



Possession vs. Penetration

TASCO Galveston 2017

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Define

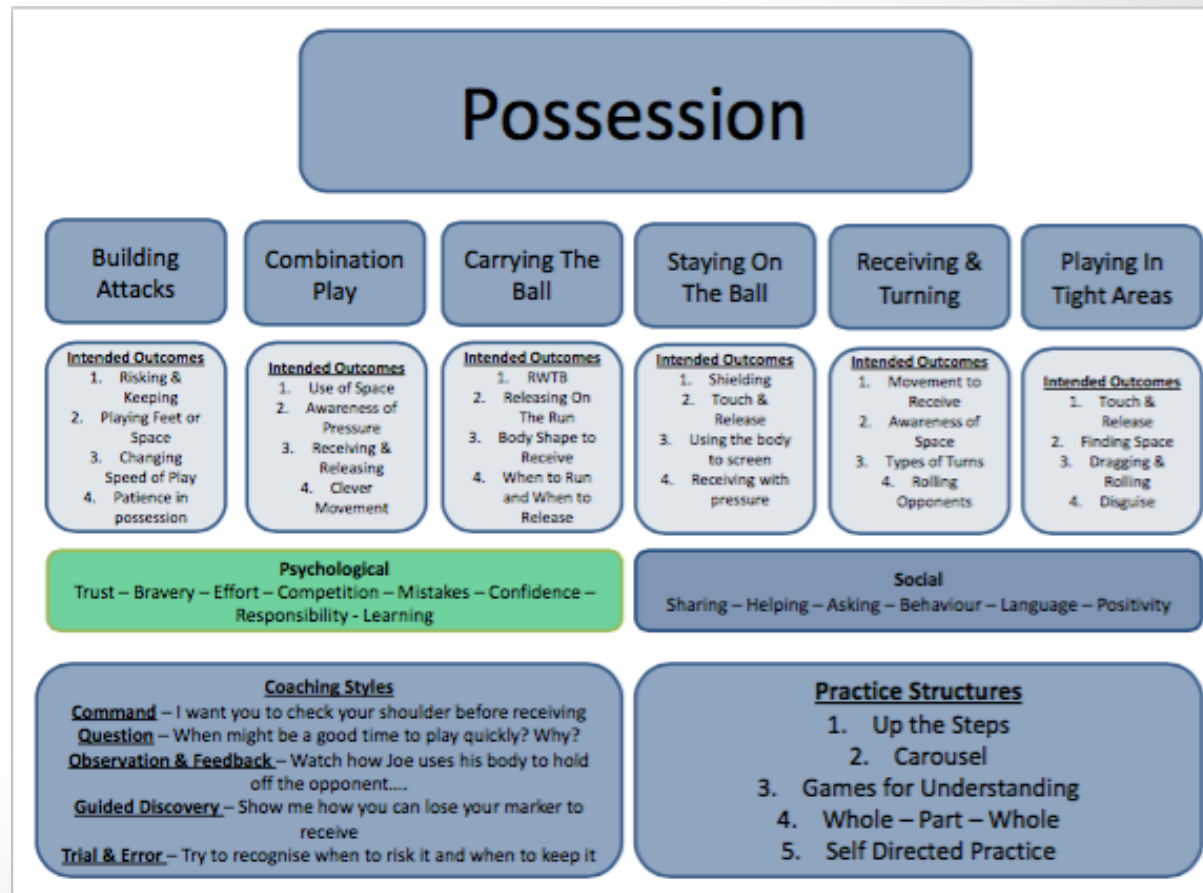
What is Possession?

What is Penetration?



Ball possession:

The amount of time a team possesses the ball during a game of soccer. Possession is tactically used to gain penetration. Possession is usually expressed as a percentage or ratio. Historically Dutch clubs were famous for ball possession, now we look more to Barcelona or Arsenal. Possession is a tactical philosophy of US Soccer

