



BC SOCCER

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Retreat Line Analysis

Discussion Paper

1.0 Introduction/ Background

The purpose of this discussion paper is to examine the use of a 'Retreat Line' to assist with the full field transition for children playing within Under 13 Leagues in British Columbia.

The aim of the review is to establish if the use of a retreat line is successful in terms of generating an increased number of passing sequences (three passes or more) and losing possession of the ball in or beyond the middle third during an Under 13 league game.

In September 2014, a retreat line was introduced to the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League to assist with the full field transition during the September to November timeframe (Appendix A).

This league is the first in the province to introduce this initiative during league play and it enabled a technical work group the opportunity to collect between leagues using and not using a retreat line.

2.0 Methodology

In an effort to collect an accurate sampling of data, the technical work group used a game analysis form (Appendix B) and captured a brief video clip from before the goal kick until after possession is lost. This information is intended to provide a visual feedback mechanism to assist with individual and team development discussions.

The main categories of analysis focused on:

- Ability to sequence 3 or more passes
- Which third of the field possession was lost
- Whether the goal kick resulted with a shot on goal or a shot against
- Whether the goal kick resulted with a goal or a goal against
- General observations

A control and experimental group was established for each gender. By forming these groups it will allow for collected data to be isolated and help identify male and female trends.

Games played within the control groups were officiated with standard FIFA Laws of the Game. Within the experimental groups, two amendments made to the FIFA Laws of the Game during the implementation of a retreat line (Appendix C).

3.0 Data Analysis & Key Findings

A total of 20 games were observed throughout the analysis, allowing the technical work group to collect a sample of 5 games for each group.

The results below have separated into gender specific control and experimental groups:

3.1 Male control group:

Of the 50 observed goal kicks, 20% of goal kicks resulted with 3 passes or more; 40% lost possession of the ball in the middle third; 4% were able to advance the ball beyond the middle third; 4% of goal kicks resulted with a shot against goal; and 16% of goal kicks were taken by a defender instead of the goalkeeper

3.2 Male experimental group:

Of the 46 observed goal kicks, 41% of goal kicks resulted with 3 passes or more; 57% lost possession of the ball in the middle third; 9% were able to advance the ball beyond the middle third; 4% resulted with a shot on goal; 4% resulted with a shot against goal

3.3 Female control group:

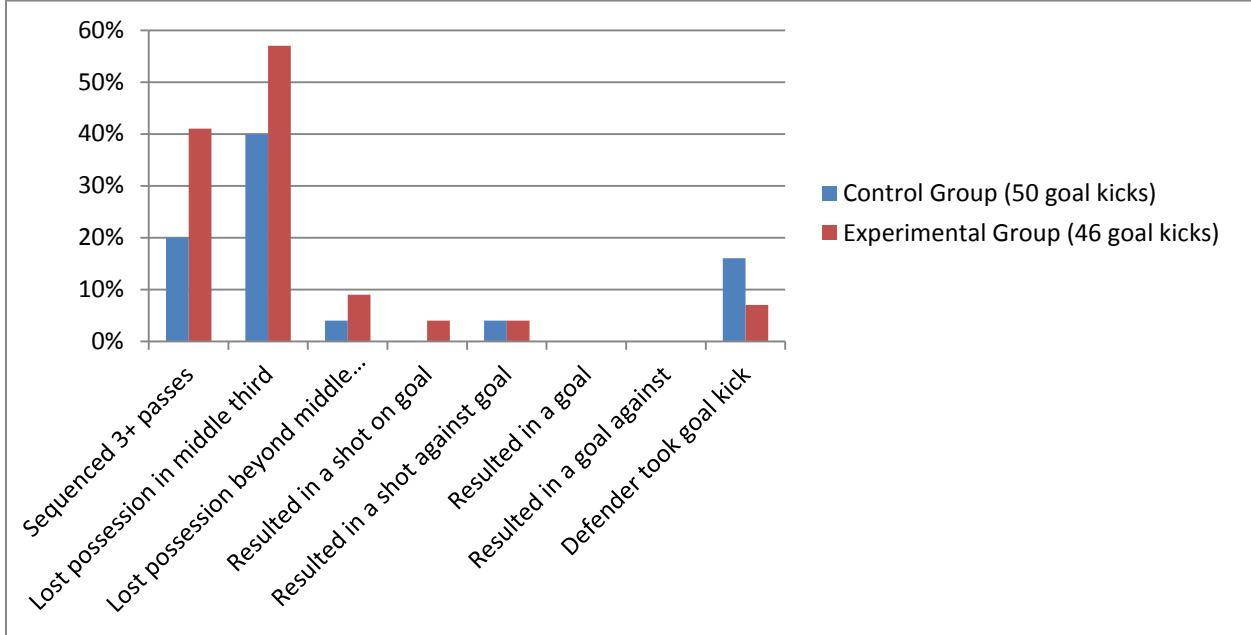
Of the 46 observed goal kicks, 4% of goal kicks resulted with 3 passes or more; 55% lost possession of the ball in the middle third; 7% were able to advance the ball beyond the middle third; 7% of goal kicks resulted with a shot against; 6% resulted with a goal against; and 43% of goal kicks were taken by a defender instead of the goalkeeper.

