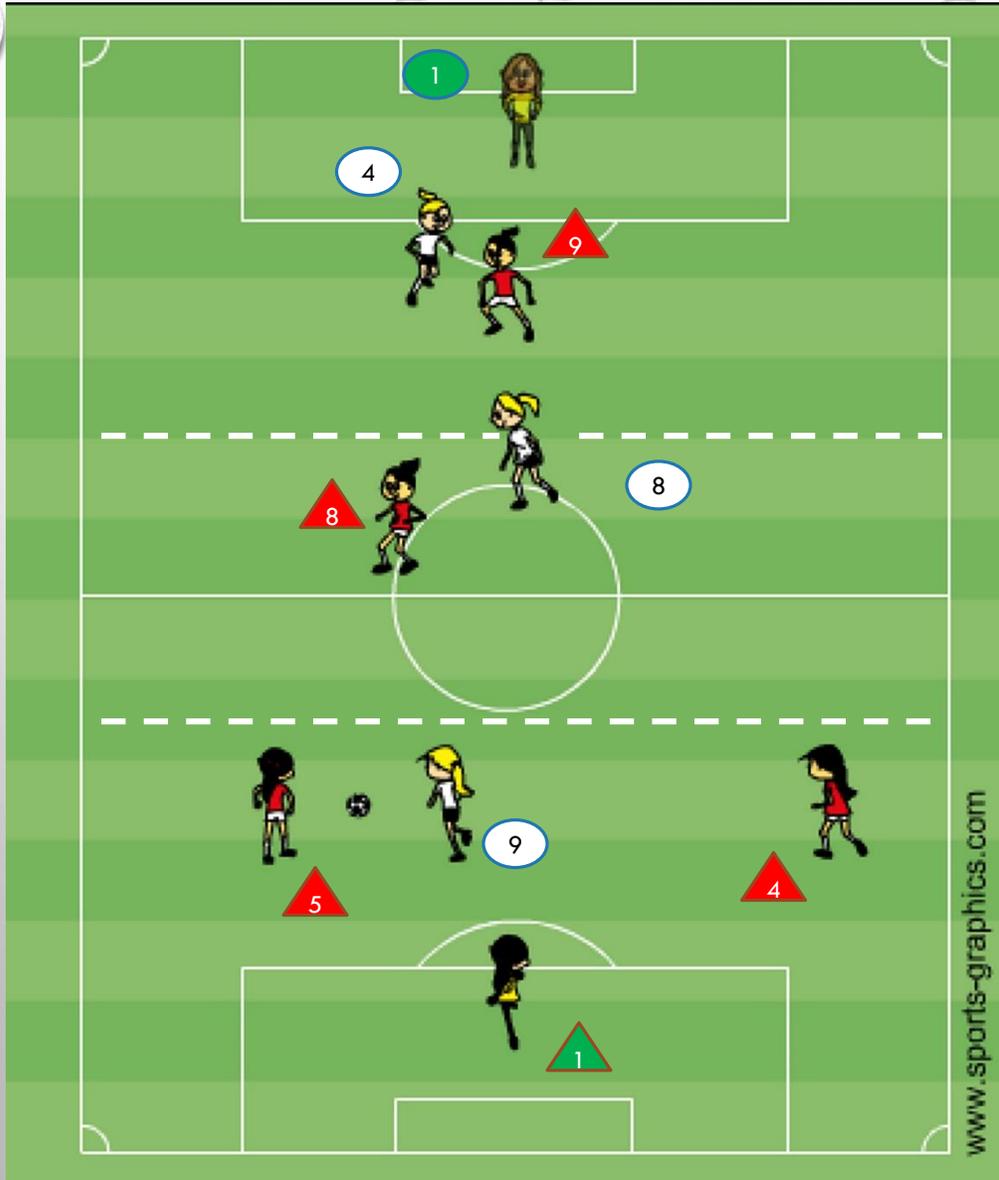
In this game, each round starts with the Red goalkeeper (#1), who plays with two defenders (#2/4 , #3/5) and a midfielder (#8) to build the ball into the attacking half.

The ball must be passed across the half- way line and one player can join the attack to create 3v2 to goal.

In transition, the White team scores by passing the ball to either goalkeeper; while the Red team attempts to regain possession while the ball remains in play.

There are no end-line or sideline restarts.

Building Through Midfield-3



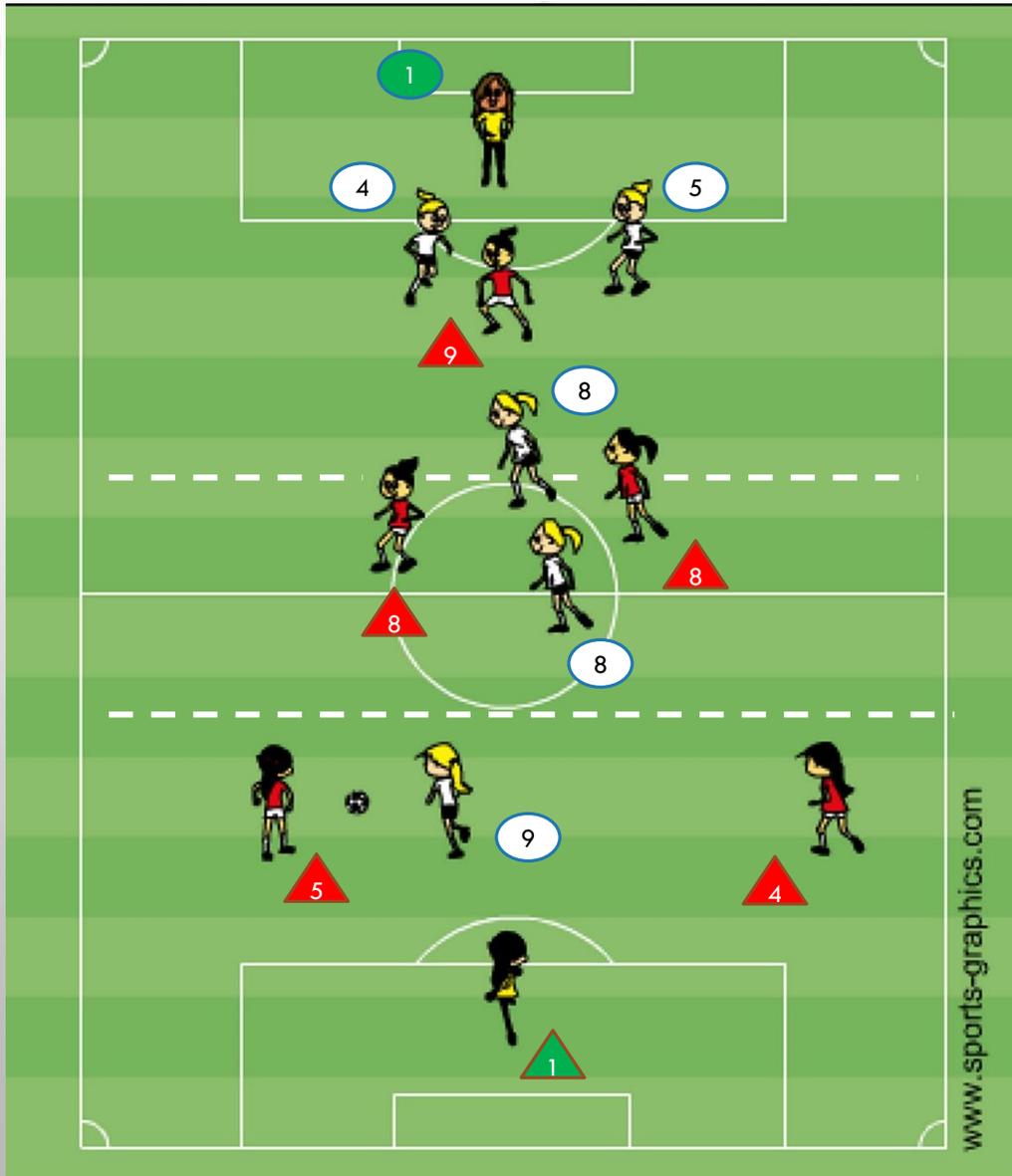
In this game, the ball starts with the Red goalkeeper (#1), who plays with two defenders (#2/4, #3/5), a midfielder (#8), and a forward (#9). The White team has one defender (#4), one midfielder (#8), and one forward (#9).

The ball must be passed into each third and one player can support forward to create 2v1.

The offside law can be applied at the top of the penalty area; or after the ball enters the final third. There are no sideline or end-line restarts.

In transition, the White team scores by passing the ball to either goalkeeper, while the Red team looks to recover possession while the ball remains in play.

Building Through Midfield-3



In this game, each team has a goalkeeper (#1), two defenders (#2/4, #3/5), two midfielders (#8, #8) and a forward (#9).

