

INTRODUCTION

TACTICIAN BLUEPRINT

A GUIDED SUMMARY OF THE ESSENTIAL
CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH POSITION TO HELP
YOU IMPROVE YOUR FOOTBALL IQ

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1

INTRODUCTION

What are Football Tactics?

Football Tactics are used to create a system of play that link the team's formation and style together.

Why are Football Tactics important?

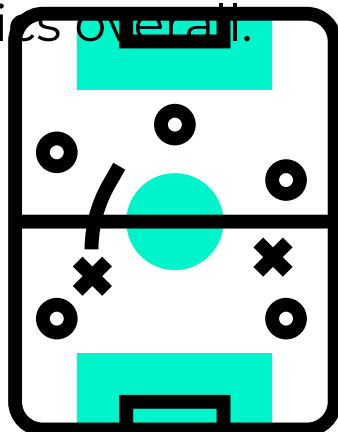
When planning for a match, it's important to determine whether you'd like to play an attacking or defensive style, slow or quick tempo, short or long passing, team oriented or individual play.

Do you know what tactical instructions are expected in your position?

Whether you're a goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, or striker, all position require certain movements/actions throughout the match. This may certainly change depending on the tactics **YOUR** club/coach decides to play.

Learn & Apply!

You will learn what characteristics each position usually requires, timing/spacing, and an overall better understanding of tactics overall.



2

MODERN GOALKEEPER

The modern Goalkeeper now possess many characteristics that are crucial in a team's system of play.

GOALKEEPER ROLE

Before, your only job was to prevent goals from going into the net. Now, the modern game has changed that! The modern GK now plays a fundamental role at the base of the team and is crucial in a team's style of play in/out of possession.

In possession, GK's are expected to pass accurately both short/long passes to initiate attacks from the back.

Out of possession, GK's positioning, team direction, communication, and awareness are crucial.

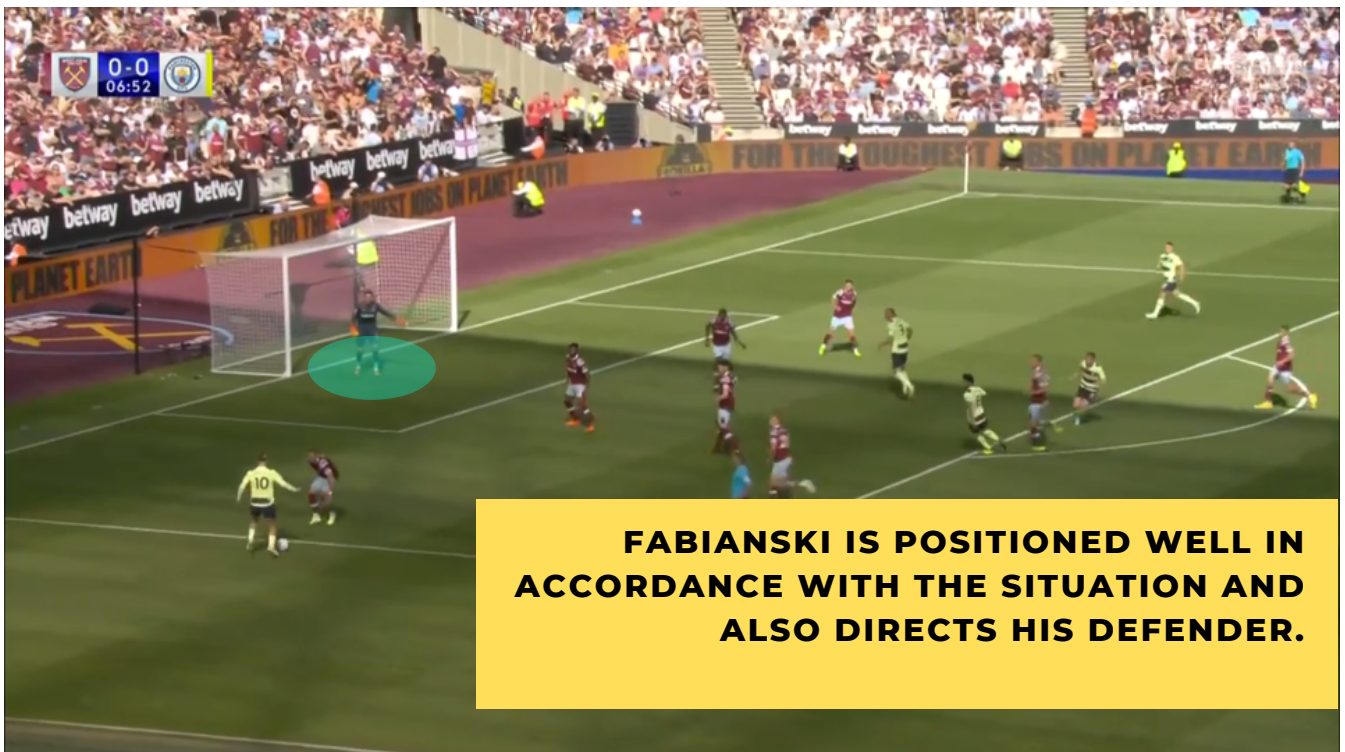
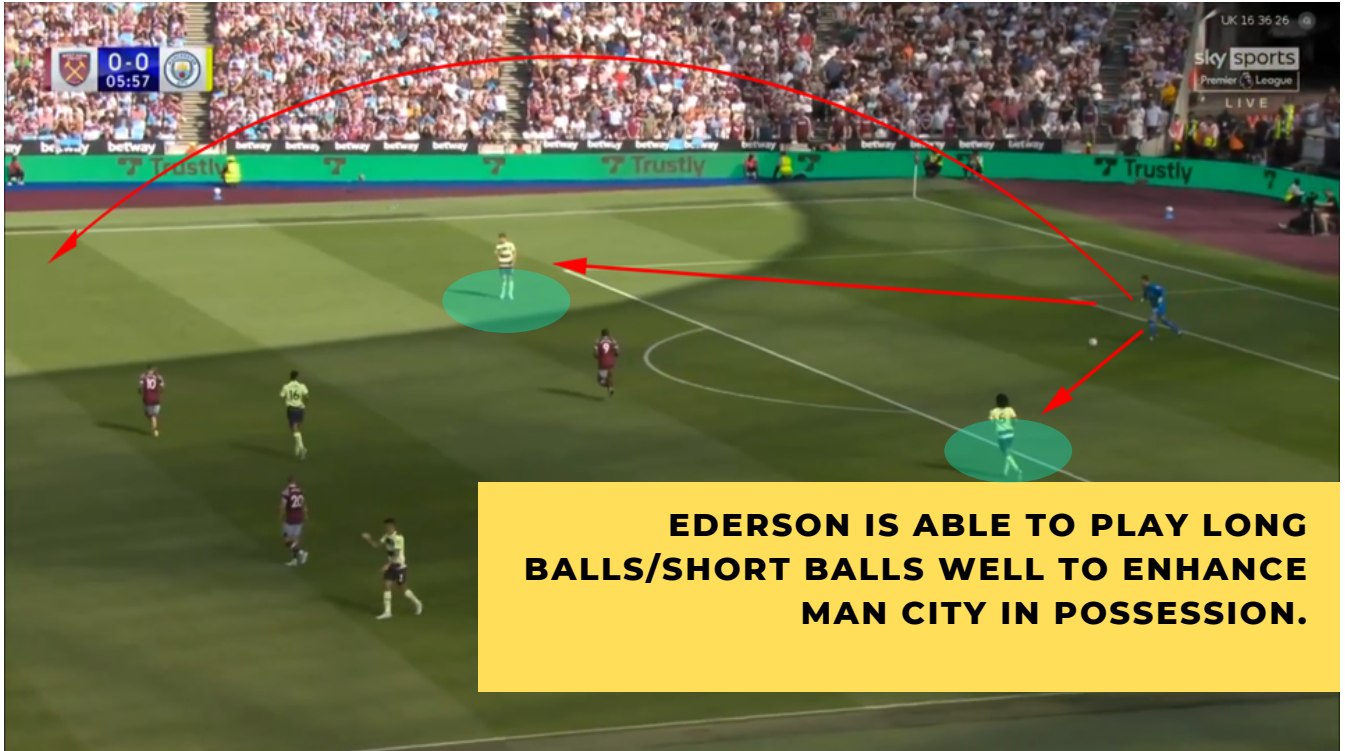
Goalkeeper Characteristics

- High level of concentration
- Positioning/Awareness
- Leadership
- Confidence
- Fast Reflexes
- Accurate Distribution
- Jumping Ability
- Agile/Quick
- Safe Hands
- Short/Long Passing



2

MODERN GOALKEEPER



3

COMMANDING CENTER BACK



The defensive wall starts with you! You command and direct your back line to make sure everyone is in unison. Make sure you push up or drop back. Make sure NO ONE gets passed you.

CENTER BACK ROLE

First, identify which type of Center Back you are. Are you the cool, composed play-out of the back type or are you the strong, rough, win the ball at any cost type? It's important to know which one you are so that you can bring out your best attributes.

A great Center Back will keep their team organized, disciplined, and well positioned. Since the attacking players are constantly moving, it's important to always be communicating with your back line.

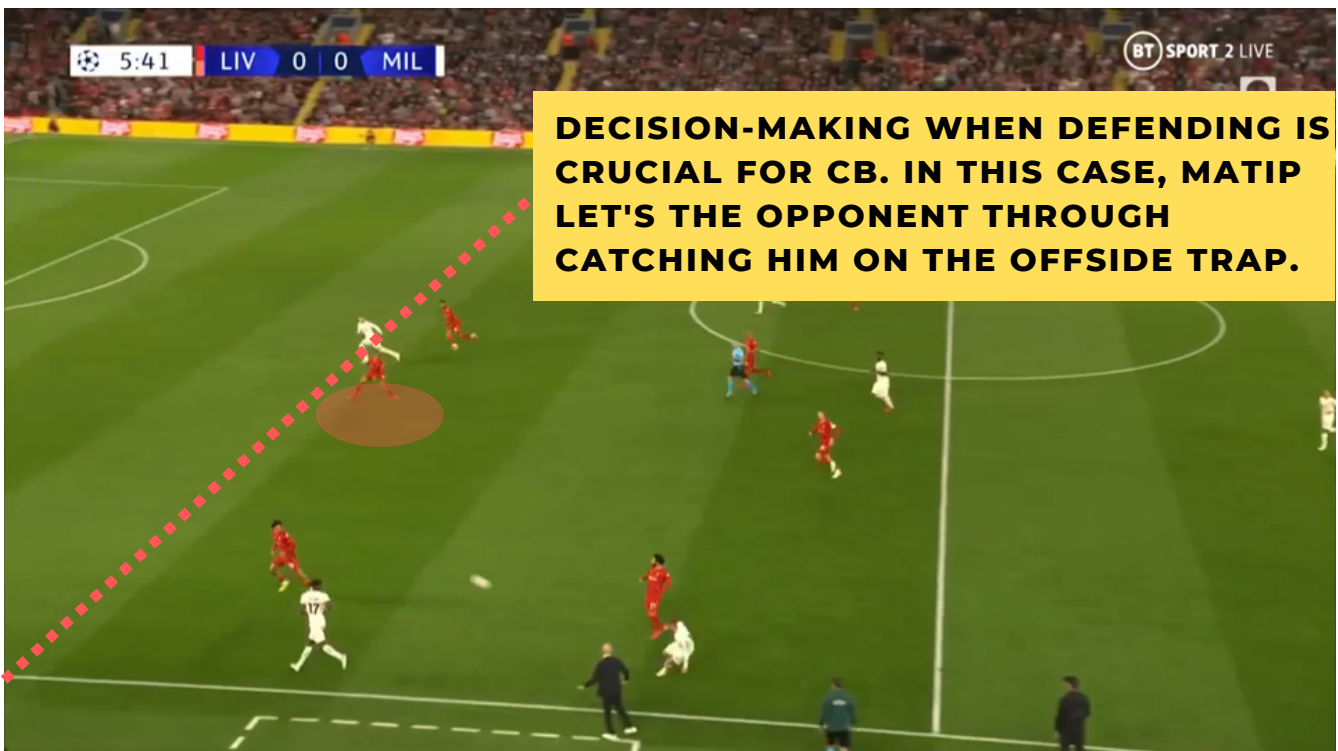
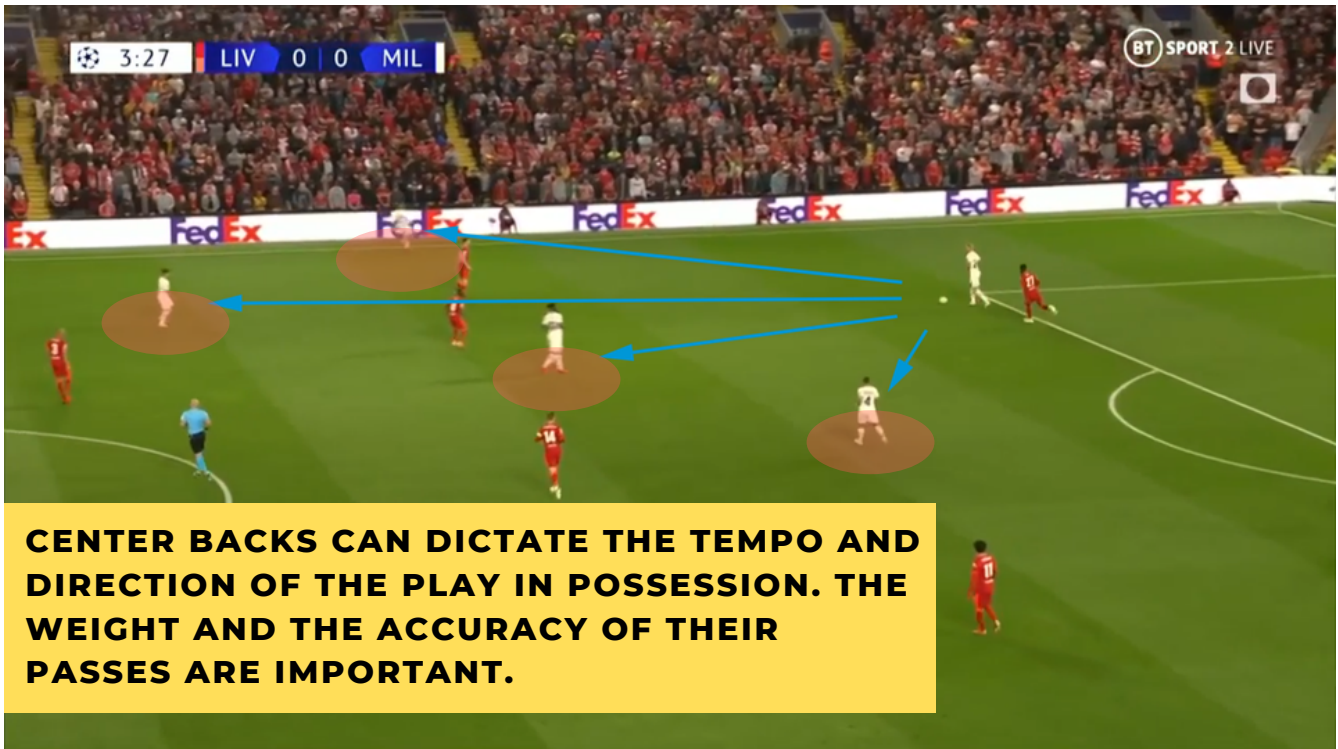
Center Back Characteristics

- Positioning/Awareness
- Leadership
- Communication
- Aerial Ability
- Technical Ability
- Strength
- Composure
- 1v1 Tackling
- Short/Long Passing

When you win the ball back, find your midfielders. Let them do the work while you are behind supporting them. Every now and then, look for your wingers/strikers making those runs into space!

3

COMMANDING CENTER BACK



4

ATTACKING FULLBACK



The Attacking Fullback covers the flanks, makes sure to defend wide players, and helps in the attack when needed by providing numbers going forward.

FULLBACK ROLE

The fullback position is very demanding. These players are probably the ones that cover the most ground. According to some studies, fullbacks usually do the most high intensity runs than any other player depending on the tactical setup. As a fullback, you can either push up to provide numbers in the attack or stay back in a low block.

In the attack, can you get down the wing and whip in an accurate early cross? Defensively, can you track back and cover ground to defend those wide areas?

Full Back Characteristics

- Positioning/Awareness
- Communication
- Aerial Ability
- Technical Ability
- Quickness/Agility
- 1v1 Tackling
- 1v1 Defending
- Short/Long Passing
- Crossing
- Dribbling

Each fullback operates differently because it all comes down to team tactics, the individual player's skill level, and in-game impact. You need to be defensive-minded first and very hard working.

4

ATTACKING FULLBACK



5

MIDFIELD MAESTRO



Midfield Maestro or the Center Attacking Midfielder often possesses top technical skills, creates attacking opportunities, and contributes a good amount of assists/goals for the team.

CAM ROLE

The CAM position requires players to be attacking-minded and create plenty of scoring opportunities for their team through skillful dribbling or dangerous passes.

Often considered the playmaker or the "10", usually can be found in the pockets of space between the opponent's midfield lines and defensive line.

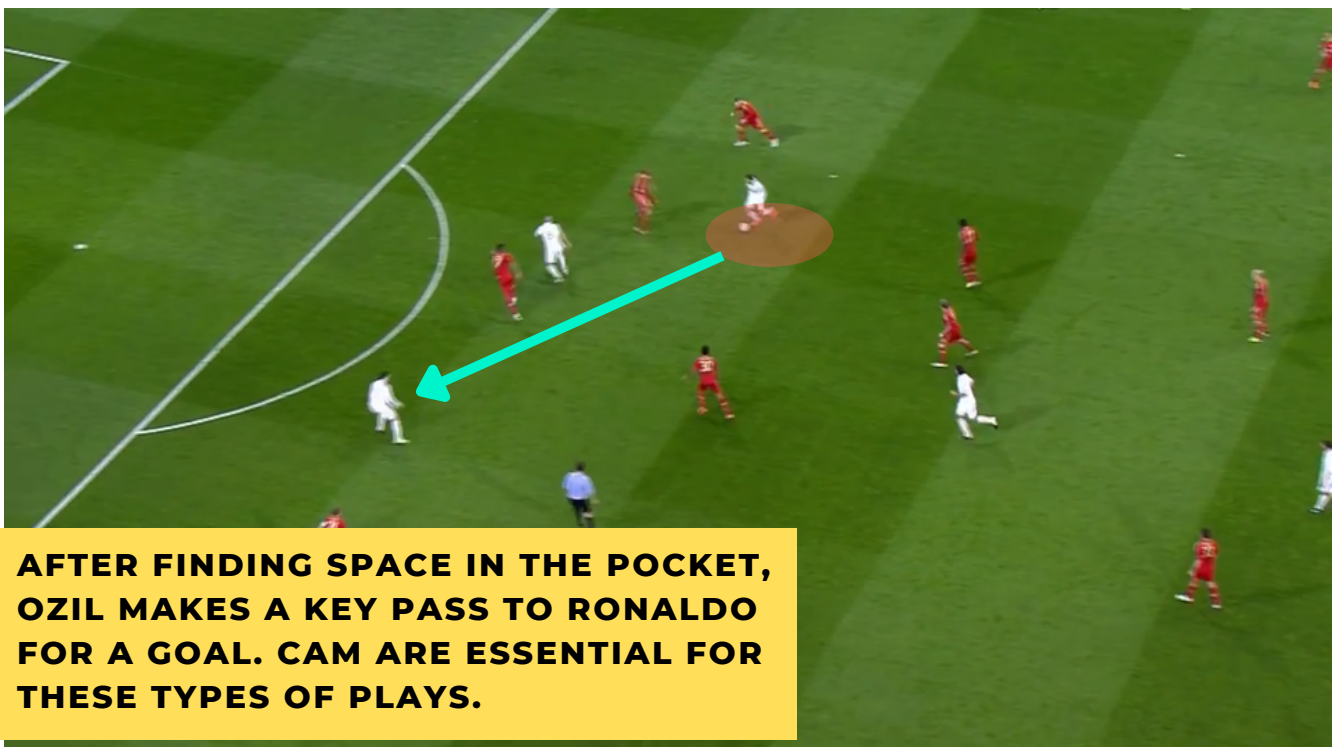
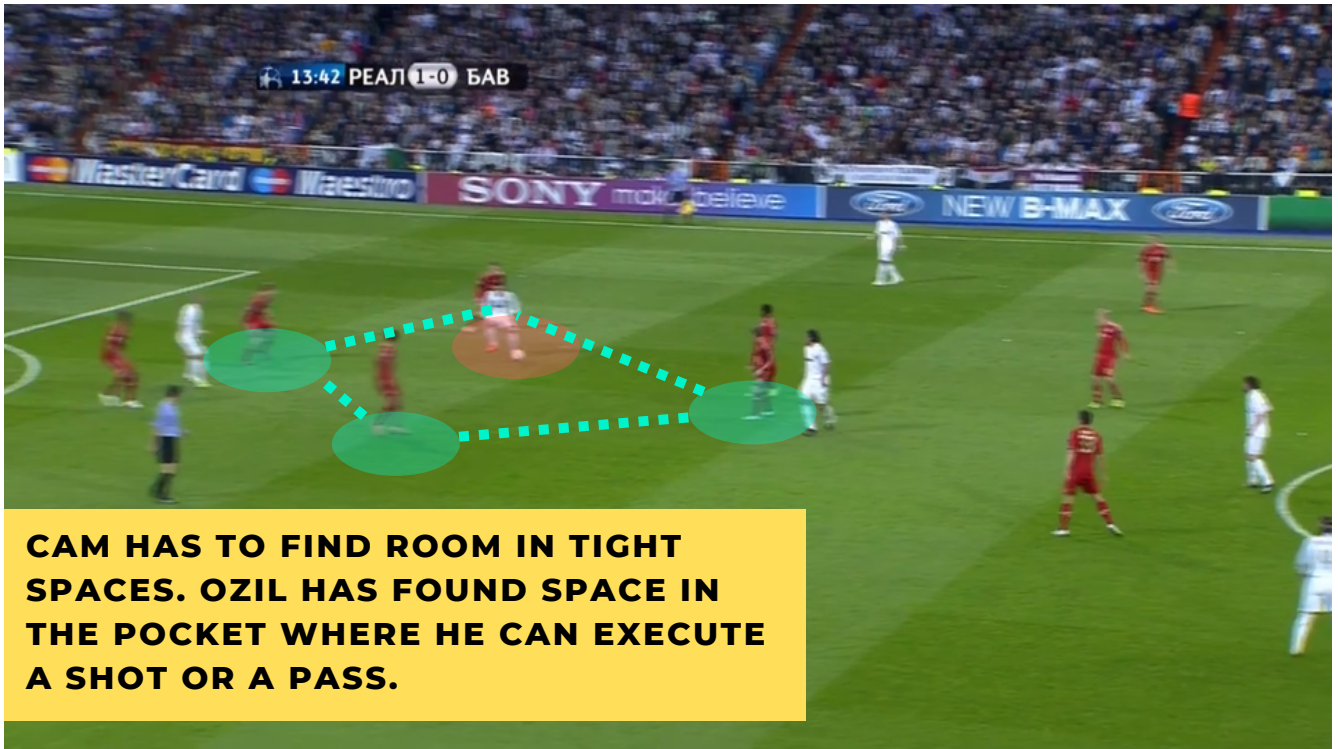
CAM Characteristics

- Work Rate
- Vision/Anticipation
- Passing Ability
- 1v1 Dribbling
- Fitness/Stamina
- Composure
- Creative
- Finishing

Although they are attacking-minded players, they may be required to track back and assist the defense especially to cover dangerous passing lanes that would allow the opponents to penetrate through the middle of the pitch.

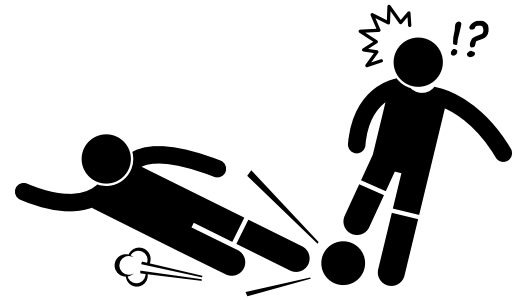
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MIDFIELD MAESTRO



6

BOX TO BOX MIDFIELDER



Midfield Ball Winner or the Box to Box midfielder is considered the engine or workhorse of the team. Often required to help in the attack but also help on the defensive side covering the center of the pitch.

CM ROLE

The CM position is similar to the CAM but requires players to perform different tasks throughout matches. They will also be required to push balls through to forwards, sprint in the box for late runs, and occasionally score goals.

Players that have fantastic positioning, strong tackling, and accurate passing will often have success in this position.

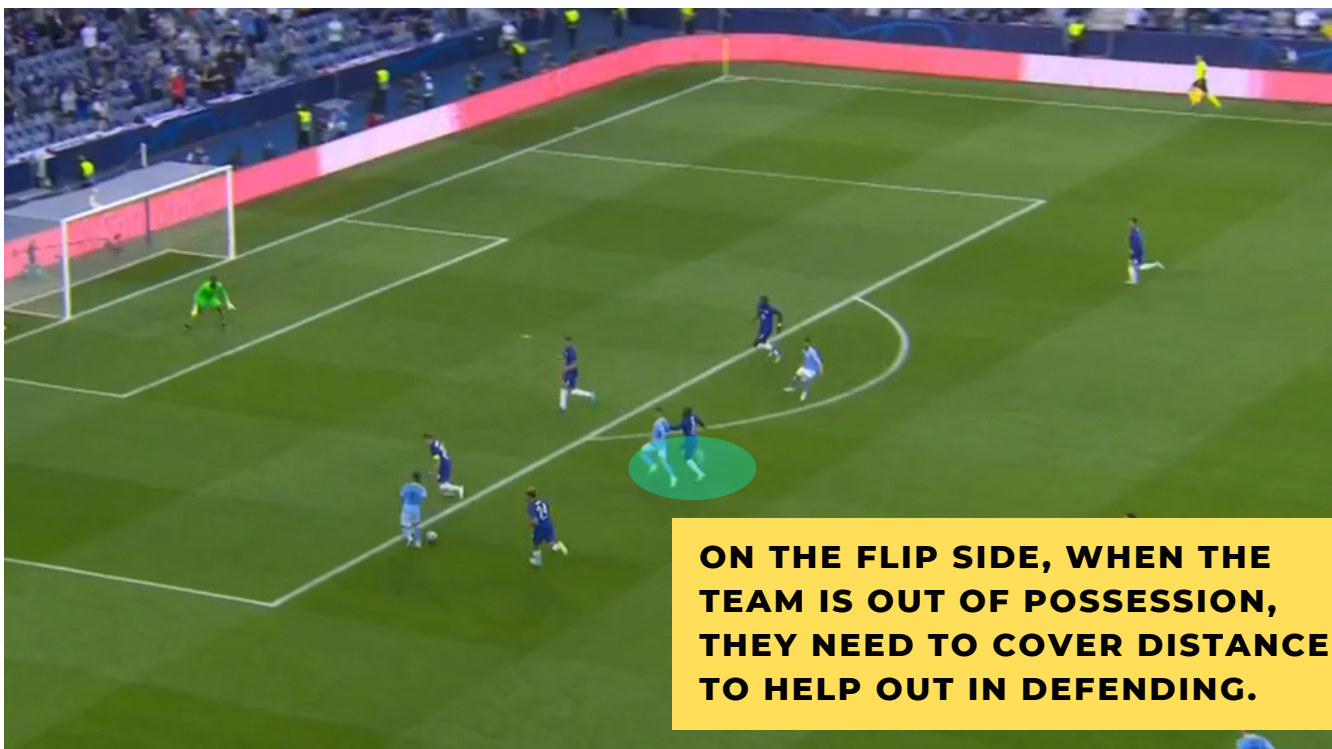
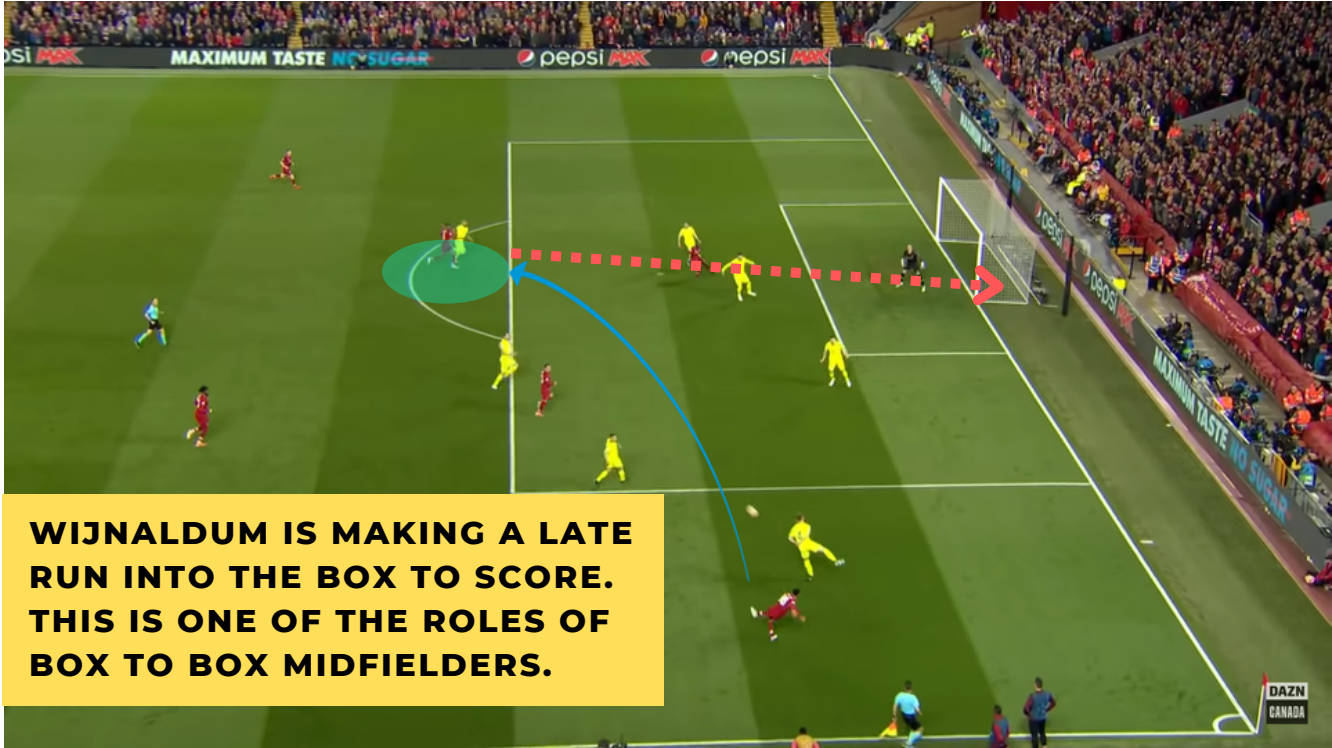
CM Characteristics

- Work Rate
- Leadership
- Communication
- Aerial Ability
- 50/50 Ball Winner
- Fitness/Stamina
- Composure
- Accurate Passing
- Tactical Awareness

Depending on the team's tactics, the CM will often play alongside the 10 or the 6. If there are only 2 central midfielders, this player will be a hybrid and assume both an attacking/box-to-box midfielder role.

6

BOX TO BOX MIDFIELDER



7

DEFENSIVE MIDFIELDER



The Defensive Midfielder plays in front of the defensive line. They are more defensive-minded and tactically aware of their surroundings both offensively and defensively.

CDM ROLE

The CDM position requires players to organize play from central areas.

Through their game, they can dictate the tempo and speed of play. They provide a smooth transition of the ball from the defense to attacking players.

The CDM must have exceptional positional sense, anticipation, and a high work rate.

Defensively they are required to be aggressive in tackles and win the ball. Offensively, they need to be an option to relieve pressure for defenders and a supporting option for attackers

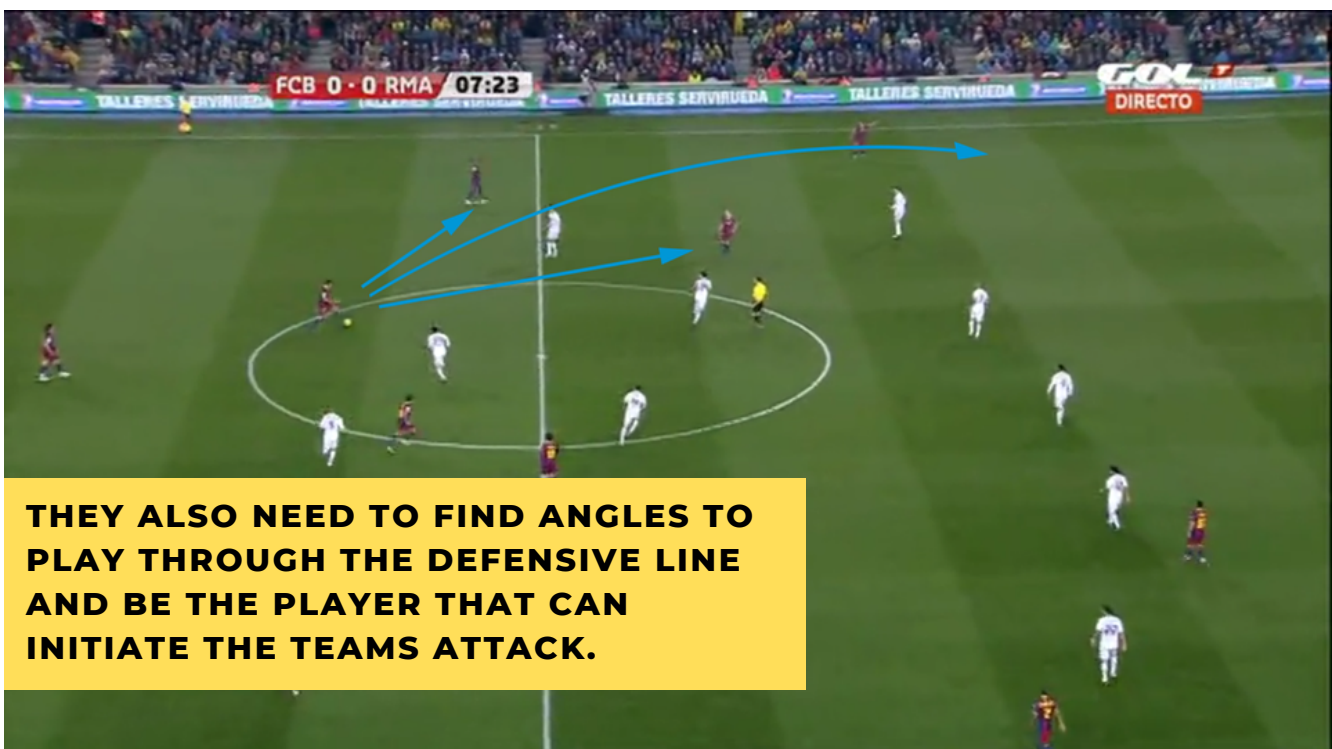
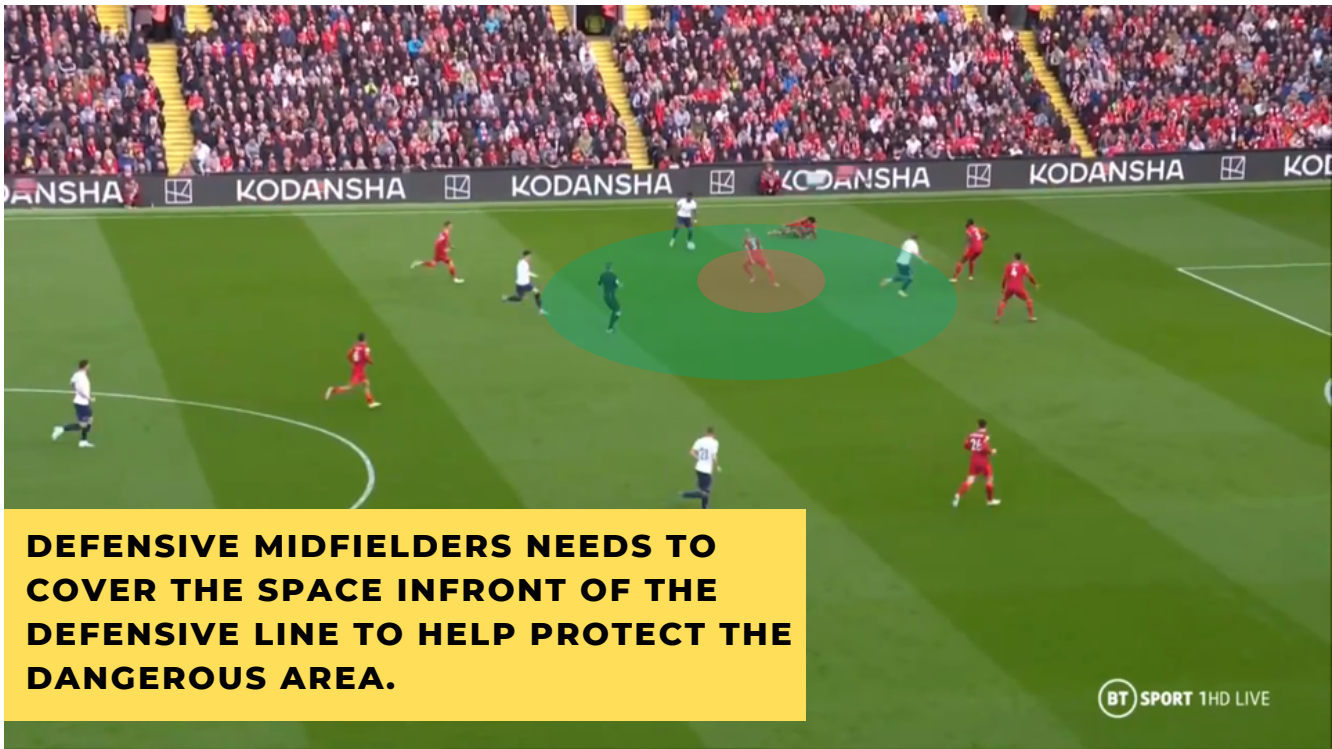
CDM Characteristics

- Work Rate
- Leadership
- Communication
- Aerial Ability
- 50/50 Ball Winner
- Fitness/Stamina
- Composure
- Accurate Passing
- Short/Long Range
- Long Distance Shooting
- Tactical Awareness

The CDM player should always be aware of their surroundings as they do not have much time in the middle. They should look to relieve pressure from one side of the pitch by switching play.

7

DEFENSIVE MIDFIELDER



8 SPEEDY WINGER



Wingers play on the flanks and provide attacking options out wide. Their main job is to create opportunities whether that be through their 1v1 skills, accurate crossing, or combination play.

WINGER ROLE

The winger will usually sit in a more advanced position on the flanks with their main aim being to put pressure on the opposition defense by whipping crosses into the box or cutting inside to create attacking opportunities.

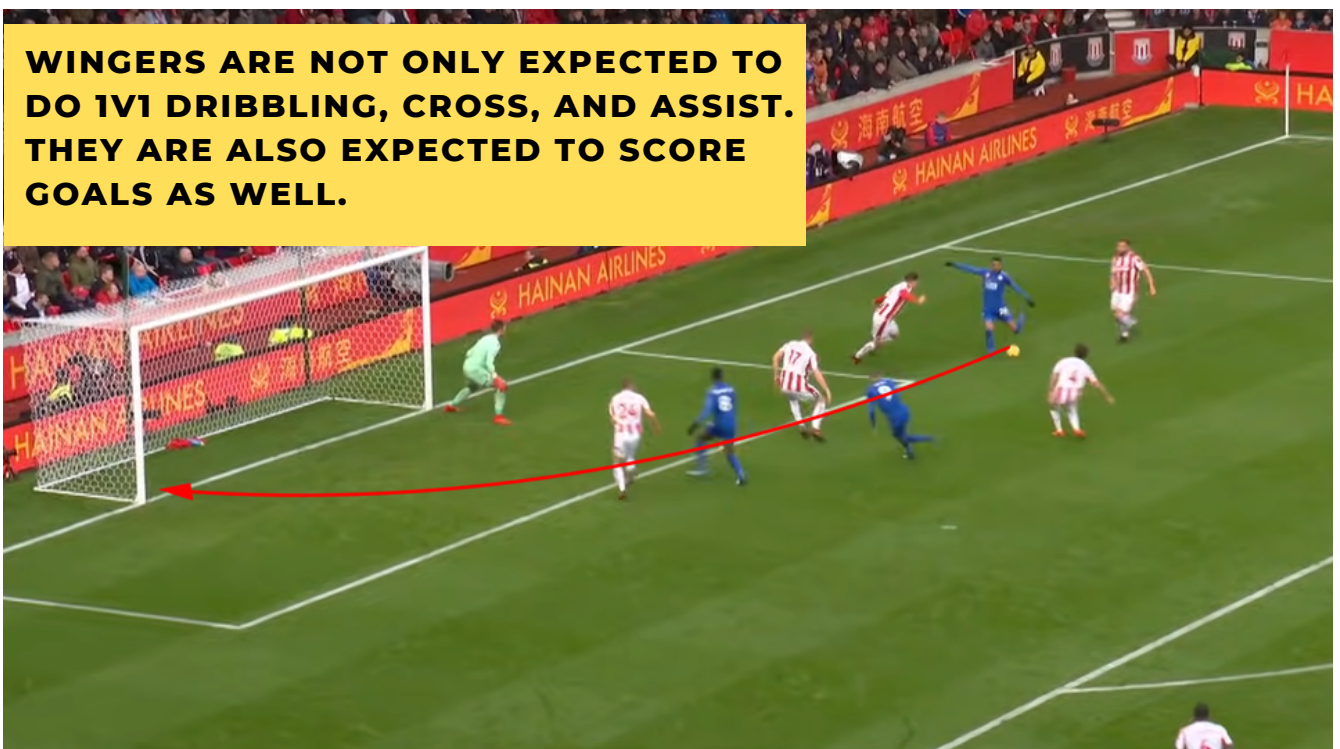
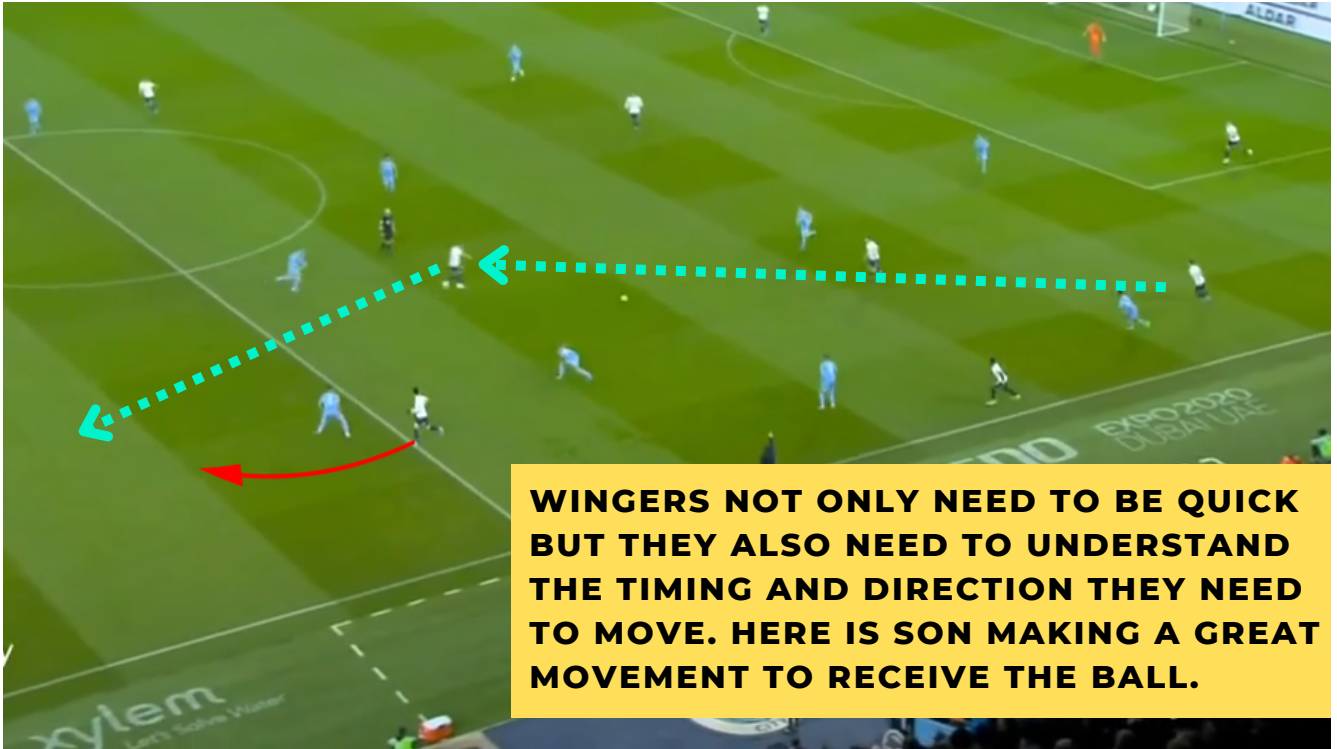
Key attributes in a winger include pace, an ability to cross accurately and consistently, dangerous dribbling skills, and an eye for scoring goals.

Winger Characteristics

- Crossing
- 1v1 Dribbling Skills
- Shooting
- Fitness/Stamina
- Speed/Pace
- Shifty/Agile/Quick
- Goal Scorer
- Acceleration

In the attacking third, the winger's main objective should be to create an opportunity. When defending, the winger needs to be in positions to cover passing lanes to opposing fullbacks/wingers.

8 SPEEDY WINGER



9 GOAL SCORING MACHINE



The Striker or the "9" is considered the goal scorer. Your main job is to score GOALS!

STRIKER ROLE

There are different types of strikers and it's important for you to identify which one you are

- Target Man
- Center Forward
- Striker

Target Man tend to be physical, strong, big, and dominate aerial duels. They hold the ball up well to bring other attackers into play.

Center Forwards will also hold the ball up to bring other attackers into play but have different characteristics.

Striker Characteristics

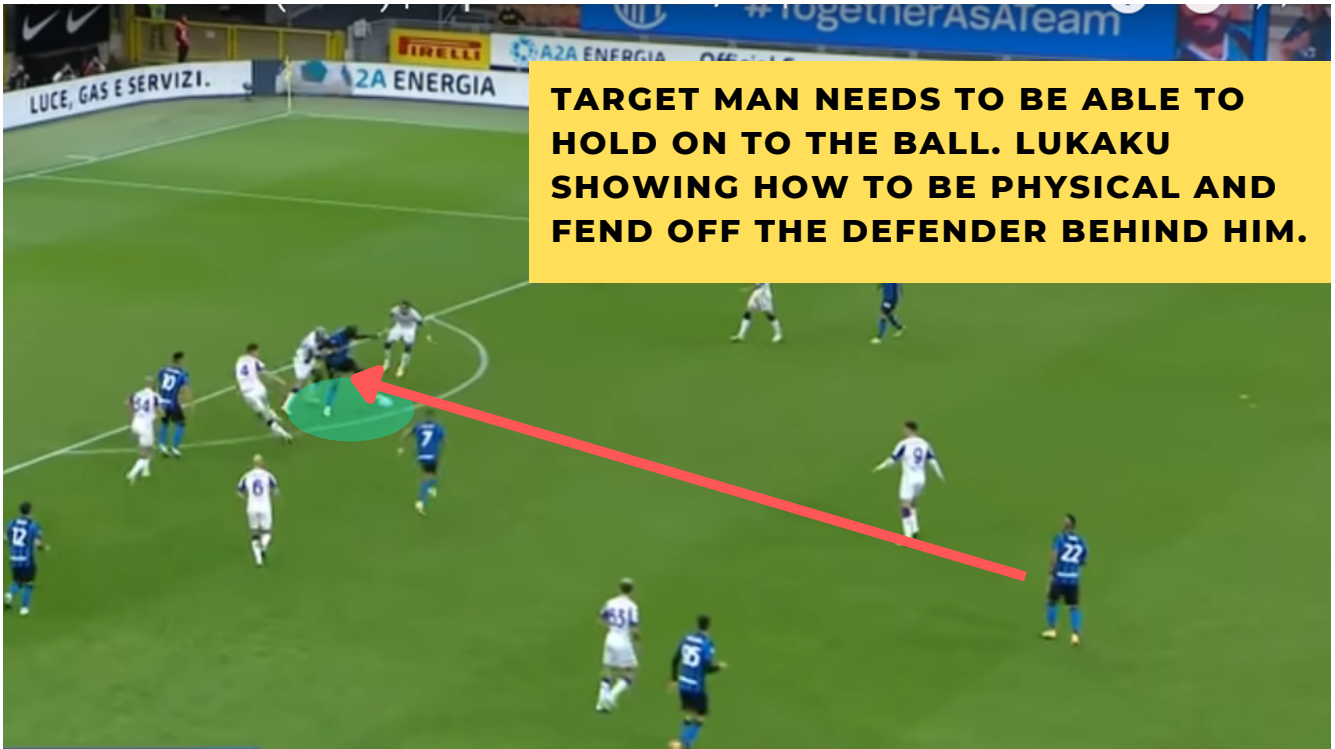
- Confidence
- Goal Scorer
- First Touch
- Positioning
- Aerial Ability
- Shooting
- Composure
- Accurate Passing
- Tactical Awareness

They can position themselves well in order to score goals. These players are called "poachers".

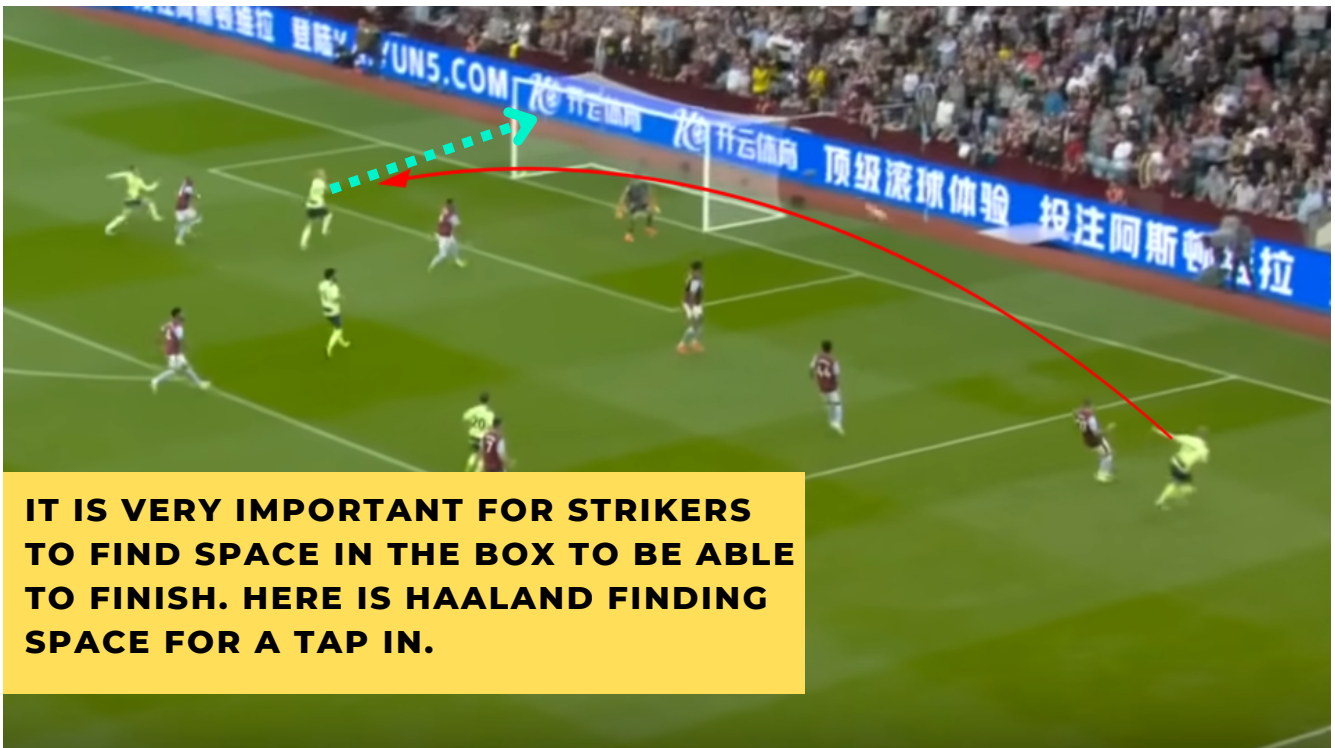
Strikers tend to be smaller, quicker, and more pacier players. They will use their dribbling ability and quickness to get past player to create opportunities to score goals.

9

GOAL SCORING MACHINE



TARGET MAN NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO HOLD ON TO THE BALL. LUKAKU SHOWING HOW TO BE PHYSICAL AND FEND OFF THE DEFENDER BEHIND HIM.



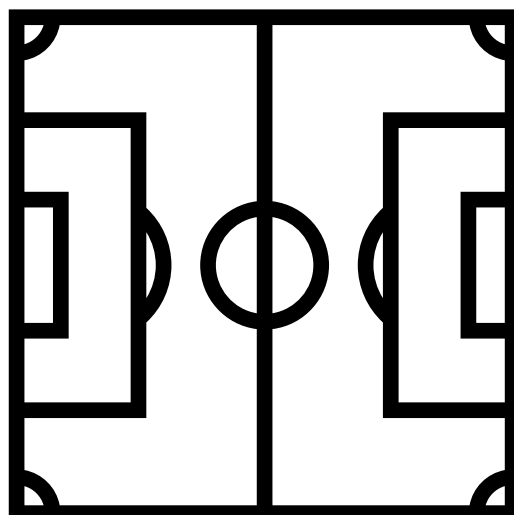
IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR STRIKERS TO FIND SPACE IN THE BOX TO BE ABLE TO FINISH. HERE IS HAALAND FINDING SPACE FOR A TAP IN.

10 FORMATIONS

When it comes to formations, it tells us where players are positioned on the pitch in relation to each other on the pitch. Formations allow teams to have a better understanding of their game plan - attacking and defending.

Formations can depend on many factors! It can depend on the quality of players, the fitness of players, and also the skill of the other team.

In the next page you will find the top 5 formations used in the modern game. These formations tend to change as the game goes. For example, Pep Guardiola's Manchester City starts game with a formation 4-3-3. In the attack, they are in a 2-3-5 formation to pick out the half spaces and space in behind.



10 FORMATIONS

1



4-4-2

This formation is considered to balance the team more than other formations. When a team has the ball and can start attacking, they are able to do so by pushing up numbers. If they need to drop back and play solid defense they tend to move together to create a big defensive block.

2



4-3-3

With a triangular midfield, teams will be able to create many opportunities through the gaps. Teams that have very good central midfielders often use this formation. Offensively, teams can attack with a good number of players pushing up the pitch. Defensively, this formation typically turns into a 4-5-1.

10 FORMATIONS

3



4-3-2-1

Teams using this formation will often be more aggressive in the attack by pushing up wide/fullback players into the attack. Ideally, teams want to control possession and control the midfield with this formation. Controlling the midfield will allow teams to draw out defenders and create plenty of gaps and numerical advantages throughout the field if played correctly.

4



4-5-1

A defensive-minded formation, where teams look to always be in numerical advantage in the midfield. This requires wingers to sit back a bit more and not join in the attack as much as other formations. When the attacking option does become available, this formation may convert into a 4-3-3.

10 FORMATIONS

5



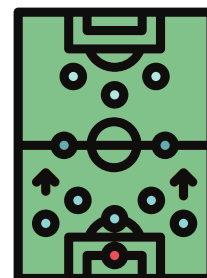
3-5-2

This formation if played correctly will cause plenty of problems in the attack. If not, there will be many vulnerable spots to cover because plenty of players will be caught out of position. Fullbacks are required to be extremely fit to cover plenty of ground down the flanks. Defensively, this may convert into a 5-3-2.



Manchester City's 2-3-5 formation during build up and attack.

END CREDITS



Hopefully by now you have a better understanding of what each position does in football. You understand what's required from you and what your teammates should be doing. These concepts/views of football are how we see the game! There are plenty of other ways to see the game. One thing is certain, the game is constantly evolving so you will always learn something new everyday and it is our job to continue to learn and adapt to the modern era.

If you want to continue learning, join our community to help guide you in the right direction so that you can keep growing into the player you are looking to become!

Special thanks for the graphics to @Fb_insight