

12G Heath Playbook And Reference Guide

2024/2025 Season

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INTRODUCTION

This playbook is a general guide to help you better understand the game itself, the emphasis of what to strive for and a quick reference guide to enhance your knowledge of soccer. Of course soccer is not played inside the pages of a book and there are always exceptions to written statements, so use this as a learning tool. The game is ever-changing, so too is this guide!

PHILOSOPHY

This particular team has many positive qualities. Very instinctual play, competitiveness, speed, TALENT, and most of all, the desire to win. By adding in some specific, simple technical tweaks this team can perform very well. Here are just a few items to focus on:

- a) Look around whether you have the ball or not. Be fully aware of your surroundings.
- b) When receiving the ball, take a quick glance around you and touch the ball AWAY from your opponent.
- c) Prioritize, 1st touch into safe area, next thought should be to progress up field to put opponent on their heels
- d) Keep moving. The more runs you make the more you help your team
- e) Resist the temptation to dive into a tackle in the non dangerous areas of the field. Just STAY with the opponent and force them sideways or back, never forward towards your goal.
- f) At the point of gaining or losing position, transition, if we lose possession retreat into a more central area of field. If we gain possession, spread the field out as much as you're allowed to (as much space as the opposing team give you)
- g) Get fitness in on non practice days. This is up to you how you proceed within limits but you have to be ready to give your all for an entire game if needed!

STRATEGIES

Beginning of game: get touches on the ball, challenge opponents by passing the ball around them, wear them out rather than wearing yourself out. Get some long range balls shot at keeper. Test them early. Look to possess and play forward before looking to recycle.

If we get more than 3 goals up, play primarily wide using the sidelines to leave ball away from opponents middle of the field where there is most danger. Control tempo of game and keep possessing as much as possible. Play into opponents corners and look for an occasional chance in front to add to score tally.

On the flip side, if we're losing or need to score, we need to show a sense of urgency. DO NOT PLAY DOWN THE SIDELINES!!! Try your best to keep the ball in the middle of the field to nullify the opponents the opportunity of getting the ball out of play and wasting precious time. Be aware of every play to create chances in and around the other team's goal area. If we are going down the flanks (out wide) the opposite attacking mid or forward should be making a curved run towards the far post. Center attacking mids and forwards should look to make advancing runs but stay a distance away from your opposing defender so you have space to get the ball and either shoot at goal or make a pass that will lead to a scoring chance.

On set pieces ALWAYS look to play to your teammate, whether on a throw in, a free kick, corners, goal kicks, GET THE BALL TO YOUR TEAMMATE NOT THE OPPOSING TEAM!!!

Use plenty of show and go movement all over the field in order to keep possession of the ball. If you're near your opponent and your teammate has the ball and is looking to pass, MAKE YOURSELF SPACE BY PUSHING OFF YOUR OPPONENT AND SHOWING TO THE BALL. Conversely, when your opponents have the ball, make the distance between you and them VERY SHORT, thereby disallowing the other team free movement.

Defensively make sure your chest is behind the ball and your stance is squared with your opponent. If their back is to your front, get low and make sure you see the ball with your eyes so that you can jostle around them and regain possession.

Offensively, always take the easy route, 1st and foremost, touch ball away from pressure, allowing you to look up and find space for a run or a pass. Secondly. use easiest access away from your opponent. If you receive ball outside of the opponent, keep ball on that side by shielding it and making your opponent get across your body to get the ball, thereby fouling you. Try not to go against their body when you've already made a path past them.

Attacking... look to link with all players around you OR take ball forward when 1 v 1.

Anything 1 v 2 (you against more than 2 opponents) or more hold ball up until support arrives. Play ball back, or sideways and then lose your marker. Inside the 18 keep touches to a minimum. Anything crossed over high you need to lower with either a header or a downward volley to ground. Outside the 18 drive ball with laces low and away from keeper. In close, place ball with inside of foot. Watch ball all the way to your head, thigh, foot etc when striking.

Play imaginatively but link up intelligently. Express yourself without making teammates GUESS at what you're doing. Stay up with last defender but find empty space to run into for through balls.

