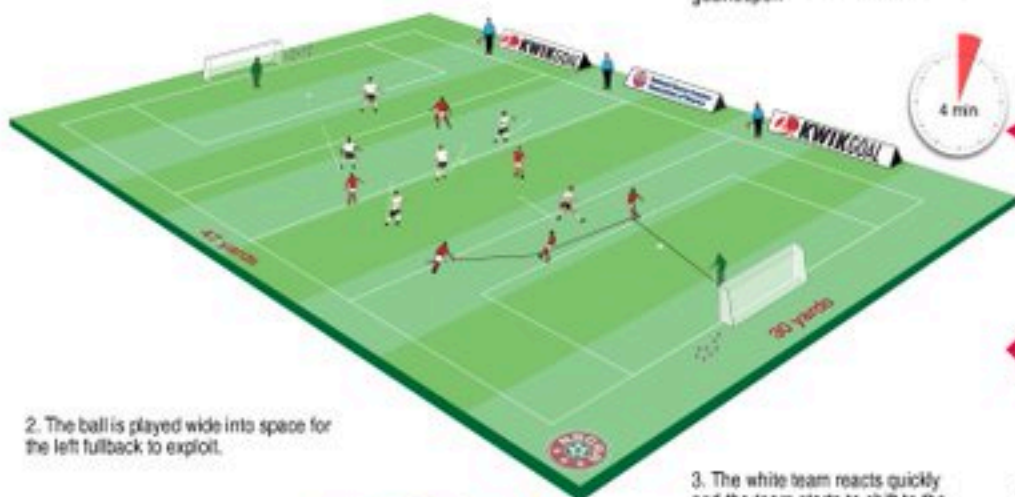


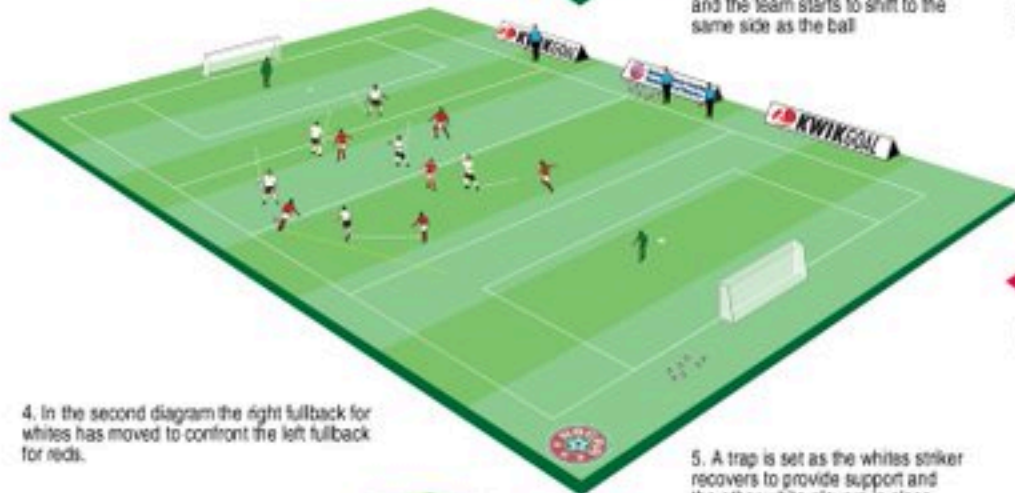
# 7v7 DEFENDING IN SMALL GROUPS - GAME

1. The red team build up play from the goalkeeper.



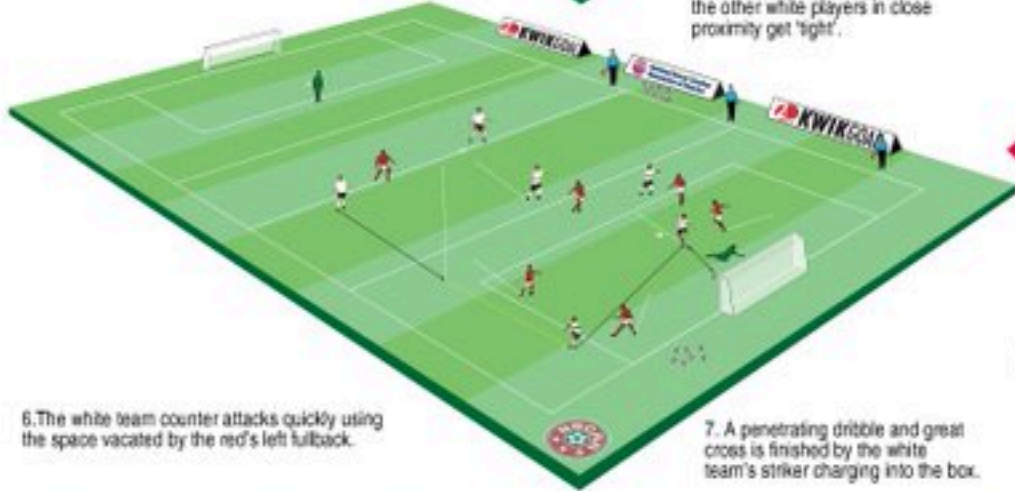
2. The ball is played wide into space for the left fullback to exploit.

3. The white team reacts quickly and the team starts to shift to the same side as the ball



4. In the second diagram the right fullback for whites has moved to confront the left fullback for reds.

5. A trap is set as the whites striker recovers to provide support and the other white players in close proximity get 'tight'.



6. The white team counter attacks quickly using the space vacated by the red's left fullback.

7. A penetrating dribble and great cross is finished by the white team's striker charging into the box.

## Why use it?

This game like activity provides the coach with an opportunity to see if learning objectives from the previous activities can be applied in a 7v7 game setting.

## Set up

The set up is full 7v7 field with an appropriate size goal at both ends. The coach observes from the sideline and is supported by 2 assistants monitoring offside.

## How to play

The coach can set a variety of different objectives for the attacking and defending teams. Set up the formations and team shape to support the defensive objectives - i.e. high/low press, prevent attacks through the middle or around the edge etc. All restarts are from the goalkeepers. If the defense forces and turnover, the team must keep possession or the opponent wins a free kick. When they win the ball the defenders keep possession, stretch the opponent, offer opportunities to keep possession and penetrate to score.

## Coaching notes

**Coaching Objectives:** Focus on whether or not the defense can read the appropriate cues and win possession. If the defender closest to the ball can arrive to apply pressure on or before the receiver's first touch the team should press hard. The second and third defenders must move close attacking options, mark opponents and 'squeeze' the game.

**Coaching Tip:** Use this activity to imprint a style of defensive shape with your team.

## How to modify

**Less Challenging:** Attackers must take more than 2 touches to slow down the play. This will enable the defenders to get into position before the ball is passed again. Making the area smaller and more compact will also help the defenders, as the attackers will have less space to pass.

**More Challenging:** Team in possession has a maximum of 2 touches. This speeds up the play and less time for defenders to get into a good defensive shape. Also the coach can manipulate the attacking team to play long balls over the top to try to expose the weak side and defenders caught 'ball watching'.

## Stage/s of development covered by activity

Stages 3, 4 and 5 - 9-18 year old players.

## Development themes and competencies

Top 3 Themes: Individual, pairs and small group defending, transition and communication.

Top 3 Competencies: Defending pressure, defending cover and defending balance.