

# **Introduction**

- Welcome
- Register and medical forms.
- Dave Jude.
- Equipment for weekend.
- Communal and Informal.

# DEVELOPING THE MIDFIELD PLAYER

# MIDFIELD PLAYER

**ATHLETIC REQUIREMENTS**



## DIABY of ARSENAL

71 passes made

96% pass success



# TOTAL FOOTBALL ?

## Frank Lampard (Chelsea)

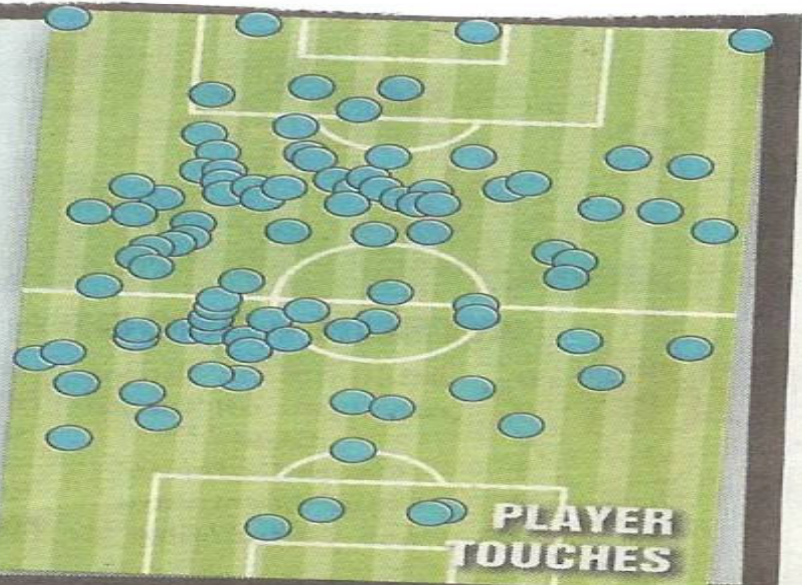


THE tireless Chelsea midfielder was at the heart of this hard-fought Chelsea victory.

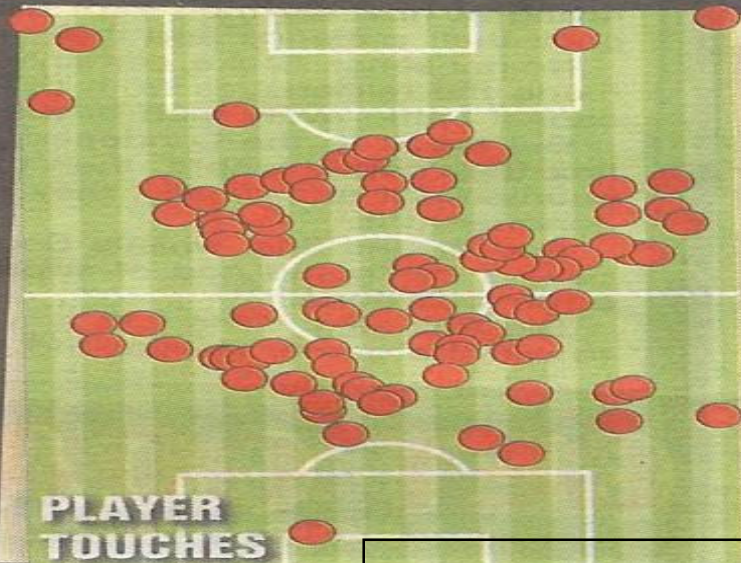
Frank Lampard was always available, always alert and always dangerous.

Mind you, the England man should have scored close to the end when teed up by Michael Ballack — but, for once, Lampard made a right old hash of his finish.

Mins on pitch ..... 90  
Pass completion. 88.4%  
Attempts on goal..... 1  
Verdict ... Took centre stage



## Steven Gerrard (Liverpool)



STEVEN GERRARD, like his teammates, struggled to find any penetration in meaningful areas — until Torres' crucial strike.

But from the first whistle, there were enough hints to suggest the England man would take the game by the scruff of the neck, which he eventually did.

Gerrard almost rounded off what became a perfect afternoon with a goal on 85 minutes.

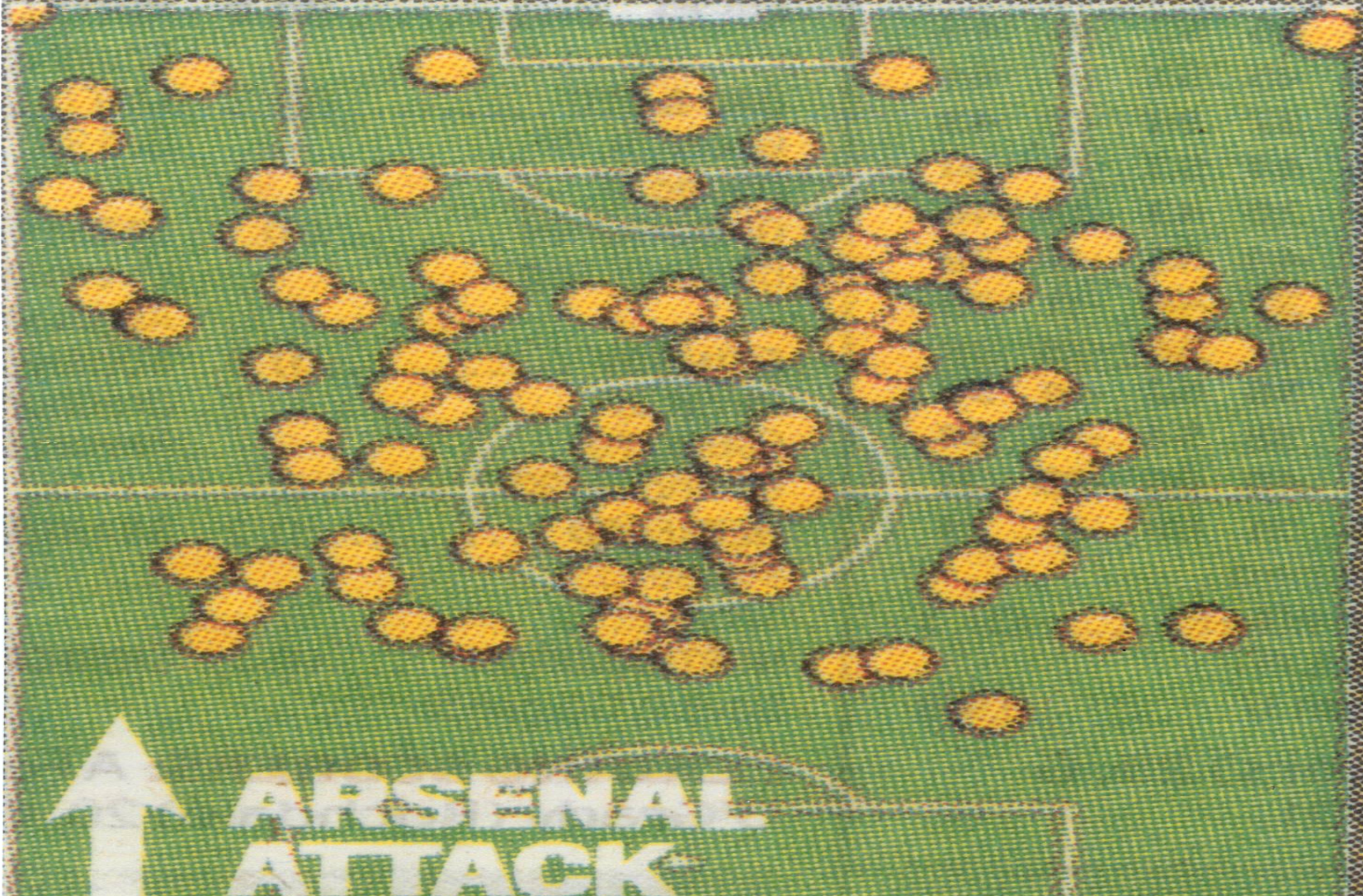
Mins on pitch ..... 90  
Pass completion..... 78.1%  
Attempts on goal..... 3  
Verdict ... Took centre stage



**MIDFIELD PLAYER INVOLVEMENT**



to make sure West Ham  
never had the upper hand.



