

TONKA UNITED SOCCER ASSOCIATION

ATTACKING AND DEFENDING FROM SET PLAYS

Statistics show that between 40 and 50 per cent of goals scored in the game of soccer are scored from set plays, or when possession is regained immediately following a set play. This makes set plays by far a very important factor in scoring goals and winning games. Almost 90% of set plays in the attacking third are the result of direct positive play and the pressure that is immediately applied to the defending team. Teams do not generally set out with the aim of gaining set plays. Set plays come as a by-product of positive play. **Set plays are a second prize when direct positive play has just failed to succeed.**

There are 5 basic advantages in attacking at set plays as opposed to attacking in the normal course of fluid play.

1. The kick or throw is always made with a ball that is still; control problems are therefore eliminated.
2. The opponents should be ten yards away from the ball. There is therefore no pressure on the kicker.
3. A large number of attackers can move forward in advanced positions without incurring risk.
4. Players can be placed in pre-determined positions to maximize the use of individual abilities.
5. Rehearsal can produce high levels of timing and coordinated movement.

These five factors make defending at set plays extremely difficult. Defending at set plays however, can be made even more difficult if attackers concentrate on playing the percentages. They should aim to provide the service, and the arrangement of the players, which will produce the best results on most occasions.

Set plays therefore often decide the outcome of the game. With this in mind the defending team should appreciate that they are not only defending against the set play but also against a possible secondary scoring chance immediately following the set play. Therefore a team that can avoid giving away set plays in their own final third will make it difficult for their opponents to score.

Three qualities are needed for successful defending:

1. **Planning and organization.** Players must be selected to fill specific positions using their individual strengths.
2. **Individual and team discipline.** Efficiency of the team depends on the individual player sticking to the job he/she has been given.
3. **Concentration.** Lapses in concentration are a major problem at set plays. Concentration is vital if the players are to successfully do the job they have been given.

Defensive organization needs to be thought out in detail. Players must be detailed to specific tasks and each situation should be rehearsed. When players are drilled in what to do, they are more likely to keep their concentration, and the danger from set plays is thereby reduced. Once the ball is cleared the whole defense should push out with the play in order to leave as many attackers as possible in an offside position. In tactical terms, the basic problem for the defending team at all set plays is to achieve the best possible balance between marking players and marking space.

