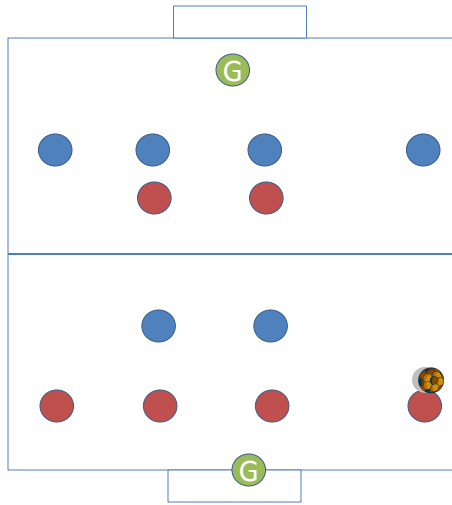


Introduction to Zonal Defending



Organization

Area 40x30 yards. 2 goals and cones to mark off a halfway line
 Players in the formation of

- 1 Goalkeeper
- 4 defenders
- 2 forwards

In starting formation, players do a movement relevant warm up by repeatedly moving forwards and backwards 5 yards by

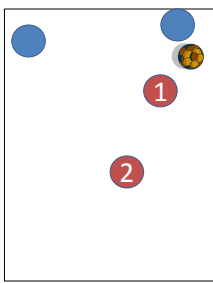
1. Moving $\frac{3}{4}$ pace forwards and slowly backwards
2. Side skipping forwards one way and backwards the next
3. Move slowly forwards and quickly backwards
4. Go forwards quickly get sideways on changing sides going backwards

Coach the players to move efficiently using the coaching points

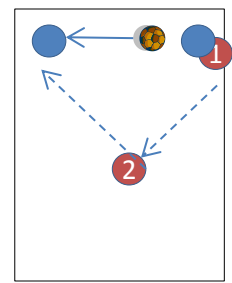
- Play an unrestricted game

Coaching Points

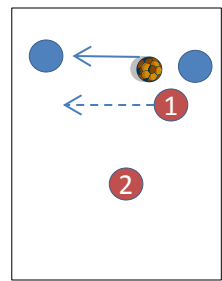
- On moving forwards Get low ready to sprint
- Bend knees
- On moving backwards keep weight forwards and have front foot pointing straight back
- On changing side skipping always move the front foot backwards 1st



1 pressures and 2 covers the space close to the line



Ball is passed across and 2 pressures and 1 covers



In groups of four 15 yards apart with one ball

Players work in pairs

Blue players pass the ball side to side stopping the ball and holding it for 3 seconds

Red players defend with pressure and cover

Players should move in a piston movement with one up and one back

Now player one stays with pressuring the ball and player 2 covers

Play 2v2 to lines with one goal scored for dribbling over the opponents end line

1st defender

- Communication (I go ball)
- Move to defend as the ball moves
- Get close enough to the ball to stab at it with your front foot
- Get sideways on to the player on the ball
- Dictate the attacker to go one way

2nd defender

- Communicate- (Im covering you right/left)
- Cover either the space behind the 1st defender or inside based on the 1st defenders shoulder position



Player ----->
Ball -->

Introduction to Zonal Defending



Organization

Now we put 2 groups of 4 together and once again the ball is passed across and each player reacts the same way as with two

The players play 4v4 with no pressure on the ball focusing on movement, defensive shape and zonal responsibility

Goals of this session

1. Establish a hooked type of shape when defending
2. Recognize when the 1st defender can continue pressurizing the ball and have the 2nd and 3rd adapt and maintain defensive shape
3. Be compact and cut the field in half

Play 4v4 with the coach serving from the side

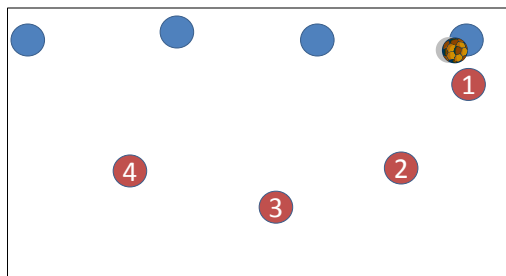
Coaching Points

3rd defender

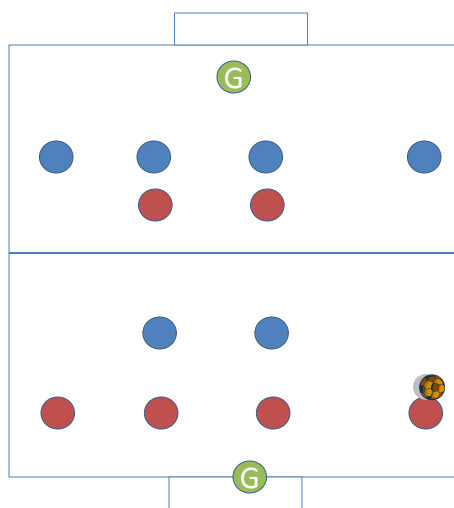
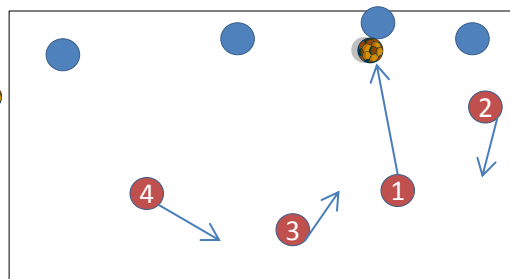
- Communication to the 2nd – I've got you covered
- Should be the closest defender to goal
- Be aware of offside line
- Compact the area

4th defender

- Be ready for the counter attack
- Track the opposing midfield player in 11v11



1 pressures
2 covers
3 provides balance



Return to our small sided game to finish

Start with the following condition

1. Players must stay in their halves and to advance to the attacking half they must dribble the ball across
2. Give an additional point if the players can catch the attackers offside

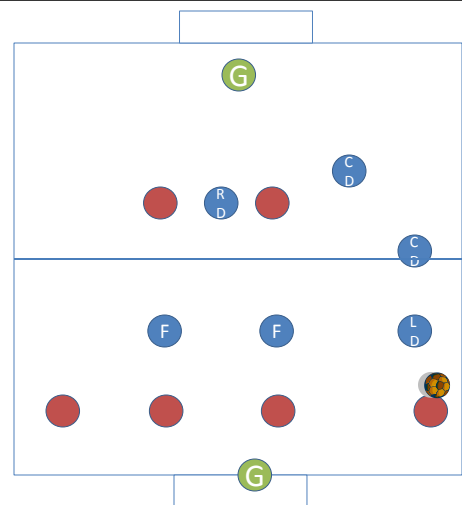
Play no restrictions but have the coach serve into specific players to promote readiness to defend

- Recognition of being 1st defender
- Communication
- Be ready to defend in twos and threes
- Compact areas
- Transition

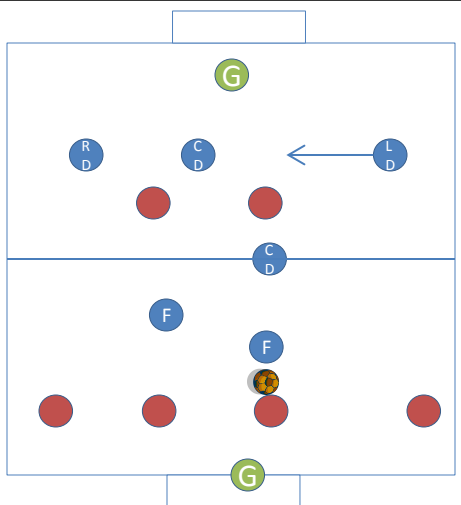


Player - - - - ->
 Ball - - - - ->

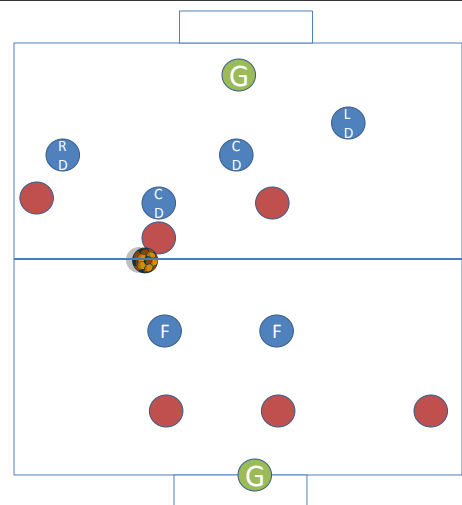
Defending examples



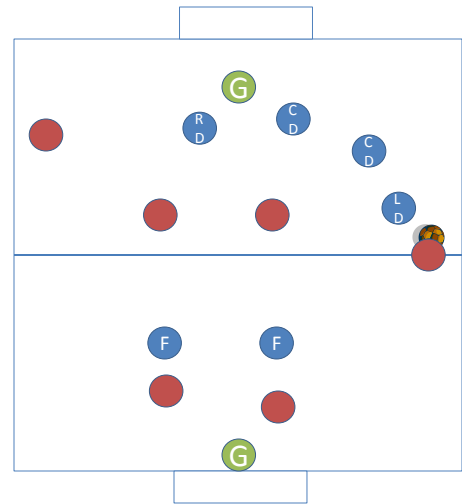
RD defends and channels out
 LCD comes across to cover and RCD is 3rd
 defender with offside line



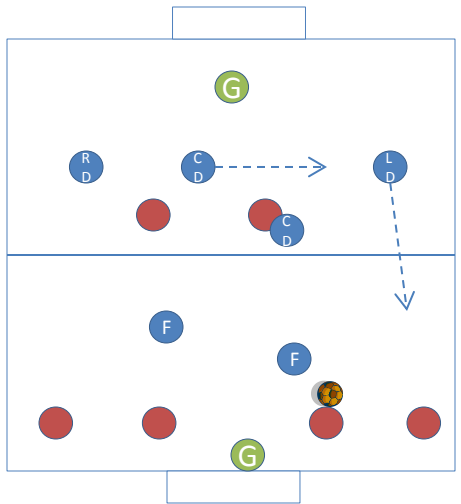
Forward steps to the ball
 2nd Forward defends (piston)
 LCD comes out of the back to cover
 Defenders compact in



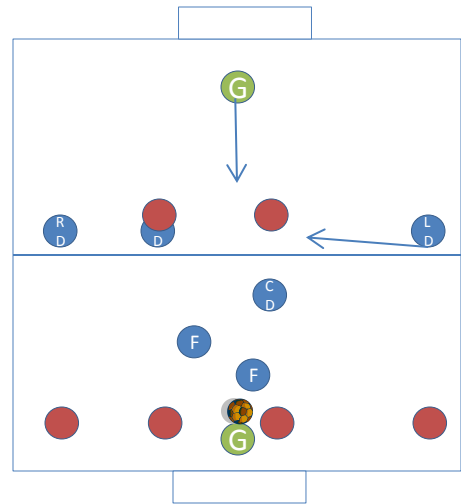
Ball into forward
 RCD Defends with LCD covering
 LD holds the offside line
 RD is also 2nd but must watch LCD for offside line



LD Defends pushing out LCD covers
 RCD comes across as 3rd and offside line
 RD can see wide player but stays compact



Forward steps to the ball
 2nd Forward defends (piston)
 LCD comes out LD steps up as ball is forced wide



GK has the ball- Forward steps up
 Forward covers (piston)
 Team compacts and pushes up