Principles of Play In Midfield

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## Principles of Play

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**Source:** USYouthSoccer.org
Principles of Midfield

Control
Numerical superiority
Appropriate Match-ups

Preparation
Moment of Transition: Organized Vs. Disorganized
Proper Team Shape: Space Awareness
Flexibility
Principles of Midfield

• Build Up
Possession with a purpose:
Recognize the tempo of the game
Change the point of attack
Use the space: Individually and as a team
Penetrate: Play defenders out of the game
Score
Defensive Function of Midfielders

- Immediate transition to defense
- Visual & Verbal communication
- Goal-side starting positions and recovery runs
- Man to Man, Zone or Combination Defense
- Delay the attack and apply “pressure points”
- Track opposing players
- Recover the ball
Offensive Functions of Midfielders

• Immediate transition to attack
• Reading the game
• Total team support to seek penetration
• Create width and space for self and teammates
• Change the point of attack
• Win 1v1 confrontations
• Finishing from close and long range
Modern Trends in Midfield Play

• Holding Midfielders 1 or 2
  Protect the Center backs
  Maintain Shape in midfield
  Initiate attacking play
  Provide support in tight situations
  Mid-Long-Range shooting
Modern Trends in Midfield Play

• Wide Midfielders playing on the opposite side of their strongest foot
  Immediate pressure on defenders
  Cover Space in the flanks
  Provide width
  Provide service from the flanks
  Finish
Moderns Trends in Midfield Play

• Play Maker/Attacking Midfielder
  Total team support
  Maintain team shape
  Upon transition provide the first choice of support
  Run at Defenders
  Influence the tempo of the game
  Finish
Midfield Play in America

Weaknesses in Midfield play
Too many games bypass midfield altogether
Lack of patience in build up. Too direct!
Reading the game
Technical ability at speed
Understanding tempo and change of pace
Midfield Play in America

• Strengths in Midfield Play

  Athleticism
  Commitment
  Understanding the principles of defending

We need to improve on our strengths!
Solutions to Improve Midfield Play

Age Appropriate Training
Training in player centered environments
Set up training sessions where players make decisions
Game like activities during training sessions
Allow players to make mistakes and learn from them during games
“Football is born in the brain not the body. Michelangelo said he painted with his mind not with his hands. So, obviously I need intelligent players.”

Arrrigo Sacchi
Principles of Play in Midfield

Questions?
Credits

- US Soccer
- Rene Miramontes US Soccer National Staff
- US Youth Soccer