



Game Model Preview

4-2-3-1

Created by:
Rhys Desmond

FORMATION: 4-2-3-1



Rhyspect FC, managed by TMS, plays a **4-2-3-1** formation. This involves...

1 Goalkeeper

4 Defenders – 1 right-back, 2 centre-backs, 1 left-back

2 Defensive Midfielders – Usually a '6' and an '8'.

3 'Attacking Midfielders' – 2 wings and 1 'number 10'.

1 Forward

Within our game model, the formation is only a starting point, a reference, and a manner in which players understand the relative position they are to adopt over the course of the game. The formation will therefore take on many different shapes depending on the phase of the game, including....

- Defensive Phase (Low-Block, Mid-Block, High-Block)
- Attacking Phase (Build-up, Progression, Creation)
- Set-Pieces

These are explored in the following sections...

Dream players to resemble...

Position by position

GK – Manuel Neuer

Sweeping in behind the back-four in a high-line, good in possession and capable of playing out from the back.

RB – Kyle Walker

Frequent high-intensity runs forward to contribute to the attack, but also a defensive warrior in recovering in transitional moments. May stay more reserved as LB ventures forward more often.

CB – Maxence Lacroix

Needs to have pace to match qualities of second centre-back, but still excel in possession of the ball, and in 1v1 duels.

CB – Mats Hummels

Capable of hitting long diagonal passes from one half-space to another, or finding the target men early on in transition. A beast in the air, and outstanding defensive awareness. Just want him to have a bit more pace.

LB – Alphonso Davies

Capable getting up and down the line, and using skill to contribute to attack on the overlap, but also capable of getting back in and recovering for centre-backs.

DM – Joshua Kimmich

Possession warrior, but also good at screening in front of a back-four and shifting side to side. Prefer a smaller, mobile midfield runner type.

CM – Jordan Henderson

Capable being a second 'six', but also goes box-to-box and contributes to attack through crosses into the box and close combos in tight spaces.

RW – Jarrod Bowen

Speed demon, with so much pace and power on the break, and the capability to score goals from anywhere cutting inside on his left foot. More direct in style of play than LW.

AM – Florian Wirtz

Capable presser and able to put in a defensive shift, but stands out more for creativity, shot-creation, goal-creation and influence in the final third.

LW – Jack Grealish

Chance creator and silky dribbler that wants to come inside on right foot and influence the match in central areas to support the number 10. In doing so, allows the LB to get on the overlap and deliver crosses from wide.

ST – Raul Jimenez

Combative defensively, while being capable of dropping in deep and drawing attention toward himself to open spaces for others. Capable finisher, penalty box poacher, and strong in the air. Solid mix of target man and fox in the box wrapped up in one.

* With this kind of team, you can see the balance – a crucial element to a successful team.

My slowest defender is supported by three of the quickest around, a goalkeeper who can sweep in behind, and a defensive warrior in front of him to screen. My right winger is more direct, as my left winger is more of a shape shifter. But both will want to invert to allow fullbacks to overlap.

All of this will help me as I build my game model.

* Within a manager's game model, it is important to detail the [desired characteristics](#) of their players, even going so far as to break it down by position. In helping you do that, think about your dream player for each role on a football pitch within your formation.

For example, do you want your 'six' to dominate possession and be a pass master? Then maybe you want a player like Jorginho. Do you want your striker to drop deep and facilitate build-up? Then maybe you want a centre-forward like Roberto Firmino. To learn more about this concept, see [this article](#).

