

NSCAA Premier Course

Chris Petrucelli, Head Coach Notre Dame Women, NSCAA Academy Instructor

Said his topic was *not* “How to Hit the Goalposts!!” He made this clear early on (tongue in cheek)

This was a lecture format in which coach Petrucelli discussed the makeup of the new NSCAA coaching course, the “Premiere Course”. He followed up this discussion with a brief discussion of the pro’s and con’s of various systems of play, and then a brief video analysis session involving ND (3-4-3) vs UNC (3-4-3) , and ND vs UCLA (4-4-2).

Premier Course

- Will be “about the game” 11 v11. This is unique in that there are very few courses around the world that analyze systems of play.
- Is geared for top coaches
- Based on match analysis
- There will be some technical teaching with the topics and instruction under the direction of National Team coaches.
- There will be an emphasis on Leadership. “Command the environment”. There will be several lectures and much discussion
- Mentoring type program. Small groups of 8-9 coaches with a staff member. There will be ongoing “assessment” sessions, but no “testing”
- Apply to get in with about 36 people admitted.
- Next one in June at Amherst college
- Much discussion of systems of play (4-3-3, 3-5-2, etc) with pros and cons of attack and defense.
- Some skill sessions
 - back to goal session
 - How to work ball out of back
 - Beating off-side traps
 - serving quality balls
- Sessions on attacking zone, attacking 3 back system, etc.
- Schedule is still evolving

Systems of Play

Discussion of strength and weakness of each system (this was very rapid fire and I'm sure I missed a number of points both directions for each system)

2 player front systems (4-4-2)

- Strengths
 - ♣ 2 equally balanced halves of field (right vs left)
 - ♣ Easy to understand the shape
 - ♣ players in midfield receive ball facing forward
 - ♣ Easier for backs to join attack without as much risk
 - ♣ Attacking through the flanks is a key element
 - ♣ More space for central forwards to work with
 - ♣ 2 forwards can compact defense centrally, or play markers apart or to one half of the field
 - ♣ two targets up front
 - ♣ easy to change point of attack
 - ♣ 8 defenders behind the ball
 - ♣ easy to stay in good zonal shape
 - ♣ difficult to unbalance
 - ♣ good high pressing system
 - ♣ good match against 3 front
- Disadvantages
 - ♣ may be numbers down against 3-5-2 in midfield
 - ♣ 2 may get isolated up front when 8 are defending
 - ♣ confusing for 4 players in the back when playing against only two front runners

3 player front systems

- Advantages (defensive)
 - ♣ Can apply pressure closer to the goal
 - ♣ Forces back players (of opponent) into smaller spaces
 - ♣ forces opposing teams to adjust (not used to facing 3 front)
 - ♣ flexibility in the back
- Advantages (attack)
 - ♣ Positioned to attack when ball is won
 - ♣ evenly spreads demands on strikers
 - ♣ easier to attack middle, near and far post
 - ♣ Better width
 - ♣ Psychologically in attacking mode

- Disadvantages
 - ♣ 3 players can be put out of game with 1 pass from defender
 - ♣ 3 players forward with back to the goal
 - ♣ defend with 7 instead of 8
 - ♣ 3 back system vulnerable on outside corners
 - ♣ pulls more defenders into area you want to attack

3-5-2 system

- Advantages
 - ♣ flexible
 - ♣ large number of players central. Allows you to quickly move wide, back or forward
 - ♣ outnumber opponents in midfield
 - ♣ Tactical advantage on flanks (more 1v1 out wide)
 - ♣ Easy to combine off front players
- Weakness
 - ♣ Tend to overload in defense or on attack
 - ♣ only 3 defenders - large flank space
 - ♣ only 1 defender on each flank

Chris finished with video analysis of 3-5-2 vs 3-5-2 and 3-5-2 vs 4-4-2. Interesting discussion, but you had to be there watching the videos to appreciate.

This session was covered by Jim Dudley, Steamboat HS Girls
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