

WHAT IS THE PRINCIPLE OF TACTICAL FATIGUE & CONCENTRATION?

Principle of Tactical Fatigue and Concentration: Tactical fatigue relates to players' capacity to focus on actions that characterise their team's style of play. The game is made up of complex situations which require high degrees of concentration. The game is characterised by high-intensity actions - it therefore makes no sense to train at low intensities, so maximum-intensity training is required, but must be relative to players' levels of fatigue on a given day.

Load & Recovery

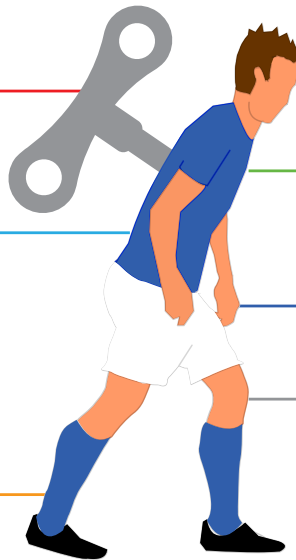
▶ Optimal relationship between load and recovery (mental + physical) = Higher quality actions

Training Variations

▶ The more variations and different information for the players to analyse during practice, the more demanding and intense the training becomes

High Levels of Concentration

▶ High levels of concentration from the first to last minute of a training session or competitive match provides a high degree of learning



Relative Maximal Intensity

▶ The intensity is always maximal in terms of concentration, but the training load and complexity must be adjusted for different days

▶ Training must always be relative to the players' recovery time and readiness to train

Tactical Thinking

▶ Football players' peak performance requires constant concentration and tactical thinking (think and decide fast)

Principles of Play

▶ "Intensity" is directly related to the principles and sub-principles of play, trained through well-designed practices and training sessions

PRINCIPLE OF TACTICAL FATIGUE AND TACTICAL CONCENTRATION (RELATIVE MAXIMAL INTENSITIES)



The Concept of Concentration

As a starting point, we need to understand more about the concept of concentration. Silverio and Srebro (2002) argue that the definition of concentration has two dimensions:

1. Ability to give attention to relevant information while ignoring irrelevant information and disturbances.
2. Ability to maintain this attention over a long period.

For football players, the relevant information is linked to their functions on the pitch, such as the position of the ball and the positions/movements of their teammates and opponents. Irrelevant information would be disturbing noise from fans, photographers, journalists, and their own negative thoughts or insecurities.

Concentration therefore relates to mechanisms for selective attention, which can be internal or external. The efficiency of actions is highly dependent on the ability to concentrate and deal with the considerable stimuli that players face during a training practice or game situation. Along these lines, Mourinho (2002) adds that something that makes his training sessions more intense is the concentration they require, and is associated to the emotional demands (Fernandes, 2003).

Tactical Fatigue and Tactical Concentration

When recognising the importance of tiredness that results from concentrated playing, there is a need for a different understanding about the traditional concept of recovery. This led to the emergence of the "tactical

fatigue" concept (Frade, 2004), which relates to players' capacity to focus on the actions that characterise their team's style of play. Mourinho says about this, "I assume that one thing that makes the training more intense is the concentration required. For example, running demands energy, but the complexity of this situation is zero. And as such, the emotional wear tends to be void as well. Conversely, the game is made up of complex situations where players are exposed to technical, tactical and psychological strains. It demands from them higher degrees of concentration." (José Mourinho, in Oliveira et al., 2006)

The game is characterised by high-intensity actions where a player must be prepared to handle any kind of situation that the game requires. It therefore makes no sense to train at low intensities, so maximum-intensity training is required, at least relatively. How do we define the term "intensity"? José Mourinho's long term assistant **Rui Faria** comments "When we talk about intensity, we refer to intensity of concentration; regarding volume, we speak about volume of intensities of concentration. So our notion of these concepts escapes the traditional notion. We talk about intensity of concentration because being in the game is primarily being able to think and make decisions, which requires concentration in terms of what is fundamental in our style of play."

José Guilherme Oliveira (2004) highlights the importance of being patient during the attacking phase, retaining possession of the ball in order to find space to exploit in the opponent's defensive organisation. He states that when even a well-organised defensive team goes a long time without the ball, it will reach a crisis point in its concentration, and this is usually when spaces appear. Great patience is therefore important when moving the ball. This so-called concentration crisis is actually nothing more than "tactical fatigue." It is not measurable in tests and cannot be quantified, so it is much more difficult to manage than peripheral fatigue (muscle fatigue). Nevertheless, it is important and needs to be trained constantly.

José Mourinho (in Oliveira et al., 2006) argues that it is most important to manage "**Central Fatigue**" (mental fatigue), because he believes that central fatigue leads to players being unable to concentrate, so their decision-making quality is diminished (Gomes, 2006).

TACTICAL PERIODIZATION

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