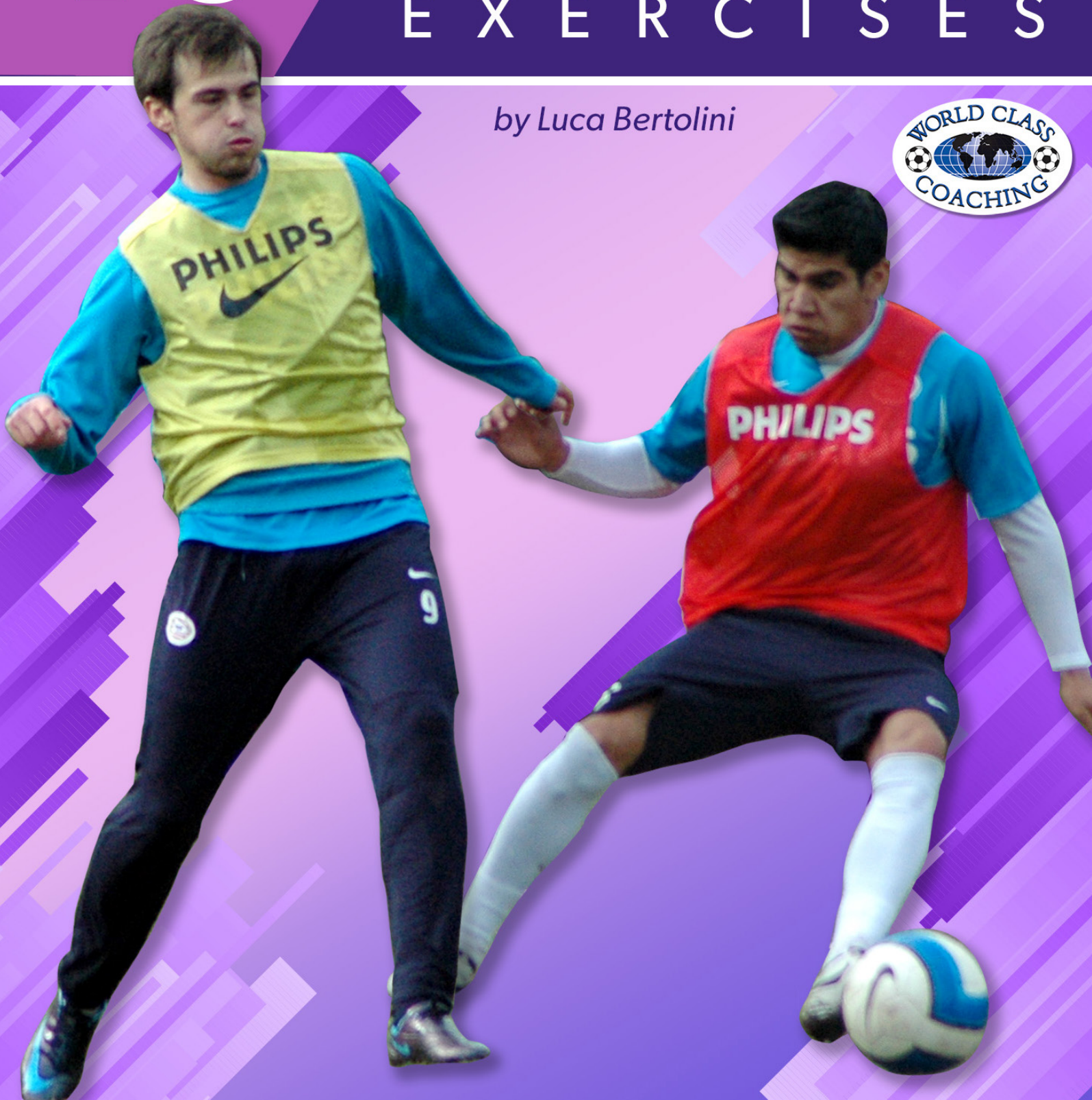


40

SHOOTING & FINISHING EXERCISES

by Luca Bertolini



40 Shooting and Finishing Exercises

By

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Published by

WORLD CLASS COACHING

First published December, 2018 by
WORLD CLASS COACHING 12851 Flint Street Overland Park, KS 66213 (913) 402-0030

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Introduction: how to organize shooting and finishing exercises

Last 2017/2018 Premier League Championship was a record season for Manchester City, the winner:





















- Most wins in a season - 32 matches
- Most consecutive wins - 18 matches (26 August 2017 - 27 December 2017)
- Most points in a season - 100
- Biggest title-winning margin - 19 points
- Most goals scored in a season - 106

We are going to take this season as the main source for all the data and following considerations.





Let's now have a look to data to understand how goals were scored during the whole season and deeper, how Man City scored all these goals.

The main goal of this book is to create "40 shooting and finishing exercise" that can be considered really effective and to propose practices where the players can reproduce all the finishing situations that may occur during a football match and moreover inside the same spaces where the most of the goals are scored from.

As first data, here's the scored goals from outside the box ranking, which is based on the total goals scored for each team, of the last Premier League season...





















	Manchester City	13
	Manchester United	13
	Tottenham Hotspur	11
	Chelsea	10
	West Ham United	10
	Liverpool	9
	Everton	8
	Stoke City	8
	Arsenal	7
	AFC Bournemouth	7
	Leicester City	7
	Crystal Palace	6
	Watford	6
	Newcastle United	5
	Brighton and Hove Albion	4
	Burnley	4
	Swansea City	4
	Southampton	3
	West Bromwich Albion	2
	Huddersfield Town	1

...And these are those about the goals scored from inside the box

 Manchester City	93
 Liverpool	75
 Arsenal	68
 Tottenham Hotspur	64
 Manchester United	56
 Chelsea	52
 Leicester City	49
 Crystal Palace	39
 West Ham United	39
 AFC Bournemouth	38
 Watford	38
 Everton	36
 Newcastle United	34
 Southampton	34
 Burnley	32
 Brighton and Hove Albion	30
 West Bromwich Albion	29
 Stoke City	28
 Huddersfield Town	27
 Swansea City	24

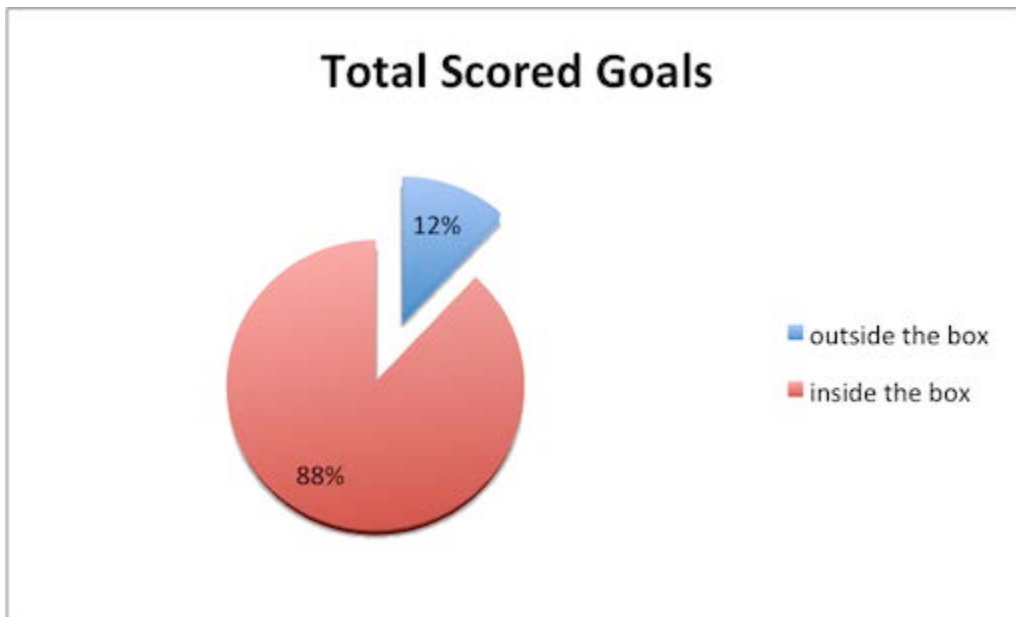
It's clear how these numbers affect our understanding of the finishing phases of Premier League teams.

These are the headers goals; they seem to be a solution for medium level teams rather than for the top class of the league. They are just the 11% of the scored goals for Manchester City, but the 27% for Chelsea, which finished sixth.

	Chelsea	17
	Arsenal	13
	Liverpool	12
	Manchester City	12
	Manchester United	12
	Tottenham Hotspur	11
	Burnley	10
	West Bromwich Albion	10
	Leicester City	9
	Watford	9
	Everton	8
	Stoke City	8
	Brighton and Hove Albion	7
	Newcastle United	7
	Southampton	7
	West Ham United	6
	Huddersfield Town	5
	AFC Bournemouth	4
	Crystal Palace	4
	Swansea City	3




















This means that headers must be coached, but not as first objective of the practices, if we are going to work with high or medium level players. The best way should be to consider them as variations of the shooting phase of the exercises.

Manchester City, the example we are using to develop finishing and shooting exercises, scored 88% of their goals from inside the box.



We ask these questions: How did they scored these goals and what kind of moves were carried out to finish? Let's take a look to some other data of 2017/2018 Premier League season.

These are the total passes of the whole season:

 Manchester City	28,241
 Arsenal	23,524
 Liverpool	22,962
 Tottenham Hotspur	21,660
 Chelsea	21,264
 Manchester United	20,064
 Southampton	17,174
 AFC Bournemouth	16,131
 Swansea City	15,721
 Watford	15,654
 Leicester City	15,200
 Huddersfield Town	14,960
 Everton	14,749
 Brighton and Hove Albion	14,675
 Crystal Palace	14,372
 West Ham United	14,369
 Newcastle United	14,028
 Burnley	13,572
 West Bromwich Albion	13,218

This means that Manchester City completed an average of 743 passes during each of the 38 matches of the season; the 19 point-margin runner-up Manchester United had an average of 528 passes for each match. Possession seems to be important to create concrete scoring chances.

If we look to the other teams' passing averages, we notice the ranking placement and the margin from the winners:

Team	Total passes	Passes Average	2017/2018 Ranking	Margin from 1st
Manchester City	28.241	743	1st	1st
Arsenal	23.524	619	6th	-34
Liverpool	22.962	604	4th	-25
Tottenham	21.660	570	3rd	-23

We see that possession can be a good tool to create finishing chances, but it must be effective.

"We possess the ball not to just to move it, but to move the opposition," Guardiola is used to say, talking about possession.

On dribbling: "If you dribble to overcome an opponent is ok, but if it's not, move the ball to attack all together."

On back passes: "A back pass can create a forward space in behind the opposition lines." And it's so true looking at the back passes ranking and average.

Possession and creation of spaces by moving the opposition are two main key points to I have kept in mind when designing these exercises.

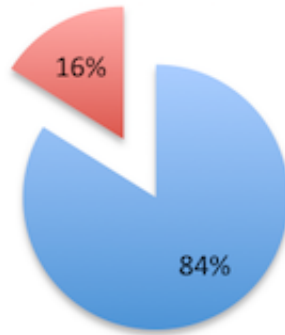
4,546 passes of the 28,241 of the last season were back passes--16%.

 Manchester City	4,546
 Liverpool	3,313
 Tottenham Hotspur	3,176
 Arsenal	3,089
 Chelsea	3,019
 Manchester United	2,878
 Southampton	2,589
 Swansea City	2,582
 Huddersfield Town	2,267
 AFC Bournemouth	2,257
 Burnley	2,245
 Watford	2,241
 Everton	2,212
 Brighton and Hove Albion	2,204
 West Ham United	2,177
 Leicester City	2,094
 Crystal Palace	2,091
 West Bromwich Albion	2,041
 Newcastle United	2,018
 Stoke City	1,979

Manchester City is an attacking-oriented team, but back-passes make sense when thinking about moving the opposition, inviting the opposition pressure, to create space forward space behind the lines.




















Manchester City Passes Average

■ otherpasses ■ back passes



Let's now take a look at the finishing stage of the moves of Manchester City and try to understand how they took the move to the final stage last season.





















These are the data of through balls--Manchester City leads this ranking together with Arsenal, which showed a similar style of play and Liverpool, which finishes this way many counter-attacks.

 Manchester City	118
 Arsenal	117
 Liverpool	106
 Manchester United	85
 Tottenham Hotspur	83
 Chelsea	70
 Newcastle United	67
 Leicester City	63
 Southampton	56
 West Ham United	51
 AFC Bournemouth	37
 West Bromwich Albion	34
 Stoke City	33
 Brighton and Hove Albion	32
 Crystal Palace	30
 Watford	27
 Huddersfield Town	26
 Everton	25
 Swansea City	23
 Burnley	18

The average of through balls for each match of Manchester City is 3 passes; this poor data shows that possession oriented attacking team leads the opposition to defend deep, to avoid this kind of passes, when the move is being played inside the defense half.

Through balls are a good solution for a possession-oriented team if the opposition is not too deep inside the defending half. But Manchester City, just like Guardiola's Bayern Munich, is used to attacking through the wingers and finishing with runs by the advanced midfielders, attacking the opposition penalty area.

This finishing style is demonstrated by the offside ranking of Manchester City. Most of the blind runs come from the back as support instead of an attacker freeing himself from a marker along the opposition defense line. The latter is much more difficult because the timing has to be just right.

	Chelsea	108
	Burnley	100
	Brighton and Hove Albion	98
	West Ham United	97
	Leicester City	92
	Arsenal	89
	Manchester United	88
	Tottenham Hotspur	88
	Stoke City	87
	Everton	82
	West Bromwich Albion	79
	Watford	74
	Southampton	73
	Liverpool	70
	Huddersfield Town	67
	Manchester City	67
	Newcastle United	63
	Crystal Palace	56
	AFC Bournemouth	52
	Swansea City	38

The offside average of Manchester City was 1.7 times during each match. It's clear how Guardiola's team attacked the depth from the back and against a deep defending opposition.

The leading team were in fact counter attacking or direct play oriented teams; Chelsea (2.8 off-sides each match), Burnley (2.6), Brighton and Hove Albion and West Ham (2.5).

	Tottenham Hotspur	825
	Southampton	800
	West Bromwich Albion	784
	Huddersfield Town	765
	Liverpool	764
	Chelsea	755
	Manchester United	753
	Leicester City	744
	West Ham United	732
	Watford	713
	AFC Bournemouth	707
	Burnley	707
	Crystal Palace	703
	Swansea City	694
	Manchester City	691
	Brighton and Hove Albion	680
	Everton	629
	Newcastle United	616
	Stoke City	598
	Arsenal	572

Despite being an attacking wingers-oriented team, Man City is not mainly a crossing team, as the wingers are used to move the opposition toward wide positions and to stretch the lines. Once they are in possession, they tend to look for 1 v 1 duels, dribble toward the opposition goal, or look for an incoming teammate.

The average for each match was 18 crosses, many of which were switches of play to free the opposite winger and they were played from the strong side that was created. What is very interesting is that Manchester City is the leader of 2017/2018 of the shots on goal and on target. These are the proof of the efficacy of the possession and attacking team phase and of the finishing skills of the forwards.

 Manchester City	665
 Liverpool	638
 Tottenham Hotspur	623
 Chelsea	606
 Arsenal	594
 Manchester United	512
 Crystal Palace	476
 AFC Bournemouth	465
 Newcastle United	451
 Southampton	450
 Watford	440
 Leicester City	423
 Brighton and Hove Albion	384
 Stoke City	384
 Burnley	378
 West Bromwich Albion	378
 West Ham United	372
 Huddersfield Town	362
 Everton	359
 Swansea City	338

The average of City is 17.5 shots per match

Team	Total shots	Average	2017/2018 Ranking	Goal scored
Manchester City	665	17.5%	1st	106
Liverpool	638	16.7%	4th	84
Tottenham	623	16.39%	3rd	74
Chelsea	606	15.94%	5th	62

The percentage of goals scored is definitely much higher than all the other teams (only Liverpool is a bit close):

Team	% goals on shots
Manchester City	15.9%
Liverpool	13.1%
Tottenham	11.9%
Chelsea	10.2%

Again, Man City is the leader of the shots on target ranking.

 Manchester City	265
 Arsenal	234
 Liverpool	233
 Chelsea	220
 Tottenham Hotspur	216
 Manchester United	178
 AFC Bournemouth	158
 Crystal Palace	151
 Leicester City	149
 Newcastle United	149
 Southampton	145
 West Ham United	133
 Stoke City	132
 Watford	132
 Burnley	128
 Everton	121
 Brighton and Hove Albion	119
 West Bromwich Albion	114
 Huddersfield Town	109
 Swansea City	103

The average of City is 6.9 shots on target per match and the goal average is 40%; 9 points more than the second ranked team for shots. Only Manchester United was quite close for efficacy (38%).

Team	Shots on target	Goal scored	Goal Average
Manchester City	265	106	40%
Arsenal	234	74	31.6%
Liverpool	233	84	36%
Chelsea	220	62	28.2%
Manchester Utd	178	68	38%








"I am not a coach for the tackles so I don't train the tackles. What I want is to play good and score goals... What are tackles?"

Looking at some of the defense data of 2017/2018 season, Manchester City was placed among the relegated team or just a little above them.








This is the tackle season data, with an average of 14.8 tackles each of the 38 matches of the entire league.

 Swansea City	610
 West Bromwich Albion	604
 Brighton and Hove Albion	599
 Manchester United	564
 Manchester City	563
 Burnley	533
 AFC Bournemouth	508

Here's the clearances data. A clearance is classified as a kick to counter an opponent, during the defense phase, without the purpose of a pass or of transition to attack. Man City is ranked last, with an average of 15.04 each match.

 Leicester City	920
 Manchester United	853
 Arsenal	829
 Tottenham Hotspur	825
 Chelsea	768
 Liverpool	736
 Manchester City	588

Looking at the interceptions data (Man City average is 9 per match), it's clear that the winners worked more against the opposition possession than on the closure of spaces and of passing lanes. Pressure is the main key factor to win the ball back.

 Leicester City	413
 Burnley	401
 Swansea City	390
 Tottenham Hotspur	380
 Liverpool	379
 AFC Bournemouth	367
 Manchester City	346

How do we design effective shooting and finishing exercises, thinking about the best Premier League team of last 2017/2018 season?

Manchester City had the best passing ranking, scored the most number of goals ever, had the best average of scored goals compared to shots and shots on target. But it was ranked lower positions from a defensive point of view.

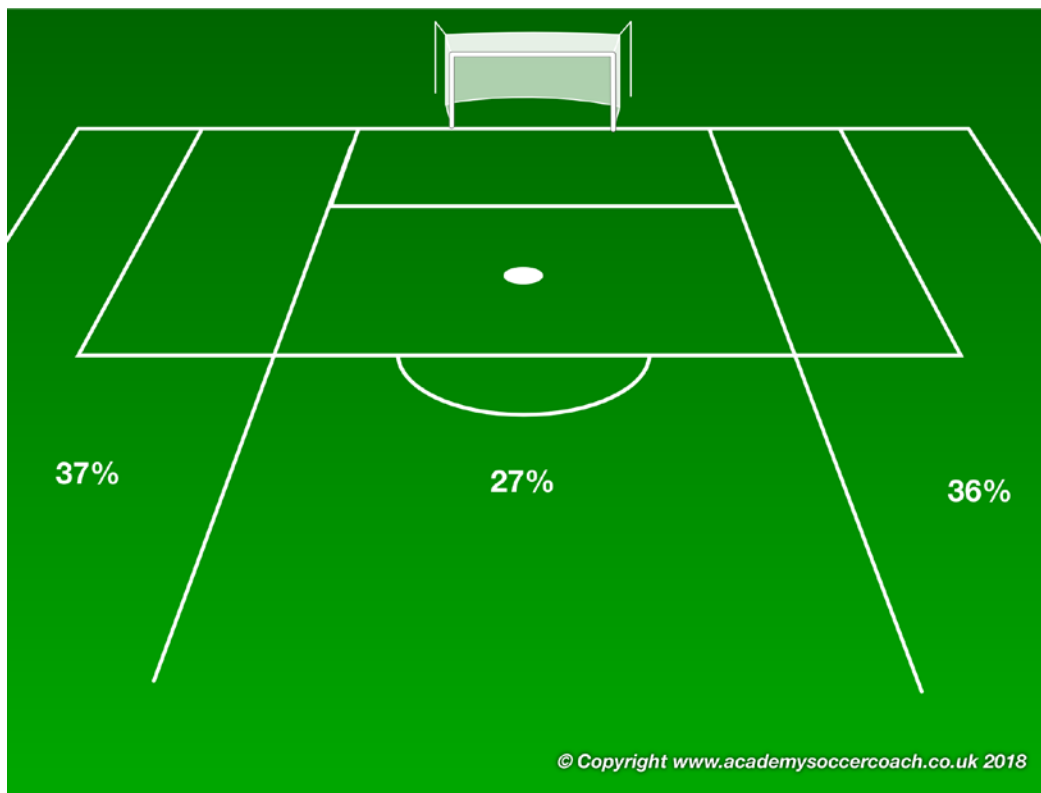
From this we can see that there isn't a clear connection between the defensive technical gestures and tactical positioning and the efficacy of the finishing phase, if the transition phase is not properly coached. If the finishing and shooting has to be coached, the better solution is to start from the possession phase and then to develop an attacking phase that can lead to the finishing stage of the moves.

It's very important to make the finishing phase easy for the defending team in case of recovery of the ball; fast and simple transition phases should be required.

Small-sided spaces or a third of a field maybe used to set-up the practices.

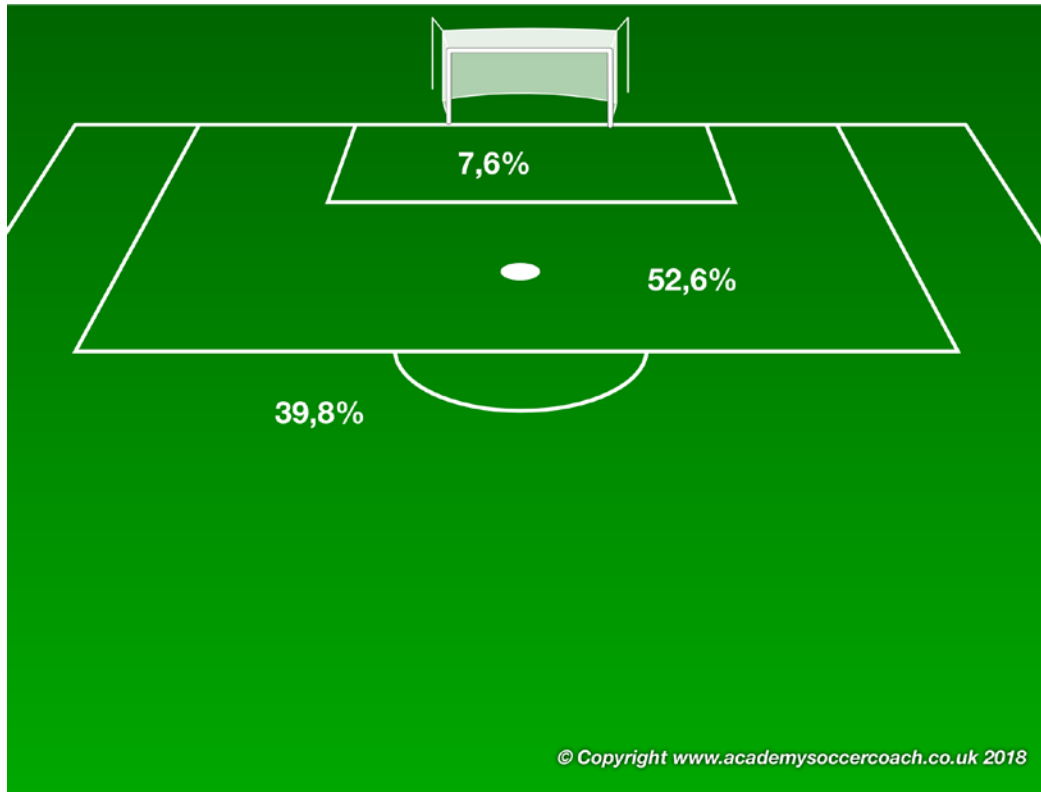
Where to place the playing spaces on the field? Following the 2017/2018 attacking and shooting data of the 20 Premier League team, the attacking moves were equally divided on the flanks (37% on the left, 36% on the right) and the middle space was used only for the 27% of the finishing phases.

