



# Phases of Attack & Defense

Framing Attack and Defense in to 4 Basic Phases

Central Arkansas Soccer Club

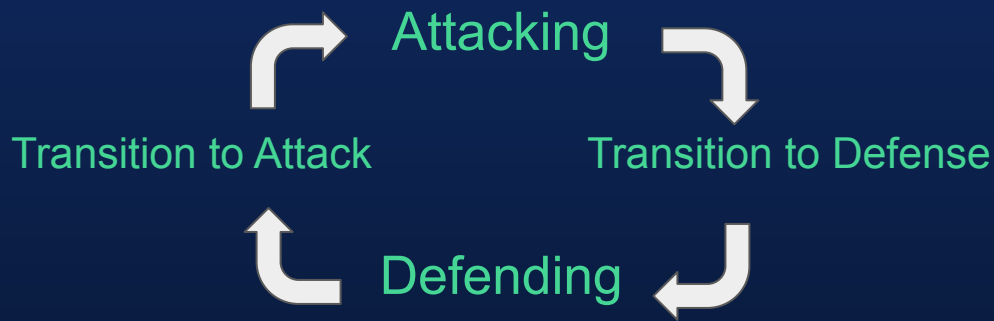
Ryan Spears  
Technical Director  
[casc.rec@gmail.com](mailto:casc.rec@gmail.com)



# Training Phases of Play

## Phases of Play

Soccer is typically seen to have the 4 broad phases of play:





# Training Phases of Play

## Phases of Play :: Attacking & Defending

We'll mainly focus on **attacking** and **defending** and break them each into 2 sub-phases each for training. But first, here is 1 way to define these processes & their purposes:

### Attacking

Scanning, Finding, Creating, and Exploiting Space > To Progress and Score

### Defending

Anticipating, Closing, and Denying Space > To Prevent Progress and Win the Ball





# Training Activities

## Phases of Play :: Attacking & Defending

### 4 Sub-Phases for Training Games

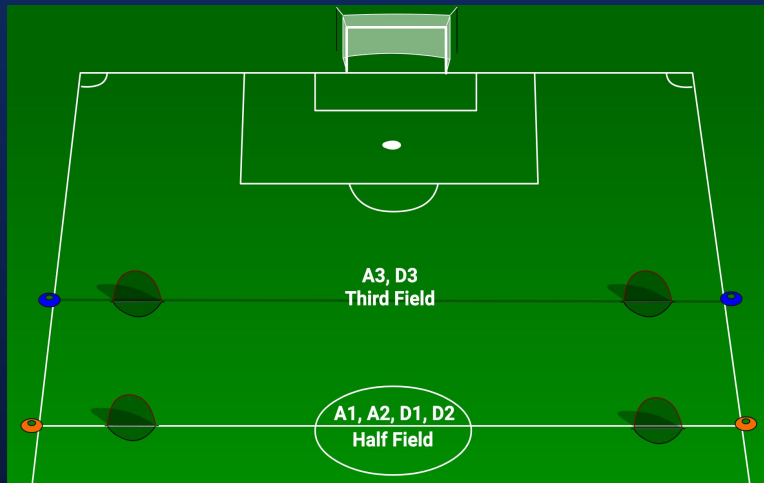
A1 - Attack to Build Out (our half)

A2 - Attack to Finish (opp half)

D1 - Defend Build Out (their half)

D2 - Defending Our Goal (our half)

When one team is A1 the other is naturally D1, A2 vs D2, but the practice focus is usually on the one that starts w the numerical advantage





# Training Phases of Play

## Phases of Play :: Usual Setups

### $\frac{1}{3}$ Field Size

U10: 3v2 ~ 4v4

U12: 3v2 ~ 5v5

U13: 3v2 ~ 6v6

### $\frac{1}{2}$ Field Size

U10: 4v4 ~ 5v5

U12: 5v5 ~ 7v7

U13: 7v7 ~ 8v8





## Phase Play Games

Practice these phases of play on  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  field space

A1 - Attack to Build Out (our half)

A2 - Attack to Finish (opp half)

D1 - Defend Build Out (their half)