**CELC FABREGAS (ARSENAL V WEST HAM UNITED March 2010)**





Presentation

Animation

Game Analysis

Fitness

# Game Analysis

# PROZONE FOOTBALL

1st Half 2nd Half

INDIVIDUAL

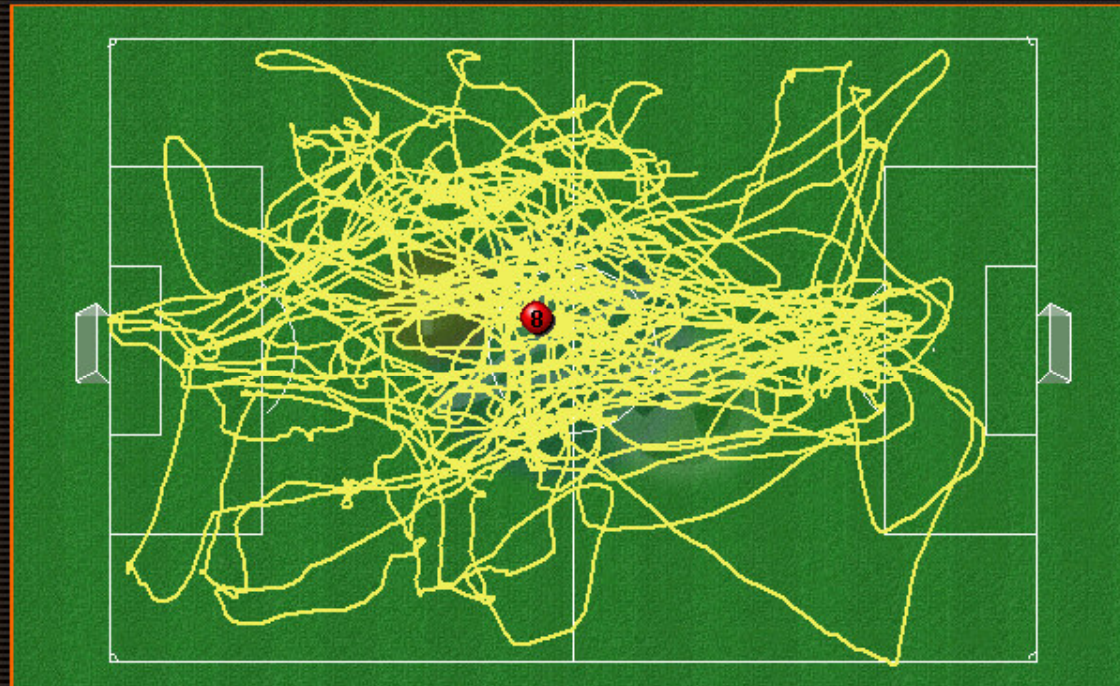
INDIVIDUAL V INDIVIDUAL

TEAM

TEAM V TEAM

00-15 15-30 30-45 ALL

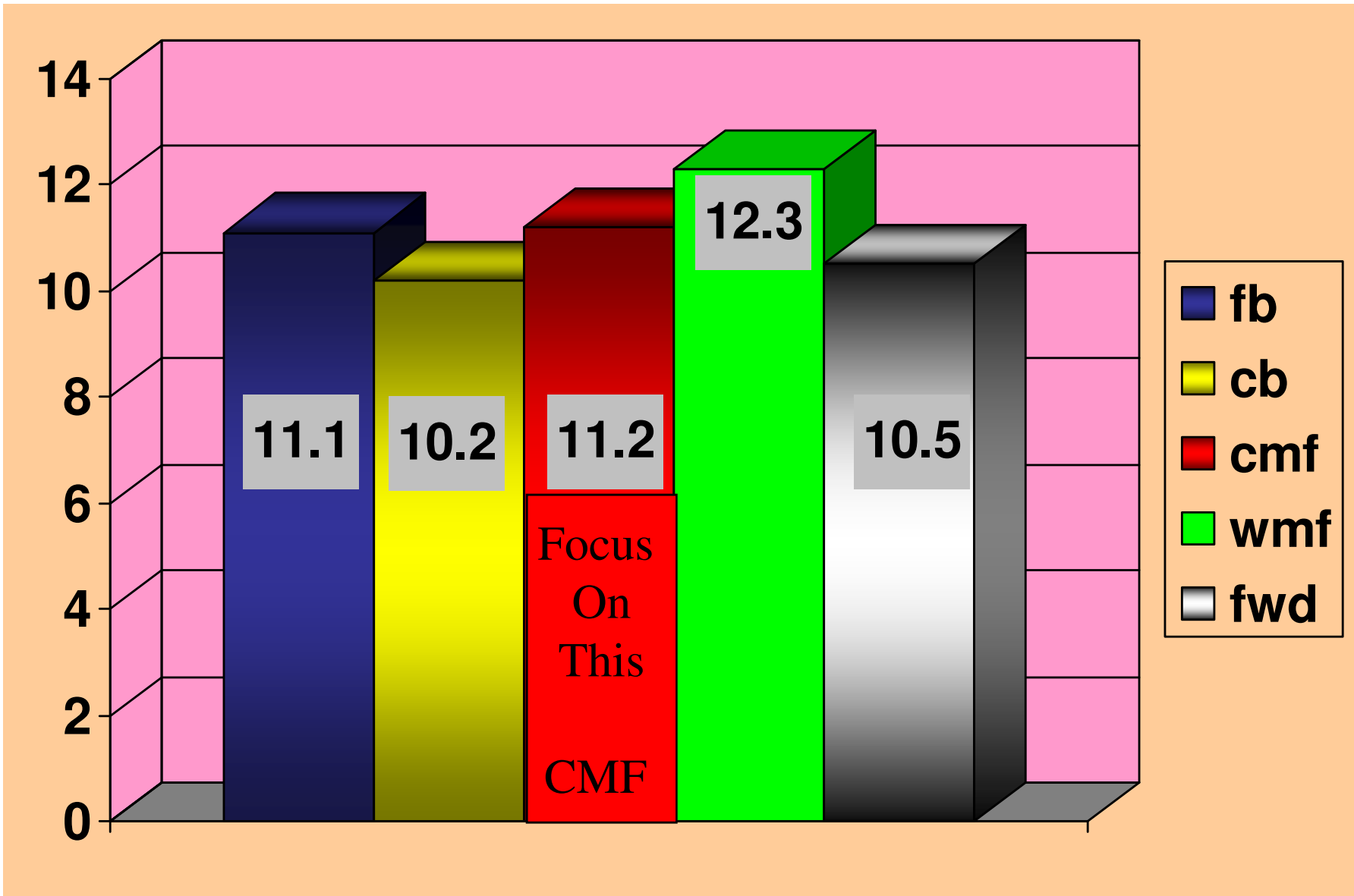
- Distribution
- Passes Received
- Interceptions
- Shots
- Tackles
- Fouls
- Offsides
- Blocks
- Dribbles
- Playing Positions
- Player Traces



