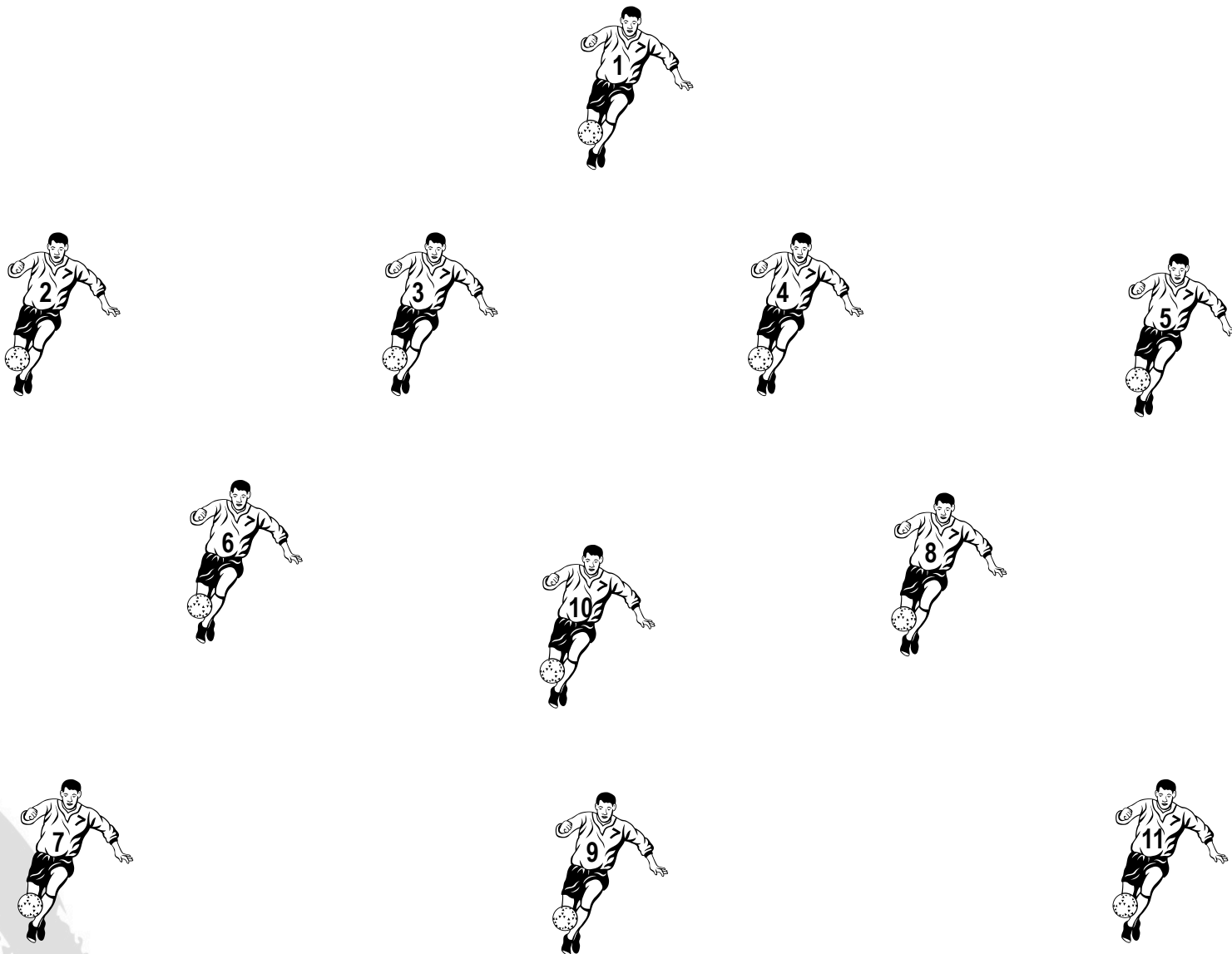


# The 1-4-3-3 formation



# Rationale

- ⚽ In the 1-4-3-3 formation there are 3 lines with a balanced spread of players over the pitch ('triangles' of players) which creates good conditions for:

- ❖ effective positioning play
- ❖ playing out
- ❖ combination football / short passing game
- ❖ creative and varied attacking play using the width of the field
- ❖ early disturbing and pressuring after losing possession

- ⚽ For youth players, the positions and the attached basic tasks are logical and recognizable, which makes learning to play as a team easier to develop

- ⚽ The Optus SSF formats 7 v 7 (1-3-3) and 9 v 9 (1-3-2-3) lead up to the 1-4-3-3 formation in a logical and methodical manner



# Basic forms



The 1-4-3-3 formation has 2 basic forms, with a number of derived (offensive or defensive) variations:

1. The midfield triangle with the 'point' (no.10) forward.
2. The midfield triangle with the 'point' (no.6) to the rear.

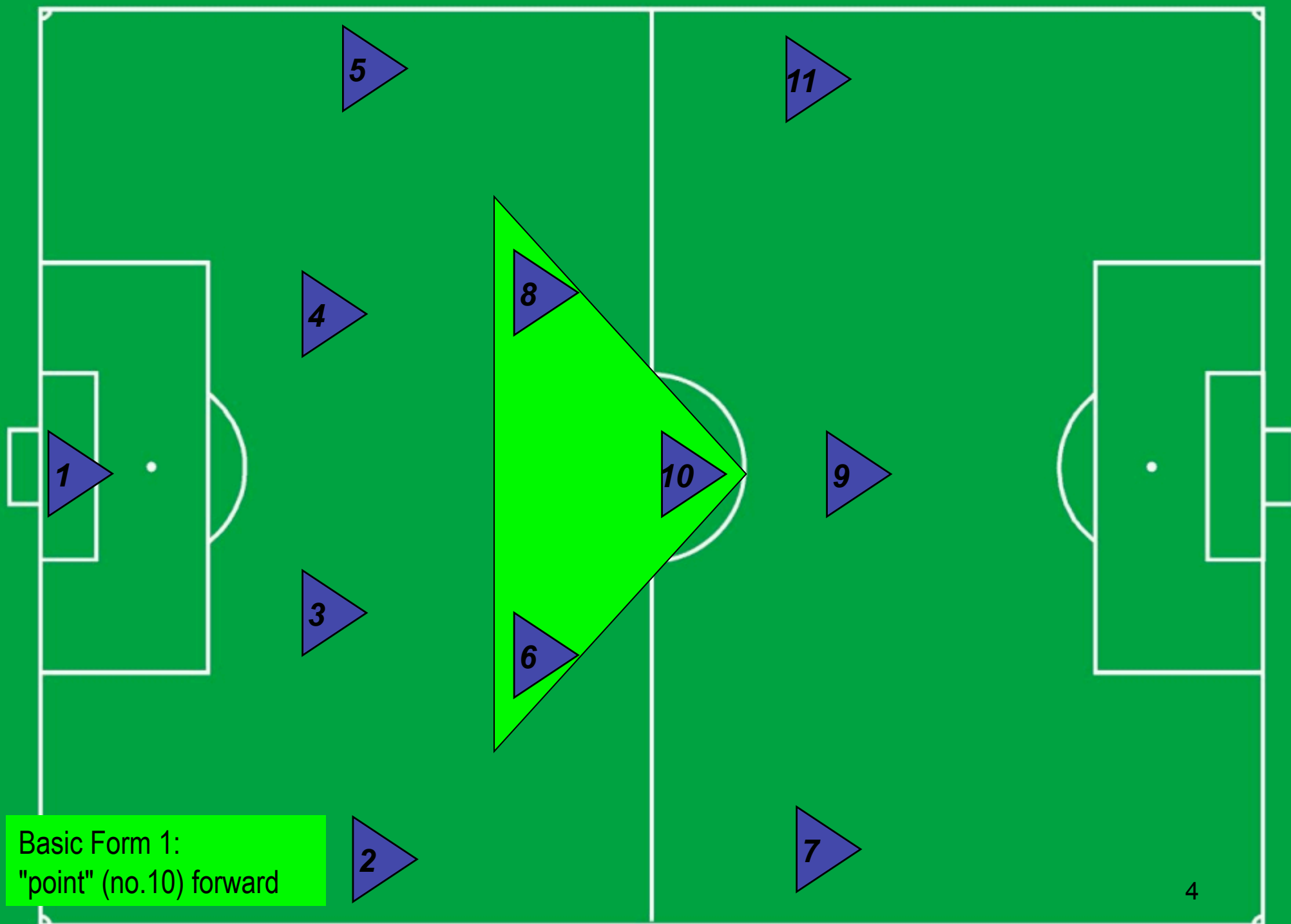


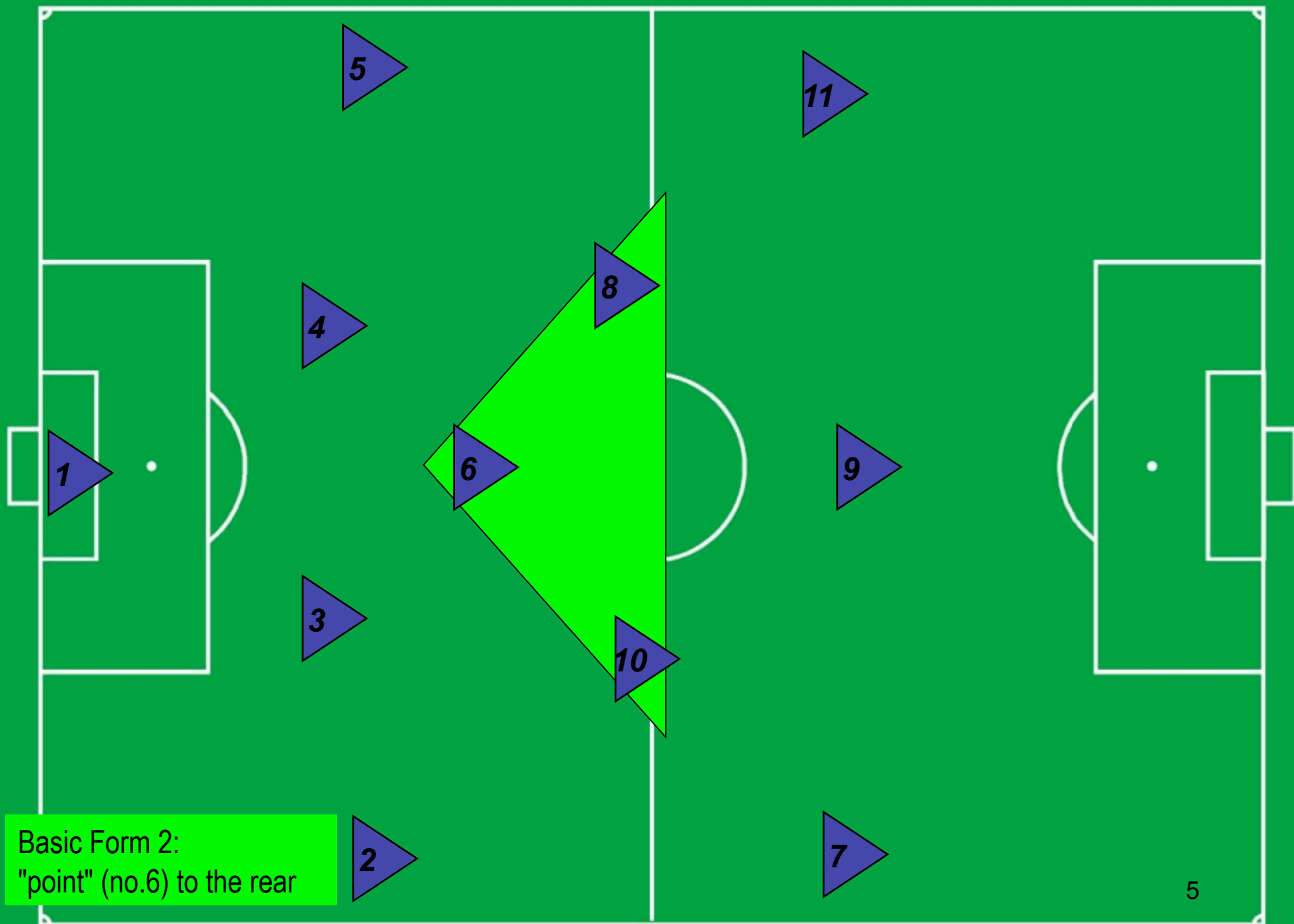
FFA advises that players in the age categories U/12 to U/15 should learn to master basic form 1.



U/16 to U/19 should also learn to master basic form 2







# General defensive principles

1. Direct transition of all players (no time to 'mourn')
2. Restore formation (no mixing of the lines)
3. Make team compact: short distances between lines and players
4. Zone defending: everyone responsible for own zone
5. Pressurized defending by the whole team, forcing the opponent to play wide or back or lose the ball
6. Players to always coach the players in front of them (help your team mate)

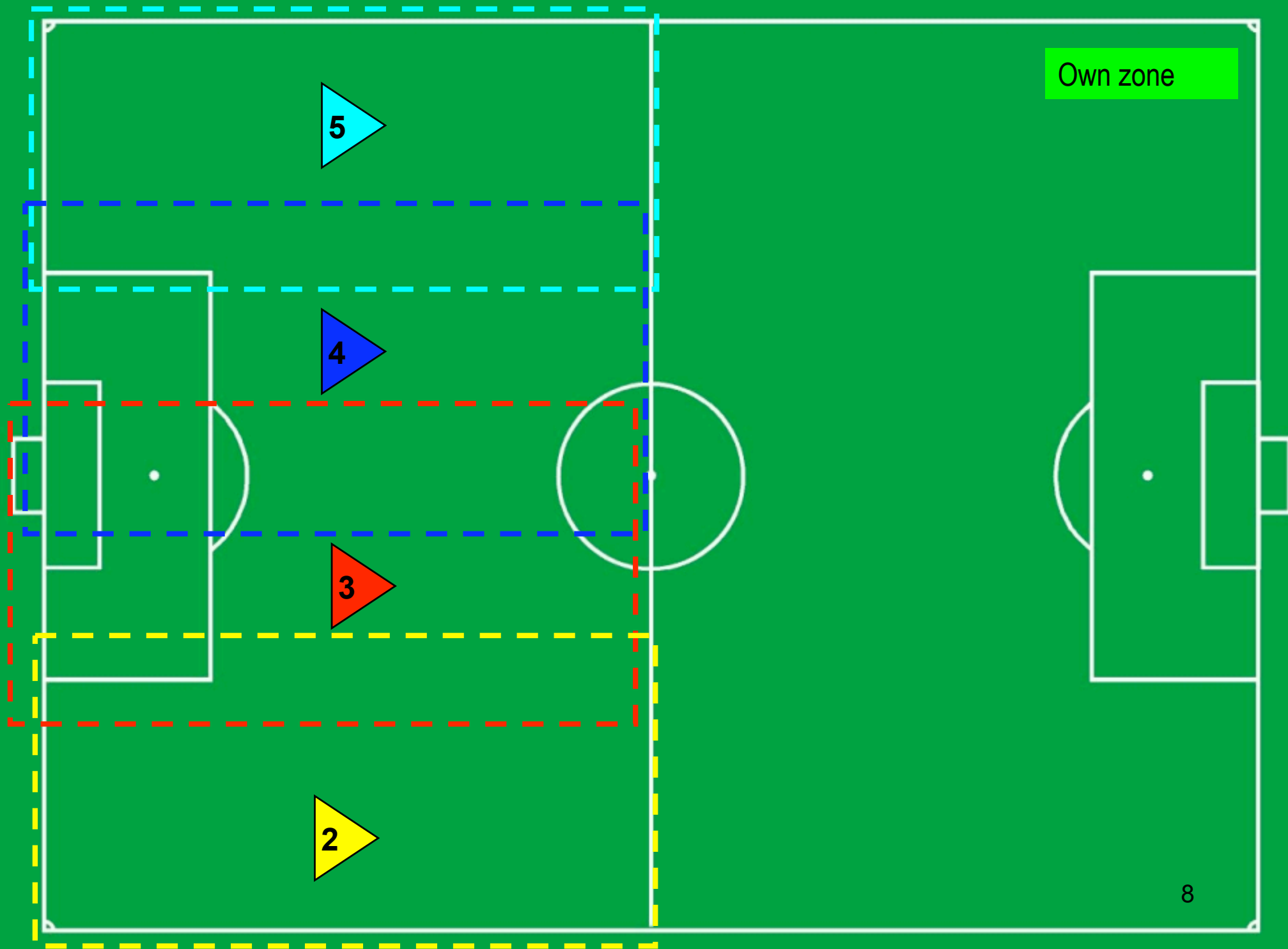


# Defensive principles per line

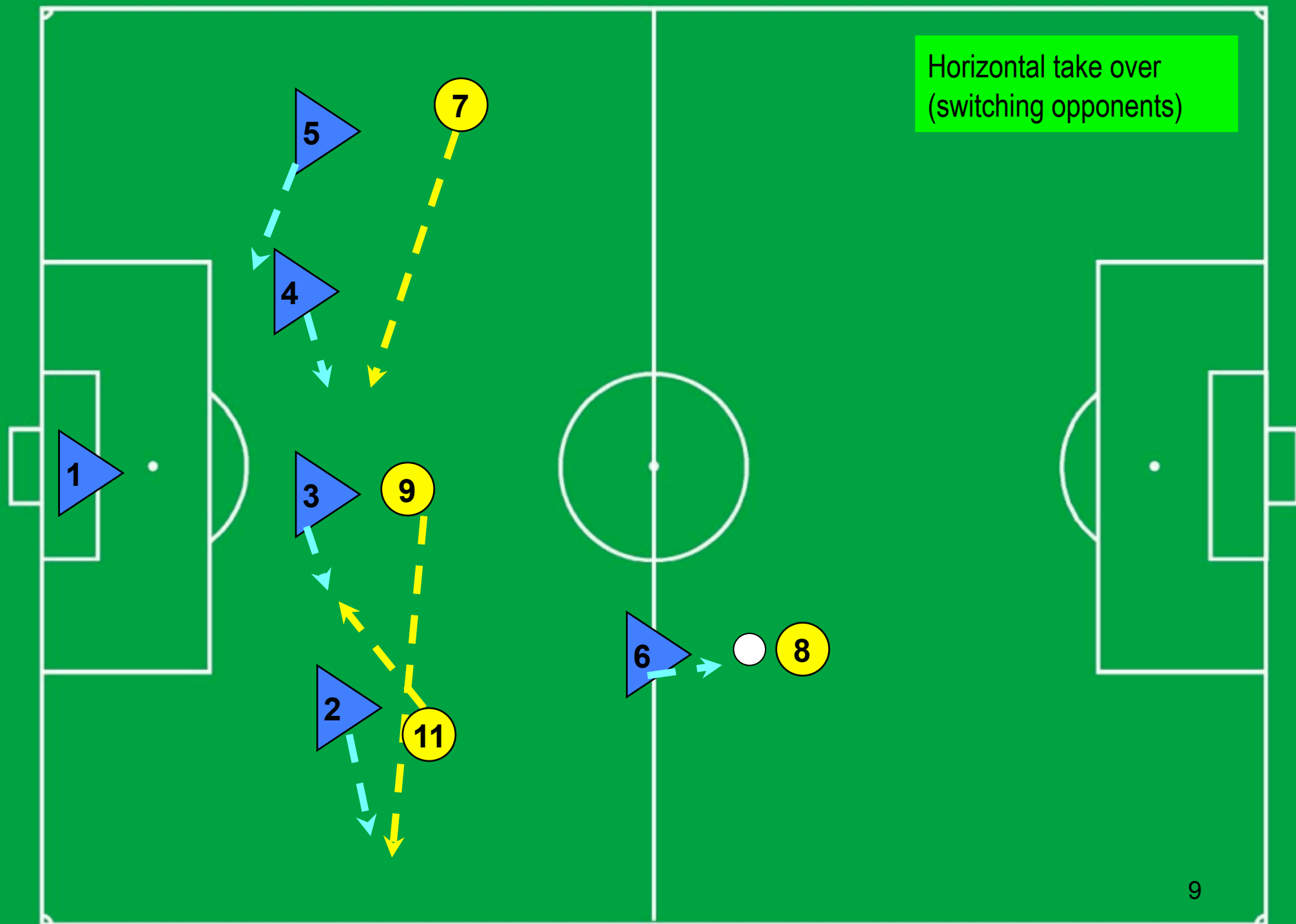
## Defenders & Goalkeeper (1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5)

- ⚽ Always maintain the structure / organisation of the defence line and keep opponent away from own goal (communication)
- ⚽ Everyone responsible for own zone so:
  1. **Horizontal take over:** pass players on in case of switching opponents (*width* of pitch)
  2. **Vertical take over:** pass players on in case of overlapping opponents (*length* of pitch)
- ⚽ Cover each other (diagonal covering), full backs to squeeze until maximum 5m. area; goalkeeper to act as 'sweeper' if required
- ⚽ Sharpness, mobility and insight (positioning / timing) are absolute requirements for modern central defenders (*Neill, Vidic, Terry*)
- ⚽ Modern full backs need to be fast, explosive and mobile rather than just big and strong (*Wilkshire, Cole, Evra*)



