



Drill less, play more!

Part 4: Match-character training for wing attacks by Hermann Bomers

In the previous installments of our series on realistic youth training, Hermann Bomers gave us one or two exercises per age level on a selected skill (dribbling, ball han-

dling) or ability (game action speed). This article deals with an aspect of group and team tactics: the wing attack. As you might expect, we don't teach this type of concept

to very young players; instead we start with activities appropriate for ages 10 to 14.

The closer the attack gets to the opposition's goal, the more compact the defense becomes, to keep attackers from setting up shots and scoring. That's the reason why the wing attack is such an important tactic: Attacks along the sidelines open up holes, they create space for teammates to move forward, and they end with a shot or a cross, preferably behind the opposition's defense.

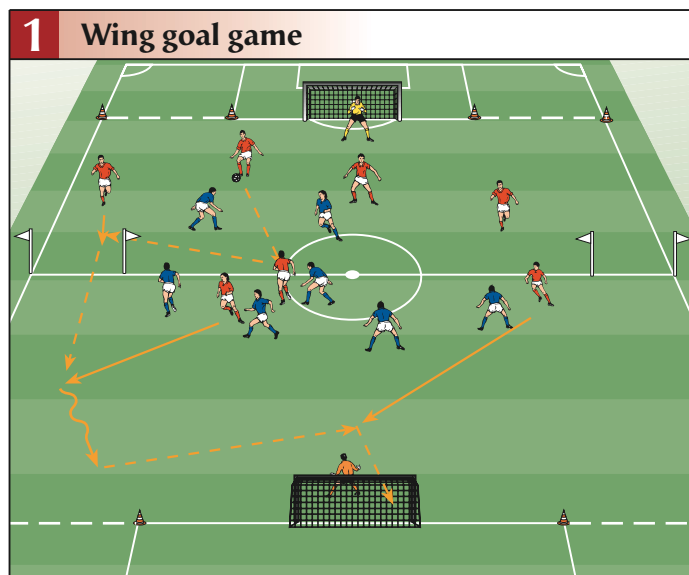
The setups, special rules and handicaps used in the exercises on these two pages emphasize various technical/tactical aspects of attacking on the wings, such as dribbling, overlapping and crossing.

Where to break through – inside or outside? Game action speed is often the key.

AXEL HEIMKEN



EXERCISES



1 Wing goal game

Setup

- Teams play 7 v. 7 on two goals with goalkeepers positioned on the 18-yard lines.
- Mark out a six- to eight-yard-wide goal on each wing.

Sequence

- Attacking players must pass or dribble through the wing goals to enter the opposition's half.
- Ball carriers are also allowed to make solo runs up the middle, to keep defenders from bunching up in front of the wing goals.
- Any player can run up the middle without the ball.
- Back passes down the middle are also allowed.

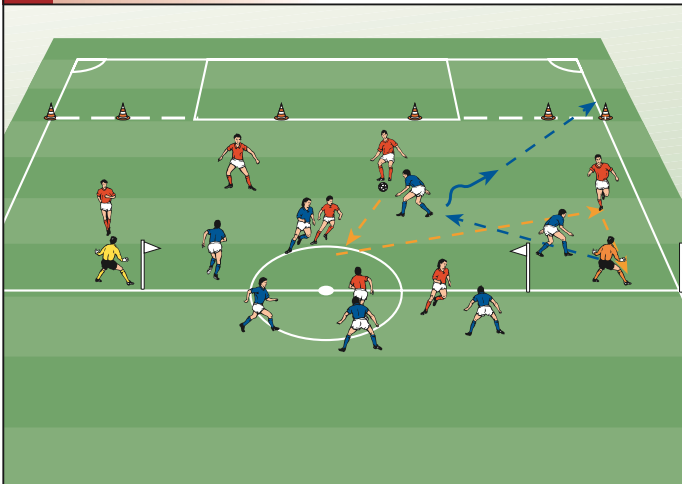
Variation

- Give more advanced players an additional opportunity to score by allowing long diagonal passes from in front of the wing goals through the center circle (shifting the point of attack).



EXERCISES

2 Get past the keeper



Setup

- Teams play 7 v. 7 on two two-yard-wide goal lines on the wings, in line with the 18-yard lines.
- There are also two 12-yard-wide wing goals on the centerline, each defended by a neutral goalkeeper.

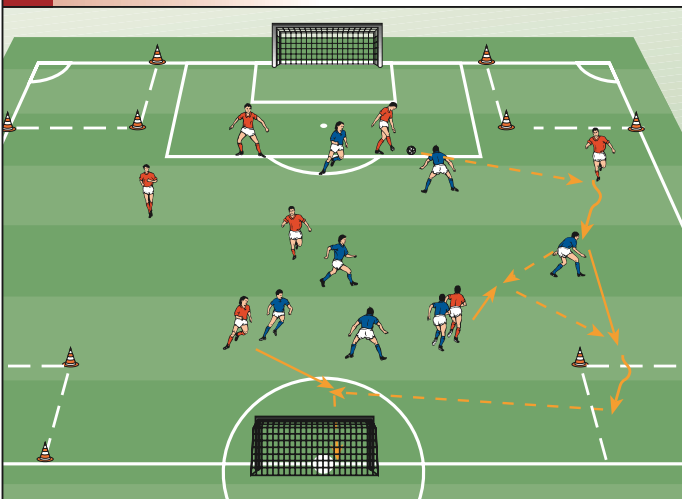
Sequence

- Rules are the same as in Game 1, except now the keepers may immediately throw intercepted balls to the defending team, which then counterattacks on either of the goal lines.

Note

- The goalkeepers increase the level of difficulty: Attackers have to get open and show for passes on the other side of the wing goals, and passers have to play hard, precise passes through the wing goals.

3 Crossing zone game



Setup

- Teams play 7 v. 7 in a half on two goals without goalkeepers.
- Mark out a 10 x 10-yard crossing zone in each corner of the field.

Sequence

- Attackers can only score on shots set up by crosses from the crossing zones.
- Also, shooters must shoot or head the ball directly.

Variations

- Add goalkeepers.
- Only one defender is allowed to be in a given crossing zone, allowing attackers to create 2 v. 1 situations there, e.g. by overlapping.
- Defending players are not allowed to enter the crossing zones, allowing attackers to cross without interference. (However, note that this increases the number of defenders in front of the goal which may reduce attackers' chances of scoring!)
- Extend crossing zones the entire length of the field.
- Add an element of positional training by assigning permanent crossers.