THE INFLUENCE OF OFFSIDE RULE ON SOCCER TACTICAL PERFORMANCE

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Introduction
In soccer (association football), the ability to avoid offside situations has been appointed as a factor that distinguishes players' positional roles (1) and match outcomes (2). However, research involving the study of the effect of the application of this law on players' tactical performance is apparently scarce. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine the influence of the application of the offside rule on players' tactical performance in small-sided games (SSGs).

Methods
The sample comprised 168 U-17 who performed 23,071 tactical actions. The instrument used was the System of Tactical Assessment in Soccer (FUT-SAT), which provides researchers with tactical performance data, through the Tactical Performance Index (TPI). Tests were conducted in a field of 36 m long by 27 m wide with the arrangement GK+3 vs. 3+GK, in two different situations. The first was designated as "Offside Rule On" and the second "Offside Rule Off". Wilcoxon's test was performed to examine differences in players' tactical performance between both situations (P<0.05).

Results & Discussion
Results showed significant differences with respect to overall (P=0.023) and offensive (P=0.007) tactical performance between "Offside Off" and "Offside On" situations. In "Offside On" situation players displayed lower overall and offensive TPIs in comparison with "Offside Off" situation, suggesting that the application of the offside rule during training sessions (especially SSGs) might be a helpful constraint to increase players' tactical performance, particularly when performing offensive actions.

Conclusion
It is concluded that the application of the offside rule influences tactical performance, mainly during the performance of offensive tactical principles.

References

Keywords: soccer, tactical performance, offside rule

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