

1st Defender

“Sponge Activity” (as players arrive)- Pass and Press

Set up-

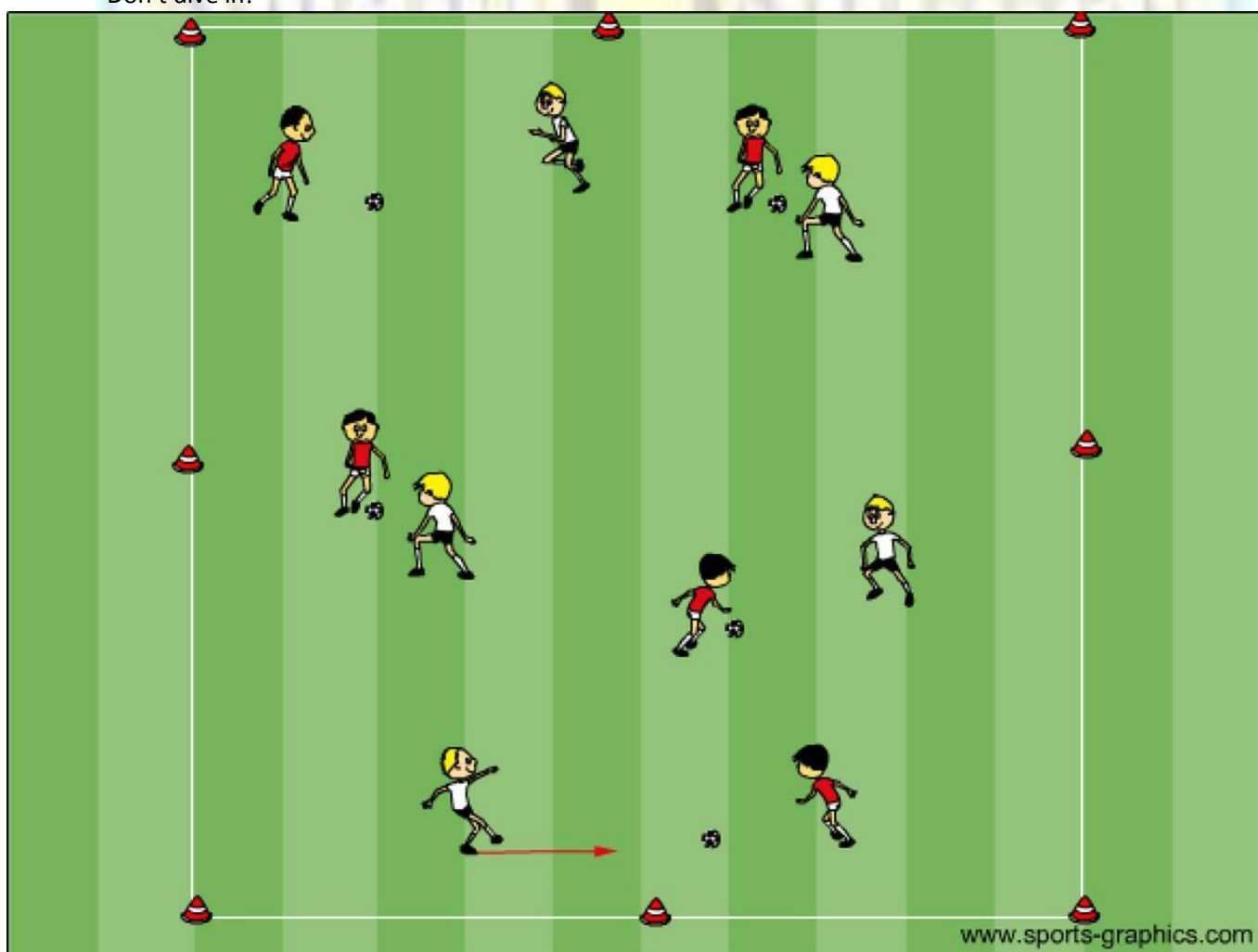
In a “Technical box”, players each get a partner and one ball between them.

Play-

Taking turns, Player one passes to his/her partner and approaches in a good defensive stance. The receiving partner then takes a few dribbles toward the defender. Then, players reverse roles and repeat.

Coaching points-

- “Approach fast, arrive slow” (short choppy steps will help you slow down)
- Approach “sideways on” (we say, “surfer dude”)
- Knees bent, arms out for balance
- Watch the ball, NOT the attacker’s legs/feet
- Stay balanced, be prepared to retreat!
- “Don’t dive in!”