3.4 Female experimental group:

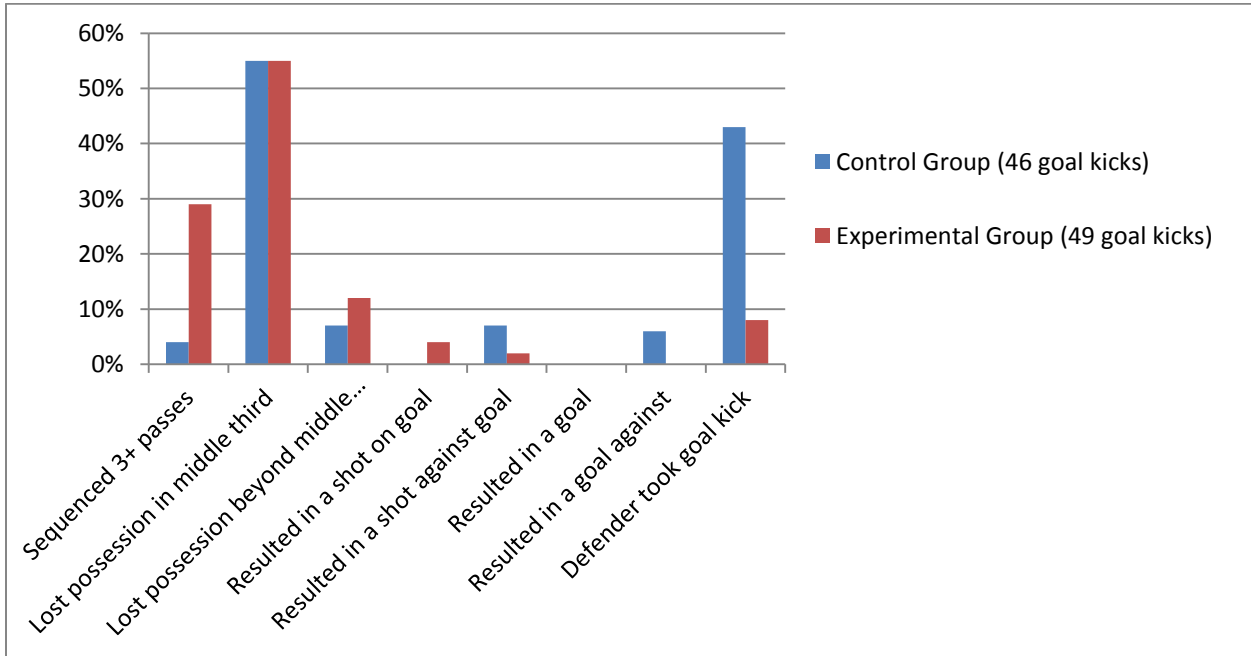
Of the 49 observed goal kicks, 29% of goal kicks resulted with 3 passes or more; 55% lost possession of the ball in the middle third; 12% were able to advance the ball beyond the middle third; 4% resulted with a shot on goal; 2% resulted with a shot against; 8% of goal kicks were taken by a defender instead of the goalkeeper.

3.5 Comparison Charts

3.5.1 Male Comparison



3.5.2 Female Comparison



3.5.3 Points of Interest

Throughout all of the experimental group's goal kicks, not one goal kick was made into the middle third; where as a number of goal kicks within the control group were either directly received or turned over in the middle third of the field. Often these longer goal kicks were taken by another player on the field, as the goalkeeper lacked ability.

