



Guideline (GUI)



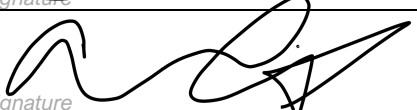
# 8 vs 8 Formation Option Guide

---

BCSA-GUI- 021-00

Rev. 0 | 13-Feb-2024

Published

<b>Originator</b>	Duncan Hawkins, Vice-President BCSA <i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i> 
<b>Checker</b>	Ivo Toellner, Treasurer, BCSA <i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i> 
<b>Approver</b>	Cody Craig, President, BCSA <i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i> 



## Errors or Omissions

Big Country Soccer Association has provided this manual to the membership as a guide for the options available with an 8 vs 8 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



## Contents

1	<b><u>Vision</u></b> .....	4
2	<b><u>Mission</u></b> .....	4
3	<b><u>Scope</u></b> .....	4
4	<b><u>Reference</u></b> .....	5
5	<b><u>Acronyms and Defined Terms</u></b> .....	5
6	<b><u>Responsibilities</u></b> .....	5
6.2	<u>President</u> .....	6
6.2	<u>Vice-President</u> .....	6
6.3	<u>Registered Member</u> .....	6
6.4	<u>Coaches</u> .....	6
7	<b><u>3-2-2 Formation</u></b> .....	7
8	<b><u>2-3-2 Formation</u></b> .....	9
9	<b><u>3-3-1 Formation</u></b> .....	11
10	<b><u>2-4-1 Formation (Diamond)</u></b> .....	13

## Tables

<b><u>Table 1- References</u></b> .....	5
<b><u>Table 2- Acronyms</u></b> .....	5
<b><u>Table 3- Definitions</u></b> .....	5

## Figure

<b><u>Figure 1- 3-2-2 Formation</u></b> .....	7
<b><u>Figure 2- 2-3-2 Formation</u></b> .....	9
<b><u>Figure 3- 3-3-1 Formation</u></b> .....	11
<b><u>Figure 4- 2-4-1 Formation (Diamond)</u></b> .....	13



## 1 Vision

---

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

---

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

---

This document is intended to provide general guidelines to Big Country Soccer Association community on the general information on the 8 vs 8 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 8 vs 8 formation.



## 7 3 x 2 x 2 Formation



Figure 1 – 3-2-2 Formation

### 7.1 Formation Overview

This is more of a defensive-first formation. The 3-2-2 formation is one of the most commonly used formation for the 8 vs 8 game. It provides teams using this formation with 2-strikers, 2-midfield players, and 3-defenders (the keeper counts as 1 of the 8 players automatically).

This formation is the pre-cursor to those teams that will elevate to the traditional 4-4-2 formation in the older age groups that are playing 11 a side. It teaches important positional details including supporting strikers, midfield who support the wide areas, and defenders that can also cover wide and also central areas.

In this formation, the midfield players will be doing the bulk of the covering of the field of play in their running and also their lateral positioning. If the midfield players are not strong, this could put pressure on the defenders needing to push up to cover the center and also be on their A-game for any penetrating plays in the wide areas.



## **7.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- Hard-working midfield players who are fit and able to get up the field to support the strikers and wide areas but also to support defending the center of the field and wide areas.
- Strikers who can drop and support the center midfield areas and put pressure in the wide areas.
- Strikers who are able to work together in support of the attack.
- Defenders who are mobile and able to move up with the play to prevent too much of a gap between the defenders and midfield players.

## **7.3 Pros of This Formation**

- Conducive for teaching players how to support each other through the defending, central, and attacking zones.
- Solid coverage in defensive areas with 3-defenders at the back for a solid spine.
- Each player has clearly defined roles and movement on the field.
- Can play a possession style of play but also use the wide areas for long-balls for the running midfield and striker players.
- Good for teaching to build up the play from the back.

## **7.4 Cons of This Formation**

- No natural wingers with this formation allowing for large gaps between the final third of the field back to the position of where the defenders are.
- Strikers need to work in applying pressure in the wide areas. Strikers will need to know where they need to be positioned in relation to the other striker.
- If the defenders are not mobile and move up with the play, this could create a large gap if midfield players move up to apply pressure and the defender do not move up in relation to midfield movement.
- Tendency to put most skilled and/ or fit players in the midfield often relying on them too much instead of the formation learning on how to move on the field of play in relation to where the ball is positioned.





## 8 2 x 3 x 2 Formation



Figure 2 – 2-3-2 Formation

### 8.1 Formation Overview

Unlike the 3-2-2 formation, the 2-3-2 formation relies more on the presence of wide players allowing the central midfielder and strikers to remain more central on the field of play. In this formation, the wide players will be involved in both supporting the attack and also running back to support the defenders.

The risk of having the wide players caught up high is greater thereby allowing for more gap in the wide areas. If the center midfielder is not paying attention to their position in relation to the play, this can put a lot of pressure on the defenders who can be caught in a position where there are more attackers than defenders.

