

# STRIKER MOVEMENT SESSIONS

Session 103: Improving Short And Sharp Finishing In The Box

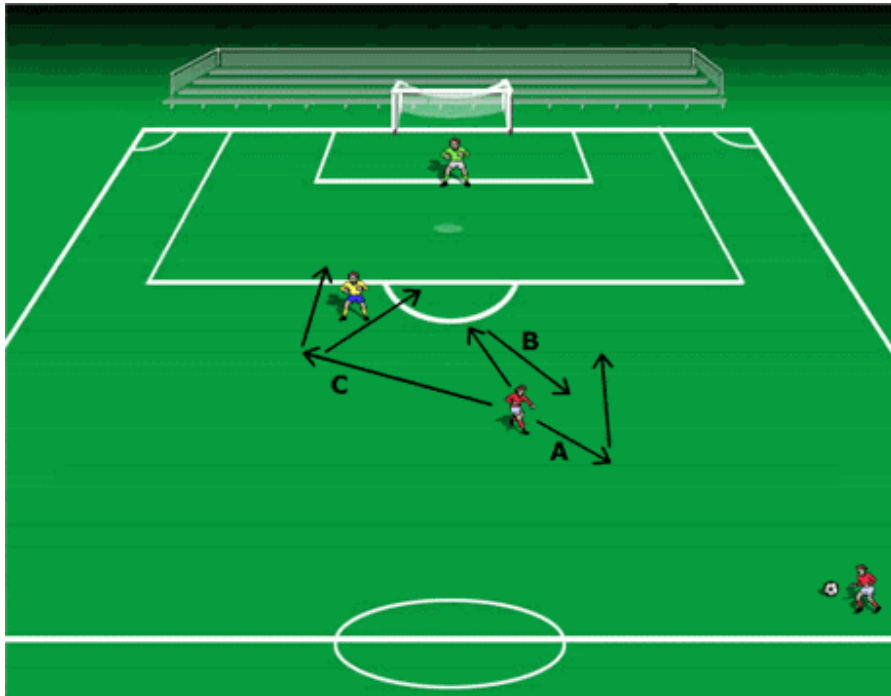
Quick One And Two Touch Finishing In The Box

Session 104: Individual Striker Movements

Session 105: Working Opposites With Movement Of Strikers

Session 106: Striker Movement Inside The Penalty Area From Crosses

## Session 104: Individual Striker Movements



**You can decide when to start to teach this depending on the soccer IQ of the individual player.**

The movement of the striker, the three ideas, working opposites on the first two

**A) Short to go long, (opposite run)**

**B) Long to come short, (opposite run)**

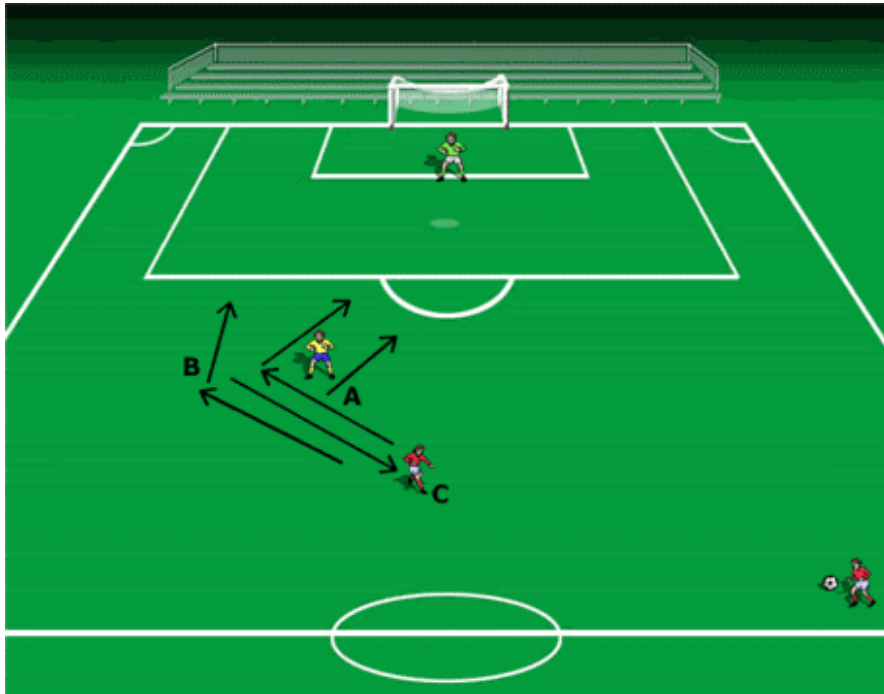
**C) Off the shoulder of the defender.** A diagonal run away to invite a ball “off / over the shoulder” of the marking defender.

On A) the striker takes the defender towards the ball to create space behind, either for themselves or a team mate.

On B) the striker takes the defender away to create space in front and short to check back into for themselves or a team mate.

On C) Here the striker runs away and invites a ball off or over the shoulder of the defender, in this situation the striker is off the right shoulder of the defender. The ball may be delivered off (outside) the right shoulder of the defender so it goes wider, or (inside) the left shoulder of the defender so the striker cuts inside the defender either in front or behind them or moves towards the ball and receives to feet.

