

Summit Goalkeeping

1998

“Field Of Play, Collecting Techniques”



Field of play is important for goalkeepers at all levels to understand, the human body was designed to play the way we are facing. We move much more fluidly when we can see our intended object, such as making a save in the last seconds of a close match. You have probably over-

heard a coach shouting “Play the way you are facing”, there is good reason for this. The first steps to determine a true “Field of Play” (FOP) is to draw an imaginary line between both feet and hips, the way that you are facing is your FOP.

Once your FOP has been determined then you will be faced with the various styles of collecting techniques as the ball travels bound for goal.

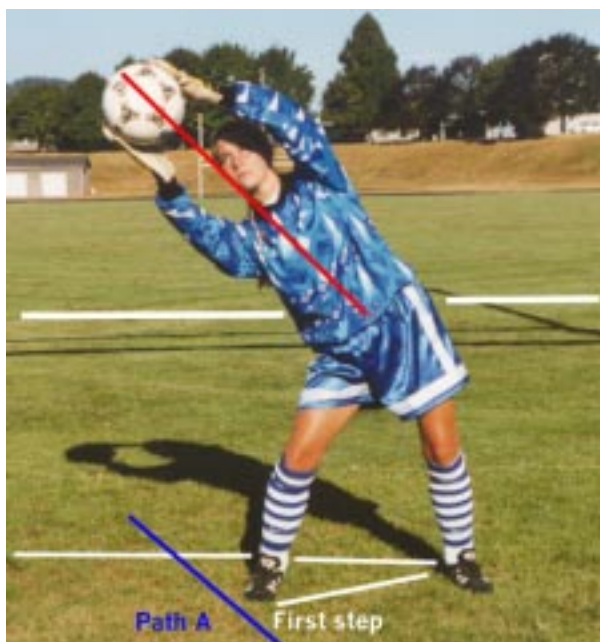
In the image to the right we see a line drawn through the keepers thumbs and hips, this line is called the “thumb-line”, Low shots (below the thumbline) will be collected in a technique where the body MUST be behind the path of the ball.



(see image left) It is important to note that the keeper maintains the correct angle of attack on her “First step”.

Of equal importance you will note that the keepers knee is not touching the ground, thus bears no weight to inhibit her from covering a ball which may be deflected or take an errant bounce.

Shots that come in high, above the thumb-line, are to be collected using the “W” form technique.(see images below) The thumbs, which are the strongest phalanges (fingers) we have and need to used in order to secure fast pace attempts on goal.



When collecting balls above the thumb line we are limited in our ability to get as much of our body behind the ball as in low attempts at goal.

In order to assure that the “W” form is used correctly we draw a line from the center of our keeper to the point of play, bending the quadriceps slightly for mobility and strength. This allows a clear unobstructed view of the ball, with the head being kept stable, gaining additional time for the goal-keeper to kill the pace of the ball using a negative collecting technique.

It is important also to note the “first step” angle of attack that is used in order to collect the ball early in its’ path, as well as the shortest distance for the keeper to travel.(see blue path “A” as a shadowed path of the ball)

Key points in FOP and collecting techniques are that early judgement and decision making are often the keys to successful goalkeeping. The strength of the goalkeepers quadriceps is very crucial to their mobility and will increase their “Area of Play”, which will be covered later.