

# The Tactics of Distribution

## **Launching the attack**

All goalkeepers are the last line of defense. The great ones are also the first line of attack. When the ball is in their hands, they think like a super midfield player, taking advantage of any opportunity to initiate an attack. The keeper who can begin an attack with every clearance can be an enormous asset to his team. The keeper who kicks or throws aimlessly is wasting good openings.

## **Tactical considerations**

The problem is when to throw, when to hold, and when to kick. Tactical considerations may delay the clearance. The keeper may want to give his teammates time to move into attacking positions or to relax and regain the composure they need to operate as a unit. The keeper's use of the ball depends largely on the situation. A throw and a kick can be used to various advantages. As a rule, however, the keeper must know how to use the ball to initiate attacks. Once he has made the save, he should not play the ball aimlessly downfield. He must think of using it to the best advantage.



How and where should he send the ball? Speed is of great importance. How can the goalkeeper satisfy this tactical requirement? By immediately sending the ball to the teammate who is in the most favorable position.

Many keepers err in unnecessarily bouncing the ball before making the throw or clearance. Others tend to lie on the ground too long after making a diving save. They should regain their feet immediately. Unnecessary movement or slowness in returning to the basic position can lose valuable split seconds that may cost an opportunity for a successful counterattack.

The two commonly used throwing techniques are rolling the ball underhand as in bowling or throwing overhand as in baseball. The throw should never go to a player who is likely to face an immediate challenge, and it should be kept low whenever possible to make it easier for the receiver to control. Generally

the goalkeeper should throw to the side opposite from which the attack was made, as this side will be less congested.

Whenever the keeper is drawn out of the penalty area, he can no longer use his hands. He must then clear the ball or pass it to a teammate with his feet.

Every goalkeeper should be capable of achieving distance with his goal and drop kicks. The goalkick should be his and not the defenders' exclusive responsibility. Why should a fullback not take the goal kick? Because he momentarily takes himself out of the game and thus gives the opposition a numerical advantage.

The goalkeeper who takes the kick himself becomes a more integral part of the team – a psychological factor of some importance.



**US YOUTH SOCCER**