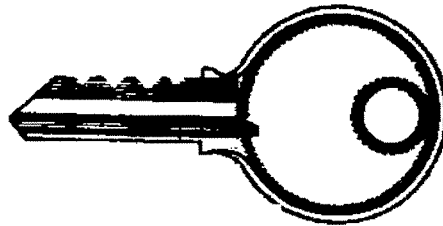


NSCAA/AYSO

Tactical Soccer Test

For Players and Coaches

Your



To Good

Soccer

Decisions

THE DARKENED PLAYER IS ALWAYS THE PLAYER YOU MUST MAKE THE DECISION FOR.



THE ARROW DESIGNATES THE DIRECTION IN WHICH THE TEAM WITH THE BALL IS MOVING.

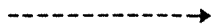


ON THE DIAGRAMS:

STRAIGHT LINE INDICATES A PASS



A DASHED LINE; A RUN



IRREGULAR STRAIGHT LINE; A CREATIVE DRIBBLE



DEFENDERS ARE SHOWN IN CIRCLES



ATTACKING PLAYERS ARE TRIANGULAR SHAPED



Diagram #1

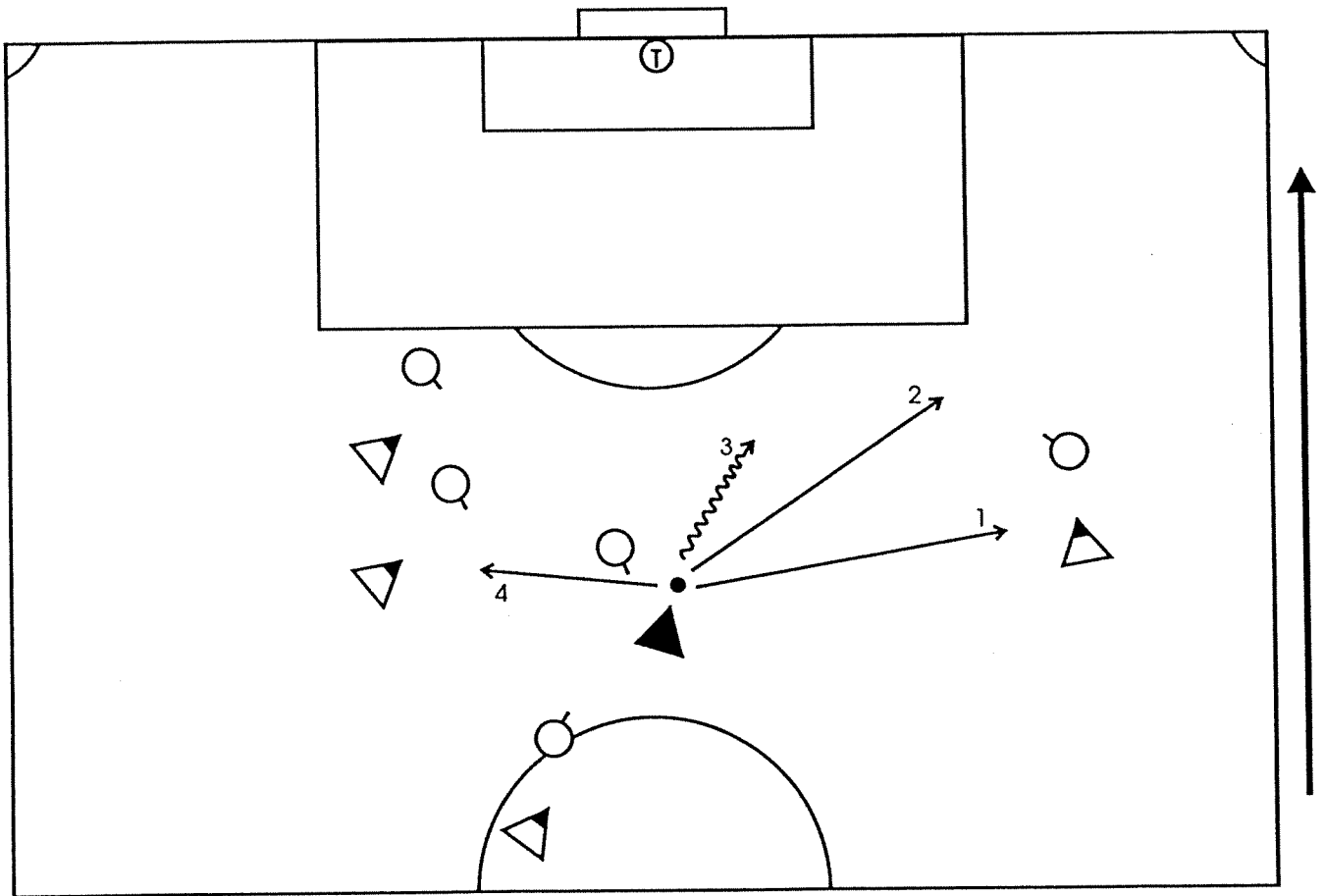


Diagram #2

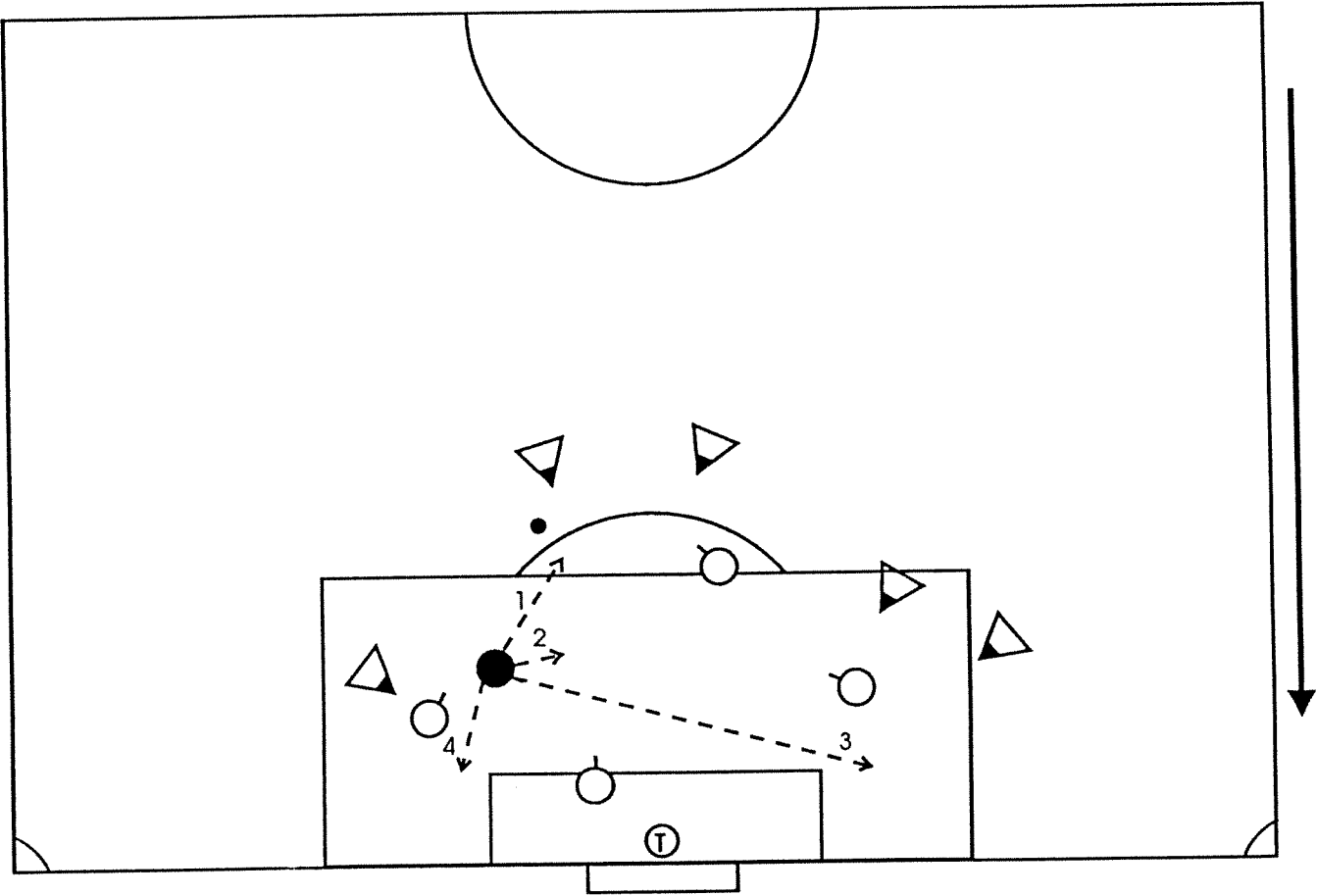


Diagram #4

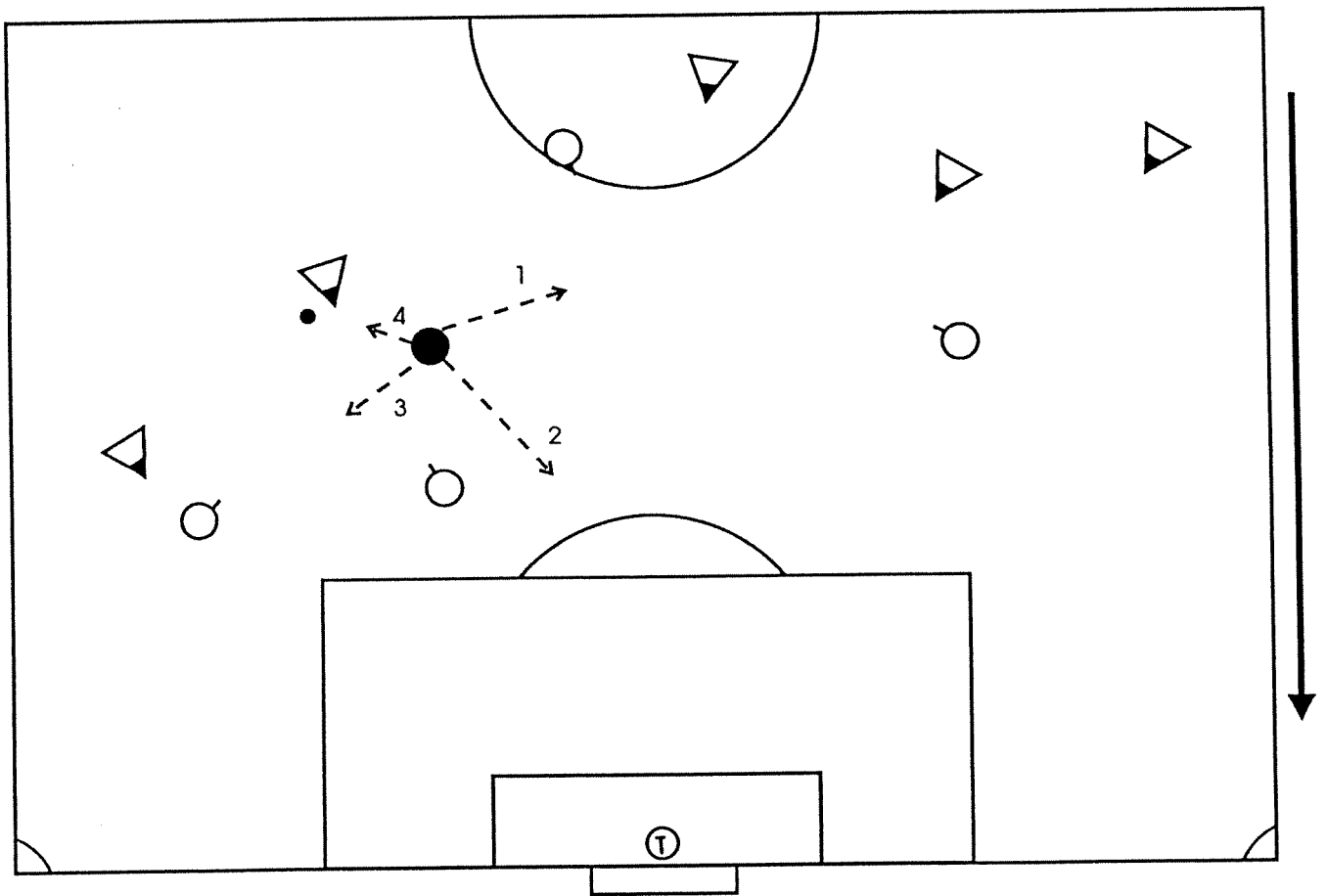


Diagram #5

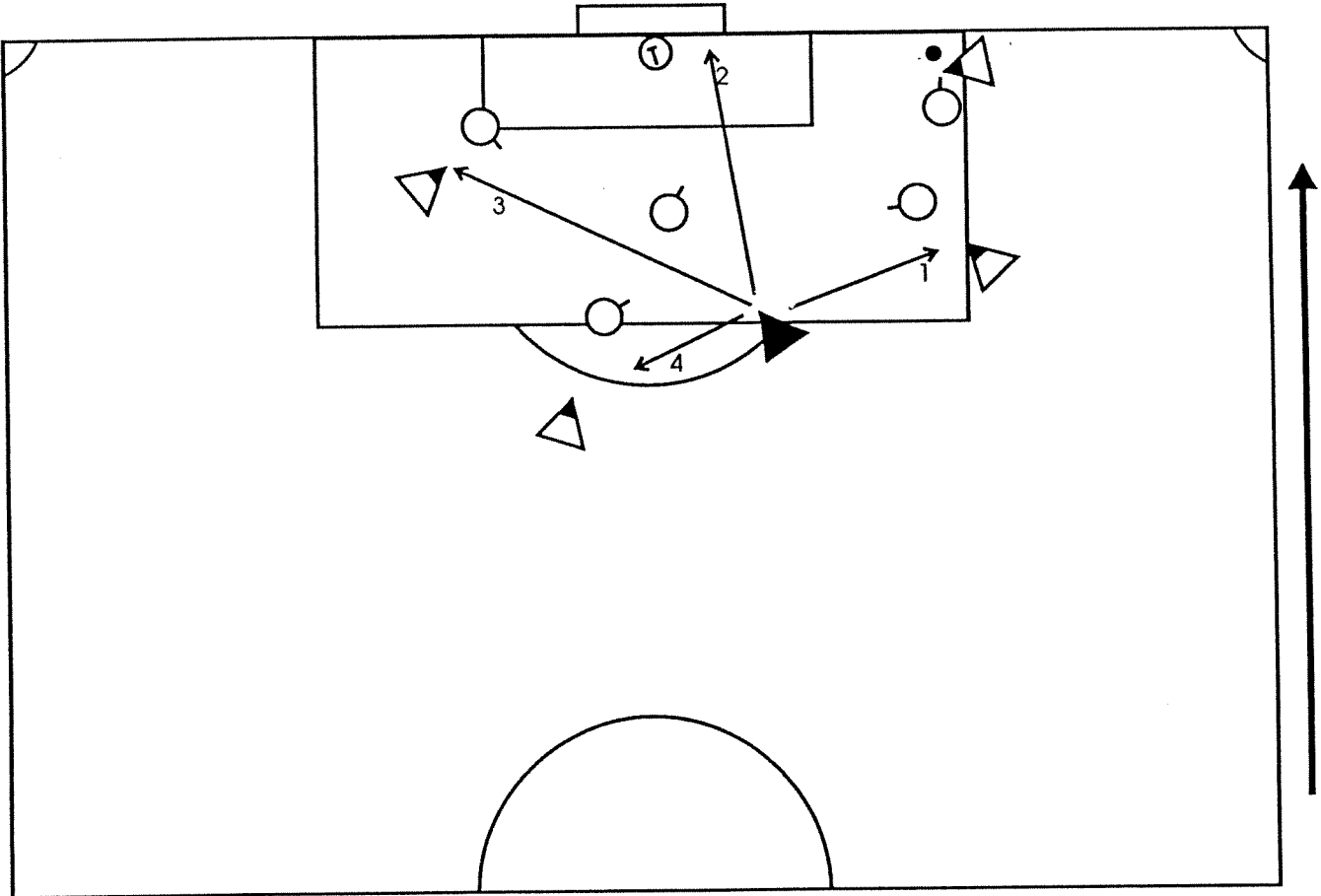


Diagram #6

