

# **MASTER TACTICAL BLUEPRINT FOR**

## **1-7-2 TACTICS**

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## **SECTION 1: TACTICAL PRINCIPLES & PHILOSOPHICAL IDENTITY**

### **1.1. Tactical Philosophy & Identity**

The tactical identity of this team is rooted in a **hybrid positional-relationist approach**, a system that combines the structural clarity and spacing discipline of positionism with the creativity and spontaneity of relationism in the final moments of each phase. The idea is to stay unpredictable the whole game and stay pragmatic in a flexible way. The goal is to construct a system that is:

- Semi-fixed but highly flexible:**

The structural framework is clearly defined but not rigid. Players operate with discipline in spacing and roles, yet are empowered to use their individual decision-making and technical intuition at key progressive moments. This creates a sense of order without predictability.

- Proactive in both attack and defense:**

Inspired by the principle of "**think like you're attacking while defending, and defending while attacking,**" players are coached to be constantly ready to transition. We emphasize anticipation over reaction, allowing the team to dominate transitional moments.

- Structurally intelligent and psychologically liberating:**

While tactical structures are deeply rehearsed, players are trusted to read the game, take calculated risks, and interpret in-game scenarios based on collective trust — ensuring both efficiency and unpredictability.

- Elite Physicality and Excellent Technique:**

In order to make the whole hybrid idea of the two distant ideas of positionism and relationism smooth and productive it requires the players to be physically fit to execute pro-activeness and intensity control whereas elite technicality ensures the ability of the players to overcome any qualitative battle against any opponent they face. In short the target is to develop players into the most complete version of each position, i.e complete fullback, complete striker, complete winger, complete mezzala, etc.

- Positive Mentality:**

I believe what you need to win a football match out of 100% is, 30% tactics and 70% social competence. And in my opinion a positive mentality is the only way to always succeed in these social competitions you face in the game. Team chemistry, productivity and tenacity or well being after any challenges will be ensured. Besides, every player will

not only be comfortable making any decision that helps the team to be unpredictable but also will make that player always feel responsible and careful of their decision.

- **Efficient Set-pieces:**

As much as I give too much focus on open play chances, as a modern coach I also do give good attention to set-pieces as both chance creating and dangerous moments of the game when they are against us. FC Midtjylland tactics on set-pieces and the well known Arsenal FC set-piece coach Nicolas Jover tactics are major constituents of our set-piece tactics as they are productive and innovative in terms of how to execute them which doesn't make us vulnerable in transitions. But I plan to work with any set-piece tactic enthusiast who blends the two productive set-piece tactics with his/her unique ideas if there are in the future as they become a set-piece coach within our coaching staff.

## 1.2. Core Tactical Principles

Our tactical system is built upon **five original core principles**, which define the team's playing identity both with and without the ball. Each principle is woven into the practical functions of the system:

### 1. Tenacity

Derived from the teachings of Arsène Wenger, tenacity replaces the more emotional concept of "resilience." It emphasizes fighting for every moment with **discipline and clarity**. Players are taught not only to endure adversity but to do so with calculated effort and sharp decision-making — especially important when individual freedom is granted during build-ups and transitions.

### 2. Game Awareness

This principle ensures players are deeply aware of:

- **Spatial dynamics:** Knowing where teammates and opponents are at all times.
  - **Zone control:** Understanding where to create overloads or traps.
  - **Tactical triggers:** Recognizing signals for progression, pressing, or retreat.
- Game awareness is especially crucial in applying our **zone-based hybrid defensive model** and in supporting progression via third-man passing lanes or diagonal combinations.

- **Relational scanning:** Players read not just space and pressure, but the behavior of teammates in the mid-three and supporting box. This enables synchronized deformation and third-man activation.

### **3. Smart Intensity and Positioning**

Intensity is not just about energy; it must be purposeful. Players are trained to move with sharpness and timing, while maintaining intelligent positioning. This principle supports:

- **Defensive compactness**
- **Rest defense security**
- **Sudden vertical overloads during attacking phases**

It also enables **fluid overloads** in targeted areas without compromising structural balance.

### **4. Pro-activeness (Mental & Physical)**

Split into **mental** and **physical** sub-principles:

- **Mentally proactive players** anticipate rather than react — they scan, reposition, and prepare for next actions even before receiving the ball.
- **Physically proactive players** are always movement-ready, available to support passing lanes, recover lost balls, or initiate pressing.

Pro-activeness forms the **backbone of our transitional success**, especially in deep build-up phases and counter-pressing recovery moments.

### **5. Collective Trust**

Collective trust is operationalized through the supporting box. Players know that when they deform or drop, the box will lift pressure, offer outlets, and maintain structural integrity. This trust allows the mid-three to take risks and express themselves. The unifying psychological principle of the system. Every player must trust that:

- Mistakes are accepted, because teammates are ready to cover or recover.
- Creative actions will be respected and supported.
- Collective understanding > individual criticism.

This principle supports:

- **Fluid attacking decision-making**

- **Tactical unpredictability**
- **Strong team chemistry**

By granting players freedom within a system of trust, we increase individual bravery and team synergy. It also allows us to execute a **player-led, scenario-adaptive progression model**, where decision-making is spread across the team rather than dictated from the sidelines.

### **1.3. Summary of Tactical Identity**

<b>Identity Element</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Base Structure</b>	Semi-fixed positional organization with relational decision-making freedom in final phase of play
<b>Defensive Philosophy</b>	Structured hybrid system (zonal + man-marking) using zone traps and close-proximity markers
<b>Attacking Philosophy</b>	Multi-layered build-up using third-man passing, positional rotations, and half-space overloads
<b>Pressing Principle</b>	Gegenpressing-based high block with zone-specific triggers and collective trust in recovery
<b>Transition Logic</b>	Players trained to recognize when to rotate, hold, or advance based on relational cues
<b>Relational Progression Engine</b>	Mid-three morphs based on pressure and support; superiority is created through behavior, not just numbers.
<b>Mental Framework</b>	Anchored in game awareness, trust, tenacity, and disciplined proactiveness and most importantly the sense of positivity.

## SECTION 2: GAME MODEL & FORMATION PHILOSOPHY

### 2.1. General Game Model

Our game model is founded on **adaptability through structure and unpredictability**, designed to give players clarity in positioning while unlocking fluidity in execution through relationist approach. The core idea is to maintain a **clear but flexible identity** across all four phases of play. But before getting into the details of the phases of the game let me first clear some basis which we rely on to make this unique style of play happen.

- The idea of the supporting box which is a box of players around our mid-three players who we use to progress with their relationist approach towards pressing or lines and then progress. This box is made of No.3, No.4, No.7 & No.8 when we attack with one striker system and No.3, No.2, No.7 & No.9 when we attack with two striker systems.
- 1-7-2 is the ratio we use to coordinate our players on any given moment of the game that means whether attacking or defending there is always for example while attacking 1 player which is the one with the ball either dribbling or passing or even shooting is supported by 7 players within different roles and that players action is defended by 2 players as rest defense.

In attack:

- 1- decision maker(the player with the ball who is about to make a pass or dribble to progress)
- 7-3 outlets, 3-inlets and 1 player always ready for direct attacks.
- 2- defending that specific moment of decision about to be made by the defenders(rest defense)
- Technicality and Physicality supported by Positive mentality are the key components that make the tactical identity happen on the pitch without any flaws throughout the game. The circumstance of physical excellence and technical quality players need to stay superior over opponents is mate through training players to be elite in both technique and physique. Pass and Play, Dribble or pass and zero point logic are the most important techniques the game needs whereas stamina and ability to adjust body orientation are the most important physical qualities the game needs.
- As unpredictability and being pragmatic is the goal to win games not only with the relationist approach or technical and physical superiority are our way of being unpredictable or pragmatic but also having a broad player profile which we use to be

varied with our attacking approach. I believe the more we attack indirectly means that we are defending, therefore we try to make our attack as various, as flexible and as pragmatic as possible using different approaches.

- Attaining balance in transitions are as important as technicality, physicality and we give a huge attention to it as we do to being unpredictable. Although triggers and other tactical procedures are used for transition, we also use the idea of subjecting each player to the role of attacking and defending in each moment of the game. The 1-7-2 idea is related to this the way every player is assigned to specific roles in each moment of the game with the 1-7-2 idea is to maintain the balance of attack and defense transitions.
- Set-pieces are another important part of our system in which most of the tactics related to set-pieces are left as place-holder sections, because set-pieces are used just like in the modern game as a game changing weapon for us. Therefore designating the role of set-piece coaching for a specialist is the appropriate way of giving the appropriate attention to it. Although we leave much of the work of this specific moment of the game for a specialist I still do have ideas of combining one of the most successful set-piece tactics from the likes of Nicolas Jover and Midtjylland FC set-piece tactics.

## **1. Attacking Phase**

- Generally our preferred attack is to start from deep build-up this is because to execute an efficient attacking play. Starting in our own half presents us with two attacking options which are either long direct balls or centrally initiated counter plays if our opponents are vulnerable to do so or our favorite one which is a slow progression from deep build up to mid possession all the way to final third occupations.
- We use two types of attacking systems generally known as 1-striker system and 2-striker system which both resemble an already known formation at times but are unique in tactical areas. For example our two striker system in mid possession phase looks exactly like a 3-5-2 system but as we progress to final third occupation structure we use a 1-3-4-2 structure, but the general idea is in 1 striker system we use a target man type of striker like Haaland while making the rest of the players involved in the build up work whereas in the two striker system we use 2 strikers to partner up to give the striking role of course at the same time is expected to help the build-up in a way we will discuss later on.
- Dominated by structured positional occupation (supporting box), but executed with relational interpretation of the mid three to progress by beating any press.

- Players build through short-passing patterns using third-man runs, overloads, and diagonal triangles, generally we call the line breaking passes as zero point passes.
- The build-up transitions from a **deep structure (e.g., 3-5-3 or 2-4-4)** into final third occupation via relational progressive linkups supported by positional discipline.
- Direct attacks through wide players or flank players is also an option of attack at a time of difficulty to progress centrally and if the circumstances are presented.

## 2. Defensive Phase

- Defense is something we want to be certain and careful about in general. We don't want to put too much time on defensive phases, because of its negative mentality impact and since positivity is our mental identity. Therefore every defensive action is expected to be as quickly productive as possible.
- Due to the above reason usually we are only seen in either the high block(which is on for about 8-10 secs) or low block which is our preferred defensive block for transitions. We prefer to recover the ball in the lower block to capitalize the advantage of them not getting the support from their GK, which gives them the numerical balance or even superiority in their own half. Therefore we prefer to drag them down by us falling back into our low block through strong restructuring which is made in the mid block after putting a ruthless press in the high block for 8-10secs.
- 1v1s, body orientations, anticipations and communication as technical attributes and the above mentality of not wanting to stay in the negative mentality of defending are the circumstances we need to win the ball as quickly and as effectively as possible.
- A quick counter-press with the closest two players where the ball is lost until high block structure is formed then followed by a man-oriented 4-4-2 structured with a high line from our back line putting a ruthless Gegenpress against opponents deep build-up is our way of defending in the high-block. As we try to press them to either of the flanks to which we block them to make switch of play and get them congested to take the ball away from them and using the dual occupation of the flank players to transit comfortably to either direct attacks or send the ball back to our own half to regenerate our attack from our preferable attacking phase which is the deep build-up phase. The high-line from our back four players is only done if the front players are pressing on the ball.
- Our low block operates on a **hybrid structure** (zonal organization with man-marking triggers).The team uses **diamond like shape zone traps** to force opponents into congested areas before applying press triggers or force them to play wide and trap them

in numerically dominated areas. 5-3-2 is our structure of low block where we use 2 centre-halves and a libero with 2 wide flank defenders which will create the back 5. We use close proximity of opponents to our players within each zone to trigger presses, and make the central progression or break through impossible for opponents and force them out wide.

