



Games Theory: What's it all about?

Presenter: Jamie Parr

Ba Hons Physical Education, Sport and Youth Development
St Mary's University, London



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London



Overview



Games Centred
Approach – What & Why

The role of the
coach/teacher

Example of a
GCA session

Feedforward
Research/Q's



What is the Games Centered Approach?

Umbrella Term
(Harvey and Jarret, 2014)

Student-Centred
(Cushion, 2013)

Autonomy, Enjoyment, Perceived
Competence
(Gil-Arias et al, 2020)

Focuses on Development of;

1. Game Appreciation
2. Tactical Awareness
3. Decision-Making
4. Skill Execution
(Light & Fawns, 2003)
5. Empowering Learner (Butler, 2005)
6. Teacher/Coach partners in learning
(Harvey et al, 2010)

STUDENT-CENTERED



LEARNING





Why a Games Centred Approach?

- Skill - Drill approach has failed (Light et al, 2013)
- Students are highly disengaged (Casey et al, 2016)





Games Centred Approach – Teacher/Coach

- Coaches philosophies vary (Green, 2000)
- Questioning (Light and Fawns, 2003; Gil-Arias et al 2020)
- Constructivism (Ertner and Newby, 2013)

Example of a GCA Session

Empowering Learners

Game Appreciation

Game: Speed Ball (Football)

Game Focus: Creating Space (Attack focus)

Game Category: Invasion

Key Stage/Age Group: 3/12-13

No. of participants: 10

NCPE Links: 'use a range of tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in direct competition through team and individual games'

'analyse their performances compared to previous ones'

Adaptation Points (What will they do if they are struggling with the 1st task?)

- 1) Attack, how can we give you more time on the ball? **Channels/Safe Zones - attack can use these and can't be tackled in them** - what does this give them? (time and space on the ball) How long should we allow players to be in this area for? **(3-5 seconds)**
- 2) If the attack are under extreme pressure from defence - how can we give the attack more time on the ball? **Restrict pressure on attack by stopping the defence from tackling → interceptions only**

Progression Points (What will they do once they have completed the 1st task?)

- 1) How can we make this more difficult for the attack, when looking to score? **(add in goalkeeper, can only shoot once all players have touched the ball)**
- 2) Channels - Where is space usually? **(out wide)** How can reward the attack for creating, identifying and using space? **(extra point if they score out wide)**
- 3) In order to have definite space in the game, what do the attack need? **(An overload, at least one extra player)** - add in a magic player, who is always with the team in possession of the ball
- 4) How could we make this more challenging for the attack?
 - **5v4, add in another defender, fewer spaces and more pressure**
 - **Smaller pitch, reduce time and space on the ball, increase pressure**
 - **Even teams, 6v6**



Decision Making

Skill Execution

Teaching/Coaching Points (Step by step technique points and terminology)

Dribbling - head up, ball close to your body/feet - allows greater control/easier to shield, quick small steps, use the inside/outside of your foot, use both feet, be aware of your surroundings and oncoming defenders

Passing - 3p's → plant, point, pass' - the basics

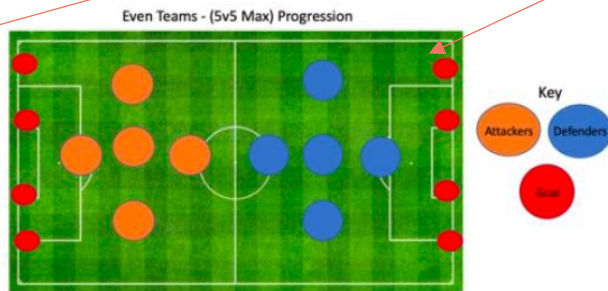
Short Pass - aim to keep the ball on the floor, aimed usually at your nearest teammate

Long Pass - aim to keep the ball on the floor, might be used when trying to switch the ball across from one side of the pitch to another

Through Pass - aim to get the ball off the ground, lean back before connecting with the ball, used to move the ball forward into space behind the oppositions defence

Space - encourage students to have the heads on a swivel - ready to turn and aware of space at all times, balls of your feet running, communication of where the space is, play the ball into space, continuous off the ball running, if in doubt cut back there is always space behind you

Tactical Awareness



Partners in Learning

Plenary - questioning based upon learning objectives

How do you create space/Why would you want to create space?

How - **first touch is crucial to keeping the ball alive and moving into space to make a decision, draw in defenders which will create space for other attackers, if in doubt turn back there will always be space behind you**

Why - **by having space when you receive a pass you immediately have space and time to make your next decision, avoid being under immediate pressure**

How did speed play become more challenging for the attack? **More defenders added/even teams gave students on the ball less time/space on the ball so emphasis on picking the right pass at the right time into the right space became more important**

Did the pressure that the attack were under change? **Yes, the more defenders on the pitch the harder it became to find/target space on the pitch**

What do you do when you have identified pockets of space within the pitch? **Attackers should be moving into it, trying to escape**



Feedforward - Questions & Further Research

- Impact of GCA approach in Primary Schools
- Comparison of game-based pedagogies
- How are trainee teachers being taught to teach?

References

- Butler, J. I. (2005). TGfU pet-agogy: Old dogs, new tricks and puppy school. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 10(3), 225-240.
- Casey, A., Hastie, P., & Jump, S. (2016). Examining student-designed games through Suits' theory of games. *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(8), 1230-1248.
- Cushion, C. J. (2013). Applying game centered approaches in coaching: A critical analysis of the 'dilemmas of practice' impacting change. *Sports coaching review*, 2(1), 61-76.
- Gil-Arias, A., Claver, F., Práxedes, A., Villar, F. D., & Harvey, S. (2020). Autonomy support, motivational climate, enjoyment and perceived competence in physical education: Impact of a hybrid teaching games for understanding/sport education unit. *European Physical Education Review*, 26(1), 36-53.
- Green, K. (2000). Exploring the everyday 'philosophies' of physical education teachers from a sociological perspective. *Sport, Education and Society*, 5(2), 109-129.
- Harvey, S., & Jarrett, K. (2014). A review of the game-centred approaches to teaching and coaching literature since 2006. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 19(3), 278-300.
- Harvey, S., Cushion, C. J., & Massa-Gonzalez, A. N. (2010). Learning a new method: Teaching Games for Understanding in the coaches' eyes. *Physical education and sport pedagogy*, 15(4), 361-382.
- Holt, J. E., Ward, P., & Wallhead, T. L. (2006). The transfer of learning from play practices to game play in young adult soccer players. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 11(2), 101-118.
- Kinnerk, P., Harvey, S., MacDonncha, C., & Lyons, M. (2018). A review of the game-based approaches to coaching literature in competitive team sport settings. *Quest*, 70(4), 401-418.
- Light, R., & Fawns, R. (2003). Knowing the game: Integrating speech and action in games teaching through TGfU. *Quest*, 55(2), 161-176.
- Light, R., Quay, J., Harvey, S., & Mooney, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Contemporary developments in games teaching*. ProQuest Ebook Central <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.stmarys.idm.oclc.org>