

ITALIAN ACADEMY TRAINING SESSIONS

**A COMPLETE SOCCER COACHING PROGRAM
FROM THE ITALIAN SERIE 'A'**

U15-U19



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ITALIAN STYLE

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Italian Academy Training Sessions for U15 - U19

A Complete Soccer Coaching Program from the Italian Serie 'A'

Written By the
Soccer Italian Style Coaches



Mirko Mazzantini



Simone Bombardieri

Published By



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Soccer Italian Style Philosophy

Soccer Italian Style was born in 2005. Mirko Mazzantini (ACF Fiorentina) and Simone Bombardieri (Empoli FC) are both professional academy coaches of the Italian Serie 'A'. They have combined due to their great passion for youth development and they have embarked on a joint project that has taken them to various other parts of the world such as the United States, Canada, France and Norway.

The Soccer Italian style philosophy is made up of the principal features of the Italian style series and Mirko and Simone's vast experiences of professional training in Italy and football worldwide. The book outlines a training methodology that is simple and efficient which the authors have personally tested over time throughout their careers in Italy. ***They have been highly successful in producing top players who are both technically and tactically astute.***

The success of this program has been demonstrated by the numerous academy victories against the main teams in Italy and European football with far greater resources. Mirko's Under 15 team at Fiorentina won the Italian Academy League in 2010-11 beating teams such as AC Milan, Inter Milan and Juventus to the title.

Many players who have been trained using this exact program in Italy have gone on to professional careers and have been capped for the Italian national teams in various age groups, where before this was simply not the case.

This book contains 12 training sessions with each session focused on fundamental technical or tactical coaching that is analysed throughout the 6 practices. The 12 sessions have been developed to demonstrate the need of progressions in training, using the basic principle **“from simple to complex”**.

Inside the two volumes there are general team exercises that are useful for all coaches and players in every position, but there are also many specific exercises that are designated for individual roles or positions within a team (e.g. attackers, midfielders or defenders).

Mirko and Simone have a high expertise in technical training and they have developed activities that are open to numerous variations which means that the 12 sessions can be used over and over to make this program of training even more complete.

This passion has driven the pair to “write on paper” what they have learned and experienced up to today, with a great hope that this method will be greatly enjoyed by the readers and used throughout the world to create top quality professional players.

Soccer Italian Style

Mirko Mazzantini & Simone Bombardieri

Session Format

There are at least 6 practices in each of the 12 sessions with some having additional progressions.

All 12 sessions always start with:

Practice 1 - Warm-up always with the ball

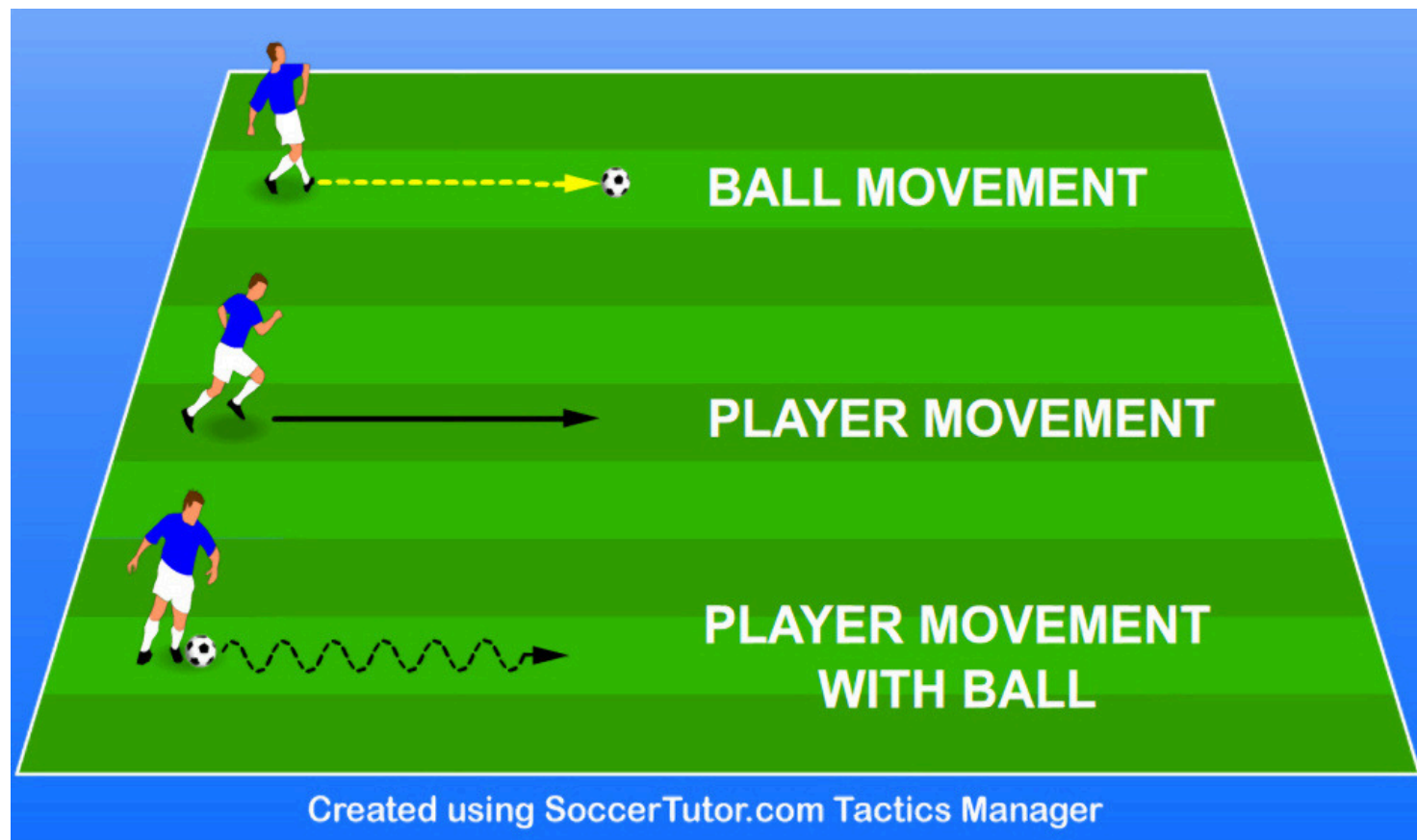
Practice 2 - Football specific conditioning

