

# Module 1. Introduction to the Report

## 1. What is a report in the world of scouting?

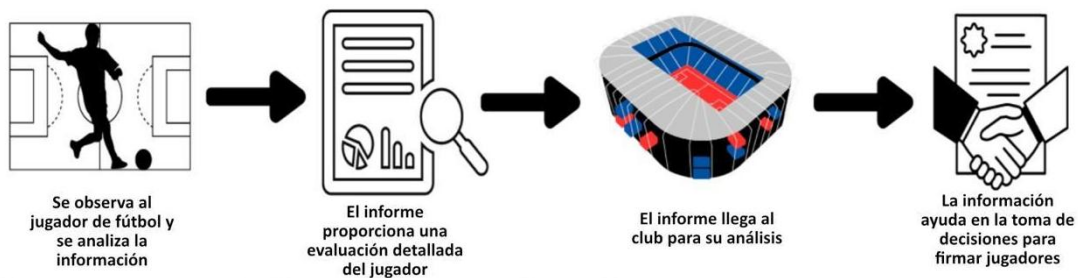
In the world of sports scouting, a report is a detailed document that provides a comprehensive evaluation of a football player, analyzing their technical, tactical, physical, and mental abilities (Tenga and Sigmundsson, 2014).

According to Lames and McGarry (2007), a report is a crucial strategic tool for football clubs, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding the recruitment, development, and management of players.

Scouting reports are fundamental tools for strategic decision-making in football clubs, as they help identify and select players who align with the team's needs and philosophy.

In summary, a scouting report in the world of football is a document that provides a description and evaluation of a footballer, aiming to assist in decision-making about them.

**Figure 1: Graphic description of the purpose of the report.**



Se observa al jugador de fútbol y se analiza la información	The football player is observed and the information is analyzed.
El informe proporciona una evaluación detallada del jugador	The report provides a detailed evaluation of the player.
El informe llega al club para su análisis	The report is sent to the club for analysis.
La información ayuda en la toma de decisiones para firmar jugadores	The information aids in decision-making

	for signing players.
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Source: Own creation.

The goal is to describe the footballer in such a way that the report's recipient, upon reading it, gains an impression very close to the footballer's reality, both in terms of their characteristics and their level in each of them.

By doing this, the person responsible for reading the report will not need to interpret its content and will effortlessly grasp an idea—a "snapshot"—of the footballer as accurately as possible.

## **2. What is the purpose of the report, and who is it intended for?**

The utility of scouting reports lies in their ability to convey detailed information about football players, including their characteristics and potential as players of interest.

Football clubs often have a scouting department comprising a team of scouts. These scouts draft reports on the players they observe and then send those reports to the heads of the scouting department. These leaders analyze the reports and/or pass them on to the relevant department within the club, whose sports managers use them to make decisions. Metaphorically, these reports represent the vision provided by the scouts, who are considered "the eyes of the club."

Scouting reports can be addressed to various individuals and departments within a football club, including sporting directors, coaches, performance analysts, etc. The exact recipients depend on the club's structure and the departments involved in decision-making regarding player recruitment.

Ultimately, these reports enable clubs to decide whether or not to sign specific footballers.

## **3. What should a report contain?**

A scouting report must fundamentally and indispensably include a description of the footballer. That is, it should provide as detailed information as possible about the observed player in terms of physical, technical, tactical, and psychological parameters.

Typically, this description implicitly includes an evaluation. The report not only mentions whether a player has a certain quality or ability or whether they can perform a specific action but also assesses their level of performance in that parameter. For instance, when



describing a defender’s aggressiveness, you wouldn’t simply state whether they are aggressive or not in binary terms. Instead, you would specify their degree of defensive aggressiveness based on observed game actions requiring that ability.

In addition to these two fundamental elements (description and evaluation), the report may also include other aspects as requested by the scout’s club or employer. These may include the scout’s opinion on the player’s suitability for integration into a specific team/system, a forecast of their future development, comparisons with similar players, etc.

