

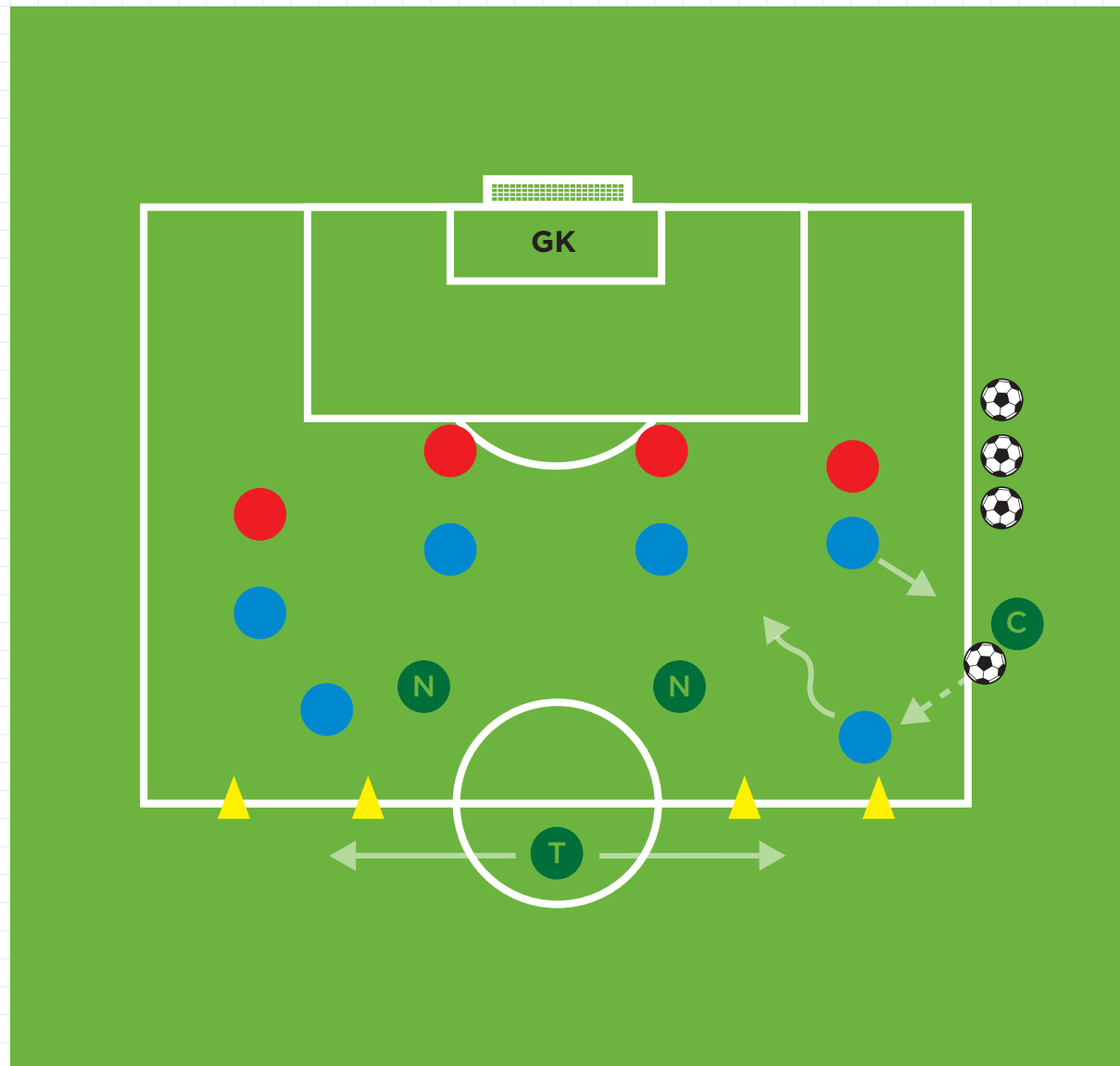
# Defending as a unit

## Practice organisation

- Half pitch with target gates marked on half way & goal at one end, set-out as illustrated.
- 13 players (including GK), with Neutral players who are available for D's as support on regaining possession.
- Practice starts with: coach feeds ball into Attacking team's FB.
- One N supports FB as play advances to make 6v4 & 2 N's.
- If Defenders gain possession: they play ball to either of the 2N's or Target player, positioned on half way.
- Objective is then to break out from defence to play through either of the Target gates on half way.

## Detail

- Depth of back 4 unit according to circumstances.
- Movement: laterally, diagonally & vertically in response to movement of ball by opponents.
- Individual decisions as to who presses, supports & covers.
- Communication & co-ordination of defensive unit, including GK.
- On a regain of possession: ensure possession is retained, whether building an attack or counter-attacking.
- Simple progression for this practice is:
  - Add 2 recovering D's to practice, once ball has travelled 20yds into defending half of field.



## Key coaching points

- D's play zonal defence (4v6).
- Distances between back 4 players & co-ordinated movement of unit.
- D's maintaining composure on change of possession.
- Controlled competitive attitude from D's to unsettle attack.
- Turning defense into attack through swift & accurate passes to N & T players.