

TACTICAL SITUATION 8



Creating an Overload and Attacking Through the Centre

The content in this section is from analysis of Diego Simeone's Atlético Madrid teams during the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 seasons.

The analysis is based on recurring patterns of play observed within the Atlético Madrid team. Once the same phase of play occurred several times (at least 10), the tactics would be seen as a pattern. The analysis on the following pages are examples of the team's tactics being used effectively.

Each action, pass, individual movement with or without the ball, and the positioning of each player on the pitch including their body shape, are presented.

The analysis is then used to create a session to coach this specific tactical situation.

CREATING AN OVERLOAD AND ATTACKING THROUGH THE CENTRE

1a. Wide Midfielder Creates an Overload by Moving into the Centre of the Pitch to Receive



The central positioning of Atlético's wide midfielders helps create overloads in specific areas. Attacking through the centre is a popular tactic for Diego Simeone's team.

The wide midfielder moves towards the centre in between the opposition's midfield and defensive lines and enters the zone of responsibility of the opposing centre back, who then has 2 players to deal with (see highlighted area).

This prevents the opposing centre back (white No.4 in diagram) from moving forward to press Atlético's left midfielder **Koke (6)**.

As soon as central midfielder **Gabi (14)** receives from the centre back **Giménez (24)** in this example, the left midfielder **Koke (6)** moves towards the centre and creates a 2v1 overload in a crucial area, as shown.

1b. Opposing Centre Back Retains Position and the Wide Midfielder is Able to Receive, Turn and Look for a Final Pass



This situation enables the left midfielder **Koke (6)** to receive free of marking and turn facing the opponent's goal.

As soon as the turn is carried out, the 2 forwards **Griezmann (7)** and **Torres (9)** move to receive a potential final pass, as do both full backs **F. Luis (3)** and **Juanfran (20)**, who are positioned near the side-lines to retain width.

The forward movement of both full backs triggers the central midfielder **Saúl (8)** to drop back and help retain a numerical advantage at the back.

2. Opposing Centre Back Tracks the Wide Midfielder's Movement, who Plays First-time Pass in Behind



In a similar situation to the previous one, **Koke (6)** receives a forward pass from **Gabi (14)**, but the reaction from the white defenders is different.

Specifically, the white centre back No.4 decides to step forward and put **Koke (6)** under pressure, which leaves **Griezmann (7)** free of marking. **Griezmann (7)** opens up to receive a first-time pass from **Koke (6)**.

3. Opposing Centre Back Tracks the Wide Midfielder's Movement, who Uses a Link Player to Pass in Behind



This shows another option for how Atlético deal with the same situation using a passing combination.

As soon as **Koke (6)** receives under pressure from the white centre back No.4, the ball is directed to **Griezmann (7)** via the other forward **Torres (9)**, who moves close to **Koke (6)** to offer him a passing option.

SESSION (3 PRACTICES) FOR "CREATING AN OVERLOAD AND ATTACKING THROUGH THE CENTRE"

PROGRESSION

3. Creating an Overload and Attacking Through the Centre in a Conditioned Game



Description

- In the final practice of this session, the 2 teams play an 11 v 11 game in 2/3 of the pitch. You can decide whether to have the areas to help the players or not.
- The reds can score in any way but if they score after successfully exploiting an overload in the centre, they score 3 goals.
- The red wide midfielder has to read the tactical situation and make the right decision about where to direct the ball and create a scoring chance (**see previous practices and analysis pages**).

- In the diagram example, the white centre back retains his position, so the wide midfielder (**6**) can receive, turn, and play a final pass.
- The white team try to win the ball and then score (counter attack) within 10-12 seconds.

Coaching Points

1. There needs to be synchronisation in the players' movements (forwards and wide midfielders).
2. Read the situation and make decisions according to the opposing centre back's reaction.

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