

Module 1. High-press in the defensive phase

Introduction

Some time ago, Ángel Cappa said something that is a declaration of intent: “you press to play, you don't play to press” (Almenara, 2108, <https://bit.ly/38rvLMD>).

This phrase reflects the more ambitious approach that this course wants to convey, the approach of the proactive perception of high-press, that of recovering the ball in the opponent's field to attack the opponent quickly and disorganise as close as possible to their goal.

The other approach, that of reactivity, is a consequence of the impossibility of recovering the ball. If there is no ball recovery, then we will try to obstruct the opponent so that he loses the ball because of the pressure applied.

Another great coach, Pep Guardiola, comments:

When you do a good high-press you defend much less in low defensive zones ... and, if you make a good build-up play, the rest flows in a much more natural way. The consequence of the two up and down phases contributes to what you have to defend, but in less time in a game. (GOL, 2019, <https://bit.ly/3qBAvFq>).

From this phrase, we can assume that a good high-press will allow you to take possession of the ball more quickly to be able to attack again. This will translate into less effort for the opponent when they chase the ball, trying to recover it for exceptionally long periods in a defensive phase.

From the idea of proactive defence and from the initiative of pressing high to take possession of the ball as soon as possible and with less effort, we are going to divide this course into four modules:



- Module 1. High-press. Theoretical framework.
- Module 2. Most common defensive structures in high-press in football.
- Module 3. High-press training methodology in football.
- Module 4. Data for a good interpretation in the analysis of high-press in football.



Unit 1.1 High-press. Theoretical framework

1.1.1. High-press in the defensive phase

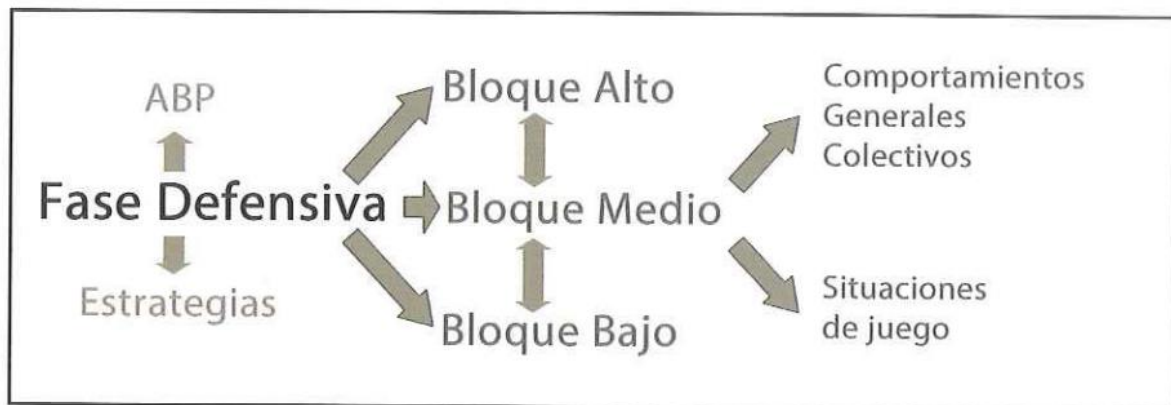
Before explaining high-press in the defensive phase we must know the phase of the game in which we are.

The defensive phase is understood as that phase of the game in which our team does not have possession of the ball and tries to recover it by preventing the opponent from progressing towards our goal.

In the defensive phase, Moreno (2013) defines 3 defensive moments or blocks (figure 1), leaving aside the defensive transition:

- 1) High block or high-press.
- 2) Middle block.
- 3) Low block.

Figure 1: Types of moments or defensive blocks



Source: Moreno, 2013, p. 191.

ABP	SET PIECES
Fase defensiva	Defensive phase
Estrategias	Strategies
Bloque alto	High block
Bloque medio	Middle block



Bloque bajo	Low block
Comportamientos generales colectivos	Collective general behaviour
Situaciones de juego	Game situations

In this module we will focus on the study of the high-block or high-press in the defensive phase.

This high-press defensive phase is carried out in the opposing field, where all the lines of the team advance, and create a compact block.

As a contribution to what happens at high-press, we will develop the idea of phase spaces.

According to Seirul-lo (2004) and his socio-affective theories, phase spaces are the set of 22 players, in which one team has the ball in certain space and with a given organisation, and the other team tries to snatch it from them in that same space and with another specific organisation.

It is possible to identify a succession of phase spaces in the game, and each phase space is a consequence of the previous phase spaces and how the two teams organise to prepare the future phase spaces.

Both teams use mutual help and cooperation as the main resources to solve and chain the phase spaces, to finally achieve the objectives they pursue.

Many followers of these socio-affective theories have carried out studies to dissect the game from these ideas. Thus, we can observe how Peraita, A. (in Flash Training, 2020) uses tools to interpret what happens in the game: the spaces, the advantages, the types of behaviour and the phases of the game.

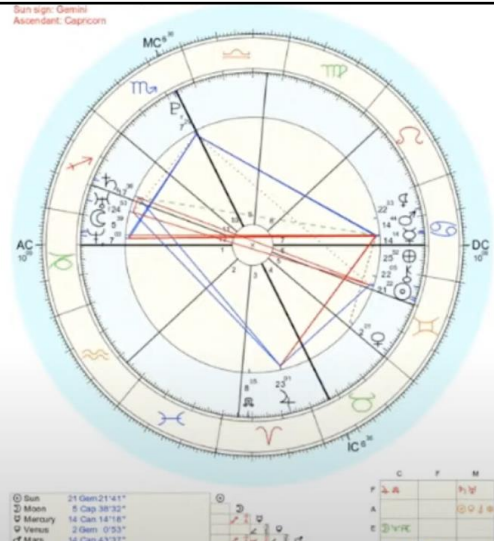


Figure 2: Tools to interpret the game (socio-affective theories)

HERRAMIENTAS DE INTERPRETACIÓN Y CICLO DEL JUEGO

RESUMEN

1. Espacios
2. Ventajas
3. Tipos de conductas
4. Fases



☉ Sun	21 Gem 21° 41'
♃ Mars	5 Cap 38° 32'
☿ Mercury	14 Can 14° 18'
♀ Venus	2 Gem 0° 53'
♂ Mars	14 Can 43° 37'
♃ Jupiter	22 Aq 1° 47'

Source: Flash Training, 2020, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/20C4hN8>

HERRAMIENTAS DE INTERPRETACIÓN Y CICLO DE JUEGO	TOOLS FOR INTERPRETATION AND GAME CYCLE
Resumen	Summary
1. Espacios	1. Spaces
2. Ventajas	2. Advantages
3. Tipos de conducta	3. Types of behaviour
4. Fases	4. Phases

To frame the high-press in the defensive phase we will use two of these tools: the spaces and the advantages.

When talking about spaces in high-press, and following the ideas of Perais (in Flash Training, 2020) and Speranza, C. (2020), we can establish three levels of intervention in each phase space:

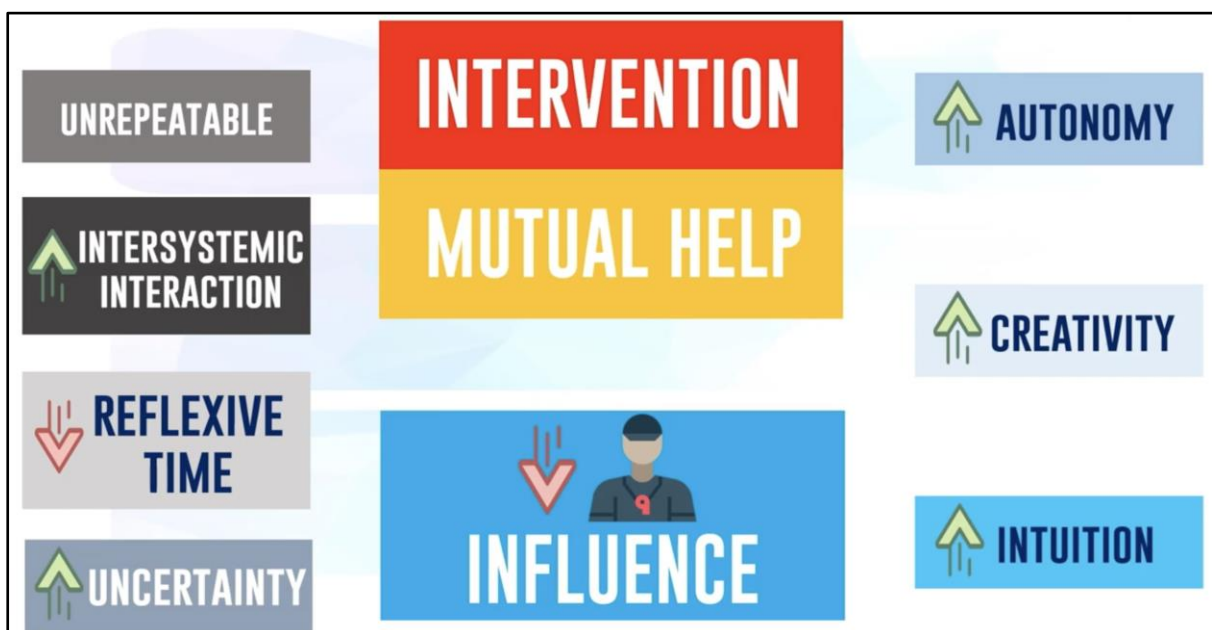
- a) The space of intervention is a game situation that is unrepeatable, since there is an extremely high level of interaction between the players who are in this space closest to the ball. Players have very little reflective time in that situation, that is, they have very little time to think, so the uncertainty is so high that players will need a lot of autonomy, creativity, and intuition to solve that unique and



unrepeatable game situation. This means that the coach has little or no influence on what happens in this space of intervention.

- b) Mutual help space is where the players close to the intervention zone are located. It has the same demands for players in this space, but to a lesser extent. Players continue to have little time for reflection in this zone next to the ball, although a little more than those found in the space of intervention, so they are not as demanded in terms of autonomy, creativity, and intuition to help solve the game situation in the way they want. The coach has a little more influence in these mutual help spaces, but it is still low.

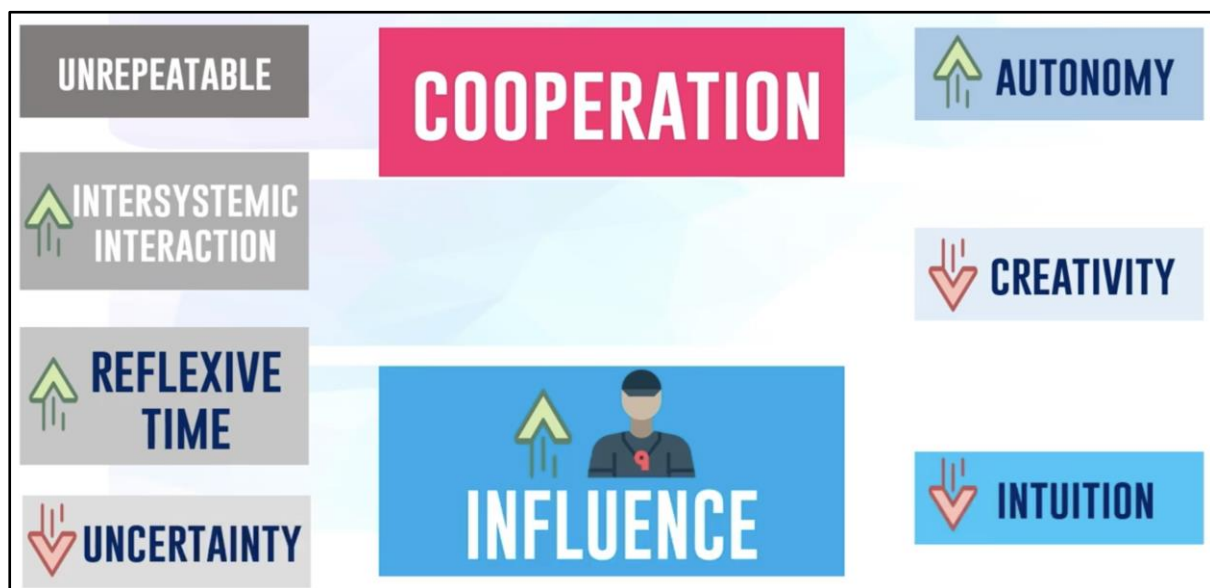
Figure 3: Space of intervention and mutual help



Source: Speranza, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3t6YDBx>

- c) Cooperation space: is where we find the players furthest from the ball, and where they have more reflective time to think, so the level of uncertainty is lower for them, and they do not need so much creativity and intuition. Here, the coach has greater influence than in the two previous spaces.

Figure 4: Cooperation space



Source: Speranza, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3t6YDBx>

For our study of high-press in the defensive phase, we will try to relate these three levels of intervention proposed with the organisation of the players who are applying pressure, depending on how close they are to the ball.

Thus, according to the classification proposed by Egurza (2018), we will talk about the following:

- a) Active zone players: those who are pressing in the space of intervention, that is, within the short range of the ball.
- b) Nearby players: those who are pressing close to the active zone, who are in the mutual help space.
- c) Far players: those players who are pressing in the cooperation space, away from range of the ball.

Figure 5: Spaces of intervention and their relationship with the players



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021)

1- ESPACIO DE INTERVENCIÓN (jugador/es en zona activa)	1- SPACE OF INTERVENTION (Active zone player(s))
2- ESPACIO DE AYUDA MUTUA (jugadores cercanos)	2- MUTUAL HELP SPACE (Nearby players)
3- ESPACIO DE COOPERACIÓN (jugadores alejados)	3- COOPERATION SPACE (Far players)

The other tool for game interpretation is the advantage. According to Peraita "they are the ability of a player or group of players to shape the phase space for the benefit of their team" (Flash Training, 2020, <https://bit.ly/20C4hN8>).

There are three types of advantages:

A) Positional advantage: when a player is better positioned or with a better body orientation in a specific phase space. For example, the defender is better positioned than the offensive player when pressing high (see figure 6).

B)

Figure 6: positional advantage

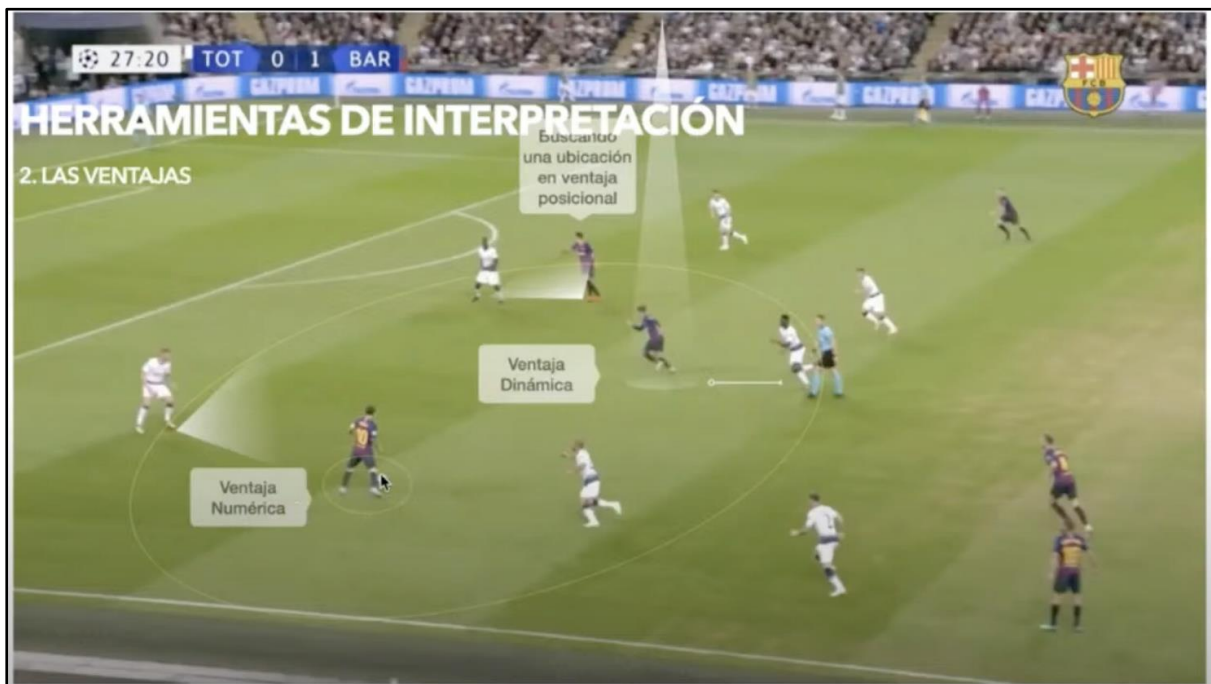


Source: Flash Training, 2020, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2OC4hN8>

HERRAMIENTAS DE INTERPRETACIÓN	TOOLS FOR INTERPRETATION
2- LAS VENTAJAS	2- ADVANTAGES
Ventaja posicional	Positional advantage

C) Numerical advantage: when there are more players from one team than from the other in certain space (intervention, mutual help, or cooperation), in a phase space.

Figure 7: Numerical advantage

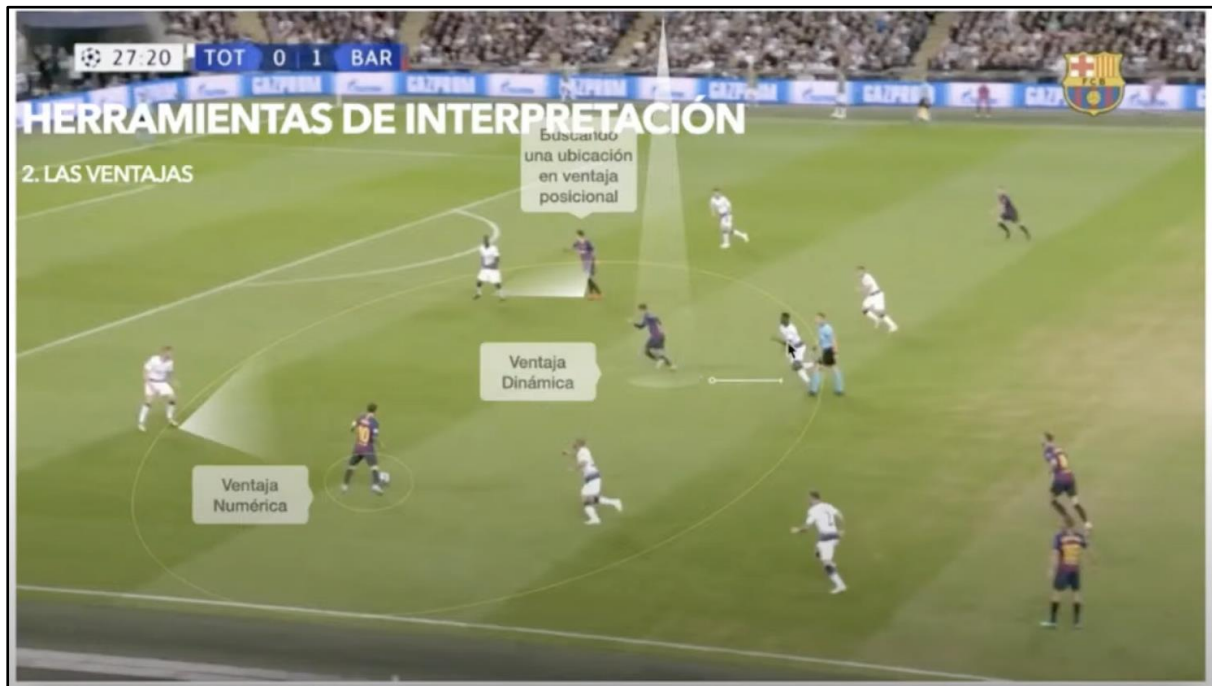


Source: Flash Training, 2020, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2OC4hN8>

HERRAMIENTAS DE INTERPRETACIÓN	TOOLS FOR INTERPRETATION
2- LAS VENTAJAS	2- ADVANTAGES
Buscando una ubicación en ventaja posicional	Looking for a place in positional advantage
Ventaja dinámica	Dynamic advantage
Ventaja numérica	Numerical advantage

D) Dynamic advantage: the advantage by which a player has an advantage over another due to their career or speed and intensity.

Figure 8: Dynamic advantage



Source: Flash Training, 2020, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2OC4hN8>

HERRAMIENTAS DE INTERPRETACIÓN	TOOLS FOR INTERPRETATION
2- LAS VENTAJAS	2- ADVANTAGES
Buscando una ubicación en ventaja posicional	Looking for a place in positional advantage
Ventaja dinámica	Dynamic advantage
Ventaja numérica	Numerical advantage

1.1.2. High-press objectives

Before we start listing the objectives that high-press pursues, we must ask ourselves why we want our team to high-press. From the answers we will get the objectives that we aim for if we choose to defend with this type of high block or high-press.

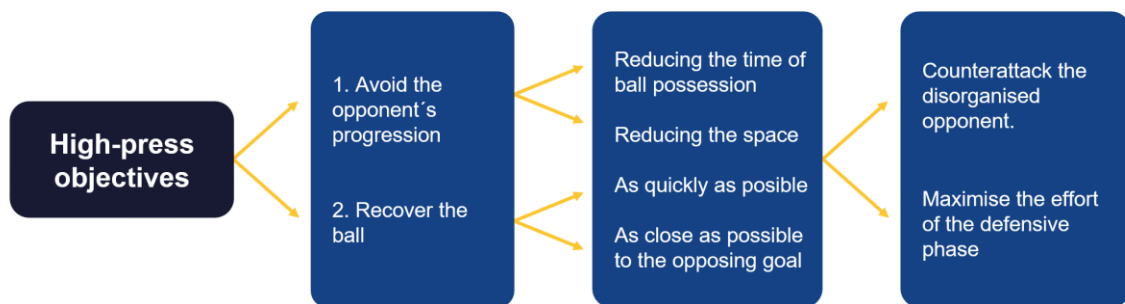
Johan Cruyff (2019) always emphasized the importance of reducing the space to defend, highlighting that space and time were two key factors to understand the offensive phase as well as the defensive one. Therefore, the reduction of time and space to the opponent is an important factor to cause errors in the decision making and the execution of the opponent's game.



As a result, we can say that in the high-press phase, our team presses on the opposing field as far as possible from our goal and as close as possible to the opposing goal, pursuing two objectives:

- 1) Prevent the advance or progression of the opposing team towards our goal, to give them less chances of scoring a goal, trying to reduce the time and space given to the opponent in possession of the ball.
- 2) Recover the ball as quickly as possible, and as close as possible to the opposing goal, to have possession of the ball to counterattack the disorganised opponent. This is so that at the time of recovery, we have more chances to score a goal and maximise the time and effort that implies being in the defensive phase.

Figure 9: High-press objectives



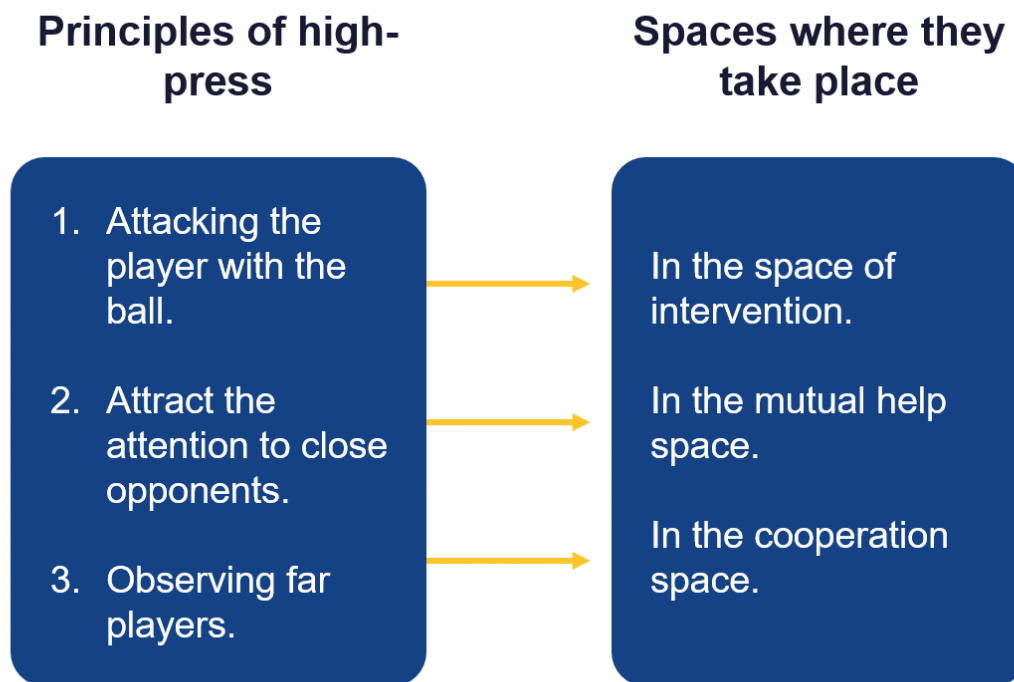
Source: Authors' own work.

1.1.3. Principles of high-press

As Moreno, R. (2013) says, there are some defensive principles that we are going to apply in high-press. We distinguish between three fundamental principles that we must comply with in any defensive action and at any time:

1. Attacking the player with the ball (in the space of intervention).
2. Defining closer opponents (in the mutual help space).
3. Observing far players (in the cooperation space).

Figure 10: Principles of high-press



Source: Authors' own work.

We are going to adapt the defensive principles exposed by Moreno (2013) to the socio-affective ideas of Seirul-lo (2004), adding the spatial framework where they are carried out:

1. Attacking the player with the ball in the space of intervention: the offensive player must recover the ball, if possible, although his/her mission is to "cause the possessor's quick decisions or oriented towards an unfavourable decision-making and execution" (Moreno, 2013, p. 191). According to the same author, to do so five requirements must be met:

1.1. Reduce the time and space of the possessor: reduce the manoeuvrability and the time for reflection of the opponent possessor in the intervention space.

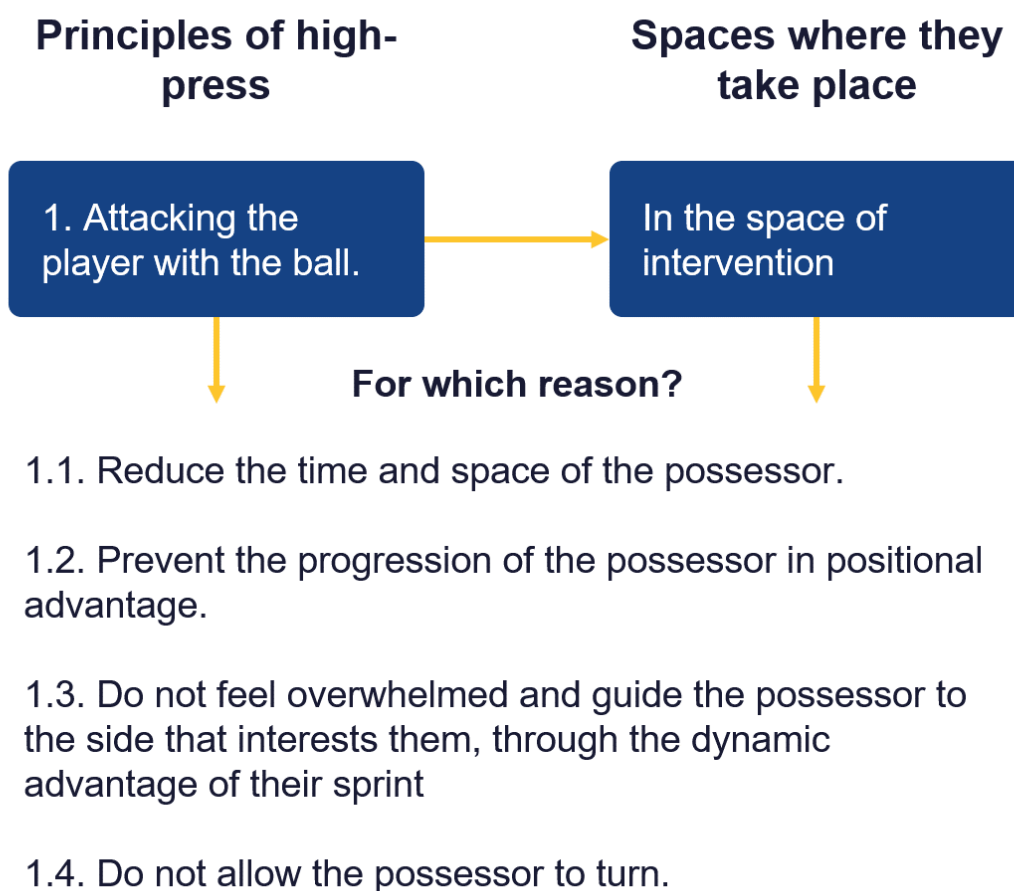
1.2. Prevent the progression of the possessor in positional advantage: not seeing themselves in a positional disadvantage, always trying to be between their goal and the possessor.

1.3. Do not feel overwhelmed and guide the possessor to the side that interests them, through the dynamic advantage of their sprint: maintain a reasonable

distance and do not go forward in the attacking movement (braking with little steps and lowering the centre of gravity, lateralizing towards where the ball possessor is intended to be).

1.4. Do not allow the possessor to turn: if the opponent receives from behind, he must not allow to the possessor to turn and confront him or her.

Figure 11: Attacking the player with the ball in the space of intervention



Source: Authors' own work.

2. Attract the attention to close opponents in the mutual help space: in the mutual help space, defenders close to the space of intervention must be careful to attract the attention to opponents without the ball, close to the possessor. Through positional,

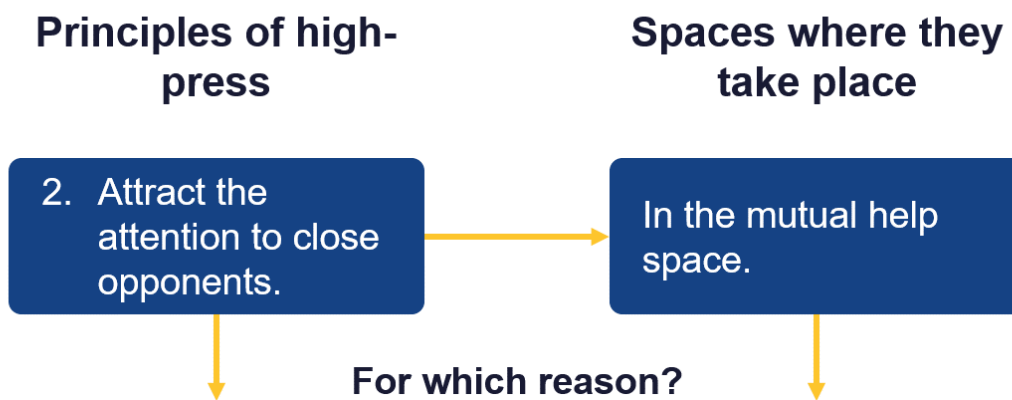


dynamic, and even numerical advantages, on specific occasions, the following must be complied with:

- 2.1.1. Anticipate: they must try to recover or steal the ball before it is received by the opponent.
- 2.1.2. Obstructing the opponent's control: challenge the opponent so that their control is unfavourable and cannot be directed.
- 2.1.3. If the opponent manages to control, do not allow the possessor to turn: if the opponent receives from behind, we should try avoiding them to turn.
- 2.1.4. Prevent progression as an offensive player in the space of intervention: if the defender manages to control or turns, he becomes an offensive player in the space of intervention, and we must follow the previously mentioned steps.



Figure 12: Attract the attention to close opponents in the mutual help space



1.1. Anticipate

1.2. Obstructing the opponent's control el control del rival.

1.3. If the opponent manages to control, do not allow the possessor to turn.

1.4. Prevent progression as an offensive player in the space of intervention.

Source: Authors' own work.

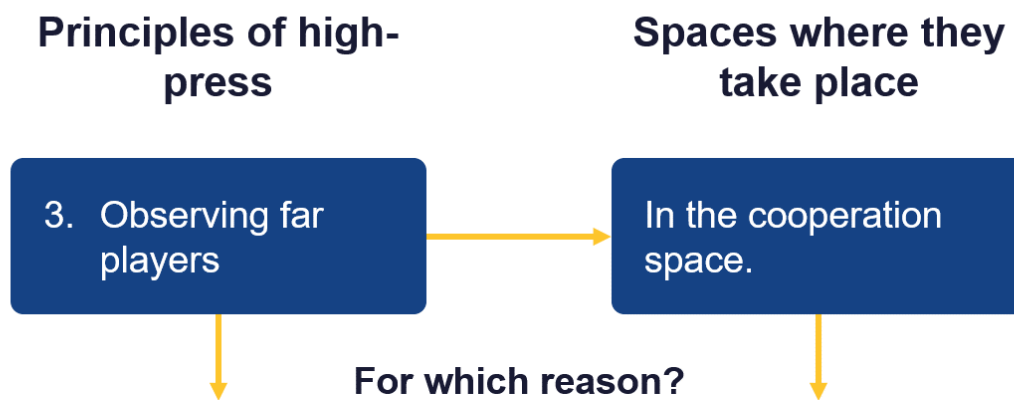
3. Observing far players in the cooperation space: those players furthest from the space of intervention, although they cannot participate in the play directly due to their proximity. We must pay close attention to them, although, to keep the defensive block compact, the defenders must move away from the opponent shuffling over towards the space of intervention and mutual help, which frees the distant opponents. However, they must do so at a safe distance that allows them to anticipate a pass or attack without risk of being beaten by a positional or dynamic, or even numerical disadvantage. For this we will need to apply the following:

3.1.1. Observing, keeping a safe distance with the far opponent, that allows the defence to anticipate or attract the opponent's attention if they give him/her a pass.

- 3.1.2. Adjust their position between the goal and the far opponent, to have the opponent and the ball in their field of view (positional advantage), shuffling over towards the space of intervention and mutual help, which frees the far opponents but keeps them observed.
- 3.1.3. Try to always be behind the ball, to be able to close external and internal corridors, and to be able to cover other teammates on the same line.



Figure 13: Observing far players in the cooperation space



1.1. Observing, keeping a safe distance with the far opponent.

1.2. Adjust their position between the goal and the far opponent.

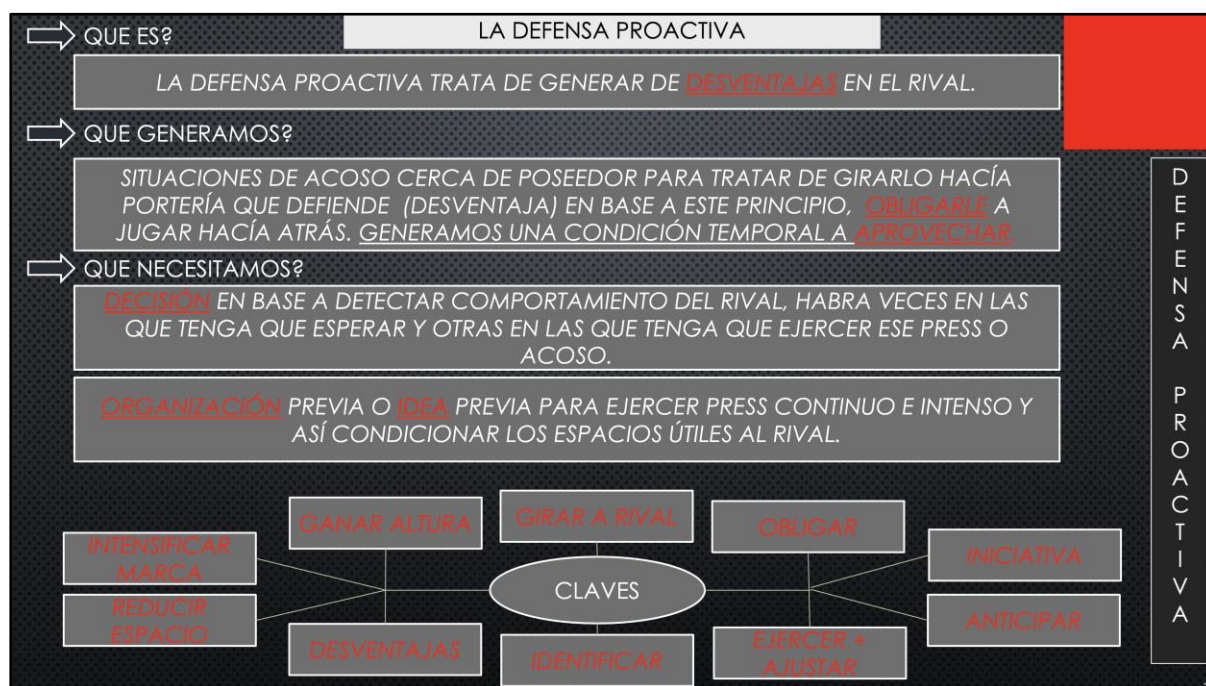
1.3. Try to always be behind the ball.

Source: Authors' own work.

1.1.4. Approach to proactive defence

We will use all these principles proactively. Egurza (in *Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol*, 2020) comments that "it is about taking the initiative in defence... trying to generate disadvantages for the opponent... generating attacking situations near the possessor to try to turn them towards the goal they defend (disadvantage)... and force them to play backwards" (<https://bit.ly/2PNAIbX>).

Figure 14: Proactive defence



Source: *Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol*, 2020, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2PNAIbX>

¿QUÉ ES?	WHAT IS IT?
LA DEFENSA PROACTIVA	PROACTIVE DEFENSE
LA DEFENSA PROACTIVA TRATA DE GENERAR DESVENTAJAS EN EL RIVAL.	PROACTIVE DEFENSE AIMS AT GENERATING DISADVANTAGES FOR THE OPPONENT.
¿QUÉ GENERAMOS?	WHAT DO WE GENERATE?
SITUACIONES DE ACOSO CERCA DE POSEEDOR PARA TRATAR DE GIRARLO HACIA PORTERÍA QUE DEFIENDE (DESVENTAJA) EN BASE A ESTE PRINCIPIO, <u>OBLIGARLE</u> A JUGAR HACIA ATRÁS. <u>GENERAMOS UNA CONDICIÓN TEMPORAL A APROVECHAR.</u>	ATTACKING SITUATIONS NEAR THE POSSESSOR TO TRY TO TURN THEM TOWARDS THE GOAL THEY DEFEND (DISADVANTAGE) AND <u>FORCE</u> THEM TO PLAY BACKWARDS. <u>WE GENERATE A TIME CONDITION TO BENEFIT FROM.</u>
¿QUÉ NECESITAMOS?	WHAT DO WE NEED?



DECISIÓN EN BASE A DETECTAR COMPORTAMIENTO DEL RIVAL, HABRÁ VECES EN LAS QUE TENGA QUE ESPERAR Y OTRAS EN LAS QUE TENGA QUE EJERCER ESE PRESS O ACOSO.	DECISION BASED ON DETECTING THE OPPONENT'S BEHAVIOUR. SOMETIMES THEY WILL HAVE TO WAIT AND SOME OTHERS THEY WILL HAVE TO ATTACK OR PRESS.
ORGANIZACIÓN PREVIA O IDEA PREVIA PARA EJERCER PRESS CONTINUO E INTENSO Y ACONDICIONAR ASÍ LOS ESPACIOS ÚTILES AL RIVAL.	PREVIOUS ORGANISATION OR IDEA FOR THAT CONTINUOUS AND INTENSE PRESS AND THUS CONDITIONING USEFUL SPACES FOR THE OPPONENT.
INTENSIFICAR MARCA	INTENSIFY MARKING
REDUCIR ESPACIO	REDUCE SPACE
GANAR ALTURA	GET MORE HEIGHT
DESVENTAJAS	DISADVANTAGES
GIRAR AL RIVAL	TURN THE OPPONENT
CLAVES	KEYS
IDENTIFICAR	IDENTIFY
OBLIGAR	FORCE
EJERCER+AJUSTAR	APPLY+ADJUST
INICIATIVA	INITIATIVE
ANTICIPAR	ANTICIPATE

This disadvantage generated to the opponent with that back pass is a dynamic advantage that the defending team has at that moment to jump to press and attack the possessor, to attract the attention of close opponents and to watch the far ones. It is a dynamic advantage because it requires speed, intensity, and group coordination to advance metres to recover in that back pass, or otherwise force the opponent's error.

Key aspects of proactive high-press

Egurza (*Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*) highlights these key aspects of high-press at the micro (player), meso (one line) and macro (of the entire team) levels



Figure 15: Key aspects of proactive press



Source: *Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2PNAIbX>

ASPECTOS DEFENSIVOS A NIVELES MICRO-MESO-MACRO	DEFENSIVE ASPECTS AT THE MICRO, MESO AND MACRO LEVELS
ASPECTOS MICRO	MICRO ASPECTS
GIRAR AL RIVAL (PARARLOS)	TURN THE OPPONENT (STOP THEM)
PARARSE Y NO PASARSE	STOP AND DO NOT GO FORWARD
INTERACCIÓN CON DEMÁS LÍNEAS	INTERACTION WITH THE OTHER LINES
PERSEGUIR O PERMANECER	CHASE OR STAY
ASPECTOS MESO	MESO ASPECTS
JUNTARSE	JOINING
CERRAR PASES POR DENTRO	CLOSE PASSES FROM INSIDE
REDUCIR ESPACIOS INTERIORES	REDUCE INTERNAL SPACES
AJUSTAR TRAS SALTO DE COMP.	ADJUST AFTER A TEAMMATE'S JUMP

ASPECTOS MACRO	MACRO ASPECTS
NO ME JUEGAN DENTRO	THEY DON'T PLAY INSIDE
INTENCIÓN COLECTIVA	COLLECTIVE INTENTION
LÍNEA DC	DC LINE
LÍNEA MC	MC LINE
LÍNEA DEFENSIVA	DEFENSIVE LINE

1) At the micro level, the player who presses in the intervention zone is presented with certain key aspects:

- a) Turn the opponent: stop the opponent, slow down the progression of the opponent with the ball to make him play backwards.
- b) Stop and do not go forward in the jump to press so as not to be overtaken with an opponent's control or cut.
- c) Interact with the other lines: check whether the rest of the lines are ready to accompany the press. If they are not, it is better not to press and get together with the rest of the team.
- d) Chase or return: once the player has done a jump to press and forced the opposing possessor to play backwards to the goalkeeper, he has 2 decisions to make:

i. Return a few metres to their ideal position in the new phase space generated with that back pass, thus closing internal spaces, and becoming a mutual help space (nearby players).

ii. Chasing the ball, jump to press to the goalkeeper, thus staying in the space of intervention, trying to recover or force the goalkeeper's error.

This last key is an adaptation of Egurza's classification (*in Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*), since he talks about chasing or staying when there is an opponent's interruption without the ball into space (to be conducted by the defensive line which is in the cooperation space).

