



Week 6 — Early-Season Identity

Tags: `build-up` `progression` `possession` `unit-work` `full-squad-practice` `conditioning`

Weekly Overview

FIELD	DETAIL
Week number	6 of 36
Season phase	2 — Early-Season Identity (opening week)
Core principle	Progression — through, around, or over
Secondary principle	Width & depth (revisited, now applied specifically to beating a press)
Previous match review focus	Apply the three routes below to the season's opening competitive fixture, or the final pre-season friendly if the league has not yet begun.
Weekly tactical problem	Phase 1 taught the team to build patiently against passive or semi-passive pressure. Phase 2 opens with the real version of that problem: opponents who press with genuine intent, for the first time this season. A team that only knows one route through a press — always central, or always long — is a team a well-organised opponent can simply take away. This week installs all three routes and teaches the team to read which one the picture offers.
Formation-neutral explanation	Through, around and over describe what a pass does to a defensive line, not which formation produced it. A pass through is one that travels between two defenders into the space behind their line; a pass around goes outside the width of their press entirely, usually down a flank; a pass over skips the press's height altogether, usually a longer or lofted ball. Any formation can produce any of the three — the question is always which one the picture in front of the team currently allows.
Example structural applications	In a 4-3-3 building against a front two: the two centre-backs typically have a numbers advantage in the first line, making a pass through more available than against a front three; the full-backs provide the around option, and a long switch or a ball over the top for the wide forwards provides over. In a 3-2 build-up structure (a back three with two holding midfielders dropping to form a five): the extra body in the first line makes around especially easy to find via the wing-backs, while through requires the double pivot to find the right moment between opposition lines. All three routes exist in both structures; which one is easiest on a given day depends on the opponent's press, not the team's own shape.

Match Review and Weekly Adjustment

Route A — Previous performance was strong. If the season's opening result was good, use this week's practices at their fuller, fully-live progressions rather than the simplest version — the team has earned the right to be tested by a genuine, aggressive press from the first practice.

Route B — Previous performance exposed a tactical weakness. If the opening fixture showed the team struggling against a real press specifically — forced long balls, turnovers in the build-up, or a team that only tried one route repeatedly — say so plainly at the start of Tuesday's session. This week's content is built to answer exactly that problem.

Route C — Attendance, facilities or player availability are disrupted. Protect the core idea — recognising which of the three routes the picture offers — even if numbers force smaller versions of every practice. A smaller build-up group against fewer pressers still teaches the same read.

Tuesday — Session 11

FIELD	DETAIL
Session number	11 of 72
Week	6
Season phase	2 — Early-Season Identity
Training day	Tuesday
Session theme	Build-up vs first line of pressure
Short summary	Introduces a genuine, live press for the first time this season and teaches the team to read and choose between three progression routes — through, around, or over — rather than defaulting to one.
Tags	`build-up` `progression` `conditioning` `decision-making`
Primary learning objective	Players correctly identify which of the three routes (through, around, over) the picture offers, and execute it.
Secondary learning objective	Width and depth (Week 2) are actively used to make all three routes available in the first place.
Match connection	Directly addresses the Match Review focus above and the week's named match-day connection: cleaner exits under opposition pressure.
Expected tactical outcome	The team produces all three progression types across a session, rather than relying on a single route.
Expected physical load	High-intensity actions begin rising in earnest this week — a genuine, live press for the first time means genuine, live pressing actions to train against.
Recommended intensity	7.5–8.5 / 10.
Equipment list	20 footballs · 24 flat markers · 16 cones (orange) · 2 sets of bibs (2 colours, 10 each) · 2 full-size or portable goals
Player numbers	Designed for 16 outfield + 2 goalkeepers; scales 10–22, see contingencies.
Goalkeeper requirements	Both goalkeepers train throughout; the building team's goalkeeper is a genuine fourth route in their own right — an out-ball that skips the press entirely when the picture calls for it.
Pitch dimensions	Largest area this week is 50 x 36 m (Practice 4).
Area layout	A zoned build-up area for Practice 2, widening through Practices 3 and 4.
Contingency — lower attendance (10–13)	Practice 2 reduces to 5+GK v 3; Practice 3 becomes 5v5; Practice 4 becomes 6v6.
Contingency — higher attendance (20+)	Practice 4 can extend to 9v9, giving the pressing team more realistic numbers to organise with.
Contingency — restricted space	Compress all grids proportionally; the three-route decision survives smaller spaces well.

TIMELINE (60 MINUTES)

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:00-0:10	10 min	Arrival & warm-up — <i>Press Rehearsal</i>	Light green
0:10-0:25	15 min	Technical practice — <i>Three Ways Out</i>	Club green
0:25-0:27	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:27-0:42	15 min	Skill game — <i>Press Breakers</i>	Dark green
0:42-0:44	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:44-0:59	15 min	Conditioned match — <i>Live Press</i>	Black
0:59-1:00	1 min	Reflection	—

PRACTICE 1 — PRESS REHEARSAL (ARRIVAL)

Duration: 10 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate

Tactical purpose: Raises heart rate while giving players an early physical and mental rehearsal of playing under real, live pressure for the first time this season.

Organisation: 20 x 16 m grid, one ball per player for four minutes, then pairs for six, with a rotating third player applying genuine, live pressure (not passive, as in earlier weeks). No goalkeeper requirement — both keepers join fully.

Walkthrough: Individual ball work, then paired passing under a real, live presser who rotates in every 90 seconds — the pair must keep the ball using any route (through each other, around the presser, or a longer ball) available.

Rules: The presser presses at genuine intensity from the start — no patience period, unlike Week 3's introduction.

Coaching points:

- *Technical:* first touch quality under real pressure for the first time this season.
- *Physical:* genuine reactive intensity.
- *Psychological:* composure against a live opponent rather than a cooperative one.

PRACTICE 2 — THREE WAYS OUT (TECHNICAL PRACTICE)

Duration: 15 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate-high

Tactical purpose: Makes the three progression routes visible and concrete, using three marked target zones — a central "Through" zone, two wide "Around" zones, and a deep "Over" zone beyond the pressing line — so players can see, not just be told, which route the picture is offering at a given moment.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 44 x 30 m
- **Players:** 7 outfield + 1 goalkeeper building, vs 4 live pressers
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** central — the goalkeeper is a genuine option throughout, not a passive starting point
- **Team sizes:** 7+GK v 4
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 12 flat markers marking the three target zones, 4 cones
- **Starting positions:** back three or back four (coach's choice) plus midfield, as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** goalkeeper restarts from hands or a goal kick
- **Restart location:** goal kick position
- **Coach position:** central, able to see the building team's picture and all three zones
- **Rotation method:** pressers rotate with tired build-up players every 3 minutes
- **Direction of play:** building team always attacks the same direction

Practice walkthrough: The goalkeeper restarts as in Week 1, but this time against four pressers applying genuine, live pressure from the first repetition — no patience period. Three target zones are marked: a central "Through" zone requiring a pass to travel between two pressers into a team-mate; two wide "Around" zones requiring the ball to be played outside the press entirely; and a deep "Over" zone beyond the pressing line, reachable only by a longer or lofted pass. A clean progression into any zone scores a point — the coaching emphasis is on reading which zone is actually open, not on favouring any one route.

Rules: Pressers engage immediately and at genuine intensity. A clean pass or carry into any marked zone scores a point for the building team; a turnover scores a point for the pressing team.