Practice 3 - 6 cover both technical and tactical practices.

Each practice includes clear diagrams with supporting training notes such as:

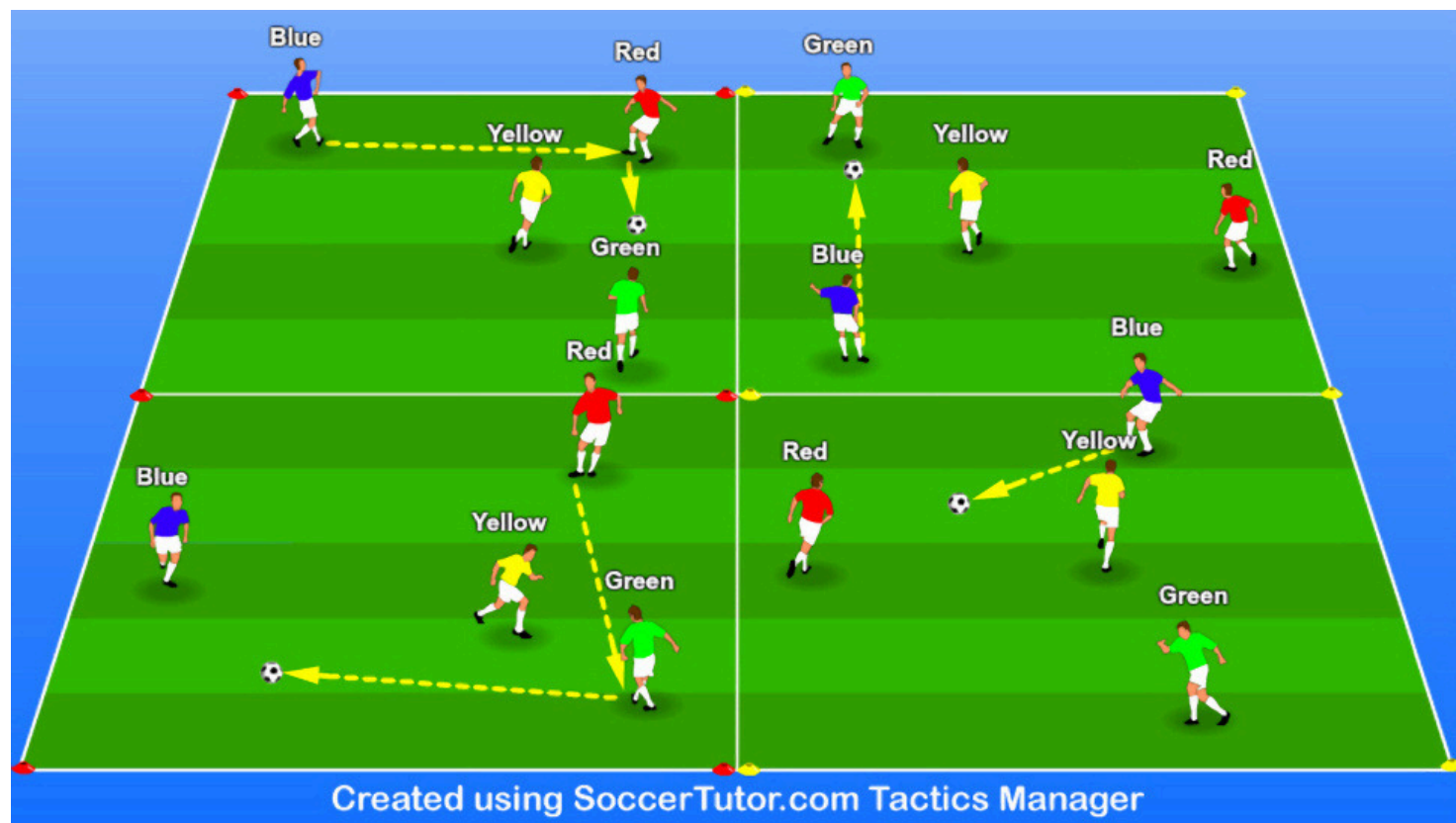
- Name of Practice
- Objective of Practice
- Coaching Points of Practice
- Variations or Progression of Practice (if applicable)
- Coaching Points of Practice.

Key



Psycho-Kinetics (Think and Act Quickly) Warm-Up

15 Minutes



Objective

Develop your players to think and act quickly using Psycho-Kinetics.

Description

The team is divided into groups of four players each within a 10 x 10 yard area. Every player from each group has a different colour.

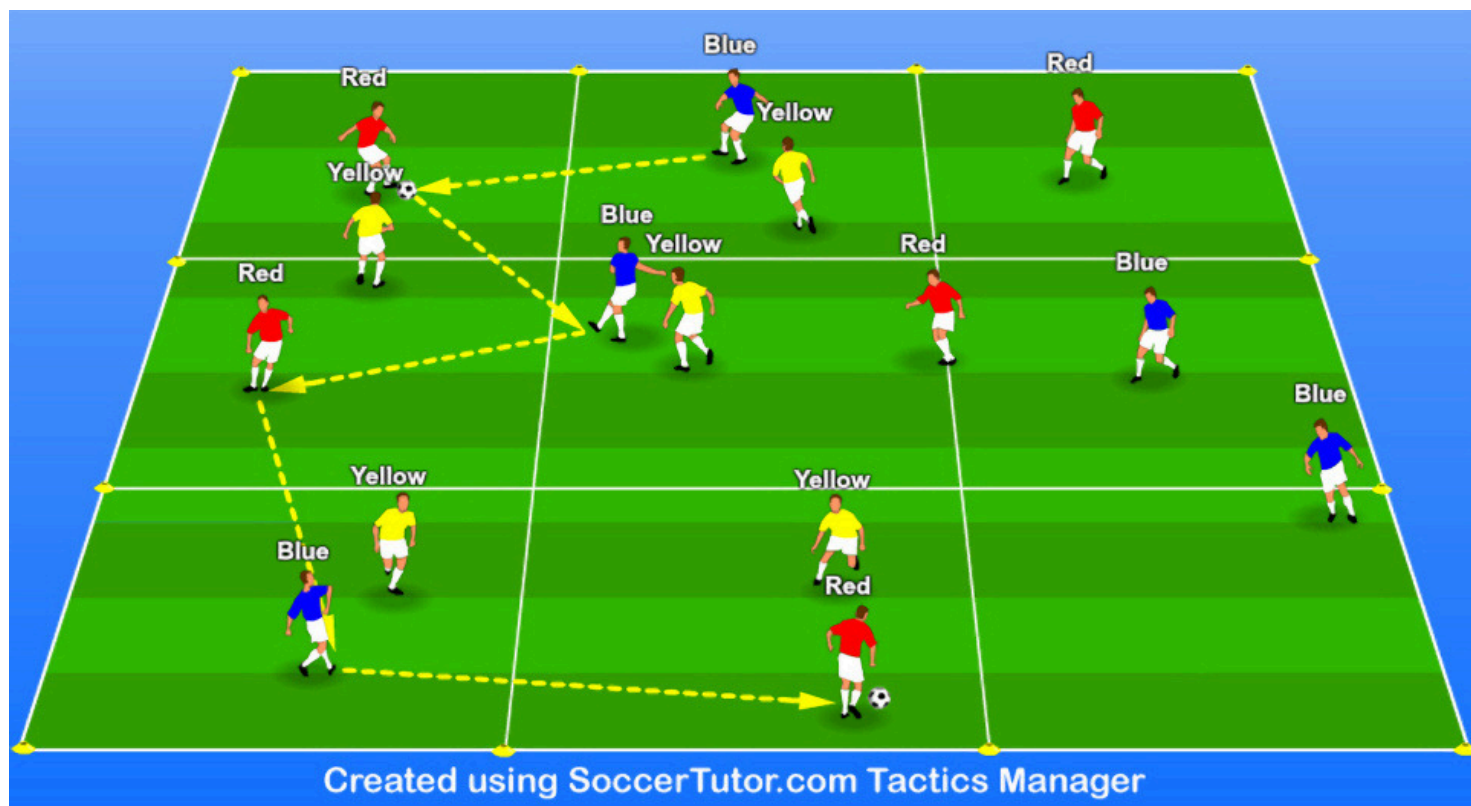
The game starts with players passing the ball by feet, calling the colour of the player who receives the ball. When the coach calls out a colour, example as shown in the diagram; “YELLOW” the players play 3 v 1 the colour called (YELLOW) becomes the player without the ball. When the colour touches the ball, the initial game restarts.

Coaching Points

1. Create space to find the right position on the field to receive the ball
2. Body shape and angle of support to receive and identify the next pass
3. Ask to play fast using only two touches where possible.
4. Reduce timing between the first touch (the receiving) and the second (passing)

Psycho-Kinetics Possession of the Ball - Dynamic Game

15 Minutes



Objective

To develop possession of the ball using Psycho-Kinetics in a dynamic game.

Description

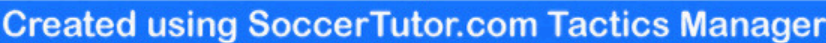
The team is divided into three colours inside a 30 x 30 yard area. This is a dynamic possession of the ball practice with a two colour team against a one colour team. If, for example, the Blue team loses possession, the game continues with the Red and Yellow trying to keep the ball with the blue trying to recover it.

As a coach you should try to enforce a conditional maximum of two touches only.

Coaching Points

1. Open body shape to see all of the playing options.
2. Play quickly (maximum of two touches) considering the overload of players.
3. If needed, create space to get away from the marker.

Game Situations - Individual Tactics, Counter-attacking and Finishing



To develop individual tactics in game situations, such as anticipation, quick counterattacking, attacking and finishing.

Team is divided into two groups.

The defenders line up in a defensive line of four players behind 4 mannequins.

Four different colour midfielders (red, yellow, green and white) are positioned on the halfway line.

The coach will start the exercise by passing the ball along the ground towards one of the four mannequins. As in a game situation, the defender will try to “anticipate” the pass, intercepting it and pass to the right colour simulating a counterattack.
The colour will be called by the coach.

1. The coach will try different anticipations with the ball on the ground and the ball in the air.

Game Situations - Individual Tactics, Counter-attacking and Finishing

2. In this second variation (*see diagram below*):

After the coach passes, he will give a special signal, for a 4 v 4 situation (four coloured midfielders vs. four defenders).



GROUP B (Forwards, Wingers and 2 Midfielders):

The midfielder passes the ball out wide and the winger has to anticipate the pace of the ball, getting in front of the mannequin before advancing to deliver a floated ball inside the box where there will be both forwards and one central midfielder.

The other central midfielder will stay out of the box, ready to shoot on goal.

Coaching Points

GROUP A

1. Players should assess the ball speed to choose to do a back marking or anticipation.
2. Use the foot closer to the opponent to accurately anticipate their movement and intercept the ball.
3. Use the arm closer to the opponent to “enter” in front of him
4. The pass, before counterattacking, must be fast and then all the defensive line must squeeze up.

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ITALIAN ACADEMY TRAINING SESSIONS

U15-U19

Soccer Italian Style coaches **Mirko Mazzantini (AFC Fiorentina)** and **Simone Bombardieri (Empoli FC)** are both professional coaches and in this book provide a full training program from their top Italian Serie 'A' academies.

This book contains 12 complete training sessions detailing over 80 practices and progressions as used in the academies of the Italian Serie 'A'. Each session focuses on technical or tactical elements of training and are structured "from simple practices to more complex game situations". The sessions outline a complete program which provides a high level of training.

The 12 sessions (over 80 practices) cover the following attributes:

Technical training; warm-ups with a ball, ball control, attacking and defending from 1v1 – tactical game situations, passing and receiving, football specific conditioning with and without the ball and more.

Tactical training; small sided games, phase of plays, functions, pattern play unopposed and opposed, psycho-kinetics training to improve player awareness and quick play, possession play, counter-attacking, transition play, crossing and finishing, build-up play from the back and more.

Most of the practices are cleverly structured for "global training" which means working on more than one attribute at the same time. This is valid for all players, with drills and exercises for specific roles (Attackers, midfielders and defenders).

There are also numerous variations for many of the practices, meaning that they can be repeated again and again providing great practices for any coach to make hours and hours of top academy level training sessions.

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UK: 0208 1234 007 | US: 305-767-4443

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