

CONTENTS

Introduction	13
Chapter 1	14
The characteristics of Barcelona players	15
• The Player Profiles	16
• Pep Guardiola	20
• 2010/11 Season 4-3-3 System of Play and Player positions	21
Chapter 2	22
The philosophy of Barcelona	23
Chapter 3	24
Barcelona in the four phases of the game	25
• Barcelona in the defensive phase	25
• Barcelona in the transition from attack to defence	26
• Barcelona in the attacking phase	27
• Barcelona in the transition from defence to attack	28
Chapter 4	29
Barcelona in the attacking phase	30
• Positioning: Creating the correct shapes	33
• Movement without the ball	34
• Diagonal Passing	35
• Vertical Passing	37
• Pass and move combinations	40
Chapter 5	43
Barcelona's formation during the attacking phase	44
• Attacking formation	45
• Attacking formation: Variations	46
• Playing with 3 defenders	47
• Creating width	48
The first stage of the attacking phase	49
• Building up play from the back	50
• Vertical pass to the forward	54
• Messi dropping deep into an attacking midfielder's position	56
• Defenders joining the midfield	58
• Switching Positions	60
• Defensive Midfielder's positioning	62
• Movement into Space	64

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

• Rhombus/Diamond shape in the Central Zone	66
• Forward dropping deep to maintain possession	68
• Movement: Creating space for others	70
• Using the correct body shape	73
• Maintaining possession from wide positions	75
• Decision making in the final third	77
• Numerical disadvantage in the final third	80
• Numerical superiority	82
Chapter 6	85
The first stage of the attacking phase against the 4-2-3-1 Formation	86
• Attacking down the flank	87
• Switching play	90
• Receiving with the correct body shape	92
• Exploiting Space	93
• Creating 3 Passing Options	94
• Receiving with your back to goal	96
• Body shape determining the next pass	97
• Approaching the third stage of attack	99
• Central midfield passing options	101
• Maintaining balance in the central zone	103
• Numerical superiority around the ball zone	105
• Wide Forwards	107
• Messi dropping deep	109
• Xavi's options from his central position	111
Chapter 7	112
How Barcelona deal with the opposition's pressing during the first stage of the attacking phase	113
• Vertical passes against the 4-4-2	115
• Advancing full backs creating space	116
• Passing out from the goalkeeper	117
Chapter 8	127
Barcelona during the second and third stage of the attacking phase on the right side	128
• Build up play using a three man defence	129
• Messi's wide movement	131
• Diagonal runs in the final third	132
• Attacking down the flank	134
• Attacking down the flank: Overlapping runs	135
• Combination play near the penalty area	136
• 2 v 2 Attacking down the flank	137

CONTENTS

• 2 v 1 Attacking down the flank	143
• Decision making and maintaining possession	144
• Messi's driving runs from deep	145
• Messi maintaining possession	146
• Messi playing from the right flank	147
The build up play using a two man defence	150
• Formations	150
• Daniel Alves's passing options	153
• Messi's movement into 'the hole'	154
• Iniesta advancing into Messi's position	156
• Advancing runs from the left back	158
• Messi in the central zone	160
• Switching play	162
Chapter 9	163
Barcelona during the second and the third stage of the attacking phase on the left side	164
• The build up play using the three man defence	164
• Abidal's passing options	166
• Attacking down the left flank; 2 v 1	169
• Overlapping run	170
• Passing combinations in the final third	171
• One-twos and diagonal runs in the final third	172
• Abidal's passing combinations	173
• Iniesta's driving runs	175
• Movement and the final pass	176
• 2 v 2 on the left flank	177
• Maintaining possession in tight areas	179
• Switching the play to the left flank	180
The Build up play using a two man defence	181
• The left back's passing options	183
• Passing combinations and awareness on the left side	184
• 2 v 1 on the left flank	185
• The left back in an advanced position	186
• Playing out from the back to create a 2 v 1 situation	188
• Awareness and decision making	189
• Vertical pass from the back	190
• Switching from the weak side to the strong side	191
• Decision making: Entering the third stage of attack	192
• Switching play from a central position	196

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

• Overlapping runs	197
• Defensive midfielder's passing options	199
• Iniesta attacking down the left flank	200
• Timing runs in behind the defence	202
• Passing through the midfield line	203
• Switching play from left to right	204
Chapter 10	205
The retaining of balance during the attacking phase	206
• Attacking phase formations; 2-5-3	207
• Attacking phase formations; 3-4-3	209
• Defensive midfielder's role	211
• The full back's role	214
• Maintaining balance; Forwards	216
• Maintaining balance; Left side	218
Chapter 11	219
The transition from attack to defence	220
• The safety player	221
• Applying immediate pressure when possession is lost	229
• Busquets as the safety player	230
• Using three men at the back	232
• Possession lost near the opposing penalty area	234
• Winning the ball back in the central zone	236
• Regaining possession near the sideline	240
• Regaining possession near to the opponent's penalty area	243
• Cohesion in the transition phase	245
• When immediate regaining of possession is not possible	246
• When immediate regaining of possession is possible	248
• Regaining possession in the centre of the field	249
• Team cohesion to regain possession	250
• Winning the ball in an advanced wide position	253
• The opposition win the ball near the halfway line	255
• Preventing the switch of play	258
• Using two safety players	259
Chapter 12	260
The transition from defence to attack	261
• Pressing near the sidelines in an advanced position	262
• Transition to the final attacking stage	266
• Intercepting a pass from the goalkeeper	271

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Chapter 13	273
Barcelona's attacking from set pieces	274
• Corner Kicks	274
Chapter 14	277
• Playing with ten men	278
Conclusion	279
Chapter 9	163
Barcelona during the second and the third stage of the attacking phase on the left side.	163
• Playing using the three man defence	163
• Playing options	163
• Playing down the left flank; 2 v 1	163
• Diagonal runs	163
• Combinations in the final third	163
• Crosses and diagonal runs in the final third	163
• Offside and counter combinations	163
• Offside and cross runs	163
• Offside and the final pass	163
• 2 v 1 on the left flank	163
• Playing possession in tight areas	163
• Switching the play to the left flank	163
• PAC	163
• Playing on play using a two man defence	163
• Playing with passing options	163
• Playing with ball awareness on the left side in vertical lines	163
• 2 v 1 on the right flank	163
• Playing in the second position	163
• Playing in the back to create a 2 v 1 situation	163
• PAC	163
• Offside	163
• Offside	163
• Offside	163
Chapter 15	188
Barcelona's transition from defence to attack	188
• Playing with the ball in an advanced position	188
• Transition to the final attacking side	188
• Intercepting a pass from the opposite side	188