- Mid block is used for flawless reconstructions of defensive blocks specially when we fallback from high block to low blocks. In mid block players while positioning themselves in the appropriate positions which they will occupy in the low block they defend the central channels because those are the vulnerable channels against us as we fall back from a 4-4-2 shape in the high block to the 5-3-2 shape of our low block.
- Proactiveness and rest-defense awareness are essential to minimize vulnerability during attacks.

### 3. Transition to Attack

- Structured recovery (via traps and compact shape) transitions into **spontaneous progression patterns**.
- Of course we rely again on the balanced role of the players at any phase, i.e. all players at any phase of the game have an attacking and defending roles, and with this philosophy we can efficiently transit into any phase of the game. In addition to this, mastering the necessary physical and technical attributes governed by our 5 core principles like controlled intensity, pro-activeness and game awareness(game mapping) will ensure the safe transitions.
- From low block recovery as we have discussed above about how it works we use a diamond like pressing traps to recover balls off our opponents. And these diamond structures are made of 4 players, and out of these 4 players 1 will mark the potential threat man to man whereas the other three will mark the zone which this man to man pressing is being carried out to recover the ball as well as their corresponding zones. So these zonal markers are the one who will be the first to take on the ball to which they pass to the deeper player (GK or CBs), our Libero (No.5), wide players or initiate a direct attack if the circumstances are presented. We target the +1 man advantage which we have in our own half as every player will drop deeper to give enough numerical advantage if the attack we are transitioning to is a deep build-up or else just like we said above if the circumstances are presented to make direct attacks our strikers barge into spaces and attack from there.
- Wide outlets and roaming half-space players No.11, No.10, No.7 No.8(one striker system)& No.9(two striker system) are activated immediately for vertical escapes.

- Recovery from High block usually either initiates a direct attack through overlapping, underlapping or direct crosses or the recovery player dribbles into opposition's dangerous areas and carries out an attack. Or else we send the ball back to our own half to initiate a deep build-up.

#### 4. Transition to Defense

- The mentality we generally have is to not lose the ball at all. Since defense is not the phase of the game we totally don't want to be in. But if we lose possession the following will happen.
- Immediate **gegenpressing** in high-block setups, followed by rapid restoration of defensive structure through our mid block to our low block.
- The team prefers to "fall back" into low block through our mid block only after failing to recover within the first 8-10 seconds.

#### 2.2. Formation Transitions

Rather than fixed shapes, our system encourages **fluid reconfiguration** between base and phase-specific formations. Examples include:

- **From 3-5-3 (deep buildup)** → 2-3-2-3 (midfield possession) → 3-2-5 or 2-3-5 (final third occupation): 1-striker system
- **From 4-5-2(deep buildup)** → 3-5-2 (midfield possession) → 1-3-4-2 or 1-3-2-4(final third occupation): 2-striker system
- Defensive fallback transitions into **4-4-2 High block** through **4-4-2 mid block** to **5-3-2 low block** depending on system

This dynamic flexibility is central to our game model. Players are trained to adapt formations across phases without losing identity or function.

#### 2.3. Player Tactical Profiles (Shirt No. 1–11)

Each player number represents a tactical role across all phases of play (build-up, transition, defense, final third). Profiles are adapted across both 1-striker and 2-striker systems where relevant. But there are five players who are expected to be in the most complete version of their specific positions. These players are No.1, No.3, No.7, No.5 and No.11. So we have 5 players with complete profiles (this is to keep the balance in the variation of playing styles) and 6 players with varying profiles.

## No.1 — Goalkeeper (GK)

- **Both systems:** Identical for both attacking systems as being a complete goalkeeper with traditional goalkeeper with exceptional shot-stopping, positioning, and long passing ability. Plays a conservative role, not heavily involved in build-up. Ball-playing goalkeeper with high technical ability and excellent distribution under pressure. Involved in deep build-up and positional recycling.
  - **Players to study:** Manuel Neuer, David Raya, Ederson Moraes
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Elite reflexes and anticipation (Alisson, Oblak)
  - Excellent with feet, under pressure (Ederson, Neuer)
  - Vision for long switches and counter-launching
  - High mental resilience and leadership from the back
- **Mental Profile:** Defensive organizer, confident communicator, emotionally balanced

## No.2 — Right Fullback / Inverted Fullback

- **1-Striker System:** Advanced inverted fullback contributing in central build-up.
  - **Players to study:** Trent Alexander-Arnold, João Cancelo, Rico Lewis
- **2-Striker System:** Functions as a defensive wide center-back in rest defense; overlaps in wide areas when needed.
  - **Players to study:** Reece James, Kyle Walker, Dani Carvajal
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Technically skilled in central buildup (Rico Lewis, Lahm)
  - Great dribbler and ball-carrier
  - Tactically intelligent in positioning and shifting lines
  - Press-resistant and proactive in transitions
- **Mental Profile:** Adaptive thinker, disciplined risk-taker

## No.3 — Complete Center Back

- **Both System:** This is one of the five players who are expected to be in the most complete version of their role. Core role in rest defense and progressive buildup; joins

advanced overloads in select moments. Is more involved in the build-up and later creates a partnership with No.2 as wide center backs and gives defensive support for the mid three from the deeper half space.

- **Players to study:** Alessandro Bastoni, Dean Huijsen (with Ibrahima Konate and William Saliba defending attributes), Jurrien Timber
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Strong 1v1 defender with great physicality (Konaté, Saliba)
  - Exceptional passing range and verticality (Dean Huijsen, Bastoni)
  - Can operate in wide spaces under pressure
  - Tactical awareness and spatial control
- **Mental Profile:** Calm under pressure, disciplined, progressive-minded

#### No.4 — Central Center-Back / Defensive Leader

- **1-Striker System:** Reads game flow, adjusts positioning, and stabilizes transitions. Leads defensive line in pressing triggers and rest defense rotations. A tactical chameleon who can lead a high line and combines proactive aggression, spatial control, and adaptability. Physical dominance, aerial strength, and transitional aggression are the most visible profiles of this player.
  - **Players to study:** Virgil Van Dijk, Sergio Ramos, Marquinhos, Gabriel Maghales
- **2-Striker System:** A fearless, physically dominant defender who can operate alone in rest defense while others commit forward. Thrives in transitional chaos, winning duels, covering wide zones, and delaying counters until support arrives. Combines explosiveness, aggression, and tactical bravery with emotional leadership. Makes teammates feel safe to attack, his presence is a psychological anchor.
  - **Players to study:** Cristian Romero, Antonio Rüdiger, Éder Militão, Ronald Araújo, Dayot Upamecano
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Elite anticipation and tackling
  - Tactical organizer and rest-defense guardian
  - Strong leadership and mental resilience
  - Comfortable initiating attacks with vertical passes

- **Mental Profile:** Natural leader, voice of discipline, emotionally intelligent enforcer

## No.5 — Complete Midfielder

- **Both System:** Deep-lying playmaker and transition anchor. Links defense to midfield. Ball-winning pivot and stabilizer. A libero profile in defense and a huge part of the mid three with the same specific role in both attacking systems.
  - **Players to study:** Rodri, Andrea Pirlo, Granit Xhaka, Moises Caicedo, Sergio Busquets
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Excellent passing vision and range
  - High positional IQ, reads spaces
  - Tough tackler, but calm in possession
  - Links with No.6 and No.2 to create triangles in 1-striker system and with No.6 and No.8 in 2-striker system.
- **Mental Profile:** Orchestrator, silent engine, tactician

## No.6 — Central Playmaker / Dictator

- **1-Striker System:** Central orchestrator of rhythm; always available for passes; dictates attacking flow (Iniesta, Enzo, Xavi).
  - **Players to Study:** Andreas Iniesta, Joao Vitinha, Enzo Fernandes, Nicolo Barella, Pedri Gonzalez, Bruno Guimaraes
- **2-Striker System:** Energetic box-to-box profile, who can escape intense pressure with elite technique and physicality.
  - **Players to Study:** Paul Pogba, Ryan Gravenberch, Mateo Kovacic, Federico Valverde
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Visionary, elite technique under pressure
  - Creator of progression triggers
  - Works as transitional "trigger" between lines
  - Versatile: can drop or advance depending on structure

- **Mental Profile:** Visionary thinker, decision-maker, emotionally expressive leader

### No.7 — Complete Striker

- **Both Systems:** This player is the final one out of the squad's complete profile players. This player is the complete player of the front.
  - **Players to Study:** Matheus Cunha, Thomas Muller, João Felix, Julian Alvarez
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Excellent movement and timing
  - Finisher and chance-creator
  - Great link-up with deeper players.
  - Can operate between lines or break behind lines
- **Mental Profile:** Intelligent mover, instinctive attacker, fluid connector

### No.8 — Attacking Midfielder / Free Roamer / Playmaker

- **1-Striker System:** Creative half-space playmaker; free-roamer.
  - **Players to Study:** Paulo Dybala, Lionel Messi, David Silva, Kai Havertz
- **2-Striker System:** Advanced creator between lines. And more of a midfielder than an attacker, as he is one of the mid-three players.
  - **Players to Study:** Kevin DeBruyne, Bruno Fernandes, Mesut Ozil, Jamal Musiala
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Elite final third vision and creativity
  - Can score, assist, or recycle intelligently
  - Operates in tight spaces, high awareness
  - Tactical fluidity to move based on buildup structure
- **Mental Profile:** Creative mind, visionary passer, instinctive shooter

### No.9 — Primary Striker / Lone Forward

- **1-Striker System:** Target forward, run behind lines.
  - **Players to Study:** Erling Haaland, Benjamin Sesko, Olivier Giroud, Romelu Lukaku
- **2-Striker System:** Mobile or deep-dropping striker paired with another forward.

- **Players to Study:** Harry Kane, Sergio Aguero,
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Deadly finishing and positioning
  - Constant movement to drag defenders
  - Physically dominant and aerially strong
  - Links play and presses from the front
- **Mental Profile:** Ruthless predator, sharp instinct, silent finisher

#### No.10 — Wide Playmaker / Technical Flank Attacker

- **1-Striker System:** Creative winger, dribbler, and initiator from the flank. Operates wide, often isolated, to manipulate defenders and create space. Prefers to retain possession and dictate tempo rather than cut inside early. Can beat defenders 1v1 but chooses delivery over direct goal threat.
  - **Players to study:** Neymar Jr., Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, Ivan Perisic, Jeremy Doku
- **2-Striker System:** Starts wide but inverts diagonally into central or half-space zones. Prioritizes **goal threat** through inside runs, cutbacks, and diagonal combinations. Clinical finishing ability.
  - **Players to study:** Kaoru Mitoma, Yankuba Minteh, Vinícius Jr., Mohamed Salah, Lamine Yamal
- **Key Attributes that both profiles share:**
  - Dribbling excellence and unpredictability
  - Can drop to create or drive directly into box
  - Vision and flair to initiate build-up from flank
  - Highly press-resistant and technically expressive
- **Mental Profile:** Artist of the team, elegant disruptor

#### No.11 — Complete Fullback

- **Both System:** A flank-dominating wingback who operates as a tactical unit on his own. Combines elite recovery and defensive actions with final-third precision and attacking aggression. Capable of initiating wide pressing, supporting deep build-up, and delivering decisive actions in attack.

- **Players to study:** Nuno Mendes, Alphonso Davies
- **Key Attributes:**
  - Explosive pace and recovery runs
  - Can create crosses or invert inward when needed
  - Technical dribbling under pressure
  - Huge defensive and offensive work rate
- **Mental Profile:** Relentless worker, dynamic engine, loyal soldier

## **2.4. Game Management, Tactical Flexibility & In-Game Adaptation**

### **Purpose of This Section**

No system, no matter how sophisticated, is complete without **adaptive flexibility** and the ability to read, respond, and recalibrate mid-game. This section outlines our strategy for managing game moments, adapting formations on the fly, and maximizing substitution impact.

#### **2.4.1. Strategic In-Game Adaptation Philosophy**

Our game model, though rooted in a **structured hybrid system**, is built with **modular fluidity**:

**“We prepare in structure but operate in solutions.”**

Adapted from relationist principles + our core idea of player-driven decision-making.

### **Situational Tactical Adjustments**

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>In-Game Change</b>	<b>Trigger</b>
Holding a lead (last 15–20 mins)	Switch to 5–4–1 or 5–3–2 low block	Goal advantage, opponent sustained pressure
Chasing a goal (final 20 mins)	Shift to 2–4–4 or 3–3–4 with a roaming No.6 or No.8	One-goal deficit, ineffective attacks
Opponent presses high & wide	Activate false fullback (No.2), funnel build-up centrally	Overexposure on flanks
Opponent defends narrow & deep	Use wide overloads with 10/11 hugging touchlines	Need for width and switches

Scenario	In-Game Change	Trigger
Opponent plays with 3 CBs	Stretch with dual strikers + attacking fullbacks (2–4–4)	Exploit space behind wide CBs

### 2.4.2 Use of Substitutions (Sub Profiles 12–18)

Substitutions aren't just rest or reaction — they are **tactical levers**. Based on your sub profile classification, here's how we integrate each:

Label	Profile Role	Use Case
12 – Striker	Athletic finisher	When needing a final punch, chasing or holding
13 – Maestro	Free-roaming creator	Late-game creative spark or overload tool
14 – Support Winger	Balanced wide outlet	To replace fatigued flank players & maintain width
15 – Tempo Setter	Game controller	For stabilizing momentum, breaking opposition rhythm
16 – Enforcer	Defensive midfielder or half-space plug	Used when winning tight games to secure control
17 – Defender	Fresh defender (1v1 expert or aerial)	Locking down flanks or handling set-piece threats
18 – GK	Backup	Emergency only

### 2.4.3. Decision-Making Guidelines for Adaptation

- Are we controlling the **spaces we want**, or are we being controlled?
- Which **zones are under threat**, and who needs to adjust?
- Which player is **mentally and physically ready** to shift shape?
- Can a substitution **change the game rhythm** or **disrupt theirs**?
- Are we ready to **revert** instantly if the adaptation backfires?

### 2.4.4. Emergency Structures & Chaos Management

In high-pressure or chaotic phases (e.g. after a red card, or when protecting a 1-goal lead under siege), we have emergency fallback forms:

- **4–4–1 (with wide compactness)**
- **5–3–1 (with deep midfield diamond)**
- **3–4–2 (if losing a CB or LB/RB)**

We also install “reset triggers” for regrouping:

- **GK hold for 3+ seconds → signal reset**
- **Sideline throw-in → reset to previous rest structure**

### **Final Psychological Directive**

This section requires **calm leaders on the pitch**: No.4 (Van Dijk), No.5 (Xhaka), and No.6 (Enzo Fernandes) will be trained with specialized game-management drills and communication roles to anchor tactical switches.

### **2.5. Summary of Formation Philosophy**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Application</b>
<b>Dual Tactical Identity for attack</b>	One-striker and Two-striker systems
<b>Phase-based Shape Shifting</b>	Shape transitions from deep build-up to final occupation are fluid and functional
<b>System-Based Player Profiles</b>	5 Players are profiled to operate differently depending on the system used with having a complete profile to their respective positions, as the rest 6 players differ in play style from team to team.
<b>Defensive Anchoring</b>	Always 2 players maintain rest defense roles (e.g. No.3 & No.4 or No.1 & No.4)
<b>Relational Progression Engine</b>	Mid-three and supporting box deform to create superiority
<b>Supporting Box Function</b>	Maintains width and depth from half-space perspective; enables pressure relief and third-man logic as well as makes direct attacks happen
<b>Attack-Minded Balance</b>	Width from one winger and one attacking fullback; central danger from relationist mid three and smart strikers

## SECTION 3: ATTACKING PRINCIPLES & PHASE BREAKDOWN

### 3.1. General Attacking Philosophy

Our attacking identity is built on **structured unpredictability**. We maintain positional discipline from deep build-up to final third, but enable relational freedom for progression and chance creation. The mid-three deform based on pressure, supported by a dynamic supporting box that varies by system. Dynamic width with a high precision on every 1v1 situation. We only deploy one player on flanks as they are supported with how the team uses the supporting box from the half spaces.

At its core, the attacking model is guided by these key principles:

Principle	Description
<b>Positional Superiority First</b>	Every build-up begins with clear roles and zones to stabilize the rhythm of attack.
<b>Relational Progression</b>	Mid-three morph in response to pressure, supported by box players to create superiority.
<b>Vertical Orientation</b>	Always advance play with intention; we avoid sterile possession.
<b>Dynamic Width</b>	Supporting box and wingers stretch play; half-space runners create vertical lanes.
<b>Third-Man Progression</b>	Build-up emphasizes third-man runs and diagonals to overcome compact pressing.
<b>Zone-to-Zone Progression</b>	Progress through the relationist playing of our mid three being supported by a box of halfspace occupants. The relationist play gives unpredictability which helps us break pressing lines easily. Whereas the supporting box helps the mid three with pressure lifting, rotations and link-up plays for third-man combinations.

### 3.2. Dual System Logic: One-Striker vs Two-Striker

As adaptability and pragmatism is our key approach to stay dominant over our opponents, having dual systems or approaches of attack ensures the dominance. Both systems still respect the **1-7-2 phase model**. This model ensures vertical compactness while maintaining defensive security. Since our attack has to be as effective as possible not only to attack but also for our defense as it is our one way of defending as we attack more indirectly we are defending. Therefore having a strong and versatile attacking approach ensures this for us. This dual system

approach is supported by the players' roles and play style. Below are the benefits we get from having this dual approach of attacking:

- To **exploit squad variety** based on available profiles (e.g. traditional striker vs mobile striker).
- To adapt the tactical shape to specific **opposition setups** or weaknesses. It's either by pressuring players to suffocate into their own box and create chances from their(2-striker system) or by inviting pressure from opponents and using the space in behind them and create chance(1-striker system)
- To **sustain unpredictability** over a full season by rotating identity without sacrificing principles.

### 3.2.1. Attacking Adjustments Based on Opponent Structure

Opponent Shape	Our Preferred System	Tactical Advantage
4-4-2 Mid Block	<b>Two-Striker System</b>	Strikers pin CBs, No.8 overloads central line
4-2-3-1 Press	<b>One-Striker System</b>	Extra midfield stability with 3-man build-up
3-5-2 Low Block	<b>Two-Striker System</b>	Wide overloads + central numerical parity
High Line Press	<b>One-Striker System</b>	Long diagonals to pacey wingers & No.9
Compact 5-4-1	<b>One-Striker System</b>	Width-stretching via No.10/11 and central traps with No.6, No.7, No.8

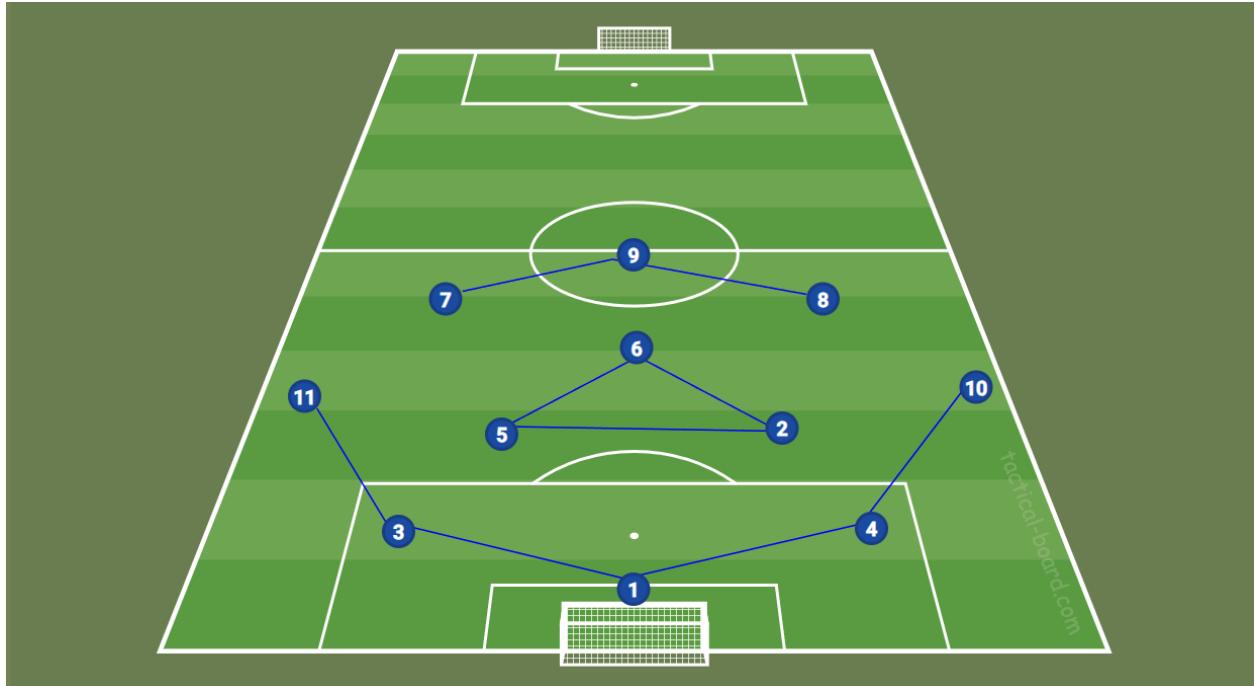
### 3.3. The Four Phases of Our Attacking Model

Each phase is detailed below, separately for **One-Striker System** and **Two-Striker System**, as the structures and player roles differ.

