



Week 13 — Developing Collective Understanding

Tags: `possession` `overloads` `combination-play` `full-squad-practice` `conditioning`

Weekly Overview

FIELD	DETAIL
Week number	13 of 36
Season phase	3 — Developing Collective Understanding
Core principle	Overloads & rest defence
Secondary principle	Width & depth
Previous match review focus	Apply the three routes below to the most recent fixture.
Weekly tactical problem	Week 10 taught the team to decide when to commit players to an overload and when to hold rest defence, but stopped short of teaching the specific mechanics of <i>creating</i> the overload in the first place — the extra body arriving, the decoy runs that free it, the timing that makes 3v3 genuinely become 4v3. This week splits that skill into its two most common pictures: overloading centrally, where the extra body usually has to arrive from deeper or from the far side, and overloading wide, where an overlap or underlap is the classic mechanism.
Formation-neutral explanation	Creating an overload is a mechanism, not a formation — any structure can produce a spare player centrally or wide, using whichever players are best positioned to arrive late and unmarked, and the specific technique (a late arriving run, a decoy, an overlap) works identically regardless of what's on the team sheet.
Example structural applications	In a 4-3-3: a central overload typically comes from a holding midfielder or a centre-back stepping forward into midfield; a wide overload typically comes from a full-back overlapping a winger. In a 3-4-3 or back-three structure: a central overload can come from the back three itself stepping forward, since it often has a spare body already; a wide overload typically comes from a wing-back combined with an underlapping central midfielder rather than the winger themselves needing to create the width. The source of the extra body changes; the mechanism of creating and using it does not.

Match Review and Weekly Adjustment

Route A — Previous performance was strong. If the team played well, look for moments where a numbers advantage existed but wasn't converted into a genuine chance — a good result can still hide underused overloads. Name it plainly.

Route B — Previous performance exposed a tactical weakness. If the team struggled to create or use overloads, either centrally or wide, this week answers it directly — open the relevant session with the specific moment from the match.

Route C — Attendance, facilities or player availability are disrupted. Both overload mechanisms — an extra body arriving centrally, an overlap or underlap wide — scale to any numbers. Protect the timing and decoy elements above pure numbers; a well-timed 2v1 teaches the same lesson as a 4v3.

Tuesday — Session 25

FIELD	DETAIL
Session number	25 of 72
Week	13
Season phase	3 — Developing Collective Understanding
Training day	Tuesday
Session theme	Creating overloads — central
Short summary	Teaches the specific mechanism of creating a central numbers advantage — a third player arriving late and unmarked to tip an even picture into an overload — and then using it before the opposition can recover its shape.
Tags	`possession` `overloads` `combination-play` `conditioning`
Primary learning objective	The team creates a genuine central overload through a late-arriving extra player, not just by standing in a crowded area.
Secondary learning objective	The overload is used quickly, before the opposition's compact shape can reorganise around it.
Match connection	This week's foundation for the match-day connection named for Thursday: numbers-up situations converted more often.
Expected tactical outcome	More frequent, cleaner central combinations that break through a compact defensive picture.
Expected physical load	High-intensity duels — repeated explosive actions to arrive into and defend against central overloads.
Recommended intensity	7–8 / 10.
Equipment list	20 footballs · 22 flat markers · 14 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; in Practice 4 the goalkeeper is coached as a possible source of the extra central body when the picture allows it.
Pitch dimensions	Largest area this week is 50 x 36 m (Practice 4).
Area layout	A tight central zone for Practice 2, widening through Practices 3 and 4.
Contingency — lower attendance (10–13)	Practice 2 reduces to 3v2; Practice 3 becomes 5v5; Practice 4 becomes 6v6.
Contingency — higher attendance (20+)	Practice 4 can extend to 9v9.
Contingency — restricted space	Compress the central zone in Practice 2 first — the timing of the extra player's arrival survives a smaller space more easily than the wider practices.

TIMELINE (60 MINUTES)

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:00–0:10	10 min	Arrival & warm-up — <i>Man Up</i>	Light green

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:10-0:25	15 min	Technical practice — <i>Third Body Central</i>	Club green
0:25-0:27	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:27-0:42	15 min	Skill game — <i>Overload to Score</i>	Dark green
0:42-0:44	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:44-0:59	15 min	Conditioned match — <i>Central Break</i>	Black
0:59-1:00	1 min	Reflection	—

PRACTICE 1 — MAN UP (ARRIVAL)

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

Tactical purpose: Introduces the physical sensation of an extra player arriving to tip a numbers picture, inside a simple, competitive warm-up before any tactical structure is added.

Organisation: 20 x 16 m grid, 3v3 rondo with a floating extra player who joins whichever team is out of possession every 30 seconds, briefly creating a 4v3. No goalkeeper requirement — both keepers join fully.

Walkthrough: Standard rondo, but the coach periodically sends a spare player into the grid to join the team without the ball, immediately turning a 3v3 into a 4v3 and forcing the possession team to recognise and exploit the temporary disadvantage before the extra player leaves again.

Rules: The floating player joins for 20–30 seconds at a time before rotating out.

Coaching points:

- *Technical:* quick recognition and use of the extra passing option.
- *Physical:* sharp, reactive movement.
- *Psychological:* recognising a temporary window and using it before it closes.

PRACTICE 2 — THIRD BODY CENTRAL (TECHNICAL PRACTICE)

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

Tactical purpose: Isolates the specific mechanism of creating a central overload — a third player arriving late into a crowded area to tip an even picture — inside a tight technical practice, so the timing of the arrival is trained deliberately rather than left to chance.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 32 x 22 m
- **Players:** 4 possession players vs 3 opposition, with one of the four starting outside the practice area
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers rotate through
- **Team sizes:** 4 v 3 (once the fourth player arrives)
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** flat markers for the practice area and the fourth player's starting point
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** 2 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart:** coach restarts centrally on any stoppage
- **Coach position:** central, able to see both the main area and the arriving player's starting point
- **Rotation method:** the "arriving player" role rotates every few minutes
- **Direction of play:** possession retention

Practice walkthrough: Three possession players work against three opposition players inside a tight central area — an even picture. A fourth possession player starts outside the area and must time a run into it, arriving unmarked at the moment the ball is best placed to find them, converting the even picture into a genuine 4v3 overload that the team then uses immediately.

