Topic: Coaching the Solo

Scenario:

In order for a player to carry the ball down a pitch, they must be able to conduct two skills after every four steps, the bounce and the solo. A player may use as many solos as they want but can only use one consecutive bounce. Therefore as a result, it is important a player can carry out the solo with efficiency in order to be in a position to carry the ball over a distance or evade any potential tackle that may come their way.

Please note:

If a player is finding it difficult at first to perform the solo in full then modify the solo to allow the player to utilise their thigh until get comfortable with action of dropping ball onto leg. In addition, this will ensure all players can participate in all the activities and progress at their own pace.

Game 1 Knockout Solo

What will this Game do?

This game will allow players to practice the following skills:
- Primary Skill - Solo
- Secondary Skills - Near hand tackle
  General Movement
  Awareness of surroundings and space

What do I need to set up this Game?

- The size of the playing area should be approx. 15m x 15m. (Big enough to give players an opportunity to solo and dispossess players. If space too big then it will be hard to dispossess players on the ball)
- 1 ball per player within the square if possible
- Bibs for the players would will be tackling
- Cones to mark out the square
- Whistle

What will pitch layout look like?
How do you play this Game?

Start of Play:

- All players inside the grid solo the ball every four steps at their own pace focusing on head, hands and feet of the skill. No tackling at this point just all players practicing the skill at their own pace. Practice on both sides of the body.

Rules of Play:

- Part 1
  - Players conduct skill at own pace i.e. walking and then progress onto jogging
  - Players with ball must solo the ball every four steps

- Part 2
  - On coaches whistle:
    - Players try knock ball away from other team mates while trying to perform solo. Players should aim to use near hand tackle.
    - Players must perform a solo every four steps at least
    - When player is disposed they must leave the grid and continue soloing around the grid until all players have been disposed

How do you score in the Game?

- Last 2/3 players remaining in the grid win the game

What changes can be made to the game?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>How can I make the Game Easier?</th>
<th>How can I make the Game Harder?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decrease the size of playing area so less space for players to solo</td>
<td>Increase the playing area so more space for players solo</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>How can I make the Game Easier?</th>
<th>How can I make the Game Harder?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Players in possession can only walk while soloing the ball</td>
<td>Players in possession must jog while performing the skill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Players in possession must perform solo with non-dominant leg</td>
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Game 2  
Beat the Circle

What will this Game do?

This game will allow players to practice the following skills:

- Primary Skill - Solo
- Secondary Skills - Bounce
  Hand-pass
  Speed of movement

What do I need to set up this Game?

- The size of the playing area is dependent on size of circle
- 1 ball per group
- Bibs for the players who are running around the circle performing the solo
- Cones to mark out the circle and start/finish point for group outside the circle
- Whistle

What will pitch layout look like?

How do you play this Game?

Start of Play:

- All players in the circle stand on a cone. One ball is given to the group
- All players outside the circle stand in a line with one ball

Rules of Play:

- On coaches whistle:
  - The Players outside the circle must:
    - Solo the ball around the players standing in a circle
    - Complete a full lap and when return to team where she must hand-pass to next player in line
    - The above continues until all players have completed one lap
- At the same time, the players in the circle must:
  - Handpass the ball around the circle without dropping the ball

**How do you score in the Game?**

- Each rotation of the ball within the circle is recorded until all players outside the circle have completed their solo lap
- Group swap around and team soloing the ball around the circle must complete same as quick as possible in order to beat score set by team mates

**What changes can be made to the game?**

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<th>How can I make the Game Easier?</th>
<th>How can I make the Game Harder?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Space</strong></td>
<td>Decrease the size of circle less space for players to solo</td>
<td>Increase the size of the circle so more space for players solo and also difficult to hand-pass ball around circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task</strong></td>
<td>Players inside the circle can throw the ball</td>
<td>Players inside circle must hand-pass with non-dominant hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Players outside the circle only have to perform a certain number of solos</td>
<td>Players outside circle must solo with non-dominant leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Players</strong></td>
<td>Add extra players inside the circle</td>
<td>Put in a defender inside the circle to make difficult to move ball around the circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Game 3  Treasure Chest

What will this Game do?

This game will allow players to practice the following skills:

- Primary Skill - Solo
- Secondary Skills - Pick up and bounce
  General Movement
  Awareness of surroundings and space

What do I need to set up this Game?

- The size of the playing area should be approx. 20m x 20m.
- All footballs are placed in the centre of the square.
- Different coloured Bibs for the players on each corner.
- Cones to mark out the square.
- Whistle.

What will pitch layout look like?

![Diagram of game setup]

How do you play this Game?

Start of Play:

- Players are divided into four groups and are placed at each corner of the grid.
- On coaches' whistle, one player from each team commences play by running into the centre, retrieving a ball and bringing it back to their group.

Rules of Play:

- Players with the ball must solo the ball every four steps.
- One player from each group is only allowed to retrieve a ball from the centre at any time.
- Players must perform a solo before returning the ball back to their group.
- Once a player performs a solo, they must hand-pass the ball to the next player in line who drops the ball and then goes to retrieve another ball from the centre.
- Once all balls are gone from the centre then players can steal from their neighbours in a clock wise direction

**How do you score in the Game?**

- Coach gives players a certain timeframe. On second whistle players must stop running and team with must footballs in their corner wins

**What changes can be made to the Game of Rouges?**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Space</strong></td>
<td>Decrease the size of playing area so less space for players to run and solo</td>
<td>Increase the playing area so more space for players to run and solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task</strong></td>
<td>Players must only perform at least one solo</td>
<td>Players must perform more than one solo Players must use non dominant leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td>More footballs</td>
<td>Less footballs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Players</strong></td>
<td>Less players</td>
<td>Add in a few defenders to try knock ball away from players that retrieve the ball from the centre</td>
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The Solo
The Solo is used when a player is carrying the ball down the pitch. The player must solo or bounce the ball after every four steps taken. A player may complete as many solos as they want but can only use one consecutive bounce.

Technique
The technique involves releasing the ball from the hand on the kicking side to the kicking foot and kicking back up into your hands.

Hands
- Ball released into hand at the kicking side
- Wrists extended and ball dropped onto kicking foot
- Hands ready to catch ball as flicked back up from solo

Head
- Eyes on the ball at all times

Foot
- Step forward with non-kicking foot
- Kick ball with instep and flick toe upwards towards body

Key Points
1. Hold the ball firmly in both hands
   Head down and eyes on the ball
2. Step forward with the non-kicking foot and keep your body upright
   Release the ball into the hand on the kicking side
3. Drop ball onto the kicking foot and when foot (instep) impacts with ball, flick the toe upwards towards the body
   Straighten the leg and extend arms forward to catch the ball
   If running maintain a natural stride

Common Errors

Error 1
- Not kicking the ball with the instep causes the ball to travel in the wrong direction
- It is important to kick with the laced part of your boot otherwise the ball will not come back up into arms

Error 2
- Another common mistake is dropping the ball from the hand on the opposite side to the kicking foot
- The ball should be released into the hand on the kicking side and the other hand is needed to aid balance

Error 3
- Some players do not flick their toe upwards causing the ball to go ahead of them instead of back up into arms
- When the foot impacts the ball, flick your toe up so ball spins back into hands