

VAFC Heat U12 Div 1a 2021-2022



Player Handbook

Have fun.
Do your best.
Behave.

Goal

Be a player of great cognition, competence and character.

“3C Footballer”

What can I expect from training and matches?

Training will be dynamic, engaging and fun.

Training will explore the joy of competition.

Training will consist of learner centered activities.

Training will develop individuals within the team context.

Training will encourage taking risks and honor failure as a step to success.

Training will develop cognition, competence and character.

Matches are just training games in fancier uniforms.

Credit to [TOVO Institute](#) for their training mandate for the majority of these views

Cognition

The brain is the most important part of your body in playing football. It is a game of decision-making and communication.



Cognition refers to our thinking process and ability to understand

- Perceive - to recognize and understand
- Conceive - to form an idea
- Decide - choose an idea based on the situation
- Deceive - to mislead
- Execute - to perform or carry out
- Assess - to evaluate

“Scan. Choose. Do.”

Competence



Competencies are the skills required to play the game with an appreciation of its complexity.

- Ball Control
- Movement
- Position Play
- Principles of Play
- System of Play

Character

Adaptable

Always Improving

Resilient

Respectful

Kind

An AARRK of traits and values that will help you succeed on and off the pitch

Adaptable - accepting and embracing change with confidence; optimistic, positive

Always Improving - getting a little better every day; improving with each touch, training session or match

Resilient - ability to bounce back from difficult situations, mistakes and challenges

Respectful - having concern and high regard; of yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches, parents, officials

Kind - a sympathetic and helpful nature; be nice and behave

Movement & Breathing

Move with coordination, balance and speed. Control breathing to recover quickly (mentally and physically).



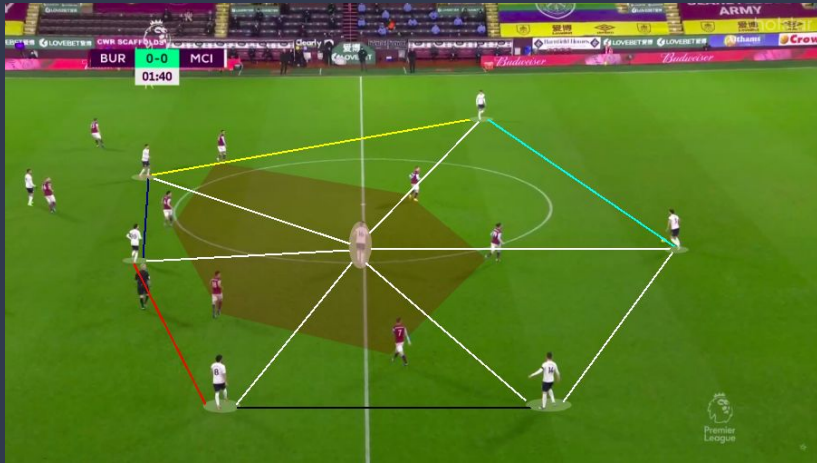
- Explosiveness & Stamina
- Accelerates quickly and can jump high
- Reacts quickly and can recover a ball after losing it
- Demonstrates sharp changes of direction
- Can beat an opponent with quick movement
- Maintains balance in a tackle
- Can avoid a challenge
- Utilizes box breathing technique to recover and to calm mind



Breathing technique: box breathing

Principles of Play

10 Principles of play applicable to any training session or match.



- Manage Oneself
- Manage Space
- Manage the Ball

Principles of Play

1. Scan. Choose. Do.
2. Create & Close Space
3. Attack 1,2,3 & Shapes
4. Pressure Quickly on Transition
5. Organize Defense on Offense
6. Defend 1,2,3
7. Keep it Simple
8. Receive with Intent
9. Pass with Purpose
10. Possession to Penetrate

Position Play

Position play is a search for superiority

- Positional - superiority of space
- Numerical - superiority of numbers
- Qualitative - superior skill



5 Elements of Position Play

- Angles
- Distance
- Timing
- Lines
- Situation

Style of Play

Football is an invasion game. To win, a team must breach the opposition's defensive lines and score more goals than the opposing team. We'll play an attack-focused, possession-based style.