Rules: The fourth player may not enter the area until the coach or a team-mate signals; once inside, the team has a limited number of touches to use the overload before resetting.

Tactical roles:

- *Individual:* the arriving player's timing is the whole point of this practice — too early and they're marked before arriving, too late and the picture has already passed.
- *Unit:* the three inside players must recognise the extra body's arrival and use it immediately.
- *Team:* not applicable at this scale.
- *Transition:* not applicable — this practice is possession-focused throughout.

Decision-making triggers:

- The arriving player is unmarked and the ball can reach them quickly → use the overload immediately.
- The arriving player has been picked up by a defender → recycle and wait for the next opportunity.

Communication language used: *Time, Hold, Travel.*

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Clean, quick combination play once the overload is created.
Tactical	Timing of the arriving player's run — late enough to be unmarked, early enough to be useful.
Physical	Explosive arrival runs.
Psychological	Patience from the three inside players to wait for the right moment to use the extra body.
Communication & leadership	The arriving player calling for the ball the instant they're unmarked.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What made the fourth player's arrival well-timed versus poorly-timed?
2. What happened when the team used the overload immediately versus when they hesitated?
3. Why might the fourth player sometimes need to delay their run rather than arrive as early as possible?
4. How does this connect to Week 9's third-man timing principle from the wide free-kick work?

Progressions:

1. Add a second arriving player, creating a 5v3 at the moment of maximum overload.
2. Reduce the touch limit once the overload is created, sharpening urgency.
3. Add a passive fourth opposition player who can recover to reduce the overload if it isn't used quickly.

Regressions:

1. Allow the arriving player to enter earlier, with more warning.
2. Widen the practice area for more time and space.
3. Reduce the opposition to two players.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
The arriving player enters too early and is marked before the ball can find them	Eagerness to join the play	The fourth player is picked up immediately, no genuine overload created	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: reset and explain the timing needed	Resume
The team doesn't recognise or use the overload once created	Attention fixed on the original three players	The extra body goes unused, and the picture returns to even before it's exploited	Stop	Short group intervention: "who just arrived, and did we use them?"	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: heavy on *freeze-and-correct* early, for timing, moving to *short group intervention* for recognition and use.

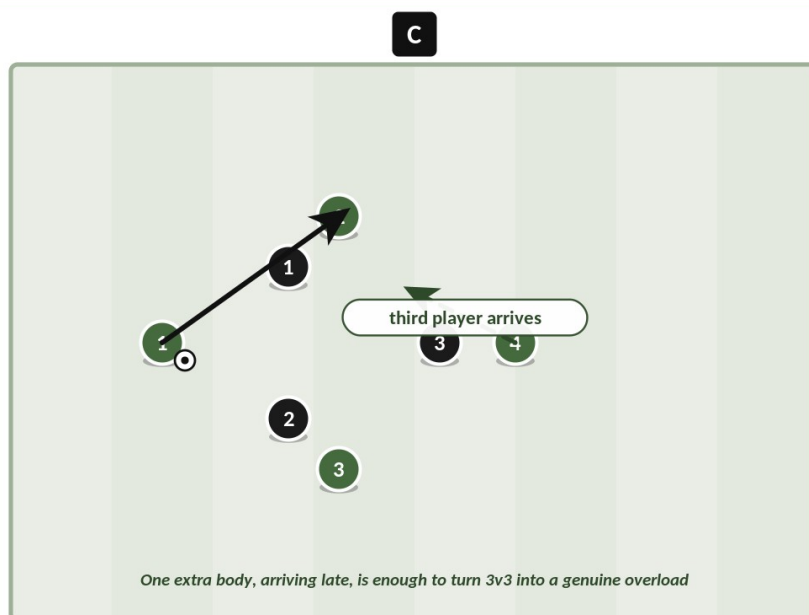
Success indicators:

- The arriving player's timing consistently creates a genuine, unmarked overload.
- The team recognises and uses the overload quickly once created.
- Combination play inside the overload is clean and purposeful.

Coach's eye: watch the arriving player's run as closely as the ball — a well-timed run that goes unused is just as much a missed opportunity as a poorly-timed one.

T13.2 THIRD BODY CENTRAL — Creating a Central Overload

32 x 22 m · 4v3 central zone · a third player arrives to tip the numbers before combining · 15 minutes



● Possession team ● Opposition ● Ball ➡ Third player arrives ➡ Combination pass

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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 32x22 metre grid with dimension labels. Three players in dark green bibs numbered 1–3 inside the grid, one more in dark green bibs numbered 4 outside the grid boundary with a short dashed run arrow labelled 'third player arrives' moving into the grid. Three players in black bibs numbered 1–3 inside the grid. White football near a green player. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a combination pass. Title: 'THIRD BODY CENTRAL — Creating a Central Overload'. Subtitle: '32 x 22 m · 4v3 central zone · a third player arrives to tip the numbers before combining · 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 training grid, three green-bibbed players working possession against three black-bibbed opponents inside a tight central area, a fourth green-bibbed player sprinting into the grid from outside its boundary, arriving unmarked to receive, coach centrally positioned watching the timing of the run closely.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of adult amateur football training on a tight central grid. Three players in dark green bibs working possession against three players in black bibs inside the grid. A fourth player in a dark green bib sprinting into the grid from outside its boundary, arriving unmarked to receive the ball. A coach standing centrally, closely watching the timing of the run. 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 — OVERLOAD TO SCORE (SKILL GAME)

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

Tactical purpose: Moves the central-overload mechanism into a genuine small-sided game, rewarding a goal that follows a central overload combination, connecting Tuesday's technical work to a real attacking outcome.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 34 x 22 m
- **Players:** 12 outfield, rotating
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers rotate through
- **Team sizes:** 6 v 6
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** 2 mini goals, 6 flat markers
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** 3 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart location:** nearest sideline
- **Coach position:** sideline, central
- **Rotation method:** none required at this scale
- **Direction of play:** both directions, two goals

Practice walkthrough: A 6v6 game in which a goal that follows a central overload combination (three or more attacking touches inside the central third with a numbers advantage) is worth double. The coach notes, without necessarily announcing, how often the team manufactures the overload rather than waiting for one to appear naturally.

