THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF POSSESSION SOCCER

February 2017
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THE CURRENT PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CYCLE PROMOTES SHORT TERMISM

THE MISSING FOCAL POINT

CLUB PHILOSOPHY CURRICULUM PLAYING STYLE

OBSERVE GAME

EXECUTE PRACTICE

ANALYSE GAME

PREPARE PRACTICE
THREE COACHING STYLES

• REACTIVE STYLE
  – COACH REACTS TO THE GAMES AND CORRECTS WHATEVER HE/SHE THINKS NEEDS CORRECTION.
  
  Post-Performance Impact
  – “PUSH UP AND STAY COMPACT”
  – “SHOULD HAVE USED A BENDING PASS”
  – “CLOSE HIM DOWN QUICKER”
  – GAME MOMENTS RANDOMLY CORRECTED
  – ALL OVER THE PLACE/OFF THE CUFF
  – HARD TO INGRAIN PLAYING STYLE/MAKE THINGS STICK (manual reading analogy)
THREE COACHING STYLES

• PROACTIVE STYLE

  – CLEAR VISION OF PLAYING STYLE. WELL ARTICULATED. Pre-Performance Impact.
  – DELIBERATE COACHING:
    – “THIS IS HOW WE ARE GOING TO PLAY”
    – “THIS IS WHAT YOU WILL DO IN THIS SITUATION”
    – “NOW THAT WE ARE COMFORTABLE WITH THIS, LET’S MOVE TO NEXT STAGE/LEVEL/CHALLENGE”
  – GAME ANALYSIS RELATED TO TEACHING THE PLAYING STYLE
THREE COACHING STYLES

• GAME MANAGEMENT STYLE
  – COACH TAILORS FORMATION AND STRATEGY TOWARDS WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN GAME. Winning is everything.
  – IF DUMPING THE BALL NEAR THE CORNER FLAG AND PRESSING IS PERCEIVED AS THE WINNING STRATEGY, SO BE IT
  – EMPHASIS ON GAMESMANSHP, TIME WASTING, DISRUPTING, NOT LETTING THE OTHER TEAM PLAY, INFLUENCING REFEREE DECISIONS, PHYSICAL AGGRESSION
THREE COACHING STYLES

• PROACTIVE STYLE
  – PREFFERED STYLE FOR PLAYER DEVELOPMENT
  – LAYS THE FOUNDATION. FIXES THE FUTURE
  – MORE CONDUSIVE FOR IMPLEMENTING A PLAYING STYLE

• REACTIVE STYLE
  – LESS EFFECTIVE IN LAYING FOUNDATION FOR LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT
  – MORE EFFECTIVE IN SHORT TERM PLUGING THE HOLES

• GAME MANAGEMENT STYLE
  – SHOULD BE USED ONLY RARELY. LAST RESORT.
FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

VS GENERIC ACTIVITIES

• KEEPER & BACK FOUR & DEF MID AGAINST 3 IN DEF THIRD
• KEEPER STARTS BY PASSING TO CENTRAL DEFENDERS. OBJECTIVE IS TO POSSESS WHILE SWITCHING FROM ONE WIDE BACK TO THE OPPOSITE ONE.
THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF POSSESSION SOCCER
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPLES OF PLAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEPTH, WIDTH</td>
<td>1. TEAM SHAPE: SPREAD OUT TO MAKE FIELD AS BIG AS POSSIBLE. DONE BY 9 PUSHING UP AND CENTRAL, WINGERS HIGH AND WIDE ON SIDELINES, MIDFIELD SPREAD, BACK LINE DROPPING BACK (WHEN BACK LINE SENSE DANGER-DROP EVEN DEEPER).</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIX TEAM SHAPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUPPORT (2ND AND 3RD ATTACKERS)</td>
<td>2. PEEL OFF AND OPEN BODY TO FIELD: RECEIVE THE BALL FACING UP FIELD. MOVE TO DEF’S BLIND SIDE (IF MUST HAVE BACK TO GOAL, KNOW WHAT TO DO BEFORE RECEIVING AND PLAY FIRST TIME BALL, LIKE A REBOUND WALL).</td>
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<td>FIX MOVEMENT OFF-THE-BALL</td>
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<tr>
<td>PENETRATION, MOBILITY</td>
<td>3. BENDING RUNS: OPENS PASSING LANES,Creates more options, AVOIDS OFF-SIDE.</td>
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# PRINCIPLES OF PLAY vs PRINCIPLES OF POSSESSION

