



# Pressing & Defending From The Front

**Category:** Tactical: Defensive principles  
**Difficulty:** Difficult

Continental FC, Philadelphia, United States of America  
Individual-Adult Member

## Description

3rd Defender Role - Support. Preventing forward penetration. Team defensive organization & defending from the front. Pressing & counter pressing.

## Warm Up : 4v4 or 3v3 (15 mins)

### Setup

Two 20x30 fields with mini goals set up as shown

### Organization

As players arrive they get set up into a small sided free playgame.  
As full squad arrives set up two 3v3 small sided free playgames.

### Progressions

Rotate players/opponents every 3-4 minutes

### Coaching Points

Little coaching but demanding a high tempo



## Southampton Pressing Warmup (10 mins)

### Setup

10x10 Diamond

### Organization

Ball starts with player 1. Player 1 passes to player 2. While the ball is travelling player 3 sprints to press player 2. Player 2 then plays to player 4, a player from 1 sprints across to press 4 etc. Pass to the right, move to the left. No contact.

### Progressions

Change the direction of the passing sequence, pass one way move the opposite way

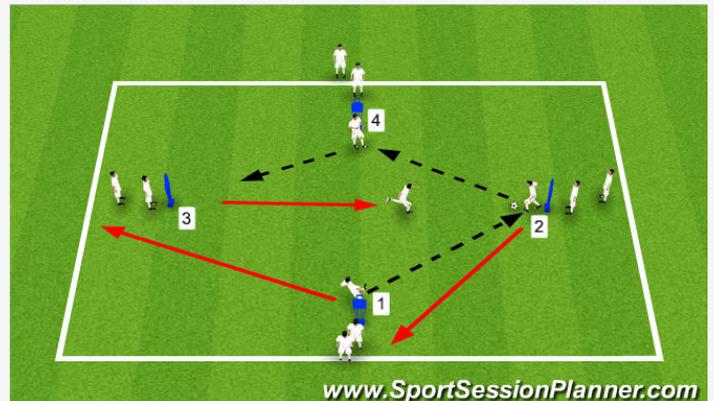
Player receiving can choose the direction of the pass based off of the Pressing player

### Coaching Points

Anticipate and press early

Close quickly, angle of approach

Identify cues & triggers



## 3v3 Defending (20 mins)

### Setup

Two 40x30 fields with mini goals set up as shown

### Organization

Play 3v3 across 2 zones. Cannot be more than 2 attackers or 2 defenders in each zone at any one time.

### Progressions

Rotate players/opponents every 3-4 minutes

Remove zones to play unrestricted

### Coaching Points

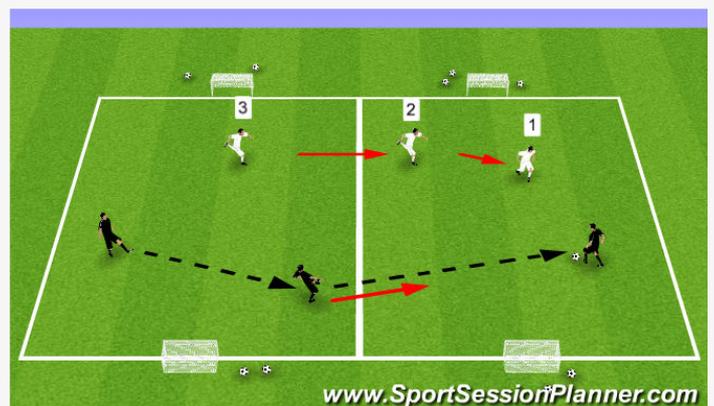
1st Defender - Close down quickly, pressure the ball. Slow down/delay the attacker

2nd Defender - Provide cover to double up for the dribble, positioning to intercept/block a pass/shot

3rd Defender - Provide balance & 'weak side' support

Communication - Clear, commanding, detailed

Transition Quickly



## Counter Pressing Exercise (20 mins)

### Setup

Half field, full size goal, 10 x 30 zone

### Organization

Team in white must pressure the team in yellow - no tackling to start. After 5-6 passes the white team receives a pass from the coach (C) and attacks the goal and the black defenders making it a 3v2. After attacking the white team becomes the passing team and the blue team become the defenders.

### Progressions

Add medium pressure - Still no tackle but can expose a poor touch or intercept a pass. If the white team is able to win the ball they counter.

Add full pressure - the passing team must try to score by dribbling/passing into the end zone.

### Coaching Points

Really focus on positioning and getting into position quickly

1st Defender - Close down quickly, pressure the ball. Slow down/delay the attacker

2nd Defender - Provide cover to double up for the dribble, positioning to intercept/block a pass/shot

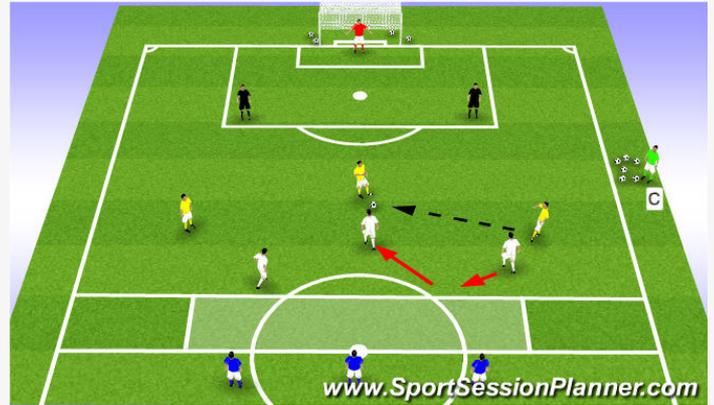
3rd Defender - Provide balance & 'weak side' support

Footwork & body shape, low to the ground

Communication - Clear, commanding, detailed

Anticipation - read cues on when to press

Transition/counter attack at pace



## Pressing In The Final 1/3 (25 mins)

### Setup

Extended half field, 1 full size & 2 small goals

### Organization

6v5 game. Game starts initially with the goalkeeper to play short. Must allow first pass before press.

Defending team (white) sets up with 4 midfielders and one striker, goes to main goal

Possession team (black) sets up with 3 defenders, 2 midfielders & a keeper, goes to mini goals

### Progressions

Coach can recreate scenarios.

Lift conditions and play regular rules for last 10 mins.

### Coaching Points

#3 - Nearest player pressures the ball. Slows down/delays the attacker

#10 & #9 - Provide cover, double up for the dribble, positioning to intercept/block a pass.

#9 - Takes away the option of a pass to centerback to switch the field or relieve pressure

#2 - Tucks in to provide balance & 'weak side' support

#6 - Acts as a screen to intercept/block a longer pass and secondary cover if needed

Commitment & communication - All must press or drop together to have success.

Compactness - Tight, don't allow gaps to penetrate