Rules: As described; otherwise standard small-sided-game rules.

Tactical roles: the full overload-creation skill set from Practice 2, now inside live, directional play with a genuine attacking consequence.

Decision-making triggers: as established in Practice 2, plus the added decision of when to commit a player centrally to manufacture the overload versus holding width.

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

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Clean, quick combination play under real opposition pressure.
Tactical	Recognising the moment to commit a player centrally to manufacture an overload.
Physical	Repeated high-intensity actions to create and defend against overloads.
Psychological	Confidence to commit numbers centrally rather than always working around the outside.
Communication & leadership	Calling for a team-mate to join the central overload when the picture allows it.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What was your team's clearest example of a manufactured central overload tonight?
2. How did the extra player's arrival change what was possible in the central area?
3. What happened when the team waited for an overload to appear naturally rather than creating one?
4. How does this connect to Week 10's overload-and-rest-defence decision-making?

Progressions:

1. Reduce the touch limit for using a created overload once it exists.

2. Add a genuine offside line at each end.
3. Reduce the practice area, sharpening the pressure on the timing.

Regressions:

1. Allow the coach to signal when an overload opportunity exists while the recognition skill is being built.
2. Widen the practice area for more time and space.
3. Reduce to 4v4 for more individual involvement.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team never manufactures a central overload, only using ones that appear naturally	Habit of playing around the outside rather than committing centrally	Central areas remain even or outnumbered throughout	Stop	Short group intervention: "who could arrive centrally to tip this?"	Resume
Overload is created but wasted through slow or hesitant play	The picture is created but not trusted or used quickly enough	The overload disappears (opposition recovers) before it's used	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "how long did we have that extra man for?"	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *questioning*.

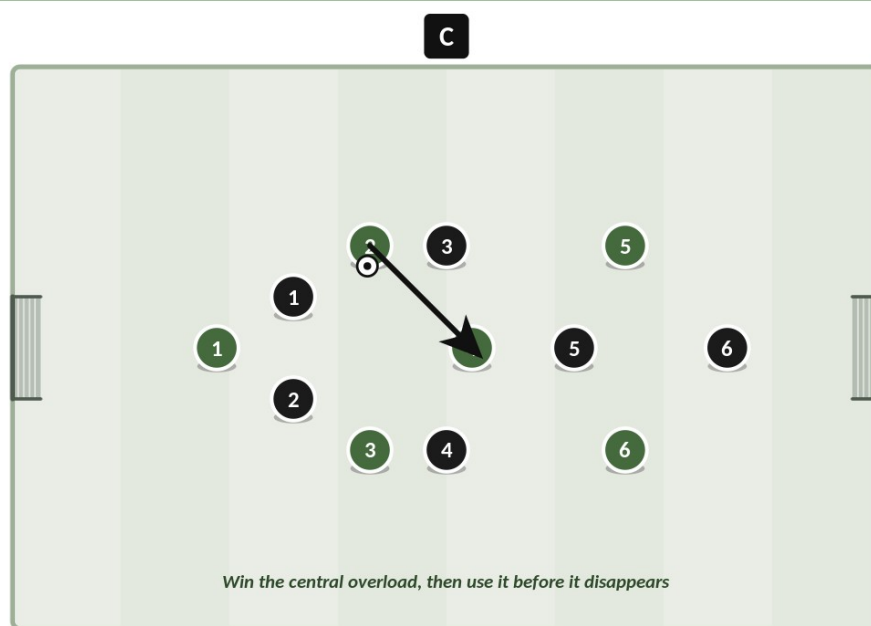
Success indicators:

- Bonus-condition goals increase across the practice.
- The team actively manufactures overloads rather than only using ones that appear naturally.
- Overloads are used quickly once created.

Coach's eye: watch for players actively arriving to tip a central picture, not just reacting to space that's already there — this is the difference between using an overload and creating one.

T13.3 OVERLOAD TO SCORE — Small-Sided Game

34 x 22 m • 6v6 • a goal following a central overload combination is worth double • 15 minutes



● Team in possession ● Opposition ⊙ Ball ➔ Central combination

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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 34x22 metre pitch with a small goal at each end. Six players in dark green bibs numbered 1–6 and six players in black bibs numbered 1–6 spread across the pitch, with a cluster of green players central. White football near a green player. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a central combination pass. Title: 'OVERLOAD TO SCORE — Small-Sided Game'. Subtitle: '34 x 22 m • 6v6 • a goal following a central overload combination is worth double • 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 6v6 game, a cluster of green-bibbed players combining quickly in a central area with a clear numbers advantage over black-bibbed opponents, both mini goals visible, coach on the touchline tracking the overload closely.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur 6v6 small-sided football game on a grass pitch with two mini goals. A cluster of players in dark green bibs combining quickly in a central area, with a clear numbers advantage over opponents in black bibs. Late-afternoon light, realistic grass pitch and shadows, amateur adult players of varied build. A coach on the touchline, tracking the overload closely. Professional sports-photography style, high resolution, landscape orientation, no club badges, sponsor logos, or identifiable real players."

PRACTICE 4 — CENTRAL BREAK (CONDITIONED MATCH)

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

Tactical purpose: Confirms the week's principle at full match scale, requiring the team to create and use a genuine central overload against a deliberately compact opposition, rewarding both the manufacture and the swift use of the numbers advantage.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 50 x 36 m (half pitch)
- **Players:** 16 outfield + 2 goalkeepers
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers play their own-goal role; the possession

team's goalkeeper is coached as a possible source of the extra central body when the picture allows it

- **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 the defending team is instructed to stay deliberately compact and central (echoing Week 7's mid-block), and the attacking team is coached to manufacture and use central overloads against it, while maintaining the rest-defence standard established in Week 10.

