



MICHAEL LOFTMAN

A black and white photograph of a soccer player in a black jersey with white stripes on the sleeves, holding a soccer ball. He is standing on a field with a goal in the background. The number '1000' is overlaid in large teal font.

1000

COACHING PRACTICES

FOR COMPETITIVE COACHES TO DEVELOP THEIR PLAYERS, UNITS, AND TEAMS.



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BOOK OVERVIEW

Introduction to 100 Coaching Practices





About the Author

In the pursuit of coaching & management excellence, Michael Loftman is a UEFA A License Coach with a Master's Degree in Sports Science, specialising in coaching, psychology, and pedagogy. He has worked at National Team, Professional, Academy, and Grassroots level across 5 countries. Roles have included working for the Egyptian National Team, the City Football Group, Tottenham Hotspur F.C, Watford F.C, and Orlando Pirates F.C. Through this journey, Michael has also worked alongside coaches of the highest level who have coached in the Champions League, Premier League, World Cups, and Youth European Champions. Michael has also worked with senior and youth international players from 24 different nationalities and 5 different continents

In between roles Michael focuses on delivering coach education, and sharing his ideas with coaches from over 90 countries around the world. This has involved writing books, delivering practical coaching clinics, and leading online workshops.





Introduction

Designing and executing effective coaching practices is one of the fundamental roles of a sports coach. As football progresses, practice design is becoming progressively more vital to influencing player and team development & performance . Historically, coaching practices focused on developing the physical and technical elements of players and teams. It is now clear that practices can be used to develop other key elements such as tactical understanding and decision making. This has led to an evolution of coaching practices being used across the world, with labelled practices such as ‘phases of plays’, ‘rondos’, and ‘wave practices’ becoming more prominent.

This book aims to offer a wide variety of coaching practices covering a wide range of tactical topics, with supporting coaching detail to support each topic. With use of the practices and detail, you can significantly impact the development of the teams and players you are working with. Out of the 100 practices presented, identifying the most suitable practices for the specific context you are working in, along with the relevant coaching points, will be key in maximising the training outcomes you can achieve.

The practices are from a culmination of my 13 years in the coaching industry, working across international, professional, academy, and grassroots level. I have attempted to cover all of the main topics required to develop players and teams, from 1v1's, to build-up play, to set pieces. More focus has been placed on the key topics that we should spend an increased amount of time working on. For example, final third attacking has a high number of practices, as creating and scoring goals is often the most challenging aspect of the game. All practices start with the specific objectives, followed by the game flow & rules, and videos which are available for all coaches who have purchased this book.



Using the Practices

Managing the Practices: All of the practices within the book can be adapted based on the specific environment you are working in. For example, the area sizes, number of players, time length, and rules can be amended. Different age groups and abilities will require different area sizes, rules, and coaching detail. The key is to adapt during practices, and reflect after the practices, to more efficiently meet the objectives you have. You may need to use smaller or bigger sizes to meet your specific objectives in your environment

Find a Way: Not all coaches have the same resources available. For some, there is limited space, limited time, and limited equipment. The principle I have always used with regard to resources, is 'find a way'. If there are no mini-goals, we can create gates with poles, if there are no poles, we can use cones. If we have limited space, we can break practices into different parts and use them across multiple sessions.

Number of Practices: While there are 100 practices in this book, the key is finding the most suitable and effective practices, and developing a set of core practices that meet the objectives you are looking to achieve. These core practices should cover the key topics within the curriculum of the club/team/players you are working with. Similarly, for each topic, not all of the detail provided will be required in your environment, therefore the key is to select the key coaching detail that aligns with your game model and core practices.

Objectives over Image: When creating, selecting, and analysing practices, we have to look at the actual outcomes for the players and the team, as opposed to whether the practice just looks good on the eye. This is why all practices start with specific objectives regarding what the players are better at after the practice has finished. There are thousands of practices online and on coach education courses, which look great, but have very few outcomes that ensure the players are better at specific attributes after the practice is finished.



Topics Covered

Across the 100 coaching practices, there are a vast amount of topics that are covered, and each practice can be used to cover a variety of outcomes. For example, a final third attacking practice, can also be used to coach final third defending, or a possession practice can also be used to coach pressing. This means, although the practices are organised into topics, you can use them for other topics you may wish to cover. Below is a list of some of the topics that can be covered across the 100 practices:

- 1v1 Attacking & Defending
- 11v11 Training
- 1vGK Finishing
- 2v2 Attacking & Defending
- Aerial Duels
- Attacking & Defending Set Pieces
- Ball Protection
- Blocking Shots
- Build-up Play
- Chain Defending
- Closing Passing Lanes
- Combination Play
- Counter Attacking
- Counter Pressing
- Cover Defending
- Crossing & Finishing
- Defending 2nd Balls
- Defending Crosses
- Defending Long balls
- Defending the Switch
- Dodging the Offside
- High Pressing
- Hold Up Play
- Interceptions
- Long Shots
- Low Block
- Maintaining Possession
- Overloads & Underloads
- Passing & Receiving
- Patterns of Play
- Penalties
- Penetrative Passes
- Player to Player Marking
- Playing a High Line
- Playing Offside
- Pressing Traps
- Rebounds
- Receiving Between the Lines
- Recovery Runs
- Rest Attack
- Rest Defence
- Running with the Ball
- Runs in Behind
- Switching Play
- Team Building
- Unit Defending
- Wing Play
- Zonal Marking

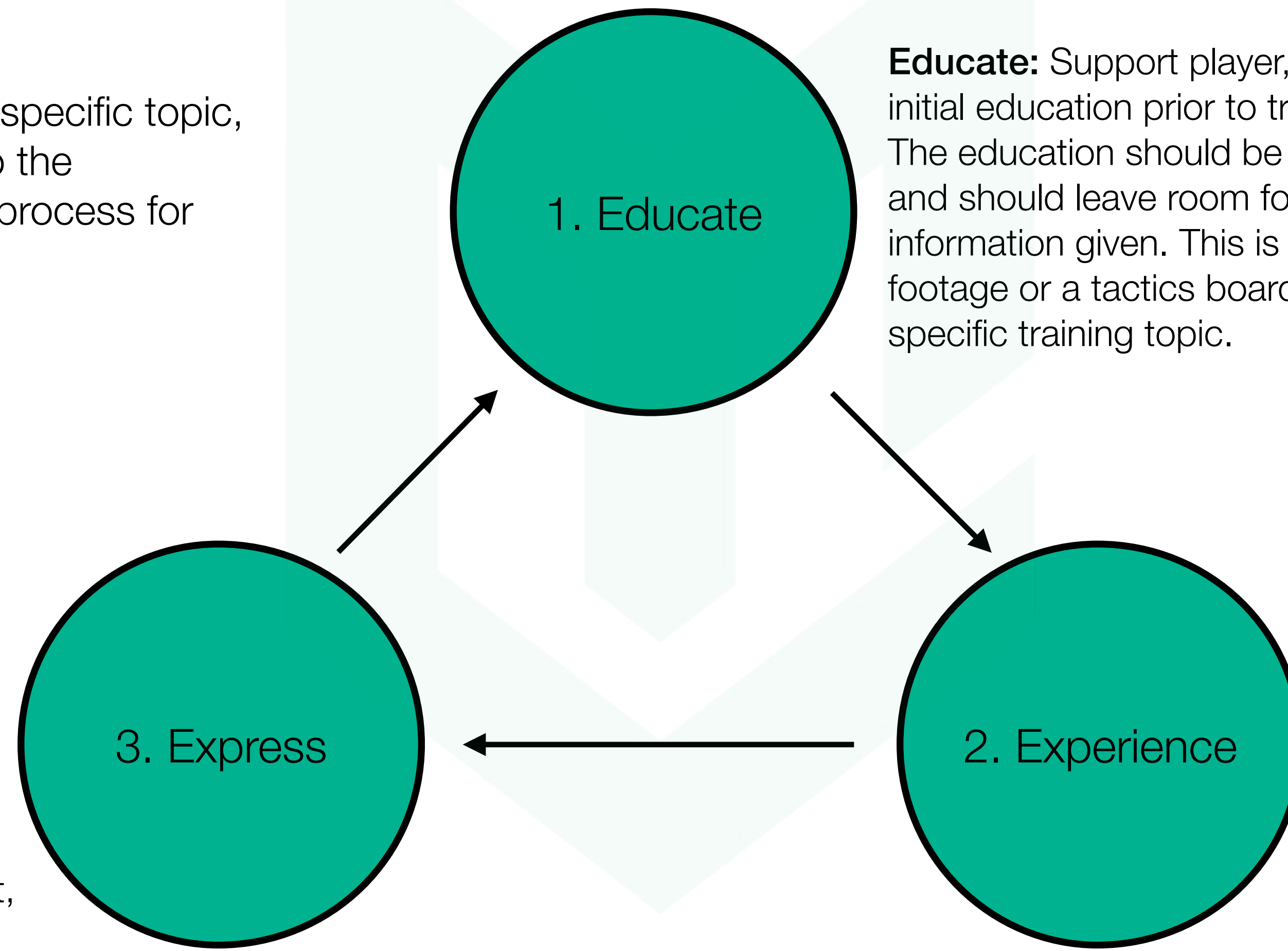


Coaching the Topics

The 3 E's:

When planning to coach a specific topic, the 3 E's are 3 key steps to the development and learning process for players, units, and teams.

Express: After players have been educated and have experienced the topic for themselves, they should then be allowed to develop the confidence in match realistic practices with limited information from coaches. This is the time to observe and review the development, to then plan the next stages of development.



Educate: Support player, unit and team development with initial education prior to training sessions and practices. The education should be predominantly principle based, and should leave room for self expression with use of the information given. This is a great opportunity to use video footage or a tactics board to share knowledge on a specific training topic.

Experience: Once players have received initial education on the specific topic, practices should be used to allow players to experience the topic. This is also an opportunity to offer coaching points and create pictures to enhance and support the learning process. Coaching styles used here should be relevant.



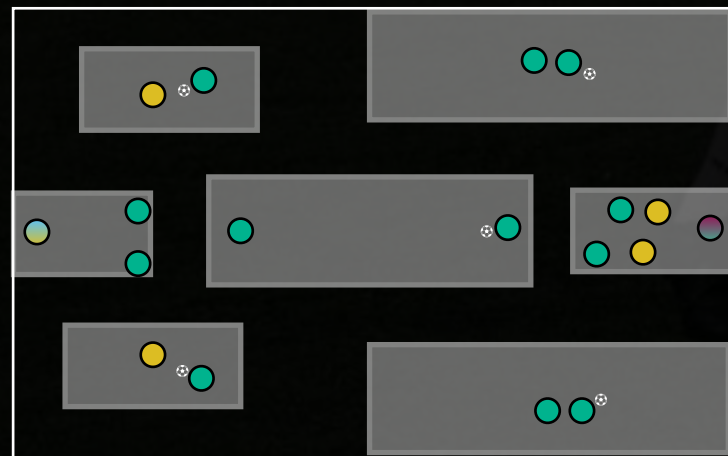
CATEGORIES & PRINCIPLES

Information to support understanding the 100 practices

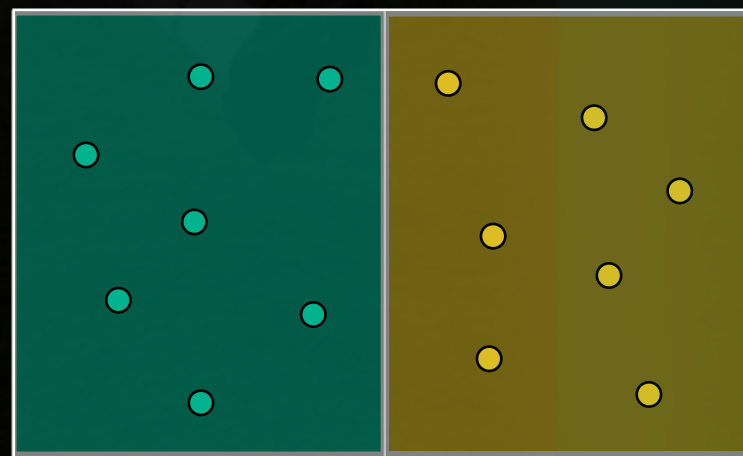


Categories of Practices

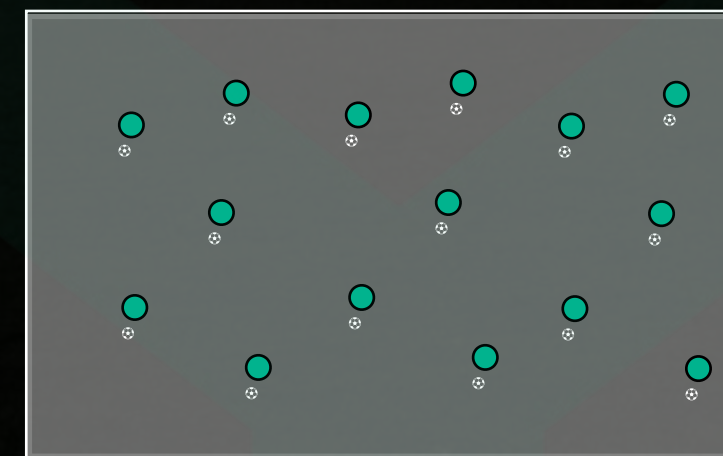
Individuals



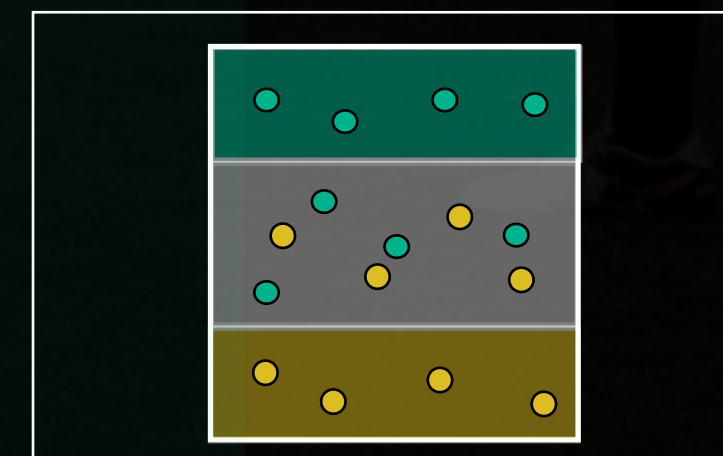
Team Building



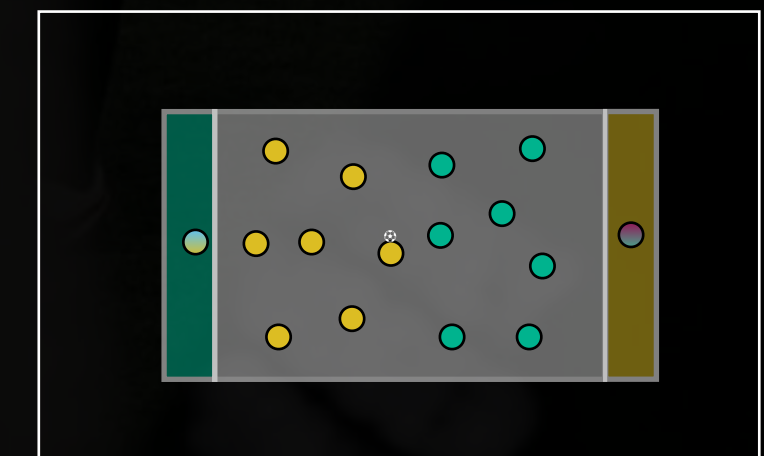
Ball Mastery



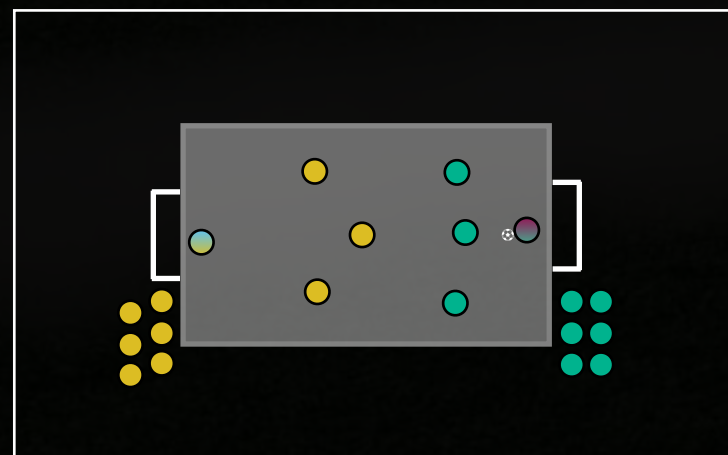
Free Possession Games



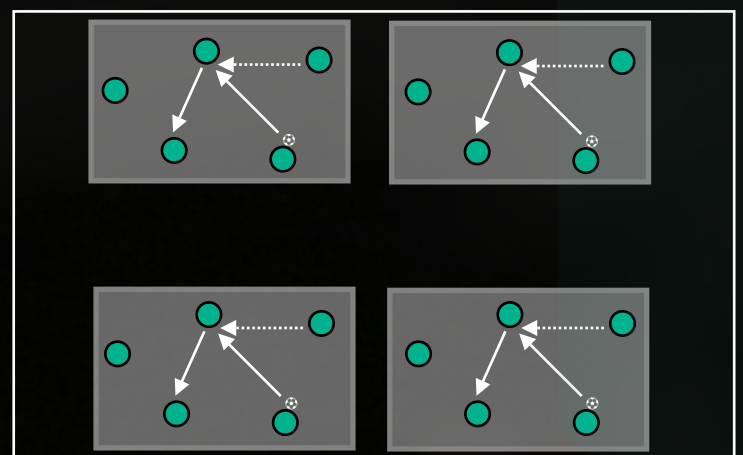
Positional Possession Games



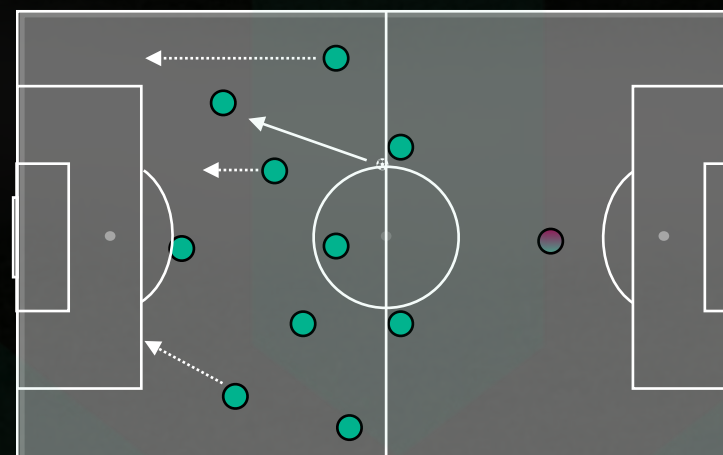
Wave Practices



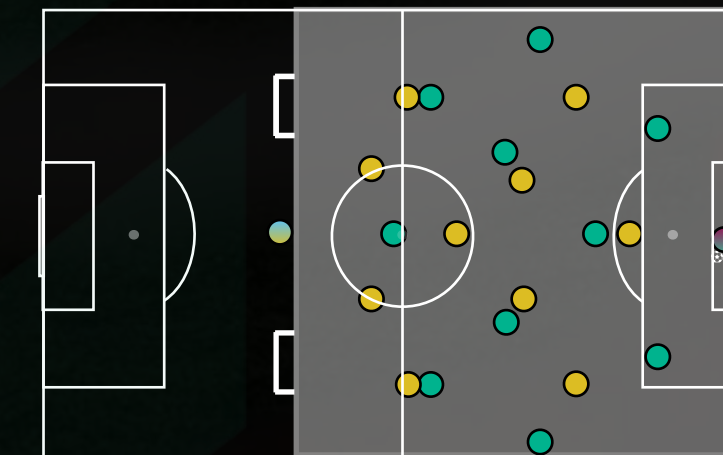
Technical Pattern Practice



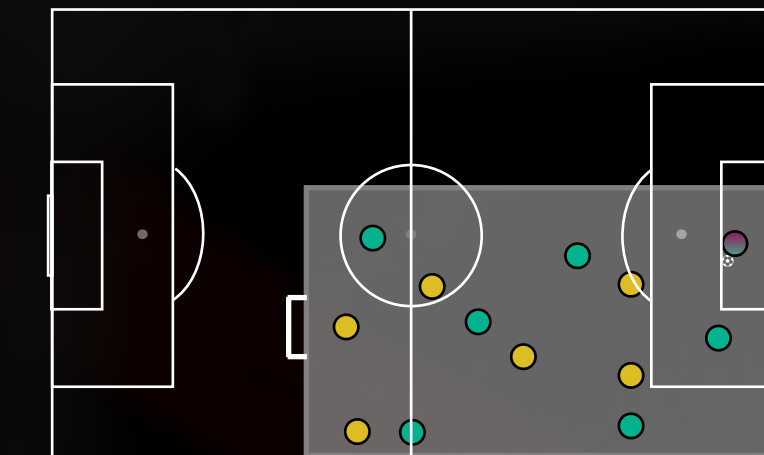
Tactical Pattern Practice



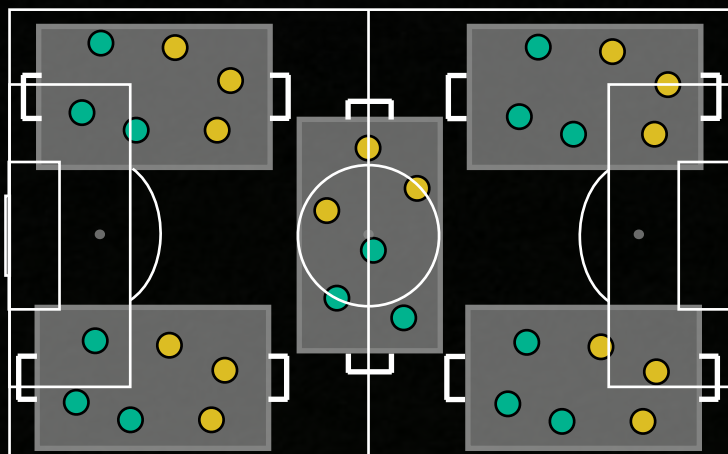
Phase Practices



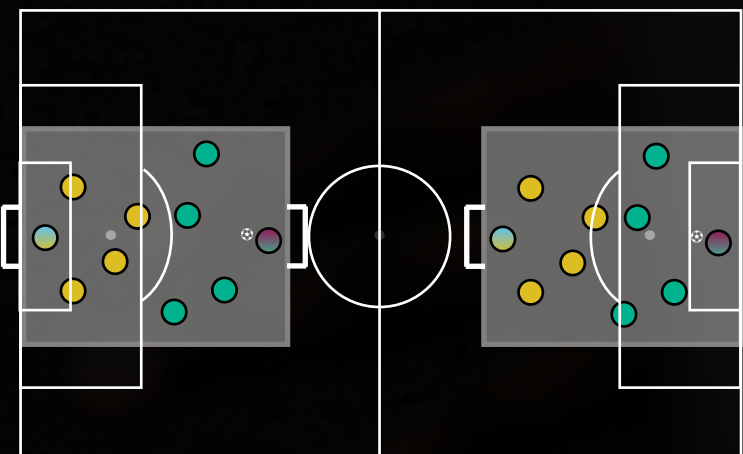
Picture Practices



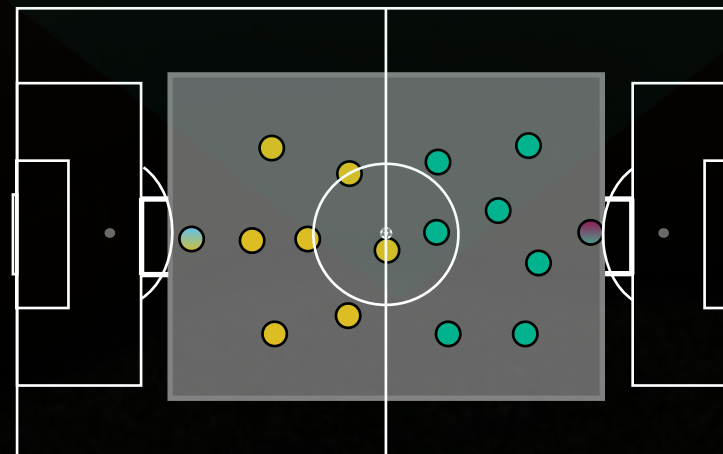
Mini Sided Games



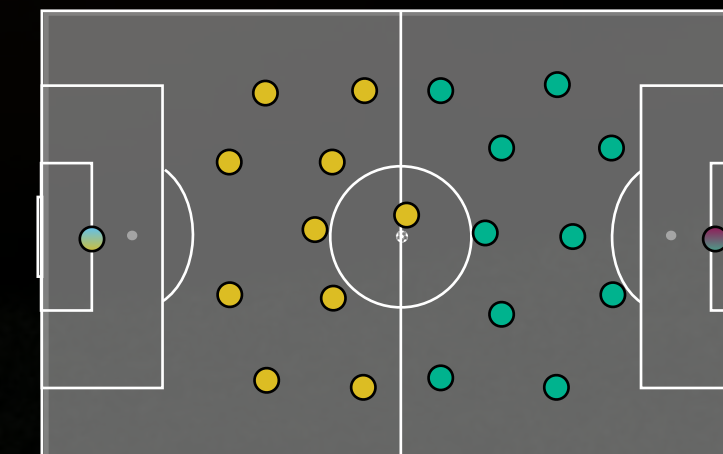
Small Sided Games



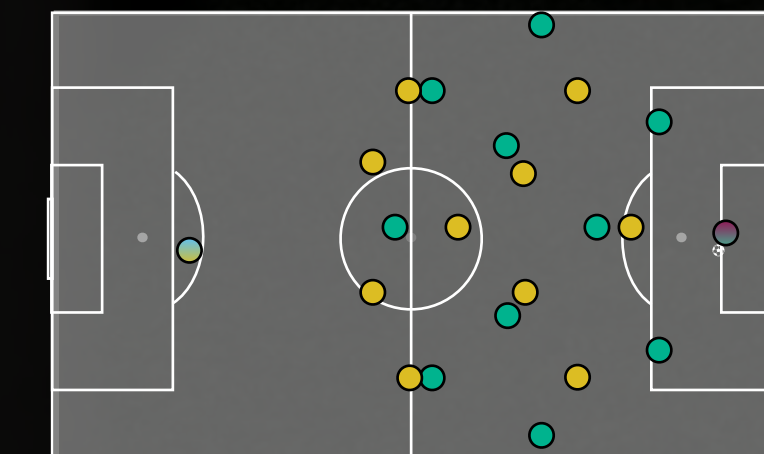
Medium Sided Games



Large Sided Games



11v11 Run Through



Individuals

Explanation

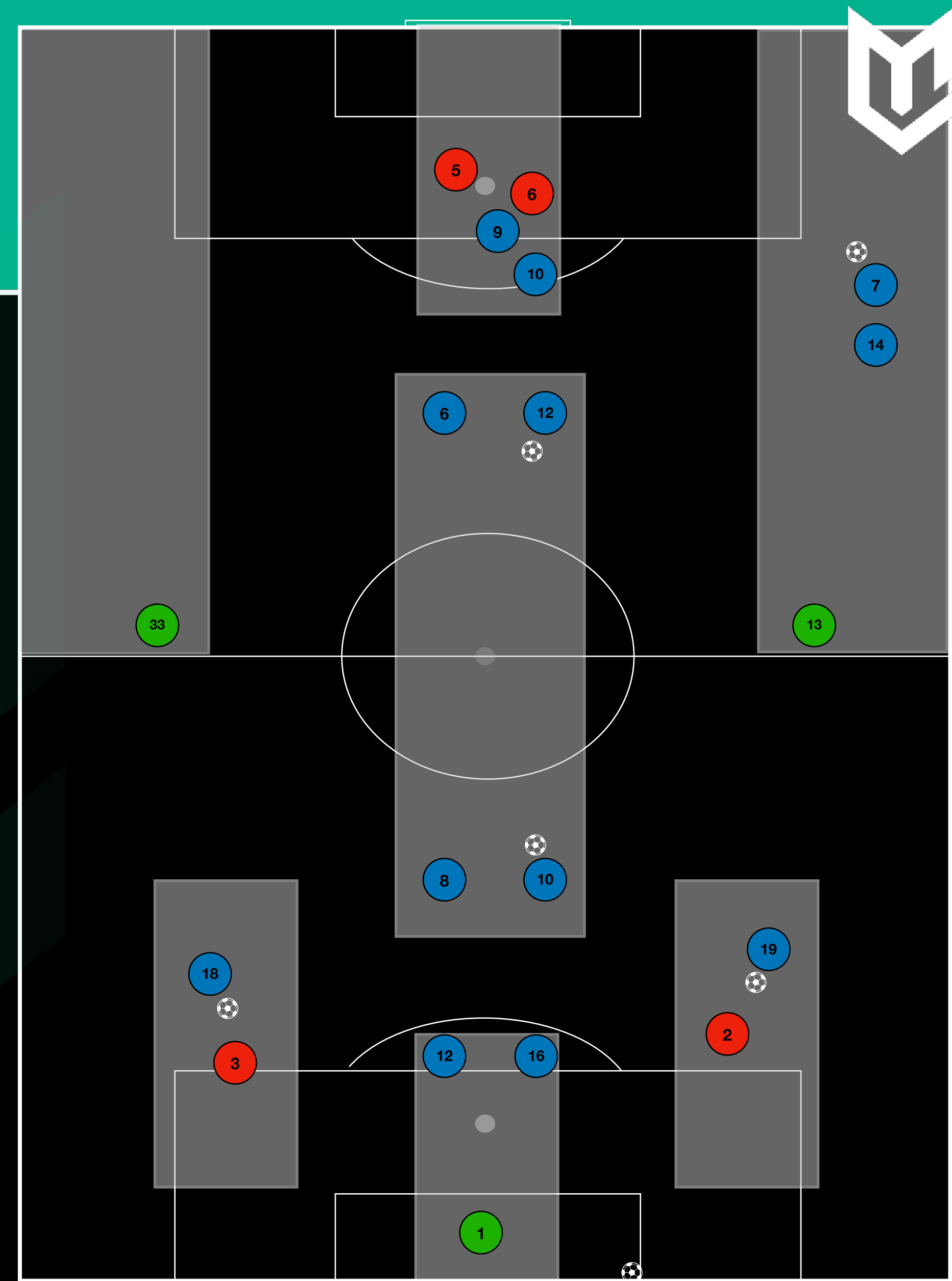
- Players set up their own position specific practices based on what they need to improve
- Players and units can collaborate, with support from coaches where required

Positives

- Opportunity for players to lead their development & coach each other
- No setup/management needed = Freedom for coaches to observe/support
- Individuals get a high repetition of key actions

Limitations

- Players will need educating on managing their workloads
- Requires a large amount of space
- Can increase injury risk during team training





Team Building

Explanation

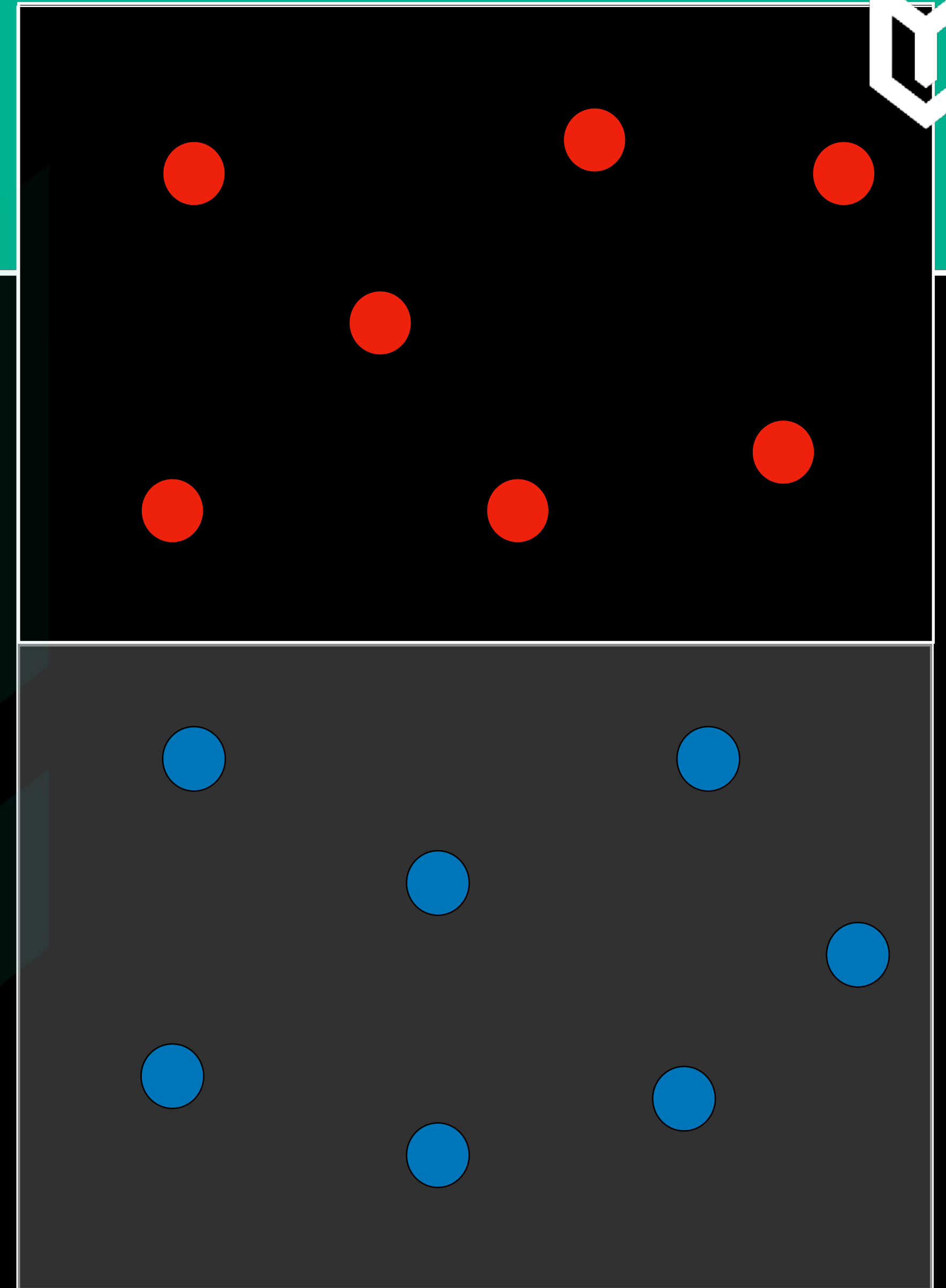
- Non game related practices to encourage enjoyment, competitiveness, and cohesion
- Research has suggested using other sports can decrease stress and injuries

Positives

- Can increase group cohesion and change the mood of the environment
- Subconscious tactical elements can be introduced
- New players may stand out as the best.

Limitations

- No technical transferability to the match



Ball Mastery

Explanation

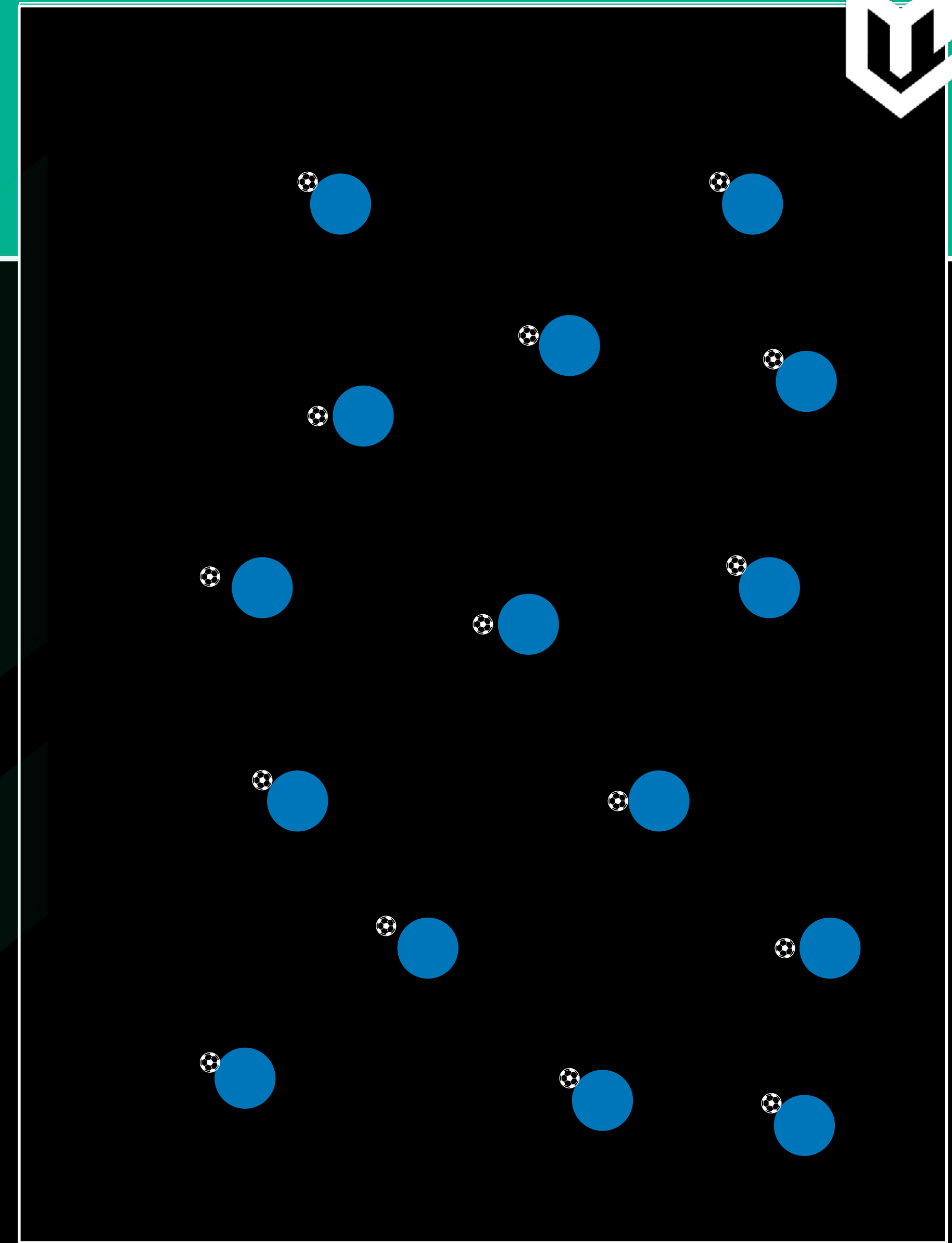
- Players with a ball each or between two focusing on development of individual actions
- Topics may include dribbling, turning, passing, receiving, heading etc.

Positives

- High repetition of actions with the ball means an increase in myelination (technique)
- Can be practiced with or without coaching.
- Players can work on specific weaknesses in their own time or during training

Limitations

- No decision making involved
- Unlikely to transfer directly to a game without progressing to opposed practices



Free Possession Games

Explanation

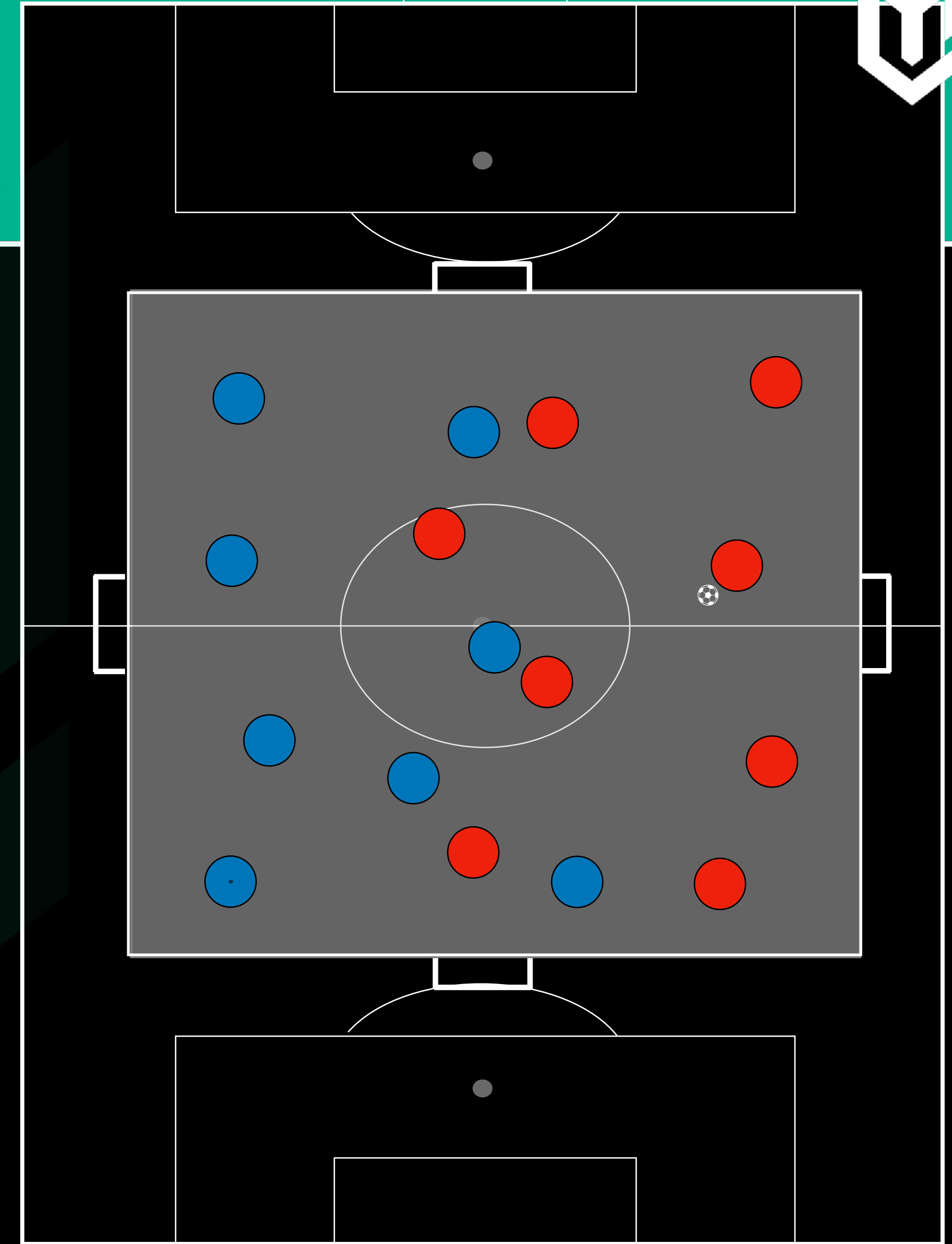
- Possession games that are multi directional without match specific positions
- Can be used with a wide variety of numbers, spaces, and conditions

Positives

- Can coach in possession, out of possession, and transition topics
- High intensity with a high cognitive demand when lots of options are present
- Freedom to include a range of actions (as opposed to Rondos)

Limitations

- Multi direction decreases transferability to matches
- Lack of positional structure means players may be learning less prioritised skills.





Positional Possession Games

Explanation

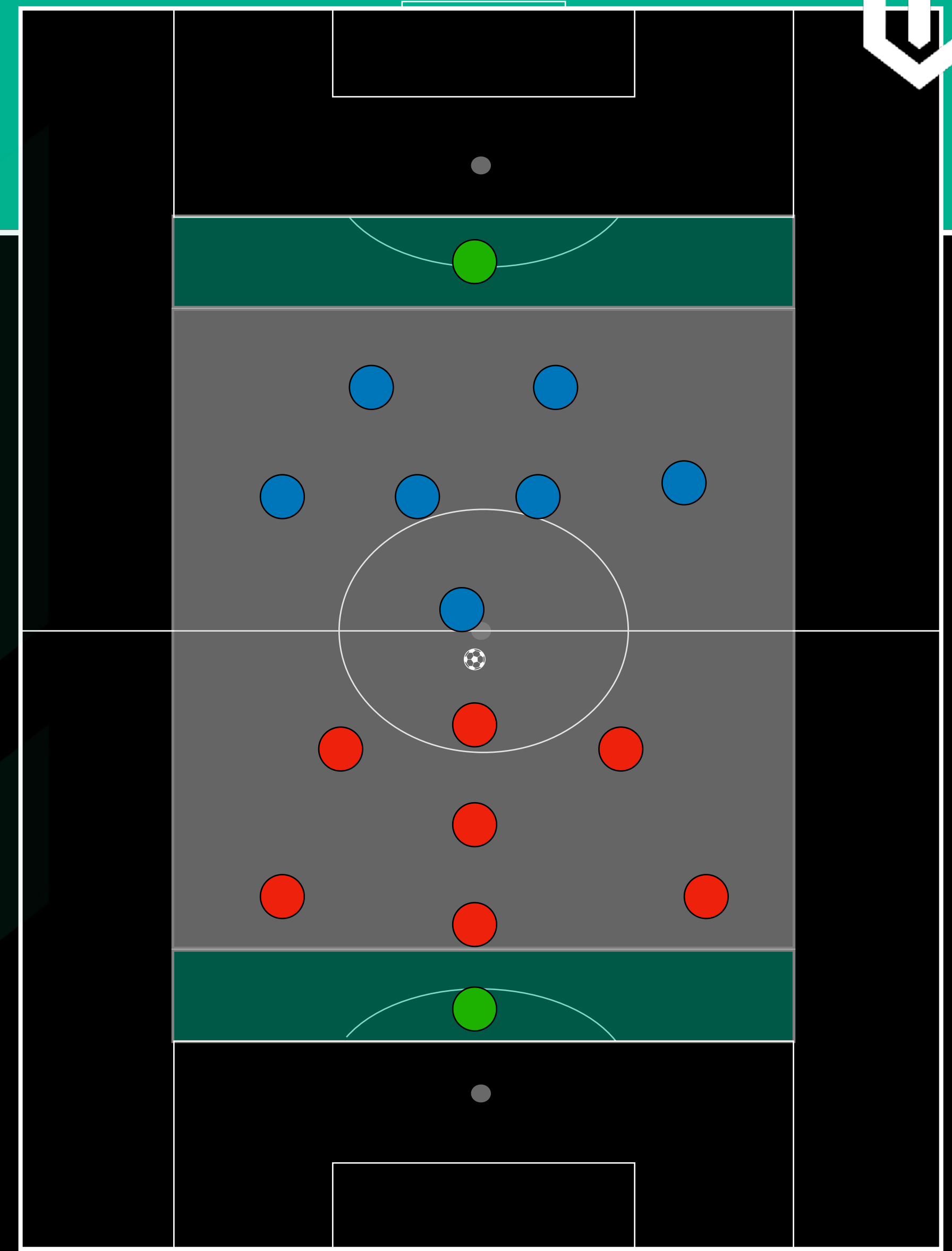
- A directional possession game without full-sized goals
- Players have specific positions and roles within the game

Positives

- Lots of transferability to matches
- Players will practice actions they are likely to need to develop
- Lots of opportunities to coach both technical and tactical elements

Limitations

- Players can be restricted in terms of possible actions due to pitch dimensions
- No/limited attacking and defending final third actions





Wave Practices

Explanation

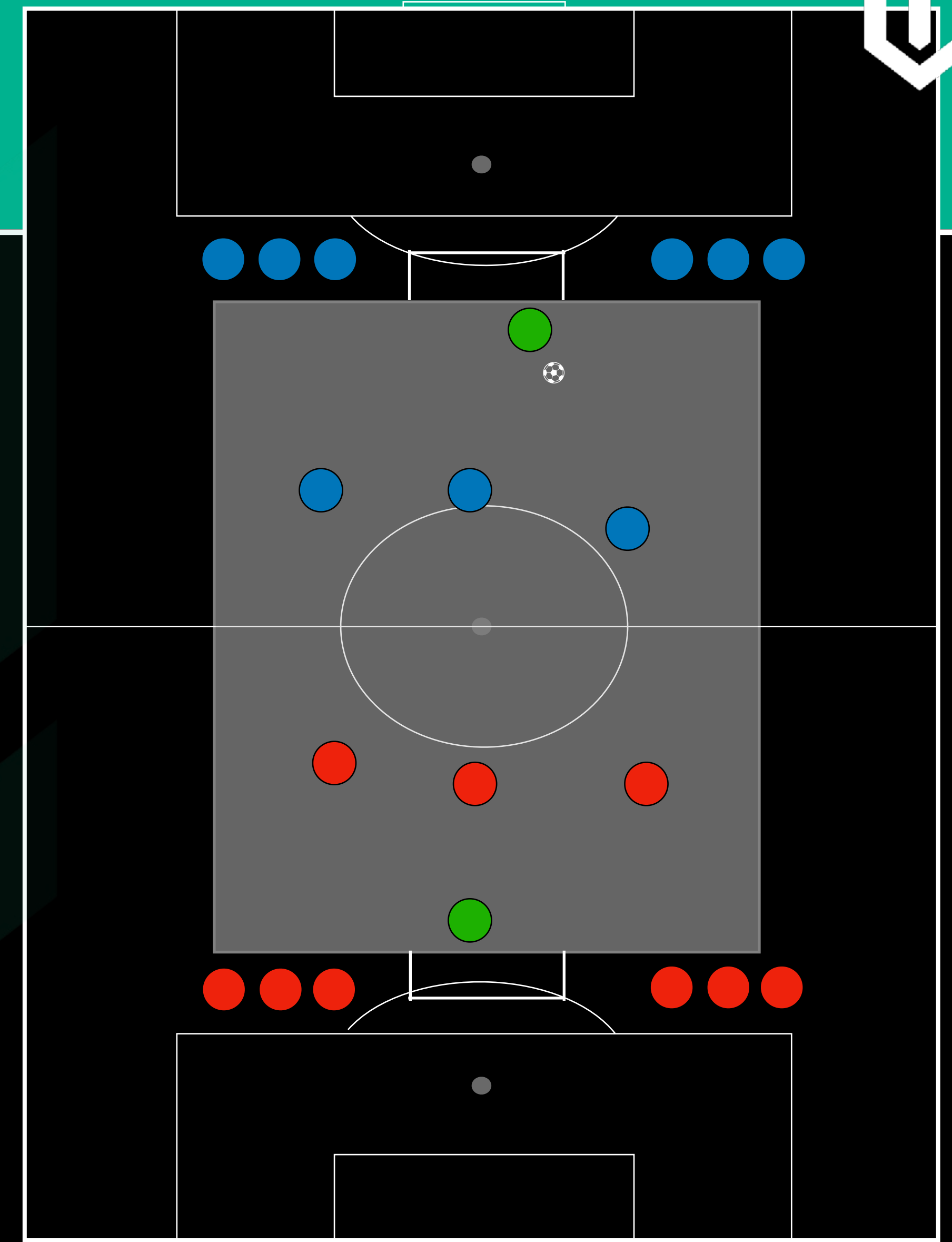
- Players divided into teams, with some players starting on the pitch, some off the pitch
- After an attack/goal or time limit players rotate and the next group come on

Positives

- Specific scenarios can be created and vary throughout the session (1v2, 5v4, 3v3 etc.)
- Rest time allows for high intensity actions
- Coaching opportunities when players are off and waiting

Limitations

- Players waiting inactive on the side
- The start stop element limits transferability





Technical Pattern Practice

Explanation

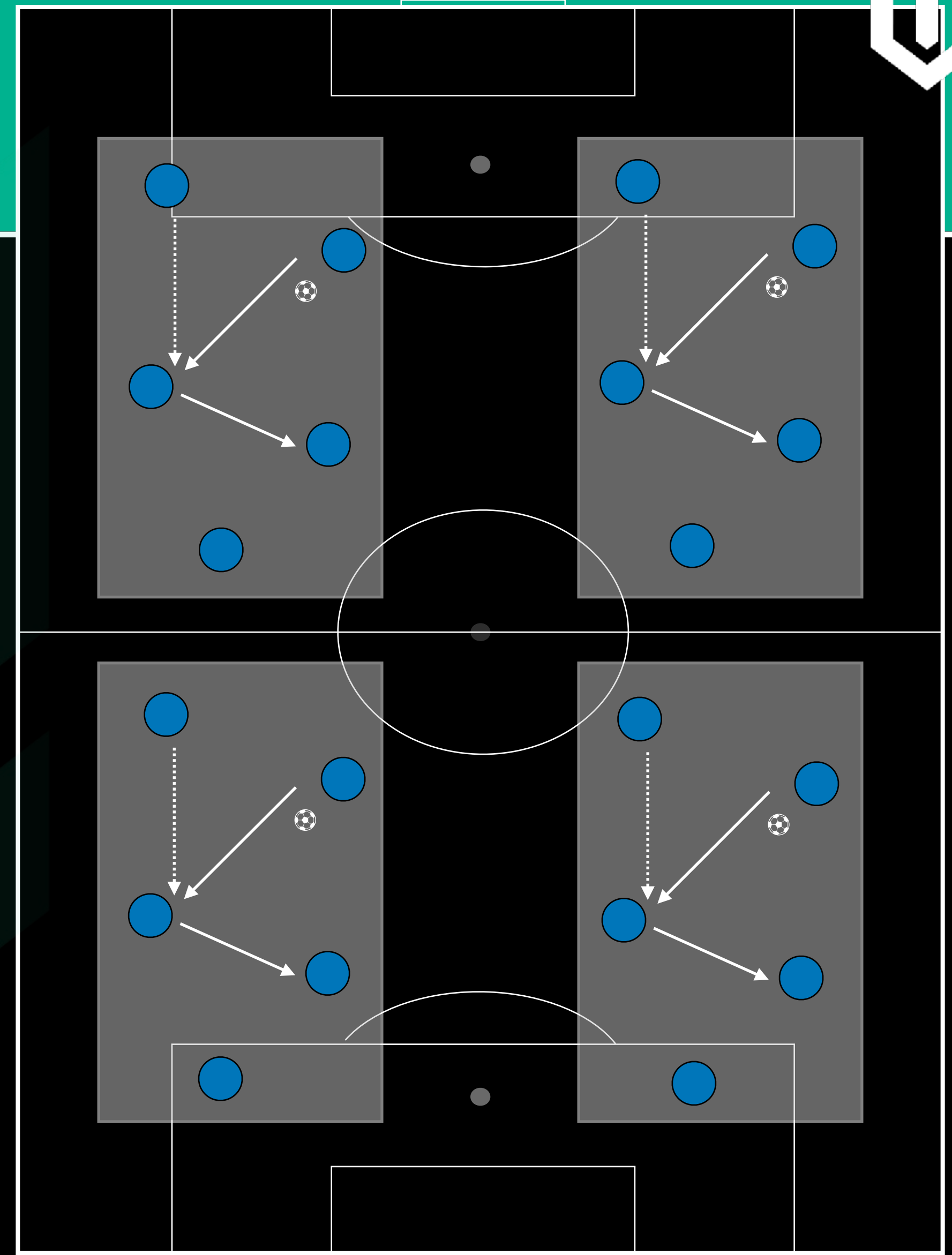
- Using specific technical patterns which players must execute to develop technique
- Actions can include passing, receiving, dribbling, finishing, and crossing

Positives

- Can be a powerful tool for setting technical standards
- Opportunities to paint pictures in preparation for tactical practices

Limitations

- Players can quickly lose focus with the lack of opponents after a period of time
- Limited transferability directly to matches without progression to opposed practices





Tactical Pattern Practice

Explanation

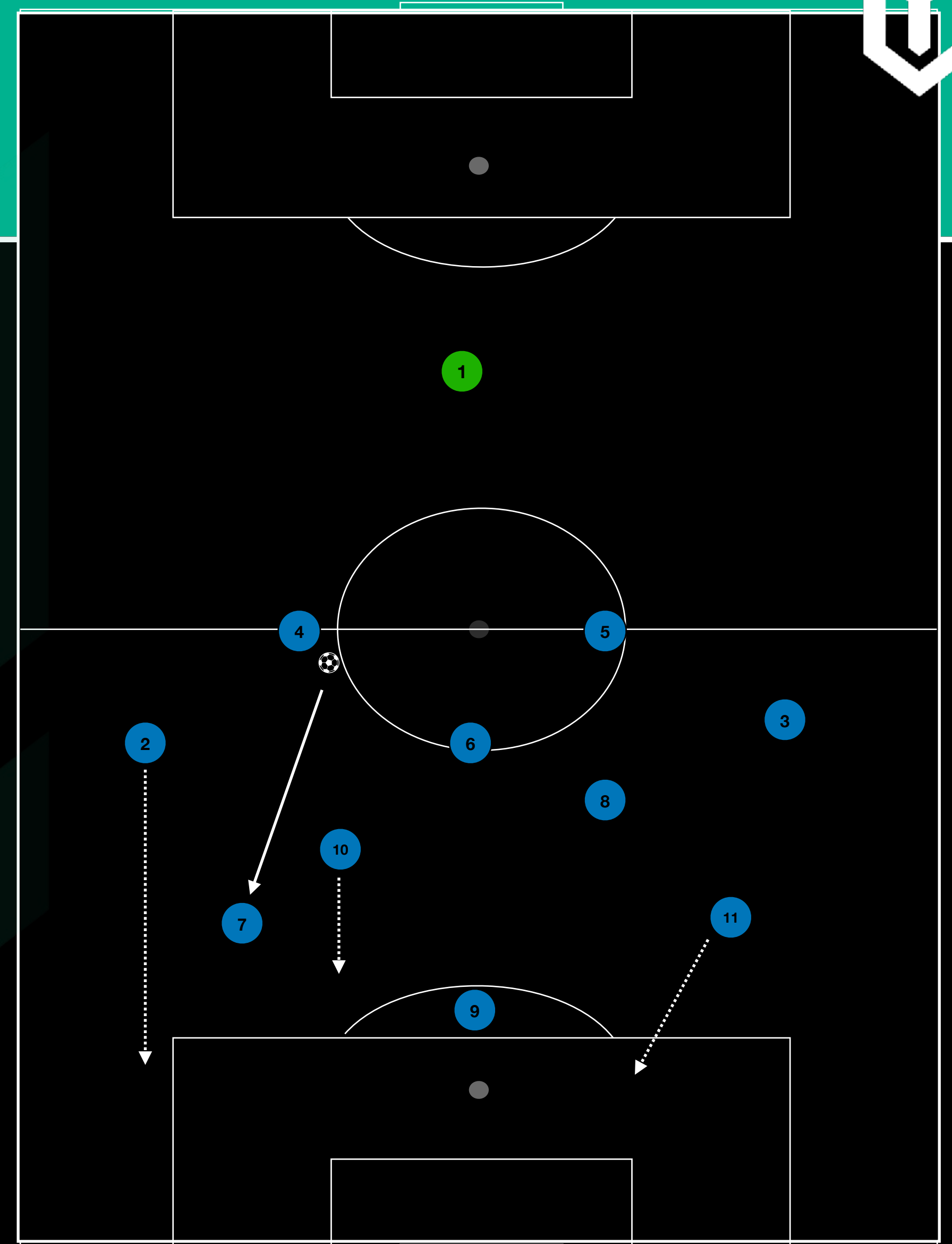
- Bigger patterns of play where the pitch dimensions and team structure is match realistic
- Players can play unopposed or semi opposed to execute the patterns

Positives

- Lots of coaching opportunities to give technical and tactical detail
- Realistic dimensions means a wide variety of pictures can be explained
- Starting line up can be used to prepare for a matchday

Limitations

- Successful transferability can be limited when the patterns are not available during matches
- No/limited challenge from opposition to force decision making





Phase Practices

Explanation

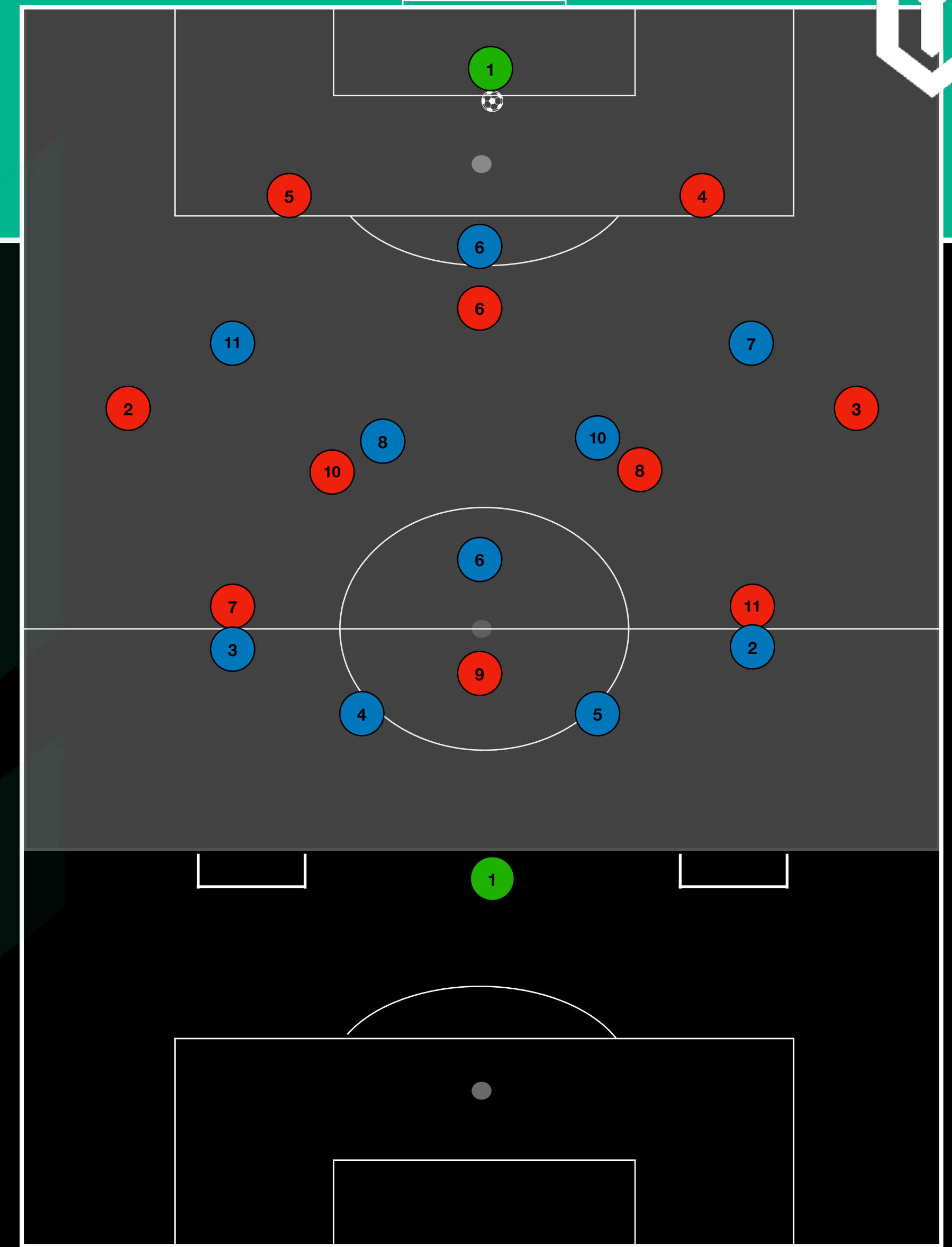
- A particular phase of the game using full width with match realistic numbers
- Rules and structure should be manipulated to increase repetition of the specific topic

Positives

- High transferability to the full match
- Realistic challenges based on the opposition actions
- Technical, tactical and physical elements are required

Limitations

- Other phases excluded
- One team often gets the majority of coaching and learning





Picture Practices

Explanation

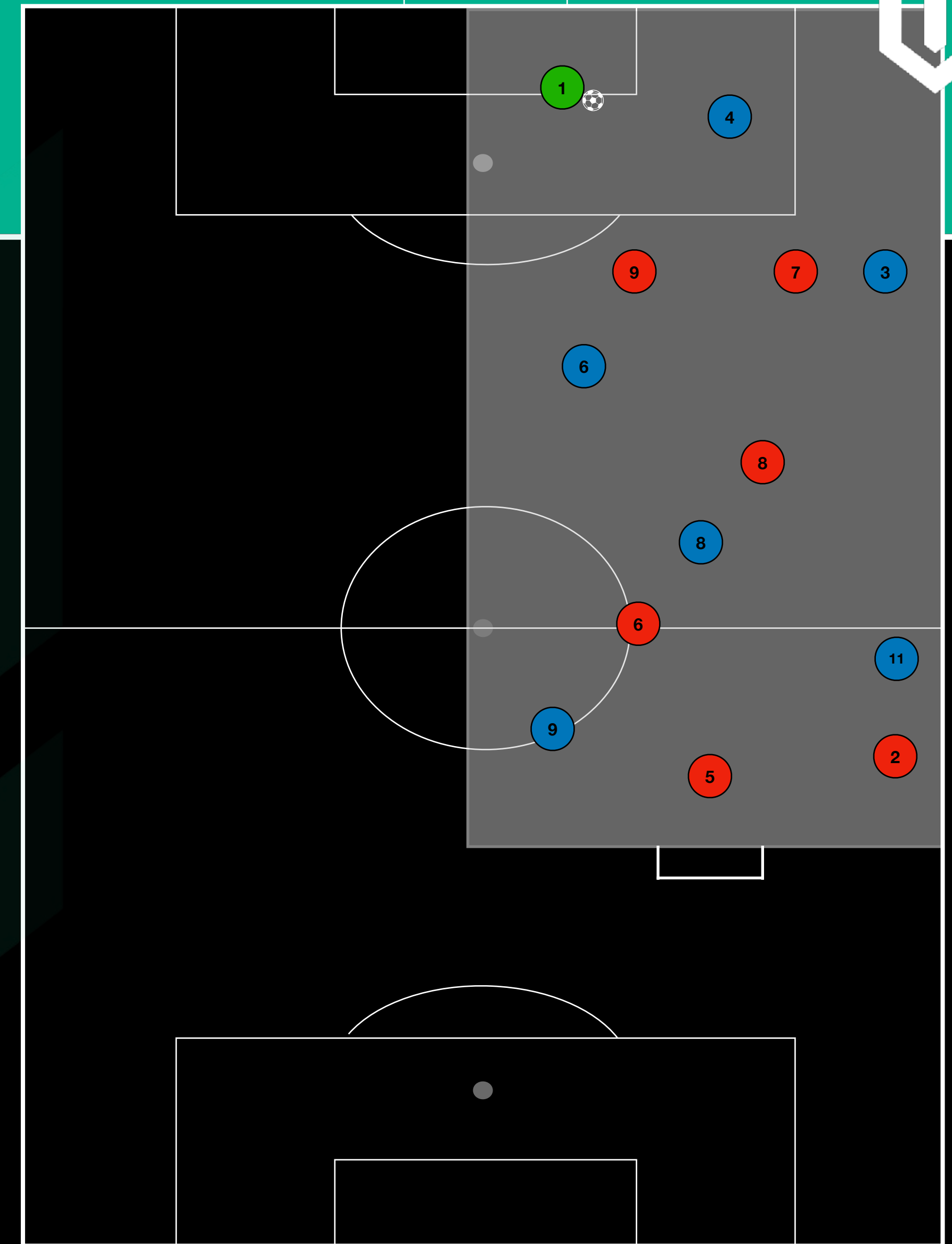
- A specific picture within a phase is selected to work on
- Pitch dimensions and player numbers should create realism and repetition

Positives

- High repetition of the specific pictures that need to be developed
- Players get a high repetition of very specific actions.
- Can help fix specific team and individual challenges

Limitations

- Limited action variety due to structure
- Only limited players involved so a second practice may need to be set up.





Mini-Sided Games

Explanation

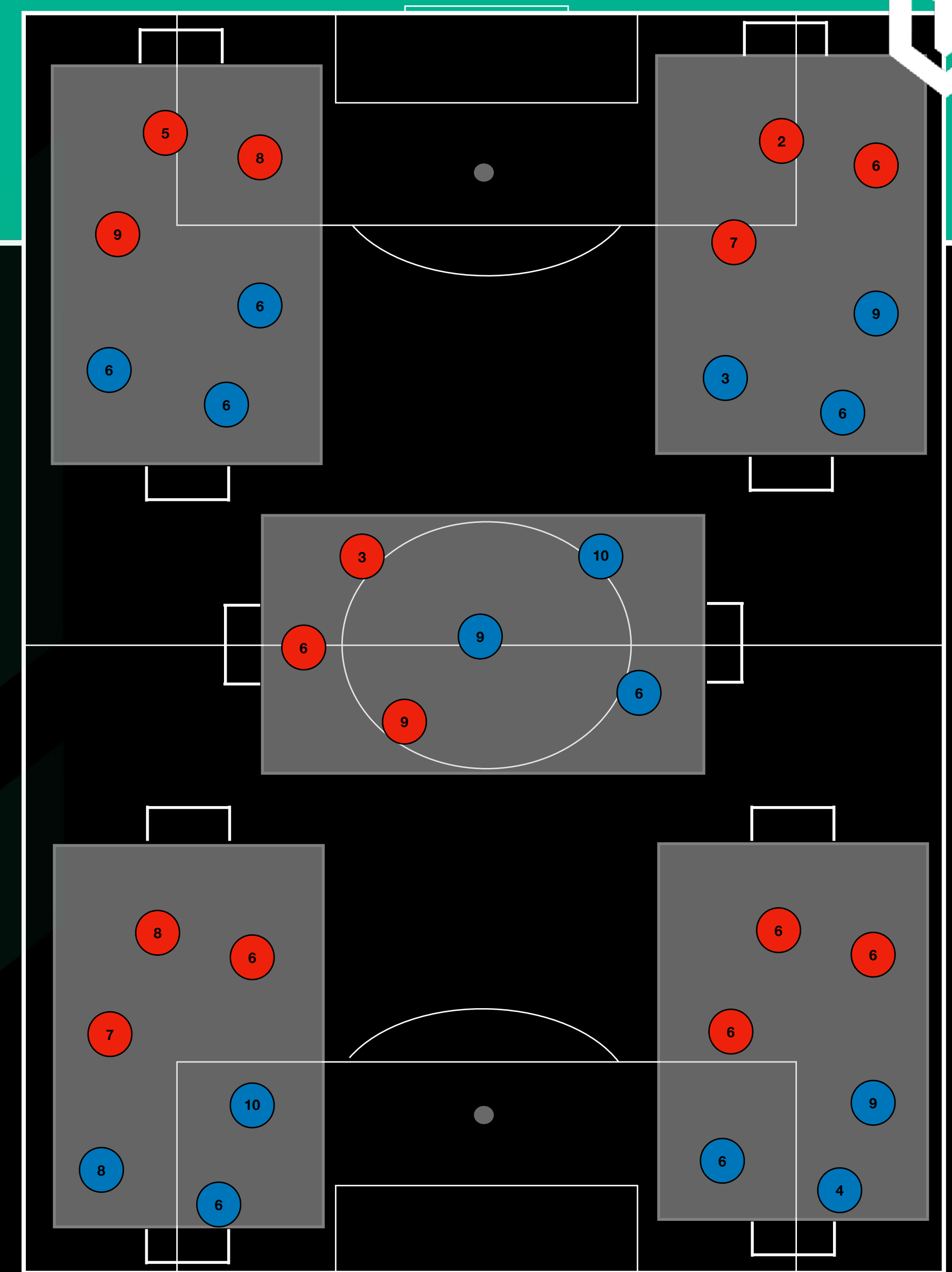
- Small sided games with very few players involved - 1v1 to 3v3
- Continuous game without any rotations of players coming on and off

Positives

- High physical outcomes possible
- High repetition of technical actions
- High transferability of technical actions

Limitations

- High risk of fatigue due to continuous actions
- Low numbers meaning multiple games needed
- Low tactical realism due to limited decisions available.





Small-Sided Games

Explanation

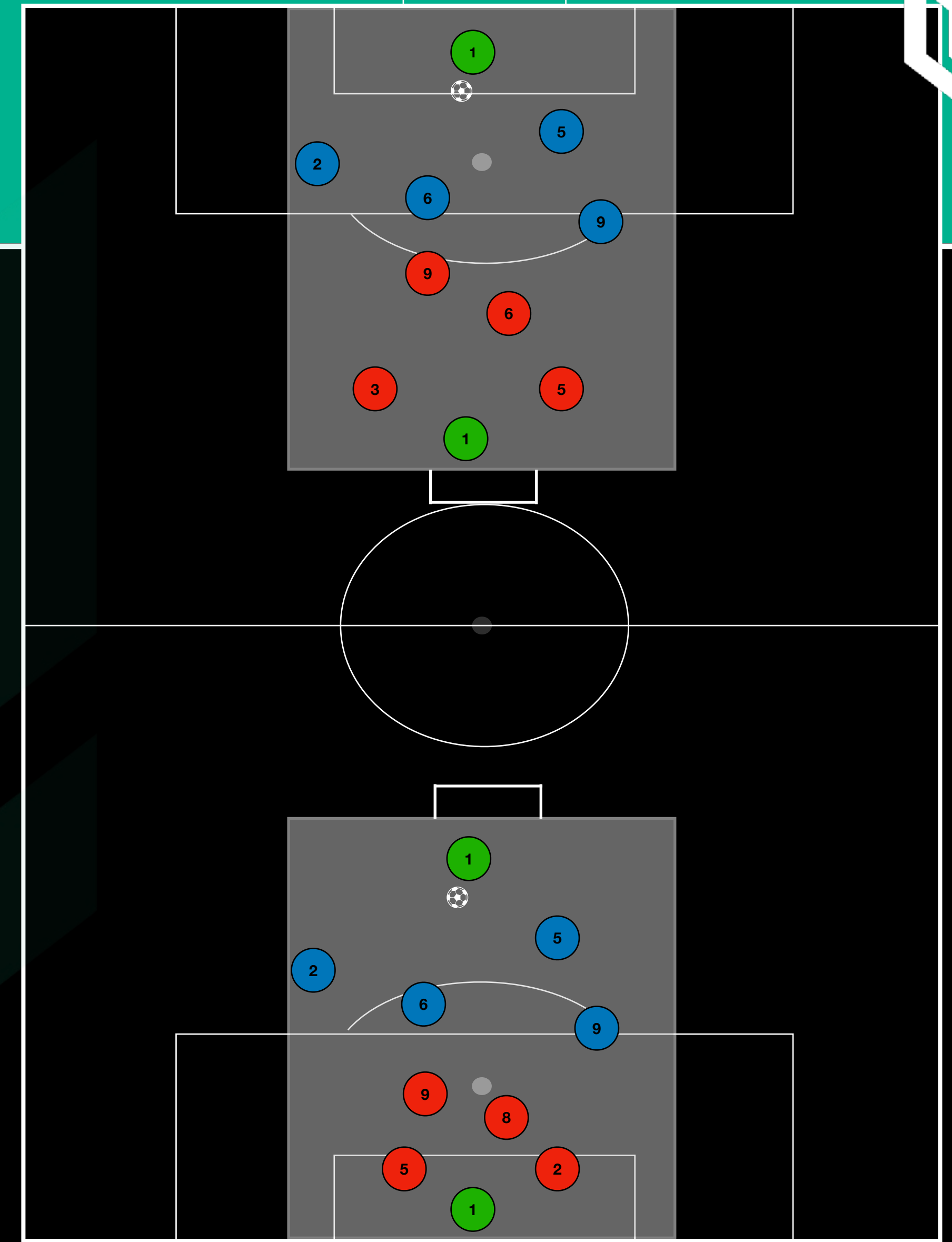
- Small sided games between 4v4 and 7v7
- Rules can be adjusted to create match specific conditions

Positives

- High physical outcomes possible
- High repetition of technical actions, with introduction of tactical elements
- High transferability of technical actions

Limitations

- Limited decision making variety available due to pitch size and player numbers
- Physical output also needs to be monitored to manage workload/injury risk





Full Matches

Explanation

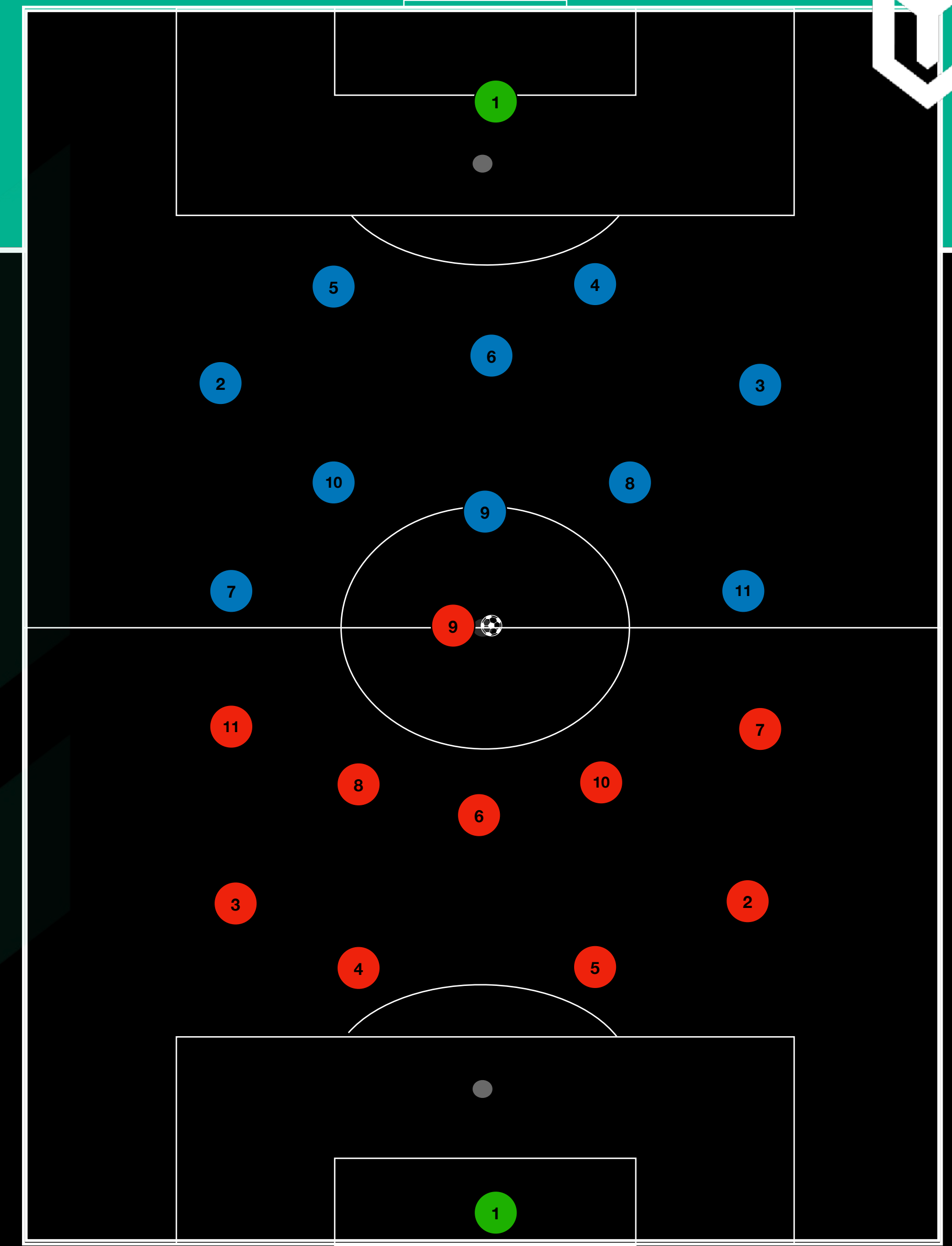
- The full match with the highest level of realism due to the possible number of decisions
- Conditions can be added to create a variety of outcomes

Positives

- High transferability of coaching detail
- Variety of decisions and tactical actions in and out of possession for all players
- Lots of coaching opportunities which can impact match performance

Limitations

- Low repetition of technical actions
- High physical demands if duration is not managed
- Requires butterfly coaching - coaching numerous topics in one practice.





Full Match Run Through

Explanation

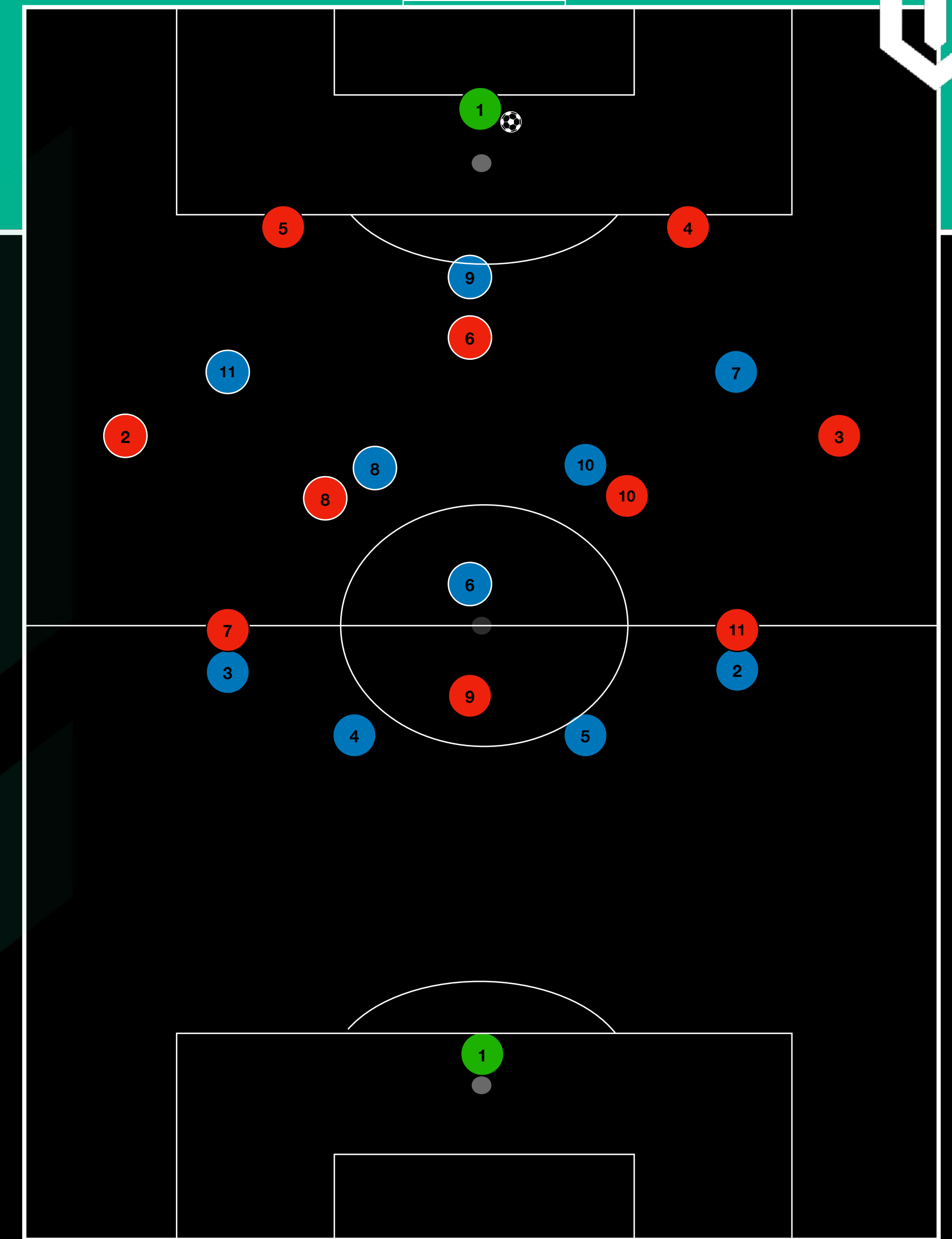
- An opportunity to prepare for matches by 'running through' set pieces and tactical plans
- This involves practicing many phases, with each phase lasting just a few minutes

Positives

- High tactical realism
- Lots of coaching opportunities
- Limited physical output required

Limitations

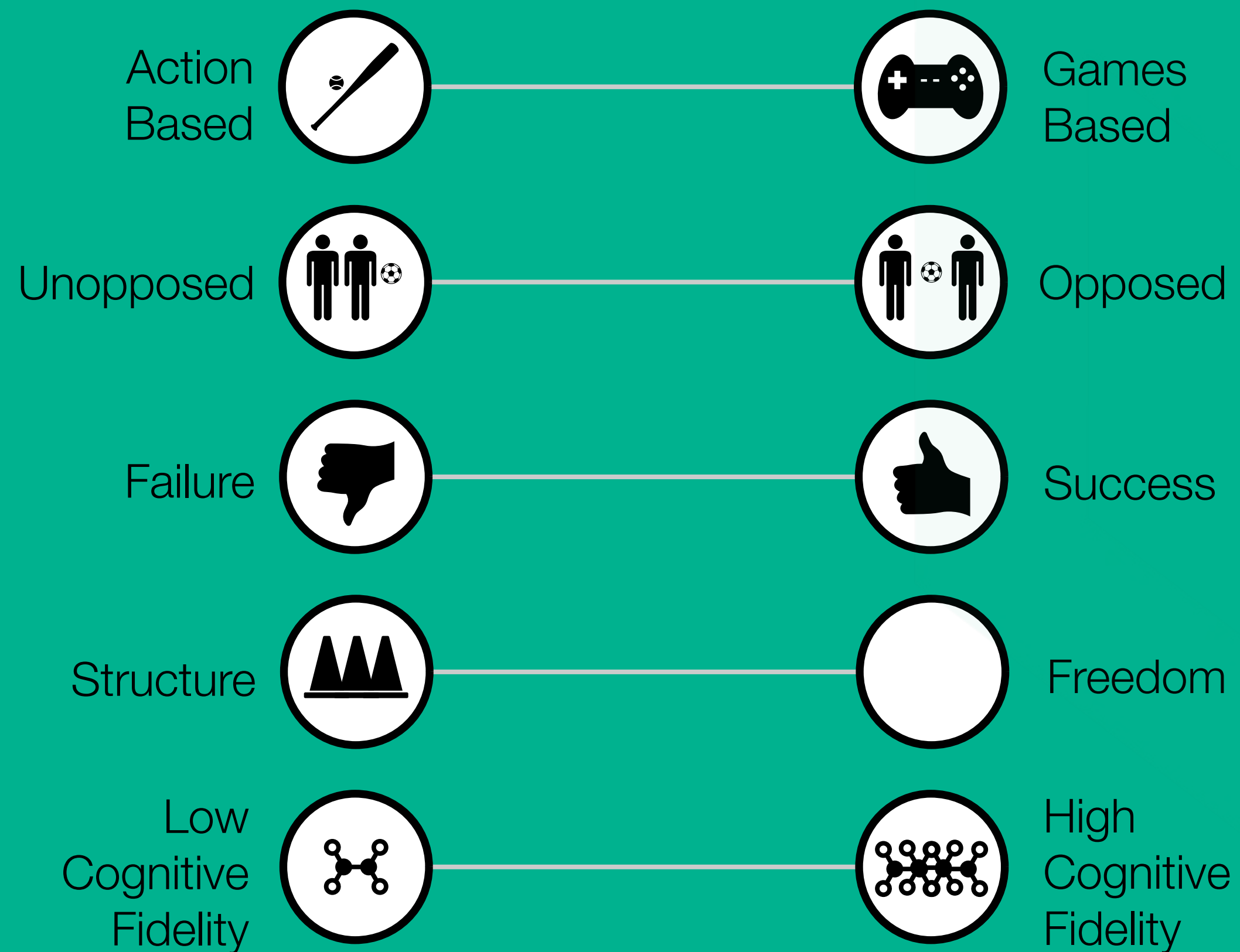
- Players can lose focus if time is not managed
- If used at the end of the session, the feeling can be 'flat' after training
- Very low number of technical actions



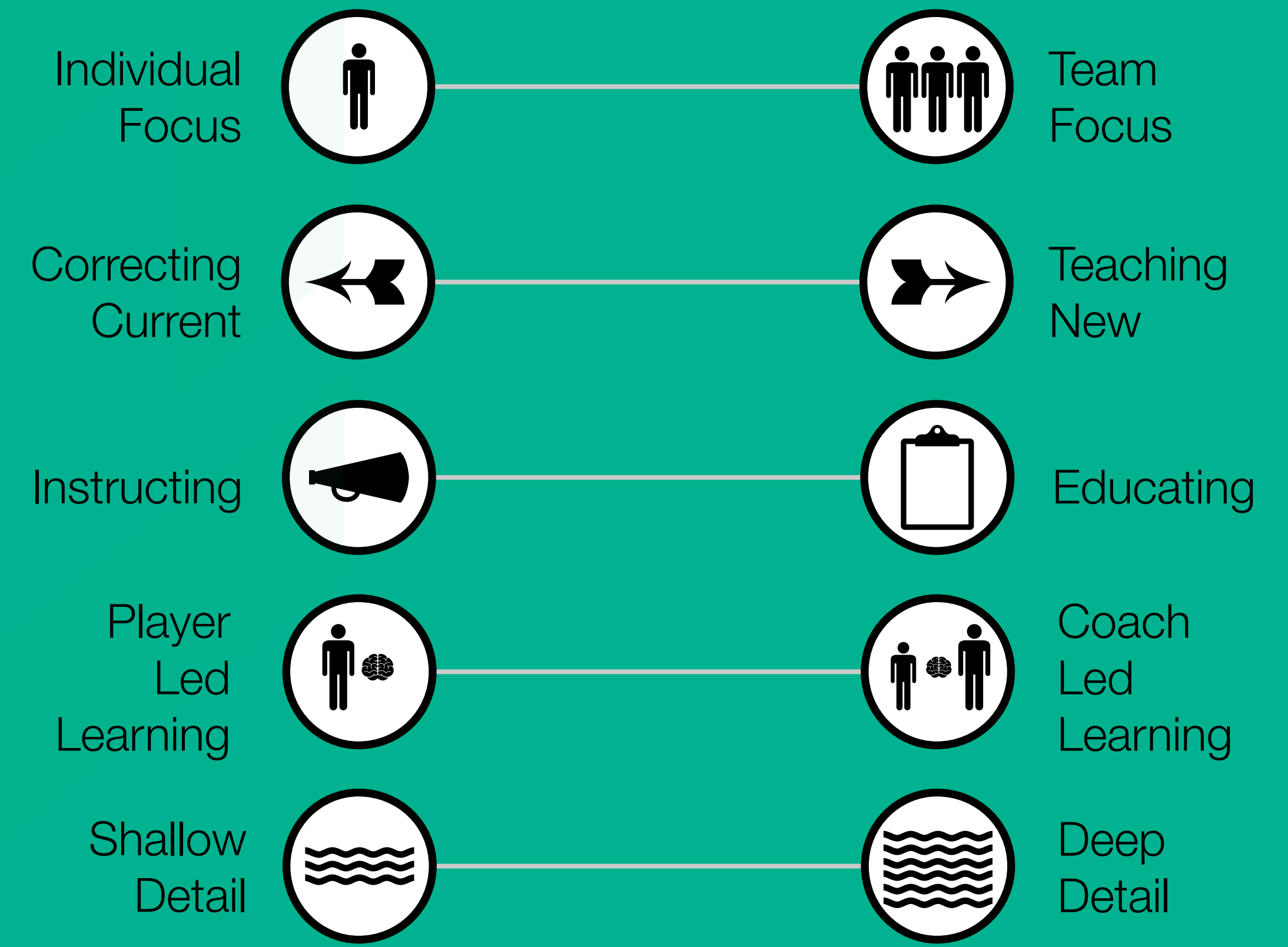


Coaching Principles

Design



Execution





Action Based vs Games Based

The first scale is the action-based vs game-based session design. This refers to whether we create a practice that forces a specific action, or we create a game which encourages those actions to be made. For example, we can set up a one-vs-one practice where we instruct an attacking player to beat a defending player, or we can create a one-vs-one game with mini goals at each end and give points when they score after being past the opponent. Both methods create a one-vs-one practice for the players involved but each method offers different trade-offs. The decision of which to use, is dependent on the outcomes we are looking for:

Action Based	Games Based
Increased repetition of specific action	Decreased repetition of specific action
Increased control over technical detail	Decreased control over technical detail
Easier to frequently intervene and correct	Harder to frequently intervene and correct
Decreased cognitive fidelity	Increased cognitive fidelity
Decreased frequency of decision making	Increased frequency of decision making
Decreased probability of entering a state of flow	Increased probability of entering a state of flow



Unopposed vs Opposed

Another scale often discussed among coaches is whether practices should be opposed or unopposed. There are numerous studies that have attempted to identify an answer to the opposed vs unopposed question. Research has demonstrated significant changes in participant's coordination when completing a basketball shot, or pass in football when opposed compared to being unopposed. Similarly, football specific research has suggested that kicking behaviour is specific to performance context, and some movement regulation features will not emerge unless a defender is present as a task constraint in practice. There are positives and negatives to both opposed and unopposed training, and the decision as to which to use again goes back to trade-offs.

Unopposed	Opposed
Increased control over motor skills used	Decreased control over motor skills used
Increased manipulation of success	Decreased manipulation of success
Increased repetition	Decreased repetition
Decreased contact injury risk	Increased contact injury risk
Decreased cognitive fidelity	Increased cognitive fidelity
Decreased frequency of decision making	Increased frequency of decision making
Decreased probability of transferability	Increased probability of transferability

Introduction

From both a research and anecdotal perspective, there is no doubt that players and teams must experience both failure and success in their journey, to make it to the highest level. Understanding this principle is key when designing and executing coaching sessions. Often due to our ego, we want our coaching sessions to look great to the parents and staff watching us, so that we can get feedback on how great we are. The challenge with this desire, is that failure never looks great to the eye, yet it is needed for the players and teams we work with. For example, a four-vs-one rondo without mistakes looks great to the eye, with a lot of quick passing and movement to retain possession for the four players. It may also be a massive confidence booster, however, if the players have achieved success, why are we not progressing to make it more challenging and forcing failure?

Failure	Success
Challenges players to develop	Limits opportunities to develop
Enjoyable for those with a growth mindset	Can become boring for those with a growth mindset
Decreases confidence for those who are insecure	Increases confidence for those who are insecure
Brings pressure prior to performance	Brings comfort prior to performance
Brings opportunity to increase grit	Limits opportunities to increase grit
Can put strain on group dynamics	Can support group dynamics



Structure vs Freedom

‘Let the game be the teacher’ has become a common phrase within youth development courses and structures in recent years. One of the key considerations with this point, is that the new generation of football players who no longer play football in the street, are often limited to playing within organised football structures only. With the change in technology and perceived safety of children in some locations, many young football players spend their free time at home playing gaming consoles. This has therefore limited the number of hours a player plays unorganised football without pressure and expectations. There was a belief that this loss in play may be one of the big challenges within player development, which is one of the reasons why the ‘let me play’ concept became so popular. There are also countries with the opposite situation, where players have limited organised football playing time, and have a lot of free football time in the streets and parks with their friends. Both bring critical benefits to the development and performance of players and teams.

Structure	Freedom
Coach and session led decision making	Player led decision making
Decreased opportunity for self-expression	Increased opportunity for self-expression
Increased specific learning outcomes	Decreased specific learning outcomes
Learning outcomes are limited by the session design	Learning outcomes limited by the environment
Increased probability of predictability	Decreased probability of predictability



“Training better decision-makers requires simulations that present the user with realistic problem-solving experiences”. Cognitive Fidelity is a term that is used in many industries in relation to skill acquisition. In relation to coaching, cognitive fidelity is ‘the level to which players are training in situations where their thoughts, feelings and actions are in line with those that will be present in the game’. This means that players are practicing utilising the same cognitive processes to experience different outcomes and therefore make better decisions. To put this more practically, a player who is practicing finishing in situations that create the same thoughts, feelings, and actions, is more likely to improve finishing in those situations. In a game, a winger is delivering crosses while running down the line with pressure from an opponent and teammate support from behind, the player should also practice with these factors during training where possible.

Principles & Categories



Individual vs Team Focused

Depending on the environment we are working in, the scale of team focus may be tipped to one side. However, as previously mentioned, this does not mean the other should be ignored or forgotten. Individuals need an element of team structure to support their brilliance, and the greatest teams need the best individuals to achieve success. If working in a development-focused environment such as youth academies, the focus should be tipped towards the individual, and less towards the team. Individual focused coaching means designing a session and executing a session with the individuals as the primary focus. For example, a finishing session with focus on developing each player’s motor skill execution, with interventions focused on the needs of specific individuals as opposed to generic points for improvement. At the other end of the scale would be a possession session focused on team shape and movement patterns.

Individual Focused	Team Focused
Increased individual development opportunities	Decreased individual development opportunities
Decreased team development opportunities	Increased team development opportunities
Decreased opportunity to improve group dynamics	Increased opportunity to improve group dynamics
Increased feeling of importance for individuals	Decreased feeling of importance for individuals

Correcting Current vs Teaching New

When should we move on from what we are currently teaching? How many of our players must be successful at playing passes to break lines before we move on to a new topic? As coaches, we are responsible for not only correcting what players can execute, but also teaching new attributes, ranging from motor skills, athletic skills, intelligence, and mindset characteristics. How long do we coach crossing and finishing before we move on to central combination play? Finding the right moments to correct current abilities and teach new abilities is a skill we should develop to maximise session outcomes. One of the big questions when discussing the trade-offs of teaching new abilities and correcting current abilities; is are we catering for the best players in the group or all players in the group? Our priorities here will guide the decision of when to move on to teaching new information and abilities. There are many coaches and coach educators who speak about senior players lacking 'brilliant basics'. Is this because we move on too quickly as coaches without ensuring enough detail and repetition has been applied to what we are teaching? At one extreme we could spend a whole week teaching the Cruyff turn, ensuring every player can execute the turn effectively, with the right detail, the right speed, and in the right situations. While doing this, there are some players who will certainly be ready to move on before others. Those players ready to move on are potentially missing out on new learning opportunities, while we are focusing on helping those who are not ready to move on

Correcting Current	Teaching New
Some players miss development opportunities	All players have development opportunities
Less players get left behind in the learning process	More players get left behind in the learning process
Less topics can be covered over a set period	More topics can be covered over a set period
Topics can be covered with deeper detail	Topics are often covered with shallower detail



Instructing vs Educating

We know decision making is a complex task, but for the purpose of this analogy, let us imagine completing a Rubik’s cube was just as difficult. The cube contains options, and each option affects the next option, and that option affects the next one, and eventually will dictate the outcome of whether it is completed or not. Now there are 2 key approaches to teaching someone to complete a Rubik’s cube. Option 1 is, we give them the cube and instruct them step by step on how to complete the cube. Turn this line left, turn this layer right, spin the cube around etc. If we know how to complete it, then they will complete it quickly. But now when we give them a new cube unsolved and leave the room, how are they ever going to solve it? They may sit for hours, days, and weeks trying to remember what they were told to do. Especially when the cube does not start off looking exactly as it did the first time. This was an instructional method of teaching, which works when the triggers are all the same and each instruction can be remembered in sequence. In relation to football, set pieces would be an example of phases that may require instructional coaching. Option 2 is, we teach them the rules and principles of the cross, the edges and corners, then support them in completing the cube with reminders of the principles, if required. There is little argument that the outcome of this would be a slower initial completion of the cube, however, when giving them a new cube and leaving the room, there is now an increased probability that they would complete the cube by themselves. In relation to football, the fact that on a matchday we are not playing, means we must educate players so that when they step on the pitch, they are able to execute the actions and make the best decisions possible to follow the principles of the team and meet the objectives of the game.

Instructing	Educating
Players become coach dependent	Players become independent
Decreased self-expression	Increased in self-expression
Increased short-term effectiveness	Increased long-term effectiveness
Lower level of coaching skill and effort required	Higher level of coaching skill and effort required



Played Led vs Coach Led Learning

How many mistakes do we allow players to make before we step in to teach? Are we responsible for facilitating or dictating what is learnt in our coaching environments? These are questions we must ask when deciding the role, we want to play as the coach within a session. A player-led approach refers to the method of allowing the learning process to be controlled by the players, whereas a coach led approach refers to the method of dictating the learning process. At one extreme of the scale, a player led approach may allow players to control the whole session, from the topic they want to work on, to the session they want to execute. At the other extreme, there is the approach of the coach controlling the learning experience by taking full control of the session. In between there are many balances we can use to find the right approach to meet our objectives in the most suitable manner.

Player Led Learning	Coach Led Learning
Players become independent learners	Players become dependent learners
Slower short-term performance increases	Quicker short-term performance increases
Knowledge available is dependent on the player	Knowledge available is dependent on the coach and player
Increased self-expression	Decreased self-expression



Shallow vs Deep Detail

One of the key attributes that is less spoken about, is the understanding of detail and being able to apply that detail in a coaching session. Every action has so many levels of detail, and the level in which we understand each action will dictate our skill to identify problems, and then apply correct solutions. When watching a full back struggle with one-vs-one defending, how many different possible problems can we identify? Do we just look at their speed, or can we identify body shape, acceleration, footwork, and other deeper details? At times there are simple challenges that players are facing, but as coaches we do not understand enough detail to identify and support them with the problem. This does not mean that we should always teach with a deep level of detail, as there are times when players use detail that we would not agree with but have success with it. How many of us would have taught Ronaldo to shoot using the ‘knuckleball’ technique? What we can do with our detail, is support the development of the knuckleball shot, using an understanding about the different effects we can have on the ball using different parts of our foot. When designing session plans it is rare to find sections for deep detail, yet that may be the aspect which takes a player to another level.

Shallow Detail	Deep Detail
Can limit variety in motor skill executions	Can significantly support player development
Self development required by players	Can significantly support team performance
Requires less focus from coaches and players	Requires significant focus from coaches and players
Requires less coaching time	Requires significant coaching time



TOPIC 1: 1v1's

Practices to encourage players to develop 1v1 dominance across a variety of situations





Contents: 1v1's

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Coaching Points: Frontal 1v1

In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Awareness of Opponent Detail	Being aware of key detail such as the opponents front foot, body shape, stride pattern, and likely behaviours in the duel
Awareness of Opportunities	Being aware of the best opportunities available based on the space, teammates, and opponents positioning & profile
Change of Speed	Being able to slow down and speed up to manipulate and exploit the opponent
Disguise	Using the body, eyes, hips, stride pattern and skill moves to deceive the opponent and create an advantage
Dribble Direction	Using a dribble direction to challenge the opponent, e.g. dribbling directly at their front foot to invite a challenge
End Product	At the end of the 1v1 action, providing a quality end product with a pass, cross or shot
First Touch	Receiving with a first touch to best set up the frontal 1v1 showdown
Inviting the Challenge	Using touch length, as well as dribble speed and direction to invite the opponent to make a challenge
Stepping Across	After beating the opponent, stepping across in front of them prevents them from making a challenge without fouling
Toe to Toe	When close to the opponent with the ball, ensuring a quick reaction to beat them to the ball when they make a challenge

Coaching Points: Back to Pressure 1v1

In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Awareness of Opponent Detail	Staying aware of the opponents body shape, movement, distance, and likely behaviour
Awareness of Opportunities	Based on the situation (teammates, opponents and space) what are the best opportunities available
Body Shape	Using the body to manage the distance between the ball and the opponent,
Centre of Gravity	Keeping a low centre of gravity enables a stronger base to protect the ball
Change of Speed	At the right time, using acceleration to roll and beat the opponent
End Product	At the end of the 1v1 action, providing a quality end product with a pass, cross or shot
First Touch	Using the first touch to either protect the ball, or roll past the opponent
Keep the Distance	Pushing off of the opponent, and using the arm across their body can help keep the distance
Option to Roll	Based on the situation, and the pressure direction from the opponent, rolling them can exploit the 1v1
Physical Contact	Maintaining physical contact gives an insight into the direction of pressure (left, right, centre) from the opponent

Coaching Points: Aerial 1v1

In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Awareness of Opponent	Staying aware of the opponents positioning and stride pattern to predict when/if they may jump
Awareness of Opportunities	Keeping focused on opportunities to maximise the aerial duel based on the situation
Communication	Communicating early can offer information to teammates about the intentions of the duel (e.g. flick on)
Direction and Flight	The direction and flight of the header should maximise the impact of winning the duel
Jump Timing	Timing the jump to ensure dominance, e.g. jumping early to place arm across the opponent and restricting their jump
Jumping and Landing Coordination	Coordination of the foot pattern and body to reach the necessary height to win the duel
Jump Power	Creating enough power through the legs and body to reach the right height and execute a header with enough power
Use of Body	In the approach and take off, using the body to restrict the opponent from winning the duel
Pre-Movement	Moving to create space to accelerate before jumping can enable a higher jump capacity
Using Arms	Using the arm to lean on the shoulder of the opponent when jumping can restrict their maximum height

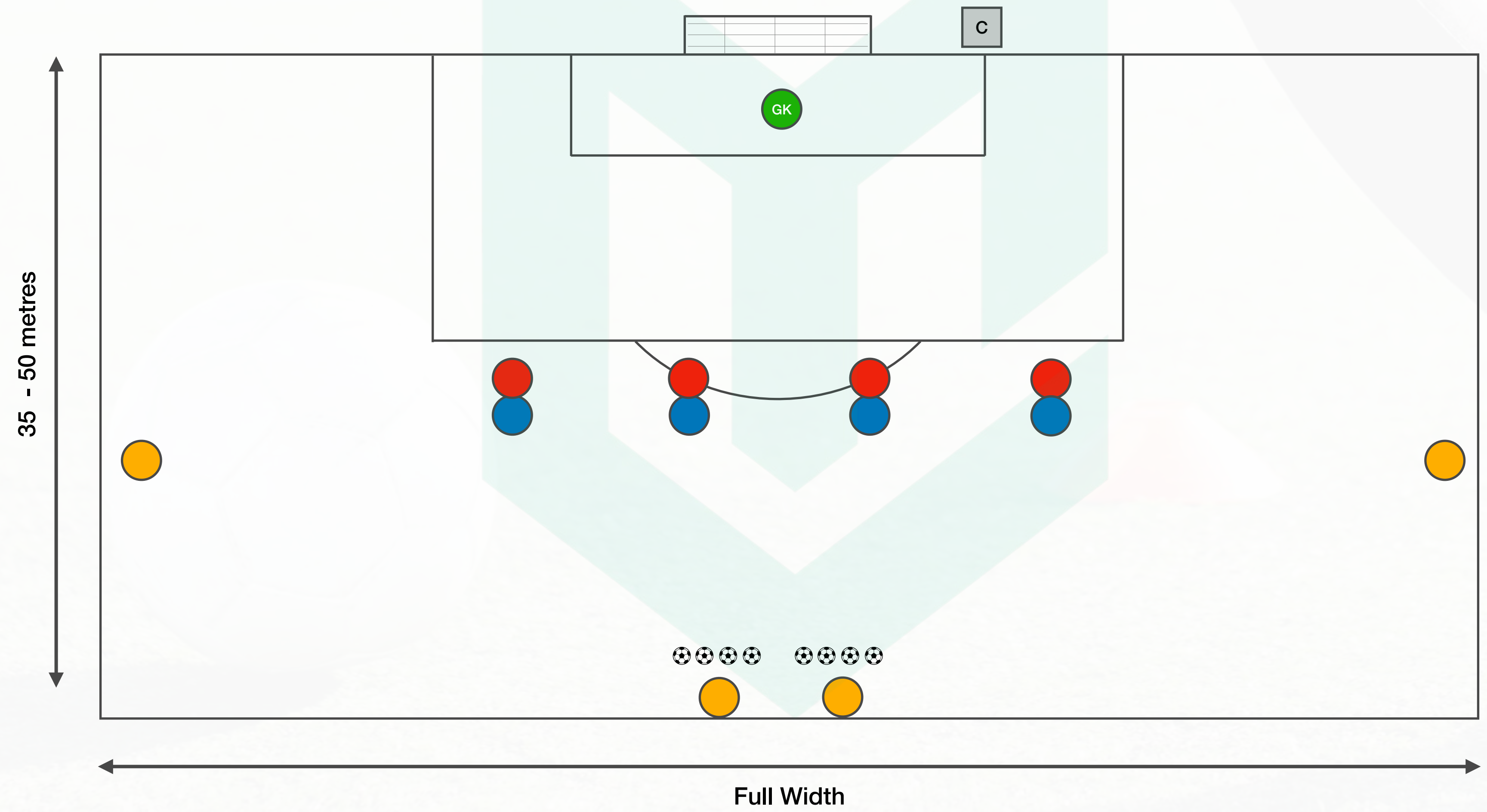
Out of Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Avoiding Toe to Toe	Keeping the front foot out of the line of the ball to avoid having to commit and make a challenge
Awareness of Dangers	Staying aware of potential dangers based on teammates, opponents, and space available for the opponent
Awareness of Opponent	Awareness of opponent detail such as their strongest foot and preferred actions to predict their likely next action
Early Pressure	Applying pressure as the ball is being received and slowing down when arriving in the duel
Forcing Inside or Outside	Keeping the front foot on the inside or outside of the ball to encourage the opponent to progress in a specific direction
Stepping Across	After the opponent takes a large touch, stepping across in front of them to prevent them from getting to the ball
Timing the Tackle	Awaiting the right time to regain the ball, based on the circumstances, particularly own strengths vs opponent strengths
Jockeying to Delay	Delaying the dribble by jockeying and restricting direct penetration with the dribble
Risk vs Reward of the Tackle	Understanding the risk of making a tackle in the specific situation, to best decide if it is worth the risk
Using the Touchline	Utilising the touchline as an extra defender, by forcing opponents away from the centre and into the touchline



001

1v1 Aerial Duels

A repetition **picture practice** for players to practice challenging for aerial duels in both attacking and defending situations



Numbers

12+

Age

14+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

8 actions x
3/6 rounds



1v1 Aerial Duels

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

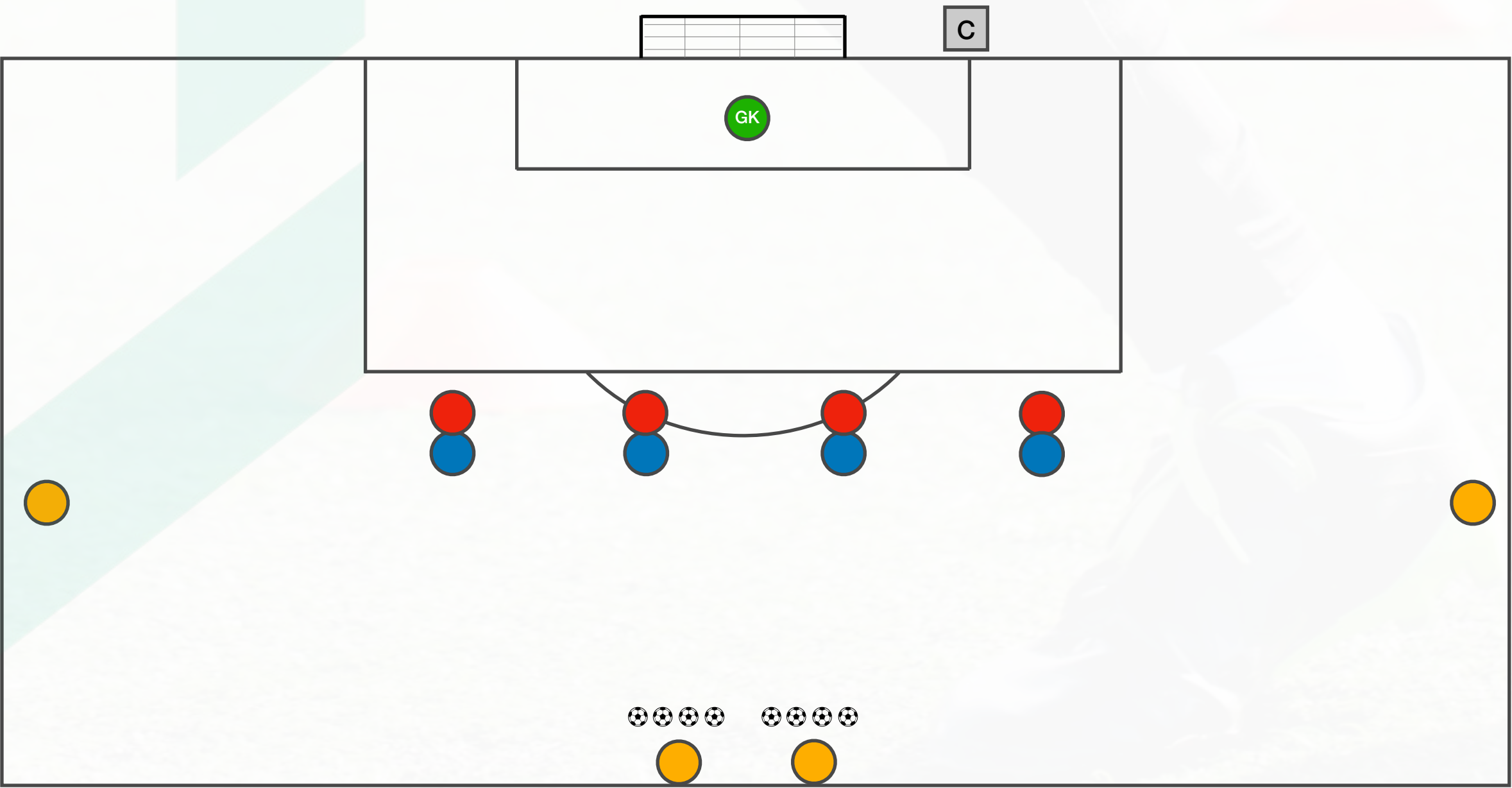
Objective 1: An increased confidence when competing for the ball in 1v1 aerial duels

Objective 2: An improved execution when using the body and head during aerial duels

Objective 3: An improved awareness of positioning and body shape to deal with direct passes and crosses

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using the full width of the pitch, and up to half a pitch in height
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 4 players, with 1 goalkeeper in the full-sized goal
- 1 team is the defending team, 1 the attacking team, and 1 the serving team
- The serving team provide the direct passes and crosses for the 1v1 duels
- The game starts with a direct aerial pass into one of the attackers for the 1v1 duel
- Both the attackers and defenders react to deal with the situation
- If the attacking team win the ball they can score, if the defending team win the ball, the next action is prepared
- The second action is the ball then being passed wide, and crossed in the box
- The defenders step up, before dropping back for the cross
- The attacking players must ensure all defenders are dealing with a 1v1 situation
- After the cross, the next direct pass is played, targeting a different defender & attacker
- This is then repeated until all 4 defenders have dealt with a 1v1 situation
- After 4 direct passes, and 4 crosses, teams rotate
- The attacking team then defend, the defending team serve, and the serving team attack.
- The winning team is the team who concedes the least amount of goals





002

1v1 Circuit

A repetition **picture practice** for players to develop their frontal 1v1' duels and back to pressure 1v1 duels.

Numbers

14+

Age

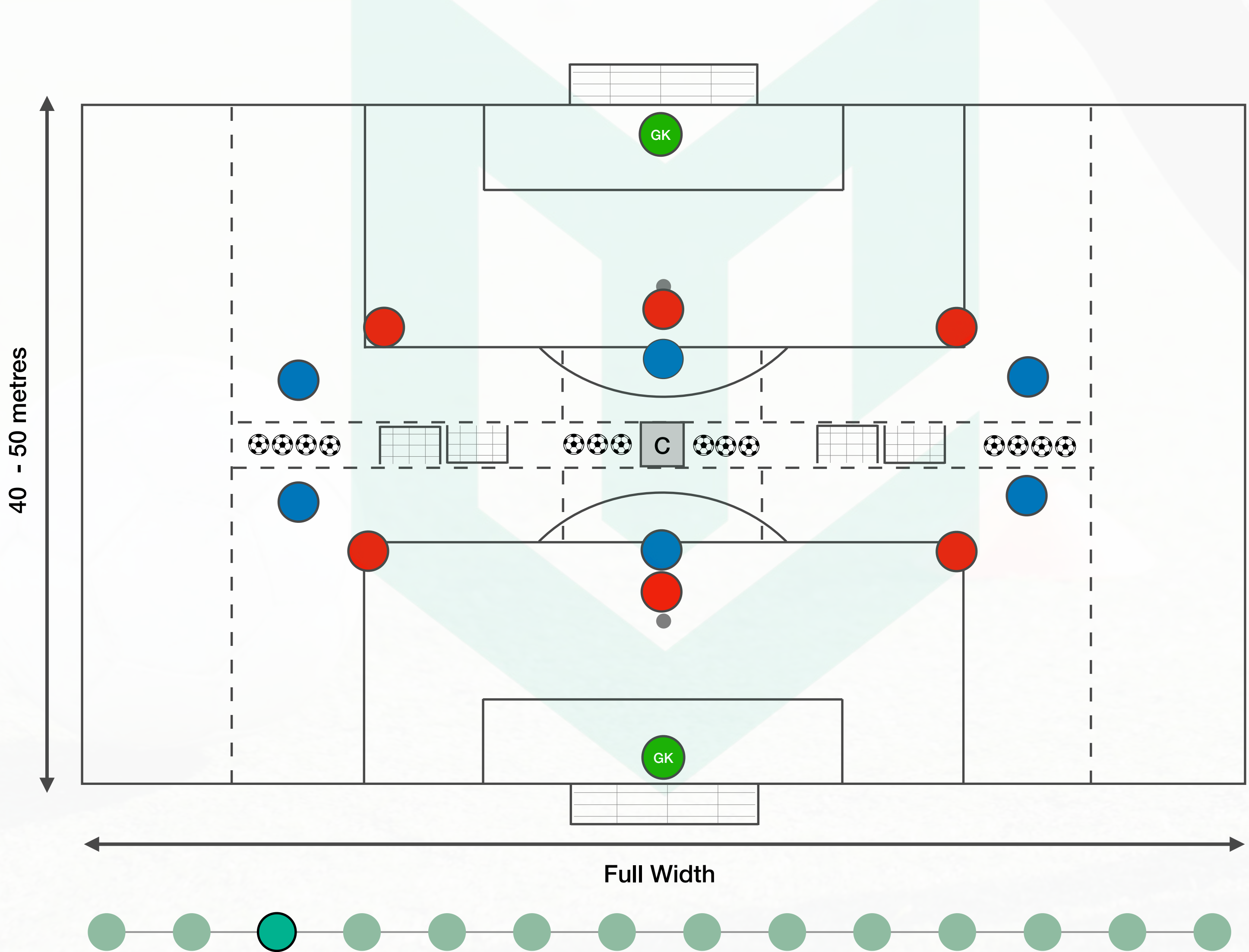
8+

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

3 actions x
6-12 rounds





1v1 Circuit

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

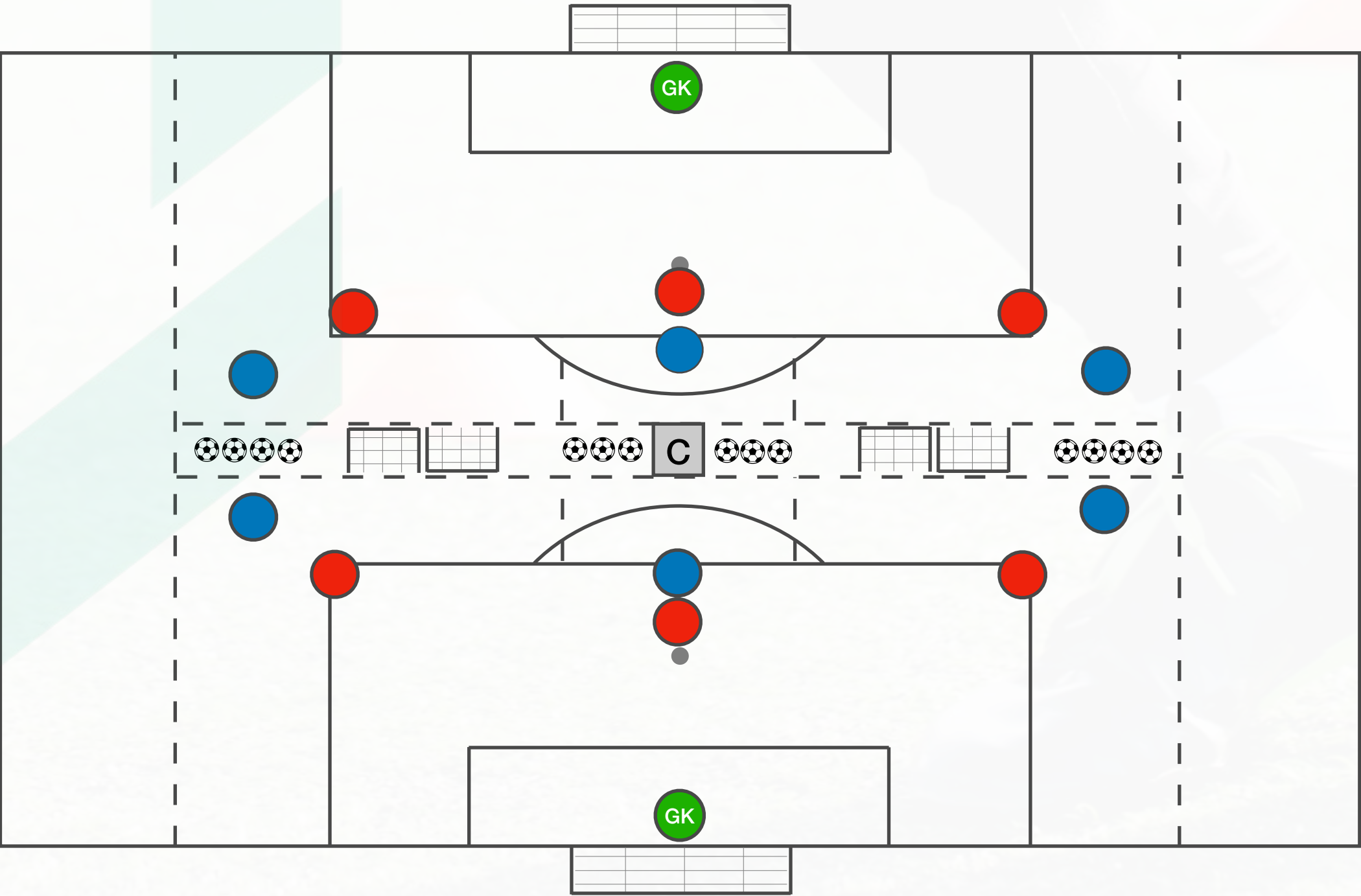
Objective 1: An improved execution of dribbling and protecting the ball in 1v1 situations

Objective 2: An improved execution of finishing in and around the box

Objective 3: An increased awareness of different ways to deal with 1v1 attacking and defending situations

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set using 2 rectangle grids around 2 penalty areas, with a small gap between
- Small lines are created using cones to visually divide each grid into 3 sections
- 1 centre section, and 2 wide sections, each with 1 defender and 1 attacker
- 4 mini-goals are used as transition goals for defenders to attack
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 6, plus 1 goalkeeper in each full-sized goal
- 1 team is the attacking team, and 1 team is the defending team to start with
- The game starts with 1 attacker from each grid receiving/taking a ball to attack the 1v1 situation
- (E.g. both left wingers collect a ball and attack 1v1)
- The attacker has to score in the full-sized goal for 1 point for the team
- If the defender regains, they can then score in the mini-goals for 1 point for their team
- The attack lasts for a maximum of 8 seconds
- After 8 seconds, or a goal has been scored, or the ball goes out of play, the next attack starts
- The next attack comes from another channel in both grids. (E.g. both central grids now attack)
- After all 3 channels have been (6 in total), attackers can rotate around to the next channel
- After a set number of repetitions, defenders and attackers can swap. The team with the most points wins





003

1v1 Master

A **free possession practice** for players to develop their 1v1 receiving and dribbling skills under pressure.

Numbers

4+

Age

6+

8 - 12 metres

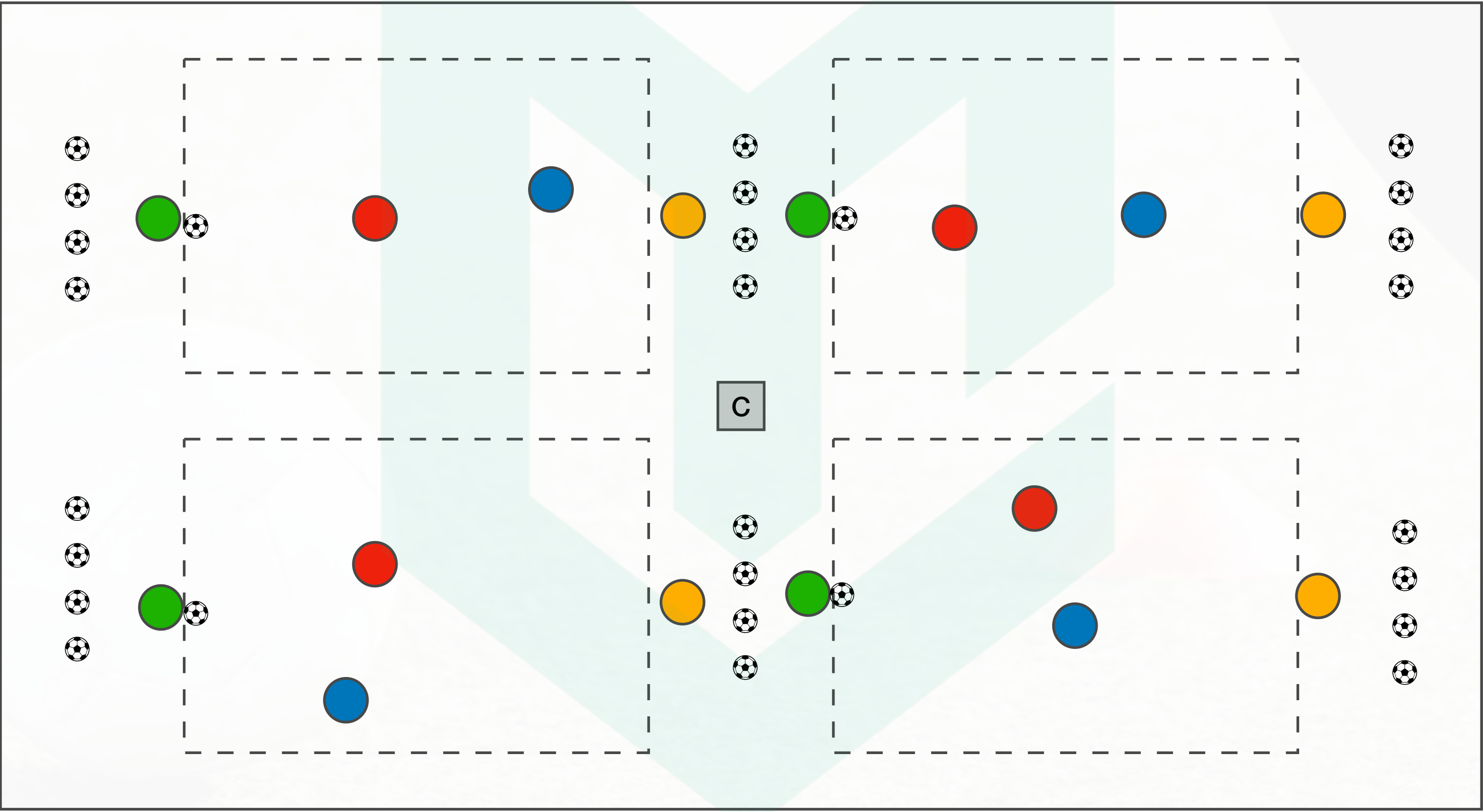
10 - 20 metres

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

4-12 x
1-3 mins





1v1 Master

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

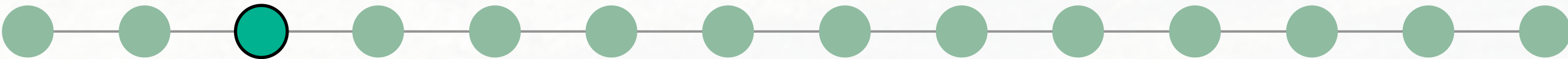
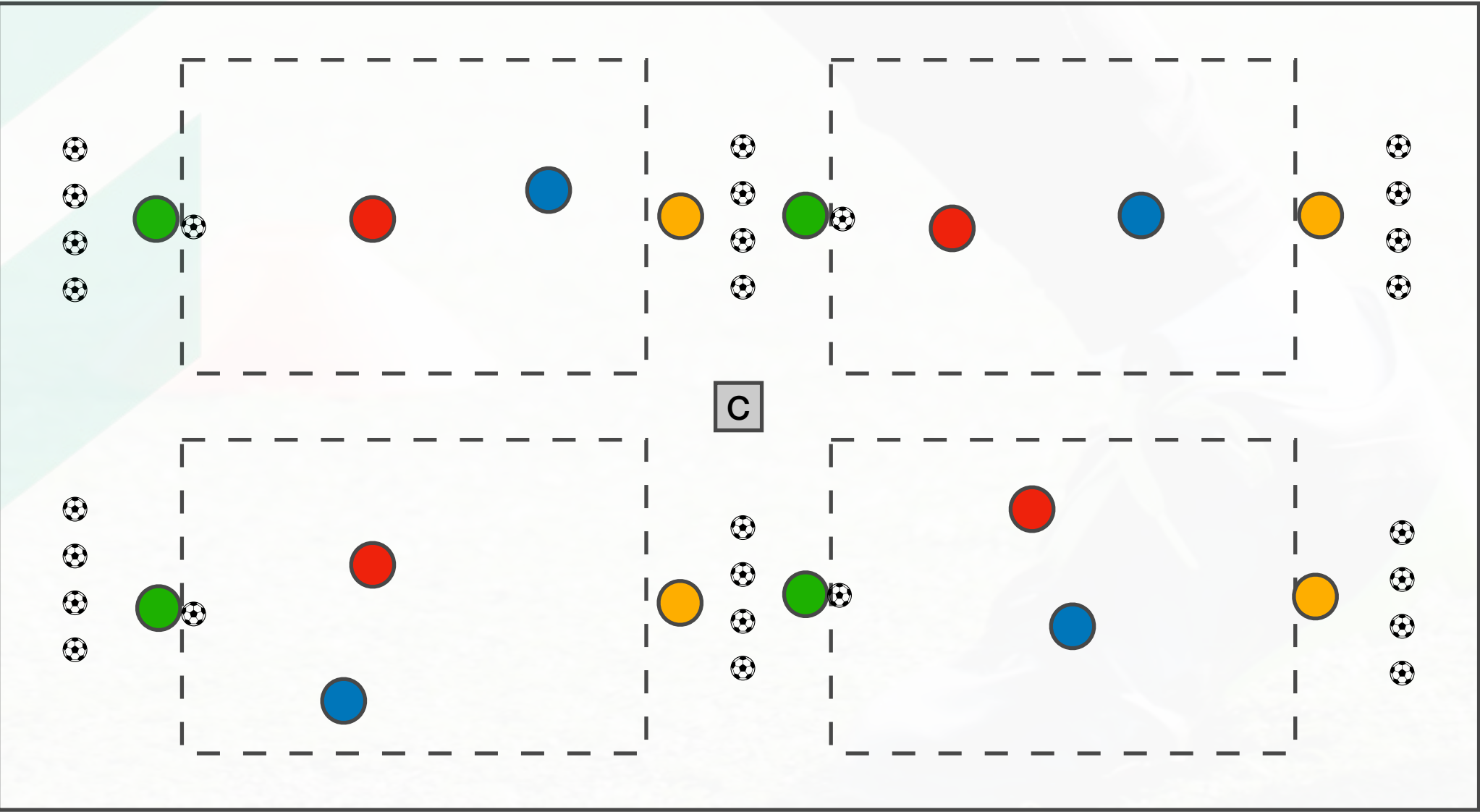
Objective 1: An improved confidence when receiving under pressure from an opponent

Objective 2: A future improved physical capacity to repeat high intensity individual actions

Objective 3: An improved ability to execute 1v1 actions across a variety of receiving situations

Game Flow & Rules

- 4 Grids are set up, with players divided into 4 teams of 4, with one player from each team in each grid
- 2 players from each grid start at the ends, with 2 players in the middle competing against each other
- The end players are 'target players', who receive the ball with the objective of playing the ball back inside
- It's simplest if all players in the same team are fulfilling the same roles, e.g. all the greens are target players to start
- The players inside are attempting to receive from one target player then transfer to the opposite side
- Once the players receive the ball from one side, they cannot pass back, they have to play to the opposite side
- Every time they receive from one side and transfer to the other, they receive one point
- After playing to the second side for the point, they receive the ball again to play to the other side to get another point
- If they regain the ball, then play to one side, they do not get a point until the ball is transferred to the opposite side
- When one player receives, the opponent attempts to regain the ball or prevent passes being played to the opposite side
- The players on the outside can move across the end of the grid to create passing lanes to help the player in possession
- Each round can last between 45 seconds and 90 seconds. After each round players rotate in and out
- Each player keeps their score, then at the end of each round the teams can add their scores together
- At the end of the rounds, the team with the most points is the winning team
- When rotating, either both players can change with the outside players, or one player can come in and one player stays out





004

1v1 Reactions

A horizontal **wave practice** for players to develop their frontal 1v1 attacking & defending and transition reaction time

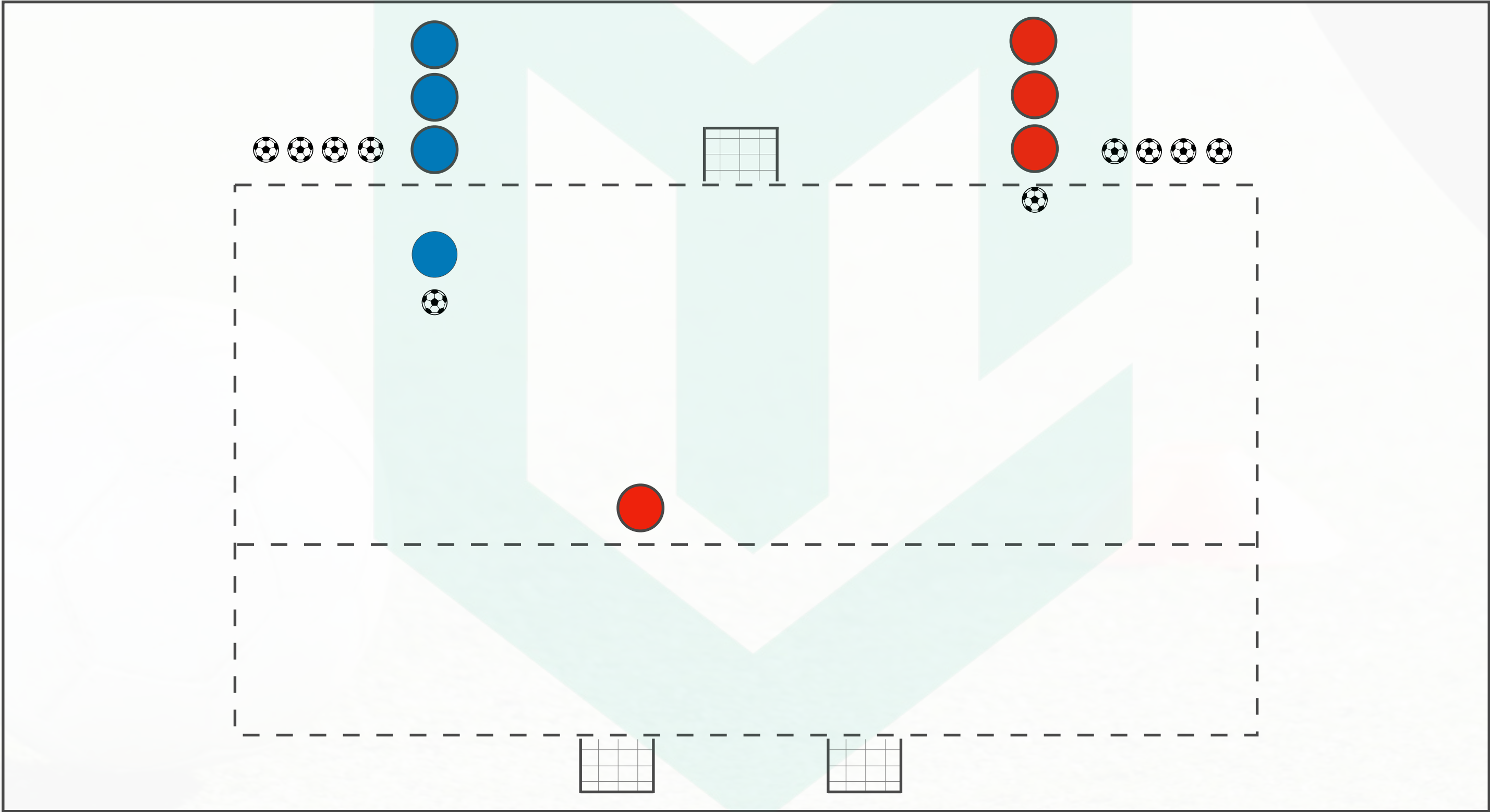
Numbers

8+

Age

5+

5 - 10 metres
15 - 25 metres



20 -35 metres

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

3-6 x
3-5 mins



1v1 Reactions

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

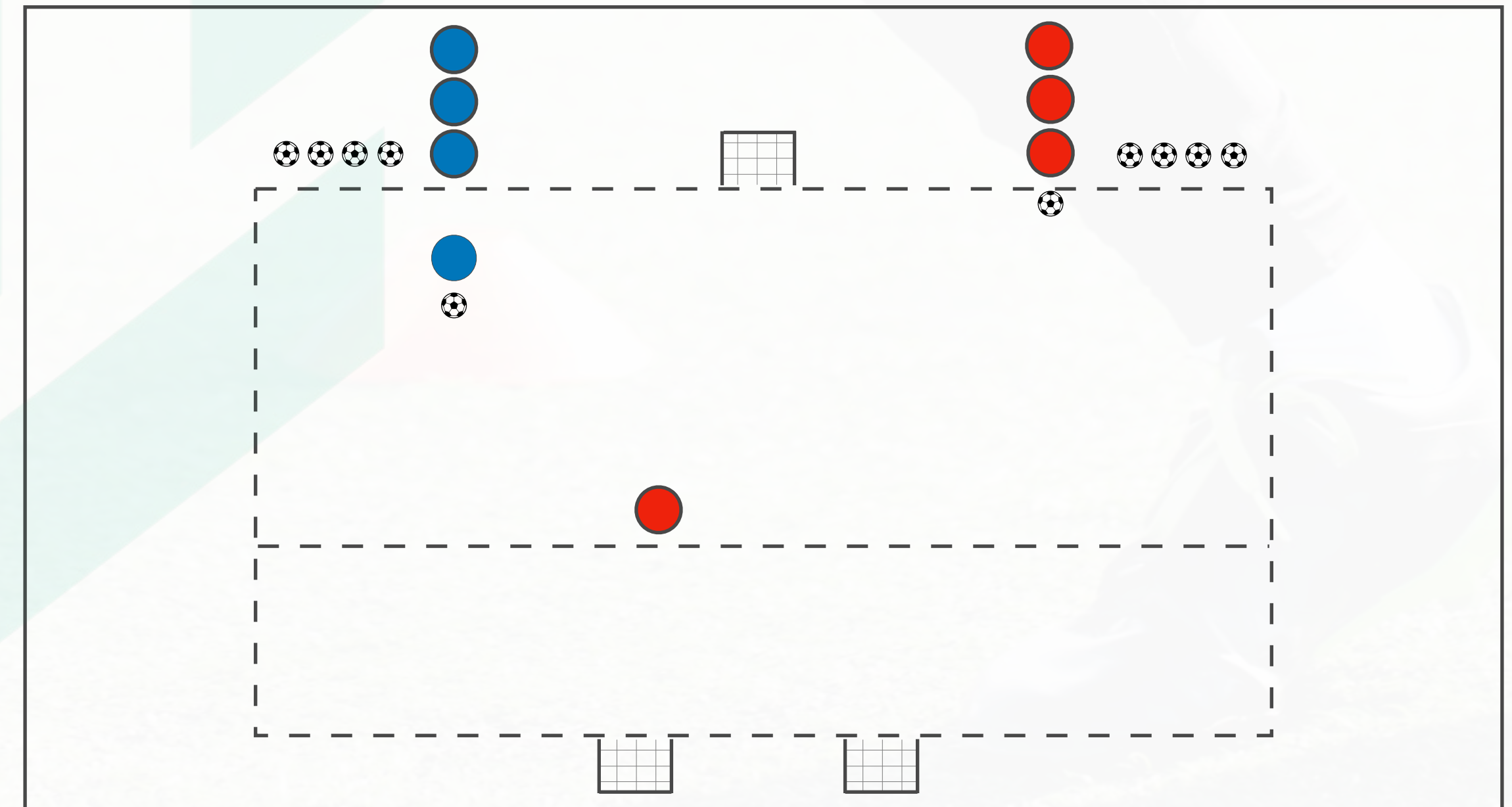
Objective 1: An improved positive feeling towards the environment and teammates

Objective 2: An increased composure and quality of execution during 1v1 attacking & defending situations

Objective 3: A future quicker reaction time when adjusting to transitions or secondary actions

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a grid, 3 mini-goals and an end zone which players have to dribble into
- 1 mini-goal is placed opposite the 2 mini-goals as a target for the defender if they regain the ball
- Players are divided up into 2 teams, and line up at the top end of the grid
- The game starts with one player from one team defending on the edge of the zone
- One player from the opposite team will start dribbling with the ball to attack the mini-goals
- Their objective is to score. They can only score after dribbling into the end zone
- As soon as they score or miss, they then have to instantly defend
- E.g. the blue player starts with the ball, and the red player defends the mini-goals
- The blue attacker will dribble with the ball to get into the end zone and score
- If the red player regains, they can score in the opposite mini-goal for 1 point
- If the blue player manages to score, they get 1 point, If the ball goes off the field, a red player will attack
- The blue attacker will now be the defender protecting the 2 mini-goals
- After a goal/ball out of play, the red attacker will defend, and the next blue will attack
- If the red defender regains and scores, the blue attacker still becomes the next defender
- The game can last for a set time limit, or there can be a points total to achieve to win





005

1v1 Recoveries

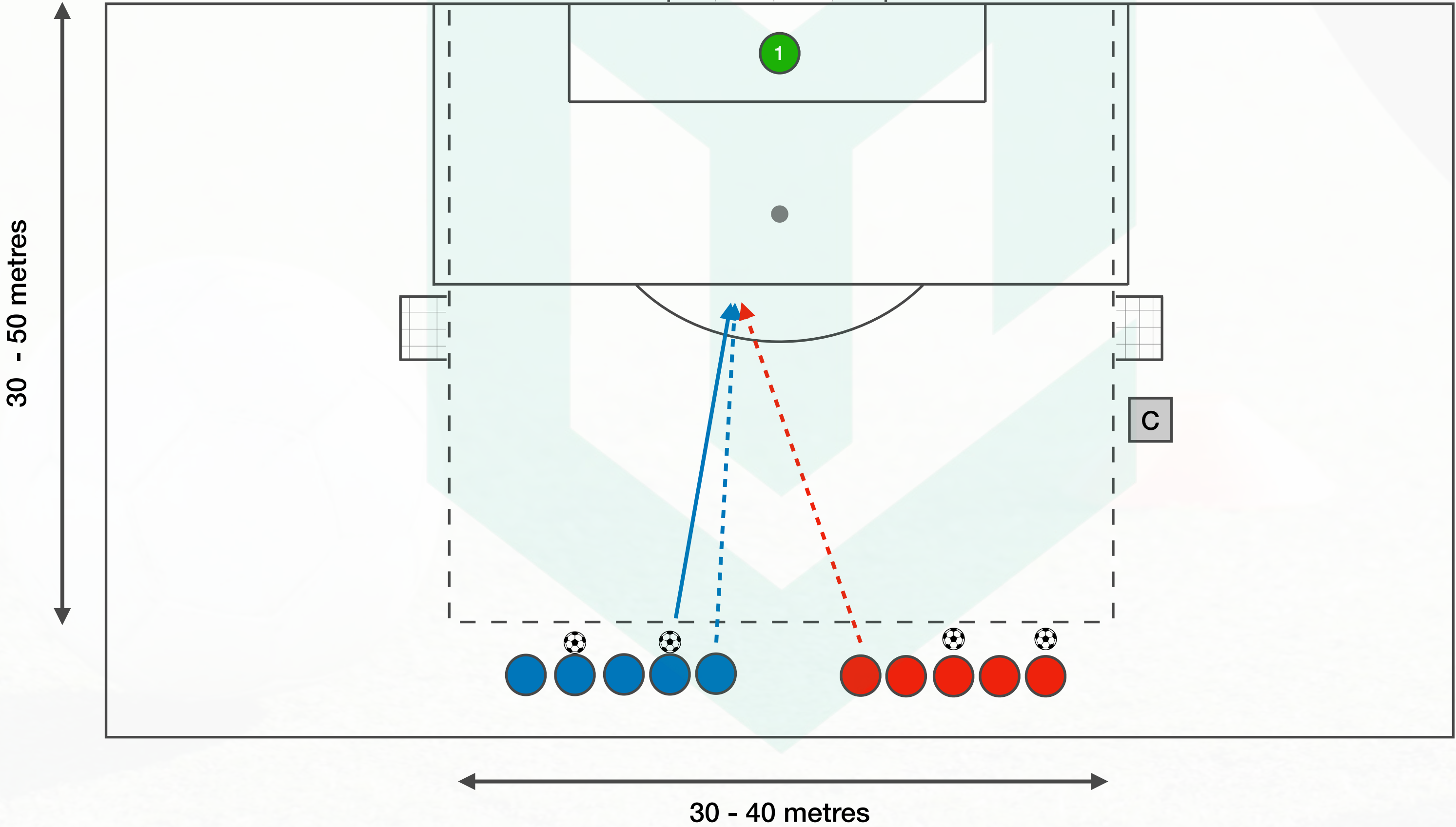
A repetition **picture practice** for players to develop their 1v1 recovery runs and 1v1 dribbling to finish

Numbers

10+

Age

9+

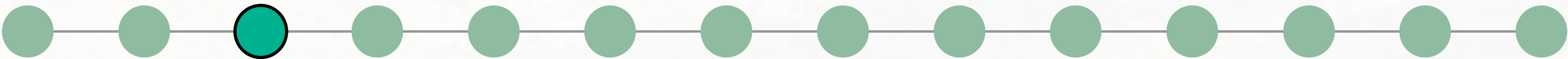


Difficulty

1/5

Time Length

3-5 x
4-6 mins





1v1 Recoveries

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

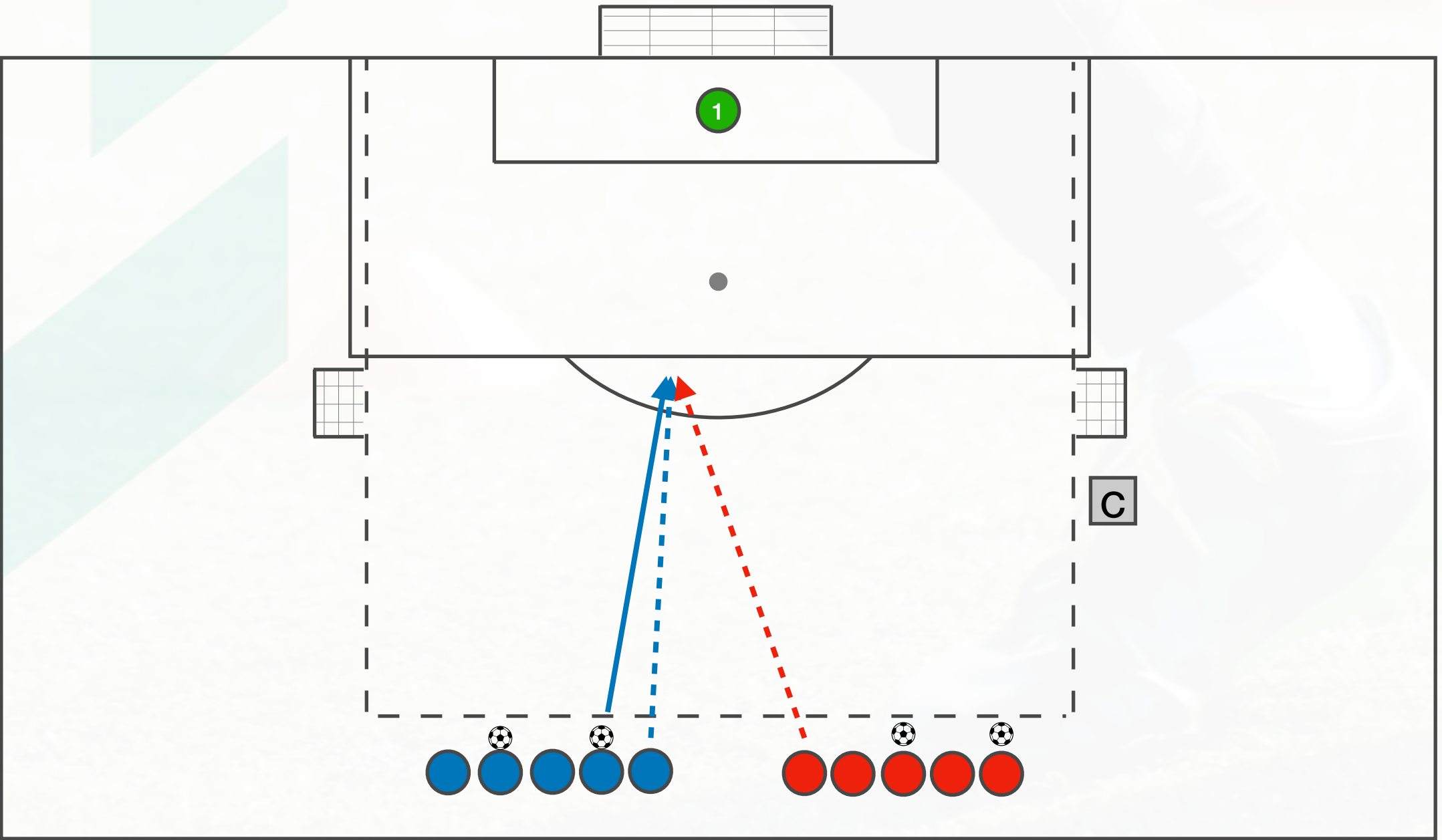
Objective 1: An improved future acceleration and deceleration speed

Objective 2: An improved positive feeling regarding the environment and teammates

Objective 3: An improved execution when finishing in 1v1 situations under pressure

Game Flow & Rules

- The grid is set up using a third of a pitch, narrowed to the edges of the penalty area
- 1 mini-goals is placed on either side of the grid by the edge of penalty area as targets for the recovery defenders
- Players are divided into 2 teams, with at least 4 players in each team
- The game starts with a pass from the second player in line
- One player from each team sprints to get to the ball
- The player defending is the player on the opposite team to the player who passes the ball
- This player is attempting to get to the ball first/regain the ball or prevent the attacker from scoring
- Both players can only cross the line once the pass crosses the line
- If the recovering player leaves too early, the point is given to the attacking players team
- If the attacking players leaves too early, they are offside and the point is given to the recovering players team
- If the recovering defender manages to regain the ball, they can score in the mini-goals for 1 point
- As soon as a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the next player from the opposite team starts dribbling
- E.g. The second blue player passes the ball, the first blue and red players then race to get to the ball
- If the blue/red player manages to score or the ball goes out of play, the next red and blue players get ready
- The second red player in line now plays the pass for the first blue and red players





006

1v1's Back to Pressure

A repetition **picture practice** for players to develop their 1v1 skills with their back to pressure

Numbers

4+

Age

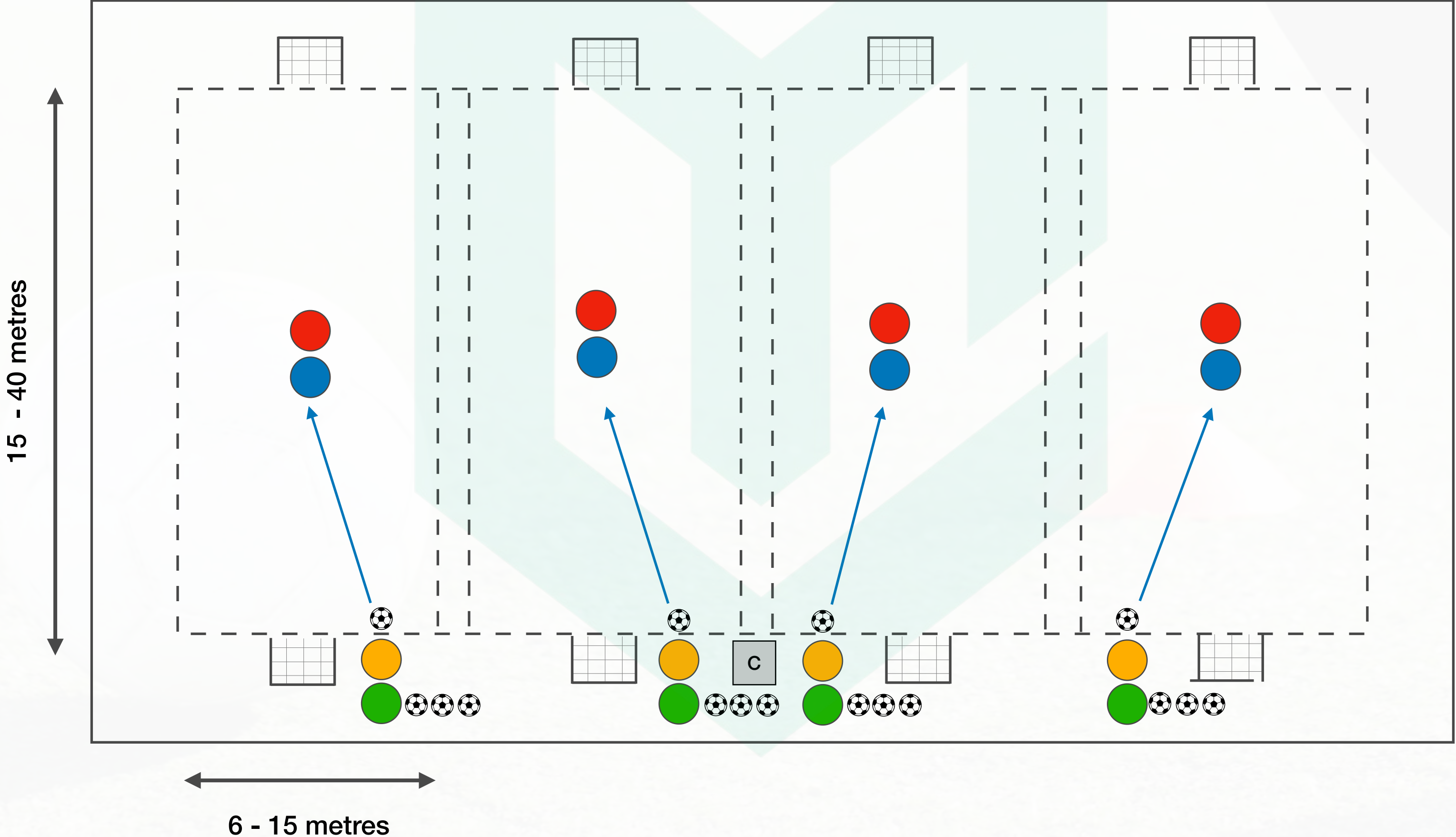
7+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

4
actions x
4-12 rounds





1v1's Back to Pressure

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

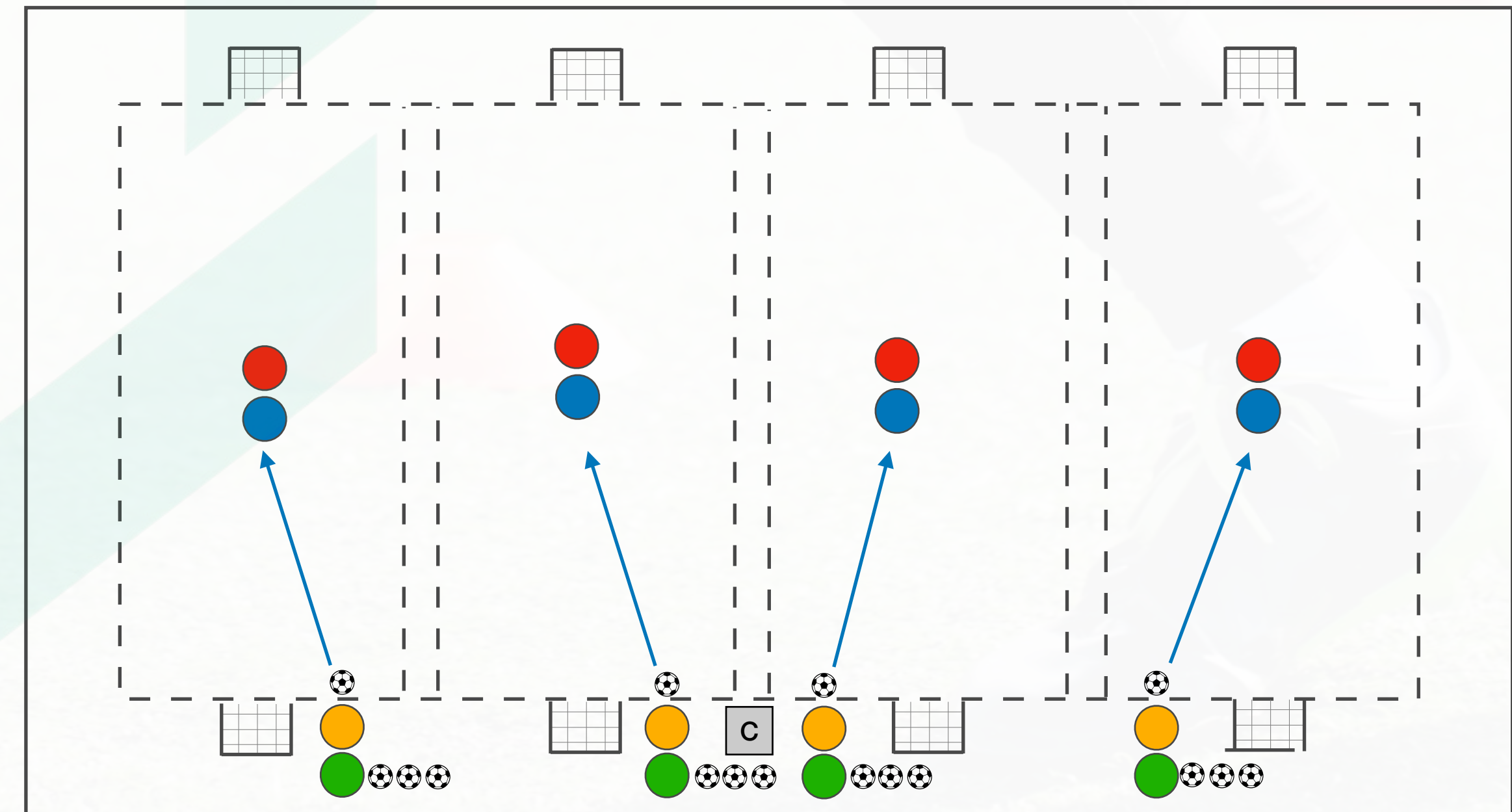
Objective 1: An improved confidence when receiving in 1v1 situations with back towards pressure

Objective 2: An improved execution when using the body to protect the ball

Objective 3: An improved execution of rolling opponents to exploit the space in behind

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a grid with 4 vertical zones, and 2 mini-goals in each zone opposite each other
- A 3-5 metre safety gap should be used in between the channels to avoid collisions
- The players should be divided into 4 teams, then one of each team in each zone
- The game starts with one defender marking one attacker from a different team
- A player on the outside passes into the attackers feet, then the attacker and defender compete to score
- The defender scores in the goal at the end where the ball came from
- The attacker has to try and turn and score in the goal behind them
- As soon as one of the players score, the defender leaves the pitch, and the attacker becomes the defender
- The player who passes into the zone, now becomes the attacker, and the next player passes the ball in
- A time limit can be set for each round, then the order of the teams should change
- E.g. the red players defend against the blue players until a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play
- Then the reds leave the pitch, the blues become defenders, and the yellows become attackers
- The greens then pass the ball to the yellows to start the game
- The winning team is the team that scores the most goals across all the rounds



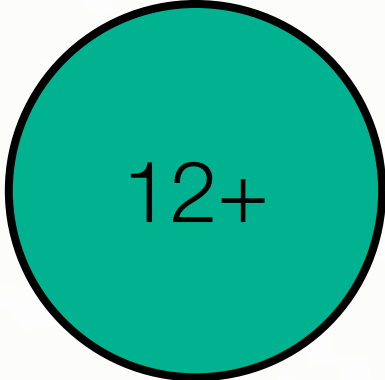


007

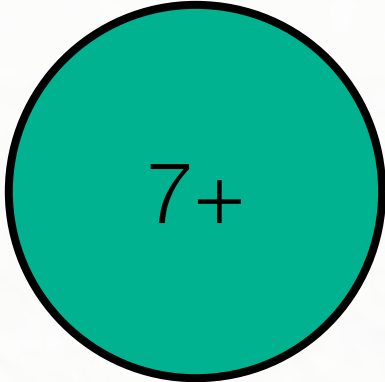
Frontal 1v1's

A repetition **wave practice** for players to develop their frontal 1v1 attacking & defending skills

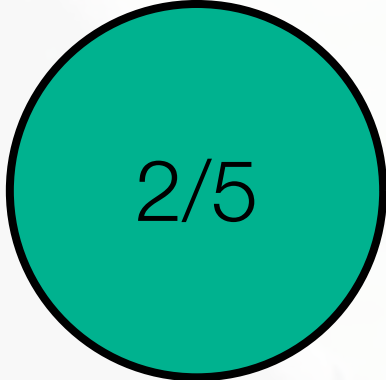
Numbers



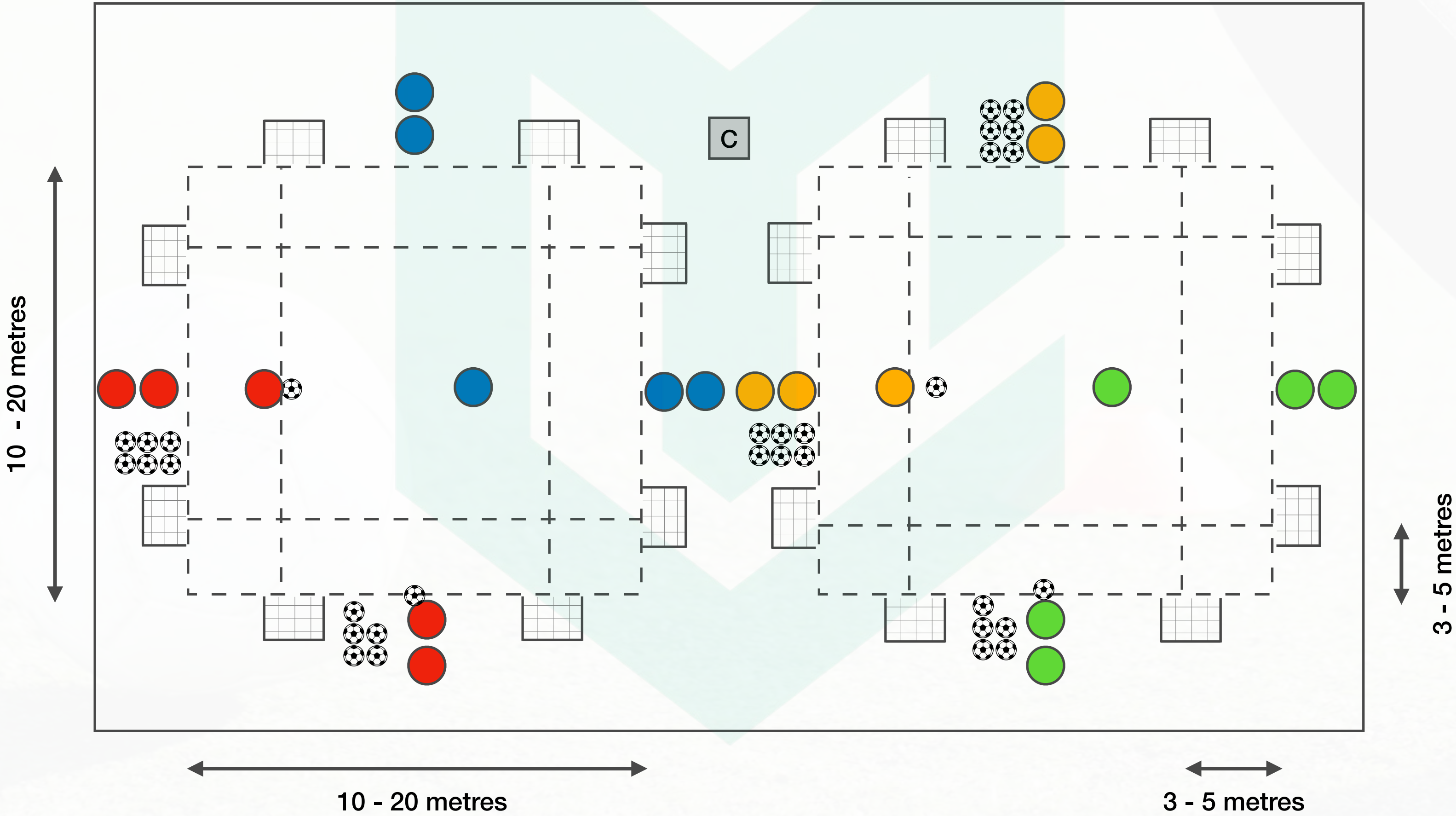
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Frontal 1v1's

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

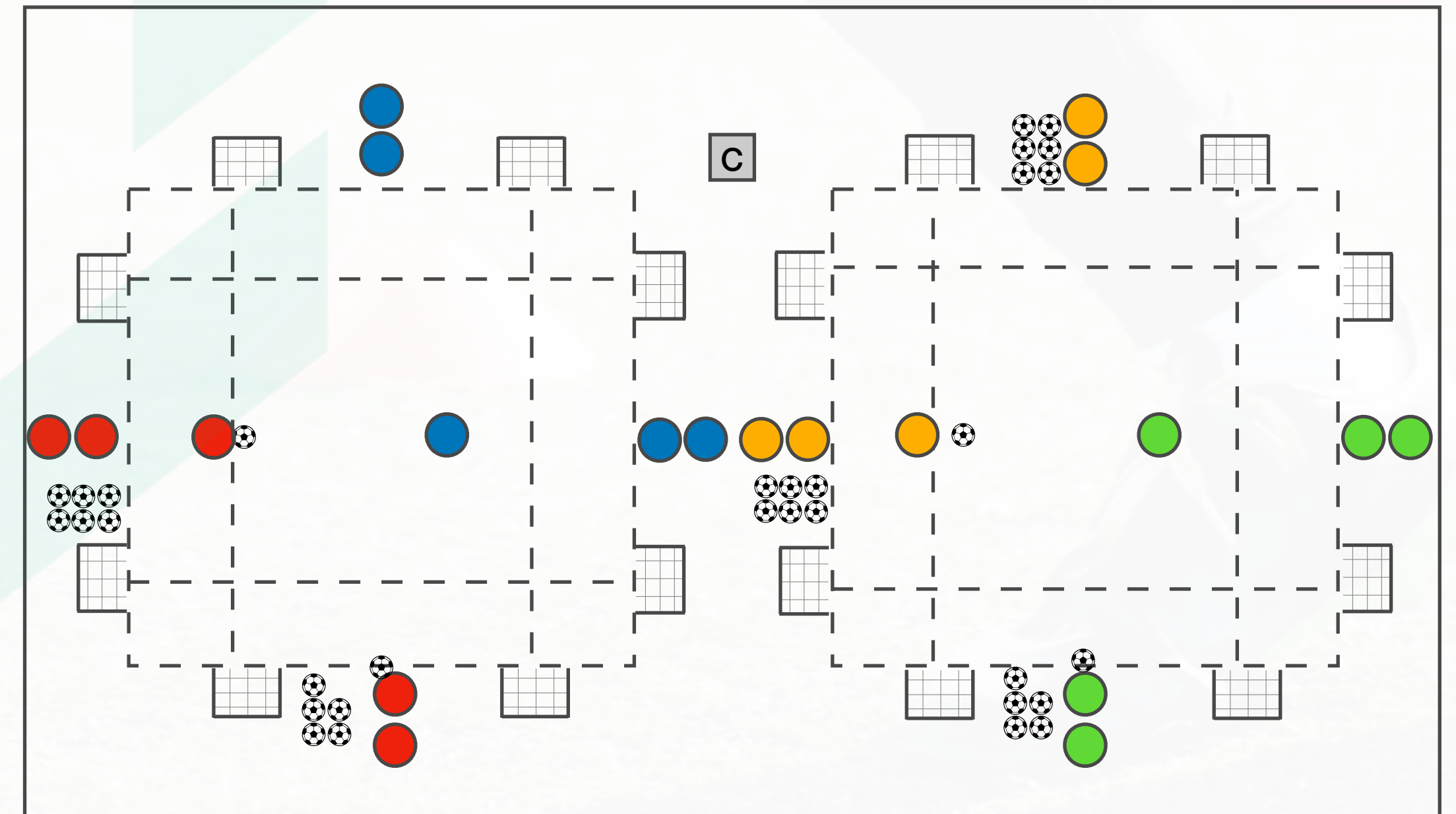
Objective 1: An improved understanding of the skills and detail that can be utilised in frontal 1v1 situations

Objective 2: An improved execution of the technical requirements for successful 1v1 actions

Objective 3: An increased future agility and speed with the ball when dribbling

Game Flow & Rules

- Each game is set up with one square grid, with an end zone and 2 mini-goals on each side
- In each square, players are divided into two teams, and then each team splits to stand on adjacent sides
- Zones are set up 5 metres from the mini goals, marking the area players must get into with the ball to score
- In the first round, one team starts to attack and one team defends. Balls start with the attacking players
- The game starts with a player dribbling the ball, and the opposing defender stepping up to defend 1v1
- E.g. the red player dribbles the ball out and the blue player sprints out to defend 1v1
- If the red player dribbles past the blue player, gets into the end zone, and scores, they get 1 point
- If the blue defender regains the ball, they can attack the goals on the side the red player came from to score
- If the defender can successfully score in the opposing mini-goals after regaining the ball, they get 1 point
- If the ball goes out of play, neither team get any points. A time limit should be used, e.g. 7 seconds per attack
- Once the attack has finished, the first red from the adjacent side now attacks a blue that is opposite them
- The reds continue to attack the blues throughout the first round, which can be 2-3 minutes
- The goals scored are counted throughout like a match. 1-0, 1-1 etc.
- Each team may get 3 rounds of attacking. At the end, the team with the most points wins





008

Wide 1v1's

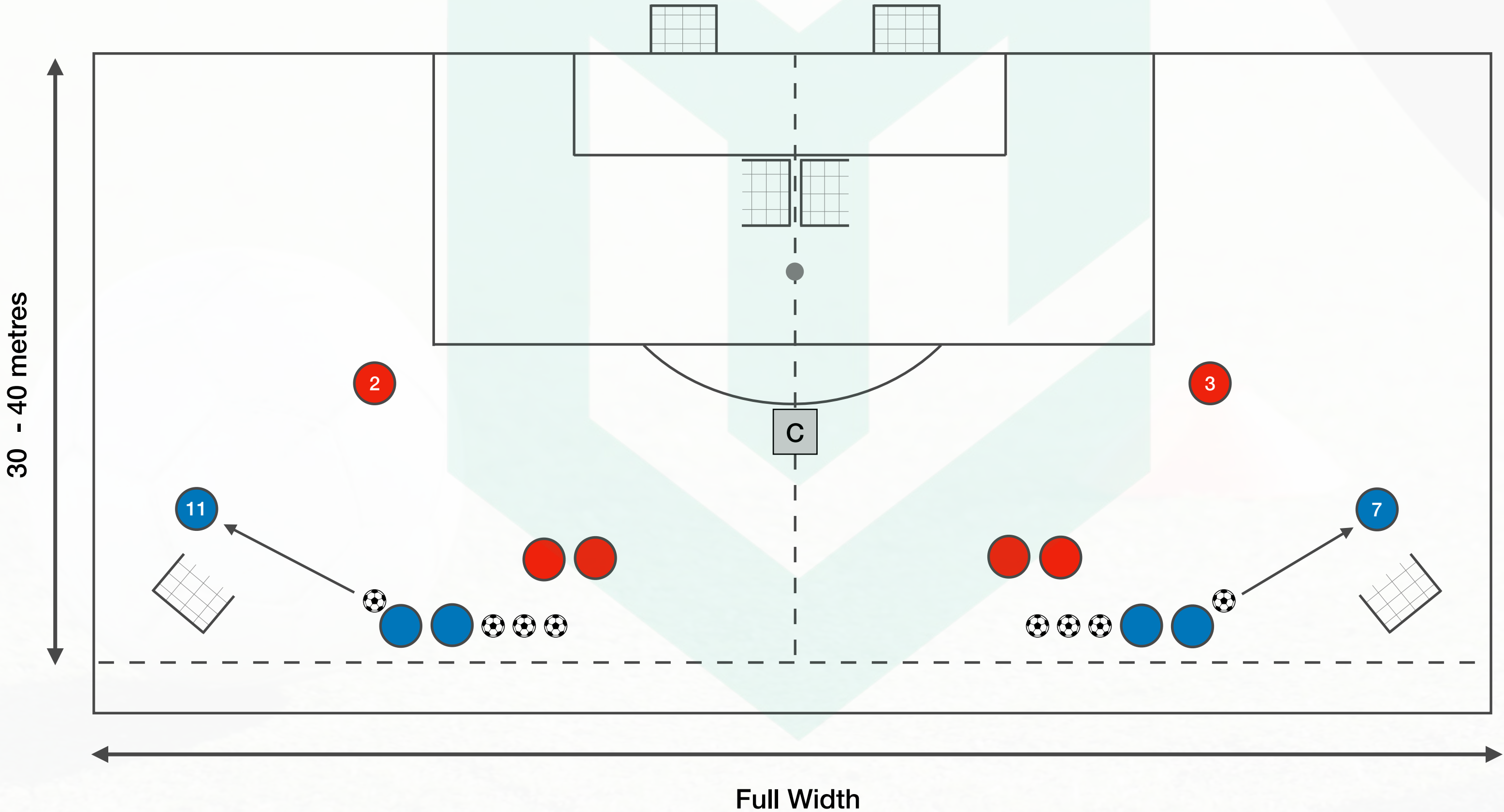
A repetition **picture practice** for players to develop their frontal 1v1 attacking & defending skills, and crossing/finishing skills

Numbers

12+

Age

9+



Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-5 x 4-8 mins



Wide 1v1's

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

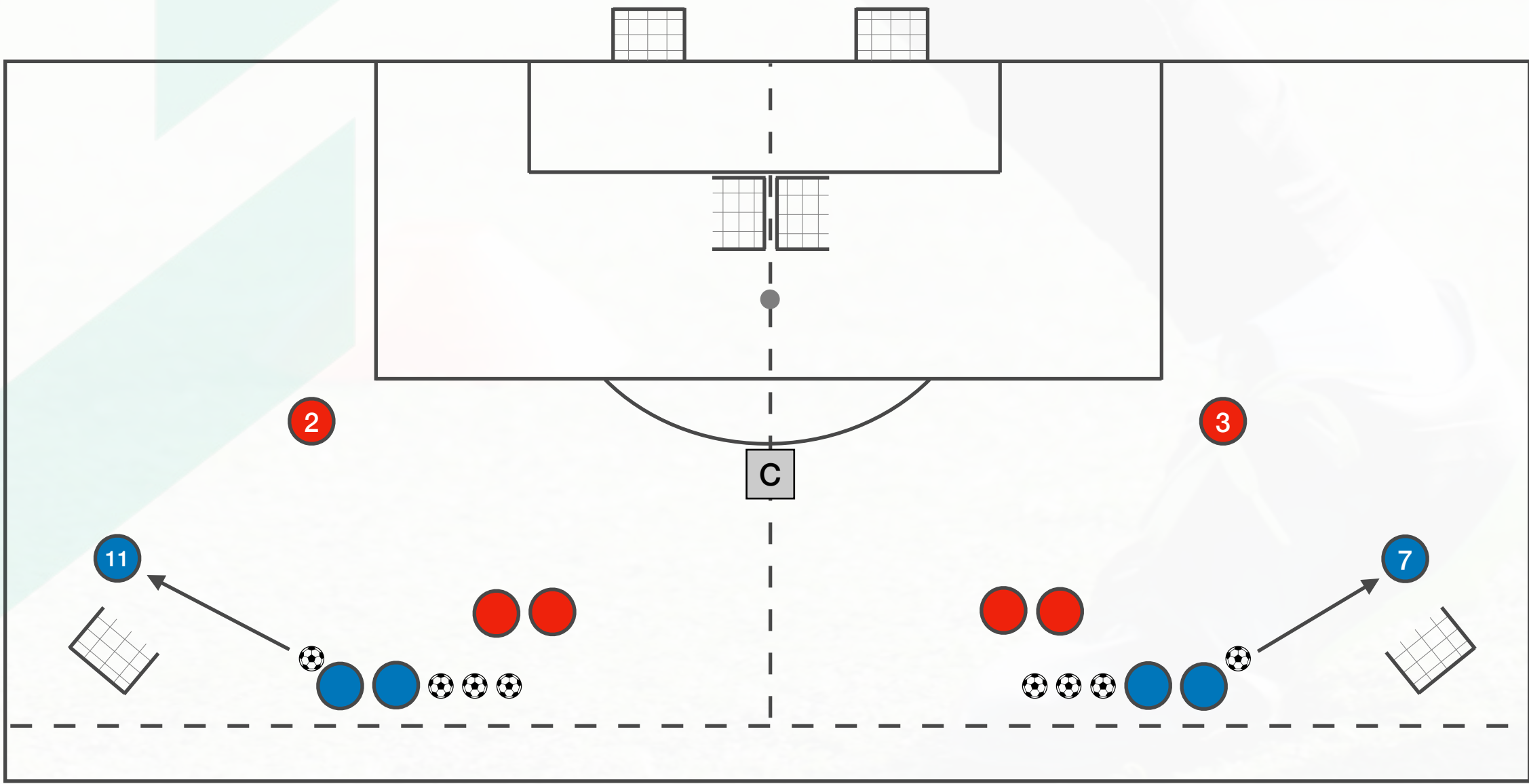
Objective 1: An improved awareness of methods to dribble both inside and outside in frontal 1v1 situations

Objective 2: An improved awareness of how to defend in 1v1 situations to force play and regain possession

Objective 3: An improved technical execution of dribbling, crossing, finishing and 1v1 defending

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up on an area size matching the final third, using 6 mini-goals, and divided into two zones
- The two zones are the left side and right side, and each side runs separately
- Players are divided into two teams, which can be defenders vs attackers, or mixed
- The mini goals are placed to represent target areas for low crosses and shots into the corners
- The 2 mini goals placed diagonally, are target goals for the defenders to attack after regaining the ball
- The game starts with the attacking players attacking the defending players 1v1 in wide areas
- Their objective is to beat the defender on the outside and cross into the mini-goal facing the side of the pitch
- Or they can beat the defender on the inside and score in either of the mini goals on the goal line
- E.g. one of the blue players passes to the blue attacker ready for the 1v1 with the red defender
- The blue attacker will try to beat the red defender on the inside or outside.
- If the red defender regains the ball, they can attack the opposite mini-goal to score
- Once the attack is over, the next red and blue players come on, and receive the ball from the next blue in line
- A time limit can be set per round, and teams can swap defensive/attacking duties
- If attackers and defenders have already been divided, teams can swap sides, or swap the order





TOPIC 2: POSSESSION & PRESSING

Practices to develop players & team's ability to retain possession of the ball in possession, and apply pressure in possession





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In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Adapting the Decision	Being able to change a decision at the last moment before executing, based on changes in the situation
Affective Forecasting	Predicting likely behaviours of opponents to identify which action is most suitable to retain/penetrate with possession
Awareness	Awareness of a variety of factors, including where are the dangers and where are the opportunities to retain/penetrate
Body Shape	Being in position to receive with a body shape that enables a variety of options, or best execution of a specific action
Communication	Using vocal communication and body language to support teammates in possession
Controlling Tempo	Utilising different speeds of ball movement to create an impact, e.g. slowing down to invite pressure
Decision Triggers	Identifying triggers that will allow a decision to be successful, e.g. size of a gap to penetrate through opponents
Disguise	Using the body, eyes and arms to deceive an opponent in relation to the next action
First Touch	Using a first touch to enable a variety of options, or the best execution of a pre-decided action
Movements to Open Lanes	Identifying moments to move out of a passing lane, to draw an opponent out and open a bigger passing lane
Movement to Support	Creating the best angles to support the player in possession, and support the next pass
Passing Detail	Selecting the right type of pass, with the right weight, direction, flight, spin, disguise etc.

Coaching Pictures: Possession

In Possession Coaching Pictures	Explanation		
Bouncing the Pivot			Passing into the pivot player for them to player a first touch pass
Circulation			Using a number of passes to move the ball to the opposite side of the pitch or grid
Creating Overloads			Movements to create numerical superiorities, e.g. 2v1s 3v2s etc.
Emergency Solutions	Using specific actions in difficult situations to avoid danger, e.g. hitting the ball into opponent shin to win a throw-in		
Playing Around			Passing around the outside of the opponent(s)
Playing Local			Keeping possession of the ball in a close proximity to invite opponent pressure
Playing Over			Passing over the top of a player or unit(s)
Playing Through			Passing through gaps in between opponents
Quick Restarts and Transitions	Preparing the ball and restarting the action quickly before the opponents are prepared		
Reversing Direction	Passing in the opposite direction to the direction the ball was previously travelling		
Switching Play	Using a direct pass to the opposite side of the pitch or grid		
Third Player Movements	Moving in advance of a pass to prepare for the second pass		

Out of Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Acceleration & Deceleration Speed	Using quick accelerations & decelerations enables quicker pressure on the ball while opponents are still making a decision
Affective Forecasting	Predicting the likely next actions of opponents and teammates to prepare for the next situation to come
Angles of Pressure	Pressing at an angle to meet an objective, e.g. pressing from the side to encourage a forward action from the opponent
Awareness of Passing Lanes	Continuous searching (scanning) to identify passing lanes prior and during pressing actions
Double Press	Pressing with a teammate to force panic and minimise available options for the opponent
Initiating the Press	Triggering the press with the first movement to apply pressure on the ball
Joining the Press	After the press has been triggered, the next players join the press with actions based on the pressing strategy
Negative Press	Pressing a player from behind them to place pressure on their next action
Pressing Triggers	Identifying specific triggers such as a bad first touch, or backwards pass to initiate pressure
Setting Pressing Traps	Creating traps for the opponent to pass into, by opening passing lanes and applying pressure as the pass is played
Terminating Possession	Regaining possession by timing the interception or tackle
Timing of Pressure	Selecting the right time to press based on pressing triggers, game state, team objectives, and current physical capacity



009

3 Team Possession

A **free possession game** to develop possession skills and/or pressing skills, with transition moments to introduce and develop counter pressing

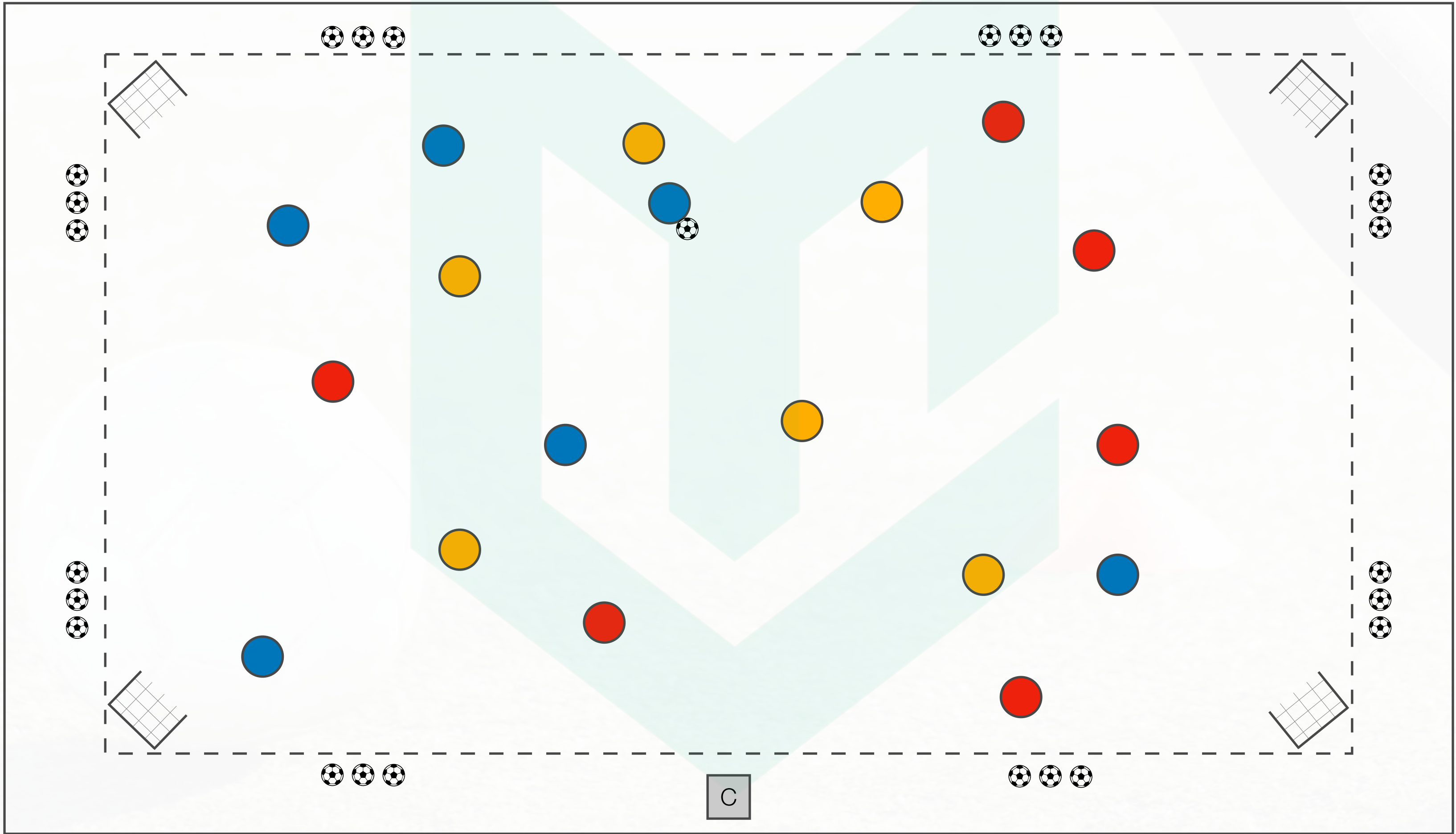
Numbers

12+

Age

11+

15 - 25 metres



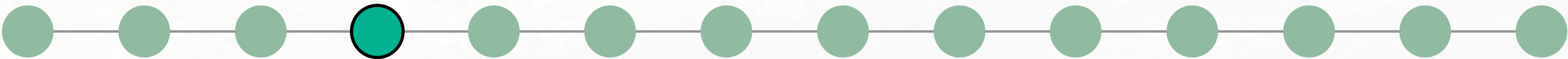
30 - 40 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-5 x 7-10 mins





3 Team Possession

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

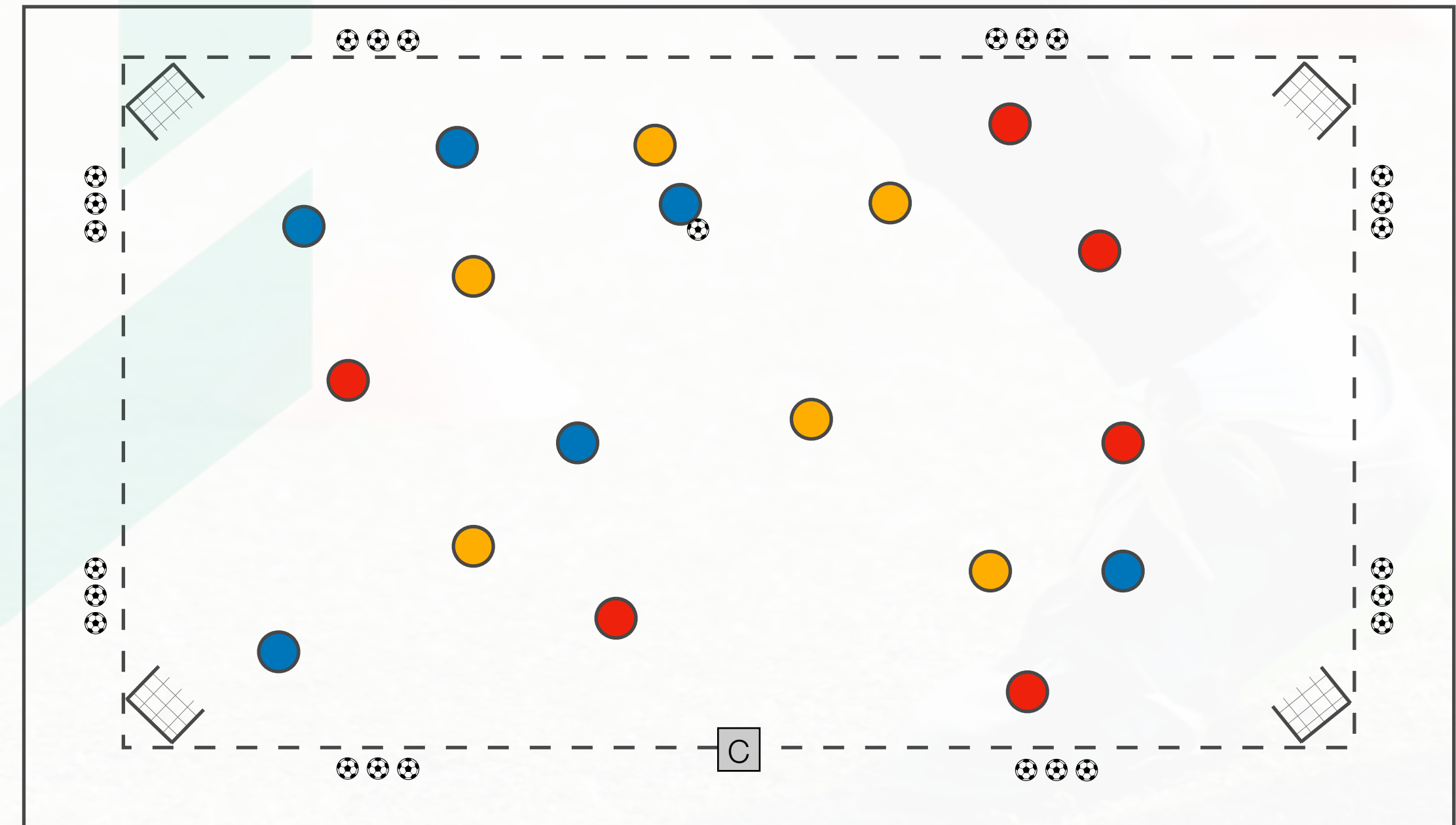
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of passing, dribbling, and receiving

Objective 2: An improved future reaction time when losing possession of the ball

Objective 3: An improved understanding of the importance of decision making after regaining possession

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with one large grid, with 4 diagonal mini-goals in the corners
- The players are divided into 3 equal teams, with balls around the outside
- The game starts with two teams working together in possession, and one team pressing to regain the ball
- E.g. The blue and red team start working together against the orange. The orange are pressing first
- The target is 10 passes for a point, before they can score in one of the mini goals for an extra point
- Both possession teams working together get points for their teams
- If the ball is lost, passes start back at 0, and the team that lost the ball now transition to defend
- If the blue and orange are in possession, and a blue player gives the ball away, the blues now defend
- This means now that the red and yellow teams work together against the blue team
- After the ball is given away, the defending team have 3 seconds where they can score without achieving 10 passes
- In those 3 seconds, the possession team that lost the ball have to quickly defend to prevent them scoring
- If the team that regained the ball manage to score in the 3 seconds, the team that lost possession loses 1 point
- The only ways the defending team become the possession team, is by regaining the ball or if the ball goes out
- A target number of points can be set, e.g. 8 points. First team to the points target wins that round





010

4 Corners

A **free possession game** to develop possession skills under 1v1 pressure, with opportunities to develop possession skills in 2v1 situations

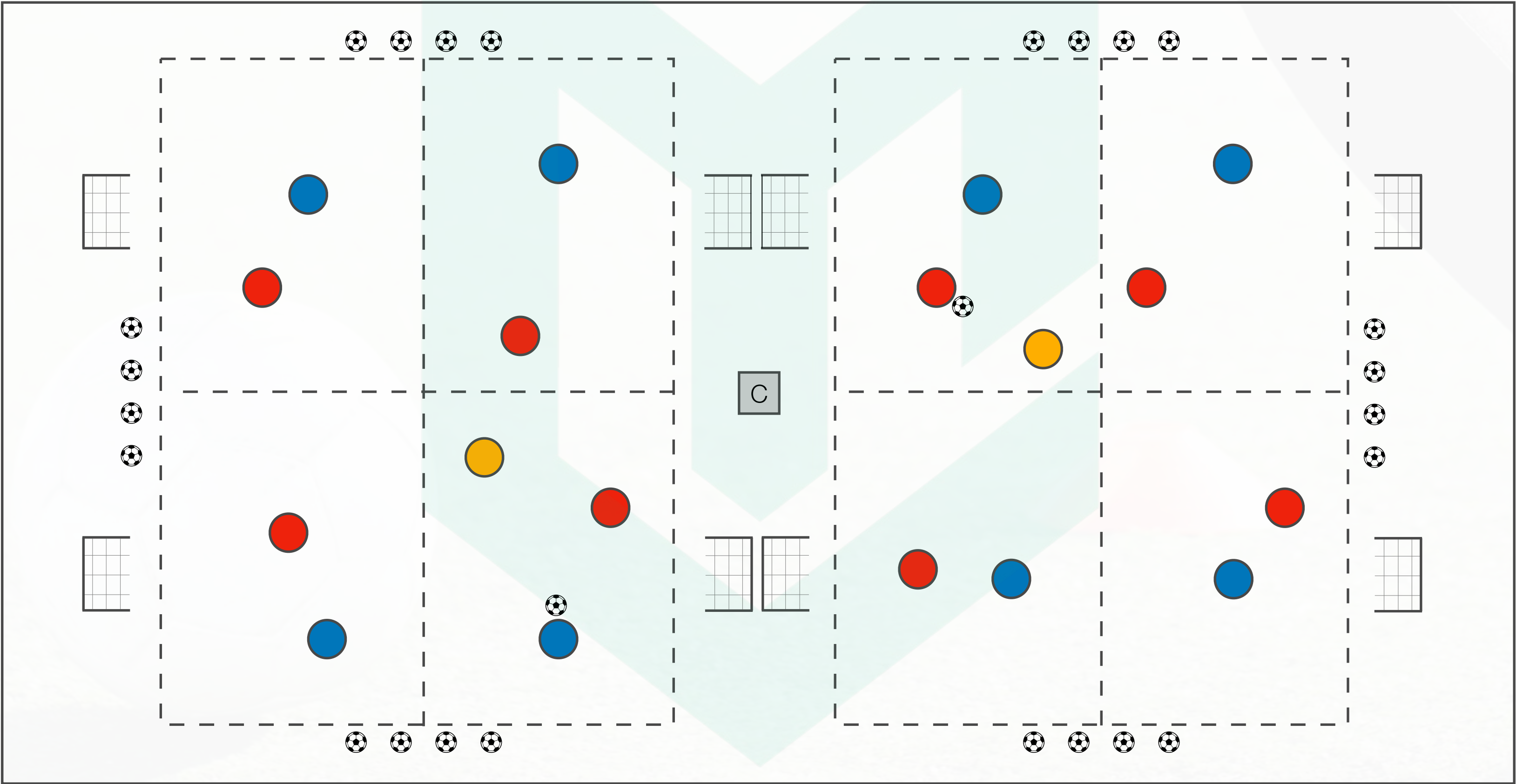
Numbers

9+

Age

11+

16 - 24 metres



12 - 20 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

4-6 x 3-5 mins



4 Corners

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

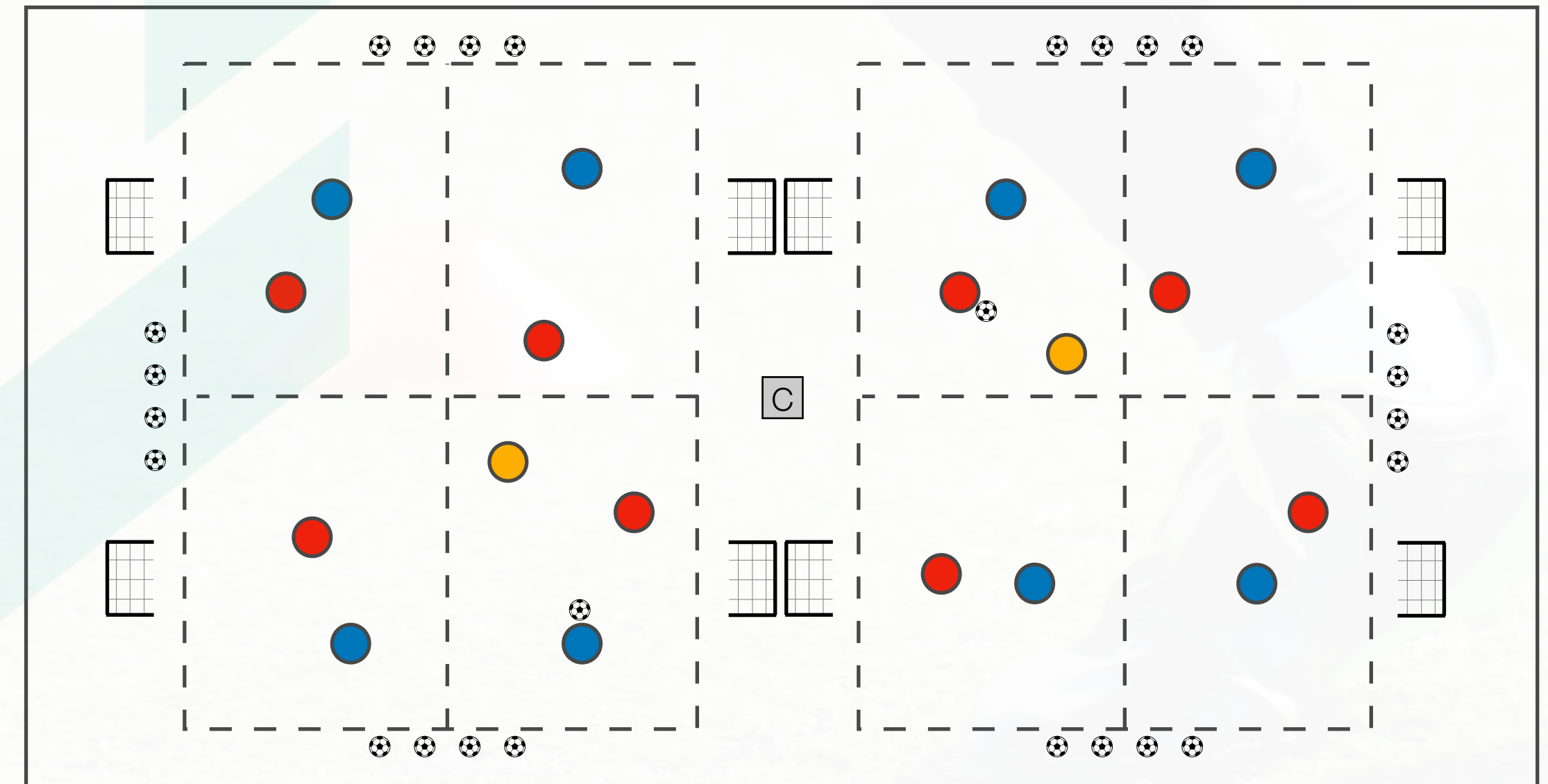
Objective 1: An increased level of calmness when receiving in high pressure situations

Objective 2: An improved understanding of how to utilise 2v1 situations to retain possession

Objective 3: An improved technical execution of receiving, passing, and protecting the ball under pressure

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with four boxes in one big box, with 1v1 in every box plus one joker who can move freely
- The team must keep the ball in a 4v4+1 situation, where the players cannot leave their own box
- The team attempt to retain possession of the ball to meet a specific target number of passes e.g. 15 passes
- Once they meet that target, they must then score in one of the four mini-goals
- After they lose possession, the other team must then reach the target number of passes without losing the ball
- E.g. the blue team start with the ball, and they have to retain the ball to reach 15 passes without losing the ball.
- In the pursuit of 15 passes, if they lose possession, the red team then have to attempt to reach 15 passes
- If the blue team win the ball back, they start again at 0 and have to get to 15
- The joker plays on whichever team has possession of the ball, and should move to create the 2v1 overloads





4 Sides Wins

A **free possession game** to develop directional attacking and pressing skills to dominate opponents with equal numbers

Numbers

12+

Age

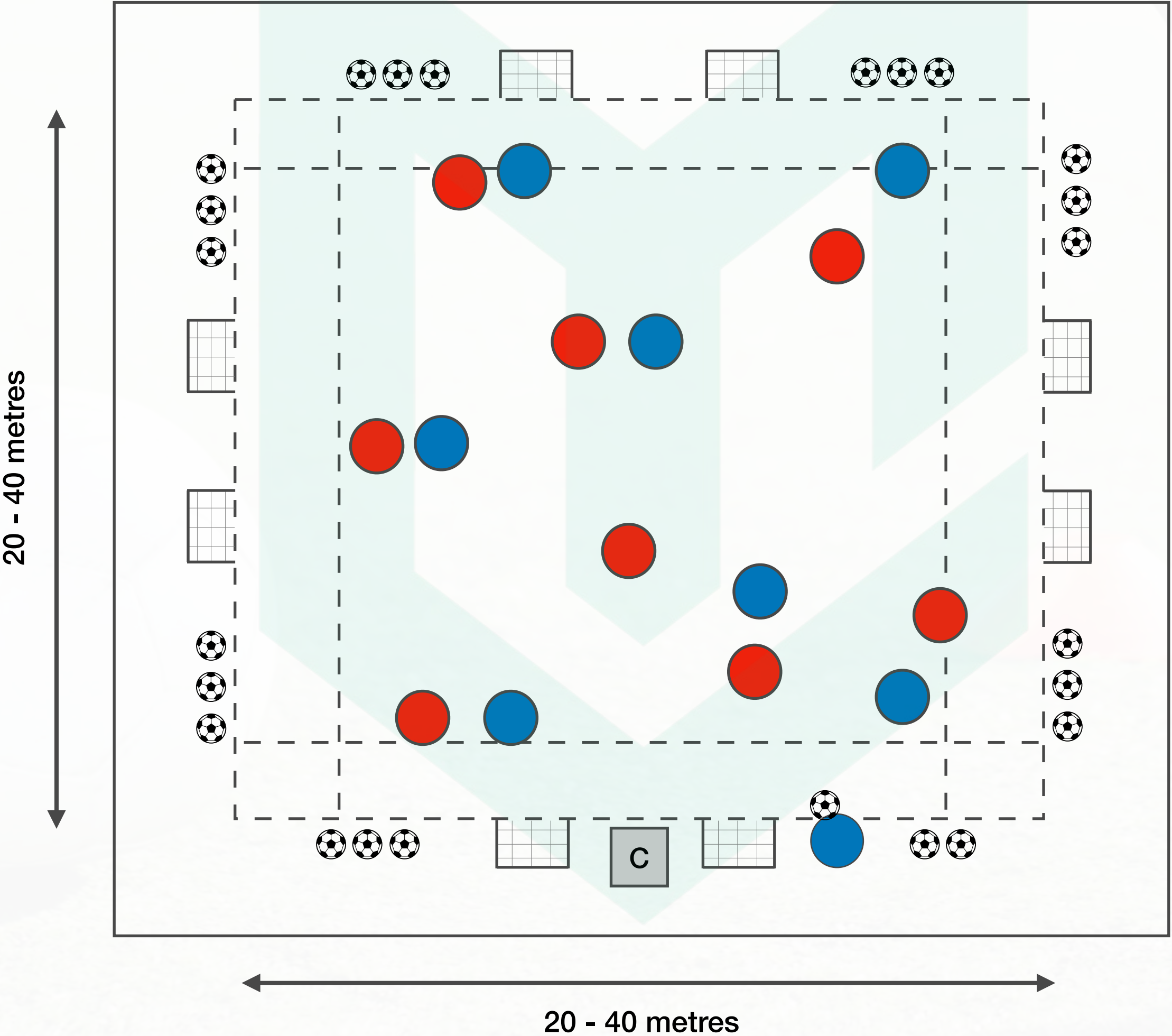
11+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-4 x 5-8 mins





4 Sides Wins

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

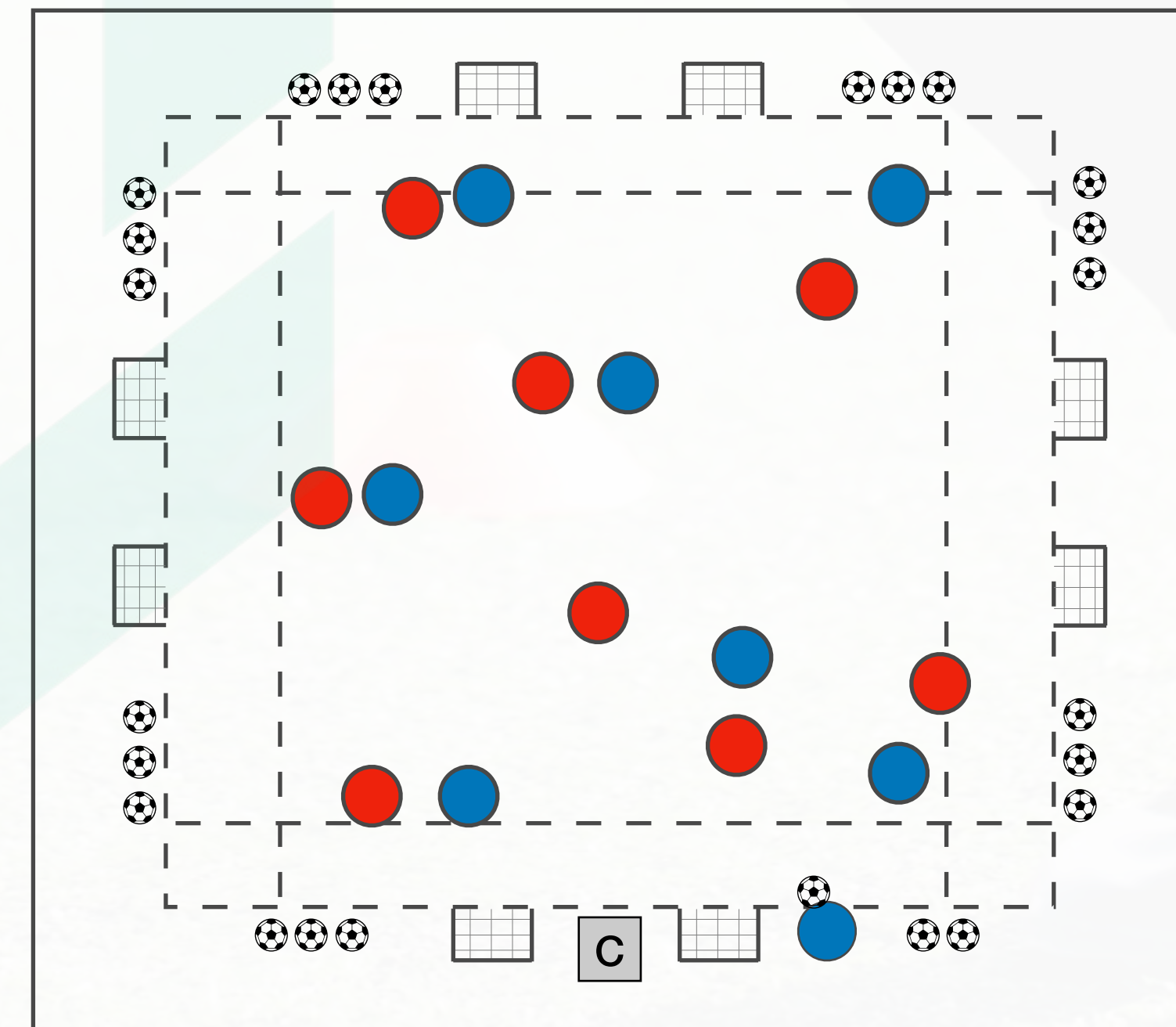
Objective 1: An improved movement to support play when the team is in possession of the ball

Objective 2: An improved execution of technical actions such as passing and receiving under pressure

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with teammates and units to dominate possession against equal numbers

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a square grid, with 4 end zones and 8 mini-goals
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 8 players
- Both teams compete to score goals in all 4 sides of the grid
- The game starts with one team taking a ball from one side of the grid
- They must then score in the opposite mini-goals
- Once they have scored in those mini-goals, that side is now complete
- They then must take a ball from a different side, then score in the opposite mini-goals
- If the defending team regain, they can score in the mini-goals on any of the sides
- If they score, they must then collect a new ball to score on a different side
- In order to score, players must have possession of the ball over the end zone line before finishing
- The defenders can only defend in the end zones to track/mark attackers
- The winning team is the first team to score in the mini-goals on all 4 sides of the pitch





012

Across the Thirds

A **positional possession game** to develop circulation actions to penetrate in both wide and central areas

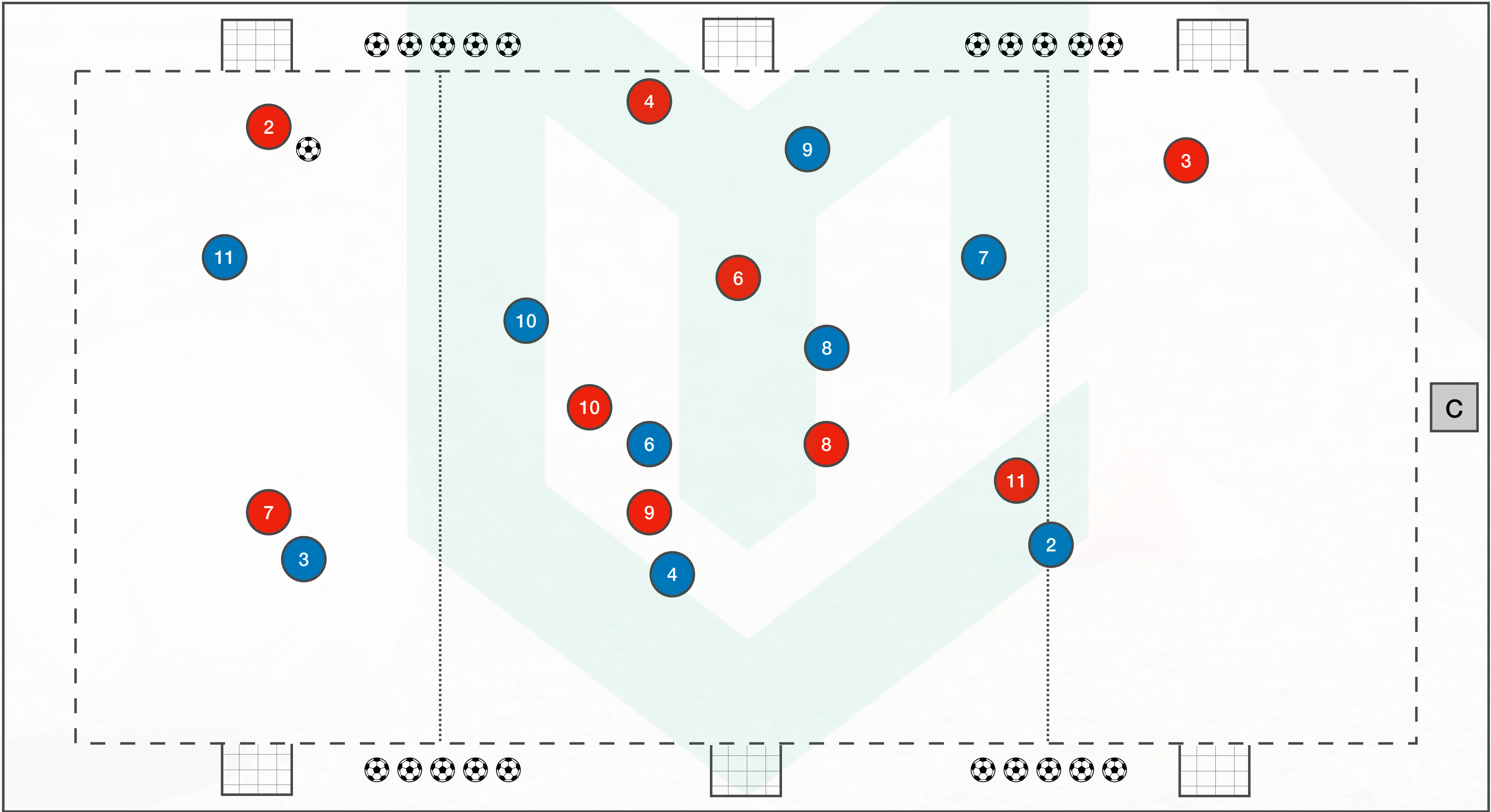
Numbers

16+

Age

12+

20 - 40 metres



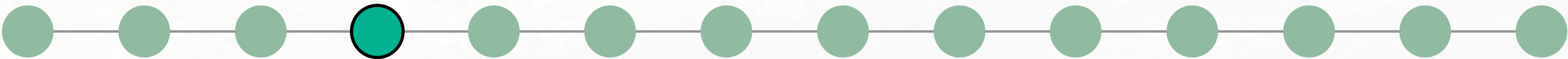
30 - 50 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

2-3 x 6-10 mins





Across the Thirds

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

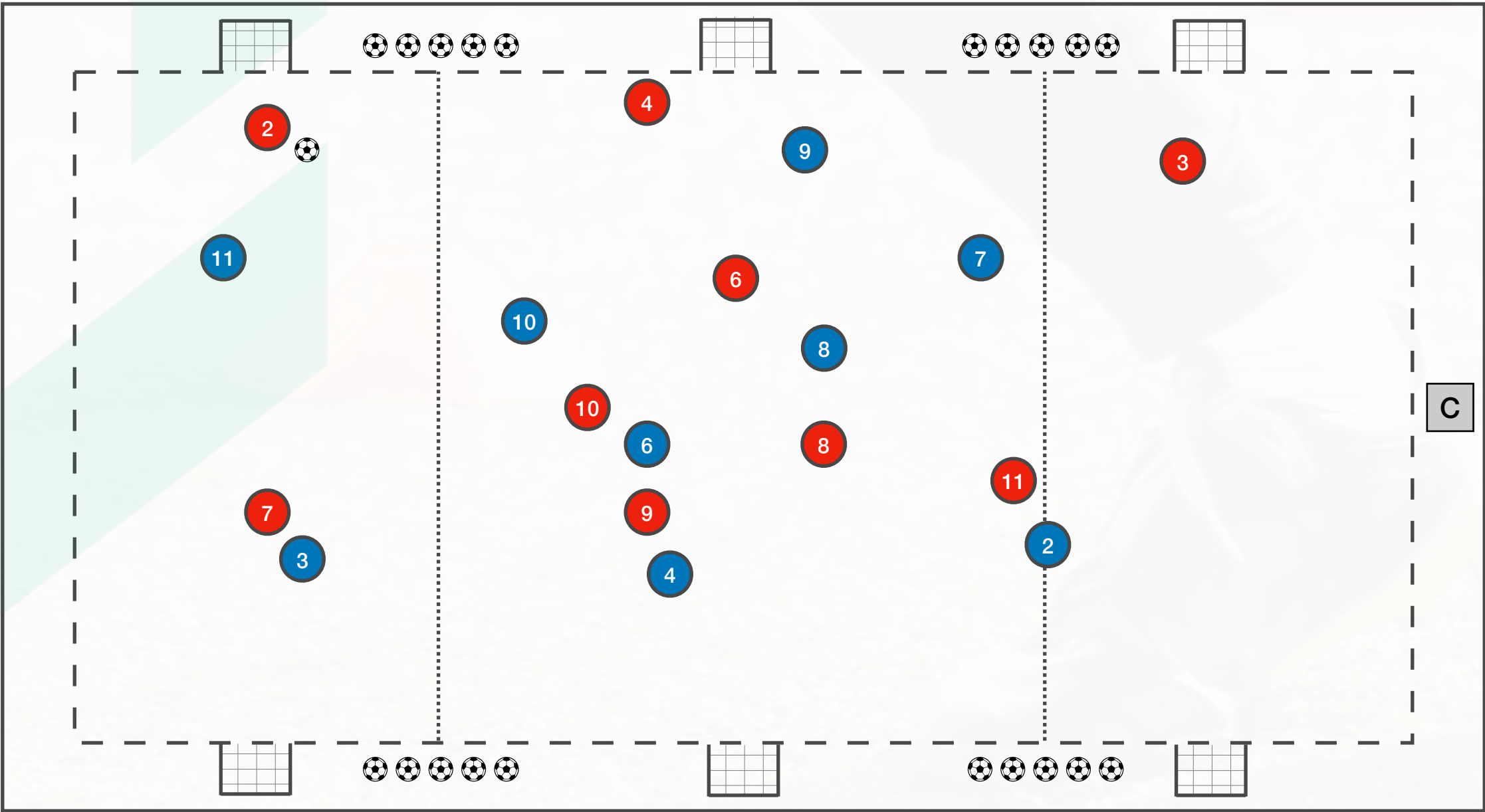
Objective 1: An improved understanding of ‘why’ circulating play across the thirds is important

Objective 2: An improved understanding of the different methods that can be used to circulate possession

Objective 3: An increased quality of execution to circulate and exploit opportunities in wide/central areas

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a wide rectangle pitch, that is short enough in height that passes ‘over’ are difficult
- One team defends 3 mini-goals on the top end of the pitch, and the other team defending the 3 opposite goals
- The pitch markings include 2 lines inside which give visual aids to the players to support their positioning
- Players can move freely without restrictions, however should attempt to play as they would in a full match
- One team starts with the ball from the mini goals they are defending, in attempt to score in the opposite goals
- Once a team scores, they can get another ball from the end they are defending, and attack again
- Both teams should be attempting to move the opponents to create an opportunity to exploit another zone
- E.g. pulling the opponent towards the right zone, to create an opportunity to score in the left side
- During the transfer across the pitch, as the opponent shifts there may be opportunities to score centrally
- The game ends once a team reaches a target score, or a set time limit is completed.





Bulldog Rondos

A free possession competition to develop possession skills and pressing skills under pressure

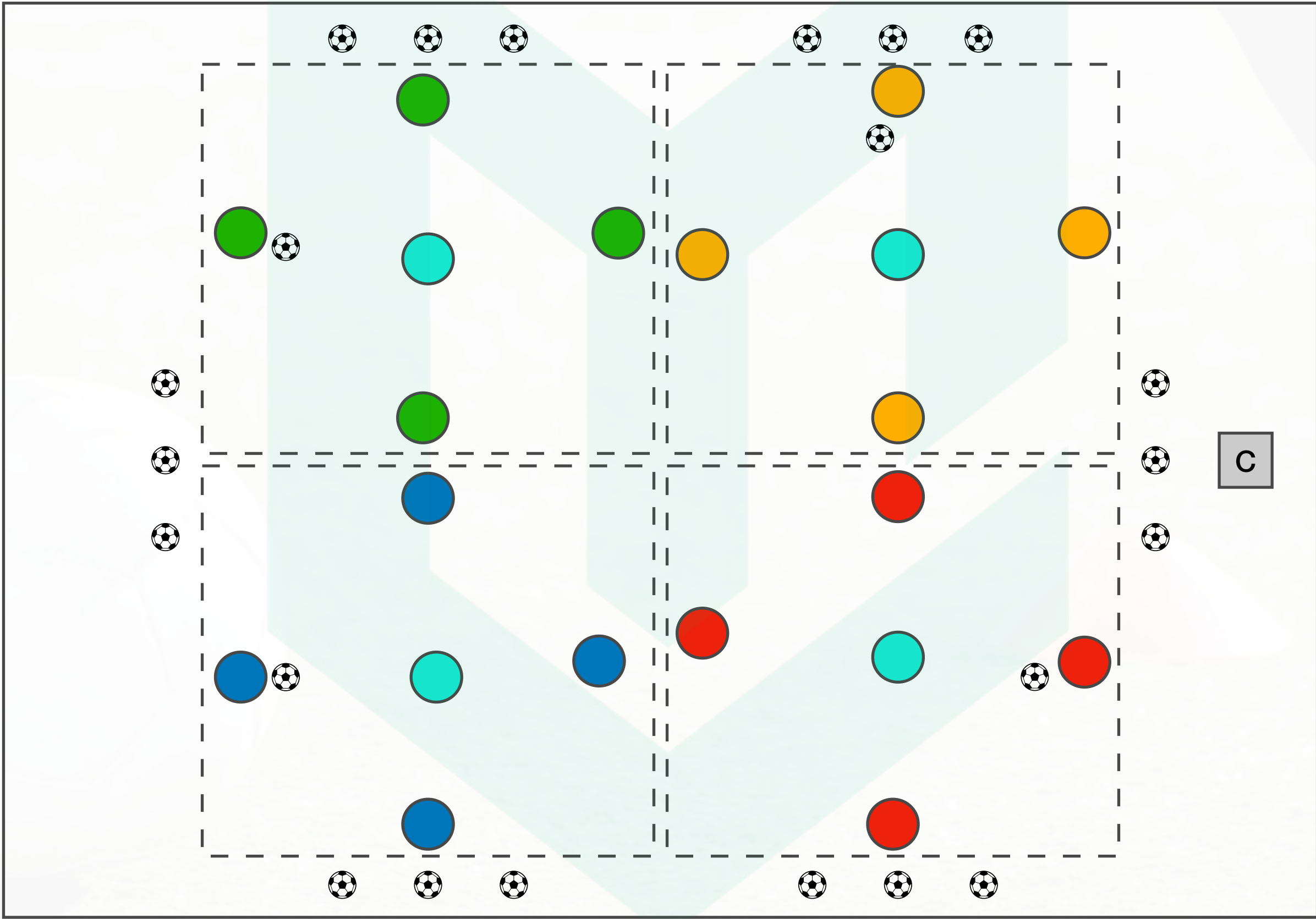
Numbers

20+

Age

8+

7 - 12 metres



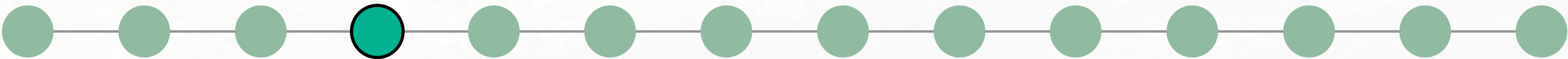
7 - 12 metres

Difficulty

1/5

Time Length

2-5
Rounds





Bulldog Rondos

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

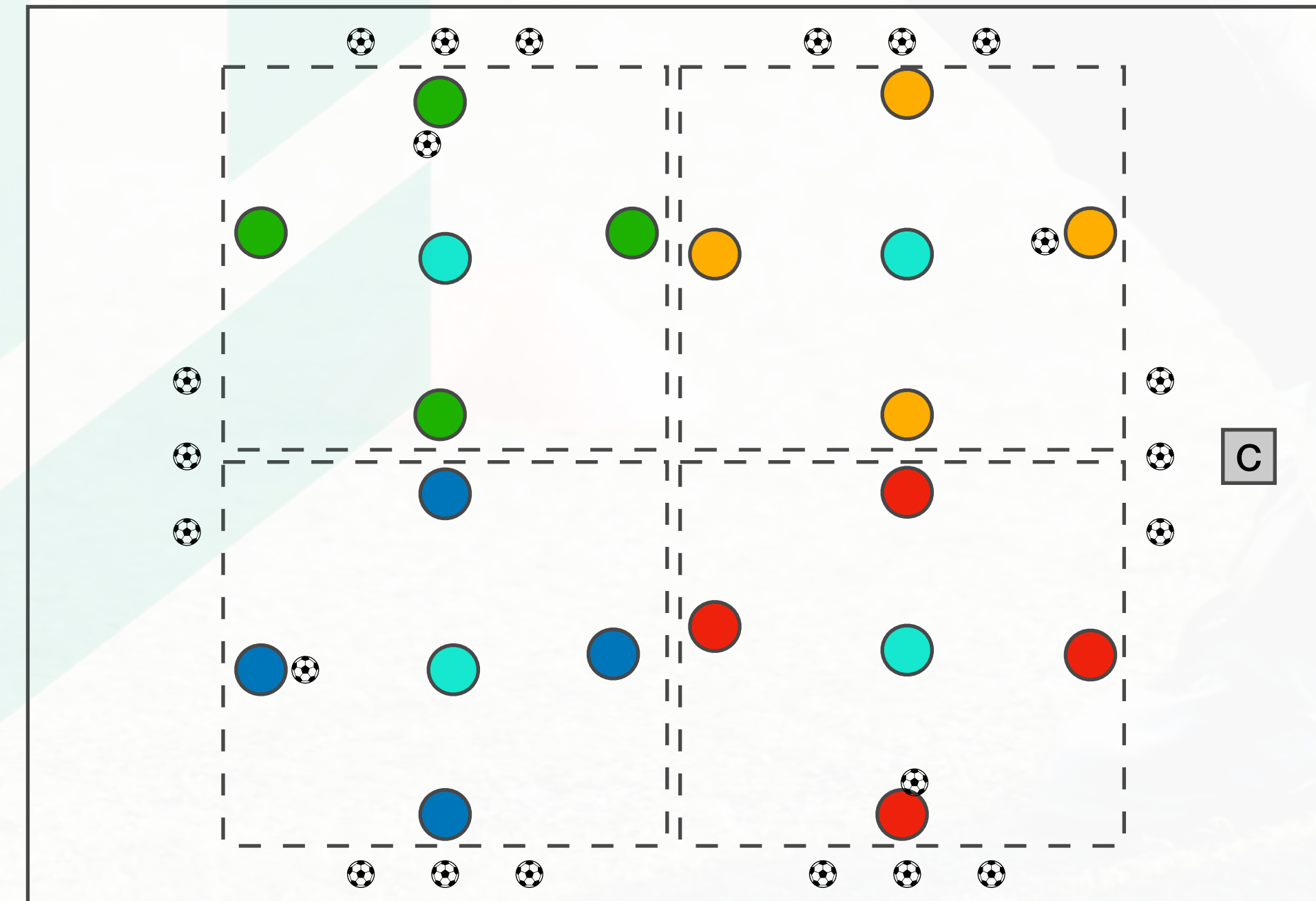
Objective 1: An improved positive feeling in relation to the session, team, and training environment

Objective 2: An increased level of competitiveness between players within the group

Objective 3: An improved awareness of decision making triggers when selecting passing options

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with 4 grids and balls on the outside
- Players are divided into 5 teams of 4 players
- 1 team is the pressing team, and 4 teams are keeping possession in the grids
- 1 team splits with 1 player in each rondo grid
- The other 4 teams select 1 grid per team
- All 4 rondos start at the same time
- The pressing team must race to clear all 4 balls as quickly as possible
- Once a player clears the ball in the box they are pressing in, they can press in another box
- The time should be measured to see how long it takes for all 4 grids to lose the ball
- After all 4 balls have been cleared/touched by the pressing team, a new team presses
- The game then restarts with the new pressing team attempting to touch/clear all the balls
- After all 5 teams have pressed, the winning team is the team with the quickest time





Dominate to 8

A **free possession game** to develop ball retention skills & pressing skills to maintain possession, create chances, and score

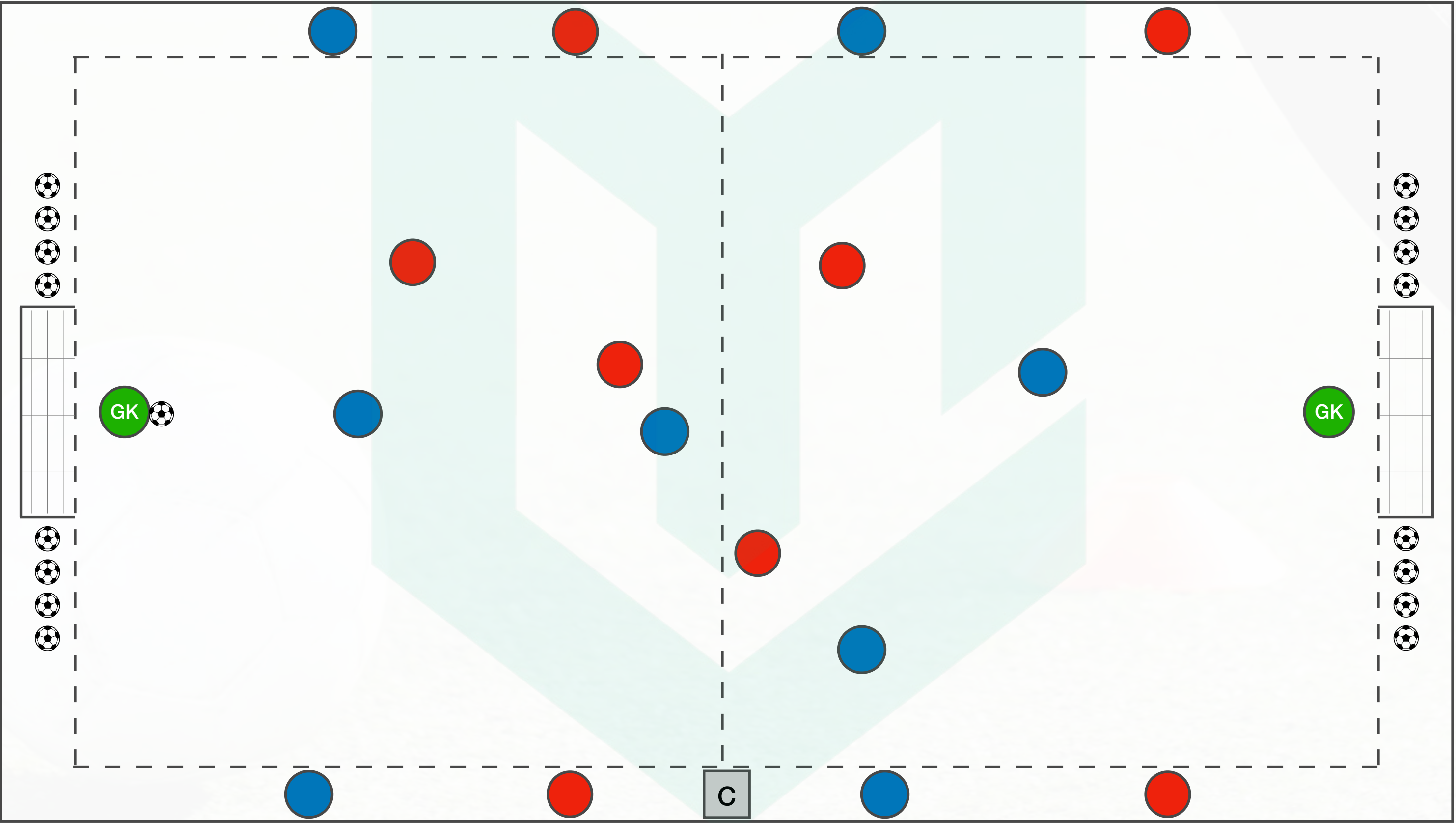
Numbers

14+

Age

11+

12 - 25 metres



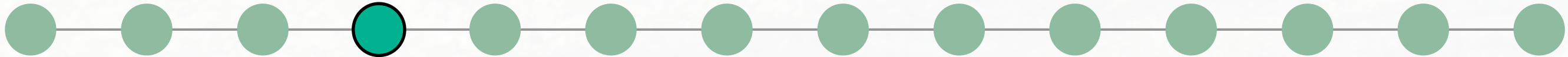
20 - 40 metres

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-4
Rounds





Dominate to 8

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

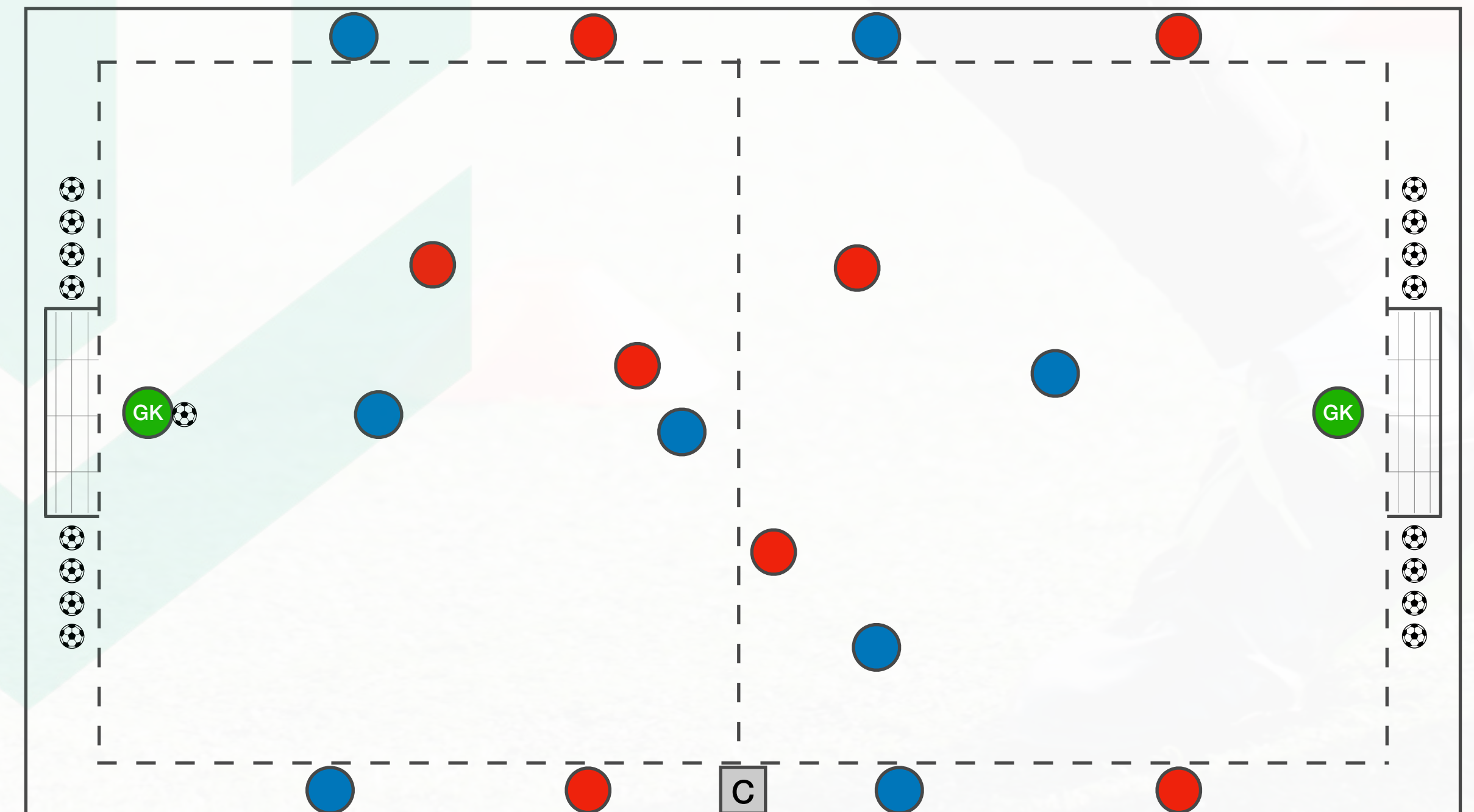
Objective 1: An improved execution of passing and receiving under pressure in tight spaces

Objective 2: An improved awareness of the tactical elements of retaining possession underloaded and overloaded

Objective 3: An increased quality of execution to receive and finish under pressure

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using a rectangle grid with 2 full-sized goals with goalkeepers
- Outfield players are divided into 2 teams of 8, with 4 of each team starting on the outside
- The game starts with a 4v4 inside, using the teammates on the outside to support
- Both teams have to get to 8 passes to then finish and score
- After the 8th pass, the team can score at the opposite end to where the pass was received
- If they score, a 5th player can join inside the grid, making a 5v4 inside
- For every goal scored, another player can join
- The team that wins is the team that scores first with 8 players on the pitch
- Players on the outside are restricted to 1 touch to ensure quick supporting movements
- If a ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper restarts
- Goalkeepers are also support players for the team in possession
- This makes a 9v4 for the team in possession
- In the next round, players who started as support players can start as possession players

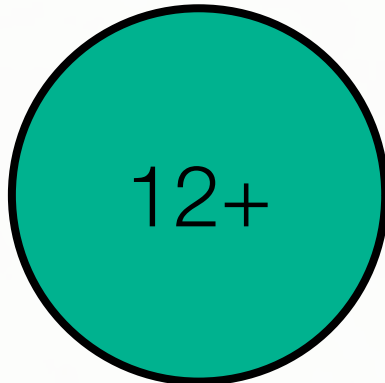




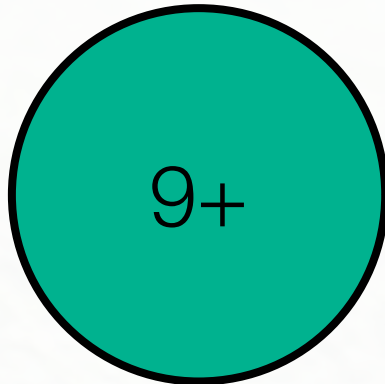
First to 50

A free possession competition to develop ball retention under pressure

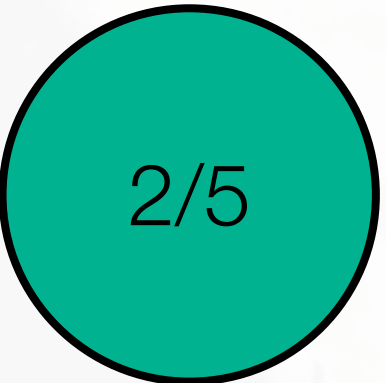
Numbers



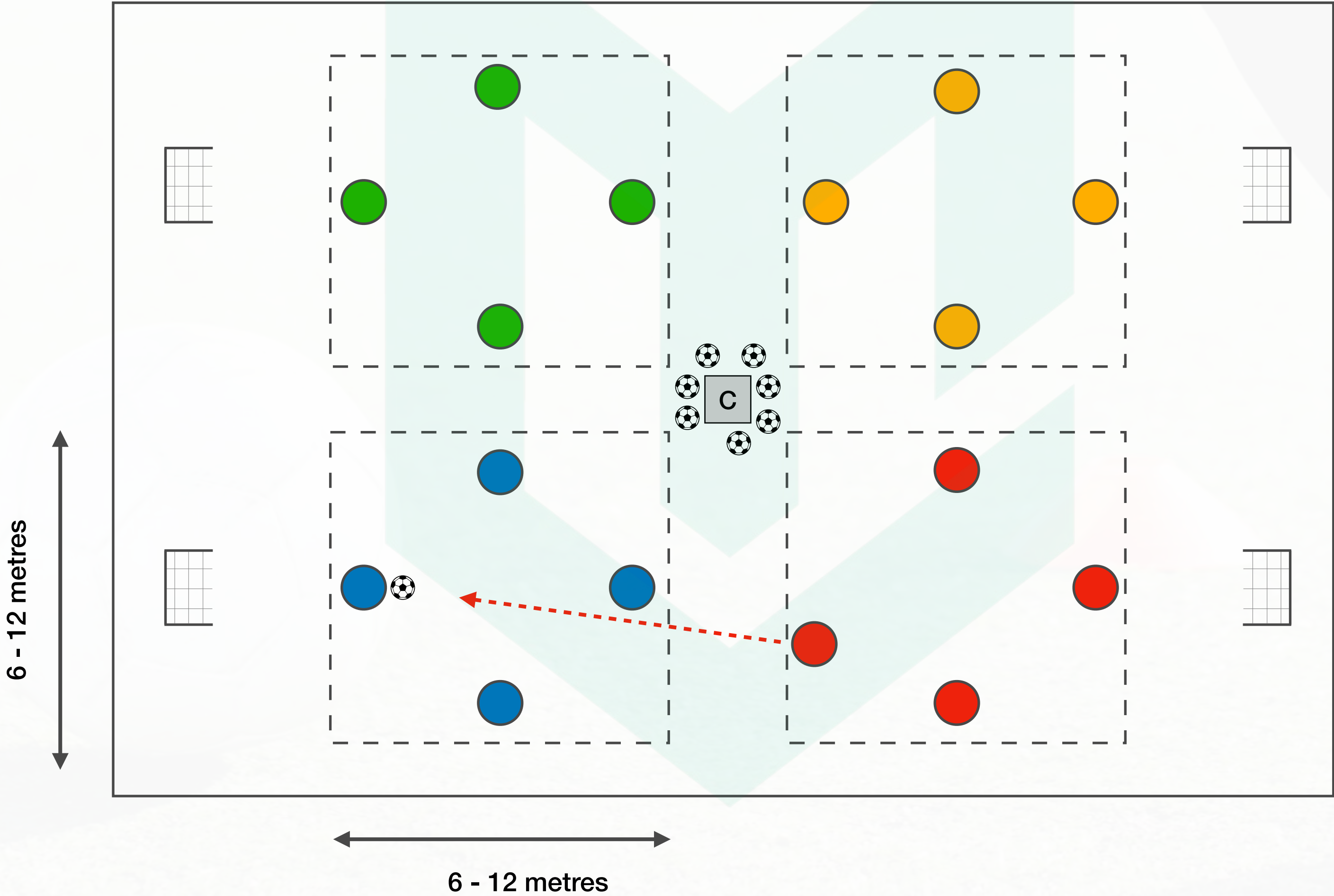
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





First to 50

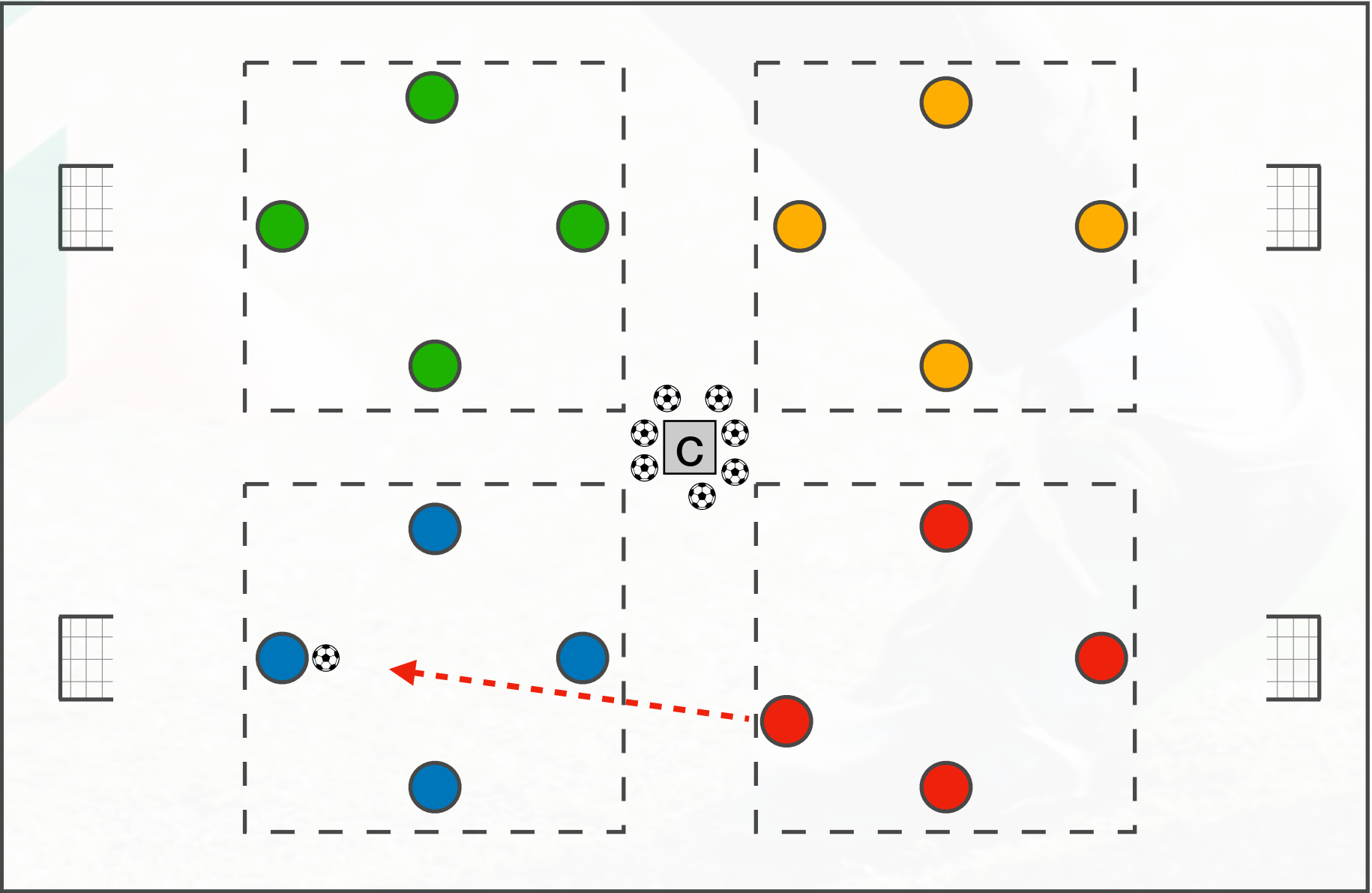
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved positive feeling in relation to the training environment, team, and session
- Objective 2:** An increased level of competitiveness between players within the group
- Objective 3:** An improved awareness of decision making triggers when selecting passing options

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with 4 boxes, with one team in each box, with balls in the centre between the 4 boxes
- The ball starts with one team, and a player from an adjacent box ready to press the them
- The team with the ball must pass the ball as many times as possible without losing the ball. They attempt to get to 50 then score
- If they get to 'x' number of passes, they store that number until the next time they have the ball
- Once the ball goes out of the box or is intercepted, a ball is played into the next box
- A player from the team who lost the ball now runs to press the next box. They count their passes until they lose the ball
- This continues until one team manages to get to 50, then scores in the mini goal
- If a player regains the ball, they can pass back to their own box. The game then plays in the opposite direction
- If the pressing player regains, they can score in the goal to put the possession team back to 0
- E.g. The green team start with the ball, and one blue player runs to press them in their box, they then keep possession
- After 8 passes, the ball goes out of play, 8 is now the score the green team continue from when they next receive the ball
- The next ball is played in to the red box, and 1 green player runs to press. The blue player who was pressing returns to their box
- The reds are now passing the ball, and after 12 passes the green player gains control of the ball
- The green player then passes back into the green box, and a red player must run and press
- This continues until a team gets to 50, once they get to 50 they score in the mini-goal to win

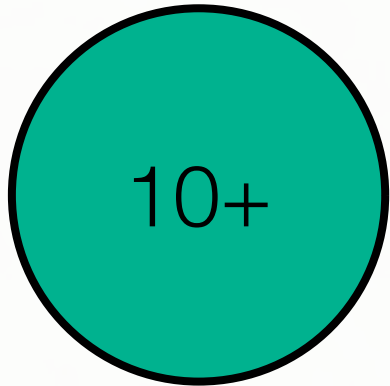




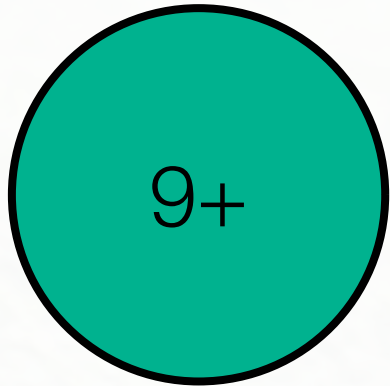
Noughts & Rondos

A free possession competition to develop ball retention under pressure

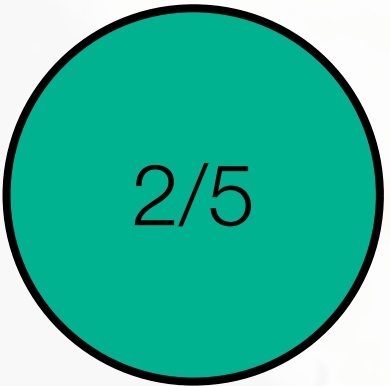
Numbers



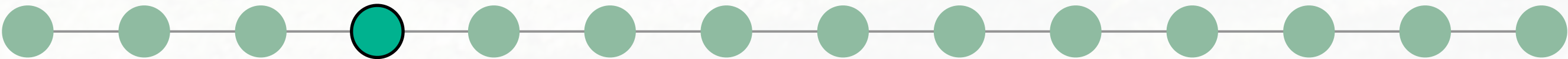
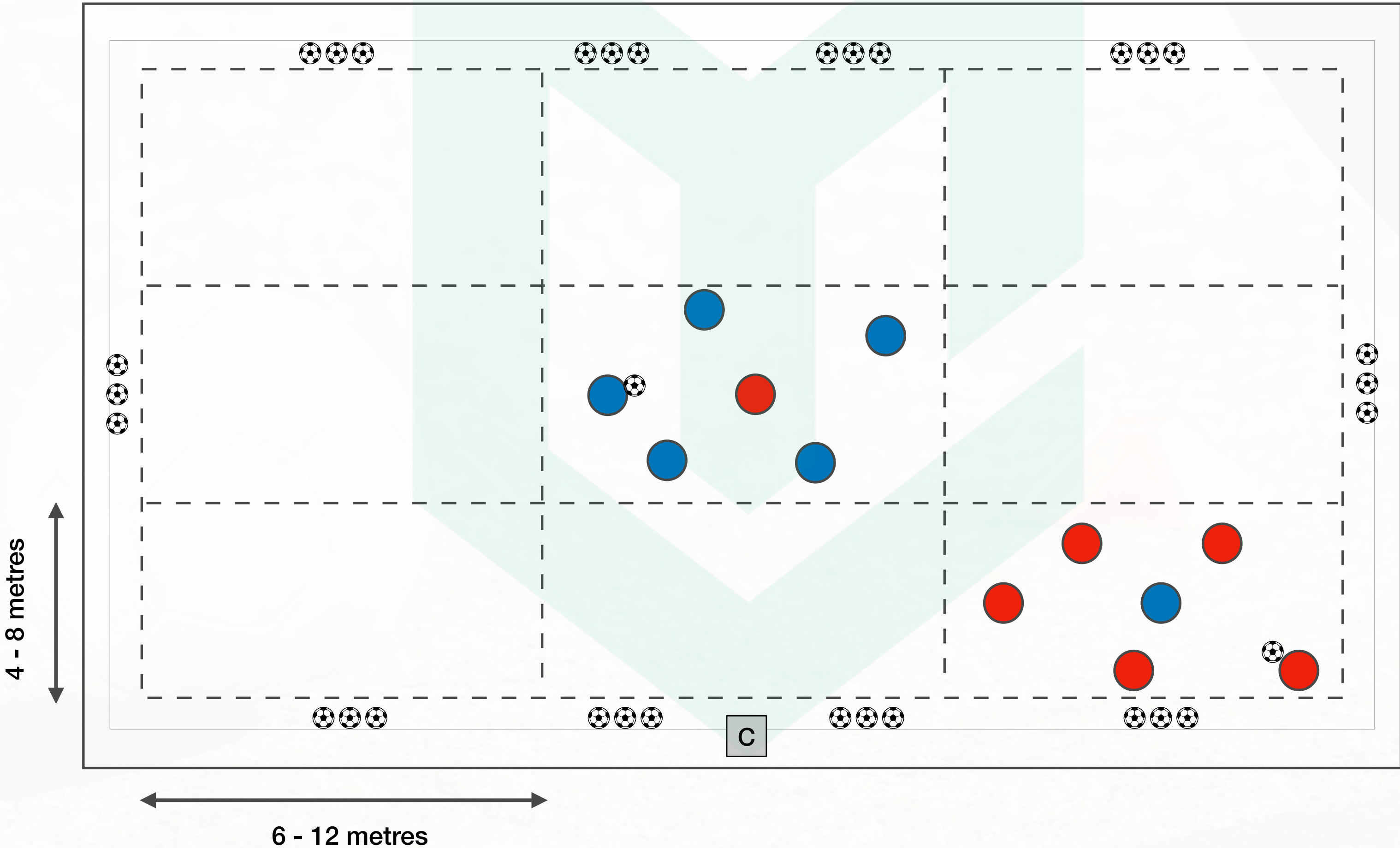
Age



Difficulty



Time Length

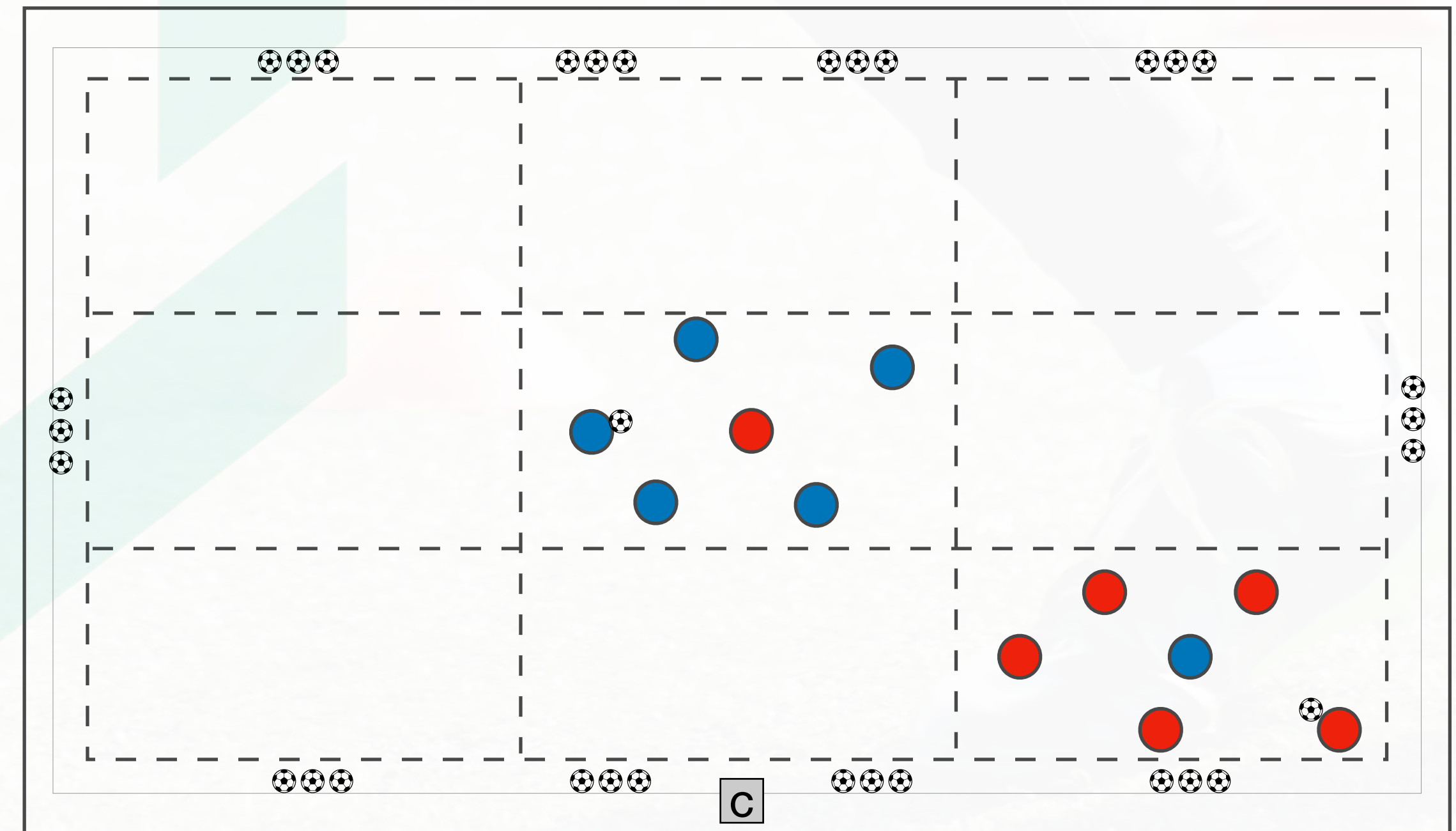


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved positive feeling in relation to the training environment, team, and session

Objective 3: An improved awareness of opponent triggers when selecting passing options

- The game is set up using a large grid divided into 9 smaller grids. Grids can be rectangle or square shaped
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 4/5/6/7 players
- The objective of the game is to play noughts & crosses to beat the opposition to completing rondos in 3 grids
- The first team to reach a target number of passes in 3 boxes in a straight line wins the game
- The game starts with teams choosing a grid to start in, the first team will often pick the middle grid
- The second team will then have to pick one of the remaining grids
- 1/2 players from each team can press in the other teams rondo to prevent them reaching the target
- The pressing players can rotate and change whenever they are ready
- Once grids have been selected and a pressing player is in each grid, the rondos can start
- Both teams compete to reach a target number of passes before moving into another grid
- E.g. the blue team start in the middle grid, and reach the target of 12 passes without losing the ball
- They then move to the grid below to complete 12 passes in that grid
- Before they can finish, the red team then complete 12 passes in their grid
- They then move to the central top grid to prevent the other team completing 3 in a straight line
- The first team to complete 3 grids in a straight line wins, these can be diagonal, horizontal, or vertical





Open the Gates

A free possession competition to develop ball retention under pressure

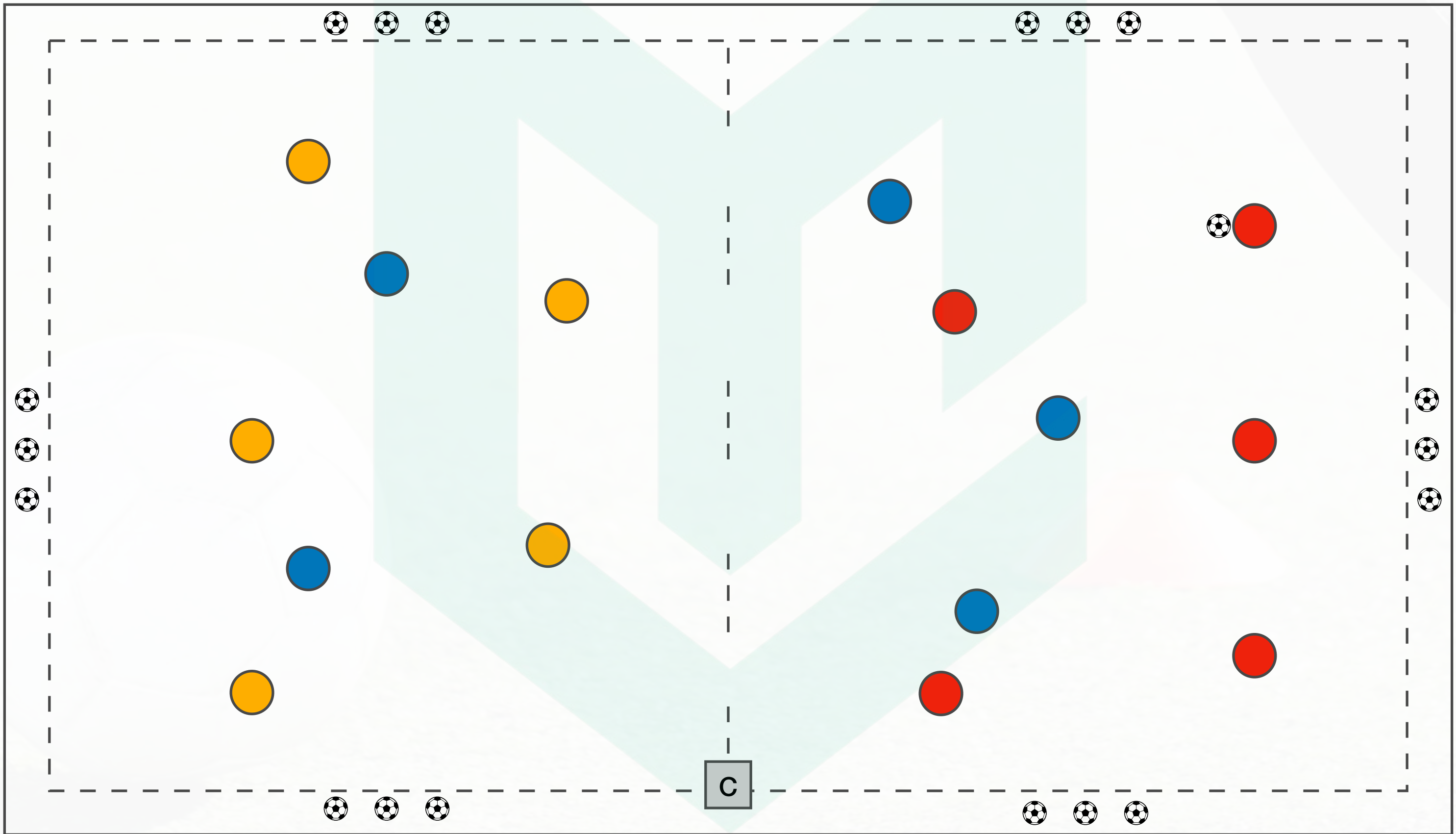
Numbers

12+

Age

9+

12 - 20 metres



20 - 30 metres

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

6-9 x
1-3
mins





Open the Gates

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

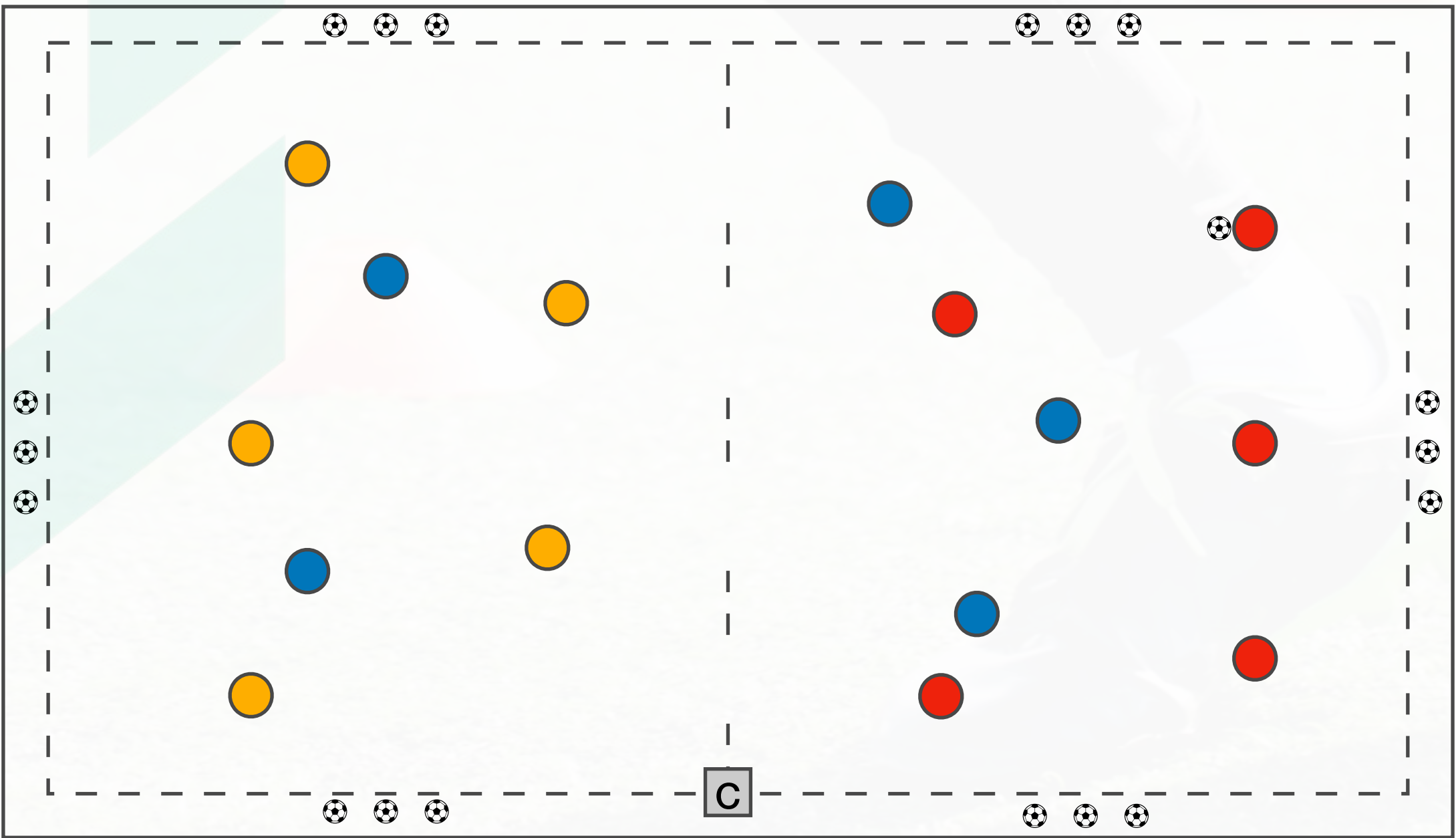
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of passing, dribbling, and receiving to penetrate

Objective 2: An improved understanding of methods to open pockets of space for penetration

Objective 3: An improved awareness of decision making triggers to retain possession of the ball and play penetrative passes

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a rectangle pitch divided into two halves
- The middle line should allow for 4 clear gates (poles/cones), and balls should be on the sides and ends
- The players should be divided into 3 teams, with one pressing teams, and the two possession teams
- The possession teams start on opposite sides of the pitch. The pressing team should split, 3 one side, 2 the other
- The possession team attempts to penetrate through the gates, staying aware of the pressers on the opposite side
- If the 2 pressing players on the opposite side stay high and close the gates, aerial passes 'over' can be used
- If there is an opportunity to dribble through the gate, one player can dribble through, pass, then return back
- Each time the ball is transferred to the opposite side, the team gets one point
- If a team makes 10 passes on the same side, they also get a point. 10 passes plus transfer equals 2 points
- The pressing team get a point every time they regain the ball and transfer to the opposite team
- E.g. if the blue team win the ball from the reds, and transfer the ball to the yellows, the reds now go in to press
- The pressing team can press in any structure and are free to move between both boxes after the first pass
- The game can last for a set period of time e.g. 3 minutes, with the teams rotating after
- Points for each team can accumulate over the period of the practice to have one winner at the end





018

Player to Player

A directional **free possession game** to develop ball retention under 1v1 pressure from an opponent

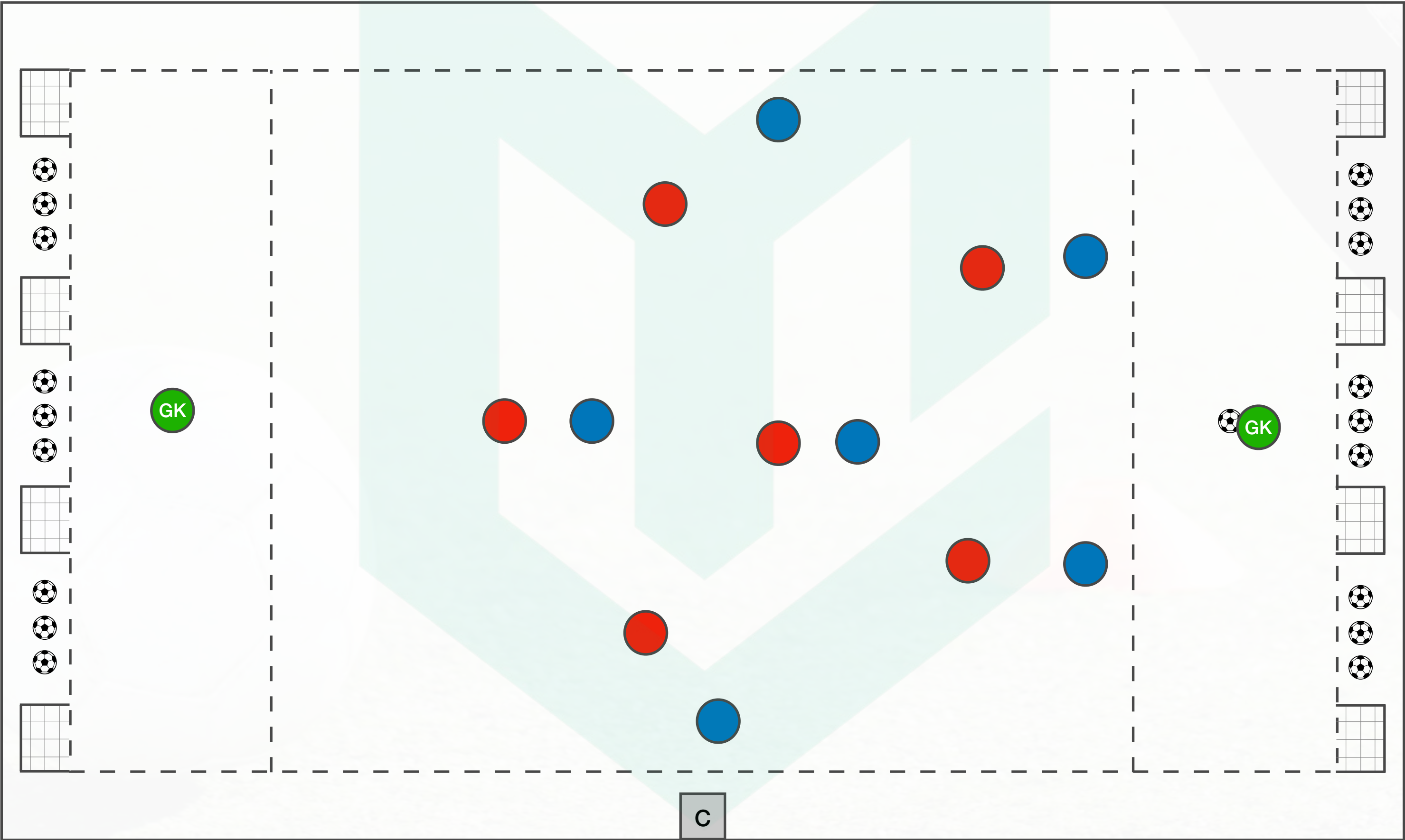
Numbers

12+

Age

9+

20 - 30 metres



30 - 40 metres

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

3-5

x 4-8

mins



Player to Player

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

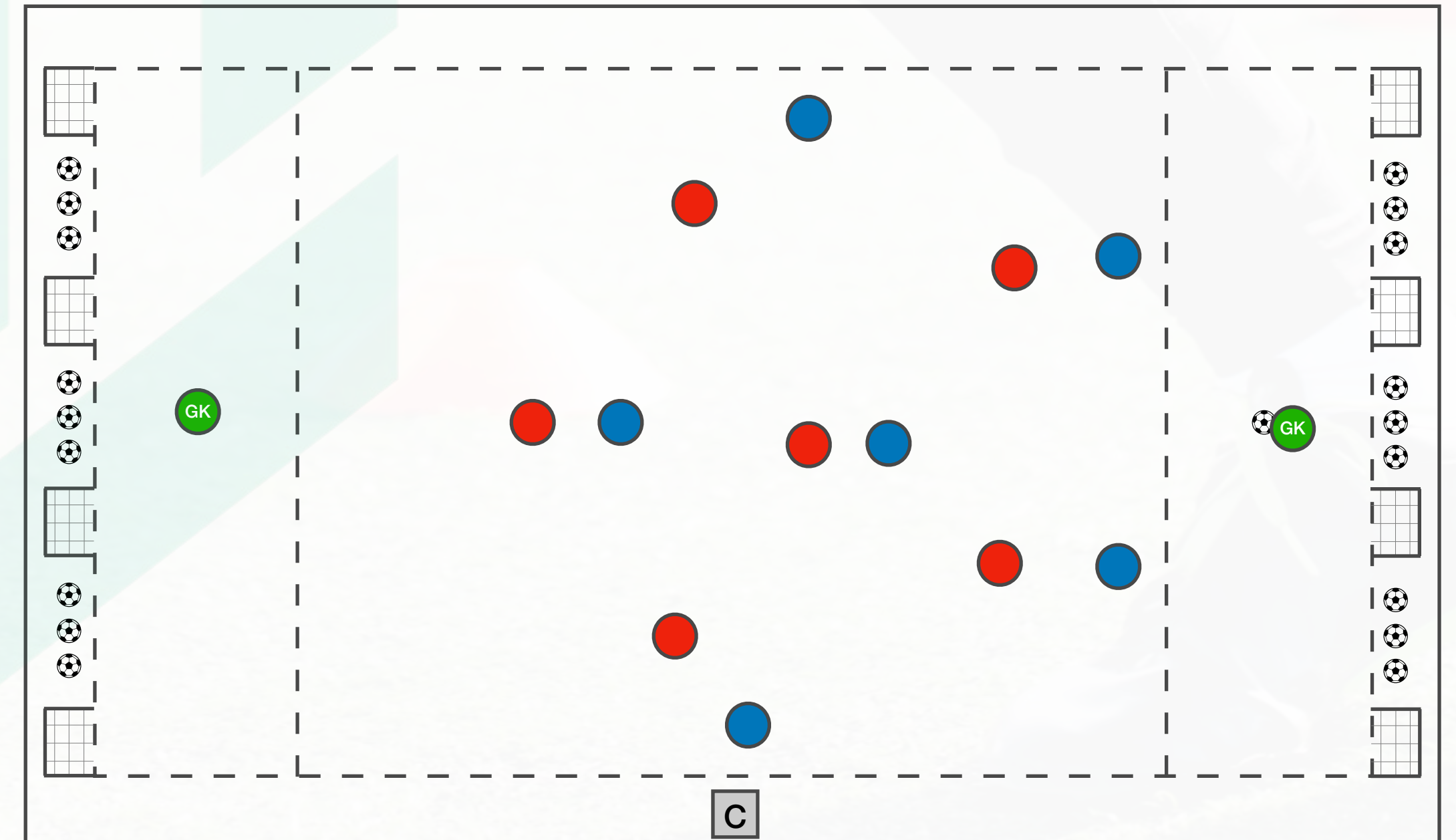
Objective 1: An improved awareness of tactical methods to beat a player to player 1v1 press

Objective 2: An improved execution of technical methods to beat tight pressure in a variety of 1v1 situations

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with teammates and units to beat player to player pressure

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with one grid, with 4 mini-goals at each end
- End zones are also added for target areas before scoring in the mini-goals
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 6 plus 1 goalkeeper on each team
- The blue team is attacking one end, and the red team is attacking the other end
- The game starts with the ball from one goalkeeper, e.g. the green goalkeeper
- The green goalkeeper then works with the blue team to build-up against the 1v1 press
- The red team stay 1v1 marking to regain the ball
- If they regain, the blue team have 3 seconds to start marking 1v1 against the red team
- Goals can only be scored from within the end zone
- Goalkeepers are free to leave the end zones to sweep, and can defend the mini-goals
- Any player who presses to regain from the GK must try to close the passing lane to their 1v1 player
- All restarts start from the goalkeepers
- The team with the most goals at the end of the practice wins

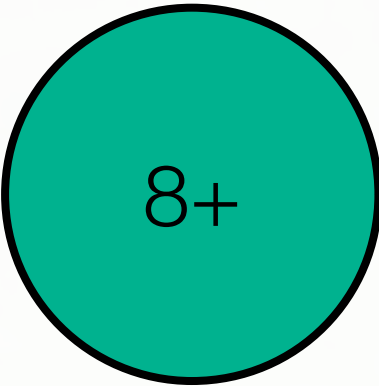




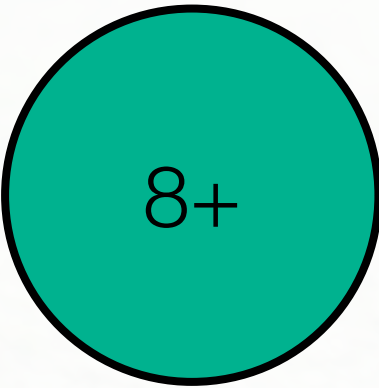
Rondo Blockers

A **free possession game** to develop ball retention, pressing and blocking passes/finishes

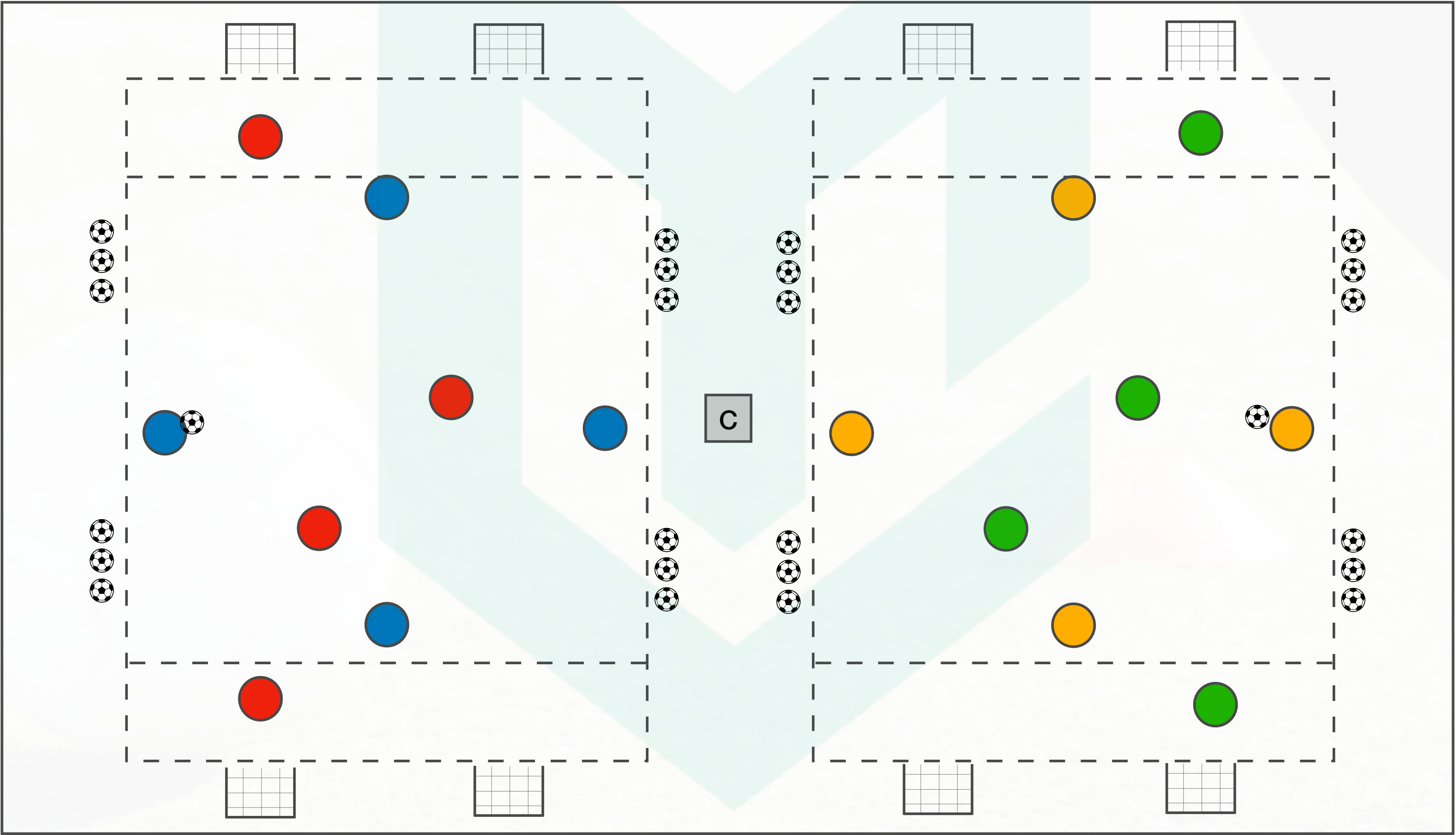
Numbers



Age

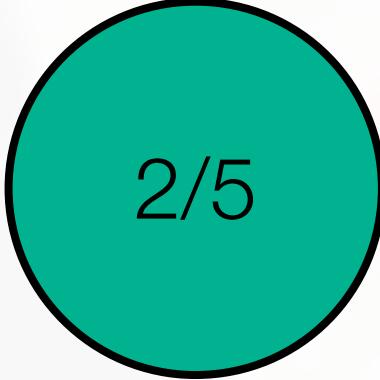


25 - 40 metres

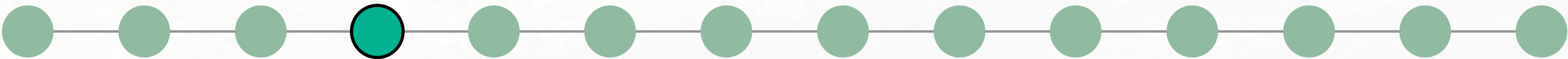
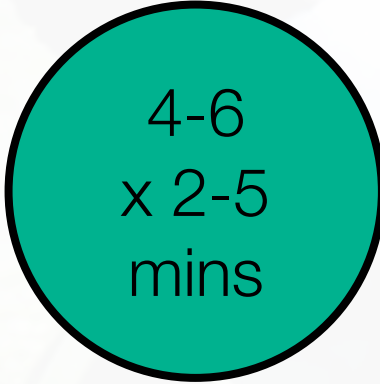


15 - 25 metres

Difficulty



Time Length





Rondo Blockers

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

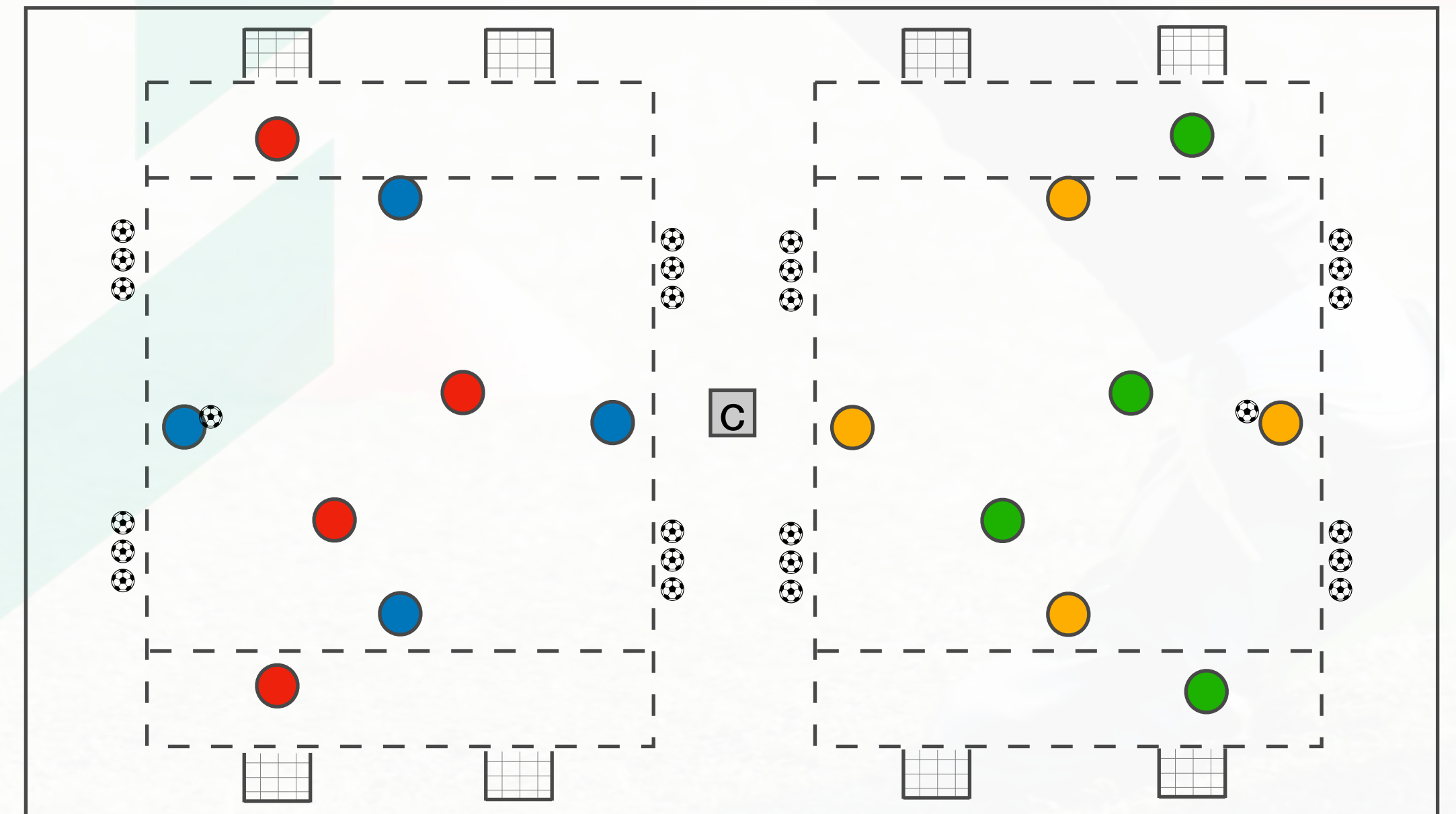
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of passing, receiving, and finishing

Objective 2: An increased awareness of opportunities to penetrate vs opportunities to retain possession

Objective 3: An improved reaction time to transition moments when regaining or losing the ball

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a square grid, with 2 rectangle end zones opposite each other on the outsides
- Outside the zones are two mini goals, with balls on the sides of the square grid
- Players are split into two teams of 4, with a 4v2 rondo in the middle, and the extra two players in the zones
- The game starts as a normal rondo, except at any point the team of 4 can score in the mini goals for 1 point
- The players in the zones on the outside of the rondo can block shots into the mini goals
- E.g. the blue team starts with the ball, and attempts to keep possession and score when possible
- If they score they get 1 point, if the ball goes out, the red team stay in the middle and blue team start again
- When the red team regain the ball, they can then score in the mini goals themselves, or using the zone players
- As the red team regain the ball, the blue team must press and block the goals to prevent the blue team scoring
- Once the red team score, they now become the 4 in the middle rondo, and 2 blue players go out into the zones
- If the blue team regain the ball, they stay as the 4 in the 4v2 rondo
- A target score can be set, such as 10 points. First team to score 10 goals wins
- Alternatively, a time limit can be used, and the team winning at the end of the time are the winners





020

Rondo into the 9

A directional **free possession game** to develop possession and central attacking play using a single striker

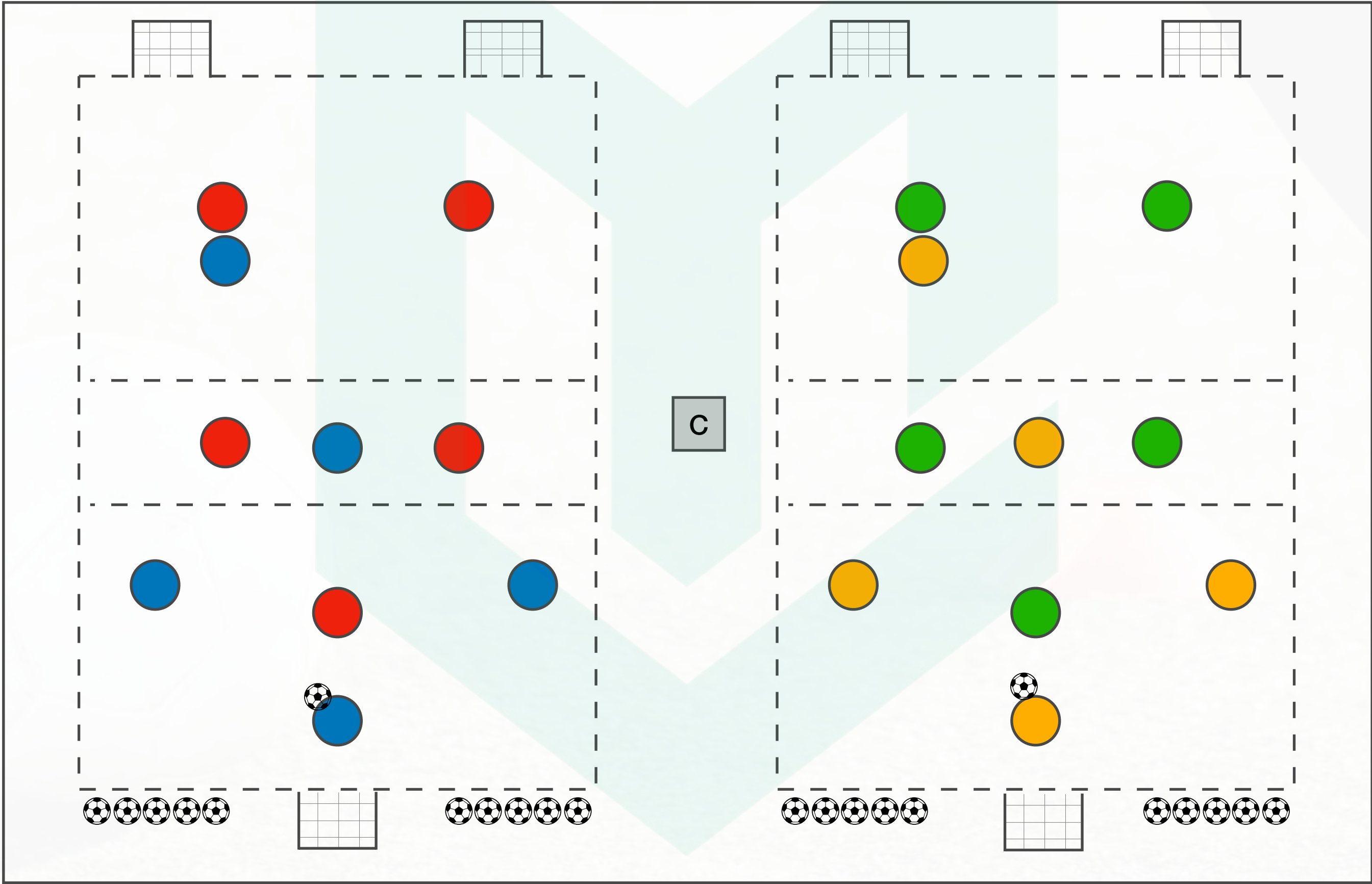
Numbers

10+

Age

11+

20 - 30 metres



10 - 20 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-6

x 4-7

mins



Rondo into the 9

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

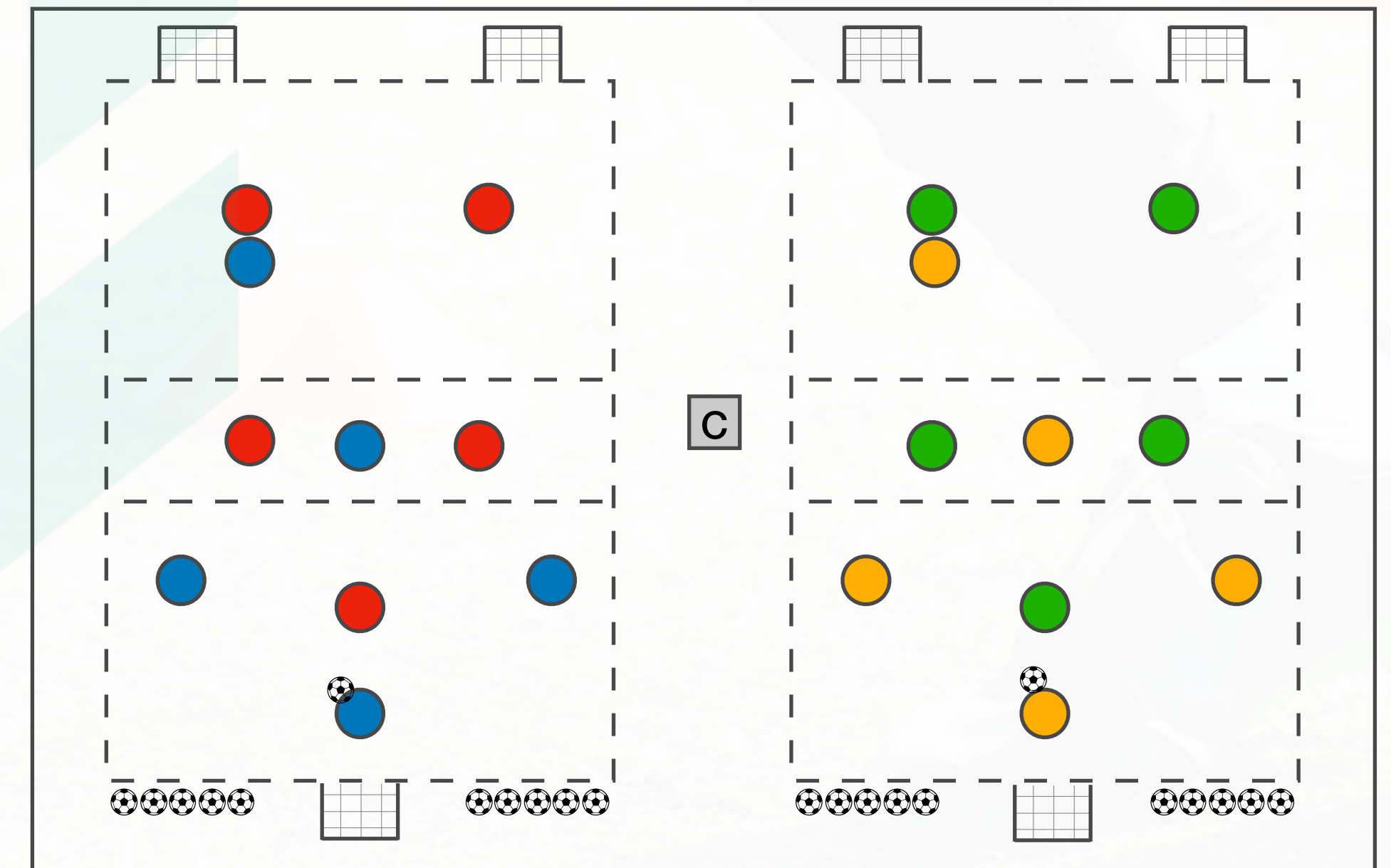
Objective 1: An improved confidence when receiving with pressure from behind to protect/roll the defender

Objective 2: An increased awareness to pick the best forward pass option at the best time

Objective 3: An increased understanding of third player runs, and timing to make forward runs to join the striker

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid, with 1 mini goal at one end and 2 mini-goals/gates at the opposite end
- The grid is then divided into 3 zones, by creating a narrow middle zone. Players are divided into two teams of 5
- In the first zone, next to the balls, the players are in a 3v1 rondo. The middle zone is 2 defenders vs 1 attacker
- The final zone is again 2 defenders vs 1 attacker. The attacker being the '9'
- The blue players in the first 2 zones are free to dribble and make runs to join the next zones
- E.g. The game starts with the blue team, whose objective is to pass into the striker and join to score in the goals
- The objective for the red team is to prevent passes into the striker, and regain the ball
- Once the ball arrives with the striker, only the blue team can join, forcing the striker to hold/roll and score
- 2 blue players can join the final zone to make a 3v2, and attempt to score
- If the red team regains the ball, they can counter attack to attempt to score in the opposite mini-goal
- If the ball goes out of play, the blue team start again with the ball in the first zone in the 3v1
- After a time limit, teams can swap so the red team is now attacking, and the blue team now defending
- The team with the most total goals wins





021

Rondo Pairs

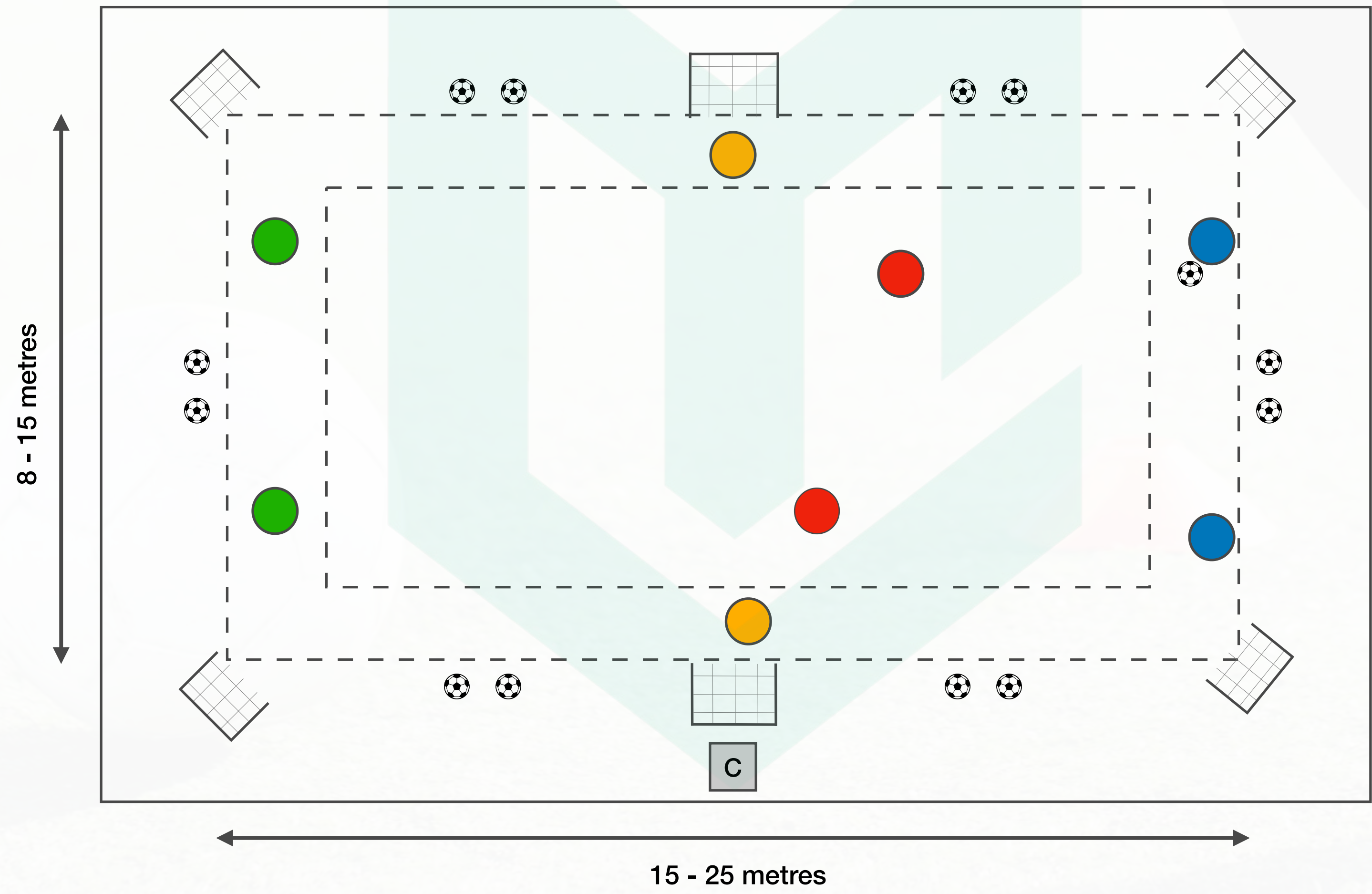
A directional **free possession game** to develop possession and central attacking play using a single striker

Numbers

8+

Age

9+

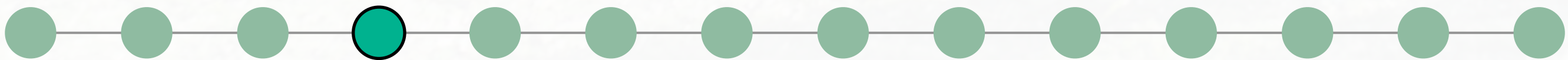


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

4/8
x 1-3
mins





Rondo Pairs

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

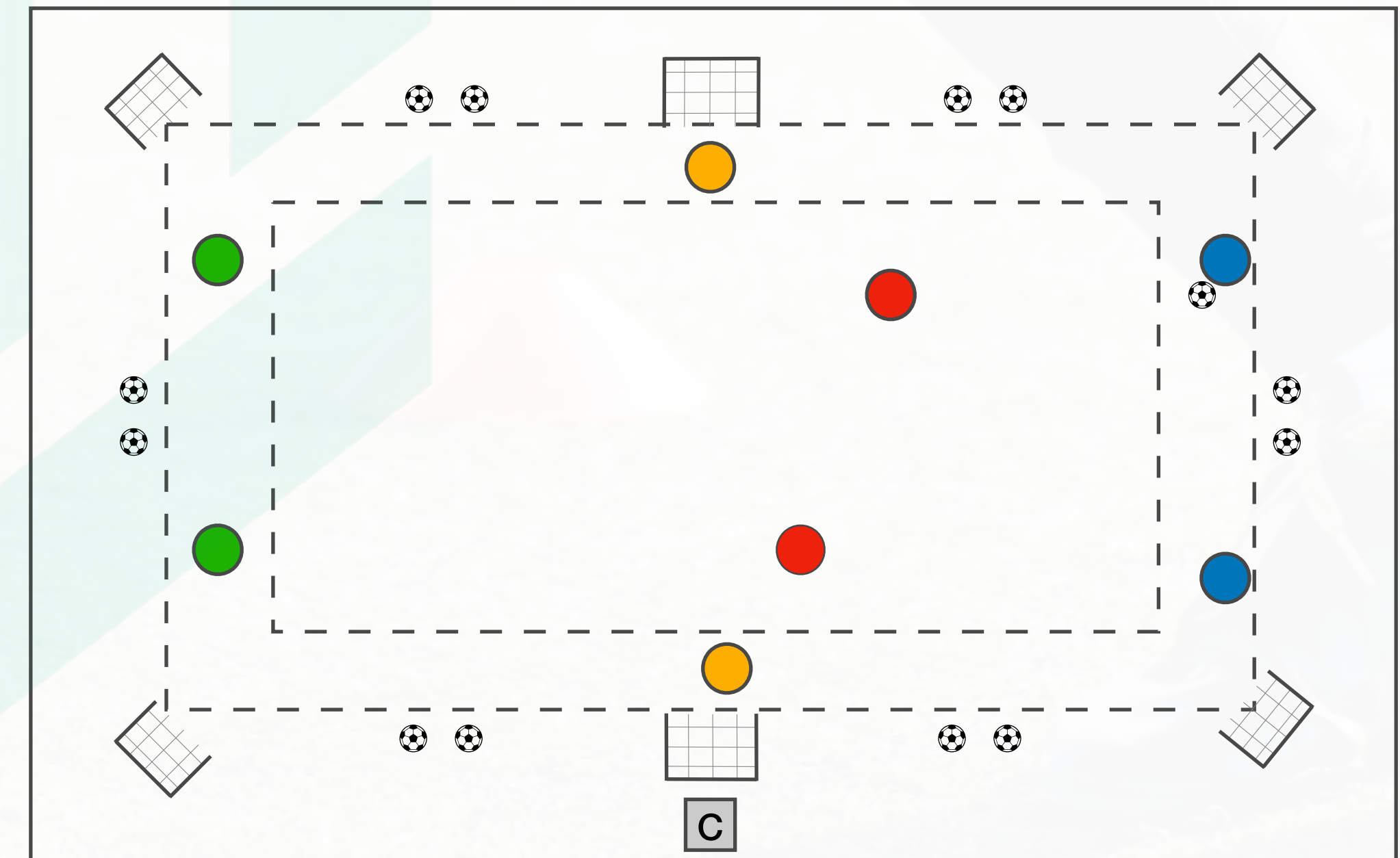
Objective 1: An increased awareness of the triggers to play through and around pressure

Objective 2: An improved execution of passing and receiving under pressure

Objective 3: An improved reaction to press and engage the ball when possession is lost

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a rectangle grid, within a rectangle grid, and 6 mini-goals
- Players are divided into 4 pairs, with 1 pair starting as the pressing team
- The other 3 pairs start as the possession team
- Each player in the possession team has a goal to defend if possession is lost
- The possession team must retain the ball, targeting a set number of passes for 1 point
- If the pressing team regain the ball, they then have to score in the mini-goals
- The possession team then have to protect their mini-goals from inside the middle grid
- Possession players cannot block shots from the outer rectangle grid
- They must press towards the ball when possession is lost
- If they score, they then swap with the team whose goal they scored in
- E.g. if the red team are pressing first, after regaining they may score in the mini-goals
- If they score in one of the mini-goals the green team is defending, they swap with the greens
- The green team are then the pressing team and the red team part of the possession team
- If after a set time limit, e.g. 2 minutes, the ball has not been regained, they may swap roles



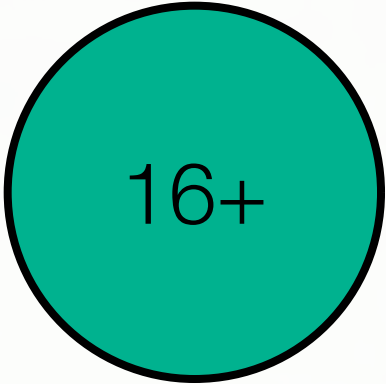


022

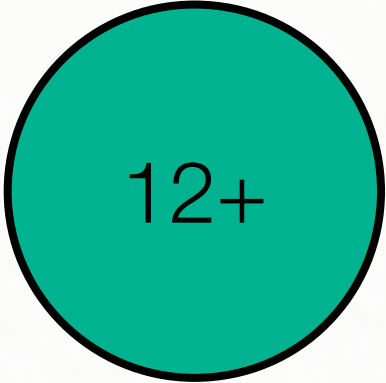
Rondo Possession Rondo

A **free possession game** which moves into a directional free possession game to develop ball retention and penetration

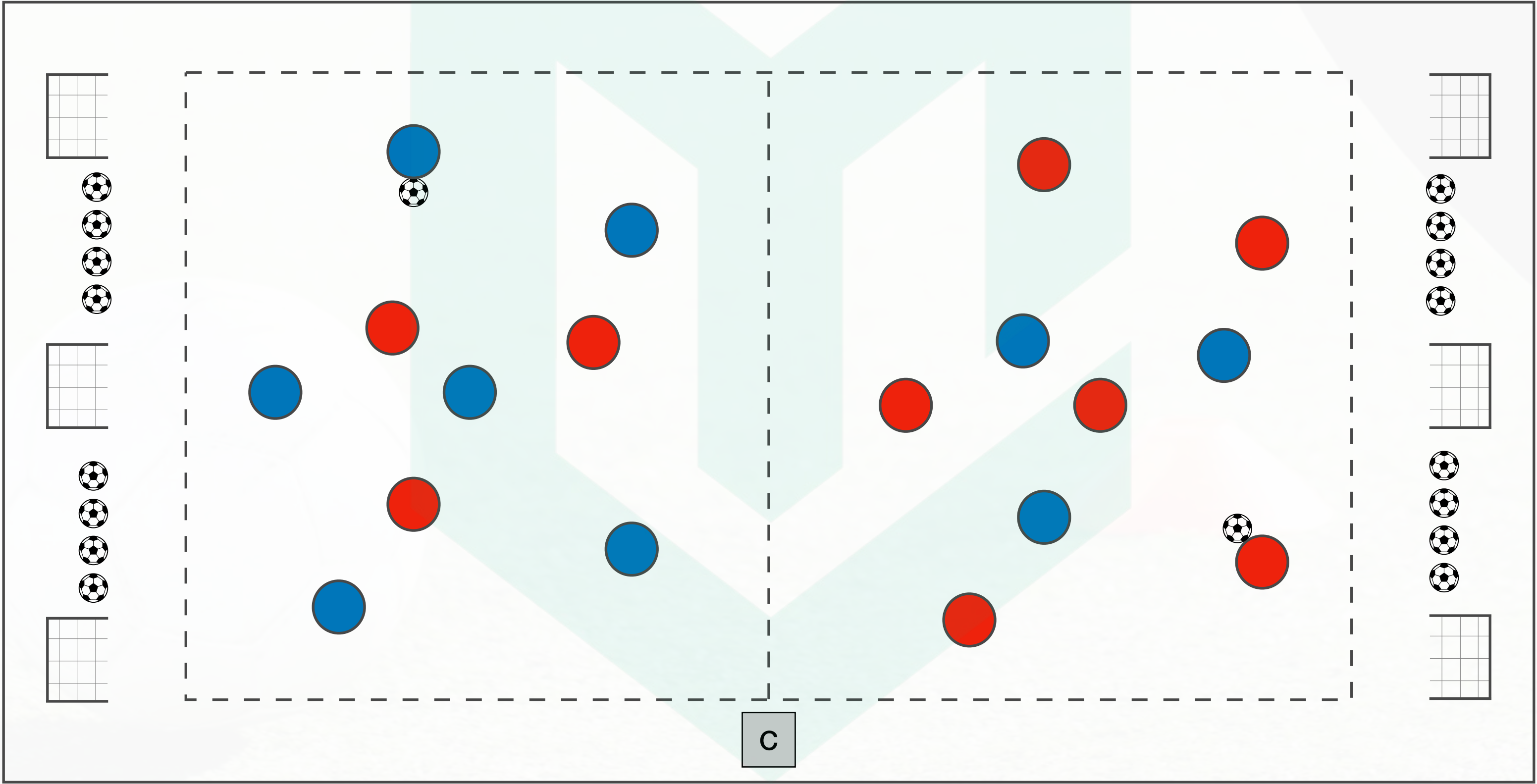
Numbers



Age

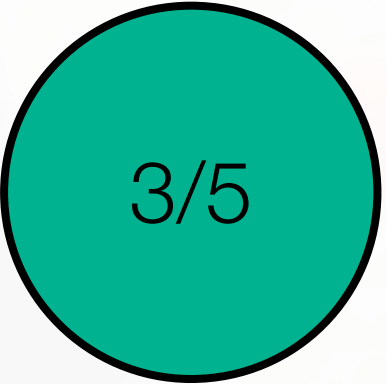


15 - 25 metres

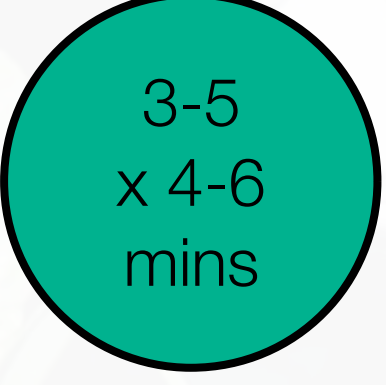


20 - 35 metres

Difficulty



Time Length





Rondo Possession Rondo

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

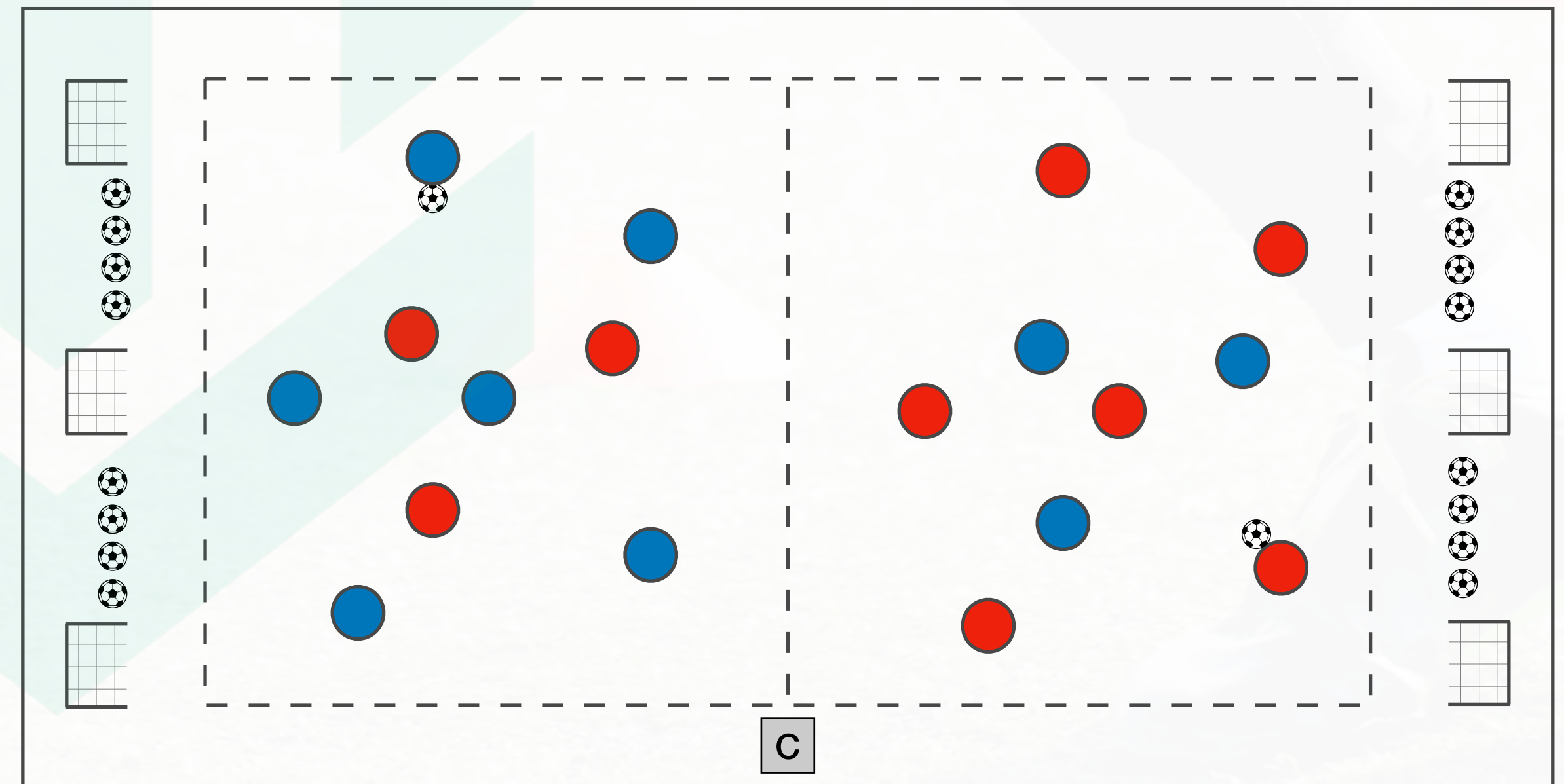
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of passing, dribbling, and receiving under pressure

Objective 2: An improved ability to adapt focus between different situations and scenarios

Objective 3: An increased desire to perform with quality and intensity from the first moments

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with one grid, with a halfway line and 6 mini-goals
- The halfway line divides the grid in to 2 rondo pitches to start the practice
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 9 players
- The game starts with both teams divided to make 2 5v3 rondos
- The teams compete to get to a set number of passes, e.g. 8
- When a team achieves 8 passes, the game then moves directly into an 8v8 directional game
- E.g. The 6 blue players get to 8 passes against 3 red players
- Both rondos then stop, and the blue team starts attacking the opposite 3 mini-goals
- The red team defend straight away
- Every time the ball goes out of play, the blue team get to restart
- If the red pressing team score in the mini-goals during the rondo, the game also moves on
- The red team then starts and restarts with the ball during the directional game
- This directional possession may last for a set time limit, e.g. 4 minutes
- After the time limit, or a goal is scored, they move back to rondos
- The winning team is the team at the end who scores the most goals

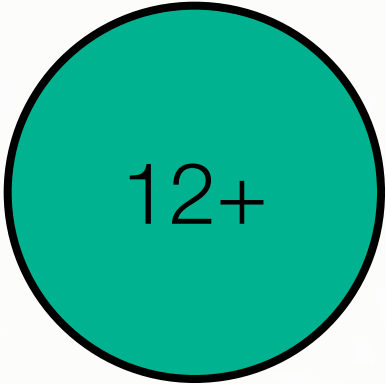




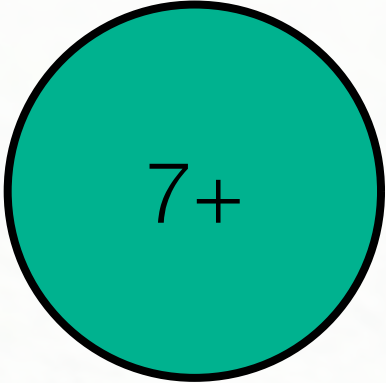
Rondo Races

A competitive **free possession game** which challenges consistency, with frequent opportunities for success and failure

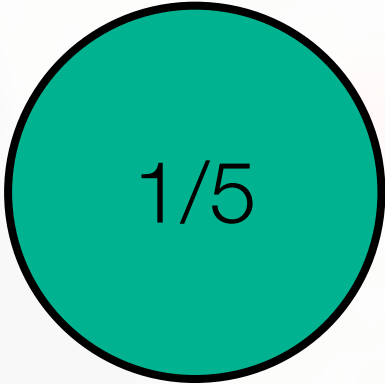
Numbers



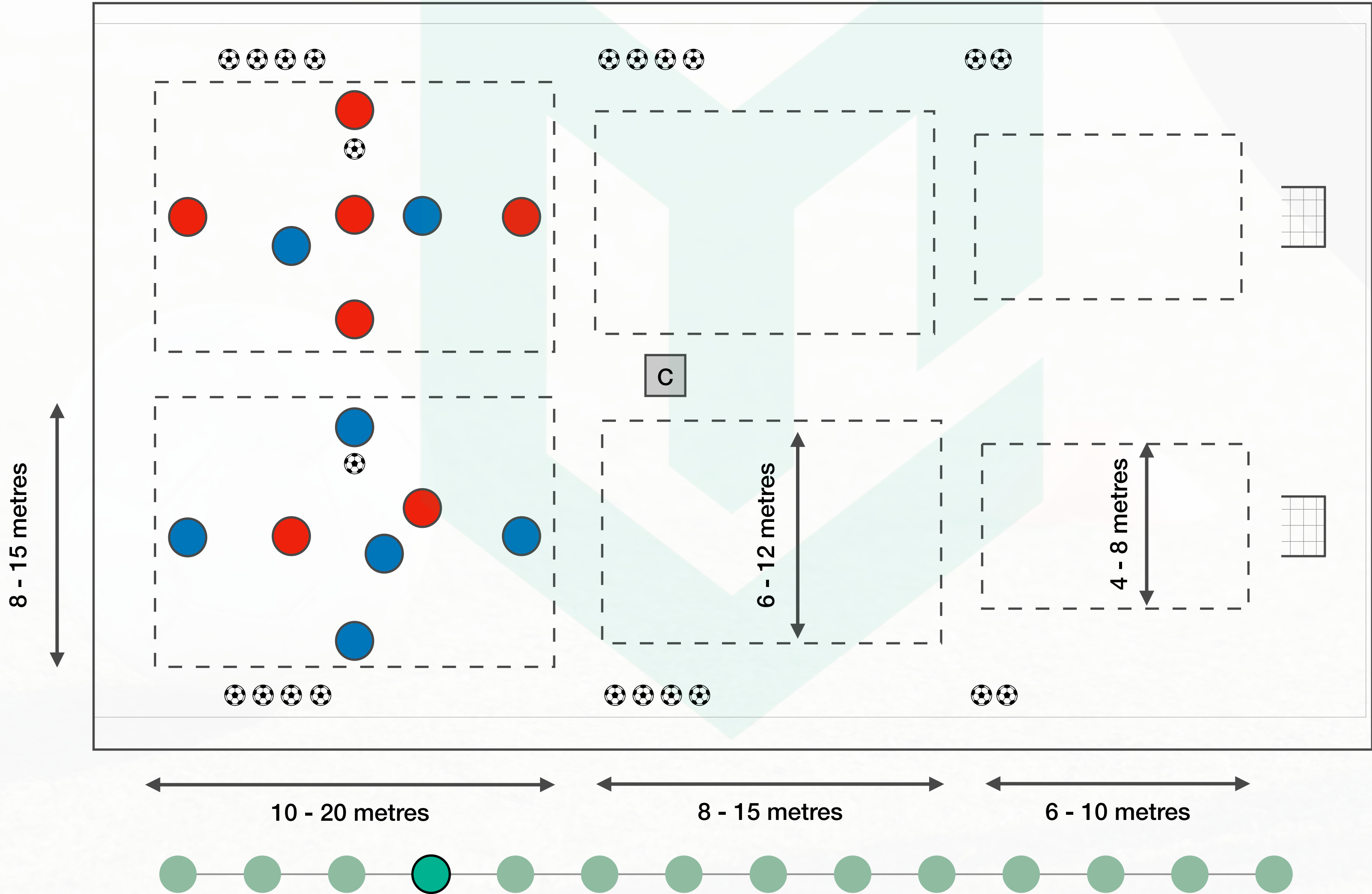
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Rondo Races

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

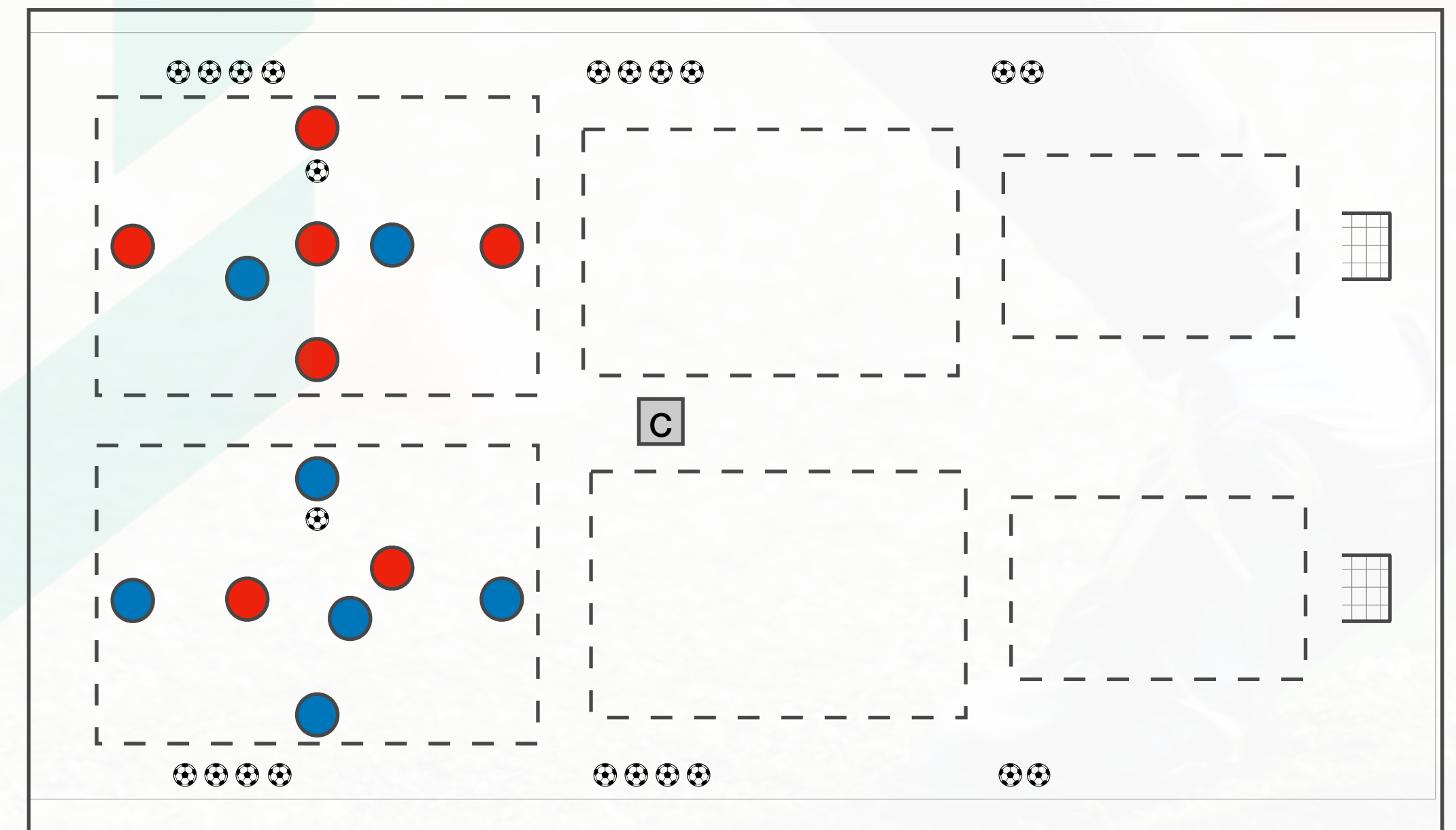
Objective 1: An improved appreciation of team possession, due to team consequence of a turnover after progression

Objective 2: An improved execution of retaining possession under pressure in a variety of spaced situations

Objective 3: An increased competitiveness and improved positive feeling regarding the environment

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 3 rondo grids per team, with a gap between each rondo, and a goal at the end
- The 3 rondo grids get smaller each time. More grids can be added. If each box gets smaller 4/5 is the limit
- If you prefer to keep the rondo boxes the same size, the game works well anywhere up to 7/8 boxes
- Both teams have 7 players. 2 players from each team start in the opponents rondo grid to press
- A target is set for each grid, before they can progress to the next grid. e.g. 15 passes before progressing
- As soon as they reach 15 passes, one player can move to the next grid to receive the ball, then everyone joins
- They now have to achieve the target in the next box, which may be slightly lower due to the smaller box, e.g. 12
- Once they progress to the final grid, they then have to complete a target (e.g. 8) then score in the mini-goal
- The first team to score in the mini goal wins
- If the team moves up, then loses possession of the ball, the rule can be set that they have to move back a grid
- A time limit can be set to manage the players pressing
- Or you can give the pressing players the freedom to change with their teammates when they are want to
- This allows the game to continue until one team scores

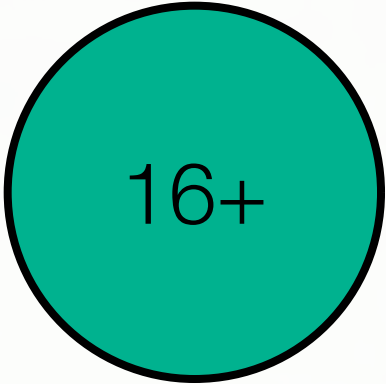




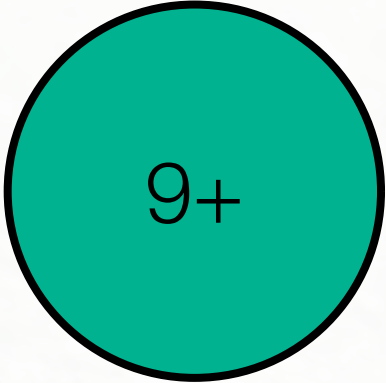
Rondo Royalty

A competitive **free possession game** which challenges consistency, with frequent opportunities for success and failure

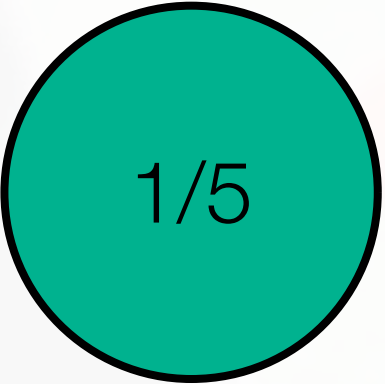
Numbers



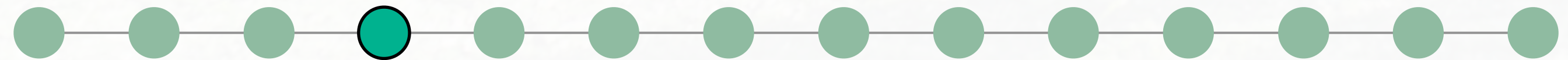
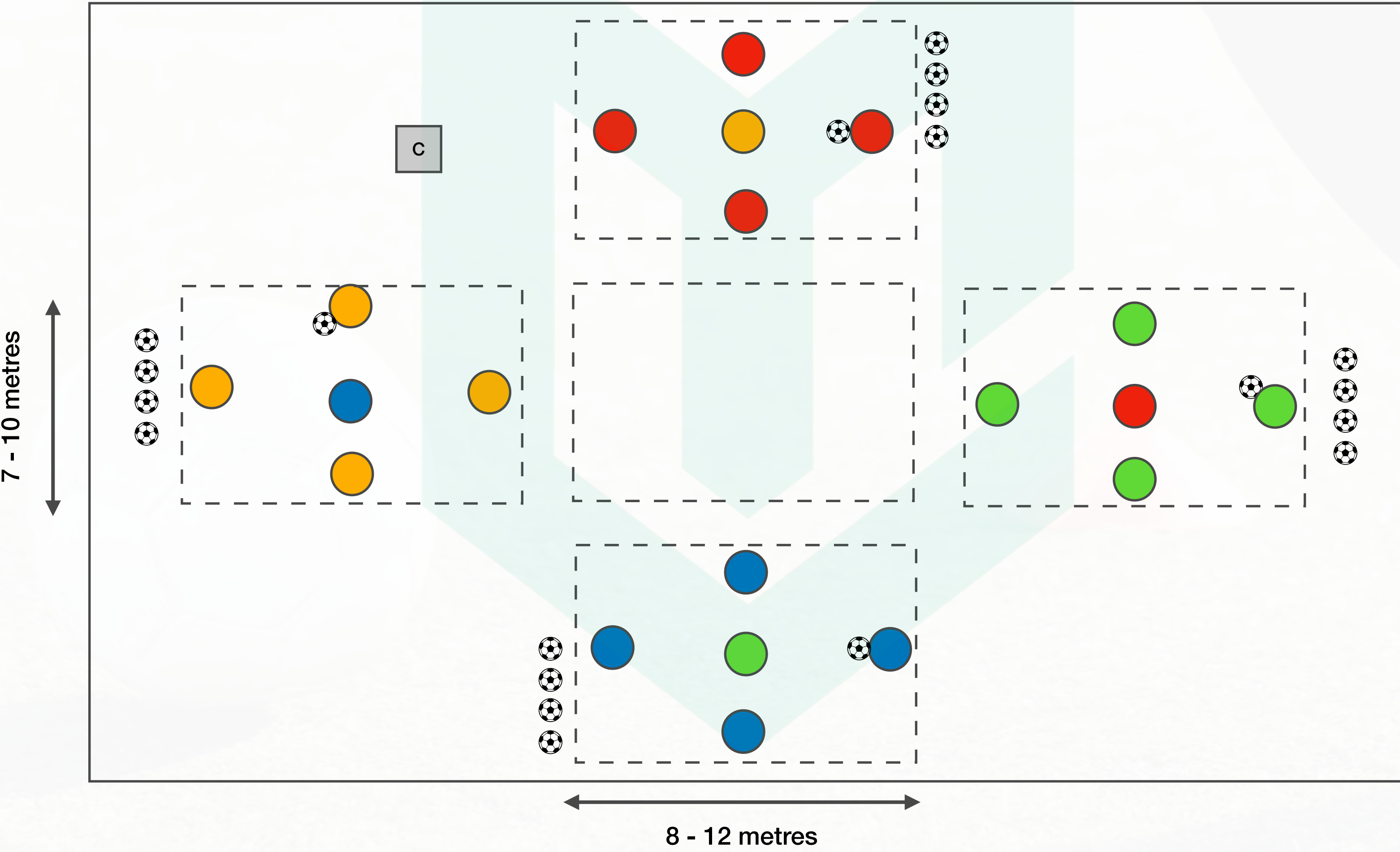
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Rondo Royalty

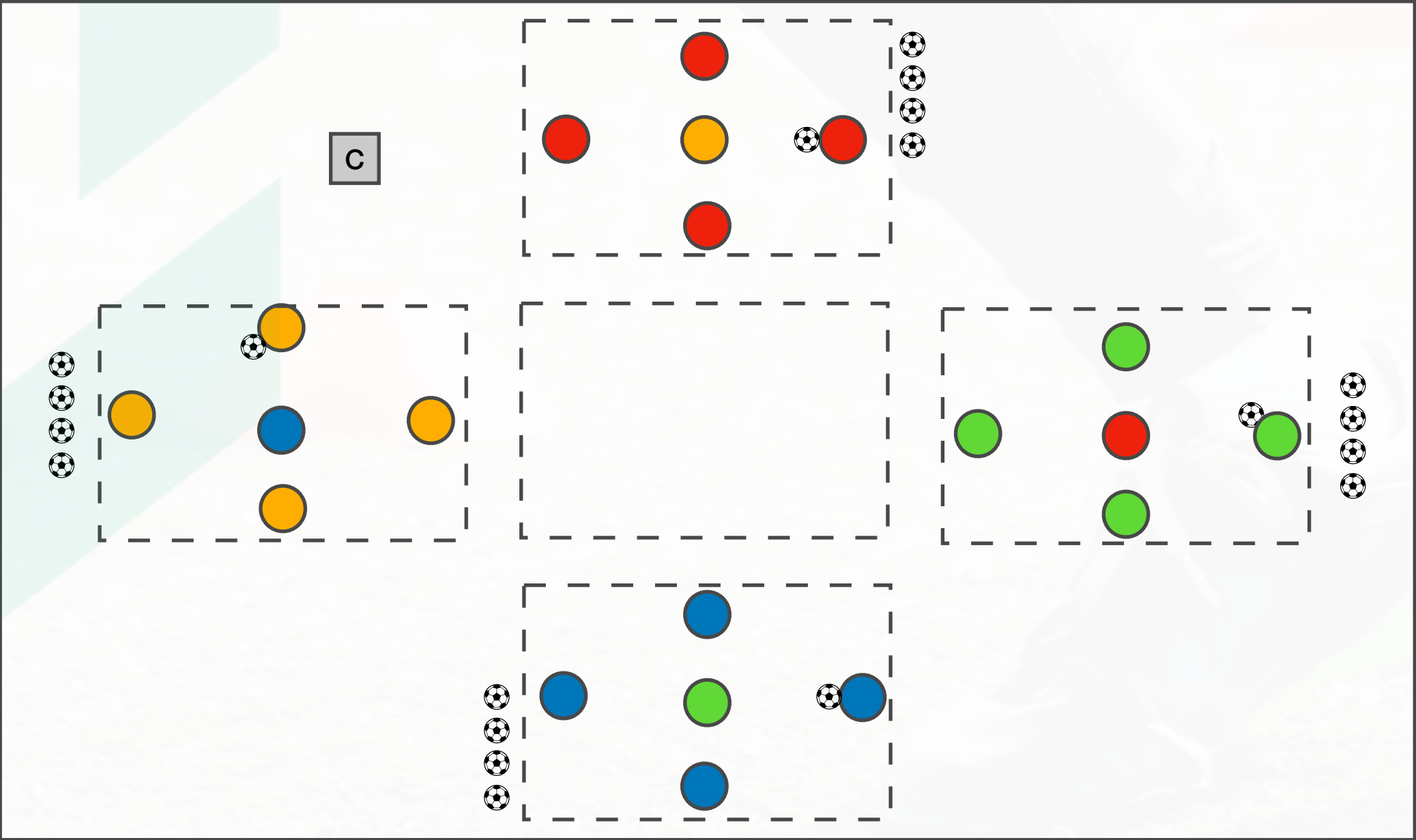
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved positive feeling in relation to the training environment, team, and the session
- Objective 2:** An improved awareness of decision making triggers when being pressed by opponents
- Objective 3:** An increased competitiveness and improved positive feeling regarding the environment

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 5 rondo boxes, making a cross shape, with the centre rondo box left vacant
- The 4 teams set up their rondo in the outside boxes, with one pressing player joining from the anti clockwise box
- The pressing player can swap with another player from their team at any time they wish
- The game starts with the players all starting their rondo. The first team to 9 passes moves to the centre
- The pressing player at the time of the 9 completed passes must also join the centre rondo to continue pressing
- The centre rondo is the king/queen rondo. Once a team is there, the target number of passes increases
- The kings/queens now move onto getting 12 passes. If the current kings/queens get to 12, they stay
- If another team completes 9, then completes 12 before the kings/queens, they then have to swap
- Once a pressing player has joined the centre rondo, they cannot swap, giving the kings/queens an advantage
- Each team must complete each target, e.g. 9 passes, then starting from 0 to get to 12, then from 0 to 15 etc.
- E.g. 5 targets: 9, then 12, then 15, then 18, then 21. The team that completes 21 first will be 'royalty'
- The team leading will always be in the middle rondo
- The team in the middle when the final target is reached is the winner

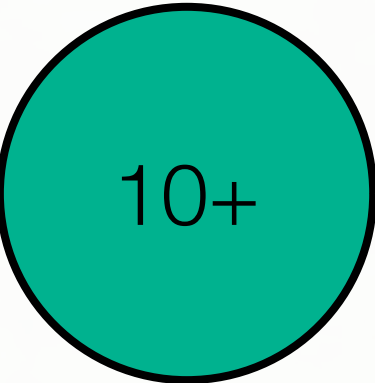




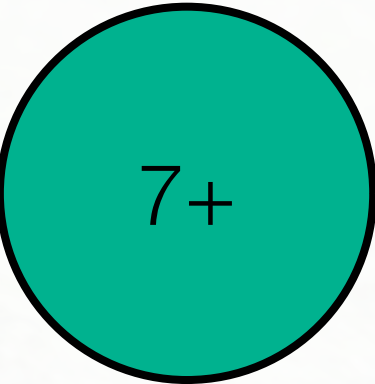
Rondo Runners

A competitive **free possession game** which develops running with the ball under pressure from behind

Numbers

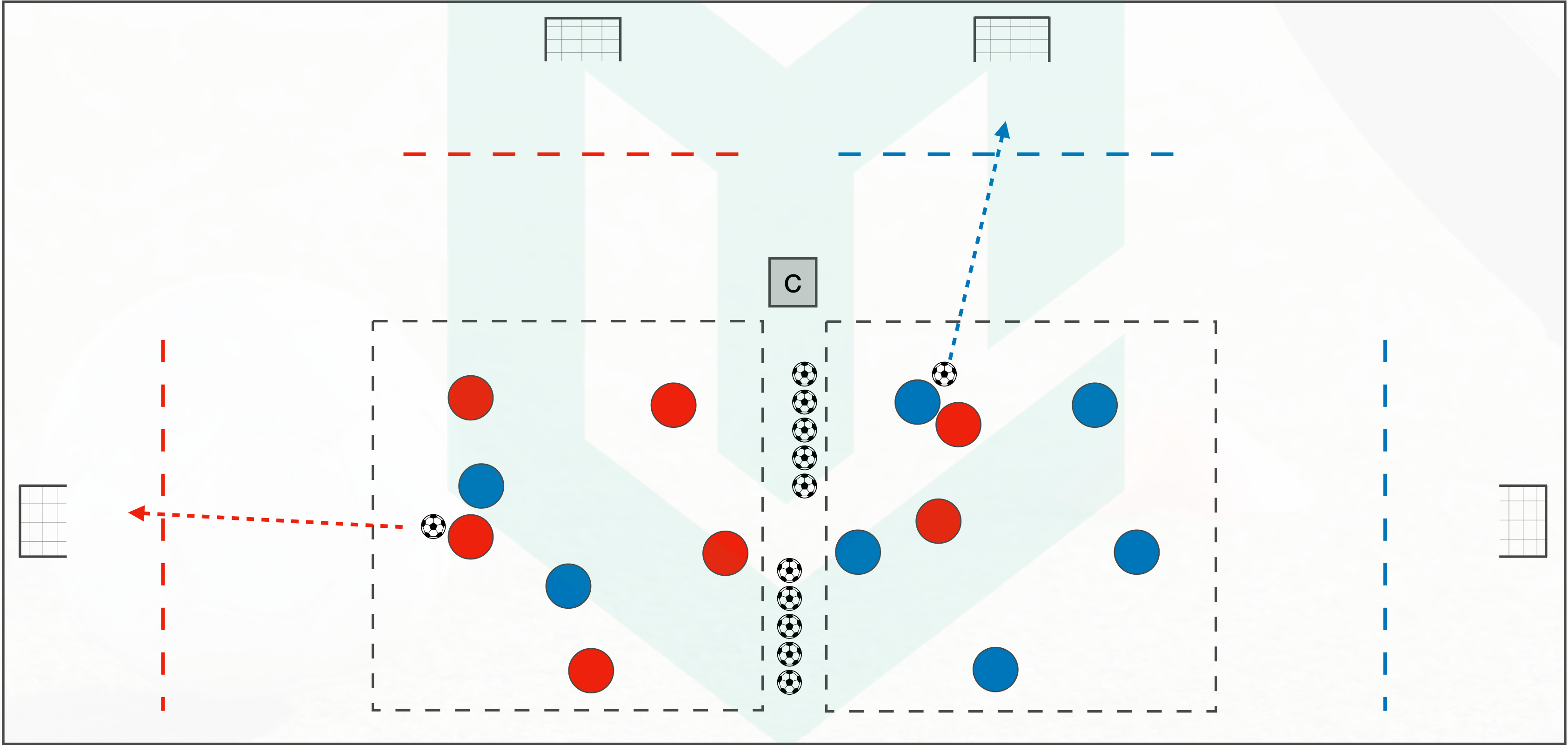


Age



6 - 12 metres

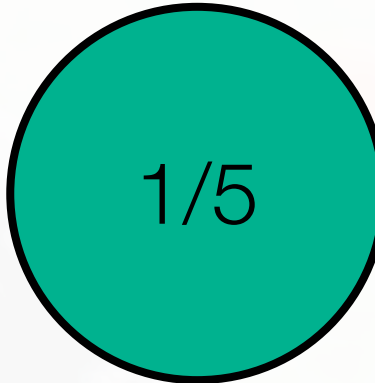
8 - 15 metres



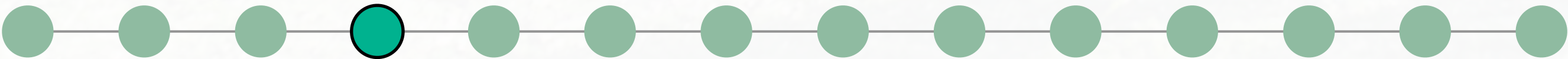
8 - 15 metres

3 - 6 metres

Difficulty



Time Length





Rondo Runners

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

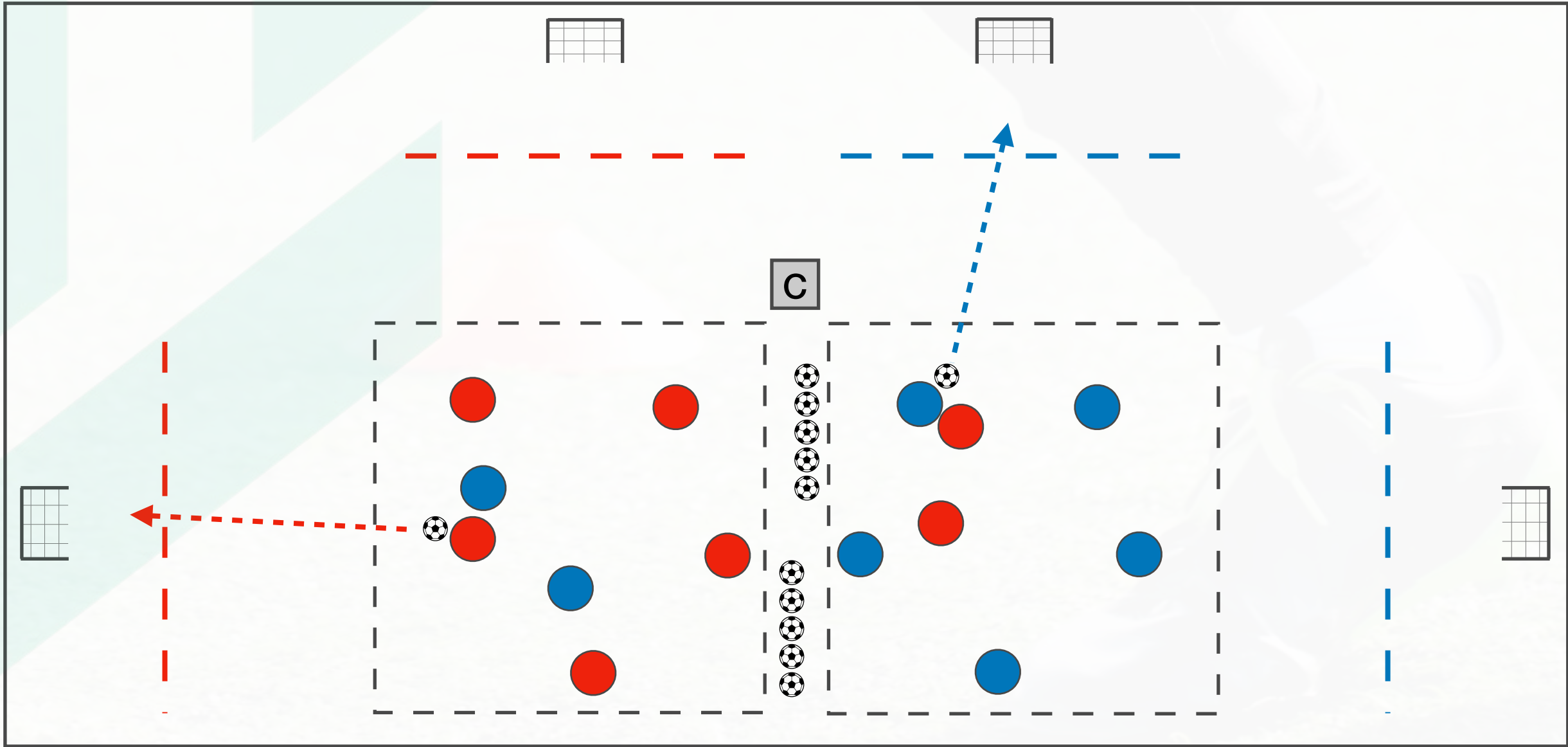
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of dribbling and running with the ball

Objective 2: An increased future acceleration when running with the ball

Objective 3: An improved awareness of opponent triggers when selecting passing option

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 2 rondo grids, with 4 mini-goals and a line 3-5 metres in front of each one
- The mini-goals are placed 10-20 metres outside of the rondo grids
- Players are divided into two teams of at least 6 on each team
- 2 players from each grid team should start in the opponents grid as pressing players
- Both team's objective is to reach 10 passes, then drive with the ball past the line to score in the mini-goal
- 1 player can run with the ball, and 1 defender can chase to prevent them from scoring
- At any point, the pressing players can rotate with the possession players on their own team
- Each goal scored is worth 1 point
- If the pressing players regain the ball, they can also drive out and score
- If the pressing players manage to score from past the line, the possession team lose all of their points
- The winning team, is the team with the most points at the end of the practice

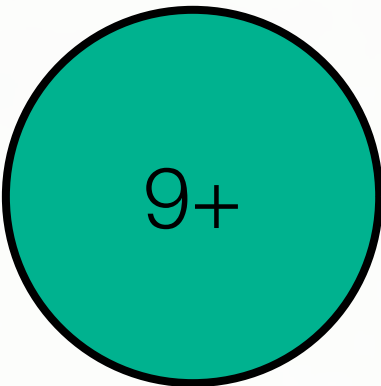




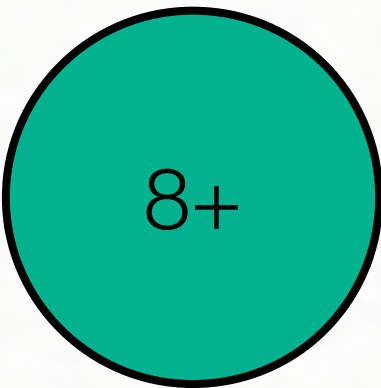
Through the Wire

A **free possession game** which develops ball retention under chaotic pressured situations, challenging cognitive processes and technical ability

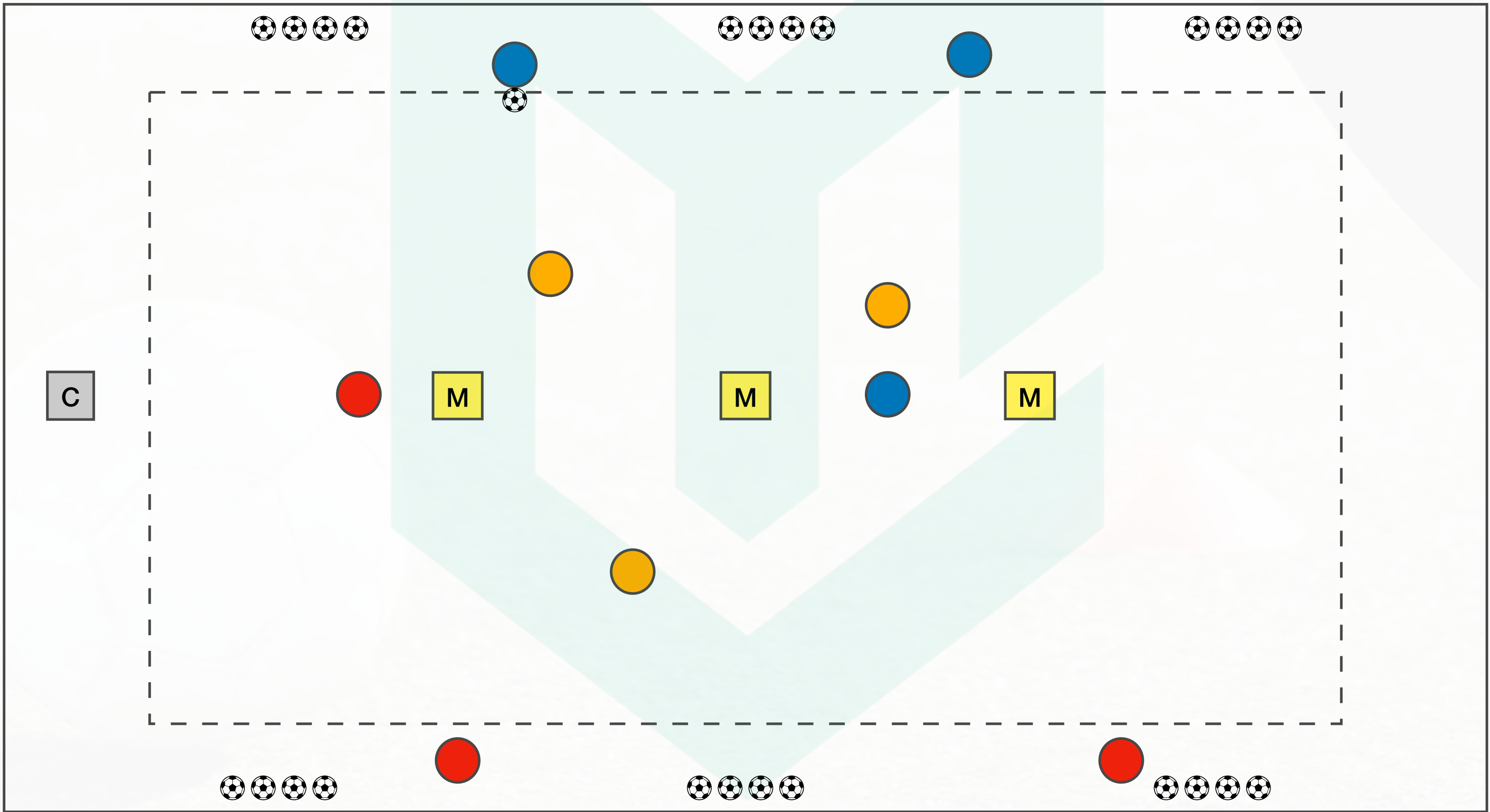
Numbers



Age

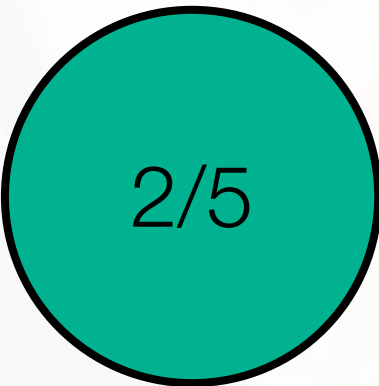


10 - 20 metres

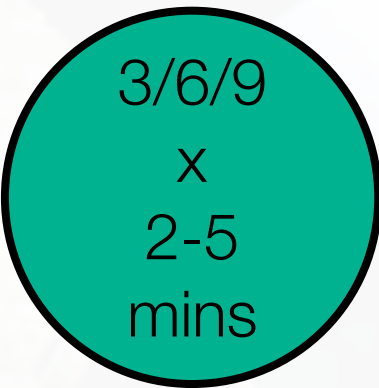


15 - 30 metres

Difficulty



Time Length





Through the Wire

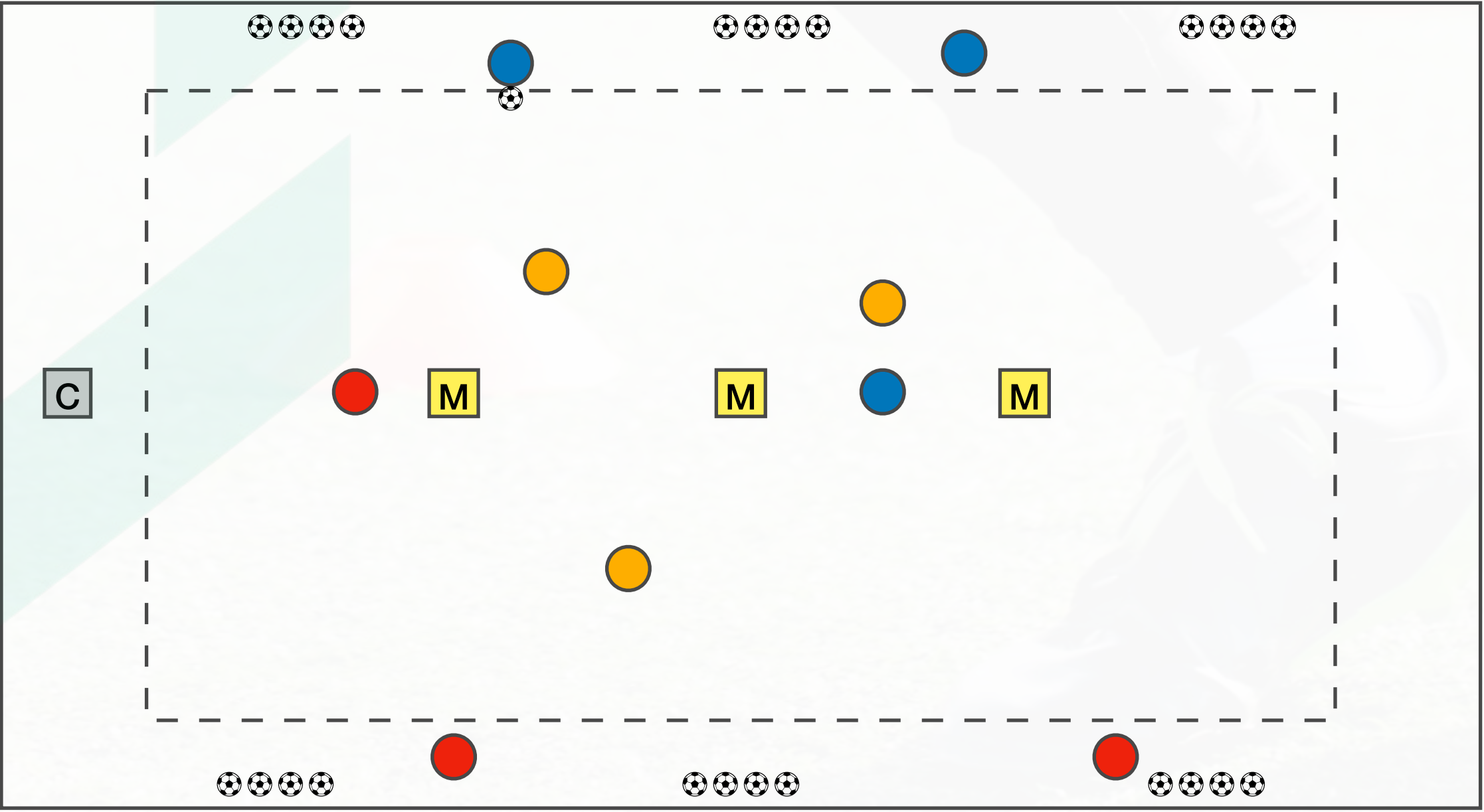
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An increased frequency of searching and scanning with efficiency to identify specific pictures
- Objective 2:** An improved execution of passing, receiving, and turning under pressure
- Objective 3:** An improved awareness of movements that can open passing lanes to bypass lines

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid, with 3 mannequins in the middle, evenly spaced out
- 9 players are divided into 3 teams, and organised into a 6v3, with 4 players of the 6 on the outsides
- The 3 pressing players start in the middle, and have to regain the ball from the 6
- 4 players from the 6 should always be on the outsides of the box on the wide sides of the rectangle.
- However, players on the outside can join inside the rectangles to press when their team loses the ball
- The game starts with 2 teams working together to compete against the other team
- One team starts with the ball, and has to retain possession away from the defenders with one other team
- E.g. Blue and red start working together to retain possession against the orange team
- They have to reach a target number of passes to gain a point for their team (15+)
- If the orange team regain the ball, or force a turnover, they then replace the team who turned the ball over
- The team that turned over the ball should counter press immediately to regain possession
- 2 players from the team that regained should move outside the box to ensure 4 players are outside
- Both teams get a point when they work together to get to 15 passes
- The winning team is the team of 3 with the most points at the end of the time limit





027

Top Rondo

A competitive **free possession game** which develops consistent quality to retain possession under pressure

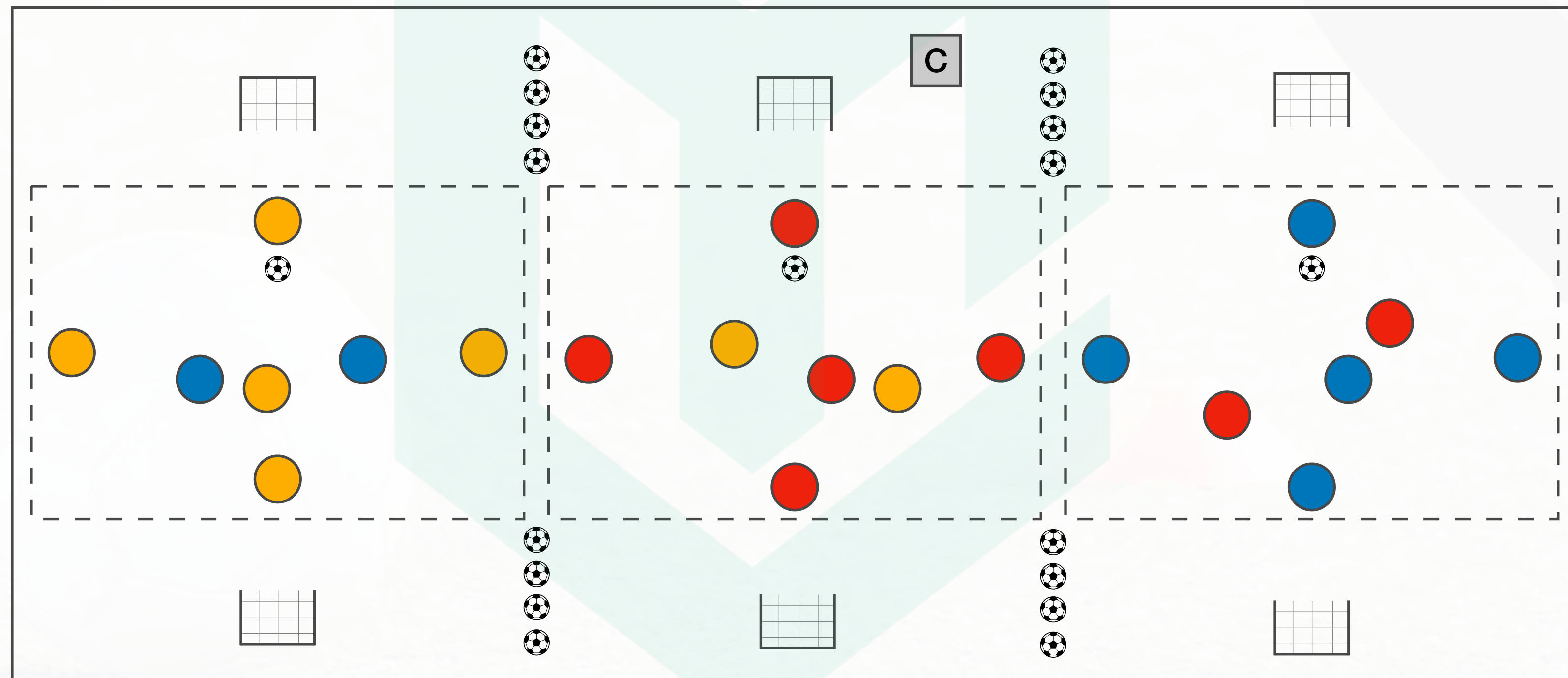
Numbers

12+

Age

7+

6 - 12 metres



8 - 15 metres

1/5

6 - 10
Rounds





Top Rondo

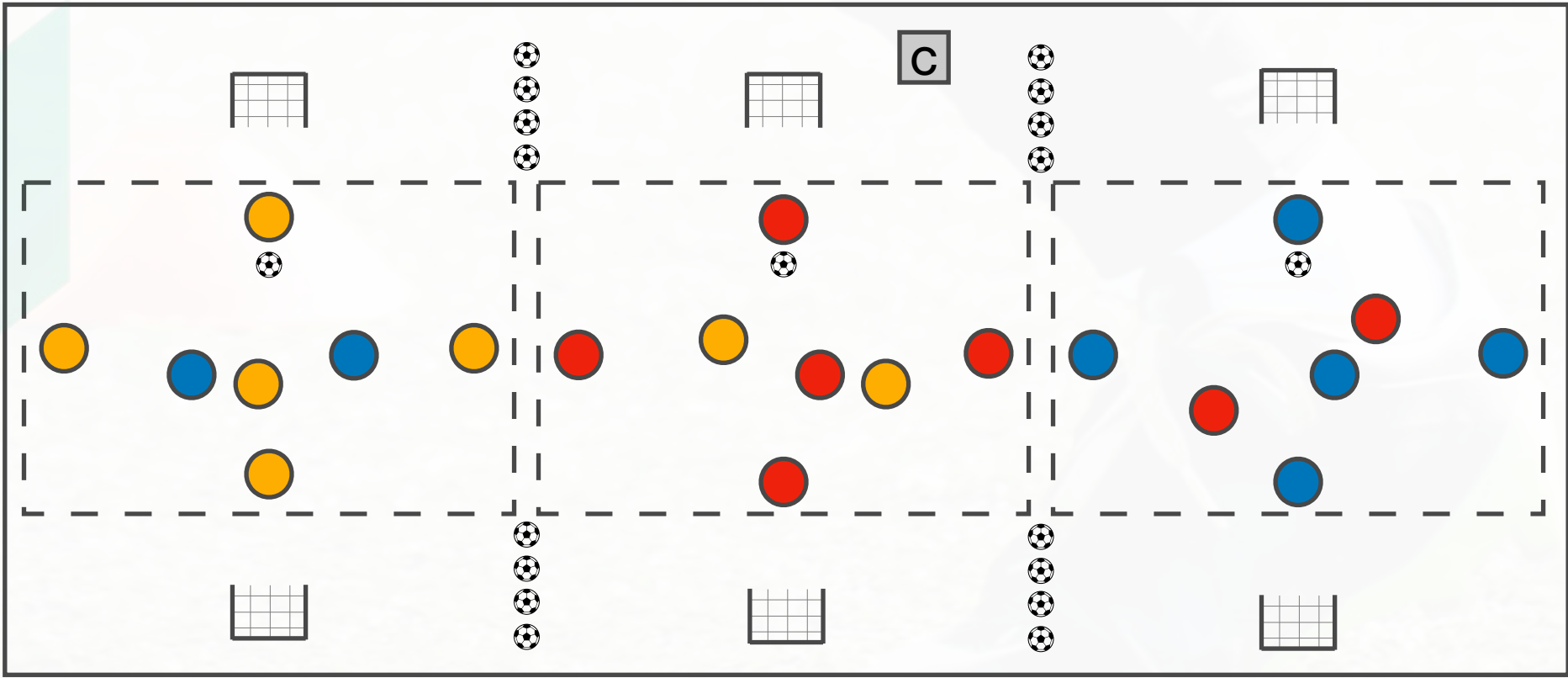
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved positive feeling in relation to the training environment, team, and session
- Objective 2:** An increased level of competitiveness between players within the group
- Objective 3:** An improved awareness of decision making triggers when selecting passing options

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using at least 3 rondo boxes with mini goals at the top and bottom of each rondo
- The rondo at one end should be labelled ‘Top Rondo’, and at the other end ‘Bottom Rondo’
- Teams are promoted towards the top rondo when they win, knocking down the opponent above them
- If the top team wins, they stay at the top and protect their position. The players pressing in each rondo must be from another box
- Their job is to regain the ball and prevent the players from reaching the target number of passes and from scoring in the mini-goal
- The rondos are played as normal, however the objective is to get to a set number of passes then score
- E.g. The 3 teams have to get to 15 passes without losing possession, then score in the mini goals
- The first team to get 15 passes and score wins the game and gets promoted, as soon as the first team scores, all rondo boxes stop
- A team can also win by their pressing players regaining the ball and scoring in the mini goals
- For example, if the red pressers win the ball in the blue box and score in those mini goals, the reds win
- If the orange team win, they move to the middle rondo, and the red team move to the bottom rondo
- If the red team win, they move to the top rondo, and the blue move down to the middle rondo
- If the blue team win, everybody stays in the same rondo box. The next round then starts and teams have another chance to get promoted
- At the end of a set time limit, e.g. 15 minutes, the team in the top of the rondo wins. The challenge is to get to the top rondo, and stay at the top rondo.





TOPIC 3: BUILD-UP (BEATING THE PRESS)

Practices to develop players & teams ability to build-up under pressure when the opponents are applying high pressure



Contents: Beating the Press

028. 1st Balls 2nd Balls	107
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035. Plus 1 Build-Up	121
036. Receiving Back Foot	123



Coaching Points: Beating the Press

In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Action Efficiency	Using every touch and action with a specific purpose, e.g. not taking 3 touches when 2 is more effective
Adapting the Structure	After setting up in a specific structure, that structure may need to be adapted based on the opponents pressing actions
Awareness of Opportunities	Identifying opportunities based on spaces and superiorities in relation to the opponents structure
Body Shape	Being in position to receive with a body shape that enables a variety of options, or best execution of a specific action
Control of Tempo	Utilising different speeds of ball movement to create an impact, e.g. slowing down to invite pressure
Defining the Level of Risk	When under pressure, a player must be able to evaluate the probability of actions being successful or unsuccessful
Detail in Passing, Receiving & Dribbling	The specific details to increase the effectiveness of actions, such as angle of the foot, distance of the dribble etc.
Double Movements	Using double actions to create space, e.g. moving away from the ball to quickly move closer to receive
Dribbling to Invite Pressure	Using the dribble to invite pressure from the opponents to then exploit space that they have left
Driving into the Next Line	Driving with the ball into the next line to beat a line of pressure and create improved opportunities to penetrate
Goalkeeper Specific Detail	Goalkeeper positioning, communication, receiving, and passing to best support beating the press
Initial Structure	Setting up in a specific structure in relation to the teams game model and objectives during build-up
Killer Passes	Ground passes to exploit the space in behind the opponents defensive line
Press Resistance	Receiving the ball under pressure, and being able to retain possession regardless of the opponents action
Receiving Between the Lines	Positioning between the opposition units to receive and turn
Reading the Press	Analysing the press structure of the opponents to identify spaces and vulnerabilities
Skiping Passes	Passes played past a player, to be received by the next player, to increase efficiency e.g. full back to far centre back
Timing Penetration	Identifying the best time to penetrate based on the situation, including game state, team objectives etc.

In Possession Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Central Overloads	Creating overloads in the centre of the pitch, e.g. 3v2s, 4v3s etc.
Direct Passes for 2nd Balls	Using direct long passes that will likely drop down for 2nd balls
Direct Switch of Play	Using a direct long pass to switch the point of attack to the opposite side
Emergency Solutions	Using specific actions in difficult situations to avoid danger, e.g. hitting the ball into opponent shin to win a throw-in
Full Circulation	Using multiple passes to circulate possession from one side of the pitch to the opposite side of the pitch
Half Circulation	Using multiple passes to play halfway across the pitch, then playing a penetrative pass through the lines
Hitting the Target Player	Using a direct pass into the chest or feet of a target player to receive and protect, set or turn
Inverting Movements	Movements of players in other directions to their original position, e.g. wingers coming inside into the pockets
Invite to Switch	Retaining possession on one side of the pitch to invite the opponents across, before then switching or circulating play
Playing Around	Playing around the outside of the opponent's structure
Playing Over	Playing over specific units of the opponent's structure
Playing the Dodge	Playing over the whole opponent outfield structure into the space for a runner to receive
Playing Through	Playing through gaps in the opponent's structure between players
Pulling the Press	Retaining possession deep on the pitch to invite opponent players to press higher, to exploit spaces left
Pushing the Press	Positioning a high amount of players higher up the pitch to minimise pressure in the initial lines of build-up
Rotations	Players swapping positioning and roles to lose markers and create space
Third Player Movements	Movements to anticipate the next pass and prepare to exploit space for a second pass
Wide Overloads	Creating overloads in wide areas of the pitch e.g. 2v1s, 3v2s, 4v3s etc.



028

1st Balls 2nd Balls

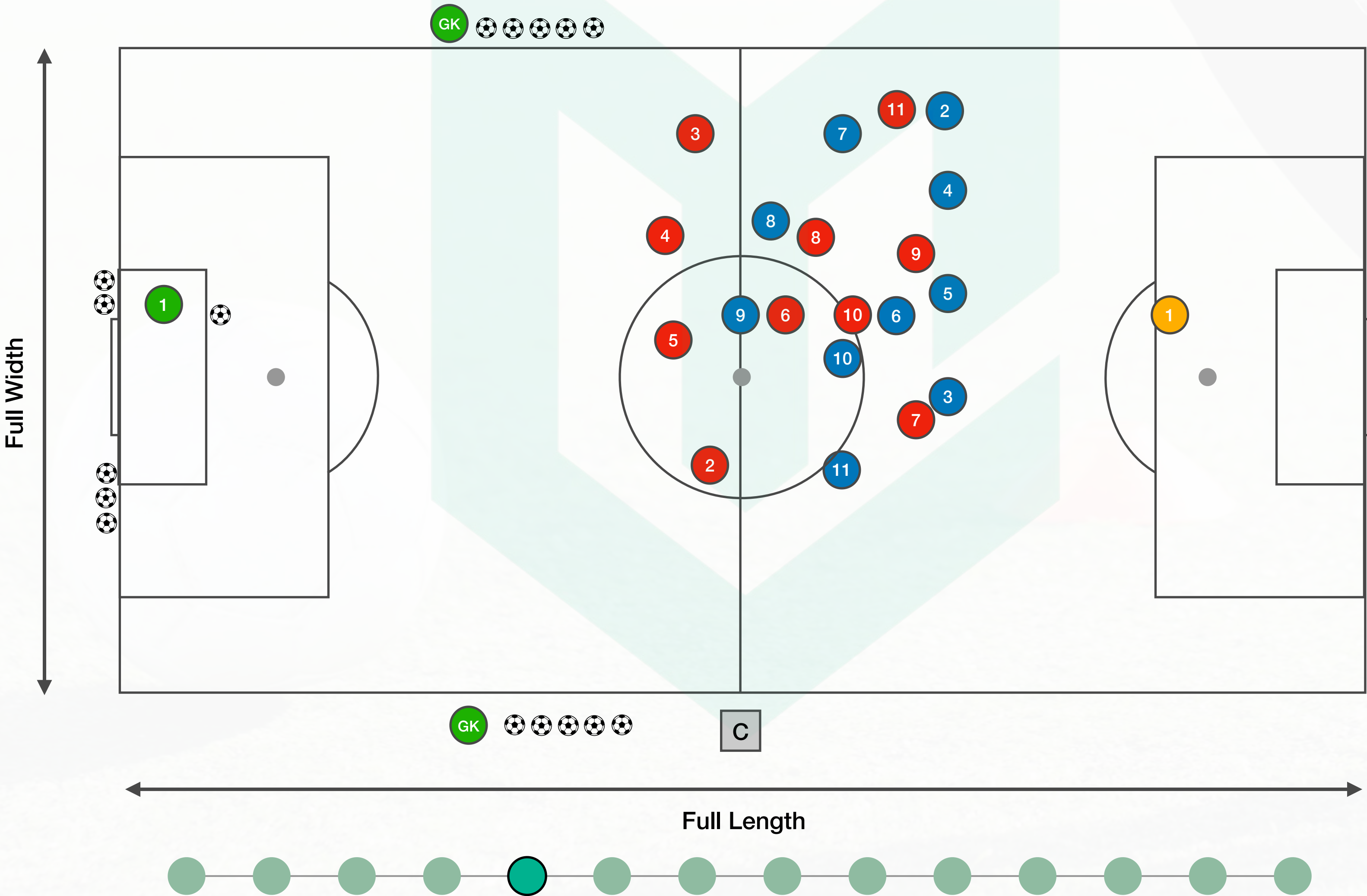
An **11v11 run through** practice, to develop the use of long balls and second balls during Build-up situations

Numbers

22+

Age

14+



Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

2-3 x
8-10 mins



1st Balls 2nd Balls

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

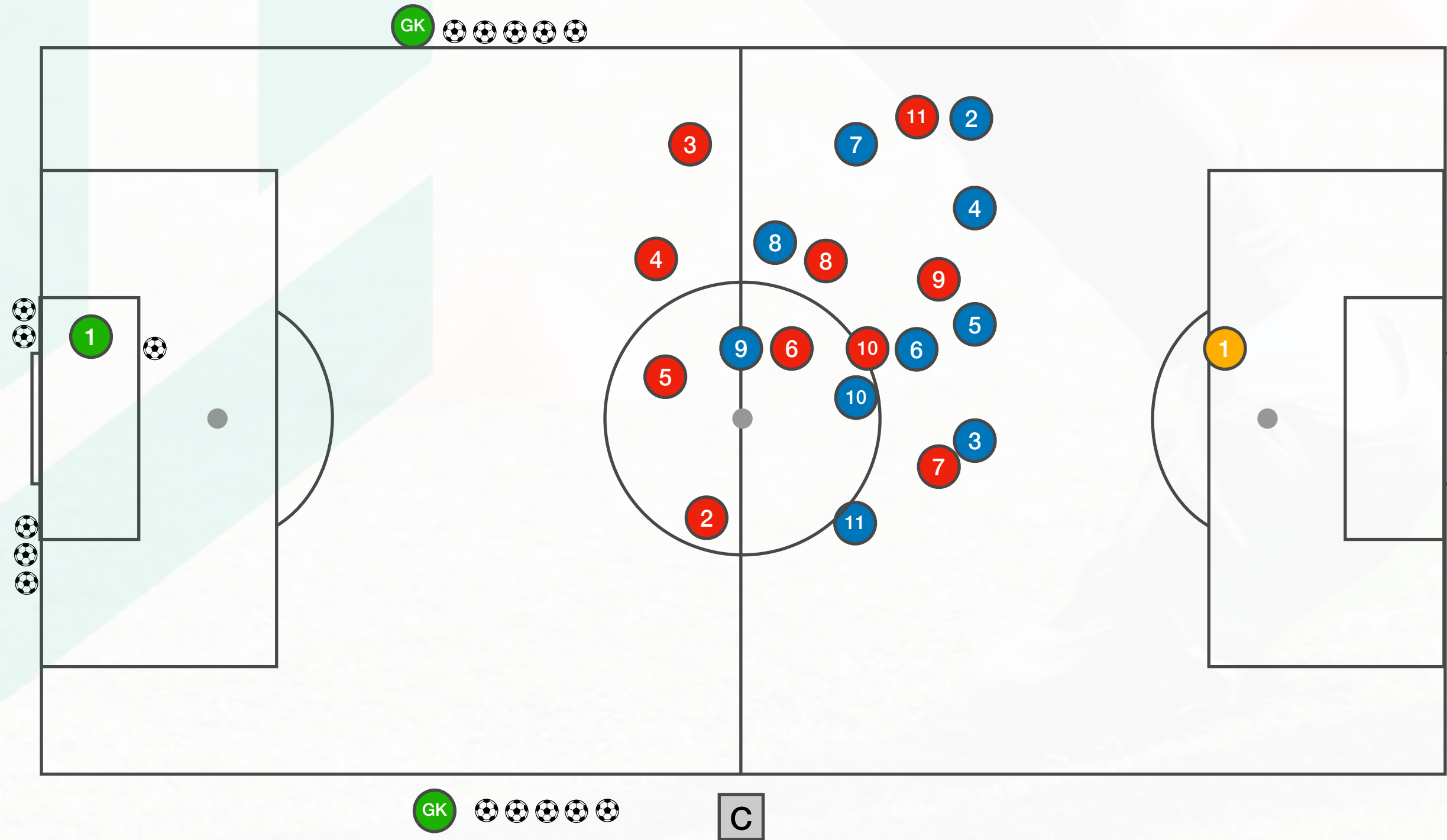
Objective 1: An improved understanding of the roles and responsibilities when defending direct passes

Objective 2: An improved communication to deal with both the first balls and second balls

Objective 3: An improved execution of heading and challenging for duels, and direct passing for goalkeepers

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a full pitch, with 11v11 plus 2 goalkeepers on the side of the pitch
- One team should be coached at a time to focus on either the attacking team or defending team
- The game starts with the attacking team goalkeeper playing a direct goal kick
- The teams challenge for the ball as they would in a match, and the game continues for 15-30 seconds
- After the time limit finishes, a goalkeeper from the side sets up a ball from a different position
- They then play a direct long ball, for the teams to compete for the first and second balls again
- The game continues for the time limit then another goalkeeper plays the direct pass.
- After a set number of repetitions (e.g. 3 each goalkeeper - totalling 9), the teams may swap





Build-Up Rondos

A **free possession game** to develop build-up play ability and pressing skills to prevent build-up and regain possession

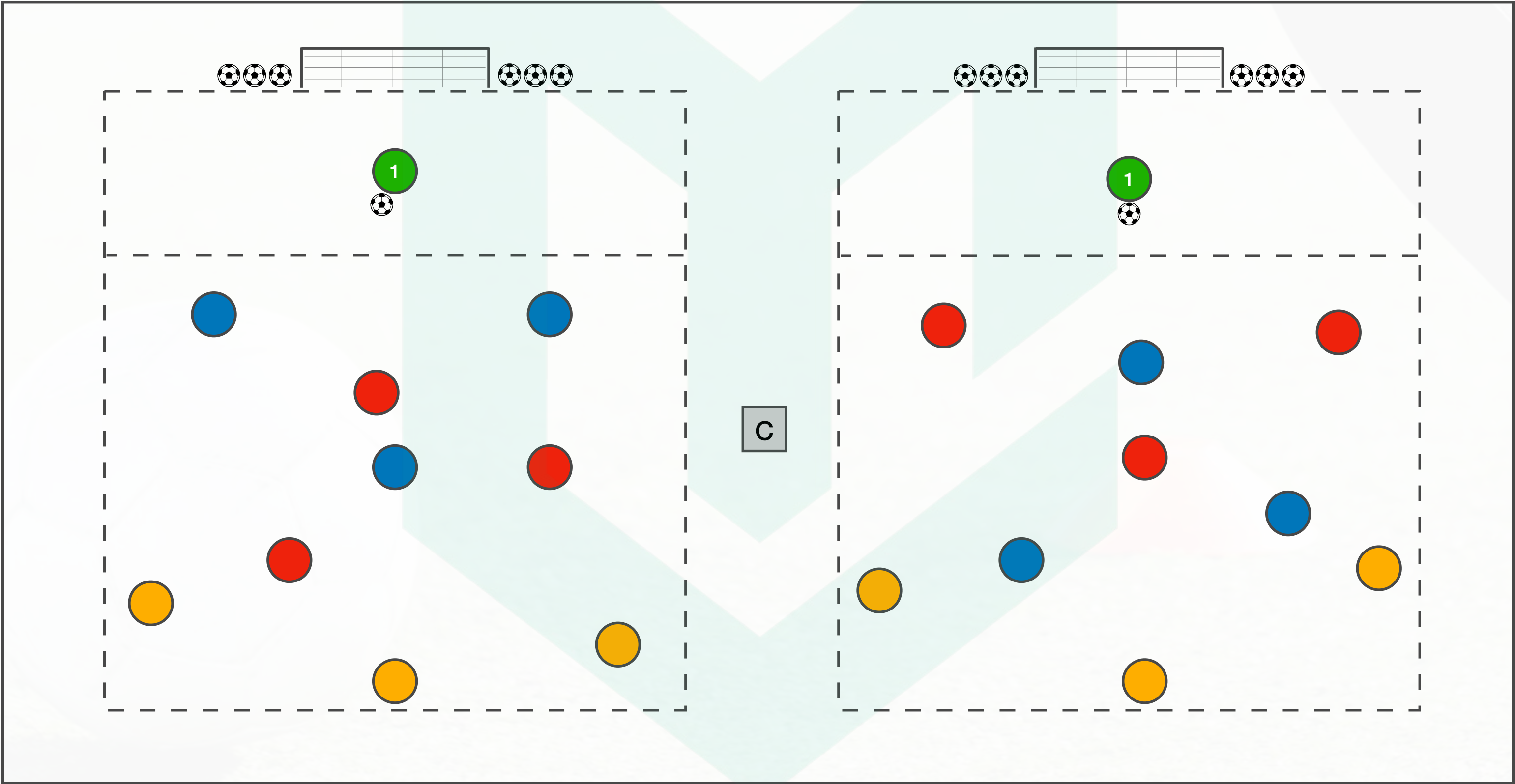
Numbers

10+

Age

8+

20 - 30 metres



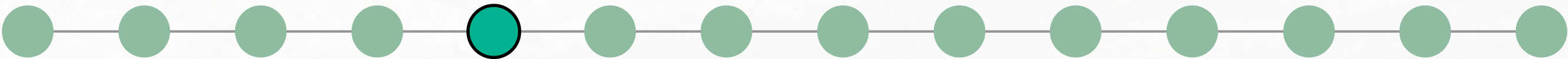
15 - 25 metres

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-5 x 5-8 mins





Build-Up Rondos

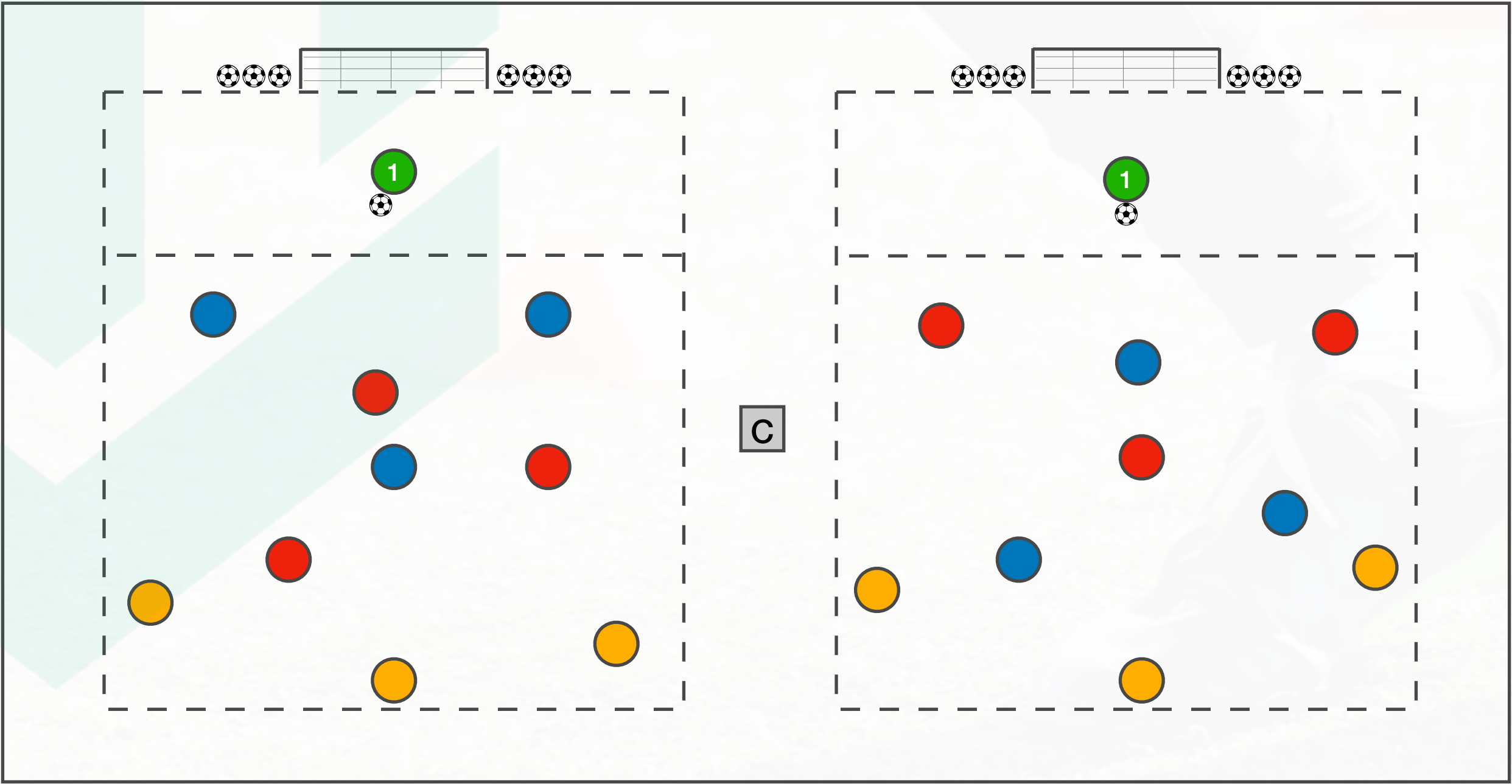
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved cohesion of movements and actions during Build-up against the press
- Objective 2:** An improved awareness of decision making triggers during build-up
- Objective 3:** An improved execution of passing and receiving actions under pressure

Game Flow & Rules

- The set up of the game uses a rectangle grid with a full-sized goal and end zone
- Players are divided into 3 teams, 2 possession teams and 1 pressing team
- The pressing players cannot start in the end zone, but can enter after the first pass
- The 2 possession teams work together with the goalkeeper to retain possession
- The pressing team work to regain the ball and score in the full-sized goal
- The game starts and always restarts with the goalkeeper
- The teams stay in the same roles throughout each round
- The pressing teams count the number of goals they can score in the time limit
- After the time limit, the teams swap roles
- The possession teams are under pressure to not turnover possession
- Each team has had equal rounds and time at being the pressing team
- At the end of the practice, the team with the most goals wins





030

Build-Up Possession

A **positional possession** game to develop build-up play ability, and tactical pictures to beat an aggressive high press

Numbers

18+

Age

13+

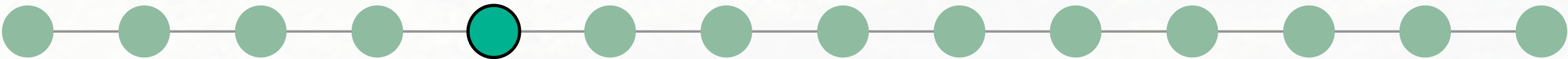


Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

2-5 x
8-15 mins





Build-Up Possession

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

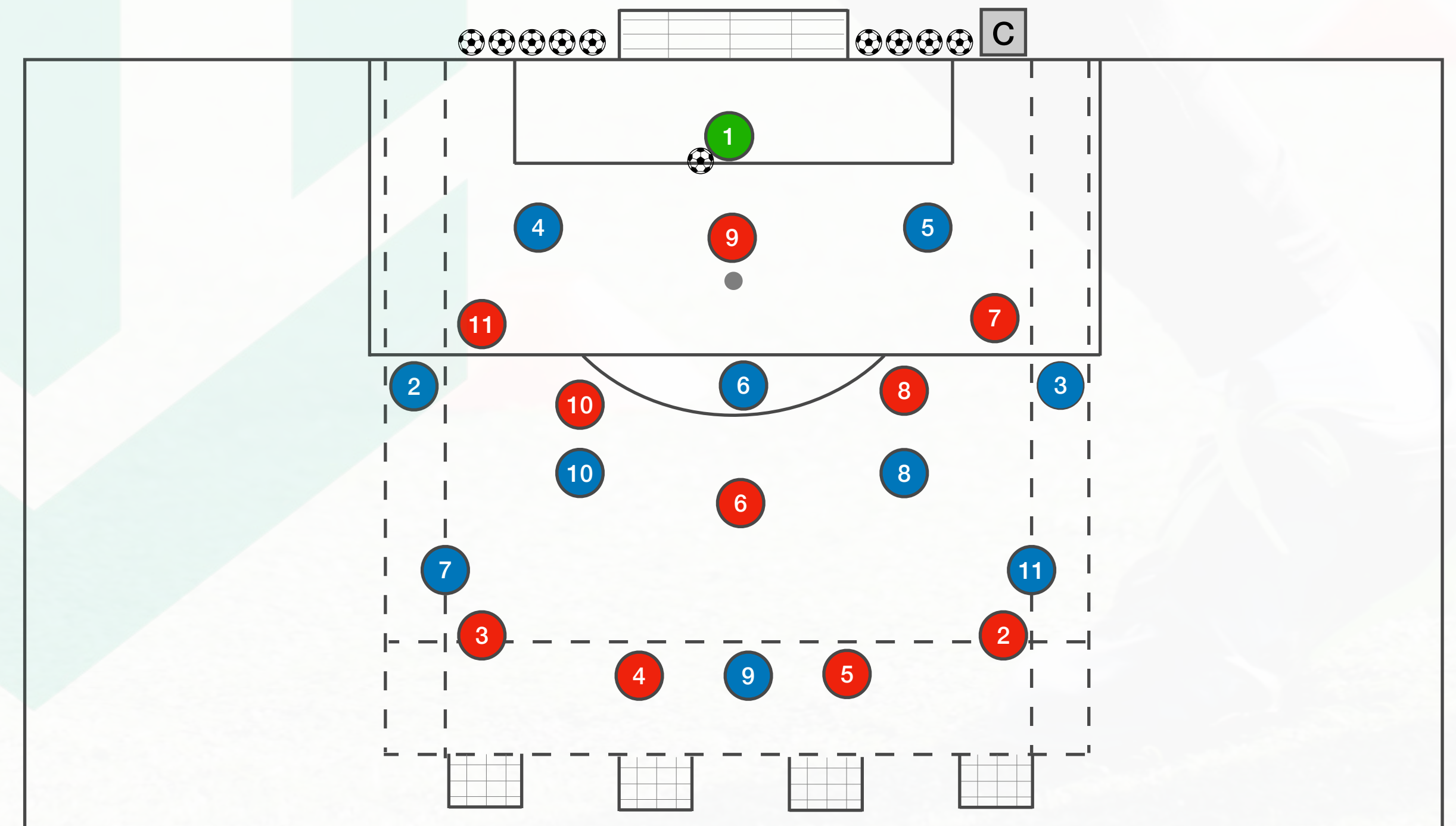
Objective 1: An improved cohesion of movements and actions during build-up against the press

Objective 2: An improved awareness of decision making triggers during build-up

Objective 3: An improved awareness of specific pictures to support the build-up process

Game Flow & Rules

- The set up of the game uses a rectangle grid with an end zone and side zones
- 4 mini-goals and a full-sized goal at each end
- Players are divided into two teams of 10, plus 1 goalkeeper for the build-up team
- 1 team is the build-up team, and 1 team is the pressing team
- The build-up team have to retain possession and score in the 4 mini-goals
- The pressing team have to regain the ball and score in the full-sized goal
- A minimum of 1 player from the build-up team must stay in each of the 3 zones
- 1 player in the right side zone, 1 in the left side zone, and 1 in the end zone
- The pressing team are free to move across all zones, except 3 players must stay in the end zone
- The game always restarts from the full-sized goal with the build-up team
- The build-up team can score from anywhere, they do not need to enter the end zone to score
- Each goal is worth 1 point
- The team that is winning at the end of the time limit wins the game





031

Central Through the Press

A **picture practice** to develop build-up pictures to beat an opponent's high press

Numbers

10+

Age

12+

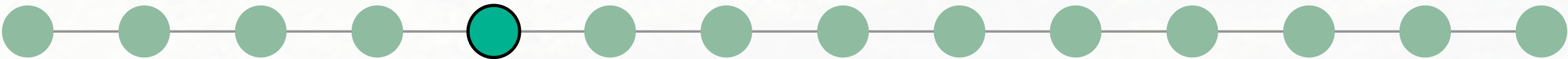


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-6 x 4-6 mins





Central Through the Press

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

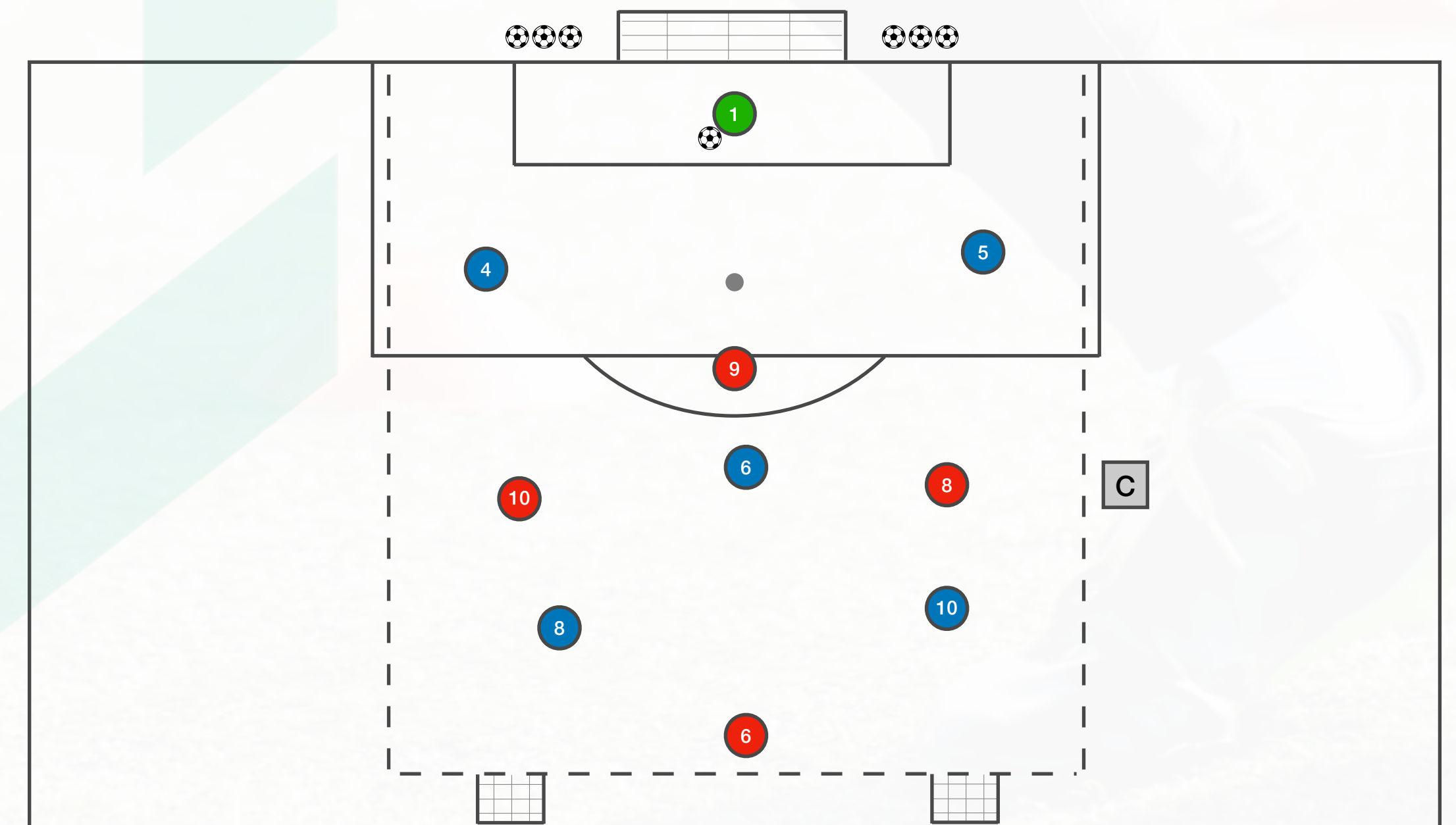
Objective 1: An improved awareness of movements to beat central pressure when building up

Objective 2: An improved execution of passing and receiving through opposition pressure

Objective 3: An improved cohesion between goalkeeper, central defenders, and midfielder

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using half a pitch and a central rectangle with mini-goals and full goal at opposite ends
- Players are divided into two teams, 5+1GKvs4. The team of 5 + goalkeeper building up from the goal
- The team of 4 defend the two mini-goals, attempting to regain and score past the goalkeeper.
- E.g. The game starts with the goalkeeper (can be a goal kick or open play)
- The goalkeeper plays to the blue team to build and attack the mini-goals. The red team press to regain the ball
- The red team can press aggressively from the first pass, or wait before applying pressure to force a mistake
- If the blue team manage to score in the mini-goals, they return to receive another pass from the goalkeeper
- If the red team regain and score, they drop to get into their pressing structure, and the goalkeeper restarts
- Anytime the ball goes out of play, the next action starts from the goalkeeper with build-up
- After a time limit, players can rotate to give others the opportunity to build-up
- Alternatively, they can compete to win, counting points for every goal scored
- Specific formations can be used depending on the teams context
- E.g. pressing team instructions can be based on an upcoming opponent





032

Finding Attackers Feet

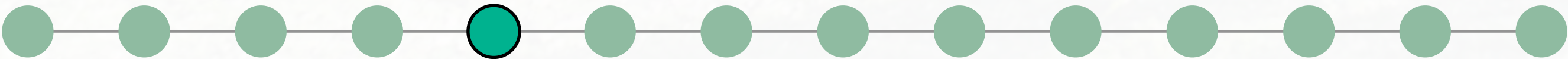
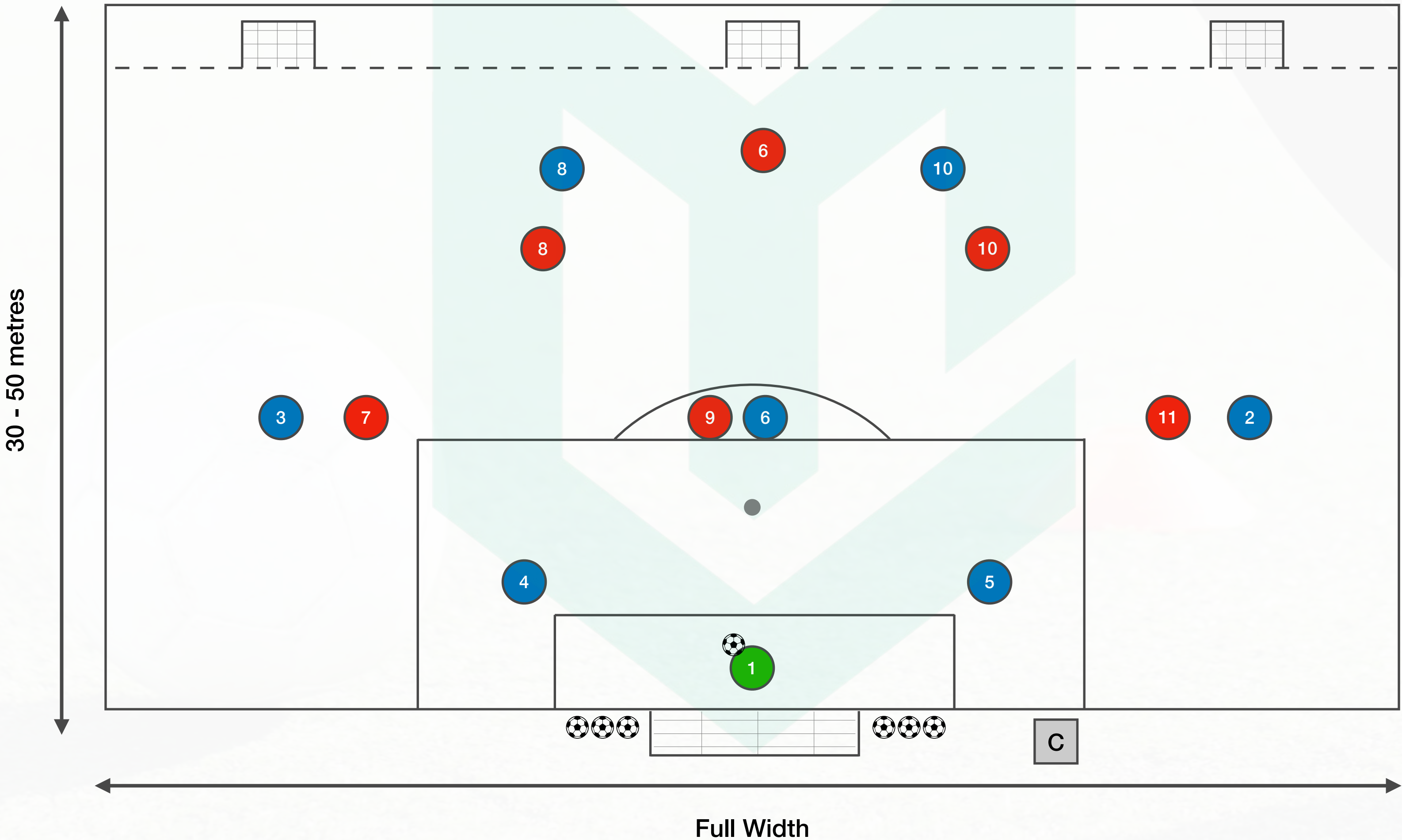
A **phase practice** to develop build-up pictures to beat an opponent's high press and find passes into attacking players (represented by mini-goals)

Numbers
14+

Age
10+

Difficulty
3/5

Time Length
2-4 x
6-10 mins





Finding Attackers Feet

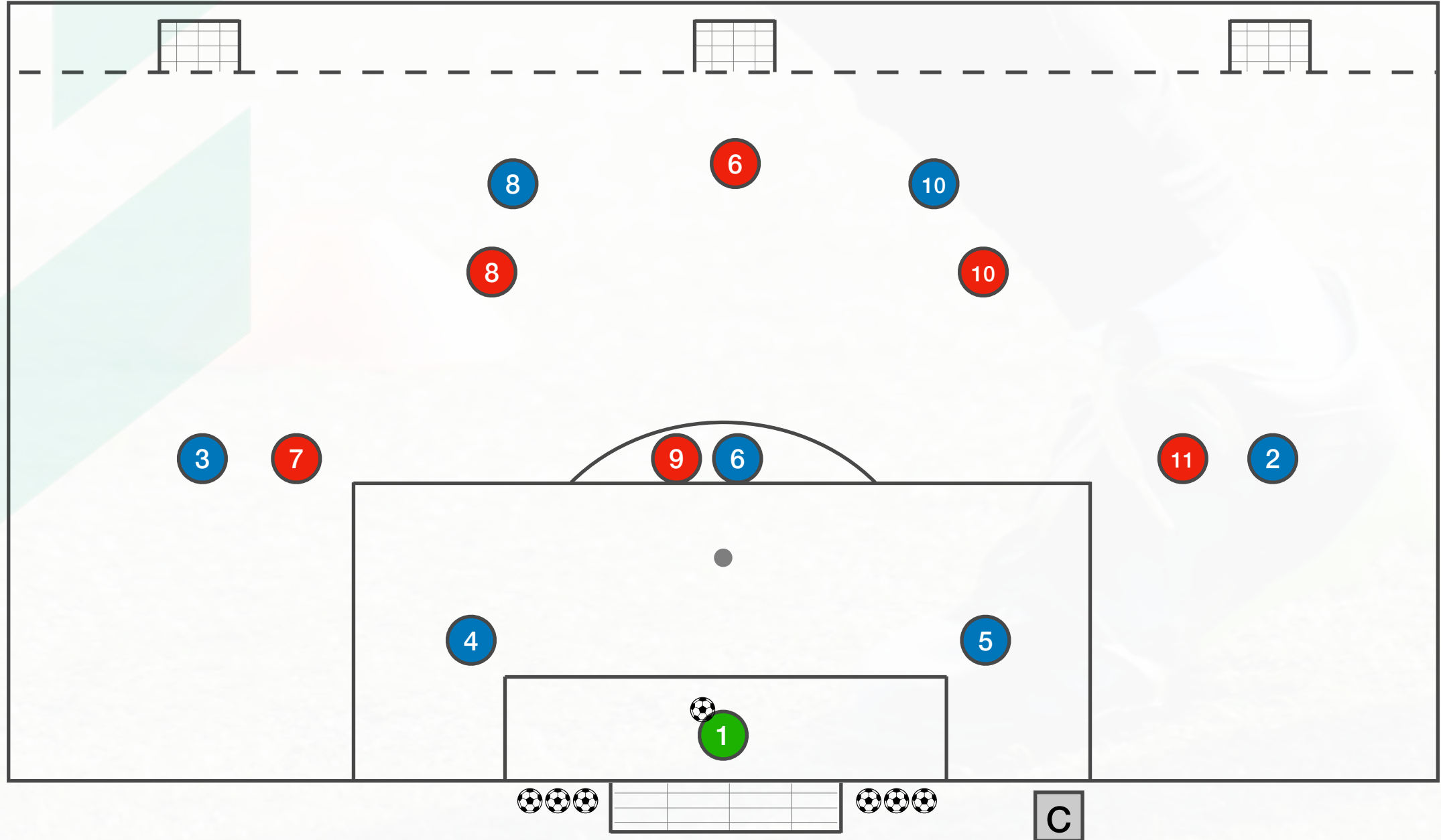
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved awareness of methods to find the attackers feet to beat opposition pressure
- Objective 2:** An improved understanding of the movements that can be used to open passing lanes
- Objective 3:** An improved execution of actions in possession of the ball to beat the opponent's press

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using under half a pitch, to the height where the attackers may be placed during build-up
- The team building up has 7 players + a goalkeeper, against the pressing team with 6 players
- The numbers represent a build-up situation in the full match. Opponents have 1 extra defender, leaving a plus one situation
- The 3 mini-goals represent the positions attackers may take up during build-up
- Passing into these mini-goals is a representation of passing into the attackers feet. From the first pass the team is free to score
- The pressing team can either set up in any structure they chose, or you can give them a specific structure
- If preparing for a specific opponent, you can manage the pressing team initially to match the opponents
- If teaching principles, you can allow the pressing team to use any structure and change during the practice
- The game starts with the goalkeeper building up from the full sized goal
- The blue team then attempt to retain possession to pass into the mini-goals. If the red team regain the ball, they can attack
- A time limit can be used to ensure the higher majority of time is spent with the build-up team in possession
- E.g. Once the pressing team regain the ball, they have 10 seconds to score
- The ball then restarts with the goalkeeper again, building with the blue team to score in the mini-goals
- If the blue team score in the mini-goals, they start again from the goalkeeper, building up against the press
- A target number of goals may be used before the teams rotate, or the practice is over
- Using short interventions allows recovery time for the pressing team, and allows coaching opportunities





033

Mini Tactical Patterns

A **technical passing pattern practice** to develop build-up pictures that can be used to beat the press

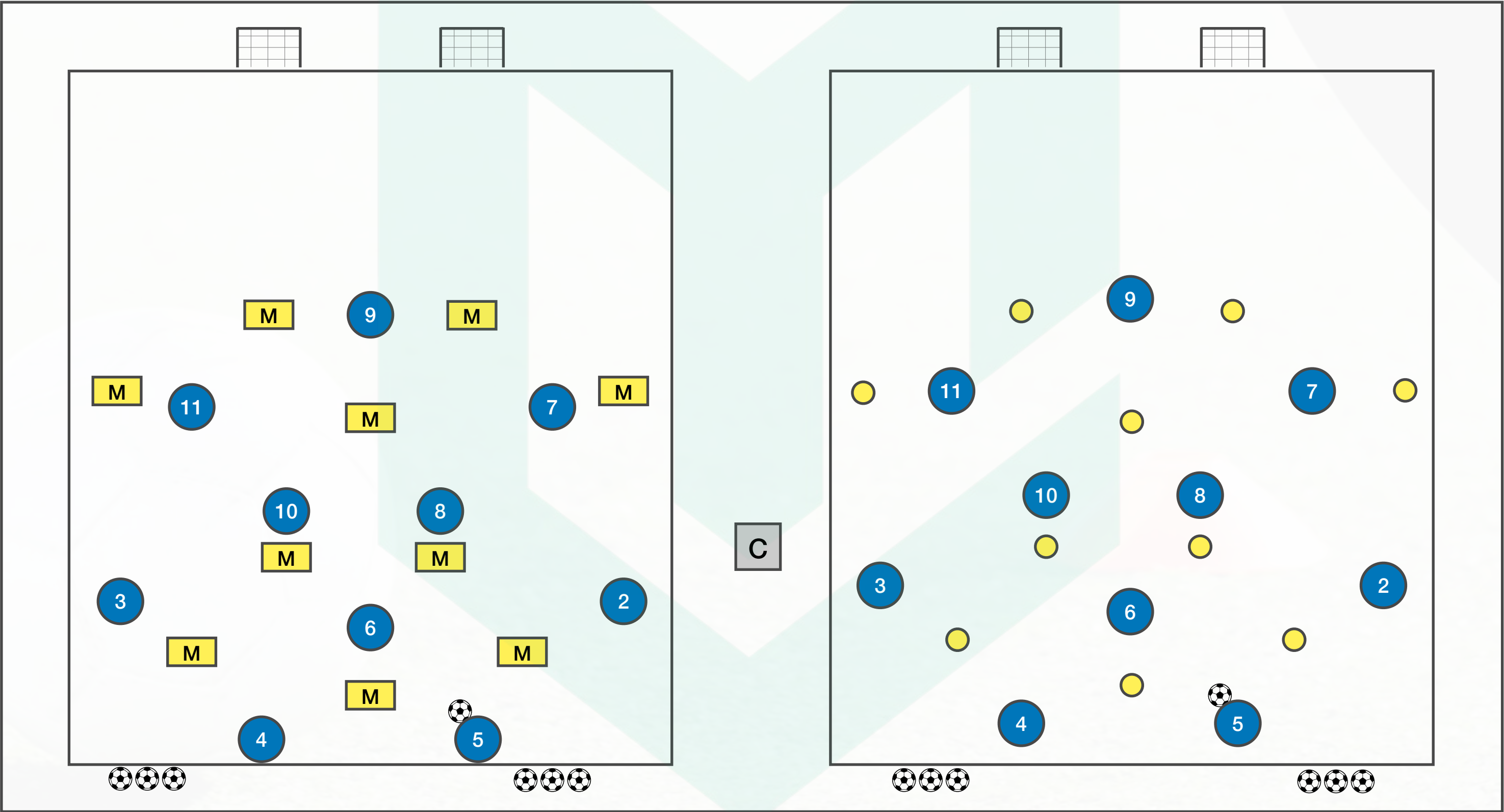
Numbers

11+

Age

12+

30 - 45 metres



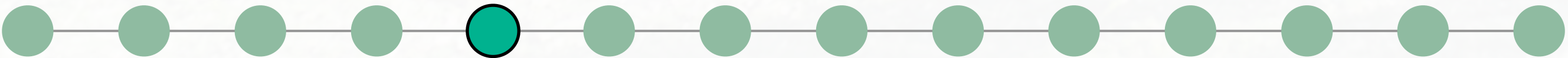
20 - 35 metres

Difficulty

1/5

Time Length

3-6 x 2-4 mins





Mini Tactical Patterns

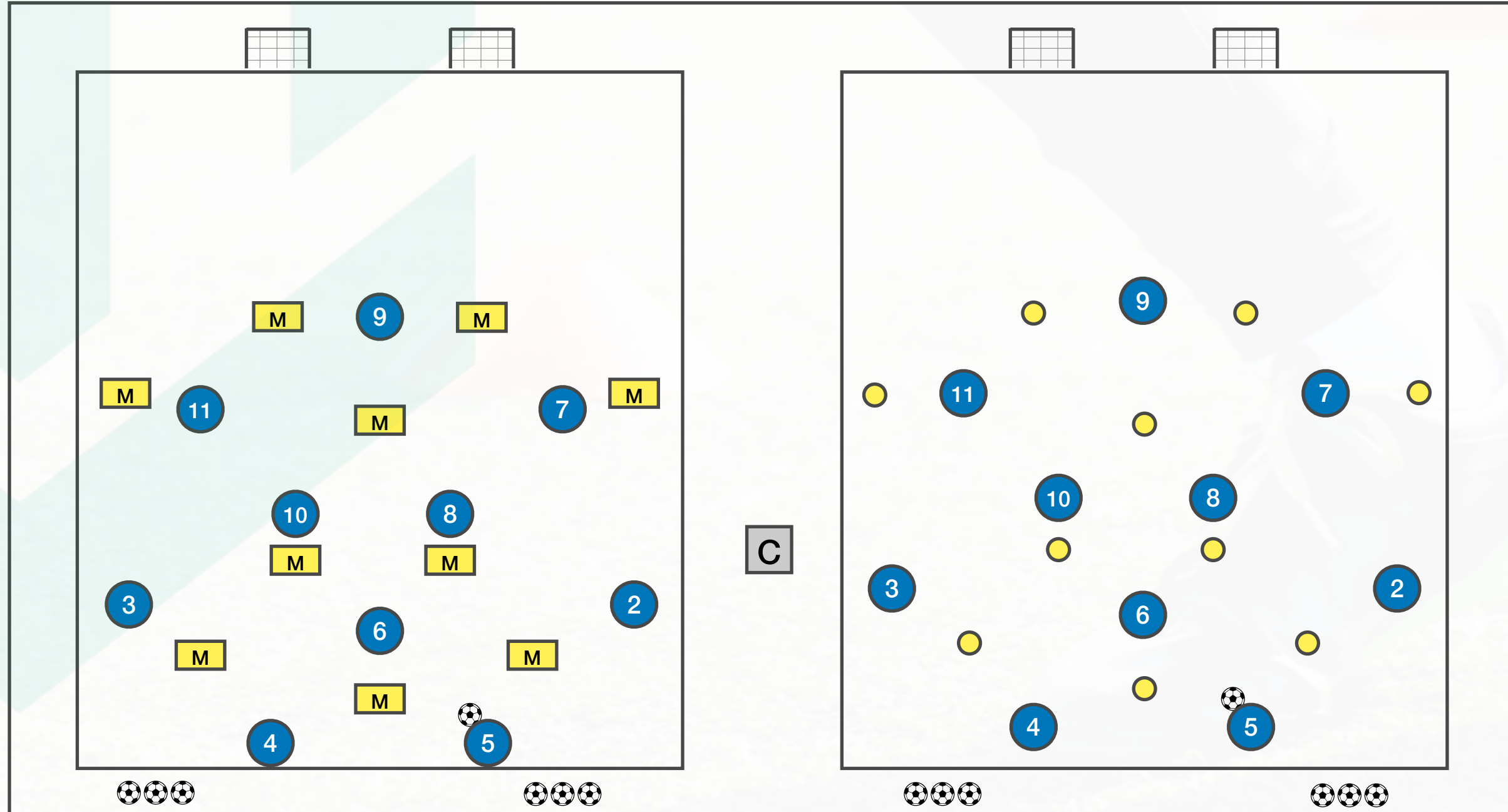
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved awareness of the different pictures and patterns that can be using during build-up against the press
- Objective 2:** An improved technical execution of the small detail around passing and receiving
- Objective 3:** An improved cohesion with teammates regarding movements and actions to success during build-up

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up with a rectangle grid and 2 mini-goals at one end opposite the balls
- 10 mannequins can be used to represent opponent players, or cones can be used instead
- 10 players should be set up in a formation used to beat the opponents structure
- Movements can be taught to players, which can then be repeated and improved
- Once a number of pictures and patterns have been developed, players should have freedom
- The freedom means players can execute the pictures and patterns they want to use
- If using 2 teams, they can compete to execute the patterns with the best quality
- This can be measured by the coaches observing the practice
- After each attack, the team returns back to their structure and restart with a new ball

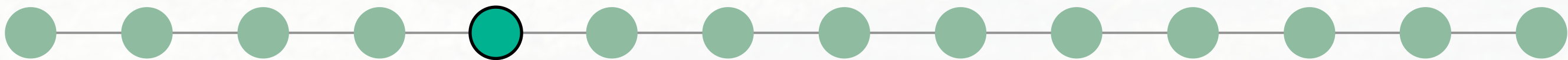
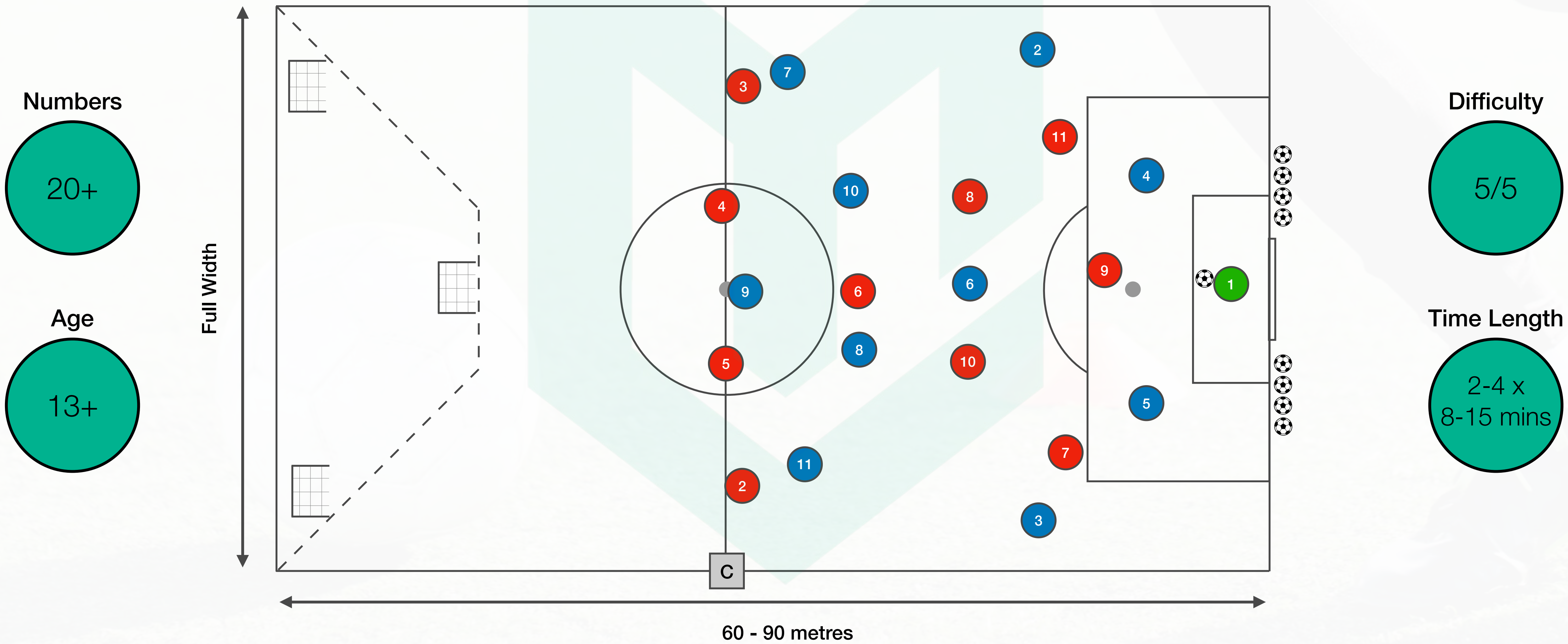




034

Phase: Beating the Press

A **phase practice** to observe and develop player and team performance during realistic build-up situations





Phase: Beating the Press

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

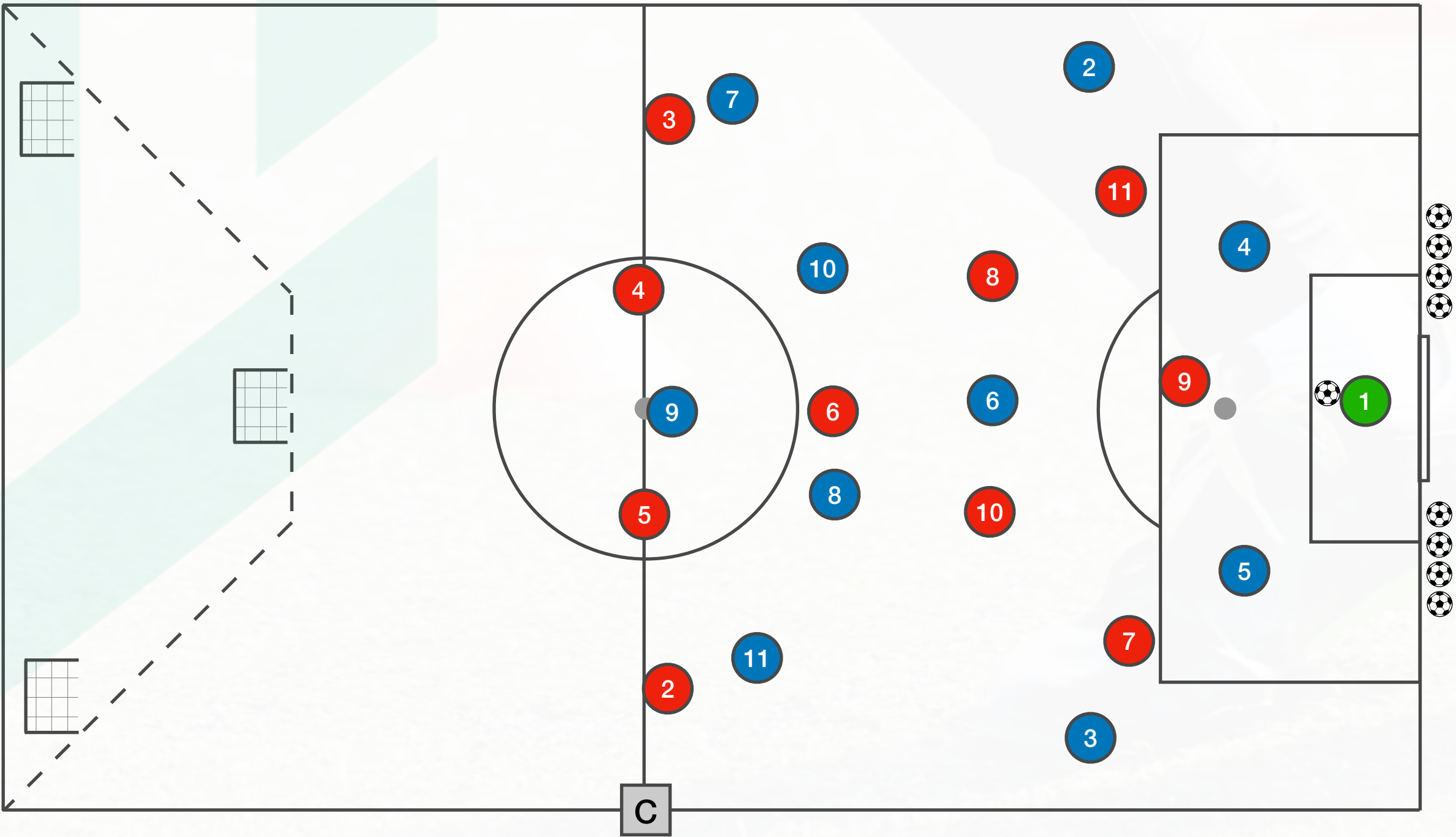
Objective 1: An improved awareness of the methods used to build-up against the high press

Objective 2: An improved cohesion with teammates to align movements and actions

Objective 3: An improved execution of passing and receiving under pressure to exploit the space in behind

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up on a cut full pitch with a full-sized goal and 3 mini-goals
- The end of the pitch is cut to represent the areas of the pitch where the GK is likely to sweep
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 10 players plus 1 goalkeeper for the team building up
- The game starts and restarts with the goalkeeper and the build-up team
- Their objective is to Build-up and exploit the space behind the opponent to score in the mini-goals
- The pressing teams job is to maintain high pressure to regain and score in the full-sized goal
- Each goal is worth 1 point
- The team that wins is the team with the most points at the end of the practice





035

Plus 1 Build-up

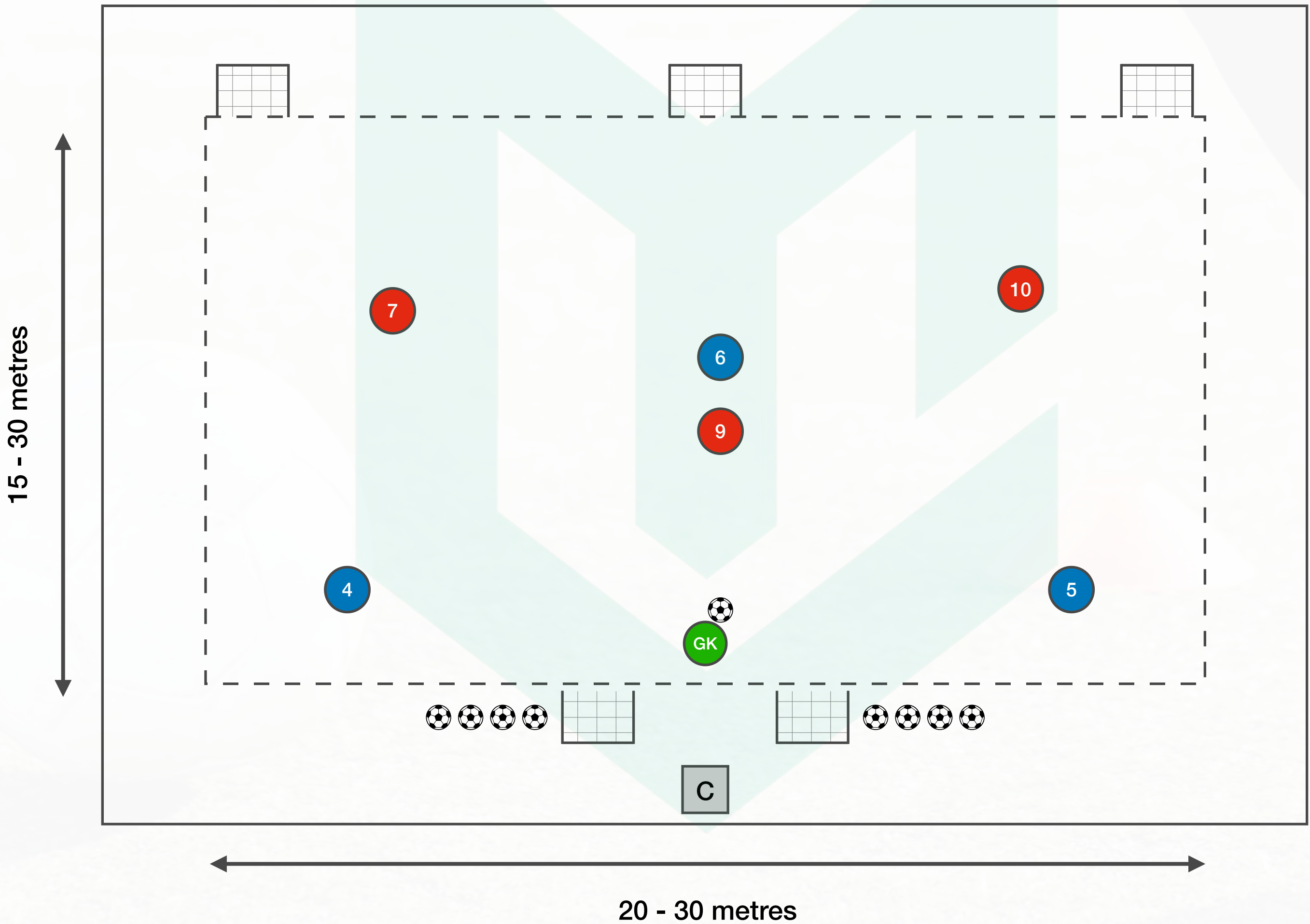
A directional **positional possession practice** to develop technical actions and decision making in the first line of build-up

Numbers

7+

Age

11+



Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-6 x 3-5 mins





Plus 1 Build-up

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

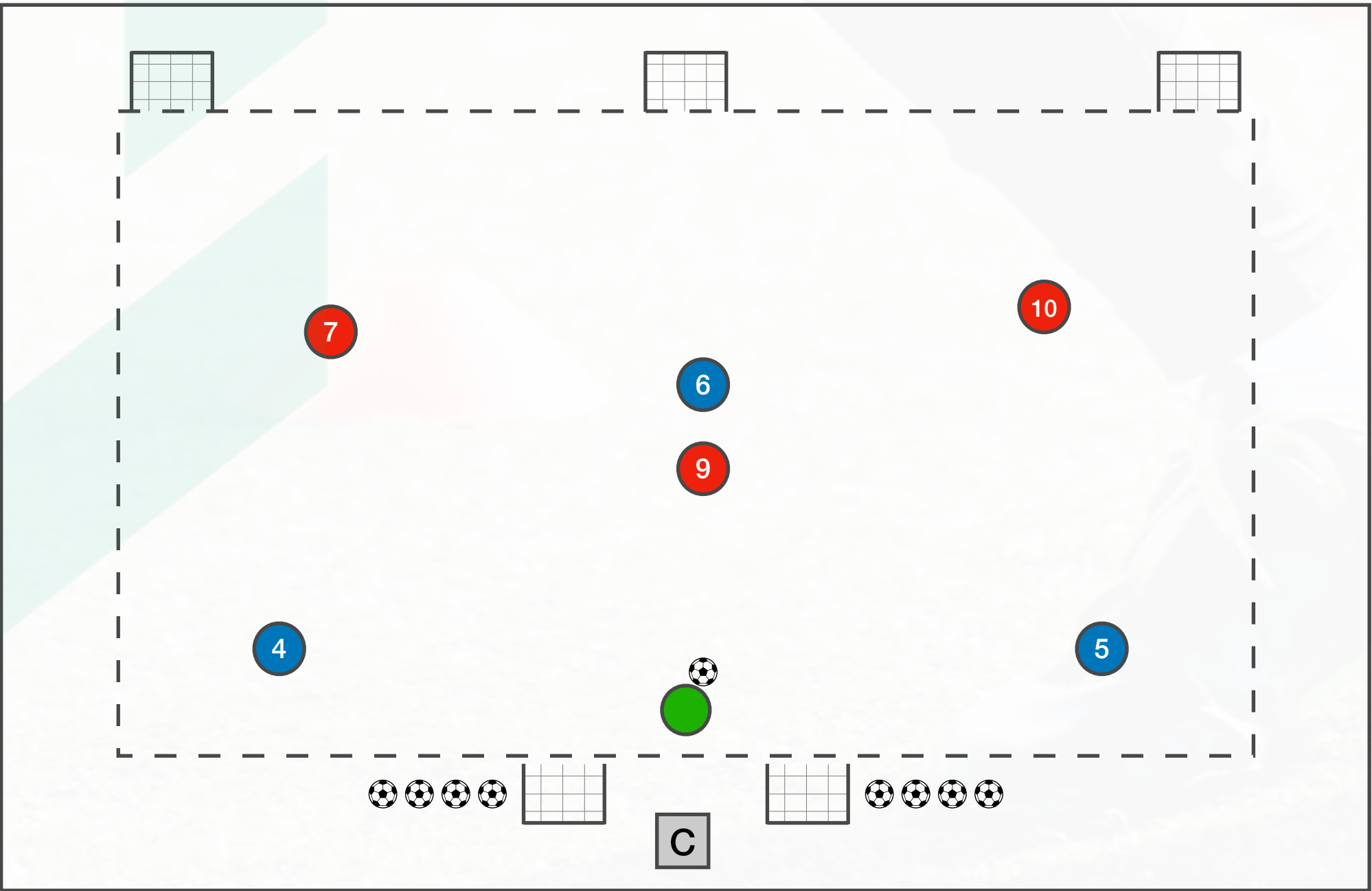
Objective 1: An improved awareness of the methods to beat the first line of pressure

Objective 2: An improved execution of passing and receiving through opposition pressure

Objective 3: An improved cohesion between goalkeeper, central defenders, and the deepest midfielder

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set using a rectangle grid with 3 mini-goals at one end, and 2 mini-goals the other end
- The 3 mini-goals represent midfielders/attackers who can receive the ball to feet
- The 2 mini-goals represent the corners of a full-sized goal
- 6 outfield players are divided into two teams of three players with one team working with the GK
- The goalkeeper works with the 3 blue players to build-up and score in the 3 mini-goals
- The 3 red players have to block the passing lanes to the mini-goals and press to regain the ball
- Once the red team regain the ball they then attack the 2 mini-goals
- The goalkeeper can play directly into the mini-goals with their feet
- Anytime the ball goes out of play, the practice restarts from the goalkeeper for build-up
-





036

Receiving Back Foot

A **technical passing practice** to develop player's ability to receive back foot in unopposed situations

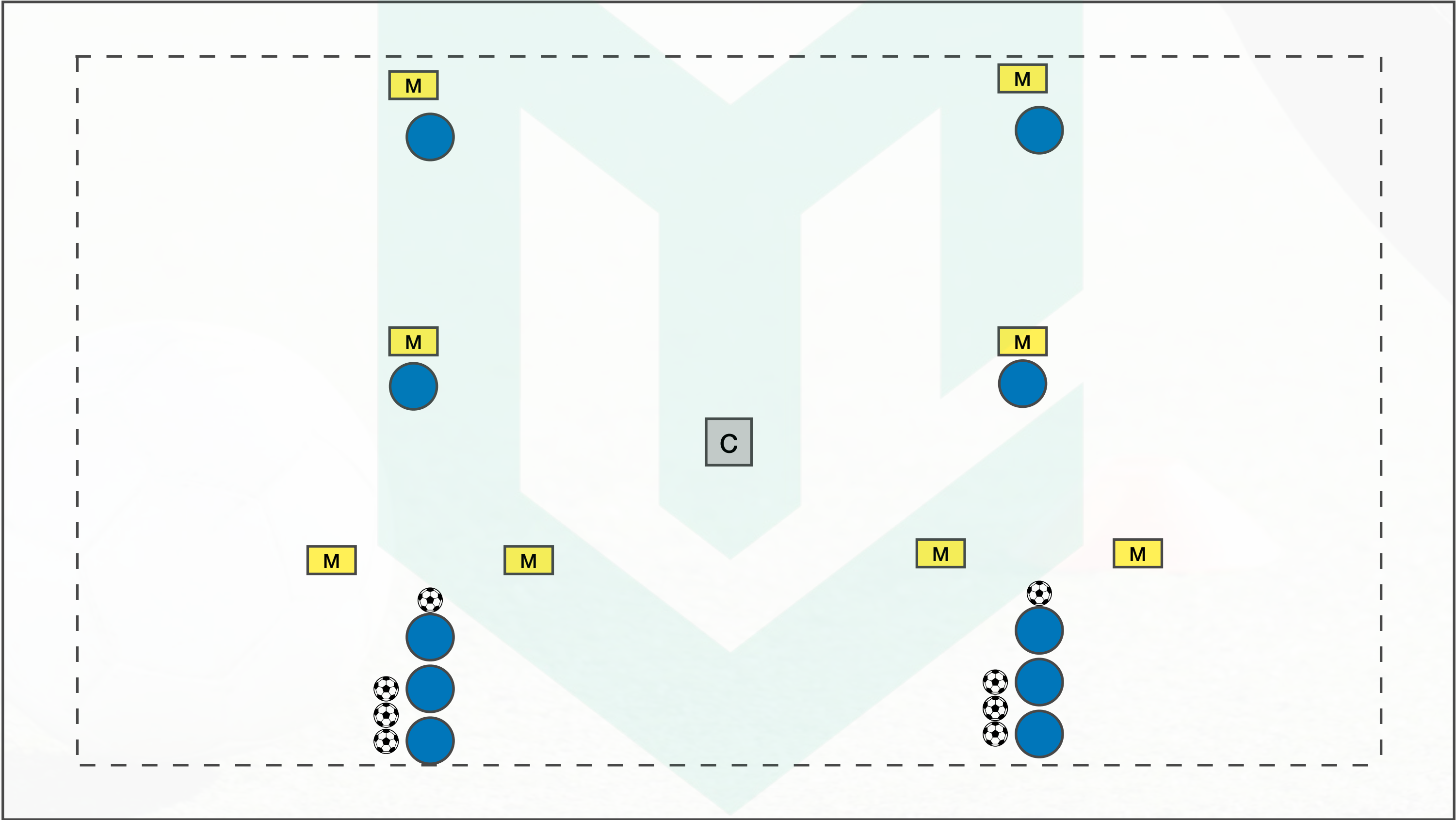
Numbers

5+

Age

7+

10 - 30 metres



5 - 10 metres

Difficulty

1/5

Time Length

2-5 x 2-4 mins





Receiving Back Foot

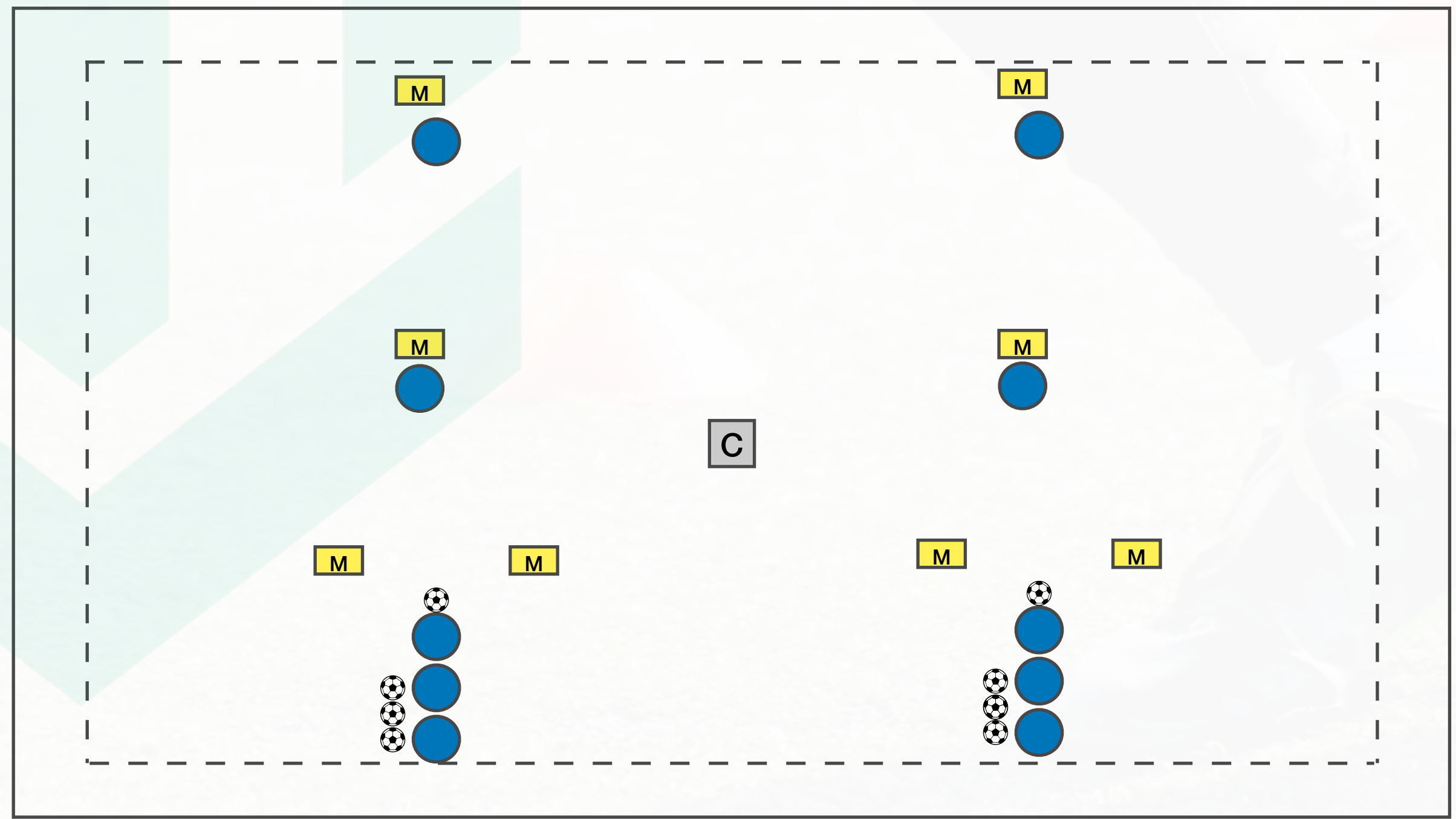
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved awareness of angles to receive between the lines
- Objective 2:** An improved execution of receiving on the back foot to pass forwards
- Objective 3:** An increased consistency of passing and receiving quality

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using 4 mannequins per station
- Each station should have 5 players, with 3 starting at the first 2 mannequins
- The practice starts from the first 2 mannequins, with a pass to the middle player
- The middle player moves off the shoulder of the mannequin to receive behind
- They then receive back foot and pass to the end player
- Both the first passer and second passer follow their passes
- After the end player receives, they pass to the middle and move to the middle
- The middle player then receives back foot on the shoulder, then passes to the start
- When using 2 stations, teams can race to get to a set number of repetitions
- The first team to hit that target without making a mistake gets 1 point
- The winning team is the team at the end with the most points





TOPIC 4: BUILD-UP (BEATING THE BLOCK)

Practices to develop players & teams ability to build-up against opponents who are organised in a block structure behind the ball



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In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Action Efficiency	Using every touch and action with a specific purpose, e.g. not taking 3 touches when 2 is more effective
Adapting the Structure	After setting up in a specific structure, that structure may need to be adapted based on the opponents block structure
Awareness of Opponents Rest Attack	Staying aware of the opponents attackers that are resting and waiting for the counter attack
Body Shape	Being in position to receive with a body shape that enables a variety of options, or best execution of a specific action
Control of Tempo	Utilising different speeds of ball movement to create an impact, e.g. increasing tempo to circulate play
Detail in Passing, Receiving & Dribbling	The specific details to increase the effectiveness of actions, such as angle of the foot, distance of the dribble etc.
Double Movements	Using double actions to create space, e.g. moving away from the ball to quickly move closer to receive
Dribbling to Invite Pressure	Using the dribble to invite pressure from the opponents to then exploit space that they have left
Driving into the Next Line	Driving with the ball into the next line to beat a line of pressure and create improved opportunities to penetrate
Initial Structure	Setting up in a specific structure in relation to the team's game model and objectives during build-up
Killer Passes	Ground passes to exploit the space in behind the opponents defensive line
Reading the Block	Analysing the block structure of the opponents to identify spaces and vulnerabilities
Receiving Between the Lines	Positioning between the opposition units to receive and turn
Skiping Passes	Passes played past a player, to be received by the next player, to increase efficiency e.g. full back to far centre back
Timing Penetration	Identifying the best time to penetrate based on the situation, including game state, team objectives etc.

In Possession Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Central Overloads	Creating overloads in the centre of the pitch, e.g. 3v2s, 4v3s etc.
Direct Switch of Play	Using a direct long pass to switch the point of attack to the opposite side
Full Circulation	Using multiple passes to circulate possession from one side of the pitch to the opposite side of the pitch
Goalkeeper Positioning	The goalkeeper positioning should be high enough to support play
Half Circulation	Using multiple passes to play halfway across the pitch, then playing a penetrative pass through the lines
Hitting the Target Player	Using a direct pass into the chest or feet of a target player to receive and protect, set or turn
Inverting Movements	Movements of players in other directions to their original position, e.g. wingers coming inside into the pockets
Invite to Switch	Retaining possession on one side of the pitch to invite the opponents across, before then switching or circulating play
Playing Around	Playing around the outside of the opponent's structure
Playing the Dodge	Playing over the whole opponent outfield structure into the space for a runner to receive
Playing Through	Playing through gaps in the opponent's structure between players
Pulling the Block	Retaining possession deep in the block to invite opponent players to step higher in the block, to exploit spaces left
Pushing the Block	Positioning a high amount of players higher in the block structure to minimise pressure in the initial lines of the block
Third Player Movements	Movements to anticipate the next pass and prepare to exploit space for a second pass
Wide Overloads	Creating overloads in wide areas of the pitch e.g. 2v1s, 3v2s, 4v3s etc.

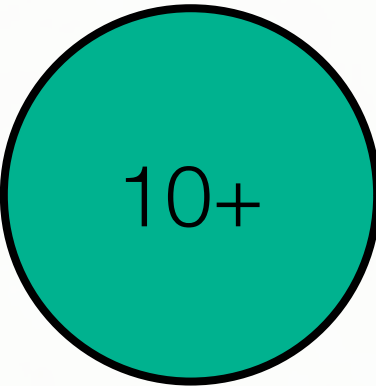


037

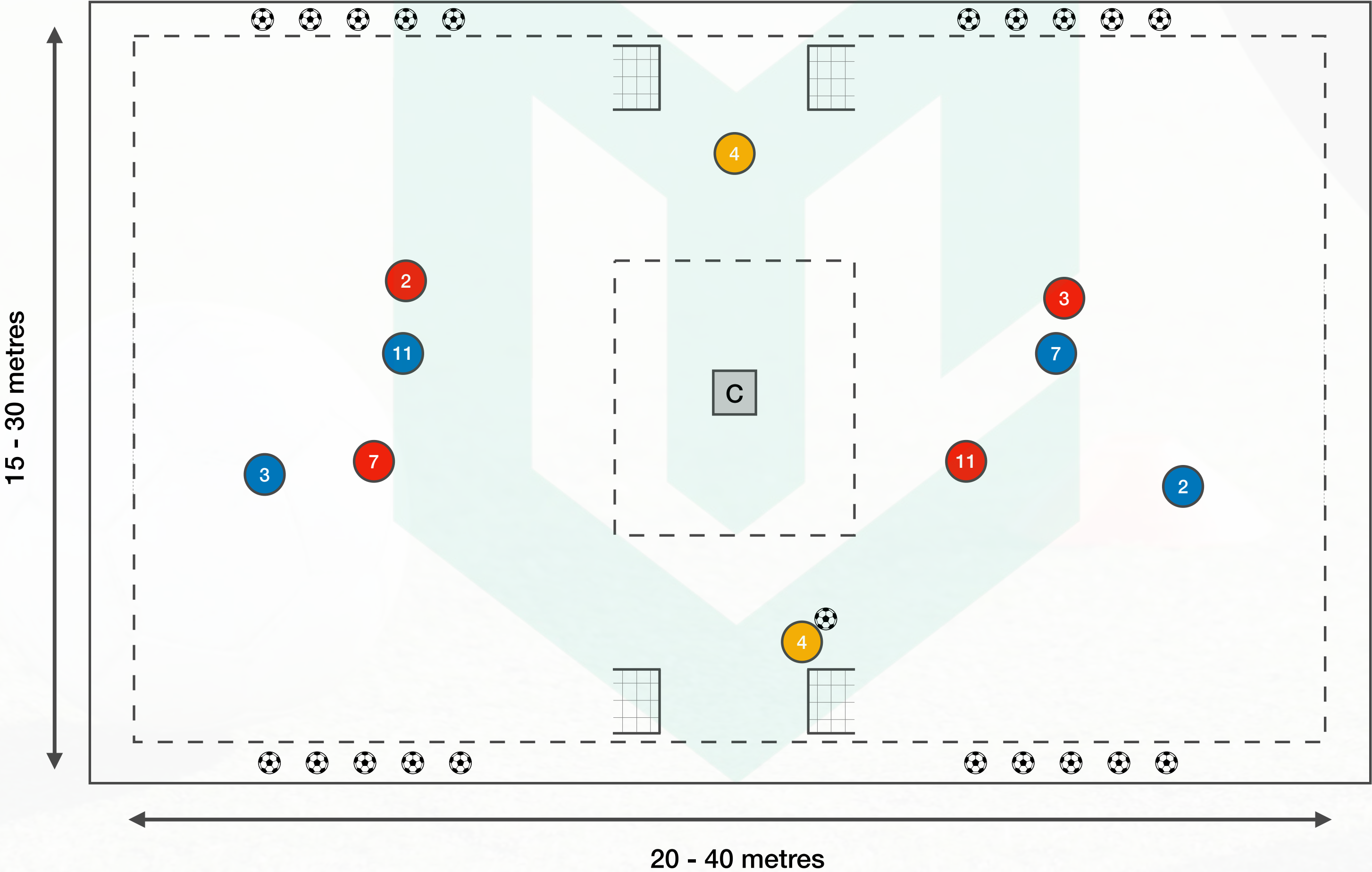
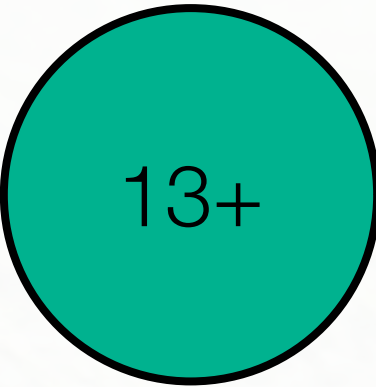
3v2 Crazy

A directional **picture practice** to develop technical actions and decision making to exploit 3v2 situations in wide areas

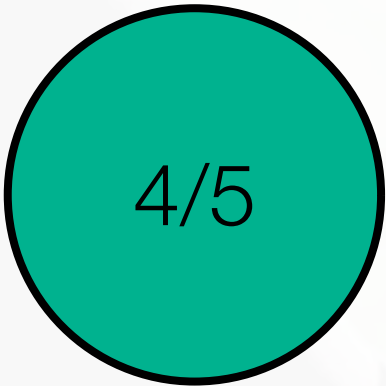
Numbers



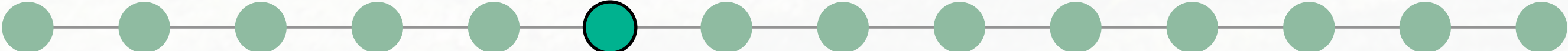
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





3v2 Crazy

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

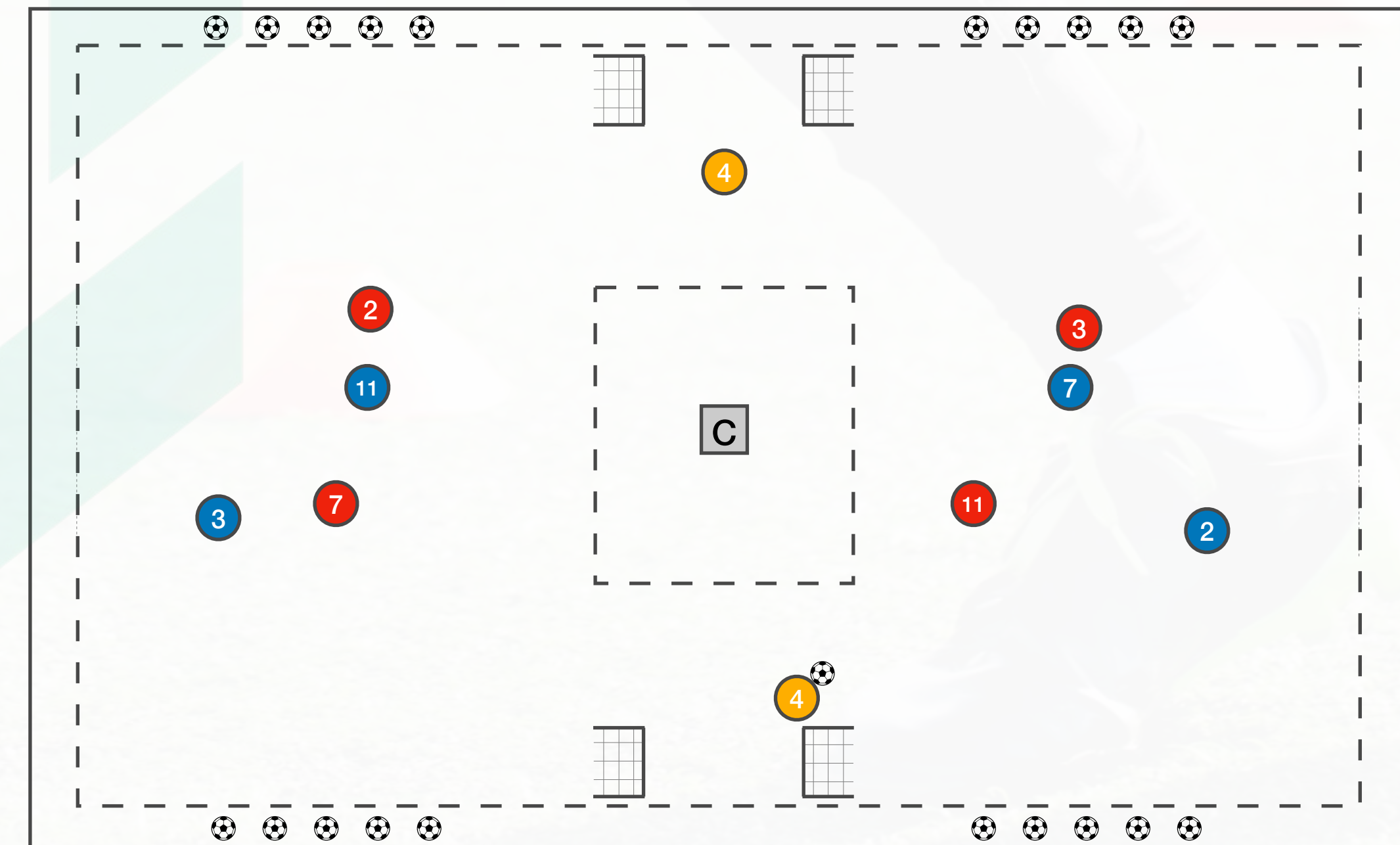
Objective 1: An improved understanding of different pictures that can be used during a wide 3v2 situation

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and speed of action in 3v2 situations to utilise cohesive superiority

Objective 3: An improved technical execution of key 3v2 actions in wide areas

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a 2v2 on both sides of the pitch, and 2 jokers who represent centre backs.
- Each side of the grid represent both the left side and the right side
- E.g. when the ball is on the right, for the blues it is the right side of the pitch, and reds the left side
- This meaning the game can flow in either direction, clockwise or anticlockwise
- On the right side is the blue right back and right winger, vs red left winger and left back
- On the left side, is the blue left back and left winger, vs the red right winger and right back
- One centre back starts with the ball from one end, and creates a 3v2 to attack one side of the pitch.
- The centre back can dribble or play any pass on that side. After their first action they stay involved to keep the 3v2
- Their objective is to utilise the 3v2 situation and score in the mini-goal at the end of the channel
- Once they score or the ball goes out of play, the opposite centre back starts
- The centre back dribbles or passes for the opposite team who now attacks the opposite side
- E.g., the centre back with the ball attacks down the right side with the blue team
- Once they score, the opposite centre back starts with a ball. They create a 3v2 on the opposite side for the red team
- If possession is lost, the team that regained can attack the mini-goal. When they regain & attack, the centre back defends the mini-goal
- After, this ends with a goal/ball out of play, the game now continues in the opposite direction
- The game will always be flowing either clockwise or anti clockwise
- If the direction stays in the same direction, it may be advisable to change it to ensure all players attack & defend





038

Beating the Line

A directional **picture practice** to develop technical actions and decision making to exploit spaces behind the opponents defensive line

Numbers

16+

Age

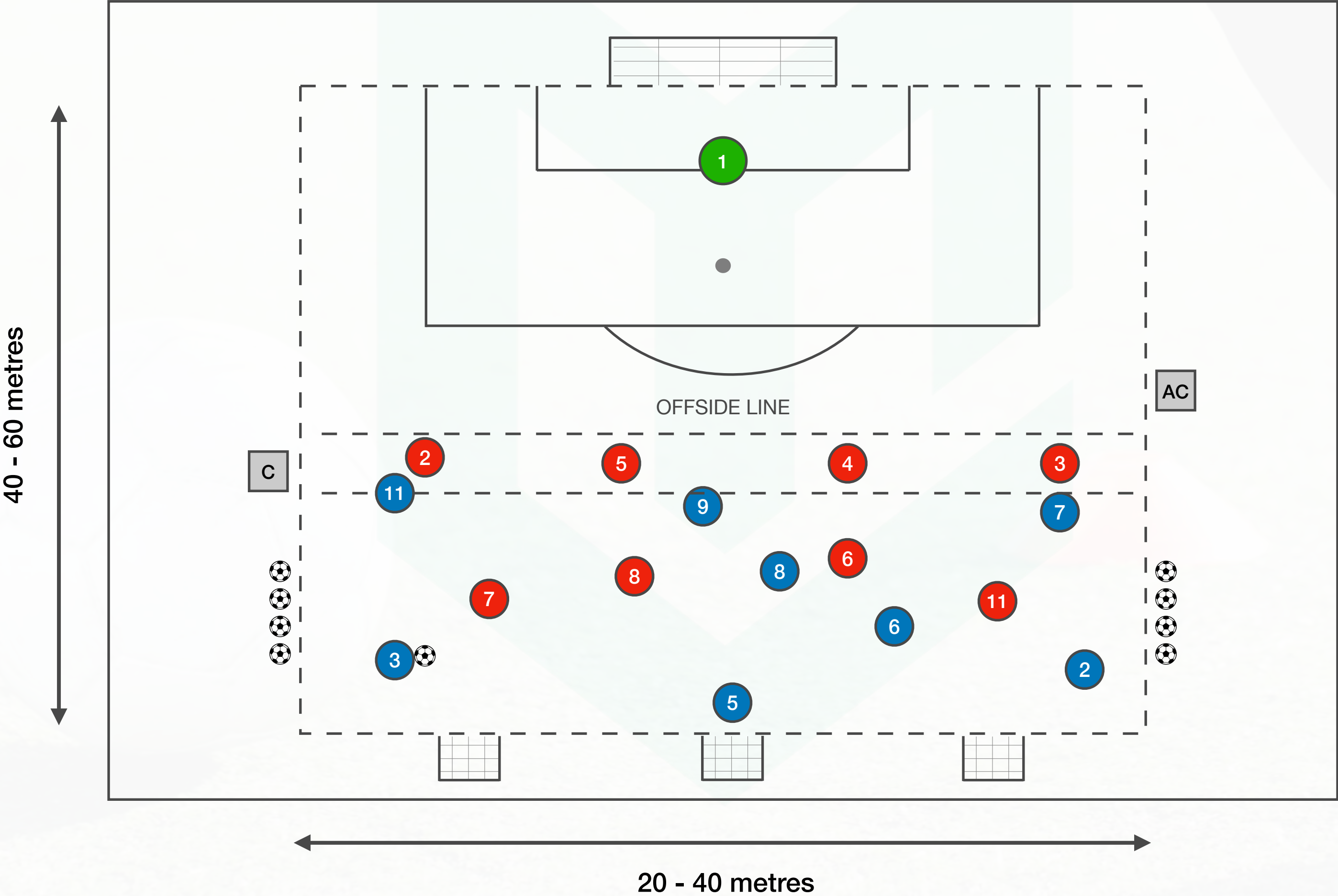
13+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

3-5 x
8-15 mins





Beating the Line

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

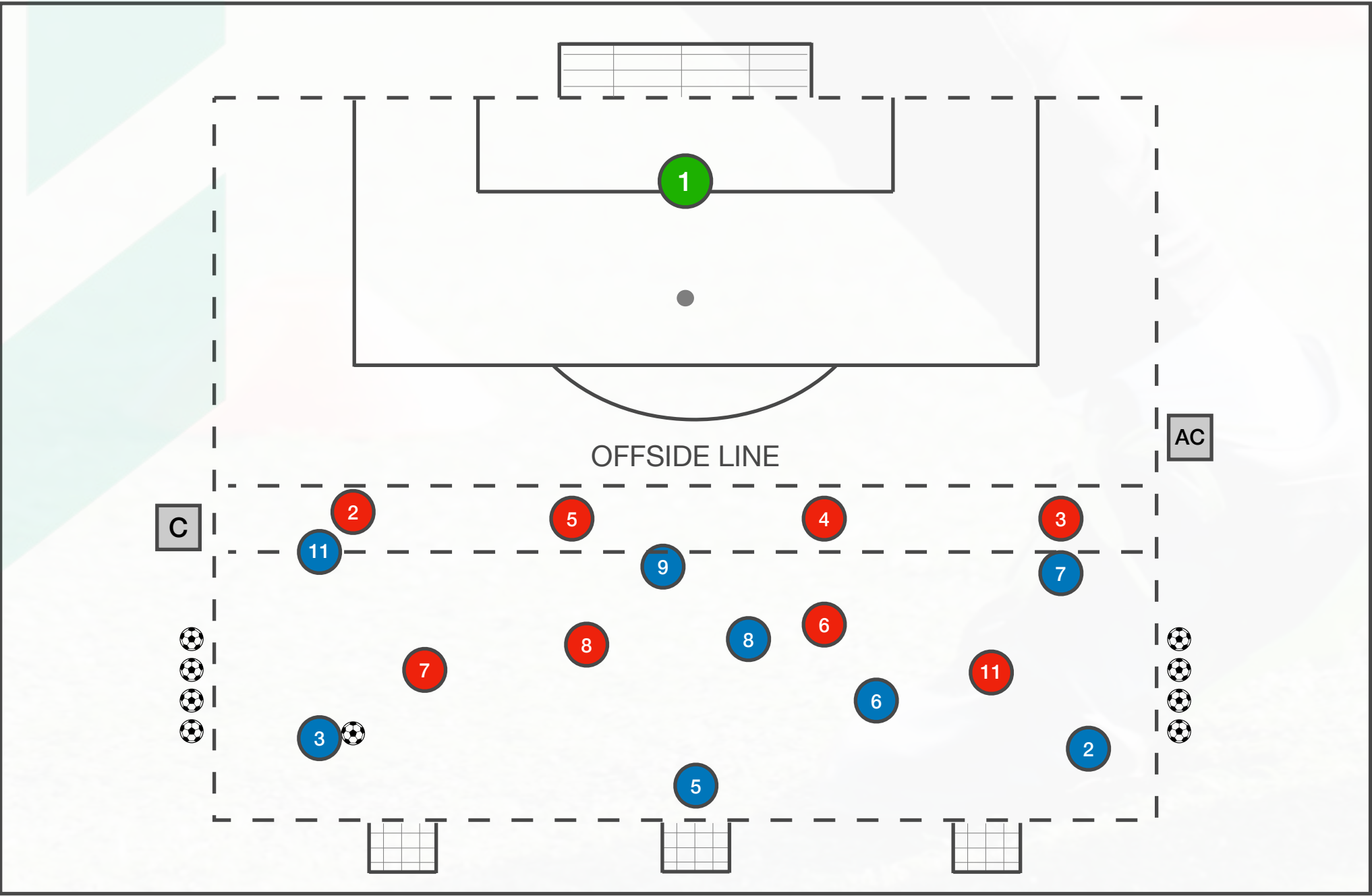
Objective 1: An improved awareness of methods to beat the block, including around, through, and dodging the offside

Objective 2: An improved execution of killer passes to penetrate opposition defensive lines

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates to execute specific pictures to beat the block

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a central grid from the goal line to the halfway line
- 3 mini-goals are added at the opposite end to the full-sized goal. An offside line is created, with a zone for the defenders
- This creates 3 zones, a possession zone, defensive line zone, and finishing zone
- The players are divided into two teams of 8 players, with 1 goalkeeper
- The defensive line must stay in the zone, except one player can step into the possession zone
- The defensive line can all move into the finishing zone when a penetrative pass is played into the zone
- If your team uses cover defending, 1 defender may drop into the finishing zone prior to passes being played
- The game starts with the blue team retaining possession in the possession zone
- The defending team are attempting to limit penetrative passes
- If they can regain the ball, they can score in the mini-goals for 1 point
- The attacking team are attempting to penetrate with a pass through, around, or to dodge the offside
- Any of the attacking players can make runs behind to beat the defensive line into the finishing zone
- Once a penetrative pass is played, all players are free to enter the finishing zone. The game restarts from the first zone
- If suitable, teams can rotate based on goals scored, or time limits
- The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of the practice





039

Dodging the Offside

A directional **technical passing pattern practice** to develop aerial passes and off the ball movements to dodge the offside

Numbers

18+

Age

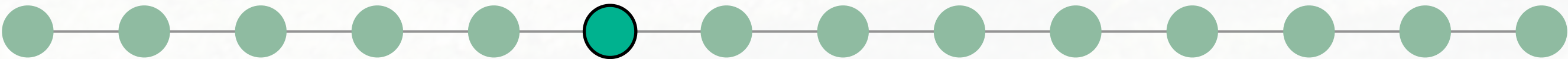
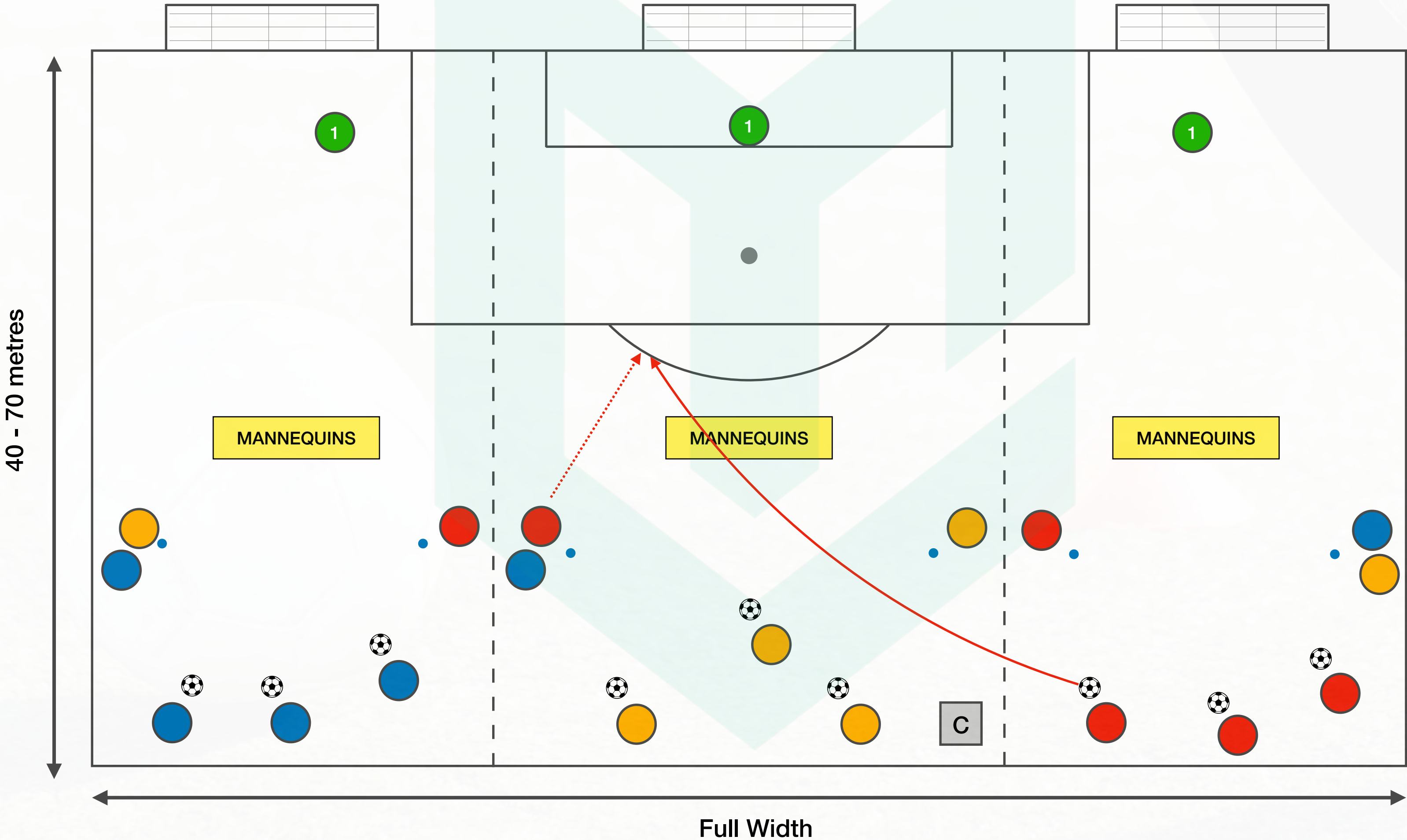
13+

Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

3-8 x 4-6 mins

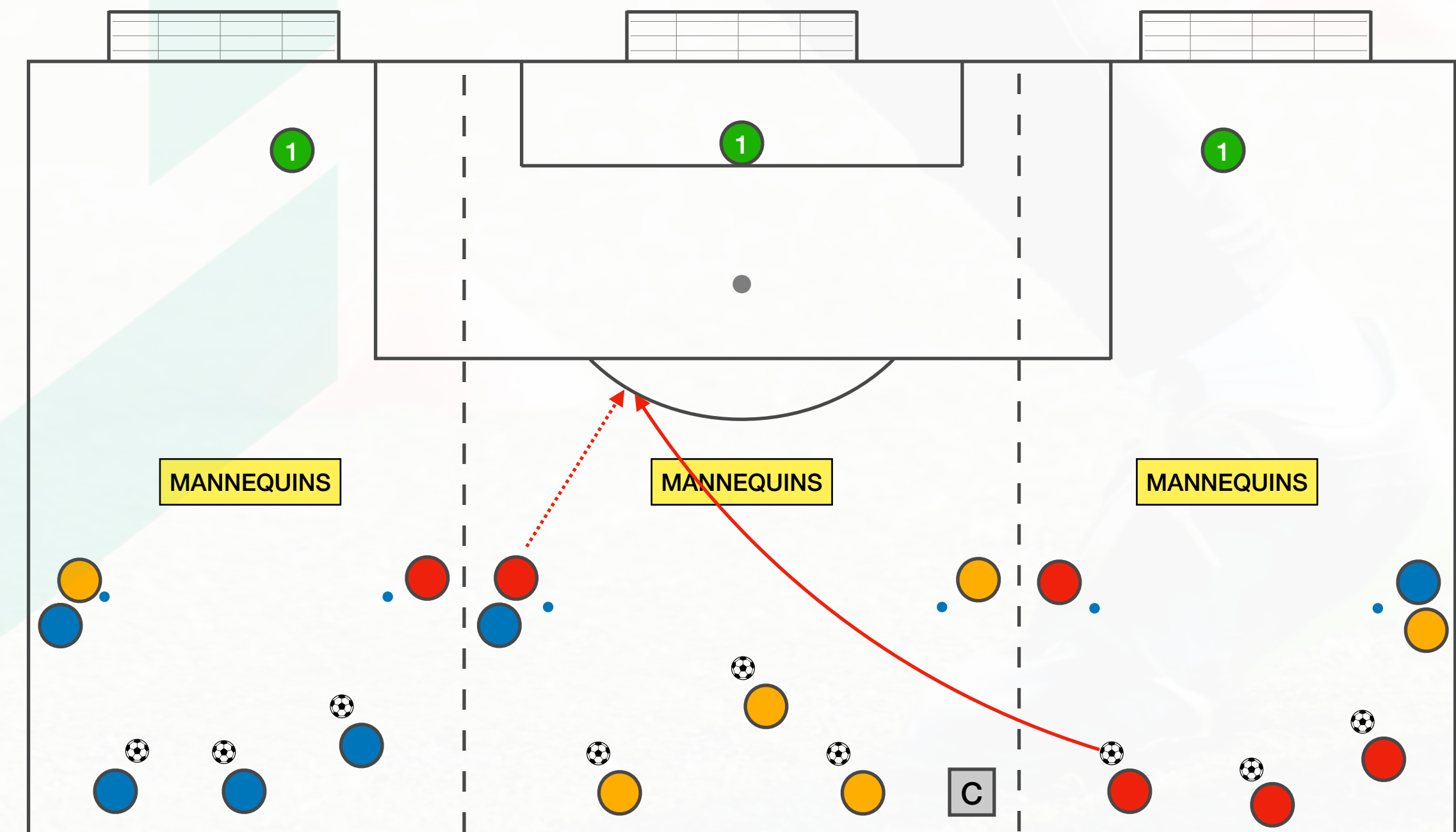


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved execution of passes and runs to dodge the offside

Objective 3: An improved awareness of the different angles that can be utilised to dodge the offside

- The pitch is divided into 3 channels, 2 wide, 1 central, using as much depth as required for the pass length
- One goal per channel is needed, so with 3 channels 3 goals will need to be used with 1 goalkeeper in each goal
- The players are divided into 3 teams of 6, then each team is divided into 3 runners, and 3 passers
- The runners start on either of the sides of any of the mannequins to make runs behind
- The passers start at the back of the pitch at varying lengths in relation to the players match position
- The game starts with one player from a side channel passing to one of their teams runners making a movement
- The pass can be in their own channel or another channel, the body shape of the passer should indicate direction
- Once the first pass has been played, a second pass can be played from the next channel, to their teammate
- E.g. the red team starts in the right channel by playing a pass to the red runner in the middle channel
- As soon as that pass is played, a yellow passer can pass over to a yellow runner in any other box (not middle)
- Then once that pass is played, the blue team can then play to a blue runner in any of the two available channels
- Passes can be played directly to runners in their own channel
- Each team counts their goals
- Rounds should take no more than 4-6 minutes to manage player (inc GK) workload
- In the next round, the passers should start in different channels, and the runners should use related start position





040

Finding the Pockets

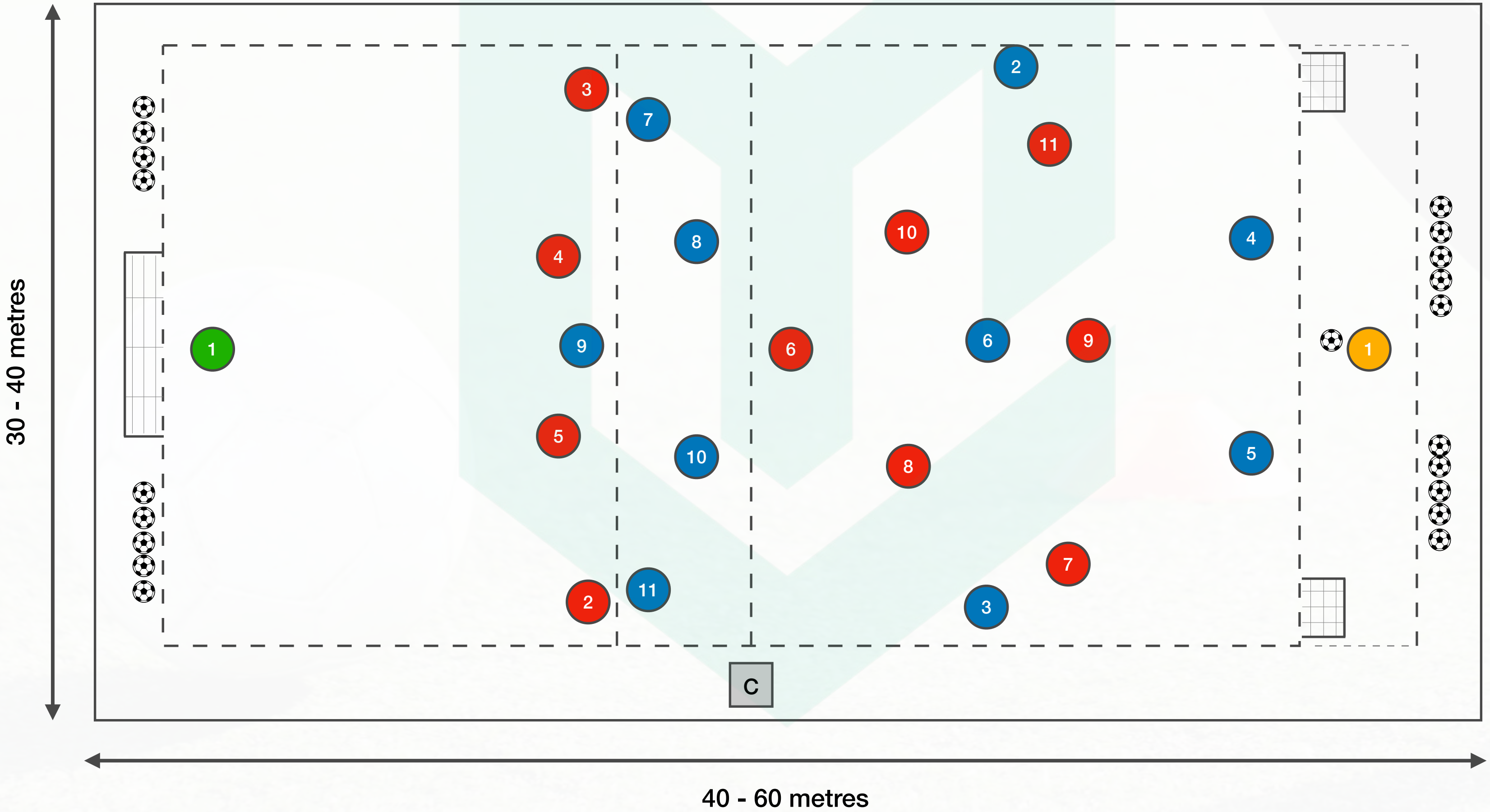
A **large sided game practice** to develop possession and penetration to find players in between the lines (in the pockets)

Numbers

16+

Age

13+

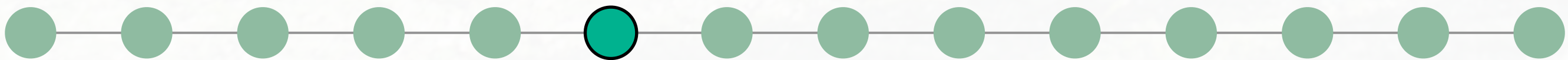


Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

2-5 x
8-15 mins

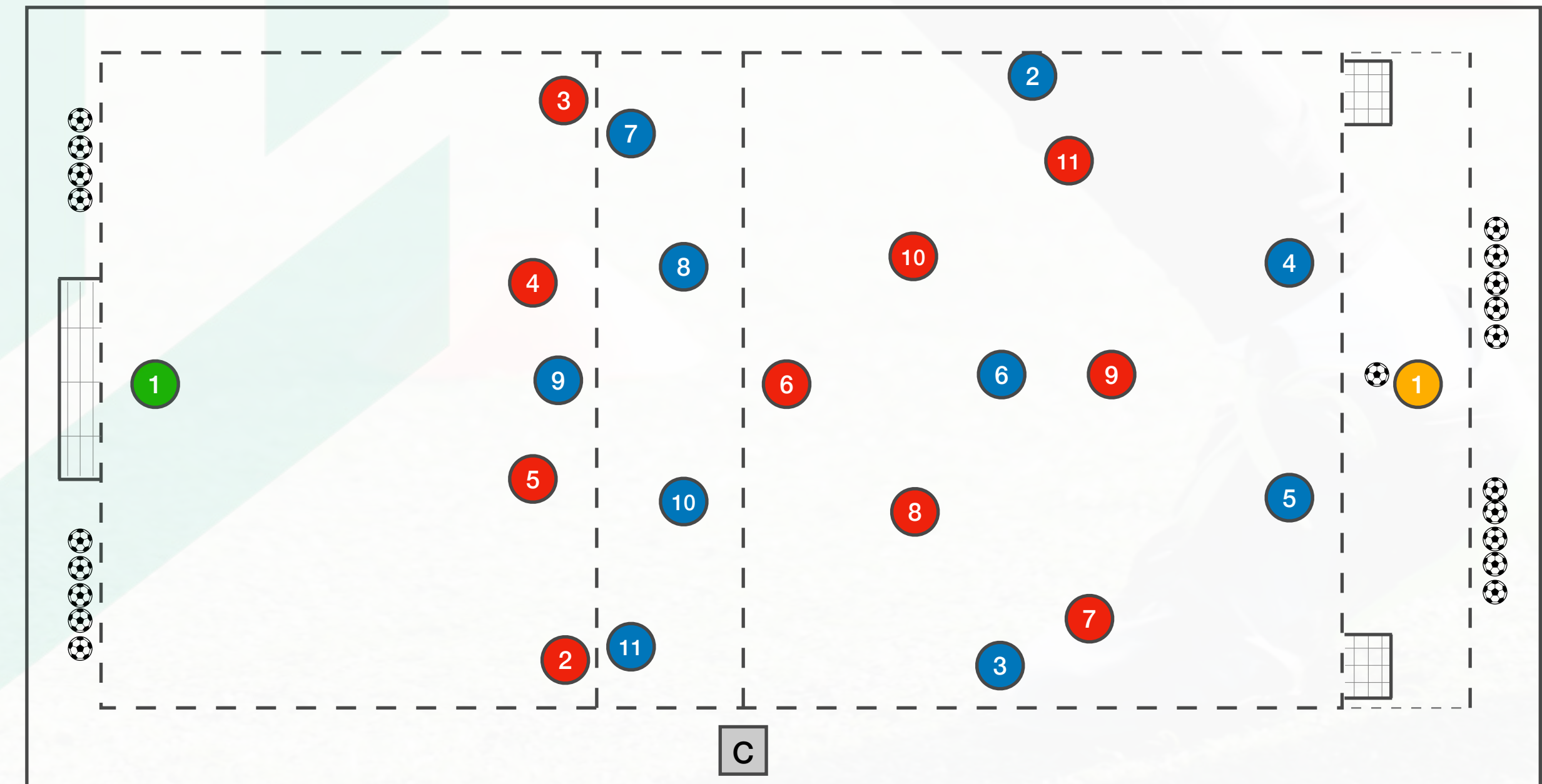


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved awareness of methods that can be used to find players in the pockets

Objective 3: An improved technical execution of passing through the lines with disguise, and receiving in the pockets

- The game is set up using a long narrow grid, with 4 mini-goals and a full-sized goal on the ends
- Two zones are created with a line just over the halfway line. A second line is added 3-8 metres after
- The double line represents the 'pocket'. A penalty area is also added as a reference for the goalkeeper
- Players should be divided into two teams of 11. The first zone with the mini-goals, is for the 6v6 (inc GK)
- The second zone is a 5v4 (plus GK). Players from this zone cannot drop into the first zone
- However players in this second zone can rotate with players in the first zone, one in and one out
- One team will primarily be the attacking team, and one team primarily the defending team
- Teams can swap at any time if required. The attacking team can become the defending team and vice versa
- The attacking team will always start with the ball if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play
- The objective for the attacking team is to penetrate through the 6v6 into the pocket
- As soon as a pass is played into the pocket, the defenders in the second zone can apply pressure
- 2 players from the first zone for the defending team can cross the zone to track back and help defend
- The 5 players must then beat the 4 defenders to score. They have a time limit of 10 seconds to score
- If the red team regain the ball anywhere they have 10 seconds to counter attack and score
- When the red team regain the ball, 2 attacking players from zone 2 can drop into the first zone
- E.g. The blue team start as the attacking team. They build against the reds and play into the blue No.8
- As soon as that pass is played, the red defenders press. The blue player turns to create and score





041

Hitting the Switch

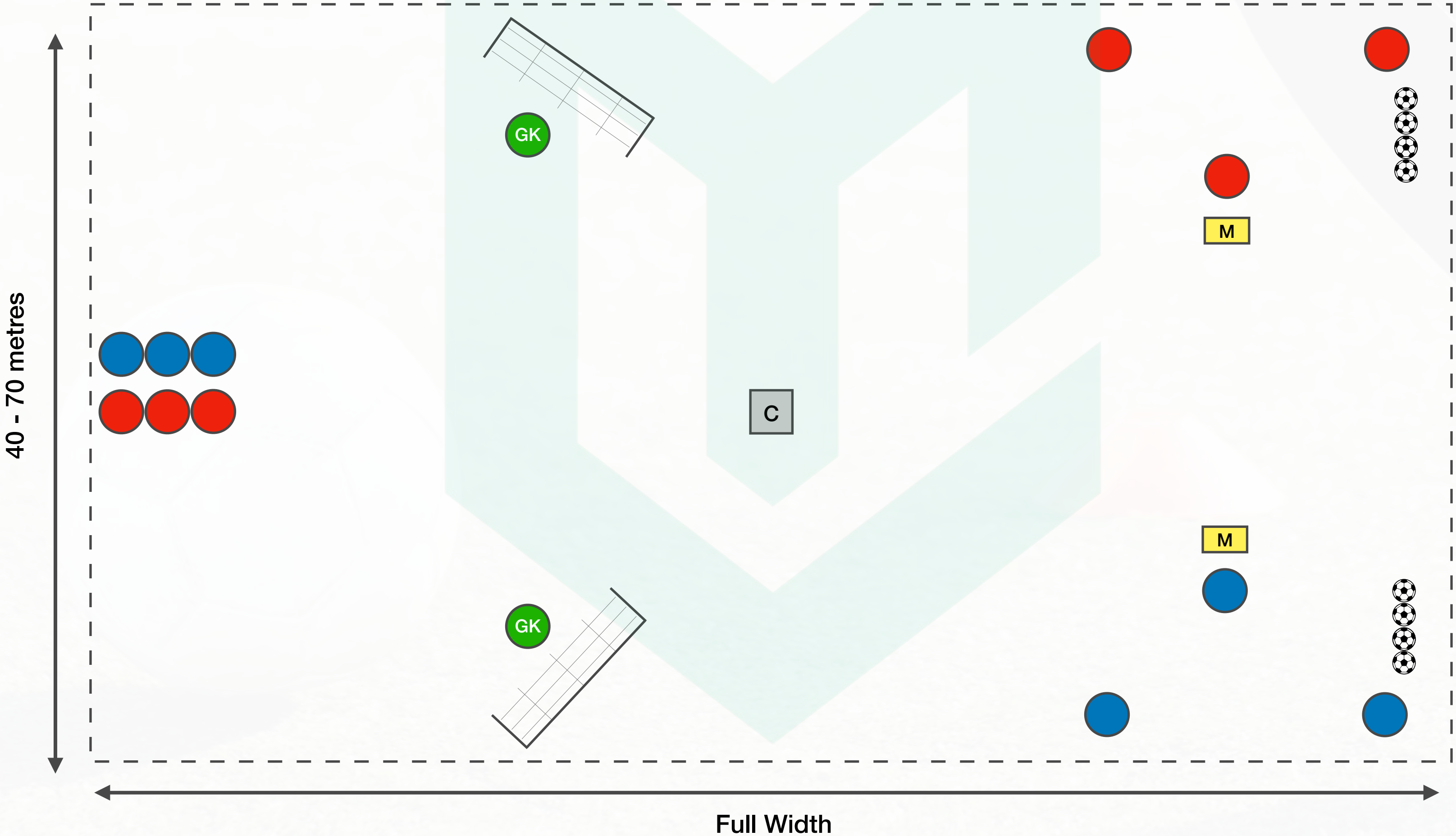
A **technical passing pattern practice** to develop aerial passes to switch play, and 1vGK finishing

Numbers

12+

Age

14+

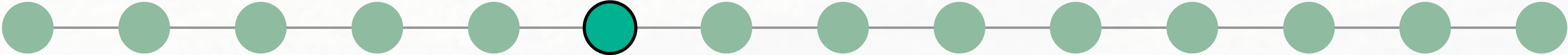


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-5 x 4-8 mins

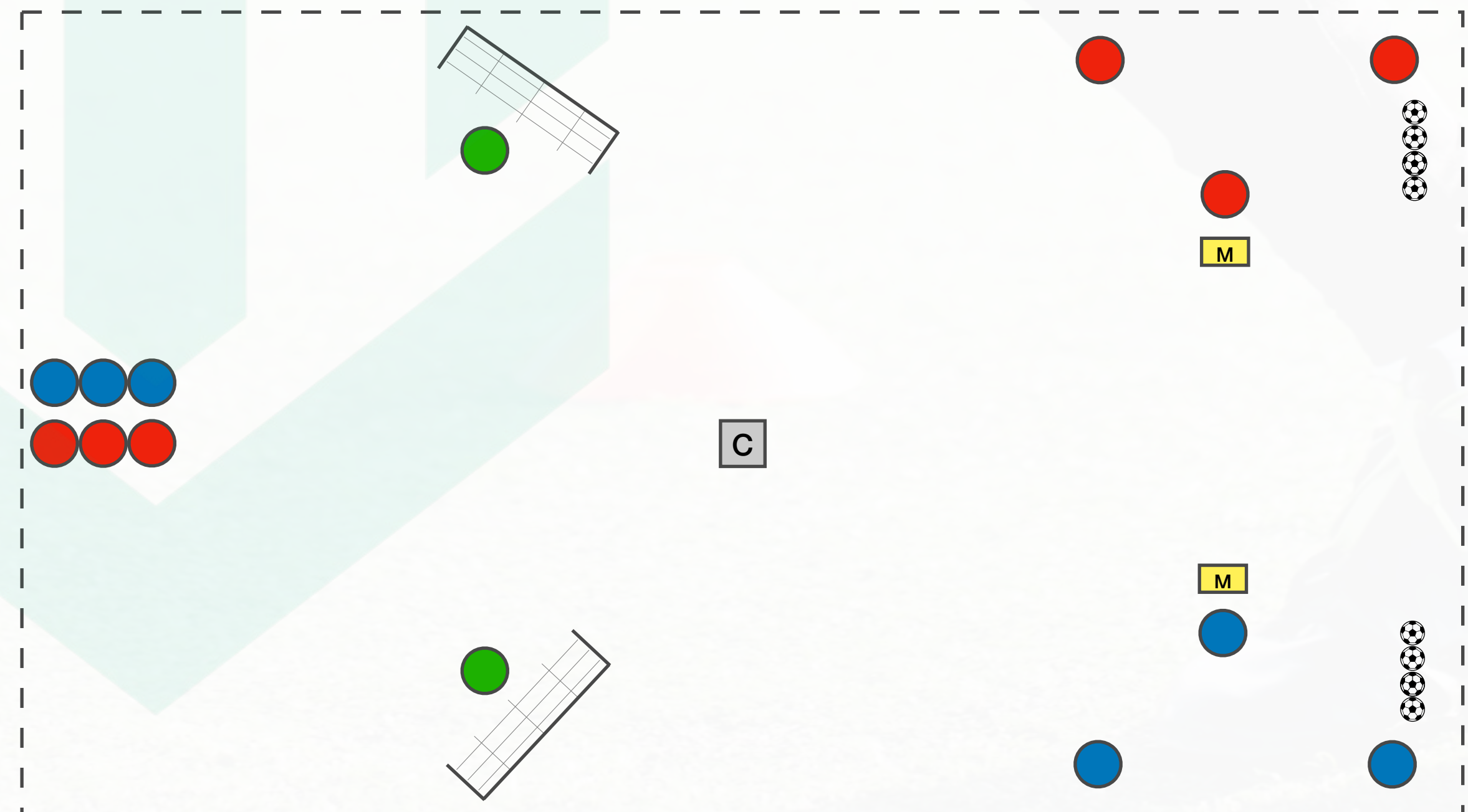


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved execution of aerial diagonal long passes

Objective 3: An increased cohesion between passing players and attacking players

- The practice is set up using a wide grid, with 2 diagonal full-sized goals
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 6 players plus 2 goalkeepers
- 3 players from each team set up the diagonal switch, and 3 line up to receive the switch
- The practice starts with the 3 switch players, playing 2 passes before hitting the switch
- 1 of the receiving players then makes a movement to receive the ball down the line
- Their first touch should take them diagonally inside to finish against the goalkeeper
- After the attack, the next receiver gets ready, and the 3 switch players rotate
- A new player should hit the switch, and a new player should also be receiving
- Both teams run the practice at the same time
- At the end of the practice, the team that scores the most goals wins





042

Move the Block

A **phase practice** to develop a team's ability to beat an opponents block

Numbers

20+

Age

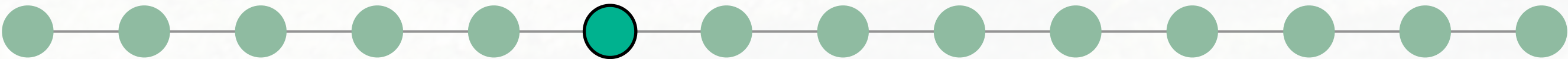
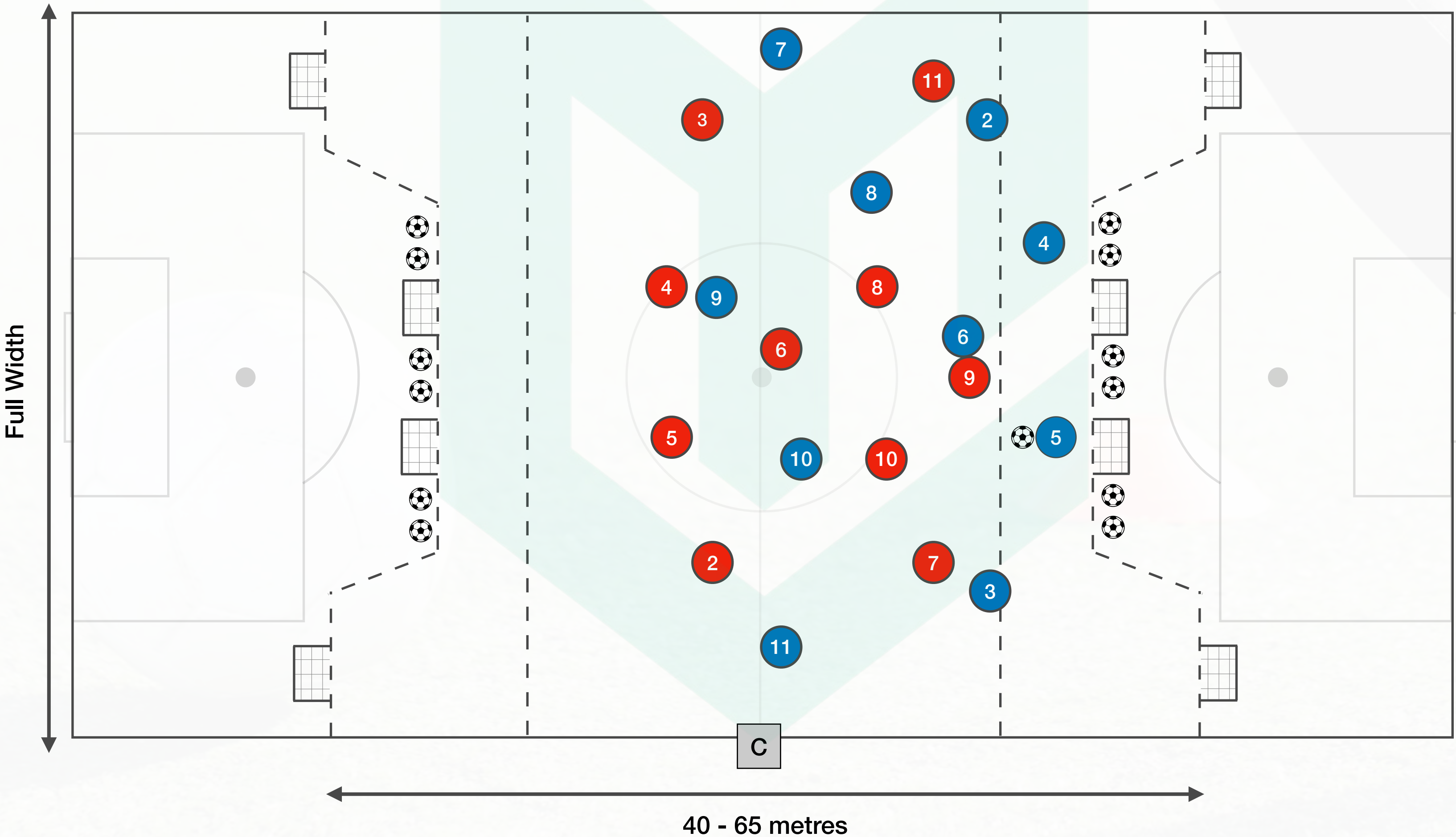
14+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-4 x
8-15 mins





Move the Block

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

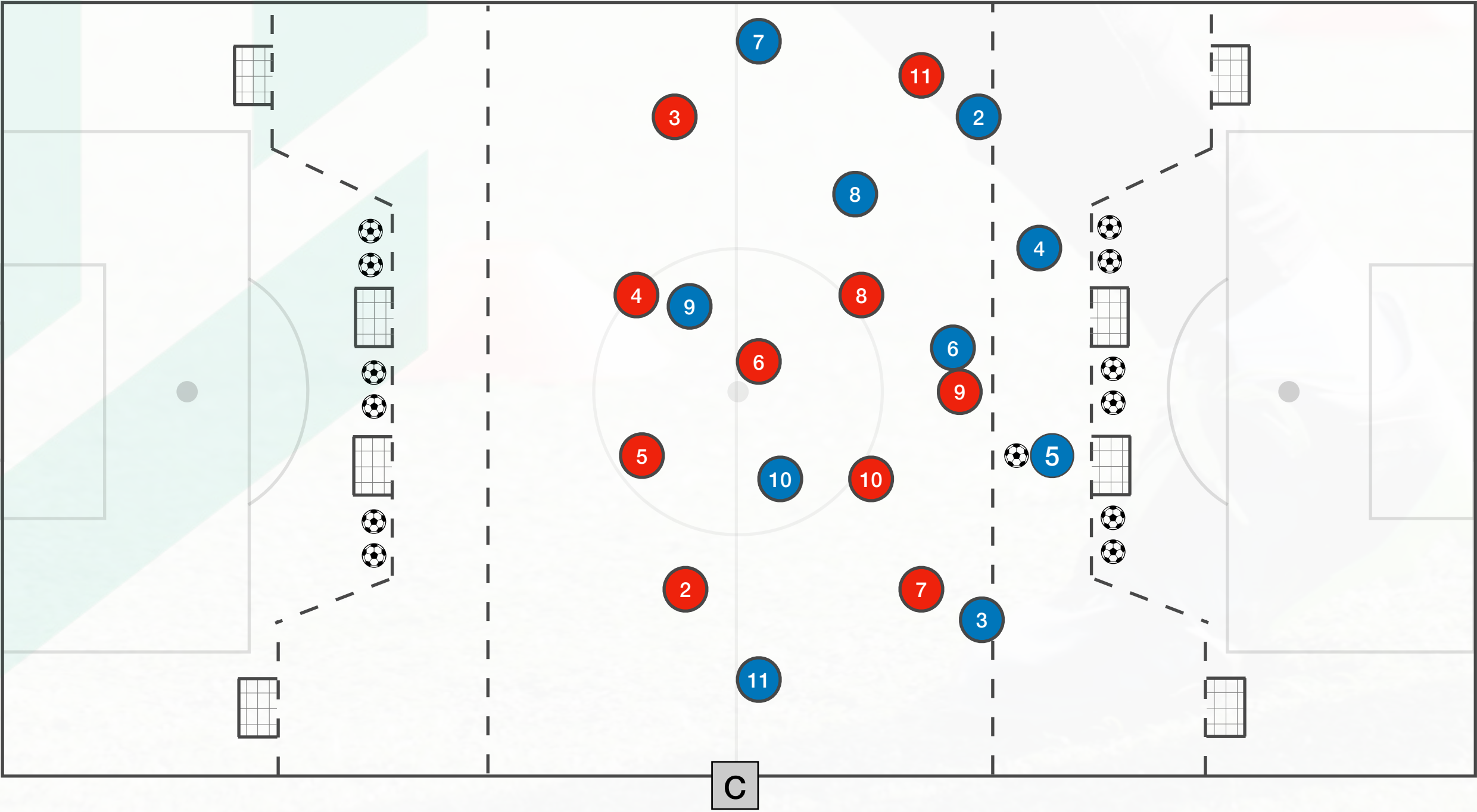
Objective 1: An improved awareness of the tactical methods to beat the defensive block

Objective 2: An improved execution of technical actions such as passing and receiving between the lines

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with teammates and units to beat the block

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using the central zone of a full pitch, with end zones and 4 mini-goals
- The end zone shapes represent areas where the defending goalkeeper is unlikely to sweep
- Players are divided into two teams of 10 outfield players, in tactical formations
- The game starts with one team attempting to beat the opponents block and scoring in the mini-goals
- If the opponents regain the ball, they can retain possession to score in the opposite mini-goals
- Both teams can only score from within the end zones
- Both teams must defend from in front of the defensive end zone
- When players are defending, they can only move into the defensive end zone when the attackers do
- After a team score, they can collect the a new ball and restart again to beat the block
- The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of a time limit





043

Phase: Beating the Block

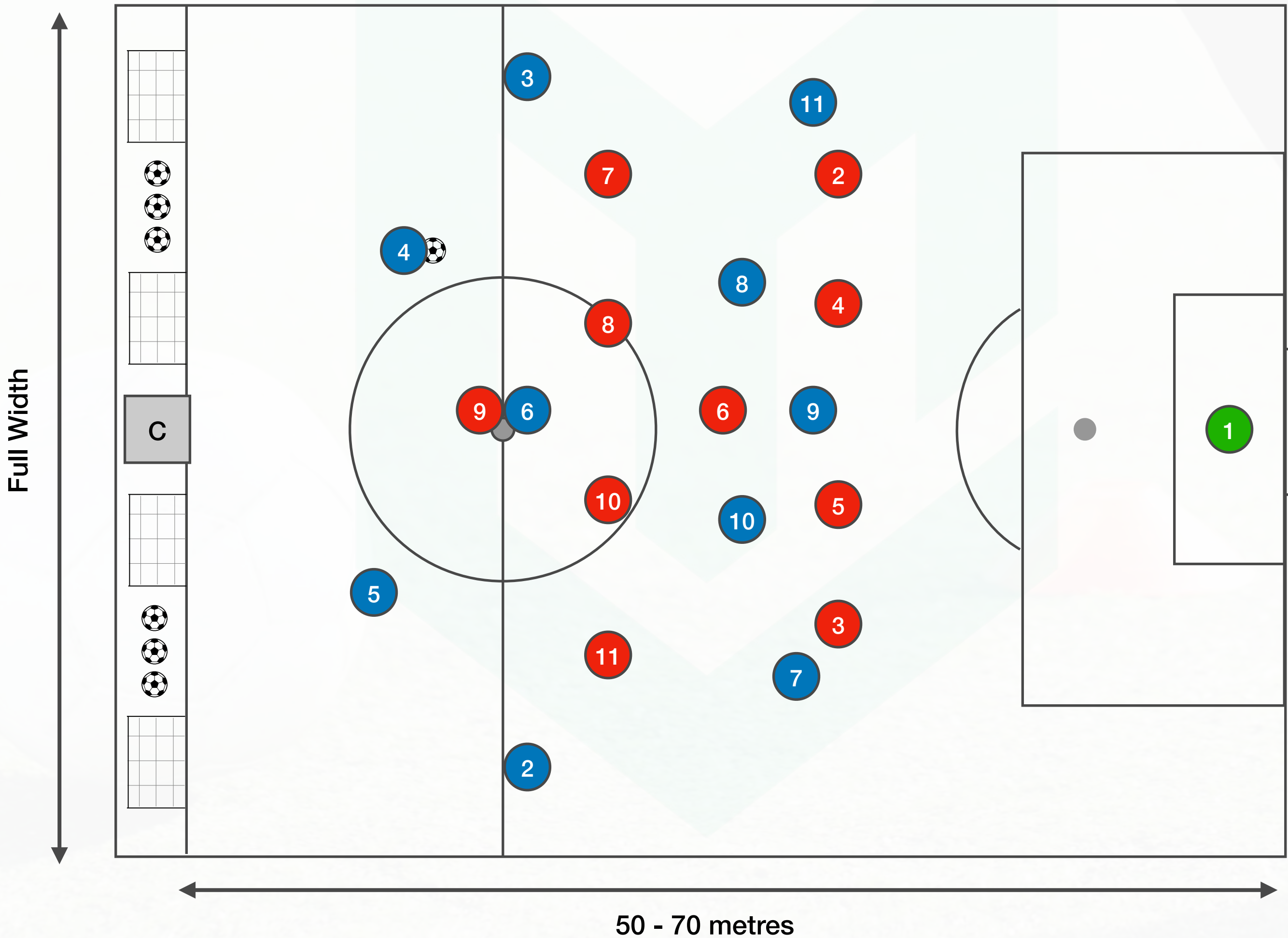
A **phase practice** to develop a team's ability to beat an opponents block

Numbers
17+

Age
14+

Difficulty
4/5

Time Length
2-4 x
10-20
mins





Phase: Beating the Block

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

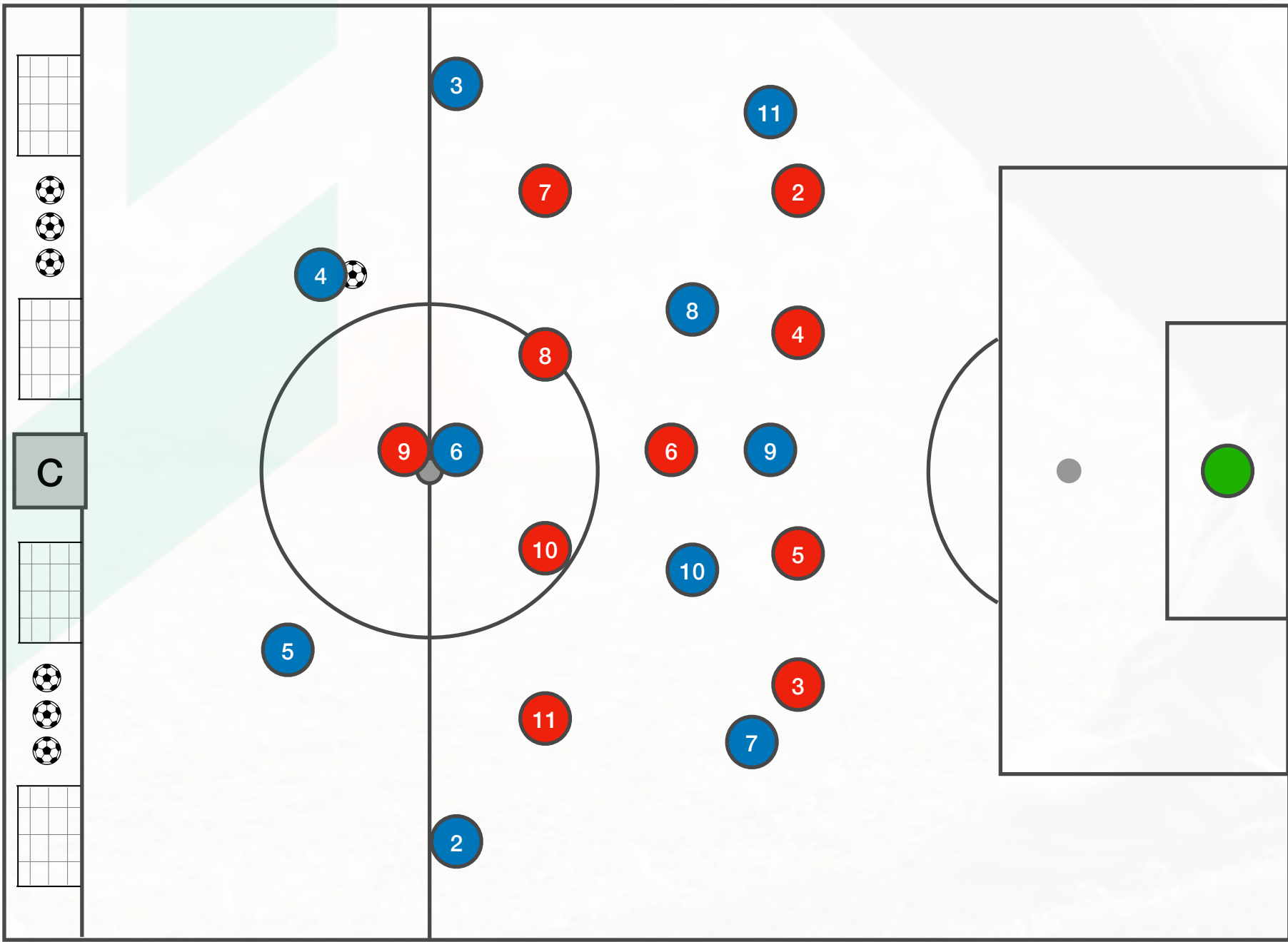
Objective 1: An improved awareness of strategies used to beat an organised defensive block

Objective 2: An improved execution of technical actions such as receiving and playing penetrative passes

Objective 3: An increased cohesion between players to exploit spaces left in a defensive block structure

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using just under 2 thirds of the pitch
- 4 mini-goals are used at one end with a full-sized goal and goalkeeper at the other end
- Players are divided into 1 team of 10 outfield players, which makes the defending team
- The other team of 10 outfield players plus goalkeeper makes the attacking team
- The game starts with the attacking team building from the mini-goals to attack and score
- The defending team have to prevent the attacking team from scoring, then counter attack
- Once they regain the ball they have 10 seconds to score in the mini-goals
- The attacking team must counter press after losing possession to regain the ball
- After a set time limit, the teams can rotate and swap roles, or a rest period can be used
- The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of the practice





044

Pinball

A **positional possession practice** to develop player's ability to play penetrative passes between the lines

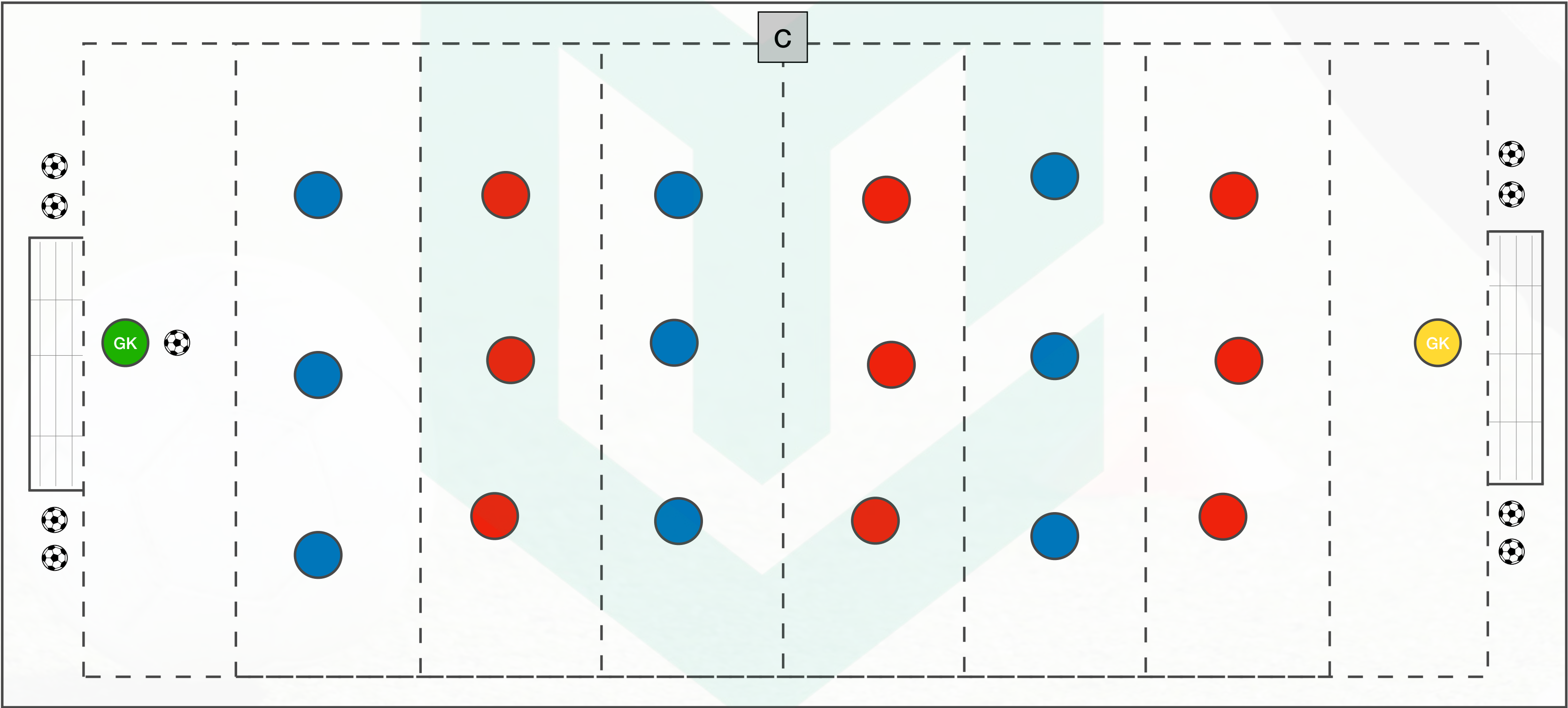
Numbers

14+

Age

13+

15 - 40 metres



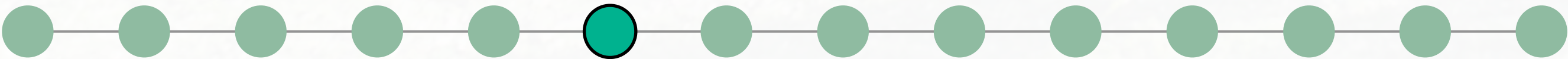
40 - 60 metres

Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

3-5 x
8-12 mins



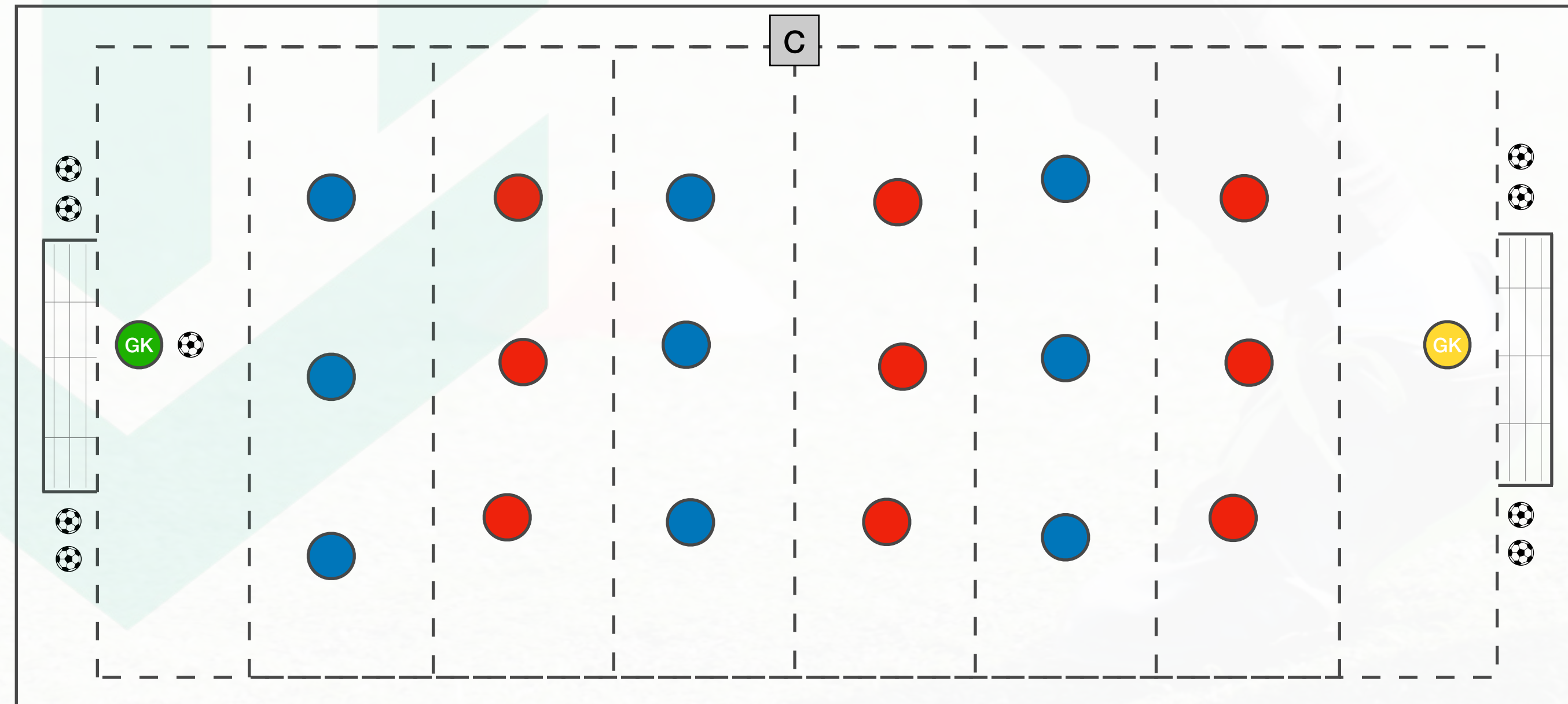
Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved identification of the triggers that suggest passing lanes are open

Objective 2: An improved execution of forward passes between the lines and shooting

Objective 3: An increased awareness and understanding of how to cut passing lanes

- The game is set up using 8 horizontal grids on a narrow pitch wide enough for 3 players
- Players are then divided into two teams of 9 players, plus 2 goalkeepers. 3 players in each grid
- The goalkeeper starts with the ball, and plays for one team which has players in the next grid
- E.g. Green goalkeeper plays with the blue team, yellow goalkeeper with the red team
- Players are restricted to their grids, to represent likely situations against a defensive block
- Both teams attempt to penetrate through the opponents, to get to their attackers grid and score
- Time or pass limits can be used to ensure the pinball effect, and many forward passes
- E.g. only 4 seconds in each grid, or only 2 passes per grid
- Once the ball goes out the ball starts with a goalkeeper
- As a progression, one player can step out of their grid at a time
- The teams compete to score the most goals like a normal game
- Teams can play directly to their highest grid. Goalkeepers must be ready to restart quickly





045

Tactical Shadow Play

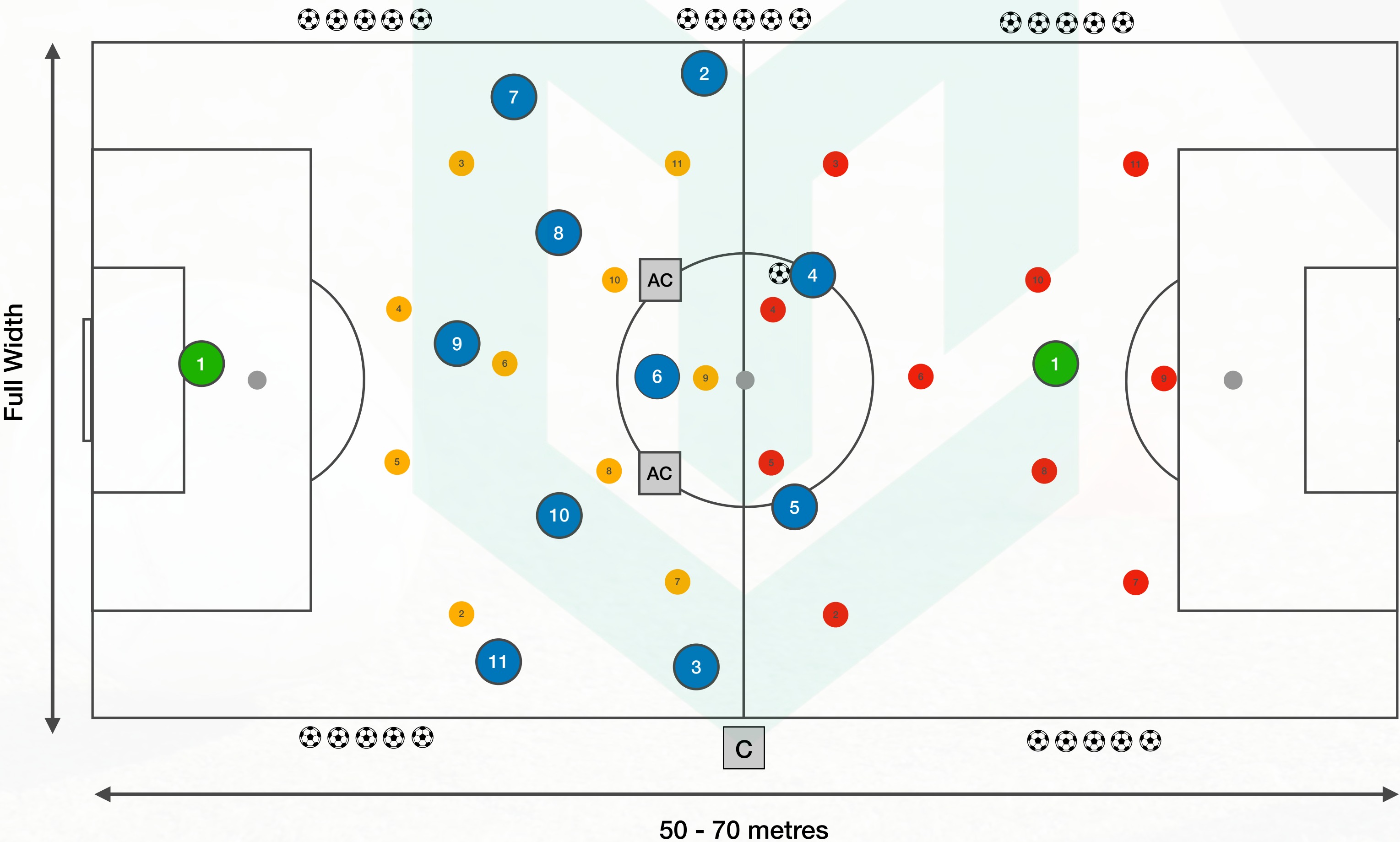
A **tactical pattern practice** to demonstrate and improve specific pictures and patterns used to beat the block

Numbers

12+

Age

14+

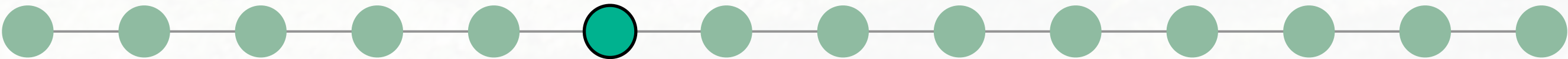


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-4 x
10-20
mins





Tactical Shadow Play

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

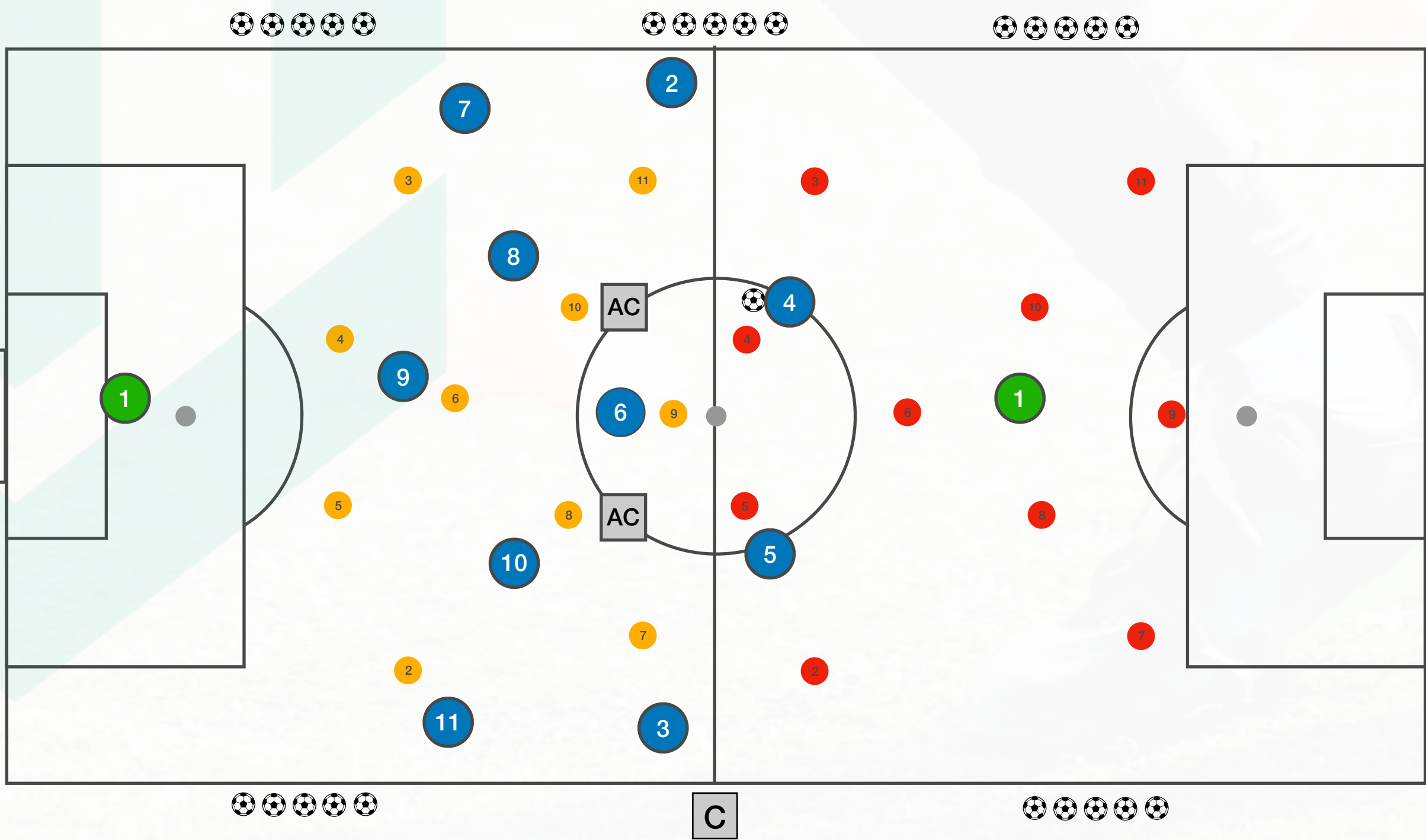
Objective 1: An improved awareness of the different roles across the different phases of the game

Objective 2: An improved technical execution of the small detail around passing, receiving, finishing

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates regarding movements and actions to succeed across the phases

Game Flow & Rules

- This practice is set up on a full pitch, with two full-sized goals and two goalkeepers
- 10 outfield players are used to run through tactical structures and movements
- Flat cones are used to mark likely opponent positions, in both halves of the pitch
- The orange flat cones are marked in between a defensive block/build-up structure
- The red flat cones are marked in between a high press/beating the block structure
- The 11 players then practice the structure and movements both In and out of possession
- 2 assistant coaches or players can represent 2 opposition players to guide movements
- If working on out of possession structures, the assistant coaches should start with the ball
- If working on in possession structures, the assistant coaches should start with the ball
- Balls can also be given to the assistant coaches to orchestrate 'transition moments'
- In possession targets can be set, e.g. scoring 8 goals from 10 attacks





Through the Pockets

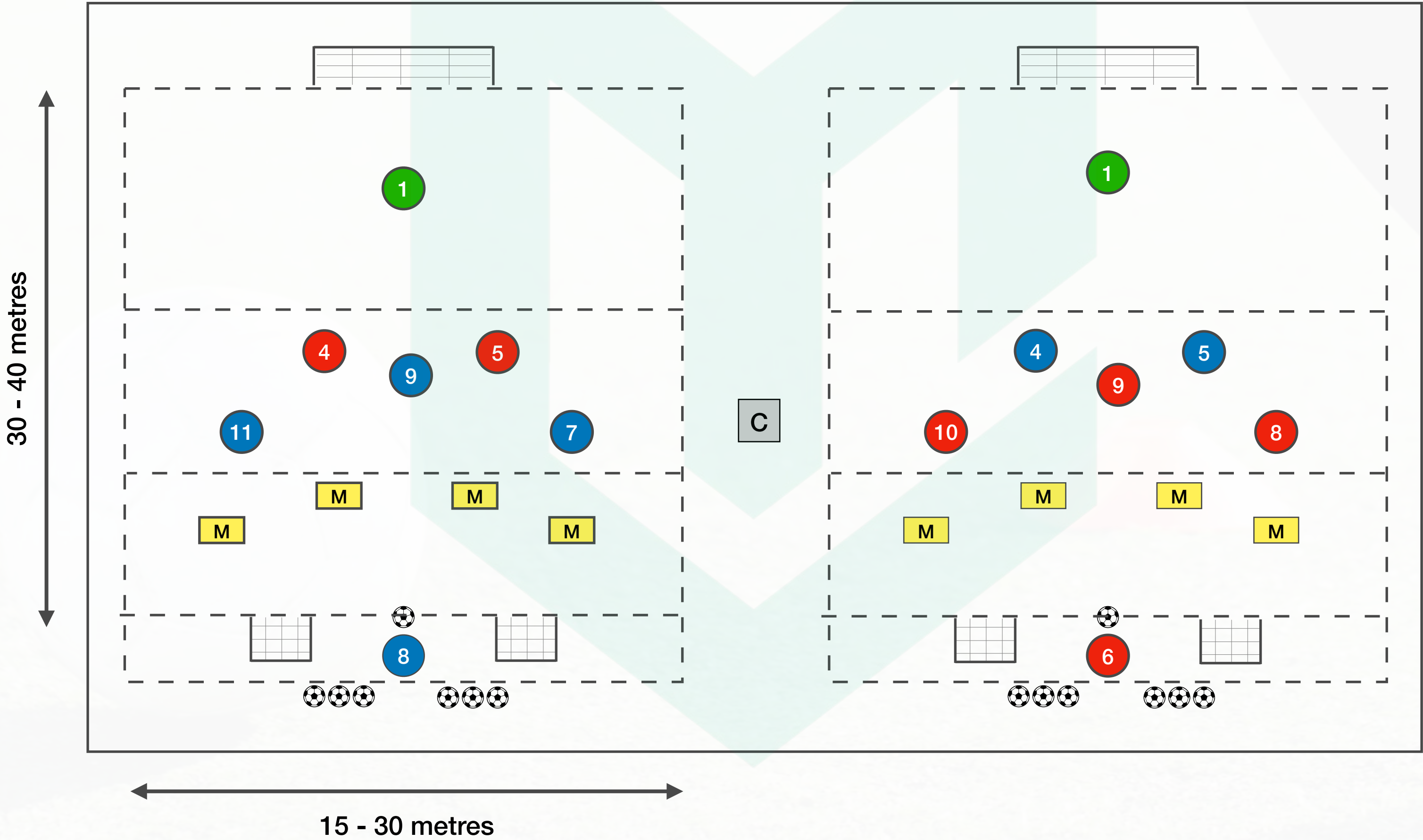
A **picture practice** to develop player's ability to receive passes into the pockets, to turn and attack opponents.

Numbers

7+

Age

11+

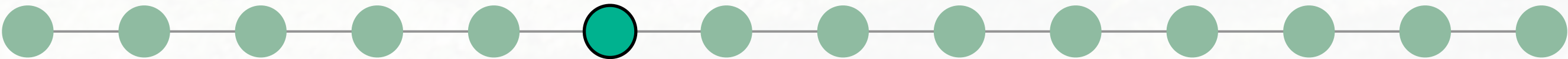


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-5 x 4-8 mins

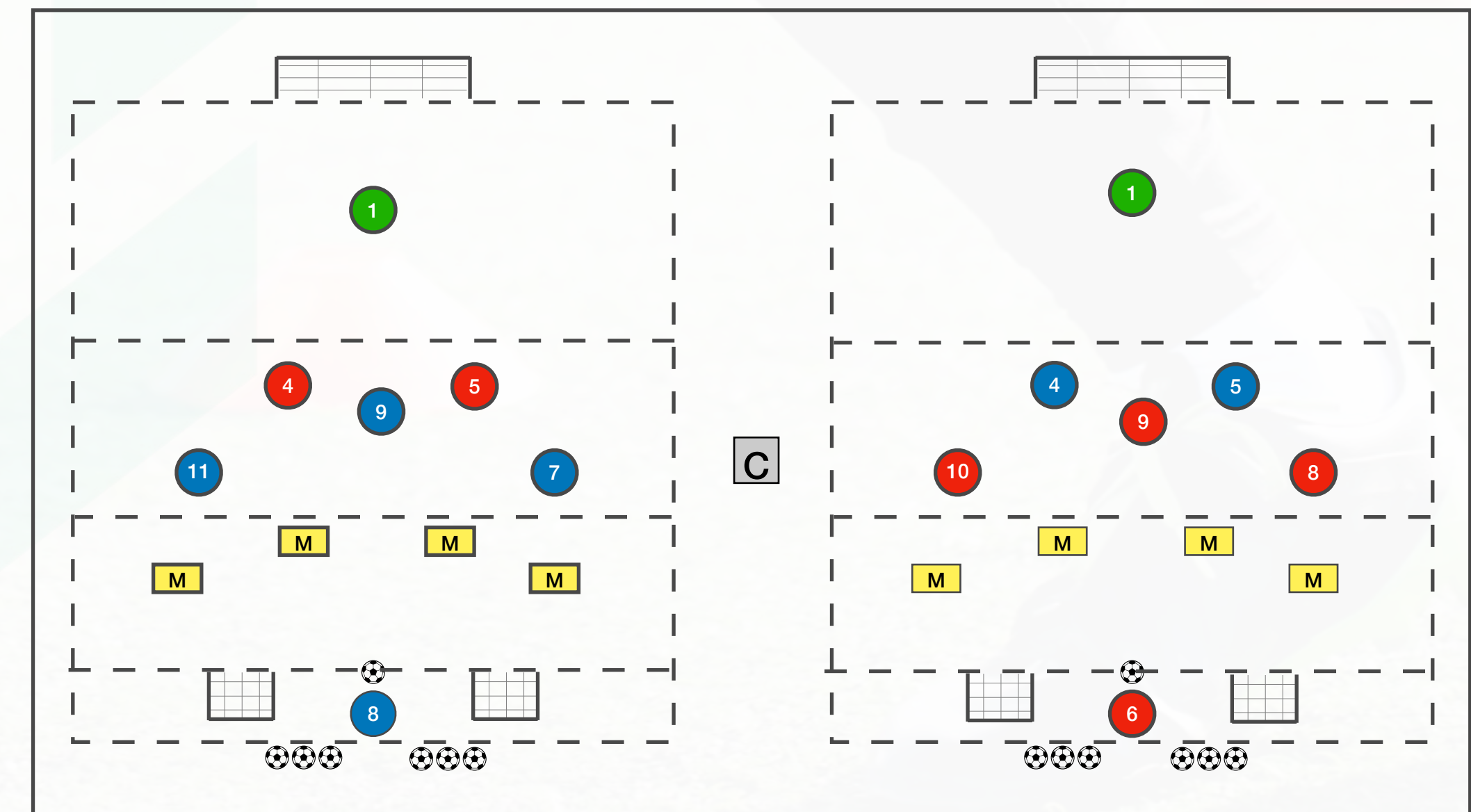


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved identification of key pictures when players receive in the pockets

Objective 3: An increased awareness of dangers when defending after players have received in the pockets

- The game is set up using a central corridor, with 3 in-play grids. The first grid represents the height of the penalty area
- The second grid represents space in the pockets against a deep block
- The third grid represents where the defending midfielder would be. These players are represented using mannequins
- Players are divided into two teams, defenders with a goalkeeper, and attacking players with a deep midfielder
- The attacking players can be made with wingers and striker, 2 strikers and a midfielder, or two midfielders and a striker
- The game starts with the deep midfielder playing a pass between the mannequins to one of the attacking players
- The attacking players then have to exploit the space behind the midfielders (mannequins) to create chances to score.
- The defenders have to try to prevent penetrative passes, and regain the ball to score in the mini-goals
- If the defending team regains the ball, the deep midfielder can join to screen and protect one of the goals
- Points can be accumulated by scoring in either the full-sized goal or the mini-goals
- If the goalkeeper manages to have possession of the ball, they can attempt driven passes/volleys into the mini-goals





047

Wide 2v2s

A **picture practice** to develop player's ability to dominate wide areas to beat the block in 2v2 situations

Numbers

12+

Age

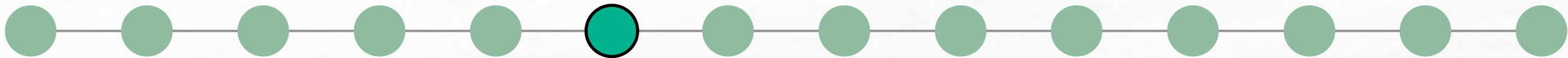
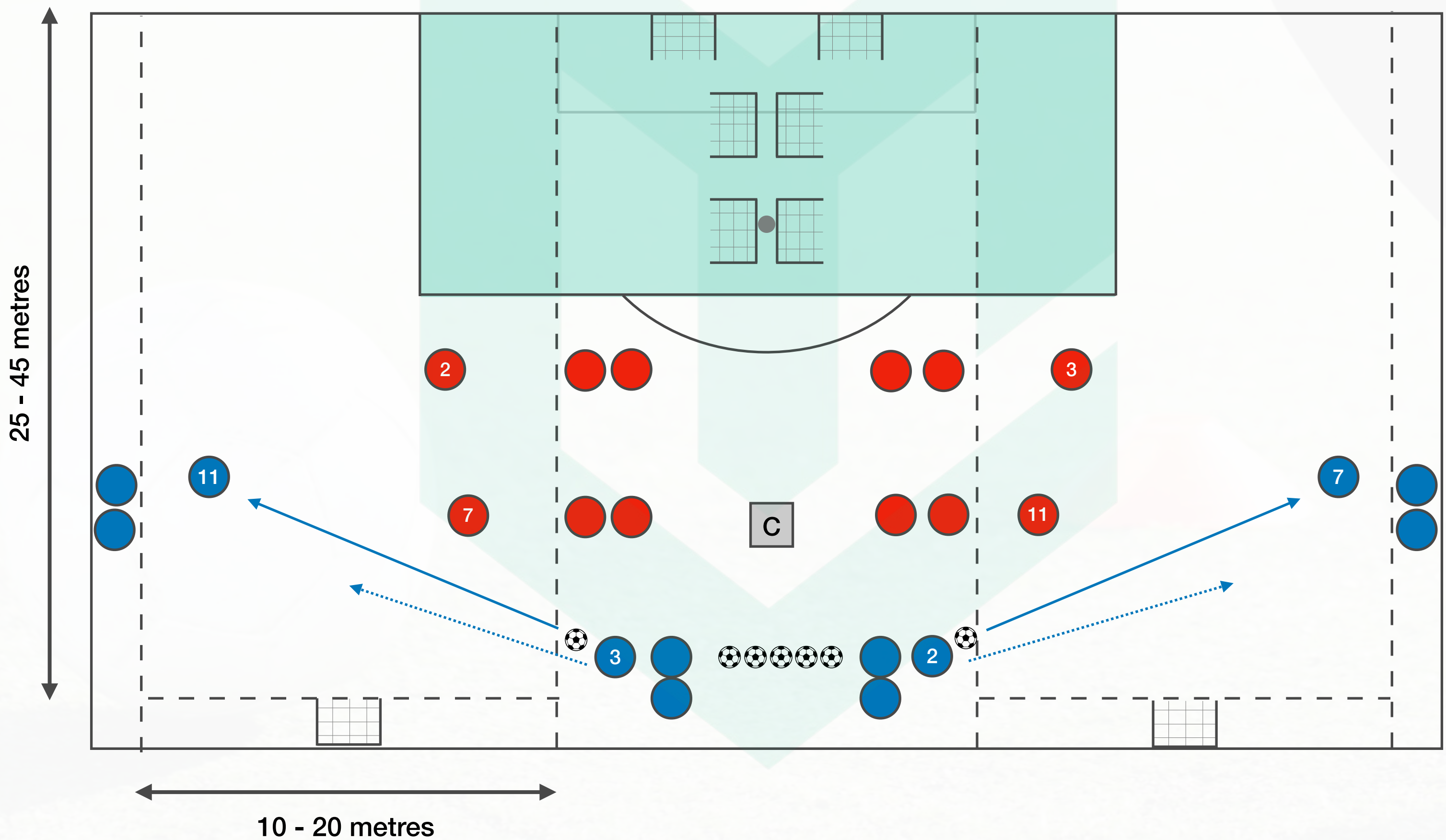
12+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

2-4 x
8-12 mins





Wide 2v2's

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

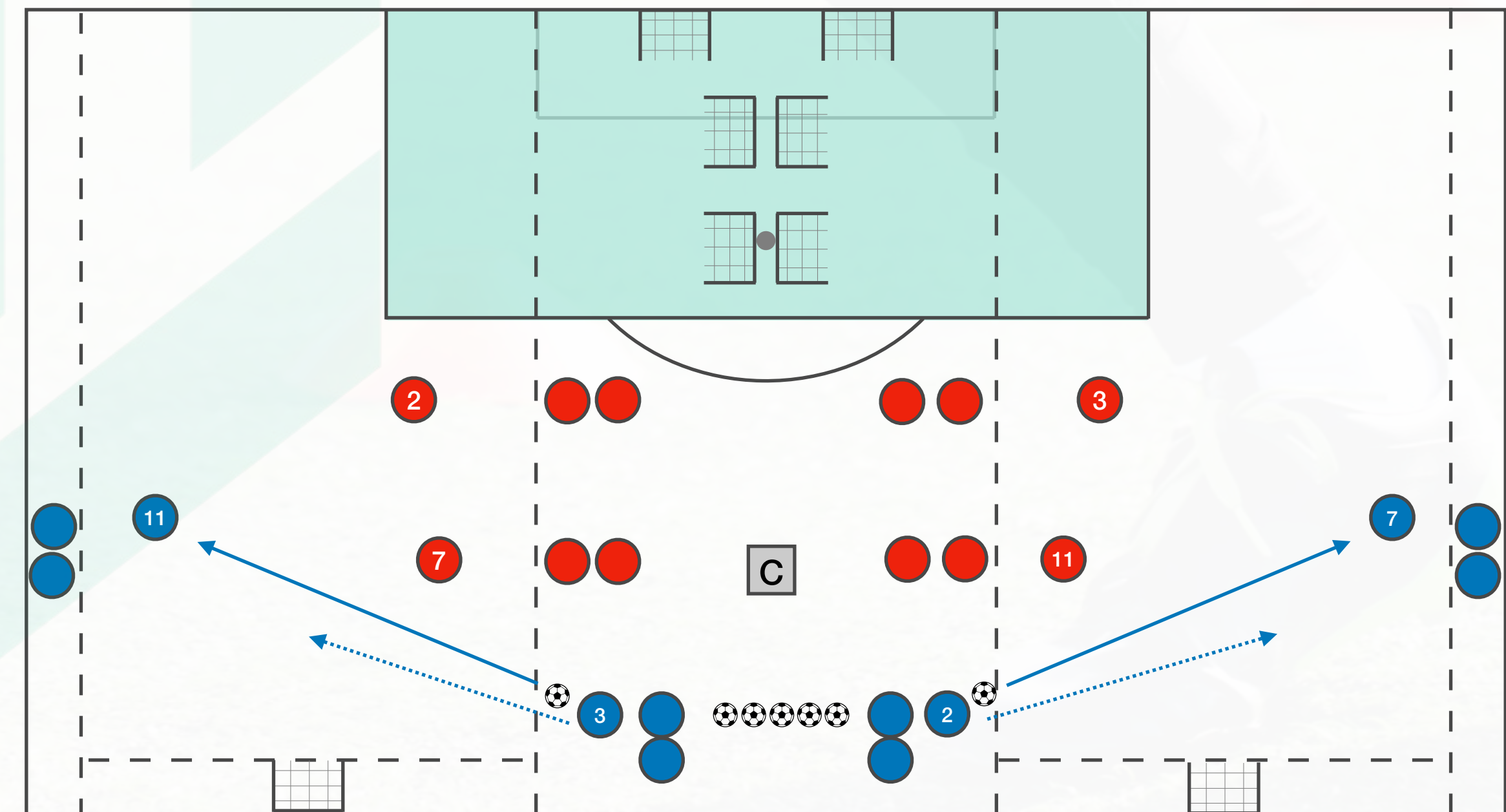
Objective 1: An improved awareness of movements that can be used to get into the box using wide 2v2 situations

Objective 2: An improved execution of dribbling, killer passes, crossing, and finishing

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates to develop cohesive actions in wide areas

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using both wide areas of half a full pitch, and a central area where the game starts from
- Mini-goals represent bottom corners of the goal, crosses, and cut backs
- Mini-goals are also placed at the opposite end as transition goals for the defenders
- Players are divided into two teams. Two players from each team attack/defend on each side at one time
- The attacking team has to get into their side of the penalty area to cross/score in the mini-goals
- The defending team has to stop the attacking team from getting into the penalty area and scoring
- If the defending team can regain the ball, they can then attack the small mini-goal before the halfway line
- E.g. the red team start with 2 players on each side, one playing as a full back, and one as a winger
- The blue team also start with 2 players on each side, one full back and one winger
- The blue full back plays to the winger, then joins the winger to attack the 2 red defenders.
- If they get into the penalty area and score, they get one point
- If the red team regain the ball and score in the goal they get one point
- If either team get a point, or the ball goes out of play, the game starts again from the next full back in line
- The next winger in line waits on the side of the pitch for the next full back to play the pass to them
- The next 2v2 starts and the same process follows. After a time limit, attackers and defenders can swap



048

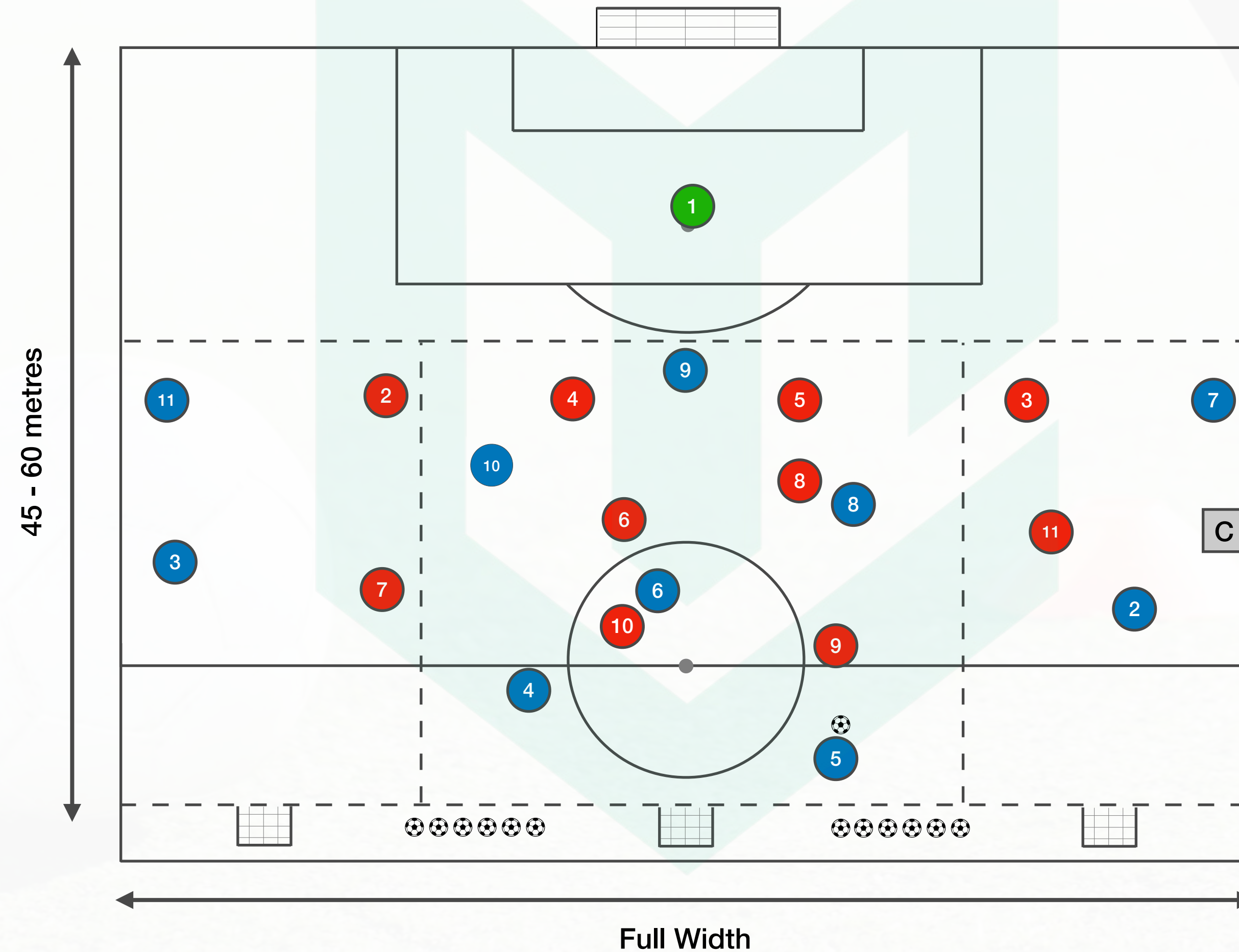
A **picture practice** to develop player's ability to beat the block in both wide and central areas

19+

11+

4/5

2-5 x
8-12
mins





Wing Centre Wing

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

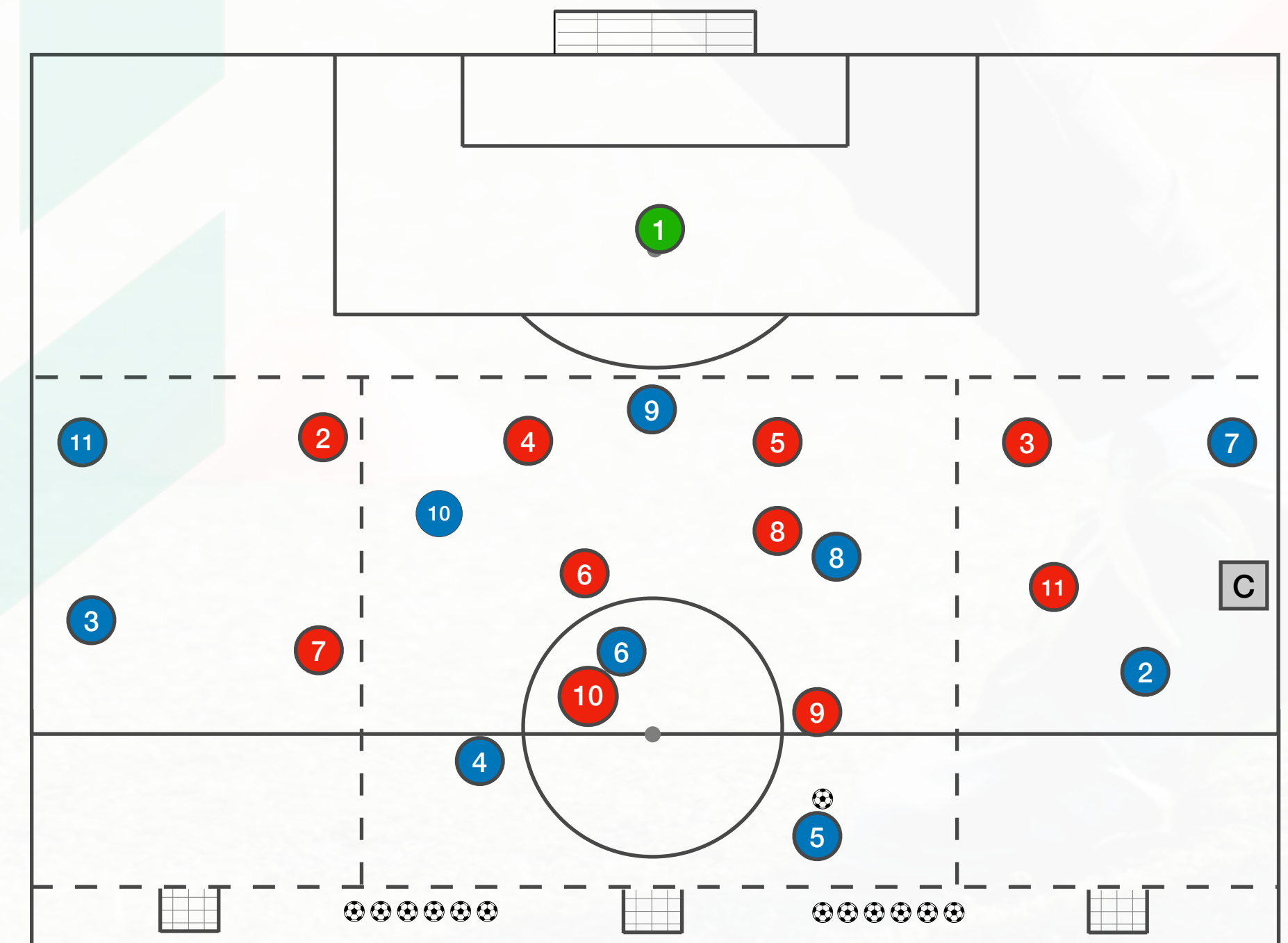
Objective 1: An improved understanding of different pictures that can be used to beat the block in both wide and central areas

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and speed of action in 3v2 situations to utilise cohesive superiority

Objective 3: An improved technical execution of key 3v2 actions in wide areas

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using over half a pitch, but can be adjusted based on space available
- There are two teams set up in 11v11, with the pitch divided into 3 vertical channels, left side, right side, centre
- The channels only stretch as far as to 5-10 metres outside of the penalty area
- In each channel, there is a mini goal for the defending team to attack after regaining the ball
- The opposition can be set up in relation to specific objectives the attacking team need to achieve
- The channels are references for where the attack must be created from
- E.g. when the ball starts in the middle channel, the attack must be created from there.
- This meaning, the pass which lands in the end zone must come from the middle channel
- In the end zone, the full width can be used
- Players can either be restricted into their zones until that pass is played, or all players can be free.
- The game starts with the centre back taking a ball from next to the mini-goals, and building an attack
- The blue team attempt to retain possession, create and score
- The defending team attempts to regain and counter
- The coaching element is in the strategical detail used in each channel to successfully create and score
- If the ball goes out of play, the ball can start again with the attacking team to maximise repetitions





TOPIC 5: FINAL THIRD ATTACKING

Practices to develop players & teams ability to create and finish chances when in the final third





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Coaching Points: Final Third Attacking

In Possession Coaching Points	Explanation
Action Efficiency	Using every touch and action with a specific purpose, e.g. not taking 3 touches when 2 is more effective
Aerial Duels to Score and Assist	Winning aerial duels from crosses into the box to create and score
Anticipation of Rebounds	Staying alert for rebounds from the posts, the goalkeeper, as well as deflections from players
Awareness of Critical Zones	Searching for critical zones that increase the probability of creating and scoring, e.g. assist zones or half spaces
Awareness of Opponent Goalkeeper Profile	Awareness of the opponent goalkeepers strengths and weaknesses, e.g. struggles to come for crosses
Box Movements	Creating space in the box to receive the ball and create/finish chances
Communication	Using body language or vocal communication to create cohesion in movements and actions
Double Movements	Using double actions to create space, e.g. moving away from the ball to quickly move closer to receive
Dribbling to Inviting a Challenge	Using a dribble to invite an opponent to commit to a challenge, to either be eliminated or create a foul
Finishing Detail	Detail in shooting actions to increase the probability of scoring, e.g. disguise, quiet eye, shot type
Killer Passes	Ground passes to exploit the space in behind the opponents defensive line
Preparation to Counter Press	The team structure, in particular the rest defence, to enable an efficient counter press after losing possession
Timing of Movements	Timing movements to best exploit the space, and stay onside if the runs are in behind
Timing of Chance Creation	Identifying the best time to penetrate based on the situation, including game state, team objectives etc.
Winning Fouls	Using contact with the opponent to entice challenges and win fouls

In Possession Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Central Overloads	Creating overloads in the centre of the pitch, e.g. 3v2's, 4v3's etc.
Combination Play	Players combining with quick passing and/or dribbling to eliminate opposition players
Cross Variety	Awareness of a variety of crosses to chose the most suitable option for the specific scenario
Direct Switch of Play	A direct pass to the opposite side of the pitch to create advantages which help chance creation
Emergency Solutions	In difficult situations, using a solution to gain an advantage, e.g. kicking the ball off the opponent for a corner
Finding the Playmaker	Identifying the best player to break down the opponents structure, and consciously attempting to pass to them
Hitting the Target Player	Using a direct pass or cross to a target player to create and/or score
Long Shots	When spaces behind the opponent are limited, the use of long shots may be a suitable option to score
Playing the Dodge	Playing over the remaining opponent outfield structure into the space for a runner to receive
Playing Through	Playing through gaps in the opponent's structure between players
Rotations	Players swapping positioning and roles to lose markers and create space
Third Player Movements	Movements to anticipate the next pass and prepare to exploit space for a second pass
Wide Overloads	Creating overloads in wide areas of the pitch e.g. 2v1s, 3v2s, 4v3s etc.



Attacking Crossing Stations

A **technical pattern practice** to develop a variety of crossing and finishing techniques

049

Numbers

10+

Age

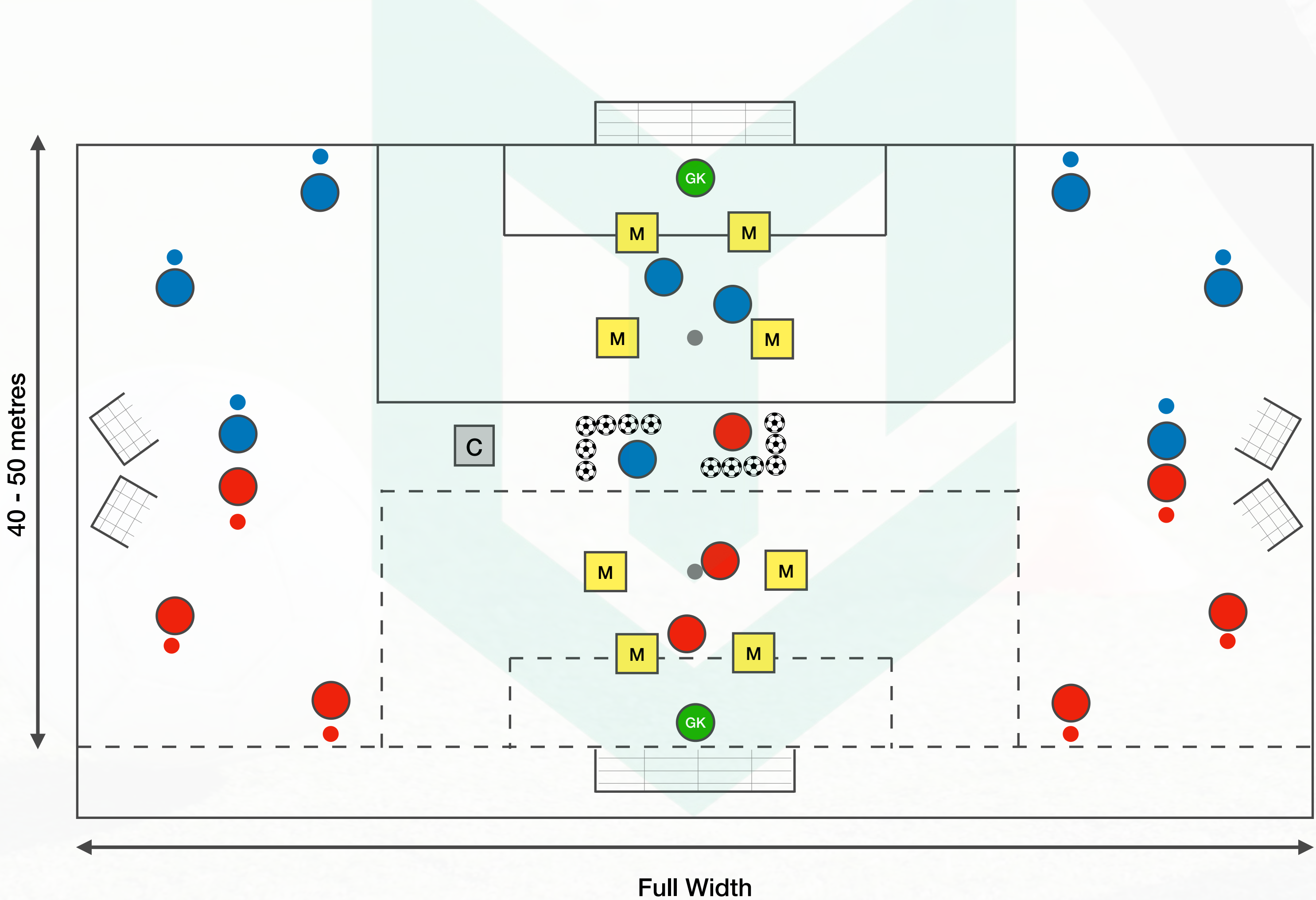
13+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

6
actions x
8-15
rounds





Attacking Crossing Stations

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

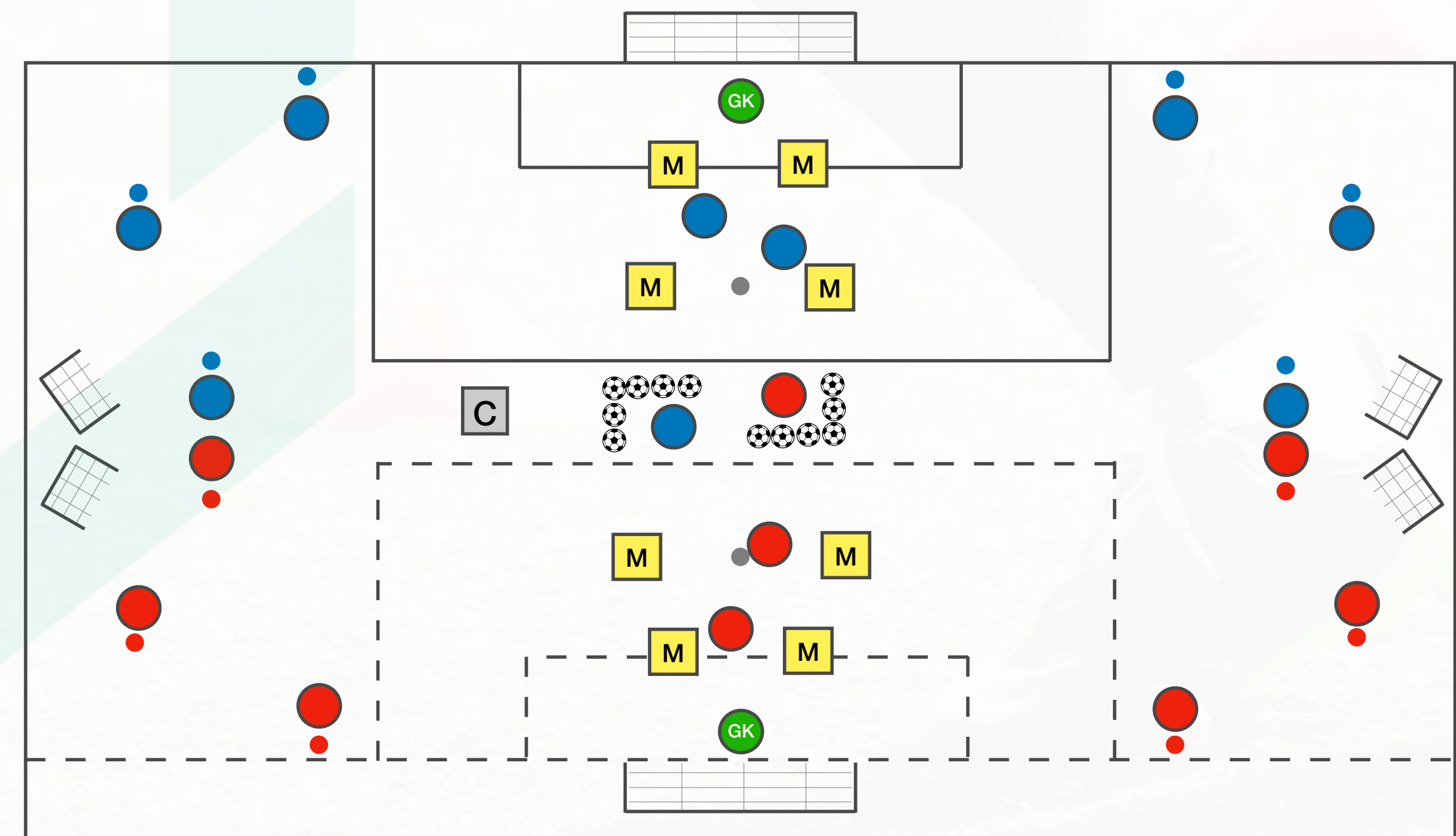
Objective 1: An improved anticipation of the different types of crosses from different locations in the final third

Objective 2: An improved execution of crosses from specific locations on the pitch

Objective 3: An improved execution of movement, finishing, and heading from inside the box

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 2 18 yard boxes, with a minimum 5 metre gap in between
- 2 mini-goals on the corners of the penalty areas are used as throw targets for goalkeepers after catching the ball
- 4 Mannequins in each box represent the positions defenders may take to deal with crosses
- There are 6 stations on the sides of each penalty area, 3 on the left and 3 on the right
- 1 player starts at each station ready to cross, with 2 players in the penalty area ready to attack the crosses
- 1 feeder starts on the edge of each penalty area, providing passes to the crossers
- The game starts with a pass from the feeder, to one crosser, who then delivers a cross for the attackers
- As soon as the cross has been delivered and attacked, the next pass is played to another crosser
- Each crosser plays one cross each per round, with the attackers counting their goals
- If the goalkeeper catches a cross or shot, they can throw into the mini goals to take a point from the attackers
- When using two penalty areas with two teams, the teams can compete against each other for the most goals
- After each round, players can rotate positions, so the attackers in the box swap with the crossing players
-



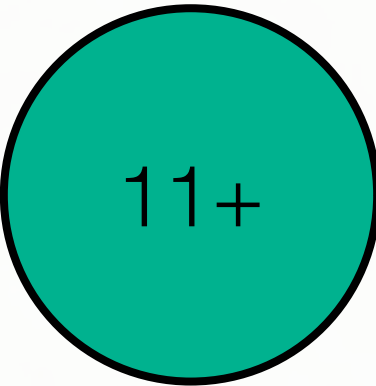


050

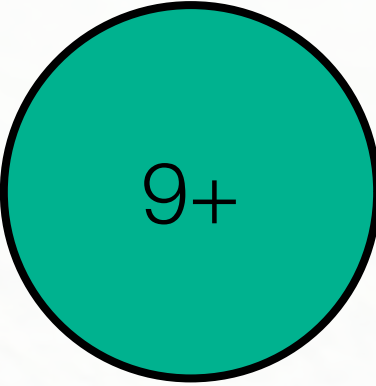
Breakout Finishing

A **free possession practice** to develop finishing under pressure in 1vGK situations

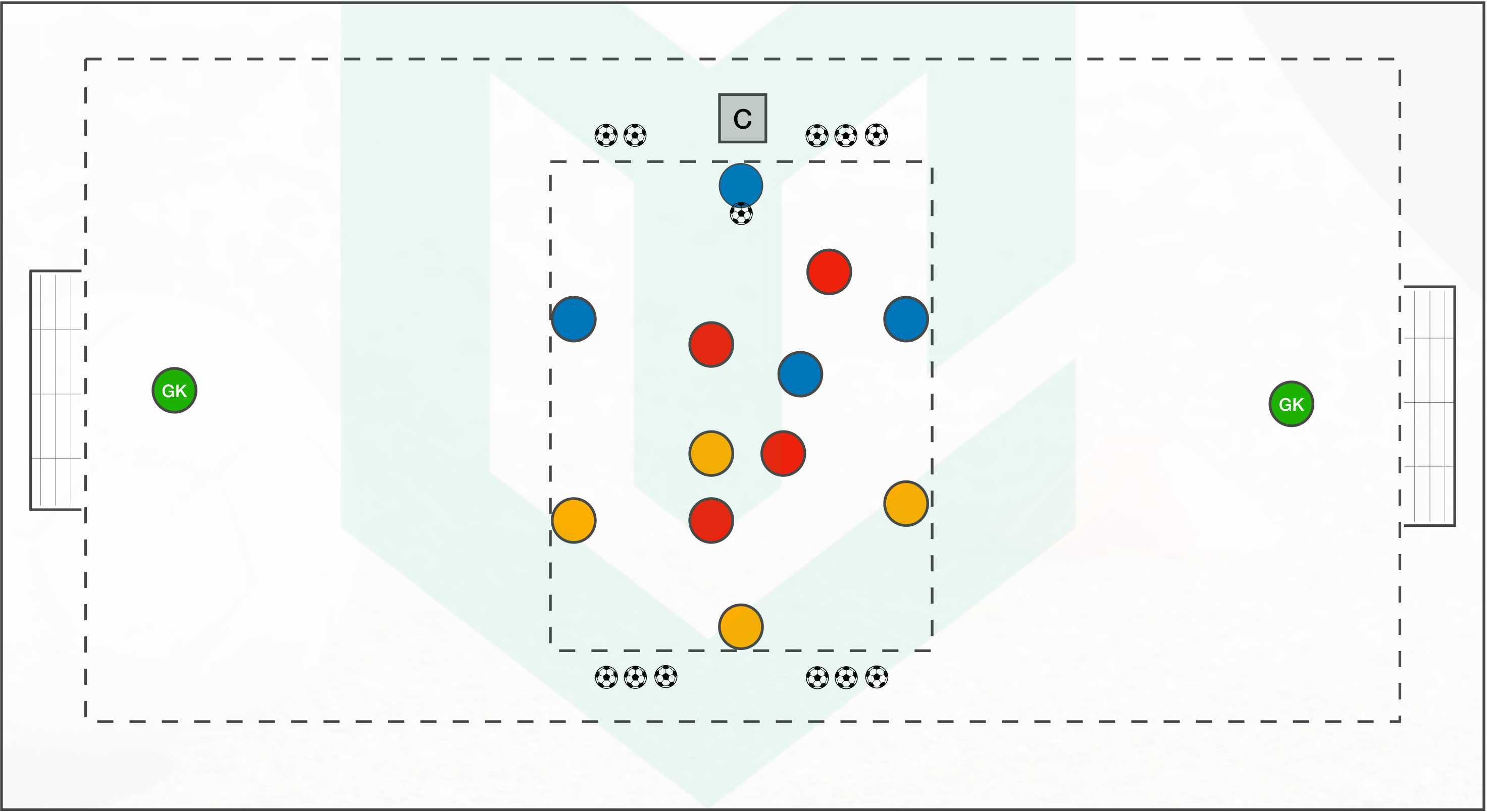
Numbers



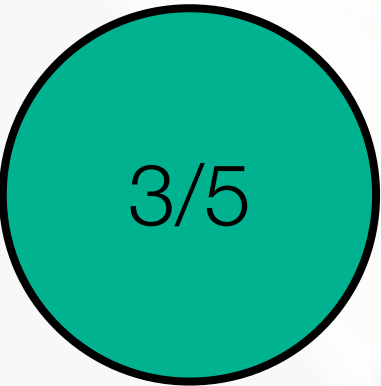
Age



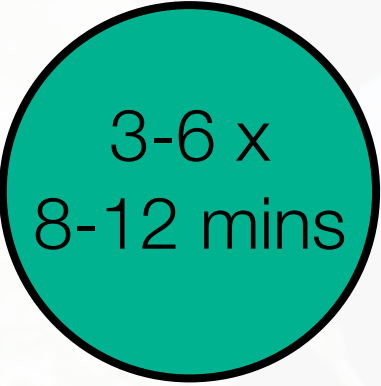
15 - 25 metres



Difficulty



Time Length





Breakout Finishing

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

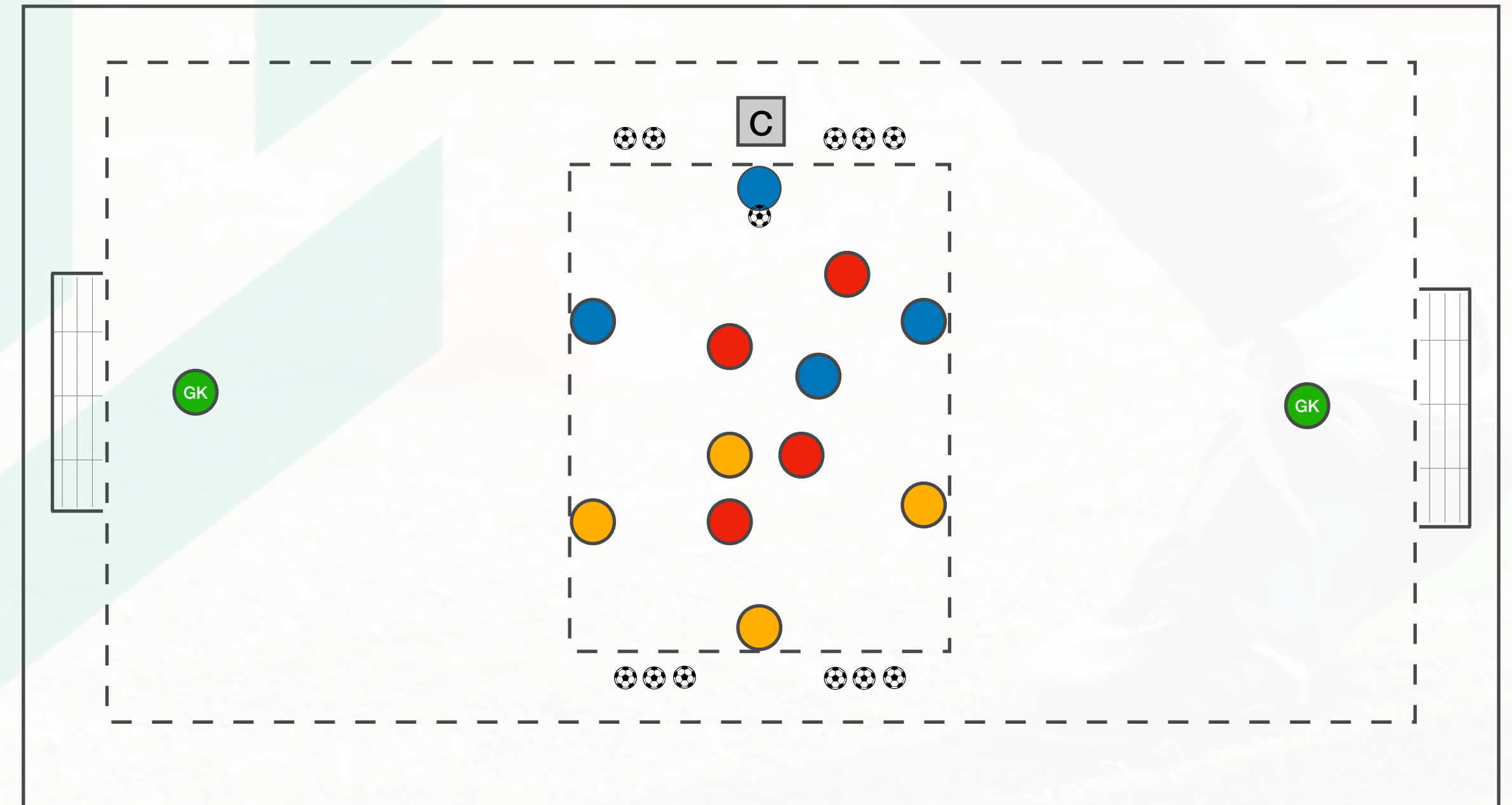
Objective 1: An increased composure in 1vGK situations when there is pressure from behind

Objective 2: An improved execution of dribbling, running with the ball, and finishing

Objective 3: An improved weight of pass to create 1vGK situations in the final third

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid with a rondo grid in the centre
- 2 full-sized goals are used with a goalkeeper in each goal
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 4 players
- 2 teams start as possession teams, and 1 team starts as a pressing team
- The game starts as an 8v4 rondo in the central grid
- Once the possession team get to 6 passes, they can play a through pass for the 1vGK finish
- Players can attack either goal
- 1 pressing player can chase the possession player when attempting to finish the chance
- If the possession player scores, both possession teams get 1 point
- As soon as a pass has been played outside of the grid, another pass can come straight in
- If the pressing team regain the ball, they can directly attack either goal with a pass/dribble
- If the pressing team score, they can rotate with the possession team who turned the ball over
- If a team breaks out to score, and does not score, they become/continue as the pressing team
- The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of the time limit



051

A **picture practice** to develop a variety of central attacking attributes including 1v1's and finishing





Channel Domination

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

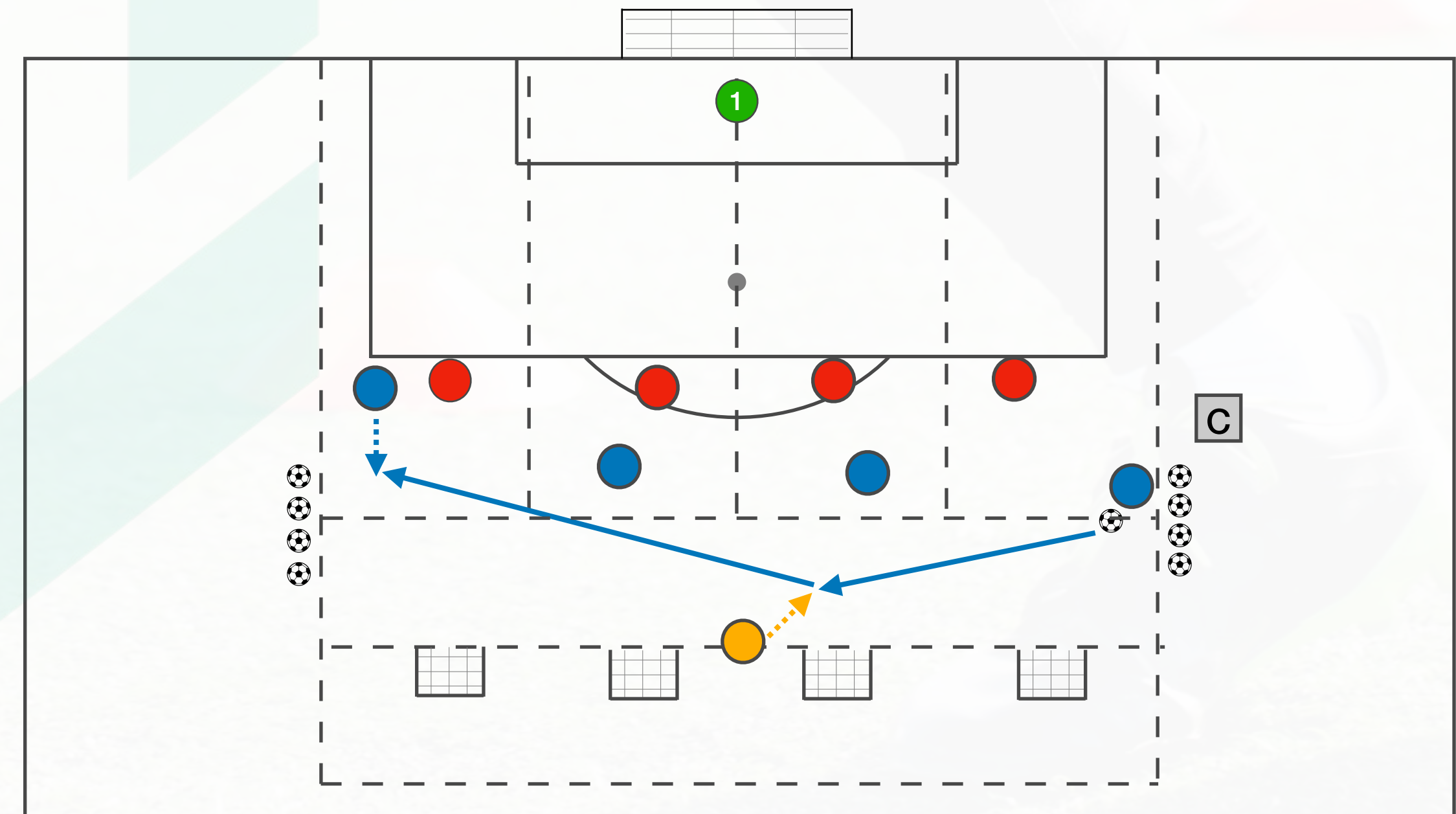
Objective 1: An improved execution of 1v1 actions to beat an opposition defender

Objective 2: An increased familiarity with a variety of movements and actions to create and score

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates regarding movements and actions around the box

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using the penalty area plus extra metres in height and width
- The game can be played with 4 restrictive channels, before progressing to, 2 channels, then no channels
- Channel 1 is on the left, then channel 2 and 3 in the middle, then channel 4 is on the right side
- The joker can move freely in the box and play any type of pass to help the attacking team have success
- There are 4 mini-goals for transition moments which the defending team can score in after regaining the ball
- The game starts with the attacking player in channel 4 playing to the joker into the space they move into
- The joker plays to channel 1, based on the attackers movement. Attackers can receive anywhere in their channel
- The attacker has to beat the opponent and cross/score or simply cross/score if they receive in the space behind
- A 4-8 second time limit can be used for the attackers to score
- If the defender wins the ball, they attack the mini-goal and score. If successful, they then become the attacker
- The joker then receives from attacker in channel 4, but now plays to the attacker in channel 2 (space/feet)
- After a set time/repetitions, the attackers and defenders can swap, and the joker can also rotate
- The key rule to decide on, is whether the attackers can combine before beating an opponent
- Locking attackers in channels and stopping combination play, encourages more 1v1 actions





Crosses Galore

A **technical pattern practice** to develop crossing, box movements, and finishing

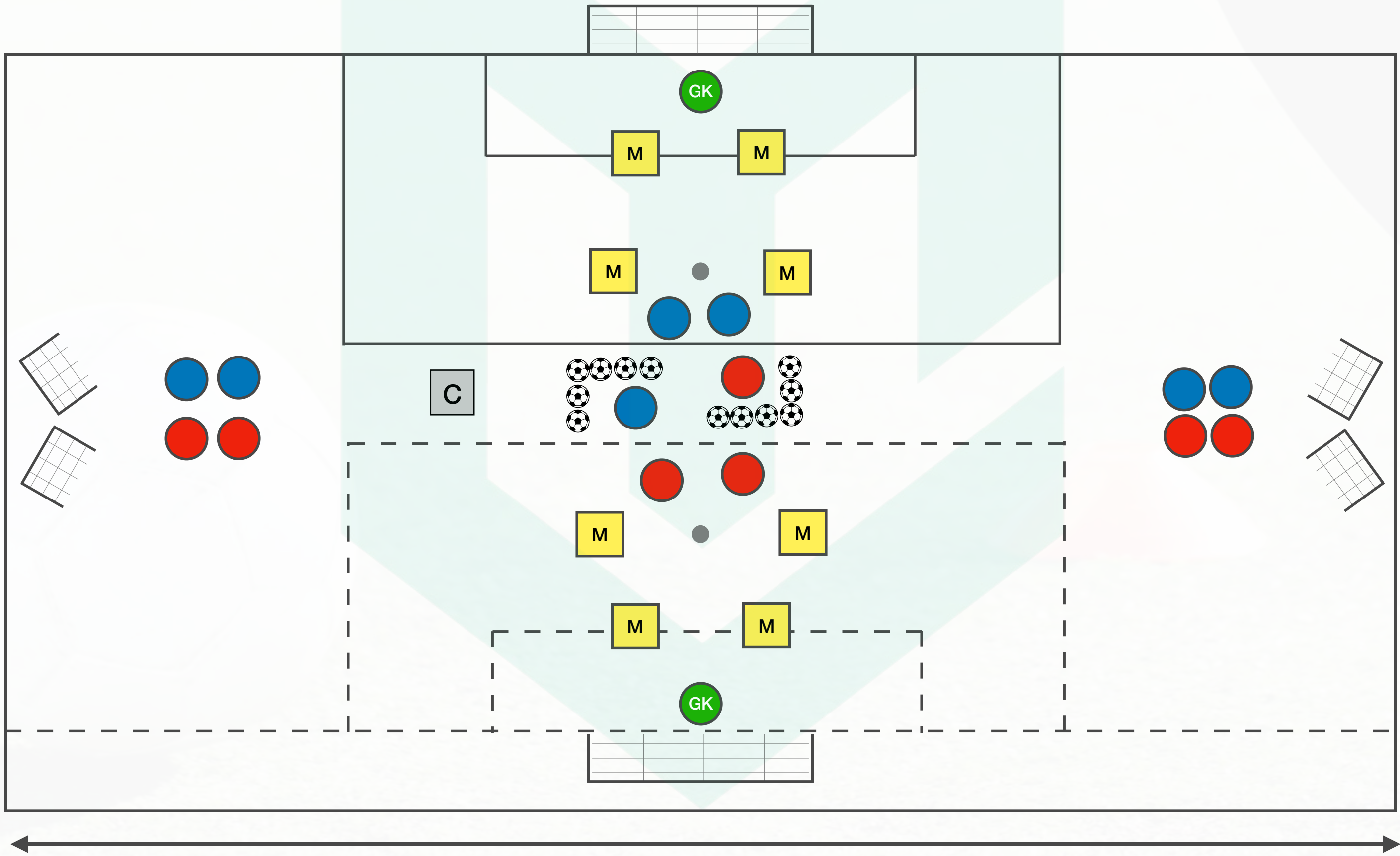
Numbers

8+

Age

13+

35 - 45 metres

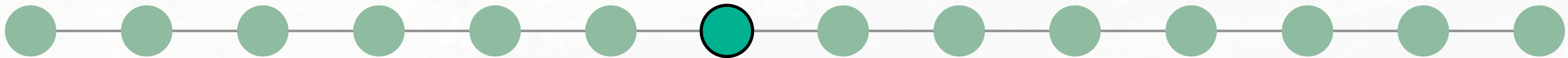


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

4 actions
x 8-15
rounds





053

Direct to Goal

A **horizontal wave practice** to develop final third techniques, pictures, and patterns across a variety of situations

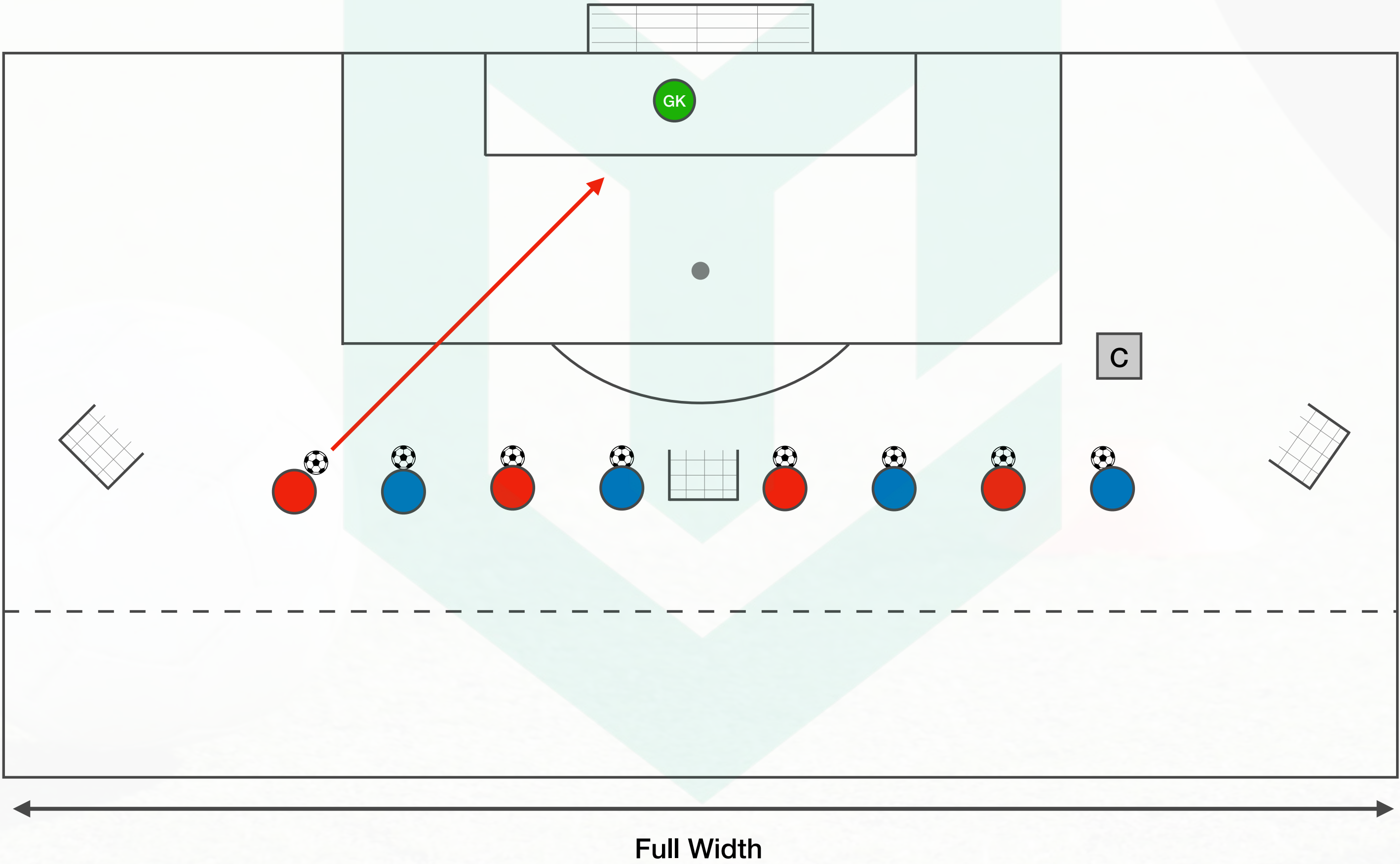
Numbers

9+

Age

11+

25 - 40 metres



Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

8 actions
x 6-12
rounds





054

Dynamic 3's

A **picture practice** to develop cohesion between 3 attacking players to create and score

Numbers

13+

Age

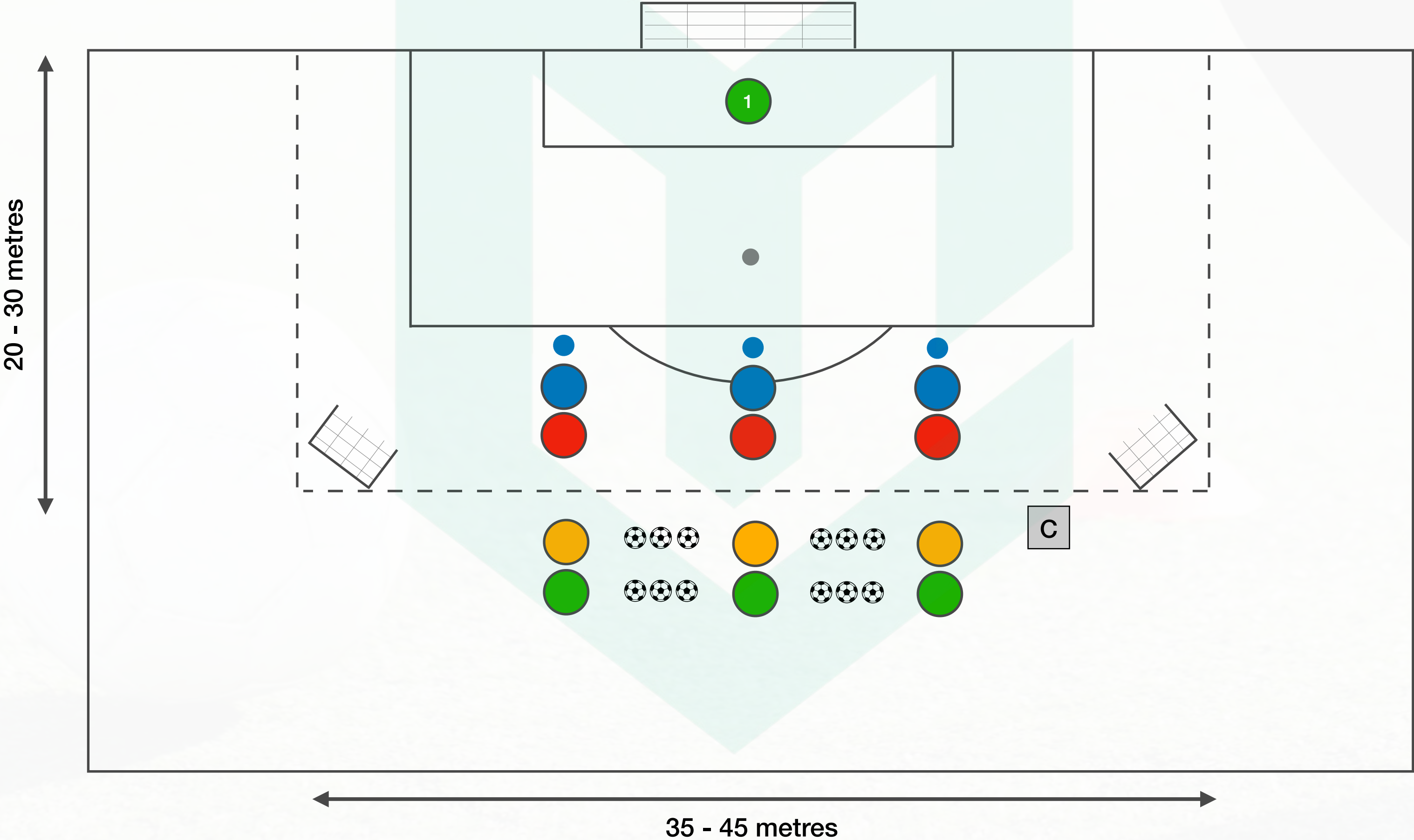
11+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-8 x 4-6 mins





Dynamic 3's

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

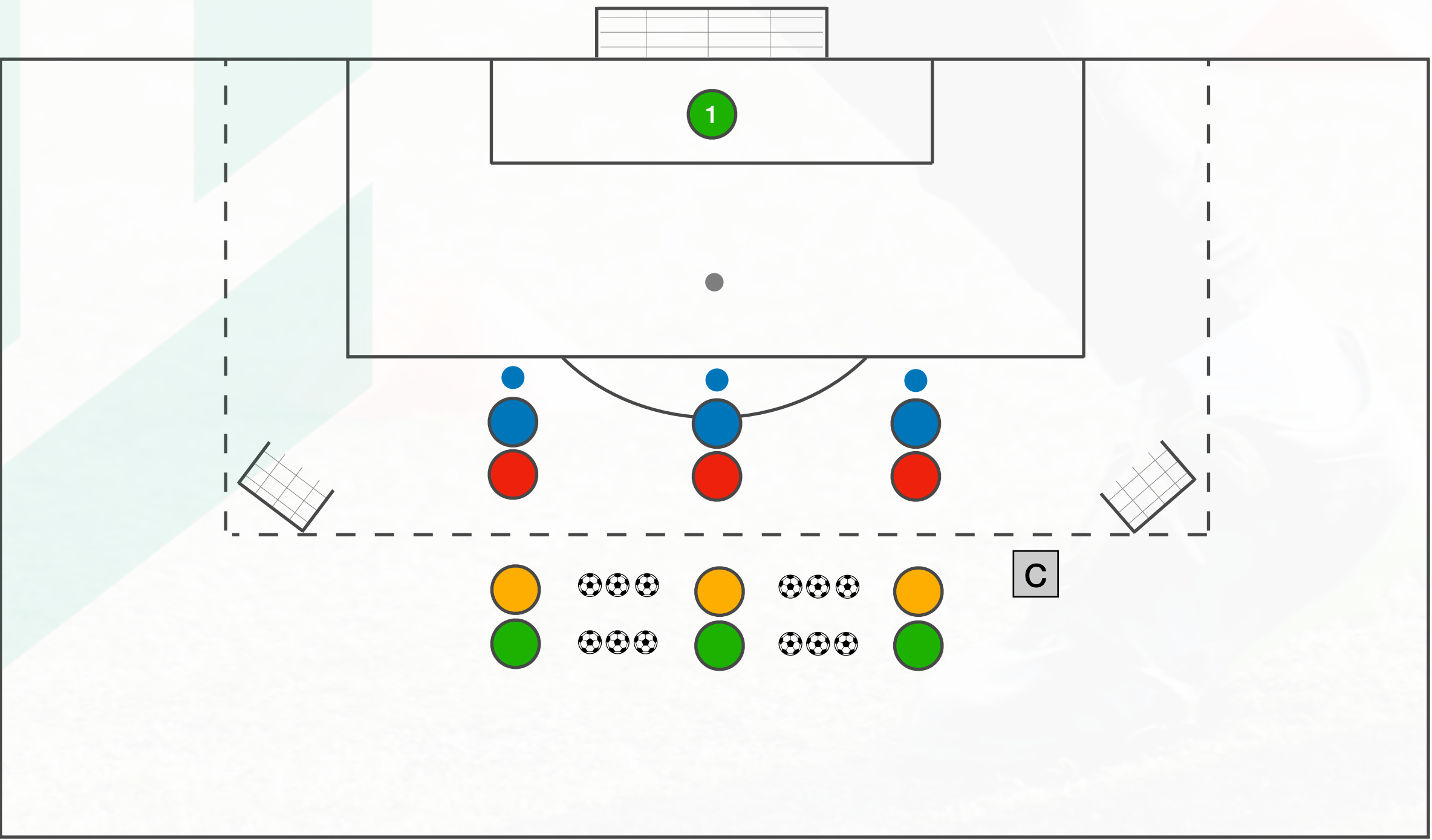
Objective 1: An improved understanding of different movements that can be used to exploit final third 3v3 situations

Objective 2: An improved execution of killer passes, crosses, and finishing in the box

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates to develop coordinated actions in the final third

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 1 penalty area, plus 5 metres on each side and 10 metres on top
- 2 mini-goals are placed in the corners of the grid, as target goals for the transition moments
- Players are divided into 4 teams of 3 players, with 1 goalkeeper
- The game starts with 2 teams of 3 competing against each other
- 1 team is defending the full-sized goal, 1 team is attacking the full-sized goal
- The team defending the full-sized goal, should score in the mini-goals if they regain the ball
- The attacking team receive a pass from a team waiting in line, then attack the defending team
- If the attacking team score they get 1 point
- After they score, the ball goes out of play, or the time runs out, the attacking team become defenders
- The defending team then join the back of the line
- If the defending team regain and score, they defend again and the attacking team join the back of the line
- Each action lasts 15 seconds, meaning each team should be involved every minute
- The winning team, is the team at the end of the practice with the most points



055

A **picture practice** to develop final third actions in a 5v5 situation





Final Third Champions

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

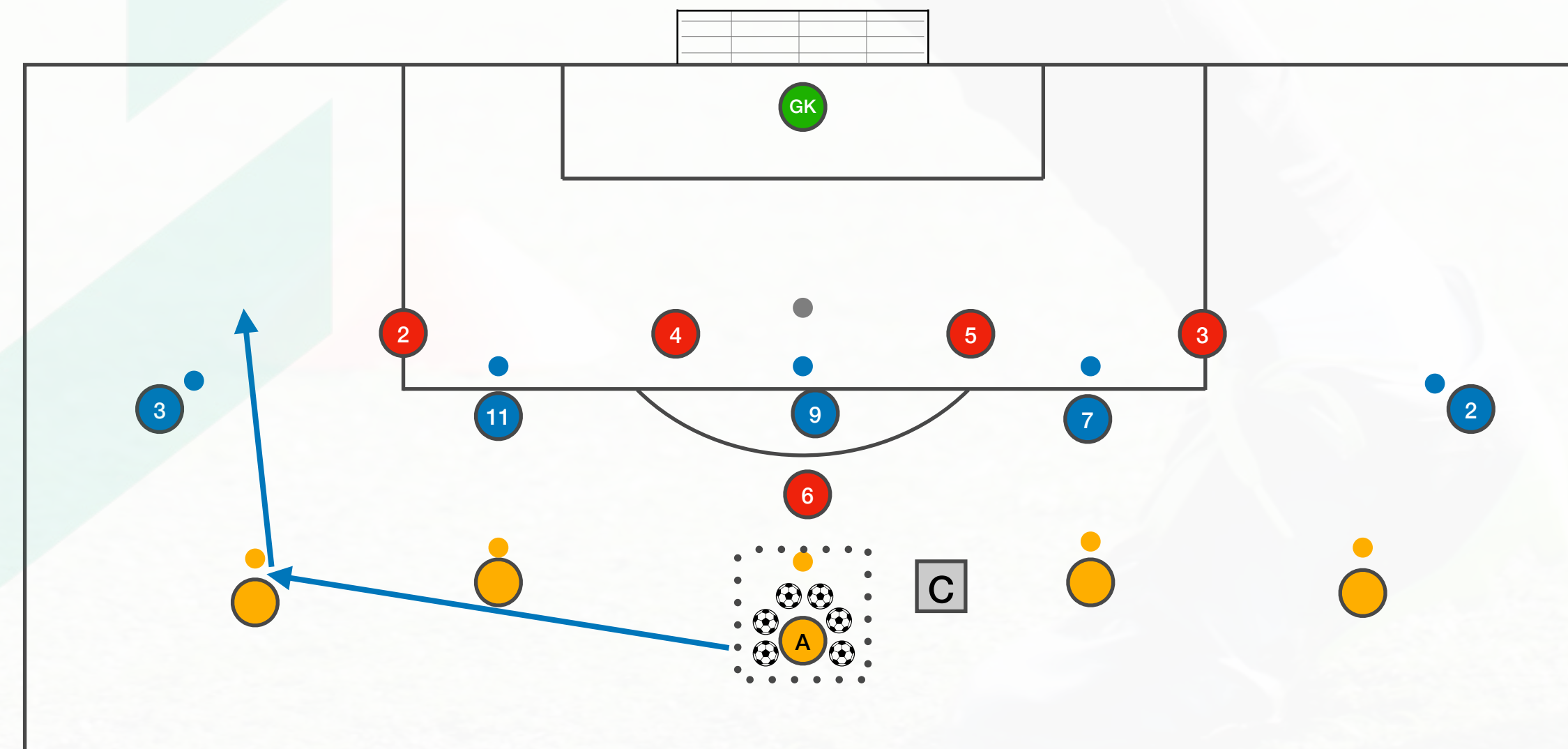
Objective 1: An improved anticipation and prediction of final third actions such as crosses and rebounds

Objective 2: An improved execution of final third technical actions, including crossing and finishing

Objective 3: An improved cohesion between players based on identifying space to exploit

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 10 metres under half a pitch, but can be adjusted or created based on space available
- There are 3 teams of 5 players, plus 1 full-sized goal with a goalkeeper. A target zone is added surrounding the Feeder A position.
- The 3 teams all start with different roles. One team start as feeders, one team start as attackers, and one team start as defenders.
- The attacking and feeding team have to rotate, however the defending team rotating is optional
- The game starts with feeder A who passes to any other feeder, which triggers movements from the attackers
- The movements of the attackers should be in relation to the type and selection of pass from Feeder A
- The defenders should react to the movements, keeping their actions as match realistic as possible
- As the attackers are adjusting their position, the feeder receiving the ball can choose any pass to play
- The pass they select should be based on the movements of the attackers, the defenders, and space available
- Once the attackers receive the ball, their job is to then score against the defenders. They have 15 seconds to do this
- If the attacking team score or have a shot on target, they adjust to receive a second ball from the feeders
- If the defenders regain the ball, they play a pass into the target box around Feeder A. They have 5 seconds to do this
- If they are successful with this, the attacking team become feeders and feeders become the attacking team
- Time between each action should be short, as soon as a shot is taken, feeder A should play the next pass
- After the set repetitions (e.g. 5-8) the feeders swap with the attackers
- The winning team is the team to score the most goals after a set number of rounds

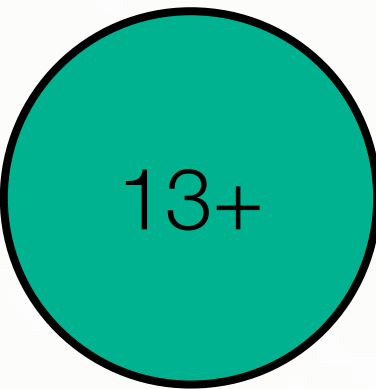




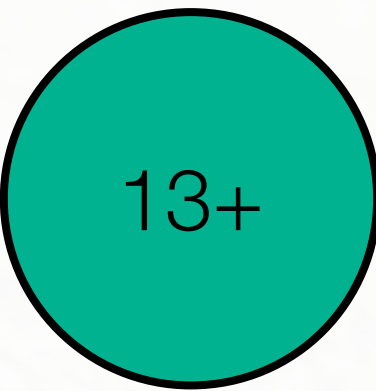
Final Third Patterns

A **tactical pattern practice** to introduce and develop final third patterns and pictures among the players and team

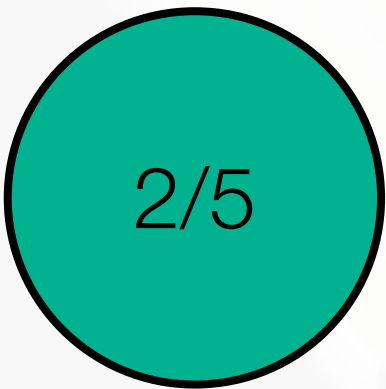
Numbers



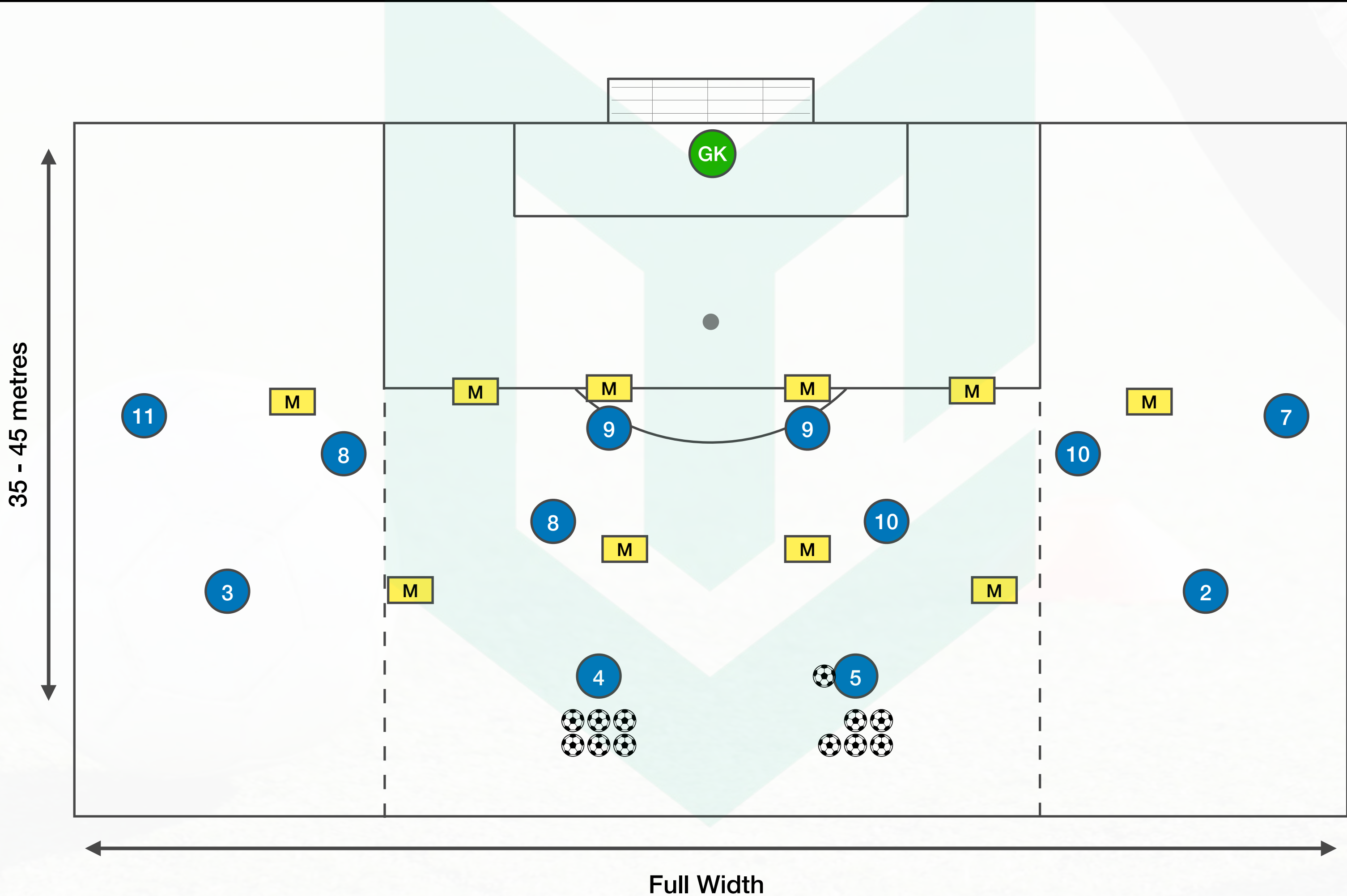
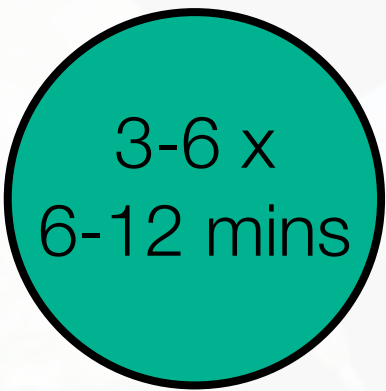
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Final Third Patterns

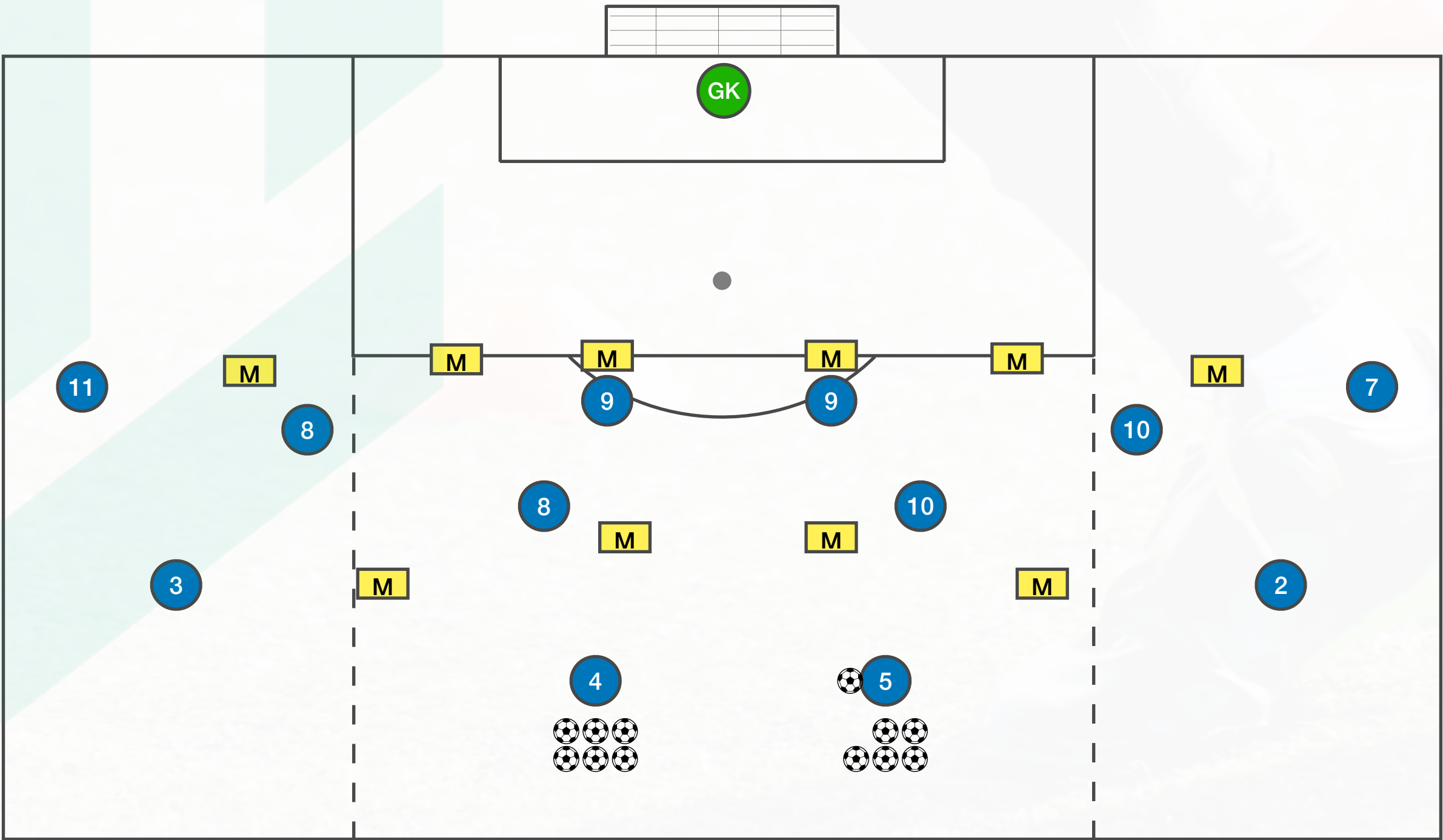
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An improved execution of passing and receiving in wide and central areas
- Objective 2:** An increased awareness of different patterns to create chances in the final third
- Objective 3:** An increased cohesion between attacking players in the final third

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using just over the final third of the pitch, divided into 3 channels
- The 3 channels are a left wing channel, central channel, and right wing channel
- 10 mannequins are used to represent an opponents structure for each channel
- E.g. when the ball is on the left, the closest 4 mannequins represent positions of a back 4
- When the ball is central, the 4 central mannequins represent an opponents back 4
- 12 players are used, with 3 on the right side, 3 on the left side, and 6 in the centre
- The deepest 2 players in the centre start the practice
- The two 9's rotate attacks, one at a time
- The practice starts by the 5 and 4 combining then passing to one of the channels
- The players in the channel then combine to create a chance to cross or score
- After the attack has finished, the 4 and 5 combine again to then pass to another channel
- The practice finishes after a set time limit, or number of attacks

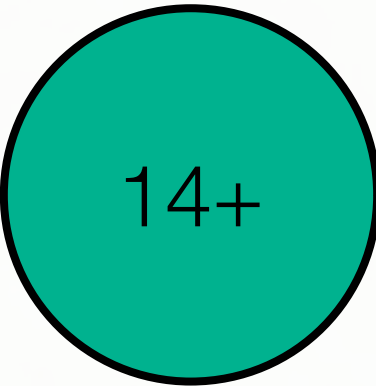




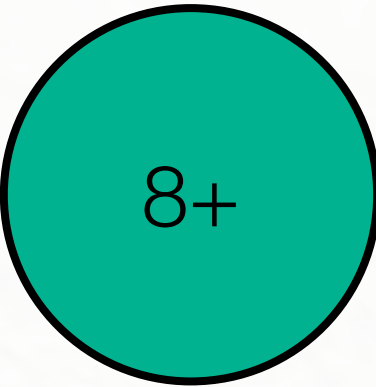
Finishers vs Finishers

A **team building game** to build a positive environment while working on inside foot finishing

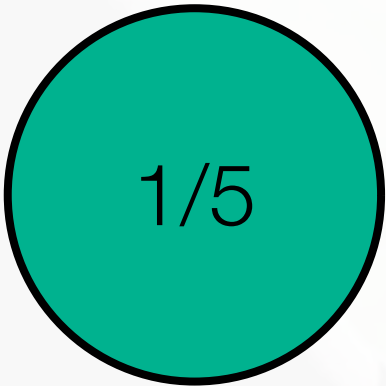
Numbers



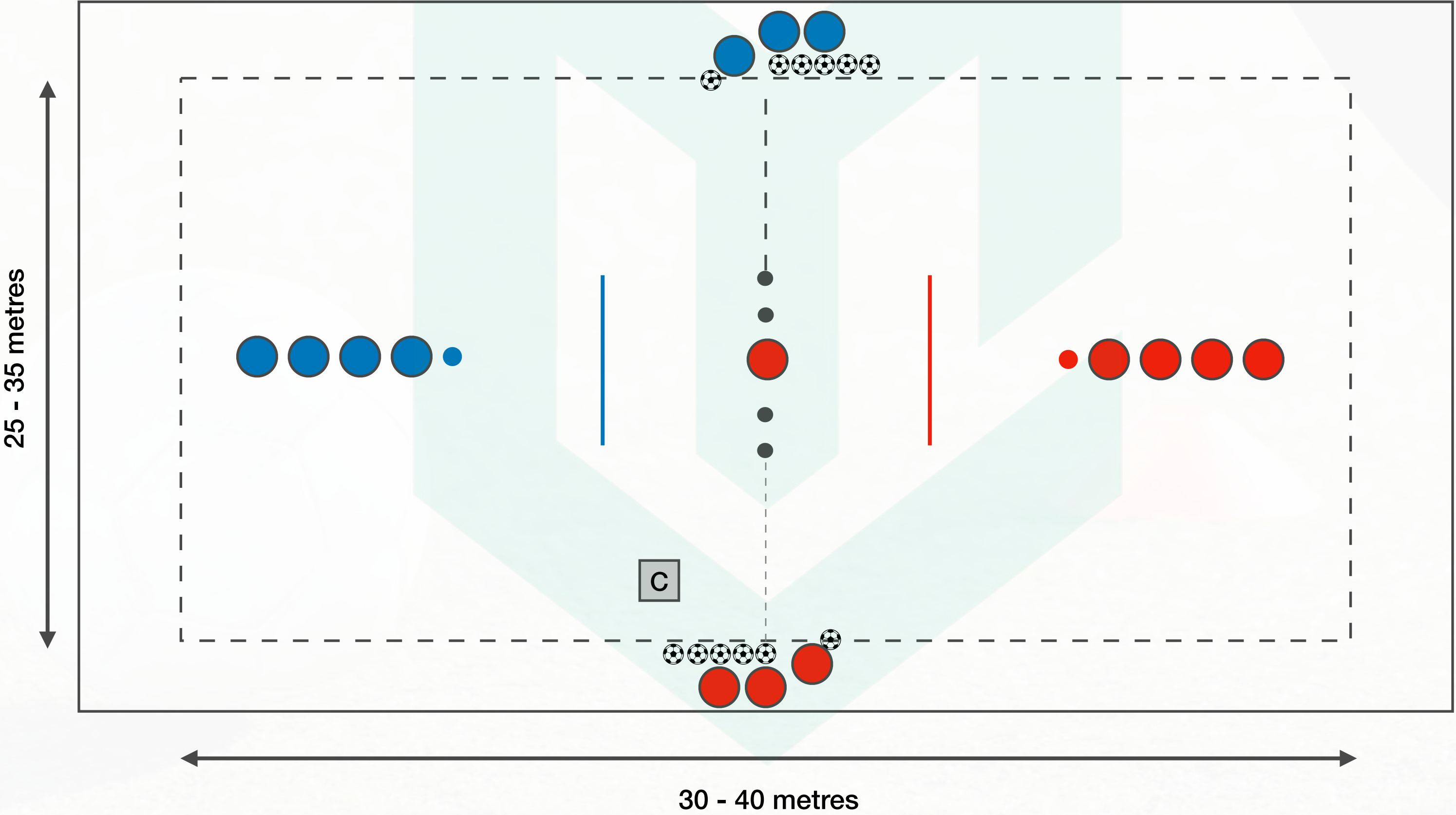
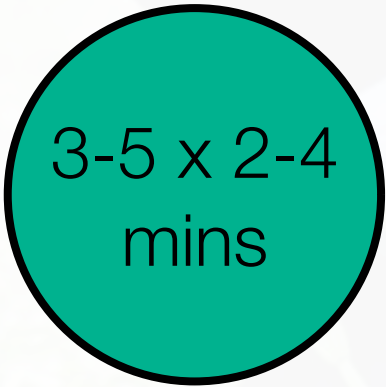
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Finishers vs Finishers

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

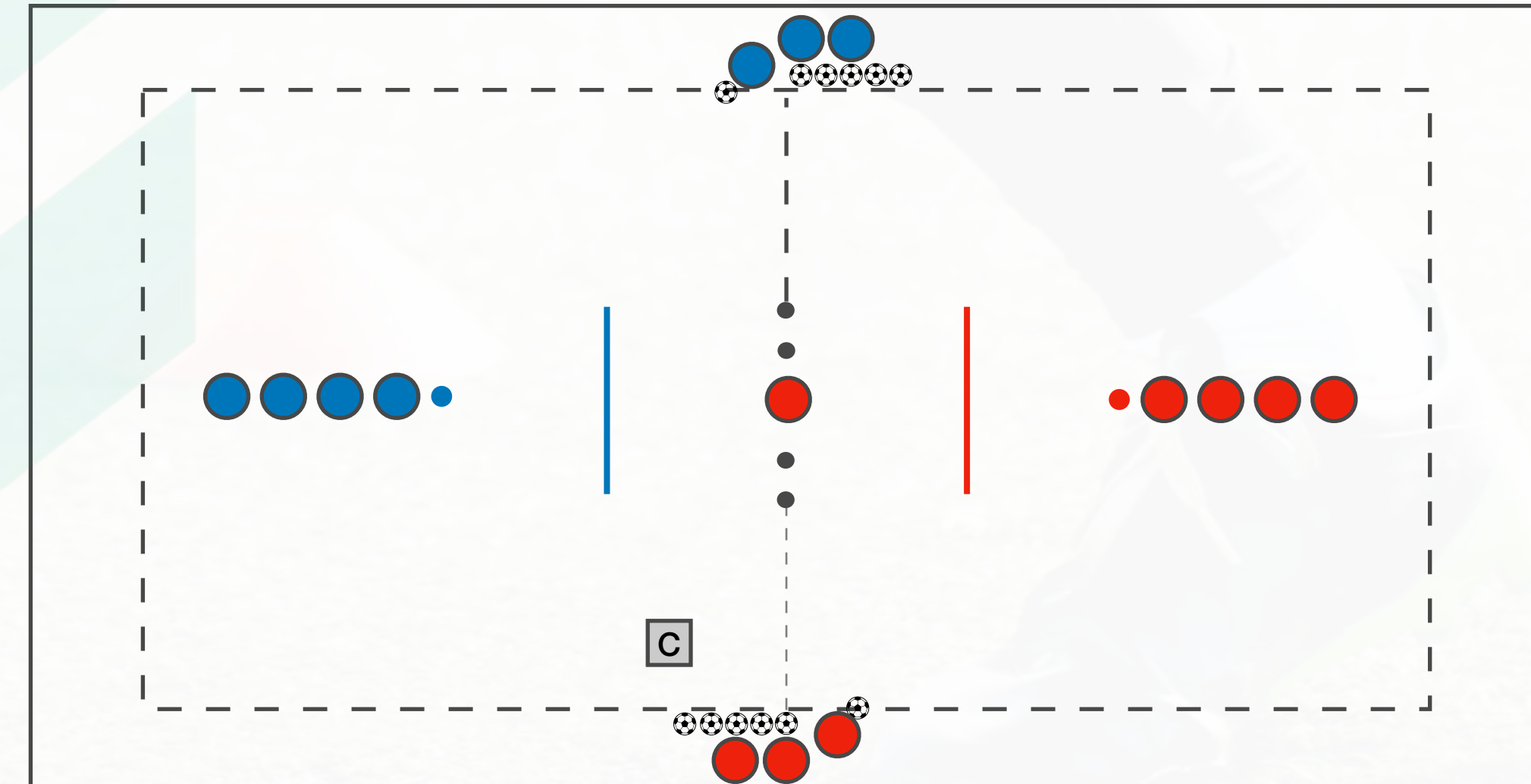
Objective 1: An improved competitive and positive feeling regarding the team

Objective 2: An improved execution of side foot finishing into bottom corners

Objective 3: An improved variety and timing of movements to finish in the box

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using one large grid, divided into two halves, with a gap in the centre of the halfway line representing a full sized goal
- The goal can be marked with poles, and the corners of the goals can also be marked with poles
- Corners of the goals represent both near and far post, and should be small enough to make it challenging, but big enough to allow success
- Lines should be marked both sides of the goal to represent the distance they must score from
- There are no goalkeepers in the goals, outfield players will be used as goalkeepers throughout the practice
- For this reason, all finishes should be with the inside/outside of the foot and should be placed into the corners
- Finishes must also be from behind the marked line
- Two teams are needed, with at least 6 players on each team
- One player of one team starts in the goal. All other players are either in a crossing line on the side, or a central finishing line
- The game starts with the team without the player in the goal, crossing on the floor, for a player to run and finish in the corners of the goal.
- The player in the goal can run through the middle of the goal, then block one of the corners to make it difficult for the attacker
- Once a player has an attempt on goal, whether they score or miss, they then run into the goal to become a goalkeeper
- The player who crossed the ball then joins the finishing line. The player who was the goalkeeper then joins the crossing line
- This flow then continues until a time limit or score target is reached. Goals only count when they go through the poles in the corners.
- When players are goalkeepers, they can use their hands and/or feet. Players continually rotate so everyone is finishing, crossing, and in goal



058

A **wave practice** to create attacking 2v1 situations and improve creation and finishing in the final third





Finishing 2v1's

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

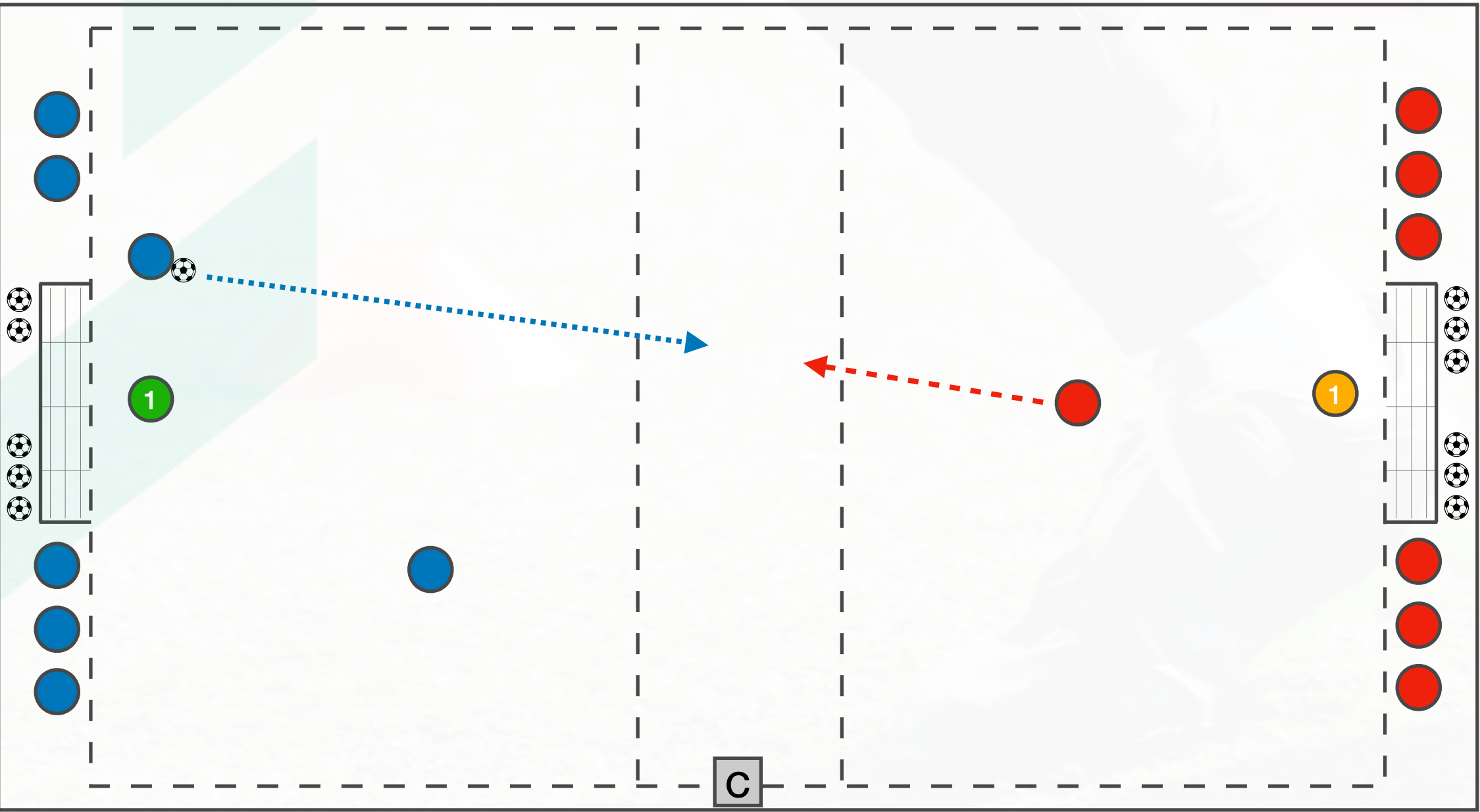
Objective 1: An increased awareness of methods to best exploit 2v1 situations

Objective 2: An improved decision making process after 2v1 situations have been created

Objective 3: An improved execution of dribbling, 1v1's, passing, and finishing

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid with 2 penalty areas and a narrow gap in between
- Players can be divided into two teams. Two players from one team start on the pitch, against 1 from the other team
- E.g. the blue team starts attacking with 2 players against 1 player from the red team
- Their objective is to score in the opposite goal, and the red player's objective is to limit chance quality or regain
- If the red player regains the ball, they go and attack the opposite goal to try and score
- If the blue team attack or the ball goes out of play during their attack, one blue player leaves the pitch
- The blue player that leaves should be the player who has been on the pitch the longest
- On the first round, as both blue players start on the pitch, the player who dribbled on should stay on the pitch
- As soon as the blue attack finishes, a second red joins the pitch to create a 2v1 against the blue team
- If the single red player regained and attacked, they then defend again against 2 blue players
- A target number of goals can be set, or a time limit where the team with the most goals wins
- Each action should involve a 2v1, with the player in the team of 2 who has been on the longest leaving the pitch
- The same principle and game flow can be used for 3v2s or higher if more players are available





Left & Right Finishing

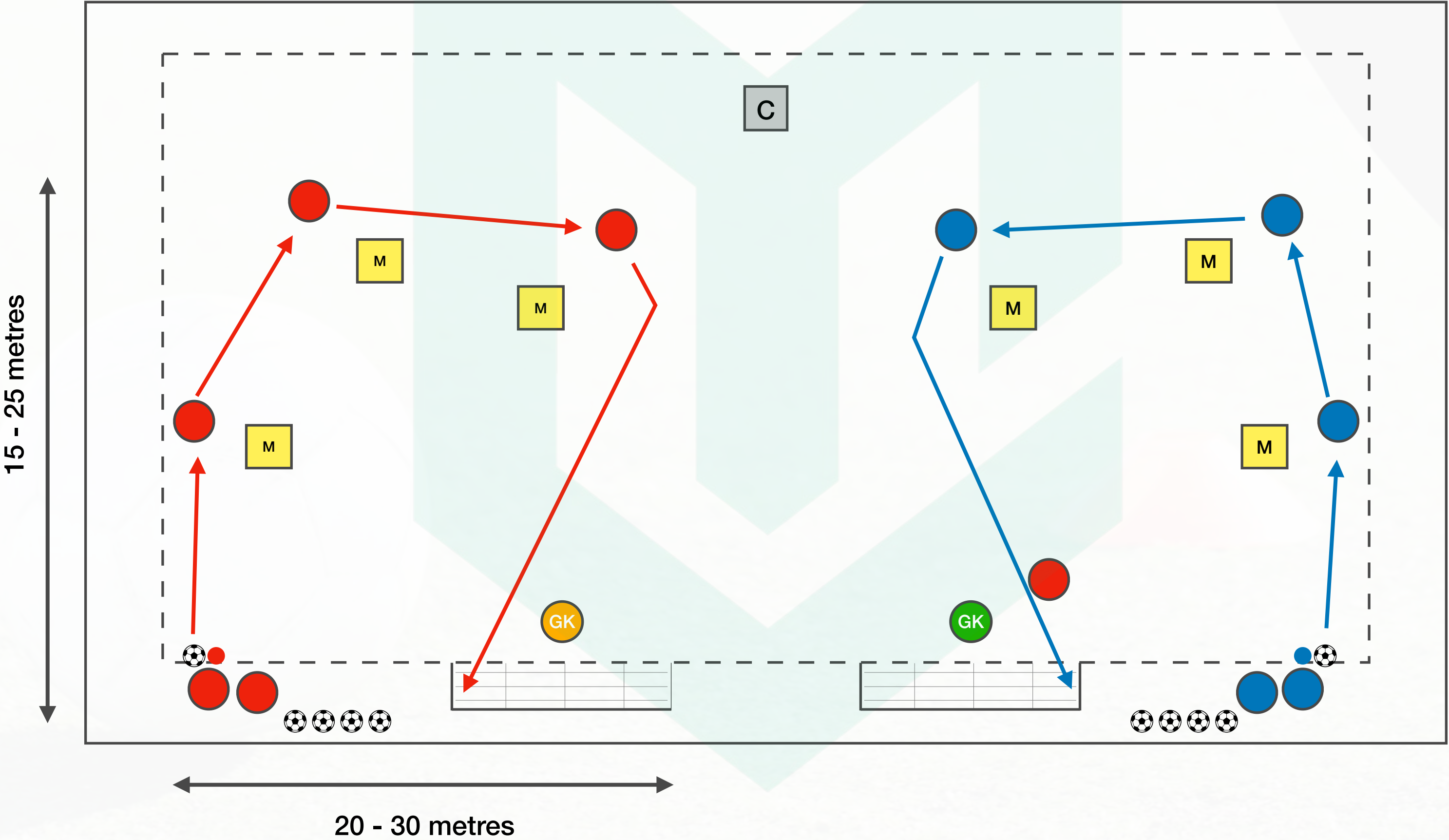
A competitive **technical pattern practice** to practice passing, receiving, and finishing

Numbers

12+

Age

7+



Difficulty

1/5

Time Length

3-6 x 2-4 mins



060

A **technical pattern practice** to develop strategies using passes into the feet of the striker





Playing off the 9

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

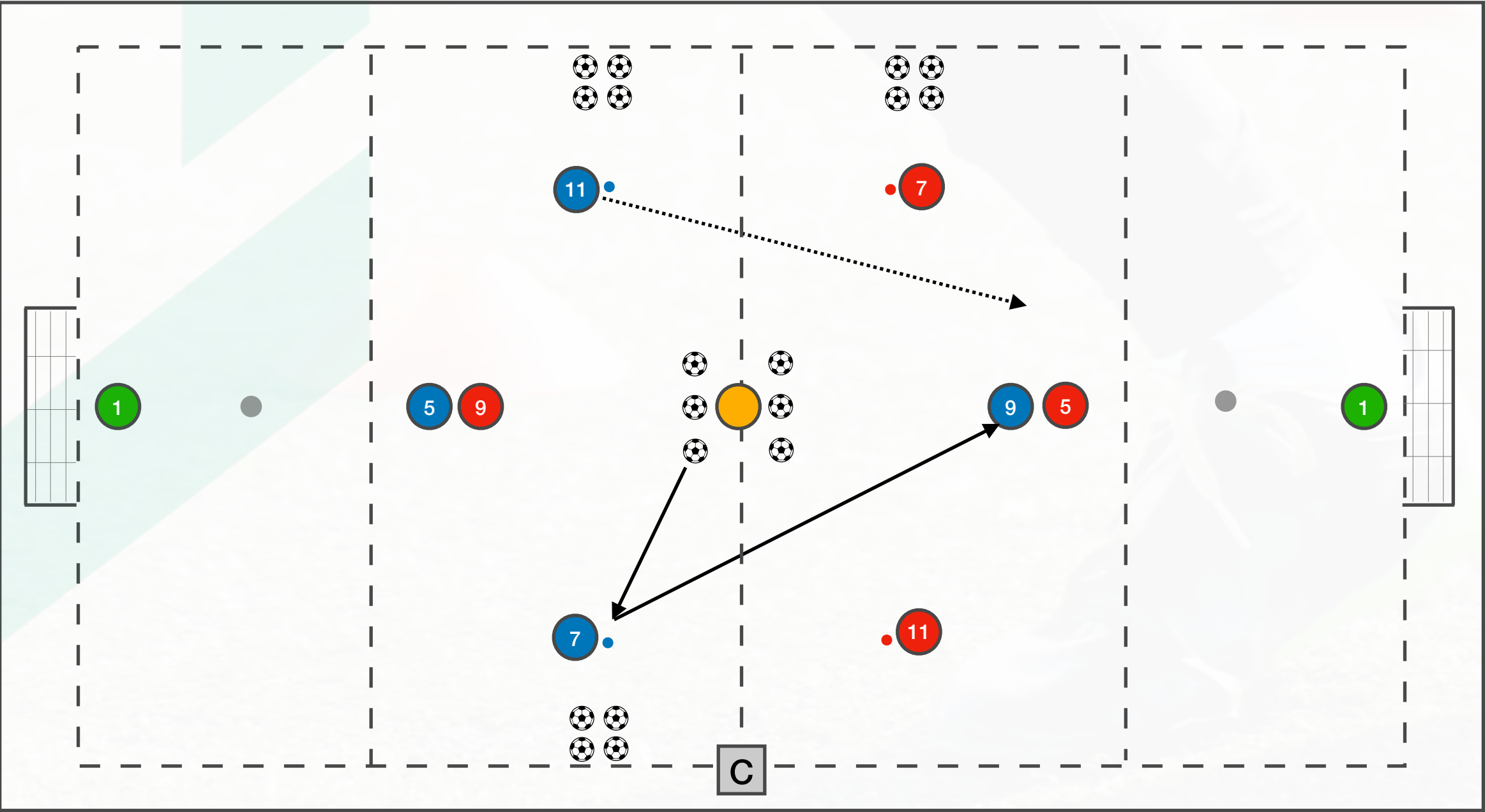
Objective 1: An improved ability for the strikers to deal with 1v1 pressure from behind

Objective 2: An improved awareness of triggers in relation to decision making in mini 2v1 overloads

Objective 3: An improved understanding of angles, timing, and support for third player runs to exploit 2v1's

Game Flow & Rules

- The set up of the game uses a rectangle pitch with goals at each end, and penalty boxes marked as a reference
- Cones are placed as starting positions for the attacking players, but the striker is free to start in varied positions
- Each team has a striker being marked by a defender, plus 2 attacking players with balls
- One feeder starts in the centre of the pitch to initiate each attack
- The feeder starts by a passing to a player from one side, who receives and plays into the striker
- As the first pass is played, the player from the opposite side should start making a run to join the striker
- E.g. the feeder passes to the 7, who then passes to the 9 while the 11 joins the 9 to create a 2v1 overload
- The striker then has the choice whether to play to the 11, or roll the defender and attack himself
- That attack ends with a shot or the defender intercepting/tackling (a time limit can be used to add pressure)
- If the defender regains the ball, they play a pass into the feeder in the middle
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they can roll into play for the defender to pass to the feeder
- If the defenders are successful at regaining and passing to the feeder, then the team that attacked loses 1 point
- After an attack is over, players then return to their start position, and the feeder initiates an attack for the reds
- On the next blue attack, the attackers swap roles, the 11 receives the first pass and the 7 joins the attack
- Each goal is worth 1 point, a target score can be set, for example first team to 5 points
- In the next round, the players may need to rotate positions to manage the workload





061

Possession to Cross

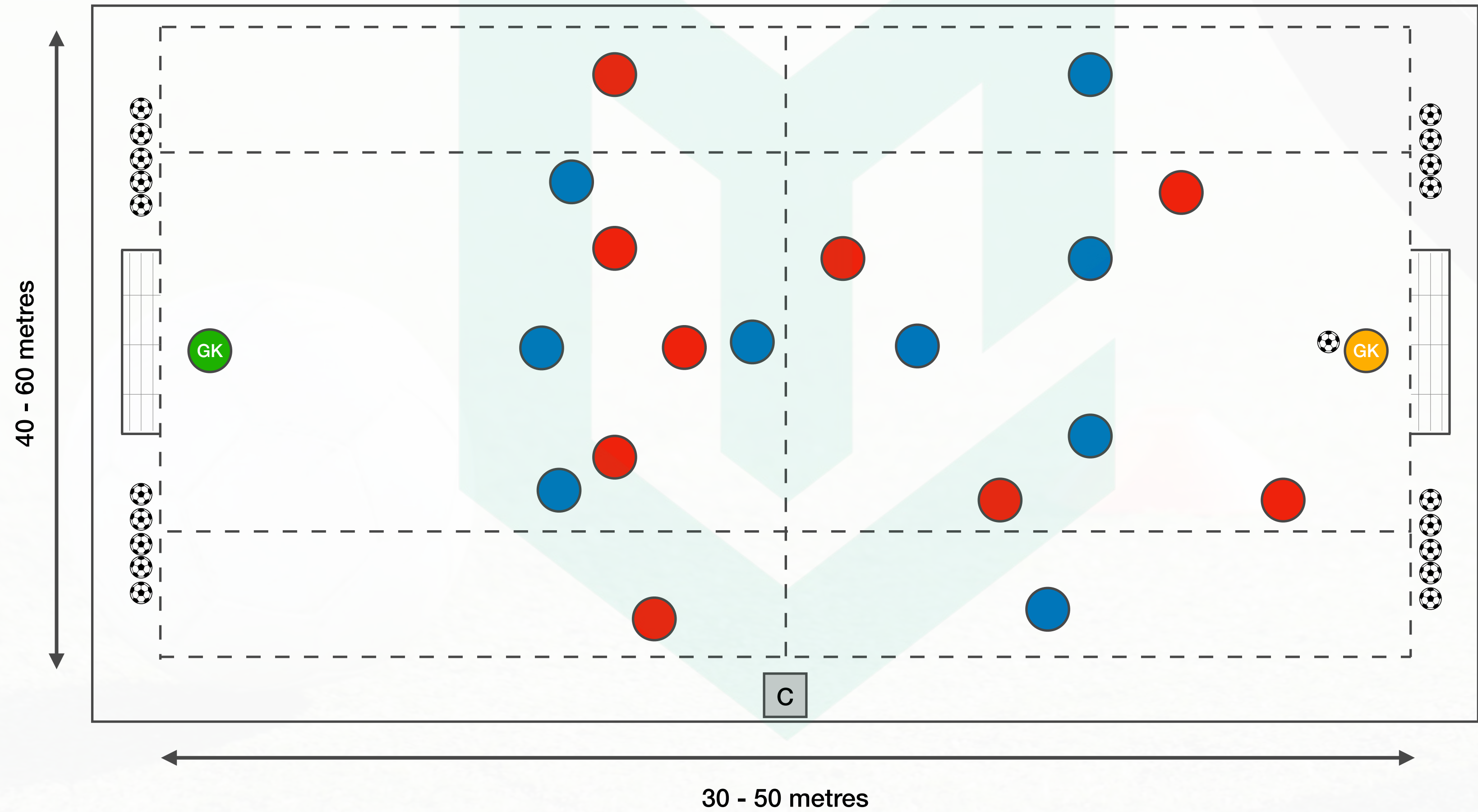
A **medium/large sided game** to develop possession and crossing & finishing

Numbers

18+

Age

13+



Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

3-5 x
6-10 mins





Possession to Cross

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

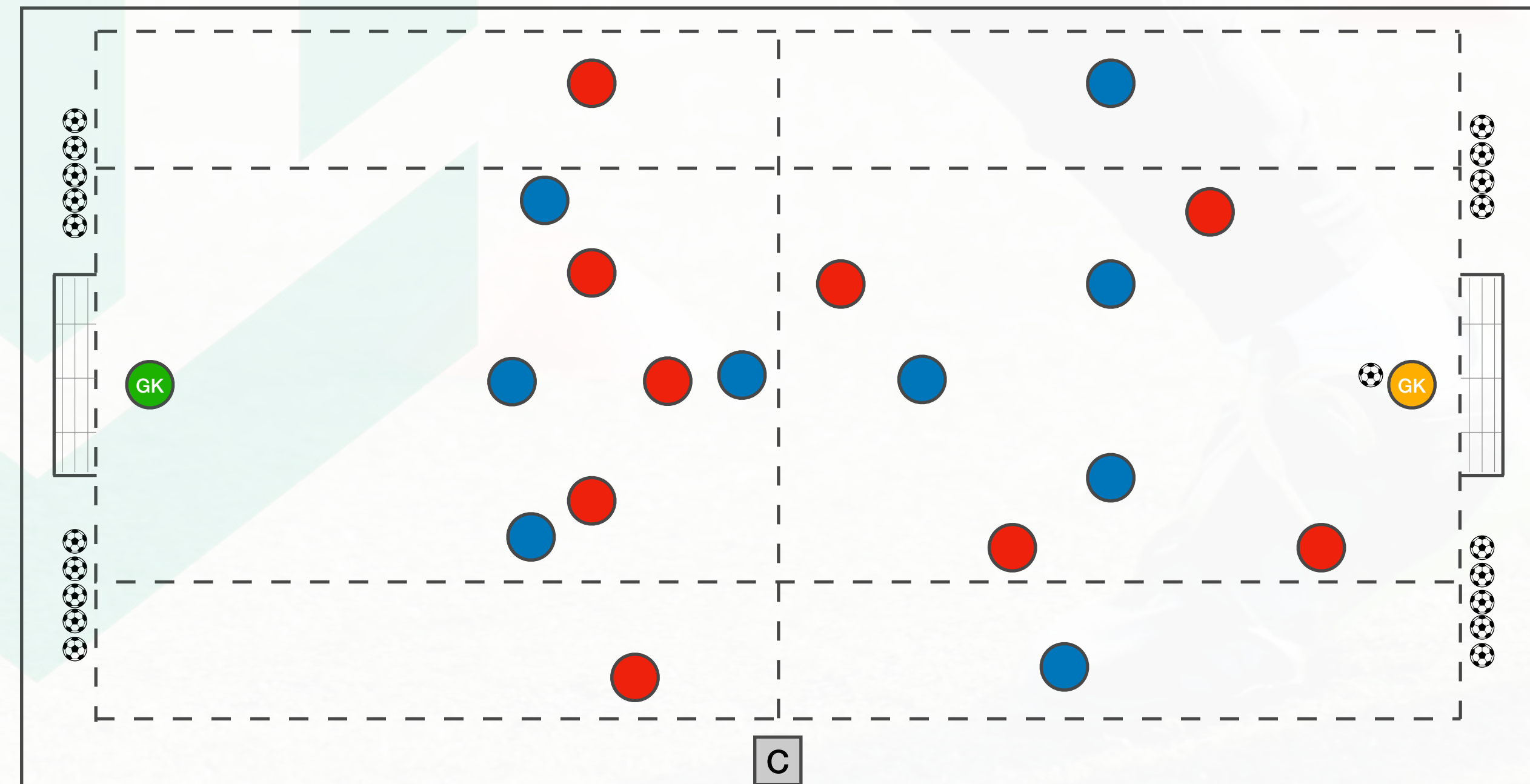
Objective 1: An improved execution of crossing and finishing

Objective 2: An improved awareness of movements to exploit spaces available for crossing & finishing

Objective 3: An increased awareness of different types of crosses that can be used in relation to available space

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set using a rectangle grid, with 2 central zones, and 4 wide zones
- Outfield players are divided into 2 teams of 9 plus 1 goalkeeper in each goal
- In the central zones, each team is divided into 3 and 4, with 1 player in each wide zone
- This makes 2 4v3 situations, plus 1 goalkeeper, making 5v3s for the build-up
- Central players are locked in their zones, except 1 defender can press the crossing player
- Wide players are locked into their zones except the opposite side winger in attacking moments
- E.g. The red team Build-up from the yellow goalkeeper, with a 4+GK vs 3
- They have to keep possession in that zone for 10 seconds, before passing to 1 of their wingers
- Once the ball goes to 1 of the wingers, they can receive and deliver a cross into the box
- The opposite winger can join centrally to create a 4v4
- One of the defenders can go out into the wide zone to block the cross, leaving a 3v4 in the box
- If they score or the ball goes out of play, the blue team then start and build-up
- If the blue team regain the ball, they can then directly counter attack using their winger
- If the pressing team regain in the possession zone, they can attack directly and score
- The winning team is the team at the end of the practice with the most goals





062

The Long 1vGK

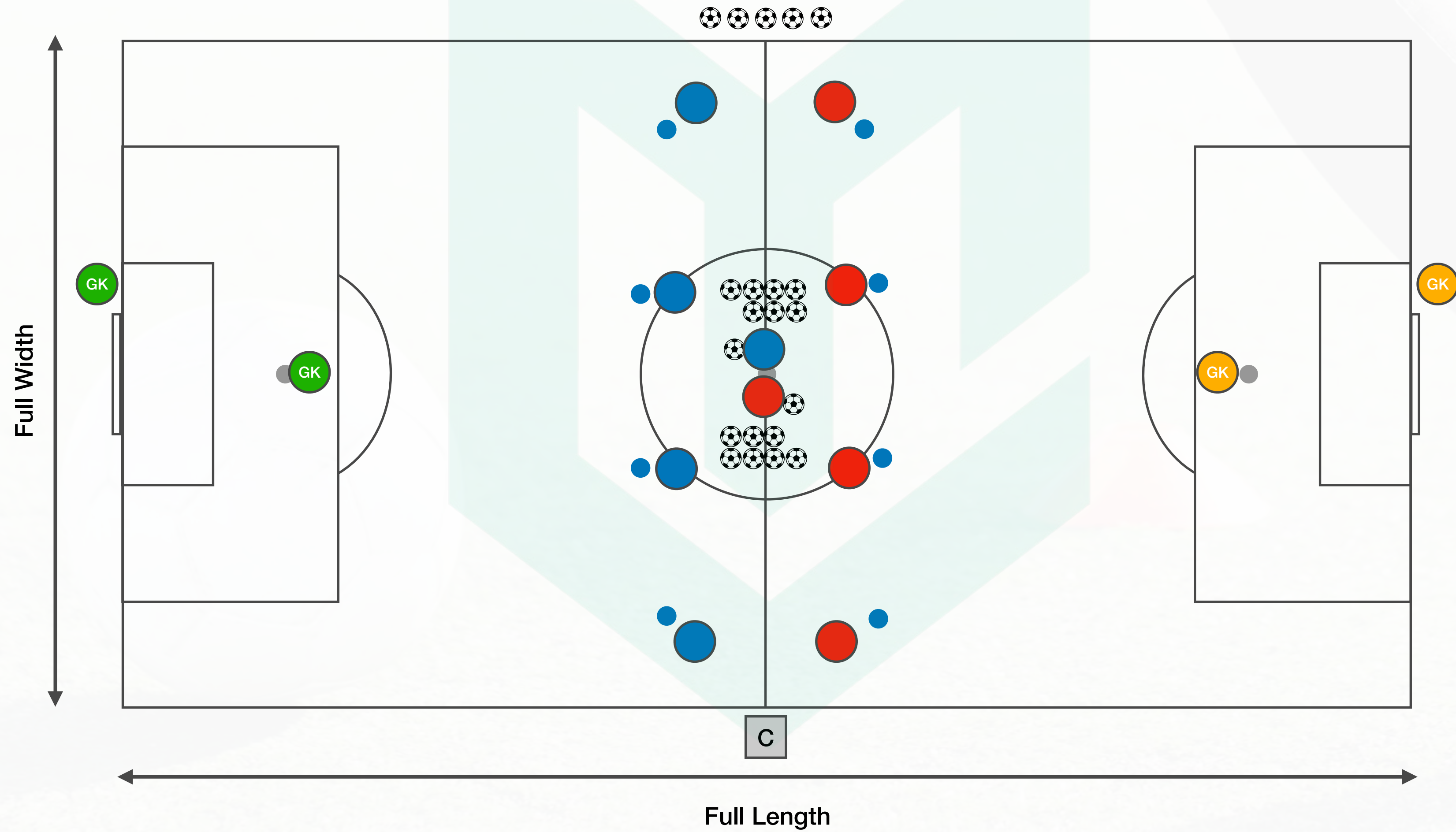
A **technical pattern practice** for attacking players to develop running with the ball and finishing in 1vGK situations

Numbers

12+

Age

12+



Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-4 x
6-10 mins



TOPIC 6: TRANSITIONS

Practices to develop a player's and team's ability to utilise transition moments when regaining possession of the ball and losing possession of the ball





Transition Contents

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069. TTD: Defending the Counter.....	203
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In Transition to Attack Coaching	Explanation
Action Efficiency	Counter attacking early before the opponent restructures or counter presses
Anticipation of Double Transitions	The safety structure behind the counter attacks should prepare in case of a loss of possession
Awareness of Goalkeeper Positioning	Staying aware of the goalkeeper's positioning can help identify opportunities to exploit, e.g. lobbing the keeper
Double and Opposite Movements	The use of individual double movements, and two players moving in opposite directions to create space
High Speed Running	A requirement of effective counter attacking is high speed running, at times over a large distance
Identification of the Best Solution	When counter attacking, a variety of passes can be used, identifying the space supports this decision
Initiating the Counter Attack	The first pass of the counter attack sets the tone and type of counter attack to be used
Key Decision Making	At the point of regaining possession, a key decision has to be made, counter attack or to retain safe possession
Quick Restructure	Restructuring quickly after regaining the ball to support the counter attack or ball retention
Passing Detail	Detail in the passes during counter attacks such as the weight of pass to exploit in the shortest amount of time
Pre-Preparation	Structure prior to the transition moment that supports counter attacking and/or ball retention
Riding Challenges	Awareness of incoming tackles to decide whether to ride the challenge or take the foul
Stepping Up to Join the Counter	Defenders and midfielders must step higher when the team counter attacks to keep compactness
Structural Balance	How many players need to join the counter attack and how many should be creating safety?
Transition Awareness	Awareness prior to regaining possession, to react before the ball has been won and gain an advantage

Transition to Attack Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Beating the Counter Press	When the opponent counter presses, moving the ball out of pressure enables ball retention
Breaking the Line	Killer passes to exploit the space behind the opponents defensive line
Creating Mini-Overloads	Small Overloads within underloaded situations, e.g. creating 2v1s in a 4v5 situation
Direct Combination Play	Multiple players combining to exploit the space left during the counter attack
Direct Dodge	Using a direct pass in behind the opponents defensive line to initiate a counter attack
Direct Dribble	Using a direct dribble to exploit the space and initiate the counter attack
Direct Pass	Using a direct pass forwards to initiate a counter attack
Direct Switch	Using a direct pass to the opposite side of the pitch to initiate a counter attack
Hitting the Target Player	Using direct passes to hit a target player who can receive in front or behind the defensive line
Playing off the Regain	Using the first touch of interceptions to initiate the counter attack
Runs from Deep	On transition, opponents may play the offside trap, which leaves opportunities for deep runners
Use of 2nd Balls	Direct passes on transitions may create 2nd ball opportunities with large spaces between the lines
Use of Quick Set Pieces	When fouls occur, using a quick set piece can exploit the moment where the opponents are disorganised

Transition to Defend Coaching Points	Explanation
Accelerations & Decelerations	Accelerating and decelerating quickly to apply pressure and deal with any passes in behind
Angles of Pressure	Pressing at the right angle to force play into an area of strength for the counter press
Awareness of Double Transitions	Staying aware of the possibility of a second transition after losing the ball
Awareness of Opponent Profiles	Awareness of opponent profiles allows counter pressure to be placed on specific players
Blocking Runners	Defenders can block runners attempting to run in behind the defensive line
Closing Passing Lanes	Closing key passing lanes that are a key threat
Goalkeeper in the Sweeper Role	Goalkeeper positioning during counter pressing moments to deal with direct passes in behind
High Speed Recovery Runs	If the opponents break through the counter press, high speed recovery runs may be needed
Interception Traps	Opening passing lanes to encourage specific passes that can be intercepted
Key Decision Making	Counter Press or Recovery into Structure
Pre Preparation	Structure prior to losing possession
Reading the Transition Early	Reading the transition moment before it occurs can create a significant advantage
Structural Balance	Managing the number of players who should counter press vs those who should restructure
Transition Awareness	Awareness of dangers and opportunities prior to the transition moment
Using the Touchline	When forcing wide, the touchline increases pressure and limits options for the opponent

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Transition to Defend Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Closing the Centre	A reaction to losing possession which focuses on closing the centre of the pitch
Cover Defending	Cover defending to deal with passes and runners in behind
Double Team	Two teammates pressing together to force a mistake and regain
Forcing Panic	Pressing chaotically at speed to cause the opponents to panic and make mistakes
Forcing Short	Leaving a short passing option open to apply pressure on that specific player, or a specific situation
Forcing the Dribble	Inviting the opponent in possession to dribble with the ball to then apply pressure and force a regain
Initiating the Press	Initating the counter press with immediate pressure on the ball
Joining in the Press	Players joining the counter press to close passing lanes, create traps, and force regains
Key Decision Making	The decision whether to counter press or recover into a block structure is key for effective transitions
Negative Pressing	Pressing from behind a player who is facing the goal they are attacking to force a quick decision
Offside Trap	Using the offside trap to deal with runs and passes in behind
Player to Player	Pressing player to player (1v1) to ensure pressure on all passing options
Recovery into Structure	Recovery runs into a defensive block structure
Tactical Foul	If the opponents counter attack and break through lines, an intentional foul can stop the counter
Terminating Possession	Regaining the ball and initiating a second transition moment

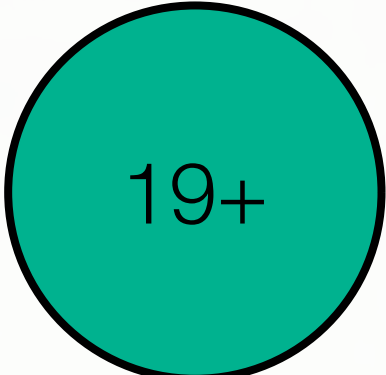


Mini Rest Attack & Rest Defence

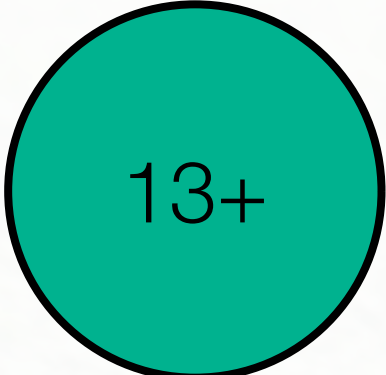
A mini **phase practice** that can be used to practice counter attacking, rest attack, rest defence, and counter pressing

063

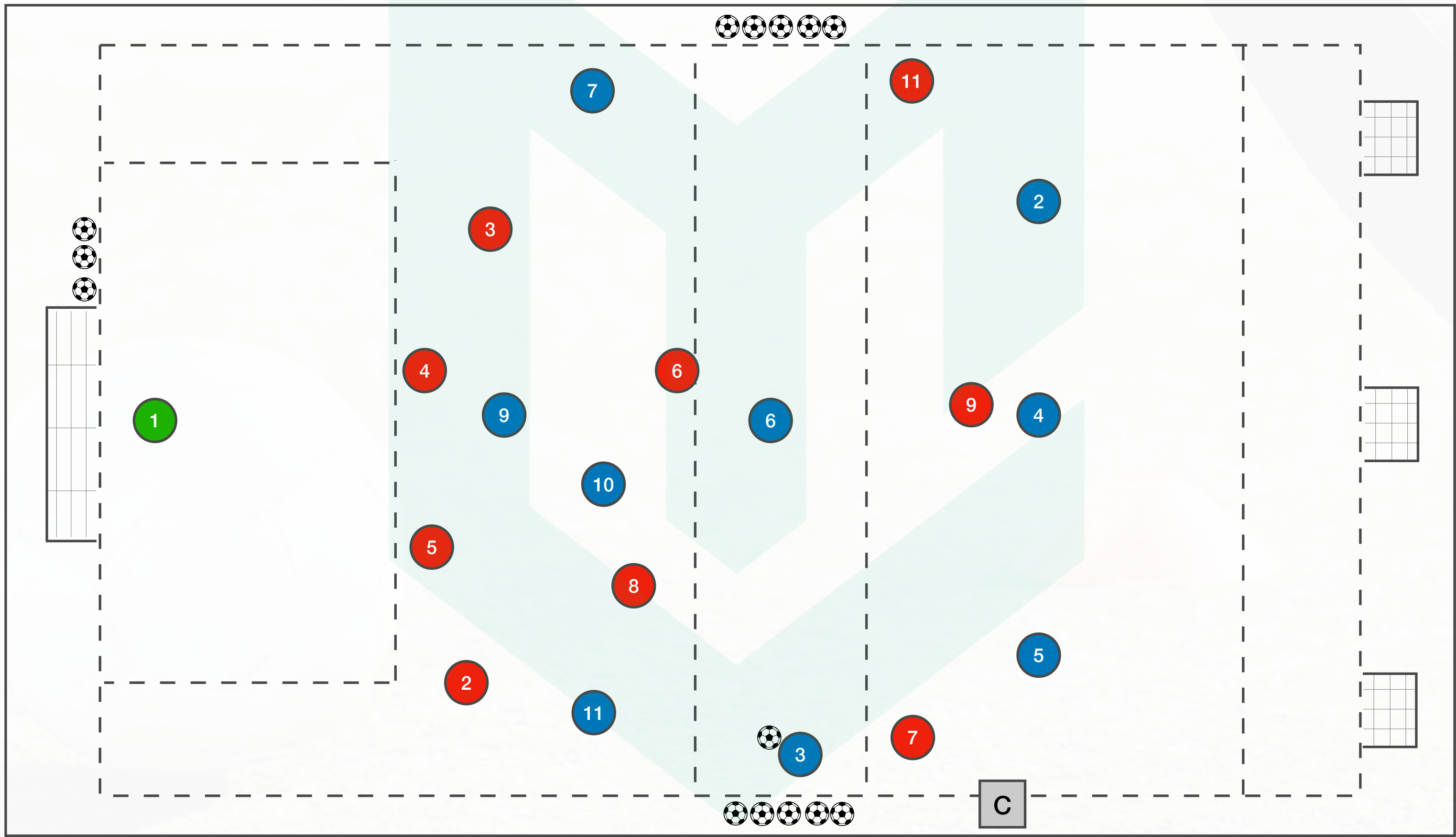
Numbers



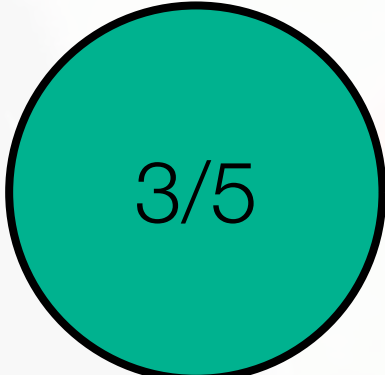
Age



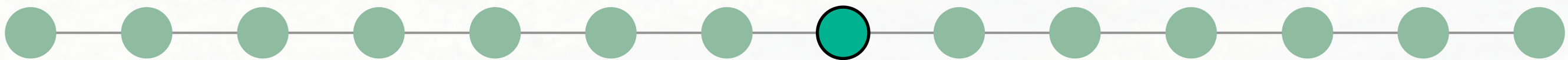
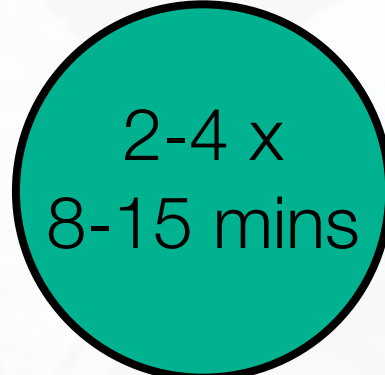
30 - 50 metres



Difficulty



Time Length

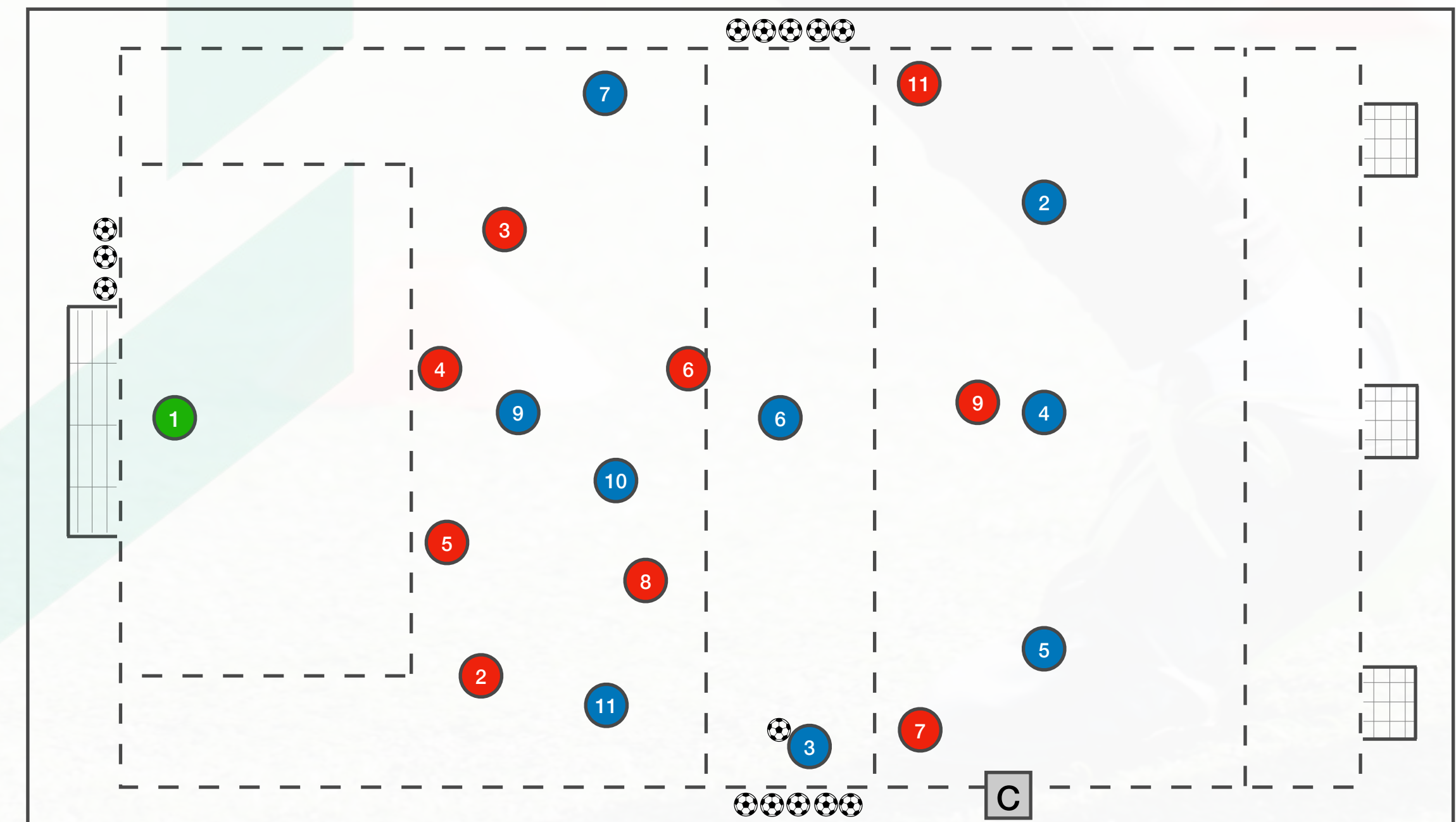


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities for rest defence and rest attack

Objective 3: An improved reaction time to transition moments when regaining or losing the ball

- The game is set up with a rectangle grid, 1 full-sized goal, and a 5-10 metre zone after the halfway line
- One penalty area at one end, 3 mini-goals at the opposite end. Players are divided into 2 teams of 9, plus 1 goalkeeper
- One team will be attacking and focusing on creating & finishing, rest defence organisation and counter pressing
- The defending team will be focused on final third defending, rest attack organisation, and counter attacking
- The game starts with one of the full backs on the side of the pitch from the attacking team
- E.g. the blue team starts with a ball from the side, and builds an attack against the red team
- While this attack is happening, the rest defence and rest attack organise in preparation for the transition
- With the overload in favour of the red team, it is likely they will regain the ball
- As the transition moment happens, the blue team should counter press, and prevent counter attacks
- The red team should use the transition moment to counter attack and score
- The red team score by getting into the red zone with the ball and scoring in the mini-goals
- If the blue team regains while the red team is counter attacking, they can counter the counter attack
- Anytime the ball goes out of play, the game restarts from the middle zone start positions
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they can also start the counter attack
- If the transition doesn't happen often enough, you can instruct the goalkeeper to restart with a throw or pass
- This throw or pass should go directly to the rest attack
- Alternatively, a time limit can be added for the attacking team to score against the defending the team



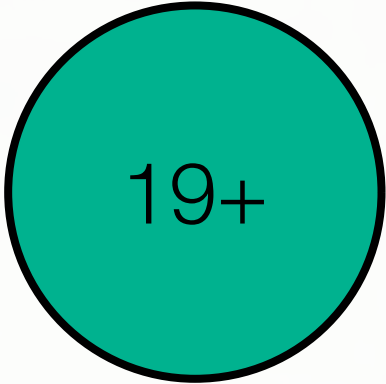


064

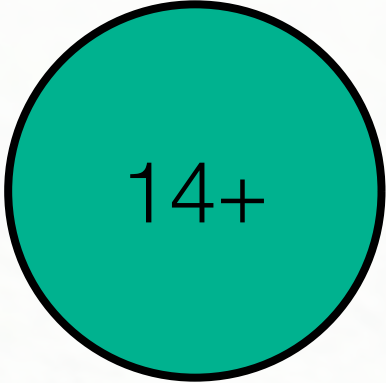
Phase: Rest Attack & Rest Defence

A **phase practice** that can be used to practice counter attacking, rest attack, rest defence, and counter pressing

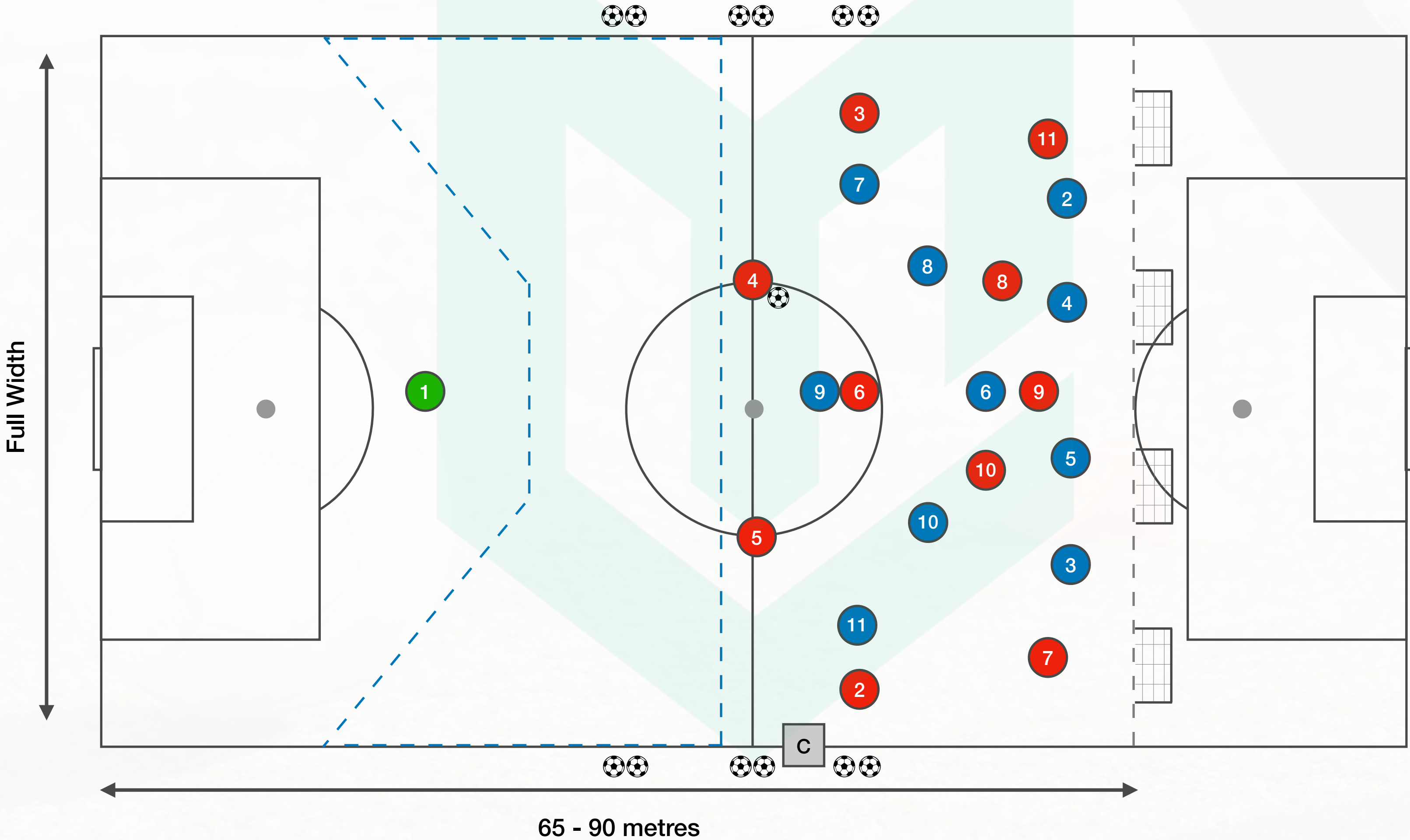
Numbers



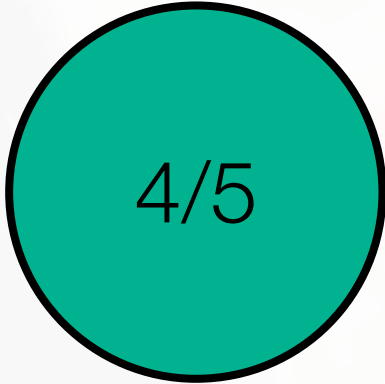
Age



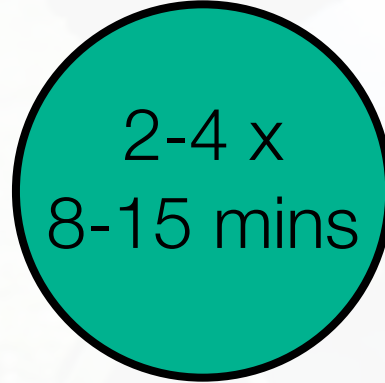
Full Width



Difficulty



Time Length





Phase: Rest Attack & Rest Defence

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

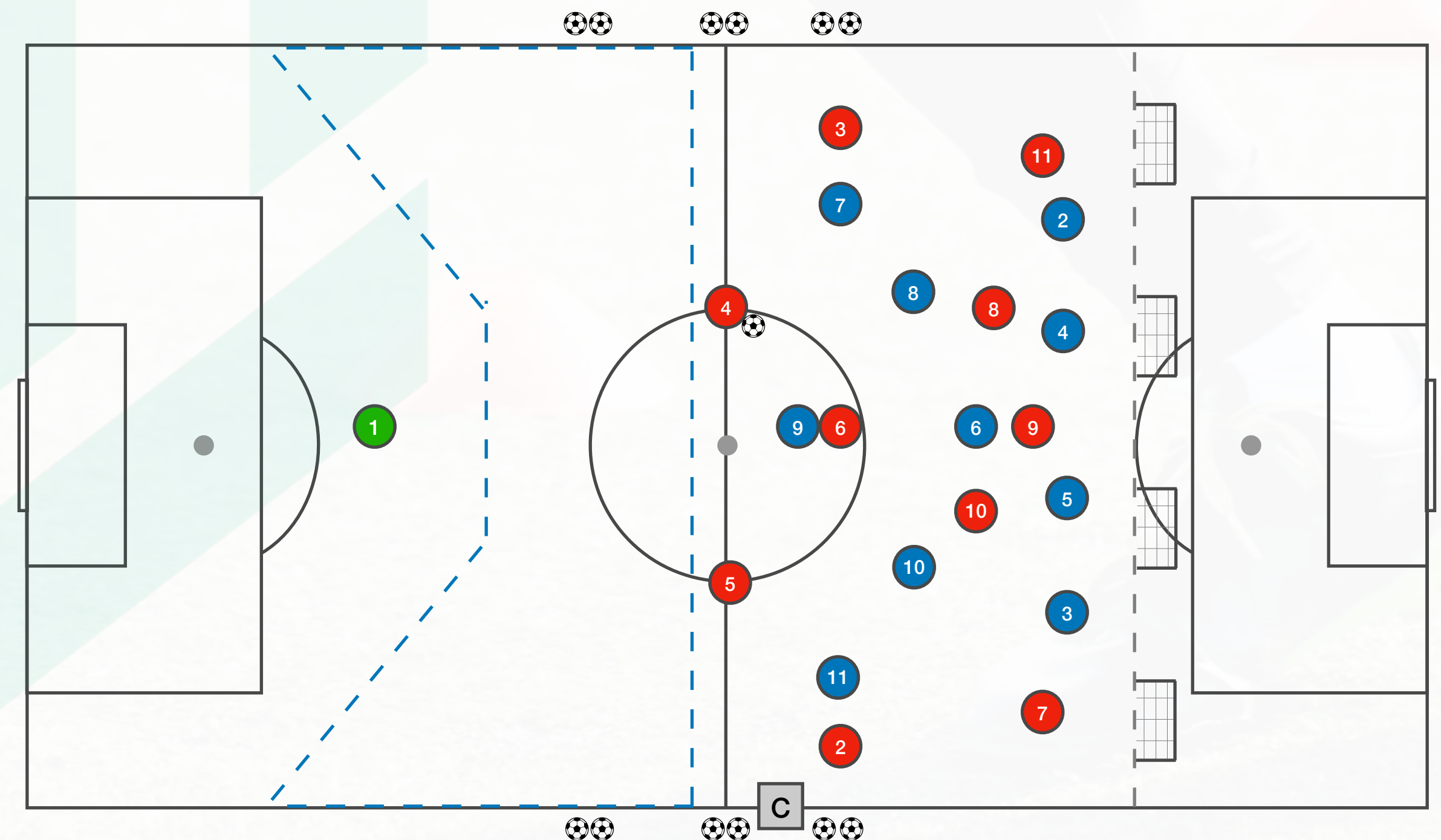
Objective 1: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities in the defensive block

Objective 2: An improved understanding of the different types of counter attacks that can be used

Objective 3: An improved ability to utilise the right decisions and actions to master transition moments

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using just under a full pitch with players set up in an 11v10
- Lower numbers can be used for teams that still play a different format
- The coaching and focus for the transitions should be on one team at a time
- The zone markings represent target areas that should be exploited on the counter attack
- The zone represents the areas where the goalkeeper is initially unlikely to sweep
- Players should be divided into 2 teams, 1 attacking team and 1 defending team
- The game starts with the attacking team from before, on, or after the halfway line
- The attacking team attempts to beat the defensive block and score
- As the ball progresses, the attacking team should organise their rest defence
- The defending team should organise their rest attack
- The attacking team have 20 seconds to score, to increase the number of transition moments
- When the defending team regain the ball, they have 20 seconds to then counter attack
- The marked zone should be used as a reference point for the areas to exploit
- After a goal is scored, the ball goes out of play, or the time limit is up, the practice starts again.





TTA: Beating the Recovery

A **picture practice** that can be used to practice counter attacking at speed and exploiting overloads

Numbers

15+

Age

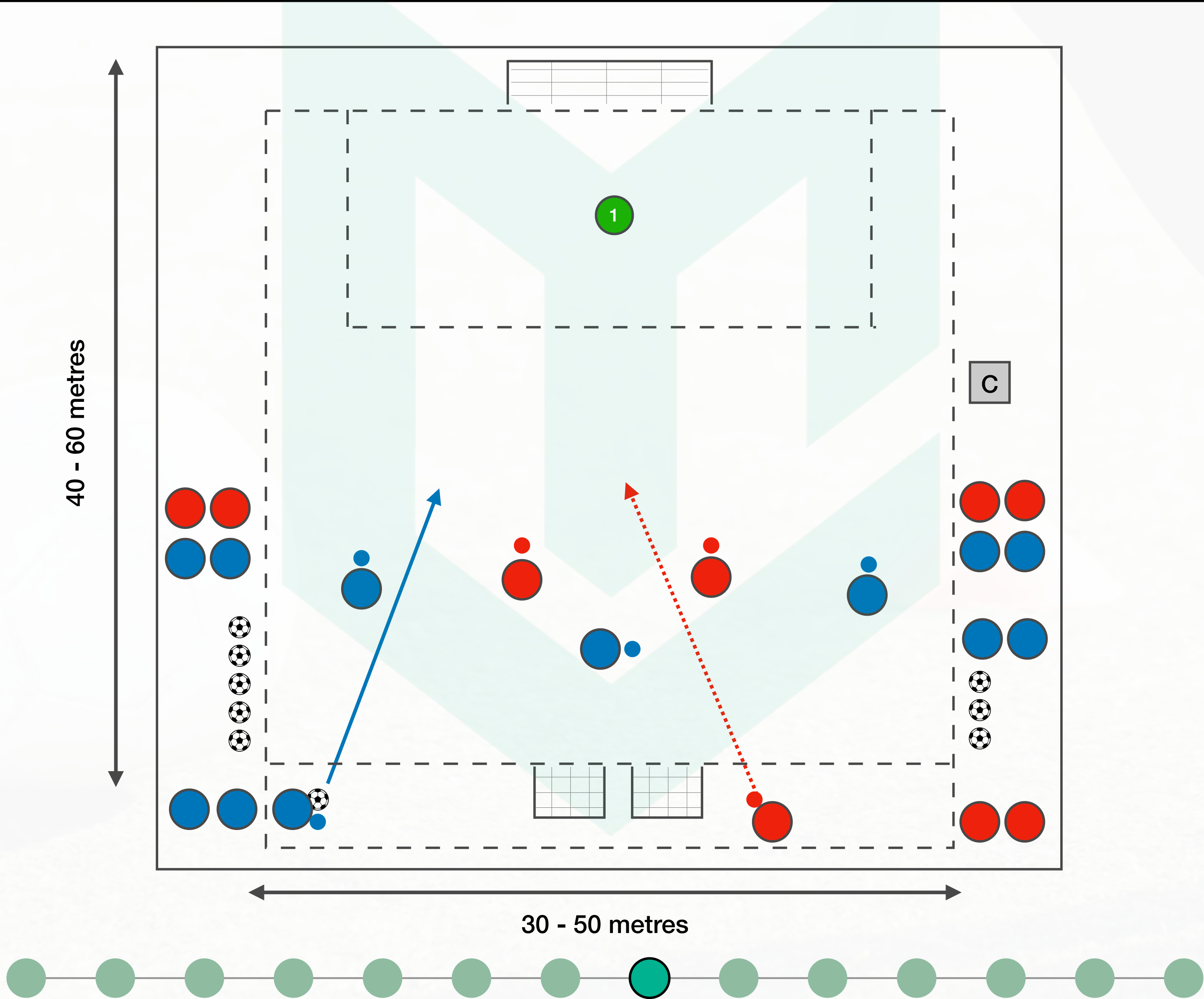
12+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-5 x
6-10 mins





TTA: Beating the Recovery

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

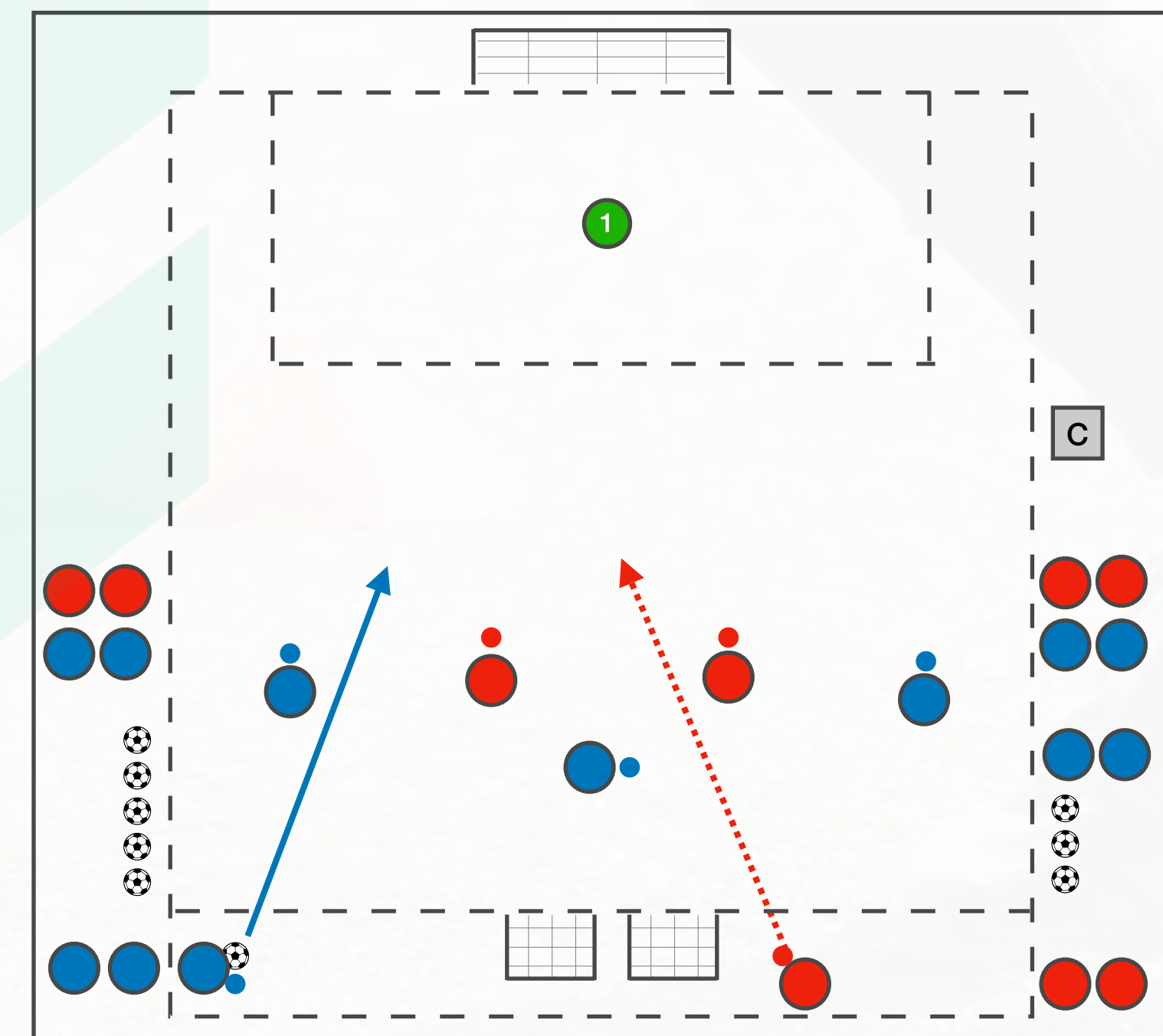
Objective 1: An increased awareness of the speed required to exploit opportunities before defenders recover

Objective 2: An improved decision making process during overload situations with pressure from behind

Objective 3: An improved execution of dribbling, 1v1's, passing, and finishing

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid with 1 penalty area and a full-sized goal with a goalkeeper
- At the opposite end, there are 2 mini-goals for the defending team to attack after regaining the ball
- Players can be divided into 2 teams, with 3 players per station
- This means the practice will ideally have 12 attackers and 9 defenders
- The attacking team starts with the ball playing a forward pass to the 3v2 situation
- As soon as the pass is played, the attacking team can try to exploit the 3v2 situation.
- A recovering defender will start to run as soon as the pass has been played to add an extra defender
- The attacker who played the pass can also join after passing to create a 4v3 situation
- The objective of the blue attackers is to score before the recovering defender can create a 3v3
- E.g. the blue team starts attacking with 3 players against 2 player from the red team
- Once the pass is played from the 4th blue player, the recovering red defender can sprint back
- If the red team regains the ball, they go and attack the opposite mini-goals to try and score
- After the attack finishes, either with a goal, or the ball out of play, all players rotate with the players waiting
- If the goalkeeper catches/receives the ball, they can counter attack to try and score in the mini-goals
- After each repetition, players can rotate positions
- After a set time/number of repetitions, teams can swap so the defenders become attackers and vice versa





066

TTA: Regain & Score

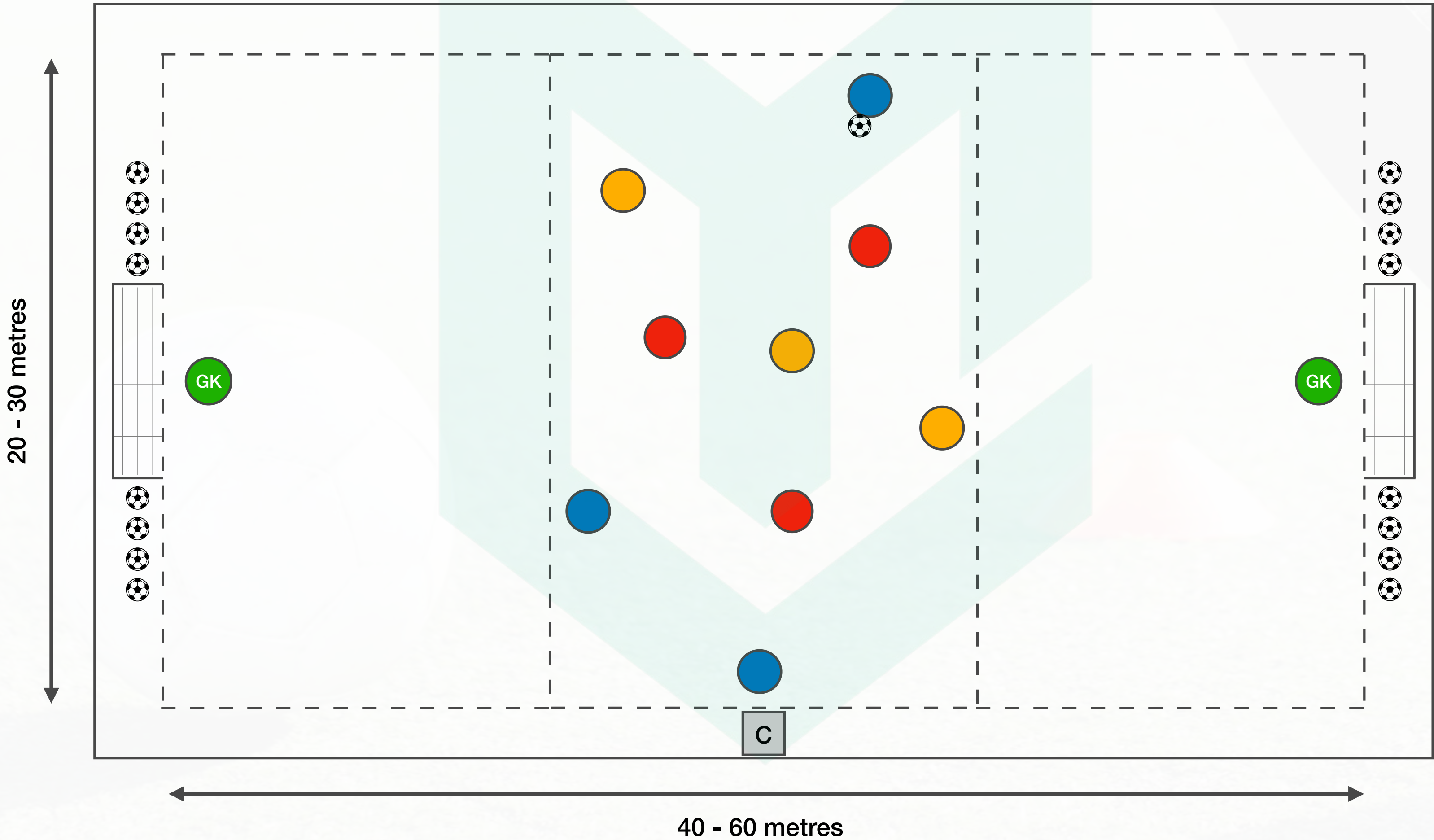
A **free possession practice** that can be used to develop player's ability to counter attack when regaining centrally in the attacking third

Numbers

11+

Age

12+

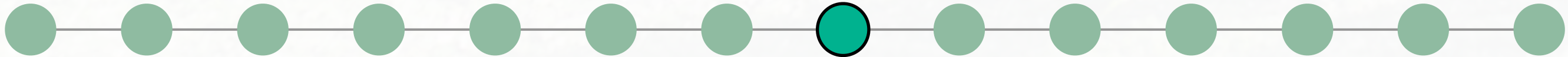


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

5-10 x
2-6 mins





TTA: Regain & Score

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

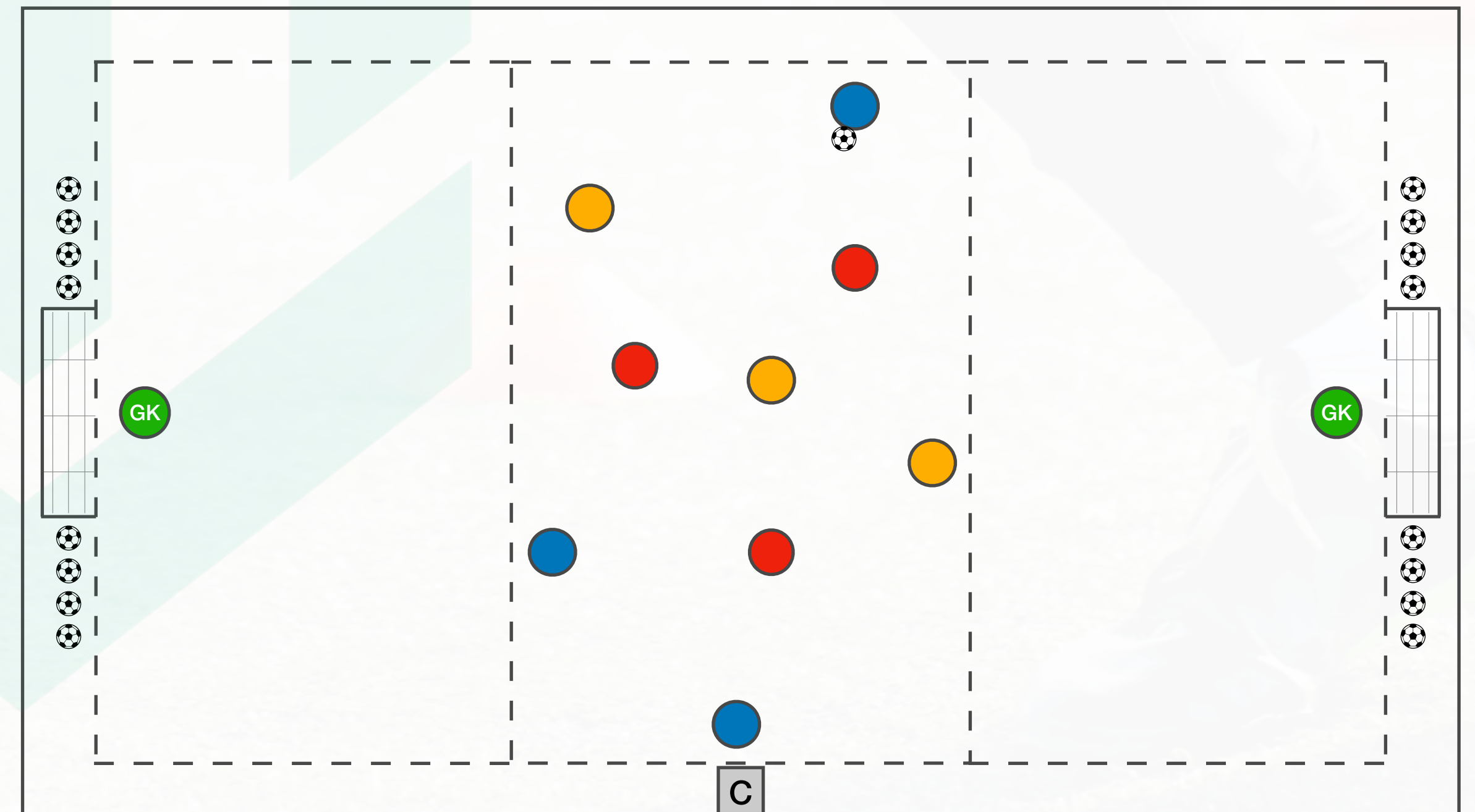
Objective 1: An improved reaction time to execute attacking actions after regaining possession

Objective 2: A improved reaction time to apply pressure on the ball when losing possession

Objective 3: An improved execution of passing, receiving, dribbling, and finishing

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a rectangle grid divided into 3 grids
- Full-sized goals are used at both ends with goalkeepers
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 3, making a 6v3 possession grid in the middle
- The 3 pressing players have to regain the ball, then attack one of the full-sized goals
- The 6 possession players have to complete 12 passes to then attack one of the goals
- If the team that attacks the goal does not score, they are the next pressing team
- If the pressing team regain and score, the team that lost possession presses next
- Players can score from inside the grid or by breaking out of the grid
- Pressure can be applied after losing possession to prevent the attack
- If the possession team reach the target and score, all 6 players receive a point
- The winning team is the team with the most points at the end of the practice





067

TTA: The No.9 Counter

A **medium sided game** that can be used to practice direct counter attacking

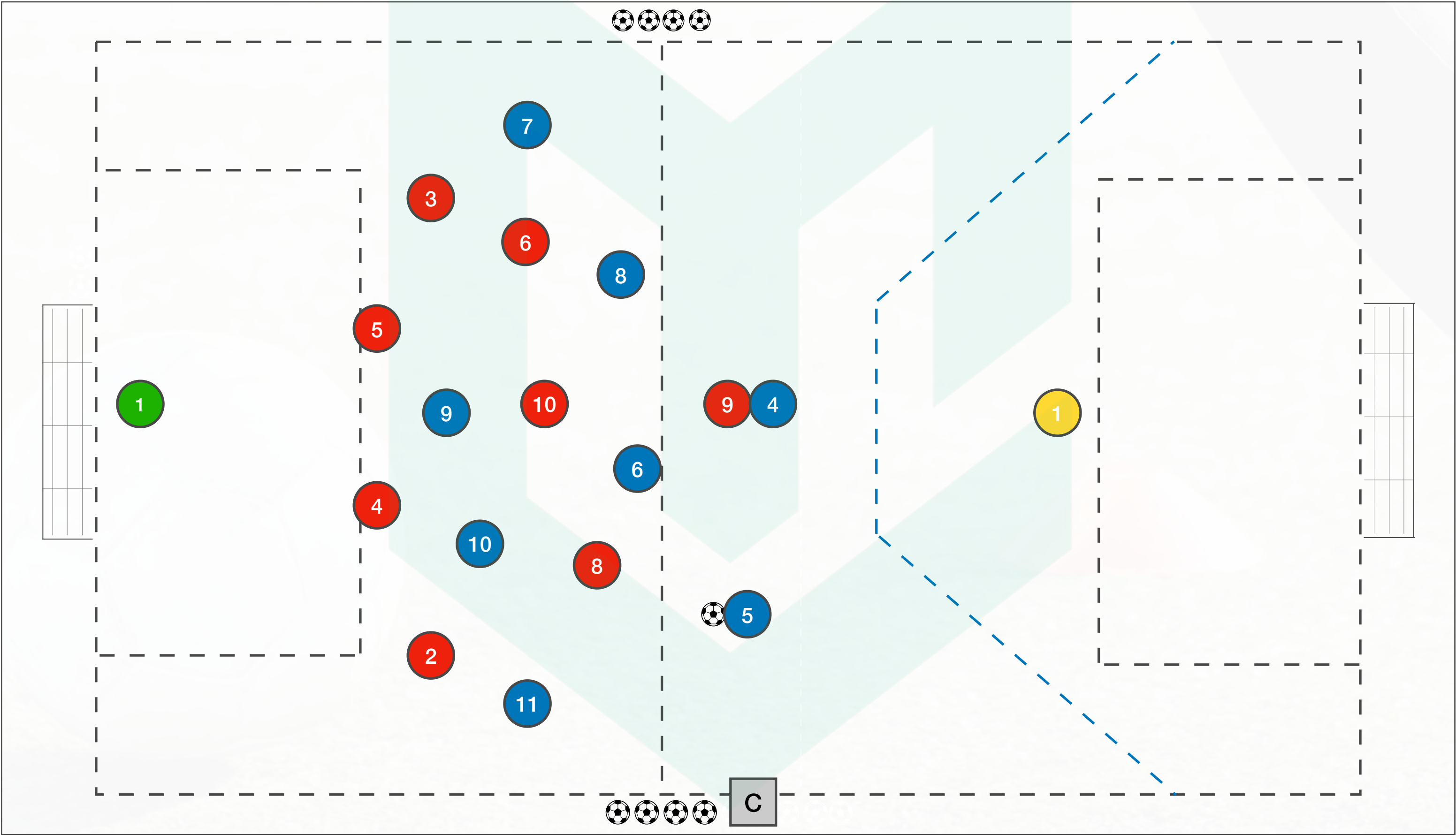
Numbers

16+

Age

13+

30 - 50 metres



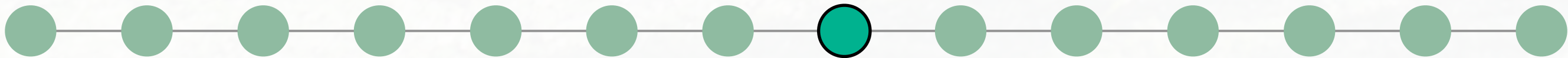
40 - 60 metres

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-5 x
8-12 mins





TTA: The No.9 Counter

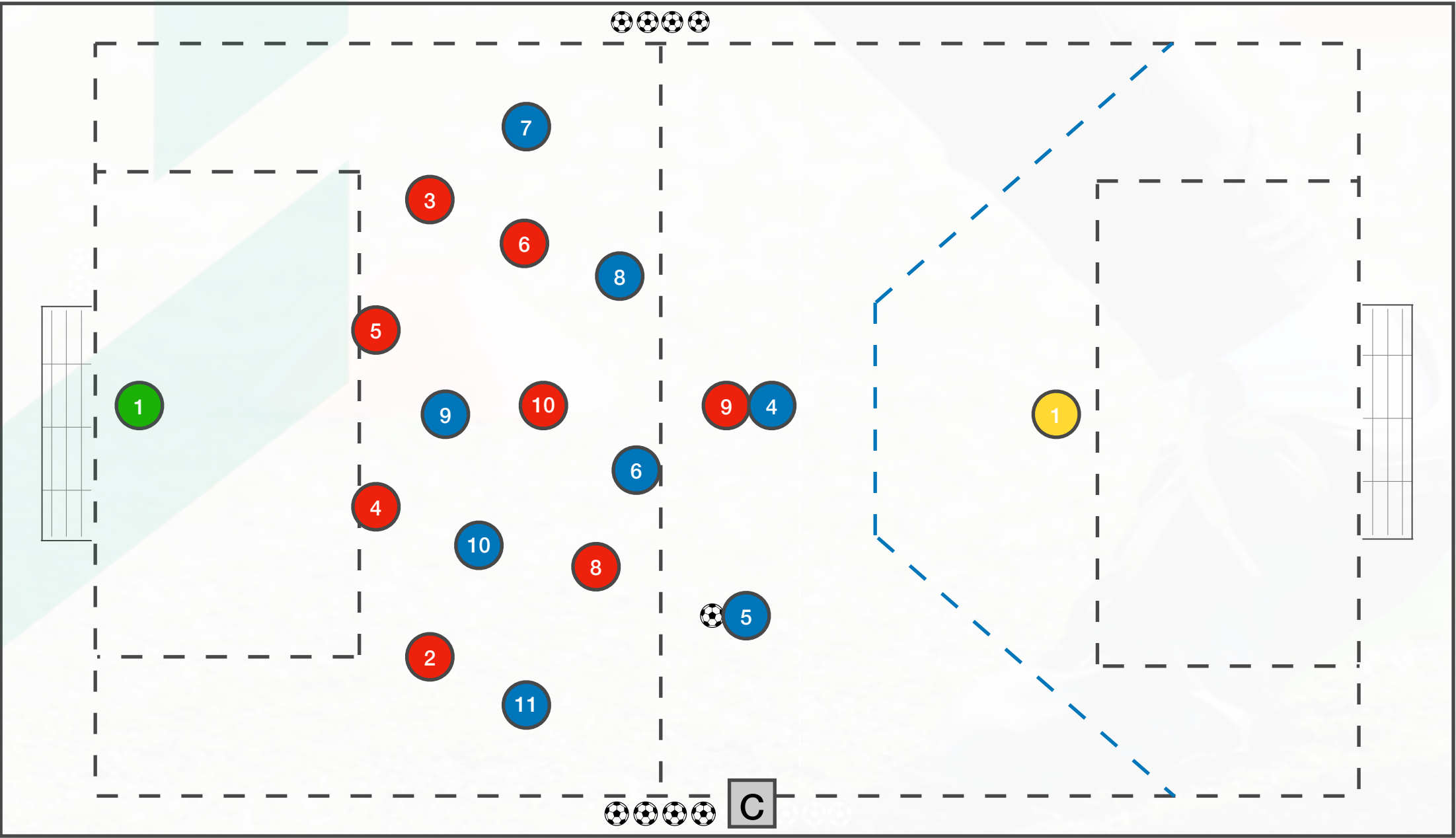
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An increased awareness of the speed required to exploit opportunities before defenders recover
- Objective 2:** An improved decision making process during overload situations with pressure from behind
- Objective 3:** An improved execution of off the ball movement and receiving under pressure from the striker

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid with 2 penalty areas and 2 full-sized goals with goalkeepers
- A halfway line is used to manage offside situations during the transition moments
- The players are divided into 2 teams of 8 plus 2 goalkeepers
- One team is the attacking team, focussing on beating the block and counter pressing
- The other team is the counter attacking team, focussing on defending in the block then counter attacking
- The zone markings represent target areas that should be exploited on the counter attack
- The zone represents the areas where the goalkeeper is initially unlikely to sweep
- The game starts with the attacking team taking a ball from the side, then attempting to beat the block
- If the defending team regain the ball, their objective is to counter attack with direct passes to the No.9
- These passes can be into the player for hold up play, or into the space to run behind
- Anytime the ball goes out of play, the game restarts with the attacking team beating the block
- If not enough transition moments occur, a ball can be played in from the side to start the transition
- Alternatively you can instruct the goalkeeper can play a direct pass from the goal
- After a set time/number of repetitions, teams can swap so the defenders become attackers and vice versa





TTD: Corner Traps

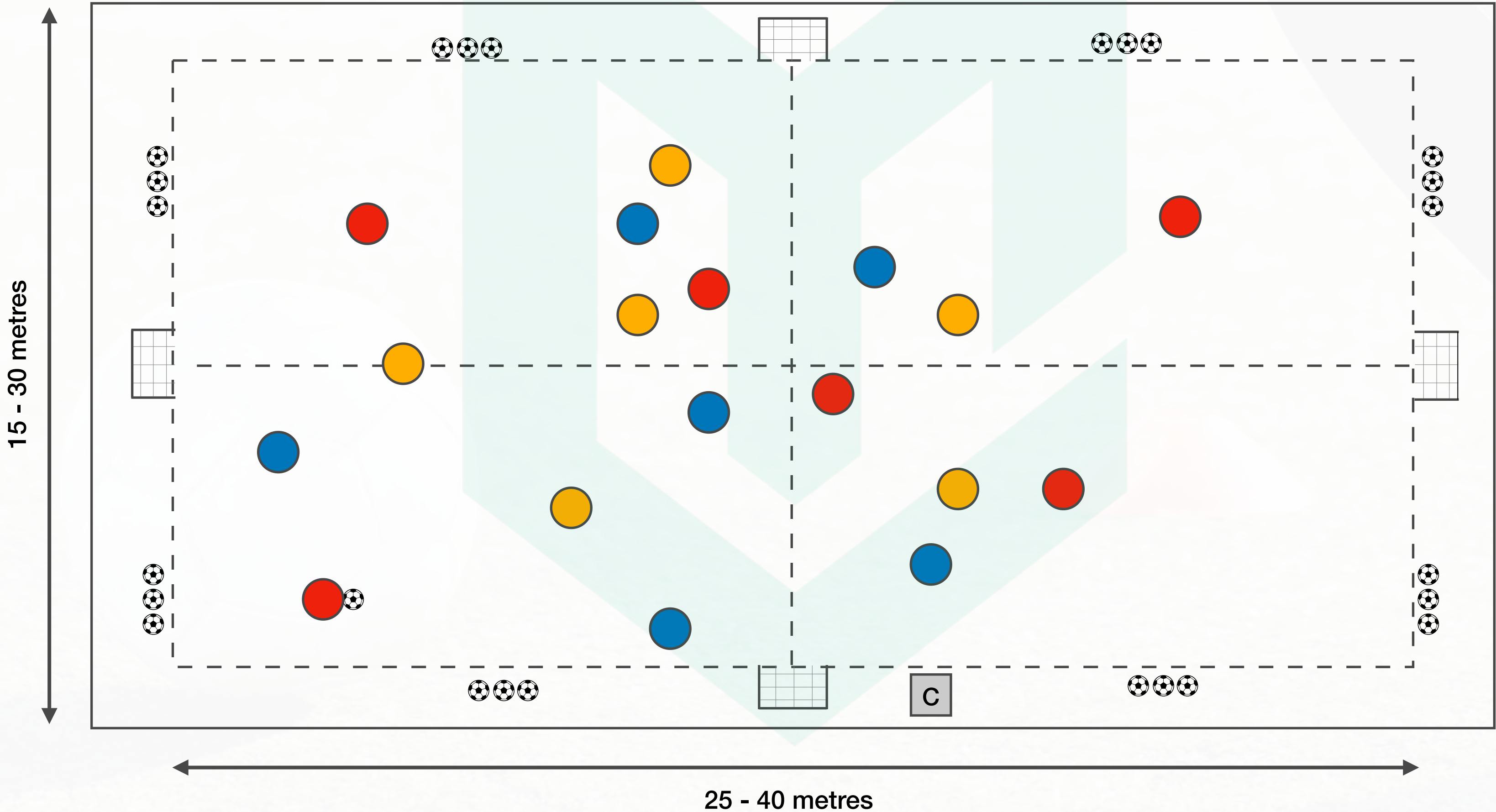
A **free possession practice** that can be used to practice counter pressing after losing possession of the ball

Numbers

15+

Age

12+



Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

3-6 x
5-10 mins



TTD: Corner Traps

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

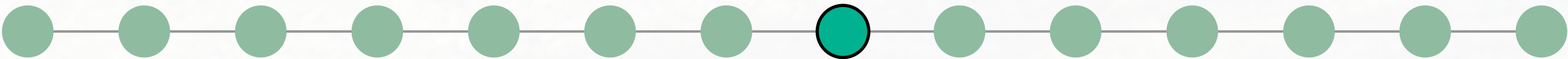
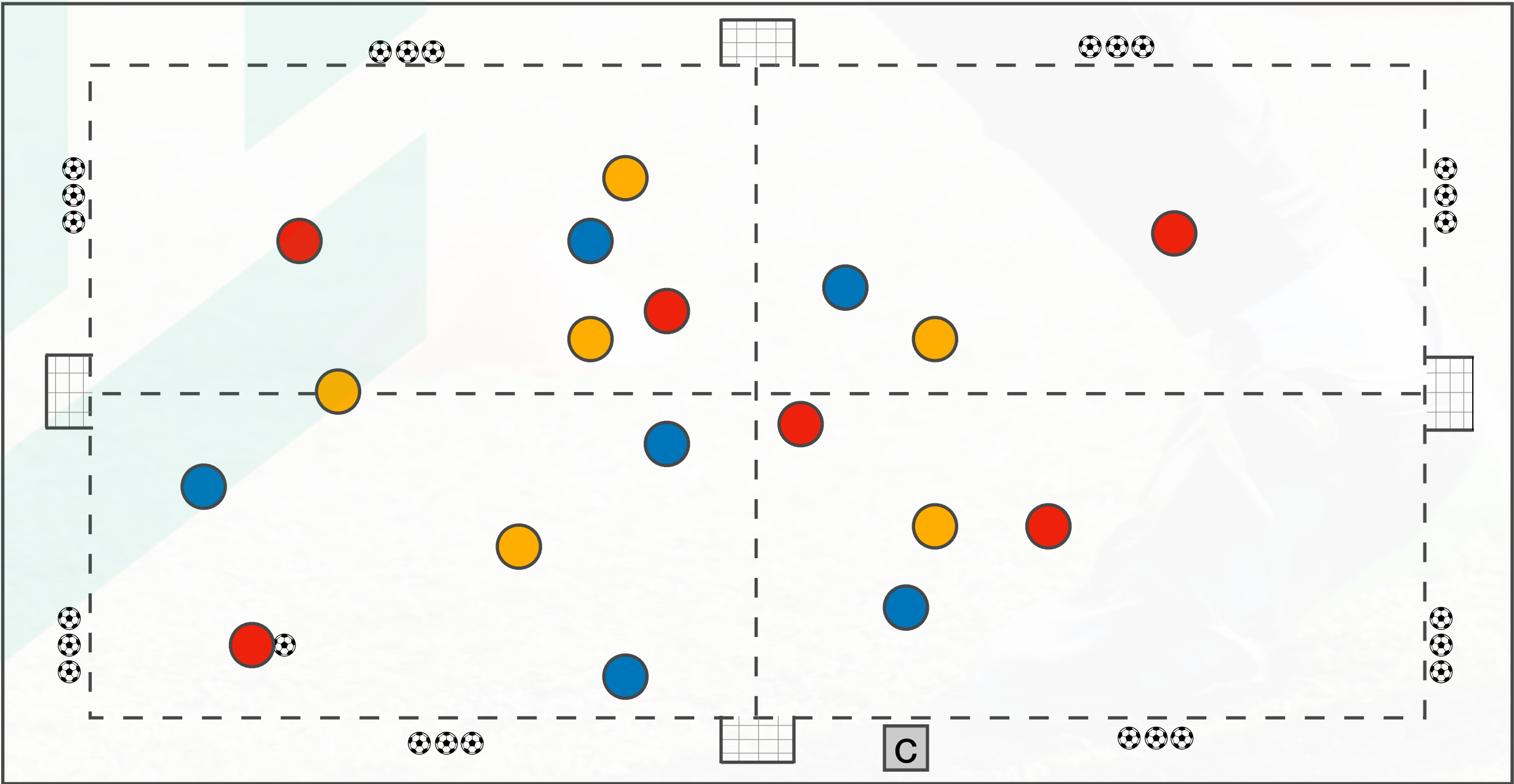
Objective 1: An improved anticipation of counter pressing to prevent circulation and penetration

Objective 2: An improved awareness of the importance of ball circulation/penetration to beat the counter press

Objective 3: An improved cohesion and communication between pressing players after losing possession of the ball

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a wide grid divided equally into 4, and 4 mini-goals
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 6 players
- 2 teams work together to retain possession of the ball against the third team
- Players are free to move anywhere across the 4 grids, no players are restricted
- While keeping possession they attempt to reach 12 passes before scoring in the mini-goals
- If they manage to achieve 12 passes and score, both teams involved get 1 point
- If the pressing team regain the ball, the team that lost possession has to counter press and prevent circulation
- Circulation/penetration means moving possession across all 4 divisions of the grid
- Therefore the objective for the teams in possession after regaining the ball is to cross all 4 grids with the ball
- If they manage to retain possession across all 4 grids, the pressing team lose all their points and start from 0
- After a set time limit, the winning team is the team with the most points
- E.g. The red and blue teams work together to retain possession against the oranges
- They are attempting to reach 12 passes to then score
- The orange team is pressing. If they regain the ball from a red player, the reds now have to counter press.
- The orange and blue team now attempt to retain possession moving the ball across all 4 grids
- The red team attempt to trap them in one corner, and win the ball back before the ball enters all 4 grids





069

TTD: Defending the Counter

A **phase practice** that can be used to develop the teams ability to deal with direct counter attacks

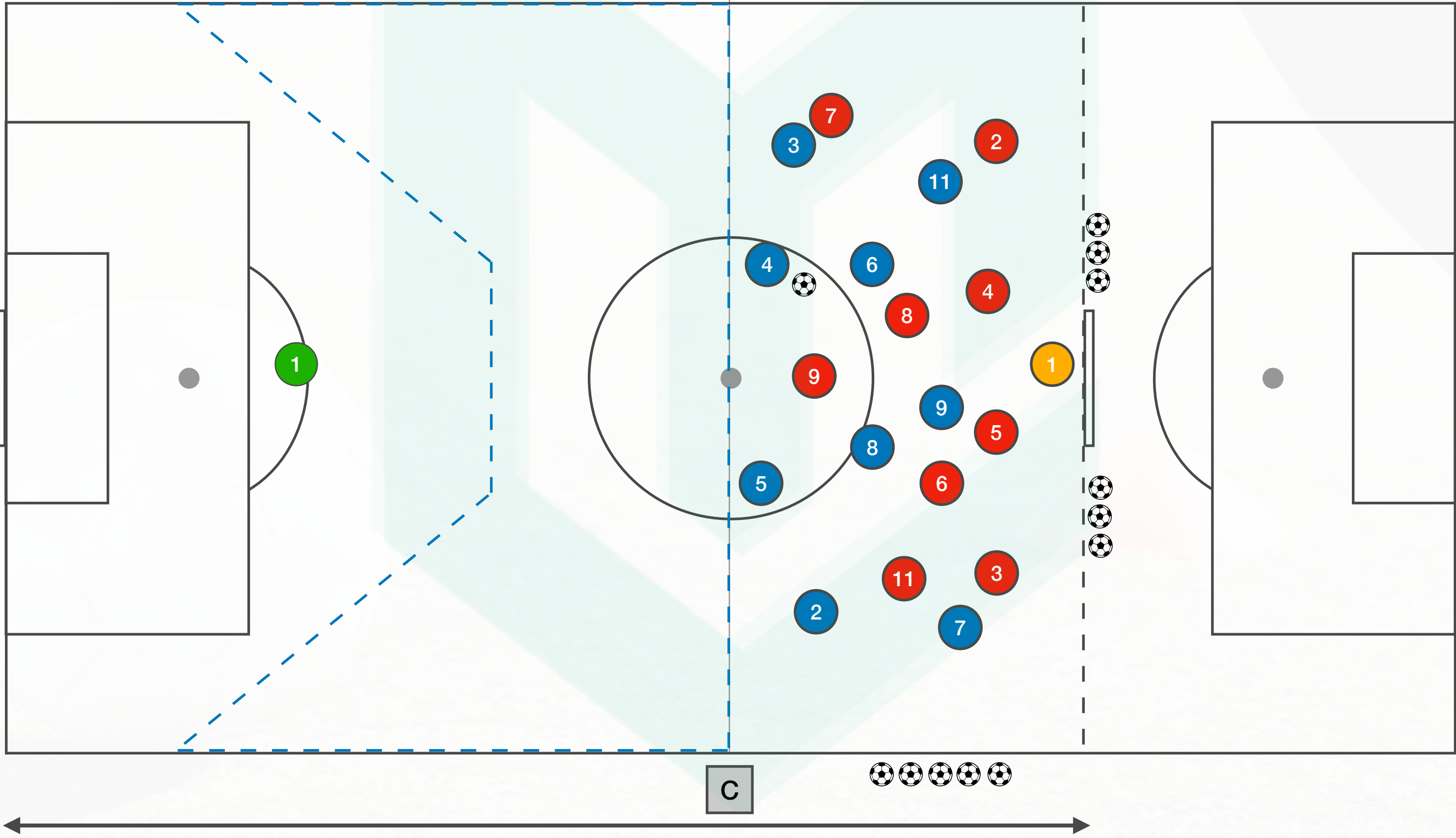
Numbers

18+

Age

14+

Full Width



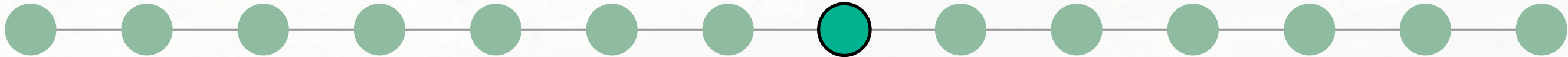
60 - 80 metres

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-4 x
8-12 mins





TTD: Defending the Counter

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

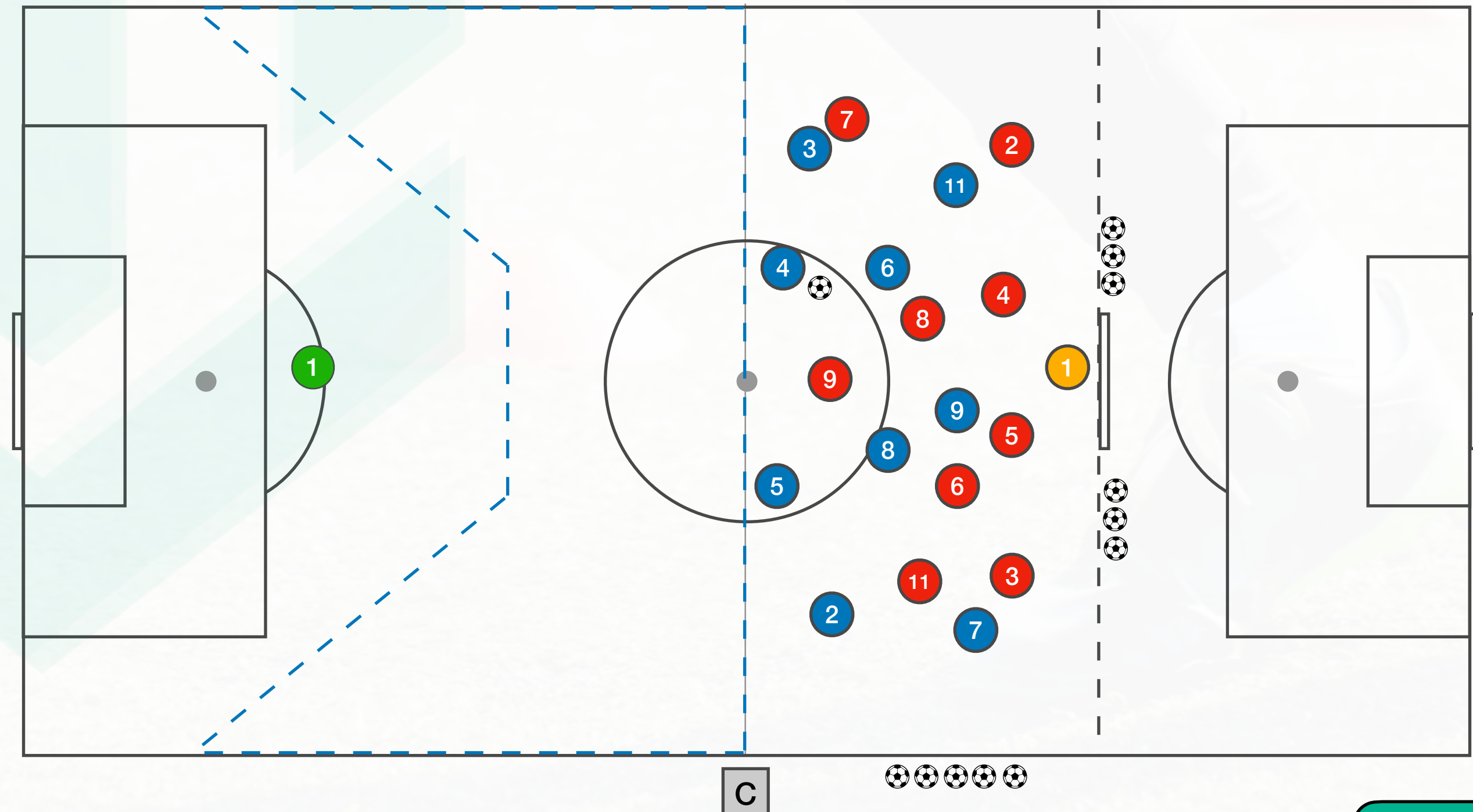
Objective 1: An improved anticipation of opponent counter attacks

Objective 2: An improved awareness of methods to deal with opposition's direct counter attacks

Objective 3: An improved future ability to turn and accelerate quickly to reach and maintain top speed during transitions

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 3/4 of the pitch. A full width zone is used for an attack vs defence game
- One team attacks the other in a tight area to try and break down the opponents defensive structure
- Players should be divided into two teams, 9+9+GKs, but more or less players can be used
- The attacking team are attempting to score in the quarter of the pitch over the halfway line
- The defending team are attempting to defend in the quarter of the pitch then counter attack
- E.g. The blue team start with the ball attacking against the red team attempting to score
- If the blue team score, they get another ball to attack again
- If they lose possession, the red team can exploit the space in behind with quick counter attacks
- The blue team must anticipate the turnover and counter press/recover to close the space behind
- If the blue team recover and regain the ball, they then have to retain possession for 5 passes
- If the red team counter attack they can attack and score
- After a time limit, the teams can swap roles
- This way both teams get to practice counter pressing and recovering into a block





070

TTD: Lose the Ball, Close the Middle

A **picture practice** that can be used to develop player's ability to counter press and close central passing lanes

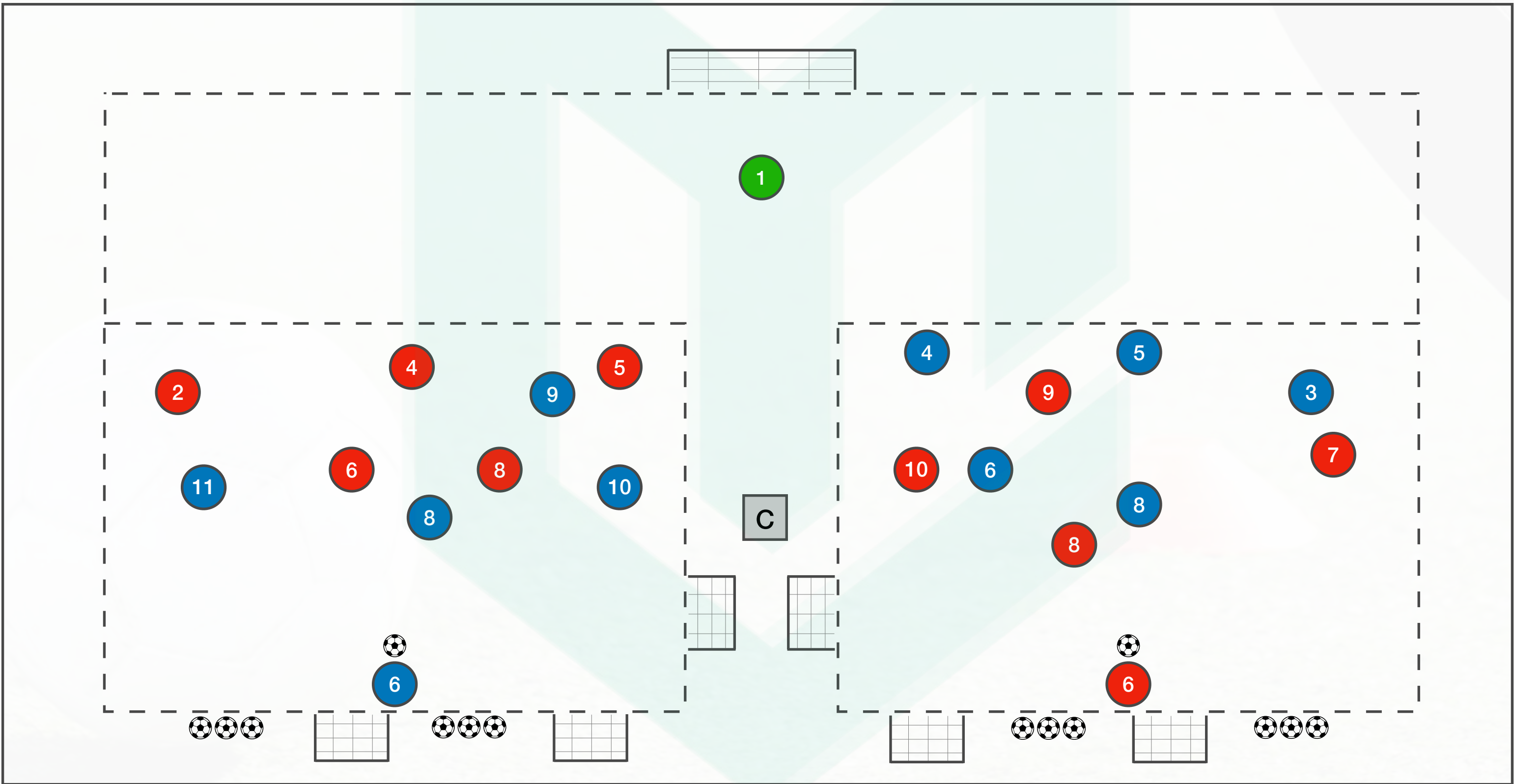
Numbers

17+

Age

13+

10 - 25 metres
15 - 30 metres



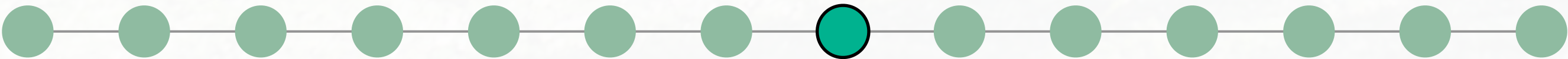
15 - 30 metres

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-4 x
8-15 mins





TTD: Lose the Ball, Close the Middle

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

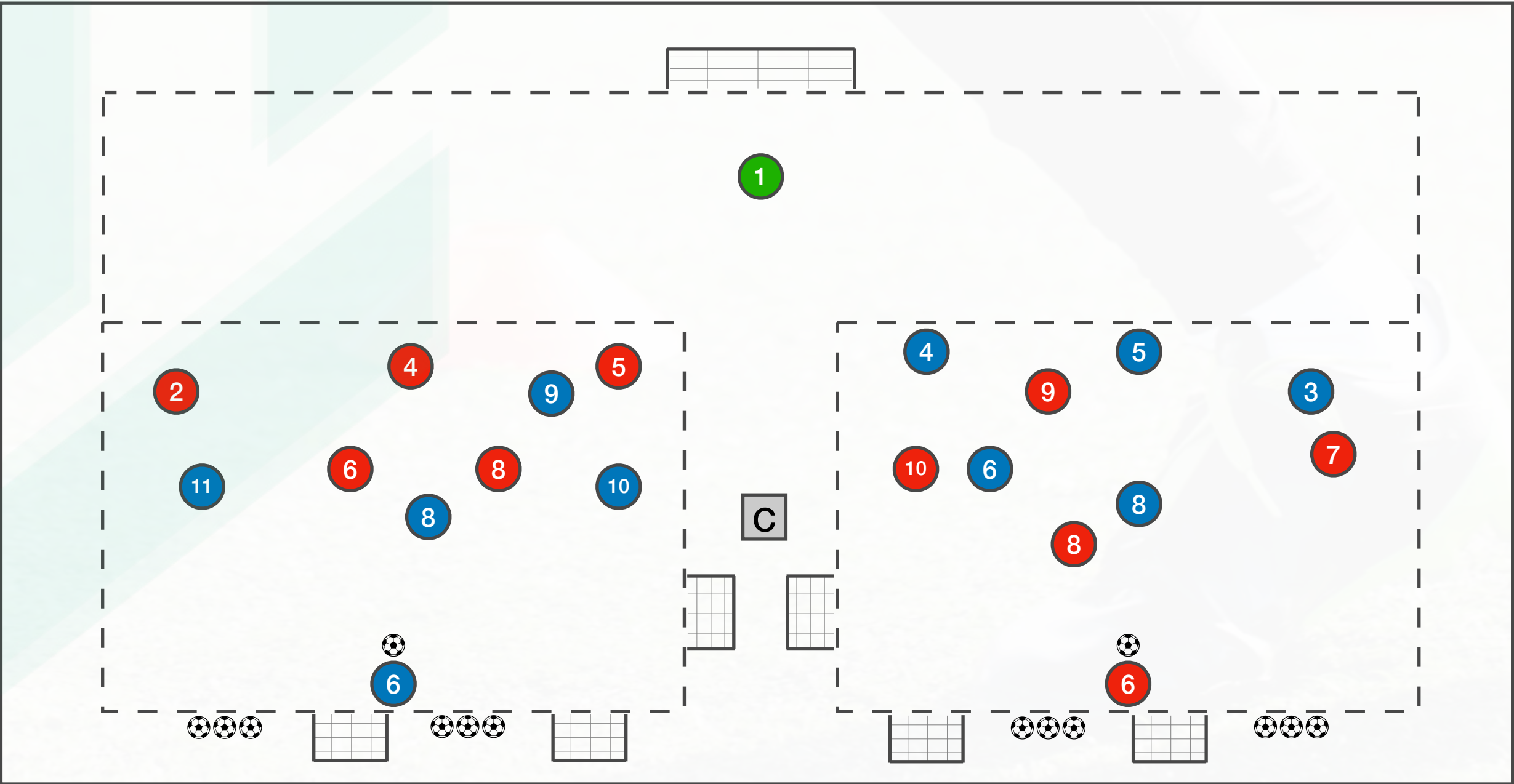
Objective 1: An improved understanding of how to counter press while cutting key passing lanes

Objective 2: A quicker reaction time to counter press after losing possession of the ball

Objective 3: An improved ability to break through opponents to create and score

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 2 grids within a large grid, 6 mini-goals and 1 full-sized goal with a GK
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 10
- Both teams are divided into an attacking team and defending team of 5 players each
- The attacking blue team attack on the left, and the defending blue team defend on the right
- The attacking red team attack on the right, and defend on the left
- In both grids, one team is attacking to try and break out of the square to score
- The other team is preventing the break out of the grid and regaining the ball to score in the mini-goals
- The first team to break out of the grid gets to have a chance at scoring in the full-sized goal
- The other grid pauses when this happens, waiting to restart the game at the same time.
- Each time a team breaks out and scores, they get 1 point
- If the defending teams regain the ball and score in the mini-goals, they also get 1 point
- The key to the game, is the attacking team protecting the central mini-goals when losing the ball
- Any time a ball goes out of play, it restarts from the mini-goals for the attackers to attack
- After a set time limit, teams swap sides, so the team defending on the left, now defends on the right





072

Wave Chaos

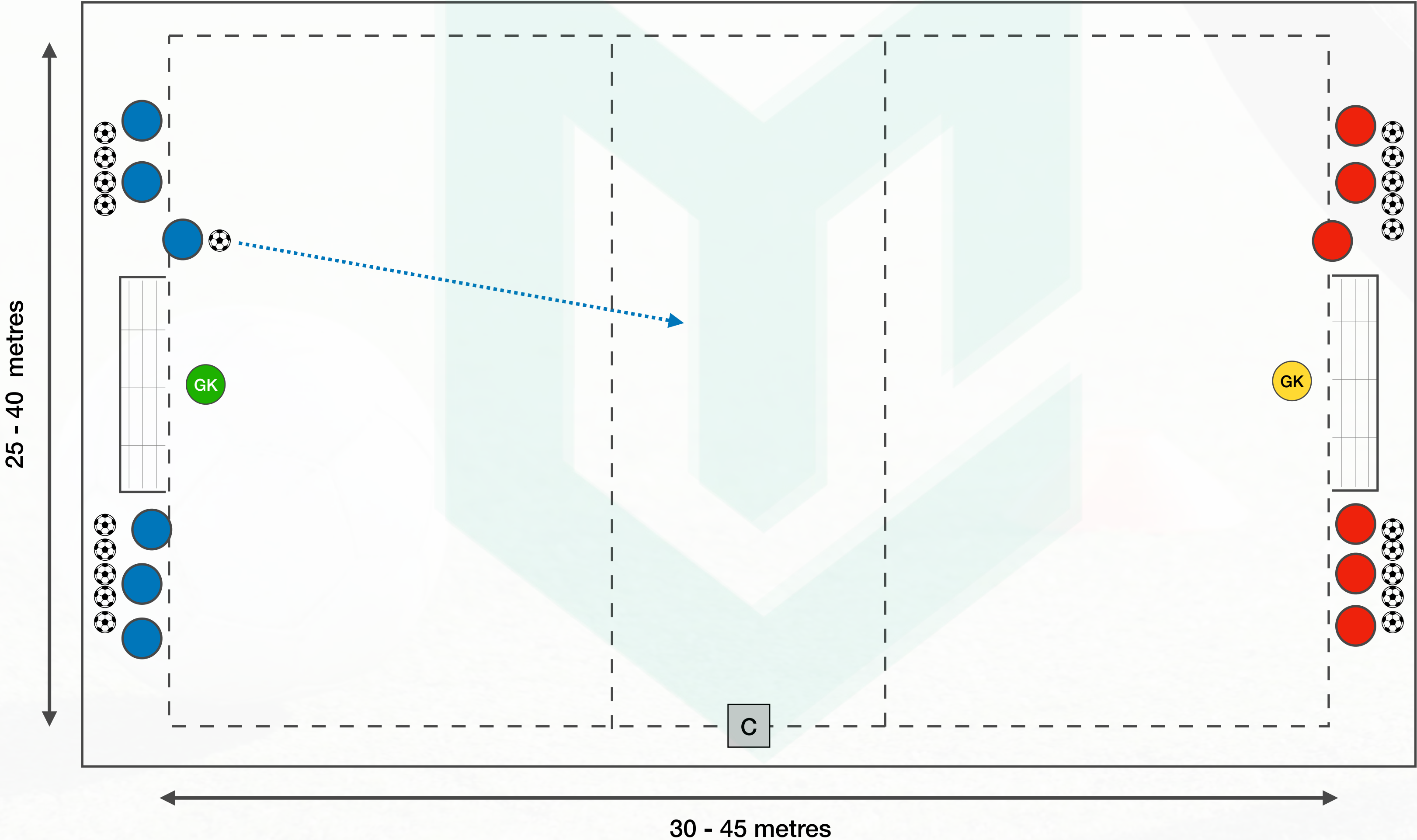
A **wave practice** to develop counter attacking with overloads, and equal numbers

Numbers

14+

Age

11+

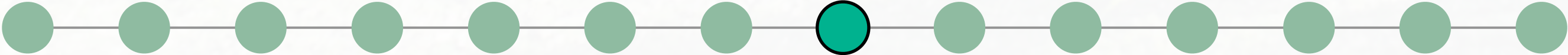


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

4 - 10 rounds





Wave Chaos

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

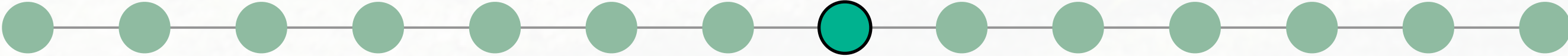
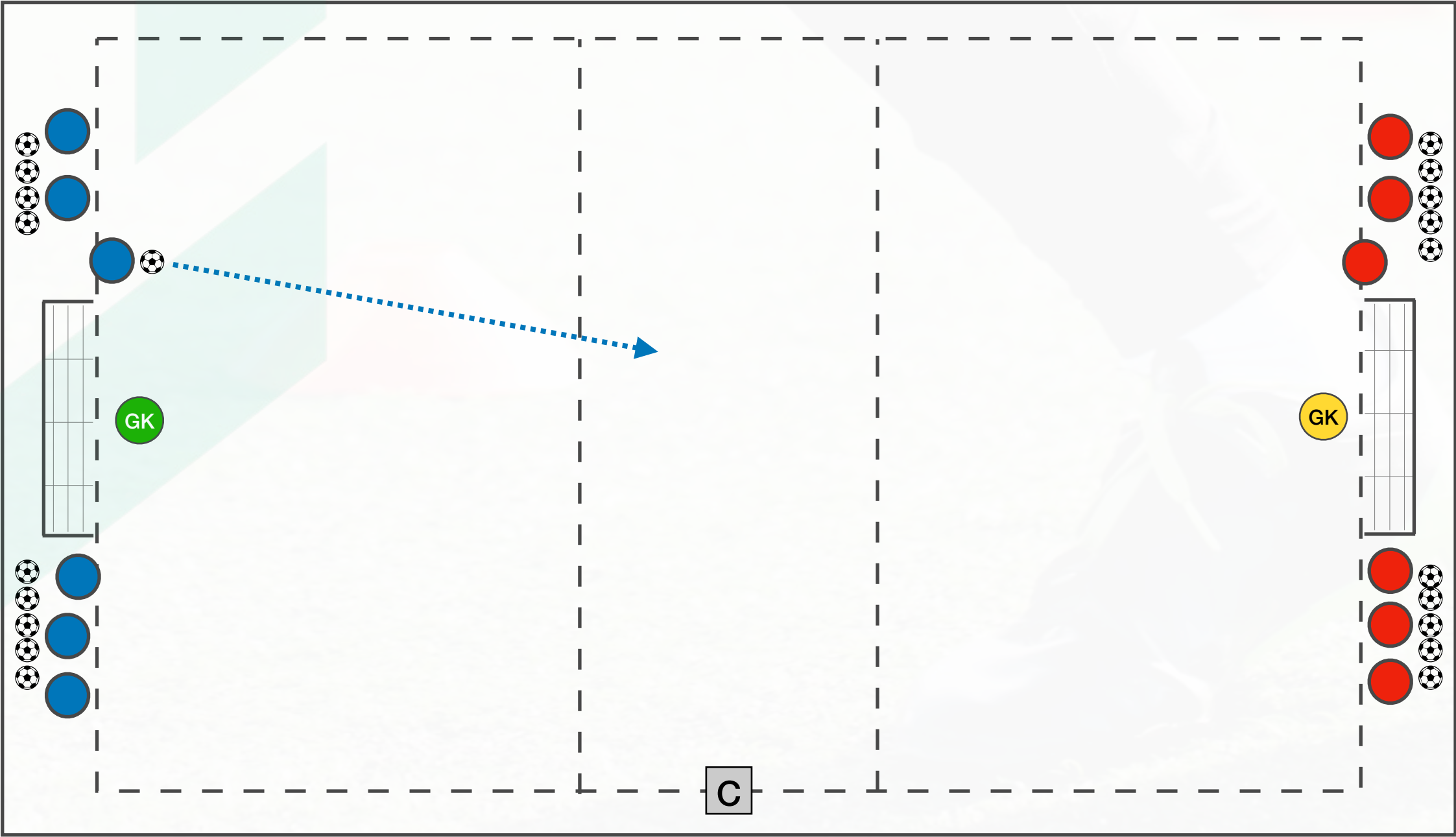
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of passing, dribbling, and finishing in and around the box

Objective 2: An improved decision making process to create and score in overloaded and equal number situations

Objective 3: An improved decision making process to defend with underloaded situations

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up containing two boxes (representing penalty areas) and a central channel between them
- The players are divided into two teams, and should spread equally on either side of each goal
- This game has 1vGK, 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3
- The game starts by one player dribbling onto the pitch to attack against the goalkeeper with no defenders
- E.g. The blue player dribbles onto the pitch to attack the red end, but no red defender can join.
- Once they score or the ball goes off the pitch, or the goalkeeper catches the ball, one red joins the pitch
- The red player either dribbles on to the pitch, or receives from the goalkeeper if it's in their hands
- The blue attacker, now becomes a defender, and defends 1v1 against the red attacker
- If the blue attacker (now a defender) regains the ball, they can attack again
- If they score, the goalkeeper catches, or the ball goes out of play, a new red player attacks
- If the red player attacks and scores/ball out of play/goalkeeper catches, a new blue dribbles onto the pitch
- This blue now joins with the blue defender to create a 2v1 attack against the red attacker (now defender)
- Once the 2v1 attack ends, another red joins to make 2v2, then another to make 3v2, adding one player each time
- This continues to 3v3, the only time a player leaves the pitch is if the opponent regains and attacks successfully
- The next round, the next group of 3s attack/defend, and the opposite team start with the 1vGK





TOPIC 7: HIGH PRESSING

Practices to develop a player's and team's ability to high press, regain possession and prevent penetration while using a high defensive line

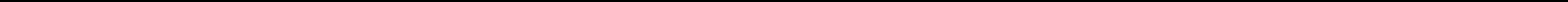


High Press Contents

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High Pressing



2

High Pressing Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Central Pressing Traps	Opening central passing lanes with the plan of quickly applying pressure to regain when the ball is played
Cover Defending	Cover defending to deal with passes and runners in behind
Dealing with Aerial Duels	Defenders preparation and participation in aerial duels to regain possession
Double Team	Two teammates pressing together to force a mistake and regain
Goalkeeper as the Sweeper	Goalkeeper positioning should ensure long balls into the space in behind are received to regain possession
High Press into Block Structure	Moving from the High Press into a defensive block structure if required
Initiating the Press	Identifying the right time to apply the first press, to trigger teammates to press
Joining the Press	Players joining the press to close passing lanes, create traps, and force regains
Jumping into the Next Line	Sprinting to press a player in the next line, e.g. a full back sprinting to press an opponent full back in the midfield line
Negative Pressing	Pressing from behind a player who is facing the goal they are attacking to force a quick decision
Offside Trap	Using the offside trap to deal with runs and passes in behind
Passing Players On	As the pressing structure moves, players must communicate when a teammate must be aware of a different opponent
Player to Player Press	Pressing player to player (1v1) to ensure pressure on all passing options
Screening Direct Passes	Players standing in front (can be at a distance) of opponent target players or pocket players
Terminating Possession	Regaining the ball and initiating a transition moment
Wide Pressing Traps	Opening wide passing lanes with the plan of quickly applying pressure to regain when the ball is played



End to End Pressing

A **free possession practice** to develop high pressing structures and strategies

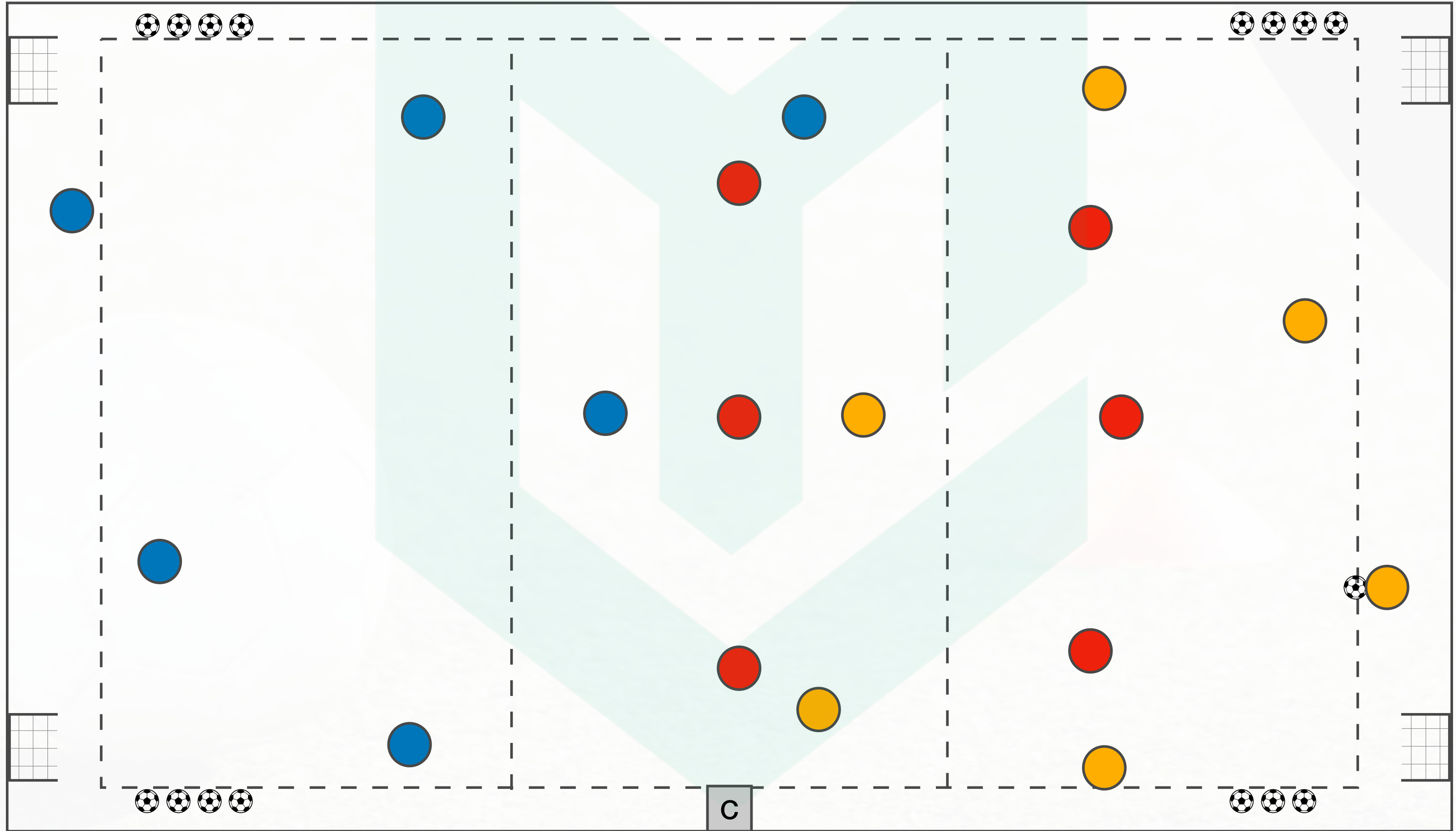
Numbers

15+

Age

12+

20 - 40 metres



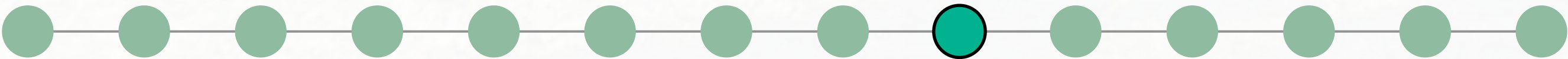
30 - 45 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-8 x 3-8 mins





End to End Pressing

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

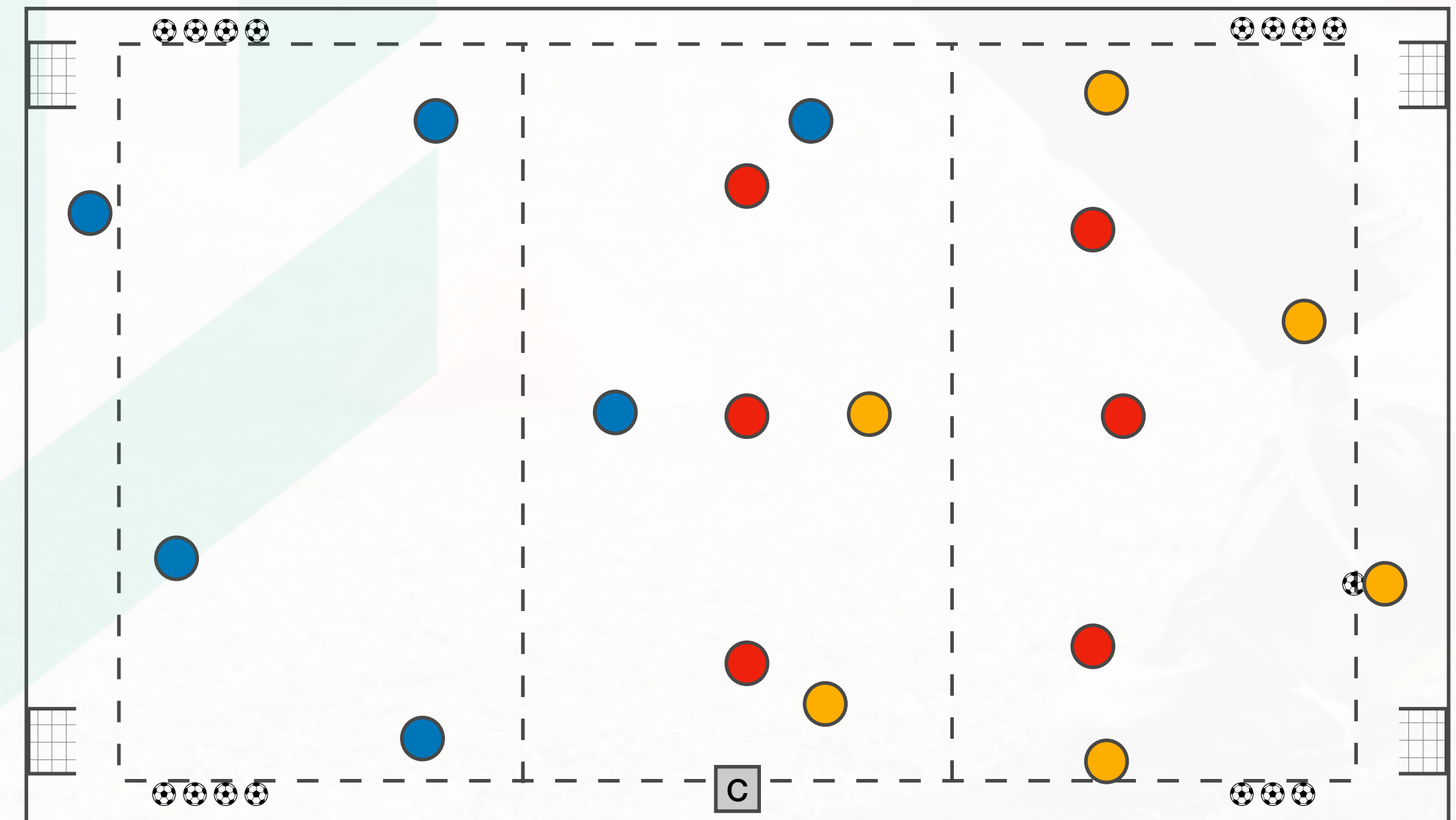
Objective 1: An increased confidence and ability to use the high press as a tactical tool in matches

Objective 2: An improved understanding of the different structures that can be used during the high press

Objective 3: An improved ability to identify the timing to initiate the press, participate in the press, and terminate possession

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up on a rectangle grid with 3 zones and 4 mini-goals
- The mini-goals are used when the pressing team regain the ball
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 6, 2 teams working together as the possession team
- The third team are the pressing team
- The possession team of 12 players is divided across the 3 zones with 4 players in each zone
- The pressing team is divided across the middle zone and the zone where the ball is
- They start with 3 in each of the 2 zones
- All players are free to move across the zones once the game starts
- A time limit is required for the pressing team
- Their objective is to regain the ball and score as many goals as possible within the time limit
- At the end of the time limit, teams rotate so a different team presses in the next round
- If the possession team transfers 4 times without interceptions, the time limit restarts back to 0
- No end zone to end zone aerial passes can be used
- At the end of the practice, the team with the most goals wins.





073

The Full High Press

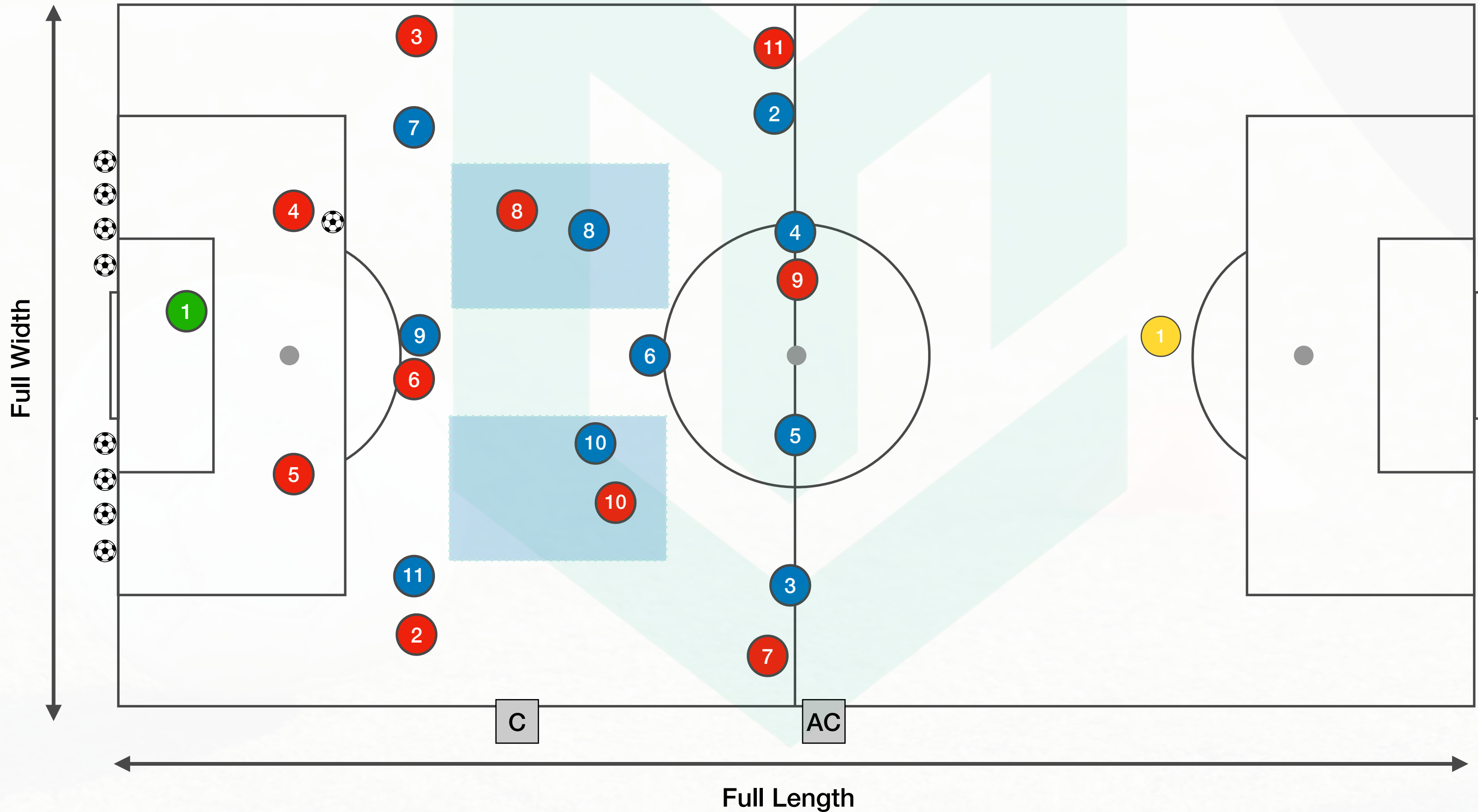
A **large sided practice** to develop high pressing structures, strategies and detail across the full team

Numbers

22

Age

14+

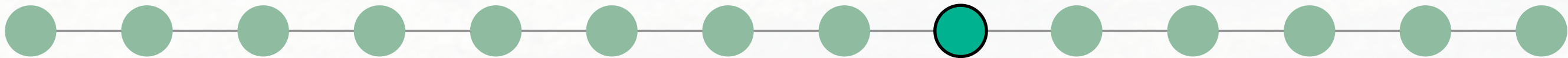


Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-5 x
8-15
mins





The Full High Press

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

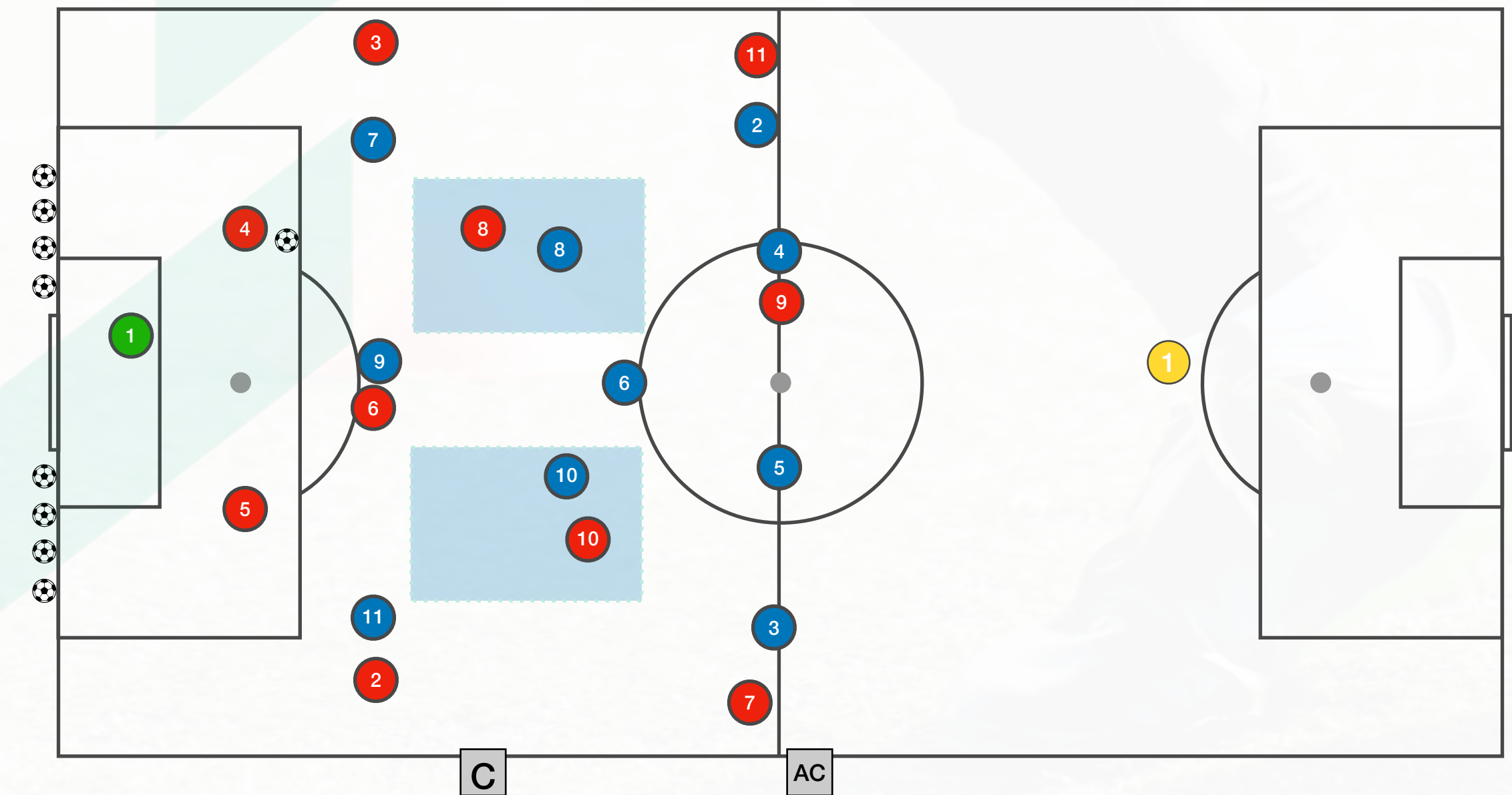
Objective 1: An increased confidence and ability to use the high press as a tactical tool in matches

Objective 2: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities for the players, units, and team

Objective 3: An improved understanding of when to move from a high press into a defensive block structure

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up on a normal full pitch
- Pressing zones are added to indicate the specific areas where the team should invite passes and force regains
- The size and location of the pressing zones can be adjusted based on the key areas you wish to apply pressure
- Alternatively, pressing traps can be set on players (forcing passes to a specific player then applying pressure)
- If available, one support staff member can monitor the offside from the same side
- The game starts with either a goal kick or open play pass in the first third from the red team
- The red teams objective is to beat the blue teams high press and score
- The blue teams objective is to create pressing traps as mentioned above, and regain possession
- Once possession is regained, they have 10 seconds to score or retain the ball





074

High Press Repetition

A **phase practice** to develop players ability to initiate the press, participate in the press, and terminate possession

Numbers

14+

Age

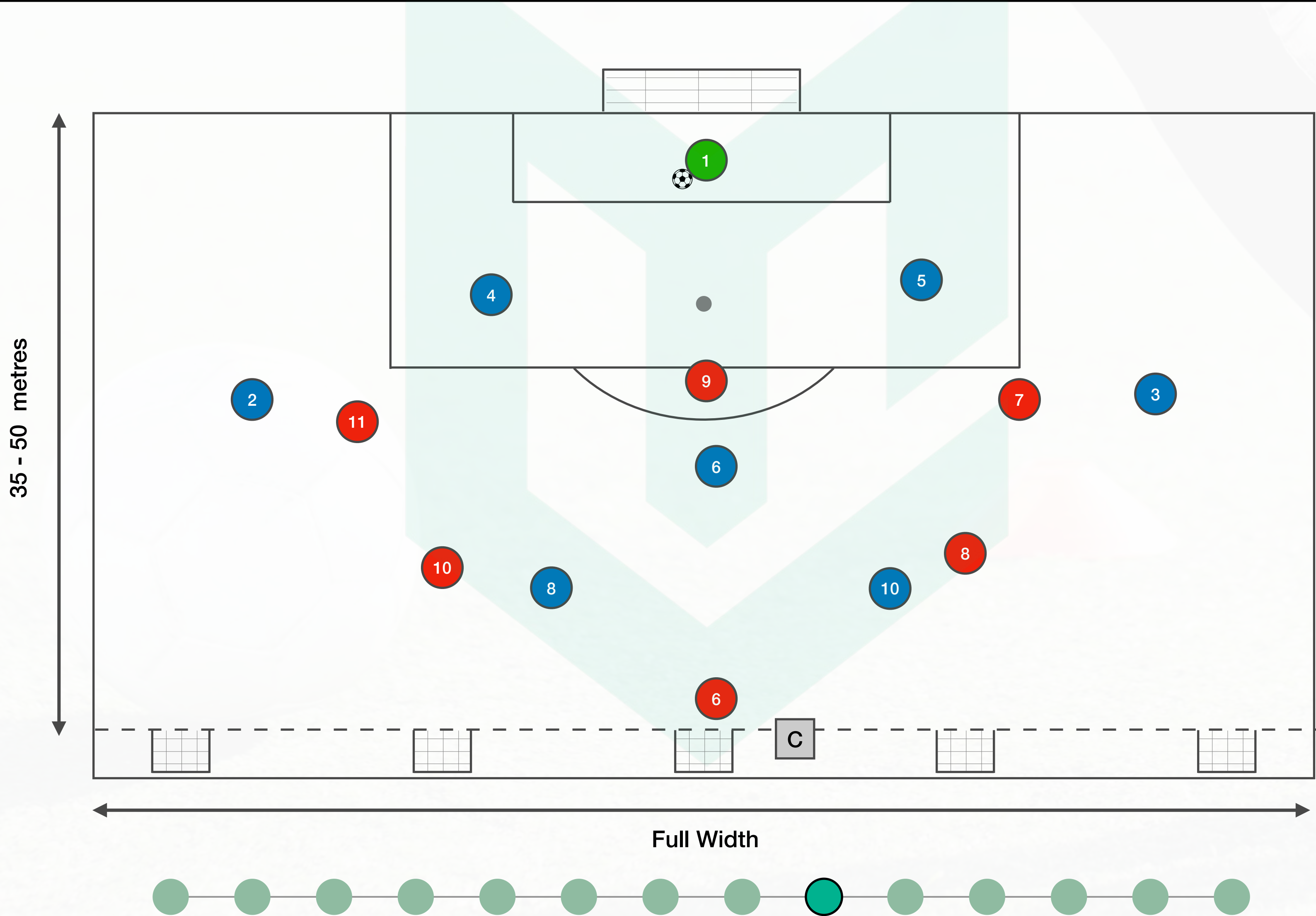
13+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-5 x
6-12
mins





High Press Repetition

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

Objective 1: An increased confidence and ability to use the high press as a tactical tool in matches

Objective 2: An improved cohesion between units to press together efficiently

Objective 3: An improved ability to identify the timing to initiate the press, participate in the press, and terminate possession

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 10 metres under half a pitch, with 5 mini-goals and a full-sized goal
- Players are divided into two teams, one team that builds-up, and one team that presses
- The build-up team have 7 players plus the goalkeeper, the pressing team needs 6 players
- The mini-goals represent the passing lines that may need to be cut to prevent passes to attackers
- The objective for the build-up team is to score in the mini-goals
- The objective for the pressing team is to regain the ball and score in the full-sized goal
- The game starts with build-up from the goalkeeper
- Anytime the ball goes out of play, the game starts with the build-up team
- Each goal counts as 1 point
- The winning team is the team with the highest points at the end of the time limit





075

High Press x2

A **positional possession practice** to develop players ability to execute repeated pressing actions without rest in between

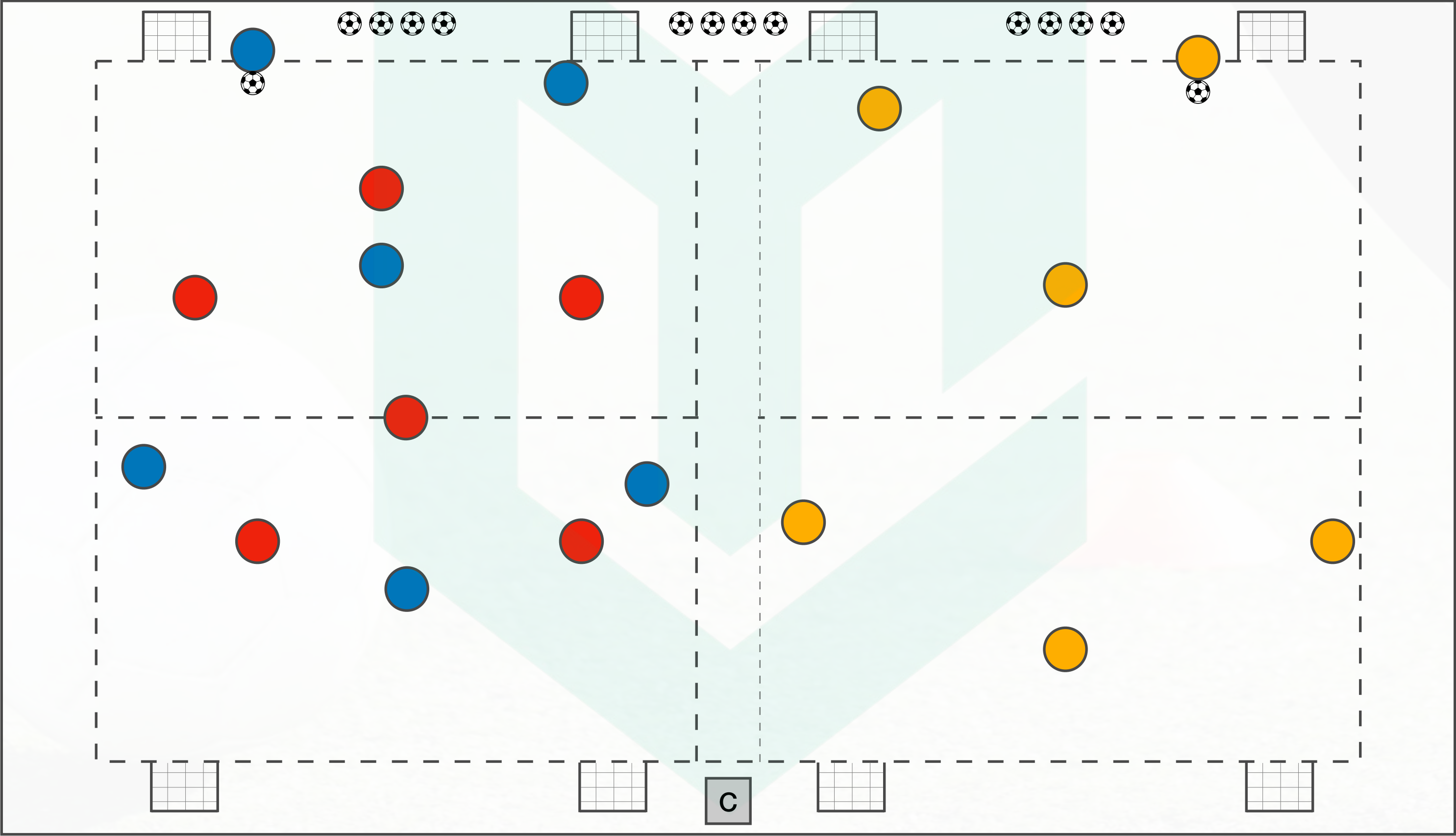
Numbers

18+

Age

12+

30 - 50 metres



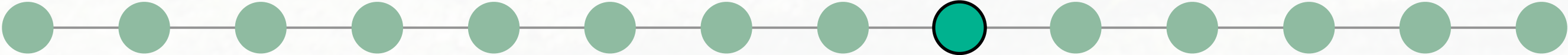
15 - 30 metres

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

6 actions/
team- x 2-5
rounds





High Press x2

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

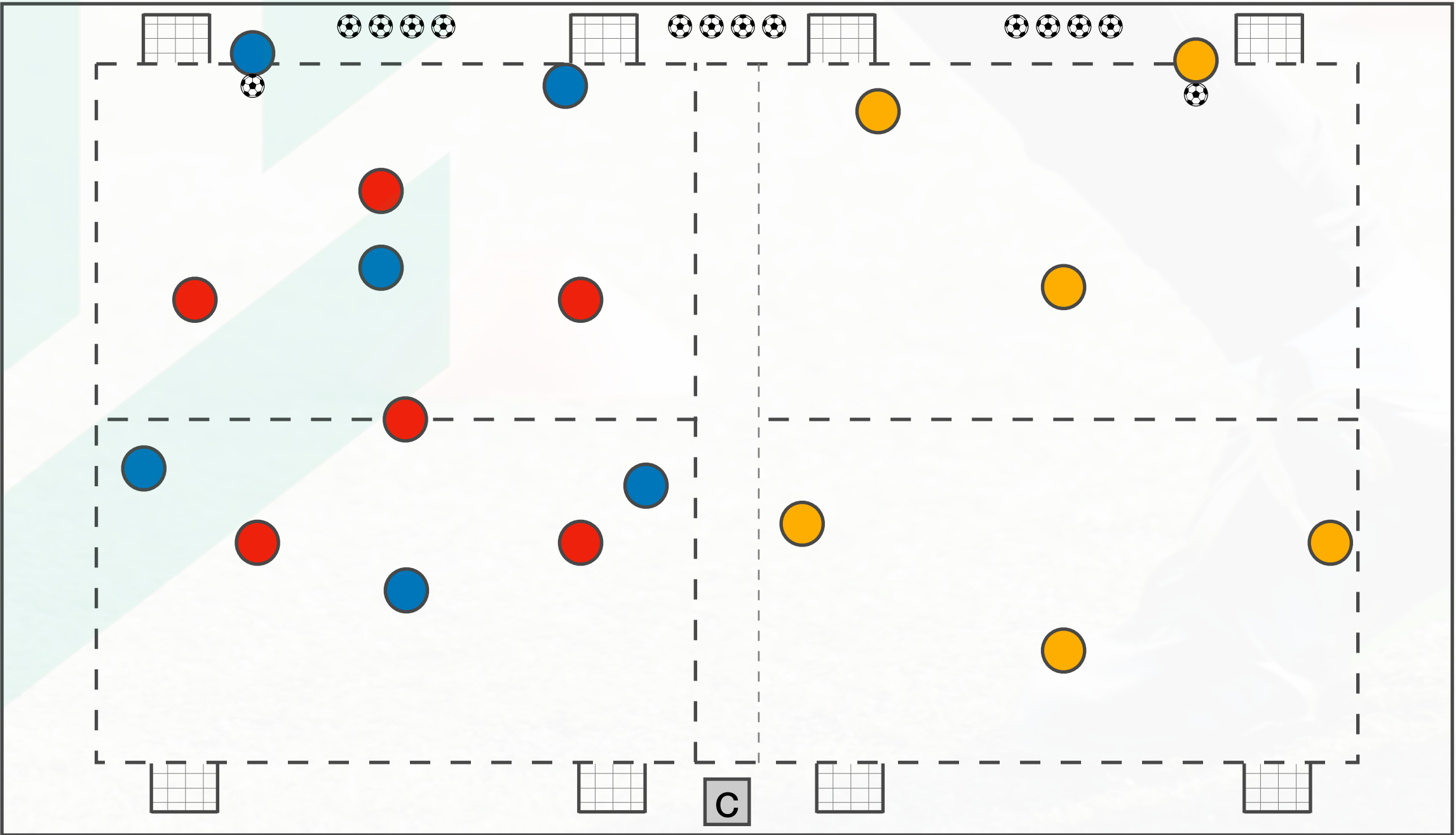
Objective 1: An increased future capacity to execute repeated pressing actions with limited rest time

Objective 2: An improved understanding of how to regain the ball under the pressure of a short time limit

Objective 3: An improved awareness of different angles of pressure and the impact they have on opponent actions

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with 2 rectangle grids, with 4 mini-goals on the corners of each grid
- A halfway line is added to support the use of offsides
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 6 players
- 2 teams start 1 pitch against each other, and 1 team waits on the next pitch
- 1 team is a pressing team, and they will work across both pitches for a set time limit, e.g. 2 minutes
- The game starts with the pressing team on pitch 1 against an attacking team
- Their objective is to regain the ball and score in the mini-goals for 1 point within 15 seconds
- The objective of the attacking team is to score in the opposite mini-goals within 15 seconds
- After 15 seconds, the pressing team moves to pitch 2, and 5 seconds later the next action starts
- The attacking team on pitch 2 now attempt to score within 15 seconds for 1 point
- The pressing team again attempt to regain and score within 15 seconds for 1 point
- This continues for a set number of actions, e.g. 6 actions, 3 on each pitch
- At 15 seconds maximum per action, with 5 second gaps, each round is a maximum of 2 minutes
- If the ball goes out of play, the action is over and they move onto the next action
- After the 6 actions, or 2 minutes has finished, the teams rotate
- The team with the most points at the end of the practice wins





076

Mini High Press Repetition

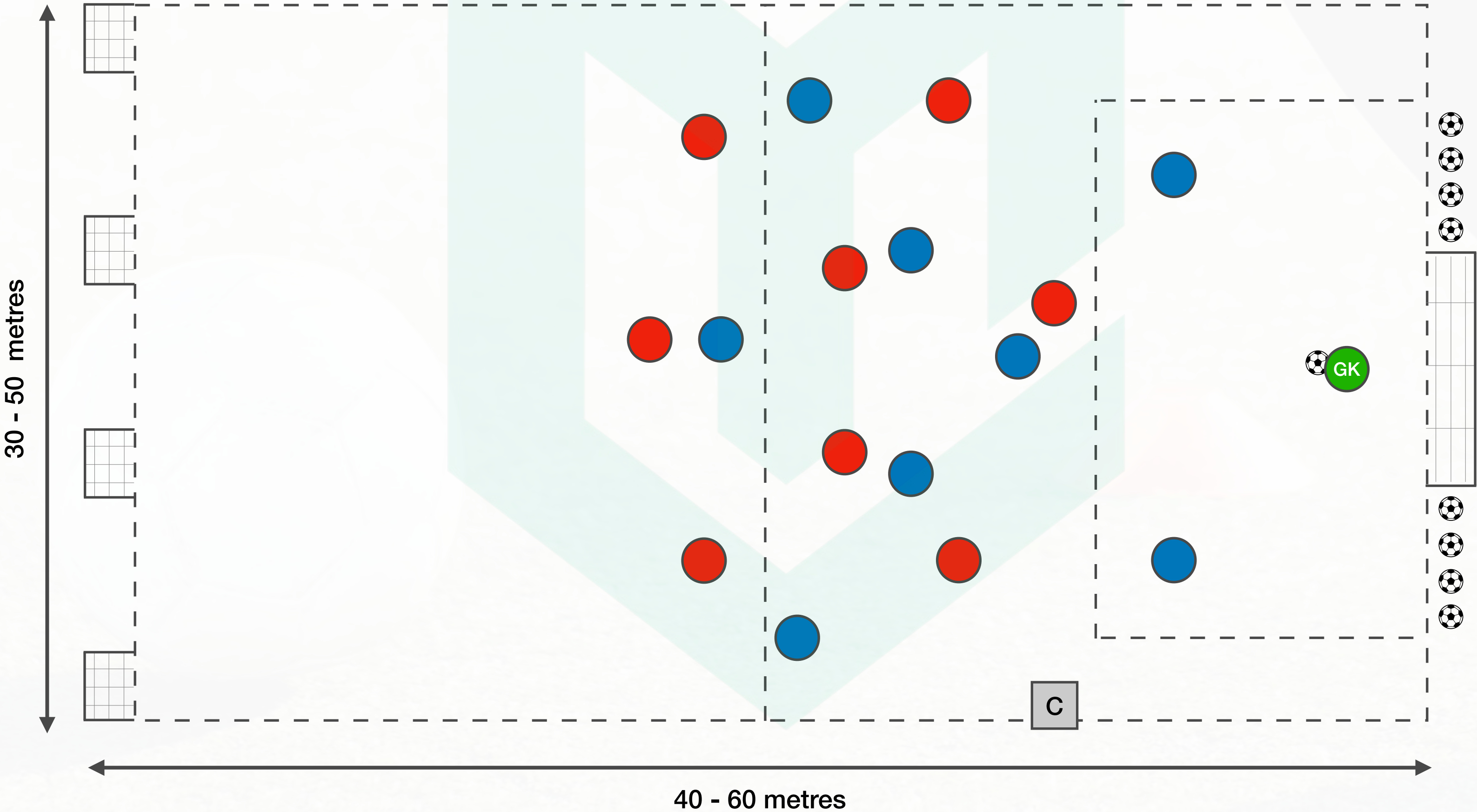
A **medium sided game** to develop player's ability to execute repeated pressing actions to regain the ball

Numbers

15+

Age

13+

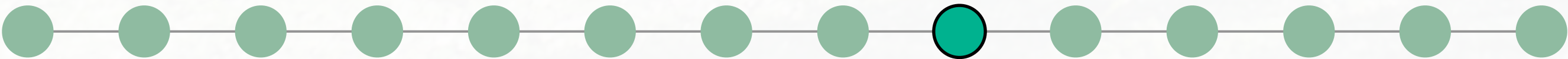


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-6 x
4-8
mins





Mini High Press Repetition

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

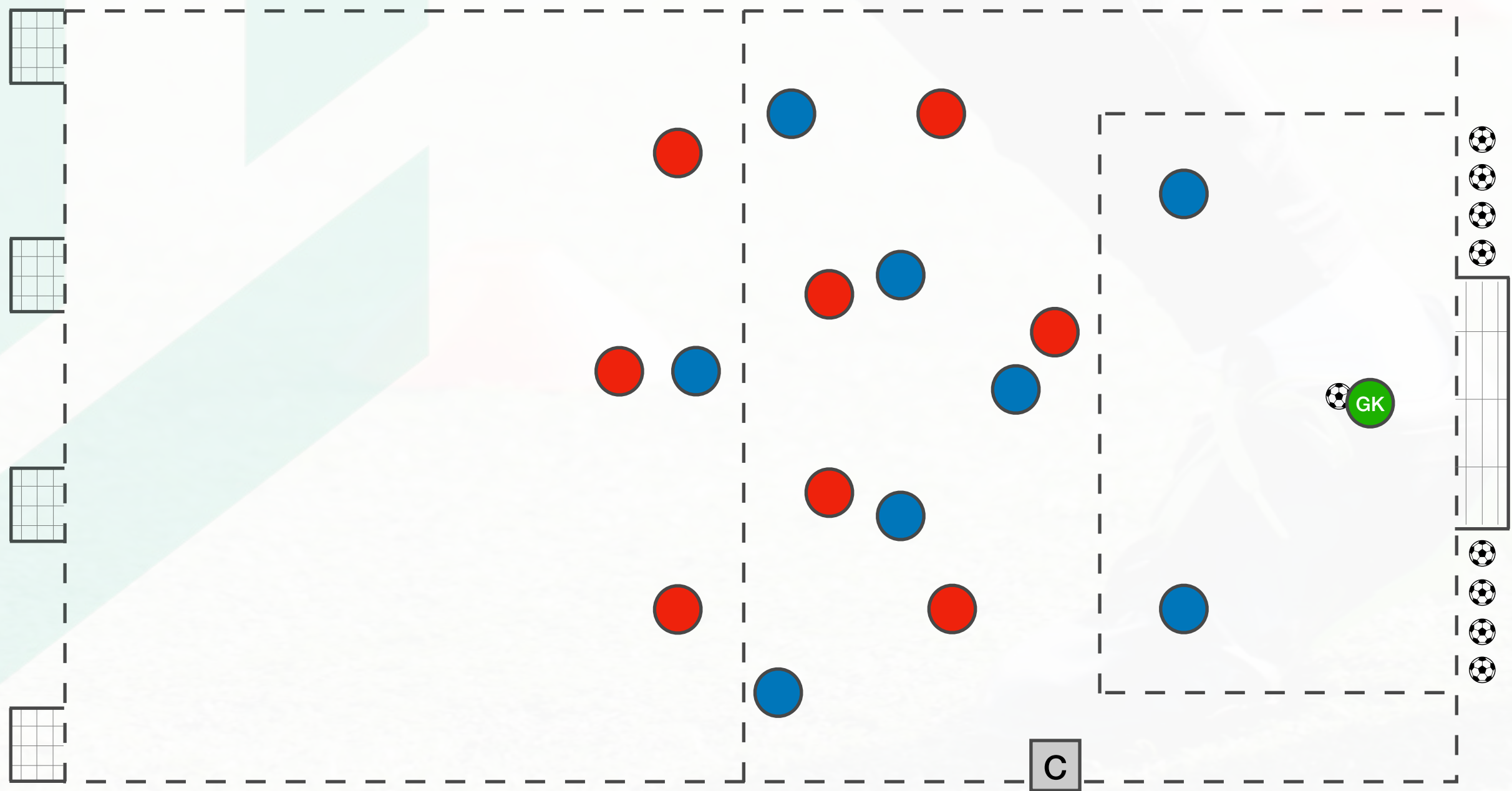
Objective 1: An increased ability to deal with a variety of opposition build-ups

Objective 2: An improved understanding of dealing with direct passes when playing with a high line and high pressure

Objective 3: An improved awareness of different angles of pressure and the impact they have on opponent actions

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a rectangle grid, a halfway line, penalty area, 1 full-sized goal and 4 mini-goals
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 8, with 1 goalkeeper playing for the attacking team
- 1 team will primarily attack, and 1 team will primarily defend
- The objective of the pressing team is to high press and regain the ball, then score in the full-sized goal
- Upon regaining the ball, a time limit should be used e.g. they have 8 seconds to score after the regain
- The attacking teams objective is to build-up against the press and score in the mini-goals
- The game starts and restarts with the attacking team building up from the goalkeeping.
- A total time limit can be used, before teams can swap and rotate roles
- The winning team is the team with the most goals after both have pressed for an equal amount of time





077

Pressing Pairs

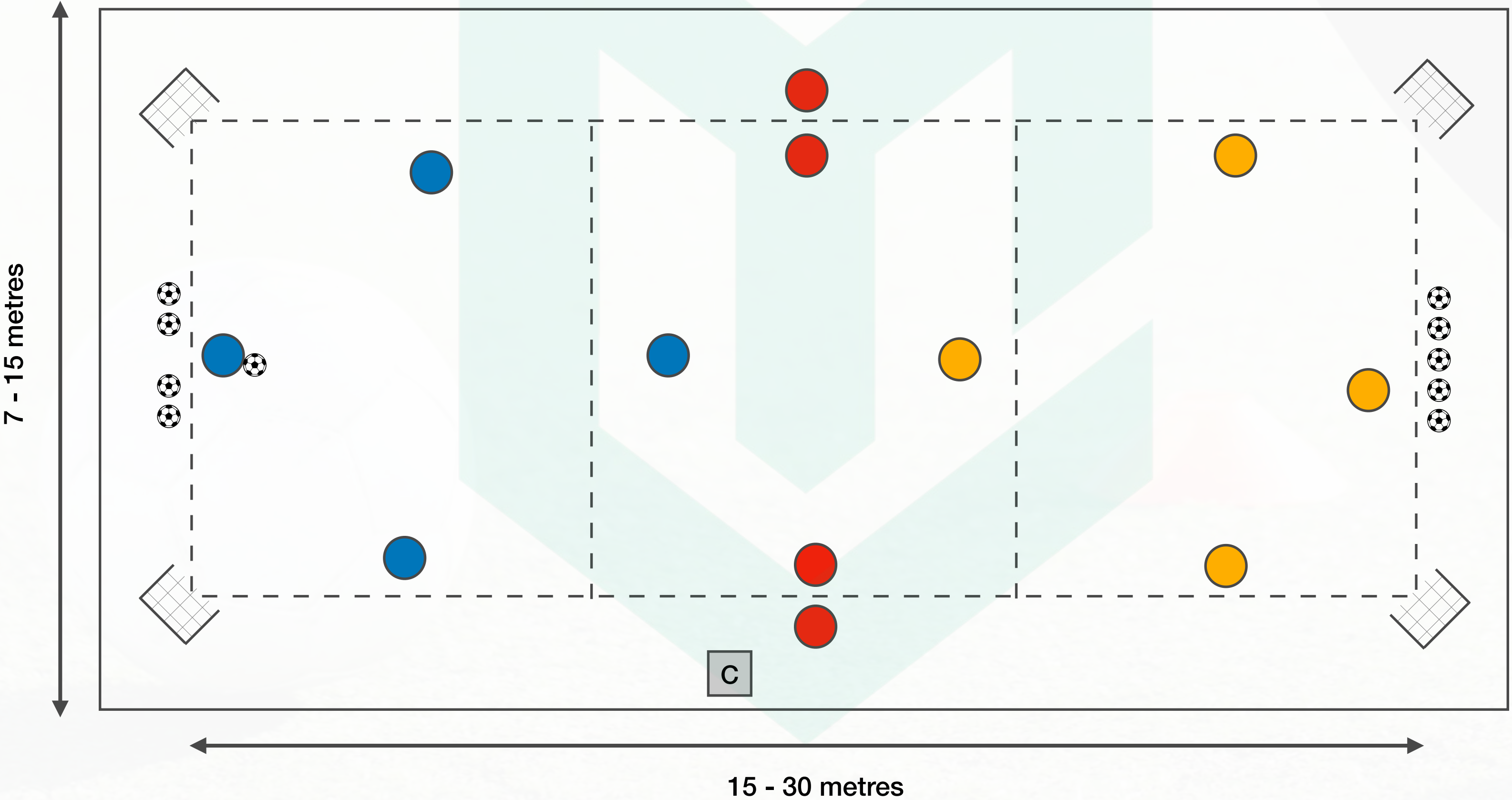
A directional **possession practice** to develop pressing partnerships

Numbers

12+

Age

11+

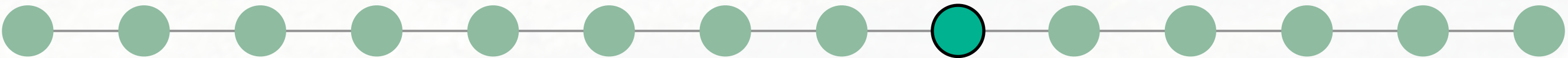


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-4 x 3-8 mins





Pressing Pairs

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

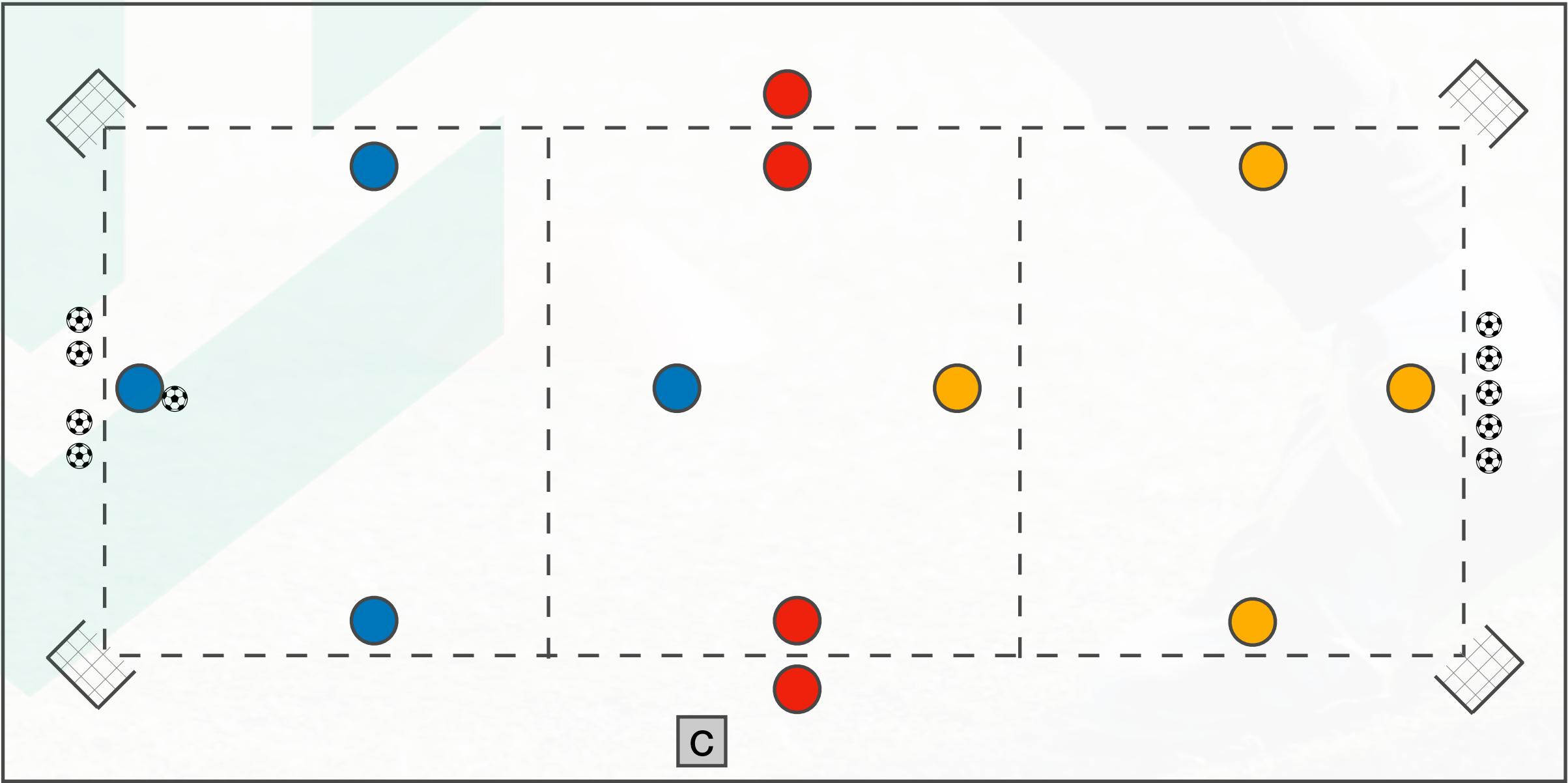
Objective 1: An increased confidence and ability to use the high press as a tactical tool in matches

Objective 2: An improved understanding of the triggers to initiate the press at the right time

Objective 3: An improved cohesion between players to communicate and press together using efficient angles and timing

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using three grids, and 4 mini-goals, 1 in each corner
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 4 players each
- 1 team starts on the sides of the middle grid, with the other teams at each end
- 3 players from each of the other 2 teams start in the end grids, with 1 of each in the middle grid
- 1 team starts with the ball at 1 end, and 2 players from the pressing team sprint into the middle grid
- The team in possession must play through their middle player to transfer to the opposite end
- The pressing pair must prevent penetration to the middle grid player, and regain the ball in 10 seconds
- If they regain the ball and score, they become the possession team at that end
- The team that lost the ball now become the pressing team, and 2 players go straight to press
- If the pressing team do not regain the ball in the time limit, or the ball gets transferred, the pairs swap
- The pair that was pressing leave the grids, and the other pair from the same team start pressing
- If one team presses for too long, teams can rotate to manage the workload
- The team with the most transfers wins the game





TOPIC 8: THE DEFENSIVE BLOCK

Practices to develop a player's and team's ability to prevent penetration and regain possession of the ball using a defensive block structure



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Coaching Points: Defensive Block

Defensive Block Coaching Points	Explanation
Accelerations and Decelerations	Accelerating and decelerating quickly to apply pressure and react to ball movement
Adaptation of Block Structure	Adapting the block structure after identification of the opponents build-up structure and strategy
Angles of Pressure	Pressing at the right angle to force play into an area of strength for the defensive block
Anticipation of Counter Attack Opportunities	Players should stay aware of potential counter attacking opportunities to react quickly to the regain
Awareness of Opponent Player Profiles	Awareness of opponent profiles allows pressing players at specific angles and speeds e.g. forcing onto weak foot
Blocking Runners	Defenders can block runners attempting to run in behind the defensive line
Body Shape of Defensive Line	Defensive line body shapes should enable efficient movement and preparation for passes to a player and into space
Communication	Verbal communication and body language should be expressed throughout the team to manage block situations
Defensive Unit Behaviours	Continuous adjustment of the defensive unit with key phrases such as, step, slide, drop
Quick and Early Organisation	Setting up the defensive block structure as soon as possible after identifying it as the next phase
Structural Balance	Managing the number of players in each line of the defensive block e.g. how far do wingers track an opponent
Tackling to Regain	Challenging opponents with tackles to regain at the right time
Timing of Pressure	Identifying the right time to initiate pressure to start the process of regaining the ball in the block
Using the Touchline	When forcing wide, the touchline increases pressure and limits options for the opponent

Coaching Pictures: Defensive Block

Defensive Block Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Defensive Block to High Press	Moving from a defensive block structure to a high press structure when the time is right
Central Pressing Traps	Opening central passing lanes with the plan of quickly applying pressure to regain when the ball is played
Closing the Centre	Closing all central passing lanes and opening up wide passing lanes
Closing the Line	Closing the passing option of a straight forward pass in wide areas
Cover Defending	Cover defending to deal with passes and runners in behind
Defending Direct Passes	The defensive line dealing with direct passes in behind and into opponents feet, chest, or head
Defending the Diagonal	Dealing with the direct switch of play from the opponent.
Initiating the Press	Identifying the right time to apply the first press, to trigger teammates to press
Joining the Press	Players joining the press to close passing lanes, create traps, and force regains
Jumping to Press	Sprinting to press a player in the next line, e.g. a full back sprinting to press an opponent full back in the midfield line
Offside Trap	Using the offside trap to deal with runs and passes in behind
Screening Penetration	When no pressure is on the ball, penetrative passing options must be screened
Terminating Possession	Regaining the ball and initiating a transition moment
Wide Pressing Traps	Opening wide passing lanes with the plan of quickly applying pressure to regain when the ball is played



078

Back 5 to Back 4

A **picture practice** to develop the defensive unit when playing in a back 5 to move into a back 4 when pressing on the sides

Numbers

16+

Age

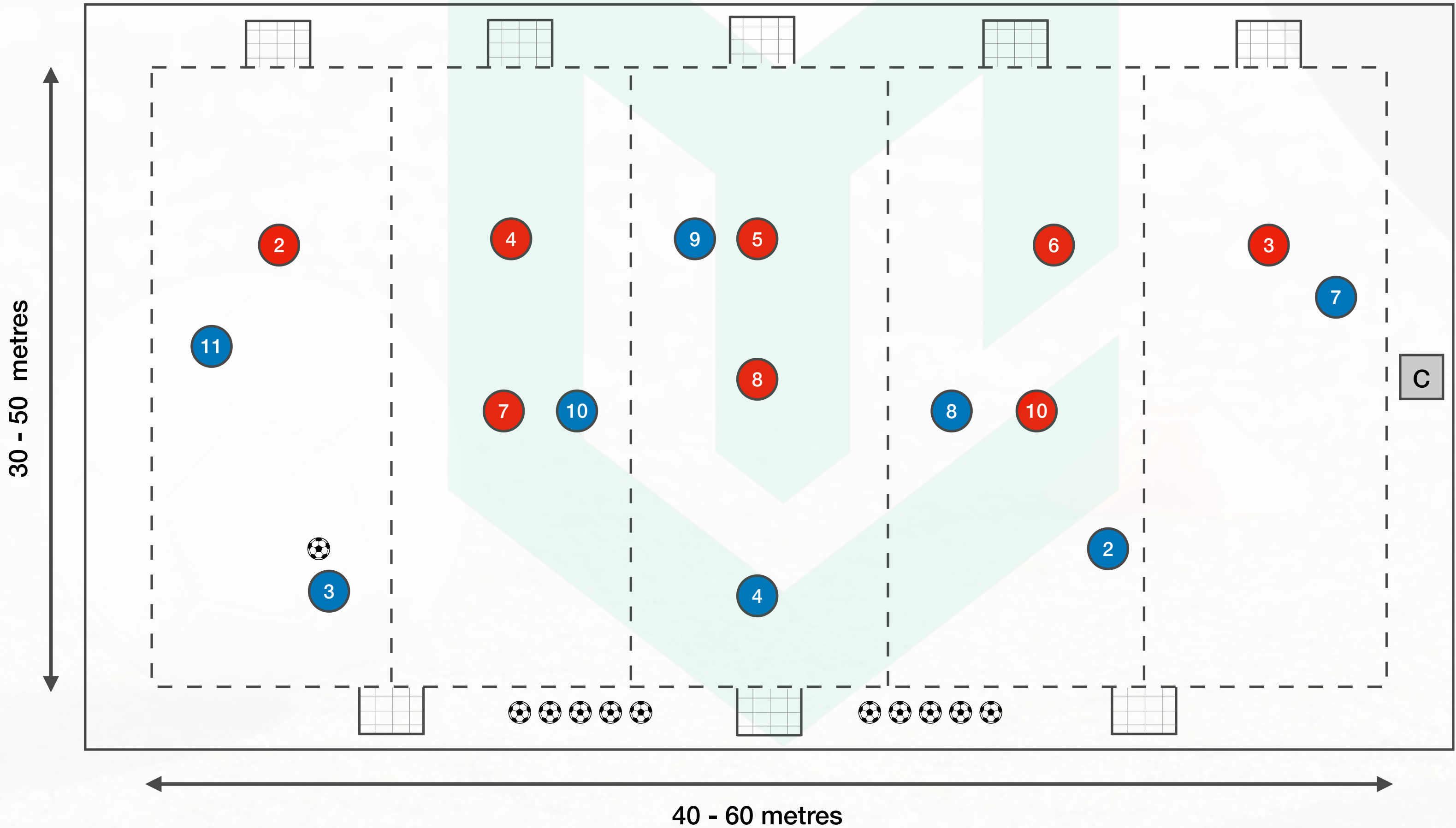
14+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

3-5 x
6-12
mins

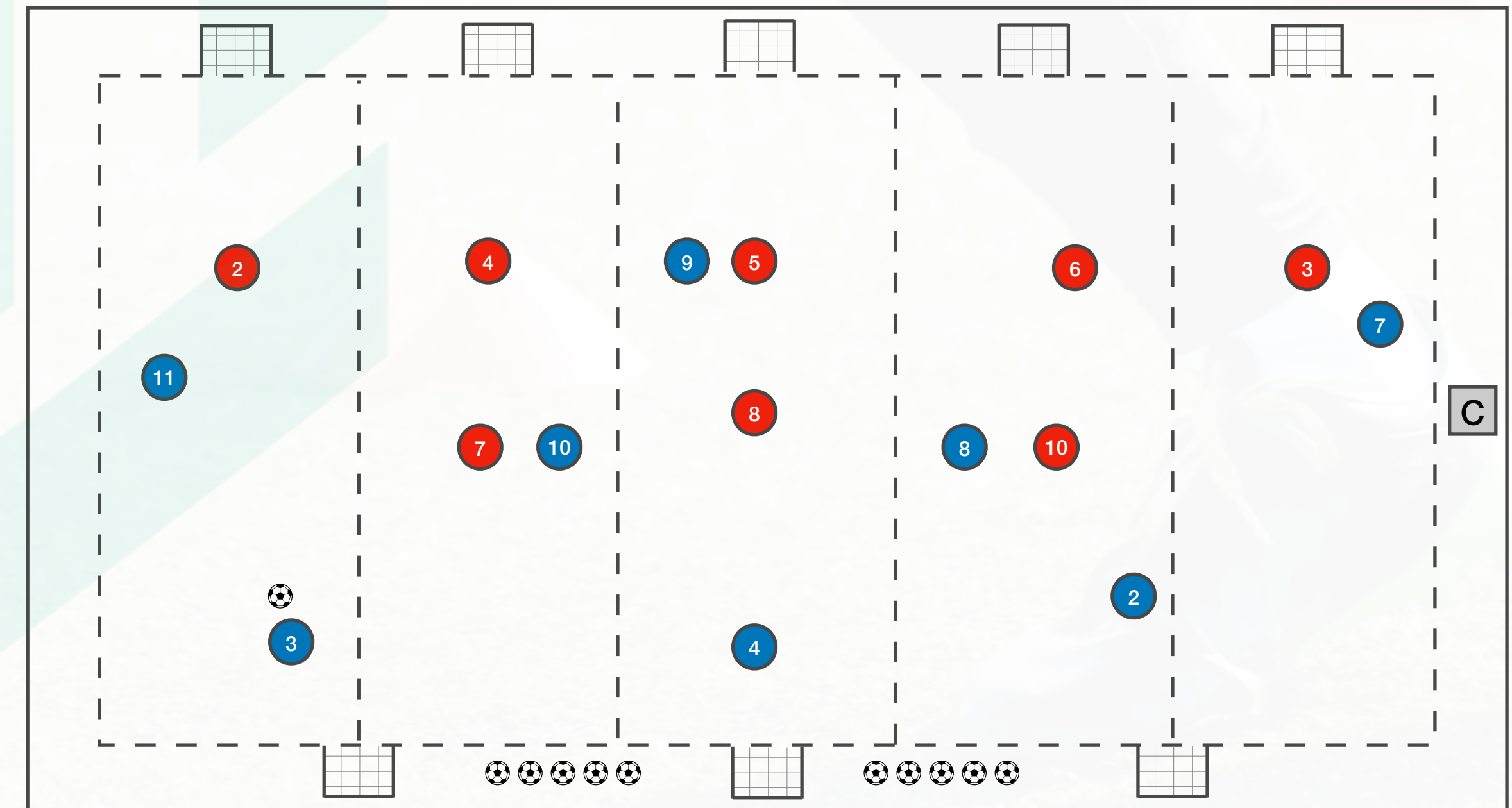


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An increased understanding of the roles and responsibilities when playing in a back 5

Objective 3: An improved level of detail when executing defensive within a block structure

- The game is set up using a wide rectangle pitch, that is wide in length, and narrow in height
- 5 channels are created, which do not restrict any player movement
- 1 mini-goal is placed in each channel at the one end, and 3 evenly spread at the other end
- Players are divided into two teams of 8
- One team is set up in a back 5 and midfield 3, which defends the end with 5 mini-goals
- The attacking team has 3 defenders, 2 midfielder, and 3 attackers
- The attacking team must try to break down the opponents, while protecting their goals
- Players can move without restrictions but should attempt to play as they would in a full match
- The attacking team starts with the balls from their end anytime the ball goes out of play/a goal is scored
- Their objective is to create disorganisation among the defending team to score in one of the 5 mini-goals
- If the defending team regain the ball, they then attempt to counter attack and score in the 3 mini-goals
- A 5 pass limit for the defending team ensures the majority of the time the defending team are out of possession
- The game ends once a team reaches a target score, or a set time limit is completed





Continuous Defending

A one direction **wave practice** to create a high repetition and variety of defensive situations to develop individual and unit defending ability

Numbers

17+

Age

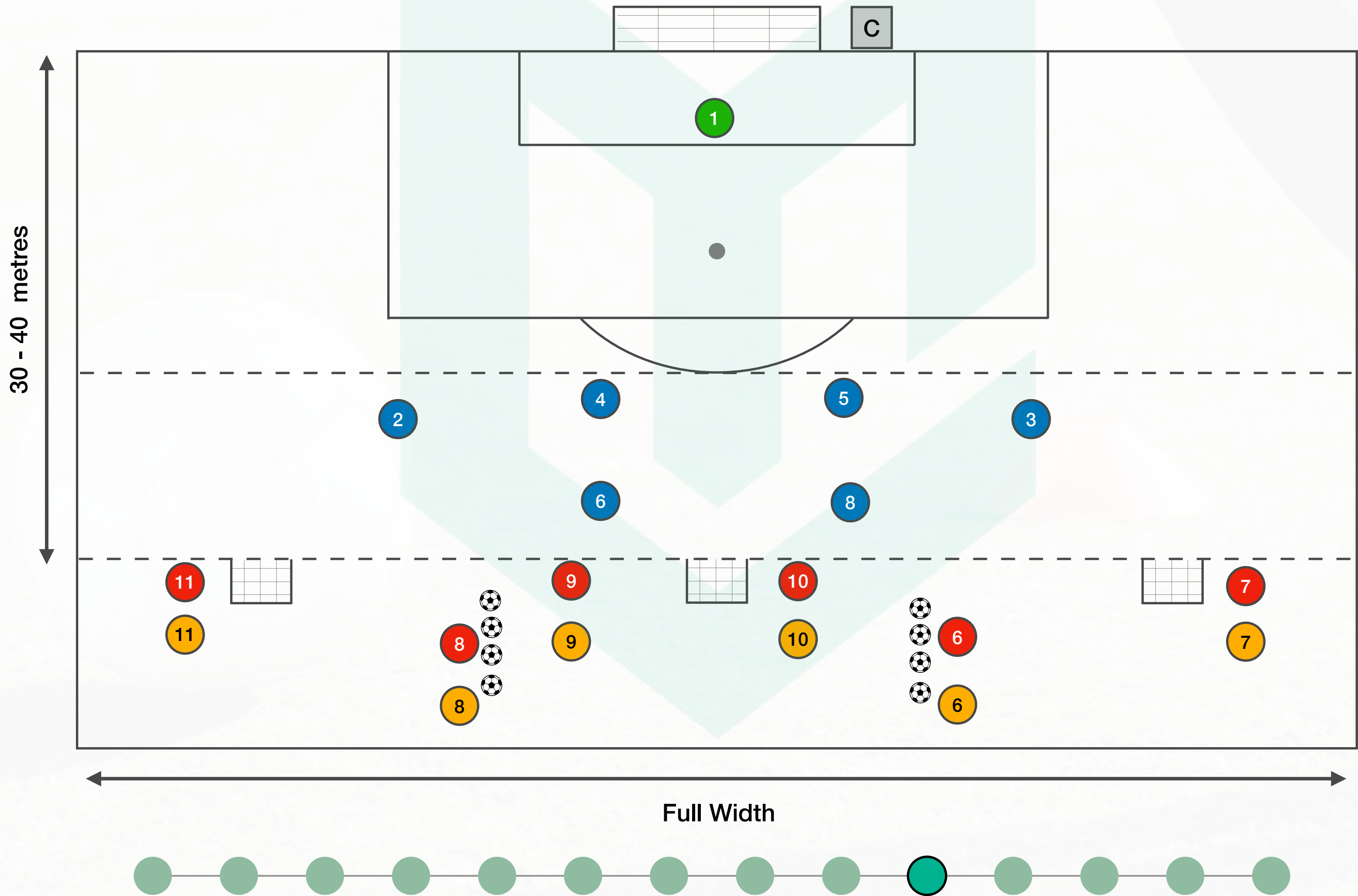
13+

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

2-6 x
3-6
mins/team





Continuous Defending

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

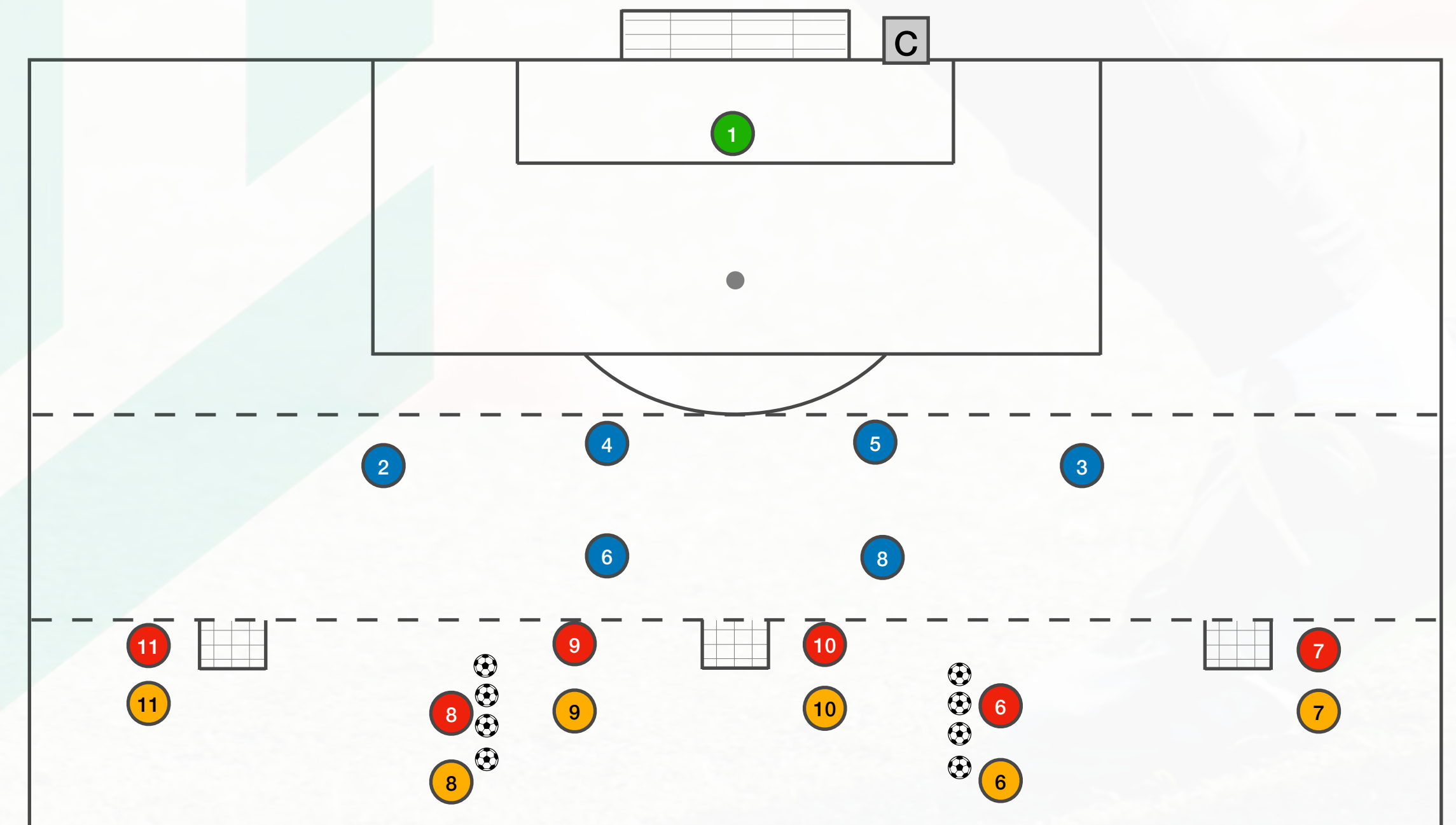
Objective 1: An improved understanding of the key principles of defending in and around the box

Objective 2: An increased quality of technical actions when defending, e.g. blocking, tackling, heading

Objective 3: An improved awareness of the potential dangers in and around the box

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using the first 30 metres of the pitch from the goal-line, with 3 teams of 6 players
- 3 mini-goals are used for the defenders to attack when they regain the ball
- The blue zone represents the area where the defending team must apply pressure on the ball
- The attacking teams start behind the 30 metre line
- The objective of the defending team is to continuously defend against the attackers
- The objective of the attacking teams is to score goals against the defending team
- The game starts with the first attacking team getting into position then attempting to score
- If the defending team can regain the ball, they have 5 passes to attack and score in the 3 mini-goals
- Each attack can last up to 15 seconds (representing a time before teammates would recover)
- After each attack there is a 5 second break for the defending team to reorganise
- E.g. the red team starts and attacks the blue team. The blue team attempt to regain and score
- If the red team score, they get to attack again
- If the ball goes out of play, the next attacking team move onto the pitch to get ready to attack
- If the goalkeeper regains or receives the ball in their hands, they can practice their distribution
- Goalkeepers can use direct throws/passes into the mini-goals, which can be blocked/intercepted
- The winning team is the team that scores the most goals
- Teams can swap rotate at the end of each round, or they can stay in the same positions





080

Defending the Diagonal

A **phase practice with zones** to develop pressing on the sides and dealing with a diagonal switch of play

Numbers

18+

Age

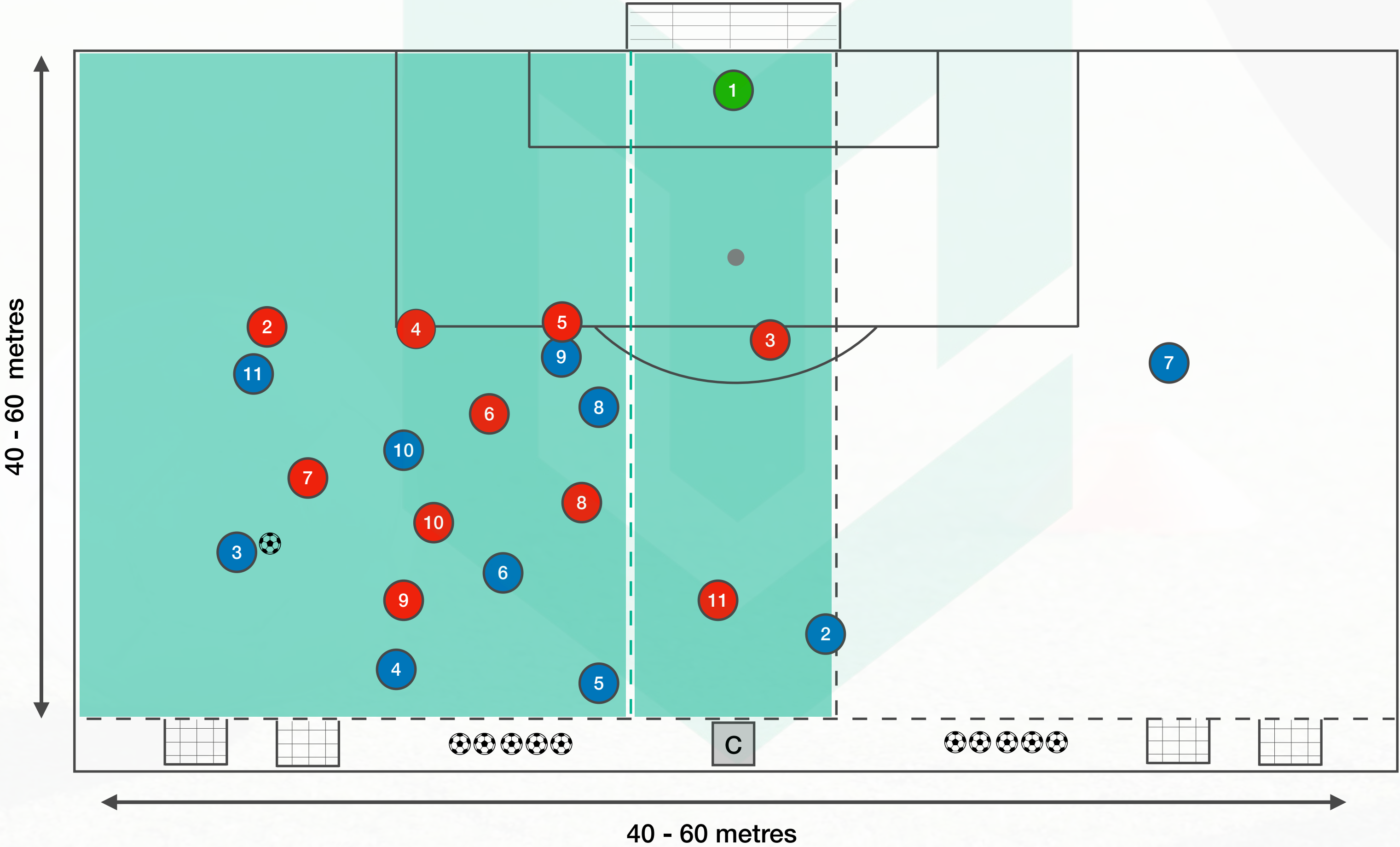
14+

Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

2-5 x
8-15
mins



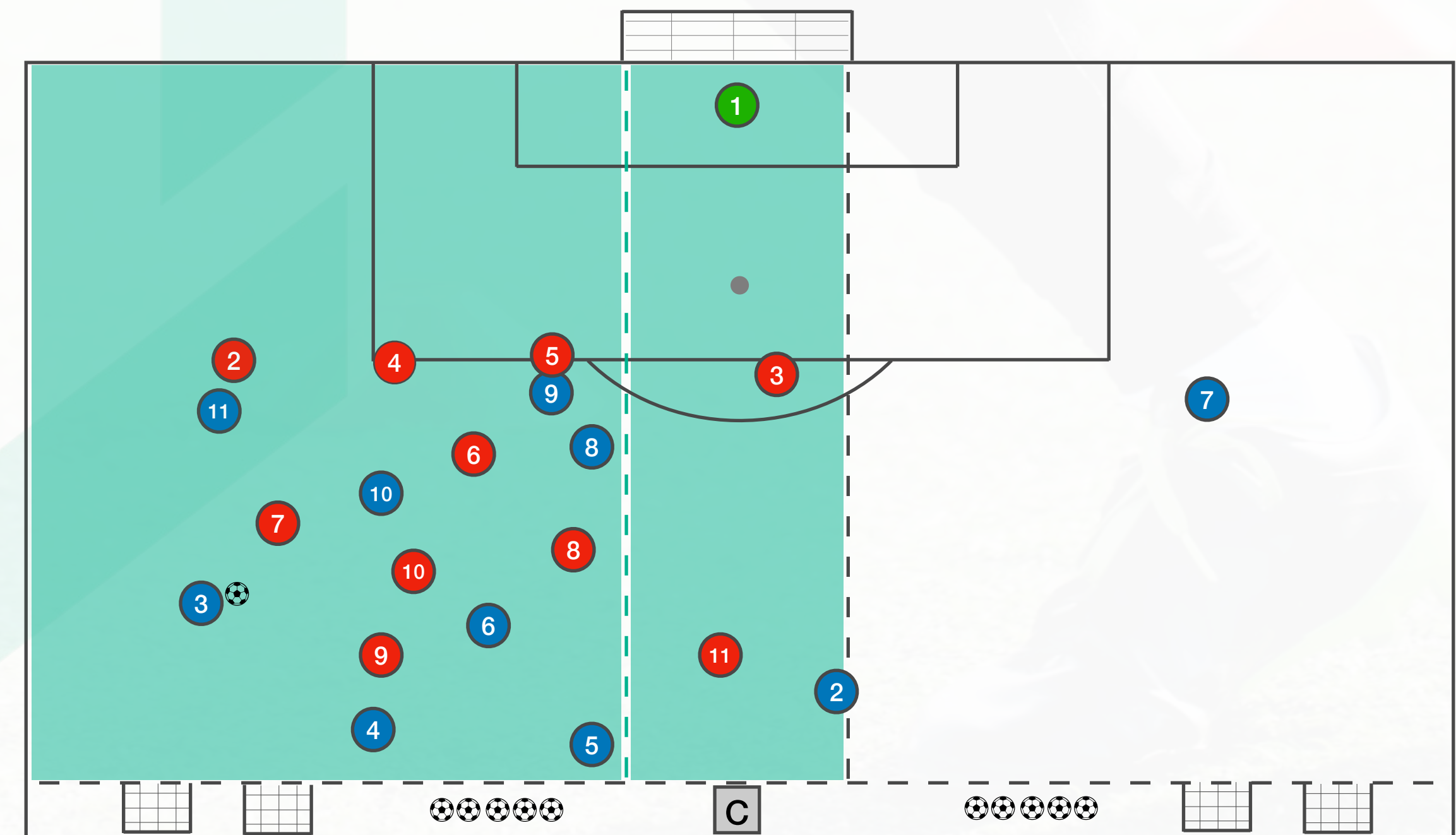
Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An increased awareness of the triggers for the diagonal switch of play

Objective 2: An improved awareness of solutions to prevent and deal with the switch of play

Objective 3: An improved execution of movements to clear diagonal passes and deal with the 1v1 situations.

- The game is set up using half a pitch, and 2 lines marked from the posts to the halfway line making 3 zones
- Mini-goals are added as target goals for the defending team
- The 3 zones are, left zone, middle zone, right zone. The central zone being the width of the goal posts
- When the ball is in the left zone, all players must be in the left and central zones except the opposite winger
- The ball can only be switched from the left zone after 8 passes
- When the ball is switched, all players can move across to the right and central zones
- The same occurs vice versa when the ball is on the right side
- As the ball travels across, the team should shift in relation to the movement of the ball
- The game starts with the blue defenders from the backline, attacking the red team to attempt to score
- The blue team have to attack in the zone, unless they get to 8 passes
- After 8 passes they can pass diagonally to their winger on the opposite side
- Only the opposite winger is free to stay on the opposite side (left winger when attacking on the right side)
- If they manage to get the 8 passes and switch play, all players are free to move across the pitch to defend
- If the ball goes out of play, the game starts again from the backline with the blue defenders
- If the red team regain the ball, they have 10 seconds to score in the mini-goal in the same zone
- (If within your game model, the full back stays wide outside of the zone, this can be an additional allowance)





081

High Lines in the Block

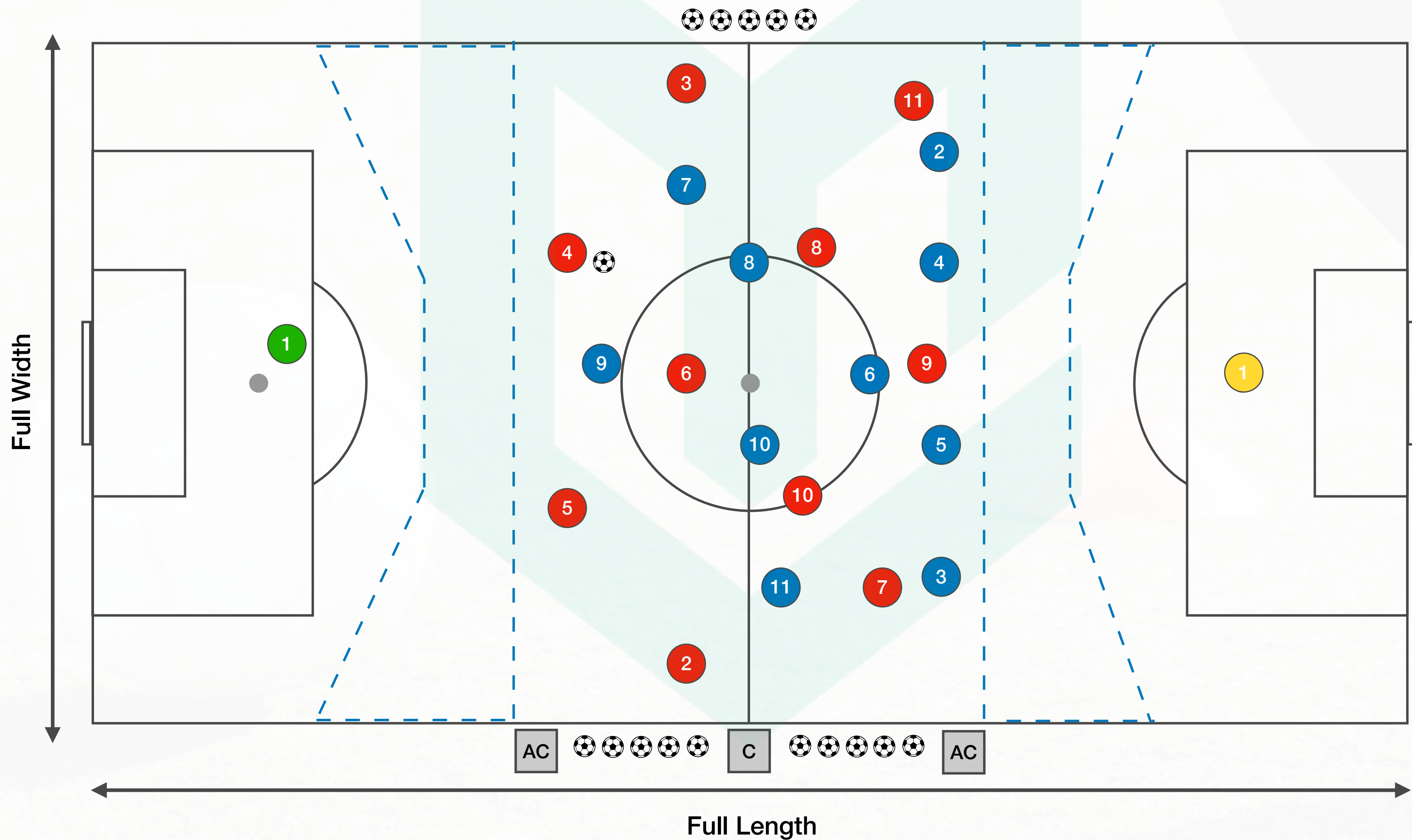
A **large sided game** to develop individual, unit, and team ability to play a high defensive line in a defensive block structure

Numbers

20+

Age

14+

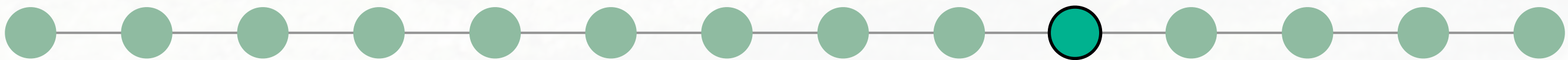


Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

3-5 x
8-12
minutes





High Lines in the Block

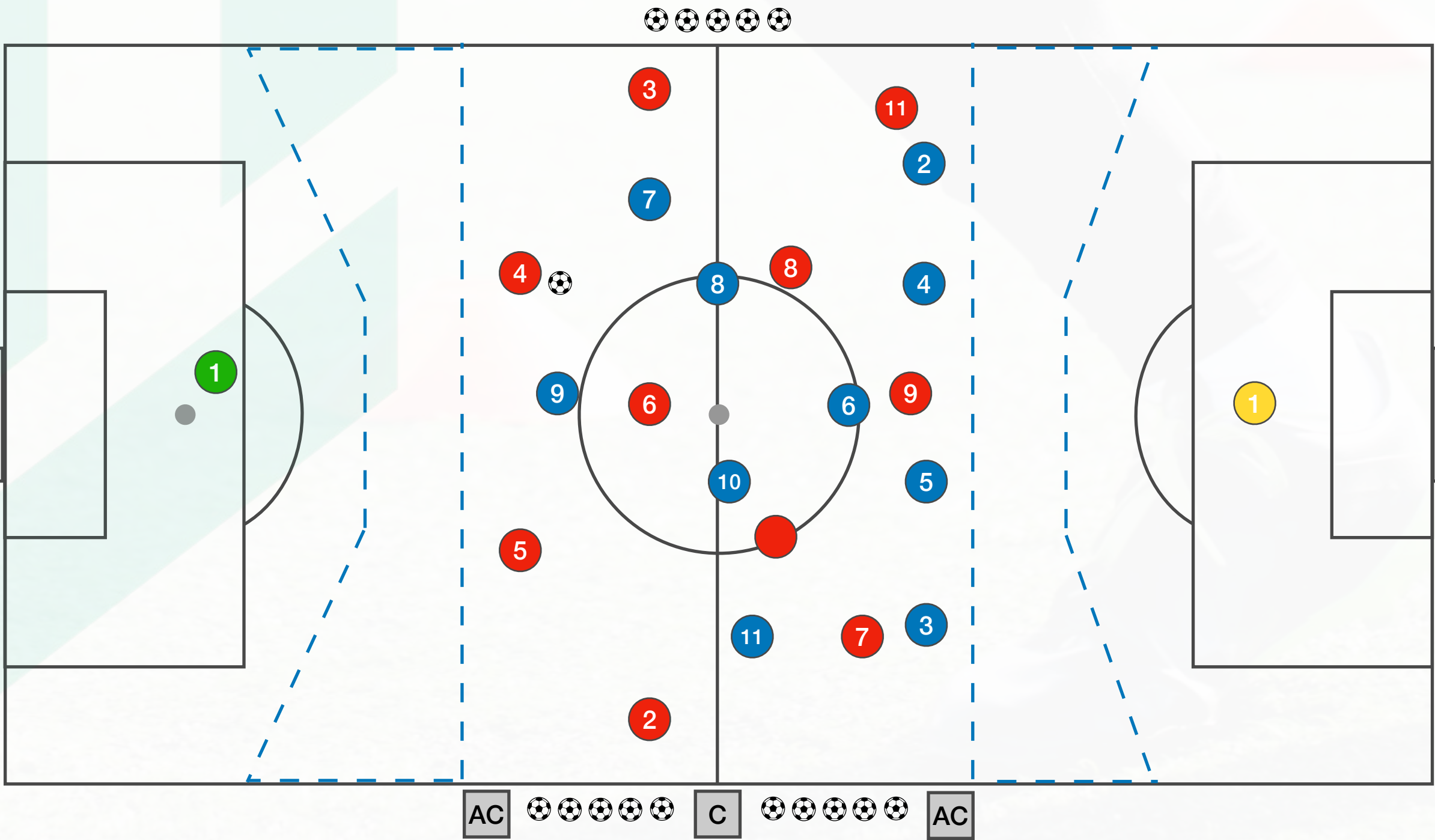
Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

- Objective 1:** An increased confidence and ability in utilising the offside trap or cover defending with a high line
- Objective 2:** An improved anticipation of the triggers when a direct pass is about to be played into the space
- Objective 3:** An improved understanding of the need to apply pressure on the ball to prevent direct passes

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up with a middle zone where the teams are organised, and 2 cover zones
- The area size and shapes of these zones can be adjusted to your game model and preferred player behaviours
- Cover zones represent the areas where the GK is unlikely to sweep, and therefore the defenders must cover
- Where possible, two support staff/players can be monitoring the offside line on the same side of the pitch
- The game starts with one team in possession, and they compete with normal rules to try and score
- Both teams have to hold a high line out of possession above the cover zones
- The defensive line, and individual players can move behind into the cover zones for a maximum of 3 seconds
- After the 3 seconds they must step back into the middle zone
- Once a ball is played in behind into the cover zones, players are now free to play as normal for 10 seconds
- Any passes that surpass the cover zone, can be chased, however the GK should be able to deal with the ball
- If the ball goes out, or the GK has possession of the ball , the game restarts again in the middle zone
- Goalkeepers are active both in & out of possession with complete freedom, but emphasis on the sweeper role





082

Parking the Bus

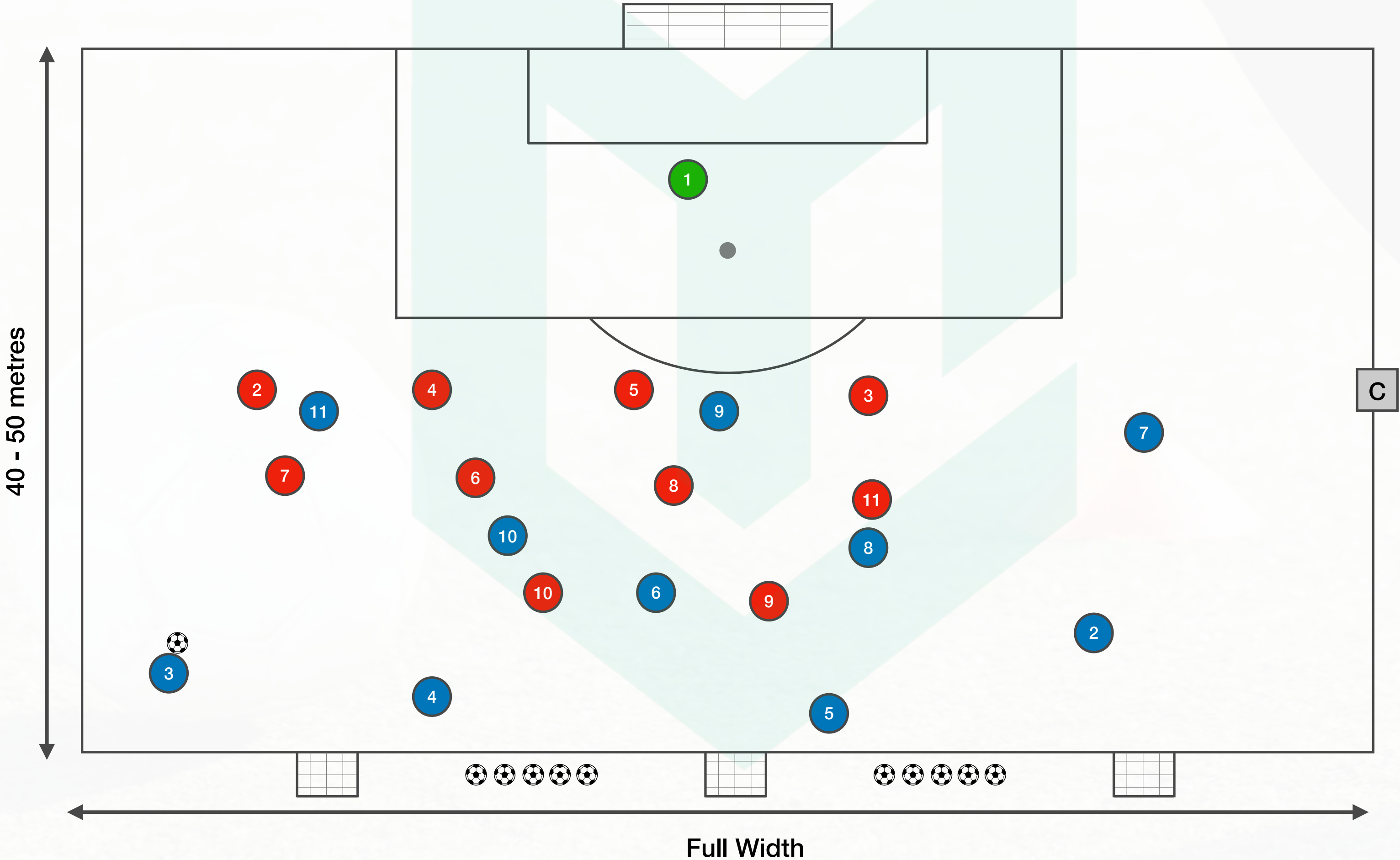
A **phase practice** to develop individual, unit, and team ability to park the bus, prevent chances and goals, and counter attack

Numbers
20+

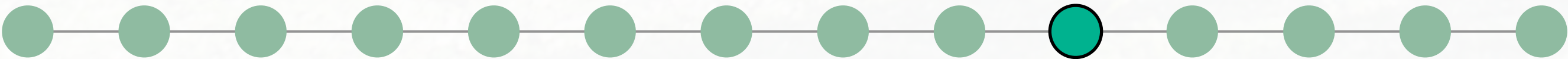
Age
14+

Difficulty
4/5

Time Length
3-5 x
8-12
minutes



Defensive Block





Parking the Bus

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

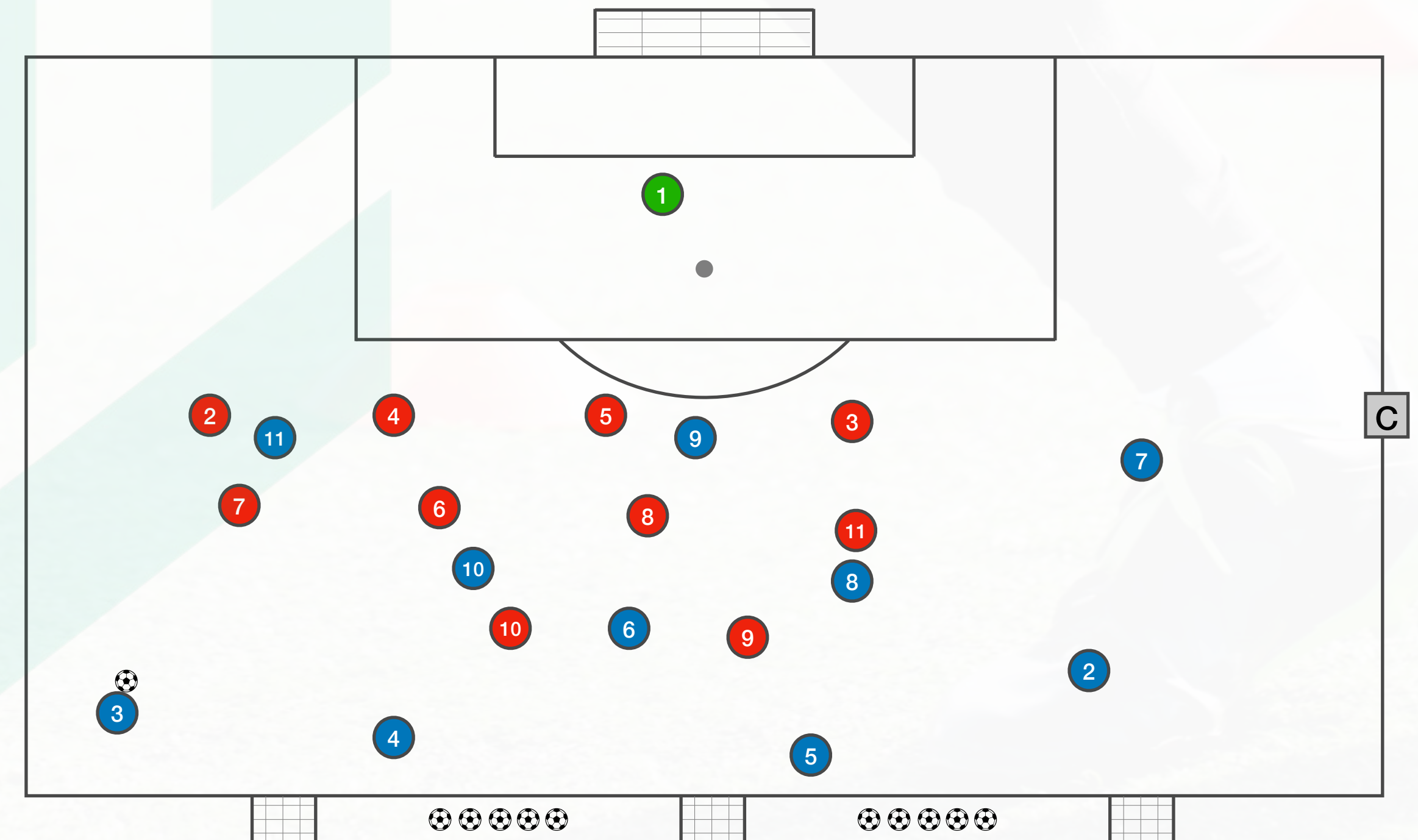
Objective 1: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities when defending in a deep block

Objective 2: An increased understanding of different defensive attributes, e.g. stepping, dropping, screening, marking and sliding

Objective 3: An improved understanding of the need to apply pressure on the ball to prevent direct passes

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using half a pitch, with 3 mini-goals on the halfway line
- The players are divided into two teams of 11, or the sized matches the team uses on a matchday
- One team is primarily the defending team, who will defend deep and 'park the bus'
- The other team is primarily the attacking team, who will break down the opponent to score
- The attacking team will always restart with the ball from the mini-goals
- The defending team will always reorganise into defensive shape, to regain and counter attack
- When the defending team regain, they have 10 seconds to score in the mini-goals
- After a time limit, the teams can swap roles, so the defending team attacks and attacking team defends
- At the end of the rounds, the winning team is the team with the most goals





083

Phase: The Defensive Block

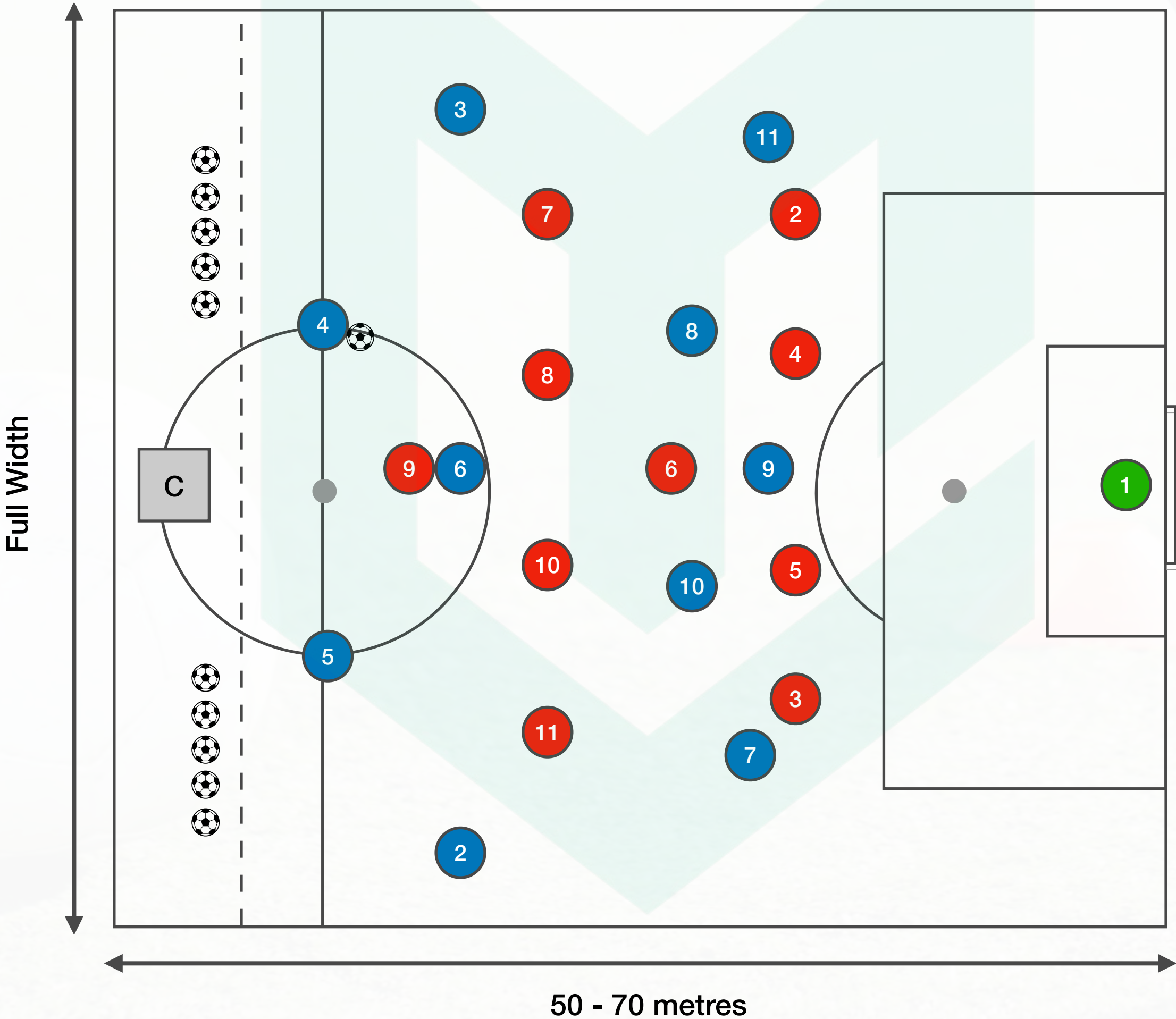
A **phase practice** to develop the defensive block structure and strategies through a high repetition of realistic situations

Numbers

18+

Age

14+

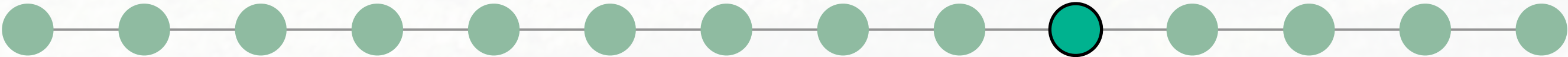


Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

3-5 x
8-15
minutes





Phase: The Defensive Block

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

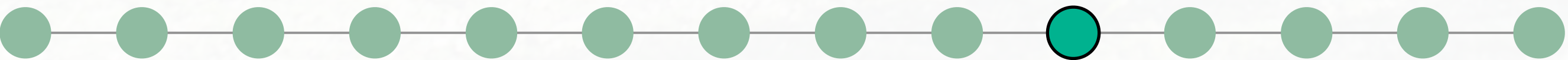
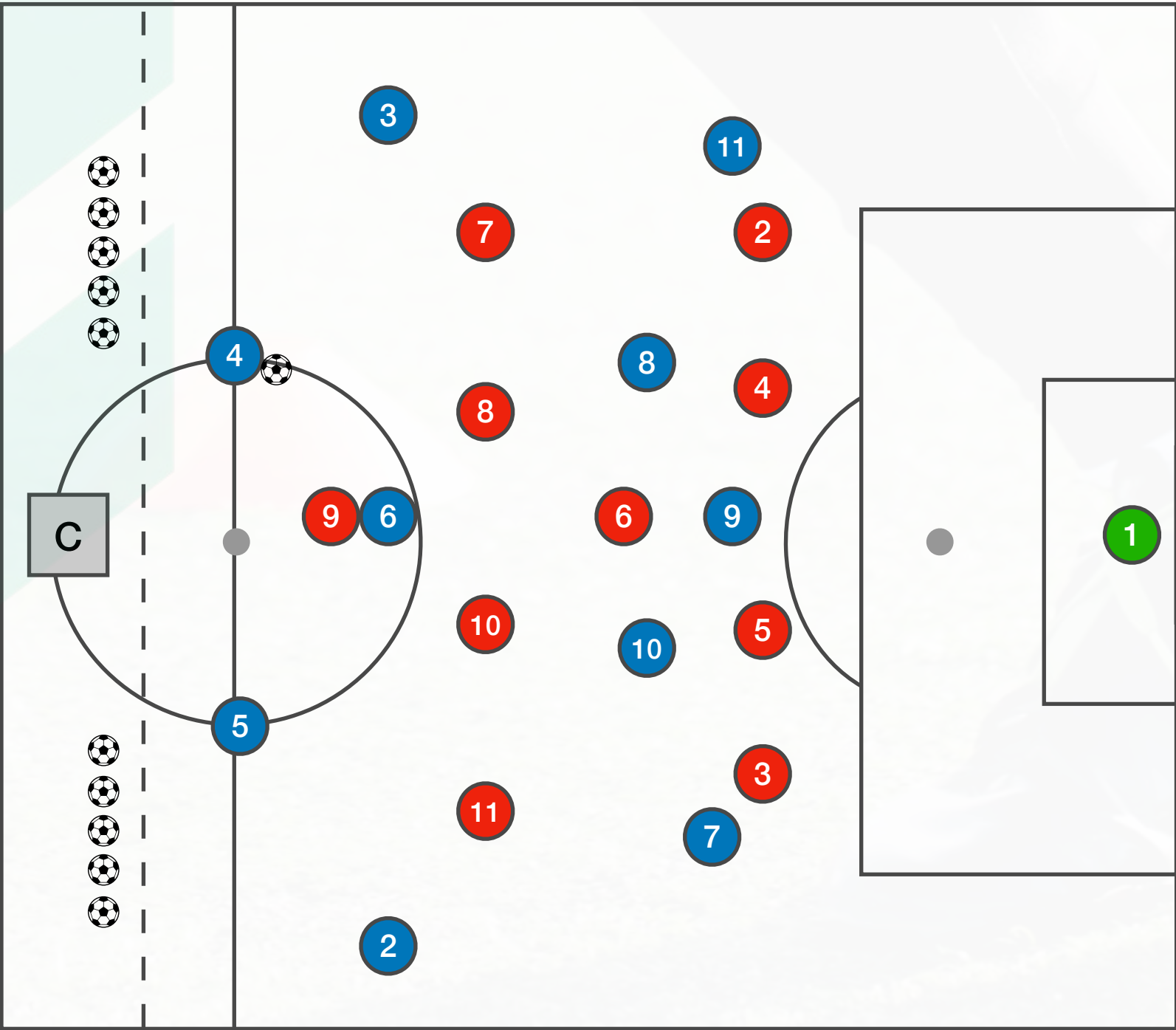
Objective 1: An improved ability to execute strategies to regain the ball within the defensive block

Objective 2: An improved execution of individual defensive actions such as interceptions, tackling, and blocking

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with teammates to execute a successful defensive block

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using just over half a pitch
- Players are divided into 2 teams
- An attacking team with 10 outfield players, who are attempting to beat the block
- A defending team with 10 outfield players plus goalkeeper who are defending in a block
- The game starts with the attacking team building from the halfway line
- The defending team have to regain the ball
- As soon as they regain the ball, another ball starts with the attacking team from the halfway line
- No transition moments continue to allow for maximum time in the defensive block
- A time limit is set for the attacking team to have as many shots on goal as possible
- The defending team attempt to allow no shots on goal for the set time limit
- After the time limit, teams can rotate, or there can be a rest period before moving to the next round





Search Screen Shift Press

A **positional possession practice** to develop defensive individual and unit actions

084

Numbers

10+

Age

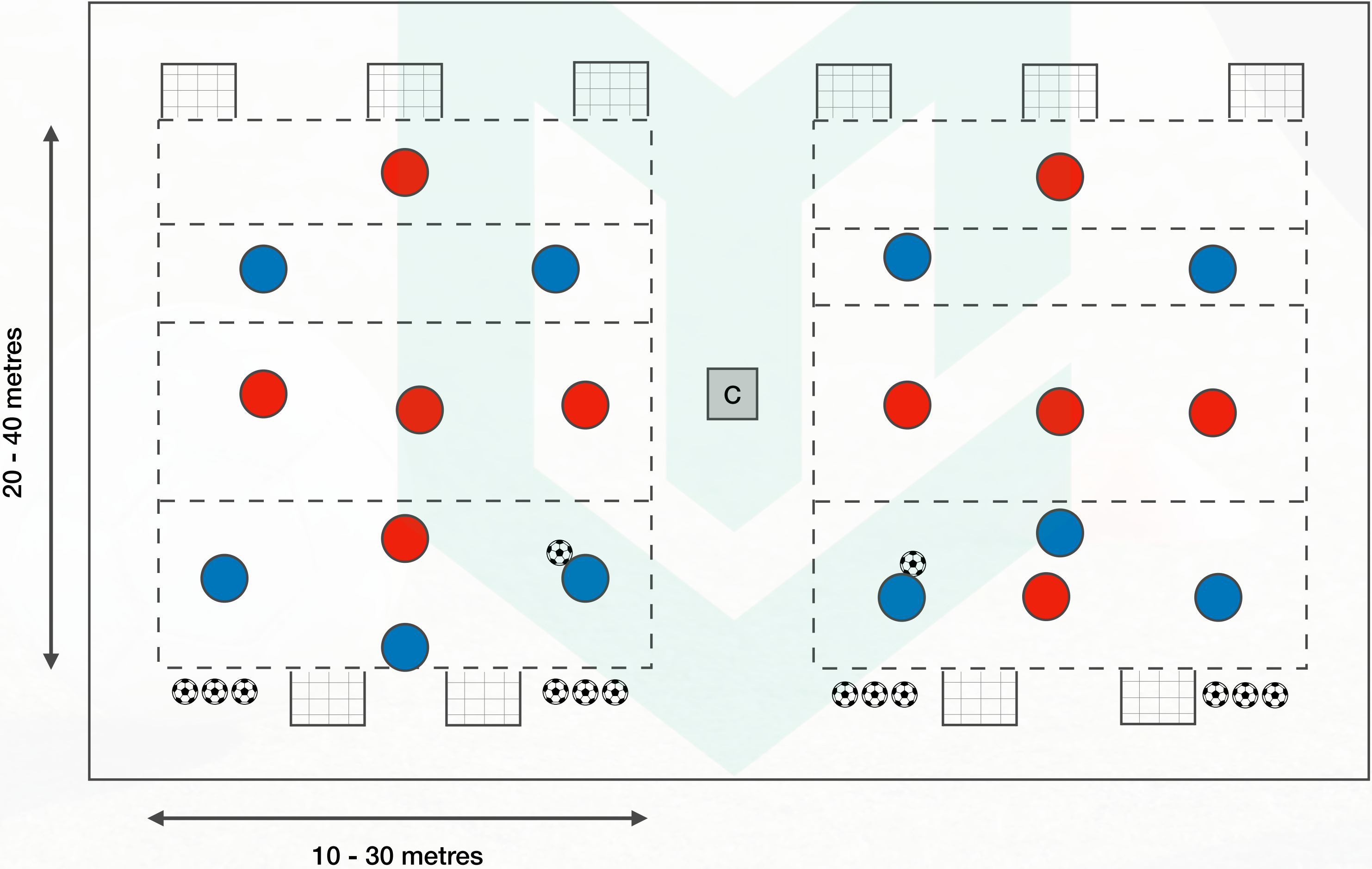
11+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-6 x
5-8
minutes





Search Screen Shift Press

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

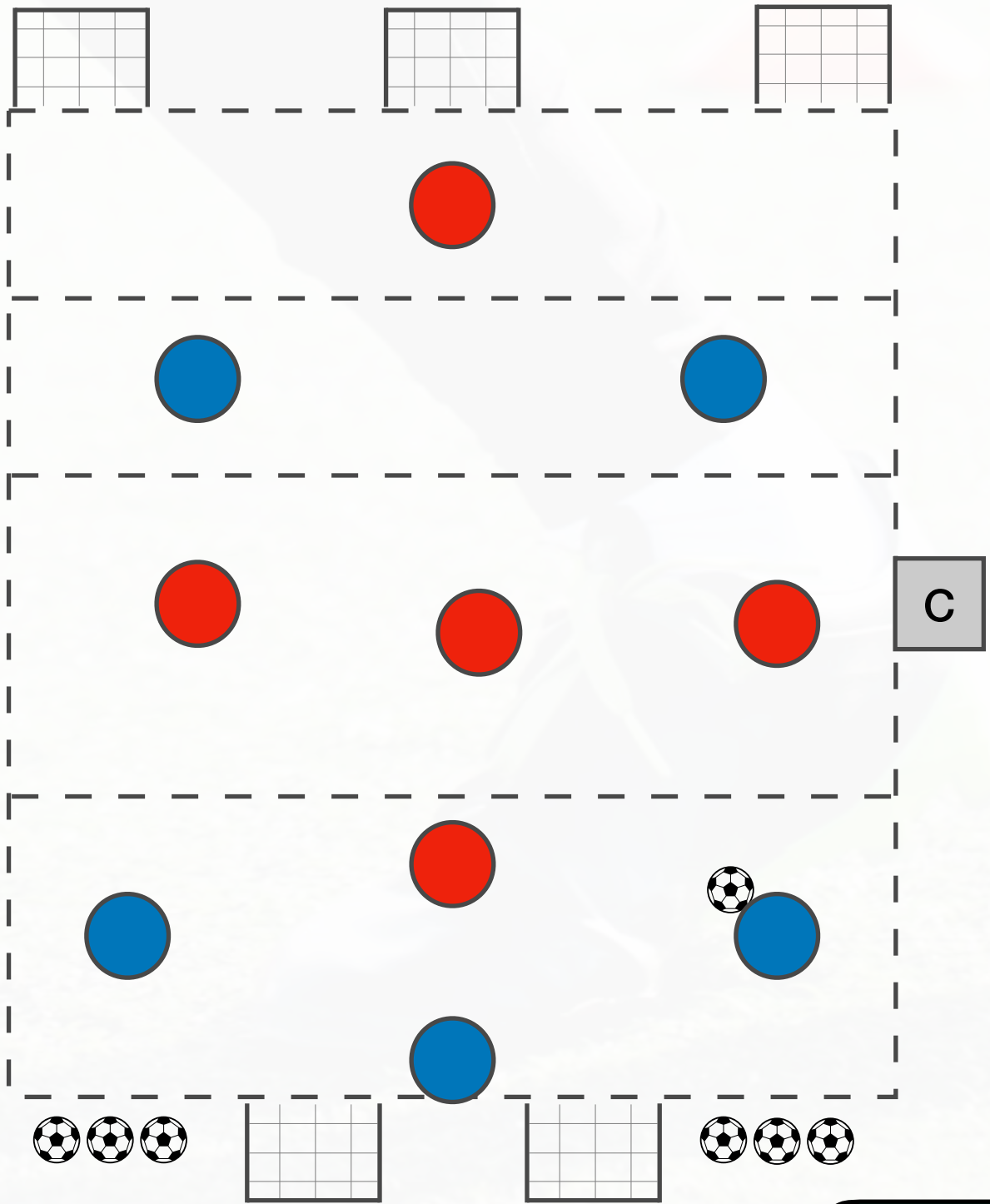
Objective 1: An increased habitual repetition of searching for danger when defending

Objective 2: An increased understanding of the importance of shifting, screening, and pressing

Objective 3: An improved execution of creating passing lane traps to intercept possession

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using one grid with 4 boxes, 3 mini-goals at one end and 2 mini-goals at the other end. The grid has three thirds, but the final third is divided into two
- Players are divided into two teams of 5. An attacking and defending team
- 3 attackers vs 1 defender in the first grid. 3 defenders in the second grid. 2 attackers vs 1 defender in the third grid
- In the third grid, the defender must start in the back half, and the attackers start in the first half. This ensures the attackers between the lines must scan
- Having defenders across three lines, ensures communication must be used from back to front
- The three attacking players in zone 1 start with the ball, and are attempting to penetrate through the lines to score in the 3 mini-goals
- They can either pass through to the blues in zone 3, or pass directly into the mini-goals
- The job of the defender in zone 1 is to press and close passing lanes to force play to a specific direction
- The job of defenders in zone 2 is to prevent penetrative passes and regain the ball with interceptions
- The job of the last defender in zone 3, is to block passing lanes into the goals, and step in to apply pressure
- The last defender can only step in to the next zone when a pass has been played through the lines to the blues
- If the defending team regain the ball, the attacking team must block the mini-goals to stop them scoring. The defending team has maximum 3 passes to score in the mini-goals
- The defending team gets 1 point for regaining the ball and scoring in either of the two mini-goals
- The defending team loses 1 point for conceding in any of the three mini goals behind them
- The game runs for a set time limit such as 3 minutes, then players rotate zones. If the ball goes out of play, it restarts from the attacking players in zone 1
- After a set number of rounds, the teams can swap, so the attackers become defenders and defenders-attackers
- The winning team is the team with the most points after they have played equal time as defenders and attackers





085

The Interceptors

A **positional possession practice** to develop pressing, screening and intercepting to start counter attacking moments

Numbers

12+

Age

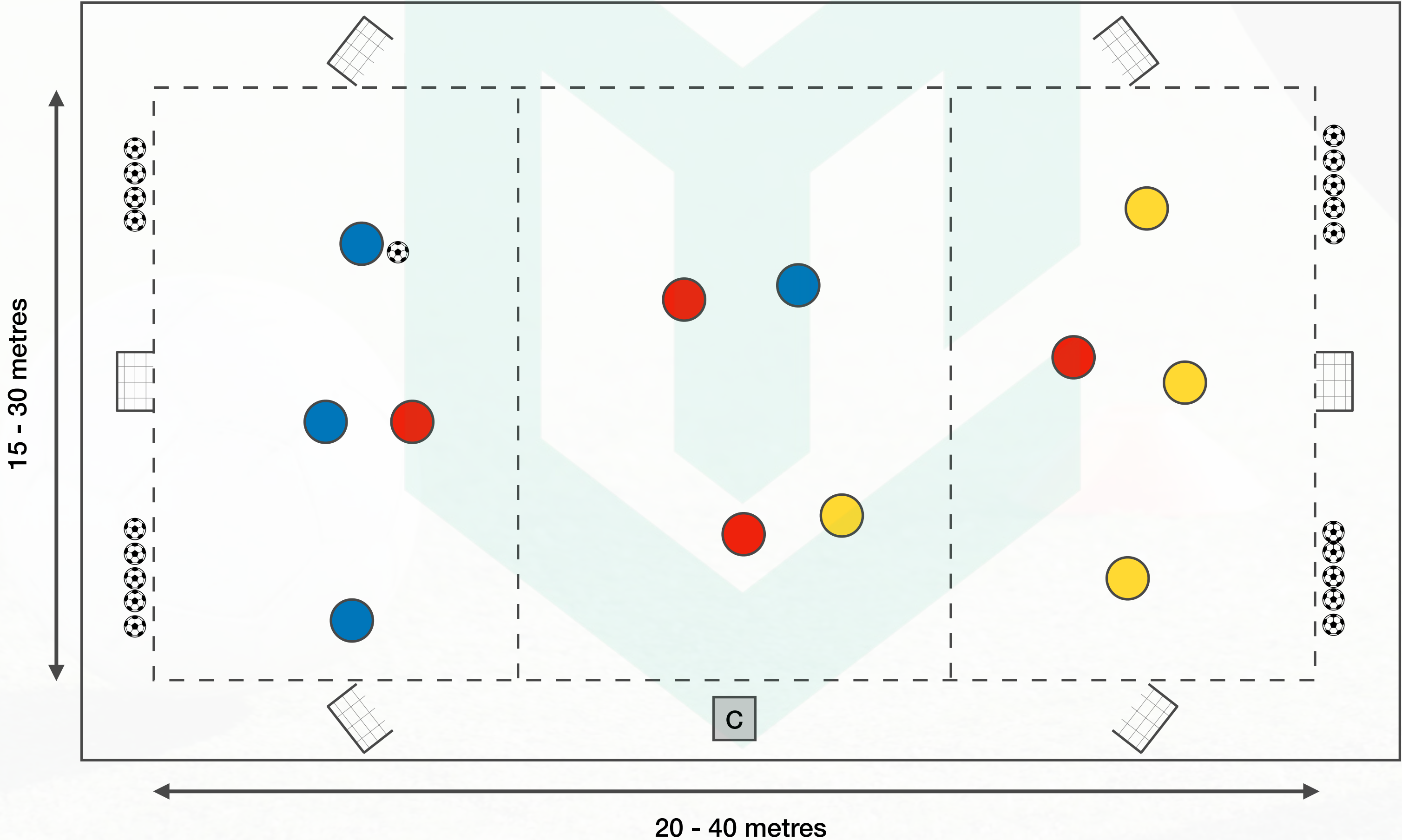
11+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-8 x
3-6
minutes



Defensive Block





The Interceptors

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

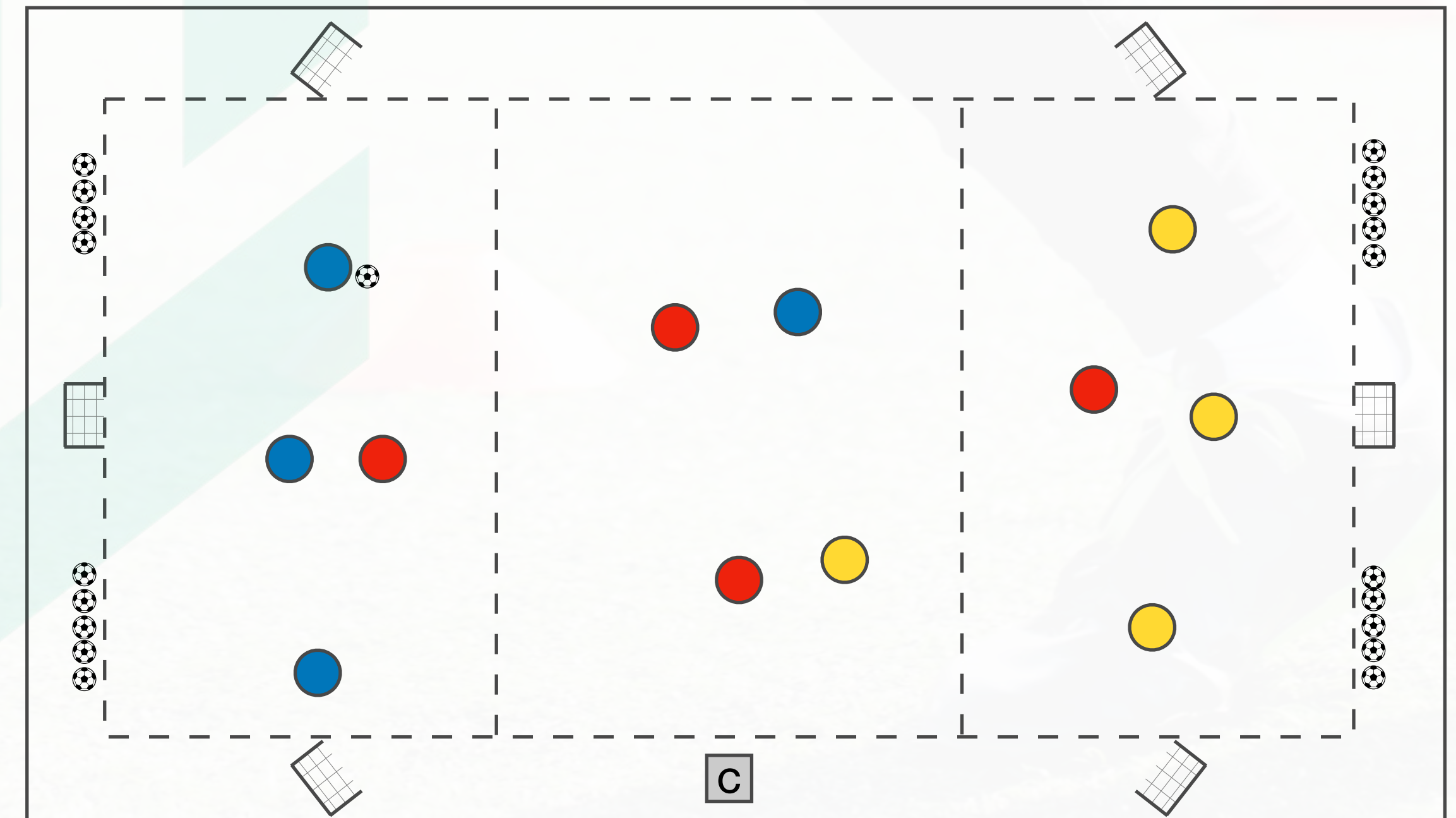
Objective 1: An increased identification of the value of intercepting passes in relation to transition moments

Objective 2: An increased understanding of the detail to increase the number of successful interceptions

Objective 3: An increased identification of moments to pass/dribble using the first touch of an interception

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a rectangle grid, divided into 3 zones with 6 mini-goals
- 2 mini-goals are at the ends, with 4 mini-goals on the sides, diagonally facing the middle grid
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 4 players. Two teams will initially work together to retain possession
- The third team will be the pressing team, looking to regain the ball
- This pressing team has one player pressing in both zones 1 and 3 and 2 players defending zone 2
- In zone 2, the key focus is to intercept passes before they can cross between zones 1 and 3
- In zones 1 and 3, the pressing players are attempting to dictate the direction of play
- If the pressing team regain the ball, they should score in any of the mini-goals
- If they manage to score, they get 1 point and then swap with the team who turned over possession
- The possession team is attempting to get to 4 transfers before scoring in the mini-goals for 1 point
- Alternatively, they can reach 15 passes and score in the mini-goals to get 1 point
- Players are free to move across the zones, however should start within the set structures
- The game starts from zone 1, where the possession teams aim for the 4 transfers





TOPIC 9: FINAL THIRD DEFENDING

Practices to develop a player's and team's ability to defend in the final third to prevent and/or deal with attacks from both central and wide areas



Final Third Defending Contents

- 086. Blocks, Shots & Rebounds 249
- 087. Defending to Delay 251
- 088. Defending Crossing Stations 253
- 089. Defending Danger 255
- 090. Phase: Final Third Defending..... 257

Coaching Points: Final Third Defending

Defensive Block Coaching Points	Explanation
1v1 Defending	Moments in 1v1 situations where the defender has to deal with the opponent until support arrives
Adaptation of Structure	Adjusting the structure within the final third to deal with key opposition threats e.g. winger tracking to double team
Awareness of Dangers	The ability to identify dangers before they are exploited, to limit the chances the opponents can create
Awareness of Opponent Profiles	Awareness of strengths and weaknesses of individual players, and their likely actions in the final third
Blocking Shots & Crosses	Preventing shots & crosses with the detail of blocking towards the ball restricting shots & crosses through the legs
Communication from Goalkeeper	Vocal information and instruction to be led by the goalkeeper
Compactness	Protecting central areas with compactness to restrict opponent chances
Defensive Unit Behaviours	Continuous adjustment of the defensive structure with key phrases such as, step, slide, drop
Interceptions	Preparation and anticipation to identify passing lanes and intercept when passes are played
Negative Pressing	Pressing from behind a player who is facing the goal they are attacking to force a quick decision
No Fouls & Handballs	Key information in and around the box is to be strategic with tackles, and defend with arms close to the body
Rebound Reactions	First reactions to rebounds to get to the ball before the opponents
Structural Balance	Keeping the balance between the number of players defending and those preparing for the counter attack
Timing the Step	Finding opportunities to step out from the final third, back into a higher defensive block structure

Coaching Pictures: Final Third Defending

Defensive Block Coaching Pictures	Explanation
Back Post Flick Ons	The defender at back post flicking crosses off the field with the top of their head to prevent opponents behind heading
Breaking the Chain	When players in the defensive line step out of the defensive line in wide areas and leave gaps in the defensive line
Filling the Chain	When a player moves into a gap left in the defensive line to cover the spaces and deal with any danger
Emergency Solutions	Using specific actions in difficult situations to avoid danger, e.g. hitting the ball into opponent shin to win a goal-kick
Forcing Inside	Forcing an opposition player inside the pitch towards the centre
Forcing Outside	Forcing an opposition player outside the pitch towards the touchline
Defending Aerial Crosses	Getting into a position with a body shape to best deal with aerial crosses
Dealing with Combination Play	Bringing the defensive unit closer together to identify and prevent combination play passes
Defending Low Crosses	Getting into a position with a body shape to intercept or clear low crosses
Mixed Marking	Initially finding a zonal position to scan and identify opponent players, then marking the most dangerous player
Player Marking	Initially marking an opposition player but staying aware of space that they may exploit
Rest Attack for Counter Attacks	Leaving players out of the final third preparing for the counter attack
Zonal Marking	Initially marking the space but staying aware of opponent players



086

Blocks, Shots & Rebounds

A **positional possession practice** to develop pressing, screening and intercepting to start counter attacking moments

Numbers

12+

Age

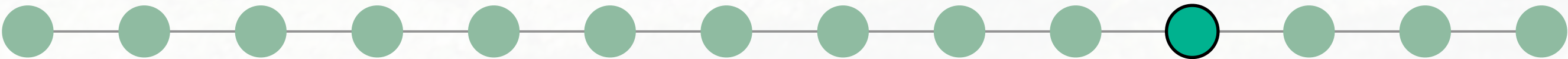
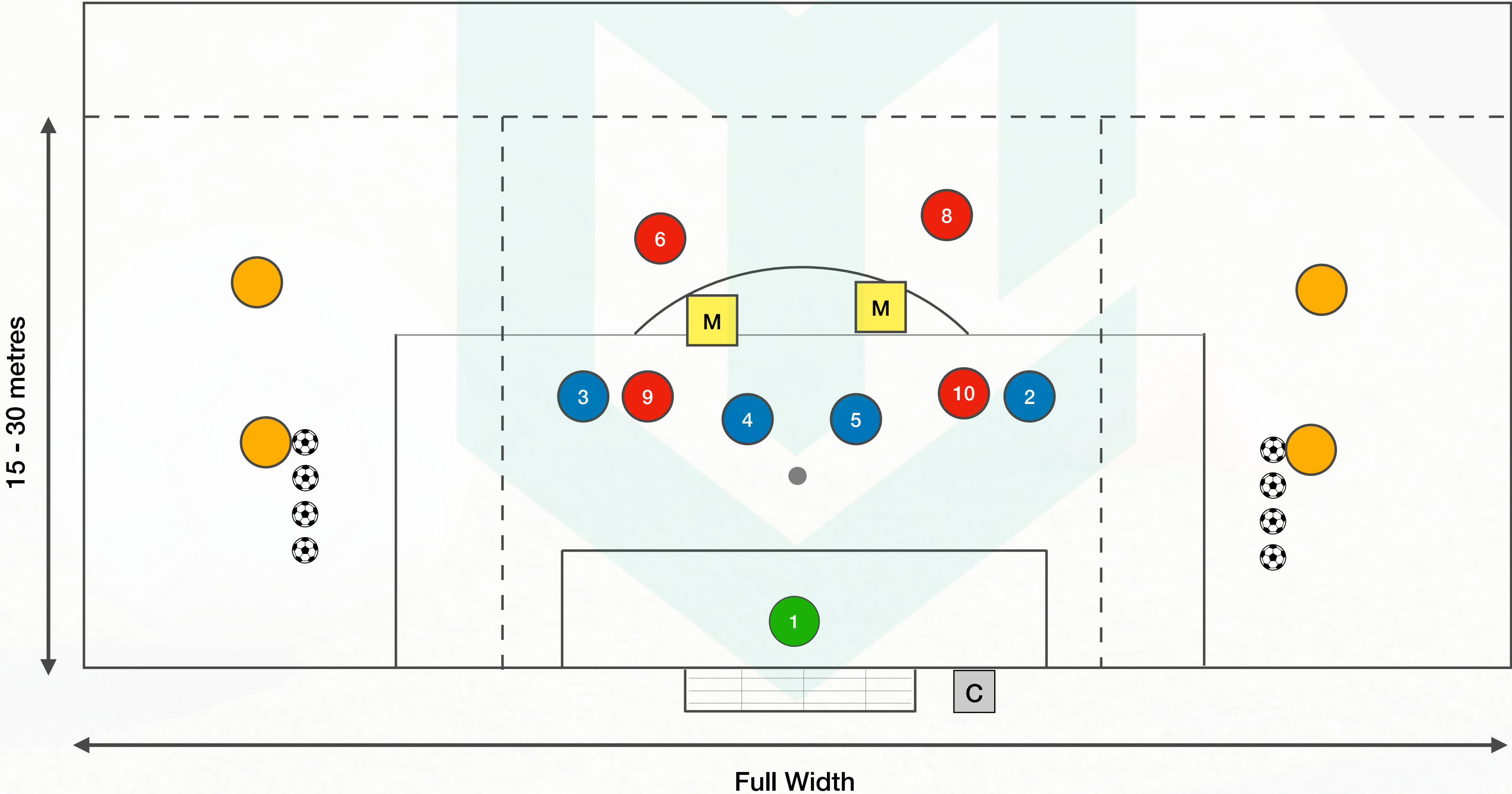
11+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-8 x
3-6
minutes

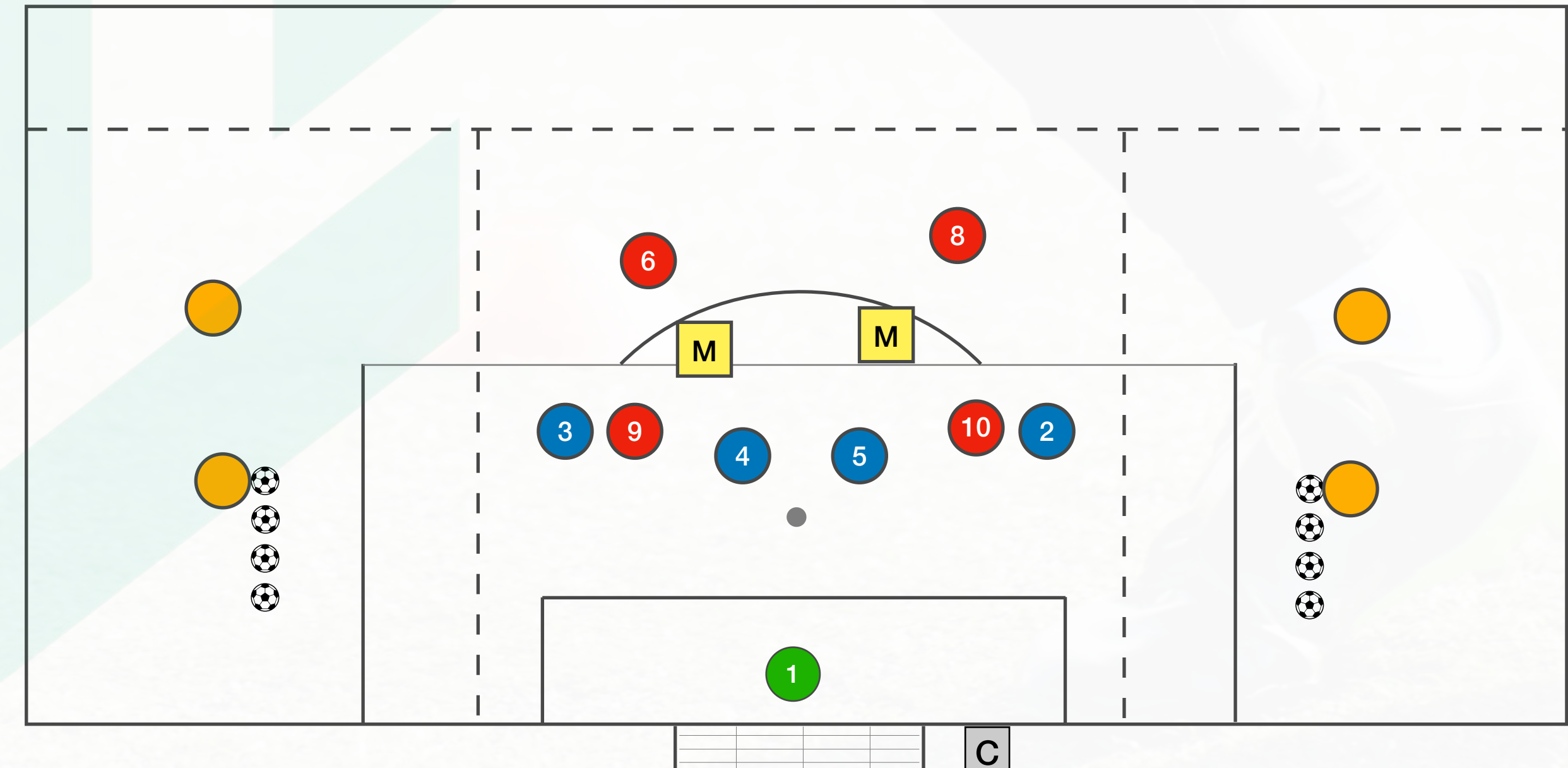


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved reaction time to block shots and get to rebounds before the opposition

Objective 3: An improved execution of attacking actions, in particular, long shots from outside the area.

- The game is set up using the penalty area plus 5-10 extra metres in front of the area
- 2 Mannequins are used to increase chaos and increase the probability of deflections
- 3 zones are then created, making a central channel and 2 wide channels
- Players are divided into 3 teams, a defending team, attacking team, and serving team
- The serving team start with the balls in the side channels
- The practice starts by one server playing to another server, then playing the ball into the attacking team
- The attacking team have 5 seconds to take a shot, which the defending team attempt to block
- Defenders should be ready to react to any deflections or rebounds
- As soon as a shot is taken or the time is up, the next ball from the other side should be played
- After a set time limit, teams rotate so all teams attack, defend, and serve
- The winning team is the team who conceded the least/scored the most goals at the end of the practice





087

Defending Crossing Stations

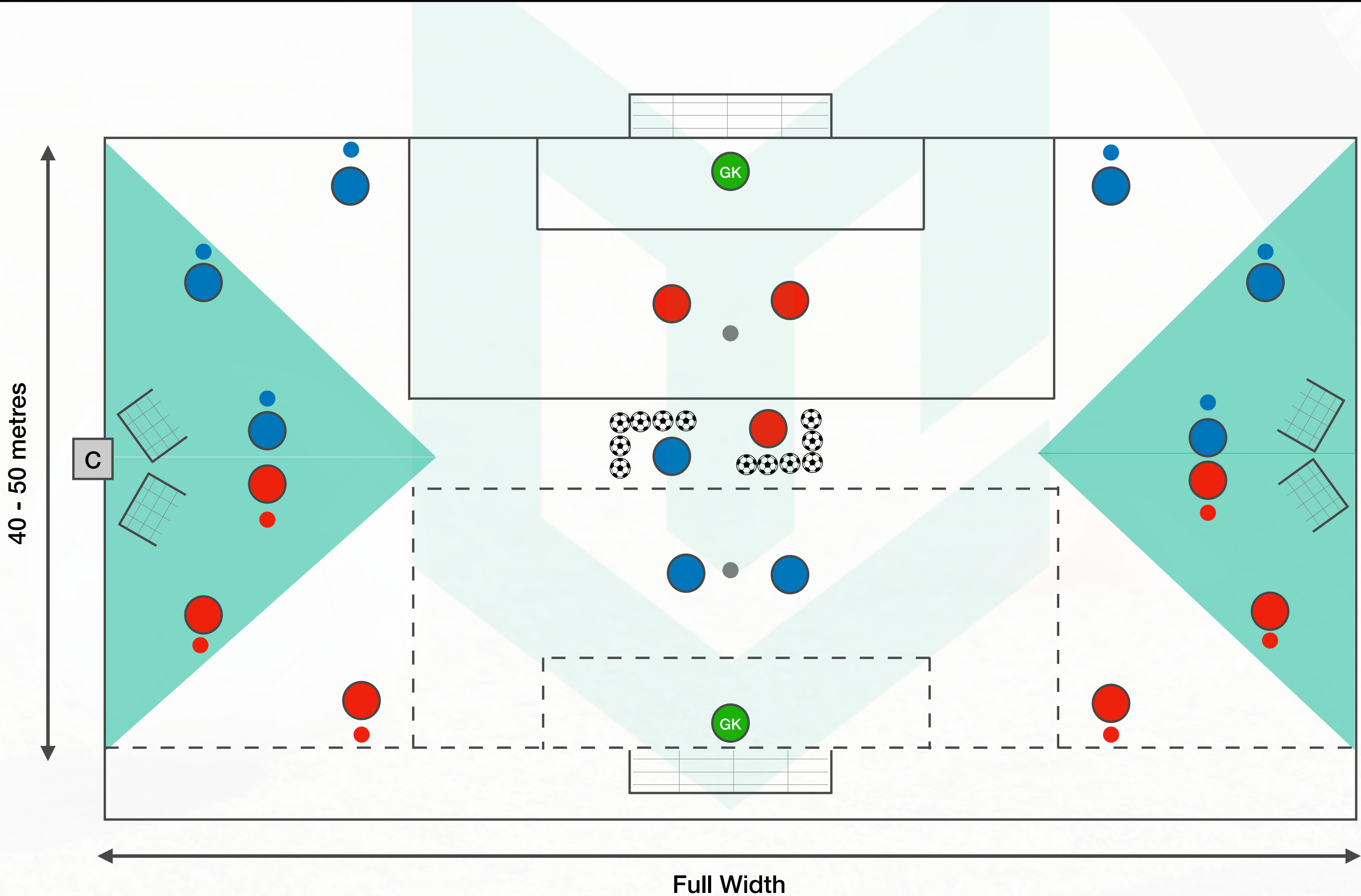
A **technical pattern practice** to develop defenders ability to deal with crosses in the box from a variety of angles

Numbers

14+

Age

14+

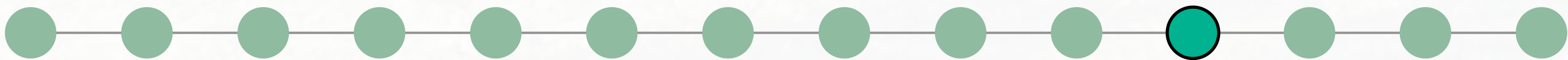


Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

6-8
actions x
5-10
rounds





Defending Crossing Stations

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

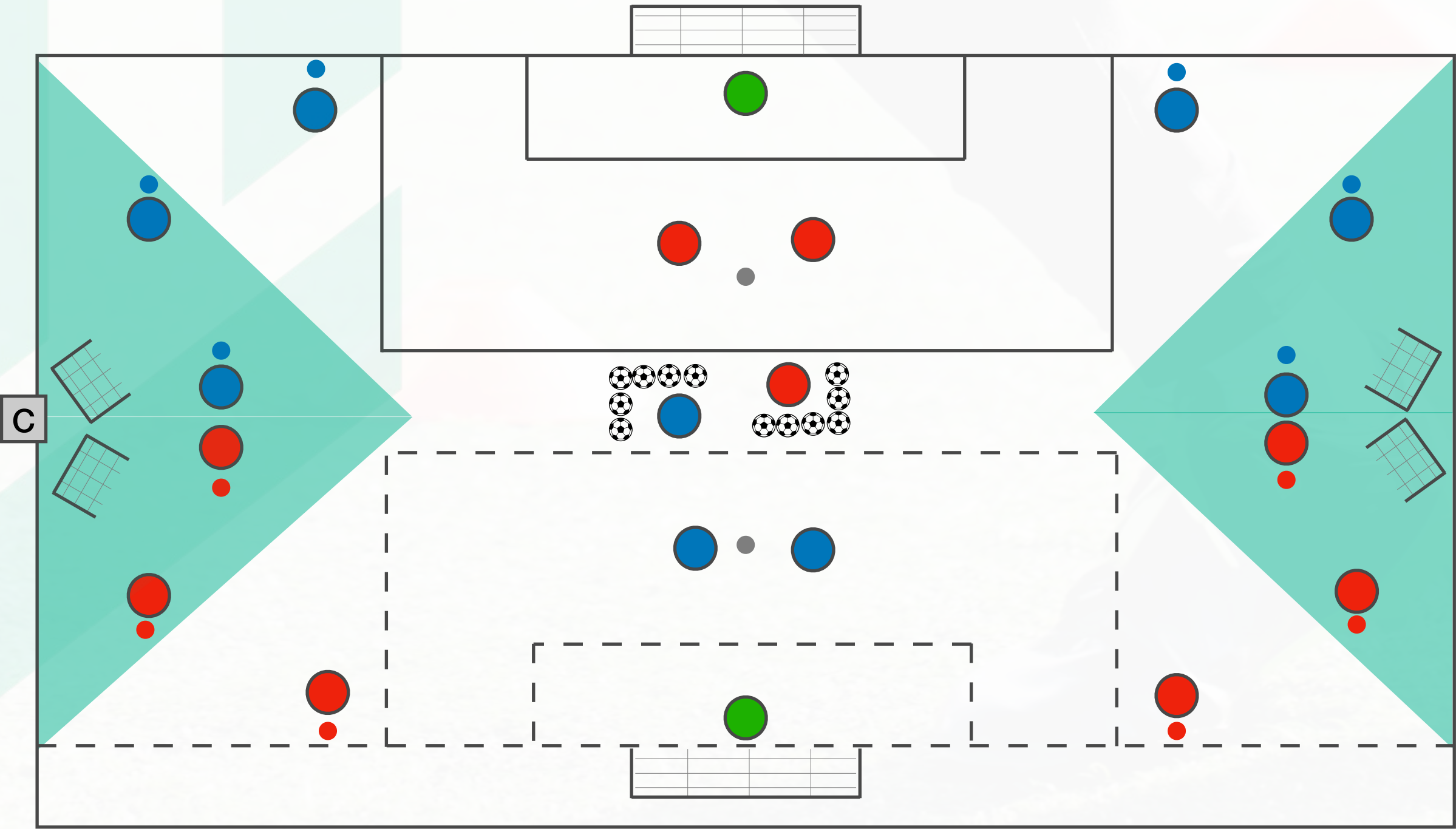
Objective 1: An improved anticipation of the different types of crosses from different locations in the final third

Objective 2: An improved execution of heading and volleying to clear crosses into safe areas

Objective 3: An improved execution of crosses from specific areas on the pitch

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 2 18 yard boxes, with a minimum 5 metre gap in between
- 2 mini-goals on the corners of the penalty areas are used as throw targets for goalkeepers after catching the ball
- There are 6 stations on the sides of each penalty area, 3 on the left and 3 on the right
- The triangle zones on the sides represent safe areas where defenders should aim for when clearing crosses
- 1 player starts at each station ready to cross, with 2 players in the penalty area ready to defend the crosses
- 1 feeder starts on the edge of each penalty area, providing passes to the crossers
- The game starts with a pass from the feeder, to one crosser, who then delivers a cross for the defenders
- The objective for the crossers, is to deliver crosses which challenge the defenders to be able to clear into safety
- As soon as the cross has been delivered and defended, the next pass is played to another crosser
- Each crosser plays one cross each per round, with the defenders counting their successful clearances
- Defenders get 1 point for a cleared cross into the target zones
- Crossers get 1 point for a cross that the defenders cannot clear into the target zones
- If the goalkeeper catches a cross or shot, they can throw into the mini goals to take a point from the opponents
- If the defenders bring the ball under control with their first touch, they can pass back to the feeders for 1 point
- When using two penalty areas with two teams, the teams can compete against each other for the most points
- After each round, players can rotate positions, so the defenders in the box swap with the crossing players
- The winning team is the team with the most points at the end of the practice





088

Defending Danger

A **positional possession practice** to develop player's ability to defend the danger in and around the box

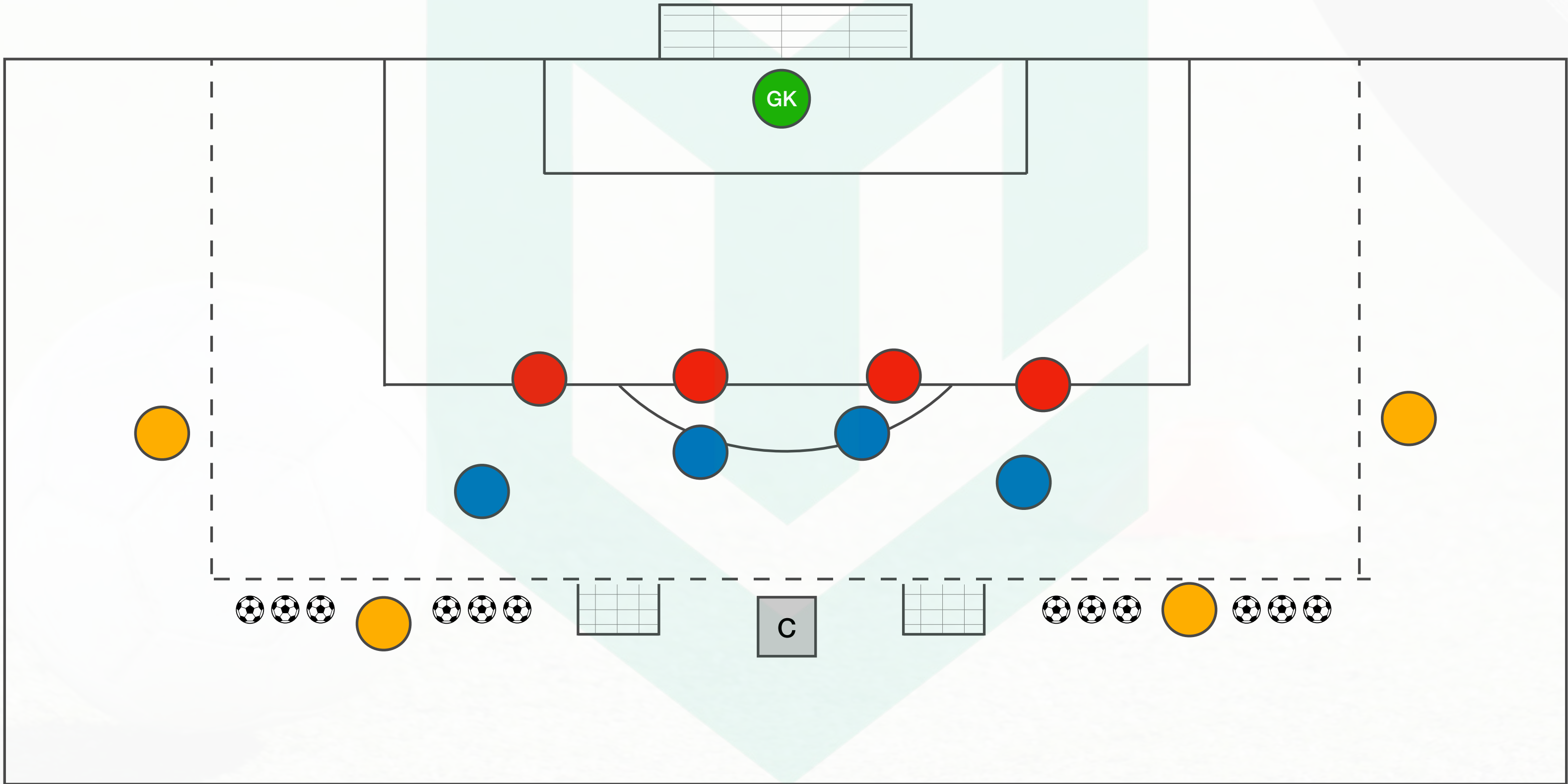
Numbers

12+

Age

12+

20 - 30 metres



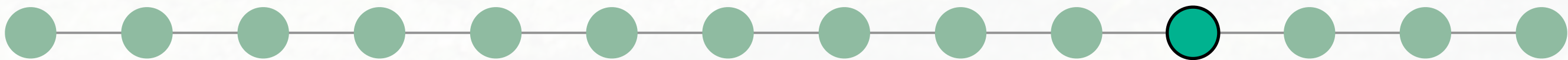
Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

6-12 x
2-4
minutes

35 - 50 metres





Defending Danger

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

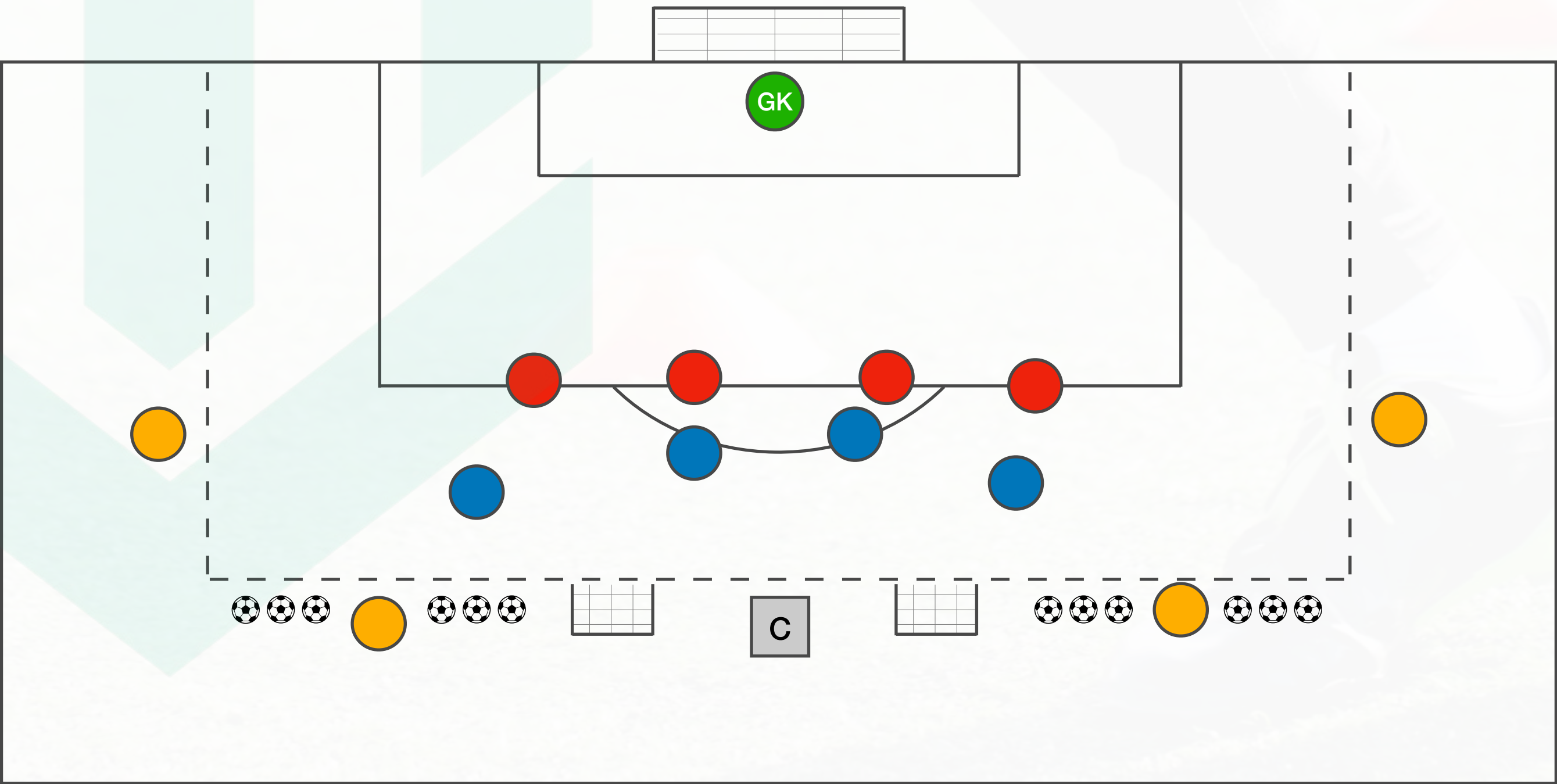
Objective 1: An improved ability to prioritise danger and deal with the most dangerous situations

Objective 2: An improved execution of 1v1 defending, blocking shots, dealing with crosses, and defending through passes

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with the goalkeeper and other defenders within the unit

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up using a grid slightly larger than the penalty area in both width and depth
- 2 mini-goals are used as transition goals for the defending team
- Players are divided into 3 teams of 4 players
- 1 team starts as the defending team, 1 as the attacking team, 1 as the support team
- The support team help the attackers attack and score from the outside of the rectangle
- The attackers have to score in the full-sized goal against the defending team
- If the defending team regain the ball they have to score in the mini-goals
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they can start the counter attack with a throw/pass
- The support team are only active when the attacking team is in possession
- The game starts with the support team passing a ball to the attacking team
- The attacking team can pass back to the support team at anytime
- A support team player cannot pass directly to another support team player
- Each round can last for a set time limit, e.g. 2 minutes
- After the time limit, teams can rotate, particularly the support team
- Support players cannot score, but can directly assist, and can be offside
- The defending team can close down the support players but cannot step over the line
- The winning team is the team who scores the most goals at the end of the practice





089

Defending to Delay

A **positional possession practice** to develop the defensive units ability to delay opponents penetrating with shots and crosses

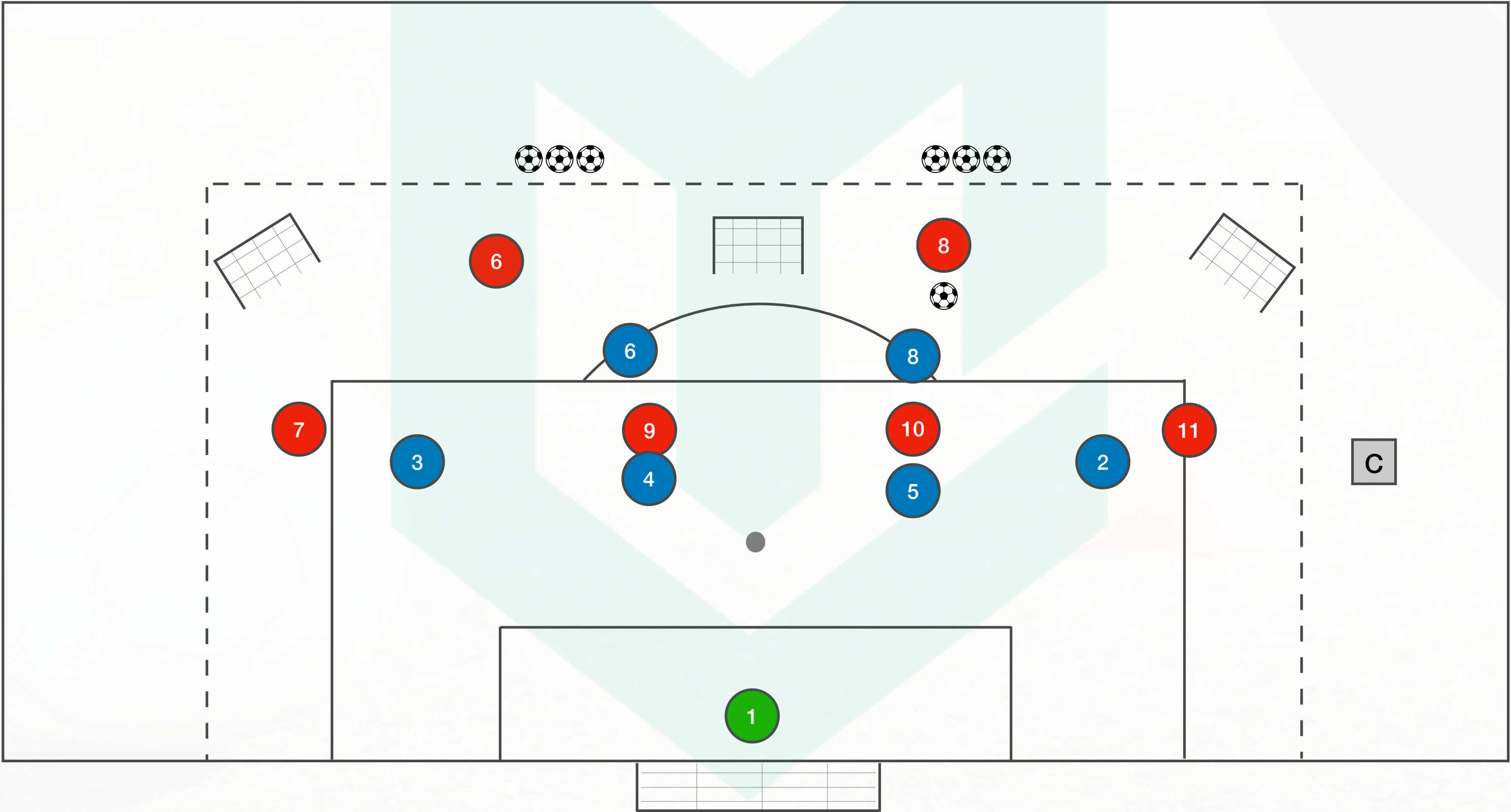
Numbers

13+

Age

12+

20 - 30 metres



35 - 50 metres

Difficulty

4/5

Time Length

6-12 x
3-5
minutes

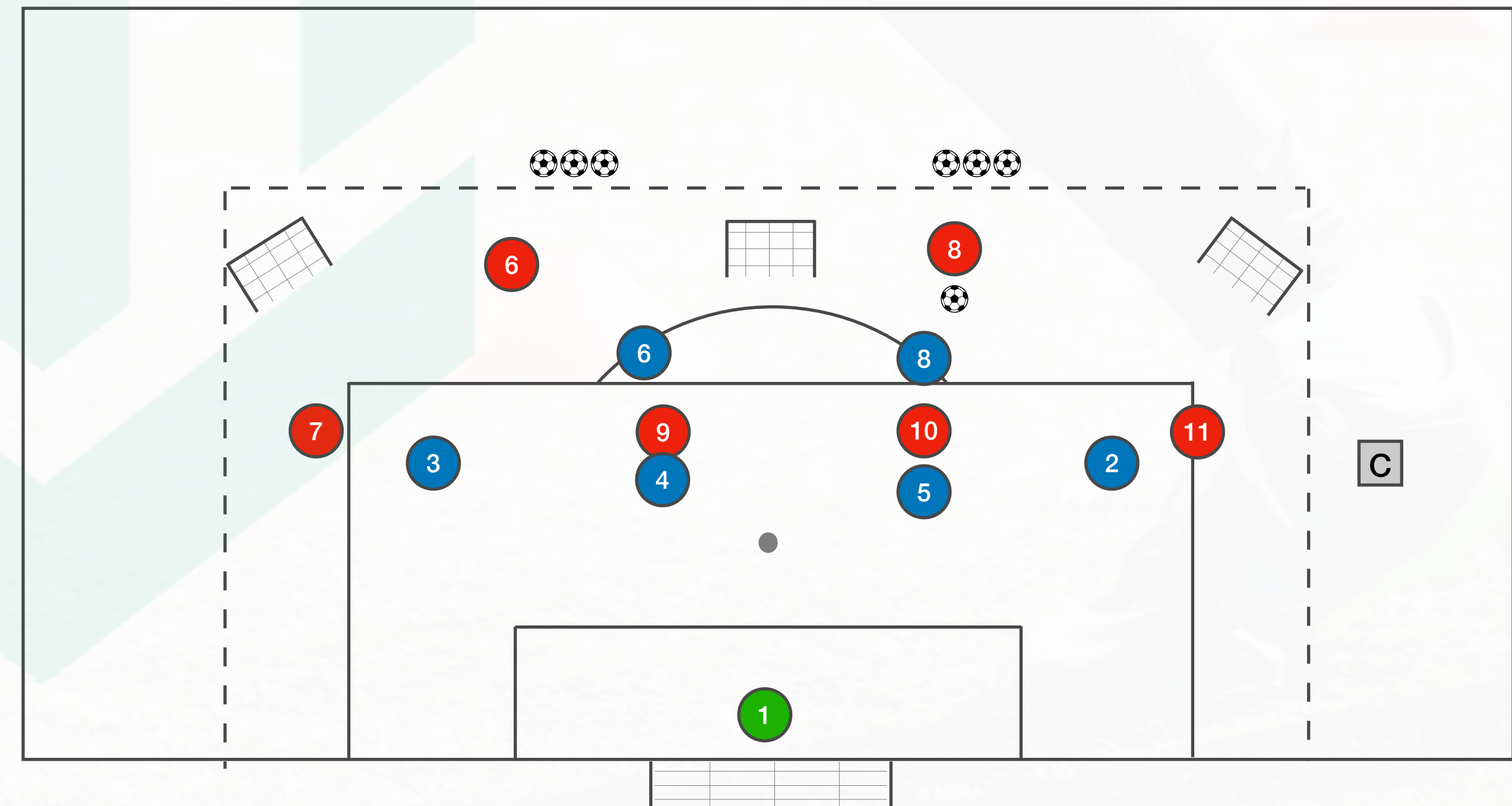


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved awareness of strategies to keep opponents out of the defensive box

Objective 3: An increased cohesion with the goalkeeper and other defenders within the unit

- The game is set up using the penalty area plus extra metres above and on both sides
- 3 mini-goals are used as target goals for the defenders after regaining the ball
- Players are divided into 2 teams of 6, with 1 goalkeeper playing with the defending team
- 1 team is attacking to create and finish, with the other team defending to prevent shots and crosses
- The game starts from the mini-goals, where the attacking team have possession
- The defending team organise and defend the full-sized goal, then counter attack after
- If there is a goal or the ball goes out of play, the practice always restarts from the mini-goal end
- The winning team at the end of the practice is the team with the most goals
- Careful attention should be paid to fouls and handballs in the box
- A time limit per attack should be used to represent the time before more defenders would recover
- 8-12 seconds is a reasonable time limit for the defensive team to defend and prevent shots & crosses





090

Phase: Final Third Defending

A **phase practice** to observe and develop units defending skills in the defensive third

Numbers

17+

Age

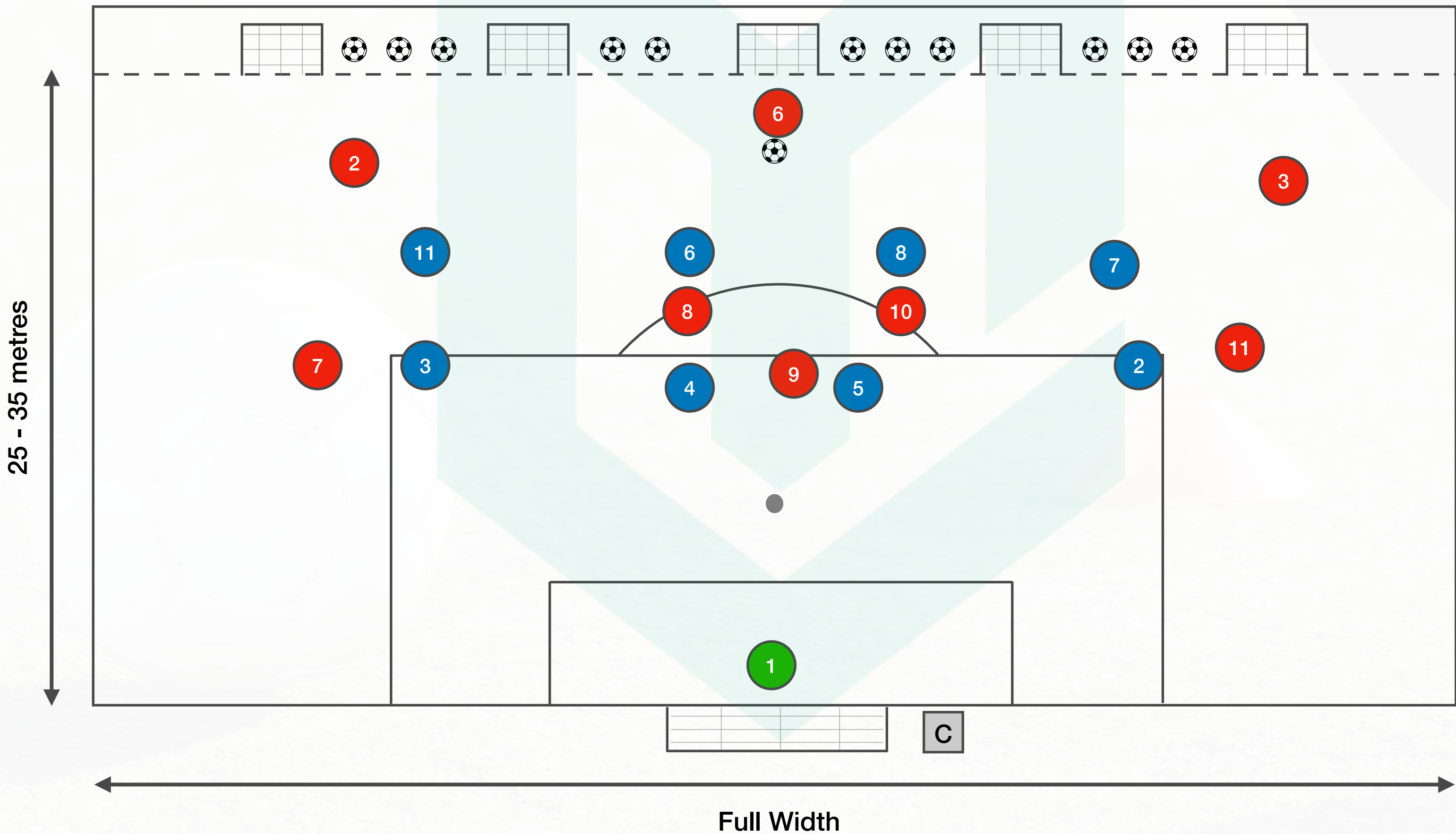
12+

Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

3-5 x
6-10
minutes





TOPIC 10: SET PIECES

Practices to develop a player's and team's ability to be more effective during both attacking & defending set pieces



Set Pieces Contents

- 091. Attacking Corner Wars 263
- 092. Defending Corner Wars 265
- 093. Final Third Throw Ins 267
- 094. Half-Moon Free Kicks 269
- 095. The Full Corner..... 271
- 096. Throw Ins vs The Block 273
- 097. The Interceptors..... 275
- 098. Top Penalties 277

Attacking Set Piece Coaching Points	Explanation
Adaptation of Structure	After identifying opportunities that can be exploited, adapt the structure to exploit them
Blocking the Blockers	To help players find free space, specific blockers can be blocked to prevent them from blocking
Delivery Execution	The quality of the delivery to meet the movements of the players attacking
Delivery Signal	A signal from the player delivering the ball can indicate the set piece arrival location
First Contact	Getting first contact before an opponent player significantly increases the chances of scoring
Identifying Key Spaces Available	Both the player delivering and the players attacking the ball should be aware of the key spaces available
Jumping before the Opponent	Jumping before the opponent gives a physical advantage of using the body to restrict the opponents jump
Movements to Lose Markers	Quick and sharp movements to lose a marker or blocker who is restricting movement
Pressure on the Goalkeeper	Applying pressure on the goalkeeper in the build-up to set piece delivery can restrict the Goalkeepers movement
Quick and Early Organisation	Quick and early organisation can create opportunities to exploit the opponents structure
Rebounds	Anticipating rebounds to get to the ball first after any deflections, saves from the goalkeeper or rebounds from the posts
Rest Defence Structure	The rest defence structure should be able to deal with any counter attacks from the opponent
Second Phase	Preparation for second balls which may drop after the initial delivery
Winning Aerial Duels	Competing with quality detail and physical attributes to win aerial duels
Winning Secondary Fouls	During set piece deliveries, fouls are often committed which can be turned into penalties

Coaching Points: Defending Set Piece

Defending Set Piece Coaching Points	Explanation
Adaptation of Structure	Identifying dangers and opportunities then adapting the structure to maximise effectiveness defending the set piece
Anticipation of Creative Patterns	Staying aware of potential creative set pieces that the opponent uses to best deal with surprise situations
Anticipation of Rebounds	Preparation to deal with any rebounds from the goalkeeper or framework
Blocking Runners	Preventing attacking players from having fluid run-ups to attack the ball by blocking and restricting movement
Communication from Goalkeeper	Information to be led from the goalkeeper to communicate actions needed, e.g. 'away' or 'goalkeepers ball'
First Contact	Getting the first contact on the ball from any set piece deliveries
Identifying Key Danger Areas	Awareness of key threats based on space left free, or opponent profiles and likely behaviours
Jumping Before the Opponent	Jumping before the opponent can offer an advantage to restrict their movement and get to the ball first
No Free Movements	Ensuring all opponent players are unable to move freely without contact prior to the delivery arriving
Prevent the Early Set Piece	Standing in front of the ball during initial set piece moments to prevent any quick set pieces
Quick and Early Organisation	Getting organised quickly and early to deal with any quick set pieces
Rest Attack	Organisation of players not defending the set piece (if there are any), to prepare for potential counter attacks
Sandwiching Key Players	Any key threats may require two players marking them, one in front and one behind
Second Phase	Preparation and anticipation of the second phase once the first phase is over
Wall Organisation	Organising the wall and roles & responsibilities within the wall, as well as on either side of the wall

Attacking Corner Wars

Numbers

8+

Age

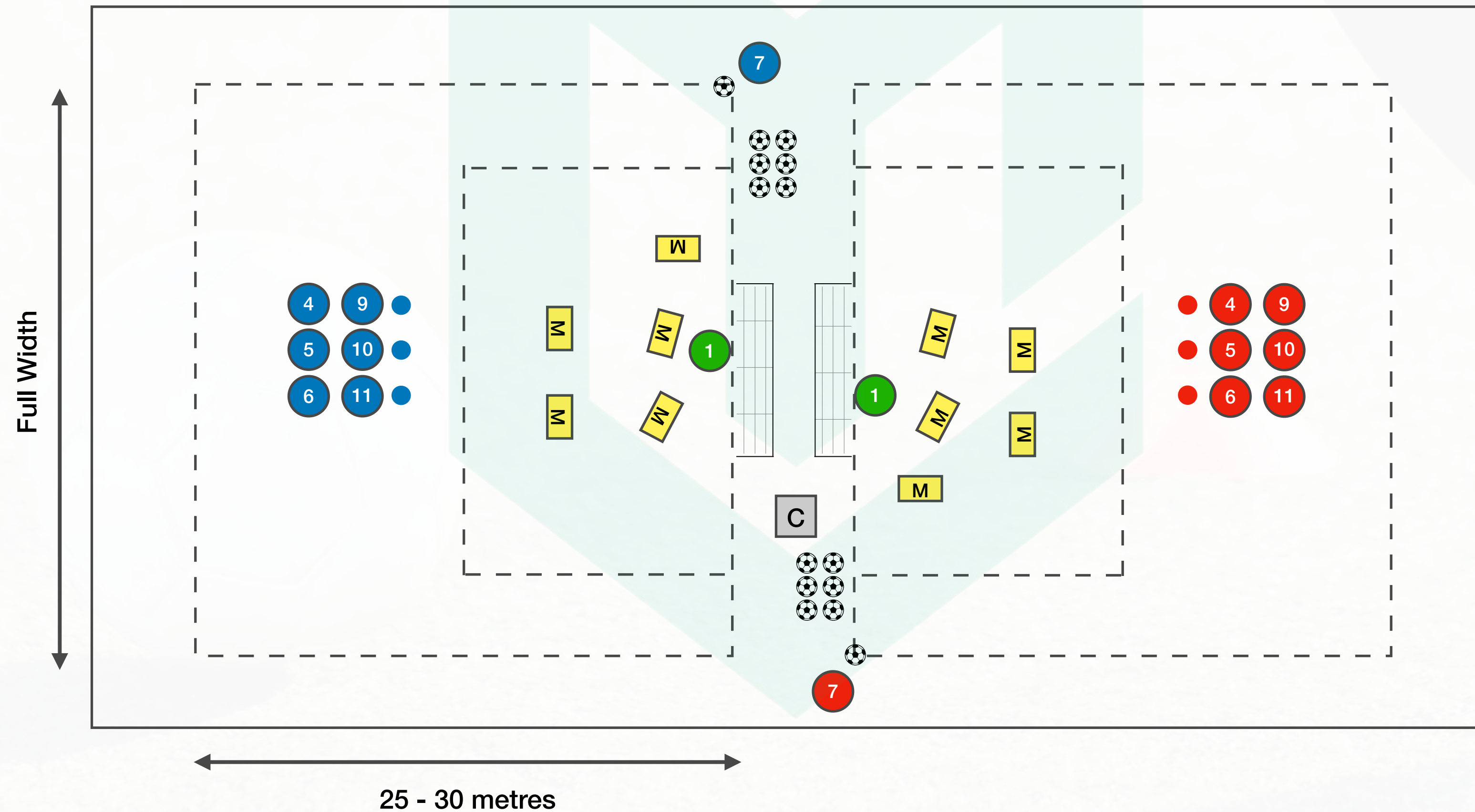
15+

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

3-5 x
3-6
minutes



Set Pieces

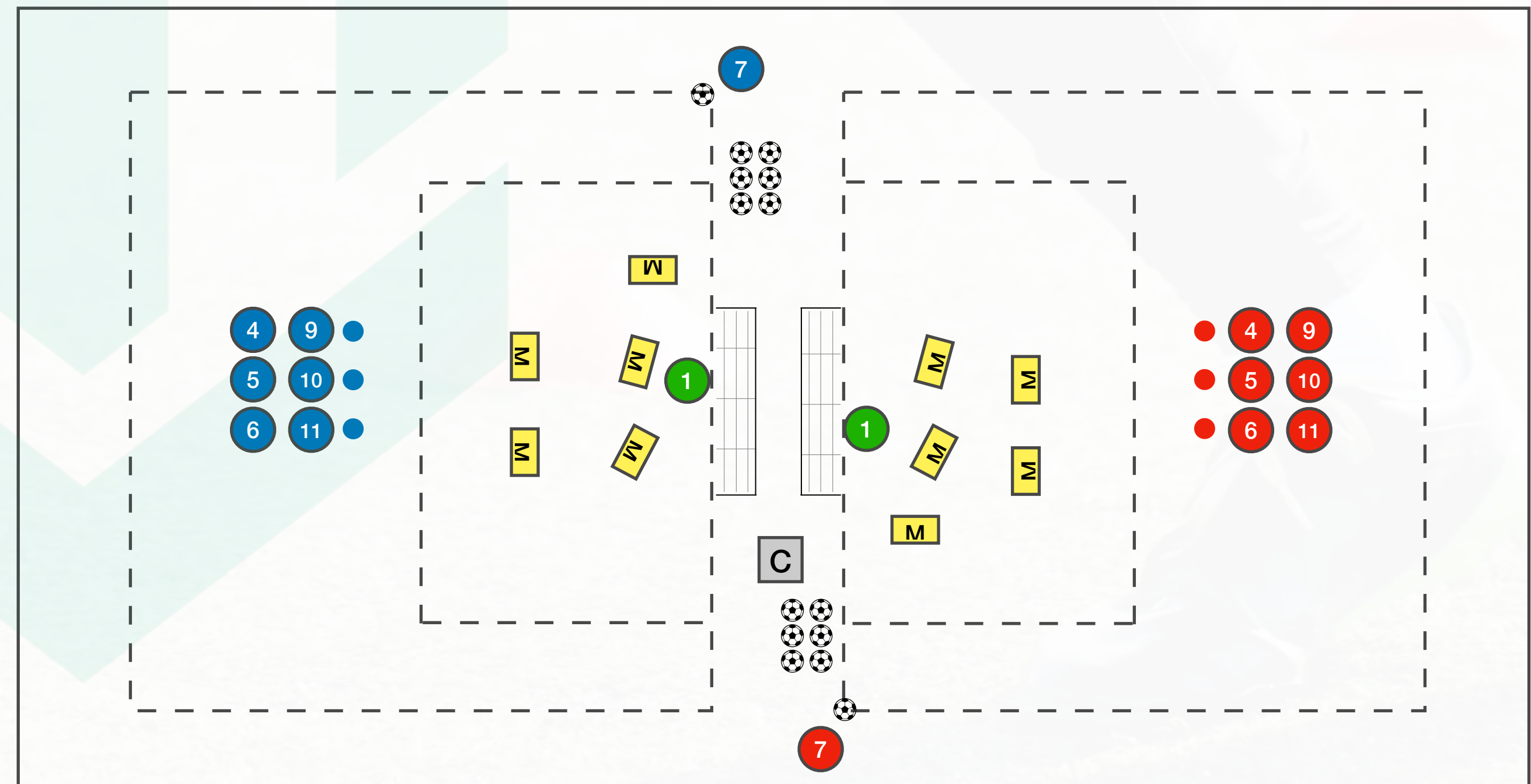
Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved technical execution of delivering attacking corners for specific players

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and timing of attacking patterns in relation to corner deliveries

Objective 3: An improved execution of individual aerial abilities

- The game is set up using two full-sized goals with goalkeepers, and 2 marked penalty areas
- Mannequins are used to reflect a zonal defensive structure
- Players are divided into two teams competing against each other
- 1 player will deliver corners, and 3 players attack the box
- 1 team crosses first, then after the corner is finished, the next team cross and attack
- The corner finishes when the ball hits a mannequin or goes out of play
- For the next corner, another 3 players attack the box
- The player delivering corners should rotate to manage the number of deliveries each player takes.
- After a set number of corners, or a set time limit, deliveries swap and are taken from the other side
- The winning team is the team with the most points at the end of the rounds





Defending Corner Wars

A **phase practice** to develop aerial abilities to defend against corner deliveries

092

Numbers

6+

Age

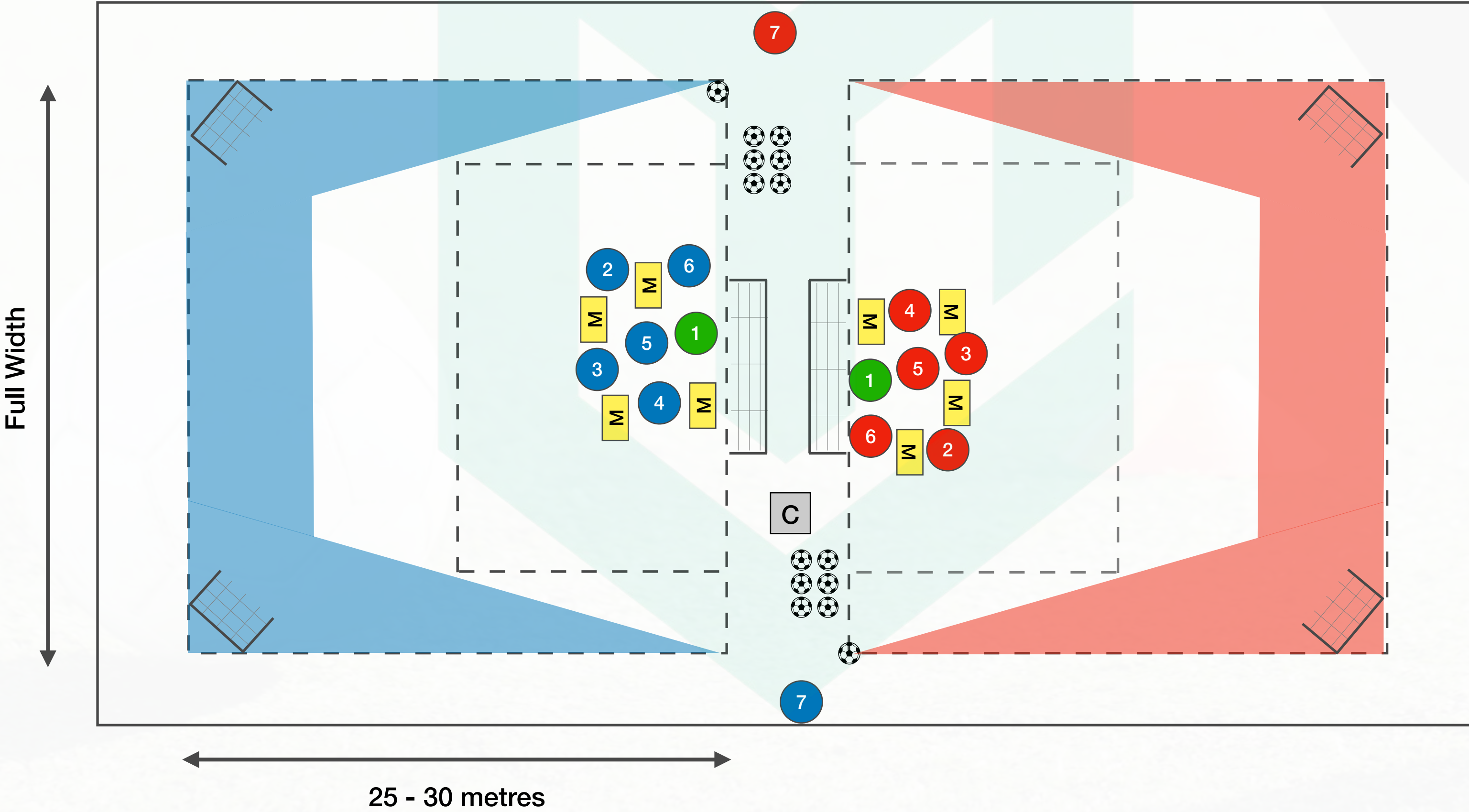
15+

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

3-5 x
3-6
minutes





Defending Corner Wars

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

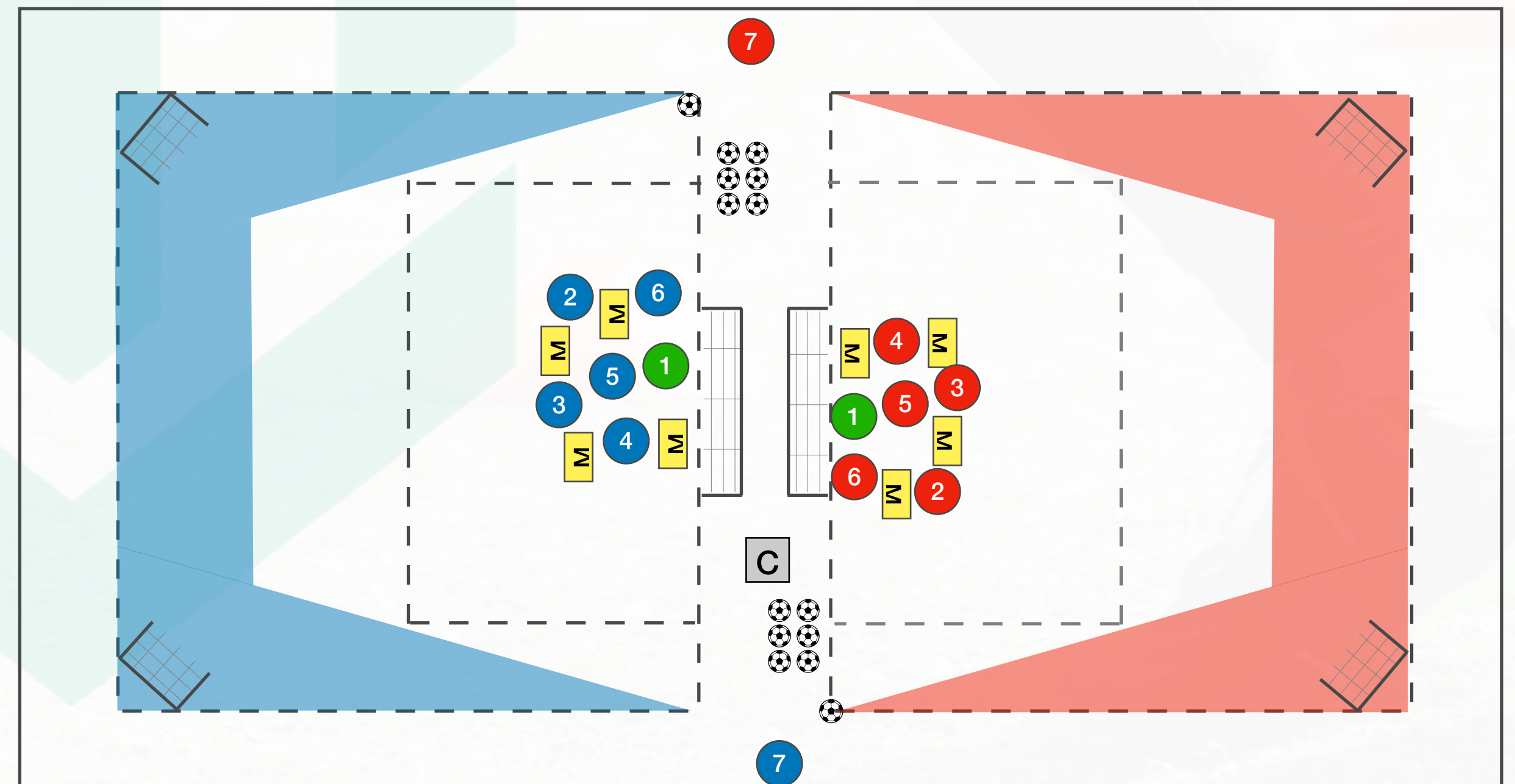
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of defensive headers to get height and distance when required

Objective 2: An improved understanding of zonal roles and responsibilities in the defensive set up

Objective 3: An improved corner delivery execution for those taking corners

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using two full-sized goals with goalkeepers, and 2 marked penalty areas
- 4 mini-goals are used as targets for when the goalkeeper catches the ball
- Mannequins are used to represent attacking players
- Zones are marked to represent positive clearance zones
- Defenders should attempt to clear the ball aerially so the ball first bounces in these zones
- Players are divided into two teams competing against each other
- 1 player will deliver corners, and 5 players defend the crosses
- The player delivering the ball is targeting the mannequins
- The defending players must stop the crosses hitting the mannequins
- Every-time the ball hits a mannequin the other team get 2 points
- Every-time the defenders clear a ball so it first bounces in the marked zones, they get 2 points
- 1 team crosses first, then after the corner is finished, the next team cross and attack
- The corner finishes when the ball hits a mannequin or is cleared
- If the goalkeepers catch the ball, they can throw into the mini-goals
- The player delivering corners should rotate to manage the number of deliveries each player takes.
- After a set number of corners, or a set time limit, deliveries swap and are taken from the other side
- The winning team is the team with the most points at the end of the rounds





093

Final Third Throw-ins

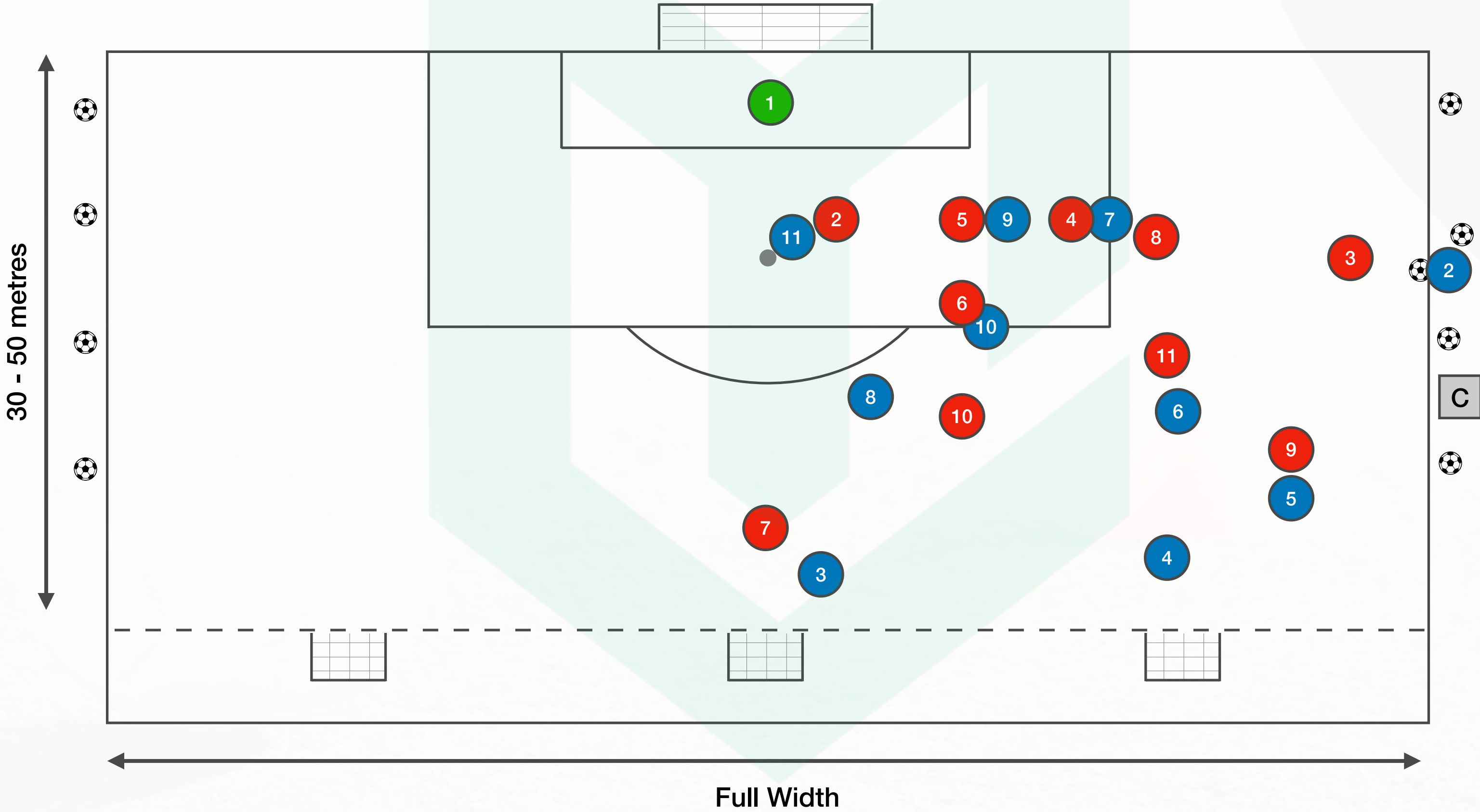
A **phase practice** to develop throw-in pictures, patterns, and technical abilities for success

Numbers

18+

Age

15+

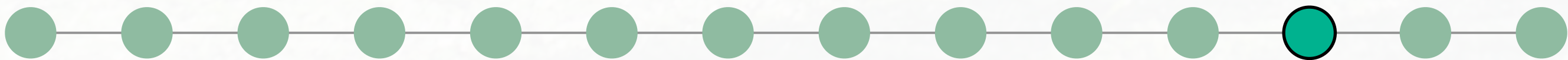


Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-5 x
5-8
minutes

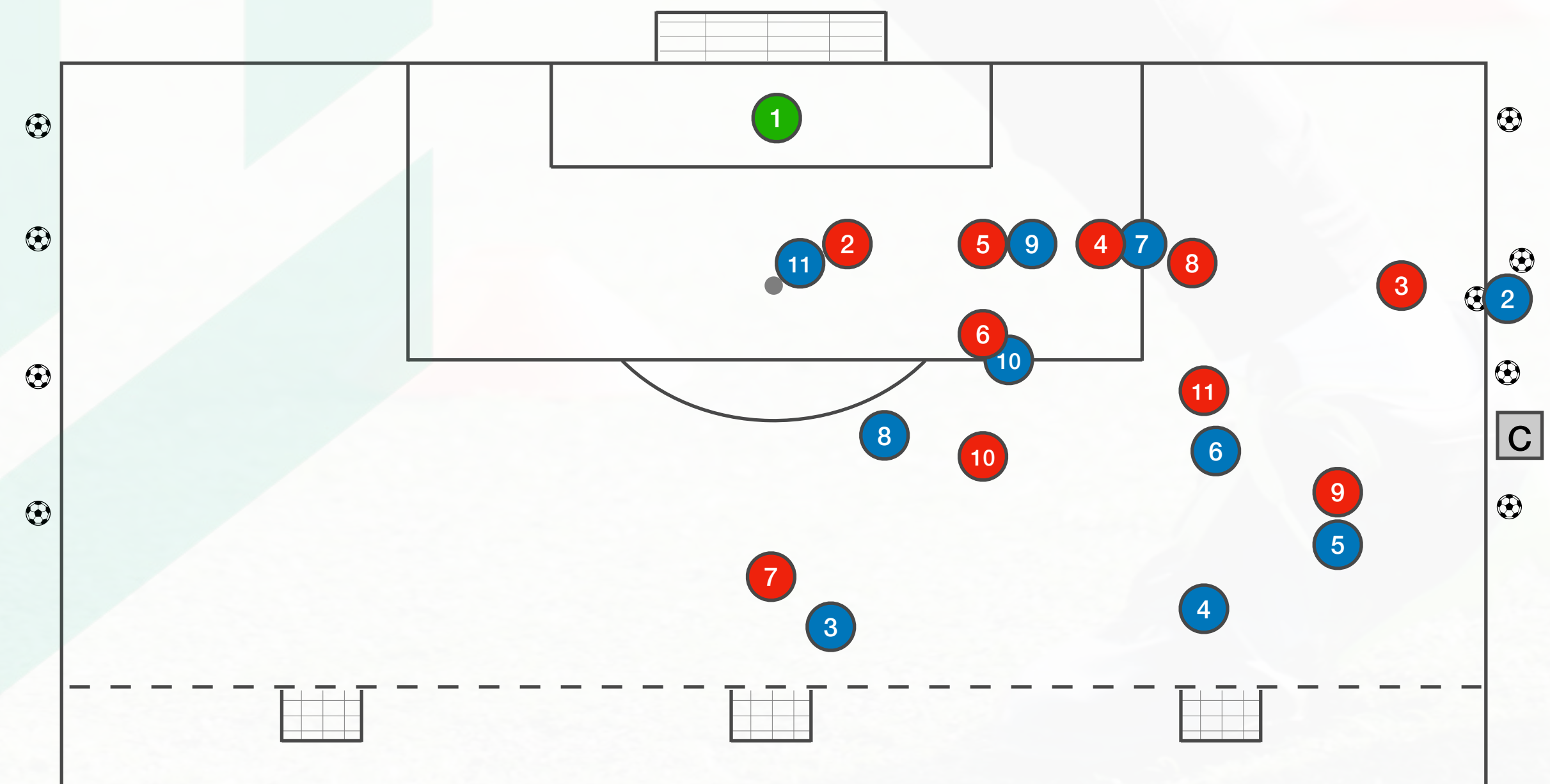


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved technical execution of throw-ins for specific players, including long throw-ins

Objective 3: An improved awareness of decision making triggers when in throw-in situations

- The game is set up using under half a pitch, with 3 mini-goals as target goals for the defending team
- Players are divided into two full outfield teams, with 1 goalkeeper in the full-sized goal
- One team is attacking, starting from the final third throw-ins
- The other team is defending the throw-ins, then counter attacking
- The attacking teams objective is to use the throw-ins to create goal scoring opportunities
- The defending teams objective is to defend the full-sized goal and attack the 3 mini-goals
- After the throw-in, each action lasts 15 seconds, meaning the attacking team have 15 seconds to score
- This meaning the defending team also only has 15 seconds to regain the ball and counter attack
- The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of the time limit
- Throw-ins should be taken from various locations in the final third, and on both sides of the pitch
- If both teams need to practice throw-ins, teams can swap roles in terms of attacking and defending





Half-Moon Free-Kicks

A **phase practice** to develop the ability of players to deliver and attack free-kick opportunities

Numbers

18+

Age

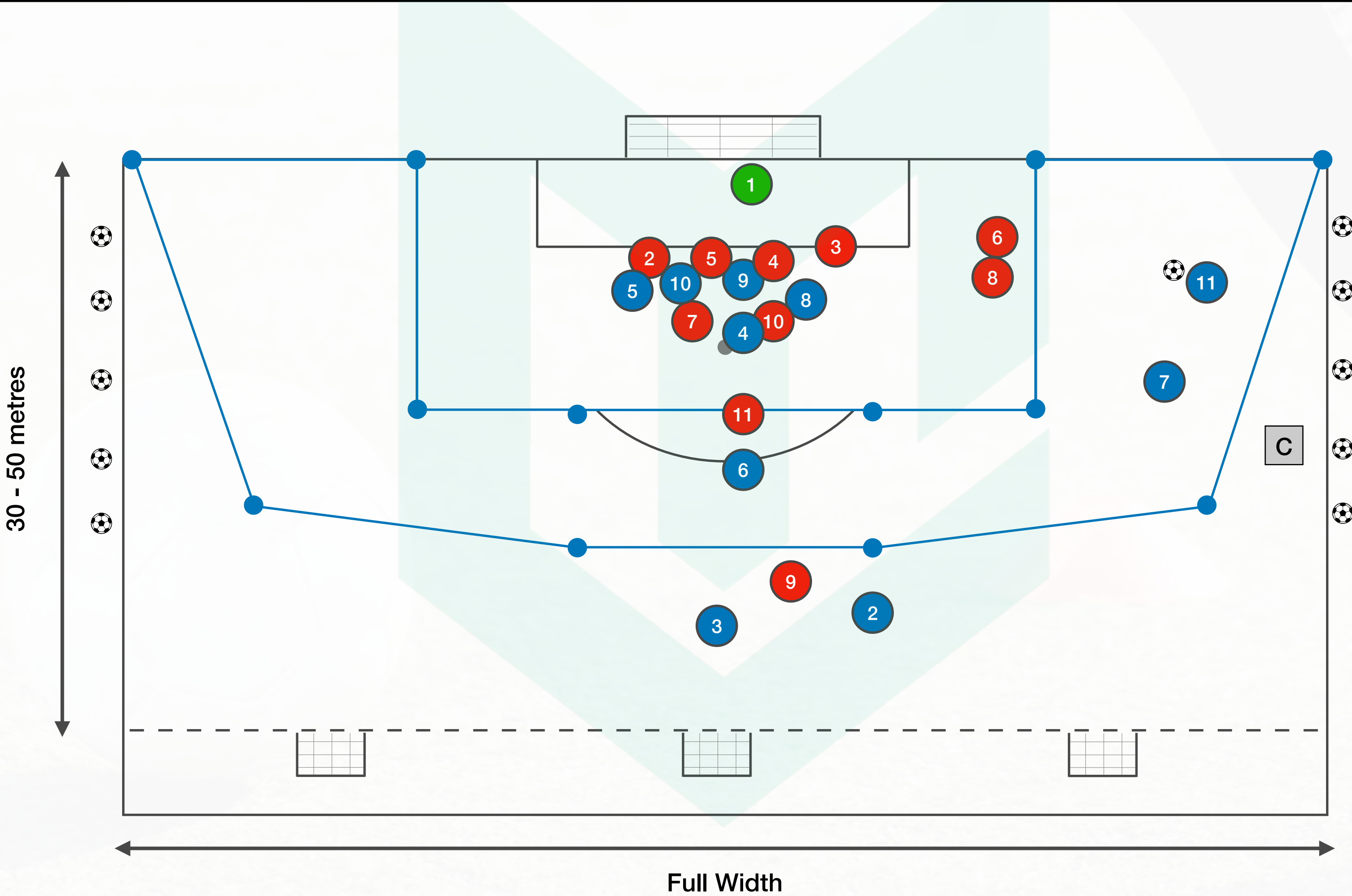
15+

Difficulty

2/5

Time Length

2-5 x
5-8
minutes





Half-Moon Free-Kicks

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

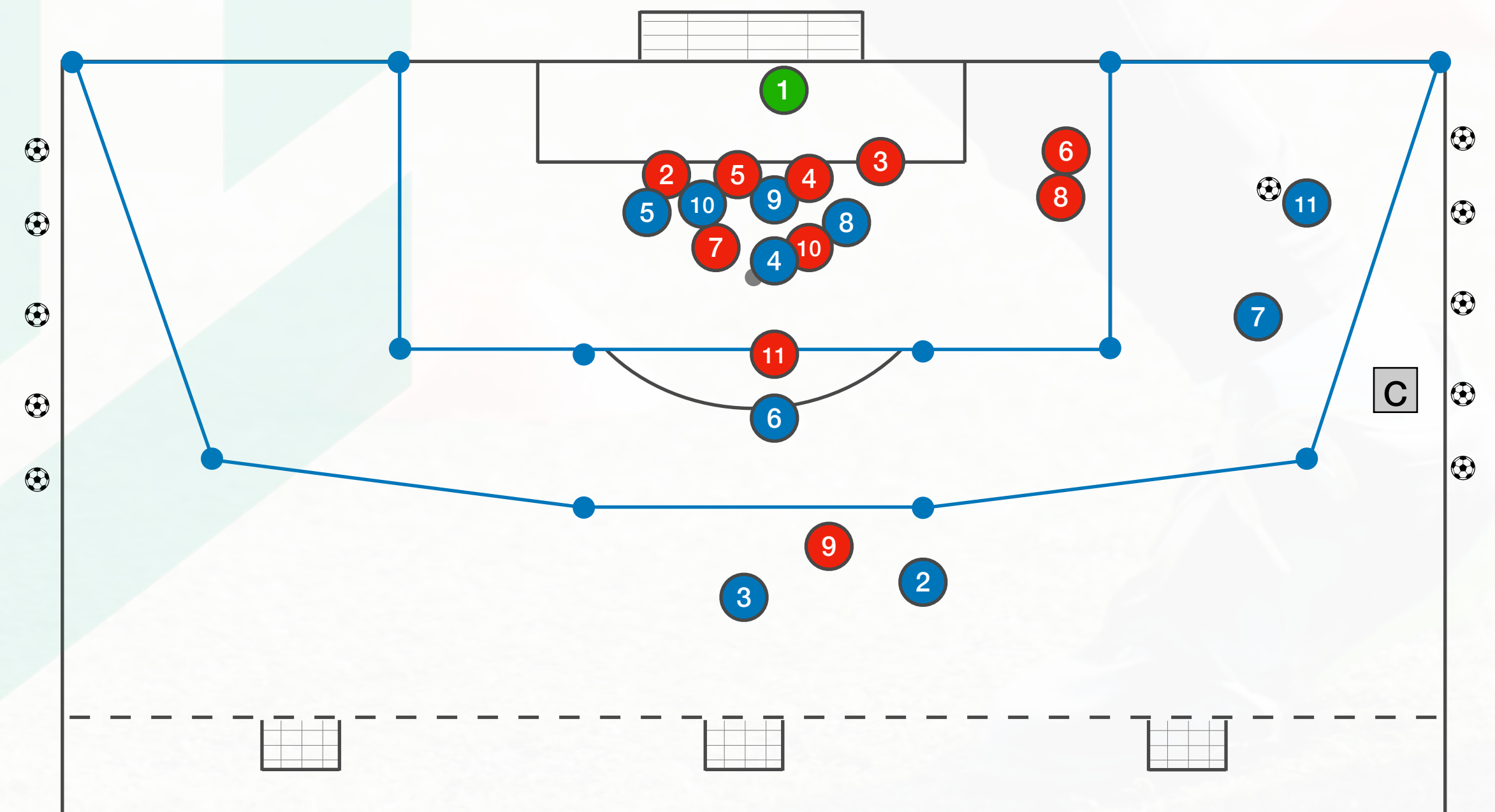
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of free-kick deliveries for specific players

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and timing of attacking patterns in relation to free-kicks

Objective 3: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities of rest defence during 2nd balls

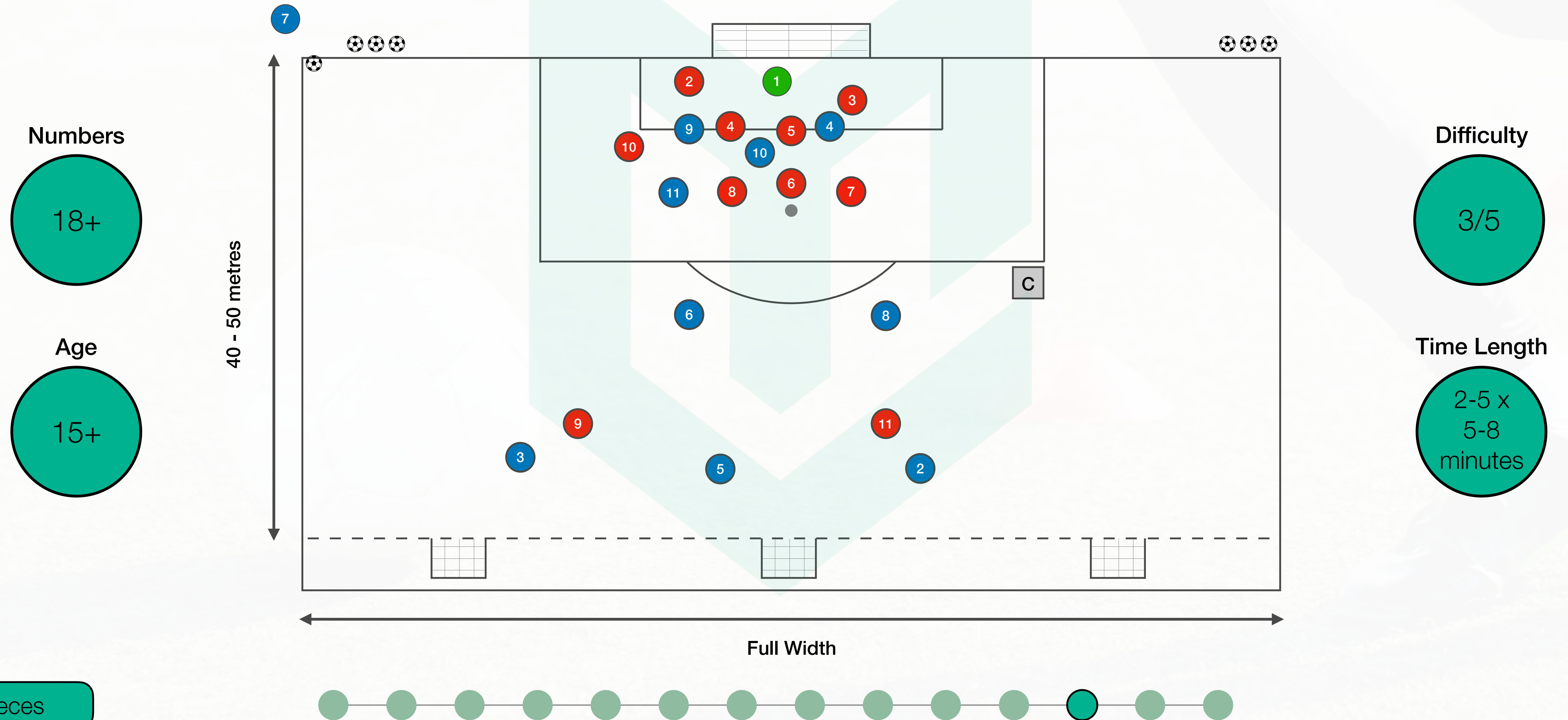
Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 5-10 metres under half a pitch, with 3 mini-goals as target goals
- Flat markers are used to mark a zone representing the areas where free-kicks will be delivered
- Areas outside of the zone should represent areas where short free-kicks would be used
- Players should be divided into two teams of outfield players plus 1 goalkeeper
- The game should be set up with a free-kick from any location within the zone
- All players should be positioned in relation to the position of the free-kick
- Rest defence and rest attack should also be organised
- The attacking team are attempting to score from 1st and 2nd balls
- The defending team are attempting to prevent headers/shots, regain possession, and counter
- If a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the game restarts with another free-kick
- Positions should be changed for every free-kick, meaning all positions should be adjusted
- Each action runs for up to 20 seconds, meaning both teams can score within the 20 seconds



095

A **phase practice** to observe and develop the ability of players to understand and execute their role specific responsibilities during corners





The Full Corner

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

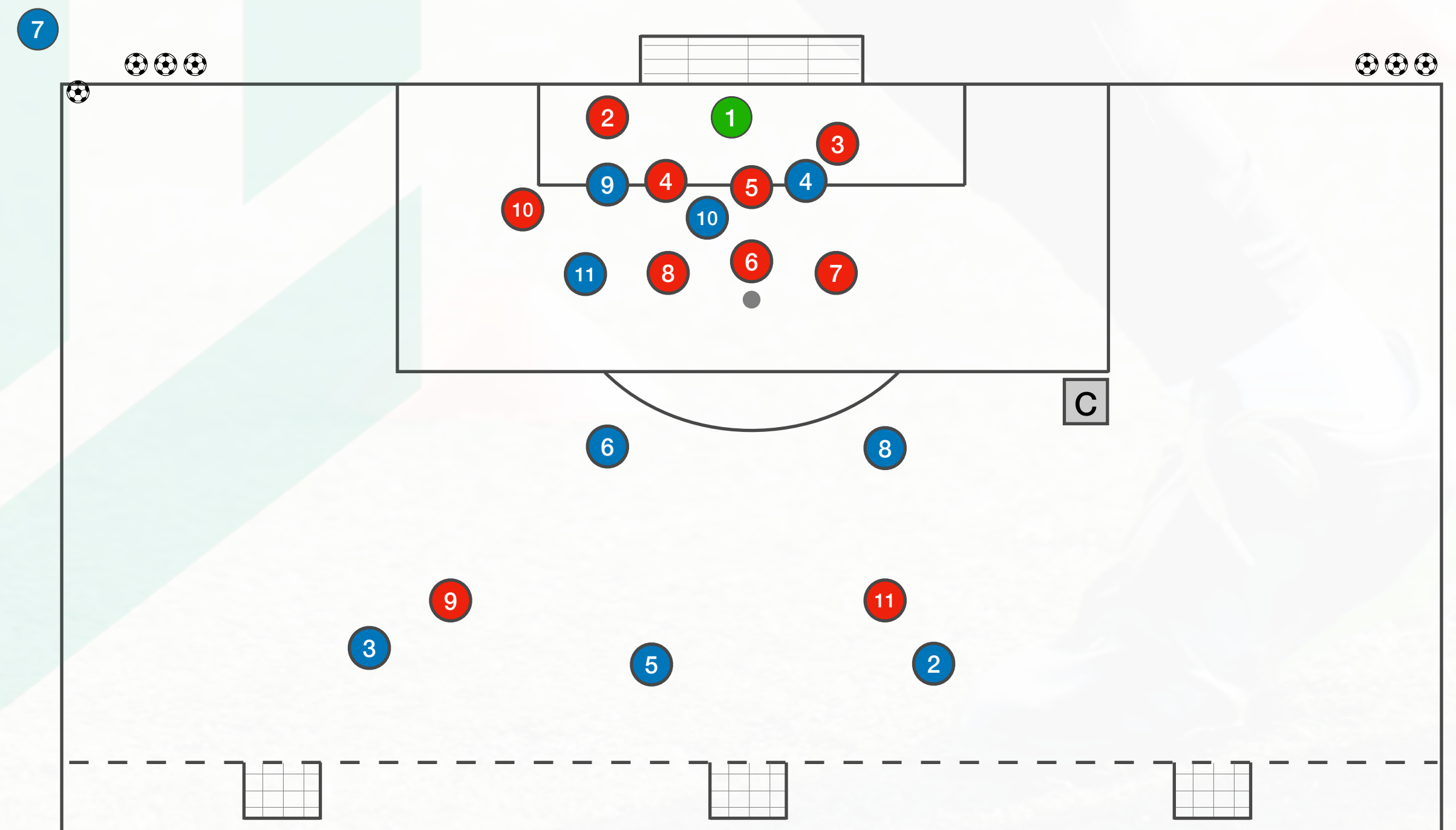
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of corner deliveries for specific players

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and timing of attacking patterns in relation to corner deliveries

Objective 3: An improved understanding of roles and responsibilities of rest defence during 2nd balls

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using half a pitch, with 3 mini-goals as target goals for the defending team
- Players are divided into two full outfield teams, with 1 goalkeeper in the full-sized goal
- One team is attacking by attempting to score from corners and 2nd balls
- The other team is defending the corners and counter attacking into the mini-goals
- The game starts with a corner delivery, and both teams have 20 seconds to score
- After a goal, or the ball goes out of play, the game restarts from another corner
- After a set number of corners, the corners should then be delivered from the opposite side
- The corner taker should be rotated to manage the number of repetitions per player
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they can distribute to start a counter attack
- Rest defence should be organised to be ready for 2nd balls and counter attacks

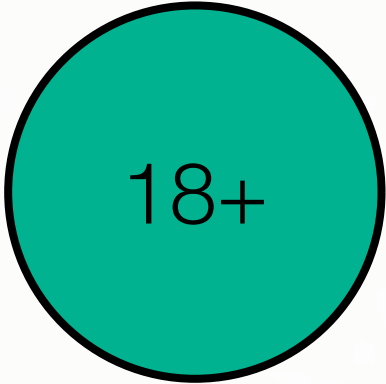




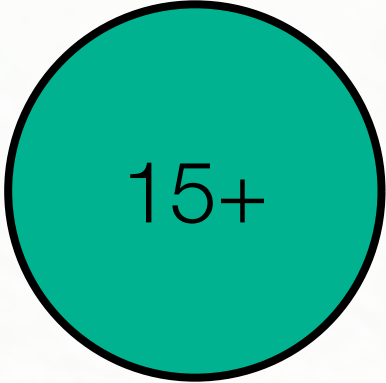
Throw-ins vs the Block

A **phase practice** to develop the ability of players to improve ball retention and penetration during throw-in situations

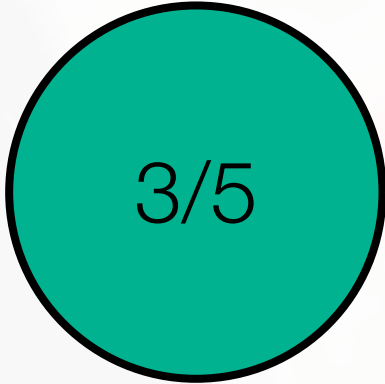
Numbers



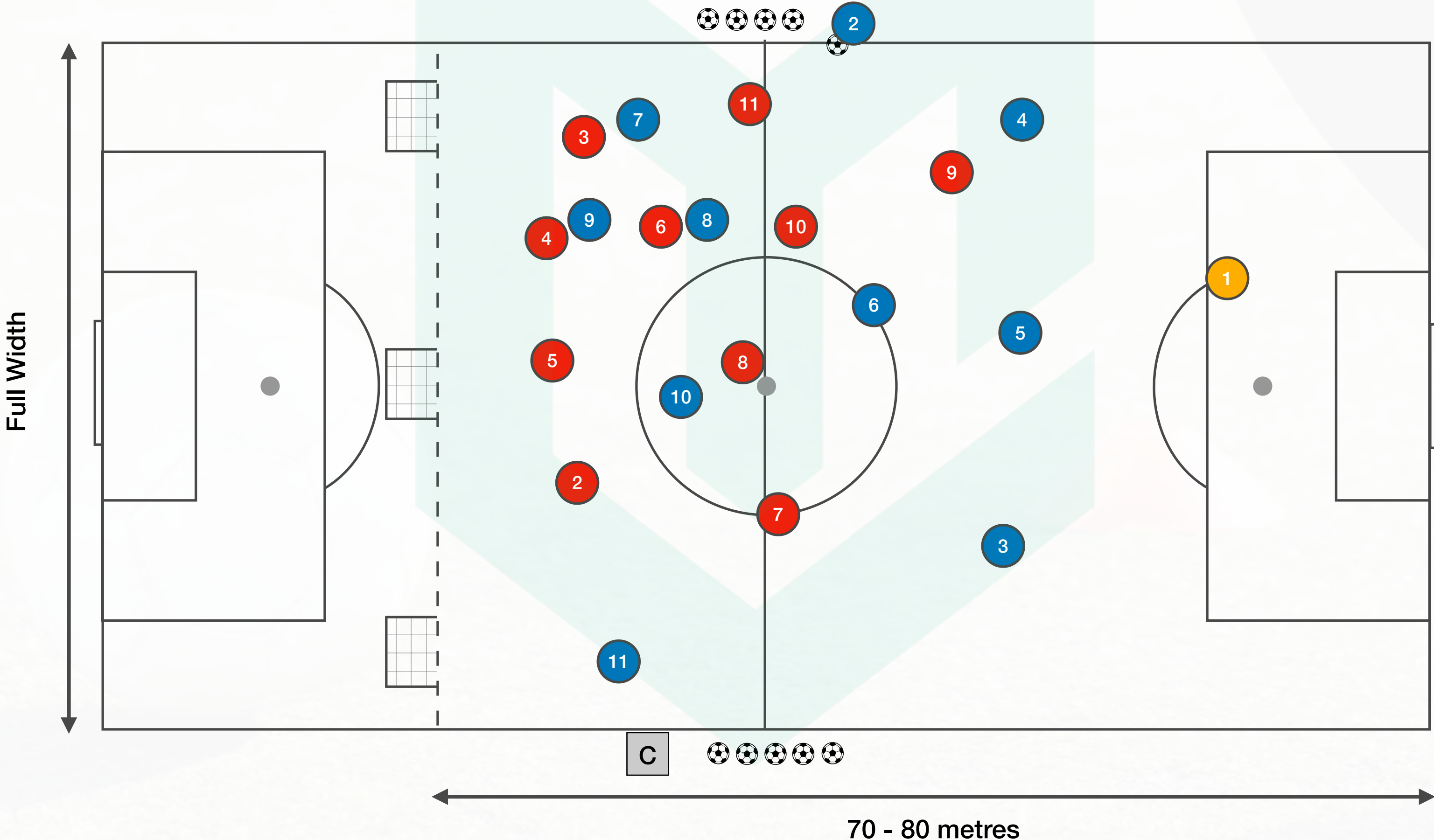
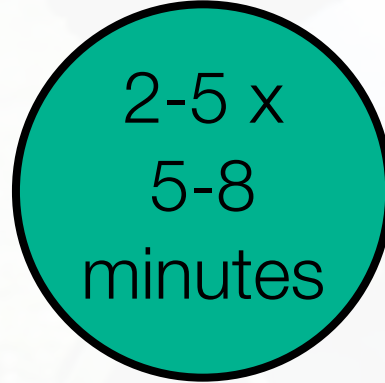
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Throw-ins vs the Block

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

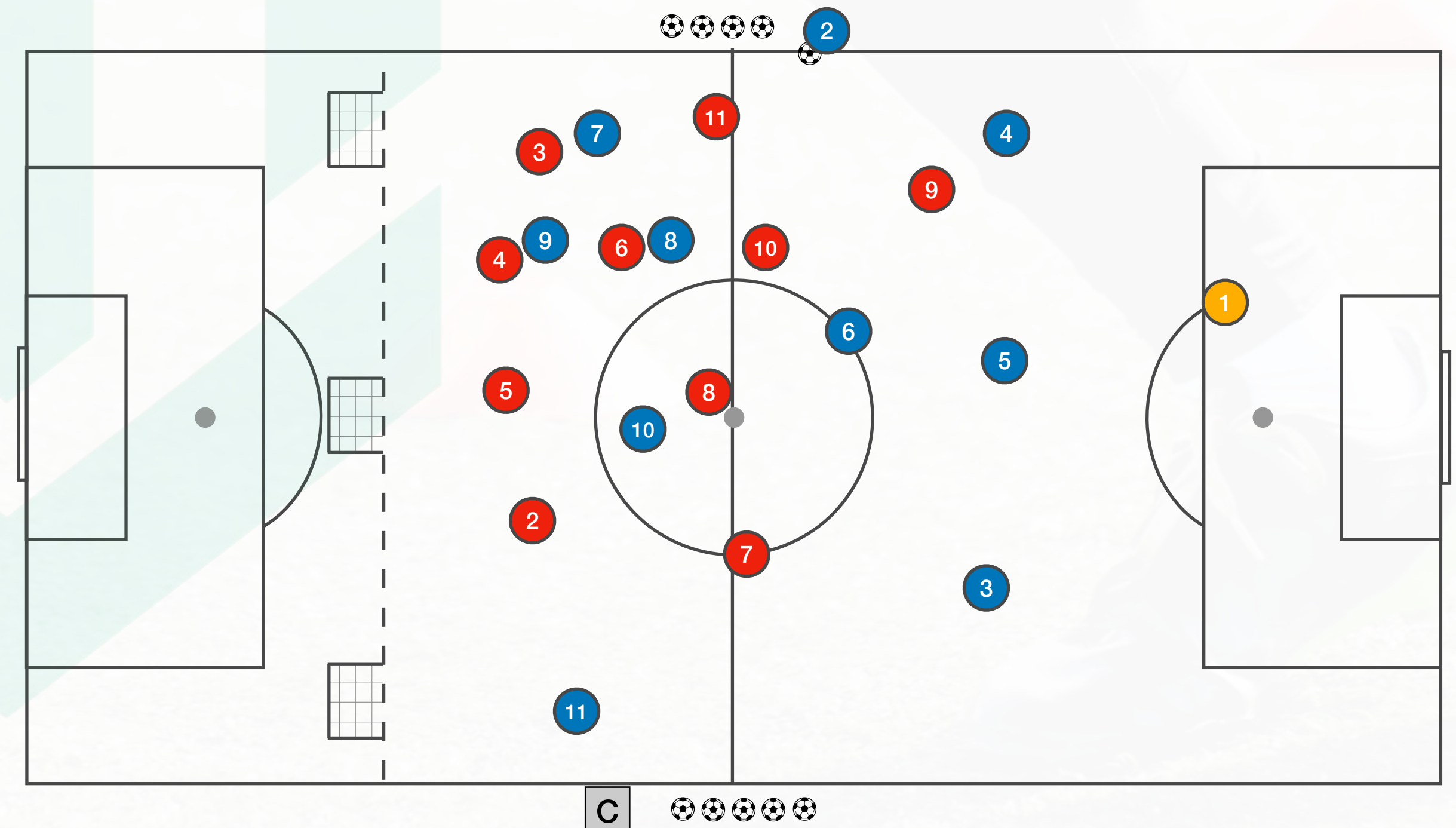
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of throw-ins for specific players

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and timing of attacking patterns in relation to throw-in deliveries

Objective 3: An improved awareness of decision making triggers when in throw-in situations

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using 3/4 of a pitch, with 3 mini-goals as targets to score in
- The balls start on the sides at the halfway line
- Players are divided into 2 teams with 1 goalkeeper
- 1 team is the attacking team attempting to beat the block, and 1 team is defending in the block
- The game starts with a throw-in on one side of the pitch
- The objective of the attacking team is to score in any of the 3 mini-goals
- The objective for the defending team is to regain the ball and counter attack to score
- After a set number of rounds, throw-ins should be taken from the other side of the pitch
- Different depths can also be used for throw-ins to start a little higher and a little deeper

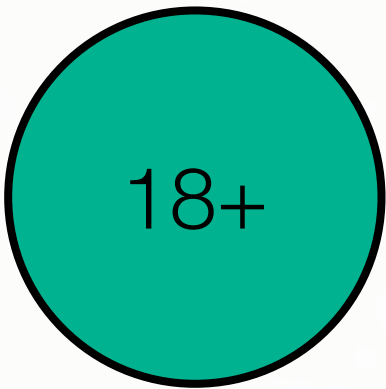




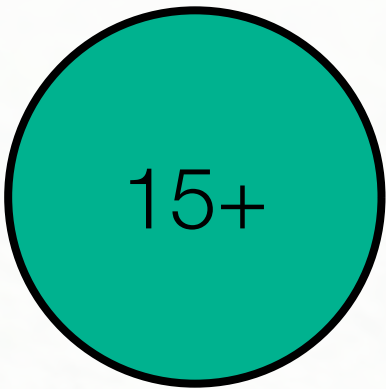
Throw-ins vs the Press

A **phase practice** to develop the ability of players to improve ball retention and penetration during throw-in situations

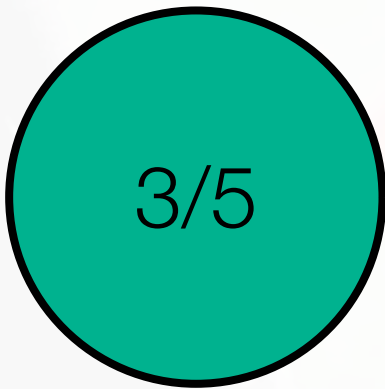
Numbers



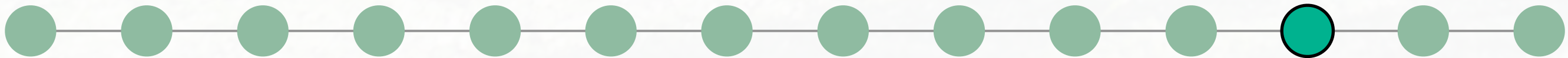
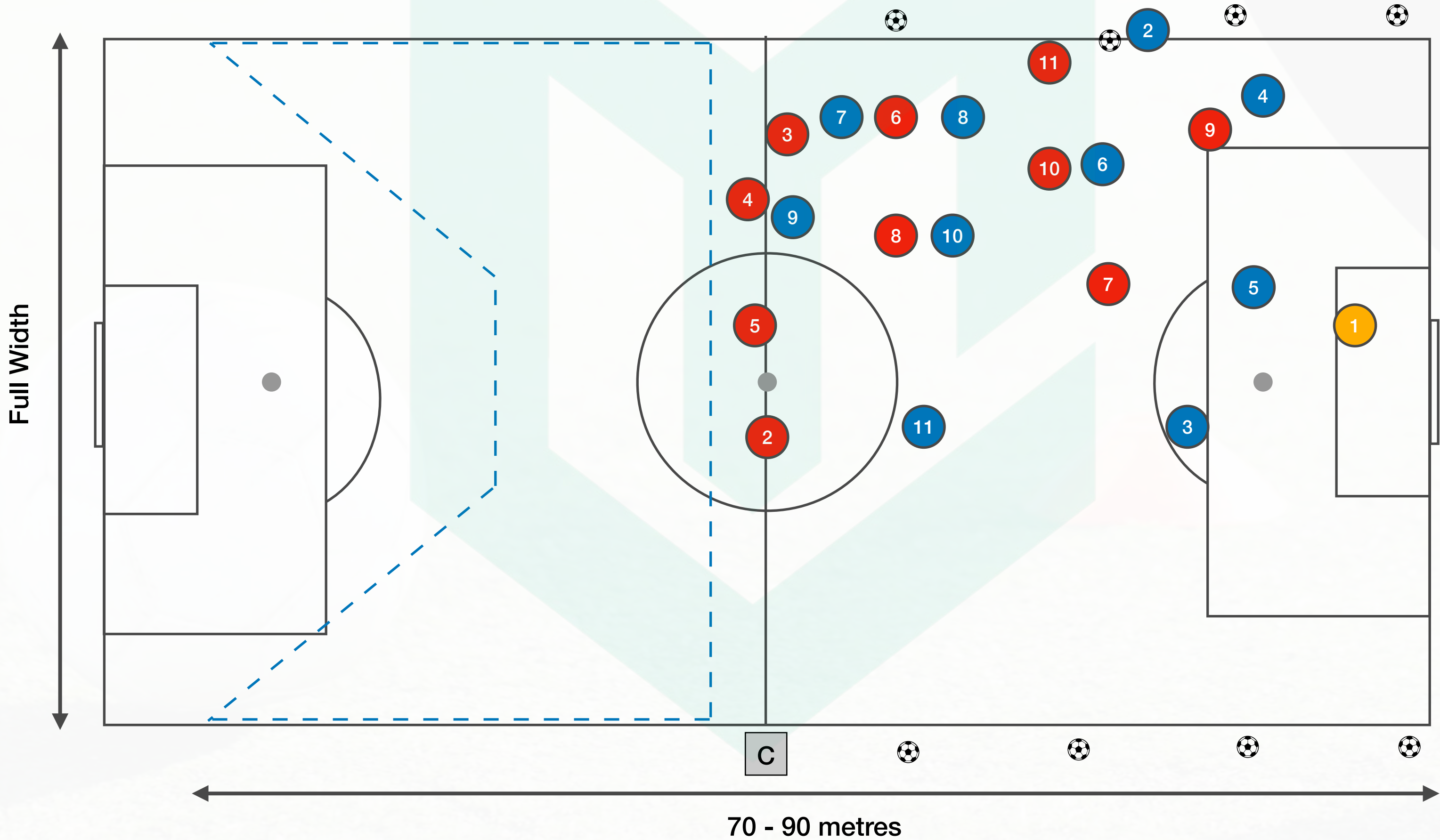
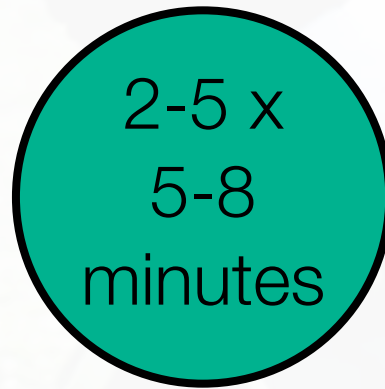
Age



Difficulty



Time Length





Throw-ins vs the Press

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

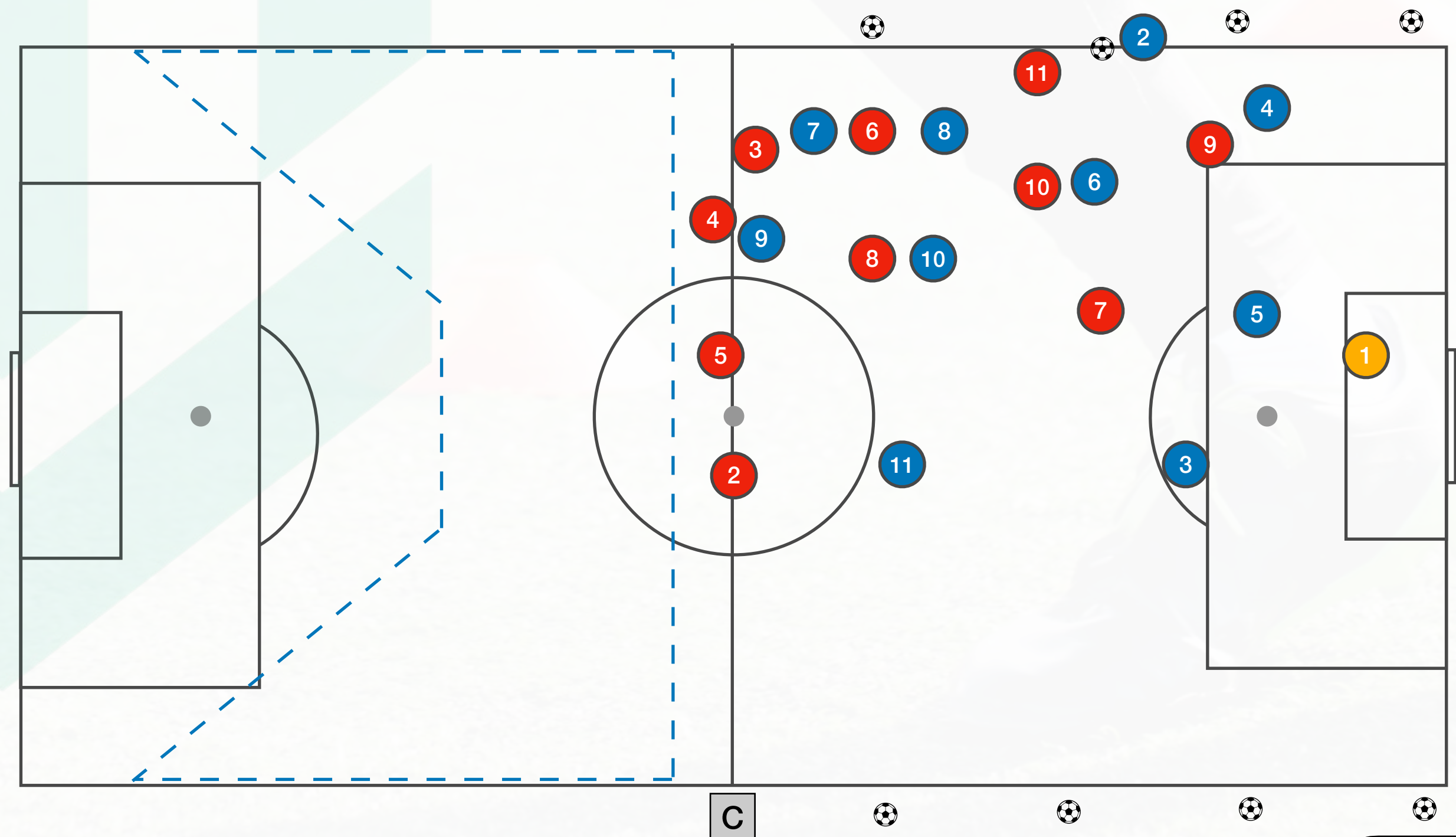
Objective 1: An improved technical execution of throw-ins for specific players

Objective 2: An improved cohesion and timing of attacking patterns in relation to throw-in deliveries

Objective 3: An improved awareness of decision making triggers when in throw-in situations

Game Flow & Rules

- The game is set up using a full pitch, with a target zone (representing spaces to target to beat the press)
- Players are divided into 2 teams with 1 goalkeeper
- 1 team is the attacking team attempting to beat the press, and 1 team is defending in the press structure
- The game starts with a throw-in on one side of the pitch
- The objective of the attacking team is to score by entering the zone behind the defensive line with the ball
- The objective for the defending team is to regain the ball and counter attack into the full-sized goal
- After a set number of rounds, throw-ins should be taken from the other side of the pitch
- Different depths can also be used for throw-ins to start a little higher and a little deeper
- Each action should last up to 20 seconds
- Each time the attacking team breaks into the target zone, they get 1 point
- Each time the defending team scores in the full-sized goal, they also get 1 point





098

Top Penalties

A **picture practice** to develop the ability of players to consistently score penalties

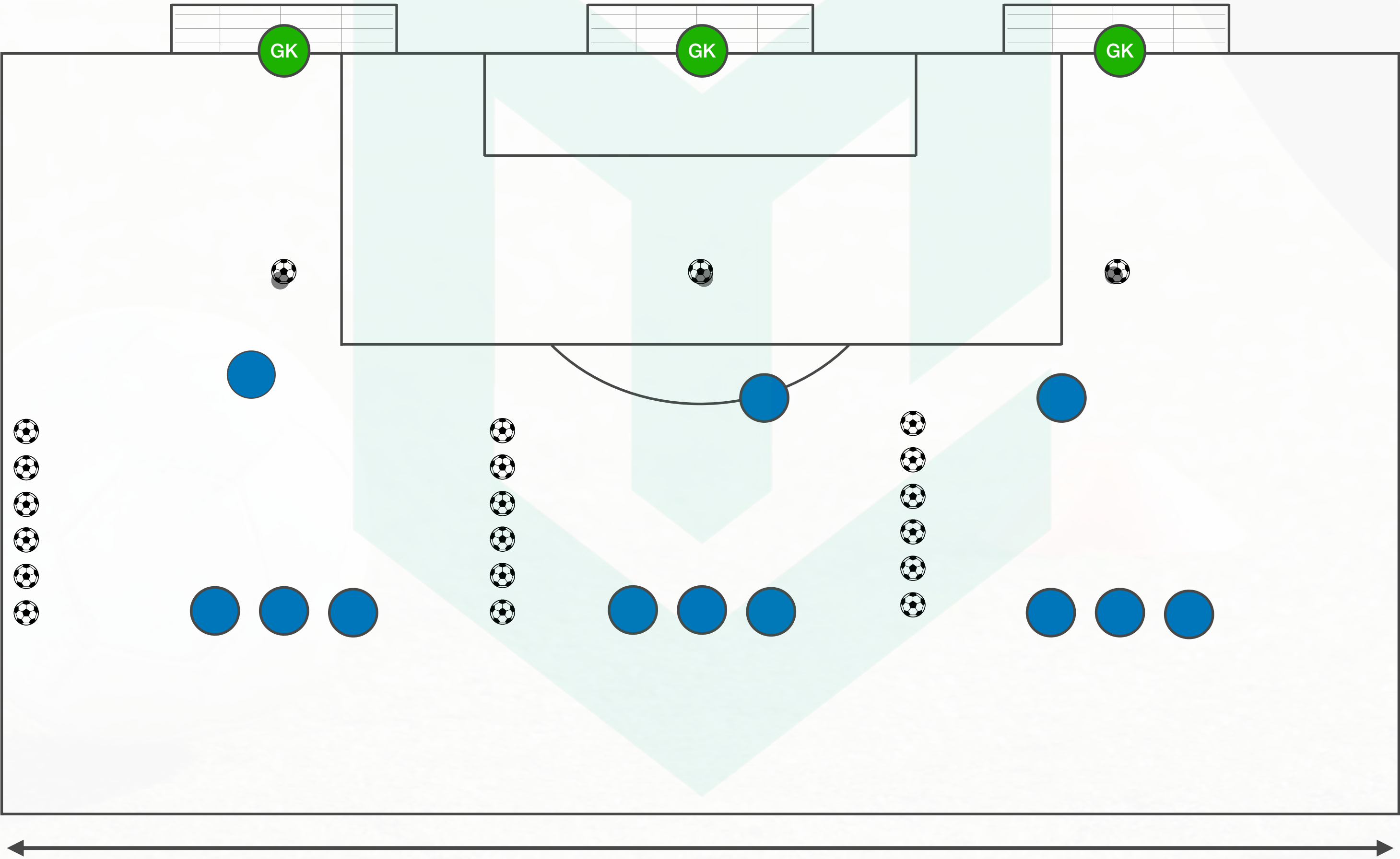
Numbers

18+

Age

15+

30 - 50 metres

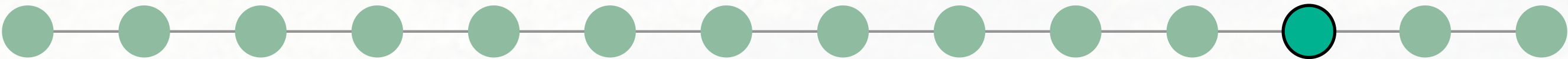


Difficulty

3/5

Time Length

Until there is a winner x 1-5





Top Penalties

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

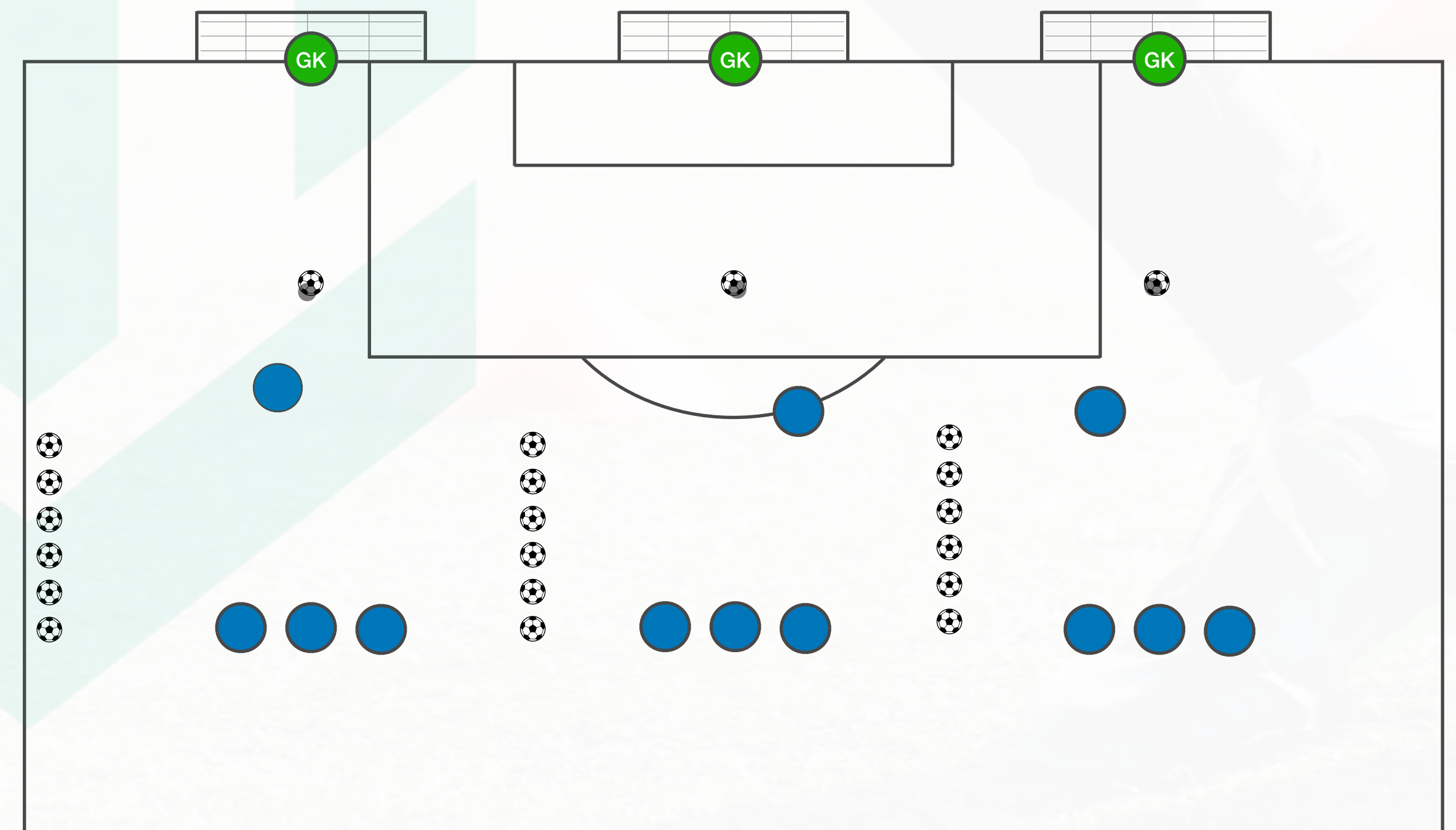
Objective 1: An improved execution of penalties under pressure

Objective 2: An improved awareness of strategies to manage the bodies reaction to taking penalties

Objective 3: An increased competitiveness to become an expert penalty taker

Game Flow & Rules

- The practice is set up with 3 full-sized goals with a goalkeeper in each goal
- Players are divided across the 3 goals, with 1 player at each goal taking a penalty at a time
- Players must aim to score 1 penalty in all 3 of the goals
- After taking a penalty in 1 goal, if they score, they can move to another goal.
- If a player does not score their penalty, they stay at the same goal but join the back of the line
- The first player to score in all 3 goals wins the competition





TOPIC 11: FULL MATCHES

Practices to observe and develop a team across the different phases of the game



Full Match Contents

099. The Next Ball	281
100. Tight Full Match	283





The Next Ball

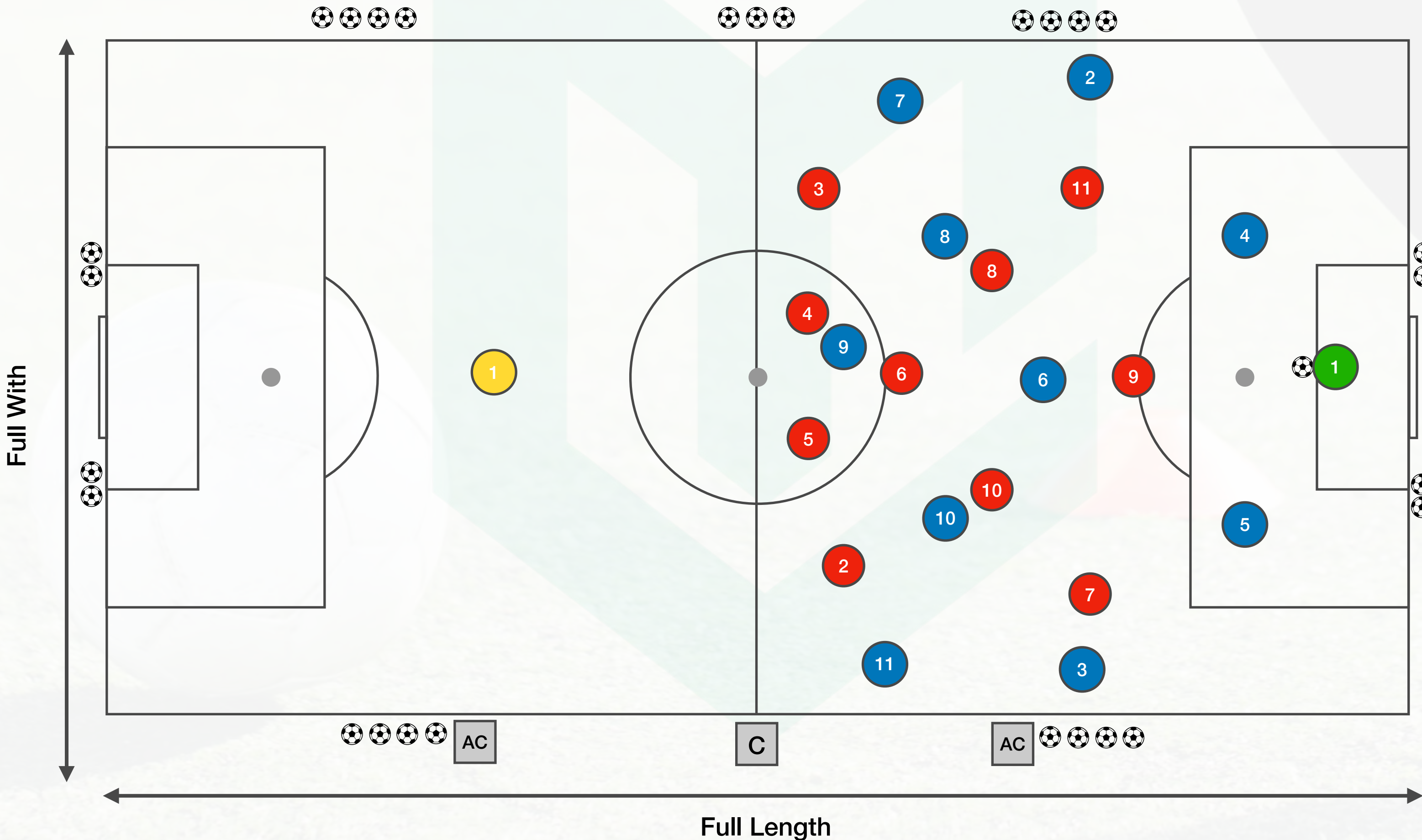
A **11v11 game** to observe and develop the ability of the team across all of the phases

Numbers

2 x Full Teams

Age

12+



Difficulty

5/5

Time Length

2-5 x 8-12 mins



The Next Ball

Practice Objectives

By the end of the practice players should have:

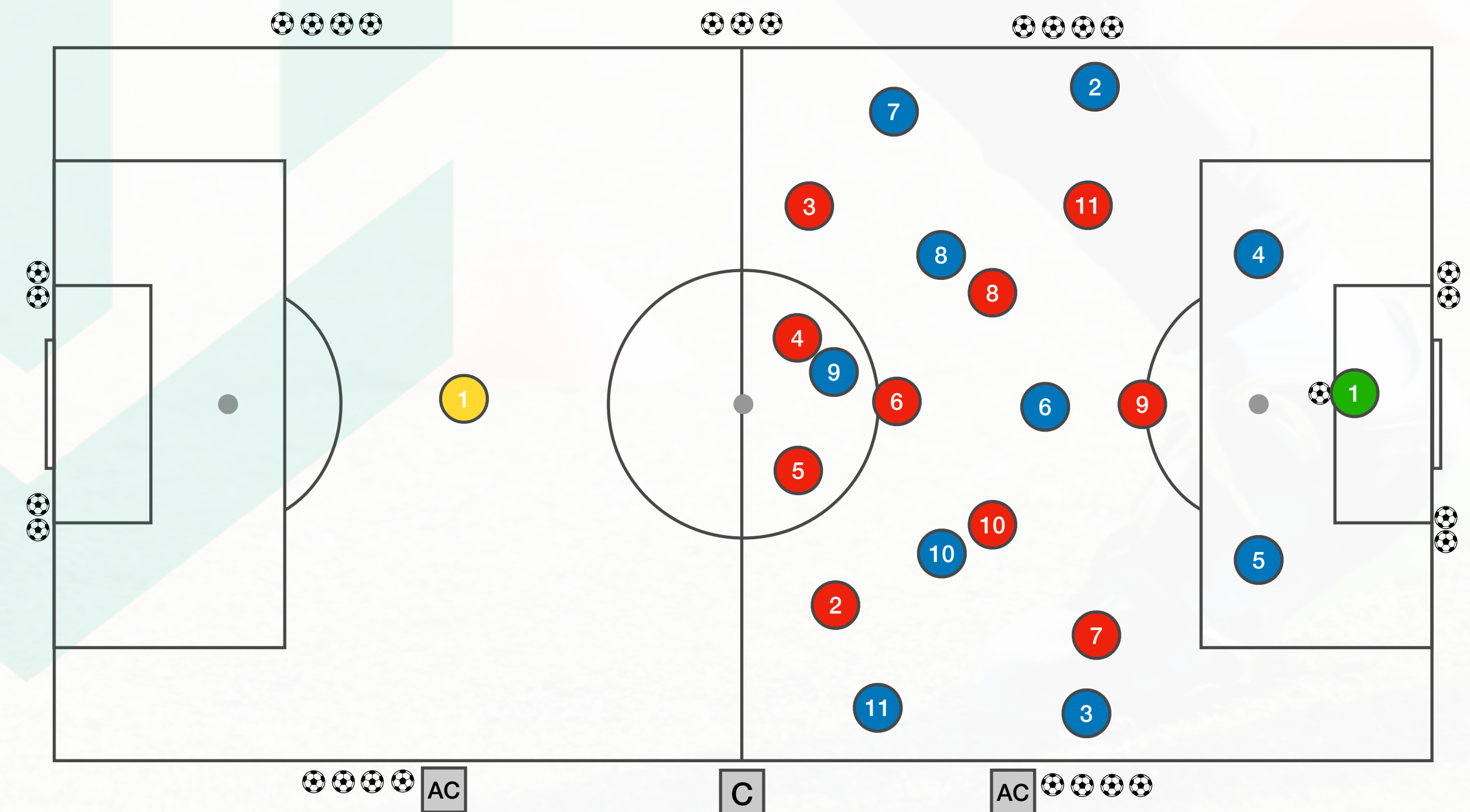
Objective 1: An improved awareness of the different roles across the different phases of the game

Objective 2: An improved technical execution of the small detail around passing, receiving, finishing etc.

Objective 3: An improved cohesion with teammates regarding movements and actions to succeed across the phases

Game Flow & Rules

- This practice is set up on a full pitch, with two full-sized goals and two goalkeepers
- Outfield players are divided into 2 teams, and arranged in their formations
- The game can start from any phase of the game, e.g. Build-up against the high press.
- Normal match rules are used, however a new ball can be played in at any time
- As the coach, you call out the next phase whenever you want it to change
- E.g. as the blue team is building up, you can call out 'red Build-up'
- Both teams then react to start the new phase called out
- Set pieces can also be included, by calling out e.g. 'red corner kick'
- Points should not be used for this game as teams will spend varied time in different phases
- The aim of the practice is to monitor and improve players and units across a variety of phases





100

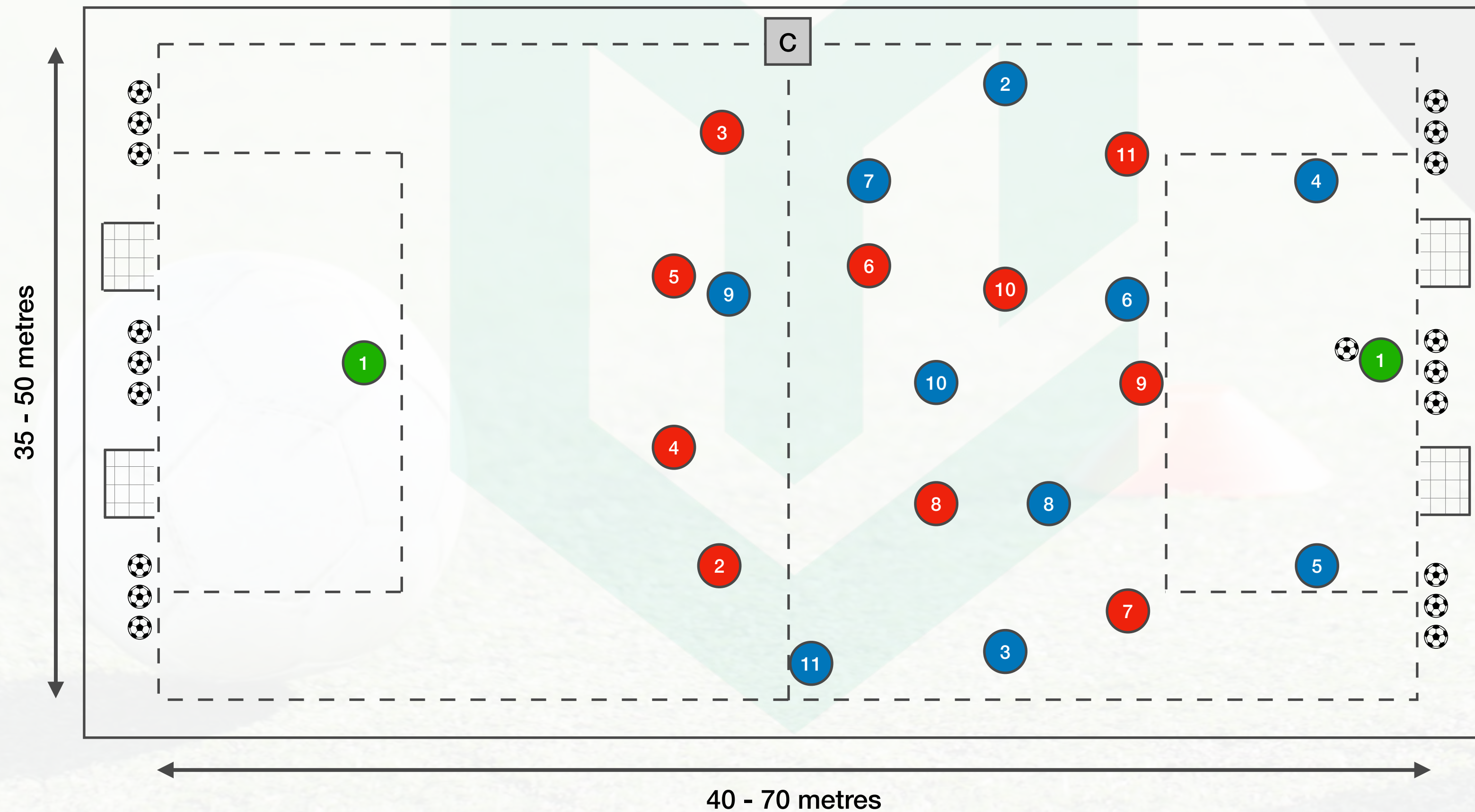
A **large sided game** to observe and develop the ability of the team across all of the phases, under tight pressure



2 x
Full
Teams

A teal-colored circle with a black outline, containing the text "12+" in black.

3-5 x
6-12 mins

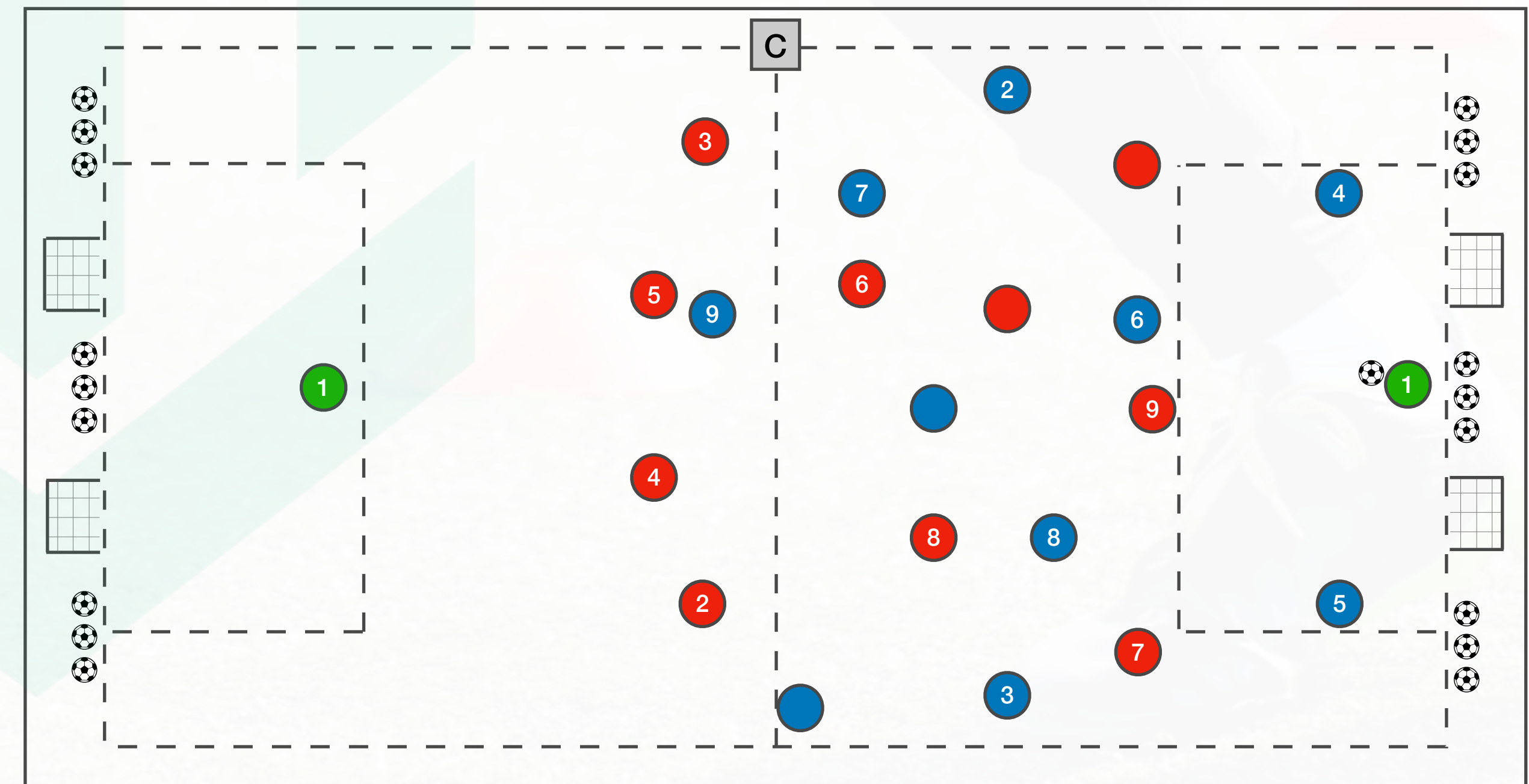


Practice Objectives

Objective 1: An improved cohesion between teammates across all the phases of the game

Objective 3: An improved awareness of pictures and patterns that can be used across the phases

- The game is set up using a tight area size, which is dependent on the age and ability of the players as always
- Penalty boxes are made in a smaller size to also apply pressure in build-up situations
- The size should be large enough so that players can have success
- The dimension ratio should be similar to the size of a pitch, roughly 5:3. E.g. 35x21 metres
- The size should also be tight enough that players have to consistently move the ball quickly and efficiently
- The mini-goals at the ends are used to replace having a full sized goal
- Each mini-goal should represent the corner of a full sized goal
- Players play end to end as with a normal game
- Rules and conditions can be added to create a variety of challenges
- No corners should be used
- If the ball goes out the team can have a goal kick instead of a corner
- No throw ins, instead of throw ins a player can pass the ball in to play
- Free kicks should be spot and play, rather than taking time to reorganise
- If a team scores, they get the ball back from a build-up situation





SUMMARY

A summary of key information regarding the execution of the practices

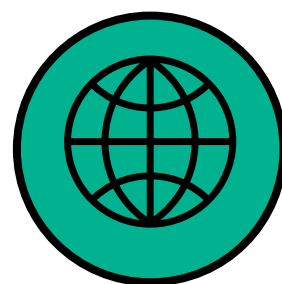


Summary

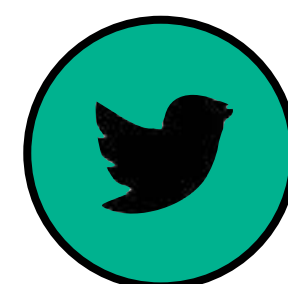
The objective of compiling this book, was to create a resource for coaches which can be directly applicable on the training pitch. The variety and detail across the 100 practices should ensure that there are practical applications for all competitive coaches. As always, the skill of the coach will make all the difference in finding the right practices and linking them back to the environment. With the book covering a wide range of topics, there will be areas that we can reflect on to realise that we miss many topics throughout a coaching season or curriculum. For example, do we coach defending against the diagonal? Do we coach penalties? Or closing the middle when counter pressing? Self reflection to identify the topics we do and do not cover will help us develop holistically as coaches. Below are some self reflection questions to consider to summarise what's been shared in the book:

- Which topics could you start coaching that you have not focused on before?
- Do you use the 3 E's, educate, experience, and expression?
- Do you use a variety of practice designs to reach different coaching outcomes?
- How much detail are you able to understand and coach during your practices?
- Are you aware of how to manipulate rules and conditions to utilise key coaching principles?

For more coach education content or to follow Michael Loftman, please see the media details below:



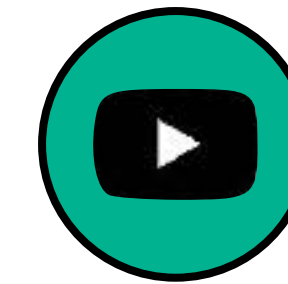
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