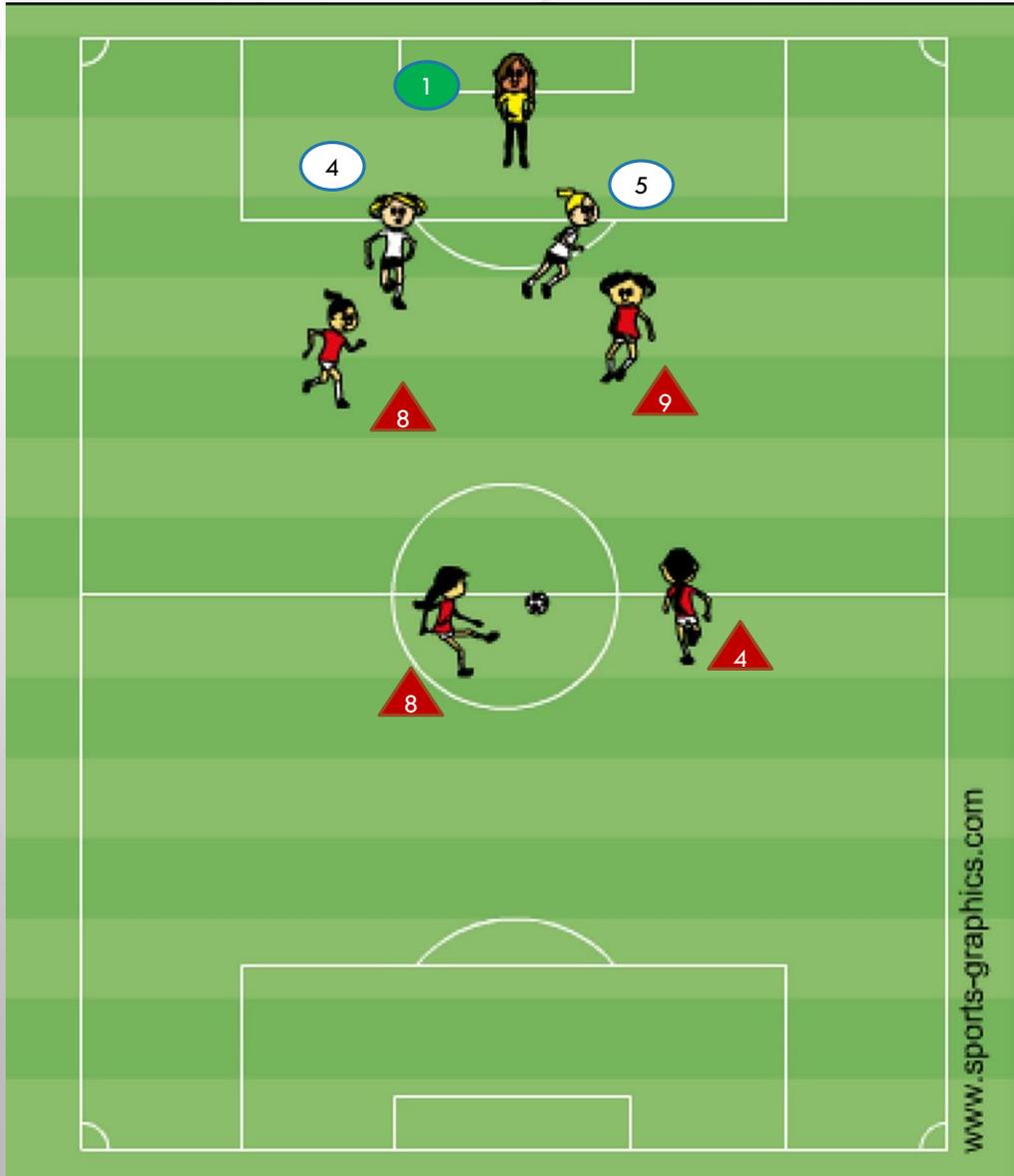
The ball must be passed into the next third.

When attacking, one of the defenders should move forward to create 3v2 in midfield; while the number of players entering the attacking third can range from one attacker (creating 2v2), to one attacker and one defender (creating 2v3), to two attackers (creating 3v2). Line balance should be maintained.

The offside law can be applied at the top of the penalty area; or after the ball enters the final third.

Sideline and end-line restarts are taken as normal.

Playing in the Final Third-1



In this game, the ball is passed between the Red midfielder (#8) and defender (#4) until one of the attackers (#8 / #9) creates space to receive a pass.

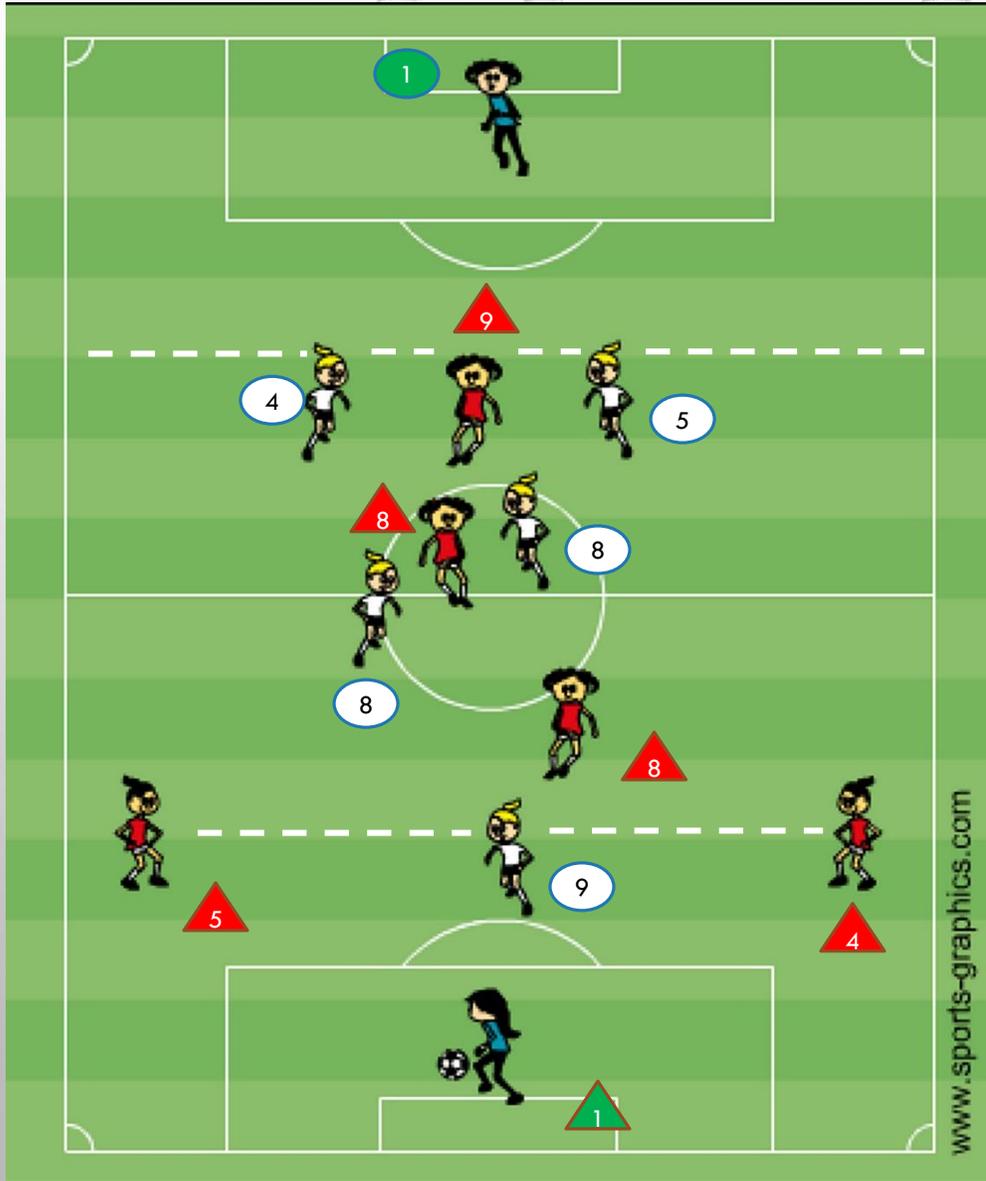
When the ball is played forward, one of the supporting players joins the attack to create 3v2.

The offside law should be applied at the top of the penalty area; or after the initial pass into the strikers.

The Red team may be restricted to a limited number of touches per possession; or to a limited time for each attack.

In transition, the White team can pass to the remaining Red player, or a small goal (not shown); while the Red attackers can look to recover possession while the ball remains in play.

Back To The Final Game



In this game, each team has a goalkeeper (#1), two defenders (#2/4, #3/5), two midfielders (#8, #8), and one forward (#9).

The offside law is applied inside the final 20-25 yards, as shown.

Sideline and end-line restarts are taken as normal.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?



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