



v



Jack Wilshere (1-0)





So what makes a 'great' counter attacking team?

'a team that drops deep, who can win the ball, with players who can give the first pass very well''

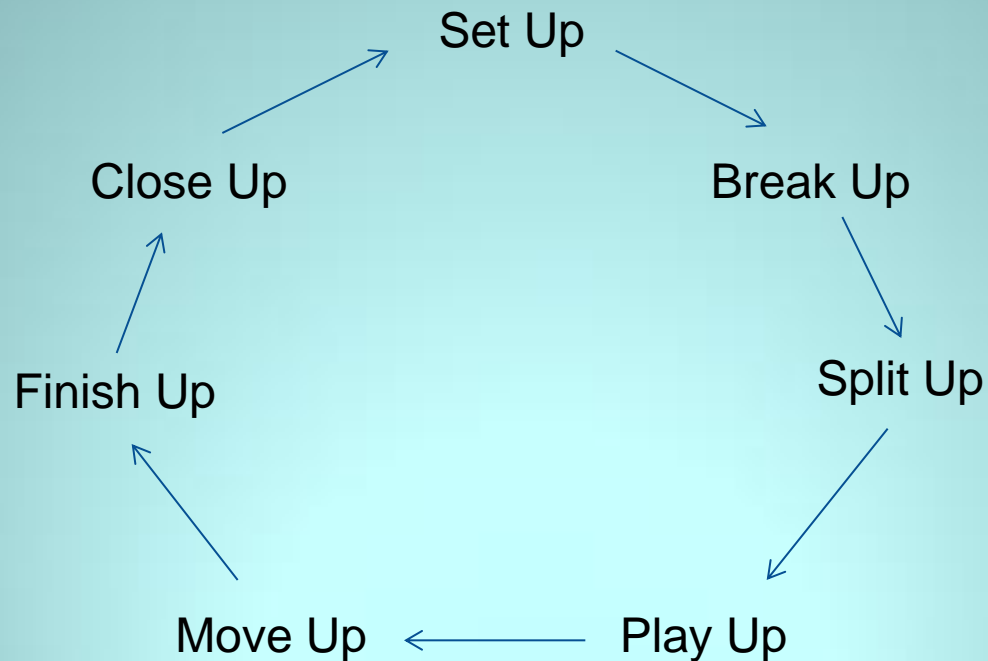
'the most important thing in a counter attack is the quality of the first pass because then you can open up the team'

'the speed of the transition from defence to offence makes the success of a counter attack''

(Arsene Wenger speaking on FIFA TV, 2013)



What are the principles of a 'Counter Attack'?





1. Set Up

Positives:

- Get numbers back early (whole team in e.g.)
- Position appropriately (goal side/screen)
- Outnumber opposition around the ball
- Awareness of opposition intentions: player in possession and team mates
- Lure opposition high up the pitch to regain and attack when their out of balance.

Negatives:

- Allow opposition to gain yardage towards goal.
- Further distance to attack opposition goal on regain.
- Allows opposition to build attack.
- Requires fast players to compensate for distance to opp goal.



2. Break Up Regain the ball



Flamini (pictured below) positions in front of Hooper to intercept forward pass by screening target player.





3. Split Up

Transition: Defence > Attack



Awareness:

Jack Wilshere 'gets the picture' before receiving to allow for a quick decision making process when in possession.

Body position:

Wilshere then receives the ball from Flamini side-on to play forward from regain.

Movement & Support in front:

Gibbs and Cazorla both position themselves to allow a forward pass from Wilshere to create momentum in the attack.



Move the ball forward at the earliest opportunity

Risk vs Reward....the trade off

‘The attitude that the potential return rises with an increased risk’

Higher levels of risk within football have a tendency to be linked with greater reward..GOALS!





4. Play Up

Players around the ball: Movement
'beyond' opponents





Destroy the opposition by running with the ball into spaces and between defenders





5. Move Up

Use of forward passes to feet/into space



Gibbs plays a quick and direct pass to Cazorla's feet to gain yardage during the attack.



Players to position themselves in front of the ball

Why?

- Create space for individual/team mates to exploit space.
- Support player in possession to receive or attract defender(s).
- Provides direction and momentum for attack.
- Gain yardage quicker.
- Places pressure on defenders quick decision making.