#### A. Phase 1 – Deep Build-Up (From Goal Kick)

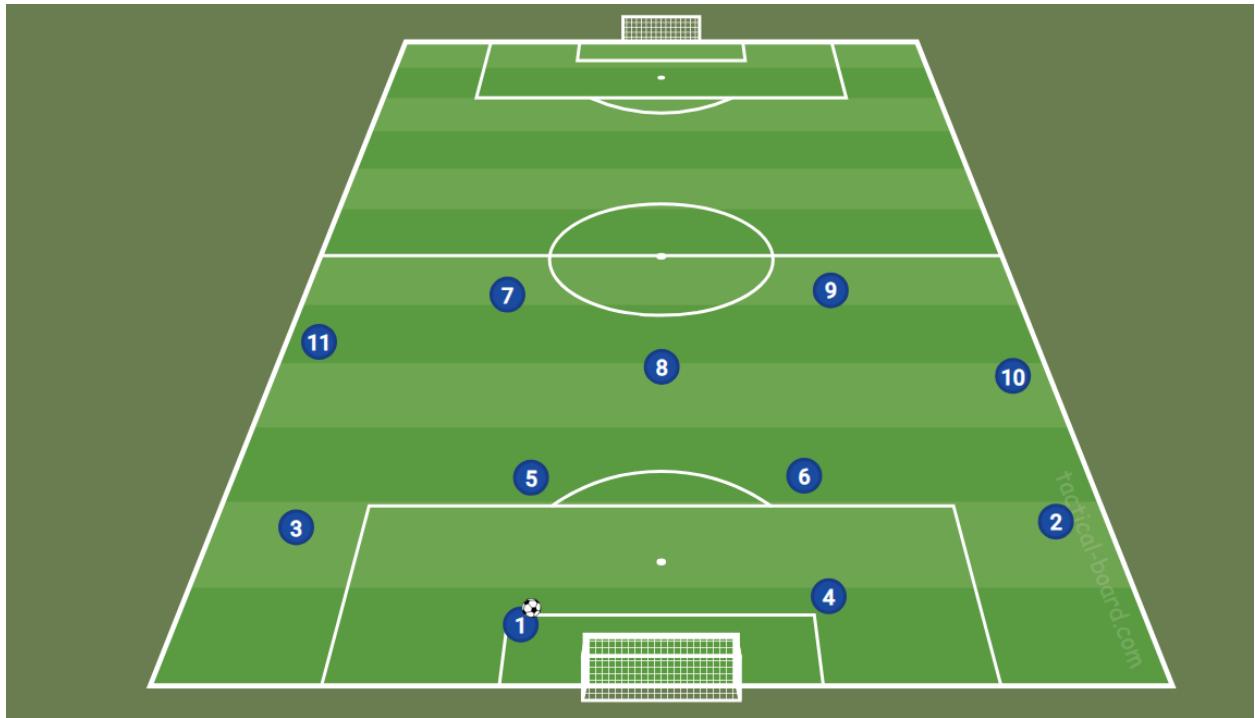
Before getting to deep briefing of the Deep Build-up structures we need to understand that the idea of double pivot although once the progression is initiated the pivots join third player which they all together form the mid three and then morph into the spaces to link-up with the lower and upper positioned players and progress the ball by breaking the pressing lines of our opponents.

#### One-Striker System



- **Base Shape:** 5-3-3 or 3-5-3
- **Structure:** CBs (No.3 & No.4) and GK (No.1) form the rest defense and build-up triangle.
- **Progression Triggers:**
  - No.6 (central playmaker) drops to receive and dictate the direction of buildup.
  - No.5 and No.2 provide width as deep pivots as No.2 inverts in from fullback position.
  - No.7 & No.8 drop into half-spaces to receive line-breaking passes.
  - No.9 stretches the back line or receives direct vertical passes.

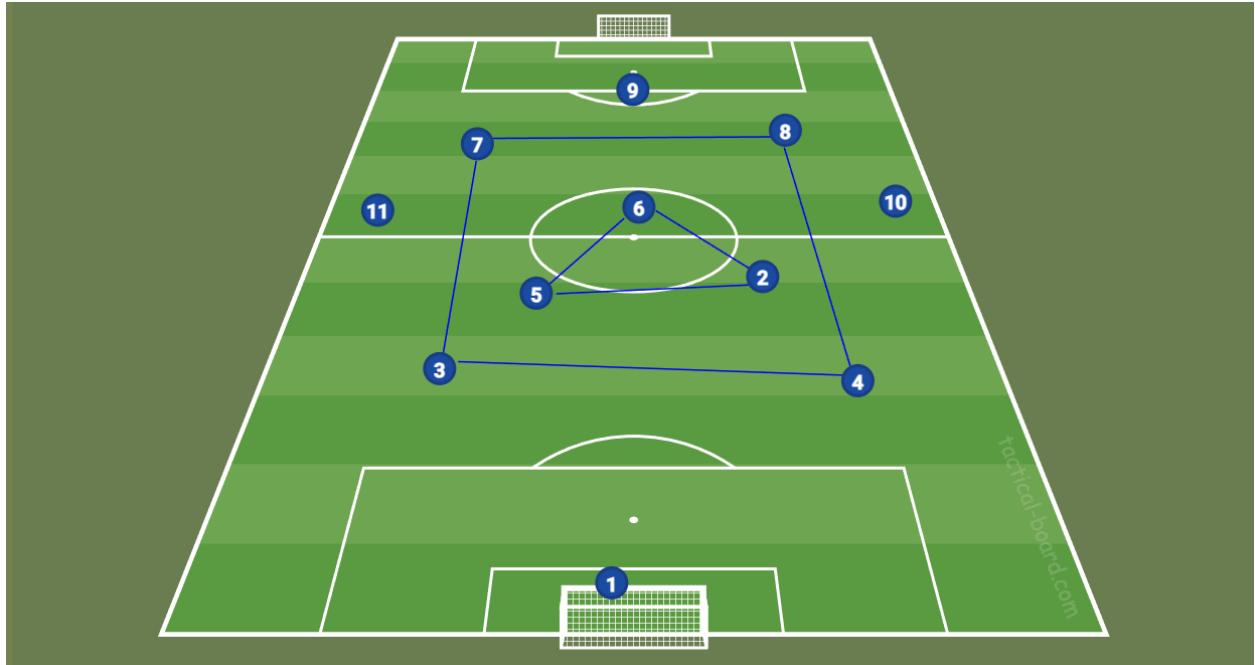
### **Two-Striker System**



- **Base Shape:** 2-4-4 or 3-5-2
- **Structure:** No.1 & No.4 form rest defense; No.3 and No.2 provide width.
- **Progression Triggers:**
  - No.1 is more involved in the build-up play as he/she joins our No.4, No.3 and No.2 to form the 4 in the back.
  - No.5 and No.6 operate as dual pivots, with No.8 joining to form the mid three, and then try to progress the game to the next phase with their relationist play style.
  - Here the supporting box are No.1, No.4, No.7 and No.9 as No.2 and No.3 are more like flank occupants alongside the two wide players No.11 and No.10.
  - No.7 & No.9 either stretch or drop to assist midfield.
  - Wingers No.10 and No.11 stretch the flanks and are used in switches of play.

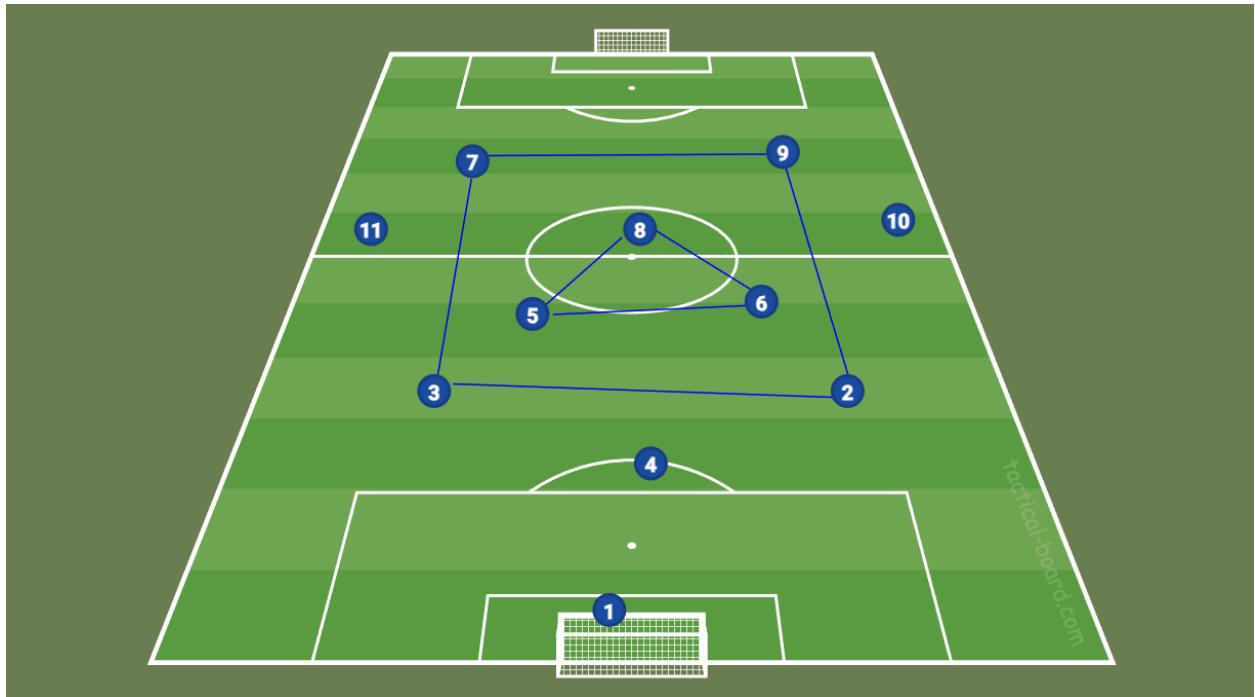
## B. Phase 2 – Midfield Possession Control

### One-Striker System



- **Shape:** 2-3-2-3
- **Function:** Create overloads in midfield and half-spaces using No.6, No.5, and No.2 as the midfield three morphing into the pressing we are facing and finding those line breaking passes and being supported by the supporting box(No.3, No.4, No.7, No.8) and staying superior on every terms and keep progressing to final third occupation structure. Again players No.11, No.10 keep the width outlet option and player No.9 will keep the two centerbacks of our opponents pinned so as not to step out of position and join the pressing.
- **Player Roles:**
  - No.6, No.5 and No.2 as mid three who link all progressions, assisted by half-space runners No.7, No.8, No.3 and No.4.
  - No.10 & No.11 hold width to allow central overload.
  - No.9 continues to stretch vertically or drop to create third-man combinations.

### **Two-Striker System**

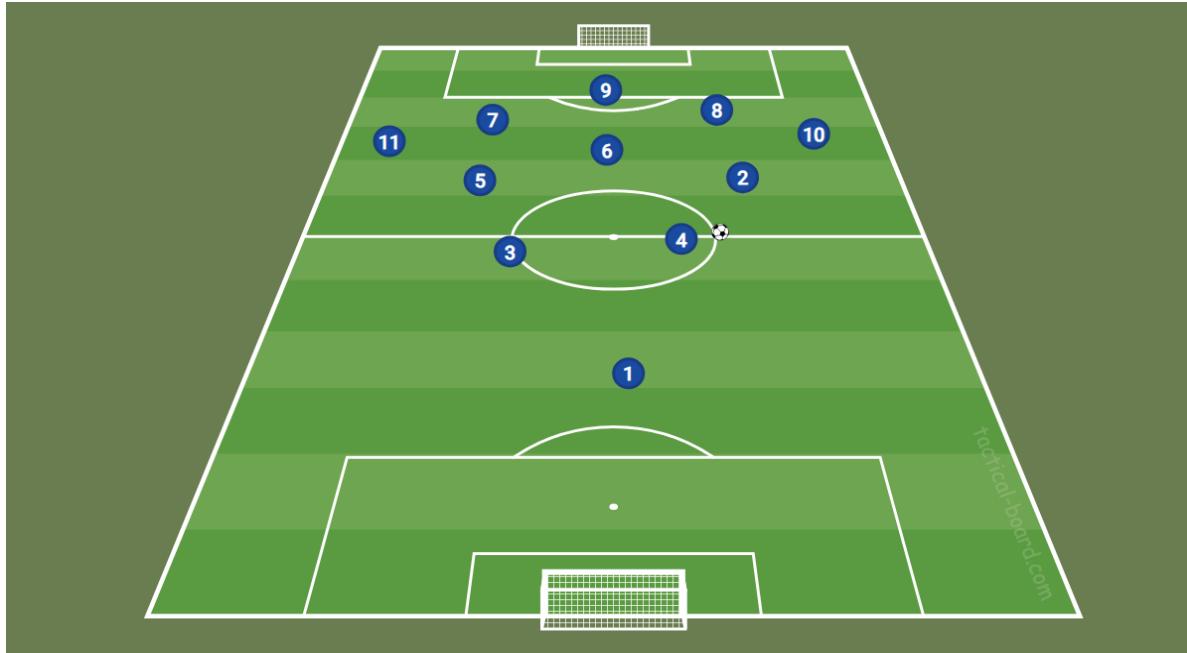


- **Shape:** 1-2-3-4
- **Function:** Dominate central progression using mid three (No.5, No.6 & No.8) supported by mobile strikers (No.7 & No.9) and ball playing defenders who are positioned along the half space (No.3&No.2) inverts into a position where they can support as pivots as well.
- **Player Roles:**
  - No.5, No.6 & No.8 will continue roaming around in relationist manner within the supporting box domain and link up with them as well as the wide attackers and progress the ball to final third occupation.
  - No.3 & No.2 will be the deeper players of the supporting box as they get involved in the rotation and linking of progressive plays with the mid three from deep. They are more positioned into a pivotal area just behind the mid three.
  - No.10 & No.11 operate wide, while No.7 & No.9 stretch and rotate centrally.

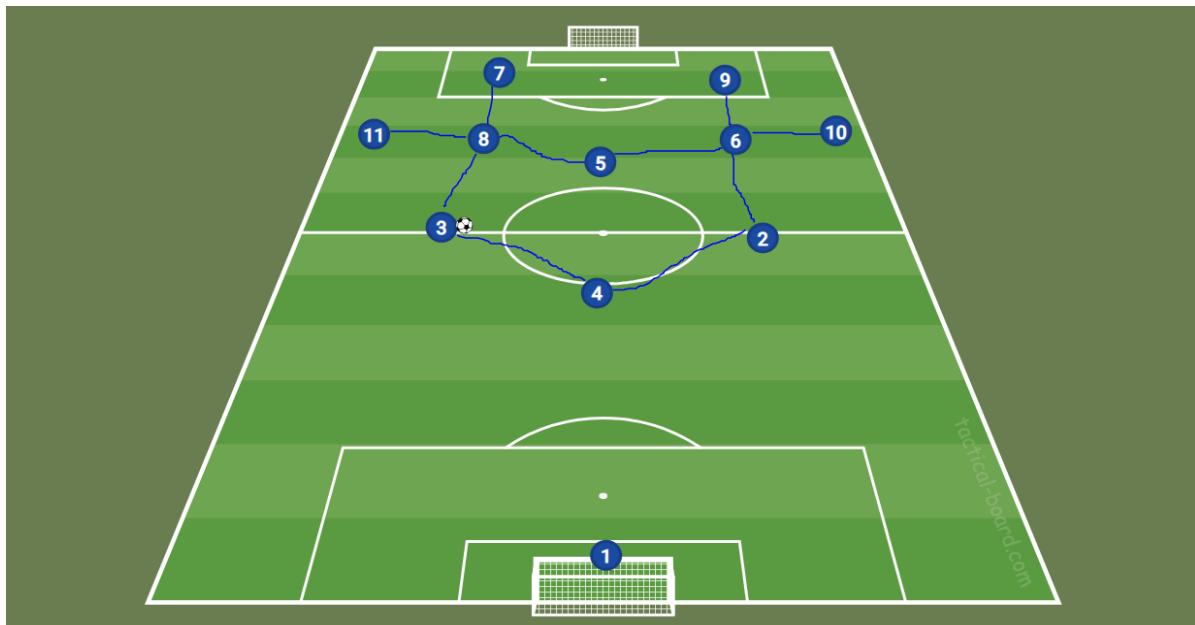
### C. Phase 3 – Final Third Occupation

First of we need to understand the intentions of the variation of the two attacking systems in general, which is the one striker system is through the movement in between the center halves and create a space for the half space attackers to combine with the mid three and the wide attackers to either score a goal themselves or assist the lone striker. But in the two striker system it's all about suffocating our opponents to a compact defense and using the

combination of the mid three and the two mobile strikers+ wide attackers to create chances against our opponents. Since No.3 and No.2 are more advanced behind the mid three and our opponents are suffocated towards their own goal therefore less risk of counter, therefore one lone defender(No.4) is enough to play as a rest defense and add more players to the suffocation work.



a) For one-striker system



b) For two-striker system

## Shared Principles for Both Systems

- **Shape:** Morphs into 2-3-5 or 3 depending on attacking system structure.
- **Key Guidelines:**
  - **Occupy all 5 lanes** (two flanks, two half-spaces, central line).
  - **No.9 (and No.7 in two-striker system)** pin defenders with off-ball movement.
  - **No.10 & No.11** invert or hug touchline based on scenario.
  - **Late arrivals** from No.6, No.5, or No.8 or No.2(in one striker system) to disrupt compact low blocks.
  - **Rest Defense** from No.4 ( and No.3 for one striker system).

## D. Phase 4 – Transition to Attack

- Transition to attack are made from two defensive outcomes either from low block defense or high block defense.
- From high block we force the opponents to either of the flanks and recover the ball and relying on the dual occupation of the flanks, if scenarios like our strikers are in a good position to receive ball in opposition box or ready for cross proceed with direct attack or wide players are also encouraged to dribble into oppositions box and create chance, or play the ball back with long ball to the GK and the back four as the ball is sent down will restructure to form the deep build-up structure and regenerate our attack.
- The other defensive setup which we make positive transition from is the low block and is also the more preferred one because of the attacking phase which we prefer to transit into is deep build-up. Here satisfying the balance of thinking of attacking while defending and the advantage the structure presents us we transit to attack by sending the ball to deeper position and start our deep build-up. Direct attacks are also optional from this position, the fact that our No.9 isn't that much pressured to make deeper defensive works it's always expected from him/her to position his/her selves in a better position for direct attacks.
- Two progression methods:
  1. **Static outlet progression:** Use No.6 or No.2/No.5 to circulate and reset tempo.
  2. **Dynamic vertical progression:** Triggered by sudden forward runs from No.7, No.9 or No.10 after turnovers and No.11.

- Use of long switches as an option but mainly using the 1 man advantage from the 4 players from each trap zone to escape early counterpresses.

### **3.4 Final Third Occupation & Chance Creation Patterns**

*"The final third is where structure meets improvisation — we engineer chaos, but navigate it with rhythm."*

#### **3.4.1. Structural Differences by System**

Our occupation model adapts based on the system in use (one-striker vs. two-striker), while always maintaining our core tenets: spatial clarity, width-depth balance, and relationist freedom in execution.

##### **One-Striker System: 2-3-2-3 Occupation**

- **Back Two (Rest Defense):** No.3 & No.4
  - Hold central & half-space lines to delay counters and receive resets.
- **Midfield Trio:** No.6, No.2, No.5
  - Form a U-shaped base behind the ball to circulate, switch play, and direct tempo.
- **Half-Space Attackers:** No.7 & No.8
  - High and narrow in the half-space lanes, positioning between CB-FB or CM-CB.
- **Wide Playmakers:** No.10 & No.11
  - Stay touchline wide to pin fullbacks and stretch vertically.
- **Lone Striker:** No.9
  - Central target, constantly swerving across CBs to disrupt line & threaten in behind.

##### *Principle:*

This structure emphasizes control, layered depth, and overload creation using third-man combinations, supported by intelligent circulation through the central triangle. And the intention is to lure our opponent's backline out of their structure and use the void spaces by either our lone striker or by our half-space attackers or even by our wide playmakers.

##### **Two-Striker System: 2-4-3-1 Occupation**

- **Rest Defense:** No.4 & No.1
  - Anchor deep while offering a short/long passing outlet.

- **Base Four:** No.5, No.3, No.2, No.6
  - Compact square just behind the ball — responsible for horizontal circulation and pressing on turnovers.
- **Attacking Three:** No.8 (center), No.10 & No.11 (flanks)
  - No.8 is our conductor: plays between lines, initiates final-action zones.
  - No.10/11 stretch wide, but with license to come inside on weak side buildup.
- **Striker:** No.7 & No.9
  - One drops to link, one stays high — roles alternate, creating flexible vertical disorientation.

*Principle:*

This occupation style favors dynamic overloads more from the deeper players with the mid three and force opponents to suffocate into tighter defensive shapes to use our wide attackers and mobile strikers to convert chances created with even more advanced mid three players and wide centerbacks who advanced with the cover of our lone defender(No.4).

### 3.4.2. Principles of Chance Creation

1. **Half-Space Manipulation**
  - Our most common creation zone.
  - No.7, No.8, and No.6 often create triangles or diamonds to engineer chances via combinations or slip passes between CB-FB gaps.
2. **Wing Isolation**
  - When wide players (No.10/11) beat their man 1v1, we immediately fill the box with No.9, No.7, and the weak-side winger.
3. **Third-Man Runs (Ladder Play)**
  - Rooted in our Slot-style build-up:  
No.6 → No.5 → No.8 (as third man) receiving in stride beyond the defensive line.  
Often reversed in motion depending on pressing scheme faced.
4. **Diagonal Serves from Advanced Pivots**
  - No.2 and No.5 have license to make early crosses or diagonal ground passes into striker runs from inverted positions.

## 5. Central Staggering & Positional Rotation

- No.8 and No.6 rotate vertically and horizontally to create confusion in the opposition's zonal schemes.

## 6. Cutbacks & Second Wave Attacks

- When wide progression reaches the byline, we position No.7 (or No.9), No.8, and No.6 at varied vertical depths to attack cutbacks or deflections.

### 3.4.3. Summary Philosophical Approach

*"We attack space through players. Not because they're there, but because we attract them into movement."*

Our final third identity is **choreographed unpredictability**:

Players understand principles, not positions. Movement is pre-trained, not pre-ordered. The structure supports improvisation, and improvisation fuels the structure.

## 3.5. Summary Table: Player Roles Across Attacking Phases

Player	Key Role (1-Striker)	Key Role (2-Striker)
No.6	Central pivot playmaker(Regista)	Advanced box-to-box creator
No.4	Tactician Centerback	Non-sense Centerback
No.2	Inverted fullback & buildup link	Wide CB or support half-space runner
No.9	Lone striker, stretch & finish	Primary striker, stretching threat
No.10	Touchline wingers, crossing and isolation	Creative wide outlets and inverted threats
No.8	Final third creator & half-space runner	Chief playmaker between lines

- Players No.1, No.3, No.5, No.7, No.11 are the players all in complete version of their respective positions.
  - No.1- Complete GK (Allison Becker+ Manuel Nuer)
  - No.3- Complete CB (Josko Gvardiol+ Dean Huisen+ Alessandro Bastoni)
  - No.5- Complete CDM(Granit Xhaka+ Sergio Busquets+ Andrea Pirlo)
  - No.7- Complete Striker(Matheus Cunha+ Kylian Mbappe+ Lionel Messi)
  - No.11- Complete Fullback(Nuno Mendes+ Alphonso Davies)

## SECTION 4: DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES & STRUCTURES

### 4.1. General Defensive Philosophy

Our defensive model is rooted in the principle of **hybrid flexibility** combining **zonal structure** with **man-oriented behavior** when triggered within designated defensive zones. This approach allows the system to be structurally resilient, yet dynamically reactive to opponents' movements.

#### Core Defensive Principles:

Principle	Application
<b>Proactiveness</b>	Defenders think offensively while defending, maintaining readiness to initiate counter-attacks immediately upon winning the ball.
<b>Zone-to-Zone Hybrid Marking</b>	Defense is built on compact mini-zones; man-marking is triggered only when opponents enter key zones while in low blocks but in high block, once 4-4-2 structure is attained after losing possession or ball is played out wide then aggressive man marking will be initiated.
<b>Press &amp; Trap Smartly</b>	We do not chase the ball recklessly, instead, we "invite and trap" within controlled defensive zones when we defend in low blocks.
<b>Rest Defense Anchoring</b>	2-1 players (usually No.4, and No.3 when in one striker system) maintain positional security behind the ball to delay transitions.
<b>1V1 Defending</b>	Being successful in every 1v1 duels while defending is very key for fulfilling our intention of recovering the ball and quickly transiting to attack
<b>Mentality-Based Cohesion</b>	Discipline, communication, collective anticipation and Neuro Synchrony are emphasized just as much as physicality and tactics.

### 4.2. Defensive Shape Breakdown

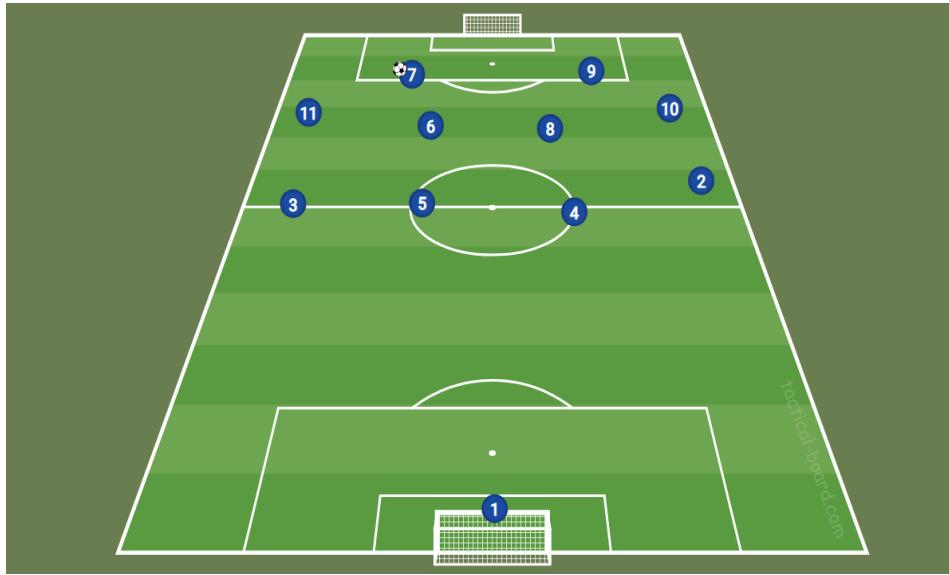
We defend in two main blocks, the third block which is mid block is used for a flawless falling back of the team from unsuccessful high block defense to low block.

#### A. High Block (Pressing Phase)

##### Structural Base: 4-4-2

**Pressing Philosophy:** Julian Nagelsmann's High Press + Pep Guardiola's 6-Second Rule

**Fallback Plan:** Immediate drop to low block structure through mid-block if pressing fails within 8-10 seconds.



## Overview

Our high block is built from a compact 4-4-2 shape, executed with intelligent gegenpressing inspired by Julian Nagelsmann. The goal is to aggressively force turnovers by forcing opponents to either of the flanks to overload them using our dual occupants of the flank with the help of central players in the opposition's half while maintaining structural discipline that allows a rapid fallback to a mid-block.

### We implement Pep Guardiola's "6-second rule":

If we do not regain possession within 8-10 seconds of the press initiation, we immediately fall back into our organized low-block shape. This ensures a balance between relentless pressing and strategic defensive compactness.

## Core Principles

### 1. Trigger-Based Pressing (Nagelsmann Influence):

- Press begins after the 4-4-2 structure is attained by delaying opponents to retain their build-up play by a counter pressing where the ball is lost and force them to play into wide zones, backpasses, or a heavy touch.
- The nearest player steps up, and the rest of the central players close passing lanes aggressively. And try to congest them into either of the wide areas.
- Once the ball is forced to be played wide then the flank occupants from the mid four No.11 or No.10 according to where the pressing is conducted they step up to man mark the opposition player with the ball as the strikers will mark the CB

near to them and the central player from the mid 4 will aggressively press the potential pivot who can link with the oppositions player who is being pressed.

## **2. Compact Vertical Lines:**

- The two strikers (No.7 and No.9) press in tandem to cut central passing lanes.
- The midfield four remains close behind to form a second pressing wave and deny vertical progressions.
- Dual Occupation of the wide flanks.

## **3. Zonal Man-Orientation:**

- Each player has a “pressing zone” but can step into nearby zones when triggered by movement or poor touches by opponents.

## **4. 6-Second Rule (Guardiola Influence):**

- The entire team is drilled to mentally and physically press for 8-10 seconds with full intensity.
- If the ball is not recovered, players instantly reorganize into their fallback mid-block zones with no delay or confusion to quickly then fall back to our more preferred defensive block which is the low block..

## **5. Mid-Block Integration:**

- The press is trained to never overcommit; it's structured in such a way that as soon as 8-10 seconds pass, the team naturally flows into its mid-block assignments to then restructure themselves into the appropriate positions they will need to be at in the low block.
- The two banks of four (defenders + midfielders) fall into a compact horizontal line, while strikers shift into cover-shadow positions.

## **• Mental Conditioning:**

- Players must be trained in mental stopwatch awareness: “If we don’t win it in 8-10 secs, we lock down the shape.”
- Emphasis on communication, second-man pressing, and trigger recognition.

## **• Integration with 1-7-2 Philosophy:**

- The high block aligns with our proactive mindset and the smart intensity principle.
- It's a pressing model designed not just for chaos, but for strategic transition into controlled shape — the balance of aggression and structure that underpins 1-7-2.

- **Key Actions:**

- Immediate ball-oriented pressing by nearest 3–4 players.
- Traps set in wide areas and half-spaces using mini-zone press boxes.
- Rest defense (No.4 + No.1 or No.5) positioned centrally to delay counter.

- **Trigger Points:**

- Poor opponent control or back pass.
- Isolated receiver near sideline.
- Lateral switch with limited support.

- **Mental Emphasis:** Controlled aggression. “Press with mind, not only muscle.”

## B. Mid Block (Structured Containment)

In Mid-block more than a work of recovering a ball ,flawlessly falling back to low block is the work. We use the mid-block to restructure all players who are in unprecedeted positions to the ones they have to be in when they get to low block. So it's about getting the players who are going to be in the backline of the low block deeper and the ones who are going to be central more to the center. But while doing this we still do defensive works like:

- **Blocking the passing lanes** toward dangerous players who can disrupt us through central progression.
- **Forcing ball-carriers into wide zones** where our team is numerically or structurally superior

So what we do is stay compact with a 4-4-2 structure as we fall to the low block. Here unless the below listed triggers are presented, we don't initiate a press. Compactness gives us not only a strong defense of central progression lanes and force opponents to wide areas where we want them to go but also, during the switching of positions of the players to their designated positions they have to attain when we get to low block we will not be vulnerable for open spaces because the players will not have to move long distance to move from where they are to where they have to be.

So we press when:

- A poor touch is made
- A backward or blind pass is played
- A central pivot or fullback receives with back to goal

### Mid Block Shape Overview

- Primary shape: Compact **4-4-2 mid-block**
- Central compactness with ~25-30m vertical distance between front and back lines
- Wingers No.11 and No.10 track front wide channels as No.3 and No.2 defend the deeper flank areas , No.7 and No.9 sit slightly deeper but ready to press
- No.8 and No.6 anchor the middle with No.4 and No.5 defend long direct attacks.

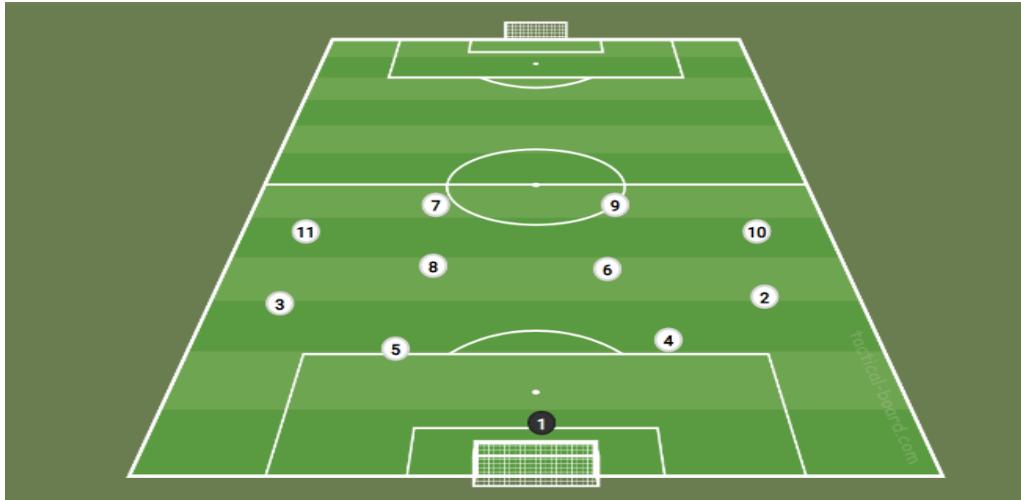
If ball recovery happened after the above list of triggers were presented then the following transition takes place.

### Chaos Execution:

- Recover → immediate vertical attack
- No.7/No.9 make inside-out or diagonal runs
- No.6 or No.8 plays the release pass

### Why?

- This allows your chaos units to activate *on your terms*
- It removes threat from players we can't reach, while controlling the next likely pass
- Makes us proactive without being reckless

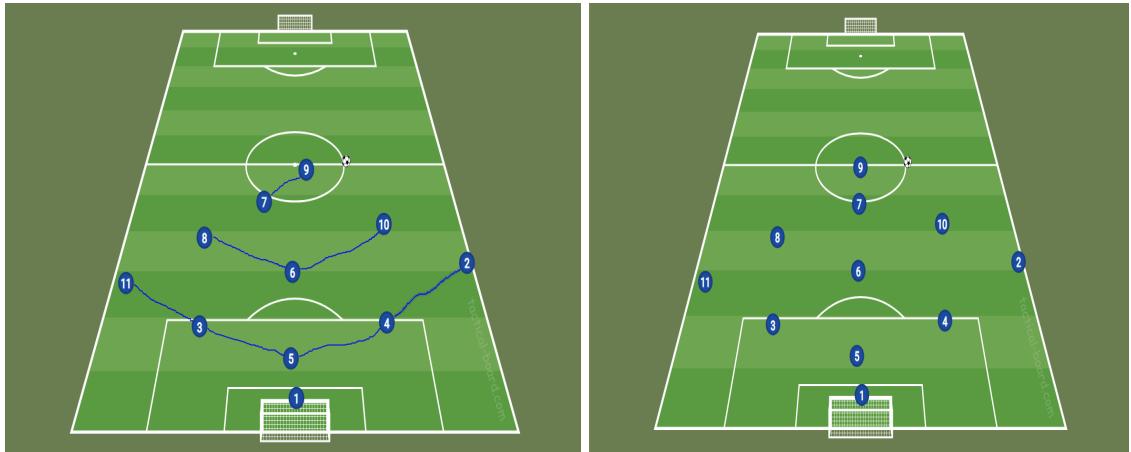


- **Transition Awareness:**

- From here, we transition into either low block or back into attack with direct attacks quickly if the situations are presented.

### C. Low Block (Consolidation)

- **System:** 5-3-2 or 5-4-1



- **Use Case:** is our most preferred defensive block to sit in and try to recover the ball from.

- **Structure:**

- No.3, No.4, No.5 form a tight three-center-back wall.
- No.2 & No.11 operate as fullbacks.

- No.6 anchors the midfield in front of the backline.
- No.7, No.8, and No.10 help screen passing lanes centrally or press wide.
- **Special Note:** This block uses deep compactness, but still follows the hybrid zone-to-man trap logic when the nearest man presses when the opponent enters the mini-zone.

### **Hybrid Zone Marking Mechanics (Diamond Defense)**

The team defends using **interlocking zone-diamonds** across the pitch:

- Each diamond is made up of **4 players** responsible for a compact trap zone.
- Upon ball entry into the zone:
  - The closest player presses the ball-carrier man-to-man.
  - The remaining 3 adjust position to block progression lanes and anticipate second passes.

This model ensures:

- Constant **compactness and vertical staggering**. Distance proximity is what we use to maintain perfect positioning and timing balance while in low block.
- **Rotational cover**, where man-marking never compromises zonal shape.

### **Principles of Distance in Pressing Diamonds**

#### **1. Compression (closing gaps)**

- **Horizontal spacing:** 8–12 meters between players in the same line.
  - This keeps passing lanes tight but still allows cover shadows.
- **Vertical spacing:** 10–15 meters between lines.
  - Enough to collapse quickly on the ball carrier without leaving gaps behind.
- **Diamond compactness:** The four points of the diamond should be close enough that one player can press and the other three can immediately shift to cover.

Think of compression as “breathing in” — the diamond shrinks to suffocate the ball zone.

#### **2. Tension (stretching the block)**

- **Horizontal stretching:** 15–20 meters when the ball is circulated wide.
  - This prevents overloads on the flanks but risks central gaps if stretched too far.

- **Vertical stretching:** 18–22 meters when the opponent drops deep or tries to bait your press.
  - This creates pressing triggers but requires elite physicality to recover.

Tension is “breathing out” — the diamond expands to cover more ground but must snap back quickly.

### **3. Dynamic Adjustment**

- **Ball-near side:** compress aggressively (8–12m).
- **Ball-far side:** maintain tension (15–20m) to anticipate switches.
- **Trigger moments:** when the opponent’s back is turned or a pass is played into a tight zone, the diamond compresses instantly.

#### **Why This Matters in Your 1-7-2**

- Your system creates **frequent 1v1 duels**. If distances are too wide, players get isolated.
- If distances are too tight, you risk being bypassed by switches of play.
- The balance of compression/tension is what allows the 1-7-2 to feel suffocating without collapsing.

#### **4.3. Defensive Roles by Player (System-Agnostic Summary of the Low-block)**

Player	Role
No.1 (GK)	Sweeper-keeper in two-striker system, deep shot-stopper and long distributor in one-striker system.
No.2	Inverted FB in one-striker system; hybrid wide CB/support fullback in two-striker. Excellent in 1v1 and spatial reading.
No.3	Wide CB with progressive instincts and physicality; presses outward when ball is wide.
No.4	Fixed CB and leader of the backline. Organizer and rest-defense anchor. Key for psychological balance.
No.5	Libero or deep pivot defender. Protects central channels; initiates long-range progression post-recovery.
No.6	Box-to-box destroyer or orchestrator. Reads second balls and shields half-spaces. Excellent anticipation.

Player	Role
No.7	First presser; initiates press triggers based on opponent buildup. Also supports the midfield block.
No.8	Screens central zone or advanced half-space. Highly active in pressing traps. Initiates turnover-to-attack shifts.
No.10 & No.11	Pressing wingers — either close to the ball or falling into low block shape. Their positioning adjusts based on the system.
No.9	Active in the first wave of press. In a two-striker system, pairs with No.7 to block center. In one-striker, leads the high press line alone.

#### 4.4. Defensive Transition Principles

Scenario	Action
Negative transition Logic	Immediate aggressive counter-press by two players, one of the two is the player who lost possession while the other one is a player who was positioned in the half space area which was close to the player who lost possession. This counter-press logic happens wherever the ball is lost to give time for the rest of the team to restructure themselves in their designated positions.
Ball Loss in Final Third	While the player who lost possession launches an aggressive man to man press on the ball the second player tries to intercept a potential passing lane. This is followed by our high block which lasts for 8-10secs.
Ball Loss in Midfield	Collapse into mid-block. Delay with the nearest 2 players, rest fall into low block.
Ball Loss in Own Half	Full fallback to low block. Priority is compactness over direct pressing.
Recovery After Pressing	Transition instantly via No.6, No.2 or No.5 depending on location of recovery. Use flank lanes or third-man triangles.

#### 4.5. Defensive Mentality & Social Intelligence

We've emphasized that "**Our system is rooted in the strong belief of a positive mentality.**" Accordingly:

- **No.4** acts as our defensive psychological anchor. A composed yet fierce presence.

- **Defense is a negative environment** therefore every defensive play has to be carried out as quickly as possible to escape this environment defense creates.
- **Press triggers** are not just tactical, they are deeply linked to players' intuition and positional awareness.
- **Discipline, respect, and subconscious leadership cues** (like shirt number assignments and dressing room authority hierarchy) are embedded in how the defensive structure operates.

## SECTION 5: Transition Protocols & Game Rhythm Management

*“Control the chaos not by resisting it, but by preparing to flow through it.”*

### 5.1. Philosophical Foundation of Transitions

Generally the governing statement for a smooth and efficient transition is “**think of defending while attacking and think of attacking while defending**”. but our transition strategy is deeply rooted in two of our guiding tactical principles:

#### **Proactiveness and Game Awareness.**

Transitions are not treated as reactionary moments, they are treated as anticipated, repeatable patterns of opportunity.

We follow the idea that **transitions should be a continuation of structure**, not a break in it. Whether regaining or losing possession, we aim to maintain structural integrity while activating player instincts and positional freedom as needed.

### 5.2. Transitioning from Defense to Attack (Def→Att)

Positive Transitions are results of either low block defense or high block defense. If not either of this then it's a mistaken turnover from our opponents. When we recover the ball from a high block defense then it's all about finding the free player for direct attack from there or else it's returning the ball down to our own goal to fall back into deep build-up structure and re-initiate an attack. And after recovering the ball with low-block defense then it's again direct attack for a free advanced runner or if not possible then restructure to deep build-up structure.

#### A. One-Striker System

- **Structural Shape:** The initial recovery shape resembles a **3-2 or 3-1 block**, with No.3, No.4, and No.1 forming the last line, and No.5 and No.2 or No.6 working as outlet/support pivots.
- **Trigger Zone Play:** Upon regaining possession, the closest outlet player initiates buildup either via a short progressive pass or a longer diagonal ball to a wide or half-space receiver.
- **Key Movement Roles:**
  - **No.6 (Central Playmaker):** Dictates tempo and verticality, receiving centrally to spread or build.
  - **No.9 (Lone Striker):** Maintains stretch and forces backline decisions, swerving into open channels.

- **No.8 & No.7:** Drop into advanced half-spaces as free roaming support options for quick progression or overloads.

*Variation:*

If facing high pressure or needing quick progression, player No.6 stays central while No.5 and No.2 drop deeper, creating a “ladder” pattern (inspired by Fernando Diniz’s relational system) with No.8 as the third man for central escape.

## B. Two-Striker System

- **Structure Post-Recovery:** A compact **2-4 or 2-5 base**, with No.1 and No.4 providing rest defense and No.5 acting as the progressive link.
- **Double Pivot Logic (Slot’s Triangle):** One pivot (No.6) drops to receive, while No.5 holds or advances diagonally, forming a stable triangle with No.8 as the advanced link in the half-space.
- **Dynamic Role Shifts:**
  - **No.7 and No.9** initially drop into pockets to help link play or attract pressure away.
  - **No.10 and No.11** maintain verticality by pushing up wide, ensuring width and stretch.
  - **No.2 and No.3** push slightly into inverted positions to offer passing lanes or cover, depending on ball location.

*Variation:*

If a counter scenario arises, No.5 and No.6 may bypass central build-up by quickly releasing into the feet of No.8 or into the path of runners No.7 and No.9.

## 5.3. Transitioning from Attack to Defense (Att→Def)

In line with our hybrid man-zone pressing philosophy, the moment we lose possession is seen as a **pre-planned trap trigger**. Usually we expect the possession losing moment is after a failed final third chance creation action. So that means our negative transition is expected to be carried out in the area where we launch our high block defense. But if apparently somehow we were forced to lose possession somewhere else besides the top third area of the pitch we first counter press until everyone is ready to fall back to low block. But when it’s in the final third area then we counterpress first to stop counter attacks and direct attacks but then we switch into high block defense and defend with it for 8-10secs before falling back to low block through mid block to rearrange their positions for high block structure. But the most important point here is our counter press. Counterpresses are orchestrated by our 1-7-2 idea, which is as we

have discussed above every attacking actions happen with 1- action taker, 7- supporters and 2-rest defenses, as out of the 7, 6 are inlets as central progression options and 6 are outlets either to stretch or switch the direction of attack and 1 player for surprise direct attack runner.

Therefore our counter presses are driven from this setup. Whenever a ball is lost the player who lost the ball directly presses the recovery opposition player then another player of ours who was positioned in the central area of the pitch joins the first presser blocking a central passing lane option for our opponent. So always our counterpresses are a more dominant 2v1s.

### **Standard Protocols:**

- **Counterpress:** Wherever or whenever a ball is lost, a quick counter press follows, intending to win the ball but also to give time for the rest of the players to arrange themselves to either of our defending blocks we switch to (high or low). Counterpress is carried out by the player who lost the possession and a player who was in the halfspace area which is near to the player who lost possession, pressing in a way he/she can block a central passing lane and a third player who attained his designated player who is in the direction of the opposition player body orientation.
- **High-line:** This only happens if the possession turnover happens in the final third area. 4 players form a compact backline where they can defend the direct attack or counter attacks.
- **Zone-to-Zone Collapse:** Players are trained to collapse into their designated **pressing zone clusters**. Once the ball enters one of these high-intensity zones, the nearest player applies immediate pressure, while others close passing lanes.
- **Press Recovery Logic:**
  - Counterpress is considered as an action of sacrifice by the players responsible for the possession loss in order to present the rest of the team to arrange themselves in their designated positions.
    - Counterpress importance:
      - Gives time for rearrangement of the rest of the players to their defensive blocks
      - To kill opponents quick transition
      - To win the ball with aggressive action from the counter-pressers.

#### **5.4. Game Rhythm Management Philosophy**

We manage tempo based on **tactical time windows**, alternating between:

- **High Intensity Waves:** Press-driven, quick-recovery cycles aimed at overwhelming the opponent. (Best used after turnovers or when the opponent is disorganized.)
- **Controlled Retention Phases:** Possession-focused play using pivots and wide outlets to pause, stretch, and mentally reset the rhythm.
- **Chaos Intervals:** Intentionally increasing unpredictability using individual decision-making freedom (relationist action zones) to create off-structure moments that destabilize rigid opposition blocks and relationist way of playing from our mid-three players.

## SECTION 6: Place-holder Section of the system

*"Games are often decided in the most structured moments — where preparation meets precision."*

Football is 30% tactics, and 70% social competence. This means elite physicality, elite technicality and elite mentality takes up the 70% of what you need to win a football match. And also to ensure that qualitative superiority is secured by all terms. I believe the more my players are elite in quality then any opponent will struggle to overcome 1v1 duels that happen in the game against us. This is why in this system these social competence components are highly regarded as the tactical part. Once a team have a physically, mentally and technically elite players then:

- Any kind of rotation and tactical flexibilities are carried out efficiently and safely
- Transitions and 1v1 duels are successfully executed
- Players can adapt to any new or repeated challenges well.
- Any setbacks like injuries, dismissals or any other losses on these three bases of the game which can affect the outcome of a game can be avoided.

Besides these three pillars of the game another two important game changing pieces of the game are Set-pieces and the role of Goal Keepers. Mentality is out of the three of based on different methodologies and training ideas listed in the training bible and methodology section. But Physicality, Technicality and Set-pieces are trained by specific specialists who mastered these basics very well.

### 6.1 Set-pieces

In our tactical system, set-pieces (both attacking and defensive) are given exceptional priority. Direct derivations from the set-piece ideas of Nicolas Jover(Arsenal FC Set-piece coach) and Midtjylland FC set-piece tactics to our designated specialist original ideas. But recognizing their statistical significance and potential to swing high-level matches, we will **delegate this entire phase to a specialized Set-Piece Coach** whose primary duty will be to:

- Analyze opposition set-piece tendencies.
- Design tailored offensive and defensive routines for corners, free-kicks, and restarts.
- Integrate player roles within our broader tactical and psychological blueprint.
- Ensure every structure zonal or man-marking, short corner play or decoy runs, aligns with our core principles: proactiveness, positional structure, and player intelligence.

#### 6.1.1 Tactical Integration Note

While the specifics of the set-piece system will be crafted separately, the tactical environment and player profiles established in this blueprint will directly inform:

- Which players will act as aerial targets, box crashers, edge-of-box shooters, or short-passing creators.
- Defensive setups (e.g., zonal + man-oriented marking hybrids) based on our existing defensive philosophies.
- Quick restart logic and post-set-piece rest-defense protocols consistent with our **1-7-2** structural doctrine.

## 6.2 Physical Fitness

The 1-7-2 system demands extreme stamina, repeat sprint ability, and strength in duels. Physicality is a very important quality for the players to have in order to work all the physical demands the game requires as well as clears out players face a mental pressure from not being able to win physical duels. There are direct inspirations from successful physical fitness programs that I have learnt from like Oscar Ortega's Fitness Programs at Atletico Madrid under Diego Simeone, that puts players under very intense physical fitness development which brings advantages of avoiding injuries and coop with any physical fitness challenges they face on the pitch. It's known that they play on quick counter plays from low block defending, which requires them not only to dominantly defend duels but also requires them to cover large areas through quick runnings. And this physical challenge is carried out well with Oscar Ortega's fitness program. Therefore taking his program into consideration while our designated fitness coach formulates his own fitness program is a must to do.

### 6.2.1 Tactical Integration Note

The details on how to build elite quality of physicality in the players is left for the specialist, below listed are the physical challenges players will face under the 1-7-2 system.

- **Repeat sprint challenges-** Constant pressing and recovery runs mean players must perform **high-intensity sprints repeatedly** with minimal rest.
- **Aerobic Endurance-** The system requires **continuous movement** to maintain compactness and cover pressing diamonds.
- **Anaerobic Power-** Frequent **1v1 duels** demand short bursts of maximum power (accelerations, decelerations, jumps).
- **Strength & Core Stability-** With so many 1v1 challenges, players must resist physical pressure and maintain balance.
- **Strength & Core Stability-** Diamonds require **constant micro-adjustments** in spacing (compression/tension).

- **Recovery & Resilience-** The intensity of the 1-7-2 means recovery between matches is critical.

Therefore all the above physical challenges need to be taken in consideration when preparing the fitness training programs by our specialist.

### **6.3 Technicality**

Elite technical qualities are met not only because of what our system requires us in order to win over our opponents for qualitative superiority, but also to ensure that 'joga bonito' happens in the game. Flair, dribbles are some of the techniques I want to see from my players. But mainly technical quality is expected to reach elite levels because of qualitative superiority I want my team to have over any opponent. This not only helps us overcome any 1v1s and pressings easily but also helps the relationist mid-three players structure themselves in any way they want without fearing or hesitating because of what could happen if they fail with their risk taking actions at dangerous positions.

#### **6.3.1 Tactical Integration Note**

Again training drills and methods on how players are trained and developed into elite technicality levels, below are the technical requirements the system of 1-7-2 presents players on the pitch.

- **1v1 Duels Under Pressure-** Constant isolation in diamonds means players must beat opponents with dribbling, shielding, or quick passing.
- **First Touch & Ball Control-** Tight compression zones demand immaculate first touches to escape pressure.
- **Passing Speed & Accuracy-** The 1-7-2 relies on rapid ball circulation to shift opponents. The zero point technique which is about finding the safe passing lane which is in between two players which is also the blindspot of the two players is another technical mastery that I personally put on to the technical part of the system. So players are expected to make quick passes after finding these zero point passing lanes to avoid interceptions by opponents.
- **Finishing Under Stress-** Due to the compactness(two-striker system) and isolated aerial duels or targeted passes(one striker system) strikers will often receive the ball in crowded zones or in isolated forms.
- **Technical Endurance-** Technique must hold even at minute 85, under fatigue. Training must simulate technical execution under physical exhaustion.

## 6.4 Goalkeeping

Another important game changing idea is having an elite goalkeeper, who has a complete profile of goalkeepers, who checks out all goalkeeping qualities that best goalkeepers in the world have starting from reflexes to shot stopping and handling qualities but also exceeds the usual GK profile by also being an elite ball player who can give us not an optional ball player but a major piece of build-ups, direct attack orchestrating, third-man combinations and other options which any outfield player could give but from his/her goal keeping position. An extra man advantage is what I look for from my goalkeeper. Ideally, it is discussed well about No.1's profile that they have a complete version of the position. Due to these specific systematic circumstances our GKs are trained in very detailed and specialized programs from a designated Goalkeeping coach.

### 6.4.1 Tactical Integration Note

Basically we can say our GK is a hybrid of Manuel Neuer+ David Raya+ Alisson Becker+ Jan Oblak+ Emiliano Martinez+ Ederson Moraes+ Thibaut Courtois best qualities combined. On this combination we add even more qualities of ball playing ability and exceptional passing abilities for the player. For the below tactical circumstances the Goalkeeper role is expected to reach the specified elite style of play.

- Facilitates progression by acting as the “hidden link” in passing triangles/diamonds.
- Launches counter-attacks or bypasses pressing traps with long distribution.
- Acts as the *first playmaker* when the team builds from the back.
- Deliver stable performances across the season, not just in big games.
- Vocal leader, inspires confidence in defenders and organizes the defensive line, instills confidence, and maintains composure in high-pressure matches.
- Win duels when the press is bypassed and attackers break through.
- Save in 1v1 duels, close-range shots, and high-pressure moments when the block is broken.
- Initiate attacks with precise short, medium, and long passes; break pressing lines.
- Cover space behind the defensive line, intercept through balls, act as an extra defender.

### Summary:

Discussed above are the list of placeholder components of the system 1-7-2 designated to be trained by specialized coaches of each area specified above.

