



Press, Cover and Balance

Session 25 • Defending as a team • 14–16 players • 60 minutes

0:00 – 0:10 • 10 MIN

First, Second, Third

0:10 – 0:25 • 15 MIN

The Diagonal

0:25 – 0:40 • 15 MIN

Never Alone

0:40 – 0:55 • 15 MIN

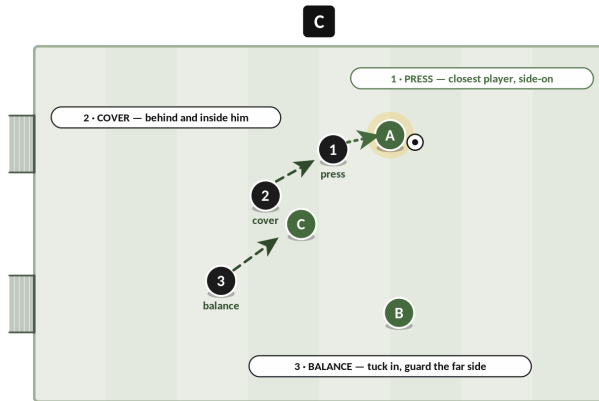
The Unit Match

0:55 – 1:00 • 5 MIN

Questions and homework

25.1 FIRST, SECOND, THIRD

Warm-up • 10 min



SET UP

- 32 × 20 m with two mini goals at one end, about 9 m apart.
- Three attackers against three defenders. With 14–16, run two areas or rotate a three in every ...

RULES

- Attackers score 1 in either mini goal. Defenders score 1 for winning the ball and dribbling over the halfway line.
- Only one defender may press at a time. Two on the ...

COACH IT

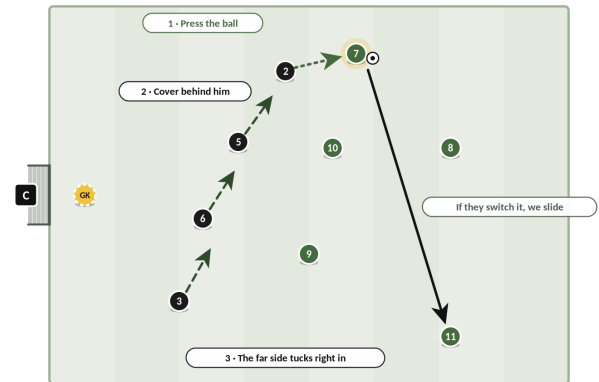
- Technical: Everything from this theme — side-on stance, patience, showing one way. It should be second nature by now; if it isn't, that is the note ...

SAY

- Give the free-kick. It's the fastest teacher in the practice.

25.2 THE DIAGONAL

Technical practice • 15 min



SET UP

- 44 × 32 m with a full goal and goalkeeper at one end.
- Five attackers working across the top; a back four defending. The attackers may not go behind the back ...

RULES

- Attackers score 1 in the full goal. Defenders score 1 for winning it, 2 for winning it with the shape held.
- The back four must stay connected — never more than ...

COACH IT

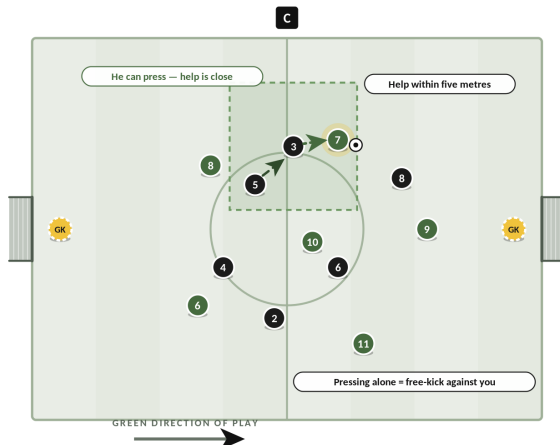
- Technical: Sliding without crossing the feet, and staying side-on so the whole line can see the ball and the space behind.

SAY

- The most common error. Who's the deepest? It should be whoever's furthest from the ball.

25.3 NEVER ALONE (6 v 6 + GKs)

Skill game • 15 min



SET UP

- One pitch, 40 × 30 m, both full goals with a goalkeeper in each.
- 6 v 6 outfield plus two goalkeepers (14). With 15–16, roll substitutes every two minutes.

RULES

- You may only press the ball if a teammate is within about five metres. Breach: indirect free-kick against you.
- A goal = 1 point. Winning the ball with support ...

COACH IT

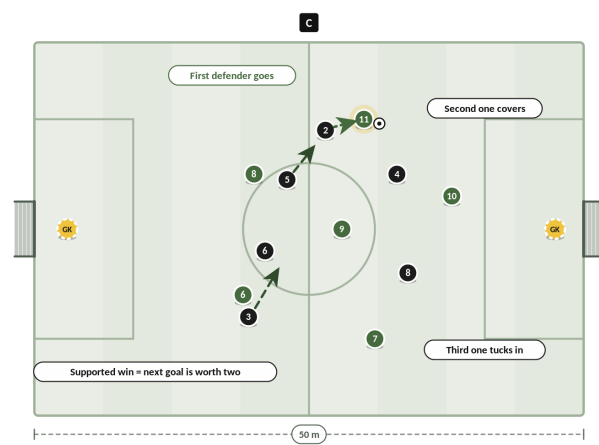
- Technical: Approach speed and body shape while pressing — all this theme material, now with a partner.

SAY

- Free-kick, every time, without discussion.
- One presses, one covers. Not both.

25.4 THE UNIT MATCH (7 v 7)

Conditioned match • 15 min



SET UP

- 50 × 34 m with full-size goals and marked boxes.
- 7 v 7 including goalkeepers (14). With 15–16, play 8v8 or roll substitutes every two minutes.
- 2-3-1 shape assigned.

RULES

- Winning the ball with a teammate within five metres makes your next goal worth 2. Otherwise a goal is 1.
- From minute 7: the presser calls press and the ...

COACH IT

- Technical: Match-speed defending. Note whether this theme individual habits survive under fatigue.
- Tactical: Every defensive shape is press, cover and ...

SAY

- The classic under-12 collapse. One goes. Where are the rest of you?