



**Guideline (GUI)**

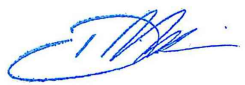
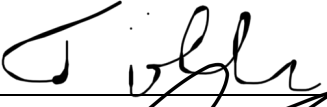

# **6 vs 6 Formation Option Guide**

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## Errors or Omissions

Big Country Soccer Association has provided this manual to the membership as a guide for the options available with a 6 vs 6 field formation. Any errors or omissions contained herein shall not supersede the by-laws, policies, procedures, or guidelines of the Association. Any changes to the manual shall be included in the next edition. The by-laws of the association supersede any guideline or policy should a conflict occur.

## Document Revision History

Rev	Date	Description	Originator	Checker	Approver
0	13-Feb-2024	Published.	Duncan Hawkins	Ivo Toellner	Cody Craig
A	22-Dec-2023	This is the initial DRAFT of this Guideline document.	Duncan Hawkins	Ivo Toellner	Cody Craig

## Current Revision Description

Section	Description



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## 1 Vision

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The Big Country Soccer Association aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience for every athlete. A high-quality experience is one in which every athlete:

1. Is coached using the principles of Positive Coaching;
2. Has fun playing the game;
3. Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance;
4. Learns “life lessons” that have value beyond the playing field; and
5. Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

## 2 Mission

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The Big Country Soccer Association is committed to providing well-organized soccer recreation appropriately structured to accommodate any level of play commensurate with our players’ individual abilities, potential, and interest and to promoting a positive youth sports culture that teaches life lessons and “honors the game” for all players in the Big Country, Alberta area. Our sporting philosophy is based on the following objectives:

1. To provide and support programs for the involvement and enjoyment of members of the Big Country Soccer Association in support of a long-term development of the sport of soccer.
2. To encourage and welcome parental support in youth soccer development.
3. To encourage good sportsmanship through development and competition in the sport.
4. To ensure all participants in all programs have fun and equal opportunity to actively participate in the sport.
5. To develop each athlete's basic skills that they can apply to the sport.
6. To develop good coaching and officiating capabilities in the sport.
7. To create and maintain a spirit of friendly competition without fear of bullying.

## 3 Scope

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This document is intended to provide general guidelines to Big Country Soccer Association community on the general information on the 6 vs 6 formation and its various options.



## 4 References

The following referenced documents are to be considered the latest edition and indispensable for the application of this document.

*Table 1 – References*

Document Number	Title
	Alberta Soccer Association
	Canada Soccer Association

## 5 Acronyms and Defined Terms

For this document, the following acronyms and terms apply.

### 5.1 Acronyms

*Table 2 – Acronyms*

Acronym	Definition
ASA	Alberta Soccer Association
BCSA	Big Country Soccer Association
CSA	Canada Soccer Association

### 5.2 Definitions

*Table 3 – Definitions*

Term	Definition
<b>Big Country Soccer Association</b>	This is the name used to identify the association of community rural teams in Big Country central Alberta.
<b>Registered Member</b>	This is the community that is registered with BCSA to register their players to compete in the Association with other registered teams. These communities will have their players registered with Alberta Soccer Association.

## 6 Responsibilities

6.1 The following list of responsibilities are not all encompassing. Additional responsibilities may be assigned out, as required, when there are tasks and/ or actions required to represent Big Country



Soccer Association, its players, parents, coaches, and the governing soccer associations that Big Country Soccer Association is required to adhere to.

**6.2** President of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following in reference to this document:

- a) Provide final comment on all Big Country Soccer Association governance and other administrative documents before releasing them as a published document to the Big Country community.

**6.3** Vice- President of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following in reference to this document:

- a) Lead on the development of Big Country Soccer Association governance, policies, and any other administrative documents necessary for Big Country Soccer Association to operate in the soccer community.
- b) Provide support for the development and support of Big Country Soccer Association coaches.

**6.4** Registered Members of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following in reference to this document:

- a) Ensure Big Country Soccer Association coaching information is made available to coaches that this document applies to.

**6.5** Coaches of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following in reference to this document:

- a) Ensure players are aware of the system of play selected for the team including player responsibilities related to that system.
- b) Provide an environment where players are able to explore and experience the positions related to the 6 vs 6 formation.



## 7 2 x 2 x 1 Formation

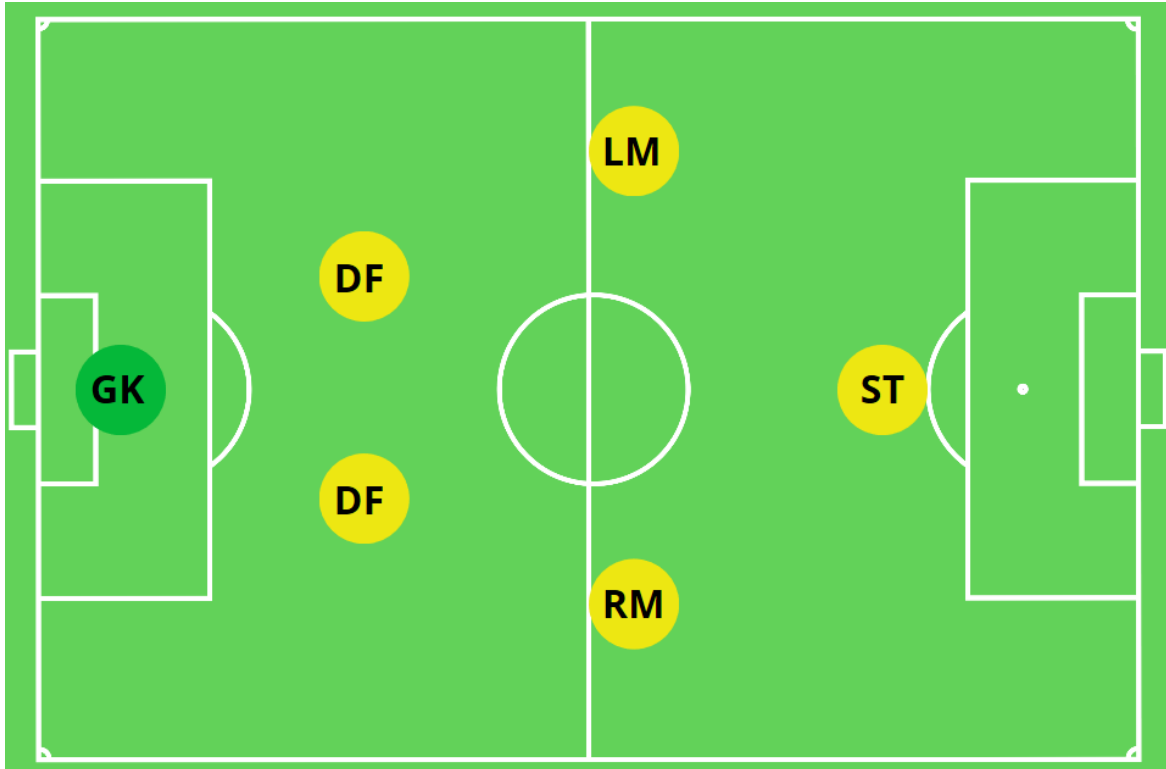


Figure 1 – 2-2-1 Formation

### 7.1 Formation Overview

This is likely the most popular system of play for 6v6 teams. Most teams want some form of a defensive base and midfield coverage, and it makes perfect sense to then sacrifice an extra player in attack and put them elsewhere on the field.

The most obvious drawback to this formation is that the balance it seems to provide can quickly become counter-acted if one of the wingers gets drawn to the middle. With no central midfielder in sight, the wingers may feel obligated to help in central areas. However, if they leave their position the wide areas can become completely exposed.

Instead, the striker should look to close the gap in defensive transitions as the defenders and wingers provide cover and balance. The option with this formation however is you can bring the wingers in and play with two central midfielders rather than wingers. This then might lack width but could be more conducive to a natural defensive shape in shutting down the middle and remaining compact in the spine of the field.



## **7.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- For this formation to work it requires discipline, especially from the defenders, who must stay in position, but also from the midfield duo, who may take it in turns to support the striker.
- The forward also needs to be fit and prepared to run a lot, because they will be required to undertake a lot of running during the match.
- It is best suited to a striker who is strong on both feet!

## **7.3 Pros of This Formation**

- This is one of the most secure formations defensively, because there are two men at the back providing a solid foundation and a base from which to mount attacks going forward.
- The midfielders are able to both support the defense and also help out with the attack further forward.
- It suits players who are dynamic and are prepared to interchange rapidly on the pitch.

## **7.4 Cons of This Formation**

- It requires the two midfielders to be very disciplined and not to over commit going forward, otherwise the defense can be left exposed.
- The play can become too narrow if the two midfielders are not prepared to drift wide from time to time. At the same time, both of them should not play wide, as they will leave a gap in the middle for their opponents to exploit.
- At the same time, it does mean they need to get forward as well – if they are pinned back too much the striker can become isolated.
- If a striker is one-footed, the attack can become too orientated to one side of the pitch or the other.





## 8 2 x 1 x 2 Formation

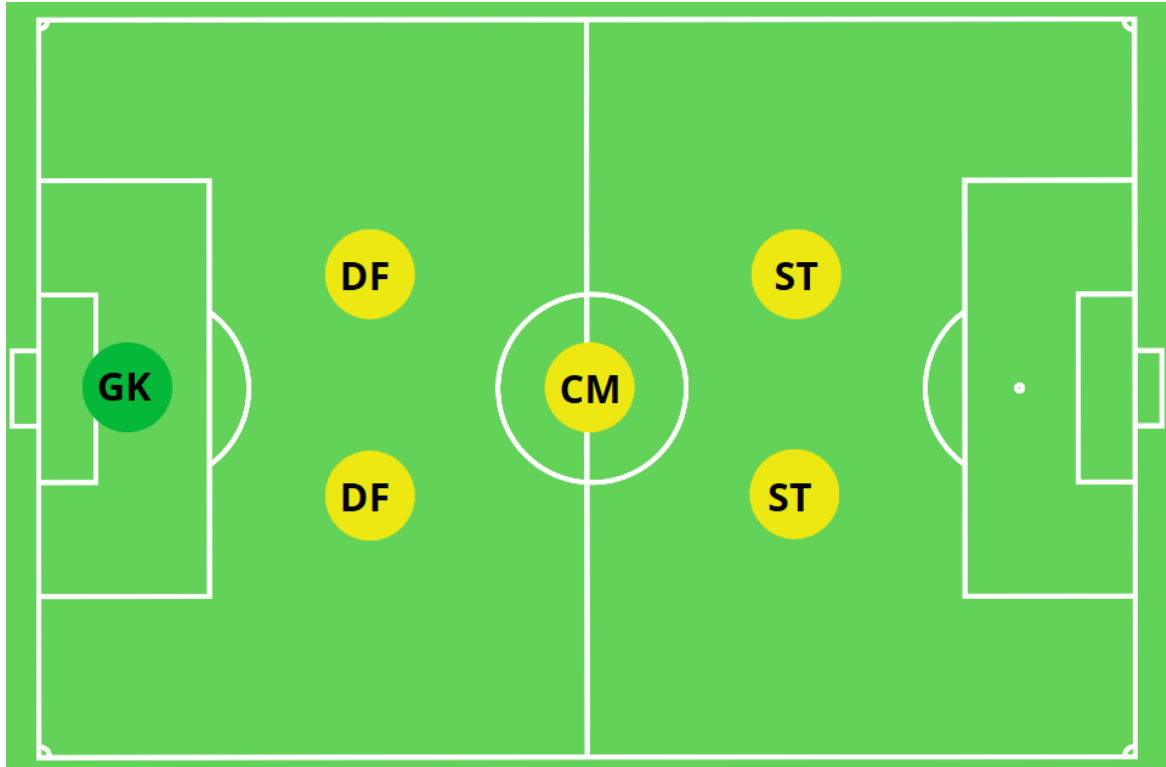


Figure 2 – 2-1-2 Formation

### 8.1 Formation Overview

The 2-1-2 is one of the more popular methods for playing 6v6 around the world. Although it might lack in width when compared to the 2-2-1, a great amount of balance is still achieved in the formation. One central midfielder can be used as the natural link between attack and defense and the width can come from whichever forward or defender is nearest to the play at a time.

This is a great formation for teaching young players how to work in pairs and could be a great steppingstone to several future formations of different formats. On the flip side, it may be particularly top heavy. Two strikers at the 6v6 level can leave a team with a lot left to be desired in the middle of the pitch and this then becomes overly-reliant on the central midfielder to pick up the slack.

However, for what it offers in attack and its otherwise solid balance, the 2-1-2 should certainly be a formation up for consideration of any team playing 6v6.



## **8.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- This formation relies on having two very good strikers, but it also places a premium on the other three players in the formation, especially the one midfielder, who will be required to do a lot of work, supporting the attack one minute, and providing cover at the back the next minute.
- The midfield player is best if the player is strong at following the play and able to understand when to support/ challenge and when not to.

## **8.3 Pros of This Formation**

- This formation allows teams with two excellent forwards to play them both at the same time, and to develop an understanding together.
- Allows for a lot of end-to-end play which is exciting to watch.
- Ideal combination if a side has a right and left footed striker and defender.
- It suits a team that can pass the ball quickly and move, because it is so fluid.
- Formation is strong for creating natural triangles between defence to attack with a strong midfield player.

## **8.4 Cons of This Formation**

- There is a risk that the two forwards concentrate on attack only, leaving the rest of the team with too much work to do defensively.
- There is a lot of emphasis placed on the one midfielder, who needs to do his share of defensive and offensive work. Whoever plays in that position needs to have a great deal of tactical awareness and stamina.
- If one or other of the attackers does not drop back when out of possession, a team can find themselves outnumbered in the midfield.
- If the movement is not fast enough, it is easy for opposing teams to break-up the interplay between the various positions.



## 9 3 x 1 x 1 Formation

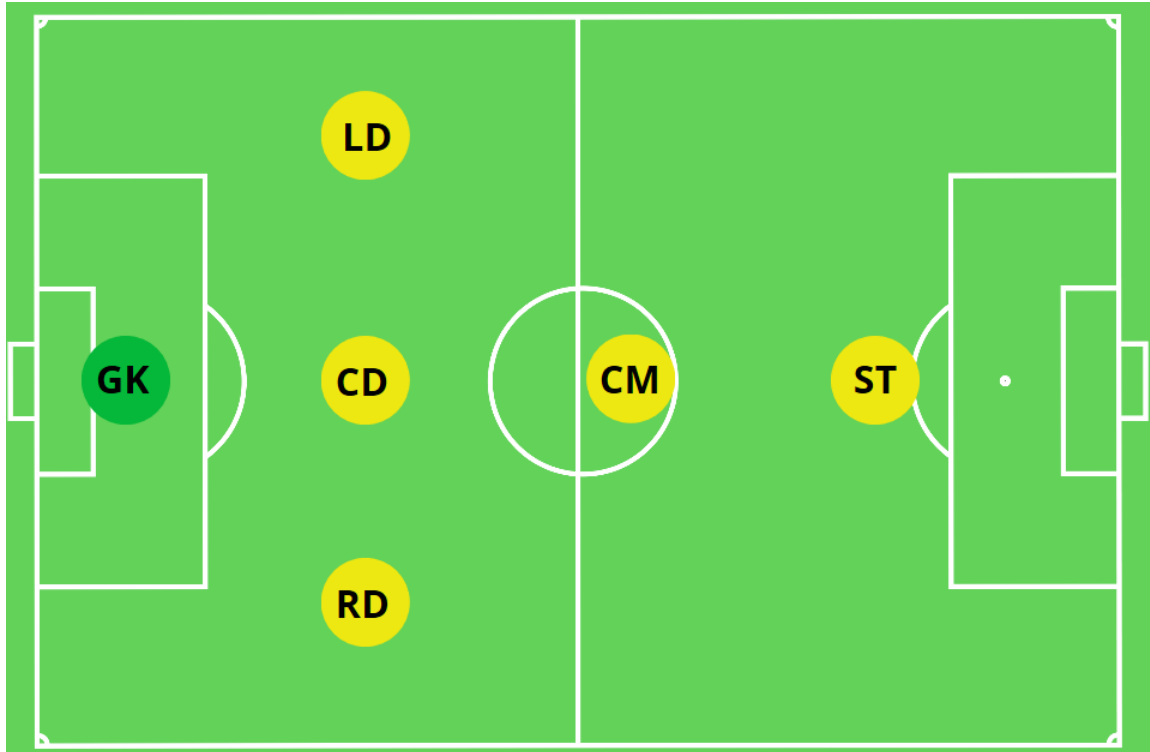


Figure 3 – 3-1-1 Formation

### 9.1 Formation Overview

On paper, one look at the 3-1-1 and you may completely disregard the formation. It is after all in appearance very defensive. However, done right I believe this can be the best 6v6 formation to use and have the capacity to beat any team. In this formation, the fullbacks (left and right defenders) need to join the attack.

When the ball is on the left, the right defender can push up...and vice versa. The central midfielder then becomes an integral link in both dictating the tempo on-the-ball and also creating space on the opposite side of the fullback in attacking transitions. Undoubtedly this may be overly complex for young players.

But the 3-1-1 can also be simplified to just a very defensive, park-the-bus esque system of play and this may frustrate the best of teams. Regardless of the approach, for teams hoping to play on the counter and explode forward at the right moments, the 3-1-1 is quite simply the best choice.



## **9.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- It needs at least one player from the back and preferably two, who can push forward from the back and drop into midfield, making it a 1-3-1 formation when on the attack.
- The attacker needs to be very fit and efficient – they will not get many chances, so they need to convert as many of those that come their way as possible.

## **9.3 Pros of This Formation**

- This provides plenty of defensive cover, with the three defenders and the midfielder also acting as a shield.
- It suits teams who like to play on the counter-attack, and can break quickly.
- It is flexible and, if applied correctly, can become a 1 -3 -1 formation when in possession.

## **9.4 Cons of This Formation**

- It requires a high degree of fitness from the two wing backs who will be required to get forward whenever possible.
- Speed is of the essence for the wing-backs. If they are too slow they can get caught too far up the pitch
- There is a danger that this formation becomes so defensive that the striker is starved of opportunities and the ball.
- It needs a lot of coordination between all the players, deciding who is going to move into midfield.



## 10 1 x 3 x 1 Formation



Figure 4 – 1-3-1 Formation

### 10.1 Formation Overview

Perhaps a less common formation that deserves attention, the 1-3-1 provides unique balance and squashes the issue that the 2-1-2 and 2-2-1 have of somehow achieving both width and cover in central areas.

The striker should never become isolated with three midfielders in behind, but what it may lack is in having the necessary cover in behind if anything were to go wrong. Having only 1 defender is risky, even at the 6v6 level. But if the midfielders are diligent and do the work they need to do, there is no reason why this formation cannot work.

For teams that have just made the jump up from utilizing a diamond formation at 5v5, the 1-3-1 could be a great option as it maintains much of the same principles. The defensive side of the game really is the only worry for this formation and so with the right players who understand the need to come back and help in defense, there is no reason why the 1-3-1 can't be a fantastic option for any coach to consider.



## **10.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- It requires the one man in the middle of midfield to maintain positional discipline, whilst the two additional players either side of them need a lot of stamina to cope with the extra running they will be required to do.
- The center midfield player is best if good defending and supporting the attack. Often referred to a central defending midfield player. This gives support to the defence while allowing the other midfield players to provide multiple options in attack in supporting the striker.

## **10.3 Pros of This Formation**

- Depending on the circumstances of the match, this can be either an offensive or defensive formation, with the three midfielders either sitting deep or positioning themselves further up the field.
- It can easily become a 2-2-1 formation with one of the midfielders playing as an auxiliary striker and the other as an added defender.
- It offers plenty of width and space to attack the full-back.

## **10.4 Cons of This Formation**

- There needs to be constant communication between the players, especially the three midfielders. The central one will need to sit, whilst the other two must agree who supports the attack and who helps the defense.
- If for any reason the midfield gets by-passed, the sole defender can get out-numbered by the other side's attackers.
- The midfielders may be too deep, meaning the gap between them and the lone striker is too great.