

Top Coaches Seminar at the Euro 06 – practical demonstration of trends

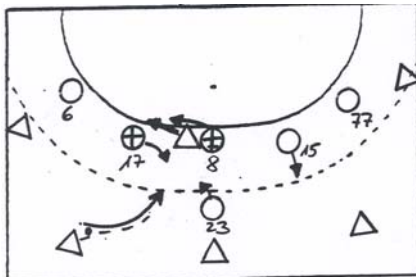
We will start with several presentations on defence work, then we will analyze a very effective offensive move of the team GER vs. FRA and the reaction of the French defence in the second periode of the game.

Finally we will take a look at some offence moves of DEN and ISL and we will end up with the great move of team CRO that is tailor-made for the abilities of their playmaker BALIC and offers him a huge number of different solutions from just one set-up.

First part – Defence

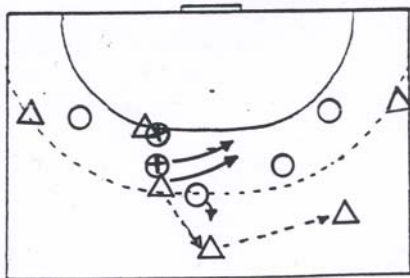
5 – 1 of team RUS

The Russian 5-1 with the point going



Basic formation is a highly man-oriented 5-1 with 2 specialists (# 8 and # 17).

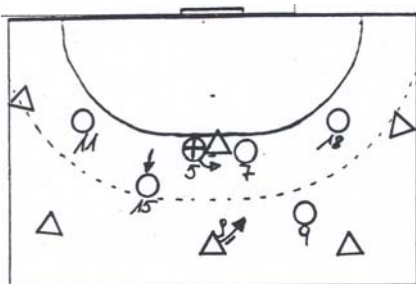
With the LB moving towards the goal, #17 takes the challenge and #8 plays man to man against the LP. The point moves back a little and #15 moves high in order to challenge the diagonal pass.



LB now is forced to bring the ball to the PM and if he continues to go to 6m #17 will stay with him. The point moves high again and with the ball flight continuing to the right side we will find a pretty high 4-2 formation fighting the ball side. This switch in the positions and the high pressing of the backs is a very new element in the defence work of the team RUS.

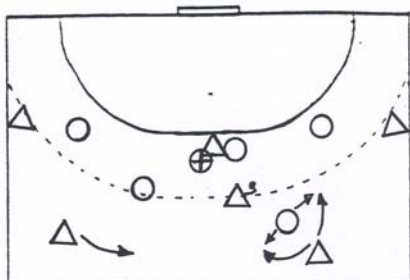
ISL : Specific 4-1+1 vs. RUS

In general this team used to play a 5-1 defence, sometimes a very flat 3-2-1 even, but in the match with RUS they came up with a very specific system dedicated especially to fight the RUS offence.



The basic set up is an asymmetric 5-1, but as soon as the ball goes to the PM the picture changes a lot. The right wing playing position #2 in defence moves up to 9m immediately and in the same moment Sigurdsson (#9) will go from 9m to 10 or 11m even.

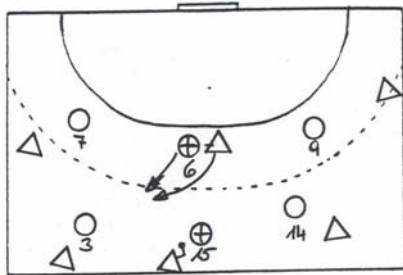
By this the two defence players form a kind of a funnel forcing all the offence players to move to the central area.



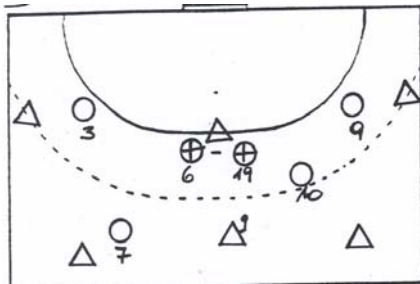
If the PM continues his move towards throwing arm, pressing will be executed against the RB and with any inside move of the LB the respective defender will move on 9m accordingly. A number of wrong passes and unprepared shots resulted in half a dozen fastbreak makes from this situation thus bringing an early decision in this match.

