

# Principles of Play In Midfield

Austin Daniels

CJSA

Director of Coaching



# Principles of Play

## Attack

Penetration

Width

Depth

Mobility

Improvisation

Finishing

Transition

## Defense

Immediate Pressure

Delay

Cover

Concentration

Balance

Tackle

Transition



# Principles of Midfield

## **Control**

Numerical superiority

Appropriate Match-ups

## **Preparation**

Moment of Transition: Organized Vs. Disorganized

Proper Team Shape: Space Awareness

Flexibility



# Principles of Midfield

- **Build Up**

Possession with a purpose:

Recognize the tempo of the game

Change the point of attack

Use the space: Individually and as a team

Penetrate: Play defenders out of the game

Score



# Defensive Function of Midfielders

- Immediate transition to defense
- Visual & Verbal communication
- Goal-side starting positions and recovery runs
- Man to Man, Zone or Combination Defense
- Delay the attack and apply “pressure points”
- Track opposing players
- Recover the ball



# Offensive Functions of Midfielders

- Immediate transition to attack
- Reading the game
- Total team support to seek penetration
- Create width and space for self and teammates
- Change the point of attack
- Win 1v1 confrontations
- Finishing from close and long range



# Modern Trends in Midfield Play

- **Holding Midfielders 1 or 2**

Protect the Center backs

Maintain Shape in midfield

Initiate attacking play

Provide support in tight situations

Mid-Long-Range shooting



# Modern Trends in Midfield Play

- **Wide Midfielders playing on the opposite side of their strongest foot**

Immediate pressure on defenders

Cover Space in the flanks

Provide width

Provide service from the flanks

Finish



# Moderns Trends in Midfield Play

- **Play Maker/Attacking Midfielder**

Total team support

Maintain team shape

Upon transition provide the first choice of support

Run at Defenders

Influence the tempo of the game

Finish



# Midfield Play in America

## **Weaknesses in Midfield play**

Too many games bypass midfield altogether

Lack of patience in build up. Too direct!

Reading the game

Technical ability at speed

Understanding tempo and change of pace



# Midfield Play in America

- **Strengths in Midfield Play**

Athleticism

Commitment

Understanding the principles of defending

We need to improve on our strengths!



# Solutions to Improve Midfield Play

## Age Appropriate Training

Training in player centered environments

Set up training sessions where players make decisions

Game like activities during training sessions

Allow players to make mistakes and learn from them during games



“Football is born in the brain not the body. Michelangelo said he painted with his mind not with his hands. So, obviously I need intelligent players.”

Arrigo Sacchi



# Principles of Play in Midfield

Questions?



# Credits

- US Soccer
- Rene Miramontes US Soccer National Staff
- US Youth Soccer