Some teams will focus on winning or playing a system, but we will strive to support individual creativity within a collective spirit. In this context, playing the Beautiful Game is like living. In a world of constant change, and some say chaos, you must try to be present in each moment, accept opportunities/challenges as they arise, and search for solutions with creativity and equanimity.

Having fun is the most important part of the game



Official team mascot - The Weasel



In the English language, someone who overeats is called a “pig”; a coward gets labeled a “chicken.” If you raise pigs or chickens, you know that these barnyard associations are deftly accurate. Pigs are voracious eaters, chickens are laughable cowards. It all makes perfect sense.

Not every animal association works, though. Take weasel. In our collective vernacular, “weasel” is often synonymous with “rat.” The word is used to denigrate, to refer to some unsavory character as sneaky and small.

But anyone who has experience with real weasels knows that the conventional use of the term is way off. In the animal kingdom, weasels are little warriors, perhaps the bravest, most ferocious animals in all the forest. To really make the association work, we should be using “weasel” to mean a combination of little and bad-ass.


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Details to be learned over the
course of the season



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Always Improving

Resilient

Respectful

Kind

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Kind - a sympathetic and helpful nature; be nice and behave

Adaptable



- Accepting and embracing change
- Self reliant - confident in your own abilities and able to do things for yourself
- Ability to regulate sadness, frustration, anger
- Communicating and working with teammates
- Adjust decisions for a particular situation
- Being optimistic and positive
- Willingness to challenge yourself when circumstances change or old habits do not serve you well

Always Improving



- Knowing that with effort and time you can learn and develop new skills
- You are in charge of your own journey - you can be as good as the work you are willing to put in
- Getting better a little each day
- An absolute desire to succeed
- Look for opportunities
- Working on individual skills outside of team training
- Assess and reflect on your own performance (journal)

Respectful

Being polite and forming relationships go hand and hand.



- Greet teammates, coaches, teammates' parents, teammates' siblings, etc.
- Be courteous to match officials
- Say goodbye to teammates, coaches, teammates' parents and thank your parents for bringing you.
- Be on time (early is on time; leave early enough for unforeseen traffic)
- Wear your proper uniform in matches (underarmour of the same colour as your jersey & player gloves are okay, but no toques, no sweatshirts underneath, no pants, etc)
- Tuck your jersey in
- Be responsible for your equipment - remember your water bottle, tie your boots properly, etc.

Resilient



- Able to withstand or recover from difficult conditions
- Makes an effort to come back from behind, and defends with great energy when ahead
- No effort is too much
- Recovers a mistake
- The player maintains focus and concentration:
 - When a mistake is made
 - When teammates make mistakes
 - When potential distractions happen off the field
 - Maintains composure when fouled and shows fair play
- Demonstrates composure at all times
- Willing to take responsibility for your actions

Kind



- Opponents are not the enemy - one team will win, one will lose; don't dwell on either for too long
- Be positive
- Encourage your teammates
- Help your teammate recover from a mistake
- Help clean up
- Be sympathetic to other's mistakes
-

Principles of Play

Attacking football requires technically skillful and tactically intelligent footballers. Executing these guiding principles will improve a player's ability to play inspirational football.

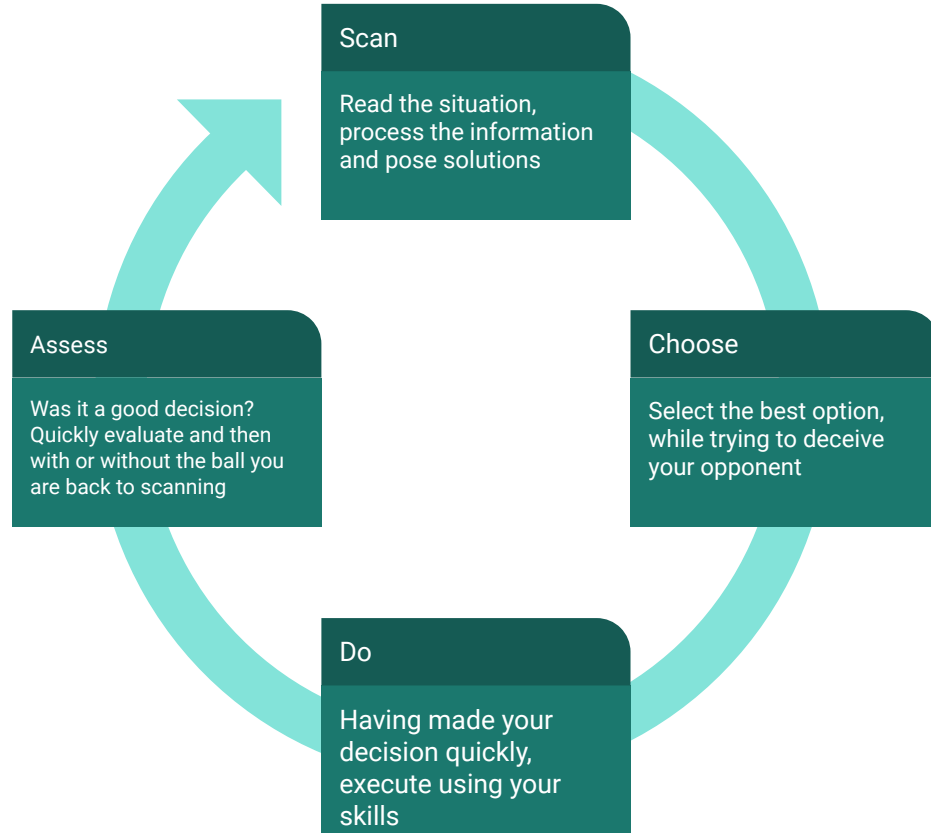


- Manage Oneself
- Manage Space
- Manage the Ball

Principles of Play

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1. Scan. Choose. Do. Assess.





Scan



Scan. Choose. (Deceive) Do.

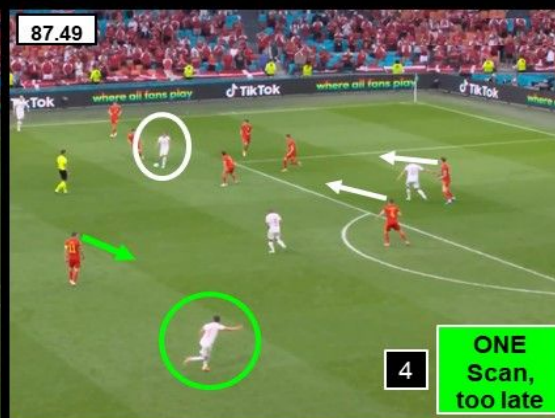
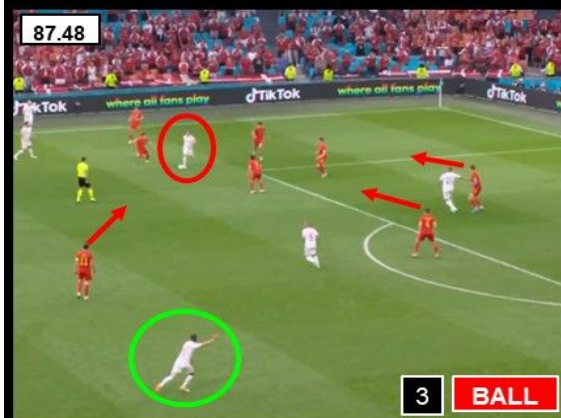
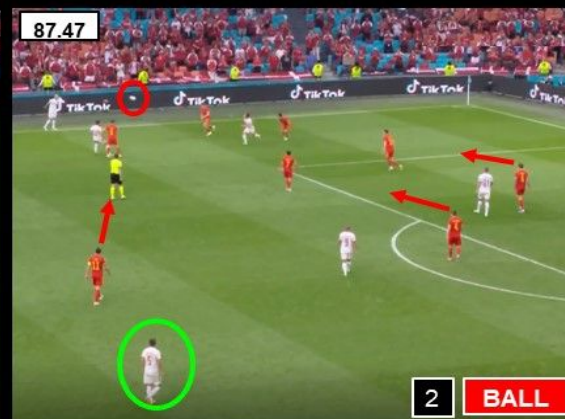
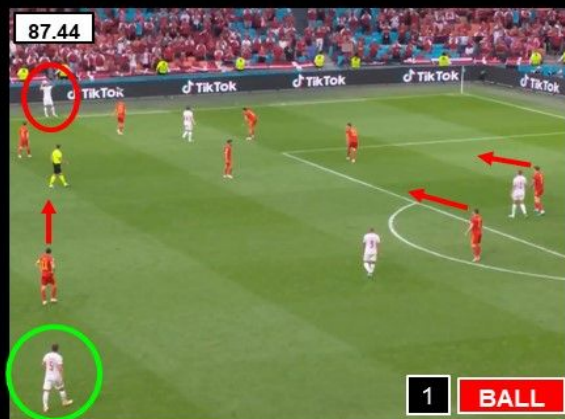


Sensory Perception - See, Hear, Taste, Touch Smell - Use your senses to improve your game.

Defensive Scanning

Denmark – Wales
Mæhle's 3-0 goal

@GeirJordet



Scanning is for defense too

@GeirJordet

2. Create & Close Space

Expand space in attack. Limit space in defense.



Create space

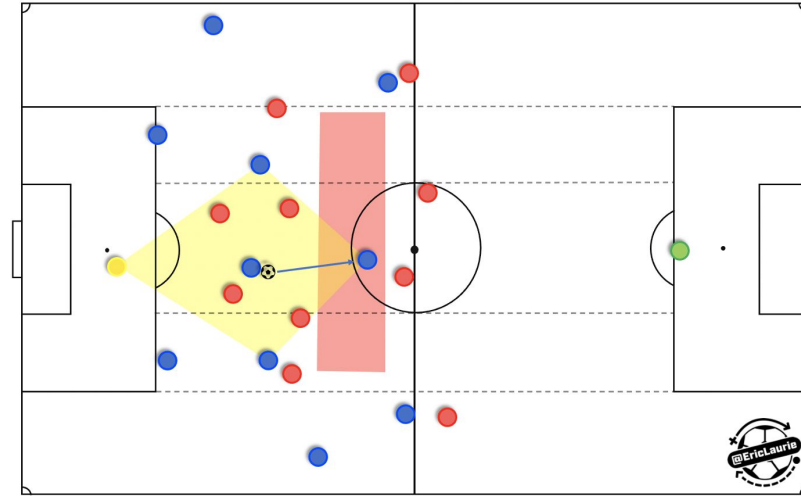


Close space

3. Attack 1,2,3 & Shapes

The 1st player must focus on passing the ball.
The 2nd player must focus on receiving the ball.
The 3rd player must move into a position of support, dictating the sequence of play.

Depending on the position on the field, supporting players should form a diamond or a triangle around the ball carrier.





