

When the Week Goes Wrong

The 36 weeks assume Tuesday and Thursday happen. This page is for the weeks when they don't.

The season plan is built for two one-hour nights. Amateur football has other ideas: a cup replay lands on a Wednesday, the pitch is closed, half the squad is on a stag weekend, or there's no match on Saturday at all. None of that needs a new plan — it needs a decision about which parts of the existing one to keep. These are the club's defaults. They are defaults, not laws; a coach who knows their squad should overrule them.

1. Only one training night this week

Keep Thursday's session, not Tuesday's. Tuesday teaches the new principle at higher load; Thursday organises the team for Saturday. With one night, preparation beats development — the principle will come around again (every principle recurs across the season by design; the phase reviews sweep up anything missed).

Two refinements: if the lost night means the week's principle is *never* seen (check the current phase's remaining weeks), fold its arrival practice into Thursday's warm-up slot as a taster. And if the team's last match exposed something urgent, Thursday's "Match Review and Weekly Adjustment" section already tells you what to swap in.

2. A midweek match on a training night

The night before the match: don't run the planned session. Take Thursday's *organisation* content — set-piece jobs, the block, match-day objectives — at walk-through intensity, 40 minutes, no contact. Physical load is the enemy the night before a game; clarity is the friend.

The night after the match: players who played 60+ minutes get recovery — the movement quality and low-load content the programme keeps in its arrival practices, a rondo at conversation pace, and stretching; done in 45 minutes. Players who didn't play get the planned session's technical practice at full intensity in the remaining space. Never give the whole squad the same night: the two groups had opposite days.

Then: the skipped week's Tuesday content merges its key practice into the next normal Tuesday's warm-up, and the season continues from where the calendar says, not where you left off. Do not try to run two weeks in one — the plan recovers better from a missed lesson than from a rushed one.

3. No pitch (closed, waterlogged, double-booked)

The senior equivalent of the youth folder's "no pitch tonight" rule. In order of preference: (1) any patch of grass fits the week's technical practice — every Practice 2 in the

programme works in a 30 × 20 m space or scales down with the restricted-space contingency row every week already carries; **(2)** a hall or 3G slot runs the week's arrival + technical practices as futsal-tempo work, skill intact, load managed; **(3)** no facility at all — run the week's video/board content instead: the Formation Translation section and the match-day objectives take 40 minutes in a clubhouse with a whiteboard and produce a visibly better organised Saturday. A talked-through week beats a skipped week.

4. No match on Saturday

A free weekend turns the week on its head: **Tuesday runs as planned; Thursday becomes a second Tuesday.** Take the next week's Tuesday session and pull it forward — development weeks are rare and precious, and organising for a match that doesn't exist wastes one. If fatigue has been accumulating (checkpoints: three matches in nine days, or the phase-review week flags it), make Thursday a genuine down night instead: small-sided games the players pick, 50 minutes, done. Freshness in November is bought in September.

5. Half the squad is missing

Below about 10 players, stop adapting the planned session and switch outright: the **Technical library** (1v1s, Crossing, Finishing, Goalkeeping, Heading) is built for small rotating groups and is the best hour a small turnout can spend. The attendance-contingency rows on every week handle 10–13; single figures is what the standalone sessions are *for*. Record it in the week's Coach Review so the phase review knows what was actually trained.

6. Pre-season didn't happen (late start, late signings)

Weeks 1–5 compress to their Tuesday sessions run in order, two per week if needed at reduced intensity, before joining the calendar at the current week. The identity content (Weeks 1–2) is the part that cannot be skipped — a team that never installed the principles can't revise them. Everything else catches up through the season's built-in recurrence.

The one rule under all of it: when in doubt, protect Thursday's organisation, the players' legs, and the season's sequence — in that order. The plan is a servant. Saturday is the boss.
