

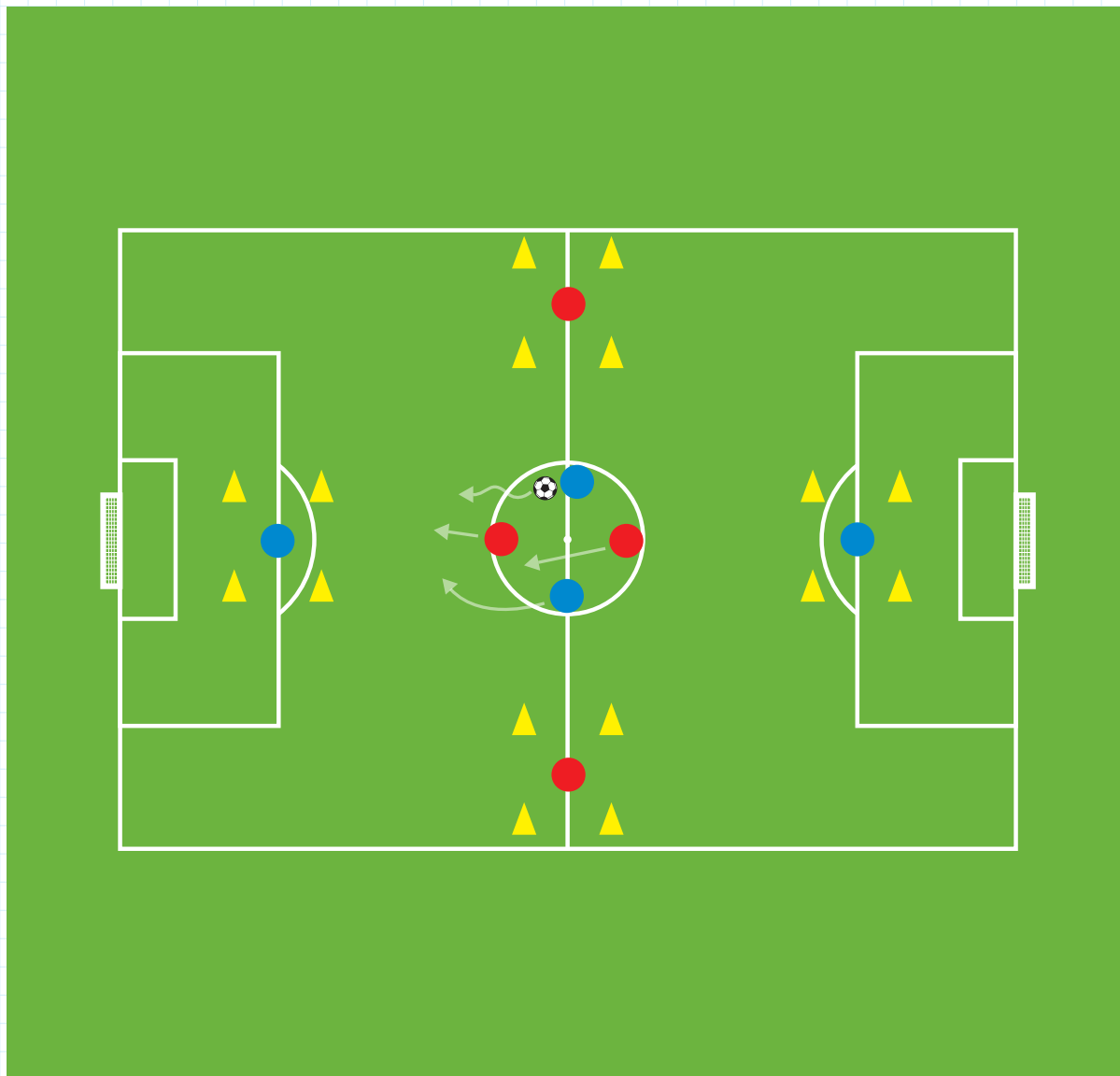
# Retreating defence

## Practice organisation

- Full pitch with boxes marked by cones set-out, as illustrated.
- 8 players, arranged 2Reds & 2Blues in centre circle, plus 2Reds & 2Blues who serve as target players, one in each of the 4 boxes, as shown. 1 ball.
- Practice starts with: 4 players in centre circle pass randomly.
- Either Reds or Blues initiate attack with one player breaking from circle supported by team mate, looking to gain entry into the target box.
- Opposing player in circle, closest to box being attacked; drops-off to defend against the counter (1v2).
- Defender delays attack whilst team mate from circle recovers from behind ball (to make 2v2).
- Players in possession can only pass (below head height) through front of box or run ball into box.
- If recovering players gain possession: they pass to either of their target players located in boxes to conclude practice.
- Practice recommences with players from circle & boxes alternating position & changing point of attack from circle.

## Detail

- D presses ball, deflecting play away from supporting A.
- Body shape of D: low stance, split feet, changing feet as appropriate, shoulders forward.
- Staying inside line of ball & goal.
- Attempt to tackle off front foot & remain on balance, if not successful.
- Simple progression for this practice is:
  - A's have to score within a time frame (e.g. 6 seconds).



## Key coaching points

- Quick realisation & reaction to movement of players from centre circle.
- Initial D engages attack early without becoming isolated too far from defensive box.
- D denies space, delays progress, deflects ball to defend target box whilst recovering D makes ground.
- Recovering D engages ball if possible on his recovery run.
- Once recovery is complete: defend with two as required.

Defensive play whilst  
'out of balance'

Age group  
17-21 years