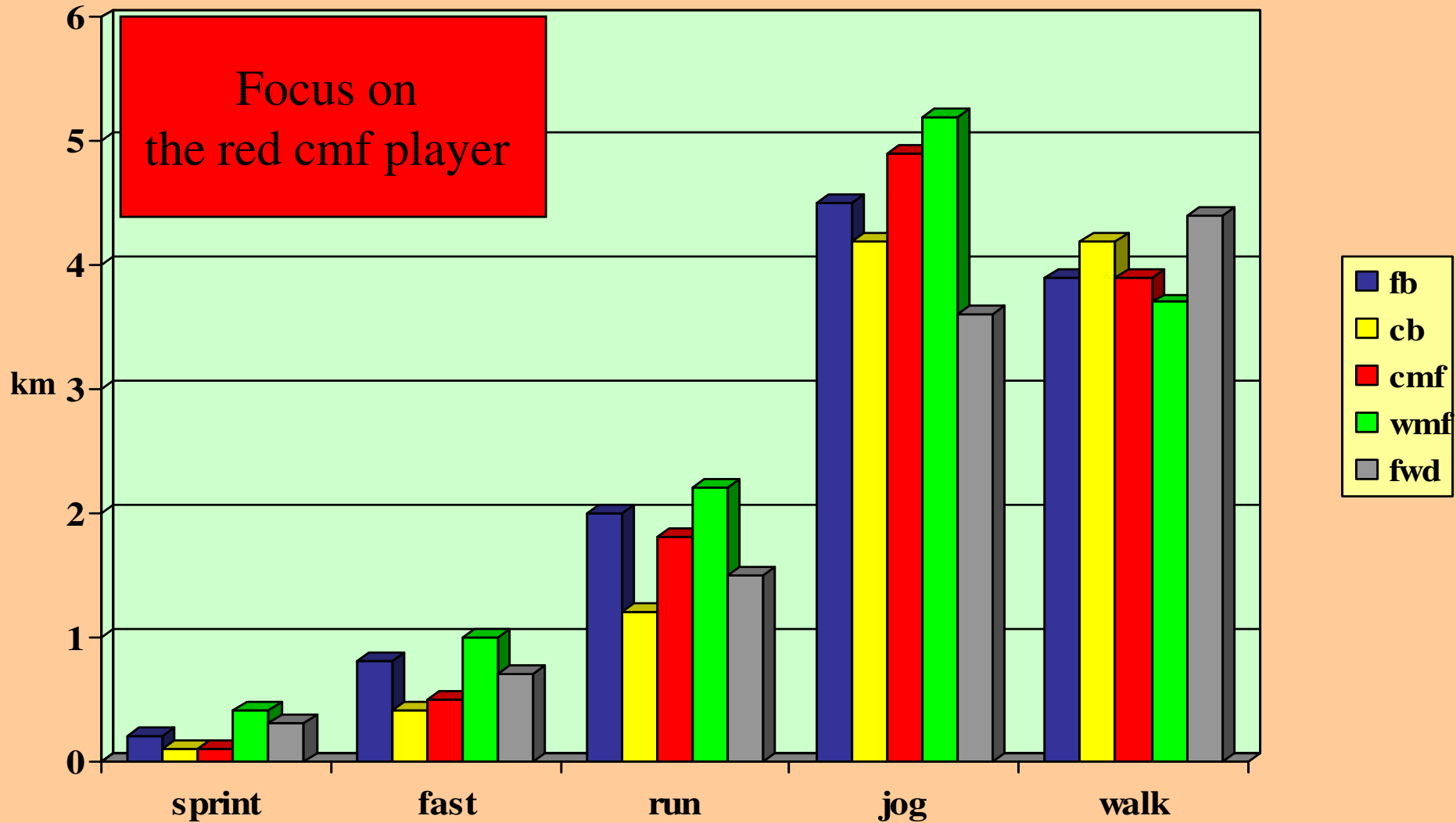
**Adult  
Central  
midfield  
players**

Direction of Attack

Display Chronologically







# ATHLETIC OUTPUT

## PREMIERSHIP **BEST** FIGURES

## **AVERAGE**

<b>Distance covered</b>	<b>13,530 m</b>	<b>11418 m</b>
<b>H I Distance covered</b>	<b>1890 m</b>	<b>975 m</b>
<b>H I Distance covered with ball</b>	<b>1263 m</b>	<b>382 m</b>
<b>H I Distance covered without ball</b>	<b>1226 m</b>	<b>544 m</b>
<b>H I Distance covered – ball out of play</b>	<b>219 m</b>	<b>47 m</b>
<b>No H I Activities</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>Sprint Distance</b>	<b>679 m</b>	<b>232 m</b>
<b>High Speed Runs Distance covered</b>	<b>1400 m</b>	<b>743 m</b>
<b>No of sprints</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Recovery time</b>	<b>20 secs</b>	<b>45 secs</b>



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS ?

# **MIDFIELD PLAYERS**

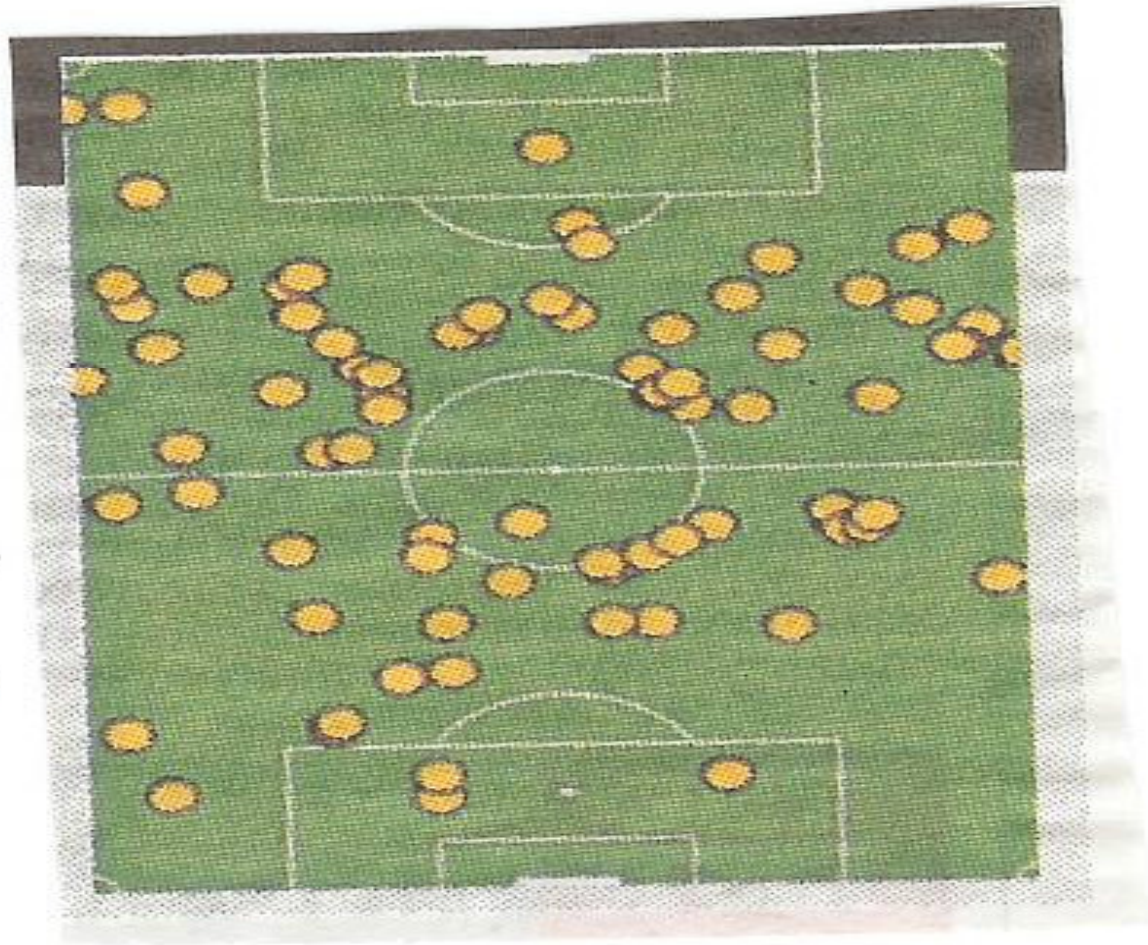
- Constantly seeking to be involved in all phases of the game with “**intelligent industry.**”
- Constantly plays with intelligence. (stand, disappear etc)
- Constantly seeking to influence events going on around him (verbally/tactically/technically)
- Recognises where ,when and how to involve himself in the game.
- Can vary the speed at which he and we play.
- High endurance, acceleration/decellaration and agility levels.



**JAMES MILNER ( CMF) for Aston Villa**  
**V**

**Manchester United**

**Carling Cup Final 2010**



# Attributes of the Midfield Player ?

- Determination and capacity to be involved in play for the full game.
- All round perception and skill to dominate and influence the game for 90 minutes if necessary.
- The “will” to dominate opponents athletically, technically and tactically no matter how long it takes.
- Ability to read the game accurately.
- An unselfish “team player”.
- Tactical awareness and adaptability to change from attack to defence quickly.
- The ability to accurately execute the skills of the game under sustained and intense pressure.



# MIDFIELD PLAYERS

- Does not surrender the ball under pressure. (receiving, possessing, releasing.)
- Can “penetrate” the midfield barrier.
- Has an extensive pass range and repertoire.
- Can change mind and action on split second demand.
- Masters “limited and instant” touch techniques.
- Knows how to play **in** midfield and out **from** midfield.
- Will often be the “initiator” of **place-changing policy!** (DF and MF 1/3rds )
- Will often be the initiator of **movement** in the team.
- Competent in all areas / positions and “outstanding” skills in some.

POSSIBLE ROLES IN MIDFIELD ?

# POSSIBLE ROLES of MIDFIELD PLAYERS

- Holding MF player.(2 or 3 man midfield)
- Classic “playmaker” in midfield. (Pirlo,Riquelme.)
- Attacking MF player behind front players.
- Attacking out of a 3 man midfield.
- Flexible role in 3 man midfield e.g.SPAIN
- Central midfield in a 2/4 man midfield.
- Wide midfield in a 4 man midfield.(Classic 4-4-2.)
- Other roles?



**GENERAL ROLE ?**

# **MIDFIELD PLAYERS**

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES  
OF AN  
**EFFECTIVE** MIDFIELD PLAYER?

# ROLE / FUNCTION

*- MAY BE VARIED i.e, "HOLDING" MF  
PLAYER ATTACKING MF, WIDE MF etc*

- TO LINK DEFENCE TO ATTACK AND VICE-VERSA
- TO DOMINATE AND INFLUENCE ALL ASPECTS OF MIDFIELD PLAY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
- TO CONTROL THE DIRECTION, FLOW AND PACE OF ATTACKING PLAY
- TO BE INVOLVED IN FINAL ATTACKING PHASES OF PLAY AND SHOOT TO SCORE WHENEVER POSSIBLE
- TO CONTAIN AND DEFLECT ANY PENETRATION ATTEMPTS BY OPPOSING ATTACKERS
- TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF BACK PLAYERS SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES DEMAND



# Responsibilities of the Midfield player ?

- Available for GK and back players if they wish to play into midfield.
- To “show” as a pass receiver whatever the difficulties.
- Understand when to initiate or participate in “movement” sequences.
- To retain possession even when under “severe” individual pressure.
- Distribute the ball accurately and sensitively.
- Draw opponents away from areas through which others may wish to pass , run with the ball or move into to receive the ball eg CB’s.
- To move close to or beyond forward players receiving or in possession of the ball.
- In the final phase of the game to move into or near to positions from which effective passes or shots can be taken.
- On losing possession-
  - support the defensive tactics of forward players as appropriate.
  - prevent opponents playing into and through MF areas by marking, pressing, screening and intercepting passes.
  - on the ball being played behind MF, recover to ensure that they are “goalside” of immediate opponents.
  - if beaten in 1 v 1 situations to recover to the ball or spaces around players who have been attracted to the ball.

# ESSENTIAL CONTACT SKILLS IN MIDFIELD

- Clinical support angles when necessary-6”
- Global awareness.(Overt /covert!)
- Tight touch / clever touch when necessary.
- Turns with ball.(Variety, ”hidden”, quick.)
- Ball protection-on receipt,in possession,on release.
- Measured and precise, instant release skills –on demand.
- All surfaces-any technique. Combination play,expanded range.)
- Give and receive “fast” passes.
- Precision delivery given freedom.
- Carry the ball effectively.
- Others ?

# Major Technical requirements?

- Varied and accurate “first touch” ability.
- Ability to “deceive” opponents on receiving and when in possession of the ball.
- Ability to protect and retain possession when under intense pressure.
- Extensive “range” (distance and repertoire ) and “feel” on releasing the ball.
- Ability to run with the ball and eliminate opponents if required to when running with the ball.
- Ability to score from “long range” – up to 30 yds !
- Ability to move into scoring positions in and around the penalty box.
- Range of goal-scoring skills.
- Ability to “press” opponents in possession of the ball.
- Ability to “screen” pass routes if unable to press the ball.
- Ability to “track” opponents and recover to the ball or spaces.

# ESSENTIAL MF ATTACKING SKILLS

- SUPPORT.
- AWARENESS.
- RECEIVING SKILLS (Turning)
- PROTECTION SKILLS.
- RELEASE SKILLS-(on demand/at leisure)
- CARRY THE BALL EFFECTIVELY.



# TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTION

## Premiership 2008 / 09

### PREMIERSHIP BEST

Total Passes	120
Successful passes	107
Passing success %	100
Passes forward	25
Passes received	117
Headers	27
Tackles	15
Interceptions	33
Crosses	9
Shots	11

### PREMIERSHIP AVERAGE

43
36
83
18
42
6
4
13
1
1

Liverpool v Everton  
Xabi Alonso

108 passes made  
97 successful

90 % success !

# THE HOLDING MIDFIELD PLAYER

# CENTRAL MIDFIELD PLAYER

## DEFENSIVE QUALITIES

- a) Reads and anticipates events.
- b) Senses danger in opponents attacks.
- c) Slides across the pitch with the ball.
- d) Marks and presses quickly.
- e) Threatens and “nags” away at the ball.
- f) Tight, balanced and quick in 1 v 1’s.
- g) Drops / recovers quickly on ball behind.
- h) Tracks opponents on forward runs.
- i) Organises others around him.
- j) Drops into back 4 when necessary.

## ATTACKING QUALITIES

- a) Links in with back 4 & GK playing out.
- b) Replaces back defenders who break out.
- c) Supports those ahead and to side.
- d) Moves MF opponents if needed.
- e) Guarantees possession with the ball.
- f) Has passing rates of 90 %.
- g) Changes the play.
- h) Drives forward with the ball.
- i) Holds for security as others go forward.
- j) Will break forward when appropriate.

**GALASEK**

**MAKALELE**

**WHO ?**

**SENN**

**MIKEL**

# MENTAL QUALITIES

## AWARENESS

- a) on positioning.
- b) on receiving.
- c) of players “last and/or likely position.”
- d) on runs into forward positions.
- e) “peripheral vision” on/off the ball.

# MENTAL QUALITIES

## CREATIVITY

- a) "ranging" and delivery of passes.
- b) "disguise" in operating where appropriate.
- c) "combination" plays.
- d) "first-touch" of the ball./receiving skills.



# MENTAL QUALITIES

## MENTAL TOUGHNESS

- a) 90 minutes contribution!
- b) “pressing”/”tracking” /challenging.
- c) in a “packed” and “competitive”  
midfield!!
- d) “persistence” in all facets of the game.

# MENTAL QUALITIES

- *OTHER SIGNIFICANT MENTAL QUALITIES?*
  - >Concentration.
  - >Courage.
  - >Cunning.
  - >Determination.

WHEN Particularly are these qualities required ?

