

Minesweeper

The role of a sweeper is given to a player that plays behind the line of defenders. It is that player's duty to cover the space behind and sweep across to remove the danger of the opponent's attacks. This is how you can develop the use of a "minesweeper" in your team.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Using a sweeper system.
2. Covering behind your team mates.
3. Regaining the ball and removing the danger of the opponent's attacks.

Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 15 mins	Developments 15 mins	Game 15 mins	Warm down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Cones, balls	The defender stays with the attacker's movement, from <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 13
The session	Four mini goals, balls, bibs cones	The sweeper communicates to their team mates and takes up positions to block shots at goals
Development	A goal, mini goals, balls, bibs cones	The sweeper communicates to their team mates and takes up positions to be ready to sweep behind and cover team mates
Game	Two goals, balls, bibs, cones	The sweeper is ready to break up the attacks and is in a position to receive a pass and instigate attacks
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



Where it fits

Individual skills: Communication, movement off the ball, defending 1v1, positioning in relation to the ball

Team skills: Communication, team work

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What to think about

- The sweeper has the best view of the game because they are behind their team mates. So the sweeper has to communicate with his team mates in order to organise them.
- He must be on the move continuously and take up a position in relation to the ball that enables him to cover his defenders should an attacker or pass make its way behind the defence.
- The sweeper is not only used in defence. He can also be used to begin attacks. In this case, his role is to see which team mates are available from his deep position and feed the ball to help build up attacks.





Set-up

Use an area 30 yards long by 40 yards wide.



What you get your players to do

Set up a small-sided game in which each team defends and attacks two mini goals. In front of the mini goals is an end zone. Each team has a sweeper inside their defensive zone.

The aim is to score in your opponent's mini goals. The sweeper must stay inside the end zone and communicate with his team mates to give defensive advice. In addition, the sweeper must continuously be on the move in order to block the goals so that the opponents cannot score.



What to call out

- “Communicate with your defenders”
- “Take up a position in relation to the ball”
- “Be ready to cover your team mates”



Development

Set up the pitch as in the middle picture by dividing the area into three equal zones. In the area with the big goal, the defending team uses a “minesweeper” – a defender who controls the area to take out any threats.

In the opposite area, the remaining three defenders try to win the ball and score in the mini goals. The opposing team has four attackers who try to combine in order to release a player past the three defenders and into the minesweeper's area to begin a 1v1 attack and score a goal.

You work as a server and stand between the two mini goals so you can pass to the four attackers.



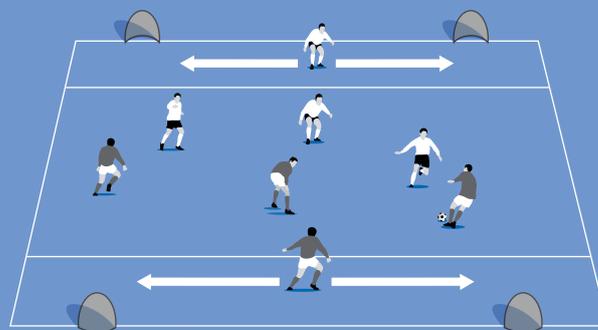
Game situation

In a small-sided game, each team nominates a player to be the sweeper in their end zone. The main game is played in the central zone of the pitch. The aim is to try and get a player into the end zone to attack 1v1 against the sweeper.

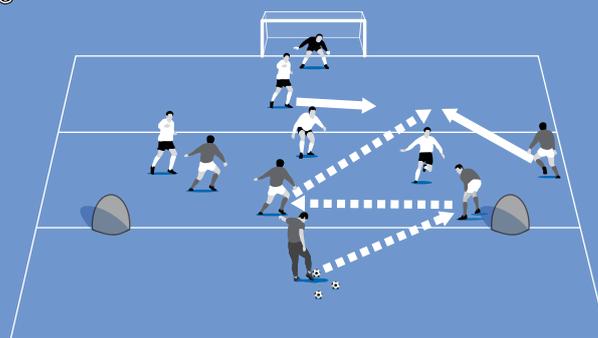
The team in possession of the ball can pass back to its sweeper and even exchange positions so the sweeper can dribble forward to attack. This rule enables the sweeper to be more active in the team's build up and gives all the players an experience of being the sweeper.

Minesweeper

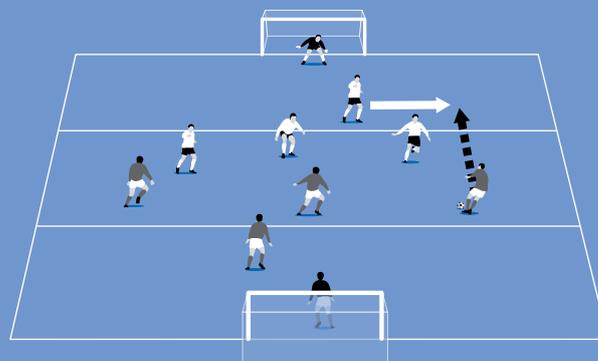
direction of run \Rightarrow pass $\square\square\square\Rightarrow$
run with ball $\blacksquare\blacksquare\blacksquare\blacksquare\blacksquare$



The sweeper communicates with his team mates and takes up a position to block the opposition from scoring in the mini goals.



Four attackers combine to release a striker into 1v1 against the minesweeper. You serve the ball to the attackers.



A sweeper is behind the defence of his team and communicates to organise the team and be in a position to react to any opposition attack.