Figure 16: To chase and stop or not to pass



Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Perseguir	Chase
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2) At a meso level, to the defensive, midfield, or striker's line, who are in the space of mutual help or cooperation (nearby and far players), the following behaviour keys are presented in high-press:

- a) Joining: reducing the spaces and time of the opposing team, accompanying the player who does the jump to press in the space of intervention, creating a short and narrow block.
- b) Close passes from inside and reduce internal spaces: nearby players to the player who did the jump to press must close internal passes, being strong inside, protecting internal spaces and guiding the opposing possessor to move to the outside corridor.
- c) Adjust after a teammate's jump: when a line teammate jumps to press and goes into a space of intervention, the rest of the line, which is in the mutual help space, adjusts their position for coverage by shuffling over and reducing spaces, to continue protecting internal spaces behind the player who has jumped, keeping the block short and narrow.

3) At a macro level, for the entire team that high-presses, the key is that the opponent plays inside and be prepared to jump to press in the wing.

Types of jumps to press

But how do we jump to press? What types of jumps to press are there for the player in the space of intervention?

According to the classification of Egurza (*in Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*), jumps to press are defined as an attack to the opposing possessor. He defines them as an “individual defensive behaviour to change the possessor’s intention” (Egurza, *Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*, <https://bit.ly/2PNAIbX>), and determines six types of jumps:

Figure 17: Types of jumps to press

SALTAR (EJERCER PRESS)	
⇒ QUE ES?	COMPORTAMIENTO DEFENSIVO INDIVIDUAL CON EL FIN DE CAMBIAR LA INTENCIÓN DE POSEEDOR.
⇒ QUE TIPOS DE SALTOS HAY?	
SALTO PARA ACOSAR	INTENCIÓN DE GIRAR A RIVAL HACÍA PORTERIA QUE NO ATACA, GENERAR UNA DESVENTAJA.
SALTO PARA ANTICIPAR	INTENCIÓN DE CORTAR PASE Y/O DE RECUPERAR EL BALÓN.
SALTO CON EL QUE ROMPE	INTENCIÓN DE QUE NO ME SUPEREN CON EL JUGADOR QUE ESTA EN RUPTURA.
SALTO CON TRAYECTORIA DE PASE	INTENCIÓN DE CREAR OPOSICIÓN BENEFICIANDOME DE UNA TRAYECTORIA O SECUENCIA DE PASES.
ULTIMO NO SALTA A PENULTIMO	EN UNA SITUACIÓN DE 2V1 RESPECTO A BANDA NO SALTO ANTE EL RIESGO DE DEJAR LIBRE A ÚLTIMO JUGADOR. (MIKEL ETXARRI)
SALTO ANTE JUGADOR EN DESVENTAJA	INTENCIÓN DE RECUPERAR ANTE SITUACIÓN DESFAVORABLE (MAL PASE, MAL CONTROL,...) IDENTIFICO QUE PUEDO RECUPERAR.

Source: *Coaching fútbol - Ejercicios y tácticas de fútbol, 2020*, retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2PNAIbX>

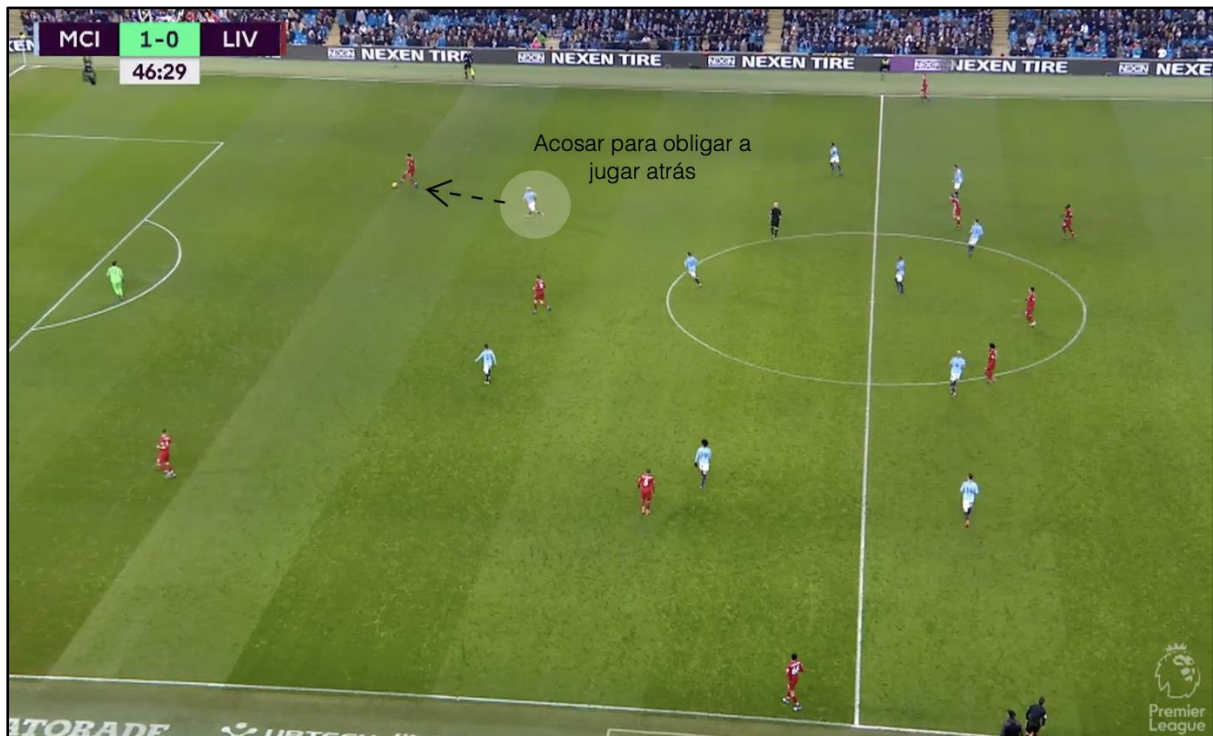
SALTAR (EJERCER PRESS)	JUMP (PRESS)
QUÉ ES?	WHAT IS IT?

COMPORTAMIENTO DEFENSIVO INDIVIDUAL CON EL FIN DE CAMBIAR LA INTENCIÓN DEL POSEEDOR	INDIVIDUAL DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR TO CHANGE THE POSSESSOR'S INTENTION
QUÉ TIPOS DE SALTO HAY?	WHAT TYPES OF JUMPS ARE THERE?
SALTO PARA ACOSAR	JUMP TO ATTACK
INTENCIÓN DE GIRAR A RIVAL HACIA PORTERÍA QUE NO ATACA, GENERAR UNA DESVENTAJA.	INTENTION TO TURN THE OPPONENT TOWARDS THE GOAL, WHO DOES NOT ATTACK, GENERATE A DISADVANTAGE.
SALTO PARA ANTICIPAR	JUMP TO ANTICIPATE
INTENCIÓN DE CORTAR PASE Y/O DE RECUPERAR EL BALÓN	INTENTION TO CUT THE PASS AND/OR RECOVER THE BALL
SALTO CON EL QUE ROMPE	JUMP TO BREAK
INTENCIÓN DE QUE NO ME SUPEREN CON EL JUGADOR QUE ESTA EN RUPTURA	INTENTION NOT TO BE BEATEN BY THE PLAYER IN A LONG BALL SITUATION
SALTO CON TRAYECTORIA DE PASE	JUMP WITH PASS TRAJECTORY
INTENCIÓN DE CREAR OPOSICIÓN BENEFICIÁNDOSE DE UNA TRAYECTORIA O SECUENCIA DE PASES	INTENTION TO CREATE OPOSITION BY BENEFITING FROM A TRAJECTORY OR PASS SEQUENCE
ÚLTIMO NO SALTA A PENULTIMO	LAST PLAYER DOES NOT JUMP TO PRESSING TO THE NON-ASSIGNED MARK
EN UNA SITUACIÓN DE 2V1 RESPECTO A BANDA NO SALTO ANTE EL RIESGO DE DEJAR LIBRE AL ÚLTIMO JUGADOR (MIKEL ETXARRI)	IN A 2V1 SITUATION IN RELATION TO THE WING, DO NOT JUMP TO AVOID LETTING THE LAST PLAYER FREE (MIKEL ETXARRI)
SALTO ANTE JUGADOR EN DESVENTAJA	JUMP TOWARDS A DISADVANTAGED PLAYER
INTENCIÓN DE RECUPERAR ANTE SITUACIÓN DESFAVORABLE (MAL PASE, MAL CONTROL, ...) IDENTIFICO QUE PUEDO RECUPERAR	INTENTION TO RECOVER THE BALL IN AN UNFAVOURABLE SITUATION (BASS PASS, BAD CONTROL, ETC.) I REALISE THAT I CAN RECOVER THE BALL



1) Jump to attack: it is important to stop slowing down at the right time, that is, as the player approaches the receiver he must slow down with little steps while lowering the centre of gravity, so that they are not beaten by control or a cut and to force the possessor to turn and play backwards.

Figure 18: Jump to attack

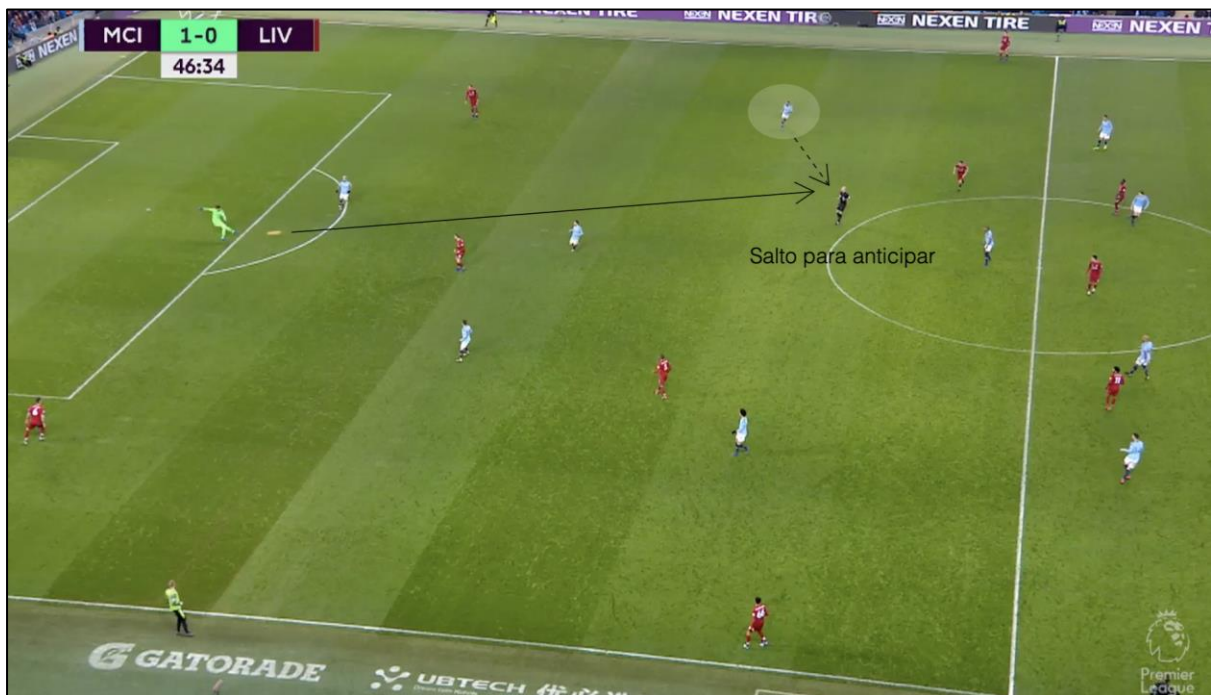


Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Acosar para obligar a jugar atrás	Attack to force playing backwards
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2) Jump to anticipate: the jump to press in which the player sees that the receiver is at a positional disadvantage as regards their threatening position (because the pass is not very precise or does not go at the appropriate speed) and they can intercept it before the ball reaches the receiver.

Figure 19: Jump to anticipate

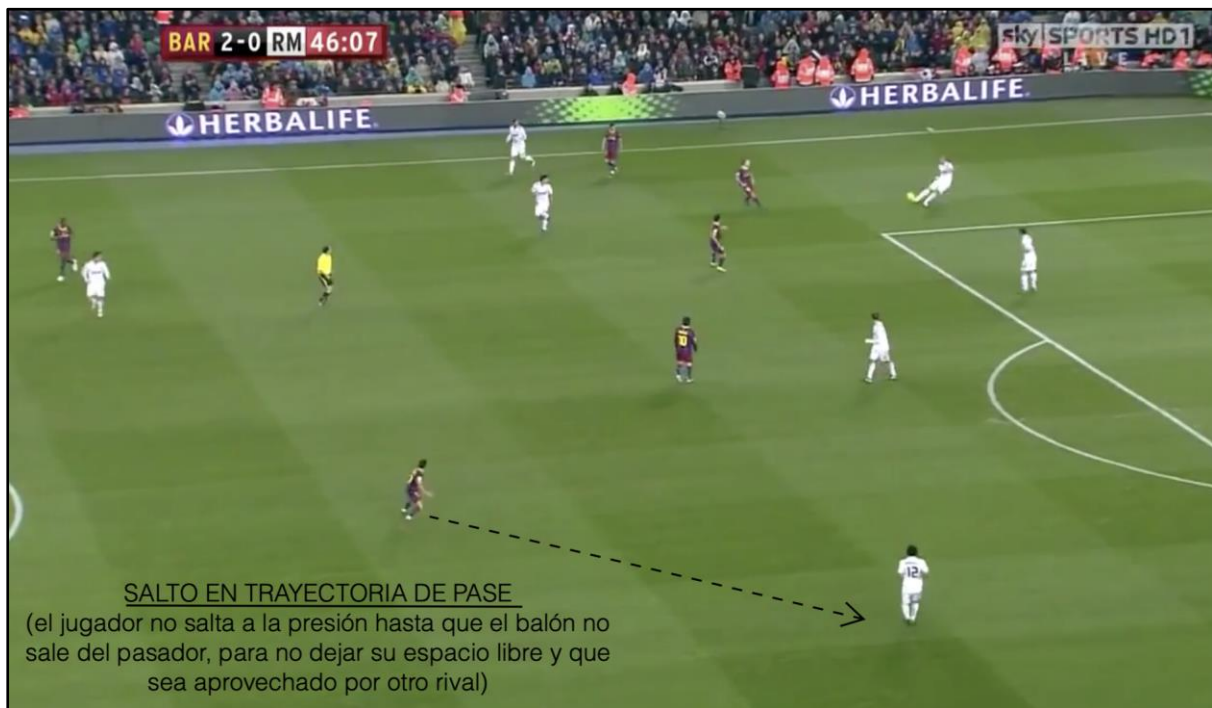


Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Salto para anticipar	Jump to anticipate
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3) Jump with pass trajectory: this type of jump is used, above all, by players who are in intermediate positions and who “attack” horizontal and diagonal passes (game changes, etc.). The player who does the jump to press while the ball is moving towards the receiver, trying not to jump before the ball leaves the player who passed it, so as not to leave spaces behind him/her that an opponent can take advantage of to receive between lines (see figure 20).

Figure 20: Jump with pass trajectory



Source: Adaptation edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021) from a screenshot of Football Match, 2015, <https://bit.ly/30w4Lah>

SALTO EN TRAYECTORIA DE PASE	JUMP WITH PASS TRAJECTORY
(el jugador no salta a la presión hasta que el balón no sale del pasador, para no dejar su espacio libre y que sea aprovechado por otro rival)	(The player does not jump to press until the ball leaves the player who passed it, so as not to leave spaces behind him/her that an opponent can take advantage of)

4) Jump towards a disadvantaged player: the player starts the jump to press when he identifies a pass in which the receiver may have problems controlling (because the pass is too fast, high, or imprecise) or because the player who does the jump to press has a dynamic advantage (at an intensity good enough to steal).

Figure 21: Jump towards a disadvantaged player



Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

SALTO A JUGADOR EN DESVENTAJA	JUMP TOWARDS A DISADVANTAGED PLAYER
Jugador en desventaja (dependiendo de la dirección del pase, velocidad, etc.)	Disadvantaged player (depending on the pass direction, speed, etc.)
Ventaja dinámica en la presión	Dynamic advantage in the press

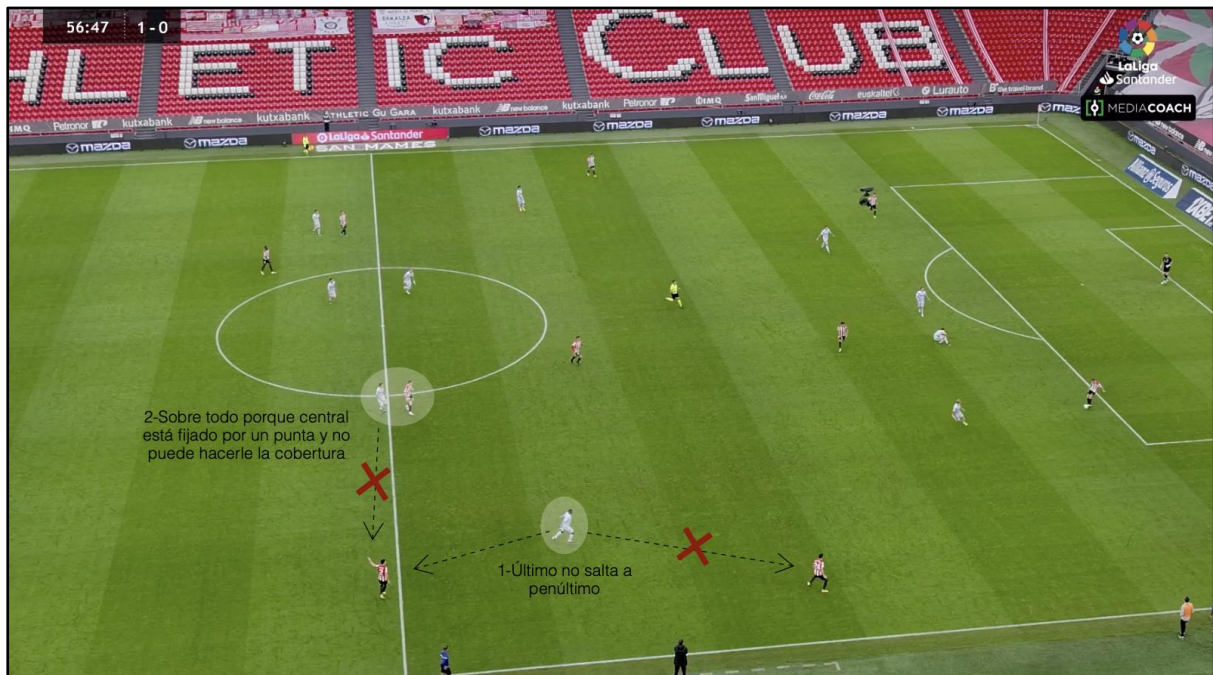
5) Last player does not jump to pressing to the non-assigned mark (this type of jump especially happens with players on the defensive line): if a player on the defensive line has an opponent without the ball in their zone (next to them) and observes that there is a pass to another close opponent who does not have a defender nearby, it is advisable NOT to jump to press.

This is because there is an extremely high risk that, in case of not anticipating or not being able to force the receiver to play backwards, he will be able to pass the opponent who is free with the jump, and that the opponent can beat in this way the entire defensive block.

The most advisable thing is to temporize and hold the position, waiting for a teammate to help solve that 1 against 2 disadvantages in which he is.

Jumping to press should only be assessed in case of identifying a bad pass and when there is an extremely high percentage of intercepting or anticipating the pass.

Figure 22: Type of jump: last player does not jump to pressing to the non-assigned mark



Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

1- Último no salta a penúltimo	1- Last player does not jump to pressing to the non-assigned mark
2- Sobre todo porque central está fijado por un punta y no puede hacerle la cobertura	2- Especially since the centre-back attracts the attention of a striker and is not able to do the coverage

1.1.5. Situations of high-press in the opposing field

When we talk about high-press or high block, there are several situations in the game in which they can take place. “The first thing we will have to differentiate is whether the ball is in play, or it starts with a set piece action” (Moreno, 2013, p.196).

We should also add the counterpressure, which also implies high-press in the opposing field, but with different conditions in terms of positioning, because at the time of the loss of the ball possession our team was attacking.

Table 1: High-press situations

Phases of the game	Types of high-press in the opposing field	Situations of high-press in the opposing field
Defensive phase.	1. High-press to set pieces.	H.P. (high-press) in the goal kick. H.P. on the indirect free kick. H.P. in the throw-in. H.P. in the kick-off.
	2. High-press with the ball in play.	H.P. or high-press in the opponent's game start zone.
Attack - defence transition.	3. Counterpressure (CP).	CP or counterpressure.

Source: Authors' own work.

1) High-press in set piece-situations

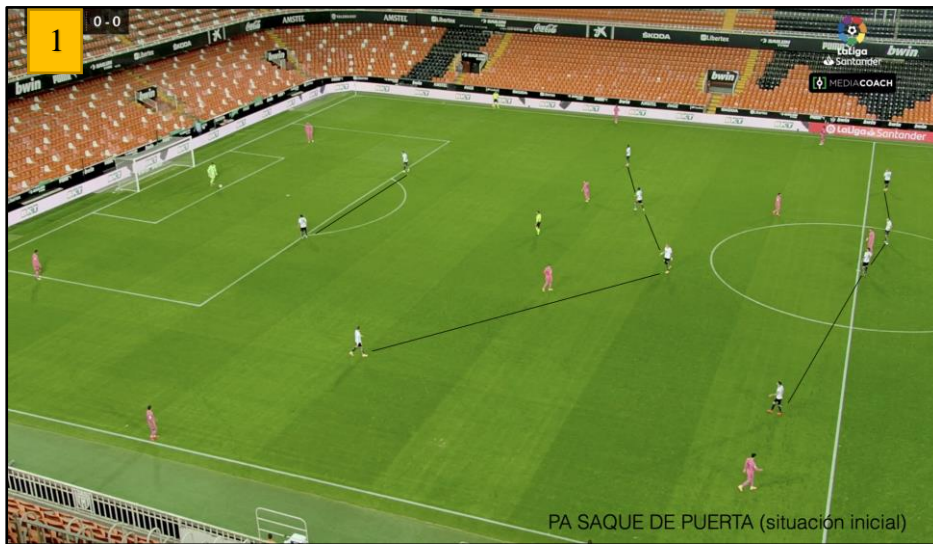
- a) High-press on a goal kick: It is a set-piece situation and, as such, we must treat it as a situation that we can prepare to develop in a certain way (we can carry out a strategy). As coaches, we will have to make decisions such as the following:
 - i. The type of defence we want to carry out (zone with players between offensive lines, or man-to-man marking).
 - ii. With how many players do we want to press on each line (we can press with one, two or three players on the front line).
 - iii. Where we want them to give the first pass (we can deliberately leave an opponent free to start the press mechanism when he receives the ball).

Once the opponent starts the game with their first pass, all our defensive press movements will be triggered, for which, broadly speaking and paraphrasing Moreno (2013),



we will have to determine some marks to force the type of pass that interests us and from there abandon the weak side (that is, the opposite side of the one from which the opponent's attack begins) and press hard on the ball and possible close receivers (Moreno, 2013, p.196).

Figure 23: Sequence of high-press in a goal kick



PA SAQUE DE PUERTA (situación inicial)	HP IN A GOAL KICK (initial situation)
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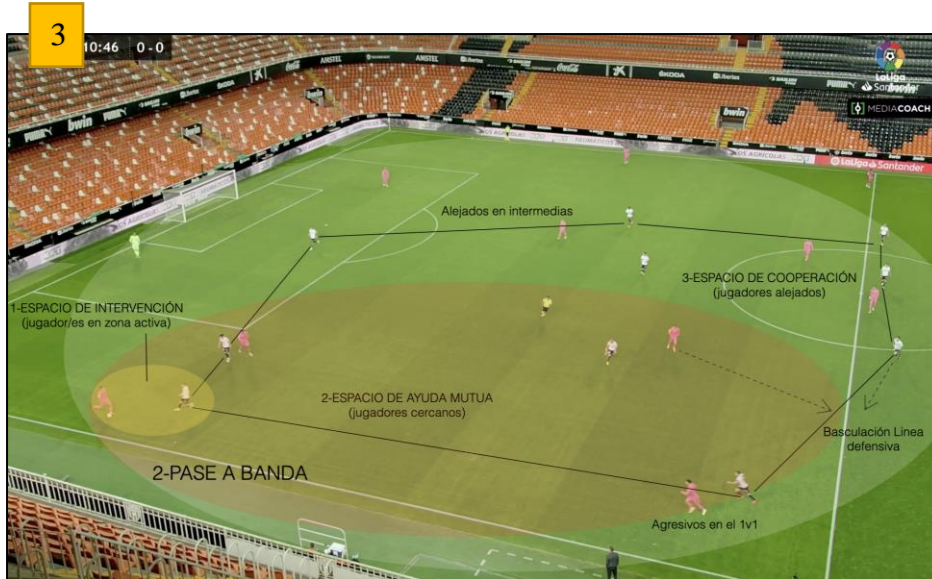


Orientar presión a banda	1-Direct press to the wing
Basculación de alejados	2- Shuffling over of far players



PASE DE PORTERO A CENTRAL

PASS FROM GOALKEEPER TO CENTRE-BACK



1- ESPACIO DE INTERVENCIÓN (jugador/es en zona activa)	1- SPACE OF INTERVENTION (player(s) in active zone)
2- ESPACIO DE AYUDA MUTUA (jugadores cercanos)	2- MUTUAL HELP SPACE (close players)
3- ESPACIO DE COOPERACIÓN (jugadores alejados)	3- COOPERATION SPACE (far players)
Alejados en intermedias	Far players in intermediate positions
Basculación línea defensiva	Shuffling over of defensive line
Agresivos en el 1v1	Aggressive in 1v1
2-PASE A BANDA	2-PASS TO THE WING

Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

When talking about facing structures in the next module, we will see various possibilities on press-strategies and mechanisms from different defensive systems and various offensive systems.

- b) High-press on an indirect free kick (free kick or offside): It is a different high-press situation because the offside rule comes into play from midfield, so, depending on the point from where the game starts, there is less space to defend (at the edge of the area, for example). The decisions to be made will basically be the same as in a goal kick, although the conditions are minor (for example, the opposing team cannot stretch the defending team by advancing their strikers beyond the midfield, because they would be offside).
- c) High-press in the throw-in: another set-piece situation in which high-press can be used, and in which, if the player manages to recover, he has many options to counterattack, as they are close to the opposing goal and the open opponent team. Generally, the 1-4-4-2 or 1-4-3-3 systems adopt a 1-4-2-3-1 structure to better press in this press situation in the corridor, giving the following functions to their players:
- i. The remote winger is in an intermediate position, to cover the build-up play with a far centre-back and full-back in case of change of direction, or a long kick to the second centre-back.
 - ii. The striker is positioned high to cover the build-up play with the first centre-back to prevent them from conceding to the goalkeeper or changing orientation easily.
 - iii. The attacking midfielder (delaying one of the two strikers at 1-4-4-2 or advancing to an inside forward at 1-4-3-3) oversees covering the closest and horizontal build-up play with the kicker. This is so, to prevent the opposing pivot from participating by changing orientation, returning to the kicker, or clearing as a first option to change the pressing to the opponent field.
 - iv. One of the two pivots jumps following the opposing midfielder or striker who comes in support, preventing him/her from returning to the kicker or changing orientation.
 - v. The close midfielder (or the winger in case of the 1-4-3-3 system) has the function of pressing the kicker in a return, or following him/her without being beaten, in case they try to detach after kicking.
 - vi. The full-back oversees marking the midfielder or opponent winger who comes in support, shuffling over the rest of the defensive line towards the wing where the throw-in takes place, marking the centre-backs to the strikers or opponent striker and the far full-back. Thus, shuffling over the interior corridor, and observing the winger or far midfielder, who remains open to receive a possible change of orientation.



Figure 24: High-press in the throw-in



Source: Image adaptation taken from DVMS Premier League and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

PRESIÓN ALTA EN SAQUE DE BANDA ESTRUCTURA EN 14231	HIGH PRESS IN THROW-IN STRUCTURE IN 14231
Intermedias	Intermediate
Intermedias centrales	Central intermediate
Con sacador	With a kicker

- d) High-press in a kick-off: you can also have a strategy with press-mechanisms to force the opponent to play backwards to try any of the following:
- i. Prevent the opponent to do a long kick to look for any set piece action they may have (normally, centre-backs are the ones who kick).
 - ii. Recover when the opponent is going to do a long kick or tries to play with a closer teammate.

- iii. Forcing the possessor to play backwards and the ball to end up in the opposing goalkeeper, to be able to put the block in the opposite field, including the defensive line.

Figure 25: High-press in a kick-off



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

PRESIÓN EN SAQUE DE CENTRO	PRESS IN A kick-off
SALTO PARA ACOSAR en ventaja dinámica	JUMP TO ATTACK in dynamic advantage

2) High-press with the ball in play: high-press in the opponent's start of play zone

If the ball is in play, we refer to high-press with the advanced block in the opponent's start of play zone.

When the opponent is in possession of the ball in an organised way, in its initial phase, "from an advanced position we will have to establish some shuffle over and some **moments of press start** depending on what was previously planned" (Moreno, 2013, p.196).

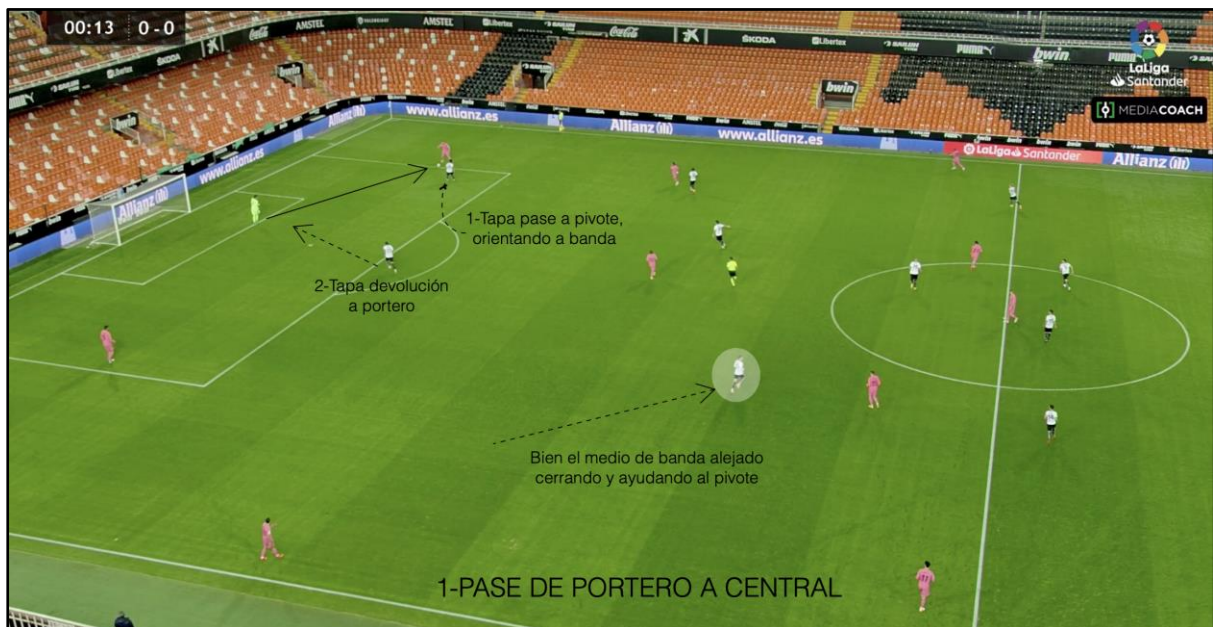
But what are these press-start moments?

- i) The pass between the goalkeeper and centre-backs: this is one of the moments that we can use as a trigger for our high-press.

As we have previously said, in the strategy to be followed in the goal kick, through the adequate study and analysis of the opponent, we can set which centre-back we want to be the receiver of the goalkeeper's pass (depending on their ability for the build-up play). Thus, with the proper positioning and attacking movement of our strikers, we can direct the press and cause the receiver to be the centre-back with lower ability for the build-up play.

Another option is with the centre-back who has the least intervention and incidence on the build-up play of that team. In this way, an attempt is made to break the opponent's most efficient and common pass chains, to make them feel uncomfortable and be able to recover the ball close to their goal, cause the opponent's error or, at least, direct the press towards the wing. Here is where the situation is even more advantageous to apply pressure due to the limitation of space along the sidelines.

Figure 26: Moment of press-start: pass from goalkeeper to centre-back



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

1- Tapa pase a pivote, orientando a banda	1-Covers pass to the pivot, directing to the wing
2- Tapa devolución a portero	2- Covers return to the goalkeeper
Bien el medio de banda alejado cerrando y ayudando al pivote	Good for the far midfielder who closes and helps the pivot

1- PASE DE PORTERO A CENTRAL	1- PASS FROM THE GOALKEEPER TO THE CENTRE-BACK
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In this high-press situation, each line of our team has a role and a responsibility:

- **The forward line:** The strikers (first press line) will oversee starting the press in the space of intervention. "They should attack the ball possessor, but they are not responsible for the recovery. Its objective is that the passes made by the centre-backs, or the goalkeeper go towards where we want, in a forced way" (Moreno, 2013, p.198).
- **The line of midfielders:** The players of the second press line will be those who participate closely in the mutual help space (the closest players) and in the cooperation space (those far players).

[Midfielders] must be the true retrievers of the ball through anticipation or ball recovery. They must oversee shuffling over and approaching the possible receivers, so that, when there is a pass from one of the centre-backs or the goalkeeper, they can change the rhythm and try to anticipate. (Moreno, 2013, p.198).

- **The defensive line:** The defenders (third press line) are the ones who keep the block short, advancing the line to midfield, knowing that the space they leave behind is the weak point of the high-press situation.

ii) The sideline pass: this sideline pass (normally, from a centre-back or from the goalkeeper to the full-back) should be the destination of our press. It is an advantageous situation for our press, since the touch line greatly limits the opponent's pass options. "The block must shuffle over towards that side to leave a weak side in the opposite wing and isolate the opponent team in that zone, that allows us to have superiority near the ball" (Moreno, 2013, p.199). That is the ideal place to press the most, squeeze the opponent and recovering the ball or forcing the error in the opponent's pass.

In this high-press situation, each line of our team has a role and a responsibility:

- **The forward line:** The strikers (first press line) will oversee starting the press in the space of intervention.



The close player must cover the possible security pass with the close centre-back. The far player will shuffle over and will be placed in intermediate positions that allow him/her to help in case of a backward pass or a horizontal pass by the possessor. (Moreno, 2013, p.199).

- **The line of midfielders:** The players of the second press line will be those who participate closely in the mutual help space (the closest players) and in the cooperation space (those far players).

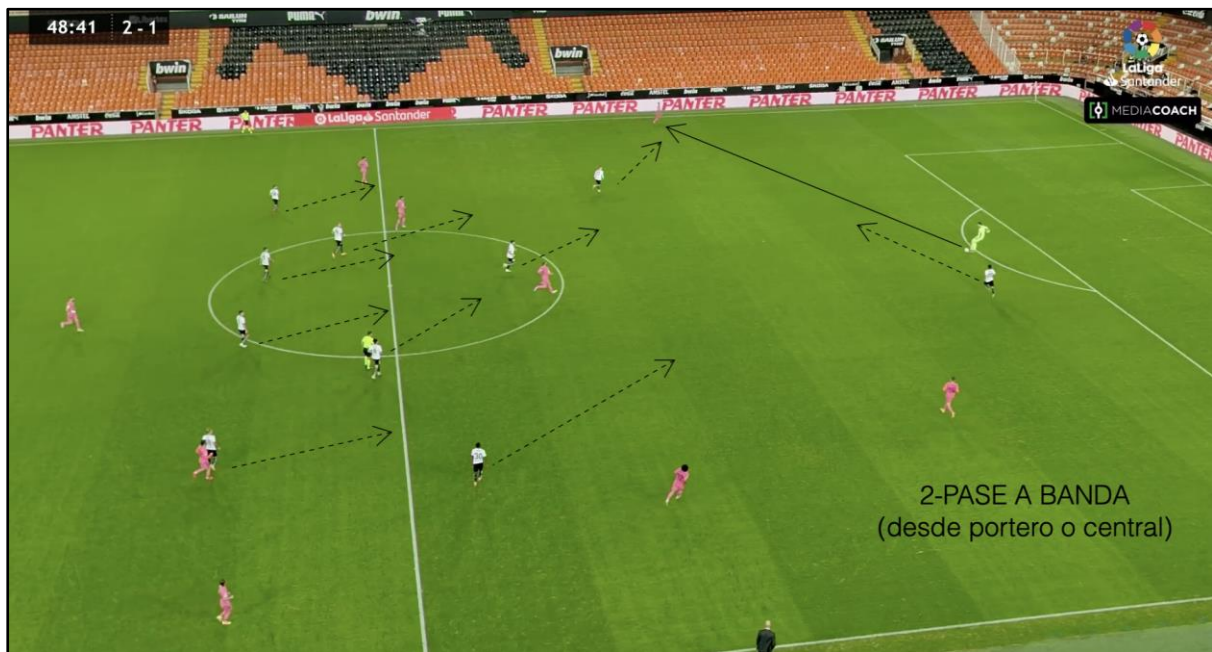
The winger will oversee "attacking" the receiver looking for anticipation or ball recovery. The rest of the line will shuffle over, trying to attract the possible nearby receivers' attention. The far midfielder will be the one that will shuffle over without attracting the player's attention and placing themselves in intermediate positions to be alert to possible help or coverage to their teammates. (Moreno, 2013, p.199).

- **The defensive line:** The defenders (third press line) are the ones who keep the block short, advancing the line to midfield, knowing that the space they leave behind is the weak point of the high-press situation.

As with the line of midfielders, they will attract the attention of possible nearby receivers and shuffle over onto the side of the ball. The far players will carry out defensive vigilance tasks to avoid possible passes to the back of their line or direct changes of orientation. (Moreno, 2013, p.199).



Figure 27: Moment of press-start: pass to the wing



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

2- PASE A BANDA (desde portero o central)	2- PASS TO THE WING (from goalkeeper or centre-back)
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Behaviour of the defensive line depending on the level of press to the possessor

The components of the defensive line must be very attentive to the conditions that can occur in this press on the wing, since they will not act in the same way if the possessor is properly pressed than if he has received the ball without press and is able to perform a backward pass:

- 1) If the ball is properly pressed:
 - a. The defenders will advance metres to reduce the spaces, shuffling over towards the space of intervention or active zone, with the aim of keeping the defensive block together and narrow.
 - b. The full-back jumps with the opponent winger or midfielder in support (in the mutual help space).

c. The rest of the defensive line (the first and second centre-back, in addition to the far full-back) will shuffle over and hold the height of the line that marks the first active zone centre-back (where the ball is being pressed).

d. They will do it being well positioned, attracting the opponent strikers 'attention, and closing internal corridors, prepared for any of these 2 options:

i. Running to a pass behind them.

ii. Jump to anticipate a pass between the lines or towards an opponent striker in support.

“Their function is to bring the team together and attract the attention to the solutions far from the possessors. Possible receptions between the lines of the opponents... and possible passes in depth behind us” (Moreno, 2013, p.199).

Figure 28: Defensive line in the opposing field joining in front of the pressed ball



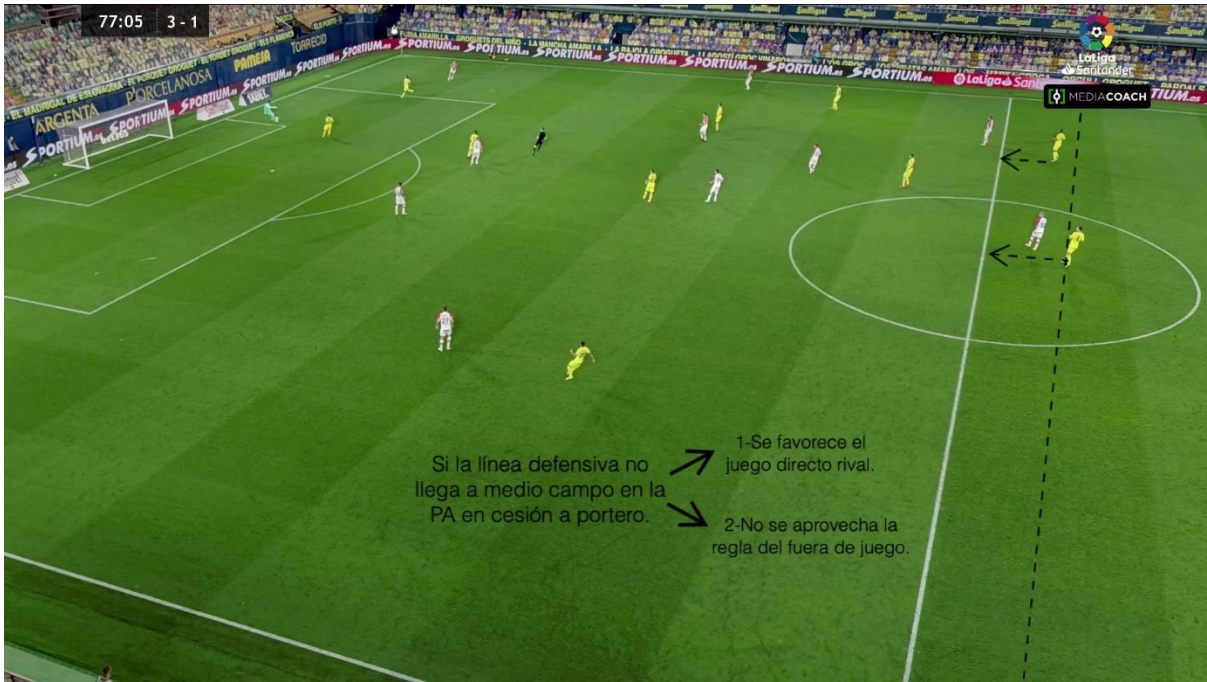
Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Línea defensiva a medio campo

Defensive line in midfield

BUEN BLOQUE CORTO Y ESTRECHO con balón presionado en cesión a portero	GOOD SHORT AND NARROW BLOCK with pressed ball when it is played with the goalkeeper
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Figure 29: Defensive line does not join the team in the opposing field in front of the pressed possessor



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Si la línea defensiva no llega a medio campo en la PA en cesión al portero	If the defensive line does not get to the midfield in the HP when the ball is played with the goalkeeper
1- Se favorece el juego directo rival.	1- The opponent's direct play is favoured.
2- No se aprovecha la regla del fuera de juego.	2- The offside rule is not taken advantage of.

- 2) If the ball is NOT properly pressed:
 - a. The defenders will shuffle over towards the space of intervention, to attract the attention of the opposing strikers and close internal corridors, but they will not



advance more metres trying to reduce the spaces, as the receiver is able to raise his head and make a backward pass of our defensive line.

- b. The moment the defensive line detects this situation of no press on the possessor, it will prepare to run to that possible pass behind him. It is recommended not to stand still in the offside.

Figure 30: The defensive line is not prepared to run behind their back in front of a NOT pressed possessor



Source: Image adaptation taken from Mediacoach and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Poseedor no presionado correctamente.	Possessor not pressed correctly.
La línea defensiva no puede mantener altura y estar sin perfilar ante poseedor no presionado.	The defensive line cannot keep the height and be unprepared in front of a non-pressed possessor.

3) The counterpressure (CP)

The counterpressure is not a high-press before an organised build-up play by the opponent in their initial phase. But as press in the opposing field, we must consider it as a type of high-press in which the players start from a different position, since they are attacking the opponent (offensive phase of the game).



This type of high-press is in the offensive phase of the game and implies a moment of continuity in front of the loss of ball possession, in which players must change from a totally open and offensive mentality and positioning to a totally closed and defensive mentality and positioning. We will call this a "chip swap."

Figure 31: The counterpressure in the game cycle



Fig.6.1- Ciclo de juego.



Source: Moreno, 2013, p. 218.

Transición/ ataque/ defensa	Transition/attack/defence
Fase ofensiva	Offensive phase
Fase defensiva	Defensive phase
Transición/ defensa/ ataque	Transition/defence/attack
Fig. 6.1 Ciclo de juego	Fig. 6.1. Game cycle
Pérdida del balón	Loss of ball possession
Momento de continuidad para...	Moment of continuity for...



Repliegue	Return to defensive shape
Presión	Press

The moment of defensive transition implies one of the greatest risks for our team. At that moment of the game, the organisation and disposition in the field of our team has an offensive purpose, and that disposition can cause problems in the defence due to the occupation of the space that we present, if we do not swap the chip quickly. (Moreno, 2013, p.219).


It is a situation of press that requires a very high volitional capacity of the entire team. It is very easy to convince all the players to do it because the prize is very large (recovering in the opposite field, near the goal and with the disorganised opponent trying to start a counterattack), but very difficult and complicated to carry out. A caught single player out of possession ahead of the ball, who does not fulfil the collective commitment to react to the loss with an explosive and intense effort towards the opposing possessor and close opponents, will not have the expected effect and will lead to consequences totally contrary to those expected (surely, it will end in an opponent's counterattack).

In addition, it is very difficult to establish a pattern of action for each loss of the ball possession situation, basically, because it's not possible to have two exactly equal situations.

Figure 32: Conditions of counterpressure (CP)

No siempre se deberá presionar ni siempre deberemos hacerlo de la misma manera porque, nunca habrá dos situaciones idénticas por lo que, los comportamientos deberán cambiar en base a los contextos del momento.

Dependerá, entre otras cosas de



- Zona del campo en que se produzca la pérdida
- Línea en la que se produzca la pérdida
- Carril en el que se produzca la pérdida
- Compañeros que queden por detrás del balón
- Capacidad de crear superioridades o igualdades numéricas
- ¿Posicionalmente superiores o inferiores?

Source: Screenshot from Aturiac, 2016, <https://bit.ly/3l9LwN3>

No siempre se deberá presionar ni siempre deberemos hacerlo de la misma manera porque, nunca habrá dos situaciones idénticas, por lo que, los comportamientos deberán cambiar en base a los contextos del momento.	Press must not always be applied nor do it in the same way, as they will never be two identical situations, so behaviours must change according to the contexts of the moment.
Dependerá, entre otras cosas de	It will depend, among other things on
Zona del campo en que se produzca la pérdida	Field zone where the loss takes place
Línea en la que se produzca la pérdida	Line where the loss takes place
Carril en el que se produzca la pérdida	Corridor where the loss takes place
Compañeros que queden detrás del balón	Teammates behind the ball
Capacidad de crear superioridades o igualdades numéricas	Ability to create numerical superiority or equality
¿Posicionalmente superiores o inferiores?	¿Positionally superior or inferior?

Therefore, what must be done is to try to establish a general basis for action, and then try to adapt to a series of **conditioning factors**, reacting in one way or another based on the following:

- a) Area of the field and corridor where the loss occurs (in the central corridor or in one of the external corridors of the opposing field).
- b) Line on which the loss occurs (forward line, line of midfielders or defensive line).
- c) Number of teammates behind the ball.
- d) Ability to generate numerical superiorities or equalities around the opponent ball possessor, right after the loss.

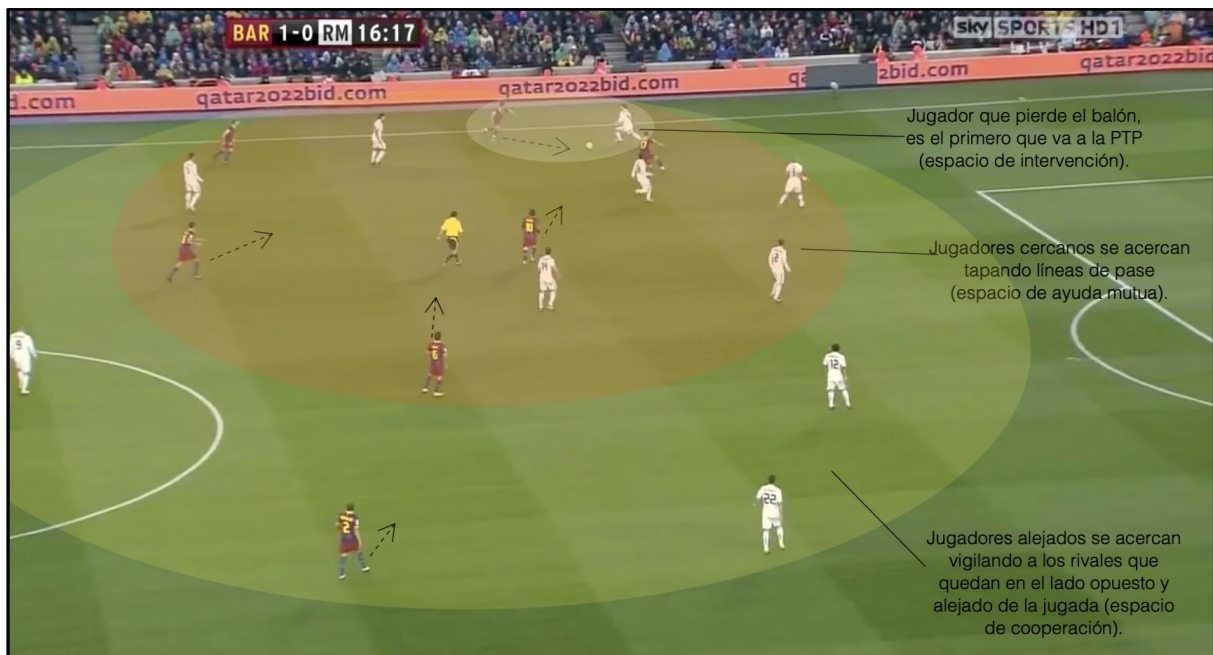
Counterpressure behaviour at the wing

Considering these conditions, depending on the area of the field where the loss of ball possession occurs and the number of players close to the ball at that time, we can act in one way or another.



If the loss occurs at the touchline, the team must try to “corner” the opponent by taking advantage of the touchline. To do this, the player who has lost ball possession will try to be the first to attack. This will allow time for those close players to get closer and thus reduce the possessor’s pass options, and those far players to get closer as well, watching the far opponents.

Figure 33: Counterpressure in external corridor



Source: Screenshot adaptation from Football Match, 2015. Image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

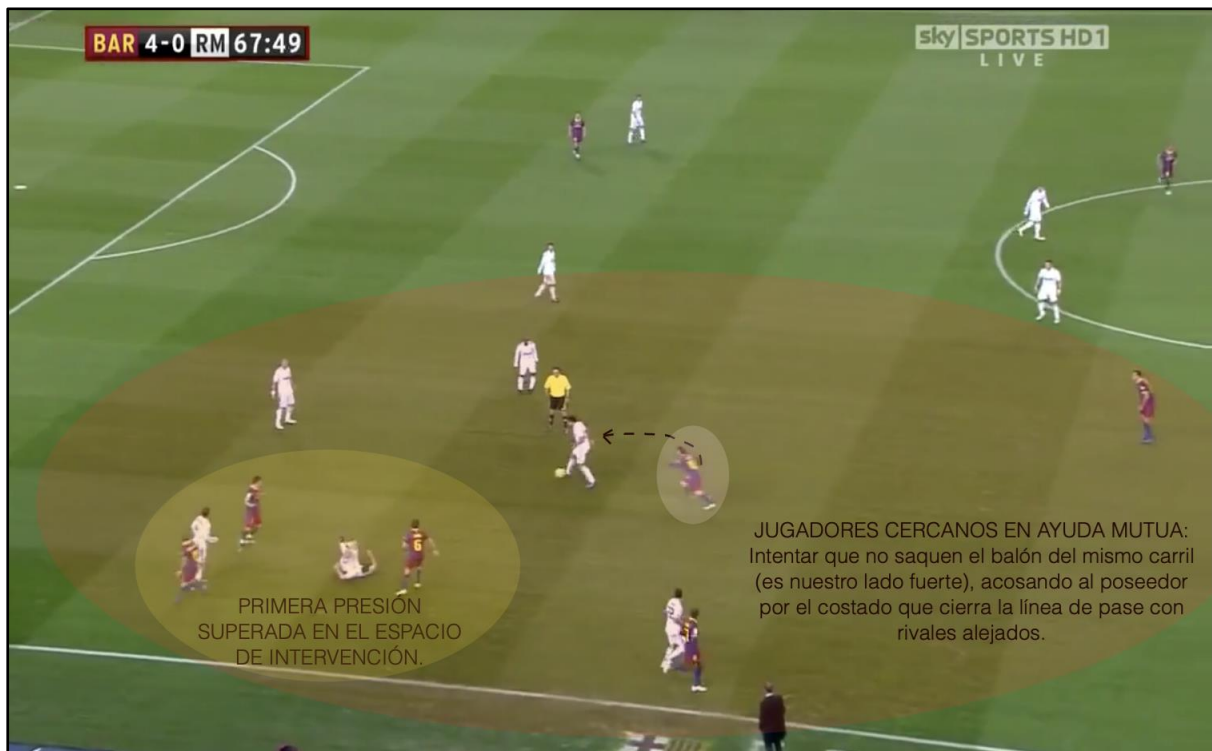
Jugador que pierde el balón es el primero que va a la PTP (espacio de intervención).	The player who losses possession of the ball is the first one in the CP (space of intervention).
Jugadores cercanos se acercan tapando líneas de pase (espacio de ayuda mutua).	Close players get closer covering pass lines (mutual help space).
Jugadores alejados se acercan vigilando a los rivales que quedan en el lado opuesto y alejado de la jugada (espacio de cooperación).	Far players get closer watching the opponents at the opposite side and far from the play (cooperation space).

But what if we can't recover the ball on the first press?



If we cannot recover the ball in the first press and they beat us trying to change the game orientation by turning towards the far corridor, those players close to each other who are in mutual help will try not to get the ball out of the same corridor, as that is our strong side. They will do it by attacking the possessor from the side that closes the pass line with far opponents.

Figure 34: Behaviour of close players in mutual help if they beat the first press applied in the wing



Source: Screenshot adaptation from Football Match, 2015. Image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

Primera presión superada en el espacio de intervención	First press beaten at the space of intervention
JUGADORES CERCANOS EN AYUDA MUTUA: intentar que no saquen el balón del mismo carril (es nuestro lado fuerte), acosando al poseedor por el costado que cierra la línea de pase con rivales alejados.	CLOSE PLAYERS IN MUTUAL HELP: avoid them from getting the ball out of the same corridor, (as that is our strong side), by attacking the possessor from the side that closes the pass line with far opponents.

Counterpressure behaviour in central corridor

If the loss occurs in the central corridor, the team must try to stop the opponent's progression from inside—that is, through the same corridor—, trying to attack to recover the ball from the front by directing the opponent's pass towards one of the two wings.

The player who loses the ball tries to be the first offensive player, and the close players go behind him closing the central corridor, to prevent the opponent's progression and recover the ball to counterattack.

This would be the normal role that each of the players would have depending on the space they take:

- a) Space of intervention (the player who loses the ball): makes the first press.
- b) Mutual help space (close players): they help the first press or the temporization.
- c) Collaboration space (far players): they conduct vigilance in case there is a change in orientation, they play between the lines or a pass behind their back.

But they cannot always act this way. Depending on the particularity of the play, sometimes when the player who loses possession of the ball cannot make the first press in the space of intervention, so there is a change of roles with close players. In this type of counterpressure, the closest mutual help player will be the one who jumps to the first press and will be in the space of intervention. This makes the player who has lost ball possession to be in mutual help (see figure 35):



Figure 35: CP central corridor and change of roles between those close players in mutual help and the one who loses the ball.



Source: Screenshot adaptation from Football Match, 2015. Image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

Jugador que pierde el balón pasa a estar en espacio de ayuda mutua si queda por detrás del balón.	Player who losses possession of the ball takes a mutual help space if he is behind the ball.
Jugadores cercanos saltan a presión acosando al poseedor, tapando líneas de pase (pasan de espacio de ayuda mutua a espacio de intervención).	Close players jump to press attacking the possessor, covering the pass lines (they go from mutual help space to the space of intervention).
Jugadores alejados se acercan para vigilar a los rivales que quedan en el lado opuesto y alejado de la jugada (espacio de cooperación).	Far players get closer to watch the opponents who stay in the opposite side and far from the play (cooperation space).

What if we can't make the first press with close players, that is, the counterpressure?

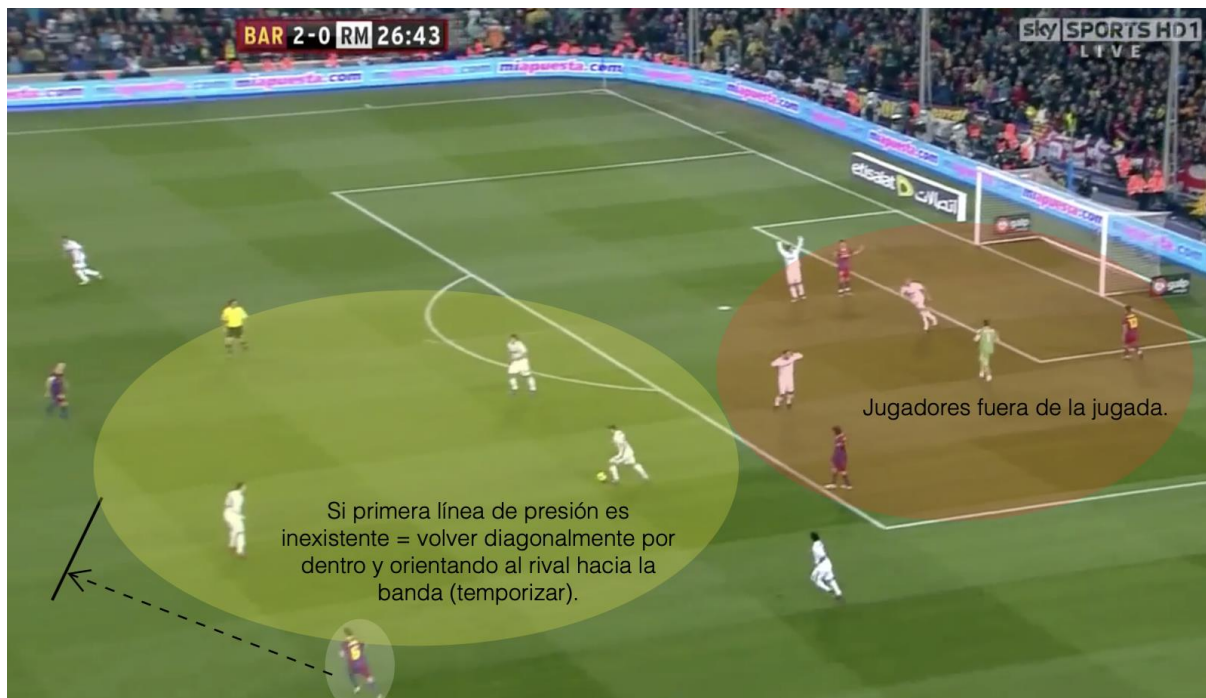
If the counterpressure cannot be applied because the first press of the close players is non-existent (because the player who lost the ball has given a pass to the space and the

loss is very far away and the rest of the close players are open), what behaviour should the rest of the players follow in mutual help or cooperation?

- 1) The rest of the open players must return diagonally closing the central corridor to avoid the progression of the opponents on the inside (which is the fastest way to our goal).
- 2) Once inside they must guide the opponent towards one of the external corridors (temporization).

The objective of this temporization behaviour is to give players out of possession ahead of the ball time to come back and integrate into the organised defensive block, in their basic defensive structure in their own field.

Figure 36: Behaviour if there is no counterpressure



Source: Screenshot adaptation from Football Match, 2015. Image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

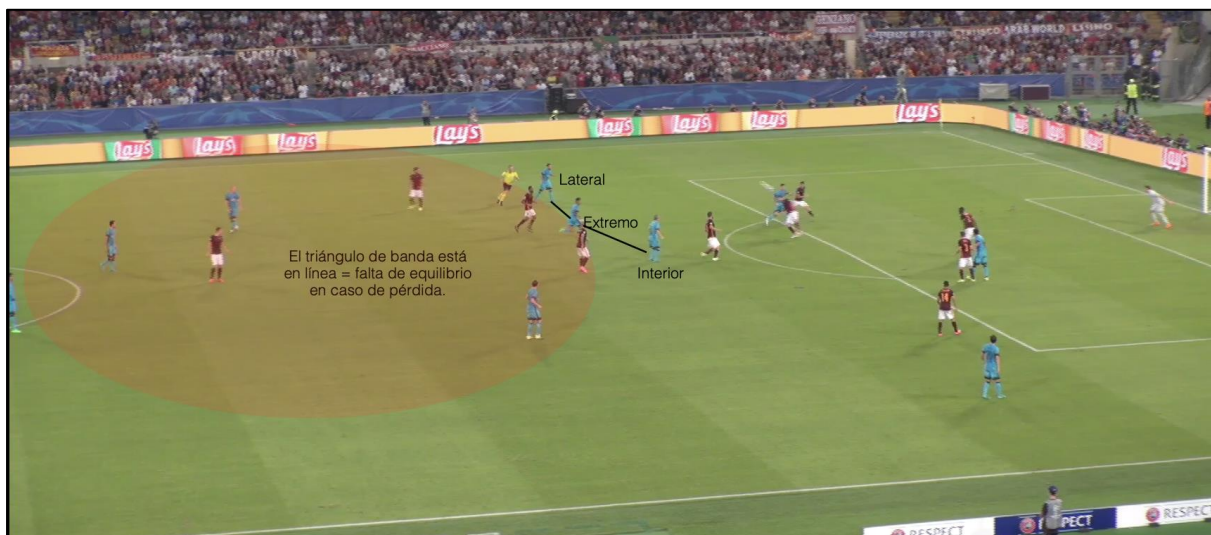
Jugadores fuera de la jugada	Players out of the play
Si la primera línea de presión es inexistente = volver diagonalmente por dentro y orientando al rival hacia la banda (temporizar).	If the first press line is non-existent= return diagonally from the inside and direct the opponent towards the wing (temporize).

General requirements for good counterpressure

The general requirements for good counterpressure (from here on we will call it CP) are as follows:

a) Have a good balance in the offensive phase: If we want to make a good CP after losing in the opponent's field, we will have to be balanced at the time of that loss. The phrase "the most important thing to defend well is to attack well" (Moreno, 2013, p.221) makes sense with this type of press in the opponent's field. For example, when a full-back joins the attack by overlapping the winger, a midfielder (either the pivot or the inside forward) must stay in coverage in that zone of the attack to balance that incorporation. In case of not doing so, there is a risk of leaving an empty space that the opponent will surely take advantage of to initiate a counterattack in case of loss.

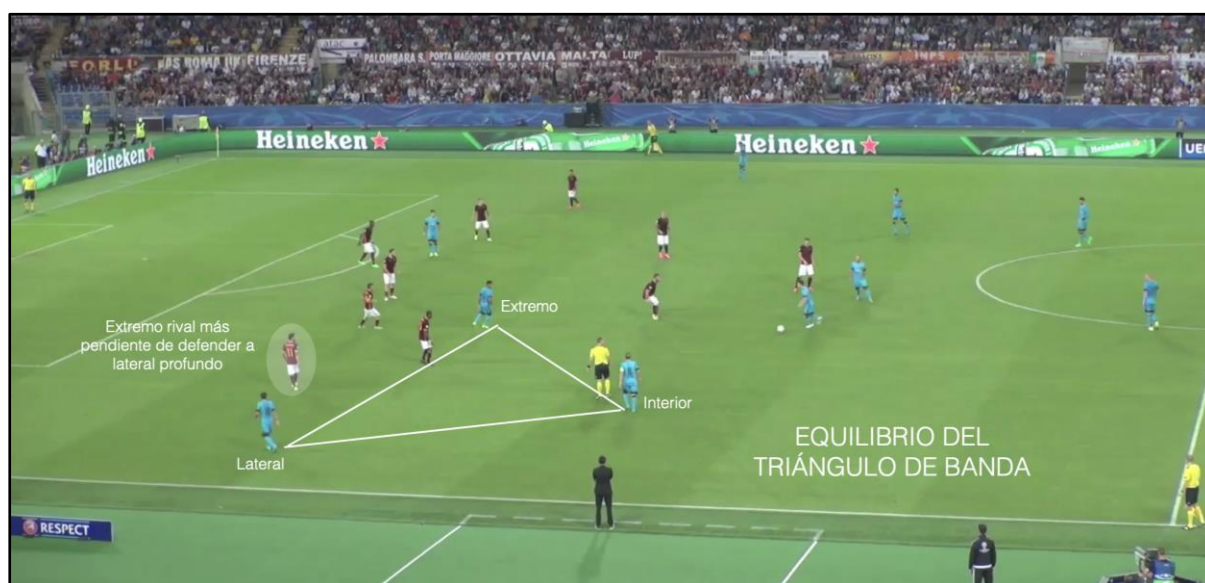
Figure 37: Lack of balance of the wing triangle (full-back/inside forward/winger at 1-4-3-3)



Source: Adaptation of own image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

Lateral	Full-back
Extremo	Winger
Interior	Inside forward
El triángulo de banda está en línea= falta de equilibrio en caso de pérdida	The wing triangle is in line= lack of balance in case of loss

Figure 38: Balance of the wing triangle (full-back/inside forward/winger at 1-4-3-3)



Source: Adaptation of own image edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36.2021).

Extremo rival más pendiente de defender a lateral profundo	Opponent winger should pay attention and defend the deep full-back
Lateral	Full-back
Extremo	Winger
Interior	Inside forward
EQUILIBRIO DEL TRIÁNGULO DE BANDA	BALANCE OF THE WING TRIANGLE

b) Go from attacking to defending in a fast and effective way (“chip swap”): Players will need to be very attentive and focused on having a good reaction after the loss of the ball possession, so that it is fast and effective. There is no time for regrets, stand, or look down. The commitment and good reaction of all the players are crucial so that the CP is effective and does not have the opposite effect in the form of an opponent’s counterattack.

c) Avoid the progression of the opponent in the same corridor where the loss occurred: The internal corridors must be closed, directing the opponent backwards or towards one of the external corridors.

d) Not allowing to be beaten by prioritizing the defence of the goal: These CP situations tend to be so fast-paced and disorganised that many times the players who must do a "chip swap" are disoriented and try to recover the ball or anticipate in any way

and are easily beaten. To avoid being beaten, they must have the premise of being between the ball, opponent, and goal, keeping the distance or running into them, otherwise legally charged, obstructing the opponent. Finally, some illegal action can be used to avoid being beaten (tactical free kick).

Basic defensive behaviours of counterpressure

We will also talk about the **basic defensive behaviours** that the players of the different lines will have to perform when they lose the ball. Everyone has a mission after the loss, both close and far players:

i) The player who has lost the ball has to do everything possible to be the first to go to the CP in the space of intervention. He will have the mission of attacking the opponent who has recovered the ball, although he will not always be able to do so, so then, the player closest to the ball will be the one that attacks the possessor first (if he loses the ball with a pass into space and is too far from the ball, it is impossible for him to make the first press).

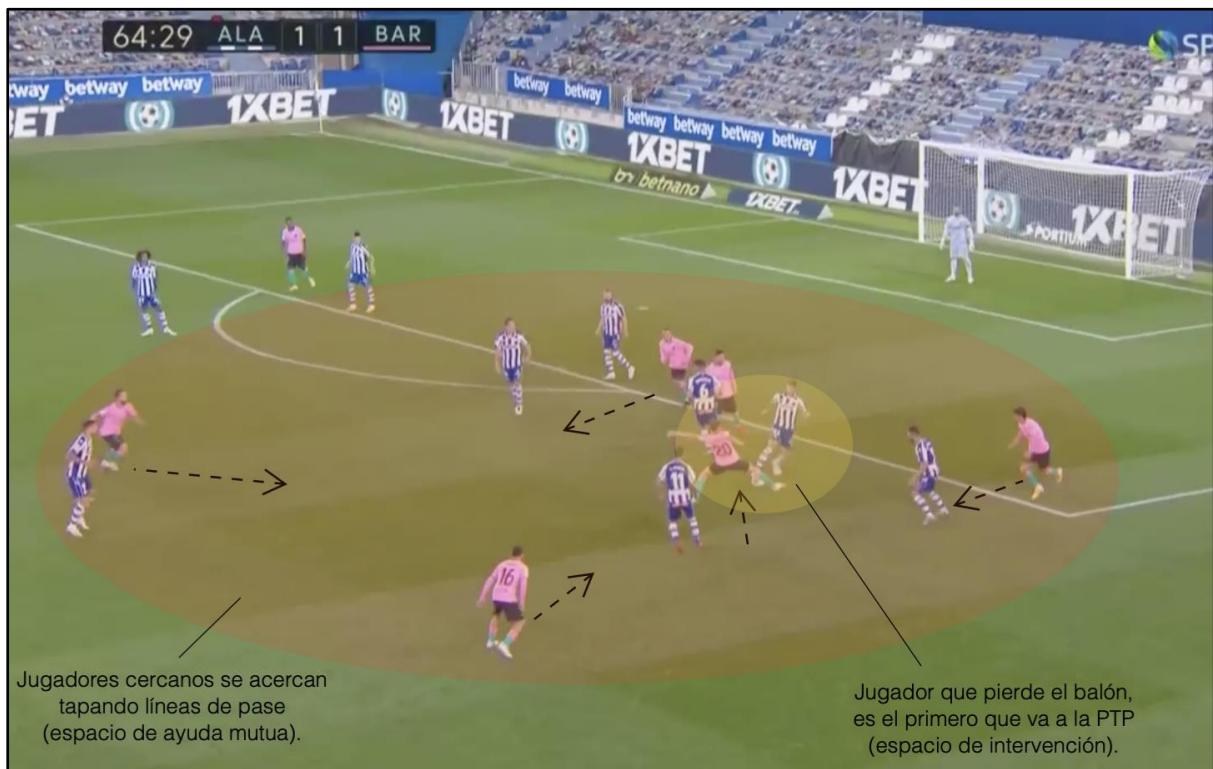
ii) Close players:

(1) The closest player will be the one who attacks the possessor in the space of intervention, if the player who has lost the ball cannot do so because he is too far away or offside.

(2) The rest of the close players on the same line, or adjacent in the mutual help space, will quickly approach the possessor to try to cover the pass lines near the possessor.



Figure 39: player who loses and close players in the CP



Source: Image adaptation taken from Wyscout and edited with SportsCode (version 12.2.36. 2021).

Jugadores cercanos se acercan tapando líneas de pase (espacio de ayuda mutua).	Close players get closer by covering pass lines (mutual help space).
Jugador que pierde el balón, es el primero que va a la PTP (espacio de intervención).	The player who losses possession of the ball is the first one in the CP (space of intervention).

iii) Far players will oversee carrying out the vigilance on the far opponents in the cooperation space.

iv) In the case of the goalkeeper, he must advance his position outside the area to be able for coverage behind his defensive line:

He must adopt an advanced position that allows him to act as a "free man" in the event of long balls behind his defence. He will only go for those balls in case of a clear advantage. If the ball is being disputed by an offensive

player with his defender, he will maintain his position. (Moreno, 2013, p.225)

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