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Improving Short Passing Stopping Skills Through The Diamond Passing Training Method ; An Experimental Study on 10-11 Year Old Soccer Players

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of diamond passing drills on improving short passing and stopping skills in 10-11 year old soccer players. Short passing and stopping techniques are very important in maintaining smooth gameplay and effective team strategy. The study used an experimental method with a one-group pre-test and post-test design involving 20 students from SSB Roksi as samples. The treatment, which consisted of diamond passing training, was given for four weeks with a frequency of three times per week. Skill data were measured before and after the treatment using a standardized instrument. Data analysis included the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, homogeneity test, and paired sample t-test. The results of the analysis showed an increase in the average score for short passing stopping skills from 9.25 in the pre-test to 15.10 in the post-test. The t-test showed a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), which means that there was a significant improvement in ability after diamond passing training. The conclusion of the study states that the diamond passing training method is effective in improving short passing stopping skills in young athletes. This study recommends that coaches implement this method in basic soccer technique training programs for 10-11 year olds.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

Football is a popular sport worldwide, including in Indonesia, requiring excellent physical fitness and technical skills (Fuller, 2015). Among the basic techniques, short passing and stopping play a fundamental role in maintaining ball flow, building teamwork, and creating attacking opportunities (Guta & Ortanescu, 2024). However, mastering these techniques still faces significant challenges for players aged 10-11, such as inconsistent accuracy and ball control (Darma, 2021). Observations at SSB Roksi also revealed a high rate of passing errors, which can lead to loss of possession and decreased team performance (Coutinho et al., 2023). This situation underscores the importance of more specific, systematic, and evidence-based development of basic techniques to prevent skill stagnation (Clark, 2019).

The main problem currently faced is the low short pass stopping ability of soccer athletes aged 10-11. Current training tends to be general and lacks specificity to hone passing techniques in depth, resulting in slow and insignificant improvement in passing ability. Consequently, young athletes frequently make passing errors, both in terms of accuracy and ball control. Research by Trajkovic et al., (2017) showed that specific passing exercises, such as short pass training in pairs, significantly improved passing accuracy in young players. Conversely, general or less varied training did not produce significant improvements (Perdana et al., 2017). A lack of variety in training methods is also a major obstacle to developing passing ability (Mahfud et al., 2020). Many coaches still use conventional training methods without innovation, resulting in less than optimal training results (Blanchard & Thacker, 2023).

Considering these issues, it appears that the low quality of short pass stopping in athletes aged 10-11 is closely related to poorly targeted training methods. Overly general, minimally varied, and unfocused training hinders optimal technique development. Therefore, a more specific, varied, and innovative training approach is needed to optimally improve passing and ball control, consistent with the developmental stages of early childhood sports.

One training method currently receiving considerable attention is the passing diamond. Various studies have demonstrated its effectiveness in improving passing ability, particularly in adolescents and young adults (Wardani, 2022). Umur et al., (2023) found that diamond passing training with 1:1 intervals effectively improved passing ability in Senteluk FC U-23 players, while (D. Y. Kurniawan & Romadhoni, 2023) demonstrated improved passing control during extracurricular futsal activities. In general, diamond training has been shown to be effective in improving accuracy and ball control across various age groups. However, its success depends heavily on the duration, consistency, and suitability of the training to the player's technical needs, particularly in mastering basic techniques such as short passing.

Although many studies have examined the effect of diamond passing training on general passing ability, most of these studies have been conducted in adolescents or young adults and have focused more on passing in general. Research specifically examining the effect of diamond passing training on improving short pass stopping in athletes aged 10-11 years is still very limited (Pramudyatama & Mardhika, 2024). Furthermore, the research has not examined the effectiveness of diamond passing training in the context of developing basic technique at an early age. Thus, there is a research gap that needs to be filled to determine the extent of the influence of diamond passing training on this specific age group.

This research also addresses the limited scientific literature on basic technique training for young soccer players. Most research focuses on adolescent athletes, making this study crucial as a contribution to coaches and trainers in determining appropriate methods for basic technique training for young players to optimize skill development. Therefore, this research is highly relevant and crucial in providing a scientific basis for developing effective training methods for young soccer development. It also provides alternative solutions and training strategies for coaches, sports teachers, and SSB administrators to improve the basic short pass-stopping technique performance of young athletes as a foundation for sustainable professional soccer development.

This research offers novelty by focusing on the effect of diamond passing training on improving short pass-stopping technique in soccer athletes aged 10-11. The specific focus on this early age group and specific techniques provides a novel contribution to the development of more effective training methods tailored to the developmental needs of children in soccer. At 10-11 years of age, children are at a critical stage in the development of motor and psychological skills, which significantly influence mastery of basic sports techniques. Therefore, diamond passing exercises specifically designed for this age group take into account the cognitive, motor, and psychosocial characteristics of children so as to maximize their

learning abilities and technical adaptation, particularly in mastering short pass stopping, which is a fundamental skill in modern football.

METHODS

A pre-test and post-test were conducted without a control group (Syuhada et al., 2025). The sample consisted of 20 SSB Roksi students aged 10-11 who regularly participated in soccer training. The total sampling technique was used due to the small population (Suriani & Jailani, 2023). The instrument used was a short pass-stopping skill test with indicators of passing accuracy, first touch quality, and decision-making speed (Fenanlampir, A., & Faruq, 2015). The instrument's validity reached 0.90 and its reliability reached 0.63. The treatment consisted of diamond passing exercises for 4 weeks, 3 times per week, each session including a warm-up, diamond passing exercises with varying touches (one, two, three touches), and evaluation of passing results. The passing distance was maintained between 10 and 15 meters in accordance with technical training principles. Pre-test and post-test data were analyzed using the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, homogeneity test, and paired sample t-test with a significance level of 0.05 to determine the success of the training.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data processing and analysis are presented in tabular form for easier understanding. Statistical descriptions can be seen in **Table 1.**

Table 1. Statistical Descriptions

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest passing stopping	20	5	7	12	9.25	1.372
Postest passing stopping	20	5	13	18	15.10	1.553

Based on the results **Table 1** of descriptive analysis, it can be concluded that students' test passing stopping skills improved significantly after being given training. The average posttest score (15.10) was higher than the pretest score (9.25), with an increase of 5.85 points. This increase was also reflected in the minimum and maximum scores, which were both higher in the posttest. Thus, the training provided proved to be effective in improving students' passing stopping skills.

The results of the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed a significance value for the pretest of 0.122 and for the posttest of 0.137. Meanwhile, in the Shapiro-Wilk test, the significance value for the pretest was 0.344 and for the posttest was 0.113. All significance values are greater than 0.05, so it can be concluded that the pretest and posttest passing stopping data are normally distributed. Thus, the data meet the requirements for analysis using parametric statistical tests.

The results of the variance homogeneity test show that the significance values for all calculation bases (mean, median, median with adjusted df, and trimmed mean) are greater than 0.05, ranging from 0.356 to 0.402. This means that the data has homogeneous variance. Thus, it can be concluded that the diamond passing exercise data meets the assumption of homogeneity and is suitable for further analysis using parametric statistical tests.

The results of the Paired Sample T-test show a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between before and after treatment. Thus, the diamond passing drill has been

The results of this study indicate that the application of the diamond passing training method has a significant effect on improving short passing and stopping skills in soccer athletes aged 10-11 years at SSB Roksi. Based on the results of the statistical analysis, there was an average increase in scores of 5.85 points between the pretest and posttest results, with a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that diamond passing training not only has a positive impact statistically, but also practically improves the basic technical skills of players. In other words, the training carried out in a structured and directed manner for 4 weeks is truly able to bring about real changes in the basic technical abilities of early childhood children.

The effectiveness of the diamond passing method in this study aligns with the findings of several previous studies. Wardani, (2022) found that the diamond pattern was proven to improve passing ability in adolescents. Umur et al., (2023) also reported a significant increase in the passing ability of Senteluk FC U-23 players through the implementation of diamond training with structured 1:1 intervals. Meanwhile, (D. Y. Kurniawan & Romadhoni, 2023) showed that this training model is also effective when applied in a

futsal context to improve players' passing control. These results support the findings in this study that the diamond training pattern is not only suitable for adolescents or young adults but can also be adapted for younger ages, as long as the implementation takes into account the cognitive and motor characteristics of children.

In terms of training characteristics, the diamond passing method has advantages over conventional methods because it presents a systematic, dynamic form of training that mimics real-life game conditions (Nila, 2024). The diamond pattern requires players to move, rotate positions, control the ball, and pass accurately at a measured pace (Sawor, 2017). Each player is trained to think quickly, anticipate teammates' movements, and time their passes precisely (Slamet, 2023). This type of training situation approximates real-life match conditions, allowing for more natural and effective technique adaptation. According to Hrp et al., (2024), varied and repeated passing drills can improve motor coordination, muscle strength, and the ability to predict the movement of the ball and teammates. Diamond training addresses these aspects by presenting a variety of passing directions and positions within a single training cycle.

From the perspective of drill theory in sports technique learning, directed and repeated training strengthens motor movement patterns, making them automatic responses during competition (R. Kurniawan et al., 2024). Through diamond training, players are trained to control and execute short passes continuously in specific patterns, thereby strengthening their short passing and stopping techniques. This is especially important for young players, as they are in a phase of rapid motor and cognitive development between the ages of 10 and 11. (Bompa & Carrera, 2015) emphasized that this stage is a golden period in the formation of basic sports skills, so that training methods must be adapted to the child's developmental needs to obtain maximum results.

Beyond technical aspects, diamond passing training also impacts players' psychological and tactical aspects. Through this training pattern, players are trained to work together, maintain ideal distance, communicate, and understand teammates' movements. This experience indirectly fosters confidence when controlling the ball and passing in real-life game situations. With improved mastery of basic techniques, players will be calmer and quicker in making decisions on the field, which are important indicators in the modern game (Guta & Ortanescu, 2024).

The results of this study also show that skill improvement is not solely driven by training factors, but also by consistent program implementation and training design that aligns with the players' technical needs. The training program was implemented for four weeks, three times a week. This training duration and intensity were ideal for progressive technical adaptation. Clark, (2019) emphasizes the importance of measurable and evidence-based training design to ensure consistent skill improvement and prevent plateaus. With this approach, players not only experience short-term improvements but also establish a strong skill foundation for long-term development.

Compared to conventional training methods, which tend to be monotonous and lack variety, the passing diamond provides a more lively and contextual training experience. This method combines elements of basic techniques, simple tactics, and game dynamics in a balanced manner. This aligns with the principles of motor learning, which emphasize three main aspects: repetition, variation, and direct feedback (Krakauer et al., 2019). These three principles are fulfilled in diamond training because each player experiences different situations during each rotation, has multiple opportunities to control the ball, and receives direct feedback from the coach throughout the training process.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the passing diamond method is not simply a form of technical training, but rather a comprehensive approach that simultaneously combines technical, tactical, motor, and psychological aspects. This makes diamond training a relevant and effective training model for application in youth soccer development. Implementing this method can help coaches and soccer schools build a strong foundation of fundamental skills, enabling young players to develop optimally and be prepared for the demands of the modern game in the future.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of this study reinforce empirical evidence, theoretical basis, and previous findings that demonstrate the effectiveness of the diamond passing method as an ideal form of technical training for young players. This training pattern not only provides a systematic training structure, but also presents game situations that resemble real conditions on the field. Through repetition of targeted movements, basic skills such as short passing and stopping can develop significantly. These two skills are important foundations in modern soccer, where speed of decision making, passing accuracy, and ball control are key factors for success.

More than just individual technical train-

ing, the diamond passing method also instills basic tactical understanding and teamwork. Players are trained to open up space, maintain ideal distances, communicate, and coordinate effectively with each other. Thus, this training plays an important role in shaping collective playing characteristics from an early age.

Based on research findings, the diamond passing method is highly recommended for implementation in soccer schools, clubs, and academies as a core component of development programs. In addition to improving players' fundamental technical skills, this exercise also helps build consistent performance and readiness for actual matches. With these advantages, diamond passing deserves to be regarded as an effective, efficient, and practical training model for building a strong foundation of technical skills for the next generation of soccer players.

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