Organization of Training

Lucia Valentino, Antonella Falco, Vincenzo D'Anzica, & Antonio Romano
University of Naples Parthenope

Abstract
In any sports activity, especially that of football, the coaching needs an effective and precise organization that knows how to take into account all the aspects influencing the state of form of individual athletes, and of the entire team.
The purpose of this research work is to investigate specifically an optimal organizational approach and the related phases and training techniques that characterize it.

Keywords: *Organization of Training, Training Phases, Speed, Endurance*

Introduction

Football players need optimal physical condition to cope with the physiological demands of the game, and to preserve their technical skills throughout the match. Therefore, physical preparation constitutes a fundamental part of the general training program.
However, the importance to be given to the athletic preparation depends on several factors, such as the player's qualities in other aspects of the game, and the work intensity during training sessions not specifically dedicated to the improvement of physical qualities.
The type of training and the total workload for each player must also be taken into account, particularly in top-level teams.
Each player, regardless of his or her game level, has an optimal training stimulus zone. This means that the player will benefit most by training in this zone, while he or she will not improve enough if falling below it, and will improve only marginally if training above it (overloading). When the overloading lasts for weeks, it can lead to a state of "overtraining", characterized by a marked decline in performance over a prolonged period of time. When planning physical preparation, the calendar of the competitive season must be taken into account, so that the year can be divided into pre-season, championship and mid-season break. In this work we will show which priorities have been assigned to the different exercises, and which are the objectives when planning athletic preparation in the pre-season and micro-cycle of training (competitive phase) in the professional and amateur categories. However, it is important to note that, in relation to the specific individual needs of the players within the team, these priorities may vary considerably. A coach or an athletic trainer should be able to adjust or modify an already scheduled training session at any time; it may happen, for example, that it is more appropriate to avoid intense training to allow players to recover both physically and mentally.

1. The main training phases

Pre-season phase

The term "pre-season" refers to the period of time between the last match of a season and the first match of the following one. This phase can be divided into two sub-phases: maintenance phase and rebuilding phase.
The maintenance phase is the period between the last match of the season just ended, and the restart of team training; the rebuilding phase, on the other hand, begins with team training (beginning, retreat, pre-season) and continues until the first match of the new season.

The duration of these phases varies according to the categories. For example, the maintenance phase for professionals lasts about 7/8 weeks, while the rebuilding phase lasts about 10 months.
In the case of amateurs, instead, the maintenance phase lasts about 13 weeks and the rebuilding phase about 8 months.
The maintenance phase is used to promote the mental recovery of the players, and therefore includes limited physical training, while the first month of the rebuilding phase focuses mainly on physical preparation, with particular regard to long-distance running and muscular endurance training.
At the beginning of the rebuilding phase, training is often very intense, since coaches want players to reach optimal condition at the beginning of the season. This partly explains the high rate of injuries that occur during this phase.
Subsequently, we will take a look at the basics on how to plan training during the pre-season phase.

Maintenance phase
The decline in physical condition that always occurs with the end of training and matches after the end of the season can be reduced by continuing to perform a certain amount of endurance training.
This will allow players to show up in good starting condition at the beginning of the pre-season. To help them relax mentally during this phase, part of the training could consist of ball games other than football (basketball and tennis, for example), or performing various activities that involve different technical gestures than football, such as swimming.
The number of sessions per week will depend on several factors: in the case of amateurs, for example, this may depend on the number of hours of work in one's profession and on the energy/mental expenditure that this determines on the individual, as well as on the number of "days off" they have available. Of course, totally different is the case for professional players, as they can dedicate themselves completely to this physical maintenance activity during their vacations.
Generally speaking, however, we could say that the number of sessions is between one and four, with the possible addition of further individual sessions.
In the month immediately preceding the rebuilding phase, the frequency of training should be increased to a minimum of two sessions per week.

2. Rebuilding phase
Training in the rebuilding period should consist primarily of exercises to be performed with the ball. This would ensure that the muscle groups usually used in the game of football are trained specifically, and would allow for the development of technical and tactical aspects under conditions requiring considerable physical effort.
As the championship draws near, the number of sessions should be gradually increased. In some categories, during the pre-season period, the game surface changes (for example, from dirt or synthetic fields to grass) with the real possibility of creating problems for the players, since the muscular-tendon system is stressed in a different way.
To reduce the risk of injury, the transition from one surface to another should be gradual.
During the rebuilding period, friendly matches can provide a good and appropriate form of physical conditioning, but they should not be held until players are physically ready to tackle a full match. Performing pre-season preparation is not easy, especially at the amateur level where the coach/athletic trainer must consider a number of factors, including:

- number of training sessions per week possible;
- players actually present in the first days of work;

- players who, showing up for various reasons, will have to perform differentiated work after a few days from the start;
- equipment and materials available;
- training schedules;
- the quality of the training ground;

Of course, these issues are not encountered in the professional environment, and if they are, it is to a very small degree and not as systematic as in the amateur sector.

3. Speed training

Among the objectives of this type of training we can primarily find that of improving the ability to perceive game situations which require immediate action (perception); improving the ability to take immediate action when necessary (evaluation and decision-making skills); improving the ability to generate strength quickly during high-intensity activities (speed of action).

During a match, players perform many activities that require strength development in a short period of time, such as sprints or quick changes of direction. Since these activities are decisive for the final outcome of a match, it is important to pay special attention to speed training.

In speed training, players should exercise at maximum performance for short periods of time (less than 10 seconds). The periods of break between sprints should be long enough to allow the muscles to recover almost completely, and thus to allow the player to perform maximally in the next repetition as well. Speed training should be provided in the first phase of the session when the athletes are not yet tired and, very importantly, it should be preceded by an adequate warm-up.

When an exercise aimed at speed training is performed for 5-10 seconds, speed endurance is also stimulated, as the body is forced to work under conditions that result in considerable lactate production. The greatest effect of this training is realized in favor of the production system using highly energetic phosphates.

Speed training should be accomplished by primarily reproducing game-like situations. This methodology is referred to as functional speed training, in view of the fact that one of the most important results to be achieved is to improve the players' ability to anticipate and react during different game situations. An example of "conventional" speed training is to perform sprints over fixed distances at the coach's command. While this improves the ability to produce energy through the anaerobic systems, it has little effect on the ability to react in game situations, since players must respond to inputs (such as a whistle) that are very different from the stimuli experienced during the game. In addition, during this type of training, those muscles that are engaged in other rapid movements in the game are not trained enough. Traditionally, conventional training has long been the predominant form of work to improve speed in the game of football: this is why players often associate speed training with sprinting without the ball.

Consequently, for psychological reasons, it may be necessary to periodically include this type of activity as well, despite the fact that the overall effects are not optimal for the game of football. However, the benefits could be enhanced through some tricks: for example, the bounce of a ball could be used as a starting signal. Some of the reasons that have made traditional speed training popular include the fact that it is easy to organize and its goals are well defined; functional speed training, on the other hand, requires more creativity and the coach must continually assess if the intended goals have been achieved. When choosing the type of functional training, the advantages of functional speed training are far superior to those of the conventional one.

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