

10 - Defensive Support (2nd defender)

Once players are doing an effective job in the role of first defender (pressure) we need to coach how other team-mates can work together to help win the ball. How to cover the first defender and mark supporting attackers needs to be understood.

Among the common errors to be avoided are the tendency to either go and pressure the attacker on the ball along with the 1st defender (double team) and leave the supporting attacker in space and unmarked, or to follow the supporting attacker everywhere and give the 1st defender no cover.

Shadow play can be an effective method in the early stages where players rehearse correct positions without any actual attempt by attackers to go past the defenders. Gradually increase the pressure with 1 attacker v 2 defenders before working on 2 v 2

Coaching Points - Observe the following details:

- ✓ How alert is the player who is nearest to the 1st defender? They should be responding quickly to the danger
- ✓ Look at angle and distance of supporting defender, it may depend on the following factors;
 - if defenders are close to their own goal get tighter to 1st defender (keeper should be ready to sweep)
 - in middle and attacking thirds drop off further and be ready to also mark space behind
 - if attacker is very fast drop off or attacker will be able to burst past 1st and 2nd defender together
 - if attacker is very skilful go and double up on him/her as soon as there is good pressure on the ball
- ✓ 2nd defender must communicate loudly and clearly to encourage and inform 1st defender
- ✓ Communication needs to be specific “*get tight - stand up - show him inside/down the line*” etc.
- ✓ If 1st defender gets beaten, step up and press quickly, buy time to make recovery runs
- ✓ In 2 v 2 situation stay ball-side and goal-side, inside the defensive triangle (opponent, ball, goal)
- ✓ Look at how 2nd defender tracks square and diagonal runs, again they should stay in defensive triangle
- ✓ Make sure they only follow runs to wide positions so far, do not abandon 1st defender, stay compact
- ✓ If 2nd attacker overlaps, how do defenders respond? - 2nd defender press ball, 1st defender goes with runner
- ✓ Need for good communication to sort out duties when attackers try passing combinations

Useful Drills

21	The Square	58	The Numbers Game
24	4x4	61	Defensive Triangle
27	Five v Three	62	Delay
28	Three Teams	63	Man Marking
29	End to End	64	Spare Cone
30	Mixed Passing	69	Winner Stays On
33	Quads		
43	Open Goal		