Module 4. Statistical analysis, selection and presentation of information

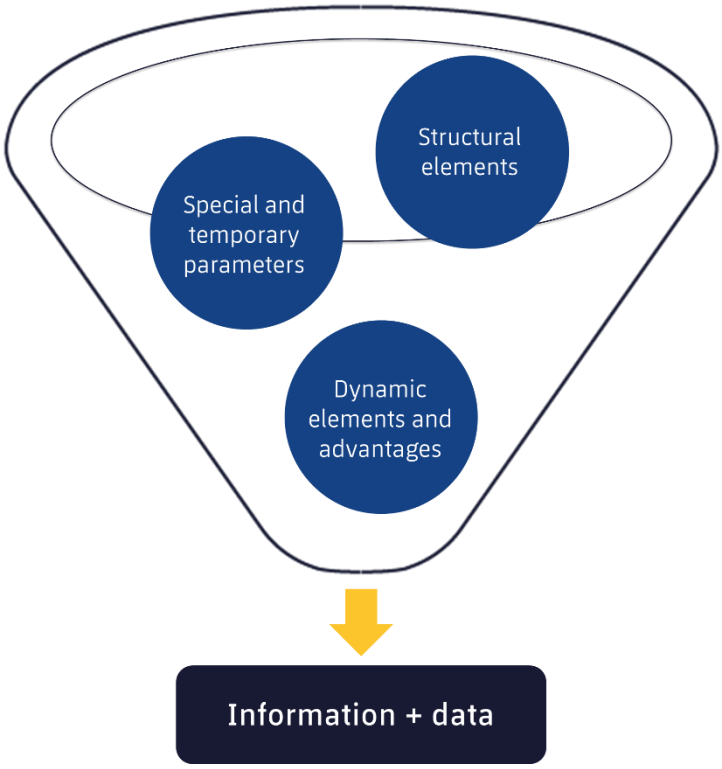
"What we see is not necessarily all that there is". (Taleb, 2007, p. 70).

"Complex thought is that which, presupposing uncertainty, is capable of establishing organisation. Its role consists of gathering, contextualising, and globalising, but at the same time, it is capable of recognising the singular, the individual and the concrete". (Gaiteiro, 2006, p. 155).

In the previous modules, we have studied the different game parameters and elements that help us obtain information for the specific analysis of the "build-up play phase".

In this module, the first objective will be to know the analysis tools available that allow us to collect information and data in order to understand how to filter and develop them so as to share them with staff and players in the most efficient way. Obviously, we will have to search those tools that allow us to obtain more information about the build-up play phase of the game.

Figure 1: Filter



Source: Own elaboration.

A possible filter will be to divide the information into **collective** and **individual** (in possession and non-possession of the ball), although, as we know, they are interrelated with each other. Then, we must ask the **correct questions**, that is, *what we are most interested in observing* in this game situation so that they can guide us in the information selection process.

> *"We are what we repeatedly do" (Aristotle).*

Available technological tools

The technologies available to football have evolved a lot in recent years, providing tools for the analysis of games and training sessions that allow us to evaluate elements of the game that were previously complex to observe and quantify.

In my opinion, the most important aspect will be to know the type of information and data that we acquire and to filter in the way that interests us the most. Many times, a large number of data can be irrelevant, and other times, a single piece of information can

be very important (Taleb; 2007, p. 76). It will always be the *interpretation* that we make to these data what will give us the qualitative factor we are looking for.

We can divide the data into two main types, which we will analyse below.

Ball event

It is a more quantitative analysis that gives us numbers and percentages regarding certain aspects of the game (individual or collective), mainly in possession of the ball (passes, dribbles, shots, etc.), without explaining why something has happened (lack of context). They provide information about the events that have occurred in very general terms.

We can find this information on different platforms such as Opta, Instat, WyScout or MediaCoach, or on technological instruments such as GPS. These allow us, for example, to know more physical parameters (such as total distances covered or accelerations) or to obtain data on specific events of one or more games.

Figure 2: A Ball event example: pass/effectiveness percentages

PASSES/EFFECTIVE	61/55	90%	36/34	94%	25/21	84%
For maintaining possession/effective	20/20	100%	12/12	100%	8/8	100%
For building-up play/effective	41/35	85%	24/22	92%	17/13	76%
For finishing/effective	-		-		-	
Forward/effective	27/23	85%	-		-	
Return/effective	1/1	100%	-		-	
To the right/effective	25/23	92%	-		-	
To the left/effective	8/8	100%	-		-	
To the box/accurate	3/1	33%	2/1	50%	1/0	0%
Crosses/effective	-		-		-	
Long/effective	6/4	67%	-		-	

Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

Nowadays, the range of specific information regarding the build-up play phase is very limited since most of the data focuses more on general game events (such as the percentage of possession or losses, the number of finishing moves, shots, chances created, etc.). Therefore, data must be collected from all this information that allows us to evaluate specific aspects of the build-up phase.

By manipulating the available data, we can find a way to investigate and generate *specific personal reports* of what we want to analyse, setting ourselves the reference parameters that we are interested in finding out.

For instance, we can collect data and statistics on:

- percentage of the types of the most executed build-up plays by some teams;
- percentage of effectiveness of one way of making a build-up play or another;
- percentage of preferential arrival zones on rival playing field;
- percentage of the players who participate the most in a certain type of build-up play;
- percentage of the block location of the teams defending the build-up play;
- spaces where the ball is most often played in the build-up play phase;
- spaces where the ball is most often lost in the build-up play phase;
- possible changes in the build-up play phase of a team playing home or away matches;
- time in which we play in our ZA or ZB during the build-up play;
- et cetera.

Tracking data

It is a more qualitative analysis that allows us to know and understand the dynamics of the game (the exact spatial location of the 22 players and the ball at all times).

We can visualise not only “what” but “why” something occurs or does not occur.

We will find out more relevant aspects of the build-up phase, many of which we have studied in previous modules such as the following.

- Where the goalkeeper preferentially goal-kicks.
- To whom the goalkeeper usually plays (long or short ball).
- What the preferential movements of distant players are in order to create spaces for their close companions (trajectories).
- If a team usually makes the rival move or keeps trying to progress along the same flank.
- The distribution of the team that allows increasing or not the probabilities of recovering in case of losses.

- The general distribution on the pitch.
- The preferential circulation zones of the team during the build-up play phase (field network).
- Modifications of the height of the own or rival team's block (centroid).
- Et cetera.

In this perspective, *tracking* data is helping analysts and coaches a lot to discover and forecast events, and they indisputably offer more qualitative information about what is happening on the pitch. The future of analysis depends mainly on this information.

I think it is essential to understand that any data and information can tell us something, and that we should not rule out anything *a priori* since each aspect has an interpretive value that, depending on how it is interpreted, will allow us to draw certain conclusions instead of others. In addition, manipulating and exchanging data will always be the best way to reach conclusions as realistic as possible regarding the reality of what is happening.

The most important question we have to ask so as to have a first filter is: what do we want to observe?

Collective information

Collective information - team in possession

First of all, we have to understand that players are immersed in ***networks of relationships***, which, in turn, are related to other networks with opposite intentions to achieve the same objectives.

From these multitudes of exchanges, an almost endless number of possibilities of interactions (behaviours) will raise, some of which will be random and others frequent.

