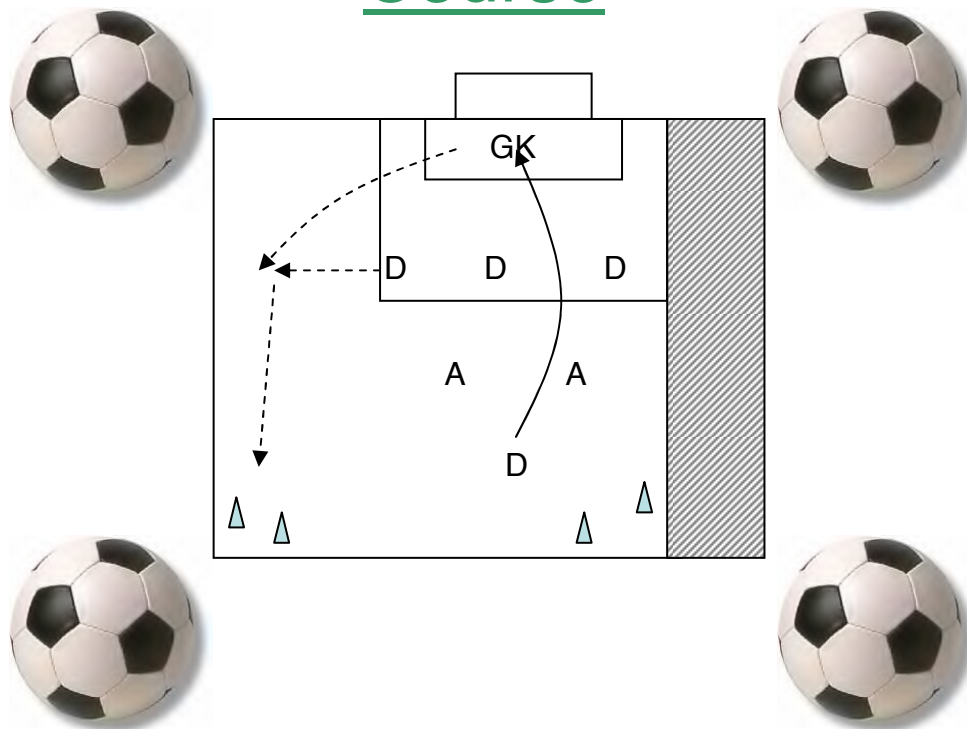


# UEFA B (LEVEL 3) PRACTICAL FOOTBALL COACHING SESSIONS

Detailed session plans for **EVERY**  
practical session topic in the Level 3  
Course



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**BA (Hons), MSc.**  
**2010 Version 2.7**  
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## **Foreword**

### **Aims of the book**

This is the second in a series of books that I have written to support coaches doing their Level 3 (UEFA B) coaching certificate. It incorporates the feedback that I have received from the many coaches that have used version 1.1 of this book. More importantly, it includes the new sessions for the new UEFA B. If you were to conduct a survey of a number of coaches who had undertaken their Level 3 coaching badge and ask them what aspects they found the most challenging, most would reply that completing the practical sessions for their portfolio and for the final assessment were what they found most difficult. Of course, the other theoretical, nutrition and fitness aspects of the course are also important, but they are more manageable if you are willing to put in the work to get them written up.

Despite the importance of the practical sessions in the UEFA B qualification, there appears to be a real shortage of quality session plans that new coaches can use and adapt for their own sessions. Indeed, most trainee Level 3 coaches are literally crying out for decent session plans. Some coach educators on Level 3 courses will reluctantly let you have a copy of their session plans, but this is not always the case. The end result is that coaches feel frustrated and anxious about how on earth they are going to get all their practical sessions completed. This book aims to remedy this by providing coaches with a session plan for every topic that you might be expected to complete as part of your Level 3 practical assessment.

The author of this book is a qualified and practicing UEFA B coach with a professional football club and who has over ten years of coaching and teaching experience. The session plans here have also been verified by a qualified coach educator to ensure that they meet the standard and requirements of the UEFA B course.

### **Types of Practical session**

The sessions in this book fall into three main categories. Each one of these sessions is covered in more detail later on with information on how to set each session up.

- a) Functions- these are specific practices working on one or two techniques in a quarter of a pitch, e.g. crossing.
- b) Phases of play this is a more game- realistic practice over two-thirds of a pitch focusing on an aspect such as counter-attacking or build up play in the final third. One team is overloaded with players (e.g. 9 v 8) and the other team has conditions placed on them like limited touches so that they do not have possession of the ball as much.
- c) Small Sided Games (SSGs) players play 8 v 8 or 9 v 9 in an area 70 by 50 yards. One team is coached on a particular aspect like defending.

### **Advice for the final external assessment**

It is understandable that coaches will feel nervous before the final practical assessment. Nevertheless, you can follow a few simple rules to ensure that you have a better chance of success:

Before your assessment:

- ✓ Be well prepared- you will be given your two topics before the date of your final assessment so attempt to try out your session on your local team. Work out what went well and what potential problems there are with your session. If possible, get someone to observe you and ask them at the end what they thought. You might also be able to show your session plan to your coach educator to see if any changes need to be made.

On the day of your assessment:

- ✓ Look like you're confident from the minute you meet the assessor. Take the opportunity to speak to him/ her, but don't be too chummy or over-familiar
- ✓ Get to know the other coaches on the course and try to build up a relationship with them. Remember that you will need them to perform for you in your session.
- ✓ Work hard for the other coaches when they are doing a session. The assessor will undoubtedly spot that you are enthusiastic and willing to help others.
- ✓ If you are one of the last people to coach that day, do everything you can to ensure that you are fresh for your session. Stay hydrated- you could even take a caffeine drink half an hour beforehand (like a RedBull drink) to make sure you feel sharp and focused on your session.
- ✓ When you step in to coach, be confident, loud and deliberate, but don't waffle.
- ✓ Go in, deliver your point, affect the players on and off the ball and then get out.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to change your session if things clearly aren't working out, e.g. adjust the size of the pitch if it's too small.
- ✓ Pick your players carefully for your sessions. For example, if you are coaching crossing, get someone who is reasonably good at crossing to be your wide player. At least then, you will get some success and will be able to coach other things rather than having to go right back to the basics every time. Having said this, you should also ensure that the teams are balanced so that the opposing team makes it challenging and so that there are mistakes that you can pick up on.

- ✓ Your session will not go perfectly- do your best, remain positive and confident for the rest of the assessment and try not to worry about it. Your external assessor is not looking for perfection, but instead they want to see that you can manage a Level 3 session efficiently.

### **The annual coaching programme**

The annual coaching programme included in this book aims to give coaches an example of how to set out and organise a scheme of coaching lasting an entire season. This is now something that is expected as part of the portfolio in the UEFA B course. The table is a theoretical example and should help coaches to write down their ideas in an organised and systematic way. To this end, a coach can demonstrate his or her long term planning skills. It is advisable to adapt this annual coaching programme to the needs of the players and your own training schedule. Indeed, you may want to add extra elements to the annual programme as you work through it.

### **The 10 week programme of coaching**

A fairly recent addition to the UEFA B tasks has been the 10 week programme of coaching. This is where you work with a team over the 10 week period and monitor their performance against a number of pre- prepared targets. Many coaches find it a daunting task to have to plan and draw out something like this.

To this end an example of a ten week programme has been included in this book. It aims to give coaches an idea of how they can present their 10 week programme and how the performance of the players can be effectively monitored. It would be advisable to adapt the programme to suit the needs of your players, but this should give you a starting point from which to work.

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# How to organise and run practical sessions- a guide for good practice

The success of your session will depend on how well organised you are and how you have set up the session. Fortunately, there are some very simple rules to remember, which soon become second nature after you have followed them for a while.

## Good practice:

- ✓ Always ensure you use the same colour cones for marking out the area of your practice. It is advisable to have them sorted into coloured groups before you start.
- ✓ Always look smart and professional- invest in some decent coaching kit that also makes you feel good, e.g. a decent pair of astro boots and a smart looking splash jacket. Pull your socks up!
- ✓ Cover health and safety factors before the session starts. Be sure to remind players about removing watches and jewellery and make sure you have checked the pitch for obstacles.
- ✓ Lay out the bibs on the ground in the formation you want the players to play in (except on a windy day!). This makes you look organised and helps the players to visualise what they will be doing.
- ✓ If there is a particular technique that you know you will have to demonstrate during the session, try to have a practice before the session starts, e.g. crossing or shooting. Do not try to do it from cold or else you are likely to slip up. You can of course get one of the players to demonstrate things for you during the session, but you get more kudos if you can demonstrate a good shot or cross yourself.
- ✓ Repeat the aim of the session throughout the practice so that players are clear on what you want them to do.
- ✓ Ensure that you have a good supply of footballs laid out around the pitch.

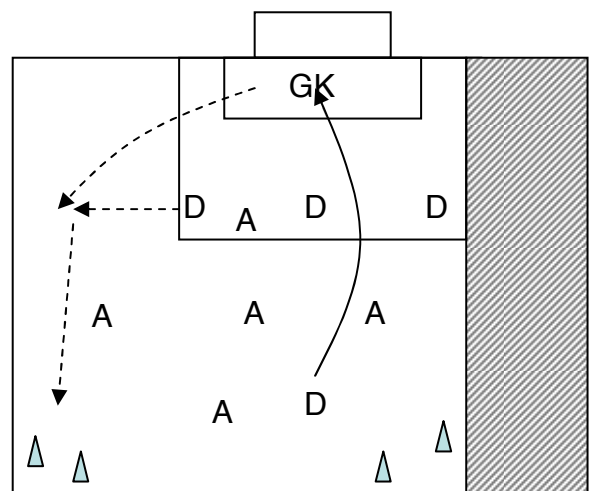
## Layout of each type of practice:

There are three types of practice that you will be asked to put on for your Level 3 sessions:

- a) Functions
- b) Phases of Play
- c) Small Sided Games (8 v 8)

### a) What is a Function?

A functional practice is one which is space limited usually over a quarter of a pitch with up to about 8 players. The specific area of the field used depends on the type of practice.



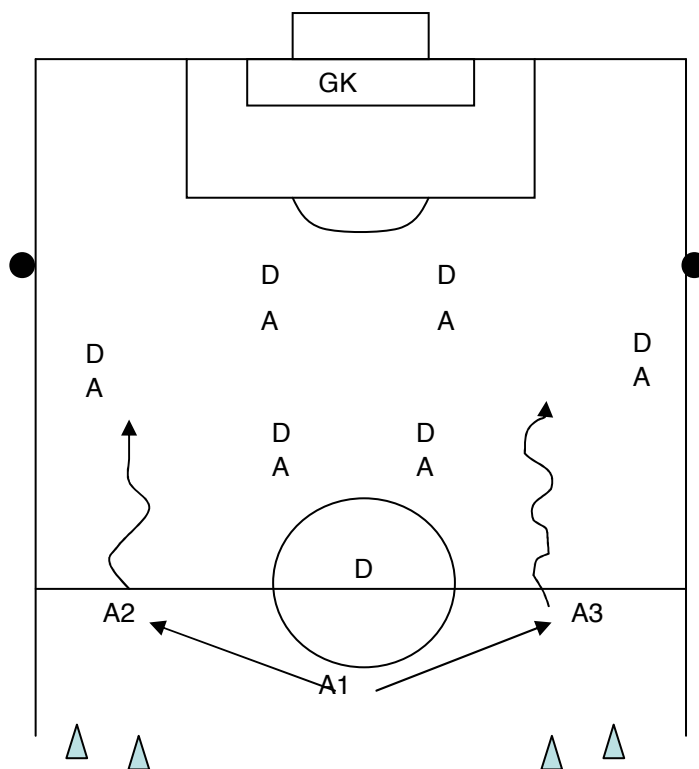
Example of a functional practice taking place over a quarter of a pitch



The aim of a functional session is usually to focus on one or two specific techniques or tactical aspects. It normally includes a progression where more players are introduced or the space is made wider for instance. A function is normally no fewer than 5 v 5.

Examples of functions include coaching a unit of players to:

- ✓ Finish from crosses
- ✓ Turn to finish as forwards
- ✓ Goalkeeper to narrow the angle and stop shots.



Example of a phase of play. Notice how there are two mini goals for the team that is not being coached to score through. This gives them a focus and makes the session more enjoyable. Be sure only to coach one of the teams.

### **b) What is a Phase of Play?**

A phase of play is a more game realistic practice over two-thirds of a pitch focusing on an aspect such as counter-attacking or build up play in the final third.

The team that you are coaching is normally overloaded with players (e.g. 9 v 8 or 7 v 8). This makes it slightly easier for them and gives them (and you) more chance of having success in the aspect that is being coached.

An offside line is put in as shown by the black dots to help teams to work out when a player is offside.

Furthermore, one team has conditions placed on them such as limited touches so that they do not have possession of the ball as much. It is important for the team you are not coaching to have a target to aim for, e.g. two mini goals which they can dribble through to score points.

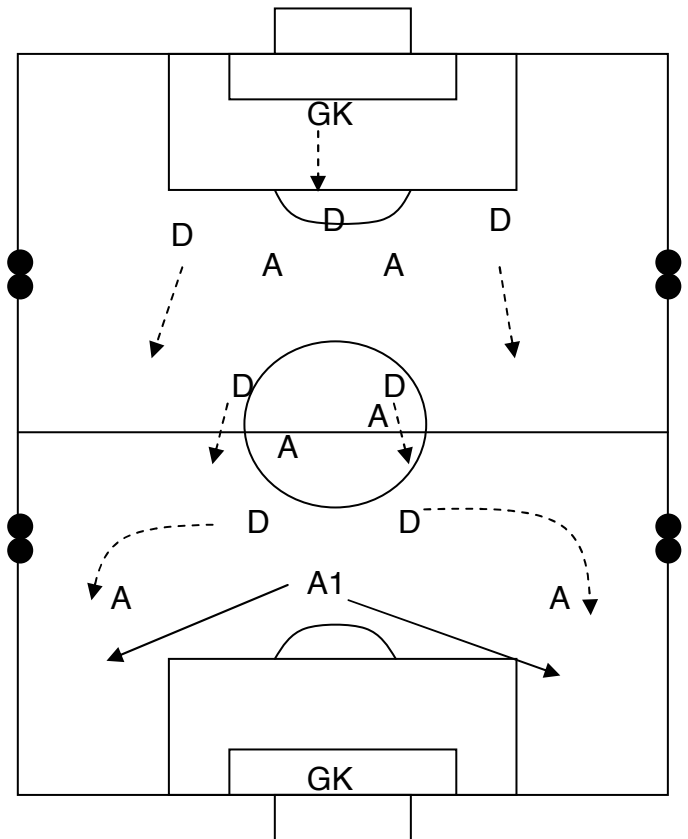
The start positions in a phase of play are very important in order to make the session realistic so make sure your players know what these are as you introduce your session. Finally, a lot of coaches fall into the trap of not using the full two-thirds of a pitch in a phase of play. Be sure that your pitch extends the full two thirds of the pitch and not just to the halfway line!

## **b) What is a Small Sided Game (SSG)?**

A small sided game (SSG) is where players play 8 v 8 in an area of 50 by 70 yards. This means moving one goal up to the 18 yard box and bringing in the touchline by 5 yards on each side. You also need to make sure that you have the thirds of the field marked, e.g. with two cones side by side as shown in the diagram below.

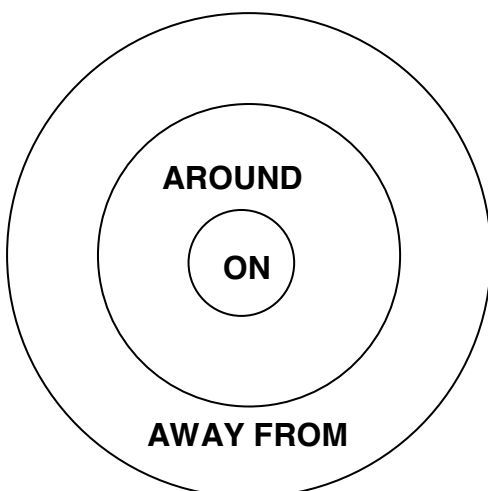
One team is coached on a particular aspect such as defending. The only time that the coach should coach the other team is if they are not making the game realistic, e.g. if they are starting from the wrong start position.

Always give the players 30-45 seconds free play at the start of a SSG before you explain what the start position is. The start position is even more important in a SSG than it is in a phase of play as this is a way of making your session realistic. A good way of starting is often for one team to make a misplaced pass and for the ball to be intercepted by the opposing team. It is also a good idea to have more than one start position so that the game can be developed later on and so that you can focus on different players.



Example of the layout of a SSG (8 v 8). Notice the two cones on each side to mark the pitch out into thirds.

## **How to correct faults**



Your assessor will be looking for you to spot faults and correct them. The danger for inexperienced coaches is that they focus only on one or two players without noticing the bigger picture. What you need to do is to affect all the players in the team. One way of thinking about this is to coach on, around and away from the ball as shown by the circle diagram. Let's look at these in turn:

- On the ball** -coach the player who has possession.
- Around the ball** - coach the players in the immediate vicinity of the player with the ball.

- c) **Away from the ball**- coach the players away from the ball. If for example you are coaching an attacking SSG, this might mean simply asking the goalkeeper to push out and sweep in case the other team breaks away. At least the assessor can then see that you are affecting all the players on the team.

There is also a useful coaching formula which should be adhered to when correcting faults made by players in your session:

- i) Spot the fault
- ii) Stop the play
- iii) Correct
  - use of a demonstration
  - guided discovery (player thinks through what could be improved)
  - Question and answer.
- iv) Structured practice of instruction- give a go or confirm
- v) Go live, e.g. play starts again on player's first touch.

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## COACHING PROGRAMME – SEASON 2006/07

| NANTWICKHAM BOYS FC |  |   |    |   |   |    |  |    |   | Coach:  |    | JOHN MULHOLLAND |  |   |  |  |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------|--|---|----|---|---|----|--|----|---|---|----|-----------------|--|---|--|--|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Month:              | July   |   |    | August  |   |    | September  |    |   | October   |    |                 | November   |   |  | December   |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Weeks:              |  | 8 | 15 | 23  | 6 | 13 | 20   | 27 | 3 |   | 10 | 17              | 24   | 1 |  | 8  | 15 | 22 | 29 | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | 3  | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 |
| Games:              |  |   |    |   |   |    |  | 1  |   |   | 2  | 3               | 4  |   |  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |    |
| Period:             | Preparation Phase  |   |    |   |   |    | Competition Commences  |    |   |   |    |                 |  |   |  | Develop the team in line with coaching plan  |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Objectives :        | Introduction of new players. Player's Physical fitness & Technical practice. |   |    | Build up physical fitness. Revise passing/receiving. Player's roles in 3-5-2. Match analysis                                |   |    | Continue with player fitness. Develop speed/agility/aerobic & anaerobic endurance. Develop & apply advanced techniques, Tactical development of the team, including individual/unit.                                     |    |   |   |    |                 |  |   |  |  |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Practical Content:  | General fitness  |   |    | Speed & Agility runs. Power, Strength & Flexibility. Roles in 3-5-2   |   |    | Playing from the back into midfield. (Accurate passing) Gaining possession & making effective movement on/off the ball. Attacking from deep positions. GK role in counter attack. SSG/functional practices/phase of play |    |   | Practise free kicks/corners. Creating space in central areas. Effective forward passing. Effective crossing |    |                 | Defending: Flanks/Central areas. Individual Defending, tracking & recovery runs. Def in & around the box. Support play – in front & behind ball. Combo plays attacking third. GK & team reducing shots on goal |   |  | Effective crossing & attacking crosses. Dribbling/Turning Shooting (improving & finishing) Link play in and around the box GK dealing effectively with crosses. SSG/functional practice & Phase of play. |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                     | Tactical components  |   |    | Timing/angle of runs. Effective running with the ball Revise attacking and defending - SSG. GK handling/Dist Practise games |   |    | Where/when. GK deal with back pass. SSG 8v8 Team play  |    |   | Where/when. GK deal with back pass. SSG 8v8 Team play   |    |                 |  |   |  |  |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| Session:                 |  | F | F               | F | F | F  | F | F | F | F | FS |   | T | S | T | S | T | S | T | S |
|--------------------------|--|---|-----------------|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                          |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Planned Evals/<br>Review |  | M | G               | G | G | G  | G | G | G | G | G  | G | G | G | G | G | G | G | G | G |
|                          |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                          |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   | R | R | R |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                          |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                          |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Session Key              |  |   |                 |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Technical                |  | T | Game (Practice) |   |   | G  |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Skill                    |  | S | Fitness         |   |   | F  |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Match                    |  | M | Fitness Test    |   |   | FT |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Review                   |  | R | other           |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

**Notes:**

- Weeks ~ Sunday to Sunday
- Sessions ~ one - per week
- Matches weekly (Sunday)
- Game sessions include functional Practices, small sided Games and Phases of Play

**Session Key factors for 2006/07 season:**

- Creating and maintaining space
- Exploiting space
- Timing and angle of runs
- More effective forward runs off the ball
- Better accuracy, timing and weight of passes
- Maintaining shape moving forward
- Patience

**Action Points from Planned evaluations:**

Give technical and tactical information      Do not commentate      Coach on, around and away from the ball.

## 10 Week coaching programme

**Phase Dates:** 5<sup>th</sup> September to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007

**Venue:** Billingham Beck playing fields

**Team Name:** Nantwicham Boys FC

**Age:** u17s

**Squad size:** 18

**Overall programme goal-** to improve the team's overall attacking play.

**Other staff present:** John Mulholland, Brian Jones (Assistant Coach) Sarah Bluckham (Fitness Coach)

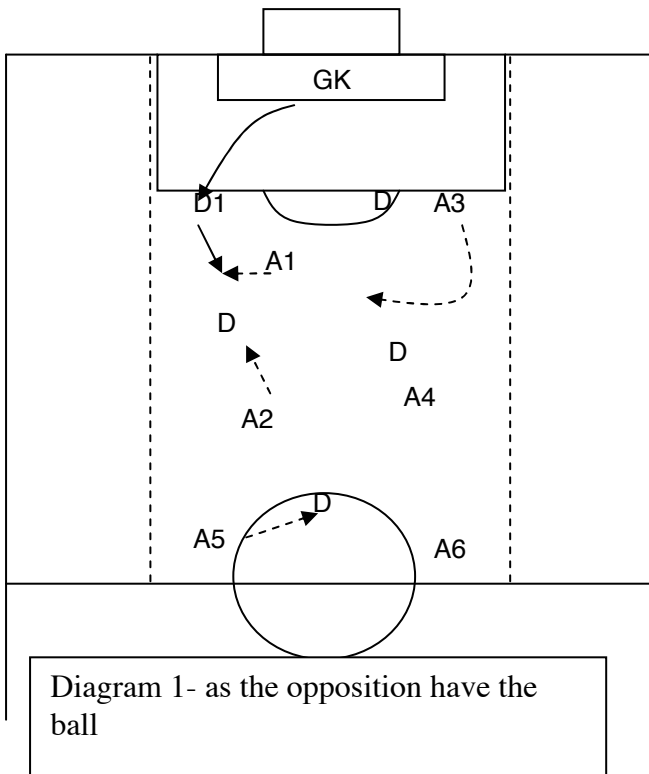
| Week and Date   | Session Objective   | Activity & Duration  | Monitoring   | Intensity  | Performance evaluation   |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Week 1</b><br><b>Session Date</b><br><b>5<sup>th</sup> September</b><br><b>2006</b>  | To assess the fitness of the players after pre-season and at the start of the new season. | Bleep Test (1 hour including cool down)<br><br>See session plan attached with recording chart  | Player's level of performance will be monitored and recorded. Heart rate will be taken                 | Varying level (building up from high to extremely high intensity as players reach peak capacity) | Players will be given feedback on how they did and given a target to achieve next time.  |
| <b>Week 2</b><br><b>Session Date</b><br><b>12<sup>th</sup> September</b><br><b>2006</b> | To improve passing in tight midfield areas  | After a dynamic SAQ warm up, players will work on possession drills and functional practice on passing. Develop in into phase of play where one team has to keep possession for a set number of passes in order to move forward and score (see session plan) | Players given feedback by coach relating to session objectives.  | Medium intensity moving into a game situation  | Players assessed formatively on ability to keep the ball in order to move forward and score.   |
| <b>Week 3</b><br><b>Session Date:</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2006                   | To improve shooting in and around the penalty area  | 30 mins- function on shooting in and around the penalty area<br>40 mins- phase of play on shooting from central areas (see session plan)   | Players monitored according to how they improved as the session went on (end product- shots on target) | Medium intensity<br>Building up to a full game type situation after phase of play                | Coach assessment and peer assessment. Players asked to fill in a form to evaluate how they did and what they must do to improve- see sheet attached. |

| <b>Week and Date</b>                          | <b>Session Objective</b>                   | <b>Activity &amp; Duration</b>   | <b>Monitoring</b>  | <b>Intensity</b> | <b>Performance evaluation</b>  |
|---|--|--|--|------------------|--|
| <b>Week 4 Session Date: 26 September 2006</b> | When to pressure and when to drop          | 30 min functional practice when and where to pressure and when and where to drop 40 SSG. Coach team to pressure as early as possible | Players given formative feedback by coach relating to session objectives.  | Medium intensity | Players assessed formatively on knowledge of when to pressure and when to drop. Check understanding through Q & A at the end of the session.                                   |
| <b>Week 5 Session Date: 3 October 06</b>      | To improve crossing & finishing            | In a phase of play coach one team to improve crossing and finishing  | Players monitored according to how they improved as the session went on (end product- goals scored from crosses) | Medium intensity | Players assessed according to how many shots on target there were from crosses. Set targets for players to achieve, e.g. 5 points for a shot on target, 10 points for a goal). |
| <b>Week 6 Session Date: 10 October 06</b>     | Goalkeeping support & communication        | In a phase of play coach goalkeeper to improve communication and support   | GK and other defensive players given formative feedback.   | Medium intensity | Communication and positioning of GK evaluated in next game.  |
| <b>Week 7 Session Date: 17 October 06</b>     | Goalkeeping: Developing play from the back | In a functional practice coach the goalkeeper in developing play from the back   | Formative feedback based on how the players have improved during the session.                                    | Medium intensity | Players assessed formatively on how well they can build an attack starting with the goalkeeper.  |

| <b>Week and Date</b>   | <b>Session Objective</b>  | <b>Activity &amp; Duration</b>  | <b>Monitoring</b>  | <b>Intensity</b>   | <b>Performance evaluation</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Week 8<br/>Session<br/>Date: 24<br/>October 06</b>              | Counter Attacking play  | To improve interchange of positions. (POP). To improve forward passing & Improve overlapping runs (SSG)                 | Players monitored according to how many counter – attacks during the POP or SSG lead to a shot on goal.                                      | High intensity   | Players assessed formatively on ability to counter-attack during the next game.   |
| <b>Week 9<br/>(part 1)<br/>Session<br/>Date: 31<br/>October 06</b> | To assess the fitness of the players after pre-season and at the start of the new season. | Bleep Test (45 mins including cool down)<br><br>See session plan attached with recording chart                          | Player's level of performance will be monitored and recorded. Heart rate will be taken   | Varying level (building up from high to extremely high intensity as players reach peak capacity) | Players will be given feedback on how they did based on whether or not they have met their target from the previous bleep test.                 |
| <b>Week 9<br/>(part 2)<br/>Session<br/>Date: 31<br/>October 06</b> | Combination play/winning more possession in the attacking/final third                     | To improve combination play in the final third. (POP) To improve the team's ability to win ball in midfield areas.(POP) | During the session, how many shots on target are achieved as a result of a ball won from midfield?   | High intensity   | Coach assessment and peer assessment. Players asked to fill in a form to evaluate how they did and what they must do to improve- see sheet      |
| <b>Week 10<br/>Session<br/>Date: 07<br/>November 06</b>            | Defending   | Improving defending in central areas, wide areas, and defending higher up the pitch<br>Use of SSGs.                     | Monitor the goals scored against the defending team.<br>Analyse the reasons for this, e.g. is there a weakness in balls played over the top? | High intensity   | Players assessed formatively on knowledge of when to pressure and when to drop.<br>Check understanding through Q & A at the end of the session. |



## Session Aim- In a function, coach attacking quickly after intercepting the ball



### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (approx 20 by 40 yards) as shown by dashed lines. Play six attackers against five defenders plus GK.

**START:** GK starts with the ball and throws out to D1 (see diagram 1). Defending players must attempt to stop the ball on the end line to score a point.

### Key Factors

a) As defenders have the ball.

Nearest player to the ball, e.g. A1 moves across to defend. A2 offers cover.

Close down as the ball travels- keep low and side on. Can I intercept? Stay on your feet.

Stay compact as a team- get players

back behind the ball, e.g. A3 drops to make central area compact.

b) as the ball is intercepted or won back e.g. A2 wins the ball back in diagram 2.

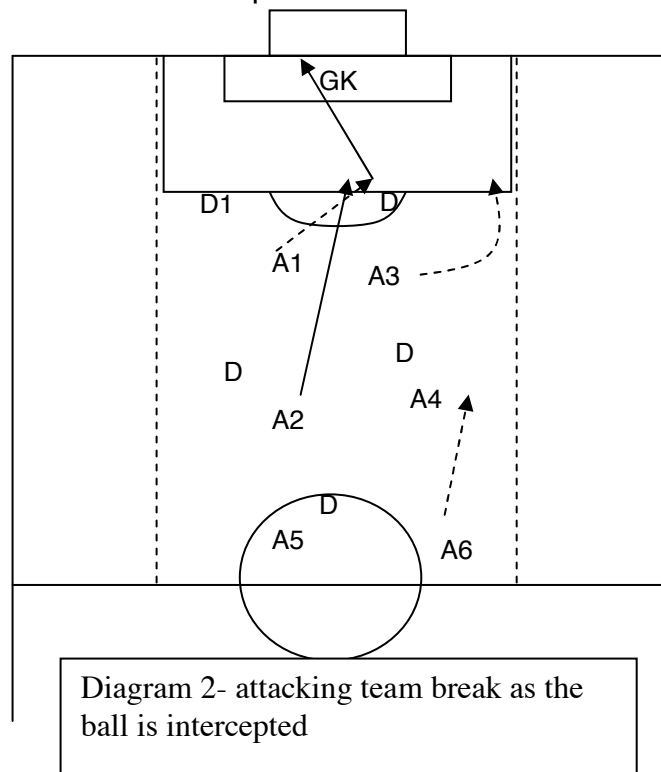
Be positive- attack space

Early decisions- pass, dribble shoot- be decisive. Try to not allow the D team to get back into position.

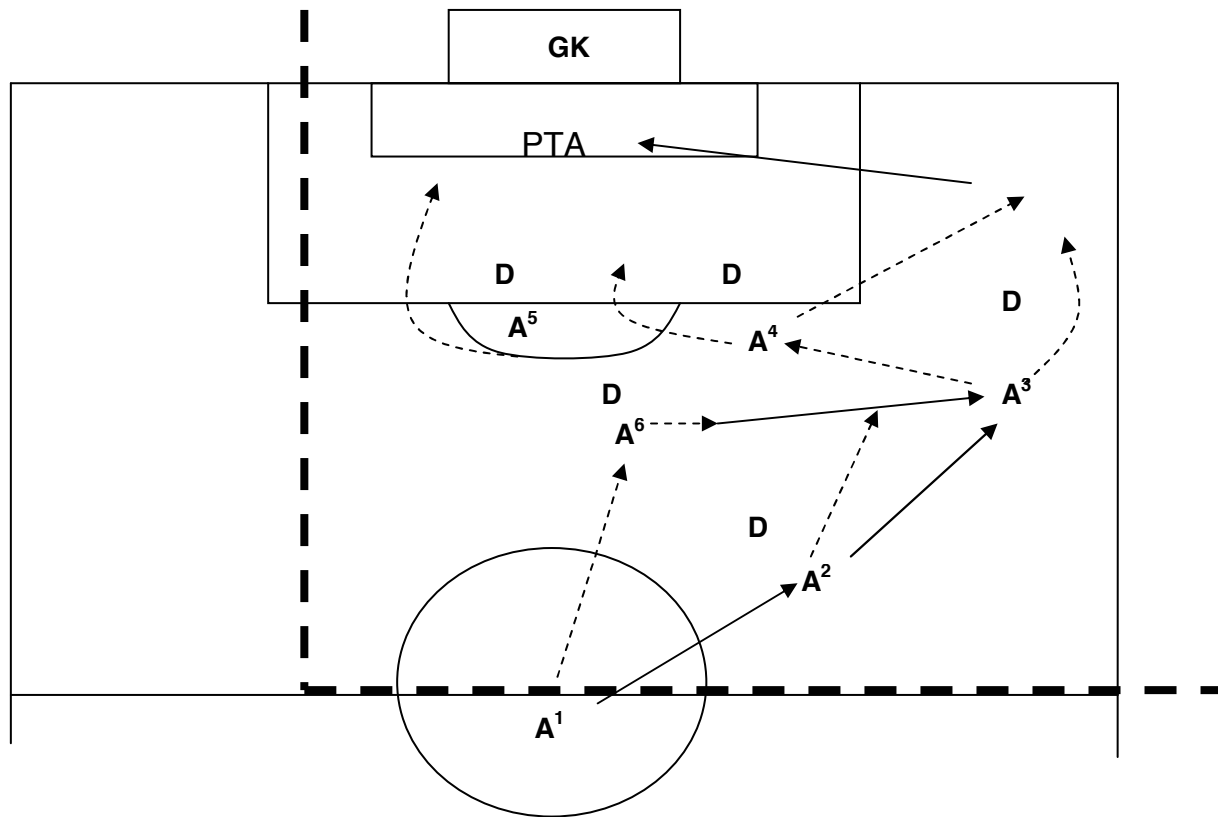
Get attacking players into advanced positions, e.g. A1 makes a diagonal run whilst A6 attempts to create an overload.

A5 stays back to ensure that there is cover in case the play breaks down.

Variation of attack- in such a confined space, emphasise the importance of short along the floor passing and quick combination play. However, a well timed long lofted ball to a player who has made a good run from deep helps to keep the defence guessing.



**Session Aim-** In a function, coach a wide player on his or her responsibilities after gaining possession of the ball (end product)



### **Organisation**

Quarter of pitch (approximately 50 x 40 yards area coned off)

Six attackers (A's) and five defenders (D's) - back three with two defensive midfielders plus GK.

**Start-** A<sup>1</sup> plays ball into A<sup>2</sup> who must then attempt to play the ball to the wide player (A<sup>3</sup>). Other attackers then work off wide player. Note that most work is done in wide areas. If the defenders win the ball back, they must look to find A<sup>1</sup> as soon as possible.

### **Key Factors**

#### **a) As an Individual:**

Create space (e.g. run wide onto shoulder of full back and then turn back to receive)

Body position to receive (half turn to get faced up)

**Option 1-** Positive attitude (can I beat the full back 1v1?). Technique of tricks to beat opponent e.g. step over, dummies. Winger must then look to deliver an end product into the Prime Target Area (PTA)

**Option 2-** If full back cannot be beaten 1v1, can I cross the ball early?- end product  
Quality of cross into Prime target area (PTA), e.g. low curled cross to A<sup>4</sup> who has made a diagonal run to front post. OR back post cross to A<sup>5</sup>.

**Option 3-** wall pass with player A<sup>4</sup> - winger must deliver ball in first time into PTA.

#### **b) As a unit:**

Movement of attackers into support positions and so that A<sup>3</sup> is isolated 1 v 1 against full back

Attacking support (e.g. wall pass from A<sup>4</sup> or overlap run from A<sup>2</sup>).

Quality of finishing (headers, volleys and rebounds)

Midfielders movements into anticipation positions, e.g. A<sup>6</sup> sits on the edge of the box.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach a full back on his or her passing into forward areas

### Organisation

Use the corner of the pitch approx 45 by 60 yards. Right channel of pitch (shaded area) is coned off. Work with D team who play 2-2-1 plus GK against the A team who have five players (2-2-1). If the A team get the ball back, they have five touches as a team to get a shot at goal. Work mainly with player D1 (right full back).

START- D2 passes to the GK who throws the ball out to the full back D1 who has pulled out wide to receive the ball. Ask attacker A1 to close down quickly having started from a central position (see diagram 1).

ALTERNATIVE START POSITIONS: D2 passes ball out to D1 having received from the GK OR D1 receives a back pass from a midfield player like D3.

PROGRESSION- Extend the pitch into the shaded area and 10 yards length ways. The coach can also work with a left full back. Add one extra A player also.

### Key Factors

Movement of full back out wide to receive the ball. The GK picking it up should act as a trigger for the full back to do this and show for the ball out wide. D1 should have a quick look to see where the opposition is before doing this.

Open up the body to receive the ball and attempt go forward on first touch. Head up and scan forward options

Movement of team mates into areas of support.

Technique of pass- side of the foot short pass or driven pass to a forward who has gone up past the halfway line.

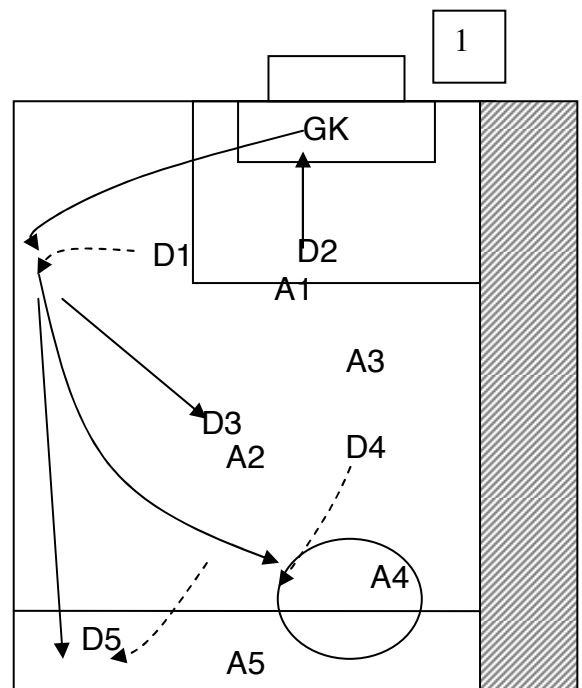
Passing selection and range of passes:

- long to centre forwards who have dropped off.
- down the line (e.g. to D5)
- to centre midfielders to play through the phases (e.g. to D3)
- Passes to feet or head.

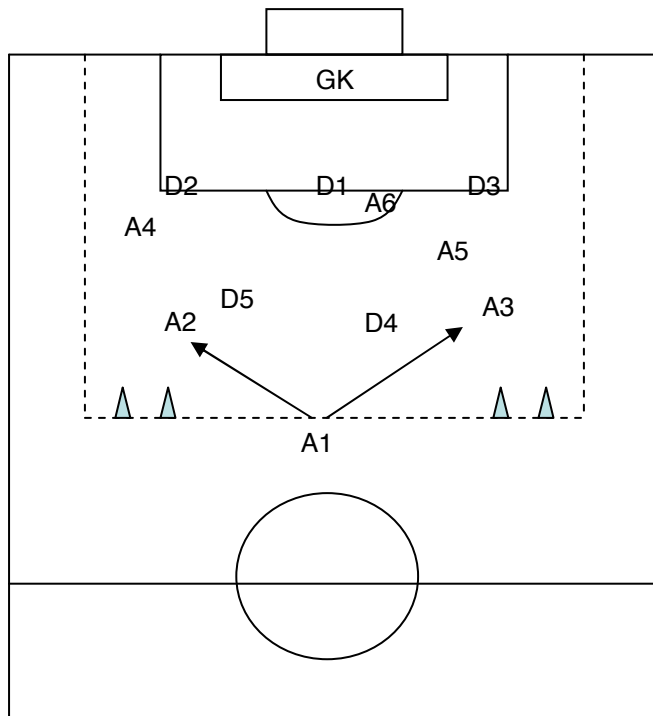
Safety first- avoid playing ball across the goal unless you are sure of making the pass. If there are no forward passing options, try to keep possession.

Follow up movement of D1 after passing- can I do a one- two or overlap?

HINT: Be sure that A1 goes back to the start position each time or else our full back D1 will not have any space in which to work and the session will break down.



## Session Aim- In a function, coach defending in and around the penalty area



### Organisation

Mark out a quarter of a pitch in a central area around the penalty box (approx 35 by 35 yards).

Attacking team has 6 players in a 3-2-1 formation (A1 is a feeder who can join in). Defending team has 5 outfield players in a 3-2 formation plus the GK.

**START-** A1 plays the ball out from the end line into A2 or A3 who then attack towards goal. If the defending team win it back, they should try to dribble or pass through the two mini goals on the end line.

### Key Factors

Defend fairly deep to protect the penalty area

Nearest player to the ball- e.g. D4 closes down the midfield attackers.

Technique of defending- slow down on approach, tackle sideways on.

Stay on your feet especially in the penalty area! Don't concede free kicks or penalties!

Show players outside away from the penalty area.

Cover and support from other defenders- back three shuffles across to support other players.

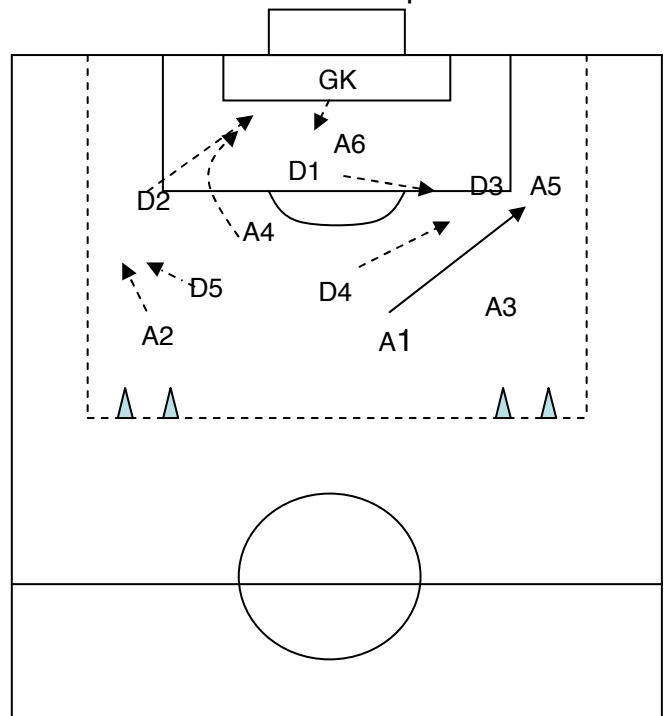
Tracking and recovery runs

Offside- can we use this trap to play attackers offside?

Support from the GK who sweeps and anticipates ball over the top.

Can we play out from defence?- if not, clear with height and distance away from the danger zone.

Communication- clear and concise.



**Progression-** add an extra attacker and/ or defender onto the field. If necessary, the area can be widened and lengthened, e.g. by 5 yards on each side.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach developing play after gaining possession of the ball

### Organisation

Use the corner of the pitch approx 45 by 45 yards. Right channel of pitch (shaded area) is coned off. 5 defenders and a GK versus 5 attackers (see diagram 1)

START- Defender passes ball back to the GK who must distribute to the attacking players. Coach the defending team (D's)

Include two mini goals at the far end of the pitch for the attackers to score through.

PROGRESSION- Extend the pitch into the shaded area. This can be a gradual progression (see diagram 2)

### Key Factors

Defenders go back to cover the GK as the ball is initially played into the GK.

Movement of the D players- defending full backs to get out wide and receive the ball from the GK.

Attacking D attempts to get forward and score through the mini goals.

Body position- full back opens out body and attempt to play forward.

Technique of GK distribution

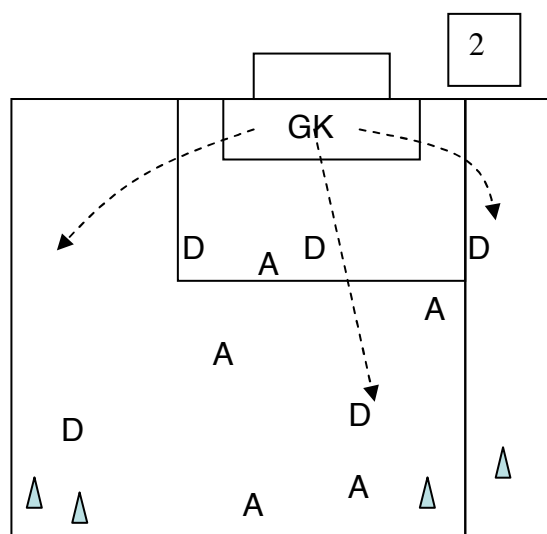
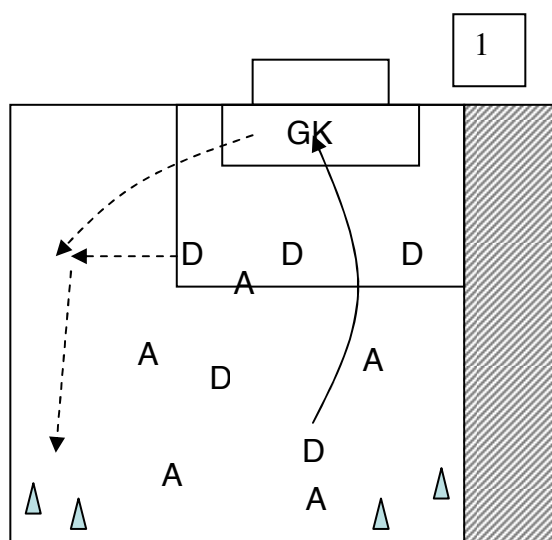
- underarm throw
- over arm throw
- kicking- height and distance
- passing accuracy

Communication- especially between the GK and the back three.

Transition- can we move quickly from defence to attack.

GK moves forward out of 6 yard box as the play moves forward on the attack in order to sweep behind the back three.

HINT- one of the main focuses in this session is the GK. However, equally important is the support play of the rest of the Defensive outfield players.



## Session Aim- In a function, coach one team to improve defending in central areas

### Organisation

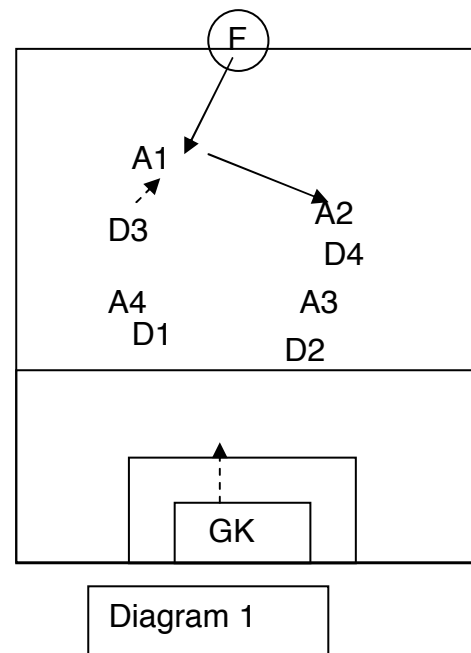
Cone off the central area of the pitch (c 20 by 35 yards)  
5 v 5 (includes GK on defending team)

Feeder F plays to attackers (A's) who must attempt to turn and score. Defenders work together to prevent A's from scoring.

### Progression

Feeder joins in. Then Introduce an extra attacker

Extend area by 5 to 10 yards to make more difficult for the defenders.



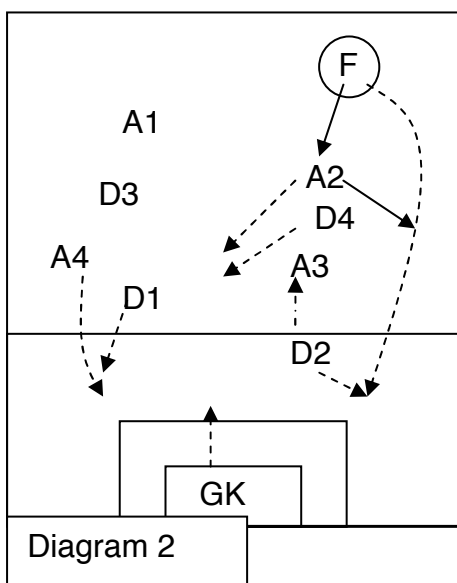
### Key Factors

Goalkeeper's start position on the edge of the 6 yard box to act as sweeper.

Diagram 1- Nearest player to the ball D1 closes down the first attacker- other defender tucks in to provide support and cover (angles and distances- see diagram 1).

Tracking and recovery, e.g. D4 tracks the run of A2 whilst D1 tracks A4.

Opposite applies if feeder plays the ball to A2.



Travel to the attacker as the ball travels from the pass of the Feeder. Slow down on approach with a low body position.

Prevent attacker from turning and shooting- close down quickly. Adjust body position to show outside and defend central area.

Can I intercept? Side on body position.

If any of the attackers attempt to run behind the defenders, hold the line to play offside. GK sweeps.

Communication- from defenders and GK.

Concentration- try to stop any shots from coming in

to the GK

## Session Aim- In a function, coach the Goalkeeper to improve shot stopping

### Organisation

All three practices here are based within an area the width of the 6 yard box by 30 yards.

### Practice 1

Server S feeds into A1 who has two touches to turn and shoot (without getting too close to the GK).

Progression- S feeds A1 to pass to either A2 or A3. OR A1 has the choice to either shoot or pass to A2 or A3.

### Key Factors

- Check set position- keep checking
- Distance from Goal line should be 3 to 6 yards (make sure GK does not stand on the goal line!)
- Concentration on the ball as the shot is taken (watch the bounce etc.)
- Move into line- body low to ground and no crossover of feet
- Move down the line- speed of movement
- Set for shot- be still
- Can GK go and take ball without committing a foul?- dive at feet.
- Dive- into the angle – left arm to left side and right arm to right side
- Arms' length reach.
- Rebounds- get up quickly to block shot of second attacker

### Practice 2 (two goals and two GK's)

GK feeds in front of X1 who attacks and shoots. X2 becomes defender on X1's first touch. Key factors as above. Repeat from other side of area.

### Practice 3

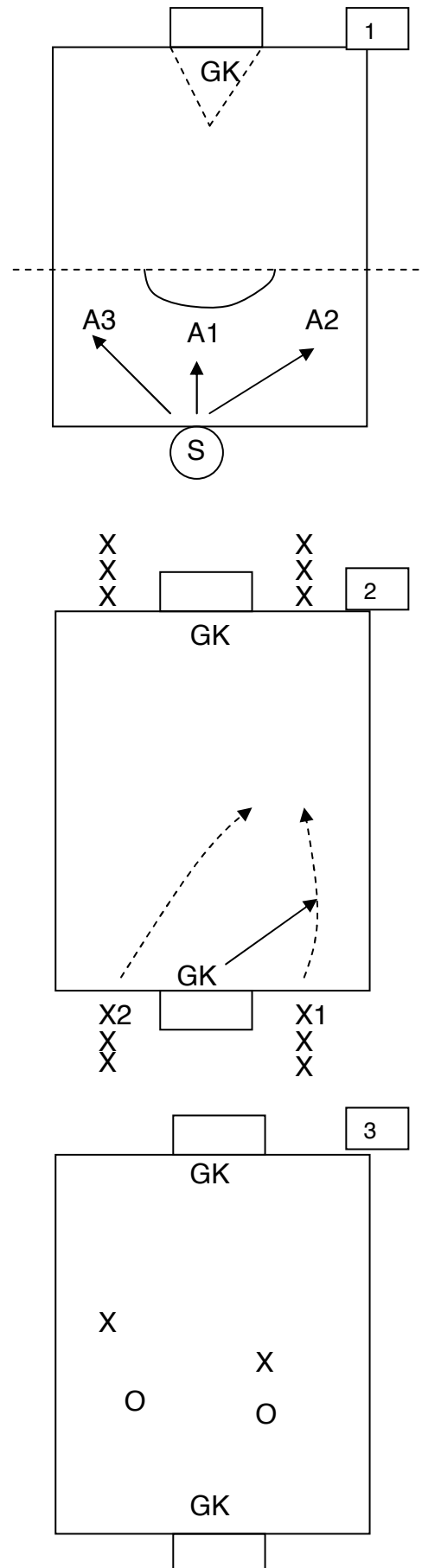
Small sided game 2 v 2 plus GK's

Introduce support of defenders after distribution to aid GK.

Communication - on the ball

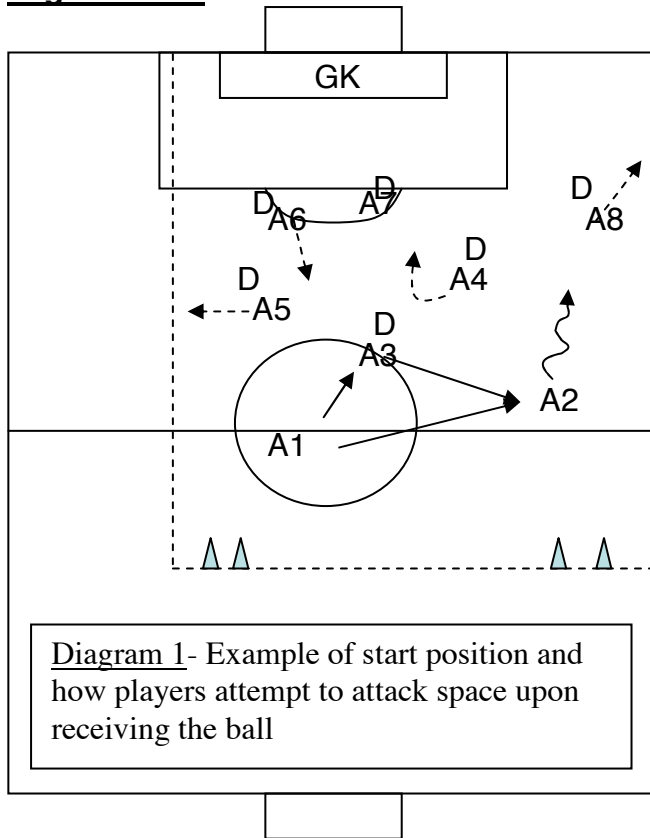
- off the ball
- hold him up
- press, cover, re-cover
- Be loud!

Silent for the first two minutes then GK's only to talk.



## Session Aim- In a function, coach receiving to dribble

### Organisation



Use a quarter of a pitch as shown in the diagrams. Players play 7 v 7. Work with the attacking team only.

**START-** A1 passes to A2 who then attempts to dribble into the space available. Defending team (Ds) defend their goal. If they win back possession, they try to score in the two mini goals at the end of the marked area.

The feeder A1 should also attempt to feed to other players who are looking to receive the ball and dribble.

### Key Factors

Initial move to make space- e.g. A6 and A4 try to check away from defenders.

Technique of receiving the ball on the half turn and attempting to go forward if possible. First touch is crucial for this

Positive attitude- looking to get forward

and attack the space. Use the laces of the boot to move at pace

Decision making- if I can't dribble, can I pass to a team mate who can? E.g. if defender marks tight and you can't do a half turn, keep possession of the ball.

Attempt to commit defending players before passing or shooting.

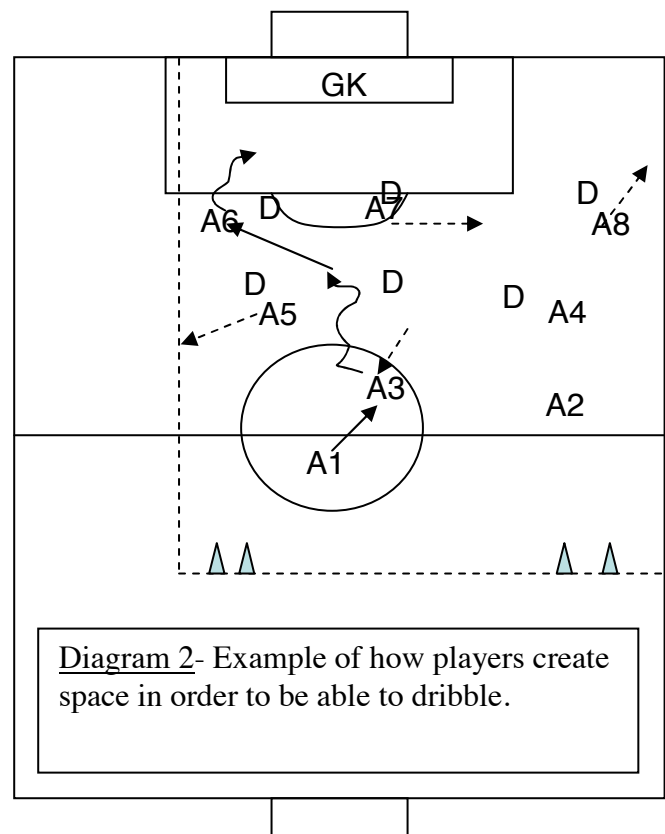
Skills, fakes and turns- have confidence.

Support play- other players make themselves available when someone else is dribbling.

End product- delivery of final ball or shot on target

### Progressions

- Reduce space to make it more difficult for attackers to get free of markers
- Add an extra defender to compact the space available to the attackers.





## Session Aim- In a function, coach shooting in and around the penalty area

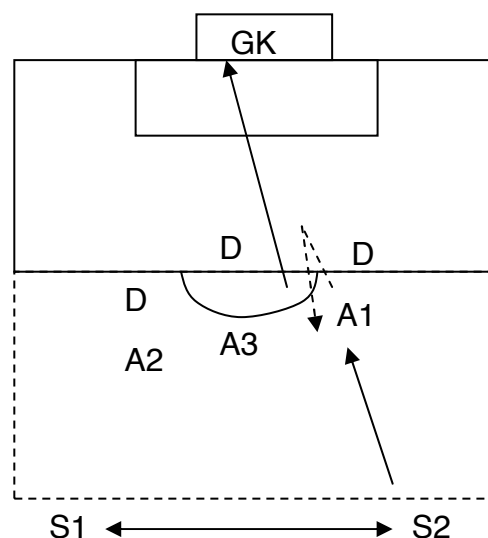
### Organisation

Set up an area of 30 x 30 yards including the penalty area.

9 players- GK, three defenders, three attackers and two feeders. Servers are stationed approx 10 yards outside the penalty area.

START- A1 pulls away and checks back to lose marker. S1 then feeds the ball to A1. The three attackers then compete 3 v 3 and attempt to score past the GK.

Servers S1 and S2 can play the ball back and forth to each other until either attacker has created enough space to receive the ball.

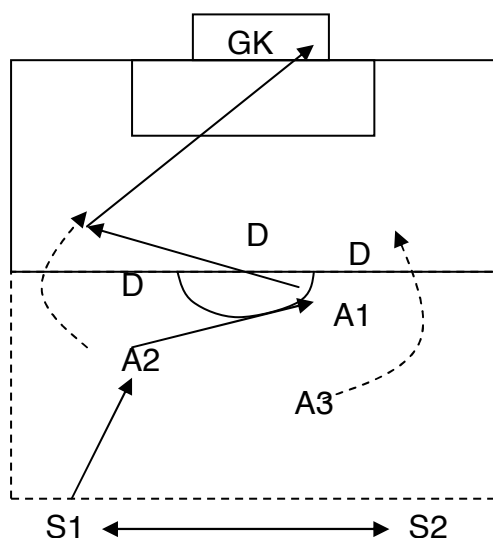


### Progression

- The server who has passed the ball joins in to compete 4 v 3
- Move start position back to create an area of 40 yards length
- Introduce a fourth defender so the play is 5 v 5.

### Key factors

- Attackers must create space before calling to receive ball. Drag defender away and check back (see A1 in diagram 1)



- Quality of pass and timing of pass from servers. If pass not on, don't give ball away, but set up again.
- Positive attitude- attempt to get in a half turn and look to shoot early. (Diagram 1) If defender gets tight, can you play to other attacker or back to server to keep possession?
- Technique- 1<sup>st</sup> touch
- Quality of shot (accuracy before power), hit the target and shoot across goal.
- Movement of second and third striker- e.g. diagonal runs, looking for a one two with first striker or overlaps (see diag 2).
- Rebounds and secondary chances- 2<sup>nd</sup> striker follows in to take advantage if keeper spills the ball.
- Be inventive- Attackers use of tricks and feints to get away from defenders.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach one team on when to press and when to drop

### Organisation

6 defenders v 5 attackers in central area of pitch in line with the 18 yard box (see diagram)

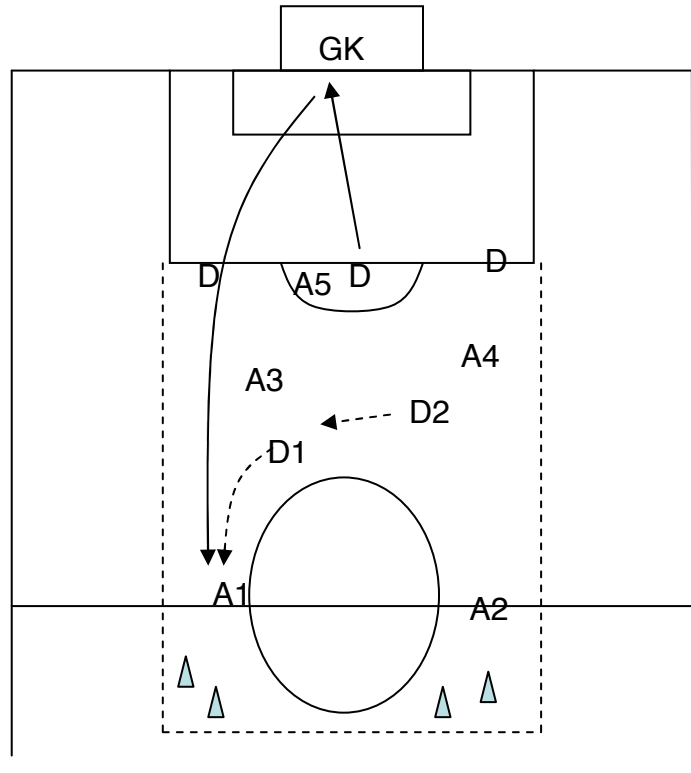
Place two mini goals at the end about 5 yards over the halfway line.

Coach only the Defenders (D's)

Start position- central defender plays ball back to keeper who kicks a long ball to midfield opponents A1 or A2 who then work as a team to score past the goalkeeper.

D1 and D2 must decide when to press and when to cover.

If Defending teams (D's) win the ball back, they must attempt to score through the two mini goals as quickly as possible.



### Key Factors

Nearest man to the ball? **Can you press** (i.e. get close?) as the ball is travelling. Body shape of D1 or D2- show outside to defend central area. (curved run –see diagram)

Cover and support from other midfield player, e.g. D2 moves across to cover D1 in the diagram.

**If you can't press** (e.g. because the attackers are too far away), drop back, let the attackers approach and make play predictable.

Defenders support to form a defensive triangle- stay compact.

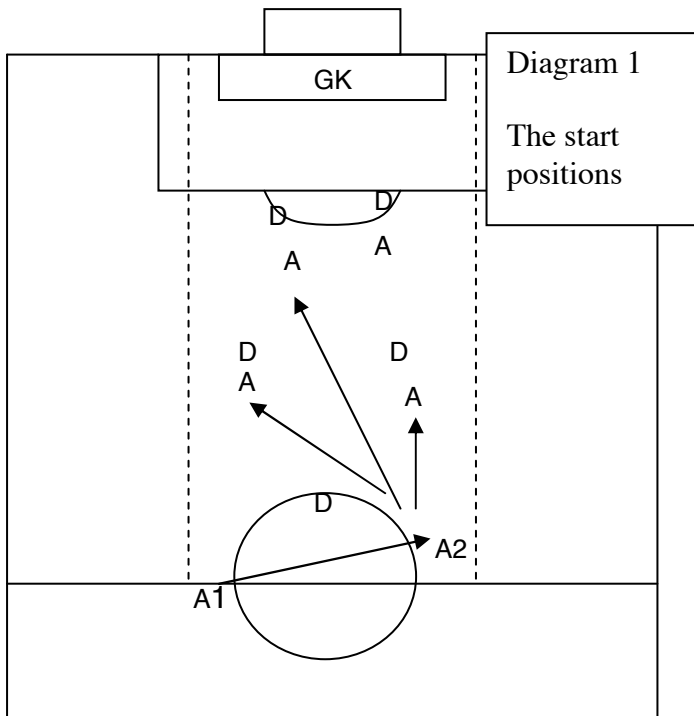
Can you intercept? - stay on feet and be patient.

Recovery runs to support tackling player

Communication- early clear and concise.

**HINT-** If for some reason the GK is unable to play a good ball from the start position forward to one of the opposing players, get him to throw it out instead. Start by having D1 and D2 close to the opposing midfielders A1 and A2 so they have to press. Then later on, get them to start further back so that sometimes they have to drop.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach one team on central attacking play



### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (approx 20 by 35 yards) as shown by dashed lines. Play six attackers against five defenders plus GK.

**START:** A1 plays the ball to A2 from the centre line (or vice-versa). Both players can then join in to support the attacking team. Alternatively, A1 can play to any attacking player in a good position. See diagram 1.

### Key Factors

Create space- e.g. check away and back again to lose marker or forward players do diagonal runs to shake off defenders.

Receive the ball on the half turn in order to try to go forward. If defender marks close, keep possession.

Awareness of space- forward and midfield players who are in good positions.

Shooting- early shots, end product- hit the target.

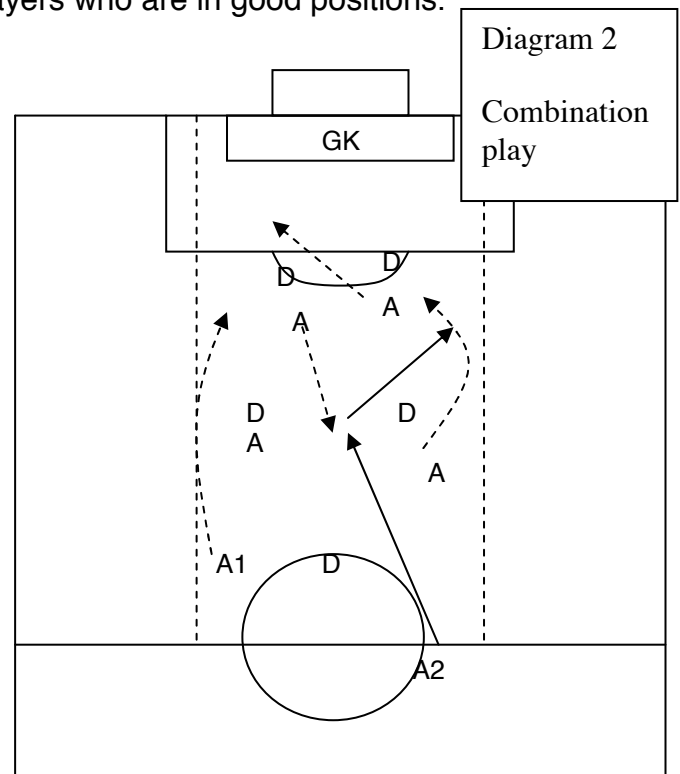
Good Technique- type of turn, shot or pass.

Be dynamic- players need to be constantly moving to drag defenders out of position, e.g. a quick give and go pass.

Positive attitude- look to move forward where possible

- anticipate rebounds
- move the ball quickly
- make early decisions (e.g. a quick one-two pass)

Support play- e.g. players running from deep areas (timing and angle of run).



Variation of attack- in such a confined space, emphasise the importance of short along the floor passing and quick combination play. However, a well timed long lofted ball to a player who has made a good run from deep helps to keep the defence guessing.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach attacking play in central areas

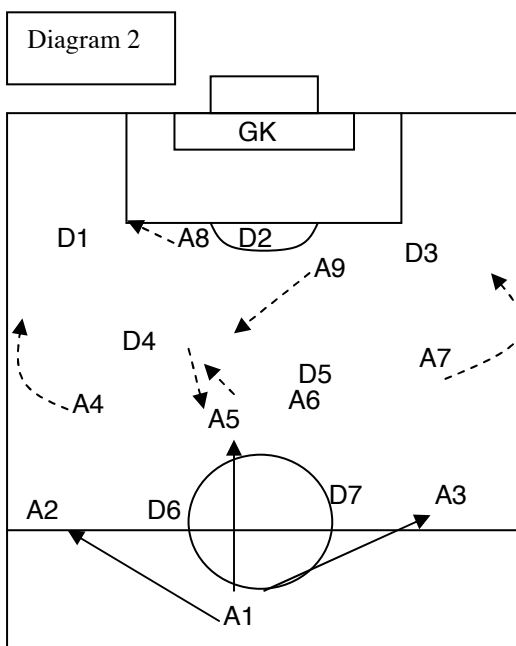
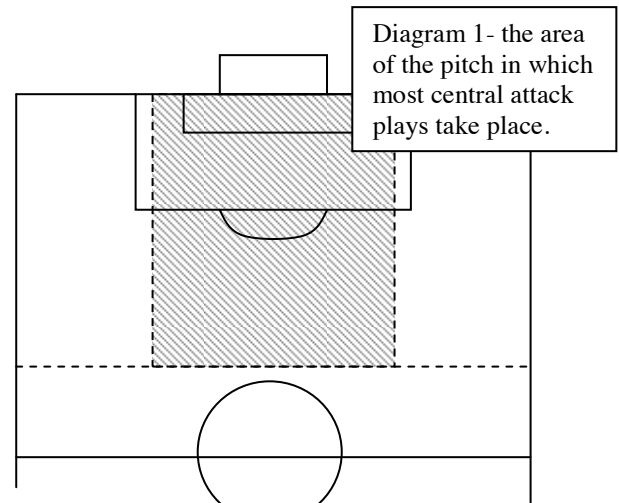
### Organisation

Phase of play over two thirds of a pitch. 8 attackers and 1 feeder on attacking team in a 3-4-2 formation

Defending team has 8 players plus GK (3-2-2 formation)

If defending team win the ball, they have five touches as a team to score through the two targets

Be aware that central attacks usually take place in an area less than the size of the penalty area (as shown by diagram 1) so the coach should concentrate on attacks in this area.



START: A1 passes the ball to A2 or A3 (or can pass centrally to one of the midfield attackers like A5 - see diagram 2).

The attacking team then look to combine to attack in the central areas.

### Key Factors

Create space- e.g. check away and back again to lose marker (e.g. A5 in diagram 2). Centre forwards do diagonal runs to lose markers. Wide players move wide to allow space for central players to operate, e.g. A4 and A7 move to the wings in diagram 2)

Attempt to create space in behind defence e.g. A9 drops deep whilst A8 goes in behind in diagram 2.

Diagonal runs e.g. centre forwards run across the line of the defence to drag them out of position.

Receive the ball on the half turn in order to go forward.

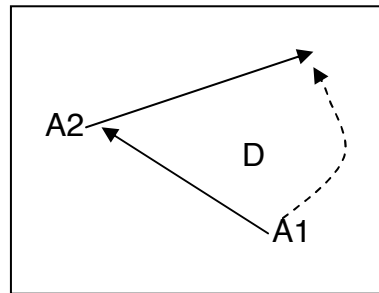
Be positive- attack with momentum

Commit defenders by:

- pass the ball past the defender
- wall pass to move into space behind defender (see diagram 3)

- Dribble the ball past the defender
- Shoot for goal past the defender.

Diagram 3- an example of a wall pass to get around a defender



End product- shots on target. Encourage attackers to have shots

Vary the type of passing - long balls in the air to be flicked on (e.g. A1 passes ball in the air to A9 in diagram 4)

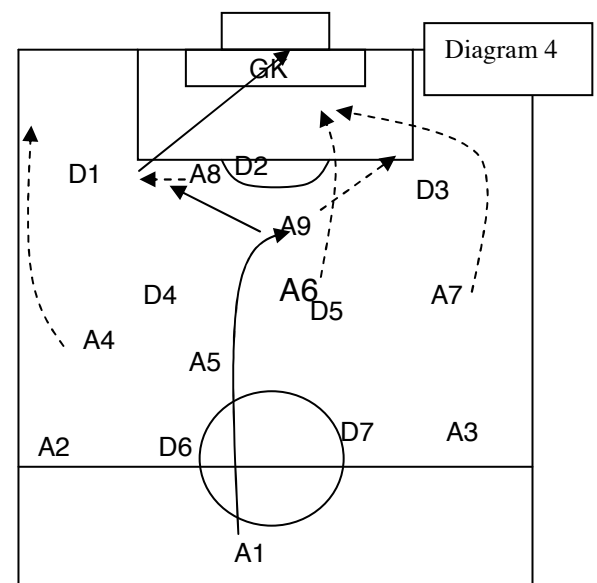
- short balls played in between the defensive line and the D midfielders
- high balls played into space behind
- low ball played into space behind

Take risks- try to be inventive (especially if the defending team are playing deep and being very compact.) Encourage dummies and takeovers.

Quick play around the penalty box- need for quick feet and early decisions. Any delay in the momentum of the attack will assist the defenders.

Wide players make runs from wide areas (e.g. for flick on or balls behind the defence- see A7 in diagram 4.)

Support play from central midfielders running from deep to help attackers (e.g. for the attackers to set the ball for central midfielders to take a shot).



**HINT-** Whilst this session focuses on central attacking play, try to be realistic. It will be impossible to go straight down the middle every time. Sometimes the ball will need to go into wide areas if only to drag defenders out of position and for a new central attack to build up.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach attacking after gaining possession in the middle third

### Organisation

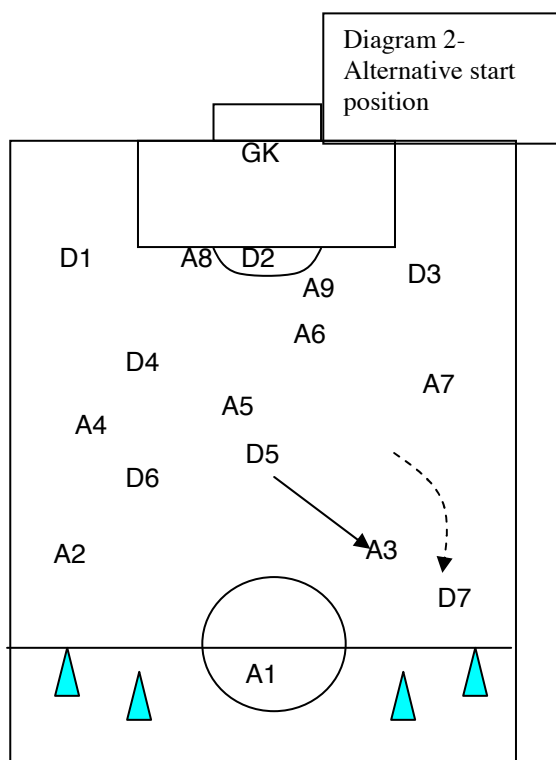
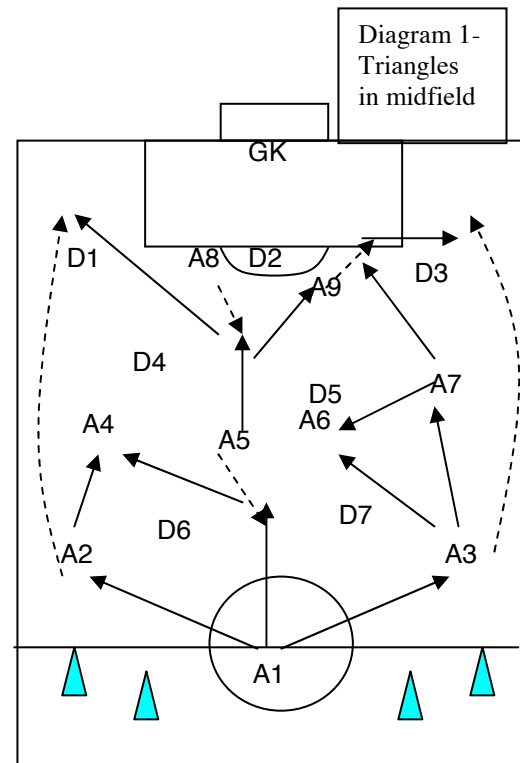
Phase of play over two thirds of a pitch. 8 attackers and 1 feeder on attacking team in a 3-4-2 formation  
Defending team has 8 players plus GK (3-2-2 formation)

If defending team win the ball, they have five touches as a team to score through the two mini goals.

**START:** A1 passes the ball to A2 or A3 (or can pass centrally to one of the midfield attackers like A5).

Alternative start position- defender D5 attempts to pass to D7 who has made a run, but the pass is intercepted by A3. (see diagram 2)

The attacking team then look to combine to attack in the central areas.



### Key Factors

Create space- e.g. A5 check away and back again to lose marker. Centre midfielders must then have options both in front and wide of him. Therefore centre forwards do diagonal runs to lose markers.

Wide players move wide to allow space for central players to operate, e.g. A4 and A7 move to the wings.

Receive the ball on the half turn in order to go forward.

Attempt to utilise space in between defence and midfield e.g. A8 drops deep whilst A9 goes in behind the defence in diagram 1 above

Combination play in midfield- quality of short range passing and movement in triangles to keep the ball (see diagram 1 above) especially if opposition play deep and compact in front of you.

BUT: Recognise opportunities for a speed attack- e.g. if opposition have the ball and give the ball away or are drawn out of position, can you attack quickly and exploit space they have left behind?

Support play from full backs making overlap runs to create an overload up front.

Commit defenders by:

- pass the ball past the defender
- wall pass to move into space behind defender
- Dribble the ball past the defender
- Shoot for goal past the defender.

End product- shots on target. Encourage attackers to have shots

Vary the type of passing - long balls in the air to be flicked on

- short balls played in between the defensive line and the D midfielders
- high balls played into space behind
- low ball played into space behind

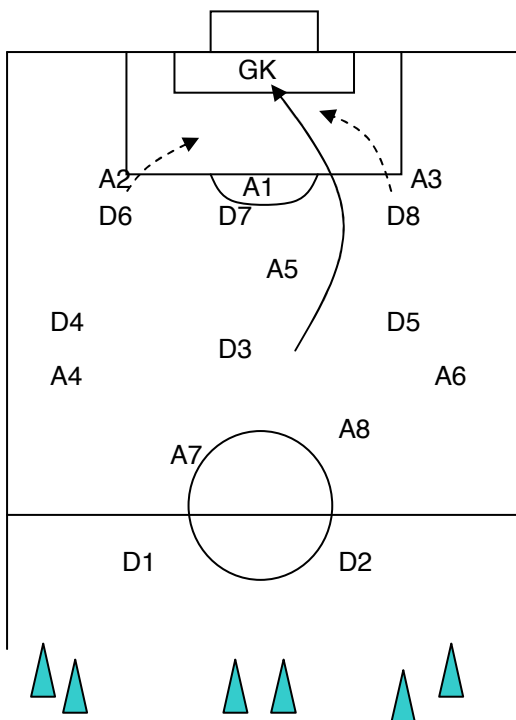
SUMMARY- In this session the attacking players need to be positive and attempt to attack space where appropriate. However, it is important not to force the play and at times the attackers will have to build up patiently until the correct moment to play a killer pass becomes available. It is imperative that the wide players and forwards are constantly making themselves available for the central midfielders to pass to.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach attacking quickly from the goalkeeper

### Organisation

Phase of play over two thirds of a pitch. 8 attackers and GK on one team playing down pitch. They must score through the three mini goals at the bottom of the pitch. The defending team have 8 players and play up pitch in a 2-3-3 formation. They attempt to score in the main goal.

Diagram 1- start position as the GK takes possession



Trigger action- as soon as GK has taken firm possession of ball, this is the signal for the full backs A2 and A3 to go wide and call for the GK to throw out. Wingers A4 and A6 should also move out wide.

Centre forwards push forward in anticipation of a long kick.

b) as soon as the GK has released the ball (diagram 2)

Early decision making: pass or run with ball (attack space with a positive attitude)

Support play-. Early and fast movement of players into advanced and wide support positions.

START: D3 plays a misplaced pass from midfield to the GK. The two Defensive forwards (D6 and D8) run towards the GK as if trying to chase down the ball. The GK then throws out to either full back.

START 2- as above but the GK kicks or throws out to whoever is in the best position. (free play).

### Key Factors

a) as the Goal keeper takes possession (Diagram 1)

Defence stay compact to make safe the central area

Composure of Goalkeeper- watch ball and make sure you have it safely in your hands before looking up to make a quick throw or kick.

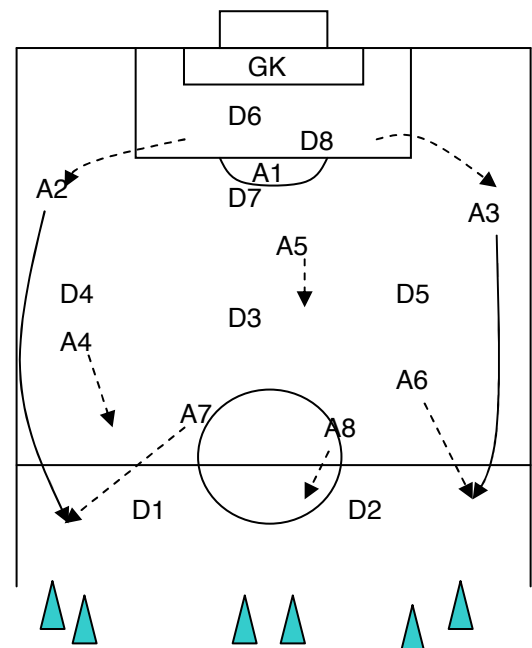


Diagram 2- attacking once GK has released the ball.



Passing technique- quality of pass

Variety e.g. short pass, or long to cover ground quickly..

Attempt to commit defenders

End product- score through mini goals (central and wide areas)

GK comes towards edge of 18 yard box as defence pushes up.

End product- shots on target. Encourage attackers to have shots

Vary the type of passing - long balls in the air to be flicked on)

- short balls played in between the defensive line and the D midfielders
- high balls played into space behind
- low ball played into space behind

Take risks- try to be inventive (especially if the defending team are playing deep and being very compact.) Encourage dummies and takeovers.

Support play from central midfielders running from deep to help attackers (e.g. for the attackers to set the ball for central midfielders to take a shot).

HINT- Be sure that the GK varies the type of feed as he receives the ball at the start, e.g. short and long kicks or throws. Avoid the situation where the two full backs are constantly picking up the ball on the edge of their penalty area. This is unrealistic to a game situation as the defence would push much further forward.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to improve combination play in the final third

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7)

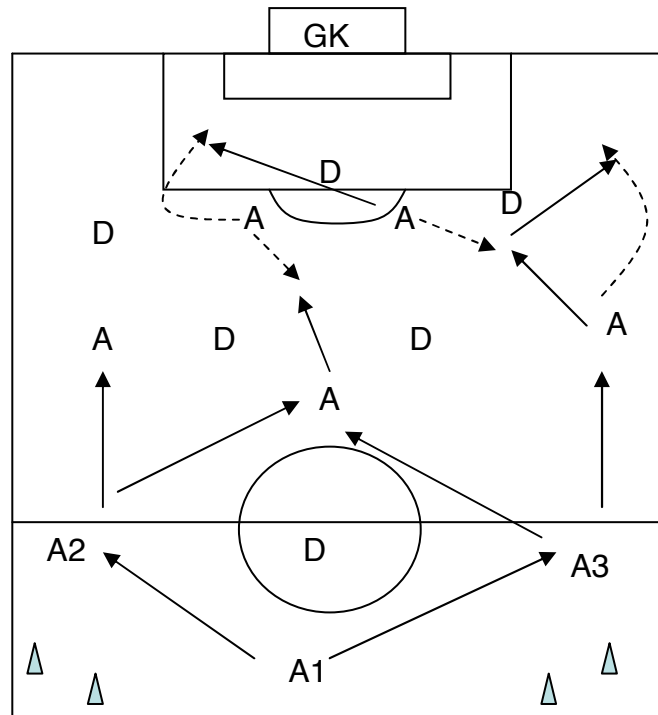
Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3-3-2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder). Defending team start in a 3-2-1 formation plus the GK.

START- A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players to get to the final third.

If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### Key Factors

Movement of midfielders and centre forwards to create space- interchange of positions. The diagram above shows a range of movement options.



Positive attitude of A2 and A3 to get the ball forward to players further up field.

Range of passing options – short ball to feet of front players who have dropped deep

- Long ball over the top for forwards to run on to
- to wide players who must attempt to cross or combine with forwards.

Type of pass- high ball for heading or low ball into feet- play to the strengths/ attributes of the attackers you have available.

Quality of passing- recognising the moment to pass based on movement of forwards.

Clever combination play- use of flicks, dummies and turns.

Do not force play- keep hold of ball until opportunities arise to exploit space.

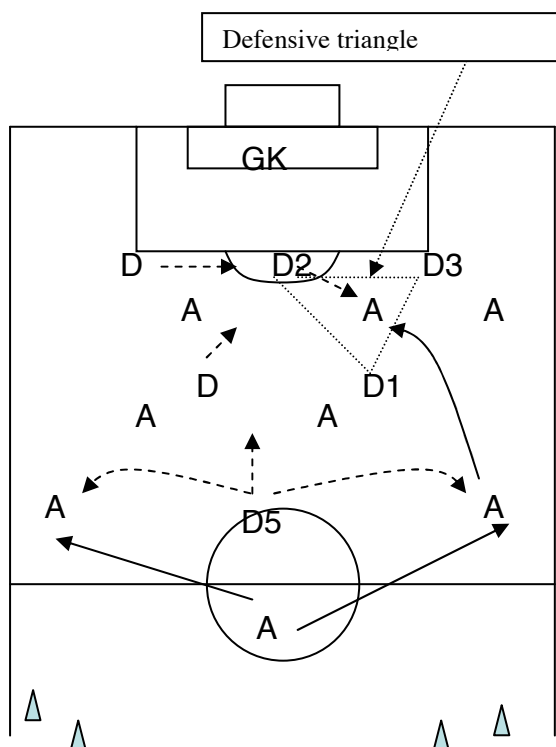
End product- get shots on target- test the keeper.

### Progressions

Introduce a further defender to make more difficult for attacking team

Attacking team has to perform a set number of passes before being allowed to shoot

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending in the defending third



### Organisation

Phase of Play (8 v 7). Defenders line up in a 3-2-1 formation plus the GK. Attackers line up as a 3-2-3 including the feeder. **START-** Feeder feeds the ball out to A1 or A2 who have two touches to play forward to attackers as the first ball. Feeder can join in play. If defenders win the ball, they have 5 touches as a team to score through the two mini goals.

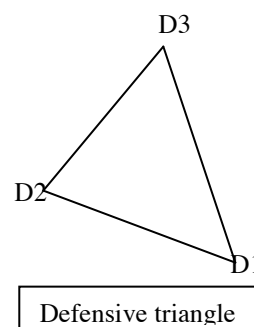
### Key Factors

Pressure- Nearest player to the ball, e.g. D5 closes down attacking full backs.  
 Low body position and side on positioning  
 Adjust speed  
 Body shape- show inside to where there are more players to help  
 Stay on your feet

Can I intercept safely? Be patient.

Cover as a team (defending triangles) to give support in front behind and to the side, e.g. if D1 is beaten, D2 and D3 support and compact the play. Maximum of 15 to 20 yards distance between players in the defending triangle.

Decisions- do I mark the player or space? There are situations where a player does not need to mark the player directly but can position himself so that he makes play compact and blocks off space whilst still being able to close down the attacking player.



If marking the player, get tight and try to prevent the player from turning.

Defending as units to cover central areas- If ball is played out wide, the opposite full back shuffles across to cover the central areas

Tracking- opponents' movement off the ball- judge how far we need to track back. Keep within the guiding triangle (15 to 20 yards maximum)

Play the offside system- don't get too deep. Unless attackers are very fast in which case one of the defending players sweeps and clears up behind the defence (i.e. they don't get caught square).

Communication- clear, concise and early. Determination- be first to win headers/ ball in the air.

**HINT-** As we are focusing on defending the defending third, the D players should not pressure too high up the pitch. Instead they are trying to compact play deep in their own half.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending to prevent opponents playing the ball forward

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -2 formation plus GK.

Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation.

**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. (see diagram 1)

If defending team wins the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

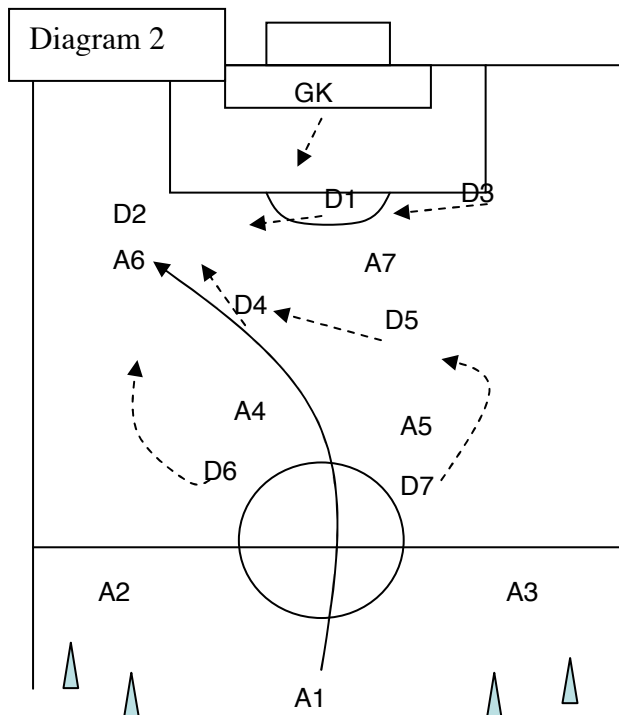
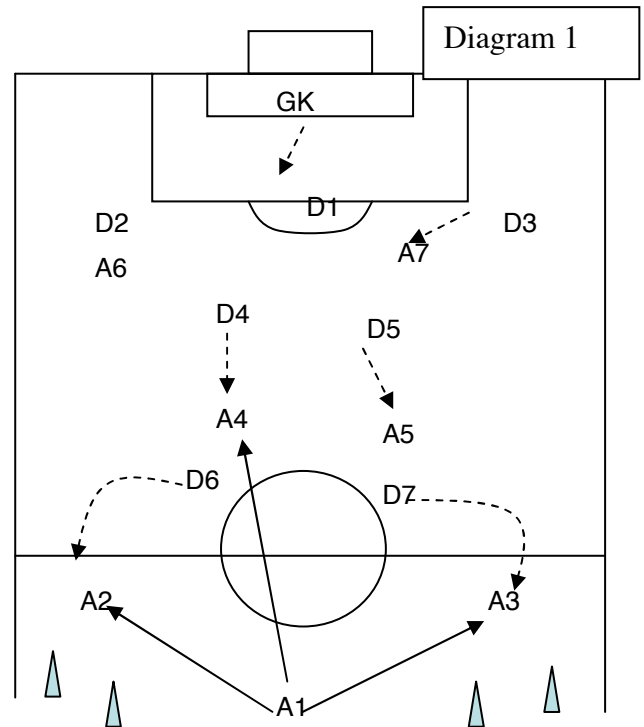
**Progression-** Feeder A1 plays the ball directly into front players and defenders must prevent ball being played further forward (see diagram 2).

### Key Factors

Nearest player to the ball.

Close down the ball early- make up ground as the ball travels

Curve the run to narrow the angle for the attacking player to play forward, e.g. D6 (diagram1)



Slow down on approach and tackle side on. Can I intercept? If not, stay on your feet.

Prevent opponents from turning. In diagram1, D4 and D5 close down A4 and A5 as ball is played to them.

Tracking and recovery runs.

Support- first defender closes down, second defender offers support and cover – see the player, see the ball, see the goal.

Similarly, if the ball goes out wide, the back three shuffle across as a unit and one of the full backs becomes a centre back (see diagram 2).

If the ball is played forward, can we win the second ball or force play backwards?

If the ball is played long (e.g. in diagram 2), midfield and forwards drop and try to get behind the ball to close down attackers. Win headers in the air- prevent flick-ons or knock downs.

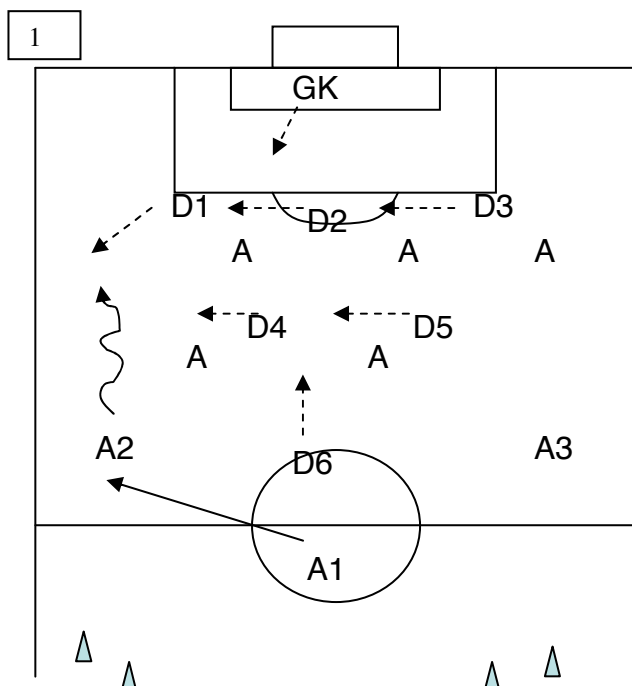
GK sweeps up behind the defence.

**HINT-** this session requires the defending team to start defending from the front. BUT do not just focus on the front D players. If the ball is played forward, the other defensive units must work to stop it being played forward further.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending the defending third from wide play.

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -1 formation plus GK. Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation in order to be able to exploit wide areas.



**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. Encourage them to try to attack using the wings to create as many opportunities as possible for the defending team to defend the wide defensive third. Get attacking team to alternate wings.

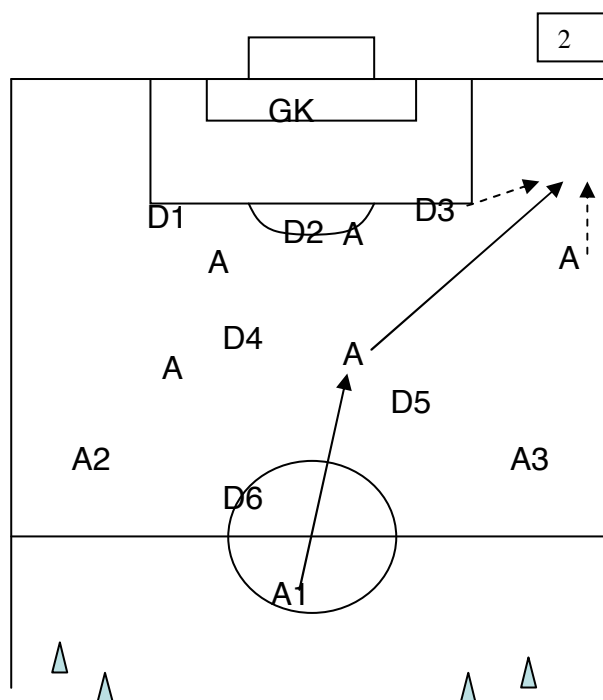
If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### Key Factors

- As a coach, affect the thinking of the full back:
  - speed of approach
  - angle of approach
  - show him outside to isolate him (unless winger is particularly quick or tricky in which case show him inside where others can help)

- concentrate on ball
- feint to tackle- get the winger's head down
- stay on your feet
- try to prevent crosses

- Cover positions- nearest player (centre back) move across to support full back and to mark attacking centre forwards (see diagram 1)
- Other players at the back shuffle across to close the gap (e.g. D3). But be ready for any switch to the other wing.
- Support depends on full back's body shape. Is he showing the attacker inside or outside? GK sweeps behind.
- Defending midfielders make compact and watch midfield runners.



**START POSITION 2 –** midfielder plays into nearest forward who plays ball wide behind fullback for a cross (see diagram 2). Full back D3 closes down first. • Watch crosses into box, • Be first to the ball (determination), • No free headers (take responsibility), • Clear (Long/ High/ Wide), • Communication- name on ball; squeeze up as ball is cleared.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending, marking and covering

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -2 formation plus GK.

Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation.

**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. (see diagram 1)

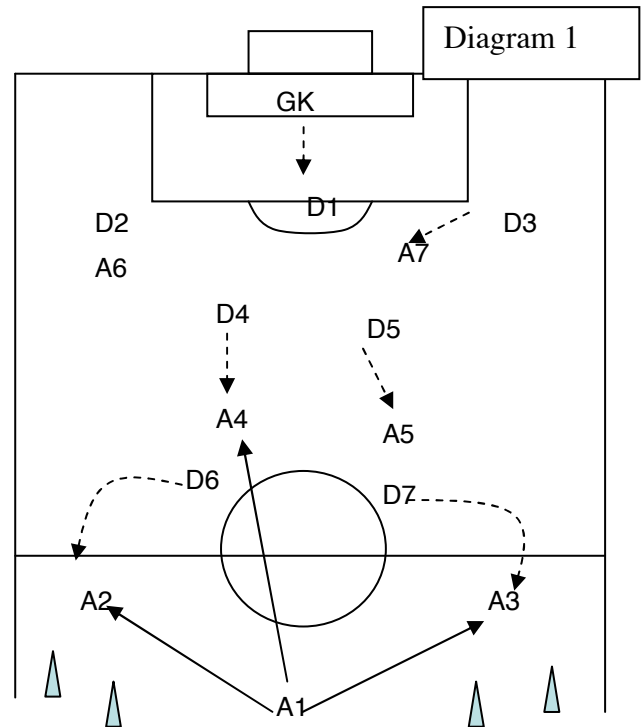
If defending team wins the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

**Progression-** Feeder A1 plays the ball directly into front players and defenders must prevent ball being played further forward (see diagram 2).

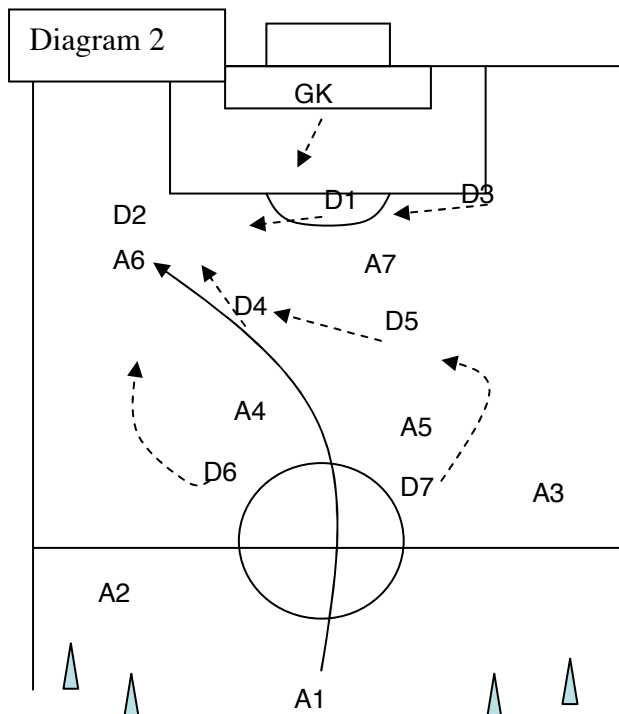
### Key Factors

Nearest player to the ball- communicate so that each player picks up an opponent.

Close down the ball early- make up ground as the ball travels



Curve the run to narrow the angle for the attacking player to play forward, e.g. D6 (diagram1)



Slow down on approach and tackle side on. Can I intercept? If not, stay on your feet.

Prevent opponents from turning. In diagram1, D4 and D5 close down A4 and A5 as ball is played to them. They supply cover

Tracking and recovery runs to prevent opponents getting in behind the defence.

Support- first defender closes down, second defender offers support and cover – see the player, see the ball, see the goal. Defensive triangle.

Similarly, if the ball goes out wide, the back three shuffle across as a unit and one of the full backs becomes a centre back (see diagram 2).

If the ball is played forward, can we win the second ball or force play backwards?

If the ball is played long (e.g. in diagram 2), midfield and forwards drop and try to get behind the ball to

close down attackers. Win headers in the air- prevent flick-ons or knock downs.

GK sweeps up behind the defence.

Defending from crosses- make sure everyone marks a player and attempts to be first to the ball. Get height and distance on clearances.

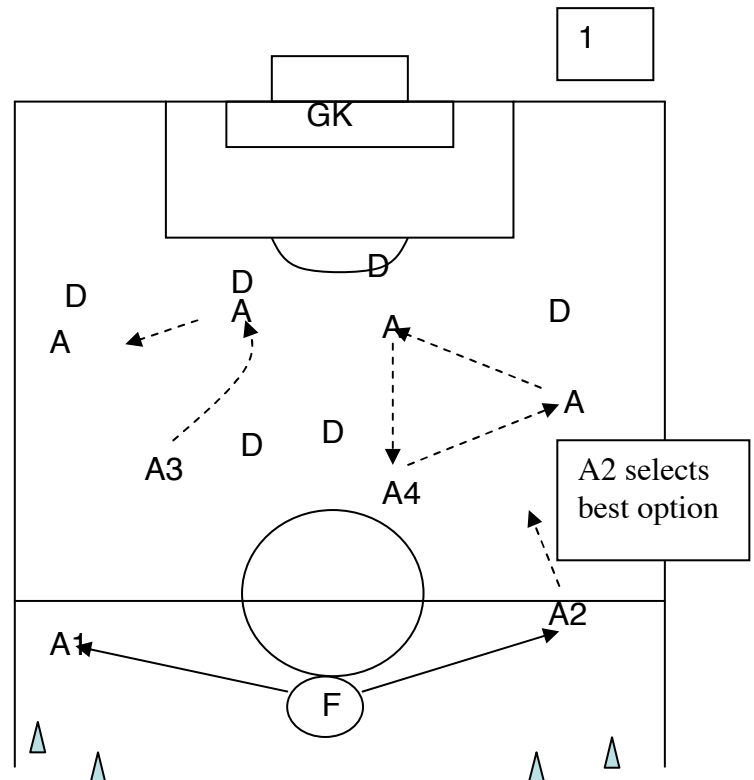
## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team on interchange of positions

### Organisation

Set up field as for phase of play- two thirds of pitch  
Attacking team is overloaded (8 v 7)

START- Feeder stands in or near to centre circle and passes ball to A1 or A2.

Defending team have five touches as a team to score through either of the two mini goals.



### Key Factors

Movement occurs as ball travels to A1 or A2 who then selects the best passing option from the triangular movement that has occurred in front (see diagram 1)

Energy and fast movement- as soon as a player has passed, he should be looking to find a new position to benefit his team.

Movement - timing

- angles
- distance

Communication- early, clear, concise and calm

Passing selection- type of pass- ground or floated pass- depends on type of space created.

Body shape to receive the pass- can we get in a half turn to go forward?

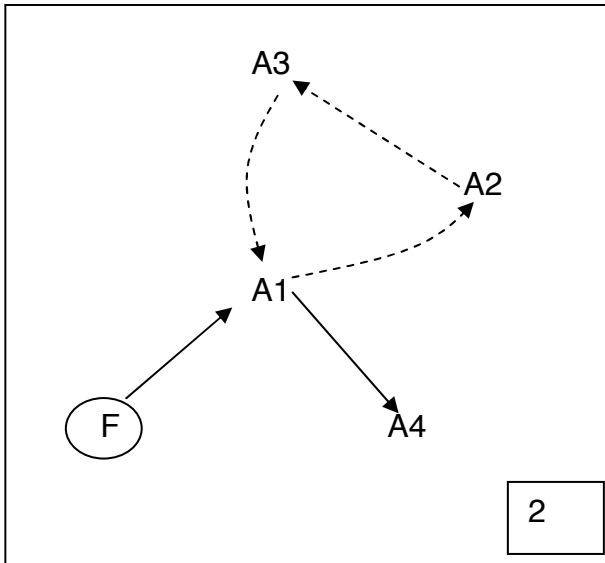
Trigger- ability to interchange in freeplay based on a trigger word or action.

Clever interchange in and around the penalty box- clever movement in order to drag the defending centre backs out of position.

### Progressions

Feeder F may feed direct to A3 or A4 who must play back to A1 or A2.  
As the return pass is made, the movement takes place.

### Variations on this theme



Feeder F plays into A1 who lays back for A4. Triangular movement takes place. A4 looks to select best option depending on position of defenders etc (see diagram 2)

HINT- with players who have not tried this before, you will need to actively demonstrate where each of the players in the triangle moves to and at what time.

### Example of an interchange of position during freeplay

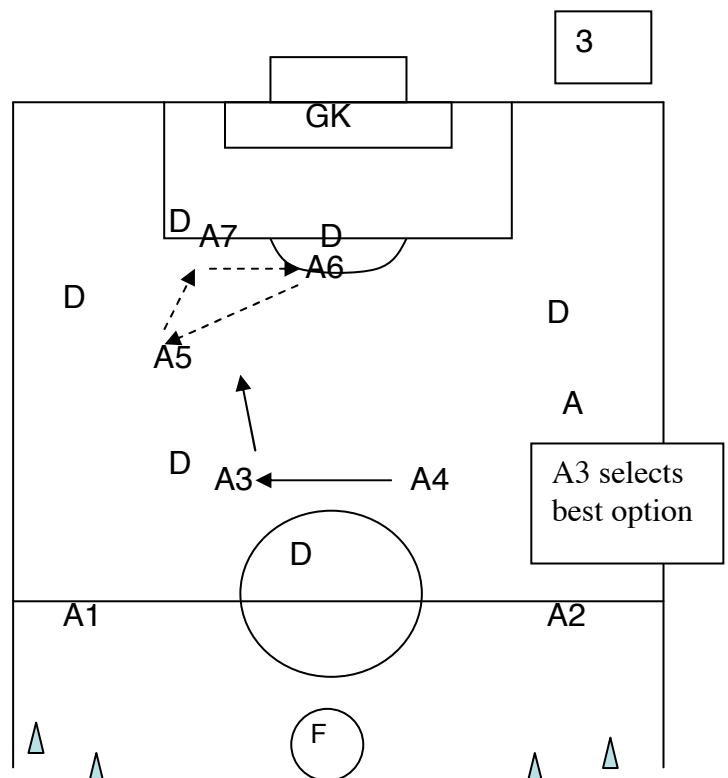
In freeplay, A4 picks up the ball and then decides to pass a crossfield ball to A3 (see diagram 3)

As that ball is passed, an interchange occurs among the left winger A5 and the two forwards (A6 and A7).

A3 selects the best option.

The aim is to confuse the two centre backs and draw them out of position.

HINT- if interchange has not led to a better passing option than before, encourage A's to keep the ball and set up an interchange elsewhere.





## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach passing to feet

### Organisation

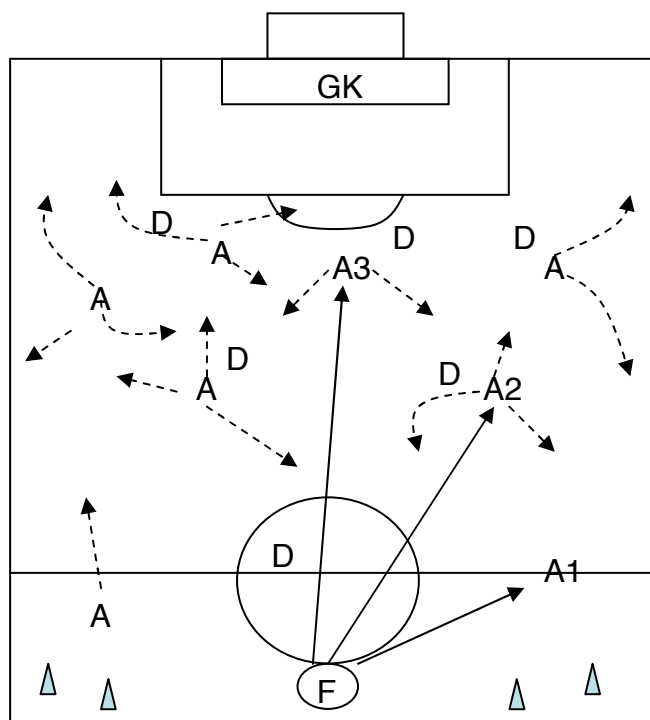
Phase of play: 8 attackers and 1 feeder on attacking team

Defending team has 7 players plus GK.

If defending team win the ball, they have five touches as a team to score through the two targets

START- Coach controls the feed to start with and then allows free play.

Feeder 'F' plays the ball out to A1 or A2 or A3. (or alternate to other side of pitch).



### Key Factors

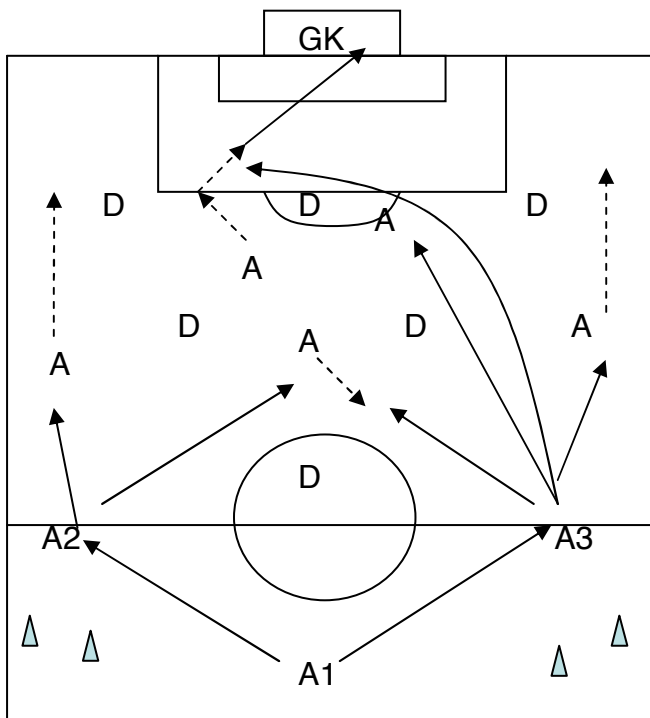
- Movement as an individual- get away from the defender
  - angled runs and open body position
- Movement as a team- timing of run
  - angle
  - distance
  - Try to shift defenders out of positions.
- Secondary movement- when one player has received the ball, the movement all starts again. Support in front, behind and to the side of the player in possession.
- Passing technique of all players- on the floor (to feet)
  - accuracy
  - pace of pass
  - one touch passing? (where appropriate)
- Passing selection- select best option based on movement around you.
- Communication- clear, concise and at the right times.
- Can we pass forward?- If not pass to the nearest player who can allow us to go forward
- Positive attitude- this session is not just about keeping possession! Try to get an end product, e.g. a shot on target.
- Clever play when passing in final third.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to improve shooting in the final third

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7)

Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3-3-2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder)



Defending team start in a 3– 2-1 formation plus the GK.

START- A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players to get to the final third.

If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

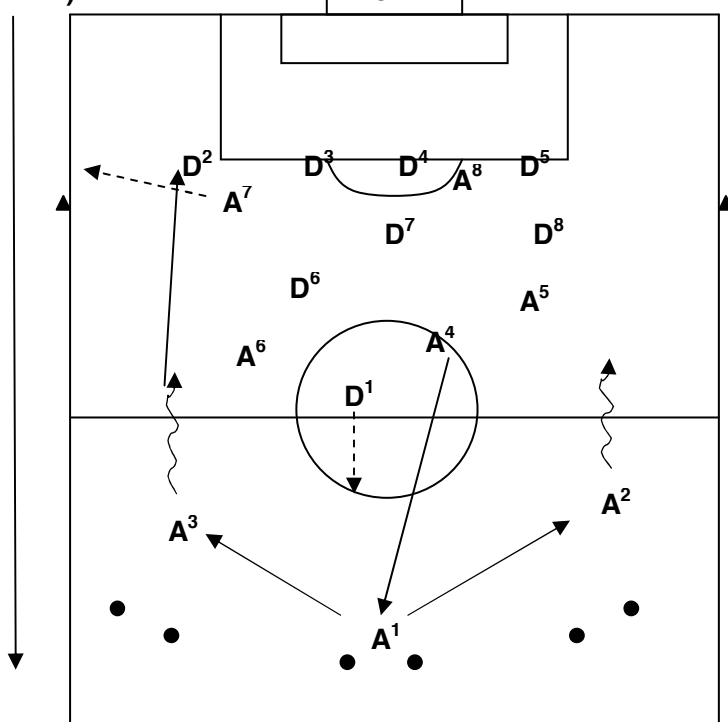
### Key Factors

- Front players and midfield movement to create space
  - diagonal runs (forward players interchange positions)
  - overlaps with wide players
- OR if we can't go wide, can one attacker drop deep to receive the ball?
- Quality of passing into front players from midfield- observe and recognise the moment to pass.
- Positive attitude- take early opportunities to shoot on half turn?
- Variety of shot (round, through and over)
- Technique- head over the ball, aim for accuracy before power. Hit the target.
- Also quality of finishing from crosses.
- Support from midfield players and rebounds.
- Encourage clever play- tricks, feints and dummies in final third to create an opening.
- BUT- don't force play- encourage Attackers to keep ball until a shooting opportunity arises.

**Session Aim-** In a phase of play, coach one team to attack quickly after gaining possession in the defending third

Coach Defending team

A)



**Organisation-** two thirds of pitch with three goals for the defending/ counter- attacking team to score through and the defending third marked with cones. Only coach the defending team. Attacking team only allowed 6 touches (after format of play has been established).

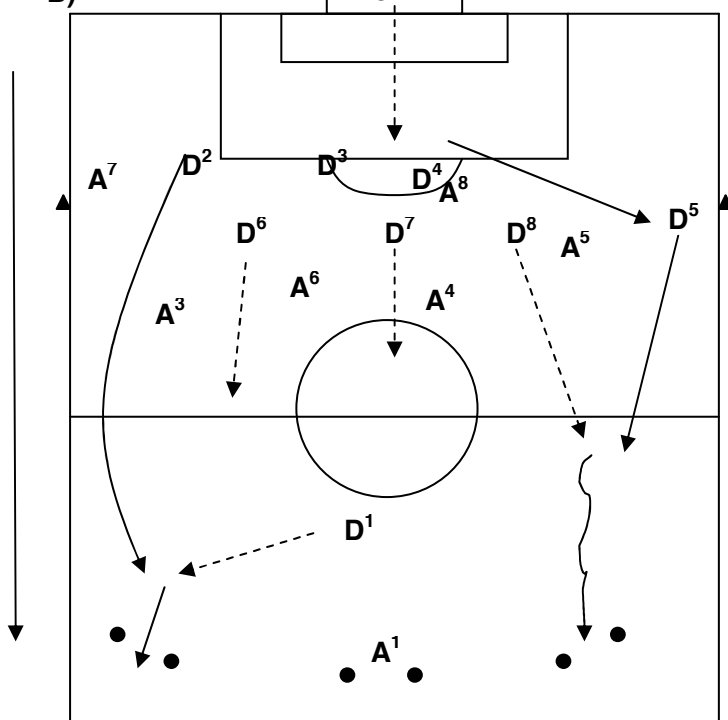
**Defending team formation:** GK: 4:3:1 (9 players total)

**Attacking team formation:** 3:3:2 (8 players total)

**Start-** Position defenders on edge of 18 yard box. A<sup>4</sup> lays the ball to A<sup>1</sup> and D<sup>1</sup> closes down. A<sup>1</sup> then plays out to A<sup>3</sup> who attempts a pass to A<sup>7</sup> who has made a run out wide. This is then intercepted by D<sup>2</sup> (see diagram A) who can look to counter-attack, e.g. curl a low ball to D<sup>1</sup> who can run it through the goal (see diagram B). Repeat on other side.

Coach Defending team

B)



**Key Factors**

**a) When attacking team have ball:**

Compactness- adopt deep and fairly central positions behind the ball to make play predictable (see diagram A)

Can I intercept? (e.g. D<sup>2</sup> or D<sup>6</sup>)

**b) As soon as ball is won back:**

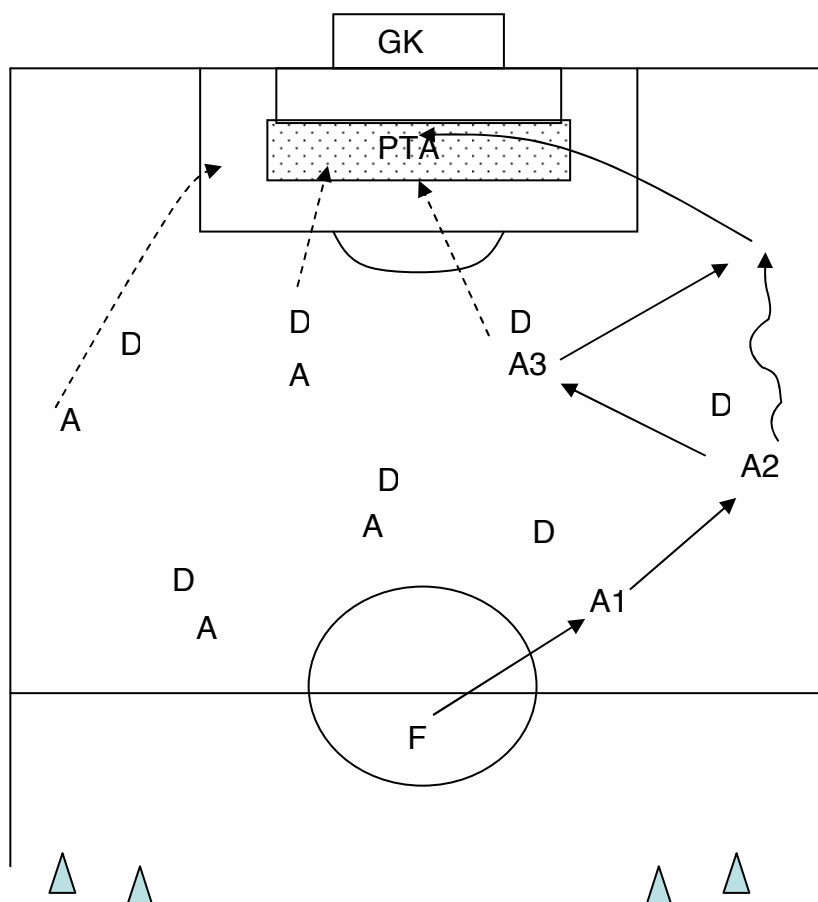
Early decision making: pass or run with ball (positive attitude)  
Support play- triggered by the ball being won back. Early and fast movement of players into advanced and wide support positions (see diagram B)

Passing technique- quality of pass  
Variety e.g. short pass, or long to cover ground quickly.

End product- score through mini goals (central and wide areas)  
As ball is won back, defending players behind play squeeze in to make compact whilst in front the players go wide and long. GK comes towards edge of 18 yard box.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to improve crossing and finishing

### Organisation



Start- Feeder F passes to A1 who takes a touch out of feet and passes to A2. A2 must attempt to cross into area marked Prime target Area (PTA). This is the area of the penalty area where crosses are generally most effective. Other attackers attempt to finish from crosses into the box.

If defenders win back ball, they have five touches as a team to play ball back to the feeder or score a goal by passing/ dribbling through the two mini goals.

### Key Factors

- A2s initial movement to make space for himself
- A2s body shape to receive (open body in order to go forward on first touch)

- A2s attitude to attack- 1<sup>st</sup> touch be positive!
- Technique and skills to beat opponent.
- Quality of cross into PTA
- Attackers movement –timing/ shape plus feints and dummies
- Winger/ midfielder's movement into positions of anticipation
- Quality of finishing- direction and contact.
- Re- adjustment for over hit cross- opposite winger must attempt to get into penalty box
- Work from both sides.
- Variation of crosses which attackers must react to (near post, far post and central area)

### Note

If opponent stands off, cross early!

OR A3 gives winger options, e.g. for a one-two pass (see diagram above).

A diagram of a soccer field illustrating player positions and movement vectors. The field is bounded by a top line, a bottom line, and a center line. A goal is located at the top center, labeled 'GK'. A circle representing the center of the field is labeled 'F'. Seven players are represented by points labeled A1 through A7. Movement vectors are shown as arrows originating from each player: A1 points towards the right side; A2 points towards the top right; A3 points towards the top left; A4 points towards the left side; A5 points towards the top left; A6 points towards the top right; A7 points towards the goal. Dashed lines connect A7 to the goal and A1 to the right side. Wavy lines labeled 'D' are positioned along the top and right boundaries. Four blue triangles are located at the bottom of the field.

If defenders win back ball, they have five touches as a team to play ball back to the feeder or score a goal by passing/ dribbling through the two mini goals.

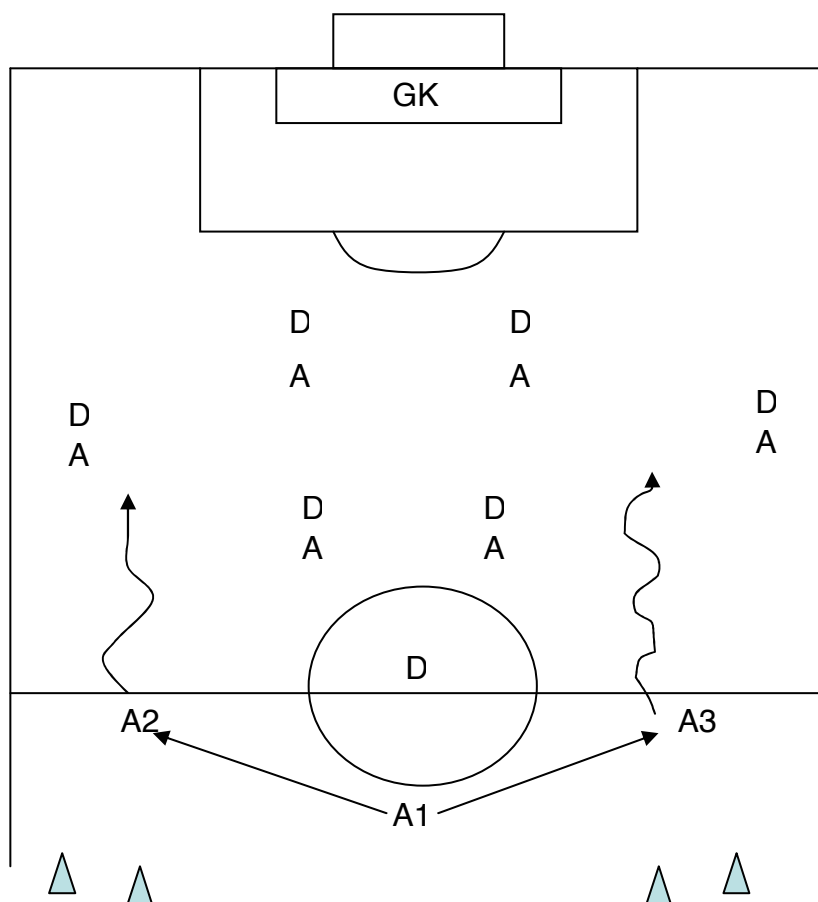
- A2s initial movement to make space for himself (pull away and check back)
- A2s body shape to receive (open body in order to go forward on first touch)

- A2s attitude to attack- 1<sup>st</sup> touch be positive and attack space with pace!
- Technique and skills to beat opponent.
- Quality of cross into penalty area.
- Attackers movement –timing/ shape plus feints and dummies
- Winger/ midfielder's movement into positions of anticipation
- Quality of finishing- direction and contact (e.g. A7 gets into box)
- Re- adjustment for over hit cross- opposite winger must attempt to get into penalty box
- Work from both sides – dribble to cross the ball, or play the ball across field to create space to dribble.
- Variation of crosses which attackers must react to (near post, far post and central area)
- If we can't go wide, play down the middle and then go wide. Wingers can attack and dribble the ball in the final third.
- Look for overlaps- e.g. A1 gets wide of A2 and is able to dribble after an overlap.

OR A3 gives winger options, e.g. for a one-two pass (see diagram above).

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to improve running with the ball

### Organisation



Start position- A1 passes to either A2 or A3 who must attempt to run with the ball. A1 gives support for a return pass. Can s/he run the ball?

Defenders (D's) have only five touches as a team when they win the ball. They must attempt to score by passing/ dribbling through either of the two mini goals.

Make the game realistic by ensuring that Defenders do not get too deep.

### Key Factors

- Positive attitude to attack the space ahead at speed.
- First Touch- out of feet and in the direction of run
- Technique – contact with laces of the boot as player gets into his/her stride.
- head up to observe
- Speed of execution
- Decision at appropriate time
  - Dribble (can I commit an opponent)
  - Pass (can I commit an opponent before passing)
  - Shoot
- Support / movement of the other players (in front, behind and square).
- Dribble to switch play and switch play to allow others to dribble, i.e. if one player cannot dribble as they have several opponents in front of them, encourage them to switch across the pitch to another player who can then dribble forward (and vice versa)

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach players on one team on the use of diagonal runs

### **Organisation**

Phase of play (8 V 7)

Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3- 3 -2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder).

Defending team start in a 3- 2-1 formation plus the GK.

**START-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players.

If defending team wins the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### **Key Factors**

The purpose of a diagonal run is to create space or to exploit space already created. There are two types of diagonal run:

- a) inside to outside (see the run of A4 in diagram 1)
- b) outside to inside (see the run of A5 in diagram 1)

Variety of run- from in front of the ball OR from behind the ball in support. Alternatively a player running backwards to get clear of a defender and receive with his back to goal (e.g. player A7 in diagram 1)

Timing and pace of run- -don't go too early

Distance of run- some diagonal runs are 10- 15 yards and involve a short sprint whereas others may be 40 to 50 yards across the pitch (e.g. in a counter-attack).

Quality of pass from players like A2 and A3.

Awareness of forward player's runs- be able to spot when a player wants the ball and when s/he is trying to create space for someone else.

Players' decisions- when to pass to a running player and when to dribble diagonally to exploit space.

Watch the offside trap- don't run too early!

### **Scenarios**

Here are some scenarios involving the use of diagonal runs that could occur in a phase of play. To avoid confusion, only the players closely involved have been labelled on the diagrams.

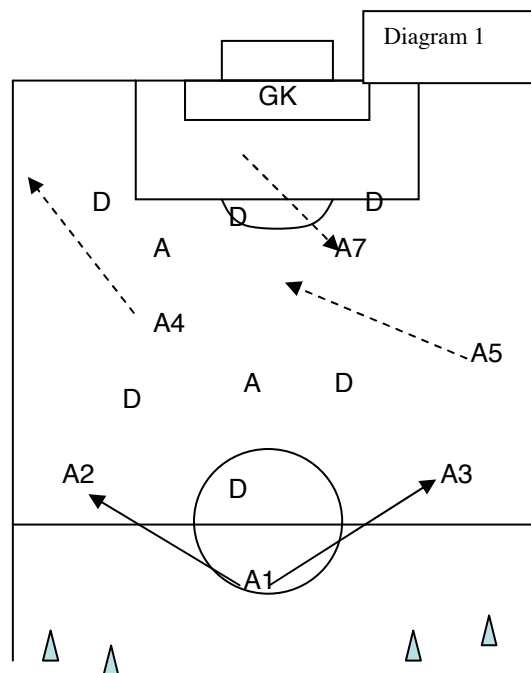
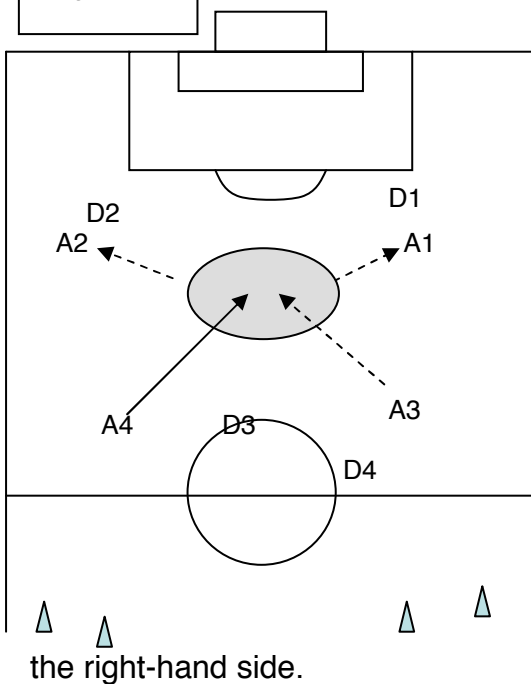


Diagram 2

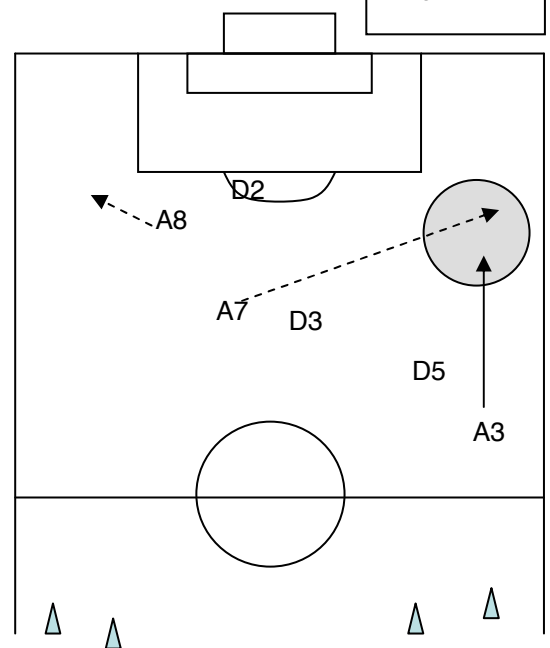


In diagram 2, A1 and A2 have made diagonal runs in opposite directions called 'split runs' because they split the two central defenders D1 and D2. This then creates space for either A3 to make a diagonal run into the space marked by a circle and receive from D4 OR for D4 to dribble into the space and exploit it for himself with the ball. We assume that defenders D3 and D4 have not tracked back.

In Diagram 3, A7 has made a diagonal run into the space behind D3. Note that the run has to be shallow diagonal to avoid A7 getting caught offside.

Meanwhile A8 in Diagram 3 has pulled away in the other direction so that A7 can have space. A8 should anticipate a possible cross coming in from

Diagram 3



In diagram 4, the two forward players, A5 and A6 have made diagonal split runs followed by a second diagonal split run in the opposite direction. This makes it more difficult for the defenders to track their runs.

Player A3 must then pick out the right pass to make use of the runs that A5 and A6 have made.

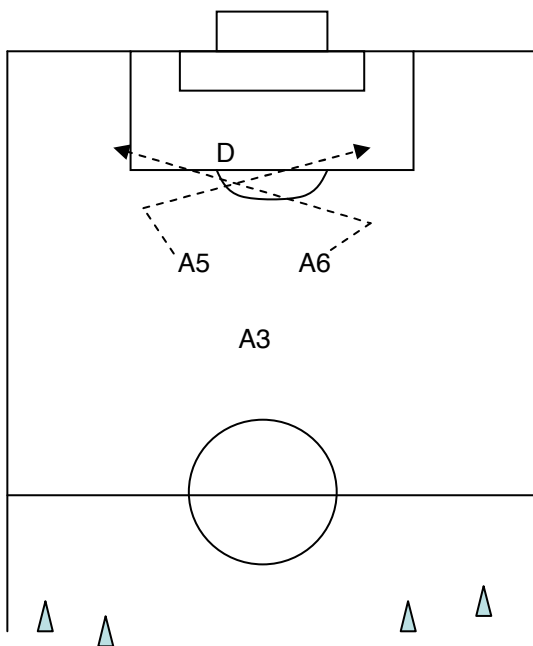


Diagram 4

**HANDY HINT**-please note that not all diagonal runs have to be forwards. You should also coach a forward player on making a diagonal run backwards in order to drop deep and receive the ball.

### **Progressions**

Attacking players can only pass to a player who has made a diagonal run to receive the ball.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to win the ball in midfield situations

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 attackers v 6 defenders).

Attacking team (A's) play in a 3-4 formation plus the GK.

Defenders play in a 1-3-2 formation so that they are outnumbered in midfield. If the defending team win the ball back, they have only 5 touches as a team before they must shoot etc.

START POSITION 1- Midfielder D1 plays a misplaced through ball which goes through to the GK (see diagram 1). The GK can then start play, e.g. by throwing the ball out to the full back.

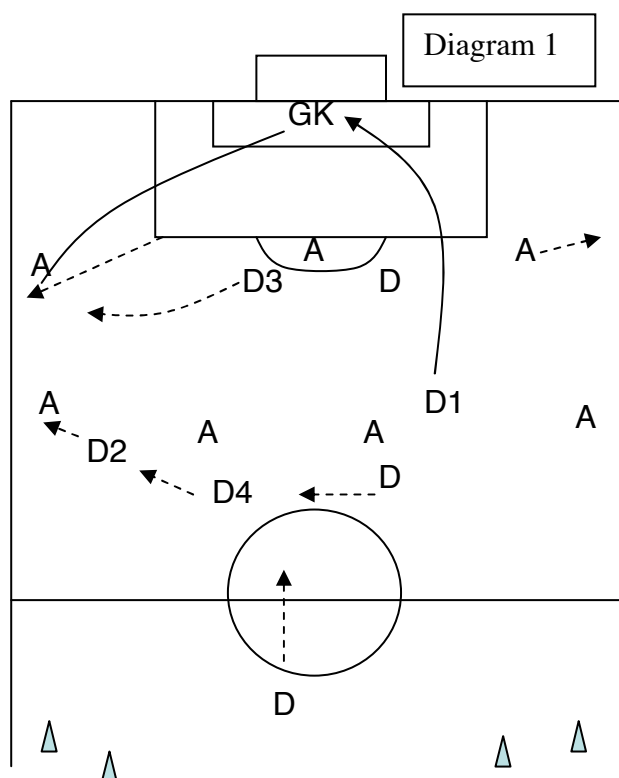
Midfielders then apply pressure.

ALTERNATIVE START POSIITON- GK throws ball out straight to one of his own midfielders allowing the defensive midfield team to apply pressure straight away and win the ball back.

Attacking team attempt to score through mini goals to score points.

### Key Factors

- Pressure from the front- close down quickly (show inside/ outside)
- Nearest player to the ball, other players add defensive support, e.g. D2, D3 and D4 in Diagram 1.
- Prevent attacking players from tuning / passing.
- Compactness- make play predictable
- Can I intercept the ball? Attempt to press the ball early. If not, can I drop?
- Stay on your feet- technique of tackling, patience and timing.
- Communication- work as a team
- Concentration and energy- need the correct focus not to make mistakes.



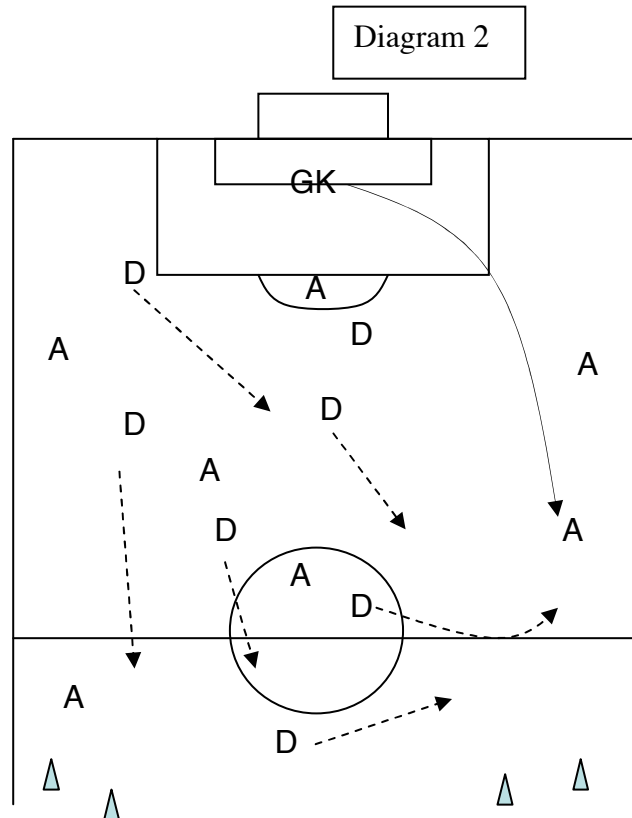
- Use of the ball- once it has been won back, can we use it to make an end product, e.g. a shot on goal?
- Positive aggression, e.g. to win headers and be first to the ball.
- Recover from the wrong side of the ball. Diagram 2 below shows how the defending players run back into a defensive position when the ball is played behind them by the attacking team. This helps to make play more predictable and allows the team to be more compact for winning the ball in midfield.

Diagram 2

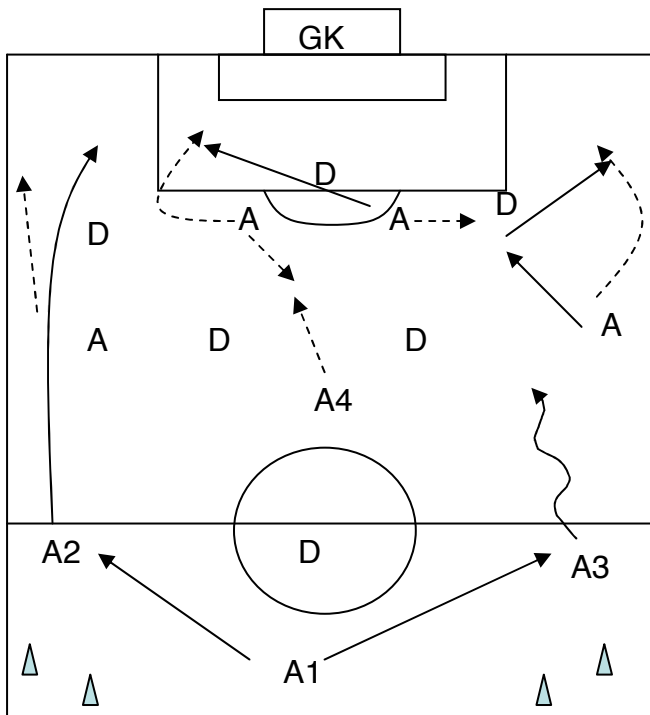
### **Progressions**

- Change start position
- Add players to the defending or attacking team (depending on how well the defending team are coping)

HINT- It is important to use the full two thirds of a pitch for this session so as to stretch the defending midfielders. You may need to force the attacking team to push everyone out beyond the defending third in order to score a goal. Otherwise, the defending team could be tackling people on and around the penalty area most of the time.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach forward runs without the ball



### Organisation

Set up as for a phase of play (8 v 7)  
 Attacking team have 8 players (3-3-2) formation  
 Defending team have 7 players (3-2-1 plus GK)

START- Feeder A1 passes the ball to players A2, A3 or A4 depending on who is in space. These players then look to play forward to the other players who have made forward runs. Feeder A1 looks to support and add cover from behind.

If the defending team win back the ball, they have 5 touches as a team in order to score through the mini goals or to play back to the feeding player.

Condition restarts where the runs will be made; otherwise the situations are unrealistic. Good rehearsal may be required so that the players understand.

### Key Factors

There are two main groups of run that the coach needs to focus on, i.e. runs to create space for other players OR runs to exploit space.

#### **a) Runs to create space for other players:**

Running from in front of the ball: - Inside- out diagonal runs  
 - Outside in diagonal runs

Running from behind the ball:

- Overlap runs
- Diagonal runs

#### **b) Runs to exploit space**

Running from in front of the ball: - Diagonal run across the defender  
 - Diagonal run wrong footing the defender by checking and changing direction  
 - Combination of diagonal pass with diagonal run

Running from behind the ball:

- Overlap run
- Movement from behind the ball into space created by movement in front of the ball

### Additional factors

Quality and timing of passing

Awareness of forward player's runs- be able to spot when a player wants the ball and when s/he is trying to create space for someone else.

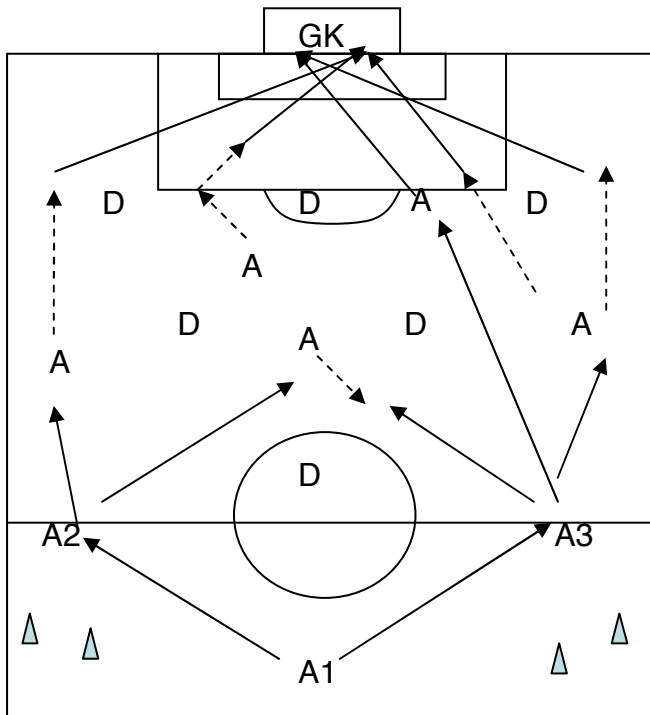
Players' decisions- when to pass to a running player and when to dribble to exploit space. Watch the offside trap- don't run too early!

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach angled shooting

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7)

Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3- 3 -2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder)



Defending team start in a 3– 2-1 formation plus the GK.

START- A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players to get to the final third.

If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### Key Factors

- Front players and midfield movement to create space – diagonal runs (forward players interchange positions) - overlaps with wide players
- Encourage wide players to have shots from wide angles (shoot across the goal)

- Other players must anticipate if keeper spills the ball- look for rebounds.
- Quality of passing into front players from midfield- observe and recognise the moment to pass.
- Positive attitude- take early opportunities to shoot on half turn?
- Variety of shot (round, through and over)
- Technique- head over the ball, aim for accuracy before power. Hit the target.
- Also quality of finishing from crosses.
- Support from midfield players and rebounds.
- Encourage clever play- tricks, feints and dummies in final third to create an opening.
- BUT- don't force play- encourage Attackers to keep ball until a shooting opportunity arises.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team on crossing and finishing

### Organisation

Set up a SSG pitch 50 x 70 yds

Players play 8v8

Work with attackers (A's only)

Wingers encouraged to use the width of the pitch.

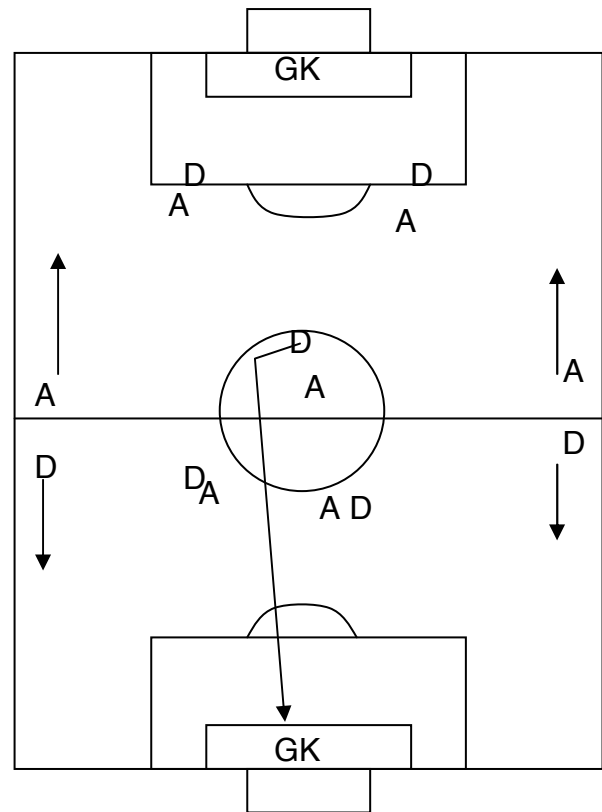
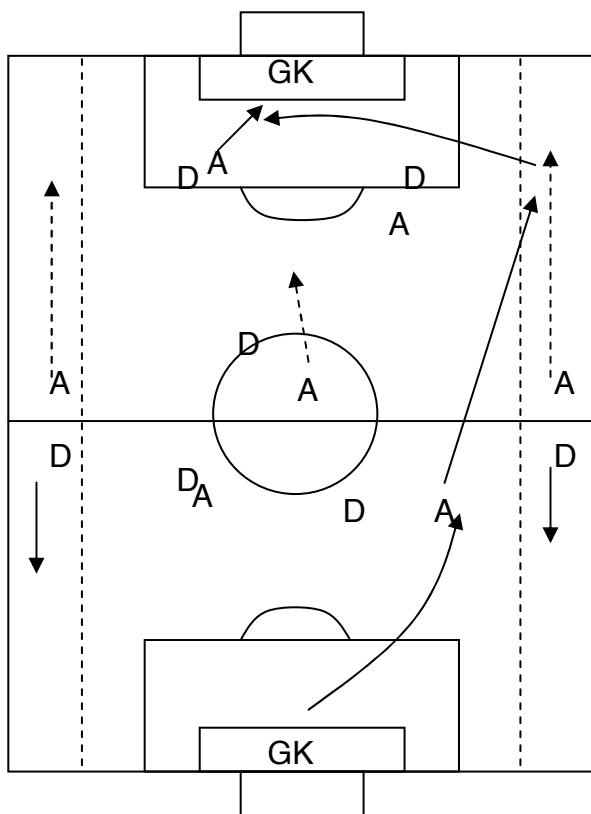
**START-** Defending midfielder passes ball to opposing GK who then plays out to the attacking team (A's)

### Conditions

Players must play to front man before going wide (except in freeplay)

If winger collects ball in own half, s/he must pass or run ball into opposing team's half.

Opposing winger cannot tackle the winger who has the ball at first.



### Key Factors:

- Cross early- one touch if possible
- Quality of delivery- Height
  - Direction
  - Behind defence
  - Pull back (make eye contact?)
- Attackers movement onto cross- it is their job to get on the end of the crosses the winger puts in.- timing and type of run.
- Contact on ball- guide/ power/ direction
- Anticipation – midfielders and opposite wingers ready if ball comes out of the box or travels to the far side.

### Progression

Back players must push up to halfway line

Fullbacks can pressure the cross

Opposing winger can tackle- this encourages the attacking winger to take people on and get the cross in.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team to defend effectively

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8 (50 by 70 yards)

Formation 3 – 2 – 2 for both teams plus GK.

Start: Midfielder D1 plays ball out of feet and passes ball into the opposing GK who in turn may feed any player by hand

Work on defending with team D (defenders)

Progressions- adjust start position (e.g. A1 gives ball away to one of the midfield A's)  
- allow GK to kick ball out.

### Key Factors

Pressure nearest player to the ball (e.g. D2 and D3 press the full backs)

Prevent forward passing

Decision making- Can I close down the final few yards? Can I intercept?  
Slow down on approach. When to press and when to drop.

Technique of tackling- sideways on body position and stay on your feet. Feint to tackle, focus on the ball. Patience and timing

Body shape- low sideways on and decide whether to show inside or outside. Can you direct the attacker towards a supporting defender who can help you?

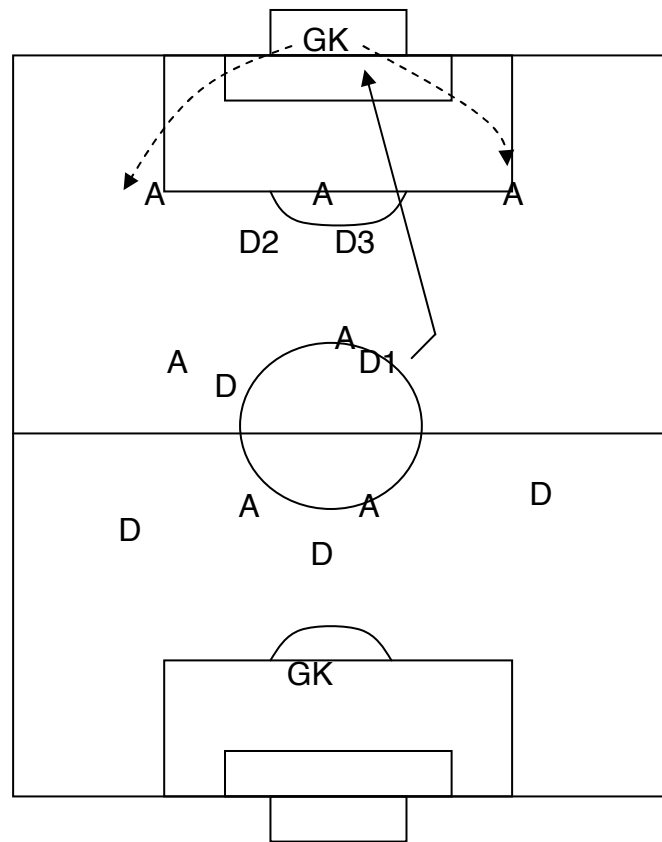
Recover from wrong side of the ball.

Tracking runs

Compactness- make play predictable. Keep to a defensive triangle – see the player  
- see the ball  
- see the goal.

Communication- clear and concise.

**HINT-** It is unlikely that the coach will be able to coach all of the above key factors in any one session, but s/he should try to cover as many as possible depending on what defensive situations arise.





## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team to develop possession to travel forward

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8

Defending team play in a 3-3-1 formation plus GK which is a fairly defensive setup.

Attacking team also play 3-3-1 so that they have to develop play in midfield before being able to go forward.

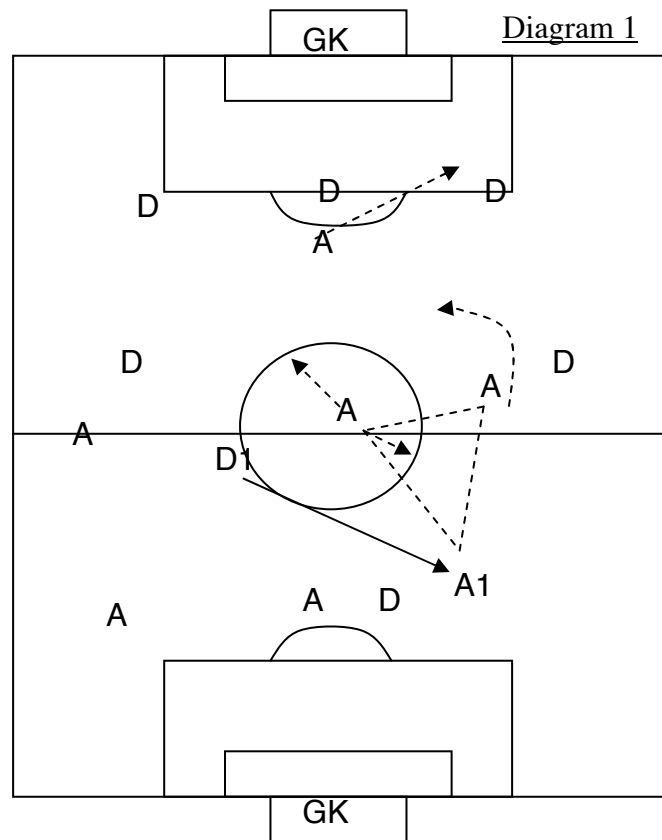
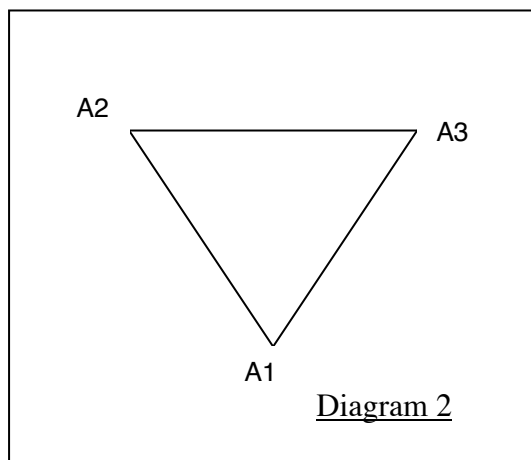
**START:** A1 intercepts a through ball by defending midfielder D1.

A1 then looks to pass the ball to a team mate in the best position.

Continue game, but return to start position when necessary.

### Key Factors

- Support- in front, behind and to the side – angle and distance plus timing of runs.
- Players should attempt to get possession of the ball in midfield or defence before attempting to play forward to the striker. If this is not happening, you could insist that there are three passes as a team before the ball can be played to the forward player.
- Pass and move- use of triangles to keep possession (see diagrams 1 and 2)
- Recognise the correct moment to play the ball forward, e.g. a darting diagonal run from the forward player. Don't force the pass if nothing is on!



- Switching play (if you can't go forward, can you switch play to someone who can pass forward?)
- Technique of shielding the ball and keeping possession. Don't give the ball away cheaply.
- Quality of passing.
- Movement of midfield players into advanced positions in order for play to go forward after a period of possession.



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## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team to improve forward passing

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8

Start: A1 intercepts a through ball by defending midfielder. Defending winger asked to run past as if for ball.

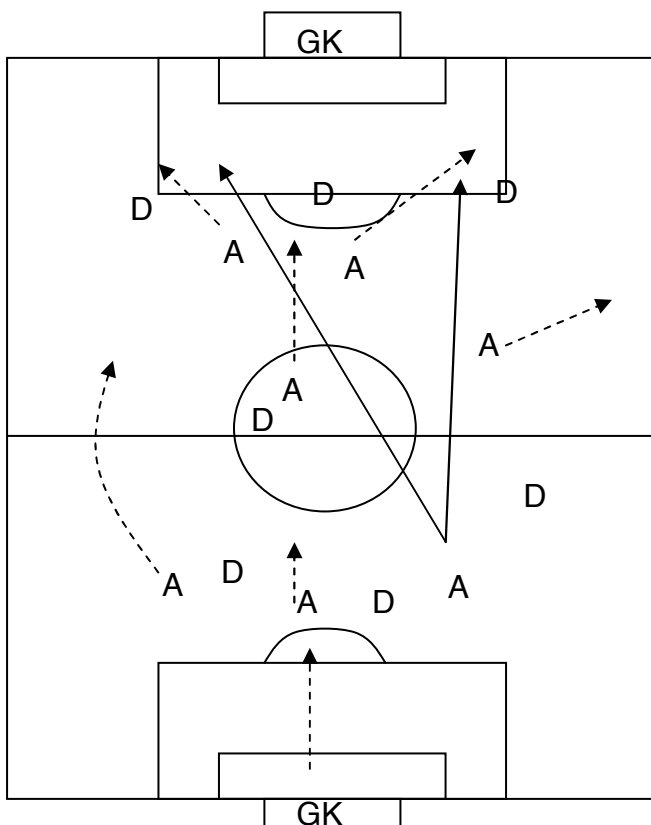
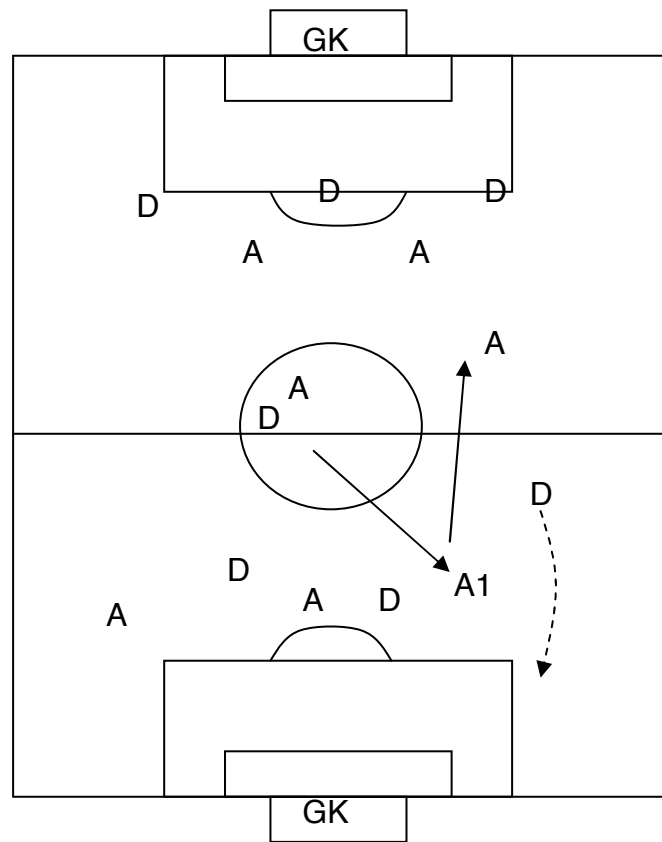
A1 then looks to pass the ball forward. Work with attacking A team on forward passing.

Continue game, but return to start position when necessary.

### Key Factors

Passing selection - behind defender

- farthest player's feet
- any forward player
- change the direction of play
- play back (selection starts again)



Support- in front, behind – angle

- distance
- timing of movement and runs.

Switching play (if you can't go forward, can you switch play to someone who can pass forward?)

Diagonal pass into some space created.

Midfielder recognises appropriate moment to pass

Support/ cover from defenders.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team to mark and intercept

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8 (50 by 70 yards)

Formation 3 – 2 – 2 for both teams plus GK.

**START:** Midfielder D1 plays ball out of feet and passes ball into the opposing GK who in turn may feed any player by hand

Work on defending with team D (defenders)

**Progressions-** adjust start position (e.g. A1 gives ball away to one of the midfield A's)  
- allow GK to kick ball out.

### Key Factors

Every player has responsibility for marking a player- defend from the front (see diagram).

Pressure nearest player to the ball (e.g. D2 and D3 press the full backs)

Prevent forward passing

Decision making- Can I close down the final few yards as the ball travels? Can I intercept? Slow down on approach and keep your eye on the ball.  
When to press and when to drop.

Technique of tackling- sideways on body position and stay on your feet. Feint to tackle, focus on the ball. Patience and timing

Body shape- low sideways on and decide whether to show inside or outside. Can you direct the attacker towards a supporting defender who can help you?

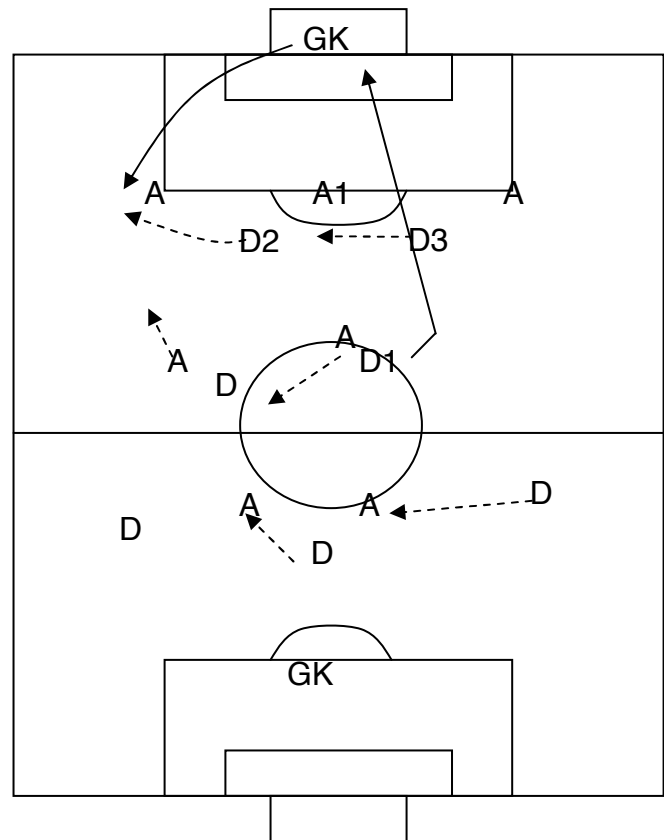
Recover from wrong side of the ball. Tracking runs- travel with attacker goal side.

Compactness- make play predictable. Keep to a defensive triangle – see the player  
- see the ball  
- see the goal.

Team shape- if ball is played out wide to one side of the pitch, the rest of the team shuffle across to support.

Communication- clear and concise.

**HINT-** It is unlikely that the coach will be able to coach all of the above key factors in any one session, but s/he should try to cover as many as possible depending on what defensive situations arise.



## **Session Aim-** In a Small sided game, coach one team to pressure as early as possible

### **Organisation**

Pitch 50 by 70 yards. Both teams in a 3-2-2 formation.

Work with the defending team (Ds) only

**START POSITION-** Centre half of opponent team A1 plays a misplaced ball behind either full back to create a realistic situation for the defending team to pressurise.

If Defending team (Ds) win the ball back, they can only have five touches as a team before they must get rid of the ball e.g. by having a shot). This means that the As have most of the ball and the Defending Ds must pressurise.

### **Key Factors**

#### **Pressure**

Nearest player to the ball (show inside).

This means that either D1 or D2 must go to close down depending on which full back receives the ball. Curve the run to block off any balls played down the line. Opposite full back closes down the centre back who originally passed the bad ball.

Close down early and quickly as the ball is moving

Individual defending technique- adjust speed / body shape / stay on feet. Can I see the player, the ball and the goal?

Can I intercept or prevent forward passing?

Can I intercept or prevent forward passing?

#### **Cover and Support**

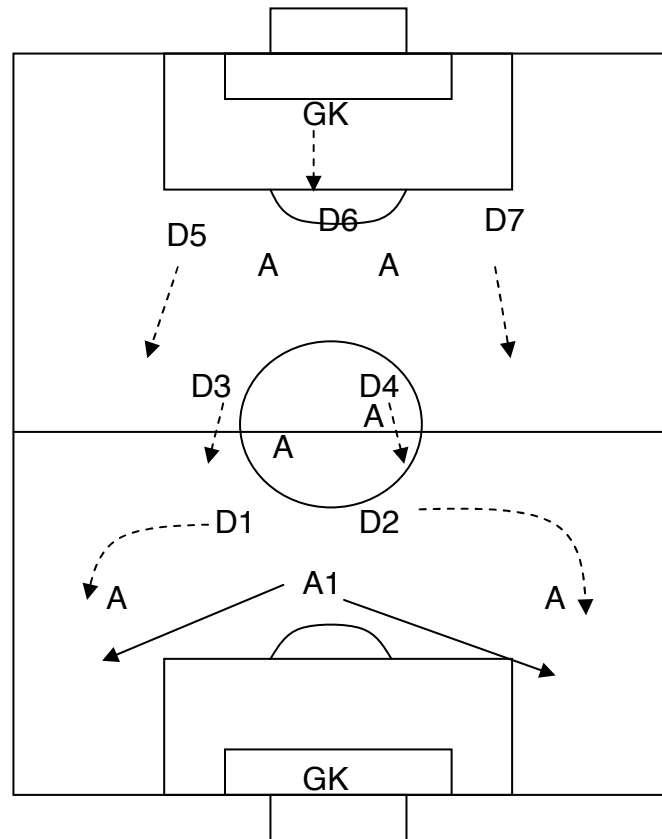
Midfield and defensive units offer support- e.g. either D3 or D4 push up to add defensive cover to the first defender (as soon as possible)

D5, D6 and D7 push forward slightly to offer support from a long ball played out from the A team. Defending team's GK pushes up to act as sweeper.

Be compact- all three units- make play predictable.

**Communication-** give clear and concise information (e.g. to offer cover and support).

**HINT-** be sure to coach on, around and away from the ball- do not just focus on the first two attackers (D1 and D2) who close down the ball. It may be possible to adjust the start position to create different situations where the defending team can pressure, e.g. one of the midfield A's plays a ball back to the Defence. OR allow free play to create a range of pressured situations.



## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team to attack quickly on gaining possession (counter-attacking)

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8 (50 by 70 yards)

Formation 3 – 2 – 2 for both teams plus GK.

Only coach the defending team.

**START-** A1 dribbles the ball from defence and the A5 midfielder pushes up to support. A7 makes a lateral run behind D1, but the pass from A1 is intercepted by D1. The counter-attack phase can then begin.

**PROGRESSION-** Attacking team only allowed 6 touches (after format of play has been established).

### Key Factors

#### a) When attacking team have ball (diagram 1):

Compactness- adopt deep and fairly central positions behind the ball to make play predictable (see diagram A)

Can I intercept? (e.g. D<sup>2</sup> or D<sup>6</sup>)

#### b) As soon as ball is won back (diagram 2):

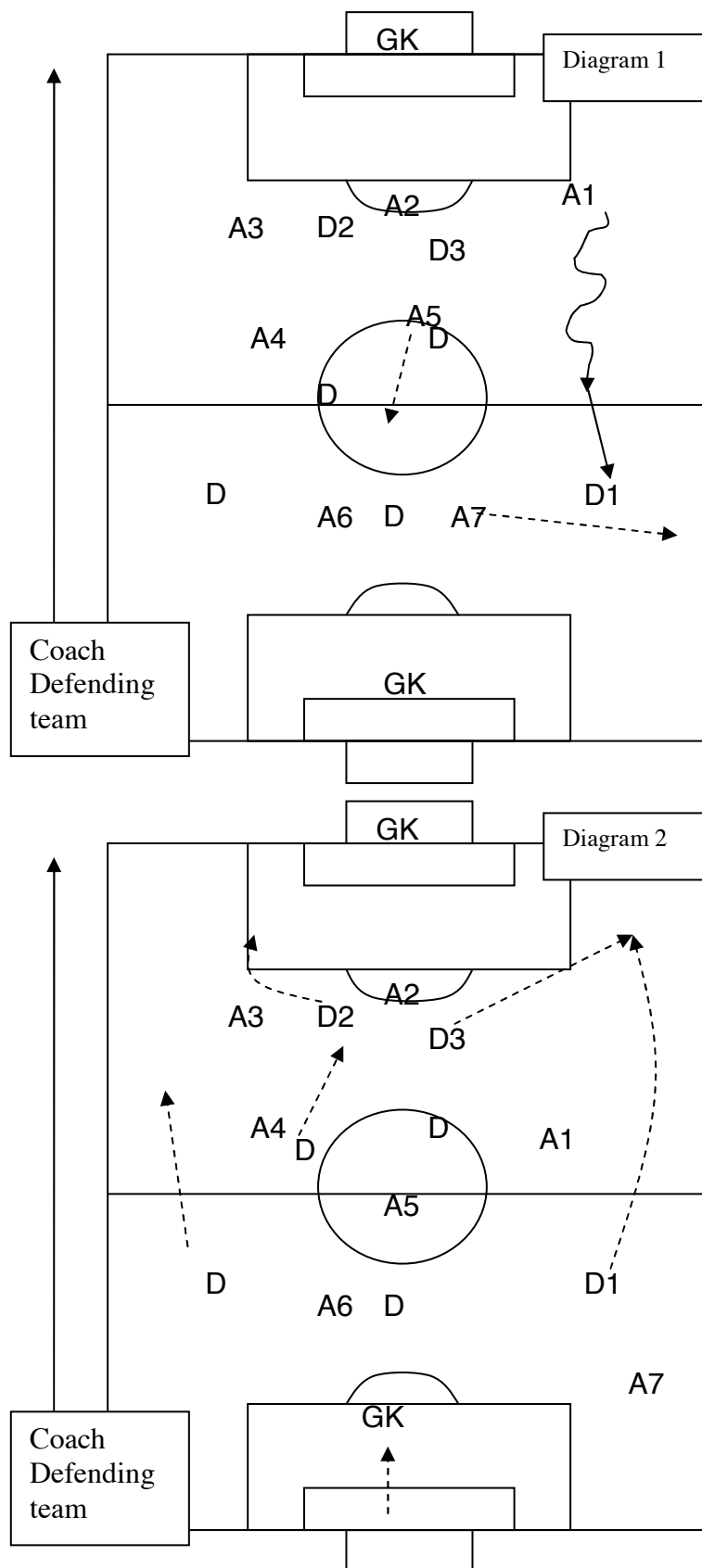
Early decision making: pass or run with ball (positive attitude)

Support play- triggered by the ball being won back. Early and fast movement of players into advanced and wide support positions (see diagram B)

Passing technique- quality of pass  
Variety e.g. short pass, or long to cover ground quickly.

**End product-** get shots on target and test the GK.

As ball is won back, defending players behind the play squeeze in to make compact whilst in front, the players go wide and long. GK comes to the edge of the 18 yard box.



## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team on when to press and when to drop as a defensive unit

**Organisation** (note solid lines = passes from attackers whereas dashed lines= tracking runs from defenders to press or drop)

SSG 8 V 8 (50 by 70 yards)

Formation 3 – 2 – 2 for both teams plus GK.

Start: Full back D7 plays a long ball (high or low) into A2 (as if giving the ball away).

D2 and D3 start off from 15-25 yards away from A2 as if they have previously been defending.

Work on when to press and drop with team D (defenders)

Progressions- adjust start position e.g. D7 plays the ball behind A3 and defenders have to decide whether to press or drop.

### Key Factors-

Make a decision about whether or not to press

**Can you press** (i.e. get close?) If so, nearest man to the ball as the ball is travelling.

Body shape of D2 or D3- show inside or outside depending on position of supporting players (see curved run of D2 –on diagram)

Cover and support from other midfield player, e.g. D4 moves across to challenge the full back A1. Defenders push up to compact space and play the offside trap. GK sweeps.

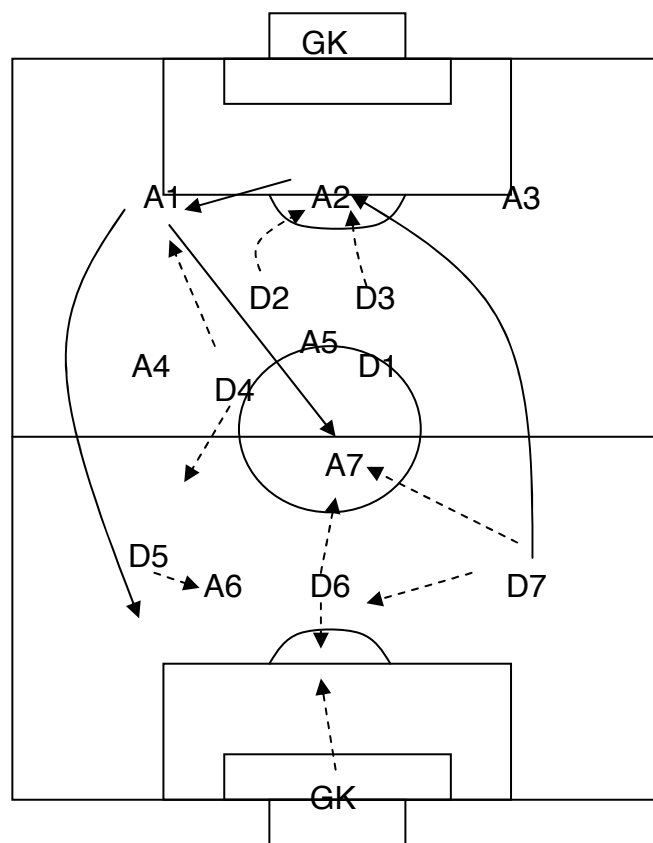
**If you can't press** (e.g. because the attackers are too far away), drop back, let the attackers approach and make play predictable by compacting space. D4 drops to support his own defenders if A1 plays the ball long down the line. D2 and D3 could drop to prevent easy passes to attacking midfielders. Full back D5 drops to track the run of A5.

Can you intercept? - stay on feet and be patient.

Recovery runs to support tackling player

Communication- early clear and concise e.g. "Close him down!" OR "Drop!"

**HINT-** if the defending team end up pressing every time and never need to drop, change the start position so that the defending players (e.g. D2 and D3) start 10 yards further back and so have to decide whether to press the A team's defence or drop and support their own midfield.



# NEW SESSIONS FOR 2008

## Session Aim- In a function, when, where and how to dribble

### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (approx 35 by 45 yards) as shown by dashed lines. Play four defenders in a 2-2 formation (plus GK). Play five outfield attackers including the feeder A1.

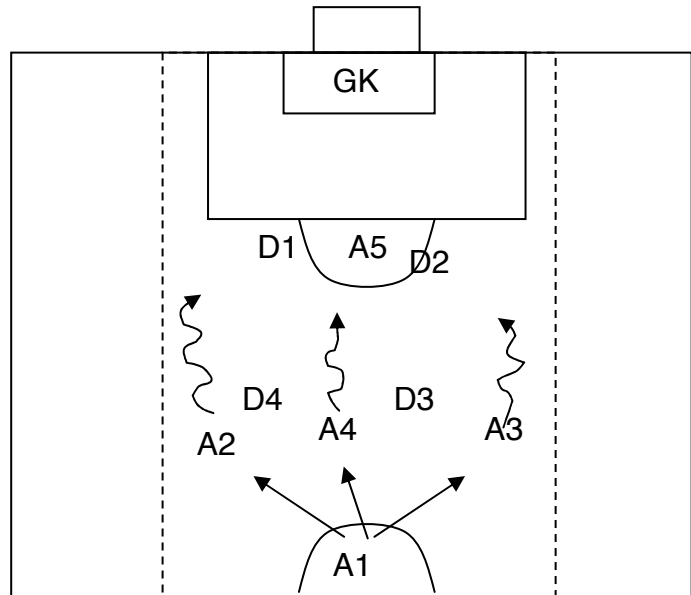
**START:** A1 plays the ball to A2, A3 or A4 from the centre line. A1's main job is to feed but can also join in to support. If D's win back they have five touches as a team before having to pass back to A1 to score a point.

**Progressions-** introduce another attacker and defender AND/ OR Extend the width of the playing area.

### Key Factors

Create space- e.g. check away and back again to lose marker or forward players do diagonal runs to shake off defenders.

Receive the ball on the half turn in order to try to go forward. If defender marks close, keep possession.



Do I have space ahead of me to exploit? If yes:

- Positive attitude to attack the space ahead at speed.
- First Touch- out of feet and in the direction of run (try to receive the ball on the run)
- Technique – contact with laces of the boot as player gets into his/her stride. Ball still close enough to maintain control.
- Head up to observe support from co-attackers.
- Speed of execution
- Decision at appropriate time
  - Dribble (can I commit an opponent 1 v 1- use of skills and tricks)
  - Pass (can I commit an opponent before passing)
  - Shoot- end product.
- Support / movement of the other players (in front, behind and square).

If I don't have space ahead of me because the defender has closed me down, pass to another player who has moved into space:

- Dribble to switch play and switch play to allow others to dribble, i.e. if one player cannot dribble as they have several opponents in front of them, encourage them to switch across the pitch to another player who can then dribble forward (and vice versa).

**HINT-** if the attacking team are trying to dribble, but are constantly losing possession as the defenders close them down, coach about where it is appropriate to dribble or not to dribble. Could they pass to someone else who has moved into space?



## Session Aim- In a function, coach the Goalkeeper to deal effectively with crosses

### Organisation

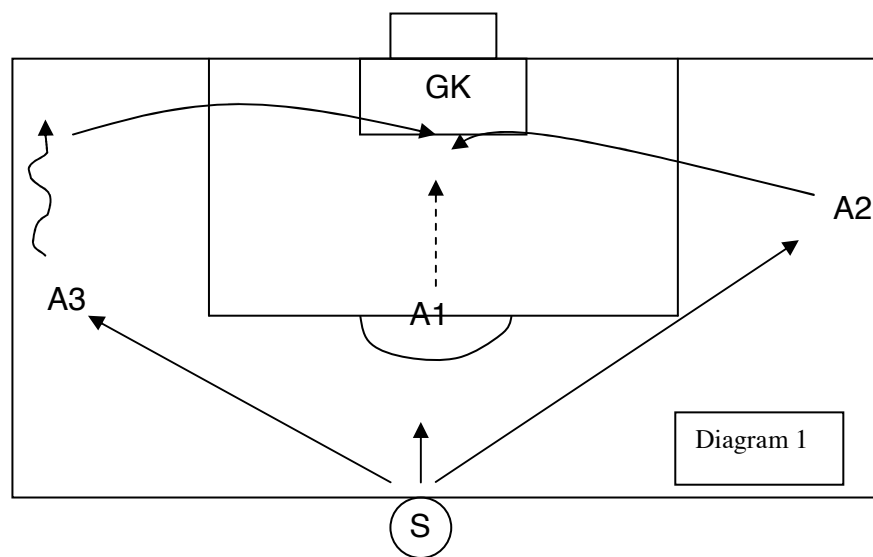
This function should take place in the defending third of the pitch.

START- server 'S' has a good supply of footballs and feeds balls alternately out to wingers A2 and A3. Centre forward A1 attempts to get on the end of the crosses and score past the GK. (See diagram 1).

Encourage wingers to put in a range of crosses (high, low, near or far post from both deep and advanced positions) so that the GK has to keep making decisions. A1 must put pressure on the GK even if he cannot reach the ball (to make the session game realistic)

### Key Factors

- **Start position for GK-** on balls of feet, hands ready at waist level; open stance parallel with the goal line. This enables GK to observe through 180°.
- **Position of the GK in relation to the goal.-** depends on the distance of the ball from the goal and the angle between the ball and the goal (see diagram 2)
- Wait for the ball to be kicked first.
- **Assess the flight of the ball-;** High crosses? Assess the line, pace and trajectory of the ball as it moves.
- Low crosses?- get down early to smother or deflect away.
- **Make a decision** (based on the flight of the ball)- Can I get to the ball? If not (e.g. because the attacker is in the way) stay put and defend the goal.
- **Attack the ball.** If I can get to the ball- early call to let co-defenders know that I am claiming it and be positive to get there before the opponent.
- **Timing** of attacking the ball- don't go too early or GK might misjudge its flight.
- If the ball is high, take the ball at the highest point of its trajectory (with both hands if possible)
- **Take off-** one footed take off for high crosses to achieve greatest possible height and to help maintain balance. Arms outstretched for a catch in front of the head.
- **Quality and type of handling-** catch with both hands if possible- bring into body and secure as soon as ball is safely in hands.
- **Punches-** If in doubt about being able to catch the ball (e.g. due to a strong challenge from an opponent), punch the ball- contact through bottom half of ball. Get height and distance away from goal.



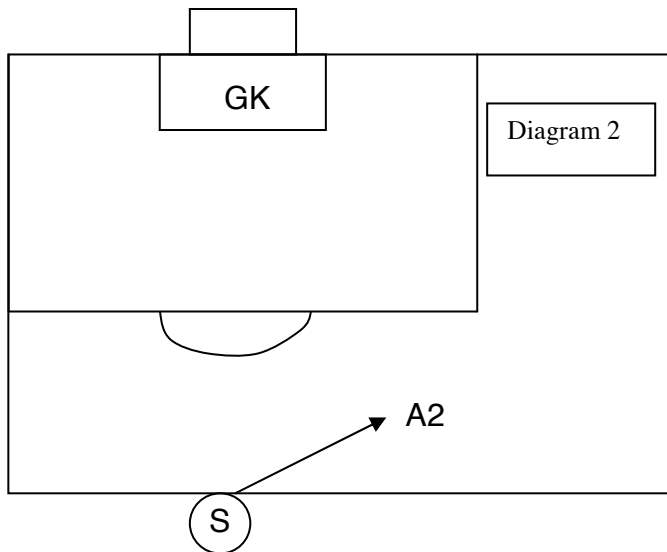
- **Communication-** loud clear and deliberate to make co- defenders aware of your position. Command the six yard box.

**HINT-** If possible, your wingers should be good crossers of the ball so that you can focus on the quality of the goalkeeping rather than the quality of the crosses being delivered in!

### **Progression**

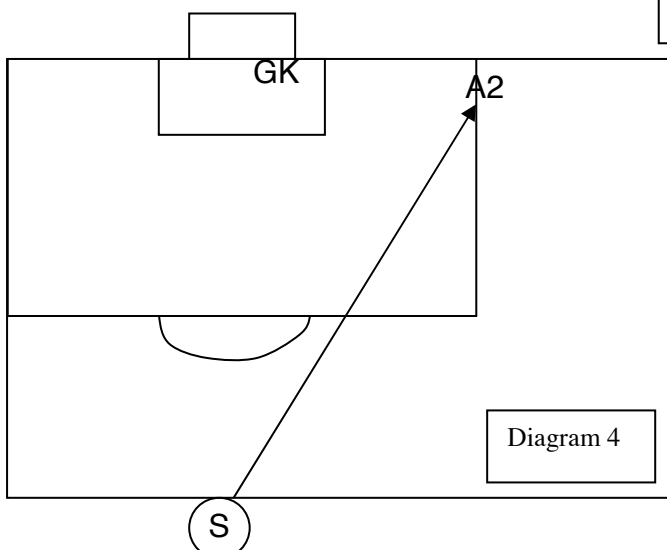
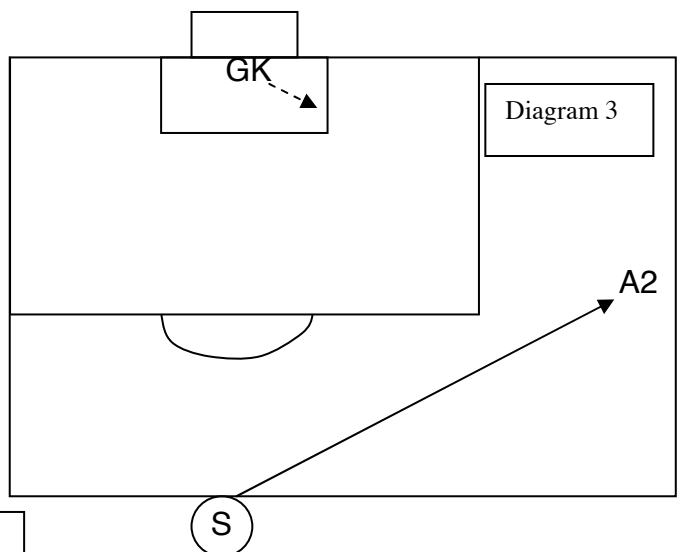
Introduce a second centre forward and a defender to make decision making in the penalty box more difficult for the GK.

### **Extra information on the GK starting position**



In Diagram 2, the ball is with A2 well in from the touch line and some 30 yards out from the goal. The GK should stand three yards off his line and in the centre of the goal.

In Diagram 3 the ball is with A2 who is now much nearer the touch line and some 15 yards from the goal line. The GK should be between 1 and 2 yards off his goal line and in the centre of the goal. If the ball is delivered into the near post, the GK can easily move forward from here to intercept the ball as it travels.

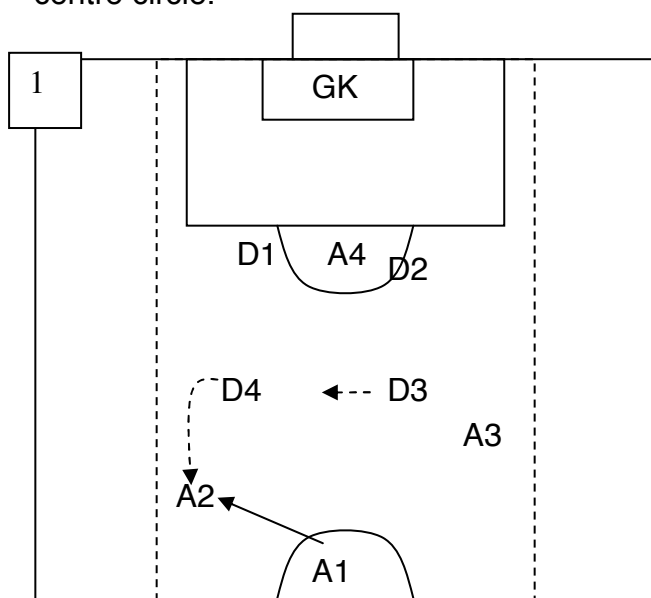


In Diagram 4, the ball is with A2 who is near to the goal line and near to the penalty area. The GK is half a yard off his goal line and approximately three yards from his near post to protect the near side of his or her goal.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach central midfielders on their defensive responsibilities

### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (approx 35 by 45 yards) as shown by dashed lines. Play four defenders in a 2-2 formation (plus GK). Play four outfield attackers including the feeder A1. Coach D3 and D4 (the two central midfielders on the defending team). If D's win the ball back, they have five touches as a team before having to pass back to A1 in the centre circle.

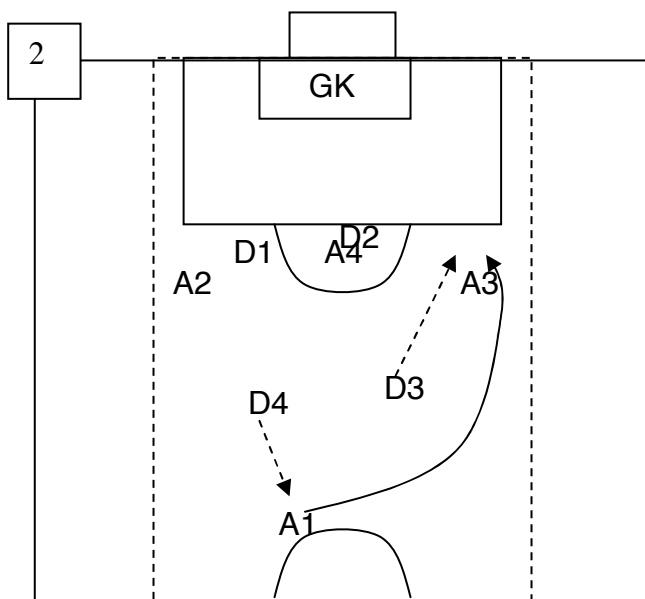


**START:** A1 plays the ball to A2, A3 or A4 from the centre line. A1 can join in to support the attack. **Progressions-** introduce another attacker AND/ OR extend the width of the playing area.

### Key Factors

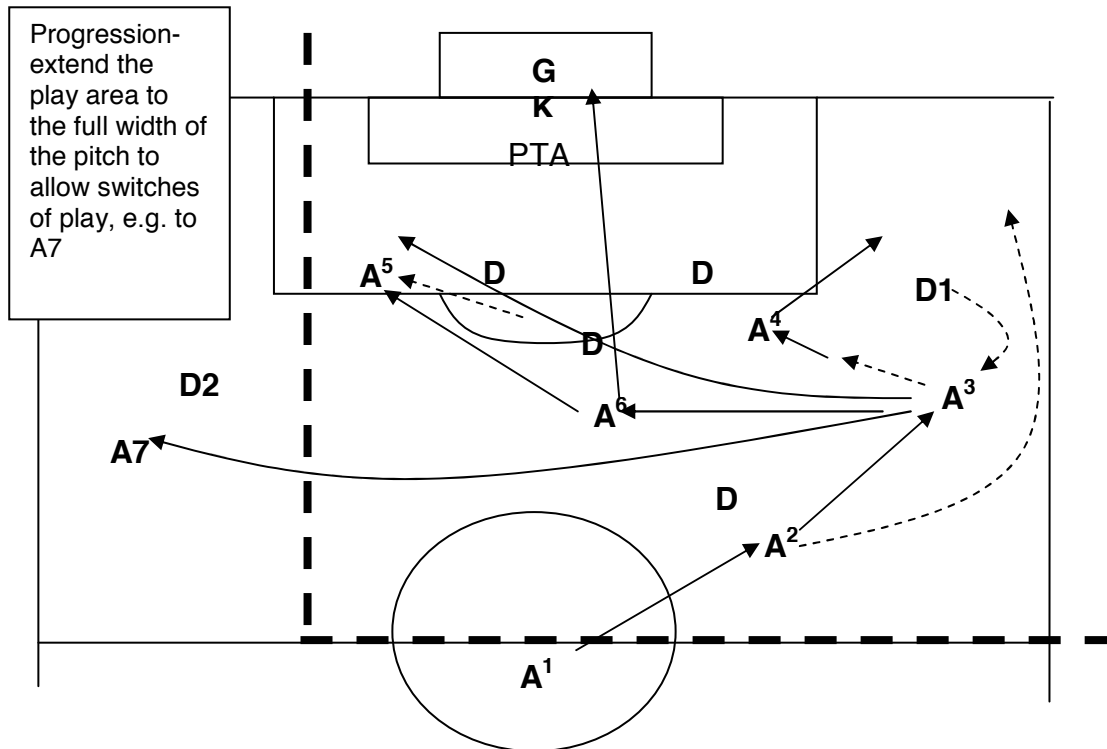
- Nearest player to the ball
- Decision making- should I press or should I drop and compact space?
- If closing, close down the attacker as the ball travels, (e.g. in diagram 1, D4 closes down A2 with a curved run to block off a pass down the line).

- Slow down on approach (side on body position). Show inside where there is support.
- Cover and support from other central midfielder, e.g. D3 in diagram 1 tucks inside to support D4 and provide cover (but not too far that D3 could not tackle A3 if the ball was passed across). The opposite applies if the ball was passed to A3 first.
- Communication (as a midfield pair) and with other co-defenders.
- Tracking and recovery runs, e.g. in diagram 2, A1 plays a long ball in behind to A3. All other defenders are occupied so D3 must track the run of A3.
- Make compact- close quickly to prevent shots from attacking players.



**HINT-** when coaching this session, it is a good idea to use good attackers who are dynamic and who are going to test the midfield two by pulling them out of position, e.g. with diagonal runs and switchovers. Additionally, try to introduce an extra attacker to create an overload for the attacking team.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach a wide player on his or her responsibilities after being forced inside



### Organisation

Quarter of pitch (approximately 50 x 40 yards area coned off)

Six attackers (A's) and five defenders (D's) -back three with two defensive midfielders plus GK.

**Start-** A<sup>1</sup> plays ball into A<sup>2</sup> who must then attempt to play the ball to the wide player (A<sup>3</sup>).

Defender D1 is conditioned always to show the wide player inside.

Other attackers then work off wide player. Note that most work is done in wide areas. If the defenders win the ball back, they must look to find A<sup>1</sup> (in the centre circle) as soon as possible.

**Key Factors** Positive attitude- can I still beat the full back D1 despite being shown inside? (tricks and skills) and then get a cross into the Prime Target Area (PTA). Or can A3 drive into space inside and commit defenders?

If not able to go outside, movement of attackers to support, e.g. A4 offers and plays a wall pass with A3. Can I still cross into A5, e.g. diagonal pass to A5?

Overlaps- as A3 cuts inside, A2 overlaps to offer support outside and cross the ball.

Midfielders movements into anticipation positions, e.g. A<sup>6</sup> sits on the edge of the box. If winger A3 passes the ball, is there an opportunity to shoot? (good first touch, technique of striking the ball, end product). A5 moves out wide to create space in the central area.

**Progression-** extend the width of the pitch and introduce an attacking winger (A7) and a full back to the defensive team (D2). This allows play to be switched from right to left as A3 is forced inside. Quality of long range switch pass- driven pass to feet or floated pass over opponent's head.

**HINT-** if A3 is finding it too easy to go outside defender D1 every time ask a second defender to start closer to A3 to force him inside.

## Session Aim- In a function, coach two central defenders how to defend as a unit

### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (c 20 by 35yards)  
2 v 2.

Feeder F plays to attackers (A's) who must attempt to turn and score. Defenders work together to prevent A's from scoring. Start off 2 versus 2.

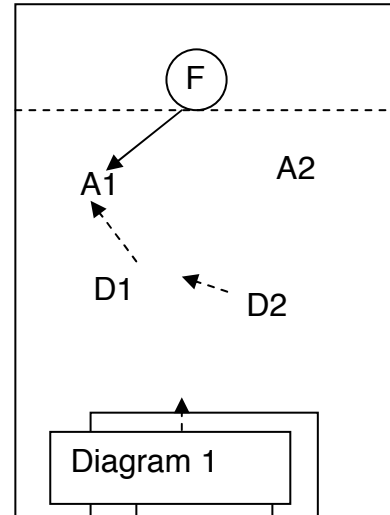
### Progression

Allow feeder to become an attacker (3 v 2) and then go to 3 v 3.

Extend area by 5 to 10 yards to make more difficult for the defenders.

### Key Factors

Goalkeeper's start position on the edge of the 6 yard box to act as sweeper.

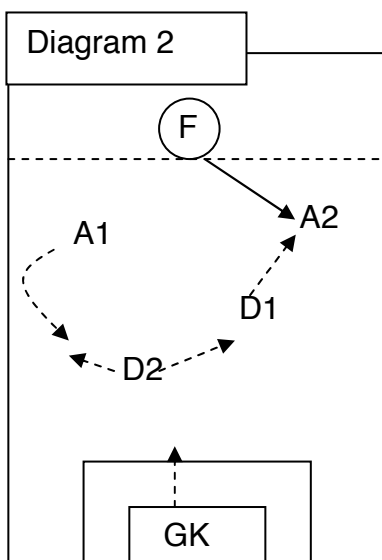


Travel to the attacker as the ball travels from the pass of the Feeder. Slow down on approach with a low body position. (Can I see the ball, see the player and see my support?)

Defensive unit- when one defender challenges, the other provides support e.g. Diagram 1- nearest player to the ball D1 closes down the first attacker- other defender tucks in to provide support and cover (angles and distances- see diagram 1).

Defender D2 tracks the runs of attacker A2 (but still close enough to support D1)

Opposite applies if feeder plays the ball to A2 (see diagram 2)



Prevent attacker from turning and shooting- close down quickly. Adjust body position to show outside and defend central area.

Can I intercept? Side on body position.

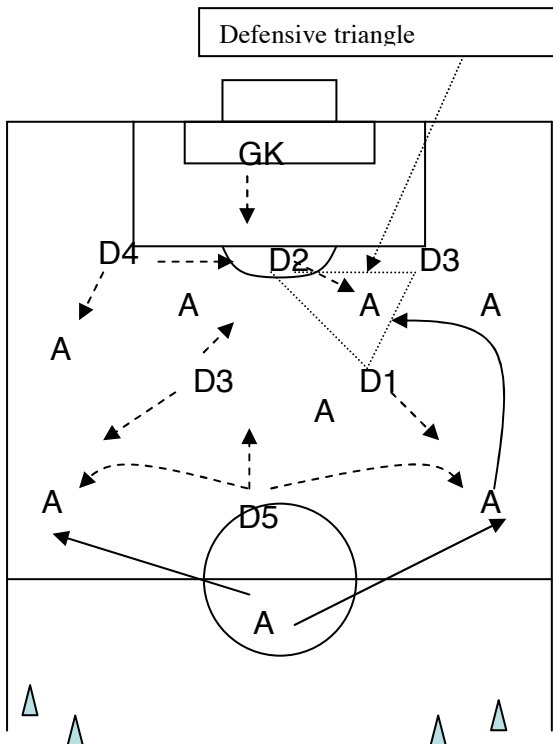
If any of the attackers attempt to run behind the defenders, hold the line to play offside. GK sweeps.

Communication- from defenders and GK (as a unit)

Concentration- try to stop any shots from coming in to the GK

Recovery- if a defender is beaten, s/he must attempt to get back quickly into position.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending in Central areas



### Organisation

Phase of Play (8 v 7). Defenders line up in a 3-2-1 formation plus the GK. Attackers line up as a 3-2-3 including the feeder. **START-** Feeder feeds the ball out to A1 or A2 who start the phase off for the attacking team. Feeder can join in play. If defenders win the ball, they have 5 touches as a team to score through the two mini goals.

### Key Factors

**Pressure-** Nearest player to the ball, e.g. D5 closes down attacking full backs. Support is offered by D1 and D3 depending on which side the ball is played.

**Low body position and side on positioning**  
**Adjust speed**

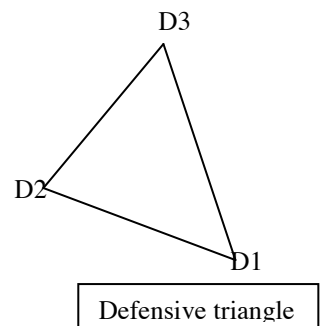
**Body shape-** show outside to protect the central area in midfield, but inside in the defending third (to prevent easy crosses from advanced areas)

**Stay on your feet**

Can I intercept safely? Be patient.

Cover as a team (defending triangles) to give support in front behind and to the side, e.g. if D1 is beaten, D2 and D3 support and compact the play in the central zone of the field. Maximum of 15 to 20 yards distance between players in the defensive triangle.

**Decisions-** do I mark the player or space? There are situations where a player does not need to mark the player directly but can position himself so that he makes play compact and blocks off space whilst still being able to close down the attacking player.



If marking the player, get tight and try to prevent the player from turning.

**Defending as units to cover central areas-** If ball is played out wide, the opposite full back shuffles across to cover the central areas

**Tracking-** opponents' movement off the ball- judge how far we need to track back. Keep within the guiding triangle (15 to 20 yards maximum)

**Play the offside system-** don't get too deep. Unless attackers are very fast in which case one of the defending players sweeps and clears up behind the defence (i.e. they don't get caught square). GK can also sweep behind the defence to cut out balls played in behind.

**Communication-** clear, concise and early. **Determination-** be first to win headers/ ball in the air. **Protect the central area-** clear crosses with height and distance.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending when outnumbered

### Organisation

Phase of play (9 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -2 formation plus GK.  
Attacking team line up in a 3-3-3 formation.

**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. (see diagram 1)

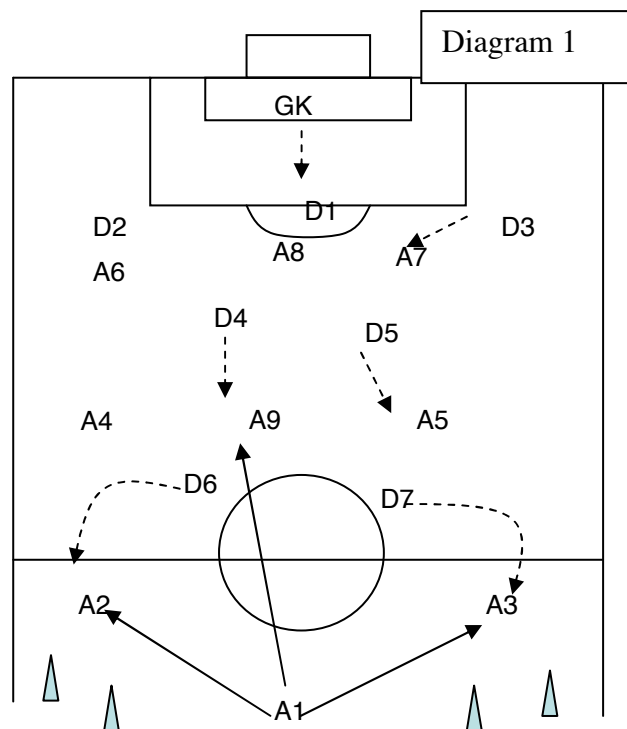
If defending team wins the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

**Progression-** Feeder A1 plays the ball directly into front players and defenders must prevent ball being played further forward (see diagram 2).

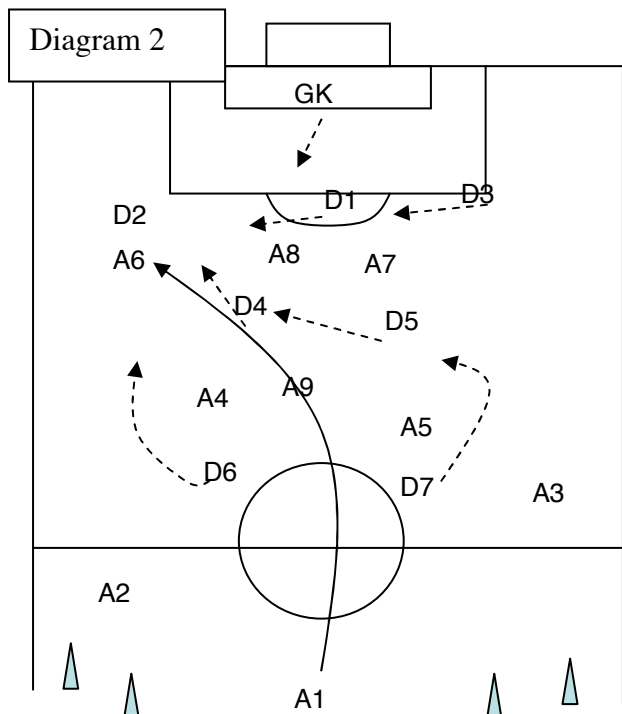
### Key Factors

Nearest player to the ball- communicate so that each player picks up an opponent.

Close down the ball early- make up ground as the ball travels



Curve the run to narrow the angle for the attacking player to play forward, e.g. D6 (diagram1)



Slow down on approach and tackle side on. Can I intercept? If not, stay on your feet.

Prevent opponents from turning. In diagram1, D4 and D5 close down A9 and A5 as ball is played to them. They supply cover.

Tracking and recovery runs to prevent opponents getting in behind the defence. Make compact,

Support- first defender closes down, second defender offers support and cover – see the player, see the ball, see the goal. Defensive triangle.

Similarly, if the ball goes out wide, the back three shuffle across as a unit and one of the full backs becomes a centre back (see diagram 2).

If the ball is played forward, can we win the second ball or force play backwards?

If the ball is played long (e.g. in diagram 2), midfield and forwards drop and try to get behind the ball to

close down attackers. Win headers in the air- prevent flick-ons or knock downs.

GK sweeps up behind the defence.

Defending from crosses- make sure everyone marks a player and attempts to be first to the ball. Get height and distance on clearances.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team on when to press and when to drop as a defensive unit

**Organisation** (note solid lines = passes from attackers whereas dashed lines= tracking runs from defenders to press or drop)

SSG 8 V 8 (50 by 70 yards)

Formation 3 – 2 – 2 for both teams plus GK.

Start: Full back D7 plays a long ball (high or low) into A2 (as if giving the ball away).

D2 and D3 start off from 15-25 yards away from A2 as if they have previously been defending.

Work on when to press and drop with team D (defenders)

Progressions- adjust start position e.g. D7 plays the ball behind A3 and defenders have to decide whether to press or drop.

### Key Factors-

Make a decision about whether or not to press

**Can you press** (i.e. get close?) If so, nearest man to the ball as the ball is travelling.

Body shape of D2 or D3- show inside or outside depending on position of supporting players (see curved run of D2 –on diagram)

Cover and support from other midfield player, e.g. D4 moves across to challenge the full back A1. Defenders push up to compact space and play the offside trap. GK sweeps.

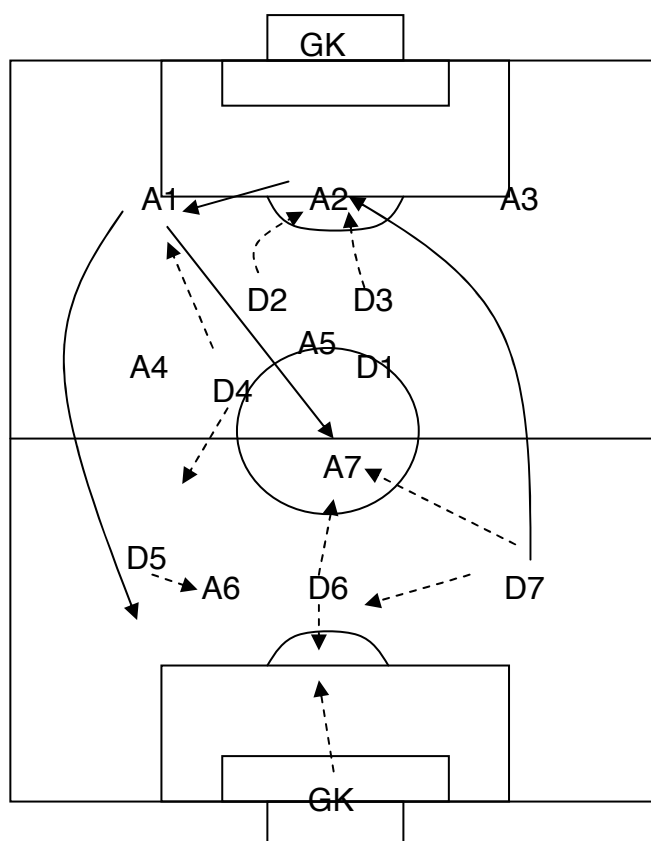
**If you can't press** (e.g. because the attackers are too far away), drop back, let the attackers approach and make play predictable by compacting space. D4 drops to support his own defenders if A1 plays the ball long down the line. D2 and D3 could drop to prevent easy passes to attacking midfielders. Full back D5 drops to track the run of A5.

Can you intercept? - stay on feet and be patient.

Recovery runs to support tackling player

Communication- early clear and concise e.g. "Close him down!" OR "Drop!"

**HINT-** if the defending team end up pressing every time and never need to drop, change the start position so that the defending players (e.g. D2 and D3) start 10 yards further back and so have to decide whether to press the A team's defence or drop and support their own midfield.





## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach support play

### Organisation

SSG 8 V 8 - Defending team play in a 3-2-2 formation plus GK.

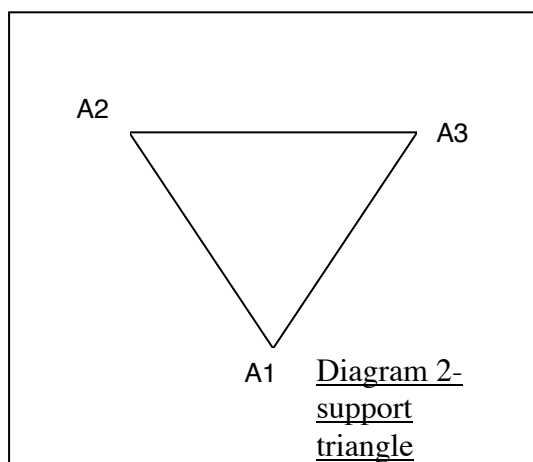
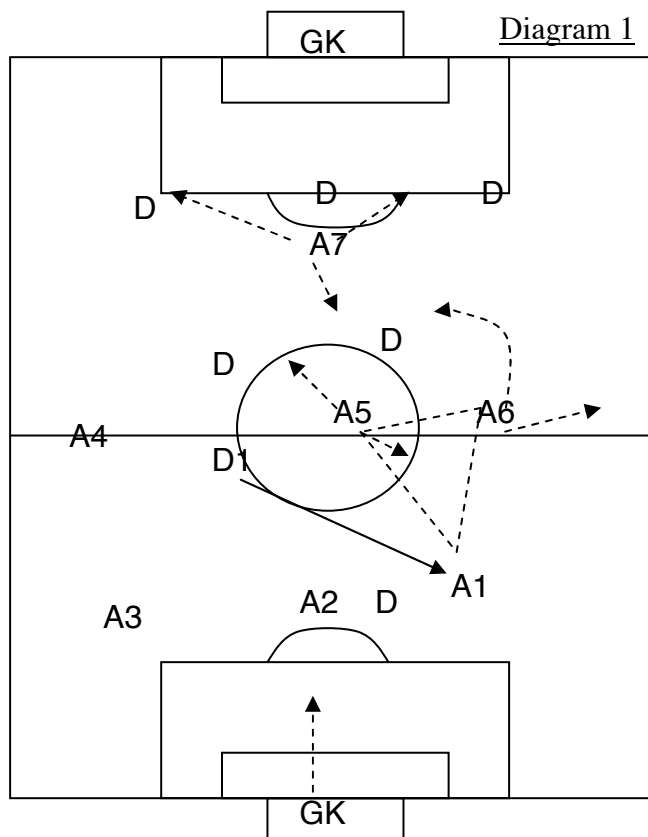
Attacking team play 3-3-1. Coach A's only.

**START:** A1 intercepts a through ball by defending midfielder D1.

A1 then looks to pass the ball to a team mate in the best position, e.g. A7 who makes forward runs. Continue game, but return to start position when necessary.

### Key Factors

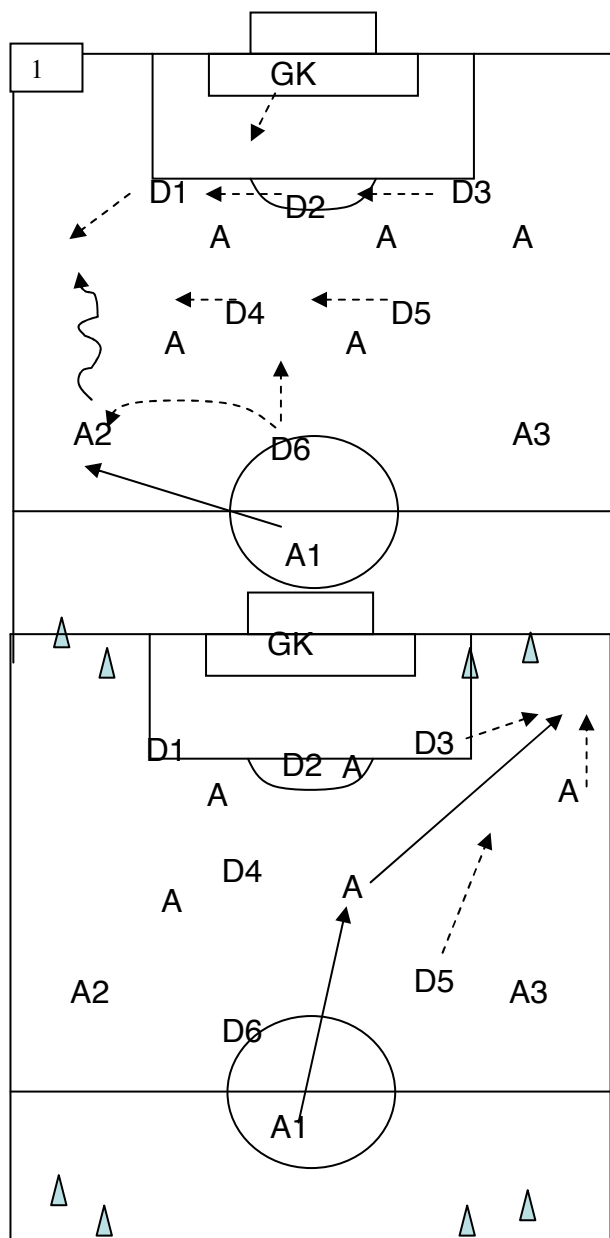
- Support- in front, behind and to the side – angle and distance plus timing of runs.
- Pass and move- use of triangles to keep possession (see diagrams 1 and 2)
- Recognise the correct moment to play the ball forward, e.g. a darting diagonal run from the forward player. Don't force the pass if nothing is on!
- Switching play (if you can't go forward, can you switch play to someone who can pass forward?)
- Make use of the width of the pitch – stretch the play.
- Technique of shielding the ball and keeping possession. Don't give the ball away cheaply.
- Quality of passing (short and long).
- Movement of midfield players into advanced positions in order for play to go forward after a period of possession.
- GK offers support from the back- e.g. as a last gasp passing option if A's cannot play forward (e.g. A5 moves forward to support A7).
- Communication- clear, concise to let player in possession know that support is available.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending in flank areas

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -1 formation plus GK. Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation in order to be able to exploit wide areas.



**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. Encourage them to try to attack using the wings to create as many opportunities as possible for the defending team to defend flank areas. Get attacking team to alternate wings.

If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### Key Factors

- Nearest player to the ball (e.g. D6 closes A2 down as the ball moves (curved run to shut down space). Defensive midfielders D4 and D5 shuffle across to compact space. If D6 cannot tackle, D1 must close A2 down.

- Defensive technique of individual players

2. Speed of approach
  - angle of approach
  - show him outside to isolate him (unless winger is particularly quick or tricky in which case show him inside where others can help)
  - concentrate on ball
  - feint to tackle- get the winger's head down
  - stay on your feet
  - try to prevent crosses

- Cover positions- nearest player (e.g. centre back) move across to support full back and to mark attacking centre forwards (see diagram 1)

- Other players at the back shuffle

- across to close the gap (e.g. D3). But be ready for any switch to the other wing.
- Support depends on full back's body shape. Is he showing the attacker inside or outside? GK sweeps behind.
- Defending midfielders make compact and watch midfield runners.

**START POSITION 2** – midfielder plays into nearest forward who plays ball wide behind fullback for a cross (see diagram 2). Full back D3 closes down first. D5 tracks back to help full back • Watch crosses into box, • Be first to the ball (determination), • No free

headers (take responsibility), • Clear (Long/ High/ Wide), • Communication- name on ball; squeeze up as ball is cleared.

N.B. There are different schools of thought as to whether you show players inside or outside to defend flank areas. Most coaches say to show outside to isolate a player and 'run him/her into touch.' However, there are other occasions where it is better to show inside, e.g. a skilful, but one-footed winger who can only cross well on his right foot is better shown inside onto his left foot where there is support from other players.

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach the strikers to combine effectively

### **Organisation**

Phase of play (8 V 7)

Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3- 3 -2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder).

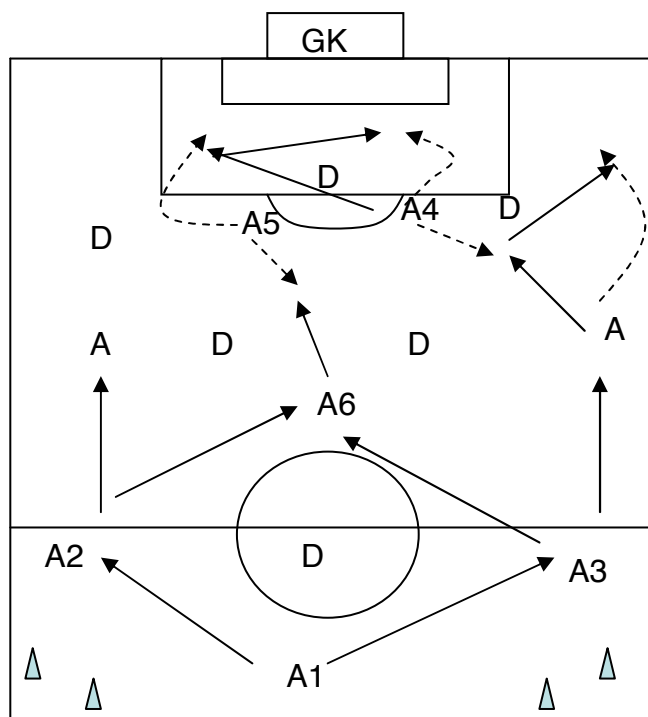
Defending team start in a 3- 2-1 formation plus the GK.

**START-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players to get to the final third. If defending team wins the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### **Key Factors**

Movement of centre forwards (A4 and A5) into space (e.g. drop deep or in run in behind).

Diagonal runs to create space. May need to curve or delay run to stay onside.



Communication of A4 and A5 a) with each other, e.g. to ensure that they don't cancel out each other's movement and b) with other players.

Positive attitude of A2 and A3 to get the ball forward to players further up field.

Once ball has been played into front two- Can I combine? e.g. A4 plays a 'one-two' with A5. If nothing on, recycle and keep possession until players move into better positions.

Range of passing options – short ball to feet of front players who have dropped deep

- Long ball over the top for forwards to run on to
- to wide players who must attempt to cross or combine with forwards.

Type of pass into attackers A4 and A5- high ball for heading or low ball into feet- play to the strengths/ attributes of the attackers you have available.

Quality of passing- recognising the moment to pass based on movement of forwards. End product- get shots on target- test the keeper.

Clever combination play- use of flicks, dummies, turns and one-twos.

Do not force play- keep hold of ball until opportunities arise to exploit space.

**Progression-** Attacking team has to perform a set number of passes before being allowed to shoot

**HINT-** Avoid focusing solely on the front two strikers. You will need to demonstrate that you are coaching on, around and away from the ball so be sure to coach the other attacking players as well. Strikers may also combine effectively with midfielders who have made runs into advanced positions, e.g. A6.

A1 then looks to pass the ball to a team mate in the best position, e.g. A7 who makes forward runs or A2 who supports to the side. Continue game, but return to start position when necessary.

If the player decides to support in advance- be positive and move quickly into advanced position where space can be exploited.

- Support options- in front, behind and to the side – angle and distance plus timing of runs.
- Be patient- Pass and move using triangles to keep possession (see diagrams 1 and 2) until a player makes a good forward support run.

- Timing- Recognise the correct moment to support in advance-move early to counter attack at speed OR – late run to avoid offside or catch opponents by surprise.
- Switching play (if you can't go forward, can you support sideways or behind to switch play to the other flank).

- Make use of the width of the pitch –stretch the play.
- Decoy runs- e.g. support in front to drag players out of position.
- Recovery runs- players who have supported in front will need to return to positions to support and defend later on.
- Quality of passing (short and long)- need high quality of passing if support players are to be effective.
- Movement of midfield players into advanced positions in order for play to go forward after a period of possession. Be positive to create the overload.
- GK offers support from the back- e.g. as a last gasp passing option behind if A's cannot play forward.
- Communication- clear, concise to let player in possession know that support is available.

HINT- There is always an element of risk when moving in advance of the ball. The risk is greatest for players moving from rear positions. Therefore, the coach must impress on players the importance of not moving forward in advance if they are leaving behind team mates who are outnumbered. Nevertheless, it is unwise to continue playing behind the ball when there is no opponent to mark and when the player in possession of the ball does not require immediate support behind or to the side.

Players should be encouraged to spot opportunities to support in advance so as to create an overload and create attacking chances, but not if this means being caught on the counter-attack when possession is lost. Note that if the attacking team is constantly losing the ball, is it because players are choosing inappropriate support as each phase progresses? If so, step in and coach about decision making.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team when to pass to feet and when to pass to space

### Organisation

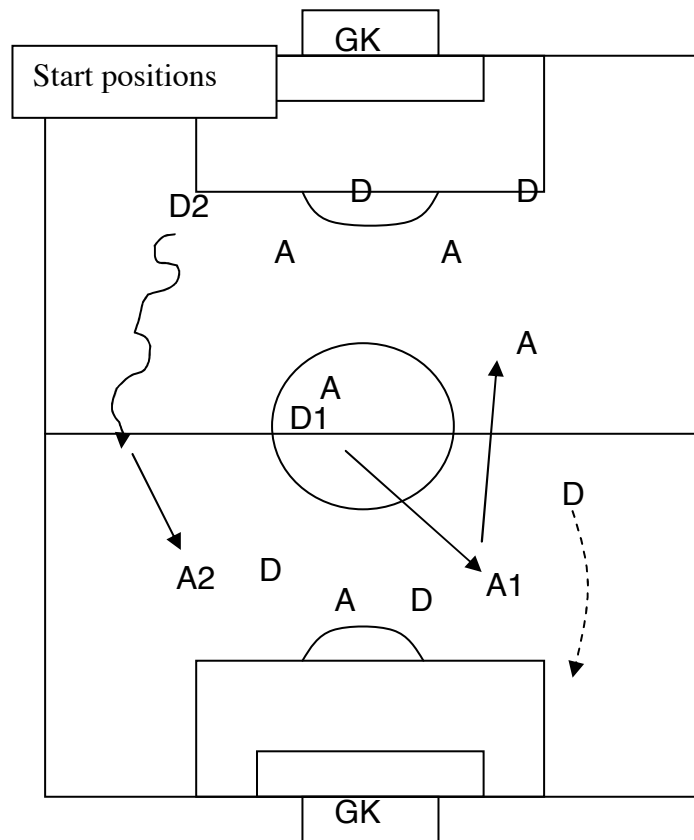
SSG 8 V 8

Start: A1 intercepts a through ball by defending midfielder (D1). Defending winger asked to run past as if for ball.

A1 then looks to pass the ball forward. Work with attacking A team on passing to space or passing to feet.

Alternative start position: D2 makes a forward run over the half way line with the ball and then misplaces a pass to A2. Can A2 exploit the space he has left in behind?

### Key Factors



### **Decision making** - am I under pressure?

- is my team mate making a run in behind the defence or in front?
- Are the defenders pressing or sitting off?
- Can I pass to space (high risk) or can I pass to feet (safer)

### Type of run of supporting players

- a) Forward and diagonal runs of midfield players into space wide of or behind defending team- timing of run to stay onside. This allows a pass into space
- b) Attacking players dropping deep to receive the ball- This allows a pass to feet. Can they then turn and shoot?

Be positive- look to pass forward where possible. BUT- be patient. Recognise when it is better just to retain possession (pass to feet).

Decoy runs- sometimes a player runs into space to drag the defender away and does not actually want the ball (Therefore, listen for a call)

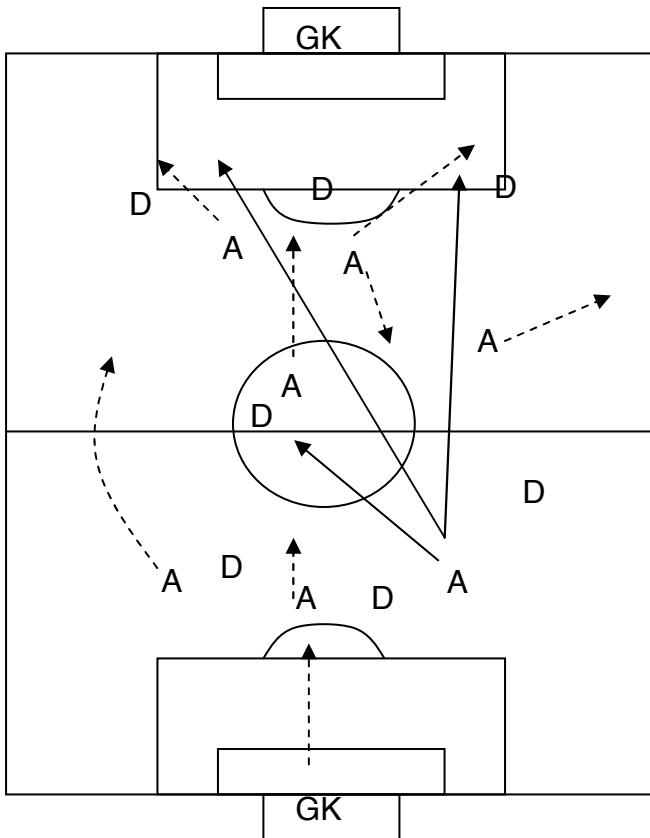
### Passing selection -

- behind defender
- farthest player's feet
- any forward player
- change the direction of play
- play back (selection starts again including the kicks from the GK)

Support- in front, behind – angle

- distance
- timing of movement and runs

Switching play – keep the ball moving to drag defenders out of position. Use the width of the pitch where possible.



## Timing and quality of pass

Variety of pass- to feet and into space.  
Keep the opposing team guessing.

HINT- If the players are just playing to feet all the time (low risk) encourage them to exploit space. This requires movement from forwards and midfielders, especially from deep positions to create an overload. Equally, if the attacking team is just pumping long balls up to the attackers, coach passing to feet and ball retention.

Most importantly in this session, the coach must demonstrate that s/he is affecting the decision making of the attacking team, i.e. when to pass to feet and when to pass into space.

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## Session Aim- In a function, coach preventing the opposition from crossing

### Organisation

Cone off small area approx quarter of a pitch (40 x 40 yards). Play 4 defenders + GK versus 4 attackers (plus 1 attacking feeder)

**START:** Feeder A1 passes ball to A2 who attempts to supply winger A3. Winger A3 attempts to cross. Alternatively A2 attempts to cross or overlap A3. A4 and A5 support. If the defending team win it back, they have five touches to dribble through either mini goal or pass back to feeder A1. (see Diagram 1).

### Key Factors

Close Down quickly as ball travels- Nearest player to the ball, e.g. D4 moves across to block A2 whilst D1 closes down winger A3 (as ball travels- Diagram 2)

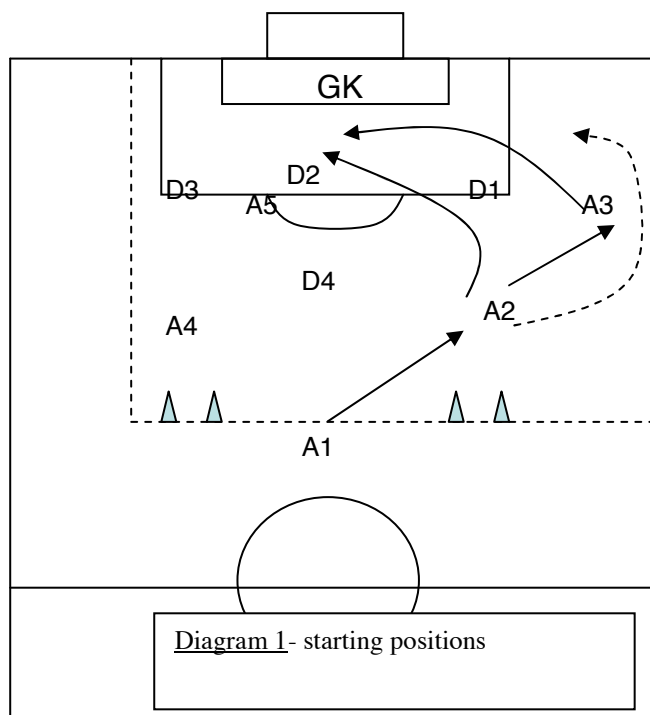


Force winger inside to reduce crossing opportunities on favoured outside foot. BUT watch diagonal crosses if the winger cuts inside.

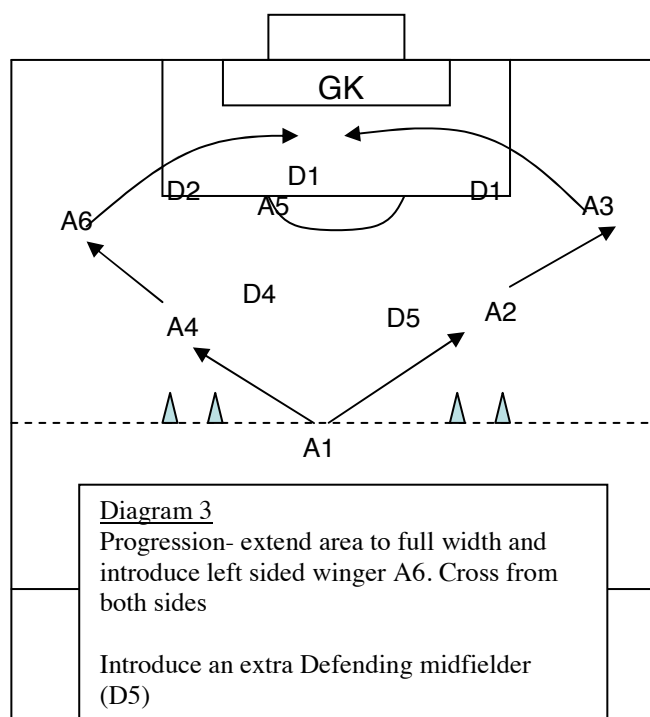
As full back moves across to block the cross, players D2 and D3 also move across to compact space, to mark A5 and to provide support to the full back who has closed down the winger.

Communication- clear and concise. Cover from supporting players- ready to clear IF cross eventually does come in. GK sweeps and prepares to claim crosses.

**HINT-** Use a strong winger/ crosser of the ball and an able midfielder (A2) to make this challenging for the defending team who then have to close down quickly in order to block. Don't just coach the full backs! If a cross comes in, how do the centre back and GK react? Are they in the right 'set' position?



Keep low and side on. Can I intercept? If not, don't commit. Stay on your feet. Keep eye on ball if winger attempts tricks; get blocks in on attempted crosses.



# NEW SESSIONS FOR 2009 AND 2010

## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach attacking from the middle third into the attacking third

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7)

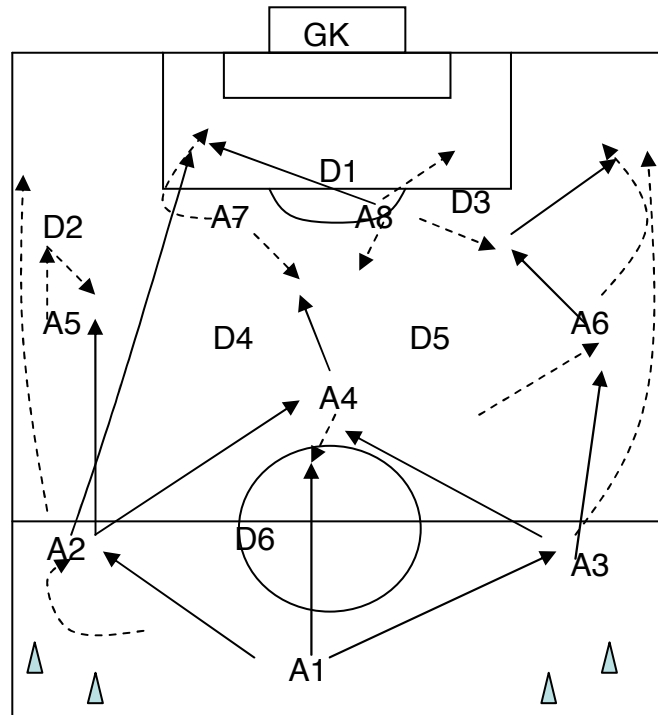
Work with attacking team (A's) in a 3-3-2 formation (A1 acts as the feeder).

Defending team start in a 3-2-1 formation plus the GK.

START- A1 plays the ball out to A2 or A3 who must then attempt to play forward to the midfield or front players to get to the final third. If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

### Key Factors

Movement of midfielders and centre forwards to create space- interchange of positions. The diagram above shows a range of movement options e.g. A5 checks away and then checks back to create space away from D2 and receive the ball from A2.



Movement of players from central into the attacking third, e.g. A3 overlaps A6 to create an overload. Diagonal movement of front players to drag centre backs out of position.

Receive ball side on (where possible) ready to travel forward quickly, e.g. A1 receives quickly from A4. Encourage high tempo and quick movement.

Range of passing options – short ball to feet of front players who have dropped deep, e.g. A8 or A7

- Long ball over the top for forwards to run on to, e.g. A2 plays to A7.
- to wide players who must attempt to cross or combine with forwards (A5 or A6).

Type of pass- high ball for heading or low ball into feet- play to the strengths/ attributes of the attackers you have available. Use of 1-2 wall pass, e.g. A6 to A8.

Quality of passing- recognising the moment to pass based on movement of forwards.

Clever combination play- use of flicks, dummies and turns.

Do not force play- keep hold of ball until opportunities arise to exploit space.

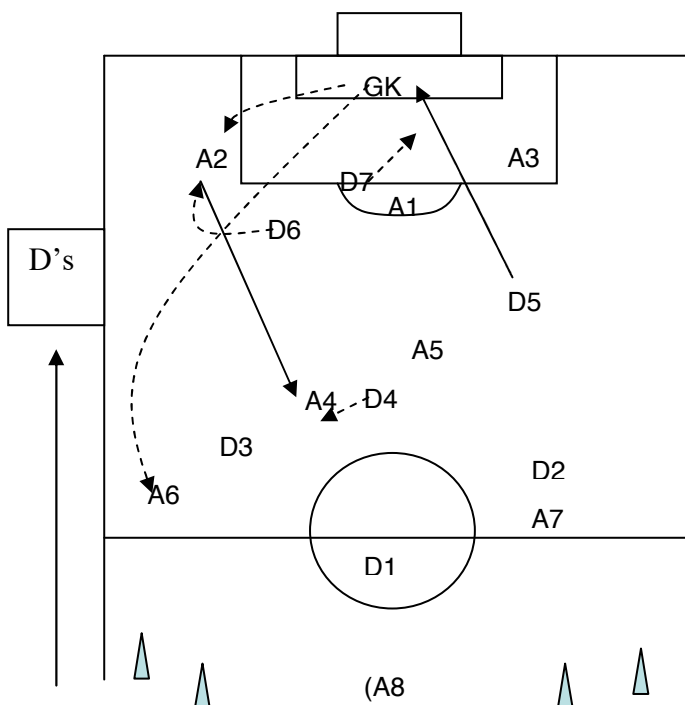
End product- get shots on target- test the keeper.

### Progressions

Introduce a further defender to make more difficult for attacking team

Attacking team has to perform a set number of passes before being allowed to shoot.

HINT- this session requires the defending team to start defending from the front. BUT do not just focus on the front D players. If the ball is played forward, the other defensive units must work to stop it being played forward further.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team to defend in the attacking half

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 3 -1 formation.

Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation plus GK and must attempt to score by dribbling through the cones. If D's win back, they have six passes before they must shoot or pass into the GK.

**START POSITION 1-**Defender D4 spots the run of D6 and attempts to pass to D6 who has by this stage run in behind A2. However, A2 intercepts and the defenders must then defend (see diagram 1)

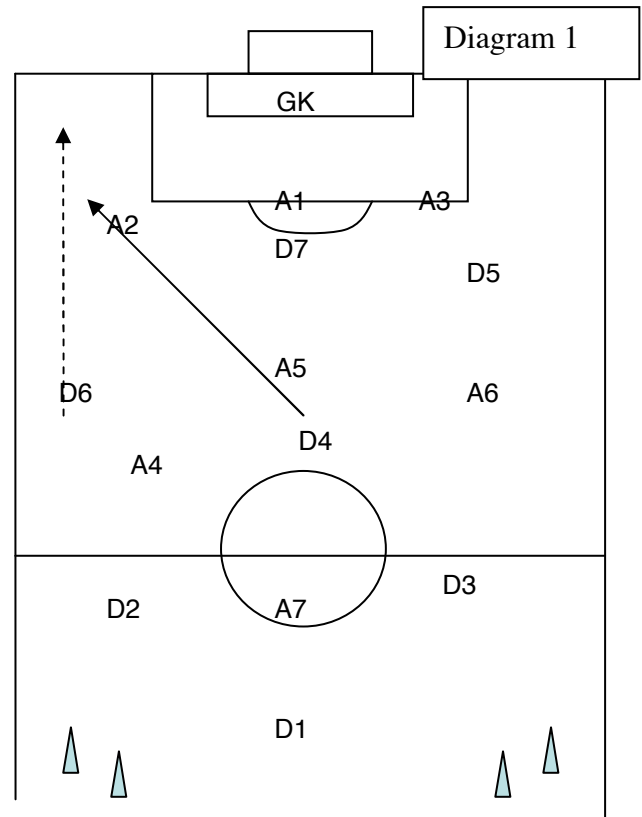
**START POSITION 2-** D4 plays misplaced lofted pass into GK; D7 follows up so that there is a gap in behind and attackers break quickly from the GK.

### Key Factors

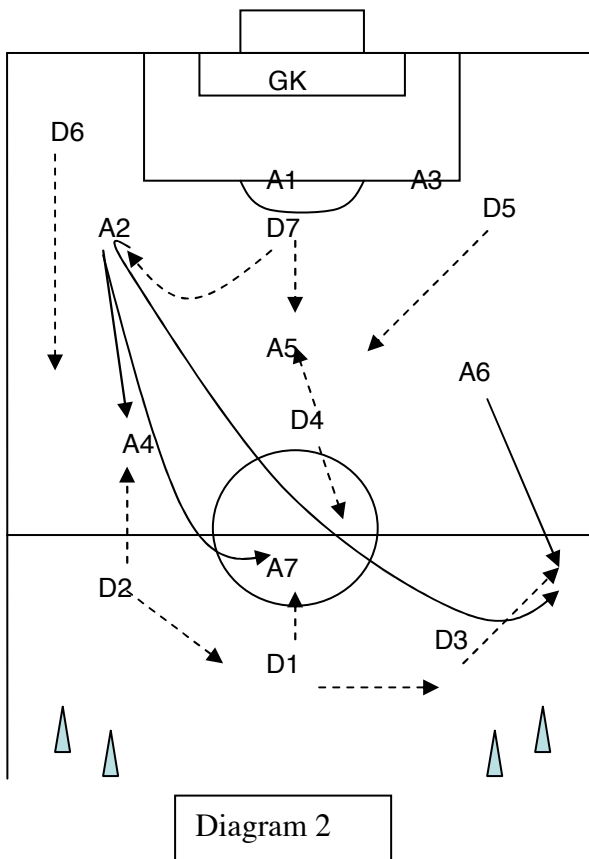
Nearest player to the ball (e.g. D7 moves across to A2 in diagram 2)

Close down the ball early- make up ground as the ball travels (quick transition from attack to defence)

Curve the run to narrow the angle for the attacking player to play forward, e.g. D7 (diagram 2)



Slow down on approach and tackle side on. Can I intercept? If not, stay on your feet.



Prevent opponents from turning, e.g. D2 quickly closes down A4 to stop him from playing forward.

Tracking and recovery runs e.g. D5 and D6 in diagram 2 to get players behind the ball.

Support- first defender closes down, second defender offers support and cover – see the player, see the ball, see the goal.

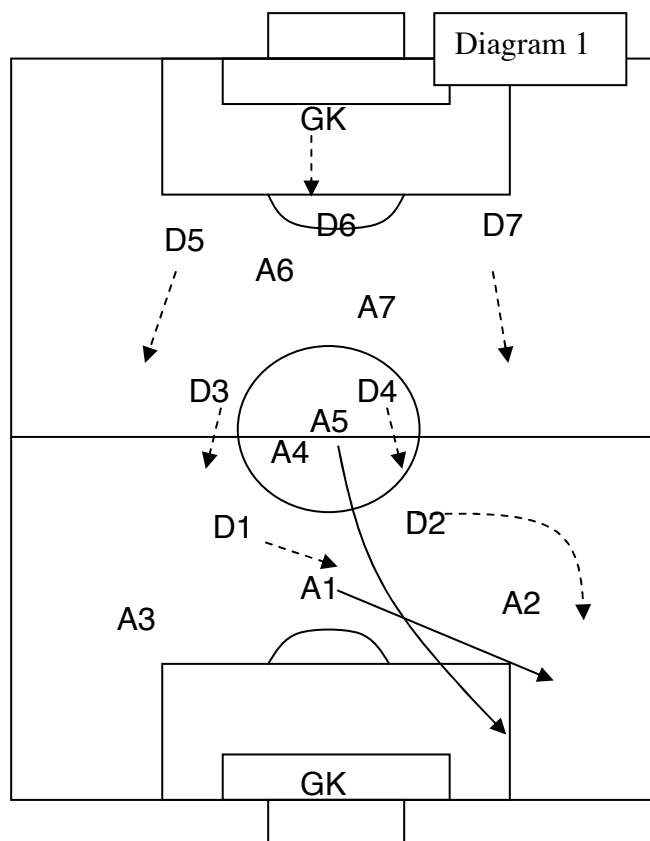
If the ball goes out wide, e.g. to A6, the back three (D1, D2, D3) shuffle across as a unit and one of the full backs becomes a centre back  
If the ball is played forward, can we win the second ball or force play backwards?

If the ball is played long (e.g. in diagram 2 from A2 to A7), D1 rises to win the ball and prevent opponents from getting out of their own half

**HINT-** this session requires the defending team to start defending from the front. BUT do not just focus on the front D players. If the ball is played forward, the other defensive units must work to stop it being played forward further.

**START POSITION 2-** Midfielder A5 plays a misplaced pass in between A1 and A2. If Defending team (Ds) win the ball back, they can only have five touches as a team before they must get rid of the ball e.g. by having a shot). This means that the As have most of the ball and the Defending Ds must pressurise.

**Pressure-** Nearest player to the ball (show inside). This means that either D1 or D2 must go to close down depending on which full back receives the ball. Curve the run to block

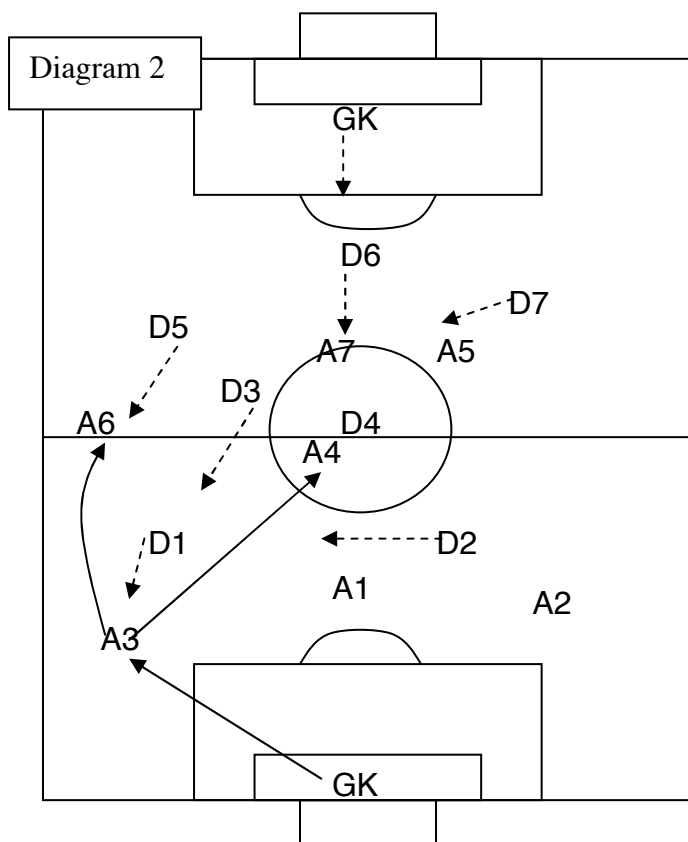


off any balls played down the line. Opposite attacker (D1 in diagram 1) closes down the centre back who originally passed the bad ball.

Close down early and quickly as the ball is moving. Keep opponents playing in front of you. Individual defending technique- adjust speed / body shape / stay on feet. Can I see the player, the ball and the goal?

Can I intercept or prevent forward passing? If not, feint to tackle to put opposing off.

Cover and support  
Midfield and defensive units offer support- e.g. in Diagram 2, D3 covers as D1 closes down A3. Meanwhile, D5 gets tight to A6 to prevent attackers from exiting their own half. D2 shuffles across to compact space. D4 marks A4 tight to prevent him turning. GK pushes up to act as sweeper. Be compact- all three units- make play predictable. Communication- give clear and concise information (e.g. to offer cover and support).



HINT- be sure to coach on, around and away from the ball- do not just focus on the first two attackers (D1 and D2) who close down the ball. Focus on what the midfield and back players of the defensive team are doing to cover and help keep play in the opposing team's half.

**3) Attitude-** speed, energy and dynamism to create space. Encourage regular (almost constant) movement to make it difficult for defenders to track.

## Session Aim- In a small sided game, coach one team on dribbling to shoot

### Organisation

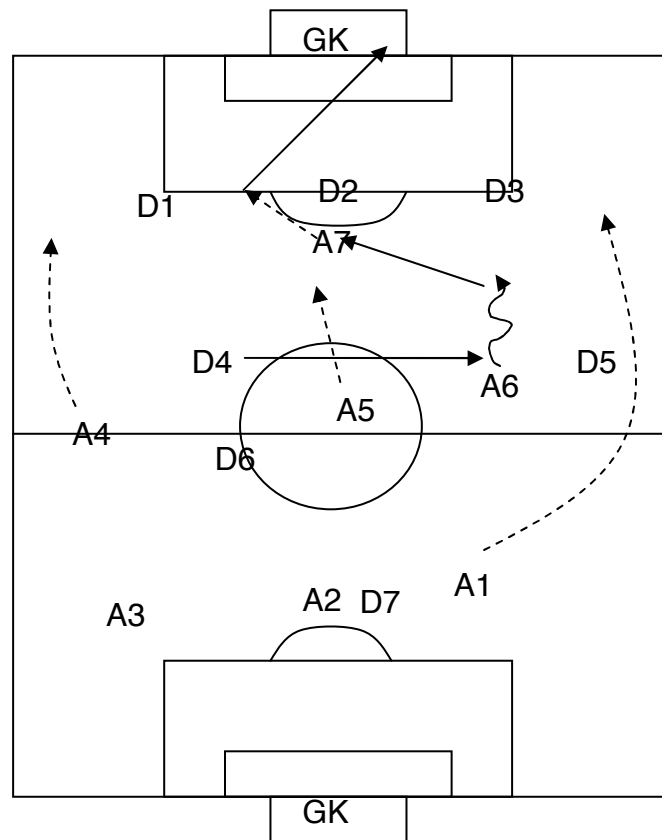
SSG 8 V 8 - Defending team play in a 3-2-2 formation plus GK.

Attacking team play 3-3-1 so that there is plenty of dribbling from midfield. Coach A's only.

**START:** A6 intercepts a pass intended for D5 who is out wide. A6 must dribble with the intention of an end product for his team (shot on goal)

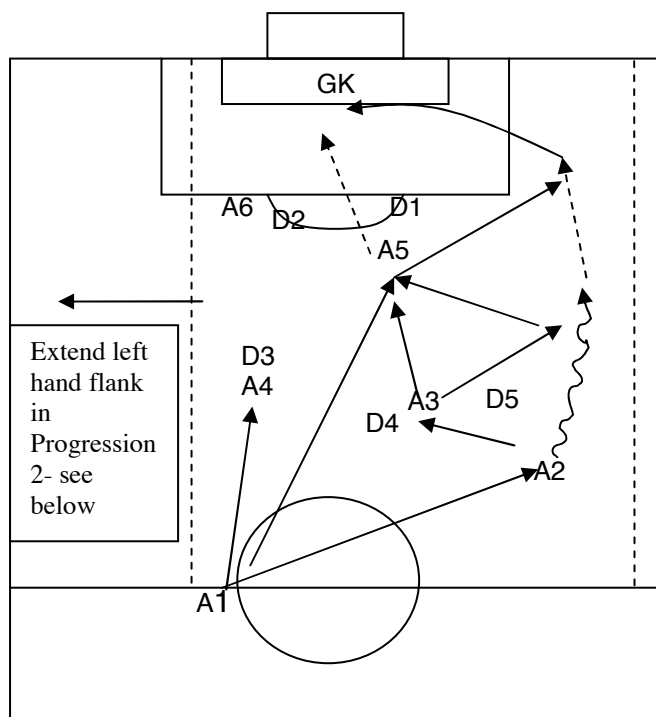
### Key Factors

- Positive attitude to attack the space ahead at speed.
- First Touch- out of feet and in the direction of run
- Technique – contact with laces of the boot as player gets into his/her stride.
- Head up to observe as A6 approaches the penalty area (opportunity for one-two pass)
- Decision at appropriate time
  - Dribble (can I commit an opponent, e.g. D3)
  - Pass (can I commit an opponent before passing. to A7 or A5)
  - Shoot (If there is there space)
- Support / movement of the other players (in front, behind and square), e.g. A1 or A4 move forward to overlap/ provide support from wide areas.
- Quality of shot- technique, e.g. head over ball, accuracy before power
- Dribble to switch play and switch play to allow others to dribble, i.e. if one player cannot dribble as they have several opponents in front of them, encourage them to switch across the pitch to another player who can then dribble forward (and vice versa)
- Encourage inventiveness, e.g. takeovers as players dribble towards each other to wrong-foot opponents before shooting. BUT there must be an end product.
- Communication- clear, concise to let player in possession know that support is available, e.g. from GK.
- **HINT-** Be careful not to just focus on the player who is dribbling. You must also coach the others around him on support play, especially if there is no space to dribble.





## Session Aim- In a function, coach one team to improve flank play



### Organisation

Cone off the central area of the pitch (approx 30 by 35 yards) as shown by dashed lines. Play six attackers against five defenders plus GK. Focus on the right flank first.

START: A1 plays the ball to A2 from the centre line (or vice-versa). Alternatively, A1 can play to any attacking player in a good position. See diagram 1.

### Key Factors

Create space to receive ball from all players- e.g. check away and back again to lose marker. A2 must try to provide width

Can I go forward? Receive the ball on the half turn in order to try to go forward. If

defender marks close, keep possession and play the way you are facing.

Positive attitude of winger A2- look to drive/ dribble forward where possible- can I take on the defender D5 and D1 with clever tricks or speed

- make early decisions

Combination play - e.g. a quick one-two pass with A3 OR with A5

- Overlaps in wide areas, e.g. A3 overlaps A2

Quality of crossing from A2 - can I get to the by line?

- clear near post defender D1
- cross from wide, deep positions where possible

Shooting- early shots, end product- hit the target. A5 and A6 must get on the end of crosses from A2

Be dynamic- players need to be constantly moving to drag defenders out of position, e.g. a quick give and go pass. Support play- e.g. players running from deep areas (timing and angle of run, e.g. A3, A4).

Variation of attack- in such a confined space, emphasise the importance of short along the floor passing and quick combination play. The ball does not have to go out to A2 straight away; wait until s/he is in space to receive the ball.

PROGRESSION 1- Vary the feed from A1, e.g. to players other than just A2.

PROGRESSION 2- extend the pitch on the left hand side so that there are two flanks with which to play. Add an extra defender whilst A1 combines with the rest of the attackers.

## Session Aim- Phase of play- When, where and how to turn

### Organisation

Phase of play: 8 attackers and 1 feeder on attacking team

Defending team has 7 players plus GK.

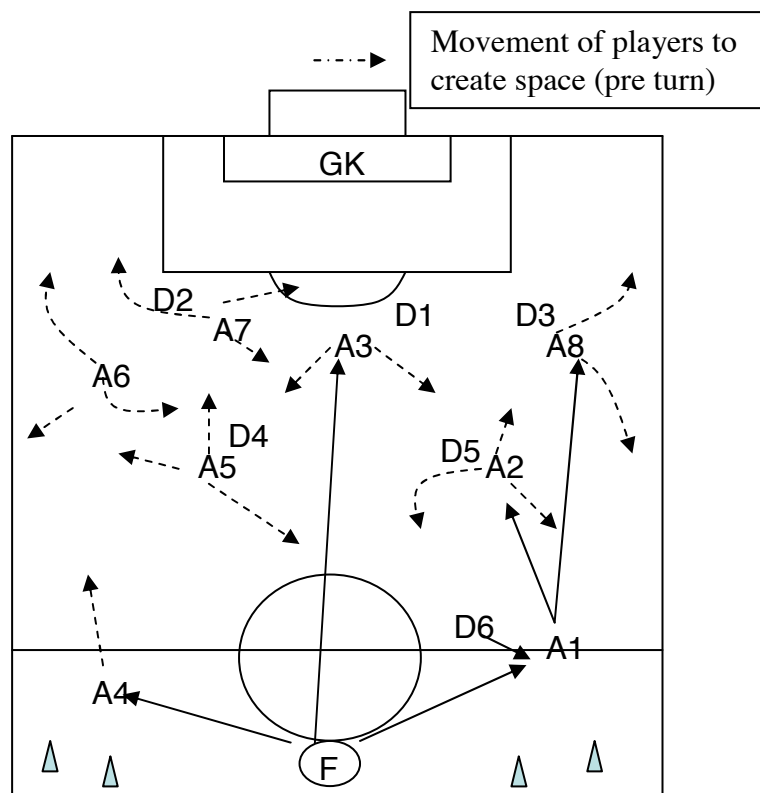
If defending team win the ball, they have five touches as a team to score through the two targets or pass to the feeder.

**START 1-** Feeder 'F' plays the ball out to A1 who looks to play forward to A2 or A8.

**START 2-** Feeder 'F' plays to other side of pitch (A4) or directly to attacking players A5, A3, A7 etc.

### Key Factors

- Initial movement to create space to receive the ball
- When to turn?
  - Do I have space to turn into?
  - Am I being marked? If yes, should I play the way I'm facing?
  - OR, Can I beat my opponent with a turn? (attacking areas only)
- Body position- Can I receive the ball on the half turn?(which means I don't have to turn later), e.g. can A8 receive on the half turn so that s/he can face up to the full back and attempt to beat him.
- Technique of turn (How to turn)- early decision, low body position, bend knees, manipulate ball and accelerate away.
- Purpose of turn
  - a) to change direction (unopposed), e.g. to face up an opponent and play forward (or to swift play, e.g. A1 switches play to A4)
  - b) to beat an opponent
  - c) to create space for a shot
- Where to turn (and where not to)
  - Fancy turns and tricks acceptable in final third
  - In defensive third or where cover is short, play the way you're facing (or when setting a team mate up for a shot)
- Type of turn
  - Demonstrate range of turns (Cruyff, drag back, inside/ outside hook etc.)
- Movement of players a) to find space b) to support the player who has turned.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach one team and GK to play out from the back

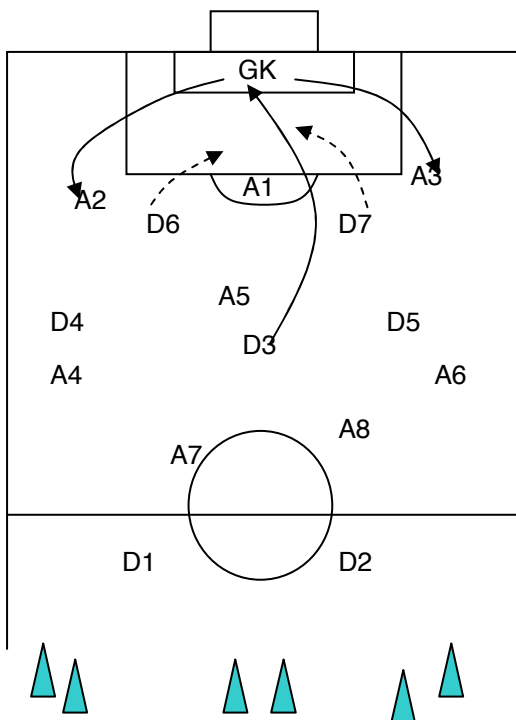
### Organisation

Phase of play over two thirds of a pitch. Coach the attacking side: 8 attackers and GK playing down pitch. They must score through the three mini goals at the bottom of the pitch. The defending team have 7 players and play up pitch in a 2-3-2 formation. They attempt to score in the main goal.

**START:** D3 plays a misplaced pass from midfield to the GK. The Defensive forward (D6 or D7) run towards the GK as if trying to chase down the ball. The GK then throws out to either full back (e.g. A2 or A3)- see Diagram 1

**START 2-** as above but the GK can kick/ throw the ball out to any attacking player (not just the full backs).

Diagram 1- start position as the GK takes possession



Trigger action- as soon as GK has taken firm possession of ball, this is the signal for the full backs A2 and A3 to go wide and call for the GK to throw out. Wingers A4 and A6 should also move out wide. Centre forwards push forward in anticipation of a long kick.

### Key Factors

#### a) as the Goal keeper takes possession (Diagram 1)

Defence stay compact to make safe the central area

Composure of Goalkeeper- watch ball and make sure you have it safely in your hands before looking up to make a quick throw or kick.

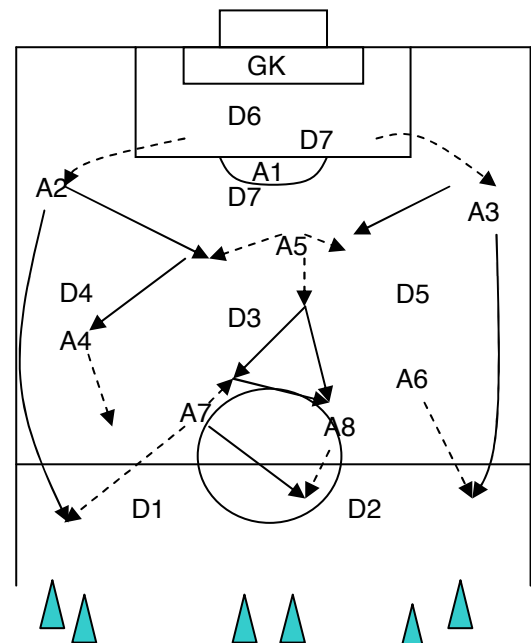


Diagram 2- attacking once GK has released the ball.

b) as soon as the GK has released the ball (diagram 2)

Can I receive on the half turn to pass forward? (e.g. A2, A3 or A5?) If not, play the way you are facing and keep possession.

Early decision making from outfield players: pass or run with ball (attack space with a positive attitude)

GK alert and sweeps up behind defence in case play breaks down early.

GK comes towards edge of 18 yard box as defence pushes up. Loud communication from GK.

Support play-. Early and fast movement of players into advanced and wide support positions. A5 offers support in central area and looks to switch play where appropriate OR play forward to A8. Offer support in triangles- behind, in front and level with the player who has possession- see triangles in diagram 2.

Passing technique- quality of pass, safe side passing, i.e. don't give the ball away easily or take silly risks especially in your own third

End product- score through mini goals (central and wide areas)

Vary the type of passing - long balls in the air to be flicked on)

- short balls played in between the defensive line and the Defensive midfielders
- high balls played into space behind
- low ball played into space behind

Support play from central midfielders running from deep to help attackers (e.g. for the attackers to set the ball for central midfielders to take a shot).

HINT- Be sure that the GK varies the type of feed as he receives the ball from the start positions, e.g. short and long kicks or throws to a variety of different players. Avoid the situation where the two full backs are constantly picking up the ball on the edge of their penalty area. This is unrealistic to a game situation as the defence would push much further forward.

PROGRESSION

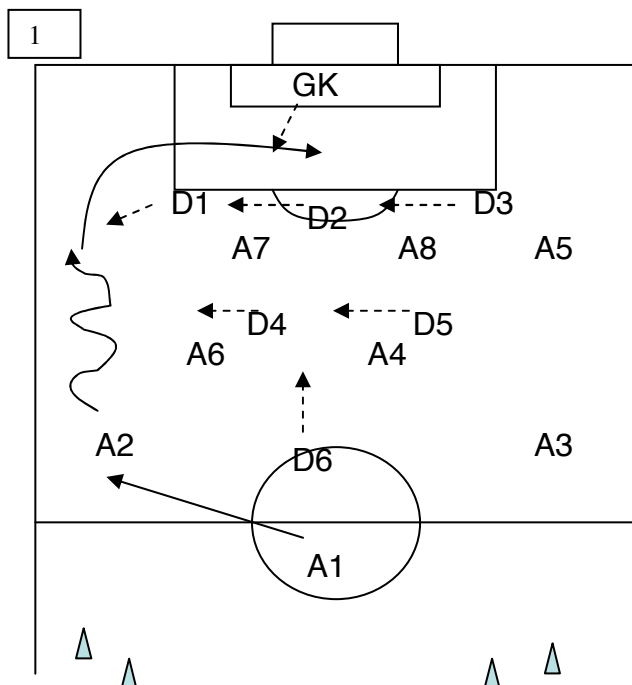
Introduce an extra defender to make play harder for the attacking team.



## Session Aim- In a phase of play, coach defending from crosses

### Organisation

Phase of play (8 V 7). Work with Defending team (D's) in a 3- 2 -1 formation plus GK. Attacking team line up in a 3-3-2 formation in order to be able to exploit wide areas.



**START POSITION 1-** A1 plays the ball out to A2 (or A3) who then combine with the rest of the attacking team. Encourage them to try to attack using the wings to create as many opportunities as possible for the defending team to defend the wide defensive third. Get attacking team to alternate wings.

If defending team win the ball back, they have five touches as a team to try to score through the mini goals.

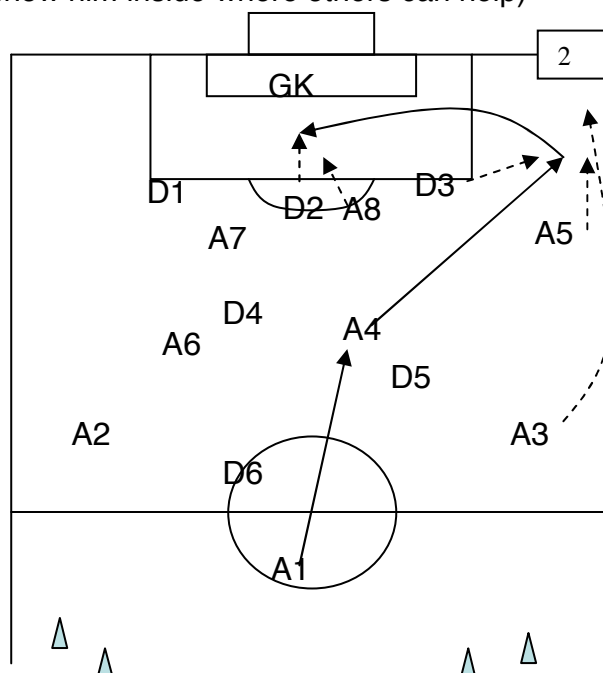
### Key Factors

- As a coach, affect the thinking of the full back:
  - speed of approach
  - angle of approach
  - show him outside to isolate him (unless winger is particularly quick or tricky in which case show him inside where others can help)

- concentrate on ball
- feint to tackle- get the winger's head down
- stay on your feet
- try to prevent crosses
- watch overlaps (e.g. A3 in diagram 2)

- Watch crosses into box, • Be first to the ball (determination), • No free headers (take responsibility), • Clear (Long/ High/ Wide), • Communication- name on ball; squeeze up as ball is cleared.

- Cover positions- nearest player (centre back) move across to support full back and to mark attacking centre forwards (see diagram 1)
- Other players at the back shuffle across to close the gap (e.g. D3). But be ready for any switch to the other wing.
- Support depends on full back's body shape. Is he showing the attacker inside or outside? GK sweeps behind.
- Defending midfielders make compact and watch midfield runners.



**START POSITION 2 –** midfielder A1 plays into nearest forward who plays ball wide behind fullback for a cross (see diagram 2). A3 overlaps. Full back D3 closes down first.

**NOTE:** For this session to work effectively, you must have two good wingers on the attacking team (who are capable of putting in crosses) and putting the defenders under pressure.