Twitter Thread by The Football Pundit



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Ronald Koeman at Barcelona. A thread.

Ronald Koeman took the worst possible job in the world after leaving on of the best jobs in the world.

Joining a Barcelona of the back of their worst season in 12 years it is clear that Koeman had to do something major to justify him keeping the job.

But it is apparent that he's done horrible at Barcelona.

Messi is having his worst season at Barcelona in 14years despite having succeeded under 7 different managers. Clearly Koeman doesn't know how to exploit his strengths.

His defensive tactics are simply put non existent. Barca's players lack indoctrination.

For example, Barcelona have conceded multiple goals from set pieces. Players marking the ball is never good.

For example you can mark the taker in case he wants to play it short,and mark the runners Barca don't do that.

You could mark the spaces, near and far post and central are but Barca don't do that. They defend haphazardly and any competent opposition player can score from that. Like in the Cadiz and Sevilla games.

Then we come to open play. When defending in open play the idea is to be in the right regions of the pitch,cut out passing lanes and compact space.

Sadly it's more than once or twice that Barca's defensive players are found out of position. Through this Ronaldo was able to win a penalty.

Many at times Barca's passing lanes are left wide open and make it extremely easy for them to be broken down like in the Classico where Benzema was able to find Valverde's run for a goal.

Barcelona don't compact space. Many at times when Barca don't have the ball their defensive line tends to drop deep while the other players press. The problem comes in that they leave a large gap that the opposition can exploit. Case and point Madrid and Ferencvaros games.

It was this mistake that ended up getting Pique sent off against the Hungarians. This also leads us to the next problem pressing.

Pressing is a very much useful tool defensively. It allows you to win the ball and prevent the opposition from moving forward.

But our pressing is very much man oriented which is dangerous as there's very man press resistant players out there. A space oriented press makes a bit more sense cause you'd practically get the ball for free like Liverpool do. Another weakness of our press is the pivots.

Both pivots rush out to press and don't sit deep to help defend in case our press is beaten making us very vulnerable.

How do I blame Koeman. Well it is him to tell the players who is to press and who is to sit deep. It is you to decide how the team defends set pieces, whether to man mark or to cut out passing lanes. It is also you who is to man manage and instruct players who make mistakes.

Be strict with them tell them to stop doing certain things. It is clear that certain players(Lenglet and De Jong) are in fire need of strictness in order to stop making mistakes haphazardly and know that they should be organized.

Then there's Koeman's tactics when in possession. The midfield. A double pivot has to make the work easier for the playmaker. But Busquets' ball progression has detiorated and De Jong and Pjanic have little to no connection with Messi whatsoever.

This forces Messi to come deep for the ball which is bad as Messi is forced to connect midfield with attack and also attack which affects Barca in attack but also in defense as he loses the ball a lot more than he once did. How does Koeman take the blame do this?

Simple there's three solutions
1. Use Messi as an attacking 8 who connects midfield with attack and relieve him of his goalscoring duties in a 4-3-3
2. Use Pjanic/Alena and Puig/Pedri as 8s also takes a duty of of Messi and improves the team.

3. Improve Messi's connection with Pjanic and De Jong
4. Play the 4 3 3 with attacking 8 s
All these are solutions Koeman has refused to take a look into.

Then there's attack. Koeman tends to try to cramp Messi Griezmann and Coutinho into the same lineup. Playing all three limits at least one of them. None of them offer you width and only one of them plays well of the wing. Meaning one of Griezmann or Coutinho need to be benched.

Sergino Dest is a high quality full back which means playing Messi on the right wing despite his lack of width and defensive contribution is not a liability to the team as Dest is capable of doing both. The same cannot be said of the left wing.

Alba needs someone to provide width in his place and also come back on defense. Which is why one of Dembele,Fati,Pedri or Konrad must always be available to ensure that this never happens. Then lastly there's the striker.

For Koeman's tactics to work there has to be a proper 9 who can drag defenders out of position and open space for the playmakers which is why Braithwaite has to start every game sadly Koeman still wants to use a false 9 in a system that already has a 2number 10s and no width.

Then there's Koeman's treatment of players. For example when a player makes a mistake you don't just go out of your way and bench him especially a young player. You give him a chance to regain confidence and you also be strict with him and tell him not to do it again.

Then there's his mistreatment of young players. It's been no secret that so long as they're fit, Busquets,Pique, Roberto, Griezmann, Coutinho,Alba all replaceable players have been used as starters when there's many young players who need game time.

Especially Riqui Puig Barca's best young midfielder. All in all Koeman's defensive tactics,lineups,the way he sets up his midfield his offensive tactics and his man management have all been horrid but non have been worse than his psychological management.

It is no secret that when Barca concede first they look confused. Messi has always been blamed for his lack of psychological back bone but in reality no player likes to push on more than Messi. Barca's players lack mentality and it's not achieved by player leadership alone.

As a coach you have to prove to your players that you're doing everything right and that it would work out in your favor. That's literally the number one rule in coaching.

In summary Koeman should go. The appointment was a wrong decision. He also hasn't helped himself gain any friends by using his terrible tactics and the next manager is already on phone.

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