

PHASE PLAY PRACTICES

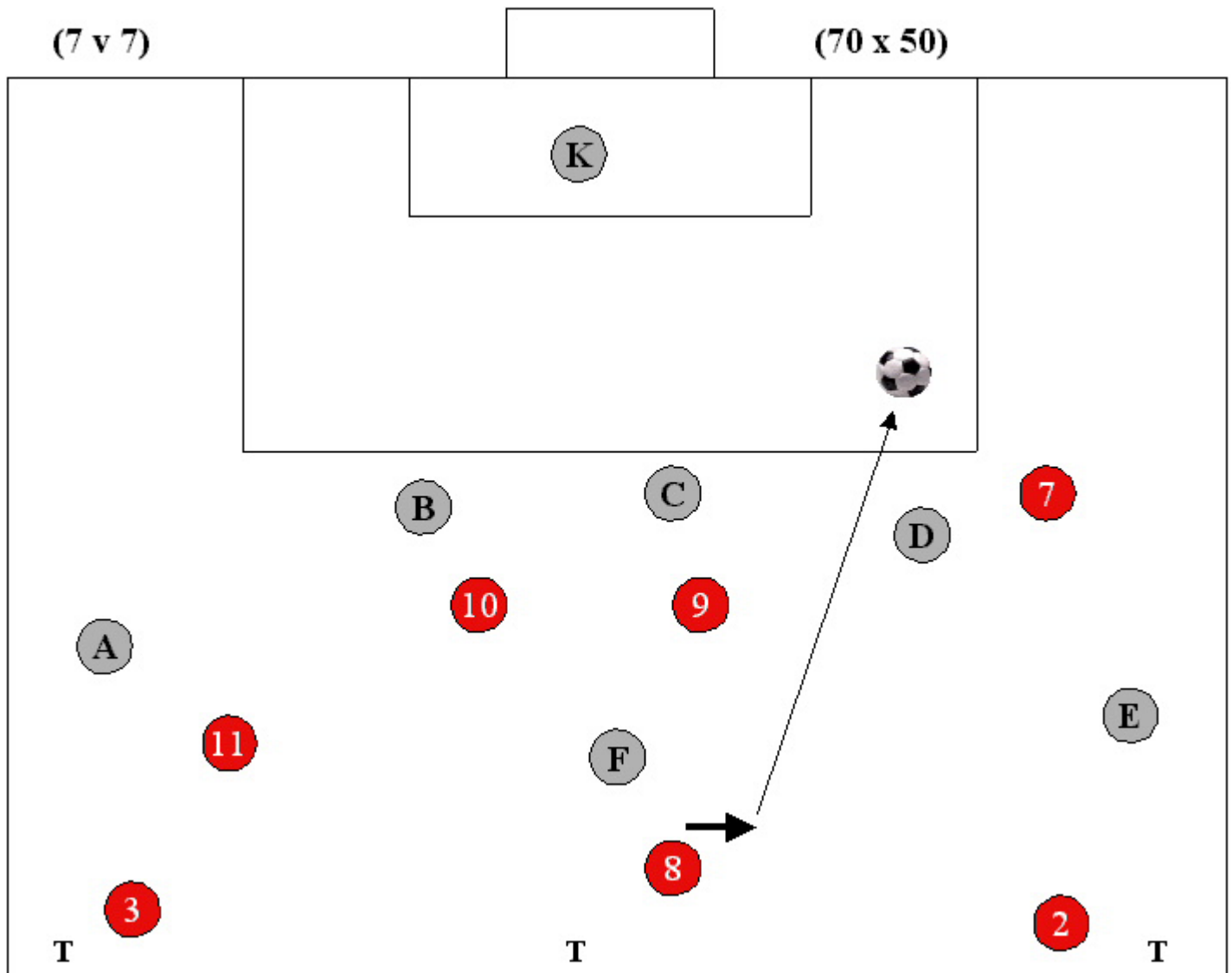
DEFENDING IN THE DEFENDING THIRD

HOW TO PRESENT A PHASE PLAY

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. Include key coaching points you want to get into the session and list them with the session plan. Try to cover each point within the session itself.
5. Use specific start positions to begin the session.
6. The phase play is attacking one set of goals only with target goals for the opponents you aren't working with to play to, should they win the ball.
7. In defending phase plays where you are working with the defending team who protect the only goal, the team that needs to have the ball most of the time is the attacking team as it is the defending teams job to win it back. Once they win it they should get the ball to a target goal quickly and in as few passes as possible as we are coaching them when they haven't got the ball not when they have it in their possession. As soon as they have won it and have got it to a target the ball goes back to the attacking team and they begin a new attack. You can condition this by allowing the defending team only so many passes (maybe 5 passes) to get the ball to a target then they lose the ball and a new phase play is set up.
8. It can be numerous combinations of numbers of players ranging from 4 v 4 to 9 v 9; this can depend on the number of players you have to work with on any given day. Often the best number is 7 v 7 or with an overload with the team you are working with perhaps to help gain initial success in the session (maybe 7 v 5). For example in a defending phase play have more defenders than attackers to help the session succeed initially then go to equal numbers and when you get consistent success with this go for an overload against to make it more difficult for the defenders (for example a 5 v 7 against).

- 9. In an attacking phase play have 7 attacking players against 4 defending players and a keeper to help the session have the chance be a positive experience for the players you are coaching and the theme to be successful.**
- 10. Make it competitive by counting the number of goals scored by each team. The defending team on winning the ball can attack the goal and again you can use the 5 passes rule where they have to get a shot off on goal within 5 passes. Initially have the reward to be just a shot at goal on target is a goal then make it more competitive where it only counts if they actually score. The attacking team score by getting the ball to a target player.**
- 11. Coaching styles – Command, question and answer and guided discovery are the three methods of coaching to be used preferably the third one; guided discovery being the most used as it gets the players to think for themselves though there are always situations where each style is required to be used.**
- 12. Command is telling and / or showing them what to do (doesn't leave a lot of room for the players to think for themselves and understand), question and answer is just that; asking them to tell you what they think should happen, guided discovery is asking them to show you they understand a coaching point by moving themselves to the position you require them using their own decisions.**

THE PHASE PLAY GAME PLAN SET UP



1. The start position is where a player moves the ball firstly on their first touch to simulate open play (as opposed to a set play) and then begins the session by making the required action. This can be a pass on the second touch to another player or a pass into space or maybe a pass towards an opponent if the session is on regaining possession of the ball in the Attacking Third as above.
2. Alternatively the coach may instigate the initial action so that the start of play is how he / she require it to start.
3. The above example is of a situation where the ball has to be played in behind the opponents defensive line as it may happen in a game and the set up is such that the numbered team you are coaching have to close

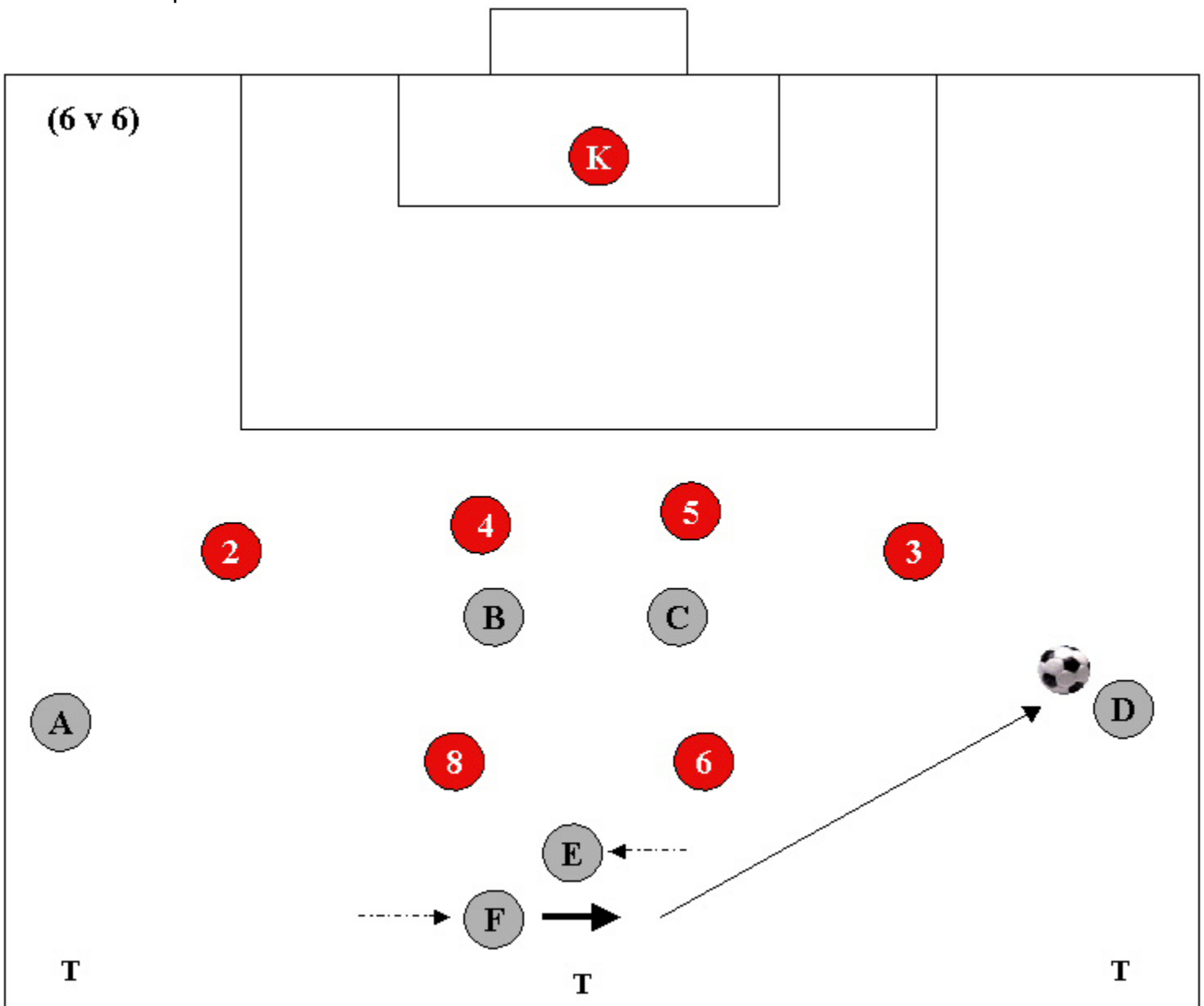
down player (D) with the help of teammates to try to win the ball back and get a shot at goal to try to score.

- (9) Could be the player to pass the ball to begin the movement, attempting to play the ball behind (D) to get (7) in. The start position is very important and whilst it can appear manufactured it is a necessary tool to use to create a situation you need to work on that would happen in an actual game.

START POSITIONS FOR PHASE PLAYS

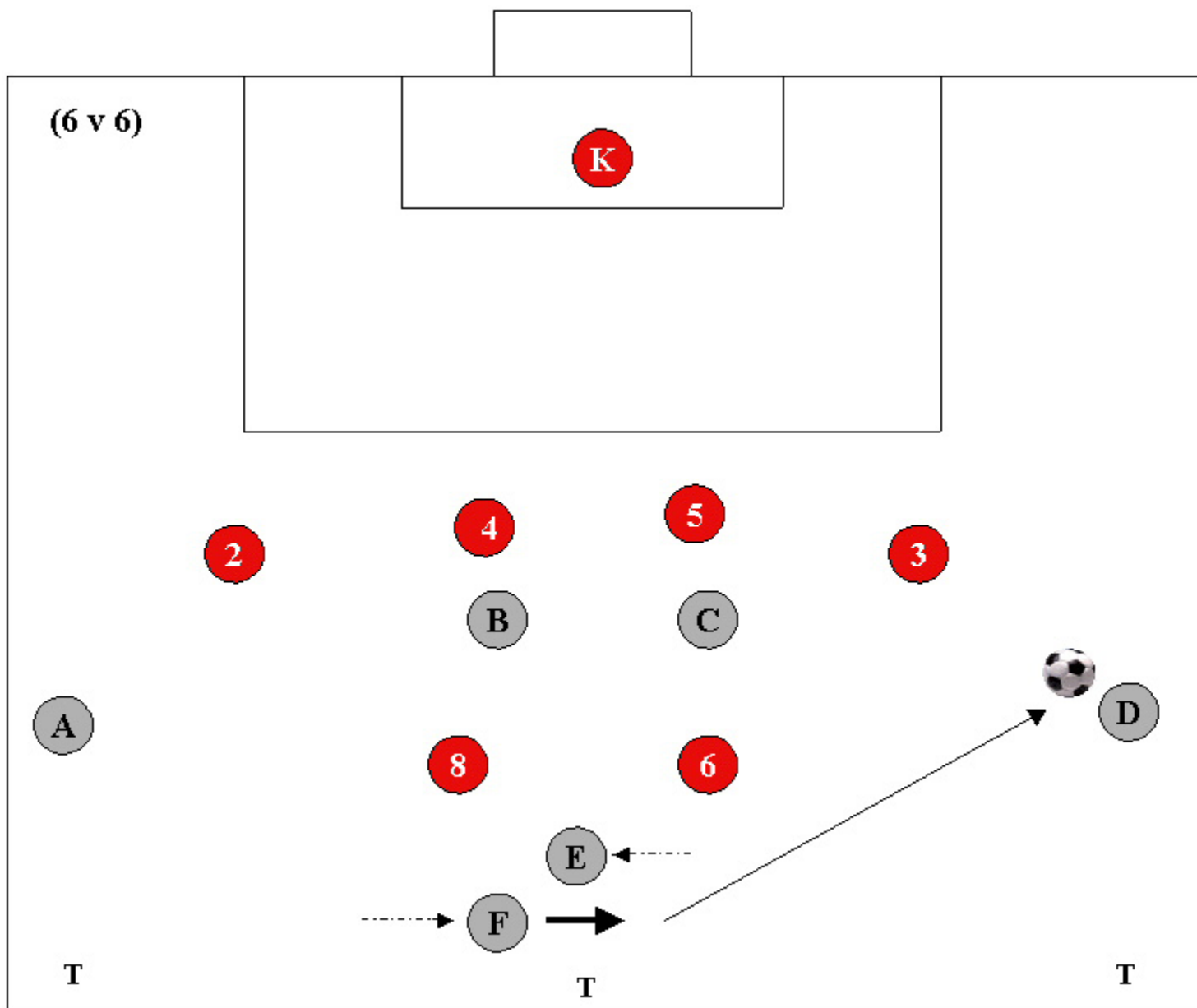
Coaching Points

1. Pressure
2. Support
3. Cover
4. Recover
5. Track
6. Double-Teaming
7. Compact



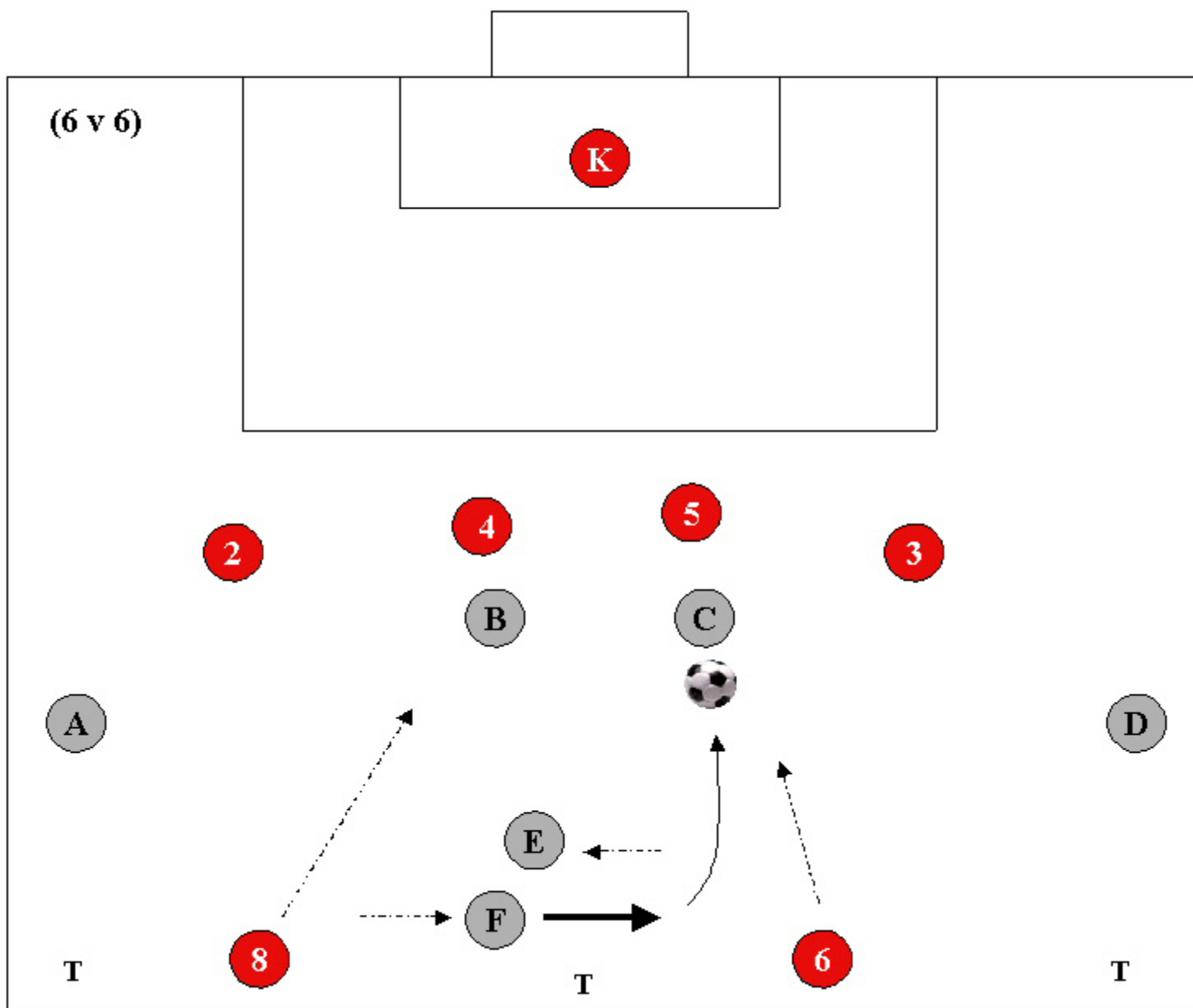
1. Start Position 1 – (E) and (F) do a crossover run and pass the ball to a team mate. This is a simple and effective start position to use to begin the practice (see above).
2. SP 2 – You could have (A) or (D) crossing the ball into the 6 yard box for the keeper to take. The defenders are in defensive positions in the box. The keeper can then kick the ball long to (E) or (F) to control and begin the attacking movement with the defenders pushing out at the same time getting set up to defend and win the ball back.
SP 3 – Have (B) or (C) shoot at goal and the keeper can kick the ball long as above.
3. The midfield set up can be as above with a flat two in the middle or you can use the diamond midfield set up with three in midfield (or just the defensive midfielder) without the attacking midfielder at the top of the diamond. You can vary it depending on your needs for the session. This is just a simple way to set it up.

DEFENDING IN THE DEFENSIVE THIRD IN A PHASE OF PLAY

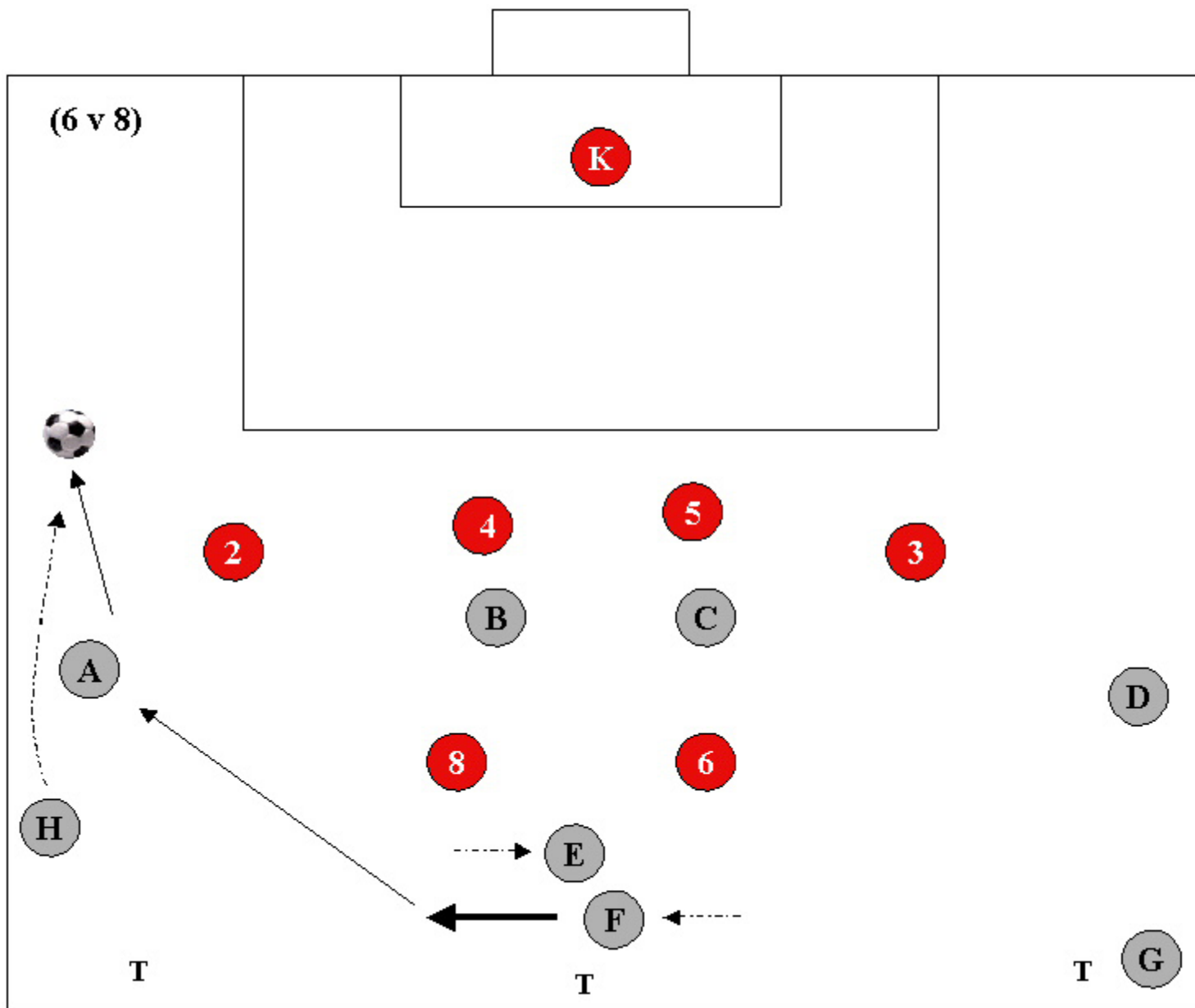


1. Begin the phase play with equal numbers to allow the defending team a chance of success from the session.
2. Start Position – (E) and (F) do a crossover run and pass the ball to a team mate.
3. Try to keep the ball in front of the back four and outside the penalty area.

4. Play the offside law so its true match conditions when you let it go free.
5. Walk through it to begin and have the ball at each attacking player and show the positions of all the defenders depending on where the ball is. Explain pressure and support positions.
6. Once the game starts when the defenders win it they get the ball to the target goals push out as a unit, reorganize and then start again.



1. Increase the difficulty as the defenders get success in this phase play, a progression from this is have the two midfielders start in recovery positions the wrong side of the ball.
2. The coach can count to three (or more) before they can recover back to help the back four. This creates for a moment a 4 v 6 against the defending team (outfield players). They must try to delay the attacking team until the recovering midfielders get back into position to help. Recovery runs are via the shortest route back to goal in a straight line.
3. Encourage the attacking team to try to break quickly to attack the goal to increase the difficulty for the defenders.



1. Next progression is introducing two wide attackers and creates two v one in wide areas i.e. attackers get behind the defense.
2. (A) and (H) work together to create an overlap situation in a 2 v 1 overload against (2). This may result in (H) getting into a good crossing position behind the defense. Show the adjustment of back four and midfielders.
3. The challenge of the defending back four is to keep the ball out of the penalty area to keep it clear for the keeper, but here the ball has gotten in behind them in a wide area so they must recover back to cover for the cross.