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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

ANALYSIS OF THE OFFENSIVE PROCESS OF THE PORTUGUESE FUTSAL TEAM

Abstract

The aim of this study was analyze the offensive actions of the Portuguese futsal team which resulted in finalization to the opposing goalpost, compare the actions which were being used, according to its origin, and verify which are the results obtained from these actions. Three games were analyzed during the tournament selection for the European Futsal Championship in 2010. Spreadsheets were used as data collection instrument, and the applied method was descriptive observational analysis. The Portuguese team carried out a total of 167 finalizations; 95 finalizations (56.89%) were originated from the organized game (OG) actions, 29 finalizations (17.36%) were from counterattack actions (CA) and 43 finalizations (25.75%) were from Stopped Ball (SB) actions. Analyzing the obtained results in these actions, 13 finalizations (7.78%) resulted in scored goals, 4 finalizations (2.20%) resulted in balls on crossbar, 55 finalizations (32.94%) were defended by the opponent goalkeeper, 56 finalizations (33.53%) were intercepted by the opponent player and 39 finalizations (23.35%) went outside the sideline. Regarding to the importance of each offensive action in the total number of goals (13), 2 of them were scored (15.39%) in the OG actions, 5 goals (38.46%) in CA actions and 6 goals (46.15%) in SB actions. Portugal has finalized much through OG actions (56.89%), however it has a low effectiveness. 46.15% of goals were scored through SB, it makes sure that this move is an important offensive action and should be explored.

Key Words: Offensive actions, finalization, tactics, futsal, Portuguese team.

INTRODUCTION

Futsal (also known as Indoor soccer) is a sport classified as Collective Sport or Collective Sports Game because it has the six invariants given to this category and listed by Bayer (1994 as cited in Morato, 2004): a ball or a similar implement, a game space, opponents, partners, a target to attack, another one to defend and specific rules. To be in this category implies, besides the invariants, presents some similarities with other modalities which are also in the same classification, such as soccer (or football), basketball, handball, water polo and more. Also according to the author, these similarities were named from operating principles, which are divided into three principles of defense and three of attack. The principles of defense are: ball recovery, preventing the progression of the opposing team and protecting its own target. The attacks are: keeping the ball possession, progression towards the opponent target and finalization seeking the score or goal.

Among the operational principles of attack, finalization is emphasized, because it is important to identify how and what way the finalizations occur in a futsal match. The offensive actions which aim to culminate with the finalization can be achieved in three ways regarding to its origin: through an organized game, of counterattacks or through stopped balls. Therefore, the finalization, while offensive action which nurtures the teams to complete successfully the main objective of the game, the goal, and the situations in which teams can make the moves finalizations, become important variables of study (Irokawa et al., 2010).

The aim of this study is analyze the offensive actions which resulted in finalizations in high yield Futsal matches, compare which were the most used actions, according to its origin, and check what the results of these actions were. Through a comparison between the offensive actions used, it is possible to identify what action had better use and allowed the Portuguese national team scoring more goals. During the discussion of the results of this study, comparisons are made with results obtained in similar studies.

Thus, this research is justified in terms of collaborating to learn more about the internal futsal dynamic, from a strategic perspective, identifying its peculiarities and therefore, pointing out indicators which can serve in the training plan and the regulation of the competition (Garganta, 2000 as cited in Santana and Garcia, 2007). Another aim is that the results found may have implications in the improvement of futsal training process.

METHOD

Sample

Three of the Portuguese futsal team games were analyzed during the tournament selection for the European Futsal Championship in 2010. The games were played against the Azerbaijan, Finland and Poland teams and were carried out in Viana do Castelo city (Portugal).

Data collection

For the analysis of the games, footages on DVD were used (Intense, DVD+R, 4.70 GB); the matches were recorded from the official TV station broadcasting the event (SPORTV). The data were collected through structured spreadsheet.

Applied method

The methodology used for this study was the observational descriptive, defined by Anguera (1988 as cited in Lapresa, 2009), as the procedure destined to articulate a deliberate perception of reality manifests, with its proper interpretation, capturing its meaning, so that, through a recorded objective, systematic and specific of the behavior generated in a spontaneous way in a given context, and once submitted to an appropriate coding and analysis, providing us valid results within a specific boundary of knowledge.

