

Notes From
England Water Polo Training Camps
in Bečej (Yugoslavia)
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Position Numbering - 6 on 6



5

6

1

Attack Numbering

4

3

2

Defence Numbering

~~6~~

~~4~~

~~2~~

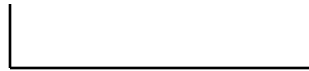
4 m

2 m

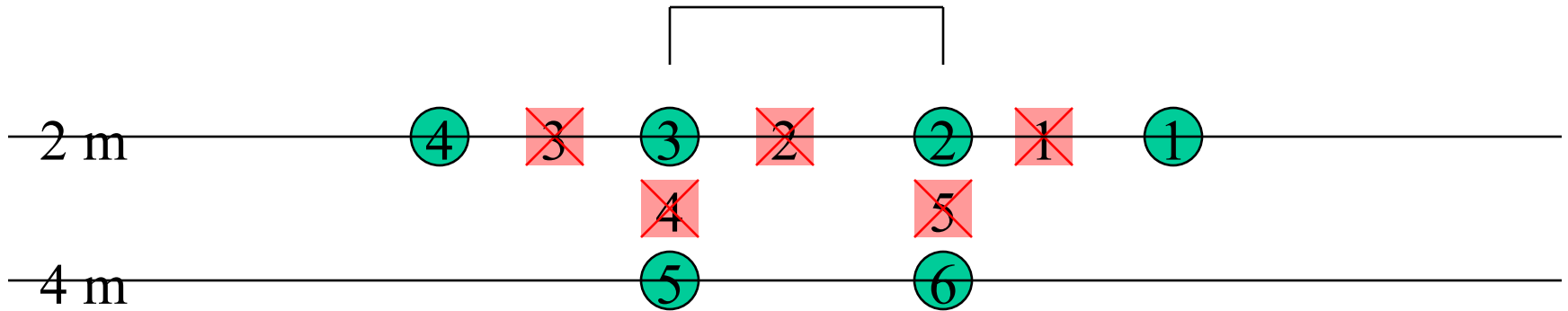
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~~3~~

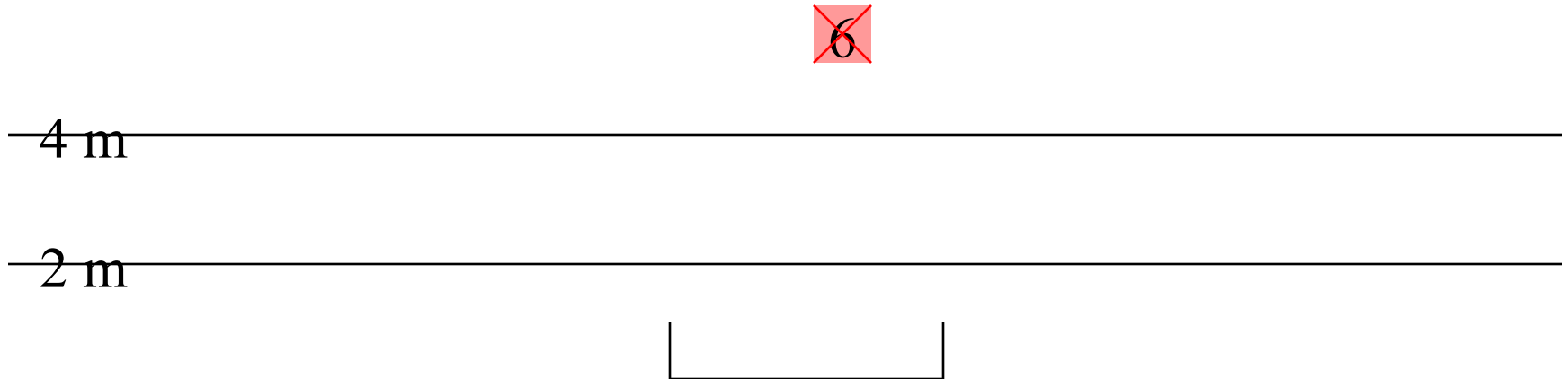
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Position Numbering - Man Up/Down



Attack Numbering



Basic Individual Techniques - Swimming

➤ Swimming

- Polo crawl; high elbow, head constantly up and forward, hands enter water close to head then push out before entering pull phase
- Polo backstroke; always use breaststroke leg kick, head held high to observe play
- Reversing direction while swimming; if turning left bring right arm round to left side of head, at the same time swing right knee up past right side of body and swing around to left side, now do big breaststroke kick start into polo crawl
- Sculling; to enable quick start in any direction place bottom high up in water, wide eggbeater leg kick, both hands wide in front and sculling

Basic Individual Techniques - Passing

- Left hand on water sculling ahead of you facing direction of pass to give balance and direction
- Passer faces chest on to pass to another player
- Ball taken back behind head and thrown as if a light shot
- Torso turns through pass
- For shooting process is accelerated
- Passes should be hard and flat unless defender is between you and recipient of pass

Passing - Drill to Develop Stamina and Consistency

- In groups of three, a maximum of three meters apart, this exercise is divided into five times 5 minutes passing. Within each five minutes the drills are done at three speeds; steady, fast and very fast. Players must maintain their positions in the water. If the ball is dropped by a player, he must sprint to retrieve it, pass it back to another player and the two players will pass between themselves while the third player gets back to his position
- First 5 minutes
 - 3 minutes steady, 1 minute fast, 1 minute very fast - 1 minute rest
- Second 5 minutes
 - 2 minutes steady, 2 minutes fast, 1 minute very fast - 1 minute rest
- Third 5 minutes
 - 1 minute steady, 2 minutes fast, 2 minutes very fast - 1 minute rest
- Fourth 5 minutes
 - 2 minutes fast, 3 minutes very fast - 1 minute rest
- Fifth 5 minutes
 - 5 minutes very fast

Basic Individual Techniques - Shooting

- See passing +
- Ball is gripped **lightly** and rest on hand - means ball does not leave hand due to excess pressure when dummy is carried out
- Ball is gripped with thumb, little finger and fourth finger and **directed** with index and middle finger
- Power is generated from the torso and back - not shoulder as with majority of UK players in turn leading to a large number of shoulder injuries

Basic Individual Techniques - Blocking

➤ Blocking

- Shoulders must be square to opposing player
- Sculling hand forward creating “tripod” of support between eggbeater legs and sculling hand
- Body high out of water leaning slightly forward to enable you to close down opponent
- Blocking arm relaxed i.e. not tensed, to allow rapid reaction to opposing players movements
- Arm should only be tensed when the shot is actually blocked
- Once opponent is reached take hold of his sculling hand/wrist and gently pull down (yanking him down is liable to lead to conceding a foul!)

Warming Up Before a Match

- First seven outfielders
 - Land warm up – lots of stretching, 2 lengths head up crescendo starting on 70%, same again starting on 80%, butterfly with crawl kick x 2, six hard strokes then easy across x 2, two strokes on front two on back with breaststroke leg kick on change x 2, sprint to half way then easy in x 2, sprint and reverse at 4m repeat four times (relay of two people) then sprint to end, sprint to first post then vertical breaststroke legs arms out to second post and easy in x 2, sprint to first post block to second then easy in x 2, pass in groups of 3 for 5 minutes, shoot against second keeper for 10—15 minutes
- Remaining outfielders
 - Land warm up – lots of stretching, two lengths easy swim, simple passing for 10 minutes, then shoot at first keeper, when first seven shooting 15 minutes hard swimming – players get out tired (essential)
- First keeper
 - Land warm up – lots of stretching, leg work across widths, pass for 5 minutes, take shots for 15 minutes working at 100%, rest for 10 minutes before game starts
- Second keeper

Goal Keeping - Leg Strengthening Drill

- Two Keepers face each other about two meters apart and throw a medicine ball to one another with two hands. Ball should be caught and placed on the water behind the head and then thrown back. Two hands used all the time and hands always out the water. One breaststroke leg kick should be used as the ball is passed back.
- Drill done in three positions:
 - Low - Shoulders in water
 - Medium - Shoulders just coming out the water
 - High - Kicking as high as possible
- First five minutes
 - 3 Minutes low, 1 minute medium, 1 minute high - 2.5 minutes rest
- Second five minutes
 - 2 Minutes low, 2 minutes medium, 1 minute high, 2.5 minutes rest
- Third five minutes
 - 1 Minute low, 2 minutes medium, 2 minutes high, 2.5 minutes rest
- Fourth five minutes
 - 1 Minute low, 1 minute high 1 Minute low, 1 minute high, 1 minute high

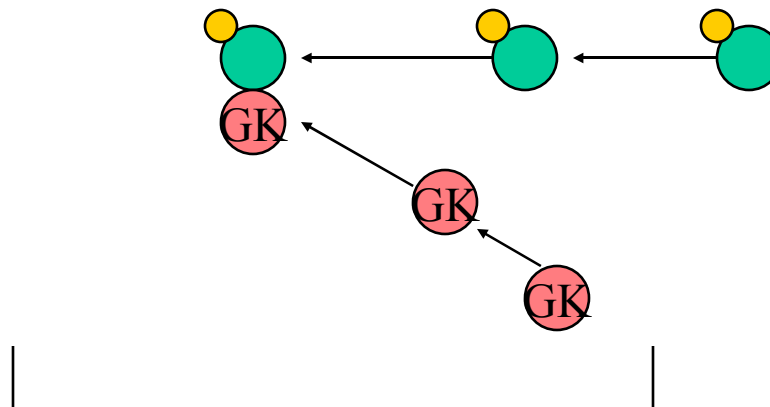
Goal Keeping - Basic Positions

- Resting position
 - Egg-beater, back straight, sitting position, hands working slowly in short sculling action, hands to front of body and elbows in to maintain a parallel position of the forearms
- Waiting position
 - Egg-beater, back straight, legs working harder, head elevated to view field of play, hands sculling short firmer strokes, hands to front of body, elbows bent to keep hands close to chest, elbows close to one another to maintain a parallel position of the forearms, legs doing majority of work
- Shot position
 - Egg-beater, legs working vigorously to maintain position, head slightly bowed forward eyes looking ahead at ball, hands sculling short light strokes, hands ball width apart, hands to front of body, elbows bent to keep hands close to chest, elbows close to one another to maintain a parallel position of the forearms, legs doing majority of work
- Close shot position
 - Egg-beater, back leaning slightly forward, legs working strongly to maintain position, head slightly bowed forward eyes looking ahead at ball, hands raised forwards with elbows at water level held one width apart, elbows in to maintain a parallel position of the forearms, arms relaxed as lower body works hard, position looks like a puma ready to pounce

NOTE – Relaxed arms in close shot position allows much quicker reaction to attacker's shot

Goal Keeping - One on Nothing

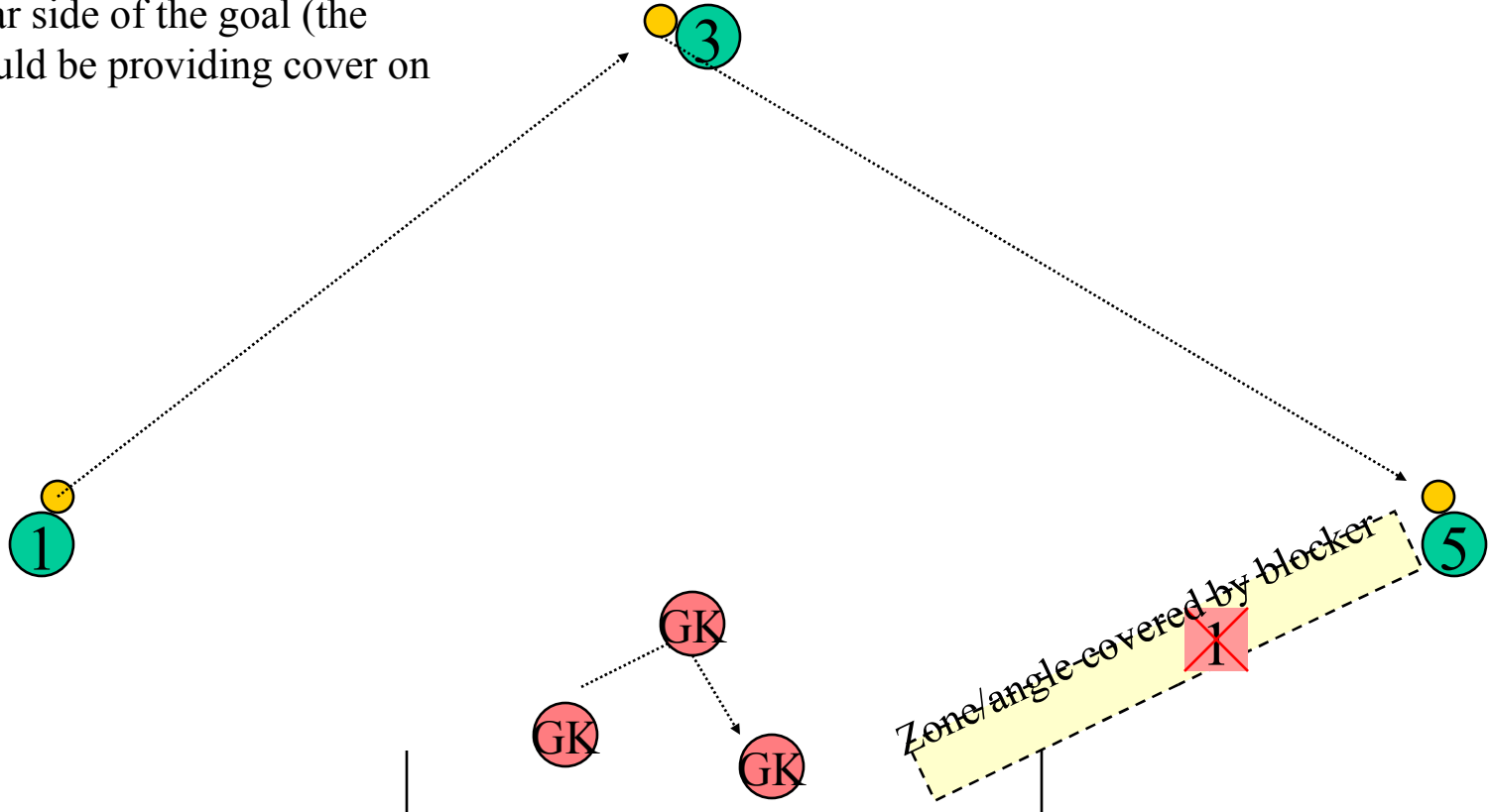
- Start in *close shot position*
- As player advances move to minimise his scoring angles
- When attacker moves across the face of goal move to minimise his scoring angles by shifting whole body (force hips into new position) – stay in *close shot position* at all times
- As attacker moves across goal the keeper moves at a 45 degree to the attacker's line of movement to close down the shooting angle but simultaneously get closer to the opponent. This prevents multiple dummy shots as the keeper gets to a point where he can rise up and vigorously attack man and ball to smother effort on goal
- Keeper should have relaxed arms with legs working hard to maintain position and be ready for attacker to shoot at any time
- As the attacker shoots the keeper should kick up and forward using hand/s, arms and body to block the shot