The middle space seems to be useful to coach how to win the 2nd times of the ball, or the wandering balls after rebounds to try a second attempt to finish, rather than to organize possession phases before shooting.



Where to coach the shots on goal? Again, following the 2017/2018 Premier League data, 7.65% of the moves were finished inside the 6 yards box, 52.6% inside the 18 yards box, and 39.8% outside the penalty area.

From a strictly coaching point of view, the 6 yard box is useful related to coaching attacks on the near post or recovering goalkeepers' missed saves. The 18 yard box and the space around the penalty area are more important to coach finishing phases and players' skill to shoot on goal.



Shooting and finishing practices without and with opposition pressure

Exercise 1: 2 v GK (1)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the picture; 1 of them is in possession on the flank, the other one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 4 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs, 1 center midfielder, and 1 fullback.

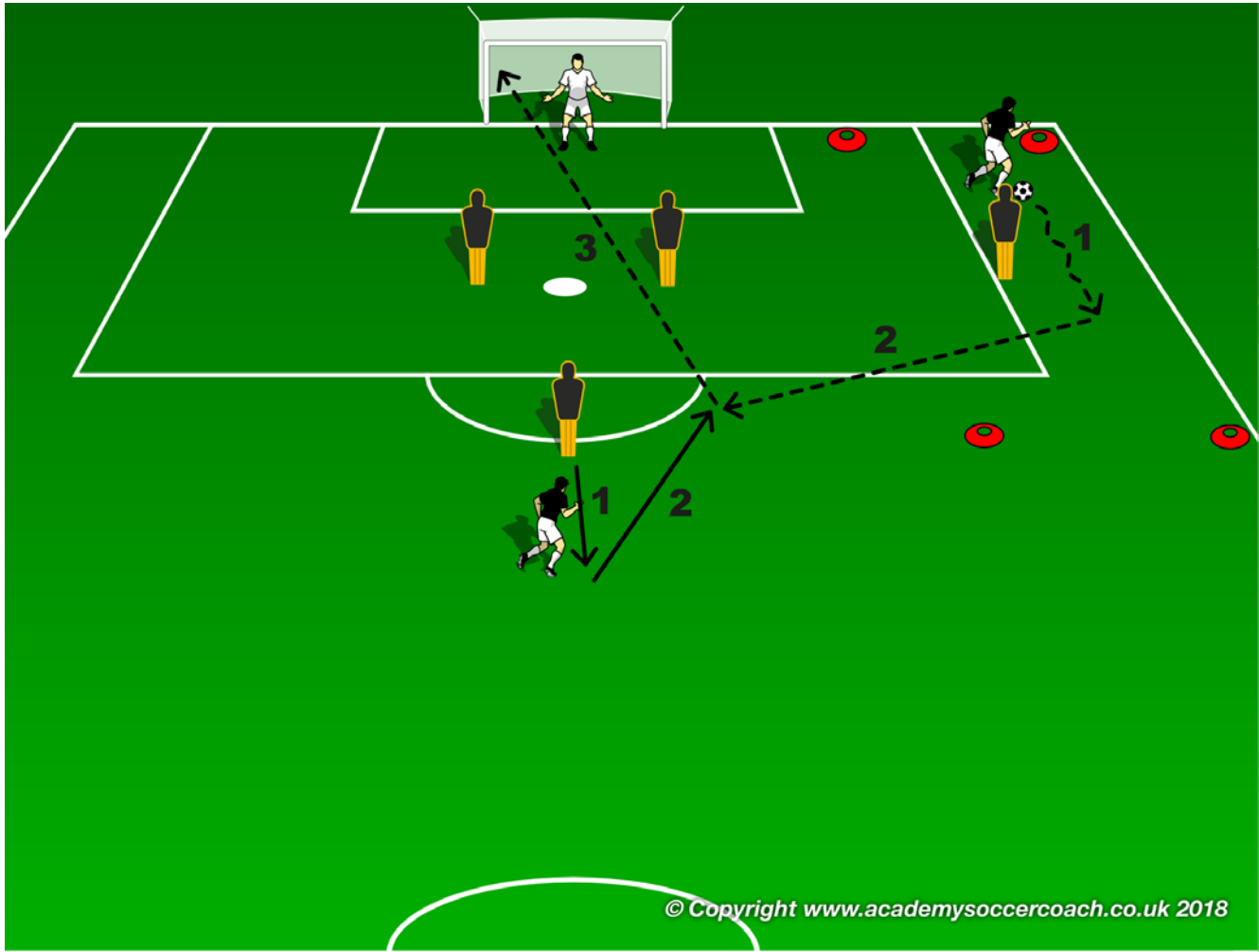
The player in possession on the flank dribbles forward over the air-body, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the cross pass (2), to shoot on goal (3), between the center backs.

The cross pass can be a volley pass or a ground pass and the forward can finish with 1 or 2 touches. The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Variation: the center forward must run toward the first pole or the second one, sideways the air-bodies.

Eye on: escape the marker, timing of runs to receive the cross pass, quality of the cross pass.

Exercise 2: 2 v gk (2)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the picture; 1 of them is in possession inside the rectangular space on the flank and the other one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 4 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs, 1 center midfielder, and 1 fullback.

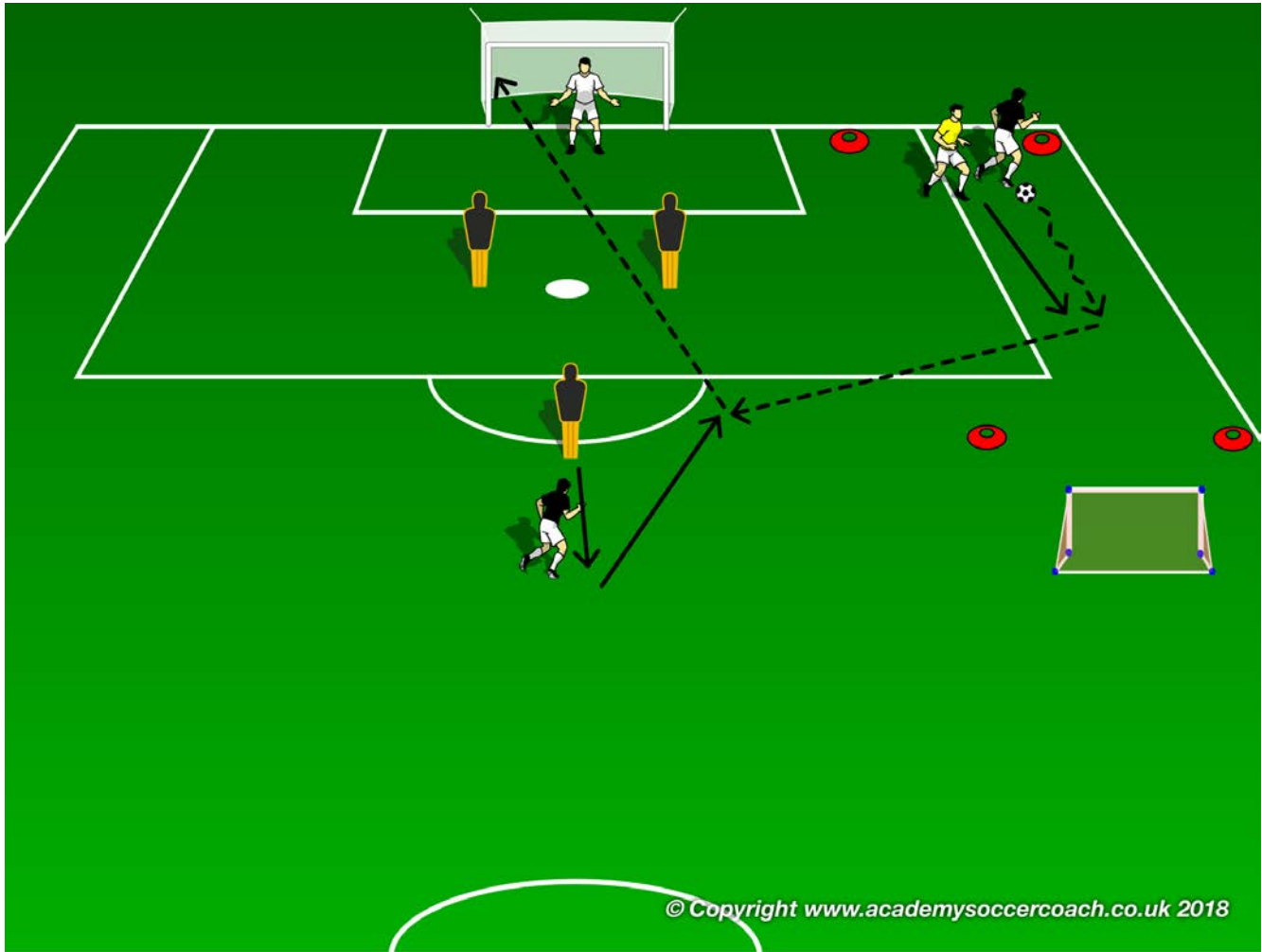
The player in possession on the goal line and wide on the flank dribbles backward to overcome the first air-body, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the back pass (2), to shoot on goal (3) out of the penalty area and through the air-bodies line.

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Variation: the center forward must run toward the first pole or the second one sideways the air-bodies.

Eye on: escape the marker, attack the ball at high tempo, timing of runs to receive the back pass, quality of dribble and pass.

Exercise 3: 1 v 1 on the flank



Set-up and Sequence: 3 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the picture; 1 of them is in possession inside the rectangular space on the flank against 1 opponent. The second forward is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 3 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs and 1 center midfielder.

The player in possession on the goal line and wide on the flank dribbles backward to overcome the direct opponent, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the back pass (2), to shoot on goal (3) out of the penalty area and through the air-bodies line.

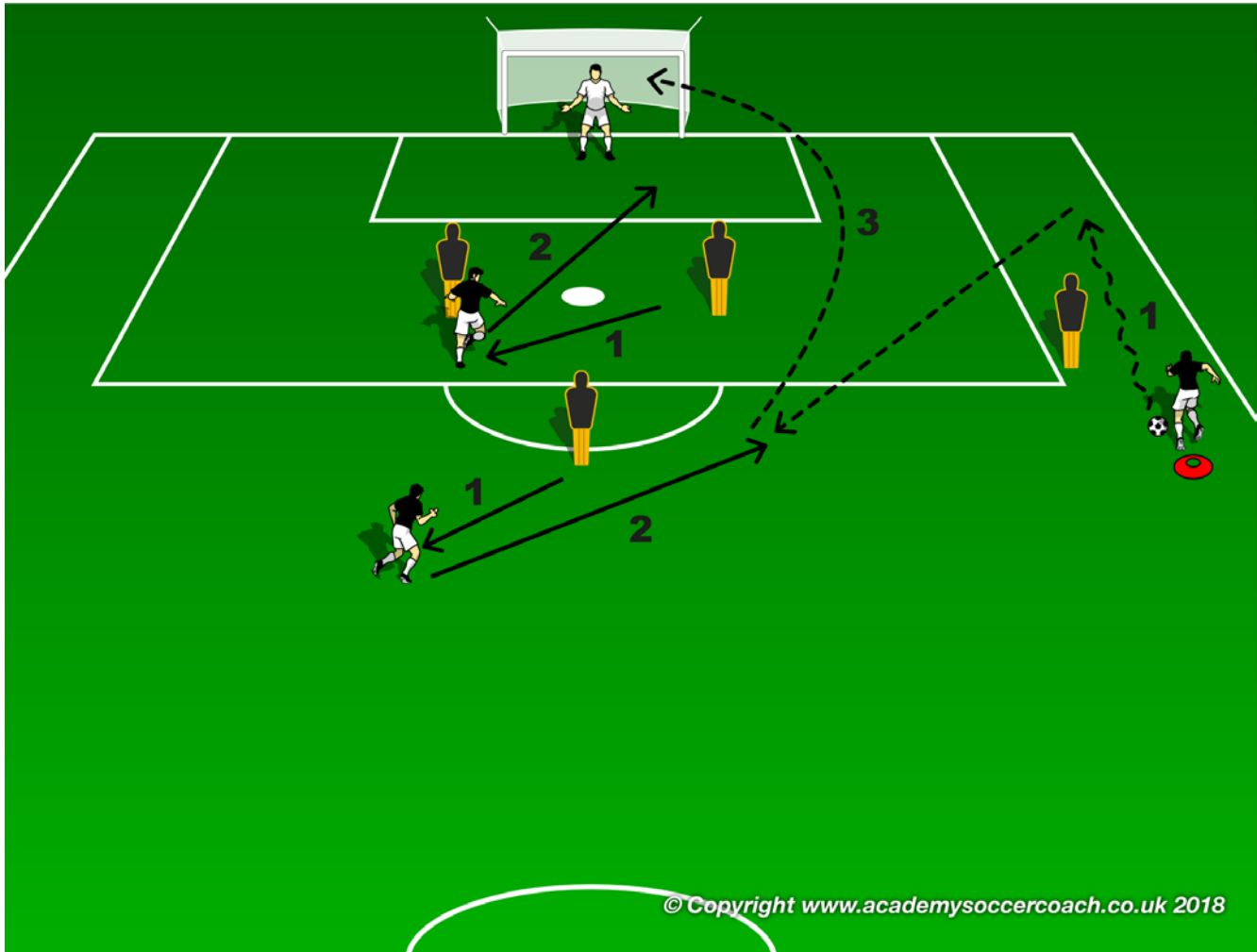
The practice must be performed along both the flanks. If the defender wins the possession, he must score in the mini goal.

Variation:

- 1) The center forward must run toward the first pole or the second one sideways the air-bodies
- 2) The outer defender can run inside the penalty area to counter the shooting attempt

Eye on: save the possession under pressure, timing of runs to receive the back pass, quality of dribble and pass, mark the opponent on and recover the space to counter him.

Exercise 4: 3 v gk (1)



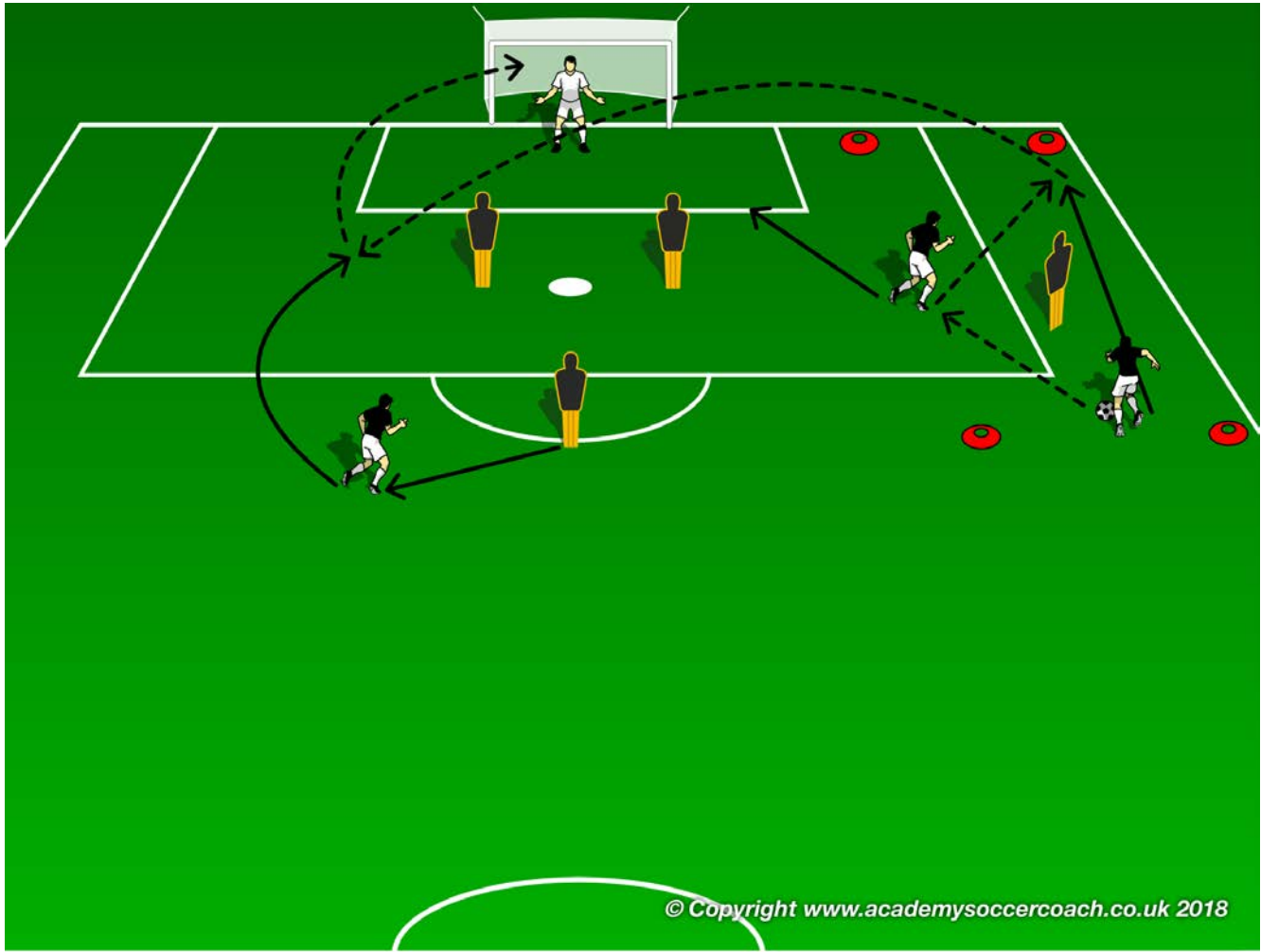
Set-up and Sequence: 3 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the picture; 1 of them is in possession on the flank, 1 is placed just out of the penalty area and the third one is placed between the air bodies, in the middle of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 4 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs, 1 center midfielder, and 1 fullback.

The player in possession on the flank dribbles forward over the air-body, while the teammates escape the air-bodies in the center backwards (1) and in between the center backs in the middle of the penalty area. The first player out of the penalty area then runs to receive a back pass (2), to shot on goal (3) out or just inside the penalty area. The third player must be ready to control a rebound of the goalkeeper. The move can be finished with 1 touch shot or with 2 touches. The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Variation: the players in the middle of the penalty area must attack the first pole and the further one attacks the second pole.

Eye on: timing of runs to receive the back pass and to attack the goal, attack the ball at high tempo, quality of the finishing pass.

Exercise 5: 3 v gk (2)



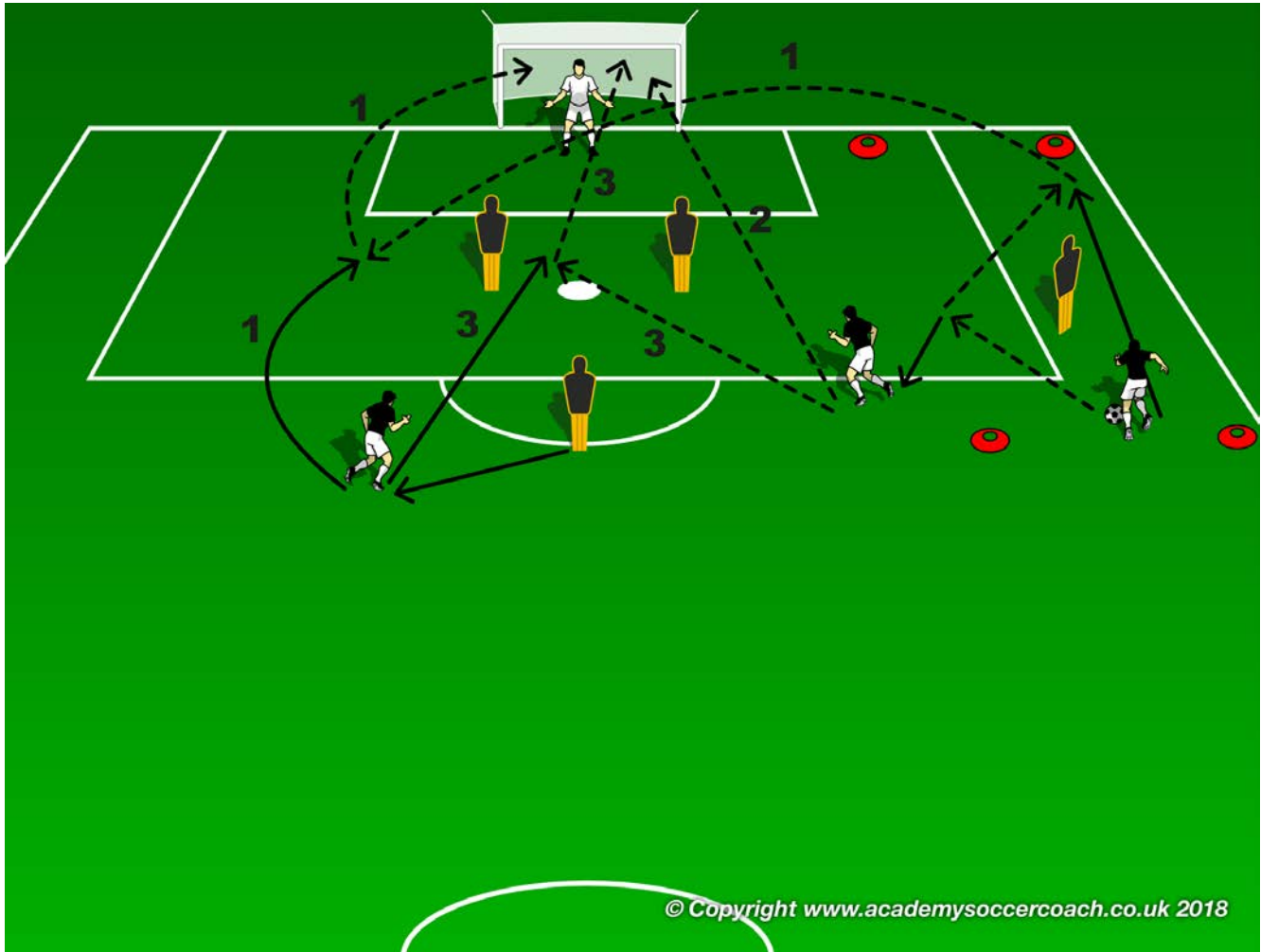
Set-up and Sequence: 3 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the picture; 1 of them is in possession inside a rectangular space on the flank, together with a teammate without the possession and a third one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 4 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs, 1 center midfielder, and 1 fullback.

The player in possession on the flank must overcome the air-body through a triangle combination play with the teammate, while the third player escapes the air-body in the center backwards. The sequence must be finished through a cross pass toward the second pole of the goal, where the center forward must shoot on the run. The support player on the flank must attack the first pole of the goal.

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Eye on: timing of runs to receive the cross passes and to attack the goal, quality of the triangle and of the cross passes.

Exercise 6: 3 v gk (3)



Set-up and Sequence: 3 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the pictures; 1 of them is in possession inside a rectangular space on the flank, together with a teammate without the possession and a third one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 4 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs, 1 center midfielder, and 1 fullback.

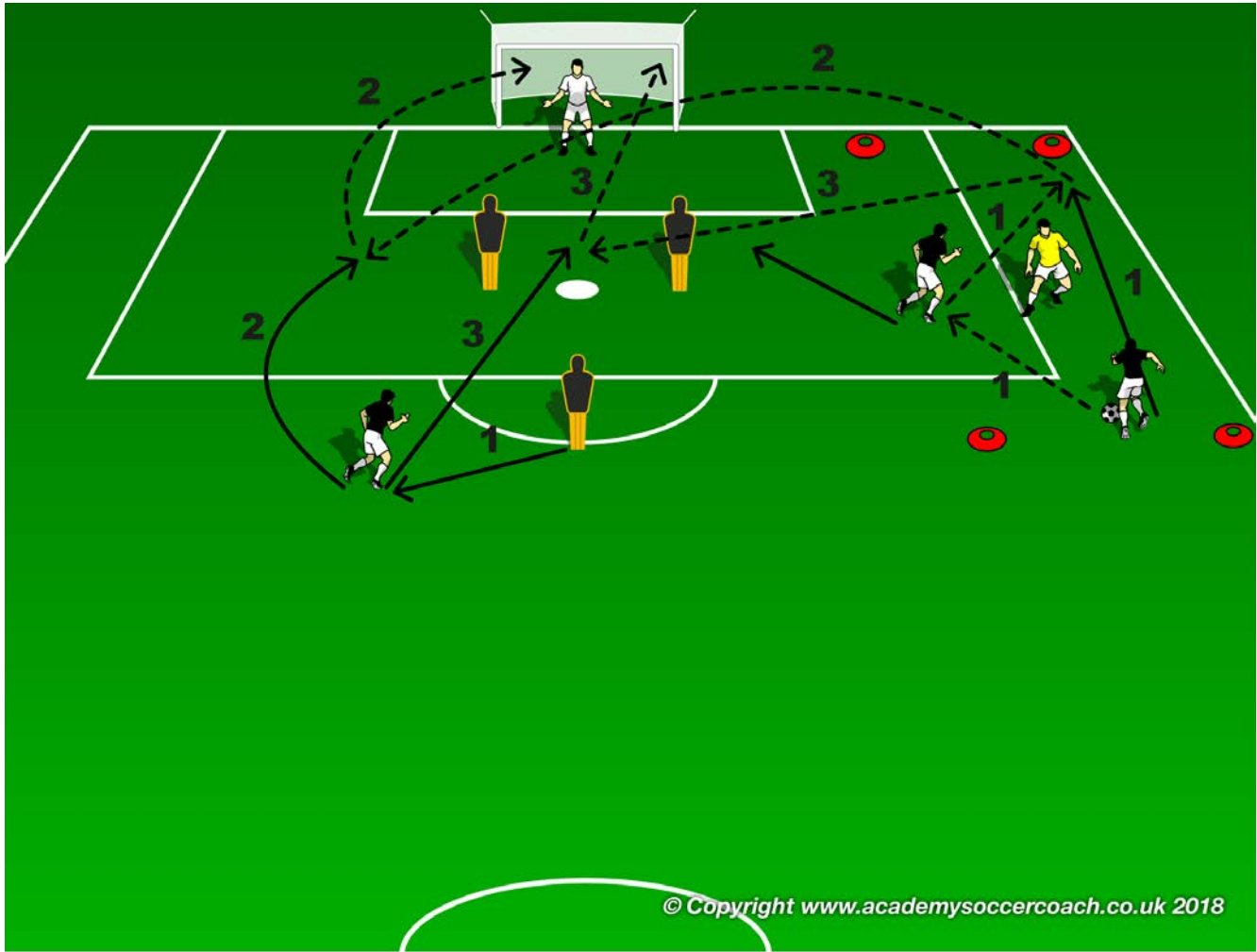
The player in possession on the flank must overcome the air-body through a triangle combination play with the teammate, while the third player escapes the air-body in the center backwards. The sequence can be finished:

- 1) Through a cross pass toward the second pole of the goal, where the center forward must shoot on the run
- 2) The support player can decide to turn and to finish directly
- 3) The support player can pass the between the air-bodies and the forward must finish on the run

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Eye on: quick decision making, timing of runs to receive the cross pass and to attack the goal, quality of the triangle and of the cross pass.

Exercise 7: 3 v 1 + gk



Set-up and Sequence: 4 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the pictures; 1 of them is in possession inside a rectangular space on the flank, together with a teammate without the possession and a third one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 3 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs and 1 center midfielder; a 2 v 1 duel is played on the flank. The player in possession on the flank must overcome the opponent through a triangle combination play with the teammate, while the third player escapes the air-body in the center backwards (1). The sequence can be finished as follow:

- 1) Through a cross pass toward the second pole of the goal where the center forward must shoot on the run (2)
- 2) Through a ground pass behind the air bodies line and toward the middle of the goal, where the center forward must shot running between the air bodies (3)

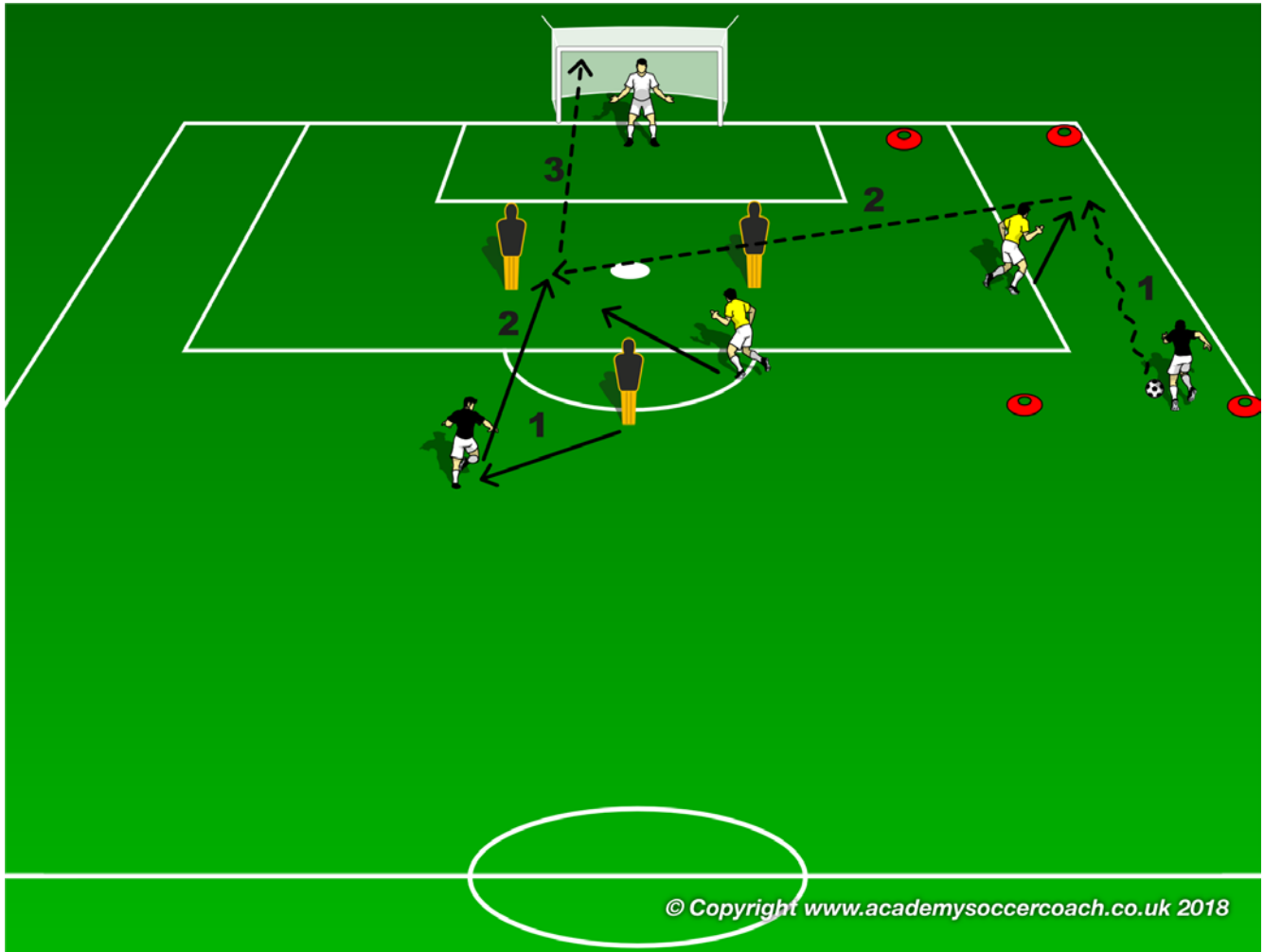
The support player on the flank must always attack the first pole of the goal.

If the defender wins the ball, he must dribble the ball out of the rectangular space on the flank.

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Eye on: attention to the development of the move, timing of runs to receive the cross pass or the ground pass and to attack the goal, quality of the triangle passing combination.

Exercise 8: 2 v 2 + gk



Set-up and Sequence: 2 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the pictures; 1 of them is in possession inside the rectangle on the flank, the other one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 3 air-bodies are placed like in the picture, as 2 center backs and 1 center midfielder. 2 defenders are full active, as second dropping back midfielder and fullback, who counter the player in possession in a 1 v 1 duel.

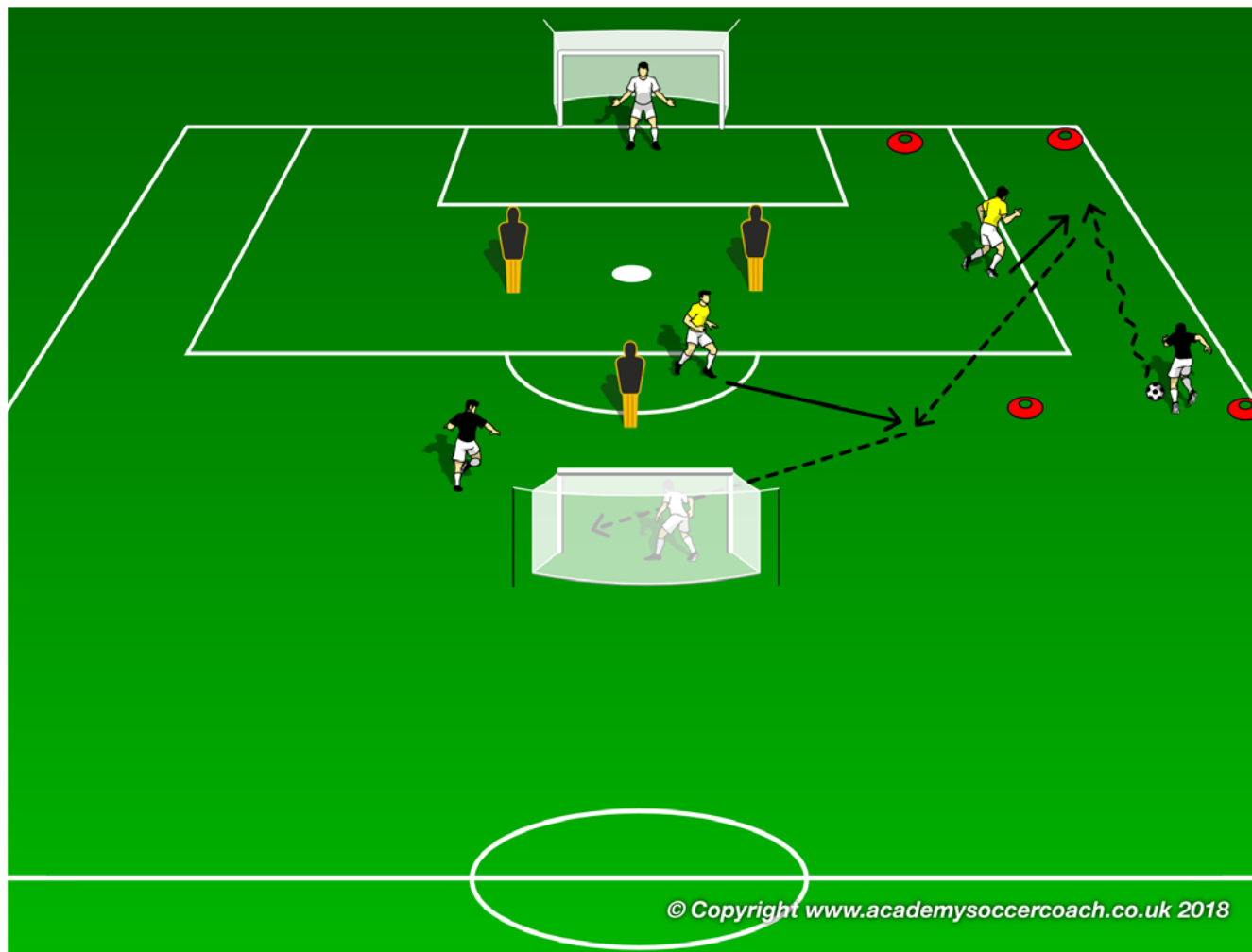
The player in possession on the flank dribbles forward winning the 1 v 1 duel, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the cross pass (2), to shoot on goal (3), between the center backs and under the full pressure of the second defender.

The cross pass can be a volley pass or a ground pass and the forward can finish with 1 or 2 touches. If the defenders win the ball, they must clean the area or play out wide to dribble out the rectangular space on the flank. The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

Variation: the center forward must run toward the first pole or the second one sideways the air-bodies.

Eye on: timing of runs to receive the cross pass, dribble saving the ball, pressure on the player in possession, closure of the spaces.

Progression: 2 v 2 + gks and counter attacks



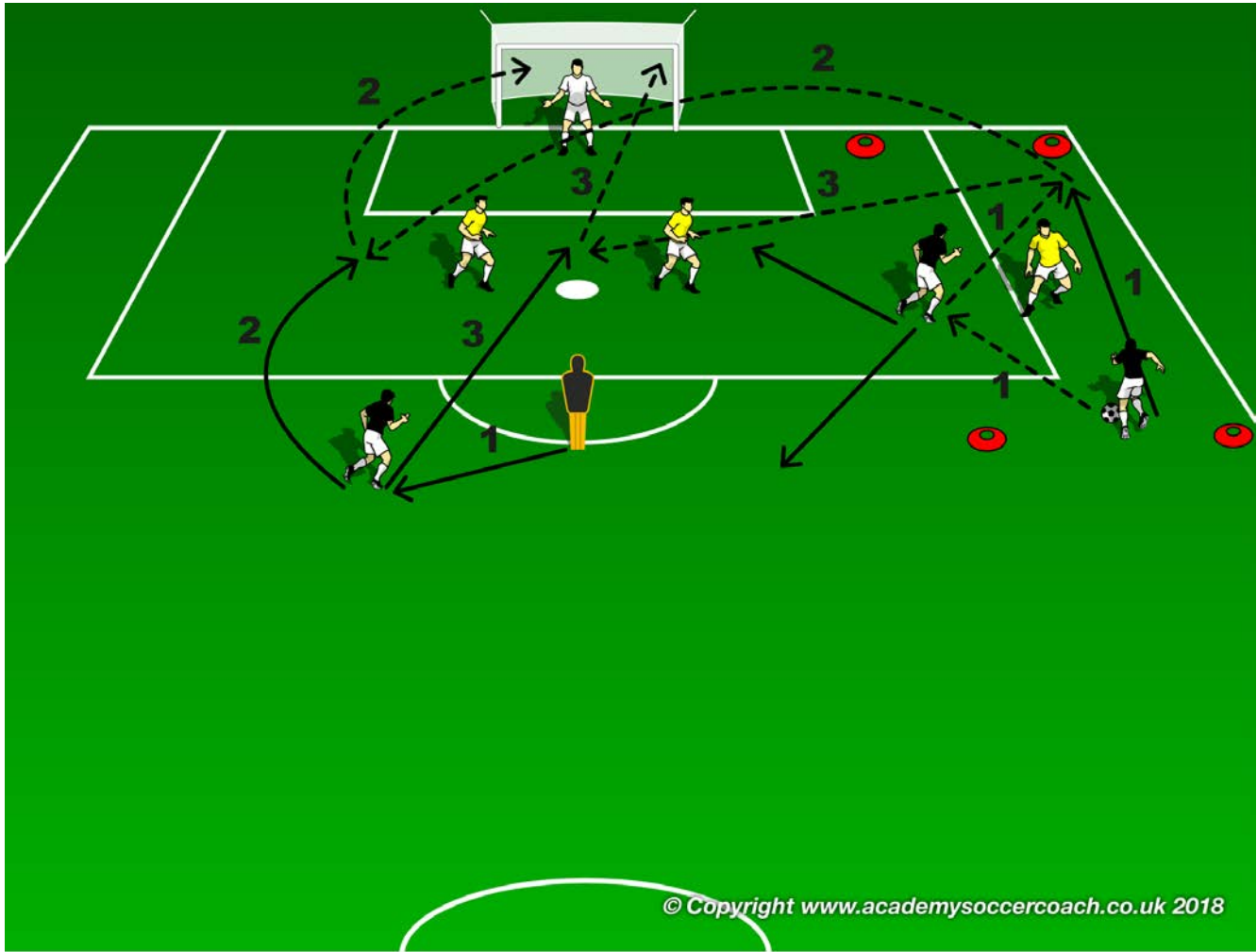
Set-up and Sequence: this is a progression of the previous exercise. If the defenders win the possession, they can counter-attack toward a second goal with goalkeeper that is placed out of the penalty area.

If the outer defender wins the ball, the second defender in the middle, and vice versa, must finish the counter attack.

Variation: the counter-attack must be finished through a combination play.

Eye on: finish with the fewest number of touches possible, as the ball is won back.

Exercise 9: 3 v 3 + gk



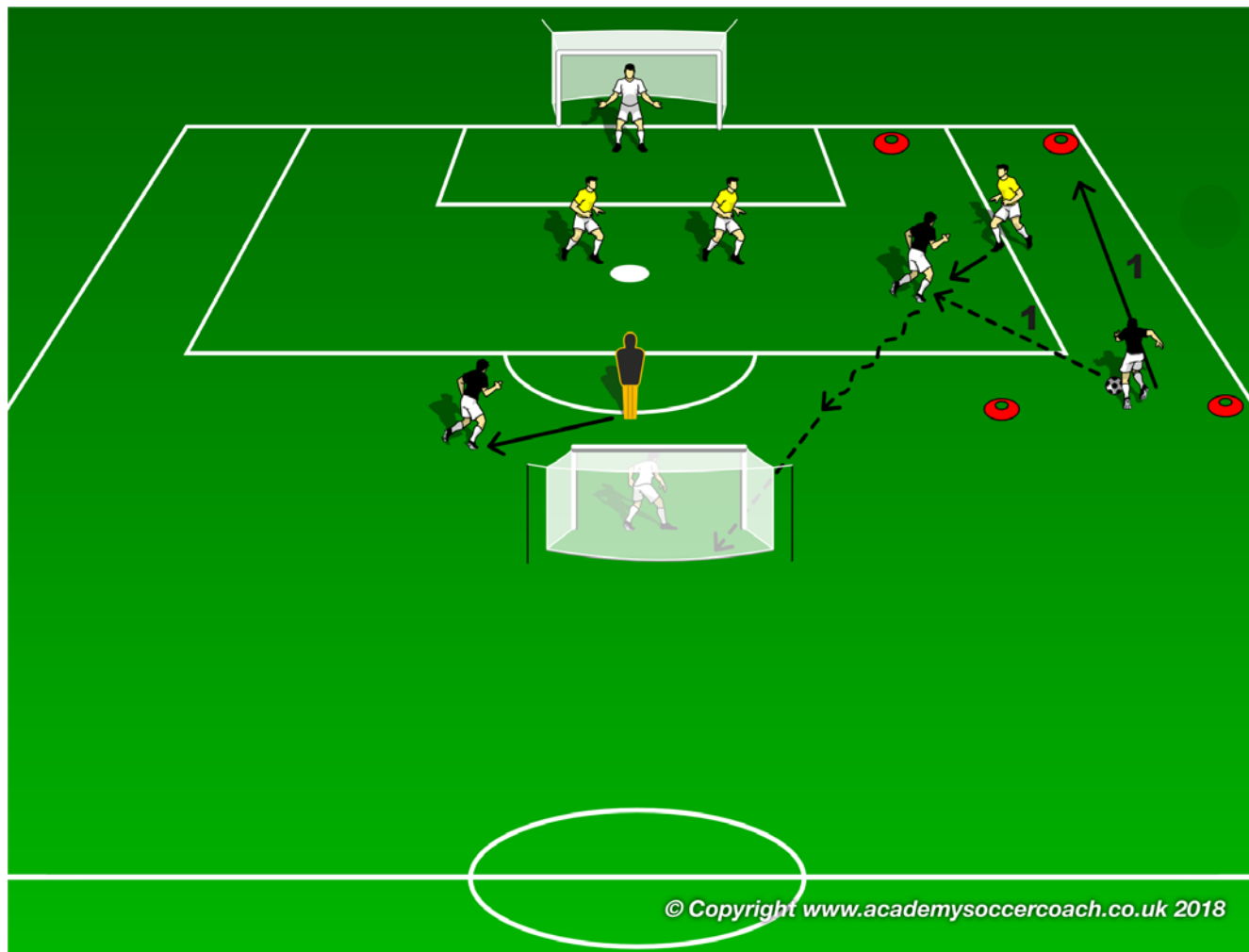
Set-up and Sequence: 6 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the pictures. 2 attacking players are placed inside the rectangle on the flank (1 of them in possession) against 1 defender: the third one is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 2 center backs are playing in the middle of the penalty area. 1 air-body is place just out of the penalty area as a center midfielder.

The player in possession on the flank must overcome the opponent through a triangle combination play with the teammate, while the third player escapes the air-body in the center backwards (1). The sequence can be finished as follow:

- 1) Through a cross pass toward the second pole of the goal, where the center forward must shoot on the run (2), escaping the center backs sideways
- 2) Through a ground pass behind the center backs line and between them and the goalkeeper, where the center forward must shoot on the run between them (3)

The support player on the flank must attack the first pole of the goal, if the other teammate attacks the further one; or he must drop back in a support position, if the teammate attacks the center of the goal.

Progression: 3 v 3 + gks and counter attacks



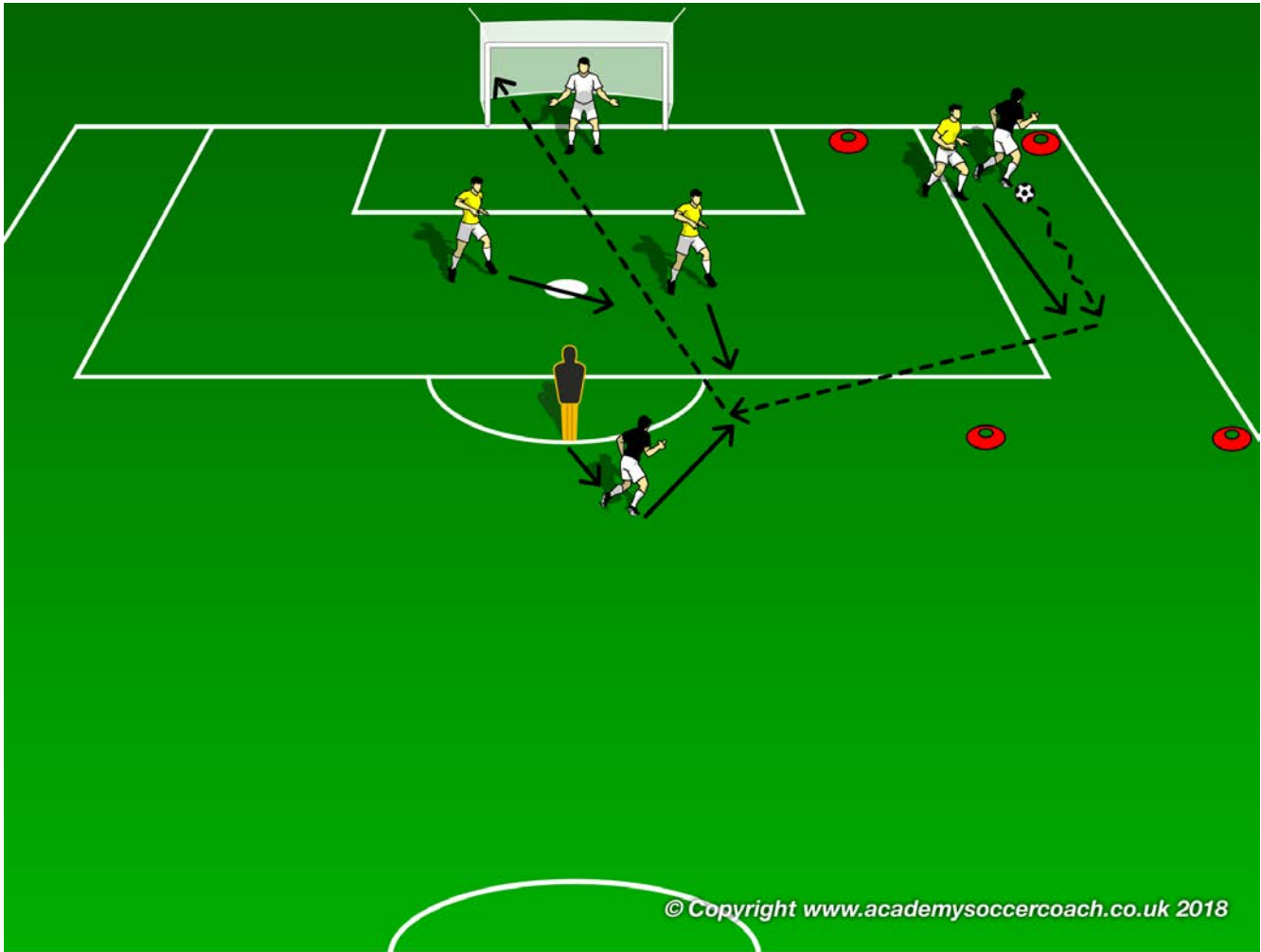
Set-up and Sequence: this is a progression of the previous exercise. If the defenders win the possession, they can counter attack toward a second goal with goalkeeper who is placed out of the penalty area.

