

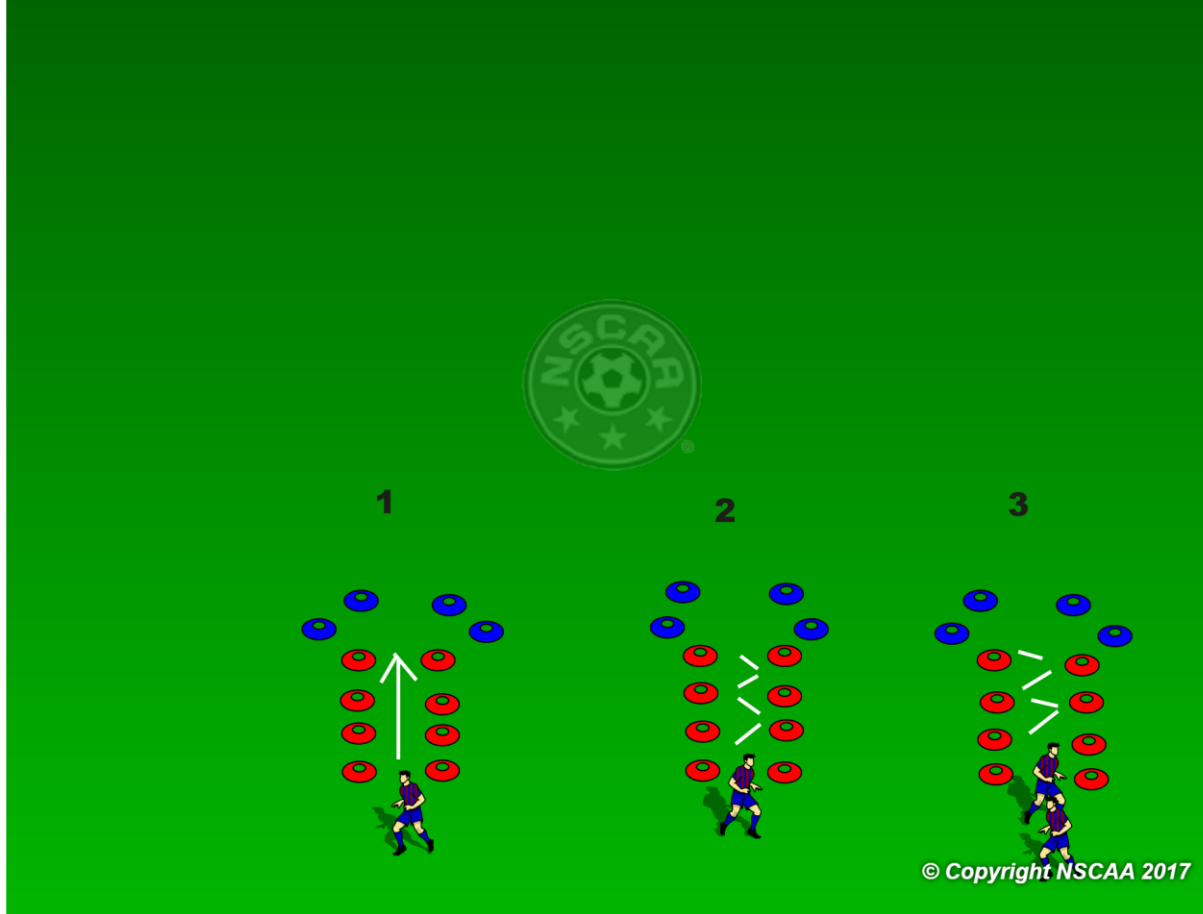
A Teaching Progression for Zonal
defending.

Nebraska Coaches Association Clinic
2017

Jim Gardner

Drill 1; Foot work in lanes 5yds by 15yds long.

- In pairs have them jog backwards and look over shoulder as they back peddle. Hold up fingers and have them tell you how many you have up.
- Have them back peddle and switch their feet as they back peddle and still look over their shoulder
- Put one person going forward and one person going backwards. Person going forward moves left and right and person going backwards back peddles and switches feet as they move from left to right.
- Same thing but have them look over their shoulder as well to see how many fingers are up.
- Same thing but work on crossover step. Sometimes defender will stay on one side and you will have to run with them so you use the cross over step.
- As players get quicker defenders will have to get quicker and be able to shift their feet quicker. To help them does this have them work on exaggerating their backwards step with the back leg. Work on turning the hip and planting the foot at least 90 degrees.
- Same thing but have them do it without the exaggeration. Focus on turning foot 90 degrees. Stay low, stay fast.
- Now have them work with exaggerating the front foot by them selves. Use the same method as for the back foot. Start out slow and then move it quicker.
- Add partner again and put it all together. Attacking player moves side to side faster, defender then has to switch feet faster. Put two small goals at end on each side of channel and have the attacker break one way or the other to beat the defender. Defender works hard to try and cut them off before they get through goal.



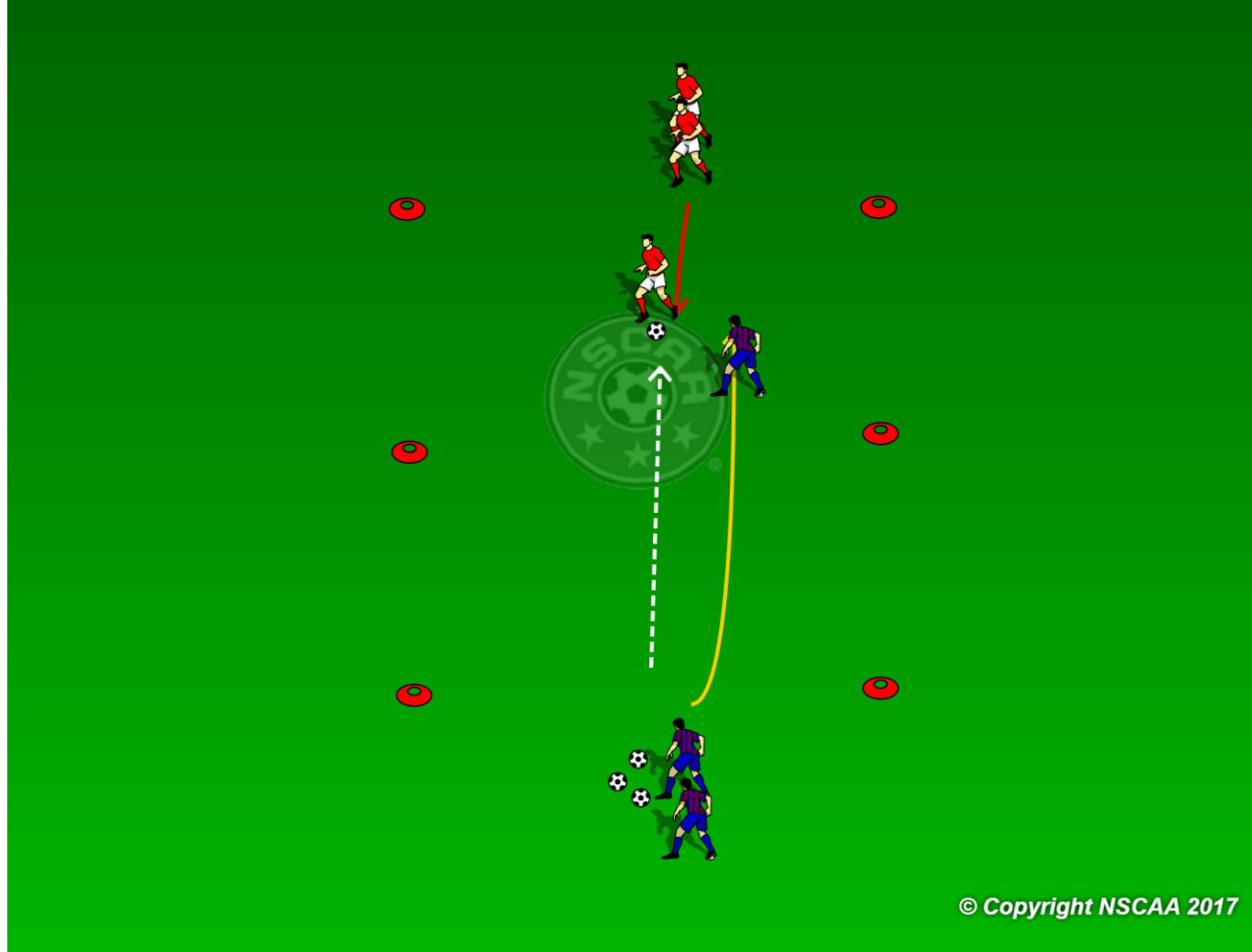
Zonal Defending page 1

- Back peddle and alternate feet look over shoulder.
- Put one person going forward and one person going backwards. Person going forward moves left and right, (zig,-zag) a person going backwards, back peddles and switches feet as they move from left to right.
- Same thing but have them look over their shoulder as well to see how many fingers are up.
- Same thing but work on crossover step. Sometimes defender will stay on one side and you will have to run with them so you use the cross over step.
- As players get quicker defenders will have to get quicker and be able to shift their feet quicker. To help them do this have them work on exaggerating their backwards step with the back leg. Work on turning the hip and planting the foot 180 degrees.
- Same thing but have them do it without the exaggeration. Focus on turning foot past 90 degrees. Stay low, stay fast.
- Now have them work with exaggerating the front foot by them selves. Use the same method as for the back foot. Start out slow and then move it quicker.
- Add partner again and put it all together. Attacking player moves side to side faster, defender then has to switch feet faster. Put two small goals at end on each side of channel and have the attacker break one way or the other to beat the defender. Defender works hard to try and cut them off before they get through goal.

Drill 2: 1v1 in 10x15 grid: Pressure

- Defense passes to offense. Attacker try's to dribble and stop ball on the end line. Defender try's to prevent attacker from stopping ball on end line. If defense takes the ball away then they immediately counter attack and offense then becomes defense
- Focus on **not** stepping in. Instead of trying to steal the ball focus on playing smart and making them give you the ball. There is of course a time to step in and tackle as they get closer to the touch line, but stress patience over stepping in.
- Use a jab step to force them into making a mistake.
- Focus on **communication**. I have ball, mine, ball etc.
- Use your hands, get them out in front of you and make them go around you instead of through you.
- Approach ball at and angle – force defender one way or the other
- Use the side line as an extra defender, try not to kick it out of bounds, make them touch it out.
- As they try to touch it by you step in front and win the ball instead of poking at it.

- Recycle if you get beat.
- Immediately counter attack when ball is won.