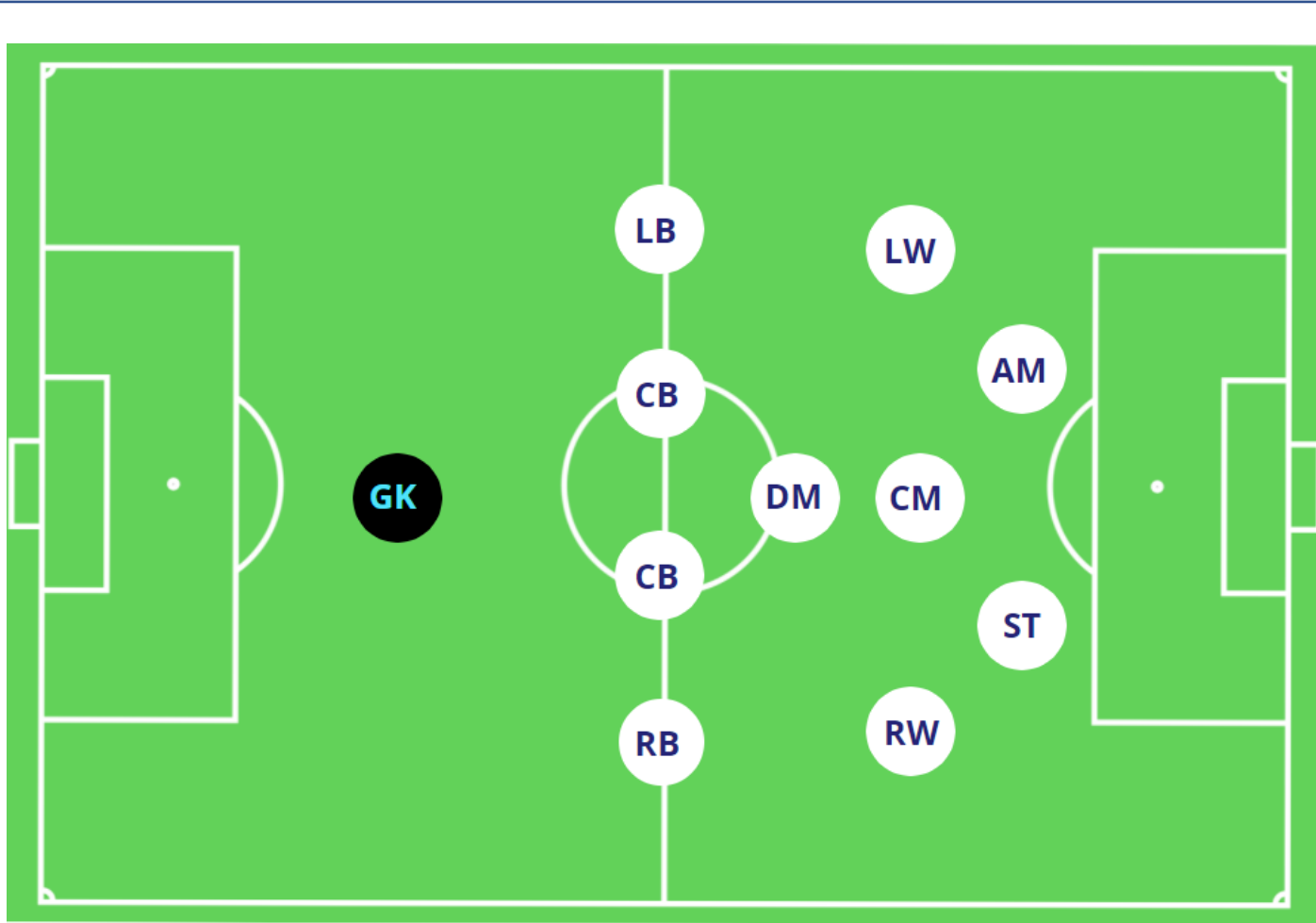


Game Model

Style of Play

Created by:
Rhys Desmond

DEFENSIVE PHASE: HIGH-BLOCK



When defending in the final third in a high-block, Rhyspect FC sets up in a **4-1-3-2**, pressing from the front with intensity, wide angling, and a high line to match. On goal kicks it will start more man to man, and then fall zonal as the ball is circulated. Both central midfielders must come to the side of the ball, with one higher and one lower.

Important principles by position:

GK – Ready to sweep in behind, situated high up field.

CBs – Drop if needed based on opp. time and space, but otherwise push team up and win aerial duels on long passes.

RB/LB – Hold narrowness and line height, without stepping out to follow movement of opp. toward ball.

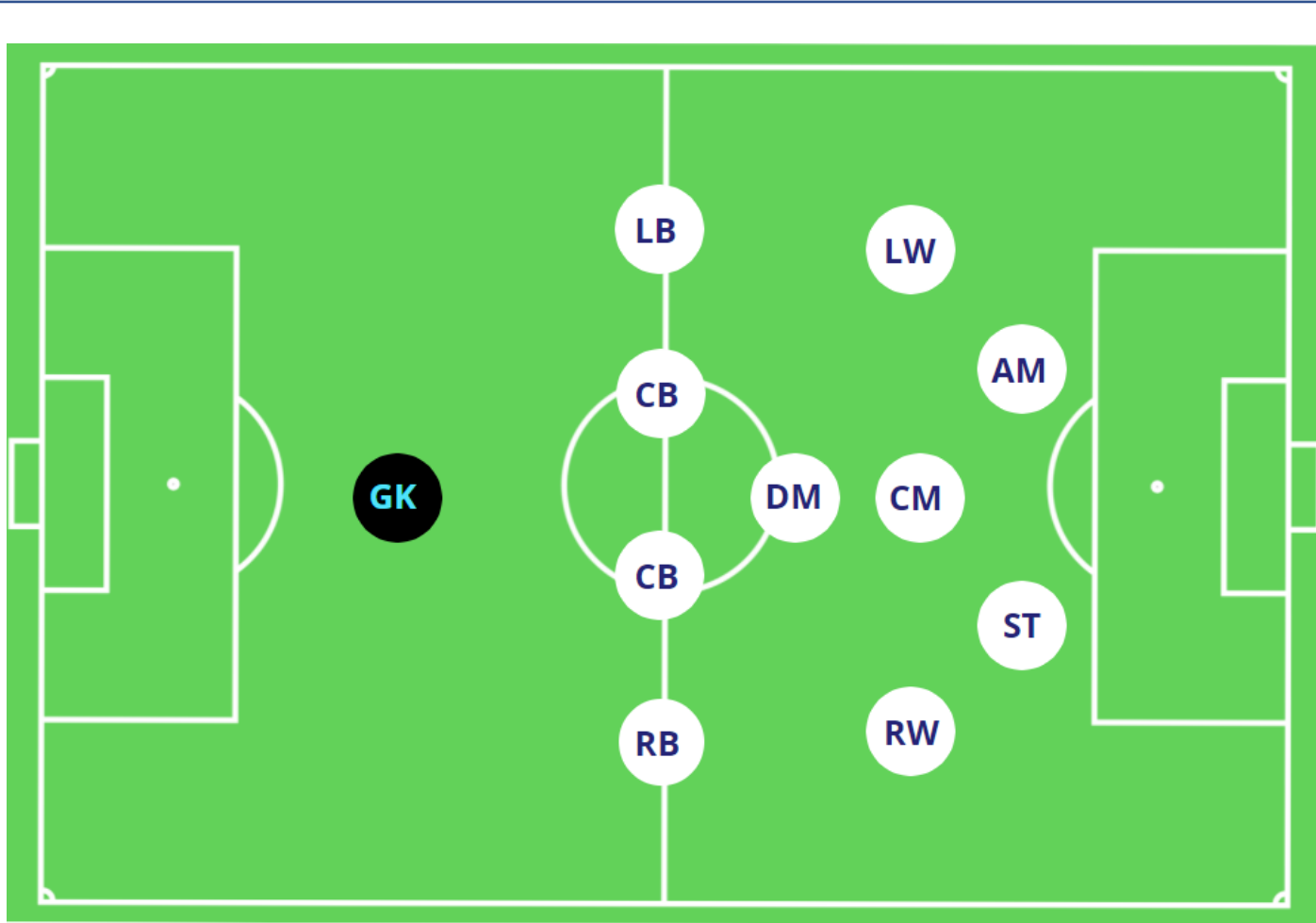
DM – Screen penetrative passing options centrally, and shift with movement of the ball left to right. CM to be more active in stepping out to support diamond pressing shapes.

RW/LW – Stop central passes first through body shape, and then press once ball finds its way to the wide area.

AM – Lead first line of pressure, or drop if needed to cover opp. number six, as shape becomes 4-1-3-1-1.

ST - Lead first line of pressure, and put in tackles when the time is right.

STYLE OF PLAY: HIGH PRESS / PRESSING

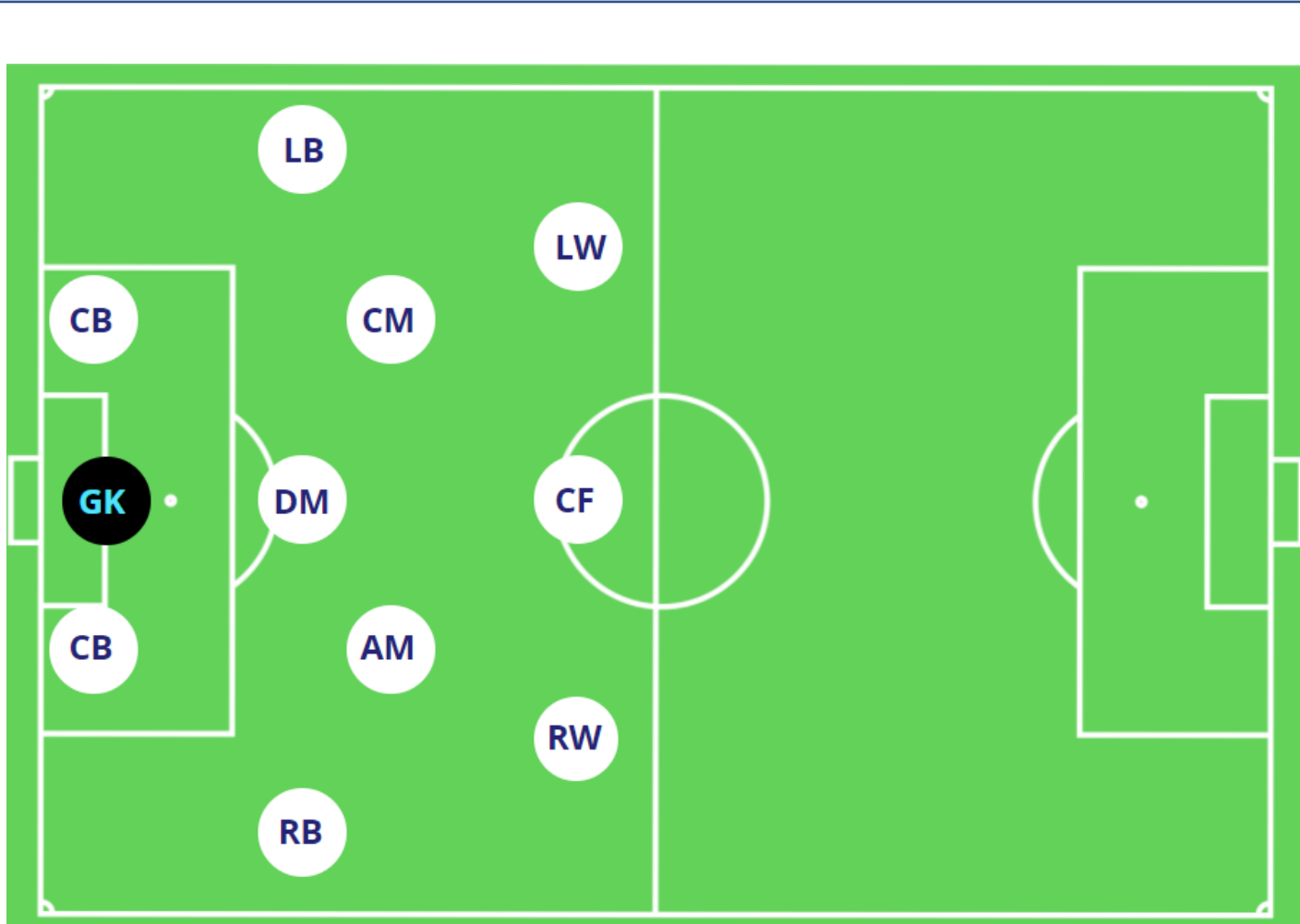


When defending in the final third in a high-block, Rhyspect FC sets up in a **4-1-3-2**, pressing from the front with intensity, wide angling, and a high line to match. On goal kicks it will start more man to man, and then fall zonal as the ball is circulated. Both central midfielders must come to the side of the ball, with one higher and one lower.

Important principles:

- Entice the opposition to play toward the touchline, where the press will be intensified in a diamond shape between wing, fullback, centre-mid and one of the front two.
- The opposition may also choose to play into the half-spaces, which are initially screened by the AM & ST. If the ball finds its way successfully into that space, the CBs will step & press, combined with the DM/CM closing, and the W narrowing.
- Amplifying press on the following **triggers**:
 1. Back to goal.
 2. Back pass to keeper.
 3. Touchline.
 4. Players weak in possession
- Dumb down the press on players who are quick to make long passes, often unsuccessfully.

ATTACKING PHASE: BUILD-UP



When building out from the back and attacking in the first third, Rhyspect FC sets up in a **2-5-3** shape. The image shows the relative starting positions of players on goal kicks. When the ball is progressed, it may then shift into a 3-2-5, with RB/LB pushing on and DM dropping in between the CBs.

Important principles by position:

GK – Actively involved and always an option as part of the initial quartet.

CBs – Split wide as ball is progressed and circulated. Key playmakers looking for moments to spray long.

RB/LB – Start low, but push on and progress higher as the ball is circulated and progressed through the thirds.

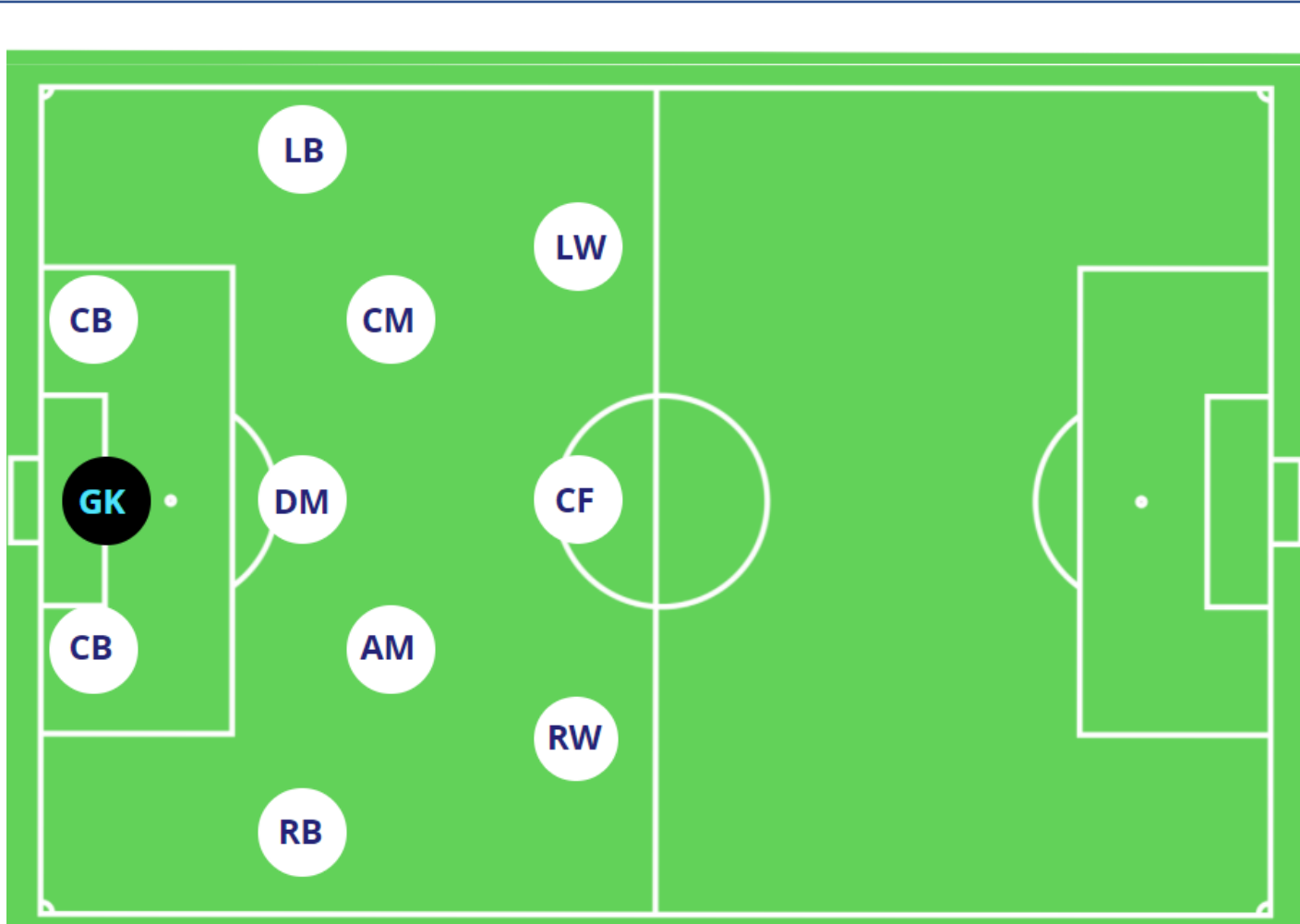
DM – Top of the diamond initially, then in between CBs during circulation.

