



PRACTICE PLAN

 <https://205sports.org>

 @205_Academy

Date: Week of Feb 16, 2026

Theme: Scanning to Counterpress

Duration: ~80–90 minutes

Load Level: Moderate → High (transition-heavy, repeated duels & counterpress moments)

Session Overview

This session is built around the principle of environmental awareness – specifically scanning cues before, during, and immediately after possession changes to improve counterpress reactions. Players move from individual duels (1v1 gates) into dual-grid transition rondos, then into overload formats and structured build-out scenarios with GKs. The core emphasis: recognize triggers, react collectively, and counterpress with speed and clarity.

Learning Objectives

Technical: Clean first touch under pressure, effective 1v1 moves, secure passing out of pressure, accurate first pass after regain

Tactical: Identify counterpress triggers (loss of possession, poor opponent touch), isolate ball-side defender, prevent split passes, transition quickly from attack to defend

Physical: Repeated accelerations in short spaces, quick re-engagement efforts after turnover, high-intensity pressing bursts

Psychosocial: Immediate communication on loss ("press," "cover," "lock"), resilience after mistakes, shared responsibility in regaining possession

Activities & Progression

1. Warm-Up / Activation

Description: Dynamic FYP-based activation (hip mobility, lunges, planks, Nordics, RDLs) blended with follow-your-pass combinations. Progress from simple back-and-forth to varied touch surfaces and wall passes.

Progression: Add competitive passing targets and scanning cue before each pass.

Rationale: Prepares movement mechanics and introduces early scanning habits tied to transition awareness.

2. 1v1 – 7 Gates

Description: Players paired 1v1. Attacker scores by dribbling through any gate. On score or cue, players switch roles and may attack any goal.

Progression: Keep score; emphasize immediate pressure on transition.

Rationale: Develops individual reaction speed and mentality to counterpress immediately after losing possession.

3. 4v2 Double Grid Transition

Description: 4v2 rondo in one grid with 2 players positioned in adjacent grid. When defenders win possession, they immediately pass into adjacent grid and enter – previous defenders remain to counterpress.

Progression: Limit touches.

Rationale: Trains instant reaction on regain/loss and recognition of where pressure should shift.

4. 4v5+2 → 6v5

Description: 4 outside + 2 central attackers vs 5 defenders. On loss, an outside player joins centrally to create 5v3 moment before full reorganization.

Progression: Limit touches; require outside player entry immediately on turnover.

Rationale: Creates structured counterpress triggers and emphasizes central compactness.

5. 4v4+4 End Line (Rotate on Scoring)

Description: 3 teams – 4v4 in middle, 4 neutrals outside. When a team scores, rotation occurs (scoring team stays, defending team switches with neutrals).

Progression: Limit neutral touches; reduce interior time on ball.

Rationale: Encourages attacking patience (8v4) and immediate counterpress when possession is lost during overload.

6. 6v3–2v3 → 8v6 Build Thirds w/ GKs

Description: Build-out from goal kick. Start 6v3 in defensive third, 2v3 in middle third. After first pass, floating players may support between zones.

Progression: Allow one additional defender to enter after first touch in defensive third.

Rationale: Applies scanning + counterpress cues in realistic build-out context. On loss in defensive third, immediate compact pressure is required.

Session Flow Notes

The session progresses from isolated reaction (1v1) → structured dual-grid transitions → overload counterpress moments → rotational transition game → full build-out with GK. Each block reinforces the same environmental cue: scan before receiving, anticipate loss, and react instantly. By the final activity, players should recognize counterpress moments collectively rather than individually, transforming turnovers into organized pressing opportunities.