Goal Keeping - Cross Passes from Attackers 1-3-6

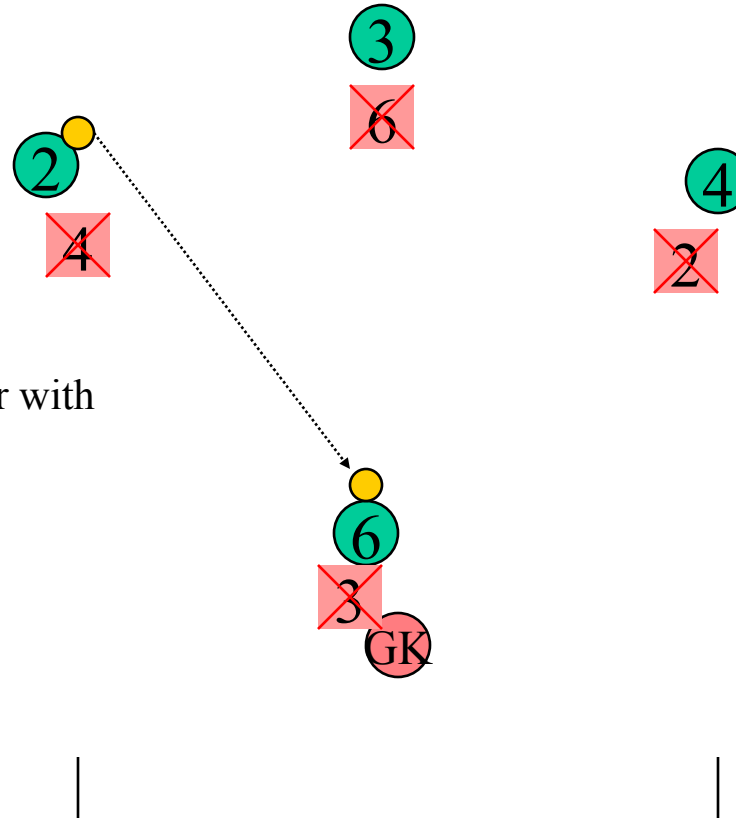
Keeper sets to face attacker 2, as ball is passed to attacker 3 keeper moves out and to the middle of the goal to cover shot. When ball is passed to attacker 5 the keeper moves sharply back in to goal to prevent shot into middle and far side of the goal (the defender should be providing cover on the near post)

This situation would be encountered, for example, when we are playing a drop with Defenders 4 and 5 i.e. on the left side of defence



Goal Keeping - Ball Played to Pit Forward from Attacker Number 2

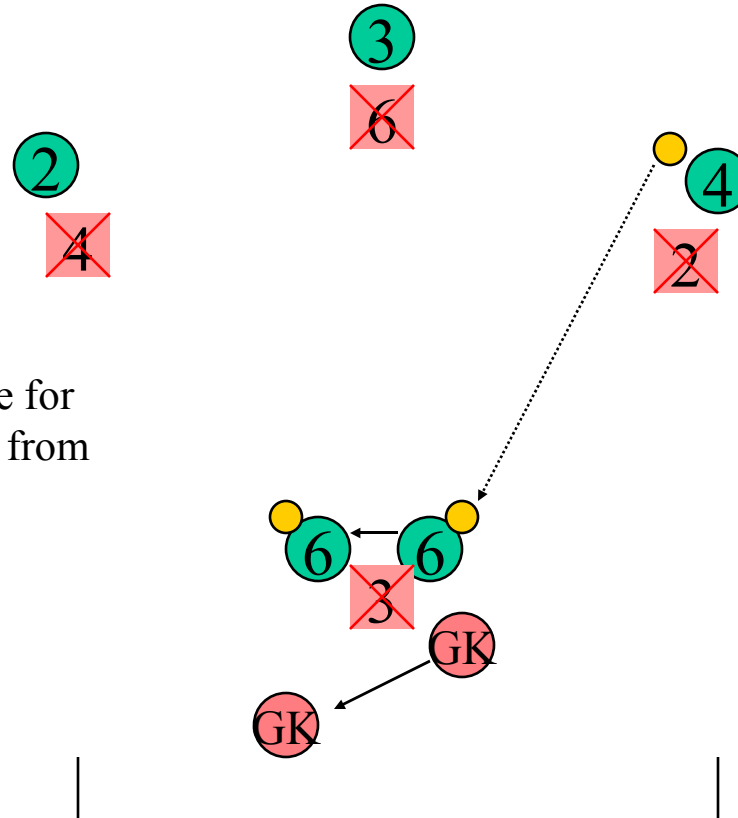
- Keeper should start in “Shot Position” when Attackers 2, 3 or 4 have the ball. As the ball is played into the pit keeper should advance to a position behind the shooters arm. Keeper should have both hands raised high above his head, be kicking up and leaning forwards with head tilted forward as well, but eyes looking at the ball. As Attacker 6 back flips the ball the keeper should kick up and try make the save. If at all possible the keeper should attempt to steal the incoming ball, or alternatively smother the ball and Attacker 6 as the ball arrives. Do not concede the penalty or major foul.



Back flip shot defence for keeper with pass into pit coming from attack position number 2

Goal Keeping - Ball Played to Pit Forward from Attacker Number 4

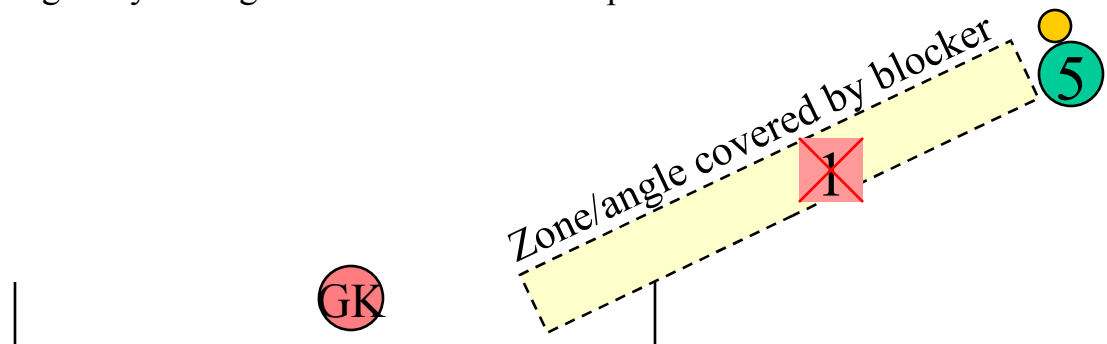
- Keeper starts in *shot position* while attacker 4 has the ball
- As attacker 4 passes into the pit the keeper should advance and raise arms in *close shot* position to cover back flip from attacker 6
- If attacker 6 turns his man to the left (usually for sweep shot) keeper should keep arms up but move 45 degrees left and back to goal – arms stay relaxed until shot comes – and block the shot
- If attacker 6 kicks away from goal and rolls on to back to fire shot then keeper should move back towards goal line to gain more distance from shooter in which to read and block the shot



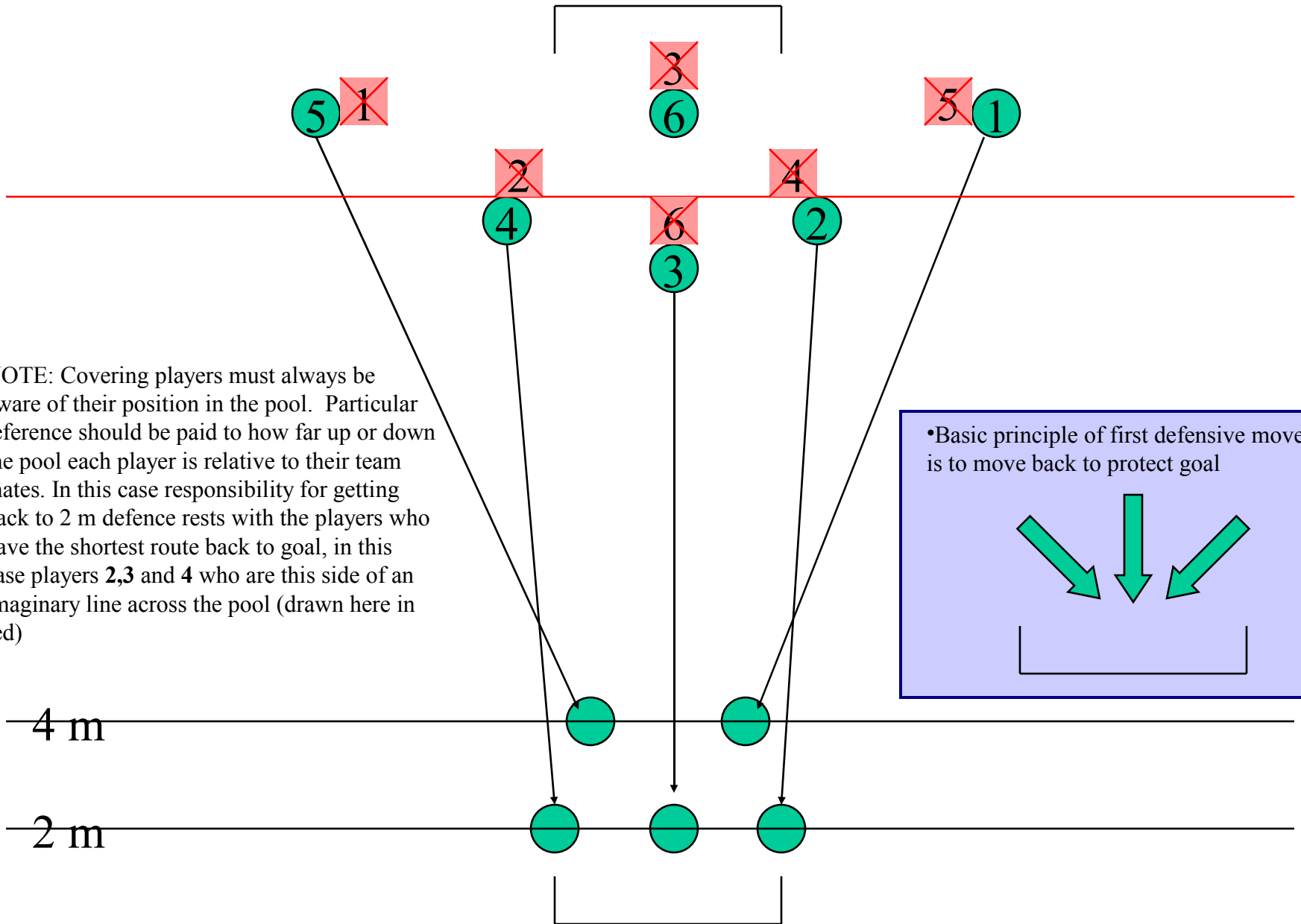
Back flip and sweep shot defence for keeper with pass into pit coming from attack position number 4

Defending - Shots From The Wing

- Goal keeper calls defensive player into correct line to block inside portion of goal
- Defender should cover inside line of near post by blocking with left hand for right hand attacker on his left wing and with right hand for left handed attacker on his right wing
- Defender should cover inside line of near post by blocking with right hand for left handed attacker on his left wing and with left hand for right handed attacker on his right wing
- Keeper should be on goal line in the middle of the posts
- Near side arm should be raised to elbow height above water and far side arm raised to mid bicep height to cover far post shots
- Arms should stay relaxed at all times until shot is taken
- Body position should not be directly to the shooter but should be angled towards the front of the pitch for two reasons:
 - To allow for a movement to make save from ball passed towards centre or other wing
 - To facilitate ball bouncing away from goal on contact with keepers arms

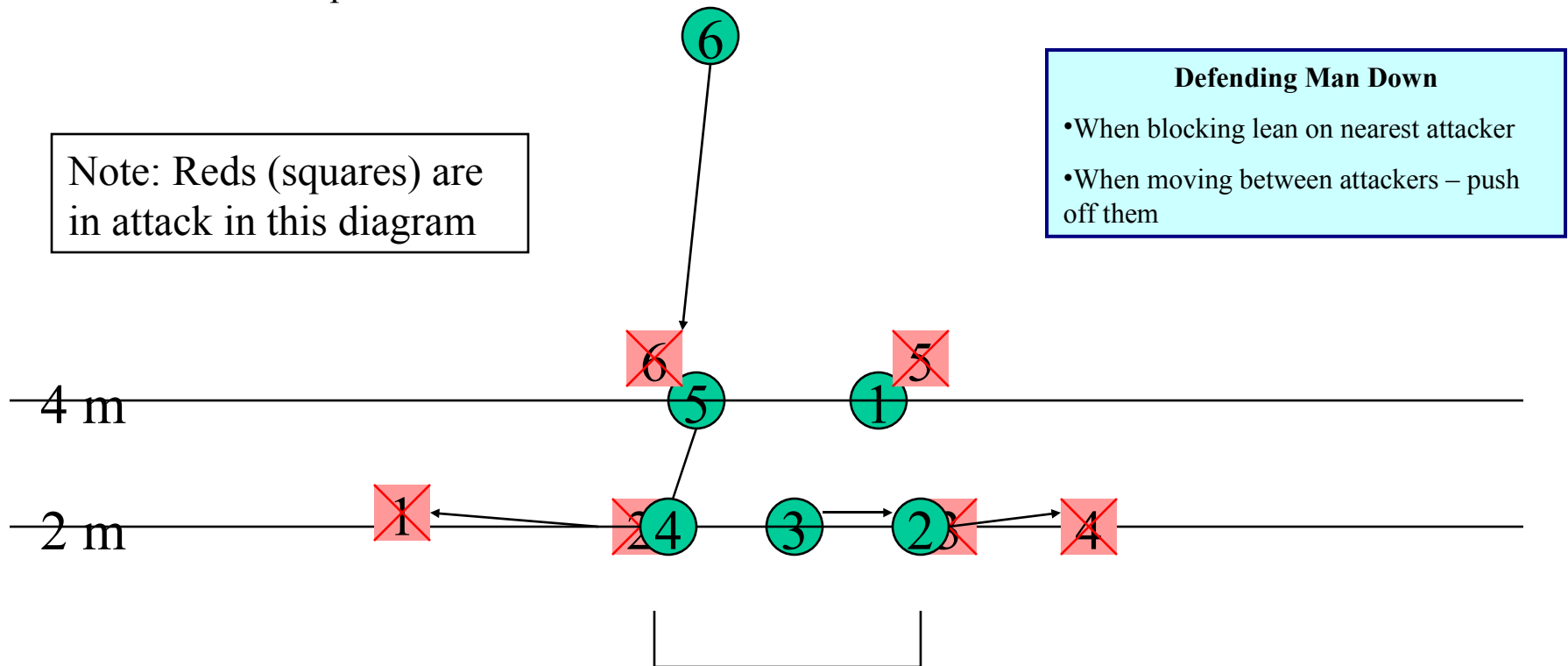


Defending - The 6 on 5 Counter Attack – (Stage 1)



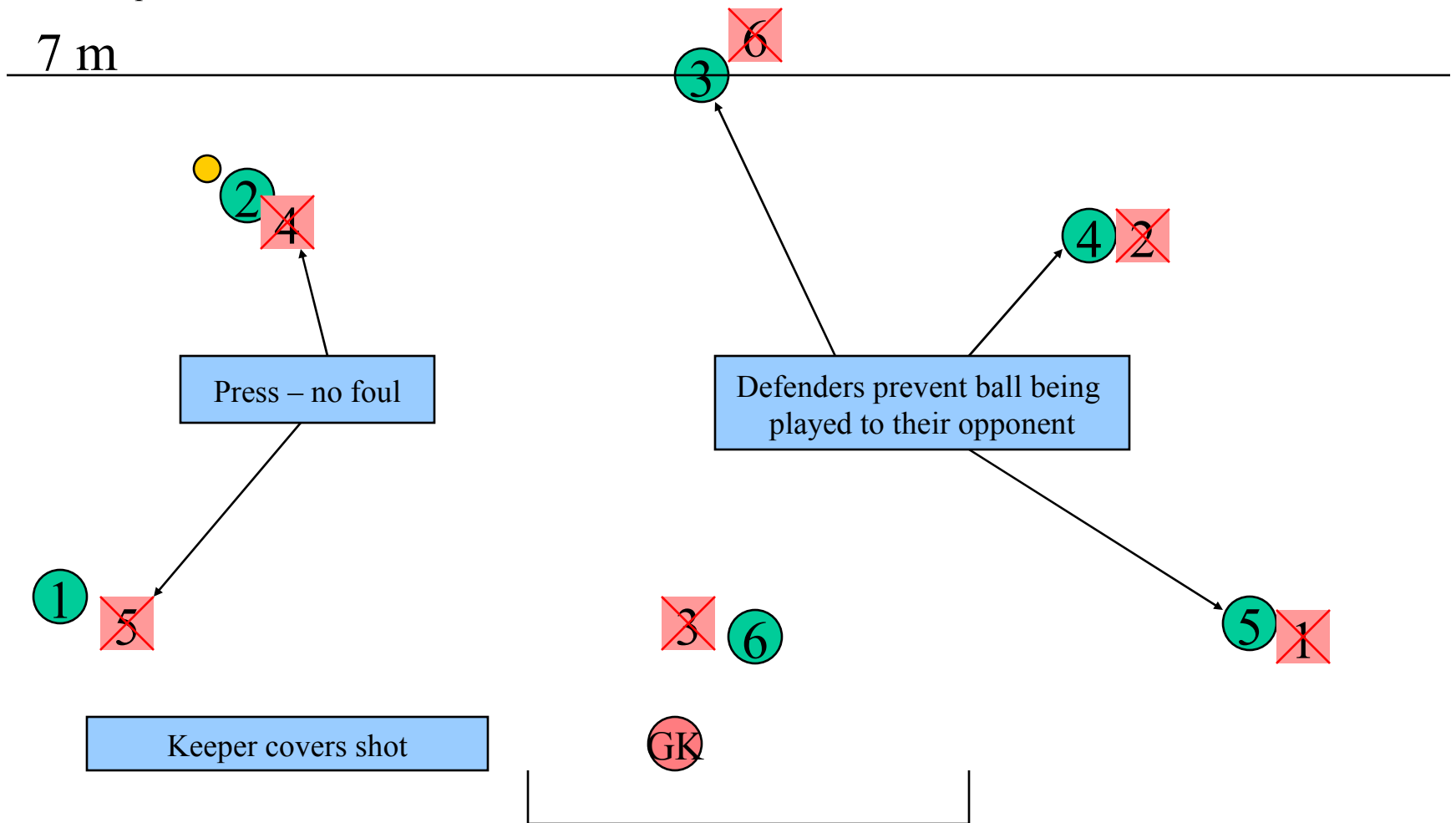
Defending - The 6 on 5 Counter Attack – (Stage 2)

- Trailing defender **6** goes back to attacker **6** controlling him by placing hand on shoulder
- Defender **5** now retreats to left post attacker (attack position **2**)
- Defender **4** now moves to our left wing (attack position **1**)
- Defender **3** simultaneously moves to attacker **3** and defender **2** to our right wing attacker **4**
- A basic press defence has now been achieved

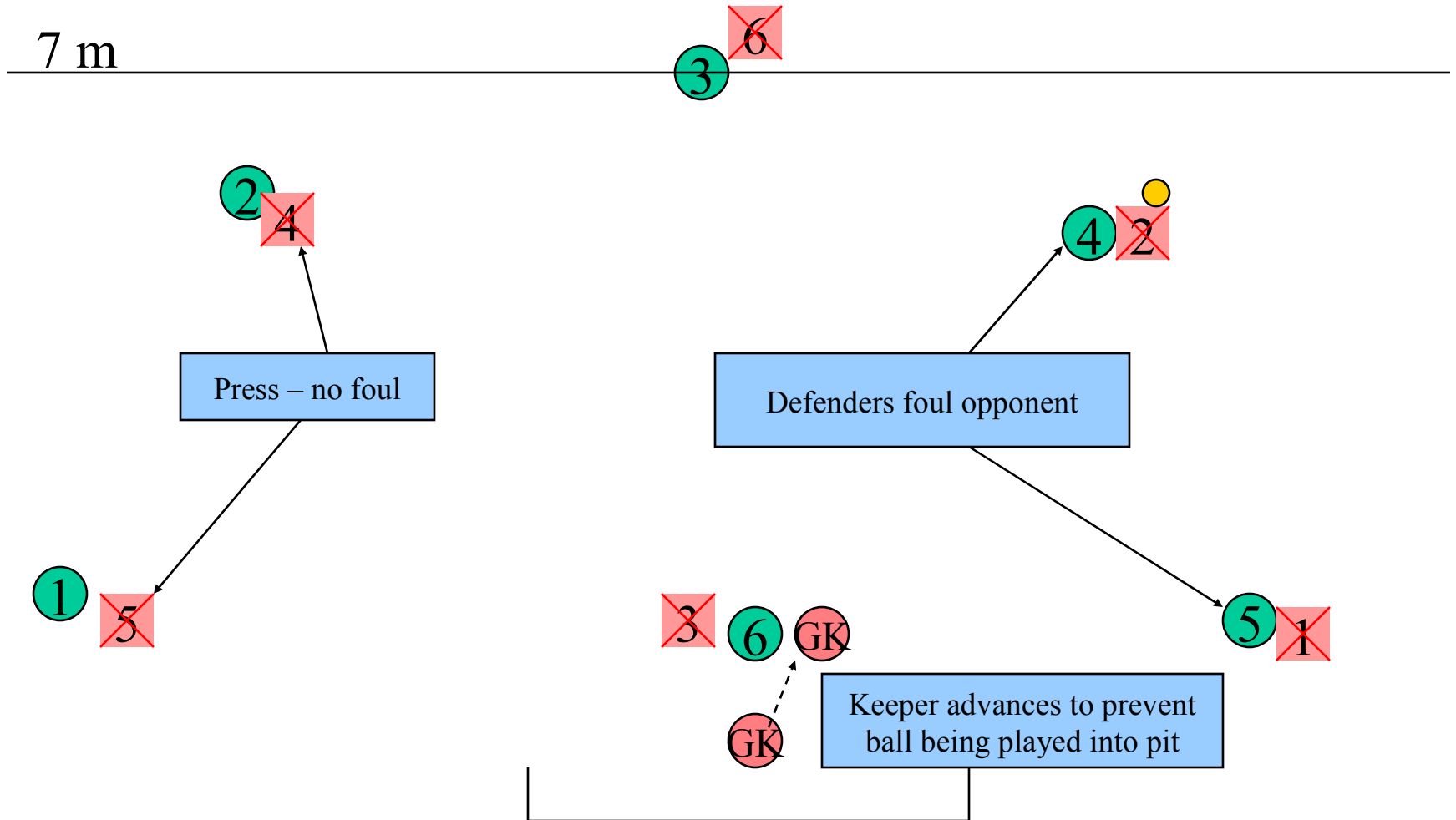


Defending - Press With Pit Defender and Ball on Left

- Defenders 1-5 responsibilities will be determined by the position of the pit defender (3)
- When the ball is on the left side of field and the pit defender is also on the left stopping the ball getting in to the pit then the left side defenders, 4 and 5, will press and not foul
- Defenders 6, 2 and 1 will prevent the ball going to their opponents
- The objective is to run down the shot clock before the attackers can take a shot or put the ball into the pit



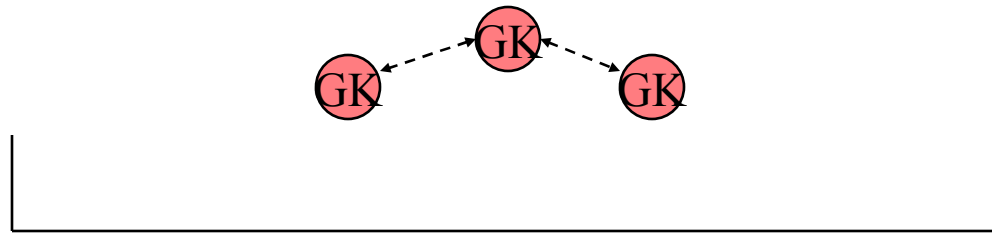
Defending - Press With Pit Defender Left, Ball Right



Defending - Zone (Individual Drills)

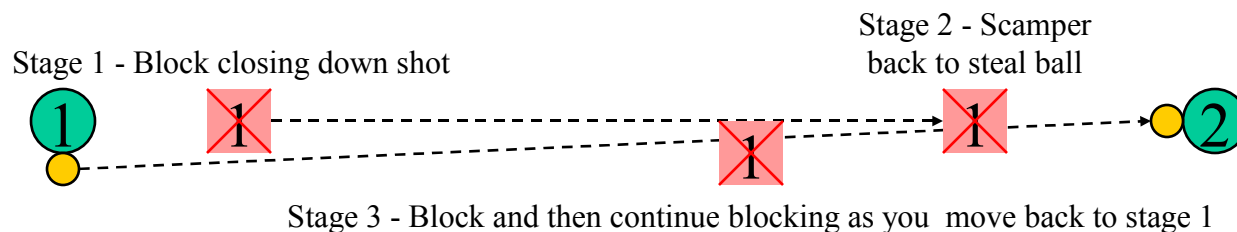
1. Goal Keeper

- Keeper adopts “Shot Position” facing attacker 3. He then does a series of moves to face alternately attackers 2, 3 and 4. Moves should be short and sharp and the “Shot Position” should be achieved as soon as possible by the keeper. The keeper should work for 30 seconds then rest for 30 seconds. Keeper should rotate through moves to ensure they are facing the shooting positions each time.