Taking into account each *unique and one-time-only* situation, there are similar collective behaviours that bring about similar situations since the previous intentions may be the same; therefore, all of them will depend on the use and interpretation of the parameters and elements that we have previously studied.

We always observe the events, but never the rules (Taleb, 2007, p. 78).

Our job as analysts will be to identify these intentions and the modes that each team adopts to achieve them. We cannot analyse or evaluate everything since not everything is useful—we must know how to filter and find the truly important information.

We will analyse some of the questions we can make.

What is the preferential build-up play structure?

Identifying the different structures developed during the build-up play phase (see Module 2) will allow us to understand part of the general intentions of the team and identify possible advantages in contrast to the structure of the rival team.

What are the determining socio-affective relationships?

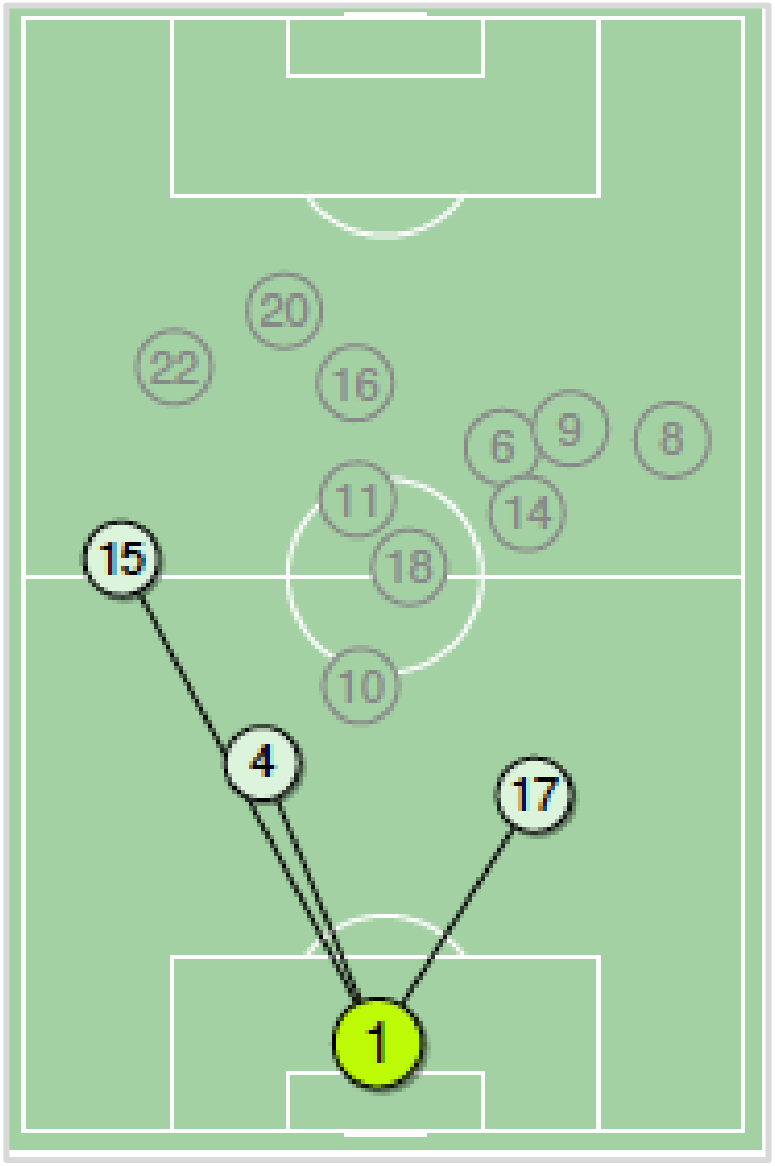
The concept of GHER (Groups of High Empathic Resonance) helps us. It allows us to identify the most repeated and effective relationships between certain players in specific game situations.

It is an essential observation parameter since it allows us to understand which connection networks are more frequent or not in players and, obviously, we can focus this parameter towards the game situation that interests us, in our case, during the build-up play phase.

By observing, we will not only know which connections occur more but how and when they arise, adding the qualitative factor to this information.

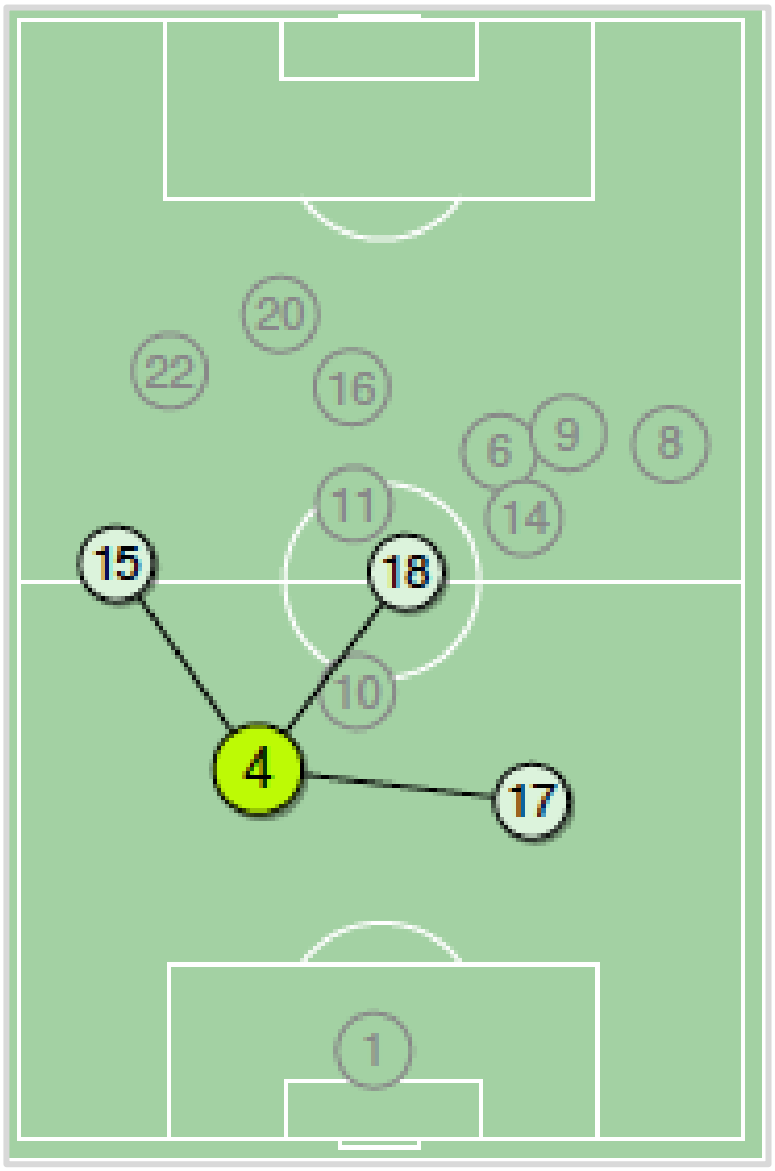
In the following image, we can see some graphs showing the most repeated interactions of a goalkeeper and a centre back during a game. Obviously, it offers a first glimpse of the most repeated relationships of some players during the build-up play phase, but the ***preferential mode*** of this relationship, the ***moment,*** and the ***situation*** in which it arises as well as the ***consequences*** it leads to in the game will need a deeper analysis.