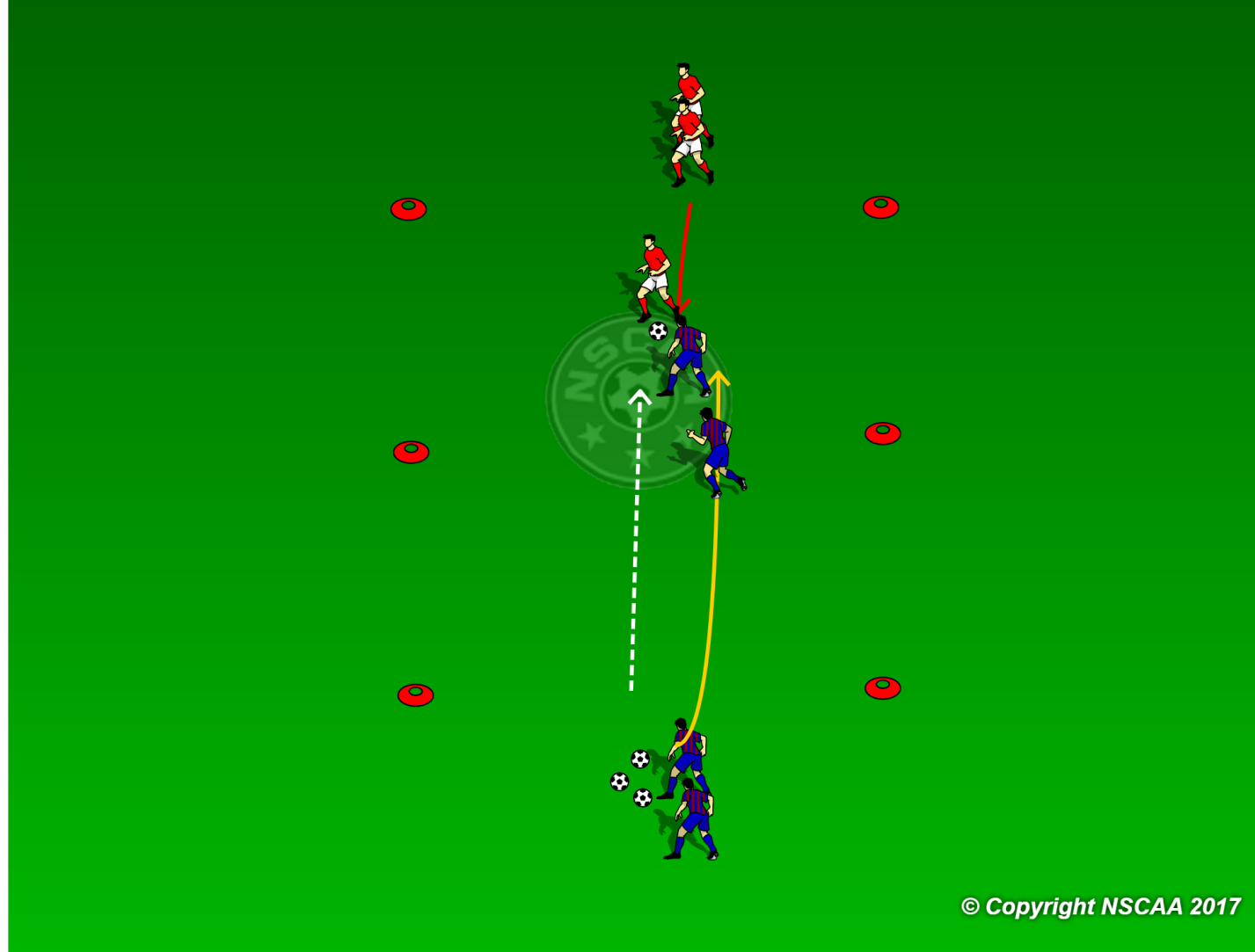
Zonal Defending; Page 2

1v1 in 10x15 grid: Pressure

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Drill 3: 1v2 in 10x15 grid: Pressure – Cover.

- Same drill as above, but now we concentrate on the second defender or cover.
- Proper distance – 3yds. If faster can get a little closer.
- Communication. Take him right/left. Stay on him. Double. I GOT BALL.



