

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RELATIVE AGE EFFECT ON THE POSITION AND TECHNICAL-TACTICAL PERFORMANCE IN ELITE LEVEL FOOTBALL ACADEMIES

Honorato José Ginés ¹, Christopher Dowling ², Karim Hamidi ¹, Rafael Ballester¹& Florentino Huertas¹

¹ UCV, Universidad Católica de Valencia “San Vicente Mártir”

² Liverpool John Moores University

honoratojg@gmail.com

Keywords: Age, relative, effect, football, soccer, young, youth, technique, tactical.

Introduction: Society, with the intention of creating homogeneous groups in different contexts (school, sports etc.) uses chronological age as the criteria for grouping. Given that the different capacities that make up sport performance (technical, tactical, physical and social environment and hereditary factors, Weineck, 2005) can be affected by the evolutionary development of the players. The present study attempts to explore if the relative age effect (RAE) is related to the assignment of certain positions for players by the coaches, and if this phenomenon demonstrates a relationship with the technical-tactical performance of the player.

Method: The study will select a sample of 104 children between the ages of 9 and 12 years ($M=10.85$, $SD=1.06$), from 2 elite level football academies within the Valencian Community. The players will be grouped according to the quarter of their birth (T1, T2, T3 and T4) and the preferred position of each player will be consulted through the coaches (Goalkeeper, Defense, Midfield and Forward).

The analysis of the RAE will be carried out through a statistical analysis of contingency tables. In order to analyse the effect of the RAE on the technical-tactical performance, 4 matches of each of the selected teams will be analysed, and only the actions of the central midfielders will be analysed. An observational analysis will be conducted based on technical-tactical pass and recovery behaviours (Casal & Arda, 2003), and will be assessed with the criteria of “Successful” and “Unsuccessful”. The reliability of the intra-observer data will be checked via a Kappa Cohen coefficient analysis. Finally, a univariate and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA will be performed according to the technical-tactical performance variable to determine the dependency relationship with the RAE.

Results: Now the filming of all the games has been completed, the present study is in the data analysis phase. Once this phase is over, we hope to have obtained data regarding the possible influence of the RAE on the assignment of specific positions within elite level academy football. In addition, we will obtain further relevant information on whether the month of birth within a chronological year can influence the performance of technical-tactical capabilities analysed.

Discussion: Our results will make it possible to identify potential patterns that determine a player’s position within the formation of a game and if this depends on their month of birth. It is important to know if these variables are linked to the chronological and maturational development condition and the opportunities that the player will have to develop their sports talent and / or play a specific role or position within their team.

Our results will allow us to increase the knowledge of those responsible for elite level football academies with regards to factors that are manifesting, consciously or unconsciously, in the process of recruitment and selection of young players. Similarly, the interest of the selected variables in the identification of the level of tactical intelligence of the player will be valued.

Referencias:

Casal, C., & Arda, A. (2003). *Metodología de la enseñanza del fútbol*. Barcelona: Paidotribo.

Weineck, J. (2005). *Entrenamiento total*. Barcelona: Paidotribo