“Small Sided Activity” 1v1 in Grids

Set up-

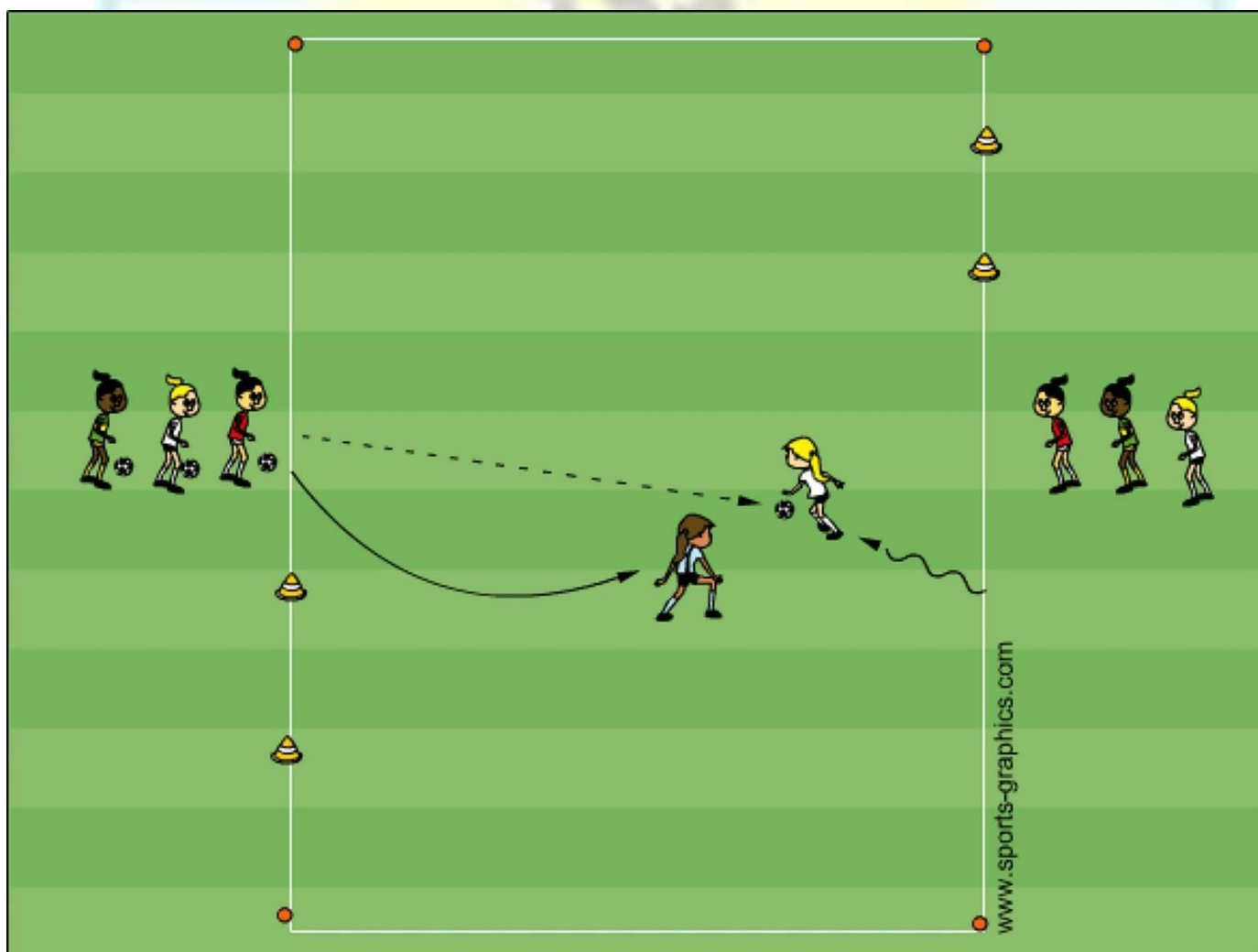
Divide players in half and place them on opposite sides of a 15ydx15yd grid with goals on each side (see diagram). All balls on one side of grid. Note: to keep numbers low and to get lots of reps, use multiple grids).

Play-

First player in line with a ball passes to first player in opposite line and then quickly approaches to play defense. Players play 1v1 to the two cone goals until someone scores or the ball leaves the grid. Players trade lines and play continues with the next players, etc.

Coaching points-

Above coaching points plus “bend your run to block the path to goal”.



“Expanded Small Sided Activity” Match Up and Defend

Set up-

Divide players into two teams (use vests) on a 14yd x 25yd field with end zones. Players “match up” with an opponent (counterpart) and this is the only player he/she may steal the ball from (and vice versa).

Play-

Teams play 3v3 or 4v4 to end zones. A goal is scored when a player dribbles into the opponent’s end zone and stops the ball in the zone. When a goal is scored, the player leaves the ball for the other team to restart play. Players may only steal the ball from their “counterpart” player when they are in possession of the ball. Any player may intercept any pass, though. If a player gets beaten off the dribble and a teammate moves to help defend, play is stopped. A goal is awarded to the attacking team and the defensive team must all do 5 pushups (or other “penalty” that coach or players choose). The object of the game is to maintain defensive discipline and to not dive in.

Coachingpoints-

Attackers should dribble more than pass in this game to “test” the defense! Remind them of all of the above defensive principals (from 1v1 in Grids). “Do your job!” Keep the ball in front of you and you’ll force the attacker to pass. Teammates may help out when there is a pass! Don’t dive in and cost your team a goal! Remember, if you get beat off the dribble, no one can stop the attacker from scoring!