If the outer defender wins the ball, the second or third defenders in the middle, and vice versa, must finish the counter-attack.

Variation: the counter-attack must be finished through a combination play.

Eye on: finish with the fewest number of touches possible, as the ball is won back.

Exercise 10: 2 v 3 + gk (1)



Set-up and Sequence: 5 players are placed in a space just a little bigger than the penalty area, as in the pictures; 1 of them is in possession inside the rectangular space on the flank against 1 opponent. The second forward is placed just out of the penalty area. 1 goalkeeper is saving the regular goal. 2 center backs are saving the middle of the penalty area; 1 air-body is placed out of it as a center midfielder. The forwards are outnumbered 2 v 3. The player in possession on the goal line and wide along the flank dribbles backward to overcome the direct opponent, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the back pass and to shoot on goal out of the penalty area, anticipating the pressure of the defenders.

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

If the defenders win the possession, they must play out along the wide rectangular area.

Variation:

- 1) The center forward must run toward the first pole or the second one, sideways the defenders
- 2) The outer defender can run inside the penalty area to counter the shot, creating a 3 v 1 duel

Eye on: save the possession under pressure, timing of runs to receive the back pass, quality of dribble and pass, pressure to recover the ball, to exploit the numerical advantage.

Exercise 11: 2 v 3 + gk (2)



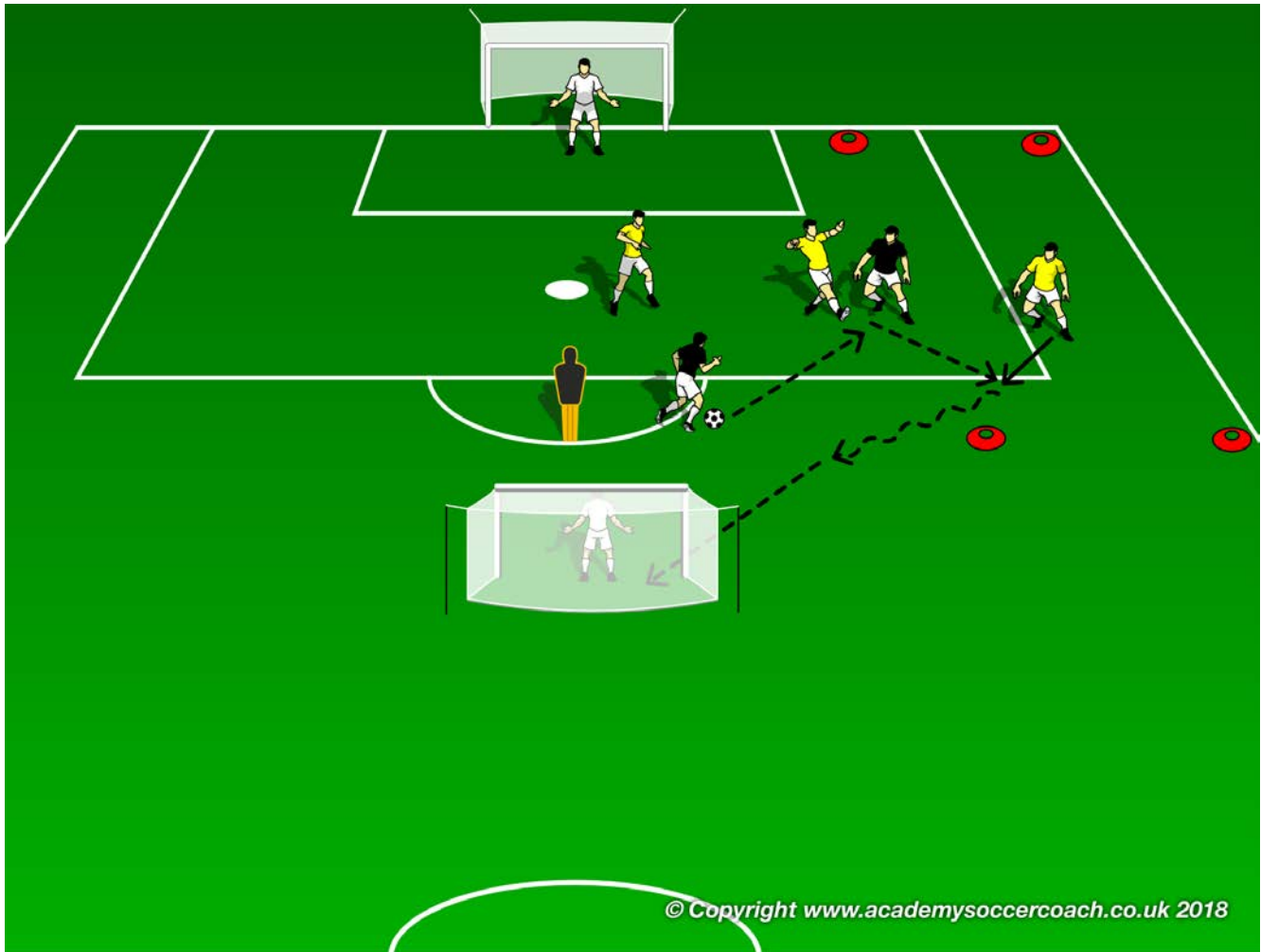
Set-up and Sequence: this practice is a progression of the previous exercise.

The player in possession on the goal line and wide along the flank dribbles backward to overcome the direct opponent, while the teammate escapes the second air-body in the center backwards (1). The center forward then runs to receive the back pass (2) and to combine with the wide teammate (3), who runs inside to shot on goal (4), anticipating the pressure of the defenders.

The practice must be performed along both the flanks.

If the defenders win the possession, they must play out along the wide rectangular area.

Eye on: save the possession under pressure, timing of runs to receive the back pass, quick combination play, quality of dribble and pass, pressure to recover the ball to exploit the numerical advantage.

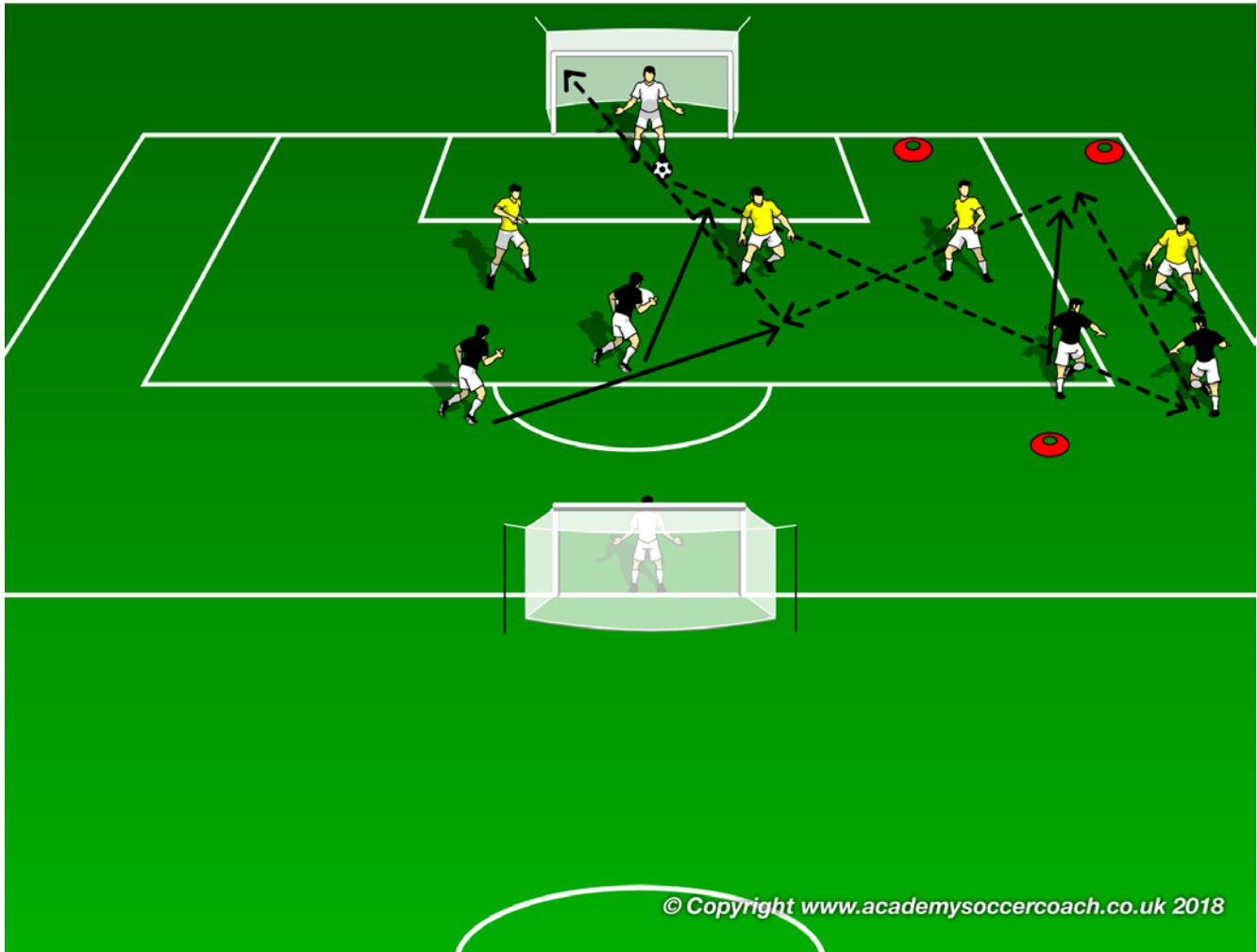


Variation: a second goal is added to the set-up of the previous exercise. If the defenders win the possession, they must counter-attack toward the opposition goal.

If the outer defender wins the ball, the other 2 in the middle, and vice versa, must finish the counter attack.

Eye on: finish with the fewest number of touches possible, as the ball is won back.

Exercise 12: 4 v 4 + gks



Set-up and Sequence: 2 teams of 5 players each (goalkeepers are included) are placed inside a third of a regular field. 1 outer rectangular area is marked along the flank. 1 goal is added as in the picture.

A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the outer area and another 2 v 2 duel is played in the center.

The goalkeeper of the defending team kicks the ball toward the wide area where the first 2 v 2 duel is played to create a chance to play a cross pass (volley or ground), or a back pass, toward the middle of the penalty area. The attackers look to make a pass behind the defenders.

The 2 v 2 duel without the ball in the middle is always active, as the forwards must escape the markers, looking for a space to receive and to finish, and the defenders must mark the opponents and save the goal space.

The move should be finished through a back pass or a pass between the defenders' line and the goalkeeper. The forwards are asked to attack the goal and to be placed in a support position, to win the second times of the ball or potential rebounds.

The sequence must be performed through and along both the sides of the field.



If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack toward the opposition goal.

Variations:

- 1) The goalkeeper can pass the ball to the yellow defenders to create a 4 v 4 duel from the back to score in the regular added goal
- 2) If the wide defenders win the ball, the couple of players in the middle, and vice versa, must finish the move

Eye on: break through the defenders' line, alternated runs of the forwards to finish, counter-attack with the fewer number of touches possible as the ball is won back.

Exercise 13: 4 v 4 + 1 and gks (1)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 teams of 5 players each (goalkeepers are included) are placed inside a third of a regular field. 1 neutral player is free to move all around the set-up. 1 outer rectangular area is marked along the flank. 1 goal is added as in the picture.

A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the outer area and another 2 v 2 duel is played in the center.

The goalkeeper of the defending team kicks the ball toward the neutral player, who has 4 options to start the sequence:

- 1) Pass wide, where a 2 v 2 duel is played to create a chance for a cross pass (volley or ground) or a back pass toward the middle of the penalty area. The attackers should look for a through pass behind the defenders.
- 2) Pass toward the center, where a 2 v 2 duel is played to shoot quickly; the wide area is then used as support zone for the attacking team and as playing out area for the defending team, in case of recovery of the ball.



- 3) Pass the ball back to the yellow center backs to build up with the goalkeeper, creating a 3 v 2 duel to attack, using the wide players as support.
- 4) Play wide back to the yellow defenders, playing out the rectangular area and crossing the ball toward the opposition goal to finish.

If the defending team wins the possession, wherever it is recovered and whoever is the recovering player, a 4 v 4 + 1 duel is played to counter-attack.

The sequence must be performed through and along both the sides of the field.

Eye on: break through the defenders' line to finish or to build up to score, be clever to understand the sequence after the first neutral player touch, counter-attack with the fewest number of passes possible.

Exercise 14: 4 v 4 + 1 and gks (2)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 teams of 5 players each (goalkeepers are included) are placed inside a third of a regular field. 1 neutral player is placed as center forward among the defenders. 1 outer rectangular area is marked along the flank. 1 goal is added as in the picture. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the outer area and another 2 + 1 v 2 duel is played in the center. The goalkeeper of the defending team kicks the ball toward the black players on the flank. The goal for the attacking team is to play to the free player, who must save the possession outnumbered and help the finishing phase that can be performed as follows:

- 1) Through a back pass to the first incoming player, to shoot on goal (1)
- 2) The first receiver after the back pass must play forward to the second teammate, who receives between the defenders, before shooting on goal (2)

If the defenders win the ball, they can counter-attack together with the neutral player to finish as soon as possible. The sequence must be performed through and along both the sides of the field.

Variations: the neutral player must be the one who shoots on goal after a combination play.

Eye on: overload an area saving the possession to free a teammate for finishing, quick ball distribution.

Exercise 15: 4 v 4 + 1 and gks (3)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 teams of 5 players each (goalkeepers are included) are placed inside a third of a regular pitch. 1 neutral player is placed in the middle among the team shapes. 1 goal is added as in the picture. A 4 v 4 + 1 duel is played.

The coach decides which team is in possession (the black one in the picture) and the attacking and defending directions of play. The neutral player is the center forward for the attacking team and the one who must finish and score.

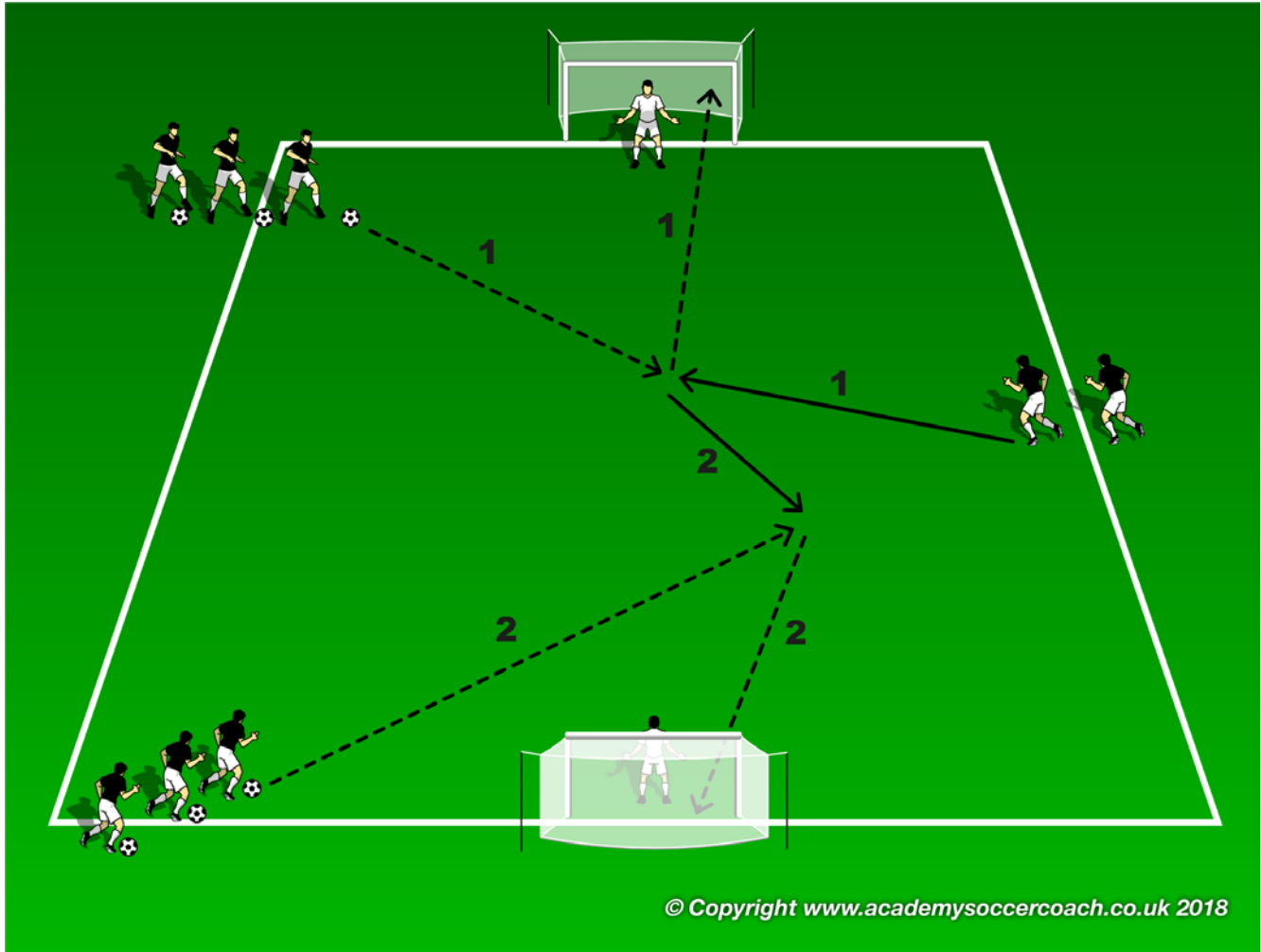
If the defenders win the ball, they can counter-attack together with the neutral player to finish as soon as possible; all the players, and the red one, too, can shoot on goal.

Variations: the neutral player supports the new defending team, if the possession is lost after the first phase of the exercise.

Eye on: quick ball distribution and finishing phase.

Shooting and finishing sequences (all players rotate clockwise their positions, when the sequences end).

Exercise 16: 1 touch and 2 touches shots (1)



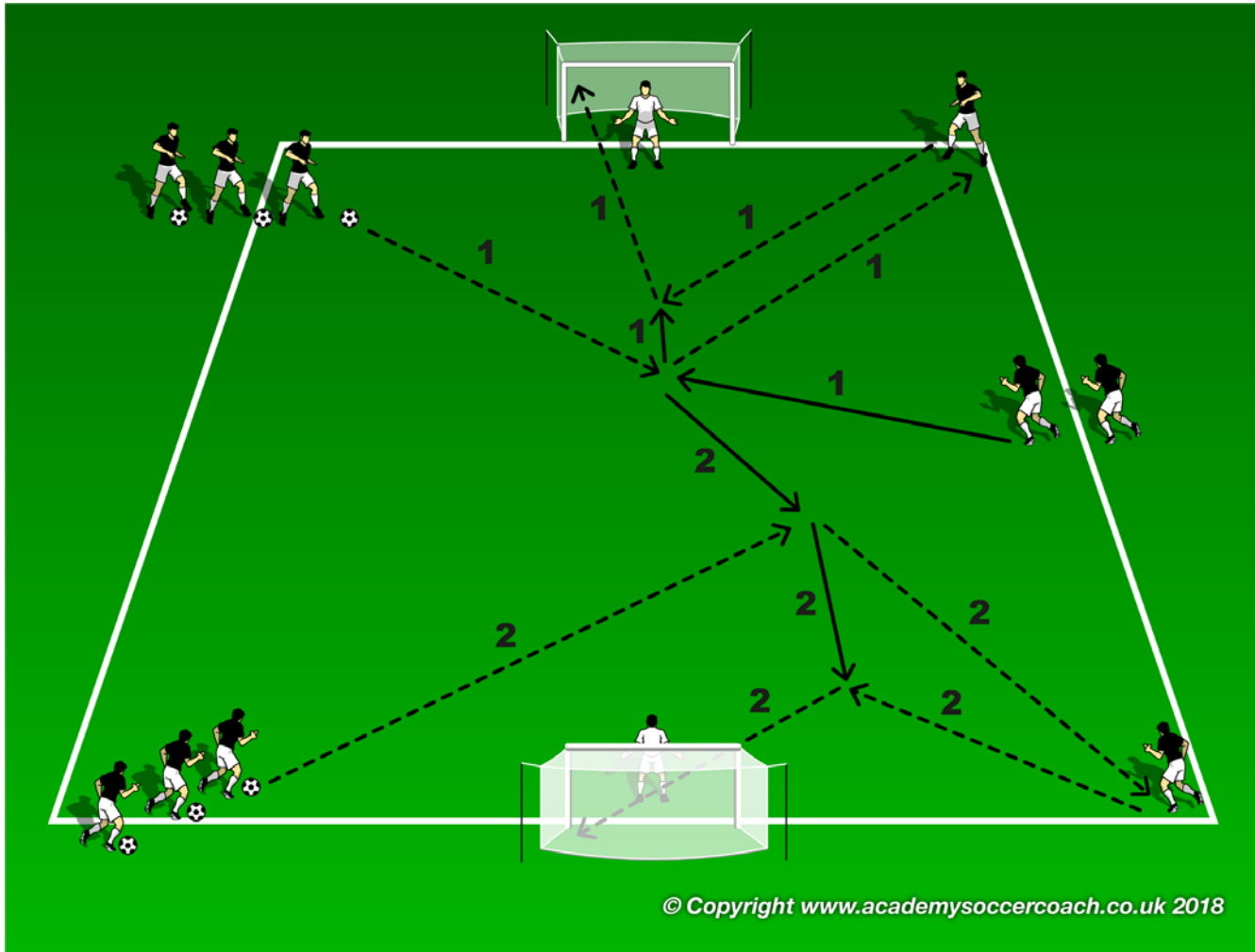
Set-up and Sequence: 1 rectangular area is marked and 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides. 3 groups of players are placed as in the picture: 2 groups on the corners of 1 side and the third one in the middle of the longer opposite side. The players of the third group are those who shoot on goal.

The first sequence (1) requires the player to run toward the passing direction from the upper cone to shoot with 1 touch, with the nearest foot to the ball. In the second sequence (2), the player is asked to turn and to control the ball that is passed from the lower corner before shooting. The sequences must be performed on both the sides, to allow the players to shoot with both feet.

Variation: pass the ball to allow headers as finishing touches.

Eye on: good body shape on the ball to control the pass and to shot.

Exercise 17: 1 touch and 2 touches shots (2)



Set-up and Sequence: this is a variation of the previous practice. 3 groups of players are placed as in the picture: 2 groups on the corners of 1 side and the third one in the middle of the longer opposite side. The players of the third group are those who shoot on goal. 2 more players are on the corners of the same side of the third group.

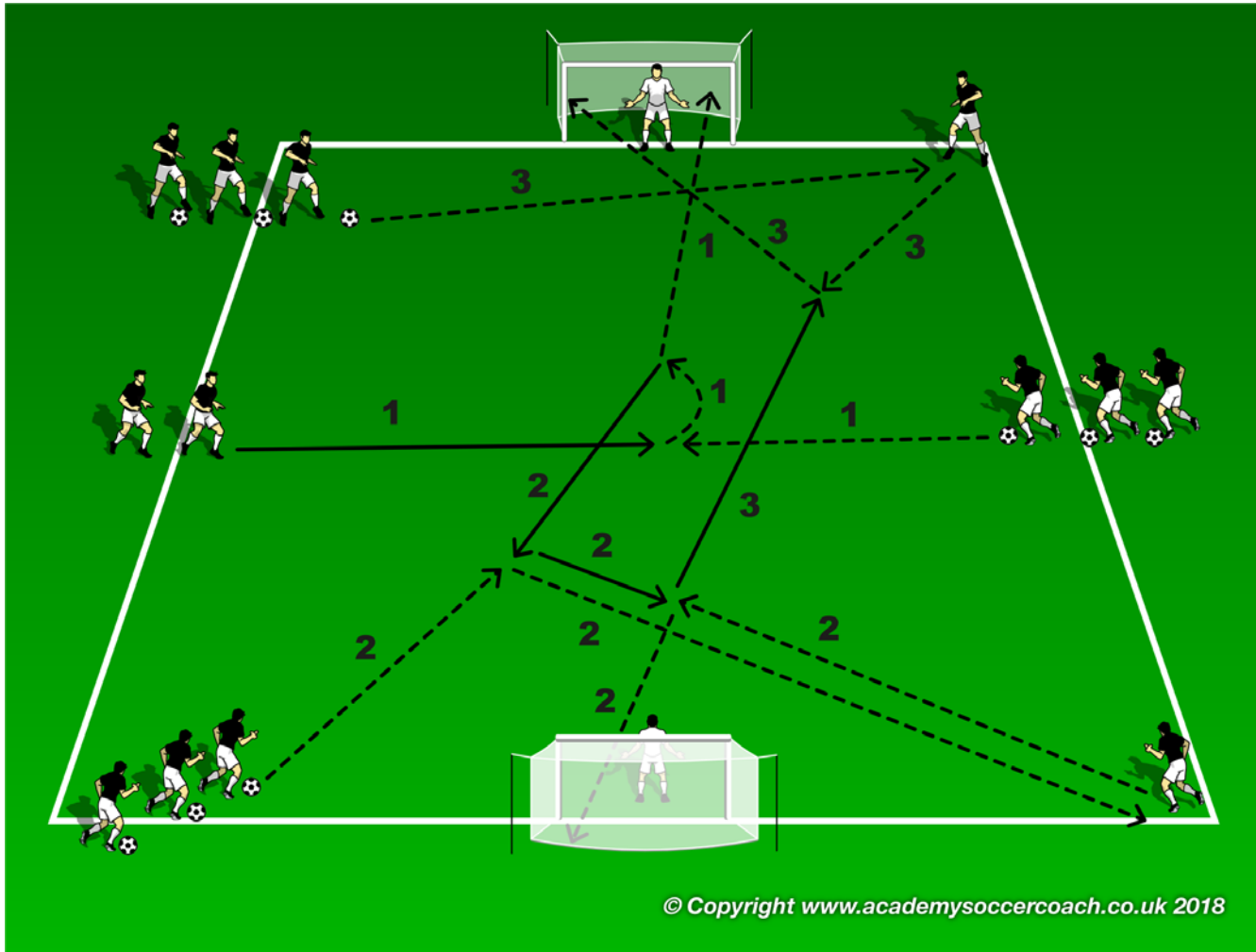
The first sequence (1) requires the player to run toward the passing direction from the upper cone. He receives and plays a 1 touch wall pass combination with the opposite teammate, before shooting with the nearest foot to the ball. In the second sequence (2) the player is asked to turn, control the ball that is passed from the lower corner and to play a 1 - 2 single touch triangle combination with the opposite teammate, before shooting after the ball control.

The sequences must be performed on both the sides, to allow the players to shoot with both feet.

Variation: play back passes to allow headers as finishing touches.

Eye on: good body shape on the ball to control, 1 touch passing combinations, and shots with 1 or 2 touches.

Exercise 18: Triple shooting sequence

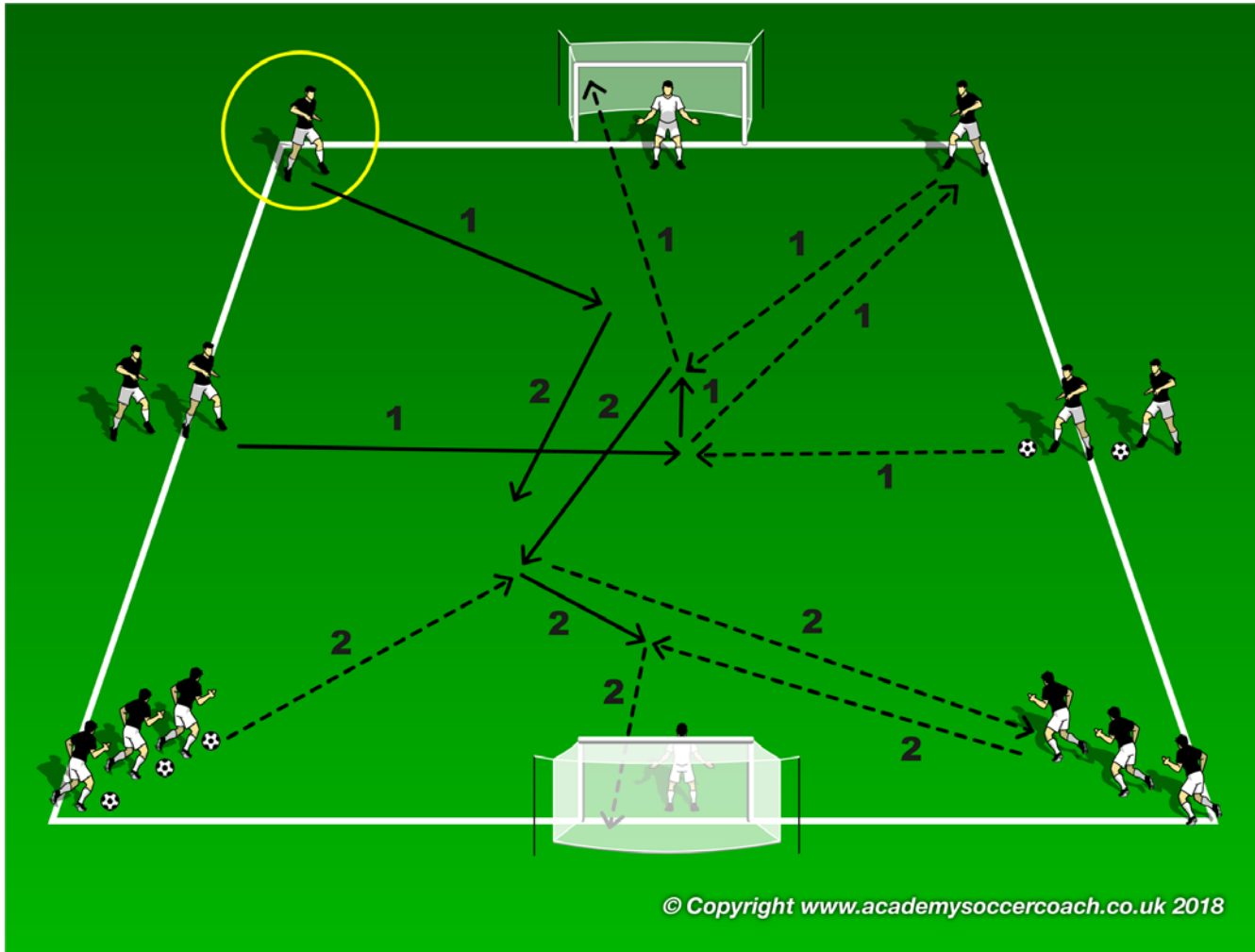


Set-up and Sequence: 1 rectangular area is marked and 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides. 3 groups of players in possession are placed as in the picture: 2 groups on the corners of 1 side and the third one in the middle of the longer opposite sideline. 2 more players are on the corners of the same side of the third group. The shooting players start from the middle of the left line of the set-up. **The first sequence (1)** requires the player to run toward the passing direction from the opposite side and along the supposed middle line of the set up. He receives, controls the ball on the left (or on the right) before shooting with the other foot. **In the second sequence (2)**, the player is asked to turn, to receive a pass from one side and switch the play toward the opposite corner, to play a single touch wall passing combination with the opposite teammate, before shooting on goal with the nearest foot to the ball. **The third sequence (3)** asks the player to change the goal again and to shoot with 1 touch toward the second pole of the goal. The sequences must be performed on both the sides to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Variation: play back passes to allow headers as finishing touches.

Eye on: good body shape on the ball to control, to turn without losing the ball, to play passing combinations and to shoot.

Exercise 19: 1 touch and 2 touches shots under opposition pressure

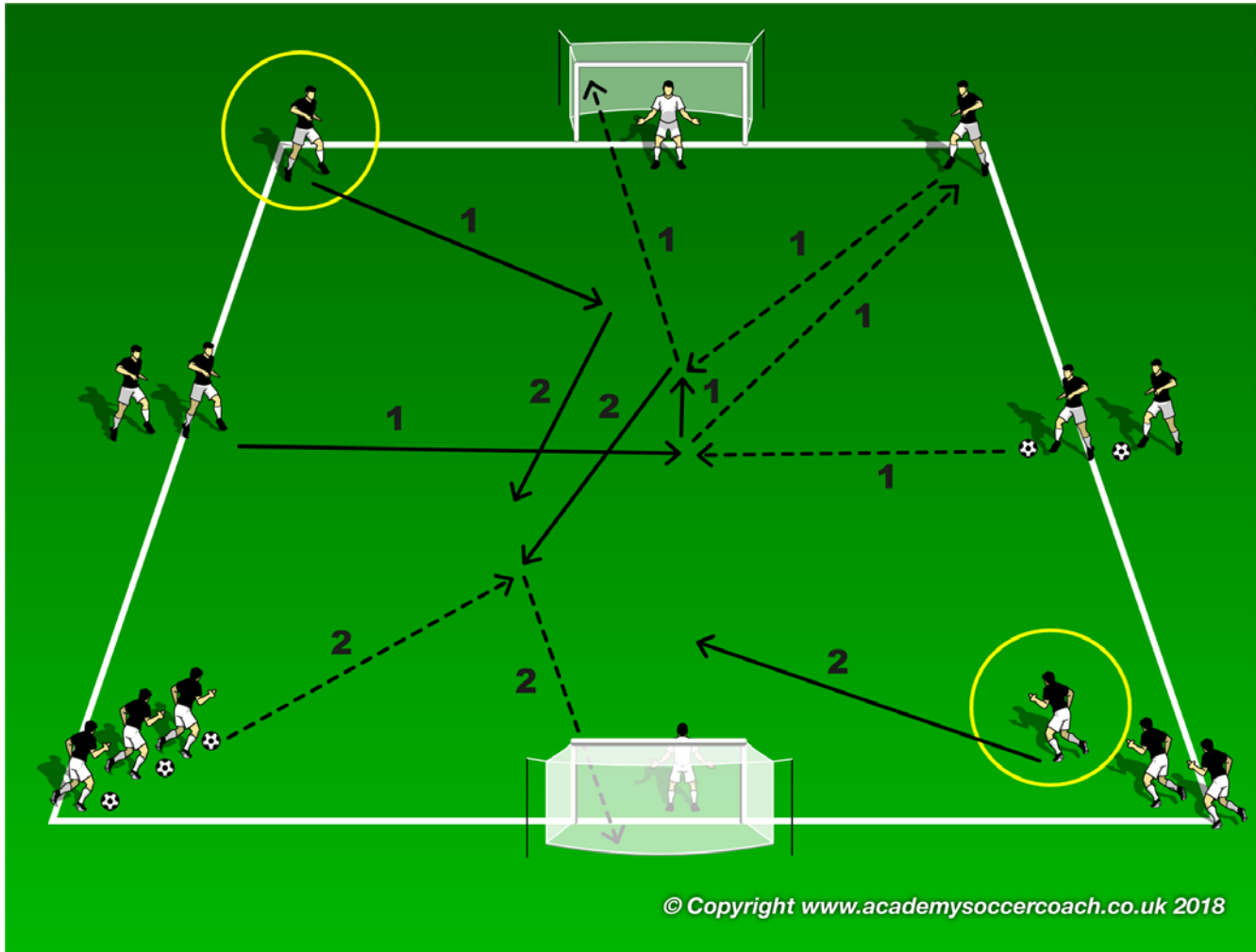


Set-up and Sequence: 1 rectangular area is marked and 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides. 2 groups of players in possession are placed as in the picture: 1 group on the lower left corner and the second one in the middle of the longer opposite side. 2 more players are on the corners of the upper shorter side. The shooting players start from the middle of the left line of the set-up. Another group of players is placed on the right lower corner, as support for the second sequence. **The first sequence (1)** requires the player to run toward the passing direction from the opposite side and along the supposed middle line of the set up. He receives, controls the ball on the left before choosing a teammate to play a wall passing combination with (the right one in the picture), before shooting with the other foot. The other player on the upper corner becomes defender. **In the second sequence (2)** the player is asked to turn, to receive a pass from one side and switch the play toward the opposite corner, to play a single touch wall passing combination with the opposite teammate, before shooting on goal with the nearest foot to the ball. He is always under the full pressure of the defender. If the defender wins the ball, he can shoot toward the opposite goal. The sequences must be performed on both the sides, to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Variation: play back passes to allow headers as finishing touches.

Eye on: good body shape on the ball to control, to play passing combinations and to shoot under pressure. Counter the opponent to win the ball, quick player transitions.

Exercise 20: 1 touch shots under opposition pressure



Set-up and Sequence: this is a variation of the previous practice. 2 groups of players in possession are placed as in the picture: 1 group on the lower left corner and the second one in the middle of the longer opposite side. 2 more players are on the corners of the upper shorter side. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides. The shooting players start from the middle of the left line of the set-up. Another group of players is placed on the right lower corner, who will be defenders during the second sequence.

The first sequence (1) requires the player to run toward the passing direction from the opposite side and along the supposed middle line of the set up; he receives, controls the ball on the left before choosing teammate to play a wall passing combination with (the right one in the picture), before shooting with the other foot. The other player on the upper corner becomes defender.

In the second sequence (2) the player is asked to turn, to receive a pass from one side and switch the side toward the opposite corner to play a single touch wall passing combination with the opposite teammate, before shooting on goal with the nearest foot to the ball. He is always under the full pressure of the first defender since the beginning of this phase; a second defender runs toward him from the opposite corner to double the mark on him.

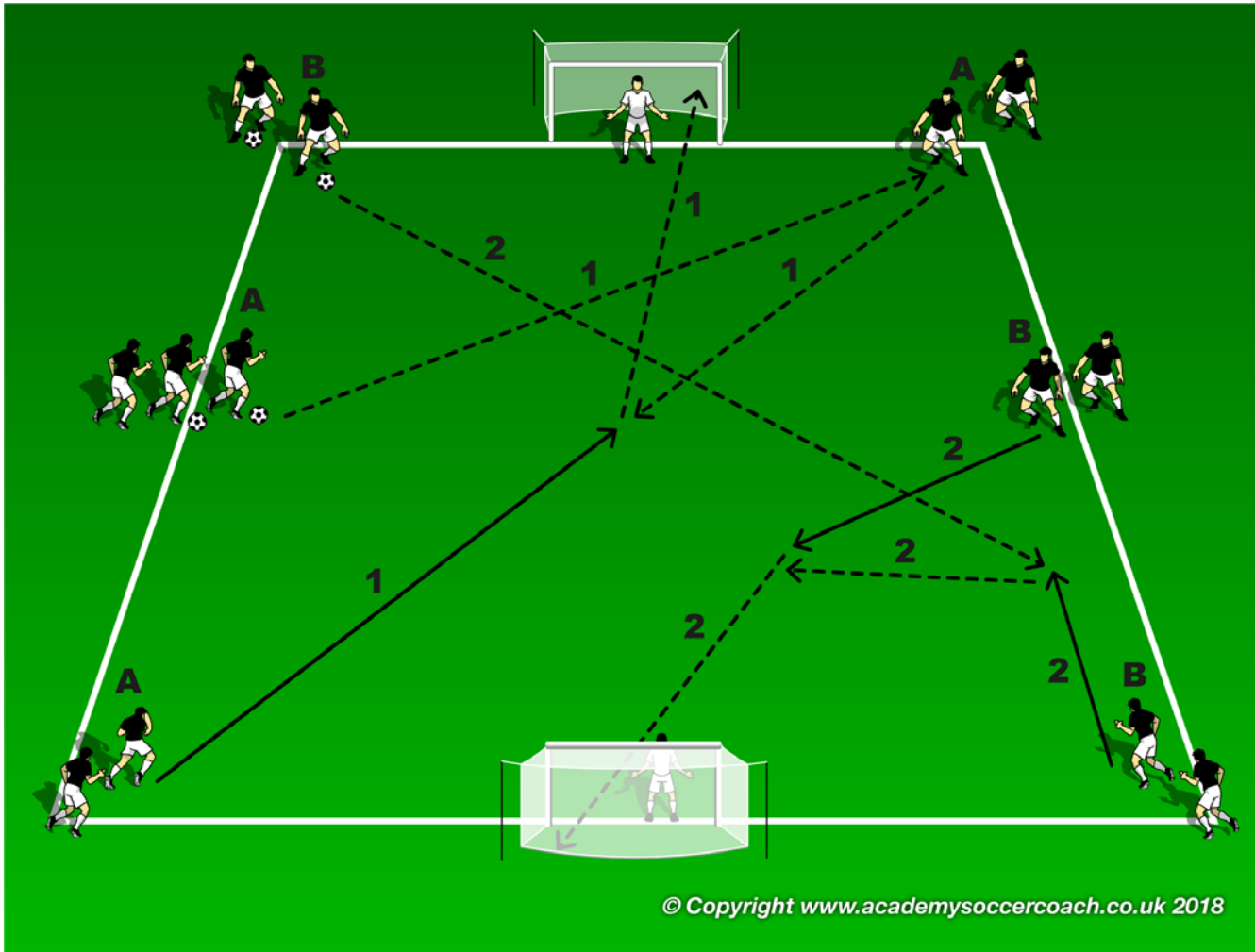
If the defenders win the ball, they can shoot toward the opposite goal, depending on the sequence.

The sequences must be performed on both the sides to allow the players to shoot with both feet.

Variation: play back passes to allow headers as finishing touches.

Eye on: good body shape on the ball to control, to play passing combinations and to shoot under pressure, quick finishing to avoid the double mark. Counter the opponent to win the ball, quick player transitions.

Exercise 21: 1 touch and 3rd man simultaneous shooting at speed



Set-up and Sequence: the letters A and B indicate 2 groups of players. The players in possession in group A are placed in the middle of the longer left side and those of the group are placed on the upper left corner. The other players of the group A are placed on the left lower and right upper corners; the rest of the group B is on the lower right corner and in the middle of the right side. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides of the set-up.

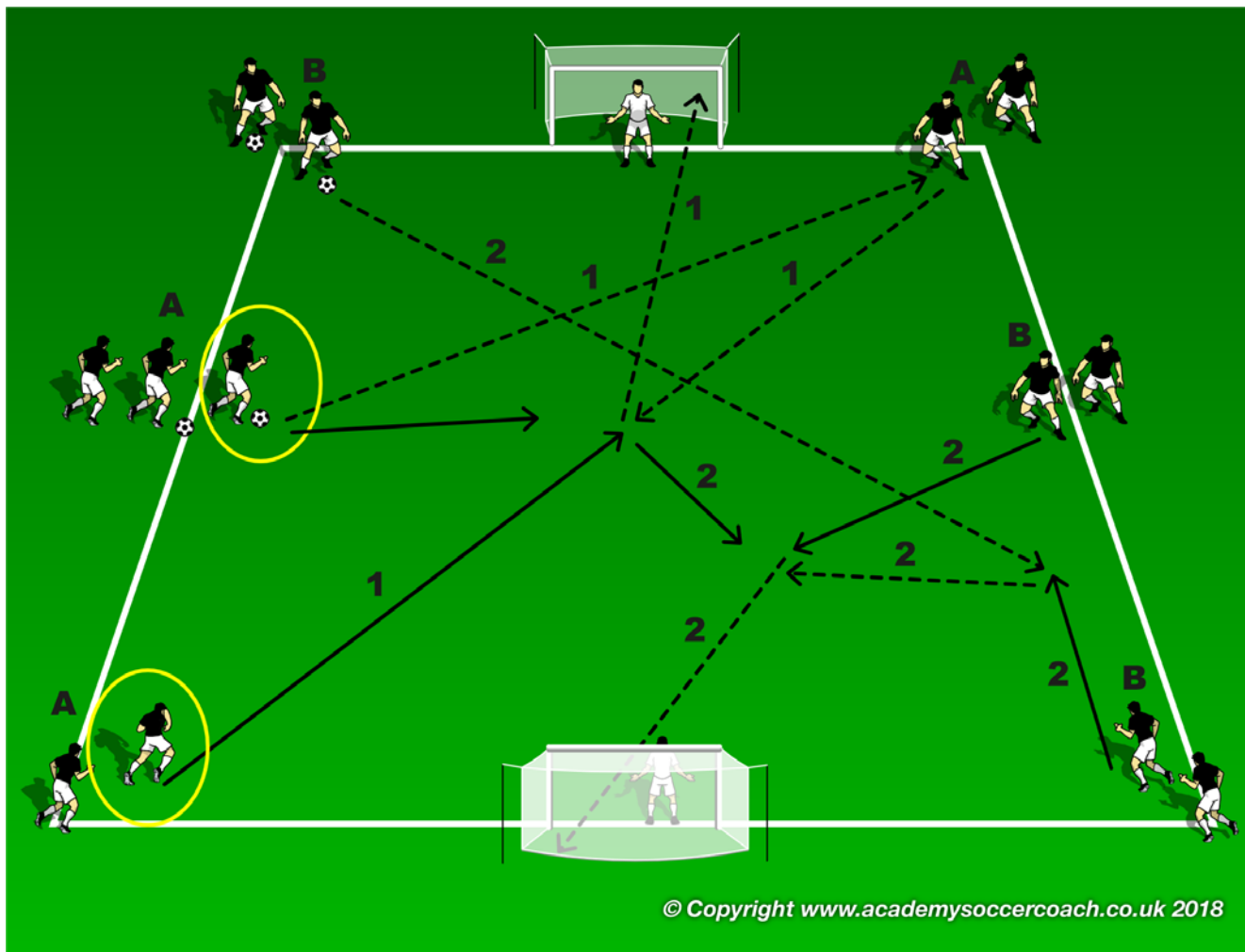
Group A (1): the first player in possession passes to the teammate on the right upper cone, who receives and he passes back on the of the 3rd man, who is running from the lower left corner to finish with 1 touch shot.

Group B (2): the first player in possession passes to the opposite corner, from where a teammate is running forward to receive and to pass sideways for the third man, who finishes with 1 touch shot.

The sequences must be performed on both the sides, to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Eye on: 1 touch combination, timing of runs without the ball and of passes.

Exercise 22: 1 touch and 3rd man simultaneous shooting at speed under pressure



Set-up and Sequence: the letters A and B in the picture indicates 2 groups of players. The players in possession in group A are placed in the middle of the longer left side and those of the group B are placed on the upper left corner. The other players of the group A are placed on the left lower and right upper corners; the rest of the group B is on the lower right corner and in the middle of the right side. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides.

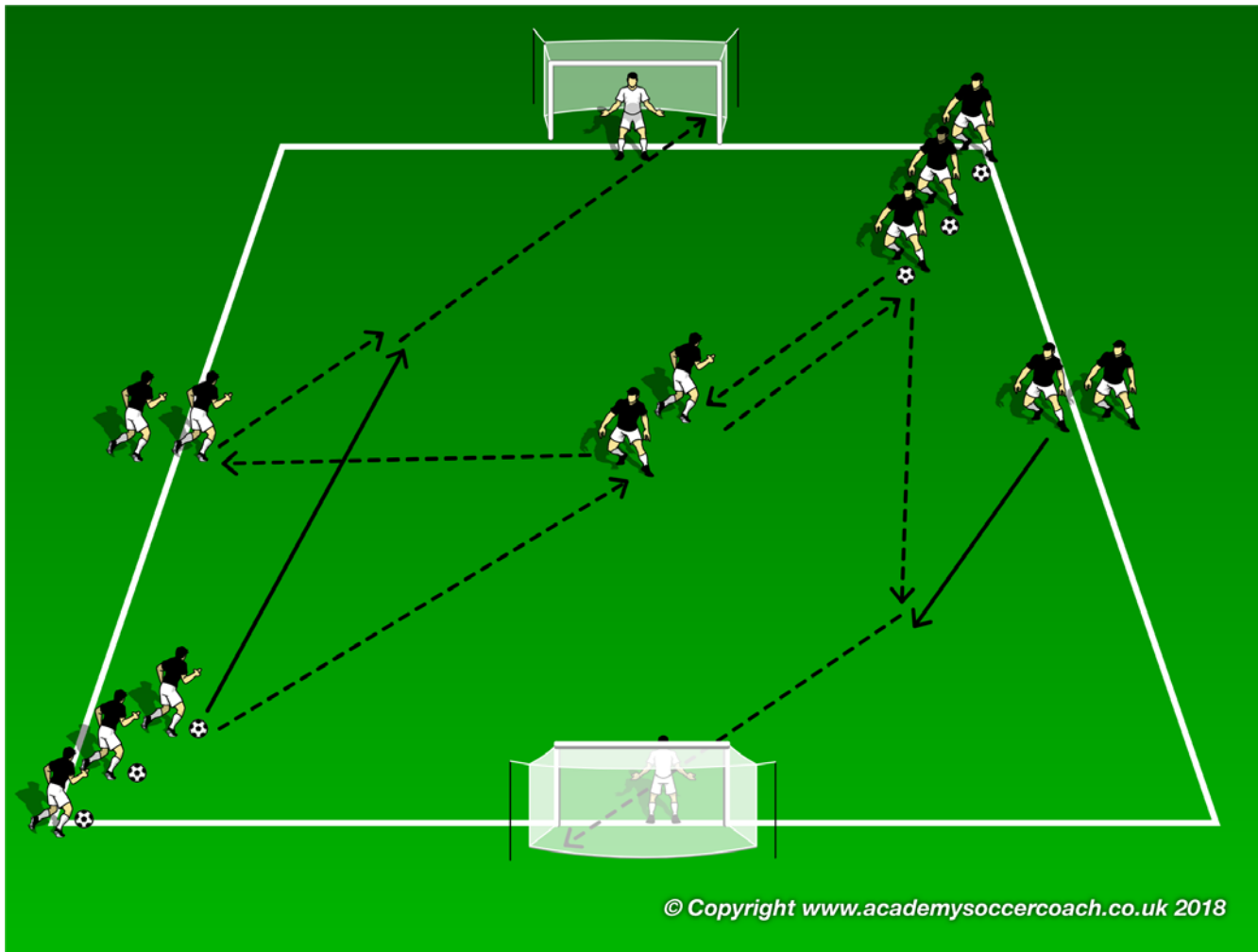
Group A (1): the first player in possession passes to the teammate on the right upper cone, who receives and he passes back on the run of the 3rd man, who is moving from the lower left corner to finish with 1 touch shot, under the sideways pressure of the first player in possession before.

Group B (2): the first player in possession passes to the opposite corner from where a teammate is running forward to receive and to pass sideways for the third man, who finishes with a 1 touch shot under the pressure of the prior shooting player.

The sequences must be performed on both the sides, to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Eye on: 1 touch combination, timing of runs without the ball and of passes, pressure to counter the finishing phase.

Exercise 23: 1 touch and 3rd man simultaneous shooting at speed after inside runs



Set-up and Sequence: 2 groups of players in possession are placed on the upper right corner and on the left lower corner. The other players are placed in the middle of the sidelines and 2 more are placed in the middle of the set up. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides.

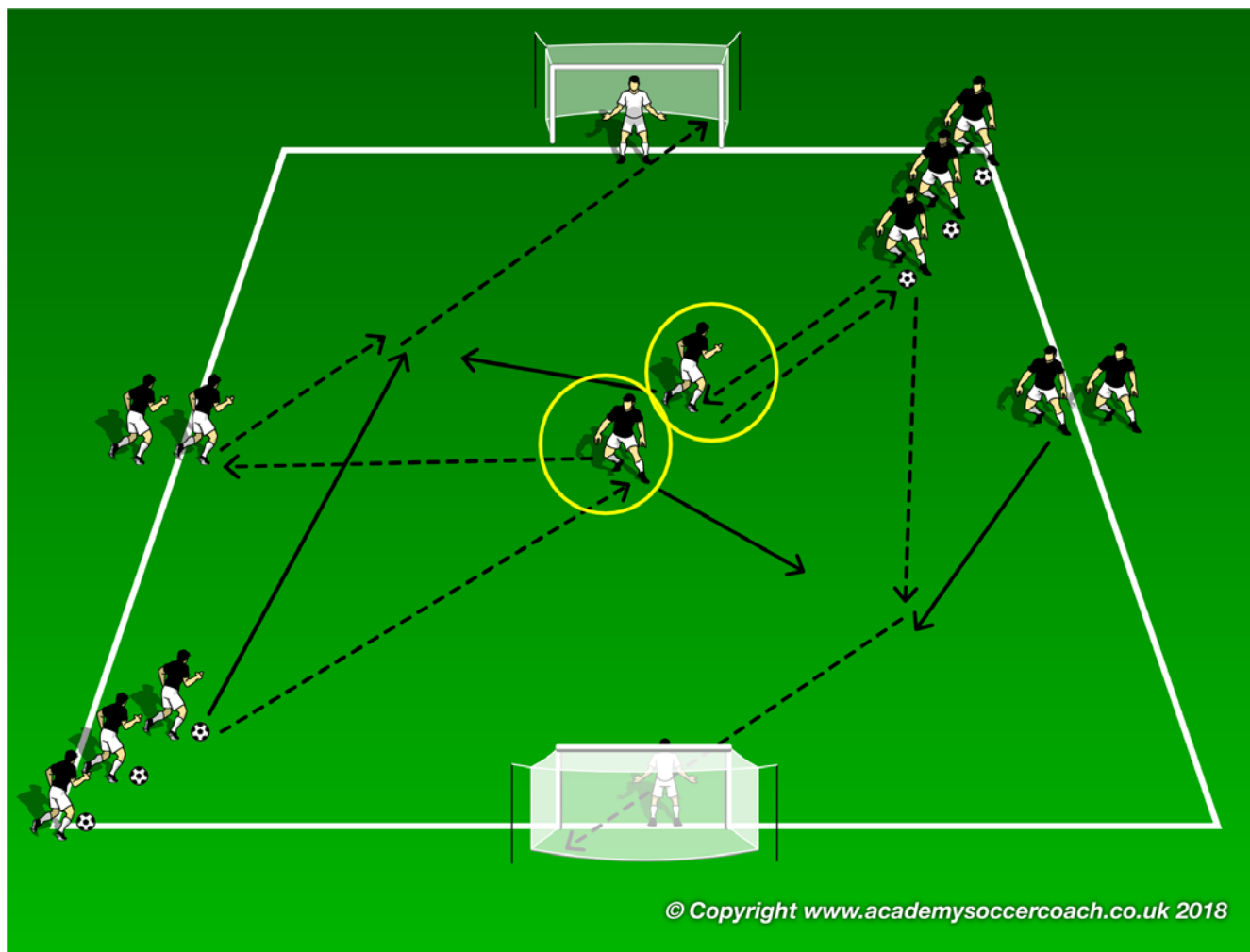
The players in possession on corners must play forward and diagonally to the center players, who then pass sideways (on left) and pass back (on the right).

Both the first possession players must run forward to receive the last passes, as third men, between the teammates before shooting with 1 touch.

The sequences must be performed on both the sides to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Eye on: 1 touch combination, timing of runs without the ball and of passes to shot with 1 touch.

Exercise 24: 1 touch and 3rd man simultaneous shooting at speed after inside runs under pressure



Set-up and Sequence: 2 groups of players in possession are placed on the upper right corner and on the left lower corner. The other players are placed in the middle of the sidelines and 2 more are placed in the middle of the set up. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides.

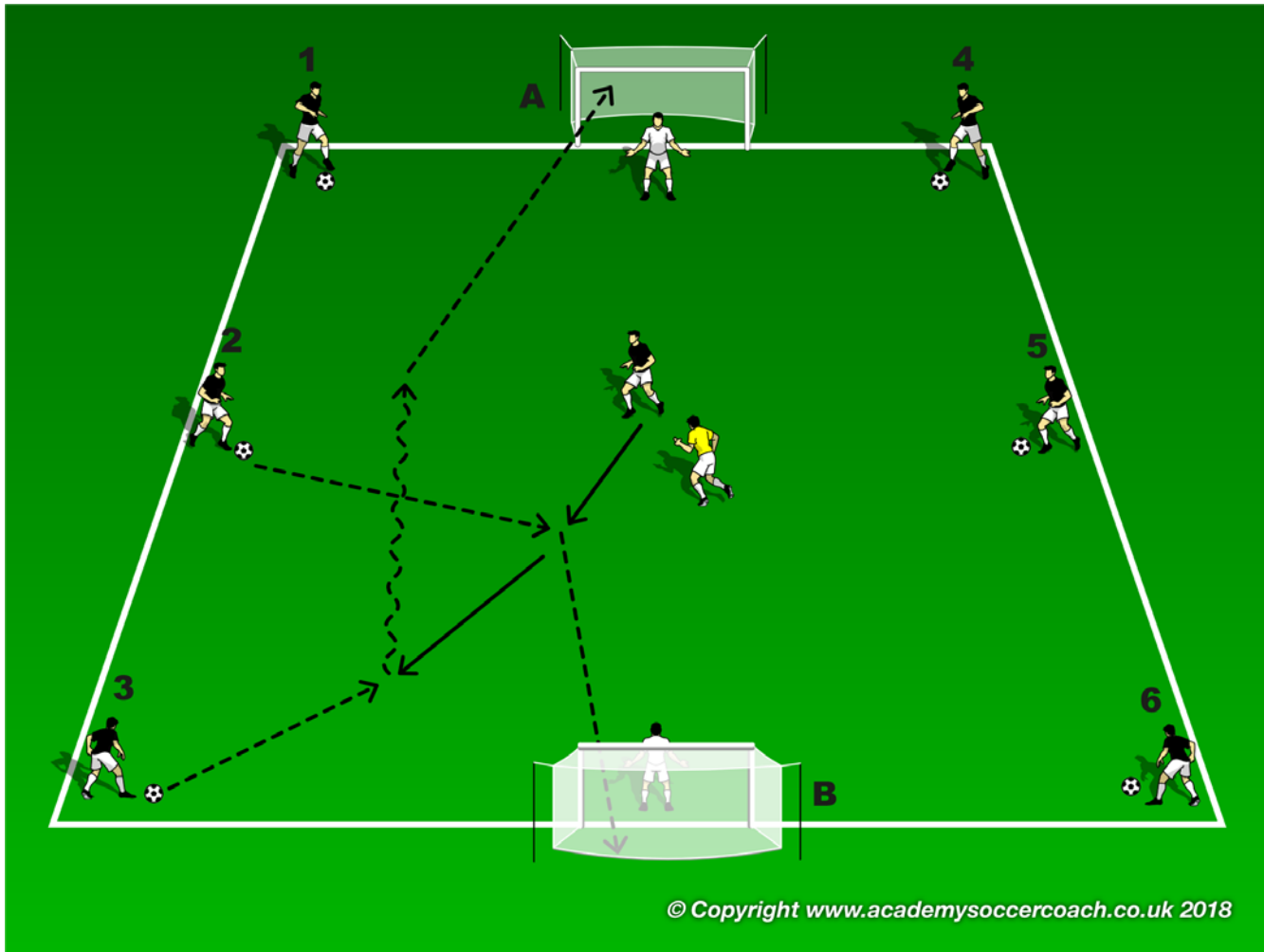
The players in possession on corners must play forward and diagonally to the center players, who then pass sideways (on left) and pass back (on the right).

Both the first possession players must run forward to receive the last passes, as third men, between the teammates, before shooting with 1 touch under pressure (the nearest foot on the left and the further one on the right combination). 2 touch shots are allowed if the possession must be made safe against the defenders. The players in the middle must become the defenders of the opposite combination, trying to recover the space against their opponents to counter the finishing phase. The sequences must be performed on both the sides to allow the players shooting with both feet.

Eye on: 1 touch combination, timing of runs without the ball and of passes to shot with 1 touch, reaction speed to counter the shots attempts.

Shooting Battle Exercises

Exercise 25: 1 v 1 shooting battle (1)



Set-up and Sequence: 6 numbered players (1-6) in possession are placed on the corners and in the middle of the longer sidelines of a rectangular set-up. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers are placed along the shorter sides of the rectangles. A 1 v 1 duel is played all around the set-up.

The coach calls out the player who must kick the ball to start the first duel (2 in the picture) and the goal to score in (B in the picture); the player who is able to win the ball becomes attacker and the other one is the defender. The coach can decide the way to attack for the player in possession and the defense behavior of the player without the possession, depending on their positions.

Every time a sequence ends, the new player and the goal to attack must be called until all six outer players have been involved (ex, 3-B etc.). The attacker and the defender can be different at every sequence. If the defenders win the ball, they must counter attack toward the opposite goal.

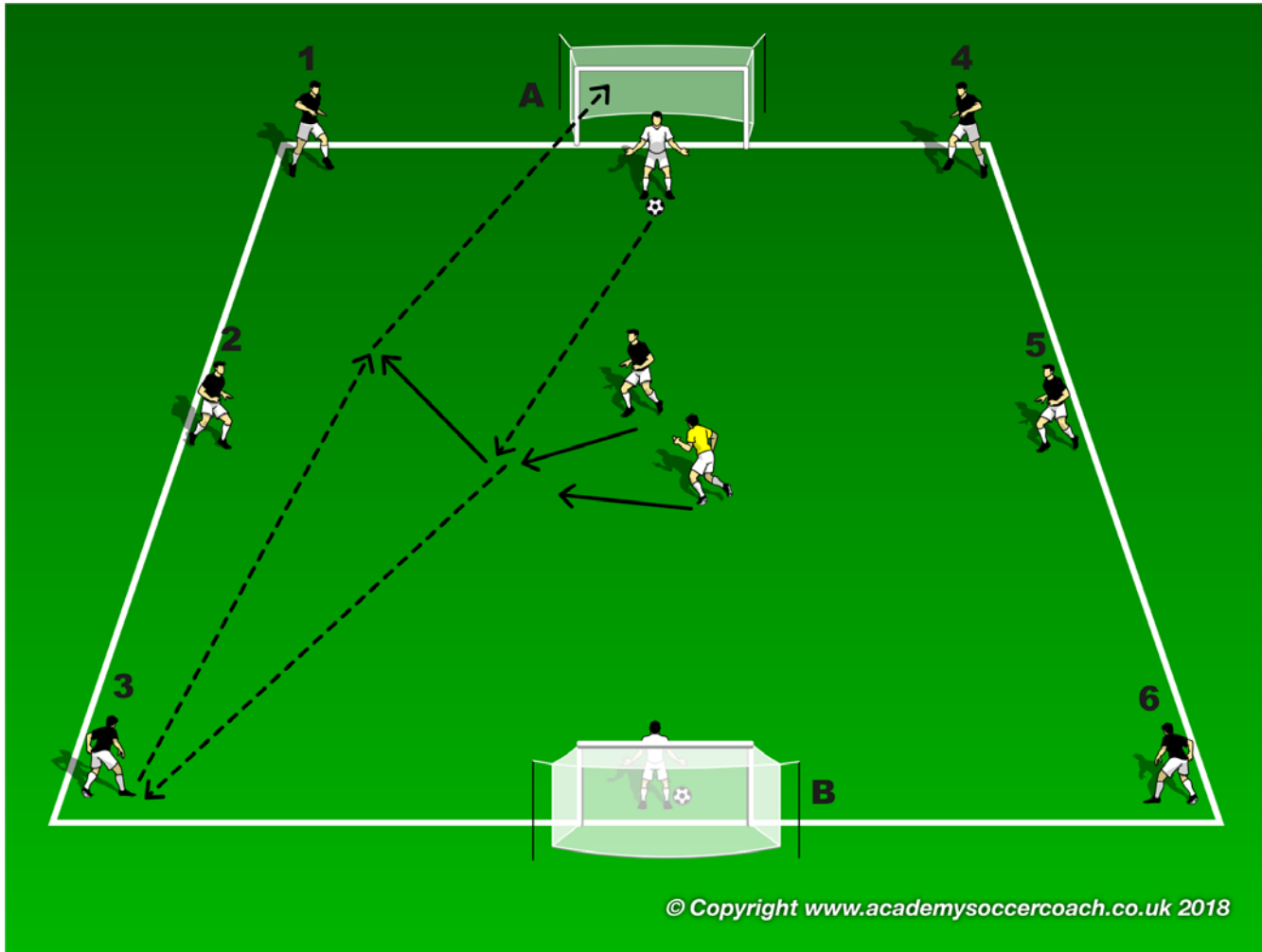
The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but scoring after the recovery of the ball possession worth double.

Variations:

- 1) The defender who wins the possession must play a passing combination with the player who kicked the ball for the first time before finishing
- 2) The player who kicked the ball runs inside as support for the player in possession, to create a 2 v 1 duel
- 3) The player who kicked the ball runs inside as support for the defender, to create a 2 v 1 duel for a fast ball recovery

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick 1 v 1 duel and finishing, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 26: 1 v 1 shooting battle (2)



Set-up and Sequence: 6 numbered players (1-6) are placed on the corners and in the middle of the longer sidelines of a rectangular set-up. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed along the shorter sides of the rectangles. A 1 v 1 duel is played all around the set-up.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture) and the outer player who must help the forward in a 1-2 passing combination (3 in the picture), before shooting. The coach can decide the way to attack for the player in possession and the defense behavior of the player without the possession, depending on their positions. The goal to attack and to defend is the one that is saved by the same goalkeeper.

If the defender wins the ball, he must counter attack toward the opposite goal.

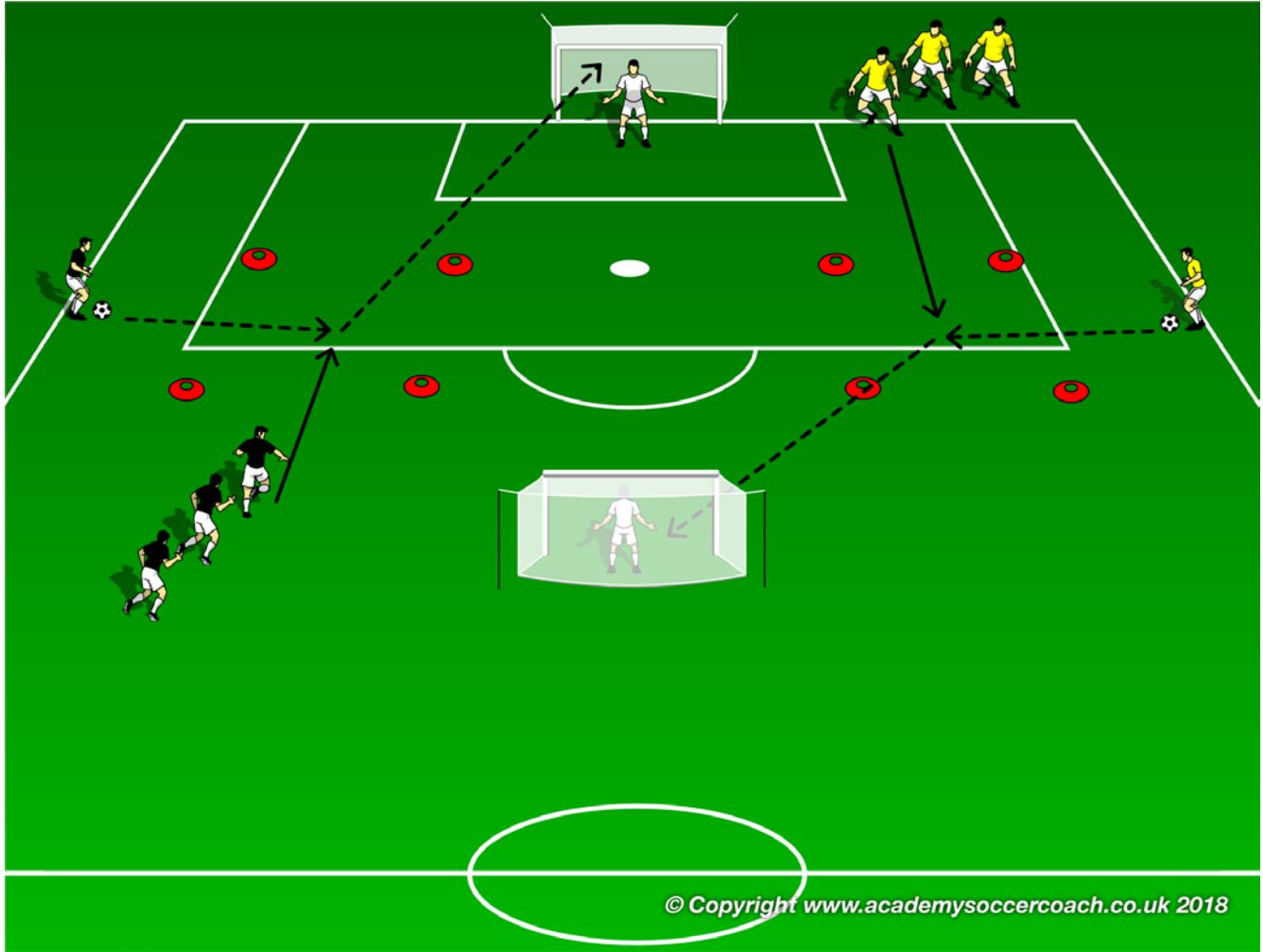
When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the second ball to start a new sequence.

The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variation: the defender who wins the ball must play a passing combination with another player (of his choice or called by the coach) before finishing.