## “Off The Shoulder” Has Three Further Movements To Consider



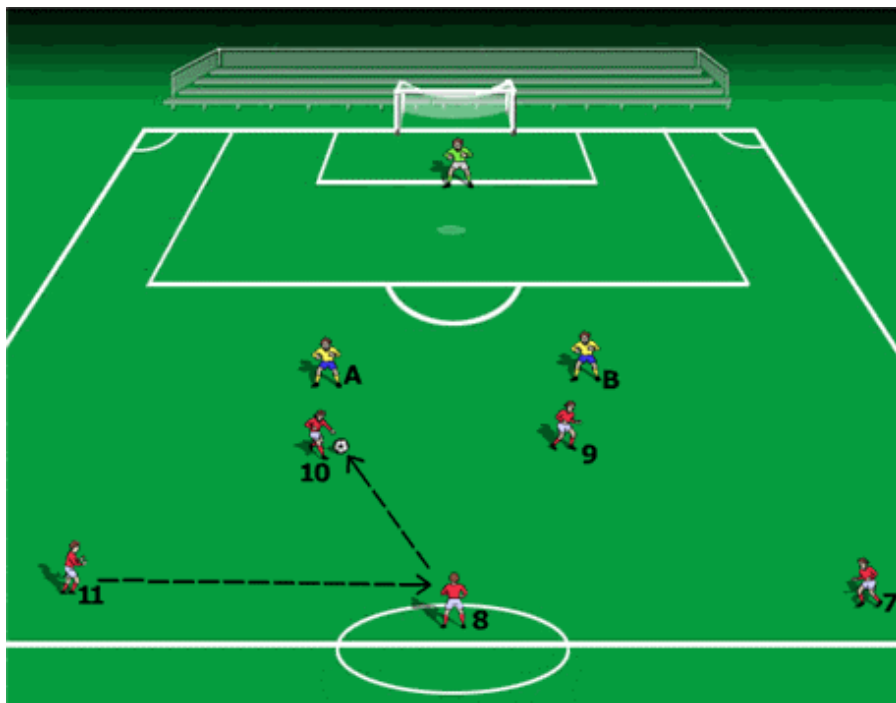
Carrying this idea on the striker in this position has three ideas for moves,

- A) Away then back across the defender either in front of them or behind them for the delivery inside the defender.
- B) Staying off the shoulder for the delivery outside the defender to attack,
- C) Going short to the ball to receive the delivery to feet.

The defender starts in the same position as the striker though it isn't shown here.

The three areas the delivery is aiming for are shown by the circles.

I believe this is a good way of simplifying movements by the striker in this position and giving them a framework to play from, they may develop their own variations of these three moves but it is a good planning tool to use in training so the players making the delivery at least have an idea what the striker may attempt in terms of his or her movement based on the position of the defender.



This is the usual position of the strikers, they stand alongside the defender and do not open the angle up to help them receive a pass, and these are the disadvantages to this:

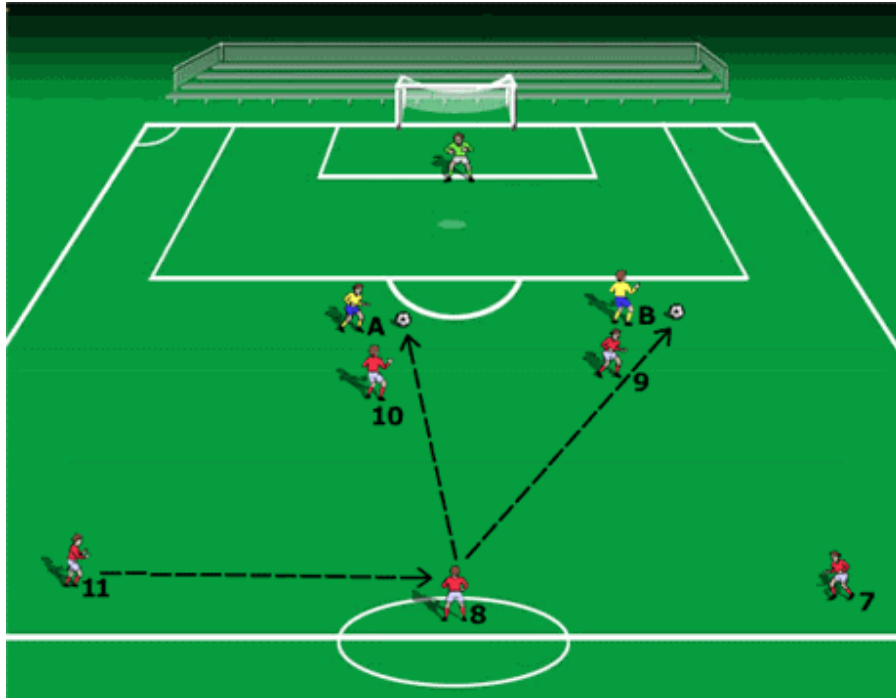
A) Striker has their back to the defender. Defender has control.

B) Striker's body position is square on to the ball, defender and the goal, facing back.

C) Striker can't see the defender clearly nor see the goal directly.

D) If the ball is played in behind the defender, the striker has to first turn, then run forward and probably is second best to the ball against the defender who has a yard or two start and is probably side on already so only needing to do half a turn.

E) It is easy for the defender to mark the striker as he or she can see the ball and the striker at the same time and be in control of the situation.

