

IMPLEMENTING A POSSESSION PLAYING STYLE

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DIRECT SOCCER DEFINED

- Players almost always pass forward
- Many passes are long and vertical
- Many passes played into areas – kick vs pass
- Many passes are played into space behind opponents' back line – foot races
- Lots of fights for 'second balls'
- All goal kicks are punted long
- All throw-ins are thrown long 'down the line'
- All free kicks in defensive and middle third are kicked long with everyone moving up for the kick



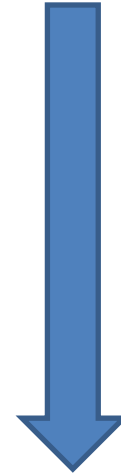
POSSESSION SOCCER DEFINED

- Passes made in all directions, 360 degrees
- Ball switched from side to side multiple times in each possession. Rhythm of possession.
- Probing passes into feet & back again. Angled passes
- Back line, def mid play pivotal role in possession
- Balls played wide to create space on opposite side, followed by switch
- Keeper throws ball to build up from back. Few punts
- Free kicks played to feet to keep possession
- Throw-ins played to possess, often to backs or mids



AMERICAN PLAYING STYLES

- KICK AND CHASE
- DROP, KICK AND CHASE
- PASS FORWARD AND MOVE
- DROP, SWITCH AND GO FORWARD
- **BALL CIRCULATION**
 - **PROBING PASSES, IN AND BACK**
 - **USING THE WHOLE WIDTH**
 - **MULTIPLE SWITCHES IN SAME POSSESSION**
 - **RHYTHM OF POSSESSION, VARIED TEMPO**



Show clips



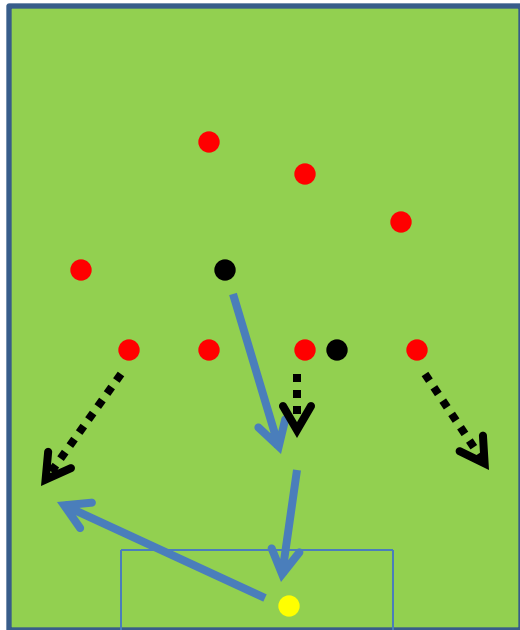
IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

- **ROLE OF KEEPER**
- **ROLE OF BACK LINE**
- **ROLE OF DEFENSIVE MIDFIELD**
- **ROLE OF WIDE ATTACKERS**
- **THROW-INS**
- **GOAL KICKS**
- **PROGRESSION THROUGH THE AGES**

