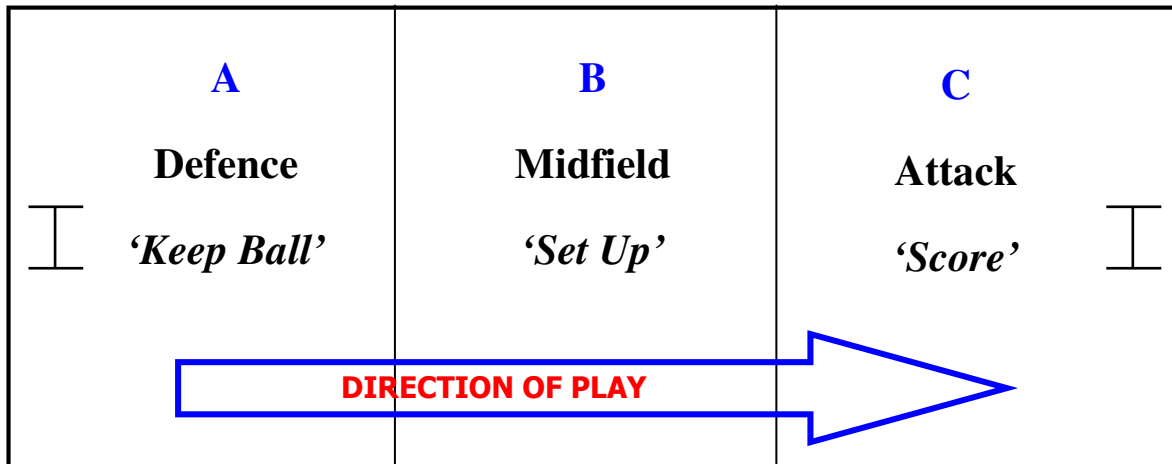


Developing Attacking Play An Introduction

Mid Ulster Sports Centre, Cookstown
11th January 2006

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A: Defence – Keep Ball – Build Up

B: Midfield – Set Up – Launch Pad

C: Attack – Score – where we want to play the game

In the above diagram we have a Gaelic pitch divided into three zones (A-C). Our Team is playing from left to right.

As coaches we encourage our players to transfer the ball as quickly as possible to Zone C, the Scoring Zone, in which we have the best chance to score and win the game. We want to play the game in Zone C not in either of the other two zones. As a coach we look for our team to work the ball to Zone B, encourage the team to hold the ball in Zone B for no more that 3-5 seconds and then release short or long to Zone C.

The theme of tonight's workshop is "**Developing Attacking Play**" An Introduction.

In this workshop we will look at how to introduce the concept of attacking play to our teams. To do this we will look at the principles of attacking play and at what we expect of our forwards. In the practical we will look at warm-ups, combining play and small sided games to introduce attacking play.

To look at how we develop this we must first look at, know and understand the Principles of Attacking Play.

These include:

- DEPTH:**
 - Support on the ball
 - Players as Targets
 - Short and long ball passing options

- PENETRATION:**
 - Moving the ball through or into the oppositions defence at speed

- WIDTH:**
 - Playing balls into wide positions to draw and isolate defenders away from each other and from central positions giving more space inside for forwards to use

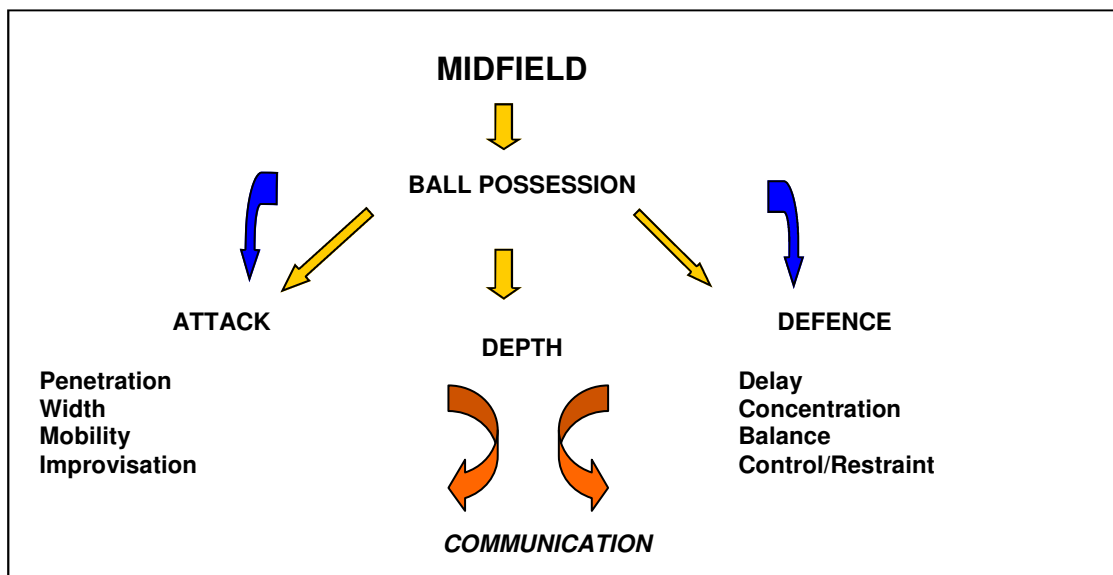
- MOBILITY:**
 - The movement of players in from or behind the ball therefore moving defensive players out of position and causing disruption in their defence.
 - Players making runs to leave space for others