Tactical roles:

- *Individual:* the first-line build-up player, central progression player, and wide outlet roles (Season Architecture) are all live and available simultaneously.
- *Unit:* the back line's width and the midfield's positioning between the lines together determine which routes are actually open.
- *Team:* recognising, as a whole build-up unit, which zone the picture currently offers rather than committing to a plan before the press has shown its hand.
- *Transition:* a turnover in this zone is dangerous, connecting directly to Week 3's compactness and pressure-cover-balance content — the pressing team's reward for winning the ball here is real.

Decision-making triggers:

- Two pressers are tight together centrally → the through zone is likely closed; check around or over instead.
- A presser has committed fully to one side → the opposite around zone is very likely open.
- The press is compact and high → the over zone, beyond their line, is often the easiest read, even if it's not always the "best" footballing option.

Communication language used: *Time, Drop, Travel, Switch* — all four applied specifically to the three-route decision.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Passing technique across all three routes — a short combination pass, a wide diagonal, and a longer lofted ball all require different technique.
Tactical	Reading the press's shape to identify which route is genuinely open.
Physical	Repeated actions against genuine, live pressing intensity — a real step up from Phase 1.
Psychological	Composure under real pressure, for the first time this season, without a patience period to rely on.
Communication & leadership	The goalkeeper and back line organising which route to attempt, communicated before the pressure arrives.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What told you a zone was open before you actually played the pass?
2. Which route did your team use most often, and is that because it was genuinely the best option, or just the most comfortable one?
3. What happened when the press shifted to close a zone that had just been open?
4. How does the goalkeeper change the picture compared to a team without one confident on the ball?
5. What is the cost of a team that only ever tries one of the three routes?
6. How would this picture change against a team pressing with two forwards instead of one?

Progressions:

1. Add a fifth presser, testing whether the team can still find a route under a genuine numbers disadvantage in the first line.
2. Remove the marked zones and ask the team to find the same routes without the visual aid.
3. Add a live outball target beyond the pressing line specifically for the "over" route, rewarding accuracy as well as distance.

Regressions:

1. Reduce to three pressers, easing the picture.
2. Reintroduce a brief patience period before pressers engage, as in Week 1, while the routes are relearned under real pressure.
3. Widen the build-up zone for more thinking time.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team panics under genuine pressure and reverts to hopeful long balls regardless of the picture	First time facing real, live pressure this season	Frequent, inaccurate long balls even when through or around was clearly available	Stop	Short group intervention: rewind, show what was actually available	Resume from a fresh goal kick
Team always tries the same route out of habit	Comfort with one option over reading the picture fresh each time	Repeated attempts at the same zone regardless of whether it's open	Let it flow with a drive-by call	"Check again — is that really the picture, or just the habit?"	Continue
Goalkeeper reverts to long clearances under pressure	Confidence dip facing genuine pressing intensity for the first time	Short options available but unused	Stop	Individual coaching with the goalkeeper, rehearse the decision at reduced pace	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *individual coaching*, since facing genuine pressure for the first time this season is a real step up and merits patient correction.

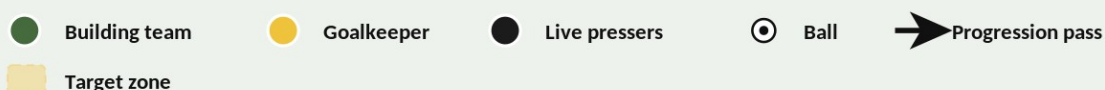
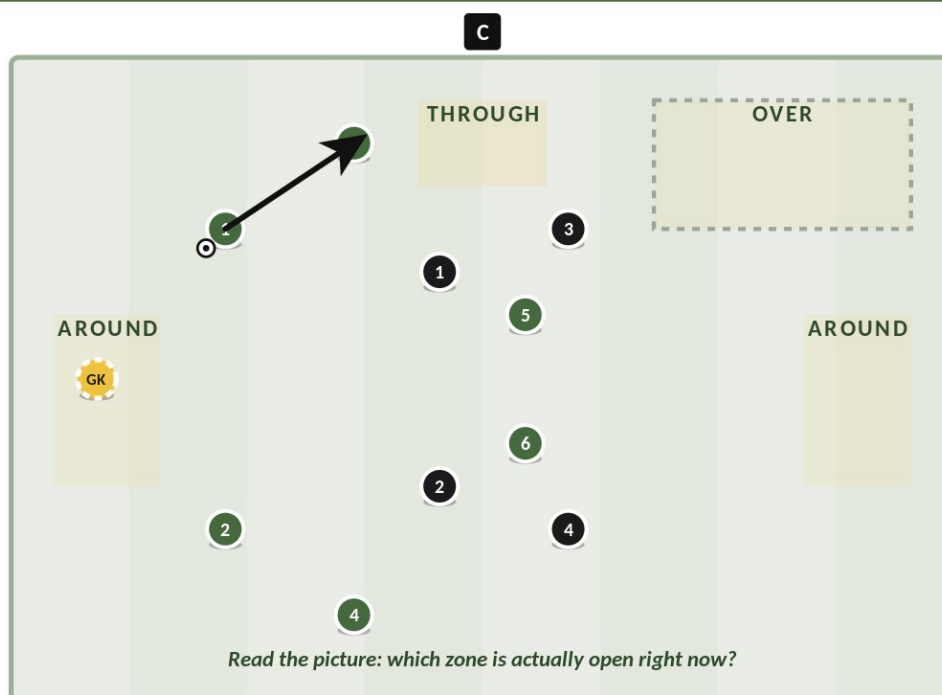
Success indicators:

- All three zones are reached at least several times across the practice.
- The team's route selection visibly matches the picture rather than a fixed habit.
- Turnovers under pressure decrease across the practice as the read improves.

Coach's eye: watch the presser's shape as closely as your own team's — the whole practice is about reading their picture correctly, and you need to see what they're showing to judge whether your team read it right.

T6.2 THREE WAYS OUT — Through, Around, Over

44 x 30 m • 7+GK building vs 4 live pressers • reach any of three target zones • 15 minutes



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AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style, showing a 44x30 metre defensive-third-plus-halfway zone with dimension labels. A goalkeeper in yellow in a shaded zone labelled 'AROUND' on the left. Two more shaded zones labelled 'AROUND' on the right and 'THROUGH' at the top centre, and a larger dashed zone labelled 'OVER' in the top right. Six players in dark green bibs numbered 1–6 spread across the back line and midfield. Four players in black bibs numbered 1–4 pressing live. White football near the goalkeeper. A black solid arrow showing a progression pass. Title: 'THREE WAYS OUT — Through, Around, Over'. Subtitle: '44 x 30 m • 7+GK building vs 4 live pressers • reach any of three target zones • 15 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Elevated sideline view of a goalkeeper distributing under genuine pressure, a back line splitting to create angles, three marked target zones visible on the pitch via cone lines, black-bibbed pressers closing down with real intensity, coach centrally positioned observing the picture closely.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of adult amateur football training. A goalkeeper in yellow distributing the ball under genuine defensive pressure from players in black bibs closing down with real intensity. A back line of players in dark green bibs splitting to create passing angles, with marked target zones visible via flat orange cone lines on the grass. A coach standing centrally, closely observing the picture"

develop. Overcast evening light, realistic grass pitch and markings, amateur adult players of varied build. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

PRACTICE 3 — PRESS BREAKERS (SKILL GAME)

Duration: 15 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate-high

Tactical purpose: Moves the three-route decision into a genuine small-sided game with a goal, weighting the reward toward the more difficult "over" route to encourage variety without punishing the other two.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 34 x 22 m
- **Players:** 14 outfield, rotating
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers rotate through
- **Team sizes:** 7 v 7
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 2 full-size or portable goals, 6 flat markers, 4 cones
- **Starting positions:** even split
- **Ball supply:** 3 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart location:** fast, small-sided-game restarts
- **Coach position:** touchline, mobile
- **Rotation method:** none required at this scale
- **Direction of play:** standard

Practice walkthrough: A 7v7 game in which a goal built through a genuine through pass or an around combination is worth one point, and a goal built via a long switch that skips the opposition's press entirely is worth two — a deliberate, light nudge toward using all three routes rather than only the two more familiar ones.