#### 4. Considerations when creating a report

When drafting a report, you should adhere, as much as possible, to a set of criteria that guide its preparation and enhance its validity. These criteria include the following:

**Table 1. Criteria to guide the preparation of the report.**

Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write in a Structured Order. Normally, this sequence is determined by the scouting department.</li> </ul>
Balance (Even more important when evaluating players in developmental stages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not apply unnecessary or exaggerated opinions or evaluations.</li> <li>• Do not draw definitive conclusions based on the success or failure of a single action by the player.</li> <li>• Balance objectivity and subjectivity. Both should be present in the appropriate proportion..</li> </ul>
Moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid evaluating in terms of all or nothing, unless it is very obvious.</li> <li>• Evaluations of “0” or “10” in a football skill level are uncommon.</li> <li>• Avoid being overly influenced and seeing the player in absolute terms (all good or all bad).</li> </ul>
Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to be specific and avoid repeating information.</li> </ul>

Source: own creation..



If you apply these criteria, you will facilitate the decision-making process for the sports manager reading the report.

## **5. Report vs. Technical File**

### **5.1 The Technical File**

A technical file in the realm of sports scouting is a document that compiles general information about a football player.

This file provides data about the player, including personal details, age, sports history, participation statistics for the current and previous seasons, injuries, etc. Additionally, it may include some technical information, usually a brief and descriptive report without in-depth evaluations or conclusions. It serves more as a data record than purely sporting information. These files are easy to read and quickly provide the necessary information about various players available on the market. Their primary use is in the initial phase of observation and tracking work.

Thanks to its organized and accessible format, scouts can efficiently locate the key data they need to assess whether the player meets the desired parameters in terms of age, position, history, experience, etc.

This immediate access to information is essential in an environment where time is a valuable resource. It enables scouts and sports managers to make swift, well-informed decisions about the talent available. These files make the scouting process smoother and more effective by facilitating the identification and evaluation of players with profiles that suit the club's needs.

In summary, the technical file has a more informational purpose and serves as an initial positioning tool for understanding the player. Although it may include information about the player's sporting characteristics, this is not its primary focus. Its role in the scouting process differs entirely from that of a scouting report, which is more specific about the player's sporting performance and characteristics.

These files allow scouts to maintain an organized database of various players in the market, making it easy to access whenever necessary.

### **Figure 2. Example of a technical file in digital format.**



TEMPORADA	NOMBRE:	NACIONALIDAD													
PARTIDOS:	CLUB:	PROCEDENCIA:													
TITULAR:	F/ NAC:	PERFIL:													
ASISTENCIAS:	ALTURA:	PESO: KG													
GOLES T/ANTERI	POSICION: DELANTERO	F/CONT:													
GOLES TEMPORA	REPRESENTA:	T/R 0	T/A 0												
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SCOUTING															

Temporada	Season
Partidos	Matches
Titular	Starter
Asistencias	Assits
Goles	Goles
Goles temporada	Goles per season
Min. Liga	Min. League
Lesiones	Injuries
Seleccion	Team
Vivo	Live
Nombre	Name
Nacionalidad	Nacionality
Procedencia	Origin

Perfil	Profile
F/ nac	Date of birth
Altura	Height
Peso	Weight
Posicion	Position
Representa	Represents
Características físicas	Physical characteristics
Características técnicas	Technical characteristics
Características tácticas	Tactical characteristics
Fecha	Date
Partido	Match
Descripción	Description

Source: own creation..



