

STEVENAGE

Darren Sarll Creating overloads in defence

Overview:

This is a variable defensive session that looks at creating 2v1s at the back in restricting attacking threat.

It's vitally important our players know how to efficiently and effectively close down opponents in winning the ball at the back, particularly given that this is an area where space between the lines is a vital target for opposition attackers.

And if your team is one that likes to operate with a counter-attacking strategy, or plays short and quick, then this allows this to happen with greater regularity.

Introducing a new role or responsibility will see the session start slower than before, so be prepared for this. In time, you will definitely see that players 'want' to defend and are prepared to work hard for the good of the team.

CREATING OVERLOADS IN DEFENCE

SET-UP

AREA

Up to 60x40 yards

EQUIPMENT

Balls, cones, goals (full-size and target)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Up to 17

SESSION TIME

Games 20mins each

What do I get the players to do?

Defending 1v1

This is a series of 1v1s in a 20x20-yard square. In pairs, one tries to win the ball back off his opponent, who can use neutrals inside the squares to play off and retain possession (1).

1v1 up to 2v2 defending

This is a simple 1v1 in a 20x10-yard area. Two servers link up before playing into the first or second 1v1 box (2). Attackers look to score in the goal in their channel, though only the player receiving the ball, and his opponent, are active. Defenders must win possession and pass back to the servers.

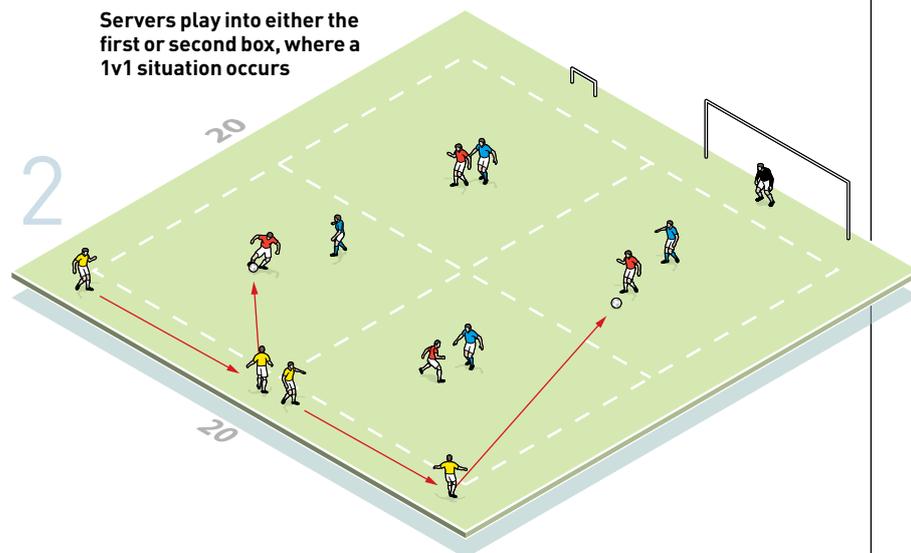
We can progress this game in two ways. First, defenders in the first area can recover and make a 2v1 in the deeper square. Then, defenders and attackers both join in the deeper square to make a 2v2 (3).

