
Developing the next generation

The retreat line



1863 150 YEARS 2013

Aim:

This presentation supports the introduction of the retreat line, helping coaches understand its use and ways to develop players.

The background

Football should be played with an efficient, economical, measured, possession based approach, where pass quality combined with intelligent and timely support and movement lead to progress and penetration through the thirds of the field to provide goal scoring opportunities IF counter attacking possibilities are denied.



The Future Game The FA Coaching Philosophy



The rationale

English football is stereotyped with ‘always playing the long ball’ and a very direct style of play. However, the rest of the world has evolved with a modern type of football, one that is based on maintaining possession of the ball and selecting the right time to play forwards.

In order to do this, children need to learn to play through the thirds of the pitch, building possession from their own area and passing their way up the pitch. This should become their default style of play.



The rationale

At best, a goal kick taken off the floor and kicked as far as possible has a tendency to become a 50/50 ball, yet evidence suggests it becomes more in favour of the defending team and possession given away more often than not.

By introducing a retreat line we are encouraging young players to develop their style of play, develop comfort in possession and build an attack from deep.

It's all about being comfortable in possession.



Research

Academic research conducted into the introduction of a retreat line found the following headline statistics (from a sample of 80 games):

- A retreat line generates a higher success rate for creating passing sequences from the goalkeeper's distribution compared to when a line is not used.
- A longer pass played when using a retreat line reduces the chances of a passing sequence.
- Without the retreat line in place, the generation of a passing sequence (with 3 or more passes) was 20%, whilst when the retreat line is used, this increases to 34%.

Four corner outcomes

<p>Improve: Short passing Receiving on half turn Through balls and killer passes</p>	<p>Improve: Decision making Self-confidence Checking your shoulder and scanning skills Assessment of risk</p>
<p>Improve: ABC's Game speed Hip flexor rotation</p>	<p>Improve: Playing as a team Co-operation Learning different roles</p>

Law 16 (Mini-Soccer) states:

Goal Kick

Procedure

A player of the defending team kicks the ball from any point within the penalty area.

Opponents must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play. The defending team does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and has the option to restart the game before should they choose to.

The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

The retreat line

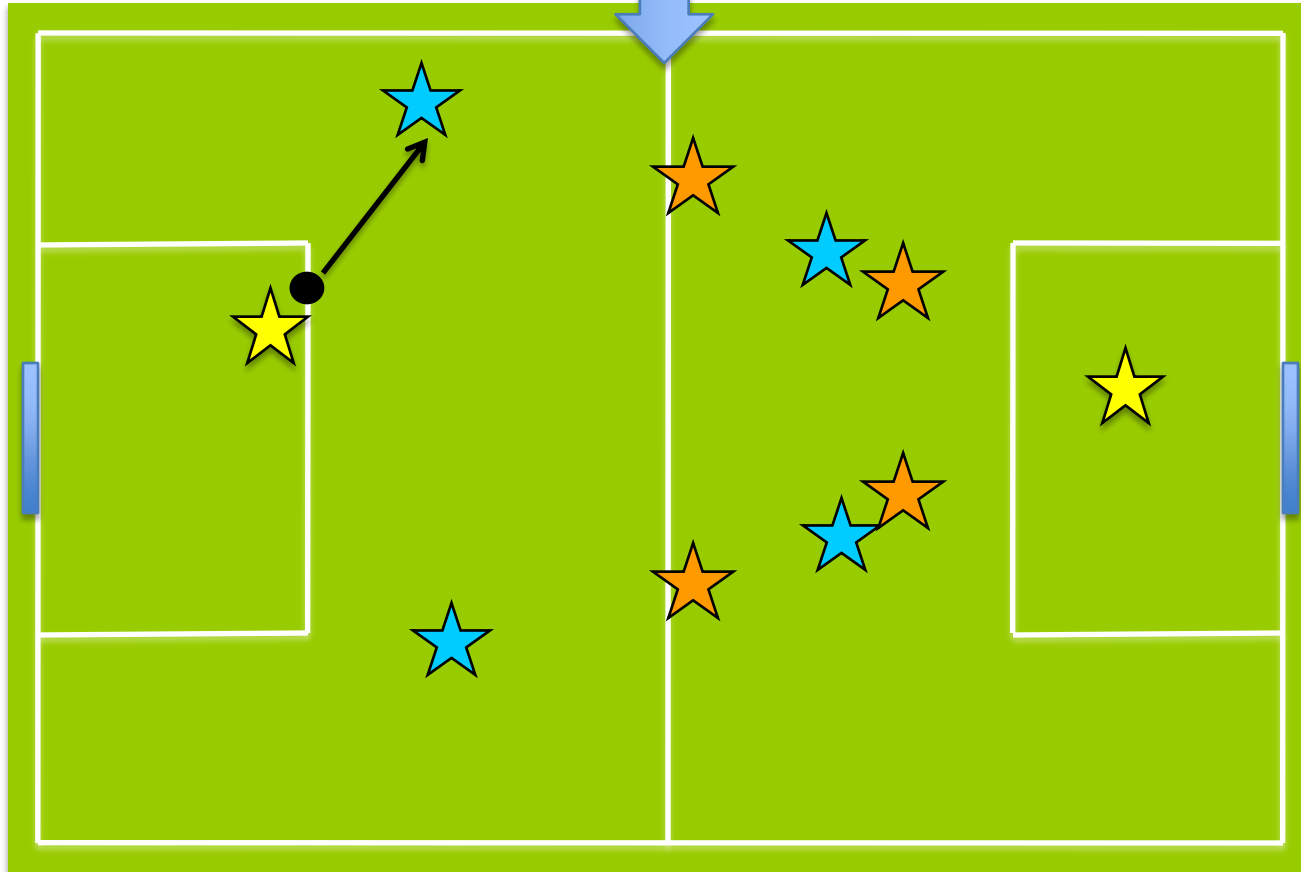
Sometimes the correct pass is a longer one, for example, if the goalkeeper spots a 1v1 between their team's centre forward and an opposition defender; this is still seen as good play.

It is permissible in Law 16 for the goalkeeper to play quickly without having to wait for all the players to retreat, to counter attack effectively, and this is the choice of the goalkeeper.

This supports the development of decision making skills in young players - whether to play shorter or longer and the speed of their distribution.

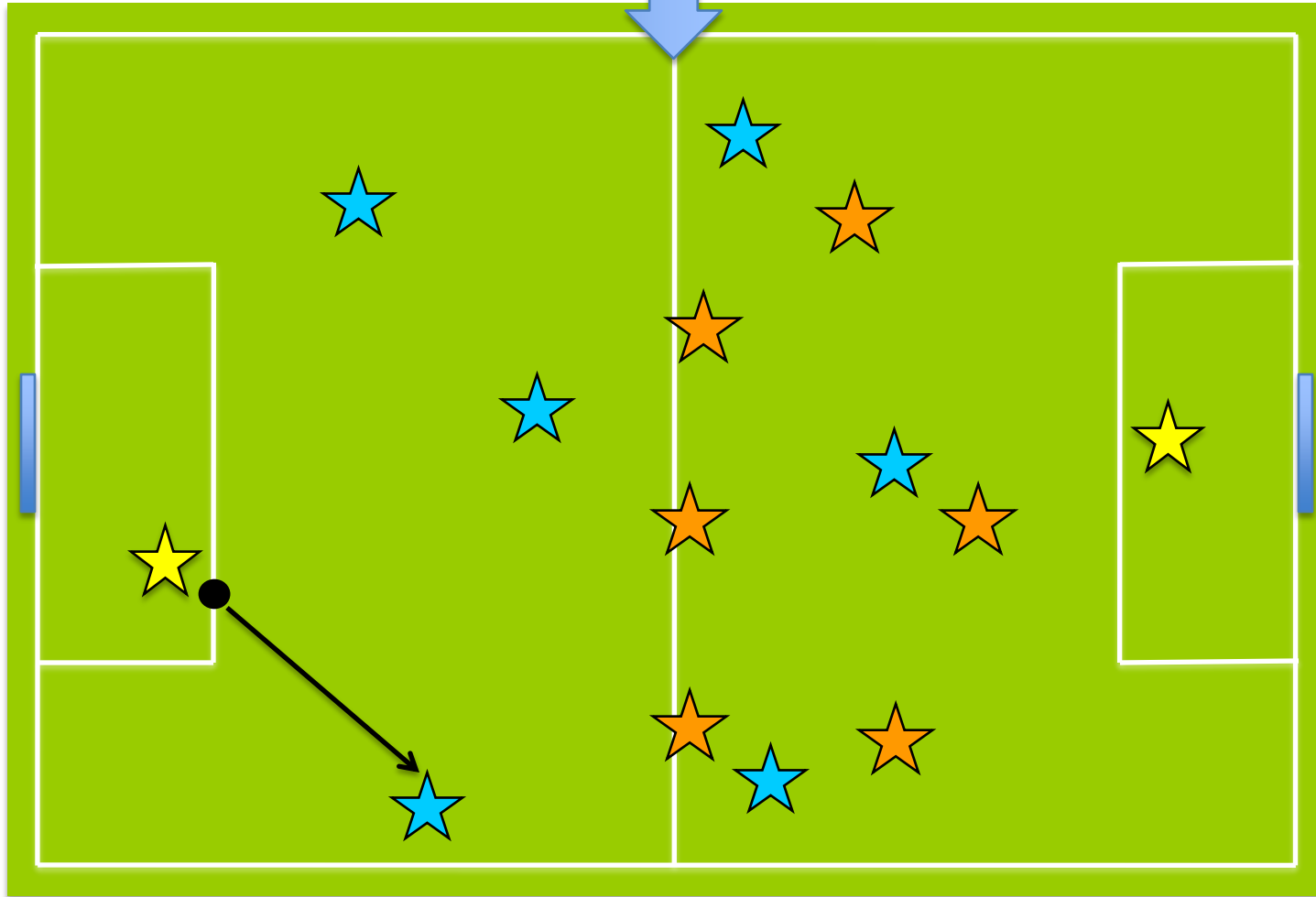
The Retreat Line

Basic restart in 5v5



The Retreat Line

Basic restart in 7v7

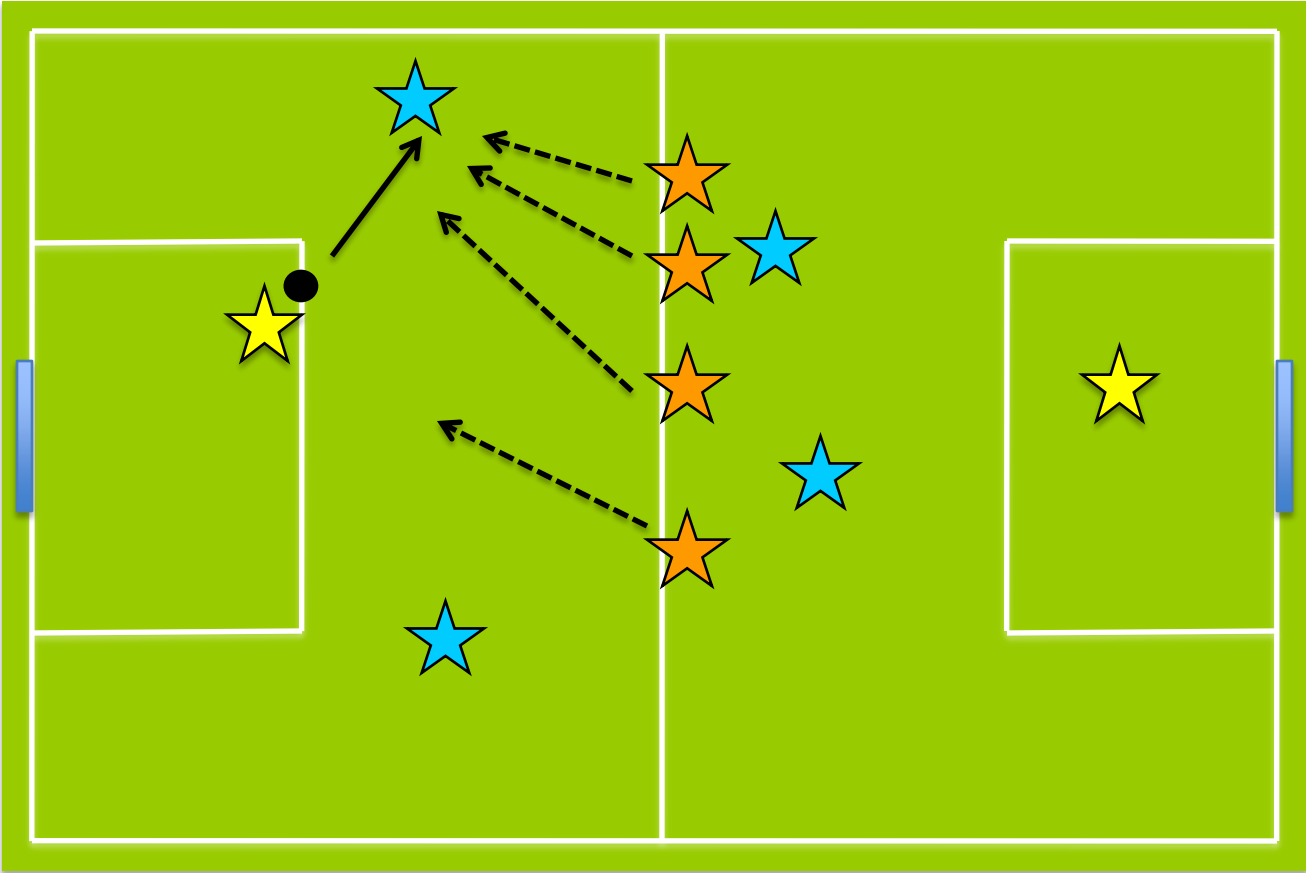


Findings so far

The majority of feedback so far is that the introduction of the retreat line is helping children learn to play out from the back. Feedback from children has been really positive and they feel it is helping them learn.

However, some coaches are using this as an opportunity to line up their players (as per the next slide) and effectively 'charge' the opposition player that gains possession.