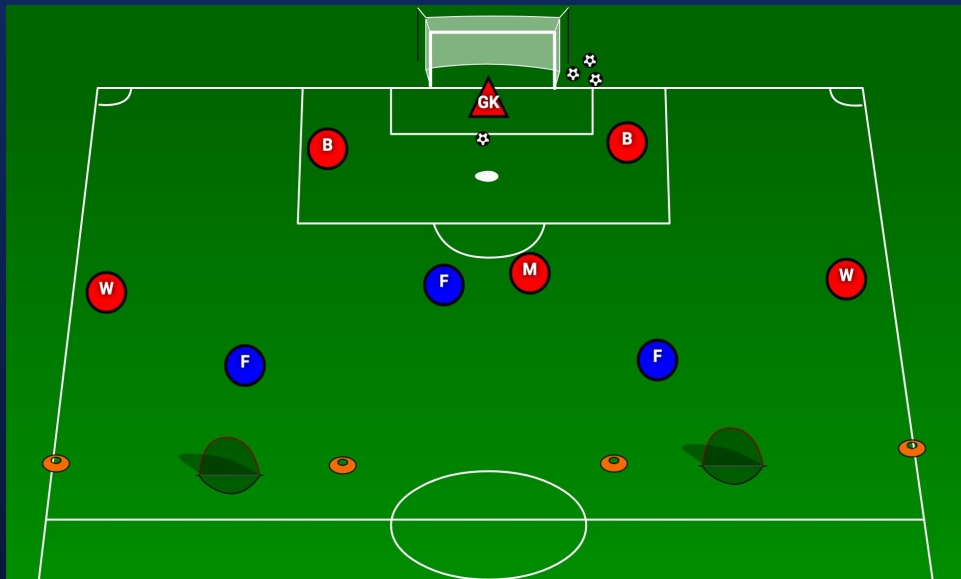
D2 - Defending Our Goal (our half)





