



**Wayne Harrison**  
presents  
**Exclusive eBook Series**



**eBook 22**

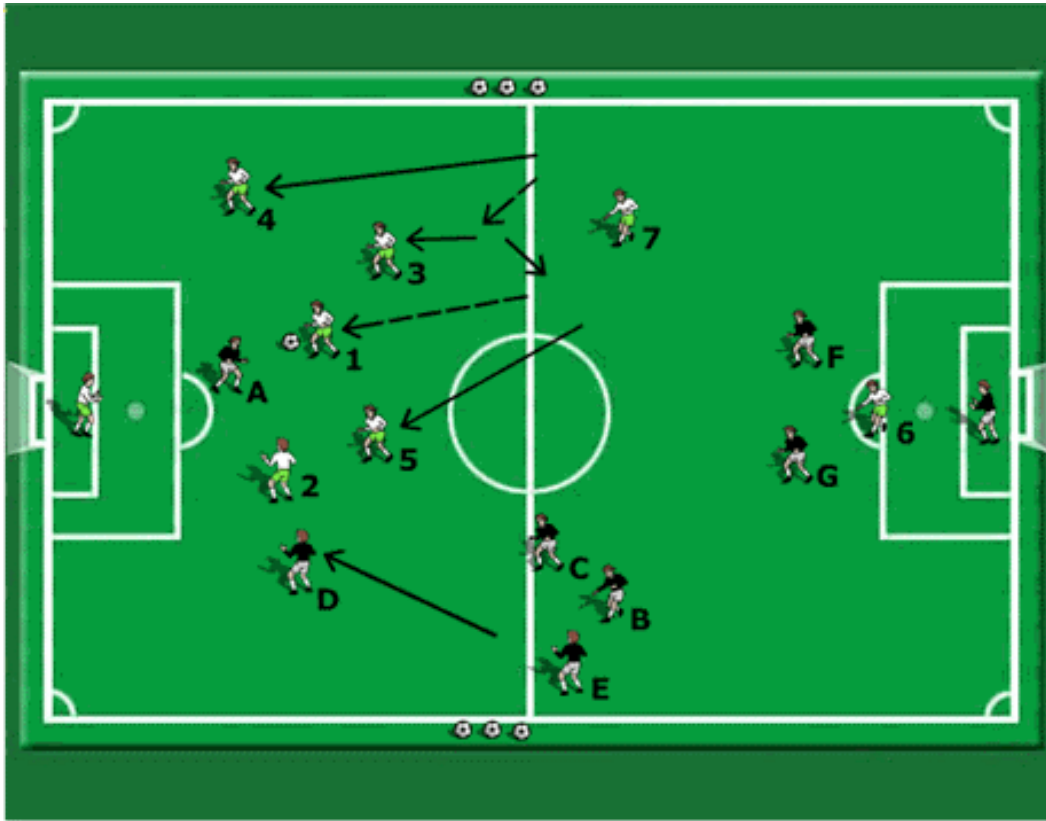
**Quick Break and Counter Attacking  
Development Plan**



## ABOUT WAYNE HARRISON

- Ex-Professional Player with Blackpool; England and Oulu Palloseura; Finland
- Represented Great Britain in the World Student Games in Mexico
- Bachelors of Arts in Sports Psychology
- UEFA 'A' License 1996
- NSCAA Premier Diploma holder
- Author of 14 Coaching Books and 4 DVD's
- DOC for Al Ain Soccer Club; United Arab Emirates; Middle East; 7 Youth National Championships in 2 years at Professional level
- Proponent of Soccer Awareness One Touch Developmental Training
- Owner Soccer Awareness Developmental Training programs



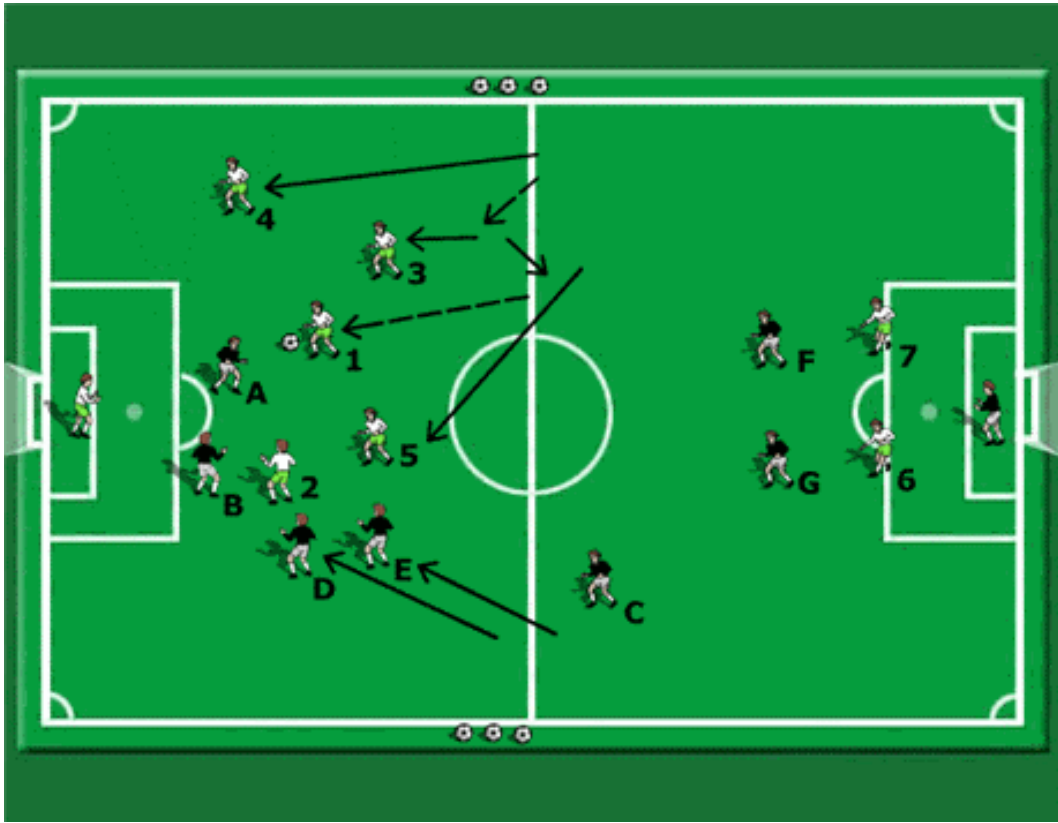


1. Here we have a big overload in attack creating a 5 v 2 situation. The attacking team should have ample opportunity to make this a winning situation.
2. Working both ways for both teams to have the opportunity to have successful attacking situations.
3. Set the session up based on the number of players you have to work with.
4. You can set it up to go only one side if you have little space to work in.

**Develop:** Now go to a 1 v 1 situation. Pass to space for (1) to come off the defender and turn. Three players break quickly to support. Two central attacking players and one wide player support the front two. One defender makes a recovery run to help (4 v 2).

Introduce a second defender. This means it's difficult for (1) to receive especially if the two defenders screen both sides so support players can run the ball out to start the play.

It is now a 4 v 3 situation and the striker has to get free of the defenders and create space for the attacking support players.

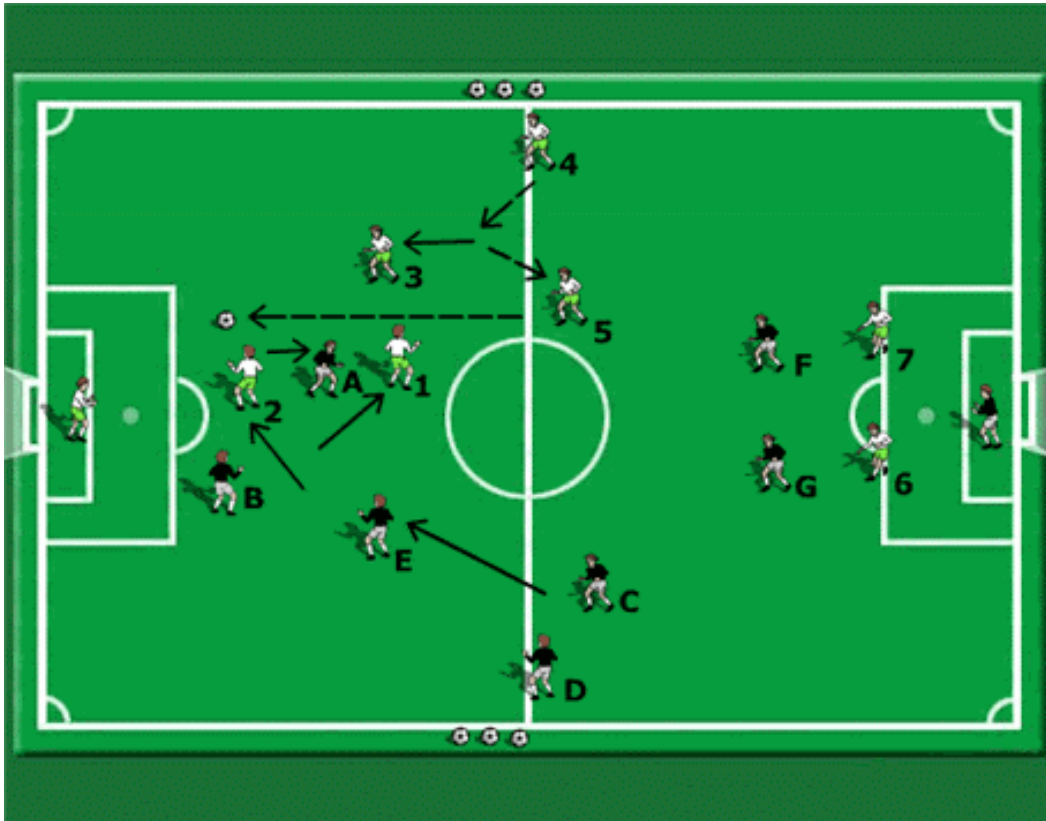


**Further Development:** Introduce another defender so it is a 2 v 2 up front plus have two recovery players. This creates a 5 v 4 situation. Pass the ball into space to bring the strikers off the marking defenders to receive the ball.

Working both ways alternately. This teaches the players to be quick and decisive in their decision making when they have the chance of an overload counter attack. Obviously to attack the other way the players have to recover back and start again.

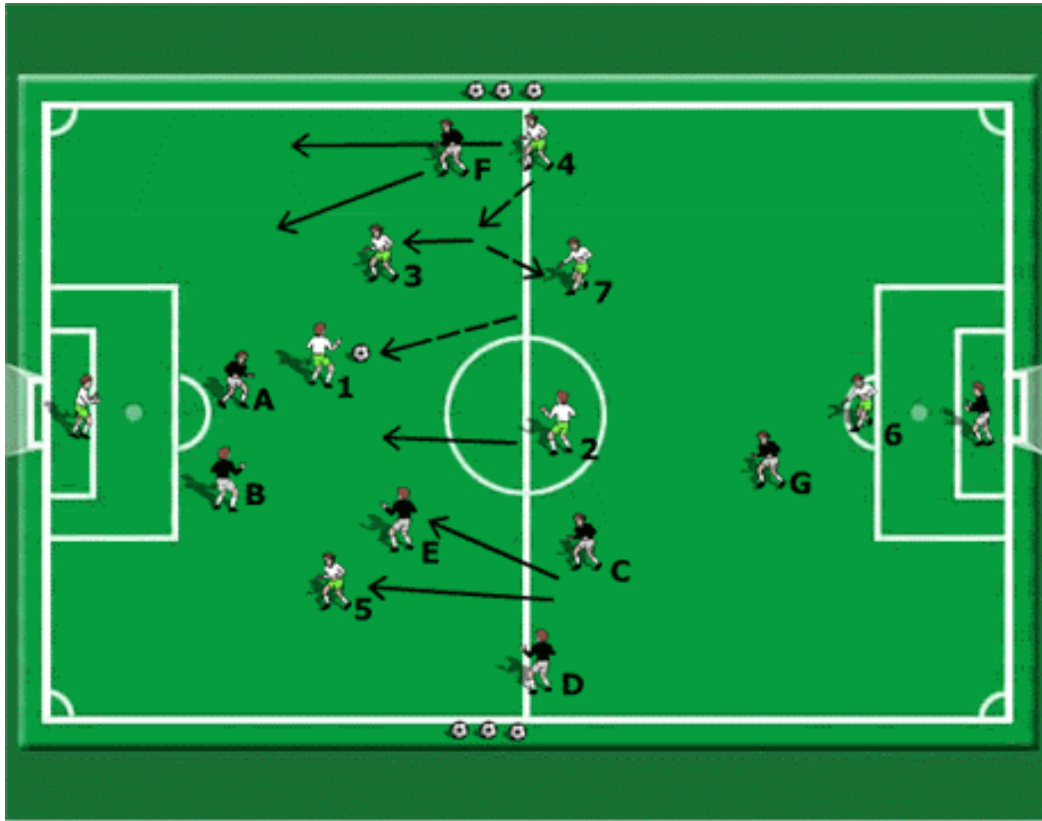
Here we have the positions of the players after the recovery runs of defenders and also the attacking support runs of the attacking midfielders. (1) Has received and turned with the ball.

You can vary the direction the defenders recover to make the situation more difficult for the attacking team for example has defenders recovering from both sides of the field for a more balanced defensive set up. Also the attacking players are breaking forward from both sides of the field.



Working on the movement of the strikers here (1) goes short to receive to feet and takes (A) with them, creating space behind for the diagonal run of (2) who goes late and fast to get away from marker (B) and try to get a shot at goal or link up with another attacking midfield player. Timing of the run is important.

Late and fast can mean (2) can receive it in front to go on to shoot at goal having escaped (B)'s marking. In too early and (2) may receive the ball with their back to goal and (B) behind having taken (B) in also so it is more likely that (2) will have to link up and work with a midfielder and not get the immediate shot off.



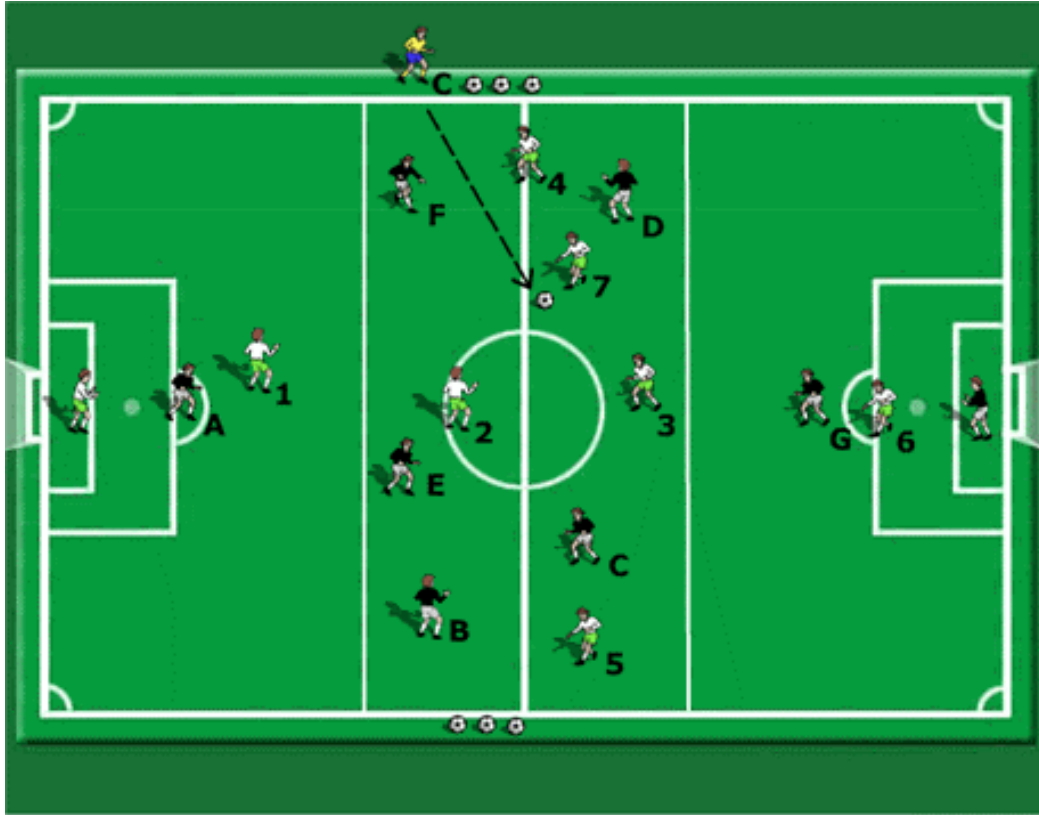
Here is a more balanced set up with players breaking and recovering from both sides of the field. Same set up with the two passes then a pass into a striker and the session begins.

You can vary the numbers attacking and defending wise in this session to make it work best. Keep experimenting to find the best formula to suit your needs.

**CHECK IT WORKS BOTH WAYS !!!!!**

Attacking from all sides of the field creating a bigger challenge to all the attacking players. A 5 v 4 is created here but again you can set it up to get out of it what you want based on degree of difficulty for the attacking or the defending players.

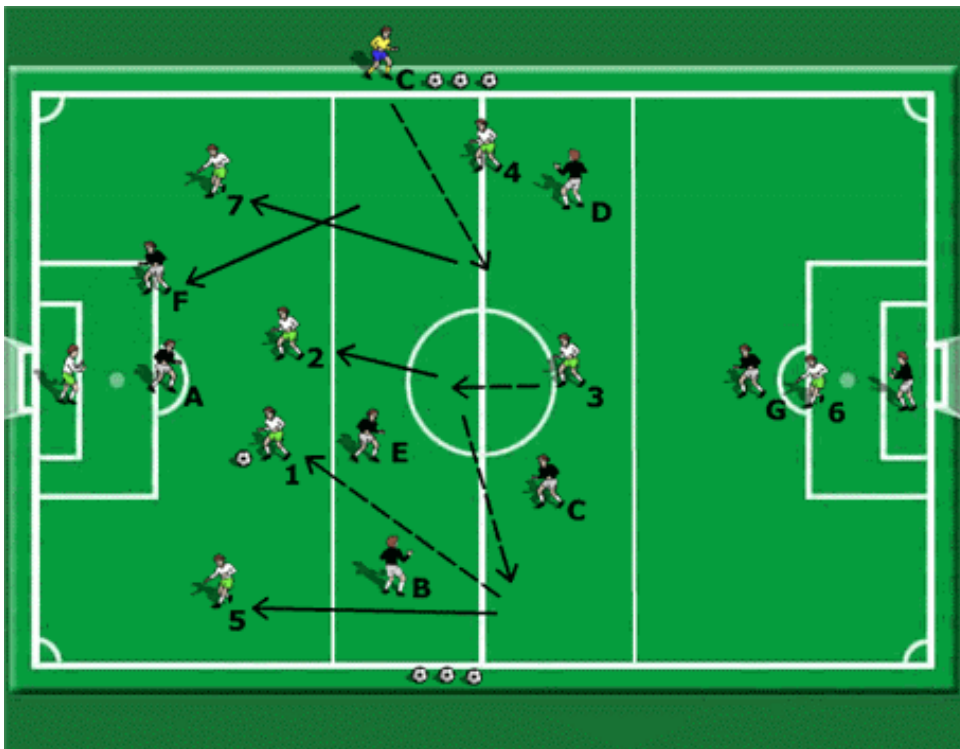
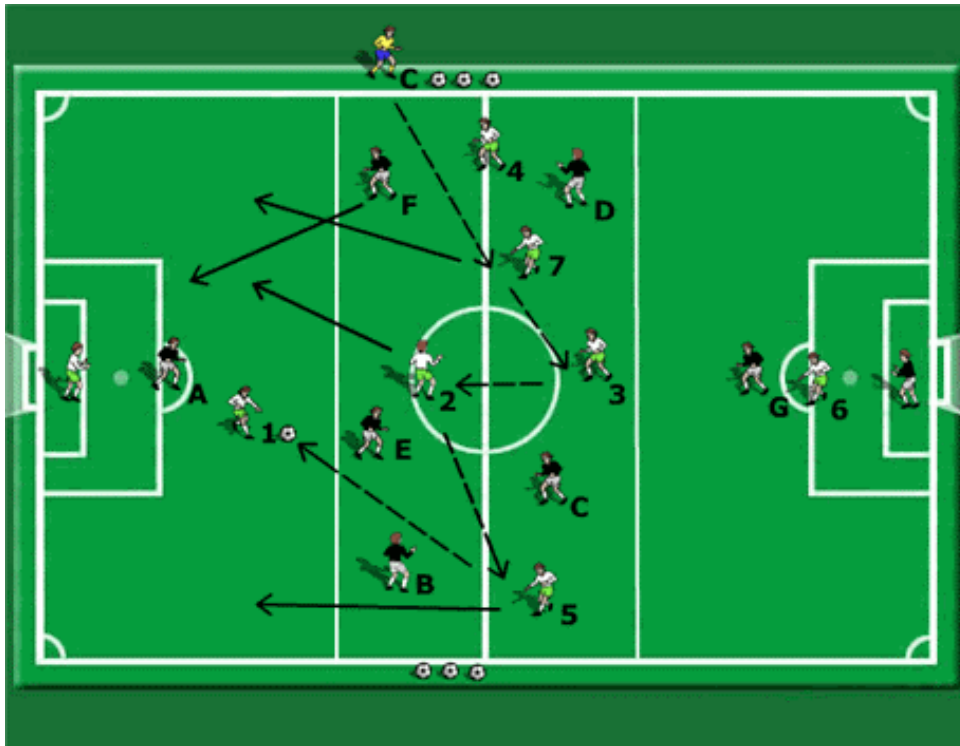
## Constant Transitions from Attack to Defense



**Directional session:** The team in possession has to make three passes then they can pass into the lone striker. Two midfield players break quickly to support (making a 4 v 2 overloads in favor of the attacking team) and / or one defensive midfielder can recover. Start with a big overload then introduce the recovering midfielder later when the session is working well to offer a bigger challenge. This leaves a 4 v 1 situation in the middle zone in favor of the other team who are currently defending, if no recovering midfielder is used to begin. If the defenders win the ball or the keeper receives it, the ball is played quickly into the middle zone (to a 4 v 1 overload again) where they make three passes then get the ball into the striker to attack in the other direction.

Players in the previous attack from the other team must recover as quickly as possible to try to win the ball back before they get it into the striker.



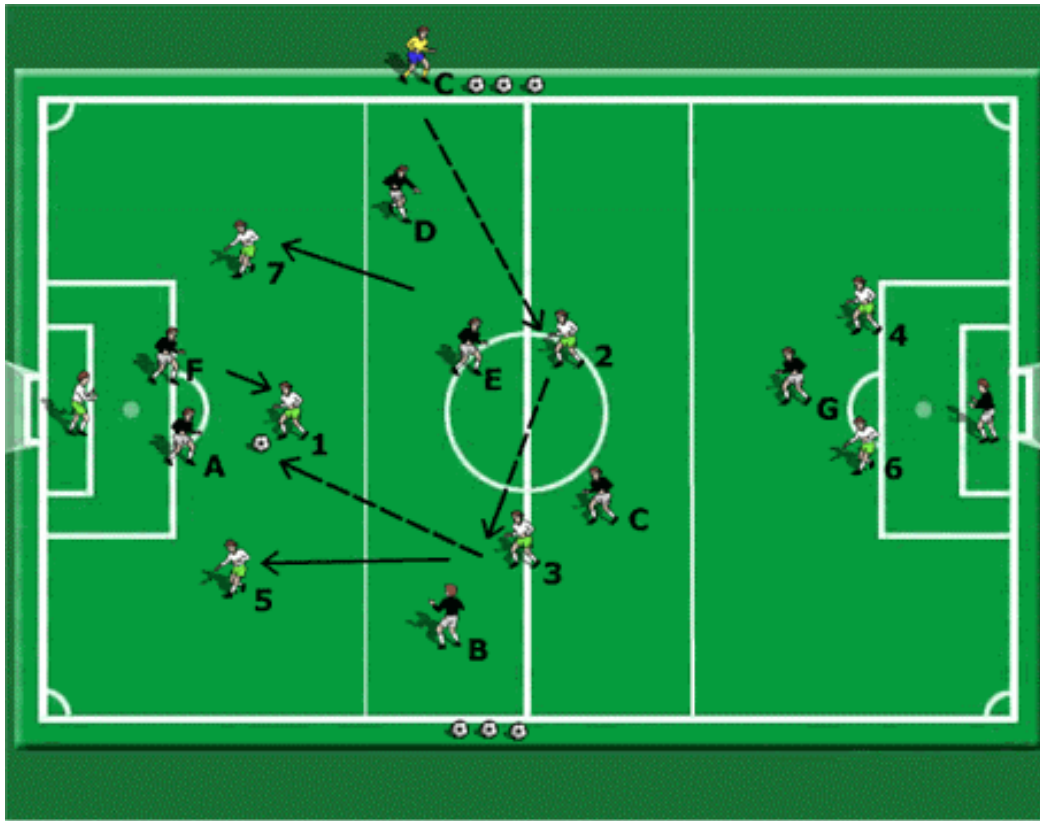


As stated previously we now have a 4 v 2 attacking overload situation.(2), (5) and (7) have broken forward to support striker (1) and defender (F) has recovered to help out defender (A).



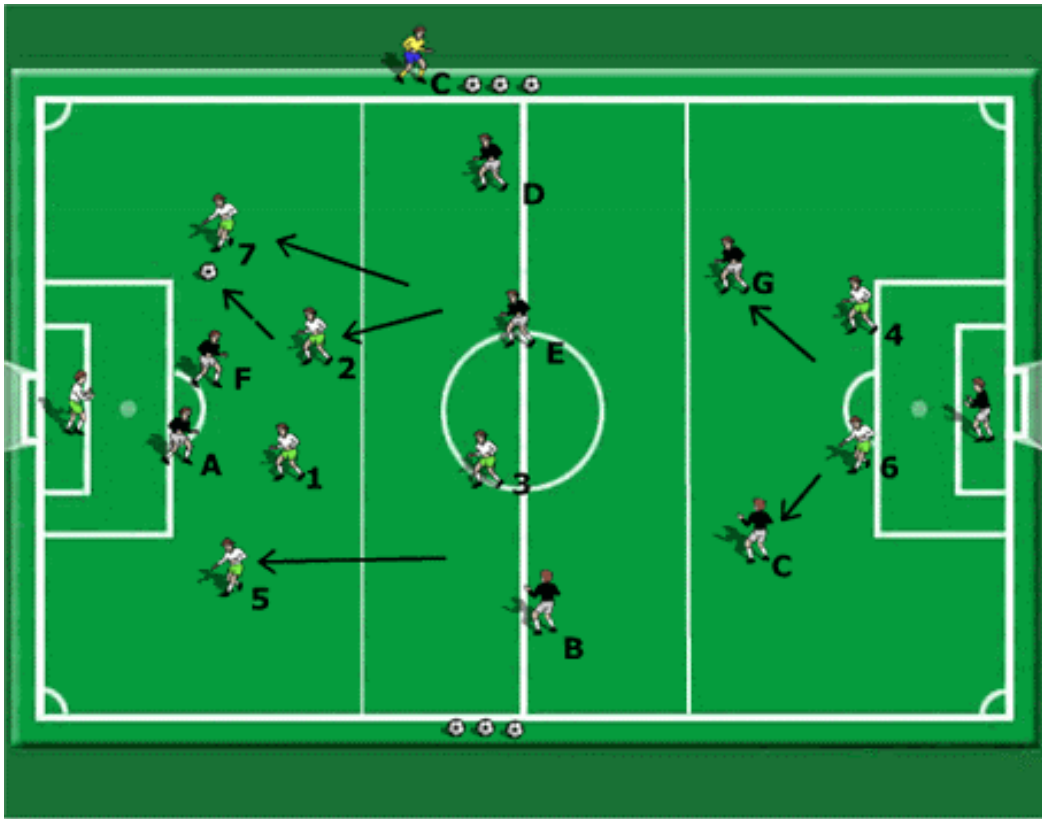
Here we have the 4 v 2 attacking and in the middle a 4 v 2 going the other way in favor of the letters team should that team regain possession. The alternatives are if the keeper saves it he or she gets the ball into the overload situation in the middle, or the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored and a new ball is served into the middle by the coach from the sideline to attack the other way.

Now the numbered players who have attacked have to recover back as quickly as possible to try to stop the lettered team, the lettered team have to make their passes quickly to use the overload to get the ball into their striker quickly and thus break away and score.



**Develop:** Introduce a second defender versus one striker so a midfielder may need to run the ball in rather than pass it in.

1. Two players can join in on the quick attack to make a 3 v 2 situation or even one more attacking midfielder can join in to go to a 4 v 2.
2. If you are having trouble making the session work you can increase the overload this way to help gain success. Once success is consistent and to make it a more difficult and bigger challenge for the players you can go back to only a 3 v 2 overload in the attacking third which leaves a 3 v 2 overload the other way in the middle midfield zone also.
3. 3 v 2 overload with two instead of three midfielders joining in to attack.
4. The variables are numerous here depending on the level of play the players are at, making it more difficult for the attacking team as they improve at this by reducing the size of the overload.
5. You need to vary the difficulty depending on how successful your teams are constantly giving them bigger challenges so it is not too easy for them so when they take it to the actual game they can have a better chance of making it work.
6. Whilst a team is attacking one way the strikers and midfielders of the defending team must move players around and make themselves available incase they regain the ball and break quickly.

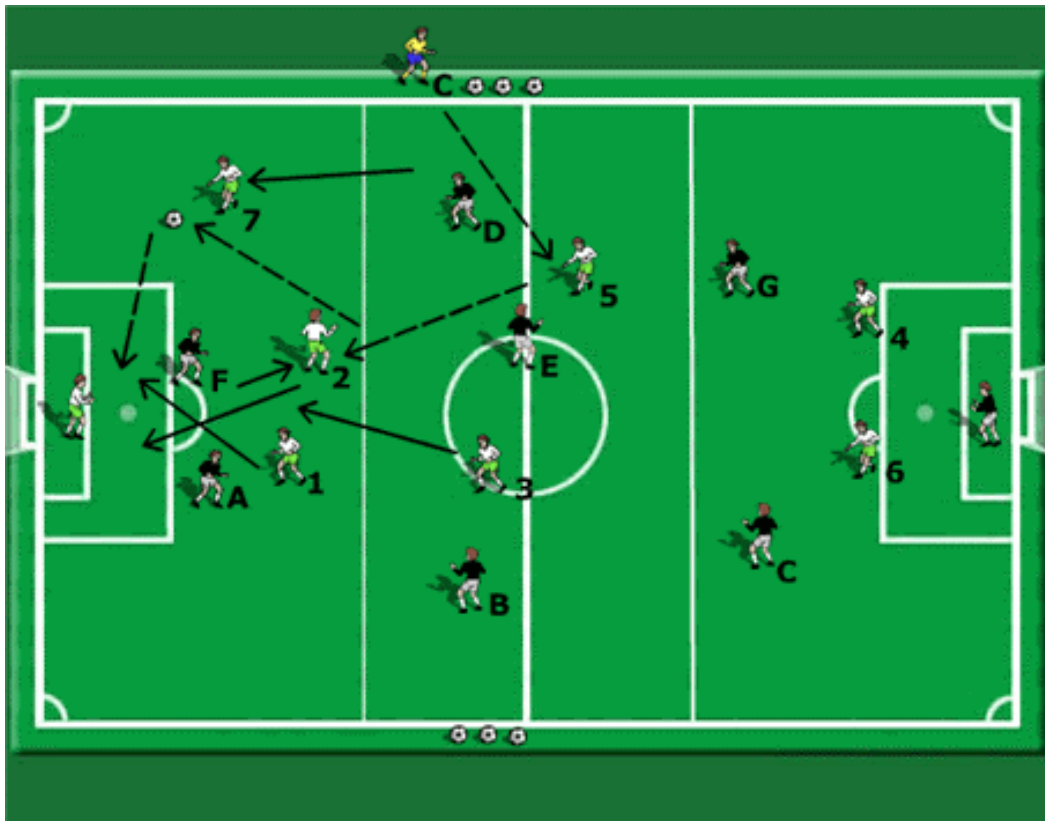


Now we have a 2 v 2 in each end zone. The numbers team has broken forward into a 4 v 2 in the attacking teams favor; it leaves a 3 v 1 in the middle midfield zone going the other way for the letters team for the quick break if the defenders win possession. The defending team's strikers are making it difficult to be marked by being on the move just in case their team regains possession and breaks quickly.

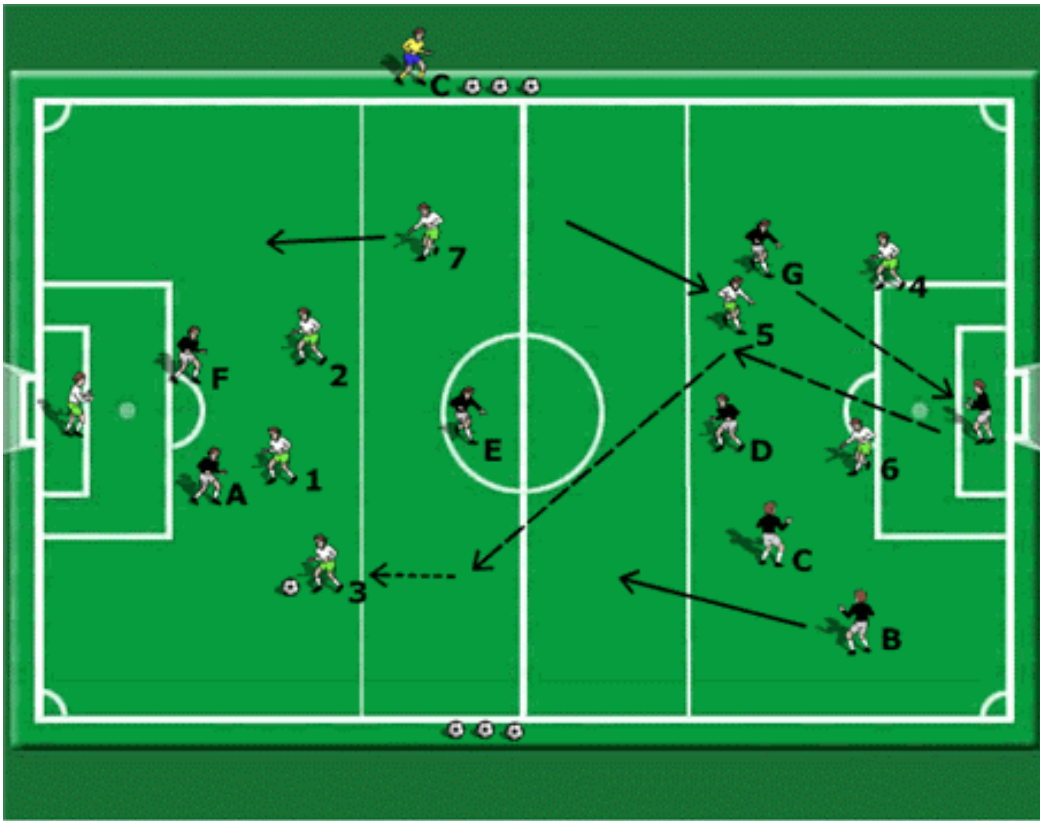
If the condition on passing becomes false then the midfield just passes the ball in when it's on to do so. It may take three passes or maybe only one. Have a supply of balls available to keep the session flowing, if one team scores pass a ball into the other team to start from midfield again.

### Coaching Points:

1. Quick Breaks in attack.
2. Passing and Support play.
3. Early shots on goal.
4. Regains of the ball and quick counter attacks going the other way.



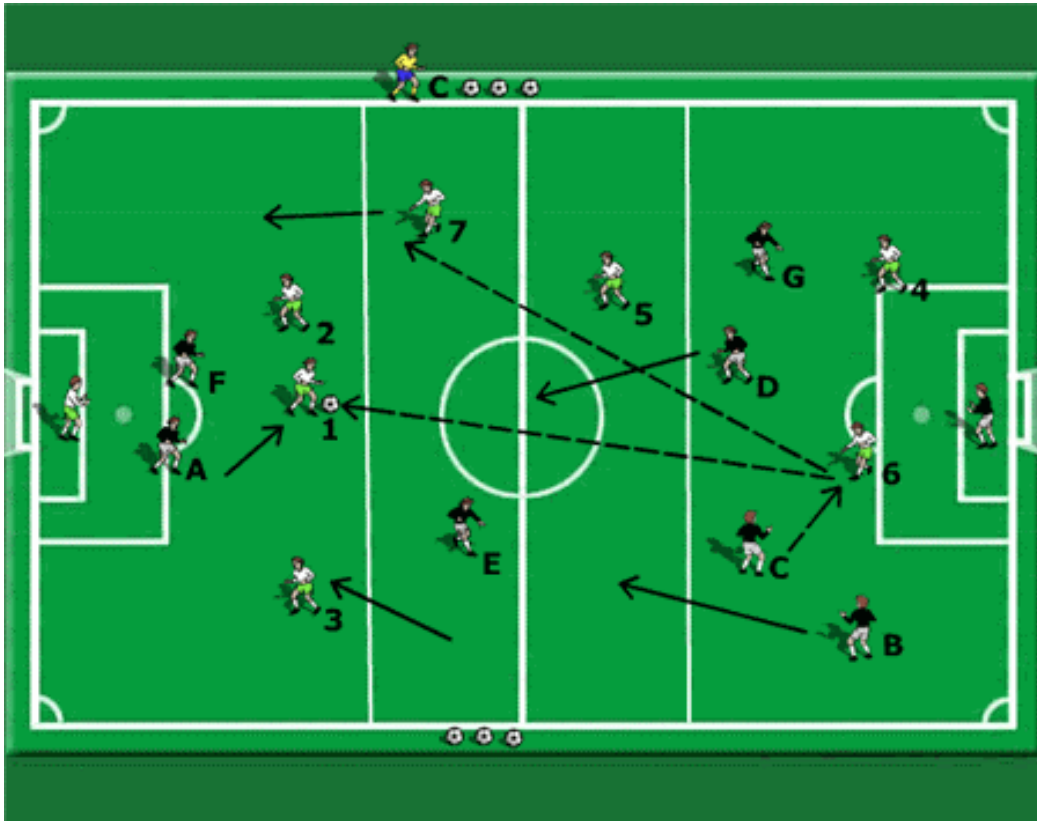
1. An often used method of attack here is for the striker to go short to receive to feet, half turn and play the ball wide for an attacking midfielder who breaks forward and gets a cross into the box. Now it is the secondary movement of the strikers to get into the box once the first link up has been made that we need to focus on. Players are attacking all the important areas in and around the box, near post, middle of the goal and far post, all done as quickly as possible and against the clock emphasizing speed in attack.
2. The positioning is now (1) near post, (2) far post and midfielder (3) in the middle around the edge of the box.
3. Cross is into the second six yard box away from the keeper, recovering defenders need to make sure they do not score an own goal in this situation.
4. This is why it is good to deliver the cross quickly and in behind the defenders and not take it to the by line to cross when everyone else has recovered back and into position.



Here (G) shoots at goal. The keeper gains possession of the ball.

**Development:** A midfield player can drop deep to receive the ball either from the keeper or a defender to set up the next play.

Here (5) drops off and receives the ball to work it forward through midfield or directly to a striker, in this case a pass to (3) who runs the ball into the attacking zone creating a 4 v 2 with the help of (7) moving in from midfield too. We have transitioned as a team very quickly from the keeper to the strikers after regaining possession.



1. The numbered team have been caught on the break but win the ball back, (C) giving it away with a bad pass. Choices can be now include quick counter attacking playing through the midfield or a direct ball into the strikers and the midfield can then link up with them.
2. Here we show both options. (D) And (B) run back to the middle zone ready for the next counter attack going the other way. (3) Is already on the way to support the strikers from midfield.
3. You can work on defending against a counter attacking fast break overload too. To do this insist on more passes begin needed in the middle third before they can go into the attacking third thus allowing the recovering players more time to get back.
4. Here is the move continued with players breaking forward to attack on the numbers team creating a 4 v 2 overload and the defending team midfield who attacked the other way previously (D and B) recovering back to be ready for the next attack the other way. They must be available to receive the ball should the keeper, (A) or (F) win possession and another transition attack is then under way in the opposite direction.
5. You can also bring in a recovering defender in both sides who comes out of the middle midfield zone to help the defenders.
6. Can condition the game where once it is into the attacking area the players cannot pass square or back and if they do the move ends. This gets them to focus on just attacking as quickly are possible.

## Developing Quick Break Play from the Back



A 2 v 3 up front with the defending team at an advantage, and a 2 v 2 in the middle. Now we work one player attacking from midfield and joining in to make a 3 v 3 leaving a 1 v 2 going the other way.

Once the keeper (or a defender) wins it then a midfield player can drop in and support.

