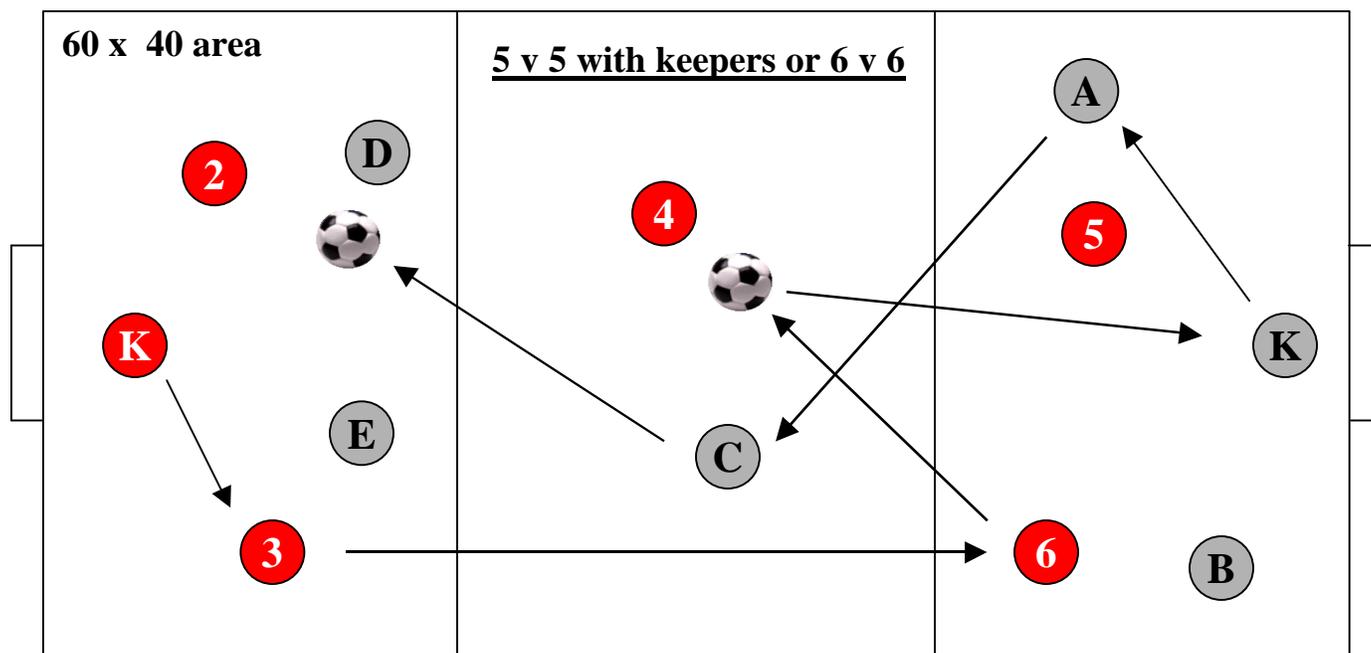


## TRANSITION GAMES MAINTAINING SHAPE AND BALANCE

The following set ups can be used with different numbers of players to suit training needs (odd number use a free player). You will achieve the same results be it 4 v 4 , 6 v 6, 7 v 7, 8 v 8, 9 v 9 up to 11 v 11. Last year we developed the concept of defenders attacking, this year the theme is transitions.



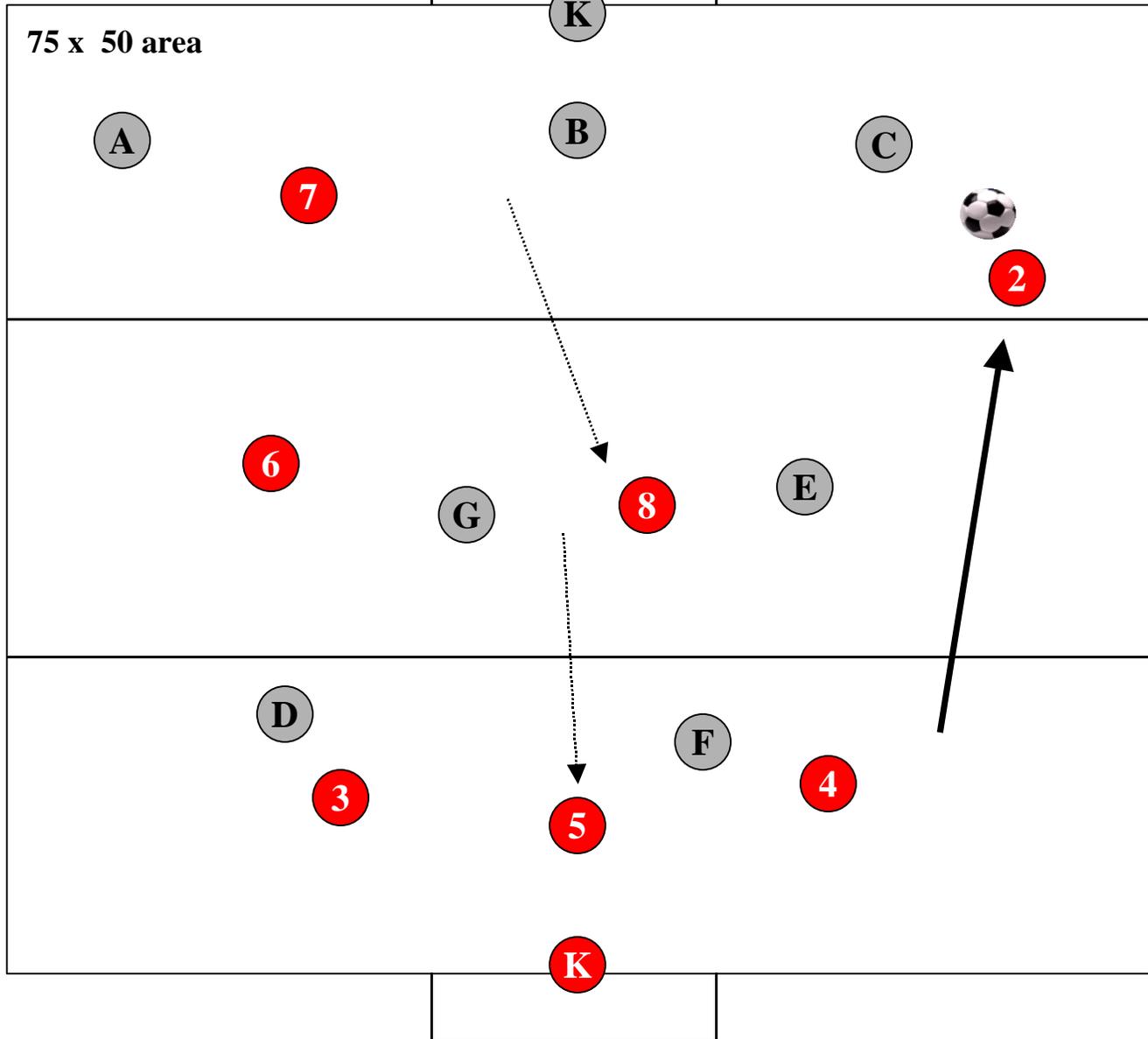
1. Playing **through each other** a ball per team to begin using the principles developed with the use of the A.I.A. program. Players stay in own zones to begin, maintaining shape throughout the team. They can shoot at the end of the move then start a new move from the keeper again. The coach can suggest options using one word to get them to think about different types of movement; forward, back, switch, etc, then let them work it out themselves.
2. Develop by allowing players to cross over zones to support each other. Still no opposition just two teams playing through each other. Once the move is over they return to their original team shape. Initially have the same players drop back to their respective zones.
3. Develop – Have them return to the original team shape but encourage other players to do it depending on where they are on the field. An example; (2) runs forward and finishes in the attacking third (an attacking overlap run in a game), wait to see if the players recognize that (4) drops back into the defensive third to cover and (2) drops back to the middle third (shortest route back), so (2) only has to get back 15 yards instead of 30 yards.
4. Develop – Into a competitive game situation. Defending players must stay in their own zones to allow the attacking concept to take shape. (Wayne Harrison)



# TRANSITIONS OVER TWO THIRDS

8 v 8

3-2-2

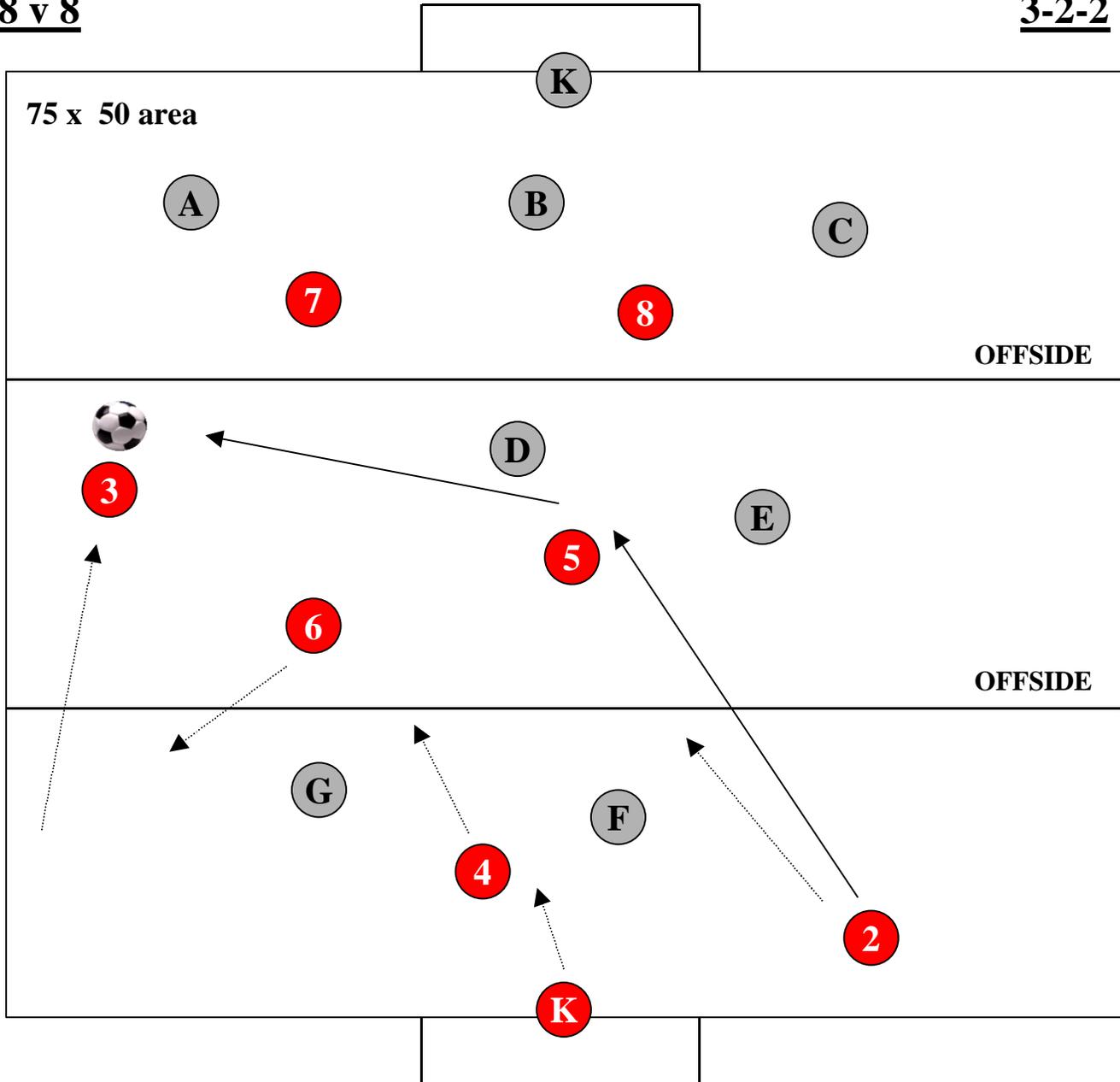


1. (2) on the ball may run over three zones with the ball, if and / or when the move breaks down and the opposition win the ball, (5) can replace (2) and (8) can replace (5) so each player gets back the team shape by the shortest route. This encourages particularly the fullbacks to attack down the flanks as they know they don't face a 50 yard run back in a game situation because a teammate will cover for them. It may only result in a 10 or 15 yard run initially saving energy and time.
2. This method of playing gives **FREEDOM** to the players. You can encourage the players to communicate with each other as this is happening, for example (2) runs forward with the ball and instructs (5) to be prepared to cover.
3. Players **change back** to their positions **as soon** as they can within the game. Can **run** the ball in, **pass** it in, or pass it in to a **runner** from your own zone. (Wayne Harrison)

# INTRODUCING OFFSIDE

8 v 8

3-2-2

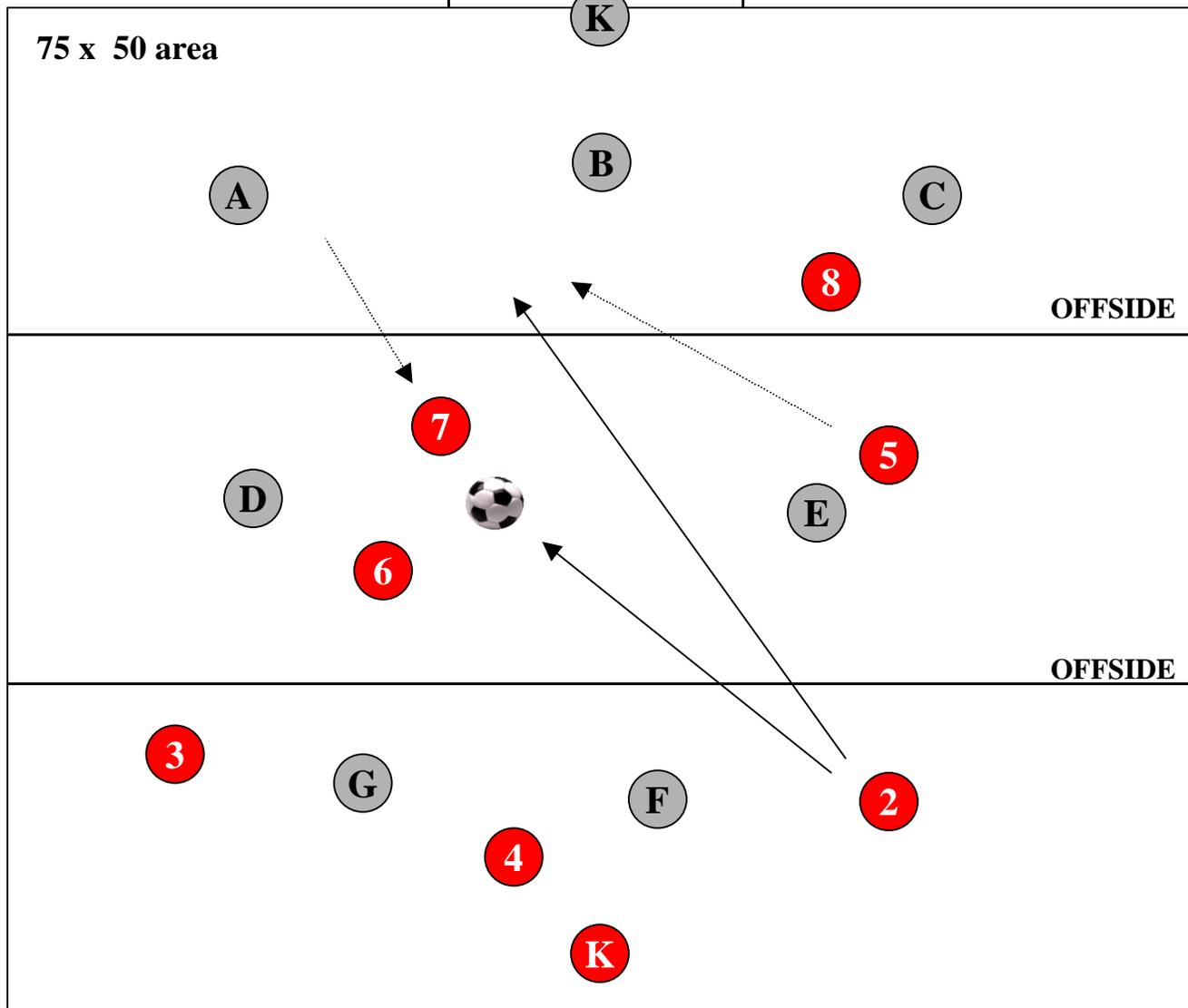


1. Player (2) passes the ball into the middle zone to (5), (3) moves up from the defensive zone to the middle zone to support. This type of **transition movement** is important because it allows players to move **freely** between the zones knowing they will have a team mate covering for them. Develop – Have **offside from the defensive third** of the field. (2) passes the ball forward and both (2), (4) and the keeper push up.
2. In terms of the **opposition** this rapid movement and transition makes it **difficult** for them to pick players up, to read what your team is doing. Usually (D) would be marking (6) (who can cover) but now has to think about marking (3).
3. This means defenders **aren't just** defenders, midfielders **aren't just** midfielders and attackers **aren't just** attackers they work to **help each other** through the three units of the team and are free to mix the game up. This is **total soccer** played to encourage the **free movement** of players throughout the teams.

(Wayne Harrison)

# TRANSITIONS BETWEEN THIRDS FOR DEFENDING TEAM ALSO

3-2-2



1. Develop – Have players able to transition back into zones from the attacking third to the midfield third, the midfield third to the defensive third. Defenders still cannot move between zones.
2. A situation can be a striker moves back into the midfield third (to receive to feet or free space for someone else to move into) .and a midfielder moves forward into the attacking third.
3. Develop – Allow defending players to track attacking players into the other zones. When this happens the above situation means the defender follows the striker going short creating space behind for another striker to move into or a midfielder to break forward into. Ultimately **open the game** up so the players have **no** boundaries to use for focus and see if they can work out how to keep that balance and shape on an open field of play.

(Wayne Harrison)

# **PROGRESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FROM START TO FINISH**

1. **STAY IN OWN THIRD**. Players **stay** in their **own** thirds to get a feel for how to maintain shape and how to use width in attack. Spread out in possession in a 3 v 2 overload at the back in the defending third to create a situation where the players are available to receive the ball in space and pass it forward.
2. **TRANSITION BETWEEN THIRDS** Players are allowed to **transition between** thirds but only one at a time. The defending team cannot move between thirds to track the attacking players. When the attacking team lose possession they then become defenders and must immediately drop back into the third they started in. The reason for dropping back and not trying to win it back there and then is because we are working on offensive play and want both teams to have the opportunity to build up play. Can **run** the ball in, **pass** it in, or pass it in to a **runner** from your own third.