DEN: Variations make it happen

In the match against RUS the team of DEN started with a 3-3, changed to the successful system of ISL (only flip-flop) and finished with a regular 5-1. All of these variations they played for 20 minutes and by doing so they never allowed the RUS team to find a rhythm in offence play.



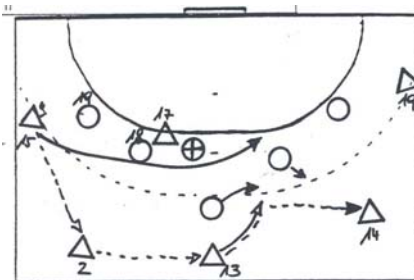
In the 3-3 they played with two specialists in the central positions and had a man to man pressing against the LP. If any of the RUS players would rush inside the respective defence player followed closely.



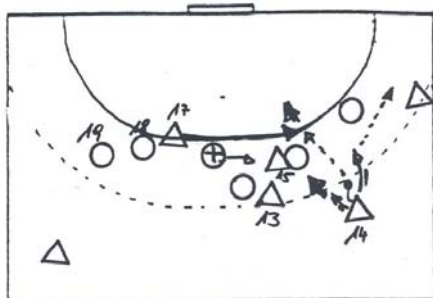
After 20 minutes they shifted to a 4 -1+1 with two specialists in the centre again but according to their players abilities they had to flip-flop the ISL system. Since BOLDSSEN (#10) was to play second left this position would go to 9m only and look for an infight situation there. The fast wing player on the right side went up for pressing against the LB thus resulting the same damage like the ISL defence had done before by forming an identical funnel against the backcourt players.

Second part : Offence – Defence Challenge (GER – FRA)

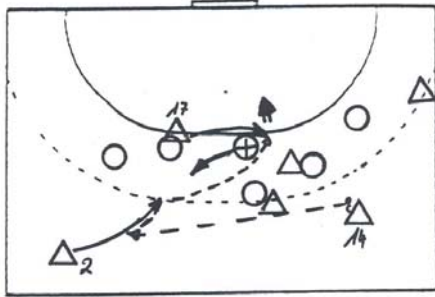
In this game the team GER came up with a specific move designed to make use of the well known characteristics of the French 5 –1 defence system and they were very successful in the first half time of the match. After intermission the team FRA changed their regular moves and by this they were able to close all the gaps at the 6m line thus forcing the German backcourt players to shoot from distance.



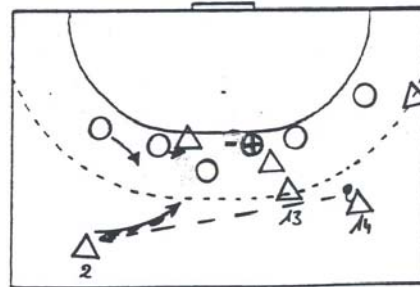
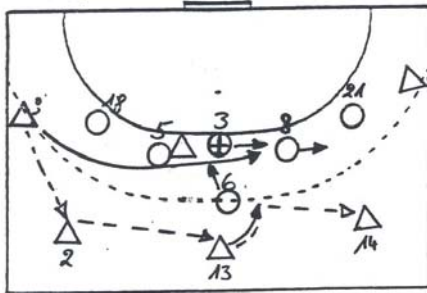
LW rushed inside with the ball flight, trying to make it for the open space behind the high-going second player on the opposite side. Since this move is synchronized with a towards arm move of the PM, the defence specialist has to take this player and follow.



In case this player (DINART #3) leaves the line, the LP immediately will make use of this gap and run for the ball. SEITZ (#14) has several options now : Pass to the LP, breakthrough and/or parallel thrust for the wing, switch inside again and fire a fast forearm shot.