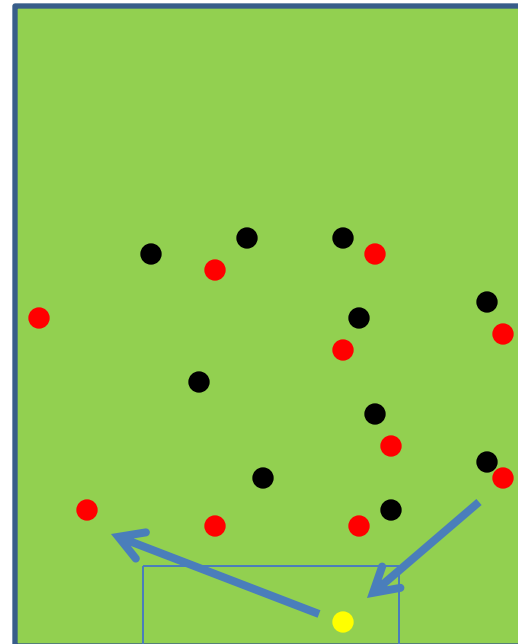


ROLE OF THE KEEPER

- PASS NOT PUNT, OUTLET, SWITCH**



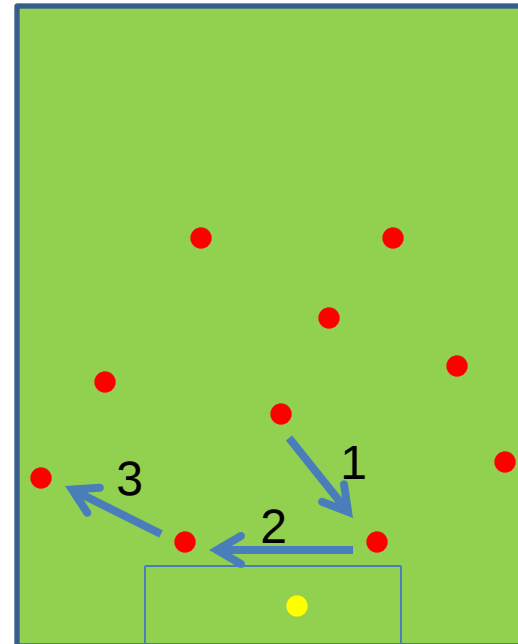
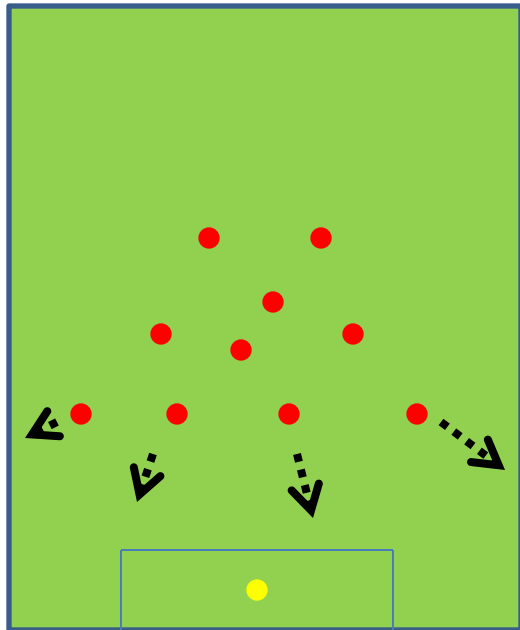
BACK PASSES



HELP SWITCH

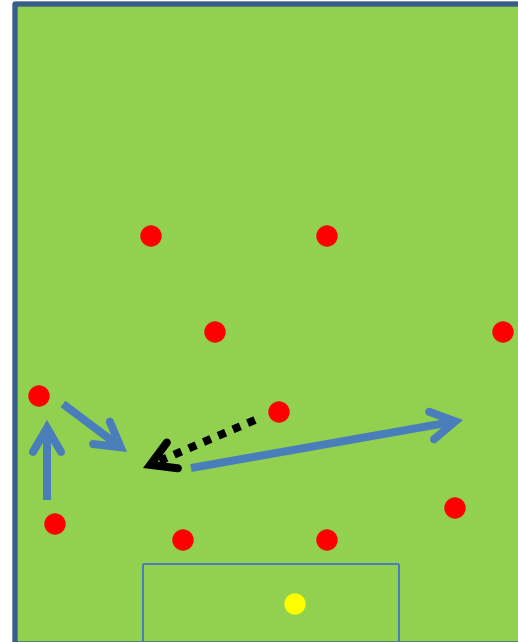
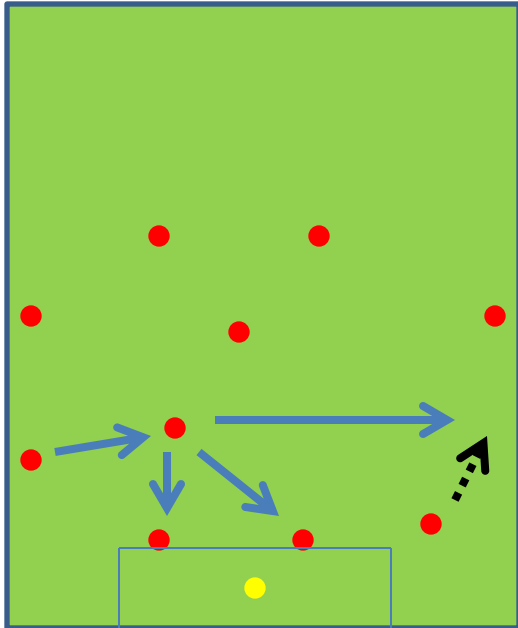
ROLE OF THE BACK LINE

