

LEICESTERCITY

Claudio Ranieri Counter-attacking and transitions

SET-UP

AREA

Half-pitch or half-pitch plus 18yds

EQUIPMENT

Balls, discs, goals

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Up to 10v10

SESSION TIME

30mins

Overview:

This session is about counter-attacking with pace on the first phase, decision-making and game-related play thereafter.

It is match-realistic and game-related for all positions. So in attacking play we want to see shots on goal, with movement to create or score. In terms of defending play, this is about defending crosses into the box, so players have to ask if they defend space or the man.

We also want to keep a close eye on distances – we always work on the compactness of the back four, whilst being aware of the need to stop crosses, with technical defending techniques also visible.

We would typically run this session on a Tuesday or Thursday, for the reason that it is done at a high intensity and needs to be undertaken well away from match day. We wouldn't necessarily introduce it every week, but regularly so that players keep hold of the benefits of quick counter-attacking, and as has been shown this season in the Barclays Premier League, the effects of this have been immense.

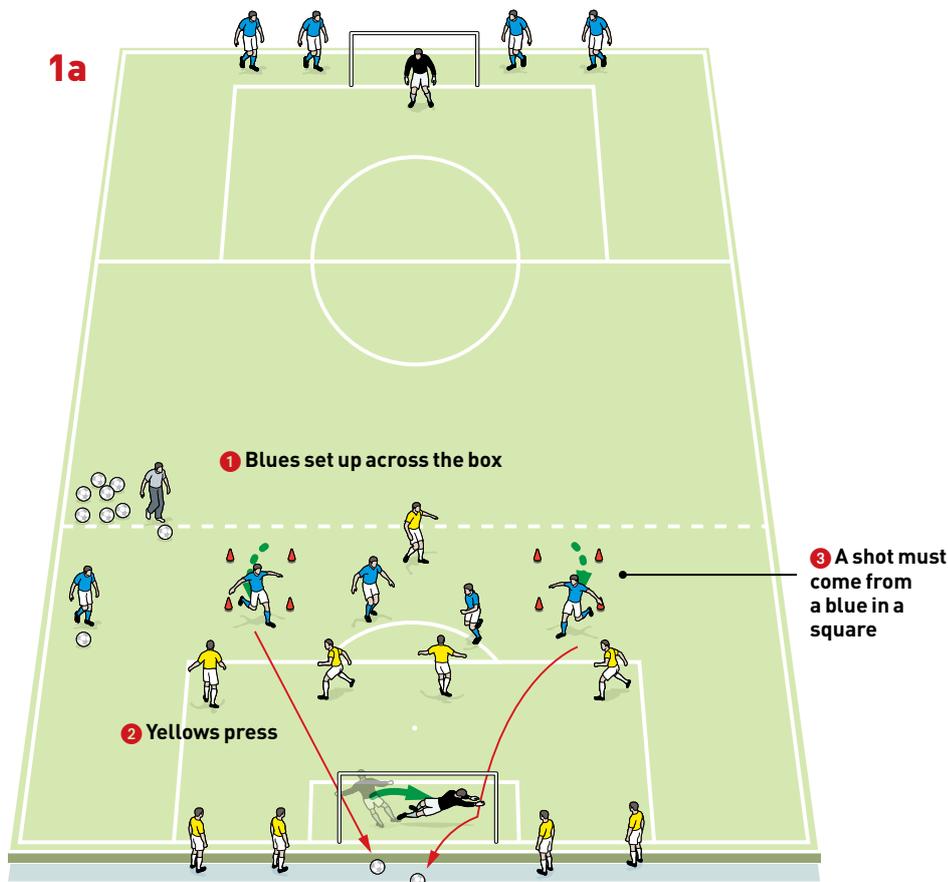
What do I get the players to do?

Phase one (finishing and crossing)

We set this up as 5v5. It is characterised by two shots on goal by the two blue players in the red squares (1a), followed by a cross that will lead to phase 2 (1b).

The yellow players must defend this – four in the standard way and the other staying out ready to start the counter-attack (something that the deepest blue player needs to be aware of). Sure enough, if the

Phase one (finishing and crossing)



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keeper catches the ball, yellows will look to counter-attack, trying to finish with an attempt on goal. The ball for the counter-attack can also be provided by the coach (if the cross is misplaced, for instance).

This first phase is vital and we must see shots hitting the target, accuracy of passes and players attacking the key areas (namely near and far posts).