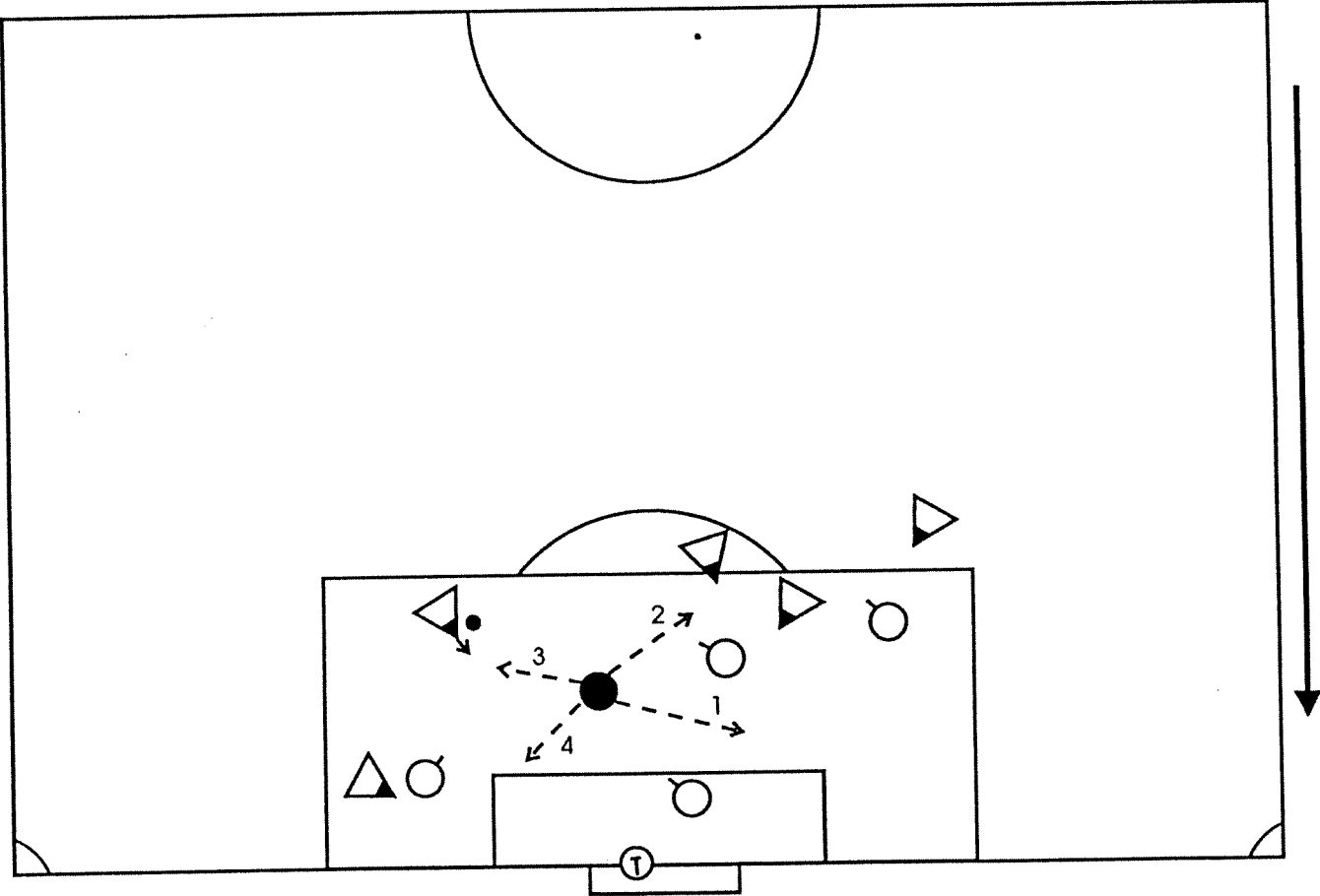


Diagram #7

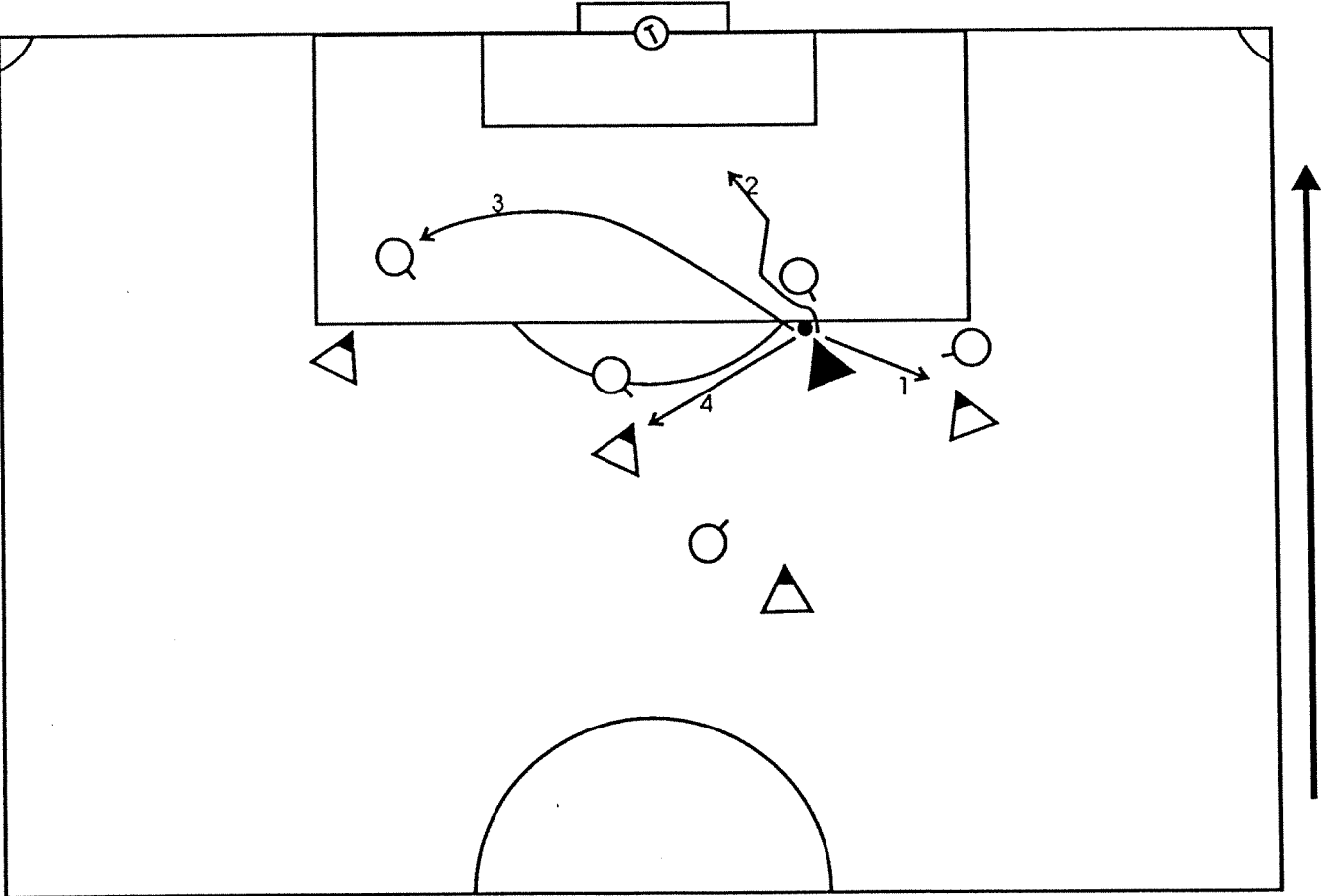


Diagram #8

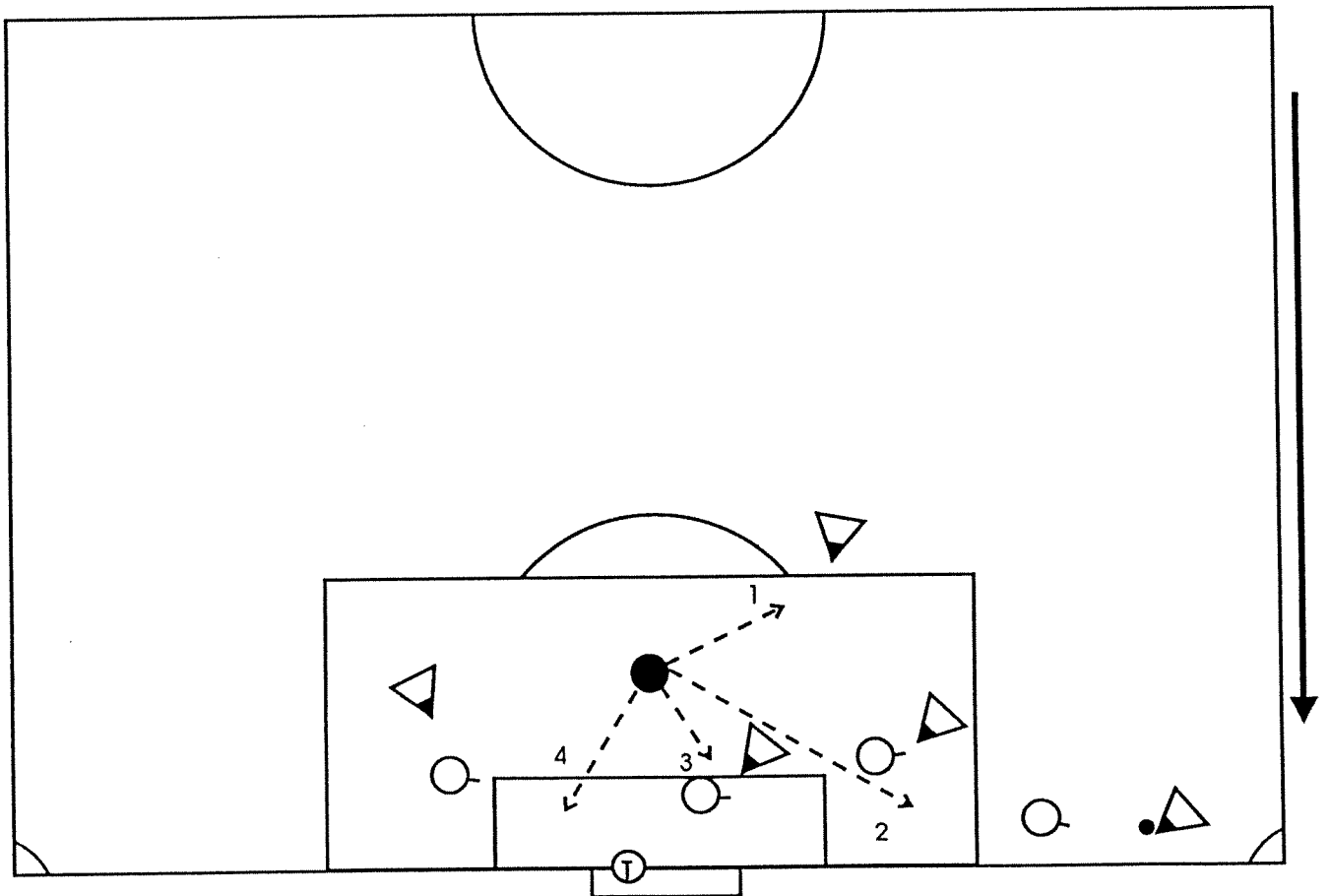


Diagram #9

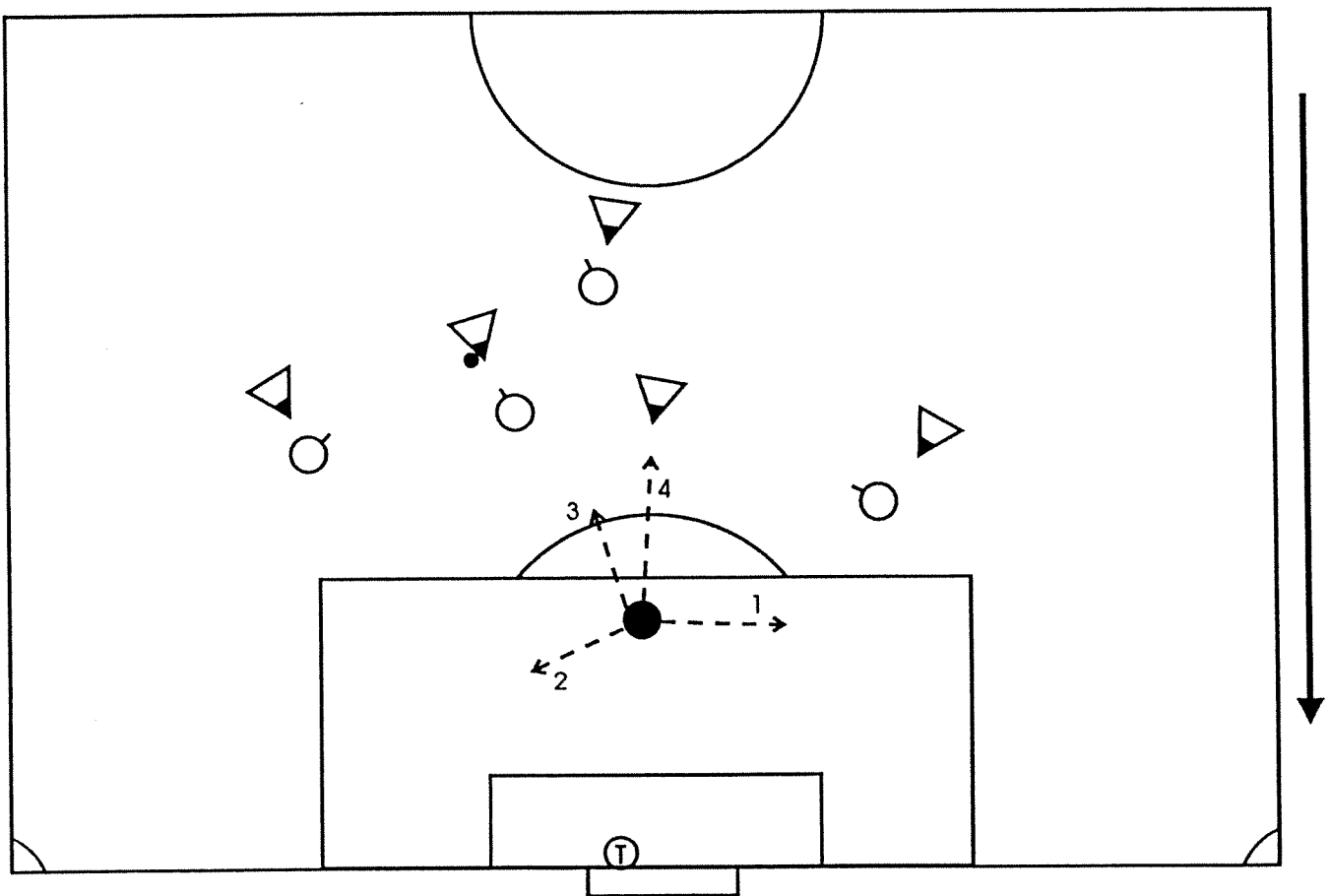


Diagram #10

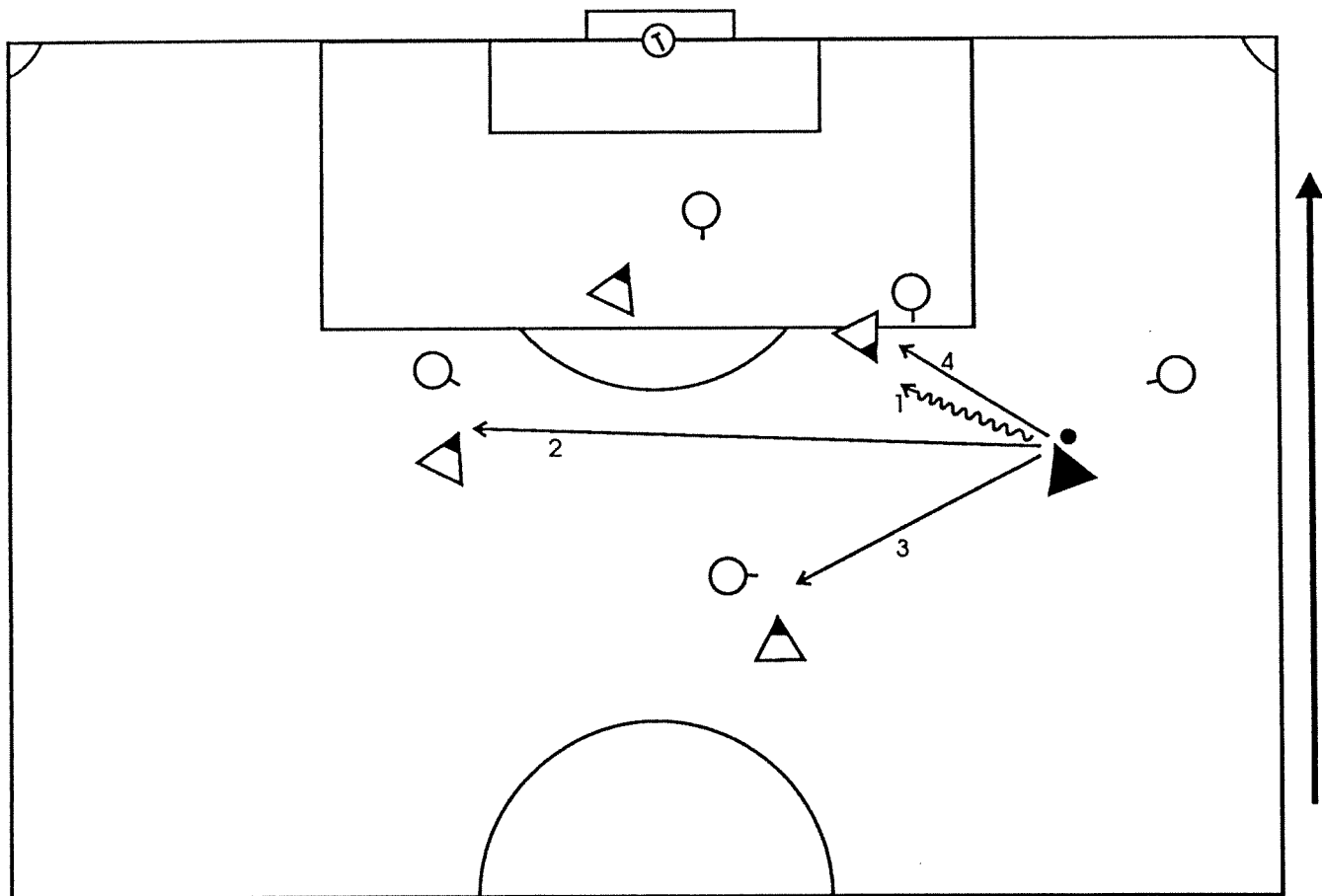