6v6 game with floaters

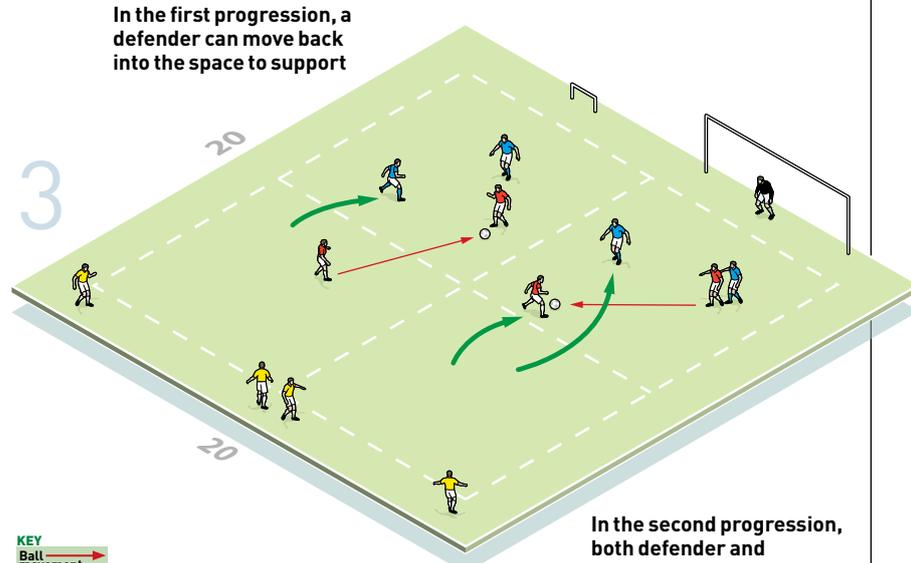
On a 60x40-yard pitch, this game is played 6v6 with teams lining up 2-2-2 (4). Boxed players (yellows) act



In Defending 1v1, the player on the ball links with boxed neutrals in retaining possession



Servers play into either the first or second box, where a 1v1 situation occurs



In the first progression, a defender can move back into the space to support

In the second progression, both defender and attacker can move on, thus creating a 2v2





Darren Sarll
STEVENAGE

When Darren Sarll returned to Stevenage at June 2012 it saw the experienced youth coach come full circle, having started out at the Hertfordshire club as a community coach

Sarll progressed through the ranks – from coaching Under-16s, to the Centre of Excellence, the Under-18s and then reserve team manager before departing for Brentford in June 2008 where he worked as Youth Team Manager.

Moving on to Rotherham United in a similar role, he guided the direction of the Academy, before taking the decision to return to Stevenage at the start of the 2012/13 season. As Head of Youth, he is responsible for the next generation of player coming through at the npower League One side.

“This session is great for helping players use the ball in small and compacted areas.”

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as servers and targets for either side to attack or defend – passes can be grounded or floated. Three floaters (greys) play for the team in possession and can also score, but their main role is to create 2v1 attacking situations for defenders to deal with.

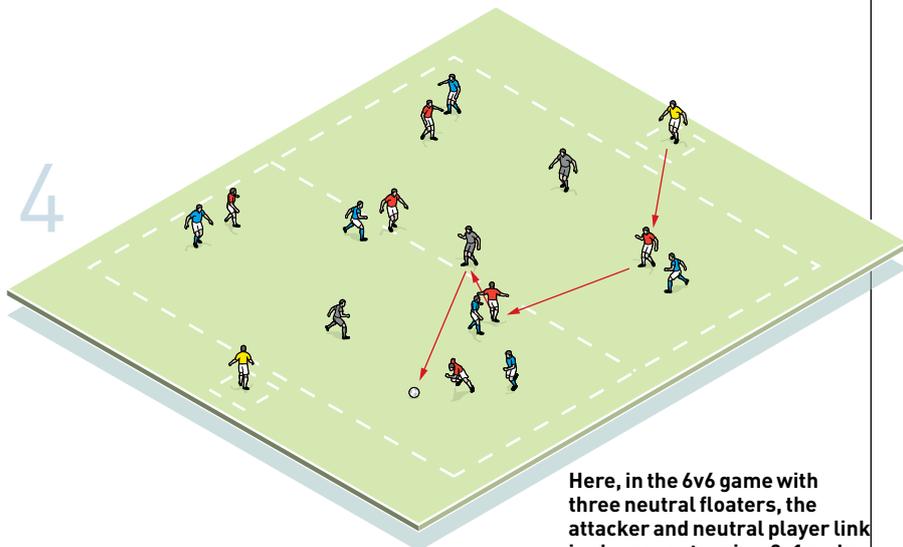
Central goal/wide goals

Still 6v6, one team defends the two smaller goals and the other the main goal (5/6). With the teams attacking different central and wide targets, the game is stretched, meaning defenders have to organise to repel attacks coming from different areas.

