

MARYLAND STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION **WINTER SYMPOSIUM**

SESSION PRESENTED BY WAYNE HARRISON **1/12/2003**

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. COACHING METHODOLOGY**
- 2. SESSION PLAN ORGANIZATION**
- 3. SMALL SIDED GAME DEVELOPMENT USING THE DEFENDING MODEL**
- 4. DEFENDING IN THE 3 v 3, 4 v 4 and 6 v 6 SET UP**
- 5. SMALL SIDED GAME DEVELOPMENT USING AN ATTACKING MODEL IN A 6 v 6**

Reference material:

“The Art of Defending Part One 1v1’s through 8v8’s”

“The Art of Defending Part Two 11v11 and Phase Plays”

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COACHING METHODOLOGY

To be effective with their players a coach should be able to change to different coaching methods to suit the moment. Whilst we all have our own style; some do it quietly, some are more demonstrative, and some are more vocal (but don't commentate). As long as they do it in a positive manner and create positive results in their players all styles can be effective.

Coaching Style is based on personality, temperament, our philosophies on how the game should be played and on the ages and abilities of the players we are working with, there is no one universal style, every coach is different. Coaching Method is different, the methods you use to coach are important in getting the best out of your players and you should be able to base your coaching around three different methods which can be implemented in various degrees at different times.

COMMAND, QUESTION AND ANSWER AND GUIDED DISCOVERY

1. COMMAND METHOD

The coach decides, the players listen and comply but do they really listen, do they learn or most importantly DO THEY UNDERSTAND?

Using this method you don't know if they understood what they are doing or why they are doing it, they just did what you told them.

Were you right in what you told them?

For example you tell a player to move to a certain position on the field and they do it. Do they know why they need to be there, maybe, but you will not know if they do. In a game situation will they know where to go?

2. QUESTION AND ANSWER METHOD

The coach seeks to stimulate the player into a response to a direct singular question for example, "Where should you pass the ball in that situation?" and the player needs to think for himself or herself, and you know if they understand or not by their response.

3. GUIDED DISCOVERY METHOD

The coach leads the players to make their own decisions for example "Show me where you should go to help the player on the ball" again the players have to think for themselves and are more likely to remember and learn from their self determined action.

Soccer is a game of the moment and players not coaches need to decide at that moment, what they should do on the field, and we need to help them to make that decision for themselves. What we have is a Command Method (autocratic / bossy) and a Co-Operative Method (democratic / guiding) but sometimes also a good coaching approach may involve saying nothing, letting them play / practice with no direction. Just watch them. This is more important than some realize.

WHY CO-OPERATIVE?

1. It helps players become thinkers and make their own decisions.
2. Fosters relations between coach and player by sharing the decision making process.
3. Players enjoy it more.
4. As well as having skills, players develop the ability to change situations, exhibit discipline and maintain concentration.

HOW DOES IT HELP THE COACH?

The coach needs more skill and knowledge, choices of solutions means they are seldom absolutely right or wrong but you need to have an answer. This improves you as a coach as you yourself need to think more deeply about your solutions to problems.

External factors can influence the method used for example a large group of unfamiliar players need more of the Command Method where a smaller familiar group of players need more of a Co-Operative Method of coaching.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion it is clear that soccer is a game of free flowing play that ultimately the players need to be developed whereby they are the decision makers much of the time. The coach needs to help them get there by encouraging them in training to work it out for themselves and when they can't; guide them to the right decision. Game situations are difficult in as much as you often don't have time to ask "where should you be now?" but over a period of time and with patience the players will take on more responsibility on and off the field and improve their performance because of it. A by- product of this which must not be overlooked is that the coach himself / herself will improve their ability and knowledge as a consequence of using this approach.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A SESSION PLAN

1. **ORGANIZE THE EQUIPMENT (BIBS, BALLS AND CONES)**
2. **COACH ONLY ONE TEAM AT A TIME TO AVOID CONFUSION**

3. **COACH (AFFECT THE ATTITUDE) OF EACH INDIVIDUAL PLAYER IN THAT TEAM**
4. **STAY ON THE SAME THEME**
5. **USE DESIGNATED START POSITIONS TO BEGIN EACH PRACTICE TO PAINT THE PICTURE YOU WANT TO CREATE**
6. **LIST THE KEY COACHING POINTS**
7. **THINK INDIVIDUAL / UNIT / TEAM – SIMPLE TO COMPLEX AND DEVELOP LOGICAL PROGRESSIONS INTO THE SESSION**
8. **SPECIFY THE SIZE OF AREA USED AND MAKE IT RELEVANT TO THE NUMBERS AND ABILITY OF PLAYERS USED**
9. **DIVIDE THE FIELD INTO THIRDS FOR EASIER POINTS OF REFERENCE IN SMALL - SIDED GAMES**
10. **USE TARGET GOALS, TARGET PLAYERS, OR LINES FOR OPPONENTS TO PLAY TO IN PHASE PLAYS AND FUNCTIONS**
11. **ISOLATE THE AREAS AND PLAYERS IN FUNCTIONAL PRACTICES TO KEEP IT SPECIFIC**
12. **USE OFFSIDE WHERE NECESSARY FOR REALISM**
13. **COACHING METHOD: FREEZE THE COACHING MOMENT (STOP, STAND STILL), REVIEW WHAT WENT WRONG, RE-RUN SLOWLY (CAN BE WALKING PACE), RE-CREATE THE SET UP AND GO AT MATCH SPEED. LET THEM PLAY**
14. **USE A QUESTIONING / GUIDING COACHING METHOD RATHER THAN COMMAND**
15. **FOR ATTACKING THEMES LIMIT THE NUMBER OF TOUCHES THE OPPONENTS HAVE IF THEY WIN THE BALL**
16. **FOR DEFENDING THEMES LIMIT THE NUMBER OF TOUCHES THE DEFENDING TEAM YOU ARE COACHING HAVE WHEN THEY WIN THE BALL. THIS THE DEFENDERS TO TRY TO WIN BACK**

HOW TO PRESENT A SMALL - SIDED GAME

This is a game of less than 11 v 11 that can be any number from 3 v 3 to 9 v 9. The general sizes of a game to establish **team** coaching themes are usually 6 v 6 or 8 v 8. I have included two examples of set ups for these sizes of games.

Session Plan

1. **Only coach one team at a time.**
2. **Try to work with all the players on the team you are coaching, affecting each performance in a positive way.**
3. **Stay with one theme / topic at a time don't jump from one to another during the session this will only confuse the players.**

4. Divide the field into thirds; defending, middle, attacking third, for easier points of reference. Cone the thirds of the field off to show the boundaries.
5. Use specific start positions to get the session going.
6. Develop your theme using the key coaching points and use them as a base for referral to check you have covered them in the session.
7. List the key points in the order you perceive them in the process of building the session. For example in defending, pressure on the ball comes before support. Once you let the game go free key points can be highlighted in any order depending on if the previous key point was performed correctly and didn't need to be addressed.
8. Move from simple to complex as you develop the session, for example in the theme defending from the front, coach individual play within the team concept first (working with one striker), move to coaching a unit of players (it could be the two strikers working together), then extend the numbers (it could be working with the strikers and midfield players then finish with coaching the whole team (strikers, midfielders, defenders, keeper).
9. You may work the other way around depending on your session theme. For example if your session is playing from the back you could start with the distribution of the ball from the keeper (individual) to working with a wide defender receiving from the keeper (individual) developing the theme with each individual defender. Then move onto the defending unit and the keeper combined (unit) then introducing the midfield players (combined units) then introducing the strikers (whole team).
10. This is individual, then unit, then team in this order building up the session from simple to complex in a logical order.
11. This is just an example to how it can be done in a logical order; it is up to the individual coach to develop his / her own method to suit their own style of coaching.
12. Once the defending team have won back the ball they have 5 passes (or whatever you as the coach decides) to score a goal then the game restarts with the defending team having to win back the ball again. This is because we are working on defending and don't want the team to spend a lot of time with the ball on attacking play. By giving them the chance to attack once they have won the ball they have a reward for good defending.

DEFENDING IN a 3 v 3 SMALL - SIDED GAME

DEFENDING IN a 3 v 3 + KEEPERS SITUATION

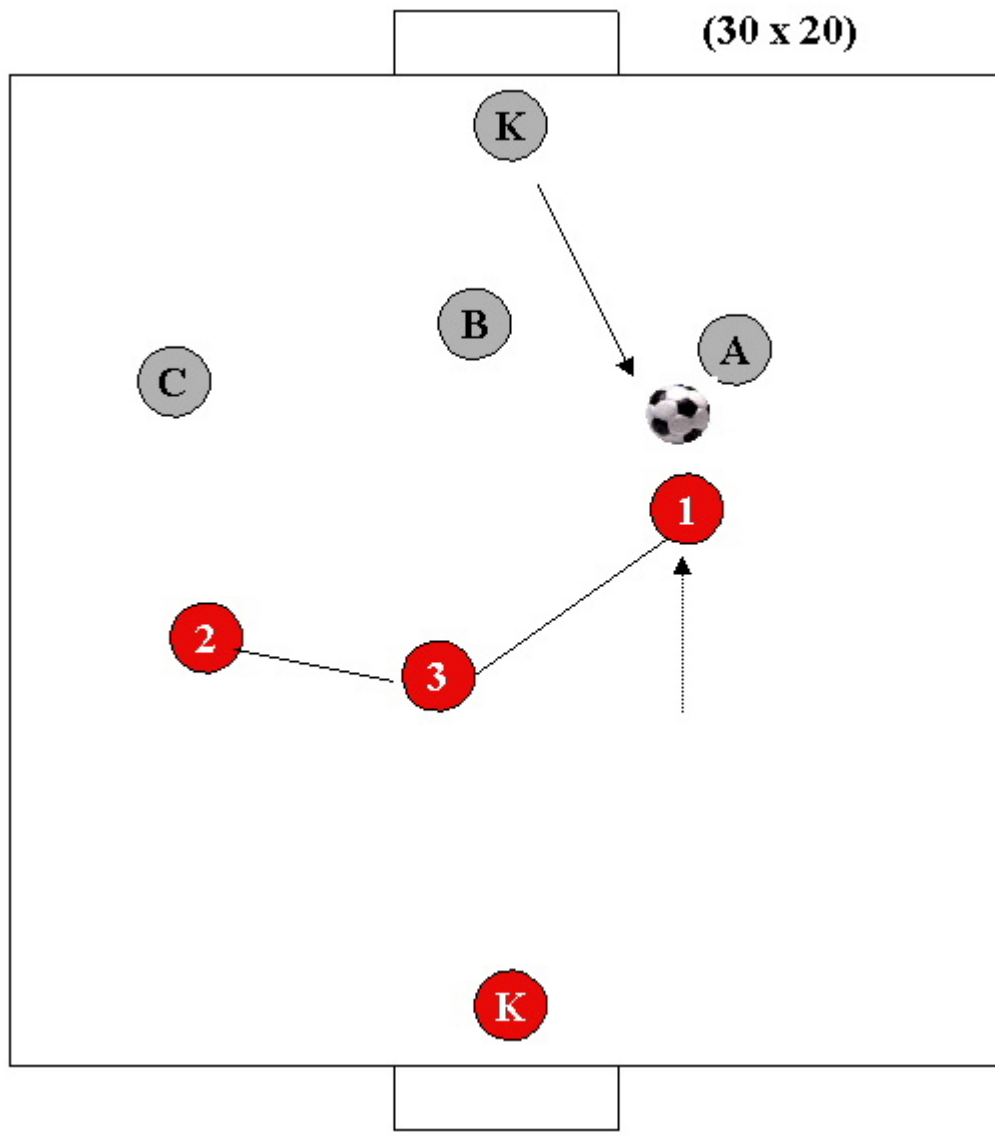
In this sequence the session includes using the offside rule from the compactness diagram. If movement of players takes defenders into unrealistic positions in relation to the real game through not using the offside rule, then introduce offside earlier, even from the beginning of the 3 v 3 sequence if necessary. You, the coach, have to judge this for yourself depending on the age and experience of the players you are working with.

Make the game competitive once the defending principles have been established to act as a measure of success from regaining the possession of the ball.

For example count the number of goals scored from a regained possession but restrict the number of touches or passes to 5 that they have to score a goal within, as it is defending we are working on primarily not attacking play.

Example below is that the numbered team wins back possession of the ball using the defending principles worked upon and now they have 5 passes to score a goal. If they don't do so within those passes the game restarts to ensure we work on defending again as the principle.

Ultimately let the game go free and just have a small sided game.

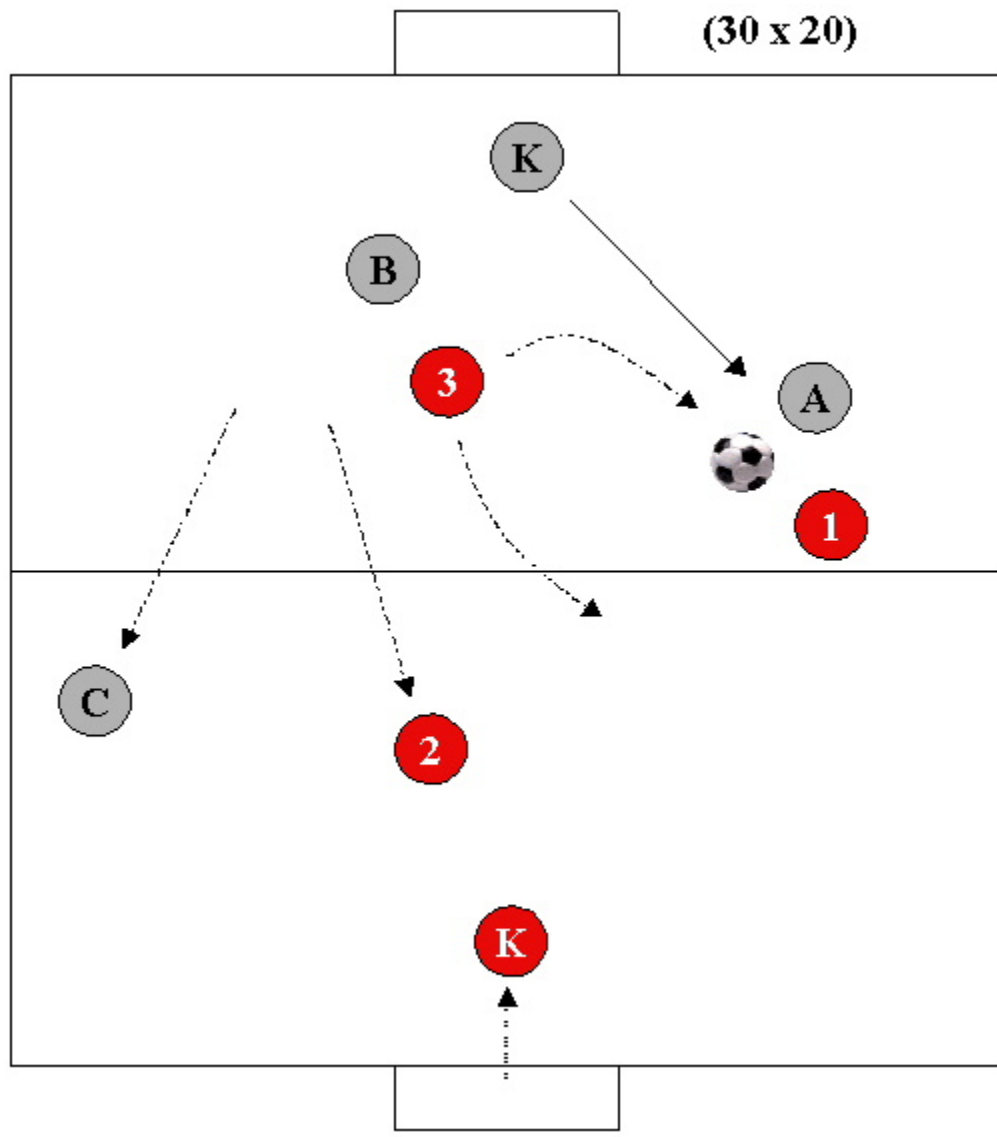


1. Player nearest the ball pressurizes the ball with teammates in support and covering positions depending on the positions of the opposition and the ball.
2. Dealing here with first, second and third defender scenario, looking at pressure, support and cover / balance positions of the defending team. Introducing recovering and tracking principles of defending later.

Coaching Points:

- a) Mark space (zone play) then **pressing** the ball, (1) closes down (A) quickly.
- b) Making play **predictable** - show the player on the ball inside or outside depending on where the **support** is. If outside then (1) has to be confident of winning the ball because this can result in a 1 v 1 situation.
- c) Shape of the team (**covering / balancing** positions).
- d) **Recovering** and **Tracking** - getting back behind the ball either into space or tracking a run from an opponent.
- e) Double Teaming.
- f) Compactness.

FREE PLAY



1. The numbers team have attacked and shot at goal, the keeper making a save.
2. The keeper passes to (A) who is then **pressured** by (1).
3. Player (3) who was in the attack makes a **recovery run** to help (1) by getting back into an inside **support** position.
4. An option for (3) is to **double up** with (1) to attack and pressurize (A) from opposite sides.
5. Player (C) makes a forward run that (2) successfully **tracks**.
6. Note, (2)'s tracking back run is not with (C) but back into a position to provide balanced cover for (1) and (3) whilst at the same time keeping an eye on (C). It could be argued this is more like a recovery run but it is based initially on the movement of (C).
7. When the defending team regain possession and move the ball forward to attack the opponents goal, the team can move forward (creating **compactness**) and the keeper can move up to fill the space left to act as a keeper / sweeper.

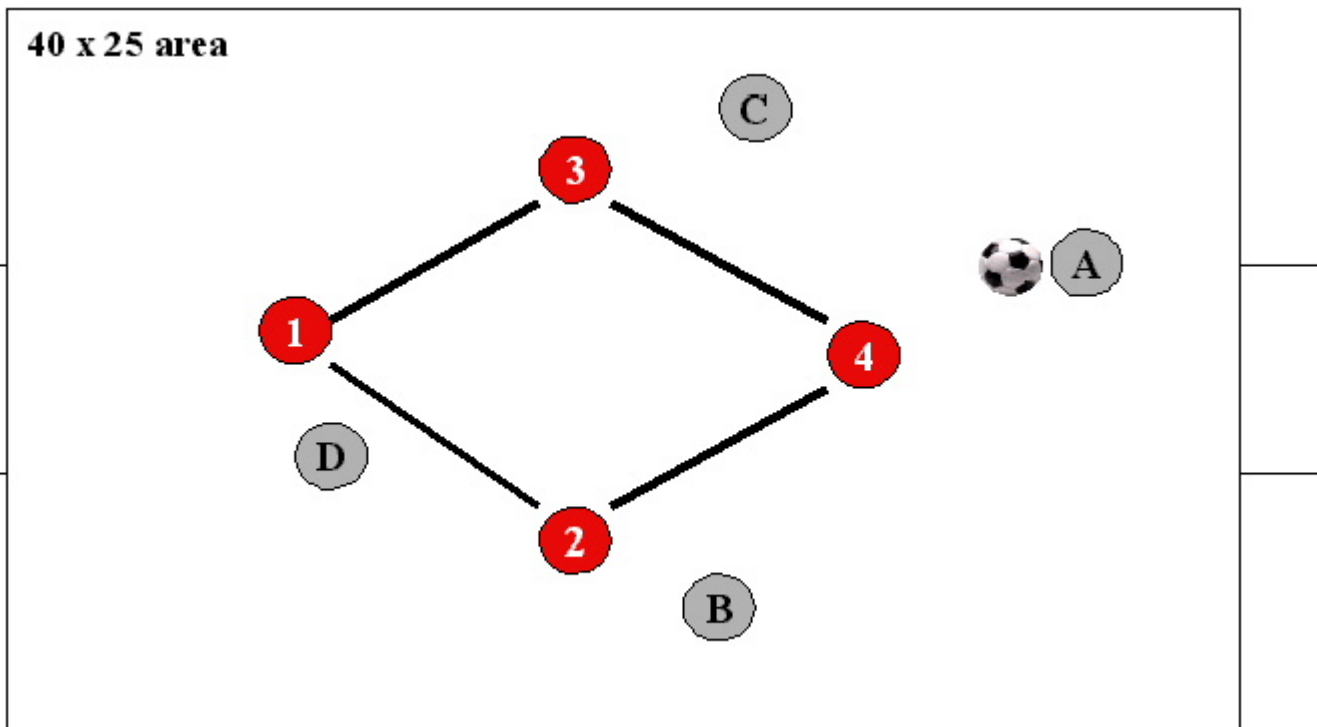
DEFENDING IN a 4 v 4 SMALL - SIDED GAME

ESTABLISHING THE ESSENTIAL KEY COACHING POINTS IN DEFENDING USING THE 4 v 4 MODEL

4 v 4: THE BASIC DIAMOND / KITE SHAPE

As in the three v three games have the reward for the defending team winning the ball to be a chance to score a goal but to do it within 5 passes of regaining possession. If this isn't achieved, start again with the team trying to win the ball again through good defending principles being used.

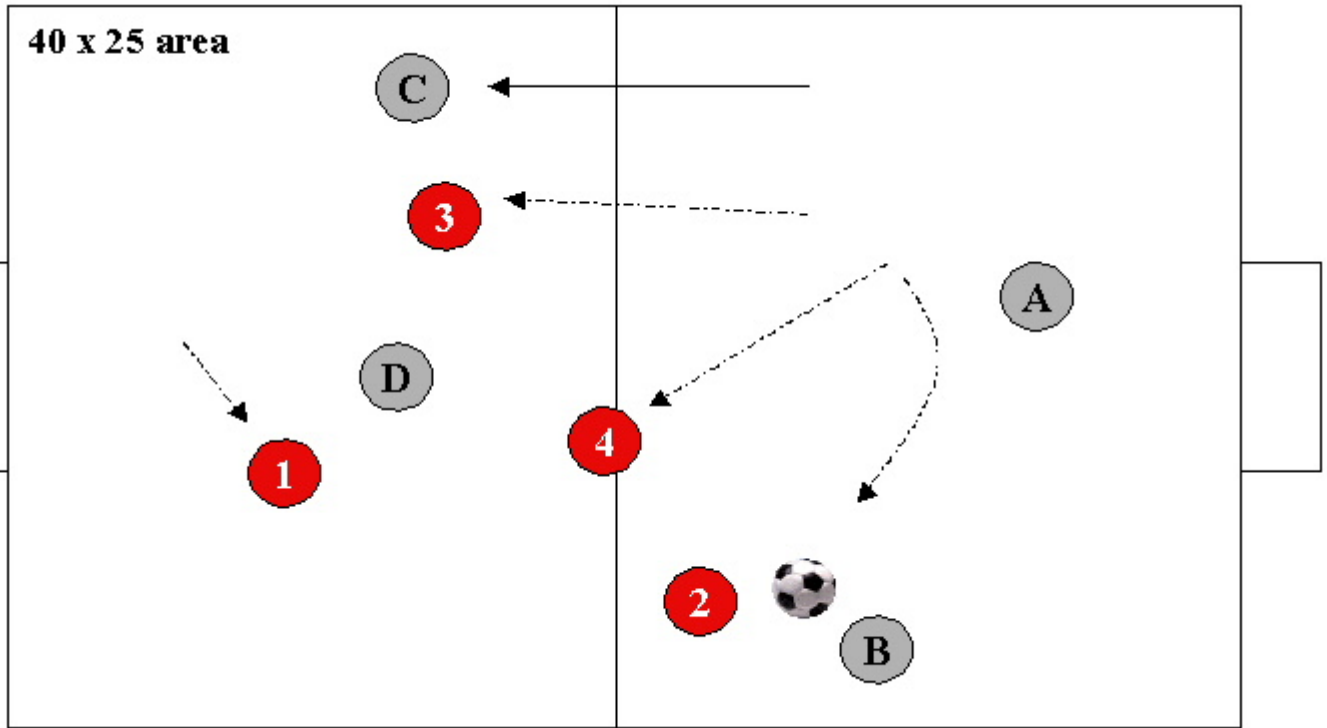
Ultimately have a 4 v 4 small sided game letting them play free with no restrictions.



1. The main idea here is for the defending team to **condense** the area the ball can be played into, the defending team becomes a diamond **within** the opponents attacking diamond. (4) Forces (A) one way and the rest of the team adjust their positions off this. (3) Protects the **space inside** but can **close down** (C) if the ball is passed, (2) and (1) is the same scenario and this results in the defending diamond being **shorter** and **tighter**.
2. As the opponents move the defending team must move to compensate. Also if any pass is played in behind players (1) (2) or (3) they should be first to the ball.
3. **Coaching Points**
 - a) **Pressure** – 1 v 1 defending to win the ball, delay or force a bad pass.
 - b) **Support** – position of immediate teammate (angle, distance and communication).
 - c) **Cover / Balance**– positions of teammates beyond the supporting player.
 - d) **Recovering and Tracking** should the ball go past our position, recovery run to goal side of the ball and tracking the run of a player.
 - e) **Double Teaming** – here two players attack the player on the ball from two sides.
 - f) **Compactness** from the back (pushing up as a unit) particularly on **Regaining Possession**.

- The objectives of defending are to **disrupt** the other teams build up, make play **predictable**, **prevent** forward passes and ultimately **regain** possession of the ball.
- Techniques include – pressuring, marking, tackling and winning the ball.

FREE PLAY

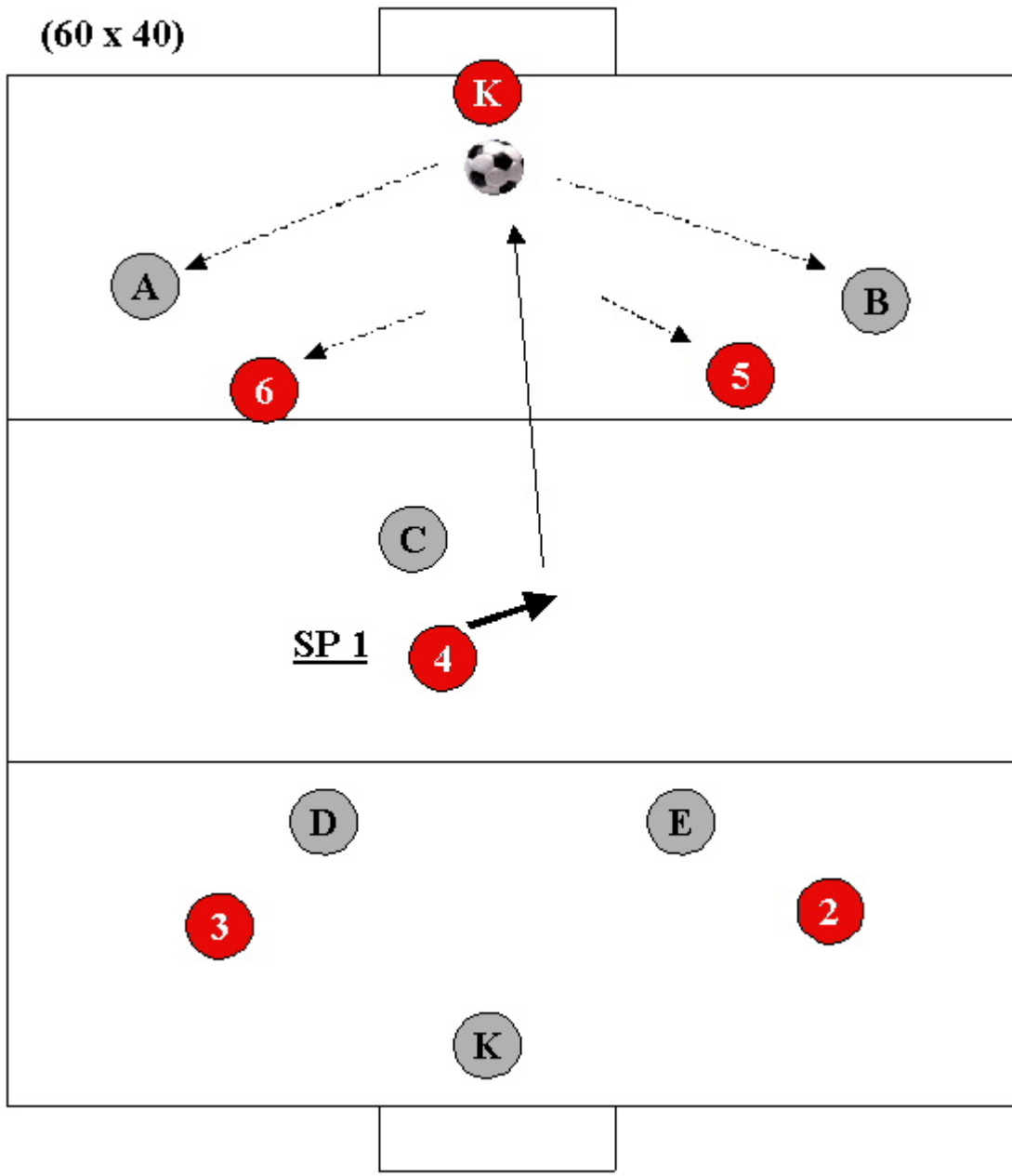


- The **Pressure** on the ball from 2) forces (B) inside.
- A **Recovery run** by (4) to get into a **support** position to aid (2).
- Other option as shown could be for (4) to be more aggressive and **double up** on (B) to help (2).
- Balance** created at the back by (1) marking the space inside the striker (D) but also covering for (2) and (4).
- Tracking run** by (3) shadowing (C) who has broken forward.
- This shows all the players working together as a team.
- Final key point would be if the defending team successfully won back possession of the ball they would move up the field as a team getting **compactness** from the back.
- As mentioned, they can also get compact by moving up even when the opponents have the ball and can't play it forward due to pressure, or pass it back, but the best time to do it is when the defending team regain possession and they can dictate the moment.
- Within this movement of the players we have shown all the key coaching points of defending being used effectively by the defending team to give them the best chance of regaining possession of the ball.

DEFENDING IN 6 v 6 SMALL SIDED GAMES.

START POSITIONS FOR DEFENDING IN A SMALL SIDED GAME

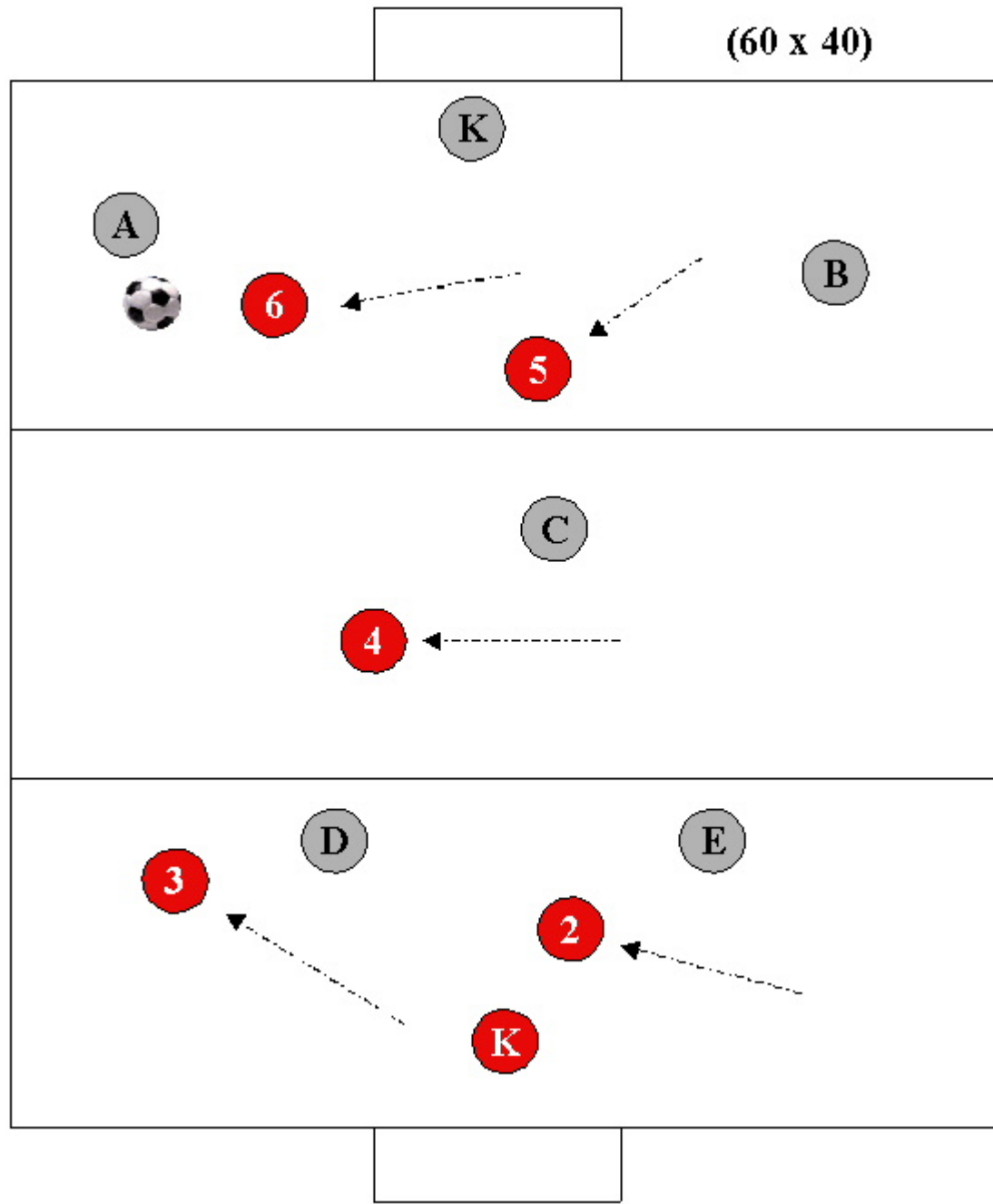
(60 x 40)



1. (4) Moves the ball with a touch to signify the beginning of the practice and shoots at goal. The keeper collects the ball and the defenders break wide to receive in space.
2. Working on defending from the front, midfield, then the back can be the sequence, or you can do it the other way around and work from the back, the midfield then the front.

3. If from the front using the strikers (5) and (6) as first defenders the keeper begins the movement with a pass or throw to the defenders (A) or (B). If from the back the keeper begins the movement with a pass or throws to the front players (D) or (E) and you coach players (2) and (3) to begin.
4. You the coach can condition the keeper to throw to certain players to keep control of the session and ensure you build it the way you want it to go. For example to start from the front have the keeper throw or pass the ball to back players (A) and (B) alternately. Next throw or pass the ball to player (C) in midfield, and then finally throw or pass the ball to strikers (D) and (E) alternately. At each stage you can work with the relevant defending players and what they should do to win the ball back.
5. The session plans are presented as a full team but you can break them down and concentrate on a unit at a time and eventually take it to the full team set up as shown.
6. Make sure the relevant players you work with in each unit get all the concepts correct before moving onto the next unit to work with. For example strikers (5) and (6) have to understand the defensive priorities they have before you move to the midfield player and so on

DEFENDING IN a 6 v 6 SITUATION SHOWING OUTSIDE



Playing offside from the 20 yard line at each end (defensive third). All previous coaching points apply. Introduce getting **compact** from the back; playing offside from the thirds trains the player's minds to start to develop this aspect of play. Defending team make play predictable by forcing play down one route.

Key factors of Defending are:

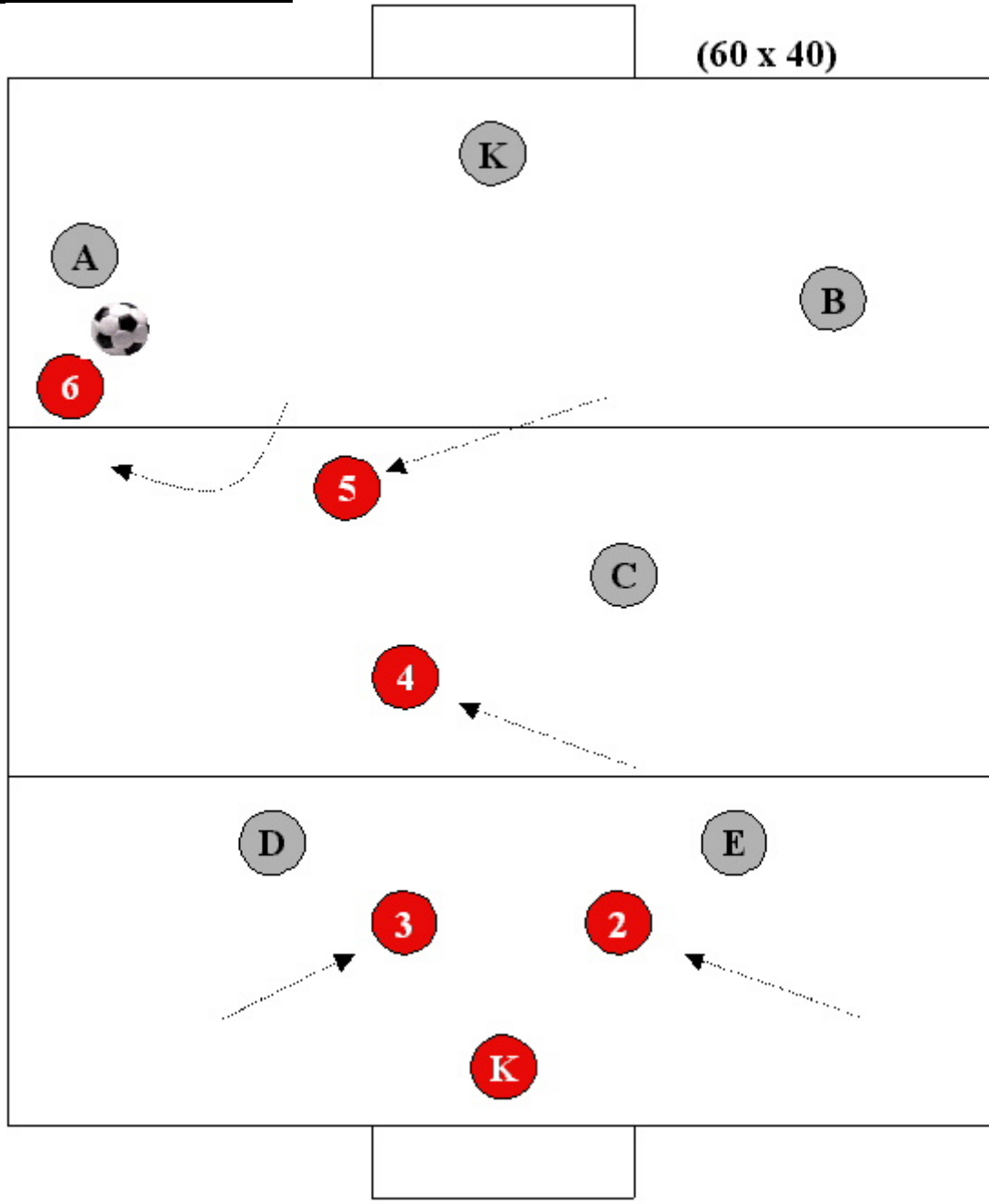
- Pressure** (Keeping play in front, delaying or winning the ball).
- Support** (Angle / Distance / Communication).
- Cover / Balance** (marking zones and / or players).
- Recover** (getting goal side of the ball).

e) **Tracking** (opponent's runs).

f) **Double teaming** and **treble teaming** (2 or 3 players closing down the same player on the ball from different angles).

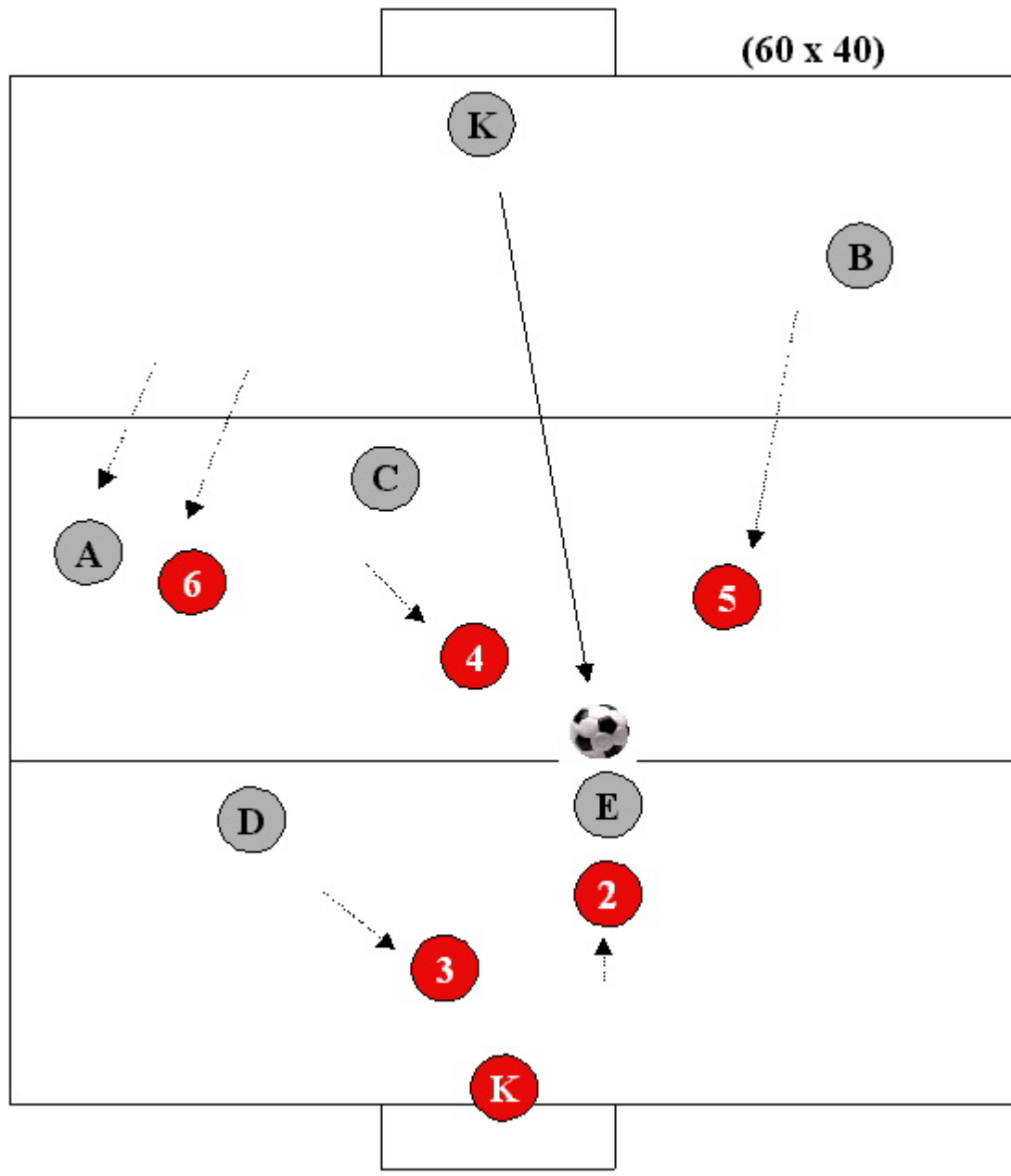
g) **Regaining Possession** and **Compactness** (On regaining possession players pushing out from the back).

SHOWING INSIDE



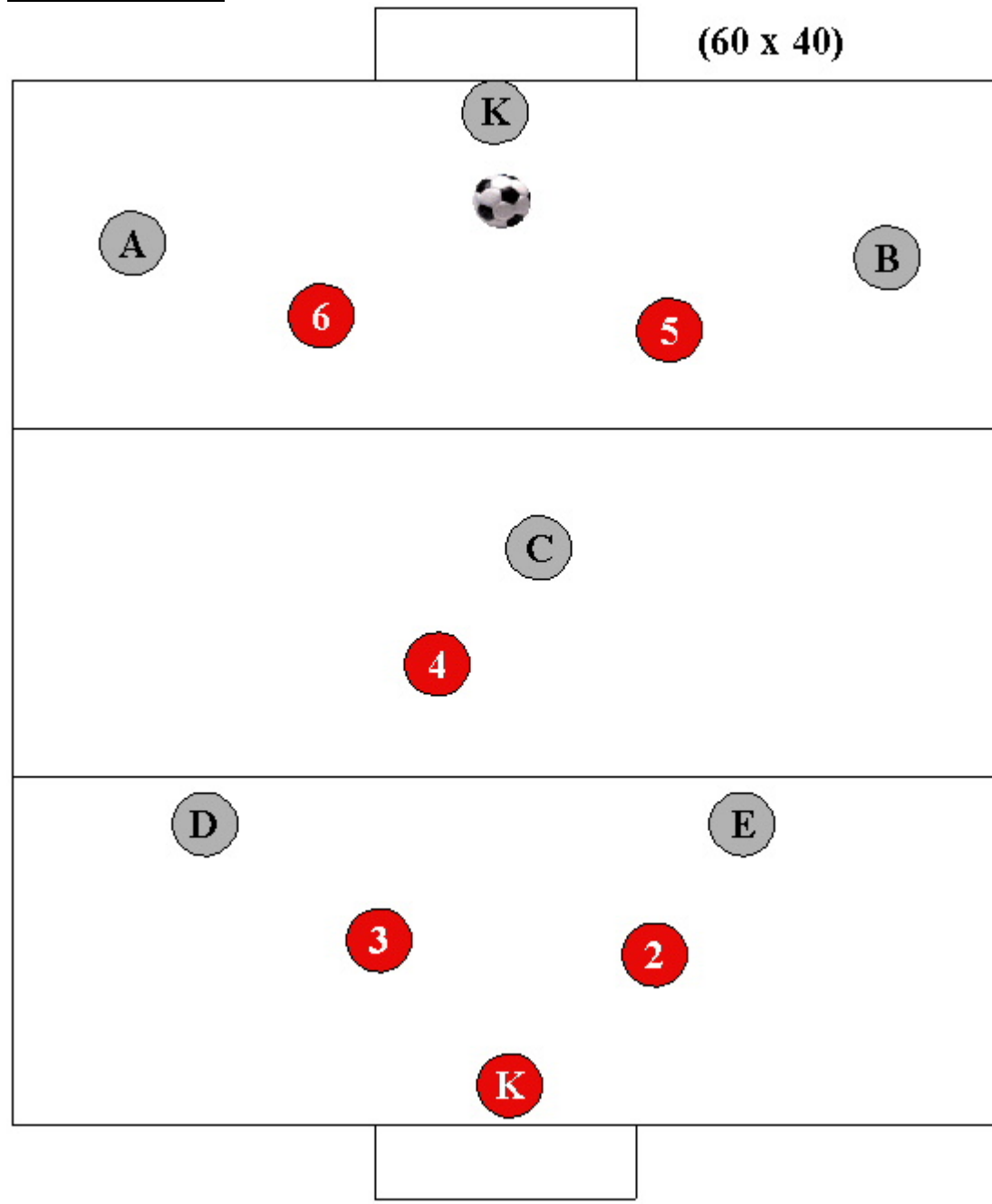
1. (6) Shows inside to numbers, stops the pass down the line and players adjust accordingly. Try to force (A) to play across to (B) and give (5) a chance to intercept.
2. (4) supports (6), covers (C) and screens the pass (marks space) into the front men ready to intercept.
3. (5) could even double team with (6), close at an angle so the pass to (B) is screened.

SHOWING ALL KEY COACHING POINTS



1. Now have the keeper play the ball into the strikers and work on the defenders (2) and (3) pressing and supporting bringing in the other key coaching points as they happen. This is the same idea as that used with (5) and (6) but in front of this the other players may need to deal with tracking runners, recovering back to help the defenders, maybe doubling teaming with (2) in the above situation and so on. Above are examples of what can happen with the defending teams players; (2) **presses** the ball, (3) drops into a **support** position, (5) starts a **recovery run**, (6) **tracks** the forward run of (A), (4) **doubles up** on (E) to help (2) win the ball back or at least try to force (E) into making an error and lose the ball.
2. Finally once the defending team win the ball back they obviously will look to play the ball forward at the earliest option and this will result in the team moving up the field from the back and the defenders at least getting up to the offside line at the limit of the defending third (this is **condensing play** from the back creating **compactness**).

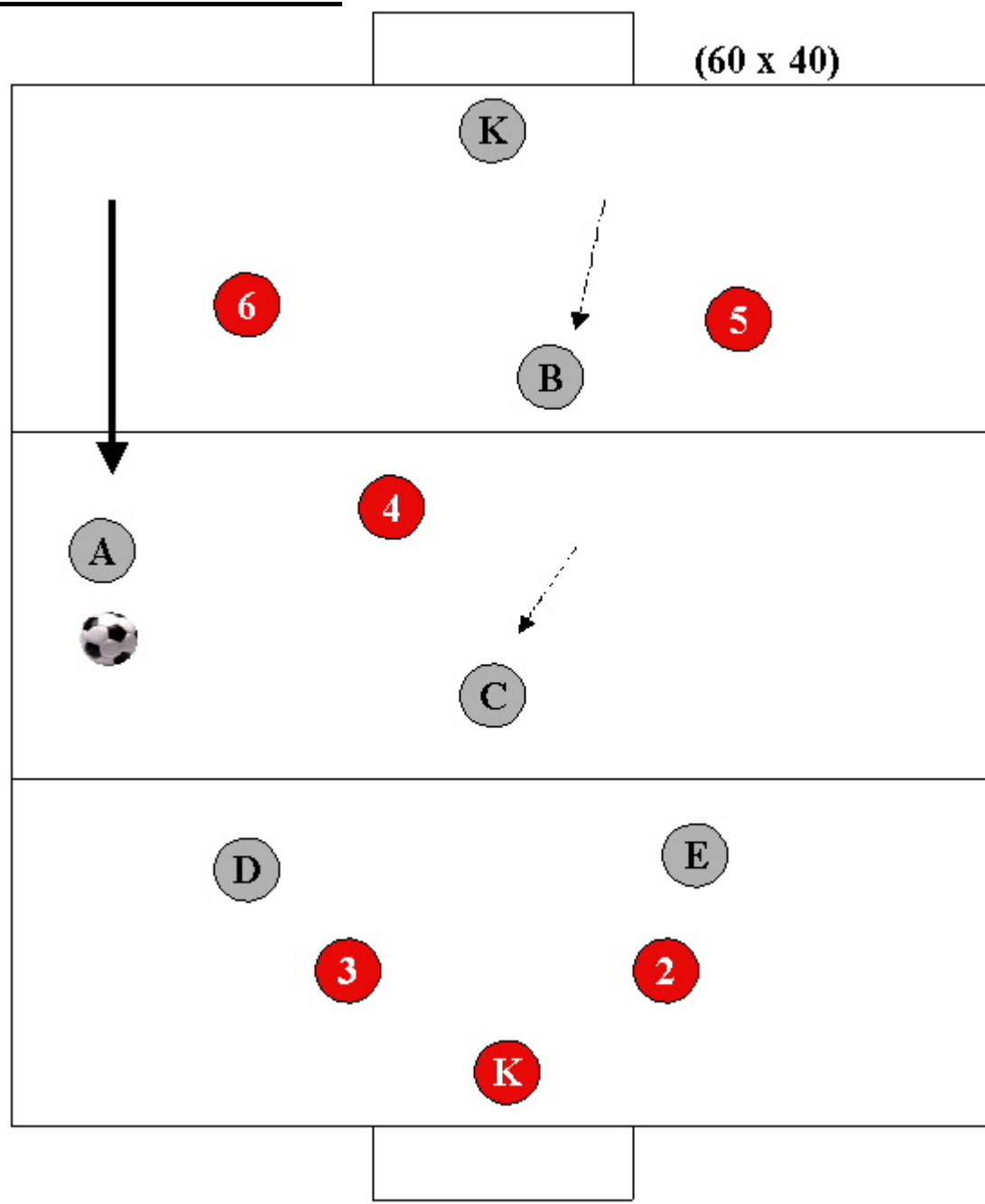
FREE PLAY



1. Finally after working through the team with the keeper throwing or passing the ball to each unit in turn (defenders, midfield, attackers) to ensure the defending team get a chance to defend in each third of the field and each key coaching point can be covered, it is time to let the game go free.
2. Now the keeper has the option of throwing or passing to any player on the attacking team and the defending players have to act accordingly.
3. As a coach it is time to identify the fault and identify the **coaching moment** as it happens and correct it. The defending team work to try to win the ball and score a goal as quickly as possible, then the ball goes back to the attacking team and the coach works with the defending team again constantly reinforcing the defensive theme.

4. Within the open game there will be occasions to correct play using all the key coaching points both individually, as a unit and as a team.

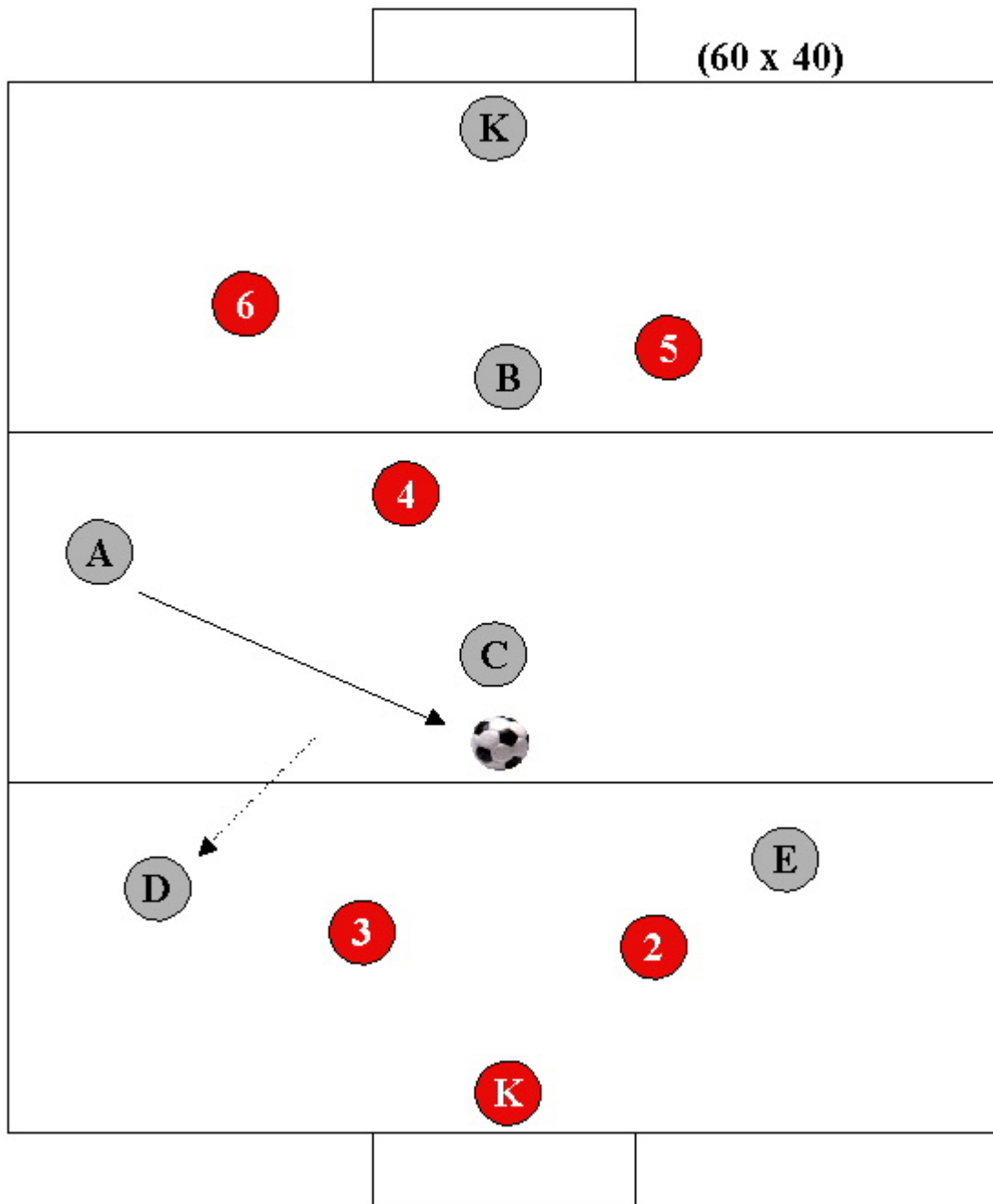
GETTING IT WRONG



These are obvious mistakes that players can make based on the key points in defending and are used to highlight situations that can easily go wrong.

1. The numbers team have attacked and shot at goal and been caught going forward. The opponents catch them out with a quick break. (A) Starts the move after a pass from the keeper and (6) **doesn't track** the run.
2. Now we have a situation where (A) has **no pressure** and is free to play. No pressure on the ball means the strikers (D) and (E) can push (3) and (2) **deeper** to create more space in front for (A) and (C) to play in.

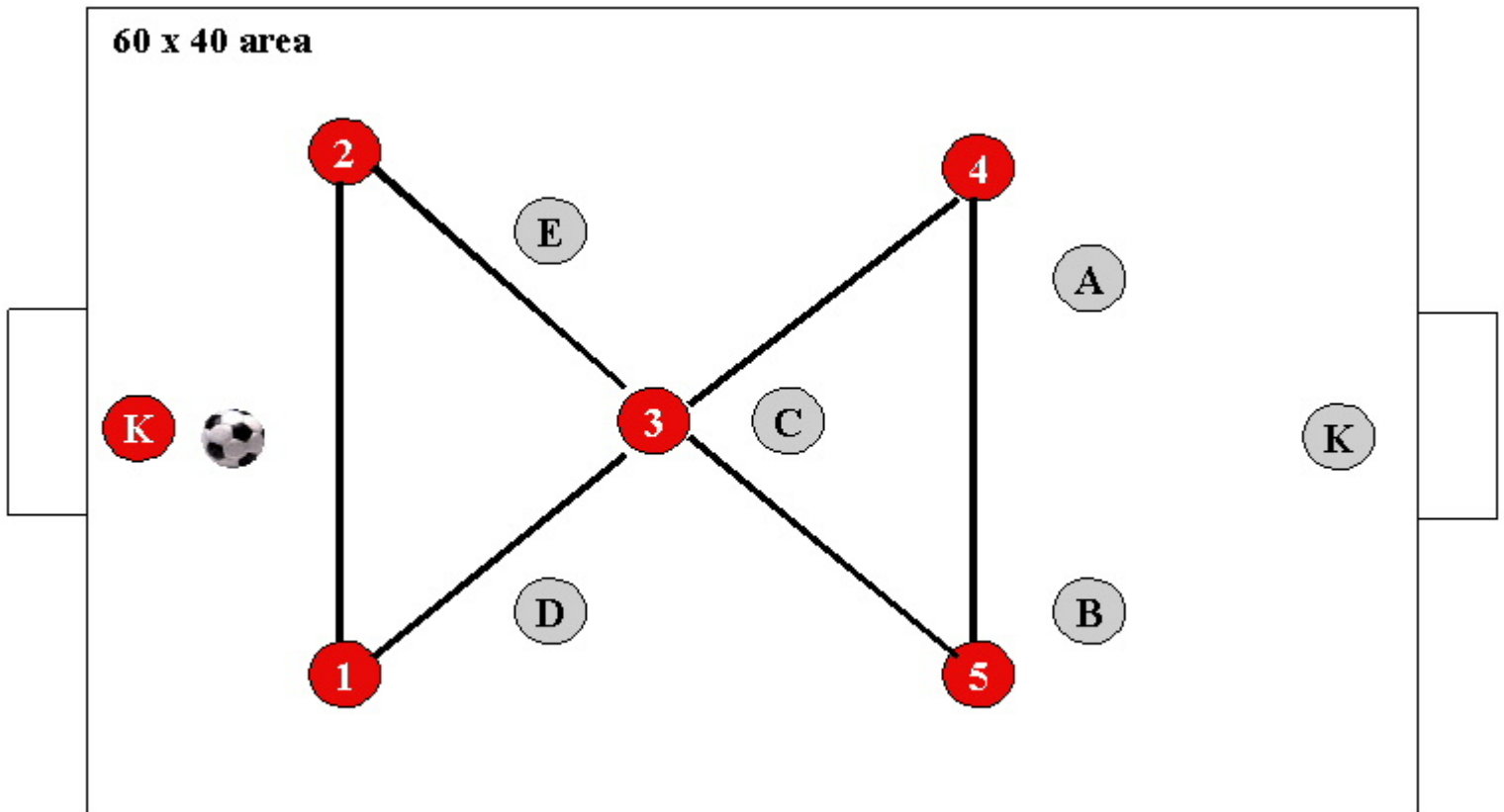
3. (4) **Doesn't recover back** to get goal-side so (C) is open to receive a pass in lots of space and time.
4. Other principles cannot now be applied; there is no pressure so there is **no support**.
5. There is **no cover** at the back because of the overloaded situation.



6. This is now a 4 v 2 against and (3) has to decide do I stay and mark (D), do I go and is free.
7. The correct defensive principles have not being applied at the start of the move which has put the other players in very difficult positions. For example doe's (3) track and mark (D) or close down (C)?
8. (3) closes (C) then (D) is free to receive a pass and shoot. (2) Closes and (E) is free. (3) Stays with (D) and (C) is free to shoot and so on.

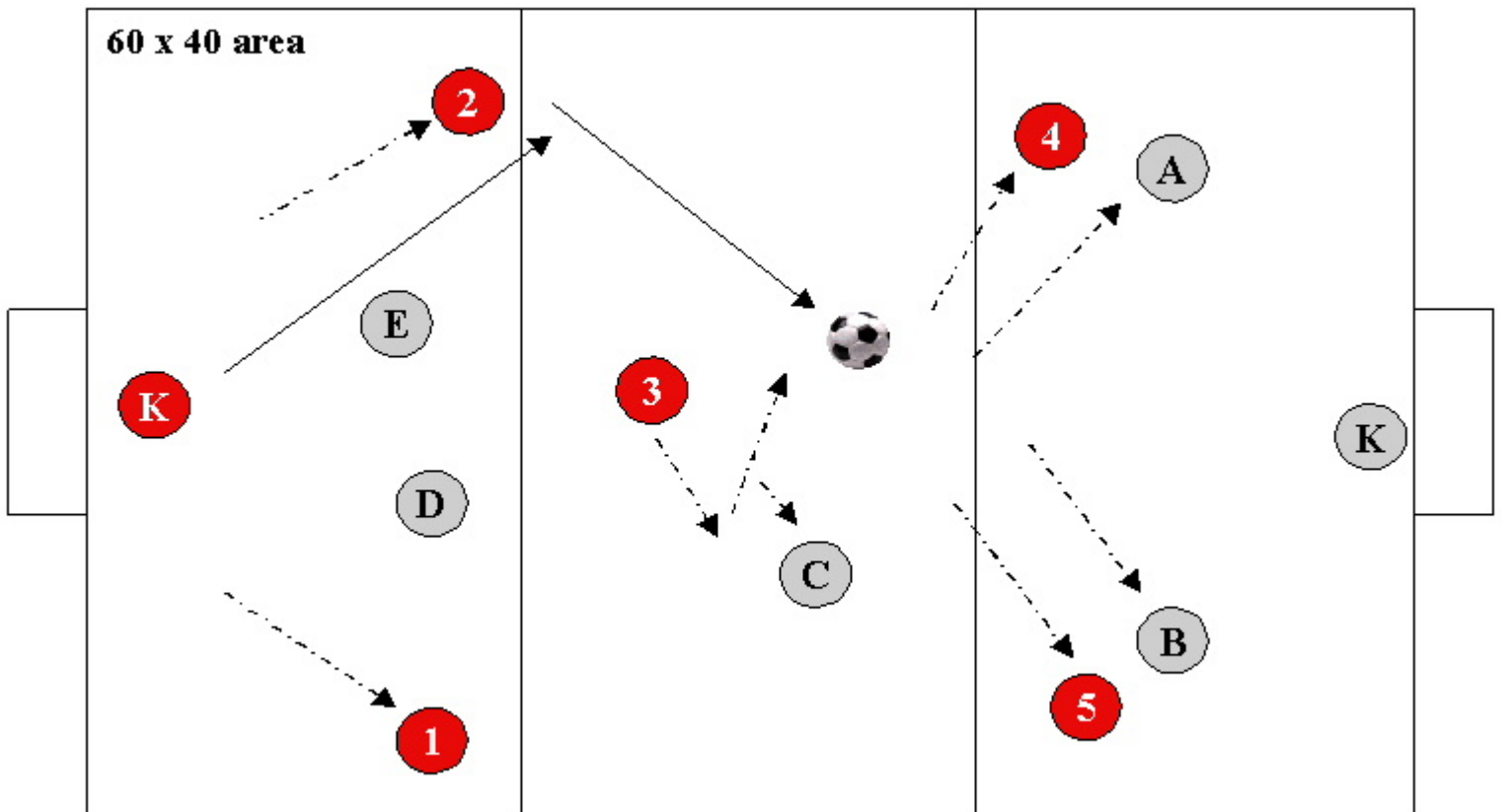
9. This serves as an example of what can happen when teams do not defend properly and it's likely with such an overloaded situation that the defending team will concede a goal or at least have to give up a shot at goal.

ATTACKING SMALL-SIDED GAME 6 v 6 DEVELOPMENT



1. The basic shape is a double triangle, again a positional theme where players are encouraged to interchange then return to a basic shape when the time is right. You could use a 2 – 2 – 1 formation also to allow a 2 v 1 overload at the defensive end.
2. As in the previous S.S.G's the coach needs to focus on the principles established with the A.I.A. program and get the players to apply them in the S.S.G. concept.
3. The **Forward** passing theme has the following coaching points:
 - a) **Create Space** - players spread out to be in position to receive the ball.
 - b) **Decision** – when, where and how to pass.
 - c) **Technique** – Quality of the pass (Accuracy, weight and angle).
 - d) **Support** Positions – of teammates (angle, distance, and communication).
 - e) **End Product** – shots on goal. Rebounds.
 - f) The **themes** you can concentrate on one at a time include, Creating Space as a team, Forward passes to Feet and Space, Switching Play as a team, Running with the Ball, One and Two Touch Play, Passing and Support Play, Diagonal Runs without the Ball (diagonal runs, Overlaps, blindside runs, under laps), Forward diagonal Runs to Receive, Receiving and Turning, When and Where to Dribble.

CREATING SPACE IN A SMALL SIDED GAME OF 6 v 6



1. Here the players work to get free of their markers by their movement off the ball; they create space for themselves and / or for their teammates.
2. **Coaching Points**
 - a) **Creating Space** – Spreading out as a team.
 - b) **Decision** – When, where and how to Create Space.
 - c) **Technique** – of passing and receiving.
 - d) **Support Positions** of players; angles and distances, movement off the ball.
3. In the above example (1) and (2) break wide to create space and offer two options to receive a pass from the keeper, (2) receives the pass and (3) runs off (C) to check back to receive the pass in space. (4) And (5) create space in front of the receiving player by making split runs to move (A) and (B) away from where (3) wants to attack and shoot at goal.
4. If either (A) or (B) do not track the two strikers and stay in the space in front to defend against (3) then (3) can pass to whichever player got free by not being tracked on their run.

