

# 7v7 PRESSURE, COVER, BALANCE DEFENDING - GAME

## Why use it?

A 7v7 game designed to teach the players to play high and low press defense as an individual and team. Working with the players to recognize visual cues and communication between teammates are key considerations.

## Set up

The set up is full 7v7 field with an appropriate size goal at both ends. The field is separated at halfway into two zones. Around each goal is a 5 yards 'keeper only' zone. Play 7v7. The coach observes from the sideline and is supported by 2 assistants monitoring offside.

## How to play

Each team is allowed 2 central midfield players to move freely between the 2 zones and all others are restricted to the zone they started in. The attacking objective is to pass the ball to the other team's goalkeeper, either on the ground or in the air. Goalkeepers are restricted to the 'keeper zone'. The goalkeeper earns a point for each ball they catch or collect clean. The primary objective for the defense is to prevent the attacking team from passing to the goalkeeper. Play 6 intervals each lasting 3 minutes. To encourage the defense to press early and high up the field, award the attacking team 3 points if the ball is passed to the goal keeper from the defending half. Award 1 point if the ball is played from the attacking half (Intervals 1-2). To encourage defenders to deny space in the attacking half reverse the scoring - 1 point if the ball is passed to the goalkeeper from the defending half and 3 points if the ball is played from the attacking half (Intervals 3-4). Remove all the restrictions for intervals 5-6 to see if the players can read the cues.

## Coaching notes

**Coaching Objectives:** The coach should encourage defenders to press the player in possession early and for the team to remain compact. Work with players to recognize the visual cues to determine if the player on the ball will play short or long.

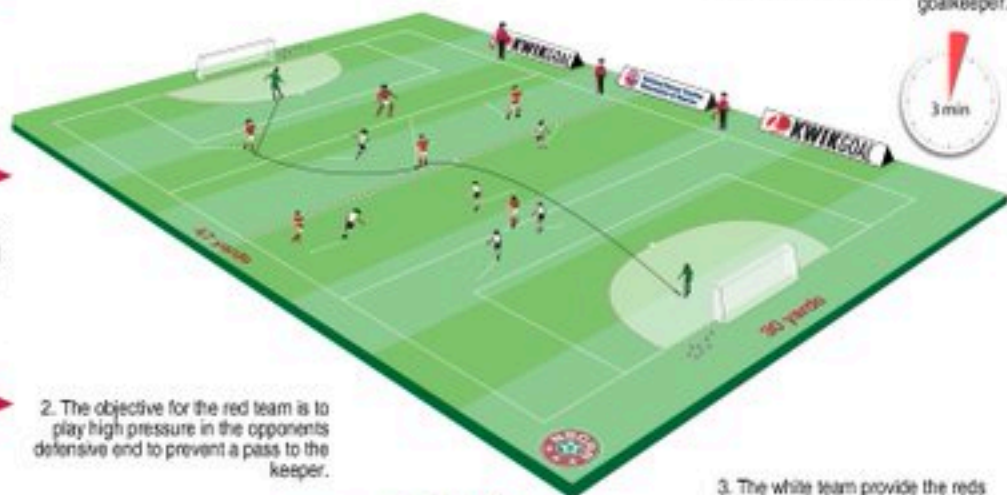
**Coaching Tip:** The coach can introduce a points system (as described above) to provide extra emphasis on the type of strategy the coach wants to see employed. Introduce the idea of defending early or later.

## How to modify

**Less Challenging:** Reduce the number of attacking players and reduce the size of the field.

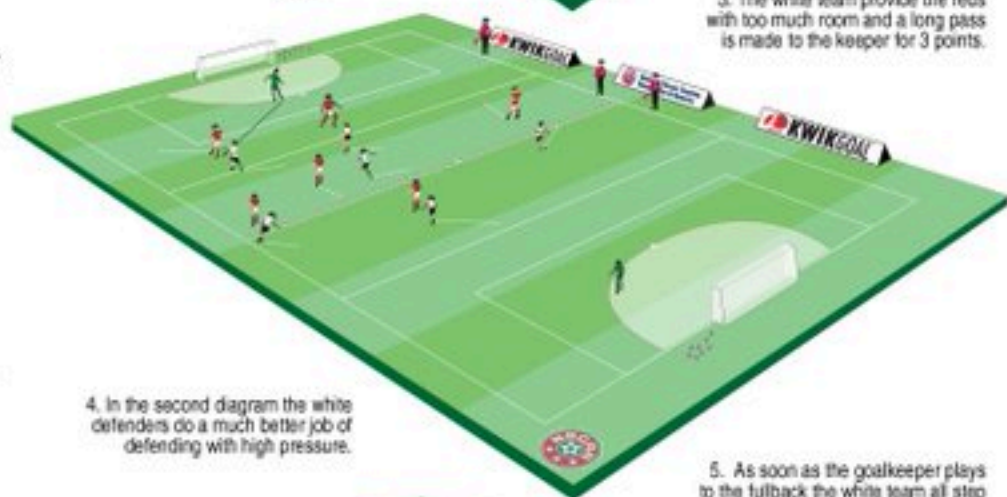
**More Challenging:** Use the larger penalty box as the 'keeper zone' and play with full 7v7 teams.

1. The Red team attacks the white team attempting to pass to the white team's goalkeeper.



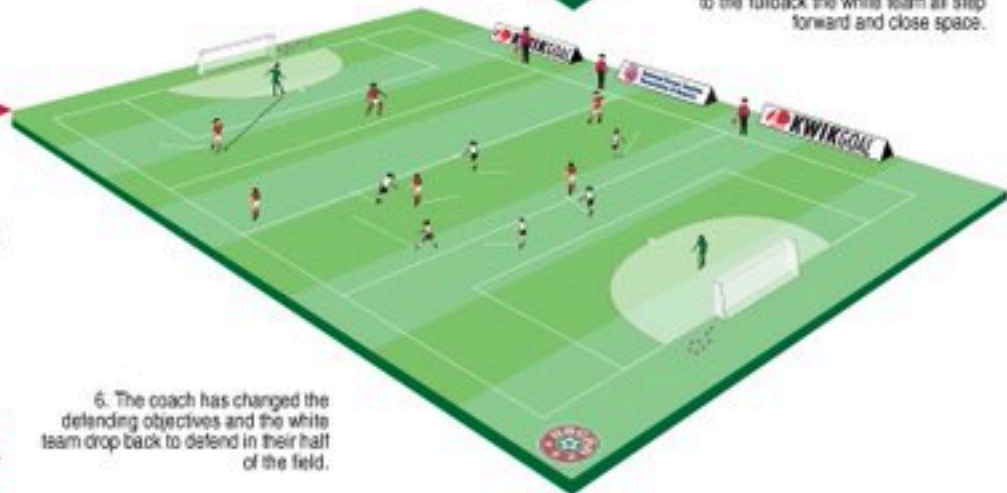
2. The objective for the red team is to play high pressure in the opponents defensive end to prevent a pass to the keeper.

3. The white team provide the reds with too much room and a long pass is made to the keeper for 3 points.



4. In the second diagram the white defenders do a much better job of defending with high pressure.

5. As soon as the goalkeeper plays to the fullback the white team all step forward and close space.



6. The coach has changed the defending objectives and the white team drop back to defend in their half of the field.

## Stage/s of development covered by activity

Stages 2, 3, 4 and 5 - 6-18 year old players.

## Development themes and competencies

Top 3 Themes: Individual and pairs defending, when to press and when to hold and communication.

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