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CHAPTER 8

Drills and Skills

*"Make a good decision. Should I shoot, penetrate or pass?
– I don't know. That's why you teach situations."
(Pat Riley – NBA Basketball)*

The drills in this section have been designed so that each skill can be built upon, depending on the participants' levels and capabilities.

Many of the drills can be used again in several of the other developmental stages. Remember if using the same drill, do not be afraid to add a variable into it (e.g. extra defender, more repetition, reduction or extension of the playing area etc), as you move through the continuum, so that you keep challenging them.

In this section, 55 drills with variations, have been created to cater for the Modelling stage. As a coach, decide on the following: Could the drill be?

- Used as a **warm-up activity** in small groups (2-6 players). This is extremely beneficial before training officially starts, especially when you have players just standing around and you want them to practise their technique/skill, as well as get plenty of touch.
- Training drills may be set-up in **rotational activities**, so that each player experiences a different focus, but gets to practise everything.
- **Whole group:** often involves whole ground skills, focusing on the playing style/game plan.
- **Decision making:** add a variable to the drill, so that the player has to make an instinctive decision, like in a game. (The simple adding of a defender(s)/bib(s) is extremely useful because players have to make a quick and hopefully, correct decision.
- **Game Sense:** The use of modified games is a fantastic training tool and assimilates what happens in a game. How do you want your player to react in this situation? Also, by having two teams, the players are gaining much from it without, in most cases, realising it.
(Could be done as a whole group or in small rotational activities).

Under each drill, recommendations about which are the most suitable times during your training program to implement it have been made. Again, these are only suggestions and the final decision lies solely with the coach.

Note: As Australian Football has been around for over 150 years, there is a wealth of knowledge and experience out there that coaches should be tapping into, particularly with regard to training drills. Coaches should always be looking out for the latest up-to date drills that are meaningful and purposeful. A changing focus of training practice, has been adopting basic drills (done for the past 150 years) and adapting them to specialise your training program, to suit the learning objective and reinforce the style of play you wish to create.

Many of the drills that coaches implement into a training program, have been passed down to them in a variety of ways. These may include:

- Through their involvement as a player
- Word of mouth from other coaches/football personnel
- Coaching texts that include training drills
- Internet/websites
- Observational learning
- Coaching courses
- Individually designed and created

The drills represented in this module are no exception, and have been gathered and collated over time using a variety of the points mentioned above.