



BASED ON RSC ANDERLECHT FILOSOPHY

PLAYING FOOTBALL IN AN ELEVEN A SIDE FORMATION

DEFENDING



CONTENT

A.	THE GAME INTENT “DEFENDING”	2
1.	Defending in zone	2
2.	The determining phases in defending / putting pressure	3
3.	Game intentions < zones	4
B.	TACTICAL WORKING POINTS	6
C.	GAME SITUATIONS	7
1.	Our opponent always chooses for the long kick out	7
2.	The opponent always chooses for the deep ball in the back of our defenders	8





A. THE GAME INTENT “DEFENDING”

1. DEFENDING IN ZONE

During the training process of a young footballer, according to the LFF's football philosophy, most of the football stimuli during the total training are given around ball possession. However, the opponent's possession of the ball also plays an important role. The incentives that youth players receive should be geared to the content of a match. After all, in a football match, youth players are not only confronted with possession of the ball. After all, the ball is always "free"; the boundary between ball possession and loss is very narrow in football.

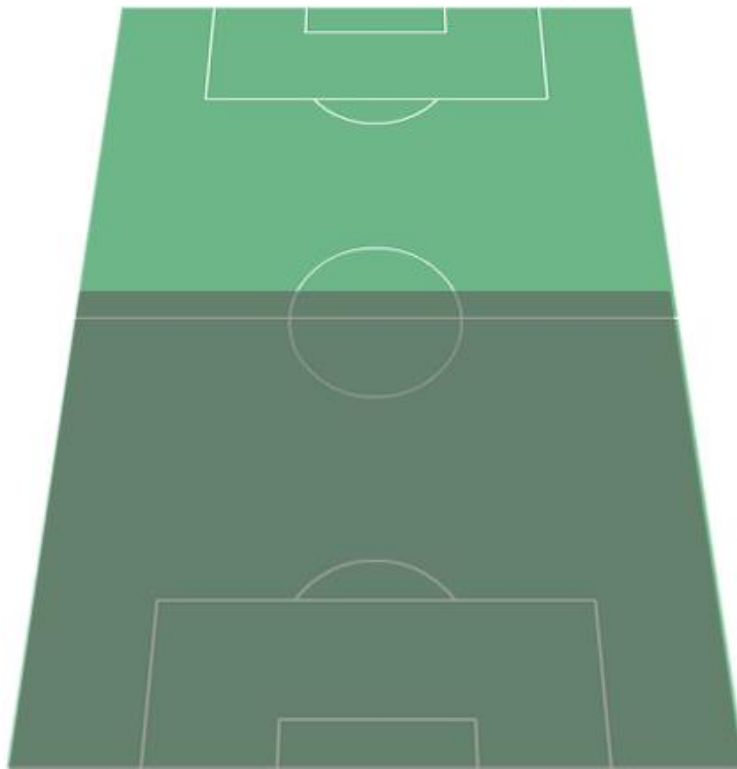
The zones where you have to defend and collectively disturb, largely depend on the strength of the opponent.

General basic principles:

- a. The ball is the starting point (one ball principle): in this system, you let the opponent run.
- b. In the line of defense, teammates will never follow their opponent: the opponents are taken over in the zone.
- c. Opponent in possession of the ball: as fast as possible and with as many players as possible behind the ball
- d. Ball loss: keep playing field small, ball possession: make playing field large.
- e. In case of ball loss, many players must be in the vicinity of the player in possession of the ball. Each player should try to get the depth out of the opponent's game in this way.
- f. Ball on the move: the whole team on the move!
- g. The defense operates as one (1) line! The players always provide cover by squeezing (moving sideways) and tilting (moving sideways and forwards).
- h. The height of the defensive line is determined by the central defender closest to the player who has the ball.
- i. We always press with 2 players: the player closest presses the player with the ball, the other tries to recapture the ball in the space.
- j. We keep the central axis occupied at all times!
- k. We play via the split vision principle: at the same time you have to see the player with the ball and the opponent who is a threat with one glance (pistols).
- l. When we end up in a numerical inequality situation, we break away inhibitably.
- m. We have eye for the ball loss moment during our attack through a defensive anticipation in T-shape
- n. We try to read the game in ball loss and we like to play on interception (one touch defense!)
- o. We coach each other at all times and we are coachable

At the LFF, however, the rule applies: "Defense is a means and not a goal in itself":

- A way of playing aimed at conquering the ball as quickly as possible, has a lot of developments in store.
- Opting for a defensive approach may result in winning more matches, but it doesn't benefit the individual development of the players.
- The opponent is locked up as high as possible. The small space, the high resistance and the mental resilience are an ideal learning experience for our footballers. Note: Disturbing and defending must be geared to the individual development of the players and NEVER to achieving a result. If our aggressive way of defending and interfering does not allow our opponent to achieve normal football, it is advisable to leave a little more space. After all, we want to play football. It shouldn't just be a 'fighting' match and we want to give everyone in our team the opportunity to develop.
- From older ages in 11:11 - depending on the training of the individual - you can choose to defend on purpose (for a result) or play counter football. A coach can therefore consciously choose for a low pressure zone (see further).



