

**Soccer Stats: Using Match Analysis**  
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**Director of Coach & Player Development**



Back in April 2008 I read an article about how American Sport fans adore stats and how it empowered the fans to see which players were hitting more consistently in baseball or if LeBron James is scoring more points than Kobe Bryant from the free throw line. Yet they feel that soccer is failing to provide their fans with any information. These facts are certainly available for the fans and below you can see some that were collated from the UEFA Euro 2008 Championship in Austria and Switzerland.

**Total Shots (Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	117	19.5
Russia	87	17.4
Netherlands	78	19.5
Portugal	65	16.25
Turkey	64	12.8

**Total Shots on Goal (Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	51	8.5
Russia	32	6.4
Netherlands	31	7.75
Portugal	30	7.5
Turkey	26	5.2

**Most Attacking Teams (Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	116	19.33
Russia	89	17.8
Netherlands	73	18.25
Portugal	65	16.25
Italy	62	15.5

**Attacks from the Left**  
**(Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	41	6.83
Russia	30	6
Portugal	27	6.75
Germany	26	4.33
Italy	25	6.25

**Attacks from the Center**  
**(Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	31	5.17
Russia	29	5.8
Germany	27	6.75
Netherlands	18	3
Italy	17	4.25

**Attacks from the Right**  
**(Top 5 Countries)**

Team	Total	Match Average
Spain	44	7.33
Russia	30	6
Portugal	23	5.75
Turkey	23	4.6
Netherlands	22	5.5

All the stats above can be found on <http://en.euro2008.uefa.com/>

All of this information may be great for the soccer fan but it also can serve a purpose for the coach. Youth team coaches can take advantage of collecting stats by analyzing their games and then planning on how they can develop a style of play to improve on their weakness both offensively and defensively.

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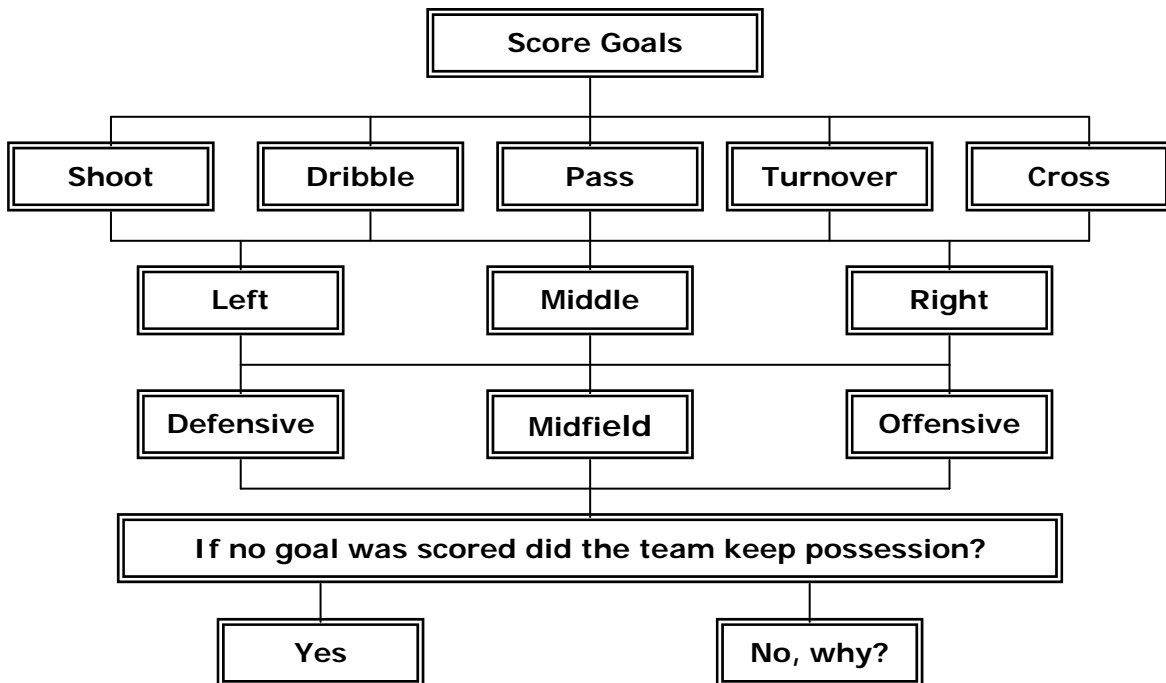
After analyzing games the coach must modify and manipulate the game setting in training to develop areas that the players and team need to practice. The game will continue to reveal improvement areas for future practices. So the process works as seen in the diagram below.



Whether we want our teams to play Counter Attacking or High Pressure Defense we need to use the game to work out how we can help them establish a style that will suit the players and work against the opponents.

During games, coaches have a lot to observe and deal with, so it may be difficult for them to collect stats such as the ones in the tables above. We can and should take advantage of parents who sit on the sidelines in helping us gather the information.

In the flow chart below, you can allocate assignments to a group of parents on where and how goal scoring chances were created and if it resulted in a goal.



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The objective of the game is to score goals, so the first boxes show what we are trying to achieve. The second group of boxes is to work out where and how those goal scoring opportunities are created. Therefore a parent or a group of them could analyze the game to see if the goal scoring opportunity came directly from a shot, or by somebody dribbling to beat a defender. As you keep working your way through the chart you can establish if the goal scoring opportunity from a certain area of the field and which third possession was gained to start the attack. Finally, you will then need to establish if following the free flowing attack, a goal was scored and if not did the team manage to retain possession in their oppositions defensive third.

If we were to use the stats provided from the Euro 2008 Championship and the chart provided, you will notice that Germany were not named in the top five countries for creating attacks down their right hand side. Although they may have been successful by going down the left or centrally this is something that can be addressed and improved upon with in their training sessions. However, it should be taken in to consideration the attacking abilities of Sebastian Schweinsteiger and Philip Lahm whom patrol the German National teams left flank.

After you gather all the stats by either using the chart provided or your own system, you can then see how and where you are creating opportunities to score as well as if you are finishing them. Whatever information comes back you can establish a coaching plan for the next training session.

By keeping stats and having parents analyze the games you can see your teams weakness and also your strengths. So not only is it helpful in working out training sessions, it is also a great tool to help parents view the game through a different perspective.