To study the importance of specific tactical and technical parameters to a sportive modality, coaches recourse to the observation area or game analysis (Irokawa et al., 2010). Nowadays, the use of observational methodology in the study of collective sports is a consolidated reality. Its rigor, systematization, flexibility and capacity to be used in situations of greater complexity, have enabled that in the last few years it has been turned into a procedural and compulsory way when interests the study of the sport in its own context (Anguera, 2009), especially competitive.

The observation or analysis of the game is a selective and planning perception process, which may occur before, during or after running the matches, which results in attitude records of participants toward game situations (Carling et al., 2005; Greco et al., 2000 as cited in Irokawa et al., 2010). Different stages constitute the process of game analysis,

among them the observation of events, the collection and data interpretation (Garganta, 2001). The data interpretation allows us to evaluate the organization of teams and the actions in the competition; planning and organizing the training and work strategies, establish appropriate tactical-technical plans for a particular opponent; and regulate the teaching-learning-training (Garganta, 1998 as cited in Irokawa et al., 2010).

Data analysis

All of the Portuguese futsal team finalizations were analyzed to check which offensive actions were used more: organized game, counterattacks and stopped balls; and the results obtained of these actions: goal, ball on the crossbar, defended kick by opposing goalkeeper, deflected kick by the opponent and kick offside. The images were analyzed, at first, with normal transmission speed. After that, each move was seen again at a slower speed (1/2, 1/4 or 1/8 normal speed) for a better accuracy on the action type, tactical players' movement, ball trajectory and conclusion of moves. For this study were included the soccer fouls which caused direct free kicks without wall formation (10m) and penalties.

For the presentation of results, descriptive statistics were used and consisted of frequency distribution.

Definition of parameters

In order to increase the reliability of the observation, we defined the concepts that support this inquiry.

Organized Game (OG)

The organized game was characterized as all actions in which Portugal aimed to destabilize the opposing defense, through concepts and patterns of a predefined game, in numerical equality situations. In futsal, the ball possession, movement and a good pass are essential to run away from the opponent's marking up and also get a good attack, getting to a finalization free of marking and in a balanced way, getting a greater chance to achieve the main objective, the goal (Marchi, et al., 2010).

Counterattack (CA)

The counterattack was defined as an offensive technical-tactical element where the team recovers the ball possession and goes quickly to the attack seeking the finalization towards an unstructured opposing defense (Irokawa et al., 2010). These are situations in which the attack was or was not in numerical superiority and achieved the opponent's goal in a dynamic way.

Stopped Ball (SB)

To differentiate a rehearsed stopped ball move to a ball reposition in game and the beginning of the attack through an organized game, the definition of Silva et al. (2004) was used, where the stopped balls were classified as cases of defensive throw in, offensive, corner kick and fouls where the ball was touched maximum three times, after being put into game, characterizing a rehearsed move.

RESULTS

In table 1, we have the total amount of offensive actions that resulted in finalizations. The Portuguese team carried out a total of 167 finalizations.

Table 1 – Total amount of finalizations.

	Portugal x Azerbaijan	Portugal x Finland	Portugal x Poland	Total
Finalizations	44	75	48	167

Analyzing all Portugal finalizations (table 2), 95 finalizations (56.89%) were checked and originated from OG actions, 29 finalizations (17.36%) were originated from CA actions and 43 finalizations (25.75%) were originated from SB actions.

Table 2 – Offensive actions that resulted in finalizations.

	Portugal x Azerbaijan	Portugal x Finland	Portugal x Poland	Total	Total (%)
Organized game (OG)	23	50	22	95	56.89%
Counterattacks (CA)	08	07	14	29	17.36%
Stopped Balls (SB)	13	18	12	43	25.75%
Total	44	75	48	167	100%

According to the results obtained from finalization actions (table 3), 13 finalizations (7.78%) resulted in scored goals, 4 finalizations (2.20%) resulted in balls on the post, 55 finalizations (32.94%) were defended by the goalkeeper, 56 finalizations (33.53%) were intercepted (or deflected) by the opponent and 39 finalizations (23.35%) went outside.

Table 3 – Results obtained in finalizations.

