

# PROJECT WORK MODULE 2

ACTIVITY: PROGRAMMING FOOTBALL TRAINING  
REQUIREMENTS: CREATION AND DEFINITION OF A  
MICROCYCLE FOR VILLAREAL C.F.

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## INDEX

EXPLANATION OF THE LAST AND NEXT GAME	3-4
LOAD ORGANIZATION AND WHY	5
TRAINING SESSIONS	6-7-8-9-10
GAME PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THE NEXT GAME	11
REFERENCES	12

# EXPLANATION OF THE LAST AND NEXT GAME

The microcycle considered covers the period between the match played on January 3rd (Elche vs Villarreal) and the match on January 10th (Villarreal vs Alavés). It includes five training days, therefore representing a complete weekly cycle, as there are no midweek matches. When designing the weekly microcycle and giving coherence to the match plan and the training exercises proposed during the working week, it is necessary, before analyzing the Elche vs Villarreal match, to briefly outline the key aspects of the current playing model and the playing model that I implemented in the first project.

MATCHWEEK	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18
OPPONENT	OVI	GIR	CEL	ATM	OSA	SEV	ATH	RMA	BET	VAL	RAY	ESP	MLL	RSO	GET	LEV	BAR	ELC
SCORE	2 - 0	5 - 0	1 - 1	2 - 0	2 - 1	1 - 2	1 - 0	3 - 1	2 - 2	0 - 2	4 - 0	0 - 2	2 - 1	2 - 3	2 - 0	-	0 - 2	1 - 3
TOTAL	W	W	D	L	W	W	W	L	D	W	W	W	W	W	W	L	W	

## Current game Model

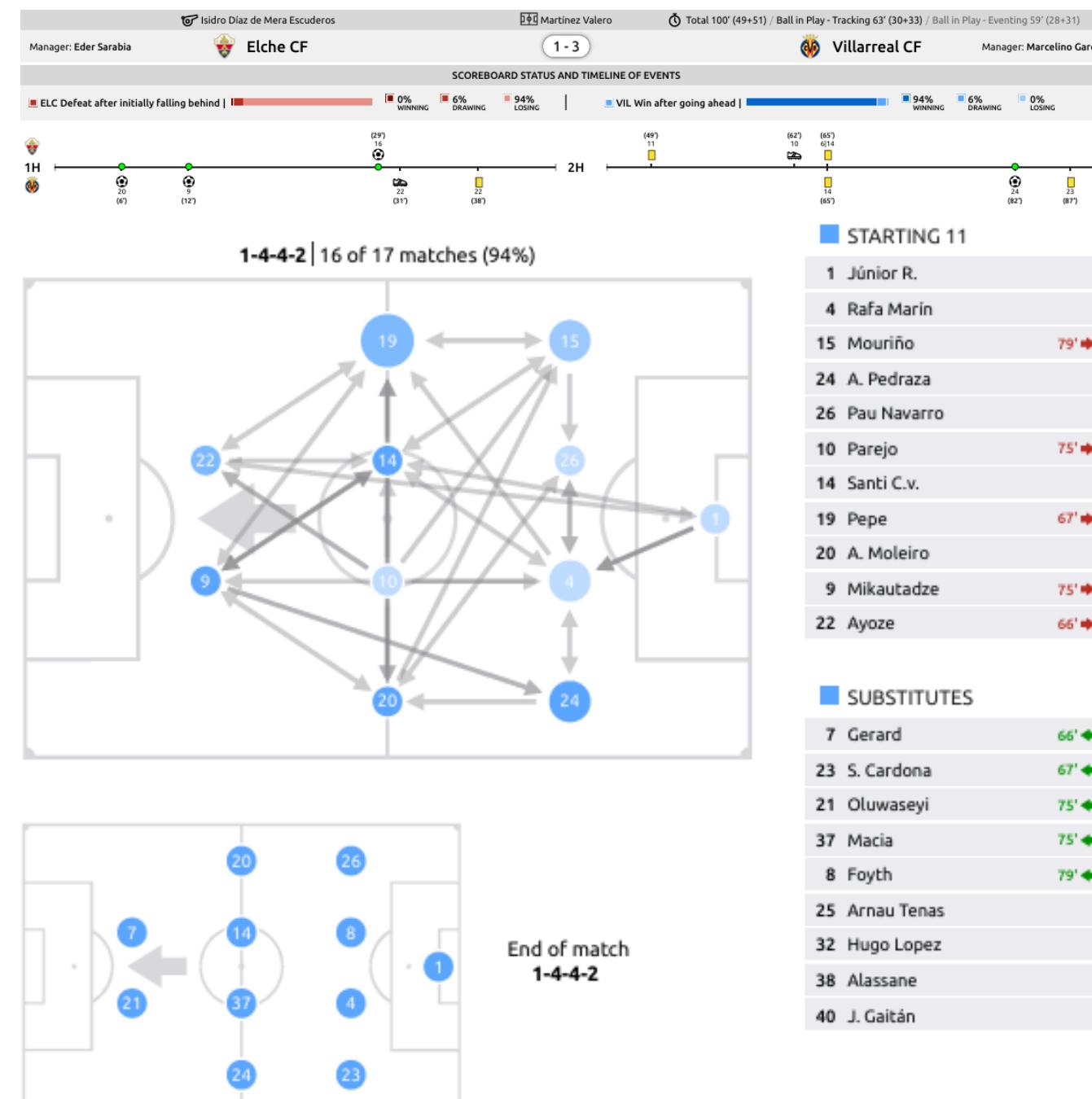
### Defensive phase

compactness  
4-2-2 midblock  
close the middle  
zonal defense structure  
wait for trigger to press

### Offensive phase

exploiting open spaces  
alternation in progression and direct attack  
first build up structure: 4-2-4  
positional attack structure in opposition half: 3-2-5  
no wide crosses (low crosses and cutback)

**Transition +**  
attack vertically  
balance  
**Transition -**  
non violent regression  
squeeze the space



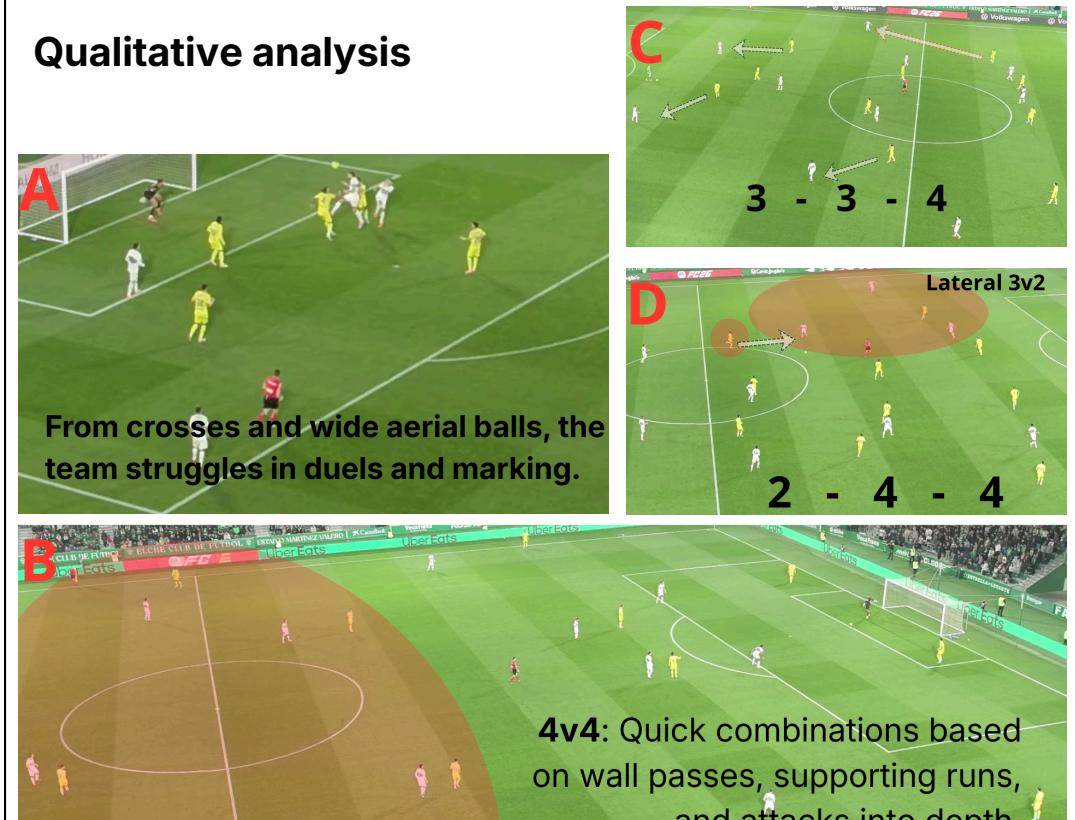
## New Game Model

The new playing model was designed following a detailed **analysis of multiple factors**. The core objective is to consolidate and further develop the pathway undertaken during the current season in order to **consistently compete with the three dominant teams in La Liga**. Achieving this level requires a more proactive and **dominant game model**, aligned with the principles commonly adopted by top-level teams. However, as this evolution cannot be completed within a single season, the proposed playing model integrates both continuity and progression. Existing principles have been maintained, such as the use of a mid-block and a zonal defensive approach within a positional defensive structure. At the same time, new principles have been introduced to encourage a more associative and positional style of play. The model is tailored to the characteristics of the current squad while aiming, in the medium to long term, to increase overall control and dominance of the game. From a defensive perspective, the structural organization has not been significantly modified. From an offensive perspective, the introduction of the **ball code** represents a key conceptual element. When the ball is open (not under immediate pressure), the team is required to adopt an open body orientation, ensure optimal positional occupation of space (width, depth, and finishing zones), and promote positional rotations and interchanges. Conversely, when the ball is closed (player under pressure), the principles focus on identifying the pivot player, activating support actions to facilitate third-man combinations, creating overloads in the ball-side area, and continuously generating clear passing lanes.

