

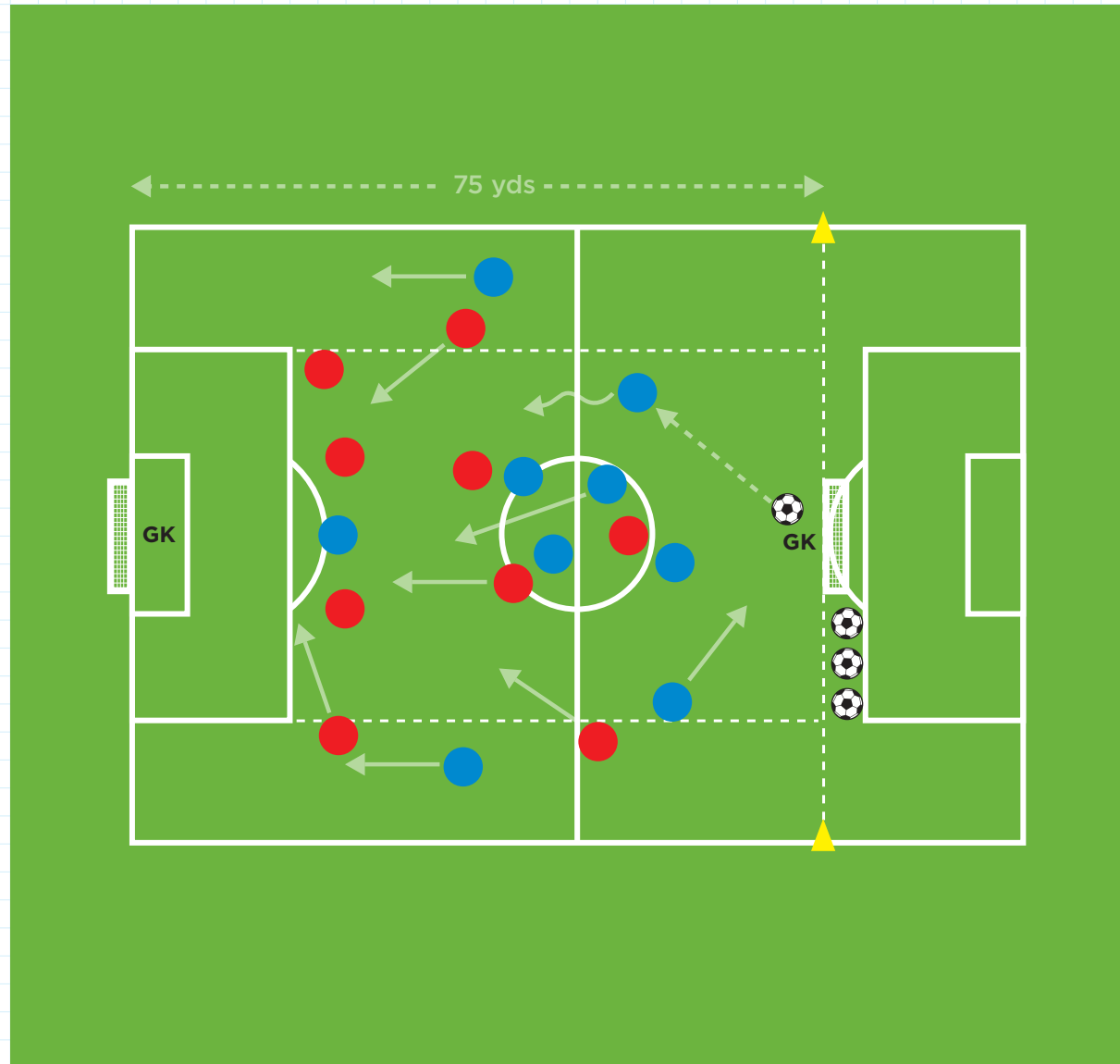
Defending deep

Practice organisation

- Area 75x44yds (width of penalty area), on full pitch, marked-off with cones & goals at each end, as illustrated.
- 20 players (incl. 2GKs), organised in 2 teams of 4-4-1, 1 ball.
- Defending flank players must recover inside practice area & start to defend narrow.
- Attacking flank players may use full width in opponents half.
- Practice starts with: ball rolled-out from GK to attacking full-back.
- A's work ball into opponent's half who look to retreat & establish compact defensive block, leaving lone striker up-field.
- If D's win possession: they try to make 5/6 passes to get over half way line, inside coned area, using lone striker & get ball to opposing GK.
- GK restarts practice by rolling-out to opposite flank.

Detail

- How deep to drop to establish defensive block with MF & defensive units.
- Where, when & how to pressurise ball.
- Moving across pitch quickly (sliding) & maintaining distances between team mates.
- How to screen opposition front players.
- Body shape, communication & detail of marking & covering players.
- Dealing with quick combination play, crosses & direct play.
- 2nd. balls & 2nd. phase attacks.
- Composure under pressure & not giving away free kicks.
- Retaining concentration & marking at back, when team is in possession.
- Simple progression for this practice is:
 - On gaining possession: team attempts to strike at goal within 10 seconds.



Key coaching points

- D's drop/recover to just outside 18yd area.
- Flank players funneling back towards goal, narrow play to deny penetration centrally.
- D drops deep to cover A team's MF (holding) player.

- Co-ordination of defensive block: when to press, slide & screen
- Going out to challenge in flank areas to prevent crosses.
- Marking opponents & blocking.
- Role of GK.