1. Outfield players

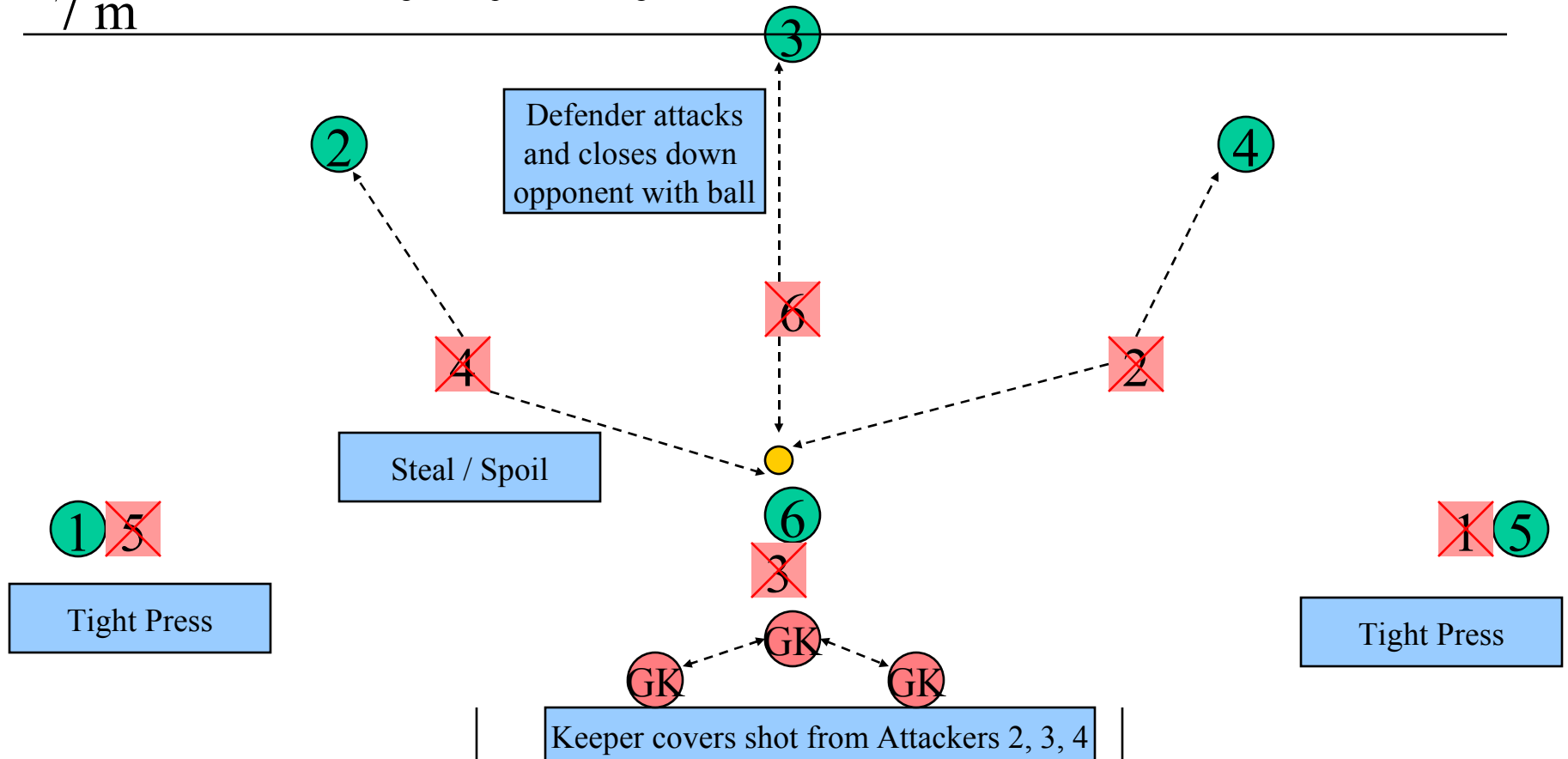
- Players work in groups of three, in a straight line all about 2 meters apart. Stage 1; Attacker 1 dummies with ball. Defender 1 blocks and moves towards Attacker 1 to close his shot down. Stage 2; Attacker 1 plays the ball onto the water an arms length in front of Attacker 2 (playing role of pit forward). Defender 1 now races back to try and “steal” ball from Attacker 2. Stage 3; Attacker 2 passes the ball back to attacker 1 who start to dummy with the ball. Defender immediately swings round, raises block and advances to close down Attacker 1. Repeat 10 times in each position



Defending - Zone (2,3,4 Drop)

1. Defenders 1 and 5 press. Defenders 4, 6 and 2 play the "Zone".
2. Defenders 4, 6 and 2 block the keepers inside post - this is NOT the keepers job (i.e. left post for Defender 4, right post for Defender 2. Defender 6 should agree which post to block with keeper) and advance and close their Attacker down when he is about to receive the ball.
3. When Defenders 4, 6 and 2 direct opponent does not have, or is not waiting for a pass that has just been thrown to them, the defender should get their legs facing their attacker and move to within one or two strokes of the pit. They should steal or spoil any ball thrown to Attacker 6
4. Defender 3 should prevent Attacker 6 playing the ball, but must not concede a major foul. Defender 3 should also act as a "second goal keeper", blocking shots.

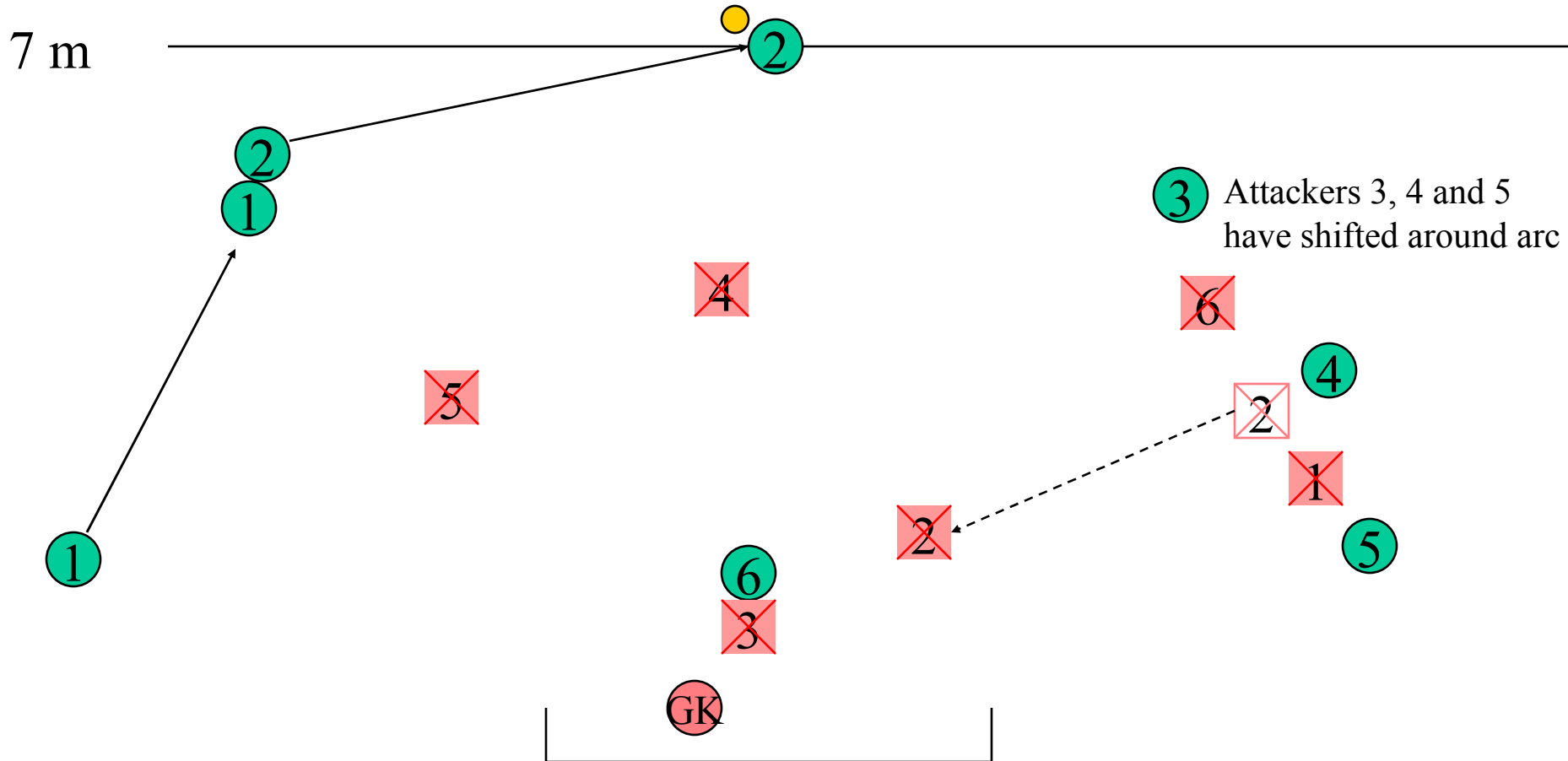
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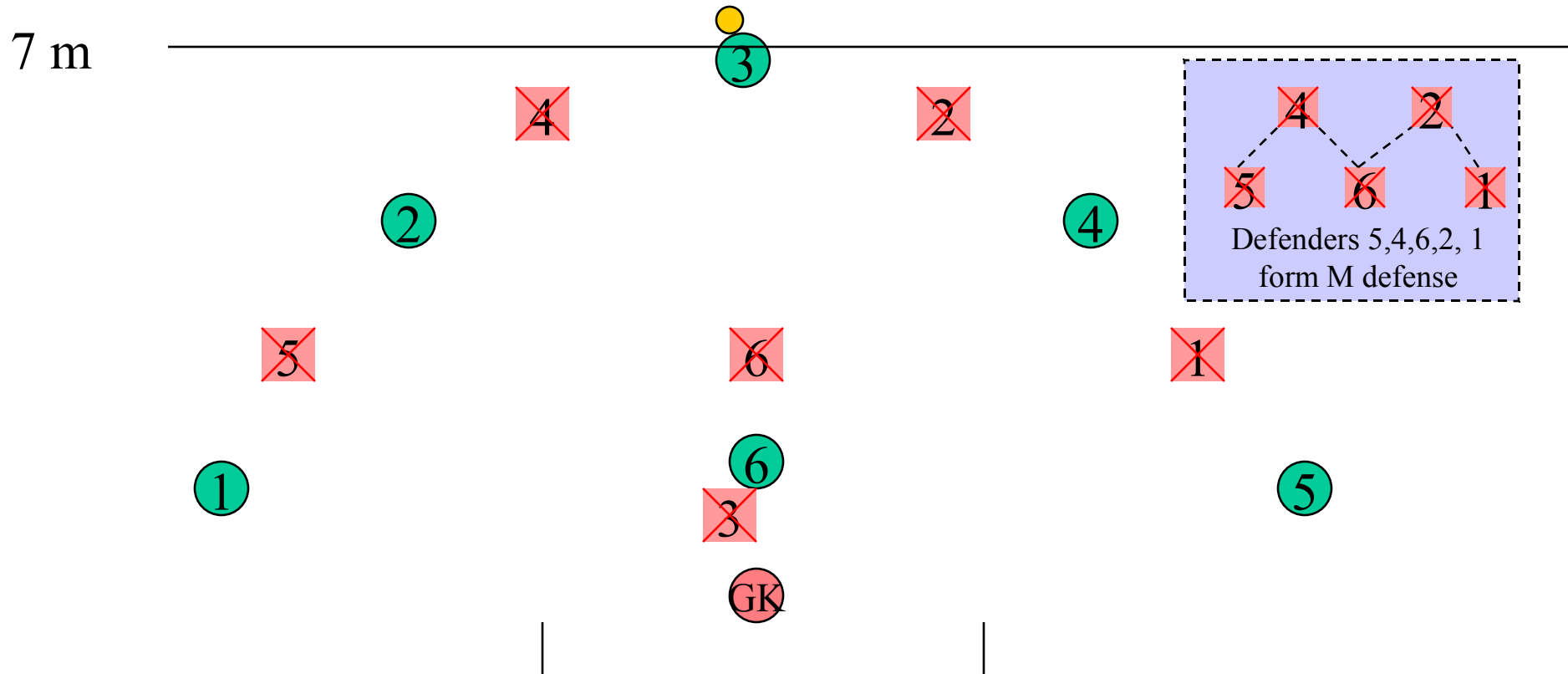
Defending – Left Side Drop When Attackers 1 and 2 play positions 2 and 3

If Attackers 3, 4 and 5 move to the right side of arc Defender 2 should drop to help cover Attacker 6 and to cover the right post shots. Defenders 6 and 1 now go between Attackers 3, 4 and 5.

Defenders 5 and 4 can now move higher up on to Attackers 1 and 2 (who are playing in attack positions 2 and 3)



Defending – The M Zone



Attacking - Start of 6 on 5 Counterattack

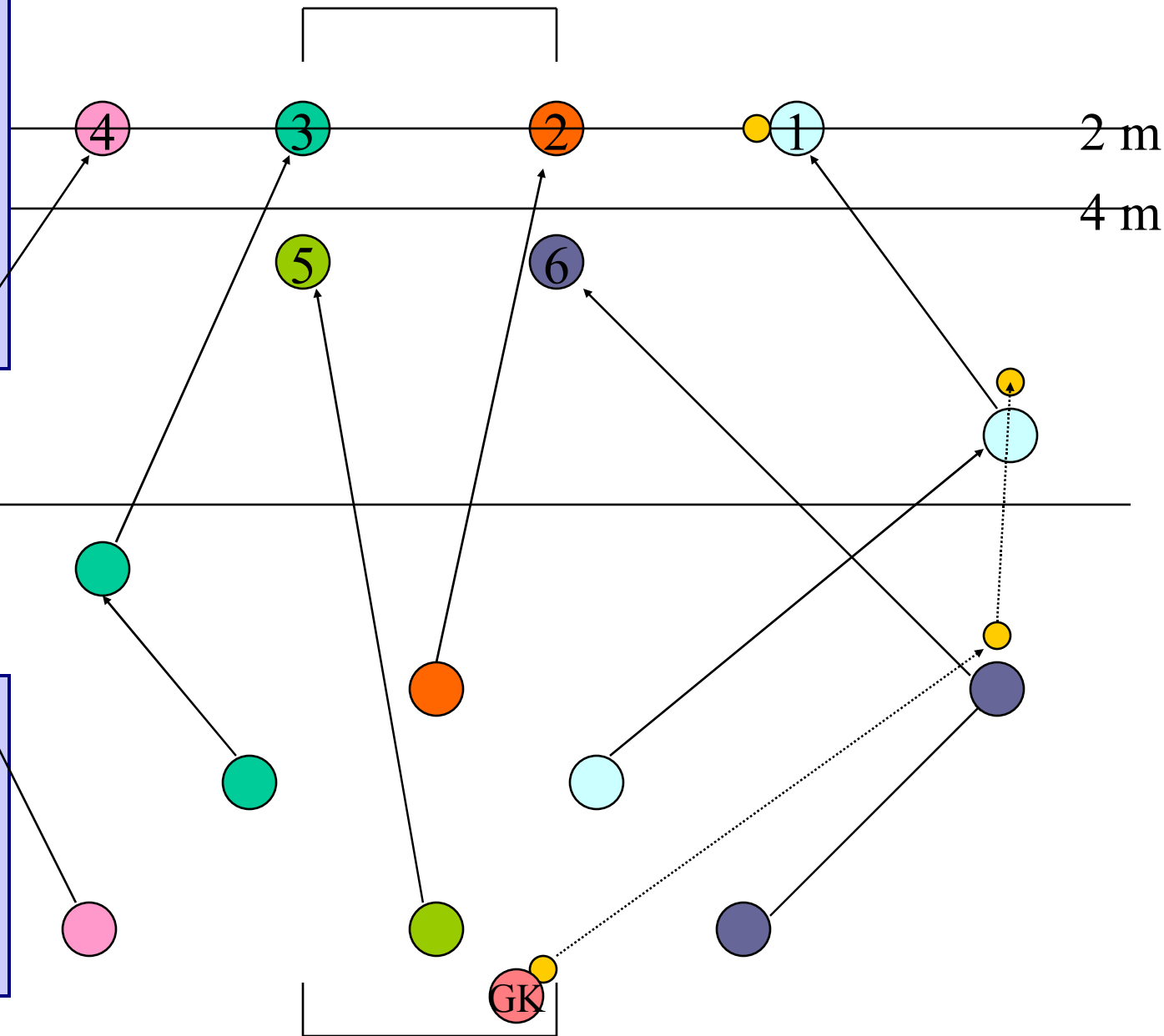
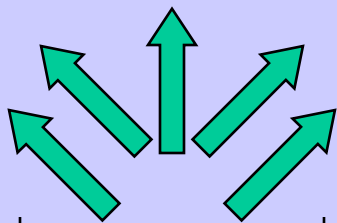
•Players adopt man up positions if a defender is left trailing

•The counter attackers now have a short but excellent opportunity to score

•Once attacker 1 has passed the ball he should cover the trailing defender (see next slide)

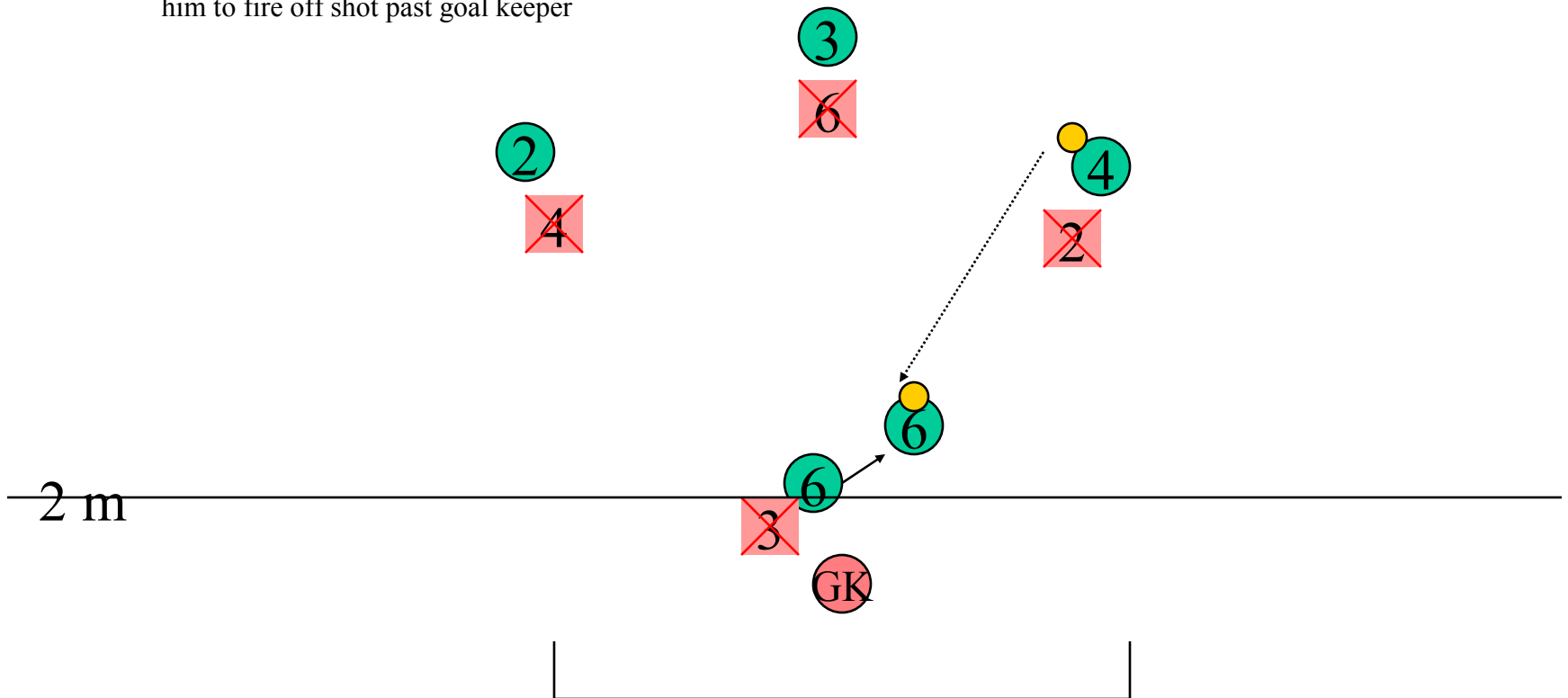
Halfway Line

•First movement is to fan out



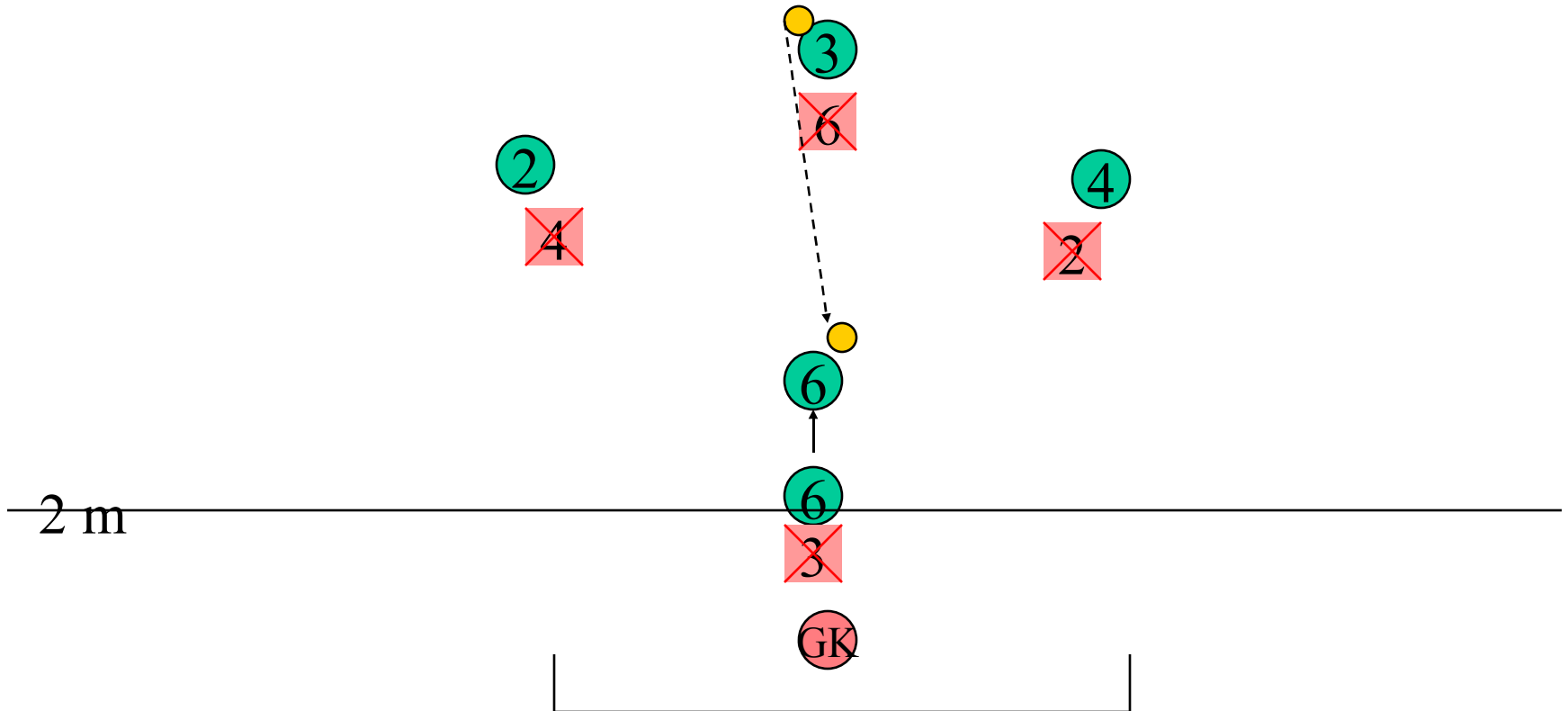
Attacking – Pit Forward Turn and Shoot (1)

- **This is best used when defender is on left shoulder (for right-handed Attacker 6)**
- Attacker 4 kicks up and passes ball to pit forward (attacker 6) arm length away
- Attacker 6 should protect ball by keeping himself between defender 3 and ball
- Attacker 6 now does an aggressive lunge forward with left arm and controls ball on the water (right shoulder pushes off defender 3, hand spins ball backwards)
- Attacker 6 immediately grabs ball with right hand and does big breaststroke kick away from defender 3 and twists onto back
- Attacker 6 now does another big breaststroke kick on his back to get further away from defender and assess goal keeper's position
- Attacker 6 immediately goes into a final breaststroke kick on his back raising himself into a sitting position to enable him to fire off shot past goal keeper



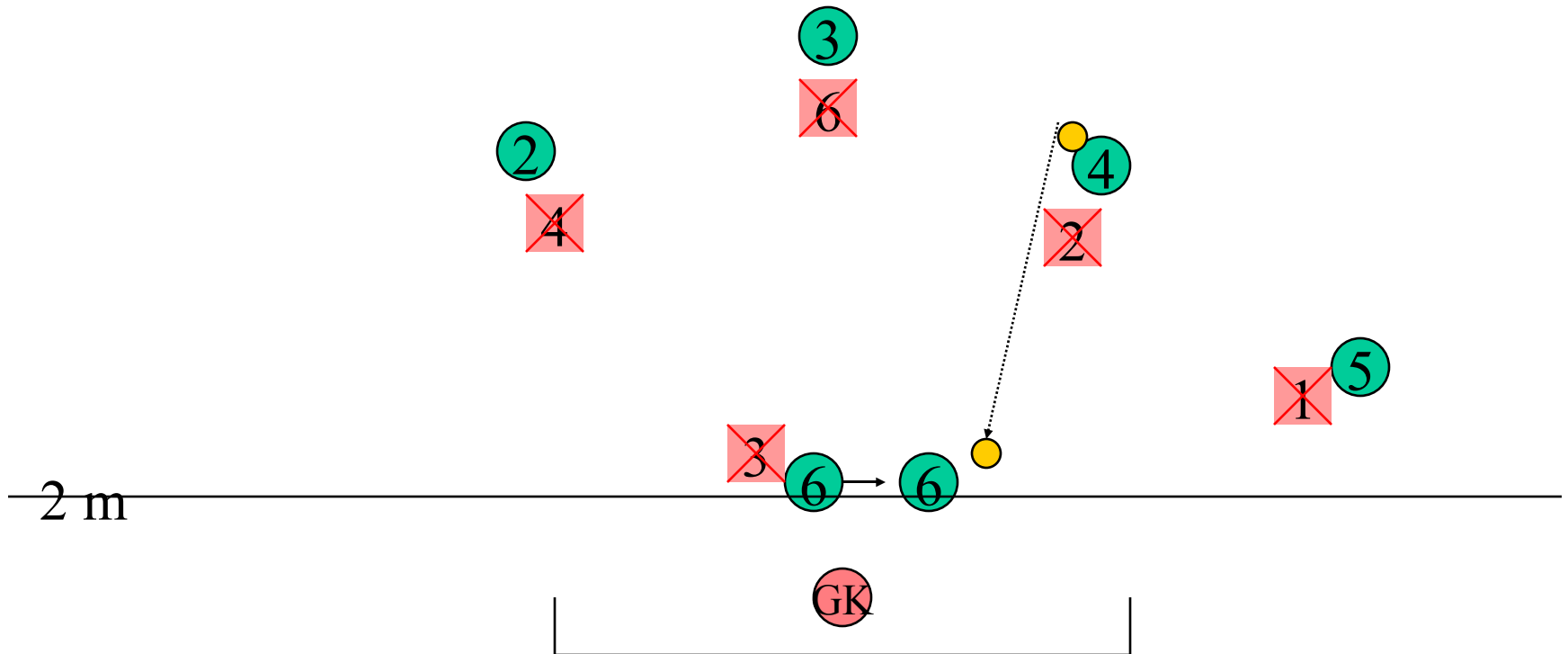
Attacking – Pit Forward Turn and Shoot (2)

- **This is best used when defender directly behind.**
- Attacker 3 kicks up and passes ball to pit forward (attacker 6) just over an arm length away
- Attacker 6 should protect ball by keeping himself between defender 3 and ball
- Attacker 6 works his legs hard to push backwards into defender 3, this is done for a few seconds. (a constant push not aggressive backing in.
- Attacker 6 in one movement stops pushing back and makes an aggressive forward move to the ball.
- Attacker 6 now does another breaststroke kick on his back to get further away from defender and assess goal keeper's position
- Attacker 6 immediately goes into a final breaststroke kick on his back raising himself into a sitting position to enable him to fire off shot past goal keeper. The likely shot is under the keepers arms.



