

ELITE SOCCER

**Exclusive
Training
practices from
top professional
managers**

MANCHESTER UNITED

OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER

DIFFERENT SPEEDS OF ATTACK



BLACKBURN ROVERS
TONY MOWBRAY
Exploiting possession



CRAWLEY TOWN
GABRIELE CIOFFI
Match preparation



ORLANDO PIRATES
ANDREW SPARKES
Shot stopping for keepers



CHERRY ORCHARD
AARON CALLAGHAN
Quick attacks

EXTRA-TIME INTERVIEW WITH CARLISLE UNITED'S STEVEN PRESSLEY

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ISSUE 106/MAY 2019: FROM THE CHAIRMAN



A collection of the best new soccer sessions that will challenge and engage your players on the training ground

Dear Coach,

Welcome to the May issue of Elite Soccer, which features five brand new training sessions from some of the best coaches in the game.

In this month's issue we are delighted to welcome Ole Gunnar Solskjaer to the magazine for the first time. The Manchester United manager has shared a training ground session that his players really enjoy and one that helps to develop the kind of exciting high-speed attacks that are key to United's style of play. His session also gives his team the opportunity to practise breaking down compact defences with more controlled attacks too.

Tony Mowbray is manager of Championship side Blackburn Rovers and he has shared a series of activities focused on keeping and exploiting possession in order to create goal scoring opportunities. Elsewhere in this issue, Crawley Town boss, Gabriele Cioffi, has written a session that will help players to understand their options for playing out from the goalkeeper against specific opponents.

Andrew Sparkes is currently first team goalkeeping coach of South African giants, Orlando Pirates, and he has shared a shot stopping session that, as it progresses, helps to integrate goalkeepers with their outfield team mates.

Aaron Callaghan is director of football at Dublin club, Cherry Orchard, and his practice is all about quick attacking football. It will help teams to play without fear, with the emphasis on technical quality.

I hope you find that the sessions in this issue will be of help to your coaching. Elite Soccer will return next month with five more engaging training practices.

Howard Wilkinson

Howard Wilkinson, LMA Chairman

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...with Carlisle United
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MANAGER PROFILES

Here are the five managers and coaches we're delighted to welcome into this issue of *Elite Soccer*

OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER

MANCHESTER UNITED

Six times a Premier League title winner as a player with Manchester United, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was a member of United's treble winning team of 1999, famously scoring the injury time winner in the Champions League final against Bayern Munich. On the international stage he represented Norway 67 times and played at the 1998 World Cup and at Euro 2000.

Forced to retire through injury in 2007, he remained at Manchester United in a coaching role and became the club's reserve team manager in 2008. While in this position, he coached United's reserves to the Premier Reserve League title in 2010.

Returning to his native Norway in 2011, he was appointed manager of his former club, Molde. He led them to back-to-back Tippeligaen titles in his first two seasons and enjoyed further success when he helped the club to victory in the 2013 Norwegian Football Cup Final. In January 2014, he joined Cardiff City as manager but he couldn't prevent the club's relegation from the Premier League and he subsequently returned to Molde for a second stint in charge.

Having finished the 2018 league season as runners up, shortly before the end of the year Solskjaer was appointed as caretaker manager of Manchester United. His first match in charge saw him secure a 5-1 victory over his former club, Cardiff City. It was the first time Manchester United had scored five goals or more in a Premier League fixture since Sir Alex Ferguson's final game in charge of the club.

Such was the immediate turnaround in the team's form, he was voted Premier League Manager of the Month for January 2019, and by the end of March, having won 14 of his 19 matches in charge, Solskjaer was appointed as Manchester United manager on a permanent basis.

The session in this issue of *Elite Soccer* was produced by Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, along with his first team coaches Michael Carrick, Kieran McKenna and Mike Phelan.

TONY MOWBRAY

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Beginning his coaching career as first team coach at Ipswich Town, Tony Mowbray had a brief spell as caretaker manager at the Portman Road club before taking his first permanent managerial job at Hibernian in the Scottish Premier League in 2004. In his debut season at Easter Road, he won the Scottish Football Writers' Association Manager of the Year award.

Moving to West Bromwich Albion, he won the Championship title in 2008 and led the club in the Premier League the following season.

Mowbray was then appointed as manager of his former club, Celtic, before returning to Middlesbrough, the club where he had started his playing career.

He subsequently enjoyed a spell as manager of Coventry City before joining Blackburn Rovers in February 2017. He was unable to prevent the struggling side from being relegated, but under his managership Blackburn won promotion back to the Championship after just one season in League One.

GABRIELE CIOFFI

CRAWLEY TOWN

A lower division defender for much of his playing career in his home country of Italy, Gabriele Cioffi rose through the divisions to play one season in Serie A for Torino in his early 30s. After hanging up his boots with Carpi in 2012, he stayed on at the club as assistant coach. He subsequently managed Gavorrano in the fourth tier of Italian football, before spending two years in Australia as a youth coach for Eastern United.

He has also worked as Henk Ten Cate's assistant coach at Al Jazira Club in the UAE and as a member of Gianfranco Zola's backroom staff at Birmingham City. He has

been manager of League Two club Crawley Town since 2018.

ANDREW SPARKES

ORLANDO PIRATES

Currently the first team goalkeeping coach of South African giants, Orlando Pirates, Andrew Sparkes is a UEFA 'A' licensed goalkeeping specialist with over 12 years of professional coaching in the UK, USA, Austria and Africa.

Prior to joining the Orlando Pirates, he spent six years as the head of academy goalkeeping at both Swansea City and at New York Red Bulls in the MLS. He spent a year with current Austrian champions, FC Red Bull Salzburg as the goalkeeping coach of their U18s team, while on the international stage he served as goalkeeping coach for Sierra Leone's national team for the 2014 World Cup qualifiers.

AARON CALLAGHAN

CHERRY ORCHARD

After a playing career that took in spells at Stoke City, Oldham Athletic, Crewe and Preston North End in the English Football League, and at Crusaders in Northern Ireland, he started his coaching career as player-manager of Crusaders.

He enjoyed spells as manager of Athlone Town, Longford Town, UCD, Bohemians and Carrick Rangers, who he led to the Northern Irish League Cup final in 2017.

He has also served as a coach educator for the Football Association of Ireland, as a sports development officer for Dublin City Council and he spent two years as coach for the Republic of Ireland U14s team. Currently director of football at Dublin club, Cherry Orchard FC, he has a degree in Sports Management and is the holder of a UEFA Pro licence.

MANCHESTER UNITED

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

with Michael Carrick, Kieran McKenna & Mike Phelan

Different speeds of attack

SET-UP

AREA

72x54 yards

EQUIPMENT

Balls, bibs, cones, 2 full size goals

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

22 players + 2 goalkeepers

SESSION TIME

Main practice: 20mins

9v9 game: 20mins

Overview

This session is about developing the ability to attack at speed with immediate forward passing and forward running, combined with the ability to build controlled attacks against a set defensive structure. At Manchester United the players really enjoy this practice, as it involves so many different attacking and defending elements in one dynamic, competitive and game-realistic session. The set-up allows us to develop the exciting high-speed attacks that are key to our desired playing style at United. It also gives us the opportunity to practise breaking down compact and organised defences.

We run the practice every two to three weeks when we do not have a midweek game. Within our physical periodization, the practice will usually take place three days before match day, when we want an intensive output of high-speed running. We will alter small details within the practice depending on the next opponents.

What do I get the players to do?

Different speeds of attack

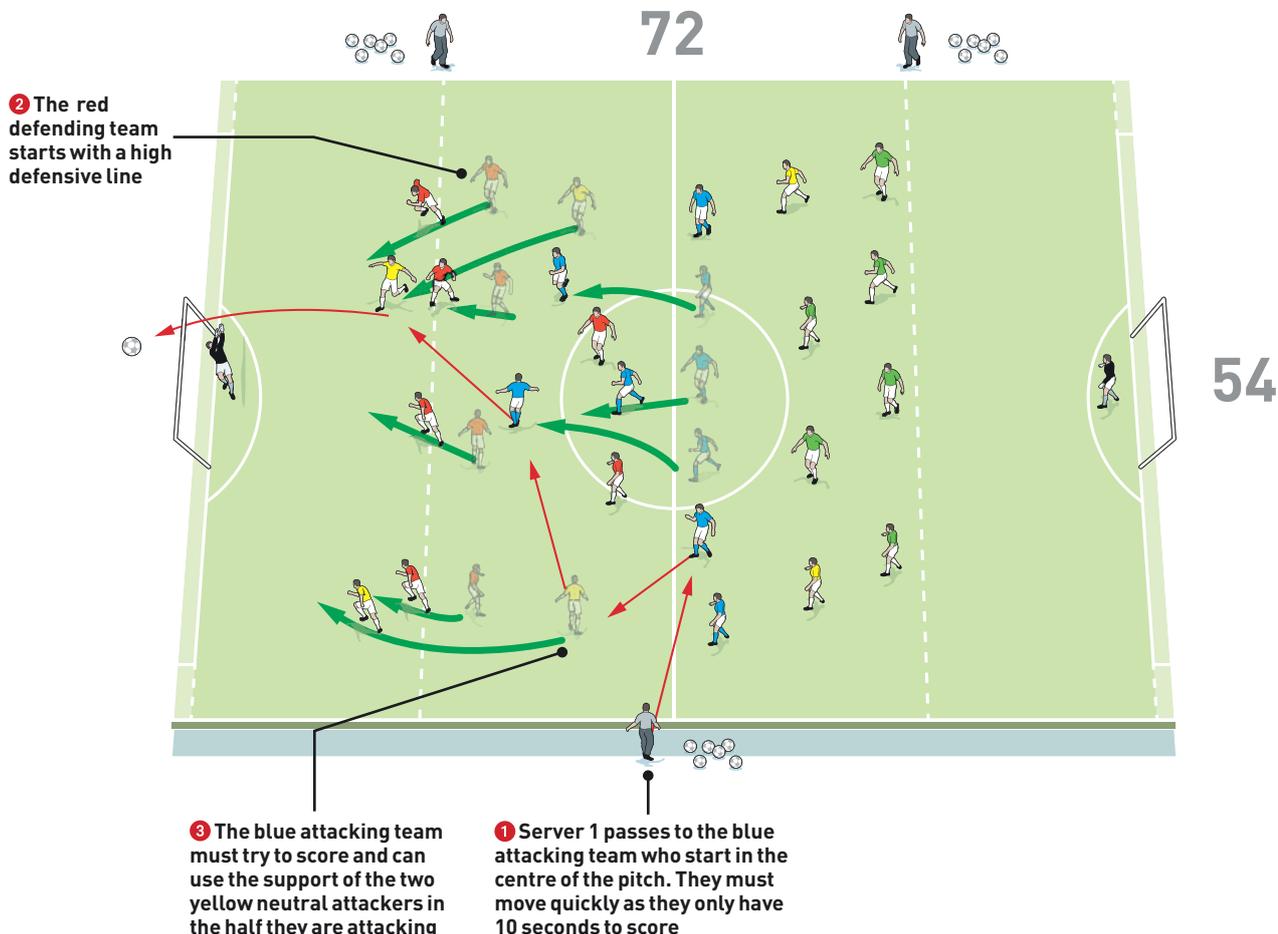
We set up in an area of 72x54 yards using the space between the two penalty boxes of our pitch, with a goal and a goalkeeper at each end. We're using 22 outfield players, split into three teams of six and four neutrals who support the

KEY

- Ball movement
- Player movement
- Dribble

“At Manchester United the players really enjoy this practice, as it involves so many different attacking and defending elements in one dynamic session”

1a FAST ATTACK BY BLUES



OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER : DIFFERENT SPEEDS OF ATTACK

attack. One team starts at each end and defends that goal, and the third team are the attackers and they start in the centre of the pitch. Two of the neutrals are fixed in each half. We are also using three servers, two on one side of the pitch and one on the other side.

We run two types of attack with each team. We rotate the attacking team as follows...

ORDER OF ATTACKS

- Blues: Fast Attack against reds
- Blues: Controlled Attack against reds
- Reds: Fast Attack against greens
- Reds: Controlled Attack against greens
- Greens: Fast Attack against blues
- Greens: Controlled Attack against blues

Fast attack by blues

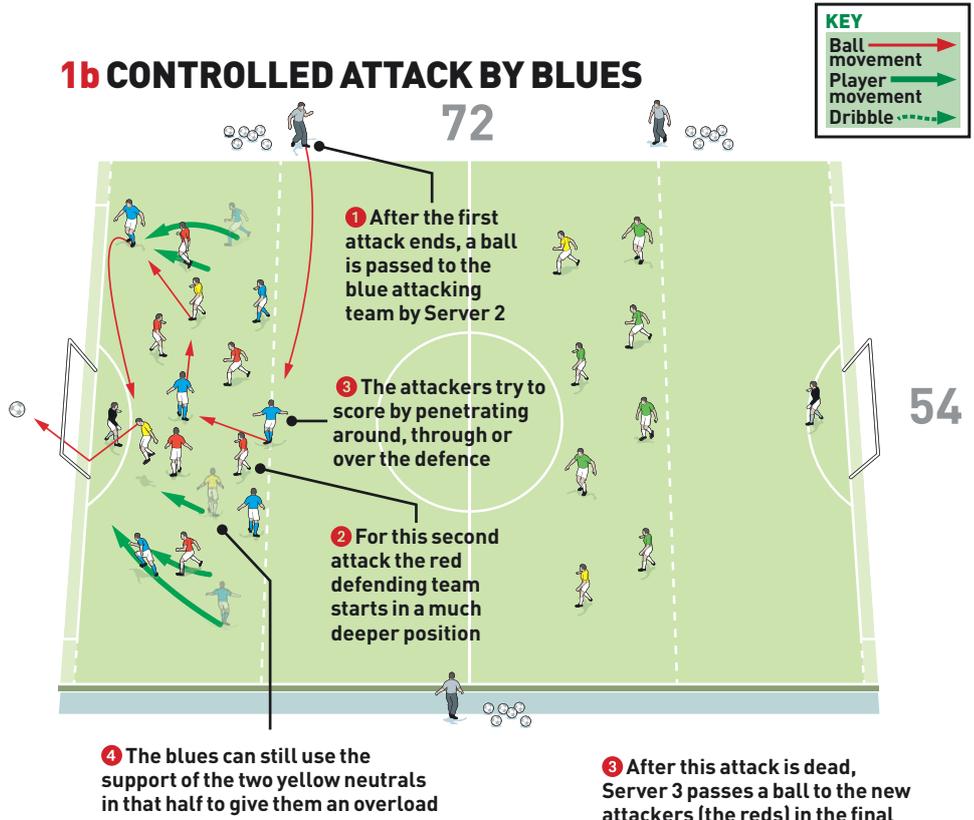
Server 1 passes a ball into the blue attacking team in the centre. They attack the reds at one end of the pitch as quickly as possible, using the support of the two neutral yellow players in that half, as shown [1a]. The attacking team has a maximum of 10 seconds to score. If the defenders win the ball, they should clear it out of the area.