3rd man runs and geometric shapes

4. Pressure Quickly on Transition



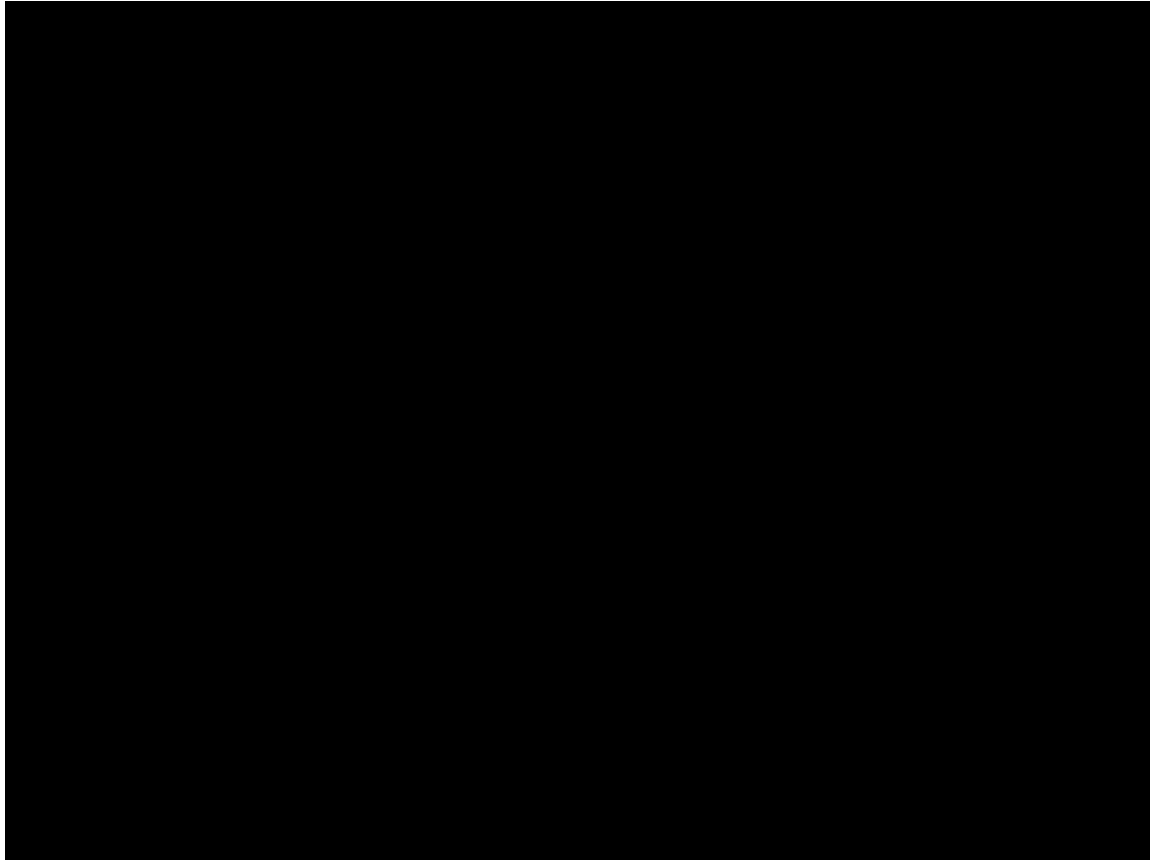
Principles of Play: Manage Space

5. Organize Defense on Offense

As your team moves up the field, everyone must move up (including the goalkeeper) to reduce the amount of space between you and your teammates. This is part of anticipating what may happen next and scanning/reading what opponents may do if you lose the ball.

6. Defend 1,2,3

Pressure, cover, balance



7. Keep It Simple - play what you see (often in the direction you are facing)



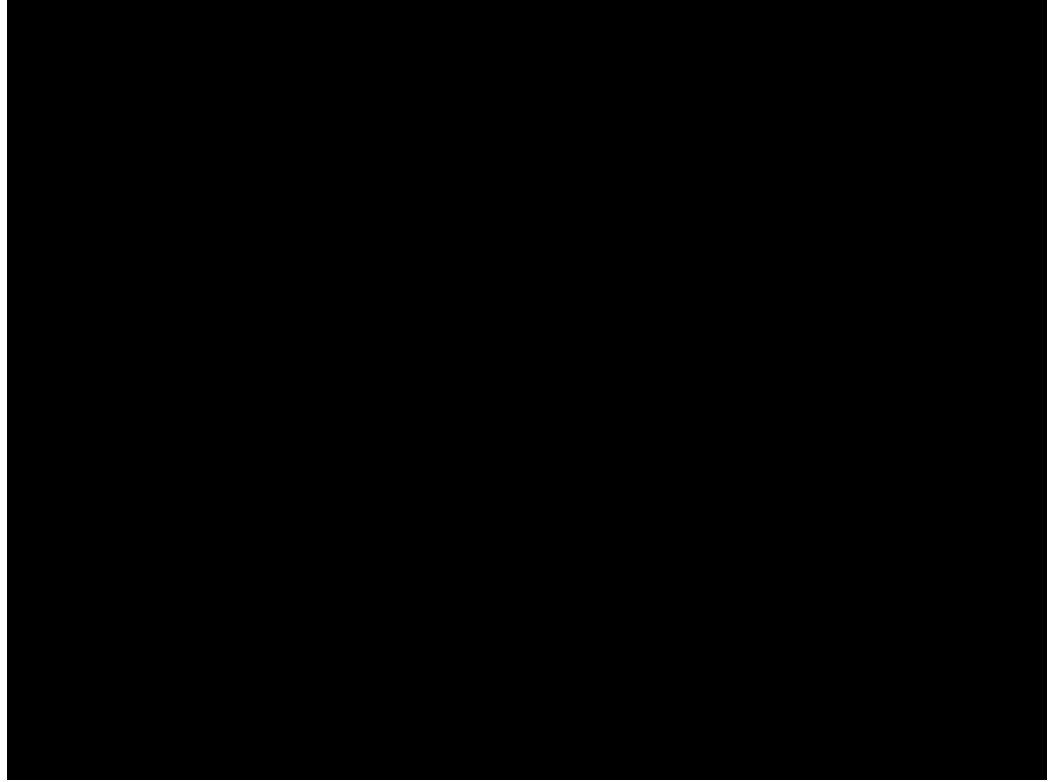
Principles of Play: Manage the Ball

8. Receive With Intent -
Make your 1st touch a
premeditated action by
scanning before you get
the ball.



Principles of Play: Manage the Ball

9. Pass With Purpose -
don't deliver a burden, share a
blessing. Help your teammate
by adjusting the pace and
location of the pass to make
their next action easier.



10. Possession to Penetrate - play the farthest available pass; keep and move the ball; break defensive lines whenever possible



Principles of Play: Manage the Ball

What can I expect from training and matches?

We work with these principles every single day of training. The children journal them, diagram them and train them. We are constantly and coherently working through the ideas so that the player understands the purpose of each concept and its application to football.

On any given day we may highlight certain principles in the following manner.

1. We may, as coaches, choose the Principle of Play in the “Preflection” moment before training.
2. We may ask a player to select a Principle of Play they need to improve.
3. We may pick one to bring to the forefront of our players’ attention.

The reality is that all **10 Principles of Play** are part of every session and applicable to any match. So bringing the players attention to them and challenging the player to execute them can happen with less rigidity.

Many clubs break sessions into technical elements. We do not. We have found it quite artificial to work on “receiving” for a 3 week micro-cycle as if passing was not connected. In this way, we also find it more fruitful to work on concepts instead of technically centric training themes. Our players pass, receive, dribble, shoot, and head the ball when the moment calls for such execution. But they do so with a thought associated with that skill, not in isolation.

Credit to [TOVO Institute](#) for inspiring the principles of play approach

What can I expect from training and matches?

2 PAR Process

Priming	Activation	Reflection
Pre-flection	Activity	Recovery

Priming

We circle together before training and take a few mindful breaths. While doing so we ask players to imagine their best selves. We ask them to prime the process with positive imagery which has proven to be effective in enhancing performance in many areas, including sport.

Pre-flection

We use this term to think about a concept most pertinent to a player's development. This may be a Principle of Play or some other item that we would like to place in the forefront of a player's mind. Some may call this mindful intentionality. In any case, just a simple way to pave the path toward a focused session.

What can I expect from training and matches?

2 PAR Process (continued)

Activation

The activation phase of training typically includes rondos in combination with the three activation elements of movement: mobility, stability, duel force. This will include a [FIFA 11+](#) Warm Up that has been rigorously tested in injury prevention. Mobility, stability and duel force exercises ensure that they are physically prepared to conduct more demanding actions.

Activity

The activities we focus on to engage the players beyond the Rondo + Movement activation are Position Play exercises and Training Games. Throughout the entire session we want them developing their cognition, competence and character. Training will require them to focus on the tasks at hand in a dynamic and engaging manner.

What can I expect from training and matches?

2 PAR Process (continued)

Reflection

We ask our players to keep a journal. In them they will revisit the exercises of the day and make any other observations they choose about their learning on a given day. Reviewing the session and reflecting upon their progress embeds learning in a more profound manner and sends a clear message that the player is the protagonist of his or her own journey.

Recovery

Taking care of proper recovery protocol is critical to top performance. Hydration and the consumption of nutritious food within 90 minutes of training is a suggested practice. To that end, we encourage players and their families to see food as fuel for their child. Of course, at the professional level we have resources in place to ensure that the athletes are well cared for by professionals. In addition, we educate players and families on the recuperative powers of proper rest and sleep.

2PAR Review

By establishing this ritual, players begin to take confidence in their ability to manage every aspect of the environment in which they will thrive. The goal is to build in routines that lead to holistic health.

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