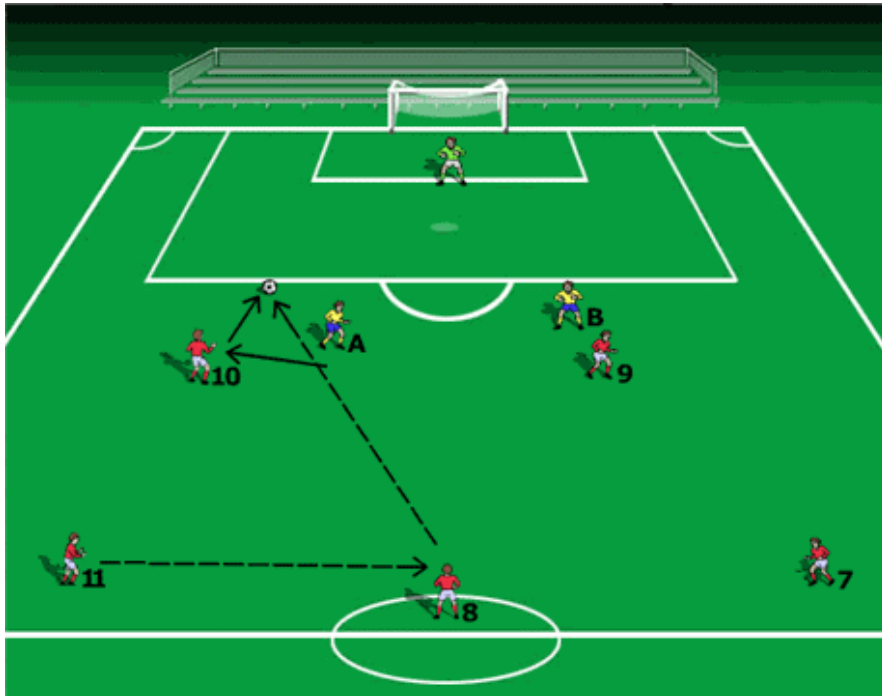


The ball is played straight and behind the defender (A) at player is likely to be first to the ball as the striker (10) has to turn and run after the ball in behind the defender.

The ball is played wide into the corner, same idea the defender (B) should be first to it based on the Starting Position of the striker (9), which is back to goal, back to the direction of the ball and where it is traveling to, having to turn and chase it losing vital seconds.

It is all about the Starting Position of the striker and his or her body stance in terms of open or closed, open being half or fully turned in the direction the ball is going or closed as in their back to where the ball is going. Too often they start from a closed body stance.

## Individual Striker Movement Off The Shoulder



Striker moves “OFF THE SHOULDER” of the defender. Only a matter of a few yards can open up wonderful space and attacking opportunities.

In this case moving off the shoulder of the defender means there is a space in behind the defender that the player on the ball can deliver to (that was previously difficult to see and / or deliver into). If the defender does not adjust their position then this is a great chance to receive and attack the goal.

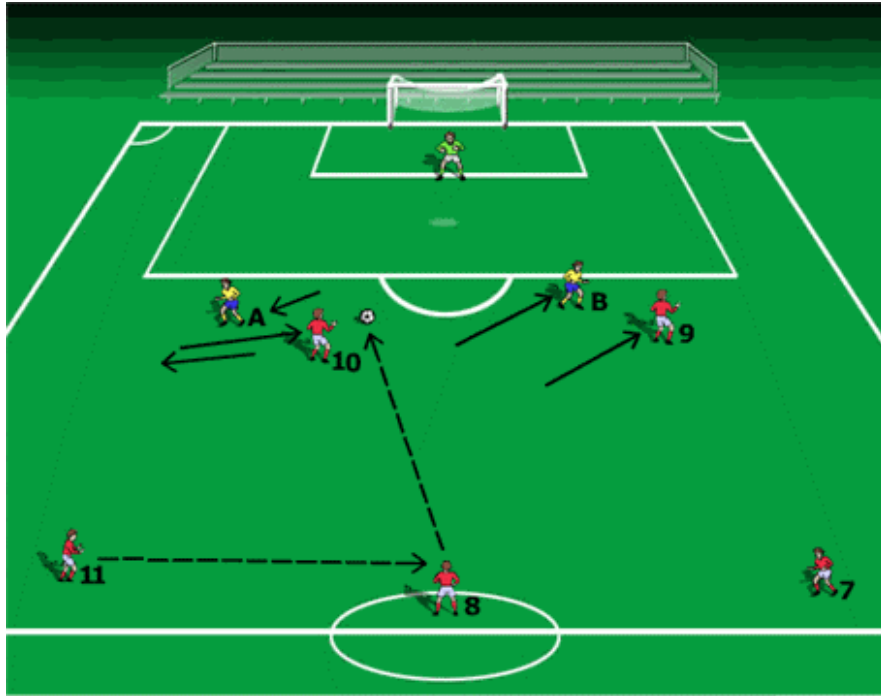
Striker is now:

A) Facing forward, and off at an angle, not having to turn and run forward (saves time and puts the defender at a disadvantage).

B) Can see the ball, the goal and the defender at the same time.

C) Striker can even take their position off the sweeper (in terms of being offside) if the opposition employs one, so they are almost in advance but also wide of the marking defender. This position (off the shoulder) is very difficult to defend against.

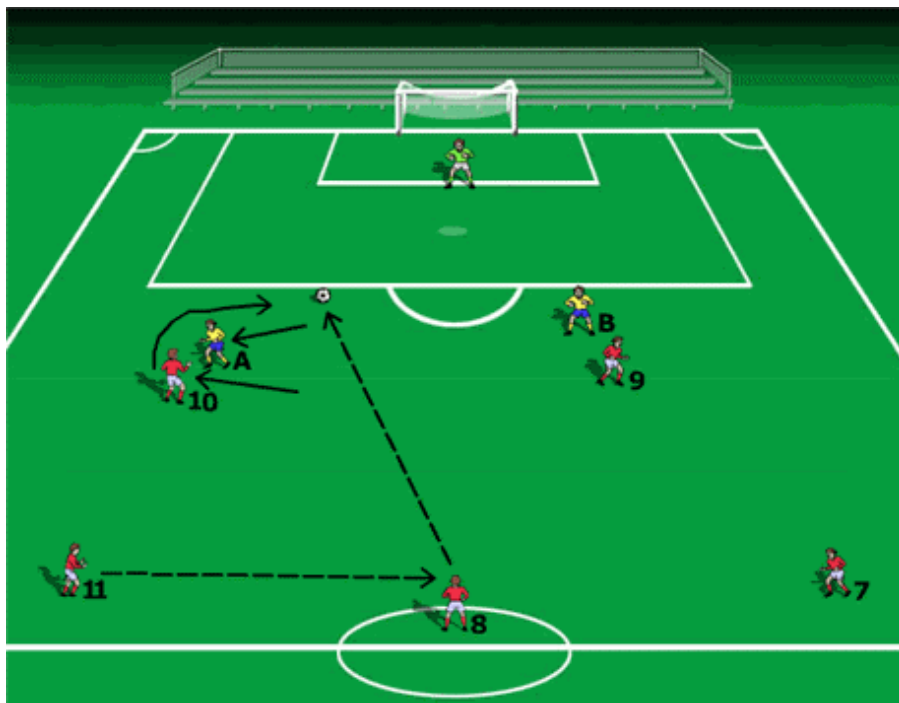
D) If not facing forward at least in a side – on position so they can see forward and not have their back to the defender.



Striker moves “OFF THE SHOULDER” of the defender.

The defender comes with the striker and closes them down. Now the timing of the pass and timing of the run come into play. Striker then checks back inside into the space the defender has vacated and attacks inside and across in front of them. Striker (9) can run off the other center back (B) to create the space inside also. The player in the ball plays it inside the center back.

Also try to time it whereas the defender in this case, plants their right foot down (and be flat footed even) so are leaning forward and towards the striker, that is the time to check back inside and across them. The defender is likely to be most off balance at this time, and that is the time to take advantage as they have to spring back on themselves and adjust their feet. It may give a valuable yard or two to the striker which can be the difference between a goal or not a goal.



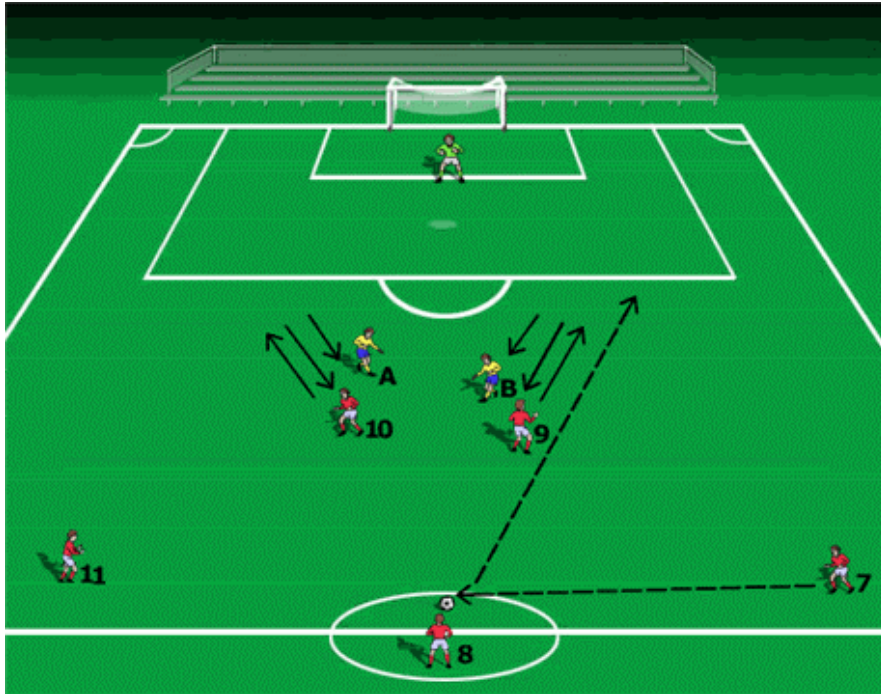
Striker moves “OFF THE SHOULDER” of the defender.

Same as the previous diagram where the defender closes the striker down but this time the striker makes a run outside and behind the defender rather than inside and across them. Timing of this is important for being on side.

Timing the movement also as previously, when the defender is in an off balanced stance making it more difficult to check back in one movement and cover the strikers run.