IONS HI-VISIBILITY IN ALL CONDITIONS



6. Close Up

Those players '*behind*' the ball to move forward to:



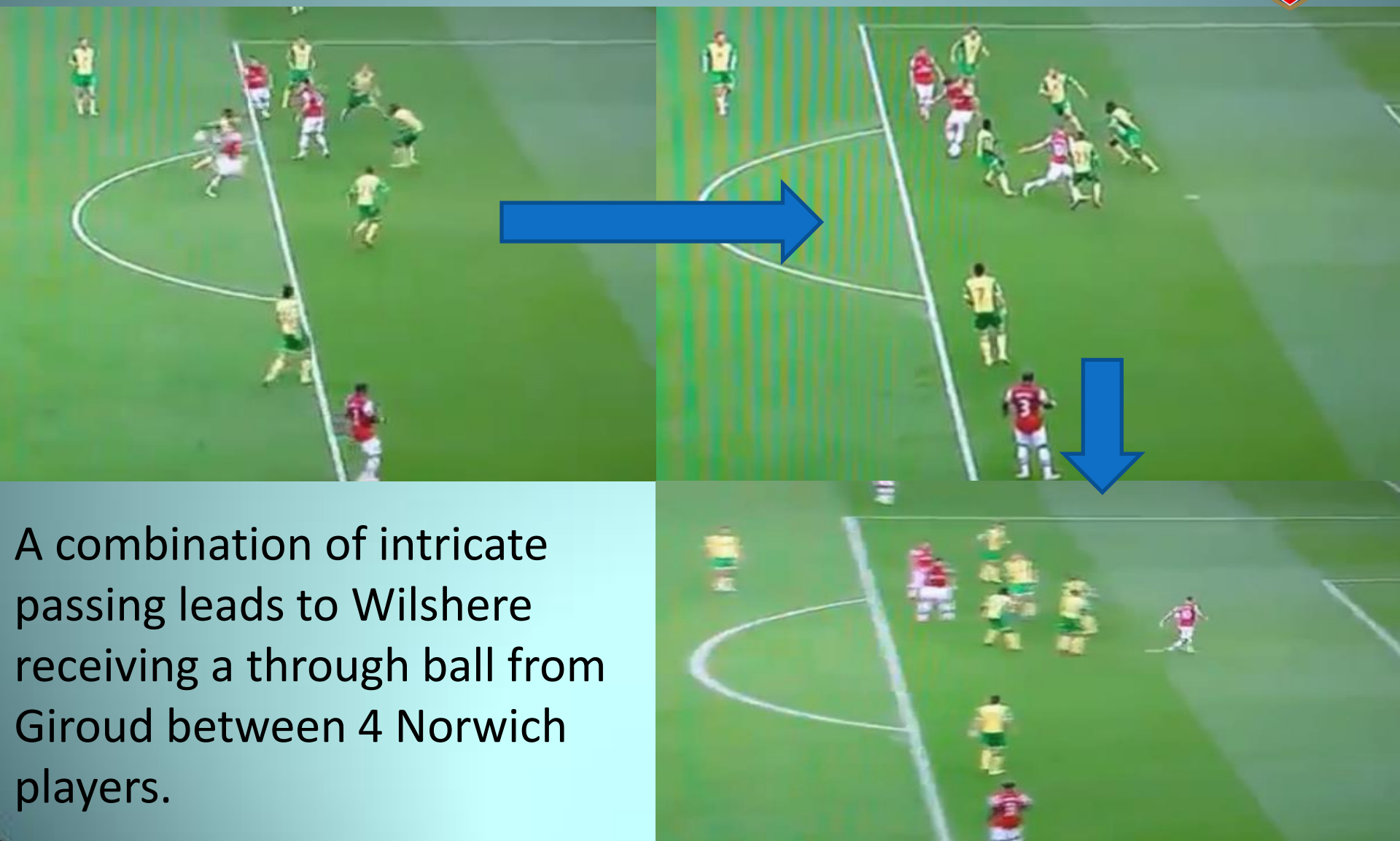
a) Arsenal players sprint from behind ball to provide support in attack.

b) Arsenal players sits behind attack to close space vacated by attacking teammates. Also can close Norwich player down early if ball is cleared.





