

**TACTICAL
TIPS**

**“Defending
vs. Direct Play”**

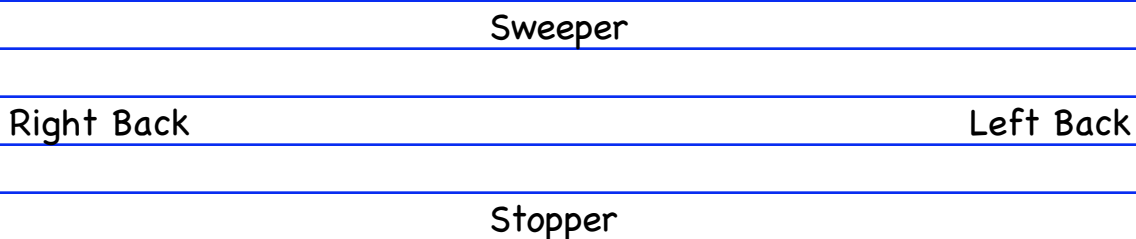
At the advanced, elite level, many teams employ an attacking style called “Direct Play”, where the object is to play the ball up, over and behind the back line of defenders.

In youth soccer, this is called “dump and chase” soccer.

Both are easy to defend...in theory.

If you are playing against a team using “Direct Play” or “dump and chase”, the key to defending against this style is to play with a Sweeper -- a central defender who plays behind the Outside Backs and (if you play with 4 defenders) another Center Back (or Stopper).

If you play with 4 in the back, play it in a Diamond Formation:



The Sweeper is now able to collect any ball that is played behind the defense. It is important to teach the other defenders to rotate should the Sweeper have to make a run toward either sideline to retrieve a direct play attempt:

