

# A SIMPLE INTRODUCTION: THE 5 PHASES OF PLAY IN THE 1-4-2-3-1

Here we now look at the end product using a back four in the 1-4-2-3-1 system of play.

The way I interpret it you will see it is similar to the 1-3-3-1-3 in set up, in terms of the attacking shape of the team.

This way it is an easy transition between the two systems.

The center backs (4) and (5) in both systems I like to teach more as a Number (6) or defensive midfielder than a traditional center back.

So with a back three or a back four all center back players are taught the same way to be able to play out of the back and be comfortable on the ball which is more like a number (6).

**We have covered the other positions previously now we add (4) and (5) to the team set up**

## THE ROLES OF CENTER BACKS (4) AND (5)

### Technical Qualities:

1. Heading skills.
2. Passing Technique - distance (short, medium and long) - direction (left and right)

### Tactical Qualities: In Possession

1. Speed - with the ball
2. Always in a position to receive the ball.
3. Simple Choices- first pass - retain possession of the ball – ability to change the direction of the game

### Out of Possession:

1. Orientation: (positioning determined by the ball, the opponent, his teammates)
2. Communication - with their peers (especially as a center back pairing) and with respect to the opponents
3. Understanding of the different forms of defending; zoning and man marking; 1 against 1
4. Knowing when to press / when to cover

### Psychological:

1. Killer mentality (Take no prisoners).
2. Vocal leader and organizer
3. Disciplined and Responsible ensuring the first pass is a safe one; always in a position to receive (confident) - orientation - preserving the position – great positional sense
4. Ability to focus on man marking and stick to the task (1 to 1 and 1 more)

### Physical Attributes:

1. Speed in short and medium distances
2. Strength on and off the ball
3. Jumping ability
4. Strength in the challenge: On the ground: In the air.
5. Agility

## **ATTACKING (10%)**

Depending on the adventure of the head coach and the technical ability of the center backs they may start the build up at the back by bringing the ball out of defense themselves and running with it. This is not a big part of their game; but again, depending on the type of center back; their game may be more than just 10% offensive.

They must be VERY comfortable on the ball and be very good passers to have the confidence to always look to build play from the back.

## **DEFENDING (90%)**

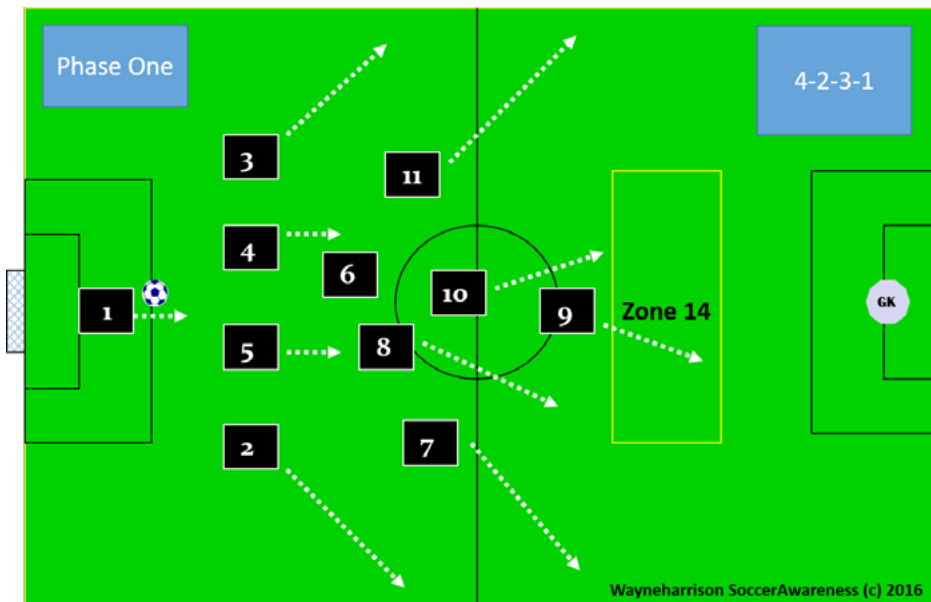
Heading: Of course they must be good in the air first of all.

1 v 1: They must have the usual defending skills of having the ability to delay, and be patient plus anticipate situations ahead of the ball and pick the right moment to tackle with the right timing and pace to close down, and to be good 1 v 1 markers.

Pace: It always helps if they are quick but if they read the game well this is not vital

Game Understanding: They must also have a great understanding as a pair able to cover each other effectively and be good communicators. They must be very good readers of the game, especially if they are not the quickest of players.

Physical: Physically strong, this is probably the most physically strong position on the field.

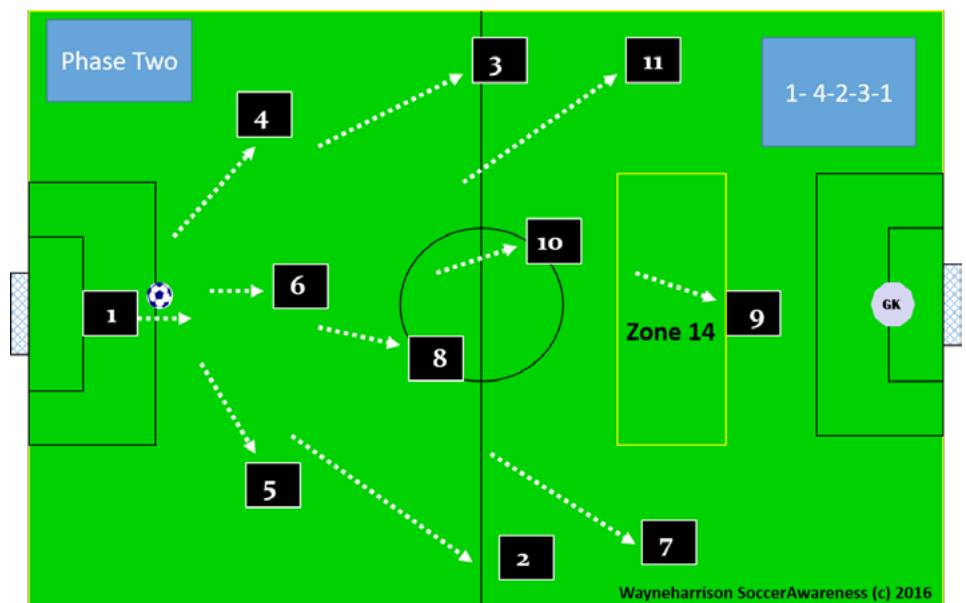


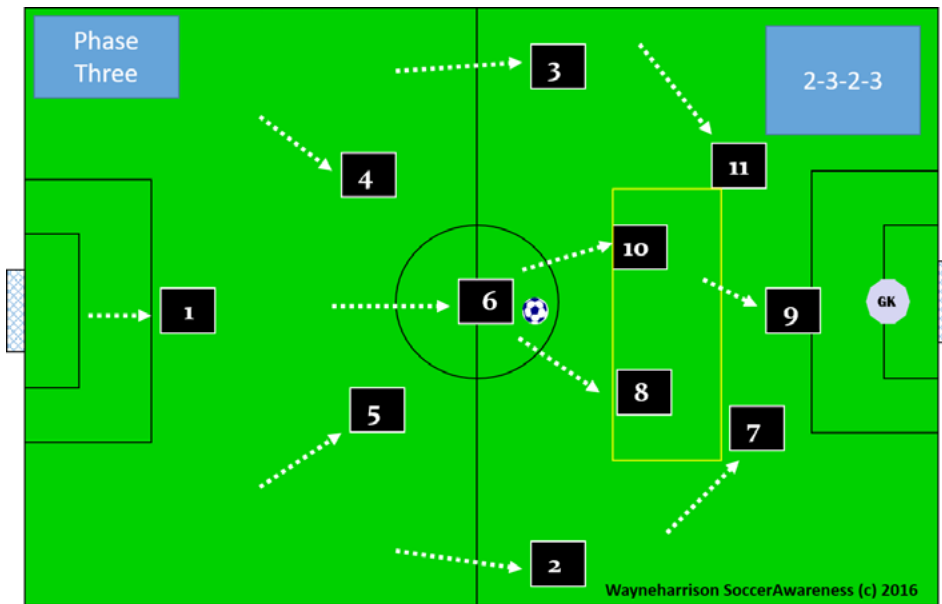
The players in our 1-4-2-3-1 system of play

This is the DEFENDING team shape (“start position”) for a 4-2-3-1.

### Initial Attacking Set up

This is the attacking team shape (attacking “start position”) for the -1-4-2-3-1. Zone 14 is the area between the opponents back three or four and their midfield. For U12 and U13 to affect the minds of 7 and 11 we may call it a 4-2-1-3 so they think positive and in an attacking mode.



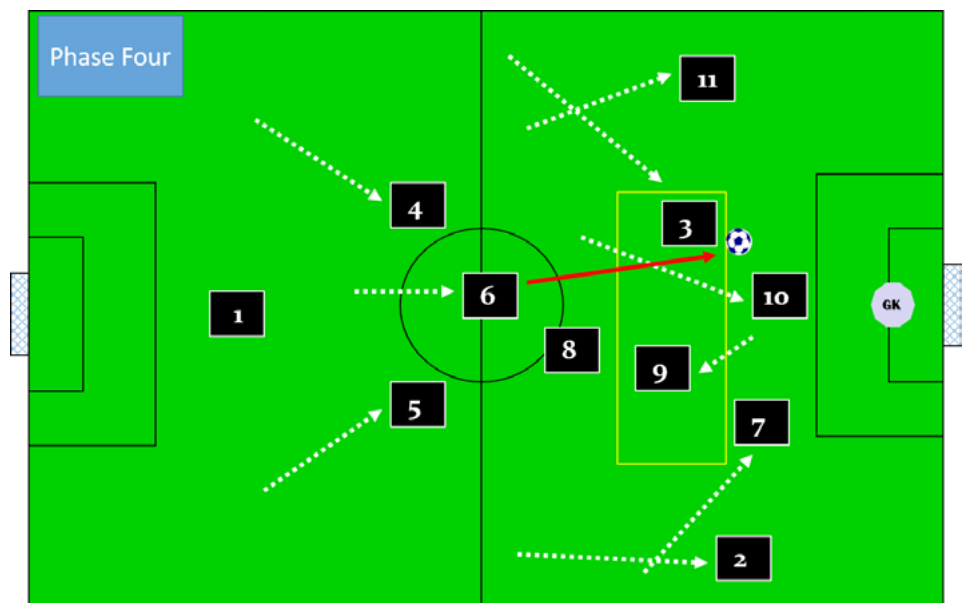


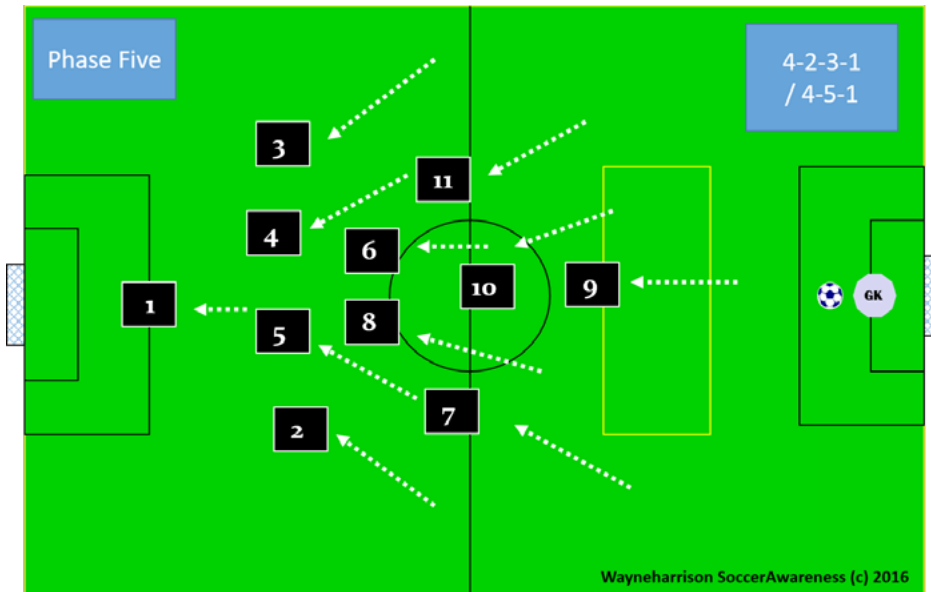
## Interchange between units of players

This is the attacking team shape now a 2-3-2-3 or 3-1-3-3 depending on the moment. This can also be the attacking team shape we change to when we are chasing a game perhaps losing 1-0 and wanting to be more positive in attack. So this now would be the start position. (4) and (5) come back together.

## The Interchange of individual players

Movements up front have been effected creating a diamond of support for striker 9 who becomes 10 and so on. Absolute freedom of movement in the attacking third.





## Defensive Recovery set up

This is the RECOVERING team SHAPE for a 4-2-3-1 which you can interpret as a 4-4-1-1 or even a 4-5-1. The main thing is we get as many players behind the ball as possible and as quickly as possible if we cant win the ball immediately where we lose it.

## A preferred Phase Five when losing the ball: A Full Team Press

We may press up from the back too leaving opponents offside; should they get a chance of a counter attack. Defenders must decide in a split second which course of action they take.