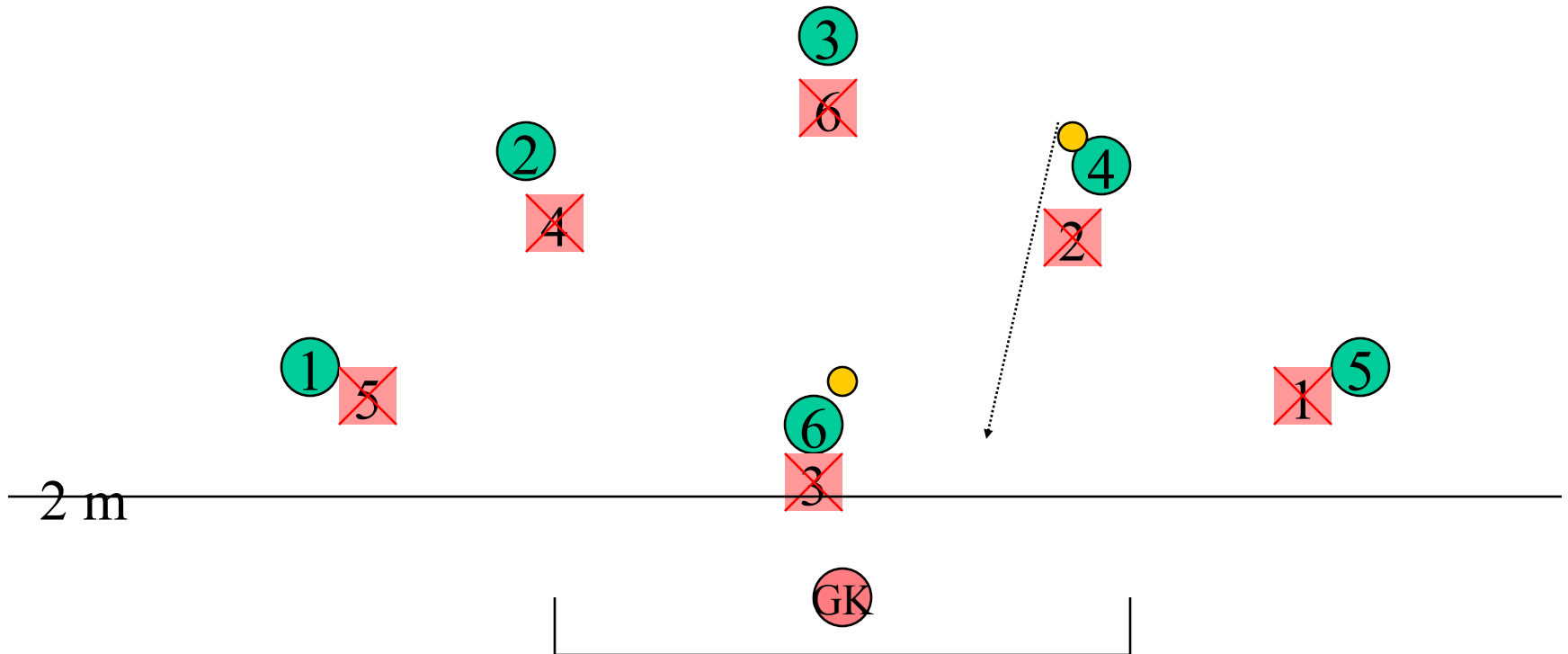
Attacking – Pit Forward Turn and Shoot (3)

- **This is best used when defender is on left shoulder or front marking**
- Attacker 4 kicks up and passes ball to pit forward (attacker 6) arm length away
- Attacker 6 should protect ball by keeping himself between defender 3 and ball
- Attacker 6 does not touch the ball! But lets the momentum of the pass make it drift towards the goal.
- Attacker 6 now does an aggressive lunge forward with left arm and controls ball on the water (right shoulder pushes off defender 3)
- Attacker 6 immediately grabs ball with right hand and does big breaststroke kick away from defender 3 and twists onto back
- Attacker 6 now does another big breaststroke kick on his back to get further away from defender and assess goal keeper's position
- Attacker 6 immediately goes into a final breaststroke kick on his back raising himself into a sitting position to enable him to fire off shot past goal keeper. The likely shot is under the keepers arms.



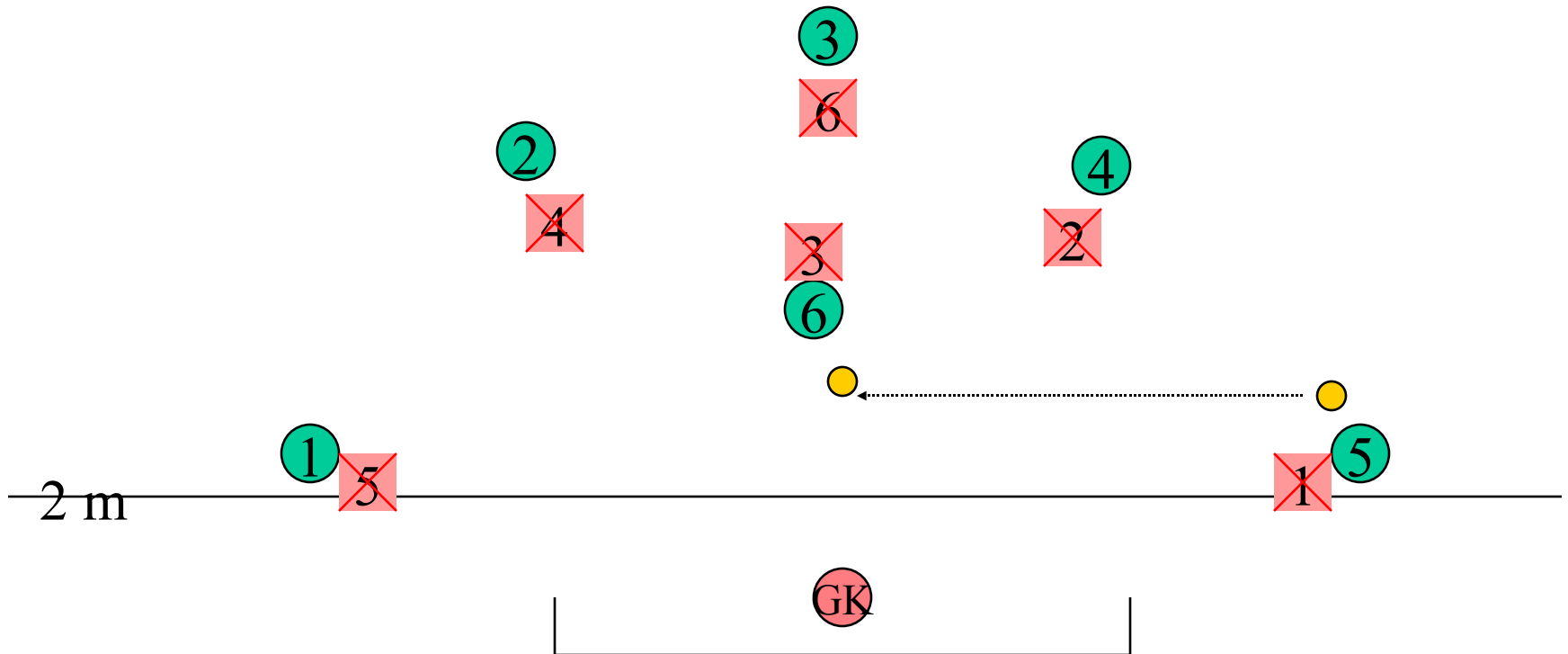
Attacking – Breaking the Press with Back Marked Pit Forward

- Attackers 1-5 must drive in and out to get free and play ball into pit



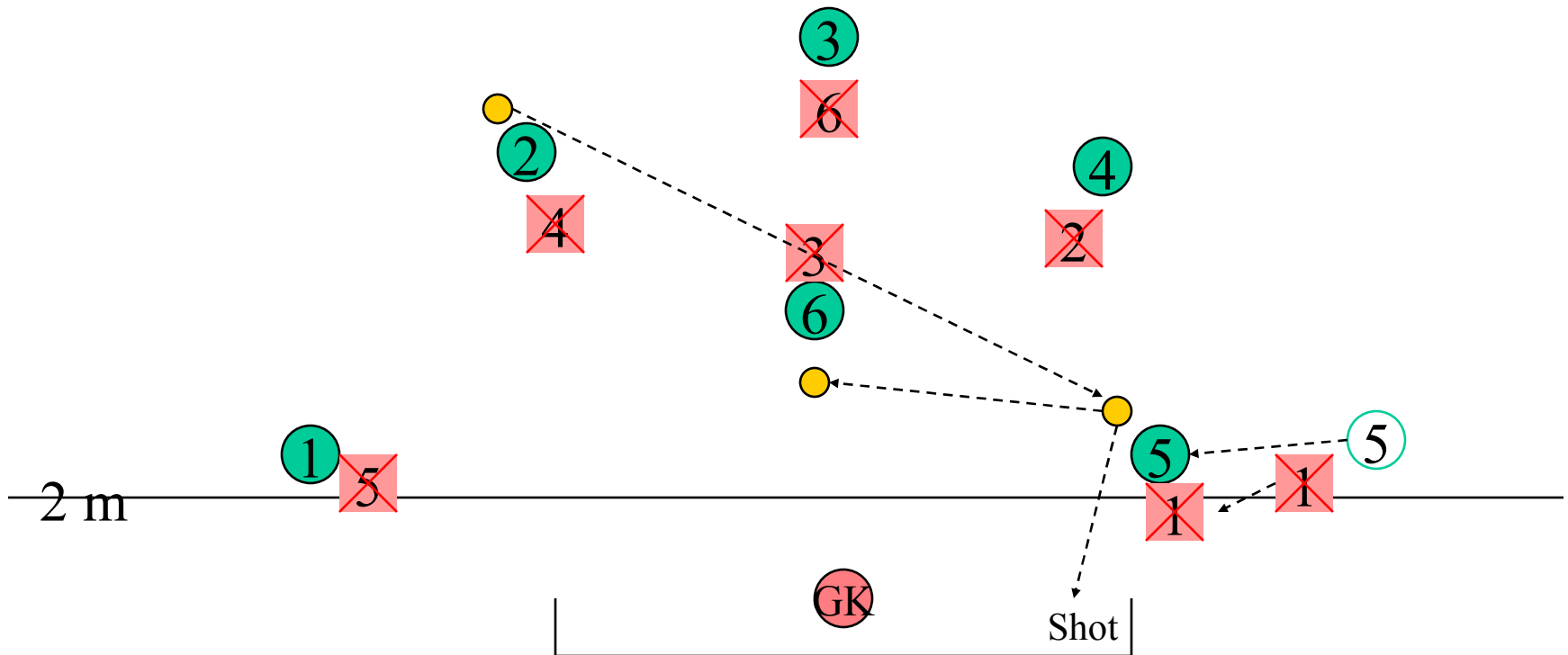
Attacking – Breaking the Press with Front Marked Pit Forward (1)

- Attacker 6 must back defender out to 4 or 5 meters
- Attackers 2-4 must get the ball to the wings, either to Attackers 1 or 5
- Attackers 1 or 5 must play the ball into the pit ahead of Attacker 6
- Attacker 6 must advance towards the goal and try score or win the penalty



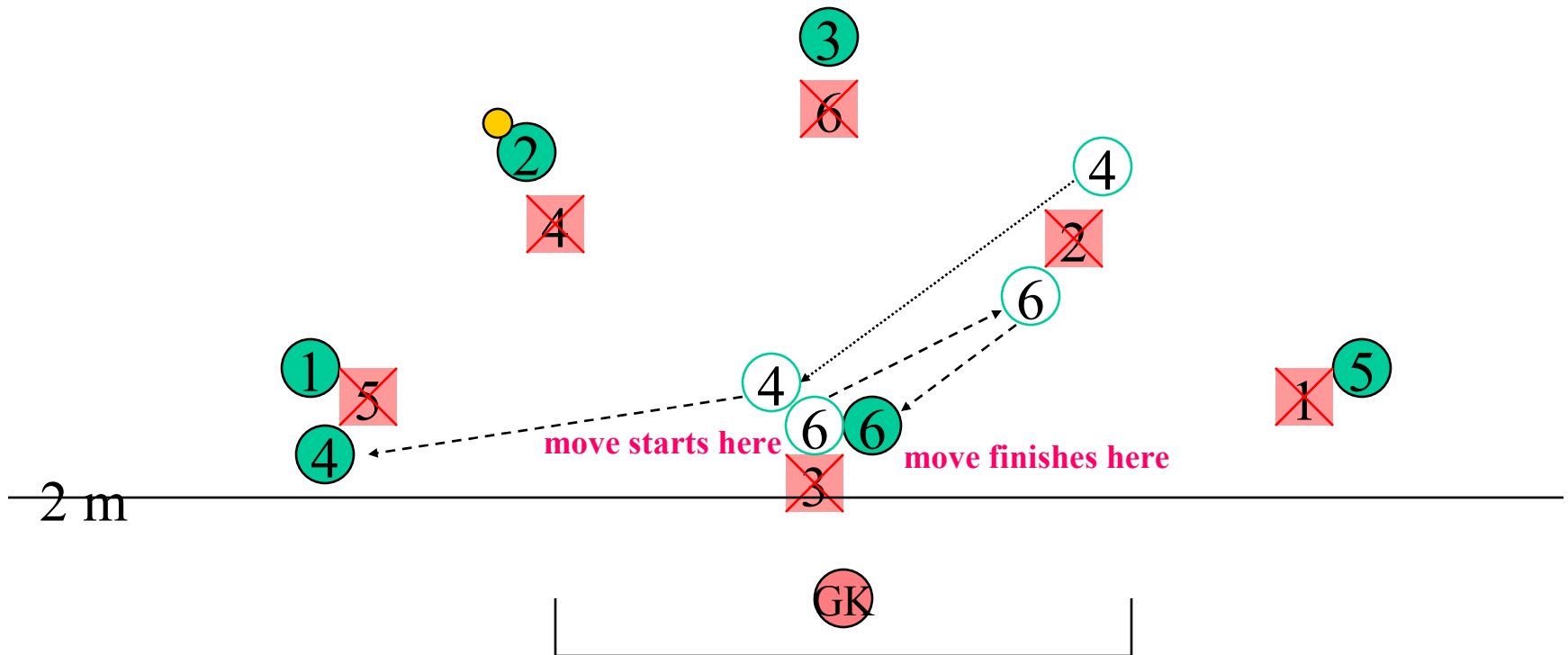
Attacking – Breaking the Press with Front Marked Pit Forward (2)

- Attacker 6 must back defender out to 4 or 5 meters
- Attacker 5 swims past Defender 1 to set second pit position just outside right post on 2 meters
- Attackers 2,3 or 4 must play the ball into the pit ahead of Attacker 5
- Attacker 5 can now shoot or pass the ball in front of Attacker 6, if so,
- Attacker 6 must advance towards the goal and try score or win the penalty



Attacking – Pit Forward Switches Pit Defenders

- Attacker 6 is being effectively marked in the game by Defender 3. Attacker 6 desires to be defended by Defender 2
- Attacker 6 swims back to Defender 2, while Attackers 2 and 3 retain the ball by passing between themselves
- Attacker 4 now drives into the pit, as Attacker 6 blocks his path to follow Attacker 4, forcing Defenders 3 and 2 to switch on their respective markers. If Attacker 4's drive is not followed he should be passed the ball and shoot from an open position on about 4 meters from goal
- Attacker 4 now drives out to the right wing, and at this point Attacker 6 drives back into the pit
- The attackers on the arc must now feed Attacker 6 the ball as soon as he is set



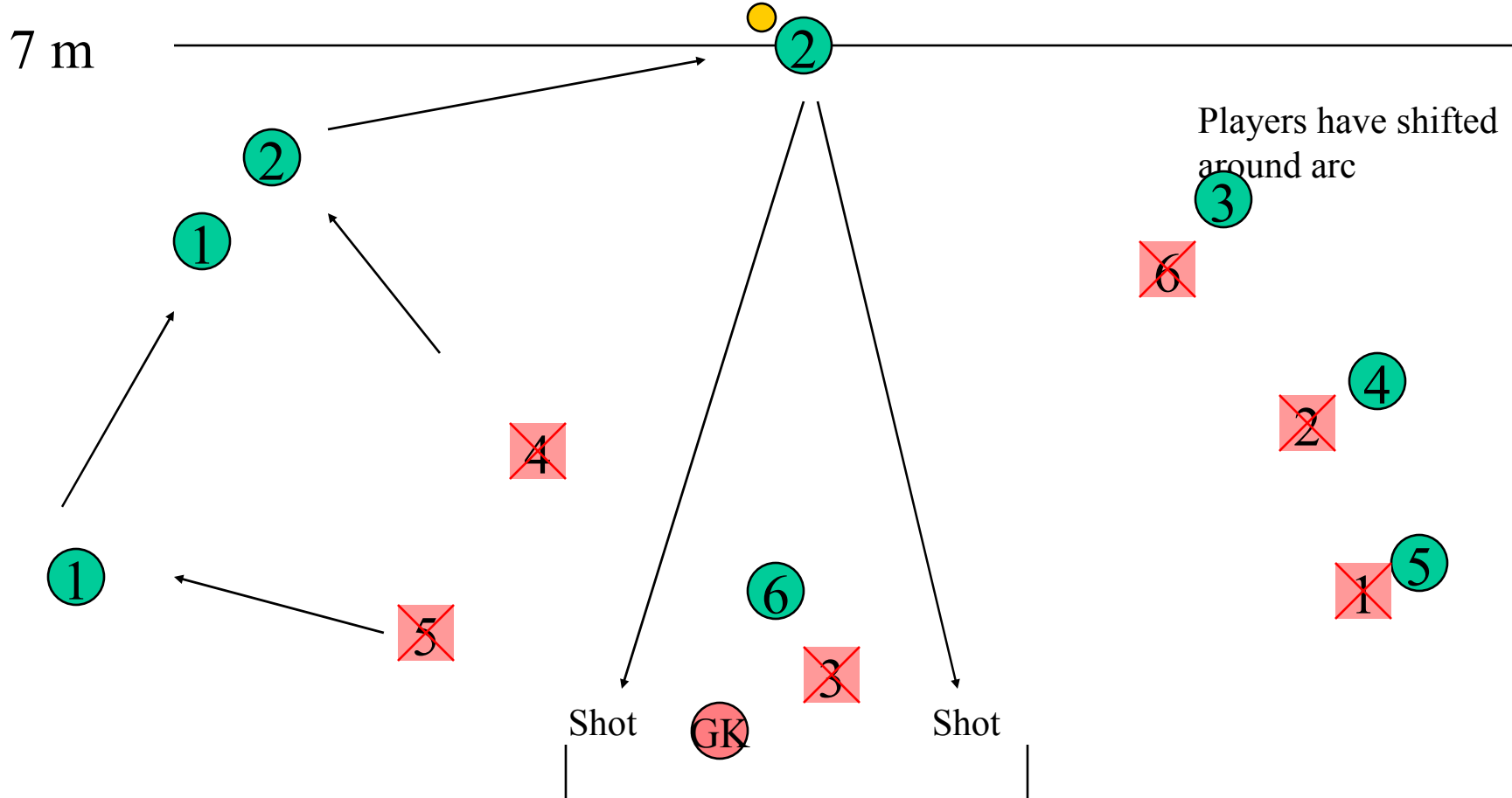
Attacking – Playing Against Left Side Drop

Attackers 3, 4 and 5 move to the right side of arc

Attacker 2 becomes point man and Attacker 1 follows him up to old attack position 2

Shot is from top following passes exchanged with dummies between Attackers 1 & 2

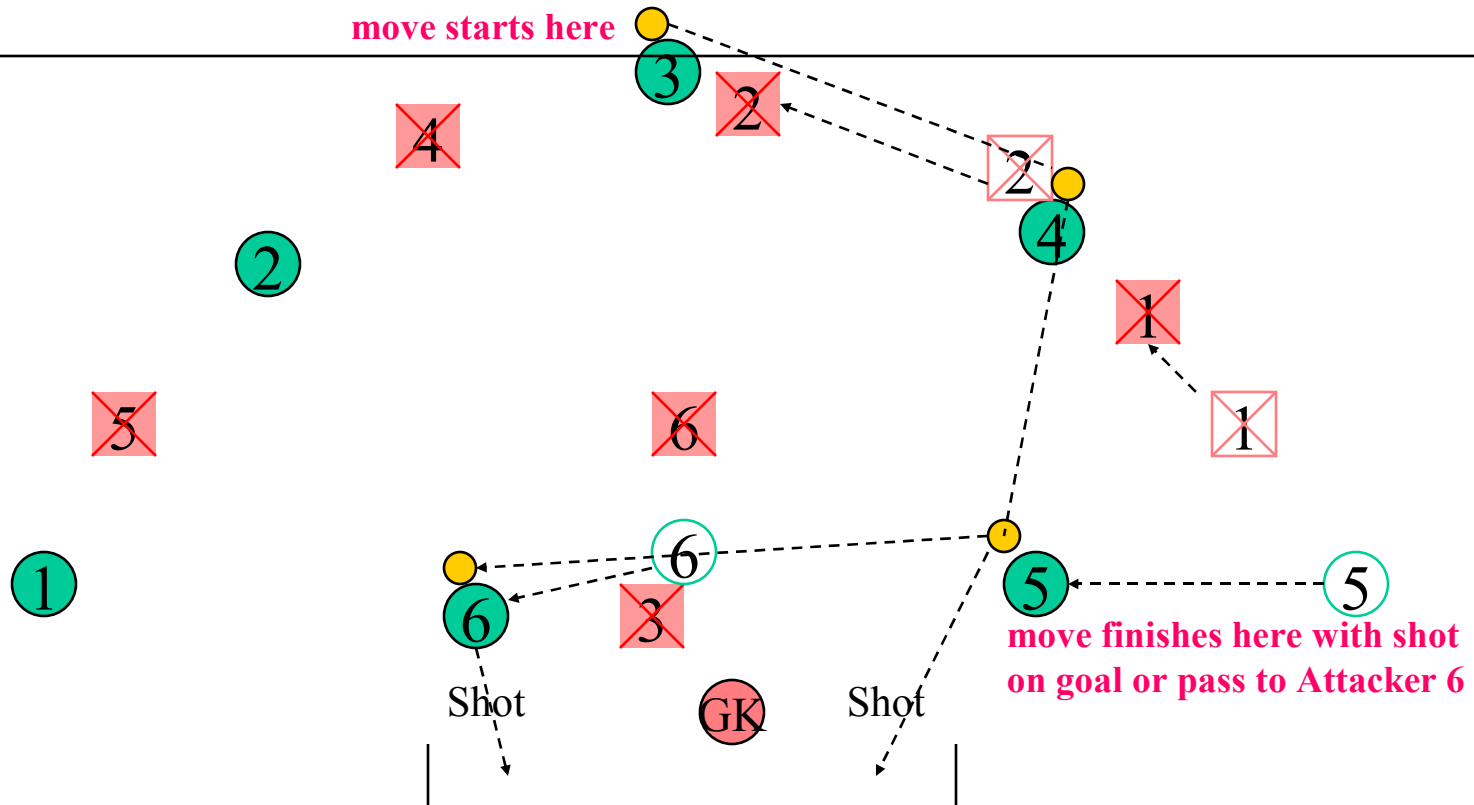
Player 2 dummies moving towards player 1 & passes to him then kicks 2 strokes back to point to move goalkeeper before shot



Attacking – The M Zone (Wing Shot)

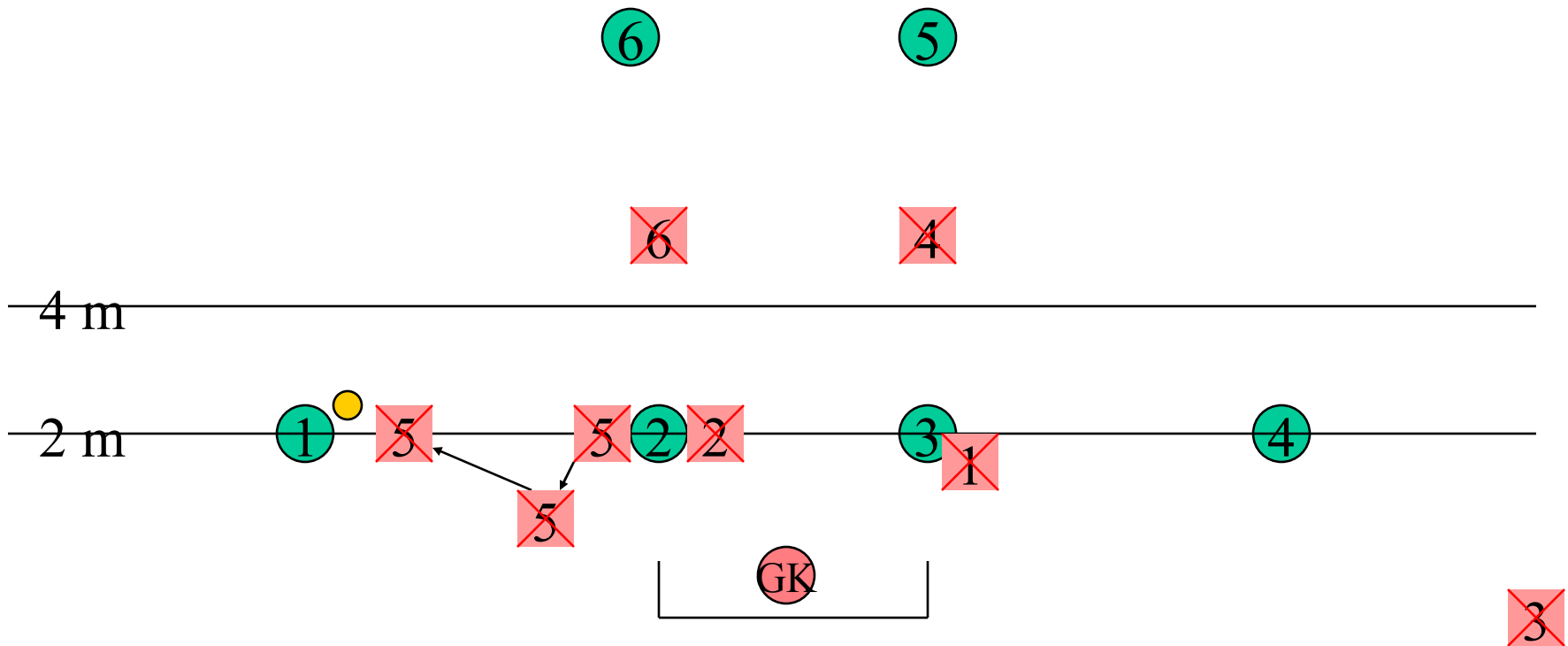
- First principles:
 - Attackers must stay calm and make the defenders work between them
 - Draw defender until he moves to attack you, only then pass the ball
 - Attackers must stay 3-4 meters apart
 - Passing must be accurate
 - Attacker 3 must be aware that he is very vulnerable to the counterattack from Defenders 2 and 4 if he shoots
 - If the attacker with the ball moves to one side the adjacent attackers should move to maintain their relative positions
- Attacker dummies and draws Defender 2. He now passes to Attacker 4 who will draw Defender 1 to him
- Attacker 5 must now move into the space behind Defender 1. He should then finish by shooting and scoring or pass to Attacker who has kicked off to the far post

7 m



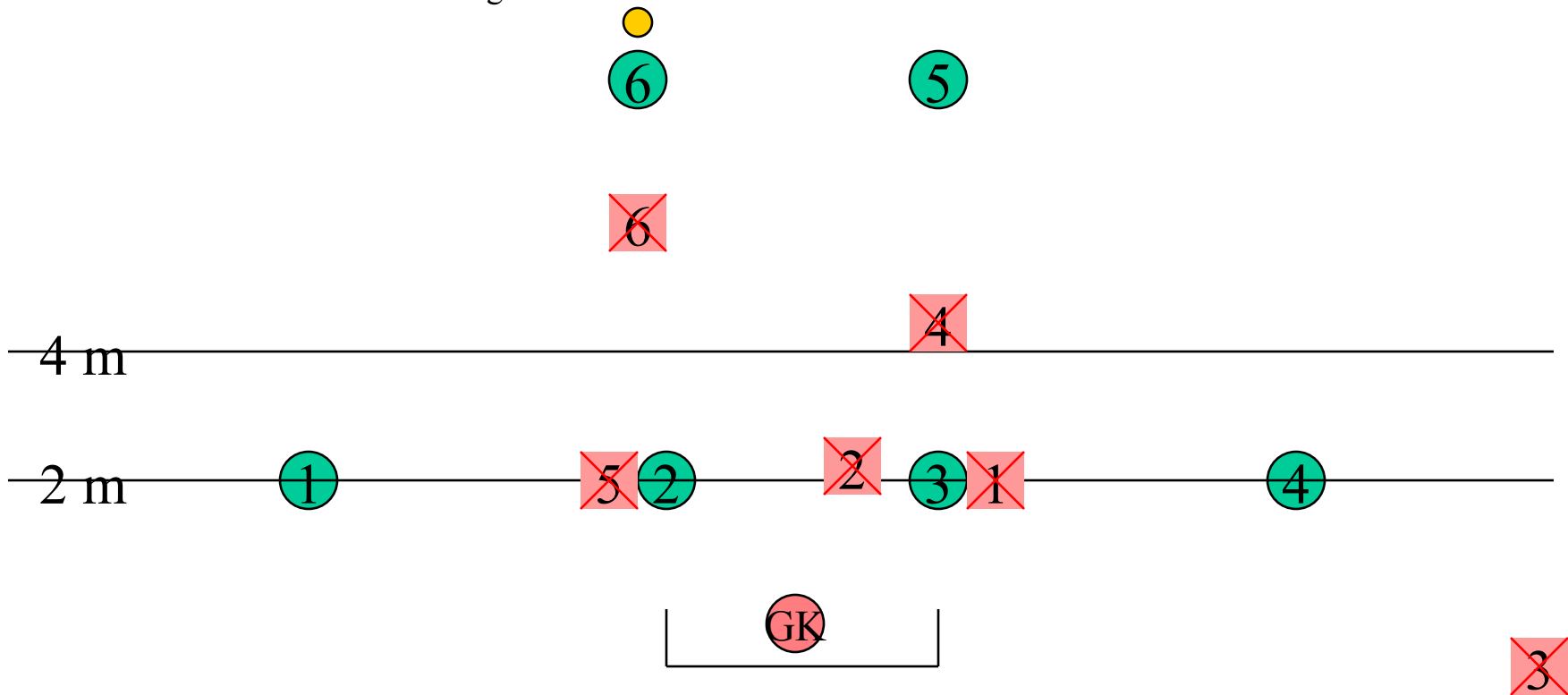
Man Down - Static Defence (1)

- With the ball on the defenders left post (with Attacker 1) defender 5 must first make sure his post is covered
- Defender 5 now moves towards attacker 1 to close him down
- Defender 5 must focus on not letting the attacker score on his near post
- Defenders 2 and 1 will play towards attackers 2 and 3 to prevent ball being thrown to them
- Defenders 2 and 1 should try and block the far post shot as well
- Goal keeper will stay on his line and one third away from left post. He must cover middle and far side of goal
- Defenders 4 and 6 will stay within jumping distance of post attackers, but ready to go into immediate blocks on attackers 6 and 5 respectively
- Defenders 4 and 5 may play higher (further out) if the attackers are very good shooters
- The same principles apply if the ball is on the other wing



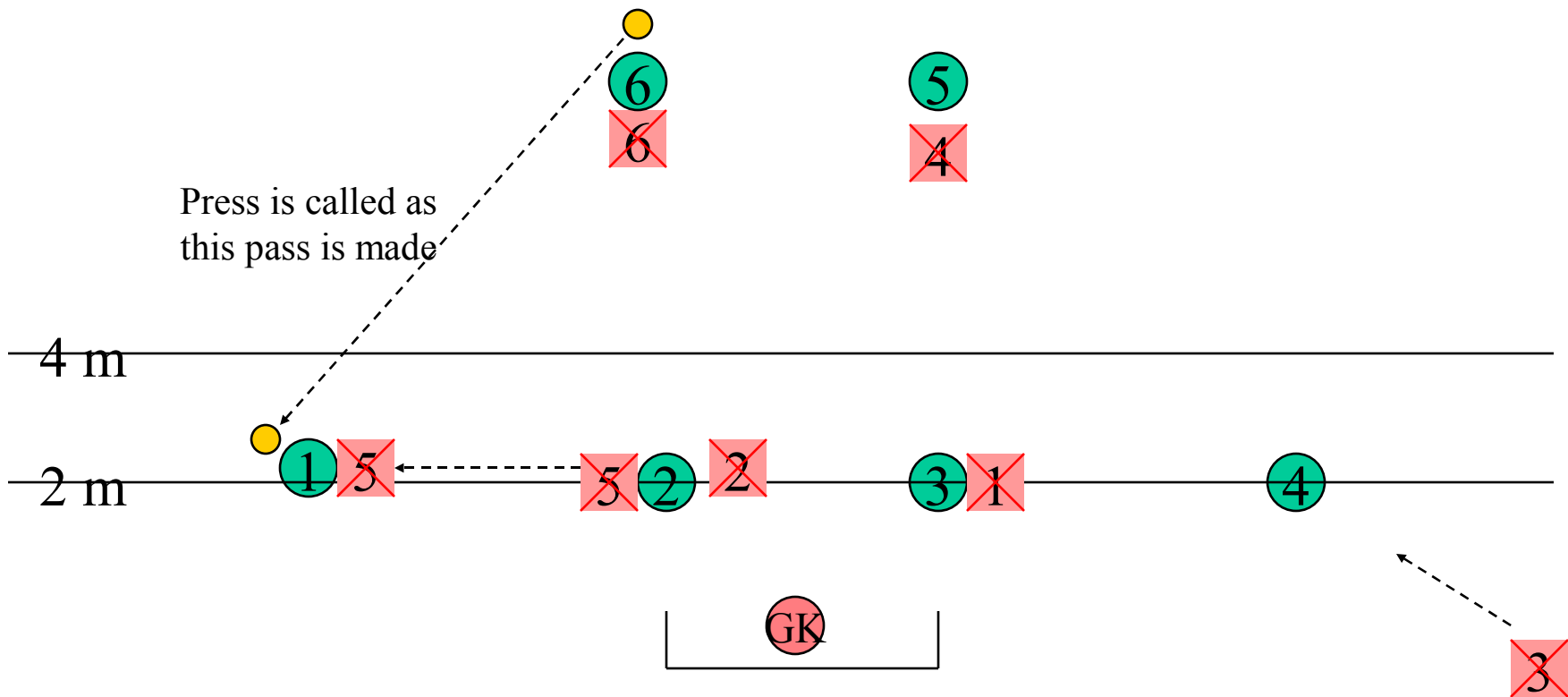
Man Down - Static Defence (2)

- When the ball is passed to Attacker 6 defender 6 should immediately block and advance part way towards Attacker 6 to close the angle and cover the left side of the goal
- Defenders 5 and 1 drop onto the post attackers and lean on their shoulders as they block with their respective posts with the other hand
- Defender 2 now moves rapidly to Attacker 3, placing his right hand on Attacker 3's shoulder and blocking the right side of the goal with his left hand
- Defender 4 must prevent the ball being played to Attacker 3, and may try to intercept any pass thrown from Attacker 6 to Attacker 4.
- If the ball is passed to Attacker 5 the same principles apply in mirror image e.g. Defender 2 goes to Attacker 2 and covers the left side of the goal



Man Down - Active Defence

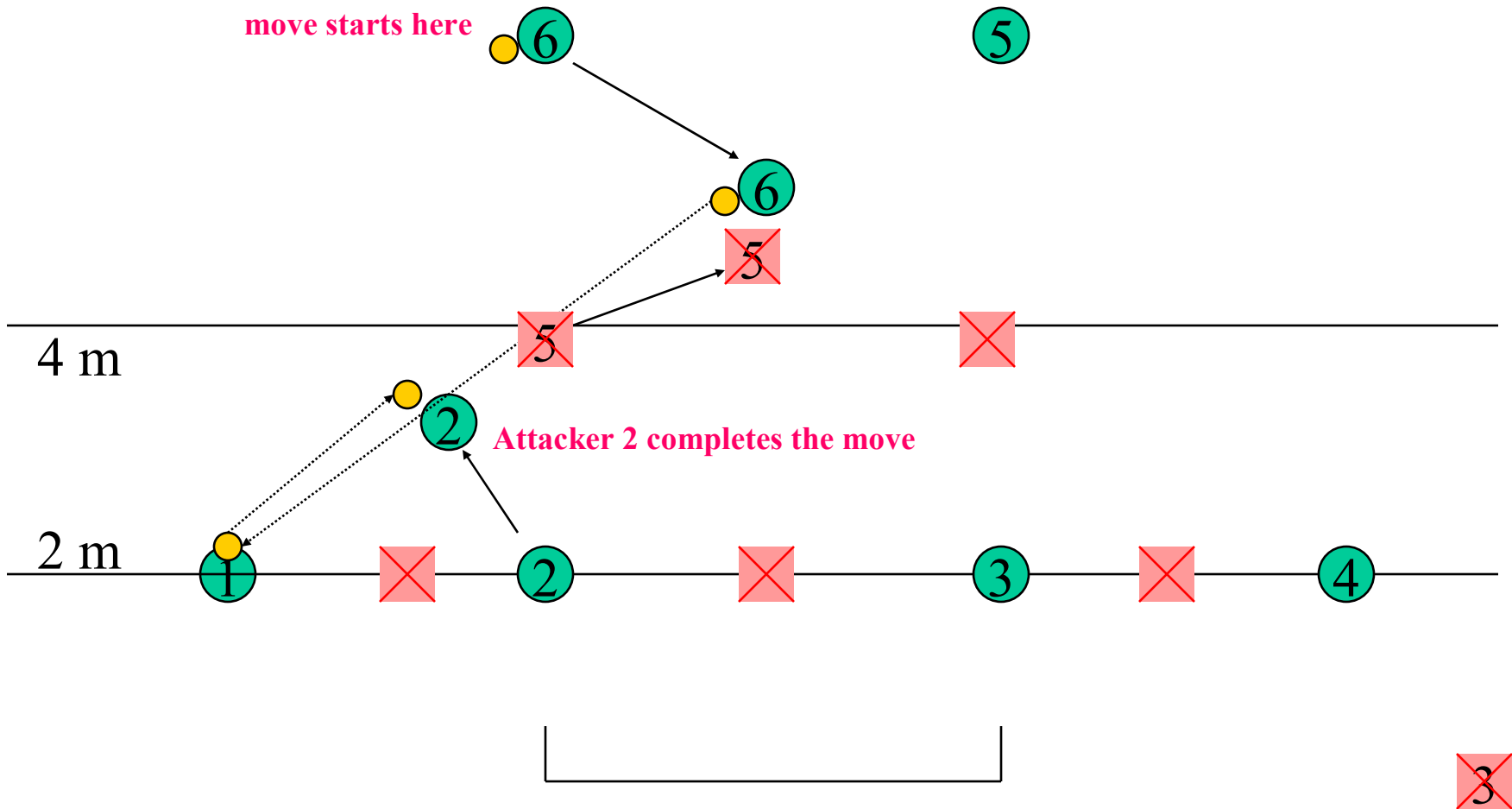
- Defence starts by playing the same as the static man down defence (see previous two slides)
- At some stage, as the ball is played to Attacker 1, a press will be called. Defender 5 charges out to Attacker 1 to prevent him taking a clean pass. He then presses but tries not to concede a foul
- Defender 2 presses Attacker 2. Defender 1 presses Attacker 3
- Defender 6 presses Attacker 6. Defender 4 presses Attacker 5
- The pressing defenders should attempt to run down the clock as they wait for the excluded player to return to the water



Man Up – Right Wing Move

- Attacker 6 moves 45° across goal, if defender 2 does not follow him he should take on the shot
- Attacker 2 moves out at 45° simultaneously and parallel to attacker 6
- Ball is passed from attacker 6 to attacker 1 who then makes a rapid pass to attacker 2 who takes an immediate shot
- If defender 1 follows attacker 2 then attacker 1 should walk in and beat the keeper one on nothing
- If defender 4 plays low on attacker 3 then attacker 4 can move across at 45° to take pass and immediate shot

7 m

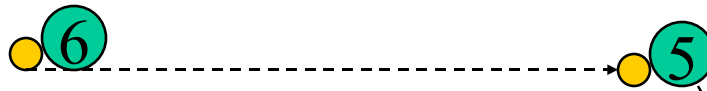


Man Up – Left post attack Move

- Attacker 6 dummies and passes to attacker 5
- Attacker 5 dummies and passes to attacker 4
- Attacker 4 dummies, drawing the defence to his side and then passes to attacker 1
- Attacker 1 makes an immediate pass to attacker 3, the ball being passed high above the heads of defender 1 and 3 so attacker 3 has to jump forward and up to take the pass and shoot.

7 m

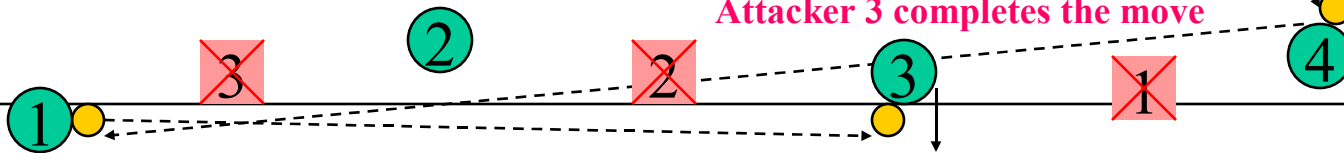
Move starts here



4 m

2 m

Attacker 3 completes the move



Man Up – Straight Line Post Attack

- This move is designed when the defence plays high and defenders 2 and 4 have been drawn out.
- Attacker 5 dummies and draws out defender 4 out further
- Attacker 3 makes a sudden movement away from goal
- Attacker 5 passes a high ball to attacker 3 who then twists and shoots.

