

**LMA AMBASSADOR**

**Neil Cutler  
Dealing with  
crosses**

**SET-UP**

**AREA**

Final third

**EQUIPMENT**

Cones, balls, mannequins, 1 full size goal

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

Up to 9 players + 1 goalkeeper

**SESSION TIME**

Each practice: 10mins

**Overview**

This session is designed to help goalkeepers deal with crosses of different heights, power and trajectories. It will not only show them the technical aspects of dealing with the cross, but also how to use momentum and power when working in and around opposition bodies. We practise this because in the modern game it is becoming more and more important for keepers to show

speed, athleticism, power and agility. For those aspiring to reach the top level, all these attributes are needed when dealing with crosses in congested areas, particularly those balls delivered with pace and accuracy.

**What do I get the players to do? Standard practice**

Setting up as shown [1], on the coach's call one of the three servers throws a ball over the mannequins for the goalkeeper

**KEY**

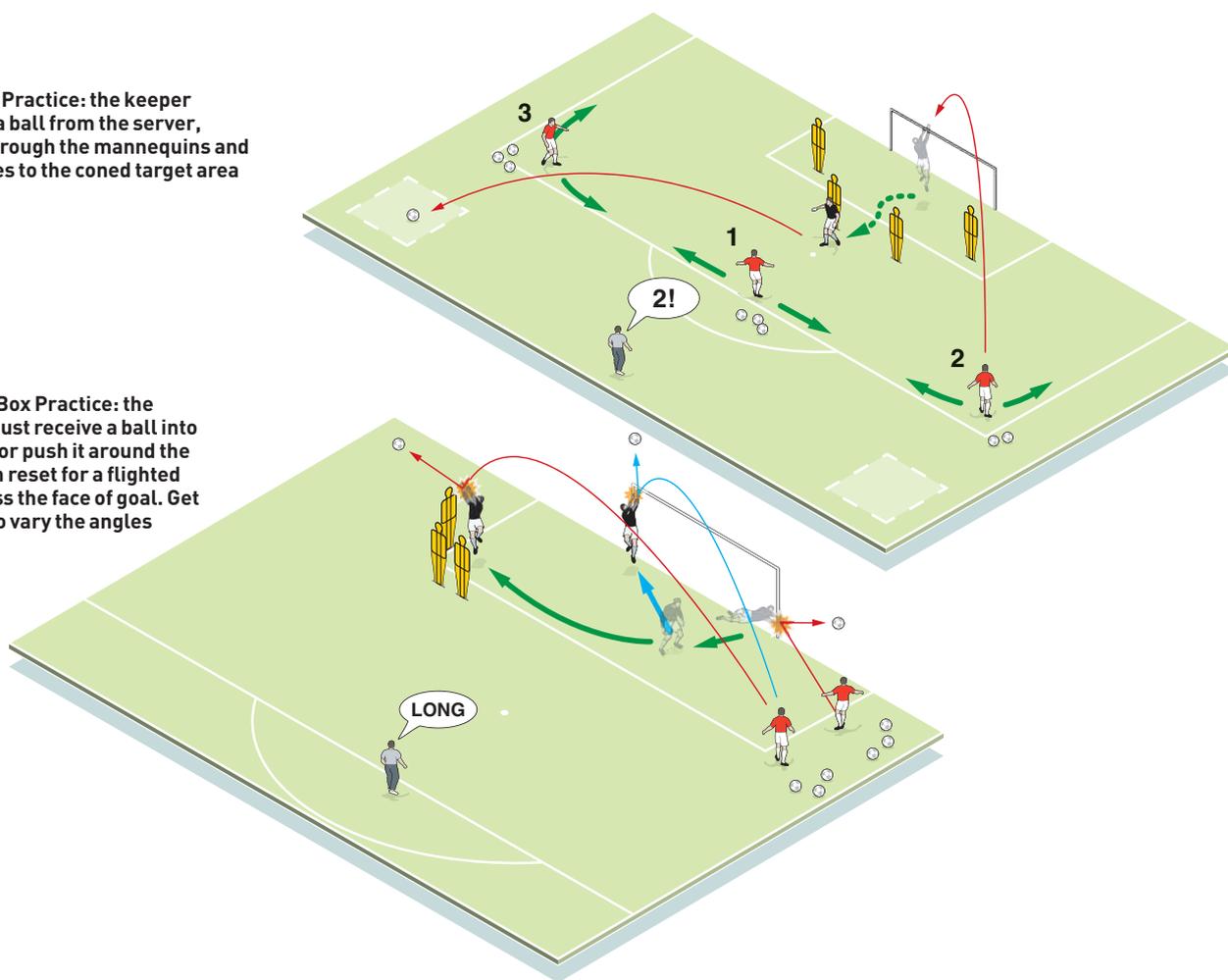
- Ball movement →
- Player movement →
- Dribble →
- Optional movement →