3. **TRANSITION OVER TWO THIRDS** Transitions between thirds still but allow players to transition forward over **two of the thirds** for example a defender moves forward into the middle third and ends up in the attacking third. If the move breaks down and the players have to get back into their original shape have the players identify who needs to drop into the defending third. It may not be the actual defender themselves but may be the closest player to the defensive third who can drop back in and **cover** for them thus saving a long run back for the defender. Players get back into their correct position when the situation allows. Look for overlap runs from behind the ball.
4. **OFFSIDE FROM THE DEFENDING THIRD** Introduce **offside** in the **final thirds** at both ends of the field. This encourages teams to move up as the ball is played forward.
5. **SWITCHING POSITIONS** Work on **movement** of midfielders and strikers in terms of play not always being in straight lines. For example movement across the field where two midfielders may **switch positions** or likewise up front where strikers can switch about thus moving defenders around.
6. **TRANSITIONS OF DEFENDING PLAYERS** Allow **defenders** to **track** players into the other thirds they venture into. Now all players can move between thirds but still have it only **one at a time**. This helps highlight how to create space for someone else by the movement of players; a striker comes short, pulls a defender with them and space is created in the area they came from for another striker or a midfielder to move into to receive the pass.
7. **FREE PLAY** **Open the game up**. See if players can maintain their shape without the help of the thirds, if they can transition between units but also keep their balance.
8. **NUMBER OF TOUCHES RESTRICTION** Introduce a three, two then one touch restriction to see if the players can work more quickly and still gain success. This speeds up their decision making in the game. When it is one touch, condition it so they can take more than one touch ( a pass may be so heavy they need two touches) but emphasize they use one touch if it is on to do so. This keeps it realistic.
9. **CONCLUSION** We have developed the session from working in thirds, introduced many progressions to work up to letting the game go free and observing if the players can incorporate into the free game situation, all they have learned. I would recommend using this session on a regular basis and set it up for the scrimmage you usually do at the end of a coaching session