

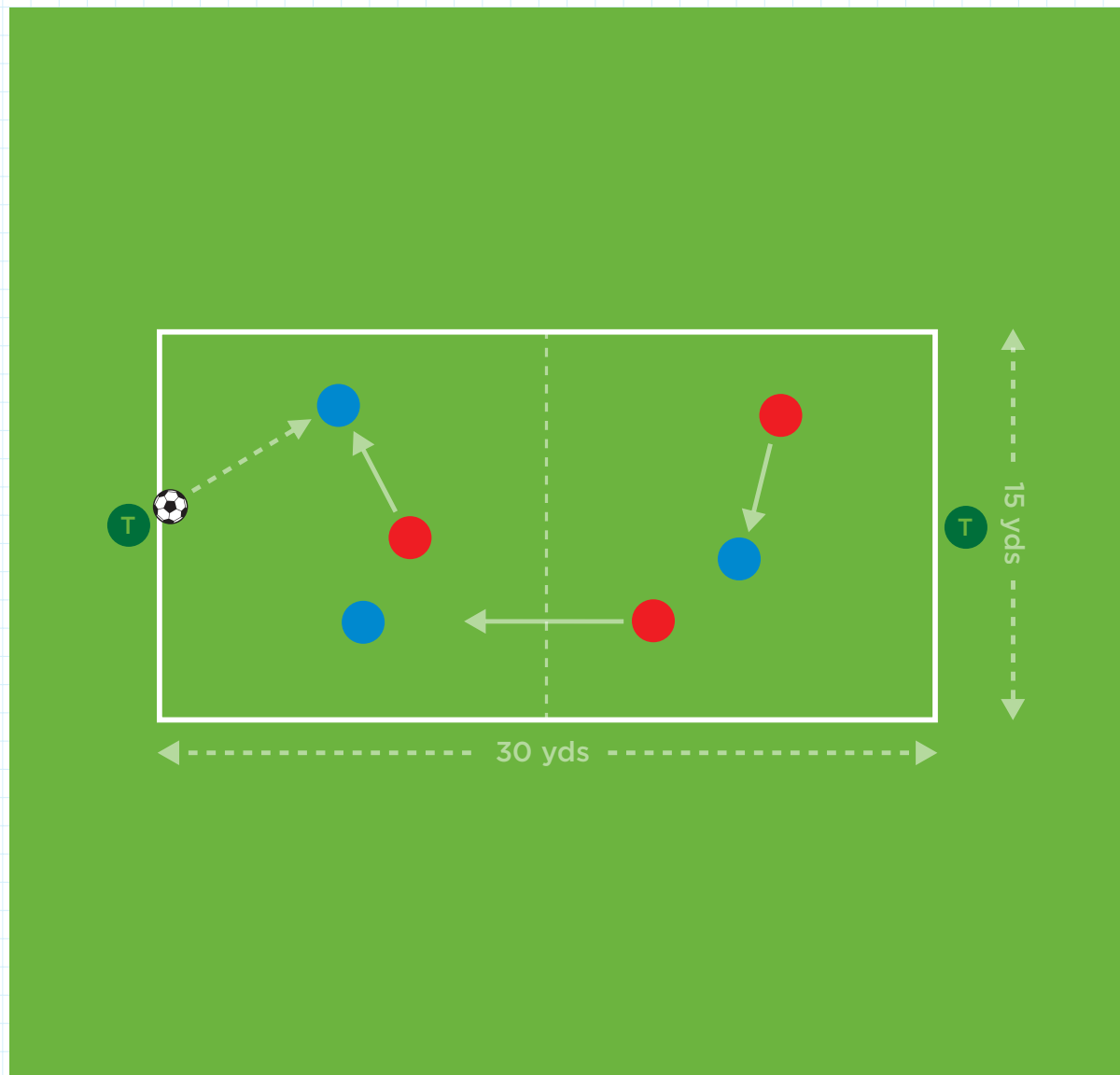
Defensive balance & compactness

Practice organisation

- Area 30x15yds, divided into 2 grids of equal size, as illustrated.
- 8 players (incl. 2 Target players), 1 ball.
- Players arranged 2v1 in each grid, with T's at each end of practice area.
- Practice starts with: T feeds ball into team mates, who are not allowed to rebound ball back.
- Defender presses ball & is supported by a team mate from opposite grid, to increase defensive numbers.
- Team in possession look to retain ball, transfer possession forwards to support player, looking to receive, turn & supply T player at opposite end.

Detail

- Rotate players frequently to retain defensive intensity.
- Speed & angle of approach.
- Mental concentration & alertness.
- When pressing: body shape; head still; see ball; good balance & footwork.
- See man & ball.
- Block stance in front of ball & blocking with correct foot.
- Composure & no fouling.
- Defensive support from players behind: where, when & how to press & mark.
- Simple progressions for this practice are:
 - Introduce additional box in middle with 4 extra players, organised 2v2.
 - T's can pass anywhere into practice area.



Key coaching points

- Where, when & how to initially press ball.
- Quick support from supporting D's to pressurise.
- Communication & adjustment of positions in relation to ball.
- Looking for interceptions.
- Forcing errors from the man on ball.

Defensive play whilst
'in balance'

Age group
17-21 years