

Defending on the Edge of the Box Game



Exercise Objectives:

This practice is designed to improve each defender's ability to defend around the edge of the penalty area.

Coaching Pointers:

Extend the penalty area using cones approximately 20 yards. Mark off a half way line with cones.

Four players are placed in each half. Both teams are restricted to their own half of the field.

They can shoot from anywhere in their own half but cannot shoot or defend in their opponent's half of the field.

The practice starts from the coach serving a ball into the playing area. The defending team must adopt a high line on the edge of the box to threaten any shooting opportunity. The speed of the practice should be realistic and at match speed.

The coach should emphasize the following coaching points:

- Gain as much ground as possible as the ball is traveling.
- Keep between the ball and the goal.
- Slow down on the last 2 yards. Get low with knees bent.
- Adopt a "side on" position.
- Make the direction of the play predictable (away from the goal).
- Timing of the tackle is important, wait for the forward to make his move.
- Quality tackling is as much an attitude as it is technique.
- Players must develop an aggressive and savvy attitude towards winning the ball.