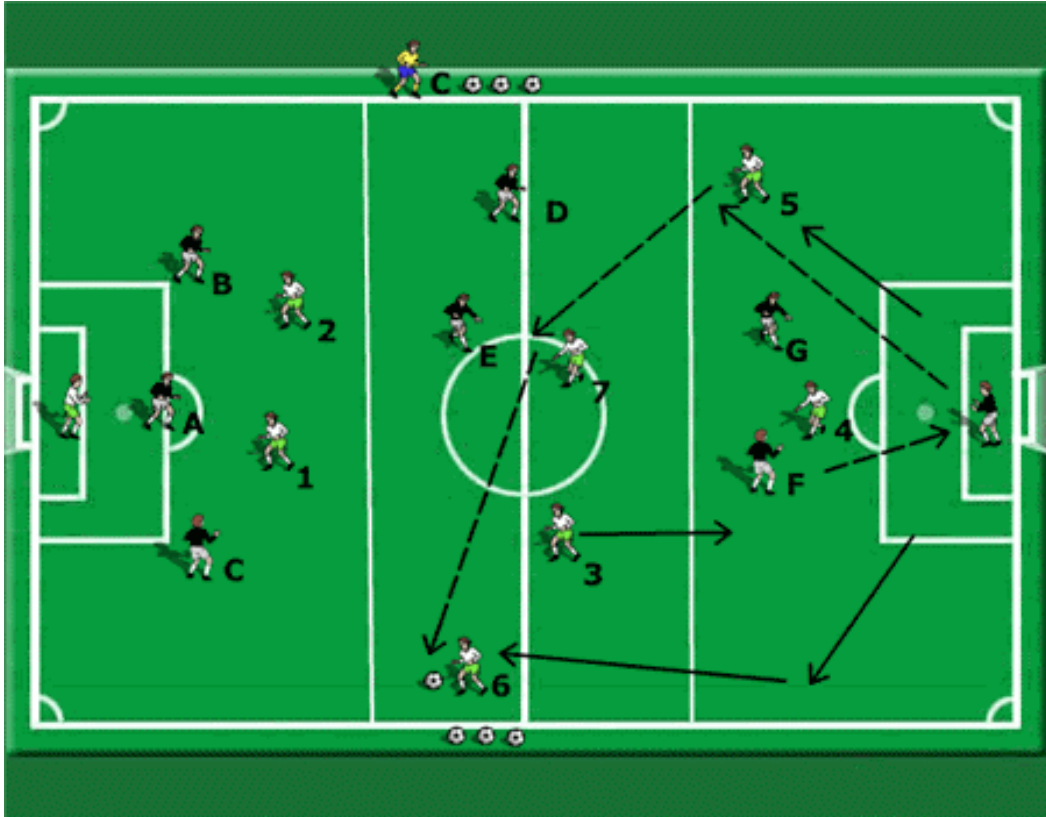
**Development:** Now we develop play from the back. Back three spread out to receive and play from the back.

Introduce wide players (or the central player joining in the build up, so they can go into the middle area and also all the way to the attacking area.

Work on players filling in for each other if the move breaks down.



## Introducing Attacking from the Back Through the Units



Letters team shoot at goal, the keeper saves. 3 v 3 going to a 4 v 3 in the build up from the back as a midfield player drops back to join in the build up (3).

Fullbacks can now transition through the thirds. (5) Gets the ball passes to (7), who is stopped passing forward by (E), so then switches play across the field to free fullback (6) making the forward run from deep. (3) Can cover for (6) and fill the full back position should the move break down and (6) can drop back into the midfield. Strikers (1) And (2) will be moving the defenders around trying to get free for a pass.



## Planning

### Attacking Team

1. Midfielders must get the passes in and then break quickly and support the strikers as the ball is played into them. Midfielders can run the ball in or pass it in and another player can go in. Vary the support players from here based on where the immediate space is.
2. Strikers must get free from their markers to receive the ball and link up with the attacking quick break midfielders or turn and attack themselves depending on the positions of the defenders.
3. They need to score in a certain short time scale, decrease the time allowed as they improve at this.
4. Vary the number of players in striking positions as you develop the session, start with one then two and have these two linking up together to develop an understanding, movement off the ball for each other to create space for themselves and for each other.
5. As soon as the move breaks down the attacking midfield players who joined in with the strikers need to get back to the midfield area they came out of. You can also coach them to rotate where it may be a striker who is nearer who makes a recovery run back to fill in for the midfielder who may have ended up beyond that striker in the attacking third of the field. Nearest player, shortest recovery route back.
6. The idea is to overload the attack so we gain success from the session in an attacking sense.

### Defending Team

1. Recovering players get back quickly to counter the quick attack.
2. Vary the number of defenders already in position and those recovering as you build up the session to change the challenges of the teams.
3. Midfielders and strikers of the team without the ball be ready to break quickly should they win it back in the defending third. They need to be constantly on the move getting free from opponents to receive the ball once the keeper or a defender gains possession of it.
4. When the defending team win the ball and it is played into midfield it may be a defender who joins in and goes all the way into the attacking third. They can pass it in or run it in. Make sure a midfielder drops back into a defensive position into the defensive third to cover for this. This encourages the players to rotate positions and develop more freedom in their positioning on the field.



## General Observations

1. Maintain the overload situations in midfield, once the session gets going after the initial start with equal numbers, as the transitions take place from defense to attack to ensure you get the session working effectively so there is constant transition from attack to defense and defense to attack, both happening at pace.
2. Eventually open the game up into an actual scrimmage and see if both teams have adopted the quick break mentality you have been trying to teach. Now it is equal numbers in all areas so it will be a good test for the players to see if they can make it work.

## Developments for the Transition Game

1. 1 v 1 in each attacking and defending zone and a 4 v 4 in the middle zone (the numbers can vary here).
2. Big overload to gain success in the attacking play, three attacking midfielders and one recovering defender making a 4 v 2 overload.
3. 1 v 2 or 2 v 2 in the attacking and defending zones with fewer players in the middle zone but still equal numbers there. Midfield can run it in now. Work on the movement of the two strikers to create space and move the defenders around.
4. Allow a midfield player from the middle zone to drop back into the defending zone where his or her team has regained possession to provide help in the link up play (distances may prevent a good long pass from the back directly to midfield depending on the age group being coached, so this helps). Opponent can't follow them in so this gives a better chance for the attack to build quickly.
5. Allow the fullbacks (or centre back) from each team (in possession) to break forward into the middle and attacking thirds and now focus on the way they cover for each other, players dropping in to replace each other allowing more freedom in the team in terms of movement around the field. This is important to follow to keep the shape of the team when opponents counter attack.
6. Finally 2 v 3 in the attacking third, meaning when the defending team win it they may have numbers up to break from the back and attack probably along the flanks.
7. Eventually let it go as a free game; no restrictions, but asking them to remember all the progressions and keep the team balance using them.





# ABOUT WAYNE HARRISON

Married to Mary for 30 years with two daughters Sophie 26 and Johanna 23.

Wayne is available for Soccer Symposiums and Conventions wherever they are needed; and able to offer field clinics and classroom presentations of your choosing. He has vast experience in this field of work.

His specialist system of play is the 4-2-3-1. His favored type of development training is that of creating the “THINKING PLAYER” through his SOCCER AWARENESS methods of coaching.

His belief is developing the MIND of the player through ONE TOUCH training, which is purely to help the development of the SKILL FACTOR (the when, where how and why of decision making; or the thinking process). He wants all coaches to teach where it is the player who becomes the decision maker not the coach.

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