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<td>MOBILITY, PENETRATION</td>
<td>4. OPEN BODY TO FIELD: PLAYERS SHOULD KNOW LOCATION OF TEAM MATES AND OPPONENTS SO INTERCHANGING RUNS CAN BE MADE (RUNS TRIGGER RUNS).</td>
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<td>PENETRATION</td>
<td>5. DIAGONAL PASSES: AVOID VERTICAL PASSES, USE DIAGONAL PASSES TO PLAYERS FACING UP OR SIDEWAYS ON.</td>
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<td>FIX DECISIONS ON THE BALL</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRINCIPLE OF POSSESSION</td>
<td>6. BACK PASSES FOLLOWED BY A SWITCH: DEVELOPS A POSSESSION RHYTHM.</td>
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<td>7. BALL DOESN’T STAY IN AN AREA FOR LONG: AFTER A COUPLE OF PASSES, BALL MUST BE PLAYED INTO ANOTHER AREA. IF WE WIN THE BALL, PLAY IT IMMEDIATELY INTO ANOTHER AREA.</td>
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<td>8. GOAL KICKS NOT PUNTED: KEEPERS MUST INITIATE PLAYING OUT OF THE BACK WITH PASSES, NOT PUNTS.</td>
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<td>PRINCIPLES OF POSSESSION</td>
<td>9. THROW-INS USED TO SWITCH THE POINT OF ATTACK: USE THROW-INS TO SWITCH RATHER THAN THROW THE BALL DOWN THE LINE. BACK LINE DROPS DEEP TO SWITCH FROM A THROW-IN.</td>
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<td>PRINCIPLES OF POSSESSION</td>
<td>10. HIGH TEMPO POSSESSION: BALL SHOULD BE CIRCULATED USING ONE AND TWO TOUCH PLAY</td>
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BIGGEST TACTICAL ISSUE IDENTIFIED

- **CONGESTING** (HANDICAP, COMPOUND TECH DEF)

- CAN ONLY SWITCH PLAY THROUGH THE BACK LINE

- VERTICAL PASSES OUT OF THE BACK. TURNOVERS.
INCREASE SOPHISTICATION LEVEL

- TEACH THE UNBALANCING PASS (AGAINST THE FLOW)
- MUST LEARN TO SWITCH PLAY VIA THE MIDFIELD
- DIAGONAL PASSES TO PLAYERS FACING UP.
DIVIDE GAME INTO TACTICAL PHASES OF PLAY

WE HAVE THE BALL
- BUILD UP
- PENETRATE INTO ATTACKING THIRD
- CREATE CHANCES AND FINISH

TRANSITION
- TRANSITION TO ATTACK
- TRANSITION TO DEFENSE

THEY HAVE THE BALL
- PREVENT BUILD UP
- PREVENT PENETRATION
- PREVENT SCORING
BUILD UP – POSITIONAL ROLES

• PEELING OFF DEFENDER (OPEN BODY)
• ROLE OF KEEPER
• ROLE OF BACK LINE
• ROLE OF DEFENSIVE MIDFIELD
• ROLE OF WIDE ATTACKERS
• THROW-INS
• GOAL KICKS
PEELING OFF DEFENDER MOVEMENT