- IMPROVISATION:**
 - Players changing roles/positions or doing the unusual

- COMMUNICATION:**
 - Supporting Players giving verbal and non verbal signals to the Players in possession.

PRINCIPLES OF ATTACK & DEFENCE

Figure 1—Adapted from Wade (1972)

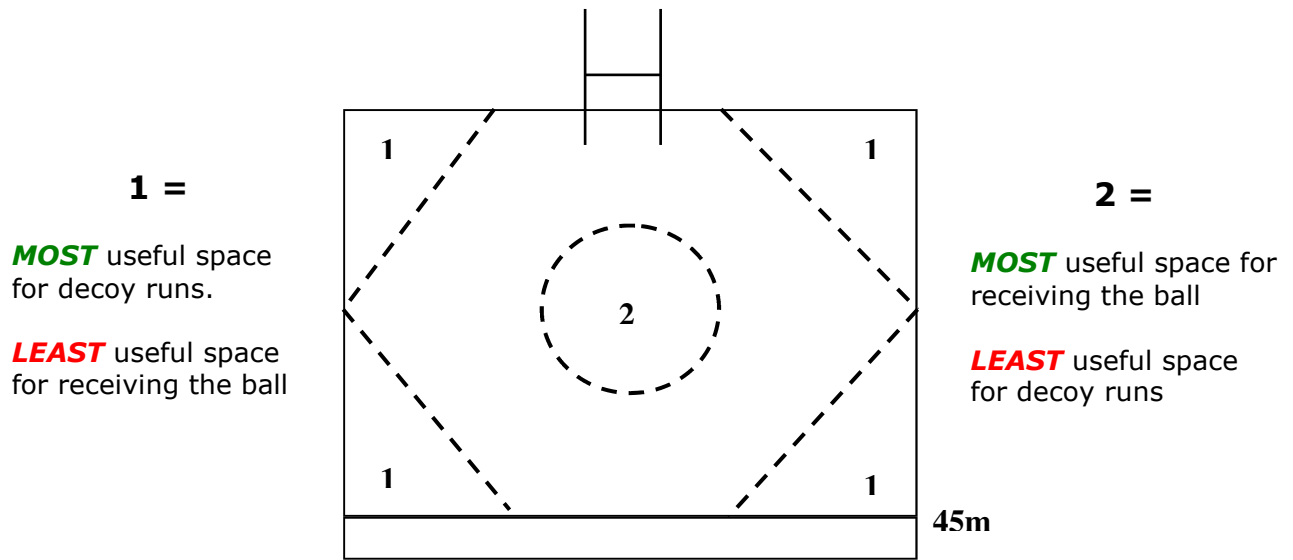


PRINCIPLES OF ATTACK & DEFENCE Cont.

