

THE BLACK HOLE

The area referred to as the “Black Hole” is just inside of the six yard box (see diagram). This is the area where most of the goals are scored off of corner kicks.

Always have one player guard the near post. At later ages when players are able to send corners further, it is recommend having a player guard the far post as well.

1- This is the position of the keeper in relation to a corner that will be in swinging. The keeper is closer to the near post and only about 1yrd off of the goal line.

2- This is the position of the keeper in relation to a corner that will be out swinging. It is more central and about 3-4 yards off the goal line.

The role of the defenders on the near post is twofold. First, they need to clear any crosses that the keeper does not call for and collect. The path to the near post for a keeper is usually very congested which makes it difficult for them to get to the ball. Also, balls played to the near post are easily flicked to the far post by an attacking player. After the initial cross, their second role is to step square to the goal line and act as a wall. This makes the goal about 3’ smaller for the keeper to defend. Now instead of having to defend a 24’ goal, its’ size is decreased to 21’. If you are adding a defender to the far post the keeper only has to cover 18’ of goal now.

As soon as the keeper wins the ball, look to start the transition offense. Most teams will push some of their defenders forward, leaving them open for a fast counterattack. Here a keeper should try to send a throw or a low trajectory kick into the left or right slot, for a forward to run on to.