



## Module 2. The scout planning



In this Module, you will learn how to plan the annual calendar.

Depending on the region you are going to observe, you should verify the competition plan for each area. As a general rule, the competition starts on the first weekend of September and ends on the second weekend of May. In addition to the planning of the exceptions mentioned in the previous module, such as tournaments, regional teams, senior national teams and European competition, you will have to plan approximately thirty weekends per season.

To optimize planning, the first step is to know the competition calendar of the categories and age groups for which you are responsible, in order to know how many trips you will have to make, approximately, throughout the season and thus be able to calculate the volume of matches to watch. Once you have it, you must structure and plan the annual calendar. The goal is always to be able to reach the maximum volume of games observed and, consequently, to get to know the maximum number of players. Ideally, you should watch six to eight live games every weekend, as an approximate ideal number. As discussed in the previous module, it is recommended that you observe teams live at least twice during the season, once as a local and once as a visitor.

Another aspect that is essential to optimize planning is to know the best clubs in your area. This information is essential, as clubs with a higher sporting level have a greater capacity to attract better players, which creates an initial filter that helps you. In other words, these clubs will, in theory, concentrate more talented players than others and, in the case of a top club, can help to make a first filter. You will need to adapt that organization based on the club you are in and the market you are considering for the club.

☰ **Learning to plan**

☰ **Conclusions**

☰ **References**

# Learning to plan

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## 1.1. Introduction

In this section, several examples are proposed so that the scout can learn how to efficiently plan the calendar every weekend and, sometimes, during the week.

In order to calculate the routes, the scout must know the longest distances that the area to be observed may have and try to avoid the longest ones, which will always be the worst-case scenario. To try to optimize distances and matches, the scout should find, if possible, a middle way.

The same example we used in Module 1 will be used as an example, an annual calendar in the Junior Division of Honor category (U19) and, based on this, distances will be calculated, a zone will be exemplified in a typical weekend and the scout will learn to plan all the stages of a season from pre-season to the end of it.

## **1.2. What is planning?**

The scout should understand planning as the maximum anticipation of events. The aim is to be as accurate and reliable as possible. Any planning needs to control the duration of the execution time of the process and its repetition. A further fundamental aspect, if necessary, is the changeover time.

These general planning inputs, which can be used in any company regardless of its business, are also applicable to soccer, where the scout must master the length of the match run time and replay. You should know that watching a U9 game is not the same as watching a U19 game, since the duration of each game can vary up to forty minutes per game.

For this reason, it is essential to know the duration of the matches to be scheduled in order to make an accurate calculation, since a simple schedule in which the duration of the matches is always the same is not the same as a mixed schedule in which the duration of games varies during the day or the weekend.

In relation to changeover time, we refer to travel between planned matches. It is important to always be at the meetings in good time, trying to be there 30 minutes before the beginning of it so that the

scout can settle in a comfortable and discreet place for observation. As long as the match does not start, you can get the lineups, review them and watch the teams warm up. If you are already in the validation or decision phase of a signing, watching the warm-up could be important, as you can observe the player's attitude towards his teammates, the type of warm-up he performs, whether he is concentrated or not, and so on.

Here is an example of simple planning, such as the ninety minutes of a U19 game on Saturday 02/09 and a U18 game on 03/09. Although we try to plan six matches in one weekend, three on Saturday and three on Sunday, the maximum time of the match already takes away ninety minutes per match and we must take into account the travel between different matches.

**Table 1: U19 and U18 game planning example**

Matches for day 1 of the season						
Match day	Day	Category	Starting time	Ending time	Duration	Journey
1	02/09	U19 A-U19 B	12:00	14:00	90'	30'
		U19 C-U19 D	16:00	18:00		45'
		U19 E-U19 F	19:00	21:00		30'
	03/09	U18 A-U19 B	11:00	13:00		70'
		U18 C-U19 D	15:00	17:00		35'
		U19 A-U19 B	18:00	20:00		15'

Source: own elaboration.

Table 1 shows a schedule in which the first game on Saturday 02/09 starts at 12:00 and we previously have a 30-minute journey. Bearing in mind that we will always try to be there 30 minutes before the match, we must leave one hour before the start of the game. The end is scheduled for 14:00, always applying the same logic: if the match starts correctly on time, ends without interruptions and without significant added time, counting the break of fifteen minutes between the two halves, the match finishes without any problems at about 105 minutes. From this point on, we should always leave fifteen minutes more for possible uncertain conditions such as injuries, unforeseen interruptions or adverse weather. In addition to the departure of the stadium, these reasons may lengthen the match by an additional 15 minutes.

From here, after the two hours, we are already counting, another journey, in this case, of forty-five minutes more, arriving at the second game on Saturday at 14:30 in the best case or about 15:00-15:30 in the worst case. We finish the last game at 19:00 with a short thirty-minute trip beforehand, which allows us to comply with the previous rule mentioned above.

The same procedure applies for the U18 category on Sunday 03/09, only taking into account that the first trip is already seventy minutes long, so you must leave at least two hours before 11:00.