## Session 105: Working Opposites With Movement Of Strikers

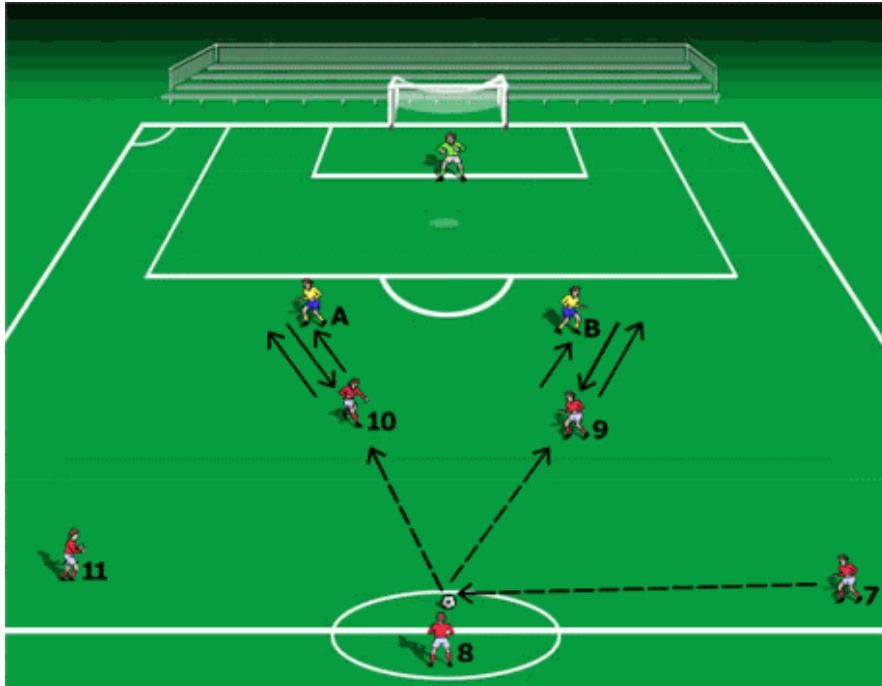


Strikers must recognize when the man on the ball has TIME to play the ball forward. Strikers move towards the ball dragging the man marking defenders close to them.

As the player checks toward the passer as if to receive a pass and is marked tightly by the defender, a sharp spin is made to receive a long pass behind (into the space created by coming short) rather than the short one the striker seemed to be asking for. A Sharp turn / spin into the defender and across the shoulder is the best move rather than the old arc run into space. With the old arc run this is easily tracked by the defender as there is time to see the ball and the player.

When the player has time on the ball to pass expect lots of movement at pace e.g. short to go long. Midfield player can pass down the side of the striker. When there's no time on the ball i.e. they must pass quickly, expect players to stay in their positions to provide options. This means if they go short to receive they get the ball to feet from the first run because there is no time to make the second run as the player on the ball has to release it quickly.

## Working Opposites Checking Back To Receive

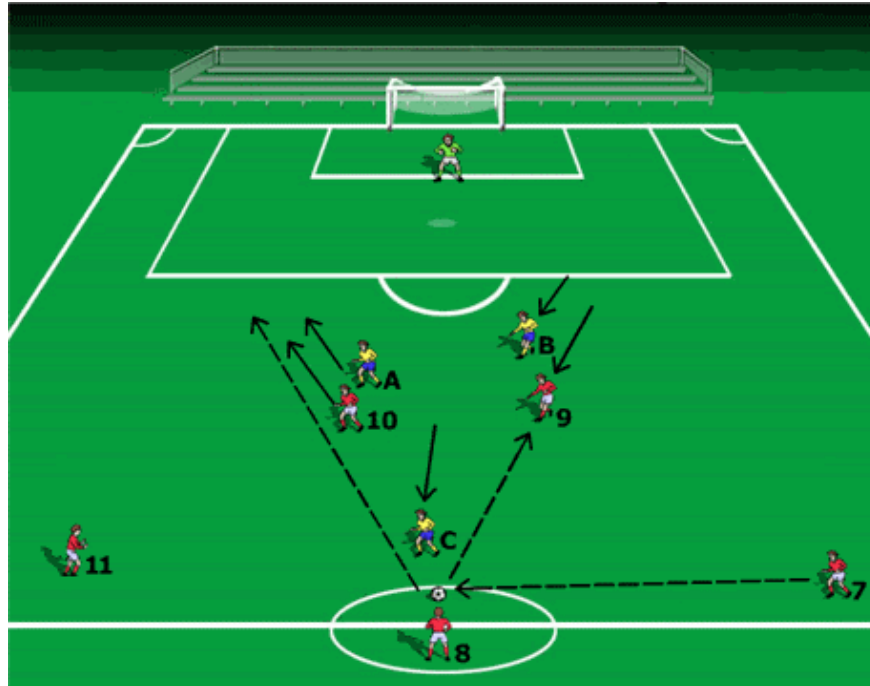


The midfield players need to know the strikers are playing opposites. This time the strikers are moving away to come back. Again there is time on the ball for the midfield player and the opposite movement comes into effect (both working off the second run), but if no time the striker knows it will be played first time into the first run.

The opposite movement is if the striker shows to receive to feet, he / she is going to spin away and receive in space in front of them in the form of a through ball, if he / she runs away, then expect a check back to feet.

This is especially effective when the strikers are not too close together so there's lots of space to work in. To make the movement clearer the strikers can have a code word to call as a signal so the player on the ball knows what is happening. They call it as early as possible.

## No Time On The Ball to Wait For The Second Run

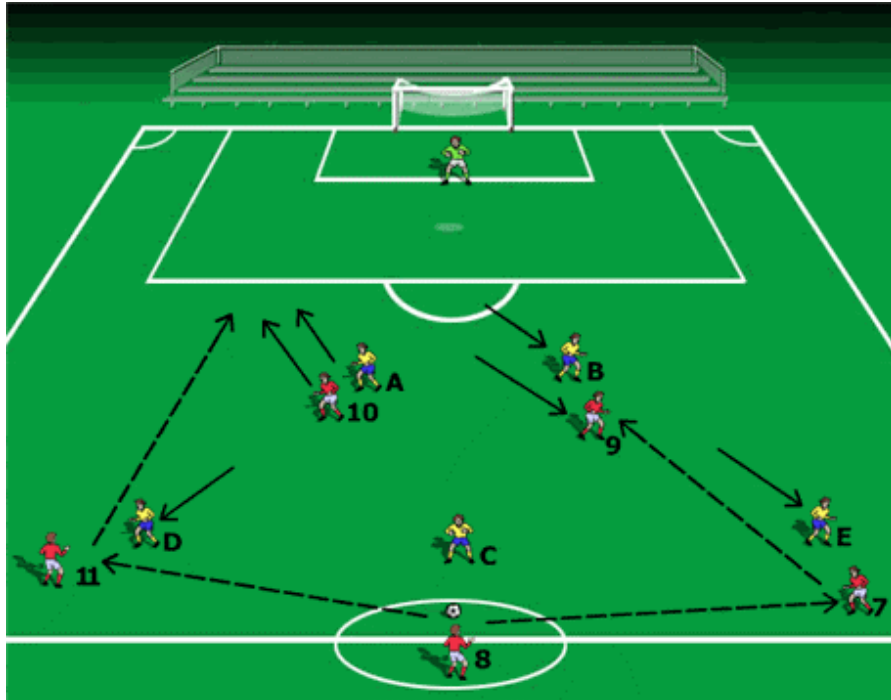


There is no time on the ball and the passer has to release the ball quickly due to quick pressure on the ball from (C).

In this case the striker must recognize this and act accordingly and expect a pass from their first run, in this case with (10) it can be a run inviting a ball to be played down the side into the channel for the striker to run on to. In the case of (9) it is a pass to feet coming short to receive. The pass can be made from wide areas too with the same conditions passing off the first run or passing off the second run depending on the time on the ball of the passer or if the striker has given the code word signal.

In a game the team could be prepared to play on the basis that they always make the pass off the first run unless they get a call from the striker using the code word to implement the opposite movement. It isn't always possible in split second situations to recognize how much time a player has on the ball so it may be best just to work the movement off a call.

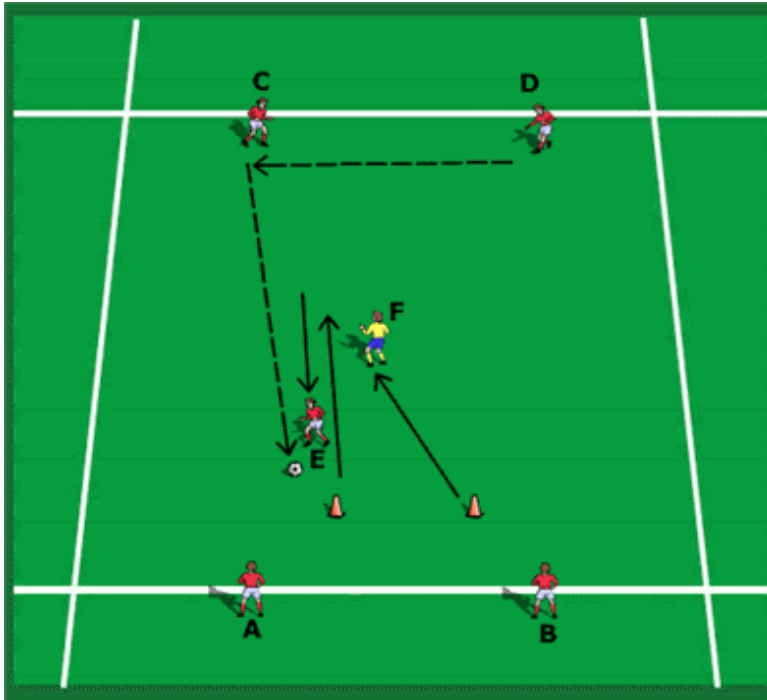
## No Time On The Ball to Wait For The Second Run



Receiving from a wide position on the field the same principles apply receiving off the first pass, as above (10) down the side to space to run on to and (9) to feet. Here the passer must release the pass early (because of pressure on the ball) or they have not received the code word signal to implement the opposite move.

In a game situation for the first thirty minutes it could be a game plan where the strikers always work off a pass from the first run and get the defenders conditioned into thinking that is always the case saving the decisive moment later in the game where the code word signal is called and they work the opposite move receiving from the second run. It may be they only have to do it once in a game and it results in a goal (due to the defenders being unprepared for the opposite movement) giving the striker a vital second or fractions of a second thus gaining a couple of yards on the defender in a vital area of the field to receive a pass and score a goal.

## Exercise To Practice The Opposite Move



Striker (E) comes short and shows for the ball asking for a pass from (D). Defender (F) follows.

Midfielder (D) passes to (C), (D) then passes over the top into (E)'s path as he / she spins.

Defender must play passively. To continue the work once player (E) receives the ball they must beat (F) back to the touchline. Players (C) and (D) go to the middle and the next two take their place.

As the pass is going from (D) to (C) the striker shouts the code word and spins to receive the pass as player (C) is about to pass it. The shout must be early to (C) to make the pass at the exact same time (E) is spinning to receive it.

**Develop:** The player receiving the pass can get it "short or long", to keep the defender guessing.

Short, when the code word is not used but the player could use any other word to confuse. Long, with the actual code word used. Combine with the passer to beat the defender.

## Session 106: Striker Movement Inside The Penalty Area From Crosses



**The Set Up:** Two full size goals and an area double the penalty box. 2 v 1 in each side; 2 keepers and two players crossing, one for each team. Crossers cannot be tackled and are in the area outside the actual playing area.

### Coaching Points:

1. Technique: Quality of the cross
2. Decision: The timing and angle of the cross (this is very important in terms of observation by crosser 4)
3. The timing and angle of the runs both to confuse the defenders and then to arrive in the space at the right moment to receive the cross
4. The movements may be based on one run or two. Two runs if time to do it if the ball comes in directly then timing off one run. Two runs constitutes a double opposite run
5. Individual or combination movements of attacking players
6. Contact on the ball with likely a one touch finish on goal

Timing should be late and fast, if they go too early then they take defenders into the areas too early to receive. There again if the cross does not come in early they may have time to correct this with a double run. So; if time then they can go early for the first run and then check for the 2nd and main run, this is an opposite run to create space either for themselves or their team mate. The cross is best driven hard and low in behind the defenders but away from the keeper if possible on the edge of the 2nd six yard box.

Once the ball is played wide the attacking team becomes a 2 v 2 in the attacking area leaving a 1 v 1 behind.

We are looking at the movements now of the two attacking players to get free of the two defenders.



Here attacker (3) pulls away from the near post position to get free of defender (B). He can attack the ball in behind defender (B), and between defenders (A) and (B) if the delivery is good enough.

This movement also frees up the space in front at the near post if (B) tracks the run.



Defender (B) moves back and tracks the run to mark attacker (3). He or she may, for a fraction of a second; take their eyes off the ball (as shown by their body position here of B) and just see attacker (3).

As (B) plants their right foot down then that is the cue for (3) to check back into the space at the near post whilst (B) may be slightly off balance.



Here we show that check back into the space in front of the near post, with attacker (3) having taken defender (B) away from it in the first instance. This is an opposite double run taking the defender away from the space to then go back into it. Attacker (3) should time the run to arrive at the near post; but not beyond it; as the ball arrives in the same place.

If beyond it to make contact on the ball it is a difficult finish trying to twist and turn the ball back to goal. If making contact on the ball just before the near post then (3) can use the pace of the cross to make a straight one touch pass into the goal by redirecting it.





Now (3) draws defender (B) to the near post and even beyond it.



(3) Then checks back to free up space at the near post and (B) stays with him or her. Another double opposite run.

If there is no time to implement two runs then (3) will make just the one run for themselves to attack the ball at the near post.

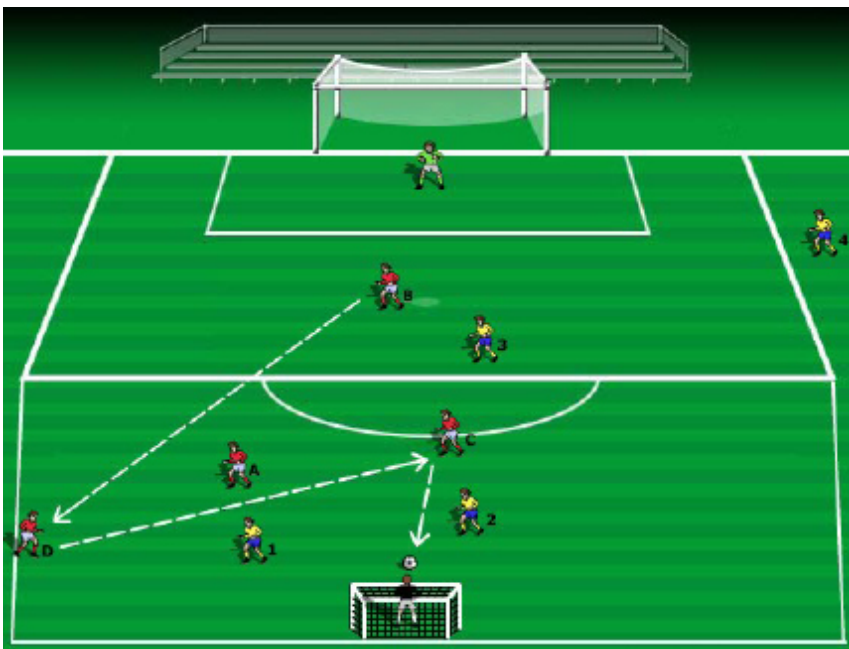
Attacker (1) first makes a run away from the goal taking defender (A) with them away from the goal also.

Timing the movement with the movement of attacker (3), attacker (1) attacks the space left by attacker (3) at the near post leaving defender (A) in their wake.

Attacker (3) having moved away from the near post then changes direction and makes a run to the far post if the ball gets delivered there instead.



The success or not of these movements depends on the timing of the cross and the runs being in synch.



Letters team attacks and shoot on goal.

Numbers team counter attack quickly.

Letters team player (A) has to recover back to defend from the next cross and track attacker (1)'s run.

Quick counter attack and this is the time the crosser (4) has to whip the ball in as early as possible and behind the recovering defenders (A) and (B) who are facing back to their own goal tracking the runs of attackers (1) and (3).



This could easily result in a defender scoring an own goal as shown here.

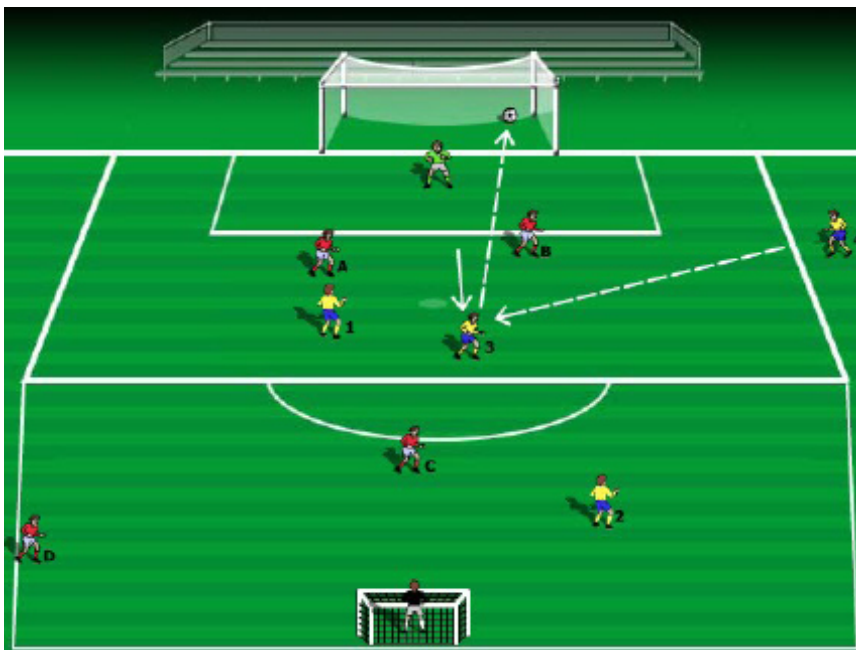
The ball is played one touch if possible for pace behind the recovering back towards their own goal putting them under immense pressure if they connect with the cross especially if the cross is driven in hard and low between the recovering defenders and the keeper.

Obviously this situation also creates a wonderful opportunity for the strikers to score racing towards goal.

Attackers could run at changing angles; if time allowed; but likely in this scenario they will only have time for the shortest and faster route to goal to receive the cross; so one direct run is required.

If the ball is delayed in the crossing part then the defenders can get back into position, face away from the goal, pick up the attacking players; and if they win the ball from the cross will head or pass it away from the goal and not back towards it as shown.

A regular set up again players positioned in the box awaiting the cross likely in too early here because the ball hasn't been delivered yet and they are in attacking positions at the near and far posts.



So (3) drops off the shoulder of defender (B).

If (B) stays in the space at the near post then attacker (3) can drop off away from the goal into space to receive the cross.

Where (4) crosses to is determined by how and where the defender sets up

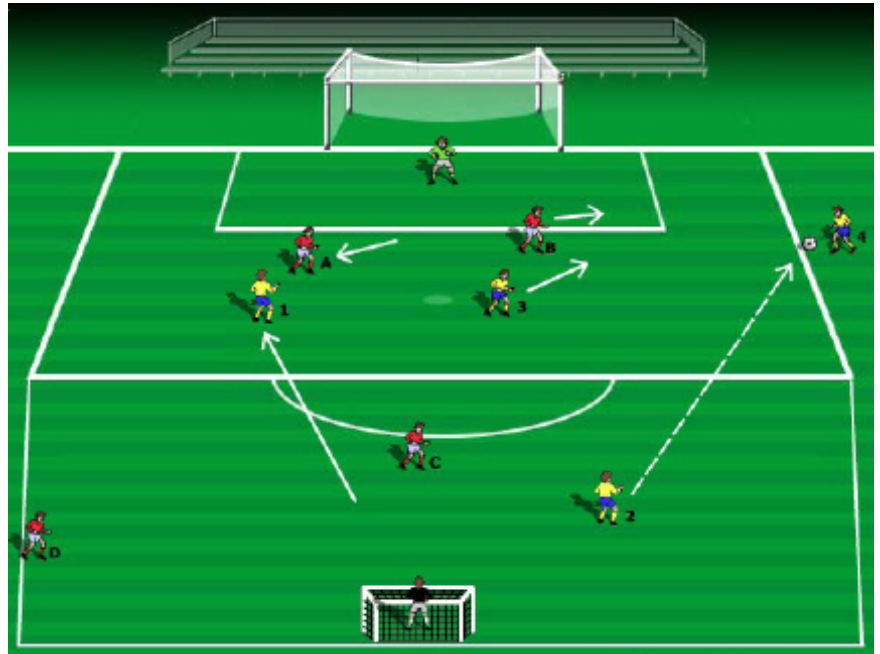
This is a single run way from goal to receive the cross for a one touch finish.

If (B) followed then a double opposite run could come from (3) to check back into the space created by the first movement, or (1) could attack the space at the near post (B) has left to pick up (3).



(3) Takes (B) beyond the near post to free up the space behind for (1) to attack it.

(1)'s immediate run (if they have time) is away from the goal to create even more space in front of themselves; and behind (3).



(1) Attacks the area in the middle towards the near post. Hopefully defender (A) has gone away from goal tracking the first run of (1) and in doing so given (1) some space to check back into.

Here we show that check back by attacker (1) and away from defender (A) into the middle towards the near post of the goal for the free connection from the cross from either a header or shot.

Now attacker (3) takes up the near post area and attacker (1) brings defender (A) towards the middle of the goal. This frees up the space behind at the far post and beyond.



Attacker (1) having taken defender (A) towards the center of the goal then checks away to the far post to get free and the crosser plays the ball into that area for a free header or shot.

Another opposite double run creates a goal scoring chance.

Now attacker (3) takes defender (B) away from the goal to leave space in front of the near post.

If (B) stays tight then this invites (1) to attack the near post in the space created.

If (B) zoned the near post instead then (3) is in an open position to receive the cross and shoot at goal; as shown previously.



Again if time allows then (3) can continue their run to the far post for the cross so they cover both sides of the goal between them.

Here we show the end product and a goal scored. (1) Has been able to get free of defender (A) and if (1) misses the cross then attacker (3) may be in a good position to attack the ball at the far post.

All these actions happen so fast it makes defending against them a nightmare and hence why attackers must not stand still in the box waiting for the cross but must keep defenders guessing as to what they will do and where they will run.



Here is the end product in terms of positioning.

You can even include attacker (2) as an attacking midfielder attacking the cross in behind the first two attackers so the crosser has three players to aim for. Attackers can vary the types of checking double opposite runs to further confuse, perhaps a spin off turn a la Del Peiro; or a double opposite Vialli run; or a Crespo off the shoulder away to come back opposite run.