- CENTER FORWARD, ATT MIDS, DEF MIDS, WINGERS
- FROM BACK TO GOAL TO SIDEWAYS-ON OPEN BODY
BUILD UP: ROLE OF THE KEEPER

- PASS NOT PUNT, OUTLET, SWITCH

BACK PASSES

HELP SWITCH
BUILD UP: ROLE OF THE BACK LINE

- EXPAND, RELIEF, BREATHER, BAITING PASSES
BUILD UP: ROLE OF THE DEFENSIVE MID

- AVAILABLE, DETACHED, UNDER THE BALL, OPEN BODY, SWITCH
BUILD UP: ROLE OF WIDE ATTACKERS

- WIDTH, FACE FIELD, OUTLET, TO FEET OR SPACE
BUILD UP: THROW-INS

• USE THROW-INS TO SWITCH THE POINT OF ATTACK
BUILD UP: GOAL KICKS

- PASS NOT PUNT – BUILD UP FROM THE BACK
- ROLE OF 6 CRUCIAL (DROP AND OPEN BODY)
PLAYING OUT OF THE BACK

• MAKE FIELD BIG
• PEEL OFF AND OPEN BODY TO SEE FIELD
• THIS CREATES SPACE FOR TEAMMATES
• NEED TO TEACH THE KEEPERS TO BE PLAY MAKERS
PENETRATE INTO ATTACKING THIRD POSITIONAL ROLES

• PEELING OFF DEFENDER (OPEN BODY)
• PENETRATION RUNS
• ROLE OF THE CENTER FORWARD
• ROLE OF THE TWO ATTACKING MIDFIELDERS
• ROLE OF THE WINGERS
• ROLE OF THE WIDE DEFENDERS
PEELING OFF DEFENDER MOVEMENT

- CENTER FORWARD, ATT MIDS, DEF MIDS, WINGERS
- FROM BACK TO GOAL TO SIDEWAYS-ON OPEN BODY
PENETRATION RUNS

• CENTER FORWARD, ATT MIDS, WINGERS
• BENT RUNS, BAITING RUNS
PENETRATE INTO ATTACK 3RD: WINGERS

- WINGERS WIDE ON THE SIDELINES FACING THE FIELD
- STRETCH & MAKE VERTICAL RUNS INTO ANGLED PASSES

PENETRATE                                               EASY OUTLET PASS
PENETRATE ATT 3RD: FORWARD & ATT MID

- CENTER FORWARD HIGH AND CENTRAL TO STRETCH THE FIELD. PATIENT!!
- CHECKING-TO RUNS TO COMBINE ONCE BALL IS WITHIN 15 YARDS
- ATTACKING MID MAKES BLIND SIDE RUNS BEHIND DEFENSE

COMBINE WITH WINGER

COMBINE WITH ATT MID
PENETRATE ATT 3RD: FORWARD & ATT MID

- CENTER FORWARD AND ATTACKING MIDFIELD COORDINATE RUNS
- CHECKING-TO RUN FOLLOWED BY PENETRATION RUN – ALWAYS!!!
- TIMING – BALL IS WITHIN 15 YARDS. IMMEDIATE OR DELAYED RUN?

![Diagram showing the penetration tactics for forward and attacking midfield coordination runs.]

**WINGER BYPASS FORWARD**

**FULLBACK BYPASSES FORWARD**
PENETRATE ATT 3RD: FORWARD & ATT MID

• CENTER FORWARD AND ATTACKING MIDFIELD COORDINATE RUNS
• CHECKING-TO RUN FOLLOWED BY PENETRATION RUN – ALWAYS!!!
• TIMING – BALL IS WITHIN 25 YARDS. IMMEDIATE OR DELAYED RUN?

WINGER FOLLOWS PASS

MIDFIELD FOLLOWS PASS
PENETRATE ATT 3RD: WIDE BACKS

- STEP INTO WIDE MIDFIELD AREA/OVERLAP. DISTRIBUTE
- EASY SUPPORT TO RELIEVE PRESSURE IN MIDFIELD
- SUPPORT WINGER FROM BEHIND. OVERLAP WINGER.
METHODOLOGY

BUILD UP FROM DEF 3\(^{RD}\) 
PENETRATION FROM MID 3\(^{RD}\) 

1. FIX TEAM SHAPE 
2. FIX MOVEMENTS OFF-THE-BALL 
3. FIX DECISIONS ON-THE-BALL 

10 PRINCIPLES OF FUNCTIONAL POSSESSION SOCCER 

POSITIONAL ROLES 

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING