



BASED ON RSC ANDERLECHT FILOSOPHY

# PLAYING FOOTBALL IN AN ELEVEN A SIDE FORMATION

## GAME MODEL





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A portrait of Tomas Danilevičius, President of the Lithuanian Football Federation. He is a middle-aged man with dark, slicked-back hair and light blue eyes. He is wearing a black suit jacket over a white shirt. A small, circular gold medal is pinned to his left lapel. He is standing outdoors in front of a football stadium with yellow and red seats. His arms are crossed, and he is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

## INTRODUCTION

We all agree that a common youth football education program and methodology is needed for Lithuanian football. The results of the RSC Anderlecht program have already convinced the world and speak for themselves - a number of world-class Belgian footballers have grown and are recognized for their quality around the world, so we are happy to implement it here in Lithuania.

This is a great opportunity for academies to contribute consistently to the development of our youth education. All the tools are in place, now is the time to work together for a common goal.

Tomas Danilevičius  
President at Lithuanian Football Federation





## A. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RSC ANDERLECHT GLOBAL GAME MODEL

This global Game Model was drafted to inform, to standardize, to lead, but not to dictate. Creativity, inventiveness and development should never be restricted in youth football. This Game Model must therefore be a constant incentive for “updating and sharing knowledge”. It must form a guideline for leading young TALENT to professional football. The philosophy behind it take full account of club history, culture, location, competition, supporters and financial scope.

## B. THE GENERAL IDEA (OR THE RSCA TATTOO)

The general football idea is based on “having the ball”.

The advantages of ball possession are numerous:

- Team is proactive instead of reactive
- Team is taking initiative
- Team is dictating (forward) direction and off intention of the game
- Team is dictating and influencing pace of the game
- Every player on the ball becomes a ‘playmaker’
- Mental advantage by having the ball than by chasing him
- Bigger football education value and attractivity player/supporters
- Statistically possession delivers more winning games

“If you play based on possession, you don’t have to defend, because there is only one ball” (Johan Crujff)



## C. PLAYING 11 A SIDE BASED ON GAME MODEL 11 <> 11 RSC ANDERLECHT

Contemporary football is characterised by a lot of movement and a number of changes of position within a (large) space. In today's and tomorrow's football, the trick is to make optimal use of the spaces when owning the ball so that, on one hand, the ball owner has and retains the necessary space (during the free running of the other players and his own running action), but on the other hand, after the ball has been played, the player continues to move intelligently so that the newly created playing possibilities are maximised. Because a football situation is rarely ideal, a player should always be able to control the situation individually in case of ball possession (dribble < ball retention). On the other hand, the trick is to consciously make the spaces smaller in case of loss of ball, so that the opponent has to play under pressure and the chance of conquering the ball is much higher.

In order to further develop and deepen our own football philosophy - based on the RSC Anderlecht philosophy and football culture - we have chosen to deepen our football identity through a number of well-considered basic principles and playing methods – modules for each formation (from 5<>5 to 11<>11). These basic principles have been specifically developed per formation 5<>5 5 (HIGH FIVE) and 8<>8 (BASIC ELEVEN). For the formation 11<>11, we choose not to repeat these principles again.

We start from our own strength and choose a 1 - 4 - 3 - 3 formation at 11<>11. Only with our oldest age groups we deviate from this in the context of training, match conditions or strength of the opponent. Our principles have been developed specifically to stimulate Lithuanian individuality and to create certain uniformity in everyday practice on the field.

## D. THE GLOBAL FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY 11<>11 OF RSC ANDERLECHT

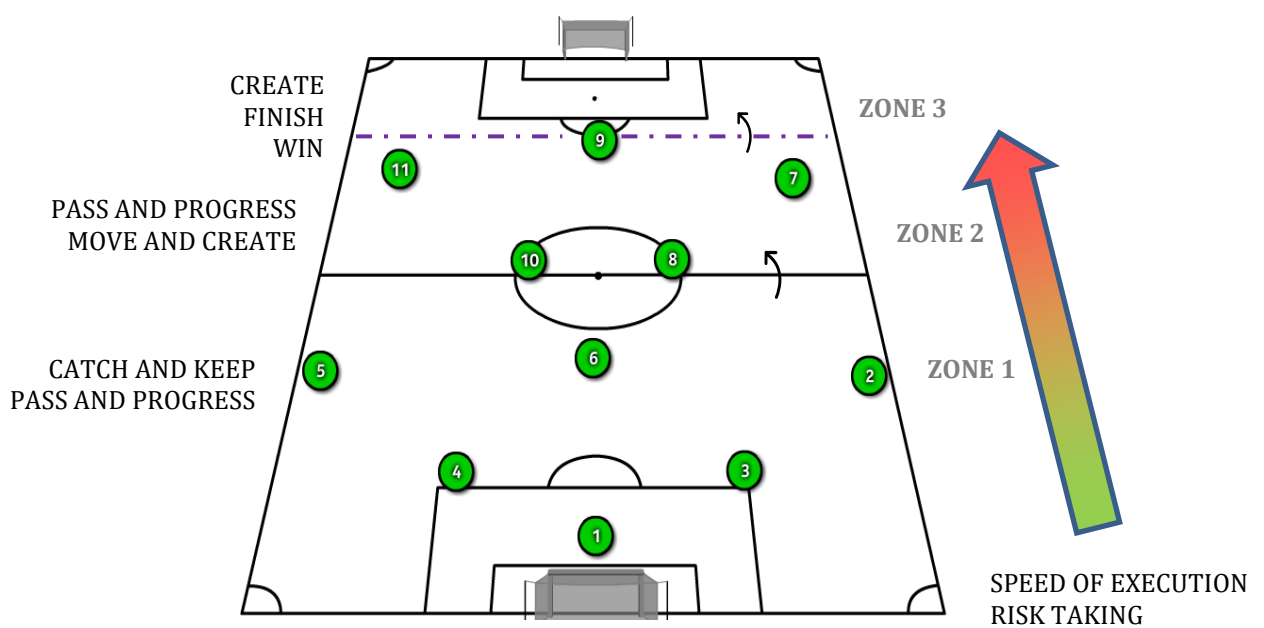
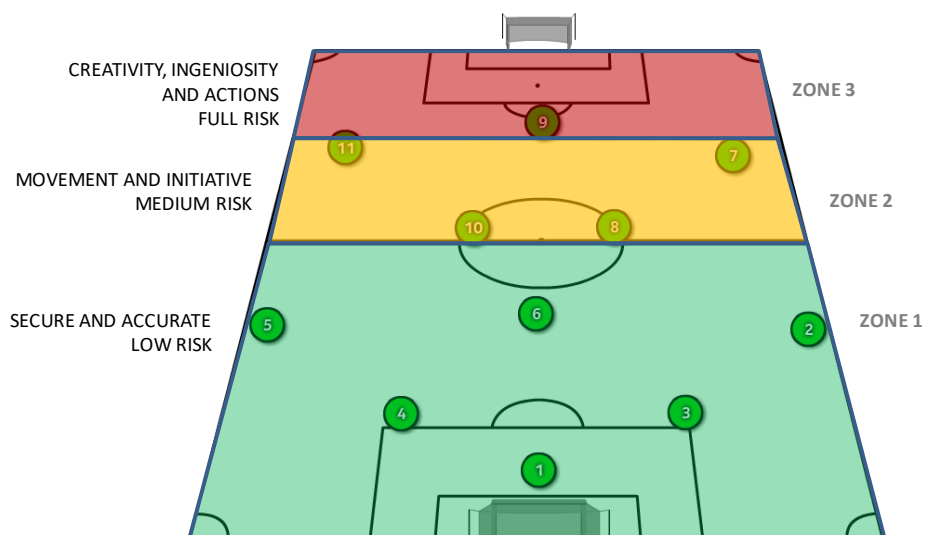
### MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- The 'kicker' is more important than whatever strategy!
  - The offensive strategy(s) depend(s) on your own qualities, creativity and will to score!
  - The defensive strategy(s) depends on your own qualities, morphology and defensive aptitudes!
1. DNA= Dominant (determine pace) – Forward (attacking) – Attractive (chances-goals) and we start every game to win
  2. Starting from own strength and fixed animation model (1-4-3-3) but tactical situational flexibility (adapting to own player material, strength-weakness opponent or (match) situations)
  3. Focus on efficient, forward (diagonal-vertical) AND progressive ball possession from a well-structured build up from behind
  4. Attacking and defending happens with ALL the players and is a collective responsibility: 6 offensive thinking players, 5 defensive thinkers
  5. In B+ we look for free space through progressive ball possession, we create dominance in 1<>1 due to majority situations (2<>1, 3<>2,...) or individual actions that ultimately lead to creating chances
  6. Enforcing opportunities AND converting (efficiency!) in and around the counterpart's 16 meters
  7. Fast transition from B+ to B- and vice versa (intelligent pressure setting, mix of high/medium/low press and duel power)
  8. Fast transition from B- to B+ through ball transition, forward-passing and fast set pieces
  9. Optimal use of set pieces for (enforcing scoring opportunities) and precise defense and duelling (preventing scoring opportunities)
  10. The 'block', defensive but also offensive, is a maximum of 40-35m long, is slidable, but remains compact in length and width in B-
  11. Decision-making: wherever on the field but especially in the offensive positions above the center line, 'actions are taken', created, inventively acted



## E. ANIMATION

- Animation 11 <> 11: 1-4-3-3
  - Position 1: goalkeeper
  - Position 2: lateral defender
  - Position 3: central defender
  - Position 4: central defender
  - Position 5: lateral defender
  - Position 6: central midfielder
  - Position 7: right winger
  - Position 8: central midfielder
  - Position 10: central midfielder
  - Position 11: left winger
  - Position 9: deep striker



## F. BASIC PRINCIPLES B+

- **BUILT UP FROM BEHIND**
- **PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION**
- **PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION < ATTACK OVER THE SIDE < AROUND THE BLOCK**
- **PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION < THROUGH THE CENTER < THROUGH THE BLOCK**
- **CREATING CHANCES/OPPORTUNITIES/FINISHING/WIN**

### 1. BUILT UP FROM BEHIND

- 1.1 Build-up via K after rapid changeover (vertical-diagonal)
- 1.2 If K players plays diagonally-vertically, he knows that he can turn (free)
- 1.3 If K player plays diagonally-vertically, he knows that he has to move (pressure)
- 1.4 Building up through overload: majority of at least 1, preferably 2 players, compared to the number of opponents who put pressure
- 1.5 Team splits into two parts, central and fullbacks low, attacking midfielders high and wide to create max space in the middle zone. Striker always 'between' the CD opponent and preferably in a light offside position

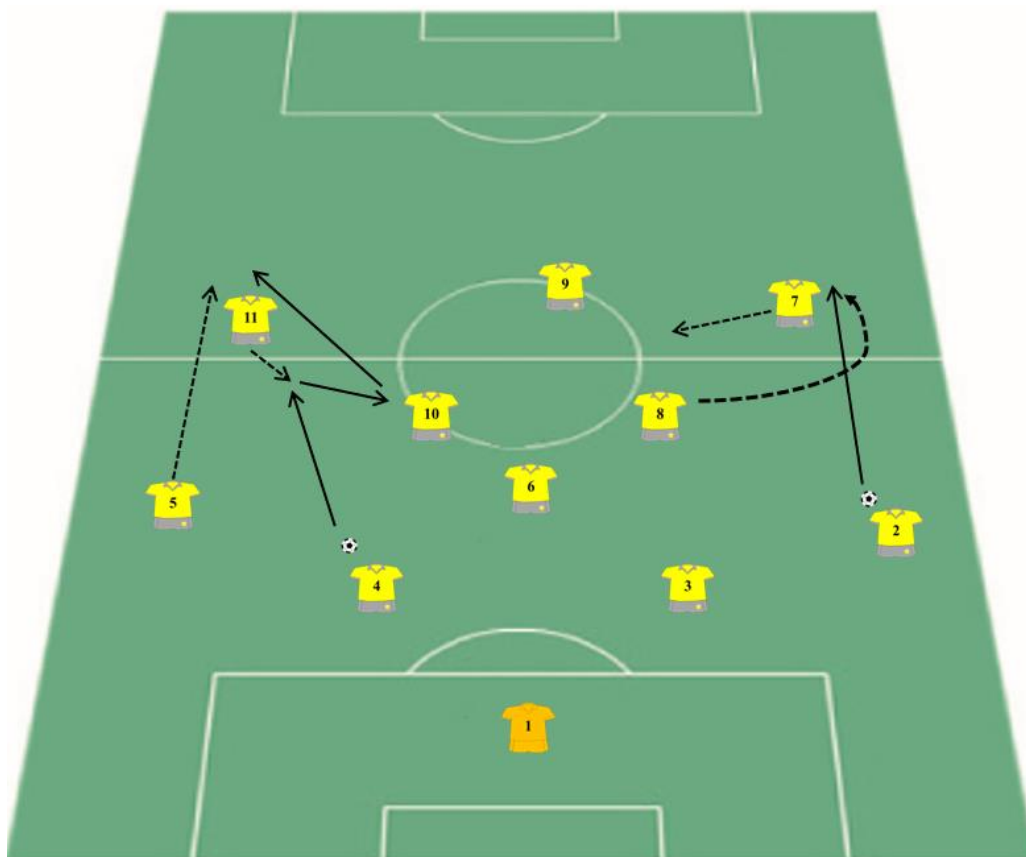




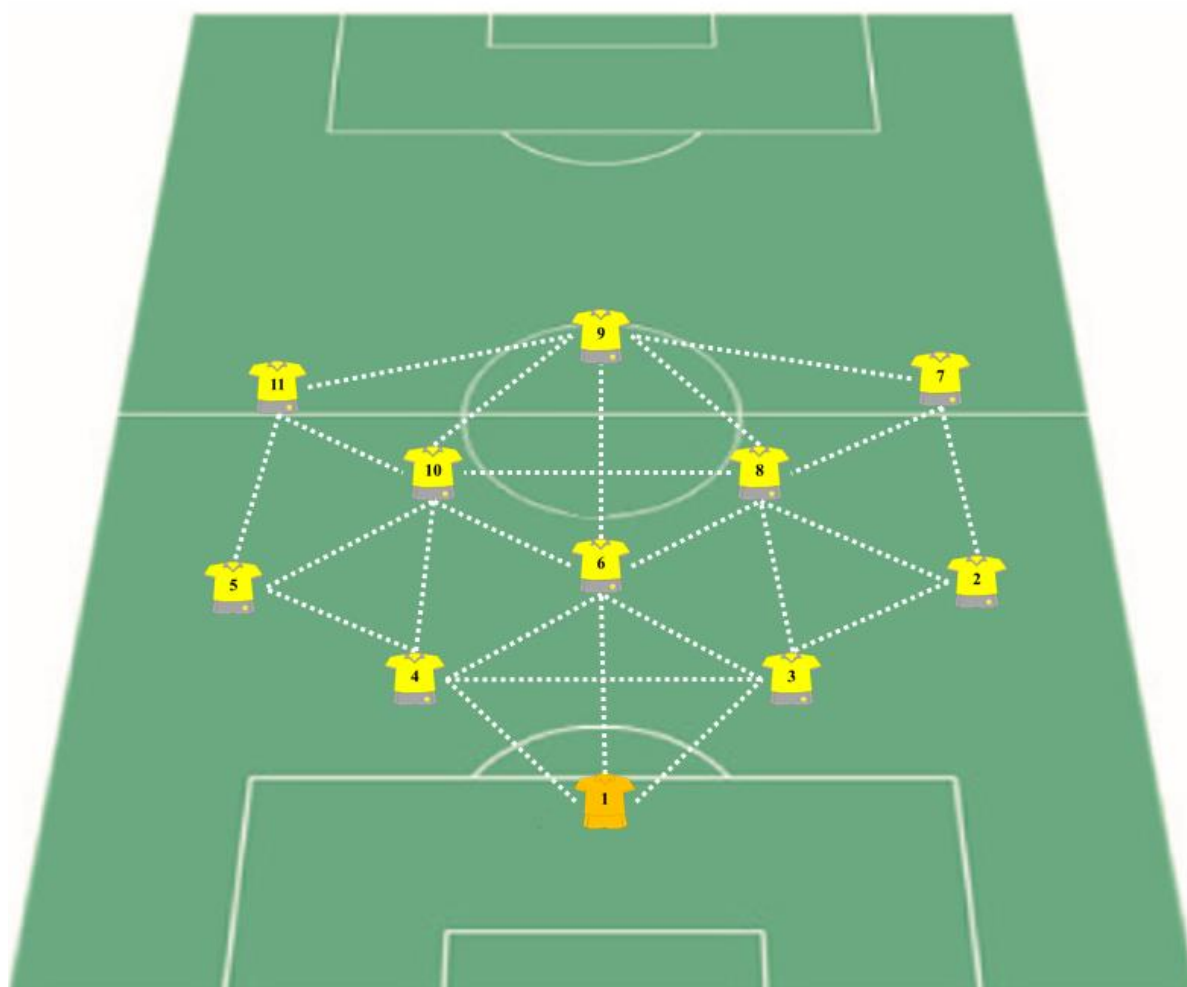
- 1.6 Automatism: if RCD (3) dribbles then LFA (11) enters the pocket and LFD (5) plunges into the depth for the cross-pass if the pocket cannot be played. Same as LCD (5) dribbles then RFA (7) comes in pocket and RCD (2) dives into space (11 and 7 opponent are often surprised and if pos 2 and 5 still intercept our 7 and 11 are on second ball)
- 1.7 Fullback or central eliminates attacker putting pressure and infiltrates in search of free man between the lines
- 1.8 Automatism: deep striker is played over the ground and set off midfielders 8 or 10 that extend to deep running 7 and 11 back/space of fullbacks or in foot to create 1<> on side
- 1.9 Automatism: deep striker is played in the air then extends/deviates on wingers 7 and/or 11 who come in the pocket, midfielders 8 and 10 ready for second ball in case of loss of duel by the striker
- 1.10 Kick-off centrally via K and head on (on 7 and 11), control or dispute second ball (8 and 10)
- 1.11 K kicks out quickly if attackers own team are in majority or equality with defenders opponent

## 2. PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION

- 2.1 Passing and playability: at pace, play the ball max FORWARD, run free between the lines, break lines, eliminate opponents with minimum number of touches, alternate short-medium-long (in that order) and keep many players around the ball at ideal pass distances WIDE play only to get the defensive block in motion or to lure opponents BACKWARDS only to lure the defensive block to the front and create space behind the 'back four'



- 2.2 TURN-UP: find free man higher on field, between the lines, who on his turn can turn and decide again
- 2.3 PROGRESS: creating majority situations on the field, in constantly changing zones (side, central, shuffle/slide) and progress (2<>1, 3<>2)
- 2.4 MOVE: player on ball WITHOUT pressure is 'come and go' principle, player on ball WITH pressure is 'give and go' principle
- 2.5 CREATE: isolate players on the side or centrally that can cause a goal chance (1<>1)
- 2.6 STRIKE: ball starts at K and via a mix of 1 to 5 a goal is scored WITHOUT intervention of an opponent
- 2.7 The three midfielders maintain visual contact with each other and move in relation to each other ( in and outs) to free up space and be playable.
- 2.8 The triangle receives support from one of the two wingers who try to create a majority in midfield as 'pocket strikers)
- 2.9 The triangle is supported by the deep striker that drops off to midfield to try to create majority
- 2.10 The triangle is supported by an infiltration central defender who forces the opponent to step out





**3. PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION < ATTACK OVER THE SIDE < AROUND THE BLOCK****3.1 Winger is played in 1:1 with defender**

- If winger is dominant in 1:1, he makes action and midfielders and strikers move away from the ball
- If winger is not dominant, midfielders and /or striker will join in to create majority

**3.2 Winger dribbles inside and creates danger**

- Winger on the ball kicks on goal, other players in box focus on 2nd ball
- Winger on ball crosses(bends) for goal on incoming teammates
- Winger seeks one-two movement with deep striker or attacking midfielder and finishes
- Winger searches through second cross for the second zone for the infiltration attacking midfielder ( opposite side)

**3.3 Fullback or midfielder overlaps flank attacker and creates danger through cross****3.4 Come and Go: winger comes to ball and then leaves deep ( player on ball has no pressure), avoids off – side****3.5 Give and Go: winger comes to the ball, gets played, set and then leaves deep ( player at ball under pressure)****3.6 Equality or majority situation leads to breakthrough on the side and creates danger through cross****3.7 Shift game via center players to opposite flank via tight crosspass; shuffle/side****4. PROGRESSIVE BALL POSSESSION < ATTACK THROUGH THE CENTER < THROUGH THE BLOCK****4.1 Player at the ball has time and space, block opponent high, then first in and immediately out of the ball in space face to goal. ( Come and Go)****4.2 Player at the ball under pressure, deep striker playable IN the ball to keep ball or to set o, attacking midfielders or wingers under the ball****4.3 Player at the ball searches one-two with deep striker and infiltrates into free space facing goal****4.4 Player at the ball searches for teammate deep, set and third man infiltrates free zone central****4.5 Central defender covers by maintaining pressure striker then attacking midfielder infiltrates without ball**

**DIFFERENT CROSSES****5. CREATING CHANCES/FINISHING/WIN**

5.1 As a WINGER (pos 11), 4 players ( 9,7,8 and 10) always cross the box

5.2 As a WINGER (pos 7), 4 players (9,11,8 and 10) always cross the box

5.3 As FULLBACK ( pos 5), 5 players ( 9,7,10,8 and 11) always cross in the box

5.4 As FULLBACK (pos 2), always 5 players ( 9,11,10, 8 and 7) pass in the box

**G. BASIC PRINCIPLES TRANSITION B- TO B+****GENERAL**

- Forcing as quickly an opportunity as quickly and accurately as possible into the greenzone – paying attention offside
- Always make the most subtle choice ( pass-kick) in front of goal
- Free running players in back defenders and green zone face to goal
- Forward passing und sustain speed
- Eye for rest defense and of marking



- 6.1 Player conquering the ball the deepest: run straight to goal and finish or challenge and finish
- 6.2 Player conquering the ball is not the deepest one: does not run or dribble but plays forward and closes in or overlaps, creating a majority situation and exploiting it through running players
- 6.3 Player conquering the ball plays the deeper free player, running players join in, overlap or dive into the space between defense and goalkeeper, pay attention offside
- 6.4 Use space in the zone where the ball was captured (weak side) and exploit disorganization opponent
- 6.5 Keep passing forward and running players to create 6 offensive players and 5 def thinkers who stop and organize on the centerline

## H. B- GENERAL

- Quickly capture the ball via forward or negative press
- Close center playing field and form short lines with mutual coverage
- Organize defensively compact and sliding block and closing line of the pass
- NO TACKLING but focus on anticipation, interception, offensive marking ( maintaining pressure) or fall back
- Always determine in advance who initiates press
- No giving away chances, no conceding goals

### HIGH PRESS

- 7.1 Total Press: strikers, midfielders and defenders put high pressure( man-marking) on all defenders, midfielders and attackers and oblige Keeper to kick far.



## 7.2 Focus on duel + second ball

7.3 High pressure when Keeper has to kick out from the ground, focus on the final game and play second ball

7.4 Smart Press: strikers, midfielders and defenders put (high) pressure but leave one(weak) player or (weak) zone free for build-up opponent

7.5 Pendulum Press: striker puts pressure on one central defender, one of the two wingers on other CD'er, fullback covers on fullback opponent.

7.6 In the back a line of 3( instead of 4) is formed, one of the central defenders becomes fullback and the central defender dares to defend in 1:1.

7.7 The opposite winger falls back a little to put pressure on the winger if cross-pass.

7.8 If one CD eliminates pressuring striker: the ball owner is attacked by midfielder, the opposite fullback becomes midfielder and the deep striker catches the upcoming fullback. In this way, we maintain equality.

7.9 In the 3-4-3 the pressure could be put by the striker and one winger, the side midfielder covers on fullback, the opposite winger falls in between fullback and winger

## MEDIUM PRESS

7.10 We play MEDIUM PRESS by forming 'spiderweb' with the whole team and building up through the center. Two wingers remain wide and invite fullbacks to infiltrate or play into the middle block. Collective pressure when ball is played in block beyond the three strikers. Then imprison collectively. No frontal pressure from strikers and wingers but dorsal negative pressure.

7.11 We play NORMAL PRESS: striker and attacking midfielder alternate pressure on 2 central defenders (if 4 defenders) , wingers on fullbacks, wingers close the line of the pass (pocket) wingers opponent, central defender covers by maintaining pressure. Midfielders and strikers may only play face with their own goal and may not turn.

## LOW PRESS

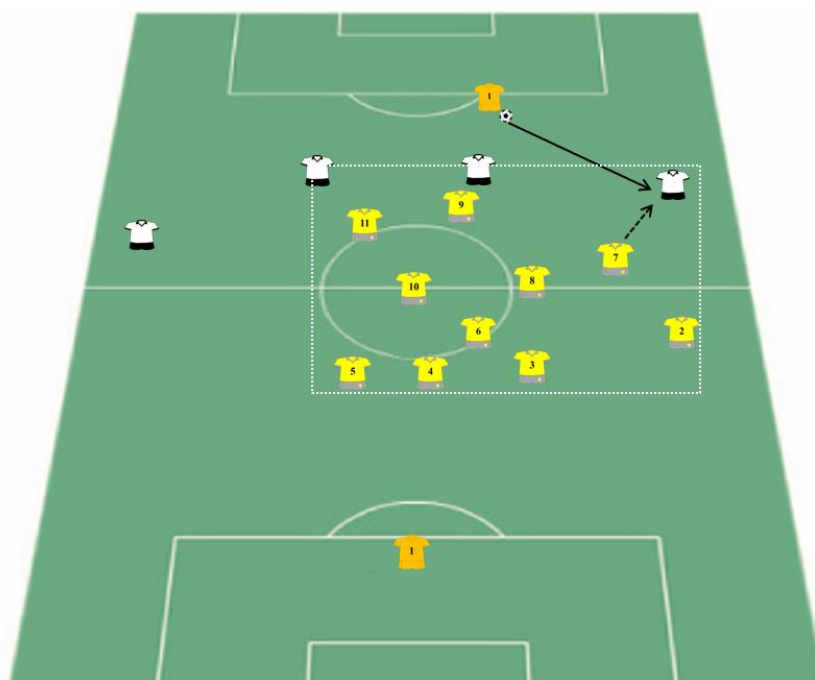
7.12 Wingers in 4-3-3 fall back to midfield and form 4-5-1 with two short lines of 4 with max 10 meter between each other and cover at the intervals and pockets.

## I. BASIC PRINCIPLES B-

- FORMING DEFENSIVE BLOCK
- SHUFFLE/SLIDE AND CREATE OVERLOAD
- SECOND BALL
- PREVENTING AND DEFENDING SIDE CROSSOVER
- IN AND OUT 16M
- DEFENDING ON LONG, DEEP BALL
- ORGANISATION REST DEFENCE
- MAINTAINING PRESSURE
- OFFSIDE TRAP

### 8. FORMING DEFENSIVE BLOCK

- 8.1 Height defensive shiftable block is always determined by one of the two central defenders with verbal support keeper
- 8.2 Defensive block moves higher as soon as ball is played backwards by opponent
- 8.3 Other players join in length / Width and form a compact block of max 40 width and 35 length
- 8.4 Goalkeeper steers and can anticipate without being lobed
- 8.5 Forward pressure as soon as the block has been formed and is in organization





## 9. SHUFFLE/SLIDE AND CREATE OVERLOAD

- 9.1 Always trying to quickly / slide to the ball side by forming a numerical majority
- 9.2 Quickly shuffle / slide to ball side by forming a positional majority
- 9.3 Opposite side ball side is the free side
- 9.4 Pendulum effect when fast side changes



## 10. SECOND BALL

- 10.1 After side crosses offensive, the controlling players always put pressure forward under the ball. Opponents may NOT turn or play forward
- 10.2 After flank crosses offensive, the attacking midfielders put forward pressure or negative pressure at second ball CENTRAL
- 10.3 After flank crosses offensive, the fullbacks push forward at second ball to SIDE
- 10.4 After flank crosses defensive, the nearest defenders press forward. Blocking shot, preventing dribbling and passing

## 11. PREVENTING AND DEFENDING SIDE CROSSOVER

- 11.1 Individual men covering on attackers IN the box (split-vision), zone defending OUT the box
- 11.2 Central defender RUNNING to goal (early cross) takes post, side offensive cross, as reference point (avoid own-goal)
- 11.3 Go long with left foot on cross from right, right foot on cross from left

**12. IN AND OUT 16M**

12.1 Ball OUT 16m defenders OUT 16m

12.2 Ball IN zone 16m defenders IN 16m, max penalty point

12.3 Goalkeeper responsible for space in back defenders

**13. DEFENDING ON LONG, DEEP BALL**

13.1 From defense: 2 central defenders facing the opponents goal, one duel, one in cover, central midfielders for falling ball second ball, fullbacks in and

13.2 After turning midfielders: central defenders turned -in sideways ready to sprint on a deep or trough ball, fullbacks the same way

13.3 Ball in back flank defenders, defensive midfielder gets out and puts pressure, central defenders defend center

13.4 Attacker penetrates box, nearest defender steps out and puts pressure, defensive midfielder falls back central

13.5 Positive one-touch defense when there is pressure from the opponent and it is not possible to play short passes

**14. ORGANISATION REST DEFENCE**

14.1 Defensive T formed by 3 defenders and central midfielder ( 3+4+6+2 or 5) each with 2 lines



14.2 If 2 fullbacks are involved in an attack, a square or trapezium is formed with central defenders and midfielders ( 3+4+6+8 or 10), each with 2 lines

14.3 Lowest of 2 lines on center of field but not lower than middle circle

14.4 Duelling in majority, fall back in case of equality/minority ( up to max own 16m)

14.5 Duel if equality or minority ONLY if 100% certainty to win dual

14.6 Offensive marking

## 15. MAINTAINING PRESSURE

15.1 Covering central defender on deep dropping striker opponent if whole team is in organization-often at high pressure

15.2 Always maintaining pressure, central defenders and midfielders, on your own half and only let go after transition, ball loss or pass backwards, over the middle line again zone and positional defending

15.3 Fullbacks maintaining pressure on deep dropping wingers only if own wingers can handle positionally marking on overlapping fullbacks

15.4 Cover and oblige to wrong choice, backward or lateral pass, ball loss

15.5 Striker(s) only cover on Keeper upon back pass if there is a choice of forced error, otherwise stay in the defensive block

15.6 If striker covered on Keeper, defenders are on the half way line ( high block) and goalkeeper ready to anticipate long ball

## 16. OFFSIDE TRAP

16.1 Offside trap is used exceptionally and only in minority defenders and / or equality

16.2 Offside trap is only used if pressure on the ball carrier

16.3 Fullback or central defender closest to duel gets out if he AND defensive line AND player at ball sees a deep running/infiltration player

16.4 On set pieces OUT box, you can COLLECTIVELY mark opponents positionally ( only discussed and determined in advance)

## J. BASIC PRINCIPLES TRANSITION B+ TO B-

17.1 Counter press – 3" rule: in the vent of ball loss, immediately regain IF enough players are around the ball, otherwise fall back quickly into block

17.2 Collective press: Oblige opponent to forced errors by collective pressure: wrong pass, backward, lateral ball loss, wrong decision



17.3 Individual press: player who loses the ball immediately presses and recovers the ball

17.4 Player who loses the ball immediately presses via direct duel or native press + Forward or sideways, or negative pressure from closest fellow teammates on the ball side ( smuther) and taking into account space between back four and own goal + non-ball side is released by closing in

17.5 Prevent or intercept the opponent's forward pass immediately

17.6 Continue to run with running players opposing team to form as soon as possible a defensive block again

17.7 In minority compared to the offensive running opponents fall back (bodyshape) up to max own box and waiting for run back fellow players

17.8 Making a smart foul to slow down counterattack (avoid red card)

17.9 Always take care of REST DEFENSE ( T or square or trapezium)

17.10 Mix of 1 till 8 leads conquest

## K. SET PIECES IN B+

- CORNERS FOR
- FREE KICKS FOR
- THROW-IN FOR
- PENALTY FOR

### 18. CORNERS FOR

- 1 striker opponent = 2 players in the back
  - 1 behind the man and 1 in front
  - NUMERICAL MAJORITY
- 2 strikers opponent = 3 players in the back
  - 2 behind the man and 1 in front
  - NUMERICAL MAJORITY
- 3 strikers opponent = 3 players in the back
  - 3 behind the man (man-man play)
  - NUMERICAL EQUALITY
- 4 strikers opposing team = 3 players in the back behind the man in ZONE (fall back)



## 19. FREE KICKS FOR

- Above the half way line and from 16m to the outside line, left-footed on the right and vice versa (17% in -/25% outswingers)
- Above the half way line central, between the backlines, stretched dropping (gestrekt droppen) to penalty point and 'running' players
- Above the half way line side, strip sideline/backline, bended to penalty point and focus on second ball for kick
- Between the circle, below and above half way line, FAST game resumptions
- Always a left and right foot (2) at the ball to sow doubt in opponent over in or outswinger
- Always one player behind defensive line opponent

### Shoot on goal

- 2 players behind the ball: right- and left-footed player
- APPOINTMENTS WHO KICKS ARE MADE BEFORE THE MATCH
- 2 players in the wall: obstruct sight goalkeeper
- 3 players who run at the kick and continue to the goalkeeper
- 1 player in the central axis
- 2 players in the rest defence



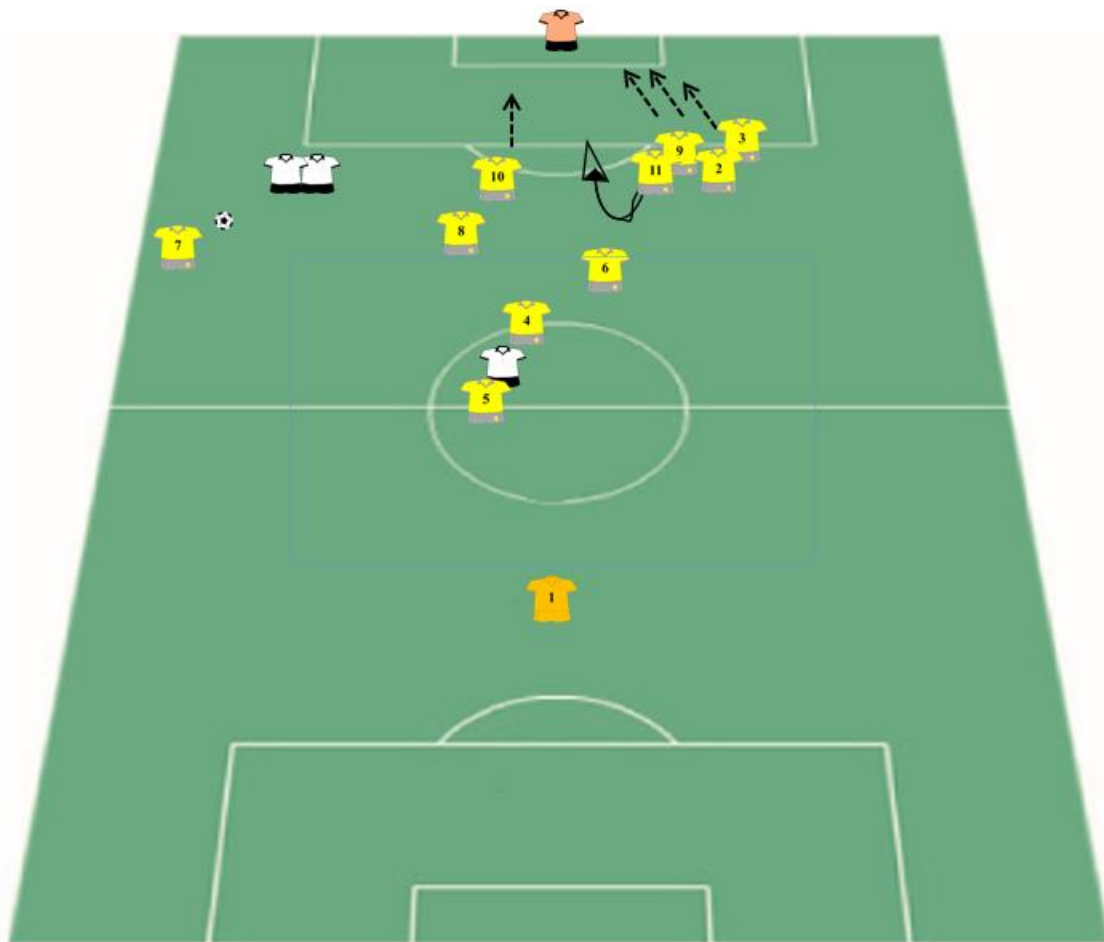
#### From the wings (for)

- From the left: RIGHT-FOOTED PLAYER
- From the right: LEFT-FOOTED PLAYER
- 75% in swingers kicked on goal

RISK KICKS: IF NO ONE TOUCHES THE BALL, IT WILL GO IN

- 3 players run from the 2nd zone onwards
- 1 player runs first wide and then to penalty point (2nd ball)
- 1 player runs in from the first zone straight ahead to flick on with one touch on low ball
- 2 players on the falling ball second ball
- Adjusting rest defence to staying attackers (see strategy corners)





### 18. THROW-IN FOR

- Maximum throw in ball to get back with enough room to play (zone 1,2 and 3)
- Below the half way line, the central defender is always far down and fullback throws (zone 1)
- Winger on the back line (zone 3), NO offside, and take action or set up a combination
- Variations in running patterns (zone 3)
- No possibilities equals deep throwing, disputing and flicking ball on or set and shuffle/sliding (zone 1,2 and 3)
- Throw in as a corner (zone 3)

### 19. PENALTY FOR

- Take the ball and move calmly towards the penalty spot
- Place the ball with BOTH hands on the spot on the ideal place
- Move back to the kicking area looking at the ball – goalkeeper and goal
- Choose the ideal running distance (+/- edge 16m)
- Decide (down/high – left/right/right ahead – hit hard or controlled/bended)
- Visualize/memorise the kick – technique of visualisation/concentration
- Do not change your mind during the run
- Do not allow yourself to be influenced by the referee's whistle. Striker is the ONLY decision-maker
- Concentrate, focus, forget public/keeper influences, adjust breathing, start
- SCORE

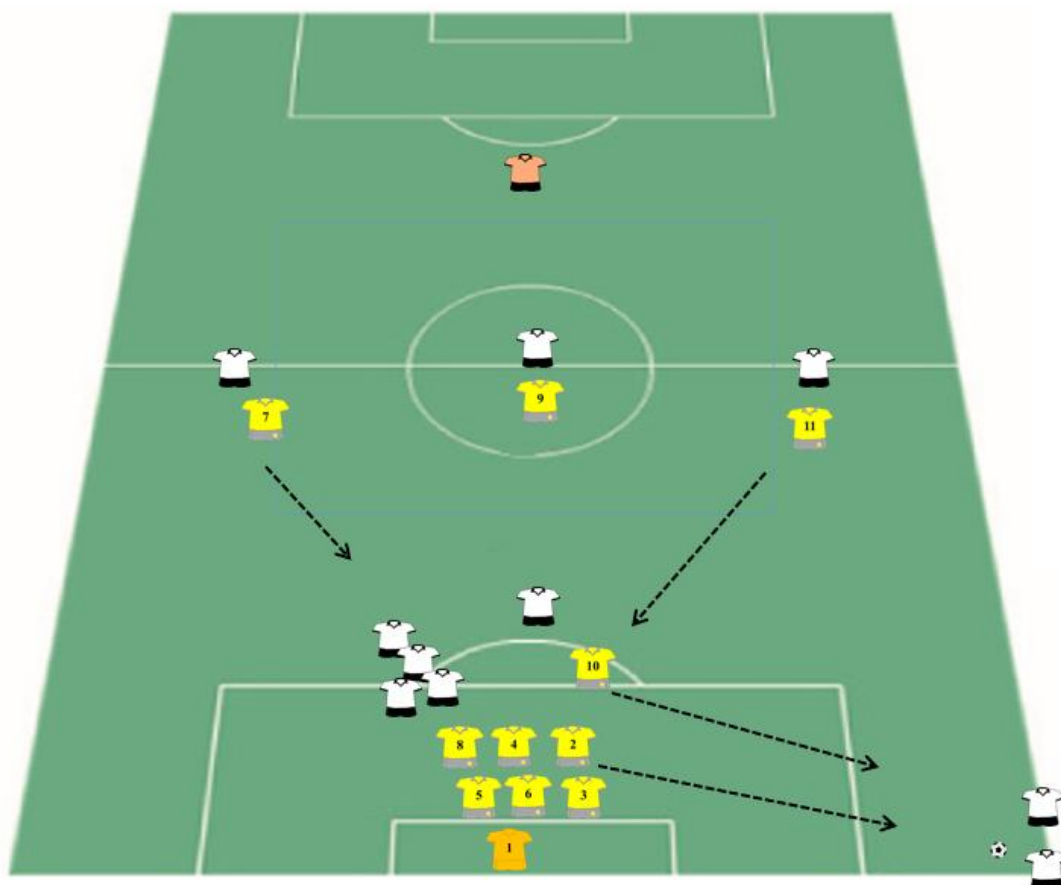
## L. SET PIECES IN B-

- We keep 3 players in the front and 'empower' defenders
- Man-man marking, individual coverage
- Mix of zone and individual coverage
- Zone
- Short corner
- Contact but no pulling or pushing errors
- Primary and secondary tasks before and after the kick

### 20. CORNERS AGAINST

#### MIX

- 3 players stay in front: a bit lower in the half way line and not far from the side line
- 1 player on the second ball
- ALWAYS READY TO START THE COUNTERATTACK BUT FIRST DEFENSIVE TASK!!!
- 6 players in ZONE, zig-zag: ALWAYS IN MOTION = NEVER STAND STIL!!
- Lowest row focus on the ball (best header 1st zone)
- Highest row blocking incoming players or duelling
- ARROWS: in case of a short corner kick



**21. FREE KICKS AGAINST**

- Always own player before the ball to win time for defensive organization
- Defensive line as high as possible, determined by central defenders, rest align, K ready for interception/duel
- Ball in zone 2: defensive line not lower than 16m
- Ball in zone 3: defensive line not lower than penalty point
- Only wall from <25 meter, no wall >25 meter away from goal
- Length in the wall and slightly jump, max 15cm! Ball must not be able to get under it!

**CENTRAL**

- 4 players in the wall in fixed order from outside to inside
- Zone next to wall for short ball: start counter-attack
- Press the ball if indirect or next to wall: 1 player
- Zone for goal: 3 players
- 1 player connects on own goalkeeper for dropped ball
- Front central: 1 player

**WING**

- 2 men behind the ball ALWAYS 2 players in the wall
- 1 man behind the ball = 1 player central to
- 3 players in front
- Always ready to start the counterattack
- 5 or 6 players in the zone
- KEEP MOVING AND RUN ALONG WITH RUNNING OPPONENTS!



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