## Quantitative analysis



## Qualitative analysis



### General Analysis

Villarreal show defensive solidity and high efficiency in fast, vertical attacks. Despite several absences, they secure a difficult win through strong tactical discipline.

### Possession Phase

#### Build-up

Villarreal use short, direct passing sequences to reach the forwards quickly. Attack building data show shorter sequences than Elche, who prefer a more possession-based approach. (Image B)

#### Second and Final Third

The 3-2-5 structure appears only occasionally due to limited sustained possession in the opponent's half.

### Out of Possession Phase

#### Opponent's First Build-up (image C)

Villarreal raise the block and apply an almost man-oriented 4-3-3 press. Pépé presses the left centre-back, while Mourinho steps out on the left wing-back. Elche, however, often find solutions down their left side.

#### Opponent's Positional Attack (image D)

After bypassing the first press, Villarreal defend in a mid-block (4-4-2). On the right side, Pépé is slow to recover, allowing wide overloads (3v2) through combinations and through balls. Most dangerous attacks come from this area.

### Transitions

#### Positive Transitions

Villarreal are very effective in positive transitions thanks to their pace. Recoveries mainly come from a mid-to-low block, forcing play wide and leading to two of the three goals.

#### Negative Transitions

Villarreal adopt a conservative approach after losing possession, with limited counter-pressing except in wide areas.

### Defensive Aspect to Improve

Villarreal struggle to defend crosses and wide deliveries. Loose marking and lost duels inside the box create problems for the goalkeeper (see image A).

## NEXT LALIGA OPPONENT DEPORTIVO ALAVÉS

VILLARREAL CF



VS

DEPORTIVO  
ALAVÉS

SAT 10.01.2026

16:15 h

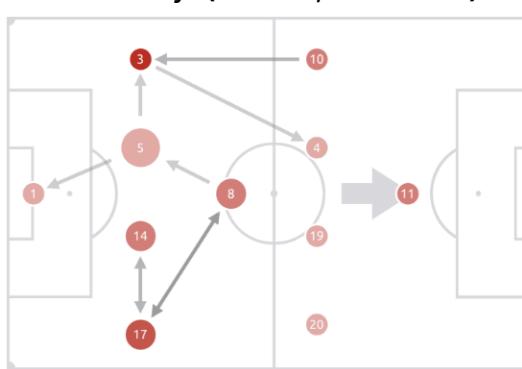
Estadio de la Cerámica

- League position: 13th
- Points in the last 5 matches: 4
- Goals scored in LaLiga 2025/2026: 15
- Goals conceded in LaLiga 2025/2026: 21
- Ball possession: 49.9%
- Clean sheets: 3
- Formation in the last 4 matches: 4-1-4-1



Alavés are a team with a direct style of play that imposes a high tempo. Their key players in developing this direct approach are the forwards, who, thanks to their aerial ability, help compensate for the limitations in build-up play from the defensive line. They are also well equipped in the wide positions and have midfield players who combine both work rate and quality.

Previous match vs Real Oviedo: 1-1  
Goal: Lucas Boyé (free kick, 68th minute)



## STARTING 11

1 Sivera

3 Youssef

5 J. Pacheco

14 N. Tenaglia

17 J. Otto

8 Blanco

4 Denis Suárez

10 Aleñá

19 Ibañez

20 Calebe

11 T. Martínez

## SUBSTITUTES

7 Carlos V.

15 Lucas Boyé

21 A. Rebbach

23 Protesoní

34 Mañas

6 Guevara

13 Raúl Fernández

18 Guridi

30 Ballesteros

31 Swiderski

## Possession phase

## Quantitative analysis

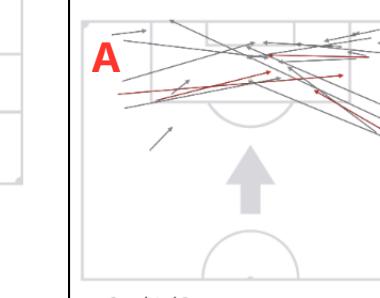
Attack building (passes/possession) 4,8 5,2  
Goals for open play 33% 68%  
Crosses (Nº/%Success) 19/22% 17/24%

Deep balls (Nº Total/Nº Completed/% possession won) 83 43 52%  
avg 65,6 31,6 48%

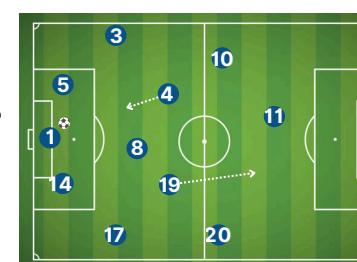
Aerial offensive duel (Nº/%Success/%Possession won) 19,8 48% 62%  
avg 12,9 46% 61%

## Macrobehaviors

- Direct play into the forwards, followed by runs off knock-downs or second-ball recoveries.
- High intensity.
- Wide development to create crossing situations.



## First build up 4-2-4

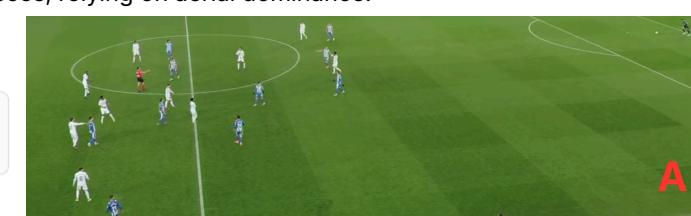


## Positional attack 3-2-5 (4-2-4)



## Observed patterns

- Build-up: the team builds in a 4-2-4 shape, with one midfielder pushing higher to support the striker. From goal kicks, they often play long and stay compact on one side, looking for the striker's aerial duel. (image A)
- Positional attack: an asymmetrical structure is used, with the left full-back (No. 3) providing width and delivering crosses. Midfielders rotate frequently, alternating between build-up and runs into the box. Against mid or low blocks, Alavés focus on wide play and crosses, usually attacking the box with four players.
- The data confirms a direct style with many crosses (vs Real Oviedo, Alavés attempted twice as many crosses as the opponent, table A). The team struggles in open play but is very strong on set pieces, relying on aerial dominance.



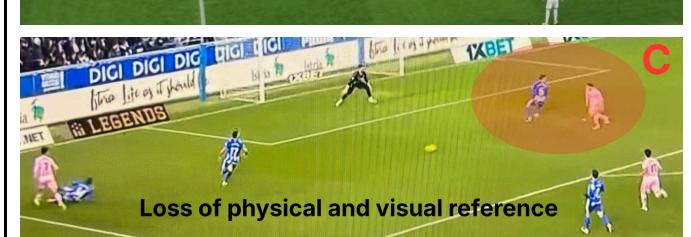
## Defensive phase

## Quantitative analysis

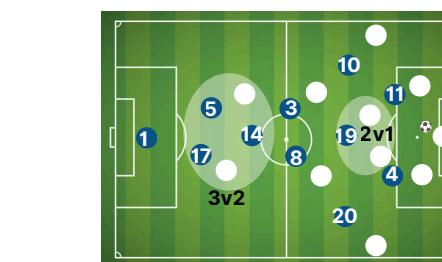
Goals against open play 86% 68%  
From counterattack 0,3 0,2  
From pos. attack 0,7 0,8  
Recovery rate (recoveries/min) 2,8 2,5

## Macrobehaviors

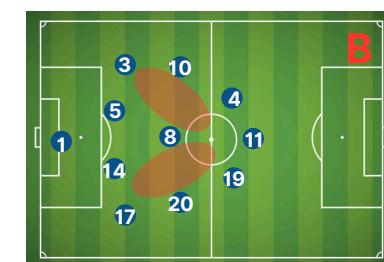
- Mid block
- Zonal defending when in block
- High press: man-oriented marking
- In the box: mixed marking on wide balls / crosses



## First pressure (man marking oriented)



## Positional defense (4-3-2-1)



## Observed Patterns and key weaknesses

- High press: Man-oriented pressing. The team keeps numerical superiority at the back, leaving the advanced central midfielder outnumbered against the two pivots. The wide players' shifting towards the far-side pivot when the ball is switched is not always well-timed.
- Mid block: In a mid block, Alavés defend in a 4-3-2-1, with the central midfielders stepping up to press the centre-backs and the wide players dropping next to the No. 8s. The structure is solid, but if the opponent moves the ball forward quickly, preventing Alavés from regaining compactness, the team becomes vulnerable in the spaces between the nr.8 and the wingers, who are often slow to narrow inside. (Images B)
- Cross defence: The ball-side centre-back covers the near-post zone, while the far-side centre-back and the opposite full-back mark man-to-man.
- Quantitative analysis once again highlights Alavés' strength on set pieces. The data also reveals a structural weakness in defensive transitions: the team is slow to reorganise after losing the ball, conceding slightly more counter-attacking goals than the Liga average.
- Defensive weaknesses:
  - Struggle to track deep runs.
  - Vulnerable to through balls between the lines when there is distance between units and no time to reorganise.
  - Defenders are not strong in 1v1 defensive duels. (image C)

## Transitions

## Offensive transitions

In offensive transitions, Alavés do not seem to apply anything particularly structured, instead basing their behavior on the opponent's reaction.