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick 1 v 1 duels, combinations and finishing, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 27: team shooting battle (1)



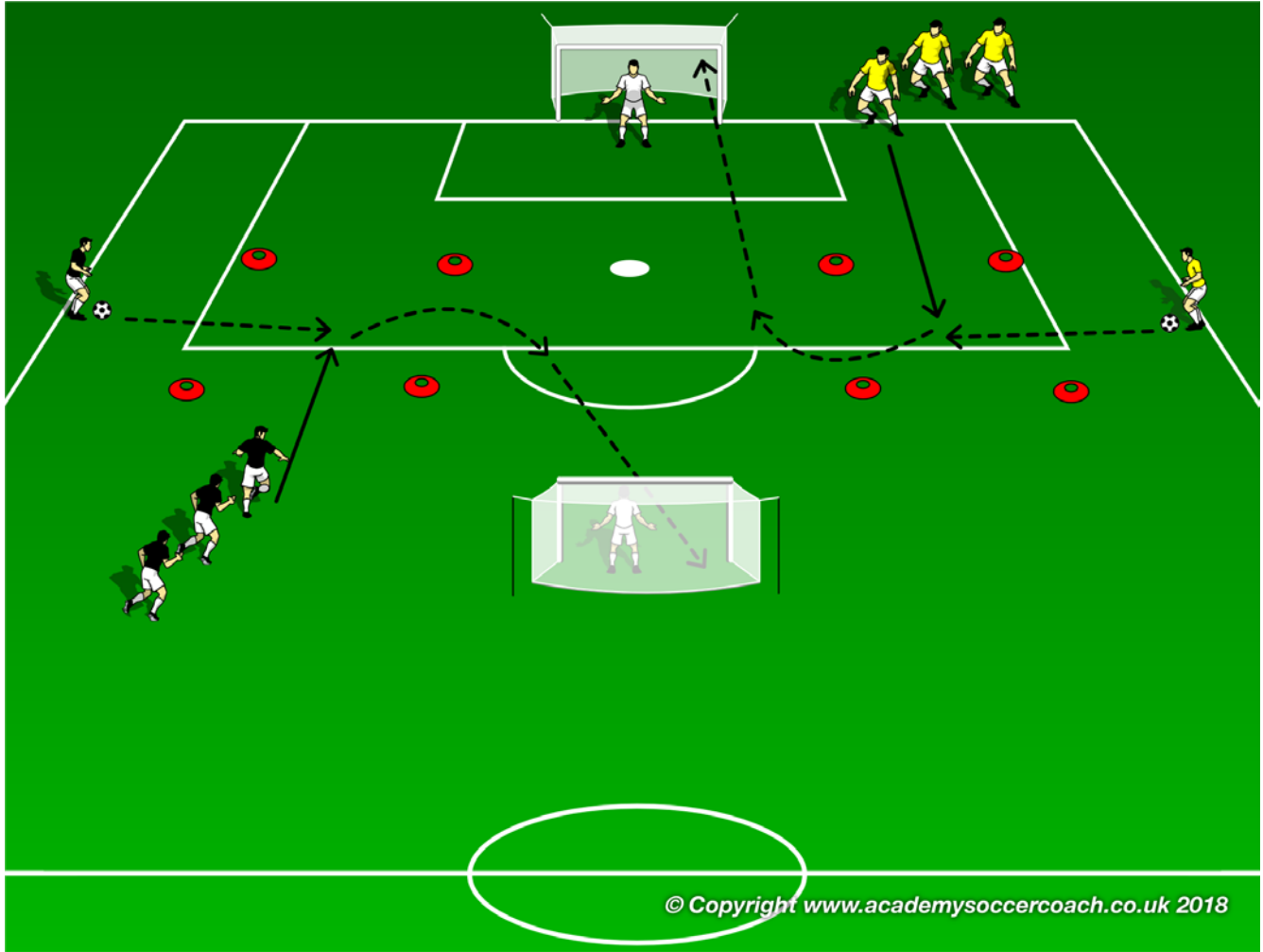
Set-up and Sequence: 2 square spaces are marked as in the picture and two teams are queued up at the borderlines of the playing space (1 third of a field). The passing players for each team are placed along the sidelines and in the middle of the total length of the space.

The first black and yellow players of the queues must run inside the squares to finish toward the goal in front of them with 1 touch, if possible, or even 2; all the shots must come from inside the squares.

The sequences are repeated until all the players have shot once; the one who shot last time becomes the sideways passing player.

Eye on: body position on the ball to shoot, runs and pass timing inside the square.

Exercise 28: team shooting battle (2)



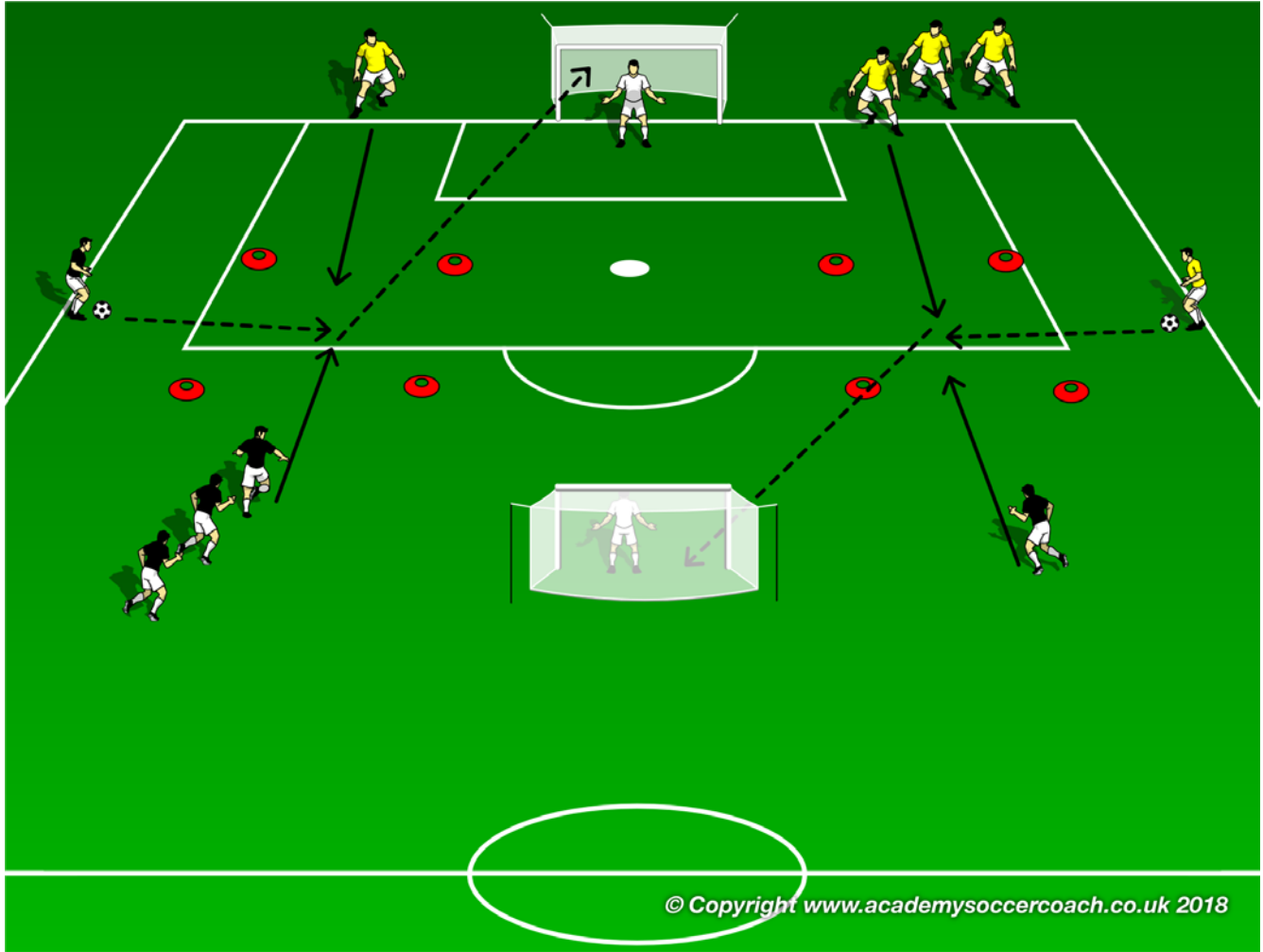
Set-up and Sequence: 2 square spaces are marked as in the picture and two teams are queued up at the borderlines of the playing space (1 third of a field). The passing players for each team are placed along the sidelines and in the middle of the total length of the space.

The first black and yellow players of the queues must run inside the squares, receive the ball, turn back and finish toward the goal in front of them with 2 touches if possible, but not more than 3 touches; all the shots must come from outside the squares.

The sequences are repeated until all the players have shot once; the one who shot last time becomes the sideways passing player.

Eye on: body position on the ball to turn with fewest possible number of passes, runs and pass timing inside the square for outside oriented ball control.

Exercise 29: 1 v 1 team shooting battle under pressure (1)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 square spaces are marked as in the picture and two teams are queued up at the borderlines of the playing space (1 third of a field). The passing players for each team are placed along the sidelines and in the middle of the total length of the space.

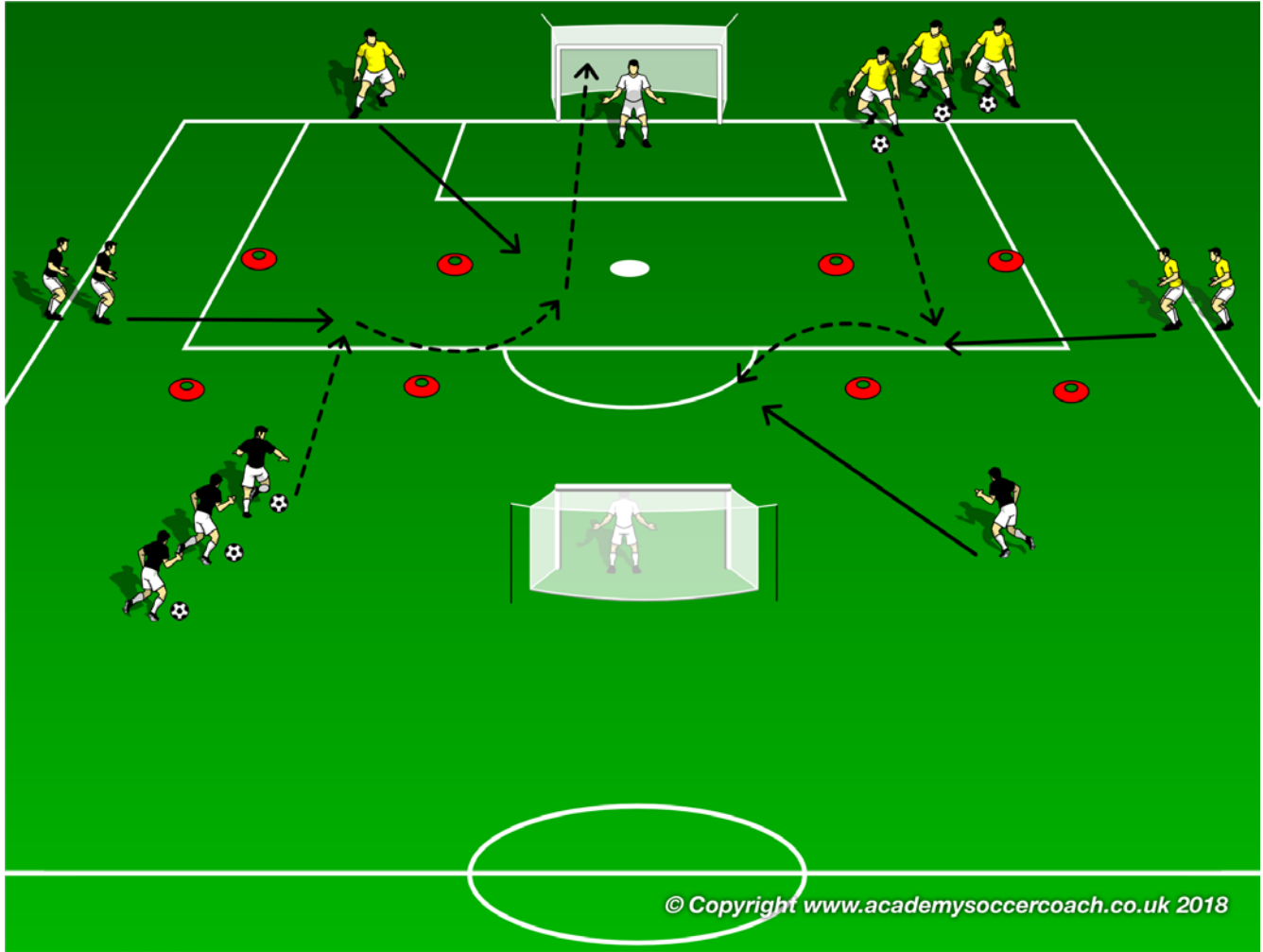
The first black and yellow players of the queues must run inside the squares to finish toward the goal in front of them with 1 touch, if possible, or even 2; all the shots must come from inside the squares.

In this variation, the players must receive and finish under the pressure of a defender of the opposition team, inside the square. If the defenders win the ball, they can shot toward the opposition goal to gain 1 more point for the team.

The sequences are repeated until all the players have shot and defended once; the one who attacked last time becomes the sideways passing player and the passing player become defender.

Eye on: body position on the ball to shot, runs and passes timing inside the square, counter the finishing attempts, tackles.

Exercise 30: 1 v 1 team shooting battle under pressure (2)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 square spaces are marked as in the picture and two teams are queued up at the borderlines of the playing space (1 third of a field). The passing players for each team are placed along the goal lines beside (on the left or on the right of the goals).

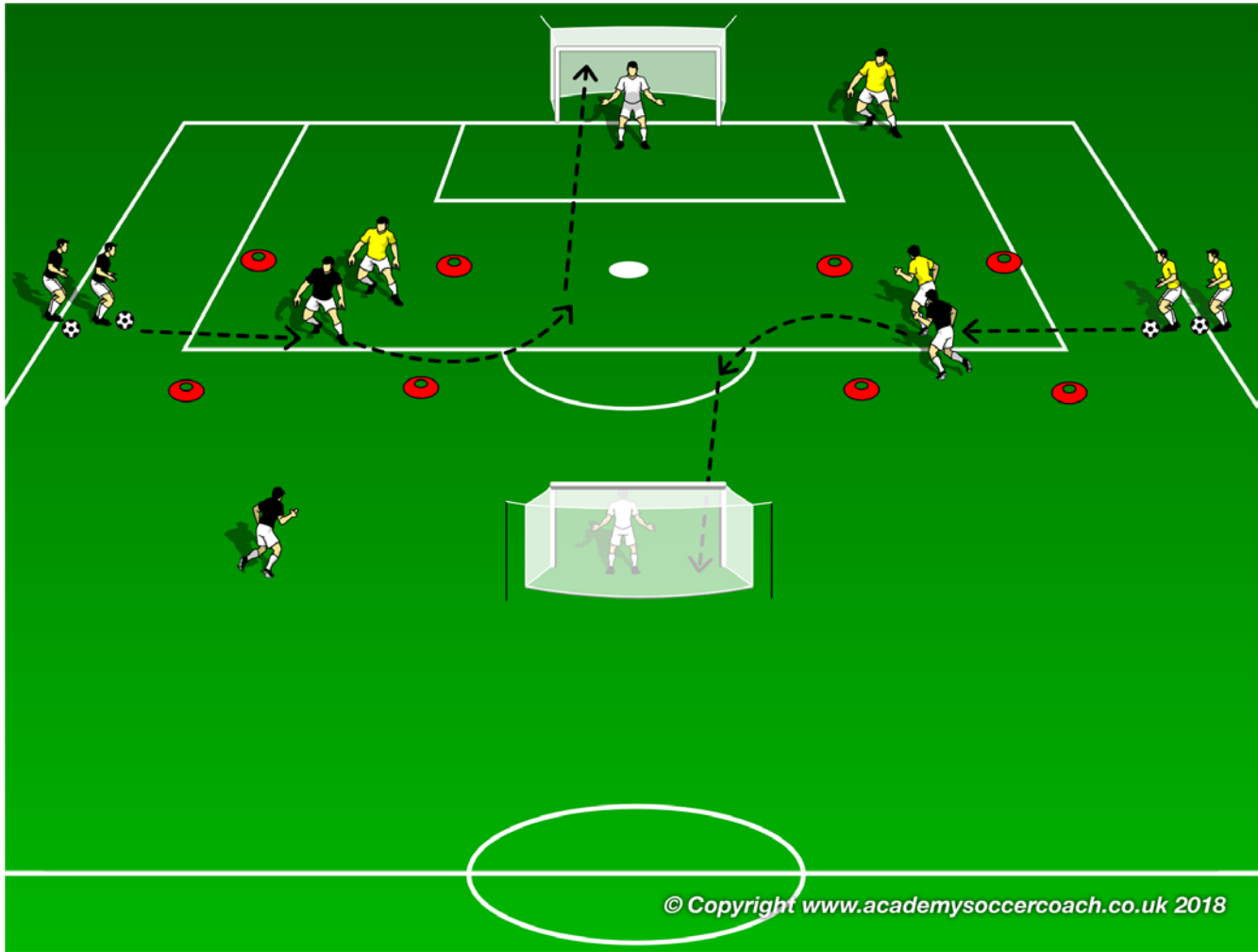
The first black and yellow players of the queues must run inside the squares, receive the ball, turn back and finish toward the goal in front of them with 2 touches, if possible, but not more than 3 touches; all the shots must come from outside the squares.

In this variation, the players must receive, turn and finish under the pressure of a defender of the opposition team outside the square. If the defenders win the ball, they can shoot toward the opposition goal to gain 1 more point for the team.

The sequences are repeated until all the players have shot and defended once; the one who attacked last time becomes the sideways passing player and the passing player become defender.

Eye on: body position on the ball to shoot, runs and passes timing inside the square, counter the finishing attempts, save the goal space.

Exercise 31: 1 v 1 team shooting battle (3)



Set-up and Sequence: 2 square spaces are marked as in the picture and two teams are queued up at the borderlines of the playing space (1 third of a field). The passing players of each team are placed along the sidelines and in the middle of the total length of the space.

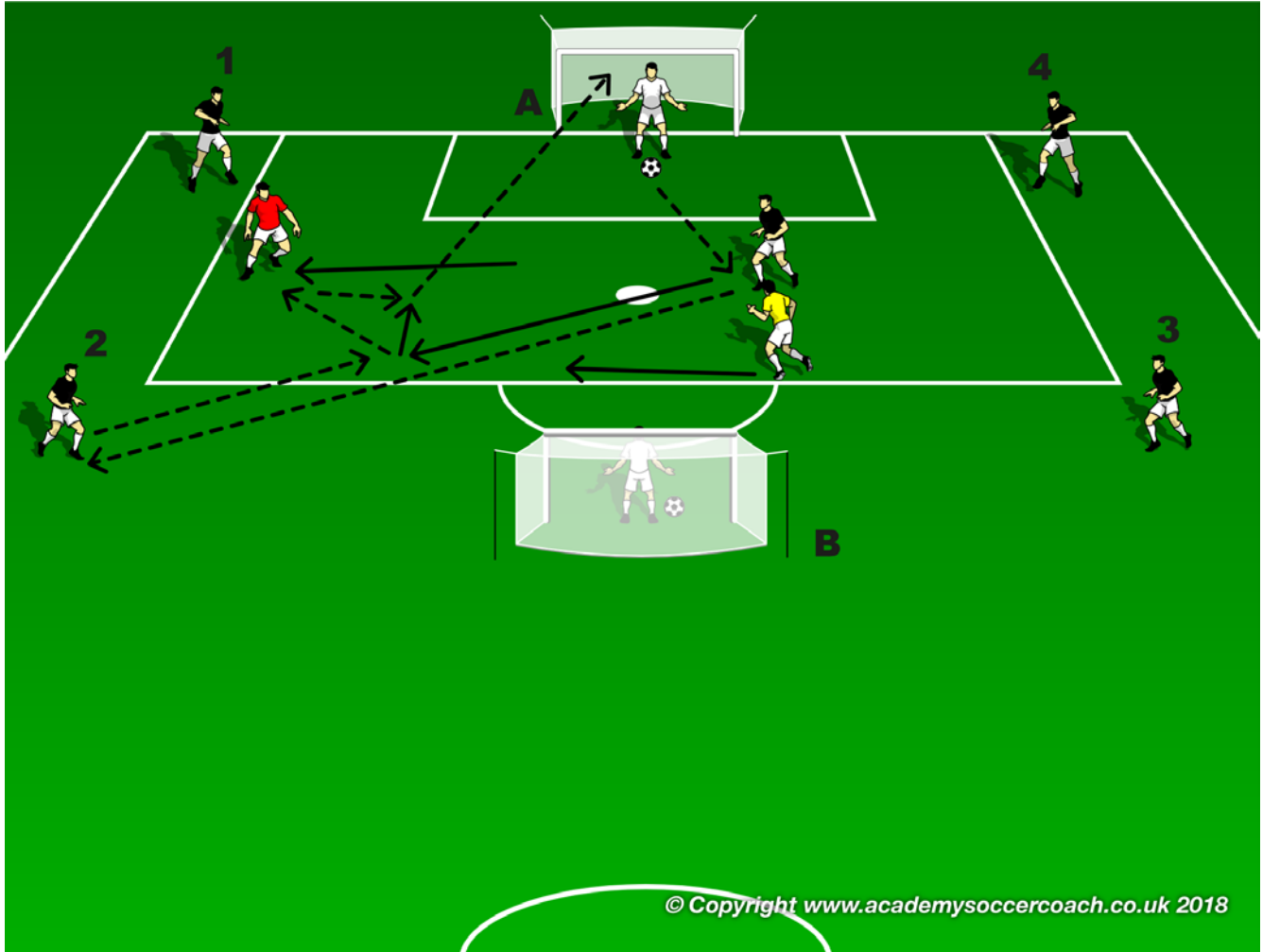
1 attacking player and 1 defending player of the black and yellow teams are placed inside each square; the forward must receive the ball, turn back and finish toward the goal in front of him with 2 touches, if possible, or even but not more than 3 touches; all the shots must come from outside the squares.

In this variation, the players must receive, turn and finish under the pressure of a defender of the opposition team since the beginning of the exercise. If the defenders win the ball, they can shot toward the opposition goal to gain 1 more point for the team.

The sequences are repeated until all the players have shot and defended once; the one who shot last time becomes the sideways passing player and the passing player become defender.

Eye on: body position on the ball to shoot, runs and passes timing inside the square, counter the finishing attempts, save the goal space.

Exercise 32: 1 v 1 + 1 shooting battle to combine quickly



Set-up and Sequence: 4 numbered players (1-4) are placed on the corners the penalty area and just out of it. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 1 v 1 duel is played all around the set-up and 1 neutral player must support the player in possession.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture) and the outer player who must help the forward to complete a 1-2 passing combination (2 in the picture). The forward must then complete a second passing combination with the neutral player before shooting. The coach can decide the way to attack for the player in possession and the defense behavior of the player without the possession, depending on their positions. The goal to attack and to defend is the one saved by the same goalkeeper. The forwards and the defenders can be pre-determined or not.

If the defender wins the ball, he must finish toward the opposite goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the ball to start a new sequence.

