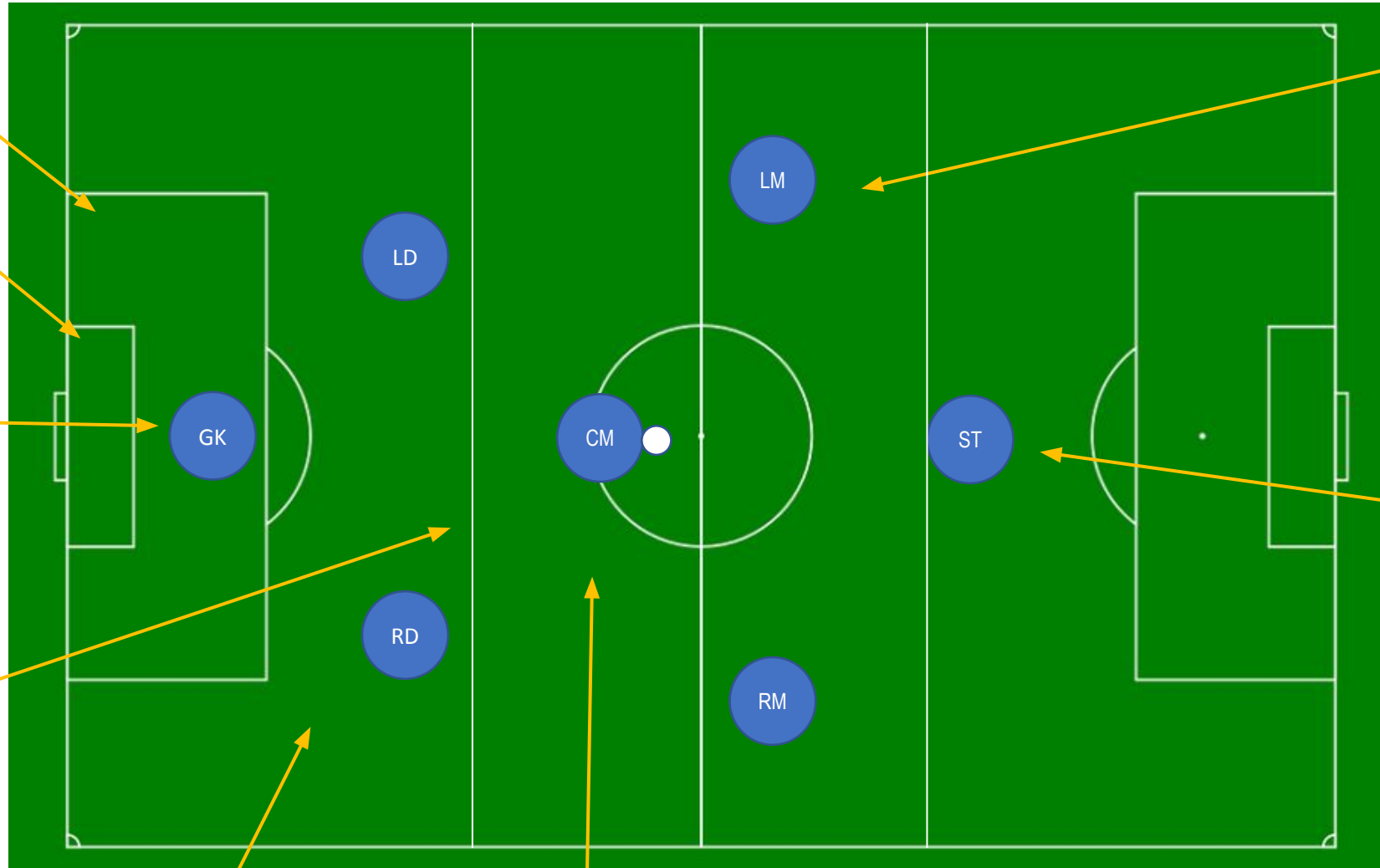


Base Positions in (2-3-1) Formation

Created by Mike Dove



The Left and Right Midfield covers wider than any positions before in Micro. They are expected to defend when being attacked, but are the main attack positions too. This requires a lot of running and good positioning awareness.

The Striker is mostly a scoring position. They look to find scoring opportunities by getting open or passing to the LM/RM when being overrun.

Penalty box – The area where GK can use hands.

Goalie Box – Where goalie kicks are taken

GK should start outside the goalie box.

Build Out Line – The line where offsides starts and the opposing team has to stand behind during GK kicks.

The Defenders protect the goal from their side and center and look to get the ball to the LM or RM. They should always stay on their half of the field.

The Center Midfield mainly covers center field and stays between LM/RM & LD/RD. CM should stay on their side of the ball and to defend, but can also look for opportunities to score.

GK = Goalie (Goal Keeper) – Protects the goal
LD & RD = Left / Right Defender – Defends the goal from the left & right
CM = Center Midfielder – Covers both offense and defense in center field
LM, RM = Left & Right Midfield (AKA Halfback, Winger) – Covers Offense and Defense, playing wide to stretch the field and create opportunities
ST – Striker – The sole mainly offensive player, stays just below offsides pt.

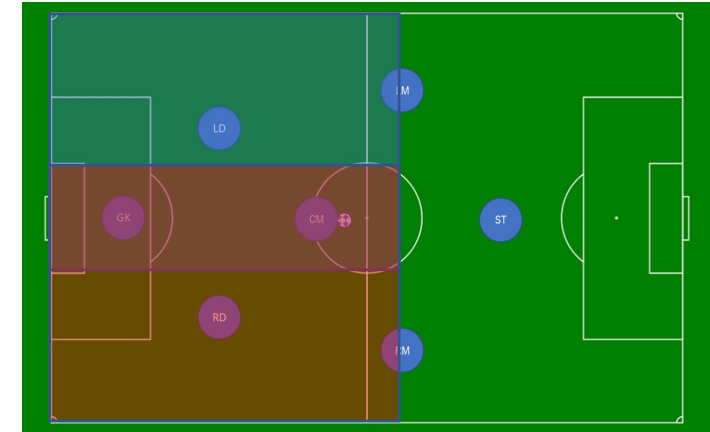
Positions in (2-3-1) Formation

LD & RD = Left / Right Defender (AKA Center Backs) – Defends the goal from the left & right in the area shown. They break up any attacks and deny any chances on goal.