Diagram #11

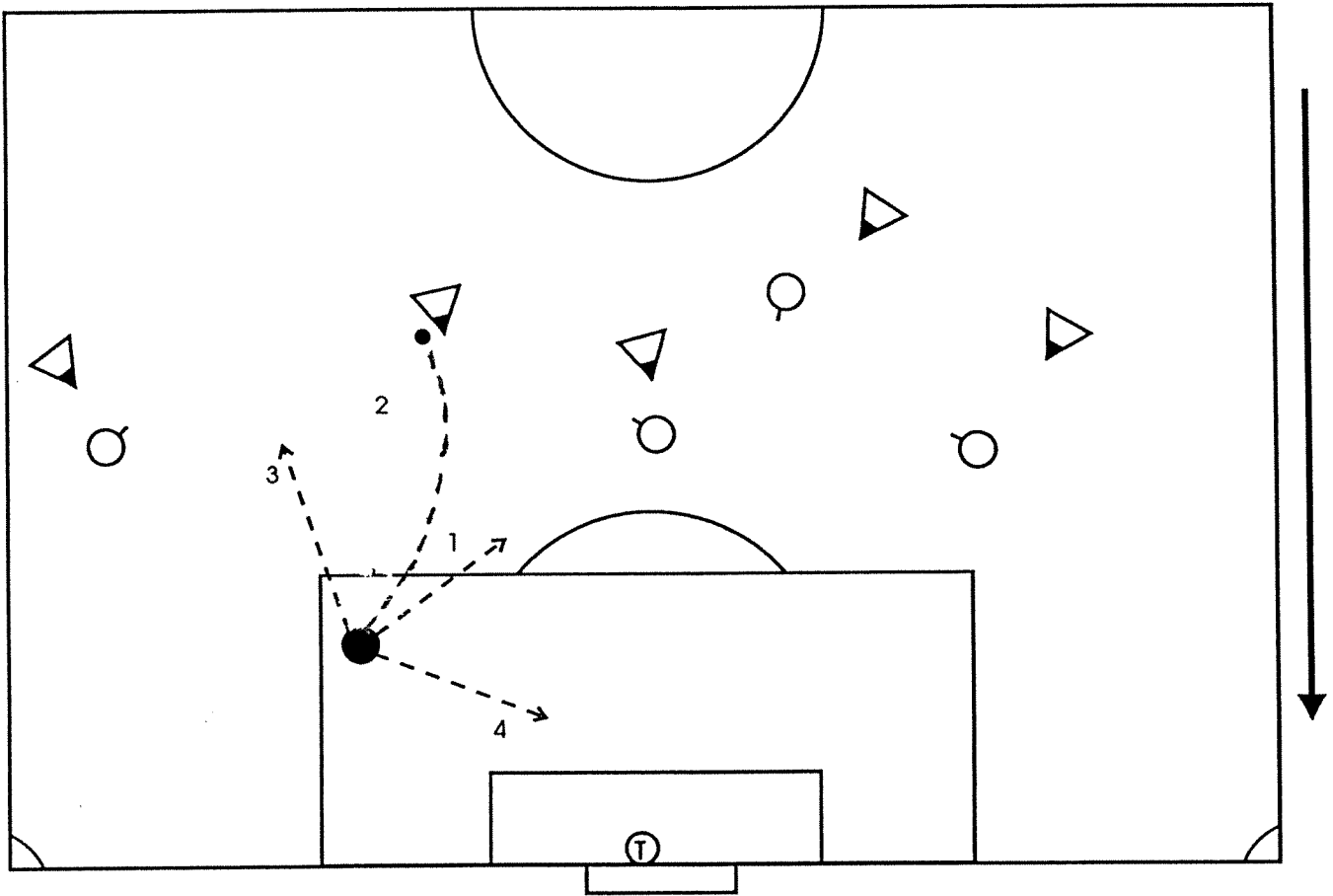


Diagram #12

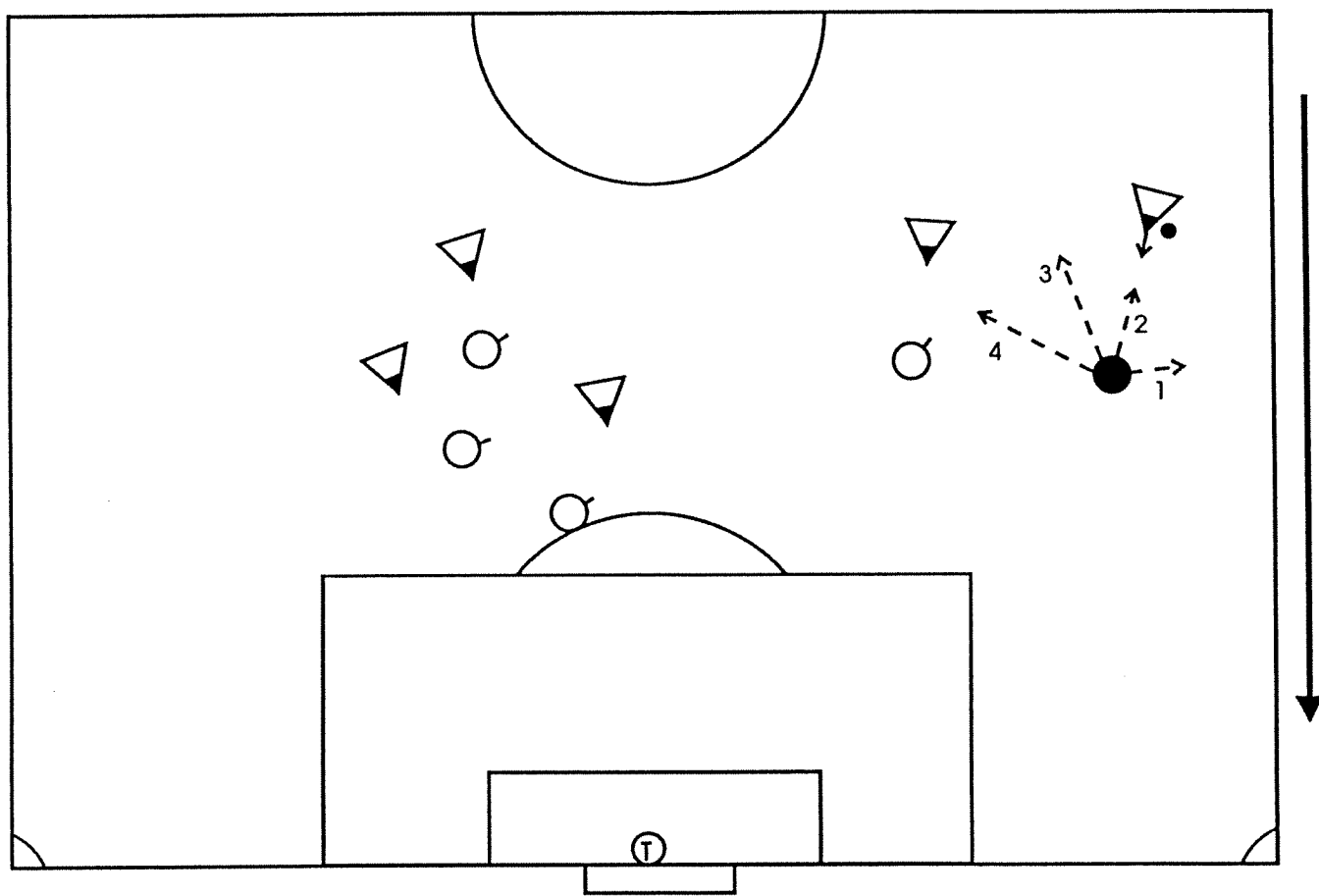


Diagram #13

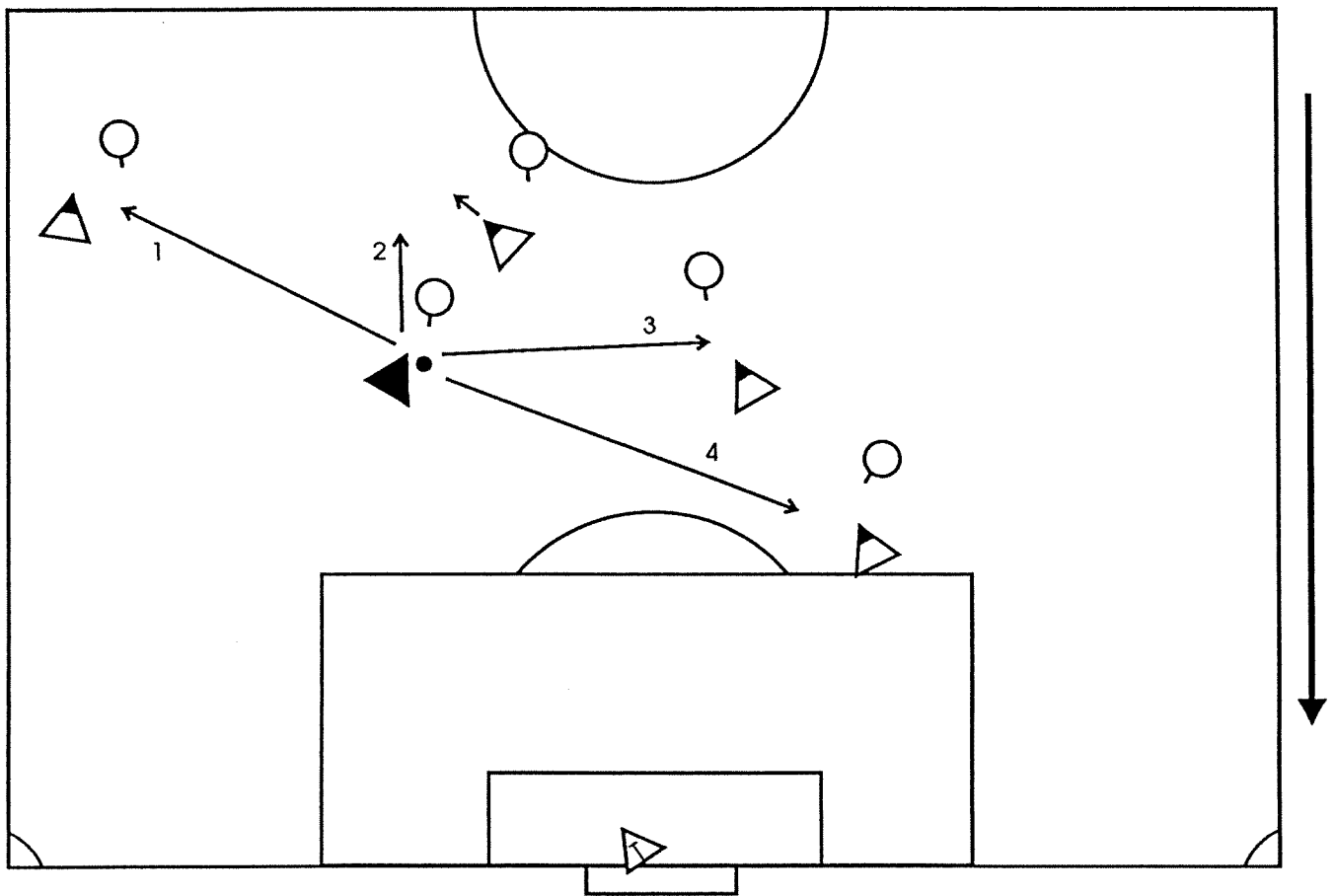


Diagram #14

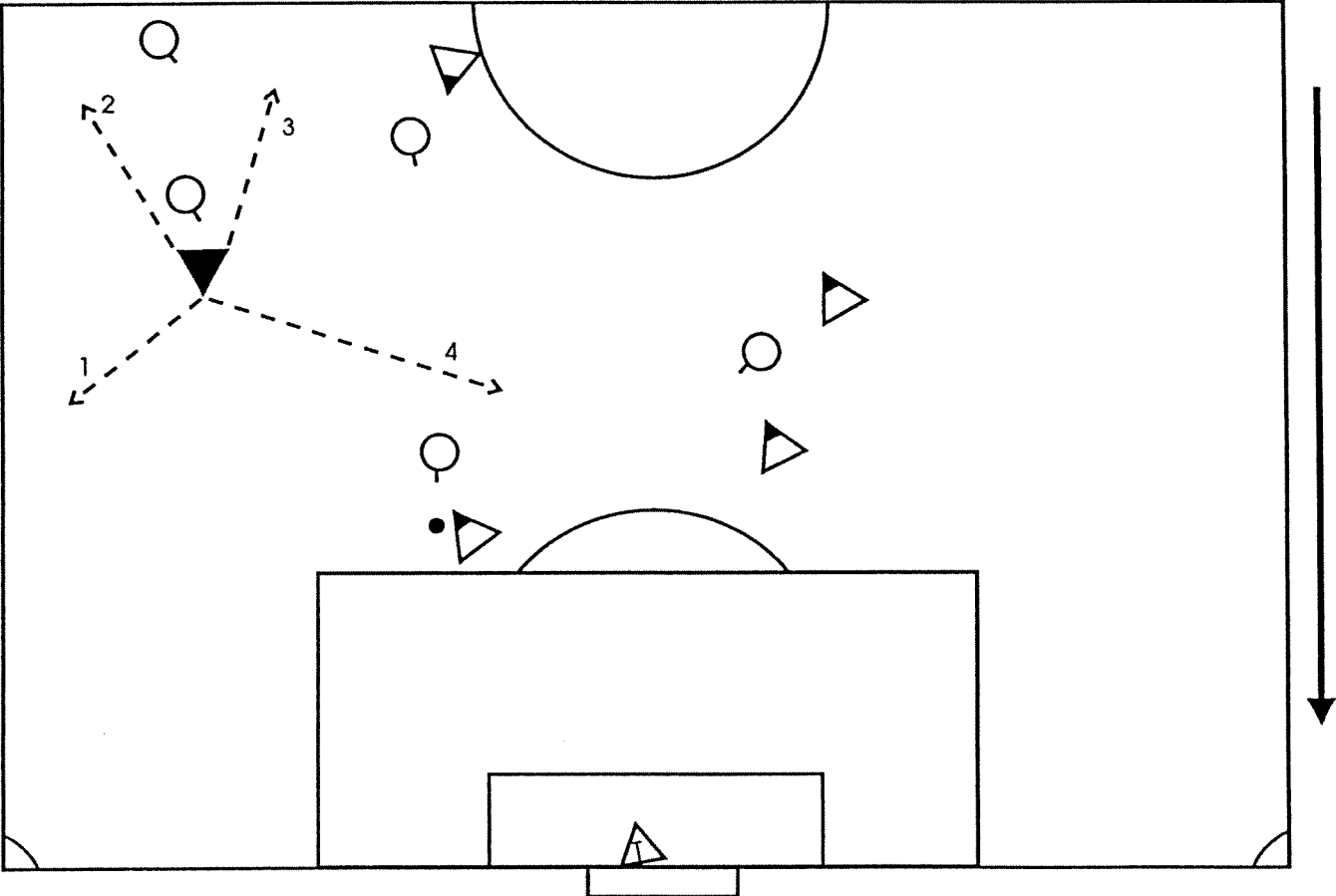


Diagram # 15

