

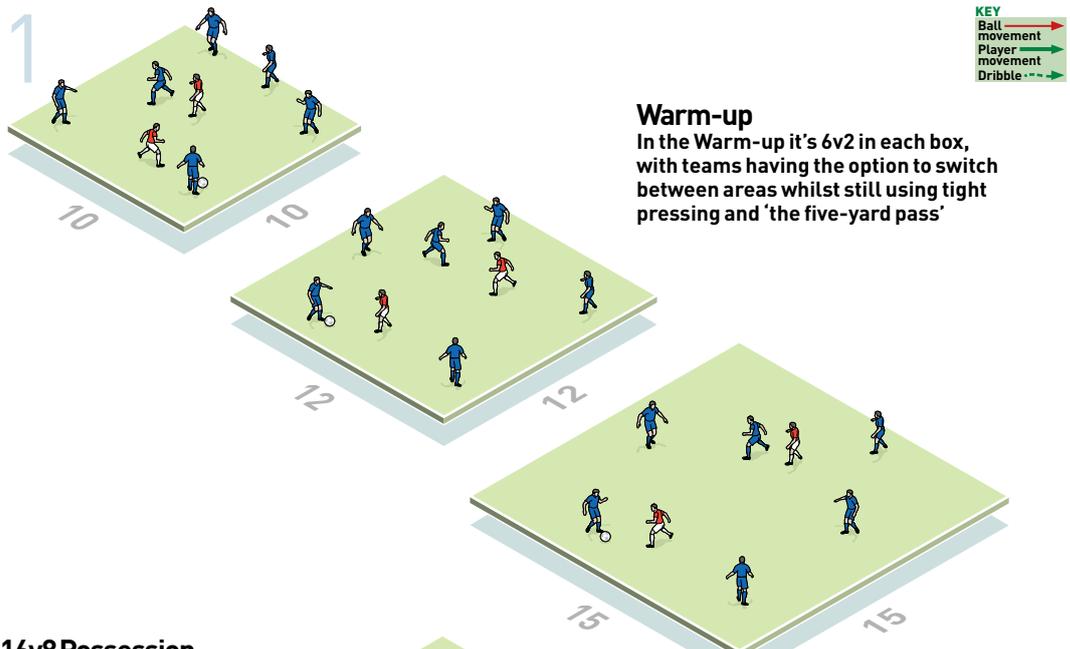
ROCHDALE
**Keith Hill
and Chris Beech**
**Regain
and retain
techniques
when out-
numbered**

Overview:
This session is imperative for reminding our lads that, in any game, possession is king, with players under pressure to regain and retain possession when outnumbered. At the heart of this is looking for a 'sacrificial press' in recovering possession quickly, then looking to retain the ball in what we call the 'five-yard pass'.

It's important to practise this to encourage players to have a psychological process to how we want to play, and we see this occur in every game in terms of flooding an area and regaining the ball in a full inclusive press. It's all about improving fitness, decision-making under pressure and, ultimately, possession of the ball in pressured environments.

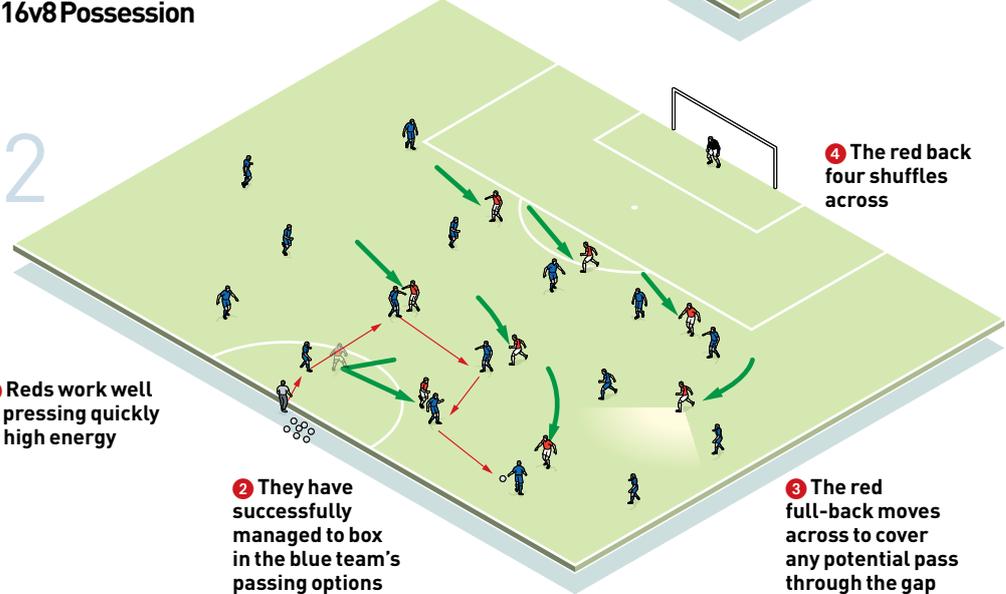
The session is split into three parts, where combinations can be put into place depending on the proposed outcomes. For example, on 'sprint days' (see notes), it's likely we'll go from the Extended Warm-up straight into the game.

REGAIN AND RETAIN TECHNIQUES WHEN OUTNUMBERED



Warm-up
In the Warm-up it's 6v2 in each box, with teams having the option to switch between areas whilst still using tight pressing and 'the five-yard pass'

16v8 Possession



1 Reds work well in pressing quickly at high energy

2 They have successfully managed to box in the blue team's passing options

4 The red back four shuffles across

3 The red full-back moves across to cover any potential pass through the gap

SET-UP
AREA Up to 70x50 yards
EQUIPMENT Balls, cones, goals
NUMBER OF PLAYERS Up to 24
SESSION TIME Up to 70mins

What do I get the players to do?

Warm-up (1)

We set the tone with a simple 'possession is king' situation - 6v2 in three possession boxes; two players always defending. Players are all-in, and if a player gives the ball away he swaps with a defender. We play anything from 3-12mins.

Players must retain possession with good positioning and smart

'five-yard passing', preferably for the full allotted time. More than that though, we want to see at which point players 'give up'. From here, we rebuild the mental side - encouraging concentration and letting defenders believe they will achieve a turnover.

16v8 possession (2)

Now we move into a more game-related practice where, again, the principles are the

key, not necessarily the set-up. This is 16v8 on a half-pitch, with three teams of eight playing three-minute rounds. Defenders are always chasing and outnumbered for the allotted time, and must lock in the first pass before looking to create mini-overloads (even though outnumbered). On turnover, quick and intense passes must be made, with players displaying the ability, if passed through, ▼



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ROCHDALE

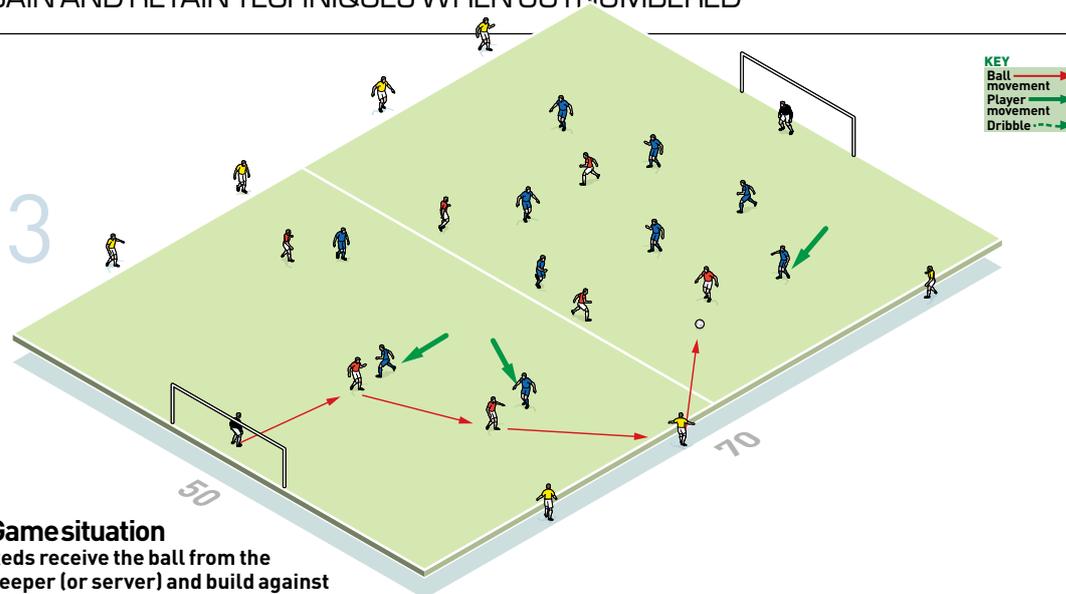
In 107 years of playing football as Rochdale AFC, the Lancashire club have achieved promotion on just three occasions, yet two of those have been in the past five years, and both under charismatic boss Keith Hill.

Some 41 years after their last change of division, Hill guided The Dale to third in League Two in the 2009/10 season and with it promotion to the third tier. The club finished 9th the following season before Hill moved to Championship club Barnsley.

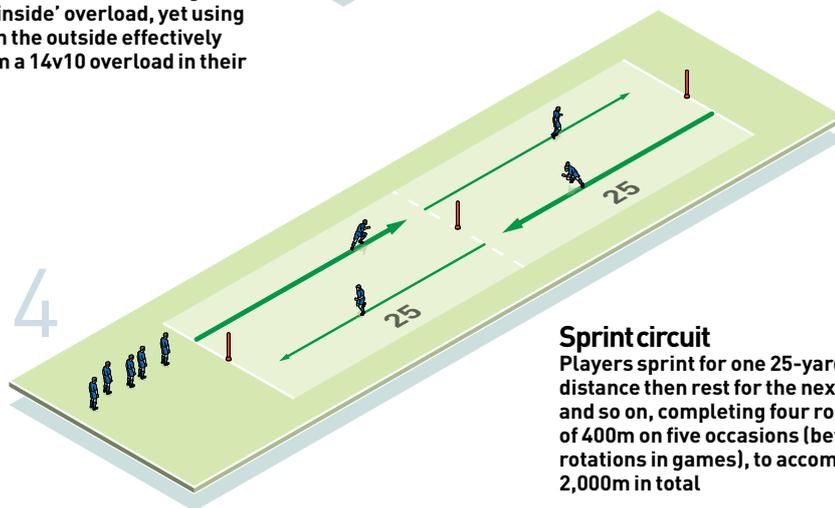
But the popular manager returned to Scotland in January 2013 and quickly set about repeating his previous feat. Within 15 months of his return the club were back in League One. Aply assisted by former Rochdale player and caretaker manager Chris Beech, Hill and his team look set to consolidate the club's position.

"Players will undertake a sprint challenge to encourage physical gains whilst instilling mental responses to the repetition of key principles."

REGAIN AND RETAIN TECHNIQUES WHEN OUTNUMBERED



Gamesituation
Reds receive the ball from the keeper (or server) and build against the 10v7 'inside' overload, yet using yellows on the outside effectively gives them a 14v10 overload in their favour



Sprint circuit
Players sprint for one 25-yard distance then rest for the next two and so on, completing four rounds of 400m on five occasions (between rotations in games), to accomplish 2,000m in total

to establish a strong core value to reset and press again.

On the regain, 'retain the ball' - this can be difficult if outnumbered or fatigued, so ensure players use the 'five-yard pass'. See for how long the outnumbered team can retain possession, then rotate in new players and repeat the challenge with a target time to beat.

Game situation (3)

This is an 11v8 game that combines dealing with a numerical disadvantage with physical fatigue

testing, with techniques, decisions and psychology interwoven. The team of 11 can play only 'on the inside', while the team of eight can use those on the outside (who are two-touch).

The playing principles for both sides are the same, yet the team of 11 must find a way to win the game, while the team of seven are under pressure yet, arguably, have 14 players available.

After each round players will undertake a sprint challenge to encourage physical gains whilst instilling

mental responses to the repetition of key principles (4). Players will complete a number of sprints totalling 2,000m.

What are the key things to look out for?

We want to see the ability to show the back-up press and waves of proactive pressing. Mastering the five-yard pass is crucial, while displaying good possession and movement of the ball and bodies in small spaces is central to teams being comfortable with the session's aims. ■

The five-yard pass

At Rochdale we take particular note of something called 'the five-yard pass'. This is a unique passing distance as it's far enough for two players to be able to master passing, receiving and body position, yet close enough to imply that reactions must be sharp and focused. Passing in close quarters is also imperative to the technical mainframe that we build around this and other sessions, so mastering what is a simple passing set-up becomes really important.