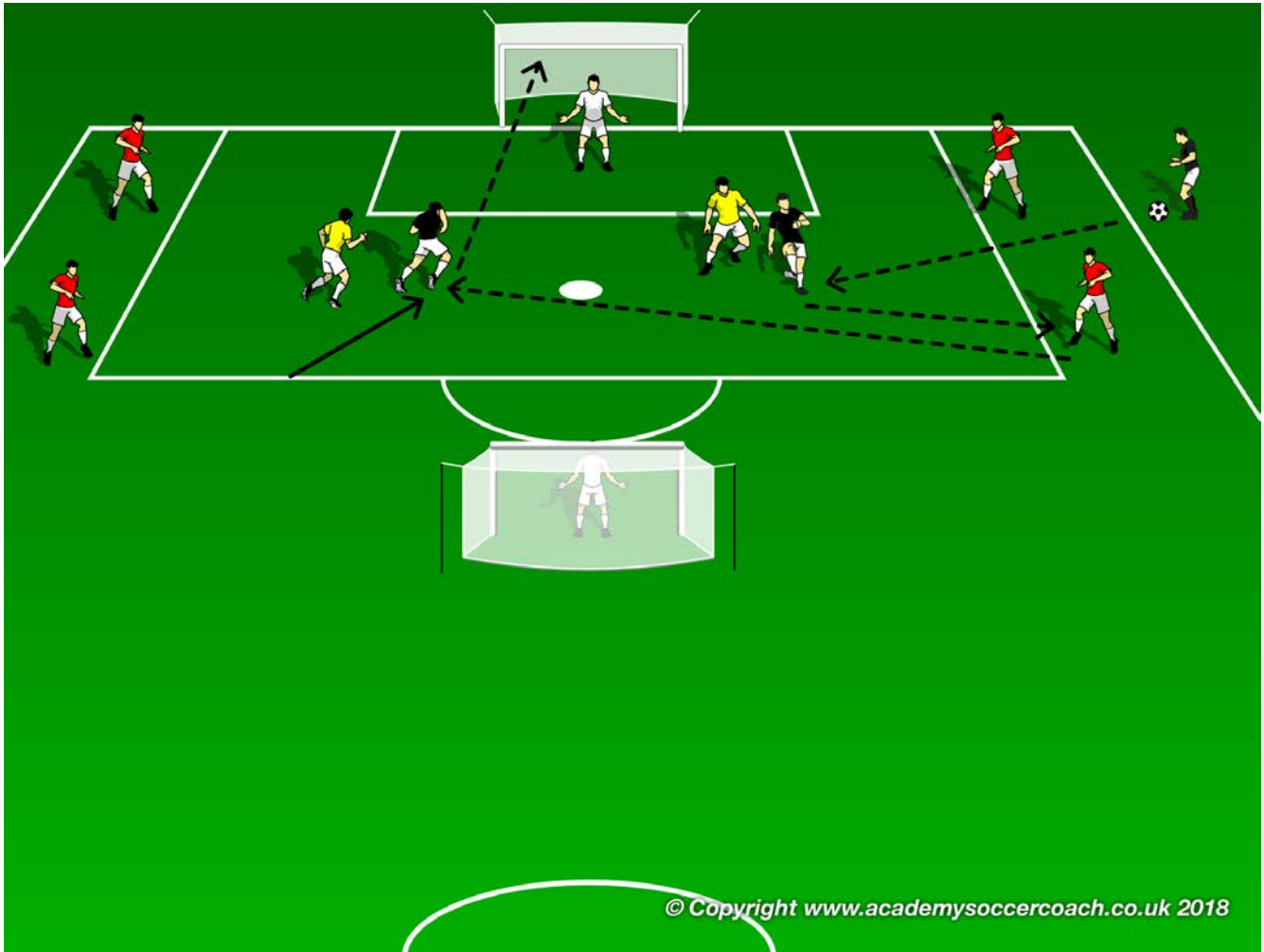
The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variations: the defender who wins the ball must play:

- 1) A passing combination with another wide teammate (of his choice or called by the coach) before finishing.
- 2) A passing combination with the neutral player before finishing
- 3) A passing combination with a support numbered player and a the neutral one too
- 4) A passing combination with the goalkeeper

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick 1 v 1 duels, combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 33: 2 v 2 + 4 shooting battle (1)



Set-up and Sequence: a basic 2 v 2 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals with goalkeepers are placed in front of each other. 4 neutral players are placed wide along the sidelines of the penalty area, as in the picture.

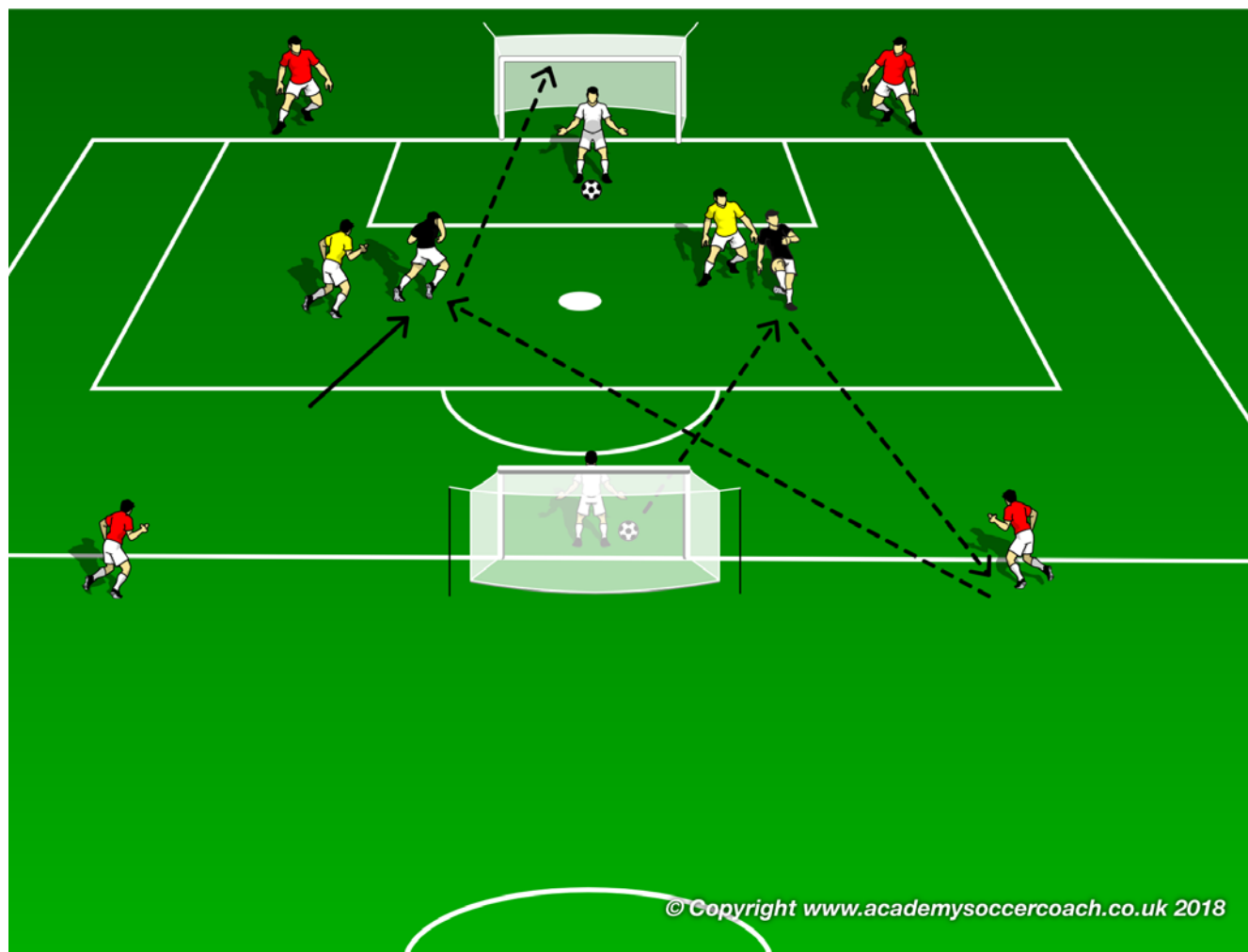
The coach kicks the ball to start the sequence; the first player who receives the ball identifies the couple in possession and the defending couples of players, as well as the goal to attack and to defend. The players in possession are asked to combine with one neutral player, before shooting on goal. If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal. The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of the ball possession worth double.

Variations: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with 1 neutral player before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with opposite wide neutral players before finishing

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession, closure of passing lanes.

Exercise 34: 2 v 2 + 4 shooting battle (2)



Set-up and Sequence: a basic 2 v 2 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. 4 neutral players are placed on the depth lines, as in the picture. The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must start the sequence (the black one in the picture), passing the ball to the first teammate; this player then receives the ball and he must pass back to the one of the neutral players before finishing. The player, who must shoot on goal, should receive on the run and behind the defense line. If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal. The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variations: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with 1 neutral player before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with opposite deep neutral players before finishing (1 back pass and 1 forward pass)

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, press to avoid the opponent from turning, closure of passing lanes.

Exercise 35: 2 v 2 + 4 shooting battle (3)



Set-up and Sequence: this exercise is a variation of the previous exercise. A basic 2 v 2 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. 4 neutral players are placed on the depth lines, as in the picture. The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must start the sequence (the black one in the picture), passing the ball to the first teammate; this player then receives the ball and he must pass forward to 1 of the neutral players before finishing. The player, who must shot on goal, should receive the back pass on the run and behind the defense line. If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal. The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variations: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with 1 neutral player before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with opposite deep neutral players before finishing (1 back pass and 1 forward pass)

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, press to avoid the opponent from turning, closure of passing lanes.

Exercise 36: 4 v 4 shooting battle (1) to build up and finish quickly



Set-up and Sequence: a 4 v 4 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the set-up and 2 more players for each team are placed wide alternately on the sidelines of the penalty area, as in the picture.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture) passing wide on his left (as in the picture) or right teammates. The receiver must play inside the penalty area, where the players of the possession team must be unmarked to receive and to finish the move, shooting toward the opposite goal as soon as possible. They can choose to play with the second wide teammate to save the possession too.

If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the second ball to start a new sequence; the prior defending team becomes the attacking one.

The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variations: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with a wide teammate before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with both the wide teammates before finishing
- 3) A passing combination with the goalkeeper before finishing

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 37: 4 v 4 shooting battle (2) to build up and finish quickly or attack quickly



Set-up and Sequence: this exercise is a variation of the previous practice. A 4 v 4 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the set-up and 2 more players for each team are placed wide alternately on the sidelines of the penalty area, as in the picture.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture) passing wide on his left (as in the picture) or right teammates and moreover to the lower or upper positioned teammate. If the goalkeeper passes to the lower one, the objectives are the same of the previous exercise: build up and finish quickly. If the goalkeeper decides to pass to the upper teammate, the receiver must play inside the penalty area, where the forwards must attack the opposition goal to finish as soon as possible and even with just 1 more direct touch. In this second kind of sequence, they can't play with the other lower and wider teammate to save the possession; they just have to finish quickly.

If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the ball to start a new sequence; the prior defending team becomes the attacking one.

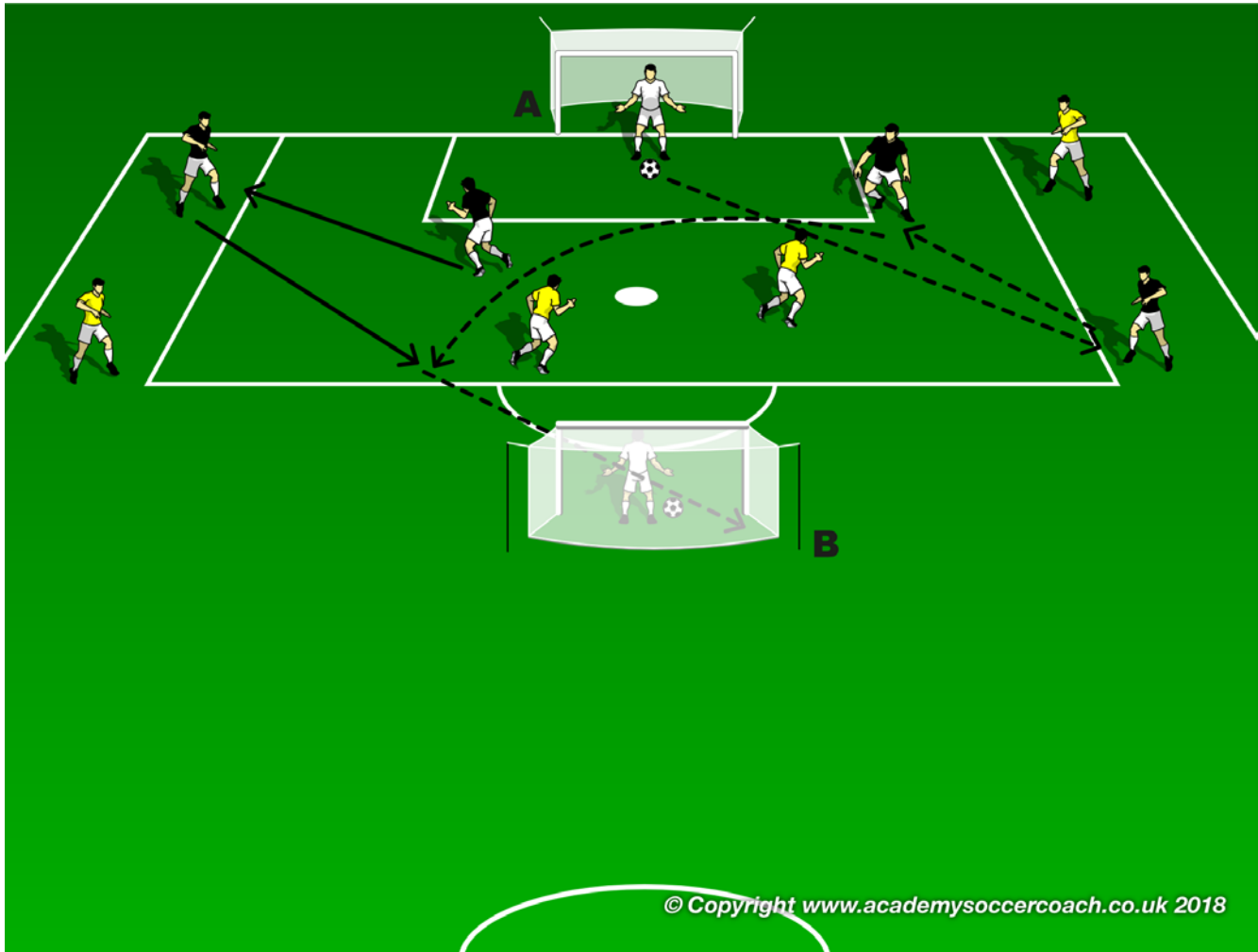
The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variation: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with a wide teammate before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with both the wide teammates before finishing
- 3) A passing combination with the goalkeeper before finishing

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 38: 4 v 4 shooting battle to finish exchanging the position while switching side of play

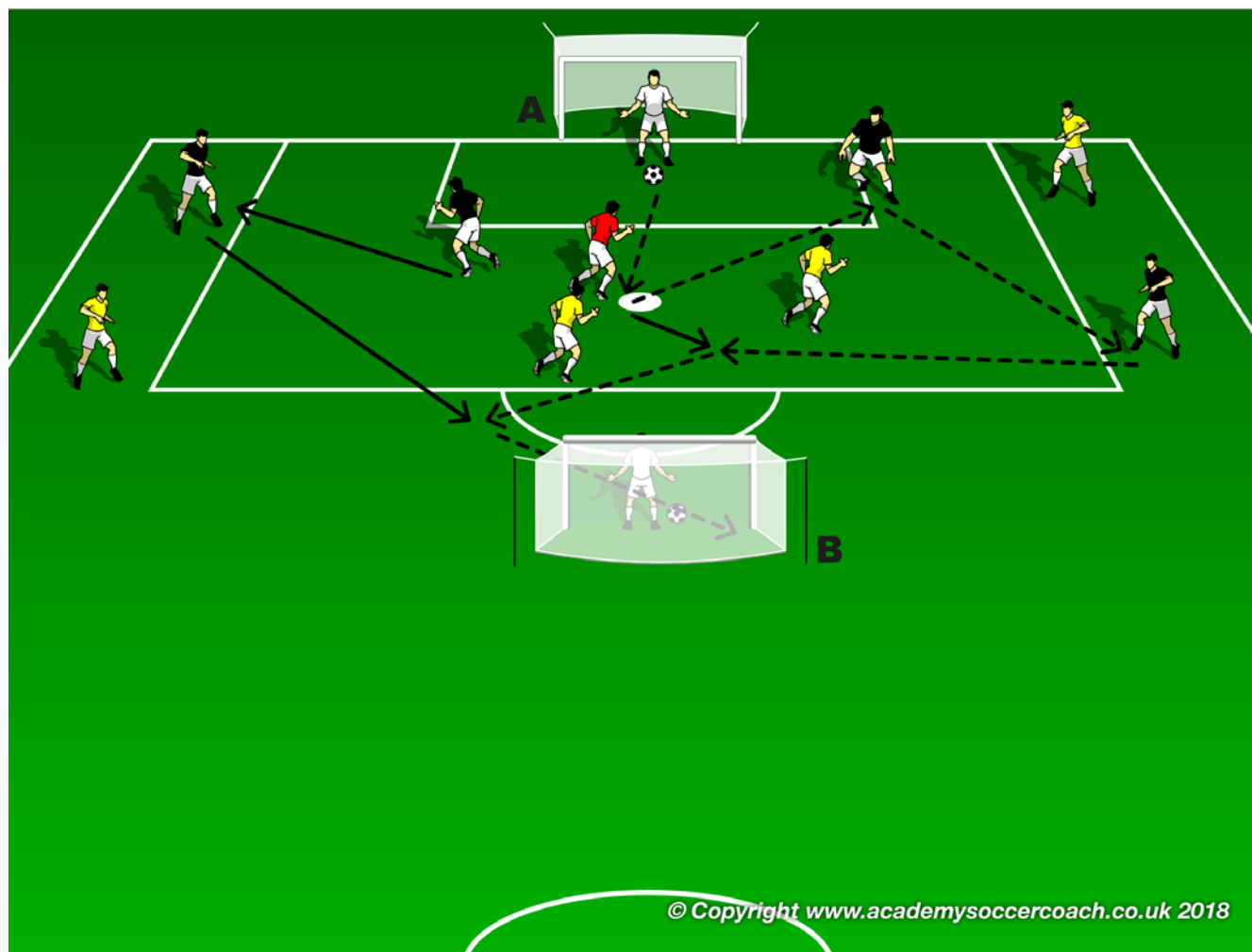


Set-up and Sequence: this exercise is another variation of the practice 36. A 4 v 4 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the set-up and 2 more players for each team are placed wide alternately, as in the picture. The coach calls out the goalkeeper, who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture), passing wide on his left (as in the picture), or right teammates, and moreover to the lower or upper positioned teammate. As the first wide player receives, the first objective for the team in possession is to be able to finish, exploiting the inside/outside exchange of position of the opposite teammates. The incoming player should be the one who receives and finishes the move. If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the ball to start a new sequence; the prior defending team becomes the attacking one with the same objectives. The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 39: 4 v 4 + 1 shooting battle to finish exchanging the position while switching side of play (1)



Set-up and Sequence: a basic 4 v 4 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals (A and B) with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the set-up and 2 more players for each team are placed wide alternately, as in the picture. 1 neutral player is involved in the game as he must decide which is the team in possession first and then support the finishing phase.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel (A in the picture) passing to the neutral player. If the neutral player passes the ball to the black team, as in the picture, the goal to be attacked is the opposite one; otherwise, if the neutral player passes the ball to the yellow team, the goal to be attacked is the one saved by the goalkeeper who kicked the ball at the beginning.

As the first wide player receives, the first objective for the team in possession is to be able to finish, exploiting the inside/outside exchange of position of the opposite teammates. The incoming player should be the one who receives the last pass before finishing the move.

If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the ball to start a new sequence; the prior defending team becomes the attacking one.

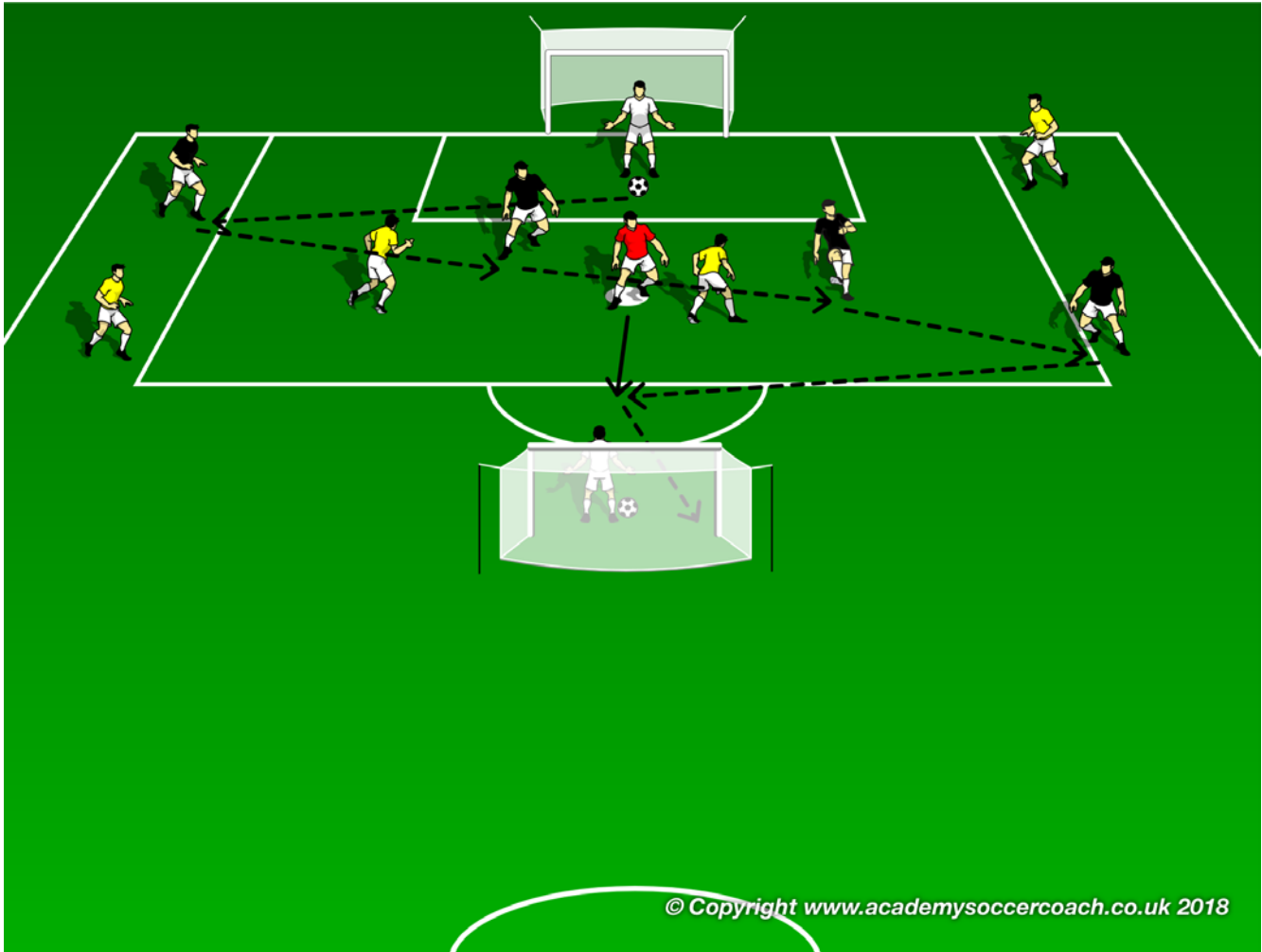
The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variation: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with the neutral player before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with both the wide teammates before finishing
- 3) A passing combination with the neutral player and the wide teammates before finishing

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession.

Exercise 40: 4 v 4 + 1 shooting battle to finish exchanging the position while switching side of play (2)



Set-up and Sequence: a basic 4 v 4 duel is played inside a set-up just a little bigger than the penalty area. 2 goals with goalkeepers in possession are placed in front of each other. A 2 v 2 duel is played inside the set-up and 2 more players for each team are placed wide alternately, as in the picture. 1 neutral player is involved in the game as he must decide which is the team in possession first and then support the finishing phase.

The coach calls out the goalkeeper who must kick the ball to start the first duel, passing the ball to the neutral player. If the neutral player passes the ball to the black team as in the picture, the goal to be attacked is the opposite one; otherwise, if the neutral player passes the ball to the yellow team, the goal to be attacked is the one saved by the goalkeeper who kicked the ball at the beginning.

As the first wide player receives, the first objective for the team in possession is to be able to finish, exploiting the switch of side and the inside run of a wide attacking player.

If the defenders win the ball, they must counter-attack directly toward the opposition goal.

When the first sequence ends, the second goalkeeper kicks the ball to start a new sequence; the prior defending team becomes the attacking one.

The goals of the attacking players worth 1 point but to score after the recovery of ball possession worth double.

Variations: if the defenders win the ball they must play:

- 1) A passing combination with the neutral player before finishing
- 2) Passing combinations with both the wide teammates before finishing
- 3) A passing combination with the neutral player and the wide teammates before finishing

Eye on: attack the ball to win the possession, be placed properly to receive, quick combinations and finishing, save the possession with the right body positioning, pressure to recover the possession, defend the goal space.