



## SELF-ORGANISATION



The skill to use information to effectively coordinate themselves.

*'Chaos is the root to creativity...'* (Wheatley 1993)

**Self-organisation** is founded on the idea that in the presence of new and changing information, ***structure will emerge to fit the situation***. To illustrate, the non-sporting example of the *traffic jam* can be used. To ensure the free flow of traffic on the road, each vehicle must maintain a suitable and relational distance from the vehicle in front, speeding up or slowing down according to both this and other factors, such as the speed limit.

Similar dynamics are at work in sport, where the presence of teammates and opponents mean that individuals continuously need to adapt - or **self-organise** - based on the changing environment around them. Sports teams at all levels and of all sizes therefore represent:

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*'interacting social units which benefit from natural processes of self-organisation among players who cooperate with each other to achieve common intended goals'* (Silva et al. 2014)

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Unfortunately, opportunities for children to self-organise are often constrained by coaches constantly telling them what to do, leading to young players lacking in adaptability and creativity. At C.A.R.D.S, we believe that the ability to **self-organise** is critical in the development of sporting expertise and prioritise it in our coaching.

### WHEN IS SELF-ORGANISATION BEST DEVELOPED?

Self-organisation is an inherent part of human behaviour from birth onwards. We are self-organising all the time and as such, we emphasise the development of this skill across **all** the C.A.R.D.S stages of learning.

### HOW DOES C.A.R.D.S LOOK TO DEVELOP SELF-ORGANISATION?

#### A Constraints-Led Approach

A **constraints-led approach** encourages natural self-organisation processes, rather than learners being explicitly told how to solve problems. Instead of prescribing one solution to a problem, a constraints-led approach expects variability, flexibility, and adaptability, developing creative decision-makers capable of responding - or **self-organising** - to game situations in a variety of ways. A constraints-led approach is explained in more detail [here](#).

#### Collaboration

Collaborative learning environments are crucial in promoting self-organisation, with **small-sided games** and **game scenarios** examples of this. For example, **scenarios** (i.e., manipulating practice game score-lines) encourage players and teams to self-organise around the score-line and the need to either keep their lead or come from behind. These are always popular with players, with the below one such example.

# 2-0 UP 0-2 DOWN



4v4 upwards

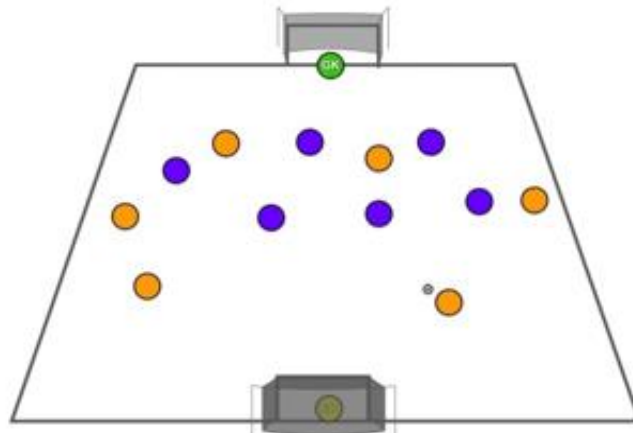
Can be added



Regular



2x 7 Minutes



**ORGANISATION** A regular 2 goal game, but one team starts with a 2 goal lead.

**OBJECTIVE** At 2-0 up, do they protect and counter or go for a third? If you are 0-2 down, what is your strategy to get back into the game?

Make sure you flip the condition so players experience both sides of this scenario.

**OBSERVATION** There will be lots of social interaction to discuss and implement a strategy to get back in the game or maintain your lead. Psychologically the players will need the ability to follow or adapt the strategy depending on the state of the game. This constraint means players are playing under pressure or in the context of a 'game' immediately.

**PROGRESSIONS** To add realism and excitement, use the players favourite teams, so for example Barcelona are 0-2 down against PSG. This works well with Champions League Semi-Finals and aggregate scores.

To assist you can add some "Bias Ref" (P57) to assist the team trying to pull back the deficit.



## Challenge

Providing **challenge** is also highly significant in fostering creative behaviour and self-organisation, with more challenging game situations – such as playing with a numerical disadvantage – promoting greater exploration of technical and tactical solutions.

Challenging learning environments will often not look as neat and tidy as many traditional drills. However, a deeper purpose is at work, creating more self-organising young players capable of adapting to different situations in a complex sport.