

SHEFFIELD UNITED

Jamie Hoyland
The dedicated defence

Overview:

This session is all about defensive positions. It looks at how players should act when the opposing team has the ball, working firstly with units and then with all of the team together.

It's important to practise this in order to retain defensive shape when out of possession. Players need to look at which side to show, which side to mark, as well as assessing defensive distances and planning how to win the ball back.

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THE DEDICATED DEFENCE

SET-UP

AREA

Up to a full pitch

EQUIPMENT

Balls, cones, goals, mannequins

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Up to 21

SESSION TIME

Unopposed and opposed back four 10mins each, 8v6 25mins, Full pitch game 35mins

What do I get the players to do?

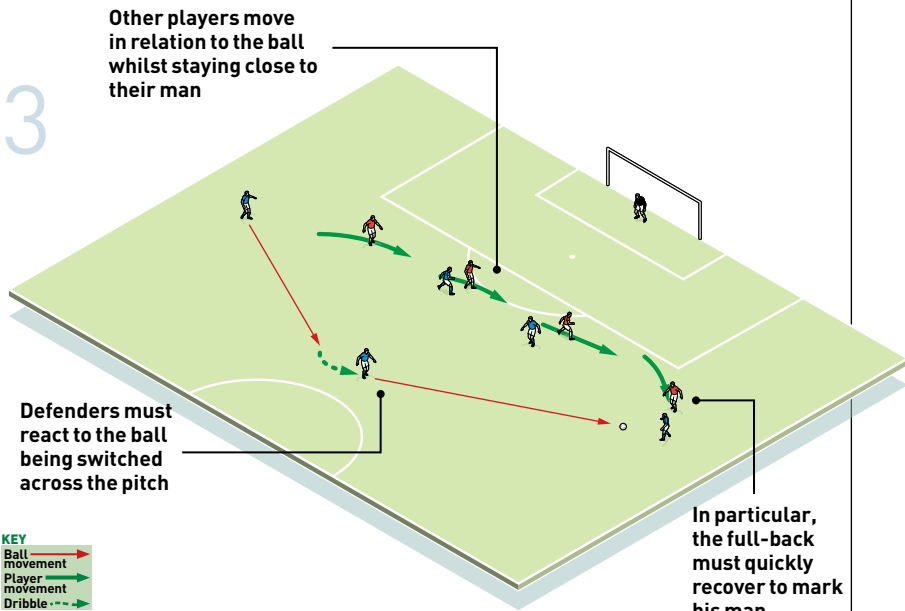
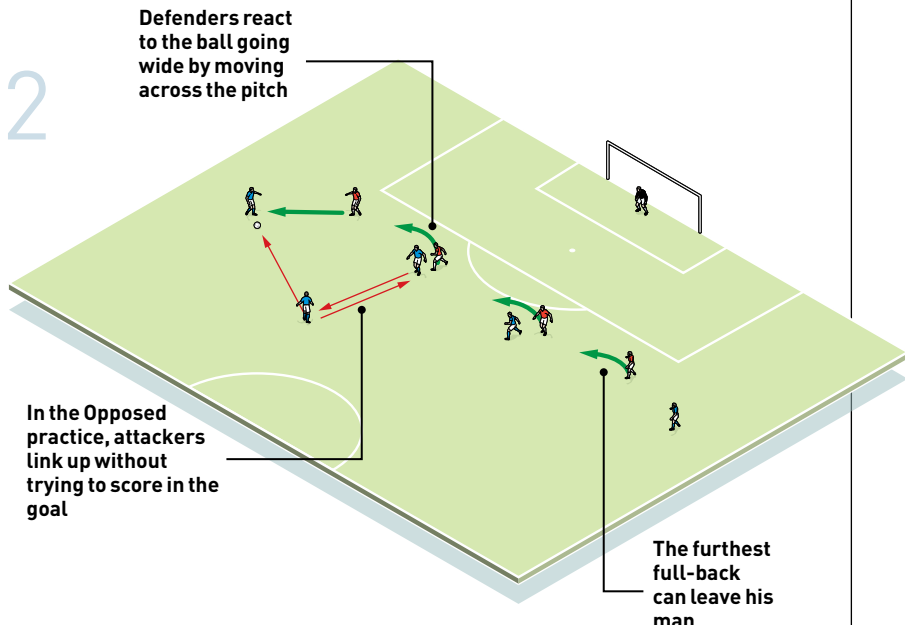
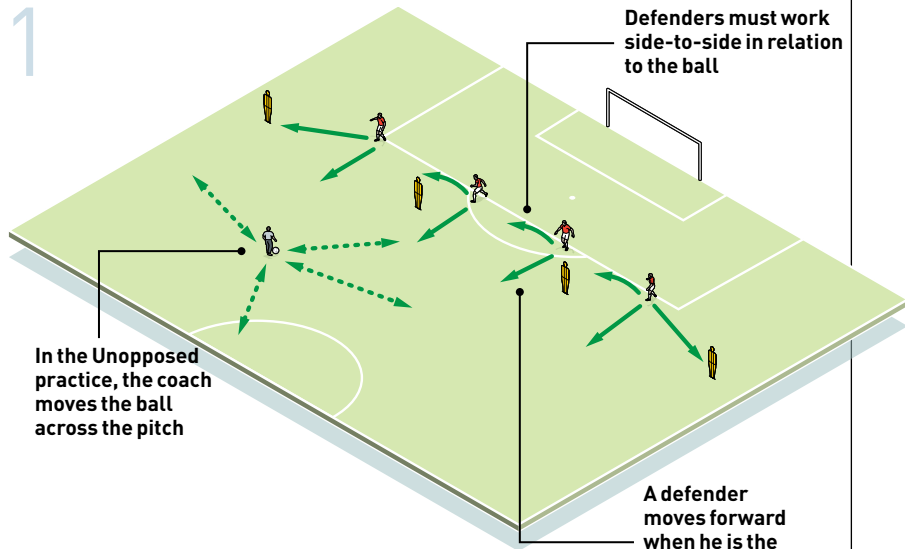
Unopposed back four

The first set-up coaches players in adopting the correct position in relation to the ball, and each other. Four mannequins occupy perceived attack positions (two centre-forwards and two wingers). The coach moves the ball from side to side, backwards and forwards. The nearest man presses the ball, while the back four move in relation – side-to-side, squeezing out and dropping off (1).

Opposed back four

Now the mannequins are replaced with attackers, who are all two-touch. Attackers are not looking to score though, they just keep the defenders moving – forwards and backwards (2), and side to side (3).

Defenders must mark on the correct (goal-)side, should be tight, remaining close enough to the ball to affect play. The nearest defender must assume a position



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble →



Jamie Hoyland
SHEFFIELD UNITED

Jamie Hoyland is Academy Manager at Sheffield United, overseeing the next breed of talented youngsters to emerge from Bramall Lane.

The 47-year-old has a long association with the Blades, having played for the club in the Premier League between 1992 and 1994. He also appeared for Manchester City, Bury, Bristol City, Burnley, Carlisle United and Scarborough.

Hoyland held coaching positions at Bolton Wanderers and Preston North End before moving to the Sheffield United academy.

THE DEDICATED DEFENCE

as if he is about to win the ball, using good communication with team mates at all times.

8v6 attacking overload

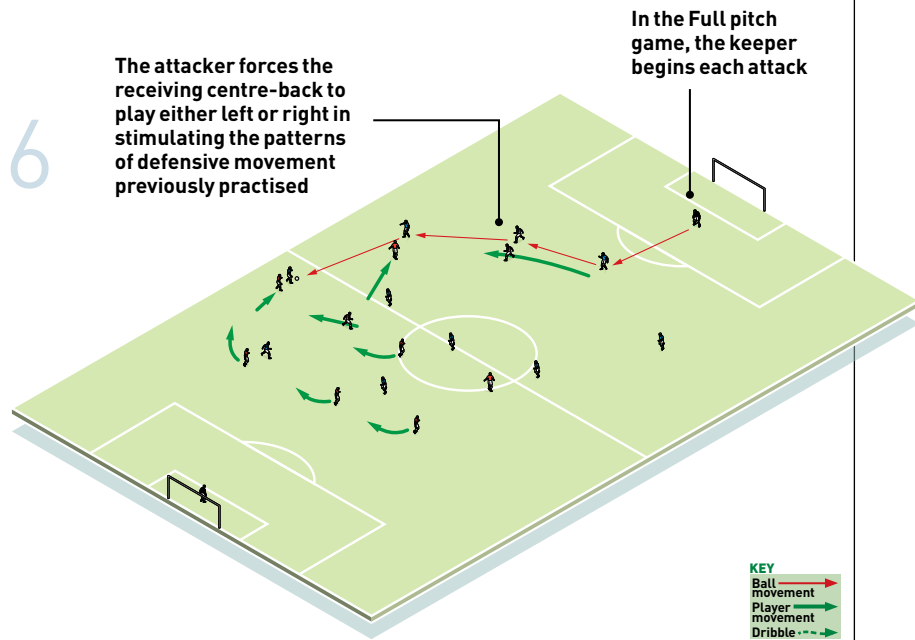
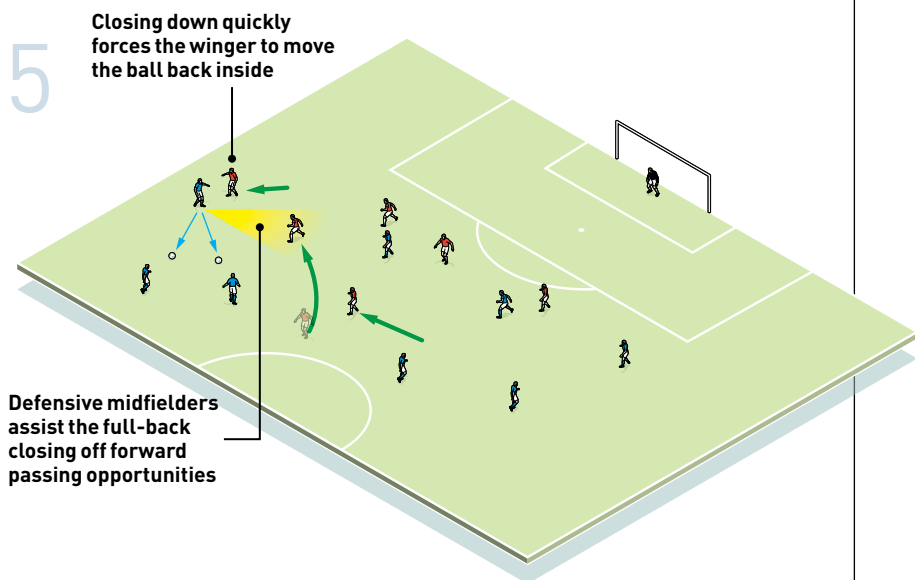
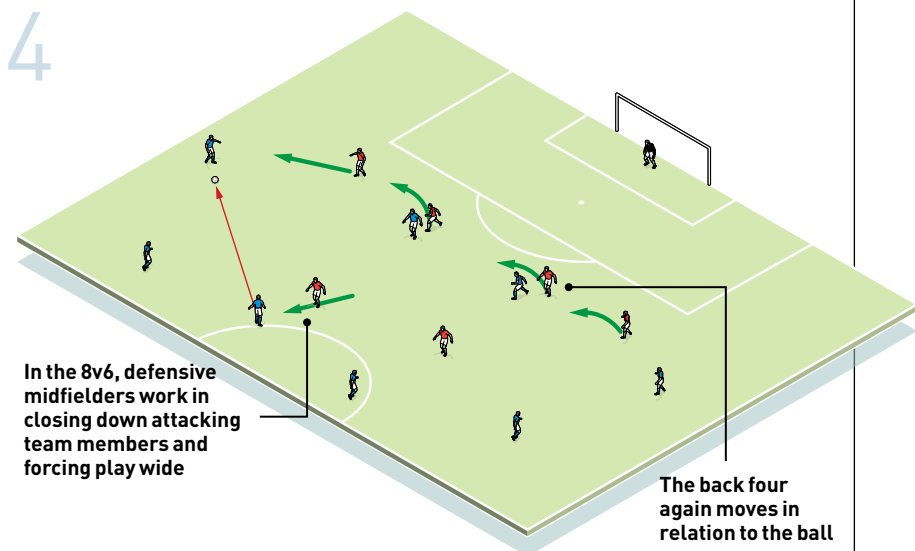
Now we bring in additional players to make an 8v6 (4). Attacking full-backs are two-touch and all other players all-in. Attackers can now score; if the defending team wins the ball it must find the coach.

Defenders adopt the same principles as before, but full-backs must now ensure they get out to the wide men quickly (because wingers are being supported by other wide attackers) (5), halting their forward momentum, showing them down the line and stopping crosses. Centre-backs move across when the ball is played wide, and the opposite full-back tucks in to leave the furthest attacker, but he must be ready to recover. Defensive midfielders work across the ball.

Full-pitch game

This is 9v9 outfield plus a neutral who plays for the attacking team. Attacks begin with the keeper feeding a centre-back. Opposing centre-forwards must show one way to play, therefore making play predictable, and enabling other defenders to get into their positions in relation to the ball (6).

As before, the nearest man presses, while the midfield screens the front, closing down if the ball goes into that area. ■



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