

Some Thoughts On Scoring Goals

1. Approximately 1/3 of all goals are scored off crosses.
 - the best or most effective crosses come from the area stretching from the edge of the 6-yard box (*extend the line of the 6-yard box out toward each touchline*) to just outside the penalty area (*extend the line of the 18-yard box out toward each touchline*).
 - the best or most effective crosses land in the middle of the penalty box, near the penalty mark/spot or between the penalty mark/spot and the top of the 6-yard box.
 - the back or far post is a more potential scoring target than the near post.
2. A key to scoring is “creating” a scoring opportunity and scoring opportunities arise from:
 - creative runs by attackers;
 - attacking dribbling -- attackers taking on defenders in a 1v1 situation;
 - maintaining width in the attack;
 - having back support;
 - drop passes to the top of the box to midfielders or defenders.
3. The worst shot is the one not taken!
4. Coach players to follow the shots and look for rebounds
5. On close, angled shots think:

“HIGH TO THE NEAR POST/ LOW TO THE BACK POST”

- It is easier for a goalkeeper to move the entire body laterally toward the near post thus making it easier to block a low shot, so...**SHOOT HIGH TO THE NEAR POST**
- It is more difficult for a goalkeeper to dive and/or get low toward the back post, so...**SHOOT LOW TO THE BACK POST**

NOTE: *a major problem in youth soccer is players dribbling too much when in potential scoring opportunities. This is especially true of young girls who have a greater fear of failure -- that is, missing the shot or hitting a weak shot; whereas boys have less of that fear of failure. Players often try to dribble as close to the goal as possible. Coach players to shoot off their first touch*

Some Thoughts On Crossing The Ball

1. The first rule of thumb about crossing the ball is:
“ELIMINATE THE GOALKEEPER” -- Do not allow the Goalkeeper to catch or block the cross
2. If the first defender is marking closely, the attacker should attempt to dribble to the endline and attempt to turn in toward goal. At that point, the attacker needs to cross the ball low and hard diagonally toward the top of the 6-yard box. A second attacker should be making a diagonal run toward the player in possession of the ball with third attackers covering the middle of the goal and the back post. If there is just one third attacker, this player should cover the area between the middle of the goal and the back post
3. “EARLY” crosses are an excellent weapon. An “early” cross is taken from the area by either touchline, 18-30 yards from the goal line
4. “EARLY” crosses should be attempted when the defending players are tracking back but have not yet entered the penalty area
5. “EARLY” crosses are hooked behind the defenders
6. “EARLY” crosses should be waist-high or lower
7. When crossing from the flanks, the ball should be struck:
 - low to the near post
 - high to the middle or back post
 - bent behind the defensive line, while also bending away from the goalkeeper
8. When crossing from the endline, the ball should be struck:
 - low and diagonally back toward the near post and/or penalty mark
 - chipped to the back post

CONCEPTS OF ATTACKING



“Framing The Goal”

There are three (3) areas that need to be covered to effectively frame the goal:

- the Near Post (post closest to ball)
- the Middle part of the goal area
- the Back or Far Post

> The Near Post

- the player covering the near post should aim his or her run to go past the post a yard or two and end up facing the player with the ball
- this means that he or she will have his or her back to the field of play
- should the ball go past the near post framer, he or she needs only to turn around and continue covering the post
- the near post framer should be prepared to:
 - head flick the ball backwards toward the back or far post
 - be prepared for a rebound or loose ball off a goalkeeper or defender mishap/mistake
 - be prepared to redirect a shot

> The Middle Area

- this is the most important framer and often the one who gets to the ball
- the Middle framer should never enter the 6-yard goalie box unless the ball is loose
- the Middle framer must be prepared to head the ball

> The Back (or Far) Post

- this framer should always make a diagonal or bending run toward the post, with his or her hips square to the goal posts
- the Back or Far Post framer should think shot first and be prepared to finish with a header or volley

If there are only two (2) players (+ the player in possession) making the run to goal then the areas to be covered should be the middle and back/far post. The Middle framer can always move to cover the Near post.

NOTE: Always cover the Back or Far Post!

Simply put, an attacking team's best friend is width. The most potent weapon to unbalance a defense is a ball played wide in the middle or attacking third. From here, the attacking options become dangerous -- a dribble to the endline with a low, hard, diagonal cross moving away from the goalkeeper; a high, bending cross from 20 yards out, the ball heading toward the back post, curving away from the goalkeeper but toward another attacker.

Some things to consider about **Attacking with Width**:

- > Good flank players must be superior technicians, excelling in the 1v1 environment;
- > Good flank players must be able to cross the ball as an “inswinger” (the ball bending toward the goal) and as an “outswinger” (the ball bending away from the goal);
- > Width in the attack opens space in the middle and at the back post or weakside area.

Attacking With Width Options:

- > Dribble down the sideline, turn inwards toward goal, and cross the ball low and hard diagonally toward the penalty spot;
- > Dribble down the sideline until you are about 9-10 yards from the endline and cross the ball toward the middle or back post; advanced players should hit an out-swinger, the ball moving away from the goalkeeper.
- > Cross the ball “early” -- an early cross is done from about 5-8 yards from the sideline and 20-30 yards from the goalline; the ball is struck as an “outswinger” going behind the retreating the defenders.

Attacking With Width Problems:

- > The outside midfielder, when not in possession of the ball, leaves his or her spot, moving toward the ball or the middle of the field;
- > The flank player, when in possession of the ball, either crosses the ball too soon or passes the ball too soon.

Attacking With Width Drills/Games:

- > 5v5 in a grid that is wider than it is long (50x30)
- > “Line Soccer”
- > Place 2 or 3 goals on each endline