3.5.4 Retreat Line Summary

Through the collected data it is evident that the retreat line encourages players to sequence passes along the field of play into the middle third and beyond for both male and female players. Also the collected data indicates that players within the experimental group were able to advance the ball beyond the middle third more frequently than the control group through their sequenced passing.

Based on this small sample, these finding indicate that the retreat line generates a higher success rate for players initiating attack from a goal kick.

4.0 Discussion

The findings from the analysis indicate that the use of the retreat line for Under 13 players transitioning to eleven-a-side soccer increased the number of passing sequences and frequency of the ball advancing beyond the middle third from a goal kick.

The space generated by the retreat line allowed players to practice appropriate dispersal, which enabled supporting movement into channels to help advance the ball out of the defensive and middle thirds of the field. Also the space provided opportunities for goalkeepers to be more involved and practice their distribution.

The results also indicated that the time generated by the retreat line allowed attacking players the opportunity to receive and play the ball into their teammates, which allowed for players to repeatedly receive the ball with less pressure that enhanced the opportunity of three or more passes.

Moving forward it will be interesting to observe both the control and experimental groups as they transition into the next phase, both playing without a retreat line.

Note:

At the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the EA SPORTS BC Soccer Premier League, the Technical Directors from each club, with support from the BC SPL Governors, voted to continue the retreat line for the U13 boys and girls divisions through June 2015.

Appendix A - EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Information Package

Introduction:

As the intake under 13 player begins their involvement with the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League, there will be amendments made to the FIFA Laws of the Game to assist with the full field transition during the September to November timeframe.

The use of a retreat line will be introduced to promote young players during goal kicks to improve their ability to play out from the back rather than kicking the ball away from their goal and down field.

By introducing a retreat line, the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League believes that the game will become more rewarding for intake players graduating into the under 13 age group in January 2015.

Background:

The EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League promotes a possession style of play, where the quality of pass combined with good decision making results in a learning environment that constantly challenges each player.

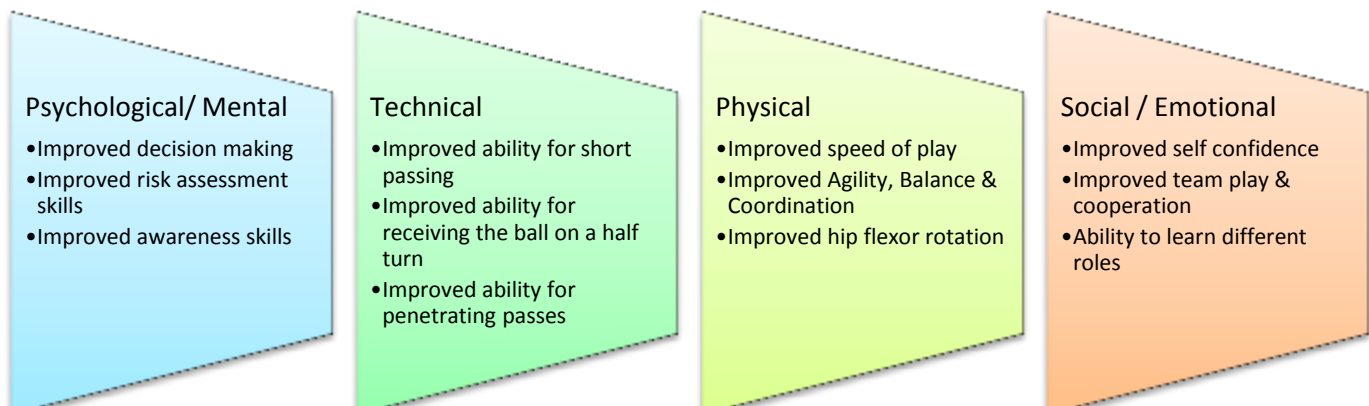
All players on the field should be comfortable in possession of the ball during game situations. Being able to progress and penetrate through all the thirds of the field to provide goal-scoring opportunities.

Rationale:

The world of soccer is evolving and Canadian youth must also evolve with the game. The modern game now evolves around maintaining possession of the ball, with controlled, precise build up starting from the goalkeeper. Players must understand the right time to play forward and/or backwards.

To enable youth players to play this style of soccer they must learn to play through the thirds of the field and have the ability to maintain possession throughout the whole field while under pressure. Every player on the field must become comfortable in possession of the ball, as possession based soccer should become their default style of play

Outcomes:



Retreat Line Procedure:

The Retreat line comes into play when the ball has gone out for a goal kick. All opposing players will retreat to flags indicating the attacking 3rd zone and cannot pursue the ball until:

- The ball is received by a teammate OR,
- The ball travels over the retreat line OR,
- The ball leaves the field of play

If a team chooses to play quickly, they can. The ball will be in play as soon as it leaves the penalty area regardless of the opposing team's position.



If the opposing team repeatedly infringes the retreat line, an indirect free kick shall be awarded from the place where the offence occurred for not respect the restart.

Making the Right decision:

At times the correct pass is a long one, players need to recognize the positions of the opposing team and act accordingly. If there is the opportunity to play quickly to create a counter attack, it should be encouraged!

This supports the development of decision making for young players and the speed of their distribution.

Summary:

This is a new initiative to help young players transition to the full field during the September to November timeframe. It will take time for players, coaches, officials and parents to adapt to something new and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League appreciates your support.

Retreat Line Assessment Form

Age Group: U5 (Male) Gender: Female (M/F) Game Format: 7v7 Referee Line: (in/out) Date: Sunday, 13 September 2014

Home	Away	3rd of field where (back) was marked			3rd of field where (front) was marked			Pass Count	Possession = Shot on goal	Loss of Possession = Shot against	Possession = Goal	Loss of possession = Goal against	General Comment
		DEF	MID	ATT	DEF	MID	ATT						
	X	✓			X		5						
X		✓				X	7	X					
X		✓				X	3						
	X	✓			X		5						CB took G.KICK
	X	✓			X		2						CB took G.KICK
X		✓			X		3						
	X	✓			X		3						CB took G.KICK
X		✓			X		1						



Appendix C - EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Retreat Line

Law 16: Goal Kick (Retreat Line)

As the Under 13 intake players begin their involvement with the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League, there will be amendments made to the FIFA Laws of the Game to assist with the full field transition during the September to November timeframe.

- Law 1: Field of Play
- Law 16: Goal Kick

These rule amendments are based on the concept of the 'Retreat Line' and have been made to allow our young players to learn and gain confidence in how to play the ball out from the back and build an attack, as opposed to the goalkeeper kicking the ball aimlessly down the field.

Law 1: Field of Play

The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length (touch line):

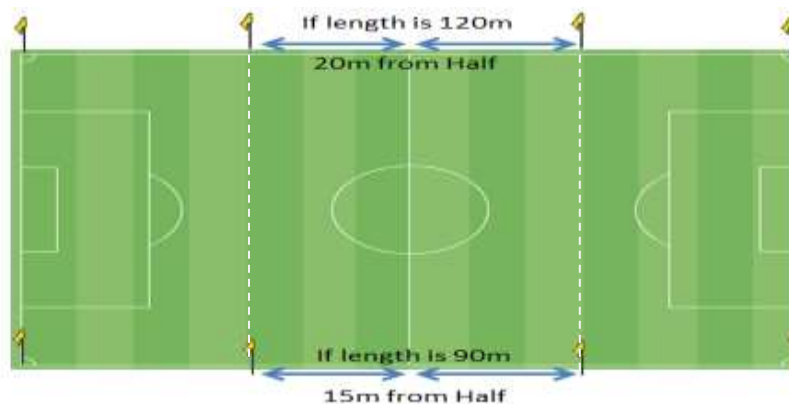
- * minimum 90 m
- * maximum 120 m

Length (Attacking 3rd for Retreat Line)

- * minimum 15 m (both sides of half)
- * maximum 20 m (both sides of half)

Width (goal line):

- * minimum 45 m
- * maximum 90 m



Law 16: Goal Kick

The attacking 3rd line will act as a retreat line on all goal kicks.

Opponents must drop off to the attacking 3rd line (Retreat Line) and cannot cross the retreat line until the ball:

- Is touched by a teammate from the team taking the goal kick OR,
- Goes over the retreat line OR,
- Leaves the field of play

This is to help the goalkeeper learn to play out from the back.

However, if a team wants to play quickly they can; the ball is in play as soon as it leaves the penalty area regardless of the defending team's position.

If a team repeatedly infringes the retreat line, an indirect free kick shall be awarded from the place where the offence occurred for not respecting the restart.

