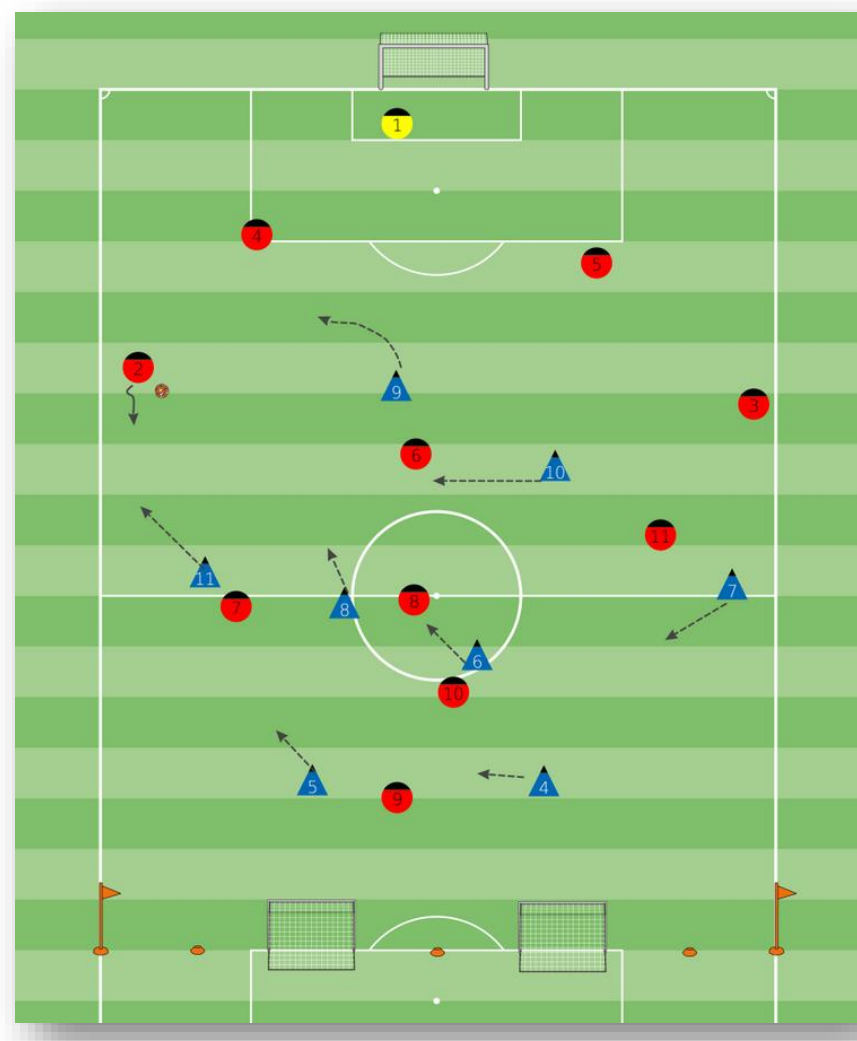




DEFENDING
Maintenance (Day 5)



Whole I (Play I) : 8v10 to Goal & 2 Counter Goals

Number of players: 10

Field size: 70x70 yards (approximately 3/4 field size)

Duration: 20 minutes | 2.5 min. X 4 bouts x 1:30 min. rest) **Intensity:** 6 / hard

Rules of the exercise:

Activity on 70x70 field with big goal and two counter goals. Blue Team (2-5-1 formation) scores in the big goal. --- Organize Blue to get compact, stay compact, try to funnel play centrally to win the ball back, quickly shift/tuck if ball is switched, pressure/cover. communicate. Red team (1-4-4-1 formation or optional at full strength) should try to score as quickly as possible by passing in either small goals. --- Organize Red to take advantage of numerical advantage, look go forward by using width to stretch blue out of shape, or depth to get in behind between two center backs.

FOCUS TEAM: Objective (expected behavior):

- Guide / allow players to recognize the behaviors and tempo of this activity. Observe behavior of #4 and #5 and how they work with the #6, #7 and #11 since there are no outside backs currently. Active observation of central midfielders and their relationships. Keep making sure Red's team shape is realistic and game-like. **FOCUS TTPs** - Get Compact, Stay Compact - Pressure / Cover / Balance - Press in identified situations - Outnumber Opponent - Eliminate Passing Lines - Provide cover and delay when outnumbered
- Player Actions:** Read and understand the game | Take Initiative / Be proactive | Aggressive to get the ball back | Get organized and execute tasks | Close off passing lines | Pressure/Cover/Balance | Responsibility | Optimal technical abilities

OPPOSITION TEAM: Objective (expected behavior):

- Work on the main concepts of our game model in a reduced space; reinforce importance of player positioning to effectively and quickly move the ball; movement and speed of play; possession with purpose to disorganize and unbalance the opponent; transition; quick counter pressure. (Highlight key TTPs - Create passing options • Support • Spread out)
- **Player Actions:** Decision Making, Concentration/Focus | Body Shape and Positioning | Angles / Triangles | Spacing (keep distance between each other; central neutral stay center/ find gaps) | Movement to make yourself available | Optimal technical abilities

Planned interactions with players (when):

Q1: How can we make play predictable?

A1: Get compact, stay compact. Reduce space for opposition team (opposite side midfielders should pinch in).

Q2: How can we create pockets and set traps?

A2: Encourage opposition team to pass or dribble into the middle - create numerical advantages by funneling play to win the ball and counter.

Q3: What cues tell us the opposition is going to play a long ball?

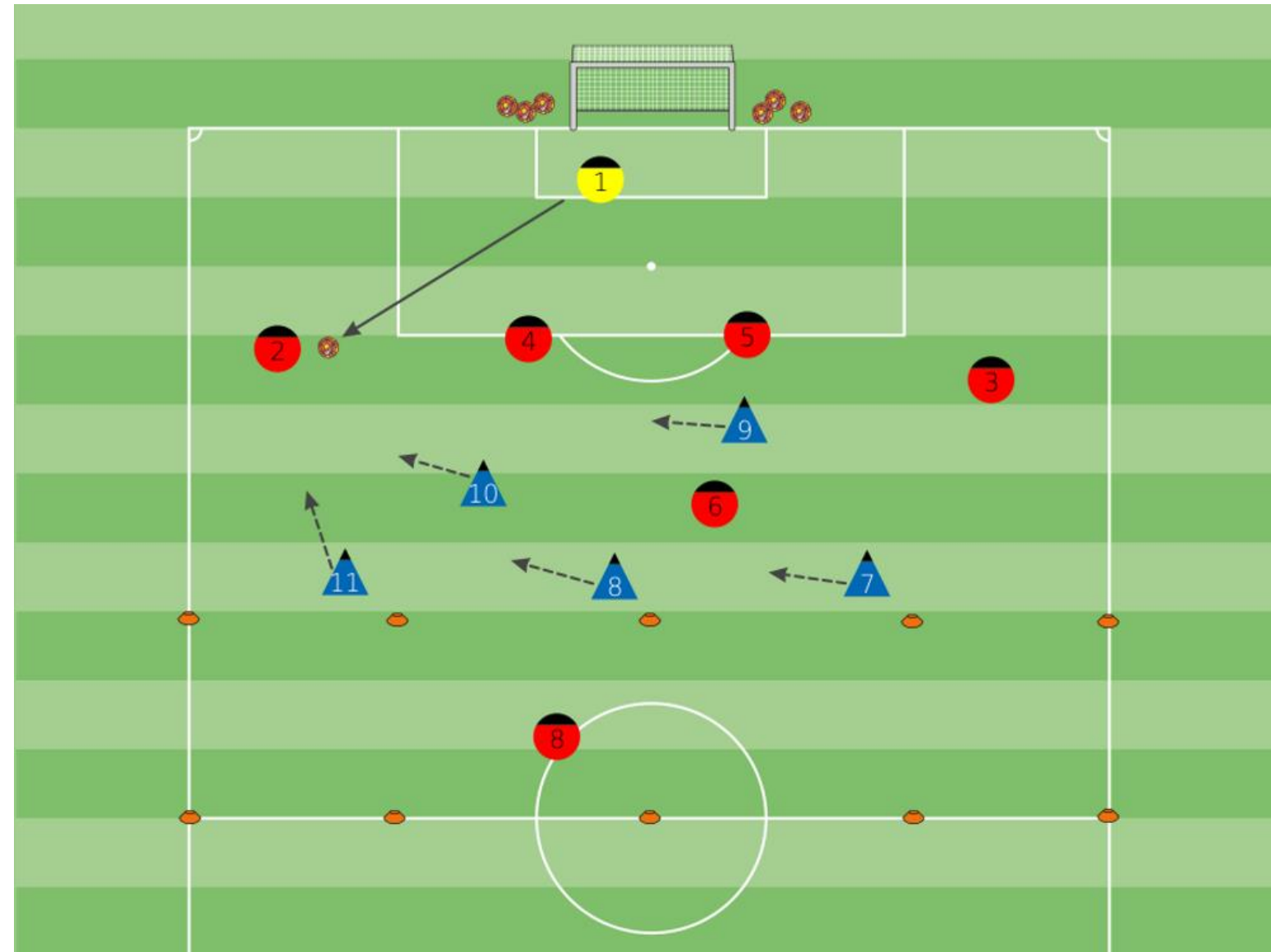
A3: The details - watch the opponents' eyes, body shape and tendencies; or, understand the current moment in the game (score, injuries, other).

Q4: How can we work together to keep the ball in front of us?

A4: Communication and cues - if our player presses, we stay connected (no gaps).

Roles and responsibilities:

HC active observation and singular voice during activity. AS1: Ensure player rotation. AS2: goalkeeper(s) warmup separately before Exercise #1. Trainer: Player health and injury



Practice (Core): 5v7 Functional Group Pressing

Number of players: 12

Field size: 70x50 yards (can vary on ability)

Duration: 12:00 min. 5 x 1:00 min. (1:20 min. rest) **Intensity:** 7 / Very Hard

Rules of the exercise:

Blue Team (focus team) attacks big goal with GK. Opposition looks for target player near midfield - target player must stay in the zone. Rotate players as needed to get appropriate repetitions.

FOCUS TEAM: Objective (*expected behavior*):

- Work on the main concepts of our game model and defensive style of play in a reduced space; disrupt the opposition's build-up by forcing an inaccurate pass; reinforce importance of player positioning to get the ball back through quick counter pressure. Monitor for more challenging/less challenging components of the activity. (TTPs: Pressure/cover/balance • Get compact • Anticipate attack). Key player roles are #9, #10, #6, #8, #7, #11.

- **Player Actions:** Read and understand the game | Take Initiative / Be proactive | Aggressive to get the ball back | Get organized and execute tasks | Close off passing lines | Pressure/Cover/Balance | Responsibility | Optimal technical abilities

OPPOSITION TEAM: Objective (*Expected application of a principle*):

- Work on the main concepts of our game model and attacking style of play in a reduced space; reinforce importance of player positioning to effectively and quickly move the ball; movement and speed of play; possession with purpose to disorganize and unbalance the opponent; transition; quick counter pressure. (Highlight key TTPs - Create passing options • Support • Spread out)

- **Player Actions:** Decision Making, Concentration/Focus | Body Shape and Positioning | Angles / Triangles | Spacing (keep distance between each other; central neutral stay center/ find gaps) | Movement to make yourself available | Optimal technical abilities

Planned interactions with players (when):

Q1: What are cues or triggers to press?

A1: Opposition is not organized. Misplayed ball, player(s) show poor technical skills, have no support (isolated), or are near line of confrontation.

Q2: What are cues or triggers to drop and keep play in front of us?

A2: Opposition is organized and is unable to penetrate. Focus team is slow to transition and/or if possession hasn't been won back immediately.

Q3: What should we do when one of our teammate's presses?

A3: Press as a unit and stay connected - verbal/visual communication required.

Roles and responsibilities:

HC active observation and singular voice during activity. AS1: Ensure player rotation. AS2: goalkeeper(s) warmup separately before Exercise #1. Trainer: Player health and injury

Whole II (Play II) : 11v11 Game (*depending on available numbers*)

Number of players: 22

Field size: Full Field

Duration: 20:00 min 2 x 7:00 min (3:00 min rest)

Intensity: 5 / Moderate

Rules of the exercise: On a full field play 11v11 Game. Check and monitor for understanding. Reinforce all previous coaching points. LOTG in force.

FOCUS TEAM

Team structure (organization): 1-4-2-3-1 Formation

Description of what you want them to experience):

Allow players to put knowledge into use under match conditions

Principles:

Vary Runs | Get in behind | Early cross | Numbers in the box

Sub-Principles: Positioning / Patience / Decision making

OPPONENT

Team structure (organization): 1-4-3-3 Formation

Description of what you want them to experience):

Allow players to put knowledge into use under match conditions

Principles: Get compact, Stay Compact | Pressure/Cover/Balance

Sub-Principles: Positioning / Transition / Foucs / Decision making

Possible Questions (Script)

Q1: What was the focus again for this session? A1: Press / No Press (recognize moments to press and moments to drop) to prevent scoring chances starting from opponent's half of the field.

Q2: What factors affect pressing? A2: The score. How much time left in the game? Size/condition of the field. Technical abilities of the opposition and their style of play.

Q3: What are some risks? A3: If one player doesn't do their role, all team efforts can be wasted. Technically-strong sides could exploit us. Over-committing players leaves team exposed to counter attacks.

Q4: Why is it important to keep the ball in front of us? A4: Disrupt other team's attacking rhythm - prevent them playing forward and breaking the lines of our midfield.

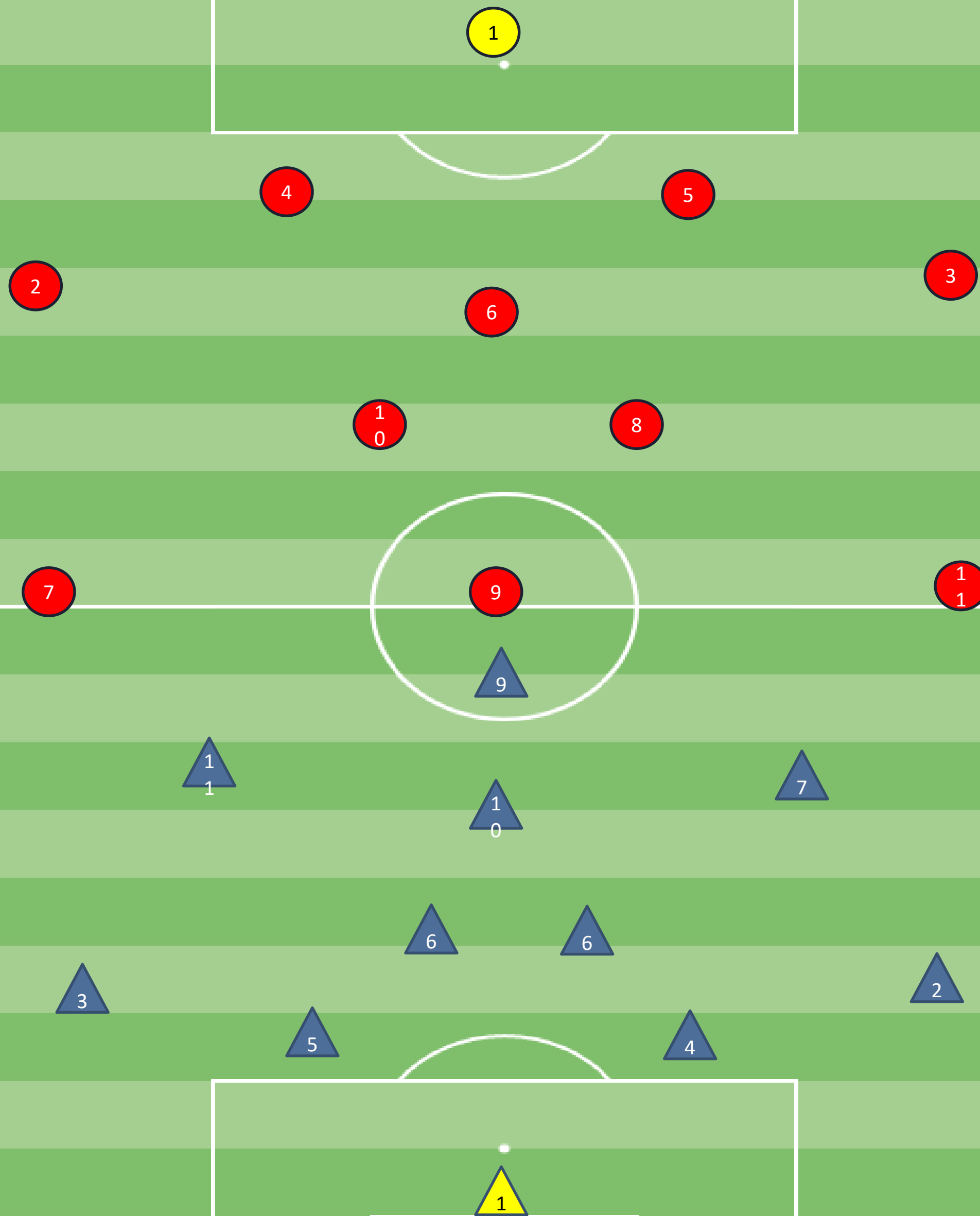
Q5: How can we be successful in our defending tactics in this area of the field? A5: Get compact, stay compact. Communicate. Stay connected.

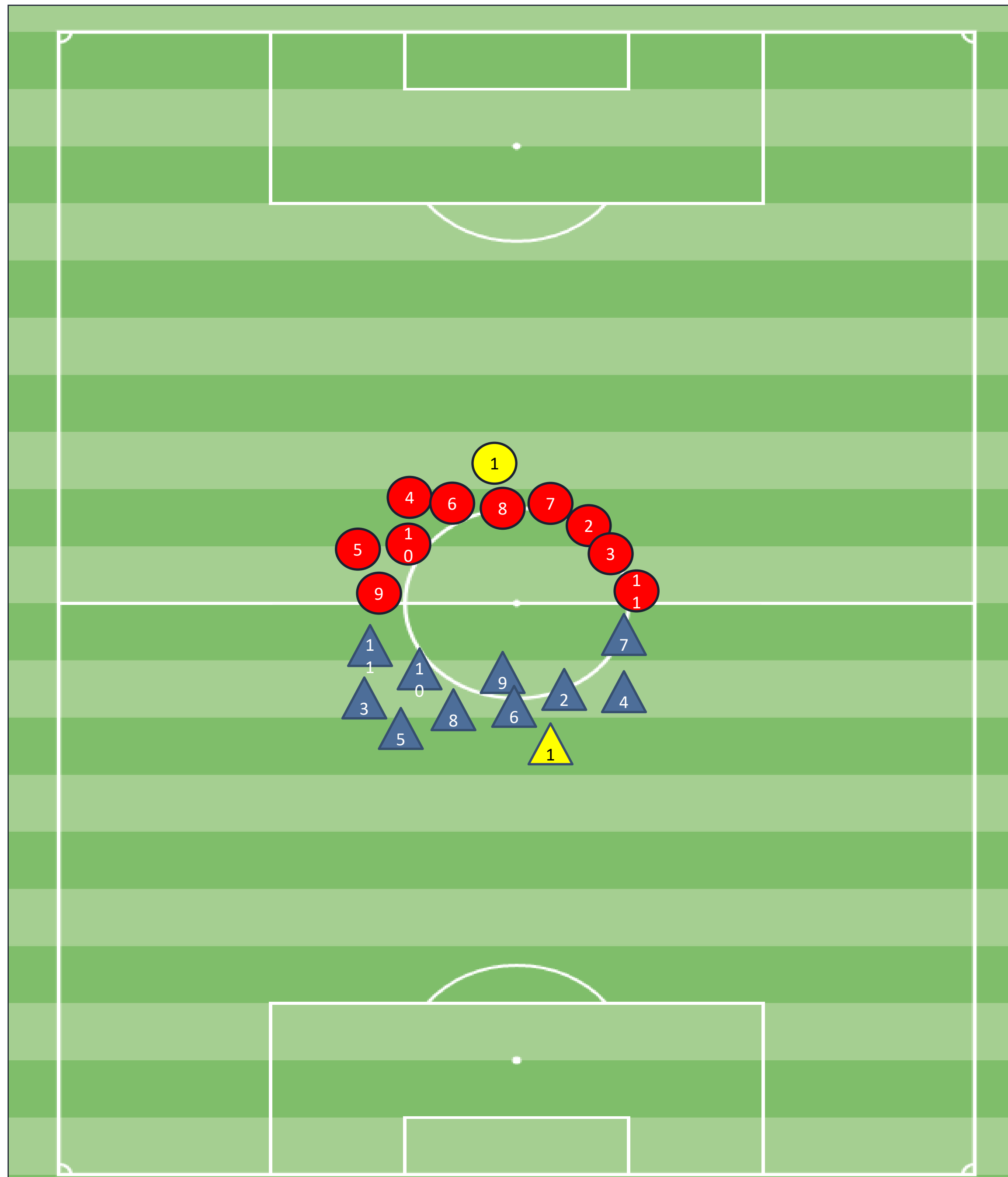
What are you going to do (say / demonstrate ?) to help key players to make the appropriate decision. When? Limit any freeze moments unless a key moment arises. Coach in flow or use a natural stoppage. Find one key moment (positive or negative) to demonstrate the effectiveness of the day's overall session.

How would you adjust the demand during the sessions (cognitive & physical)? Are the players on both teams being challenged equally (are both teams having the right balance of being successful or unsuccessful?)

Roles and responsibilities:

HC running Focus Team. AS1 (if available): running Opposition Team. Trainer: Player health and injury.





Cool Down & Debrief

Duration: 3 Minutes

Activities

Cool-down activities will focus on slow movements and stretching, allowing the heart rate to return to normal after vigorous activity. Use full body stretches to work on improved flexibility / increase oxygen to the working muscles.

Planned Interactions w/ Players

- Check for understanding on the day's session topic
- Address any other player questions
- Team housecleaning and reminders
- Provide a period of hydration, relaxation, and decompression
- The Joke of the Day & Dismissal