

# CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB

*Developing Players with Character, Cognition, Competence, and Community*

## OUR MISSION

At CUSC, we are committed to nurturing players in a fun and engaging environment while developing their cognitive, technical, and tactical abilities. Through our club's methodology, we strive to create well-rounded athletes who not only enjoy the game but also grow in confidence, creativity, and decision-making on and off the field. Our goal is to ensure every player finds joy in their journey and reaches their full potential.

## OUR CORE VALUES

Proud: We take pride in how we play, train, and support each other.

Cognition: We think the game, make quick decisions, and stay aware.

Capable: We build skilled, adaptable players who handle pressure.

Honest: We value effort, accountability, and doing the right thing.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Individual Development: Prioritizing personalized growth for every player.
- Intellectual Training: Encouraging decision-making, creativity, and building Soccer IQ.
- Community Engagement: Actively participating in and contributing to our local community.
- Consistent Methodology: Ensuring each age group builds upon the previous, maintaining a cohesive development pathway.
- Sportsmanship: Promoting good character both on and off the field.
- Resilience and Perseverance: Focusing on long-term development over short-term wins.

## OUR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

At CUSC, we adopt an individual approach to player development, recognizing that each player possesses unique strengths and areas for growth. Our philosophy revolves around nurturing talent through tailored guidance, ensuring that every player can reach their highest potential.

### Core Components:

- Individual Focus: Personalized development plans catering to each player's needs.
- Ball Mastery: Emphasizing exceptional control and proficiency with the ball.
- Decision-Making & Intelligence: Enhancing understanding of game dynamics for effective navigation of complex situations.
- Creativity: Encouraging innovative play and individual expression on the field.

We integrate principles of game, intelligence, player autonomy, and technical excellence to create a dynamic learning environment.

# CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB

## COACHING VOCABULARY, PRACTICE STANDARDS & EXPECTATIONS

### UNIVERSAL COACHING VOCABULARY

TERM	DEFINITION
Drop and Reset	Drop the ball to a teammate and return to team shape.
Drop and Switch	Drop the ball to a center back and switch the field.
Block the Line	Prevent a pass down the line, press, and force play backward.
Back Foot	Receive the ball with the foot farthest from the ball.
Hips Open	Open hips toward the wider space or field side.
Behind the Ball	All players recover behind the ball and goal.
Goal Side	Defend with your body between the opponent and your goal.
Check Your Lines	Ensure you're not flat with a teammate; reposition diagonally.
Diagonal Relationship	Center mids must remain diagonally positioned, not flat.
No Square Passes	Avoid flat, lateral passes that are easily intercepted.
Break the Line	Pass between defenders to a teammate behind them.
Drive the Ball	Dribble at a defender to draw pressure and release.
Attack the Endline	Dribble to the endline and cut back toward the penalty spot.
Overlap	Run past a teammate into space to provide a wide option.
Find the Green Road	Identify an open passing lane with no defender in the way.
Find the Forward-Facing Player	Pass to the teammate already facing goal.
Play the Way You Face	Play in the direction your body is naturally facing.

### PRACTICE STANDARDS

#### U9-U11 Format

1. Training Game
2. Rondo
3. Positional Play
4. Training Game

#### U12+ FORMAT

1. Rondo
2. Positional Play
3. Training Game
4. Training Game

# CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB

## COACHING VOCABULARY, PRACTICE STANDARDS & EXPECTATIONS (CONTINUED)

### ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

- Activity Design: Coaches may select their own activities, but each must logically progress and support game-realistic decision-making.
- No Cone-to-Cone Drills: These offer little value beyond what players can already do individually. All training must involve direction, pressure, and decisions.
- Long-Term Planning Required: Training should be based on a seasonal plan, not week-to-week reactions to games. Games should not dictate your sessions.

### PLAYING TIME STANDARDS

- Non-State League Teams: All players must play a minimum of 50% of total season minutes.
- State League Teams: All players must play at least 30% of total game minutes across the season.
- A Bracket State League Teams: Playing time is not guaranteed. However, do not take players to away games if you do not plan to play them. Respect their time and commitment.

### PROFESSIONAL & CULTURAL STANDARDS

#### Player Culture & Behavior:

- Coaches are expected to instill a culture of humility, work ethic, and discipline.
- All players should be encouraged to take initiative, compete with integrity, and commit to lifelong learning.

### PARENT COMMUNICATION:

- Coaches must maintain professional boundaries with parents.
- Tactical discussions, playing time complaints, or emotionally charged conversations are not appropriate.
- Refer unresolved concerns to the DOC.

### SIDELINE CONDUCT:

- Matchdays are for players, not micromanagement.
- Avoid over-instructing during play.
- Provide calm, clear guidance when necessary.
- Represent the club with poise and composure.

### UNITY & APPEARANCE:

- Coaches must never speak negatively about other coaches, players, or the club—internally or externally.
- All coaches are required to wear Cullman United or VERO FC gear at all practices and games. This gear will be distributed before the season.

### PLANNING & ACCOUNTABILITY

- All coaches must follow the club's game model and macrocycle.
- Coaches may adapt the seasonal plan to match team ability—but must document and plan in advance.
- Weekly training plans must be written out with intentional coaching points.
- “Winging it” is not acceptable—every session must reflect your long-term developmental goals.



# CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB

## HOW TO COACH GUIDE

### 1. HAVE A PLAN

Come to practice with a clear focus and specific activities.

Know exactly what you're teaching and why.

Follow the club's training layout:

Rondo → Positional Play → Training Game

### 2. SET UP EFFICIENTLY

Arrive early and have everything ready before players show up.

Use cones smartly — plan ahead to re-use them across multiple activities.

Transition with minimal setup to keep players engaged and practice flowing.

### 3. START STRONG

As players arrive, give them structure (1v1s, rondos, juggling).

No chaotic free time — you set the tone for the entire session.

### 4. BE CLEAR & QUICK WHEN YOU COACH

Keep your explanation short and sharp, then let them play.

Make corrections on the move or individually when possible.

Less talking, more action — but your words must be precise and purposeful.

### 5. COACH HABITS, NOT JUST RESULTS

Reinforce club habits every session:

(e.g., back foot receiving, open hips, scanning, playing simple).

Don't use vague phrases like "focus" — say things like:

"Check your line," or "Open up to the big side."

If a player keeps doing something wrong, don't just repeat yourself —

Step in and SHOW them.

Use guided discovery:

Ask questions like: "Why did you make that pass?" or "What did you see before you turned?"

### 6. BE FIRM BUT FRIENDLY

Set clear boundaries and expectations, but build trust through humor and encouragement.

Be the adult they respect and enjoy learning from.

### 7. USE CLUB LANGUAGE

Speak the same language as the rest of the club so your players can build consistently year to year.

Examples: "green road," "reset," "positional play," "back foot," "scanning."

### 8. KNOW THE WHY BEHIND THE STRUCTURE

Rondos → Develop technique, awareness, and timing.

Positional Play → Teach spacing, support, and scanning.

Training Games → Apply ideas in real situations with freedom and pressure.

### 9. ENCOURAGE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Help players think for themselves: ask them what worked, what didn't.

Get them to take ownership of their development.

Self assess yourself as well every practice!



# **CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB**

## **COACH ETIQUETTE & EXPECTATIONS**

### **CORE COACHING PRINCIPLES (ALL COACHES)**

- Make training fun and challenging
- Arrive at least 15 minutes early and have everything set up
- Have a plan for every practice – do not "wing it"
- Build a season plan using the club curriculum
- Practice Layouts:
  - U9–U12 (Academy): Training Game → Rondo → Positional Play → Training Game
  - U13–U19 (Competitive): Rondo → Positional Play → Training Game → Training Game
- Always refer to players as "our players," not "my players"
- Make decisions based on what's best for each individual player

### **QUALITIES OF A GREAT COACH**

- Animated and energetic
- Patient and encouraging
- Positive with players, parents, and fellow coaches
- Long-term focused over short-term wins
- Goofy and fun when appropriate
- Firm, but never negative – keep attention through respect

### **OUR COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

- We follow the TOVO Methodology
- "The game is the best teacher" – players learn best through play
- Training must develop both technical skills and decision-making
- Promote critical thinking – players must read, adapt, and choose
- Use guided discovery, not constant instruction

### **U9-U12 (ACADEMY) COACHING FOCUS**

- Prioritize fun and development through small-sided games
- Master our 8 Habits Taught Weekly
- Hips open to the Field
- Receive Back Foot
- Check your teammates (Scan)
- Check your Lines (Scan)
- Check the Defender (Scan)
- Play Simple
- Keep the ball moving
- Play the way you face

# CULLMAN UNITED SOCCER CLUB

## COACH ETIQUETTE & EXPECTATIONS (CONTINUED)

### U13-U19 (COMPETITIVE) COACHING FOCUS

- Reinforce positional play and tactical understanding. Focus on
- TOVO Principles
- Promote autonomy and responsibility
- Use consistent club language and methodology. Reinforce our 8 habits.

### TRANSITION COACHING (THE 4 MOMENTS)

- Teach players to recognize and react to:
- When we lose the ball (defensive transition)
- When we win the ball (attacking transition)
- When we start with the ball (build-up)
- When we start without the ball (defensive shape)

### GAME MODEL FOCUS AREAS

- Resets – recycle and switch through the back when needed
- Counters – transition quickly when we win the ball
- Pressing – press with purpose using known triggers

### FINAL NOTE: BE A CLUB-FIRST COACH

- Always speak positively about Cullman United and other coaches
- Model character and professionalism on and off the field
- Remember: we coach people first, players second
- Take pride in shaping good humans, not just soccer players





# CULLMAN UNITED 9V9 GAME MODEL & PERIODIZATION PLAN

COACH: JACOB BROWN

## FORMATION & TACTICAL SHAPE

Base Formation: 1-3-2-3 (In Possession), 1-3-1-3-1 (Out of Possession)

### In Possession:

- Build-Out Phase: GK+3 build-up with #6 creating a diamond
- Progression Phase: Positional rotations and wide overloads
- Final Third: Third-man runs, underlaps, overlaps, dynamic combinations

### Out of Possession:

- Defensive Shape: 3-1-3-1 Shape
- Principles: Block central access, press triggers, collective counter-press

## TRANSITIONS:

- **Attack:** Win-and-play-forward via "green roads"
- **Defense:** 3-second counter-press, recover to block

## SET PIECES:

- **Defensive:** Man-zone mix, clearances and tracking
- **Attacking:** Consistent delivery, varied runs, second-ball structure

## STYLE OF PLAY

Cognitive-positional model with structured freedom. Key moments:

- Attacking
- Defending
- Attacking Transition
- Defensive Transition

## CORE PRINCIPLES:

- Cognition leads execution
- Positional superiority through diamonds
- Tempo control
- Compact, proactive transitions

## PLAYER CHARACTERISTICS

Each role within the 9v9 model has essential traits:

- **GK:** Sweeper-keeper, communicator, build initiator
- **CBs:** Rotate, anticipate, support build
- **FBs:** Width providers, overlap/underlap
- **#6:** Pivot, links play, counter-press anchor
- **#8/#10:** Create overloads, flexible, final third threat
- **Wingers:** High/wide, 1v1 threats, pressing
- **#9:** Intelligent runs, pressing, goal scorer

## INTEGRATED PERIODIZATION SCHEDULE

Our 18-week macrocycle is built in mesocycles with layered focus:

Mesocycles:

- **Weeks 1-4:** Foundation
- **Weeks 5-10:** Tactical Application
- **Weeks 11-15:** Realism & Simulation
- **Weeks 16-18:** Reinforcement

Each week includes:

- Tactical theme
- Technical habit focus
- Game-based physical work
- Psychological development (mindset, resilience)

## DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY FOR PLAYERS & FAMILIES

- The 9v9 model elevates habits built in 7v7 and refines them for future 11v11 roles
- Players learn to take greater responsibility: scanning, leading transitions, and solving problems in real-time
- Families and coaches align around a clear growth framework that reflects our identity as a teaching club

*"Think fast. Play sharp. Adapt freely."* – CUSC Coaching Staff



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# CULLMAN UNITED 9V9 GAME MODEL



This 9v9 game model is a progressive evolution from the 7v7 foundation, designed to guide U11–U12 teams toward the 11v11 game. It emphasizes positional play and cognitive development – maintaining core principles from 7v7 while adding new tactical layers. The model outlines how we play in possession (3-2-3 shape) and out of possession (3-1-3-1 shape), ensuring players understand their roles in both scenarios. We prioritize intelligent, possession-based soccer where players apply key principles (angles, distance, timing, etc.) in real game situations. Overall, this game model serves as a blueprint for a unified style of play, fostering player growth and team synergy.