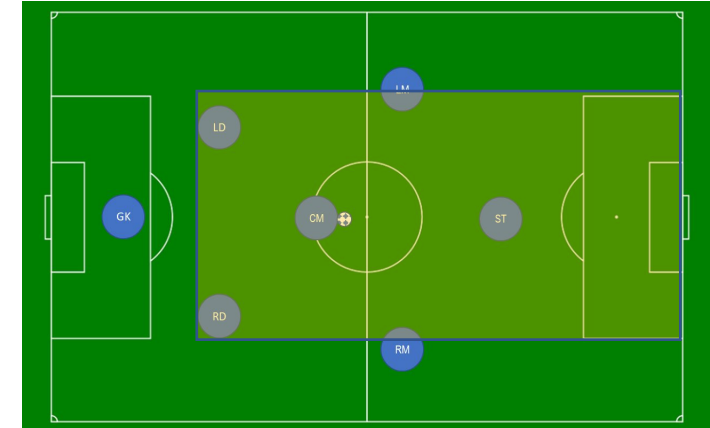
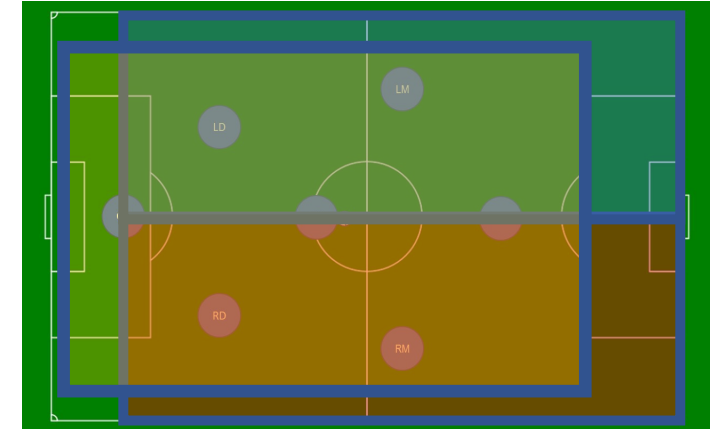
CM, LM, RM = Midfield (The LM and RM are sometimes referred to as Wingers) – A midfielder in soccer is a player positioned in the center of the field between the defenders and the forwards. The role of a midfielder is to provide the link between the attack and the defense. They are expected to defend as well as attack and will attempt to control and dictate the tempo of the game. The CM covers from box to box. The LM and RM cover their side of the field from their box to the opponent's goal.

The midfielder can play aggressively or defensively depending on the strategy at the moment. Up by 3 goals? We will play a defensive midfielder game. The midfielder needs to have a good awareness of the field and the positions. They need to adjust more than the other positions base on the opponent's strategy.

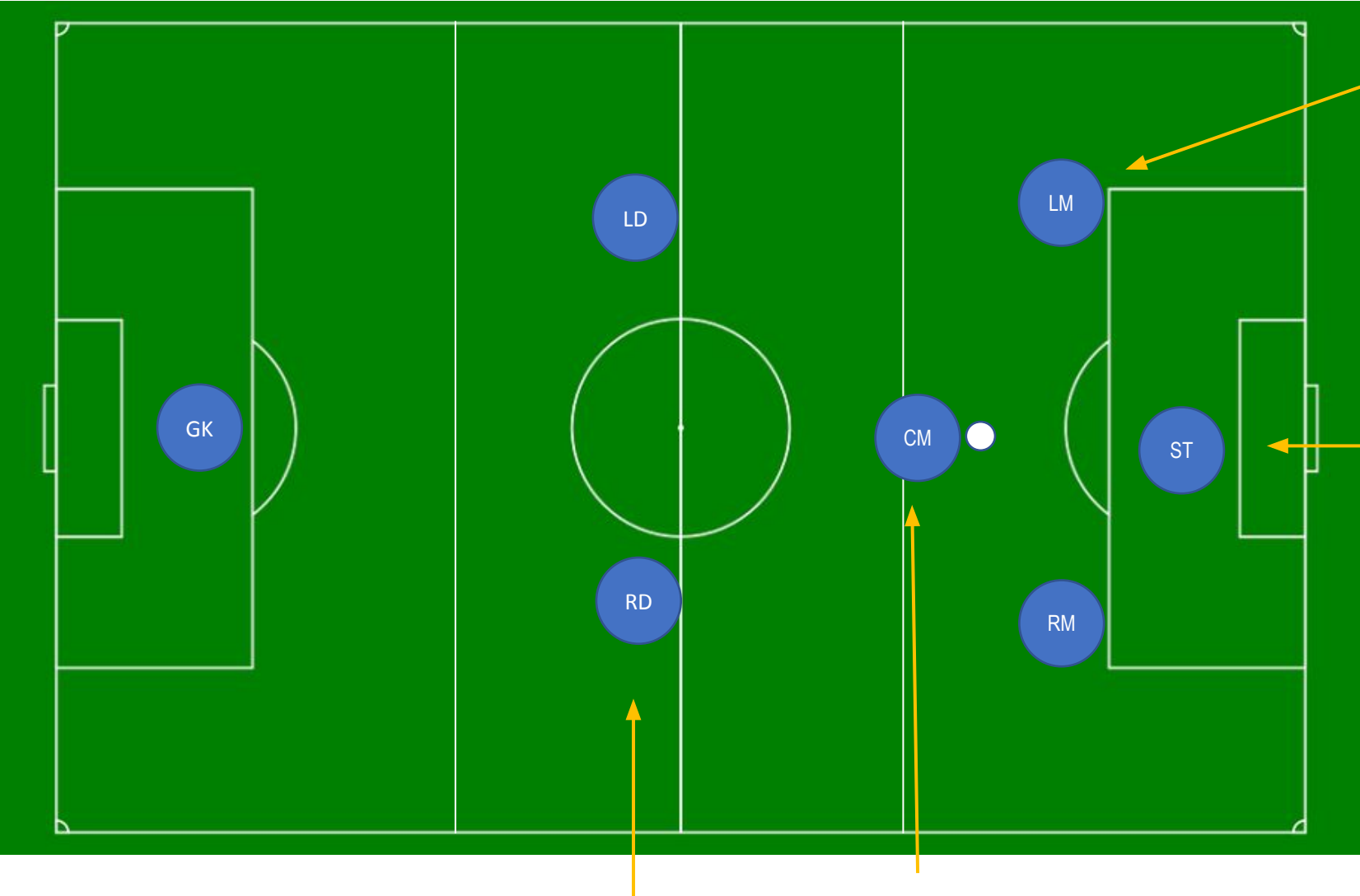
ST – Striker – The sole offensive player, stays just below offside line. They job is to score goals, but often they are quickly overrun by 2 or 3 players, so “holding” the ball is important until the midfielders can get into position. If the striker is overrun, then one of the wingers should be wide open. The Striker should take advantage of those matchups.



CM covers the middle box (Y&O). The LM covers G&Y, and RM covers R&O.



Positioning When on Offense



The Left and Right Midfield covers the flanks. If they have the ball, they move towards the goal. If the striker gets the ball, they move towards the net for support. If not, they move to an advantage position for a pass or takeaway. They must be prepared to fall back quickly if the opposing team gets the ball.

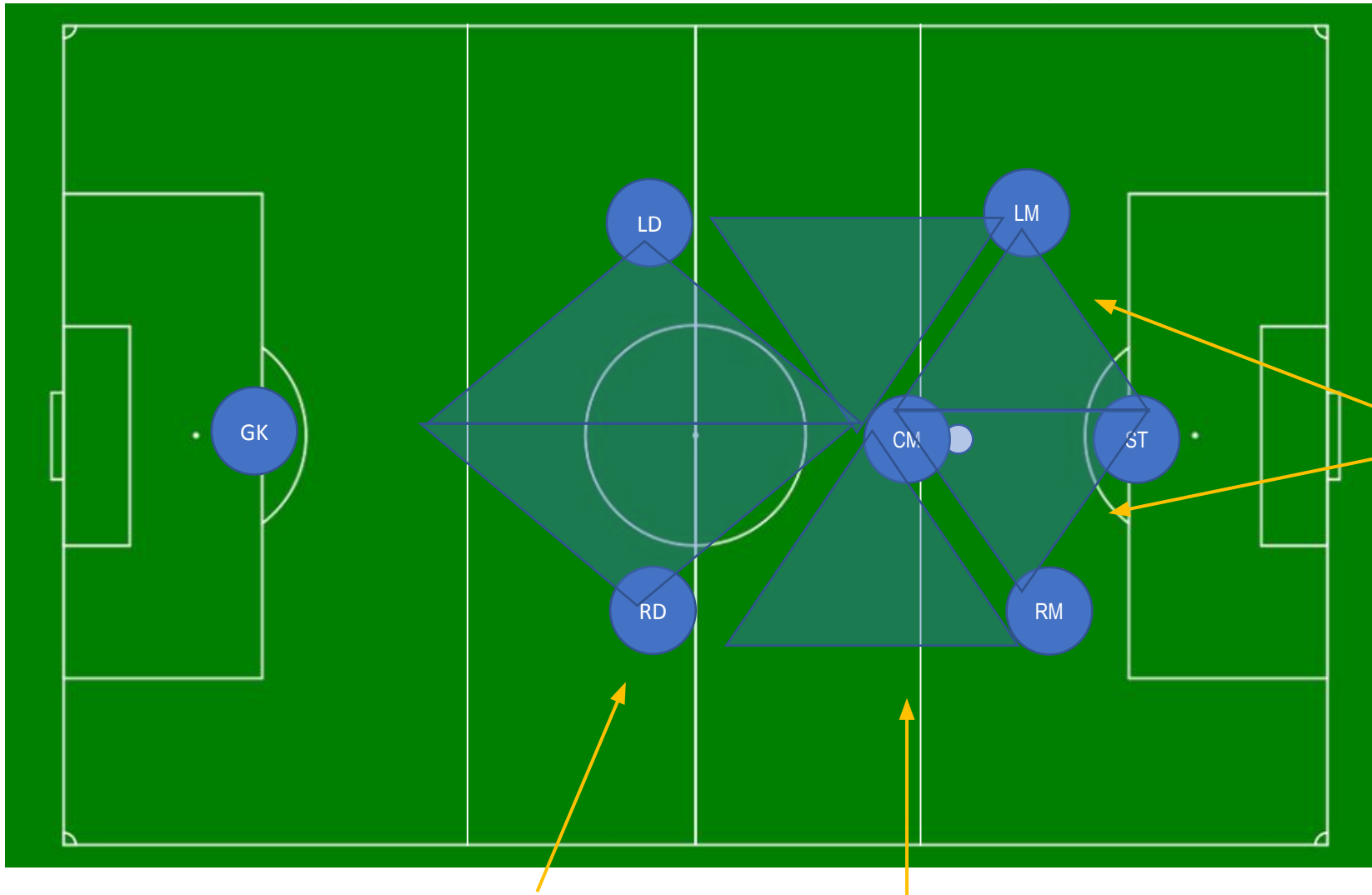
The Striker is looking to get open, but behind the offside line. If they have the ball, they will likely get overloaded, so look to shoot or pass to the closing LM or RM

The Defenders move up to get any ball cleared by the opposing defense. They should never be further than one hard kick away from the ball.

The Center Midfield has to cover the gap between the LM/RM and the LD/RD. This is a lot of responsibility. If the CM cheats forward too much, the team can be caught in a bad position on defense.

- GK** = Goalie (Goal Keeper)
- LD & RD** = Left / Right Defender
- CM** = Center Midfielder
- LM, RM** = Left & Right Midfield
- ST** – Striker

Positioning When on Offense – Passing lanes



The intent is to stay in position to a certain extent to build passing lanes or “triangles”. However, the main point is to get open and anticipate where the ball is going. This is the base setup, but variations can be used to exploit different defensive looks.

The Defenders move up to get any ball cleared by the opposing defense. They should never be further than one hard kick away from the ball. The Defense can cross over the halfway line, but they need to get back quickly if the opponents get the ball. The ball side defender should move closer to the ball to keep the ball on the offensive.

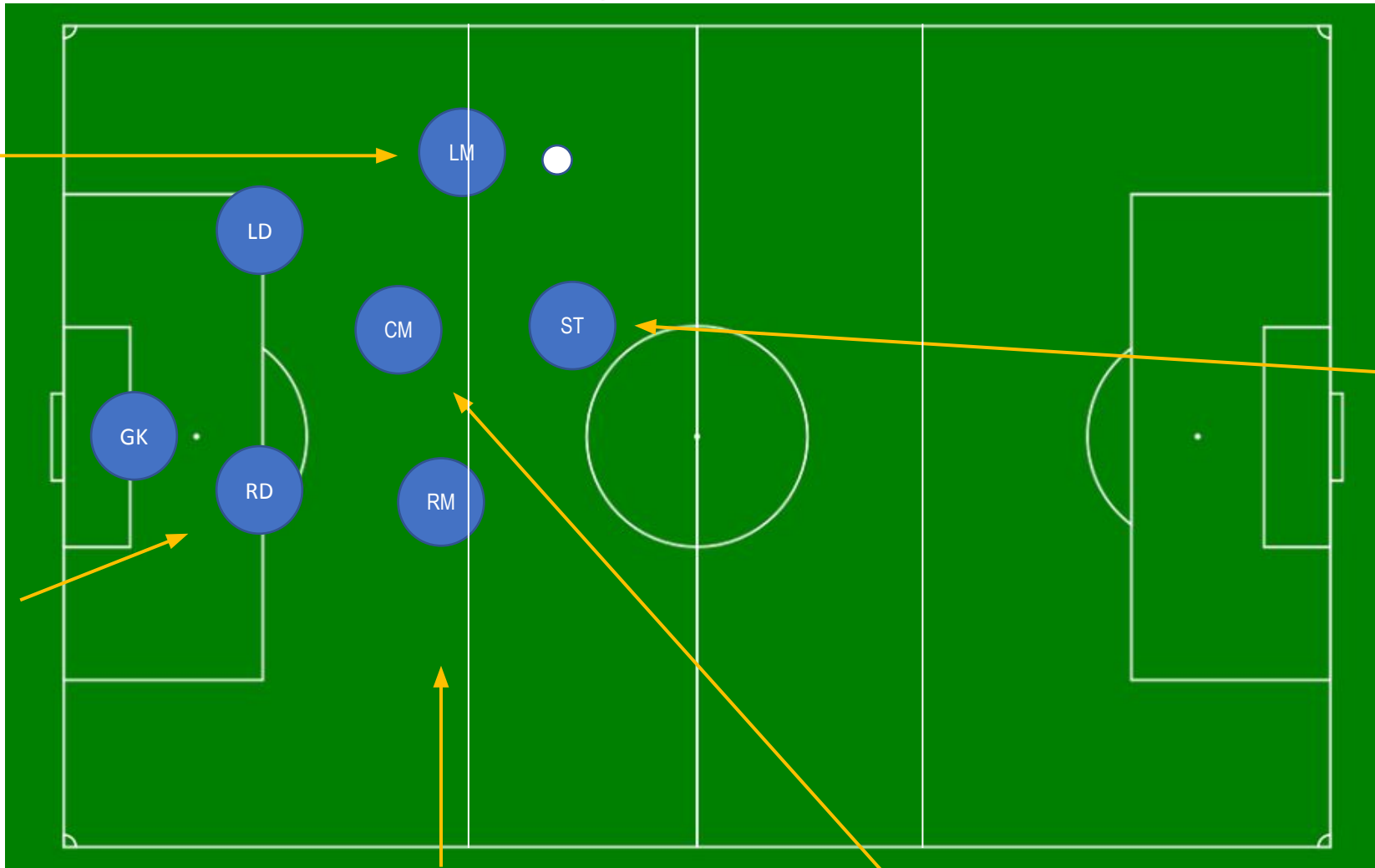
The Center Midfield has to cover the gap between the LM/RM and the LD/RD. This is a lot of responsibility. If the CM cheats forward too much, the team can be caught in a bad position on defense.

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Positioning When on Defense

The Left and Right Midfield covers the flanks on defense too. They are trying to keep the opposing team from running down the field. They must get used to defending while running full speed.

The Left and Right Defender prevents the ball from getting into the goalie box and covers any opponents inside the box. If the opponents players are bunched up on one side, they can move more towards that side. If the opponent is spread out, so should the defenders.



The Striker is looking to get a ball if cleared and be open if the defense is looking to pass. As soon as your team gets possession, the striker should look for the pass.

The Left and Right Midfield opposite side of where the ball is, moves towards the middle of the field and looks out for open opponents and open field.

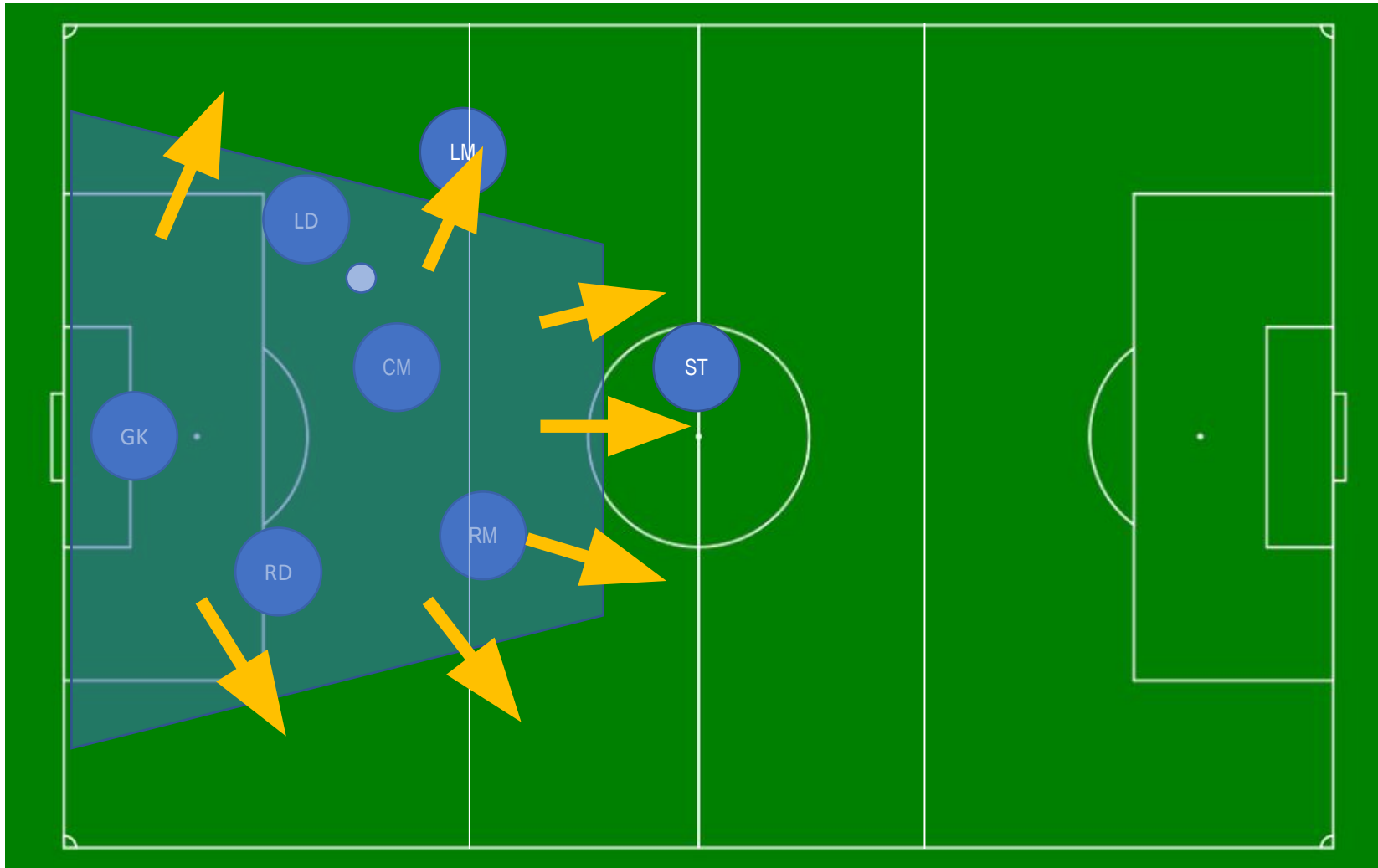
The Center Midfield on defense should always look to be where the ball is about to go, which is typically towards the goal. Hence, they need to get between the ball and the goal.

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The Danger Zone

The first move on defense when the opposing team is pressing up, should be to get the ball out of the danger zone. If the opposing team is on top of you, attempt to kick the ball in the direction shown here.

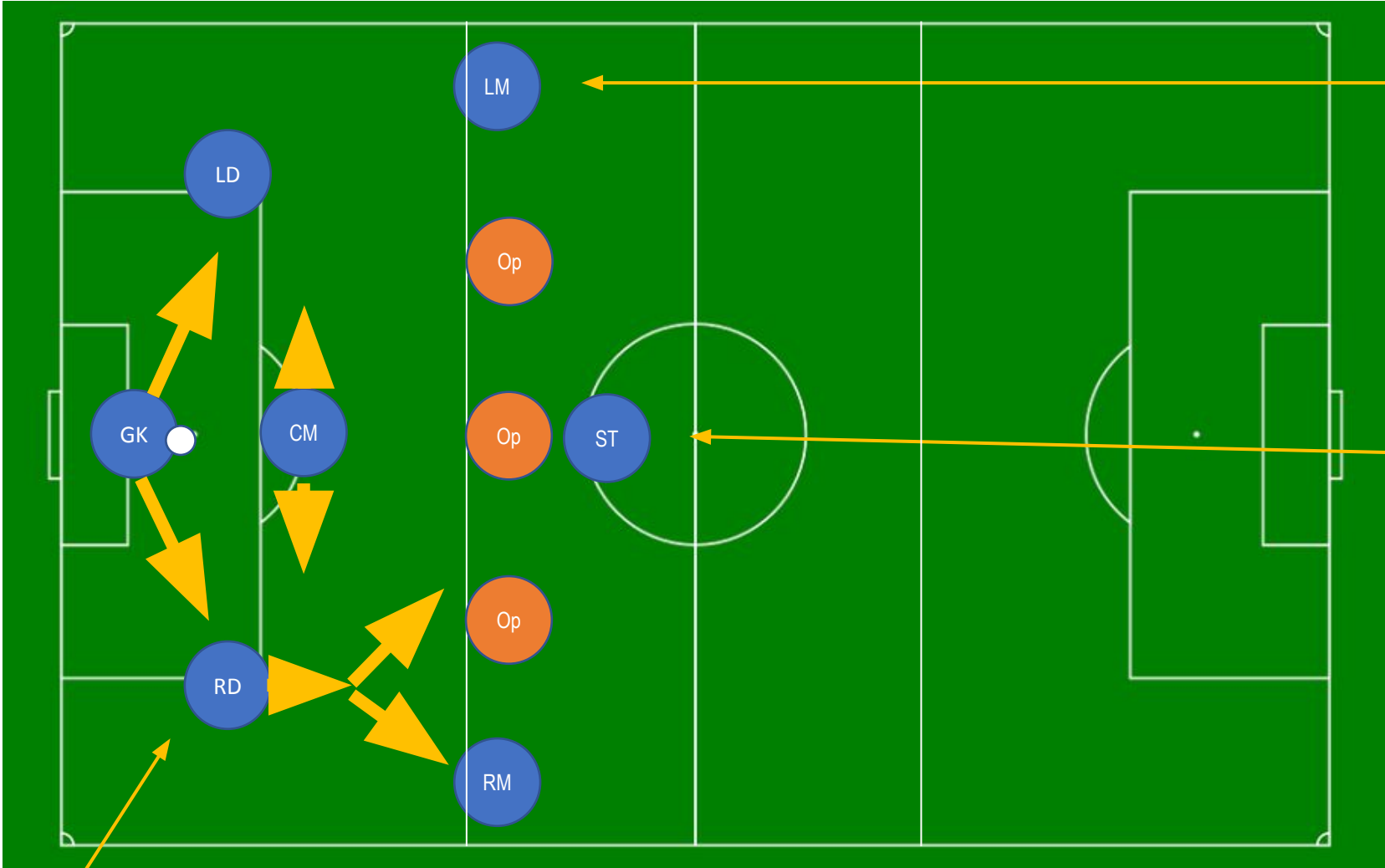
If you get possession of the ball and have time, try to pass it out to the sideline to one of the Midfielders. Or just kick it downfield to clear the danger zone. Dribbling is usually very dangerous when in this zone as players will press quickly once you have the ball. For now, we won't try to kick the ball through the middle, towards the goal, or into the danger zone.



#1 Rule on Defense: Never play the ball towards the middle!

GK = Goalie (Goal Keeper)
LD & RD = Left / Right Defender
CM = Center Midfielder
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Positioning During Goalie Kicks



The goalie never kicks the ball up the middle. Often the Opponents will be stacked in the middle. Always pass out to the side, but close enough to easily retrieve the ball.

The Left and Right Midfield stays out wide to ensure they can receive a ball on the sideline, which is the best way to get the ball out of your territory.

The Striker is looking to get open as always. If they get the ball, and the rest of the team hasn't caught up, the striker should try to delay the attack if possible to allow the Mid Fielders to get into position. Taking on 3 defense players by yourself always results in a loss of possession, so don't try it.

The Defense gains possession of the ball and then runs up the field if they are not being pressed. Once they start being pressed, they will have the option to pass to either the outside midfielder or the striker, whoever is mostly open.

The Opposite side defender must move towards the center if they're not receiving the ball. This is to help stop any attacks from a quickly lost build out play, which happens often. So CM and Opposite side defender needs to prepare for a loss of possession attack.

