

Patterns of Play that Created Delayed Shot Opportunities in Corner Sequences

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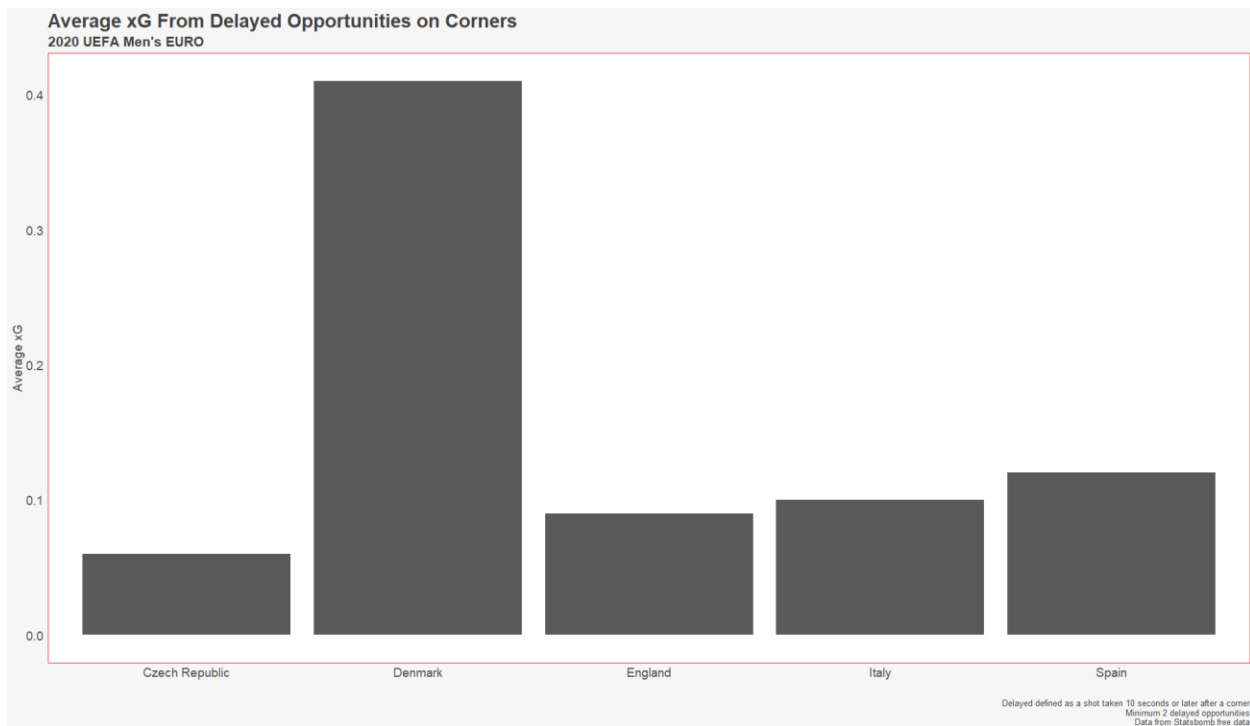
Introduction

There were 461 corners taken at the 2020 UEFA Men's EURO. Of that total, 177 corners produced a shot in the sequence following the corner. Most of the shot opportunities occurred quickly after the corner was taken – in 10 seconds or less. This makes sense as most shot opportunities from corners are headers or redirections from the corner pass itself.

This proposal focuses on the shot opportunities that were delayed, or created 10 seconds or later after the corner was taken. Ten seconds (or more) was the chosen amount of time because this project is intended to focus on the patterns of play that create shot opportunities later on in the sequence following a corner. A buffer of 10 seconds helps to ensure that the shot opportunities analyzed for this proposal were not due to the havoc that can ensue after a corner inside the box (e.g., a ball that pings around the box without being cleared and results in a shot opportunity, or a shot that is assisted by the corner that is saved or deflected and is immediately turned into a shot opportunity).

Background

There were 34 corner sequences at the EURO where shots occurred 10 seconds or later after a corner. England had the most delayed opportunities with 6, and they were followed by Spain and Italy with 4 each. It's unsurprising that these three teams were also in the top 5 teams of average xG on delayed opportunities.



Minimum 2 delayed shots taken. Denmark had 2 delayed shot opportunities, one of which had 0.54 xG. This has skewed their average xG.

The moments after a corner can be chaotic. Dense numbers in the penalty box, forwards on defensive lines, and defenders on forward lines are just a couple examples of the messiness. It's a transitional moment that more teams should take advantage of. After looking at the data I found that there were 5 patterns of play with which the teams at the EURO used to create delayed opportunities.

The 5 patterns of play that created delayed opportunities:

- Playing vertical through defensive lines that were pushing up
- Passing/switching the field to shift the defense away from space that would eventually be exploited
- Exploiting the narrowness of the defense after a corner
- Exploiting the disorganization of the defense after a corner
- Taking advantage of the space afforded around the box because the defense was pinned back

It should be noted that if a team can get a shot opportunity as quickly as possible from a corner, they should try to do so. This proposal is supposed to be viewed as a way for teams to still create opportunities later in sequences following a corner if they fail to create a shot opportunity quickly or if their first shot opportunity does not result in a goal.

Throughout this document are examples of each pattern of play with explanations of each sequence. The data used for these examples came from Statbomb's 360 Data from the EURO.

Playing Vertical Through Defensive Lines

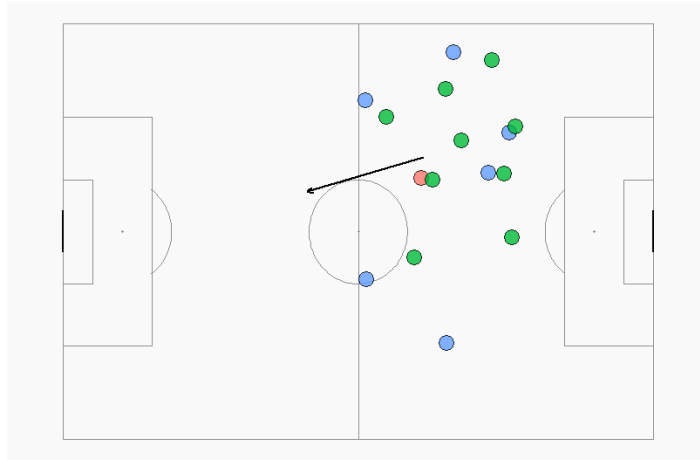
After a defense clears a corner, the first thing they try to do is to push up the defensive line. This prevents the attacking team from keeping players deep in the box while shrinking the space that the attacking team has to keep possession. Teams and players should always be looking to see if they can play vertically through an advancing defensive line.

The following sequences are examples of this pattern from the EURO beginning on the next page:

England vs Scotland

Kalvin Phillips Pass, Corner Sequence

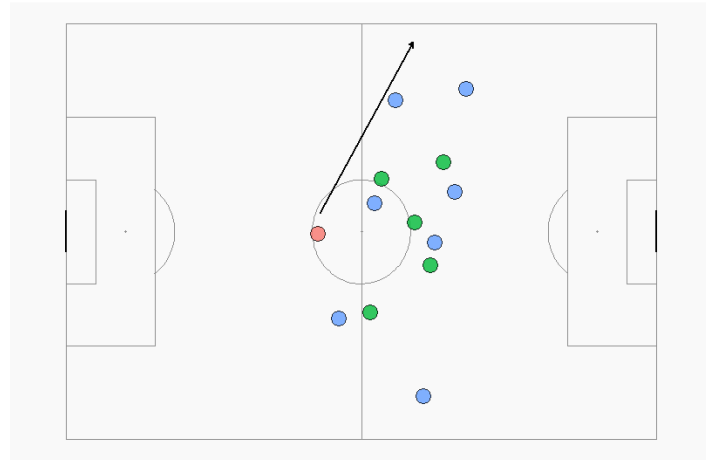
England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Tyrone Mings Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020

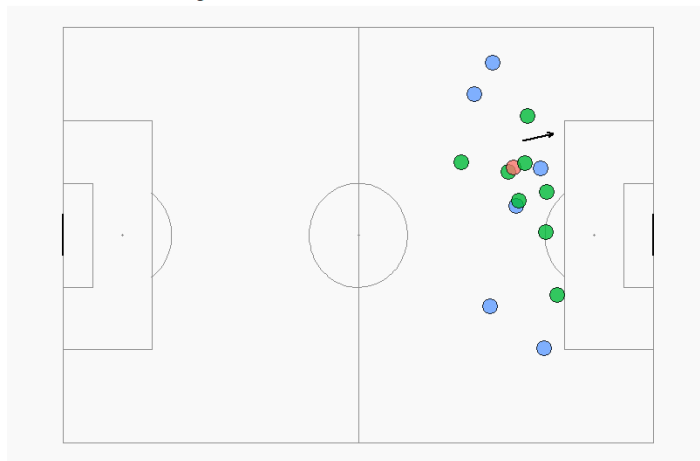


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

After England's corner was cleared, the English left back and left forward combined before finding Phillips. Phillips sent the ball back to center back Mings to reset the possession. Mings carried the ball centrally and was in the center of the pitch when he made his pass to Sterling on the left. That carry was important because it was enough to make Scotland shift away from the left side and create space for Sterling on the left.

Raheem Sterling Pass, Corner Sequence

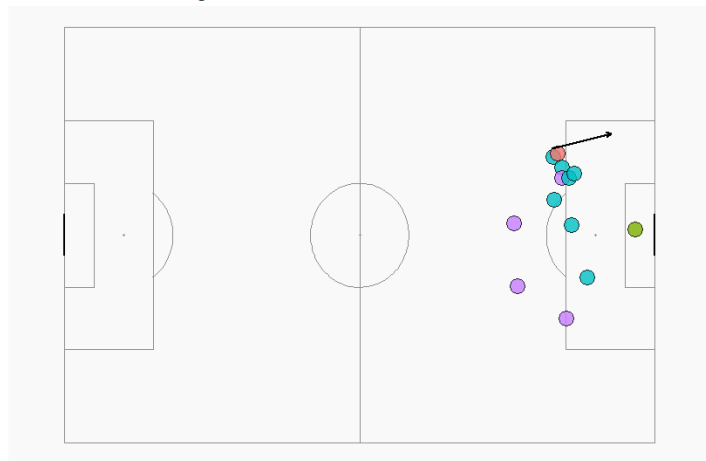
England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Harry Kane Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020

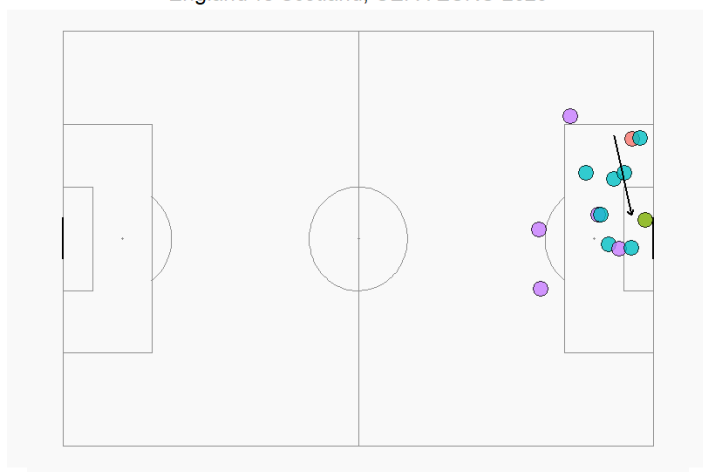


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Sterling and Kane then combined vertically through Scotland's defensive line.