The Retreat Line

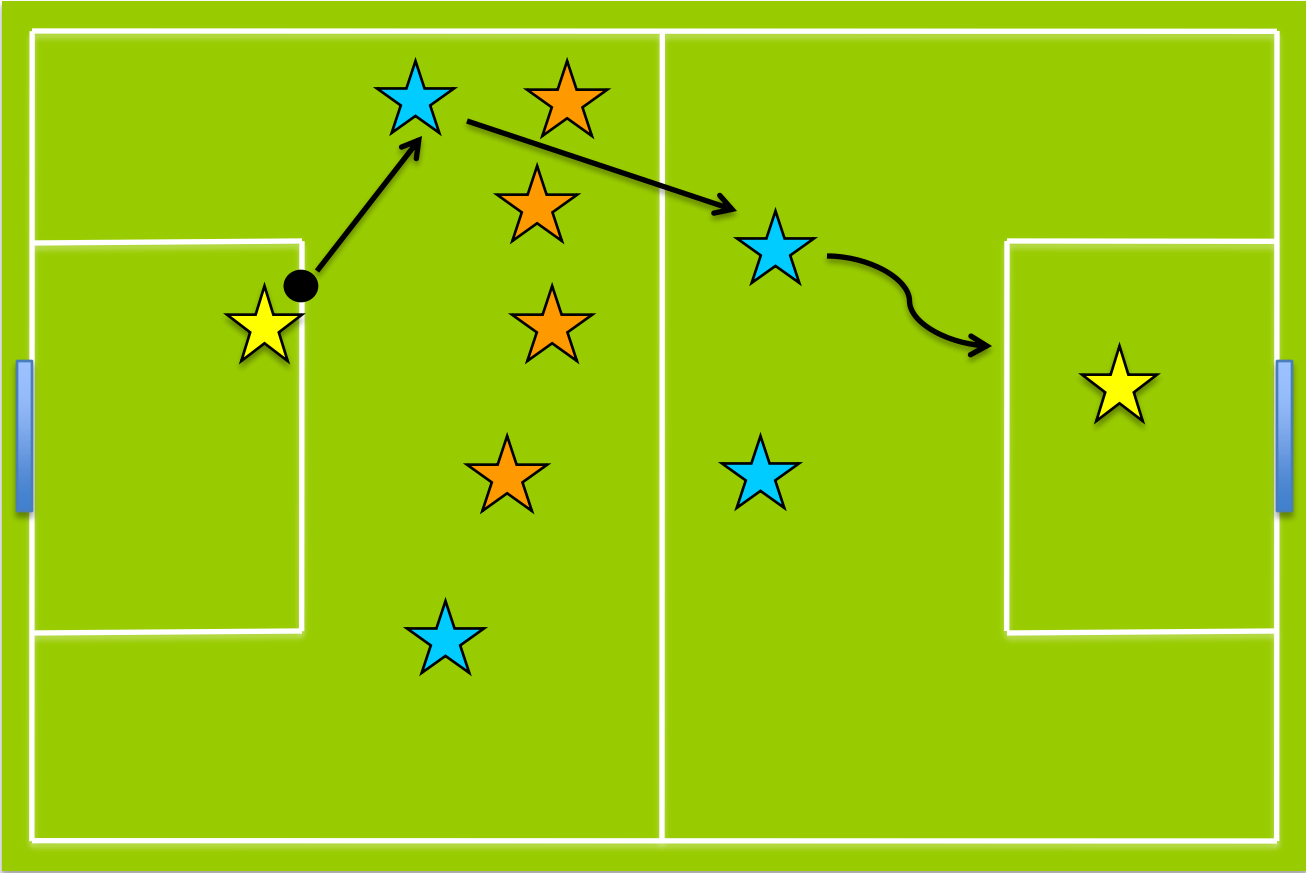


Findings so far

This is defeating the object of helping the children learn and managers/coaches need to consider the bigger picture of helping ALL players get better at learning the game. This is both when defending and attacking and includes the other team's players too. Please help educate others.

...However, some players have countered this by playing one through pass that beats all the opposition...and then the other team have to defend smarter and more strategically.

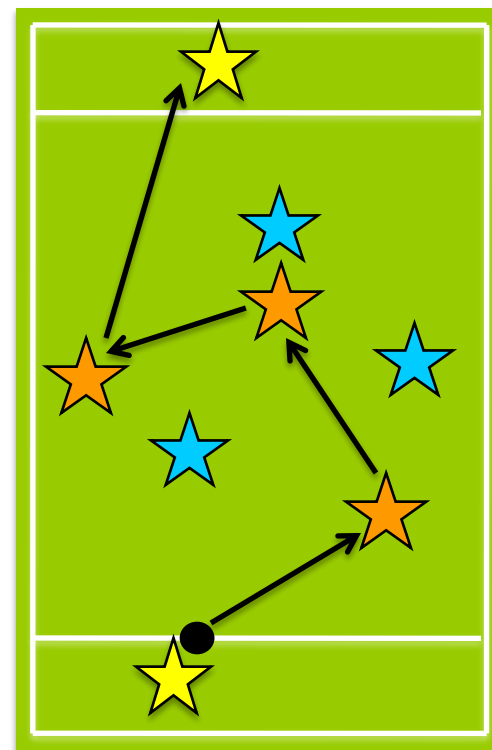
The Retreat Line



Helping the players

By using practices such as the 'Target' game on the right, this can help players develop outcomes such as:

- receiving on the half turn
- angled passing between players
- innovative movement off the ball to create space
- communication with team mates
- making effective decisions
- working together as a team
- problem solving of authentic game-like situations



Summary

We are in the early stages of introducing the change to the Law and understand it will take a while for children to adapt to something new. We will let this embed and settle down as the coaches and players get up to speed before we start to assess the impact this has made on player development.

It's about an appreciation of possession; educating players on its value, enjoying the ball, rather than fearing it. Please help each other along as we get to grips with a changing time for helping young players become better footballers in England.