2. THE DETERMINING PHASES IN DEFENDING / PUTTING PRESSURE

2.1 Press on the ball

- The player closest to the ball puts pressure
- The ball in depth must be avoided (take the deep ball out!)
- Full pressure around the ball
- Don't let your opponent pass you by
- Go with the conviction to win the duel!

2.2 Keeping the space small

- Space around the ball small
- On the side of the ball there is full pressure. Squeezing, putting pressure and if it's necessary cover the space

2.3 Collective

- Each player must participate in the play
- Collective pressing
- To form a defensive cohesion (cohesion)
- We Defend Forward: The players don't run backwards

2.4 Conquering the ball

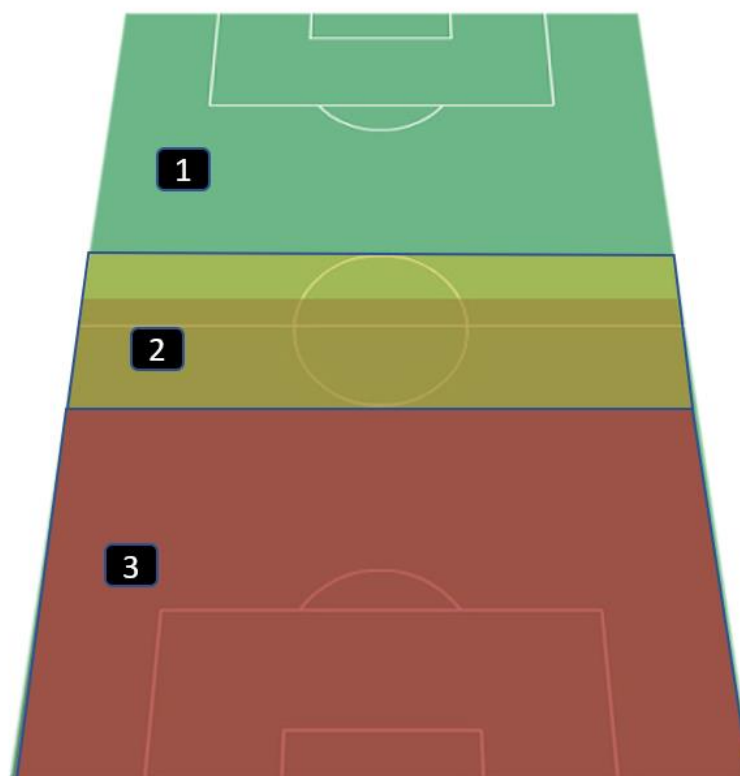
- Wait for the right moment
- No fouls
- Defending is a chain reaction: Maybe only the third "hunter" has the ball.

3. GAME INTENTIONS < ZONES

Disturbing and defending in ball possession of the opponent can be divided into 3 goals and in 3 different zones on the field:

1. On the opponent's half: disrupt/defend to score
2. On and around the centre circle: disrupt/defend to attack
3. On own half: score/defend to build

HIGH PRESSION ZONE
MEDIUM PRESSION ZONE
LOW PRESSION ZONE



3.1 High pression zone

In this case we immediately put pressure on the opponent's build-up. So we block the opponent during the most vulnerable moment in possession of the ball: the build-up. Attention: too much attention to "high interference" can jeopardize the development in ball possession. Recovering the ball at the moment when there is space in possession, is much more effective for individual progression. Recovering the ball when there is no space can result in a result on the scoresheet, but is not the right method for individual development. The most interesting place to put pressure on the opponent is the flank. The build-up possibilities are more limited here, given the proximity of the sideline. In the central axis the opponent has more possibilities: the free flanks give the opponent more choices. Depending on the qualities of the opponent, one can then force him in or out. All other players slide to the side of the ball and close the playing corners. The strikers are always attentive to a possible replay ball.

To do 1: Forcing an opponent inside. When do we force an opponent inside?

- When the offensive qualities of the opponent are mainly on the flank.
- When the wingback has only one good playing foot

The right winger (7) puts pressure on the outside of the wingback (5). This forces the wingback to come inwards with the ball at the foot. By forcing the defender to pass the ball with his weak foot, we increase the chance of ball recovery. In addition, all players have moved in the direction of the ball. As a result, the centre of the playing field is crowded. It is important that the winger goes straight at the opponent and leaves just a little more space on the inside. Attention: don't run too much outwards, otherwise the opponent might have the chance to pass you by without having to run inwards!