**1**

**Standard Practice:** the keeper receives a ball from the server, breaks through the mannequins and distributes to the coned target area

**2**

**Six-Yard Box Practice:** the keeper must receive a ball into his chest or push it around the post, then reset for a flighted ball across the face of goal. Get servers to vary the angles



to catch. The keeper then breaks through the line of mannequins and throws the ball so it lands in either of the coned boxes outside the penalty area. Deliveries into the keeper continue with servers taking turns to throw on the coach's call. The servers can adjust their positions around the 18-yard box and should

vary deliveries in terms of pace, height and bounce.

**What are the key things to look out for?**

The keeper must adjust his starting position in line with the relevant server. He must assess the flight of the ball and take off from his non-kicking foot, attack the delivery in the air to create momentum

and power in case of a collision with another player. The distribution must be quick and positive.

**Six-yard box practice**

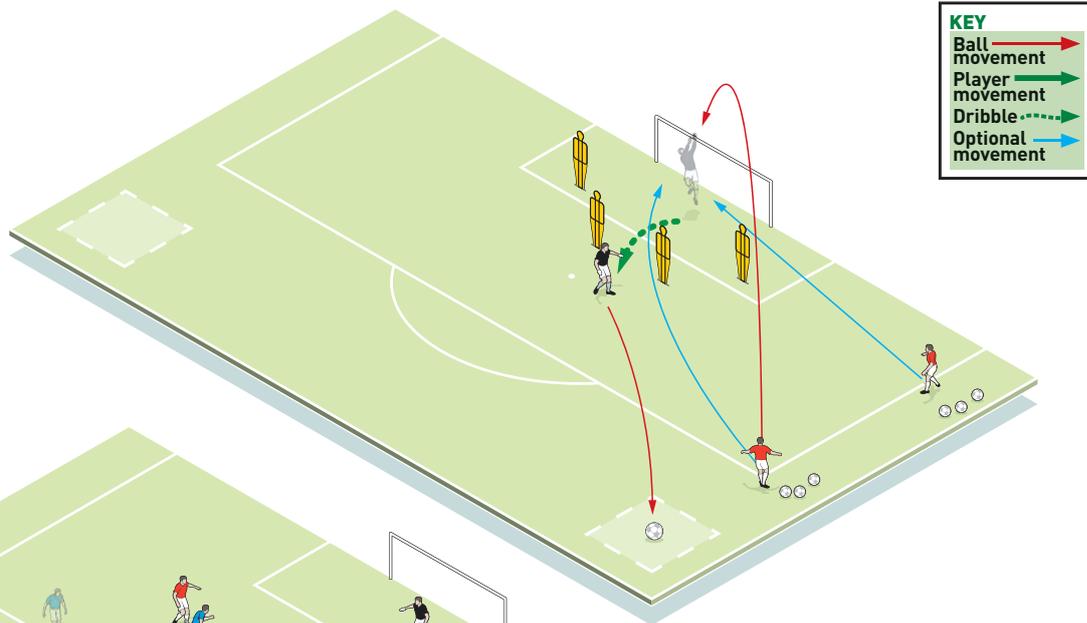
Setting up, as shown [2], in this practice the keeper faces a series of balls into the six-yard box. First the keeper steps towards his near post and takes a low volley from

server 1 into the chest or pushes the ball around the post, immediately resetting to face the next ball. Server 2 then throws a ball over the keeper's head. He must follow its path, deciding whether to catch it or punch it. The coach can call for the type of delivery. The servers should vary the power and angle of each delivery. ▼

**NEIL CUTLER: DEALING WITH CROSSES**

**3**

**Side Practice:** the keeper is tested by a variety of serves, and again must break through the wall of mannequins to distribute

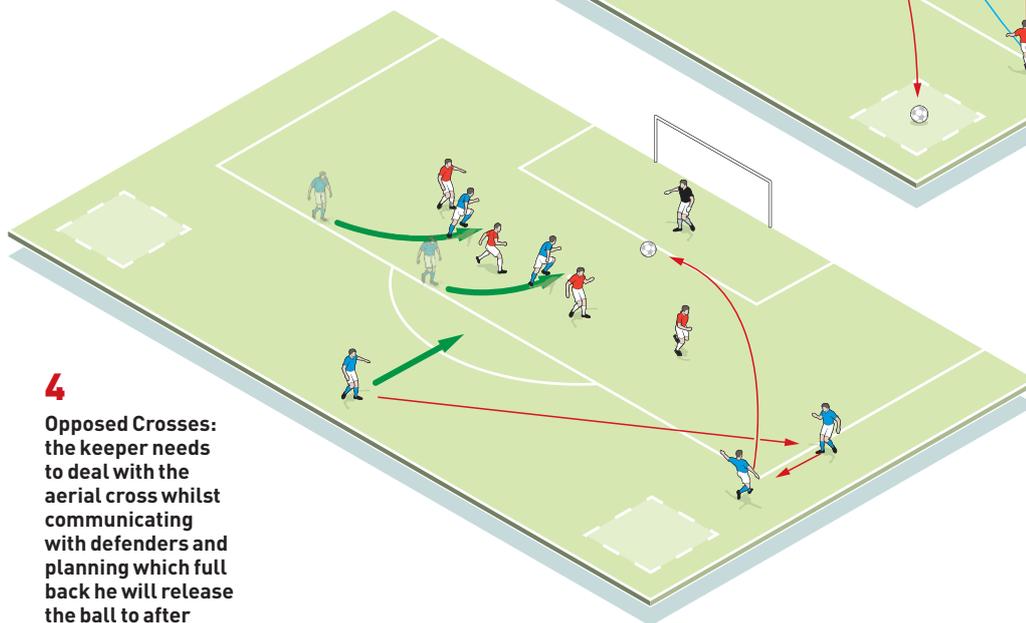


**KEY**

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

**4**

**Opposed Crosses:** the keeper needs to deal with the aerial cross whilst communicating with defenders and planning which full back he will release the ball to after collecting



“In the modern game it is becoming much more important for keepers to show speed, athleticism, power and agility”

**What are the key things to look out for?**

The keeper needs to use short, sharp feet into the near post, adopting a good set position to receive the volley. He then opens his stance to face play. For the second ball, he must assess the flight and use short, sharp, quick steps, moving sideways, not backwards, so he still has any obstacles in view. If he decides to punch, he must clear with height, width and length, keeping an eye on the ball at all times. If catching at full stretch, he must go down with the ball to protect it.

**Side practice**

This time the servers are working from the side of the penalty area, delivering a series of crosses in

and around the mannequins with pace, as shown [3]. The keeper adopts a positive starting position on the front foot, and must make a positive early decision if coming for the ball, assessing its flight all the time. Target zones are added to practise distribution, and to ensure a perceived target for a quick breakaway.

**What are the key things to look out for?**

The keeper must attack the ball as early as he can to ensure attackers don't nip in front, making sure again that he drives through the ball to maintain power and aggression.

**Opposed crosses**

Now we introduce attackers and swap

the mannequins for real defenders, making this a 5v4 attacking overload situation. The midfielder begins, feeding in a firm pass to one of the wingers, before heading into the box as an additional attacker. The wingers combine freely to fashion a cross into the box, as shown [4]. As before, the keeper adopts a positive starting position in relation to the ball. This time, when he gathers the ball, he throws it out to a full back.

**What are the key things to look out for?**

We are looking for the keeper to combine all of the technical and tactical elements learnt from the earlier drills in this practice, except now he needs to communicate at all times with his defenders as well.