Rules: Standard conditioned-match rules.

Tactical roles: the full overload-creation and rest-defence skill set, combined for the first time with a genuinely reactive, compact opponent at match scale.

Decision-making triggers: the full set from Practices 2–3, applied under match conditions against a deliberately compact opponent.

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

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Execution under full match pressure and fatigue.
Tactical	Genuine manufacture and swift use of central overloads against a compact block.
Physical	The week's peak physical demand — repeated explosive arrival runs.
Psychological	Composure to commit numbers centrally without abandoning rest defence.
Communication & leadership	The team organising who arrives to create the overload and who holds rest defence.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What was the clearest example of a manufactured central overload tonight?
2. Who provided rest defence while the overload was being created and used?
3. How did the compact defending team try to prevent the overload from forming?

- How does this connect to Week 12's connected-lines work — does a stable back line and midfield line make it easier to create a central overload?

Progressions:

- Add a genuine offside line.
- Reduce numbers to 7v7.
- Instruct the defending team to press higher after conceding the overload once, testing whether the attacking team can adapt.

Regressions:

- Instruct the defending team to be less compact while the overload-creation skill is being consolidated.
- Reduce to 6v6 on a smaller area.
- Reintroduce Practice 2's isolated timing drilling briefly if the mechanism has broken down under full match conditions.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team fails to manufacture a genuine overload against the compact block	Habitual patterns of working around the outside reassert themselves	Central areas remain even throughout, with no genuine numbers advantage created	Stop	Short group intervention connecting directly to this week's principle	Resume
Overload is created but rest defence is abandoned to make it happen	Excitement of the overload crowds out defensive discipline	Too few players positioned behind the ball when the overload is created	Stop	Short group intervention connecting to Week 10's rest-defence standard	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *questioning*, reserving deeper correction for the reflection immediately after.

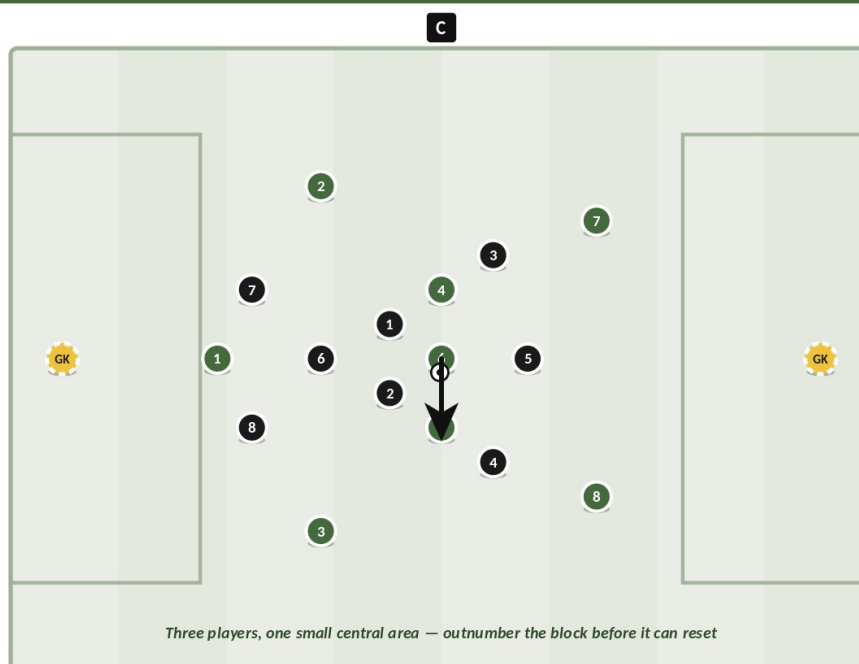
Success indicators:

- Central overloads are genuinely manufactured, not just occasionally found.
- The overload is used quickly once created.
- Rest defence is maintained throughout, even as the overload is being built.

Coach's eye: this practice is the week's clearest test of whether Tuesday's teaching has transferred — judge it specifically against how deliberately the team creates the overload, not just whether one occasionally appears.

T13.4 CENTRAL BREAK — Conditioned Match

50 x 36 m (half pitch) • 8v8 + GKs • create and use a central overload against a compact defence • 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, with three green players clustered centrally against two black players in a small area. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a combination pass between the clustered green players. Title: 'CENTRAL BREAK — Conditioned Match'. Subtitle: '50 x 36 m (half pitch) • 8v8 + GKs • create and use a central overload against a compact defence • 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, three green-bibbed players combining quickly in a tight central area against two black-bibbed defenders, the rest of both teams spread across the pitch, coach on the touchline near halfway tracking the whole picture.

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. Three players in dark green bibs combining quickly in a tight central area against two defenders in black bibs. The rest of both teams spread across the pitch in organised positions. A coach stands near the halfway line on the touchline, tracking the whole picture. 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: "Name one moment tonight where we created a central overload rather than just found one."

Thursday — Session 26

FIELD	DETAIL
Session number	26 of 72
Week	13
Season phase	3 — Developing Collective Understanding
Training day	Thursday
Session theme	Creating overloads — wide
Short summary	Applies this week's overload-creation mechanism to the touchline, using the overlap and underlap as the classic tools for tipping a wide picture, then stretching the defence to create and deliver a clean crossing opportunity.
Tags	`possession` `overloads` `width` `unit-work`
Primary learning objective	The team creates a genuine wide overload using a timed overlapping or underlapping run.
Secondary learning objective	The wide overload is converted into an early, accurate delivery before the defence can recover its shape.
Match connection	The week's named match-day connection: numbers-up situations converted more often.
Expected tactical outcome	More frequent, cleaner wide combinations that produce genuine crossing or cutback opportunities.
Expected physical load	High-intensity duels, similar in demand to Tuesday.
Recommended intensity	6.5–7.5 / 10, rising in Practice 4.
Equipment list	20 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, see contingencies.
Goalkeeper requirements	Both goalkeepers train throughout.
Pitch dimensions	Largest area this week is 46 x 30 m (Practice 3).
Area layout	A tight wide zone for Practice 2, widening through Practices 3 and 4.
Contingency — lower attendance (10–13)	Practice 2 reduces to 2v1; Practice 3 becomes 6v6.
Contingency — higher attendance (20+)	Practice 3 can extend to 9v9.
Contingency — restricted space	Compress the wide zone in Practice 2 first — the overlap/underlap timing survives a smaller space more easily than the wider practices.

TIMELINE (60 MINUTES)

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:00–0:10	10 min	Arrival & warm-up — <i>Overlap Reflex</i>	Light green
0:10–0:25	15 min	Technical practice — <i>Wide Third Man</i>	Club green

TIME	DURATION	PHASE	COLOUR CODE
0:25-0:27	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:27-0:42	15 min	Unit / tactical practice — <i>Stretch and Strike</i>	Dark green
0:42-0:44	2 min	Water break / transition	—
0:44-0:59	15 min	Confidence game — <i>Wide and Wild</i>	Black
0:59-1:00	1 min	Reflection	—

PRACTICE 1 — OVERLAP REFLEX (ARRIVAL)

Duration: 10 minutes · **Training load:** Low-moderate

Tactical purpose: Introduces the physical timing of an overlapping run before any tactical structure is added.

Organisation: 20 x 16 m grid, pairs along a marked line. No goalkeeper requirement — both keepers join fully.

Walkthrough: Paired passing in which one player receives the ball while the other sprints past them on the outside, receiving a return pass in stride — a simple, direct rehearsal of the overlap's timing.

Rules: The overlapping run must be timed to receive the ball in full stride, not standing still.

Coaching points:

- *Technical:* accuracy of the return pass into the runner's path.
- *Physical:* explosive overlapping sprints.
- *Psychological:* trust between the two players' timing.

PRACTICE 2 — WIDE THIRD MAN (TECHNICAL PRACTICE)

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

Tactical purpose: Isolates the technique of creating a wide overload — an overlapping or underlapping run that tips an even wide picture into a numbers advantage — inside a tight technical practice.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 32 x 20 m
- **Players:** 3 possession players vs 2 opposition, working in a wide channel
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** both keepers rotate through
- **Team sizes:** 3 v 2
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** flat markers marking the wide channel
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** 2 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart:** coach restarts on any stoppage
- **Coach position:** touchline, able to see the whole channel
- **Rotation method:** groups rotate every few minutes
- **Direction of play:** toward the far end of the channel

Practice walkthrough: Two possession players work the ball in a wide channel against two opposition players — an even picture. A third possession player starts behind the first and must time either an overlapping run (outside the ball-carrier) or an underlapping run (inside the ball-carrier) to arrive unmarked and create the overload.

Rules: The third player must clearly declare their run type (overlap or underlap) before committing to it, so the ball-carrier can react to the correct side.

Tactical roles:

- *Individual:* the runner's timing and clarity of run type is the whole point of this practice.
- *Unit:* the ball-carrier must recognise which type of run is being made and play accordingly.
- *Team:* not applicable at this scale.
- *Transition:* not applicable — this practice is possession-focused throughout.

Decision-making triggers:

- The defender is engaged with the ball-carrier, leaving the outside free → overlap.
- The defender has shifted to cover the outside, leaving the inside free → underlap.

Communication language used: *Travel, Time, Overlap/Underlap* (named calls).

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Weight and timing of the pass into the runner's path.
Tactical	Correct choice between overlap and underlap based on the defender's position.
Physical	Explosive running actions.
Psychological	Trust and clear communication between the ball-carrier and the runner.
Communication & leadership	The runner calling their run type clearly and early enough to be useful.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What told the runner whether an overlap or an underlap was the better option?

2. What happened when the ball-carrier and runner weren't clear with each other about the run type?
3. Why might an underlap sometimes be more dangerous than an overlap, despite being less common?
4. How does this connect to Week 9's near-post/far-post decoy principle — is timing the common thread?

Progressions:

1. Add a passive third defender who can recover to cover the overload if it isn't used quickly.
2. Reduce the channel width, sharpening the timing required.
3. Require the combination to end in a first-time cross or cutback.

Regressions:

1. Allow the runner to call their run type earlier, with more warning.
2. Widen the channel for more time and space.
3. Remove the second defender temporarily, focusing purely on timing.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Runner and ball-carrier aren't clear with each other about overlap versus underlap	Communication happens too late or not at all	The pass goes to the wrong side, or the runner and ball-carrier collide in space	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: reset and rehearse the communication	Resume
Runner arrives too early and is picked up before the overload can form	Eagerness to make the run	The defender adjusts and covers the run before it's useful	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: reset the timing	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: heavy on *freeze-and-correct*, since timing and communication are the entire teaching point.

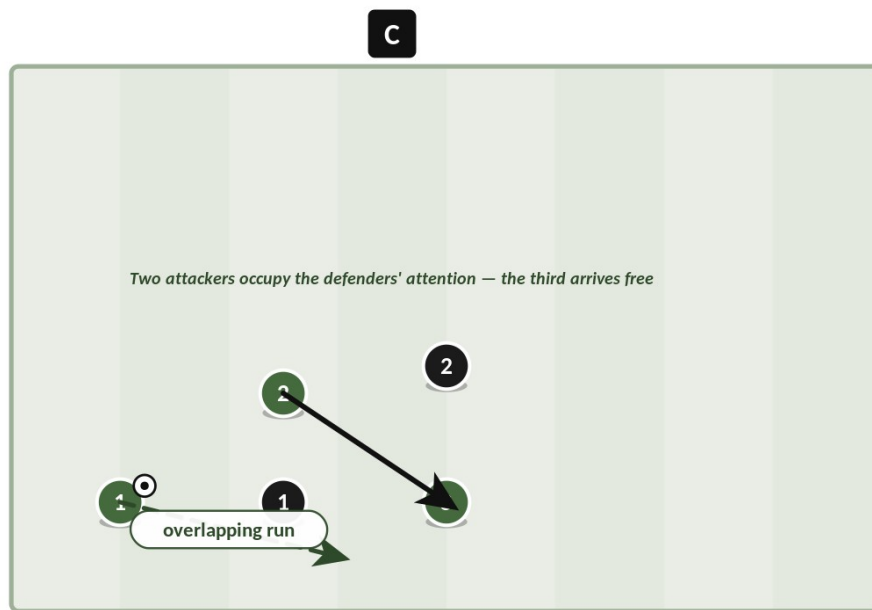
Success indicators:

- Overlap and underlap runs are clearly communicated and correctly chosen.
- The runner consistently arrives unmarked.
- The resulting delivery (cross or cutback) is clean and purposeful.