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A1 5v3 Buildout



GK starts ball w goal kick

Red build out wide, work to score in small goals

Blue defend to stop buildout, attempt to steal ball and counter

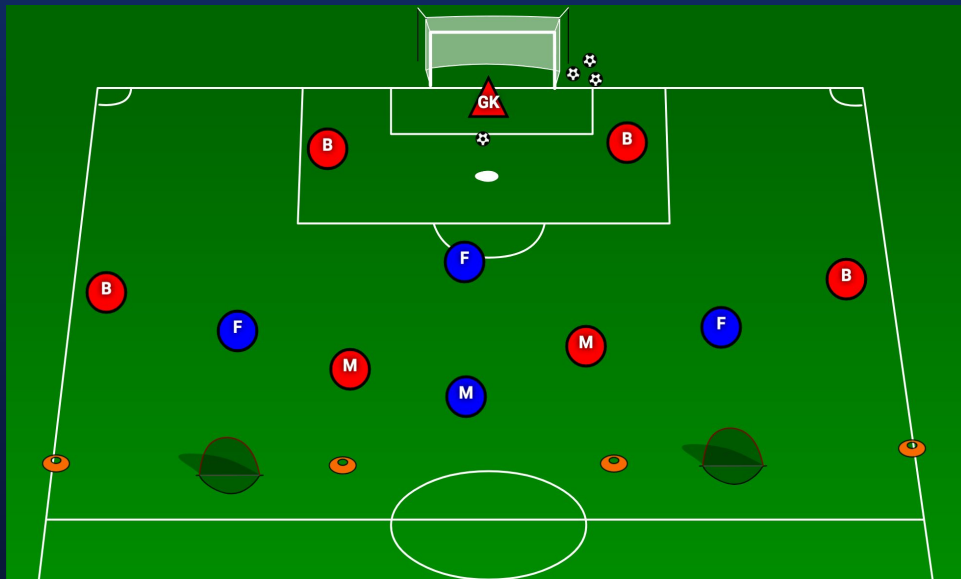
Add blue to increase difficulty





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A1 6v4 Buildout



GK starts ball w goal kick

Red build out wide, work to score in small goals

Blue defend to stop buildout, attempt to steal ball and counter

Add blue to increase difficulty

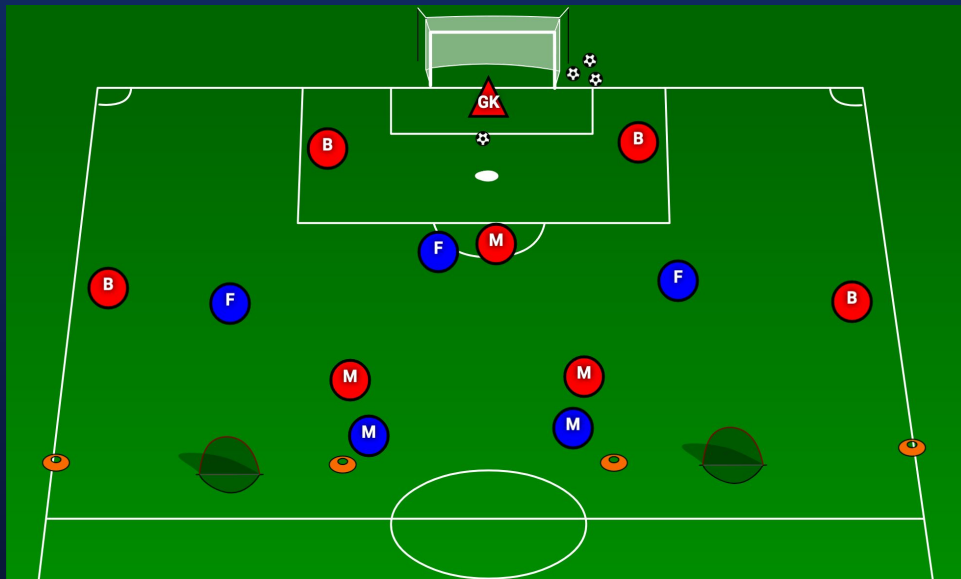






# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A1 7v5 Buildout



GK starts ball w goal kick

Red build out wide, work to score in small goals

Blue defend to stop buildout, attempt to steal ball and counter

Add blue to increase difficulty





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 5v4 Finishing



GK starts ball w goal kick

Red build out wide, work to score in small goals

Blue defend to stop buildout, attempt to steal ball and counter

Add blue to increase difficulty





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 5v5 Build-In



### 5v5 Half Field

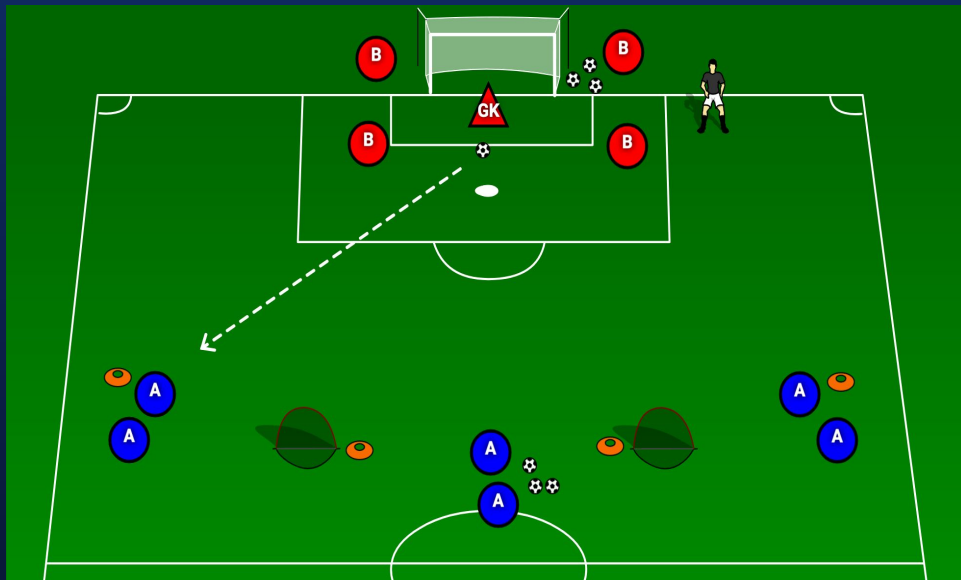
Coach play ball into various attacking players feet or into spaces to start attack





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 3v2 Finishing



Defenders play ball out to Attackers and go pressure

If defender wins the ball, counter to small goals

Play til goal or ball goes out and rotate

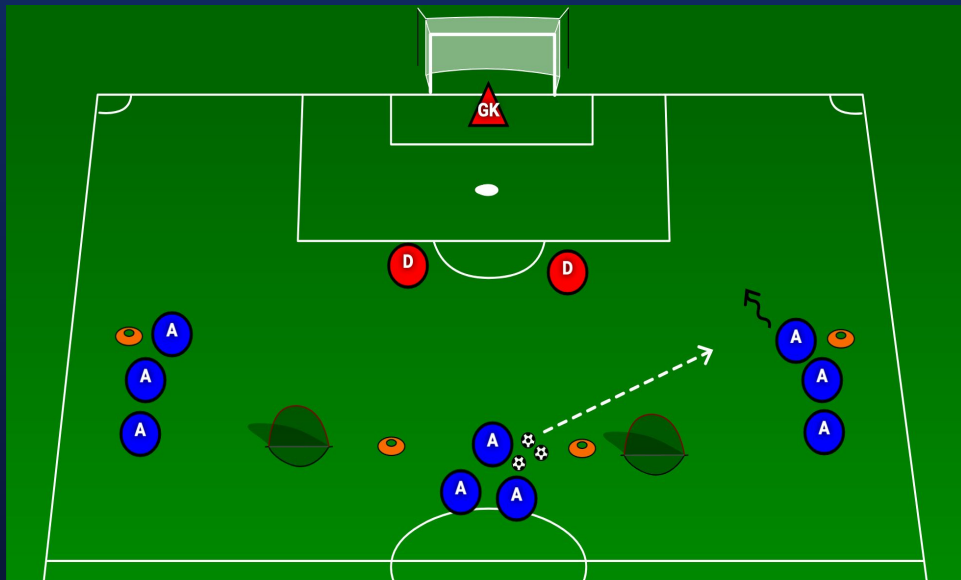
Switch att/def half way





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 3v2 Finishing



3 sets of Attackers  
2 Defenders

Attacker, GK, or Coach play  
ball in

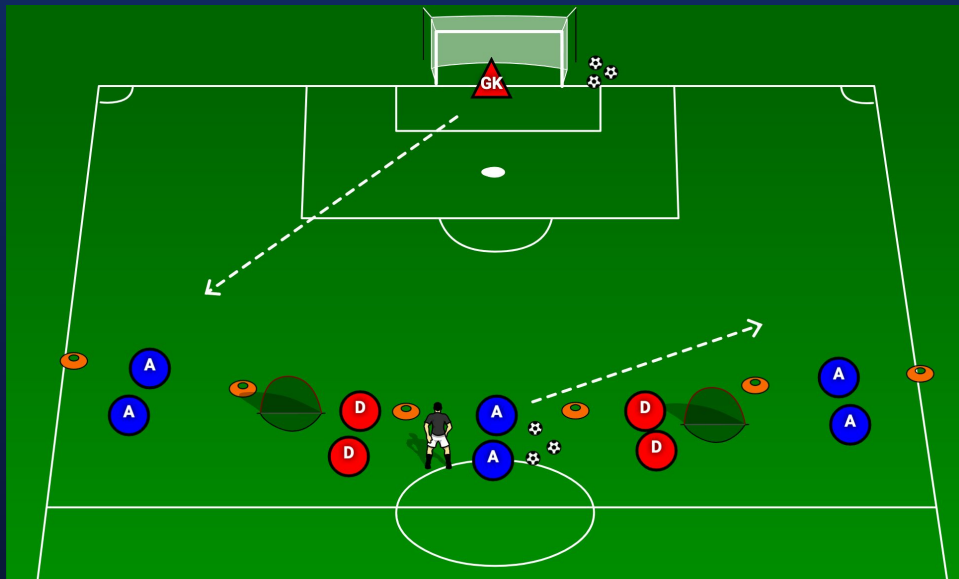
Rotate defenders every  
couple of mins





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 3v2 Finishing



3 sets of Attackers  
2 sets of Defenders

GK or Coach play ball in

3 Attackers try to score,  
defenders **recover**  
to prevent and counter to  
small goals

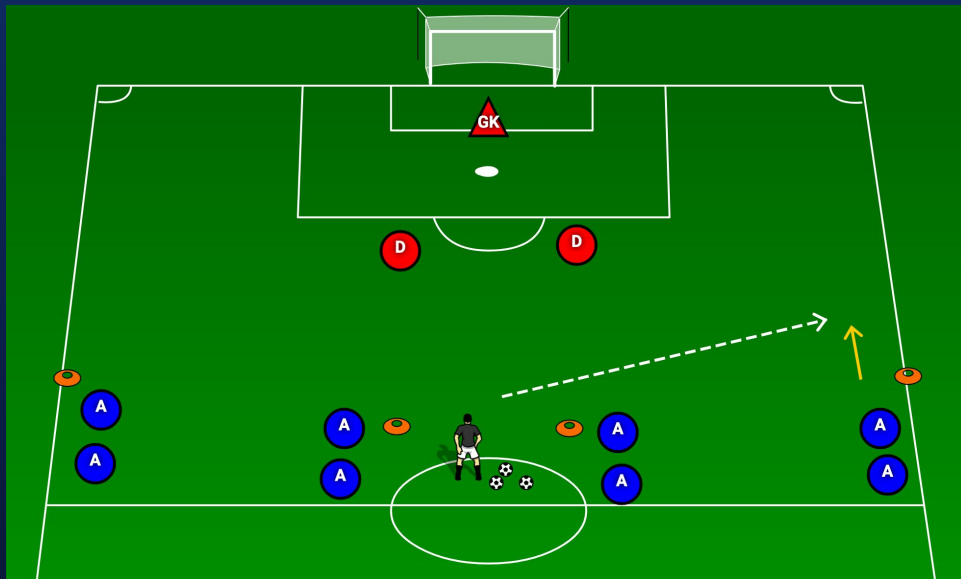
Switch roles after a bit





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 4v2 Finishing



4 sets of Attackers  
2 sets of Defenders

GK or Coach play ball in

4 Attackers try to score,  
defenders prevent and  
counter to small goals  
(should be here)

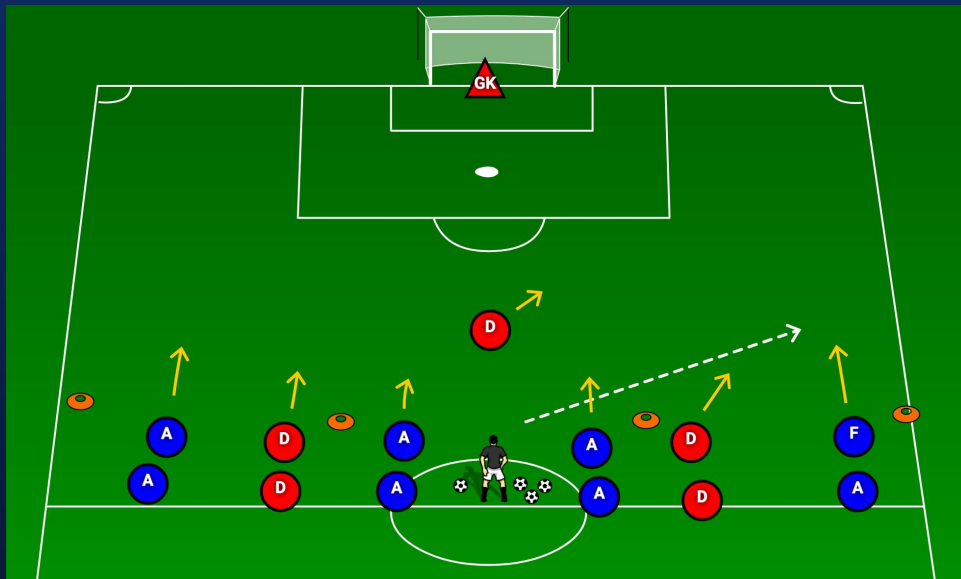
Rotate defenders every few





# Training Phases of Play

## Phase Play :: A2 4v3 Finishing



4 sets of Attackers  
2 sets of Defenders  
1 static Defender

GK or Coach play ball in

4 Attackers try to score,  
defenders score in small  
counter goals (add, not  
shown)

Switch roles after a bit