Figure 3: Most repeated interactions of a goalkeeper in a game



Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

Figure 4: Most repeated interactions of a centre back in a game



Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

Consequently, we have to find out the ***efficient interactions*** that exist between the players—the opponent's build-up play is based on these since they will be the most important ones—and then identify the ***spaces*** where they want to put the ball so that the action has continuity.

The ***time factor*** will also be important since it will tell us if a team sets up certain organisations during different moments of the game, in specific games (less stable) or in a longer period of the season (more stable).

How does each team make their build-up phase? What collective intentions and regularities do they have? How do they try to move on the rival field?

We have seen that there are *3 modes* that teams can use to make a build-up play from the back, each with different nuances and with positive or negative aspects to consider.

Combined form

The team will try to build-up play and progress by making short passes, actively establishing rival disorganisation in order to propose playing.

Initially, the objective will be to attract the players from the rival front line of pressure so that they create spaces behind their backs that must be occupied and used.

Generally, a team can choose one of the following options.

1) *Moving outside*: moving forward with outside players (wingers or full backs) and with inside players (goalkeeper, centre backs, midfielders) who will have the function of circulating the ball, supporting the inside players, and attracting rivals from within.
2) *Moving inside:* looking for inside players to continue in the progression towards the rival playing field or force the rival team to close in order to make space outside.

In each of the moments of the game, we can ask ourselves about aspects that seem important to us when it comes to identifying and analysing the behaviour of a team in this phase of the game.

- BEFORE:
  - prior situation to combined game:
    - recovery in own/rival half – zone/flank;
    - possession in own/rival half – zone/flank;
    - previous SP.
  - rival block height;
  - goalkeeper situation/location (under pressure or free);
  - centre backs and full backs situation/location (under pressure or free);
  - relocation of near/far players (how they occupy spaces to favour and enable combined play).

- DURING:
  - players who usually start the build-up play (goalkeepers and centre backs);
  - importance and influence of the first line when having and supervising the game;
  - the number of players they need to "fill" the build-up play;
  - if the inside players tend to have high or low mobility (how they create spaces and give support);
  - if they tend to maintain their possession despite very high pressures from the rival;
  - possible preferential connections (GARE);

- how the players are relocated to favour the reception of a certain player and allow the action to continue;
- if they are patient or frantic in the circulation (if they usually change zone/flank based on the rival structure);
- if they tend to have a specific orientation (very vertical or not);
- through which zones they prefer to enter the rival playing field (and with which players);
- if they tend to gather players in the corridors to attract rivals and change the play.

- AFTER:
  - how the team is organised if it manages to keep possession:
    - occupied/attacked spaces;
    - more frequent interactions;
    - how players at the back and far players behave (they reduce space or not);
    - how nearby players behave (if they support the receiver or try to make use of the free space).
  - how the team organises if it loses the possession:
    - spaces left free;
    - how nearby players behave to recover the ball (pressure on rival possessor and close supports);
    - how far away players behave to retrieve the ball (how many players they leave behind under surveillance);

Mixed form

There are mainly two modes:

- attracting rivals previously with a prior short circulation and then playing a long ball;
- trying to reach the rival playing field with few passes.

We can identify many of the factors we are looking for in the combined and/or direct form.

Direct form

The team tries to reach the rival half as quickly as possible by directly getting away from the opponent's pressure with long passes.

We have to identify if a team plays directly because of their intention or because of a reaction to the pressure from the rival.

Our role will be to identify certain organisational factors, always related to the three moments in time.

- BEFORE:

- situation prior to direct play:
  - recovery in own/rival half – zone/flank;
  - possession in own/rival half – zone/flank.
- rival block height;
- goalkeeper situation/location (under pressure or free);
- centre backs and full backs situation/location (under pressure or free);
- relocation of near/far players (how they occupy spaces to favour and enable direct play).

- DURING:
  - who shoots (goalkeeper-centre backs):
    - preferential hitting type,
    - towards which spaces the ball is usually thrown (looking for a rival back or playing between the lines).
  - players who tend to receive the long balls;
  - how the players are relocated to favour the reception of a certain player and allow the continuity of the action.

- AFTER:
  - how the team is organised if it manages to keep possession:
    - occupied/attacked spaces;
    - more frequent interactions;
    - how players at the back and far players behave (they reduce space or not);
    - how nearby players behave (if they support the receiver or try to make use of the free space).
  - how the team organises if it loses the possession:
    - spaces left free;
    - how nearby players behave to recover the ball (pressure on rival possessor and close supports);
    - how far away players behave to retrieve the ball (how many players they leave behind under surveillance).

Using one or more of these forms throughout a game depends on different factors that can help us know other aspects.

Do they modify their behaviours or not? How do players respond and adapt to situations with and without space? Do they usually take risks? Where and when?

Knowing the adaptations that a team tends to make based on different tactical and emotional elements will be the qualitative factor that will help us better understand collective behaviours during the build-up phase.

Collective information - team in recovery

As in the possession phase, we are now going to identify one of the most important collective information that allow us to define the behaviour of a team defending the opponent's build-up play phase.

- BEFORE:
  - situation prior to direct play:
    - loss in own/rival half – zone/flank:
    - previous SP.

- DURING:
  - block height:
    - low block;
    - mid-block;
    - high block.
  - how they usually move and what their intentions without the ball are:
    - to protect space;
    - to recover the ball in advanced or distant areas;
    - to obstruct rival's build-up play or inhibit progression.
  - how they behave before short/long build-up play;
  - how many press lines the team forms;
  - moments of starting to press:
    - when the ball reaches the touchline;
    - when rivals play inside.
  - spaces that leave behind the first press line;
  - spaces they leave behind the defensive line;
  - if they usually mark man to man or zone inside;
  - if they tend to shift a lot to the side of the ball;
  - where they try to direct the rival possession;
  - which rivals usually let free or press.

- AFTER:
  - what they do once the ball is recovered (in own/rival half):
    - fast attack;
    - they ensure possession;

Individual information

"The new paradigm is not knowing your sport but knowing your athletes" (Seirul-lo Vargas, 2017).

Defining the characteristics of each player will allow us to extract other relevant information and integrate it with collective information in order to have a big idea ofthe team we evaluate.

Who are the determining and influencing players in this situation? How do they respond to situations with and without space?