Defending... pressure players closest to you in our attacking 3rd, looking for clues as to when you should be most aggressive to ball. (A) When player has a poor touch, (B) looks down to get ball, or (C) When backtracking to get ball.

Field Positions

Keeper

Communication Throughout game is essential.

Attacking... Look for wide options. Before distributing wait for movement to see open players and the opportune place where combinations can take place. If wanting to go high must signal for defenders and all other players to push up field.

Defending... defensively read the play if the ball is far away, come out more. As play approaches and defenders are in good covering positions stay close to your line.

Field Positions

Outside Defender

Attacking... When goalie has possession get wide (open) as possible, look to distribute short thru your respective side with forward diagonal passes, if blocked off, attempt to take your space up the line. Look for incoming CDM and to support moving forward. If play is in attacking 3rd, the OD on that side should be high but NOT past you're defensive mid, just pushed in to keep pressure in opponent's end. If you see room, go all the way to the corner and get a cross in. If we lose possession, track back towards the inside of your goal. Read you're keepers needs. If they want to punt the ball upfield long, shift up into your position.

Defending... In our defensive 3rd, if opponent goes at you, work them from entering danger area. DO NOT DIVE IN! If you're inside defender shifts towards the outside, you must shift inwards towards center of your area. Try to block shots/crosses. If you dive in, the central attacker is 1v 1 on that attacker which opens up the middle and that's not good.

Field positions

Center Back

Attacking... Read keepers movements. If keeper wants to play out the back get open carefully but slightly offset, (not in a straight line), with the other CB. If passing back to keeper, 1st take a glance over your shoulder, then GET OPEN and look over your shoulder again before you receive. Push upfield if keeper punts ball upfield. Don't "HANG BACK" "1 show, 1 go"

Defending... (Ball Carrier) Always get between attacker and your keeper. If you get beat, retreat ASAP to get at the very least shoulder to shoulder with attacker. If no support jockey backwards but slow down attacker by STAYING in front of your attacker. Use few touches to clear ball in our 3rd. 1 touch into clear (safe) space then look forward 1st to clear, if nothing available go back but should be last resort. When clearing as defender and no option forward or backward strong clearance out wide. Game management, if winning, clear ball out towards opponent's corner. One center back should pressure, and the other should cover.

Field Positions

Defensive Center Mid

Attacking... steps into an open area above the defensive line and is an outlet for the defenders. Look to receive ball on the half turn if you're not covered (LOOK AROUND YOU BEFORE YOU RECEIVE BALL) attempt to link with attacking mids either outside or inside. Push up as ball moves up field, but be behind your attacking mids in order to transition back to defensive player.

Defending...always put pressure above your defensive line, making sure to NOT DIVE IN when player approaches and is NOT READY to shoot. As soon as you see the wind up for shot, then you close in TIGHT! Primarily your role is to cut off angles, disallow crosses coming into the middle and clear balls using high hard headers diagonally away from pressure, trying to distribute to incoming mids.

Field Positions

Outside Mid/Winger

Attacking... The name of the game is to link with striker. Serve lots of crosses, looks back towards top of 18 for diagonal feeds or at 6 yard box for headers or outside/inside post. If you're given space to go to goal, DO SO. Always look at ball coming to you at line so as to block ball from going out.

Defending... As soon as ball goes behind you on opposite side of field get inside of your mark and back squeezing in towards the middle keeping track of your opposing opponent. ALWAYS staying goal side. Slow down the direct oncoming opponent by showing them the side lines. If your outside mark makes a diagonal run inside, make sure you're communicating with your inside mids/defenders.

Field Positions

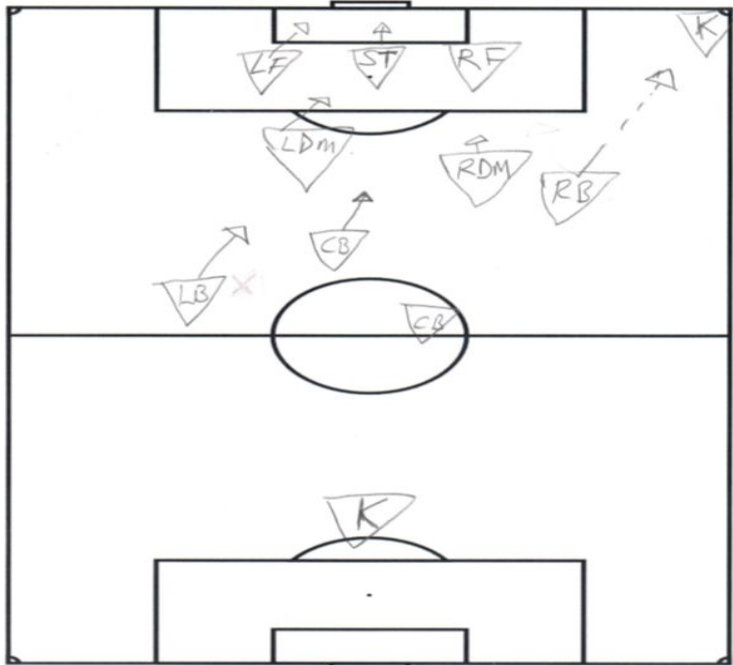
Center Mids

Attacking...If playing along another CDM, one shows, one goes. We will establish who plays more defensively and who plays higher up field. VERY IMPORTANT. To stay centralized, a lot of plays will go thru you. Take space only if given. If not, don't dribble into traffic. Pass to show and go attackers or backs that see play better than you if you're facing backwards, if there are a CDM and CAM one has to go forward, the other one has to be going diagonally back.

Defending...Aim to slow play down going in the middle 3rd, really close in our defensive 3rd as soon as ball goes past you towards your goal. On crosses and corners set up carefully and cover closely.

SET PIECES

Our corner kick where players should be heading to.



In the attacking 3rd, we push up and widen the field without being too far away from one another so that we can link up. Always find the open path to your teammate whether you are making a pass, or you are going to be receiving the ball. **FIND THE GAPS!!!**

SET PIECES

Attacking Corners Play #1

- ❑ Leave an extra defender at half line depending on how many opponents stay forward
- ❑ All players at 18 yard box stay tight and near the line or outside arc
- ❑ Players make curved runs toward their final destination whilst ALWAYS LOOKING AT BALL
- ❑ In this instance, the rdm stays put about 10 yards away from the 18 yard box and drives a ball 1st touch back towards the goal.
*This player should NOT try to take on opponents 1 v 1 here because if possession is lost, opponents have great opportunity to counter
- ❑ Specifically LF looks to get one touch short side
- ❑ CF disrupts keeper and bangs a rebound or direct header in
- ❑ RF looks to get far post
- ❑ RAM looks to get outside 18 on far right, to contain pressure and put ball back in danger zone
- ❑ ACM tries to look for ball at pk spot
- ❑ LB starts off about 10 yards away from center circle and drifts in slowly then sprints towards corner for a short option
- ❑ LAM holds outside 18 on left side, then as play develops moves, in to contain the ball in the danger area.
- ❑ CB/RB in general should be slightly pinched in past the center circle on the opponent's end of the field adding themselves to contain the ball and drive back into danger area.***Corner taker should raise hand then approach and kick ball as soon as hand goes down. Players on field should expect to see ball driven as soon as hand goes down and kicker runs to ball. It is a question of timing from the time the hand goes down, so WATCH THE KICKERS MOVEMENT. Kicker needs to find the tallest most aggressive header on team.

COACH'S NOTES

Keeper...good communication. Watch your angles and stay off your line a bit more to cut down the angles. If punting, TELL YOUR TEAM TO MOVE UP FIELD. IF PLAYING OUT OF THE BACK, WAIT UNTIL THEY'RE POSITIONED PROPERLY.

Centerbacks...one shows, one goes. Never defend or attack in straight lines. Look at the ball and your players to figure out your shape. Don't dive in until absolutely sure there's no other option. In defensive 3rd, stay tight to your opponent, especially on set pieces and when they're in the 18.

Outside backs...as soon as your keeper has the ball, move as wide as possible for short option, remembering to stay in a clear, open path. If keeper will go long, move accordingly UP FIELD. Read the play. If our attack goes into opponents last third, then that side should be pushing forward to keep play there. Defensively track back angled, towards your respective goal post, and if you're inside back shifts to your side, be sure to shift towards middle to cover and balance.

Inside mids...NEED TO BE OFFSET. One will be the defensive mid that is ALWAYS BEHIND CENTER MID/ ATTACKING MID. Your role is to provide an outlet by showing to your back 4/keeper to build play from out of the back. Always be in front of your back 4 and behind the midfield players offset (not in flatlines with your mids). Defensively, you must disrupt play coming from the outside and look to clear out wide or thru the middle of the field going forward.

COACH'S NOTES (PART 2)

Center mid or other 2nd mid...the positioning of these 2 will be predetermined before you go on field. Your role is to be the pivot from defense to offense at all times. Don't be wide, don't be high, don't be low. You need to keep your shape in between your defenders and your attackers. Be offset with defensive mid and in building the play do the opposite movement of your defensive mid. More often than not, you'll be making diagonal runs into open spots in the area between your attackers and defenders. Look to open up your receiving so you can look for forward options 1st. Defensively, both inside mids must track back as soon as ball goes past them, running straight back towards the central part of their defensive 3rd. Must look to slow down attack by being behind your opponent to disrupt the flow moving forward.

Outside mids/wingers. In a 4-1-3-2 formation, while in possession, should be extremely wide, boots on chalk in open space. Should run in to receive if there's pressure but start the run from the line. Focus on winning the ball and moving up the line to either provide crosses or to cut in and combine with players making the correct runs in opportunistic areas. If you've made a run down the line and see 2 open players set up at the 18, pass there rather than crossing towards keeper. Play the favored odds.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

Advance: move up the field: move towards opponents goal

Anticipate: look and scan the field so that you can intercept a pass

Behind the ball: a defensive term indicating get behind the ball so that the opponents are outnumbered and have difficulty in distributing the ball and either have to go back or across, not forward

angle of the pass - the direction of a pass in relation to defender, attacker

angle of run - the direction of the run from a supporting player

ball watching - describes a soccer player who is not aware of what's going on around them as they are more intent on focusing on the ball rather than players and situations building around them

blind side - playing the ball to the opposite side of where an opponent is focused

block tackle - strong frontal tackle

box - the penalty area / 18 yard box where strikers do the damage

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

breakaway - counter attack where rapid movement is made into forward space.

channels - area approximately 15 yard from the touchline

chip - short lofted pass or shot that gets the ball in the air

closing down - players should advance to an opponent with the ball in an attempt to stall play or win back possession

commit - getting your opponent to commit to a course of action that your player can then do the opposite too

control (ball) - bringing the ball under control by cushioning its arrival at a player with a surface on the body

cover - defensively where a second player provides cover to another player. This follows the defensive soccer principles of first and second defender.

cross - a long pass often in the air that is played diagonally from the flanks or channels into the box

cross, inswinging - a cross which arcs from the center of the pitch to the goal area

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

cross, outswinger - a cross which arcs from the by line out to the center of the soccer pitch

cross, far post - long cross from a corner that misses out the penalty box and aims for the furthest post

cross, near post - shortish cross aimed at the nearest post

decoy run - where a soccer player executes a run to draw attention from the intended play. Also known as creating space.

dummy - similar to decoy, any trick, technique or skill that unbalanced or confuses an opponent and can send them the wrong way in order to gain an advantage

early ball - simple phase of soccer play where an immediate pass is played to a teammate at the earliest opportunity, often to exploit space

fakeover - technique where a player looks as if they are to take the ball from their teammate who is in possession but they don't and just run past each other

feint - an action that attempts to confuse and trick an opponent e.g. step over, scissors, Beardsley, Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Cryff all have feints named after them.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

first touch - vital skill of any soccer player is to be able to get the ball under control and set up their next option, often known as their first touch

flank - the 10 - 15 yards from the sidelines, often where crosses come in from

flight - referred to the flight of the soccer ball

give and go - were a player passes the ball and then moves to receive the ball back from the player they played it to also known as wall pass or 1 - 2

goal side - the area between ball and the goal when defending

half volley - when a player volleys (using their laces)an upward bouncing ball that has just landed in front of them

high press - tactical deployment of the soccer team where all players apply immediate pressure to the opponents when possession is conceded, often in opponents half

instep - upper surface of the foot, when coaching players it's the laces part of the boot!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

line (holding the) - defensive term where the defenders keep an imaginary line to catch opponents offside

line of recovery - when a player is beaten, this is the line on which they retreat back towards their own goal to get goal side of the attack

lofted pass - a high pass executed by kicking the bottom half of the ball sending it into the air

mark - to cover a player who may or may not have the ball, prevent a player from receiving the ball

man to man marking - a system that can be deployed where individuals are given specific tasks of marking individuals

narrowing the angle - closing down a player so that the angle they have to shoot or pass is reduced significantly

offside trap - when a defender(s) acting on a common understanding or trigger moves forward in a line to catch one or more opponents offside

off the ball - movement of players, to create space and provide options

one touch soccer - players move the ball quickly and immediately when they receive it

one two - give and go/wall passing around opponents

outswinger - when a ball is played but curls away from the target

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

inswinger - where the flight of the ball arcs towards the target

jockeying - delaying and holding up play, not diving in with a tackle but staying upright and preventing the advancement of the opponent

killer pass - a perfectly timed and weighted pass through a defense on to the foot of a team mate

late tackle - an unfair challenge, where a soccer player commits a tackle after an opponent has already played the ball

pace - the speed of a player or ball

pass - technique to move the ball from one player to another. Various techniques apply, chip, half volley, push, lofted etc.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

penetration - a phase of play where a team breaks through the opponent's defense

peripheral vision - being able to see wider than just what's directly in front vision

pitch - the lovely smooth green grass, where soccer should be played

play on the break - counter attacking soccer

playmaker - a designated player who has good vision, excellent passing ability, can open up defense lines and create opportunities

plyometrics - drills and exercises that develop explosiveness in players

pressure training - a method of training that requires rapid repetition for a limited time

receiving - technique required to control an incoming ball

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

running with the ball - player in possession exploits space by carrying the ball quickly and efficiently, different to dribbling a player must beat an opponent

service - used to describe whether or not the attackers / strikers are getting quality balls played into them e.g. "attackers are just not getting the service!"

shadow play - playing without opponents

shielding - keeping possession and control of the ball by using the body to come between the ball and the opponent

show - when a player makes themselves available

sliding tackle - when a defending player goes to ground and uses an extended leg to win the ball

space - creating , exploiting and running into space

square ball - a ball that is played from one player to another, laterally

stretching the play - making the pitch big, wide and deep

support play - teammates move into and create space and options for the player in possession

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

sweeper - specific role on the pitch where a player will sit just in front or behind the defense

switching play - changing the angle of attack

taking a player on - when a player in possession runs at a defending player with the aim of going past them

target man - a striker / attacker (often big and shields the ball well) who should always be available for a pass from the midfield who can then hold up the play until reinforcements arrive. The ball is usually played to their feet.

thirds - the pitch/field can be segmented roughly into a defensive, a midfield and attacking third all of which are approximately 35 yards (give or take a couple)

through pass - a pass which is played between two defenders for an attacker to run onto

turning an opponent - when running at an opponent, the use of feints and fakes to trick the opponent into turning or by pushing the ball past them and causing them to turn

volley - striking the ball before it lands, difficult skill to master but very powerful

wall - line of players that organize themselves to prevent a direct attack on goal from a dead ball situation

GLOSSARY OF TERMS WITH DEFINITIONS

weight of the pass - key ingredient to a perfect pass, the pace or power of

wide players - often called wingers who play near the touch line

work rate - players and teams contribution to the game

wrong side - when an opponent is allowed to get between the defender and the goal

zonal marking / defense - a system where players have a specific area that they have to cover