



BASED ON RSC ANDERLECHT FILOSOPHY

PLAYING FOOTBALL IN AN ELEVEN A SIDE FORMATION

ATTACKING



CONTENT

A.	THE GAME INTENT “ATTACKING”	2
1.	The pure intention of football	2
2.	General principles of attacking	2
3.	Principles in attacking through the centre	2
4.	Principles attacking through the flanks	6
B.	TACTICAL WORKING POINTS	7
1.	The tactical working points for the central axis	7
2.	The tactical working points for the attacking wings	8
C.	TECHNICAL WORKING POINTS	9
1.	The technical working points for the players in the central axis	9
2.	The technical working points for the players on the flanks	10
D.	EXTRA: OTHER WORKING POINTS	10





A. THE GAME INTENT “ATTACKING”

1. THE PURE INTENTION OF FOOTBALL

Attacking focuses on creating opportunities. The players try to create a scoring opportunity and score. The focus is on the 16 meter box of the opponent. There are three decisive phases in the attacking game:

1. recognising the situation: seeing
2. act accordingly to the situation: via the pass - the individual action - the shot at goal
3. finishing the situation: scoring (can also be done via 2)

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ATTACKING

Depth before width

- ☞ Thinking deep, looking deep and if it's possible playing deep. However, the urge to play the ball deep should not lead to compulsive depth play in which all the basic principles of ball possession are thrown overboard. Playing a deep ball should not be based on chance. Playing the ball back to the goalkeeper is the last option for setting up an attack, but it is definitely an option: the option towards possession!
- ☞ Note: We promote a way of playing based on possession! Preferably, we want to dominate the game.

How?

- ☞ Good positional play by midfielders and strikers
- ☞ Alternation between bouncing and individual action for strikers
- ☞ Fast ball circulation for midfielders

Choices

- ☞ Attacking can take place through the centre or through the flanks. The positional play is very important here.

3. PRINCIPLES IN ATTACKING THROUGH THE CENTRE

The attack can take place through the center or through the flanks. The positional play is very important here. When attacking through the centre, the deep striker and the shadow striker should be placed in a diagonal line as much as possible. They should choose a position below each other (see below).



3.1 Principles attacking through the centre by the striker (9)

What?

- ☞ He acts as a possible receiver of the ball in his foot. The optimal performance of our system and the associated individual development of our players in our 1:3:4:3 system is closely related to the availability of our deep striker. Some strikers naturally opt for deep running actions. Because of this, they are often unreachable. Our deep striker primarily acts as the player who is ready to pass the ball back: given his position (back to goal) and the sharp coverage in the center of the defense, the chance of a successful deep running action is often very limited. With possession of the ball, it is important that the deep striker makes the playing field as large as possible. To this end, he should choose as deep a position as possible.

Advantages of a target man who receives a ball in the foot?

- ☞ Playing this player opens up a lot of possibilities for the other players. For example, the shadow striker or the midfielders can provide deep running actions.
- ☞ The "good luck" factor is limited.

Never play deep?

- ☞ Attacking means creating chances and trying to score. Every situation in which our deep striker can be brought into a scoring position must be taken. There are various situations in which playing the striker in depth is possible:
 1. after a quick switch from losing the ball to possession
 2. when the opponent gives away space
 3. when the situation calls for it

3.2 Principles attacking through the centre by the attacking midfielder (10)

What?

- ☞ In our development process, our number 10 has to play an offensive role. In addition to the supporting role for the attackers, he mainly has an overlapping role. He should seize every opportunity where he can make use of the space behind the deep striker. In most cases, the shadow striker functions more as a midfielder, which is not a good thing for youth football.

Advantages of a shadow striker as a second striker?

- ☞ Stimulating the creativity of our number 10.
- ☞ Learning to run between the lines of our shadow striker, which is very difficult to defend.

Important:

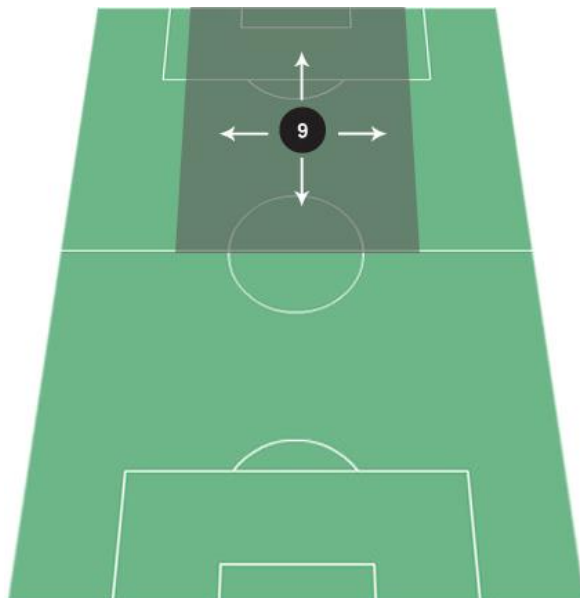
- ☞ Taking the above division of roles too literally and applying it would not be a good thing for our age group. A deep striker who "only" serves as a target man, will have a limited development. A player should be given a lot of room to make actions and experiment.
- ☞ During the learning phase, first try to learn the principles of one specific position. A player then plays as a deep striker for a few weeks and then acts as a shadow striker for a few weeks. After a few weeks it should be possible to switch positions smoothly during the game.

3.3 How to attack through the centre?

- ☞ The cooperation between the deep striker (9) and the shadow striker (10) is decisive: the deep striker has a view over the running actions of the shadow striker. In the cooperation between the two players,

the running action of the shadow striker is therefore decisive. The following clear agreement is made between these attackers: if the shadow striker goes to the ball, the deep striker must keep or go deep.

- ☞ The action radius of the deep striker (9) is well defined: it is very important that the deep striker covers a limited space. Central attackers who swerve to the outside too often deprive the other players of the space. The space in which the deep striker can move is in the central axis.



- ☞ The action radius of the shadow striker (10) is larger: the shadow striker has more space to move. In youth football, however, it is important that he stays close to the deep striker. After all, he always has to provide the necessary support and ensure the overlap of the deep striker. The midfielders (6) and (8) should always play "under" the shadow striker, except in case of infiltration.



In the decisive phases of the attacking game, phases 1 and 2 (page 3) are of great importance:

1. recognising the situation: seeing
2. act according to the situation: via the pass - the individual action - the shot at goal

Recognising the situation and acting on it can be perfectly stimulated. Playing the diagonal ball is an important factor:

- ☞ A ball from the inside out: from the midfielders/defenders to the wingers/ wingbacks
- ☞ A ball from the outside in: from the wingbacks to the deep striker / shadow striker / midfielders



The ball from outside to outside (from the wingbacks to the wingers) is the most frequently played pass in youth football. It is avoidable as this attack or build-up is collectively and individually easily defendable. However, this pass can be played if the pass is immediately followed by an overlap or if the opponent leaves space. A ball played from central back to central front is only possible in some cases. In general, we can say that we prefer passing in triangles!

3.4 Principles attacking through the centre for our midfielders (6) and (8)

What?

- ☞ These players must have an eye for 360° playing field.
- ☞ Above all, it is important to choose a good position in relation to the ball. By choosing the way of positioning, they create more choices when in possession of the ball.
- ☞ They should create danger to goal as quickly as possible.
- ☞ Given their position on the field, they are the players who - preferably - pass the ball on as quickly as possible. Bringing one-touch football is advised. Playing the ball in one go is difficult to do. For this reason, an orientated and well-maintained approach to the ball at this position is indispensable. There must always be a message attached to playing the ball (communicating with the ball).
- ☞ Being able to maintain balance in the number of players in front of and behind the ball.

Infiltrating function

- ☞ Essentially, midfielders have an important supporting function in relation to the attackers. In addition, they can also be an important weapon when infiltrating the last line of the opponent. In other words, midfielders must be able to bring the necessary variations to the 16-metre area with deep running actions.

Important

- ☞ Bringing one-touch football should under no circumstances be confused with evading responsibility (wanting to get rid of the ball as quickly as possible) or stamping away the ball! Bringing one-touch football is aimed at possession of the ball!

The collective demands of the midfielder

- ☞ Continue the attack by:
 - Creating space to allow latitude and depth play
 - Supporting the defenders, attackers and other midfielders
 - Changing the playing side
 - Making a running action
 - Making an action with the ball

4. PRINCIPLES ATTACKING THROUGH THE FLANKS

The most important thing in a flank attack is to choose the right position.

- ☞ One of the primary tasks is to create space. By selecting a position on the outside of the field, more space is automatically created. Wingers often stand too much inwards, making them more difficult to reach.
- ☞ The position of the winger and the way in which the oriented controlling of the ball should take place, depends on the individual qualities:
 - A player who easily goes outside chooses to leave the necessary space on the outside or an orientated ball acceptance towards the inside, in such a way that the space on the outside remains.
 - A really fast winger resolutely chooses the outside. This allows him to exploit the 1<>1 situation even more.
- ☞ Making individual actions is a priority for our wingers!

Important

- ☞ When attacking through the flanks, the outside player should choose as deep and as wide a position as possible. This makes it less easy for the direct opponent to cover. If the defender falls short, he leaves too much space between himself and the central defender. This offers opportunities for attacking via the centre

B. TACTICAL WORKING POINTS

1. THE TACTICAL WORKING POINTS FOR THE CENTRAL AXIS

1.1 Towards position play

- ☞ The striker (9) and the shadow striker (10) each play their own game. There is no cooperation.
 - Both attackers too often choose position next to each other.
 - Both players always go to the ball with the same running line, always straight into the ball.
- ☞ Too little depth is created
 - Both attackers stand too low or go to the ball too fast. As a result, there is less space and the depth possibilities are also limited.
 - Deep striker (9) and the shadow striker (10) always tend to ask for the ball in the foot. As a result, there are no depth possibilities.
- ☞ The striker (9) searches too much for the outsides
 - A deep striker who runs too much to the outside takes up the space of the wingers. A striker who swerves towards the flanks is less likely to be available in the centre.



- ☞ Neither attacker is available
 - The ball is played around by one's own team. Neither striker is able to receive the ball in the centre.
- ☞ The shadow striker (10) drops too far back
 - The shadow striker (10) has a supporting function in relation to the deep striker (9). Overlaps are also expected. A number 10 that falls too far back, loses a lot of offensive return.

- ☞ The attackers have the ball too little of the time
 - When asking for the ball, good timing is important. Attackers who ask for the ball too fast, fail to get to the ball or stand still at the moment of the control.

1.2 Towards the action

- ☞ The ball is bounced back too often
 - Bouncing the ball too often tends to evading taking responsibility. Attackers MUST also set up individual actions.
 - Bouncing the ball too often is not good for individual development. Too few attackers dare to handle the 1<>1 situation.
- ☞ Too long a delay in opening to the outside.
 - When passing the ball in the centre, there is often automatically more space on the outside. It is very important that this space is used quickly.
- ☞ The deep striker (9) must always opt for the individual action because of too little support from his direct fellow players.
 - A lonely deep striker often runs into a force of defenders. It is therefore necessary to consult with the deep striker.

2. THE TACTICAL WORKING POINTS FOR THE ATTACKING WINGS

2.1 Towards position play

- ☞ The attacking winger is standing too much to the inside
 - The attacking winger play too much to the inside. This makes them unavailable when opening to the flank or when changing sides. Both attackers too often choose position next to each other.
- ☞ The attacking winger isn't deep enough on the pitch
 - Choosing too low a position or coming to the ball too fast reduces the space for the winger. As a result, there is less time to process the ball. The passing possibilities become – given the number of opponents in the small space - a lot more difficult.
- ☞ The non-involved attacking winger does not think along
 - The right attacking winger sets up an action. The left winger stays stereotypically on the outside.
- ☞ The attacking winger is free, but still comes towards the ball.
 - The attacking winger is free on the outside of the field. The defender is at a safe distance. Instead of maintaining his position, he still comes towards the ball. This results in an unnecessary loss of time

2.2 Towards the action

- ☞ Not enough variety in the game
 - The attacking winger fails to pass the opponent. Nevertheless, we continue to play stereotypically. Neither the midfielders nor the flank attackers take initiative.

- ☞ The same side of the game is played for too long
 - By spending too much time on the same side of the pitch, the opponent is given time to organise and put pressure on the ball.
- ☞ There is no cooperation between the attacking winger and the midfielder.
 - The attacking winger gets the ball, but there is no cooperation between the two. The midfielder does not play in support to the attacking winger.
- ☞ The attacking winger is not properly turned in when the ball is controlled.
 - The attacking winger controls the ball, but always stands with his back to the opponent's goal. A winger must control the ball with his back to the sideline, otherwise he has no view of the playing field.
- ☞ The attacking wing player does not eliminate the defender
 - The attacking winger receives a well-played ball, but he fails to pass by the opponent
 - The attacking winger does not go into the 1<>1 situation
- ☞ The attacking winger eliminates the defender, but he gives the defender a chance to come back
 - The opponent is passed, but still the defender manages to come back again and again
- ☞ There is no bypassing via the outside
 - The attacking winger does mock actions to the outside, but always goes inside
- ☞ The attacking winger passes the defender, but the continuation is not as desired.
 - The opponent is passed, but the dribble has no continuation: the pass or cross for goal does not succeed

2.3 Towards the passing

- ☞ The attacking winger gives the cross too early
 - The attacking winger doesn't estimate the situation in front of goal well enough
- ☞ The attacking winger gives the cross too late
 - The attacking winger can easily give the ball in the back of the defenders, but he neglects to give the cross

C. TECHNICAL WORKING POINTS

1. THE TECHNICAL WORKING POINTS FOR THE PLAYERS IN THE CENTRAL AXIS

- ☞ The control of the ball
 - When the ball is controlled, the ball is under the body
 - After the ball is controlled, the ball is not ready to play
 - There is no direction of play in the control of the ball
 - The ball is in place too often
- ☞ The bounce
 - The bounce is not ready to play and is not specific enough for the situation or the teammate.
- ☞ The action
 - The striker does not recognise the moment to make an individual action

☞ Finishing

- The striker does not keep the overview

2. THE TECHNICAL WORKING POINTS FOR THE PLAYERS ON THE FLANKS

☞ The control of the ball

- When the ball is controlled, the ball is under the body
- After the ball is controlled, the ball is not ready to play
- There is no direction of play in the control of the ball
- The ball is in place too often
- The ball is preferably controlled with the back to the sideline: turn in well!

☞ The bounce

- The bounce is not ready to play and is not specific enough for the situation or the teammate.

☞ The action

- The winger does not recognise the moment to make an individual action

☞ The cross

- The cross is made without overseeing the situation
- The cross is kicked without the body being turned in

D. EXTRA: OTHER WORKING POINTS

An individual action in 7 steps

- 1) Attitude: the conviction with which an action is started.
- 2) Position: the action that the player is going to make depends on the position of the player in relation to the opponents' goal, the direct and other opponents, the ball and his teammates. Based on all these factors, the player must make a "plan" within a fraction of a second.
- 3) First control: the first control is all decisive for the continuation of the action. Making a good individual action is made difficult or impossible by a wrong first touch of the ball.
- 4) Direction: together with the control, a direction must be chosen in function of one's own qualities such as e.g. feint kick left, kick right.
- 5) Pace: you as an attacker determine the tempo. Pre-action, stop, feint, dribble, incline, explode.
- 6) Movement: the better you execute a movement, the more self-confident you radiate when in possession of the ball (see 1). Trust the individuality and qualities of the individual.
- 7) Do not make the move for the sake of the movement, but with a certain goal: scoring, passing, ...



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