If the opponent presses quickly, Alavés try to catch the opposing defense off guard through runs and passes in behind.

If the opponent does not show the intention to immediately recover the ball, Alavés carry out a more patient, build-up oriented attack.

## Defensive transitions

Defensive transitions can be a weak point where Alavés can be exploited, as they often appear disorganized and vulnerable. The players are relatively slow to recover their positions or to apply a clear and coordinated press that could limit the opponent's ability to play forward. In the image below (D), Real Madrid can be seen finding an important pass between the lines immediately after regaining possession.



## Set pieces

## Principles:

1. first-post-attraction with one player to free the space and drag the first post defender out of position.
2. An initial line (avoid man to man marking) that changes is staggered attacking lines.
3. flicks for the far post



## Short corner



Alavés tend to use short corners most often against teams that are strong in the air and can defend against high balls into the box. Alavés aim to draw markers out of that structure. In this case a short combination is performed before attacking the first post with the free player.

## LOAD ORGANIZATION AND WHY

## Contextualization

Villarreal are facing one of the few weeks in the season with a full microcycle. As a result, the coaching staff will have the opportunity to work more effectively on game principles and specific tactical adjustments in preparation for Saturday's match (10 January) against Alavés.

However, the numerical situation of the squad is currently not optimal, as several players are unavailable due to injuries and call-ups for the Africa Cup of Nations, which will inevitably influence both training management and match preparation.

The microcycle (morphocycle) planning is embedded within a broader mesocycle structure and follows a clear methodological framework. The core guiding principles are the following:

## Progression

Progression refers to the logical and gradual construction of training content over time. Training exercises are organised in a sequence that starts from simpler and more general concepts, progressively moving towards more complex and match-specific situations.

### Propensi

Propensity relates to the intentionality of training. Every exercise is designed to reinforce the game model, training specific behaviours that the team is required to reproduce during competition.

### Specific horizontal alternatives

This principle is linked to load management and functional recovery, always within a tactical logic. Specific horizontal alternation means that training sessions vary from day to day according to different dominant domains (tactical, physical, technical, psychological), while never leaving the game context, ensuring that all stimuli remain highly specific to match demands.

From a **tactical perspective**, the weekly **objectives** will focus on

- **ball code**, specifically the recognition of closed and open ball situations, which are a key component of our game model.
- In the offensive phase, we will work on **attracting the opposition** in order to **stretch the space between their lines**, an area where Alavés have shown particular weaknesses, along with all the related sub-principles.
- **fast offensive transitions** after ball recovery. While quick transitions are already part of our game model, we aim to further emphasise them, especially by committing more players into the penalty area, as we have identified issues in Alavés' marking inside the box.
- From a defensive standpoint, the focus will be on **tracking and absorbing** late **runs** into the penalty area, **defending crosses**, and **doubling up in wide areas**, given that Alavés are particularly strong in aerial situations.
- Another specific aspect that will be addressed with particular attention is the **defensive organisation on corners**. This is due to the fact that Alavés are particularly effective in set-piece situations, making defending corners a key component of the match preparation.

The physical load, as well as the mental and psychological load, will be concentrated mainly on MD-4 and MD-3.

## Team situation

Players who played at least 45 minutes in the last match



Players who played fewer than 45 minutes



## Unavailable players



 Africa cup

### U23 players

enjuro

## Suspended

Session structure (indicative)	<b>Non starters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective activation</li> <li>• strength session</li> <li>• small spaces + HIT</li> </ul> <b>Starters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collective activation</li> <li>• strength session</li> <li>• small spaces with tactical sub and sub-sub principles (short durations)</li> <li>• individual training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual activation</li> <li>• Big spaces with tactical principles</li> <li>• Individual training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual activation</li> <li>• Reduction of load</li> <li>• Contextual aspects of the next game</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective activation</li> <li>• Priming reaction speed</li> <li>• set pieces</li> </ul>
Tactical focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of "ball code" in possession → based on our game model</li> <li>• Off-the-ball movement</li> <li>• Receiving beyond the pressure</li> <li>• Open body orientation</li> <li>• press the opponent "close the ball"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Penalty box defence against wide crosses → based more on weaknesses of the next opponent</b></li> <li>• Doubling up on wide areas</li> <li>• Aerial challenges</li> <li>• <b>Attract the opponent and create space beyond the pressing line</b></li> <li>• Key individual technical elements</li> <li>• Body orientation</li> <li>• Quick off-the-ball movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Positional defending / offensive transition → base on both: game model and weaknesses of the next opponent</b></li> <li>• Ball recovery in wide areas</li> <li>• Smart movement into the opposite half-space</li> <li>• Runs in behind / attacking depth runs</li> <li>• Preventive positioning / anticipation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Build up, Positioning</b> between the lines while keeping an open stance, <b>find the free-man</b></li> <li>• <b>tactical work 11v11 (low pace)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ kick off</li> <li>◦ goal kick / build up</li> <li>◦ positional attack</li> <li>◦ positional defence</li> <li>◦ first pressure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finishes</li> <li>• set pieces</li> </ul> <p><b>Depth of work: Game plan</b></p>
Physical and cognitive load	Non starters → medium-high Starters → low	Medium High Greater number of eccentric contractions Intensity High	Medium High High Volume Intensity Medium/high	Low Focus on Speed Mental recharge	Medium Low Priming work Game mindset
MD vs Eelche	MD+1 3/01/26 Saturday	MD+2 4/01/26 Sunday	MD-4 5/01/26 Monday	MD-3 6/01/26 Tuesday	MD-2 7/01/26 Wednesday
MD vs Alavés	MD-1 9/01/26 Friday				MD-1 10/01/26 Saturday

Total training duration: 1 hour and 25 minutes

Available players not in recovery: 12

Training center: Ciudad Deportiva José Manuel LLaneza

Time: 12.00

### Training objective

The aim of the session is to develop the ball code concept, which represents a core principle of our game model. Through the proposed exercises, several related sub-principles will be stimulated and progressively highlighted, becoming more specific as the session advances.

In order to comply with the project requirements, a maximum of four exercises will be explained. These exercises are carefully selected to ensure coherence with the training objective and methodological continuity throughout the session.

### Available Players

#### Goalkeepers

Junior (recovery session)

Tenas

Gomez (U23)

#### Defenders

Mourino (recovery session)

Navarro (recovery session)

Marin (recovery session)

Pedraza (recovery session)

Cardona

Foyth

Veiga

#### Midfielders

Comesana (recovery session)

Parejo (recovery session)

Moleiro (recovery session)

Diatta (U23)

Macia (U23)

Lopez (U23)

#### Attackers

Pépé (recovery session)

Perez (recovery session)

Mikautadze (recovery session)

Moreno

Oluwaseyi

Buchanan

Gaitan (U23)

## WARM UP (20')

### 1. General collective warm up (5')

#### 2. Dinamic rondo 5v2

The aim of the game is to reach the 2 players positioned at the ends of the pitch. This is achieved through passing combinations and supporting runs to occupy the nearby square. If the defending team wins possession, they score one point by successfully exiting the square with the ball.

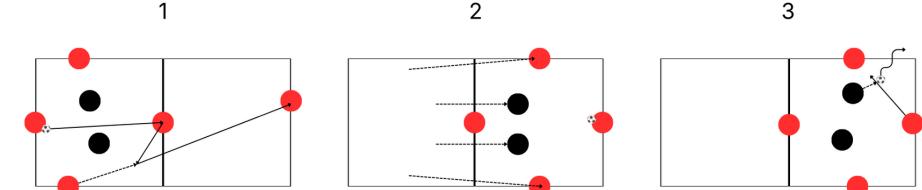
Ind. Time: 12' / rep 3 (3' w / 0'45" r) 6m x 12m

#### Offensive objectives

- Ball code recognition
- Search for the pivot player
- Support runs

#### Defensive objectives

- Recognising numerical inferiority
- Work on interceptions
- Communication



### 3. fast activation (3')

## MAIN PART (1H 5')

#### 1. Creating angles and supporting run circuit

1.A passes at a slight angle to B, who moves off the pole at an angle, and receives on the half-turn (opens up).  
2.B passes diagonally to C, who also moves off the pole at an angle, and receives on the half-turn (opens up).  
3.C passes to D, who moves across.  
4.D passes to E1, who also moves off the pole at an angle, and receives on the half-turn (opens up).  
5.E1 passes to Position A (start).  
The players rotate around the circuit A → B → C → D → E → A. After the first set, repeat the sequence playing towards the right and using E2.

