

## Goalkeeping Edition 117

Welcome to the Goalkeeping Newsletter. Today's subject will deal with distributing the ball from the keeper's hands.

There are three ways to distribute the ball from the keeper's hands.

First is the bowling technique. This is used when the keeper has a teammate a short distance from her who is open and there isn't an opponent between the keeper and her teammate. When this situation occurs, the keeper wants to roll the ball to the field player using a similar technique as used by bowlers. There should be no bounce to the ball and the ball **MUST** get to the player quickly (the keeper wants to get to the ball to the player as quickly as possible because she wants the player to receive the ball with as little pressure as possible and with pressure being defined as the absence of time and space, getting the ball to her quickly will mean she receives it before an opponent can take away her time and space).

Some of the keys to the bowling distribution are to play the ball to players who are open, have the skill to handle the ball properly, and to play it to them to the correct foot. Normally, it will be played to a player whose body is open to the field (meaning her body is facing the goal she is attacking) and the ball will be played slightly in front of this player's outside foot (if the ball is being played to the keeper's right side, the ball gets played slightly in front of the player's right foot so that her body stays open to the field and she can go forward with her first touch. If, by playing the ball to a player this way, she will receive the ball under pressure, the ball should **NOT** be played.

The next way to distribute with the hands is the baseball throw. This is done when the targeted player is too far away to bowl the ball to and still get it there in a reasonable amount of time. This throw also requires there be no one between the keeper and the target. To make a baseball throw, the ball gets held in one hand (and this is one of the reasons that younger keepers rarely use this throw because it is hard to do this with small hands) next to the ear (if throwing with the right hand the ball is held in the right hand up by the right ear) and the keeper takes a hard step or two forward and then comes forward with the right hand while using the momentum of the step forward to get more power.

Unlike throwing a real baseball, you do not take the arm back further than the head (it really is more like the way an American Football is thrown in terms of the release). When the arm comes forward, the knees should be bent so that the release comes from a very low level (if you are throwing with the right hand, the right knee is almost touching the ground when the ball is released). The ball should **NOT** reach the target in the air but rather, should the ball should be aimed to hit the ground two thirds of the way to the target. The reason for this is that you want the ball to be at the target's feet when it gets to her so that it is easy for her to handle the ball and maintain possession.

When keepers try to throw the ball to the player on the fly, too often it arrives at the player's waist or chest which makes it much more difficult to handle. Not only does this technique require big enough hands to be able to control the ball while executing this throw, but it also

requires a strong upper body to get the appropriate power on the throw. Of the three types of distribution from the hands, this is the one that is done the least.

The third type of distribution is the overhand throw. This is the one that is used for throwing longer distances and also when there are players between the keeper and the target. Again assuming the keeper is going to throw right handed, the ball can be held with both hands slightly in front of the right hip. With the right hand, cup the ball against the right forearm and bring the ball straight back and overhead in a windmill type motion.

The key here is to have your arm come straight over hand and NOT sidearm. By doing this, you will maximize your distance and accuracy and get rid of all sidespin which will cause the ball to curve (kind of like a curve ball in baseball). The earlier you release the ball, the higher the trajectory of the ball so this can be used to throw to a target even when there are players in between the keeper and the target. If there aren't players in between, you want to release the ball later so that the trajectory of the ball is lower and it gets to the target quicker. Again, if possible, you want to get the ball to the target in a way that is easy for the target to receive the ball so trying to throw it so that it hits the ground 2/3rds of the way to the target is ideal (this is assuming a low trajectory).

The way to aim this type of a throw is to point at the target with the opposite arm full extended (this serves a similar role as the way a player aims a kick by with the plant foot). The great thing about this type of a throw is that it doesn't require great strength to get a good throw because the speed at which a person brings the ball around in the wind mill type action is where the power and distance of this throw comes from.

The way to get better at all three of these types of distribution is to work on them each training period. However, you want to do it in moderation. It's better to throw 20-30 times per training session and do it correctly then to do it 100 times a day (which will result in hurting your shoulder). Learn to be consistent in your throwing and you will be a better keeper for it.

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Have a great day

Lawrence

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