Forwards – Objectives

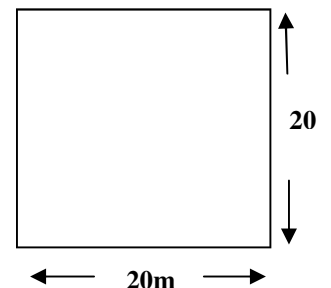
- To score
- To create scores for team mates
- To create space and expose defenders
- To retain possession and get into scoring positions as quickly as possible
- To make runs off the ball (sacrifice) and take defenders out of position
- To defend, make it difficult for defenders to clear the ball
- To win possession
- Mobility – keep on the move when not in possession and attempt to pull defenders out of position

Effective Use of Space in the Forward Line



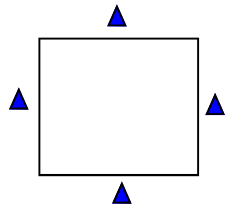
1. - WARM UP GAMES: SOLO TAG

- **Organisation** – Grid 20 x 20m, 1 tagger and enough footballs for one ball between two
 1. Game of Tag with a difference – only players not in possession of the ball can be tagged. Players in possession of the ball can't be tagged.
 2. Tagger attempts to tag player without the ball. If successful tagged player changes places with him.
 3. Normal rules of soloing.
 4. Encourage players in possession to pass to player who is being chased by the tagger.



In this game;
Mobility
Support
Penetration
Communication
Width

2. - WARM UP GAMES: 4 + 4 v 4

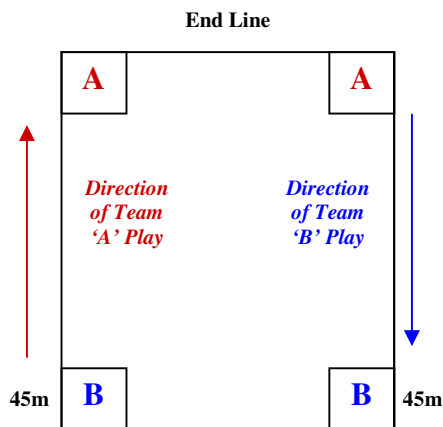


- Organisation: Grid 20 x 20m with 4 cones/poles placed 5m out from the grid at each side. 2 sets of bibs, 1 team of 4 in blue bibs and 1 team of 4 in red bibs (together play as attackers). 1 team without bibs act as defenders.

- Attackers** attempt to keep possession – They get a score for every 10 successful passes.
- After every pass the **passer** must sprint out of the grid and to around the nearest cone/pole and comes back into the game to support the man on the ball.
- Defenders attempt to win and retain possession of the ball.
- Change roles after 2-4 minutes.

In this game;
 Mobility
 Support
 Penetration
 Communication
 Improvisation

3. - WARM UP GAMES: Long Ball

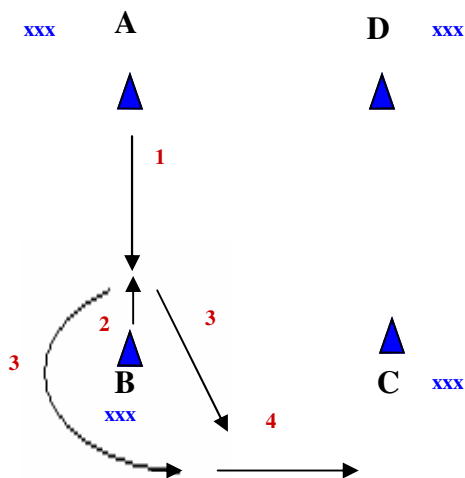


- Organisation:** – Grid Endline to 45m line, footballs, cones/poles and bibs
 - Two Teams organised with bibs.
 - Each Team to defend the Grids.
 - Team A & B places a player into each of the grids they are attacking.
 - Object of the Games is to play the ball to the player in the Grid they are attempting to score in. Defending Team **cannot** enter the grid.
 - Once the Player in Grid collects the ball cleanly this counts as a score. The receiving player immediately plays the ball to a team mate. The Player who gave this pass into the grid changes places with the receiver.

- Variation:**

- Take the Players out of the Grids. To score the ball has to be worked to a team mate who gets into the grid to receive the pass – Players can only stay in the Grid for three seconds.

1. - COMBINATION PLAYS:



- **Organisation** = Grid 40/45m x 40/45m, Players divided between markers A,B,C,D etc. Footballs

1. First Player at **A** passes to first player at **B** and continues to run.
2. **B** collects and plays the ball back to **A**
3. **B** sprints around cone and receives pass from A who joins back of Group **B**
4. **B** passes long to **C** who collects and returns ball back to **B**
5. Drill continues.

In this play;
Accurate Passing
Quick Movement
after pass
Communication
Support

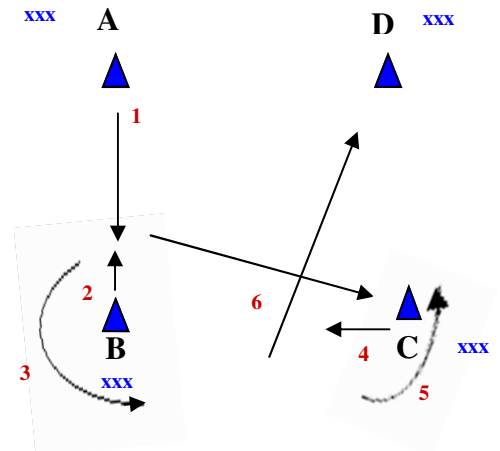
- **Variation:** Add I extra ball and/or change direction

2. - COMBINATION PLAYS:

- **Organisation** = Grid 40/45m x 40/45m, Players divided between markers A,B,C,D. Footballs

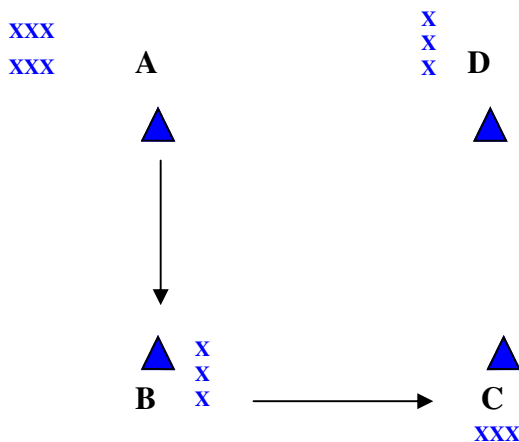
In this play;
Width
Accurate Passing
Movement after pass
Penetration
Support
Communication

1. Long ball from **A** to **B**
2. **B** collects and plays the ball back to **A**
3. **B** sprints around cone
4. **A** plays diagonal ball to **C**, who collects
5. **C** plays ball to **B** and runs around cone
6. **B** plays diagonal ball to **D**
7. Drill continues.



- **Variation:** Add I extra ball and/or Change Direction

3. - COMBINATION PLAYS:



- **Organisation** = Grid 40/45m x 40/45m, 6 Players at A, 3 players at each of B, C, D. Footballs

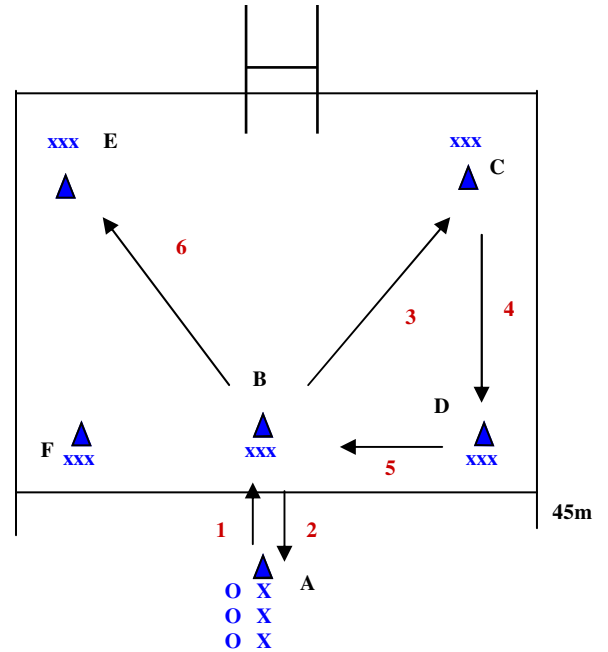
1. Ball among first three players at **A** long pass from them to Group at **B**. **A** follow the ball to **B**.
2. **Group B** collects, pass to each other once on the move and play ball to **Group C**. **B** continues to **C**
3. Drill continues.

- **Variation:** Add I extra ball and/or change direction

In this play;
Communication
Support
Mobility

4. - COMBINATION PLAYS:

- **Organisation** = Grid – half pitch
 Footballs (unlimited) and cones. First ball is to the right corner **Group C**
 1. **A** passes ball to **B** and keeps moving forward
 2. **B** collects and plays the ball back to **A** and **B** turns and runs to **C**
 3. **A** passes a long ball to **C** and joins back of **Group B**
 4. **C** collects and passes ball long to **D**. **C** continues to back of **Group D**
 5. **D** collects and solo's back to **Group A**
 6. Second ball is to the left corner – **Group E**
 7. Third ball is to cone **C** etc
 8. Drill continues.



