

20260401- Barkers Under 13 B Stu

Coach: Stuart Milne

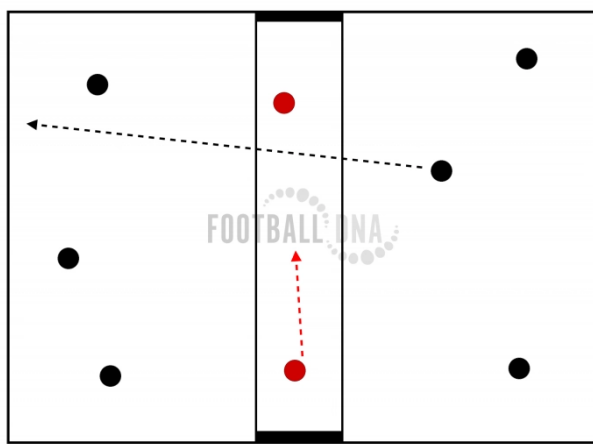
Team: Barkers under 13 B Stu

Date & Time: 01/04/2026 19:00

Duration: 90 Minutes

Session Objective: Defending in block

Crossing The River – Invasion Warm Up



Equipment : Footballs, Bibs, Cones, 6 Players

Overview:

Setup an area and create an area in the middle with either cones or flat markers that acts as the 'river'. In this game, players have to try and get from one river bank (side) to the other without being tagged. The players in the middle area have to try and tag players as they travel from one side to the other but are limited to being only able to move around the middle area to tag. If a player is tagged, they then become a tagger inside the middle area. Play until all attackers have been tagged.

Coaching Points:

Awareness: Players need to be aware of where the space is for them to help them cross the middle area without being tagged. Players may look to observe where the defenders are as well as other attackers to help them to recognise when is the best time to cross the area and get to the other side.

Speed: Players should look to use their speed to help them to cross the middle area once a space has opened up for them to do so. Likewise, players may need to adjust the way they're travelling as well as change their speed to help them escape being tagged the defenders.

Movement: Players throughout this game need to continually dodge and avoid opponents. Players should explore different ways that they can twist and turn as well as change speed to help them to avoid being tagged the defenders.

1v1s: Players should explore different ways of using their body to help them in 1v1 situations to help them to evade opponents as well as to grab bibs from others too. Challenge players to use body feints, changes of direction and disguise to help them to be successful in 1v1 situations.

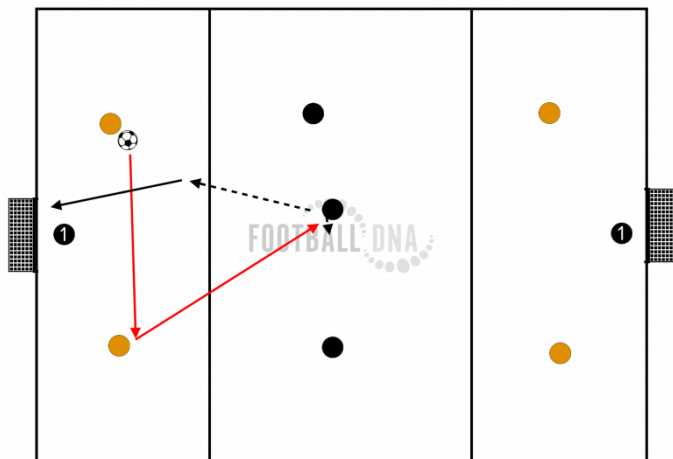
Progressions:

- Attackers all have a football each which they have to travel across to the other side without being tagged.

Regression:

- Rather than having an area in the middle, have a line that the taggers have to stay on instead.

Beating The Block – Defending As A Unit & Breaking Lines



Equipment : Footballs, Bibs, Cones, 2 Goals, 8 Players & 2 GK

Overview:

Setup an area and split the pitch into four different areas using either flat discs or cones. Setup a goal at either end with a goalkeeper in each of the goals as well as organise two teams. Each team will have two players in front of a goal and also two players locked into one of the middle sections in the middle of the pitch. The game begins either through the goalkeeper or by the coach passing the ball into one of the teams. The attacking team has to try and beat the defenders in the middle area and pass through into their other attackers, once the pass has been played through those attackers then have to try and score in the opposite goal. If the defenders win possession, they have to play into their team mates in the middle area and try and score. Rotate the players in the middle channels around regularly.

Coaching Points:

Scanning/Awareness: Throughout this game when the opposition are in possession of the ball, the defenders in the middle should continually scan and check their shoulders to see where the ball is as well as the players that they're trying to block the ball going into. Players that aware of their surroundings and not just the ball will be more effective at intercepting passes going into the desired destination.

