

Principles for 11v11

Formation 1:4:3:3



Principles of Play:

When talking (or thinking) about the game, we think in terms of the 4 main moments, Possession (Attacking), Opponents' Possession (Defending), the Transition from Attacking to Defending (team just lost possession) and the Transition from Defending to Attacking (team just won the ball and gained Possession). We also think about where on the field the action is taking place (defensive third; middle third; or attacking third of the field). The risk a player takes when in possession (or opponents' possession) is dependent on where they are on the field.

Everyone attacks and everyone defends.

- Our goalkeeper is our first attacker when they have the ball in their hands or feet.
- Our forwards are our first defenders when we lose the ball in the attacking 1/3 of the field.

Summit Strikers FC players must always:

- **Scan the field:** both in possession and when the opponent has possession to know where teammates, opponents, and open space are at all times. The more aware you are of your surroundings, the more you can help the team by being an option or marking an open opponent!
- **Communicate:** verbally, visually (pointing) and physically (by making runs or how you position your body or pass the ball) to let your teammates know you are open or where or how you want the ball. When the opponent has the ball, communicate to point out open players or space in a positive manner (can be demanding or forceful). Normally when a player does not like the communication of a teammate, it is because it was accurate and they didn't appreciate being called out for not doing their job.
- **Keep it simple:** know where you are on the field and how much risk you can take with the ball. Passing to the open player is always a good option. Do not take risks in our defensive third. Attempting to dribble players, or attempting a pass that has to split three players and go over two others when there are other open teammates is not the best option in most cases, but might be appropriate near the opponent's goal.

Position, Moment, Direction, and Speed (PMDS):

These 4 things are at the heart of every decision and action on the field, in all 4 moments of the game, when the player has the ball and when they do not. All 4 of these items take place in a single player action, hundreds of times a game (every time the ball moves or players move on the field in relation to the ball moving, (and which moment it occurs). Players need to know them and consider them at all times. Many more examples can be made, but here are a few for reference:

- **Position:** Body position in relation to the ball and opponents. Is the player facing the correct way to take a positive first touch or shield an opponent? Is the player goal side / ball side of an opponent when out of possession? When defending, is the players' stance flat; or knees bent, feet on an angle forcing an opponent one way or another?
- **Moment:** When the team is in possession and the player is making a run without the ball, is the player waiting for a pass to be played and then moving (reactive), or anticipating the next action and moving to space and asking for a pass (proactive)? Is the player moving to an open space when their teammate is not yet able to make a pass and drawing a defender into the space early? When defending, is the player

trying to win the ball when it is close to the opponent and clearly under control (diving in) or is the player keeping the opponent with the ball in front of them and waiting for a bad touch before trying to win the ball?

- **Direction:** When passing the ball, is the ball being played to the far foot in front of the teammate, so a positive first touch can be taken; or was the ball played in a way (behind a running teammate) that the teammate cannot go forward with the ball? When the team is in possession and the player is moving without the ball, is the player moving to open spaces to receive the ball; or moving in spaces where they are not an option to receive the ball (or a space where a teammate is already standing)? When the opponent is in possession, is the player dropping straight back (or standing still), or are they squeezing toward the ball to close space while dropping back to be goal side of the ball?
- **Speed:** When trying to get open for a pass, is the player walking or jogging to an open space, or sprinting (moving quickly) to get open? When playing the ball to a teammate, is the ball played so slowly that the opponent can challenge for the ball (hospital pass) or is the ball played at a pace that can be controlled, and gives the teammate time to make the next action without pressure? When closing down an opponent with the ball, is the player running full speed all the way to the opponent, or slowing down before they get there to be in control of their body if the opponent suddenly changes direction?

OPPONENT IN POSSESSION:

When the other team has the ball we:

- Try to win the ball back by going to the player with the ball and tackling the ball (closest player)
- If we cannot win the ball, deny the deep/forward pass
- Find an open player and mark him/her (if the ball is passed to this player, you try to win the ball)
- Squeeze as a team to the side of the field with the ball.
- Squeeze as a team to close down the middle of the field when the ball is in the center of the field.
- Keep the distance between the lines small (defenders-midfielders; midfielders-forwards), so the opponent cannot pass to players in the space between the lines.
- Get goal side of your opponent!
- Get behind the ball!
- Get between the ball and the goal!
- Do not let them shoot on goal / block the shot or cross!
- Help each other by communicating

POSSESSION:

When we have the ball we:

- Build-up – “as far as possible and as short as necessary (while keeping possession)”.
- We look to break lines with passes (or dribble when it is the best option), while keeping possession.
- Give the player with the ball space to dribble/ pass or shoot
- Move to the outside / forward and scan to get open (away from players from the other team)
- We run forward while still looking at the player with the ball (they may need to pass to you!)
- Only ask for the ball when you are open – don’t hide behind opponents
- Give firm passes in front of your team mate – far foot (diagonal pass) when possible
- Receive the ball so we can keep the ball (with 1st touch taking the ball into space)
- The farther away from our goal, the more risk can be taken when playing the ball
- Close to our goal, less risk should be taken when playing the ball
- We try to score!

When receiving / gaining possession of the ball, the order of thought should be:

1. Can I score? If not
2. Can I give an assist? If not
3. Can I pass or dribble to do #1 or #2? If not
4. Can I play the forward by passing or dribbling? If not
5. Can I play the ball backward to a teammate to keep possession who can do 1-4?

TRANSITION: When we lose the ball we:

- Immediately get pressure on the player in possession of the ball and take away options to score or play the ball forward (by pass or dribble) or shoot/ cross the ball.
- Away from the ball, take away time and space for the opponents passing options.
- Get goal side / ball side of the opponents as quickly as possible.
- Stay useful for your team as a defender as long as possible
- Do not stop to catch your breath until you are goal side / ball side or your opponent, and they are no longer a passing option (you are goal side / ball side, and the ball is on the other side of the field).

TRANSITION: When we win the ball we:

Immediately scan to observe:

1. Can I score? If not
2. Can I give an assist? If not
3. Can I pass or dribble to do #1 or #2? If not
4. Can I play the forward by passing or dribbling? If not
5. Can I play the ball backward to a teammate to keep possession who can do 1-4?
 - Create space to give the player with the ball options to play the ball forward (MF and FW's)
 - Drop back if necessary to keep possession by playing the ball back. (defenders)
 - Communicate and ask for the ball if open

FIRST TO THE BALL, LAST TO GIVE UP!