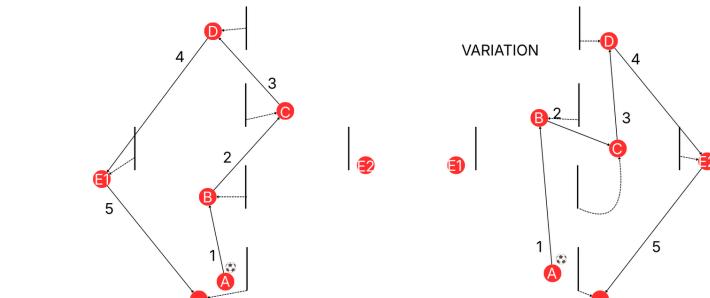
#### Variation 2: Free decision making / 1 touch play

1-2. A skip the first pole and plays longer pass at a slight angle to C, who moves off the second pole at an angle, and sets the ball back for the oncoming B to receive  
3.B passes forward to D, who moves off the end pole to receive  
4.D passes diagonally to E2  
5.E2 moves off the pole and opens up to receive, then passes to Position A (Start)

Ind. Time: 14' / rep 3 (3' w / 0'30" r) 12 m x 18 m

#### objectives

- open body shape
- technical perfection (strong passes, quality lay off)
- create passing angles
- supporting runs



#### 2. Positional Game (3v3 + 4J)

Importance of off-the-ball movement and positioning in relation to the ball's progression. Recognition of different behaviors depending on whether the ball is under pressure or free. On the wall pass, players in possession of the ball occupy a different space from the one they were in before, making sure to divide the 'squares' evenly. Once the ball enters the playing area, players in possession can move freely. Encourage off-the-ball movement and the occupation of a different square when the ball leaves the field and goes to the wall/support player. The wall pass on the first pass is not attackable, simulating an open ball, but it is on the second pass. Therefore, the focus should be on immediately supporting the teammate rather than abandoning strategic spaces to go to the other side, in order to retain possession. If the black team regains possession and becomes the team in possession, they must be able to create an open ball situation by playing the ball to one of the two wide support players.

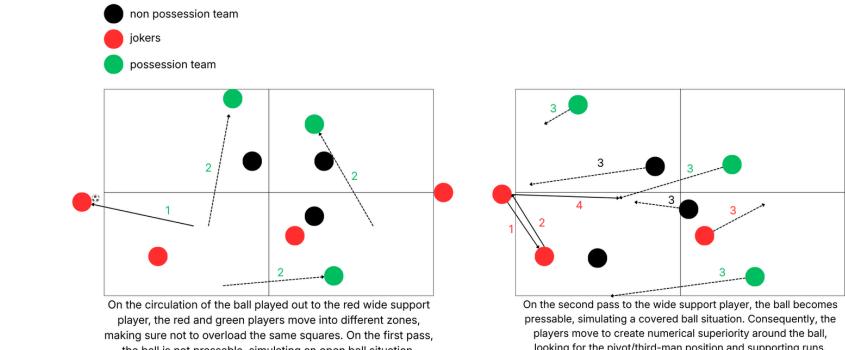
Ind. Time: 18' / rep 4 (3'30 w / 1" r) 18 m x 24 m

#### Offensive objectives

- Recognition of the ball-related cue (unopposed ball or pressured/covered ball).
- With an open ball: strategic occupation of spaces beyond the pressure line, adopting an open body orientation.
- With a covered ball: support to the ball carrier, search for the pivot/third-man position, and supporting runs.

#### Defensive objectives

- Pressure on the ball carrier
- Recognition of numerical inferiority
- Preventing penetrative / through passes
- With an open ball: unit/collective defending
- With a covered ball: tight marking on direct opponents



#### 3. Game-related HIT in line with the session goals (15')

#### 4. Small side game "keepers without hand" 5 v 5 + Gk

Classic 5v5, free play. The only constraint is that goalkeepers are not allowed to use their hands to make saves. As a consequence, pressure must be immediate and aggressive to prevent the opponents from shooting. This exercise is consistent with the athletic component of the session while also replicating our game model during the opponent's first build-up phase. Man-to-man marking. Progression to further increase intensity: goals scored in transition are valid only if completed within 5 seconds of ball recovery (also consistent with the game model).

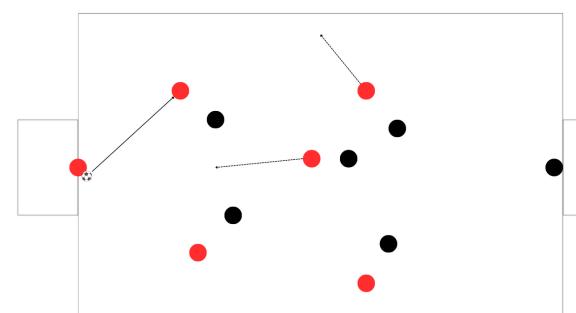
Ind. Time: 18' / rep: 1°(4'w/1'r) 2° (3'w/0'30"r) 3°(3'w/0'30"r) 4° (5'w) 30 m x 40 m

#### Offensive objectives

- Duels,
- play-and-move actions
- quick combinations

#### Defensive objectives

- Tight marking
- immediate pressure
- unit communication



Total training duration: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Available players: 20 + 3 goalkeepers

Training center: Ciudad Deportiva José Manuel LLaneza

Time: 11.00

### Training objective

The tactical objectives of this training session are two: one attacking and one defensive.

- Attacking objective: **attract the opponent** in order to play behind them. This is a key principle of our game model, and we placed specific emphasis on it this week because Alavés struggle when defending large spaces and allow through balls between the lines. The focus is on key individual principles: using the pause, sole control to attract pressure, wall passes (one-twos), and sharp off-the-ball movements beyond the pressing line.
- Defensive objective: **penalty-box marking**. This objective is mainly linked to the game plan, as Alavés are strong when attacking crosses and commit many players into the box, while also favouring a direct style of play. The focus remains on individual behaviour: tracking your direct opponent, positioning yourself between the attacker and the goal, and stepping in to intercept only when there is a diagonal passing lane.

Physical focus: as previously mentioned, the session targets strength and high-intensity actions.

### Available Players

#### Goalkeepers

Junior

Tenas

Gomez (U23)

#### Defenders

Mourino

Navarro

Marin

Pedraza

Cardona

Foyth

Veiga

#### Midfielders

Comesana

Parejo

Moleiro

Diatta (U23)

Macià (U23)

Lopez (U23)

#### Attackers

Pépé

Perez

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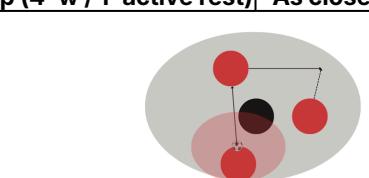
### WARM UP (25')

#### 1. general collective warm up (10')

- a. 2' free mobility
- b. 4' injury-prevention circuit in pairs using resistance bands, with and without the ball
- c. 4' motor skills circuit with poles for lateral running, changes of direction, and ball carrying

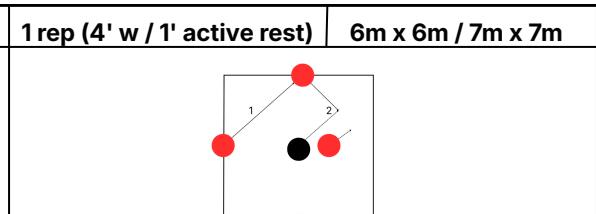
#### 2A. 3v1 rondo with continuous transitions

Three players keep possession in a small area while one defender applies constant pressure. Upon ball loss or a technical mistake, there is an immediate transition: the player who loses the ball becomes the defender. This exercise reflects and trains our game model, as the ball is constantly under pressure and the two supporting players must continuously provide passing lines. As a result, all players remain in a continuous intervention zone, offering mutual support and reacting immediately both in possession and upon ball loss.



#### 2B. 4v1 rondo to find the central player

Rondo in which the objective for the players in possession is to play the ball to the inside player in order to score a point. The defender's objective is to prevent the inside player from receiving. The focus is on the basic principles of the defensive duel rather than pure marking, as there is no directionality. It works well as a warm-up, preparing the players for more detailed exercises later in the session. If the out-of-possession player wins the ball, he immediately swaps bibs with the player who made the incorrect pass.



#### 3. Fun group-based competition for neuromuscular activation (5')

### MAIN PART (1H 5')

1. **High-intensity block ('30)**. The block is composed of two exercises, each lasting 15 minutes. The squad is divided into two groups, working simultaneously on the same exercise. The session starts by focusing on the individual fundamentals related to the two main objectives of today's training, which are defending the penalty area from wide balls and attracting opponent pressure in order to play behind the defensive line. In line with the limit of four exercises per training session, I have chosen to illustrate the exercise focused on the defensive objective. The exercise with an offensive objective will be more demanding from a mechanical and metabolic point of view for the attackers, while the work on the defensive objective will place a higher load on the defenders. Starting from this exercise, players will occupy specific positional roles.

#### a. Small side game 5v3+ 2J in 2 zones. Attract to invade the next sector with off the ball runs (15')

##### b. Small side game "defend the goal" 6v4

The exercise starts with the red team in possession (4 outside and 2 inside the p.area), with the objective of scoring in the opposition goal. They can score either with a shot from outside the box, worth one point, or by delivering a cross and attacking the penalty area with a maximum of three players (+1 off the ball run), in which case the goal is worth three points. If the defenders regain possession, they can score by playing a forward pass beyond the penalty area to a positioned staff member. Once the action is completed, play always restarts with the attackers in possession.

1. Shots from outside the box are used to work on immediate pressure in order to prevent the opponent from shooting, as a goal was conceded in this way in the previous match.

2. Defending wide aerial balls. Even though our game model foresees a mixed defensive approach in these situations, the focus is placed on individual behaviours within mixed marking, combining man-oriented and zonal principles.

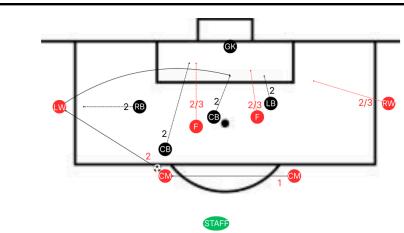
Ind. Time: 15' / rep 4 (3'w / 1'r)

18 m x 42 m

##### Defensive objectives

- Communication.
- The near full-back applies pressure on the ball, the first centre-back covers the near-post zone, the second centre-back takes a marking role, and the third defender covers the far-post zone.
- Zonal marking concept:
  - Before the ball is delivered, priority is given to goal protection, coordination with teammates, and ball awareness, with opponents coming last.
  - After the ball is played, the focus shifts to individual marking behaviour: not allowing the opponent to attack the ball first, using the arms correctly, using the opponent's body to generate leverage, and clearing the ball wide.

The team in possession has the sole objective of maintaining a high tempo of play.



#### 2. Positional Game 10+2 v 8 attract to find the half space behind the pressure

The starting positions are shown in the diagram (players are positioned in their personal position). Once the ball is in play, players are free to move across the three zones. The pitch is divided into three zones and the exercise always starts in Zone 1 with the goalkeeper of the team in possession.

The objective of the team in possession is to overcome the opponent's pressure and progress into Zone 3 by playing a pass to the wide support player, who then delivers a cross into the penalty area. At the same time, the attackers make forward runs to attack the box. This targets a known weakness of Alavés, who often fail to track late runs and lose individual duels inside the penalty area when defending large spaces.

Progression from Zone 1 to Zone 2 is only allowed through a pass, preferably into the highlighted areas that represent the half-spaces, in order to break the first line of pressure. Players who start in Zone 1 are also allowed to move into Zone 2, as shown in the example. In Zone 3, an offensive numerical superiority is created through the arrival of one player from Zone 2. For the team out of possession, regaining the ball in Zone 1 is worth one point. If possession is regained in Zone 2 or Zone 3 and the team completes three passes, one point is awarded. This scoring system is designed to encourage high pressing behaviour from the defending team.

Variation: in Zone 2, the team in possession is limited to a maximum of two touches in order to increase speed of internal circulation and maintain positional and numerical advantage.

Possible in-session adjustment: if the team struggles to attract the opponents in Zone 1 due to excessive tempo, a minimum of three touches can be imposed in Zone 1 to encourage patience and better manipulation of the defensive block.

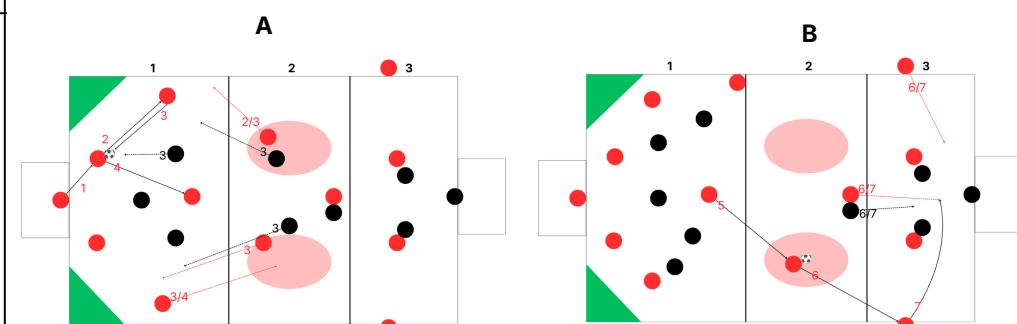
Ind. Time: 20' / rep 4 (4'w / 1'r)

65 m x 45 m

The main tactical objective for the team in possession is to overload Zone 1 in order to attract pressure and then play between the lines.

As this is a session focused on sub-principles and sub-sub-principles, the emphasis is placed on individual tactical and technical **offensive behaviours**:

- artificial transition for decoy.
- timing and pause on the ball
- attacking depth
- movements beyond the pressure line
- emptying one space to occupy another
- autonomous recognition of numerical situations in the area of intervention, and mutual support



#### 3. High-Intensity Rotational Cage Game (5v5 + Support Players)

This exercise is organised as a rotational tournament involving four teams. Two teams play a 5v5 cage game inside the pitch, one team acts as external support players (jokers) around the playing area, and the fourth team performs a technical-coordination circuit outside the pitch. Roles rotate at the end of each set so that all teams experience each task.

The objective of the teams playing inside the cage is to score goals while maintaining a high tempo and intensity. Goals scored following a cross are worth two points, in order to specifically target the defensive objective of marking inside the penalty area and defending wide deliveries. All other goals count as one point.

The team acting as support players plays for the team in possession and is limited in the number of touches to maintain speed of circulation. The team in the technical circuit remains active during the set, performing coordinated technical movements at controlled intensity.

The tournament format increases competitiveness and engagement while allowing intensity to be managed through structured rotations.

Ind. Time: 15' / rep 6 (1'45" w / 45" r)

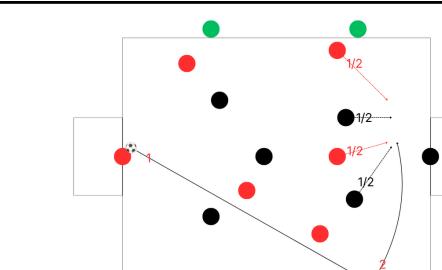
22 m x 18 m

**Defensive objectives**

- Marking
- Aerial duels and fundamental defensive actions
- Tracking the direct opponent

**Offensive objectives**

- Late runs
- Attacking space
- Speed of play



Total training duration: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Available players: 20 + 3 goalkeepers

Training center: Ciudad Deportiva José Manuel LLaneza

Time: 11:00

### Training objective

In this session the team will work on two tactical objectives: positional defending and the initial phase of offensive transition.

The focus on principles will be less specific and more unit-based, with larger distances and fewer eccentric demands compared to the MD-4 session.

The cognitive load will be relatively high, as the session focuses on collective and complex principles that require continuous reading of the game and coordinated decision-making.

For positional defence, the main principles addressed will be: compactness in a 4-4-2 mid-block, zonal defending, and waiting for the pressing trigger on the flanks, with the objective of squeezing the pitch and pushing up when the ball is played wide.

For the offensive transition phase, the focus will be on team balance and diagonal runs in behind the defensive line.

### Available Players

#### Goalkeepers

Junior  
Tenas  
Gomez (U23)

#### Defenders

Mourino  
Navarro  
Marin  
Pedraza  
Cardona  
Foyth  
Veiga

#### Midfielders

Comesana  
Parejo  
Moleiro  
Diatta (U23)  
Macia (U23)

#### Attackers

Pépé  
Perez  
Mikautadze  
Moreno  
Oluwaseyi  
Buchanan  
Gaitan (U23)

## WARM UP (30')

1. Individual activation in the gym working on: general dynamic mobility, core stability work, hip activation, adductor activation, neuromuscular activation (12')

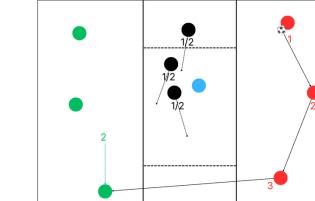
2. A collective coordination circuit on the pitch designed to replicate movements that will be required during the session: lateral runs, delaying actions, curved runs, and diagonal runs, with a focus on using the pivot foot to change direction (5')

### 3.3+3v3 + 1 J | Positional defence

A technical activation in which two teams aim to circulate the ball from one zone of the pitch to another with the help of a joker who can operate in all three sectors. If the defending team intercepts the ball, it immediately switches roles with the team that misplaced the pass. The defending team can therefore become the attacking team by regaining possession; however, if it concedes a penetrating pass into the central zone, it must remain defending for two additional turns as a penalty. Variation: the same penalty applies if the joker receives the ball in the central zone.

Ind. Time: 12' / 3 rep (3' w/0'45 active rest)

(30m (11+8+11) x 20m)



## MAIN PART (50')

### 1. Possession Game : 4+2+2 v 4

The team in possession aims to play a pass through the gates positioned in the central area of the rectangle. While doing so, the outside supporting players are limited to two touches. The main focus is on the team out of possession, which must prevent the opposition from scoring a point by blocking passing lanes and protecting the central space. If the defending team regains possession, it keeps the same objective: to play the ball through the central gates and then find a pass to one of the outside supports to switch roles with the team that was previously in possession. This choice is made to remain consistent with one of the game plan objectives: after regaining possession, the team must look for diagonal runs and diagonal passes beyond the opponent's pressure.

Ind. Time: 15' / 3 rep (4'w/1'r)

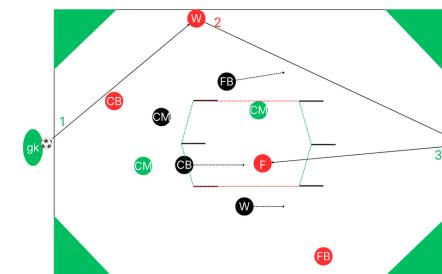
32m x 24m

Defensive objectives:

- close the inside, show outside
- stay connected
- shift together
- jump at a trigger
- fast key passes in transition

Offensive objectives:

- move the ball quick to open the block
- create passing lines
- negative transition



### 2. Positional game 7 + 3 outside supports vs 8

The team in possession (red) aims to score. There are two different types of actions starting from the outside supports. The first one is a long ball played towards the strikers, to replicate Alavés' direct style of play. Once the outcome of the action is clear, play is stopped and a new action immediately starts with a short pass from the outside supports. In this phase, the black team's objective is to defend in a mid-block and try to regain possession in wide areas. If the red team manages to move the ball into the red zone and score, the goal is worth 2 points, with the constraint of avoiding passes between the lines. If the black team regains possession, in order to score a point they must complete a "try" by playing a pass beyond the outside support line, with the supports acting as passive targets. If this is achieved through diagonal runs and diagonal passes that change the sector, the goal is worth 2 points. Variant: test a back five defensive structure by adding one extra defensive player to work on collective coordination and spacing within a five-man defensive line.

Ind. Time: 20' / 4 rep (4'w/1'30'r)

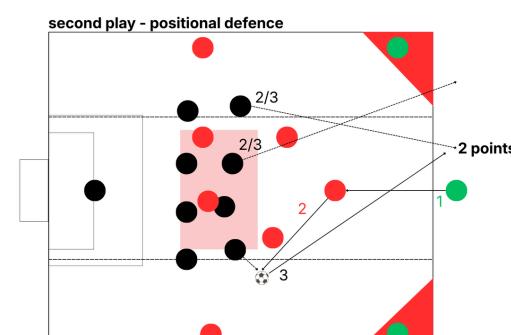
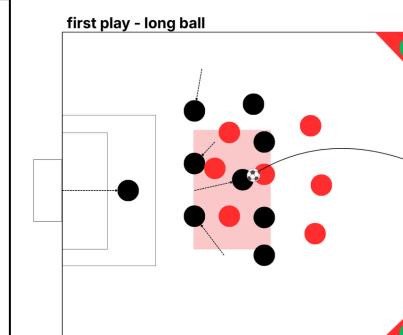
60 m x 50 m

Defensive objectives:

- Reading aerial trajectories
- Zonal marking
- Maintaining density
- Recognising clever runs
- Wide trigger to press
- Squeeze the pitch and push up to remove depth

Offensive objectives:

- Replicate Alavés' game model based on long balls, crosses into the penalty area and duels for second balls

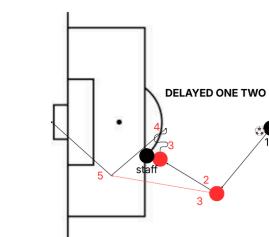
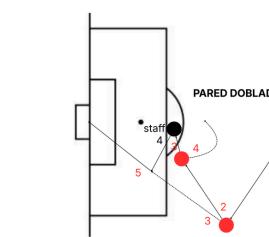
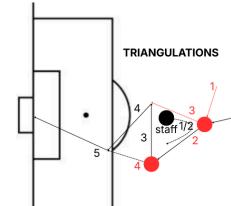


### Combination in pairs

Exercises functional to associative play in the finishing zone, mainly in the half-spaces. The concepts and combinations involved are:

- triangles
- pared dobla
- delayed one-two
- asymmetric 2v2 situations

These concepts are useful to revisit because they are an integral part of our attacking sub-principles and also because, given Alavés' limitations, if we are able to create these types of situations after a through pass, our level of threat increases significantly. The workload must be low, with passive opponents applying only light, simulated pressure, represented by members of the staff.



3. Conditioned game: A goal scored after regaining possession in the wide areas counts double: Ind. Time 15' / 3 rep (4'w 1'r)

Total training duration: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Available players: 20 + 3 goalkeepers

Training center: Ciudad Deportiva José Manuel LLaneza

Time: 11.00

#### Training objective

The tactical objective of the session is to work on principles related to build-up play: finding space beyond the pressure with an open body shape and creating interchanges between teammates. Find the freeman, third man combination.

The session will then move into a light, highly tactical phase focused on the game plan and specific situations related to the match against Alavés.

More specifically, the work will address the four phases in which the ball is in play: first build-up and first pressure, positional defense and positional attack.

From a physical and cognitive perspective, this is considered a recovery day, therefore neither volume nor intensity will be high. Match activation will be left to MD-1, in preparation for the game on January 10th.

#### Available Players

##### Goalkeepers

Junior

Tenas

Gomez (U23)

##### Defenders

Mourino

Navarro

Marin

Pedraza

Cardona

Foyth

Veiga

##### Midfielders

Comesana

Parejo

Moleiro

Diatta (U23)

Macià (U23)

Lopez (U23)

##### Attackers

Pépé

Perez

Mikautadze

Moreno

Oluwaseyi

Buchanan

Gaitan (U23)

## WARM UP (23')

### 1. Individual activation in the gym working on: general dynamic mobility, core stability work, hip activation, adductor activation, (12')

#### 2. No-volley football tennis

The exercise is played in two squares. One square is occupied by a team of four players and the other square by another team of four players. The team in possession has a maximum of three passes to score. A point is awarded when the attacking team plays or shoots the ball past the red line, or when a defender deflects the ball and it goes out of play. After a point is scored, the action restarts with a ground pass or shot from the team that scored, similar to a volleyball-style restart. The constraints are one touch per player and a maximum of three team touches per action: reception/control, pass, and final pass or shot/score the point.

Indicative Time: 11' / 3 rep (3' w/o 45' active rest)

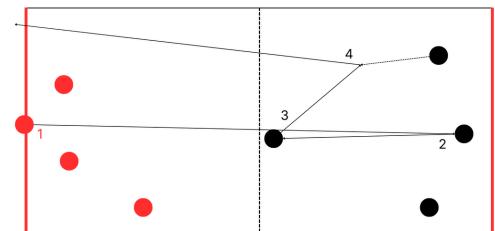
6 x 12

**Defensive objectives:**

- interception
- communication
- cover
- save the ball

**Offensive objectives:**

- diamond structure
- use of the pivot
- third man runs
- body shape



## MAIN PART (45')

### 1. Positional Game 7v3 in 2 zones

Indicative Time: 15' / 3 rep (4' w/ 1' r)

24 x 12

Positional game 7v3, also divided into two squares. The team in possession aims to circulate the ball from one square to the other without losing possession. There are no transitions when possession is lost; roles are changed only at the end of each repetition.

The only constraints are that, inside each square, the game is played as a 5v2 or 5v3, depending on how the defenders choose to position themselves, and that play is limited to a maximum of two touches.

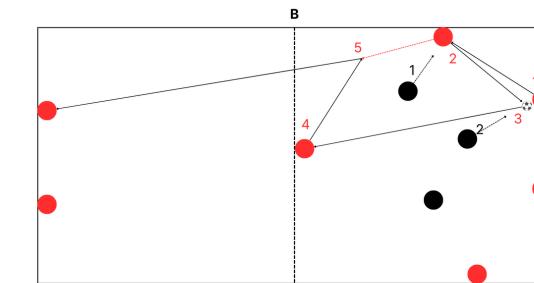
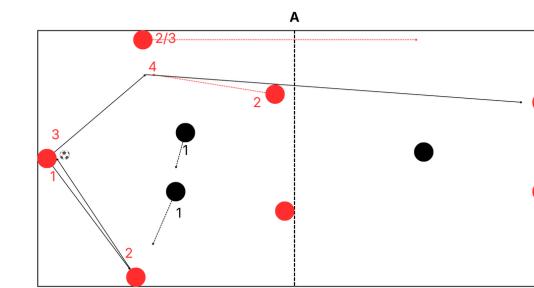
The exercise is designed to stimulate the creation of passing lines, the ability to play beyond the pressure, and role interchanges during ball circulation that involve internal transitions. Players are also encouraged to recognize whether the pressure is applied by two or three defenders, in order to build with 3+2 or 2+3, always maintaining numerical superiority on the first line of build-up.

