

Rondo - Playing Through The Pivot: Part 3

Written by The Coaching Manual

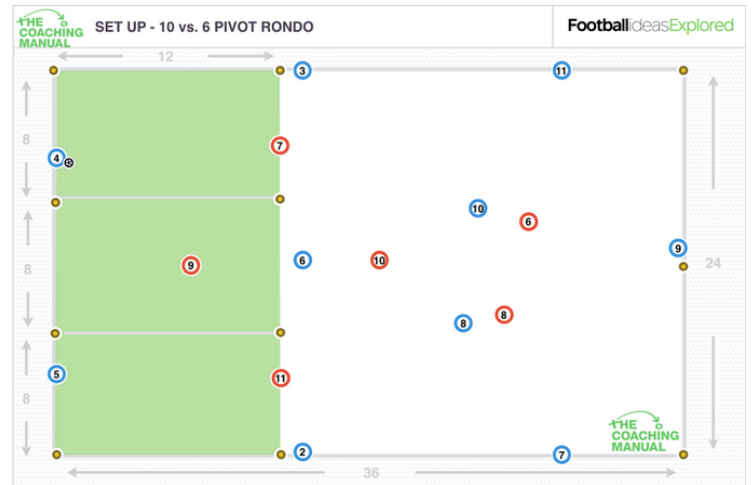
10vs.6 Pivot Rondo

Set Up

Area 36x24 with the defensive third (Green zone) of the area divided into 3 x areas 12x8 to provide Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) and the Pivot (Blue 6) with reference points for when, where and how they can take up positions to maintain possession and play forwards.

10 x Attackers (Blue) against 6 x Defenders (Red) and only 3 Red defenders may enter the Green zone to defend.

Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) can move anywhere in the Green zone, Centre Midfielders (Blue 8 and 10) can move anywhere in the attacking two-thirds (White zone) and Pivot (Blue 6) can move anywhere in the area. Full Backs (Blue 2 and 3), Wide Forwards (Blue 7 and 11) and Centre Forward (Blue 9) can move along the entire length of their designated lines.



Task

Blue Team (Attackers): Maintain positions and possession of the ball with the emphasis on advancing forward with the Pivot (Blue 6) recognising when to drop into the back line to receive, when to hold positions to receive a penetrating pass and when to combine and play forwards.

Red Team (Defenders): If the ball is won, maintain possession as the Blues press and attempt to dribble or pass the ball to a Red player over the opposition's defensive end line.

Key Coaching Points

Pivot play - understanding when and where to receive the ball (back line/penetrating pass/2nd phase)

Co-ordinated movements to take up positions to receive the ball

Quality, weight and decision of the pass (play in front, play around or penetrate)

Detail

Body angle to receive the pass and play forwards

Receiving areas of foot or body

Quick combinations and limiting touches to think quickly

Angles, distances and areas of structure to penetrate effectively and patiently

Understanding slow and quick play through the areas

Timing of passes - "La Pausa"

Use the 3 passing lines (in front of Defenders, around the Defenders and through the Defenders) to create opportunities to penetrate the opposition and advance forwards utilising the Pivot

Passing options around, behind and ahead of the ball

Communication

Focus - Beating the high press

As 3 x Defenders (Reds) are allowed to enter the Green zone and press, the blue team need to devise strategies and take up positions to be able to play through or around the aggressive defending.

In a game situation the ball may be played back to the Goalkeeper to relieve pressure and change the angle of attack, however in the above scenario there is no Goalkeeper present and the players have to experience being pressed aggressively.

As the Pivot (Blue 6) has dropped into the central position of the back line to receive, the Full Backs should also read the opposition pressing cue and drop to offer a deeper passing option. In a game they would also offer further defensive security if negative transition occurred.

It is also important that the Centre Midfielders (Blue 8 and 10) move to provide passing angles to release the pressure beyond the first opposition defensive line.

Focus - Pivot receives between the lines

If the opposition press is disjointed, the Pivot (Blue 6) may be able to hold their position and move to receive a penetrating pass between the lines.

Alternatively, the movement of the Pivot may drag across the opposition players and create space for the Full Back (Blue 2) on the opposite side to receive and exploit.

Focus - Quick combinations and movement ahead of the Pivot

In the 6vs.3 and 8vs.5 Pivot Rondos we have focused on the Pivot's movement into the back line to receive and play forwards. However, for the strategy to be effective in a game, co-ordinated movements and combinations also need to occur ahead of the Pivot to progress up the pitch and ultimately create goalscoring opportunities. Therefore, the coach must also work with players ahead of the Pivot.

In the created example above, the Pivot (Blue 6) has dropped into the backline to combine with the Centre Back (Blue 5), as the CB plays a penetrating pass into the movement of Centre Midfielder Blue 8.

The Left Back (Blue 3) has read the cue of the Pivot dropping and advances to receive a pass from Blue 8. The Left Back plays down the line to Blue 11 as the Attacking Central Midfielder (Blue 10) makes a run between the opposition Midfielders (Red 6 and 8) to receive and pass to Blue 9.

Progression - 10 vs. 10 Pivot Rondo Game Situation

Having worked through the concepts of playing through the Pivot, players can now progress to a Rondo Game situation in order to challenge their understanding, decision making and application.

The key coaching points and detail remain the same as the 10vs.6 Rondo and a "game situation" is introduced to the players.

Set Up

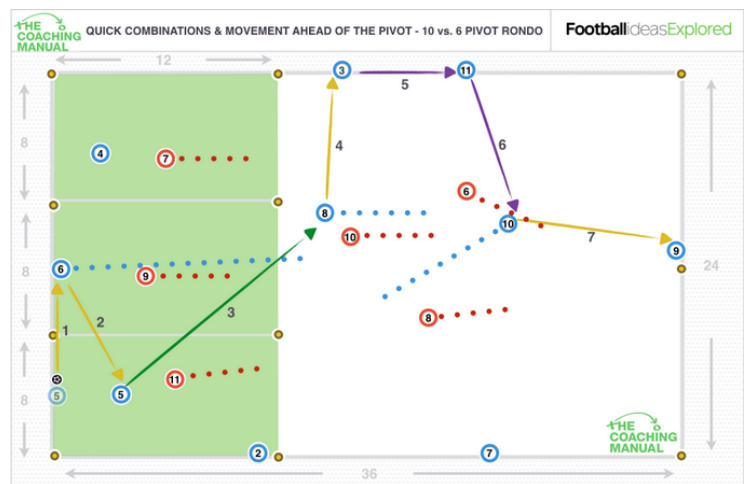
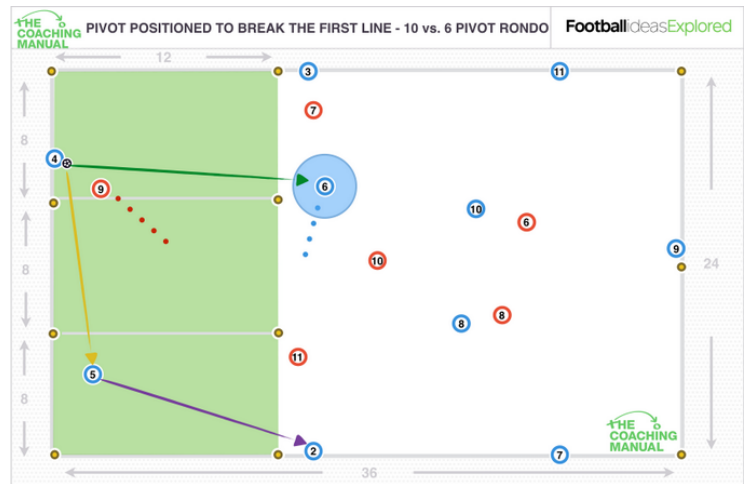
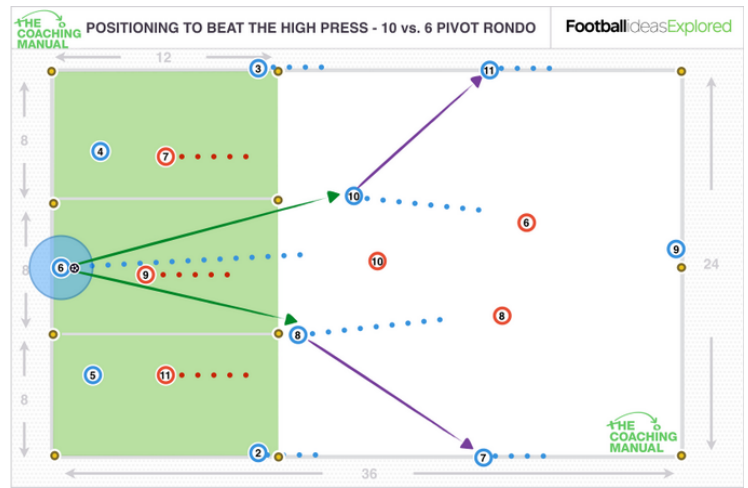
Area 40x30 with the defensive quarter (Green zone) of the area divided into 3 x areas 10x10 to provide Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) and the Pivot (Blue 6) with reference points for when, where and how they can take up positions to maintain possession and play forwards.

10 x Attackers (Blue) against 10 x Defenders (Red) and only 2 Red defenders may enter the Green zone to defend.

Centre Backs (Blue 4 and 5) can move anywhere in the Green zone, Centre Midfielders (Blue 8 and 10) can move anywhere in the attacking three-quarters (White zone) and Pivot (Blue 6) can move anywhere in the area. Full Backs (Blue 2 and 3) can move along the entire length of their designated lines.

The Situation

The Red team are losing 2-1 with 15 mins to play and are looking to regain possession of the ball to dribble/pass over the blue teams end line to score. The Blue team need to find ways of breaking the opposition press down involving the movements practised in the Pivot Rondo.



Task

Blue Team (Attackers): Maintain positions and possession of the ball with the emphasis on advancing forward with the Pivot (Blue 6) recognising when to drop into the back line to receive, when to hold positions to receive a penetrating pass and when to combine and play forwards.

Red Team (Defenders): If the ball is won, maintain possession as the Blues press and attempt to dribble or pass the ball to a Red player over the opposition's defensive end line.

Alternative Game Situation - 11vs.10 Pivot Rondo Game

The 10vs.10 Pivot Rondo Game can be progressed further to include a Goalkeeper for the Blue team. The focus would then shift to the Pivot occupying positions to receive between the lines as the Goalkeeper can become the free player in the back line.

This also allows the GK to practise playing out from the back when under pressure from 2 Red Defenders and creates new situations for the players to solve.

The final progression would then be in to an 11vs.11 game with the Blue team looking for opportunities to play through the Pivot.

To Conclude...

Teams that set up with a Pivot Defensive Midfielder understand that this role is vital to secure and maintain possession, penetrate opposition lines and launch attacks from deep.

The Rondos we have detailed allow the Pivot to practise when, where and how to take up positions to create options to receive the ball and advance forwards, along with highlighting the roles and positions of the units and the team when using the Pivot.