Controlled attack by blues

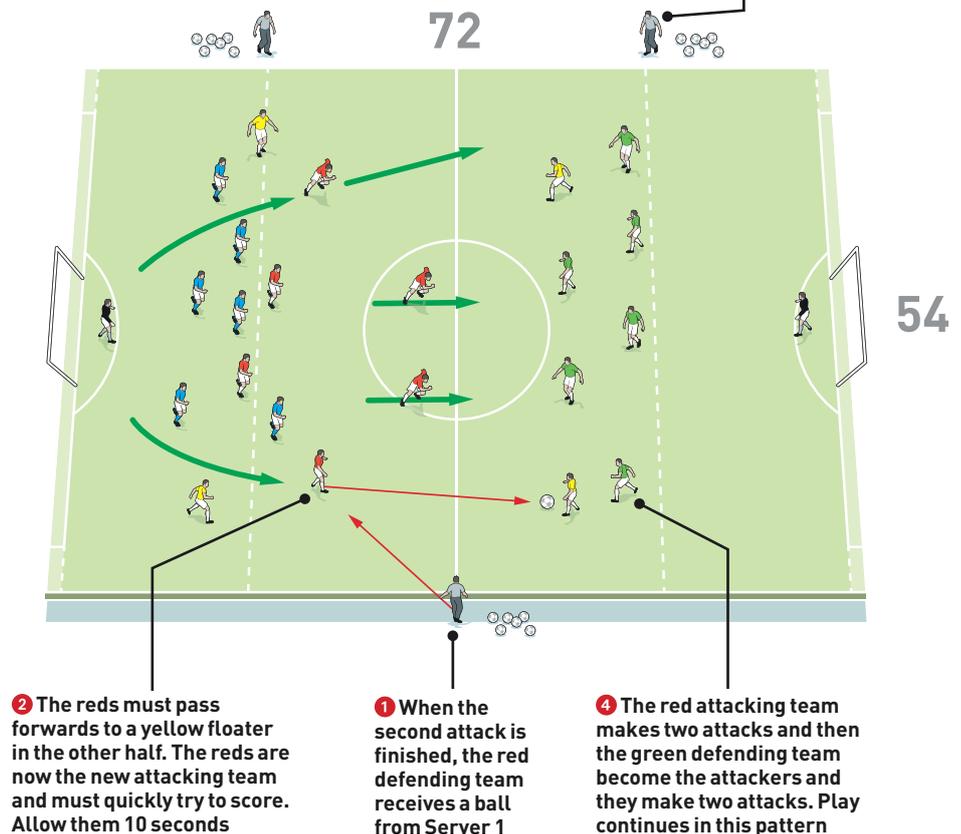
After the first attack finishes with either an attempt at goal or a successful defensive action, Server 2 plays a ball into the blue attacking team, as shown [1b]. In this second attack, the red defending players start in a much deeper position and the attackers must look to penetrate the defence either by going around, through or over the defensive structure.

Fast attack by reds

When the second attack is finished, the red defending team now receives a ball from Server 1 and they immediately pass forwards to one of the yellow neutral attackers in the other half of the pitch and then counter-attack that end as quickly as possible against the green defending team, as shown [1c]. The reds are now the new attacking team.



1c FAST ATTACK BY REDS



OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER : DIFFERENT SPEEDS OF ATTACK

The session continues with the attacking team always making two attacks (one fast and one controlled), and with the defending team always becoming the new attackers after facing two attacks.

How do I progress the session?

Progression

To progress the practice we alter the attacking overload on the first attack and give the change a time restriction. For instance, we remove two players from the defensive team, normally the full backs, for the first six seconds of the first attack, as shown [2]. This means the attacking team has six seconds to score before

the two defenders are reintroduced. This further encourages the high speed of the first attack against an unbalanced defence.

How would you put this into a game situation?

9v9 game

A simple way to implement these ideas in a game situation is to introduce a deep offside line at each end that doubles as a drop off line for the team out of possession.

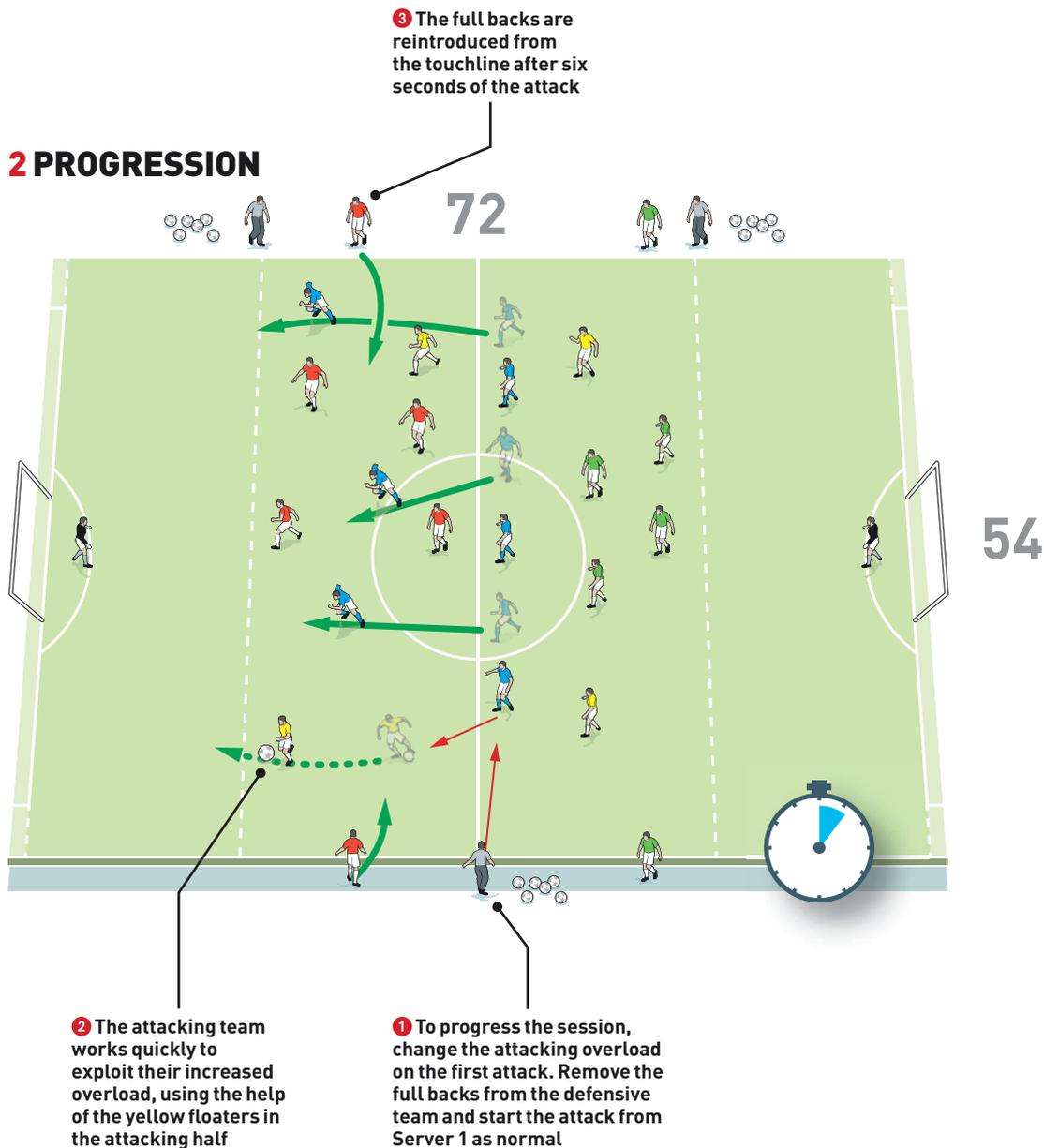
We're using 16 outfield players and two goalkeepers, split into two teams of nine. When out of possession the defending team must have all their players in the three quarters of the

pitch below the drop off line – this encourages the defending team to defend in a compact way in certain areas and then look for opportunities to attack quickly into space when winning the ball, as shown [3].

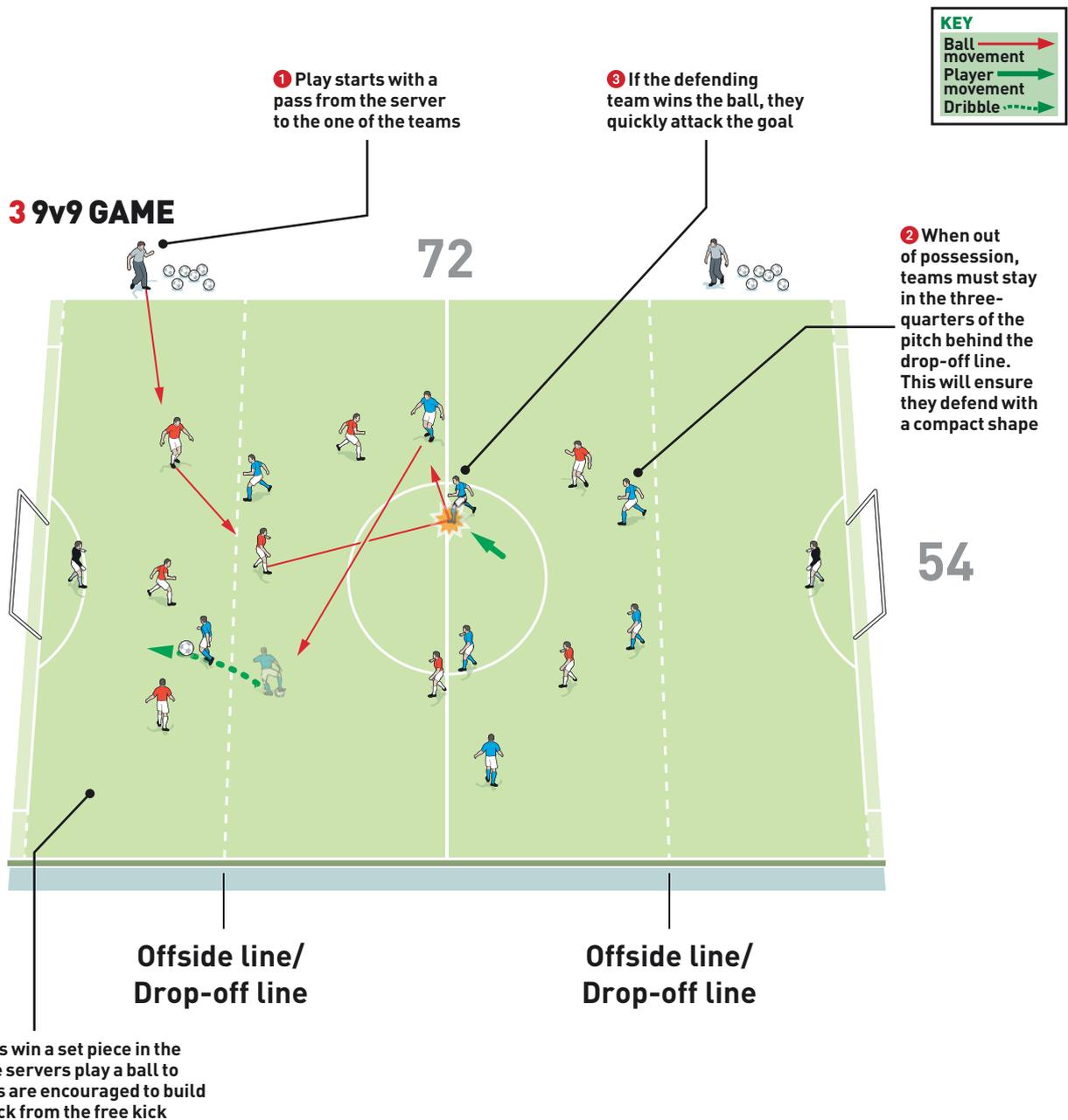
Additionally, a ball can be played in from the side immediately on the award of any set piece in the attacking quarter. This encourages the team to build sustained and controlled attacks in the opposition half.

What are the key things to look for?

We want to see players making two kinds of attack: fast attacks and controlled attacks. When making fast attacks we are looking for the



OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER : DIFFERENT SPEEDS OF ATTACK



intent to pass forwards immediately on regaining the ball, with supporting players making forward runs that create overload situations against the defence. We then need to see players exploit the overload with correct decision-making and an effective execution of passes and finishing. On the controlled attacks, we want the players to take up intelligent positions that stretch the opposition defence, with good ball circulation, off the ball movement and lively combination play to penetrate and create chances. From the defensive perspective, the players should try to delay the fast

attack and deflect the play into wide areas. Then they should reorganise into defensive shape for the second attack and apply more normal defensive principles to stop chances being created.

What are the typical mistakes players might make and how do I avoid them?

Typically, there can be a reluctance to pass forwards and to run forward on regaining the ball – we really have to drum home the importance and value of the early forward pass and encourage the desire to run beyond the ball within our playing style.

On the second attack, the players can be hurried and frantic in possession at times, therefore we need to emphasise the different speeds of attack and the need to change tempo while in possession.

How long does the session last?

The main activity usually lasts about 20 minutes, with the blocks of work dependent on the physical outcomes desired. Usually we would precede this with a 12-minute technical practice [not shown] and a smaller 15-minute overload practice [not shown] that introduce the key attacking themes.

