

CONTENTS

Introduction

Chapter 1	12
The characteristics of Barcelona players	13
• Player Profiles	14
• Pep Guardiola.....	18
• Barcelona’s first 11 for the 2010-11 Season (4-3-3 Formation)	19
Chapter 2	20
The philosophy of Barcelona	21
Chapter 3	22
Barcelona in the four phases of the game	23
• Barcelona in the defensive phase	23
• Barcelona in the transition from attack to defence	24
• Barcelona in the attacking phase.....	25
• Barcelona in the transition from defence to attack	26
Chapter 4	27
Barcelona in the Defensive Phase	28
• The chain reaction of the midfielders and the forwards.....	29
• The chain reaction of the defenders	31
• Cohesion between the back four and the defensive midfielder	32
• Pressure, cover and support in wide areas	34
• Tactical movement: Offside line	36
• Keeping the ball near the sideline and preventing the switch of play.....	38
• Pressing high up the pitch towards the sideline	38
• Closing passing options inside; forcing play down the line	41
• The second line of defence.....	43
• Limiting the space for the wide player in possession.....	46
Chapter 5	48
Barcelona in the defensive phase against the 4-4-2	49
• Limiting the opposition to one passing option at the back.....	49
• Applying pressure to a team passing along the back line’	52
• Pressure on the goalkeeper	55
• Pressure on the central defender receiving the ball from the goalkeeper	57
• Defending forward runs from the full backs.....	59

CONTENTS

- Limiting passing options for the central defenders62
- Preventing midfielders receiving short passes from the defenders.....66
- Defending a goalkeeper’s pass to a full back.....68
- The opposition full back receives the ball on the halfway line71

- Chapter 673**
- Barcelona in the defensive phase against the 4-2-3-174**
- Marking forwards who drop deep to receive the ball77
- Pressing forward and covering positions.....80
- Preventing vertical passes and creating superiority in numbers around the ball82
- Defending a long kick towards the sideline.....84
- Midfield balance and positioning from long kicks86

- Chapter 788**
- Barcelona in the defensive phase against the 4-3-2-189**
- Preventing numerical dominance in midfield.....90
- Tracking players and preventing short passes93
- Intelligent positioning to prevent vertical passes97

- Chapter 899**
- Barcelona in the defensive phase against the 5-3-2100**
- Man Marking101
- Utilising the spare man in midfield; double marking.....104
- Attacker’s defensive work to maintain cohesion106

- Chapter 9108**
- Barcelona in the defensive phase against the 4-3-1-2109**
- Getting three players around the ball carrier; regaining possession109
- Pushing high up the pitch to mark free players112
- Denying space for potential receivers of the ball115

- Chapter 10.....117**
- Tactical situations where the pressing application was not possible118**
- Defenders118
- The opposition create space down the flank to attack.....119
- Defending a long kick to the centre of the field123
- Midfielders125
- Defending against a central midfielder with space to create126

CONTENTS

- Defending the long ball into the attacker131
- Midfield cohesion around the ball zone134
- Defending an aerial ball into the centre of the field.....136
- Forwards139
- The second line of defence139
- Closing down attacks on the flank.....142

- Chapter 11144**
- Barcelona when defending near the sidelines145**
- Defending on the weak side145
- Defending near the sidelines and close to the penalty area150
- Defending when the winger nears the by-line.....151
- Defending a free player near the penalty area153
- Defensive adaptability.....155

- Chapter 12157**
- Barcelona’s defending from set pieces158**
- Defending a goal kick159
- Defending a corner kick.....160
- Defending a free kick near the sideline162
- Defending a free kick near the corner flag.....163
- Defensive positioning from throw-ins164

- Conclusion.....166**