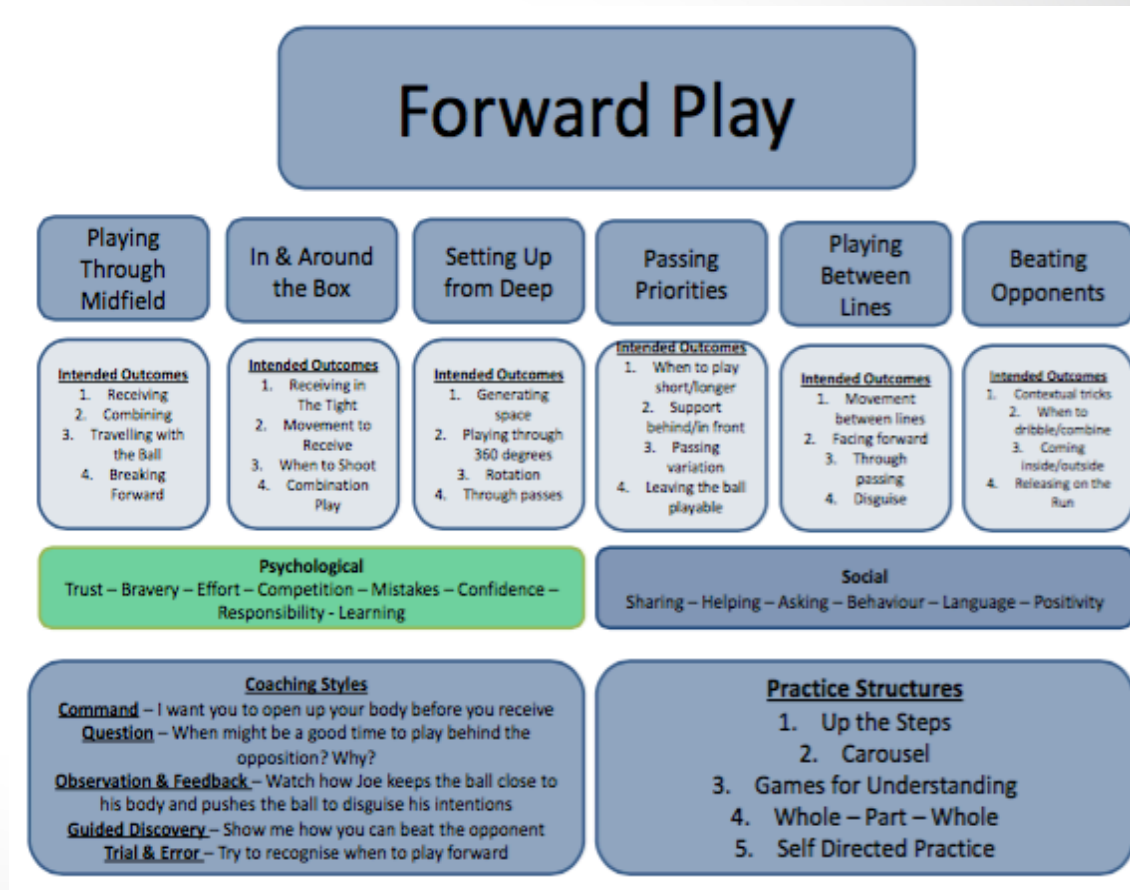


Slide referenced from Ben Bartlett



Penetration:

The act or process of entering the oppositions ground or space through shooting, dribbling, or connecting passes. Disturbing their organization so as to establish dominance or information by probing. Vertical & horizontal depth reached by playing through over, around or behind the opposition. With the initial thought and ultimate aim of placing the ball in the back of the net. Through phase of play, a ball does not always have to go forward to penetrate



Slide referenced from Ben Bartlett



Possession Vs. Penetration 5 Ws



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Why?

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Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- Purpose?
- Reason?
- Goal?
- Philosophy?
- Style of play?
- Level of players?
- Objective of the game?
- More

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Where

Methodology:

Phase of Play



Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- Tactical / Technical
 - Area of field
 - Risk vs. reward
- More**



When

Methodology:
Functional
Phase of Play



Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- **Tactical / Technical**
- **Decision: PASS or Dribble**
- **Pressure vs. Space**
- **Numbers up/down**
- **Area of field**
- **Risk vs. Reward**
- **Your team shape**
- **Opposition team shape**
- **Time of game**
- **More**



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Who

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Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- All players?
- Blocks of players
- Style of play: Direct/Indirect
- Shape or Style of opposition: hi/low pressure
- System(s)
- Time Man
- More





How

Methodology

Technical Progressive

Whole Part Whole

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Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

PASS or DRIBBLE?

- PASSING
- Technical /Tactical
- How to Pass to maintain Possession:
- Inside of foot
- Outside of foot
- Lofted
- Bent
- Driven
- More





Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- Dribbling
- Technical /Tactical
- How to dribble to penetrate or Possess:
- Inside of foot
- Outside of foot
- First touch, second touch, third touch
- Speed
- Attack Space
- Draw play
- Shield (target)
- To engage
- More



When

Teaching Methodology:
Tactical Progressive
Functional
Phase of Play



Possession vs. Penetration // 5Ws

- **When**
- **Tactical / Technical**
- **Principals of Attack & Roles of Attackers**
- **Transitioning from defense into attack**
- **Through – Over - Around**
- **Counter attacking**



Reading the game

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Possession vs.. Penetration // R-T-G

- The real reasons for the use of ‘keep-ball’ tactics in the game of football should not be about the number of passes achieved – but the number of penetrations achieved!
- Ball retention in a phase of play must supply two vital playing ingredients: (a) it must deny the opposition the ball and (b) it must create spaces in an opposing defensive system that must be penetrated



Possession vs.. Penetration // R-T-G

- Research to support training
- Not here to change your mind, but to give credibility to thought
- Is your team a passing team or a dribbling team?
- How to find out?



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Possession vs. Penetration // R-T-G

- It is generally accepted that our youth teams need to improve their possession play. US Soccer is clearly viewing it as a priority. The USSDA coaches are being instructed to play a possession game, starting from the back and playing through the lines in a 1-4-3-3 formation.



Possession vs. Penetration // R-T-G

- **POSSESSION: PASSES PER POSSESSION:**
- This number is derived by dividing the total number of passes a team makes by the total number of possessions. For example, if a team had 50 possessions of the ball and made 200 passes, the average number of passes per possession is 4. This number is indicative of the team's ability to possess the ball. The bigger the number of passes per possession, the better the team is at possession.



POSSESSION VS PENETRATION // R-T-G

- **EFFECTIVENESS: POSSESSION PER PENETRATION:**
- **This is the most important factor since it measures the team's ability to turn possession into goal chances.** This ratio is calculated by taking the number of possessions and dividing it by the number of times a team penetrates into the attacking third and crosses or shoots the ball. For example, a ratio of 5.0 means that this team needs an average of 5 possessions to create one scoring chance. The lower the number, the more effective is the team's play.



POSSESSION VS PENETRATION // R-T-G

TEAMS	DIAG/VERT RATIO	POSSESSION: PASSES PER POSSESSION	EFFECTIVENESS POSSESSION PER PENETRATION
USSDA TEAMS (20)	0.6	3.3	9.4
MLS USSDA TEAMS (6)	1.2	3.9	7.3
NON-MLS USSDA TEAMS (14)	0.3	3.1	10.3
US SOCCER U15 NATIONAL TEAM (NIKE FRIENDLIES)	1.4	4.3	5.7
INTERNATIONAL TEAMS (12)	1.6	3.9	5.5
ODP REGION TEAMS (5)	2.3	4.6	3.7
INTERPRETATION:	HIGHER NUMBER IS BETTER	HIGHER NUMBER IS BETTER	LOWER NUMBER IS BETTER



- **Effectiveness: Possession per Penetration**
- As emphasized earlier, this is the most telling ratio and the most relevant for comparison. The USSDA teams created on average one penetration into attacking third for every 9.4 possessions. The international teams needed 5.5 possessions to create one penetration and the Region ODP teams needed 3.7 possessions to create one penetration. This means that the international teams are almost twice more effective at penetration than the USSDA teams and the Region ODP teams are 2.5 times more effective at penetration than the USSDA teams.



POSSESSION VS PENETRATION // R-T-G

The ability of most teams to possess and play through the lines was limited by a number of tactical and technical deficiencies

Uncorrected, we have what can best be described as 'tactical stagnation'. The existing Technical deficiencies limit our players' ability to grow tactically. The effect of the tactical stagnation is that as players get older, they get faster and stronger but not technically smarter. This leads to the game evolving into a physical contest instead of a cerebral/technical contest. We need to redress this trend with possession specific training, individual, group and team



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We must teach our players how to breach opposing defensive 'shields' in each of the playing thirds. Throughout the length of the field players must be able to switch from preparation play to penetrative surge when situations occur. Possession play must be seen as the 'casual draw' that provides the opportunity to 'strike'. The ability to keep the ball by 'bringing extra players to the party' (overloading) must be an important part of player development in the future; but without also underlining the importance of incisive penetrations as the culmination of keep-ball sequences we will continue to allow statistics and not football logic to determine our football future.



TIMEMAN

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TIMEMAN //

TIMEMAN

THE PLAYER YOU CAN PASS TO, TOO:

CREATE TIME

PIVOT

TRANSITION INTO THE ATTACK

RESET

SEPARATE LINES

OPEN SPACE

MAINTAIN POSSESSION

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REFERENCES

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- Sources / References
- **THE US Soccer Development Academy: Recommendations for raising playing standards**
- **Cartwright – Premier skills**
- **Players Academy of Soccer Skill**
- **Ben Bartlet – Syllabus program of work**



Personal Details

**THANK
YOU**

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