Coach's eye: watch the defender's body shape as closely as your own team's runners — the correct choice between overlap and underlap depends entirely on reading which side the defender has left open.

H13.2 WIDE THIRD MAN — Creating a Wide Overload

32 x 20 m · 3v2 wide zone · an overlap or underlap tips the numbers on the touchline · 15 minutes



● Possession team ● Opposition ⊙ Ball -> Overlapping run → Pass to the overlap

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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 32x20 metre wide channel with dimension labels. Three players in dark green bibs numbered 1–3 and two players in black bibs numbered 1–2 inside the channel. A short dashed run arrow labelled 'overlapping run' showing a green player running around the outside. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a combination pass. Title: 'WIDE THIRD MAN — Creating a Wide Overload'. Subtitle: '32 x 20 m · 3v2 wide zone · an overlap or underlap tips the numbers on the touchline · 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 training area along a touchline, a green-bibbed player in possession facing a black-bibbed defender, a second green-bibbed player sprinting past on the outside in an overlapping run, coach positioned on the touchline observing the timing and communication closely.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of adult amateur football training along a touchline. A player in a dark green bib in possession of the ball, facing a defender in a black bib. A second player in a dark green bib sprinting past on the outside in an overlapping run. A coach positioned on the touchline, closely observing the timing and communication between the two attacking players. 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 — STRETCH AND STRIKE (UNIT / TACTICAL PRACTICE)

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

Tactical purpose: Expands the wide overload mechanism into a full positional practice, stretching the defence across the width of the pitch before overloading a single touchline and delivering an early, accurate cross or cutback.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 46 x 30 m
- **Players:** 16 outfield
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** the defending team's goalkeeper is included, reading the delivery
- **Team sizes:** 8 v 8
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** flat markers, 1 full-size or portable goal
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** 3 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart:** nearest player restarts any stoppage
- **Coach position:** mobile, able to see the full width of the pitch
- **Rotation method:** roles swap at the midpoint
- **Direction of play:** toward the one goal

Practice walkthrough: The possession team is coached to first stretch the defending team across the full width of the pitch — using Week 9's switching principle if needed — before committing an overlapping or underlapping run to overload a single touchline, delivering the ball into the box early rather than waiting for the defence to recover its shape.

Rules: Standard positional practice rules; a clean delivery into the box following a genuine wide overload scores a point.

Tactical roles: the full overload-creation skill set from Practice 2, combined with Week 9's switching and stretching principles.

Decision-making triggers:

- The defence is narrow and compact → switch the point of attack first to stretch them.
- The defence is stretched and a wide overload is available → commit the overlap or underlap and deliver early.

Communication language used: *Travel, Switch, Time*, plus the overlap/underlap calls from Practice 2.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery quality — early, accurate crosses and cutbacks.
Tactical	Sequencing the stretch (switch of play) before the overload, not attempting both at once.
Physical	Repeated wide sprints and quick delivery actions.
Psychological	Patience to stretch the defence first rather than forcing an overload too early.
Communication & leadership	Players organising the sequence of stretch-then-overload out loud.

Guided discovery questions:

1. How did stretching the defence first make the wide overload easier to create?
2. What was the timing relationship between the switch of play and the overlapping run?
3. Why does an early delivery matter more once the overload has been created?
4. How does this connect to Week 9's switching-the-point-of-attack principle directly?

Progressions:

1. Add a genuine offside line inside the delivery zone.
2. Reduce the time allowed between creating the overload and delivering the ball.
3. Add a live defending goalkeeper and central defenders contesting the delivery.

Regressions:

1. Remove the stretch-first requirement temporarily, allowing a direct overload attempt.
2. Widen the practice area for more time.
3. Reduce numbers to 6v6.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team attempts the wide overload without stretching the defence first	Impatience or habit from earlier, more direct practices	The overload is attempted against a still-compact, well-covered defence	Stop	Short group intervention: "did we actually stretch them first?"	Resume
Delivery is delayed too long after the overload is created	Over-elaboration once the overload exists	The defence recovers its shape before the cross or cutback is played	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "how much time did we have there?"	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: a mix of *short group intervention* and *questioning*.

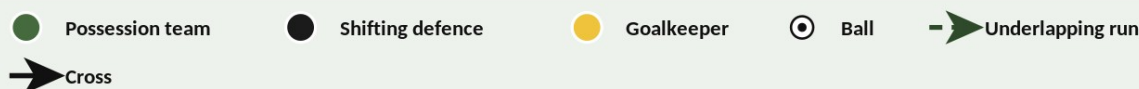
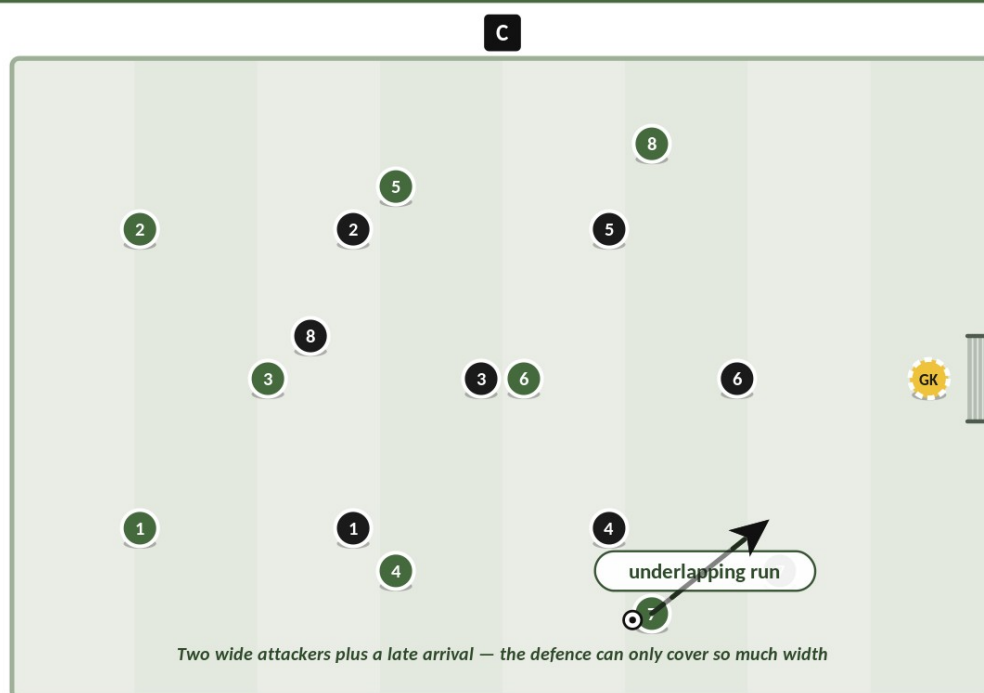
Success indicators:

- The team consistently stretches the defence before committing to a wide overload.
- Deliveries are early and accurate once the overload is created.
- The sequence (stretch, then overload, then deliver) becomes visibly faster across the practice.

Coach's eye: watch the sequencing as closely as the individual actions — a wide overload created against a defence that hasn't been stretched first is a much harder picture to convert.

H13.3 STRETCH AND STRIKE — Wide Overload to Cross

46 x 30 m • 8v8 • stretch the defence wide, overload the touchline, deliver early • 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. A 46x30 metre area with dimension labels, a full-size goal at one end with a goalkeeper in yellow. Eight players in dark green bibs numbered 1-8 spread across the width of the pitch and eight players in black bibs numbered 1-8 marking them. A short dashed run arrow labelled 'underlapping run' showing a green player breaking inside near the goal end. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a cross. Title: 'STRETCH AND STRIKE — Wide Overload to Cross'. Subtitle: '46 x 30 m • 8v8 • stretch the defence wide, overload the touchline, deliver early • 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 wide view of a positional practice stretched across the full width of the pitch, a green-bibbed player delivering an early cross from a wide overload near the goal end, a team-mate arriving on an underlapping run, goalkeeper alert in position, coach observing from a central, elevated vantage point.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated wide three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur football positional practice stretched across the full width of a grass pitch. A player in a dark green bib delivering an early cross from a wide position near the goal end. A team-mate in a matching dark green bib arriving on an underlapping run into the box. The goalkeeper, in yellow, alert and positioned to react. A coach observing from a central vantage point. 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 4 — WIDE AND WILD (CONFIDENCE GAME)

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

Tactical purpose: Closes the session with a competitive, enjoyable game that requires every goal to follow a wide overload combination, reinforcing the week's technical and tactical work inside a genuinely fun context that sends players into the weekend confident.

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
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** 3 spare balls with the coach
- **Restart location:** nearest sideline
- **Coach position:** sideline, central
- **Rotation method:** none required at this scale
- **Direction of play:** both directions, one goal per end

Practice walkthrough: A 7v7 game in which every goal must follow a wide overload combination — an overlap or underlap that created a numbers advantage on the touchline, followed by a delivery into the box.

Rules: Goals not following a wide overload combination do not count; otherwise standard small-sided-game rules.

Tactical roles: the full overload-creation and delivery skill set from Practices 2–3, applied inside free-flowing, competitive play.

Decision-making triggers: the full set from Practice 3, applied spontaneously as wide areas arise during play.

Communication language used: the full season's language so far, plus the overlap/underlap calls.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery quality and finishing under game-realistic, competitive conditions.
Tactical	Correctly identifying and exploiting wide overload opportunities as they arise naturally.
Physical	Moderate-high, game-based intensity to close the week on a positive note.
Psychological	Confidence and enjoyment — this is the week's designed high point.
Communication & leadership	Organising quickly around a developing wide overload without needing a stoppage to reset.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What made tonight's best wide overload work?
2. What's one thing from this week — central or wide overloads — you feel ready to take into Saturday?
3. Why does converting a numbers-up situation matter even when the overload itself was well created?

Progressions:

1. Increase the value of a goal scored via an underlap specifically, since it's the less common option.
2. Add a genuine offside line.
3. Reduce the pitch width slightly to increase the frequency of wide overload opportunities.

Regressions:

1. Allow goals from any source if the condition is proving too restrictive for the group's current confidence.
2. Increase the pitch size for more space and time.
3. Reduce to 5v5 for more individual involvement.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Team forces play toward the wide areas even when a central option is clearly better	The condition is chased rather than played naturally	Wide areas are congested even when space exists centrally	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "was the wide overload really the best option there?"	Resume
Overlap and underlap runs are poorly communicated in the live game	The structured communication from Practice 2 hasn't yet transferred	Runners and ball-carriers miscommunicate or collide	Stop	Short group intervention: quick reminder of the calls from Practice 2	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: light touch — mostly *questioning*, preserving the game's flow and enjoyment as the session's intended closing note.

