CROSSING AND FINISHING PATTERNS

Build-up -> service from wide areas -> movement in the box -> finish with purpose

SESSION OVERVIEW

SESSION AIM

Develop crossing and finishing through sharp build-up play, quality service from wide areas and aggressive movement in the box.

THEME	PRACTICE 1	PRACTICE 2	END GOAL
Crossing & Finishing	**Patterned Crossing**	**Continuous Service**	**Final Product**

ACTIVITY 1 | PATTERNED CROSSING & FINISHING

ORGANISATION

Use a half pitch. Position players at the reference cones for the build-up pattern, with two or three players in the wide crossing positions. The remainder of the squad waits around the centre circle with a supply of balls. A goalkeeper is in goal.

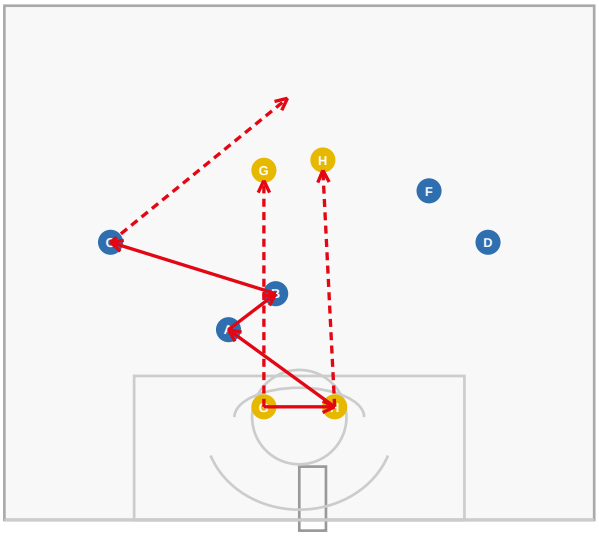
HOW IT WORKS

Two players start centrally. The ball is worked through a short combination into the wide channel for the crosser, who delivers into the box for the two central runners. Alternate the pattern to both sides. The two main crossing pictures are: 1) a hard, low cross into the near-post area, and 2) a bigger cross beyond the far post. In the second picture, the opposite wide player can attack the back-post space and return the ball across goal. A further progression is to eliminate the extra lay-off and serve earlier from a deeper position.

COACHING POINTS

- Attack the near-post area with two aggressive runs - one directly to the front post and one across the goalkeeper.
- Deliver crosses with purpose: hard and low, or beyond the back post.
- Keep the build-up passing sharp and the movement explosive.
- Run the practice at a realistic, game-like tempo.
- If serving early, recognise the moment quickly and deliver

DIAGRAM



Build centrally, release the wide player and attack the box with aggressive near-post runs.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Add the opposite-side wide player to attack the back-post space and knock the ball back across goal.
2. Miss out the extra lay-off and deliver an early cross from a deeper position.

CROSSING AND FINISHING PATTERNS

Build-up -> service from wide areas -> movement in the box -> finish with purpose

ACTIVITY 2 | CONTINUOUS CROSSING FROM BOTH ENDS

ORGANISATION

Split players into four groups at the sides of the goals with a supply of balls. Position two servers on each side of the playing area and one central link player in the middle. A goalkeeper works in each goal.

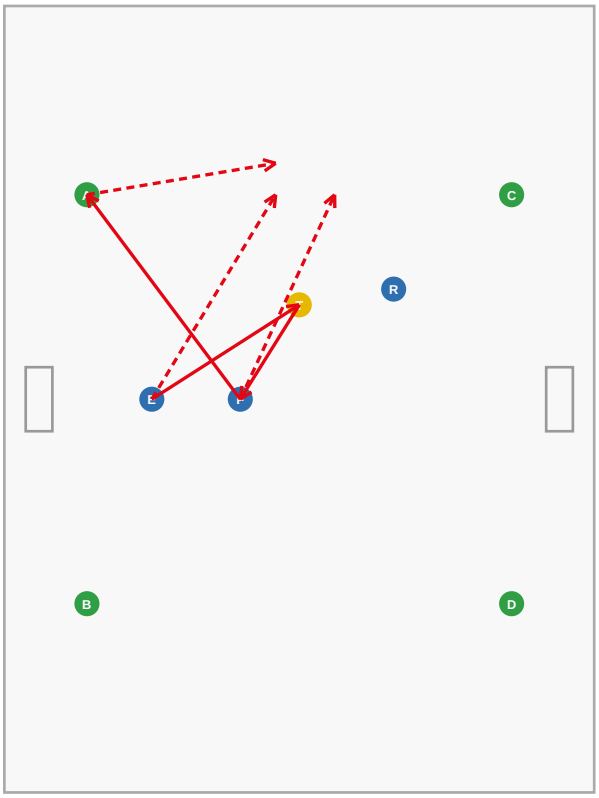
HOW IT WORKS

The first player serves an aerial ball into the central link player, who lays the ball back for the oncoming runner. That runner plays wide to the server and then joins the box with the original server and the far-side wide player to attack the cross. The next attack starts immediately from the opposite end, creating continuous work in both directions. The main emphasis is on quality build-up, varied service and finishing movement. In the progression, once the ball is played wide, the second wide player overlaps and becomes the crosser.

COACHING POINTS

- Play the build-up with quality, timing and clean movement.
- Vary the delivery - hard to the near-post zone or bigger beyond the far post.
- Keep attackers active in the box and adjust their runs if the cross is delayed.
- Aim to miss out the goalkeeper with every service.
- Demand realistic finishing movement and decision making.

DIAGRAM



Continuous two-way crossing practice using a central lay-off, wide service and active box movement.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Add an overlap from the second wide player before the final cross.
2. If the crosser delays, the near-post runner should spin away and arrive in the middle or back-post area.