Presented by Jacob Brown



# PROGRESSION FROM 7V7 TO 9V9

Our 9v9 model is a natural evolution of the core ideas introduced in 7v7. The habits and principles learned in the smaller format remain central, but now apply in a more complex and demanding context.

Foundational Concepts: Angles, Distance, Timing, Lines, Situation

Line-Breaking Passes

Core Habits: Back-foot receiving, open body stance, scanning, and playing simple.

Build-up Play using a Diamond & "Green Road"

Principled Play and Game Based Learning



# PROGRESSION FROM 7V7 TO 9V9

Our 9v9 model is a natural evolution of the core ideas introduced in 7v7. The habits and principles learned in the smaller format remain central, but now apply in a more complex and demanding context.

## Foundational Concepts

These five ideas remain at the heart of our methodology. In 7v7, players learned to support with proper angles and distance, to time their actions well, to recognize horizontal and vertical lines of play, and to read the situation — knowing when to keep the ball and when to penetrate. With more players and a larger field in 9v9, these principles become even more important. Maintaining spacing, timing overlapping or diagonal runs, and moving into passing lanes all require greater awareness. Our goal remains the same: use intelligent positioning and movement to support the ball and break lines.

## Core Habits

Core Habits: Back-foot receiving, open body, scanning, and playing simple.

These essential habits were a focus in 7v7 and continue in 9v9 — now with higher expectations. Players must receive on the back foot to play forward quickly, maintain an open body shape to see the field, scan constantly for teammates and pressure, and keep possession by playing simple. As the game speeds up with more players, these habits become non-negotiable. For example, a central midfielder must scan even more frequently to stay aware of increased options and threats. Simple, efficient passing remains key to maintaining tempo and finding space.

## Line Breaking passes

Penetrating passes were a key focus in 7v7 and are even more vital now. With more organized defenses in 9v9, breaking lines becomes a primary objective. We train defenders and midfielders to spot and exploit passing lanes into forwards or attacking mids. Split passes between defenders are a key tool in our model and directly connect to our “green road” approach — once a gap appears, we play decisively. In training, positional games like 4v2+3 reward these line-breaking passes. Success is when players consistently bypass pressure with smart, well-timed balls that advance play.



# PROGRESSION FROM 7V7 TO 9V9 CONTINUED

as we move from 7v7 to 9v9 - we continue to build on our two main tenets

## Build up play - Diamonds / Green Roads

In 7v7, we built out using a diamond between the goalkeeper and back three to create passing angles. Players were taught to find the “green road” — the clear path forward — and to avoid forcing into a “red road” when pressure was high. That same structure continues in 9v9. With a 3-2-3 shape, our keeper and back three still create a build-up diamond. Players look to break lines when the path is open, but reset or switch when needed. Purposeful circulation and patience remain key to finding space and advancing play.

## Principled Play

We continue to train players to interpret the game through five key ideas: angles, distance, timing, lines, and situations. These guide every decision—whether in buildup, midfield control, or final-third execution. 9v9 adds complexity, but the principles stay the same. Players learn not just what to do, but why it works.

## Game Based Learning

We believe the game is the best teacher. Training is built around realistic, game-like scenarios that challenge decision-making in real time. Players solve problems under pressure, building tactical instinct. In 9v9, this approach helps players adjust to added roles and structure while staying grounded in fluid, intelligent play.



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# NEW 9V9 CONCEPTS

Moving up to 9v9 introduces new tactical concepts that build on our foundation. We focus on the following 4 key concepts added to our game model



01

## Positional Rotation

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02

## Advanced Spatial Awareness

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03

## Diagonal Relationships and Triangles

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04

## Moving Defenders with the ball



# POSITIONAL ROTATION

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- In the 9v9 phase, players are taught to rotate through multiple positions during play. For example, if an outside back overlaps into the attack, the winger should recognize it and cover the vacated space. If a center back pushes forward, a midfielder may drop into the back line. Similarly, a striker might drift wide if a winger moves centrally.
- This helps maintain shape even as players move freely, encouraging dynamic, intelligent play. It also develops well-rounded players by exposing them to different responsibilities. At the youth level, this variety builds game awareness and empathy for teammates' roles — no one is locked into a single position.
- The guiding message is: “If you go, who covers?” Movement is welcomed, but with shared responsibility. Players learn to think collectively and protect against counterattacks by maintaining defensive balance. Over time, the team becomes more adaptable — fluid in motion but always organized.



# POSITIONAL ROTATION

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- As the field grows in 9v9, spatial control becomes more important. We train players to stretch the field vertically (lengthwise) and horizontally (widthwise) to create time, space, and gaps.
- Horizontally, we want full width in possession: wingers should stay near the touchlines, and outside backs push wide to support. This forces opponents to spread, creating openings. For example, if we draw the opponent to one flank, a quick switch to the far-side winger (who holds width) can lead to a 1v1 attack in space.
- Vertically, our striker stays high to pin the back line, while defenders may drop off to stretch the midfield. Midfielders are taught to make runs beyond the forward to push the line back, while holding mids might drop in to create room.
- We also emphasize expanding and condensing shape as needed. If the ball is on one side, the opposite winger must stay wide and hold a diagonal line as a switch outlet — “opposite winger stay wide” is a trained habit. Players are constantly taught to scan, adjust, and understand where their closest support and farthest switch options are.
- We use grid and channel drills to develop this understanding. The goal is a team that intuitively fills space, stretches opponents, and maintains a balanced attacking shape that is hard to press.





# DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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- We emphasize diagonal support, especially in midfield. Instead of standing flat or side-by-side, players should stagger their positioning to create **diagonal passing lanes**. For example, if one midfielder has the ball, the next supporting player should be slightly ahead and to the side—forming a triangle.
- This diagonal setup creates multiple passing angles and is essential to our possession style. It naturally forms triangles and diamonds across the pitch, enabling **third-man combinations**. A common pattern we train is “**up-back-through**”: the ball goes to a forward, who returns it to a midfielder, who then plays a through pass to another runner.
- These actions rely on players offering support on angles and anticipating the next phase. In our 3-2-3 (or 3-1-3-1), the midfield’s job is to keep these diagonal connections alive—like between the holding mid and wide mid—so the ball can move around defenders quickly.
- By keeping this triangular structure, we can more easily bypass flat defensive lines and give the ball carrier at least two passing options at different angles. In short, **diagonal support creates triangles**, which unlock possession play and drive creativity.





# MOVING DEFENDERS WITH THE BALL

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- (Provoking to Penetrate): At 9v9, we introduce the idea of **manipulating the opponent's shape** through purposeful dribbling and circulation. Players learn that advancing the ball isn't always about passing forward—it's often to **draw a defender** and create a gap elsewhere.
- For example, a center back might carry into midfield. If a defender steps up, space opens behind them for a through ball. We coach players to be **patient in build-up**, provoking pressure and then exploiting the space it leaves.
- A common pattern: a midfielder dribbles laterally, baiting a far-side defender to shift. When they do, we switch play or play a diagonal into the space they vacated. This is sometimes called "**attract pressure to eliminate pressure**." Our back three may circulate the ball to pull the press, then find our #6 popping into space behind.
- Ball carriers are taught to **draw defenders** intentionally—and the moment pressure comes, recognize and exploit the resulting lane. Off-ball players must stay alert and move into those freed spaces.
- The key coaching message: "**Pass or dribble with a purpose**." We're not playing keep-away for the sake of possession—we're moving defenders like chess pieces. When executed well, this tactic unbalances opponents and opens clean paths forward..



# CORE PLAYER HABITS (EXPANDED & REINFORCED)



01

Back Foot Receiving

02

Open Hips and Body Orientation

03

Scanning: Field awareness

04

Play Simple (Simplicity and Speed)

05

Communication and Leadership



# CORE HABITS: EXPANDED AND REINFORCED

These habits are built upon our 7v7 habits, but taken to the next level so that there is constant progression between the levels

## Back Foot Receiving

Players are expected to receive on their “back foot” — the foot furthest from the ball's source. This allows them to open their body, control across their frame, and face forward immediately, rather than getting stuck with their back to play. This habit buys time and sets up positive actions. While we introduced this in 7v7, 9v9 increases the pressure — now it's essential. In training, we repeat: “First touch sets up your next action.” A good back-foot touch can beat a pressing opponent instantly, and with enough repetition, this becomes second nature.

## Open Hips and Body Orientation

Before receiving, players must adopt an open stance — hips facing into the field, not the sideline — so they can see the ball and the next pass at once. This “half-turned” posture enables quick decision-making and supports combination play. In rondos and positional games, players quickly learn that receiving square often leads to a turnover. We consistently coach: “Hips open to the field.” This habit connects directly to back-foot receiving and builds fluid play under pressure. Our exercises like rondos enforce this, because if you receive square in a tight rondo, you'll likely lose the ball. Thus, players learn to constantly adjust their feet and body before the ball arrives.

## Scanning: Field Awareness

Players must scan regularly to gather visual information before and as the ball arrives. We teach them to check their surroundings — teammates, opponents, and space — at every opportunity. At 7v7, this concept was introduced; by 9v9, it's expected. Scanning enables quicker, smarter choices and links directly to our principles of Angles, Distance, and Situation. One check might tell a midfielder to lay the ball off instead of turning into pressure. Over time, we aim for 360° awareness — players processing their environment constantly, even off the ball.



# CORE HABITS: EXPANDED AND REINFORCED

## Play Simple” Simplicity and Speed

We emphasize: “Simple is smart.” As the game speeds up, over-complication leads to mistakes. Playing simple means finding the easy, effective option — often one or two touches — rather than forcing risky dribbles or speculative long balls. A key habit is “play the way you face” under pressure: if you're facing your own goal, don't try to turn into a defender. Instead, drop or square the ball and move. This doesn't limit creativity — we want flair in the final third — but encourages smart risk-taking. In buildup zones, simplicity maintains possession and control. The ball always moves faster than players, so clean, sharp passes are our best weapon.

## Communication and Leadership

With more players and space in 9v9, communication becomes essential. We encourage players to habitually give verbal and visual cues — “Man on!”, “Turn!”, or pointing to where they want the ball. We assign leadership roles (e.g., center backs or holding mids) to organize and instruct. Communication complements scanning: if one player sees something, the whole team can benefit if it's shared. Over time, we want a vocal, connected team where every player contributes to structure, pressing, and support. Football is a language — and learning to speak it out loud builds confidence, cohesion, and collective intelligence.



# TACTICAL SHAPE - 3-2-3 IN POSSESSION



In possession, our base shape is 3-2-3. This means 3 defenders, 2 midfielders, 3 attackers (plus a goalkeeper). For example, we have two wide defenders (right and left back) and one center back; two center mids (often a #6 holding mid and #8 box-to-box); and a front line of left winger (#11), right winger (#7), and a center forward (#9). This shape provides width and depth – the wingers hug the touchlines to stretch play horizontally, while the #9 stays high to stretch vertically. There is no fixed #10 in this setup, which actually makes 3-2-3 a great developmental stepping stone toward common 11v11 formations like 4-3-3.

When we are building up, the 3-2-3 shape naturally forms diamonds and triangles across the field, giving multiple passing options. Each player has a clear role: the back three build from the defense, the midfield pair link defense to attack (they are the crucial “bridge” players), and the front three provide attacking outlets and width. This balanced shape suits many team styles and can easily adjust as needed.



