

**“Offensive and defensive strategy against 5:2:3-System”
(Part-2)**

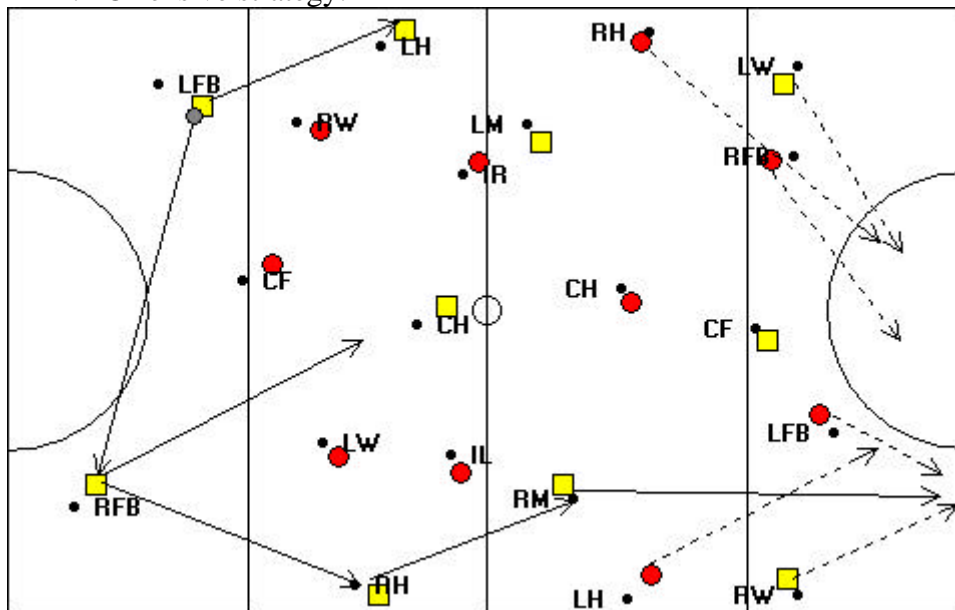
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“Offensive and defensive strategy against 5-2-3 system”

1. Offensive strategy:



1. The general strategy of the players against 5-2-3 system!

The 2 “Full-backs” stand quite far and the 2 “Halves” should push up as much as possible along the side-lines to make it difficult for the attackers to tackle and make them chase further!

The 2 “Full-backs” can mostly play the ball to the 2 “Halves” or to the “Midfield-players” if the side-channels are closed by the opposite “Wingers”!

When the transfer is played fast enough to the “Halves”, they can immediately play long-line-passes to the wingers - as long as the side-channel is open!

Players who are standing in the side-channel should move inside to create space for other forwards. The players from the centre of the field should move into the open side-channel to receive long-line passes!

The “Right and Left Half” can support the attackers for a “2 against 1” or “Give and Go”! They can make pressure from the side by dribbling and crossing into the “D”, create free-hits or “Long Corners! If they lose the ball and a counter-attack occurs, the “Full back” on the ball-side moves up and tackles!

The “Centre Half” (“Central-Midfield”) can move freely when the ball is built out of defence because he is not marked closely in his own half! He can also change position with all the other players, like “Full-Back”, “Midfield-players” and “Forwards” to make it more difficult for the opponents to check him!

The other “Midfielders” have various tasks to do:

- moving towards the ball-carrier during the 16y-hit to collect and play passes!
- “opening the channel” to create space where the ball can be played
- supporting the “Halves” in ball-possession for a “2-1”, “Give and Go” or transfer of play!

-changing position with other “Midfielders” and “Forwards” to make it more difficult for the opponents to “read the attack”.

The Forwards have different tasks to do:

- indicate to the ball-carrier that he is free to receive the ball by approaching
- moving into “Backdoor-position” behind the defenders!
- moving to the goal-line-position to create space and pulling back the opponent!
- changing position with other forwards and midfielders

2. Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of 5-2-3 system

Strengths:

As far as I know this system was used mostly by the Asian countries! The current system has already changed, but the structure and the style of play is still the same!

- The individual skill even in attack as in defence is very strong!
- The individual stick work is the trade-mark of the Asian players and the significant strength.

- The team work in the different parts of the team makes the system work.
- The “Centre Half” is always a key-player who organizes the defence and the attack, traditionally he was the team-leader and a player with a combination of good skill and tactical abilities!

-The speed of the players and the fitness-level is still very good.

-They had many specialists in the team:

- fast wingers who can cross the ball on the run!
- dribblers in the midfield and forward-line, very skilful in 1 against 1 situation!
- players with good “flicking-skill” for long flicks
- defenders with excellent reflexes and defence-skills!
- “Penalty-corner-specialists like hitters or flickers!
- scorers in the “Circle” who can convert “half chances” into goals by “deflection-skill”, “diving-skill”, “hitting-or flicking-skills”, “dribble-skills” like one-one against the “Full-back” or the goalkeeper!

Before I mention the weaknesses, I want to highlight the most important point and the biggest advantage of Asian teams that is – playing by instinct!

This strength has been partly reduced, when the opponents came out with solutions such as developing individual and collective systems to beat the “ball-artists”!

This was done by using video to study the Asian style of play and this gave teams from Europe and Australia an advantage over the Asian teams. The gap between Asian and other teams became closer and from the early 70s the dominance of Asian Hockey was over when European and Australian teams achieved victories in major tournaments. Asian Hockey changed their strategy of play but still the traditional structures can be recognized!

Weaknesses:

One significant difference between Asian and other countries is the defence:

- marking is very open, giving the opponent much space to receive and play the ball!
- problems against teams with a “passing-system” and fast transfer of play! Defenders always closes the space near ball-side but open up the “weak-side” too much!
- forwards are not working hard enough to help the defence! Forwards are not coming back to close the space in their own “Half”! Still relaxing and waiting for counter-attacks!

The Attack, was for a long time, the most attractive aspect of the Asian teams!

With the tremendous change in Hockey from Natural to Synthetic grass, skills and tactical aspects influenced the game a lot!

The following mistakes made them lose their position:

- Too much dribbling, running with the ball, and wasting time in “ball-possession” by holding the ball too long!
- many risky dribbles can cause loss of possession and result in counter-attacks!
- prefer dribbling with the ball instead of passing-skills like hitting or flicks! Therefore they slow down the speed of play and allow teams to come back into defence!
- seldom use the whole field even after the “off-side-rule” was changed!
- seldom use the “back-door-position” to make the marking by the defender more difficult!
- no flexibility for individual and team-tactical decisions!

Conclusion:

The top-teams in Hockey have improved their field play and there is no more a clear dominance by one team over a long period of time, like it was in the past!

Many teams have improved and all the top-teams can be beaten by each other and even by teams with minor Hockey tradition!

The physical aspect is even more important than before and the best example is shown by S.-Korea who achieved the “Silver Medal” in the Sydney Olympics through their superior fitness!

The “Penalty-Corner-Specialists” have brought success to many teams in the past but new ideas have emerged such as by running into “Penalty-Flicks” like “Kamikaze”!

Top-Hockey has changed and will change again and only those teams who constantly adapt to the changes will remain in their top-position!

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