Analysis between success and defensive action - case study of Handball Men’s European Championship, 2006

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Introduction
The specific literature review in Handball reveals the predominance of studies deal with the offensive process. The considerations about team’s defensive activity are usually based on the offensive behaviour of the opposite team. Nevertheless, in order to be valid the assessment of performance in sport games should consider the peculiarities of defensive activity of players and teams.

The main goal of the study was to analyse the relationship between the success and the defensive action used in 6x6 situation of the teams classified in the three first places in Handball Men’s European Championship, 2006 (France, Spain and Denmark national teams).

Material and Methods
In total, 23 matches were analysed (France - 8, Denmark – 8 and Spain - 7). A specific computer program (ORAND) was created to register a total of 1854 defensive actions from 1042 DP. The 68 defensive performance indicators were grouped in 9 categories: defensive process duration, time of the game, game result, player, defensive action, defensive zone, process result, defensive system, phase of game. The defensive action category was consisted of 23 indicators.

The non-parametric chi-square test was used in order to evaluate the level of association between defensive actions and team success.

Results
The findings of the study suggest that the defensive actions significantly associated with team failure on defence were:
- “one against one” action (adjusted residual -10,2);
- “one against two” action (adjusted residual -3,7);
- defensive change (adjusted residual -3,0).

The set of defensive actions significantly associated with success included:
- interceptions with ball possession (adjusted residual 8,9);
- block (adjusted residual 5,6);
- pressure on shooting player (adjusted residual 4,9);
It was registered that actions related with players physical contact and an intentions to dissuade opponent pass were important indicators for recovering ball possession. The indicators related with these actions showed the significant relationship with success of defensive process:
- fault in pass (adjusted residual 2,4);
- technical faults with contact (adjusted residual 26,6);
- technical faults under pressure (adjusted residual 6,2).

Discussion
These data can be used for optimising training contents, particularly in relation to development of handball players’ defensive skills.

References
http://activities.eurohandball.com/?mode=104&ctrl=11&id1=1&id2=7&id3=29