Rules: Standard small-sided-game rules; scoring weighting as described, judged by the coach.

Tactical roles: the full build-up role set from Practice 2, now inside live, directional play.

Decision-making triggers: as established in Practice 2, now applied without marked zones.

Communication language used: *Time, Travel, Switch, Drop.*

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Execution across all three routes inside a genuine, scored game.
Tactical	Choosing the right route for the picture rather than chasing the higher-value bonus artificially.
Physical	Sustained high-intensity actions against real opposition.
Psychological	Confidence to attempt the harder, higher-value route when it's genuinely on.
Communication & leadership	Organising the picture before the ball arrives, not reacting to it after.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What did your team's best "over" goal require that a normal build-up didn't?
2. Did the two-point weighting change your team's decision-making, or did you keep reading the picture honestly?
3. What is the risk of always chasing the higher-value route even when it isn't really on?
4. How does this connect to Week 2's width and depth work?

Progressions:

1. Increase the over route's value further, testing whether decision quality holds under a stronger incentive.
2. Reduce the practice area, compressing decision time.
3. Add a genuine offside line.

Regressions:

- 1. Equalise all three routes' value while the decision-making is still developing.
- 2. Widen the practice area.
- 3. Reduce to 5v5.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team forces long balls to chase the bonus, ignoring an easier through or around option	The reward is more visible than the picture	Repeated forced long balls that turn over possession cheaply	Stop	Short group intervention: "the bonus only pays off if it's really on"	Resume
Team avoids the over route entirely, undervaluing it	Comfort with familiar routes	No attempts at the higher-value option across several minutes	Let it flow with a drive-by call	"That switch was on — why didn't we take it?"	Continue

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *drive-by coaching*.

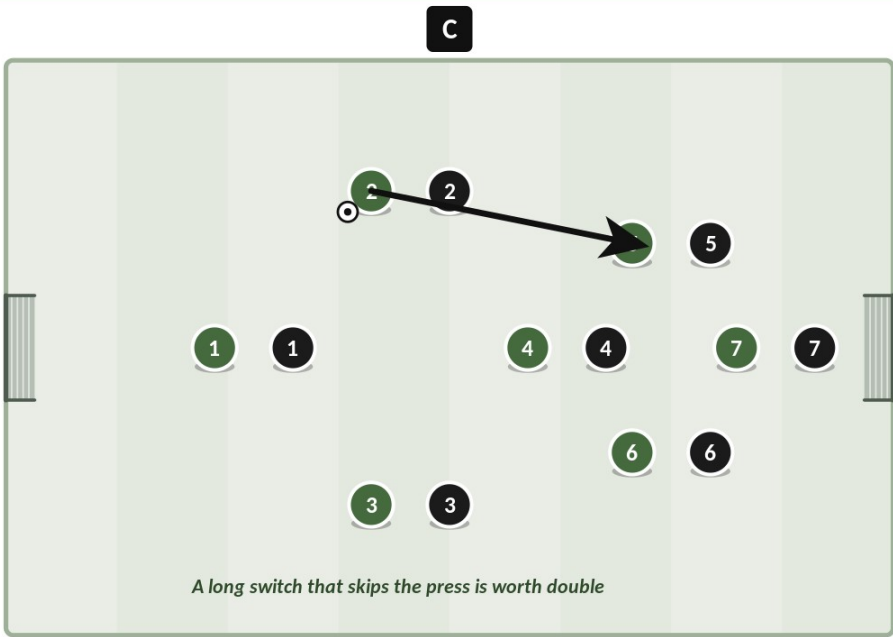
Success indicators:

- All three routes are attempted and succeed at least several times each.
- Forced, low-percentage attempts at the bonus route decrease across the practice.

Coach's eye: watch for genuine variety, not just correctness — a team using all three routes intelligently is the actual target, not simply avoiding turnovers.

T6.3 PRESS BREAKERS — Small-Sided Game

34 x 22 m • 7v7 • through = 1pt, around = 1pt, a long switch over the press = 2pts • 15 minutes



● Building team

● Pressing team

⦿ Ball

➔ Progression pass

AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style, showing a 34x22 metre pitch with a goal at each end. Seven players in dark green bibs

numbered 1–7 and six players in black bibs numbered 1–6 spread across the pitch. White football near a green player. A thick black solid arrow showing a long diagonal switch pass across the pitch. Title: 'PRESS BREAKERS — Small-Sided Game'. Subtitle: '34 x 22 m · 7v7 · through = 1pt, around = 1pt, a long switch over the press = 2pts · 15 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Elevated sideline view of a 7v7 game, a green-bibbed player striking a long diagonal switch pass over a compact black-bibbed press toward a team-mate arriving on the far side, both goals visible, coach on the touchline animated.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur 7v7 football game on a grass pitch with two full-size goals. A player in a dark green bib striking a long, raking diagonal pass over a compact group of black-bibbed opponents toward a team-mate arriving in space on the far side. Late-afternoon light, realistic grass pitch and shadows, amateur adult players of varied build. A coach on the touchline, animated, tracking the pass. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

PRACTICE 4 — LIVE PRESS (CONDITIONED MATCH)

Duration: 15 minutes · **Training load:** High

Tactical purpose: Confirms the week's principle at full match scale against a genuinely organised, live pressing team for the first time this season — the clearest test yet of whether the team can read and solve a real defensive problem rather than a cooperative training picture.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 50 x 36 m (half pitch)
- **Players:** 16 outfield + 2 goalkeepers
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers play their own-goal role, fully integrated as a fourth route
- **Team sizes:** 8 v 8
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 2 full-size or portable goals, 8 flat markers, corner cones
- **Starting positions:** standard match shape
- **Ball supply:** 3 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart location:** match-realistic restarts
- **Coach position:** touchline, halfway line, mobile
- **Rotation method:** none required; goalkeepers may split time at the midpoint
- **Direction of play:** standard, both teams attack opposite goals

Practice walkthrough: A conditioned 8v8 match in which both teams press each other with genuine, live intent — the first time this season both sides are simultaneously pressing and building under real conditions. The coach's attention is on the building team's route selection specifically, though the pressing team's organisation (drawing on Week 3's content) is also live and relevant.

Rules: Standard conditioned-match rules.

Tactical roles: the complete build-up role set from the week, tested against a genuine defending team applying Week 3's pressure-cover-balance principles.

Decision-making triggers: the full set from Practices 2–3, now under complete match conditions.

Communication language used: the full season's language so far.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Execution under full match pressure and fatigue.
Tactical	Genuine, live route selection against a genuinely organised opponent.
Physical	The week's peak physical demand — repeated high-intensity actions in both directions.
Psychological	Composure against real, sustained pressure for a full practice, not an isolated repetition.
Communication & leadership	Organising the build-up picture continuously, adapting as the opposition's press adjusts.

