

2015 EHF Referee Seminar in Vienna/AUT – 28.8. – 30.8. 2015

# Coaches' Expectations from Referees



EHF Competence Academy & Network



# Referees are expected to be in a good physical fitness.

- Referees must fulfill certain physiological conditions – during the match the percentage of time spent in a moderate intensity of load and effort is predominant (moderate 96,4%, heavy 2,3% and severe 1,3% of total time ),
- The mean VO<sub>2</sub>max. – 48,5±6,1ml.kg<sup>-1</sup> (Da Silva et al., 2010),
- In interpreting the factorial model of “Sport games referees” some authors described “the functional state of the body and preparedness” as a factor with second most important variance - (17.92%) (Rudzitis, Kalejs and Licis, 2014).



# Expectations in decision-making

- In team handball, the competitive situation involves two entities (the coach and two referees) who pass judgment on a common object (whether players' behavior obeys team handball rules) (Debanne, 2014).
- Competitive team-sport situations are dynamic and complex (Hageman et al., 2008; Lyle, 2002; Macquet, 2009).
- However, most players' fouls are ambiguous and can be interpreted in different ways (Mascarenhas et al., 2009; Plessner, 2005; Ste-Marie, 2003).
- In most cases, referees make their decisions under time pressure (Plessner, 2001) and from a suboptimal viewing position and therefore without access to relevant indicators of the situation (Plessner, 2005).

- Thus, the referee's activity is a complex decision-making activity under circumstances that prevent extensive cognitive information processing (Plessner et al., 2006).
- In interpreting the factorial model of "Sport games referees" authors described "choice (decision-making) reaction time," and "the quality of the decisions made" as factors with most important variance – (45.71%) (Rudzitis, Kalejs and Licis, 2014).



- Therefore, according to many authors (Plessner and Betsch, 2001; Nevill et al., 2002; Souchon et al., 2009) referees use judgmental heuristics when making their decisions.
- Tversky and Kahneman (1974) define judgmental heuristics as simple ways of reasoning to help guide judgments of uncertain events in complex environments.
- Heuristic is cognitive shortcuts that make decision-making of an event quick and easy (intuitive).
- They substitute long reasoning or statistical observations to explain an event (Tversky and Kahneman, 1982).



- This way of decision-making process shows positive as well as potential negative consequences of using heuristics that lead to biasness:
  - the mind's tendency to automatically assess the similarity between two entities under consideration and to use that assessment as input to a judgment about likelihood, (video)
  - insufficient adjustment of anchor – a team's (or player's) reputation as being aggressive (example: players learn how to use the opponents bad reputation to persuade the referees about the roughness of the certain foul) (video),
  - too much self-confidence in decision-making (a sense of infallibility) and, as a consequence, difficulties in communicating with others.



# Coach-referee communication

- More than 90% of the set of coach's communications toward referees are technical communications and are done primarily and significantly to express disagreement on the interpretation of the situation (Debanne, 2014).
- It seems that the coaches seek to establish their power by presenting a skill asymmetry in order to influence the referees' perception or decisions, because in the professional male handball environment, all coaches have played at certain level, while the referees have not (Debanne, 2014).



- Coaches' technical knowledge and experience in their activity help them to determine more accurately the location and time of potential problems during certain actions.
- Therefore, game expertise is more awarded to coaches than referees.
- This might explain why coaches are more likely to express their disagreement on game situations than all other things.



- Coaches use different means to influence referees' decision-making during games.
- The contextual factors (game period, opposing team, coach yellow cards) have impact on the coaches' method of persuasion (Debanne, 2014).
- However, a top level coach studied by Debanne and Fontayne (2009) indicated that he attempted to create a positive relationship with the referees from the outset of the game.
- He showed them that he agreed with their decisions, even and especially those to his team's disadvantage, in order to create a climate of trust and be able to weigh on the final decision at the appropriate time.



- Hageman et al. (2008) showed that coaches with higher domain-unspecific complex problem-solving skills seemed to make fewer attempts to influence the referees during the game.
- Referees appreciate coaches telling them they have officiated the game well.
- This makes them feel more integrated into the environment. Therefore, there is a desire among referees to be rewarded by the coaches.



THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR  
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