

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING OF TRAINING IN THE COMPETITIVE PERIOD IN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

DOI 10.7251/SIZEN2001132A
ISSN 1840-152X
UDK 796.015.2:796.332
<http://sportizdravlje.rs.ba/>
<https://doisrpska.nub.rs/index.php/SIZ>

¹Luka Androja,
¹Veronika Terzić

¹College of Management and Design, Aspira, Split, Croatia

PROFESSIONAL ARTICLE

Abstract: Training planning and programming make up a very complex process, especially planning and programming during the competition period. The women's soccer competition lasts a total of five to six months and is divided into two sub-seasons. The competition period is a mesocycle period that is made up of multiple microcycles. During this period, intensive training work is carried out for the football players to reach the highest level of their abilities. Coaches need to know how to manage their sports form for football players to be most ready for the most important phase of the competition. In order to maintain it, it is necessary to conduct training of specific and situational fitness exercises that connect the functional, motor, and technical-tactical goals. The intensity of such training should be very high (80-100%). The share of fitness training in the competition period should be around 30%, and studies have shown that 1-2 stimuli per week are required to maintain fitness abilities, provided the intensity is high. The seven-day microcycle consists of 5 individual training sessions, matches, and rest days. The footballers play 20-25 games of different difficulty and importance during the season. The schedule of these matches determines the dynamics of the load, which means that if the match is important in the microcycle, the lower energy component of the load is applied and vice versa. Coaches and professional staff should be continuously educated in the form of planning and programming sports training, to acquire new knowledge about sports form management in all periods, phases, and conditions during the season, with special emphasis on the competition period.

Keywords: training planning and programming, competition period, mesocycle, sports form, women's football

1. Introduction

The increasing demands placed on female football players in the process of training and competition are the result of a significant connection between science and practice, where the entire system of preparation is in the function of achieving top individual qualities. (Mikić et al., 2006). However, these requirements cannot be easily met without a well-developed training plan and program. Training planning and programming make up a very complex process, especially planning and programming during the competition period. The competition period lasts

throughout the competition season and a large number of official matches are played in it, but also a large number of control and preparatory matches. (Mikić et al., 2006). According to the intensity of the match, the coaches determine the weekly training load. The most intense training load in training is carried out in the weeks when the team expects less demanding matches, while the lowest intensity of the load is used in the weeks when more demanding matches are expected, ie better opponents. Each coach is in a challenging situation during the competition period, so it is necessary to look at the current situation and deploy all training components, to achieve certain realistically set annual goals according to the training plan and program for the current season. The main and biggest goal of this period is to maintain the sports form that was achieved in the preparation period. That is why we say that the most important periods of a football team are the preparation and competition period. (Mikić et al., 2006).

2. Competition period - mesocycle period

2.1. Duration of the competition period in women's football

Sports form is very demanding to manage in the competition period due to the fact that it lasts a very long time and is carried out in two competition sub seasons. In this regard, the competitive period in women's football on the example of the women's Croatian Football League in one season lasts a total of five to six months. The first part begins in mid-September and ends in late November or early December, and the second begins in mid-March and ends in late May or early June.

2.2. Mesocycle competition period

The mesocycle is a middle cycle of training made up of several microcycles that are included in the ongoing planning and programming of training. The mesocycle is divided into three periods: preparatory, competitive, and transitional. Each of these periods is divided into several phases.

The competition period is the basic type of mesocycle, whose structure, content, and number depend mostly on the competition calendar (number and character of matches), the length of the interval between matches, the sports level of football players, recovery conditions, and set goals. During this period, intensive training work is carried out to bring the football players to the highest level of ability to participate in the competition. The structure of the competitive mesocycle is dominated by competitive microcycles that line up one after the other. The competition period is divided into three phases: the introductory phase of the competition, the official phase of the competition, and the most important phase of the competition of the season, such as the European or World Championships or the

Olympic Games. Between the cycles of these competitions, a recovery-preparatory mesocycle is planned to re-establish the optimal level of sports form. In sports games, competitions take place continuously, but due to the performance of the national team, there may be a need for part of the team to conduct training of a restorative-preparatory nature to re-establish the required level of training and sports form. (Božinović & Vrdoljak, 2013). In the mesocycle of the competition period, the training process is built under the main goal and tasks of this period, and the optimal load dynamics and the ratio of means and methods are ensured. Also, attention should be paid to the rational regime of accumulated training influences that stimulate adaptation to train but cause fatigue. For the coach, certain difficulties in training programming occur when the sports form needs to be managed in a competition period that lasts a very long time and when the competition system is implemented in two competition seasons. In the construction of such a competition period, it is necessary to respect three rules: 1) rationally allocate all programs, especially basic and specific preparations concerning the dynamics of important competitions; 2) in the middle of the competition period, envisage a short period of renewal-preparatory character; and 3) rationally set the structure of work and workload in the period of immediate preparation for the main competition of the season. The competition period thus created must ensure the achievement of sports form and the highest competitive results in the main competitions. (Hrelja, 2017).

The introductory phase of the competition should be the phase of control-preparatory matches, the official phase is the official start of the competition, while the most important phase of the competition is the very end of the competition which includes fighting for points and a certain position in the standings. In the competition period, there is a phase of introductory competitions that are generally less important in terms of results but are of great importance for checking the form and planning possible corrections before major competitions that take place in the middle and end of the competition period. (Salopek, 2015). In the competitive period of the official phase of competition in women's football, as in other sports, the achieved level of sports form is manifested and the planned sports results are achieved, with special emphasis on maintaining sports form. The most important phase of the competition is also the most important phase in the whole season. In addition to the set goals regarding the improvement of overall morphological characteristics, functional and motor abilities, and technical-tactical knowledge, the desired result is the most important indicator. At the top of the pyramid of success factors in sport is the competitive result which is the ultimate measure of an athlete's overall efficiency. It has, to a different extent, incorporated abilities, characteristics, and knowledge from the aforementioned groups of factors. This fact should be taken into account when creating a model of sports preparation and when valorizing individual and team performance.

3. Planning and programming of training in the competitive period in women's football

3.1. Training planning and programming

Planning implies a complex management action that determines the goals and tasks of training and the periodization and conditions under which the set goals can be realized. (Mikić et al., 2006). Programming is a set of management actions that carry out the selection, dosing, and distribution of training operators during work and recovery measures in the rest phase. Training operators are stimulants that produce transformational results, ie quantitative and qualitative changes in individual cycles of sports preparation. They correspond to the states of training of athletes, the desired achievements, and the conditions in which sports preparation is carried out (Milanović, 1997). Therefore, training planning and programming is an essential part of the overall activity of the trainer and the professional team. It enables coincidences to be minimized and optimal sports results to be achieved safely and economically, which correspond to the individual characteristics of the athlete and the conditions in which the training process is carried out. To make an adequate training plan and program, in this case, the competition part, it is necessary to plan the preparation period well. The preparation period should be the basis for the start of the competition period.

3.2. Training planning and programming in the competition period

The competition period is a period of maintenance and stabilization work managed by a coach, and training should use specific and situational fitness exercises that best connect functional and motor, and TE-TA goals on which the competition results depend the most. Therefore, the basic guidelines that coaches should follow during the competition period are:

- training is more specific and situational than using multilateral and basic preparation programs (this refers to the choice of exercises and load dosing);
- most work is done on TE-TA training (multiple levels of the information component of the load) and adaptation to selected tactical variants from different systems of the football game;
- the range of energy load is smaller, but the high intensity of training work remains;
- it is necessary to carefully determine the length of rest after work intervals;

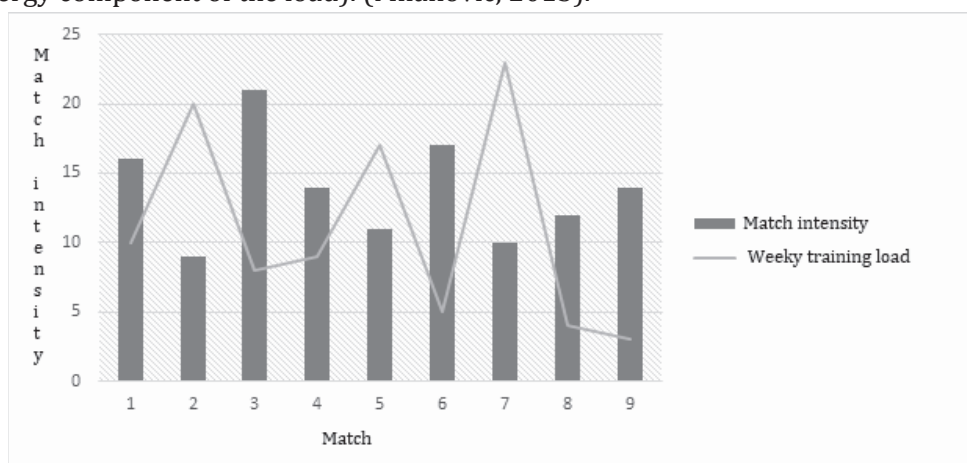
- maintaining fitness training is applied, which means that in the preparation period the achieved level of fitness should be maintained at that level;

The results of control and official competitions indicate the current state of sports form. (Milanović, 2013).

The share of fitness training in the competition period is equal to that at the end of the preparatory part and is about 30%. Studies have shown that 1-2 stimuli per week are sufficient to maintain fitness, provided the intensity is high. (Bradić and Marković, 2008). Fitness training in the competition period can be focused on the active rest of athletes and recovery from injury. It can also have a developmental character, especially with players who don't play games.

For the coach, certain difficulties in the current programming of training occur when it is necessary to manage the sports form in a competition period that lasts a very long time and when the competition system is implemented in two competition seasons. In this form of competition, three rules need to be followed. The first rule is to rationally allocate all programs, especially basic and specific preparations concerning the dynamics of important competitions. The second rule would be to provide for a short period of restorative-preparatory character in the middle of the competition period. The third rule is to rationally set the structure of work and workload in the period of immediate preparation for the most important part of the season. (Milanović, 2013).

In the competitive period, women's football teams play a large number of matches (20-25). They are played at home and away and are different in weight and importance. The schedule of matches determines the dynamics of the load. When an important match is played in the microcycle, the lower energy component of the load is applied and vice versa (less important match, ie weaker opponent - higher energy component of the load). (Milanović, 2013).



Graph 1. Relationship between match weights and weekly training loads (conditional units of match weight and training load)

The three peaks of training loads in three different weeks are reached in microcycles when the easiest matches are played. An increased level of weekly training load can contribute to the accumulation of training effects and in the next microcycle raise the level of team and individual efficiency, ie sports form. (Milanović, 2013).

During the immediate preparation for the main competition, the so-called pendulum principle says that as the main competition approaches the intensity of the load decreases and the intensity of the stimulus increases. (Milanović, 2013).

3.3. The way of training in the competition period

The training is completely specific and situational, and in addition to such training, special kinesiological stimulators are used. The intensity ranges from 80% to 100% of the maximum load. With exercises for agility, explosiveness, and speed, and with technical-tactical (TE-TA) training, the goal is to reach the peak of sports form. Also, the goal is to maintain the level of good physical fitness that was achieved in the earlier stages with maintaining fitness training. The level of workload also depends on the stage the football players are in. The same load should not be used in all three phases. In the introductory phase, the load on the preparatory matches will certainly not be as great as in the official and most important ones. The reason for this is that there is no need to spend large levels of the energy component on the unofficial part of the competition season and that they should be saved for the upcoming result-important matches. In the official phase, it is extremely important to maintain all the previously acquired sports form, because, in the most important phase, the first symptoms of fatigue begin to appear like the end of the season approaches. The experience of the coach and the professional team is extremely important. Football players should be the most prepared at this stage, so in addition to adequate training kinesiological stimulus, psychological preparation before the game is also used a lot in this phase. Most technical-tactical requirements should be done in situational and difficult conditions. This refers to playing in conditions of a smaller or unequal number of players, playing with fewer touches, playing in a shortened space, dueling, etc. All technical requirements, also in the largest possible volume, must be at the situational and improvisational-creative level. (Erceg et al., 2018).

4. Overview of the seven-day training cycle in the competition period

The seven-day microcycle consists of 5 individual training sessions, matches, and rest days. Each training consists of an introductory, preparatory, main (main "A" part, main "B" part), and final part of the training.

Monday

Introductory part - light running over half of the playground with stretching exercises.

Preparatory part - running and jumping exercises through ladders, sticks, groin, and circles on the ground, perform each exercise 4 times in a series and finally connect all runs in one series. Between exercises - stretching.

The main "A" part - in the marked area 16x16 m (with goals) plays by hand. There are three teams with 6 players each. The game takes place by passing by hand, and a goal can only be scored with a header. The goal is also defended by the head. The emphasis is on a game with a lot of duels in the air. The duration of the game is 2 times for 4 minutes. The waiting team takes a throw-in in the middle (center shot) and jumps and headers during the break.

Main "B" part - in the marked area 20x30 m with two goals, a game with two touches of the ball. There are three teams with 6 players each. The duration of the game is 2x6 min.

The final part (10 min) - stretching.

Tuesday

Introductory part - light guiding of the ball in the middle of the field with stretching exercises.

Preparatory part - technical exercises in pairs (hitting the ball with the inside of the foot, full part, receiving the ball on the upper leg and playing with the inside of the foot, receiving on the chest and playing, head kick) - each exercise is done for a minute, between stretching exercises.

The main "A" part - is played in an area of 50x50 m. At one end of the pitch, there are two goals, and at the other one goal. On the side, 15 m in front of the goal, there are three gates 2 m wide. The team (7 players) defending the side with one goal should prevent the other team (9 players) from passing the ball through the goal in front of the goal. If the opposite team loses the ball, everyone presses at the same time. If a team with fewer players wins the ball, they can score a goal on one of the two goals on the opposite side.

Main "B" part - running around the playground for 12 minutes (width of the playground acceleration, length of the playground jogging).

The final part - shooting the bar and stretching.

Wednesday

Training match - game on two goals, 2x25 min.

Thursday

Introductory part - light running of two laps and stretching.

Preparatory part - in a square 10x10 m handover of the ball in various ways between 5 players.

Main "A" part - duration 5x3 min. A game is known as "three colors". 3 teams with 6 players each play possession in an area of 20x15 m. Two teams keep the ball so that the third team does not take it. If the third team takes the ball, it must pass it to the team from which it did not take it to confirm this and then the two teams continue to play against the one who lost the ball. Different requirements: an unlimited number of touches, 2 touches, 1 touch.

The main "B" part of training - shooting at a goal from different positions.

The final part - stretching and stretching.

Friday (the day before the match)

Introductory part - playing the so-called kola / ševe - 5: 2, one touch.

Preparatory part - stretching and stretching.

Main "A" part - crossing through the middle of 3 players and ending on goal (50 m) - lower intensity (emphasis on precision is important)

The main "B" part - setting in the formation that should be played in the game and passing the tactics in walking.

The final part - shooting free and penalty kicks and stretching.

Saturday - match

Sunday - rest

After the game is played on Saturday, the football players will be given a day off to relax. Instead of a day of rest, regeneration training can be done (light running, relaxation). Preparations for the next match start on Monday.

5. Conclusion

The competition period is one of the most important periods because it is the period of playing matches, the most important of which are the official ones. It is one of the periods of the mesocycle made up of shock microcycles. For female footballers to welcome a more ready competition, it is important to have an effective and balanced preparation period plan that should be the basis for the competition period. The achieved sports form during the preparation period needs to be maintained and rationally distributed to the phases of the competition period. When

preparatory matches are played in the introductory phase of the competition period, a large number of energy components should not be consumed, because the goal of the preparatory matches is to play for official matches. In official matches, every result is essential. Due to more frequent stimuli and training frequencies correlated with the intensities at matches, there is still a significant consumption of energy and the first signs of fatigue. For this reason, coaches should pay attention to the rest of the team and give importance to psychological preparation. The already mentioned sports form should be held with situational training where mostly technical-tactical exercises predominate. Fitness training is necessary for the competition period, but it should not be so frequent, because in this period the emphasis is on situational exercises that can happen in the game. Each microcycle consists of 5 training sessions, matches, and rest days, however, no microcycle is the same. The difference is the intensity and importance of the match at the end of the cycle. If we have an important match in terms of results, the weekly training load should be lower, and vice versa, for our microcycle to be balanced. Educated and professional staff should plan well and conduct training within the periodization through the competition period to stay in the desired shape and to achieve targeted results. In this regard, coaches and professional staff should be continuously educated in the form of planning and programming sports training, to gain new knowledge about sports form management in all periods, phases, and conditions during the season, with special emphasis on the competition period.

REFERENCES

- Bompa, Tudor Olimpius (1994). Theory and methodology of training. The key to athletic performance. Dubuque, IA: Kendal/Hunt.
- Bompa, Tudor Olimpius (2001). Periodization training for sports. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Bompa, Tudor Olimpius (2006). Periodization: Theory and methodology of training. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Božinović, Damir; Vrdoljak, Josip (2013). *Teorija sportskog treninga*. Visoka škola za menadžment i dizajn Aspira. Split.
- Erceg, Marko., Rađa, Ante. & Sporiš, Goran (2018). Razvoj nogometaša: antropološki status nogometaša tijekom razvojnih faza. Zagreb. vlast. nakl.
- Hrelja, Davor (2017). Analiza pripremnog perioda u muškom odbojkaškom klubu Rovinj za sezonu 2016/2017. Diplomski rad. Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Kineziološki fakultet.
- Marković, Goran; Bradić, Asim (2008). Integralni kondicijski trening. Zagreb.
- Mikić, Branimir; Tanović, Izudin; Begović, Denis (2006). Planiranje i programiranje trenajnog procesa nogometaša. Tuzla.
- Milanović, Dragan (1997). Osnove teorije treninga. Zagreb.
- Milanović, Dragan (1996). Planiranje i programiranje kondicijskog treninga nogometaša.

Međunarodno savjetovanje o fitnessu, 1996. Zagreb, Fakultet za fizičku kulturu
Milanović, Dragan (2013). Teorija treninga. Zagreb.
Salopek, Martina (2015). Dvociklusna periodizacija godišnjeg ciklusa treninga
bodyfitness natjecateljica. Diplomski rad. Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Kineziološki
fakultet.

Received: 17.11.2020.

Approved: 08.12.2020.

Correspondence:

Luka Androja, M.Sc.

Head of Sports Management, College of Management and Design, Aspira,
Mike Tripala 6, 21 000 Split, Croatia

Tel: +385955061065

e-mail: luka.androja@aspira.hr