HOW are they acquired ?

IMPLICATIONS for training ?

# POSSESSION AND PASS COMPLETION

# Euro's 2008 - Ball Possession – Average Passes per game.

<b>SPAIN</b>	- 569
HOLLAND	- 541
ITALY	- 501
FRANCE	- 488
PORTUGAL	- 487
<b>GERMANY</b>	- 474
RUSSIA	- 453
CROATIA	- 450
TURKEY	- 449
GREECE	- 448
AUSTRIA	- 447
POLAND	- 438
ROMANIA	- 433
SWITZ'LD	- 409
SWEDEN	- 393
CZECH R	- 379

**Xavi (Spain) v Germany**

**62 passes made**

**Xavi – overall Tournament passing.**

**316 passes made**

**Senna (SPAIN)**

**2 matches – 111 passes made.**

**90 % pass completion !**

# PREMIERSHIP PASSING (2008-09)

## PASSES MADE

Chelsea 19926  
Man Utd 19415  
Liverpool 19505  
Arsenal 18999  
Fulham 16109  
(next best.)  
Stoke City 9480  
(lowest)

## ACCURACY

Chelsea 83.9%  
Man Utd 83.0%  
Arsenal 82.6%  
Liverpool 80.9%

League average 76%

## IN OWN HALF

Chelsea 92.7% (7992 passes)  
Man Utd 92.3% (7488)  
Liverpool 91.5% (7957)  
Arsenal 91.0% (6746)

League average 88.6%

## PASSING IN ATTACKING HALF

Chelsea 78.1% (11934 passes)  
Arsenal 78.0% (12253)  
Man Utd 77.1% (11927)  
Liverpool 73.6% (11548)

League average 68.4%

## PASSING IN THE ATTACKING THIRD

Arsenal 72.2% (7251 passes)  
Man Utd 70.5% (6386)  
Chelsea 70.0% (6514)  
Liverpool 67.4% (6586)

League average 60.7%

MUFC v WIGAN ATHLETIC Passes Made : MUFC 614 Wigan Ath 360 ( 1000 ! )  
86% - accuracy – 80%



# PREMIERSHIP POSSESSION FACTORS

Per game **average Team passing totals** Nov: 2008-09

Chelsea	496
Arsenal	442
Manchester United	431
Tottenham Hotspur	341
Liverpool	399
West Ham United	355
Manchester City	352
West Bromwich Albion	333
Fulham	325
Sunderland	314
Newcastle United	299
Portsmouth	294
Blackburn Rovers	288
Everton	287
Middlesbrough	266
Wigan Athletic	253
Hull City	236
Aston Villa	232
Bolton Wanderers	190
Stoke City	175

**DIABY of ARSENAL**

**v**

**Portsmouth (Aug 2009)**

**71 passes made – 96% success**

**Xabi Alonso v Everton**

**108 passes made**

**97 successful**

**90% pass success**

# Champions League Final 2009

## PASS COMPLETION %

Average 68 passes each

**Messi 94.7 % ( 54 accurate from 57)**

**Iniesta 93.8 % ( 65 accurate from 69)**

**Xavi 93.8 % ( 75 accurate from 80)**

Average 33 passes each

**Anderson 85.7 % (12 accurate from 14)**

**Giggs 79.2 % ( 19 accurate from 24)**

**Carrick 74.0 % ( 44 accurate from 59)**



“Strategy in  
Barcelona  
is in the hands of  
Iniesta  
Xavi and Toure.  
Messi completes the  
moves !”

( Kiev v Barcelona )

# WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS 2010

In essence  
9/10 passes were  
successful.!

**SPAIN had an**  
  
**88.07%**  
  
**total passing completion rate !**

939 passes made by Xavi

Average 94 per game !

**Manchester United v Everton**

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2009**

**DARREN FLETCHER**

**63 Passes made**

**Completed 60**

**Pass success 95 %**

**PREMIER LEAGUE**

**40 % more passes delivered successfully than in season 2002 - 03**

**Paul Scholes**

**Sheffield United v Manchester United**

**Premiership Season 2005 -2006**

**98% pass accuracy !**



“ I loved playing against England.

They would always give us the ball back quickly

and they still do .”

Johann Cruyff

# Highest Levels of Game.

- More passes now being made per game.
- Player passing - repertoire now extended.
- Player receiving skill now enhanced.
- More passes being completed successfully.
- Pass completion rates in excess of 80%.
- Outstanding pass completion of 90 % +

**Passing development implications ?**

# CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2007 - 08

Manchester Utd, Chelsea, Liverpool, AC Milan)

## One touch play.

64 goals in free play scored by the semi finalists.

299 individual player possessions in scoring the goals.

38% of all these passes were 1 touch.

30% of all these passes were 2 touch.

14% of all these possessions were 3 touch.

68%

***48% of all possession contacts in the build up to goalscoring by Manchester United, were 1 touch.***

1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all passes delivered in the Premier League are 1 touch !

# MINIMAL TOUCH FOOTBALL

**Everton v Manchester United**

**October 2008**

**“They couldn’t get near United in the first half when the champions provided a master class in pace, passing and movement. The feints and flicks were mesmerising. The one touch play was compelling”.**

# Carlos Alberto

**“ The most important thing that can happen to English players is that they improve their technique. Technical skills like dribbling, good movement, the ability to pick a pass are key to breaking teams down – but you just don’t see it when England play, their style is always the same. They never change, they never improvise and they never improve. They put the high ball into the area and try to head it in, but they need to focus on the more technical skills.”**

**CREATIVITY – making the complicated, awesomely simple !**

# PASSING & POSSESSION SKILL

# PASSING TYPES

## TACTICAL USE OF POSSESSION

**Defending half** build up passing – searching, changing play, playing through.  
**Midfield possession** and **progression** play.

**Attacking third passing** – speed, subtlety, precision, disguise and variety.

Retain possession whilst “searching” – usually in midfield and back.

“**Set up play**” to attack elsewhere. ( **Holland**, Red Star )

**Counter-attack passing** – release and receive at optimum speed employing any surface.

**Breaking the lines.**

- midfield lines
- back-line from distance
- back line over short distance

**Beating the block.**

“**Free-flow**” passing sequences. (Arsenal)

“**Congested area**” possession.

**Tempo changes** – why, when, how ?



“ **With Lampard it’s difficult to tell him to work slow. He likes to work 100 %. In Italy it is different –you ask them to play 50% and they do.**”



“ It’s wrong to call us the golden generation. We have improved because we are doing the basic things like communication, teamwork and **passing the ball better.**

Frank Lampard

October 13<sup>th</sup> 2009

# JORGE VALDANO

**“ teachers of the game have disappeared from training programmes to be replaced by coaches with a style that is too academic with a scientific basis to support their theories.**

**If there is no freedom there is no creativity.”**

**Jorge Valdano, Sporting Director – Real Madrid 2005**

▪

## Carlos Quieroz talking of Ronaldo.

“ I have learned something about techniques from the very best – Zidane, Balakov - and so, at MUFC we put that into Ronaldo – the **detail**, the **mechanics** of the movement, **how to** position the body, the position of the chin, the arms, we introduced **fine detail**, one step 20 centimetres to the left, position the feet here, the knee like this.

After two days – nothing but after three days it started to fly like we wanted.

There's nobody prepared to work harder for his artistry !

**Do coaches know the necessary detail ?**

# PASSING DEVELOPMENT

- **A**wareness (of circumstances) and **A**ppreciation – of what, why and how .(Consideration / calculation)
- **V**ariety ( of release skills – all surfaces )
- **A**ccuracy and timing – delayed - instant.
- **R**ange (distance judgement, capability & accuracy.)
- **A**pplications. (Feel,Force,Flight – spin.)
- **D**isguise.( as appropriate.)