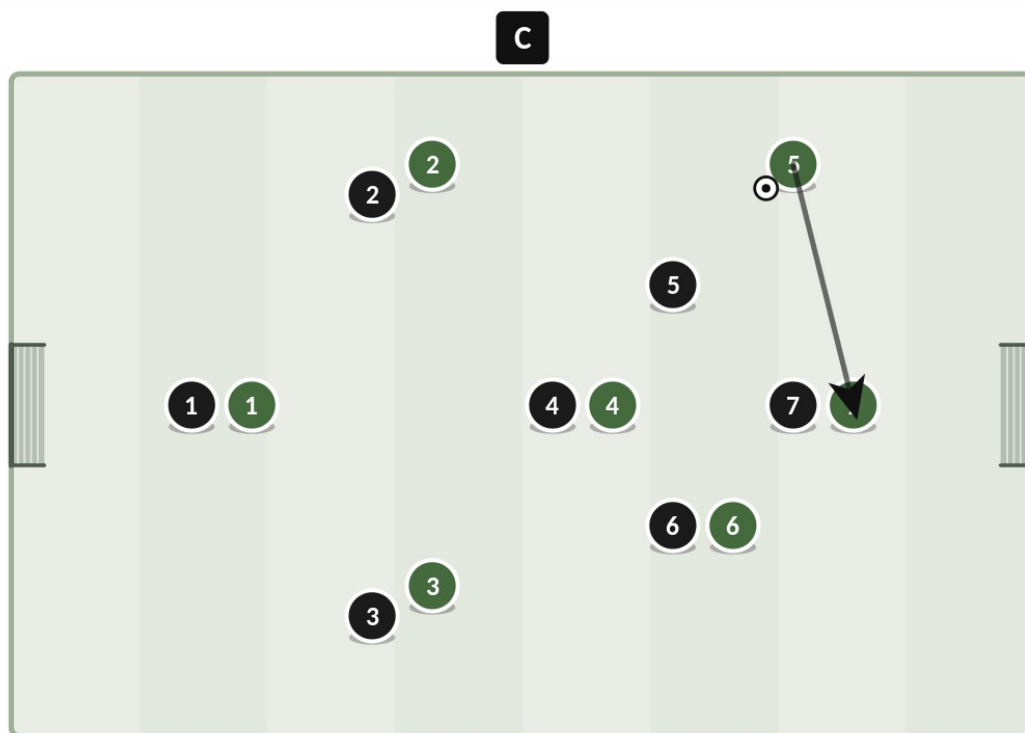
Success indicators:

- Goals from wide overloads increase across the practice.
- Overlap and underlap communication becomes visibly clearer and faster.
- Players finish the session animated and positive.

Coach's eye: this is a confidence-building close to the week — resist over- coaching it; let the week's earlier correction do its work and allow the group to enjoy what they've built.

H13.4 WIDE AND WILD — Confidence Game

34 x 22 m • 7v7 • every goal must follow a wide overload combination • 17 minutes



● Team A ● Team B ● Ball ➔ Wide combination

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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 34x22 metre pitch with a full-size 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, with a cluster of green players wide on one side. White football near a green player. A black solid arrow with an arrowhead showing a wide combination pass toward the goal. Title: 'WIDE AND WILD — Confidence Game'. Subtitle: '34 x 22 m • 7v7 • every goal must follow a wide overload combination • 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, a cluster of green-bibbed players combining with visible energy down one touchline, team-mates arriving into the box to meet a delivery, both full-size goals visible, coach on the touchline smiling and encouraging.

AI image-generation prompt (realistic illustration): "Elevated three-quarter sideline photograph-style illustration of an adult amateur 7v7 small-sided football game on a grass pitch with two full-size goals. A cluster of players in dark green bibs combining with visible energy down one touchline. Team-mates in matching dark green bibs arriving into the penalty area to meet a delivery. Warm early-evening light, realistic grass pitch and long shadows, amateur adult players of varied build showing visible energy and enjoyment. A coach on the touchline, smiling and encouraging. 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: "Name one overlap and one underlap from tonight — what made each one work?"

Match-Day Objectives

Three team objectives:

1. Manufacture central overloads deliberately, rather than only using ones that appear naturally.
2. Use an overlapping or underlapping run to create at least one genuine wide overload.
3. Convert numbers-up situations quickly, before the opposition can recover its shape.

Three unit objectives:

1. **Back line and goalkeeper:** provide the central overload's extra body when the picture allows it, without abandoning rest defence.
2. **Midfield unit:** recognise the moment to commit centrally versus the moment to hold width.
3. **Wide players:** communicate clearly on every overlap or underlap attempt, and deliver early once the overload is created.

Individual role reminders:

- The player arriving to create an overload — central or wide — owns the timing of their run; too early or too late both fail.
- The overlap or underlap call must be made clearly and early enough for the ball-carrier to react.
- Once an overload exists, use it quickly — the picture closes faster than it feels.

Measurable performance indicators:

- Number of genuine central overloads manufactured (not just found) during the match.
- Number of wide overloads created via overlap or underlap, and how many resulted in a delivery into the box.
- Time between an overload being created and the team using it (aim: a visible reduction from previous weeks).
- Number of numbers-up situations converted into a shot or clear chance.

Formation Translation — Applying This Across Different Shapes

Creating overloads — central:

STRUCTURE	WHO TYPICALLY PROVIDES THE EXTRA CENTRAL BODY	WHAT STAYS THE SAME	WHAT CHANGES	KEY RISK
4-3-3	A holding midfielder stepping forward, or a centre-back carrying the ball into midfield	The timing and recognition principle	Which specific player is best suited to arrive depends on the opposition's press	The holding midfielder over-committing, leaving the base of midfield exposed
3-4-3 / back-three structure	The back three itself, since it often has a natural spare body	The timing and recognition principle	Fewer additional bodies are usually needed, since the back three provides a head start	Over-committing a second centre-back forward, leaving only one covering the space behind

Creating overloads — wide:

STRUCTURE	WHO TYPICALLY PROVIDES THE OVERLAP OR UNDERLAP	WHAT STAYS THE SAME	WHAT CHANGES	KEY RISK
4-3-3	The full-back overlapping the winger	The overlap/underlap timing and communication principle	The winger may instead tuck inside, making the full-back the primary width provider	Both the full-back and winger occupying the same wide space simultaneously
3-4-3	The wing-back combined with an underlapping central midfielder	The overlap/underlap timing and communication principle	The underlap is often more available than the overlap, since the wing-back already provides width	The wing-back pushing so high that the underlapping midfielder has no space to break into

Coach Review

To be completed by the coaching staff after delivery.

What worked well this week:

What needs more work:

Attendance and availability notes:

Adjustments for next week:

Individual player notes:

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