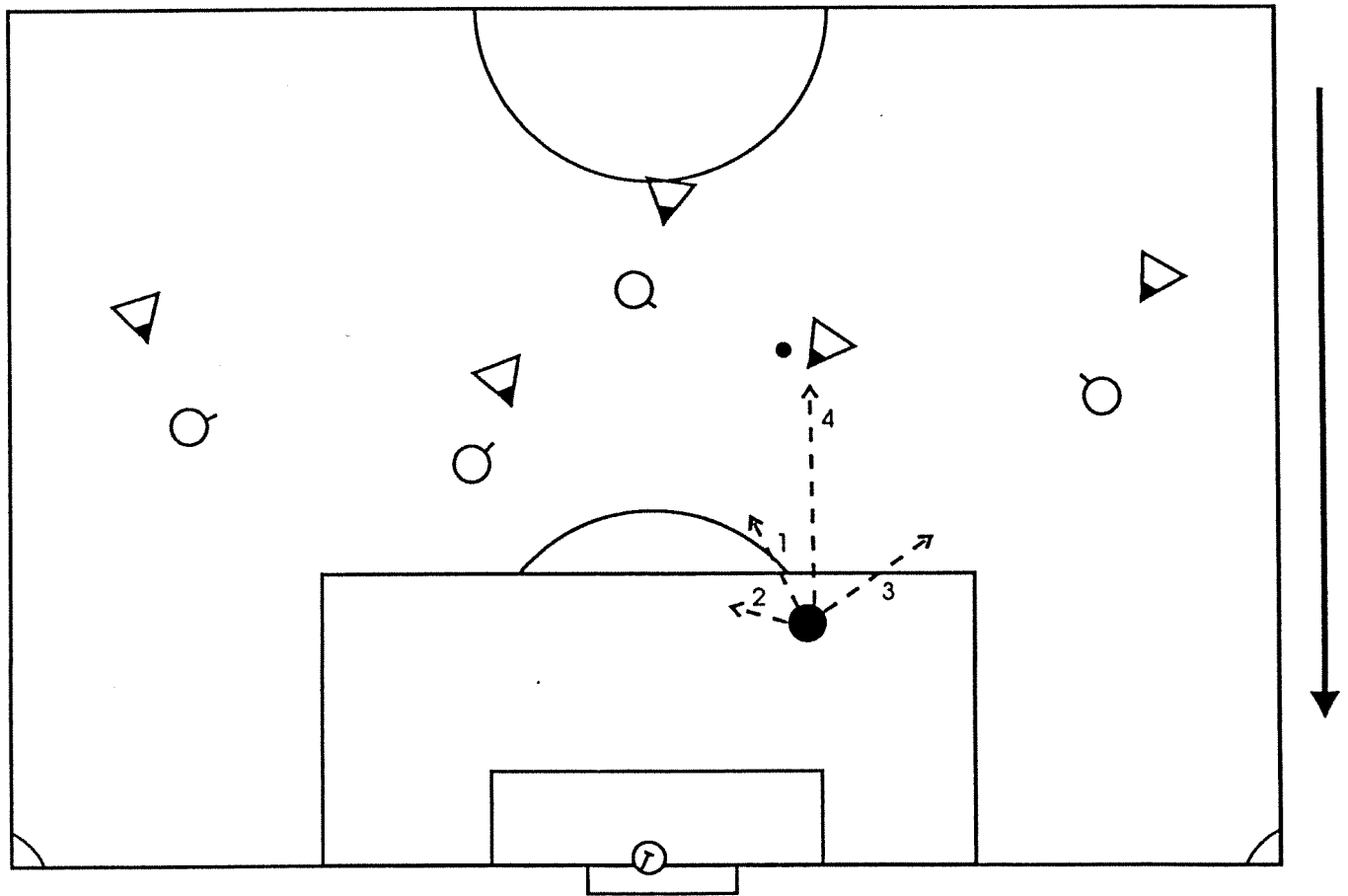


Diagram #16

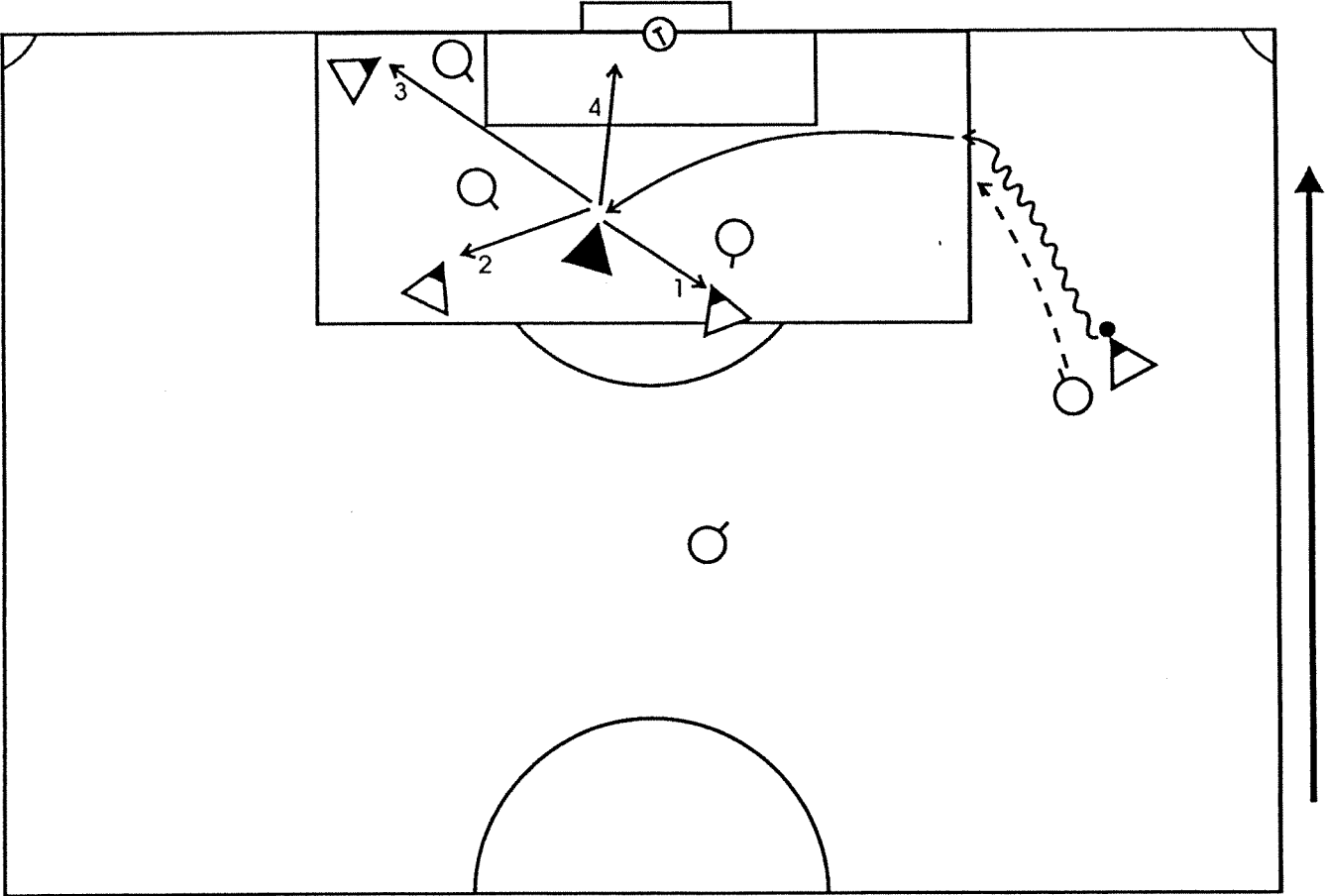


Diagram #17

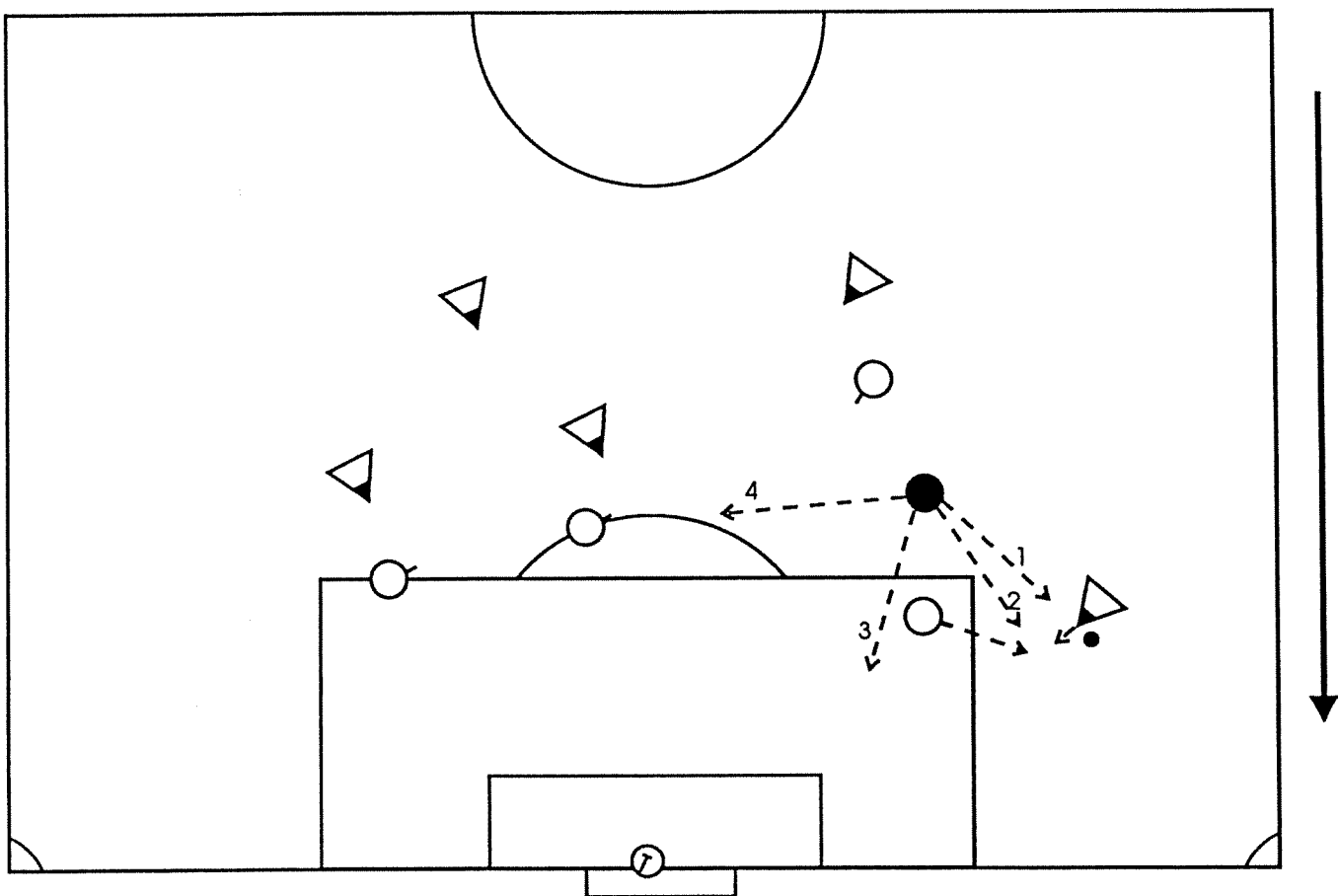


Diagram #18

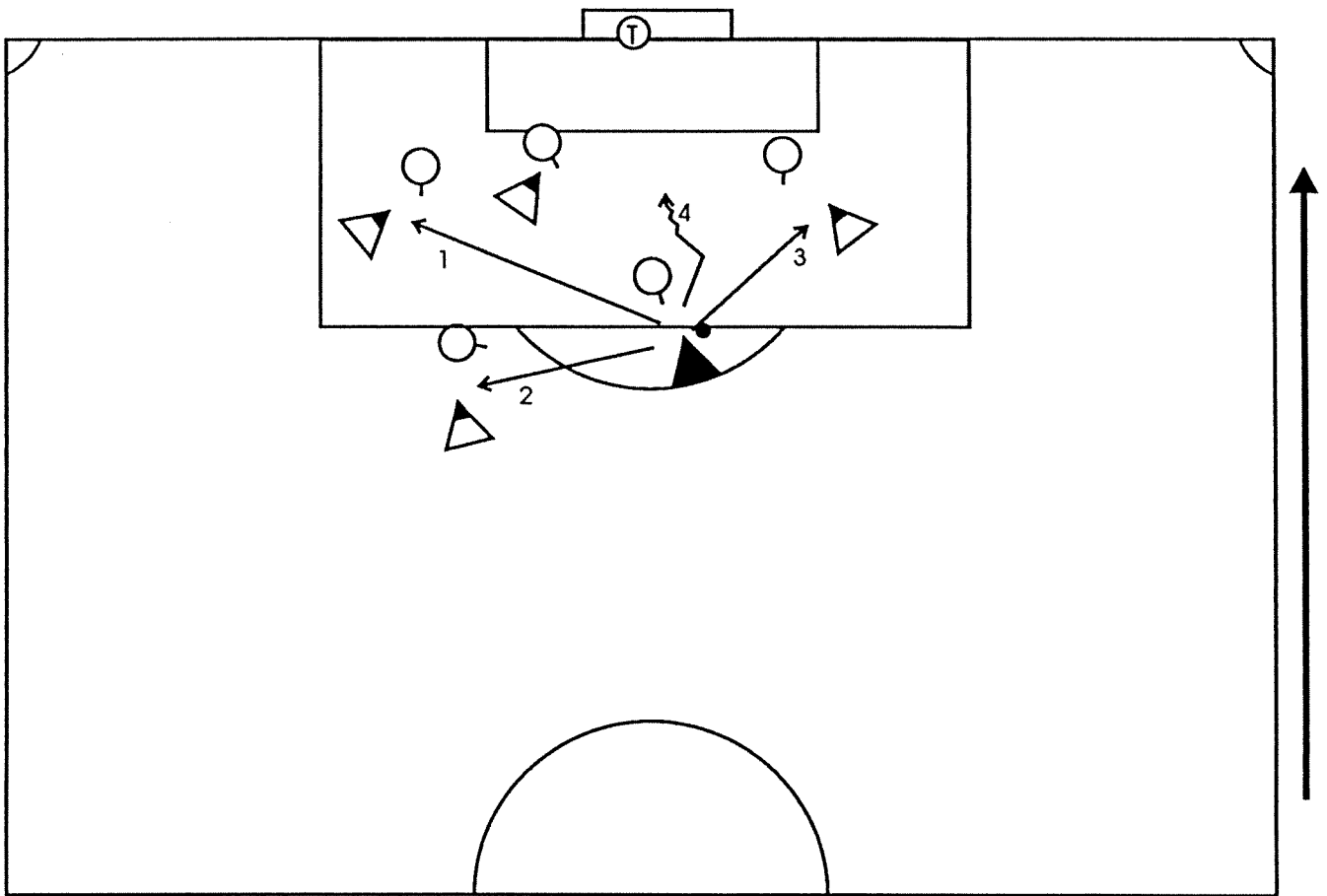


Diagram #19

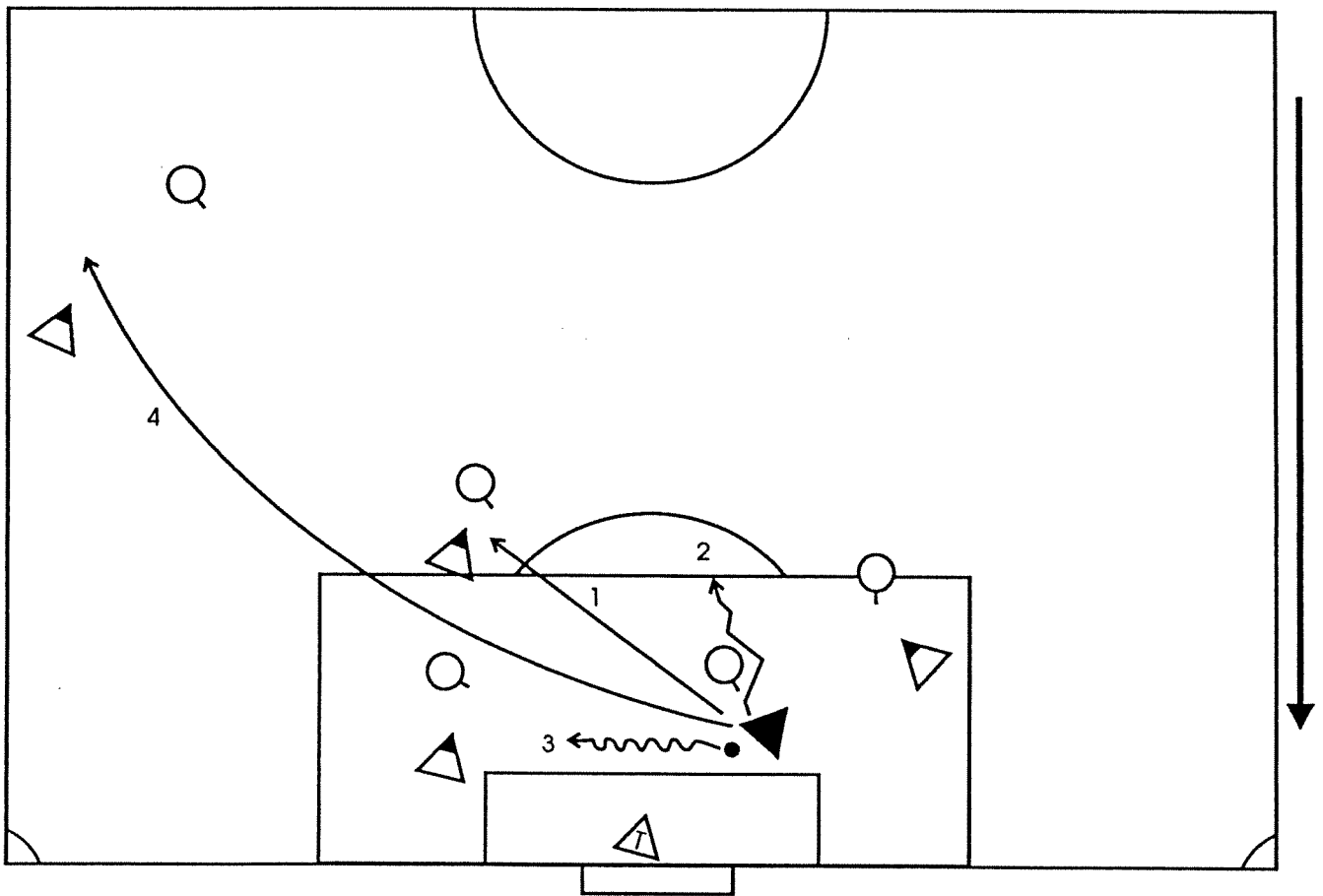
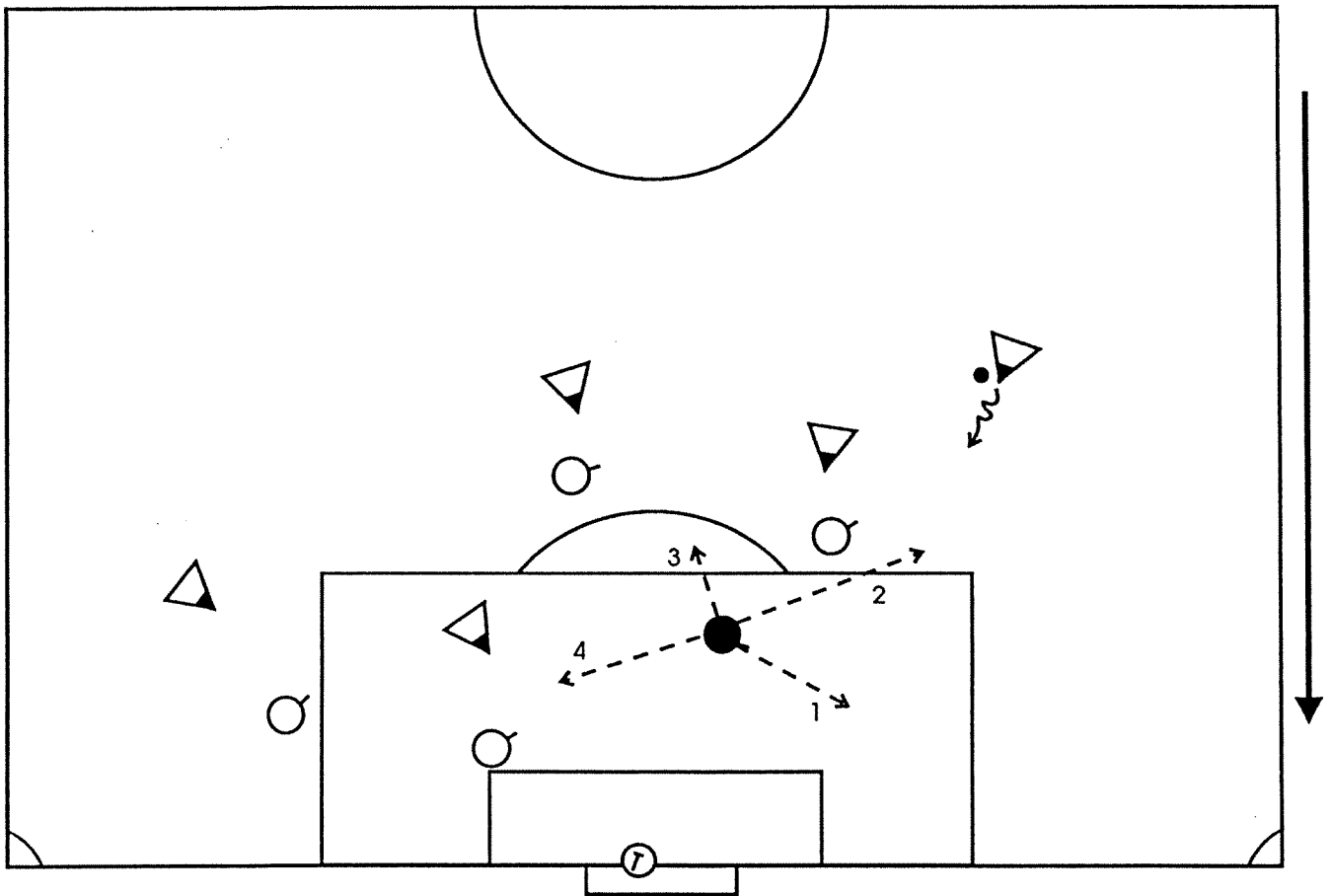


Diagram #20



Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #1):

Option #3 is correct. Dribble and penetrate to goal. There is no cover for the nearest defender creating a 1 vs. 1 in the final third of the field.

#1 finds teammate already marked by a defender. Also such a pass would delay penetration and allow for possible recovery of weak side defenders.

#2 finds defender in a position to defend space.

#4 plays the ball into well-defended area of the field.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #2):

Option #1 is the correct option. Pressure must be put on the ball at all times in and about the penalty area; the approach should be at an angle in order to cut down the shooter's opening to the goal.

#2 – allows for a shot.

#4 – teammate already marking the attacker and there is no need to cover the defender whose attacker does not have the ball.

#3 – same as #4; teammate already marking the ball.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #3):

Options #2 and #3 are correct. #2 allows for coverage of the attacking space by the defender while #3 might become a good covering position for defender if he arrives in time for goalside position. Also, it affords possible offside trap positioning by defensive unit should dribbler look to pass the ball behind the defense.

#4 is not an option as it creates a 4 vs. 4 situation for attackers in final third; 'numbers up' is preferred.

#1 takes defender into space where he is not needed as the attacker is marked by another defender.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #4):

Option #4 is correct. Approach the ball at an angle to channel the play to the touchline.

#3 is a "no pressure" situation – too far from the player with the ball.

#2 is not a good option as deeper defender (sweeper) is already in position to defend space.

#1 is the worst option. The player makes no contribution to the team defense with this move.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #5):

Option #2 is correct. Player makes near post run to look for service to that area of the goal. The keeper's attention is drawn to run. Also, server appears to be facing goal and decisive run to the near post should be on his mind. If keeper covers near post run, another attacking player is in a good position to make far post run.

#1 is not a good run as support for the ball is already evident.

#4 is wrong – no need to withdraw.

#4 is wrong as teammate in this area has not moved for near post run – but is in position for run to far post.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #6):

Option #3 is correct. In the penalty area pressure must be put on the ball immediately. The angle of approach might be a consideration so as to give the shooter only the near corner of the goal to shoot at – and helping the goalkeeper in his angle play.

#4 is incorrect as the distance from the shooter allows him to look up and select his spot.

#2 is incorrect as the player in question does not have the ball and is not a threat.

#1 is incorrect as there is no need to cover space as neither of the nearest two attackers has the ball and the sweeper is already in position to cover the space.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #7):

Option #2 is the correct decision. The pressuring defender has no cover and especially near the goal box, you must take defenders on and beat them such as to get a clean shot on goal.

#1 is incorrect as why play backwards? Near the goal the tactical objective is penetration.

#3 is wrong as the long, diagonal pass only buys time for the defense to regroup and establish a “numbers up” situation. As it stands now, the situation is 4 vs. 4 – an advantage the attacking team must exploit – now!

#4 is wrong for the same reason as #1. Why play negatively – pass backwards in this part of the field?

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #8):

Option #2 is the correct decision for the defender. In this situation the pressuring defender needs cover so he can attack the ball. All the other attackers are marked. But if the player with the ball beats the single defender it will unravel the defense and he will be allowed to select his options without pressure of a second defender.

#1 is incorrect as the least dangerous player is the player furthest from the goal.

#3 is incorrect; cover him, you would do so in front of him cutting out the possible cross.

#4 is incorrect as that space is best covered by the keeper – if, in fact our defender would move to that space to cover it.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #9):

This situation presents to defense with a 5 vs. 5 situation; not good as need “numbers up” whenever possible. So option #3 is best for the free defender. He can give cover to the player defending the ball and mark the free player.

#4 puts him close the unmarked player, but not in a good covering position relative to the ball.

#1 is incorrect as there is no need to cover that space; it is furthest from the ball and therefore the least dangerous area to be concerned with.

#2 is incorrect for it is neither a good covering position as it is too far from the ball nor a good defending position as it takes us further, not closer to the unmarked defender.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #10):

Option #1 is the correct option as by dribbling goalside of the nearest defender he exploits the incorrect defensive position of that player and helps create a 3 vs. 2 outside the box. By dribbling at his teammate he forces the teammate to make a decision – hopefully a creative run outside the same defender to the goal or a bent run outside the same defender which forces the defender to make a decision. With proper timing the dribble by the attacker will result in a shot or a penetrating pass to the teammate running off the ball.

#4 is wrong as the defender is ball side and in a good position to intercept or spoil the pass.

Both #2 and #3 are incorrect in that they are non-penetrating passes and both would allow the defense time to regroup and establish a 4 vs. 4 match up; possibly a 5 vs. 4 positioning depending on speed of recovery. A lateral or back pass buys time for the defense and postpones decision making by the attacking team. What is called for in this situation is quick, decisive play to exploit the 3 vs. 2.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #11):

Option #2 is the correct choice in this instance. Pressure must be placed on the ball with the assumption that the pressuring player's two covering defender (01 and 02) would fall back to give the proper central cover (while still able to mark their men). The approach to the ball must be timed such that 01 and 02 can get to compact positions and also timed such that the ball player does not penetrate with the dribble. No mad dash to the ball - does not penetrate with the dribble. No mad dash to the ball - no diving in! This in the absence of any evident sweeper to cover the space for the team.

#1 would be the second choice as that positioning would cut down the shooting angle of the player with the ball - but would allow time for the shooter to more accurately place his shot - albeit that his percentage from that distance would be low. #1 would also allow time for more compactness by the defense in the central area around the goal.

#3 is incorrect in that it would allow for central penetration by the player with the ball. 01 certainly needs no covering defender - an additional reason why #3 is incorrect.

#4 is incorrect in that the distance is too great to execute any of the two principles of defense involved in this tactical situation. No pressure is exerted on the ball and the covering possibility from this positioning is non-existent.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #12):

Option #2 would be the correct decision. Assumed here is that the defender would channel the player towards the touchline and away from the goal - using the touchline as a means of cover. In making this choice the defender assumes that his second defender, 01, would cover both assumes that his second defender, 01, would cover both his man and the space and other defenders would similarly shape themselves into more compact positions.

#1, while delaying the dribbler, would also invite him to attack centrally - and without a sweeper in position to cover that vulnerable space - seems a poor tactical choice.

#3 would make the play predictable - allowing the dribbler only the left flank to play into, either with a pass or on the dribble - but lack of pressure on the ball would allow the ball player the option of selecting a penetrating pass into the box for the other attacking players to run onto.

#4 would allow even more time for events to occur as described in option #3.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #13):

In building an attack from the defensive third into the middle third, simplicity must rule our choices.

#1 could be a choice if the outside attacker were shown making a run centrally into the open space. That is not the case. The player is closely marked and loss of the ball here would invite immediate counterattack into an unbalanced alignment. Also, the ball player is shown with his back to that area of the field.

#2 is the best choice as the run by the supporting player is into open space. Here the assumption is that the ball player will be able to recognize the run and break pressure to deliver the ball.

#3 and #4 both are incorrect for the same reason; defenders are in good pressurizing positions. #3 violates a cardinal principle of play in the defending third - never square pass; while #4, by the distance of the pass, would seem to give the defender an equal chance to win the ball as it would the support player. The angle and distance of the support player being played to in #4 is incorrect and a pass to him would only reward incorrect support in this instance - with probable loss of the ball in the process.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #14):

The support player in question must make the best run possible to allow his team to possess the ball and allow for buildup in the midfield. He is playing into a 2 vs. 3 situation in his area of the field and needs time to bring more support to the area of the field or time to perhaps change the point of attack. Option #1 seems best here. A well timed run to the perimeter of the field and a subsequent Turn on the ball should allow the receiver to now face the opponent's goal and select the next best penetrating pass. The receiver, if pressured, has a good angle to play the ball back to the keeper as a second alternative. If there is a technical breakdown, there is time for the defense to recover centrally.

#2 and #3 look to be speculative passes at best and play into the "numbers up" defense alignment of the opponents.

#4, while offering the possibility of a 2 vs. 1, this particular 2 vs. 1 would take place in the final third of the field and would offer immediate counterattack to the goal should a breakdown occur.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #15):

Pressure on the ball in this situation seems impossible and so option #4 is not quite right here unless it can be placed at the correct angle - in this case on the ball player's inside foot would be correct. The ball player (in #4) can either shoot in a central fashion or penetrate centrally - further distorting a less than compacted defensive alignment.

#1 is the best choice for the defender in this instance as it cuts down the shooting angle of the ball player and makes play predictable for the keeper. It would also allow some time for the other defenders to move to more central positions - to perhaps compact themselves a bit more.

#2 allows too much time for the alternatives mentioned in discussing #1 to take place while #3 doesn't seem to have anything about it worth discussing.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #16):

Option #4 is the correct choice. Once the ball has been served in the box and collected (first time?) the objective is to strike at goal. The player in question is most central and all other options would put the ball into less dangerous positions relative to the goal itself. Also, all other players are marked and to pass up the shot would not be responsible play.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #17):

Option #3 is the correct choice. The player must return to a good covering defensive position so that pressure can be applied to the attacking player. In creating a 1 vs. 2 situation, the recovering player makes certain that the vital space in the box is sealed off and enables his pressurizing defender to mark very tightly denying both shot and pass into the box.

Runs #1 and #2 would not deny the space behind the initial defender, while #4 if made, should have the player benched.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #18):

Option #4 is the correct choice. In this position (central and outside the box), penetration should be the foremost thing in the player's mind. -

Option #3 does not show a 1 vs. 2 - but combination play in the area is most difficult.

Options #1 and #2 clearly take the ball into less advantageous positions on the field and enable the defense to become even more compact.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #19):

Option #4 is preferred here. Clear the ball to the side of the field where the winger is in a good attacking position. The ball must be cleared - high, wide and handsome. "Handsome" in this case is an attacking player in a good position.

Never square pass in your box (#3). Never dribble in the final third (#2). #1 would be a pass to a marked player. Take the ball out of danger and to the width of the field.

Answer to Tactical Quiz (Diagram #20):

Option #2 is the correct choice. The most dangerous player is the one with the ball. Take a good technical position goalside of the dribbler as soon as possible to deny a penetrating pass or a shot.

All other players are marked and none are in as dangerous a position as the player with the ball.

JUDGING THE CHALLENGE

	FOUL ONLY						CAUTION						SENDING OFF					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
PROXIMITY TO PLAY																		
ATTEMPTS TO PLAY THE BALL																		
ABLE TO PLAY THE BALL (TIMING)																		
FORCE USED IN THE CHALLENGE																		
ULTERIOR MOTIVE or MALICIOUS INTENT																		
CONTACTS OPPONENT BEFORE THE BALL																		
SEQUENTIAL ACTIONS (fair then foul; two fouls)																		