#### Defensive objectives:

- compactness
- jump at the right moment (trigger and numerical equality)
- communication

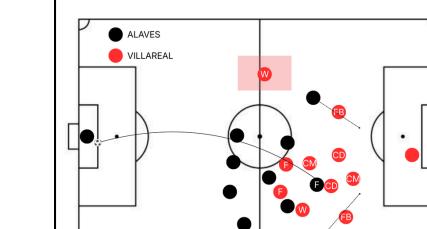
#### Offensive objectives:

- recognize the pressure and adapt the structure
- find the free man
- build forward passing lines
- "liquid" positioning



### 1. Tactical work 11 v 11: 30' (6 minute x each phase) Specific work in preparation for the upcoming match. Very low intensity, no tackles, with frequent pauses for explanations and coaching.

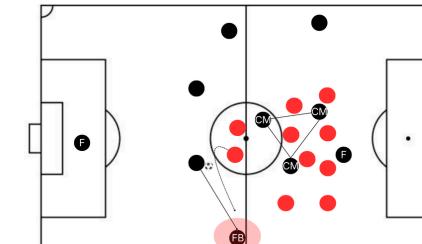
#### First pressure



Alavés often look for the striker during build-up to create flick-ons into depth or to attack second balls. This situation is recreated by having a mid-fielder drop into the defensive line, with a centre-back applying man-oriented marking on the striker and a mid-fielder providing cover to screen the space, allowing anticipation or control of the second ball.

Another build-up situation. Alavés push one mid-fielder higher, close to the striker, and occasionally try to play short. The strategy is man-to-man oriented, keeping a +1 at the back and leaving the right full-back free, using him as the pressing trigger. We have identified this player as the one who loses possession most frequently in the opposition team. Key points are intelligent runs and controlled pressure, not too aggressive, until the ball is played to the right full-back.

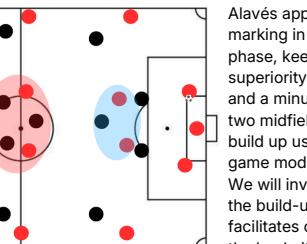
#### Positional defence



Compact 4-4-2 structure, with ball-recovery triggers identified as: lateral passes, uncomfortable passes, backward passes, and opponents receiving with their back to goal.

The objective is to perform an effective defensive elastic movement in relation to the ball cue (ball code).

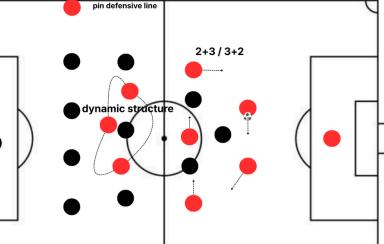
#### First zone build up



Alavés apply man-oriented marking in their first pressing phase, keeping numerical superiority in the defensive line and a minus one between their two mid-fielders. This allows us to build up using the principles of our game model.

We will involve the goalkeeper in the build-up: if he is pressed, it facilitates our progression from the back; if we face difficulties, we will create coordinated movements to open passing lanes between the lines for the two strikers dropping short (if they are not followed by the centre-backs), or play long balls to Pépé into the space created by the movements of our forwards. If Pépé is well marked, we will then look to serve the overlapping movement of the wide full-back.

#### Positional attack



Three main functions in positional attack. First, the build-up structure, which shifts from 2+3 to 3+2 depending on the pressure, in order to maintain numerical superiority on the first line of build-up. Second, two players acting as width and depth fixers, in this case the right winger and the left full-back. Third, three central players operating in the attacking midfield zone, continuously creating and emptying spaces and avoiding giving the opposition fixed reference points.

Total training duration: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Available players: 20 + 3 goalkeepers

Training center: Ciudad Deportiva José Manuel LLaneza

Time: 16.15

### Training objective

Today's tactical objective is to work on set pieces.

From a technical perspective, a finishing exercise will also be included. This will be useful not only to revisit specific attacking patterns, but also to boost the players' confidence and overall mood.

From a cognitive standpoint, the load will remain relatively low, avoiding excessive stimulation.

From a neuro-muscular perspective, a preparatory activation will be carried out in view of the following day's match. This will include a short priming station, combining ball work with jumping and reactivity exercises based on visual stimuli.

### Available Players

#### Goalkeepers

Junior

Tenas

Gomez (U23)

#### Defenders

Mourino

Navarro

Marin

Pedraza

Cardona

Foyth

Veiga

#### Midfielders

Comesana

Parejo

Moleiro

Diatta (U23)

Macià (U23)

Lopez (U23)

#### Attackers

Pépé

Perez

Mikautadze

Moreno

Oluwaseyi

Buchanan

Gaitan (U23)

## WARM UP (18')

### 1. Collective activation (6): Dynamic mobility and coordination in group circuit with ball carrying.

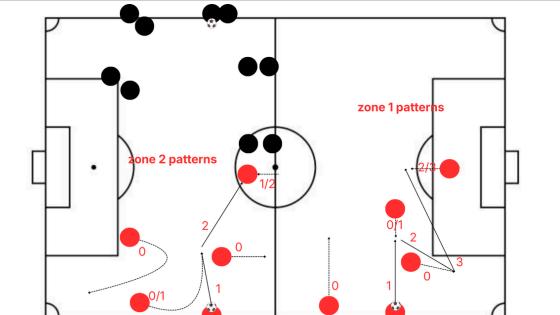
#### 2. Throw in analytical sequences in zone 1 and 2

The squad is divided into two groups working simultaneously on opposite sides of the pitch, performing the same movements. The movement patterns are pre-defined, while the final decision is left to the players. At the end of each set, the groups switch sides and the exercise is repeated using roles that are representative of match situations. Once the ball reaches the final player, it is returned to the starting station to restart the sequence. In the diagram on the right, the presence of two groups is clearly shown. For each position there is also a substitute, allowing player rotation and ensuring adequate recovery between repetitions. Variant: Two members of the coaching staff are added per group to screen passing lanes and block options, increasing the level of opposition and making the analytical exercise more situational and game-realistic.

Time: 12' / 4 rep (2'30" w/0'45 active rest) 36 m x 66 m

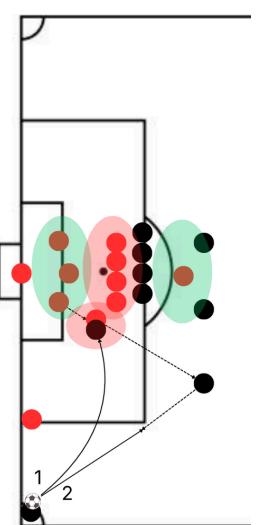
#### Offensive objectives:

- Timing of movements
- Playing on the foot furthest from the opponent / playing on the back foot to facilitate the switch of play
- Proper body shape and orientation
- Emptying and occupying space



## MAIN PART (50')

### 1. Corners and set pieces (30')



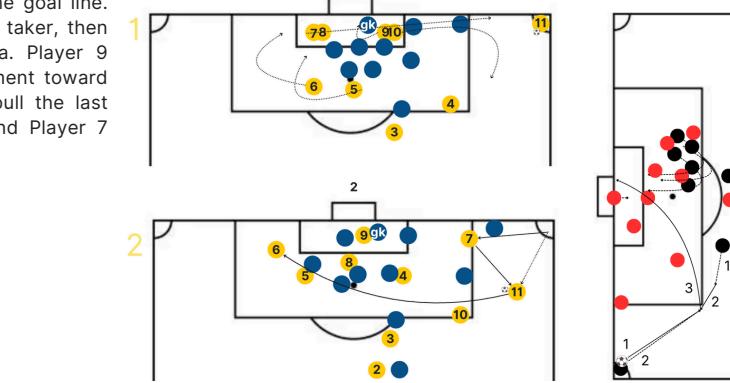
#### Defensive corners

Alavés, on attacking corners, usually delivers an outswinging cross aimed at the first-post run, looking for a flick-on that is then attacked at the second post by a block of players arriving in that zone. To counter this, we will remove one player from the zonal line (compared to our usual way of defending outswinging corners) and assign him to mark the player attacking the first post. This player must be strong in aerial duels but, above all, alert and proactive in reading the situation. If Alavés plays the corner short, the first player of the zonal line will step out aggressively to press, as shown in the graphic, with the rest of the line shifting accordingly. As a result, we will defend with a total of five players zonally and five players man-oriented, adopting a mixed zonal system. The last zonal defender, originally positioned on the second post, has been moved slightly closer to the goal. This adjustment allows him to have a better visual reference of the ball and the attackers, considering that any ball arriving in that area may be difficult to read due to possible deflections or "scraped" trajectories.

#### Offensive corners

Based on the data and the analysis of Alavés' recent matches, which have shown that they are very strong on set pieces, I decided to design two specific situations that could allow Villarreal to better exploit their potential and surprise Alavés. For this reason, the first two corners rehearsed in training will be short corners. (In this phase, wide set pieces will also be quickly rehearsed, along with direct free kicks, kick-offs.)