Guided discovery questions:

1. Which route did the team rely on most under full match pressure, and why?
2. What happened when the opposition adjusted their press mid-practice — did the team's read adjust with it?
3. How does this connect to Week 3's pressing content, now seen from the other side of the ball?
4. What is one thing the team should carry into Saturday's match from tonight?

Progressions:

1. Add a genuine offside line.
2. Reduce numbers to 7v7, raising individual decision frequency.
3. Add a scoreline context, foreshadowing Phase 5.

Regressions:

1. Reduce the pressing team's intensity slightly if the practice is producing too many turnovers to be useful.
2. Reduce to 6v6 on a smaller area.
3. Reintroduce the marked zones from Practice 2 briefly if the read has regressed under full match conditions.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team reverts to a single route under full match fatigue	Old habits reassert themselves under tiredness	Repeated use of only one route in the practice's final minutes	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "what else was available just then?"	Resume
Turnovers rise sharply against the genuinely live press	First time facing this level of pressure for a sustained period	Frequent turnovers, particularly in the build-up third	Stop if the picture is becoming unproductive	Short group intervention resetting the team's composure and picture-reading	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *natural stoppages* and *questioning*, reserving deeper correction for the one-minute reflection immediately after.

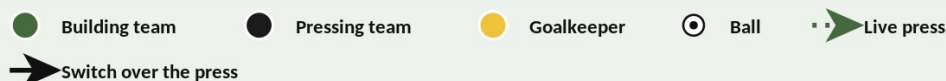
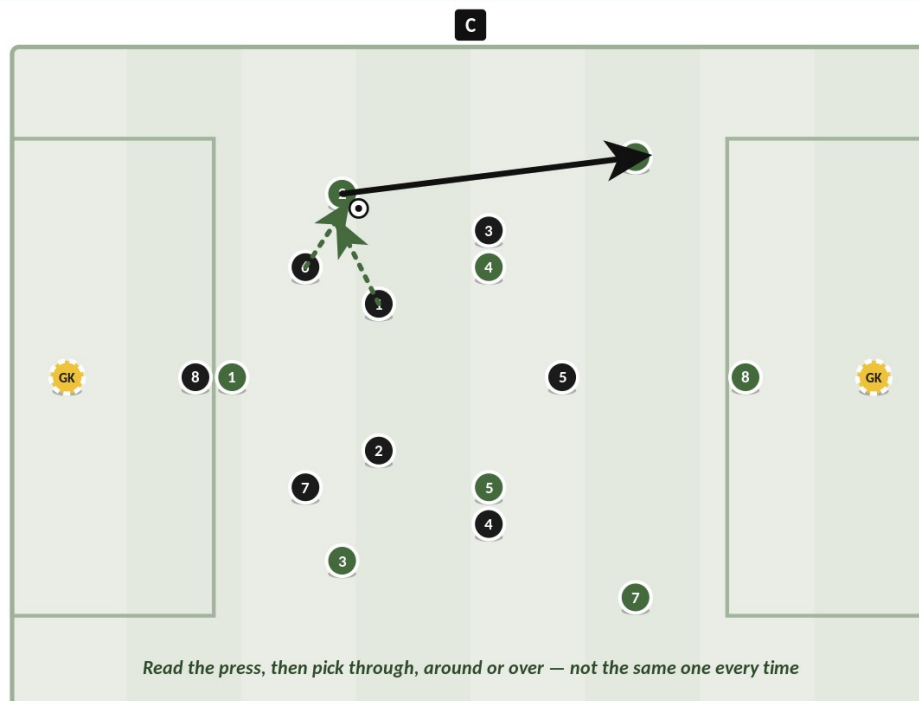
Success indicators:

- All three routes are used across the practice, even under full match pressure.
- The team's read visibly adjusts as the opposition's press changes.
- Fewer clean progressions are needed to reach dangerous areas than turnovers conceded — a rough, observable ratio worth tracking informally.

Coach's eye: this practice is the week's clearest evidence of whether Tuesday's teaching has actually transferred — judge it against Practice 2's more structured picture, not in isolation.

T6.4 LIVE PRESS — Conditioned Match

50 x 36 m (half pitch) • 8v8 + GKs • a genuine, live press for the first time this season • 15 minutes



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AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style, showing half of a football pitch, 50x36 metres, with penalty box markings at both ends and a full-size goal at each end with a goalkeeper in yellow at each. Eight players in dark green bibs numbered 1–8 and eight players in black bibs numbered 1–8 spread across the area, black team pressing live with two short dotted red press arrows with chevron arrowheads. White football near an advanced green player. A thick black solid arrow showing a long switch pass over the press. Title: 'LIVE PRESS — Conditioned Match'. Subtitle: '50 x 36 m (half pitch) • 8v8 + GKs • a genuine, live press for the first time this season • 15 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Wide elevated view of a full-scale 8v8 conditioned match, a green-bibbed player striking a long switch pass over a committed, live black-bibbed press, goalkeepers in yellow at each end, coach on the touchline near halfway watching the picture develop with real intensity on both sides.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Wide elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur 8v8 conditioned football match on a half-size grass pitch with full-size goals and goalkeepers in yellow at each end. A player in a dark green bib striking a long switch pass over a compact, committed press from players in black bibs. A coach stands near the halfway line on the touchline, arms crossed, closely tracking the passage of play. Early evening light with long shadows, realistic grass pitch markings, amateur adult players of varied build. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

REFLECTION (1 MINUTE)

One question to the group: "When the press closed down one route tonight, what did you do instead — and how quickly did you decide?"

Thursday — Session 12

FIELD	DETAIL
Session number	12 of 72
Week	6
Season phase	2 — Early-Season Identity
Training day	Thursday
Session theme	Playing around pressure — wide overload
Short summary	Develops the "around" route from Tuesday in depth — the wide overload — teaching the timing of overlaps and underlaps that turn a simple 2v1 into a reliable way past a well-organised press.
Tags	`progression` `possession` `unit-work` `full-squad-practice`
Primary learning objective	Players execute a clean 2v1 (or 3v2) wide overload with correctly timed support runs.
Secondary learning objective	Width and depth (Week 2) are applied specifically to creating a numbers advantage in a wide channel.
Match connection	A specific, reliable way to beat a well-organised press down the flank — directly supporting Tuesday's broader progression work.
Expected tactical outcome	The team creates and uses a wide overload at least several times in open play.
Expected physical load	Moderate — lower than Tuesday, as intended for a Thursday, though wide sprints are a real, specific demand.
Recommended intensity	6.5–7.5 / 10, rising only in the closing game.
Equipment list	16 footballs · 20 flat markers · 12 cones (orange) · 2 sets of bibs (2 colours, 10 each) · 2 full-size or portable goals
Player numbers	Designed for 16 outfield + 2 goalkeepers; scales 10–22.
Goalkeeper requirements	Both goalkeepers train throughout; Practice 3 includes the goalkeeper as the starting point for the wide overload build-up, connecting directly to Tuesday's session.
Pitch dimensions	Largest area this week is 46 x 32 m (Practice 3).
Area layout	A narrow wide channel for Practice 2, widening into a fuller build-up picture for Practice 3.
Contingency — lower attendance (10–13)	Practice 3 reduces to 6+GK v 5; Practice 4 becomes 5v5.
Contingency — higher attendance (20+)	Practice 3 can extend to a fuller 9+GK v 8 picture.
Contingency — restricted space	Practice 2 is barely affected (already a narrow channel); compress Practices 3 and 4 proportionally.