If DINART (#3) does not give room on 6m, the move of the LP is delayed. SEITZ (#14) will bring the ball back to fast approaching P. HENZ (#2). With DINART (#3) now concentrating on the blocking action against this guy in the centre there is room for the outside move of the LP. The assist pass is done by HENZ (#2) or following another diagonal pass it will be executed by SEITZ (#14).



Since GER was very successful with this move, the French team changed their basic behaviour. With the rush of the LW, the point B. GILLES (#6) retreated to 7m in the centre whereas DINART (#3) and NARCISSE (#8) took some sideways action on 6m only. So there was now free way for running for the LP anymore thus eliminating the first direct solution.

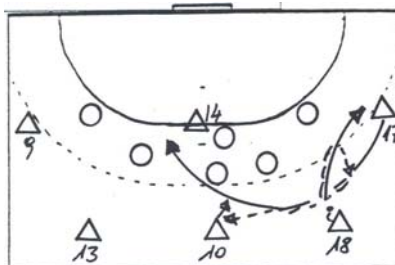
And due to a switch in defence there was no chance for the delayed action as well : ABATI (#18) went high thus forcing the inside move of HENZ (#2), where B. GILLES (#6) already waited for the challenge. And behind them G. GILLES (#5) played a direct man-to-man action against the LP not allowing him any free move.

The whole offence game of team GER became pressed together without any chance for passes to the line, so their strikers were forced to fire through crowded spaces which gave OMEYER a real good number of saves and ruined their self confidence.

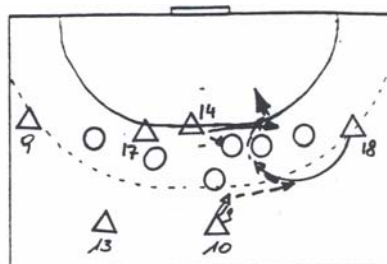
Third part : Transition play plus simple solutions by group tactical means (GTM)

This will be demonstrated by solutions picked from Scandinavian teams, it must be pointed out that this way of offence play is the most common now. Most teams do base their offensive activities on moves like these or at least very much alike these.

DEN vs. 5-1 flat or 3-2-1 flat



Short crossing between LEEGAARD (#18) and STRYGER (#17) with the ball, RW will pass on to the PM and continue with an inside sweep just close outside the basic central position of the LP.

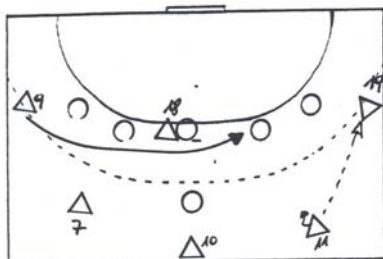


With this set-up the PM moves straight forward in order to hold the point in the centre and brings the ball back to the RB who moves up in a semicircular move for the shot. With the two defence players forming a double block, KNUDSEN (#14) will run behind them for the pass.

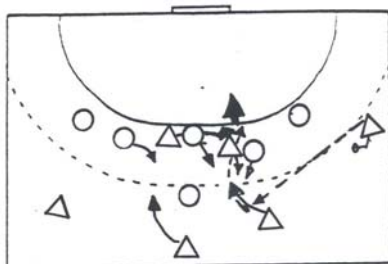
The key of this move is that the Danish players fake to look for a solution on the man advantage side after a diagonal pass and the LP has to wait until the last possible moment before starting to move. This solution requires a very high level of tactical discipline and coordination.

ISL vs. 5-1

This team will play an almost identical solution from a complete different set-up.



With pass from RB to RW the left wing will rush in, all the other players remain static and RW delays a little to give the LW enough time to reach the proper position.



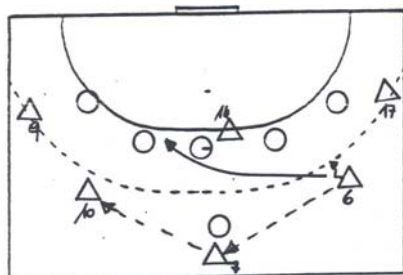
After the pass from RW, STEFANSSON (#11) starts his approach. Since he is a tremendous striker his defence player will move out and SIGURDSSON (#9) will move with him faking a pick-and-roll action. This forces the CB to challenge, because if he does not, STEFANSSON will shoot. And this gives the LP enough room to run behind the defence and receive the ball by a pass over the passive LW.

The key of this move is that the PM GUDJONSSON (#10) will lay off so the point cannot take over STEFANSSON, because if he does there will be a short pass RB-PM and GUDJONSSON will fire his terrific fast forearm shot through the gap.

The three-way threat RB + LP + PM made this move extremely effective.

DEN vs. 5-1 high

If a 5-1 defence decided to send the point high against the PM in case of a transition game, DEN played a very simple move based upon the physical condition of BOLDSSEN (#10) and very effective indeed.



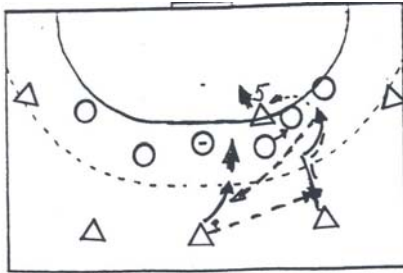
RB will bring the ball to the PM and sweep inside in the most common way. All the other players remain static and PM will bring the ball on to BOLDSSEN in the position LB.



Now BOLDSSEN starts a long inside run with the ball, forcing the CB to challenge – if he does not, he will shoot from the centre with a distance of 8m only from the goal. If the tackle is good against the shot, he will do one dribble and continue his move thus producing a 2-1 situation against the defender in position 2. According to the situation he will continue with the breakthrough or give the ball to the LP. And if the OL should come running to close the gap this will give a fantastic wing shot chance for STRYGER (#17) who is very confident in situations like this.

NOR vs. 5-1 flat and 6-0

Another example for simple solutions based upon the individual abilities of the players in this case the firepower of the backcourt players in terms of fast forearm and centre shots.



The PM takes a position somewhat left of the middle and passes on to the RB (right-handed player). The RB will go straight + right towards throwing arm forcing both the defenders to move sideways.

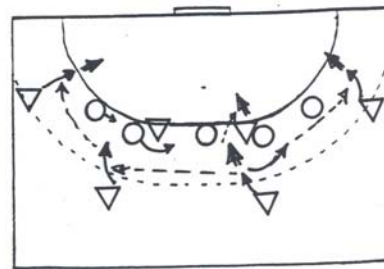
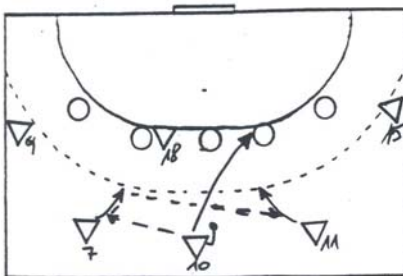
If he gets his arm free, he will fire immediately (forearm hip shot). His second option is the pass to the LP or the wing sometimes.

If the defence is able to block all these options, he will stop his move and bring the ball back to the PM who in this very moment comes in with a fast short move towards throwing arm.

In this position the PM can do his fast shots on either side of the isolated CB or, if this guy is really doing well, try to bring the ball to the LP behind the defence.

ISL in 6-5

This is just a pick, many teams do this move from either side because it is so simple.

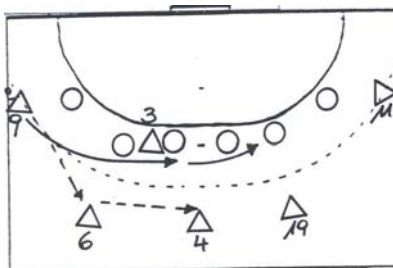


The PM plays the ball to LB and moves to 6m away from the ball. LB thrusts and plays a diagonal pass to the moving RB. STEFANSSON (#11) now has a number of options which I do list according to the frequency he made use of them: 1st Shot, 2nd another diagonal pass and continuation LB – LW. These two were the most frequent by far. 3rd fast outside switch against throwing arm with breakthrough or continuation to RW. 4th pass to the PM on 6m.

