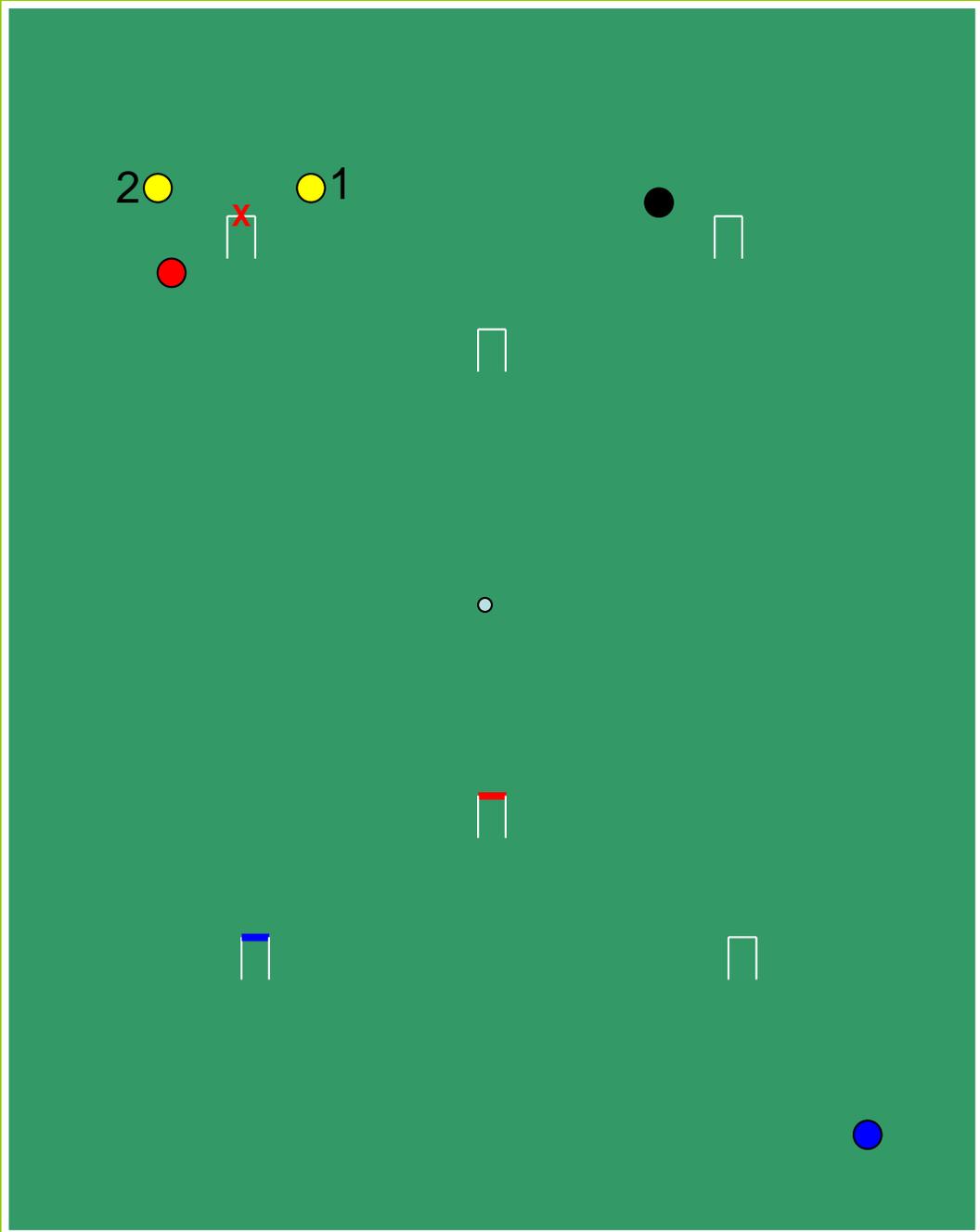