# TACTICAL SHAPE - 3-1-3-1 OUT OF POSSESSION



Out of possession, our shape shifts to 3-1-3-1 for defensive solidity. We still have a back line of three defenders, but now one midfielder (the #6) stays deep as a dedicated defensive midfielder, screening in front of the defense. Ahead of them, the two wingers have dropped back alongside the central attacking mid, and a lone striker (#9) remains forward. This formation covers space very well: it's set up to protect the middle with the #6, and to cover wide channels with the wide mids dropping in. If players hold their positional discipline, 3-1-3-1 can guard both central and wide areas effectively, while also forming a natural "pressing diamond" up front (the striker, two wide mids, and one of the midfielders behind them create a diamond shape to press the opponent's build-up). The obvious vulnerable spaces in this setup are the "half-spaces" between the #6 (DM) and the central attacking mid (#10). We train the #6 and #10 to shift and cover those gaps when defending – the red arrows in the diagram show our #6 moving laterally to plug holes. Overall, 3-1-3-1 is a flexible defensive shape: it's fluid and can quickly spring back into 3-2-3 when we win possession. This dual structure (3-2-3 to 3-1-3-1) ensures players understand how to contribute both in attack and defense, and highlights the importance of transition.



## Team Compactness and Shape

The key principle is staying compact both vertically and horizontally. In our 3-1-3-1, lines are close together: the back 3 and the #6 (holding mid) form a tight diamond protecting central areas. In front of them, the striker and three mids lead the press or delay the opponent's advance. We train the team to shift laterally as a unit — when the ball goes wide, the whole shape slides, with the far-side winger tucking inside. This ensures vertical compactness (no big gaps between lines) and horizontal balance (coverage on the far side). A compact block helps us deny space, intercept passes, and press more effectively.

# DEFENSIVE ORGANIZATION AND PRESSING TRIGGERS

Out of possession, our model prioritizes compactness, coordination, and intelligent pressing. The 3-1-3-1 is our base shape — here's how we defend and win the ball back from that structure:



## Defensive Roles and Responsibilities

Each line has clear duties. The front four (striker, wingers, central mid) start the press. The nearest player becomes the “first defender,” pressuring the ball; the others provide cover and cut off passing lanes. For example, if their center back has the ball, our striker angles the press to one side, the ball-side winger steps to their fullback, and our CM steps to their #6 — together forming a pressing triangle. The far-side winger tucks inside to cover a switch. Behind them, the #6 protects space between the lines, marking any attacker dropping in. If a midfielder gets beat, the #6 is the second defender to step in.

The back 3 defend zonally. One steps up to confront an attacker in their zone, the other two provide cover — one marking, one balancing. When the ball goes wide, the closest defender presses, the center back shifts over, and the far-side defender tucks in to guard the back post. Our goalkeeper plays high as a sweeper, ready to clear balls behind the line.

# DEFENSIVE ORGANIZATION AND PRESSING TRIGGERS

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# DEFENSIVE ORGANIZATION AND PRESSING TRIGGERS

- **Bad Touch or Mistake:** A sloppy first touch triggers immediate pressure. The nearest player presses aggressively, with cover behind. Players are taught to react instantly when they see hesitation.

- **Opponent with Back to Goal:** When a player receives facing their own goal, we close them down hard. The nearest player applies pressure, others cut off outlets. This often leads to rushed or errant passes.

- **Slow or Loose Pass:** Under-hit or bobbled passes cue our front players to sprint and close down the receiver before they can settle.

- **Sideline Isolation:** When a ball carrier is near the touchline, we press to trap. The presser angles them to the sideline, while teammates cut off options. This often forces giveaways or throw-ins.

- **Hesitation or Lack of Options:** If an opponent is stuck or unsure, we escalate pressure. The ball carrier is closed down while teammates anticipate panic passes.

- **Immediate Counter-Press:** After losing the ball, especially in the attacking half, we press instantly. The nearest player tries to win it back within 3–4 seconds, while teammates compress around the ball. The goal is to recover possession before the opponent escapes.



Out of possession, our model focuses on staying compact, coordinated, and aggressive at the right moments. The 3-1-3-1 shape is the framework – now we'll detail how we defend and win the ball back within that shape, including pressing triggers.



# BUILD UP & CHANCE CREATION PATTERNS



When we have the ball, our approach to building attacks and creating chances follows a structured yet flexible plan. We combine positional principles with rehearsed attacking patterns that give players tools to succeed. Here's how we build from the back and generate goals:

01

## Playing out from the back (First Phase)

In the 3-2-3 shape, build-up starts with the goalkeeper and back three. We play short from goal kicks and seek to maintain possession with composure. Like in 7v7, we use a diamond structure with the goalkeeper and back line — now with additional options: deep wingers and a high striker. We train patterns where defenders draw in pressure, use the keeper to switch sides, and find the open player. If the forward path is blocked, we reset and try again, rather than forcing a risky ball. A common pattern: center back draws pressure, lays off to GK, who switches to the far-side back — now with space to carry forward. We also mix in direct play when appropriate: if a forward checking in is wide open between lines, we encourage a line-breaking pass straight into them. Combining short build-up with occasional vertical passes keeps our attack unpredictable and sharp.

02

## Midfield Progression (Second Phase)

Once we bypass the first line, our midfielders (#6 and #8) and forward line link to progress through zones. A key pattern is the “third man” combination — the classic Up-Back-Through: into the striker, laid off to a midfielder, and then through to a runner. We use exercises that reinforce this because it's ideal for beating compact midfields. We also train quick switches when the opponent overloads one side. Midfielders create diamond support with the striker and wingers: one drops, another pushes higher. One mid often becomes a pseudo-#10, finding pockets between lines. Players are given freedom — if a gap opens, we want them to drive through it. The goal in this phase is to connect defense to attack through intelligent movement and fast combinations.