Composure and precision

**A V A R A D**

# PASSING FACTORS

## PLAYER INTELLIGENCE IN POSSESSION

- **Awareness** – use of all senses.
- **Space & Time** available for passer **AND** receiver.
- **Circumstances** – for passer, receiver.
- **Options ( prime )** available from situation.
- **Capabilities** – of player on ball **AND** receiver.
- **Priorities** – state of game, tactics.
- **Success** – guaranteed – 90% +
- **Additives** – force, flight, spin, disguise ?

# IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

- Time – devoted to passing – hierarchy of values !
- Touches – maximum involvement !
- Teaching – “specialist **possession** teachers”
- Tailored practice – “bespoke practice design.”
- Type of practice – opposed / unopposed.
- Types of passing – practice ! ( congested, counter attack, build.)
- Tempo variations.
- Teach the arts, crafts, ingenuity involved in passing.
- Coach to expect, accommodate and manage errors.

# TEACHING



SPECIALISTS NEEDED



# TAILORED PRACTICE

## Knowledge of the coach:

**Bio-mechanics.**

**Mechanics.**

**Knowledge of highest level requirements.**

**Demonstration methods.**

**Themes / Types of passing.**

**Technique / skill / Tactical useage.**

**Speeds.**

**Directions.**

**Areas – space ,time.**

**Demands.**

**Position specific !**

**Generic.**

**Appropriate levels.**



# The ART OF COACHING.

“The art of coaching is lost when coaches fail to realise the depth to which the game should and must be taught.”

Allen Wade

# THE FUTURE PLAYER SKILLS

- Give and take “instant” fast-passes.
- An enhanced range and variety of passing skills.
- Ability to play “minimal touch “ passes.
- An assured “tight and soft first touch” on the ball.
- Ability to subdue and secure the ball to retain it under pressure.
- Possess “certain” basics and assured unorthodoxy.
- Ability to deceive as and when appropriate.

“ Players operating at the highest levels of the game in the future will consistently need to meet 80 + % pass completion rates and be capable of achieving 90 + % completion rates. There will be a demand on players that they increase their variety, range, accuracy, disguise and consistency of passing to meet these requirements.”

**What does a 90 % passer have and do ?**

**How do we as coaches develop the 90 %'rs**

# PASSING EXCELLENCE

- 1) Do we as coaches fully understand what is involved in passing excellence ?
- 2) Who can we as coaches and also players look to as “role models” ?
- 3) To what degree can passing excellence be developed in isolated technique practice ?
- 4) Can passing creativity be coached – if so – how, if not – how to develop ?
- 5) Is creativity more a result of practice environment, or teaching ?
- 6) Is passing skill best developed by a player responding to circumstance in practice ?

END

Controlling the ball.

# Reasons for “control.”

- To “set-up” the ball to .....
- To secure possession.
- To protect the ball under pressure.
- To “eliminate” an opponent.
- To move an opponent.
- To attract an opponent.
- To gain control (harmony) of ball / body.
- To “still” the ball.
- To open up an angle.
- To turn with the ball.
- etc: etc:

# Factors involved.

- Read likelihood of receiving the ball.
- Movement of player into support position.
- Assess the path/flight of ball.
- Movement of player into line of the ball.
- Awareness of the “immediate” playing circumstance.
- Intent of controlling touch.
- Timing of the first touch.
- Direct the path of the ball according to intent.



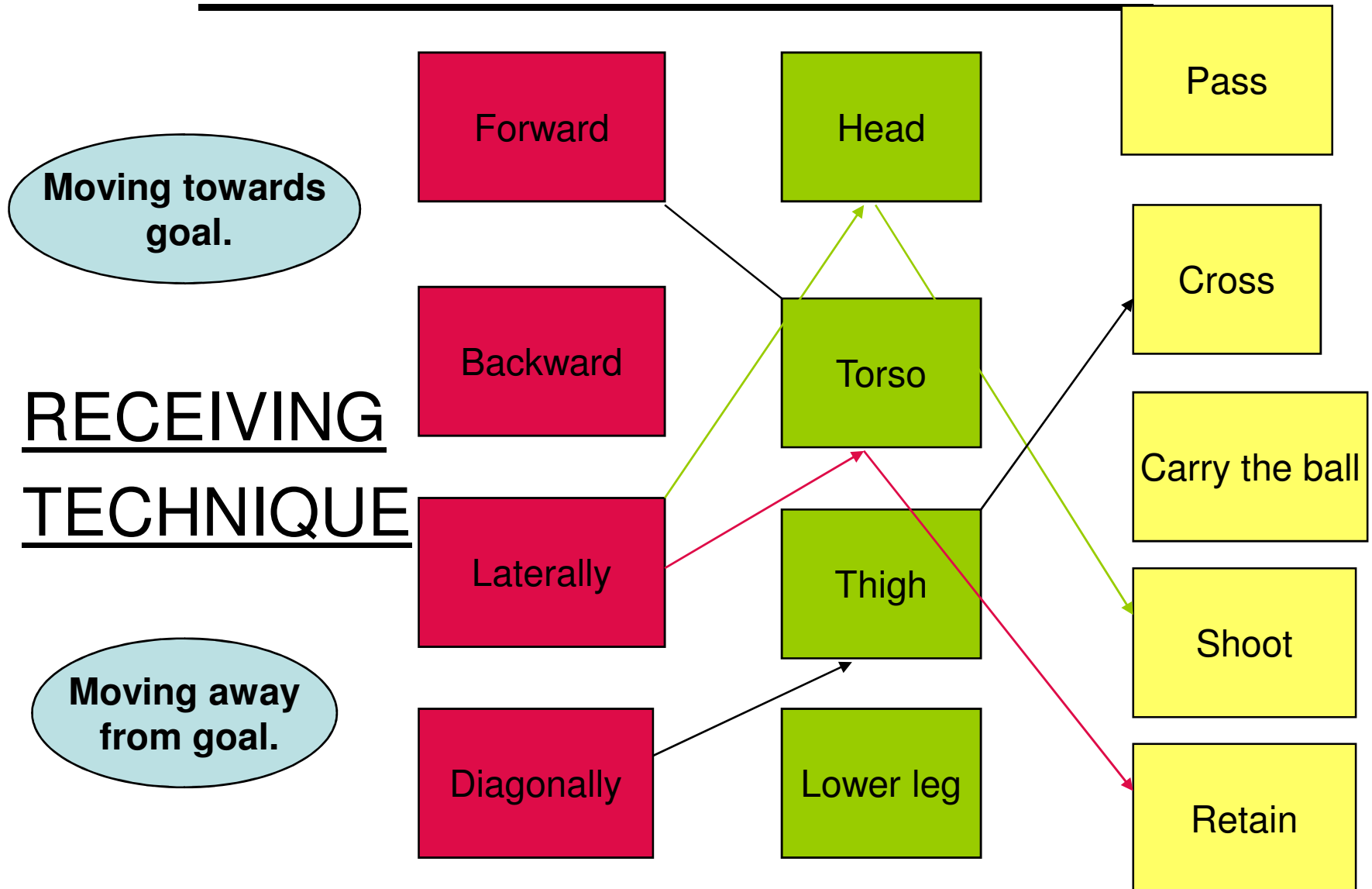
# “KEY” FACTORS of the contact.

- Intent.
- Direction.
- Distance (force applied- weight.)
- Plane/height of the touch.
- Command (Body / ball harmomy. )
- Disguise if necessary or chosen.
- Timing of the touch.
- Applications !!! (Spin, surprise!!)

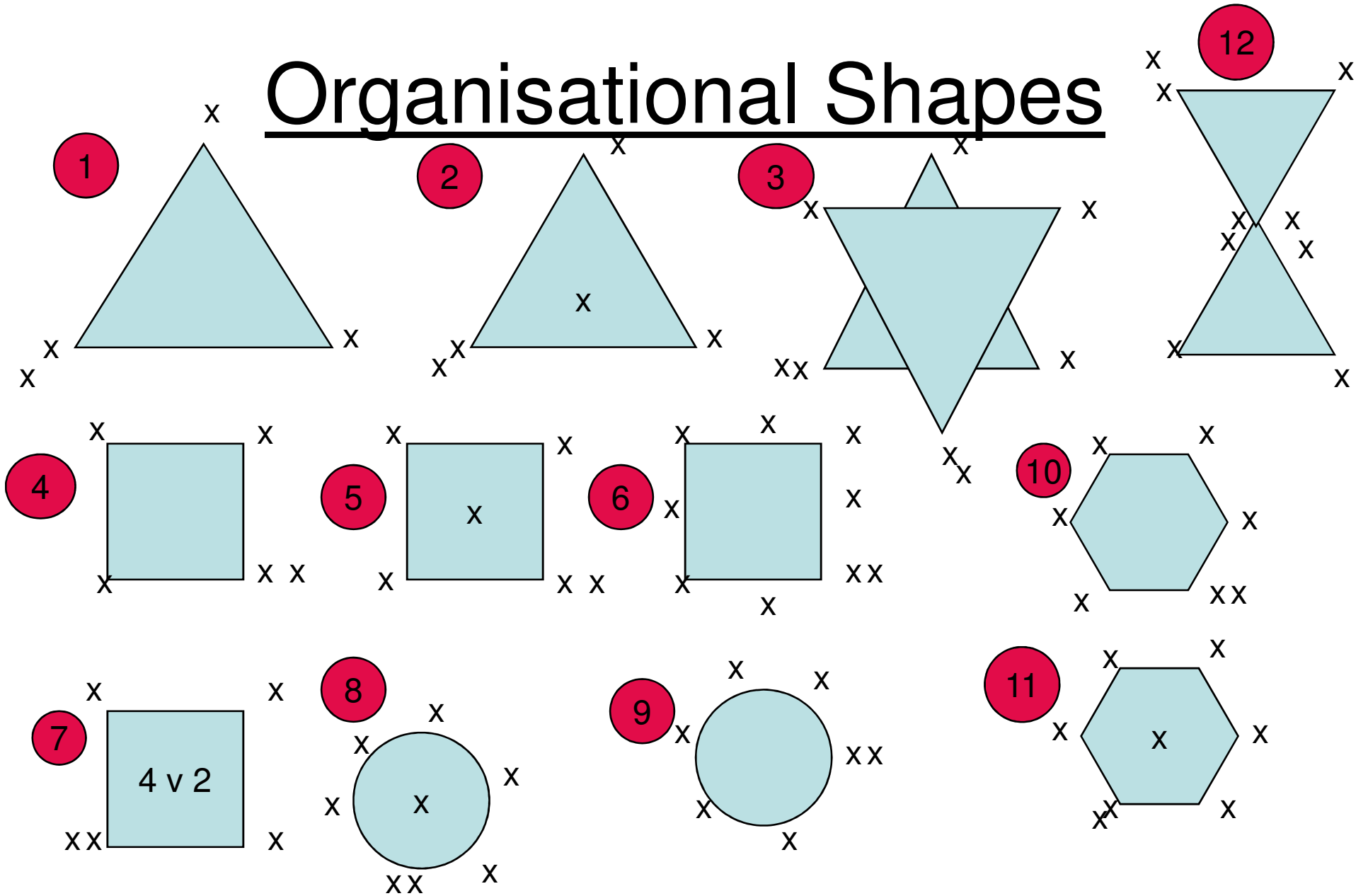
# HOW ?

- Individual ball-player practice- "Jonglages"
- Drills.
- Circles
- "Moving" technical practice.
- Skill practice. (Degrees of pressure.)
- Specific "functional" practice.
- Conditioned game-type practice.
- Squad / Zone practice.
- Game practice.

