

11 against 10

– why can it be so difficult?



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Preface

Why should one deal with the situation 11 against 10? It appears obvious that the team playing with 11 has an advantage and better chance of winning the game. As described in this report, it does not always seem to be case. My experience is that coaches even a top-level do not prepare the 11 vs. 10 or 10 vs. 11 situation, and in my opinion, it should be a challenge for a coach to optimise any condition that can make the team successful. Like set-pieces, the 11 vs. 10 and 10 vs. 11 situation should be discussed and trained. It may be argued that we - as coaches - do not have the time to train and prepare such situations which may be regarded as having minor influence. Considering that the 11 against 10 situation occurs in about every fifth match, it appears logical to focus on it, even though it often lasts less than 30 minutes. In the present report I have included up-to-date statistical analysis, interviewed top-coaches with many years of experience and made tactical considerations as well as included exercises and drills, to stimulate to a further discussion of this topic. I must apologize for not dealing with female football, but it was beyond the scope of the project.

It will like to express my gratitude and thanks to the coaches Massimiliano Allegri (AC Milan), Luigi Delneiri (Juventus FC), Sir Alex Ferguson & Mike Phelan (Manchester United), and Morten Olsen (Danish National Team) for taking the time to discuss these matters with me. Also to Casper Skovgaard, who has played a key role in the analysis of the games.

It may not be the best team that wins, but the team best prepared.

Jens Bangsbo
September, 2011

Definitions

For simplicity, the team which has a player sent off and being reduced to 10 players will be called the 10-team and the other team is named the 11-team. The team playing a home will be called home-team and the team playing away the away-team.

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I. Summary

Playing 11 against 10 will certainly lead to the expectation of a win. Based on the analysis of the 2010/2011 season for three major European leagues and the Danish Premier League it is also clear that the team numerical superior (11-team) gets 15% and 20% more points at home and away, respectively. However, in more than two-third of the games the result was not changed after one team had a player sent off. If the home-team was in the lead at the moment the quest team had a player sent off it won more than 9 out of 10 games, but if it is was a draw the home-team was winning less than half of the matches (48%). When the quest team was playing 11 against 10 in a lead the result was maintain in about two-third of the matches (61%), but it lost 8 out of 10 games when the home-team was in the lead and had a player sent off. In addition, even if it was a draw when the home player was sent off it was more likely that home-team would win (35%) than the quest team (27%). The earlier a player was sent off the higher was the probability that the team playing 11 against 10 got a positive outcome of the period being numerical superior at home, but when playing away it was only obvious if the opponent had a player sent off in the first 30 minutes. Furthermore, it is amazing that the top-level teams did not get more points in games playing 11 against 10 compared to 11 vs. 11. Thus, the results of the present investigation suggest that it may be useful to have a clear strategy of handling the 11 against 10 situation. However, in a group of Danish top-coaches slightly less than half responded that they were not making any tactical changes when becoming numerical superior and few were training that situation. Actually the Danish teams at home performed worse when playing 11 vs. 10 compared to 11 vs. 11 (1.00 vs. 1.58 points per game). The present report also presents the strategy of a number of top-coaches and provides guidelines of how to manage the 11 against 10 situation. In addition, a number of practical exercises and drills are presented.

II. Introduction

In the past there have been a number of attempts to estimate the effect of a red card on performance. Studies have analysed and made statistical analysis of games where one of the teams had a player sent off. Caliendo and Radic (2006) studied the FIFA World matches from 1930-2002 and found that the 10-team was not doing worse if the sending off occurred in the second half. Data from the 1997/1998 season of the English Premier League presented by Carmichael and Thomas (2005) argued that guest teams are better able to adapt to the disadvantage of having one less player. However, the statically material was limited and no firm conclusions could be made.

In a study of all matches in the German Bundesliga between 1963 and 2004 with one or more red cards, it was concluded that an expulsion weakens the team and that its scoring and winning chances decrease (Bar-Eli et al., 2006). In addition, that the 11-team playing at home is more likely to score the first goal than when playing away. However, the data were not compared to the 11 against 11 situation where the home-team is more likely to win a game. Thus, in a study by Mechtel et al. (2010) studying German Bundesliga, the home-team was shown to win 48% of the matches and the away-team only 27%.

One of the most complete studies was carried out by Mechtel et al. (2010) using data from the German Bundesliga for the seasons 1999/2000 to 2008/2009. In the ten years period 672 players were sent off. The distribution of the time when the player were given a red card is shown in Table 1, showing that 77% of the sending off occurred in the second half with 40% in the last 15 minutes of the game. A player was on average sent off in each fifth match with the away-team having a red card twice as often as the home-team (see Table 2). In about 3% of the matches two players were given a red card. No correlation was found between the number of red cards and the strength of the team, i.e. the strong team did not get fewer players sent off as often believed.

Table 1. Time when a player was sent off

Time (min)	Total	Percent
1-15	10	1.5
16-30	48	7.1
31-45	94	14.0
46-60	118	17.6
60-75	135	20.1
75-90	267	39.7

Tables 2 and 3 show that in most cases the result of the game did not change after a player was sent off. For example, a home-team in a lead when receiving a red card nonetheless wins 70% of the games, with a corresponding value for the guest team being 62%. This also means that in 30-40% of the games with a player being sent off the final score, in terms of victory, draw, defeat, deviates from the score at the minute of sending off, with the 10-team being successful in 32.7% of these games. They found that the key factors explaining the change of a match following a sending-off are the strength of each team, the remaining time to go, and whether the penalized team is playing a home. A sending off only affected the guest team negatively when it occurred before 70 minutes of play, while the red card on average had negative impact on the home-team's performance.

Table 2. Development of result when home team had a player sent-off

	Home team player sent-off			Total
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads	
Home team wins	33	13	3	49
Draw	11	37	3	51
Guest team wins	3	18	59	80
Total	47	68	65	180

Table 3. Development of result when guest team had a player sent-off

	Home team player sent-off			Total
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads	
Home team wins	180	56	8	244
Draw	15	60	15	120
Guest team wins	6	14	37	57
Total	201	130	60	391

Thus, many of the data presented are collected over a long period and are focusing on just one league, such as the Bundesliga, or a special event, e.g. the FIFA World Cup. To obtain a picture of the present situation and compare different league, in the present report four leagues, the Spanish, English, Italian and Danish league were analysed. The aim was to investigate how often a team is successfully in handling the 11 against 10 situation in relation to strength of the team, time of becoming numerical superior, playing home or away, and the result at the time a player was sent off.

So far the statically information has been collected and presented to provide a basic of understanding how successful the 11- and 10-team was. However, little focus has been on how the coach is handling the 11 vs. 10 and 10 vs. 11 situations. It is difficult to obtain these types of information from statistical analysis, but one approach used in the present report was to examine whether either one or the other team was making a substitution shortly after a player got a red card. In addition, some top-coaches were interviewed to gain information about how they are approaching the situation and a number of tactical considerations are presented including drills and games to practice the 11 against 10 situation.

III. Methods – Statistical Evaluation

All games in the 2010/2011 season of the English Premier League, Italian Serie A, Spanish La Liga and Danish Superleague were analysed. For each game the result for each 15-minute period and the final score of the game was recorded. The teams from each league were divided into four categories depending on the position in the table at the end of the season: Top (1), middle-upper (2), middle-lower (3) and bottom (4), each representing $\frac{1}{4}$ of all teams. The games where a player was sent off were analysed separately. The time and position (goalkeeper (G), full-back (FB), central defender (CD), central midfielder (CM), external midfielder (EM) and attacker (A)) of the player sent off was noted as well as the result of the period with one team being numerical superior to the other team. It was also recorded whether any of the teams were making a substitution within the first 5 minutes after the player was sent off. In a number of games also the 11-team had a player sent off and at that moment the analysis was no longer included in the data. Likewise, from the moment the 10-team had another player sent off, the data are not included. Specifically within each league and for all leagues the outcome of the period with one team being reduced to 10 players was evaluated and the results of the games playing 11 against 10 for parts of a game were compared to the games playing 11 against 11 during the entire game.

IV. Results and Discussion – Statistical Evaluation

In this chapter the most important results of the investigation will be presented and discussed.

Number of players sent off

The total number of matches studied, i.e. all games in the 2010/2011 season for the Italian, Spanish, English and Danish League, was 1338. In 236 of the matches a player was sent off, corresponding to 17.6% of the games (see Table 4), and in the following only the games where one team played 11 against 10 will be considered and compared to the 11 vs. 11 situation. The number of games where the home-team played 11 vs. 10 was 130 with the corresponding number for the guest team being 108 (Table 4), i.e. the away-team had only slightly more players sent off in contrast to the study by Mechtel et al. (2010).

There were significant differences between the various countries. The number of 11 vs. 10 games in the Spanish and Italian league was 89 and 75, respectively, corresponding to 23.4% and 19.7% of the games. This means that in about each fifth game this situation occurred. In contrast, it happens only in 13.9% of the games in the English and 10.6% in the Danish League.

There was no difference in the number of players sent off related to the classification of the team with the top, upper middle, lower middle and bottom teams having 58, 66, 66, and 48 players sent off, respectively.

Table 4. Number of games playing 11 against 10

	Number of games	Number of games 11 vs. 10			
		Total		Home-team	Away-team
		No	%		
Total	1338	238	17.9	130	108
League					
Italian	380	75	19.8	40	35
England	380	53	14.0	29	24
Spain	380	89	23.6	52	37
Denmark	198	21	10.7	9	12

Time when a player was sent off

The majority of players were sent off in the last 30 minutes of the game (56.7%), and about three-quarter of the players were sent off in the second half (see Table 5) as also observed by Mechtel et al. (2010) in their study of German Bundesliga players in a ten year period (59.8% and 74.1% , respectively).

Table 5. Distribution of time when a player was sent off

Time (min)	Total	Percent
1-14	6	2.5
15-29	21	8.8
30-45	37	15.5
46-60	39	16.4
61-75	49	20.6
76-90	86	36.1

The result in games playing 11 against 11 compared to 11 against 10

Evaluated based on the final result obtained in the 11 vs. 10 games compared to the 11 vs. 11 games, it is clear that overall a team is performing better when playing 11 against 10 (see Table 6). Thus, when playing 11 vs. 10 compared to 11 vs. 11 the team gets 14.7% and 20.0% more points home and away, respectively. However, there are major differences between the different countries. With the Spanish and

Italian teams benefitting from the 11 against 10 situation both a home and away, the English teams did not perform better when playing away and the Danish teams even had a marked negative outcome at home (see Table 6). It should be emphasized that the number of observations of the Danish teams playing 11 vs. 10 at home was only 9.

