

SOUTH REGION ODP

KEY REMINDERS BY POSITION



Diagram 1 Standard Formation

REMINDERS BY POSITIONS

KEEPERS

Keepers should get into the habit to distribute from the back. Keepers should have a quick look to assess options and play quickly before opponents have time to press. If the central defenders are marked, the keeper should tell them to drop to the goal line and re-assess options. Keepers can skip the center backs and throw to fullbacks or midfielders if those players are free. One option is to play to a center back and if he passes the ball back to the keeper, the keeper can play a one touch pass to the fullback with a lofted pass.

CENTRAL DEFENDERS #4, #5

The center backs should get into the habit of dropping back after they play the ball to the fullback. This will give them more time and space to receive the ball away from opponents. Also, whenever the ball is in the midfield area, the central defenders should drop and offer a pressure relief back pass.

FULLBACKS #2, #3

Every time the fullback receives a pass, his first look should be to pass the ball inside to either the #9, the #8, the #10, or the #6. This is so that we can switch the ball to the other flank. These passes will likely be diagonal or lateral passes. A vertical pass to the winger is the least desirable option since it is a predictable pass and opponents will press the ball.

If the options to play inside are blocked, the fullbacks can play back to the central defenders. For example, the #2 can play back to the #4 who will switch using the keeper. If the #2 has the ball and the #4 in this scenario is also marked, the #2 should consider the option of switching by playing straight to the #5. The same goes for the other side when the #3 has possession.

Whenever one fullback is overlapping, the opposite fullback should slide inside to provide cover. We need to always have at least 3 players in the backline to provide cover. Typically, it will be the #2/4/5, or the #3/4/5.

DEFENSIVE MIDFIELDER #6

When the central defenders #4, #5 have the ball, the #6 should drop between the two center backs and face upfield. This way, he can receive passes without pressure and can also provide defensive cover in case we lose the ball. However, if he is not marked while in the midfield area, he doesn't need to drop and can receive the ball and turn.

Whenever the fullbacks #2 or #3 receive the ball, the #6 should move laterally into the space inside them and be available to receive the ball and switch the point of attack.

Whenever the #6 wins the ball in midfield, he should immediately play it wide to the #2 or the #3, to relieve pressure and allow the team time to transition into an attacking shape. Another option is to play it back to the central defenders.

ATTACKING MIDFIELDERS #8, #10

When we have possession, the attacking midfielders should spread out in front of the #6 and stay on their side of the field. In other words, the #8 should operate on the right side of the field and the #10 should work the left side of the field. They can interchange, so long as they don't both stay on the same side. The objective is to use them to switch the point of attack through the midfield. If they are both on the same side, it is too congested, they are too close to each other and it's harder to switch.

The attacking midfielders should get in the habit of peeling off and opening their body to receive the ball facing upfield. This is one of the ten principles that are hard for our players to apply consistently hence the need for constant reminders. They should also avoid blocking the passing lane to our #9 when our back line has the ball.

Attacking midfielders can also be used as a 'rebounding wall' even if they are marked and are facing their own goal. For example, the #10 can receive a pass from #5 and play a first-time ball to the #4. Another example is receiving a pass from the #5 and playing a first-time pass to the #3. In essence, they are helping teammates out of pressure by redirecting the ball like a rebounding wall with a one touch pass even if they are marked, so long as they avoid turning into pressure.

Whenever the #8 or #10 wins the ball in midfield, he should immediately play it wide to the #2 or the #3, to relieve pressure and allow the team time to transition into an attacking shape. Another option is to play it back to the central defenders.

WINGERS #7, #11

The wingers need to stay wide on the sideline when we are building the attack. This causes the opponents to spread out which gives us more gaps to play through balls. Getting the wingers to stay wide is a constant struggle and coaches need to remind them and explain the benefits.

There are moments when wingers can and should slide inside such as to create space for the overlapping fullback or to check into midfield to receive a pass from a midfielder or a central defender. Such a checking run into midfield should be executed when the ball is on their side of the field and the winger should run into spaces between the opponents' back line and midfielders.

CENTER FORWARD #9

The center forward should take up high positions but always be available to check and receive a pass from any of the players, including from the back line.

Since our teams' playing style is building out of the back, there will be many games when our opponents will press us. When they press, their midfielders will push up and this will create space between their midfielders and their backline. Our #9 should use this space to check into and receive the ball and help us break pressure. Our #9 should move laterally and be available for a pass but he should avoid making runs into the flanks.