- **Variation:**
 1. As above only this time **B** sprints towards **C**, receives the ball from **C** and plays the ball back to **C** in front of him. **C** passes to **D**
 2. New group (**G**) go behind goals. **C** plays the ball to **D** who runs toward the goals. **D** receives ball, takes 4 paces, no solo and strikes ball over the bar. **D** goes to **G**. **G** collects and solos out to **A**.

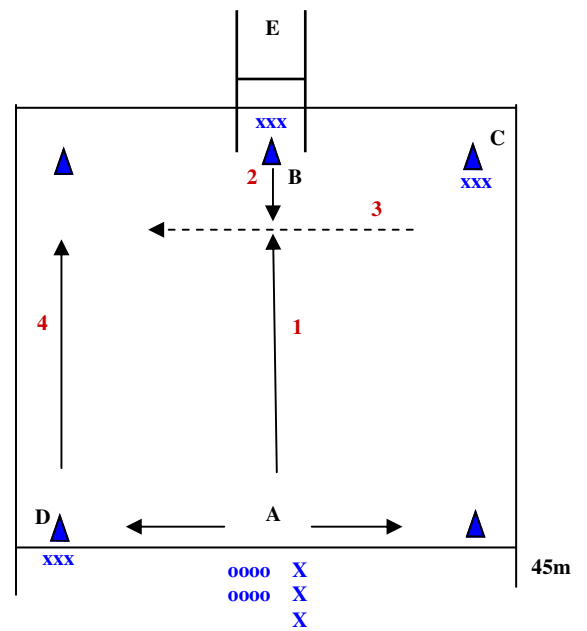
In this play;
 Mobility
 Communication
 Width
 Depth
 Penetration
 Combination Plays

- **First Ball:** A-B-C-D-G-A
- **Second Ball:** A-B-E-F-G-A

5. - COMBINATION PLAYS:

- **Organisation** = Half Pitch, Footballs & Cones
 1. Footballs at **A** – Players at A, B, C, D and E.
 2. **A** plays back to **B** (follows direction of ball) **B** collects ball
 3. **C** makes diagonal run across in front of **B**. **B** passes ball to **C**. **C** continues diagonal run.
 4. **D** makes run wide and receives ball from **C**. **D** takes 4 paces and shoots for a point.
 5. **E** collects and brings ball to **A**. (**A-B-C-D-E-A**)
 6. Drill continues.

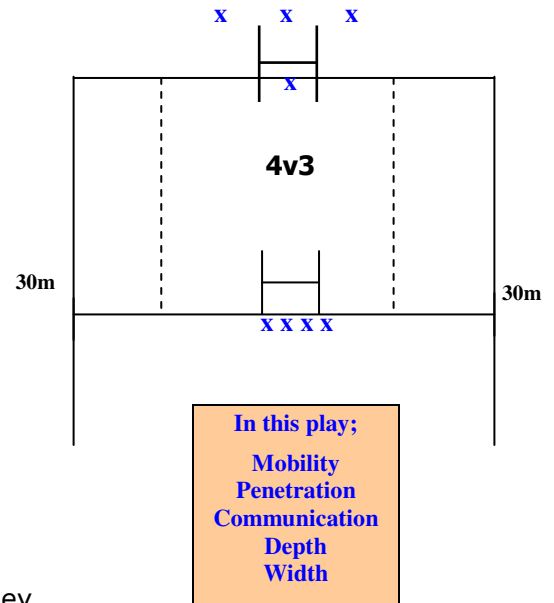
In this play;
 Mobility
 Width
 Depth
 Penetration
 Communication



- **Variation:** Same drill finishing from the right wing. And/or add defenders.

