

SWANSEA CITY

Adrian Tucker
Close range blocking for keepers

SET-UP

AREA

Up to 30x18 yards

EQUIPMENT

Balls, bibs, cones, mannequins, 4 mini target goals, 2 small goals, 2 full size goals

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Up to 7 players + 4 goalkeepers

SESSION TIME

Starting practice: 15mins

Progression practice: 20mins

Final progression: 20mins

Overview

This session puts the goalkeepers in a training environment where they can develop the speed of their reactions to make saves from close range. They will do this by using different techniques to secure, block, parry or deflect the ball.

We use a number of goalkeepers for this session, together with selected outfield players, in order to create an enjoyable but highly competitive environment.

If performed at a competitive tempo, this session will create numerous opportunities for keepers to practice the varied techniques of defending their goal from close range. It also

encourages keepers to make quick decisions in pressured situations. The organisation of the session creates a realistic match tempo for the outfield players, challenging them to make the most of goal scoring opportunities and take on 1v1 duels with the keeper.

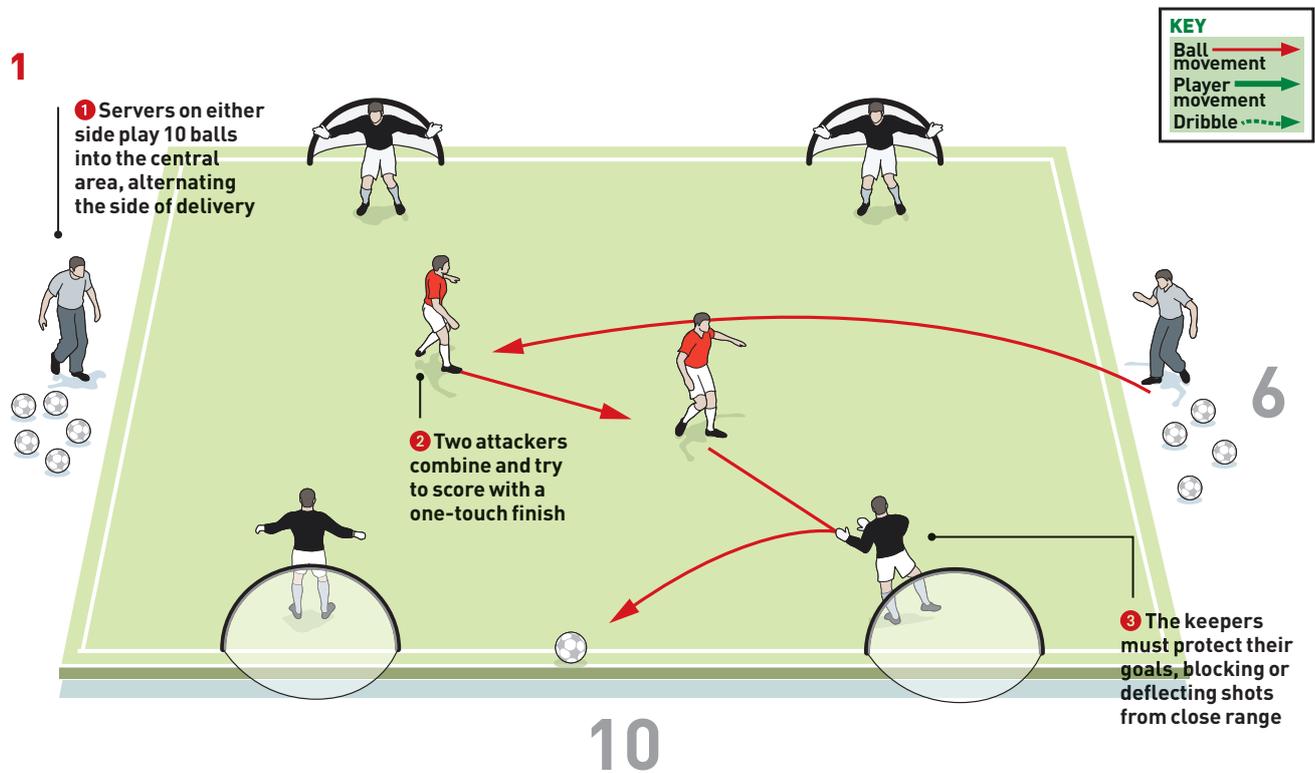
What do I get the players to do?

Starting practice

We set up an area of 10x6 yards.

We position two mini target goals on each of the longer sides of the area, spaced four yards apart.

We're using four goalkeepers, two servers and two attackers.