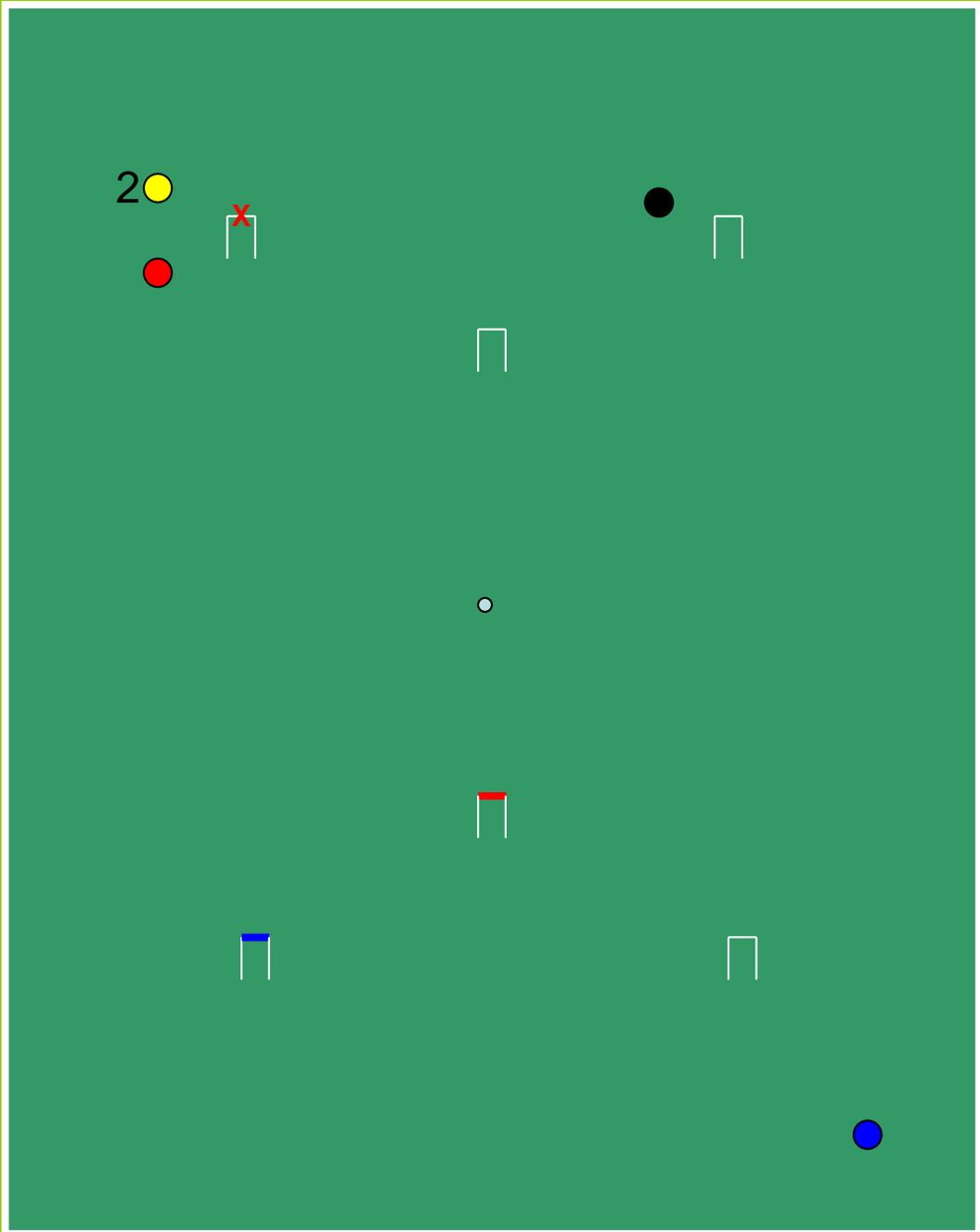