Raheem Sterling Pass, Corner Sequence

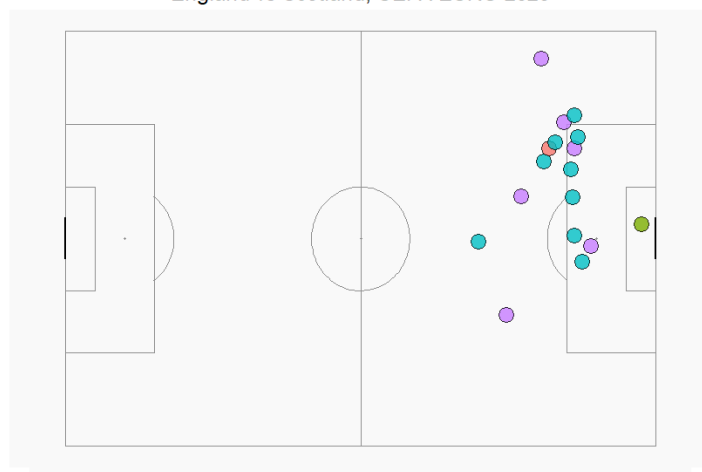
England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Mason Mount Shot, Corner Sequence

England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



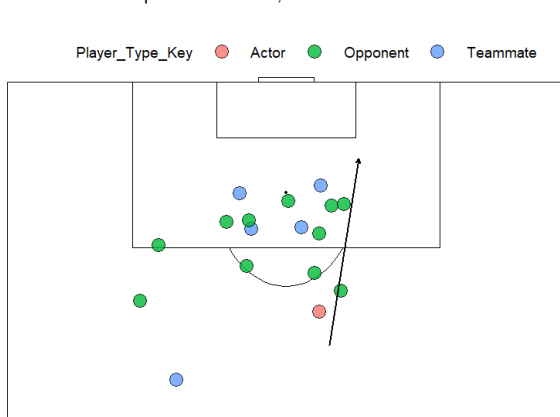
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Sterling squared a ball into the 6 yard box, but no teammates were able to get on the end of it. Scotland only cleared Sterling's pass as far as Mount who tired a long range shot that was saved and had 0.02 xG.

Spain vs Slovakia

Pedri Pass, Corner Sequence

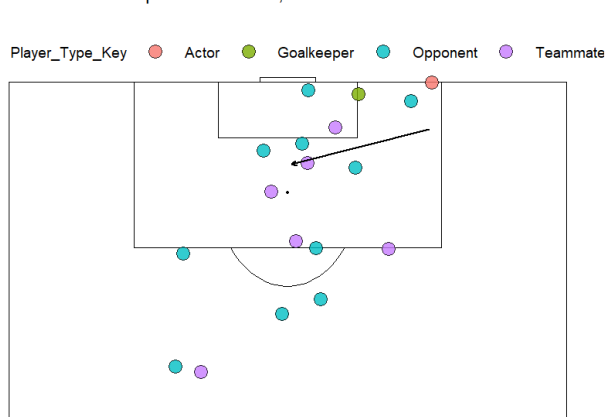
Spain vs Slovakia, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Gerard Moreno Pass, Corner Sequence

Spain vs Slovakia, UEFA EURO 2020

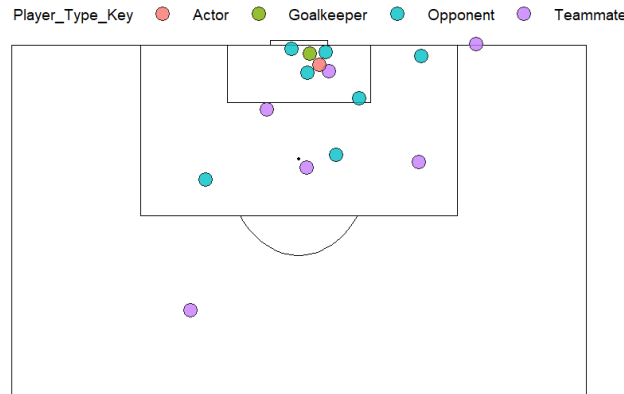


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Slovakia was only able to clear Spain's corner as far as Pedri who was outside the box. He played an excellent through ball into the box while the Slovakian defense was in the process of pushing up. Moreno received Pedri's pass and crossed.

Aymeric Laporte Shot, Corner Sequence

Spain vs Slovakia, UEFA EURO 2020

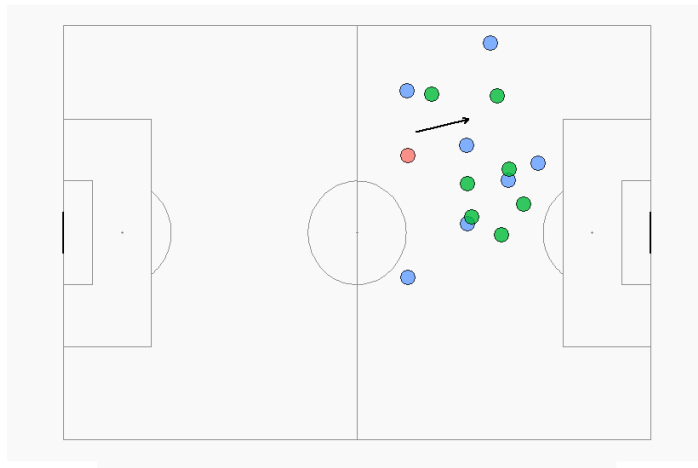


Laporte scored his header and it had 0.19 xG.

Spain vs Sweden

Jordi Alba Pass, Corner Sequence

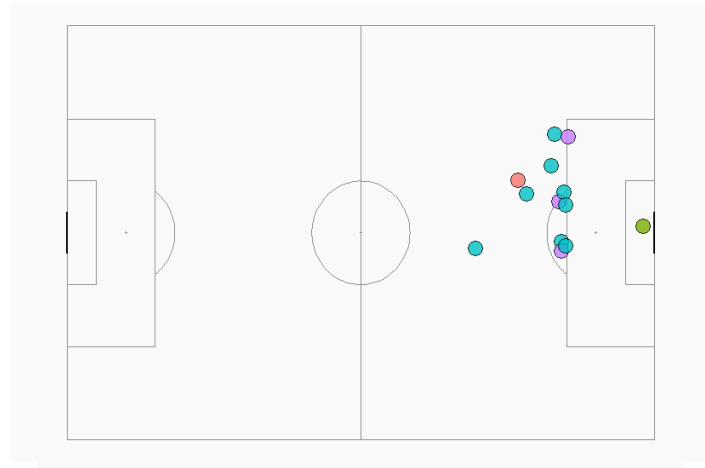
Spain vs Sweden, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Dani Carvajal Shot, Corner Sequence

Spain vs Sweden, UEFA EURO 2020



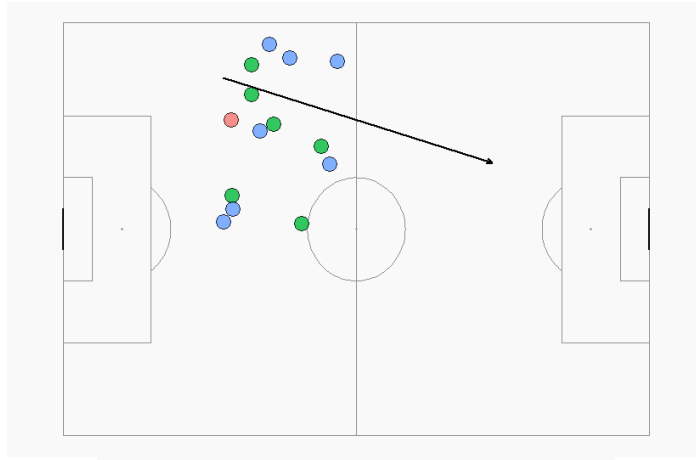
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Later in the sequence after Spain's corner, left back Alba found himself in a deep midfield position. He was able to break Sweden's midfield line with a pass to right back Carvajal who was in an attacking midfield role. The space for this pass was created because Spain's wide forward was occupying Sweden's right back, and Sweden's right center back was occupied by the Spanish player to his left as well as the player behind him. Carvajal received Alba's pass, carried forward, and took a long range shot that was saved and had 0.02 xG.

Italy vs Spain

Jorge Filho Pass, Corner Sequence

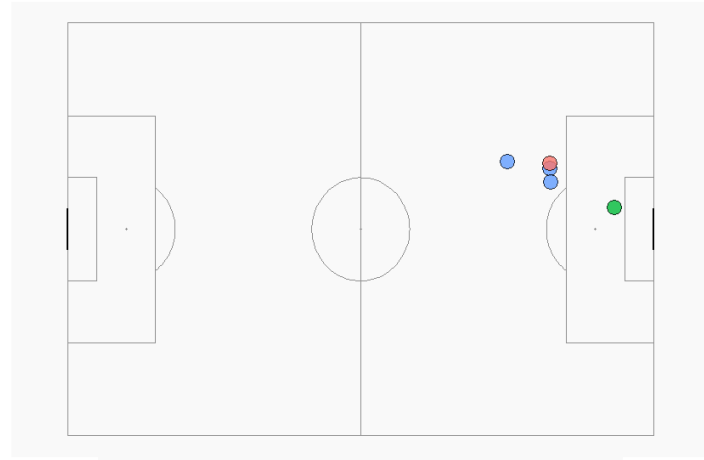
Italy vs Spain, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Ciro Immobile Shot, Corner Sequence

Italy vs Spain, UEFA EURO 2020



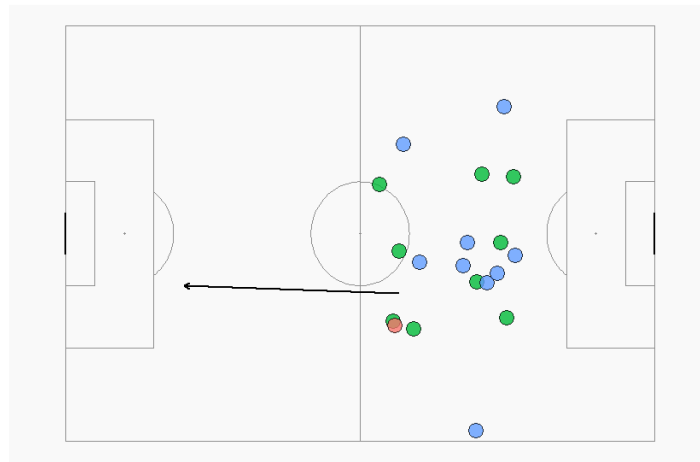
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent

The sequence following Italy's corner contained possession for both teams. The key moment for Italy was when Filho had the ball in Italy's defensive half. Spain was continuing to push up their defensive line from the corner, and Filho exploited the space behind by finding Immobile. Immobile did a good job battling with Spain's center backs to retain the ball and get a shot off in a numerical disadvantage. His shot was off target and had 0.04 xG.

Turkey vs Switzerland

Mehmet Çelik Pass, Corner Sequence

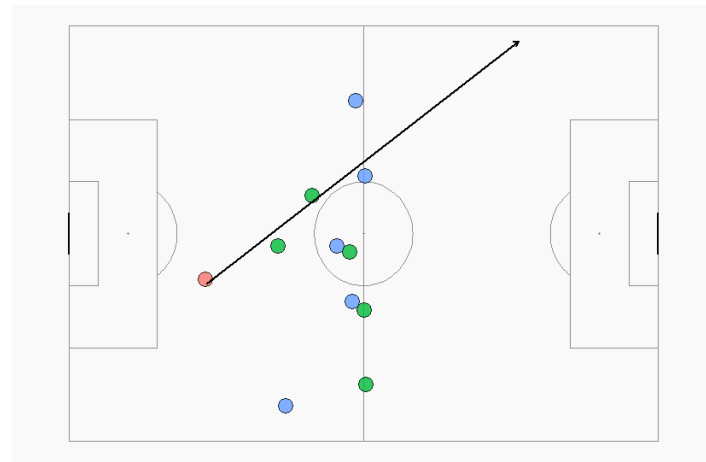
Turkey vs Switzerland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Ugurcan Çakir Pass, Corner Sequence

Turkey vs Switzerland, UEFA EURO 2020

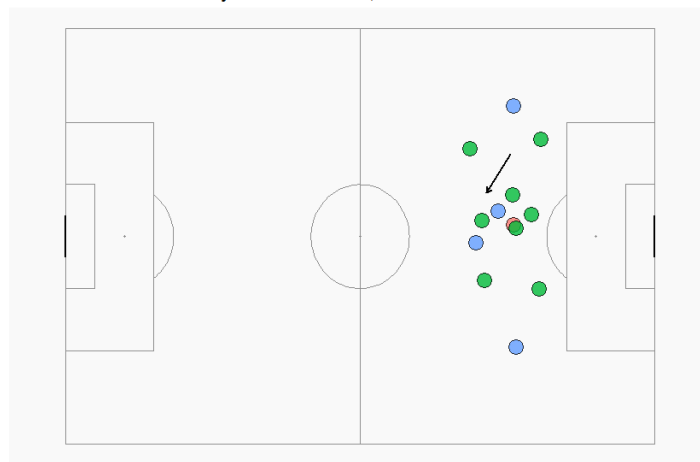


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

After Turkey's corner was cleared, Switzerland's defensive line was pushing up and there wasn't much room. Çelik opted to play it back to his goalkeeper, Çakir. Çakir sent a long diagonal pass to the left as Switzerland continued to push up.

Irfan Kahveci Pass, Corner Sequence

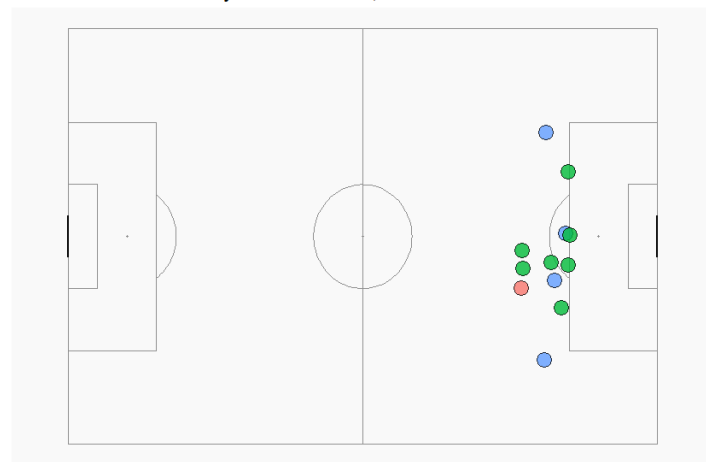
Turkey vs Switzerland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Ozan Tufan Shot, Corner Sequence

Turkey vs Switzerland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Kahveci and Yilmaz combined before Kahveci found Tufan outside the box. Tufan took a long range shot that was off target and had 0.02 xG.

Implementation: Encourage players to constantly be looking for line breaking options when defenses are pushing up. Players off the ball should be directed to make runs in the seams between defenders, or to place themselves in a position where they can break lines by passing or carrying.

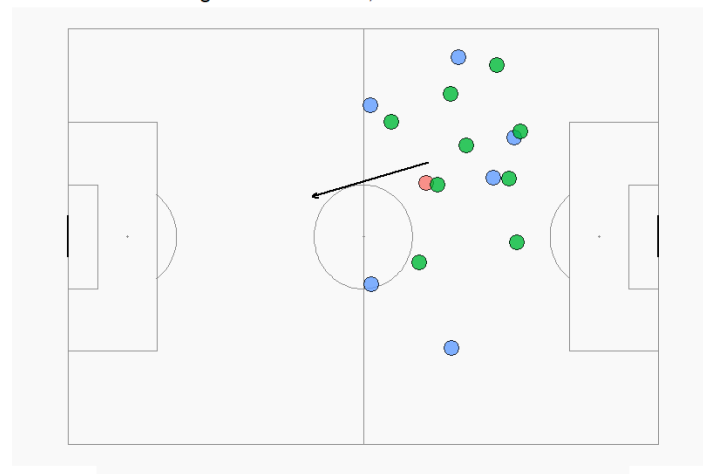
Passing/Switching the Field to Shift the Defense

Teams at the EURO would often create overloads on one side of the field to exploit the opposite side during corner sequences. The concept of passing away from the area that will later be utilized is simple but very effective.

England vs Scotland (Also Seen in Playing Veritcal)

Kalvin Phillips Pass, Corner Sequence

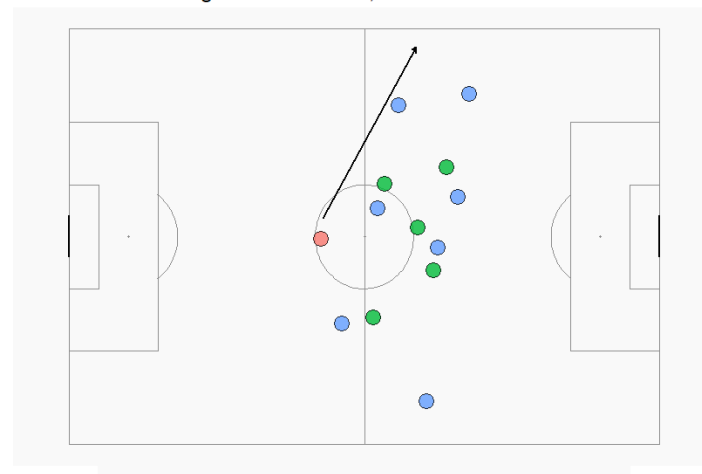
England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Tyrone Mings Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Scotland, UEFA EURO 2020



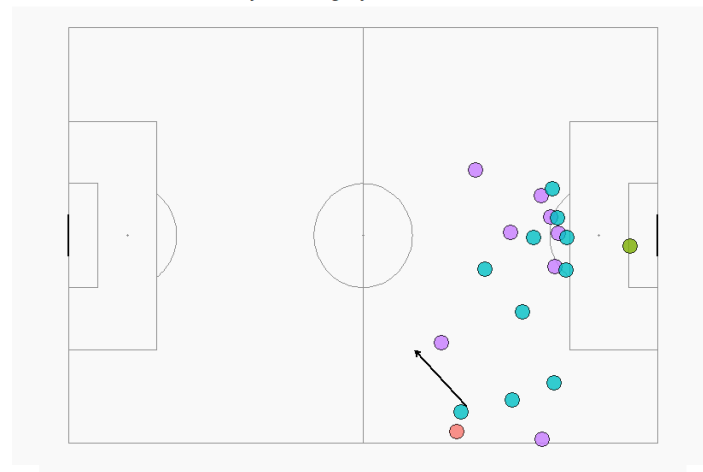
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

After England's corner was cleared, the English left back and left forward combined before finding Phillips. Phillips sent the ball back to center back Mings to reset the possession. Mings carried the ball centrally and was in the center of the pitch when he made his pass to Sterling on the left. That carry was important because it was enough to make Scotland shift away from the left side and create space for Sterling on the left.

Germany vs Hungary

Leroy Sané Pass, Corner Sequence

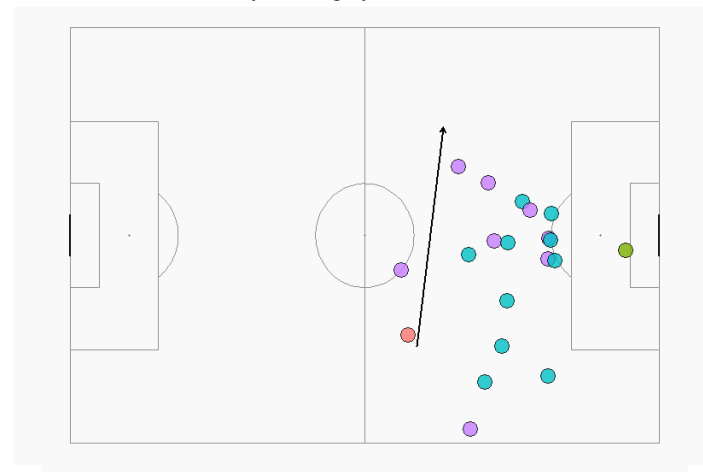
Germany vs Hungary, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Robin Gosens Pass, Corner Sequence

Germany vs Hungary, UEFA EURO 2020

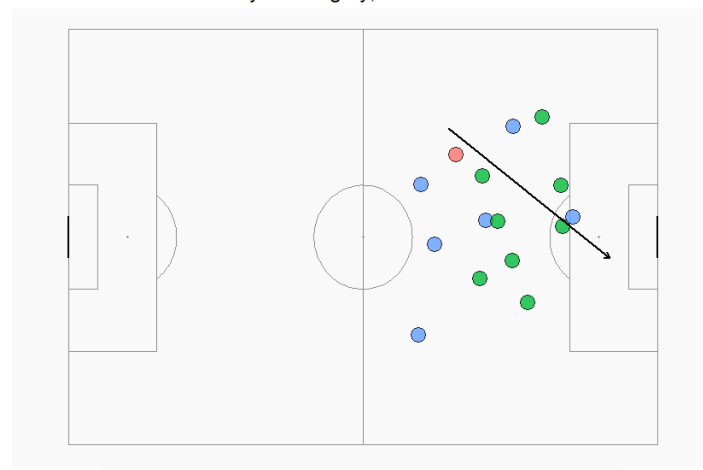


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

After a clearance, Germany had the chance to draw out and manipulate Hungary's shape. When Sané made his pass to Gosens in frame 1, Germany was occupying all of the defenders in Hungary's back line which made them narrow, and Hungary had players scattered throughout the space on the right. The compactness of the back line and Hungary's overload on the right allowed Gosens to find Havertz in frame 2.

Kai Havertz Pass, Corner Sequence

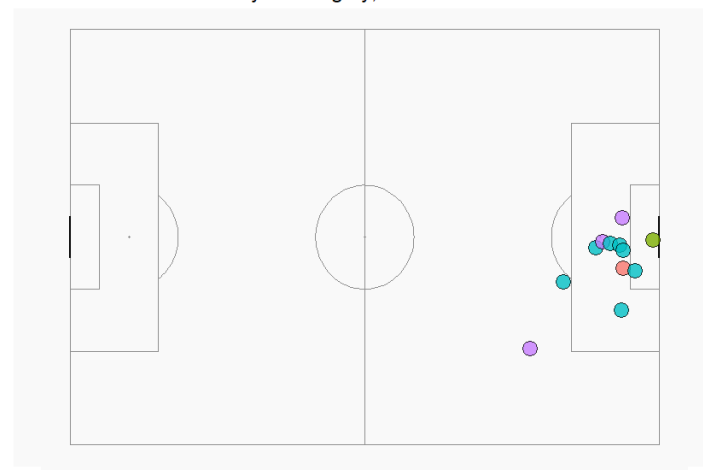
Germany vs Hungary, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Matthias Ginter Shot, Corner Sequence

Germany vs Hungary, UEFA EURO 2020



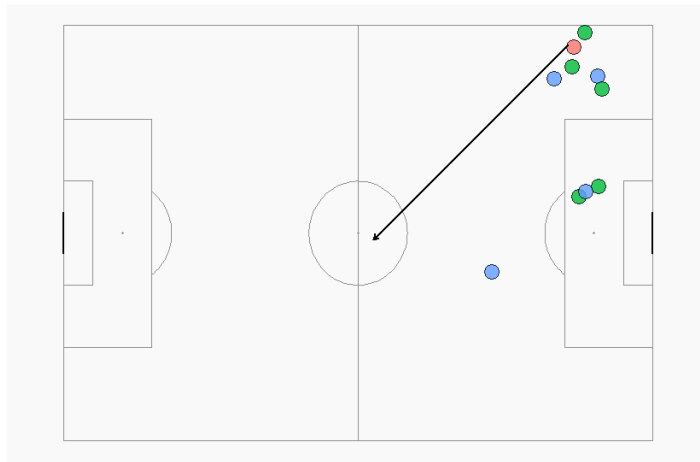
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

After Havertz received the ball, Hungary shifted to the left side, so he played a diagonal ball towards the right side of the box. Ginter's shot was saved and had 0.44 xG.

Italy vs Austria

Lorenzo Insigne Pass, Corner Sequence

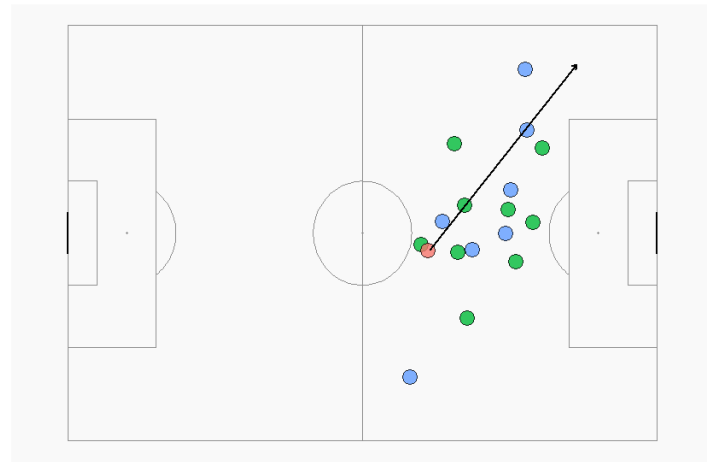
Italy vs Austria, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Leonardo Spinazzola Pass, Corner Sequence

Italy vs Austria, UEFA EURO 2020

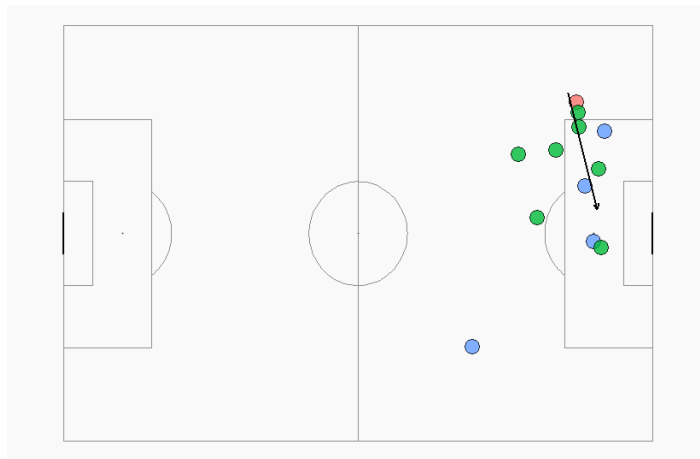


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Italy's initial shot from the corner was blocked (0.06 xG), and the ball ended up with Insigne out wide. Insigne opted to go back to Spinazzola and reset play. His pass was a long backwards diagonal to the right seen in frame 1. After Austria continued pushing up their defensive line and shifted to the right, space was created for Insigne to receive Spinazzola's pass.

Lorenzo Insigne Pass, Corner Sequence

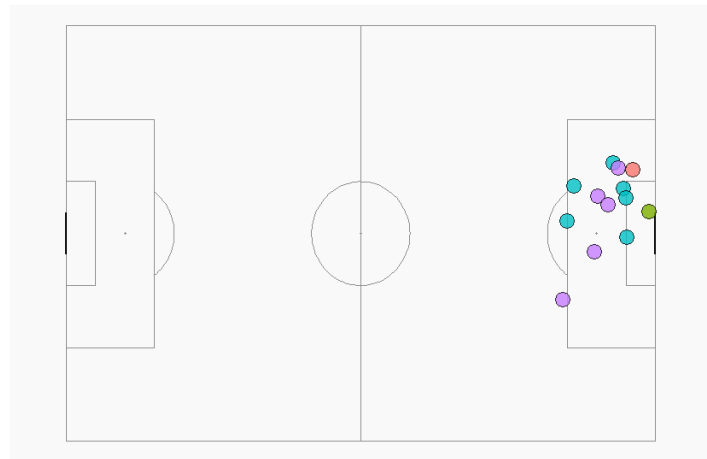
Italy vs Austria, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Matteo Pessina Shot, Corner Sequence

Italy vs Austria, UEFA EURO 2020



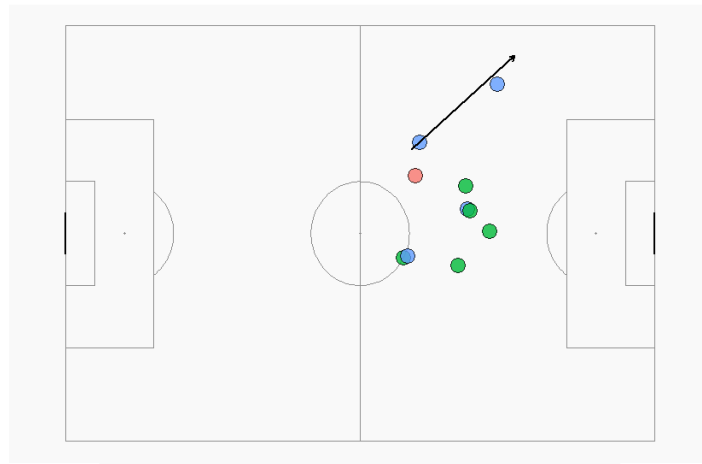
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Insigne carried to just outside the box and put in a pass towards the penalty spot. Pessina received his pass and his shot resulted in a goal (0.24 xG).

Italy vs Turkey

Leonardo Spinazzola Pass, Corner Sequence

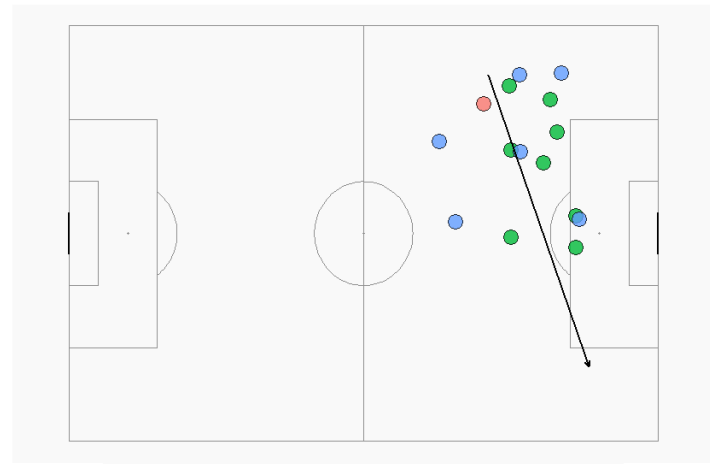
Italy vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Lorenzo Insigne Pass, Corner Sequence

Italy vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020

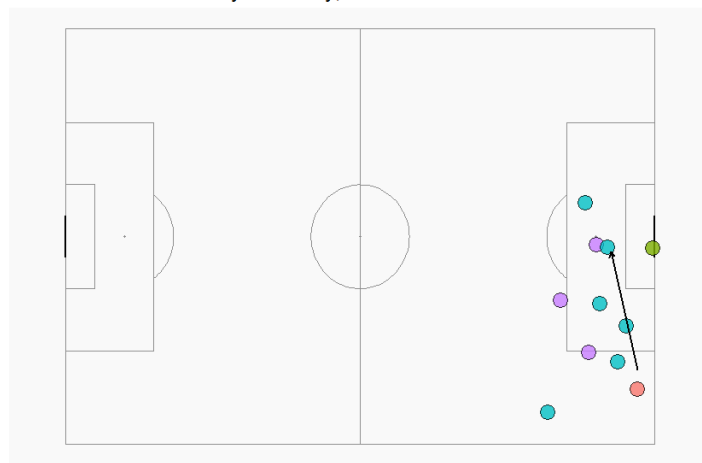


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Italy's first shot was blocked (0.01 xG) and cleared. Italy reset possession with Spinazzola just outside of the attacking third which can be seen in frame 1. After combinations between Spinazzola, Insigne, and Nicolò Barella (whose passes are not pictured above), Turkey's defense had shifted to the left. Insigne took advantage of the space that was created on the right and found Di Lorenzo with a diagonal ball.

Giovanni Di Lorenzo Pass, Corner Sequence

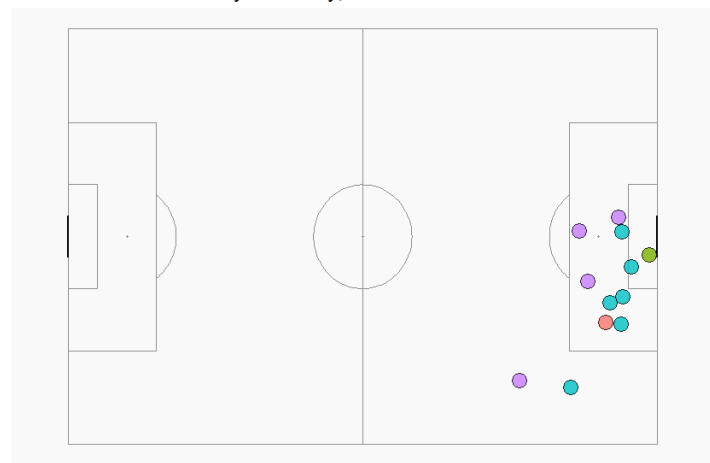
Italy vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Domenico Berardi Shot, Corner Sequence

Italy vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



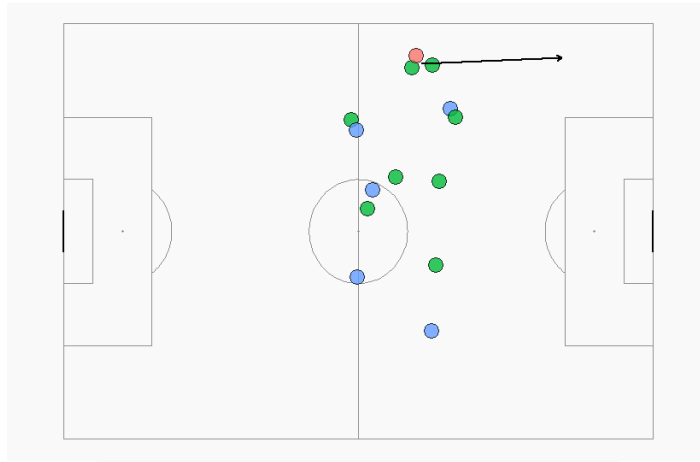
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Di Lorenzo carried towards the end line and put in a cross. Berardi was able to get the ball and take a shot. It was off target and had 0.02 xG.

Switzerland vs Turkey

Steven Zuber Pass, Corner Sequence

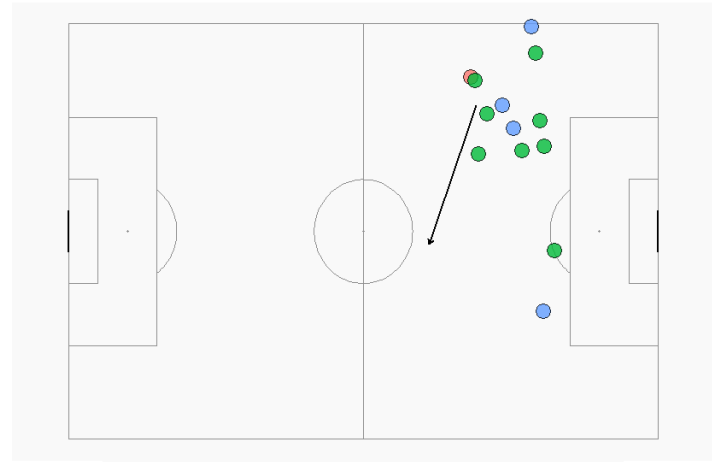
Switzerland vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Granit Xhaka Pass, Corner Sequence

Switzerland vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020

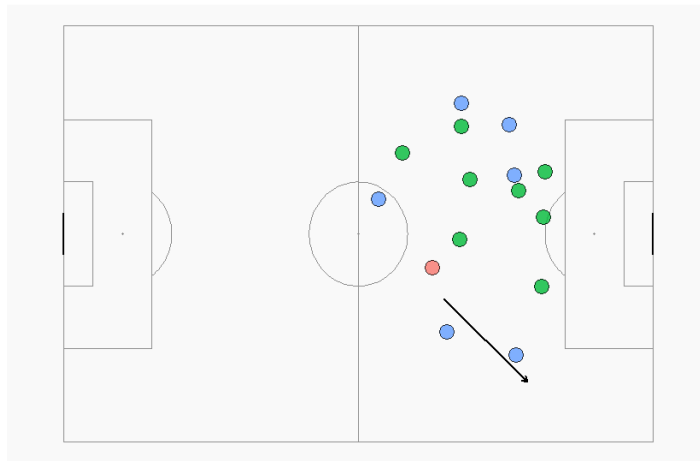


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Later in the sequence after Switzerland's corner, Zuber played a ball down the line for Seferovic. This gave Switzerland the opportunity to get more numbers in the attacking half and support the play. By the time Xhaka made his pass to Freuler, Turkey had a numerical advantage (7v4) on the left which can be seen in frame 2.

Remo Freuler Pass, Corner Sequence

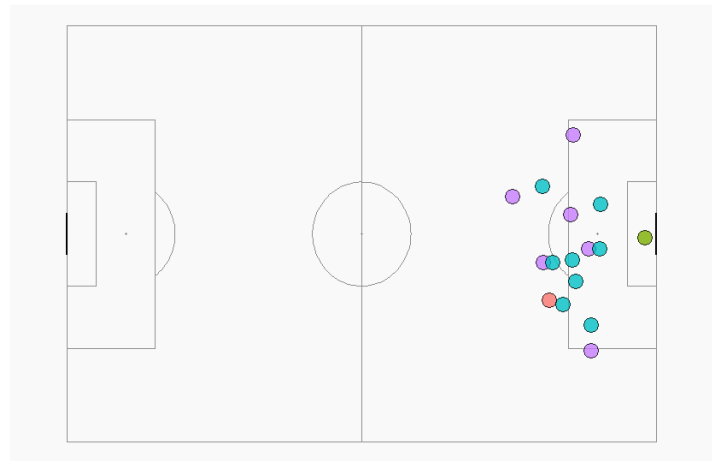
Switzerland vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Xherdan Shaqiri Shot, Corner Sequence

Switzerland vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020

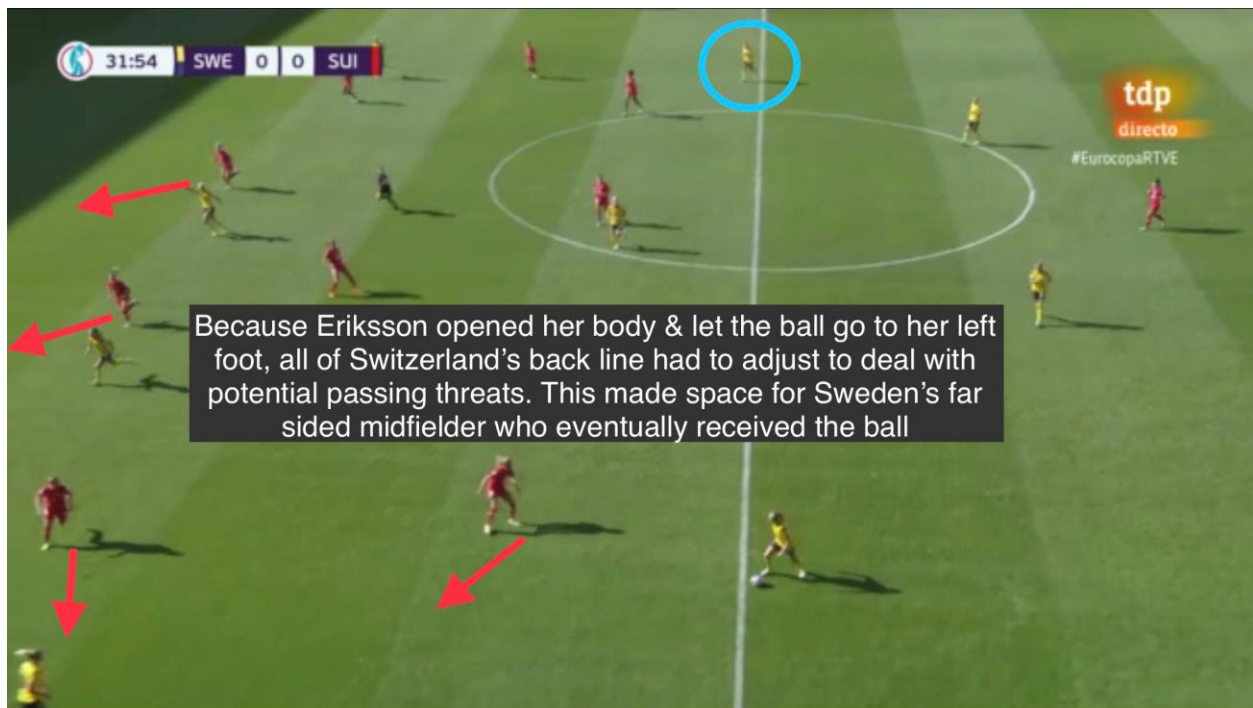


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

When Shaqiri received Freuler's pass, he had space to carry and he was isolated 1v1 against Turkey's left back. He carried inside, took a shot just outside of the box, and scored on a deflection (0.02 xG).

Implementation: Utilizing patterns in training that mimic shifting teams away from an area in order to later exploit that area can give players a better idea of how to do it within the team's framework. Showing examples in film would also be useful. On an individual level, encouraging players to use their body shape (the direction their body is facing and the orientation of their body to appear like they are going to perform a certain action, such as a shot or a pass) will also aid in shifting defenders.

Below is an example of how body shape was used by Sweden's center back Magdalena Eriksson at the 2022 Women's EURO to shift a defensive block away from the space that Sweden would eventually exploit.



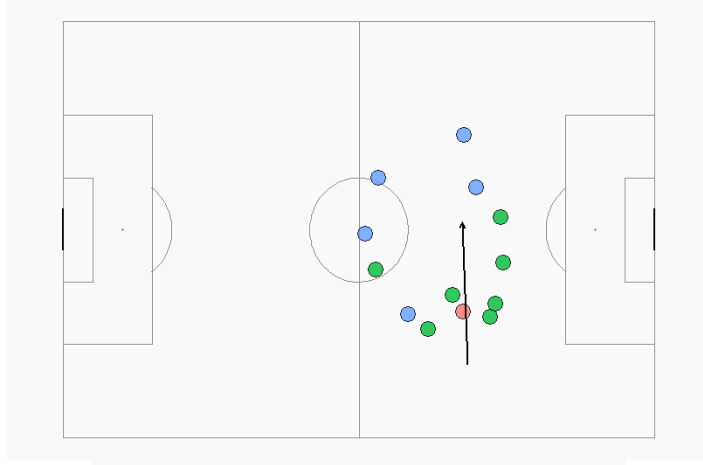
Exploiting the Narrowness of the Defense After a Corner

After corners are cleared or the ball is no longer in the box, defenses tend to be narrow. This is due to the fact that they were compact within the confines of the box in order to protect the goal during the corner. Below are how teams at the EURO took advantage of this narrowness.

England vs Denmark

Mason Mount Pass, Corner Sequence

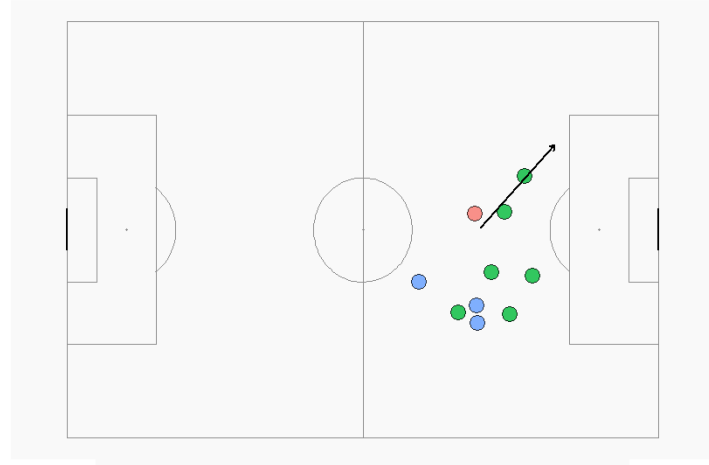
England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Harry Kane Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020

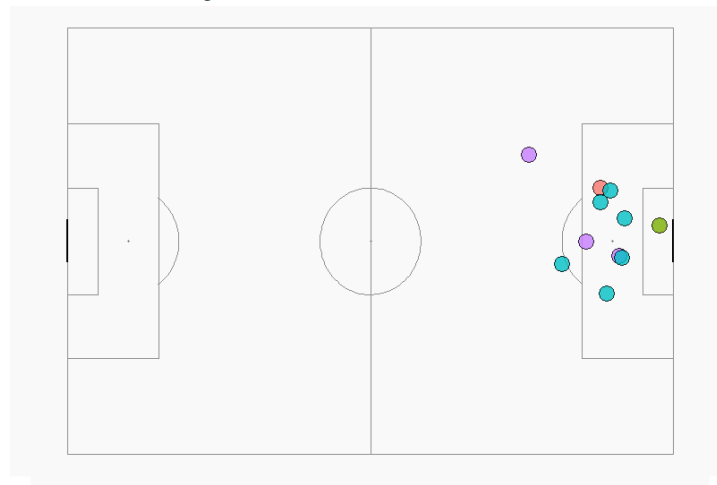


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

England's corner was cleared and England progressed into the attacking third from their defensive half. At the time of Mount's pass in frame 1, it can be seen that Denmark's back line was very narrow. In frame 1, Kane was on the Danish right back's shoulder and Sterling was even wider than him. Kane received Mount's pass and played Sterling.

Raheem Sterling Shot, Corner Sequence

England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



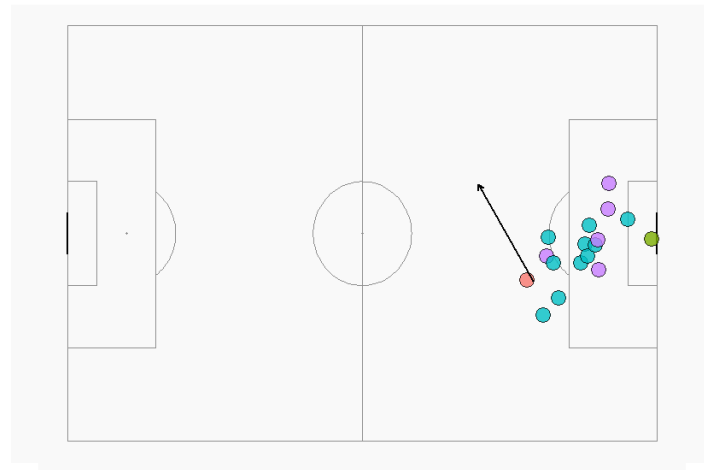
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Sterling carried into the box and took a shot. His shot was saved and had 0.09 xG.

Spain vs Croatia

Pedri Pass, Corner Sequence

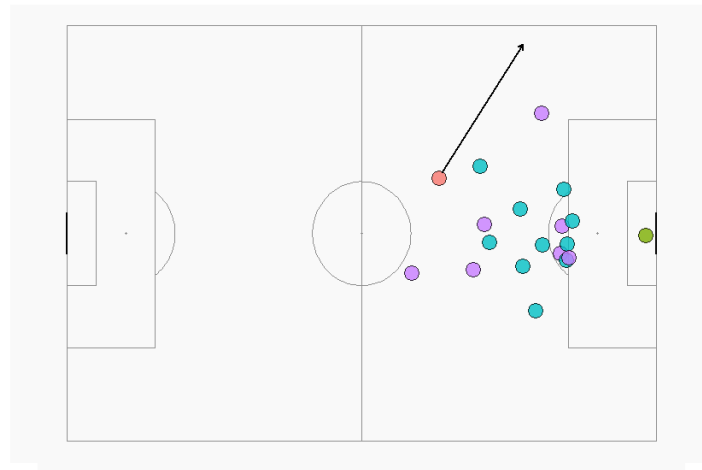
Spain vs Croatia, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

José Gayà Pass, Corner Sequence

Spain vs Croatia, UEFA EURO 2020

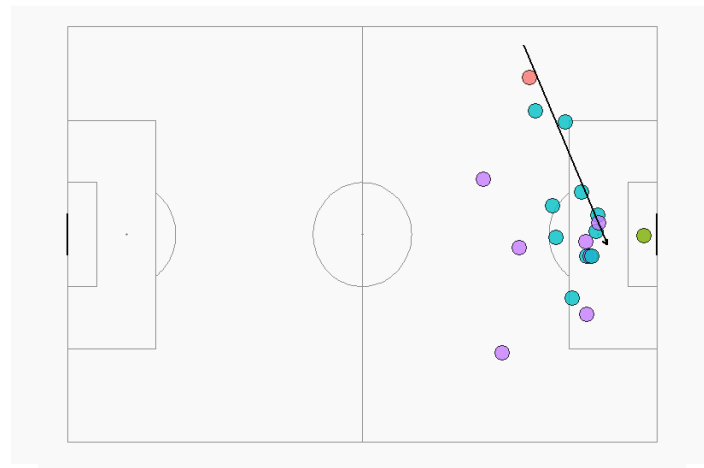


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Spain's corner was cleared, and Croatia did a good job of clogging the space so Pedri didn't have any options for a vertical pass. Pedri's pass to Gayà (frame 1) allowed Croatia's back line to push forward to the top of the box, but it allowed Gayà to find Torres on the right due to the narrowness of the defensive shape.

Ferrán Torres Pass, Corner Sequence

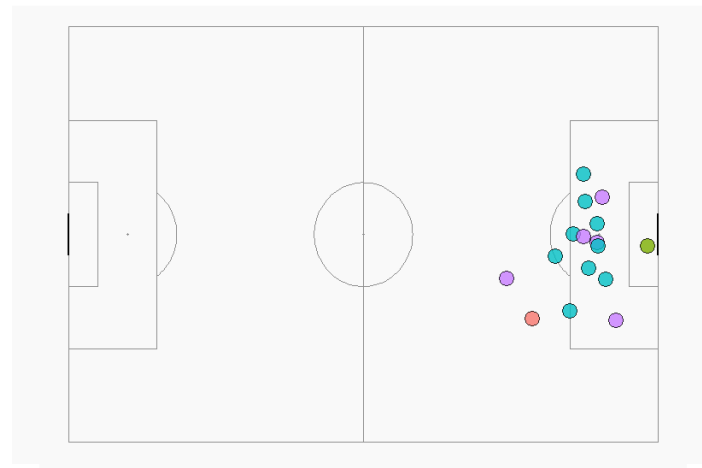
Spain vs Croatia, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Koke Shot, Corner Sequence

Spain vs Croatia, UEFA EURO 2020



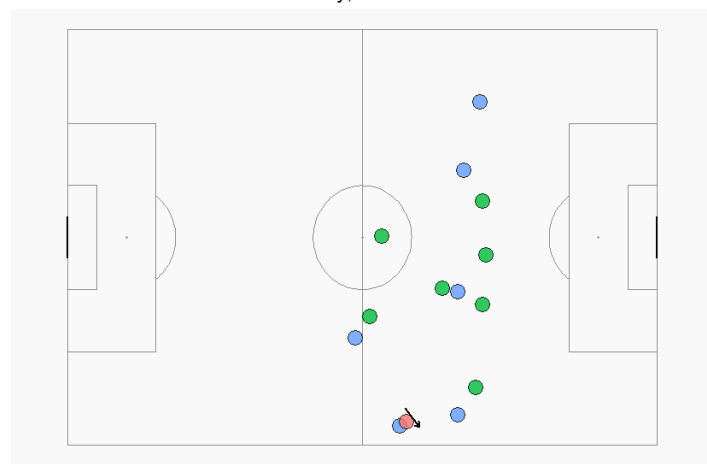
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Torres decided to cross into a congested box, and it was cleared only as far as Koke. Koke opted to take a long range shot due to the lack of pressure put on him as Croatia were pinned in the box. His shot was off target and had 0.02 xG.

Wales vs Turkey

Joe Rodon Pass, Corner Sequence

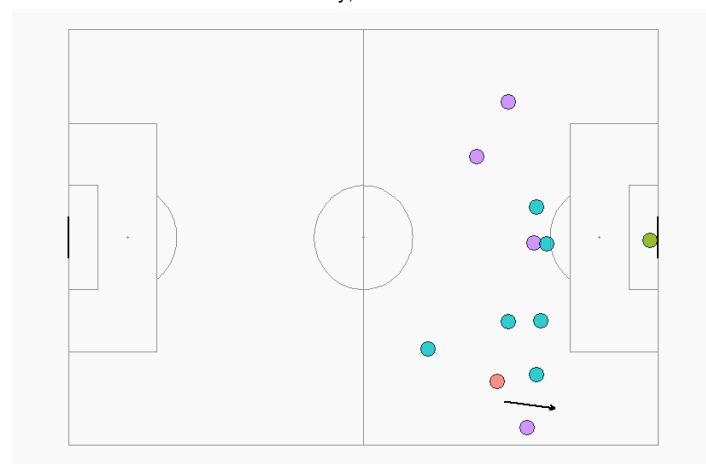
Wales vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Connor Roberts Pass, Corner Sequence

Wales vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020

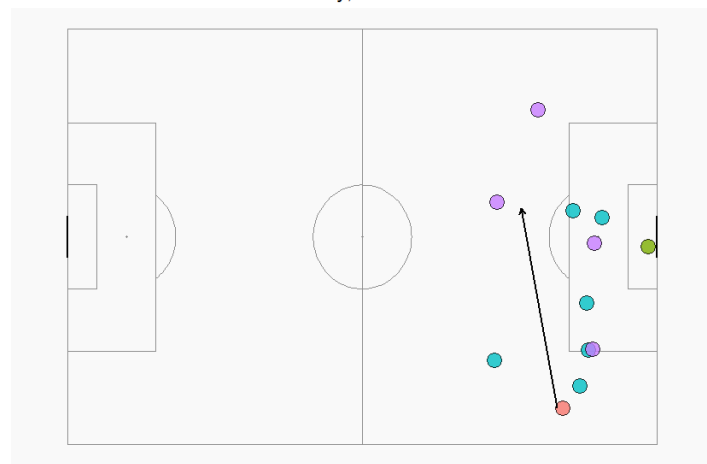


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Turkey was able to force Wales back to the half line area after Wales's corner. A key moment in the sequence was when Rodon got the ball on the right (frame 1). He gave the ball to Roberts who worked with Ramsey to progress vertically into the attacking third. While that was happening, Turkey's back line had to drop and they became occupied with Robert's run past Ramsey (seen in frame 2).

Aaron Ramsey Pass, Corner Sequence

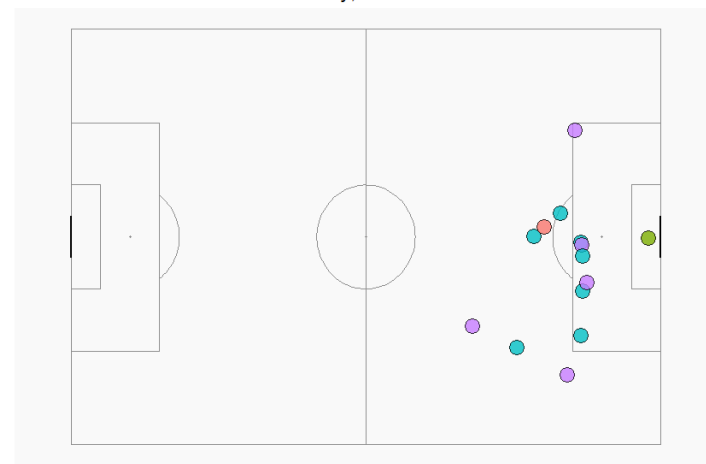
Wales vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Gareth Bale Shot, Corner Sequence

Wales vs Turkey, UEFA EURO 2020



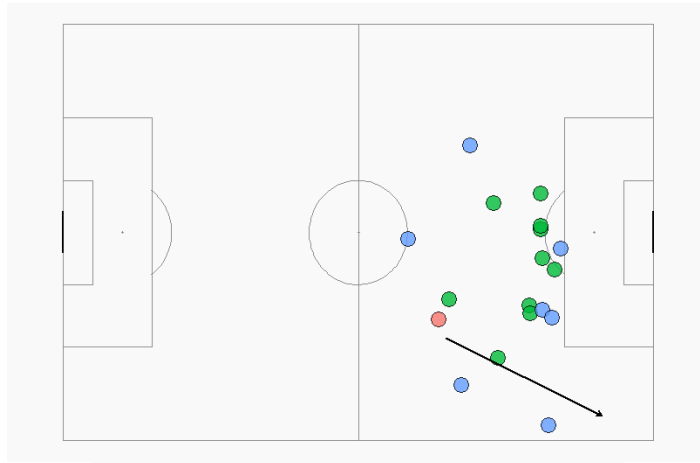
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

This gave Ramsey the time and space to pick out Bale outside of the box. Bale carried to the D of the box and took a shot that was off target and had 0.04 xG.

England vs Germany

Kalving Phillips Pass, Corner Sequence

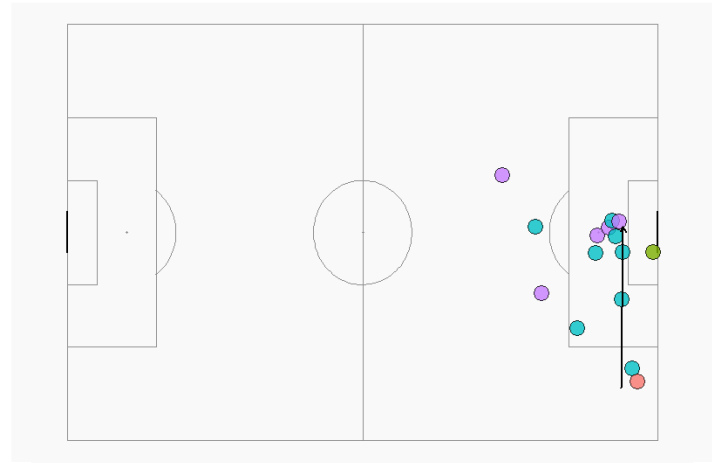
England vs Germany, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Kieran Trippier Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Germany, UEFA EURO 2020

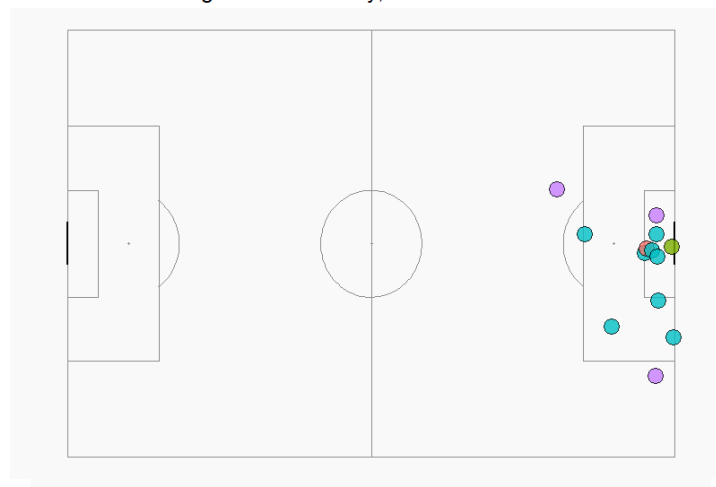


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Germany used zonal marking throughout the tournament, and when they cleared England's corner and were pushing up, their shape was narrow. England also had a numerical advantage on the right side (3v2) which can be seen in frame 1. Phillips took advantage of the numerical superiority and played Trippier who crossed into the box.

Harry Maguire Shot, Corner Sequence

England vs Germany, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Maguire headed Trippier's cross, but it was off target and had 0.10 xG.

Implementation: Training drills specific to creating a game like situation where the defense is narrow while pushing up can give players better recognition of the situation as it happens.

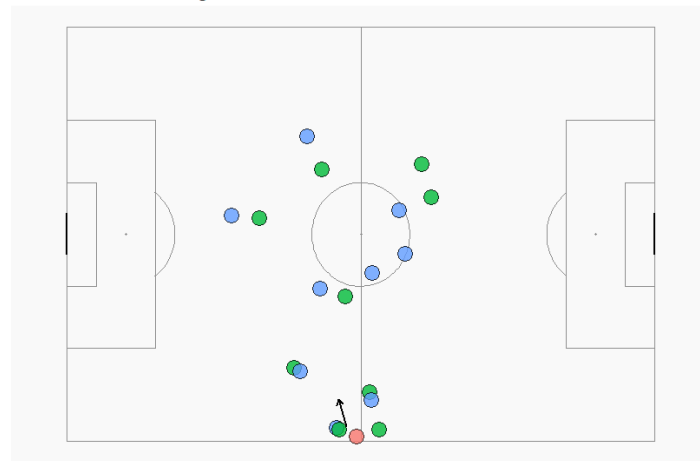
Exploiting the Disorganization of the Defense After a Corner

Not only can defenses be narrow after a corner, they can also be disorganized. Some examples are defenders eagerly pressuring the ball without cover and leaving space in behind, and numerical advantages for the attacking team in wide areas outside of the box.

England vs Denmark

Bukayo Saka Pass, Corner Sequence

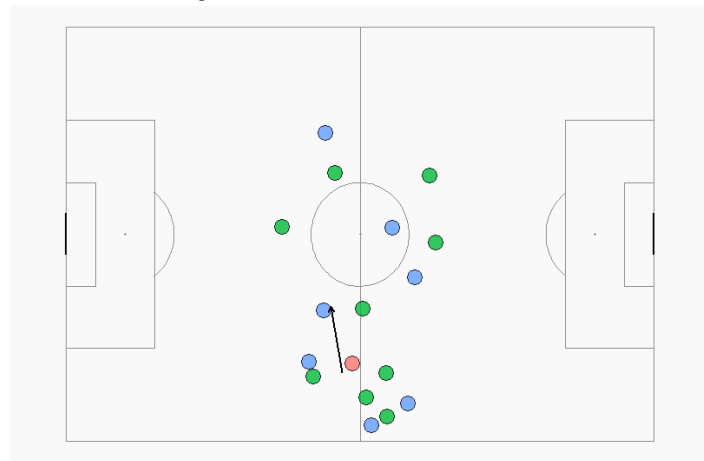
England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Kyle Walker Pass, Corner Sequence

England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020

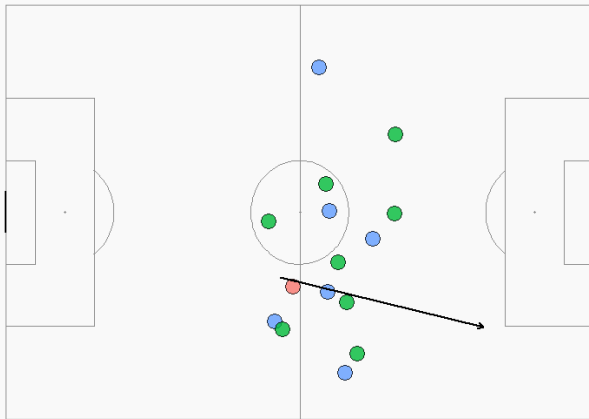


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

England spent some time keeping possession in their defensive half during the corner sequence. Their breakthrough began when Saka and Walker combined in a wide area (frames 1 & 2). It attracted Denmark's left back and left center back, and created space in behind.

Kalvin Phillips Pass, Corner Sequence

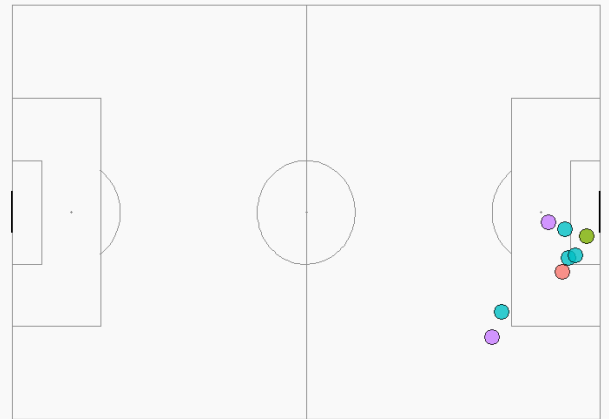
England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Mason Mount Shot, Corner Sequence

England vs Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



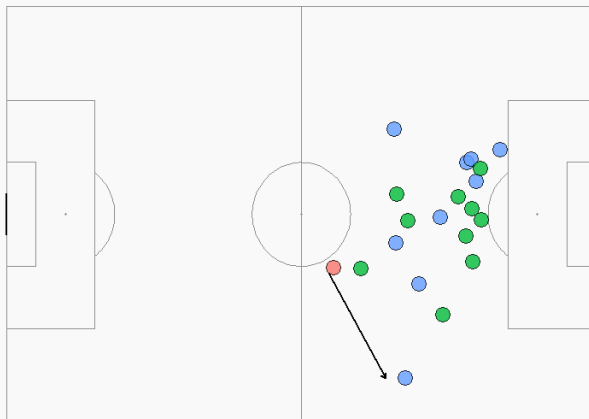
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Phillips played a through ball for Mount to run onto in frame 3. Mount received the pass, carried into the box, and took a shot that was blocked and had 0.07 xG.

Portugal vs Belgium

Diogo Dalot Pass, Corner Sequence

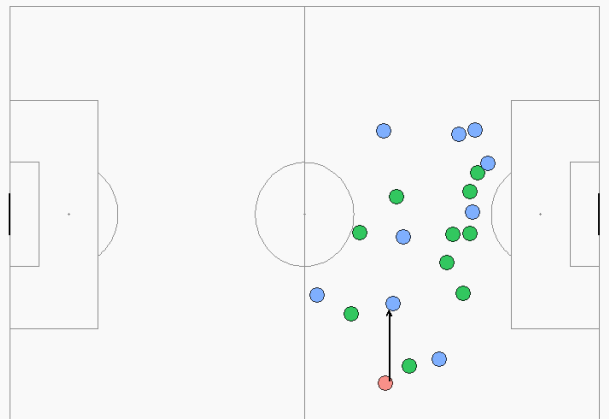
Portugal vs Belgium, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Bruno Fernandes Pass, Corner Sequence

Portugal vs Belgium, UEFA EURO 2020

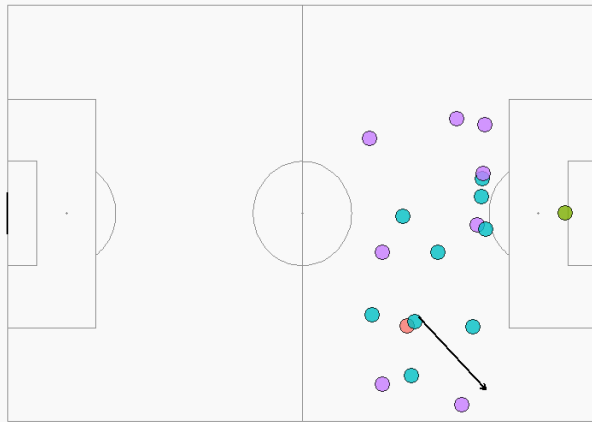


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Portugal's initial shot was saved (0.10 xG). The ball was cleared and Dalot had it near the center circle. Belgium's defensive shape was narrow as they were pushing up, so he played Fernandes on the right out wide (frame 1). At the time Fernandes passed to Oliveira (frame 2), Belgium had pushed up their defensive line and were starting to close them down. However, they were at a numerical disadvantage in the wide right area (2v3), and the Belgian player who closed down Fernandes was isolated. The defender had a choice to close down Fernandes and prevent a service into the box, or keep both players in front of him and risk allowing Fernandes to cross. He chose to do the former.

Sérgio Oliveira Pass, Corner Sequence

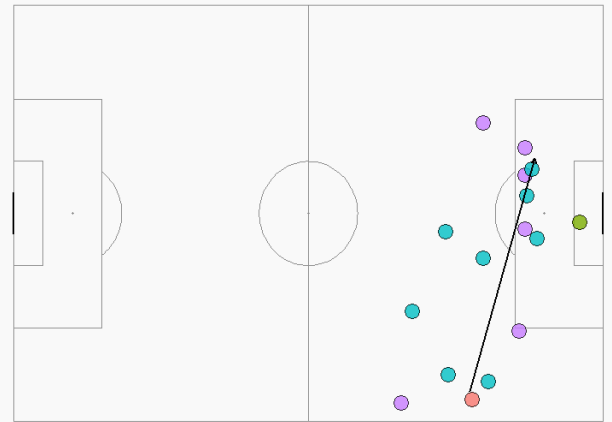
Portugal vs Belgium, UEFA EURO 2020



Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

Kléper Ferreira Pass, Corner Sequence

Portugal vs Belgium, UEFA EURO 2020

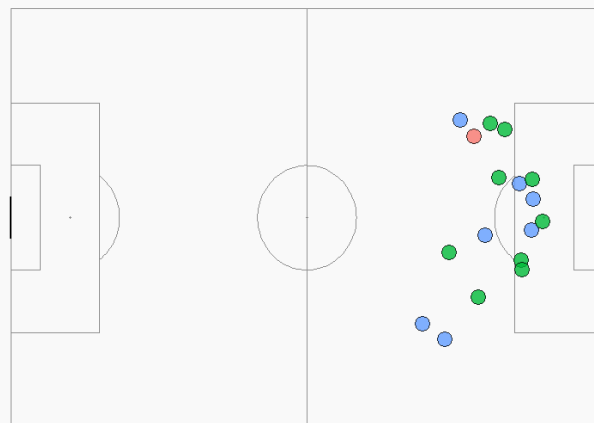


Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Goalkeeper ● Opponent ● Teammate

After Oliveira and Fernandes combined to find Ferreira, Ferreira crossed into the box (frame 4). When he crossed, the Belgium player at the right back position was outnumbered 1v3.