	Portugal x Azerbaijan	Portugal x Finland	Portugal x Poland	Total	Total (%)
Goal	03	02	08	13	7.78%
Ball on the post	03	01	-	04	2.40%
Defended kick by the goalkeeper	19	22	14	55	32.94%
Finalization intercepted by the opponent	10	31	15	56	33.53%
Kick to outside	09	19	11	39	23.35%
Total	44	75	48	167	100%

The analysis of the 3 types of offensive actions and the amount of scored goals (table 4) established that 2 goals were scored (2.10%) in OG actions, 5 goals (17.24%) in CA actions and 6 goals (13.95%) in SB actions.

Table 4 – Amount of offensive actions and scored goals.

	Finalizations	Total of goals	Total (%)
Organized Game (OG)	95	02	2.10%
Counterattacks (CA)	29	05	17.24%
Stopped balls (SB)	43	06	13.95%
Total	167	13	7.78%

Analyzing the effectiveness of each offensive action in the total amount of goals (table 5), 2 goals were scored (15.39%) in OG actions, 5 goals (38.46%) in CA actions and 6 goals (46.15%) in SB actions.

Table 5 – Total of scored goals and the offensive actions which originated them.

	Portugal x Azerbaijan	Portugal x Finland	Portugal x Poland	Total	Total (%)
Organized Game (OG)	-	01	01	02	15.39%
Counterattacks (CA)	01	-	04	05	38.46%
Stopped balls (SB)	02	01	03	06	46.15%
Total	03	02	08	13	100%

DISCUSSION

The Portuguese futsal team carried out a total of 167 offensive actions which resulted in finalizations to the opposing goal (table 1). After identifying and analyzing these actions, they were divided in 3 types, in relation to their origin: OG, CA and SB (table 2).

From the total of 167 finalizations, 95 finalizations (56.89%) occurred in OG actions. In a similar study, Silva et al. (2004) analyzed four games from Brazilian national u-20 team in the Egypt World Cup 2003 and verified 156 finalizations from Brazil, being 102 finalizations (65.38%) through OG actions. Irokawa et al. (2010) analyzed the four final

games from Futsal World Cup 2008 and checked that a total of 277 finalizations had occurred, being carried out 103 finalizations (38%) through OG actions.

The Portuguese team carried out 29 finalizations (17.36%) through actions originated from CA. Ferreira (2004) studied the circumstances in which the three best well-placed teams (Ukraine, Russia and Brazil) in the World University Futsal Championship 1998 finalized to goal. The author observed nine games (three of each team) and found that, from a total of 277 finalizations, 106 finalizations (38.26%) happened in CA actions. Silva et al. (2004) verified in his study that 33 finalizations (21.15%) were originated through CA moves. In his study, Irokawa et al. (2010) found 62 finalizations (22.9%) originated in CA actions.

From finalizations carried out by Portugal (167), 43 of them (25.75%) were resulted from moves originated from SB. Irokawa et al. (2010) verified in his study that, from the 271 finalizations, 100 finalizations (36.9%) occurred in SB actions. Silva et al. (2004) discovered that, from the 156 finalizations, 21 finalizations (13.47%) were originated from SB actions.

In comparison with these studies, we can notice that the Portuguese team stayed among an average of effectiveness in OG and SB actions. However, it presented a lower effectiveness in CA actions.

Analyzing the obtained results in the Portugal offensive actions (table 3), 13 finalizations (7.78%) resulted in goals scored, 4 finalizations (2.40%) resulted in balls on the crossbar, 55 finalizations (32.94%) were defended by the opposing goalkeeper, 56 finalizations (33.53%) were intercepted by the opponent player and 39 finalizations (23.35%) went outside.

Analyzing only the finalizations that were on goal (excluding intercepted finalizations and finalizations to outside), from a total of 72 finalizations, 13 goals were scored, 4 finalizations (5.55%) were on the crossbar and 55 finalizations (76.39%) were defended by the opposing goalkeeper. The results show an effectiveness of 18.05% of goals, which can be considered a reasonable amount of improvement, because it wasn't found in the literature any similar study for a possible comparison of results.

When the types of actions which originated the finalizations were analyzed and the goals scored through these moves (table 4), we observed that in OG actions, from the 95 finalizations, only two resulted in goals, 2.10% of effectiveness. Silva et al. (2004) realized that, from the 102 finalizations through OG, the Brazilian team scored 5 goals, having an

effectiveness of 4.90%.

Through the CA actions, Portugal scored 5 goals in 29 finalizations, having an effectiveness of 17.24%. In similar studies, Silva et al. (2004) realized that, in Brazil games, from a total of 33 CA finalizations, 7 goals were scored, having an effectiveness of 21.21%. Santana and Garcia (2007) analyzed 28 games from the Brazilian League 2003, and from a total of 521 finalizations originated from CA, 60 goals were scored, having an effectiveness of 11.74%. Marchi et al. (2010) analyzed 20 games from the Brazilian National League 2009 and found that, of a total of 285 finalizations from CA, were scored 30 goals, having an effectiveness of 10.52%.

In the finalization from SB were scored 6 goals in 43 finalizations, having an effectiveness of 13.95%. Silva et al. (2004) verified in his study that, from a total of 21 SB actions, only one goal was scored, having an effectiveness of 4.76%.

From a total of 167 finalizations, 13 finalizations resulted in goal, having an effectiveness of 7.78%. In the study carried out by Irokawa et al. (2010), from a total of 271 finalizations, 15 goals were scored, having an effectiveness of 5.54%. Silva et al. (2004) found that, from a total of 156 finalizations, Brazil scored 13 goals, having an effectiveness of 8.33%.

In comparison with these studies, Portugal presented a good effectiveness in scored goals in CA actions and in the total of finalizations. It presented a higher effectiveness in SB actions. However, it presented a bad effectiveness in the OG actions, although it uses this kind of move a lot.

Observing only the total number of goals (13) and the incidence of each type of offensive action (table 5) 2 goals were scored in OG actions, having an effectiveness of 15.39%. In the study carried out by Silva et al. (2004), the Brazilian team scored 13 goals in 4 games, from these ones, 5 goals were scored in OG actions, having an effectiveness of 38.46%.

In CA actions, 5 goals were scored, having an effectiveness of 38.46%. In similar studies, Bello Junior (1998 as cited in Marchi et al., 2010) analyzed 21 games from the Paulista Championship (Brazil) and asserted that, from a total of 121 goals, 73 goals were originated from CA actions, having an effectiveness of 60.33%. Voser (2001 as cited in Santana and Garcia, 2007) analyzed the occurrence and origin of goals in 28 of professional

futsal games from Brazilian National League 1999. He found that, of a total of 199 goals, 42 goals were originated from CA actions, having an effectiveness of 21.10%. Silva et al. (2004) found in his study that, from a total of 13 goals, 7 goals were scored in actions CA, having an effectiveness of 53.85%. Marchi et al. (2010) said that the counterattack is significant and with a good representation in the total amount of goals of the games. In his research, from a total of 88 goals, 30 goals were resulted from CA actions, representing an effectiveness of 34.10% from a total of scored goals, concluding that the counterattacks are decisive factors in the results of matches, because they are responsible for most of the scored goals.

In SB actions, Portugal scored 6 goals, having an effectiveness of 46.15%. The actions from stopped balls suppose a so valid, spectacular and effective opportunity as any other action of the match (Herráez, 2003). In his study, Silva et al. (2004) verified that only 1 goal was scored in this type of move, having an effectiveness of 7.69%.

Making a comparison with these studies, once again, the Portuguese team presented a very low effectiveness in OG actions; although it uses this kind of move a lot. In CA actions, it stayed among the average of effectiveness of other studies. In SB actions, it presented a higher effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the objectives of this study was to try to create parameters that can be used on the improvement of the futsal training process.

According to the found results in the games analysis, it's perceptible that the Portuguese futsal team, although it uses many OG actions (more than half of their offensive actions – 56.89%) to get the finalization, it has a low effectiveness in this kind of action. This data can be proved in the comparisons: the relationship between the amount of offensive actions and the scored goals (table 4), or on the incidence of each action in the total amount of scored goals (table 5). Therefore, it is necessary a better balance of actions (better moving, improve the pass, rehearsed moves, etc.) in this kind of offensive action so that it can have a good balance at the time of finalization and increase the probability of scoring goals.

Analyzing the scored goals and the total amount of finalizations, the Portuguese team

had a good effectiveness (7.78%) compared to similar studies. Considering just the finalizations that were towards to the goal, we may consider that we've gotten a reasonable result (18.05%), because it wasn't found in the literature any similar study for a possible comparison of results.

In relation to offensive SB actions, 1/4 of total finalizations (25.75%) was through these actions. Observing the total amount of goals, there is almost half of Portugal goals (46.15%) were scored from SB actions. This shows that this move is a very important offensive action and should be explored.

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