Having a strong midfielder who is good with the ball is also important. There are more attacking options with two wide players plus the two attackers. Teams that are good in possession with the ball may find this formation one that suits them.



## **8.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- Wide midfield players that are able to stay wide and understand how to support in defense and in the attack.
- A center midfield player who is comfortable on the ball and can dictate the play from the center of the field.
- Strikers who are mobile and understand how to support each other in the attack while also not creating too much of a gap between themselves and the central midfield player.

## **8.3 Pros of This Formation**

- Attack-minded and possession-based formation.
- Allows for strong balance in the wide attacking and defending areas.
- Every player has clearly defined roles and responsibilities on the field of play.
- Conducive of playing wide but also being able to switch the play from side to side.
- Dual strikers mean the opposing defenders are always occupied allowing for wide midfield players to help overload the attack.

## **8.4 Cons of This Formation**

- Over-reliant on wide players who will be required to burst forward in support of the attack but then may need to hurry back to defend if the team is not as skilled in retaining ball possession.
- Central midfield player must remain disciplined in their position. Can be a challenge with some youth players.
- If the wide players get stuck in too high up and not pay attention to their position in relation to the play, will cause a gap that the other team can exploit and put pressure in the wide areas on the defensive end of play causing a counter-attack.
- Having two strikers may not be as necessary if the mid-field is packed by the opposition.



## 9 3 x 3 x 1 Formation



Figure 3 – 3-3-1 Formation

### 9.1 Formation Overview

Excellent option for a team with skilled players in central positions. There is a lot of balance in this formation in both the defensive and midfield wide areas. With there being only 1 striker in this formation, the key is to utilize the wide players in the attack and also having the defender from the same side as the midfield player pushing up in order to support the midfield. This means the wide defender will need to be able to play both ways. First as a defender and second as a midfield player.

Again, the central midfield player will need to be skilled with the ball in order to use both the options of the striker and also the options of the wide players in attack. Additionally, the central midfield player needs to also have good vision to also see and use the supporting defender moving into the wide position in support.

### 9.2 Players/ Skills Required

- Wide midfield players who are able to support the attack in the wide areas and retain the ball in order to support a single striker formation.



- A striker who is able to read the play and move in relation to the ball and supporting players. Can work well on their own in 1 vs 1 situations.
- Agile wide defenders who can see the play and move up the field in support of the same side wide midfield player.

### **9.3 Pros of This Formation**

- Conducive to playing wide.
- Good coverage in defensive areas while also giving a platform to teach wide defenders the skills on joining the attack.
- Can play possession or long-balls depending on the movement/ position of the strikers and midfield players.

### **9.4 Cons of This Formation**

- Likely to be less players in central midfield than the other options.
- Can easily become overly defensive if the wide midfield players are hesitant on attacking thus freezing out the single strike to try and do all the attacking with no support.
- Wide midfield players may be tempted to play more towards the defenders thus shrinking the field where more players are bunched in the center.
- Reliance on this formation is based on have strong skilled players in central positions.



## 10 2 x 4 x 1 Formation (Diamond)



Figure 4 – 2-4-1 Formation (Diamond)

### 10.1 Formation Overview

This formation is an option for those teams that do not have natural wide midfield players but have players that are good at ball possession and passing where the center of play is more through the center of the field using various angle passing.

In this formation, players may have less defined role with the exception of your defending midfield and attacking midfield players. Often this formation can be more challenging with teams that are not as familiar with how positions/ shape needs to move during play.

This formation is good for setting up a counter-attacking system where the midfield players collapse when defending but then move out wide automatically when they get possession and attack. If the team is good with the ball and have experience with the sport, this formation may prove to be once worth doing as many players on the opposition may not know how to line up and deal with this formation.



## **10.2 Players/ Skills Required**

- Hard-working wide midfield players who are able to collapse and defend the center of the field of play but also be able to move out wide quickly when in possession.
- Good passers of the ball and able to retain possession without panicking.
- Above average soccer intelligence and tactical knowledge than normal for the age group. Good for a team that has played together for a while.
- Hard workers and fast runners when defending.

## **10.3 Pros of This Formation**

- Rooted in a possession-based style of play.
- Easily allows for pressing in a diamond formation.
- Very flexible and allows for interchanging into variations during play. This is something opposing teams may not be able to adjust to.
- A formation that can easily transform into the 4-2-3-1 formation in the older age groups.

## **10.4 Cons of This Formation**

- May lack adequate coverage in wide areas if the wide midfield players are not paying attention to their position in reference to the ball.
- Less clearly defined roles than the other formation options.
- If players are not aware of their position on the field of play, it opens a team for counter-attacking.
- Defensive midfield player may need to leave their area to cover wide midfield player zone allowing for space being left in the center of the field of play.
- Above average soccer intelligence and tactical awareness is required for this formation.
- A single striker must be a good striker of the ball when there is an opportunity as they are operating up front alone.