

## **Soccer SBXL v2 EXPERT RATIONALE ONLY**

### **Soccer SBXL 1 Expert Feedback:**

The right move is to provide cover to your LB (a) by sliding to the left and taking a position behind her in case she gets beat by the attacker. The first principle of defense is pressure on the ball, which your LB is providing. This is also called First Defender, because the first defender to arrive pressures the ball. The second principle is cover, also known as Second Defender. The second defender to arrive takes up a cover position to be ready to become First Defender if the first defender gets beat.

Staying where you are (b) does not allow you to support your teammate. Stepping forward (c) is a mistake because it does not put the Blue #9 offside. Your other teammates (#5 and #2) are holding the offside line. Stepping forward just takes you out of the play.

Dropping deeper (d) is even worse because it drops the offside line and puts your other teammates at risk; attackers could now get behind them without being offside.

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### **Soccer SBXL 2 Expert Feedback:**

This is a very dangerous situation, and you must immediately step forward to close down the Blue #9, who is in position to score and who, as the striker, is probably the best goal scorer on the team. You've got to put her under pressure and deny her the time and space to line up a good shot. Get your body in front of her to deny the shot!

Providing cover to your LB (#3) no longer makes sense because the Blue RM (#7) has already passed the ball away. Staying where you are (c) makes you of no use to anybody. Moving toward the penalty spot (d) may put you in position to provide cover to your #5, but that is not where the threat is.

Dropping deeper (e) just puts you in the way of your own goalkeeper.

There is one critical thing to do here: Pressure the ball!

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### **Soccer SBXL 3 Expert Feedback:**

Definitely take the shot (d). You will get few better goal-scoring opportunities. You are unmarked with the ball at your feet at the edge of the box, with time and space to settle the ball and line up your shot. Blue has made a bad defensive error by not marking you, and your RW has made the smart pass. Exploit the defensive mistake. Take a touch or two to tee up the shot and pull the trigger!

#10 (a) has a defender in front of her and is in a less dangerous position. By passing to her, you let Blue off the hook,

#11 (b) is in a similar position to yours on the left side of goal, but she is closely marked whereas you are wide open. You would have to thread the ball between two defenders (#3 and #6) to get it to her, and she has two defenders (#2 and #4, not counting the goalkeeper) between her and the goal. Not a smart play.

#9 is closely marked by two defenders (#4 and #5). Trying to pass the ball to her is a low-percentage play.

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### **Soccer SBXL 4 Expert Feedback:**

This is an interesting situation with a number of options, some better than others. The critical factor to recognize is that the Blue #2 is badly out of position and has taken herself out of the play. The Blue #5 is isolated and vulnerable. You and your #8 can work a 2-versus-1 (2v1) overload to take her out of the play. We'll consider the options from worst to best.

Centering the ball to your #10 (a) does nothing for you. In fact, it passes up the 2v1 advantage you have and creates a static, neutral situation. There are three defenders between her and the goal.

Crossing the ball to your left wing (#11)(b) is no better. That is a long pass to a teammate surrounded by three opponents who could step in to contest the pass. It is a low-percentage play. Dribbling forward between Blue #2 and #5 (e) does not put you in a dangerous position.

Moreover, it gives Blue #2 a chance to recover and get back in the play, which negates your numerical advantage. If Blue #5 comes off your #8 to defend you, you could pass inside to #8, which could create some opportunities, but it is not the best option.

You could pass directly to #8 (d), who has her back to goal with a defender (#5) on her back. If your #8 can hold the defender off, you could cut inside looking for a return pass in the box. This could give you a clear path to goal. It could work if you and your #8 are on the same page.

The best option is probably to cut inside on the dribble yourself (c), putting you in a threatening position. If the Blue #5 stays with your #8 or is slow to react, you have a path to goal or can now work a 2v1 with your #9 against the Blue #4, who is now isolated and vulnerable. If the Blue #5 reacts quickly to cut you off, you pass forward toward the end line for your #8 to run onto.

Your #8 then has several good options: (1) pass to #9 who is camped in front of the goal, (2) pass to #11 who will be sprinting hard for the far post, or (3) play diagonally back to you as you cut toward the near post.

The key to this scenario is recognizing and exploiting the 2v1 advantage you have over the isolated Blue #5.