“The session sets up opportunities for the goalkeepers to practise the various techniques of defending their goal from close range”

The four goalkeepers must defend the target goals. One of the servers starts play by passing into the central area, where the two attackers combine and try to score in a target goal with a one-touch finish, as shown **[1]**. Play in blocks of ten balls with

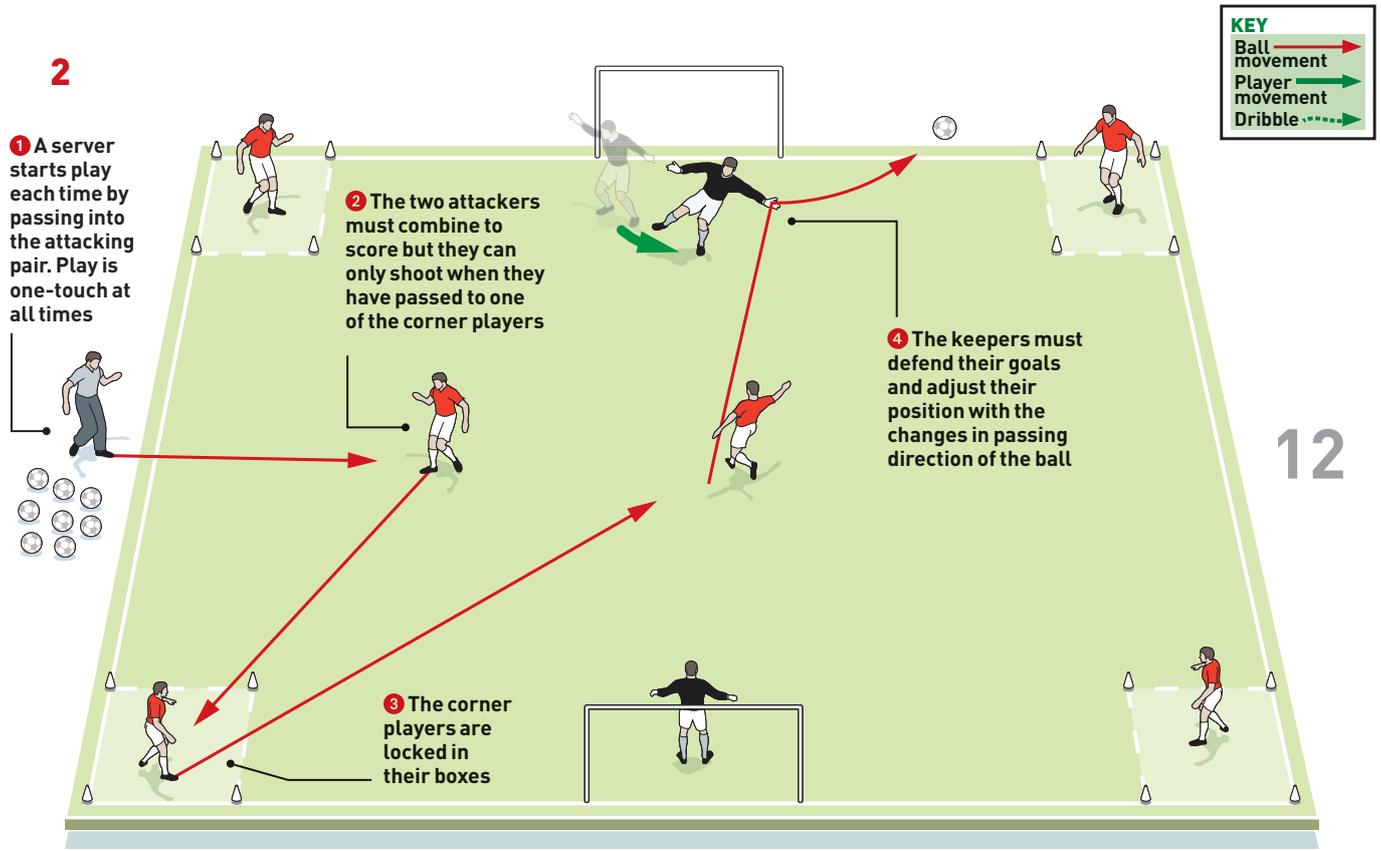
five from each server, alternating sides after the ball goes dead. Goalkeepers should defend their goals with blocks, deflections and saves. To keep the tempo high, rotate in fresh outfield players or get the servers to swap positions with the attackers.

How do I progress the session?

Progression practice

Next we set up an area of 16x12 yards, with a small goal on each of the two longer sides. Boxes are marked out with cones in the four corners of the playing area. We're using two goalkeepers, six ▼

ADRIAN TUCKER: CLOSE RANGE BLOCKING FOR KEEPERS



16

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outfield players and a server. Four of the players are locked into the corner boxes, with one in each box. The remaining pair are attackers and they start in the main area. Play begins with the server passing in to the attacking pair, who must combine in the centre to attack one of the goals. However, they can only take a shot at goal after the ball has been passed to one of the corner players, as shown [2]. Play is one touch at all times. The two goalkeepers should try to defend the goals, adjusting their position in keeping with the movement of the ball. Play this activity in blocks of

10 balls before rotating the outfield players so everyone gets a turn as an attacker.