TIMELINE (60 MINUTES)

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:00–0:08	8 min	Arrival & warm-up — <i>Wide Feet</i>	Light green
0:08–0:23	15 min	Technical practice — <i>2v1 Every Time</i>	Club green

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:23–0:25	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:25–0:40	15 min	Unit / tactical practice — <i>Wide Overload Build-Up</i>	Dark green
0:40–0:42	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:42–0:59	17 min	Small-sided game — <i>Around the Press</i>	Black
0:59–1:00	1 min → extended below	Reflection	—

PRACTICE 1 — WIDE FEET (ARRIVAL)

Duration: 8 minutes · **Training load:** Low

Tactical purpose: A shorter, sharper Thursday warm-up with a light technical theme (wide, quick footwork) feeding directly into the evening's wide-overload focus.

Organisation: 16 x 12 m grid, one ball per player for three minutes, pairs for five. No goalkeeper requirement — both keepers join fully.

Walkthrough: Individual ball work emphasising outside-of-the-foot touches and quick changes of direction toward the width of the grid, then paired passing with an overlap run built in — one player passes and immediately runs beyond their partner.

Rules: Every pass is followed by a run beyond the receiver.

Coaching points:

- *Technical:* touch quality on the move, not standing still.
- *Physical:* short, sharp overlapping runs — low overall load.

PRACTICE 2 — 2V1 EVERY TIME (TECHNICAL PRACTICE)

Duration: 15 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate

Tactical purpose: Isolates the wide overload in its simplest form — two attackers against one defender in a narrow channel — teaching the timing of an overlap (running outside the ball-carrier) or an underlap (running inside) before adding it to a fuller picture.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 20 x 14 m wide channel
- **Players:** 3 outfield (2 attackers + 1 defender), rotating
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers rotate through as attackers
- **Team sizes:** 2 v 1
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 4 flat markers (channel corners), 2 footballs
- **Starting positions:** attacking pair at one end with the ball, defender central
- **Ball supply:** spare ball with the coach
- **Restart:** attacking pair restarts from the end line after every outcome
- **Coach position:** side of the channel
- **Rotation method:** every 90 seconds
- **Direction of play:** attacking pair always attacks the same end line

Practice walkthrough: Two attackers face a single defender in a narrow wide channel, trying to reach the far end line. The single defender cannot cover both attackers at once — the coaching content is entirely about how and when the second attacker uses that numbers advantage, either overlapping outside the ball-carrier or underlapping inside them, and about the ball-carrier recognising which run has been made and delivering accordingly.

Rules: The defender may only engage the ball-carrier, not the supporting runner — this is deliberately artificial at this stage, isolating the timing question before adding the fuller defensive picture in Practice 3.

Tactical roles:

- *Individual:* the ball-carrier's job is to draw the defender's attention; the supporting player's job is to time their run so it arrives after the defender has committed, not before.
- *Unit:* the two-player relationship is the entire unit at this stage.
- *Team:* not applicable at this scale.
- *Transition:* not the focus — kept deliberately simple.

Decision-making triggers:

- The defender steps to engage the ball-carrier → this is the moment for the supporting run, not before.
- The defender stays central, refusing to commit → the ball-carrier should carry directly at them, forcing a decision.
- The supporting run arrives too early → the defender can adjust to cover both; timing, not effort, is the actual skill.

Communication language used: *Travel* (the ball-carrier carrying at the defender), *Time* (called by the supporting player when their run is genuinely on).

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery timing and weight to a runner arriving at pace, not standing still.
Tactical	Recognising the moment the defender commits, not running early out of habit.
Physical	Explosive, well-timed sprints rather than early, static width.
Psychological	Patience for the supporting player — resisting the urge to run before the picture is ready.

CORNER	POINT
Communication & leadership	The ball-carrier and supporting player reading each other without needing to shout instructions every time.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What told the supporting player it was the right moment to run?
2. What happened on the reps where the run came too early?
3. How is an overlap different from an underlap, and when would you choose one over the other?
4. How does this simple 2v1 scale up to a fuller team picture?
5. What is the risk of a wide player who always makes the same run regardless of the picture?

Progressions:

1. Allow the defender to engage either player, testing whether the timing holds under full uncertainty.
2. Add a second defender (2v2), testing whether the overload still functions.
3. Add a small goal or target zone to finish toward, sharpening the consequence.

Regressions:

1. Walk the timing through at reduced pace before adding live opposition.
2. Widen the channel for more thinking time.
3. Allow the coach to call "Go!" for the supporting run during the first few reps.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Supporting run happens too early, allowing the defender to adjust	Eagerness, or not reading the defender's commitment	Runner already past the defender before the ball-carrier has drawn them in	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: walk through the correct timing once	Resume
Ball-carrier doesn't draw the defender in, passing too early	Lack of confidence carrying at an opponent	Pass played before any real pressure has been applied	Let it flow with a drive-by call	"Carry at them — make them decide"	Continue
Delivery to the runner is inaccurate or poorly weighted	Technical execution under the pressure of a timed run	Runner has to slow down or the ball runs behind them	Let it flow	Technical cue on weight and timing of the pass	Continue

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *freeze-and-correct* early and *drive-by coaching* once the timing is understood.

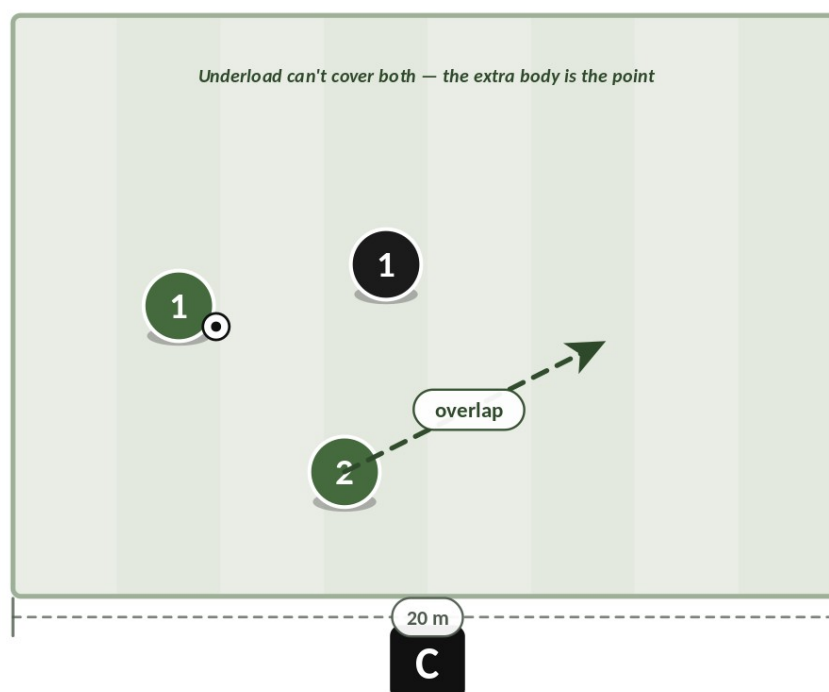
Success indicators:

- The supporting run's timing visibly improves across the practice.
- The ball-carrier consistently draws the defender before releasing the ball.
- Both overlap and underlap options are used, not just one.

Coach's eye: watch the gap between the defender committing and the supporting run starting — that gap should shrink to almost nothing by the end of the practice.

H6.2 2v1 EVERY TIME — The Wide Overload

20 x 14 m wide channel • 2 attackers vs 1 defender • overlap or underlap • 15 minutes



● Attacking pair ● Defender ● Ball ➔ Overlap run

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AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style. A narrow 20x14 metre channel with dimension labels. Two players in dark green bibs numbered 1 and 2, one with a white football. One player in black bibs numbered 1 positioned centrally. A green dashed arrow labelled 'overlap' showing the second attacker's run beyond the ball-carrier. Small dark coach icon below the channel. Title: '2v1 EVERY TIME — The Wide Overload'. Subtitle: '20 x 14 m wide channel • 2 attackers vs 1 defender • overlap or underlap • 15 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Elevated view of a narrow marked channel, a green-bibbed player carrying the ball at a black-bibbed defender, a second green-bibbed player timing an overlapping run outside, coach at the channel's edge watching the timing closely.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of adult amateur football training in a narrow marked channel on a grass pitch. A player in a dark green bib carrying the ball directly at a defender in a black bib. A second player in a dark green bib timing a fast overlapping run around the outside, just as the defender commits to the ball-carrier. A coach standing at the edge of the channel, watching the timing of the run closely. Overcast evening light, realistic grass texture, amateur adult players of varied build. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

PRACTICE 3 — WIDE OVERLOAD BUILD-UP (UNIT / TACTICAL PRACTICE)

Duration: 15 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate

Tactical purpose: Scales the 2v1 principle up into a full build-up picture, connecting directly to Tuesday's "around" route — the team builds from the goalkeeper specifically toward a wide overload, with rest defence protected throughout.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 46 x 32 m
- **Players:** 8+GK building vs 7 defending
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** the building team's goalkeeper restarts every sequence, as in Tuesday's session
- **Team sizes:** 8+GK v 7
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 10 flat markers, 4 cones
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram — a back four or back three plus midfield, with the wide overload built specifically down one flank at a time
- **Ball supply:** goalkeeper restarts from hands or a goal kick
- **Restart location:** goal kick position
- **Coach position:** central, able to see the whole picture
- **Rotation method:** roles swap at the midpoint
- **Direction of play:** building team always attacks the same direction

Practice walkthrough: The building team constructs a genuine three-vs-two overload in one wide channel — typically a winger, an overlapping or underlapping full-back, and a midfielder drifting to support — while two players remain central specifically as rest defence, protecting against the counter if the overload breaks down. The defending team, set up with Week 3's pressure-cover-balance principles, tries to shift across quickly enough to prevent the overload forming.

Rules: A clean combination that beats the wide defending pair and reaches the byline or the edge of the box scores a point for the building team; a turnover in the wide area scores a point for the defending team.

Tactical roles:

- *Individual:* wide outlet, overlap/underlap runner, and rest-defence roles are all live simultaneously.
- *Unit:* the wide three (winger, full-back, supporting midfielder) function as a coordinated attacking unit.
- *Team:* recognising which flank the overload is easiest to create on, based on the defending team's shape.
- *Transition:* the two central rest-defence players are the direct link to Week 2's rest-defence content and Week 4's transition-to-defence work — non-negotiable, exactly as the corner routines' rest defence was in Week 5.

Decision-making triggers:

- The defending team shifts slowly to the ball side → the overload is very likely available on that flank.
- The defending wide pair matches the attacking numbers exactly → look to switch the point of attack rather than force it.
- The overload breaks down → the two rest-defence players must already be positioned to deal with the counter.

Communication language used: *Switch, Travel, Squeeze* — connecting this practice to both Week 2 and Week 6's Tuesday content.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery from wide areas — crosses, cutbacks and combination passes under time pressure.
Tactical	Recognising which flank offers the overload, and protecting the opposite side with rest defence.
Physical	Repeated wide sprints — a genuine, specific physical demand.

CORNER	POINT
Psychological	Patience to build the overload properly rather than forcing an early cross.
Communication & leadership	The wide unit organising its overlap/underlap timing together, live.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What told the team which flank the overload was easiest to create on?
2. What happened to the rest-defence pair when the overload broke down — were they ready?
3. How does this connect to Tuesday's "around" route?
4. What would change about this picture in a back three, with a wing-back providing the width instead of a full-back?
5. What is the cost of forcing a wide combination that isn't genuinely on?

Progressions:

1. Add a live counter-attack condition — if the defending team wins the ball in the wide area, they have five seconds to counter, testing the rest-defence pair directly.
2. Allow the overload to be created on either flank interchangeably, adding a decision layer.
3. Add a genuine offside line for timing runs into the box.

Regressions:

1. Reduce the defending team to 5, easing the picture while the overload timing is relearned at this larger scale.
2. Fix which flank the overload is built on for the first few repetitions before allowing free choice.
3. Widen the practice area for more time and space.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Rest-defence players drift wide to help the overload, abandoning their job	The pull toward the exciting part of the practice, as seen in Week 5's set-piece work	Central area empty when the ball is wide	Stop	Firm, immediate correction — this connects directly to Week 5's non-negotiable rest-defence standard	Resume
Overload is created but the final ball is rushed	Excitement at reaching a good position overrides patience	Poor delivery from good positions	Let it flow with a drive-by call	"You've done the hard part — now be patient with the final ball"	Continue
Team always builds the overload on the same flank	Comfort with a favoured side	No variation in which flank is used	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "what does the other side offer tonight?"	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *drive-by coaching*, with the rest-defence rule enforced firmly and immediately every time, consistent with Week 5's standard.

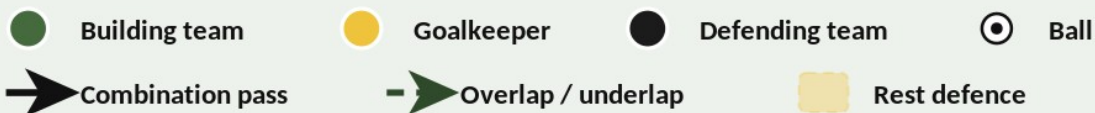
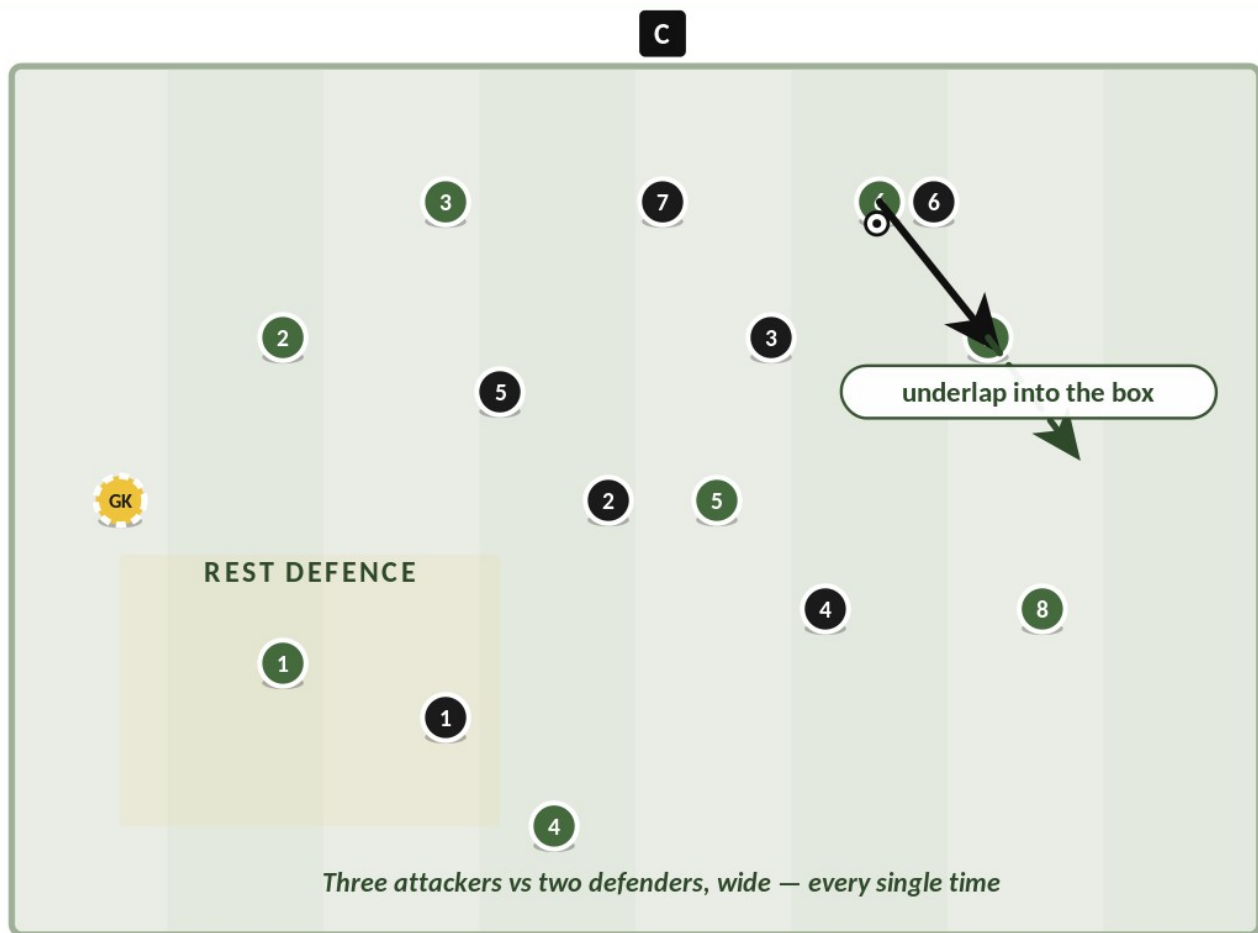
Success indicators:

- The wide overload is created and used on both flanks across the practice.
- Rest defence holds its position throughout.
- Delivery from wide areas is composed rather than rushed.

Coach's eye: watch the two rest-defence players as closely as the overload itself — exactly the same standard as Week 5's set-piece work.

H6.3 WIDE OVERLOAD BUILD-UP — Around the Press

46 x 32 m • 8+GK building (wide overload) vs 7 defending • 15 minutes



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AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style, showing a 46x32 metre pitch with dimension labels and a shaded zone labelled 'REST DEFENCE' near the building team's own goal. A goalkeeper in yellow. Eight players in dark green bibs numbered 1–8 spread across the pitch, three of them clustered wide on one flank showing an overload. Seven players in black bibs numbered 1–7 defending. White football near a wide green player. A black solid arrow showing a combination pass and a green dashed arrow labelled 'underlap into the box'. Title: 'WIDE OVERLOAD BUILD-UP — Around the Press'. Subtitle: '46 x 32 m • 8+GK building (wide overload) vs 7 defending • 15 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Elevated sideline view of a wide overload building down one flank, three green-bibbed players combining against two black-bibbed defenders, two green-bibbed rest-defence players clearly visible centrally, well away from the ball, goalkeeper in yellow watching from deep, coach observing the whole picture from a central position.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): *"Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of adult amateur football training. Three players in dark green bibs combining in a wide area against two defenders in black bibs, clearly outnumbering them. Two further players in dark green bibs positioned centrally, well away from the ball, clearly held back as rest defence. A goalkeeper in yellow visible deep in the picture. A coach standing centrally on the pitch, taking in the whole picture. Overcast evening light, realistic grass pitch and shadows, amateur adult players of varied build. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."*

PRACTICE 4 — AROUND THE PRESS (SMALL-SIDED GAME)

Duration: 17 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate-high

Tactical purpose: Closes the week with a confidence-building game rewarding goals built through a wide overload, sending players into the weekend sharp and ready to use this week's content on Saturday.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 34 x 22 m
- **Players:** 14 outfield + 2 goalkeepers
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers play their own-goal role
- **Team sizes:** 7 v 7
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 2 full-size or portable goals, 6 flat markers, 4 cones
- **Starting positions:** even split
- **Ball supply:** 2 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart location:** fast, small-sided-game restarts
- **Coach position:** touchline, mobile
- **Rotation method:** none required
- **Direction of play:** standard

Practice walkthrough: A 7v7 game with a bonus: a goal built through a wide overload (an overlap or underlap creating and using a numbers advantage) is worth two goals. Otherwise the game is played with minimal interruption, closing the week on high-volume, enjoyable, successful play.

Rules: Standard small-sided-game rules; bonus as described, judged by the coach.

Tactical roles: every principle and role named across the week is available; coaching focus is recognition and encouragement.

Decision-making triggers: as established across the week.

Communication language used: the full set introduced so far this season.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery and finishing from wide combinations.
Tactical	Recognising and rewarding the week's principle in full flow.
Physical	The week's second-highest load, appropriately placed at the end.
Psychological	Finishing the week on a genuine high.
Communication & leadership	Players organising and encouraging each other with reduced coach input.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What did this week's two sessions have in common — how does "around" connect Tuesday and Thursday?
2. Which overlap or underlap tonight was best timed, and why?
3. What is one thing from this week you want to see on Saturday?
4. Looking back across six weeks now, how does this week's content build on everything from Phase 1?

Progressions:

1. Increase the bonus to triple for an overload finished with a first-time shot.
2. Reduce the grid slightly to raise tempo for the closing minutes.

3. Add a golden-goal condition in the final two minutes.

Regressions:

1. Widen the grid for a gentler close to the week.
2. Remove the bonus condition in the closing minutes for open, unconditioned play.
3. Reduce to 5v5 if fatigue is visible.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Fatigue reducing overlap timing in the final minutes	A demanding week of live pressing work now behind the group	Runs arriving late or not at all	Let it flow	Light-touch encouragement only	Continue
Game becomes stretched and transitional	Natural end-of-session tempo rise	More end-to-end play, fewer sustained wide combinations	Let it flow	None needed	Continue

Coach interventions used in this practice: minimal — encouragement and recognition of good examples.

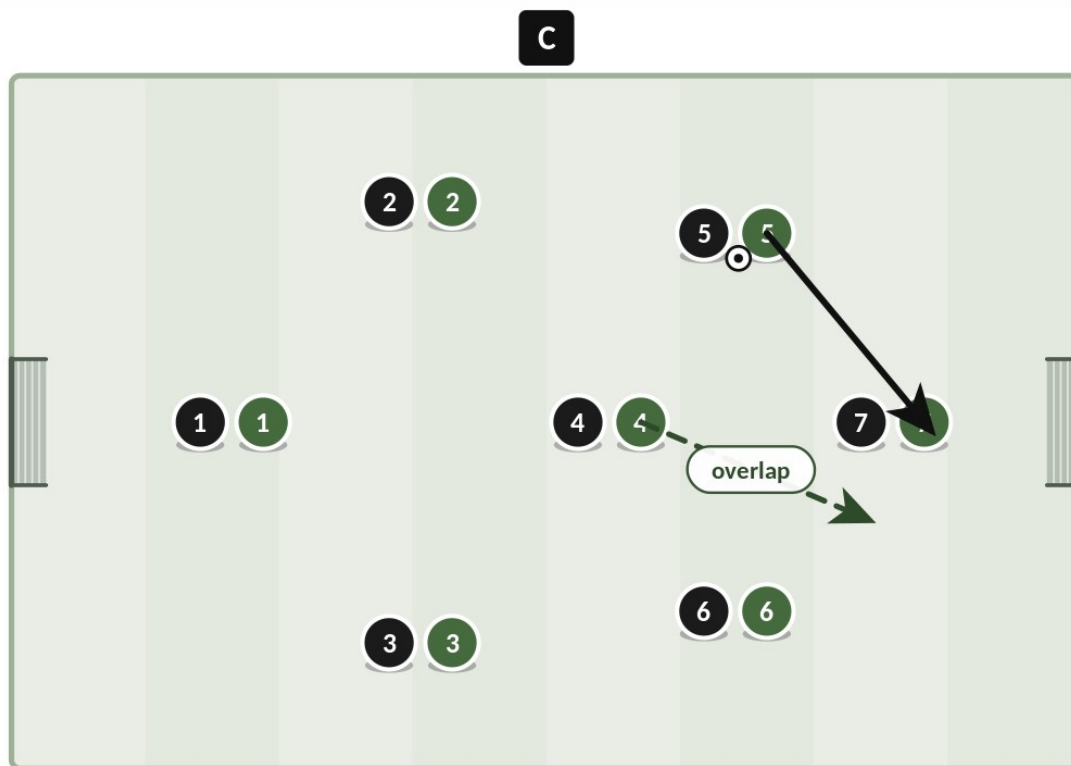
Success indicators:

- Multiple bonus goals scored through genuine wide overloads.
- High energy and communication maintained into the closing minutes.
- Visible enjoyment and organisation from the players themselves.

Coach's eye: as in every Thursday session, read the group's mood as closely as their shape.

H6.4 AROUND THE PRESS — Confidence Game

34 x 22 m • 7v7 • bonus for a goal built through a wide overload • 17 minutes



● Team A ● Team B ● Ball ➔ Wide combination ➔ Overlap run

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AI image-generation prompt (tactical diagram): "Top-down 2D vector football coaching diagram, clean white background, UEFA coaching-manual style, showing a 34x22 metre pitch with a goal at each end. Seven players in dark green bibs numbered 1–7 and six players in black bibs numbered 1–6 spread across the pitch. White football near a wide green player. A black solid arrow showing a wide combination pass and a green dashed arrow labelled 'overlap' showing a supporting run. Title: 'AROUND THE PRESS — Confidence Game'. Subtitle: '34 x 22 m • 7v7 • bonus for a goal built through a wide overload • 17 minutes'. Legend row at bottom. High-resolution landscape vector illustration, clear typography, no decorative elements, no club badges or logos."

Realistic illustration — description: Elevated sideline view of a lively 7v7 game at dusk, a green-bibbed player combining with an overlapping team-mate down the wing, black-bibbed defenders outnumbered and reacting late, both goals visible with nets, coach on the touchline relaxed and pleased.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur 7v7 football game at dusk on a grass pitch with two full-size goals visible. A player in a dark green bib combining with an overlapping team-mate down the wing, clearly outnumbering the black-bibbed defenders nearby. Warm, low evening sunlight, long shadows, genuine energy among players. A coach in training kit stands relaxed on the touchline, visibly pleased. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

REFLECTION (FINAL 3–4 MINUTES, SEATED)

Seated as a group, captain(s) present.

Questions put to the group:

1. How does tonight's wide overload connect to Tuesday's three-route decision?
2. What is one specific moment from this week you'd want to see repeated on Saturday?
3. Phase 2 has five more weeks to go — what's the next thing you think this team needs to learn?

Coach's closing input: name two or three specific, positive examples from across the week, and confirm the connection between Tuesday's broader progression content and Thursday's specific wide-overload solution, since the two sessions were built to complement each other directly.

Match-Day Objectives — Week 6

Three team objectives:

1. The team uses more than one route to progress past the opposition's press.
2. A wide overload is created and used at least once in the match.
3. Rest defence holds during every attacking sequence, wide or central.

Three unit objectives:

- *Defensive unit*: the back line and goalkeeper together provide a genuine, live build-up option under pressure, not just a fallback.
- *Midfield unit*: central players recognise when the picture calls for a through pass versus a switch.
- *Attacking unit*: wide players time overlap and underlap runs off the ball-carrier's engagement of the defender, not off habit.

Individual role reminders *(assign according to the shape the coach selects)*:

- First-line build-up player: your job is to be available under real pressure, not just in a cooperative practice.
- Wide outlet: hold your width until the overload picture is ready, then time your run.
- Central progression player: scan for through, around and over — don't default to one.
- Rest-defence player: your job is never optional, wide overload or not.

Measurable performance indicators:

- Rough count of clean progressions by route type (through / around / over) achieved during Tuesday's Practice 4, compared informally against Week 4's transition-focused equivalent.
- Number of genuine wide overloads created during Thursday's Practice 3.
- Squad's own account, given in the closing reflection, of what Phase 2 needs next — recorded for the Week 11 review.

Formation Translation — Applying This Week Across Different Shapes

Principle: Progression — through, around, over; wide overload.

In a 4-3-3: the wide overload is typically built with a winger, an overlapping full-back, and a central midfielder drifting to support — three players against the opposition's full-back and nearest winger or midfielder, a clean 3v2.

In a 3-5-2: the wide overload is often even more natural, since a wing-back already provides advanced width without needing to leave a back-line gap the way a full-back's overlap does in a back four — a genuine structural advantage worth naming to players, though it typically leaves one fewer central body available if both wing-backs commit high simultaneously.

What stays the same: the 2v1-or-3v2 principle itself, and the non-negotiable rest defence protecting against the counter.

What changes: which players provide the width and the underlapping or overlapping support, and how much defensive risk committing them forward carries.

What must not change: the timing discipline from Practice 2 — a run made before the defender commits is a wasted overload, in any formation.

Risk in each structure: a 4-3-3 that overlaps its full-back loses that player from the defensive line entirely until they recover; a 3-5-2 that commits both wing-backs forward simultaneously risks being caught with only three central defenders against a fast transition.

Opposition influence: against a team that defends narrow and compact centrally, the wide overload (this week's content) is usually the more productive route. Against a team that defends with genuine width itself, the central "through" route from Tuesday may be the easier read instead — the team's job, every week from here on, is recognising which.

Coach Review — Week 6

(To be completed by the coach after both sessions have run, before Week 7 is delivered.)

- **Match result and performance (Route A/B/C applied):** record what actually happened and which route was used to shape this week.
- **Attendance:** Tuesday ____ / Thursday ____.
- **Technical/tactical evidence:** were all three progression routes (through, around, over) visible during Tuesday's Practice 4?
- **Wide overload evidence:** how cleanly was the overload created and used during Thursday's Practice 3?
- **Communication evidence:** is the season's language holding up under genuine, live pressure?
- **Physical observations:** how did the squad handle the first genuinely live-press week of the season?
- **Leadership observations:** who organised the build-up picture most effectively?
- **Priority for Week 7:** based on the above, does Week 7 (playing through pressure centrally, and introducing the mid-block) need any adjustment to its planned emphasis?

Written by Alan Cunningham with Claude AI · Castlewellan Town FC — Senior Coaching Curriculum, Week 6 of 36 · session design follows the four-corner model used in UEFA coach education and the principle-led, formation-neutral approach set out in the Season Architecture (Stage 1). An independent club resource, not an official UEFA or Irish FA publication and not endorsed by either.