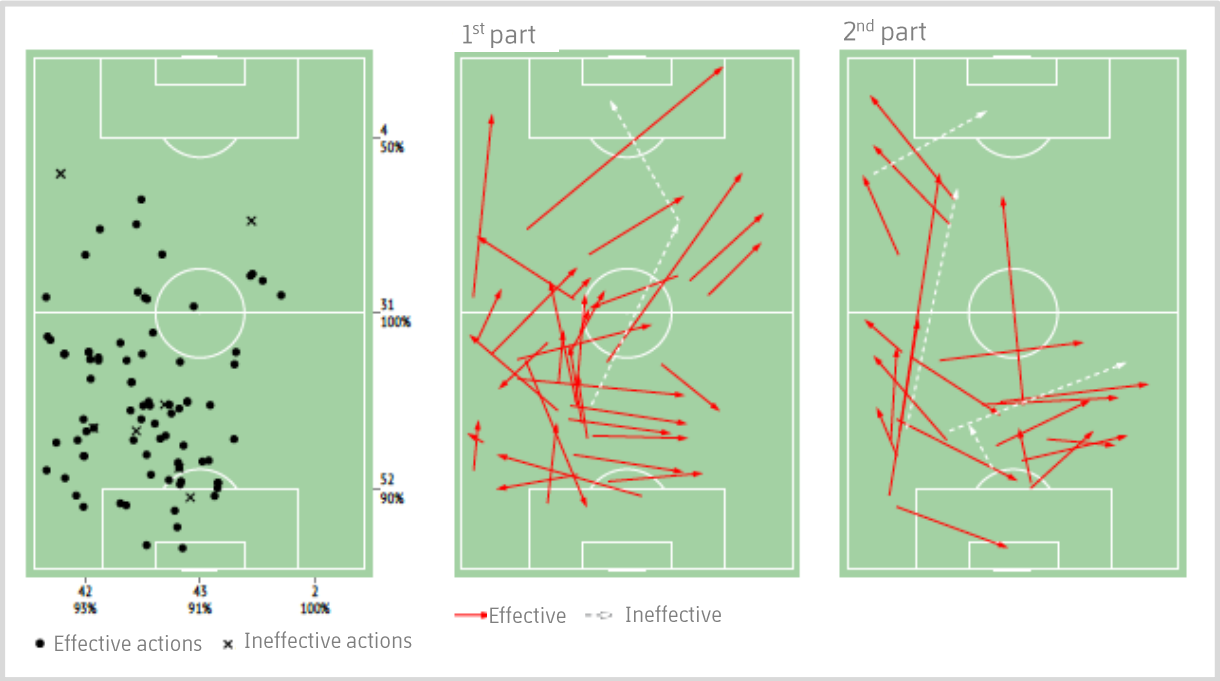
In relation to their individual capabilities, we can identify general parameters—devised by the club's methodology and analysis department—that will help us to better define players' individual behaviours.

Concept of PEA (Preferential Emergency Actions): motor actions that each player will perform preferentially with and without the ball to communicate with their teammates and deceive the rival.

It forms the set of individual habits that each player will have in their "backpack of experiences" due to their history as a footballer, and that they will be able to fill thanks to the adaptations that they will make in each context in which they find themselves, initiating their motor learning process.

For example, identifying if a centre back has a tendency to run with the ball to always attract the attention their direct opponent, or if they are used to always playing with the goalkeeper as soon as they are under pressure, allows us to understand one of the most adopted habits of such player in this specific game situation. This is true for both positive and negative factors.

Figure 5: Number, zone, and direction of passes by a centre back during a game

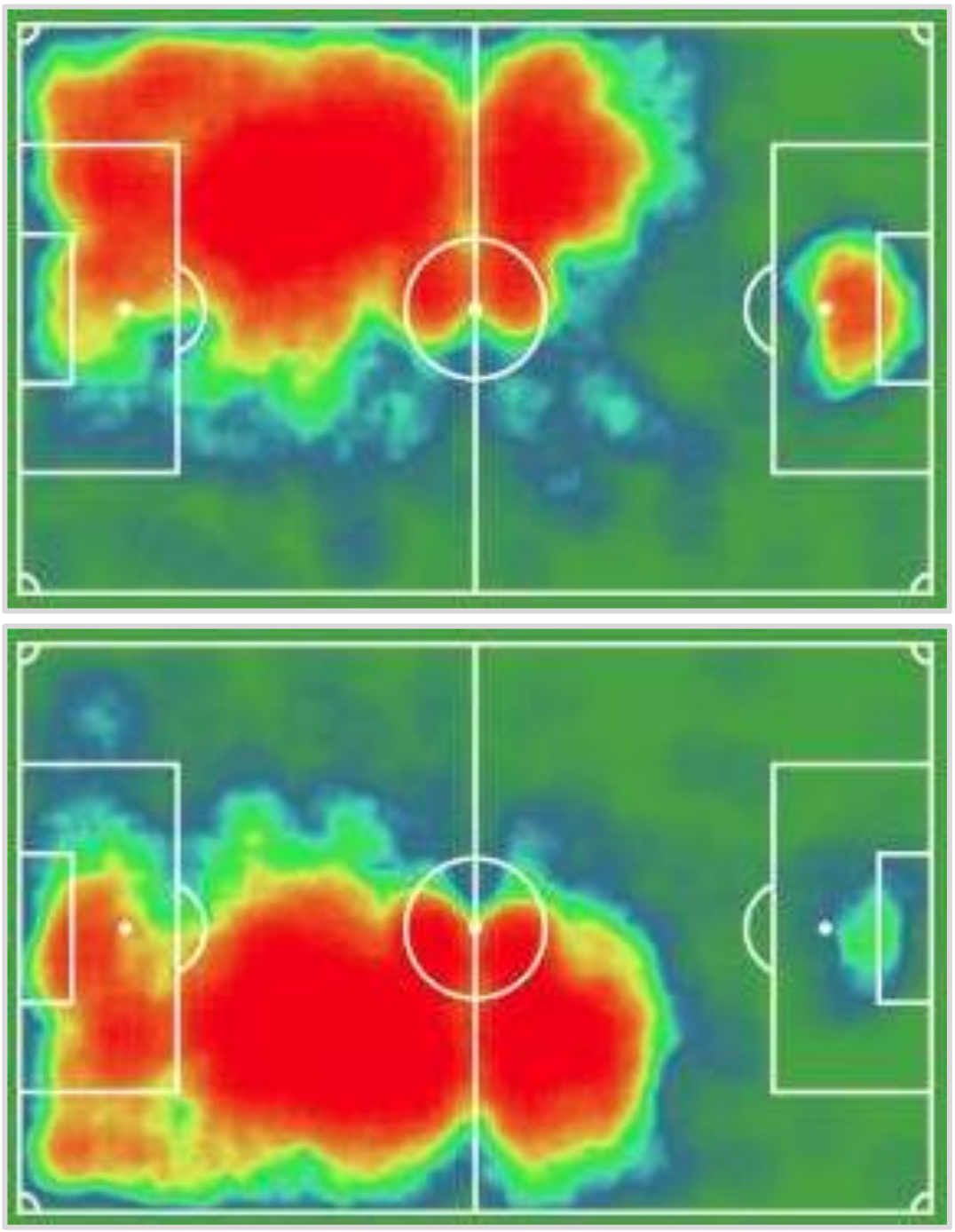


Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

Concept of ZAP (Preferential Action Zones): spaces of the playing field in which a player usually acts preferentially, interacting with teammates and rivals (it depends on their position, function, and individual characteristics).

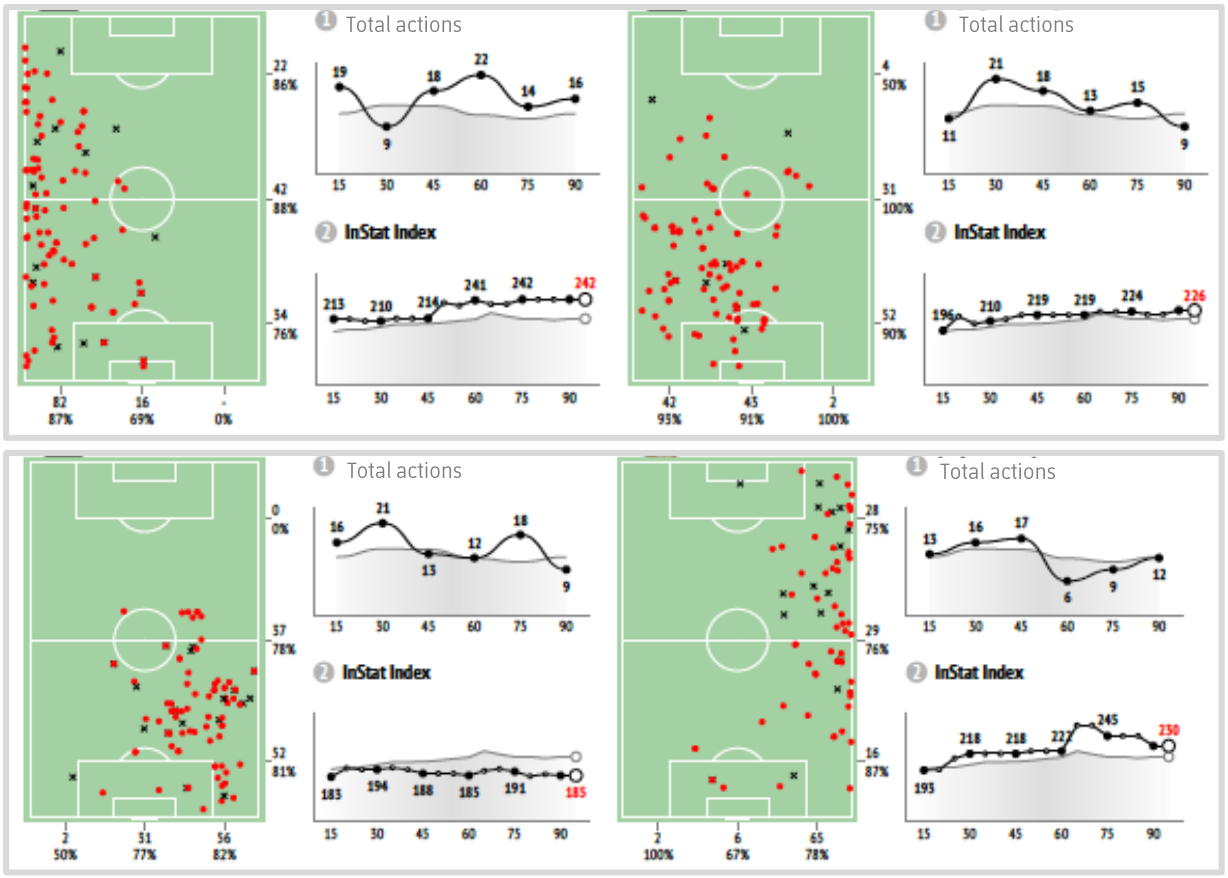
Within these zones, the player usually finds themselves in different situations (with or without the ball, under pressure or not, with the possibility of progressing or not and with few or many pass options, etc.) where their abilities will help them take the best decisions. Evaluating how they live and relate will give us a complete idea of their performance.

Figure 6: Heat maps representing the ZAP of S. Ramos and Piqué



Source: Caravaca, 2020.

Figure 7: Index of the total actions of some FCB women players in relation to their ZAP during a game.



Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

Each footballer is placed under a certain type of **pressure**, i.e., they relate and behave in different ways according to the different situations of proximity of the rival, depending on the space in which they are. Therefore, it will be essential, for example, to identify the players who have the most difficulty with the ball at the build-up play in order to decide which players to press and how and when to do it once they are in possession of the ball.

Individual information and team in possession

Much of the information we have in order to understand the behaviours in each player's possession phase refers to the individual interpretations and the use of the elements that we have analysed so far.
Here, I will share more specific information on the build-up phase, mainly related to the ***basics by position*** in order to facilitate the understanding of the concepts by the student.

Goalkeeper
As we have seen, the role of the goalkeeper is one of the roles that has suffered the most from the regulation changes and the tactical evolutions of the build-up play phase, always having more importance. They are the main *free player* of this phase and the constant support to their teammates, as well as being the first starter of the game in most cases.

- General characteristics:
  - ability to play with their feet;
  - ability to play with both legs (laterality);
  - ability to play under pressure.
- Characteristics of their movements (with feet and hands):
  - shot force, trajectories, and preferential zones
  - hitting flat, parabola, cross
  - preferential trajectories
    - if they usually play outside or inside
- Ability to analyse where superiorities are
  - short, medium, long space
  - to know to look before receiving
  - preference to play short or long balls.
  - tendency to change game orientation (play a pass from one area to another or try to play where the pressure is generated).
- Support movements (support to centre backs, where, when, etc.):
  - tendency to go out of the goal to give support (or more static)
  - whether they usually adapt support to the situation or not
- Controls (oriented)
- Dribbles
- Speed and precision in restarting the play.
- Communication skills with teammates

Centre backs
- Laterality (ability to play with their non-dominant leg).
- Know who of the centre backs often starts the build-up play.
- Preferential location:

    - if they increase width when the goalkeeper has the ball.
- Ability to dribble with the ball:
    - they usually take advantage of free spaces while dribbling with the ball;
    - they usually attract the attention or divide rivals (dribbling trajectories);
    - they usually take excessive risks.
- Ability to pass:
    - play under pressure;
    - deliver passes with advantages to their teammates;
    - filter passes that exceed lines (diagonally);
    - play long balls that give advantages;
    - preferential relations with receivers.
- Ability to control:
    - open control to change orientation;
    - closed control to attract or attract the attention rivals;
    - forward control to progress and gain height.
- How they behave under pressure:
    - they usually seek support from the goalkeeper;
    - they tend to throw long balls;
    - they usually try to progress on dribbling or passing.
- Whether or not they tend to seek support to give a way out to teammates under pressure.
- Be prepared for occasional losses:
    - locations and vigilance when the ball reaches the rival playing field.
- Ability to readjust their position in order to constantly offer support to teammates or close spaces thus "gathering" the team.

Full backs

- Laterality (ability to play with their non-dominant leg).
- Preferred locations during build-up play:
    - height with respect to the direct opponent;
    - ability to gain advantages outside;
    - to guarantee width.
- Be active in situations of orientation changes.
- Possible relationships with inside players:
    - give emergency support to pressured centre backs;
    - perceive themselves as a third man.
- Ability to control:
    - open/forward control to progress;
    - closed control to retain possession;
    - to know how to pause the game.
- Ability to dribble with the ball:

- to exceed lines;
- to attract the attention/divide.

- Ability to play under pressure:
  - ability to protect the ball.
- Possible locations and vigilance when the ball reaches the rival playing field.

Midfielders (Pivots and Inside Forwards)

- Laterality (ability to play with their non-dominant leg).
- Achieve positional superiority:
  - to locate themselves at different heights;
  - they tend to move closer to attract or to move away to attract the attention;
  - to guarantee depth;
  - to appear behind the back of the rivals.
- They establish numerical superiorities with first line:
  - who usually joins the line;
  - where they usually join the line and when;
  - ability to balance spaces in inside play;
  - they tend to be close to forwards to win second play;
- Perceive themselves as a second or third man.
- Types of passes in change of orientation.
- Preferential relations with receivers.
- They tend to take risks and have a lot of freedom while performing a manoeuvre.
- Behaviours in rival high-density zones:
  - ability to protect the ball under pressure;
  - ability to receive in intermediate zones;
  - ability to play 1-2 touches.

Wingers

- Preferential location:
  - They tend to increase width or are located in central flanks to establish superiority on the inside (they alternate their locations or not);
  - they usually attract the attention full backs or central-full backs.
- Alternation in the game:
  - they usually receive between the lines;
  - they tend to detach behind the rival defensive line.

Forwards

- They guarantee depth to the team:
  - They attract the attention rivals or not;
  - reference in direct play (who).

- Ability to receive long balls.
- How they move:
  - to receive balls between lines;
  - to receive balls directly to the opponent's back;
  - to create space for teammates.
- Ability to play facing the rival/protect the ball to ensure possession or wait for help.
- Alternation in the game:
  - they usually receive between the lines;
  - they tend to detach behind the rival defensive line.

Individual information and team in recovery

Forwards

- If they have a defensive attitude (they feel like the first player of the team that recovers the ball).
- If they tend to press the goalkeeper: identify the trajectory and orientation of the pressing.
- How they block passes and progression of the centre backs:
  - if they try to avoid orientation changes.
- How they adjust the cross *timing* (identify press start – timing/cross).
- Identify distances and defensive movements of the strikers.
- How they behave once overcome:
  - whether they continue or stop;
  - to locate themselves to be prepared for a counter-attack.

Wingers

- If they have a defensive attitude (they feel like the first player of the team that recovers the ball in this phase).
- If they usually close spaces in centre flanks or not.
- How they adjust the cross *timing* (identify press start – timing/cross):
  - if they know how to time.
- How they block passes and progression of the centre backs and full backs:
  - if they try to avoid orientation changes.
- Whether or not they chase their mark (e.g., full back).
- How they behave once overcome:
  - whether they continue or stop;
  - to locate themselves to be prepared for a counter-attack.

Midfielders (Pivots and Inside forwards)

- If they tend to chase opposing midfielders creating space behind their backs.
- If they tend to defend in zone:

    - towards where they orient the rival game;
    - if and how they give coverage to close teammates who jump to the press;
    - when they usually jump to press (*timing*);
    - if they jump to the first rival line;
    - how they position themselves against long balls.
- Individual aerial challenge capacity:
    - how they try to close inside pass lines.
- If they tend to relocate and go back to win the second play once overcome.
- If they usually follow the opponent once overcome.

Full backs

- How they balance the team if the ball is in the opposite flank.
- If they have the ability to know the intentions of distant rivals:
    - ability to adapt body shape and position.
- Ability to monitor their pair (physical and visual contact of the ball and the rival).
- Ability to adjust cross *timing* to get closer to their pair as a potential receiver.
- Aerial challenge capacity to clear:
    - ball drop zones after clearance.
- Communication with their close teammates.
- Ability to return if overcome.

Centre backs

- Ability to monitor their pair (physical and visual contact of the ball and the rival).
- Ability to guide rival forwards where they want.
- Ability to balance and compensate line imbalances:
    - ability to turn quickly if overcome.
- If they usually keep distance with the midfielders line.
- If they usually give coverage to jumping teammates.
- Anticipation capacity (cross *timing*).
- Aerial challenge capacity to clear:
    - ball drop zones after clearance:
    - if they usually keep on providing continuity to the play.

Goalkeeper

The goalkeeper's location in the recovery phase during the build-up play of the rival game will depend on the position and situation of the ball.

- Location before rival build-up play phase:
    - if it is combined;
    - if it is direct (if they usually try to anticipate leaving the box).
- Ability to communicate with close/distant teammates.
- Comfort in different areas of the playing field.

- Ability to relate to close teammates
- Communication skills with teammates

Preparing reports

Of all the information we receive, we have to differentiate two categories: quantitative information and qualitative information.

The union of these two categories will allow us to obtain a general and complete knowledge that we can transmit to the staff and the players. How we organise this information will be very important to make a report that is as clear as possible. We can find different ways to organise them according to our needs. There are two types of general reports:

- own team report (written and through a video):
  - collective;
  - individual.
- rival teams report (written and through a video):
  - collective;
  - individual.

Obviously, depending on the objective of the course, we will focus on structuring only the information about the build-up play phase of the game, both collectively and individually.

Collective report

The collective reports (of the own team and of the rival team) can be made up of a written part accompanying the video. The most important thing is that the two parts will obviously have to follow the same pattern and order, seeking to clarify those aspects that will be more important when evaluating the build-up phase.

Of course, there may be differences in the structure of your own report and that of your rival, depending on the organisation that the staff and your analyst believe is better.

Here, there is table showing a smooth organisation that allows ordering the information of a collective report. The names used are the most common ones in order to facilitate understanding, but everyone can choose the nomenclature, division, and order that they think is most convenient in their work organisation.

Table 1: General structure of the report

Game dynamic analysis of team "x"	
Possession phase	**Fase de recuperación**
General structure	General structure
Organised attack **Build-up play** Progression Finishing	Organised defence **Press start** Defence progression Defence finishing
Offensive transition	Defensive transition
Offensive SP	Defensive SP

Source: Own elaboration.

In the following table, there are more detailed aspects that must be taken into account in the build-up play phase, separating the different moments in both game situations.

Table 2: Specific elaboration of the build-up phase

Build-up play phase evaluation of team "x"	
Possession phase	**Recovery phase**
Game system(s)	
Structure + possession in goal kick Structure + possession in build-up play. Mode. Combined style – mixed – direct. More repeated connections. Most used spaces. ... (before – during – after). Positive aspects. Negative aspects.	Structure + possession in rival goal kick Structure + possession in rival build-up play Mode. In high - mid - low or altered block. Moment of the pressure Where they tend to guide rival circulation Spaces that they leave free... (before – during – after) Positive aspects Negative aspects

Source: Own elaboration.

The trends that will be selected are the ones that, throughout the games we watch, we believe are most important when analysing the rival build-up play phase. Needless to say,

the selection of the games will be fundamental since it will be better to look for confrontations that somehow recreate the context that we will find in the game. For instance, if our team is used to pressing very high on the centre backs of the rival team, it will be necessary to analyse games where the rival faces similar situations. Analysing different situations (e.g., against teams defending low blocks) will not allow us to fully understand the behaviours that we are likely to observe in that game. Another aspect to take into account is to focus on the alternatives, but first we have to focus on what we want to cause in the rival.

For organisational reasons, the structure of the video report (as well as the written one) will be developed as follows: in the first place, we will teach all those aspects that we believe will probably appear in the game we are going to play (main habits) as well as those aspects that have been covered the majority of the times, and then, those variants that the rival team has used in the last games. This obviously applies to both phases of the game.

In order to better understand the dynamics of the team, videos should show the previous moment and the continuation or the moment of the action in which we want to put focus. In this way, we will understand the consequences that certain collective behaviours have and how to deal with them. This will help the player to remember the information more since we have the ability to better remember the situations that have a meaning with respect to the information that is obtained successively. In order to make a decision, we require to focus more on consequences than probabilities.

To avoid a superficial and partial analysis, we must always take into account how certain random, abstract aspects that often have nothing to do with the game itself can affect the dynamics of the team and the game. This is part of the complexity of the game itself and, thus, its analysis.

Individual report

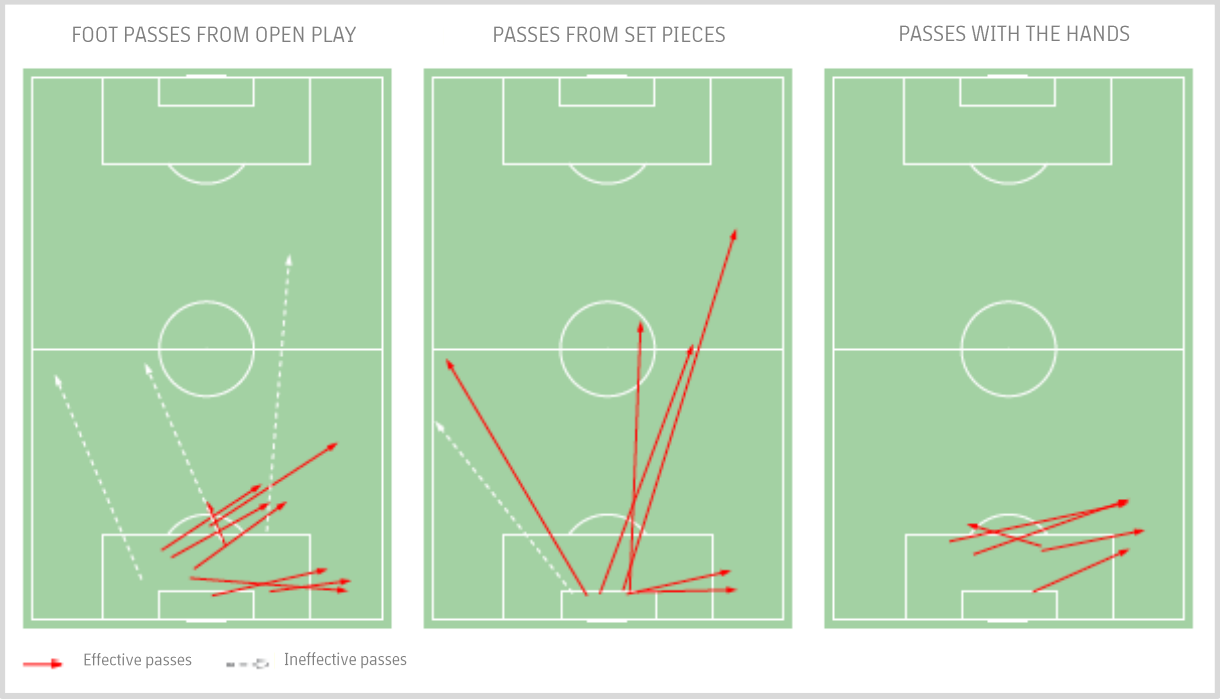
The preparation of an individual report allows us to identify characteristics of the players we evaluate, identifying occasional aspects to be taken into account–positive or negative– in the section of the build-up play phase.

We can include images or individual statistics in the reports that will help us focus on certain aspects more in depth.

In the following image, we can see the passes that a goalkeeper has made during a game and thus obtain general information about their performance during the build-up play phase.

Without a doubt, the video images will be the ones that will convey qualitative details to comprehend the situation and the modes in which these passes were made, as well as the intentions of the player.

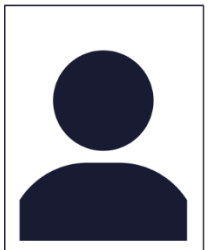
Figure 8: Effective/ineffective passes made by a goalkeeper during a game

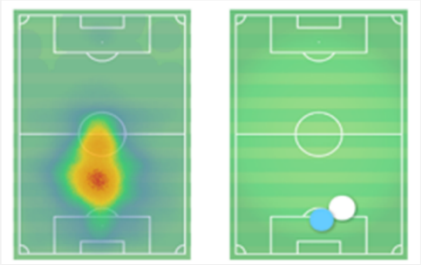


Source: Own elaboration based on the software Instat (Ivanskiy, 2020).

We can compile individual records where we can include information about the individual characteristics of each player such as positive and negative aspects. Here are some examples.

Figure 9: Example of individual player profile

Team									
	Name and surname		Height						
	Nationality		Weight						
	Year		Laterality						
	Number		Games		Starting line-up		Reserve		Goals	

Main position	
Secondary position	
System 1-5-3-2 / 1-4-3-1-2	General characteristics
	
	Positive aspects
	Negative aspects
Post-game observations	

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 10: Example of individual squad profile

Source: Own elaboration.

As in the collective reports, the individual report will follow the order of the selected players and, especially, the order of the important aspects to take into account for each of the players in the two phases of the game.

Regarding the information on the build-up play phase, as we have seen so far, each player will take their role, so it will be crucial to put more focus on those players that we believe are important (positively and negatively) during that phase.

The objective of this analysis is to identify those individual behaviours on which a team tends to base its build-up play and also to identify the negative behaviours that tend to complicate such an organisation.

In every game situation, there are always some players who participate more than others. Therefore, the first objective will be to identify them and know their preferential

behaviours during this phase, perhaps analysing games similar to the context we are going to face in the same way it was done for the collective report.

Due to lack of time, work tools or staff organisation, a more specific and individual section on the most unbalancing players could be included in a collective report, in order to link it directly to the individual report.

In relation to own reports, there are different possibilities of structure:

- collective/individual post-game report;
- accumulated collective/individual report.

By always considering the time available and, above all, the tools that a team analyst can use, collective and individual reports can be prepared **after each game**, analysing in a more specific way aspects (in this case specific to the build-up play phase) that have been positive or negative of the game just played.

The **accumulated** collective/individual report will be a sum of different parameters and studies throughout the season (we can do it by competition, every 5 games, against rivals with a specific structure, at home or away, etc.). They will deliver the evolution of the team (or a single player) toward a certain aspect of the game, and at what point we are in the development of certain behaviours (collective and individual). Showing these data and studies to the players (complete team, groups or individually) will be a subsequent tool that we can use in the growth and optimisation process.

Evaluation of training sessions

In my opinion, analysing a training session is essential to understand what aspects of a team or a player can be improved and optimised, although it is often not considered as relevant as a game analysis.

If we understand training as the time in which the elements of the game that we want to include as habits so as to cultivate them during the game are repeated and practised the most, I think it will be essential to start investigating and producing reports that allow us to obtain data and information to make decisions from a collective and individual point of view.

Below, there are some very basic examples of possible reports that we can generate to control and evaluate the training process, taking into account more general aspects first,

and then a specific analysis of the build-up phase. This can be done from two points of view.

Quantitative training analysis: it allows us to collect statistics and numbers to control the percentage of practice of certain tasks instead of others.

In this section, we will focus on identifying the percentages of tasks that will allow us to practice micro and macro elements of the build-up phase, in a general or more specific way.