BLACKBURN ROVERS

**Tony Mowbray
Exploiting
possession**

SET-UP

AREA

Up to 60x40 yards

EQUIPMENT

Balls, bibs, cones, 2 full size goals

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Up to 16 players + 2 goalkeepers

SESSION TIME

Normal possession: 10mins
Directional possession: 10mins
Small-sided game 2v2: 15mins
Small-sided game 4v4: 15mins
Small-sided game 8v8: 20mins

Overview

This session is focused on creating opportunities from possession. Every team should work on their ability to maintain and exploit possession because, when harnessed to attacking intent, keeping hold of the ball is the best way to break down defences and create goal-scoring chances. This kind of play greatly increases a team's chances of winning games. We start off with a simple possession square and as the session develops, players are encouraged to use possession to their advantage while attacking. The session progresses seamlessly through a series of possession activities to an 8v8 game to finish.

What do I get the players to do?

Normal possession

We set up an area of 25x25 yards and we're using 16 outfield players, split into two teams of eight. Teams have one player on each of the four sides of the area and four players in the centre, as shown [1]. The coach starts by passing to one of the players in the centre and teams must keep possession, using the help of their team mates on the outside. When out of possession, teams should press to win the ball and then keep hold of it themselves in the same manner.

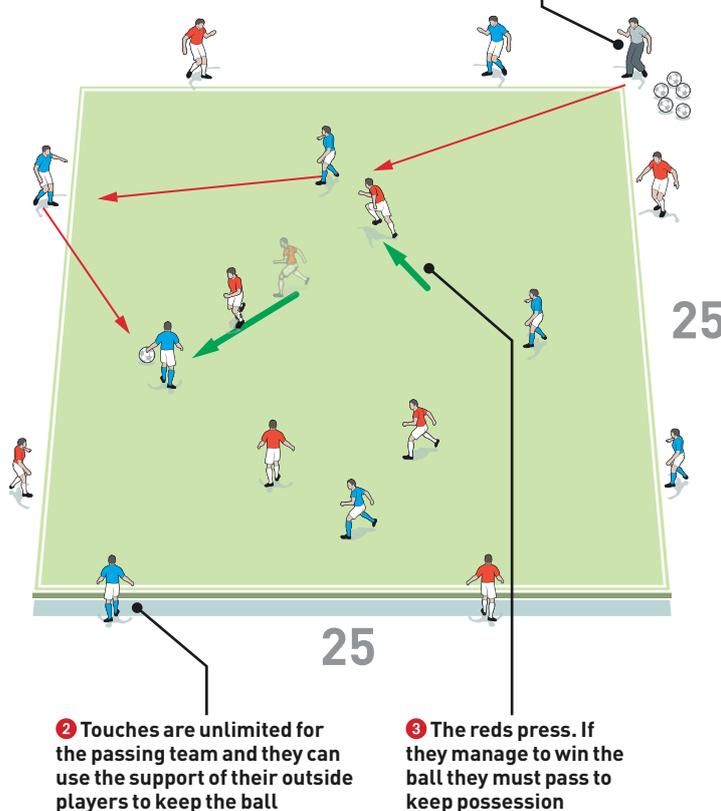
Directional possession

Using the same 25x25-yard

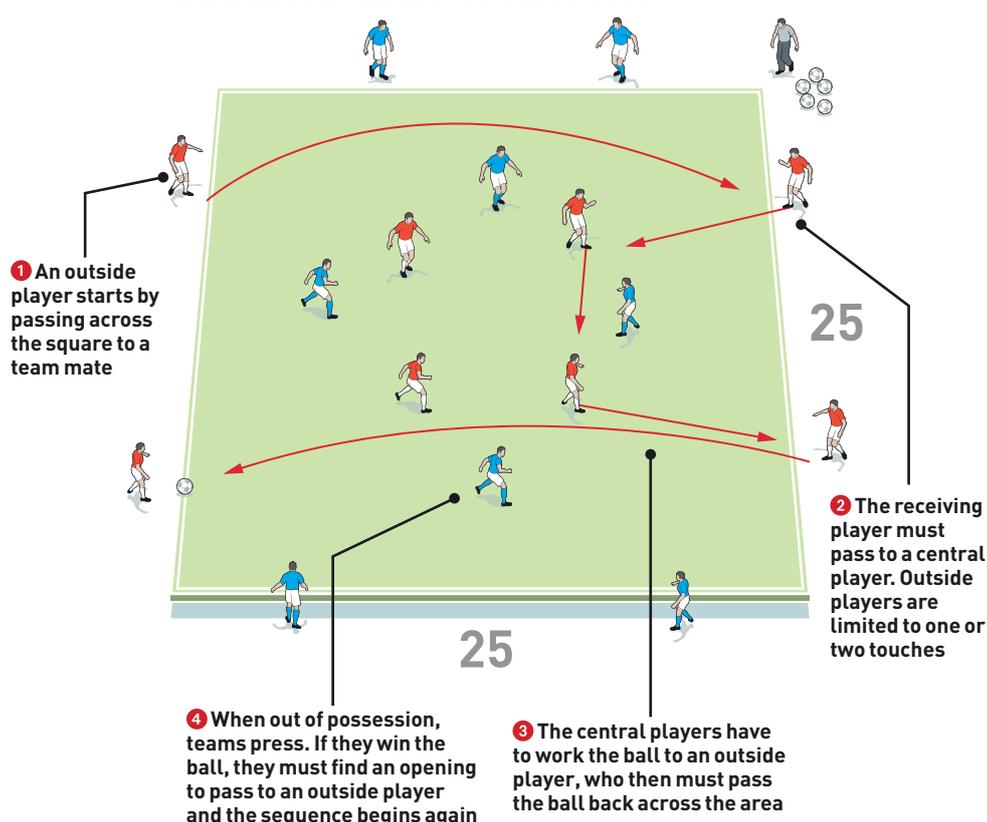
KEY

- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble →

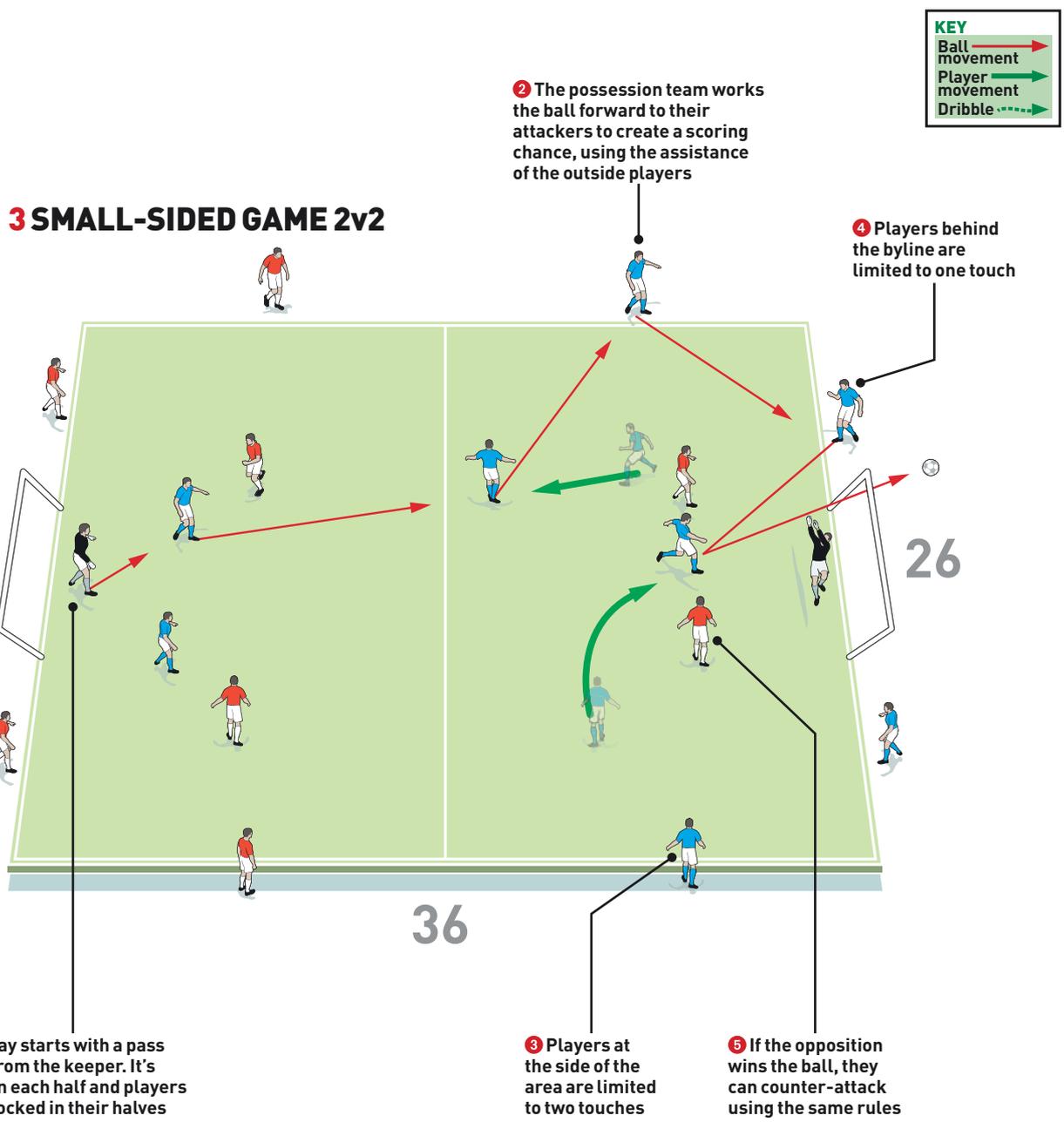
1 NORMAL POSSESSION



2 DIRECTIONAL POSSESSION



TONY MOWBRAY: EXPLOITING POSSESSION



area, we again set up with two teams of eight players, with a 4v4 in the centre. The remaining players are set up as shown [2], with each team having two pairs facing each other on opposite sides of the area. The aim is for teams to transfer the ball from one side of the square to the other without losing possession. Play always begins with an outside player, who must pass across the square to a team mate on the other side. The receiving player then passes to one of the central players. The central players have to try and work the ball back to another outside player, who receives and plays back

to the side of the square that the ball started. The other team press and if they win possession they must try to work the ball to one of their outside players, who then starts the same passing pattern again. We limit the outside players to one or two touches.

What are the key things to look for? We want to see players using a variety of passing styles, such as soft passes and fast passes, both in the centre of the area and to the outside players. It's also essential that players use the correct body shape when receiving the ball, particularly when touches

are limited, and they must show an awareness of the positions of their team mates.

What do I get the players to do next?
Small-sided game 2v2
We set up an area of 36x26 yards, with a goal and a goalkeeper at each end. We're using 16 outfield players, split into two teams of eight. Each team has two players on the pitch in the half they are defending and another two in the half they are attacking. Players must remain in their halves. Each team also has four players around the outside of the pitch at the end they are attacking, as shown [3], with

TONY MOWBRAY: EXPLOITING POSSESSION

the players at the side limited to two touches and the players behind the byline limited to one touch. Play starts from the goalkeeper. It's 2v2 in each half and the possession team must work the ball up to their attackers and create a goal-scoring opportunity, using the help of their team mates around the edge of the pitch if necessary. The opposition press and if they win the ball, they counter-attack using the same rules.

How do I progress the session?

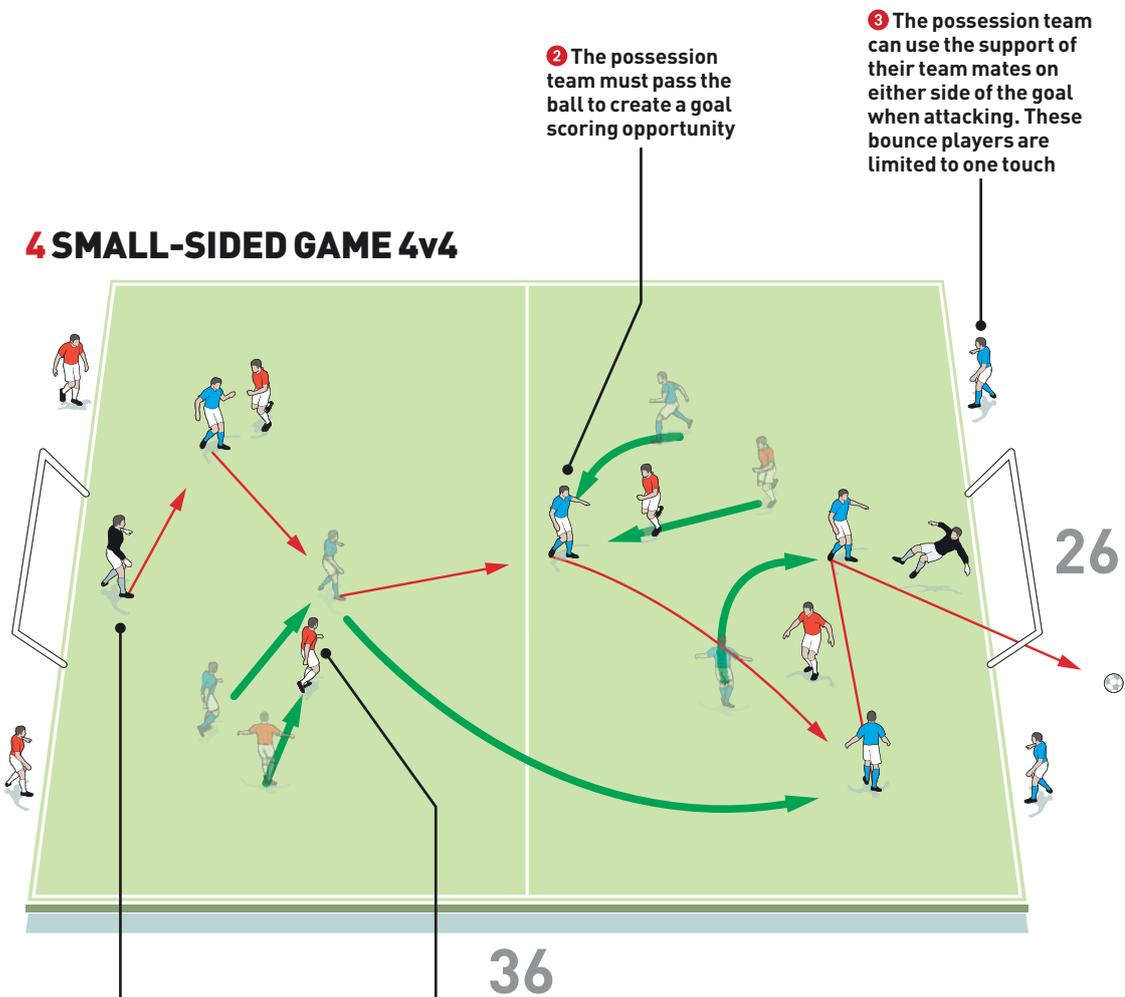
Small-sided game 4v4

We use the same 36x26-yard area as in the previous activity, with a goal and goalkeeper at each end, but this time we're using 12 outfield players split into two teams of six. It's 4v4 in the main area and the inside players have free movement, while each team also has two supporting players behind the byline of the goal they are attacking, as shown [4]. These players are limited to one touch.