However, if we plan several matches involving fewer minutes per game, such as, for example, all categories below U17 to U8, the duration of the game can vary in a range from fifty to eighty minutes per game. The duration of the matches may vary according to the regulations of the different territorial federations. The scout can observe a higher volume of games in about the same amount of time as the previous example of simple planning, in about the same hours.

In Table 2, schedules of different categories are shown, planning for Saturday, September 2, a U16 game and three U14 games. As can be seen, despite the fact that the scout would start at 10:00 due to the fact that neither U19 nor U18 can start because of competition regulations before 12:00, unless exceptional cases ending also at 21:00, we have managed to see one more game with two factors to be controlled: the duration of the U14 that are reduced between 10 and

20 minutes compared to the U19, and the travel time we reduced to fit one more game. Thus, the scout gets to watch four games on Saturday in this mixed schedule instead of the three in the previous single schedule.

**Table 2: U16, U14, U12 and U9 game planning example**

Matches for day 1 of the season						
Match day	Day	Category	Starting time	Ending time	Duration	Journey
1	02/09	U16 A-U16 B	10:00	12:00	80'	60'
		U14 C-U14 D	13:00	15:00	70'	15'
		U14E-U14 F	16:00	18:00	70'	20'
		U14G-U14 H	19:00	21:00	70'	25'
	03/09	U9 A-U9 B	09:00	10:30	50'	40'
		U9 C-U19 D	11:00	12:30	50'	15'
		U12 A-U12 B	13:30	14:30	60'	10'
		U12 C-U12 D	15:00	16:30	60'	10'
		U12E-U12 F	18:00	19:30	60'	15'

Source: own elaboration.

Looking back at the mixed planning for Sunday 03/09, we see that this one still benefits the scout even more in order to get volume. The U9 category always starts early and its full duration is about fifty minutes, almost half of a U19 or U18 match. The duration of the U12 match is between sixty to seventy minutes long. Usually, the breaks in these matches are shorter than the usual fifteen and there are very few interruptions. This, along with detailed travel planning, allows the scout to observe five games instead of the three of the simple planning and, although it also starts a little earlier, it ends at the same time as the simple planning in Table 1.

Finally, and as a practical tip, it is always recommended to have an alternative schedule, i.e., matches at the same times and in the same or nearby areas as the scheduled matches, in case there are circumstances that make it impossible to watch some of the initially planned games. These circumstances may be: suspension of matches, last minute schedule changes, players we are interested in monitoring may not be called up. Thus, in case of any of these unforeseen events, we can modify and plan ahead.

Also, we must keep in mind that we must be as efficient as possible with our resources (time and money, for example). This means that, during a period of activity, it can be interesting to stay in the same club we are interested in following (either because its teams compete in the highest categories or because it is a club that we usually follow for different reasons) and take advantage of the opportunity to

watch several matches of different teams in the same day. This means that we do not “waste” travel time and we do not incur “extra” mileage expenses. All these factors should be taken into account when planning the weekend tour.

### **1.3. Stages of the scout's planning**

The scout must organize the season in three phases: **volume, follow-up and validation:**

- **Volume** is the most time-consuming part of scouting, since as well as planning to see as many games as possible, it is maintained throughout the season at different ages or stages.
- **The follow-up** appears at the moment the scout has discovered or perceived a possible talented player and must review whether his projection is as expected or, on the contrary, is stuck and is not as expected.
- Lastly, there is the **validation phase**, where the scout must decide on the players who have passed the monitoring process, if he considers that the player can be a potential candidate for the club's needs.

The following is a detailed description of the three stages and the timetable to be followed for each of them in order to organize individual planning in a more efficient and meaningful way.

### **1.3.1 Volume**

The volume stage covers the pre-season through the months of November and December. During this, the scout should watch as many games as possible to get to know both the clubs and the players. There are new signings, players who no longer belong to the club, players who have been promoted in age, and others who have shown physical and performance improvement. This stage is the most difficult of the season, as it forces the scout to know and detect in a fast and concise way the existing talented players in his area and who can be passed on to the follow-up phase. At this stage it should be noted that, although we have placed it temporarily in the first 3-4 months of the season, from January onwards there will be high volume goals for other lower age groups, in addition to all the mid and end of season tournaments, where a large number of matches, teams and players will also be seen.

Also, the high competition for talented players means that these early volume stages are becoming progressively shorter, as some clubs decide on signings for the following season well in advance,

especially in youth soccer. Although we must adapt to the market, we must do a good job, and in this case planning and the months of volume are very important.

### **1.3.2 Follow-up**

This is the scout's second stage of the season, being January and February the most relevant months. After the volume stage, the scout will have a reduced list of players to monitor closely and with greater interest and dedication. This list of players depends either on the talent detected in their area or on the needs requested by the club. In any case, it must contain the best players in the scout's area. The scout must always understand before the month of February each season whether the players on the list are strong candidates to be a possible addition or, on the contrary, remain on the more standardized list to review their projection without going through the filter of the confirmation stage.

### **1.3.3 Validation**

This is the final stage for the scout and should take place between February and March at the latest. It is possible that these processes may be accelerated and confirmation may be obtained earlier

between September and October, but it is usual that the scout may observe the player three or four times if necessary to obtain a clear and definitive confirmation as to whether or not the player's level is sufficient to propose the player's incorporation or not. This stage gives credibility and value to the scout, since his opinion can gain weight for a future incorporation or, on the contrary, an exclusion is recommended. At this stage, it is good to have prior experience of the player and the factors that may influence his recruitment and performance, such as his contractual situation, family background, behavior and injury history. The more detailed the information, the easier it is to make a decision.

#### **1.4. Getting to know the area**

The organization will vary depending on whether the scout's assigned area is extensive or not, and the planning can range from very simple to very complex, including intermediate stages.

Based on the example of the competition in Spain explained in Module 1, an example area will be chosen to show the initial difficulty until reaching the stage of discovering the best and most efficient way to save distances.

As can be seen, Figures 1 and 2 show the first two rounds of the top U19 category in Spain belonging to the División de Honor Juvenil Group 1. In both figures, the sixteen stadiums or fields are shown, eight on day 1 in Figure 1 and eight on day 2 in Figure 2. They all belong to the area that has been chosen as a sample and that the scout should know and master.

Group 1 is made up of four teams from Cantabria, four teams from Asturias and eight teams from Galicia, making up half of the group.

**Figure 1: Day 1 of Group 1 of the Juvenile Division of Honor U19**

Jornada 1 (03-09-2023)			
R.C. Celta de Vigo SAD	2 - 1	Real Racing Club de Santander SAD	
S.D. Compostela	1 - 0	Coruxo F.C.	
Veriña C.F. "A"	1 - 2	R.C. Deportivo de La Coruña SAD	
E.D. Val Miñor Nigran	0 - 0	Real Sporting de Gijón SAD "A"	
Real Oviedo SAD "A"	3 - 1	C.D. Covadonga "A"	
C.D. Choco	1 - 0	Club Bansander	
C.D. Lugo SAD	0 - 1	C.At. Perines	
S.D. Revilla	1 - 0	Arosa Sociedad Cultural	

Source: own elaboration

**Figure 2: Day 2 of Group 1 of the Juvenile Division of Honor U19**

Jornada 2 (10-09-2023)			
Real Racing Club de Santander SAD	3 - 0	S.D. Revilla	
Coruxo F.C.	0 - 1	R.C. Celta de Vigo SAD	
R.C. Deportivo de La Coruña SAD	3 - 4	S.D. Compostela	
Real Sporting de Gijón SAD "A"	1 - 1	Veriña C.F. "A"	
C.D. Covadonga "A"	0 - 3	E.D. Val Miñor Nigran	
Club Bansander	3 - 4	Real Oviedo SAD "A"	
C.At. Perines	1 - 3	C.D. Choco	
Arosa Sociedad Cultural	1 - 1	C.D. Lugo SAD	

Source: own elaboration

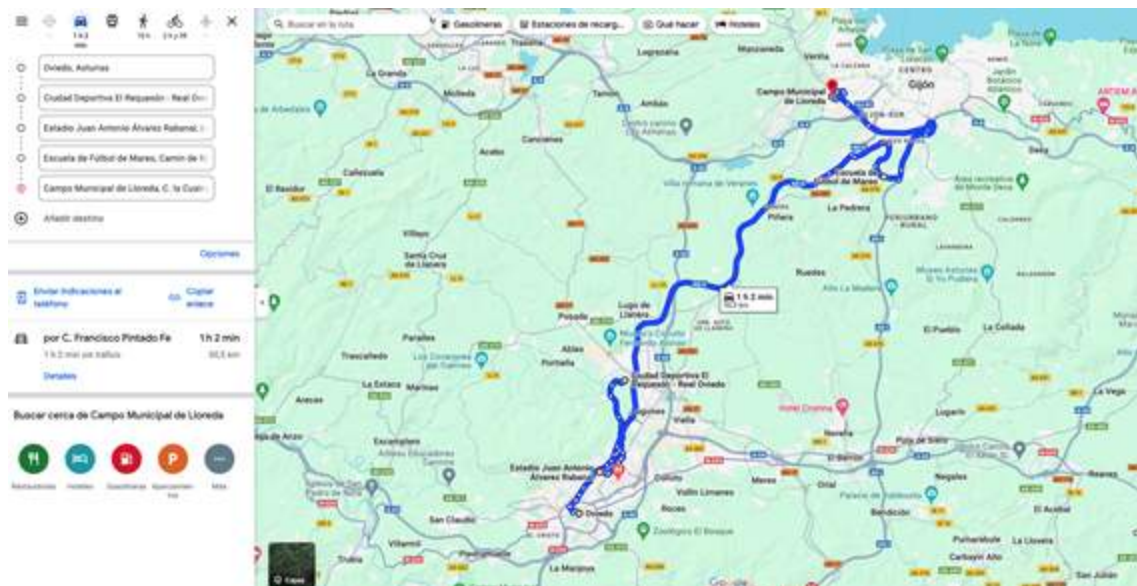
Among the four teams in Cantabria, there is only one that belongs to a professional soccer team, which is Real Racing Club de Santander. There are two from Asturias: Real Oviedo and Real Sporting de Gijón. Two others from Galicia are Real Club Celta de Vigo and Real Club Deportivo de La Coruña. The monitoring of these five teams, as they are professional youth academies, is essential for the scout, because - as mentioned above - they serve as a filter to observe the best players, since, in theory, they concentrate the best players of that age in the area.