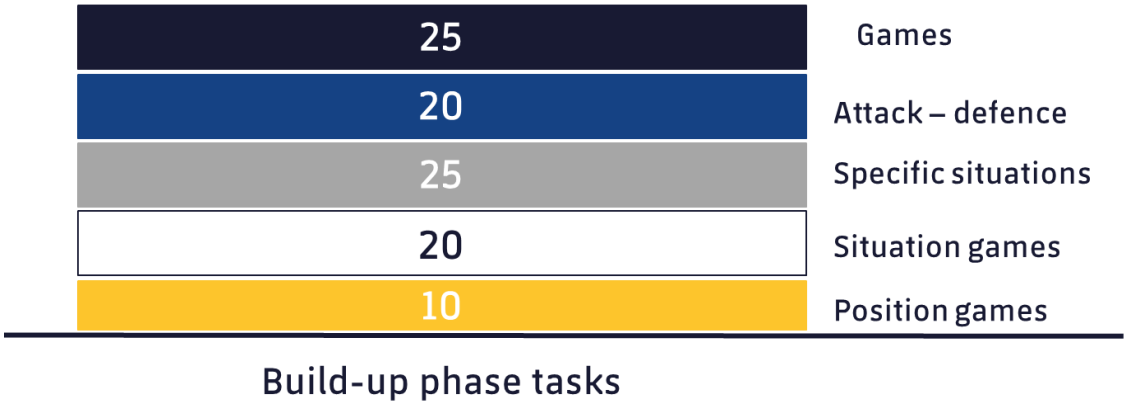
- Short term (training session):
  - times a player "x" participates in the build-up play phase;
  - pairings – rotations.

- Medium – long term (micro-cycle – season):
  - percentage of specific tasks of the build-up phase;
  - percentage of structures and modes adopted;
  - percentage of players who have participated more;
  - percentage of tasks performed in the build-up play phase (position games, matches);
  - percentage of individual/group/collective tasks;
  - percentage of tasks of an analytical/global/real nature;
  - percentage of tasks in numerical superiority/equality/inferiority.

Figure 11: Percentage of time devoted to train different phases of the game during a certain period of the season

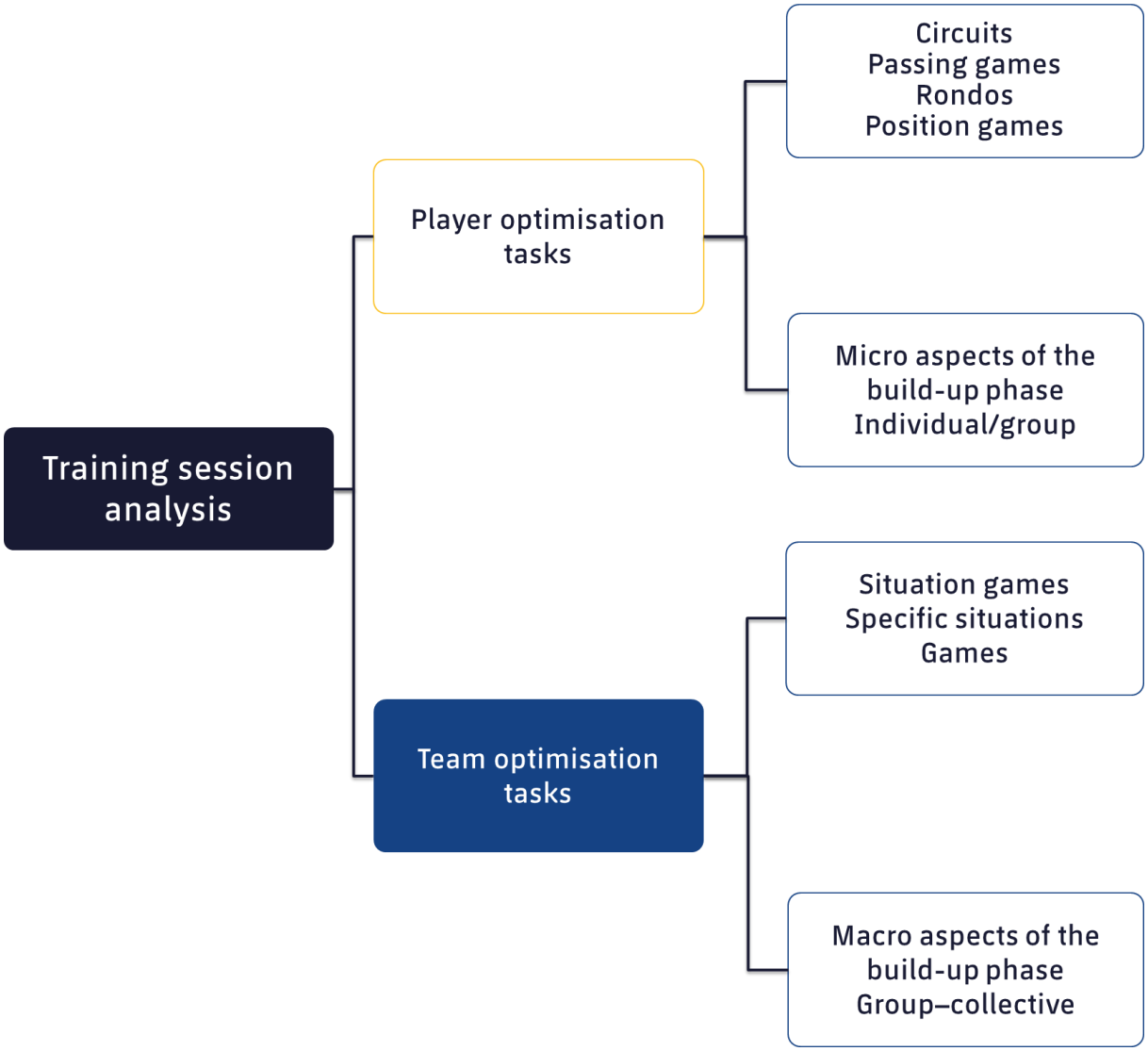
Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 12: Example of statistical analysis of the training sessions–percentage of tasks most performed to practice the build-up play phase



Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 13: Training tasks analysis



Source: Own elaboration.

Qualitative training analysis: it allows us, among other things, to:

- identify specific collective and individual behaviours of the build-up phase;
- know the influence on decision-making and on the behaviour of the players of some rules/constraints/instructions or of the structure of the task itself;
- understand the influence of the coach's intervention during the task.

It will be important to understand how some tasks–due to their structures and characteristics–allow us to practice certain aspects or elements of the game (in our case: of the build-up play phase) in certain dimensions.

For example, in a simple *game of position*, certain micro elements will be incorporated in a less complex context (such as body orientation, reactivity after the loss, the game with one or two touches, etc.) that will be useful for the players in different situations of the game. While in more complex tasks such as situation games or games, we will practice macro elements and more complex interaction with teammates and rivals.

I explain this aspect because, when evaluating a training session and its tasks, understanding what each exercise can offer us with respect to another will help us to find the most relevant information to know if that task is the most suitable to correct a certain element instead of other.

Images or videos of some tasks could be included in the pre-game report, for example, since they will reproduce exactly those behaviours that we believe are important to appear.

All the information collected will always need a careful evaluation and observation of the analysts so that it can be filtered, selected, organised, and finally taught in such a way that it is clear and direct.

Nowadays, I believe that, with all the technological means and the knowledge that we have available, the role of the analyst needs a change, or rather an evolution, becoming an “observer” who filters and interprets the information they gain, rather than a simple data collector. In this way, their participation changes more actively, always bearing in mind that everything can be evaluated, but not everything can be predicted.

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