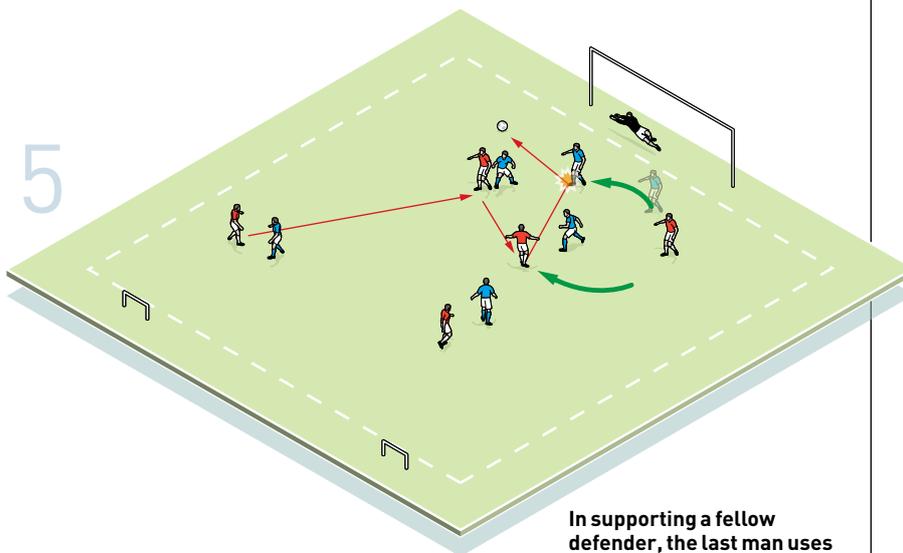
What are the key things to look out for technically/tactically?

It's vital players understand what you want from them individually. I am a 'mark players not space' coach and am determined players can deal with all 1v1 defensive scenarios. Once players understand individually what you want from them, you can evolve their roles accordingly.

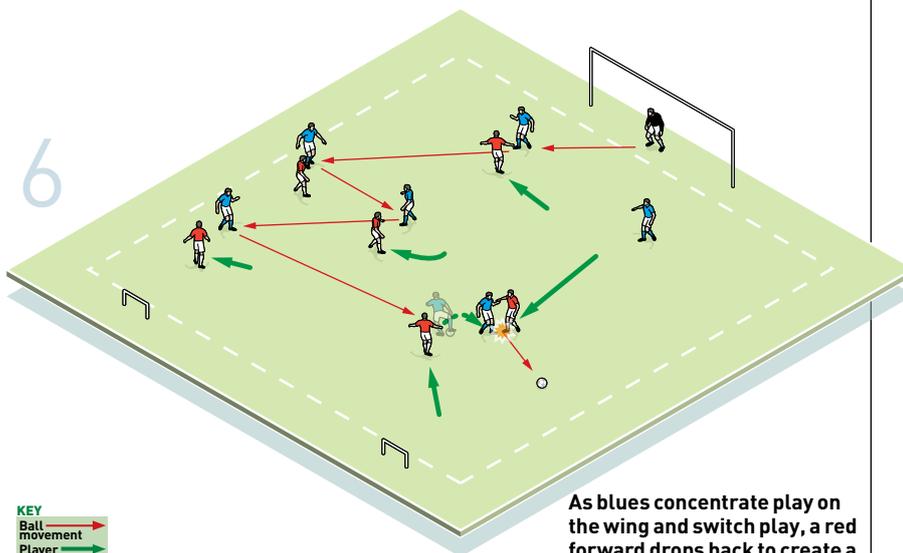
So we're looking for defending 1v1 from behind, the front and the side, watching angles and distances from the ball, balance, body position, and ensuring players can see the ball at all times. Good tackling technique, patience and anticipation is also required. ■



Here, in the 6v6 game with three neutral floaters, the attacker and neutral player link in close quarters in a 2v1 and a ball is threaded through for the attacker to run onto



In supporting a fellow defender, the last man uses quick reactions to block a shot on goal



As blues concentrate play on the wing and switch play, a red forward drops back to create a 2v1 in defence

KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble →