CASTLEWELLAN TOWN FC · YOUTH COACHING PLANS

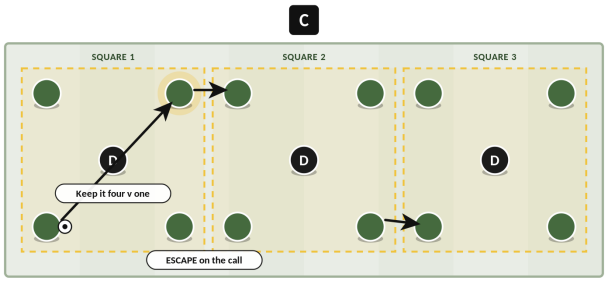
Beating the First Press — Three Ways Out

Session 18 · Building from the back · 14–16 players · 60 minutes

0:00 – 0:10 · 10 MIN	0:10 – 0:25 · 15 MIN	0:25 – 0:40 · 15 MIN	0:40 – 0:55 · 15 MIN	0:55 – 1:00 · 5 MIN
The Escape Squares	Beating the First Press	Press or Play	No Retreat Match	Player-led review

18.1 THE ESCAPE SQUARES

Warm-up · 10 min



FOUR AGAINST ONE IS EASY · THE SKILL IS ESCAPING WHEN THEY COME

SET UP

· Three 11 × 11 m squares in a row, with 1 m between them, marked in flat markers.
· Four players and one defender in each square. Fifteen players fills three squares exactly; with …

RULES

· Three seconds to escape once the call is made.
· Two touches maximum throughout.
· The escape pass must be controlled by the receiving group — a hopeful ball into the next square doesn't …

COACH IT

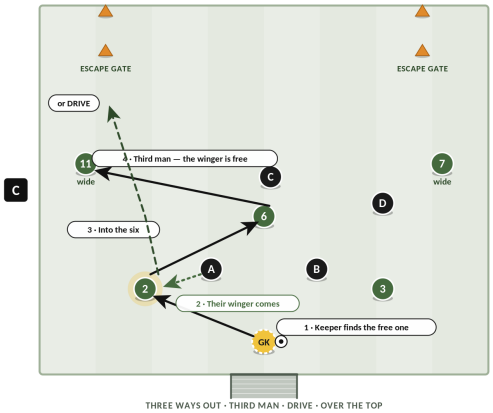
· Technical: Firm passes, first touch out of the feet. The escape pass is often 12–14 m and must be accurate.

SAY

· You had three seconds and four players. What was the rush?

18.2 BEATING THE FIRST PRESS

Technical practice · 15 min



THREE WAYS OUT · THIRD MAN · DRIVE · OVER THE TOP

SET UP

· One station at each full goal: 34 × 28 m, with a 3 m escape gate in each far corner.
· Building team: goalkeeper, two centre-backs, a six, and two wide players who stay high and wide …

RULES

· 2 points for escaping through a gate along the ground (third man or drive). 1 point for the long ball reaching a wide player. 2 points to the pressers for winning the ball in the build zone.

COACH IT

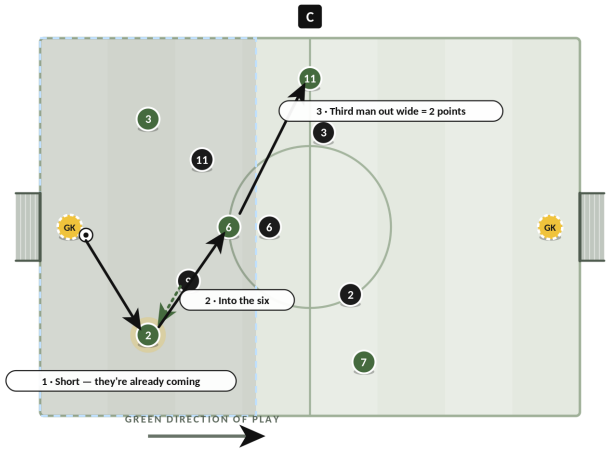
· Technical: The third-man sequence needs three good actions: a firm pass into the six, a receive on the half-turn, and an accurate release wide. Any one of …

SAY

· Nobody's within ten metres of you. Why aren't you running?

18.3 PRESS OR PLAY (5 v 5 + GKs)

Skill game · 15 min



SET UP

· One pitch, 40 × 28 m, using both full goals with a goalkeeper in each.
· No build zone and no retreat line. The pressing team may start pressing as soon as the ball is …

RULES

· Short goal kicks by default, but a long one is allowed from minute 5 and scores 1 if a teammate wins it.
· Goal = 2. Beating the press into the opposition …

COACH IT

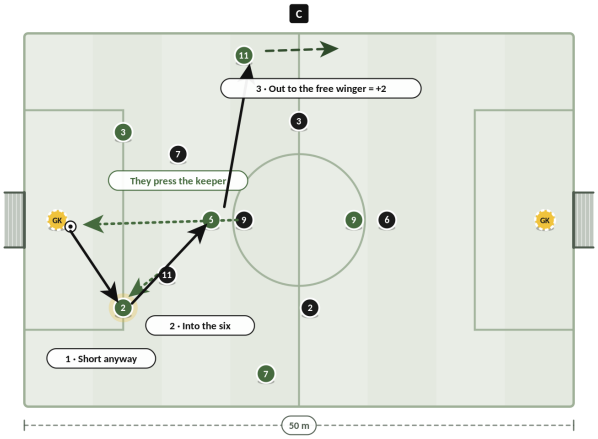
· Technical: Everything faster than in Session 17. First touch is the whole thing — a heavy touch under a live press is a goal against.

SAY

· Decide before they arrive. Wrong and quick beats right and late.

18.4 NO RETREAT MATCH (7 v 7)

Conditioned match · 15 min



SET UP

· 50 × 34 m with full-size goals. No special markings at all.
· Four spare balls in the back of each goal.
· 7 v 7 including goalkeepers (14). With 15–16, play …

RULES

· Goal = 3. Beating the press into the opposition half with the ball = +2.
· Goal kicks may be short or long — the choice belongs to the goalkeeper and the coach does not …

COACH IT

· Technical: All of this theme under match conditions.
· Tactical: The press decides the route. Third man …

SAY

· The break question handles it. Don't instruct.
· You've beaten four of them. What's in front of you?

Alan Cunningham with Claude AI · independent club resource, built around the Irish FA Youth Football Framework