The team with the ball must keep possession and try to create a goal-scoring chance, using the support of an outside player if needed.

What are the key things to look for?

We want to see a high quality of passing, good movement to receive the ball, inventive attacking and quick combination play. In terms of creating chances, attackers should make good off the ball movement in order to receive crosses and they should



4 SMALL-SIDED GAME 4v4

1 Play starts with a pass out from the keeper. It's 4v4 for the inside players and they can move anywhere on the pitch

4 If the opposition wins the ball, they counter-attack

2 The possession team must pass the ball to create a goal scoring opportunity

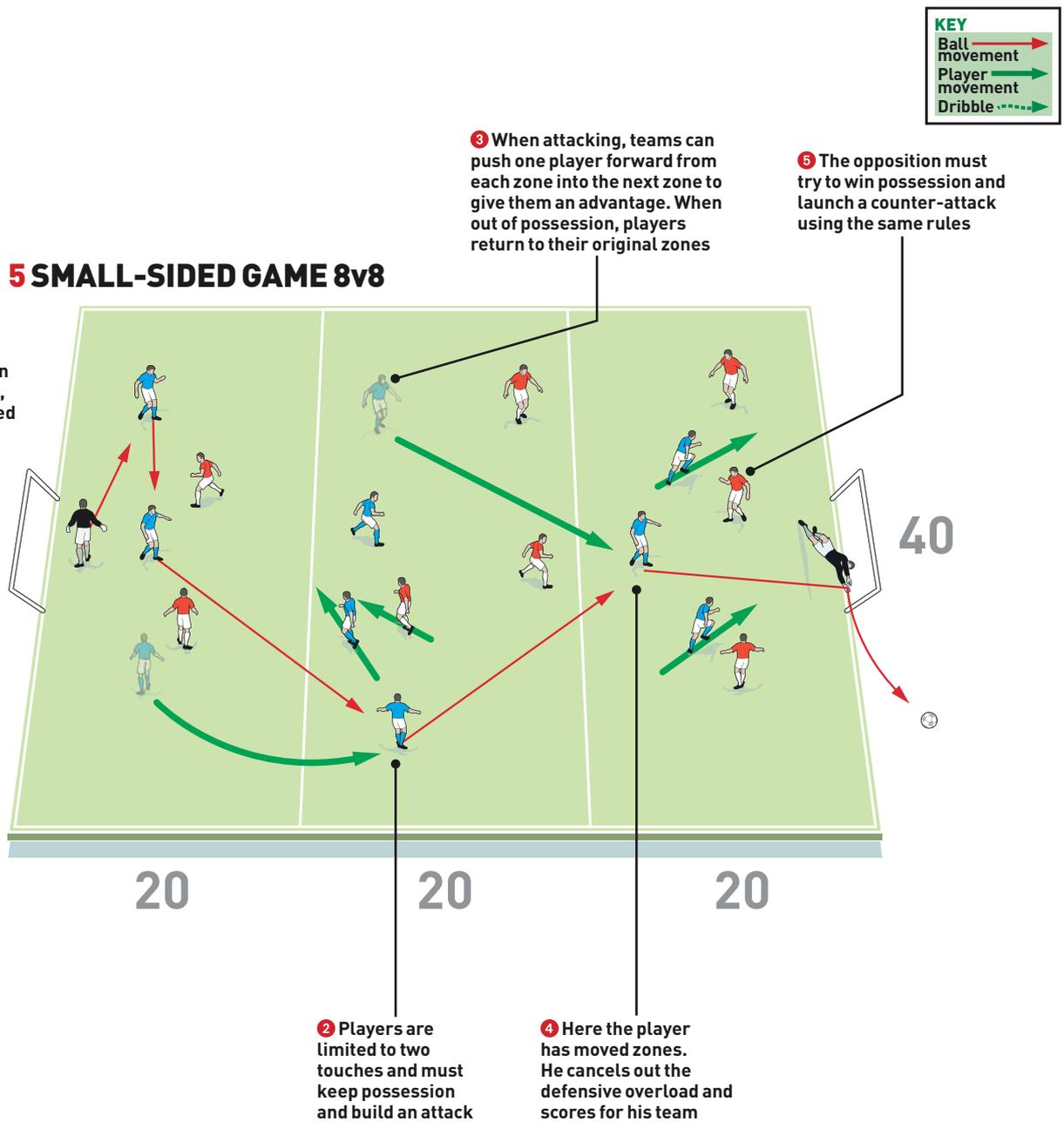
3 The possession team can use the support of their team mates on either side of the goal when attacking. These bounce players are limited to one touch

KEY

- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble - - - - - →

“Keeping hold of the ball is the best way to break down defences and create goal-scoring chances”

TONY MOWBRAY: EXPLOITING POSSESSION



be effective with their heading and shooting techniques. We want to see the defensive players demonstrating a good body shape and taking the correct angle of approach, blocking well and tackling efficiently. It's important for the defenders to be aware of the position of their team mates in the other half and use a variety of passing techniques to get the ball to them.

How would you put this into a game situation?

Small-sided game 8v8

We set up an area of 60x40 yards with

a goal and goalkeeper at each end. The pitch is split into three 20-yard zones. We're using 16 outfield players split into two teams of eight. Each team starts with three players in their defensive zone, three players in the midfield zone and two players in their attacking zone. We play an 8v8 game with all players limited to two touches. To begin with players are locked in their zones, but when in possession teams can push one player forward from each zone into the next zone, in order to give them an advantage when attacking, as shown [5].

After the attack has concluded, or if the team loses possession, the players who pushed up must drop back into their original zone. As a progression, play the same game but instead of getting one player from each zone to drop back while defending, to give that team a defensive overload. To finish the session, take out all three zones, remove the touch restrictions and play a normal 8v8 game, encouraging players to take note of all the coaching points from the previous activities.

CRAWLEY TOWN
Gabriele Cioffi
Match preparation

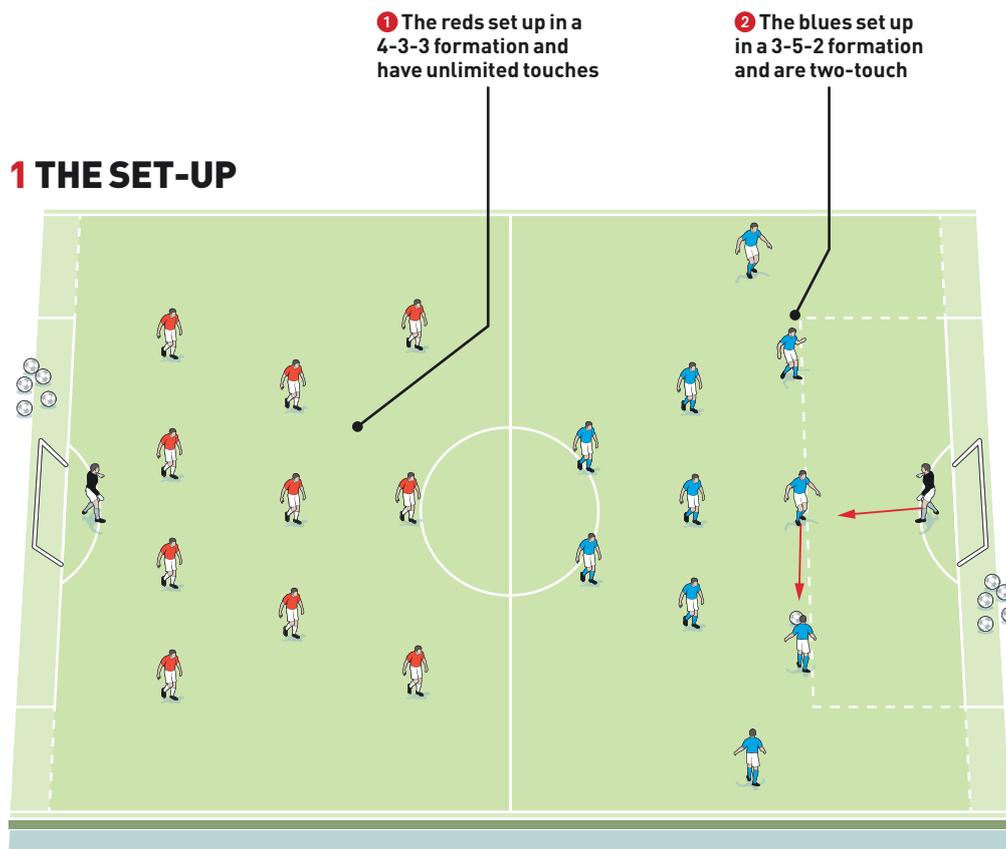
SET-UP
AREA
Full pitch
EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs, cones, 2 full size goals
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
20 players + 2 goalkeepers
SESSION TIME
Part A: 15mins
Part B: 15mins
Part C: 15mins

Overview
This session is focussed on preparing players for an upcoming opponent, specifically with regard to getting them to understand their options for playing out from the goalkeeper against the exact formation they are likely to encounter. It also prepares them to play against the opposition when outnumbered in certain areas of the pitch. I like my teams to play an aggressive, penetrative and well-organised style of football and I try to give players an understanding of the scenarios they are going to face during the next game. I want players to be conscious of what the

opponents are likely to do. Football is made up of both predictable movements and unpredictable events. The predictable movements include set plays, patterns of play and the use of passing lanes, while the unpredictable events include things such as the skills of the individual player, the weather conditions and so on. During the week leading up to a game, I want my players to have built a picture of all the predictable movements of the game, so all of their mental energy will be focused on the unpredictable. If we were playing on a Saturday, I would run this at training on a Thursday.

KEY

- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble →



▲ Set up as if playing an 11v11 game. The reds line up in the formation you expect your next opponents to use. Coach the blue team, who start and restart by playing out from the back

GABRIELE CIOFFI: MATCH PREPARATION

What do I get the players to do?

Part A: the set-up

We set up between the penalty boxes, using the full width of the pitch. We have a goal at each end, and a ready supply of balls around the pitch.

We're using 20 outfield players and two goalkeepers, playing 11v11, as shown [1]. As we're setting up to face a specific upcoming opponent, we get one team to line-up in the formation we expect the opposition to use (here we're using 4-3-3) and they have unlimited touches.

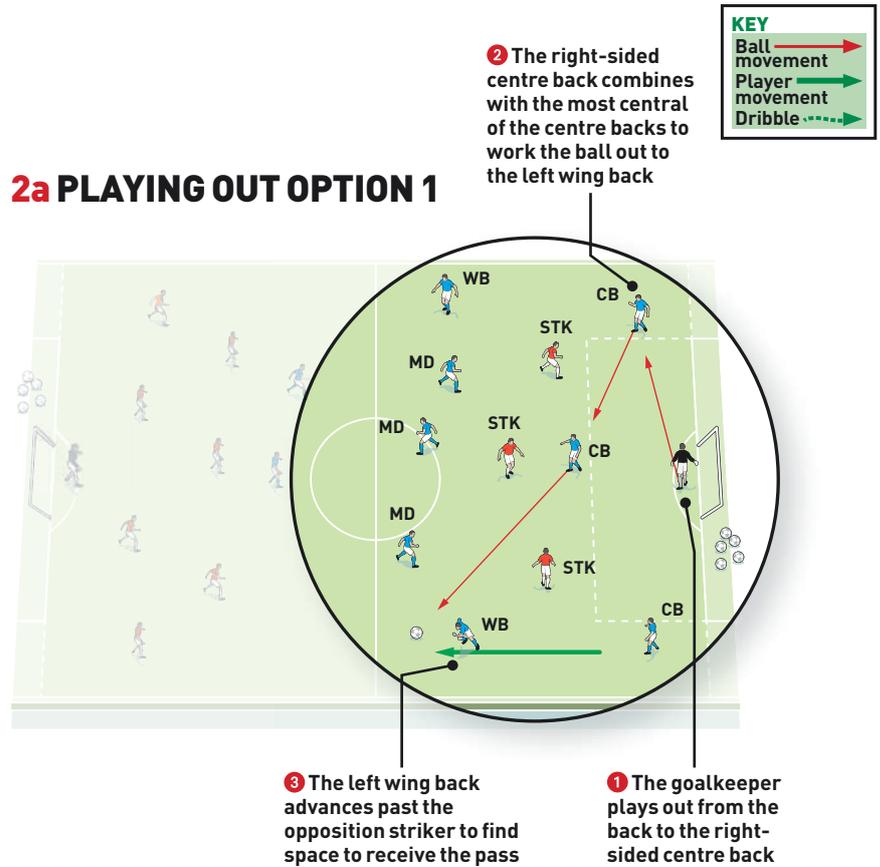
We coach the other team (here set-up in a 3-5-2 formation) and we are restricting these players to two-touch, although this can change depending on the style of aggression of the opponent – and by that I mean how aggressively they press the goal kick and how many passes on average it takes before they win the ball back.

These drills are to make players aware of how we want them to play out from the back in our next match. Before this part of the session begins, I underline to the players our pressing area (the area in which we press forwards with the ball). I also explain which players should begin the move forwards and how they do it. I also make them understand what happens and what they do if they break past the first pressing aggression of the opposition and progress into the central third of the pitch. We then spend 15 minutes working on the below options of playing out from the back.

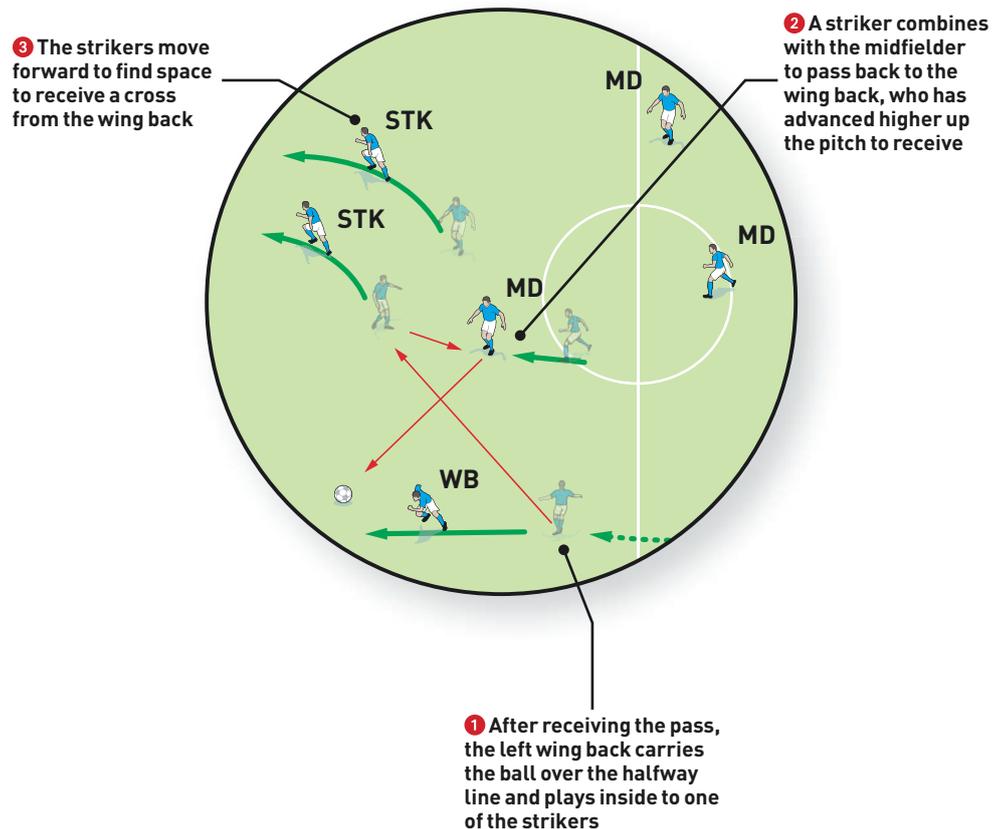
Playing out option 1

In the first drill the goalkeeper plays out from the back through two central defenders who combine to pass out to one of the wing backs, who has moved into space to receive, as shown [2a]. The midfielders and the strikers also move to find space to support the wing back, who plays the ball inside to combine with his team mates and then receives the ball back higher up

2a PLAYING OUT OPTION 1



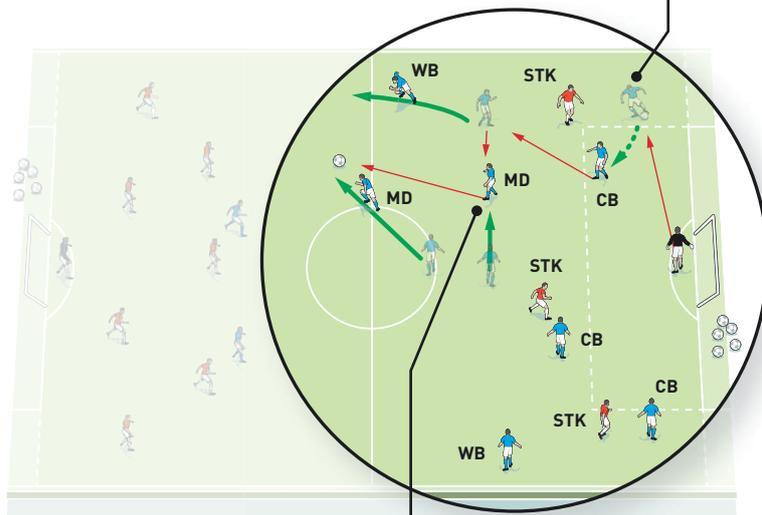
2b



GABRIELE CIOFFI: MATCH PREPARATION

KEY
 Ball movement →
 Player movement →
 Dribble →

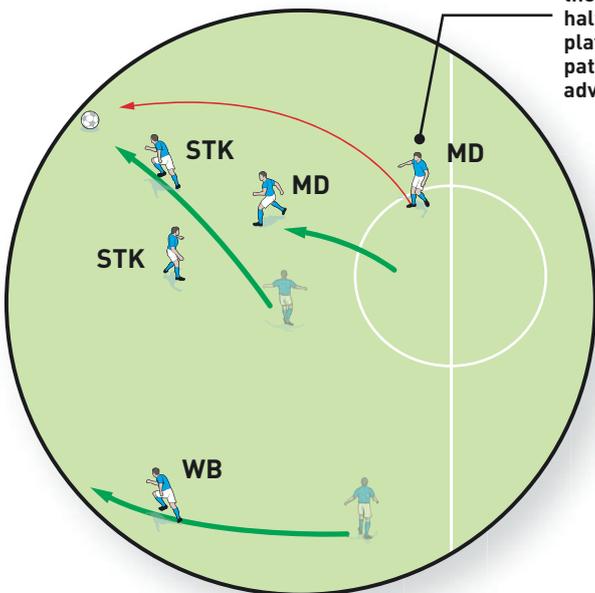
3a PLAYING OUT OPTION 2



1 The goalkeeper plays out to the right-sided centre back, who moves inside to avoid the press of the opposition striker. He passes down the line to the right wing back

2 The right wing back combines with a midfielder to work the ball forward to a second midfielder on the halfway line

3b



1 The second midfielder takes the ball over the halfway line and plays it into the path of one of the advancing strikers

the pitch, as shown [2b]. We let them play for a while and then we stop play and restart the drill from the goal kick, so they continue to focus on their passing patterns for playing out from the back and working the ball through the middle third.

Playing out option 2

The second option of playing out involves passing to one of the centre backs, who receives and moves inside with the ball to find the space to pass. He then plays down the line to the wing back, who combines with a midfielder to pass forwards into the path of second midfielder, as shown [3a]. On receiving the pass, the second midfielder takes the ball over the halfway line and plays into the path of one of the two advancing strikers, as shown [3b]. As before, we allow them to play for a while, before restarting play with a goal kick.

What do I get the players to do next?

Part B: playing outnumbered

We use the same set-up again but now we focus on simulating a situation when we are outnumbered in certain areas of the pitch [not shown].

We start from the kick off and we play an 11v11 game as normal for 15 minutes. However, at certain points we call for two or three of our players to kneel for five seconds, leaving the team we are coaching outnumbered. We do this in areas where we could be outnumbered in a match, or imbalanced because some players are tiring.

We usually remove two players who are possibly connected in the defensive phase, like a full back and a winger, or a chain of three players. We set the players a question – how do we react if this happens? The drill is interrupted and I let them discuss solutions and then ask them to implement their plan when we restart the game. ▼

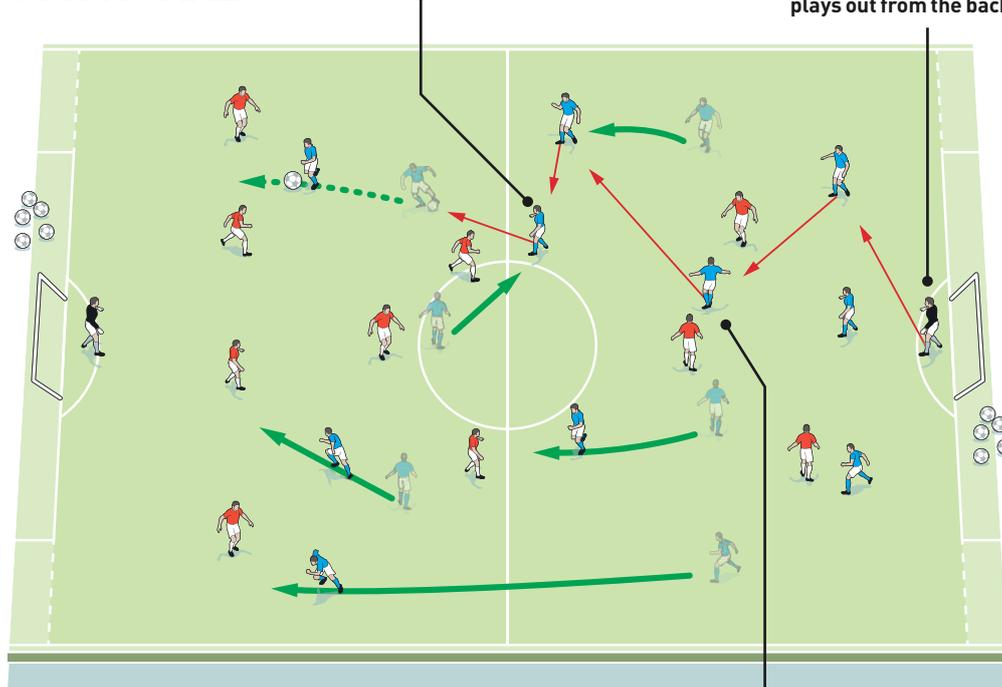
“We like players to find the solutions to problems themselves and we want to see them coaching each other”

GABRIELE CIOFFI: MATCH PREPARATION

KEY

- Ball movement
- Player movement
- Dribble

4 11v11 GAME



3 A second midfielder drops back into space, receives the ball and plays forwards to the striker

1 Combining what has been learnt from the first two parts of the session, play an 11v11 game. The goalkeeper starts with a goal kick and plays out from the back

2 A central defender receives and combines with a midfielder to work the ball out wide to the right wing back, avoiding the press of the opposing striker

“I try to give players an understanding of the scenario they are going to face during the next game and what their opponents are going to do”

How would you put this in a game situation?

Part C: 11v11 game

We finish the activities by asking the players to combine what has been learnt from the first two parts of the session into an 11v11 game, played between the penalty boxes of the pitch with a goal at each end, as shown [4].

For this game, both teams have unlimited touches. We play for 15 minutes.

What are the key things to look out for?

We want to see that players can think for themselves as much as possible. They must show they understand the predictable elements of the

game and what they have to do in certain situations, but they must also demonstrate they have the intelligence to interpret and react to less predictable situations. We like to let the players find out the solutions to problems themselves and we want to see them coaching each other, either when they are playing or when we stop the game.

ORLANDO PIRATES
Andrew Sparkes
Shot stopping for keepers

SET-UP
AREA
Up to 54x44 yards
EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs, cones, 3 mannequins, 2 full size goals
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 players + up to 3 goalkeepers
SESSION TIME
Shot stopping 1: 10mins
Shot stopping 2: 10mins
Shot stopping 3: 20mins
3v2 Shot stopping: 20mins
5v5 Game: 20mins

Overview
This is a functional shot stopping session that starts using just the goalkeepers and the goalkeeping coach and it then progresses into a broader session and a small-sided game with the outfield players. The integration of the outfield players makes the session more match realistic and it will enhance the goalkeeper's decision making in game situations by reading and understanding different cues, such as his position in relation to the area of the pitch, the threat to goal, and the recovering defenders. It develops the relationship between the goalkeeper and his defenders, whilst also working on the attacking players'

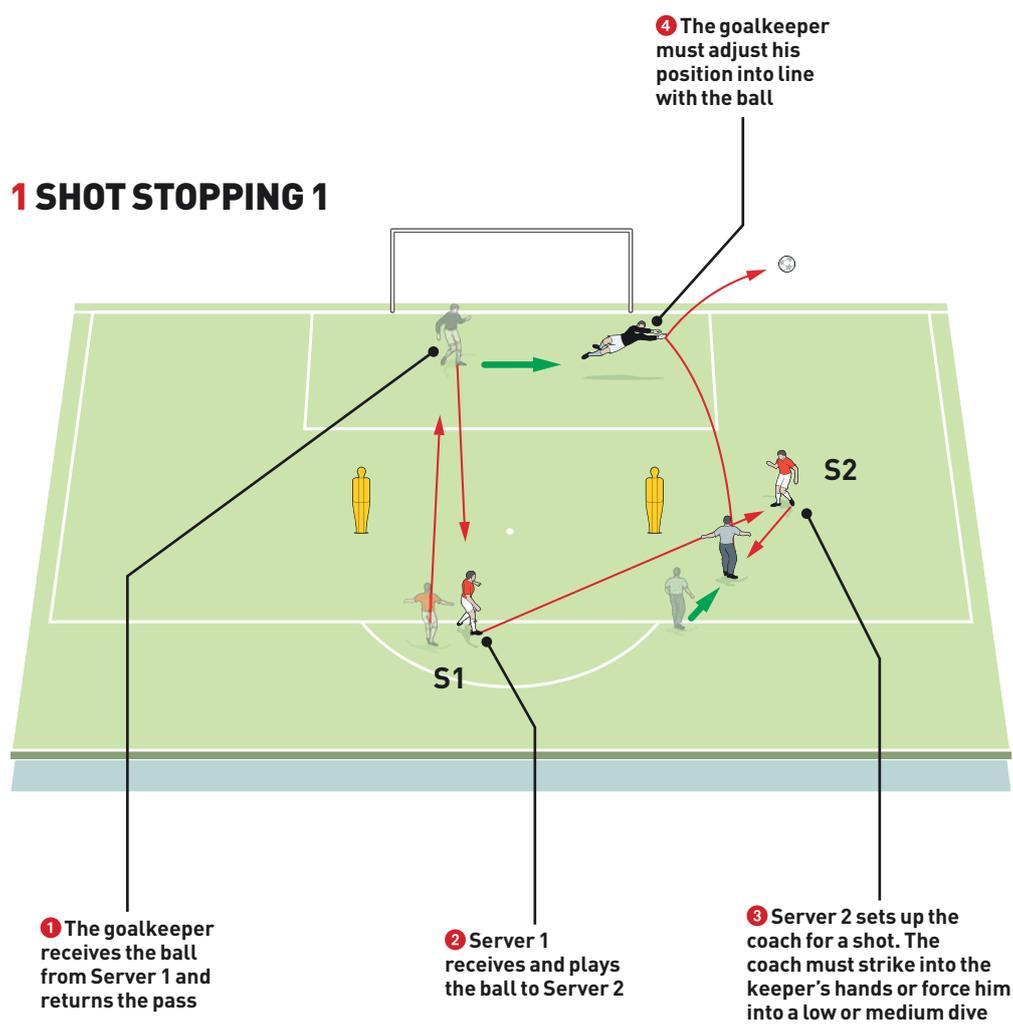
approach to creating goal scoring opportunities. This session needs to be well planned with the outfield coaches to integrate the goalkeepers and the players successfully. The outfield coaches can coach the attacking players, while the goalkeeping coach can coach the defenders and goalkeepers.

What do I get the players to do?

We start by running a warm-up [not shown] with the goalkeeper performing specific movements, such as movement into line and across the goal, as well as the kind of technical actions needed within the session. After the warm-up, the goalkeeper will be put through

KEY

- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble →



ANDREW SPARKES: SHOT STOPPING FOR KEEPERS

a series of different shot stopping exercises, which will also transfer into situations that occur later in the session...

Shot stopping 1

We set up in the penalty area with a full size goal and with two mannequins representing defenders. In addition to the goalkeeper, we're using two servers, which can be the other goalkeepers. Server 1 starts with the ball on the edge of the penalty area and passes into the keeper, who plays a return pass. Server 1 receives and then passes to Server 2, who sets up the goalkeeping coach for a shot, as shown [1].

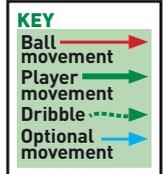
The goalkeeper must adjust his position into line with the ball, and the coach can strike into the keeper's hands, or force him to make either a low dive or a medium dive. We play this for 10 minutes.

Shot stopping 2

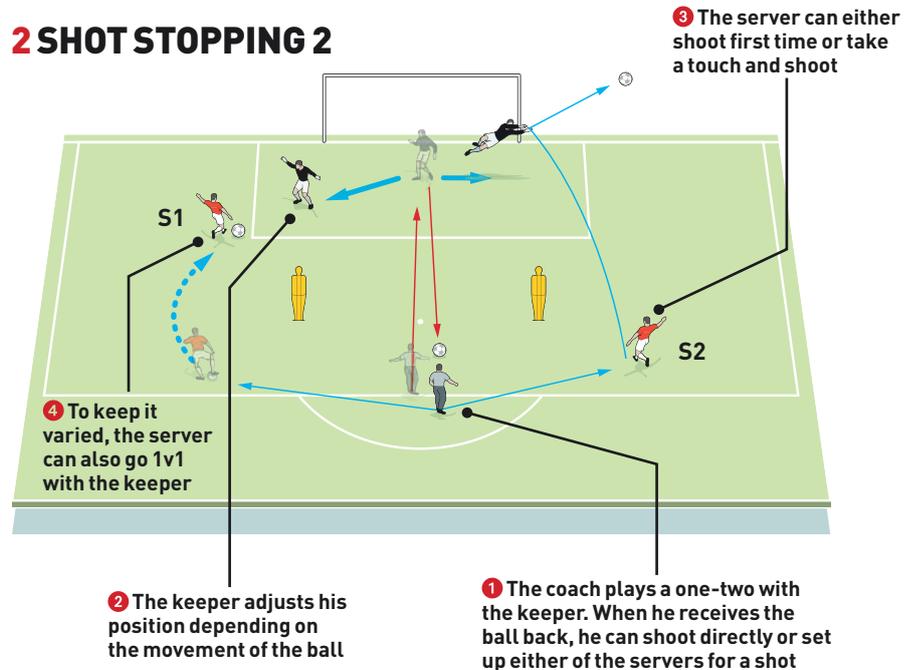
We use the same set up as before and the coach starts by playing a bounce pass with the goalkeeper. When he receives the return pass, the coach can either shoot directly at goal, or he can pass to one of the servers positioned on either side of him. The servers can either shoot first time, take a touch and shoot, or go 1v1 with the keeper, as shown [2]. We play this for 10 minutes.

Shot stopping 3

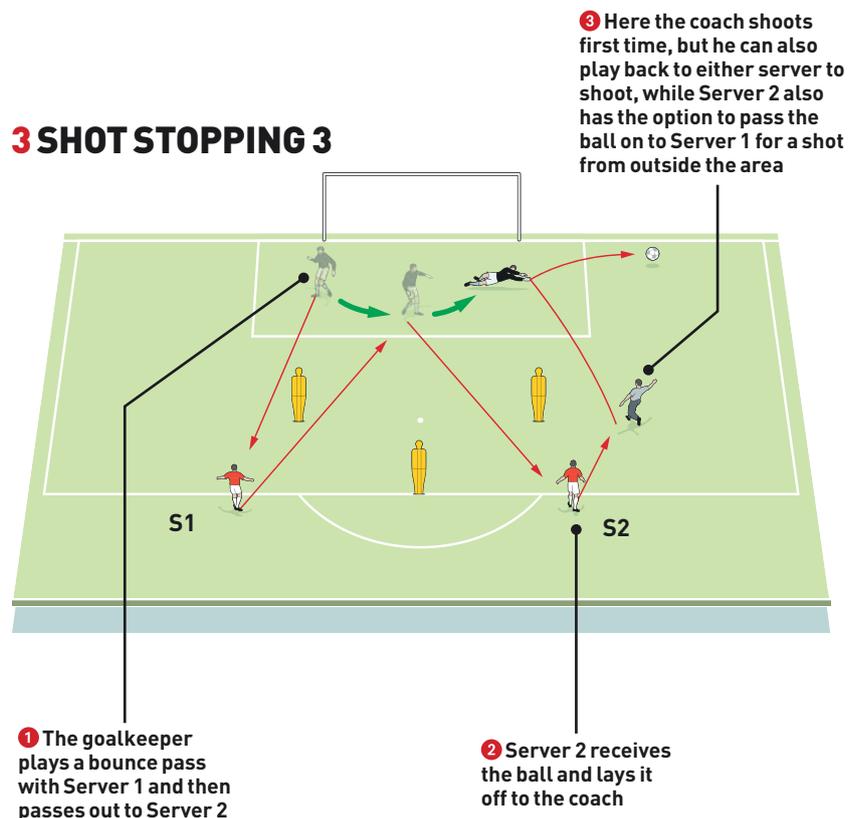
Using the same set up as before, we add a third mannequin on the edge of the penalty area. The goalkeeper starts play with a one-two with Server 1, before passing out to Server 2. When he receives the ball, Server 2 lays off to the coach, who can shoot first time, as shown [3], or play the ball back to either of the servers to shoot. On receiving a pass from the coach, Server 2 also has the option of playing the ball back for Server 1 to try a shot from outside the penalty area. We play this for 20 minutes.



2 SHOT STOPPING 2



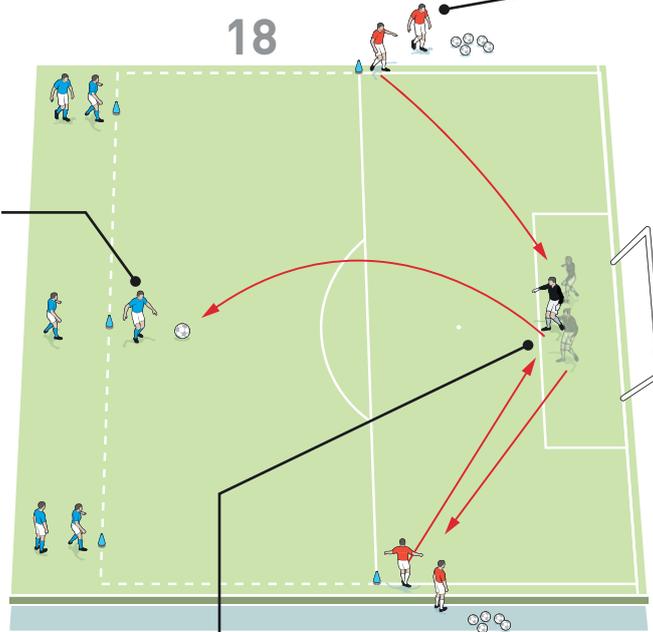
3 SHOT STOPPING 3



ANDREW SPARKES: SHOT STOPPING FOR KEEPERS

KEY
 Ball movement →
 Player movement →
 Dribble - - - - - →

4a 3v2 SHOT STOPPING



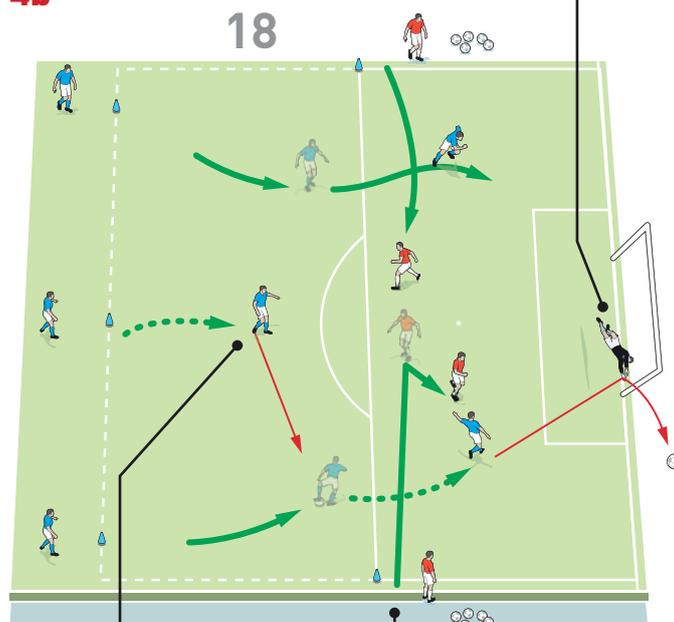
1 Play starts with a pass from one of the waiting defenders to the goalkeeper

3 On receiving the ball, the first wave of three attackers can launch an attack on the goal

2 The keeper then plays a one-two with the waiting defender on the other side of the pitch, before hitting a lofted pass up the pitch to the attackers

3 If the defenders win possession, or if the keeper makes a save, the defending team scores a point

4b



2 The attackers look to combine and score in the goal for a point

1 On the attacker's first touch, the first two defenders enter play, one from each side. They move into a central position to deal with the attackers in a 3v2

How do I progress the session?

3v2 Shot stopping

We next run a functional session with the goalkeeper now integrated with the outfield players to face a 3v2 attack on goal. This practice will expose keepers to the different kinds of situations they will have to defend against with their team mates.

We set up an area the size of two penalty boxes (36x44 yards), with a goal and goalkeeper at one end. We're using 10 outfield players, split into six attackers (blues) and four central defenders (reds). The attackers start at the far end of the pitch in two waves of three, and two defenders wait at each side of the pitch near the halfway point. Play starts with one of the defenders, who knocks the ball to the goalkeeper. The keeper then plays a one-two with a centre back on the other side of the pitch, before playing a lofted pass to one of the waiting attackers at the far end, as shown [4a]. Two defenders then move quickly into a central position, ready to defend against the first wave of attackers. The attackers have a 3v2 overload and must combine to create a goal scoring opportunity, as shown [4b]. If the attackers score a goal they get a point, but if the defenders win possession and clear the ball out of the area, or if the goalkeeper makes a save, the defending team is awarded a point. Once the ball is dead, the cycle repeats with the next wave of attackers and defenders. We play this for 20 minutes.

How would you put this into a game situation?

5v5 Game

We finish the session with a small-sided game that is used to expose the goalkeepers to realistic shot-stopping situations in a game format. We set up an area of 54x44 yards – the size of a penalty box at

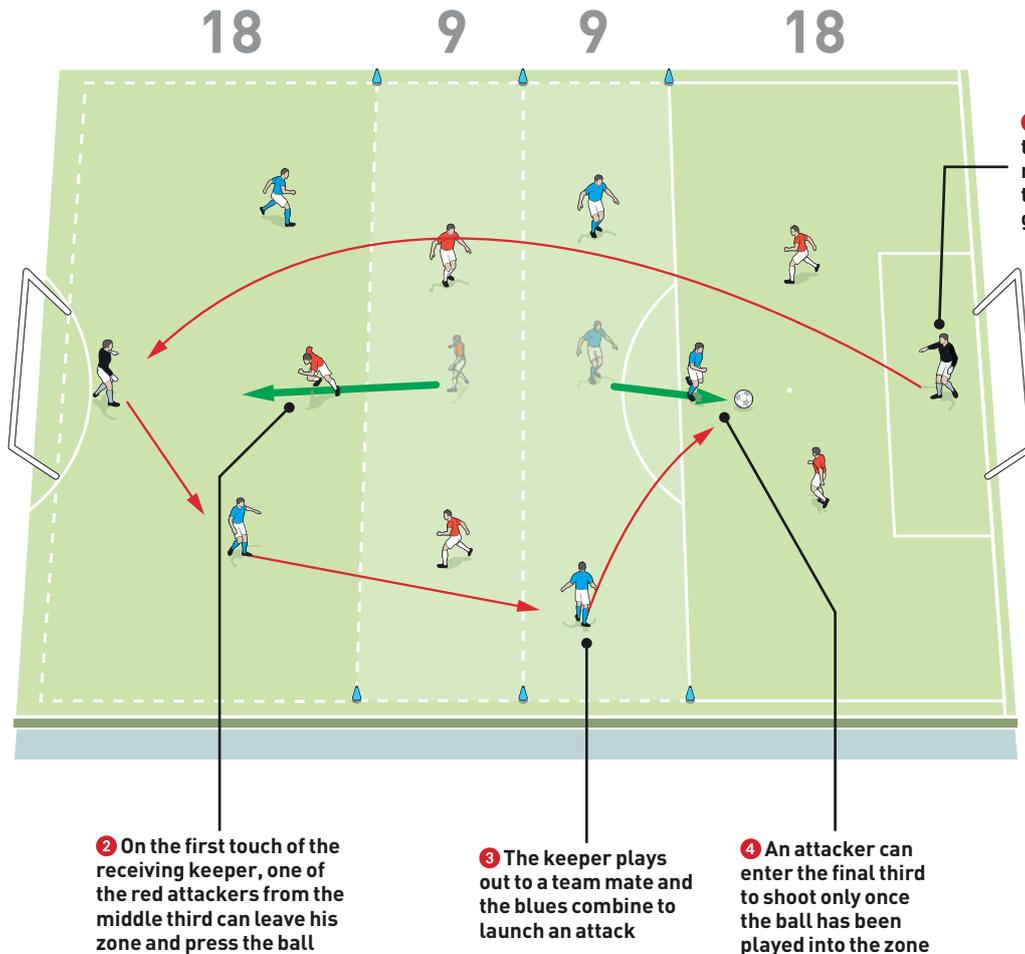
ANDREW SPARKES: SHOT STOPPING FOR KEEPERS

“Once the outfield players are integrated into the practice, the goalkeeper’s focus will be on more tactical aspects, such as reading the game”

KEY

- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble - - - - - →

5 5v5 SHOT STOPPING GAME



each end separated by an 18-yard central zone. We position a full size goal and a goalkeeper at each. We’re using 10 outfield players split into two teams of five. Each team starts with three attacking players in the central zone and two defenders in their defensive third. One goalkeeper starts play by making a lofted pass down the pitch to the opposite keeper, and on the first touch of the receiving keeper one of the opposing players from the middle third can leave their zone and press the ball, as shown [5]. The team in possession must get the ball to their three attacking players in the middle zone to start a 3v2 attack on the opposition goal. An attacker can enter the final third to take a shot

as long as the ball has been passed into the zone first. If a goal is scored, or if the ball goes dead, restarts are from the keeper. We alternate ends for each restart. We play this for 20 minutes.

What are the key things to look for?

In the early part of the session, where decision making is limited, we will look for the goalkeepers to improve on the actions that are specific to keepers. Once the outfield players are integrated into the practice, the goalkeeper’s focus will be on more tactical aspects, such as reading the game. The latter activities will put the keepers in decision-making situations, where

good communication and a strong relationship with the defenders will also be developed.

What are the typical mistakes players might make, and how do I avoid them?

It is a mistake to work with the keepers in isolation too much. The goalkeeping coach must work closely with the outfield coaches to ensure that the keepers are integrated into the team session as much as possible. This will instil strong decision-making qualities into a goalkeeper’s game, an aspect they won’t normally be able to develop when the keepers work purely in isolation.

CHERRY ORCHARD
Aaron Callaghan
Quick attacks

SET-UP
AREA
Up to 50x35 yards
EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs, cones, 4 small goals, 2 full size goals
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
Up to 9 players + 2 goalkeepers
SESSION TIME
Quick attacks 1: 10mins
Quick attacks 2: 10mins
Alternating 3v2: 15mins
Small-sided game: 15mins

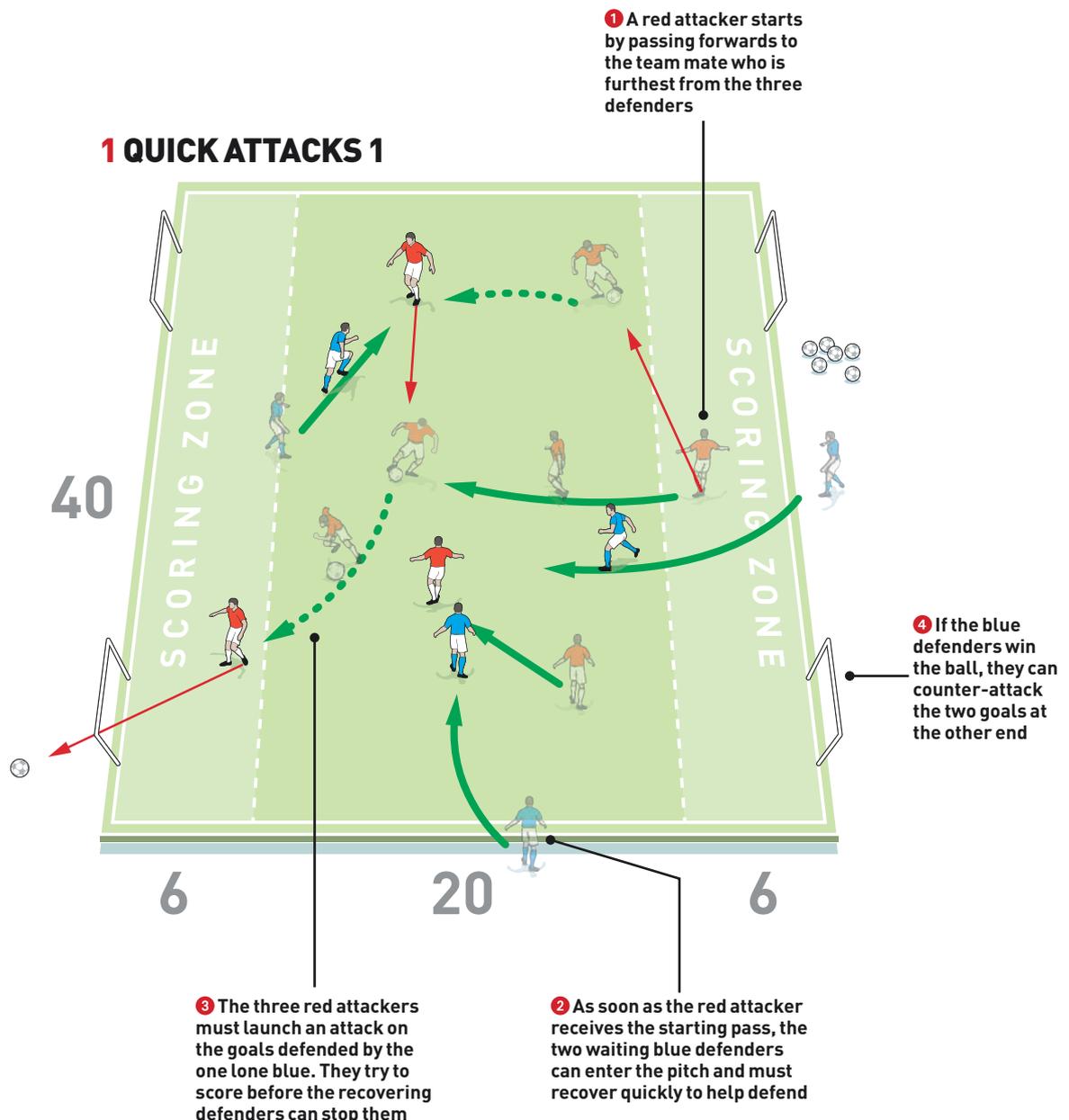
Overview
This session is about quick play going forward. Initially in the main practice the three attackers are faced with one defender and have to make the right decision about when and where to pass the ball in relation to the defender's positioning. As the session progresses, attackers play against two defenders and then three.
We would run this practice twice a week with the emphasis on getting players to understand the system and their roles within it. Players should play with freedom and without fear,

with the emphasis on technical quality.
In the future I think successful teams will need to possess a number of qualities. They must be able to counter-attack instantly at optimum speed. They will also need to build play with patience and precision, using pace to penetrate when necessary. It will be important to play fast and accurately in congested areas, breaking down the defensive block, but teams must be versatile enough to also play a controlled possession-based game. This session helps to develop all of these qualities.

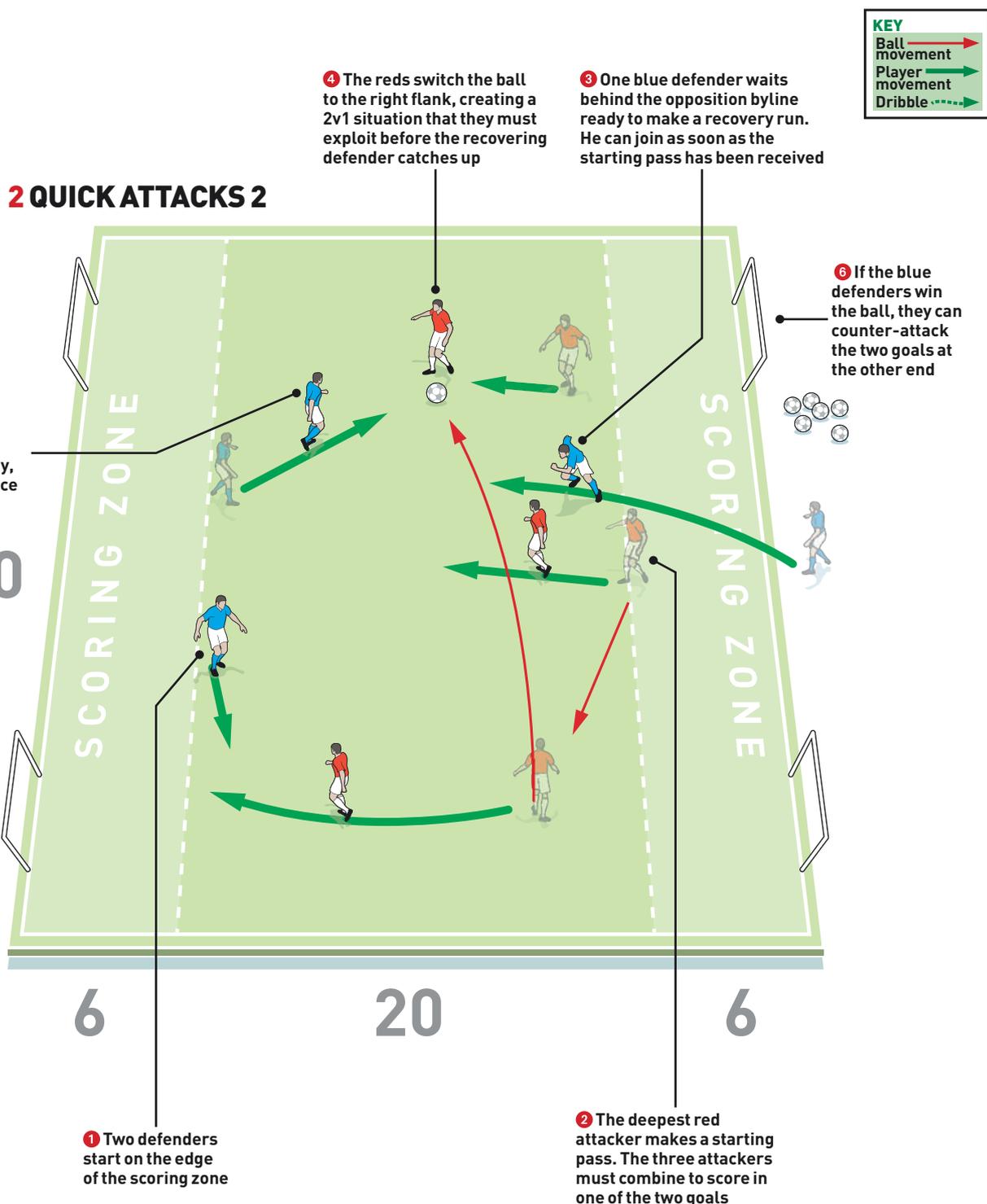
KEY

- Ball movement
- Player movement
- Dribble

1 QUICK ATTACKS 1



AARON CALLAGHAN: QUICK ATTACKS



What do I get the players to do? Quick attacks 1

We set up an area of 32x40 yards, split into a 20-yard central zone and two six-yard scoring zones. Each scoring zone contains two small goals. We're using six players, divided into an attacking team of three and a defending team of three. We start with three attackers going up against one defender, as shown [1]. The

remaining defenders are off the pitch – one starts on the touchline and the other starts behind the opposition byline and they are waiting for the opportunity to make recovery runs. One of the attackers begins with the ball in his defensive end zone and he plays a starting pass to a team mate in the central zone, usually the player furthest from the defenders. The three attackers then combine to

attack the two goals in the scoring zone, but as soon as the starting pass has been received, the two recovering defenders are released and join their team mate in trying to stop the attackers scoring. An attack ends when a goal is scored, or when the ball goes out of play. When the defenders win the ball, they counter-attack the two goals at the other end. ▼

AARON CALLAGHAN: QUICK ATTACKS

What are the key things to look for?

We want to see that the attackers recognise that the player who has the best chance of scoring, or creating a scoring chance, is the attacker who is furthest from the three defenders when the starting ball is played.

We also want to see fast, attacking, creative football, with players able to demonstrate good decision making and game understanding. Players should be able to protect the ball when necessary and make decisive moves when on the ball and use good movement when off the ball.

Quick attacks 2

We use the same basic set-up as before, but this time two defenders start in front of the pair of goals they are defending, with one recovering defender starting behind the opposition byline.

As before, the deepest attacker starts play with a forward pass and when one of his team mates receives the ball, the waiting defender is free to make a recovery run to help defend against the attack, as shown [2].

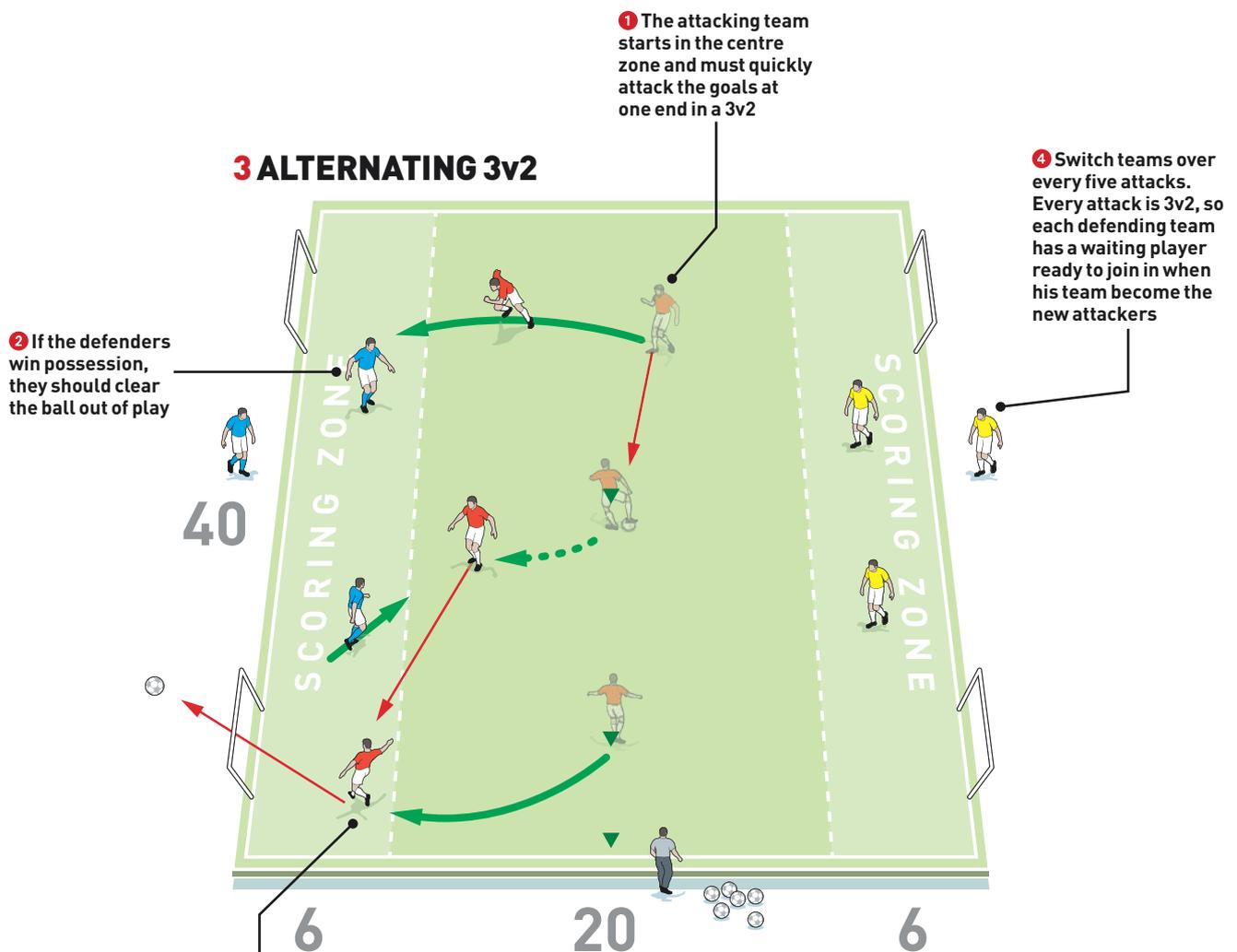
We count how many goals the attackers can score in sequence

without losing possession or allowing the ball to go out of play.

What are the key things to look for?

It is important for the attackers to create a 2v1. They should move the ball quickly onto the flank that is best for exploiting a 2v1 situation – that is where the nearest defender to the ball will challenge first and where the second defender is no longer able to intervene as he is covering the movement on the other flank.

We want to see the attackers moving the play quickly to create the 2v1



3 If the attackers score or the ball goes dead, the coach plays a second ball and the attackers turn to attack the other end in another 3v2

“Teams must be able to counter-attack instantly at speed. They will also need to build play with patience and precision, using pace to penetrate when necessary”

KEY
 Ball movement →
 Player movement →
 Dribble→

AARON CALLAGHAN: QUICK ATTACKS

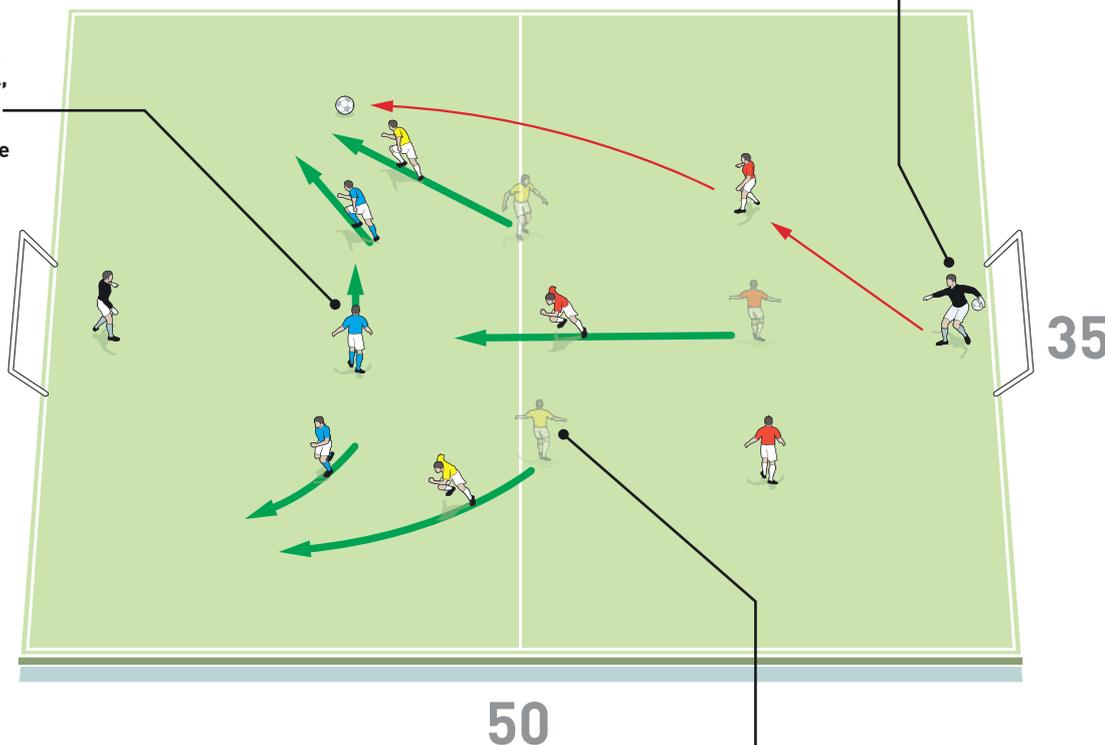
KEY

- Ball movement
- Player movement
- Dribble

1 The team in possession plays out from the back and combines quickly to attack the goal at the other end of the pitch

4 SMALL-SIDED GAME

3 If the defending team wins the ball, they attack their opponent's goal with the assistance of the floaters



2 Two floating players work with the possession team to give them a 5v3 overload. They help to make it a fast attack

“We want to see fast, attacking, creative football, with players able to demonstrate decision making and game understanding”

overload before the recovering defender can get back to help.

What are the typical mistakes players might make, and how do I avoid them?

Players can pass too slowly and direct the ball behind their team mates or too near a defender. They can also take too many touches and move so slowly that they allow recovering defenders back into position. To remedy this, impress on the players the need for accuracy and speed.

How do I progress the session? Alternating 3v2

We set up using the same area as

before, but now we are using nine players, split into three teams of three. One team are the attackers and all three of them begin in the centre zone. The other two teams are the defenders, with one team defending each end. Only two defenders from each team are active while they are in a defensive role, with the third player waiting at the side to rotate in when their team takes its turn to act as the attackers.

The attackers start with the ball and they attack the two goals at one end in a 3v2 and attempt to score, as shown [3]. When the ball goes dead, they receive a second ball played in by the coach and they turn to attack

the other end in another 3v2. If the defenders win the ball, they should clear it out of play. After every five attacks, switch the teams so everyone has a turn at attacking. See which team scores the most goals in 10 attacks.

How would you put this into a game situation? Small-sided game

We set up an area of 50x35 yards, with a goal and a goalkeeper at each end. We're using eight outfield players split into two teams of three, plus two floating players who assist the team in possession, making it 5v3 in favour of the attackers, as shown [4].

EXTRA-TIME INTERVIEW: STEVEN PRESSLEY



THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

Carlisle United manager Steven Pressley has come to believe that management is a learning experience. Here he talks through his career development so far...

Steven Pressley has earned something of a reputation for helping clubs that are struggling off the pitch regain their form on it. At Falkirk, Coventry and Pafos, Pressley has developed young talent from within and achieved great results against the odds.

Now at Carlisle United, he explains how he has changed and developed throughout his career.

Your first role as a manager came at Falkirk, where you had been a player. How did you find the transition from playing to management?

When the management post became available at Falkirk I applied, but it was Eddie May who got the job and he asked me to be his assistant manager. I was a player at the club at the time, but I'd taken my pro-licence and was already doing some coaching with the national side. Seven months later, May lost his job and I took over.

While it was a great opportunity, I wasn't prepared. Looking back, I would like to have had three or four years in other roles first to really learn the ropes. I did, however, have a great mentor at Falkirk in Alex Smith. He had a huge influence on my development as a manager and without him it would have been a very

difficult period. At the time, the club was in serious financial trouble and there was a real risk of it going into administration.

Despite the financial constraints at Falkirk, you won the Scottish Challenge Cup. How important was that early success for your career?

I think we're all shaped by our early management experiences. The only way we could deal with the situation at Falkirk was to put all our efforts into developing the talent we had in the academy. As a result, I learned very early on in my career that when you invest your time in young players and give them trust and responsibility, they will very rarely let you down.

We consistently battled at the top of the league and reached cup finals and we did it with the youngest squad in Britain at the time. Winning the Challenge Cup was certainly important for my CV and I think it strengthened my reputation as a developer of young players. Indeed, I was appointed manager

of Coventry City on that basis. They, like Falkirk, were facing financial cutbacks and they wanted me to do something similar to what I'd done there, to develop it into a completely sustainable club by focusing on bringing through young talent.

I learned early in my career that when you invest your time in young players and give them trust and responsibility, they will rarely let you down

When you have those kinds of challenges away from the pitch, how do you ensure the players aren't affected?

When I took on the role I had three months before the start of the season, so I made a point of meeting with all the players. I gave them the off-season programme, and explained very clearly what was expected of them and the culture that I was going to implement. I then

asked them if they wanted to be part of that and said if the answer was 'no' there would be no place for them at the club.

Once the season had started, we didn't talk much about what was going on off the pitch. We trained properly and we prepared as well as we could, given the circumstances; we couldn't stay overnight for matches because

EXTRA-TIME INTERVIEW: STEVEN PRESSLEY

of financial restrictions, and we had to hold our pre-match talks on the bus. But we were strong in areas like analysis and game planning, body composition and fitness. The focus was on ensuring all of the players were in the best shape they could be and that they knew totally how they needed to play; it was a no-excuses culture.

It helped that I had a very young squad in my first season in charge. Young players tend to be easier to mould and it's easier to get their buy-in to the culture you're trying to create.

You were tasked with embedding a new culture at Coventry as well, but didn't the challenge go a lot further than that?

When I look back at my time at Coventry, I can see that what I was asked to do was way too much for a young manager to take on. There was no director of football in place, so it was down to me to not only change the culture, but effectively restructure the club and the academy. To do that you have to make some very big decisions, not all of which are going to be well received. That isn't something a manager should be doing.

You have to make big decisions as a manager, but ideally those decisions should only concern the first team, with others falling to the director of football. As a young manager entering the profession, you really need to feel the support of everyone in the club.

You're one of relatively few British managers to have worked abroad.



Did you see the move to Cyprus to manage Pafos as an opportunity or a risk?

To some extent both, but I had spoken with a number of players who had been out there. I also chatted to John Carver at an LMA event and he shared how much he had enjoyed his time in Cyprus and spoke well of the standard of football there.

The UK job market is tough and aggressively competitive. With so many foreign coaches coming over here to work, I think it's important that British managers are open-minded about seeking opportunities abroad.

I met with the owners of Pafos and learned all about the club, which was struggling at the bottom end of the table at the time, and I saw a great opportunity to discover European football.

How did you find the experience actually managing Pafos?

When I arrived with my coaching staff, the CEO and director of football had just left the club, so we had to manage our way out of a relegation battle with minimal support. However, my first four or five months there were probably my best as a coach and manager, because I had to totally change my style as a leader.

I was managing players from numerous countries and there was no money to pay them for the first three months. That meant I couldn't use fines as a way to discipline poor behaviour; instead I had to create a culture of respect and team

spirit, where everyone felt part of something. I had to deal with so many new situations and it was a brilliant experience. When I went over there, I had a preconceived idea of how I wanted us to play, but I learned that you have to adapt to suit the strengths of your players. I became a much more adaptable and flexible leader.

When I arrived, we were two points away from relegation, but we finished the season 18 points clear of the drop zone and we also reached the semi-final of the Cypriot Cup.

The situation at Carlisle is somewhat different, the side having finished in the top 10 of League Two for the past three seasons. How have you approached it?

Each time I've moved to a new club I've taken some time to reflect on my previous role and tried to learn from my past experiences. I've also adapted my style of play and my approach to management at each club. So, here at Carlisle, while we aren't yet necessarily playing to my vision, we're absolutely playing to the strengths of the players. I have made slight adjustments rather than radical changes, because I wanted to maintain some continuity. I've really tried to respect the work that the previous staff did before.

The move to Carlisle has been a very different and enjoyable experience. This is the only club in the city, and it has a great catchment area and huge potential. What's more, the staff are great here, they have a director of football and a board of directors who give the manager the opportunity to be a success. That kind of stability from above is so important. I know that if I can get my teeth into this role I can build a great club here. ■

I learned that you have to adapt to suit the strengths of your players. I became a much more adaptable and flexible leader

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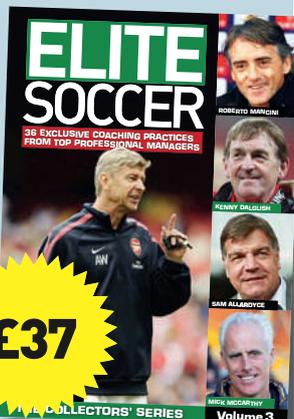
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