Final progression

For the final practice, we set up in a penalty area that has been coned off to a width of 30 yards. A full size goal is at each end of the area and three mannequins are positioned between the goals to represent defenders. We’re using two goalkeepers, two attacking players and two servers. A server starts play by making an angled pass to the attackers, who try to control the ball between (or past) the mannequins to create shooting opportunities in

either goal. They can do this by combining or by shooting directly, as shown [3]. The attackers can take up to two touches and the keepers must try to save, block or deflect the shots. Play in blocks of 10 balls, with servers alternating the side of delivery.

What are the key things to look out for?

To achieve a productive outcome for the goalkeepers, we want to see the outfield players maintaining both a high tempo and their levels of sharpness throughout the session. This will keep the goalkeepers on their toes and result in them

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being able to make the kind of saves they would encounter on a match day.

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

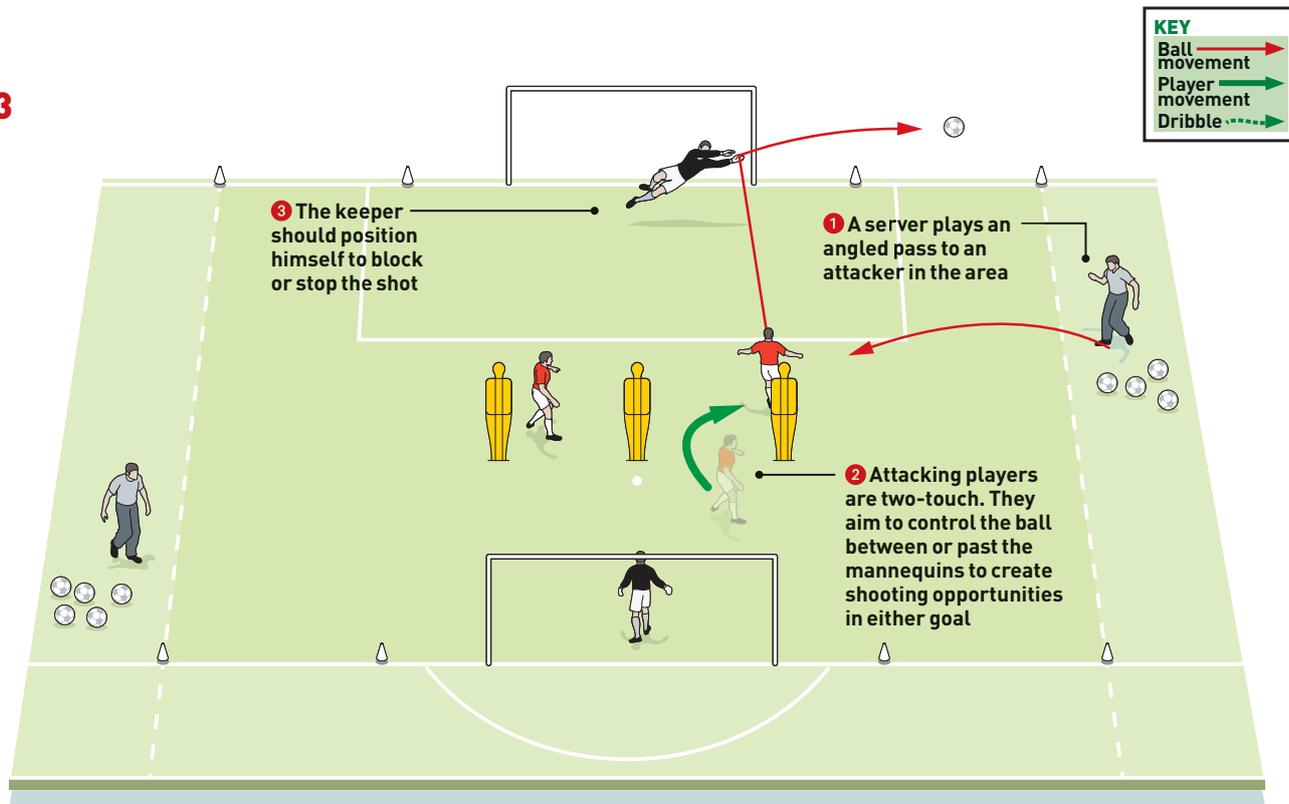
If players are given too much time in small playing areas, you may see their decision-making becoming unrealistic. We make sure we rotate both the

outfield players and the goalkeepers so that everyone receives adequate rest periods to maintain the high levels of performance required for the success of the session.

Adrian Tucker can be contacted via his website. He has a video recording of the session that he is happy to share with any readers who want more info.
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“If players are given too much time in small playing areas, you may see their decision-making becoming unrealistic”

3



30