Quick Combination play in final third



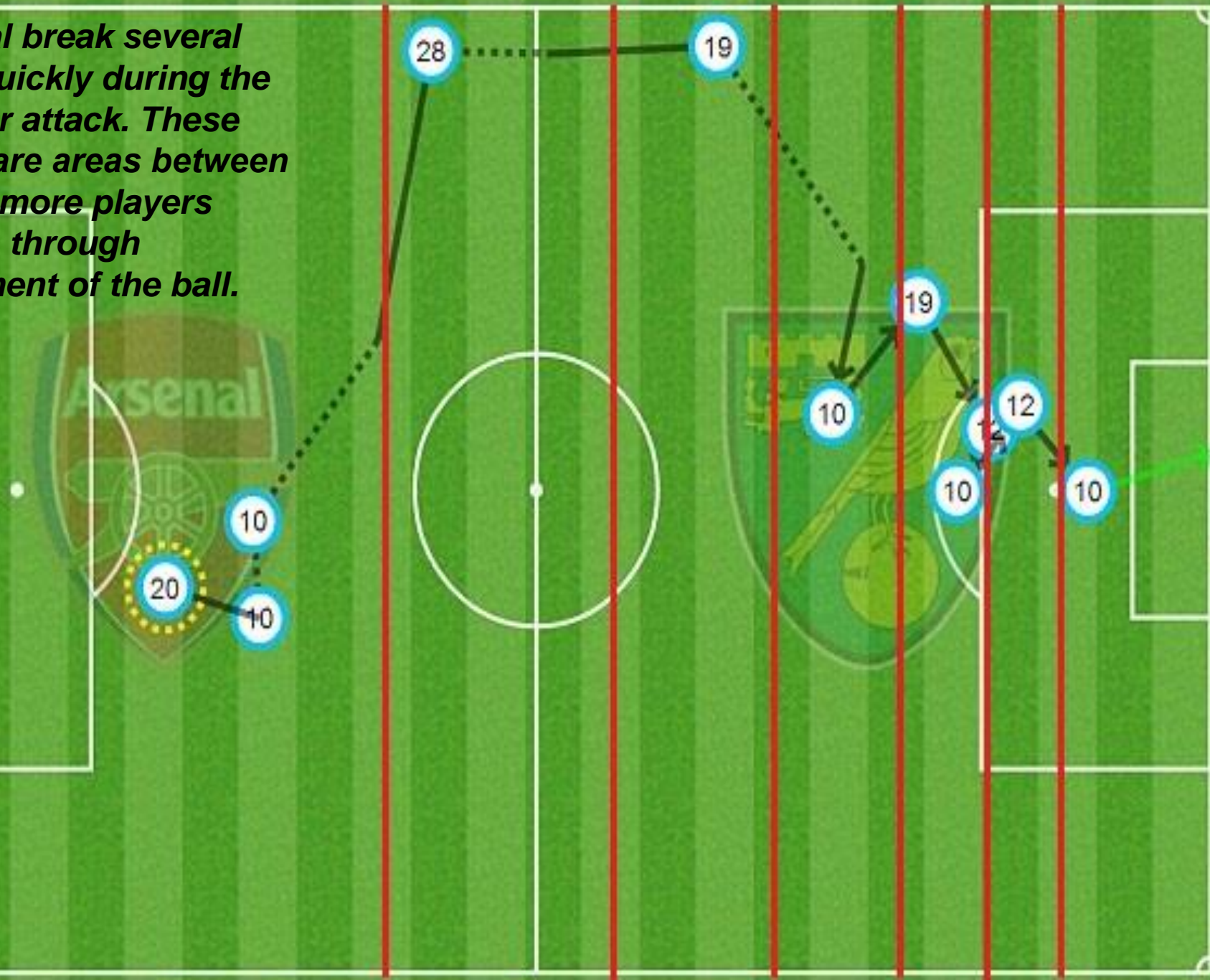
A combination of intricate passing leads to Wilshere receiving a through ball from Giroud between 4 Norwich players.



7. Finish Up....



Arsenal break several lines quickly during the counter attack. These 'lines' are areas between two or more players broken through movement of the ball.





Facts and figures...

- 9... Number passes made before goal
- 5... Number of Arsenal players involved in attack
- 4... Number of defenders eliminated with a single pass
- 1... Number of touches used to finish
- 18... Number of seconds taken to score from regain



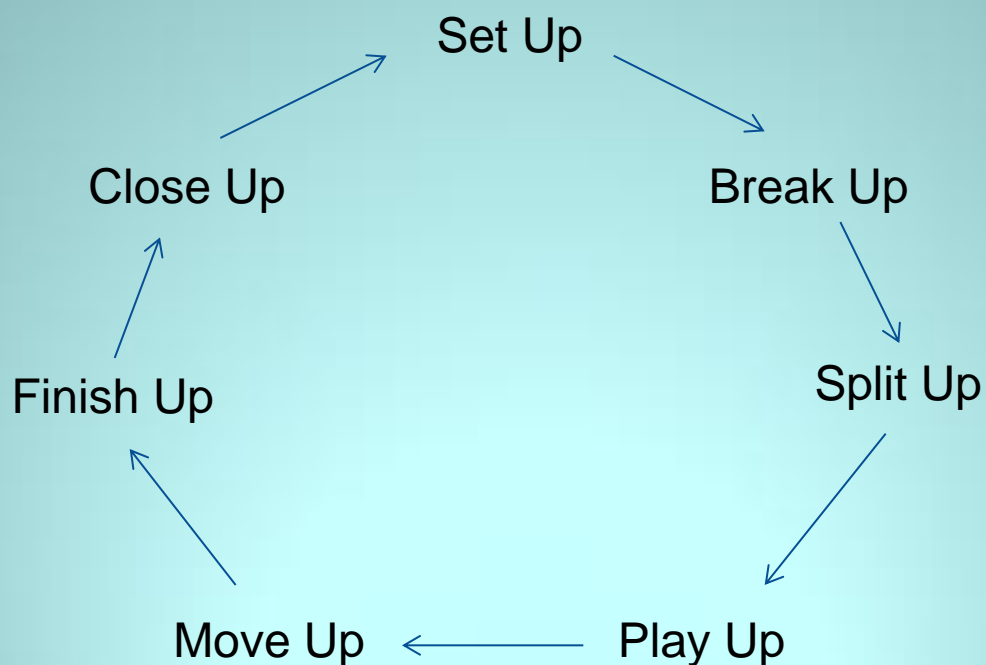


the inspiration...