- **EXPAND, RELIEF, BREATHING, BAITING PASSES**



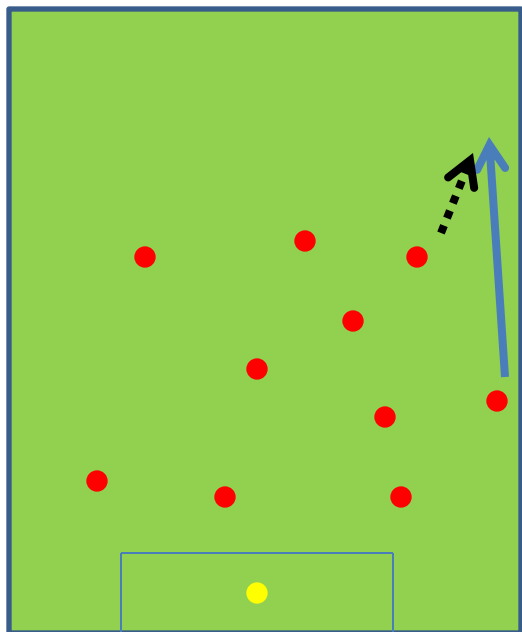
ROLE OF THE DEFENSIVE MID

- AVAILABLE, DETACHED, UNDER THE BALL, SWITCH

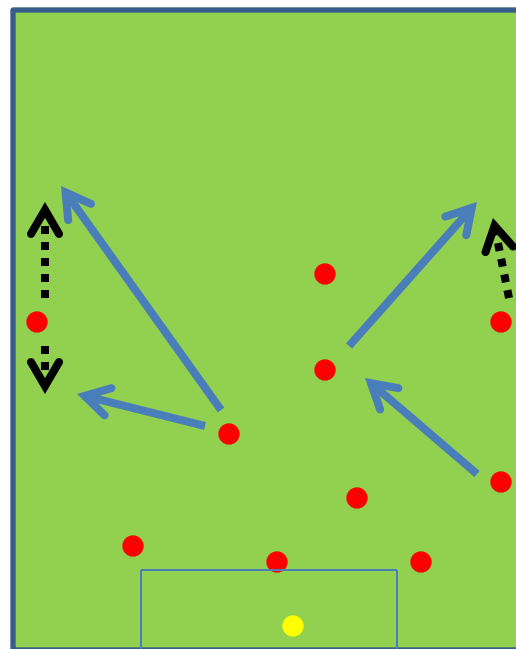


ROLE OF WIDE ATTACKERS

- **WIDTH, FACE FIELD, OUTLET, TO FEET OR SPACE**



WRONG

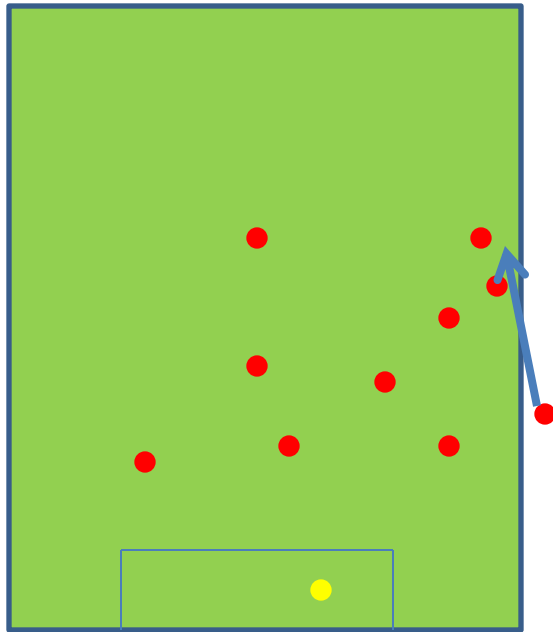


RIGHT

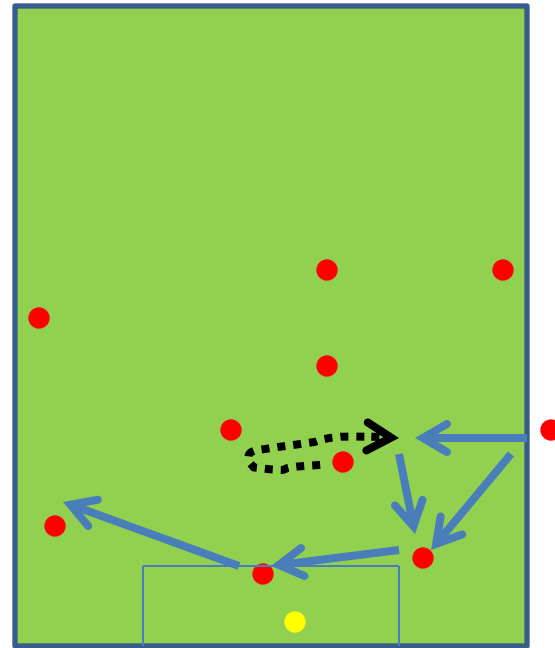


THROW-INS

- **USE THROW-INS TO SWITCH THE POINT OF ATTACK**



WRONG

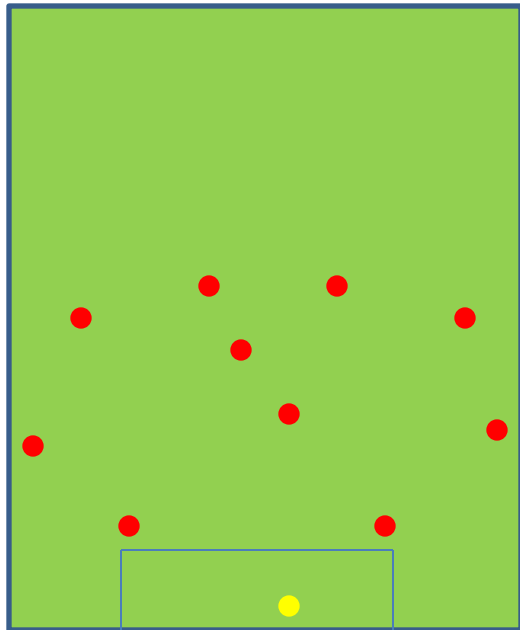


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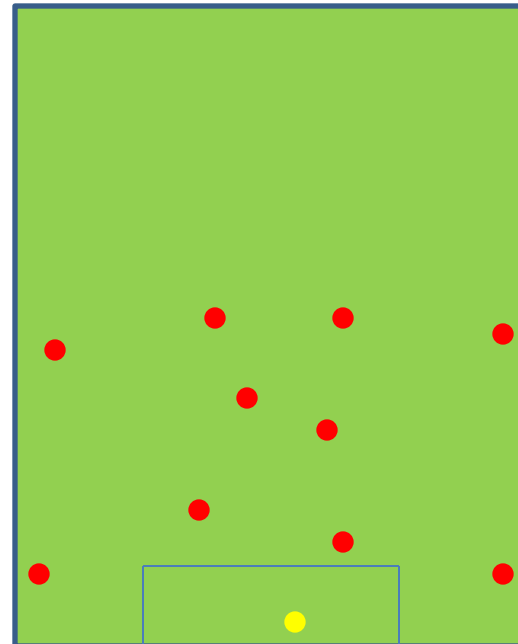


GOAL KICKS

- PASS NOT PUNT – BUILD UP FROM THE BACK**



PREFERABLE

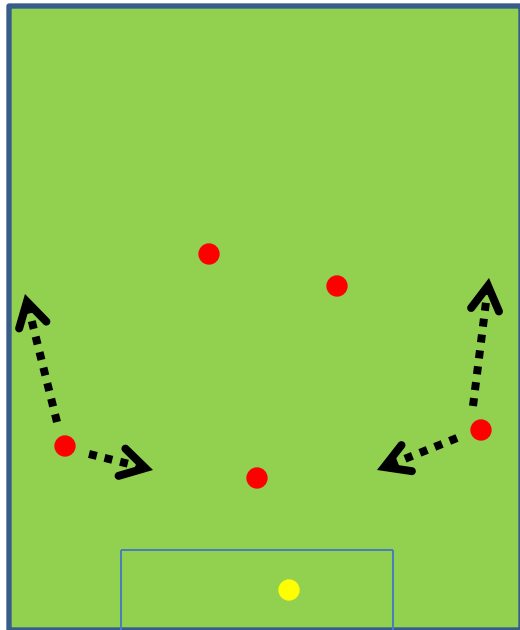


ACCEPTABLE



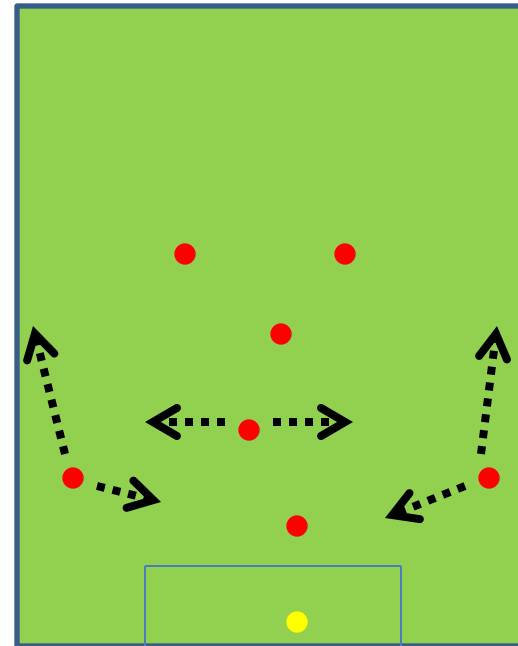
PROGRESSION THROUGH THE AGES

START WITH A 3 BACK FOR WIDTH AND NUMERICAL ADVANTAGE



U-10 6V6

2-1-2 TOO NARROW



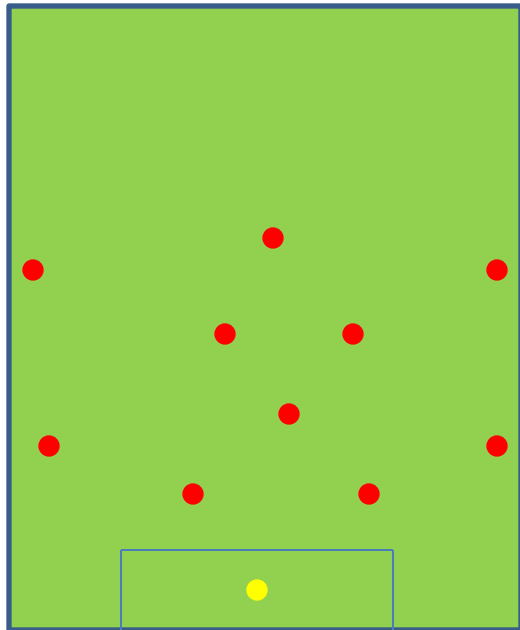
U-12 8V8

INTRODUCE DEF MID



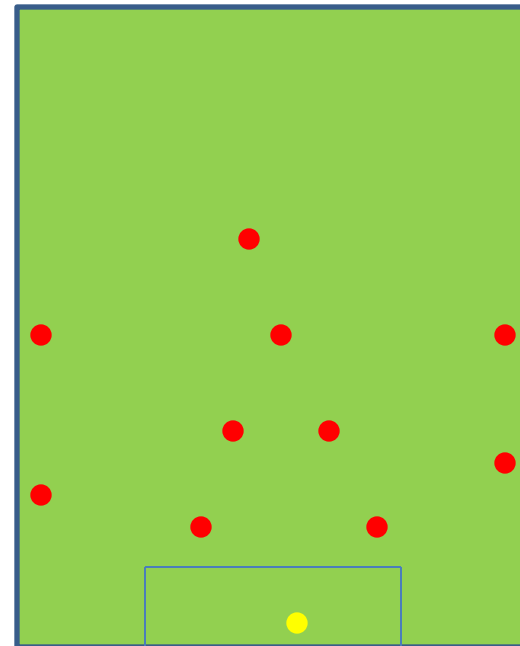
PROGRESSION THROUGH THE AGES

USE A BACK 4 & AT LEAST ONE DEFENSIVE MIDFIELD



U-13/U-14

INTRODUCE WINGERS



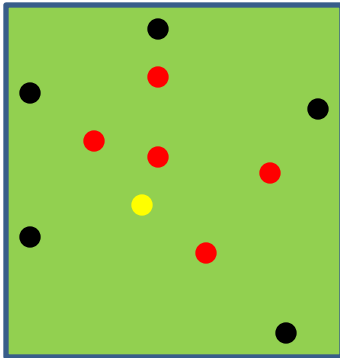
U-15 AND OLDER

INTRODUCE VARIATIONS

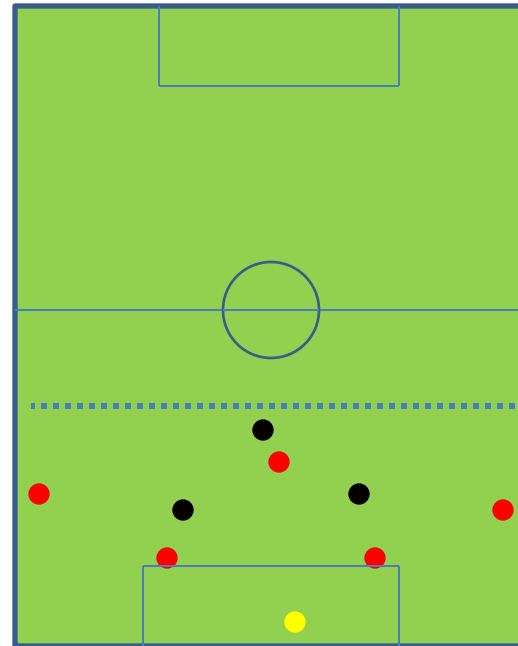


BALANCE BETWEEN GENERIC AND FUNCTIONAL TRAINING

NEED BOTH BUT FUNCTIONAL WILL HAVE MORE IMPACT



5V5 PLUS 1
GENERIC



FUNCTIONAL

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **CORE ACTIVITIES – AGE SPECIFIC**
 - **FUNCTIONAL – MUST REPLICATE GAME SCENARIOS**
 - **METHODOLOGY: TEAM SHAPE – MOVEMENT OFF THE BALL – DECISIONS ON THE BALL**
 - **BALANCE CURRICULUM WITH IMMEDIATE NEEDS**
- **CONSISTENT FEEDBACK FROM COACHES**
 - **ALLOW LEARNING THROUGH TRIAL AND ERROR**
 - **ALLOW INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION AND CREATIVITY**
 - **USE OPPONENTS' MOVEMENT AGAINST THEM**
- **PLAYERS GIVEN CLEAR ROLES – BUILDS CONFIDENCE**
- **PLAYER ROLES SIMILAR THROUGH AGES**



OBSTACLES

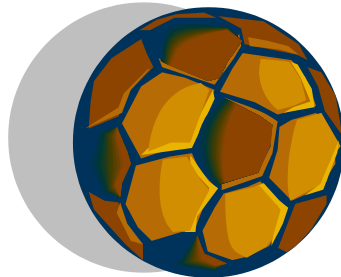
- **COACHES NOT BUYING INTO PHILOSOPHY**
 - **RESISTANCE TO CHANGE, EGO**
 - **WORRIES ABOUT SACRIFICING RESULTS**
 - **ACCEPTANCE BUT INABILITY TO EXECUTE**
 - **WASTING TIME ON ONE-OFF SITUATIONS**
- **MONITORING AND TRAINING COACHES**
 - **STAFF MEETINGS NOT EFFECTIVE WITHOUT FOLLOW UP**
 - **NEED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE MESSAGE**
- **NEED A CENTRAL TRAINING SITE**
- **NEED WELL ARTICULATED PARENT EDUCATION**



Arguments for DIRECT play

Arguments for POSSESSION play

- Ball is mostly lost away from our goal - hence we concede less goals

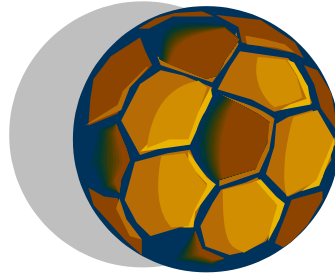


- Our team's possession periods last longer - less attacking opportunities for other team

Arguments for DIRECT play

Arguments for POSSESSION play

- Other team cannot cope with our fast forwards – we play to our forwards strengths

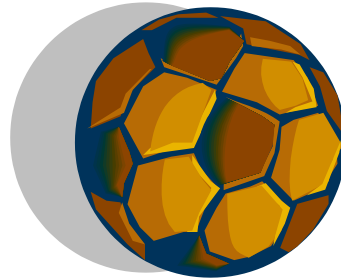


- We still use our superior speed/athleticism.
We will win most games anyways

Arguments for DIRECT play

Arguments for POSSESSION play

- Other team is better than us. We have no choice

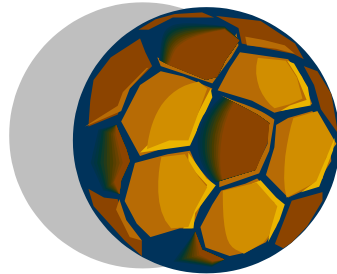


- If other team is better, possession play gives us more breathing room, more rest time

Arguments for DIRECT play

Arguments for POSSESSION play

- Our players don't have the technique to play possession out of the back



- In lower divisions, both teams are technically & athletically weak. It's all relative. It evens out

IS DIRECT SOCCER REALLY SAFER TO PLAY ?

- A question of perception and fear
- **Coaches need to be more analytical**
- The real question is not whether the players are good enough to play possession soccer but whether the club coaches are good enough to teach it
- **The earlier we start the process, the better.**
- Hard to change habits later on



POSSESSION SOCCER **VS** **DIRECT SOCCER**

- IT'S NOT A CHOICE BETWEEN PLAYING POSSESSION SOCCER AND WINNING
- IT'S A QUESTION OF PHILOSOPHY, KNOWLEDGE, CONVICTION AND ORGANIZATION