Table 6. Points obtained in games playing 11 vs. 11 and 11 vs.10 home and away

	Home-team			Away-team		
	11 vs. 11	11 vs. 10	Difference	11 vs. 11	11 vs. 10	Difference
Total	1.70	1.95	14.7%	1.30	1.56	20.0%
League						
Italian	1.66	1.98	19.3%	1.34	1.46	9.0%
England	1.71	2.10	22.8%	1.29	1.29	0%
Spain	1.82	2.02	11.0%	1.18	1.73	46.6%
Denmark	1.58	1.00	-58.0%	1.42	1.83	28.9%

When comparing the level of points obtained in games 11 vs. 10 against 11 vs. 11 played at home taken into account the strength of the teams, it becomes clear that it is only the lower middle and bottom teams which are benefitting from the situation (see Table 7A). Similarly, it was the lower middle teams that got the largest improvements in the away games, where also the upper middle teams and the bottom teams had better results playing 11 against 10 compared to 11 vs. 11 (see Table 7B). As for the home games the top teams did not have a better result when being numerical superior in part of a game.

Table 7. Points obtained in games playing 11 vs. 11 and 11 vs. 10 at home (A) and away (B) in relation to quality of the team

Level	1			2			3			4		
A – Home	11vs.11	11vs.10	Diff.									
	2.25	2.23	-0.9%	1.79	1.85	3.4%	1.53	2.00	30.7%	1.26	1.68	33.3%
B – Away	11vs.11	11vs.10	Diff.									
	1.85	1.88	1.6%	1.25	1.45	16.0%	1.09	1.63	49.5%	1.03	1.18	14.6%

Outcome of the period playing 11 against 10

Another way to evaluate the outcome of the 11 vs. 10 situation is to determine the result of the period when the team is playing 11 against 10. Such values are shown in Table 8 and compared to the average results of the team when playing 11 against 11. It is clear that such a comparison brings up a more complex picture than described above, showing also that a Spanish home-team playing 11 vs. 10 and an English away-team was not successful. It should, however, be taken into account how much time is left at the moment when the team starts playing 11 against 10. If the time is short, it can be difficult to create a result in the period where the team is numerical superior. Table 5 shows that the number of players sent off was considerable higher towards the end of the game, then not allowing the team much time to “win” the period where it is numerical superior. Table 9 illustrates this point. It is clear that the earlier that a player is sent off the higher is the probability that the 11-team will get a positive outcome of the period being one player more. However, for the away-team it is only obvious if the opponent had a player sent off in the first 30 minutes. Table 9 also illustrates that 11-team playing at home did not benefit much from the situation if the away-team was reduced to 10 players in the last 15 minutes of the match.

Table 8. Points obtained in the period playing 11 vs.10 home and away compared to playing 11 vs. 11

	Home-team			Away-team		
	11 vs. 11	11 vs. 10	Difference	11 vs. 11	11 vs. 10	Difference
Total	1.70	1.82	7.1%	1.30	1.37	5.4%
League						
Italian	1.66	1.83	10.2%	1.34	1.34	0%
England	1.71	2.10	22.8%	1.29	1.08	-19.4%
Spain	1.82	1.65	-10.3%	1.18	1.49	26.3%
Denmark	1.58	1.22	12.7%	1.42	1.67	17.6%

Table 9. Points obtained in the period playing 11 vs. 10 home and away in relation to when the player was sent off

Time (min)	Home-team (11 vs. 10)						Away-team (11 vs. 10)					
	0-15	15-30	30-45	45-60	60-75	75-90	0-15	15-30	30-45	45-60	60-75	75-90
Total	2.40	2.06	2.33	1.85	1.74	1.47	3.00	2.00	1.43	1.63	1.56	0.92

Whether there is a positive outcome of the period playing 11 against 10 can also be examined by comparing the point obtained in this period with the average outcome of a game, i.e. 1.33 points (mean of 0, 1 and 3 points) per game, i.e. whether the team wins the period when being numerical superior. In such comparison the teams perform better at home than away when playing 11 against 10, which was the case for all leagues (see Table 8). Playing away a team just reached the average number of points (1.37 vs. 1.33), with the English teams doing worse (1.08) and the Danish team performing significant better (1.67) than the average.

In 8.5% of the 11 vs. 10 games where the home-team was numerical superior, the team was losing the period, whereas they in 48.5% and 43.1% of games had a draw or were winning (see Table 10). It is noteworthy that none of English team playing 11 against 10 at home did lose that period, whereas the Danish teams lost as many as they won. For the away-team playing 11 against 10 the corresponding numbers

are 22.2%, 48.1% and 29.6%, respectively, i.e. the team is almost loosing as many periods as they are winning.

Table 10. Distribution of points in the period playing 11 vs. 10 home and away

Points	Home-team (11 vs. 10)			Away-team (11 vs. 10)		
	0	1	3	0	1	3
Total	8.5%	48.5%	43.1%	22.2%	48.1%	29.6%
League						
Italian	7.5%	47.5%	45.0%	22.9%	48.6%	28.6%
England	0%	44.8%	55.2%	22.9%	31.4%	14.3%
Spain	11.5%	50.0%	38.5%	16.2%	51.4%	32.4%
Denmark	22.2%	55.6%	22.2%	16.7%	41.7%	41.7%

Not much differences in the points obtained in the period being numerical superior were observed related to the quality of the team when playing at home, giving 1.7-1.9 point per game, except in Denmark where only the top-teams got more points than average (see Table 11). When playing away the top-teams were doing much better than other teams when being the 11-team, but not in England (see Table 11).

Table 11. Points obtained in the period playing 11 vs. 10 home and away in relation to quality of the team

Level	Home-team (11 vs. 10)				Away-team (11 vs. 10)			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Total	1.91	1.76	1.73	1.68	1.82	1.23	1.33	0.96
League								
Italian	2.00	1.40	1.71	2.38	1.92	1.40	1.29	0.73
England	2.00	2.25	1.86	2.20	1.33	1.20	0.75	1.20
Spain	1.88	1.80	1.63	1.23	1.92	1.20	1.40	1.22
Denmark	1.67	1.00	1.33	0.50	2.00	1.00	2.50	0.67

Change in result during the period playing 11 against 10

In the analysis above it has not been considered that it may not be necessary for a 11-team to win the period when they are playing 11 against 10, i.e. if they are in a lead at the moment when the opponent had a player sent off. Therefore, another way to analyse the data is to evaluate how often the result of the game was changed in the period 11 vs. 10.

It can be seen from the Table 12, that in 67.2% of the matches no change in the result occurred, and that the 11-team was successful in about two-third of the matches where a change occurred. There was no difference in the number of matches where no changes occurred whether it was the home (67.7%) or the away (66.7%) team that played 11 against 10. However, the home-team was much more successful by having a positive change in 83.3% of the cases compared to 44.4% for the away-team. This means that more than half of the times a game result changed in games, it was that 10-team playing home that was successful.

Table 12. Development of the game after a player was sent off home and away expressed as relative numbers

	All		Home-team			Away-team			
	No change	Change	No change	Change	No change	Change			
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)			
	S*	NS**	S	NS	S	NS			
Total	67.2	65.4	34.6	67.7	83.3	16.7	66.7	44.4	55.6
League									
Italian	68.0	66.7	33.3	62.5	86.7	13.3	74.3	33.3	66.7
England	66.0	61.1	38.9	75.9	100	0	54.2	33.3	66.7
Spain	68.5	64.3	35.7	67.3	70.6	29.4	70.3	54.5	45.5
Denmark	61.9	75.0	25.0	66.7	100	0	58.3	60.0	40.0

*S = Successful **NS = Non-Successful

When a home-team had a player sent off, it won 78.6% of the matches and did not lose any if they were in a lead (see Table 13). If it was a draw at the moment the

home player was sent off it could almost equally become a draw (27.8%) or go in either directions (35.1% for home victory and 27.0% for away victory). In contrast, if the guest team was in the lead it won 83.7% of the games and did not lose any.

Table 13. Development of result when home-team had a player sent-off expressed in numbers (A) and in relative numbers (%; B)

A				
	Home team player sent-off			
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads	Total
Home team wins	22	13	0	35
Draw	6	14	7	27
Guest team wins	0	10	36	46
Total	28	37	43	108

B				
	Home team player sent-off (%)			
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads	
Home team wins	78.6	35.1	0	
Draw	21.4	27.8	16.3	
Guest team wins	0	27.0	83.7	
Total	100	100	100	

When an away-team had a player sent off, the home-team won almost all games (92.3%) and lost only 1.9% of the games if it was in a lead (see Table 14, page 20). If it was a draw it ended almost equally with a draw (46.0%) or a victory (48.0%) for the home-team, with 6.0% of the matches being a victory for the away-team. On the other hand, when the guest team was in lead it won 60.7% of the games and only lost 7.1%.

Table 14. Development of result when away-team had a player sent-off expressed in numbers (A) and relative numbers (% , B)

A				
	Home team player sent-off			
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads	Total
Home team wins	48	24	2	74
Draw	3	23	9	35
Guest team wins	1	3	17	21
Total	52	50	28	130

B			
	Home team player sent-off (%)		
	Home team leads	Draw	Guest team leads
Home team wins	92.3	48.0	7.1
Draw	5.8	46.0	32.1
Guest team wins	1.9	6.0	60.7
Total	100	100	100

Substitution in relation to a player being sent off

In slightly more than two-thirds of the game the 11-team did not make a substitution in the first five minutes after the opponent had a player sent off, but there was a marked difference between playing at home or away (see Table 15). At home a change occurred in about one out of five matches whereas when playing away a substitution happen in almost half of the cases. There were also differences between the leagues, where the English league had almost the same number of substitution home and away, in the Italian and Spanish substitutions for the 11-team occurred much more frequently in the away game. In addition, in the Danish league very few substitutions were made both at home and away.

Table 15. Substitution in relation to a player being sent off expressed in relative term (%)

	11 vs. 10						10 vs. 11					
	All		Home-team		Away-team		All		Home-team		Away-team	
	NC*	C**	NC	C								
Total	67.5	32.5	80.2	19.8	54.7	45.3	68.5	31.5	65.1	34.9	71.9	28.1
League												
Italian	66.1	33.9	83.9	16.1	48.4	51.6	62.5	37.5	41.6	58.4	83.3	16.7
England	63.8	36.2	65.5	34.5	66.7	32.3	66.7	32.3	75.0	25.0	58.3	41.7
Spain	67.6	32.4	86.5	33.5	48.6	51.4	70.7	29.3	75.9	24.1	65.5	34.5
Denmark	83.3	16.7	89.0	11.0	78.8	22.2	79.2	20.8	66.7	33.3	91.2	8.8

*NC = No Change **C = Change

Surprisingly, the 10-team did not make more substitutions than the 11-team. In less than one-third of the game the 10-team made a substitution with no significant difference between playing home and away. This was the case for all leagues, except for the English where the home-team being reduced was changing in more than half of the games whereas it happens rarely in the away games. Likewise, in the Danish league in less than one out of 10 games the 10-team playing away did make a substitution.

The major difference in substitutions when becoming the 11-team between home and away could indicate that the coaches in the away games, in contrast to the home games, looks for another strategy, especially in Italy. It striking that this does not seem to be case in the Danish league where few substitutions occurred when a player was sent off both for the 11- and 10-team home and away.

V. Cases

Statistical analyses are useful to generate general information about how things are associated, but a deeper understanding is needed in order to evaluate the practical consequences. At the end of the day, it is job of the coach to evaluate how his/her team is doing. In this section a few cases of teams which have been involved in a number of 11 against 10 games, and have performed very well or badly, will be highlighted.

In the Italian league Catania (lower middle team) played six times 11 against 10 at home and did only win one period. It was against a bottom team after been playing 67 minutes 11 against 10. In the other five games they lost two periods. In none of the games they made any substitutions in the first five minutes after the opponent had a player sent off. Likewise, Deportiva Coruna (bottom team) had three draws and lost one in the four games where they were playing 11 vs. 10 more than 50 minutes at home. Thus, not very successful and they also at the end became relegated. From the same league Villareal played 6 games 11 against 10 at home and won only one of these periods, but did not lose any. When playing away they won two and lost one period (also the game). The latter was against a bottom team even when playing 11 vs. 10 for 53 minutes out of four matches. Thus, in the season Villareal played 11 against 10 in ten matches, mostly with an insufficient result, emphasising the importance of preparing that situation for the team.

Bolton from the lower middle of the Premier League lost two matches against a top and higher middle team, and had a draw in other two matches in the four periods where they played 11 vs. 10 away. A more successful team was Napoli (top), which managed to win three matches and have one draw in the four matches being the 11-team away. At the end of the season they also qualified for the Champions League. Likewise, FC Barcelona, in the four matches playing 11 against 10 away, won three of the periods (against category 2, 3 and 4 teams) and had one draw when being numerical superior against a top-team for 43 minutes.

VI. Tactical Considerations – 11 against 10

There are a number of factors that influence the decision of how to approach the situation of playing 11 against 10, and it may be different from game to game. It may depend on:

- when the player is sent off
- the result at the moment the opponent is reduced to 10 players
- playing home or away
- the strength of own and opponent's team
- the importance of winning the game

The statistical analysis showed that most games will develop in favour of the 11-team if the opponent has a player sent off in the first 30 minutes of the game, and one may conclude that there may not be a need for tactical adjustments. However, it is not given, e.g. playing 11 vs. 10 for 60-75 minutes was only successful in two out of three cases both home and away (see Table 9; page 16). When playing home there is a logical reduction in the chance of being successful the later the opponent is reduced to 10 players after the first 30 minutes (see Table 9). However, it is noteworthy that this is not the case when playing away. Thus, no difference in the result when playing 11 vs. 10 away was observed whether the home-team was reduced to 10 players after 30 or 75 minutes. Thus, a coach may especially benefit from considering how to handle the 11 vs. 10 situation when playing away.

The statistical analysis demonstrated that if the 11-team is in the lead it will most probably win the game both at home (92% of the games) and away (84%) which may justify that the coach is not making any changes in tactical strategy, even though there is always a risk that the team will lose the period. If a team leads at the moment it is reduced to 10 players the static analysis showed, that it wins most of the games both at home (79%) and away (61%), which speaks in favour of the coach of the 11-team taking action. Likewise, if it is a draw the 10-team playing at

home has a greater chance of winning the game than the 11-team (see Table 13). Generally, playing at home and being the 11-team will certainly lead to the expectation of spectators of a win. This puts the players under pressure. Often the away-team has a defensive strategy, which will be reinforced when becoming 10 players causing a constant struggle for the 11-team to create a balance between scoring and not letting the away-team counterattack.

The top-teams often have an attitude of “We can win the game independent on the number of opponents”. The statistical analysis showed that this is the case, but also that the top teams do not win more matches when being numerical superior in a part of the game. Thus, also the coaches of the top-teams have to consider how to optimize that situation. Even skilful teams can lose the part of the game when playing 11 against 10. A recent example is the Barcelona team playing in Madrid in April 2011 against Real. With 15 minutes to the end Real Madrid had a player sent off, but succeed to equalise 3 minutes before the end and get a draw. Likewise, in the Italian league Inter managed to win 2-1 against another top-team, Lazio, even though their goalkeeper was sent-off after 24 minutes and Lazio scored to 1-0. In the Danish league the top-team Brøndby in a game against Silkeborg (lower middle team) at home was in a lead 1-0 when Silkeborg had a player sent off after 25 minutes, and the game ended 2-2. From the statistical analysis it was also clear that at home it was only the lower middle and bottom teams that got a significant benefit out of the 11 vs. 10 situation. It would be expected at the top team and the upper-middle teams should get a better outcome of the 11 against 10 situation. Thus, it may be of value to change the attitude and approach of the coaches.

There can be a number of occasions where one team, even though it is numerical superior can be satisfied with a draw, e.g. when playing against a top-ranked team away or at the end of the season where a point can save the team from relegation. Therefore, the team may not like to take any risks and believe it will be best to continue their way of playing.

VII. Coaches' view

The 11 against 10 situation requires some considerations and tactical strategies. In this section a result from a questionnaire of Danish high level coaches are given and the view of some top coaches in Europe is presented. It is obvious that the strategy may change from game to game dependent on a number of factors, such as the tactical changes by the 10-team, the time and the result at the time when the player is sent off, the quality of own team and opponent, playing home or away, and the importance of winning the game. Nevertheless, it is interesting to understand how the coaches are thinking, and it may give inspiration to develop one's own way of handling the 11 against 10 situation. The interviews are also covering the 10 against 11 situation and presents to some extent the philosophy of the various coaches as well as practical exercises in order to develop the concept (see chapter X).

How do Danish coaches react?

Fourteen coaches at the highest Danish educational level were asked how they handle the situation of playing 11 against 10 if the opponent, at a game at home, had a player sent off 30 minutes before the end of the game and the score was 0-0. Six answered that they were not making any changes to the way the team played, whereas 8 were changing the team tactics with three of them playing with only three defenders compared to the normally four defenders (see Table 16). The others were mainly pushing the full-backs further up and having the external midfield players getting more into the centre.

Table 16. Summary of replies by fourteen Danish high-level coaches to tactical changes when playing 11 against 10

Tactical change		Tactical Substitution			Trained (times per year)		
Yes	No	Shortly after	Later	No	0-3	>3	No
8	6	3	3	8	4	3	7

Three of the coaches would often make a substitution for tactical reasons, whereas three other would consider doing it later in the game. When asked about whether they were training this specific situation seven were replying with a “no” with four of the remaining seven coaches replying that they trained it less than three times a year.

View of top-coaches

Sir Alex Ferguson (AF) Manger and Mike Phelan (MP) First Team Coach, Manchester United

How do you handle the 11 against 10 situation?

AF: I will to a greater extent use the width of the field and make the players make long shifts to make the opponent run more and to create more space in the middle. I also want the players to make more penetrations. We continue with our fast passing, which is part of our basic concept, and I want the players to be even quicker with the ball. If the team has not scored and the game has not been decided or we are behind with 10 minutes left, I have tried many different things, including adding an extra attacker. Even once I put the goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel in the front line, where he actually scored but it was disallowed as he was off-side.

MP: It depends on how the opponent is organizing their team. They may open in the middle by closing in the sides or being compact in the middle. Nevertheless, I will like the players to pass the ball even faster than when playing 11 against 11.

Often the opponent leaves more space to the two central defenders, how are they going to handle that?

AF: I want the central defenders to quickly move the ball forward. If they are not so skilful and feel uncomfortable moving with the ball, they should rapidly pass the ball to a team mate, who has those qualities.

MB: Often the central defenders are making the mistake of slowing down when receiving the ball and keeping it. I want them to immediately look for opportunities and move the ball forward.

How do you control the defensive phase in the 11 against 10 situation?

AF: As I do keep the defensive line and asking the midfield player to cover when the full-backs are moving forward, we are well covered, but it requires extra attention.

MB: I will rather like to lose the ball on the offensive one-third of the field and at the sides than in the middle, so that is also one reason for playing the ball to the sides as soon as it is conquered.

Do you train the 11 against 10 situation?

AF: As the fast passing game is part of our physiology we expect the players to be able also to handle the 11 vs. 10 situation and it is then part of all our training session.

MF: We do a number of times play 11 vs. 10 or 9 vs. 8 in order for the players to experience the opportunities an extra player give. We also play with one or two jokers (players always being with the team in ball possession) with the players having limited touches, e.g. a maximum of two, and the jokers having free touches. This stimulates the players to look for the jokers and play the ball rapidly to them (see game 3; page 47)

How do you see the players approaching the 11 against 10 situation?

AF: The top-class players do have the right understanding of the situation and are not affected by the spectators having higher expectations when playing 11 vs. 10.

MP: Some players have the right attitude, whereas others are not sufficiently focus in the 11 vs. 10 situation. You just have to hope that you have enough of the first category on the field. What you do not want to have is too many “dribbling players”, but rather players who are moving without the ball. In combination with moving the ball from one side to the other, it will create confusion and challenge the opponent making them struggle to cope with the demands. Patience is a key word, often it can be more difficult to play against 10 than 11.

How do you organise your team when playing 10 against 11?

AF: In most cases I will take one of the attackers out and play something like 4-4-1. I will still go for the result and try to score 10 against 11. It is definitely possible to score especially if you have players that are willing to make penetration of the opponent defensive line.

Massimiliano Allegri, First team coach AC Milan

How do you handle the 11 against 10 situation?

I do not change the basic concept when we become 11 against 10. However, I try to open more space in the middle by having the full-backs in both sides, at the same time, to take positions close to the sidelines as well as having the external midfield players (in a 4-1-4-1 system) to move at the defence line of the opponent when we have the ball. Our concept is to bring the ball forward as soon as possible and keep possession in the opponent's half by passing at the ground, but avoiding the short passes (1-2 metres). Then waiting for the right moment to pass the ball behind the defensive line of the opponent to an attacker or midfield player penetrating. Alternatively, creating space for the external players by playing in one side and make a rapid shift of the ball to the other side. I work a lot on having the players to look for and utilize the open space. This means that they already before they receive the ball should know the opportunities and take the right position. I believe that this concept in the 11 against 10 situations will bring even more scoring opportunities.