# RECEIVING THE BALL

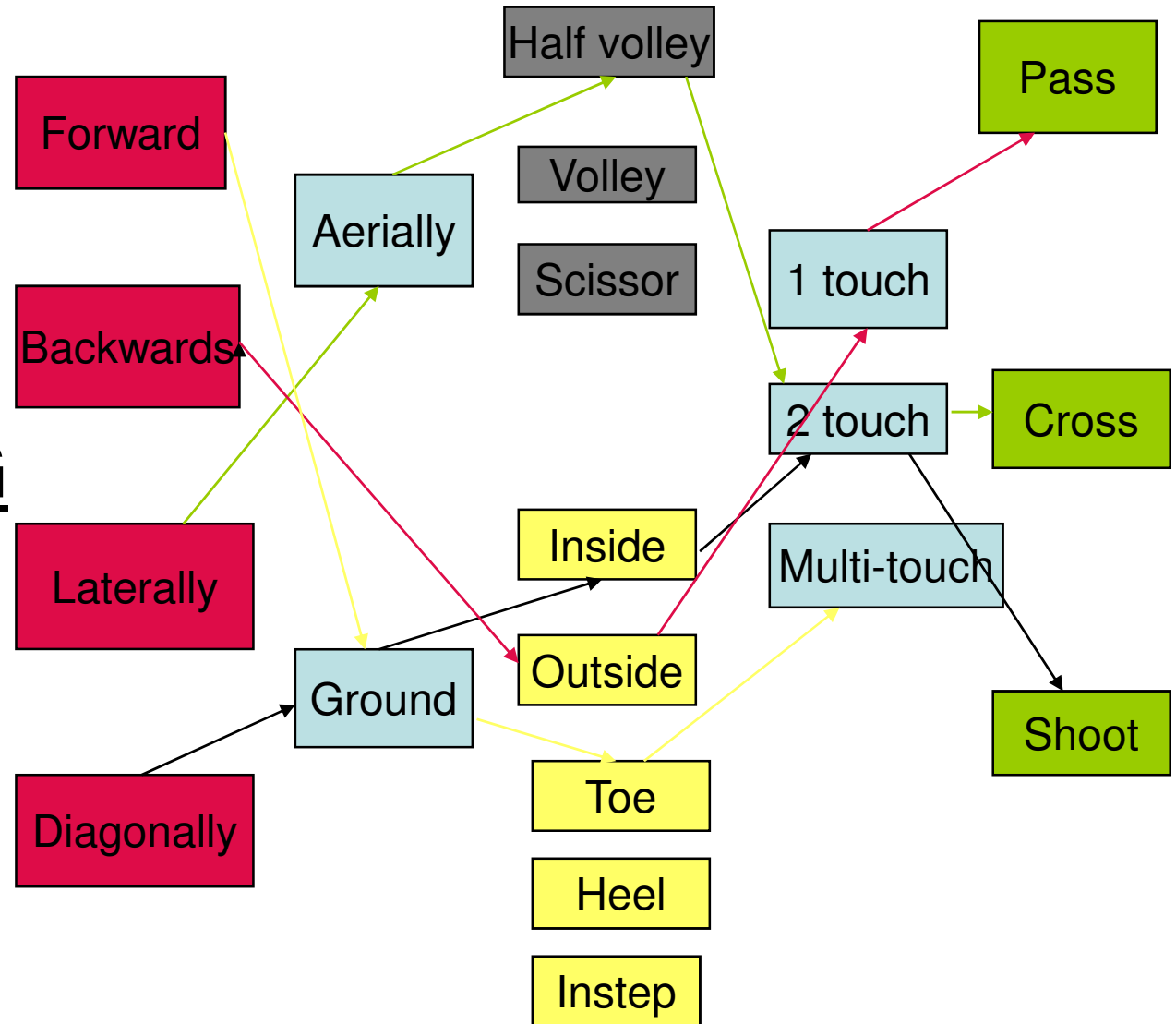


# Organisational Shapes

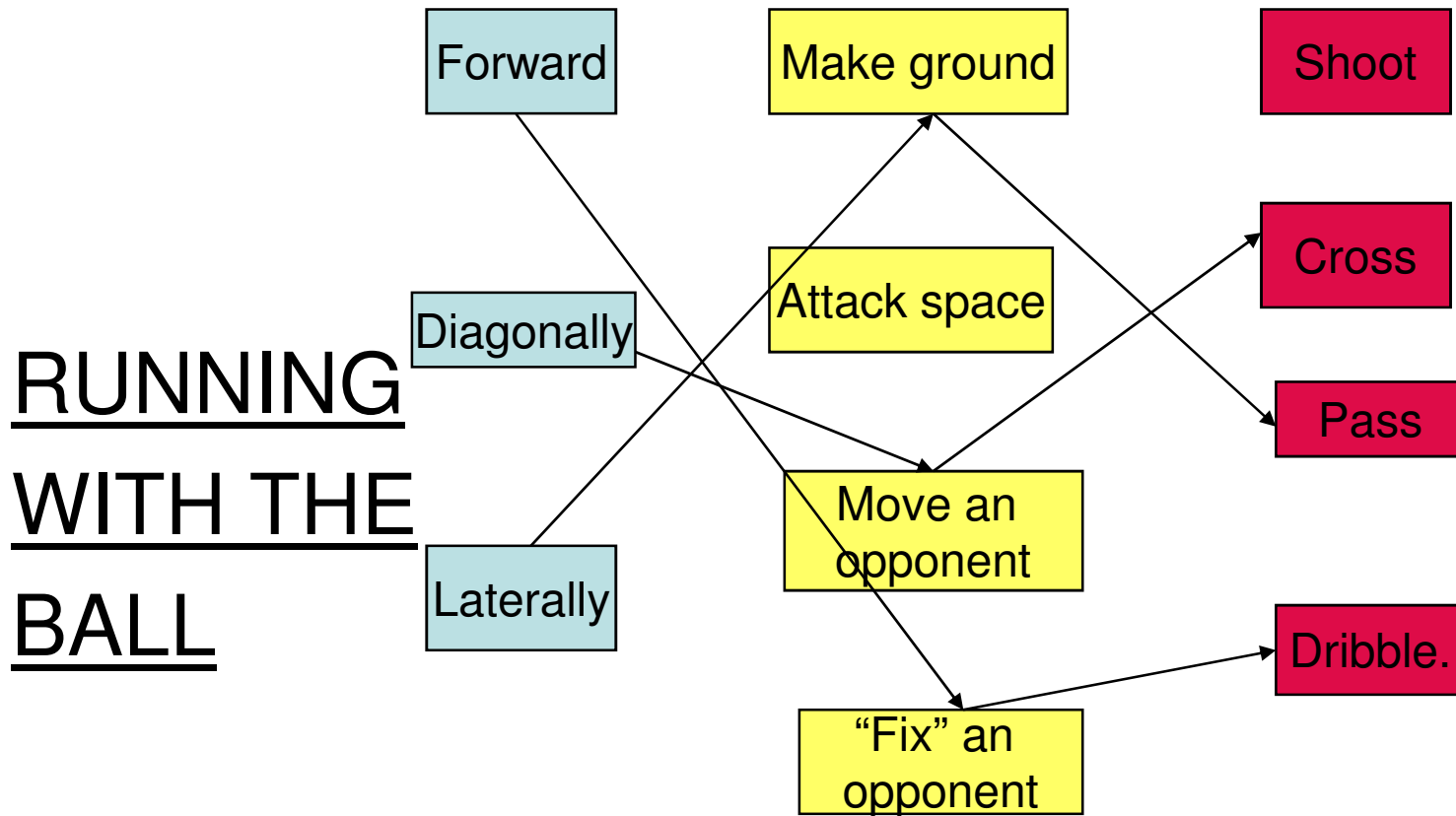


# RELEASING THE BALL

## RELEASING THE BALL

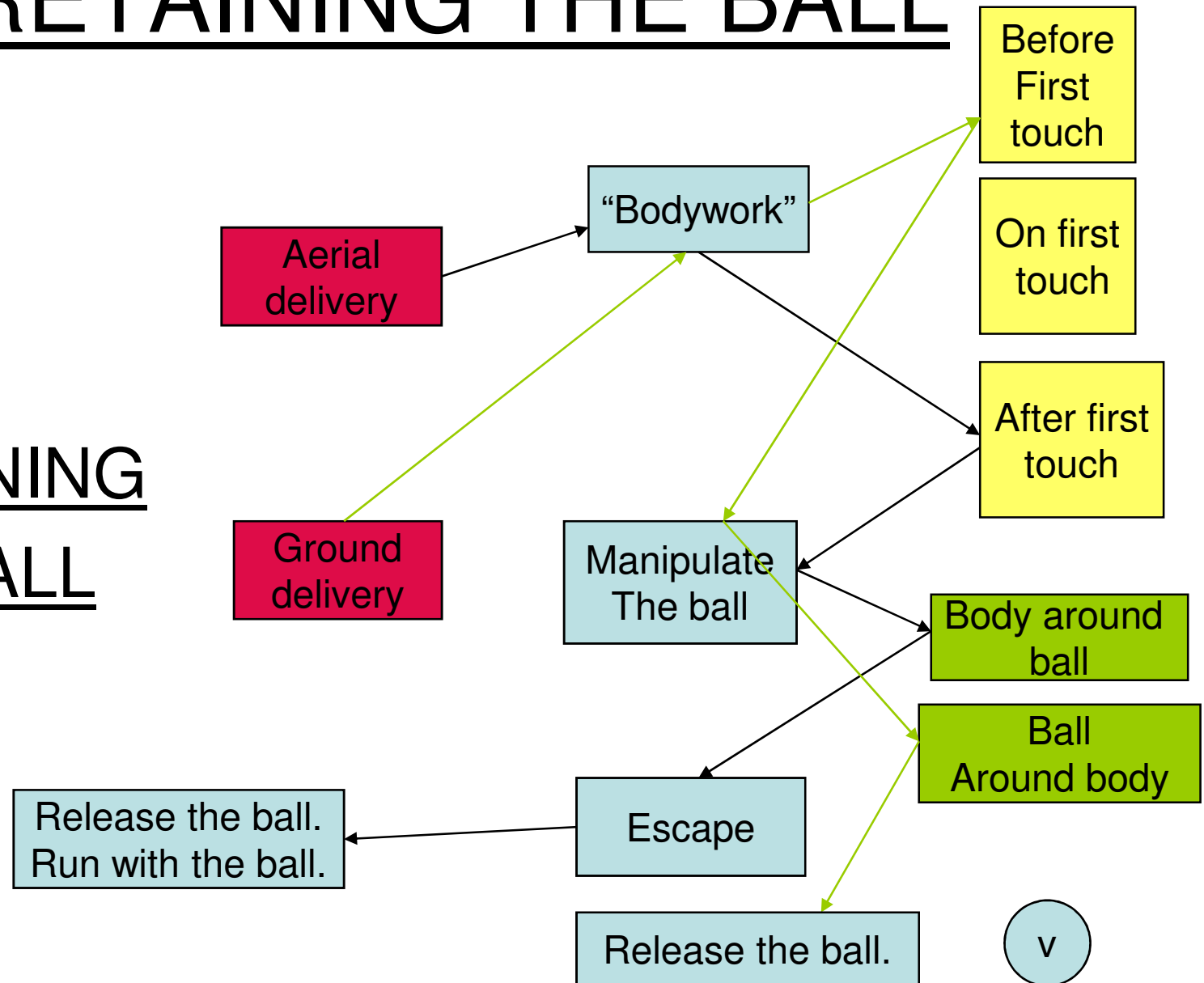


# RUNNING WITH THE BALL



# RETAINING THE BALL

## RETAINING THE BALL



**END**