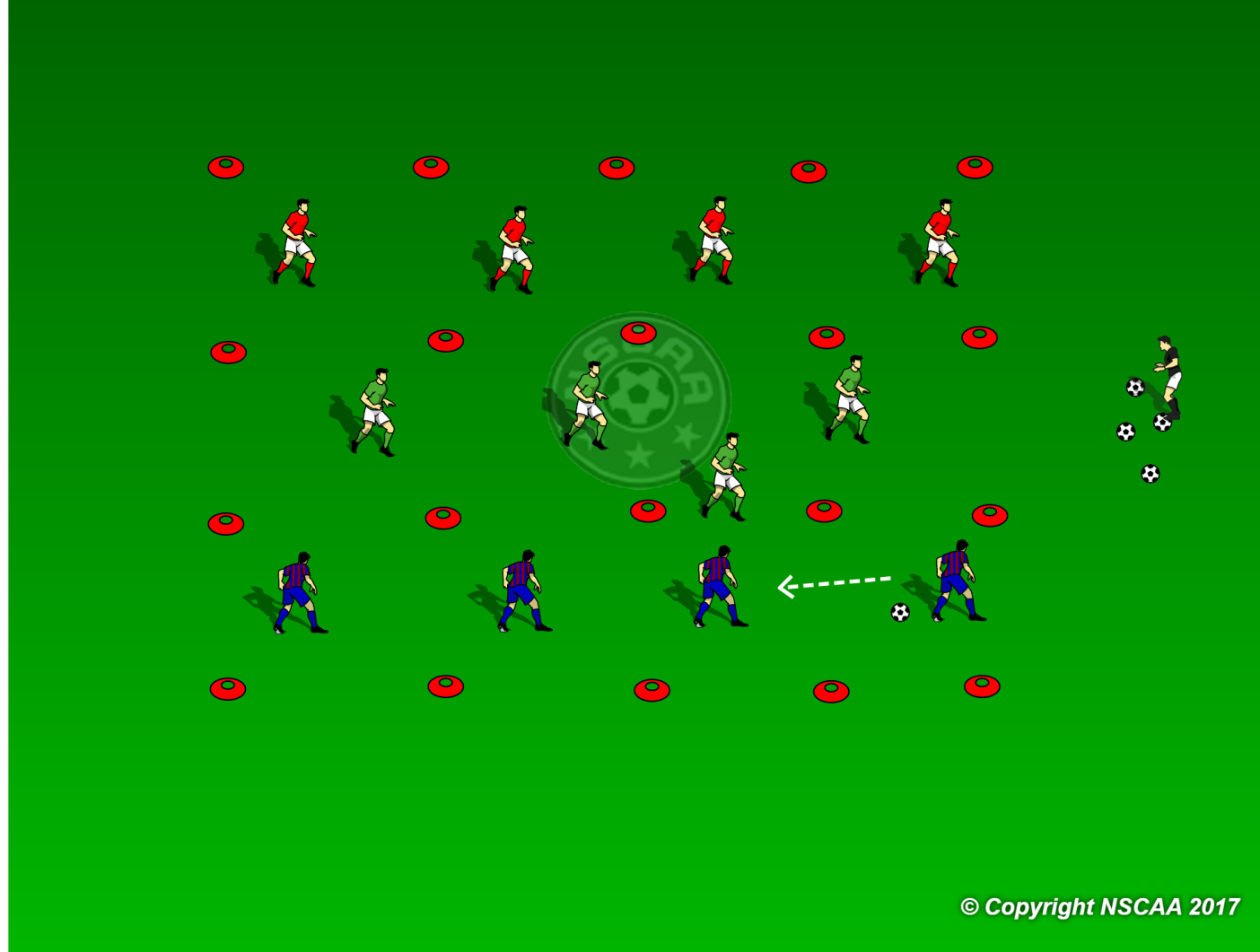
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1v2 in 10x15 grid: Pressure – Cover.

- Same drill as above, but now we concentrate on the second defender or cover.
- Proper distance – 3yds. If faster can get a little closer.
- Communication. Take him right/left. Stay on him. Double. I GOT BALL.
- Recycle if you get beat.
- Immediately counter attack when ball is won.

Drill 4: 4v4v4 zone defense drill. Step up step back. Three grids 25x5 right next to each other.

- Object is for teams on either side to pass the ball between the team in the middle. If the ball goes through the team in the middle it is one point against them. Play for one minute then switch teams. Outside teams try to pass the ball back and forth, up and down in their grid to create an opportunity to pass between
- Balls above waist high do not count and balls on the outside do not count.
- Middle team represents the defense and must learn to step up and call ball, and even more importantly to step back when ball moves out of their zone.



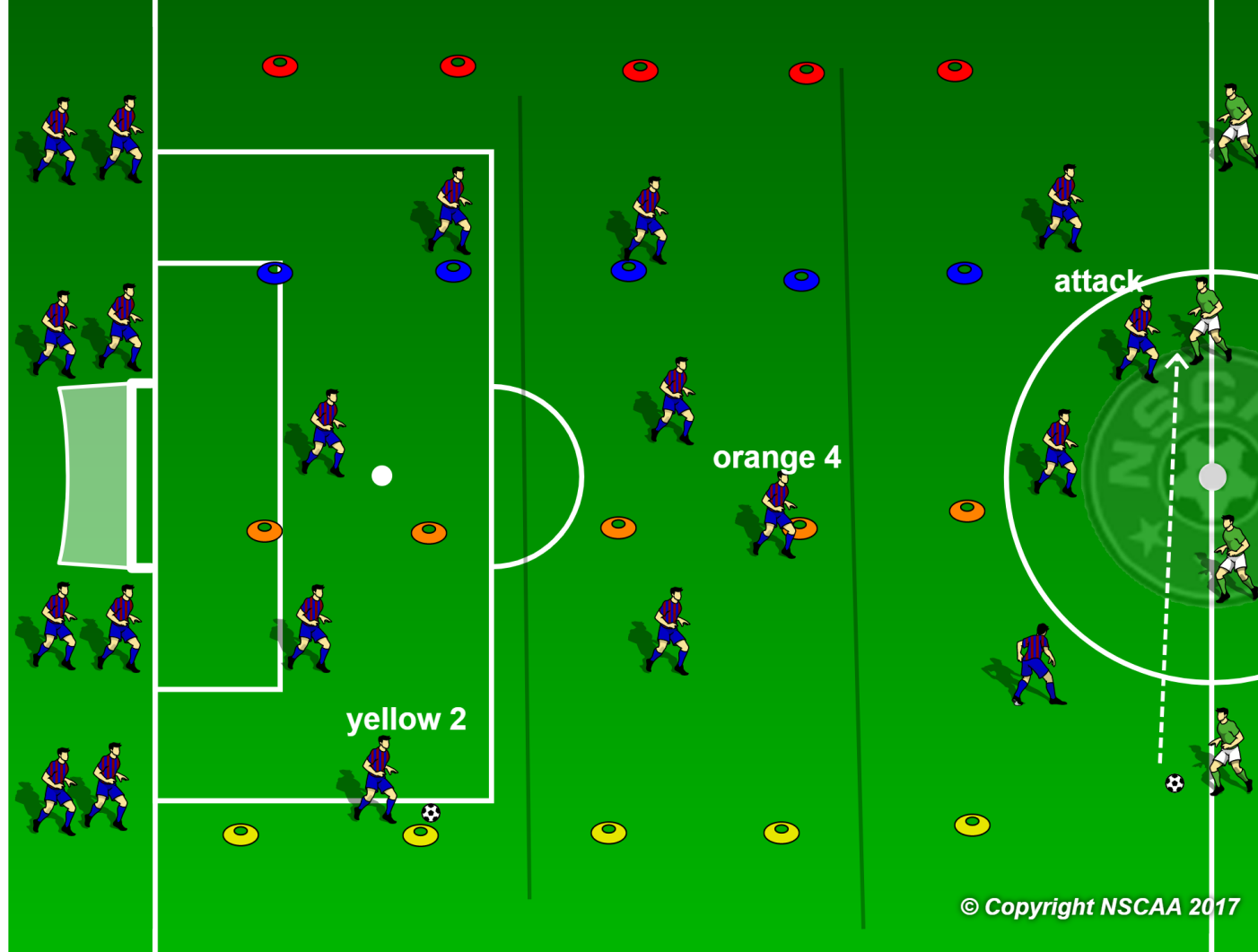
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Drill 5; man zone in large space.

- Four lines of different color cones set up approximately ten yards apart and 10 yards deep.
- Coach calls color and number of cones like blue-4. Four players step out and pressure, cover, balance to cone called. Call out different colored cone and the four players shift to that cone again, pressure, cover, balance. When they get to the end four players pass the ball back and forth and the defense adjusts to movement of ball.
- Watch for over shifting and correct when it happens. Back player should be in line with the back post.
- Watch for proper distance between players. Don't play offside trap it will naturally happen.
- Watch for proper body position – side on.
- Watch for quick pressure as ball moves across field. Delay and protect to set up the interception.
- When ball is moving forward...retreat. When ball is moving sideways or backwards...steal space.

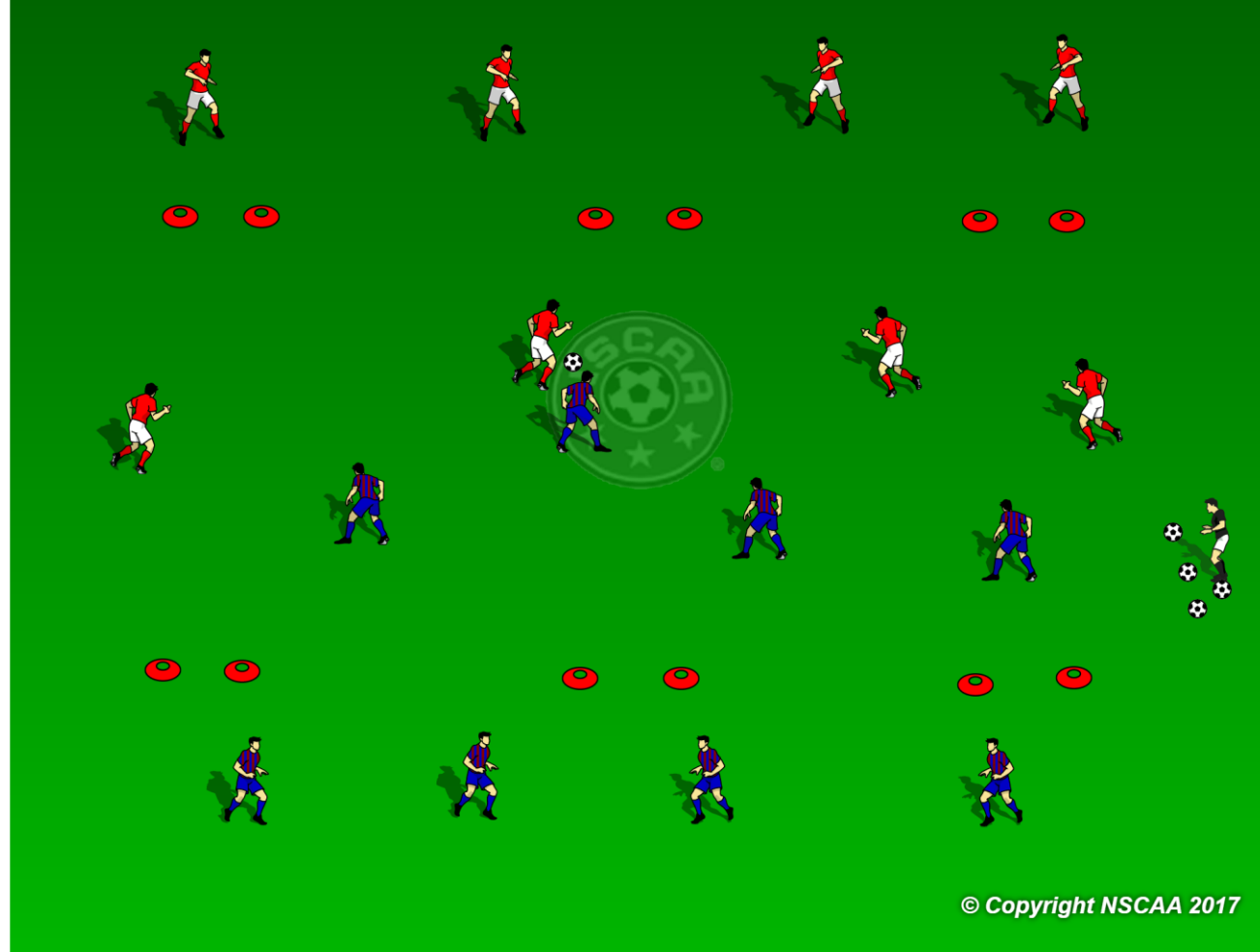


4 man zone in large space; page 5

- Four lines of different color cones set up approximately fifteen yards apart and 10 yards deep.
- Coach calls color and number of cones like blue-4. Four players step out and pressure, cover, balance to cone called. Call out different colored cone and the four players shift to that cone again, pressure, cover, balance. When they get to the end four players pass the ball back and forth and the defense adjusts to movement of ball.
- Watch for over shifting and correct when it happens. Back player should be in line with the back post.
- Watch for proper distance between players. Don't play offside trap it will naturally happen.
- Watch for proper body position – side on.
- Watch for quick pressure as ball moves across field. Delay and protect to set up the interception..
- When ball is moving forward...retreat. When ball is moving sideways or backwards...steal space.

Drill 6: 4v4 with three goals.

- 20 yard deep by 25 wide grid, with three goals. One goal on each end and one goal in the middle.
- Put what we have learned into action. Play four against four until a goal is scored and then switch players or play for a set amount of time.
- Work on Stepping...when ball moves away from goal we move away from goal.
- If a team try's to unbalance the defense by using an overlap, the tendency is for the defender to want to run with the person overlapping. Try to develop the sense of zonal defending and stay in your passing lanes and cut the pass off rather than following the runner.
- Can make middle goal worth 2 points and outside goals worth one.



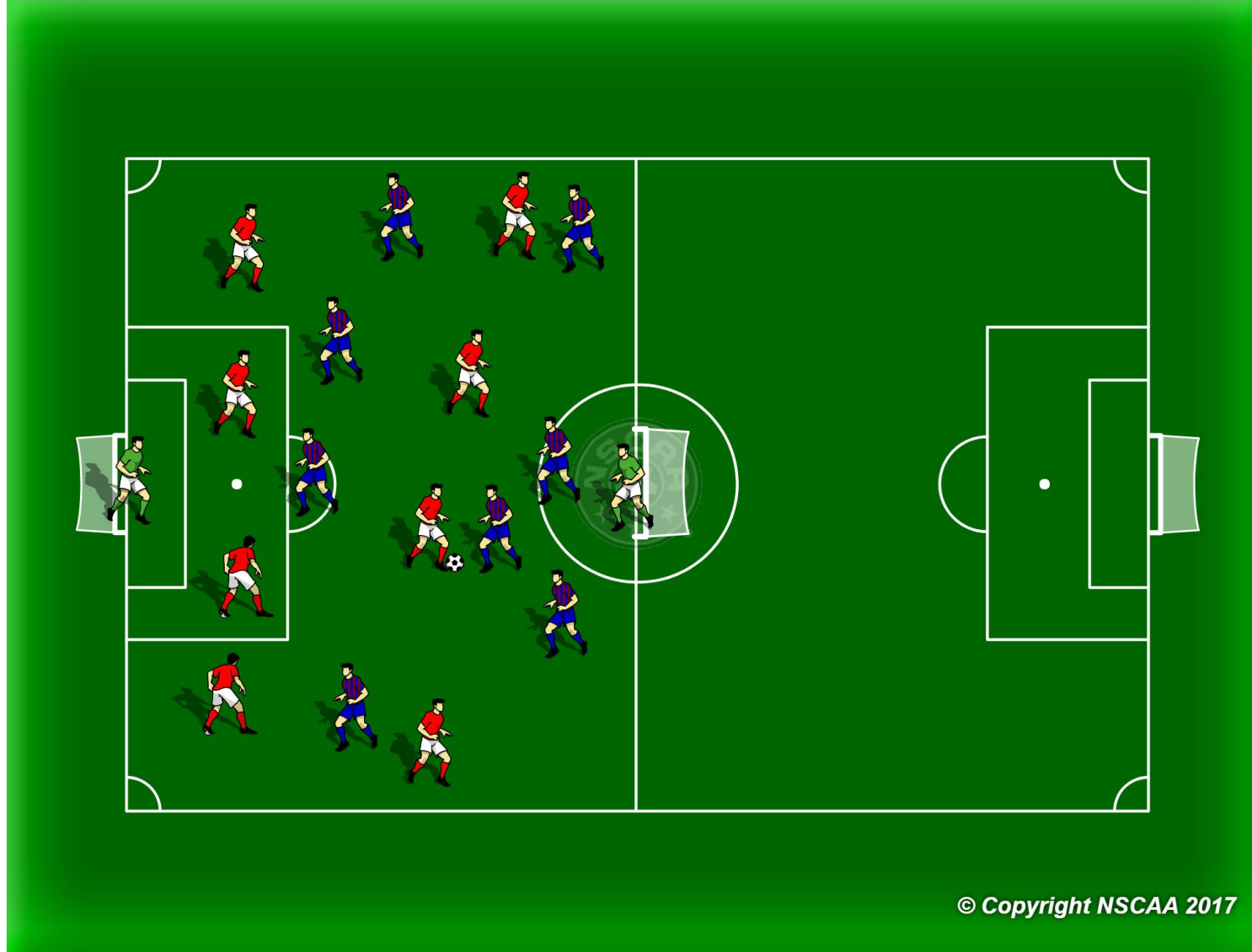
Zonal defending page 6

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Drill 7: 8V8 Half field

- Play with 4 mid field players and 4 defenders
- Incorporate midfield play with defenders.
- Add goal keepers and play for shot on big goals.
- Focus on all aspects of zonal defending



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Zonal Defendin; Page 7

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