



# **FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTING EVENTS PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION**

MODULE 3. A SPORTING  
EVENT, MUCH MORE  
THAN A GAME

**- CONMEBOL -  
EVOLUCIÓN**

## **3.1 A sporting event, much more than a match**

As presented in the previous topics of this module, the organization of a sporting event means much more than organizing a "simple" match, it goes far beyond the match day itself and what we see during an official broadcast or sitting from our seat in the stadium.

Thousands of professionals participate in a large event, involved and committed in every detail, seeking to offer the best possible service to players, coaches, referees, audience, suppliers, sponsors, commercial partners and all customers who are part of the process, before, during or after the event.

Figure 1



Source: own.

Countless hours of work during the planning and development phase are committed to delivering a well-organized and quality event, keeping our margin of error to a minimum.

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It is essential to create solid relationships that generate mutual trust. You will only perceive the importance of being in contact with all the people in the different operational areas in a fluid and efficient way. In this area, the prior definition of a clear work plan between all parties is essential to achieve the objectives set.

**It is essential to build understandable and effective processes.**

Figure 2



Source: own.

It is necessary to know all the tasks of each area and have well-organized information to be able to work strategically, use our resources efficiently, select priorities correctly and delegate different tasks and the responsibility for them. In this aspect, we must take into account the objectives we are pursuing, the profile of our audience, the available budget, as well as all the information that will set "the path" for our next steps.

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- Work with strategy
- Count on good vendors (generally "cheap is expensive", evaluate several aspects, price, quality, delivery times, market references, etc.).
- Develop a schedule of deadlines and establish mechanisms to follow up on them.
- Maintain a healthy relationship with your work team.
- Invest in technology and communication
- Efficiently control access and know your customers in depth
- Share knowledge and train your team, transmit the passion for the event in every moment, every task is important.
- Respect your budget, keep a close eye on it.
- Select the date of the event wisely and strategically
- Value your time and don't leave things to the last minute.
- Listen and learn from feedbacks, both from your customers and your employees.

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Figure 3



Source: own.

Figure 4



Source: own.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTING EVENTS PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Starting with the next module, we will show you more details about the operations of each of the main areas involved in the organization of a sporting event. We will know in detail everything that happens "behind the scenes", while the spectator is enjoying the preview, or the match itself, watching the good moves of the players on the field, and even afterwards, returning home happy for the victory or sad for the defeat of his team.

**Take note, let's keep exploring together this factory of dreams and hard work that are the events!**

### 3.2 Single Finals of CONMEBOL Libertadores 2019 - CONMEBOL Sudamericana 2019

Figure 5



Source: own.

In this section, students will be able to appreciate as an audiovisual complement, with the unique seal that tournaments in South America have, the preparation, its people and the particularity of the fans, as well as various exclusive testimonies of the organizers and

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authorities of CONMEBOL, the documentaries of the CONMEBOL Libertadores and Sudamericana 2019 Single Finals.

Then, as a fundamental part of our post-event stage, regardless of the magnitude of the event, it is important to carry out a detailed statistical analysis of the figures obtained, to obtain the "picture" of the reality, to share among all stakeholders, as well as internally, in order to make important decisions for our next events.

As a practical example, we attach some of the numbers obtained in the CONMEBOL Libertadores and CONMEBOL Sudamericana 2019 Single Finals.

Figure 6

### Final CONMEBOL Libertadores Lima 2019 (in numbers)

**Economic impact: US\$62MM approx.**

- +45k visitors;
- average cost per person: \$760 (without considering international transportation);
- 96% affirm that their visit was motivated by the final of the Conmebol Libertadores;
- 84% visit Peru for the first time;
- 19% took the opportunity to visit other places in the country (such as historical points of Lima, Cusco - Machu Picchu and Ica - Paracas);
- from November 20 to 24, an occupancy rate of more than 93% of the 5, 4 and 3 star hotels in Lima was reached.

## Final CONMEBOL Libertadores Asunción 2019 (in numbers)

**Economic impact: US\$8MM approx.**

- +40k visitors;
- security operation with a total of 6,000 troops;
- 26-camera plan (4K);
- 1,200m<sup>2</sup> TV Compound;
- 7 mobile transmission units;
- transmission with a reach of 124 countries;
- 100% occupancy of the hotel network.

Source: own elaboration.

For more information about our events, you can watch the following documentaries that will be very useful:

- CONMEBOL (n.d.). *A final that transcended the world of football, the CONMEBOL South American Final* [Youtube]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/nRWoUbzvJS4>
- CONMEBOL (n.d.). *The story behind the first CONMEBOL Libertadores Single Final* [Youtube]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/8WS852oYYJs>

### **3.3 Social and environmental responsibility**

#### Social Responsibility

CONMEBOL Evolution

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Sporting events have proven to be exponential tools for working on social responsibility issues in recent years. Certainly, we can use the spaces of these events to develop awareness issues and raise causes that need visibility.

CONMEBOL as a continental institution and having as members the Federations / Confederations of each of the 10 South American countries, strengthens since 2017 projects for the development and training of grassroots and professional athletes, involved in all activities and tournaments proposed by the CONMEBOL EVOLUTION program.

CONMEBOL Evolution aims to promote football in a spirit of peace, understanding and fair play, ensuring that there is no discrimination against an individual or group of people for political reasons, gender, religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation or any other reason.

All projects also consider environmental aspects, using resources in a responsible manner and always seeking to reduce possible ecological consequences.

**The Evolution program has two key management areas:  
Sports management: through the use of its funds to carry out competitions aimed at the development of football and its future projection.**

**Social management: through investment in the training and education of trainers, educating the new generation of football players, inspiring and transforming the lives of people who love football in South America.**

### Development Direction - CONMEBOL

In 2017, the Development Department launched the Evolution Program, through which, for the first time in the history of CONMEBOL, it has been promoting an inclusive strategy that seeks to enhance the capabilities of all players in South American football, working on the future of new generations, creating opportunities, overcoming cultural barriers for the development, growth and consolidation of grassroots football, women's football, futsal and beach football in all communities in South America, inspiring to #CreerEnGrande.

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The Evolution program allows the allocation of economic contributions from FIFA and CONMEBOL for financial and technical assistance to the 10 CONMEBOL Member Associations, identifying their needs, financing and monitoring projects in training, infrastructure, competitions, refereeing, subsidies, governance and sports management.

Figure 7



Source: own elaboration.

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Figure 8



Source: own.

### Combating Racism

FIFA, the leading football federation, has long understood the importance of providing social and environmental responsibility actions in its tournament regulations. The first resolution passed and included in its code of conduct took place in 1960 and addressed the issue of racial discrimination, condemning such acts and thus following the anti-apartheid demonstrations that were gradually emerging in South Africa.

Racial discrimination is still present today in the football environment and still needs to be addressed on a daily basis for there to be a common understanding where race and gender equality needs to be exalted within the sporting environment.

Racism, xenophobia and, in general, intolerance, are a form of violence that should have no place in society. Sports promote values such as mutual respect, tolerance, sportsmanship, and non-discrimination.

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### Gender Equality

The fight for gender equality in rights and opportunities has sports as one of its most important and powerful platforms, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), as leader of the Olympic Movement, has become one of the most important allies in recent years in the search for the greatest possible equality. A very important milestone was that at the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games, where for the first-time half of the athletes were women.

A football camp in Jordan sows seeds of friendship and cohesion.

For Syrian refugees in Jordan, integration into Jordanian society is fraught with challenges. Mistrust and rumor cloud one group's perception of the other. A UN Women project organized a series of football camps for adolescent girls, where Jordanian and Syrian girls enjoy friendship and social cohesion.

Figure 9: UN Women/Christopher Herwig



Source: UN Women, <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2016/09/anotar-puntos-para-la-igualdad>

In the following video, you can see a reference to this situation in Jordan:

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UN Women (July 21, 2016). *Football helps integrate Syrian refugees in Jordan* [Youtube]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/M1AOd2SHicU>

Another example is shown by UN Women in South Africa, which seeks to change the game for girls. Watch the video:

UN Women (22 July 2016). *Changing the game for girls in South Africa* [Youtube]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/X-Q0kIVhSt4>

In Pakistan, football defeats gender stereotypes.

In 2014 Hajra Khan became the first Pakistani female football player to sign a contract to play overseas in the Maldives National Women's League. This is no small triumph, in a society where gender stereotypes and cultural barriers prevent girls participating in football.

Figure 10: Atif Mansoor Kahn

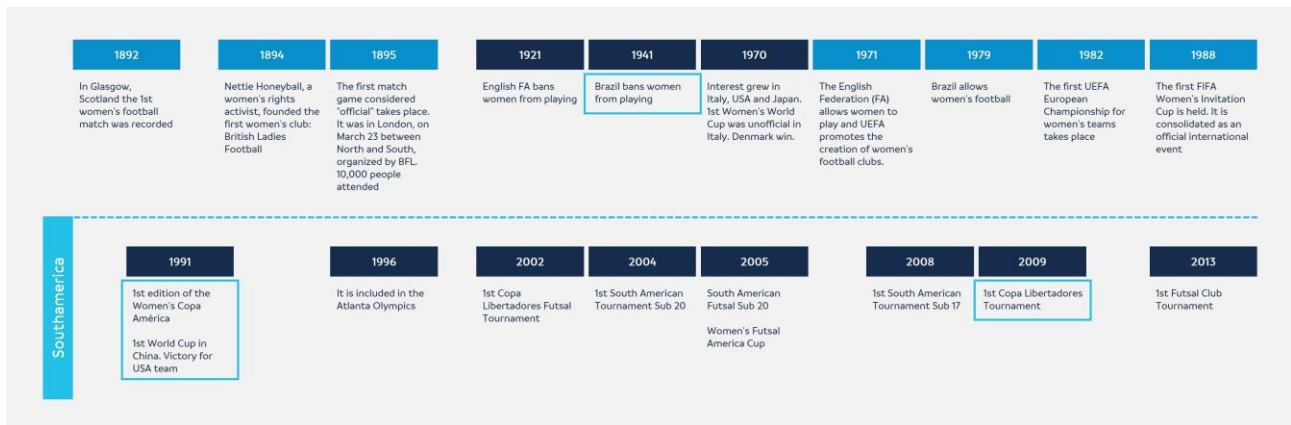


Source: UN Women, <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2016/09/anotar-puntos-para-la-igualdad>

Women's football in South America

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Figure 11



Source: own elaboration.

## Women at the Olympic Games

The introduction of women in each discipline has been long in the making: starting in Paris 1900 with tennis and golf and ending in 2012 with boxing. Women account for more than 50 percent of the participating athletes in triathlon, table tennis and badminton. Gymnastics, synchronized swimming and softball are sports in which only women have participated.

It was in Amsterdam, in 1928, where the true Olympic beginnings of women took place, with nearly 300 athletes, almost 10 percent of the total, and, above all, being able to participate in the king of sports: athletics.

## The first medalist

British tennis player Charlotte Cooper was the first woman to win a gold medal at the Paris 1900 Games.

## Exclusive sports

The London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympic Games were the first to stop having men-only sports.

## Gradual growth

The growth in women's participation in 1976 was 20 percent; in 1988, 25 percent; and 35 percent at the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games. In Tokyo 2020 (moved to 2021) there is talk that there will be 48 percent of female athletes among the competitors.

## Environmental Responsibility

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## Sustainability in high-impact events

A catalytic event in the field of sustainability was ECO-92, a meeting organized by the UN with the participation of government representatives from 178 countries, over 400 NGOs and approximately 17,000 spectators.

The Conference was the opportunity to adopt a program of action for the 21st century, taking into account issues related to health, housing, air pollution, management of seas, forests and mountains, desertification, management of water resources and sanitation, management of agriculture, waste management. The program was a reference for the beginning of the application of the sustainable concept in mega events.

This concept is based on the principle of sustainability of human activities required to meet basic and supplementary needs (quality of life), with elements such as minimum emissions, good production and operating practices, adequate management and use of by-products and waste, reduction in the use of resources, etc. In this way, we see that sustainable development is not by itself a sociological element, but it must be part of a fabric in which production, economy, welfare and environment always play on the same side.

Since this first period, sustainable practices adopted by organizers of mega-sporting events have become more formalized. The IOC came before FIFA in this regard, taking the lead in 1994 when it recognized the fundamental role of environmental and sustainable development. In 1996, an environmental protection clause was added to the Olympic Charter; this indicated that the IOC's role was to "encourage and support responsible concern for environmental issues, promote sustainable development in sport and require that the Olympic Games be held accordingly." (IOC, 2013, p. 16).

The massive costs associated with hosting an event such as the World Cup were often justified in the past by the economic and social benefits the event is expected to bring to the host nation (Varrell and Kennedy, 2011). Today, sustainable environmental development is also a central pillar in promoting bids for these events. However, while experience and expertise in environmentally sustainable practices and strategy development has increased, the monitoring of these policies in practice by event governing bodies such as FIFA and the IOC has been far from comprehensive.

The first FIFA World Cup with a sustainability agenda was Germany 2006, with the implementation of the Green Goal Program, aimed at minimizing the adverse effects on the environment associated with the World Cup. Green Goal was an integral part of the planning and organization of the event and made a significant contribution towards the "sustainable legacy" of that World Cup (FIFA, 2010, p. 9).

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Since then, FIFA has been working on a plan to achieve its mission to build a better future by challenging the negative environmental and social impact of football (Neirotti et al., 2011). Football for the Planet is a continuation of the environmental initiatives that have been implemented for FIFA competitions since the 2006 World Cup and aims to minimize the negative impact of its activities and tournaments on the environment (FIFA, 2014). Key focus areas of the program include waste, energy, transport, procurement and climate change. FIFA has developed a straightforward and concise strategy divided into five main areas (FIFA 2014):

- **People:** providing a safe and healthy work environment for all its people.
- **The game:** ensuring that the game of football reflects the highest values of society. Through its regulations and actions on and off the field. FIFA fights against negative influences on the game and ensures that fundamental values are respected.
- **Events:** organized tournaments and events act as exceptional platforms to raise awareness, highlight particular issues and implement projects and campaigns on the ground.
- **Society:** provides football-related resources and engages with its member associations, commercial affiliates, development agencies and others to bring more resources and expertise to the grassroots level.
- **The planet:** addressing issues such as global warming, environmental conservation and sustainable management. Engage with stakeholders and other institutions to find sensible ways to address environmental issues and mitigate negative environmental impacts linked to their activities.

In addition to the strategy described above, other sustainability programs were designed for the 2010 and 2014 World Cups. An overview of these programs can be found at [www.fifa.com/what-we-do/sustainability/](http://www.fifa.com/what-we-do/sustainability/).

## Sustainability at the heart of the Olympic Agenda 2020 (2021)

In line with its recommendations, the IOC is working to ensure that sustainability principles are incorporated into its activities as an organization, as owner of the Olympic Games and as leader of the Olympic Movement.

All future editions of the Olympic Games have pledged to be carbon neutral.

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The organization's estimated carbon emissions between 2017 and 2020, approximately 250 Kt, have already been offset. The IOC's new headquarters in Lausanne, the Olympic House, is one of the most sustainable buildings in the world. It is mainly powered by renewable energy.

In March 2020, it was announced that, as of 2030, all editions of the Olympic Games will be "climate positive". The benefits they create for the climate will outweigh their impact. Host cities will be required by contract with the IOC to minimize and offset their direct and indirect carbon emissions. They must also implement lasting zero-carbon solutions for the Olympic Games and maintain them as a legacy.

Before 2030, however, the Organizing Committees are already taking steps to reduce emissions and reduce their waste. Tokyo 2020 (moved to 2021) is expected to achieve carbon neutrality through a range of measures, including renewable energy and zero-emission vehicles. Paris 2024 has built its entire Games concept around sustainability, aiming to build only one sports venue and reduce overall carbon emissions by 50 percent compared to previous Games.

## Conclusion

To harness the potential of mega sporting events, it must be understood that cities, governments and institutions at state, national and international levels have an important role. In general, sporting events such as the World Cup create a significant impact on the environment and it is necessary for organizations in charge of developing large stadiums to address environmental and planning concerns thoroughly. In the coming years, the strategies of organizations such as FIFA will not only guide efforts to organize more sustainable events, but will ultimately contribute to building a better future for the nations that have the opportunity to host World Cups.

## 3.4 Post-event

### Legacy

Hosting a sporting event is a powerful catalyst for cities and countries to invest in the future, creating a lasting legacy of real value.

**Each host's legacy vision is different and must be aligned with the city's long-term development plans.**

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By identifying and committing to a legacy plan during the event planning phase, a city can achieve real change and the event can be the driver for defining priorities and accelerating long-term plans within the city.

The 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games are an excellent example of the city's legacy of infrastructure and renovation. It was said to be a city that lived "with its back to the sea", a characteristic that changed completely after the renovation of its Mediterranean coastal area, the construction of the Olympic Village and the new Olympic Port.

As well as Brazil and its countless tournaments organized since 2007, from the Pan American Games onwards, a legacy of knowledge has been generated as well as the emergence of elite professionals in the sports industry, who have learned and have been made part as a result of these events; many starting their careers in the Brazil 2014 World Cup, even as volunteers.

Within the concept of legacy, we can distinguish four types of legacy, which we will mention below:

## Infrastructure Legacy

The event can be used to reinforce urban plans and motivate investment in infrastructure necessary for long-term use. Once the event is over, these improvements produced by the investments made can be used extensively by the community to develop new sporting events, entertainment or commercial activities. Event hosts should ensure that investments in permanent infrastructure are developed within a realistic legacy plan, avoiding the creation of "white elephants", any facility that becomes unusable once the sporting event ends.

## Economic Legacy

In the case of the recent CONMEBOL 2019 Single Finals, positive economic benefits were achieved. For example, according to data from Paraguay's General Directorate of Migration, Paraguay had an income of US\$7.2 million due to the holding of the CONMEBOL Sudamericana 2019 Single Final in Asunción.

Organizing a unique Final creates hundreds of new jobs, not only for those who execute the event, but also for many companies in general. The CONMEBOL Sudamericana 2019 Final attracted tourists for more days and not only on the day of the match, and the most benefited items or activities were: accommodation, food, transportation and shopping.

## Legacy of knowledge

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In order to supply the essential goods and services required for this event, people develop new skills and enhance their employment prospects and vocations, which implies a form of legacy for the local community, which has the opportunity to engage and work with the best professionals in events across the continent. This involves the development of a new generation of specialized sports workforce, which can create valuable opportunities for the organization and staging of all types of large-scale sporting events.

### Sports legacy

The focus on staging a high-caliber event can be used to make major investments in high-performance sports infrastructure, as well as promote healthy living and sports throughout the country.

A major sporting event presents the opportunity to inspire people of all ages, but especially young people, to do sports and enjoy a more active and healthier lifestyle. It inspires participation not only at the highest level, but also at the grassroots and community level, which encourages the development of local sporting structures. We can encourage the development of a particular sport discipline through our tournament, learning the rules, promoting a training school on the sport at hand and all kinds of activities that tend to generate a close link between the event, the sport in question and the future development of that sport in the host country or city.

### Debriefing

We have already mentioned the importance of the post-event stage. Not only "imagine" it from the point of view of dismantling the structures used, but also see it from the concept of strategic planning. It is important to review the processes, to verify what was budgeted versus what was executed in terms of actions, not only from an economic point of view, but also from an operational point of view.

It is even a matter of generosity and contribution to the industry, being able to share our event and have it be motivation and provide future support for other events, and it will be up to each user to take advantage of this information and adapt it to their reality.

In this case, beyond the knowledge legacy that we have already mentioned, we must internally establish mechanisms to obtain feedback from each area responsible for the evaluation of the project, process changes and improvements for the future, even if the event has gone excellently and according to plan, there are always things to implement, innovate and improve.

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Attached is a model of questions as a reference for each area manager to share their experiences:

- ✓ List or describe what you consider to have been successful in the area for which you were responsible.
- ✓ List or describe what presented difficulties (or did not work well) in the area for which you were responsible.
- ✓ Taking into account what did not work or what you think can be improved, make a list of actions/recommendations/suggestions to improve these points for the next events.
- ✓ List or describe the good performance you have observed in areas related to yours or in the event in general.
- ✓ List or describe what you observed that did not work well in areas related to yours or in the event in general.
- ✓ Post other comments or suggestions for improvements for upcoming events.

### 3.5 The importance of the countdown in your planning

A large-scale event requires a set of resources and people to make its organization possible. Most fans have probably never stopped to analyze the great diversity of functions and tasks that take place before the stadium doors open, during the game and/or competition, and even after the closing of the stadium.

This module aims to introduce students to the multiple parallel efforts that must come together for an event to achieve a successful outcome.

Additionally, we want to show you the importance of each operation and its objectives, with a vision of each of the parts that make up "an event day". In this way, we will enable a better visualization, which will be fundamental in the proposal and reasoning throughout the planning of each of the specific operations and their resources.

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As mentioned in module 1, it is important to explain that an event, in terms of time and phases, has 3 distinct moments:

1. the planning and preliminary work phase: supplier input, assembly, etc.; **(the before)**
2. the **DAY** or **DAYS OF THE EVENT**, often called *MATCHDAY*; **(The during)**
3. everything that happens after the day of the event: dismantling, supplier departure, knowledge transfer, legacy, etc. **(the after)**.

In this specific module, for purposes of the class, we will focus our attention only on the day of the event. In the following modules we will develop more details that occur during the other phases, according to each operational area.

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Figure 12



Source: own.

Before we start our journey through the operational countdown to the day of the event, let's talk about some concepts and terms that we will find reflected during the development of this module.

**We have two types of countdowns:**  
**The operational countdown, which details all match day activities.**  
**Team countdown (details unique team activities from the time they arrive at the stadium until they leave the stadium).**

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The Countdowns may be adjusted according to the stadium where the match will be played, taking into account the distances of the dressing rooms, positioning of the benches, etc.

For the preparation of the countdowns, although there is a structure of times and activities that must be respected, each countdown must be adjusted to the reality of the match and stadium.

For example, if you want the players to be ready to leave the field access gate 7 minutes before the start of the game, take into account for the "teams leaving the locker room" activity to know and check how long it will take the teams from their locker room to get to the tunnel. There are stadiums where the locker rooms are far from the access door to the field, there are locker rooms that are right next to the access door to the field, so, beyond the original model designed for a tournament, always take into account the specifics of each stadium, the start of the match cannot be delayed under any circumstances.

The countdown we will analyze and the schedules and operational areas exposed are merely illustrative, a development model that encompasses multiple activities and areas described in terms of the organization of a large event. The organizers of an event, who are leading a project, should, together with all the areas, establish their own countdown.

**It must always be remembered that, with much or little in common, all areas have interaction among them, the countdown must integrate all activities, and if changes occur, they must be informed in order to avoid impacts that may be detrimental to the correct development of the event.**

Regardless of the size of the event, an efficient communication channel should always be established for the event. Let's imagine that you will be working in large spaces and square meters within a defined perimeter. The use of radios to communicate, and different channels in them for specific communication between the different areas is key. A WhatsApp message, a call, an sms, many times during work, are not displayed with the urgency that the sender requires, or even, we might not have coverage.

**Anticipate and plan your communication mechanisms during the event.**

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With different radio channels, each area will use a specific one for "their" topics, but if, for example, security wants to interact with competitions, the sender of the message will only have to change the channel on his device and he will be able to communicate quickly with another area.

Figure 13



Source: own.

### Concepts used

**Countdown:** The *COUNTDOWN* is a list of detailed tasks, in chronological order, with a specific time for each action. We have several types of countdowns, the global countdown, which involves the interaction of all areas, is the one we will go through. Each area will also have its own countdown, and in turn we will have a specific countdown for the teams, bringing together all the activities they must carry out from the moment they arrive at the stadium until the kick-off time of the match.

**Facility perimeter:** is the operational boundary of the facility, usually set by fences, walls or temporarily installed closures. Its function is to establish how far "the event goes" in terms of

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space, the physical limits of the event, establishing security services, access controls, etc. We will have activities and actions taking place not only inside the stadium, but also in the surrounding area.

**The integration of all areas in the same scheme is fundamental, regardless of their location.**

**Off Hours:** these are the hours when there is no attention to external customers, in the facilities or stadium, i.e., we only find within the perimeter of the facility internal customers, staff of the work team, collaborators (the workforce), and even suppliers related to the organization and realization of the event.

**On Hours:** are the hours where there is presence of external customers in the facility. Example: the audience, the fans attending our event already inside the perimeter of the facility, once they enter the facility, the expected services will be up and running. We are not necessarily talking about people already located in the stands of the stadium, but for example fans who have passed a first control of their admission ticket, they would already be within our perimeter, even if they are not yet in the stands; in that case, we are already in On hours.

**It is important to note that the facility or stadium goes into HOURS ON mode with the arrival of the FIRST CUSTOMER, and only goes to HOURS OFF mode after the LAST CUSTOMER leaves.**

**ON and OFF hours are related to the operation of the facility and/or stadium.**

**Gate opening:** Gate opening is a very important concept in facility management, because it establishes the exact moment when spectators will start accessing the facility through the established access points and controls. In terms of spectator areas, this is the most important point. All the operations prior to and related to access control and door opening have to be ready, in place, with everything working in order to provide the proper attention to the customers and the entry flow in a controlled manner.

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**Field of Play (FOP):** The area of the field or arena where the competition will be played, and its adjacent areas up to the boundary that separates competitors and fans.

**KICKOFF or Kickoff (KO):** is the beginning of the match or sports competition. We must keep in mind that the purpose of a sporting event is to create a show of the sport, whether it is a football match or any other sport, amateur or professional. This is the main purpose of the event, it is what makes people be part of the event, it is why spectators pay a ticket, to watch live emotions. This is also why a signal of the match or competition is generated to be broadcasted via traditional media or digital platforms.

In summary, the game represents the most important activity that will take place within the facility. This activity will require the effort, coordination and communication of several operational areas.

**FINAL WHISTLE (FW):** it is the end of the sport competition (match) by the main referee. This moment is very important because it marks the end of the competition itself, and, in turn, determines the moment that starts the whole routine of tasks "after" the match. It is important to say that, specifically speaking of football, and depending on the rules of the competition, a match may have different durations, depending on the mechanism of definition (overtime and penalties) and the stage of the tournament, and may also have award ceremonies in case it is a final or inaugural match.

In either case it is important that the organization is prepared and monitoring the development of the competition in order to do their jobs.

**IN OTHER WORDS, EVEN IF THE MATCH IS OVER, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN WE THINK THAT THE EVENT IS OVER.**

**Operational areas:** we use the term operational areas to define each group of people/work team in charge of a specific role during the event. Example: there is a specific group of people in charge of the food and beverage operations inside the stadium, (arrival, preparation, sale and delivery) normally called the FOOD and BEVERAGE operations area.

There is also the SECURITY area which, as the name itself describes, is in charge of all the tasks related to the security of the event and total control of the perimeter of the event's scope, defined during the planning and preparation phase.

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It is important to clarify that, depending on the size of the event being organized, the size of the stadium and the complexity/sensitivity of the operation, more or less operational areas may need to be defined. It is a matter of evaluating the most efficient structure according to what is needed for the type of event to be developed.

For methodological purposes, the following is a list of operational areas and the acronyms we will use for a quick identification of these areas during the countdown study.

- OPS - Stadium Operation and Infrastructure
- CPT - Competitions
- SEC - Safety and Security
- TIK - *Ticketing*
- LIM - Cleaning
- AEB - Food and Beverages
- MED - Medical Services
- BRD - *Broadcasting (in English for the area in charge of producing and generating the signal to be transmitted from the event).*
- PRE - Press and Media Operations
- TRA - Transportation
- LIC - Licensing - Commercial
- HTY -Hospitality
- EVS - Event Services

## 3.6 Countdown to game day

For the specific event day, and for the practical development of our operational countdown, we will take as an example an event with the following characteristics:

- ✓ A Sunday football game

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- ✓ Stadium for 40,000 people,
- ✓ Kick-off at 16:00
- ✓ Recommended opening of doors by the OPS and SEC area will be at 13:00.

In the countdown, we will detail multiple tasks that happen simultaneously, divided into several blocks of time, from the early morning, through the moment the match is played, to the post-event.

In your countdown, each task should mention the specific start time of the task, as well as detailing how many hours are left from the start of the action until the *Kick Off* time. To detail the tasks that happen after the match, the reference will be the *Final Whistle*.

Next, we will develop a wide range of activities that occur on the day of the event, and at the end of the chapter, we will show a simplified operational countdown, used in CONMEBOL events.

**Block I: Period from 00:00 a.m. to 06:00 a.m.**

(KO - 16hs to KO - 10hs)

**KO-16hs / 00:00hs-** From this time, and even from previous days, the SEC area will already be running. A security team will be guarding the premises. This number of guards and/or controls must be sufficient to have control and supervision at the access points and make "rounds", ensuring that only people and items authorized by the organization can access the enclosure and/or perimeter on game day, according to indications. The entire external perimeter must be prepared to be open to the public, with fences positioned in the early hours of the morning to determine the different access flows.

**KO-11hs / 05:00hs-** From the CPT area, the turf preparation works begin. The field maintenance personnel, along with the manager and the agronomist are among the first to arrive at the FOP. The preparation of a high level pitch involves a series of tasks and procedures that are more detailed in our *specific turf preparation course that is available on this same platform*.

Preparation of the substitutes' benches and areas near the field, final mowing of the grass, watering according to the irrigation plan, marking of the field, warm-up and technical areas, placement of corner flags, nets and goals, among others. In general terms, this operation takes approximately 6 to 8 hours, depending on the equipment and work equipment available.

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The reason for the early start is that the preparation of the turf and surroundings of the playing field must be completed by the time the gates open.

In our example game, all this operation must be completed by 13:00h.

This period is also an important window to enable the delivery of cargo and supplies to be used in the event. Coordination between the OPS area and the SEC area is essential in order to control exactly what should or should not access the site. This is done by integrating the information received from the different operational areas that have loads that need to be received inside the venue, such as information on vehicles, badges and authorized persons. Days before, all the information detailed above will be sent via e-mail from the different areas so that everything runs smoothly without problems or delays of vendors or goods at the door.

**KO-10hs / 06:00hs-** The OPS area, mainly related to infrastructure, should also be arriving at the site, normally these are the times when they start to perform the checks and confirm that the proper supplies are in order and as planned, e.g. water, energy, fuel, generators, hydraulic and mechanical equipment (elevators, stairs).

**Block II: Morning period 06:00 to 10:00 a.m.**

(KO - 10hs to KO - 6hs)

**KO-9.30hs / 06:30hs** During this period of time we will observe the arrival of the vast majority of staff (the workforce) to the stadium and, upon their arrival, the distribution of people and resources to their corresponding assigned positions.

In general terms, the largest teams are related to the services we provide to the spectators. This is the case of SEC, LIM and AEB that will be starting their arrival at the stadium at 6:30 am approx.

Regarding the SEC area, once the staff arrives, they go directly to a previously coordinated meeting point, as if to carry out a first and very important activity, the so-called "*check-in*". During this, all the staff receive their uniforms, radios, food and hydration. An initial briefing is given to all those who are going to work, where the safety officer and the different supervisors share essential information about the day's operations and review the most important concepts. Once the *briefing* (initial talk) is over, the supervisors of each sector go out to walk around the site and position each item of their personnel in the right place.

Something very similar will happen upon arrival of the LIM area collaborators, the managers must receive their personnel at a meeting point or office to check in, hand them their

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personal work materials, cleaning supplies, receive instructions and position themselves in their specific work area.

The AEB area will receive goods at multiple times from the early morning hours, in addition to the arrival of its own team of professionals. In AEB there is also a very similar process to that of SEC and LIM with the arrival of employees at the stadium, however, there is a greater variety of positions and tasks. The food and beverage area has a more specific division depending on the process of preparing the food to be served. There are stock support positions, product replenishment; there are personnel dedicated to food preparation and heating, handling, customer service, cashiers and cashiering, mobile staff, etc.

At this point it is important to emphasize that relations with local authorities (municipalities, town halls, etc.) are very important for the development of AEB in official facilities. There is a food safety protocol that must be followed in strict compliance with the specific rules of each city or country. Not respecting the correct procedures and proper food handling practices can result in bad food being served in the official facilities of the event. This situation is dangerous, as it can lead to mass contamination.

It is very important to mention the need to maintain a high level of hygiene in all logistical phases of the service. The area will need refrigerated containers to store its items and have daily deliveries of products, 24 hours a day.

At this time also, the "bulk" of the CPT competitions team that will lead the match will be arriving. Delegate and match coordinator, security officer, venue manager, media officer and the competitions team that will be in charge of all aspects of the sporting competition.

**KO-7.00hs / 09:00hs** Work begins in the ERP area. The press and media workspaces are opened. Journalists usually arrive early in the morning and start to produce specific content about the match and the aspects that involve the place where the match takes place, the atmosphere outside the stadium, etc. Not having the areas ready, clean, with enough chairs, tables, bathrooms, wifi, telephones, lighting, and even a catering service, can generate a negative first image about the organization of the event, which could even be reflected in the first press publications.

**KO-7.00hs / 09:00hs TIK** - Arrival at the stadium, testing and checking of the *ticket* reading system and database, positioning at the gates and help desk.

**Block III: Period from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Final stretch to the opening of doors.

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(KO - 6 through KO-3)

**KO-6.00hs / 10:00hs-** The SEC area, together with TRA and local traffic police authorities, will implement the vehicle circulation plan (and its restrictions) within the perimeter defined for the event. From this moment on, the free circulation of vehicles within the perimeter will be restricted, and the use of Vehicle Access and Parking Permits (VAPPs) will become mandatory. No vehicle may enter or remain parked within the perimeter without this device (the VAPP may be a sticker attached to the windshield of the vehicle or a sign made of a sun-resistant material, placed or positioned on the front of the vehicle for quick and easy identification by SEC).

Together with the activation of the mobility restriction plan for vehicles within the perimeter and their proper identification for access or parking, the access roads for delivery of materials within the period are closed.

During this period, the stadium manager and the event manager will make a new general tour of the facilities, talking to the different operational managers in charge of the event. During the tour, they will carry out an ocular inspection of the different sectors of the perimeter and general aspects such as cleanliness, vehicles parked in inappropriate places, etc.

In the same way that unauthorized vehicle access is restricted, it is at this stage that access controls to the different areas of the stadium, previously defined (SEC), are activated.

In CONMEBOL events, each personal accreditation grants access to different areas of the stadium, in the specific case of a large CONMEBOL event, we divide the perimeter of the event into 8 areas. During this period of time (from KO-6) people will only be able to access the zones to which their accreditation allows it, no one will be able to enter the playing field or dressing rooms if their accreditation does not grant access to zones 1 and 2, for example.

It is essential, regardless of the event, to carry out a correct mapping of the site (establish *zoning* or sectors of the same) to avoid filtrations of unauthorized or unwanted people in areas where they have nothing to do.

**KO-6.00hs / 10:00hs** Watering of the pitch (CPT). Six hours before the match, the field will be watered, at the discretion of the match delegate and according to weather conditions.

**KO-5.30hs / 10:30hs-**The *Venue Team Briefing* is held, the meeting of the match day, led by the project manager, together with the leaders of each area. The activities that have taken place so far, those that are about to take place and the actual situation of each area as planned are reviewed (all area leaders must participate in this meeting).

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**KO-5.30hs / 10:30hs** The opening of the ticket office (to address concerns and problems with tickets, ticket collection, general attention to the spectator with a ticket or voucher) Generally, in major events, no sales are made on the day of the game, much less at the venue itself (TIK, EVS, SEC).

**KO-5.30hs / 10:30hs** Arrival of the medical team that will provide services to spectators and also of the medical team responsible for anti-doping controls and athlete care (MED). All these operations will be previously planned. Local medical authorities, the local club and/or city responsible for hosting the event, together with our medical area MED (the organization's own) will develop a plan according to the number of spectators and type of event, to design a service according to it.

**KO-3.30hs / 12.30hs** - Opening of the accreditation center (ACR). Anyone who arrives at the event and has their work accreditation approved but does not yet have their physical accreditation, must first go to the accreditation center to collect their accreditation. This is the only valid identification during the event, it is like the identity document of the event, it is useless to show another document justifying that you have access to one or another place because you are a member of a working committee or belong to a public organization, etc. No person who has not gone through the process of application, acceptance and issuance of accreditation, may enter the event.

**And remember: Accreditation is not status, it is role. The Accreditation is not a ticket to watch the game.**

**KO-3.30hs / 12.30hs** Online monitoring of public transportation flow to the event (TRA).

**KO-3.15hs / 12.45hs-** Opening of food and beverage sales points for spectators (AEB), at this time we are 15 minutes from the opening of gates, outside the stadium. At many events, entertainment is offered once the ticket check is done. At this time we are referring to the food vendors inside the stadium, which will open its doors to the public at 1:00 pm. It is important to clarify that this same process could have happened before, if we offer AEB services within the perimeter of the event, but outside the stadium.

**KO-3.15hs / 12.45hs** - Opening of *merchandising* stores (LIC), together with the opening of food and beverage stands inside the stadium, 15 minutes before the opening of the gates, the stores where we will sell the official products of the event will open. In the same way as the food and beverage stands, if we have any trading area inside the perimeter of the event,

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but outside the stadium, we will have to adjust the times for these as well. During the following modules we will develop more in depth everything that has to do with the profit that can be obtained on a match day, the analysis of the stadium as a business unit, including the selling of official merchandising of the event.

**KO-3.15hs / 12.45hs** Last check prior to the opening of gates. Normally a tour of all the gates is made to check that the Ticketing, Spectator Service and Security teams are positioned correctly at all the previously defined points. This check is usually the responsibility of OPS, together with the Venue Manager of the sports facility. Always in radio contact with the different areas involved, including public forces, such as police, firefighters, etc.

**KO-3.15hs / 12.45hs** Last locker room check: Part of the competitions team (CPT) the match delegate or, failing that, someone entrusted by him, will perform the last internal check of the locker room. Cleanliness, lighting, hot water, wifi, air conditioners working (attention: always know where the AC control is), hygiene supplies (toilet paper, soap, etc.), stretchers, and everything that the competition rules establish that the locker room must contain.

**KO-3.10hs / 12.50hs** Minutes before the opening of gates (CONMEBOL establishes this in its regulations) we will turn on the lights so that, at 13:00, the time of gates opening, they will be fully lit. Please note that the stadium lighting will be turned on, even if the event takes place in sunlight. This is for television broadcasting purposes and to improve its quality.

**Attention:** This is a CONMEBOL regulation for official matches of its competitions. It is important to be attentive to the regulations of other types of tournaments and to observe their specificities.

**KO-3.00hs / 13.00hs** Activation of accreditation supplements. Both vehicles and access control are operational from 10 am. In the case of large events, such as the CONMEBOL Libertadores and CONMEBOL Sudamericana, with strict access controls, accreditations are accompanied by what is called SAD (*supplementary accreditation device*). The SAD is an extra device that, when applied in a practical way, makes access even stricter in some sensitive areas of the event, when the hours are highly sensitive. Example: a person can have access to zone 1 in their accreditation, but if after 13:00 in addition to their accreditation with zone 1, they do not have a SAD, they will not be able to access. Generally the SADs are an additional card that is placed above the accreditation, they are designed with different colors, to perfectly identify the zone to which each one corresponds. We can establish SADs for the areas we want, depending on how we want to set up our access control. Generally we find SADs for the playing field and competition areas.

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KO-3.00hs / 13.00hs - Opening of gates: Finally, once the gates of all the accesses to the inside of the stadium are opened, the spectators begin the entrance in search of their sector. (SEC, EVS, CTY, AEB)

Opening of spaces and VIP sectors for guests, spectators who paid for this differential ticket and sponsors who receive a differential treatment for their special guests (SEC, HTY, EVS).

KO-3.00hs / 13.00hs Departure from the hotels of commercial partners and guests (with official transfers) for arrival at the stadium and admission to special services (TRA, HTY).

### Block IV OPENING OF DOORS UNTIL THE END OF THE EVENT

#### OFFICIAL EVENT PERIOD

(KO-3 to FW)

KO-3.00hs / 13.00hs Arrival of Clubs' props (CPT). The day before, during the match coordination meeting, the clubs and the event's organizers will agree on the time of arrival of each club's props. In tournaments in which large teams participate, such as a CONMEBOL Libertadores, the utilitymen arrive much earlier than the group of players at the stadium, so that when the players arrive at the facilities, they already have all their clothing and personal belongings ready for the competition. It is important that the locker rooms are open when the vans arrive with the equipment and that everything related to the logistics of the locker rooms is ready. We must keep in mind that the locker rooms are a very sensitive area, once the props personnel enter and start with the preparations, except for the internal recording before the players arrive (previously agreed and established by regulation) and the fourth official's inspection of the players, they should not enter the locker rooms. We must respect the privacy of the teams as much as possible. Our staff from the competitions area must make themselves available to the players to assist them in whatever they may need. At the same time, the ball boys who will help with the game during the match will arrive at the stadium. (CPT)

Once the dressing rooms are ready, after the arrival of the players, with a schedule previously agreed upon in the technical coordination meeting of the match, the dressing rooms will be recorded. For this purpose, all the playing material must be prepared and tidy (jerseys, shorts, socks, captain's tape, goalkeeper's gloves). This activity is carried out with a camera of the HB and must be finished BEFORE the players arrive at the dressing room. (BRD)

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**KO-2.00hs / 14:00hs** Watering of the pitch. Two hours before the game a total watering of the field is done, at the discretion of the match delegate and according to weather conditions. (CPT)

**KO-2.00hs / 14:00hs** Entry of accredited photographers to the field of play, guided by the media officer. In case of automatic cameras behind the goals, they must be placed at this time. (PRE).

**KO-1.30hs / 14:30hs** Arrival of the delegation and equipment (TRA, SEC, CPT)

Depending on the event, some activities such as interviewing the coach (coach on arrival) or following the players on their way to the locker room with a camera could be carried out. (BRD and PRE)

In CONMEBOL events, it is established by regulation that the official delegations must arrive at the stadium up to 90 minutes before the match, the referees will also be arriving at this time.

Both the referees and both official delegations will be arriving from their respective hotels, escorted by the local traffic police, an escort that is coordinated during the previous days between our security team, the clubs and the local authorities. The teams will arrive at least 90 minutes in advance and will make the scheduled press appointments. The Technical Director of the team will deliver to the delegate of the match the list with the 11 starters, 12 substitutes and 8 officials that will go to the substitution bench (this will be according to each tournament regulations, this is the example of CONMEBOL Libertadores and CONMEBOL Sudamericana). The official list must be signed by the team captain and by the DT (Technical Director).

**KO-1.20hs / 14:40hs** Processing of official list (CPT). The delegate of the match, the highest authority of the match, must enter the line-ups of both teams into the official CONMEBOL software. Once entered into the system, the delegate will distribute the official list among the teams, referees, doctors (for doping control) and the rest of the interested parties. It is essential, whatever the event, that the teams are the first to know about the official lineups, the teams cannot find out about the lineups of their rival team through social networks or the press. Always provide it to the teams first, then to the press.

The delegate and fourth official will talk with the ball boys about the behavior during the match (CPT).

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**KO-1.05hs / 14:55hs** The match referee performs the identity check of the players in each of the dressing rooms, checking against the official list the players' jersey numbers, names on the jersey and their identity with their official documents.

Meanwhile, the competitions area is reaching its highest point of work concentration, with the teams already in the stadium and several other areas interacting with all the external clients in constant reception of services.

**KO-0.50 / 15:10hs** Start of athletes warm-up. The warm-up will be assisted by the ball boys who will be positioned in their assigned place to help with the return of balls to the field. (CPT).

In CONMEBOL events, teams will warm up on the field of play from KO-50 to KO-20. Teams must warm up with the official vests of the competition (an element that adds to the other existing ones, giving greater identity to the tournament).

**KO-0.20hs / 15:40hs** End of athletes' warm-up. Once the warm-up of the players and referees is finished, the referees check the tension of the nets in the goals. A last pre-game watering is performed and preparations are made for the placement of the elements that are part of the protocol for the start of the game, arch/portal through which the players will pass to enter the field, ball holder, ball to start the game, etc. The field maintenance staff makes the final touches and repairs for any possible damage that may have been caused during the warm-up, leaving everything finally ready for the game.

**KO-0.20hs / 15:40hs** The photographers, who remained positioned behind the goals, will move, guided by the media officer and some collaborators, to the middle of the field, in an orderly manner, to wait for the players to leave the field and face the protocol formation of the teams and official photos. (PRE)

**KICKOFF / 16:00hs** *Kick off* (all areas) The referee kicks off the match.

**KO+0.45hs / 16:45hs** Halftime. During halftime, maintenance tasks will be performed on the playing field and even a new irrigation may be carried out depending on weather conditions. (CPT)

Photographers can check the position of the remote cameras installed just behind the nets of each goal (during the match they cannot manipulate them under any circumstances) (PRE).

The media officer makes a walk-around verifying that all photographers remain in their proper position. (PRE)

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Right holders who are positioned behind the advertising static in CONMEBOL matches can go back live with their commentators. (BRD)

KO + 1.30hs / 17:30hs (LIC) official stores and food and beverage stops (AEB) are closed.

KO + 1.30hs / 17:30hs The doping control officer, in the presence of the doctors of each club, draws lots to determine which players will go to the doping control (PRE).

KO + 1.30hs / 17:30hs The media officer makes the last check in the press conference room: connectivity, wifi, lighting, event backdrop, etc. (PRE)

FW / 17:45hs End of the match (all areas). The referee ends the match, the right holders proceed to conduct the interviews (flash interview) to 3 players per team with a duration of 45 seconds each. (PRE, BRD)

FW + 0:30 / 18:15hs Press Conference (PRE, BRD)

The post-match press conference will be held for the players and coaching staff. It is considered an official match activity in CONMEBOL events and must be attended by one player and the manager of each team. Players who have been sent off, who have not played the match or DTs who have also been sent off may not attend the conference, in which case the field assistant must attend. (PRE, BRD)

FW + 0:45 / 18:30hs Departure of commercial partners' buses (TRA, HTY)

FW + 1:00 / 18:45hs Closing of press conferences (PRE, BRD)

FW + 1:00 / 18:45hs one hour after the end of the game, the stadium will be completely evacuated, the gates will be closed (SEC, EVS).

FW + 1:00 / 18:45hs end of services to spectators (EVS, MED)

FW + 1:00 / 18:45hs Closing of VIP spaces (SEC, HTY, EVS, AEB)

FW + 1.00 / 18:45hs Delegations leave the Stadium to their hotel or directly to the airport (TRA, SEC, CPT).

Important: it may happen that a player is delayed due to the anti-doping test. In this case it is necessary to consider how to make the transfer of that player to the official hotel or airport.

FW + 1:00 / 18:45hs Deactivation of access control by means of SADs devices (SEC)

FW + 1:15 / 19:00hs End of traffic restriction (SEC, TRA)

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**FW + 1:15 / 19:00hs** Closing of the medical service to spectators (MED)

Important: Check if there are no players taking anti-doping tests before releasing the medical teams and designated ambulance to the locker room area.

**FW+1:30 / 19:15hs** stadium lights off, part of which must remain on to assist with the dismantling of cameras, advertising statics, etc. (STM, OPS)

**FW +1:30 / 19:15hs** Referees leave the stadium for their hotel or directly to the airport (TRA, SEC, CPT).

**FW +2:00 / 19:45hs** Deactivation of access control (SEC)

**FW +2:00 / 19:45hs** Logistics receives the samples taken for doping controls (LOG, DOP, MED).

**FW +2:00 / 19:45hs** Team meeting (Venue Team Debriefing) after the game, it is essential to have a tune-up meeting, reviewing all processes, actions to improve, fulfillment of objectives, receiving input from staff and, in case of having more days of the event, leaving the points and concerns already organized to improve for the next day. (all areas)

**FW +3:00 / 20:45hs** Departure of the anti-doping commission and closing of the doping control room (TRA, MED, BRD).

As you were able to study in this module, operations take place at the same time between the different areas. Having a countdown will help you plan your actions in a straightforward and organized way.

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Figure 14

		Team A		Team B	
<b>Played in</b>		Lima (PER)		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Stadium</b>		Monumental		23/11/19	
<i>Kick off</i>		15:00			
-	5:00	h	Full security check	at	10:00
-	5:00	h	Stadium opening	at	10:00
-	7:00	h	Arrival of Match Officials	at	8:00
-	3:45	h	Arrival of Team A equipment van	at	11:15
-	3:30	h	Arrival of Team B equipment van	at	11:30
-	2:45	h	Arrival of the referees	at	12:15
-	1:35	h	Arrival of Team A	at	13:25
-	1:30	h	Arrival of Team B	at	13:30

Source: own elaboration.

We will begin the next module by delving into the main responsibilities of the Competitions area (CPT). One of the most important and sensitive areas, which needs to deal with clubs, technical committee, players and is the main internal client of the other areas involved in the organization of the sporting event.

*Part of an official countdown as a design reference.*

- It is advisable (depending on the magnitude of the event and the number of activities) to set up regressive sub-accounts by operational area.
- Always remember that, with much or little in common, all areas have interaction among them, the general countdown should integrate all activities, and if there are changes in them, they should be informed in order to avoid impacts that may be detrimental to the correct development of the event.

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- Once the main referee ends the match, the activity does not end; that moment indicates the beginning of the post-match activities. Under no circumstances should the level of attention be lowered. Special care should be taken during the dismantling phase to ensure personal safety, as well as to avoid breakage and damage to the stadium.

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