# BUILD UP & CHANCE CREATION PATTERNS CONTINUED



When we have the ball, our approach to building attacks and creating chances follows a structured yet flexible plan. We combine positional principles with rehearsed attacking patterns that give players tools to succeed. Here's how we build from the back and generate goals:

01

## Wide Play and Overlaps

Our 3-2-3 setup naturally emphasizes width. A common chance-creation pattern is fullback-overlap-winger. For example, the winger (#7) might dribble inside, pulling their defender, while our fullback (#2) overlaps outside. The winger slips a pass, then either cuts inside or rotates to cover. This 2v1 wide overload opens space for low crosses or cut-backs. If the fullback gets the ball wide, they look to deliver into the box. We emphasize cut-backs — playing to the penalty spot or top of the box — because defenders often collapse too deep. Our attacking structure includes: weak-side winger crashing the back post, striker attacking the center, and a midfielder arriving at the top of the box. These give us multiple finishing options.

03

## Central Combinations and Through Balls

We don't rely solely on wide play — we also look to break through the middle. A go-to pattern is the wall pass at the top of the box: striker checks to the ball, lays off, and a runner goes behind. Tight coordination is needed, so we train this in small-space environments. If the opponent plays a high line, we coach midfielders to spot and time diagonal runs behind. One common example: the #10 receives between lines, draws out a defender, and slides a pass into the space behind them for a curved run. These line-breaking passes require the right weight and timing. Players are encouraged to attempt them when the opportunity is clear. Communication and anticipation are key.

04

## Finishing and Goal Scoring

All patterns aim to lead to high-quality chances. We train finishing scenarios like crosses, cut-backs, 1v1s, and top-of-the-box shots. We also instill “follow the shot” habits — attackers crash for rebounds. Defenders sometimes initiate attacks too: a center back might switch play or even step into space and strike. Our finishing work emphasizes second waves — if the first attack doesn't lead to a goal, we stay alert and press again.





# PHILOSOPHY AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Our 9v9 game model is more than just a tactical framework — it reflects our belief in how young players should experience and learn the game. Every layer of this model is built to develop intelligent, confident footballers who understand space, timing, and decision-making.

01

## Cognitive Development and Positional Intelligence

This model reinforces our long-term commitment to developing thinking players. Concepts like scanning, perception-action coupling, and back-foot receiving are not just technical details — they're how we prepare players to make smart decisions under pressure. We don't simply teach patterns; we create environments where players must read the game, adapt in real time, and discover the best solutions. Through guided discovery, reflective coaching, and game-based learning, we build players who understand why a movement or pass is the right choice. Training is designed to simulate the game — we challenge players with situations that require real decisions, not rehearsed responses. Every activity has purpose: to build football IQ alongside skill.

02

## Positional Play & Functional Understanding

Throughout this model, you've seen the emphasis on angles, distance, timing, lines, and situational awareness. These principles drive our approach to positional play. Whether it's a winger staying wide to create space, a midfielder supporting diagonally to form a triangle, or a defender dropping to stretch the field vertically — our players are constantly learning how their positioning affects the team. We don't assign roles blindly; players are taught the function of their position within the team context. Why does a fullback overlap? Why must the opposite winger stay wide? These are not just instructions, but lessons in reading the game and playing with intent.

03

## Training with Context, Not Repetition

We prioritize technical development in realistic, game-like conditions. Instead of isolated drills, we train passing, movement, and decision-making through positional games and functional exercises. Players learn how to apply skills like first touch or combination play within fluid scenarios — not from memorization, but from repetition in context. The result is deeper understanding, better transfer to games, and players who can act under pressure.

04

## Empowered Players, Positive Environment

At the heart of everything is a commitment to player empowerment. We want players to feel confident thinking on their own, encouraged to try new ideas, and supported through mistakes. Our coaching language is intentional: clear, constructive, and positive. Instead of barking commands, we pose questions and challenge players to solve problems. Our goal is to help each player grow into a leader who communicates, organizes, and takes responsibility on the field.



# CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This 9v9 model builds directly from the foundation established in 7v7, advancing both tactical complexity and player responsibility. From team shape and pressing triggers, to spatial awareness and attacking patterns, every part of the model serves the broader goal of developing smart, creative, and resilient footballers.

For coaches, this model provides clarity and structure while still allowing for flexibility based on team needs. For players and parents, it offers a consistent identity rooted in intelligent, proactive soccer — one that values possession, teamwork, and decision-making over reactive play. As players rotate through roles and game moments, they gain clarity, confidence, and cohesion.

Importantly, this model prepares players for what's next. When they transition to 11v11, they'll already understand fundamental concepts like build-up patterns, defensive blocks, midfield rotation, and positional discipline — the structure simply scales up. The habits, principles, and ideas in this 9v9 model are not temporary — they are foundational.

Above all, this game model puts development first. Results will come as a byproduct of doing things the right way. If applied consistently, by season's end we expect to see a team that builds from the back, attacks with creativity, and defends with intelligence and collective grit. This is our vision for modern youth soccer: proactive, thoughtful, and a joy to watch — and even more importantly, a joy to play.



## Cullman United 9v9 Macrocycle

Date	Week	Practice	Primary Game Moment	Weekly Objective	8 Daily Habits	Tovo Principle	Rondo/Warmup - 2 - 15 minutes	Positional Play - 3 - 20 minutes	Training Game - 1 - 20 minutes	Training Game - 4 - 25 minutes	
June 16	1	Monday	Attacking	Understand Formation Movements on own side	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Scan - portion of scan choose do	2v2+2	4v4+4 positional play	6v4 positional game to endzone - no keepers - defenders counter to popups	7v5 Build out - normal Half, counter to goal, build to dribble gates	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
June 23	2	Monday	Attacking	Understand Formation Movements on own side	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Choose portion of scan choose do - emphasis on deception	2v2+2	4v4+4 positional play	6v4 positional game to endzone - no keepers - defenders counter to popups	7v5 Build out - normal Half, counter to goal, build to dribble gates	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 7	3	Monday	Defending	Understand Team shape on own half	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure cover balance	4v2 defensive rondos	3v2 Attacking	3v3+3 Positional play - players do not rotate when they win the ball - focus on defensive shape	Offense v Defense - start at midfield - Offense focus on shape, keeping the ball - Defense focuses on compact behind the ball	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 10	4	Thursday	Defending	Understand Team shape on own half	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Understand Compactness - Behind the ball	4v2 Defensive rondos	3v2 Attacking	3v3+3 Positional play - players do not rotate when they win the ball - focus on defensive shape	Offense v Defense - start at midfield - Offense focus on shape, keeping the ball - Defense focuses on compact behind the ball	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 14	5	Monday	Defending	Understand Mid block / Press	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Close Space - compact in defense	5v3 transition rondo	4v4+4 training game - Funino with neutrals	apfc next mid block activity modified - 5v4+2+1 - defense tries to block the switch from each side - only 2 teams - no rotation	5v5+2 pressing runs - prevent the long pass to targets	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 17	5	Thursday	Defending	Understand Mid block / Press	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure quickly on transition	5v3 transition rondo	4v4+4 training game - Funino with neutrals	mid block activity modified - 5v4+2+1 - defense tries to block the switch from each side - only 2 teams - no rotation	5v5+2 pressing runs - prevent the long pass to targets	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 21	6	Monday	Attacking Transitions	Up back thru	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	5v3 transition rondo	up back thru game - 6v4	4v4+4+1 progression game. switch the ball from side to side apfcnext	5v5+2 endzone game - up / back thru to endzones	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 24	6	Thursday	Attacking Transitions	Up back thru	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose! - same as above	5v3 transition rondo	up back thru game - 6v4	4v4+4+1 progression game. switch the ball from side to side apfcnext	5v5+2 endzone game - up / back thru to endzones	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 28	7	Monday	Defending Transitions	Win the ball back - 6 seconds	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure quickly on transition	6v3 positional play - 6 seconds to win in 4 seconds to score in pop up - rotate 3 defenders every 10 seconds	6v6 counter rondo - send 4	4v2+4 +2gk- counter rondo to large goals	Half field scrimmage - offense v defense - start at midfield - 5v7	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
July 31	7	Thursday	Defending Transitions	Win the ball back - 6 seconds	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure, cover (mark others)	6v3 positional play - 6 seconds to win in 4 seconds to score in pop up - rotate 3 defenders every 10 seconds	6v6 counter rondo - send 4	4v2+4 +2gk- counter rondo to large goals	Half field scrimmage - offense v defense - start at midfield - 5v7	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)



August 4	8	Monday	Defending	Understand Team shape on own half	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure cover balance	3v2 Attacking	4v2 defensive rondos	4v4+4 Positional play - players do not rotate when they win the ball - focus on defensive shape	Offense v Defense - start at midfield - Offense focus on shape, keeping the ball - Defense focuses on compact behind the ball	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 8	8	Thursday	Defending	Understand Team shape on own half	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Understand Compactness - Behind the ball	3v2 Attacking	4v2 defensive rondos	4v4+4 Positional play - players do not rotate when they win the ball - focus on defensive shape	Offense v Defense - start at midfield - Offense focus on shape, keeping the ball - Defense focuses on compact behind the ball	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 11	9	Monday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose!	Endline activity - pattern - no pressure	Battle Rondos	4v4+4 Funino style game - 2 neutrals inside, 2 between the goals - 4 goal game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for endline goals	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 12	9	Tuesday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Scan choose Do	endline activity - pattern into a 1v1	Battle Rondos	4v4+4 Funino style game - 2 neutrals inside, 2 between the goals - 4 goal game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for endline goals	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 14	10	Thursday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	SCan choose Do	endline activity - 1v1 activity to start	Battle Rondos	4v4+4 Funino style game - 2 neutrals inside, 2 between the goals - 4 goal game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for endline goals	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 18	10	Monday	Attacking	Drop and reset	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Keep and move the ball, receive with intent	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v2 transition rondo	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 19	10	Tuesday	Attacking	Drop and reset	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass With purpose	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v2 transition rondo	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 21	11	Thursday	Attacking	Drop and reset	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Play what you see / face	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v2 transition rondo	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 25	11	Monday	Defensive Transitions	Behind the ball	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure quickly on transition	4v2 Defensive rondos	4v4+4 - Defensive back line split game	5v6 defending - counter to midfield	5v4+gk+2 wide - width of 18 - length of 2 18. Attackers try to combine to score - defense works on compactness	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 26	11	Tuesday	Defensive Transitions	Behind the ball	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Close Space - compact in defense	4v2 Defensive rondos	4v4+2+2 defensive back line game - different variation	6v3 - Defend the line - progression into 8v4	5v4+gk+2 wide - width of 18 - length of 2 18. Attackers try to combine to score - defense works on compactness	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
August 28	12	Thursday	Defensive Transitions	Behind the ball	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure, cover balance	4v2 Defensive rondos	4v4+4 defensive back line variation 3	6v3+gk - emergency defending	5v4+gk+2 wide - width of 18 - length of 2 18. Attackers try to combine to score - defense works on compactness	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)



September 2	12	Tuesday	Defending	Mid Block - Press	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure quickly on transition	6v6 counter rondo - send 4	4v4+4 training game - Funino with neutrals	mid block activity modified - 5v4+2+1 - defense tries to block the switch from each side - only 2 teams - no rotation	5v5+2 pressing runs - prevent the long pass to targets	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 4	12	Thursday	Defending	Mid Block - Press	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure , cover (mark others)	5v3 transition rondo	4v4+4 training game - Funino with neutrals	mid block activity modified - 5v4+2+1 - defense tries to block the switch from each side - only 2 teams - no rotation	5v5+2 pressing runs - prevent the long pass to targets	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 8	13	Monday	Attacking Transitions	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose!	3 player - speed pass	4v4+4 positional play - no rotation of defenders - points by switching the field - 3 teams - keep up with score	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 9	13	Tuesday	Attacking Transitions	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Keep and move the ball, receive with intent	3 player - speed pass	4v4+4 positional play - no rotation of defenders - points by switching the field - 3 teams - keep up with score	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 11	14	Thursday	Attacking Transitions	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	all 3 above	3 player - speed pass	4v4+4 positional play - no rotation of defenders - points by switching the field - 3 teams - keep up with score	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 15	14	Monday	Attacking Transitions	Up back thru	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	up back thru game -8 - 10 players - or 3v3+2 2 pop up goal game	4v4+4+1 progression game. switch the ball from side to side apfcnext	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 16	14	Tuesday	Attacking Transitions	Up back thru	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose! - same as above	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	up back thru game -8 - 10 players - or 3v3+2 2 pop up goal game	4v4+4+1 progression game. switch the ball from side to side apfcnext	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 18	15	Thursday	Attacking Transitions	Up back thru	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Organize the defense while on offense / close gap when a teammate advances	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	up back thru game -8 - 10 players - or 3v3+2 2 pop up goal game	4v4+4+1 progression game. switch the ball from side to side apfcnext	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 22	15	Monday	Defending	No Turn - Pressure	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure quickly on transition	1v1 start from behind	2v2+2 no turn transition game	2 3v3 Funino games	7v4+gk - offense v defense - focus on counter pressing	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 23	15	Tuesday	Defending	No Turn - Pressure	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure , cover (mark others)	1v1 start from behind	2v2+2 no turn transition game	2 3v3 Funino games	6v6 to 3 dribble goals each side	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
September 25	16	Thursday	Defending	No Turn - Pressure	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pressure , cover (mark others)	1v1 start from behind	2v2+2 no turn transition game	2 3v3 Funino games	6v6 to endzones	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)



September 30	16	Tuesday	Attacking	2v1 combos on the side	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Drive the ball to open up space	2v1v1 to pop up	Battle Rondos	2v1 to pop ups to 3v2 to big goals	4v4+2+2gk - small field - 2 large goals - overload for combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 2	16	Thursday	Attacking	2v1 combos on the side	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Decide and Deceive - use deception	2v1v1 to pop up	Battle Rondos	2v1 to pop ups to 3v2 to big goals	4v4+2+2gk - small field - 2 large goals - overload for combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 6	17	Monday	Attacking	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose!	3 player - speed pass	5v3 transitional rondo	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 7	17	Tuesday	Attacking	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Keep and move the ball, receive with intent	3 player - speed pass	5v5+2 positional play - defenders rotate in transition	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 9	18	Thursday	Attacking	Switch the field	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	all 3 above	3 player - speed pass	4v4+4 positional play - no rotation of defenders - points by switching the field - 3 teams - keep up with score	5v5+2 wide game	9v9 Scrimmage - must switch in order to score	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 13	18	Monday	Attacking Transitions	Thru balls	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	SCan choose Do	Battle Rondos	3v3 with breakout zones to score - must make a combo to enter	7v4+gk thru ball game - must break offside line with combos to breakout	5v5+2gk - full game - 3 goals from thru ball combos into endzone - 1 for a regular goal	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 14	18	Tuesday	Attacking Transitions	Thru balls	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Attack 1, 2, 3 - Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	Battle Rondos	3v3 with breakout zones to score - must make a combo to enter	7v4+gk thru ball game - must break offside line with combos to breakout	5v5+2gk - full game - 3 goals from thru ball combos into endzone - 1 for a regular goal	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 16	19	Thursday	Attacking Transitions	Thru balls	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose	Battle Rondos	3v3 with breakout zones to score - must make a combo to enter	7v4+gk thru ball game - must break offside line with combos to breakout	9v9 - full game - 3 goals from thru ball combos into endzone - 1 for a regular goal	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 20	19	Monday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Pass with purpose!	4v1 Rondos	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 21	19	Tuesday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Scan choose Do	4v1 Rondos	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 23	20	Thursday	Attacking	Attack Endline - Finishing	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	SCan choose Do	4v1 Rondos	4v4+2 or 3v3+2 - Funino with neutrals between goals - goals are a dribble goal and a popup goal - or 5v5+2	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	5v5+2GK - double 18 game. Field is width of 18, length of 2 18s. Small field - focus is on combinations, finishing and lots of shots. Double points for up back thru combos	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)



October 27	20	Monday	Attacking	Final third combos	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	2v1 2v1 game - rectangle quick possession game	3v3+3 positional play	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	9v9 Scrimmage - combos worth 3	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 28	20	Tuesday	Attacking	Final third combos	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	2v1 2v1 game - rectangle quick possession game	3v3+3 positional play	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	9v9 Scrimmage - combos worth 3	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
October 30	21	Thursday	Attacking	Final third combos	1. Receive with back foot, 2. Hips open to the field 3. Keep the ball moving 4. Play Simple 5. Play the way you face 6-8. Check your lines, teammates, defenders	Advance the ball/break lines - play the way you face / see	2v1 2v1 game - rectangle quick possession game	3v3+3 positional play	4v4+2+2gk breakout game	9v9 Scrimmage - combos worth 3	(Arrival activity is always 1v1s or juggling)
<p>Please understand this is not meant to be something that you fully copy. The numbers you have at practice will dictate a lot of it. If you have extra kids, you either need to adjust the activity to accomodate your numbers, or have something for them to do as they rotate. Nobody should be sitting out. This could be an extra activity, or individual training, goalkeepers etc. Also understand that you are focusing on the principles of the game, not the tactics. Arrival activities can also always change as well. Our practices are based on Angles, Timing, Lines, Distance and situations. We will use the topics to consistently discuss all of these daily in different ways.</p>											
<p>Please also note that this is based on our current u11 teams just now entering 9v9. Our current setup is 2 9v9 teams on the same field. Our stage 4 activity is set up the way it is due to the resources we have. Please also note that all activities that are essentially offense v defense are just basic titles. There are numerous ways to do Offense V Defense. On those days we will set them up based on what we want to see from that topic. That means we may change which team has numerical superiority, we may add extra points for scoring a specific way. You have to adjust these activities to what you want to see your own team do.</p>											
<p>I repeat, Macrocycles are not meant to be copied. They serve as a guide. You must adapt it to your team. This is merely meant to give you a starting point for your team.</p>											