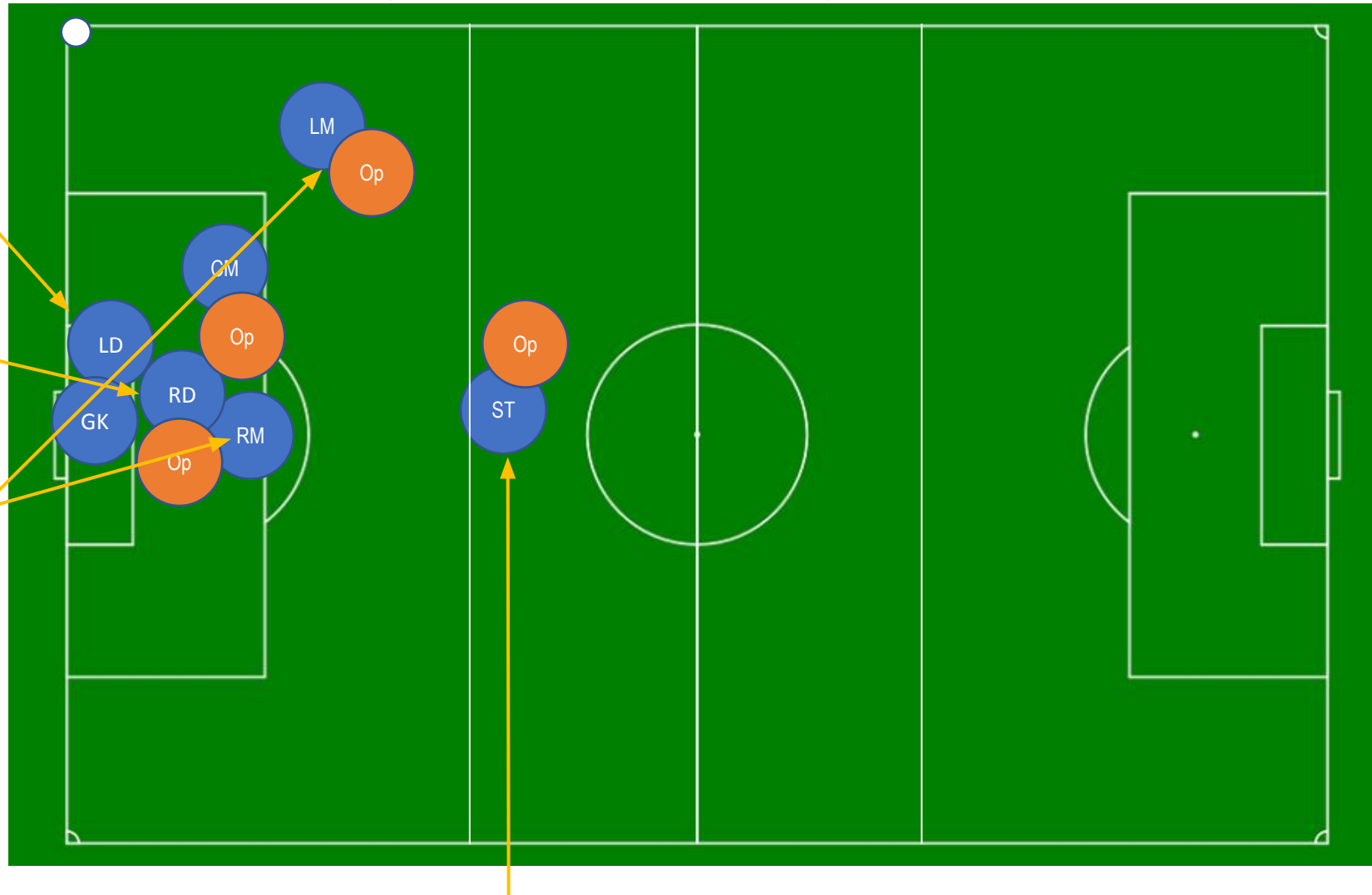
- GK** = Goalie (Goal Keeper)
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Positioning When Defending Corner Kicks

When defending corner kicks, everyone except the Striker is playing pure defense. The kick side defender should play the goal post and defend the cross.

The opposite side defender covers the middle of the field close to the goal.

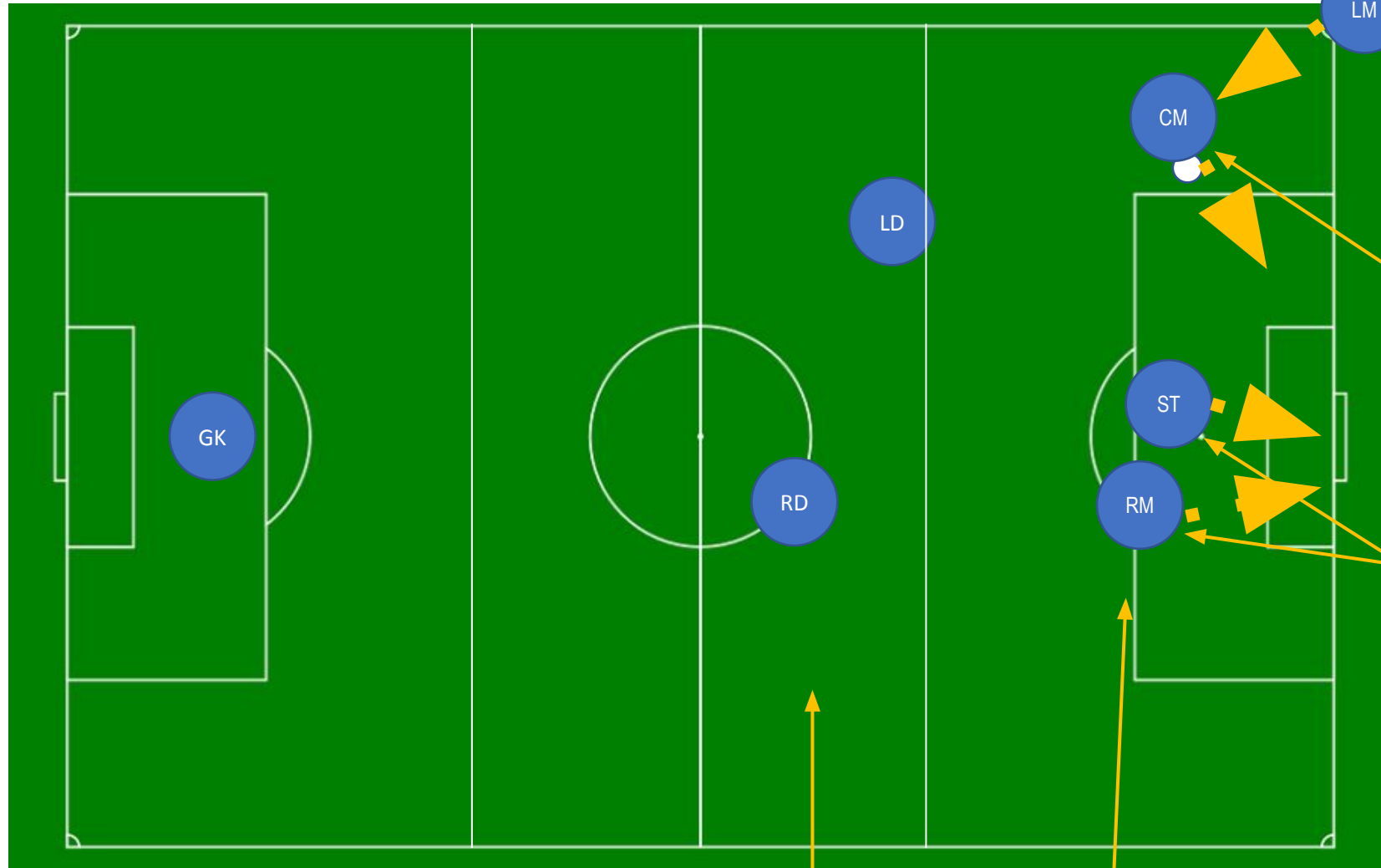
The midfielders cover an opponent player on the ball side of the player. If the opponent keeps moving, so should the defender.



The striker sits just outside the opponent's players in the open zone between the opponents Offense and Defense. The Striker is preventing their Center from kicking the ball back into the goal area. If the Striker gets the ball, his job is to "hold" the ball until the rest of the midfielders can start to get downfield. Taking the ball downfield by himself would only result in a lost possession, so be patient. If you are being pressured instantly, kick the ball outside the danger zone and allow everyone to "reset" their positions.

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LD & RD = Left / Right Defender
CM = Center Midfielder
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Positioning When Taking a Corner Kick



The Left and Right Midfield takes the kick. They have an option of kicking in front of the goal or kicking to the Center Midfielder, who has moved over to the ball's side. Once the ball is kicked, the Midfield must immediately run towards the goal.

The Center Midfielder must move over to allow a short kick to the midfielder. If this player is open, this should always be the move. An open CM can approach the goal with a better angle. The LM & CM can swap positions here.

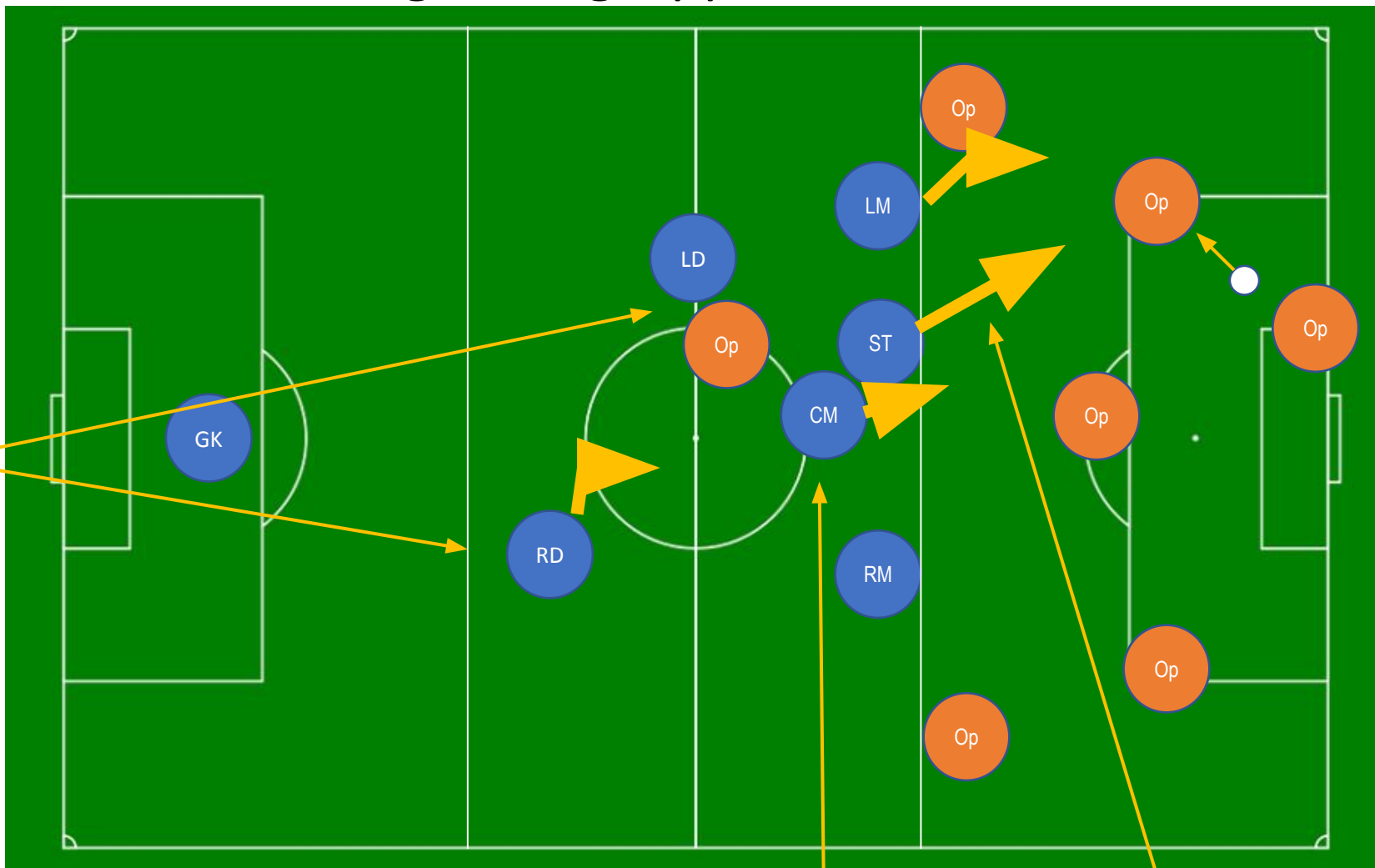
The Striker and Opposite side Midfielder are looking to get open and not be covered. If the team is covering players heavily, move around to get open. A moving target is hard to cover. Start far away and move towards the goal. The Striker generally moves towards the center of the goal and the opposite side midfielder moves towards their side goal post.

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The Defenders move up to get any ball cleared by the opposing defense. Once again, they should never be further than one hard kick away from the ball. If they get possession of the ball, they should dribble, pass or kick the ball back into the opponents Danger Zone. The ball side defender should always play up more than the other defender as shown here.

Remember, start high and “crash” towards the goal once the kick is taken. You want the ball to be in front of you when it gets in the area.

Positioning During Opponents Goalie Kicks



The Defenders have to ensure the play doesn't get behind them. They watch the Opponents Offense/Strikers/Wingers closely. The Opponents Offense cannot be left open.

The ball side defender plays higher, while the non-ball side defender moves closer to the middle for support.

The most aggressive strategy on a Goalie Kick is the 4-player press. Its difficult to defend regardless of the opponent's formation strategy.

This is basically having four players on the Build Out Line. If the ball is kicked short, they rush the play accordingly and try to overwhelm a spread-out formation. If they are playing a bunched formation, this strategy still creates chaos in the Opponents danger zone and hopefully provides a scoring opportunity.

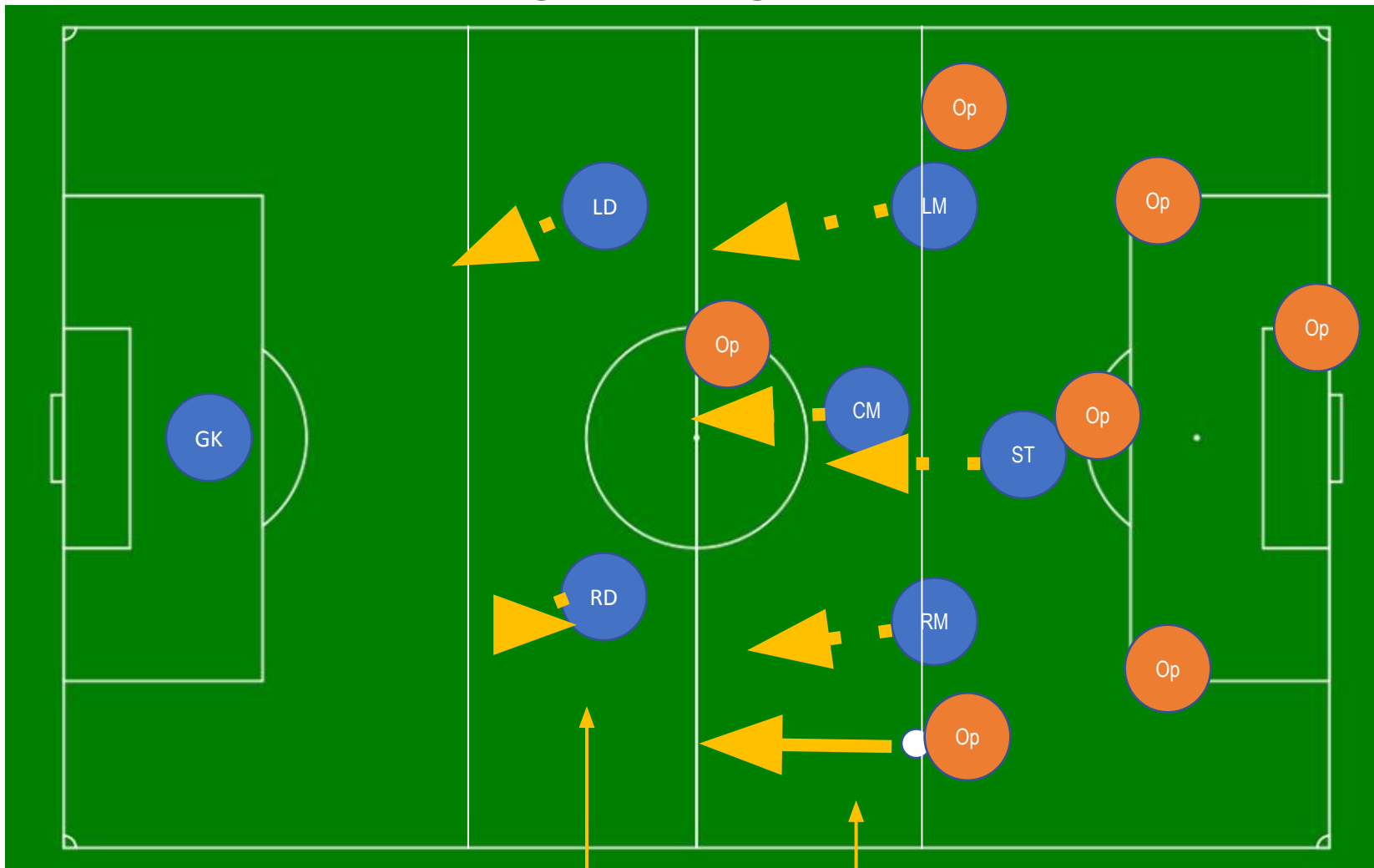
If the ball gets past our offensive push, the defensive players will be all alone, so its important that every time the Opponent gets the ball that the Midfields quickly run back to help protect a counterattack. Whenever the possession is lost, all players should heads towards their own goal.

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ST – Striker

The Center Midfield is fairly close to the Striker. However, any short kicks, they can move forward to assist in a coordinated attack. The CM tries not to let the ball past them.

The Striker is the first to attack and they should attack **HARD** by quickly pressing the ball. Don't worry about overcommitting or if the ball gets by you. The Striker job is to create chaos and hopefully force a mistake.

Reaction During a Change of Possession



If the Opponent gets possession of the ball, every player as a team needs to move the formation back towards their own goal as a quick reaction.

For example, if the ball gets out to the Opponents midfielder, everyone instantly runs towards their goal.

The intent is to tighten up the formation to a defensive stance from the more spread-out stance of the Offensive push.

We also want players used to instantly running towards their goal as timing could be everything here. If you spend too much time thinking about where you should be, it could be too late, so we will practice this during the formation drill in practice.

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LD & RD = Left / Right Defender
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The Defenders watch the Opponents Offense/Strikers/Wingers closely. They are the last line of defense, so containing is more important than possession change. This keeps a player from a straight shot to the goal and allows the midfielders to get back and in position to defend.

The Midfielders try not to let the Opponent's Midfielders/Wingers/Offense get behind them.