GLOBAL PREMIER SOCCER

TRAINING THE SYSTEMS

1-4-3-3

IN POSSESSION
AIM:
To allow players of all ages and abilities, to develop to their full potential, in an ENJOYABLE, CHALLENGING and POSITIVE environment.

OBJECTIVES:
- Create a clear and simple pathway for player development.
- Always keep the player at the centre of the development process.
- Allow players as much active time with a ball each as possible.
- Teach the principles of the game.
- Teach “roles” not “positions”.
- Acknowledge that players will learn and develop at different speeds.
- To keep a fresh and current outlook on the changes in young player development.
- Create a deep and underlying passion for the sport of soccer at all ages.
GPS recommends that all practice sessions follow the S.C.O.R.E. method:

**S**IMPLE. Stick to one theme during your practice session. Choose 2 or 3 core coaching points and reinforce them throughout the session.

**C**HALLENGING. Ensure that the players are posed problems that they need to find solutions to. Provide guidance and help when they need it.

**O**RGANISED. Plan every detail of your session - how many players, space and equipment. Ensure that your sessions have the appropriate pace and progression to challenge all of your players.

**R**ELEVANT. Ensure that the exercises in your session are relevant to the game.

**E**NJOYABLE. The players should walk away from every practice having thoroughly enjoyed the session and learning at least one new aspect of the game.

**KEY**

- PLAYER MOVEMENT WITH THE BALL
- PLAYER MOVEMENT WITHOUT THE BALL
- MOVEMENT OF THE BALL (PASS / SHOT)
GPS SYSTEM OF PLAY: 1-4-3-3

FORMATION - NUMERICAL SYSTEM
Starting shape when in possession-

When we recover possession the transition in shape should happen as quickly as possible to give the best possible options for the new ball carrier. We create maximum width using the full-backs and/or wide forwards and depth within the options using the goalkeeper, centre-backs, centre midfielders and centre-forward.
Key Principles- Shape Out of Possession

Starting shape when defending -

The shape when defending will be compact as a team to limit the space for the opposition to play in. As the play moves from side to side we will shift across the pitch as a team.
PART 2: GPS TEAMS IN POSSESSION

This document will look at the following 4 areas:

**Key Principles** - When in possession

**Phase 1** - Playing in the first third - Includes all the actions taken to move the ball from the goalkeeper, defenders and midfielders from the first third of the field into the middle third.

**Phase 2** - Playing in the middle third - Includes all the actions taken in the middle third by the midfielders, full-backs and forwards to move the ball into positions where the final pass towards the attacking player can be made or when penetration is not possible to maintain possession of the ball.

**Phase 3** - Playing in the final third - Includes the final pass/assist or cross into the box towards the attacking players and the final shot/header towards goal. Largely this stage is based around the play of the front 3, two attacking midfielders and the two full-backs.
GPS SYSTEM OF PLAY: 1-4-3-3

Key Principles- When In Possession

Psychology- Player Mentality

Confidence- A self-belief to want to get on the ball, receive under pressure and affect the game.

Pro-active- GPS players should be soccer smart. Players are students of the game and are able to make adjustments based on what they see on the field.

Attack minded- Our first thought should be can I play forward. GPS teams play with flair and creativity.

Awareness and Decision making- Constantly scanning to assess the field- who can I play forward to, if no forward option is available how can I maintain possession. Do I have time on the ball when I receive, where is the defender/pressure coming from, how does this affect where my first touch must go.

Principles of Attack

Penetration
Mobility
Support
Width+ Depth
Creativity
Possession Based
Key Principles- In the Attacking Phase

Important Points-

First thought should be to play forward and try to penetrate the lines of the opposition. But when this is not possible, as a team we must be patient in our build-up play and maintain possession of the ball.

Good decision making- knowing when to play forward and penetrate and when to maintain possession of the ball, not forcing the play forward.

It is important that we base our play in possession around maintaining the ball. This allows us to control the game, create opening within the opposition shape to exploit and put less pressure on ourselves defensively.

The mobility of players off the ball is key to successful possession- this comes from players creating the correct options, space, angles and balance within the options especially within the midfield three.

When looking to break-down and penetrate the opposition’s lines then the tempo of our play must be quick. When we move the ball quickly we try to create an area of the opposition to exploit where a player may be out of position. When the play is slow it is easy for the opposition to constantly shift across the field and keep their shape compact and hard to break down.

Identifying the correct time to switch the play- with a succession of quick passes on one side of the field, hopefully we will draw over opposition defenders to that side of the play. This creates space to then open the play up and redirect to either the full-back on the far side or play a through ball in behind the defenders for the wide forward making a diagonal run.

Creation of superiority in numbers around the ball zone

Creation of ideal formations- triangles and rhombus’
Important Points-

Maintaining width from wide forwards and full-backs.

Maintaining depth in the shape to play back to as an outlet when needed. Centre backs creating options when midfielders cannot play forward and also centre midfield depth when attackers cannot play forward in the final third.

The use of diagonal passes during the first and middle third build-up and the use of additional vertical passes in the final third with the addition of combinations of play to create or exploit space such as give and go, one-two’s, cutting/diagonal dribbles and runs, overlapping runs, switch of play.

Giving players the freedom to be creative, improvise and attempt skills and combinations in the final third.

The timing of runs is important to create space for yourself. If your movement comes to a stop before you receive, this gives the defender the opportunity to close you down and as a result when you do receive you will be immediately under pressure.
Penetration is having the ability through a shot, pass or dribble to break through the lines of the opposition's defence and as a result create an attempt on goal or take defending players out of that phase of play. The two examples show passing through the lines of the opposition.

This can come from our defenders playing through the opposition forward line into the midfield.

A centre midfielder playing the final through ball for the diagonal run of the winger or a shot in the final third beyond the defenders at goal.
One of the key principles of attack is mobility. Without a lot of mobility throughout the team to create space for yourself and offer options of support it will be difficult to maintain possession of the ball when under pressure from the opposition.

It is important that players are constantly moving to create angles to receive the pass, to create space and to lose your marker.

This can be done by checking away and dropping in front of the defender (No10-CMid) or by coming short and moving away from the defender for a pass into space (No8-CMid).
Creating the correct options

For the development of the attacking phase with vertical and diagonal passes it is necessary for the players to create the correct options, making angles and with depth and correct distance in between to create triangles and rhombus shapes.

With the full-back (No2) using the maximum width and the centre back (no4) and the defensive midfielder (no6) having depth between them these three positions can create a triangle offering various different options.

A triangle can be created between the three midfielders.

The defensive midfielder at the base of the triangle (no6) giving depth to the balance of the triangle and an option to play back to if the forward pass is not available.

The two centre midfielders (8+10) will give an option either side but must not be square (in a straight line). In this example the No 10 is higher up in his option.
Creating the correct options

Defensive Midfield (no6), centre midfielder (no8) and the centre forward (no9) create another option of developing triangular options.

Rhombus’ can be created using full-back (no2), centre midfielder (no8), wide forward (no7) and centre forward (no9).

An alternative option is through the center of the field using the midfield 3 (no 6, 8 and 10) and the centre forward (no9).

All of these shapes can be developed into functional passing exercises using cones to create a triangle or rhombus in relation to different positions and using a variety of passing sequences and combinations with movement before and after the pass.
Key Principles- Mobility and Support

Creating the option with the correct body shape

Open body shape-

The defensive midfielder has created space for himself and therefore can make the option with an open body stance. This allows him to increase his vision of the surrounding area and allowing him to receive on the back foot and be positive with his next pass forward.

It is also important that players are constantly scanning around in different directions this allows quicker decision making. Knowing if they have time on the ball when they receive and also knowing where their team mates are even before they receive the pass.

Closed body shape-

The centre midfielder receives with a closed body shape to protect the ball from the defender as he receives. He can either take his first touch to the side of the defender- rolling to the side while protecting the ball at all times using his body or he can pass back to centre-back who provides an alternative option.
Creating the option with the correct body shape

When playing out from our own half a lot of the movement from the players ahead of the ball will be to drop towards the ball carrier and offer the option to pass into their feet.

When immediately under pressure from a defender the body shape should be closed to shield the ball from the defender. You can then pass back to maintain possession of the ball or if the defender is extremely tight to you but with space around you then you can take a more positive first touch away from the defender and play forward.
Creating the option with the correct body shape

When you can create space or make the movement to drop short, but the defender does not come with you then your body shape should be open to the ball and facing forward. This allows you to scan around you effectively and then take a positive first touch forward.

The defensive midfielder can receive with an open body shape from the centre back, while still shielding the ball from the defender he can now see a lot of the play and be positive with his pass.

The centre forward also drops off to create space and can receive with an open body shape using the through ball for the wide forwards diagonal run as one positive option.
Movement without the ball - Variations of Runs

Runs in behind the back four -

When the midfielders or full-backs are in possession of the ball the centre forward or wingers can make penetrating runs in behind. This can be either to receive the pass or to create space for others to exploit. They will first drop in short before spinning off and making the run in behind. The timing of run and pass is important to remain onside and to create an initial yard away from the defender.

In the first example on the left the centre forward can receive the through ball in behind the centre back. In the example below the centre back closely marks the centre forward but space is now created for the winger to come inside and play the penetrating pass in behind for the centre midfielder or far winger.
Key Principles - Mobility and Support

Movement without the ball - Variations of Runs

Runs in behind the back four -

Diagonal Runs

The wide forwards can also penetrate behind the defense by making diagonal runs. As the centre midfielder receives the centre forward makes a movement in the opposite direction to take away the centre back and allow the winger to make the run inside the full-back.

Channel Runs and Interchange

The centre forward can also make a run into the channel and interchange with the wide forward. The movement of both players will force the defenders to make decisions of whether to remain or go with the run. The centre midfielder can then pass to either the wide forward or centre forward if either create space away from the opposition defender.
Movement without the ball-

Interchanging and replacing options

Being fluent in our movement as a team is much more effective in creating space and losing your marker than making runs in straight lines with play frequently going sidewards.

In the first example, the wide forward drops short and therefore the full-back can replace the option and push higher up the field to give an option for the centre midfielder to play to.

In the second example, the centre forward pulls wide to make a run into the channel. The wide forward then moves inside to become the centre forward and create space for the centre forward to exploit.

When a player moves or makes a run into your area, that player should then move to give an alternative option. This can be to drop short, pull wide or take the players place where they moved from originally.
Two important principles of successfully maintaining possession are width and depth. When playing a 1-4-3-3 system the width when in possession in our own first third should come from the full-backs and wide forwards.

When the full back (no2) has possession of the ball the centre back (no4-highlighted) must drop off from the opposition centre forward to create depth and as a result, space. This now gives the full-back an outlet to maintain possession if a forward option is not available.

As the play develops into the middle and final third the width should come from the full-backs with the wide forwards having more freedom to make diagonal runs and interchange with the centre-forward.

When the full-backs and centre midfielders have possession depth comes from centre-backs and goalkeeper but also from the centre forward.

Making the field as big as possible when in possession with maximum width and depth is important not only to create space for yourself but also to create space for others to play in or to exploit by moving into.
Key Principles- Creativity and Possession Based

Creativity-

When playing in a 1-4-3-3 system the two centre backs and the defensive midfielder give a solid defensive base and it is important that the full-backs give the width to our shape. This allows freedom for the attacking midfielders (8+10) and the three forwards(7, 9 +11) to be creative and improvise at times to break down the opposition, penetrate and create goal scoring opportunities.

Positive possession based play-

As a club one of our key principles is possession based. This philosophy gives us the opportunity to control the game, probing for opportunities to penetrate and force the opposition into defending for long periods of the game. Our first thoughts should always be to play forward.

The 1-4-3-3 system gives natural width and depth, creating good options and angles to maintain possession of the ball. Again it is vital that as a coach you instil a confidence amongst the players to play under pressure and encourage them to play out from the back. At all times we should look to be positive in our play but must also be patient when the pass, dribble or shot is not on and maintain possession of the ball.
Key Principles- Diagonal Passing

When players positioning, body shape and movement is correct diagonal passing options come naturally. This type of passing ensures safety behind the ball if possession is lost and provides more available options for the new ball carrier, as he has the option to pass forward or back.

The defensive midfielder can play to either of the centre midfielders who can they play up to the centre forward.

When the defensive midfielder plays the pass he immediately moves to create a new option for the centre midfielder to play back to when under pressure.
Key Principles - Diagonal Pass and Overlap Combination

The first diagonal pass can be played from the full-back to the wide forward. Once the pass is played the wide forward must dribble inside drawing the opposition full-back in and therefore creating space for the full-back to run into.

The wide forward can then pass into the space for the full-backs run or play into the CF who can then play the final diagonal pass into the space for the full-back to run onto from deep.
Key Principles - Vertical Passing

Vertical passes are used a lot during the attacking phase to penetrate opposition lines. These passes are important as they can pull a lot of players out of their defensive positions bypassing the entire defense or midfield with one pass.

After combinations in central areas vertical passes can be made into space for wide forwards (7+11) making diagonal runs.