## 1.5. Calculating distances

Based on the example of Figures 1 and 2, and starting from the premise that all the teams must be known, assuming, for example, that the scout's place of residence is in the city of Oviedo, the maximum distances must be calculated to try to find a better average point so as to observe as many teams as possible while traveling the shortest possible distance.

Note that we continue to use group 1 of the División de Honor Juvenil category and a scout with residence in Oviedo for the examples.

**Figure 3: Travels of the Asturian teams in Group 1 of the U19 Youth Honor Division**

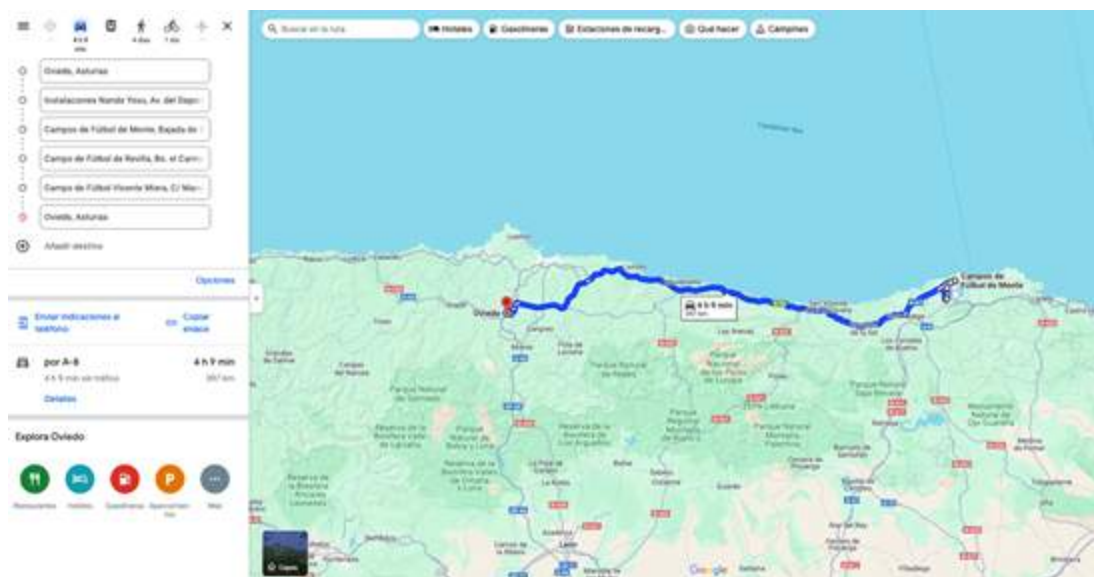


Source: screenshot from Google Maps.

The distances we get from Oviedo to the four Asturian teams is fifty kilometers, with a maximum travel time of one hour if we have to go to the four fields in a weekend.

This distance is clearly accessible, and allows us to get to know the four teams in depth, saving travel and avoiding excessive driving time.

#### **Figure 4: Travels of the Cantabrian teams of Group 1 of the U19 Youth Honor Division**



Source: screenshot from Google Maps.

Figure 4 analyzes the scout's distance from Oviedo to Cantabria, in order to observe the group's Cantabrian teams and get to know them. As can be seen, from Oviedo to Cantabria the scout would already

have two hundred kilometers that could be equivalent to a two-hour round trip. On the other hand, the distance between the four Cantabrian clubs is minimal and does not exceed thirty kilometers.

**Figure 5: Travels of the Galician teams of Group 1 of the Juvenile Division of Honor Youth U19**



Source: screenshot from Google Maps.

Figure 5 shows the long distance involved in traveling to Galicia for a scout living in Oviedo. In this case, therefore, it is necessary to plan more carefully. If the routes were organized in order, they would have a sequence Lugo-Coruña-Compostela-Vigo-Pontevedra. The analysis of the Galician teams covers 1,000 kilometers and would involve spending the night in the middle between Saturday and Sunday to

optimize the more than six-hour round trip and the six-hour return trip.

After analyzing the zones of the sixteen teams, we can corroborate that for the scout residing in Oviedo it is much easier to travel to Cantabria every two weeks than to travel to Galicia, so the best thing would be to wait until the teams of those clubs, determined as more interesting, play closer to our residence and then observe the nearest community, which is Cantabria. It would be recommended to travel to Galicia in the volume phase twice between September and December, checking beforehand that it has the maximum number of matches between Galician teams to save trips and gather rivals.

The examples shown are intended to emphasize the importance of planning distances according to the match schedule, in order to achieve maximum efficiency in travel time. Here, as in many other aspects of the scout's work, there is an important part of planning and analysis.

## **1.6. Preseason planning**

As was seen in Module 1, the preseason consists of friendlies between different teams and preseason tournaments. It is essential for the scout to obtain information on friendlies played in his area, and on

tournaments played to organize the preseason. The preseason starts in July for the professional teams and in early August for the grassroots teams (in the senior teams) and lasts approximately one month with friendlies and tournaments. This is why the scout has four full weekends and some midweek dates to make an initial assessment of how the teams and players are performing.

This would be like an anticipation of the volume phase, although -as we say- the information obtained in the preseason, due to its nature, can never be considered as conclusive, and it is more useful for getting ready and anticipating work.

**Table 3: U19 preseason game planning example**

U19 preseason games					
Day	Tournament	Time	Match	Stadium	Result
Aug 11	40 Villa de Laredo	19:00	Athletic Club Bilbao-Real Sporting Gijón	Laredo Municipal Stadium (Cantabria)	
Aug 12		19:00	Real Racing Club-Real Sociedad de Fútbol		
Aug 13		17:00	Real Sporting Gijón-Real Sociedad de Fútbol		
Aug 13		19:00	Athletic Club Bilbao-Real Racing Club		
Aug 27	XXIV Torneo Escobedo	19:00	Real Racing Club-Real Valladolid	Sports facilities Escobedo (Cantabria)	
Aug 28		19:00	Club At. Perines-Club Bansander		
Aug 28		17:00	Club At. Perines-Real Valladolid		
Aug 29		19:00	Real Racing Club-Club Bansander		
Sep 2	Copa Principado	15:30	El Berrón-Real Oviedo	Sergio Sánchez el Berrón Soccer Field (Asturias)	
Sep 2		19:15	EFMO Boadilla-Real Sporting de Gijón		
Sep 3		10:00	Real Oviedo-Atlético Coruña Montañeros		
Sep 3		11:30	Real Sporting Gijón-Pabellón Ourense		

Source: own elaboration.

Based on the example of the teams mentioned in the previous section, Table 3 contains three tournaments on three different weekends, played from Friday to Sunday, occupying a total of nine preseason days, where we can observe five of the sixteen teams mentioned above.

All of them are played in an area close to our residence in Oviedo, which allows us to go and return on the same day without a long

journey; and investing about four hours of travel in the first two tournaments and in the third one about thirty minutes.

This planning allows the scout to review the teams of his area in demanding matches with teams from other communities, and thus check the level of his area in comparison with other nearby zones. As mentioned above, it also provides an initial evaluation for the scout, where teams usually go with the entire staff and usually make a complete change of players at halftime. If the scout already has experience in the area, the preseason will serve to check the physical development of the players, especially at those ages where changes occur in a short period of time and, many times, in a surprising way.

In either case, the scout must review the new additions to the teams in his zone, as well as the players who have left these teams, either because of a low expected level or because of promotion to another team in the same zone or in other zones, even if he already has previous experience in the zone or not. Initially, you should check if any player in your area may have signed with a top national, European or international team.

## **1.7. Planning tournaments**

These exceptional events that take place in the middle of the season, coinciding with rest periods in the competition calendar or at the end of the season, are referred to in Module 1. Some of the most common are the tournaments during Easter, a period of rest in the calendar that varies annually but usually takes place between the end of March and the beginning of April. The scout must know where these tournaments are played in order to prioritize those that are of most interest to him and organize his planning with sufficient time to be most efficient.

Since there are usually multiple matches and different places, it is necessary to plan in detail in order to always watch the maximum number of matches. Table 4 shows a typical tournament covering various age groups in which the duration of the matches is a twenty-five minute single part. This is a short format that allows the scout to observe different teams and ages between U8 and U16 in the same day and, although they are played in different stadiums, it is important to calculate the distances and know in advance that all of them are within a radius of 40 kilometers.

**Table 4: Game planning example for a Tournament in between seasons**

Oviedo Cup Tournament Easter Week Season						
PLACE	N. º	DATE	TIME	CATEGOR Y	LOCAL	VISITOR
Campos Fed.- Gijón	1	28/3	9:30	Uº14	SALAMANCA CF UDS	PREVIOUS PHASE WINNER 9
Campos Fed.- Gijón	2	28/3	9:30	Uº13	SALAMANCA CF UDS	CD MÓSTOLES URJC
H.F.E. Tensi	2	28/3	10:3 0	Uº14	AD UNIÓN CARRASCAL	REAL ZARAGOZA
Hnos. Uiana		28/3	10:3 0	Uº14	FC PORTO	CI AMISTAD
Hnos. Uiana		28/3	11:3 0	Uº13	EFMO BOADILLA	CI AMISTAD
Llano 2000 F-7		28/3	11:3 0	Uº12	CD MÓSTOLES URJC	REAL SPORTING
Hermanos Antuña		28/3	12:1 5	Uº13	GRANADA CF	CAUDAL
Hnos. Uiana		28/3	12:4 5	Uº15	CI AMISTAD	BURGOS CF
H.F.E. Tensi F8	1	28/3	13:0 0	Uº8	CI AMISTAD	EF MAREO
Campos Fed.- Gijón	1	28/3	13:4 5	Uº15	REAL SPORTING	RSD ALCALÁ DE HENARES
Campos Fed.- Gijón	2	28/3	13:4 5	Uº13	REAL SPORTING	ACADEMIA DRIBLING
H.F.E. Tensi	2	28/3	13:4 5	Uº15	CF Cerdanyola	REAL ZARAGOZA
Vallobín		28/3	13:4 5	Uº16	REAL MALLORCA	ARENAS DE ALCABRE
Díaz Vega		28/3	15:3 0	Uº13	RC DEPORTIVO	CD COVADONGA
Guelito-Noreña		28/3	15:3 0	Uº14	DEPORTIVO ALAVÉS	RAYO ALCOBENDAS
Hermanos Antuña		28/3	16:3 0	Uº13	RACING SANTANDER	SDCR LA CORREDORIA

La Marzaniella		28/3	17:0 0	U <sup>16</sup>	REAL VALLADOLID	LICEO FRANCÉS
El Berrón		28/3	17:3 0	U <sup>16</sup>	RAYO VALLECANO	OZA JUVENIL, S.D.
El Cristo		28/3	17:3 0	U <sup>15</sup>	REAL SOCIEDAD	MARCET FOOTBALL
Matalablima		28/3	17:3 0	U <sup>14</sup>	RC CELTA	CD MÓSTOLES URJC
Llano 2000 F-7		28/3	18:1 5	U <sup>12</sup>	REAL SPORTING	CD BADAJOZ
Vallobín	2	28/3	18:1 5	U <sup>12</sup>	WINNER F. PREVIOUS 11	REAL VALLADOLID
El Cristo		28/3	18:4 5	U <sup>15</sup>	BANSANDER	RCD ESPANYOL
H.F.E. Tensi	2	28/3	18:4 5	U <sup>16</sup>	CA OSASUNA	FURSAN HISPANIA FC
Matalablima		28/3	18:4 5	U <sup>13</sup>	ASTURIAN CENTER	GRANADA CF
H.F.E. Tensi	2	28/3	19:4 5	U <sup>15</sup>	PREVIOUS PHASE 8	CA OSASUNA
H.F.E. Tensi FB	1	28/3	19:4 5	U <sup>8</sup>	REAL OVIEDO	SD NAVARRO

Source: own elaboration.

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## 1.8. Planning the regional selections

As it was observed in Module 1, another exception in the calendar are the national championships of autonomous teams (CNSA) of the different categories, where teams of the autonomous communities compare their potential, between two and three times in the case of the U14 and U16 categories, and once a year in the case of the U12.

Scouts use these championships to observe the best players of each autonomous community at those ages, in a fast and highly competitive format. According to the rules established by the RFEF,

which is the organizer of these championships, there are a series of restrictions for the selection of players to participate in the CNSA on the part of the different coaches. The most relevant and to be considered by the scout are the following:

- There shall not be more than three players belonging to the same club on the field at any one time during the match. It should be noted that goalkeepers are not included in this restriction.
- There must be a minimum of four first-year players on each team's roster and at all times there must be a minimum of two of them on the field. This standard does not apply to category U-12.

The two rules described above are of fundamental interest to scouts because, if we do not know them, our assessment of the tournament or even the development of the games and the changes made during them, can lead us to error.

An example of the Spanish Championship of U12 regional teams is shown, set in the calendar for the weekend before the Easter break specifically, and as can be seen in the annual calendar of the first module, it is disputed between 22 and 24 March. All matches are organized by drawing lots and a preliminary phase is organized with four groups from which the first two from each of them advance to the final phase.

Figures 6, 7, 8 and 9 show the qualifying matches of each group, which will be played in four different venues due to overlapping match times. In this case, the scout must prioritize whether to review the teams in his area competing with the rest to assess the level of their players in case they are in the confirmation or validation period; or, on the contrary, whether to observe other teams with a good level to discover new players while keeping up with the volume stage. In any case, on Sunday, as shown in Figure 10, the scout will be able to watch live the semifinal and the final where the best players of the whole championship will surely meet.

In this type of championships, such as those we exemplified with the CNSA U-12, where many matches are concentrated in nearby or adjacent areas, coinciding in time, if the club's budget allows it, it is ideal that several scouts attend in order to give the best coverage.

Also, when a scout is faced with a lot of games like this, in many occasions, the information is already filtered by teammates' reports from the different zones, which helps to focus on certain players without having to make a general observation of everyone. However, it is important to note that this prior information will always depend on the club's scouting volume and, therefore, its budget level.

Likewise, in the best possible context, attendance at the different phases of the CNSAs would already have some prior information on the most outstanding players, based on observations of the players in

competition and/or in the preparation calls made by the different regional teams.

**Figure 6: Example of group A of the U12 Spanish Championship of Autonomous Region Selections**

## GRUPO A

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
J1		Región de Murcia - Comunidad Valenciana	10:35
J1		Principado de Asturias - Castilla y León	10:35
J2		Islas Baleares - Comunidad Valenciana	12:50
J2		Castilla y León - Región de Murcia	12:50
J3		Islas Baleares - Principado de Asturias	19:05
J3		Comunidad Valenciana - Castilla y León	19:05
J4		Comunidad Valenciana - Principado de Asturias	10:35
J4		Región de Murcia - Islas Baleares	10:35
J5		Castilla y León - Islas Baleares	12:50
J5		Principado de Asturias - Región de Murcia	12:50

Source: own elaboration.

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**Figure 7: Example of group B of the U12 Spanish Championship of Autonomous Region Selections**

## GRUPO B

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
J1		Andalucía - País Vasco	- 10:35
J1		Ceuta - Cantabria	- 10:35
J2		La Rioja - País Vasco	- 12:50
J2		Cantabria - Andalucía	- 12:50
J3		La Rioja - Ceuta	- 19:05
J3		País Vasco - Cantabria	- 19:05
J4		País Vasco - Ceuta	- 10:35
J4		Andalucía - La Rioja	- 10:35
J5		Cantabria - La Rioja	- 12:50
J5		Ceuta - Andalucía	- 12:50

Source: own elaboration

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**Figure 8: Example of group C of the U12 Spanish Championship of Autonomous Region Selections**

## GRUPO C

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
J1		Canarias - Galicia	- 10:35
J1		Cataluña - Comunidad de Madrid	- 10:35
J2		Castilla-La Mancha - Galicia	- 12:50
J2		Comunidad de Madrid - Canarias	- 12:50
J3		Castilla-La Mancha - Cataluña	- 19:05
J3		Galicia - Comunidad de Madrid	- 19:05
J4		Galicia - Cataluña	- 10:35
J4		Canarias - Castilla-La Mancha	- 10:35
J5		Comunidad de Madrid - Castilla-La Mancha	- 12:50
J5		Cataluña - Canarias	- 12:50

Source: own elaboration

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**Figure 9: Example of group D of the U12 Spanish Championship of Autonomous Region Selections**

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
J1		Navarra - Aragón	- 10:35
J1		Melilla - Extremadura	- 10:35
J2		Melilla - Aragón	- 19:05
J2		Extremadura - Navarra	- 19:05
J3		Aragón - Extremadura	- 10:35
J3		Navarra - Melilla	- 10:35

Source: own elaboration

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**Figure 10: Example of the final phase of the U12 Spanish Championship of autonomous teams**

## CUARTOS DE FINAL

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
Partido 1		1º Grupo A - 2º Grupo B	- 19:15
Partido 2		1º Grupo C - 2º Grupo D	- 19:15
Partido 3		1º Grupo B - 2º Grupo A	- 19:15
Partido 4		1º Grupo D - 2º Grupo C	- 19:15

## SEMIFINALES

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
Semifinal 1		Ganador Partido 1 - Ganador Partido 2	- 11:00
Semifinal 2		Ganador Partido 3 - Ganador Partido 4	- 11:00

## FINAL

JORNADA	CAMPO	ENCUENTRO	HORA
Final		Ganador Semifinal 1 - Ganador Semifinal 2	- 13:00

Source: own elaboration

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## 1.9. Planning the youth national teams





Another exceptional period offered by the calendar are the training sessions of the national teams, the qualifying and performance championships for which the youth teams qualify, such as the European Championship or the World Cup.

A major exception to the calendar shown in the first module, which has already been exemplified, is the U17 World Cup, which takes place in the middle of the season, between November and December. This competition is usually held at an international level in countries far away from those that compete in it, which forces the scout to travel for a period of three or four weeks in order to attend it. It is clear that these events are attended by the best players of their age group in the world, so we may see players who in the near future will be in the top categories of the best leagues around the world.

This is an example of the scout's difficulty in planning, as shown in Figure 11 and later in Table 5, since the scout must choose which of the eight matches he wants to observe in person. Since some games are played in the same stadiums three hours apart, the scout can watch both on November 20, and on November 21 he must choose two out of four, but on November 22 he can watch both again, so by calculating travel and accommodation in advance and planning well, he will be able to watch six of the eight games.

**Figure 11: Example of the Round of 16 of the FIFA U17 World Championship**





### November 20:

Octavos de final	ECUADOR 	1 · 3	 BRASIL	FINAL >
Octavos de final	• ESPAÑA 	2 · 1	 JAPÓN	FINAL >

### November 21:

Octavos de final	• ALEMANIA 	3 · 2	 EE. UU.	FINAL >
Octavos de final	• MALI 	5 · 0	 MÉXICO	FINAL >
Octavos de final	• ARGENTINA 	5 · 0	 VENEZUELA	FINAL >
Octavos de final	• MARRUECOS 	1 · 1	 RI DE IRÁN	FINAL >
		4 · 1	Marruecos Victorias 4 - 1 En los penales	

### November 22:

Octavos de final	INGLATERRA 	1 · 2	 UZBEKISTÁN	FINAL >
Octavos de final	• FRANCIA 	0 · 0	 SENEGAL	FINAL >
		5 · 3	Francia Victorias 5 - 3 En los penales	

Source: FIFA, s.f., <https://shre.ink/gVAo>

**Table 5: Sample match schedule for the Round of 16 of the FIFA U17 World Championship**

Round of 16 World U17 Indonesia			
Day	STADIUM	Time	Match
Nov 20	Manahan Stadium (SURAKARTA)	9:30	ECUADOR-BRAZIL
Nov 20	Manahan Stadium (SURAKARTA)	13:00	SPAIN-JAPAN
Nov 21	Jalak Harupat Stadium (Bandung)	9:30	Germany-US A
Nov 21	Gelora Bung Tomo Stadium (Surabaya)	9:30	MALI-MEXICO
Nov 21	Jalak Harupat Stadium (Bandung)	13:00	ARGENTINA-VENEZUELA
Nov 21	Gelora Bung Tomo Stadium (Surabaya)	13:00	MOROCCO-RI OF IRAN
Nov 22	Jakarta International Stadium (Jakarta)	9:30	ENGLAND-UZBEKISTAN
Nov 22	Jakarta International Stadium (Jakarta)	13:00	FRANCE-SENEGAL

Source: own elaboration.

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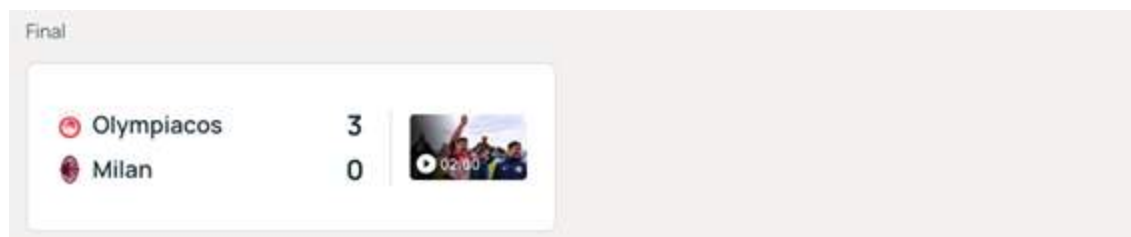
## 1.10. Planning European competitions

One of the possible exceptions in the U19 category is the **UEFA Youth League**. The competition in this format is similar to the top competition, the UEFA Champions League, which is played by the best European teams. As can be seen in the annual calendar of Module 1, it

is played on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, coinciding with the dates of the first teams, and usually played in the mid-afternoon before the first teams' match. In these cases, the scout responsible for this competition, or the one who coincides with the area, must plan in advance the trip and his travel, as well as choose which match he is interested in watching on Tuesday and Wednesday, since due to time incompatibility and distances between countries, it is almost impossible to watch two matches each day.

Figure 12 shows the incompatibility of the semifinals, where the scout will have to choose whether to travel to Greece or Portugal, since the same day and the same time slot do not allow him to watch both of them. The scout will be able to attend the final, which takes place three days later at UEFA premises in Switzerland.

**Figure 12: Example of the UEFA Youth League U19 semifinals and finals**



Source: UEFA Youth League, n.d., <https://shre.ink/gVAM>

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# Conclusions

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The second module reinforces everything learned in Module 1, using visual examples to give the scout a more specific understanding of what planning is.

The module has shown several examples of the efficiency of planning, always with the objective of allowing you to observe the maximum number of matches each weekend. As time is a finite factor, the scout must first review distances, routes, length of matches and time between them to be able to prioritize and get the maximum efficiency.

The different stages of the season for scouting have been explained, starting with a volume phase that, although it may extend throughout the season, has to bear fruit from December onwards in terms of talent detection. Subsequently, this talent must be validated in the second quarter of the season and, in case it is positive, it must be confirmed to the department as a proposal for incorporation.

Also, an example of how to discover and get to know the area was shown, using a specific calendar as an example, which helped us to calculate the distances and to know how we can optimize the planning throughout the season.

Then, we have explored each and every one of the exceptions that the calendar can offer us, such as the preseason, tournaments, regional teams, youth teams and European competitions. The aim was to show, through concrete examples, that with good anticipation and knowledge of the area and age groups, talent can be mastered and discovered before other clubs.

In the next Module 3, you will develop the necessary skills to observe the player and optimize talent detection.

[CONTINUE](#)

## References

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<https://www.fifa.com/fifaplus/es/tournaments/mens/u17worldcup/indonesia-2023/scores-fixtures?country=ES&wtw-filter=ALL&stage=Octavos+de+final&team=none>

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