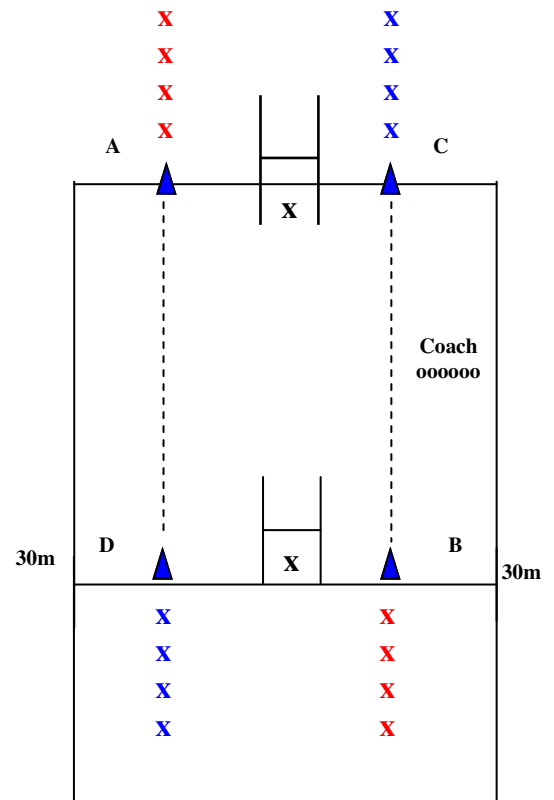
1. - SMALL SIDED GAMES:

- **Organisation** = 1 x Portable Goals, 1 x fixed goals, ¼ pitch (30m x 30m). Bibs, Footballs & Cones
 1. **4v3** – Goal Keepers in goals. 4v3 on the pitch. **Team of 4** attacks the large goals and **Team of 3** attack the portable goals.
 2. Next Team of 4 players ready behind the portable goals.
 3. Next Team of 3 ready behind the large goals
- **Variation :**
 1. **Two minutes** on for both teams. Keep scores, normal rules.
 2. **Conditioned Game** – 1 designated forward on Team of 4 to stay in full forward position.
 3. **Conditioned Game – 4v4** – The Team in possession have 1 minute to score a goal. If they score they leave the pitch immediately and the Defenders stay on, retrieve the ball and attempt to score before next attacking team comes on to the pitch.

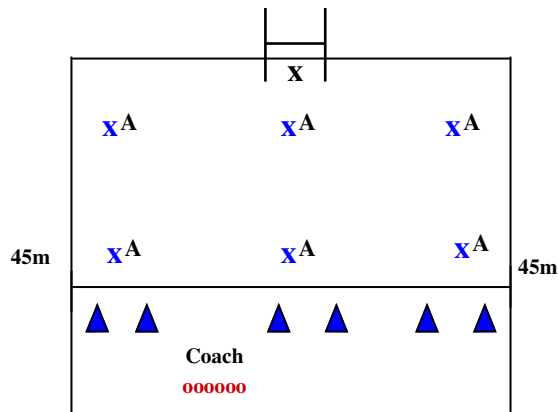


2- SMALL SIDED GAMES:

- **Organisation** = 1 x Portable Goals, 1 x fixed goals, ¼ pitch (30m x 30m). Bibs, Footballs & Cones
 1. Divide players into two teams A & B with bibs.
 - Team A & B then further divides. Half of Team A goes to **Cone A**, the other half to **Cone B** on the diagonal.
 - Half of **Team B** goes to **Cone C** and the other half to **Cone D** on the diagonal.
 2. Players at each cone number themselves 1, 2, 3, etc. Goalkeeper in both goals. On the pitch excluding the goalkeepers you will have 2v2 at any one time.
 3. Coach is positioned centrally with footballs.
 4. Coach throws the ball into the pitch in any direction for the **number 1's** in each group to contest (2v2). They have 1 minute to score a goal. If a goal is scored inside a minute both teams go off and the coach plays in the next ball for the **number 2's**, etc.
 5. If no goal is scored the coach call both teams off and plays next ball.



3. - SMALL SIDED GAMES: - CONTINUOUS BACKS -V- FORWARDS



In this play;
Combination Play
Mobility
Depth
Width
Communication
Penetration

- **Organisation** = Area ($\frac{1}{2}$ Pitch). Bibs, Footballs & Cones/Poles
 1. 3 Games set up beyond the 45m line
 - **6 Backs -v- 6 Forwards**
 2. Coach plays ball to one of the Forwards
 - If forwards score a point they get the next ball. If forwards score a goal they get the next two balls.
 3. If Defenders win the ball they must work the ball out through one of the three gates. Once they do this the game does not stop, the Defenders immediately become Forwards and attempt to score. (The Attackers revert to defend)
- **Variation**
 1. Goalkeeper to take a kick out, whichever Team wins the ball can attack immediately.
 2. Add in a Midfielder as an extra player for the Team in possession.

This workshop is an introduction to attacking play. If you want to ask me any questions on any aspects of the workshop you can contact me on mkmcg@eircom.net or michael.mcgeehin@lyit.ie