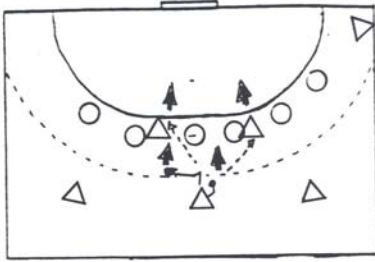
Remark: Funny enough there was never a chance to play on to the LP, all the defence teams would closely shut down this guy.

Fourth part : CRO unstoppable by a 6-0 defence

The basic idea behind this move is as simple as great : when planning to move in for a 4-2 anyway, why not taking two LPs from the very start ?

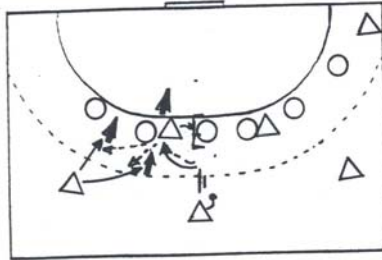


With this CRO starts in a regular 3-3 set play but without LW. Instead this position is taken by VORI (#9), a top line-player. He will just move inside with the ball flight, doing a double screen for LACKOVIC (#6) first, then moving on swiftly with his pass to BALIC (#4), the PM to take position between players 2 and 3.



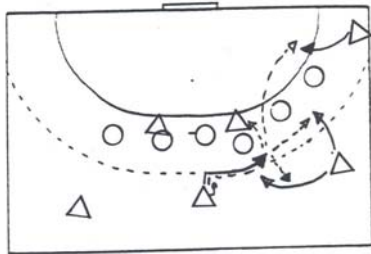
First set of solutions:

Just before receiving the ball BALIC moves slightly to the right, not more than one meter, just freeing his throwing arm. This offers four options at once : direct shot, lay-away shot, pass to the respective line-player whose defender comes up for the challenge.



Second set of solutions:

If both IR and IL of the defence play very well BALIC will continue with a breakthrough move against throwing arm side, supported by a pick by SULIC (#3) against IR. If this move is blocked by the defender BR he will do screening for a shot by LACKOVIC who will have to different options to execute the shot.



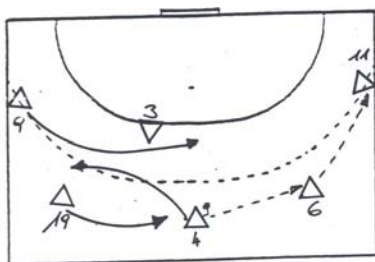
Third set of solutions:

With the defence really moving fast and determined BALIC will move on towards throwing arm side and try to pass by the IL. From this position he will try to shoot first of all, if that seems not possible he will have four passing options: VORI, two different passes to METLICIC (#19) and a Kempa-pass to DZOMBA (#11).

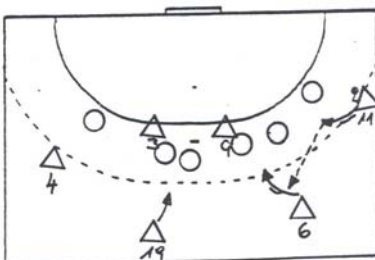
Looking at all this one will understand why it looks like BALIC was the one and only in team CRO but as a matter of fact it is the set-up that is as important as the astonishing abilities of the playmaker. Both things together make the overwhelming effect.

CRO alternating move

The move shown above was carried out against a 5-1 defence too but of course it was much more difficult for BALIC to free himself from the point first and to continue then. So they had a second pick at hand.



With BALIC passing the ball to the RB, both the LW and LB will move in simultaneously whilst BALIC lays away from the ball in a without-ball crossing move. This has to be finished when the ball reaches the RW.



Now they will start a parallel-thrust move with two mean strikers and two line specialists. And if they cannot succeed in this 4 on 4 set-up, then they still have cleared the floor for their PM on LB position for a 1-1 action against an isolated defence player.

By doing so CRO managed to bring up an enormous lot of pressure on every defence although they gave away some space by sacrificing the LW position.

W. Pollany