- The fast paced attacks are a refreshing way of playing football to the contrasting 'Tika Taka' method, more notably fashioned by F.C Barcelona.
- The dependence of team work and cohesion to successfully complete a counter attack, rather than relying upon individual brilliance.
- Fast flowing attacks can often provide excitement when watching the speed of play which prevents play from becoming predictable to both players and fans.
- It gets you off your seat.
- The type of football that if you blink... you'll miss it!



The seven main principles of a counter attack





HOW... to coach it?

A counter attacking topic can be delivered in a variety of practice types:

- Technical (use interference)
- Skill
- Functional
- **Small Sided Game**
- Phase of Play

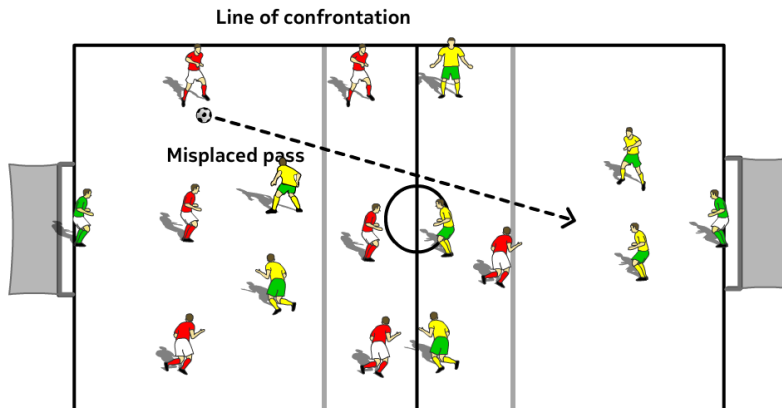


UEFA B: Defending deep to Counter Attack

Small Sided Game

‘Defending deep to counter attack’

1 3 3 1 V 1 2 3 2



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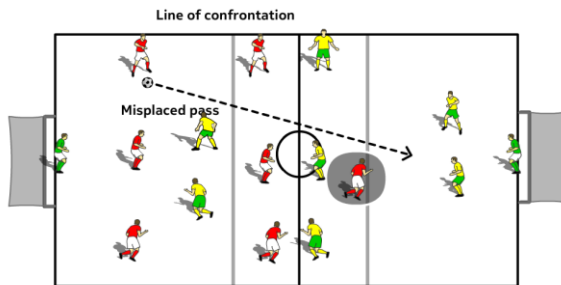
Coaching Points:

1. Drop – when? where? how?
2. 1st defending line
3. Pressure to regain by nearest man – team mates to slide in relation to ball movement (individual/unit?)
4. Early and quick forward pass
5. Movement & support - #11/#7 high and wide runs
6. Innovation – Be clever on end product



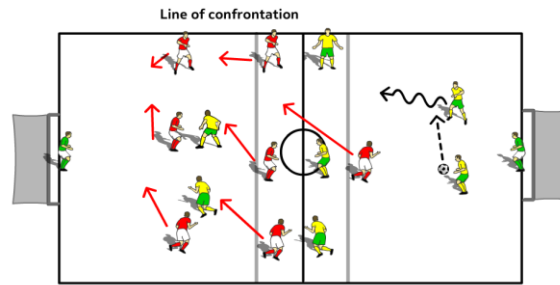
‘Painting the pictures’

1 3 3 1 V 1 2 3 2



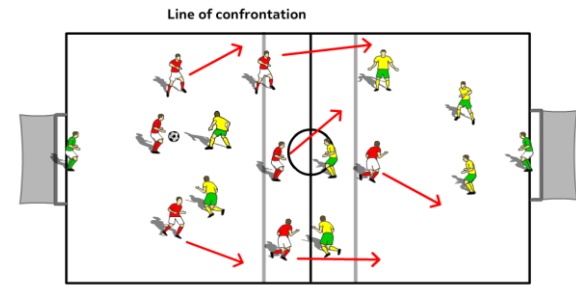
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No.9 to **drop** in front of
midfield three, rather than
press in a 2v1.

Defending team to
recognise body position of
CB in position and **slide**
goal/ball side.

After regain, Arsenal to
disperse **high and**
wide to allow forward
pass centrally/wide.



Any Questions?