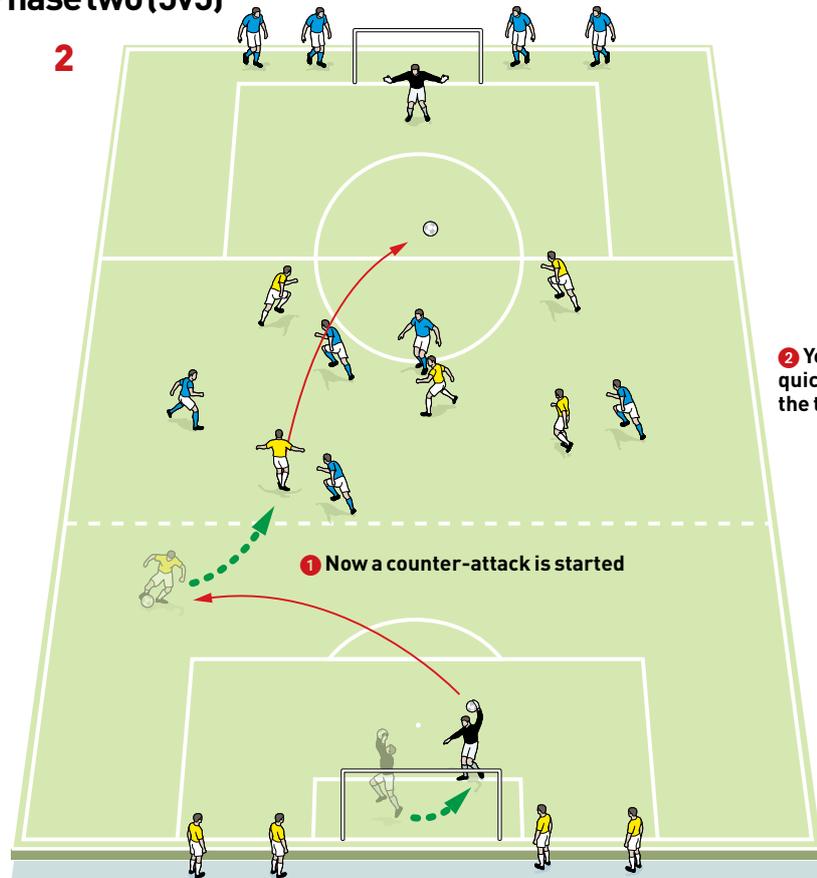
Phase two (5v5)

After crossing the ball, if the defending five assume possession they will then counter-attack the existing five attacking players, looking to play to a finish at the other end (2).

In other cases (for instance, when a goal is scored), a coach on the sidelines can decide to play the ball into the five players to counter-attack, or give the blues another attack.

Phase two (5v5)

2

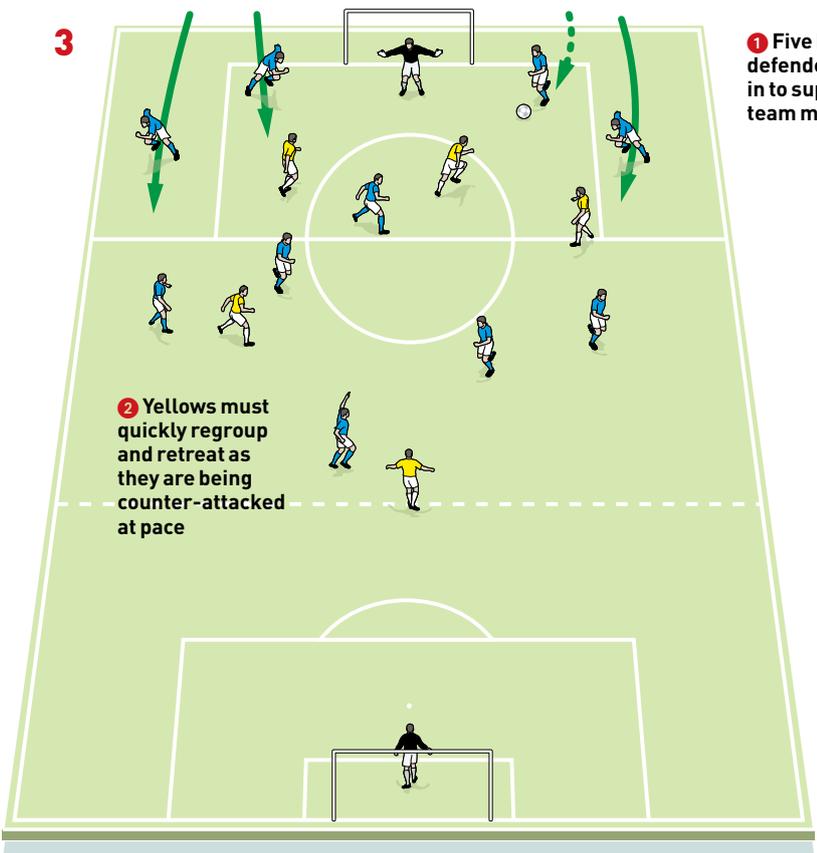


2 Yellows break quickly through the thirds

1 Now a counter-attack is started

Phase three (10v5)

3



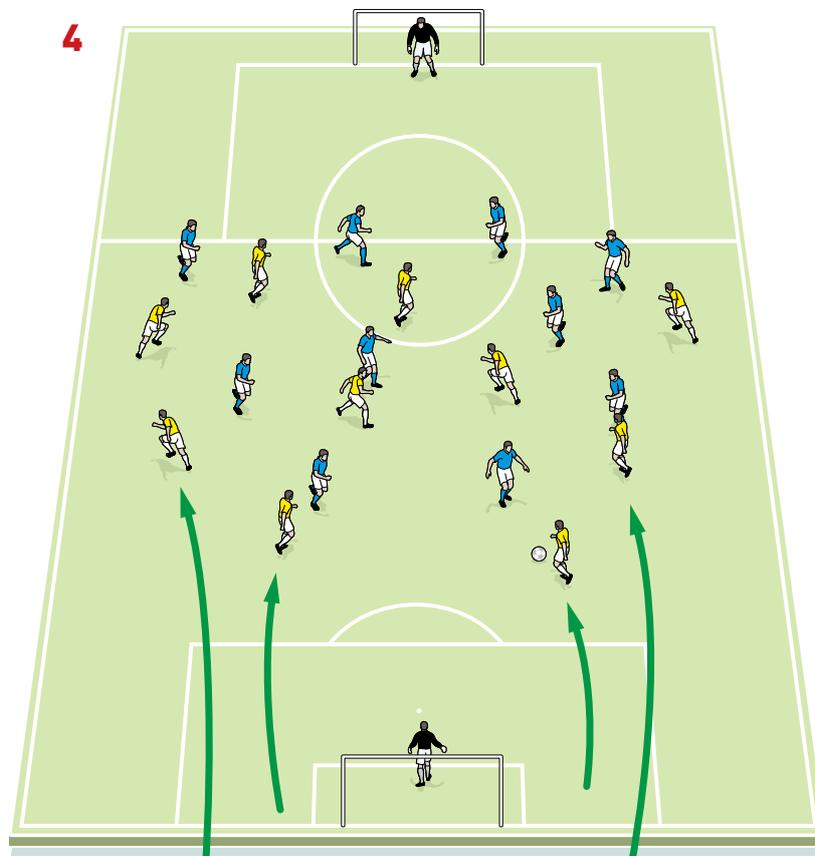
1 Five blue defenders come in to support their team mates

2 Yellows must quickly regroup and retreat as they are being counter-attacked at pace

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

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Phase four (10v10)



In the second progression attacking yellows come in to create a 10v10 attack against blues

Phase four (10v10)

As a further progression, the game will be continued as a 10v10 in the same space used for the initial 5v5 due to the fact that the other five players will join the previous five who were defending (4). The intensity during this phase should be at a maximum; we're looking for continuous counter-attacks and quick phases of play.

What are the key things to look out for?

We must see a positive attitude to counter-attacking, with any break conducted with accuracy of passing at its core. Players must be smart in their decision-making when looking to work an advantage, and we also want to see a good tempo to the session, with the match being game-realistic and at usual competitive tempo.

Game understanding is vital, so players must be aware of transitions between balance and cover, never

overcompensating on either. In addition, we want to see communication and organisation performed at the highest level, compactness when defending and the awareness of triggers in terms of when to press (such as a bad touch or poor weight of pass by an opponent).

How would you put this into a game situation?

This can easily build into a 10v10. When reaching this level we play for a specific time – 3-4mins, for instance – with 2mins rest in between. ■

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