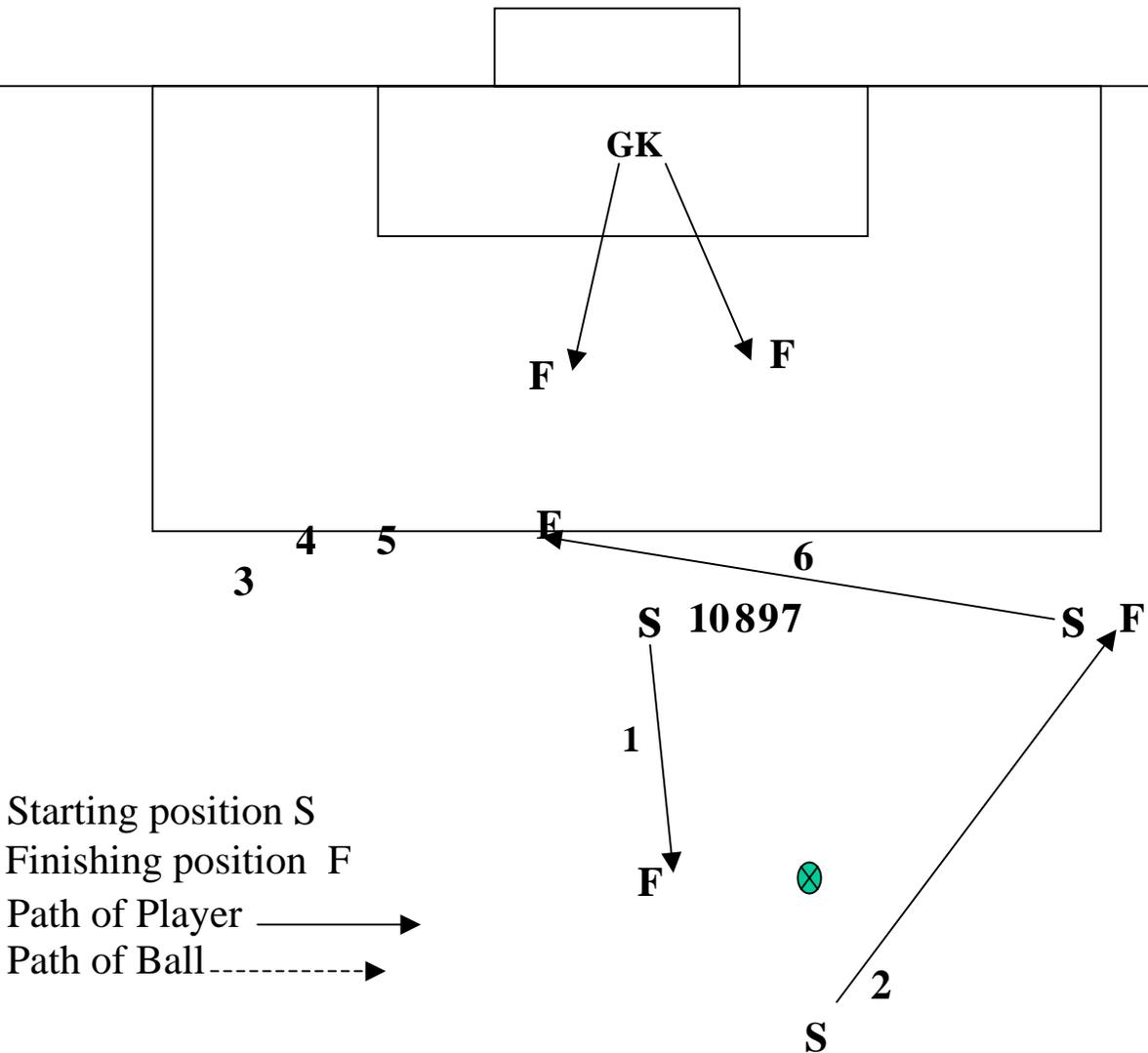
Points for the coach to remember in all set plays:

1. Detailed planning and organization
2. Rehearsal to co-ordinate and integrate the performance of the individual with that of the team.
3. Mental concentration
4. Discipline
5. Application

Use the following set plays as a guide to help you create more ways of attacking and defending efficiently. Be inventive. Be creative.

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DEFENDING FREE KICK # 1



Defending freekick in the final third middle of field .

Player 2 sets up the wall and lines up Players 7 and 9 to spilt the post.

Player 2 changes places with 6. Player 6 now runs to support the inside of the wall and mark if nessarsary.

Players 10 and 8 make up the rest of the wall. Players 3, 4 and 5 take up marking positions on the far post areas, marking inside to outside.

Player 1 is on hand to close down the ball if it is played short, (Kamikaze)

Be alert for runners and be prepared to track. **Do not pass players on this close to the goal.**

These positions may change to accommodate the opposition. Be prepared to adjust positions. Open stance to see both ball and the player being marked.

Do not let players run behind the defense line track at all costs.

