

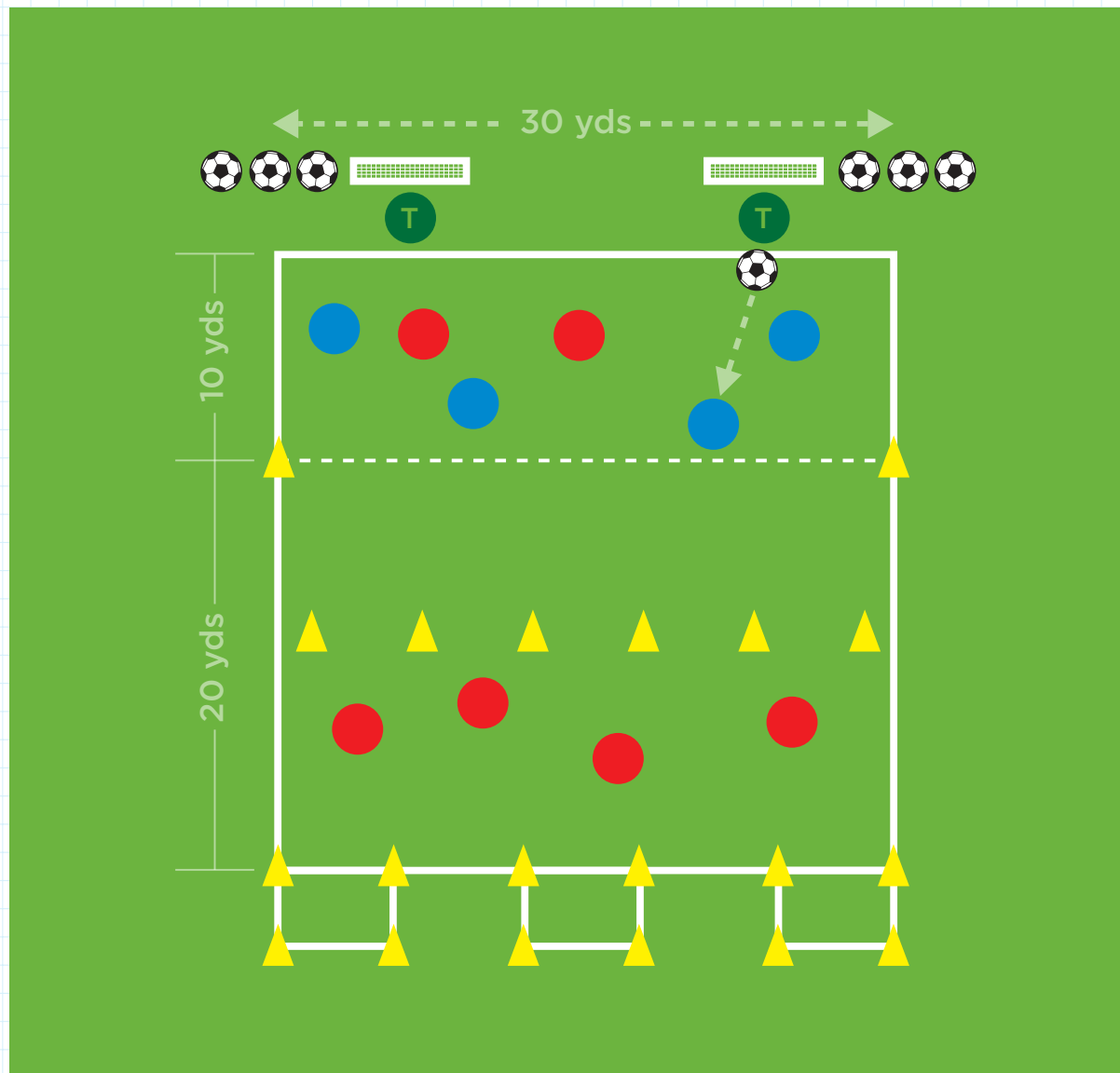
Individual defensive awareness

Practice organisation

- Area 30x30yds with line across width 10yds into practice area, with cones, goals & target boxes arranged as illustrated.
- 12 players organised 4v2 in 10yd end zone, plus 4 Defenders in large area, 1 ball.
- Players restricted to designated zones.
- 2 Target players 5yds behind 4v2 zone, defending goals.
- Practice starts with: ball fed-in to 4v2 by T player.
- Objective: retain possession in 4v2 in the end zone & look for opportunities to clip passes into target boxes, at other end.
- Alternatively: players can run with ball out of end zone to get through one of the coned gates to score.
- D's must be aware of players looking to break through gate, or when to drop-off to intercept or deflect lofted passes into target boxes.
- If D's gain possession: they try to make long passes past T's at opposite end to score & practice continues.
- If pass is intercepted by T's defending targets: play continues as they feed back into 4v2 game.

Detail

- Scale & size of targets can be adjusted to suit skill levels, but need to remain realistic.
- Simple progressions for this practice are:
 - T moves into defenders' zone, to receive pass & run with ball through 10y end zone.



Key coaching points

- D's need to constantly evaluate & prioritise threat.
- Adjust to triggers: pressure or no pressure on ball: slide & press as a unit.
- Adjustment to movement or flight of ball.
- Movement of individual D, to adjust position: side-on where possible.
- Adjustment to regain compactness if defensive line is broken.
- Decision on first touch to clear ball or controlled possession to pass & play out from main area to T's.

Defensive play whilst
'in balance'

Age group
17-21 years