Figure 3. Another example of a technical file

**EQUIPO (CATEGORIA)**

**DATOS PERSONALES**

NOMBRE:				NIVEL:	
FECHA NAC:		NACIONALIDAD:		COMUNITARIO:	<span style="color: green;">■</span> <span style="color: red;">■</span>
POSICIÓN:		POSICIÓN SEC:			
INTERNACIONAL:		PIE: DERECHO	ALTURA:	PESO:	LESIONES:
F/CONTRATO:		MOVIL:		MAIL:	
FECHA INFORME:		VIDEO: OK	VIVO: OUT	CONTACTADO POR:	

**ESTADÍSTICAS EN LAS 3 ÚLTIMAS TEMPORADAS**

EQUIPO	TEMP	PJ	GOL	GPP	ASIS	TA	2TA	TR	SUST	SDO	G/M	MIN

**DESCRIPCIÓN DEL JUGADOR**

**OPINIÓN PERSONAL:**

**VEREDICTO:**

**INFORME DE PARTIDOS**

FECHA	PARTIDO	DESCRIPCIÓN
1-		
2-		
3-		

**CONTACTO REALIZADO**

FECHA	NOMBRE DE AGENTE O TUTOR/A	INFORMACIÓN
MÓVIL:	OTRO:	CORREO:

**SCOUTING:**

Source: own creation..

As seen in Figures 2 and 3, the technical file consists of the player's personal information (name, age, height, weight, nationality, etc.), seasonal statistics (matches played, goals, cards, assists, minutes played, etc.), and, in this case, a section for comments about physical/technical characteristics.

## 5.2 Differences and Similarities Between the Technical File and the Report

The technical file and the scouting report are two essential components of the scouting process, each serving distinct purposes and containing different information.

Technical File

- The technical file is a structured document that provides a more general overview of a specific player.
- It includes personal and sports data, offering standard and objective information about the player's technical, tactical, physical, and psychological abilities.
- Typically includes specific data such as performance statistics, sports history, strengths, and weaknesses of the player.
- It is an easy-to-read and consult resource, designed to provide a quick and clear snapshot of the player in question.
- The technical file is useful for quickly and efficiently comparing and contrasting different players.

### Report

- The report is a more extensive and descriptive document that provides a deeper evaluation of the player.
- It is usually the result of detailed observation and thorough analysis by the scout.
- Contains the scout's personal observations and opinions about the player's performance, playing style, development potential, among other aspects.
- May include comments on performance in specific situations, tactical analysis, field attitude, and other relevant aspects.
- Reports can vary in length and format depending on the club's or the scouting department's preferences.
- Often more subjective, reflecting the scout's judgment and experience in evaluating the player.

In conclusion both the technical file and the report play crucial roles in the sports scouting process. The technical file offers a quick and structured overview of a player, providing objective and easily accessible data about their skills and statistics. Conversely, the report provides a deeper and more subjective evaluation of the player, based on the scout's experience and judgment.

To help you better visualize and compare these two scouting tools, here is a table summarizing the main features of these elements:

**Table 2. Main Features of the Technical File and the Report**

	Technical Sheet	Report
Content	Basic information that can be found publicly, such as	More extensive information. A more subjective and detailed evaluation of the player.



	statistics and scout comments based on observation.	
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide an overview and quick snapshot of the player.	Offers an in-depth and detailed evaluation of the player.
<b>Format</b>	Structured and easy to read.	Varies in length and format depending on preferences.
<b>Data</b>	Technical, tactical, physical skills, statistics, etc.	Technical, tactical, physical skills, statistics, etc., with more detail. Personal observations, tactical analysis, attitude on the field, etc.
<b>Required Matches</b>	One match is sufficient to create a technical sheet.	Se necesita seguimiento, al menos 3 o 4 partidos en la .
<b>Usefulness</b>	Allows comparison and contrast of different players. The club does not make a decision based solely on a technical sheet.	Allows for informed decisions on recruitment and talent evaluation.

Source: own creation..

## 6. Types of Reports

### 6.1 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Reports

Several experts (Creswell et al., 2018) define qualitative reports as those that focus on an in-depth understanding of complex aspects through the observation and interpretation of non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and content analysis. These reports are typically descriptive, exploratory, and rich in narrative details, providing a deep understanding of a subject.

On the other hand, quantitative reports are based on numerical data and focus on measuring variables and statistical analysis to establish trends and relationships among data. According to Trochim et al. (2008), these reports tend to be structured, precise, and objective, using quantitative methods to analyze and present data.

Below, we will see how this applies to the world of scouting.



In recent decades, the world of football has undergone a remarkable transformation, reflected in the process of talent identification and evaluation. What used to be a purely subjective (qualitative) scouting method has evolved into a more comprehensive approach, where the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis emerges as the future of scouting in this popular sport (ScoutYouPro, 2021).

### Quantitative Analysis in Football

Quantitative analysis in football has advanced beyond the simple collection of basic statistics such as goals, assists, and ball possession. Today, thanks to technological advancements, more specific data on player performance can be obtained. Elements such as distance covered, speed, pass accuracy, and effectiveness in one-on-one duels have become essential tools for evaluating a player’s performance.

### Qualitative Analysis in Football

Despite the abundance of quantitative data, football remains a complex and highly dynamic sport. Aspects such as technical skills, tactical intelligence, decision-making ability, and player personality cannot be fully evaluated through numbers alone. Here is where qualitative reports gain importance.

Qualitative reports are based on subjective observations and a thorough analysis of a player’s performance. Scouts evaluate aspects such as technique, game vision, leadership skills, and other intangible elements that contribute to a player's success on the field. These reports offer a more human and contextualized perspective, complementing the objectivity of quantitative data.

**Table 3: Differences Between Qualitative and Quantitative Reports**

Characteristics	Qualitative Reports	Quantitative Reports
<b>Type of Data</b>	Observations	Numerical measurements
<b>Method of Information Collection</b>	Interviews, direct observation, content analysis	Collection of statistics and measurements
<b>Approach</b>	Exploratory and interpretive	Structured and analytical
<b>Aspects Evaluated</b>	Technical skills, tactics, personality, and environment	Performance statistics, physical and technical metrics



<b>Benefits</b>	Provides an in-depth understanding of the player	Offers an objective view of the player
<b>Limitations</b>	Subjectivity and difficulty in quantifying information	Does not capture intangible aspects of scouting

Source: own creation..

In summary, the true revolution in football scouting lies in the ability to effectively merge these two seemingly opposing approaches. By combining the abundance of quantitative data with the depth of qualitative reports, it is possible to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a player. The integration of both types of reports enables the identification of performance trends supported by objective data and enriched by subjective evaluations. This collaboration not only increases accuracy in talent identification but also facilitates strategic decision-making for team development.

## 6.2 Reports Based on Player Level

In professional football, clubs provide their scouting teams with a detailed list of characteristics that players being considered for signing must meet. This information is organized into different priority levels, helping scouts identify and evaluate players according to their potential contribution to the team.

In line with these requirements, as scouts conduct their evaluations, they find players who are operationally classified into levels. Each club standardizes these levels and their respective names or labels. For the purposes of this explanation, a specific nomenclature will be used; however, this can vary depending on the club, organization, or scouting software utilized:

At the highest level of this classification are Level 1 players, or "Top Players," who stand out for their exceptional skills and are considered the primary signing targets due to their technical, tactical, and physical abilities aligning perfectly with the club's demands (see Table 4). Often, Level 1 players are considered for recruitment because of their quality, even if they do not meet the club's or team's immediate needs.

Level 2 players, while not meeting all the requirements of Level 1, still display considerable potential and may be considered viable options for the team in the short or medium term.



Finally, Level 3 players, or "Follow-Up Players," are those who, while not meeting all the desired criteria, still possess qualities that make them worth monitoring and evaluating for future consideration.

This hierarchical structure provides scouting teams with a clear guide to identify and prioritize players based on their recruitment needs and objectives.

### **Characteristics of Each Level**

- **Level 1 (Top Player):**
  - Fully meets the club's criteria for recruitment.
  - May be considered even without an immediate positional need.
  - Reports are highly detailed and include comprehensive information about the player's skills, performance, and potential impact.
- **Level 2 (Viable Player):**
  - Suitable for filling gaps when no Level 1 players are available.
  - Highlighted for potential recruitment if immediate needs arise.
  - Reports include detailed evaluations and are archived for short- and medium-term monitoring.
- **Level 3 (Follow-Up Player):**
  - Not ready to sign or meet all the club's criteria.
  - Displays potential for development over time.
  - Reports are less exhaustive, focusing on areas that require further observation.

### **Report Examples Based on Need**

- When a report suggests a player is ready to sign (Level 1), it means they possess all the characteristics required by the club. These reports are comprehensive, containing as much information as possible across all domains.
- If there is an immediate need for a player of a specific age and position for the upcoming season, but no Level 1 players fit the requirement, Level 2 players are evaluated. Their reports reflect that they meet all the criteria to be signed if necessary, with detailed evaluations archived for active short- and medium-term monitoring.
- For a player who is not ready to sign or does not possess the required characteristics but shows potential for development, the result is a Level 3 or "Follow-Up" report. These reports are less detailed, as the expectation is to continue observing the player and updating the information over time.

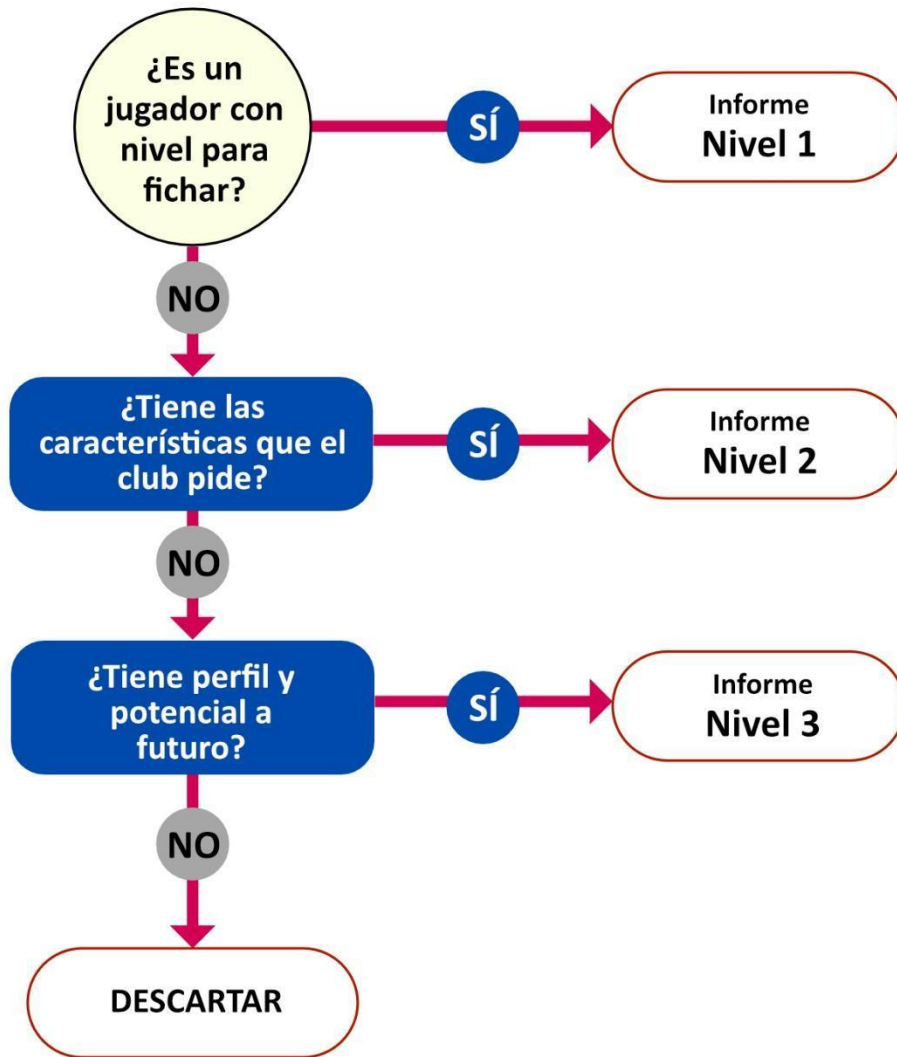
### **Key Questions for Report Determination**

To simplify the process of deciding the type of report a scout should produce, the following questions can help:



1. Is the player ready to sign and meet a current club need?
2. Is the player talented but not immediately required?
3. Does the player have potential for development but is not yet ready to sign?

**Figure 4: Reports by Player Level and Their Relationship with Club Needs.**



<i>¿Es un jugador con nivel para fichar?</i>	<i>Is the player of the right level to sign?</i>
<i>¿Tiene las características necesarias?</i>	<i>Does he have the necessary characteristics?</i>
<i>¿Tiene el perfil y potencial a futuro?</i>	<i>Does he have the profile and potential for the future?</i>
<i>Descartar</i>	<i>Discard</i>



<i>Informe nivel</i>	<i>Report level</i>
<i>Si</i>	<i>Yes</i>

Source: own creation..

Below, to conclude this module, we provide an example of the final sections of a report based on its content:

- **Level 1 or "Top":** A player of medium to tall height, with a solid build and the ability to withstand physical contact. They possess notable speed in both movements and transitions. Their coordination is remarkable, appearing dynamic and agile on the field. They stand out for their good jumping power. They are right-footed and display technical quality in short, medium, and directional passes, as well as having good ball control and effective use of their left foot. They demonstrate the ability to shield the ball and break through in difficult situations, as well as a powerful and precise header. In the central defender position, they exhibit excellent positioning in coverage, showing attention to crosses with great anticipation. They are not hesitant to press the opposing forward and quickly recover their position when needed. They consistently offer solutions to start plays from defense, whether with interior passes or precise directional changes. They maintain high concentration throughout the match, displaying leadership in defensive organization with good judgment. I believe that, given their qualities, they are a very mature player for their age, with considerable room for improvement and would be a valuable addition to the team.
- Physically, they are aggressive, forceful, fast, and excel in aerial duels, showing bravery at all times. From a technical standpoint, they display solid ball distribution, security in both short and long passes, and the ability to filter passes with precision, benefiting their teammates with advantageous positioning. Their style of play is simple and effective. Tactically, they demonstrate excellent game reading, staying alert at all times, and providing balance to the team through their coverage and rotations. Psychologically and personally, they show a clear and positive mindset, being a collaborative and respectful player both with teammates and opponents, as well as with referees.
- **Level 2:** Adds aspects to improve and comments that the club does not have an immediate need to sign the player.
- **Level 3 or "Follow-up":** A technically very good player who handles both feet well and is always well-positioned. They have a solid skill base but still have room for



growth, especially in aerial play. Their technical ability stands out, with good decision-making and quick interior play. They are tactically intelligent and demonstrate leadership on the field. The only potential drawback could be their height. I think it would be prudent to continue observing them to assess their ongoing progress and development.

## 7. Conclusions

- The report is a communication tool between all the sporting bodies involved in decisions regarding the signing or non-signing of players.
- The report includes both descriptive and evaluative aspects.
- When writing the report, the scout forms subjective opinions and conclusions based on objective data they have observed.
- The profile sheet is a preliminary element that gathers up-to-date information, helping to classify and organize the group of potentially observable players. The report provides more extensive information on the player's sporting profile and aims to predict their performance.
- Reports can be quantitative or qualitative. Both have advantages and disadvantages. The quantitative report provides more visual information, while the qualitative report allows for greater depth and a wider range of nuances.



## References

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