How to attack against high and low pressure defense

“Attacking 101”

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Attacking in soccer is like being a quarterback in football standing at the line of scrimmage deciding which play to run.
Attacking 101

**Principles of Attack**
- Penetration
- Support
- Width
- Mobility
- Improvisation

**Principles of Defense**
- Delay
- Depth
- Balance
- Concentration
Your team is playing in the semi finals of the State Cup against an inferior opponent. The whistle blows and you notice the other team is all dropping back into their own half when your team wins possession, making it very difficult for your team to break them down.

What do you do???
Low Pressure Defending

• Refers to a defense that falls back to its own half before applying defensive pressure
• Allows the opposition time and space in their own half
Goals of low pressure defending

- Frustrate the opposition into making mistakes
- Put as many defenders behind the ball as possible
- Every player has to defend
- Given the limited space, it will be difficult for a team to score
When to low pressure

• Your team is winning the game
• The opposition is very skilled at passing
• Your team is not good at covering long balls
• Your team is good at counter attacking
How to attack against low pressure

- Deliberate buildup
- Attacking out of the back
- Switching the point of attack
- Quick counter attacks
- Long dribble
- Attacking down the wings
- Long range shooting
- Quick interchange of passes
Deliberate Buildup

Attacking against low pressure
Deliberate buildup

• Have patience
• Look for numerical advantage
• When to play safe, when to take chances
• Maintaining possession (passing) will cause opponent’s defense to become impatient and come out
• Speed of Play
Deliberate buildup

• **Forwards:**
  Awareness of space to move into slots between defenders

• **Midfielders:**
  Knowing when to take chances and when to play safe

• **Defenders:**
  Always supporting the play at angles and acting as a safety net
Attacking out of the back

Attacking against low pressure
Attacking out of the back

- Add numbers to the attack
- Center backs come thru with possession
- Bring fullbacks forward with overlaps
Attacking out of the back

• **Forwards:**
  Bring players into the game

• **Midfielders:**
  Movement in relation to backs moving forward

• **Defenders:**
  Understand when to spring forward into the attack
Switch the point of attack

Attacking against low pressure
Switch the point of attack

- Play from an area of high concentration to an area of low concentration
- Can occur directly or indirectly
- Make as few passes as possible
- Long passes are better
- Field vision is essential
- Type of pass out wide
Switching the point of attack

• **Forwards:**
  Slide across quickly to provide penetrating options

• **Midfielders:**
  Support of wide players by central players
  Off the ball wide players need to provide width

• **Defenders:**
  Move to support the ball at angles
Counter Attack

Attacking against low pressure
Counter Attack

• Spread out early
• Speed of Play
• Forward Passes
• Very little dribbling
Counter Attack

- **Forwards:**
  Stretch the field vertically and show as a target

- **Midfielders:**
  Stretch the field horizontally
  Central players get forward with pace

- **Defenders:**
  Know when to counter and when to build
  Not afraid to defend
  Find outlet pass early
Long dribble

Attacking against low pressure
Long dribble

- Dribble into the seams
- Draws defending players out of their shape
- Dribbling into space
Long dribble

• **Forwards:**
  Move to create space

• **Midfielders:**
  Move to create space for a pass

• **Defenders:**
  A long dribble can be the start of a counter attack
Attacking down the wings

Attacking against low pressure
Attacking down the wings

- The flank provides space and opportunity for players to get behind defenders
- Combination play in wide areas
- Quality service into the box
Attacking down the wings

• **Forwards:**
  Timing of runs into the penalty area

• **Midfielders:**
  Stretch the game from sideline to sideline
  Take players on 1 v 1
  Different types of crosses

• **Defenders:**
  Overlap at times to provide width
Long range shooting

Attacking against low pressure
Long range shooting

• Accurate, dangerous shots will force an opponent’s defense to put pressure on the ball and therefore move forward
• Openings are created for central combinations
Long range shooting

• **Forwards:**
  Have a positive attitude for shooting

• **Midfielders:**
  Look to shoot quickly to catch GK off guard

• **Defenders:**
  1 touch shots from rebounds
Quick interchange of passes

Attacking against low pressure
Quick interchange of passing

- Usually occurs down the central part of the field
- Don’t allow defense time to adjust
- 1 and 2 touch passing
- Good movement and support
Quick interchange of passing

- **Forwards:**
  Body shape open-able to play one touch

- **Midfielders:**
  Head up
  Close support

- **Defenders:**
  Splitting passes between defenders
Way to go! Your team won their semi-final match and will now play in the State Cup final against a far superior opponent. The other team are bigger, faster, stronger and more technical than your team. The opening whistle blows and your team plays the kickoff back and you notice that when your fullbacks have the ball, their forwards press them tirelessly.

What do you do???
High Pressure Defending

- Describes a defense that tries to dispossess the offense anywhere on the field
- Refers to setting a high line of pressure
- Like a full court press in basketball
Goals of high pressure defending

• Win the ball as close to your opponent’s goal possible
• Win the ball as far from your goal as possible
• Pressure the opposition as they receive the ball in their own half
When to high pressure...

- Your team is losing
- The opposition is not skilled technically
- Your team is good at covering long balls
- Immediately after a goal has been scored
How to attack against high pressure

• Spread out
• Long Passes
• Diagonal Passes
• Combination play
• Long dribble
Spread out

Attacking against high pressure
Spread out

- Vertical Spacing/Horizontal Spacing
- Makes it difficult for defense to cover you
- Allows for more time on the ball
- Gives both short and long options
Spread out

• **Forwards:**
  Stretch the game as high as possible

• **Midfielders:**
  Stretch from sideline to sideline

• **Defenders:**
  Drop back behind the ball to provide good supporting distances
Long passes

Attacking against high pressure
Long Passes

- Play over them or around them
- Bypass the midfield
- Long, direct passes
- Look for knock downs or 2\textsuperscript{nd} balls
Long Passes

- **Forwards:**
  Aerial control

- **Midfielders:**
  Run forward to support the ball immediately

- **Defenders:**
  Long accurate passes into forwards
Diagonal passes

Attacking against high pressure
Diagonal Passes

- High pressure means the defense will shift its entire team into half of the field vertically.
- A cutting pass diagonally thru their lines to backside players will unlock their defense.
Diagonal Passes

• **Forwards:**
  Move to the ball-side of the field together

• **Midfielders:**
  Cheat up on the backside

• **Defenders:**
  Open body shape to see the backside run
Combination play

Attacking against high pressure
Combination Play

- In the correct parts of the field
- Look for 2 v 1 situations to exploit
- Quick and precise passing

Wall pass                Overlap              3rd man running
Combination play

• **Forwards:**
  Show to the ball at angles
  Body shape

• **Midfielders:**
  Recognition of when to support and when to run into space

• **Defenders:**
  Overlap
  Play forward and go=3\textsuperscript{rd} man running
Long dribble

Attacking against high pressure
Long dribble

- Draw defenders to the ball
- Make defenders commit
- Exploit gaps created by movement out of defensive team shape
Long dribble

• **Forwards:**
  Attack defenders off the dribble in the final third

• **Midfielders:**
  Recognize when to dribble, when to pass

• **Defenders:**
  Choose moments to burst thru out of the back
Congratulations! After winning the prestigious State Cup, the Federation took note of your coaching skills and have named you the new head coach of the US MNT. You are expected to advance out of your group in this summer’s World Cup. You play first round games against England, Slovenia, and Algeria.

What do you do???
How will the USA attack this summer at the World Cup in South Africa?
### What The Numbers Say

<table>
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<th>Team</th>
<th>Qualify for Second Round</th>
<th>Qualify for Quarter Final</th>
<th>Qualify For Semi Final</th>
<th>Qualify for Final</th>
<th>Win</th>
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<td>England</td>
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<td>58.7%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
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<td>36.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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</table>

Powered by *Castrol Predictor* - crunching the numbers to find the strength of each team and the path they take to the final.
PHEW! WORLD CUP DRAW RELIEF

England

Algeria

Slovenia

Yanks

USA, ALGERIA AND SLOVENIA...

BEST ENGLISH GROUP SINCE THE BEATLES
USA

- Who will score goals?
- Look sharp on the counter
- Lack creativity
- Big concern choosing the right tandem up front
England

• June 12, 2010  8:30 PM  Rustenburg (Egypt 3-0)
• US/England have met 9 times in all competitions
• England leads series 7-2 with 35 GF and 8 GA
• Players to watch: Wayne Rooney, Frank Lampard, John Terry, Ashley Cole
England

- Will line up in a 4-4-2 formation
- Big question mark at the goalkeeper position
- Afraid of being outmuscled by the US
- Typical slow starters in World Cups
The problem is not with the style we played, but the difficulty we have when the other team play the counter-attack," added the 62-year-old English manager Fabio Capello.

"It is always dangerous and we have to study this problem."
SLOVENIA

• June 18, 2010 4:00 PM Johannesburg (Brazil 2-3)
• US/Slovenia have never met before
• Smallest country in competition
• Defeated Russia 2-2 (away goals) in playoff
• Players to Watch: Robert Koren
Slovenia

Hand’ic

Brecko  Suler  Cesar  Jokic

Birsaj  Rado’ic  Koren*©  Kirm

Novakovic*  Dedic
Slovenia

• Did well against England friendly (L 2-1)
• Struggle against more physical opponents
• Well organized and disciplined; rarely lose shape at back
• The US typically struggles with physically imposing and organized sides.
  Romania (94), Czech Rep (06)
ALGERIA

- June 23, 2010  4:00 PM  Pretoria (Italy 0-3)
- US/Algeria have never met before
- Notable common opponents: Egypt
  – Algeria defeated 2-2 on away goals in playoff
  – US defeated Egypt 3-0 in 2009 Confederations Cup
  – Algeria lost 4-0 to Egypt in semis of ACN
- Players to watch: Karim Ziani
Algeria

- Very organized defensively
- Has outstanding wide play and strong tactical sense
- Will concede much of the possession
- Defenders known for their aerial prowess
- When the Desert Foxes push forward they leave gaps at the back
Attacking against High and Low Pressure

...vs. Low Pressure
- Deliberate buildup
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- Attacking down the wings
- Long range shooting
- Quick interchange of passes

...vs. High Pressure
- Spread out
- Long Passes
- Diagonal Passes
- Combination play
- Long dribble
Always stay a step ahead...