#### first corner from the right



1. Players 7, 8, 9, and 10 start almost on the goal line. Player 10 feints to move towards the ball taker, then occupies the corner of the penalty area. Player 9 moves to distract the goalkeeper's movement toward the far post. Player 8 uses his run to pull the last defender of the zone out of position, and Player 7 exchanges positions with Player 11
2. Players 5 and 6 take the space that has been created to attack the ball with a header.

#### first corner from the left

A quick play aimed at exploiting the goalkeeper's movement by anticipating his step forward and surprising him with a curling shot to the far post that can beat him. The player taking the corner and then shooting on goal will be Parejo. The players inside the penalty area will perform clearing and re-attacking movements to open space, encouraging the goalkeeper to step out and gain a few meters, creating the window for the shot.

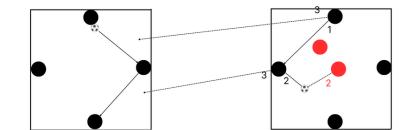
### 2. Priming and fast rondos: group divided in 2 (10 and 10)

#### Priming session (4')

- Reactive bilateral and unilateral jumps (maximum 20 jumps) with visual stimuli
- 4 accelerations over 6 meters triggered by visual cues.
- Introduce a competitive element if the exercise becomes monotonous.

#### 2 rondos 4v2 with transition (time 4' (rep 2 x 1'30" w/1'r) / 5x5 squares: distance from square to square → 5 meters

- The exercise is played in two squares, where two rondos take place at the same time: a 4v1 in one square and a 4v2 in the other.
- If the team in possession completes 6 consecutive passes, the defending players are forced to immediately switch squares and press the players in possession in the opposite square.
- If the team in possession loses the ball, the player who makes the mistake and the player who played the previous pass must immediately sprint to the other square to recover the ball.
- It is important that, in the square where players are "resting", ball circulation continues even without opponents, maintaining rhythm and technical quality.



### 3. Fast combinations to shot

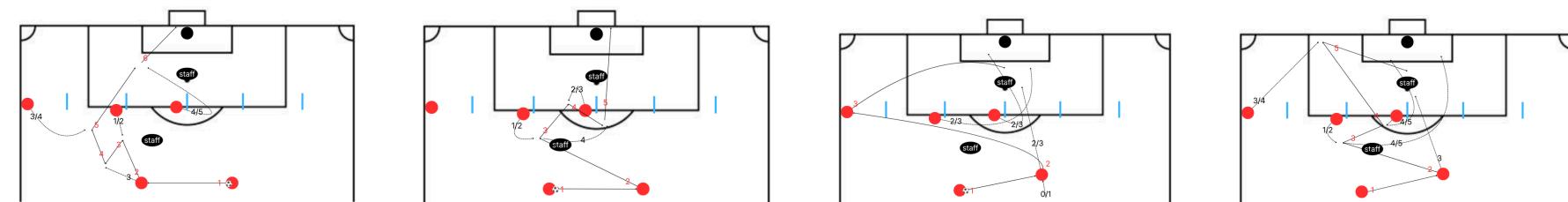
Indicative Time: 12' / 2 rep (5'w/2'r)

creation/finalization zones

The group is divided into four teams. Two teams perform the sequence in one area, while the other two work in the opposite area. The two teams alternate actions, competing against each other and completing the four sequences one team at a time, allowing for a large recovery margin between actions. At the end of the set, the two winning teams compete against each other in one area, while the remaining two teams compete in the other area. In the second set, the direction of the attack is switched, while the teams are free to choose the sequence. Two members of the staff will provide semi-passive opposition.

#### Offensive objectives:

- off-the-ball movement
- combinations
- passing to feet or into space
- crossing
- cut-backs.



VILLARREAL CF  VS  DEPORTIVO ALAVÉS

SAT 10.01.2026 16:15 h 

Estadio de la Cerámica



**Sub**  
 22 Perez  
 17 Buchanan  
 23 Cardona  
 21 Oluwaseyi  
 13 Conde  
 4 Marin  
 26 Navarro  
 37 Macia  
 32 Lopez  
 38 Diatta

**Line-up doubts for Alavés**  
 Martinez 60% - Boye 40%  
 Vicente 60% - Calebe 40%

These two doubts do not affect Alavés' overall line-up, but rather some of the team's characteristics. Boyé is a player who links up better with his teammates and has greater technical quality compared to Martinez. Number 11, on the other hand, is a striker who is strong in aerial duels and very effective inside the penalty area. As for the two wide players, Vicente's offensive impact is different from Calebe's: Calebe becomes dangerous with the ball at his feet, while Vicente is more threatening through off-the-ball runs and dynamism.

## GAME PLAN (FAST INFOS TO FIX ON THE DRESSING ROOM WALL)

**BUILD UP**

1.4-2-4  
 2. FIND THE FREE MAN IN THE HALFSPACES  
 3. MOBILITY TO GO LONG

**FIRST PRESSURE**

BUILD UP SITUATION  
 1. DO NOT PRESS FIRST AND SECOND PASSES TO PREVENT IMMEDIATE LONG BALLS  
 2. VEIGA ON MARTINEZ  
 3. COMESANA DROP BACK ON DEFENSIVE LINE  
 3.+1 IN DEFENCE

LONG GOAL KICK  
 1. COMPACTNESS  
 2. VEIGA ON MARTINEZ  
 3. COMESANA DROP BACK ON DEFENSIVE LINE  
 2. CLEVER RUN TO THE RIGHT BACK (TRIGGER)  
 3.+1 IN DEFENCE

**POSITIONAL ATTACK**

1.2+3+5  
 2. MOBILITY TO EMPTY AND FILL SPACES  
 3. ATTRACT TO STRETCH THE OPPONENTS LINES:  
 ○ PAUSE  
 ○ WALL PASSES  
 ○ ARTIFICIAL TRANSITION

**POSITIONAL DEFENCE**

1.4-4-2  
 2. MONITOR CRITICAL SPACES (WIDTH, FINISH, DEPTH)  
 3. RECOVER THE BALL WIDE  
 4. WAIT FOR PRESSING TRIGGER (EX: BALL TO OTTO N.17)

**TRANSITIONS**

**POSITIVE TRANSITIONS**  
 ZONE 1 → SAFE FIRST PASS AND STRETCH THE FIELD  
 ZONE 2 → DIAGONAL DEEP RUNS AND BALANCE  
 ZONE 3 → COMBINATIONS TO ATTACK THE BLINDSIDE

**NEGATIVE TRANSITIONS**  
 ZONE 1 → COUNTERPRESSING  
 ZONE 2 → WIDE: COUNTERPRESSING, MIDDLE: POSITIONAL DEFENCE  
 ZONE 3 → PROTECTION, IMMEDIATE PRESSURE ON THE BALL

**SET PIECES**

**OFFENSIVE CORNERS**  
 FIRST CORNER FROM THE RIGHT SIDE  
 NO. 11 PEPÉ  
 NO. 7 PAREJO  
 NO. 6 VEIGA  
 NO. 5 MORENO  
 NO. 10 MOLEIRO  
 NO. 8 FOYTH  
 NO. 9 COMESANA  
 NO. 3 PEDRAZA  
 NO. 2 MOURINO

FIRST CORNER FROM THE LEFT SIDE  
 PAREJO / PEPÉ COMBINATION

**CENTRAL FREE-KICK WALL**  
 MOLEIRO  
 MIKAUTADZE  
 PEDRAZA  
 COMESANA  
 PAREJO  
 CROCODILE: PEPÉ

**LEFT-SIDE FREE-KICK WALL**  
 MOLEIRO  
 PEDRAZA

**RIGHT-SIDE FREE-KICK WALL**  
 PEPÉ  
 PAREJO

**DEFENSIVE WIDE FREE KICKS**  
 MOURINO / PEDRAZA SLIGHTLY DETACHED - FOYTH - COMESANA - VEIGA - MOURINO / PEDRAZA  
 MAN MARKING: MORENO - PAREJO - MIKAUTADZE

**CENTRAL ATTACKING FREE KICKS**  
 PAREJO / MORENO

**WIDE ATTACKING FREE KICKS**  
 PEPÉ / PAREJO

**PENALTIES**  
 MORENO, PAREJO, MIKAUTADZE

**WHAT IF STRATEGIES FOR STAFF (DO NOT SHOW IT TO THE PLAYERS)**

**If they play in a 4-4-2 formation:**  
 There are no major changes, as in the possession phase they already use this structure.  
 Out of possession, look to find receiving spaces between the two midfielders, who are often flat.

**If we go behind:**  
 Introduce right back Buchanan and make attacking substitutions. Unfortunately, due to injuries and unavailable players, Villarreal are currently quite limited in their options.

**If we take the lead:**  
 Maintain our game model, which has allowed us to gain the advantage.  
 Optional solution: introduce another wide player who is strong in attacking depth for potential counter-attacks (Buchanan). The same applies to the striker position, opting for a forward who is less involved in build-up play but effective in transition (Oluwaseyi).

**If we receive a red card:**  
 Reorganize into a 4-4-1, removing the striker who is least involved in the game or covers less ground, most likely Moreno.

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