



FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY

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“A good player with the ball should have the vision to spot three options. Puskas always saw at least 5.”

On 25th November 1953 shockwaves reverberated through international football. Using a false 9 (deep lying striker), one touch football, and a fluid front four formation, Hungary travelled to Wembley and comfortably beat England 3-6. On 23rd May 1954 Hungary dominated England 7-0 in Budapest.

We were out-speeded, out-smarted and out-stayed... I can only hope it will have a revitalising effect, and jolt our soccer chiefs into the realisation that control of the ball at speed is the secret of success nowadays. - **Clifford Webb, Daily Mail.**

Brazil emulated Hungary's false 9 and fluid front four to win the 1958 and 1962 World Cups. England manager Alf Ramsay (who played right back in the 1953 defeat) adapted Hungary's front four formation, omitting traditional wingers, to win the 1966 World Cup. Hungary had established a blueprint for modern day football.

How To Implement:

Small-sided games, 3vs3, 4vs4, 5vs5, etc. The more one touch passes the more bonus points are awarded per goal, e.g., four one touch passes in build-up play then goal = five points. When possession is lost potential bonus points are reset to zero (bonus points from goals are retained).

To replicate a fluid attacking line and false 9, set up attack overloads (4vs3, 5vs3, 5vs4, etc.) along with the bonus points system.





"Playing simple football is the hardest thing. Simple play is also the most beautiful. How often do you see a pass of more than 40 metres when 20 metres is enough? Or a one-two in the penalty area when there are seven people around you when a simple wide pass around the seven would be a solution? The solution that seems the simplest is in fact the most difficult one."

"Don't run so much. Football is a game you play with your brains."

"When I don't have control of the ball, what do I do? I press to get it back. It's a way of defending."

- Johan Cruyff

'Total Football' was introduced to the world in the 1970's by Ajax FC and the Dutch national team. Building on the 1950's Hungary blueprint, it is a tactical system in which possession of the ball and player positioning are core values. It relies on any player having the ability to play in any position while the ball is on the ground.

Ball carriers are given total positional freedom on the pitch which means a centre back can find himself playing centre forward, and vice-versa. The shape of the team stays the same because teammates drop back and cover forward runners, occupying vacant positions.

The constant movement and switching of positions in attack confuses the opposition and makes it difficult for the defence to mark players. This often creates space for forward passes and dribbling. Like 1950's Hungary, Johan Cruyff (Ajax & Holland) would line up as a false 9 playmaker, roaming the pitch at will to take up different positions.

While build up can be slow and measured in possession, when out of possession the whole team aggressively presses high. Three, four, five+ players sprint in packs to win the ball back as soon as possible. Coupled with an off-side trap and a sweeper goalkeeper who is comfortable playing defender, the opposition have no space or time to build an attack.

How To Implement:

Small-sided / full sided games. Pitches are divided into defence, midfield, and attack zones (designated defenders / midfielders / strikers must stay in respective zone). Ball carrier can dribble / pass & follow the ball into a different zone, when this occurs he is assigned to that position (e.g., defender dribbling / following his pass into midfield zone becomes a permanent midfield player). A teammate must cover the vacant position within five seconds or possession is lost (e.g., midfielder must drop back to become a defender). Striker/s can be a false 9 playmaker, allowed to enter any zone without the ball.

At any time the teacher can instruct "Press" whereby the defending team push high, entering any zone to swamp the ball carrier using high intensity sprints. Once possession is won the whole team quickly returns to their original positions (tiring, should be used sparingly).



"It's great to see everyone passing on the baton. First from me to Rijkaard and then from Frank to Pep ... It is an ideology that has turned Barcelona into an institution. A club that symbolizes a unique philosophy in football." - Johan Cruyff

"In the world of football there is only one secret. I've got the ball or I haven't."

"I loathe all that passing for the sake of it. Barça didn't do tiki-taka. You have to pass the ball with a clear intention, with the aim of making it into the opposition's goal."

- Pep Guardiola.

In 2009 Pep Guardiola's Barcelona FC achieved the sextuple, winning every competition in a season. The majority of this Barcelona team led Spain to victory the 2010 World Cup.

'Tiki-taka' was a concept which valued retaining and circulating the ball. Guardiola evolved the basic principles through developing a comprehensive understanding in the geometry of space, short passing, and interchangeable midfielder positioning.

Guardiola's Barcelona was noted for have a high defensive line with midfielders offering defenders simple passing options. A patient approach of short passes, circulating the ball anywhere on the pitch, was designed to methodically work the ball towards the final third.

'Total Football' elements such as aggressive high intensity pressing when out of possession, a false 9, and advanced positional play meant attacks were fluid. Players were drilled to occupy optimum space in relation to teammates which often created player overload in certain areas. This would lead to opportunities for 1-2 passes and through balls towards the opposition goal.

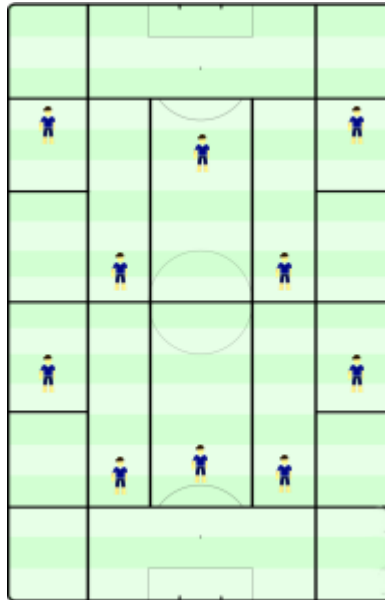
While in general play there was a regimented positional structure, upon reaching the final third attackers were given freedom. With licence to express themselves flair players such as Lionel Messi tormented defences.

While 'tiki-taka' could be criticized for being a stale possession-based style which creates few scoring opportunities, Guardiola evolved it into an artform. He later proved critics wrong by adapting his brand of football to work successfully in the English Premier League for Manchester City.



How To Implement:

Full sided games. Guardiola painted lines on the pitch to teach positional play.



- No more than two players should occupy the same line vertically in any one phase of play.
- No more than three players should occupy the same line horizontally in any one phase of play.
- While it's unrealistic to expect school children to implement consistently, individuals will often look for new positions to receive the ball.

Small-sided games. Set conditions which must be achieved before a goal can be scored. If possession is lost conditions must be met again. These can include;

- One touch pass x1, x2, x3, etc.
- 1-2 pass x1, x2, x3, etc.
- 1-3 pass (triangle) x1, x2, x3, etc.
- 2 players, 3 players, 4 players, every player must touch the ball.
- Can only score in the penalty area / specified area.

SMALL SIDED GAMES - GOALS



FLAT CONES

Dribble / pass the ball into a square marked by cones and stop the ball stationary. Four squares can be set-up with no boundaries to the pitch (two goals to defend). Can have more than one ball in play for large groups.



FOOTBALL TRAFFIC CONES

BASIC: Score through two same-coloured cones (can be more than one goal).
INTERMEDIATE: Hit cone with the ball.
ADVANCED: Knock over cone with the ball.



FOOTBALL MINI GOALS

BASIC: Two 5-a-side goals with goalkeepers.
ADVANCED: Four+ mini target nets.