João Félix Shot, Corner Sequence

Portugal vs Belgium, UEFA EURO 2020



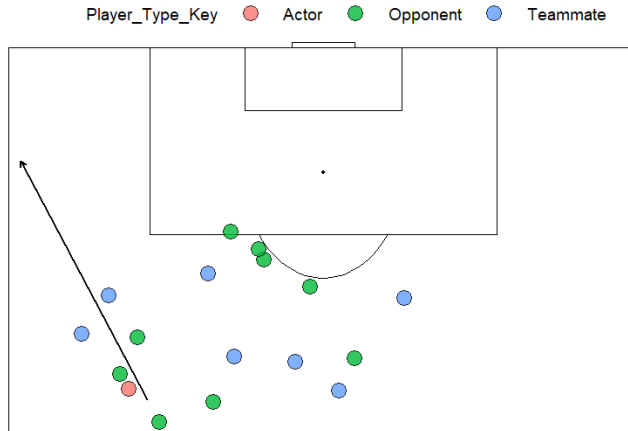
Player_Type_Key ● Actor ● Opponent ● Teammate

Belgium did a good job to neutralize Portugal's numerical advantage. Félix was still able to get a shot off that was off target and had 0.02 xG.

North Macedonia vs Netherlands

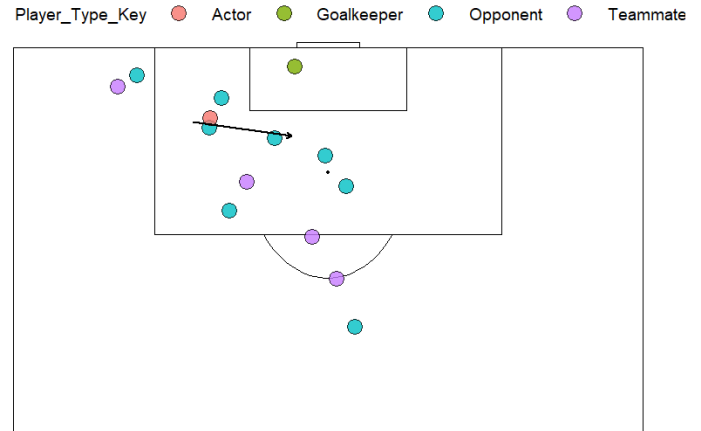
Ezgjani Alioski Pass, Corner Sequence

North Macedonia vs Netherlands, UEFA EURO 2020



Arijan Ademi Pass, Corner Sequence

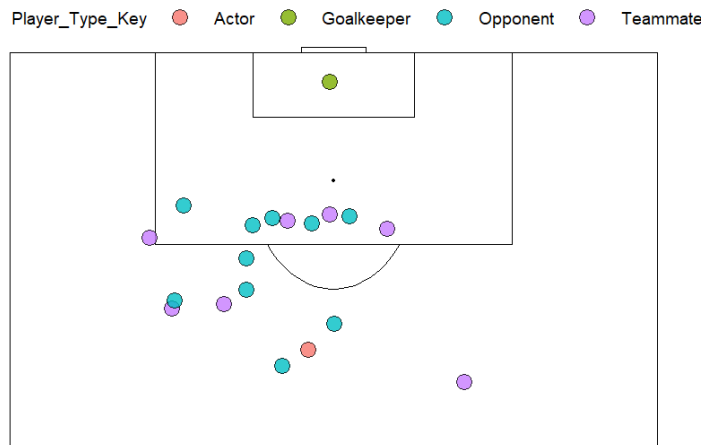
North Macedonia vs Netherlands, UEFA EURO 2020



After North Macedonia's initial shot was blocked (0.01 xG) and cleared, Alioski had the ball on the left side of the pitch (frame 1). The Dutch back line was in the process of pushing up, but they were disorganized. Two Dutch players were closing down Alioski and left two North Macedonia players behind them with space. Alioski played a ball in to space for Aleksander Trajkovski (frame 1) who then played Ademi in the box (this pass is not pictured above). Ademi squared a pass in the box, but no teammates were in the vicinity.

Enis Bardhi Shot, Corner Sequence

North Macedonia vs Netherlands, UEFA EURO 2020



Ademi's pass was only cleared as far as Bardhi who took a long range shot that was off target and had 0.03 xG.

Implementation: Like the implementation for narrowness, specific drills in training that create a game like situation where the defense is disorganized while pushing up can give players better recognition of the situation as it happens.

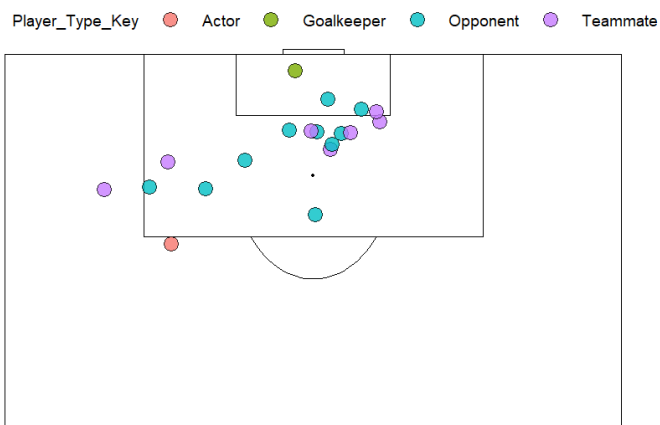
Taking Advantage of the Space Given Around the Box

There are times when the defense is not able to clear corners with enough power or distance to relieve the pressure. When offensive teams are able to recover clearances near the box, they can take advantage of the space in a dangerous area because the defense has not yet been able to start pushing up. This makes for a congested box which can cause deflections on shots and passes, making them more dangerous.

England vs Denmark

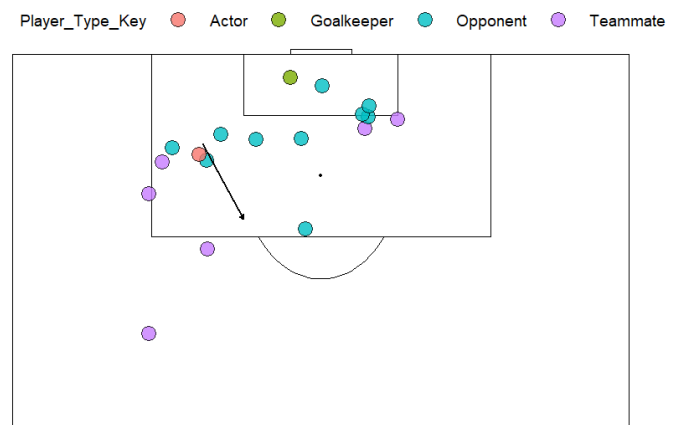
Jack Grealish Shot, Corner Sequence

England v Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



Jack Grealish Pass, Corner Sequence

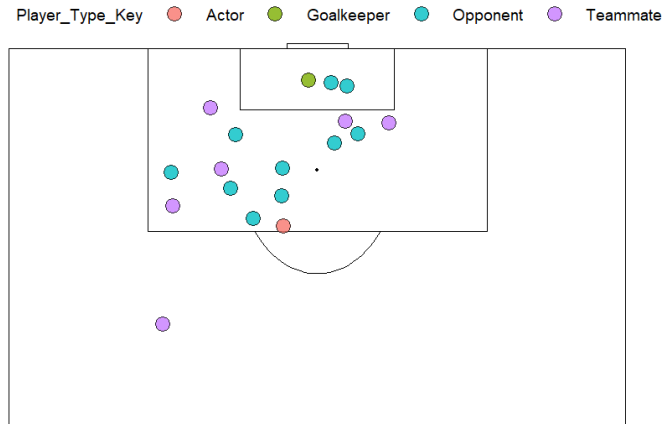
England v Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020



Grealish took advantage of the fact that Denmark could not put a clearance past the English players around the box, and he took a shot that was saved and had 0.03 xG (frame 1). In frame 2, he picked up the ball again after his shot was saved and he carried into the box and made a cutback pass for Raheem Sterling to run onto and take a shot.

Raheem Sterling Shot, Corner Sequence

England v Denmark, UEFA EURO 2020

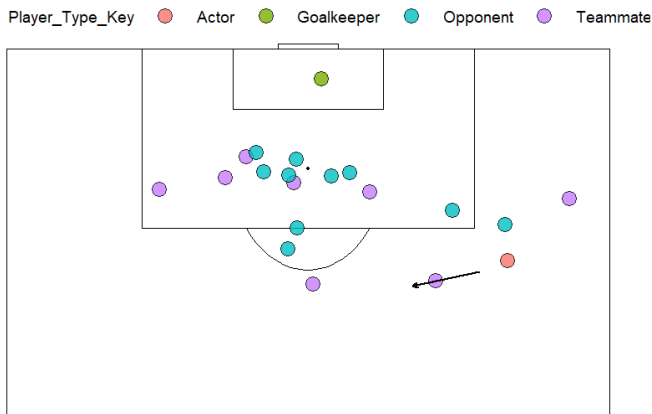


Sterling's shot was off target and had 0.04 xG.

Slovakia vs Sweden

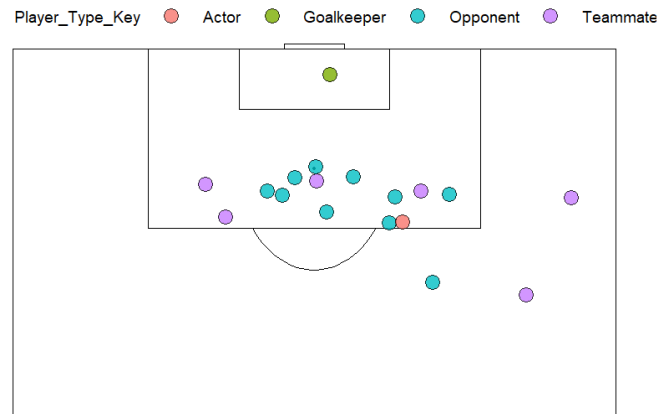
Peter Pekarík Pass, Corner Sequence

Slovakia vs Sweden, UEFA EURO 2020



Ondrej Duda Shot, Corner Sequence

Slovakia vs Sweden, UEFA EURO 2020



Slovakia recovered Sweden's clearance and Pekarík found Duda just outside the box. Duda took advantage of Slovakia's numerical advantage on the edge of the box (3v2) and the fact that Sweden's defensive line was pinned back in the box and he carried into the penalty area. His shot was off target and had 0.04 xG.

Implementation: Film sessions with examples would give players a good grasp of this concept. It's also important to differentiate to the players the difference

between shots and passes that can cause havoc due to dense numbers and shots and passes that are made out of desperation or without much thought.

Challenges Faced in the Proposal's Creation

Ideally, this proposal would have looked at all 34 delayed shot opportunities, but it was not possible. This was because not all of the corners contained the Statsbomb 360 Data, and because in some the sequences it was too difficult to classify any patterns of play.

Further work in this area would preferably contain a bigger sample size. The time buffer between the corner and shot is also something that can be revisited and adjusted for future projects.

Conclusion

Corners (and set pieces in general) have become an equalizer for teams of lesser quality and a ceiling raiser for teams with a lot of quality. The purpose of this proposal was to give teams a starting point of how to take advantage of the transitional moments of play after corners are taken. Because football is a game of small margins, if teams can figure out ways to create delayed chances after corners within their own framework, it can give them an extra edge.