Youth Players Information Thread

Posted by STLCoach - 20 Mar 2009 09:01

When a long ball is played into the opponents defensive players and you aren't able to win the first ball (meaning, the opponent will get to the ball before you will), many players will realize that they can try to win the second ball. This simply means conceding that the opponent will make the first touch of the ball so you try to take advantage of what might be a bad first touch and you win the second touch.

For example, the red player plays a long ball because they are under pressure and it goes toward the red central defender. A yellow forward is laying back with the idea that they will be able to win the second ball.
The problem with this is that the yellow central defender isn't being put under any pressure at all and as a result of this, most likely will be able to receive the ball with the first touch and keep it under control and away from the red player.
In order to win the second touch, the first touch usually needs to be pressured. When possible, this would be done with a second player. Next example, The same ball is played in but now, instead of the red player staying back and hoping to win a second touch, he pressures the player and a second player on his team comes in to win the bad touch.
By pressuring the ball, it changes things from hoping for a bad touch to creating the bad touch by the opponent. This greatly increases the likelihood of you, or your teammate, winning the ball and creating a goal scoring opportunity.

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MAKING DIFFICULT ATTACKING RUNS

Posted by STLCoach - 24 Sep 2009 04:42

Today's newsletter addresses the issue of making runs to make it difficult on the opponent.

As an example, we are going to use a corner kick situation. Many runners, if they are going to make a far post run will start outside of the far post to position themselves to make it easy to get where they want to go.

The problem with this is that it allows the defender to see the runner and the ball by positioning himself properly.

The alternative is to start your run from the middle and then bend it outward.

When you make this bending run away from the ball, it forces the defender to either watch the ball, at which point he loses visual contact with you, or he watches you and loses visual contact with the ball. Either way puts you at a major advantage.

This is one of the many advantages of making bent (or curved) runs. It makes it easy for you to see and difficult for the opponent.

Don't think of this as something that just works on corner kicks, take advantage of these types of runs all over the field and good things will happen.

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REFS THAT CHEAT, MUST READ FOR ALL

Posted by STLCoach - 07 Oct 2009 04:44

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Today's topic deals with refs that cheat.

A player tackles from behind in the box, takes the player down and a penalty kick is awarded.....the ref must have cheated.

A team stalls throughout the game and then gives up a goal in extra time....the ref must have cheated.

The ball goes out of play and the ball is awarded to the other team....the ref must have cheated.

A player tries to time a run for a through ball and gets called for being in an offside position....the ref must have cheated.

A player gets tripped inadvertently and the opponent doesn't get carded....the ref must have cheated.

Time runs out before your team gets to hit a shot on goal and the ref blows the whistle for the end of the game...the ref must have cheated.

There are so many times throughout every game that someone seems to feel the ref has cheated that it makes me wonder where people are finding all of these dishonorable refs.

Amazingly, there are refs that must be cheating against both teams in the same game.

Or, is it possible that the refs are actually quite honest and are doing the best they can? Maybe the pk should have been awarded. Maybe the extra time was justified. Maybe the player really was offside. Maybe the trip really was inadvertent. Maybe time really did expire.

Before you assume the worst of people, ask yourself, what incentive would these refs really have to cheat? Do you think they are being bribed? Do they hate you personally? Are they being blackmailed?

It's been my experience that when a ref sees something from the field, and I see something from the sideline, a large majority of the time, they are correct and I'm the one who is wrong.

There are times when a ref might miss a call but there is a BIG difference between missing a call and cheating. Really give some serious thought before you slander someone by stating they have cheated.

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DEALING WITH THE 60-40 BALL

Posted by STLCoach - 22 Oct 2009 07:43

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Today's topic deals with keeping possession of the 60-40 ball.

Just because a player can get to a ball before the opponent does not mean they will be able to keep possession of the ball. In the diagram below, the ball is slightly closer to the black player than the yellow

player.

Most likely the black player will arrive at the ball before the yellow player but if the black player tries to keep the ball where it is, the yellow player will have a good opportunity to tackle the ball away.

If the black player can get to the ball with enough time to get his body between the ball and the yellow player, he can successfully shield the ball.

However, in many cases, it's difficult for the black player to get to the ball with enough time to do so. In a 60-40 situation, or a 50-50 situation, the hope is to simply get their first.

An extremely effective method to keep the ball when you barely get to it first is to simply poke the ball into space that is opposite the opponents momentum In the diagram below, the black player gets to the ball first and then pokes the ball on an angle into space that is against the yellow players momentum. he would then chase the ball down and have possession with some time.

Basically, this is very soft pass to yourself. Not only do you want to make the pass into space against the momentum of the oncoming opponent but you also want to make sure no other players are in that space either.

This is an extremely effect way to keep possession of a ball when pressured by an oncoming player.

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BEATING AN OPPONENT WITH YOUR FIRST TOUCH

Posted by STLCoach - 05 Nov 2009 06:32

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Today's topic deals with beating a player with the first touch.

The black player passes to his teammate. The defender closes in on the receiving player.

If the receiving player traps the ball dead, it gives the defender the opportunity to tackle the ball and go in the other direction.

The alternative to stopping the ball dead is to keep the ball moving. Frequently this is done by taking the touch into space away from the defender

However, another option to consider is to take a hard touch past the defender and use their momentum against them. As the defender is closing the space, take a hard touch (almost a pass to yourself) past the defender and take advantage of the fact it's difficult for them to stop and change directions quickly.

By doing this, not only will you be attacking the space behind the defender but also, the next time a similar situation arises the defender will most likely be much slower to close the space which will relieve pressure and make your job easier.

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EARLY CROSS OR LATE

Posted by STLCoach - 17 Nov 2009 09:04

Today's topic deals with determining when to use an early serve vs taking the ball to the end line and crossing back out.

Just to make sure you understand what I'm referring to, in the diagram below, the black player out wide receives the ball and plays a cross to in behind the defenders for the runners to run onto.

The alternative is to take the ball down to the end line and cross the ball back away from the goal/keepers.

The question is, when should the player out wide look to play the early serve and when should he look to take the ball to the end line and then cross it?

Much of this decision will be made by the initial passer. If the player out wide is open and the ball is played to feet, it means the passer thinks an early serve should be considered.

If the ball is played into the space in front of the wide player, than the passer wants the receiver to take the ball down to the end line and then cross it in.

This is a classic example where the person making the initial pass is involved in not only that pass but also the next pass as well. It's why it's not good enough to just pass the ball to the open player, you want to pass it in a way to set up the next pass as well.

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Balance when shielding

Posted by STLCoach - 19 Feb 2010 03:06

Today's topic addresses the issue of Balance when shielding.

Players seem to be getting better at doing more than just having their body between the ball and the defender (which would be the definition of shielding). By standing with your back to the defender, you make it easy for them to poke the ball away from you or knock you off balance
Instead, players are getting "side on" so a wider part of their body is between the defender and the ball. This makes it more difficult for the defender to poke the ball away and done properly, allows the shielder to stay on balance.

Unfortunately, too often, the shielder will position their body properly but then try to keep the ball under control by putting their far foot on top of the ball.

The advantage of using this technique is you can feel the ball at all times and also can change the position of the ball relatively easily, the BIG disadvantage is it's virtually impossible to maintain your balance if the defender exerts some pressure.

The alternative is to get in the same side on position but keep the ball just to the outside of your far foot.

This makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to poke the ball away while also allows you to stay on balance and keep some contact with the ball. This will require a bit more practice to make sure you maintain possession of the ball but once you get accustomed to it, you will find this to be much more successful.

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