This was clearly the case in the match against Inter. In that match Milan outplayed Inter in the last 25 minutes where they with one more player created a number of occasions as well as scored two goals reaching a final score of 3-0. In the matches against Napoli and Bologna where we played 11 against 10, it did not work that well mainly as the concept was not followed when the opponent was reduced to 10 players.

Often the opponent leaves more space to the two central defenders, how are they going to handle that?

The basic concept does not change, and I am not interested in central defenders going forward. They still have to pass the ball mainly to a midfield player, or sometimes a long ball if we have a strong forward, such as Ibrahimovic, who is able to win and control the ball.

You have previously trained Serie A teams at a lower level than Milan and teams in Serie B and C – did you have the same strategy?

I always want my teams to play after the concept described above, and the strategy in the lower level teams was the same. When I have played a 4-4-2 system with two defensive midfield players I have asked one of them to move forward immediately after we have gained the ball. I have also sometimes changed to a diamond formation on the midfield.

How do you control the defensive phase in the 11 against 10 situation?

As we do not change much in our organization, the players have to handle the situation as normally. However, as the full-backs become more offensive the central defensive midfielder has to be more aware about the risk and I like this player to take part in the defending line if needed, e.g. if one of the central defenders is

going to the side to cover for the full-back. Generally, I like the central defenders to mark closely the opponent in their zone.

Do you train the 11 against 10 situation?

I do train the concept of being numerical superior by playing 10 against 8 on half of a field (see game XX, page XX) asking the 10-team to be patient and wait for the right opportunity to penetrate the defensive line as well as being very aggressive when they are losing the ball. It also helps to develop the players at the 8-team to immediately think of moving the ball forward and by giving them the opportunity to score in the goals in each side. Often the 10-team is not successful in these games and they get an understanding of the difficulties a numerical superior team may face.

How do you see the players approaching the 11 against 10 situation?

They can at times lose the focus and not do what I will like them to do. That is why we daily are working on our concept and I do show them situations during matches where we are becoming sluggish and are taking unnecessary risks.

How do you organise your team when playing 10 against 11?

I basically have two ways of doing it. I may take out the one attacker and play something like 4-3-2 with two external midfield players (see figure 1 – Milan 10 players I). This leaves the central part open for the opponent and we do only attack a player with the ball when he gets into our half. The other way is more traditional playing a 4-1-3-1 with one attacker/offensive midfield player central (see figure 1 – Milan 10 players II).



Figure 1. Two ways for AC Milan to organise the team with 10 players.

Luigi Delneri, First team coach Juventus FC

How do you handle the 11 against 10 situation?

We do not change the way we are playing. In the build-up I want the full-backs to go further up and increase the distance between the two central defenders. If the ball is played in one side, the opposite full-back has to go back to secure the defence preparing the team loosing the ball. If the game has not been decided and there is lasting 10 minutes, I may put the two external midfield players and forwards further up with support from the offensive midfield player. In the build-up and the transition phase from defence to the attack the ball should be played to the full-back or external midfield players as soon as possible. Generally, I do find it important that the team is keeping possession of the ball.

Often the opponent leaves more space to the two central defenders, how are they going to handle that?

The central defenders should not move forward with the ball, even though they will get more space. They have to cover the defence and be ready if the ball is lost. The defenders have to follow my general principles of defending the goal rather than the opponent. This means that the defenders should not necessary mark a direct opponent but cover the space between the ball and the goal.

You have previous trained Seria A teams at a lower level than Juventus and teams in Seria B and C – did you have the same strategy?

The strategy in the lower level teams was the same as described above.

Do you train the 11 against 10 situation?

No. I always train 11 against 11

How do you see the players approaching the 11 against 10 situation?

I do see a clear difference between the players at Juventus and those at a lower level. The latter players have a tendency to lose the concentration and wanting to do too much, resulting in them losing the ball in situations which it does create problems for our team.

How do you organise your team when playing 10 against 11?

I always keep an attacker at a high central position in order to be able to create a play when we get the ball. Then the four defenders with three midfield players placed central with one positioned in front of the defence line constitutes the defence. The last midfield player can move freely.

Morten Olsen, Danish National Coach

How do you handle the 11 against 10 situation?

It very much dependent on the situation with all the components discussed in this report. Most 10-teams are substituting (one of) the attackers or the offensive midfield player. Then, it depends on the characteristic of the (remaining) attacker/offensive midfield player. If he is fast I may be reluctant to let one of the central defenders go high, when we have the ball. I would consider changing one of my central defenders with a faster central defender to provide the other central defender more freedom to utilize the space in front and to put more pressure on the opponent. Otherwise, I will let the team play in its normal way, which I may change toward the end of the game if we do not have a satisfying result.

When the opponent has the ball I put pressure on both central defenders (with our number 9 and 10) and then the two external midfield players are pressuring the full-backs, and our full-backs and two defensive midfield players will be close to the next four of the opponent. This means that all the eight players further back on the opponent's team are marked closely, and that our remaining two central defenders are taking care of the one attacker/offensive midfield player. One is marking the attacker and the other covers for the other players, and takes a position furthest back of the team. Such a strategy should give us a good chance to conquer the ball on the opponent's half.

Often the opponent leaves more space to the two central defenders, how are they going to handle that?

Generally, I can accept that the central defenders are moving forward with the ball, but it depends on the characteristic of the central defender, if he does not have a good sense for where to play the ball and is not skilful, I just want the central defenders to play the ball fast.

Do you train the 11 against 10 situation?

I did when I had a club team. With the national team I have difficulties finding the time to do it.

How to see the players approaching the 11 against 10 situation?

I have often experienced that the players feel that they have more freedom when they become numerically superior, which make them too relaxed in their marking.

How do you organise your team when playing 10 against 11?

In most cases I will take either the attacker or the offensive midfielder player out. However, it depends on the situation and how the opponent plays. For example, in an away match against Spain our left back Niklas Jensen was sent off after about 25 minutes and as Spain had Inesta at the right side, I decided to just play with three defenders with one of the defensive midfield players partially covering the space and partially leave the space open.

VIII. Tactical Strategy – 10 against 11

Most coaches have a solution of how to handle the 10 against 11 situation. If an attacker is sent off, in most cases no substitution is made. Then, if the team is only playing with one attacker the offensive midfield player may be moved further up when the team is attacking. If the team is playing with two attackers, the remaining attacker just take a more central position. If one of the midfield players is sent off, the tactical change does depend on how many attackers the team has. If two, one of the attackers is often substituted with a midfield player with a good endurance capacity and/or high ability to maintain the ball. If only one attacker, the team will usual be organised with four midfield players covering the whole width of the field and then the attacker in defence is covering the space in front of the two central midfield players, i.e. in a zone where the opponents central midfielder(s) is placed. Alternatively, if one of external midfield players is sent off, one of the attackers may take his position. If one of the defenders is sent off, a new defender is almost always brought to the field on the expense of an attacker more or less independently on whether the team is playing with one or two attackers. Then, the team is organised more or less in the same way as when a midfield player is sent off.

Thus, it is predictable how a team will react to having a player sent off. The 10-team will in most cases bring the offensive players further back in the defence and often be focusing on the counter-attack independent on whether the team is down in score. In most cases the 10-team will play in a 4-4-1 formation leaving more space for the two central defenders of the 11-team (see Figure 2; page 36). There are, however, alternatives as also described in the interviews with Massimiliano Allegri and Morten Olsen (see pages 30 and 34).

From 11 to 10

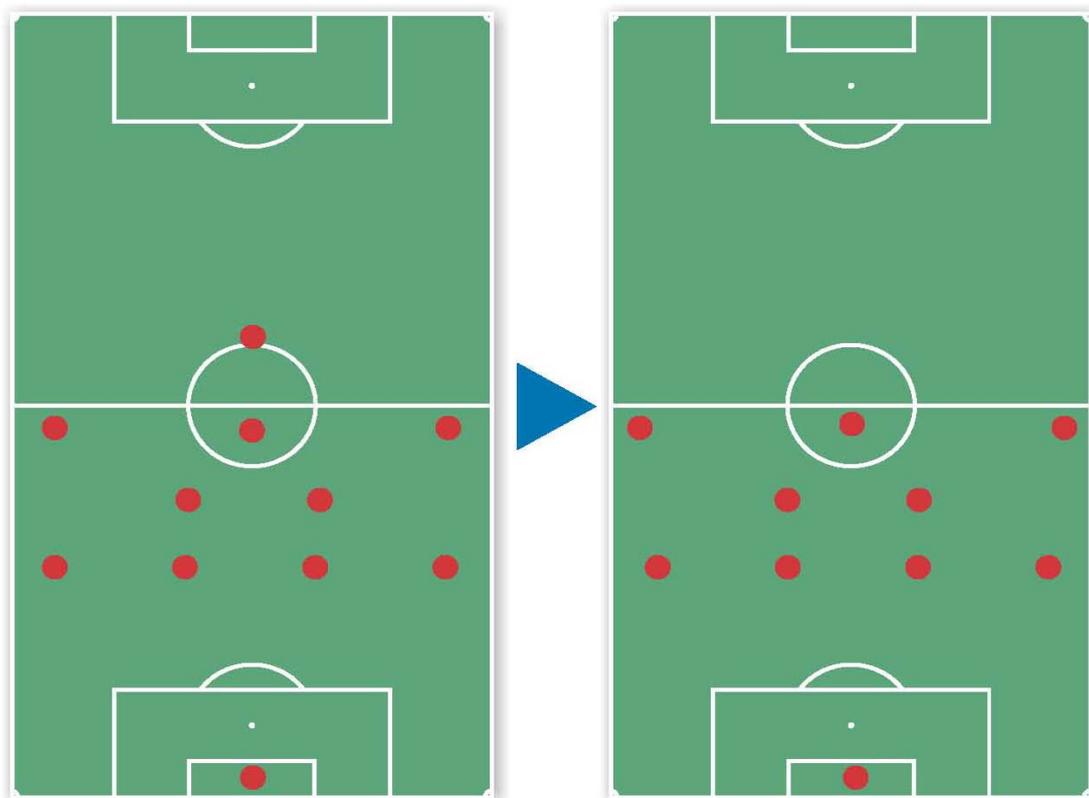


Figure 2. Typical re-organisation of a team when reduced to 10 players.

Motivational aspects of having a player sent off may also be important. In a team reduced to ten players a special “fighting spirit” often develops, i.e. the players are supporting each other to a greater extent and all players are fully engaged in getting a good result. Team members communicate and coordinate themselves to organise their resources in an optimal way to accomplish their goals. Furthermore, any pressure that may have been on the players is released, which may allow some players to better utilise their capacity.

IX. Tactical strategy – 11 against 10

Many coaches are not making changes in strategy when the opponent has a player sent off. There is a common belief that the result will be positive: “Now we will definitely win the game”. On the other hand, the statistical analysis showed that some coaches are reacting as the 11-team in about one-third of the games made a substitution within the first five minutes after the opponent had a player sent off. It should be noted, that the change could also be for other than tactical reasons. Nevertheless, the 10-team is definitely alternating its way of playing, and the statistical analysis showed that it may be beneficial to make tactical changes when becoming the 11-team. For example, the top teams are not winning more of the 11 against 10 matches than when playing 11 vs. 11 and the away-team is losing as many periods being numerical superior as they are winning. Therefore, the 11-team should have a clear strategy where team members learn to cooperate and coordinate their effort effectively when playing 11 against 10.

Being superior in number of players often give the players in the 11-team a feeling of advantage and believe in being able to win the game. Many players get an understanding of not having to do as much and not to mark as concentrated as when playing 11 against 11 in the defence. In the offence there is a tendency for the players to do more on an individual basis, i.e. dribbling and challenging more, which may lead to more lost balls. Then, if the 11-team is not being successful, the players may become frustrated and uncertainties start to develop in the team. Especially if the 10-team is scoring, it does lead to irrational actions of the players. A clear strategy can reduce the confusion in the team.

As concluded in the previous section, it is predictable how the opponent will react to having a player sent off. Therefore, it should be simple for the 11-team to establish a strategy for handling the situation, but with proper modifications if the opponent is taking a different approach. Generally, it appears logical for the team with 11 players to wait a few minutes before making any changes in tactical strategy to see the tactical alterations made by the opponent.

In this section different ways of tactically handling the 11 against 10 will be discussed.

Attacking more on the sides

A way to open the defence of the 10-team is to move the ball rapidly and attack more on the sides leading to more crosses. One way to use the free space is by diagonal passes from the central defenders to the full-backs. Having more crosses will also allow for the utilization of the possible extra attacker (see below). This strategy will often require that the full-backs to a greater extent are taking part in the offense, since the external midfield players often are marked closely by the full-backs of the 10-team. It can be necessary to substitute one of the full-backs by a full-back with more offensive qualities or with an external midfield player in order to obtain the “power” needed from the full-back position. It should be considered whether these attacks should come from both sides or mainly from one side. It is, however, important that the full-backs understand well when it is appropriate to take part in the offense actions and that they are well covered by the team-mates, if the ball is lost and the 10-team is making a counter-attack.

Play-maker at central midfield

The 11-team will get more space which can be utilized if the ball is moved fast and long passes are made. Players which are technical skilful, but generally are suffering from close markings from the opponent, will have a better chance to obtain more space and can be important for the team. Alternatively, a play-maker type can be brought in from the bench. However, it requires that there is a clear strategy with the other players and for the movements of the play-maker. The optimal space for the play-maker is in the central zone and, therefore, the other midfield players should move to create the space, but not to an extent where they are closing the passing opportunities for the play-maker. Optimally, the play-maker should have time to control the ball and make his decision before he/she gets on pressure. The player may be told to have a “maximum of two touches” strategy, i.e. he/she should look for the opportunities before receiving the ball and basically avoid more than

two touches. In addition to short passes to the other midfield players the play-maker should focus on playing long balls to the sides, optimally to the opposite side, and deep balls to the offensive central midfield players who are penetrating the defence of the 10-team.

Substituting one of the central defenders or using one of the central defenders as striker

When the opponent has a player sent off, the 10-team is usually reducing the number of attackers or getting the one attacker further back, as discussed above. This leaves more space for the two central defenders (see Figure 3), who have a marked increase in the time with the ball. However, often they are not the optimal players to have more space and time with the ball. In addition, their defensive tasks are reduced. Therefore, it can of value to substitute one of these players with more offensive oriented players.



Figure 3. Typical organisation of a 11-team and 10-team.

If the 11-team is playing with one attacker, another attacker, who is placed in the front line with the other attacker, may be added (see Figures 4 and 5). If playing with two offensive midfield players (4-1-4-1), one of these should have a position a bit further back (see Figure 5). If the 11-team is playing with two attackers, e.g. in a 4-4-2 system, a midfield player can be brought into play. If the team is playing with a banana-formation on the midfield an offensive midfield player can be positioned in a central offensive position behind the two attackers (see Figure 6; page 42). If the 11-team has a diamond-formation on the midfield a central or external midfield player, depending on the characteristics of the other midfield players, can be brought in (see Figure 7; page 42). The latter change is the most challenging since the team is now playing with two external midfield players, which is different from the normal way the team is playing. In all cases, (one of) the defensive midfield player is taking a position further back both in the defence and in the first part of the offense to be more involved in building up the attack. In this way the 11-team will be numerically equal with the 10-team in the offensive side (the remaining central defender of the 11-team will be the “free” player). Having two attackers and two external midfield players will keep all four defenders of the 10-team occupied and provide more opportunities of getting 1 against 1 situations in the last third of the field. In addition, it will allow more effective penetrations of the defensive line of the 10-team from the midfield players in the 11-team. It will also provide the opportunity to make immediately pressure when the ball is lost.

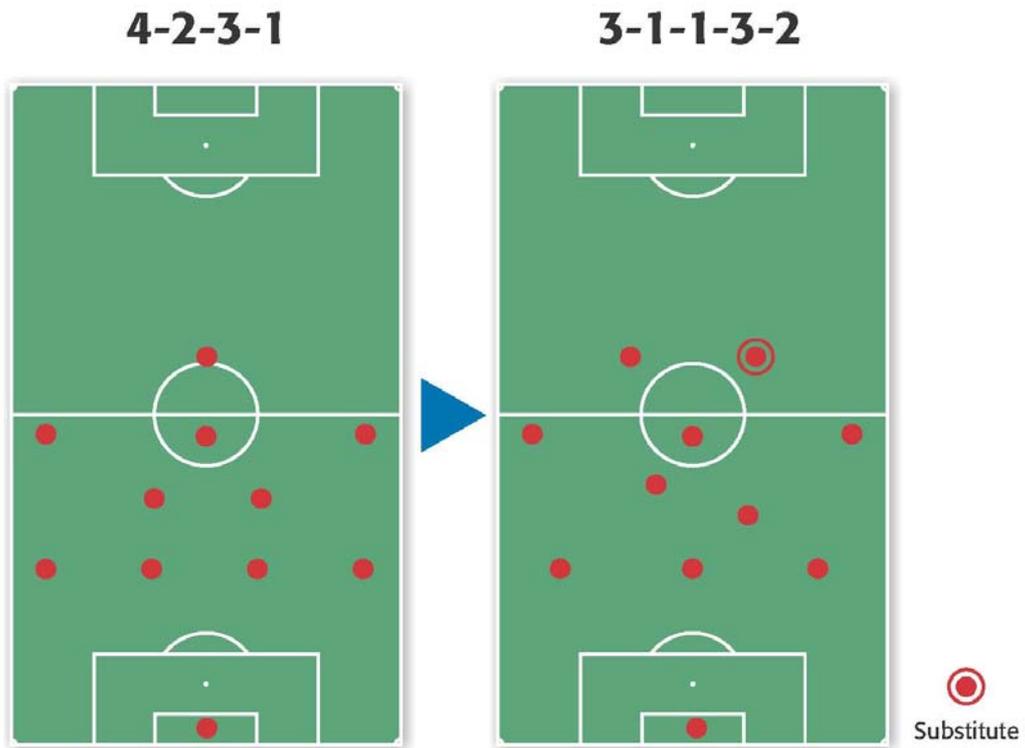


Figure 4. Re-organisation of a team playing 4-2-3-1 to 3-1-1-3-2 through a substitution when playing 11 against 10.

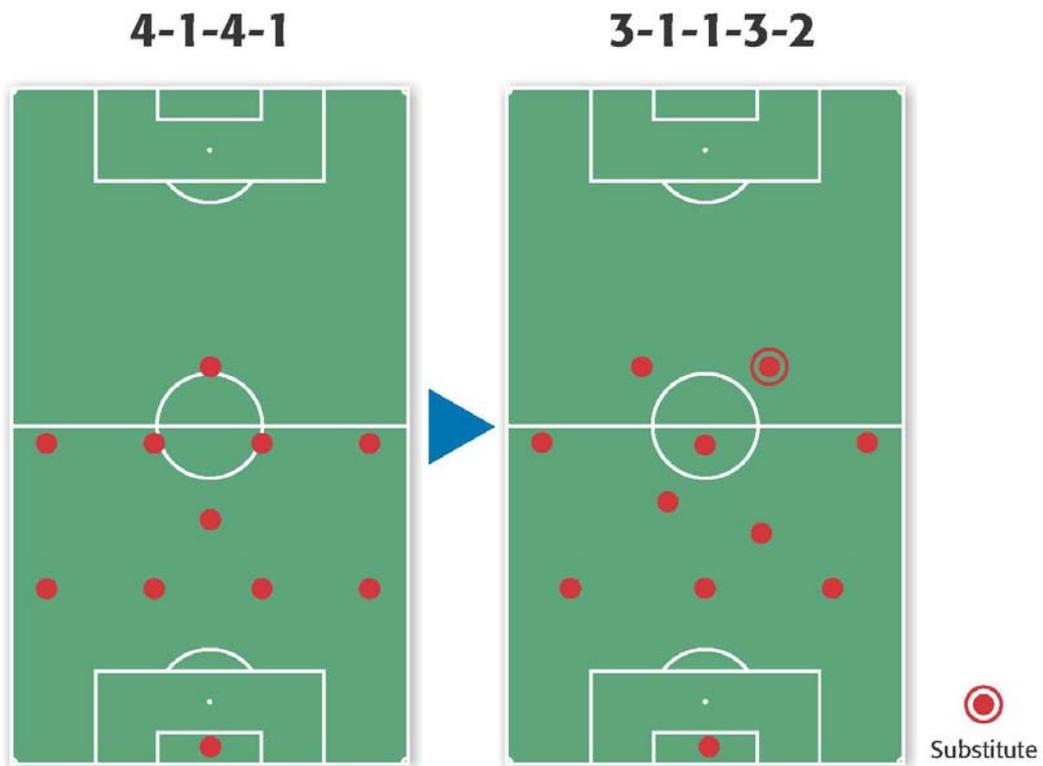


Figure 5. Re-organisation of a team playing 4-1-4-1 to 3-1-1-3-2 through a substitution when playing 11 against 10.

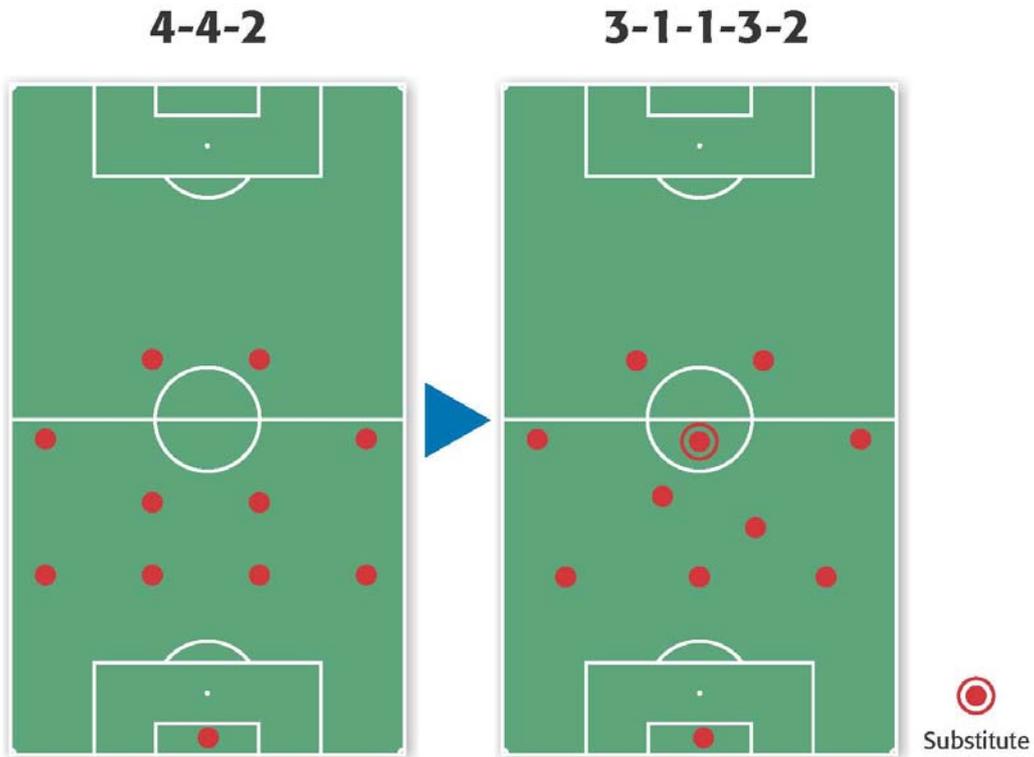


Figure 6. Re-organisation of a team playing 4-4-2 (Banana formation) to 3-1-1-3-2 through a substitution when playing 11 against 10.

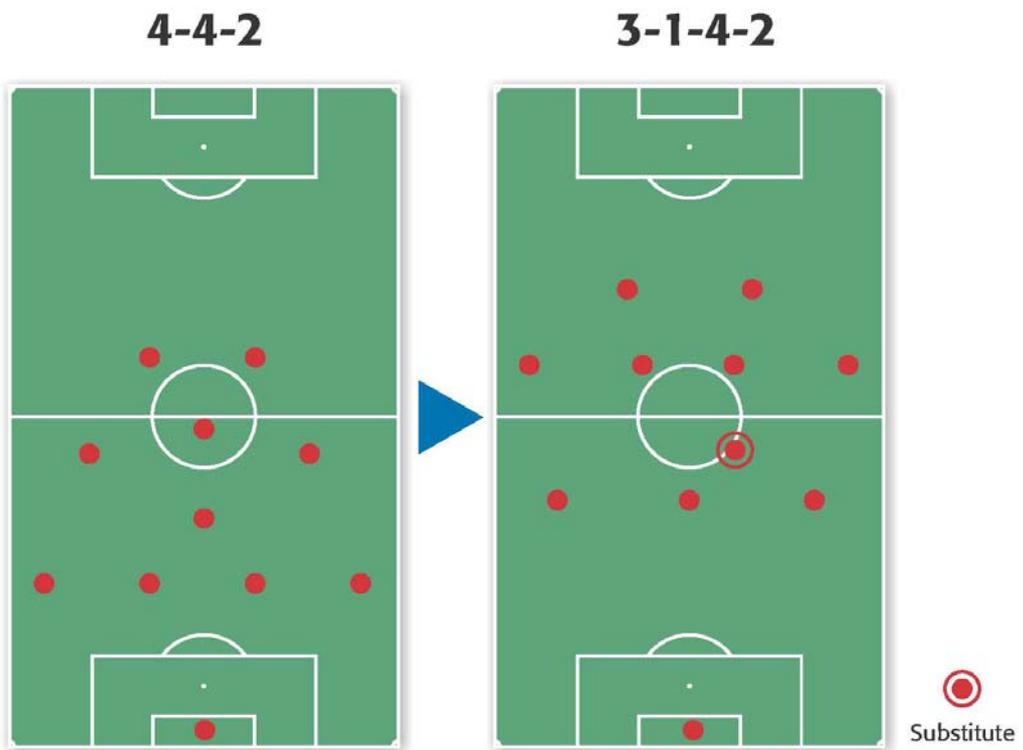


Figure 7. Re-organisation of a team playing 4-4-2 (Diamond formation) to 3-1-4-2 through a substitution when playing 11 against 10.

The characteristic of the extra attacker may depend on the attacker already in the team. If the latter is small and fast, the 11-team may bring in a tall and strong attacker, who can be used as a target-player, and vice versa. The team should have a clear strategy of how to use the extra attacker. More high balls may be played to the target-player. Then, it is necessary to consider how to precede the play after the target-player has received the ball. It can be that the second attacker mostly is running deep and get a header from the target player. In addition, the offensive central midfielders may positioning themselves close to the target-player to receive a first time pass from the target-player to distribute the ball immediately to the other attacker, external midfield players or full-backs. It is, however, a decision the coach has to make whether he/she wants the team to make such a change of strategy and maybe in philosophy.

As an alternative to bringing in another attacker, one of the central defenders may be placed in the front line, especially if the opponent's player is sent off towards the end of the game. Basically, it provides the same solutions as described above. However, the central defender usually has other characteristics than a forward, such as being tall and a good header, but with limited dribbling qualities. Therefore, the team strategy may be different, using the extra attacker (the central defender) as a target for both long balls from the defence and for crosses. Such a solution may also be used if all substitutions are made and/or if the team is losing, and there is lasting less than 10 minutes of the game. In this case it should be carefully considered where and who is going to play the ball to the central defender as well as who is receiving the ball from the central defender in the frontline.

Defence

Substituting or moving one of the central defenders creates a greater risk in the defending situation, since the central defensive midfield player may not be in an optimal defending position when the team is losing the ball and may not be able to mark the opponent with the same quality as the substituted central defender. Thus, the remaining central defender may be the player primary marking the attacker of

the opponent. This means that the 11-team in the central defence may shift from zone-marking to man-to-man marking. Alternatively, (one of) the central defensive midfield players may also be substituted with a midfield player with defensive characteristics of a central defenders, but it may not be feasible to change two players. Nevertheless, the collaboration between the central defender and the defensive central midfield player should be trained (see pages 50-53). The central defensive midfield player has to understand that his/her role is more restricted. This can be psychological though for that player, and it is often required that the coach emphasise the importance of the player keeping a strict role.

Secure in defence

The 10-team will often be more compact and take a position further back. This means that most players have to run longer in the counter-attacks. The 11-team will often attack with too many players, as every player fell more free, which leaves space for the 10-team on the midfield in the transition from the defence to the offense. This is one of the dangers for the 11-team, as the 10-team often is prioritising the counter-attacks. Therefore, it is important that the 11-team is preparing this transition and it has to be controlled by one of the players from the 11-team. It can obviously be done by one of the central defenders, who have an overview of all players. A focus on that role should be brought up in the training.

X. Games/drills

Whatever tactical approach the coach may have for the 11 vs. 10 situation, there is a need to be focused on the strategy during training. The practice of this situation will also have psychological effects. The players being prepared will give them confidence and reduce the risk of making the mistakes which is often experienced in the 11 vs. 10 situation.

In this chapter some drills and games are presented in relation to the different concept of how to handle the 11 against 10 situation.

1. 9 against 10 – a Milan game (Figure 8)

Field

½ of a field with one full-sized goal and two small goals.

Players

19 – 10 (10-team) vs. 8 + 1 goalkeeper (9-team).

Description

The 10-team scores in the full-sized goal. The 9-team scores in one of the two small goals. No corners - the 10-team gets the ball from their own goal-line. Goal-kick - the goalkeeper starts with another ball.

Instruction

The 10-team has to be aggressive when loosing the ball. The 9-team has to immediately look for the opportunity to



Figure 8.

move the ball forward. At the least one of the 9-team players has to move forward and utilize the space in one of the sides. To challenge the players further and stimulated the 10-team to be aggressive the rule of maximum two touches may be introduced.

2. Pressing – a Milan game (Figure 9)

Field

About 2/5 of a field with a 5-metre zone in front of each goal. Two full-sized goals.

Players

18 – 8:8 with a goalkeeper in each team.

Description

Normal play. Only one player from the attacking team can enter the outer zones and the player has a maximum of two touches. If the team conquers the ball in the offensive half they can immediately make a goal. However, if the team gets the ball in own half the team has to make 8 passes before they can score (not necessary in own half). The off-side rule is not applied.

Instruction

The game shall teach the players to be aggressive when they are losing the ball (in order to have the opportunity to score a goal without restrictions). In addition, to look for opportunities forward when conquer the ball. There will probably be opportunities since the opponent will pressure to get the ball and leave space for



Figure 9.

players running forward. The team should limit the number of short passes, as it gives the opposing team possibilities for getting the ball.

3. Quick passes – a Manchester United game (Figure 10)

Field

About 2/5 of a field with 3 small goals at each back-line.

Players

22 – 10:10 with two jokers (always with the attacking team).

Description

Normal play. The players, except the jokers, have a maximum of two touches when in ball contact. The teams are scoring in one of the three goals

Instruction

Focusing on moving the ball quickly among the player and make use of the two extra players, who should move mainly in the middle of the field. Make

support to the player receiving the ball and look for the opportunity to shift from one side to the other when the situation become blocked in one side. Highlight also the need of communication within the team.

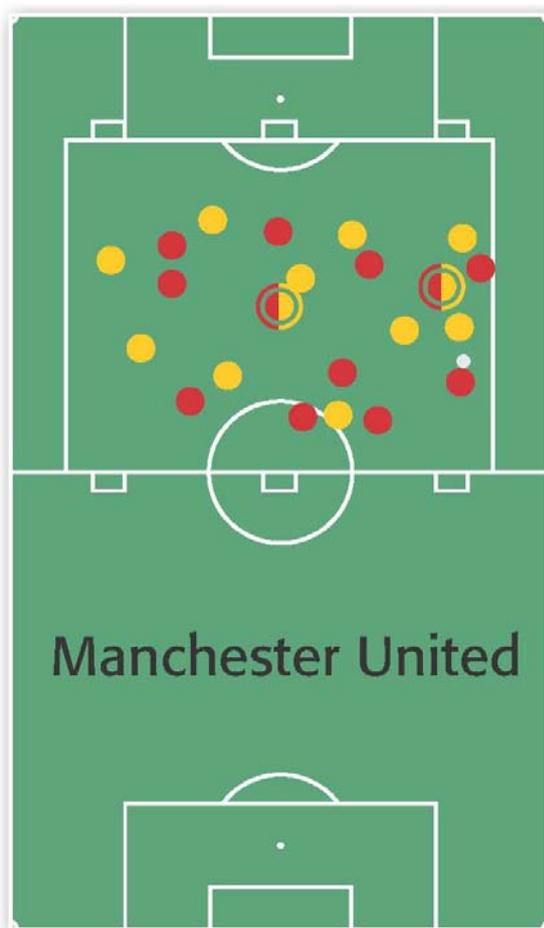


Figure 10.

Substitution of a central defender - play with two attackers

The rationale for substituting one of the central defenders has been given previously (see page 39). If the team normally is playing with one attacker an attacker is added and if the team is playing with two attackers an offensive midfield player is added

and in both cases the 11-team plays a 3-1-1-3-2. Below are described drills and games with focus on the offensive part and one emphasizing the defensive part. However, in both games the transition from offense to defence and vice versa is important, and the play should be continued until the ball is out of play. The drills/games should have a specific focus on the defensive role of the central defensive midfielder player and his/her collaboration with the central defender also in the offence. In addition to the drills described, it may be useful to have the central defensive midfielder player once a while playing as central defender in 11 against 11 situations, so he/she get accustomed to that role.

4. Offense – preparation 1 (Figure 11)

Field

½ a field with a full-size goal.

Players

7 – 6 + 1. Two central defenders, two central midfield players, two attackers and one goalkeeper (other team).

Description

The ball is passed as indicated on figure 11 (both sides).

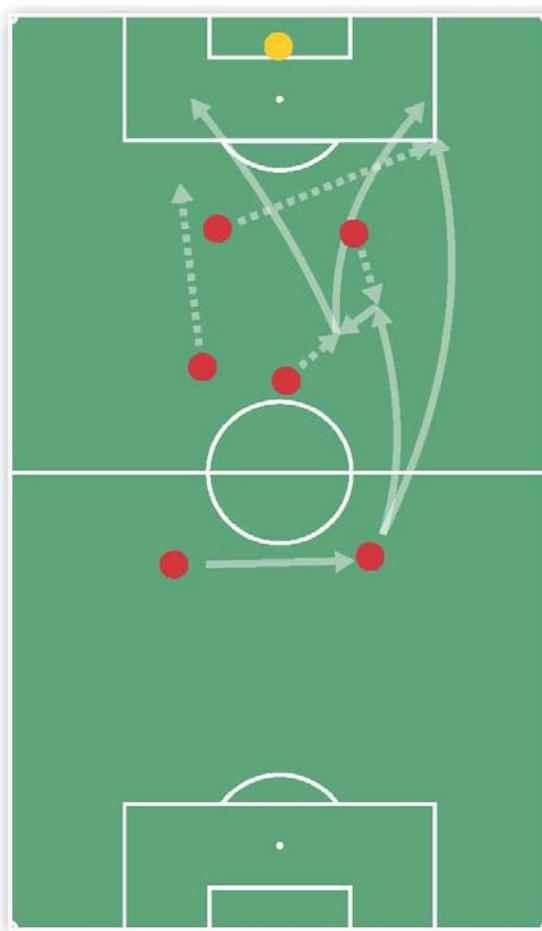


Figure 11.

5. Offense – preparation 2 (Figure 12)

Field

½ a field with a full-size goal.

Players

9 – 8 + 1. Two full-backs, two central midfield players, two external midfield players, two attackers, and one goalkeeper (other team)

Description

The ball is passed as indicated on figure 12 (both sides).

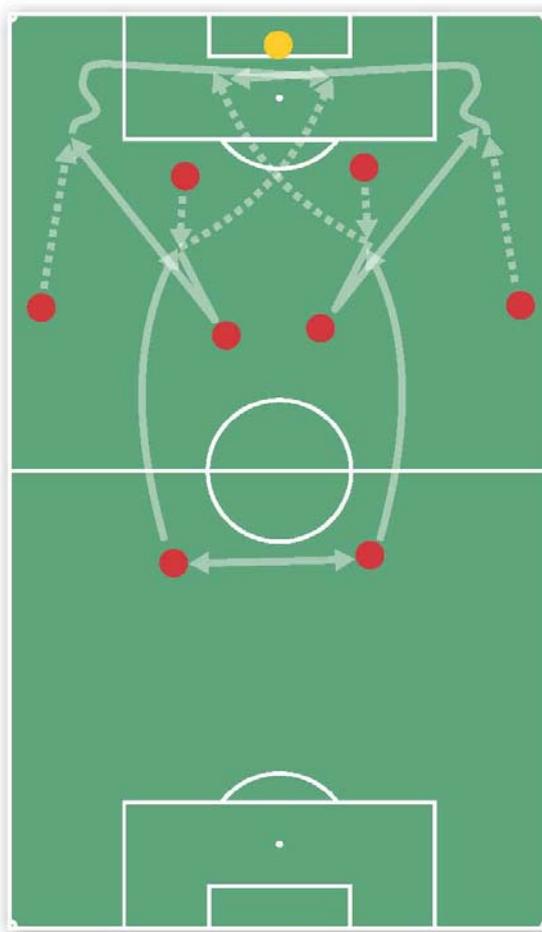


Figure 12.

6. Offense (Figure 13)

Field

3/5 of a field with a full-size goal.

Players

15 players – 8 (8-team) vs. 6+1 goalkeeper (7-team). The eight players represent the 11-team without the full-backs and with the central defender substituted with an attacker.

Description

The ball is served to the central defender (CD) from one side (by the coach or a player). CD passes the ball to central defensive midfield player (CDM), who has to start at the opponent's half. CD and CDM can only play the ball to each other or pass

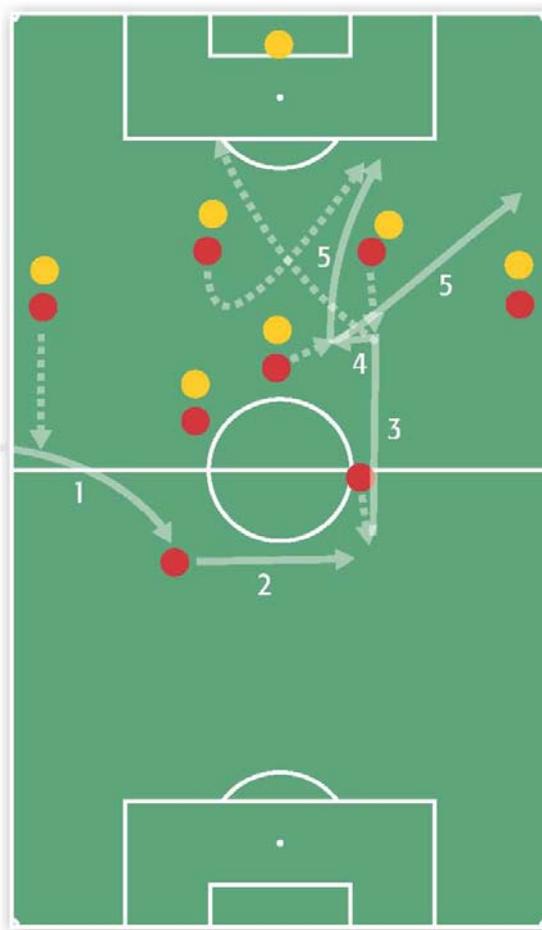


Figure 13.

to one of the attackers, and cannot pass

the mid-line. When one of the attackers receives the ball the play develops as the players want. If the defending team is getting the ball, they can score a point by playing the ball over the midline to a team-mate. In this case and when the ball is out of play a new ball is served when both teams are organized again.

Development

1. CD and CDM do have a maximum of two touches.
2. An offensive midfielder player is added to the 7-team. The player should always start at own half and put CD and CMF under pressure. Development 1 is omitted.
3. CD/CDM is not restricted to pass the ball to the forwards.

4. Two full-backs are added to the 8-team and two external midfield players to the 7-team.
5. CD and CDM can pass the midline, i.e. normal play.

Instruction

It should be emphasized that CDM and CD have to handle the ball rapidly. This also means that CDM should orientate himself before receiving the ball and receive the ball in a position where is able to turn immediately. Development 1 will strengthen those aspects and can be introduced when the players have the understanding of the game. Development 2 will put further emphasis on these aspects as CD and CDM will be under pressure. The drill should focus on the collaboration between the two attackers and how the pass from CD/CDM should be in order to optimize the various situations. Then, how the central and external midfield players can support/contribute to the next phase. For example, the attacker may make a short pass back to the most offensive midfield player, who kicks the ball deep to the other attacker, who uses the space created by the other attacker, or to an external midfield player, who should time the running to use the speed forward and not being off-side. Development 3 will open for more possibilities, and a focus should be on how the midfield players when receiving the ball can make use of the two attackers including what position they should take before the ball arrives. Development 4 will allow an additional focus on the role of the full-backs, and development 5 covers now the normal play and the possibility to have support from the CD and CDM should be emphasised.

Throughout the game a focus should also be on the transition from offense to defence, including whether the positions and the approach of the players are correct. In addition, it includes the role of CD and CDM in the transition from offense to defence. High-light especially the situations where the defending team (6-team) is scoring. Why was the 6-team able to score?

7. Defence (Figure 14)

Players

20 players – 10 (“11-team”) vs. 9 + one goalkeeper (10-team).

Field

2/3 of a field with a full-sized goal.

Description

The game is started by the central defender (CD) or the central defensive midfielder player (CDM) of the “11-team” kicking the ball behind the defending line of the opponent. The 10-team has to get the ball over the mid-line to a team-mate as fast as possible. If the 11-team gets the ball it has about 30 seconds to finish the attack. Thereafter both teams organized

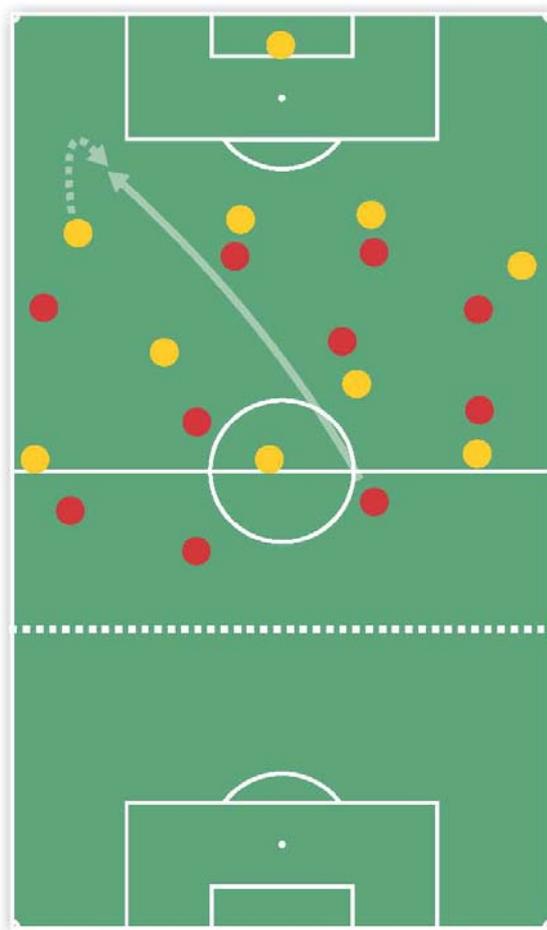


Figure 14.

themselves again and a new ball is served. This is also the case if 10-team is successful or the ball is out of play.

Development

1. A line is introduced at about the half of the “11-team” (see Figure 14). The game is started the same way. The play is free. The 11-team scores normally, whereas the 10-team scores by playing the ball into the last third of field to a team-mate (has to receive and control the ball). The game continues until one team has scored or the ball is out of play. Then both teams organized themselves again and a new ball is served. The off-side rule is used
2. A goalkeeper is added to the “11-team” and two players from each team is allowed to be in the defensive third of the “11-team”, but each player has a

maximum of three touches and can only touch the ball once in that zone, e.g. the attacking team has to finish rapidly.

3. The line is removed and normal play.

Instruction

Focus on the organization of the “11-team” and the players being aggressive when losing the ball with the player closest to the ball blocking for the first pass forward and one of the attackers covers the pass to the goalkeeper. The whole team should move towards the ball to block for a pass to the central defenders and midfield players.

In the “open” play (development 1-3) play a focus should be on the transition from offense to defence. How is team organized? What risks is the team taking? What should be done when the team has the ball to make sure the defence is covered if losing the ball.

The game can also be used to train the situation 10 against 11. The team numerical inferior should focus on rapidly getting the ball forward and to make the support from the central midfield players and perhaps one of the external midfield players when the offensive midfield player/attacker receives the ball, as well as getting the other external midfield to try to run behind the defence line without being off-side.

With development 2 a focus is on the collaboration between the defenders and CDM of the “11-team”. The attacking team (10-team) has to finish rapidly when entering the zone allowing to emphasize the importance of the 10-team to rapidly attack the goal of the opponent to utilize the 11-team not being well organized.

After a period the two teams may shift roles so the ordinary team also trains the 10 vs. 11 situation and all players try the 11 vs. 10 situation.

Other strategies

The game below can be used to train the 11 vs. 10 situation (with one attacker) independent on how the coach wants to approach the situation. It could that the coach wants the full-back to move higher up and the two central defenders having a greater distance, as a number of top-coaches have suggested.

8. Offense - preparation 1 (Figure 15)

Field

About ½ a field with a full-size goal.

Players

9 – 8 + 1. Two central defenders, two full-backs, two central midfield players and two external midfield players and one goalkeeper (other team).

Description

The ball is passed as indicated on the figure (both sides).

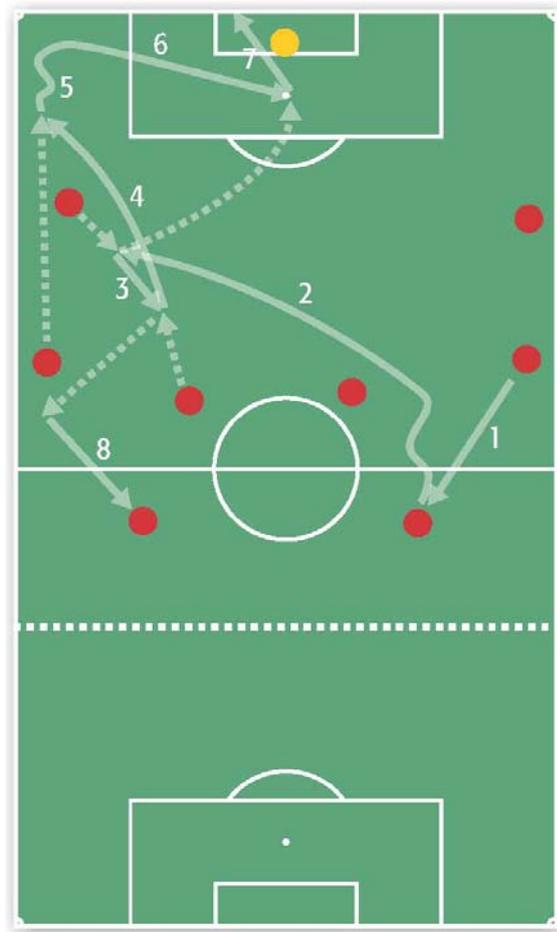


Figure 15.

9. Offense – preparation 2 (Figure 16)

Field

About ½ a field with a full-size goal.

Players

20 – 10 (“11-team”) vs. 9+ 1 goalkeeper (10-team).

Description

The ball is passed as indicated on the figure (both sides). When the attack is finished the “11 team” starts again.

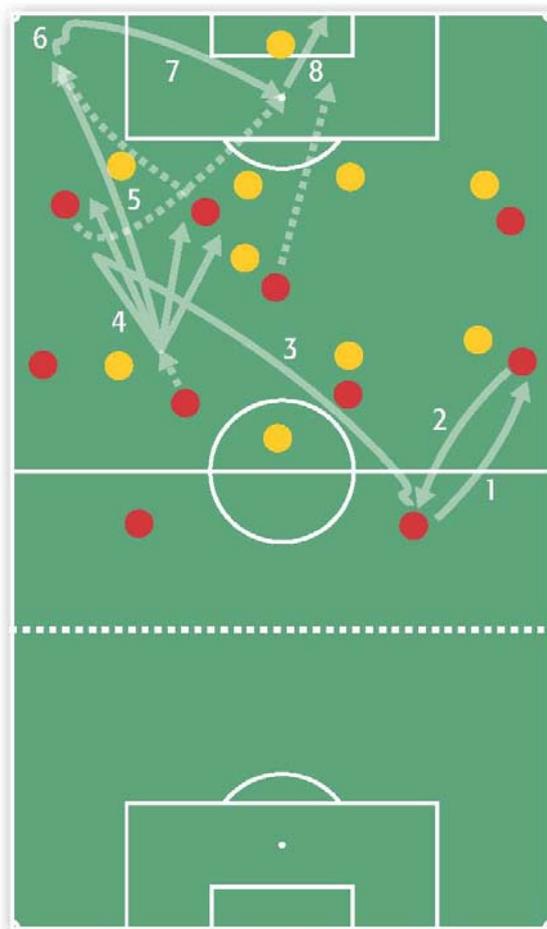


Figure 16.

10. Game (Figure 17)

Field

2/3 of a field with a full-sized goal.

Players

20 – 10 (“11-team”) vs. 9 + 1 goalkeeper (10-team)

Description

The game is started by one of the central defenders of the 10-team kicking the ball to one of the central defenders of the “11-team”. The “11-team” scores normally, whereas the 10-team scores by playing the ball into the last third of the field to a team-mate (has to receive and control the ball). The game continues until one team has scored or the ball is out of play a new ball. Then both teams organized themselves again and a new ball is served. The off-side rule is used.

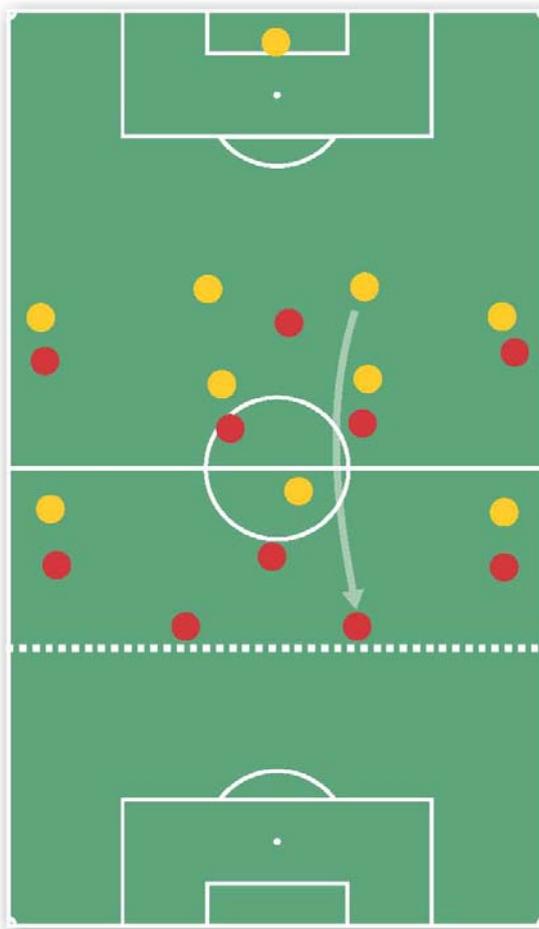


Figure 17.

Development

1. A goalkeeper is added to the “11-team” and two players from each team is allowed to be in the defensive third of the “11-team”, but each have a maximum of three touches and can only touch the ball once in that zone, e.g. the attacking team has to finish rapidly.
2. The line is removed and normal play.

Instruction

See instruction to game 6, page 50.

XI. Synopsis

Playing 11 against 10 occurs in out each fifth game. It is only the lower middle and bottom teams that benefit from playing 11 against 10 at home. In the Danish League the teams are even doing worse in that situation. In addition, when the quest team was playing 11 against 10 it lost 8 out of 10 games when the home-team was in the lead and had a player sent off. Thus, there is a need to focus on how to strategically approach the 11 against 10 situation. In the present report a number of top-coaches have given their view. Other suggestions of how to approach the situation have been made and drills/games used to develop the players have been presented.

XII. References

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