



North Cardiff Cosmos FC

Sample Coaching Strategy – In possession

By John Norman



Player and Team Development

Principles of Play – Coaching Focus by John Norman

IN POSSESSION

OVERLOADS

FINAL THIRD

BREAKING LINES

Through

Priority When in Possession

Split Passes

RWB

Dribbling

Turning

Welsh Way Moves

Around

When attack lines are blocked by opposition

Switching Play

Over

When opposition exert pressure in numbers

Gain Territorial Advantage quickly/relieve pressure/turn opposition pressure into attacking opportunity

GOALKEEPING

GOALKEEPING

GOALKEEPING

Shooting – Throw Ins – Goalkeeping – Corners – Free Kicks – Headers – Aerial ball

COMMUNICATION

AWARENESS / ALERTNESS

Notes

- Though principles of play are an essential learning focus – they do not in themselves solve problems with technical development. “95% of breakdowns in play are a result of technical problems that have not been addressed” (FAW Lead Coach, Dec 2018). This in itself suggests individual technical development should be the sole focus. However, players across many teams struggle to become involved as a result of lack of awareness of shape, space and movement, an ‘in possession’ game structure focussed on breaking lines would seem a good starting point, before branching off into more focussed practice sessions such as RWB (running with the ball), Shooting, Dribbling, Overloads, Final Third etc etc.
- If we are all aware of how the discreet disciplines and focussed training areas fit into the bigger picture it will improve our ability to coach players to have a clear idea of what’s expected of them. Furthermore, can we use a common language so for example, all of the coaching team and all of the players will know what a ‘switch of play’ is. The coaches will be able to explain how and when to do it and we can put together training sessions that facilitate layered learning.
- ‘Out of Possession’ Coming soon but it’s best to discuss ‘in possession’ in the first instance. Out of possession is basically the inverse of ‘In Possession’ with topic areas such as ‘defending the lines’. We may find that ‘Close down – Slow down – Get down – Showdown’ (relating to 1 v 1 situations) or something similar will cover much of what we need at some age groups. It’s worth discussing how to develop and set out training sessions/when to bring them in.
- This overview is not intended to be the solution, nor does it cover everything. It is more a proposed basis for discussion and planning.
- Main thing is here, if we all speak the same language, the players will have much clarity and be able to focus on their technical areas to a greater degree.
- Theoretically, but not practically, it’s possible for teams to create a coaching strategy for the entire year. Most coaches at times focus on being reactive in terms of the previous match rather than proactive in setting out a longer plan. Neither approach is right nor wrong but as coaches we all stand to benefit from discussion/collaboration, with the outcome always benefitting the players.