THE SPEED MECHANIC



12-WEEK CONTEXTUAL SPEED PROGRAM

Overview

Objective:

To enhance speed capacity (acceleration, max velocity, COD, RSA) and its application within Verheijen's Football Action Theory (communication–decision–execution).

Duration: 12 weeks (pre-season or focused development block).
Microcycle structure: 4 training days + 1 match day per week (modifiable).

Session types:

- Day 1 (MD-4) → Max acceleration + technical integration (Speed & Power)
- Day 2 (MD-3) → Reactive agility + decision-making (Perception–Action)
- Day 3 (MD-2) → High-intensity tactical conditioning (RSA & Decision Execution)
- Day 4 (MD-1) → Activation + perceptual rehearsal (Cognitive sharpness)
- Day 5 (MD) → Match
- Day 6–7 → Recovery

Phase Structure (12 Weeks)

Phase	Weeks	Focus	Goal
FOUNDATION	1-4	Strength & acceleration base, perceptual awareness	Build physical qualities & perception habits
INTEGRATION	5-8	Speed–decision coupling, reactive agility	Connect perception → decision → action under time stress
PERFORMANCE	9-12	Match transfer, repeated speed under tactical conditions	Execute football actions faster & under fatigue

Football Action Theory Integration

Stage	Focused Component	Training Elements
Communication	Perceptual scanning, anticipation, visual-motor speed	Reactive cues, scanning tasks, decision drills
Decisions-Making	Tactical choices under pressure	Variable small-sided games, constraints-based design
Decision Execution	Physical and technical action	Sprint, COD, RSA, and technical finishing at game speed

THE SPEED MECHANIC

PHASE 1: FOUNDATION (Weeks 1–4)

Goal: Build acceleration & strength base, improve perceptual scanning and body control. Weekly microcycle example:

Day	Focus	Example Session content
MD-4	Acceleration & strength	Warm-up (dynamic + visual scan cues) → 6×10m resisted sprints (sled @ 20–25% BW) → Gym: 4×4 squat/hip thrust + plyos (hurdle hops) → Small 3v3 transition game (fast first 3m)
MD-3	Perceptual agility	1v1 reaction games (partner mirror drill) → 4× COD (5-5-5m) → Small 5v5 with coloured targets (must play to called colour)
MD-2	RSA Technical	6× (20m sprint + 3v2 attack for 10s) with 40s rest → measure sprint drop-off + successful passes (dictates sets)
MD-1	Activation	4×10m sprints @ 90% + scanning video task + short ball reaction drill
Match		Normal match play; gather GPS data
Gym	2x/wk	Strength focus (squat, hinge, unilateral, trunk)

Progression guidelines (weeks 1–4):

- Gradually increase sprint distance (10 → 20m).
- Add light reactive component (simple cue → go).
- Introduce 1 perceptual task per session (e.g., coach call, visual signal).

PHASE 2: INTEGRATION (Weeks 5–8)

Goal: Blend physical speed and cognitive components — decisions at match tempo.

Weekly microcycle example

Day	Focus	Example Session content
MD-4	Max velocity & acceleration decision link	Flying sprints 6×30m with cognitive cue (player must decide which cone to sprint to) → Gym: strength-speed work (trap bar jump, split squat) → 4v4 transition game (time limit on ball)
MD-3	Reactive agility (decision)	2v2 reactive gate game (coach shows cue) → COD drills w/ light cognitive load (numbers, colours) → 6v6 game: players must react to tactical cue (switch, press, drop)
MD-2	RSA under tactical constraints	8×(25m sprint + immediate 3v2 decision drill) → 40s rest → track sprint consistency & decision accuracy
MD-1	Activation	Short reactive warm-up, scanning + small positional rondo
Match		Match data collection

Progression guidelines (weeks 5–8):

- Include more open decision drills (no predetermined response).
- Gradually increase high-speed exposures (30–35m).
- Introduce reactive agility testing (measure decision time & outcome).

PHASE 3: PERFORMANCE (Weeks 9–12)

Goal: Ensure football-action speed (communication → decision → execution) transfers to real match conditions. Weekly microcycle example:

Day	Focus	Example Session content
MD-4	Max velocity + match context	6×30m sprints with passing decision at finish → small tactical sprint drill (break line + finish) → Gym: maintenance (power, low volume)
MD-3	Reactive speed in tactical shapes	Tactical game 8v8 with constrained space (emphasise scanning + quick transitions) → video feedback mid-session
MD-2	RSA & fatigue decision	10×(20m sprint + immediate 4v4 transition) @ 1:4 work:rest → measure tactical accuracy under fatigue
MD-1	Activation	3× short reactive games (first touch + acceleration), visual-cognitive warm-up
Match		Match data collection
Post-Match	Recovery & analysis	GPS data + decision-execution review

Progression guidelines (weeks 9–12):

- Reduce isolated drills, increase representative game-based sprints.
- Maintain speed exposure (1–2 high-speed days/week).
- Evaluate improvements in sprint time, COD, and in-game tactical speed.

THE SPEED MECHANIC

Weekly Load Overview (General Guide)

Phase	Sprint Exposure	Gym Load	Gym-Based Volume	RSA Load
Foundation	250-350m	High	Moderate	Low
Integration	300-400m	Moderate	High	Moderate
Performance	200-300m	Low-Moderate	High	High

MONITORING & TESTING:

- Week 0 & 12: Baseline + Post testing
- 10m & 20m sprint
- COD (5–10–5)
- Reactive agility (light cue test)
- RSA (6×30m)
- In-game high-speed running (GPS)
- Decision-execution success rate (video analysis)
- Weekly:
- GPS metrics (HSR, accelerations, sprint count)
- RPE (session load)
- Decision success in representative drills (% correct choice / time-to-decision)

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Always link drills to a football problem.
- Decision first, execution second.
- Representative design — variability, time pressure, spatial constraints.
- Microdosing — 2–3 short speed exposures (10–20m) even on tactical days.
- Recovery — low-load MD-1, balanced gym load, respect game readiness.

THE SPEED MECHANIC

What to Expect?

OUTCOMES EXPECTED

By Week 12:

• ↑ Acceleration (10m) by ~3–5%
• ↑ Max velocity by 2–3%
• ↑ Reactive agility decision time ↓ by 10–15%
• ↑ Successful decision-execution rate in match-like drills
• Improved high-speed running and acceleration frequency in matches (GPS)

Thank you

We support players, coaches from grassroots to elite professionals get in touch today to see how we can support you.

THE SPEED MECHANIC

Contact:
Whats App - 07368391477
Email - chris@speedmechanic.co.uk