Movement: Defenders should continually be moving based on where the ball and the opposition is throughout the game. Defenders should look to move quickly to block passing lanes and prevent the opponents from playing between, beyond and around them. Defenders should look to move collectively to help them to intercept passes and will need to communicate between them to help one another.

Body Shape: To help players to scan and check their surroundings they should continually adjust their body shape to allow them to be side on throughout this game whilst defending. Through defenders being side on they will be able to adjust their positioning to where they need to be to intercept passes as well as helping them to continually scan as well.

Positioning: Defenders should work between them as a pair to help them to prevent opponents from being able to play between, beyond or around them. Players should look to position themselves to force play a particular way and make play 'predictable' for them and their team mates to help them to intercept and limit the oppositions options whilst in possession of the ball.

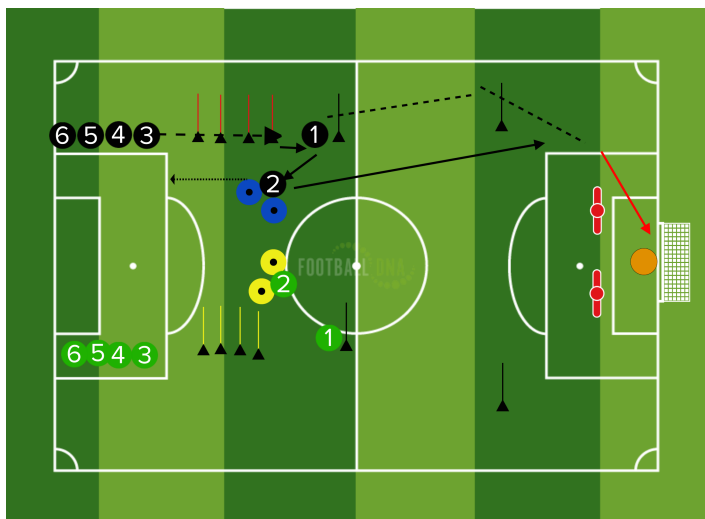
Progressions:

- One attacker can join into the middle third with the ball by travelling in with it to create an overload for the attacking team.
- Limit the number of passes the defending team is allowed in their half before the opposition can press the ball i.e. after three passes the defenders can press the ball and win it back.

Regression:

- Add additional defenders in the middle area to help them to be able to intercept passes as a team.

J Runs



Equipment : 1 Goal,Bibs,Poles,Mannequins, 6 - 10 Players

Overview:

This session is designed to develop attacking movement with a focus on the **J-shaped run into the box**, combined with **sharp midfield combinations** and a **well-weighted final pass** for a first-time finish.

Play begins with players dribbling through a line of poles to promote close ball control. This is followed by quick, sharp passing combinations in midfield between two players to simulate game-realistic tempo.

The attacker initially checks in, plays a return pass, then executes a **deceptive movement (drop of the shoulder and pivot)** around a pole acting as a defender. From there, they make a **curved "J run"**—first moving slightly away, then arcing back toward goal.

The midfielder delivers a **timed, weighted pass inside the pole**, allowing the attacker to meet the ball **in stride** and finish first time.

The "J run" ensures the attacker's **body shape is open**, enabling them to see both the ball and the goal clearly.

Coaching Points:

- **Ball Control:** Tight, controlled touches through the poles at speed
- **Passing Quality:**
 - Crisp, accurate passes in midfield
 - Correct weight and timing on the final through ball
- **Movement of the Attacker:**
 - Sell the initial movement (drop of shoulder)
 - Sharp pivot around the pole (defender)
 - Explosive acceleration into the J-shaped run
- **Timing:**
 - Attacker must time the run to meet the ball **on the stride**
 - Midfielder must release the pass at the right moment
- **Body Shape:**
 - J run opens up the body to see both the pass and the goal
- **Finishing:**
 - First-time strike where possible
 - Stay composed and balanced over the ball
- **Awareness:**
 - Scan before receiving and before passing
- **Weak Foot Development:**
 - Repeat on both sides and encourage use of the non-dominant foot

Progressions:

- Vary the **midfield passing combinations** (e.g. one-touch, overlaps, third-man runs)
- Start the attacking sequence from **different angles/sides of the pitch**
- Allow the dribbling player to **move wide and receive a second pass** before delivering the through ball
- Add a **second defender (passive ? active)** to increase pressure
- Introduce **competition** (e.g. goals scored, time limits, team challenges)
- Require different finishes (e.g. across goal, near post, weaker foot only)

Regressions:

- Remove the defender (pole pressure) and simplify the movement pattern
- Allow extra touches in midfield (2–3 touch instead of one-touch)
- Slow down the sequence to focus on **technique over speed**
- Reduce distance of the final pass to make timing easier
- Start attacker's run earlier or from a more central position
- Allow attacker a **control touch before finishing** instead of first-time