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Pivot play dominates the opening match of the day

by

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(Photos: Uros Hocevar)

The growing trend in handball today is importance of the role of pivot play and this is evident even at youth level.

Both teams, Denmark and Japan relied heavily on their pivot player in the opening match of the World Championship in group A. As dominant players for their teams, DEN #14 J. Hald and JPN #17 H. Tamakawa scored 4 goals each and set up several chances for their teammates during their limited playing time. Although their physical build is similar, their playing style is slightly different; Hald is more static, he moves less in the defence wall, yet he blocks then frees himself with excellent timing and rhythm. (for example Picture row 1-4). Whereas his counterpart, Tamakawa is a more mobile type pivot, who often moves out from the defence wall, takes the ball then works himself into a scoring position (for example Picture row 1-4).



Picture 1. #14 pivot J. Hald blocks RH defender when his LB teammate moves to the centre.



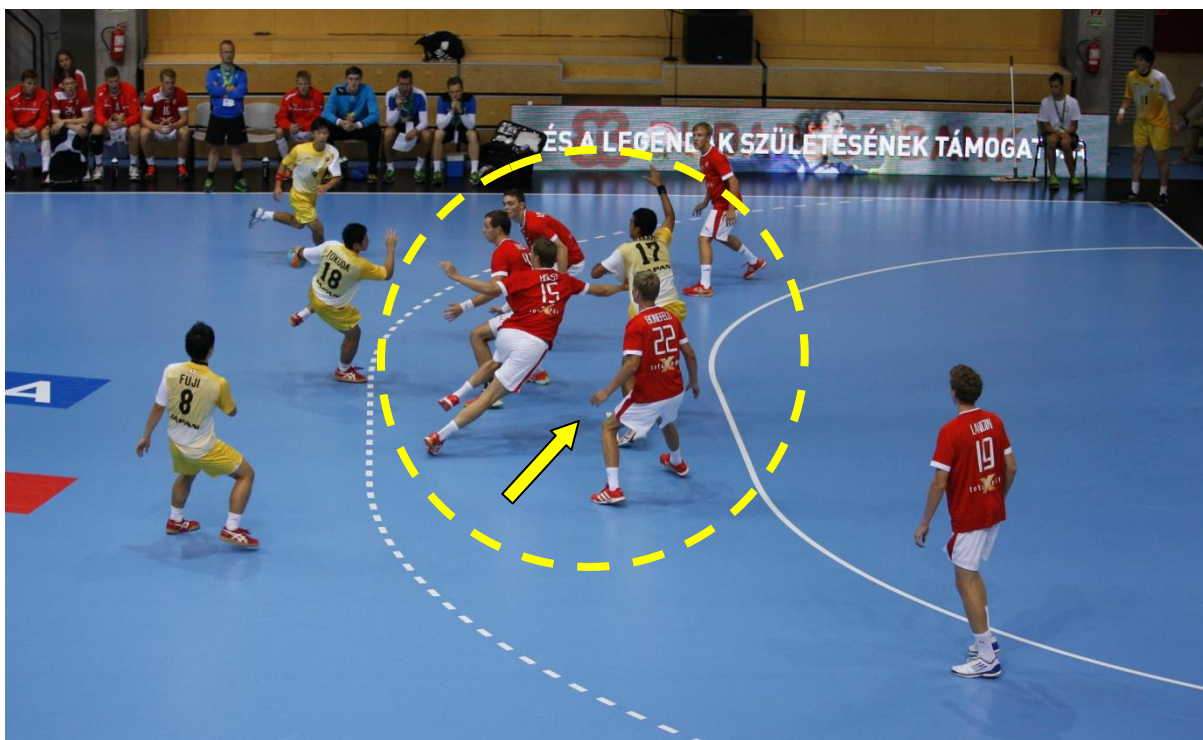
Picture 2. Passing his man, #15 LB forces the RH defender to fall out, while the P frees himself.



Picture 3. Pivot receives the ball from LB then quickly passes it back to him, while LW runs-in.



Picture 4. After the ball is received back, RB attacks the goal and LW moves into Pivot position.



Picture 5. #17 pivot H. Tamakawa moves in, occupying the defenders in the middle.



Picture 6. Following a shooting fake, #8 LB passes the ball to the Pivot with a quick wrist pass.



Picture 7. The Pivot frees himself from the defenders and turns to the goal with the ball...



Picture 8. ... then finishes the action in a clear scoring chance with a dive shot.