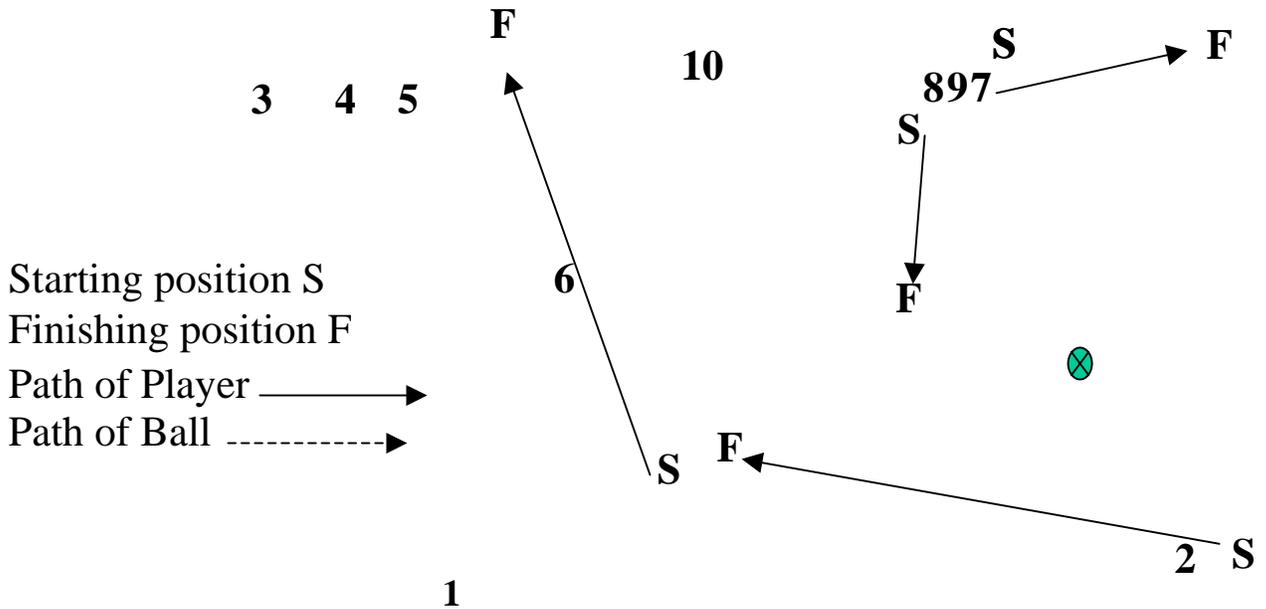
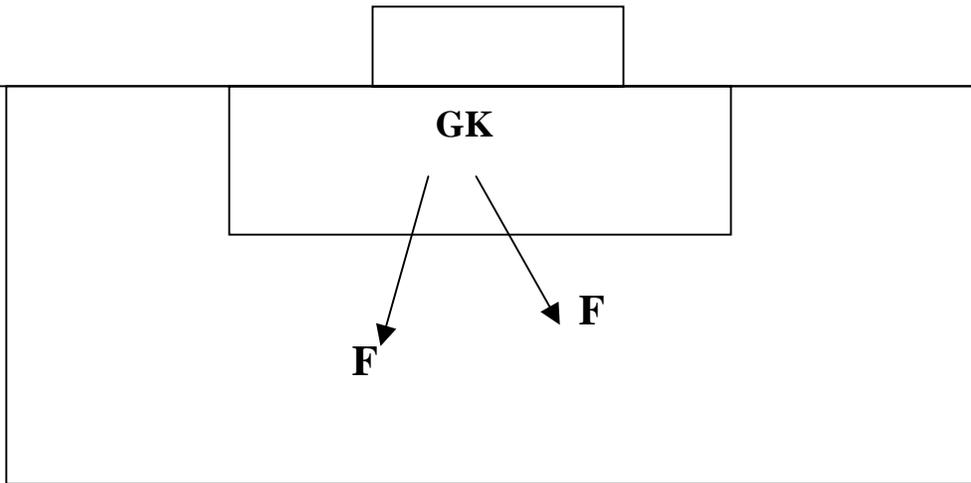
Be alert for second ball opportunities. Attack the ball early and clear high long and wide.

Push out and be compact as the play proceeds down the field.

Leave space for the keeper work in.

Be aware of loose balls and clear high and long

DEFENDING FREE KICKS # 2



Defending freekick in the final third of the field out wide. Player 2 sets up the wall lines up 7 and 9 to spilt the post. Player 2 changes places with 6. Player 6 now fills in through the middle of the field. Player 7 also covers down the flank if the ball is played down the line Player 8 is kamikaze for the ball touched inside. Player 10 covers the far post shooting option. Players 3, 4, and 5 take up marking positions on the far post areas, marking inside to outside. Player 1 remains up field for quick break outs.

Get across the player you are marking. Be alert for runners and be prepared to track.

Be prepared to adjust positions and change quickly to accommodate for the opposition.

Open stance to see both ball and the player being marked. Be alert for second ball opportunities. Do not pass players on this close to the goal.

Attack the ball early and clear high long and wide. Push out and be compact as play proceeds down the field.

Leave space between the keeper and the last line of defense to work in.