RESISTANCE CONDITIONING PRACTICES



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What are Resistance Conditioning Practices?

Resistance-based conditioning is a targeted physical training strategy designed to overload key football-specific muscle groups through controlled, high-intensity movements. It replicates the stress players experience in match play, particularly short bursts of explosive activity such as accelerations, decelerations, and directional changes. **These practices are integrated into technical and tactical content, ensuring players develop strength, explosiveness, and recovery** efficiency in game-relevant contexts rather than being isolated from football actions.

In this book, we focus primarily on the **Professional Microcycle** *(see pages 17-18)*. Resistance conditioning practices are used on **MD +3/-4** (3 days after the previous match and 4 days before the next one). It is the first major training session after a match and this type of conditioning plays a **crucial role in restoring physical function and stimulating performance adaptations**. With post-match fatigue typically peaking within 48 hours (Owen et al., 2015), careful planning of training demands on this day is essential.

Key Point: ***The combination of mechanical, neuromuscular*, and cardiovascular stress is central to improving robustness and recovery capacity**.

Resistance Conditioning Practices are Structured to Target:

- Repeated stop-start efforts with frequent **changes of direction** (**CODs**).
- High volumes of **accelerations and decelerations** in tight playing spaces.
- **Controlled overload** through resistance movements.
- **Explosive strength** development, particularly in the lower body.
- **Aerobic loading**, as interval-based movement in resistance drills elevates the heart rate to >85–90% HRmax.

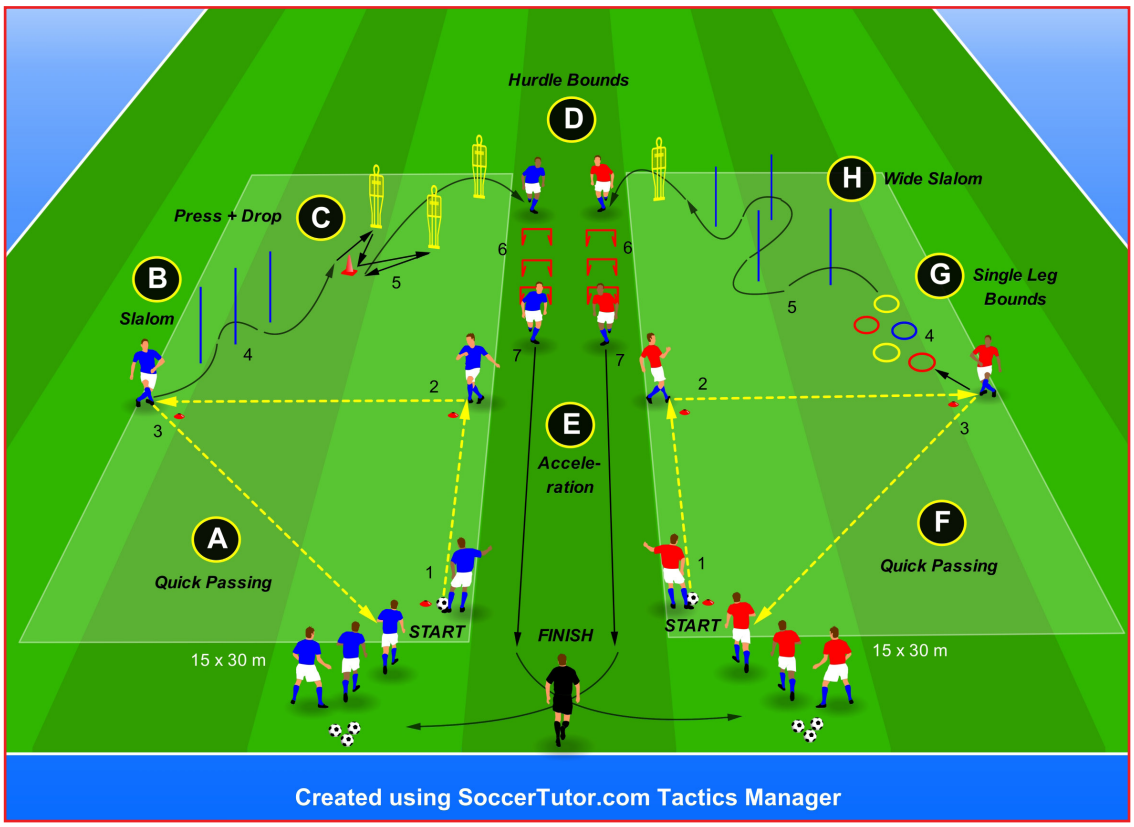
Common Practice Formats:

- Tight-area **duels** and directional changes, often in **1v1 or 2v2** formats.
- **Accelerations with bands**, partner resistance runs, or sled pushes.
- Short-sided possession games in reduced spaces to increase **changes of direction** (**CODs**) and **accelerations**/**decelerations** (**A:Ds**).
- **High-intensity** small-area circuits using cones, ladders, or hurdles for **reactive movement**.
- Interval-based, designed to **elevate heart rate** (**HR**) while avoiding excessive volume.

Session Design Principles:

- **Reduced playing areas** to naturally increase resistance through body mechanics.
- Manipulate player density and work-to-rest ratios to **control physical load**.
- Ensure **technical and tactical relevance** by connecting these practices to match scenarios.
- **Tailor practices** to each player's physical status, position, role, and fitness level.

8. Explosive Agility and Technical Conditioning Circuit



Practice Duration	Bout Duration	Reps	Sets	Area (m)	Numbers
15 min	3-4 min	2-3	1	35 x 30	16-20

Objective: Improve speed, power, agility, and game-specific conditioning.

- **Players rotate through stations A to H performing different actions**, as shown and labelled in the diagram.
- Each pass is followed by movement, reinforcing **execution under fatigue** and positional awareness.
- Slalom and mannequin pressure simulate defensive recovery, **building agility and reactive strength**.
- The 15 metre acceleration targets first-step quickness and **plyometric power**.
- **Training Focus:** Blend aerobic and anaerobic effort, mimicking game transitions with **total-body engagement**.

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