CM/AM – Look to receive in between the lines, rotate with winger to cause chaos.

RW/LW – Look to get on blindside of defender and receive long passes in half-spaces. Rotate with CM/AM.

ST - Come deep to receive the ball centrally when DM has ball, push opp. line back when FBs, GK or CBs have ball.

STYLE OF PLAY: BUILD-UP



When building out from the back, Rhyspect FC focuses primarily on high-tempo possession-based football, utilizing one and two-touch moves to progress the ball into half-spaces or the central channel. Long passes may be used if opposition's press is high and effective, and our front three can outpace the opp. defense.

Important principles:

- > Starting positions on goal kicks as shown. Short pass into outside CBs always first option. If opposition press high and effective, GK can break press by pushing team up around the halfway-line, by playing into chest/head of wings. Team would then react by shifting into position for progression phase or mid-block (turnover).
- > FBs may start reasonably high as shown, but then come close to the ball after the GK's first pass. Near-side FB should drop lower to receive than far-side FB, opening up more space for Wings to chase down loose balls in half-spaces.
- > If CM/AM are tightly marked, float away with the help of RW/LW rotating in.

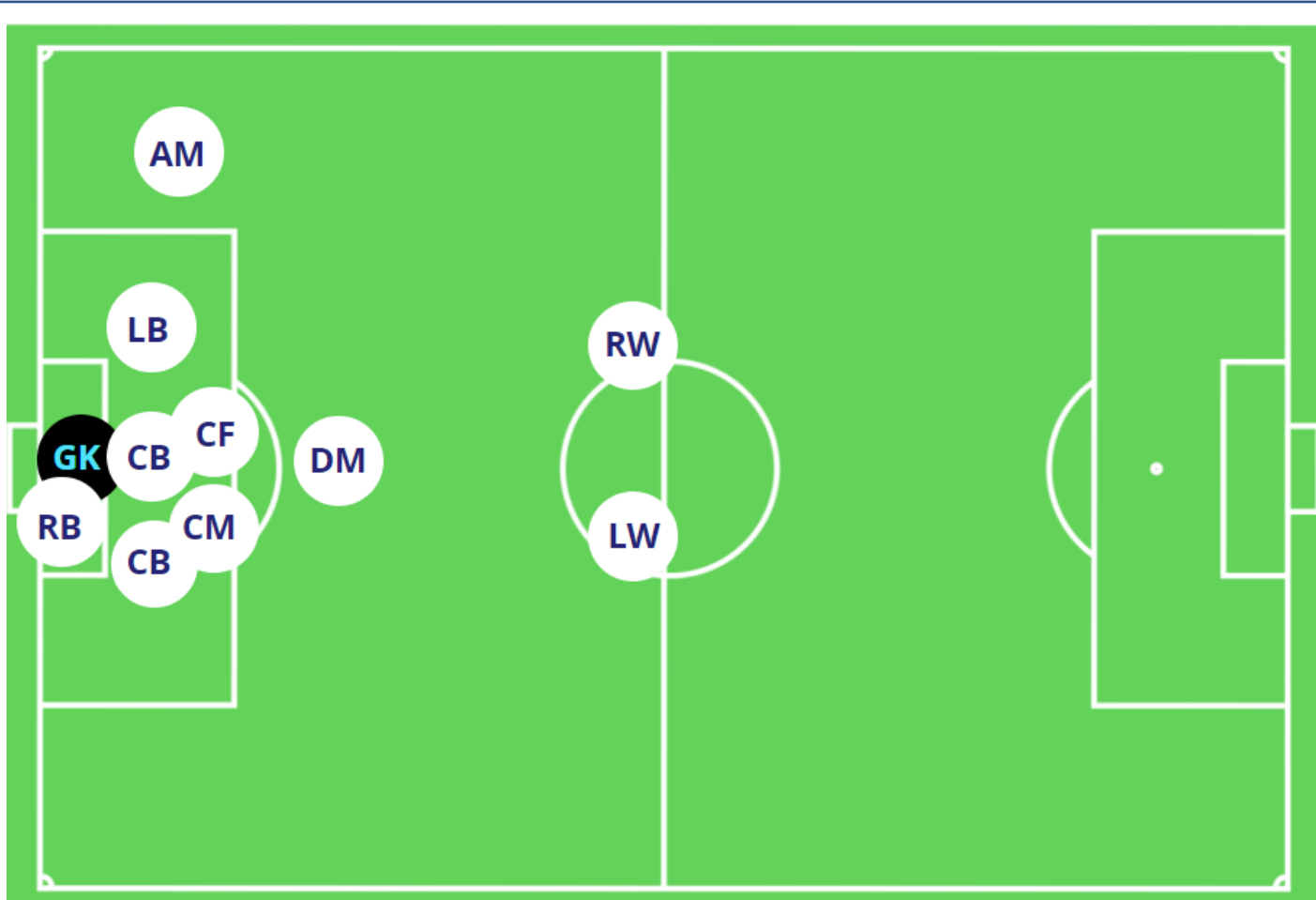


Game Model

Shape & Player Roles: Set-Pieces

Created by:
Rhys Desmond

SET-PIECES: DEFENDING CORNERS

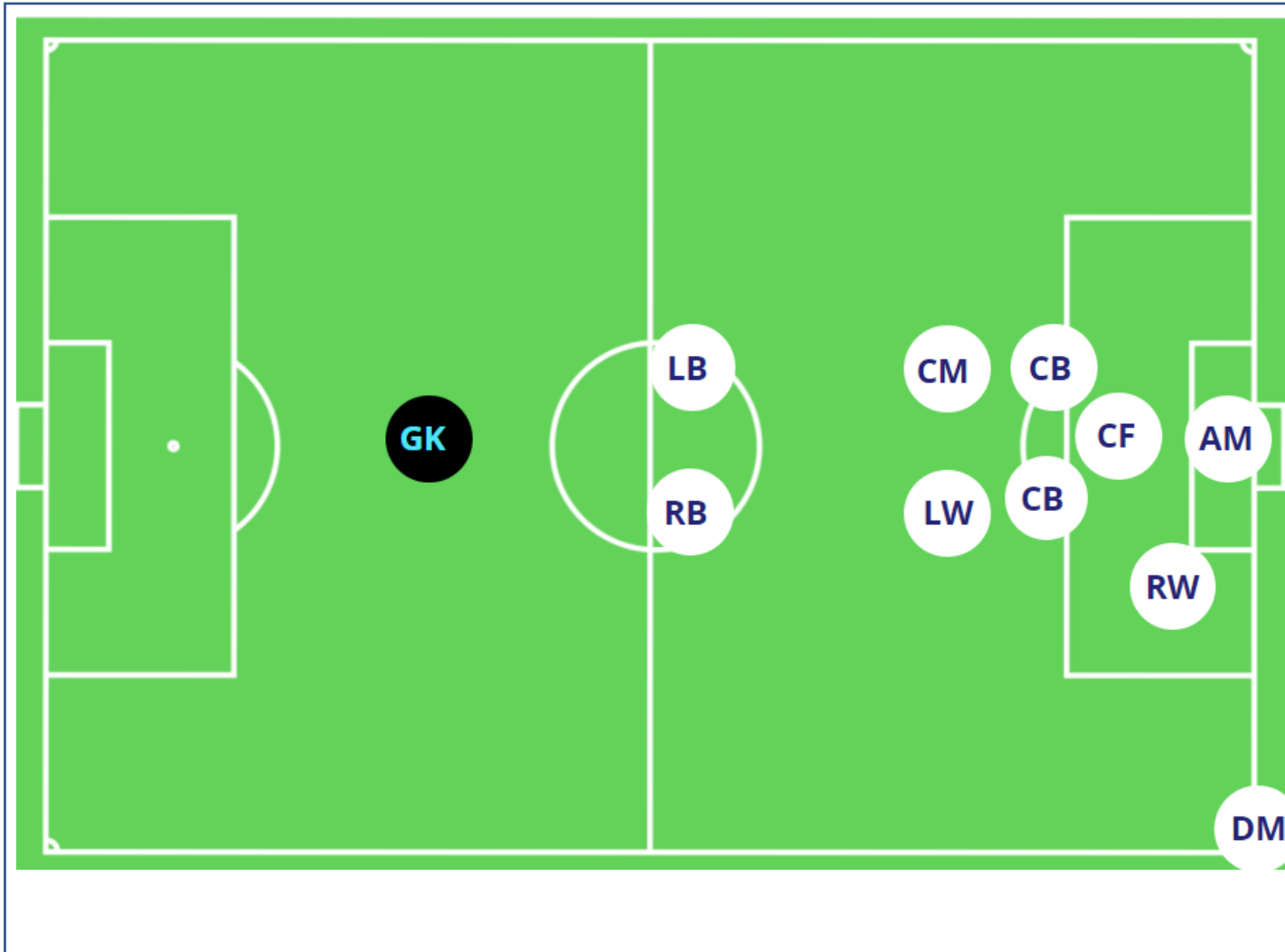


When defending corner kicks, Rhyspect FC defends in a mix of zonal marking (six players) and man-to-man marking (two players), with tallest, most aggressive players all in box. Goalkeeper takes command of near-post, as one shorter player covers far-post.

Important principles:

- Zonal markers: AM cuts off short corner option, RB on far-post, and LB cuts off near-post delivery but doesn't go on post. GK instead commands near-post. CBs around penalty spot to defend zonally. One CB slightly more back-post. DM also zonal/man-to-man at top of box to win second balls.
- Man-markers: CF and CM mark tightly the two most dangerous threats. AM may also man mark if no short corner.
- Outside the situation: RW and LW ready to counter attack.
- Clear ball out of danger swiftly. No-nonsense defending. Get out of box together as a unit to keep players offside.
- Keeper stays on their line on first ball into the box due to congestion.

SET-PIECES: ATTACKING CORNERS



When attacking on corner kicks, Rhyspect FC puts the tallest, most aggressive players all in the box. The players left outside the box are long shot threats, and the players even further back are some of the fastest in the team to help react in quick defensive transitions. The best crosser of the ball takes an out-swinging kick, aiming for the penalty spot.

Important principles:

- Targets = CBs and CF, moving toward the penalty spot.
- One striker starts on goalkeeper to limit their movement.
- RW can come close to the ball to pull opposition players away, opening more space for CBs and CF to receive.
- Two long-shot specialists wait outside the eighteen to react to second balls. Two speedy players wait at the halfway line to defend against counter attacks.
- One player starts on the goalkeeper, usually the player who would be taking the kick from the opposite side.
- Creative freedom given to players in training, with players able to develop attacking set-piece strategies.

IMPORTANT PLAYER CHARACTERISTICS

Rhyspect FC, managed by TMS, plays a **4-2-3-1 formation**, playing through the thirds through verticality, quick transitions and positional rotations. Everything is based around the four elements of the game (ball, opposition, space and teammates), with players making decisions according to what they perceive a correct action to take in the moment based on these four elements, and our game model. Each individual position may require different characteristics. However, the following are characteristics in which each player should possess, based on our style of play and player responsibilities across the phases of the game.

- > **High endurance** (to meet demands of the game and play full 90 minutes)
- > **High speed of play** (for quick decision making, and running speed both in and out of possession such as pressing, counter-pressing, and counter-attacking).
- > **Warrior mentality** (to execute the high demands of the game and style of play).
- > **Good in possession** (short and long passes, one-touch passing, quick decisions)
- > **High footballing intelligence** (for quicker/more accurate decision making, understanding of role, understanding of position, decisions of patience vs. all-out).
- > **1v1 superiority** (for winning 1v1 duels such as dribbling, defending, and aerially)
- > **Brotherhood/Sisterhood and team-first attitude** (Coaches will work with players to establish a clear sense of role within team, and from there, players must recognize the team comes first and that they are to believe in each other like brothers or sisters).





Game Model

4-2-3-1

Created by:
Rhys Desmond