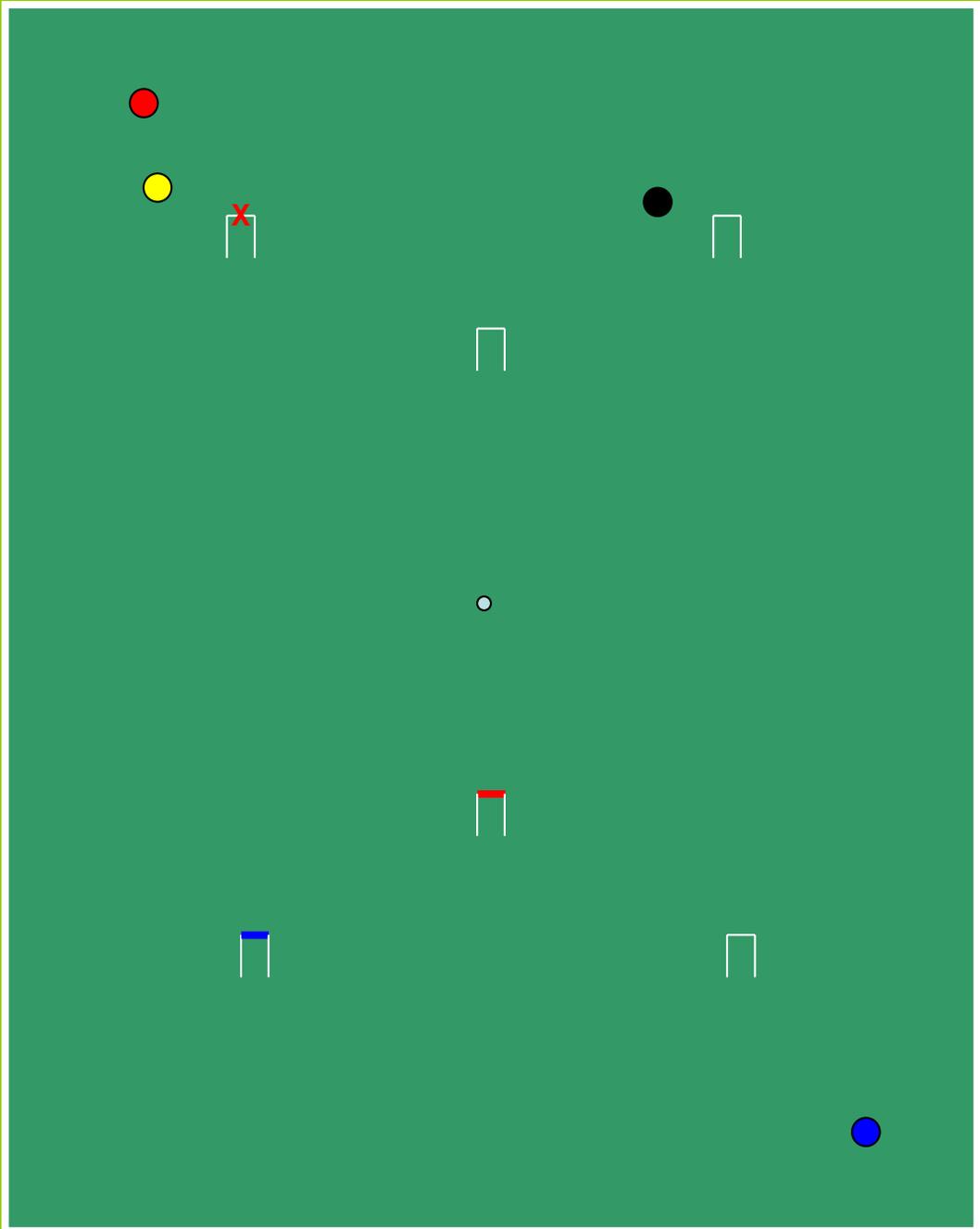
Red (for hoop 2) is taking croquet from yellow. Black is at hoop 3, blue in corner IV. What should red do?



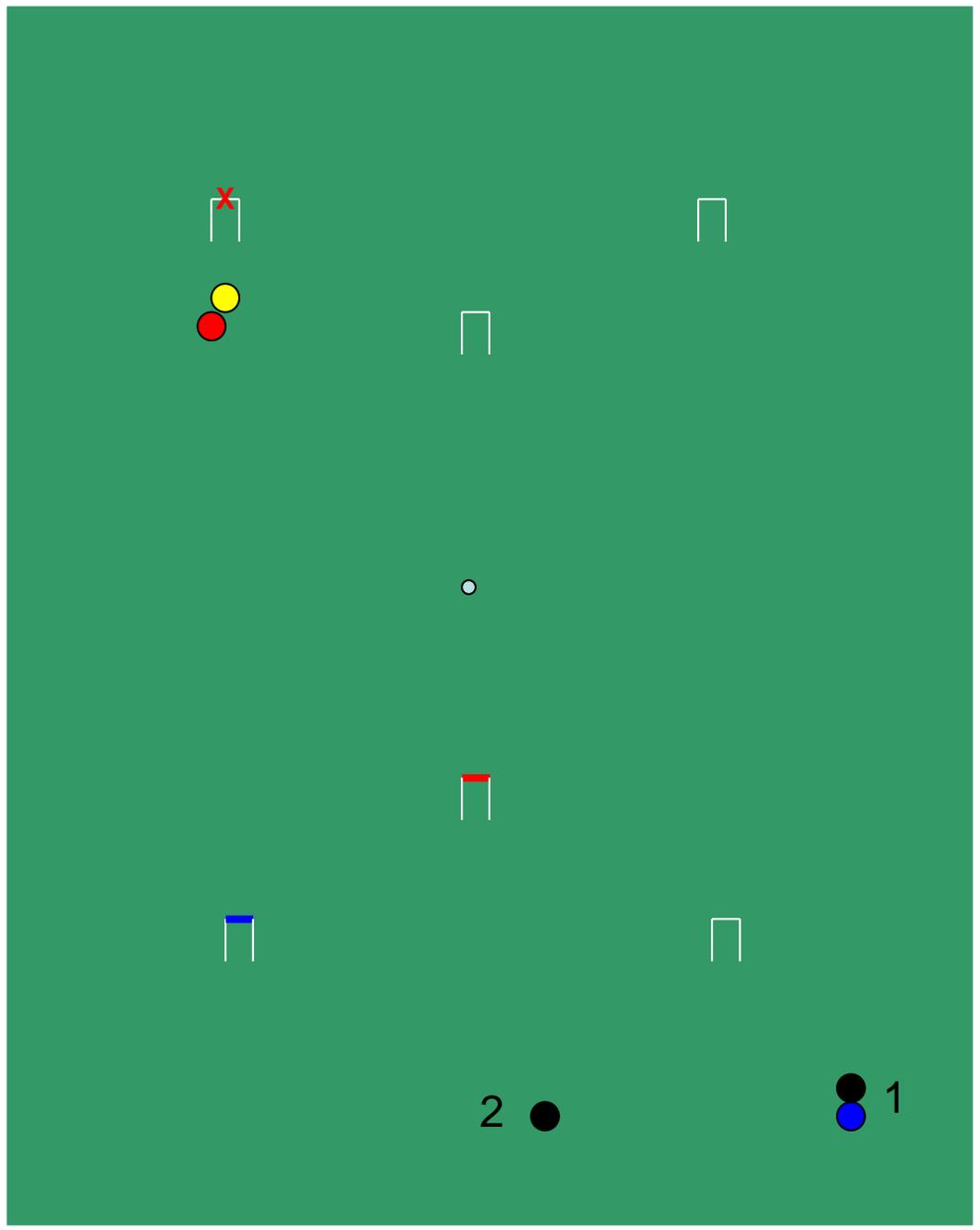
A roll to hoop 2 is the best option, but could go wrong. The instinct is to send yellow to position 1 ready for a forward rush but this may not be such a good idea!



By sending yellow to the west of the hoop (position 2) you can create a leave and a rush to the hoop if black misses the roquet.



In this position black's best shot is to shoot at blue or a wide join on the south boundary.



Red now has an easy hoop 2 with the prospect of a rush to hoop 3.

Commentary

- Rolls to hoops are always tricky – some say they should never be attempted! But by taking sensible precautions you can set a trap for the opponent
- Rolling the yellow west of the hoop (position 2) gives red the option of setting up a “guarded leave” if the roll to the hoop is inaccurate. If the roll works out, red simply roquets yellow and goes to hoop 3, putting yellow towards the peg.
- If red sets up the leave, black would be very foolish to shoot at red/yellow as red can pick up black in the corner and stop-shot it to hoop 3 whilst picking up yellow to run hoop 2.
- Black’s safest shot is at blue; a miss may leave touching corner balls (1). The wide join (2) is a defensive option but automatically gives the innings back to red.
- A forward rush to hoop 3 for red after making hoop 2 means that red should be able to make hoop 3 and then rush yellow towards hoop 4 in order to pick up blue/black

Ian Harrison April 2018