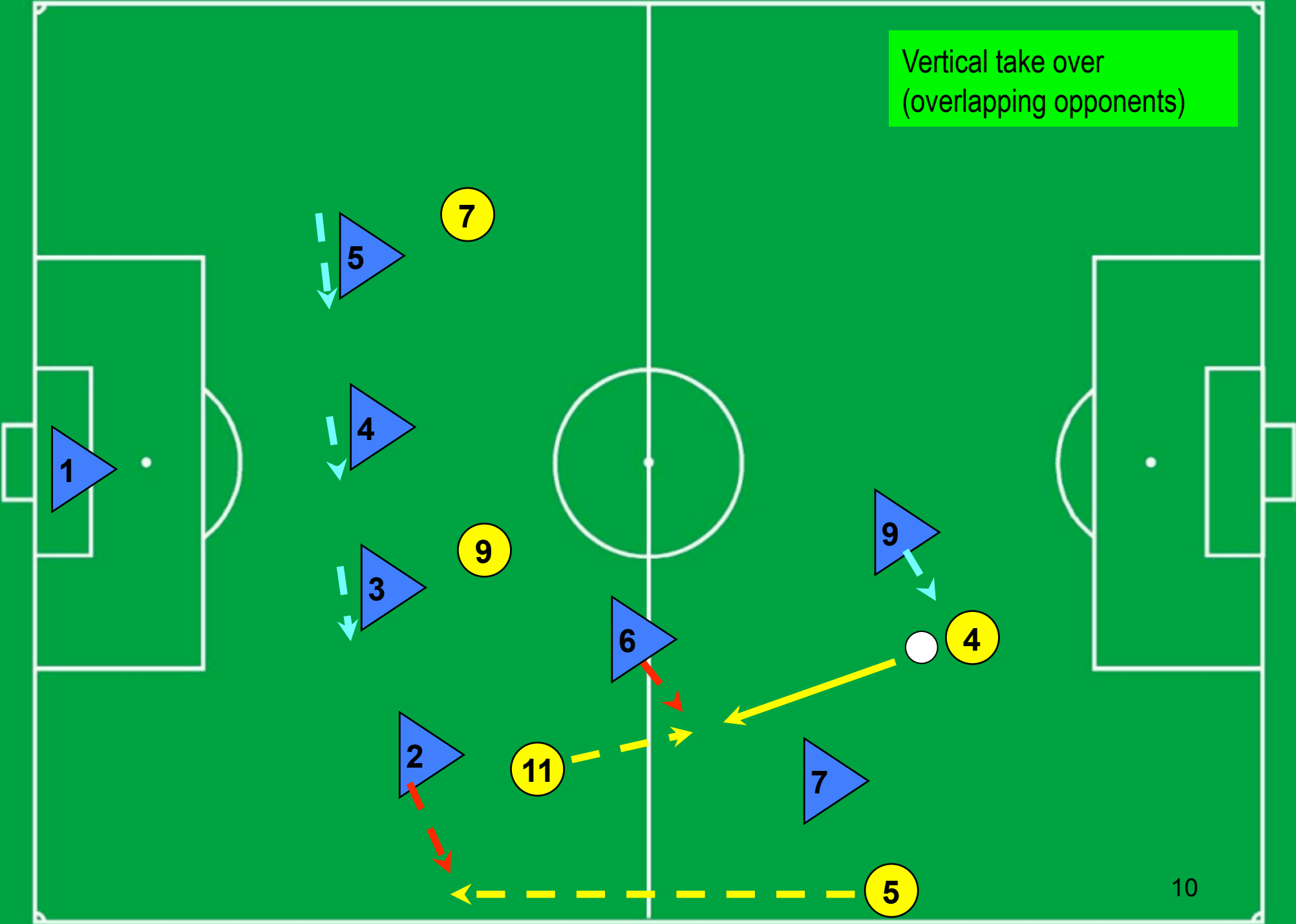




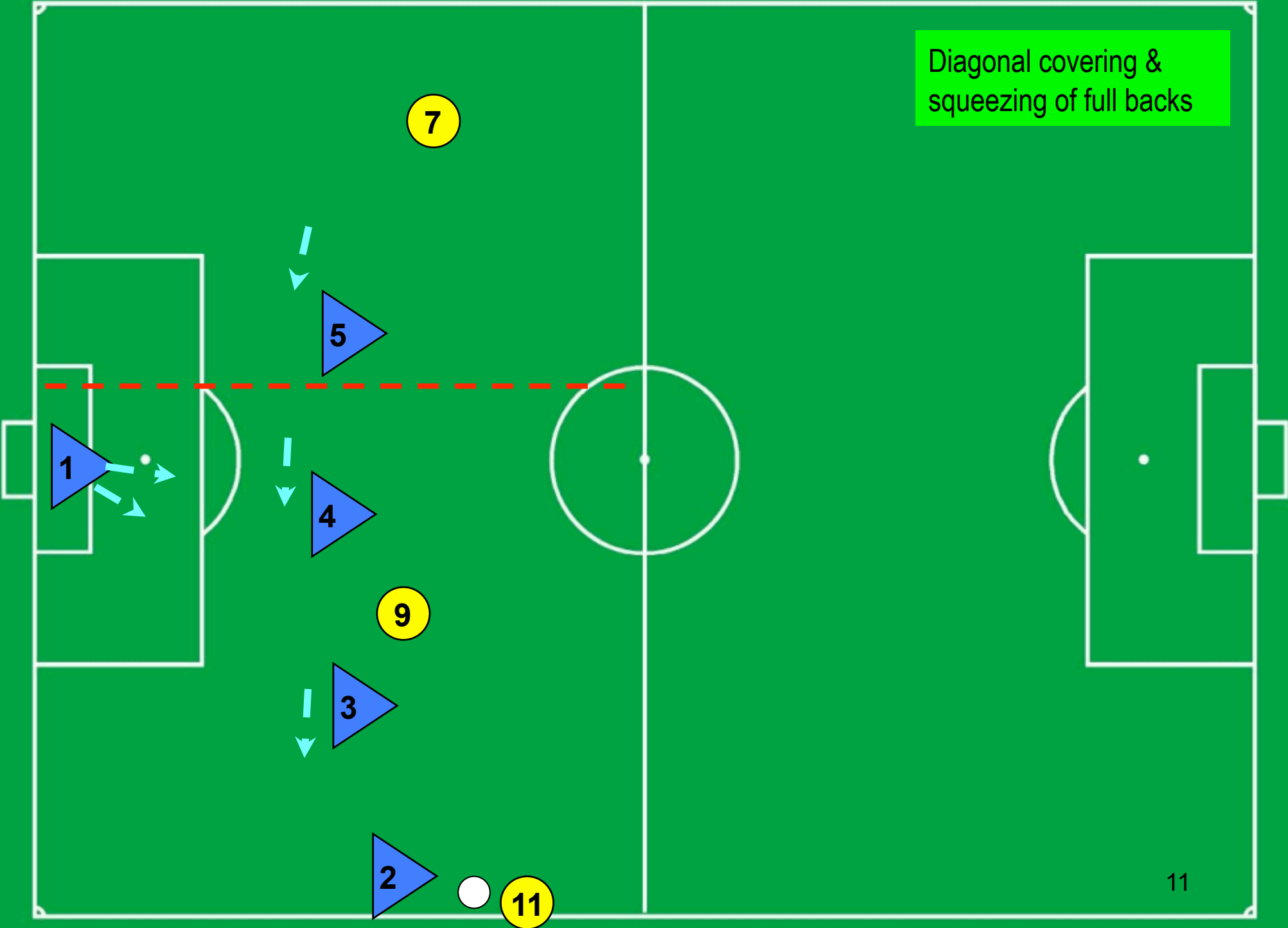


Horizontal take over  
(switching opponents)

Vertical take over  
(overlapping opponents)



Diagonal covering & squeezing of full backs



# Defensive principles per line

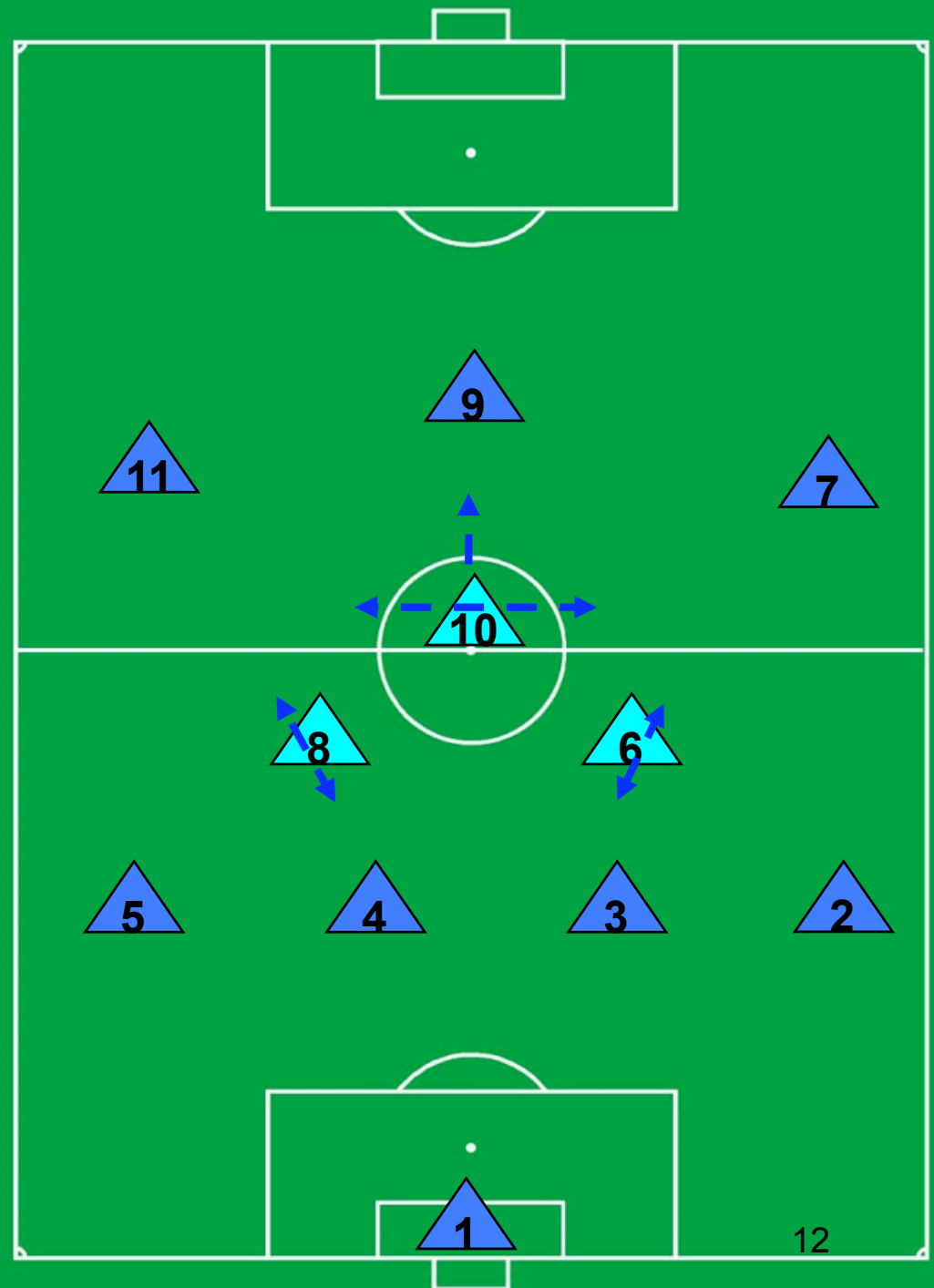
Midfield (6 – 8 – 10) pointed forward:

No's 6 & 8

- ⚽ Cover the central and lateral defensive midfield area's
- ⚽ Screen / shield the lines to the strikers
- ⚽ Take over positions, 'fill' gaps and stay 'behind the ball' (at least one of both)
- ⚽ Ball 'winners' with strong tactical awareness / insight  
*Grella, Culina, Carrick, Essien*

No. 10

- ⚽ Connects with no.6 & no.8 to form a 'block' in the midfield
- ⚽ Covers the central offensive midfield area
- ⚽ Supports no.9 in pressuring the opponents central defenders  
*Bresciano, Cahill, Kaka*



# Defensive principles per line

Midfield pointed to the rear:

No. 6

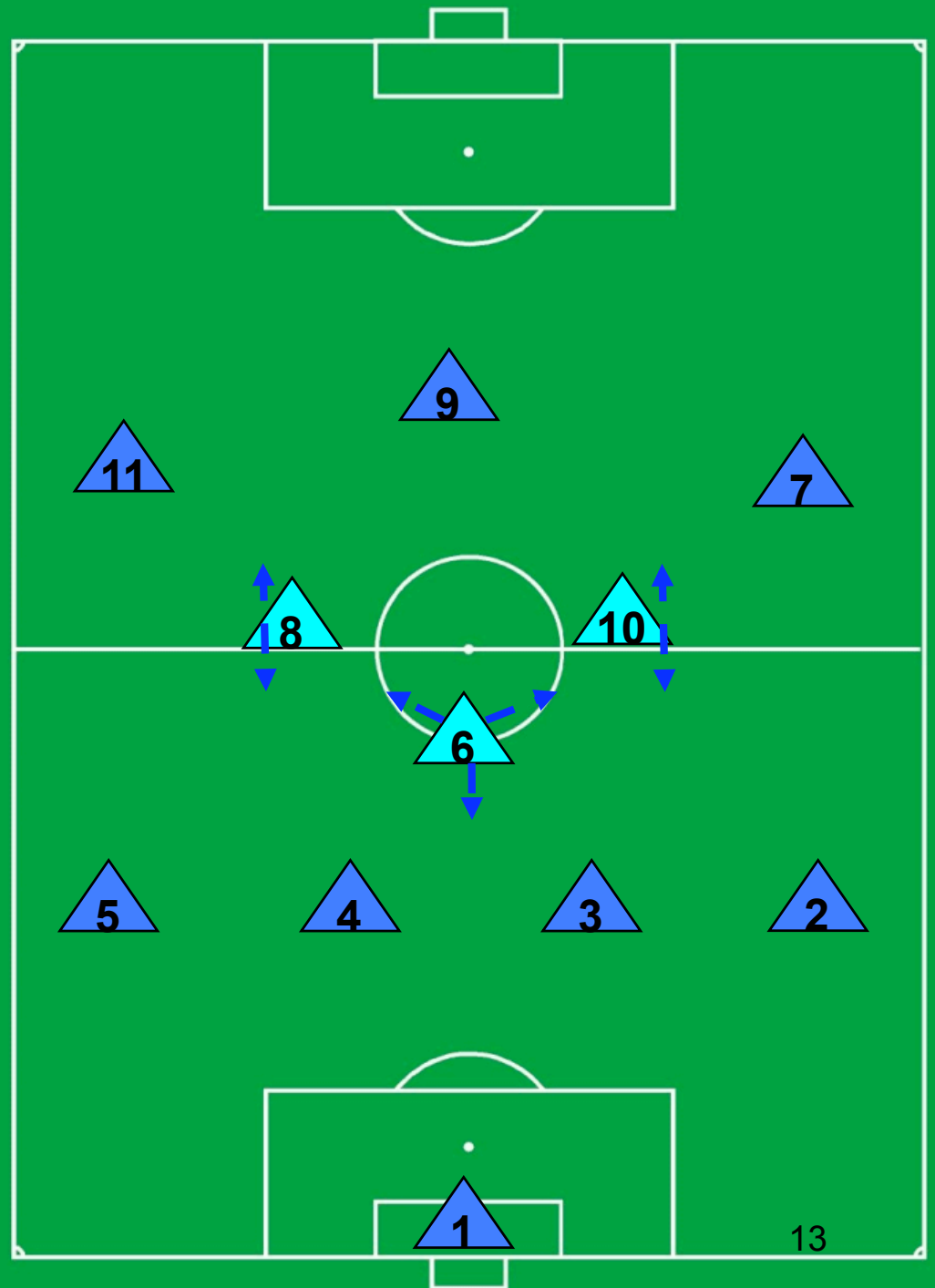
- ⚽ Covers the central defensive midfield area
- ⚽ Screens / shields the line to the strikers
- ⚽ Takes over positions, 'fill' gaps and always stays 'behind the ball'
- ⚽ Ball 'winner' with strong tactical awareness / insight, on field leadership

*Toure, Mascherano*

No's 8 & 10

- ⚽ Connect with no.6 to form a 'block' in the midfield
- ⚽ Cover the lateral midfield area's
- ⚽ Technical and tactical 'all round' midfielders that are able to cover large spaces

*Gerrard, Lampard, Ballack, Xavi, Iniesta*



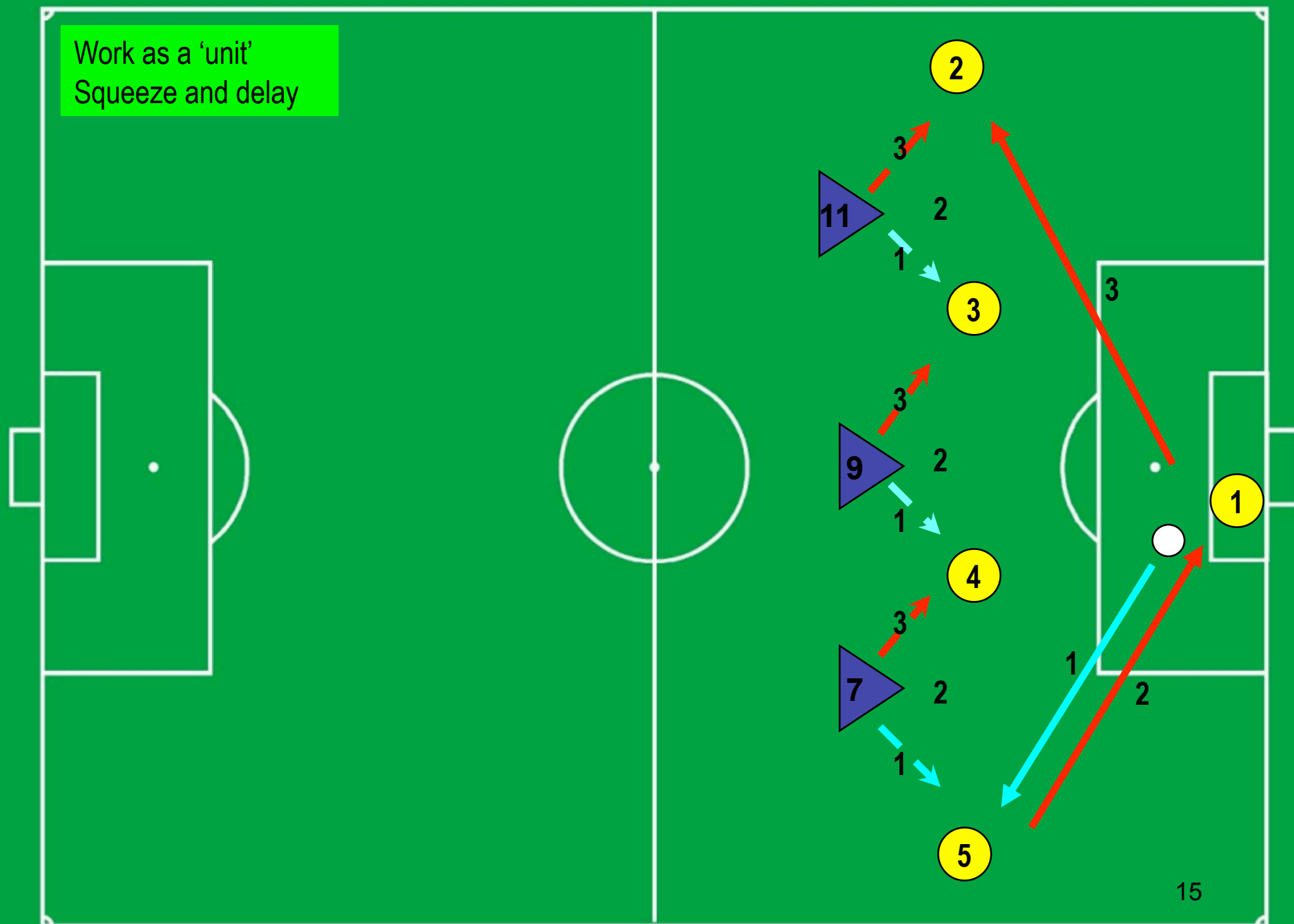
# Defensive principles per line

## Attackers (7-9-11)

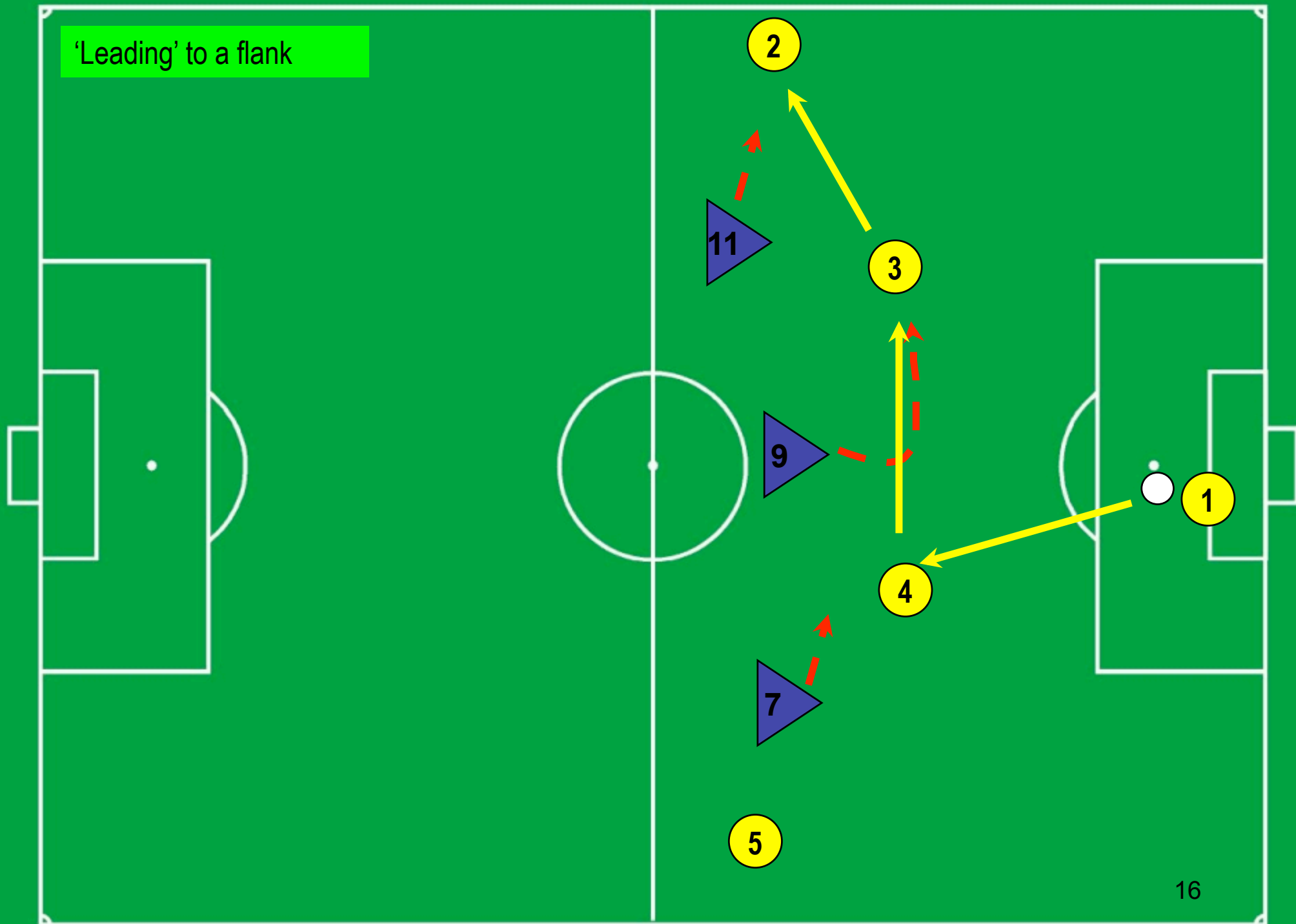
- ⚽ Immediate transitioning from BP to BPO (especially important for attackers!)
- ⚽ 'Connect' to the midfield ASAP
- ⚽ Work together as a 'unit' (communication!)
- ⚽ Squeeze and delay opponents playing out in a 3 v 4 situation while 'leading' them to a flank
- ⚽ Start pressuring collectively on the signal from (one of) the designated axis player(s)
- ⚽ Prevent opponent from playing a forward pass where possible, otherwise always force opponent to give the forward pass under pressure
- ⚽ Prevent defenders from moving into the midfield
- ⚽ Take over each others positions / tasks if necessary



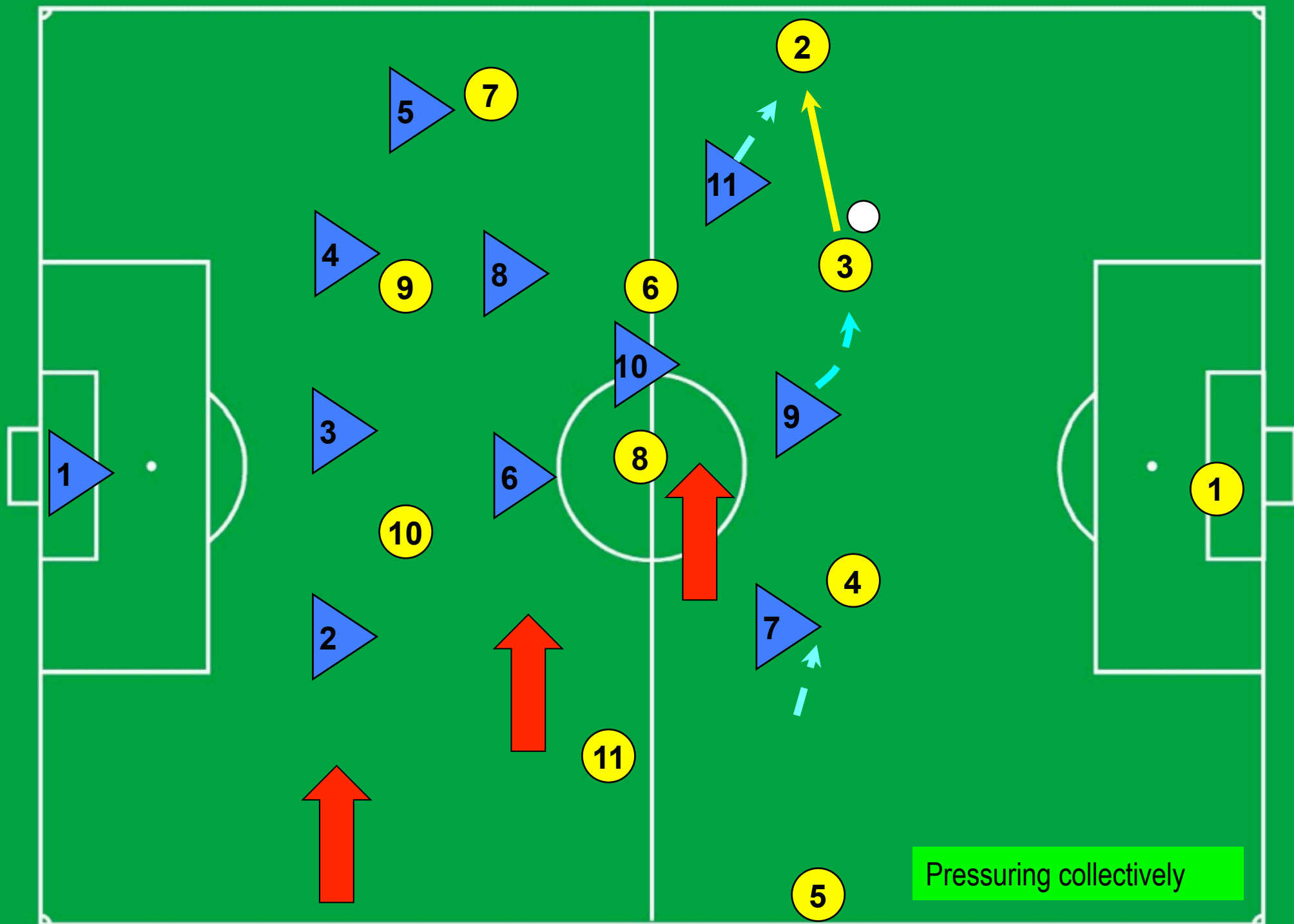
Work as a 'unit'  
Squeeze and delay



'Leading' to a flank

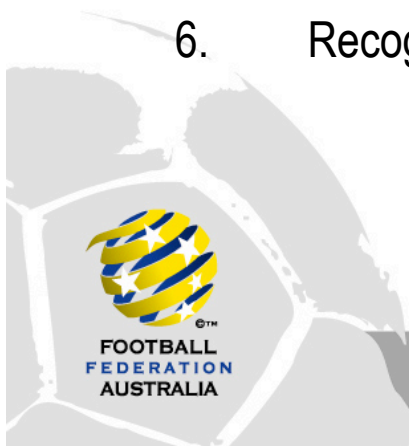






# General offensive principles

1. Immediate and quick **transition** BPO to BP by all players, open up the spaces and restore attacking formation
2. Always look for a **forward pass** as first option, if not possible:
3. **Play out** through good positioning play with dynamic participation of all players
4. **Ball possession** is of vital importance in order to control the rhythm / speed of the game and 'feed' the attackers in a structured manner
5. Starting from wide positions for **improvisation and individual actions** in the attacking third
6. Recognizing the value of **set-piece specialists**

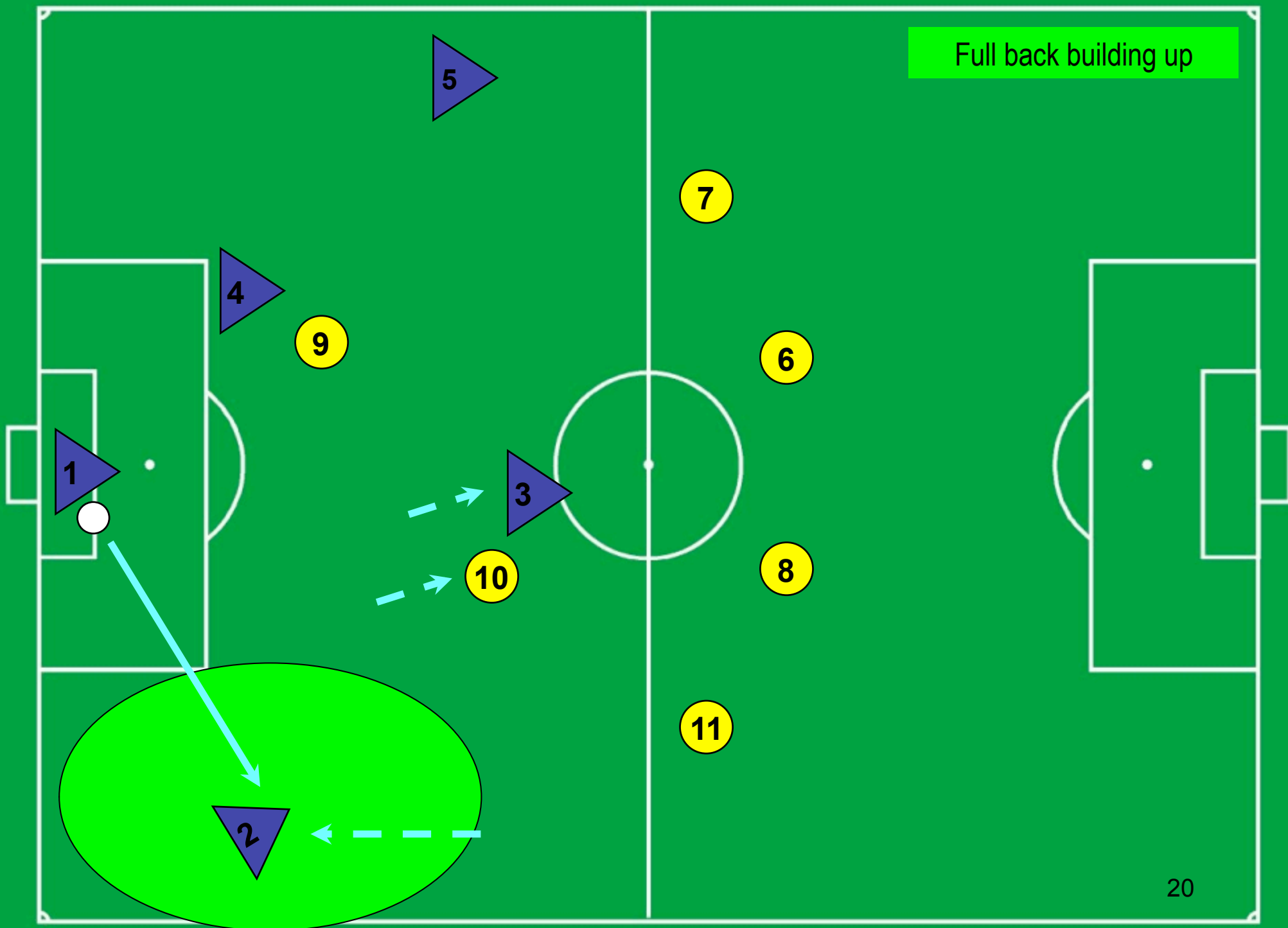


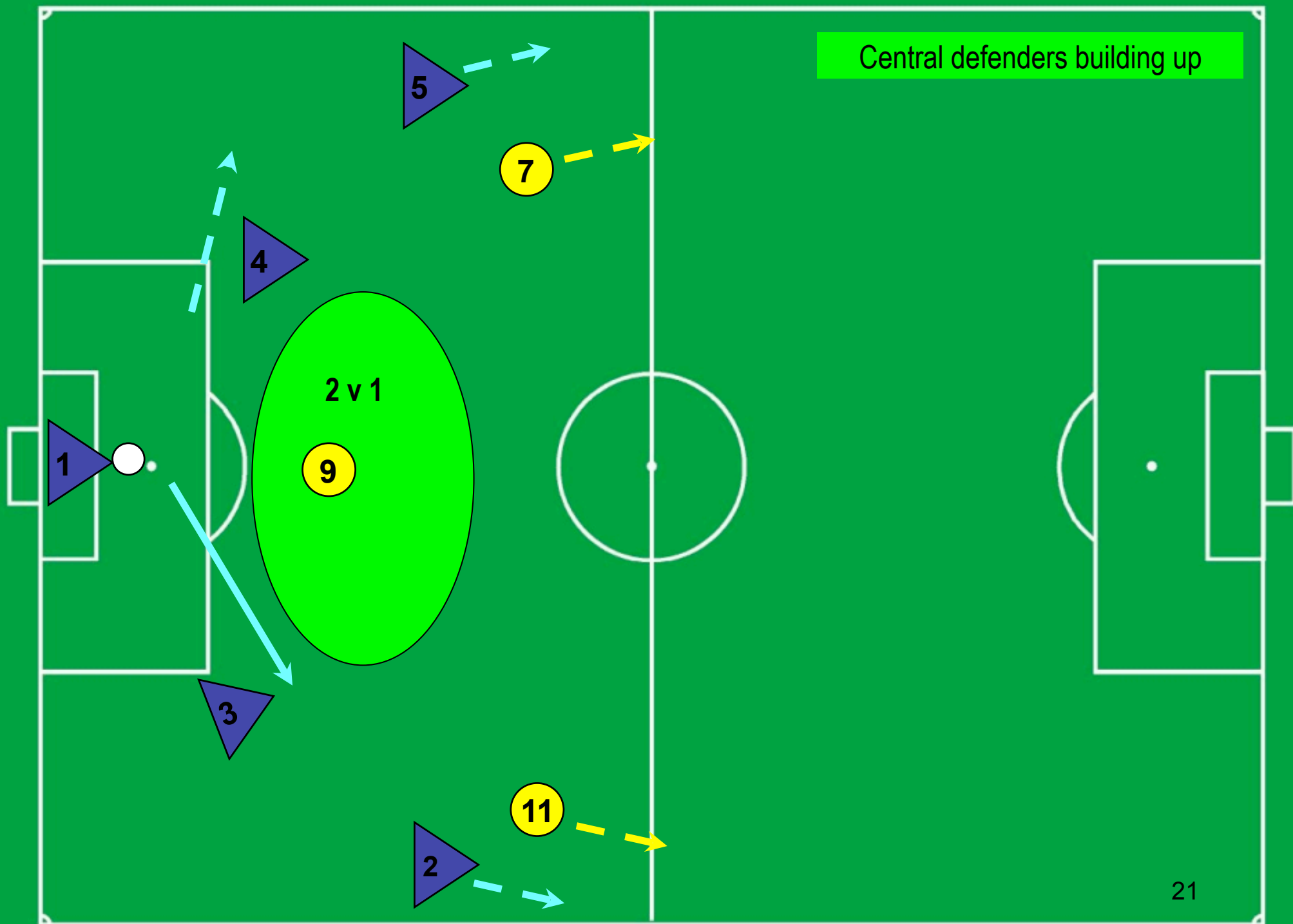
# Offensive principles per line

The defenders:

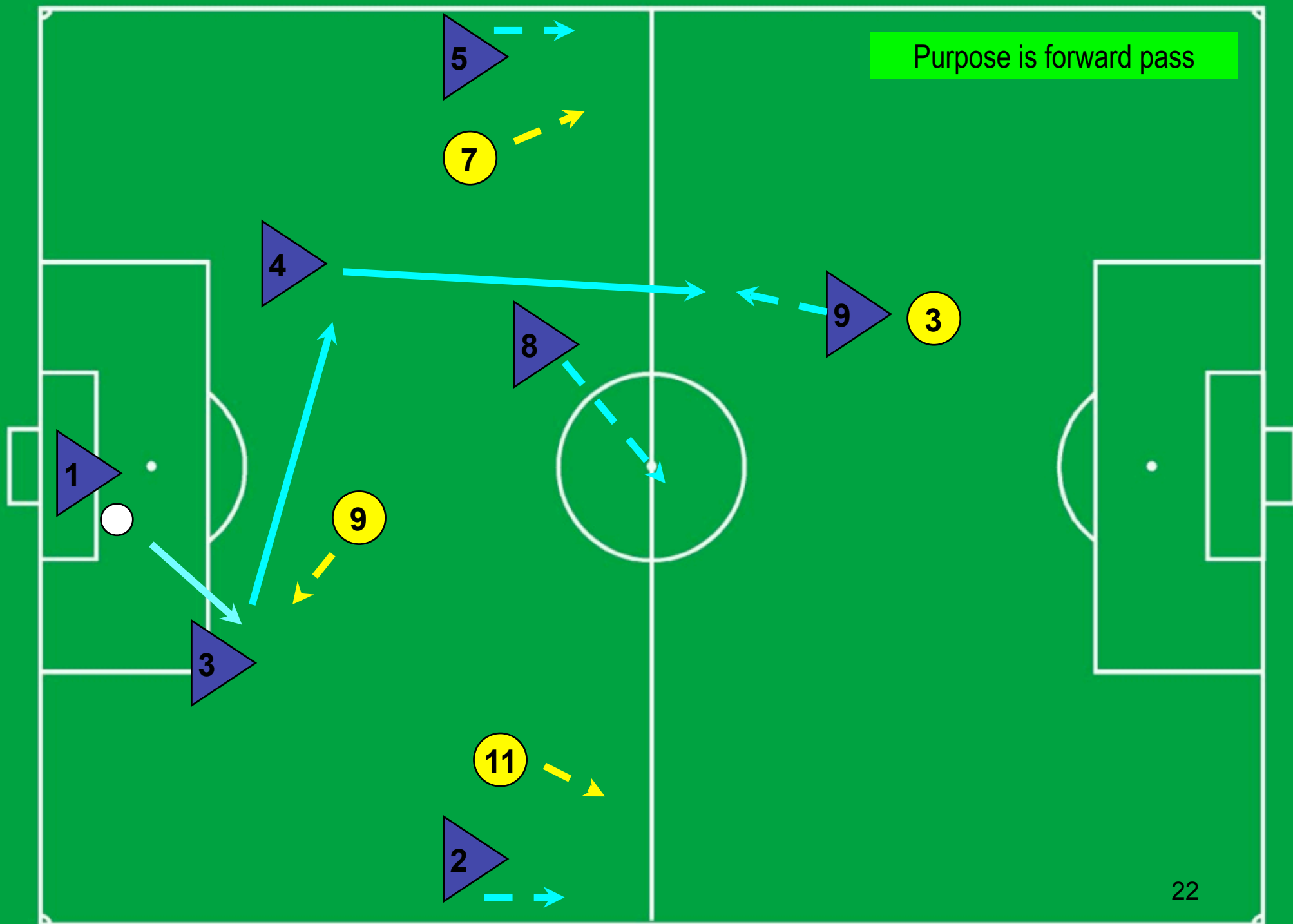
- ⚽ **Playing out is a means to an end! The purpose is to go forward while keeping possession!**
- ⚽ This requires dynamic participation of all players, good positioning play and fast and precise passing:
  1. Create the right moment for the forward pass or:
  2. Have a defender move into midfield to create an 'extra player' in the midfield
- ⚽ The goalkeeper must be the 11<sup>th</sup> outfield player while playing out! (fast change of direction; recognizing the right moment to play the forward pass; etc.)
- ⚽ If the opponent uses a formation with 2 strikers the emphasis is placed on building up through the full backs (central defenders to create space)
- ⚽ If the opponent plays with 3 strikers the emphasis is on building up through central defenders (full backs to create space)

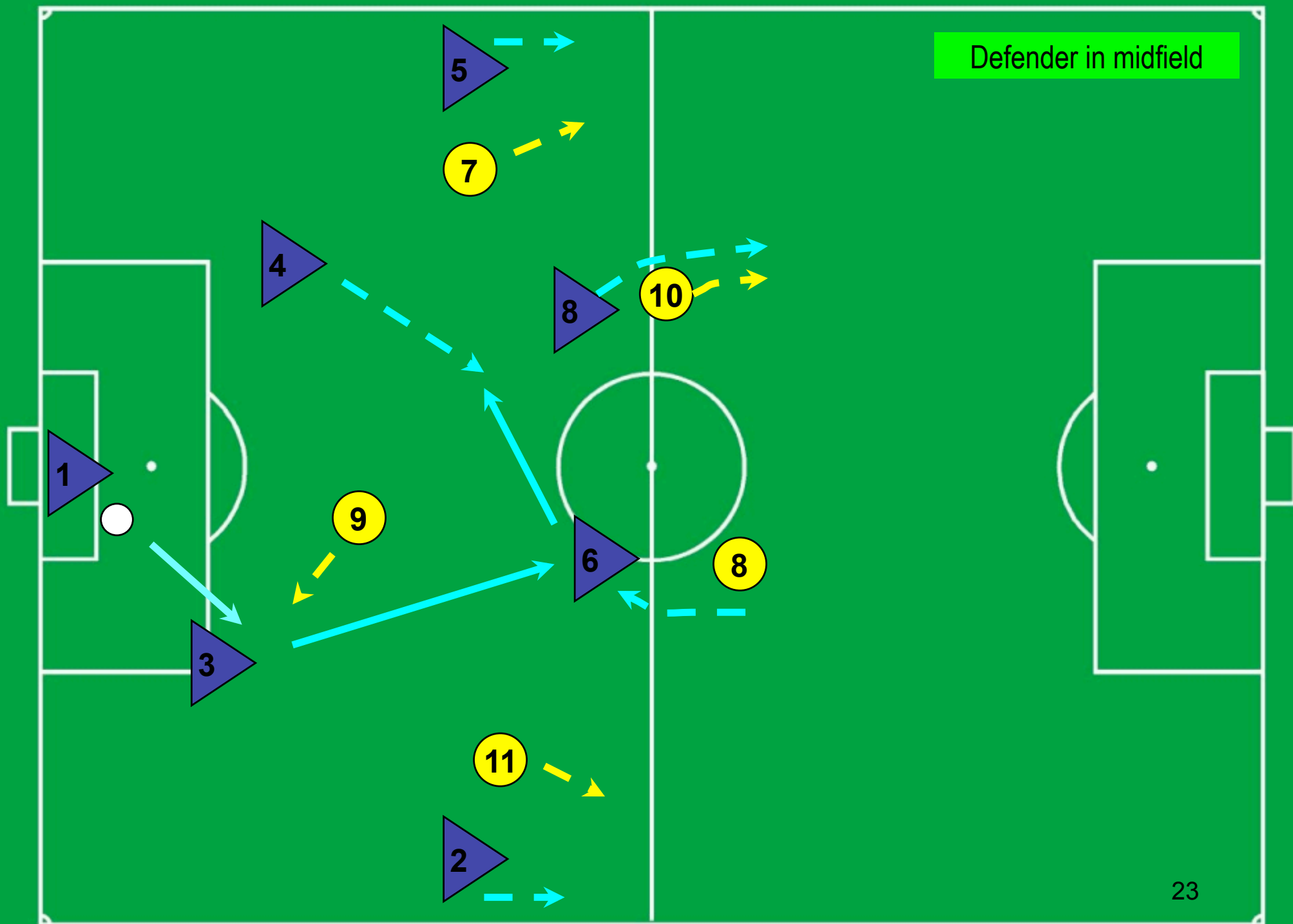






Central defenders building up





Defender in midfield

# Offensive principles per line

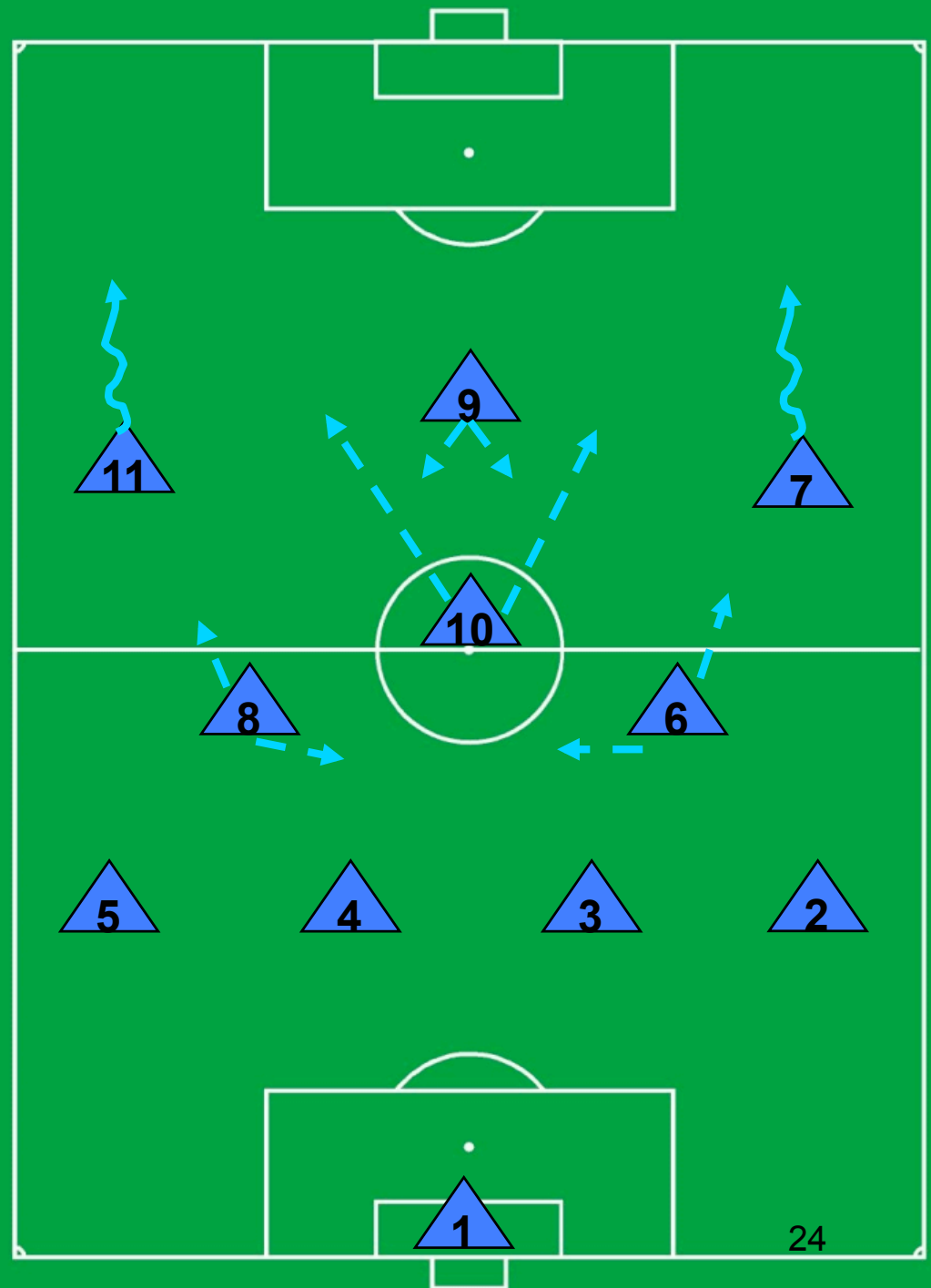
## Midfield pointed forward:

No's. 6 & 8:

- ⚽ 'transfer' playing out to attacking
- ⚽ feed and support the attacking 'unit'
- ⚽ good game (passing) skills, vision and handling speed are required (*Grella, Culina*).

No.10 (key player in this formation):

- ⚽ attacking midfielder  
(not a traditional 'playmaker')
- ⚽ good 'interaction' with the strikers  
(especially with no. 9)
- ⚽ penetrate in front line and look for scoring chances
- ⚽ good anticipation/feeling for right moment
- ⚽ good tactical insight, technique and handling speed (*Kaka, Cahill, Bergkamp*)
- ⚽ In this formation no's. 7 & 11 are more traditional 'wingers' making attacking moves in the wide positions and providing assists and crosses. They can come inside but needs to be well timed, not 'closing' the spaces for no.10.  
(*Robben, Giggs, Beckham*)

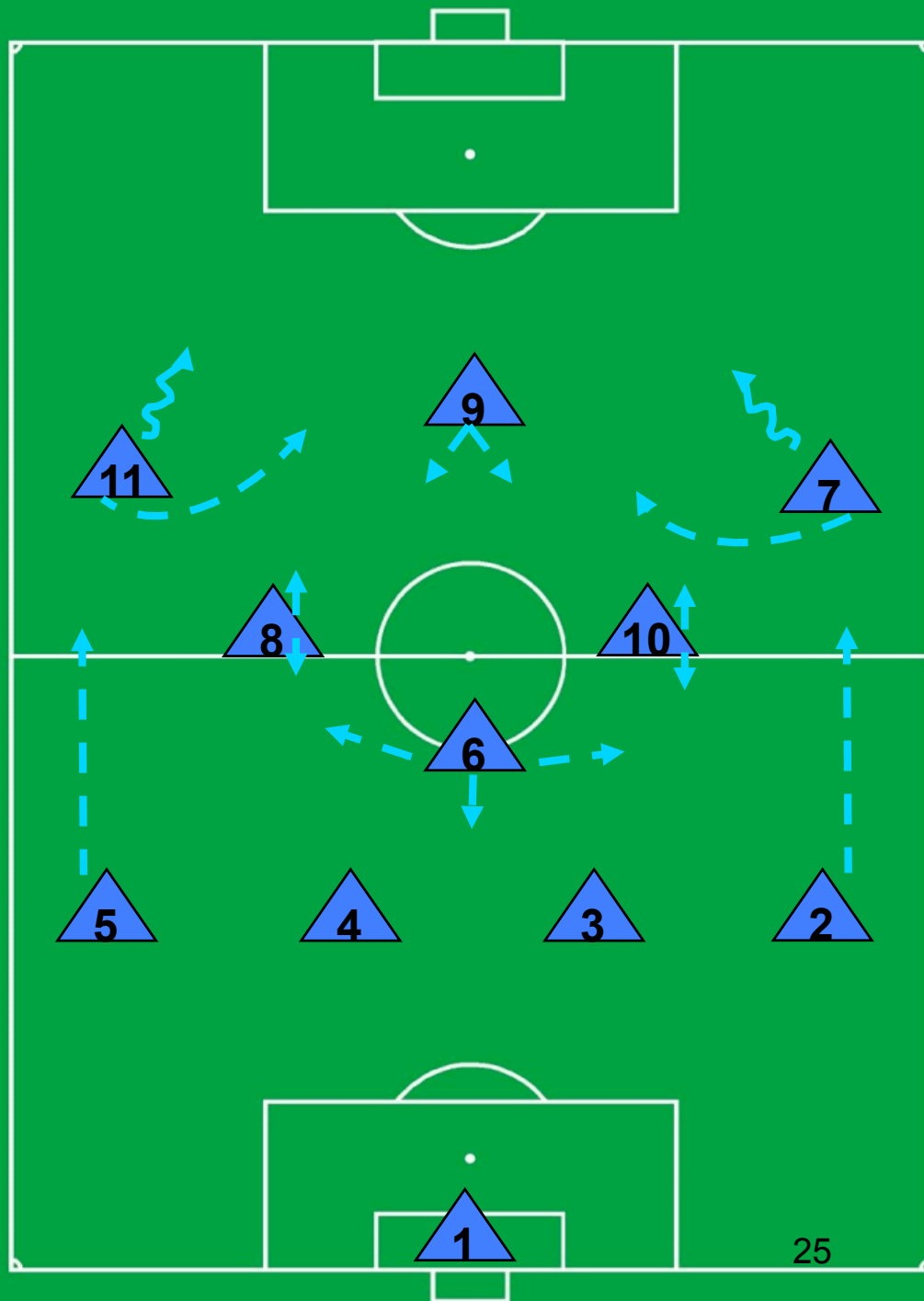




# Offensive principles per line

## Midfield pointed to the rear:

- ⚽ No. 6 is the 'controlling' midfielder. He/she always has to stay 'behind the ball' and take over the positions of the players that go forward. No.6 also holds a key role in playing out and is a player with strong game (passing) skills and vision.  
(Essien, Mascherano, Toure, Carrick)
- ⚽ No's 8 & 10 'feed' and support the strikers. They have strong individual skills, vision and handling speed. They provide the assists for the strikers and have goalscoring abilities. These are the 'complete' midfielders.  
(Lampard, Gerrard, Xavi, Iniesta)
- ⚽ In this formation no's. 7 & 11 are 'multi functional' attackers making attacking moves to the inside (and outside) starting from wide positions. The 3 attackers often switch positions but the formation should always be maintained.  
(Cristiano Ronaldo, Messi, Rooney, Henry)



# Offensive principles per line

## The attackers (7 – 9 – 11)

Wing attackers No's. 7 & 11:

- ⚽ starting from wide positions going outside and inside
- ⚽ are creative and pro active (with the ball and running off the ball)
- ⚽ provide assists, crosses and have goal scoring ability  
(*Messi, C.Ronaldo, Rooney, Kewell*)

Central striker No. 9:

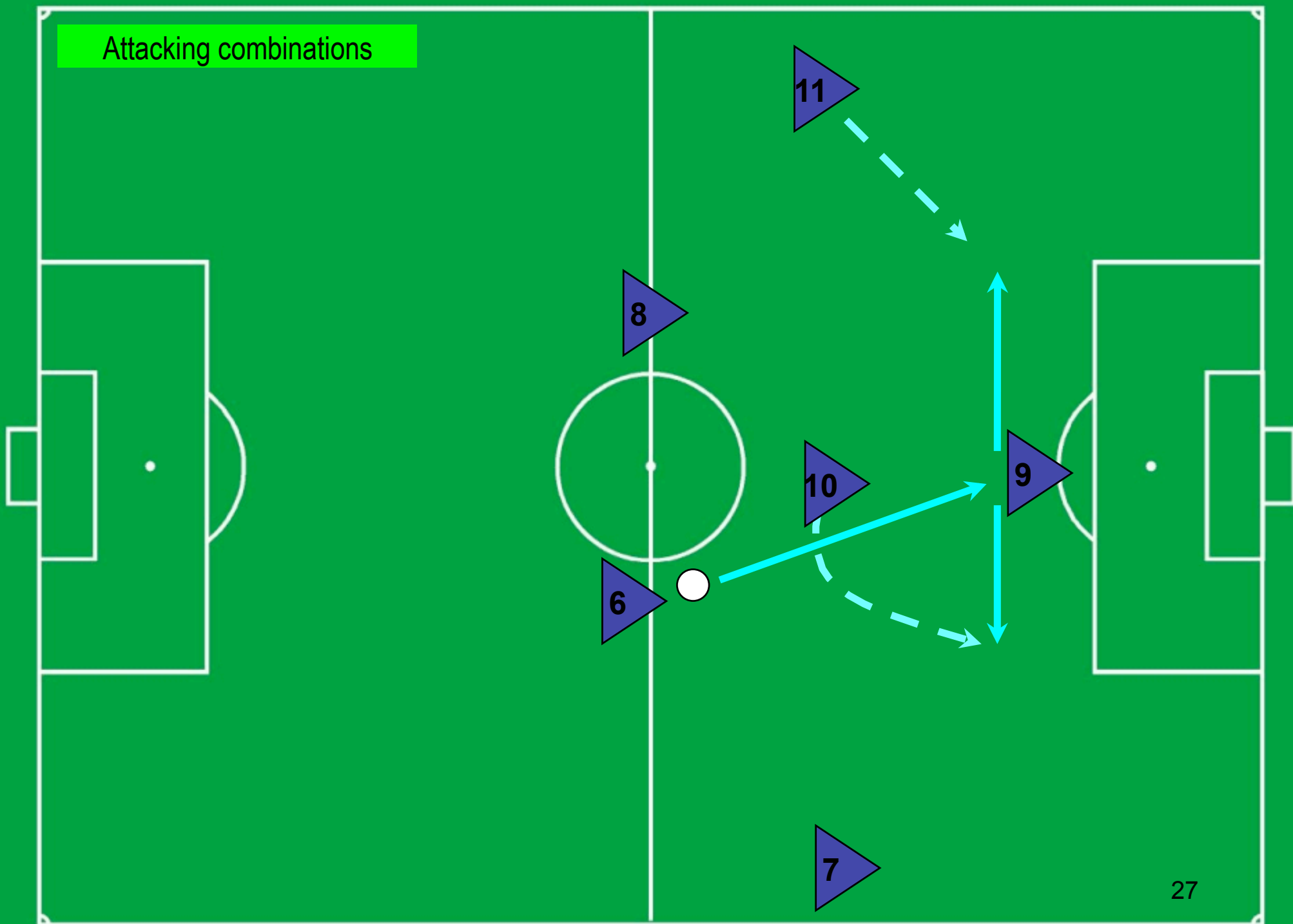
- ⚽ strong in receiving and holding the ball with his / her back to the goal
- ⚽ strong in attacking combinations
- ⚽ goal scorer  
(*Drogba, Torres, Adebayor, Viduka*)

Collective important aspects in the attacking third:

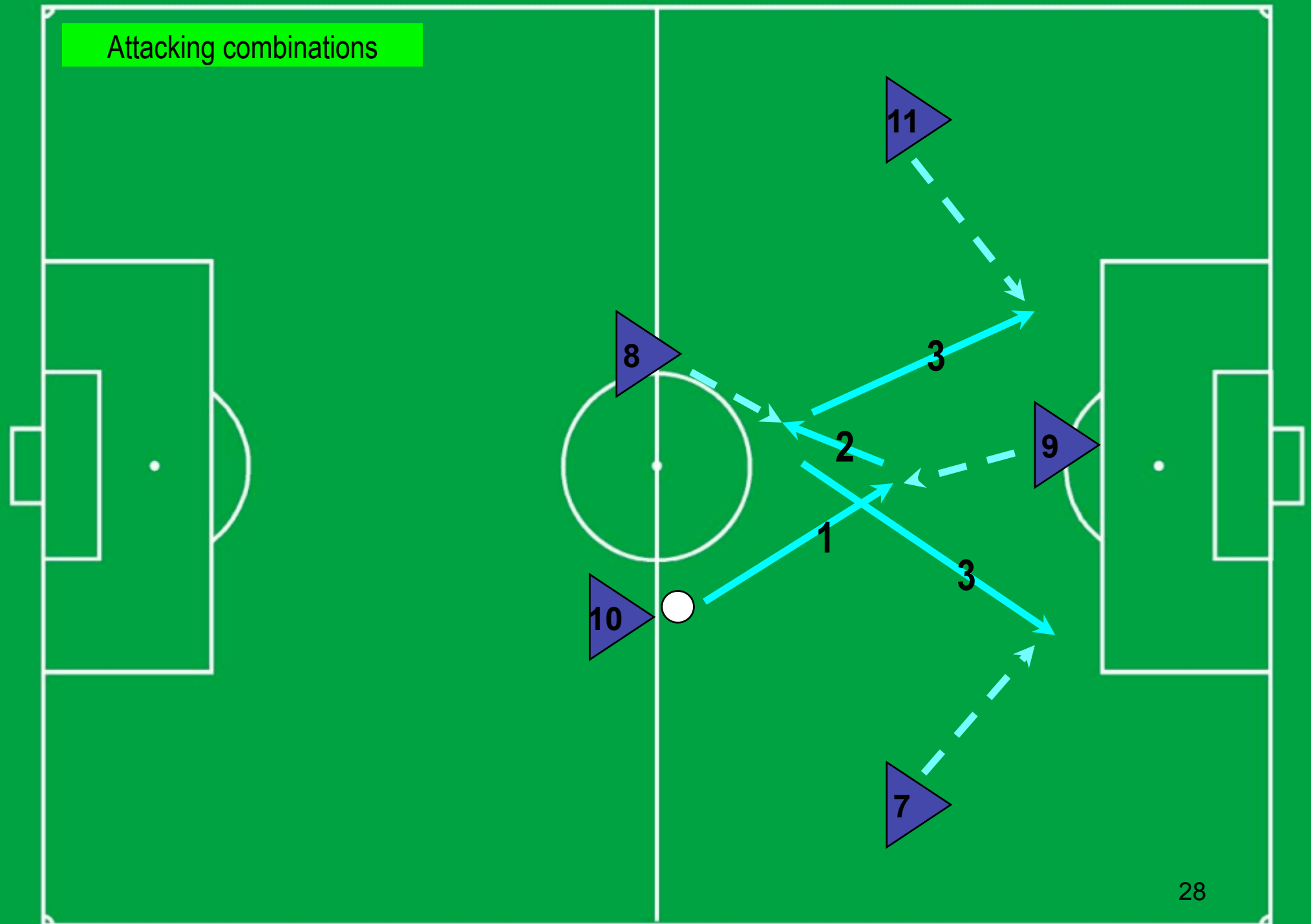
- ⚽ Fast / direct combinations (wall-pass; no look pass; 3<sup>rd</sup> man; etc.)
- ⚽ Individual attacking qualities and ability to improvise
- ⚽ Effective positioning in front of goal

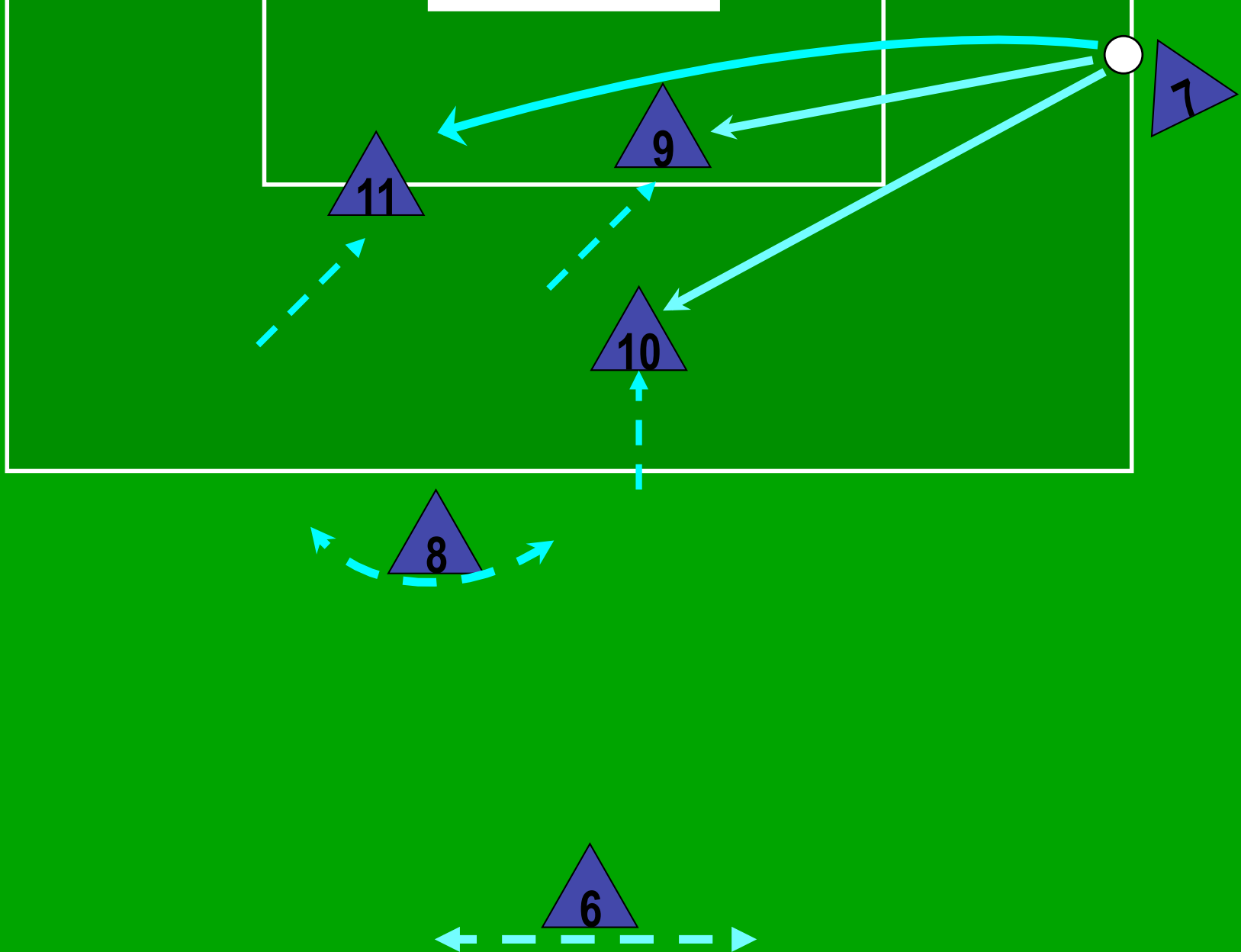


## Attacking combinations



# Attacking combinations





Positioning in front of the goal