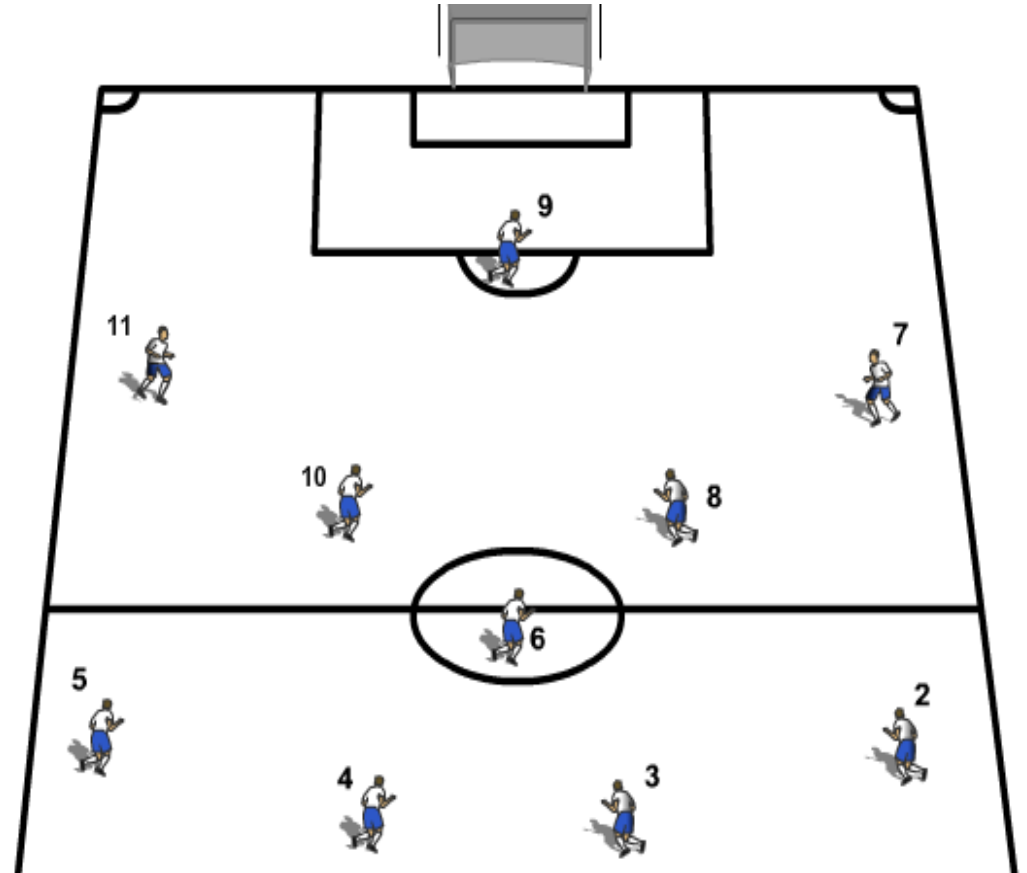


4-3-3 advantages of using a holding midfielder

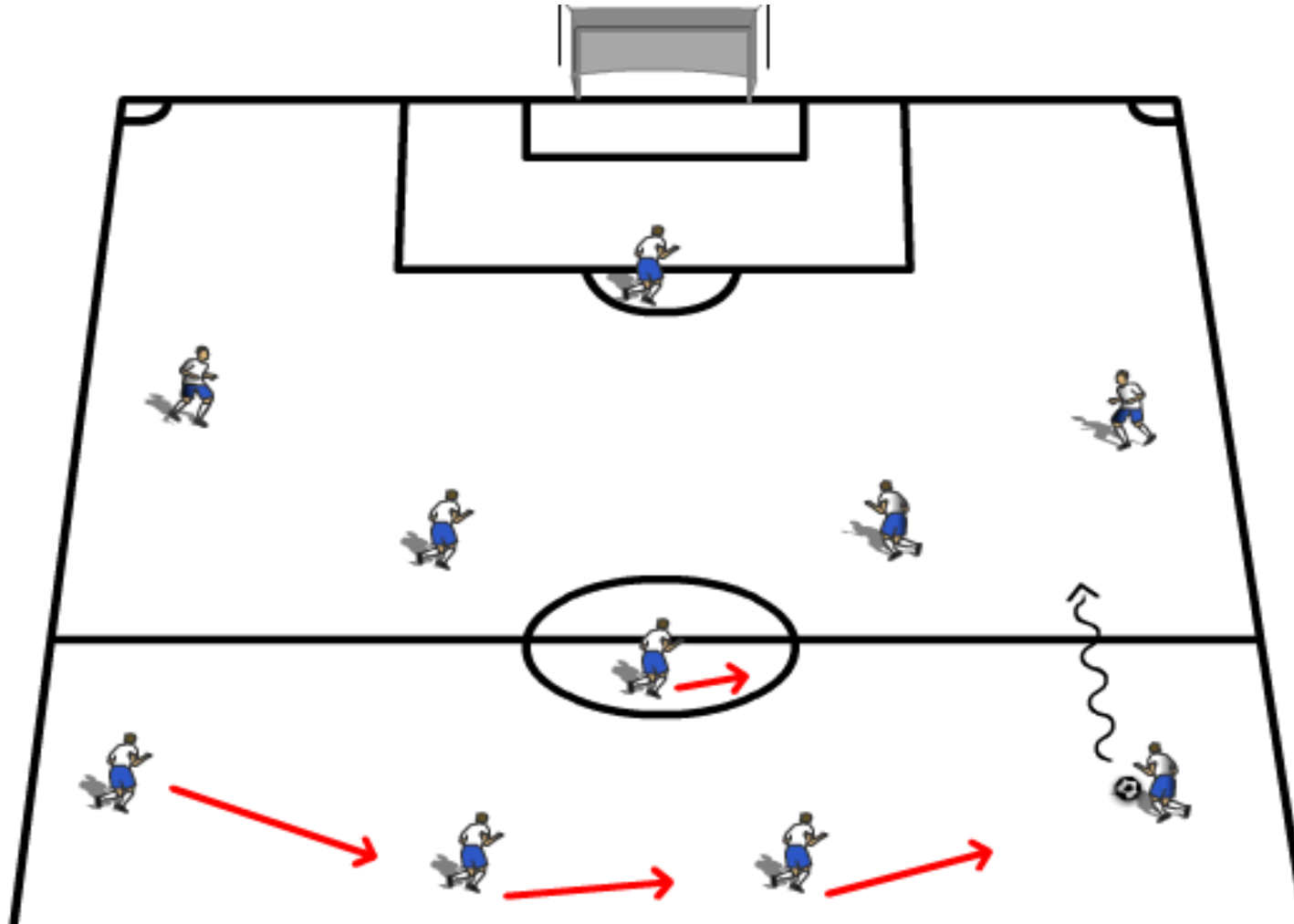


4-3-3 advantages of using a holding midfielder

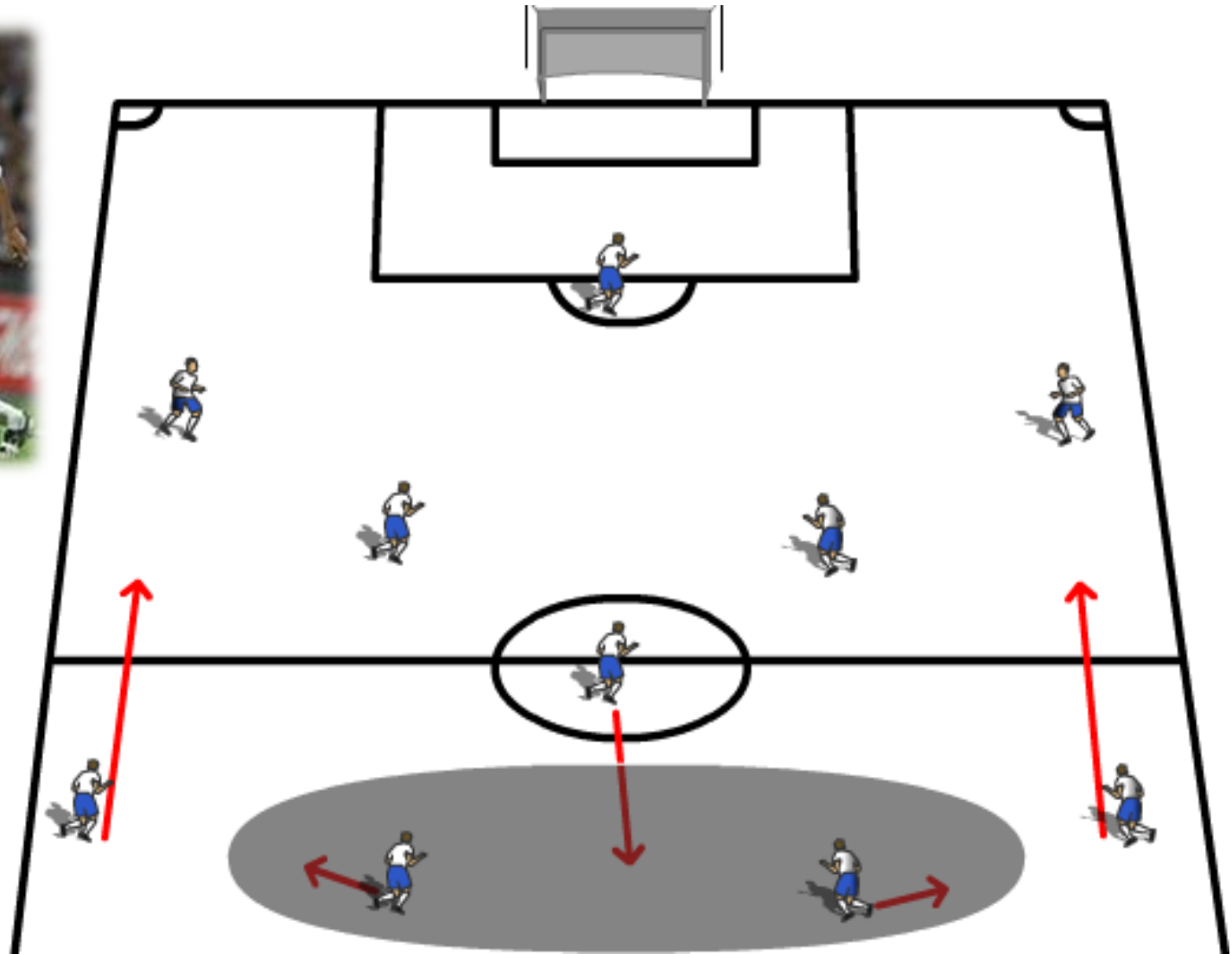
In the recent games against Wales and Ghana, the England national team have experimented with a GK-4-3-3 formation as shown below. In these fixtures, England have chosen to play with one holding midfielder, with both Scott Parker and Gareth Barry sharing this role and playing behind two attacking midfielders.



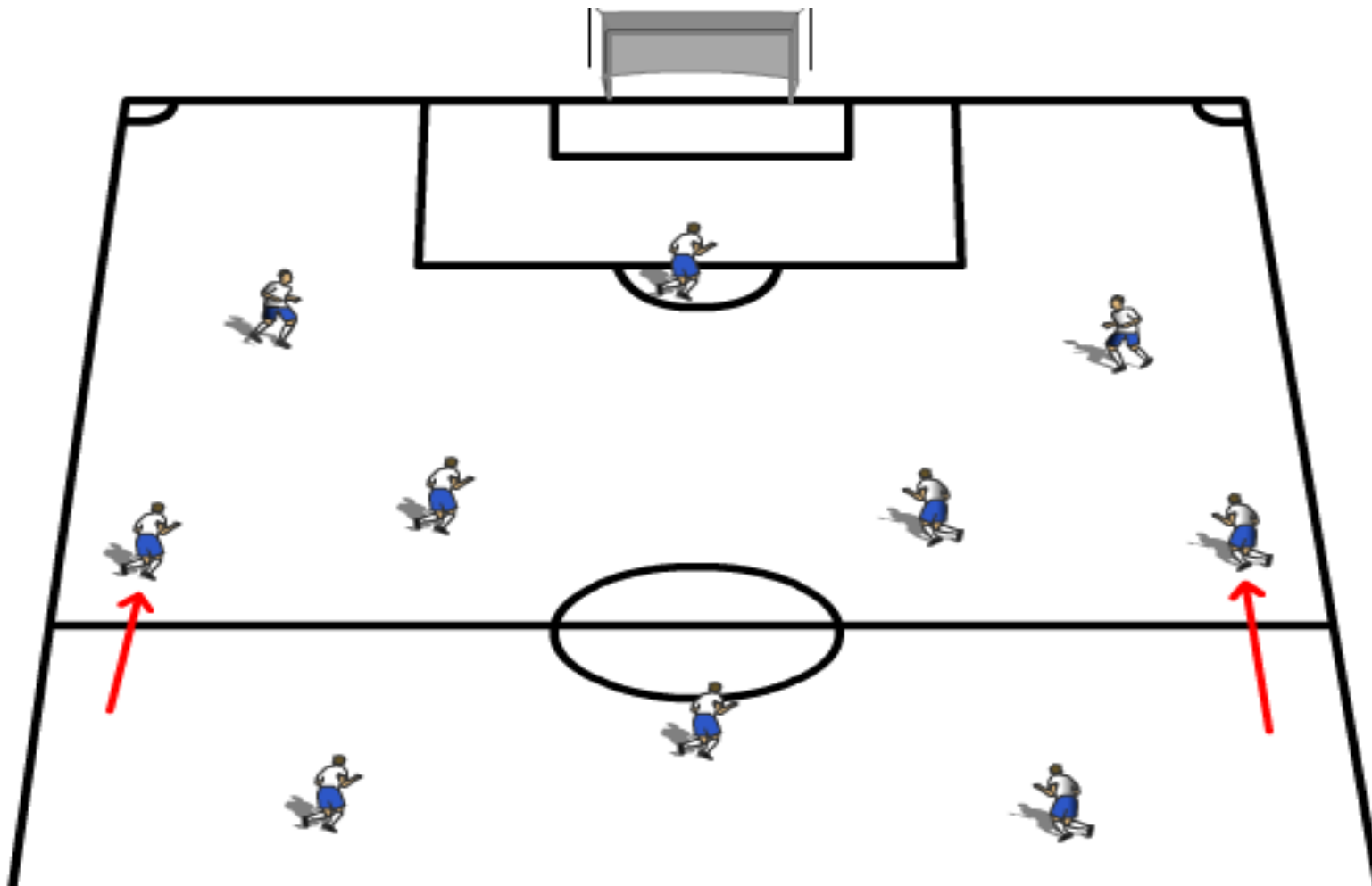
The advantage of this formation is that it allows both of the full backs to attack freely and create overloads in the middle and final thirds of the pitch. The diagram below shows how the right full back can dribble into the attack. The holding midfielder and three defenders then squeeze across to cover the space that is left by this forward run.



The holding midfielder can also provide the freedom to play with two attacking full backs.



When both full backs decide to get forward and join the attack, the holding midfielder must drop deeper and in-between the two central defenders, who then split wide. This gives the team good defensive stability and rotation from a GK-4-3-3 to an expansive GK-3-4-3 formation.



The holding midfielder also gives the team other advantages in attack.

For instance, the two attacking midfielders can be free to join and the attack and make forward runs to support the lone striker. The holding midfielder gives them this freedom by holding the centre of the pitch.

Decision time !