To do 2: Force an opponent outside. When do we force an opponent outside?

- When the qualities of the opponent are mainly central in midfield, based on the principle: "the less the good players of the opponent have to the ball, the less danger for our team".
- When the opponent plays with one man on the flank, we take away some of his playing possibilities by pushing him outward all the time.
- When the central defender has only one good playing foot

The deep striker (9) forces the central defender (3) in the direction of his weakest foot. Forcing the defender into that position increases the chance of ball recovery.



To do 3: Closing of the passing lines by the midfielders.

The left midfielder (8) comes in, gives cover to the right midfielder (6) and "picks up" an opponent. The right midfielder (6) blocks in the passing line to the centre (attack). He controls the area between the ball and the goal. This makes it more difficult for the left wingback to pass the ball to an attacker.



3.2 Medium pression zone

The team has a more waiting attitude and chooses position around the centre circle. This creates more space in the back of the defenders when conquering the ball. The principles and points of attention of the interference are identical to those of putting pressure on the half of the opponent (High pressure zone).

3.3 Low pression zone

This third game intention should never be a conscious choice before U15. This way of taking position and defending is imposed by a stronger opponent. Training now and then and, exceptionally, taking up this position in a match will certainly contribute to the mental development of the players. Avoiding an opponent goal is an essential part of the game of football. The game is then played according to the following principles:

- The closer to one's own goal, the more compact one plays
- The rules of zone football do not apply in the own 16 meters

B. TACTICAL WORKING POINTS

- The opponent can build-up too easily
 - o The players don't properly slide to the side of the ball: on the side of the ball there should be high pressure.
 - o Players should adjust to the position of the ball and the position of their direct opponent: ball on the move = players on the move!

On the side of the ball defending has to be very SHARP!



- The lines are too far apart
 - o The space between the lines is too large, the opponent can easily run between the lines
 - o The defenders connect well, but the midfielders do not. This creates too much space.
 - o The defenders hang back too much, the space between defence and midfield becomes too large
- There's not enough "hunting"
 - o There is passive pressure: the opponent never gets into trouble during the build-up.

- The attackers let themselves be eliminated too quickly or they don't defend
 - o The attackers act as first defenders. It is essential that the attackers do targeted interference work.
- The defenders insufficiently cover the center
 - o It is important that the defenders work well together and also cover the center well by providing mutual coverage.
- The goalkeeper stays in his goal
 - o When we put pressure on the half of the opponent, space is automatically created in the back of the defenders. It is important that the goalkeeper takes up that space.

The goalkeeper has to take up the space in the back of his defenders!



C. GAME SITUATIONS

1. OUR OPPONENT ALWAYS CHOOSES FOR THE LONG KICK OUT

In this phase, we choose to conquer the ball: we then talk about recovering the "second" ball:

- The opposing goalkeeper kicks the ball out
- The player of our team - closest to the ball - goes into a duel:
 - o Even if you know that it is a lost duel (e.g. the opponent is 2 heads taller), we go into duel. This prevents an easy acceptance of the ball by the opponent.
 - o We try to intercept the ball before the bounce of the ball
- All other players make the space around the ball as small as possible
 - o All players of our team squeeze to the side of the ball (also the attackers sink back), we make the space around the ball as small as possible.
 - o If a player of ours is "free", he positions himself behind the duel.
- After the duel, we put pressure on the ball and try to get hold of it:
 - o This must be a chain reaction of chase!

2. THE OPPONENT ALWAYS CHOOSES FOR THE DEEP BALL IN THE BACK OF OUR DEFENDERS

Choosing a high pressure zone means giving away space in the back. Note that this situation is relatively limited during matches 8 <> 8 for U10 and U11, because the solution is often sought at a limited distance. Skipping lines does not happen very often at this age. With the older ages this situation occurs more often.

A good positional play by the central defender, a good cooperation in the last line and a good positional play by the goalkeeper can prevent scoring chances for the opponent:

- The central defender should read the opponent's build-up carefully. When an opponent is playing a long ball, it is important that the central defender lets go of his direct opponent for a moment and covers the space. In this way, he creates a direct lead over the opponent, which makes handling the deep ball a lot easier
- The goalkeeper (1) preferably does not choose a position in his goal! It is best for the goalkeeper to move up along with the ball and play about 20 metres out of goal. The "danger" that an opponent can score from 30 metres is very low in these age groups. However, the goalkeeper must be in the correct starting position: alert, on his forefeet and in sprint position.



COLOPHON

Responsible publisher

Lithuanian Football Federation
Stadiono g. 2, LT-02106 Vilnius

Find more on our website

<https://lff.lt/>



LITHUANIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION