

## INTRODUCTION

Every four years the World Cup provides an opportunity for us to enjoy wall to wall soccer almost every day but also an opportunity for coaches to analyze the best players and the best International teams in a very short period of time. To take up this opportunity in 2014 we asked those coaches and analysts who had completed he LMA School of Football Management Online Course if they would like to volunteer to analyze games. (NB See Page 25 of this Report for the details of this course and the 'World Cup 50\% Discount Promotional Price available until the end of August 2014)

Those who kindly volunteered are listed on Page 23
They were directed and guided in their analysis by the authors of this Report: John Bilton and Dr. Peter Usher
John \& Peter first worked together at the Singapore national academy then more recently in the Fenerbahce S.K. youth programme where John was the Technical Co-ordinator (Academy Director) and Peter was the sports ssychologist. Presently Peter works with world champion athletes in the Canadian Olympic Programme and John coaches within the youth academy at Chesterfield FC in England and works as a coach educator, coaching, analyst and programme design consultant with Peter. John and Peter have just realized their second eBook 'Analysing The Soccer Player' It focuses on the individual analysis of a player and the contribution that analysis can play within a purposeful coaching programme. Cost: $\$ 9.99$ For Details see Page 24 of this Report and also click here https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/analysing-the-soccer-player/id895120834?mt=11

We are extremely indebted to this team who analyzed every game in this year's World Cup in Brazil.
This Report is targeted for COACHES and is provided FREE. We hope, however, you will take time to look at the range of Products and Services we have available at Sports Path shown on Page 25
Hope you find the Report of value to your coaching

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## CONTENTS

1 GOALS ..... 4
1.1 Goal Scoring Strike Locations ..... 4
1.2 Strikes per Match ..... 5
1.3 Strike Accuracy ..... 6
1.4 From where was the ball most often delivered into the Goal Zone? ..... 6
1.5 Strikes and Scoring: Origination of Goal Scoring Possessions ..... 9
1.6 Speed of Transition ..... 11
1.7 Strikers: What makes them lethal? ..... 12
1.8 Win Probability ..... 15
1.9 Scoring Sequences: Scoring First, Winning at Half-time and Scoring ..... 152 Goals in the First Halt
Goalkeeper's Distribution Opportunities to Provide the Team With ..... 17
Possession in the Attacking-Third20
3 Throw-ins20
4 Summary
23
5 Contributing Analysts
6 Now available: ‘Analysing The Soccer Player’ ..... 24
7 Other Products \& Services from Sports Path ${ }^{\text {TM }}$ ..... 25

## GOALS

The World Cup of 2014 saw 171 goals scored. An average of 2.67 per game equaling the record for the 1998 World Cup

### 1.1. Goal Scoring Strike Locations

## Table 1 Distribution of Goal-Scoring Strike Locations

|  | G | P1 | P2 | GZ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average All Teams | $24.3 \%$ | $33.7 \%$ | $20.7 \%$ | $78.7 \%$ |
| Germany | $23.5 \%$ | $41.2 \%$ | $23.5 \%$ | $88.2 \%$ |
| Germany | $9.1 \%$ | $45.5 \%$ | $36.4 \%$ | $91.0 \%$ |

* Data from the two matches versus Portugal and Brazil


Diagram 1 above explains the columns in Table 1
Why the Gold Zone? As a result of analyzing thousands of matches and plotting strike locations at all levels it was found that around $80 \%$ of all goals are scored in a zone designated as the Gold Zone (GZ) [The 'Gold Zone' as defined by John Bilton and Dr.Peter Usher]

## Summary

On average, teams at the WC scored approximately $80 \%$ of their goals from an area described as the 'Gold Zone' (GZ in Diagram Above).

## Table 2 Distribution of Strike Attempts

|  | GZ | OGZ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average All Teams | $35.1 \%$ | $64.9 \%$ |
| Germany | $55.8 \%$ | $44.2 \%$ |
| Germany* | $70.4 \%$ | $29.6 \%$ |

## Summary

On average, the vast majority of strike attempts were taken outside of the Gold Zone (GZ). However, the majority of strike attempts for Germany took place within the GZ. In their two matches in which Germany scored 4 and 7 goals respectively, they had twice as many scoring attempts from inside the GZ than the average teams. Germany's data strongly suggests that there is a strong correlation between the number of strike attempts occurring inside the GZ and the number of goals scored!

### 1.2 Strikes per Match

Table 3 Strikes per Match

|  | GZ |  |  |  |  |  | OGZ |  |  |  |  | Match |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | SOT | SOFF | B | TS | SOT | SOFF | B | TS | TS |  |  |  |
| Avg | 2.1 | 1.8 | 0.6 | 4.5 | 2.4 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 8.2 | 12.7 |  |  |  |
| WT | 3.1 | 1.8 | 0.8 | 5.7 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 2.2 | 8.6 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| 0 goals | 1.3 | 2.1 | 0.5 | 3.9 | 2.3 | 4.2 | 2.8 | 9.3 | 13.2 |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{1 G o a l}$ | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0.5 | 4.3 | 2.7 | 4.5 | 2.4 | 9.6 | 13.9 |  |  |  |
| 2 Goals | 2.8 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 5.9 | 3.1 | 4.1 | 2.7 | 9.9 | 15.8 |  |  |  |
| 3+ | 4.3 | 1.8 | 0.8 | 6.9 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.1 | 7.4 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| Top4 Wins | 3.3 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 6 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 8.4 | 14.4 |  |  |  |
| Germany | 4.1 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 7.6 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 1.3 | 6.2 | 13.8 |  |  |  |
| Germany $^{*}$ | 6.5 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 9.5 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 2.5 | 12 |  |  |  |

SOT =Shots on target: SOFF =Shots off target: B= Strikes blocked or deflected: TS -=Total strikes WT = Winning Teams; Top4Wins = Winning matches of the semi--finalists

## Summary

On average, teams attempted just fewer than 13 strikes per match of which 4.5 occurred inside the GZ.
Germany had, on average, 1 more strike attempt than the average value. Germany on average attempted three more strikes from inside the GZ and in their two epic matches they had more than double the GZ strikes than the average value.

### 1.3. Strike Accuracy

## Table 4 Strike Accuracy

|  | GZ |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | G | P1 | P2 | Combined |  |
| Average All Teams | $58.6 \%$ | $51.2 \%$ | $56.5 \%$ | $54.0 \%$ | $40.8 \%$ |
| Germany | $80.0 \%$ | $71.4 \%$ | $70.0 \%$ | $72.2 \%$ | $53.3 \%$ |
| Germany $^{*}$ | $100 \%$ | $87.5 \%$ | $83.1 \%$ | $86.7 \%$ | $50.0 \%$ |

Summary
As shown in the above Table (4), in comparing the average values with those of Germany there is a significant increase in strike accuracy for strikes occurring inside the GZ.

Of the goals scored during open play, $58.9 \%$ of all goals came from a 1-touch strike. Two-touch strikes contributed $20.9 \%$ of the goals with the first touch used to bring the ball under control and/or get the ball from out of the feet. The first touch was also used to change the direction and angle of the ball; to move away from a defender before striking.

## Coaching Implications

If $80 \%$ and more of goals are scored from inside the Gold Zone then why do teams make the majority of their striking attempts from outside the GZ? The data clearly shows that strike accuracy is significantly higher for attempts taken inside the GZ.

Given the data shown here, it would suggest coaches design functional sessions based on the key findings presented here. Attention should be given to accurate forward passing at speed with quality deliveries into the GZ finished with an incisive strike.

### 1.4 From where was the ball most often delivered into the Goal Zone?

## Goals scored inside Gold Zone from open play = 130

Table 5

|  | Area | Number of Goals |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| G | 43 | $\%$ |
| P1 | 56 | 33 |
| P2 | 31 | 43 |

See Diagram 2 below for an explanation of the areas


## Table 6: Delivery Zones

|  | CAZ | WAZ | CZ | BPZ | M3 | Rgn | CKL | Totals |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| G | 4 | 3 | 13 | 11 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 43 |
|  | $9.3 \%$ | $7.0 \%$ | $30.2 \%$ | $25.6 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ | $11.6 \%$ | $16.3 \%$ | $100.0 \%$ |
| P1 | 17 | 6 | 2 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 56 |
|  | $30.4 \%$ | $10.7 \%$ | $3.6 \%$ | $19.6 \%$ | $3.6 \%$ | $16.1 \%$ | $16.1 \%$ | $100.0 \%$ |
| P2 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 31 |
|  | $38.7 \%$ | $6.5 \%$ | $6.5 \%$ | $22.6 \%$ | $9.7 \%$ | $12.9 \%$ | $3.2 \%$ | $100.0 \%$ |
| Totals | 33 | 11 | 17 | 29 | 5 | 18 | 17 | 130 |

## Major Findings

1. Of the 130 GZ goals scored from open play $47.7 \%$ originated from deliveries from the CAZ and the BPZ
2. For goals scored in the G area, the Crossing Zone was the primary source followed by deliveries from the BPZ
3. For goals scored in the P1 area, the major provider was CAZ followed by the BPZ. Combined, deliveries from these two zones contributed $50 \%$ of the goals scored in P1.
4. $C A Z$ and the $B P Z$ contributed to over $60 \%$ of the goals scored from strikes in P2.

## Attempted Deliveries

From 60 match performances coded to date there has been a total of 1378 attempts to deliver the ball into the Gold Zone of which 328 ( $26.7 \%$ ) were successful deliveries. That is, a team gained a controlled possession from those delivery attempts. The data was analyzed in three ways.

1. Distribution by delivery zone. Of the 1378 delivery attempts, how many came from each zone
2. Gold Zone Possession Deliveries. Which zones provided the 328 controlled possessions inside the GZ
3. Conversion. The success rate of converting attempted deliveries from each zone. There is no conversion rate for possessions regained in the GZ.

## Table 7 Attempted deliveries

| 60 Matches | CAZ | WAZ | CZ | BPZ | M3 | Rgn | CKL |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Distribution | $12.6 \%$ | $18.9 \%$ | $30.4 \%$ | $12.5 \%$ | $6.8 \%$ | $2.2 \%$ | $16.6 \%$ |
| GZPD | $27.0 \%$ | $10.2 \%$ | $14.1 \%$ | $19.9 \%$ | $6.1 \%$ | $8.0 \%$ | $14.7 \%$ |
| Conversion | $57.2 \%$ | $14.4 \%$ | $12.4 \%$ | $42.5 \%$ | $23.7 \%$ |  | $23.6 \%$ |
| Germany | CAZ | WAZ | CZ | BPZ | M3 | Rgn | CKL |
| Distribution | $32.0 \%$ | $8.0 \%$ | $26.0 \%$ | $20.0 \%$ | $2.0 \%$ | $6.0 \%$ | $6.0 \%$ |
| GZPD | $47.6 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ | $4.8 \%$ | $23.8 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ | $14.3 \%$ | $9.5 \%$ |
| Conversion | $62.5 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ | $7.7 \%$ | $50.0 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ |  | $66.7 \%$ |

CAZ- Central attacking zone: WAZ- Wide attacking zone: CZ- Crossing zone: BPZ - Box passing zone: M3 Middle third: Rgn: A regained possession in GZ from an opponent's block or deflection, GK's stop, opponent losing possession: CKL- Corner kick long

## Major Findings:

1. In their attempts to deliver the ball into the Gold Zone, teams, on average rely upon the CZ, WAZ and long Corner Kicks $66 \%$ of the time. However those three delivery zones only provided $39 \%$ of the controlled possessions inside the GZ
2. The CAZ and BPZ provided just $25 \%$ of the total delivery attempts and yet they contributed to $47 \%$ of the GZ possessions. These two zones also had the highest rates of conversion. That is, attempts to deliver the ball into the GZ from those two zones were far more successful.
The data for Germany includes only that from the two matches versus Portugal and Brazil. Caution must be exercised in the interpretation of the $66.7 \%$ conversion rate for long Corner Kicks. There were three attempts of which two were successful.
Note:1 Data is for all teams, 156 goals: 2 The data does not include penalty kicks

The Pitch zones as shown in pitch diagram relate to the zones in table no. 8. Note that the middle third is split into the middle third defending and middle third attacking. The most productive zone was the attacking third where 66 goals ( $43.3 \%$ ) were scored. Teams that pressed the wide channel areas 26 and 30 were rewarded with a possession that contributed to 28 goals. Zone 28 in the penalty area where most regained possessions are made was the highest contributor with 18 goals.

## Diagram 3



NB Possesions won in the defending third have a major contributions to scoring goals at $23 \%$.

## Table 9 Germany - pickpockets in the attacking-third!

|  | Germany's $\mathbf{1 7}$ goals originated from |
| :--- | :--- |
|  |  |
| $\mathbf{D}=\mathbf{2}$ | $(11.8 \%)$ |
| $\mathbf{M}-\mathbf{D}=\mathbf{3}$ | $(17.6 \%)$ |
| $\mathbf{M}-\mathbf{A}=\mathbf{2}$ | $(11.8 \%)$ |
| $\mathbf{A}=\mathbf{1 0}$ | $(58.8 \%)$ |

$70 \%$ of the Goals Germany Scored originated from possession gained in the Attacking half

### 1.6. Speed of Transition

## Table 10

|  | Average |  | Germany ( $\mathbf{n}=\mathbf{7}$ ) |  | Germany (n=2) |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Possession Gained | Passes | Time | Passes | Time | Passes | Time |
| Defending-third | 5.0 | 17.6 | 5.5 | 16 | 5 | 17 |
| Defending Middle-third | 5.3 | 16.2 | 4.7 | 13 | 3 | 8 |
| Attacking Middle-third | 2.6 | 8.4 | 6.5 | 17.5 | 6.5 | $18^{\star}$ |
| Attacking-third | 1.0 | 2.3 | 0.7 | 1.6 | 1 | 1.8 |

## Table 11: Goals from open play

| Time Taken from re-gaining the Ball to scoring | \% of Goals | Cumulative \% |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| $\mathbf{0 - 5}$ Seconds | 49 | 49 |
| $\mathbf{6 - 1 0}$ seconds | 20 | 69 |
| $\mathbf{1 1 - 1 5}$ seconds | 12 | 81 |
| $\mathbf{1 6 - 2 \boldsymbol { 2 } \text { seconds }}$ | 8 | 89 |
| $\mathbf{2 1}$ seconds or more | 11 | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ |

NB Two of Germany's goals which originated from possessions aimed in the attacking side of the middle-third were from a long series of passes taking 30 and 35 seconds respectively. Those two goals could be seen as outliers. If they are excluded then the data would emphatically state that the further up-field the possession is gained the quicker a goal will be scored. The eleven goals scored by Germany in the two coded matches arrived from 3 possessions gained in Defensive third; 2 from Mid-third and 6 from the Attacking Third. The one OGZ goal came from a possession gained in Mid-third

### 1.7. Strikers: What Makes Them Lethal?

Top Scorer Colombia's James Rodriguez scored 6 goals in 5 matches, the diagram below shows the strike locations and strike outcomes in all 5 matches. Five of the 6 goals ( $83 \%$ ) were scored in GZ. Yet these 5 goals came from just 6 strikes in GZ (37.5\%). Note the high number of blocked strikes in OGZ. Rodriguez had a 1 goa to 1.2 strikes ( $1: 1.2$ ) ratio. From OGZ the he took 10 strikes to score 1 goal.

## Diagram 4: James Rodriguez Strikes



## Table 12: James Rodriguez Strikes and Goals

|  | STRIKES |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | GOALS |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| MATCH | GZ | OGZ | TL | $\%$ GZ | GZ | OGZ | TL | $\%$ GZ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{1}$ | 1 | 5 | 6 | $16.7 \%$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{2}$ | 1 | 1 | 2 | $50.0 \%$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{3}$ | 2 | 1 | 3 | $66.7 \%$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{4}$ | 1 | 2 | 3 | $33.3 \%$ | 1 | 1 | 2 | $50.0 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{5}$ | 1 | 1 | 2 | $50.0 \%$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTALS | 6 | 10 | 16 | $37.5 \%$ | 5 | 1 | 6 | $83.3 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Strikes Taken = TL
With 5 goals in 7 matches Thomas Muller came a close second, like Rodriguez he had 16 strikes. Four goals ( $80 \%$ ) were taken in $G Z$. These goals came from 11 GZ strikes ( $68.8 \%$ ). The high number of GZ strike pportunities demonstrates the abiity of the German team to deliver into GZ with possession. Overall Muller averaged 1 goal in 2.8 GZ strikes (1:2.8). In the first group match where he scored 3 goals it was 1 goal in 1.3 GZ strikes (1:1.3) and in the semi-final 1:1. Muller's average OGZ goals to strikes was 1:5.0

## Table 13: Strikes and Goals for Thomas Muller

|  | STRIKES |  |  |  |  | GOALS |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| MATCH | GZ | OGZ | TL | $\%$ GZ | GZ | OGZ | TL | $\%$ GZ |  |  |
| $\mathbf{1}$ | 4 | 0 | 4 | $100.0 \%$ | 3 | 0 | 3 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |
| $\mathbf{2}$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{3}$ | 0 | 2 | 2 | $0.0 \%$ | 0 | 1 | 1 | $0.0 \%$ |  |  |
| $\mathbf{4}$ | 5 | 1 | 6 | $83.3 \%$ | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{5}$ | 0 | 1 | 1 | $0.0 \%$ | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{6}$ | 1 | 1 | 2 | $50.0 \%$ | 1 | 0 | 1 | $100.0 \%$ |  |  |
| $\mathbf{7}$ | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  |
| TOTALS | 11 | 5 | 16 | $68.8 \%$ | 4 | 1 | 5 | $80.0 \%$ |  |  |

## Diagram 5: Thomas Muller Strikes



STRIKERS STRIKE LOCATIONS

## Implications for Coaching

If the team and the player are not confident of their ability to set up strikes from inside GZ they will often choose to take the easy route and strike from OGZ.
The most important implication is that players should be encouraged to create more strike-for-goal attempts from within the GZ
It should be stated that a total ban on strikes OGZ is not the objective. If defenders are giving the striker time and space to shoot from just outside OGZ and the player feels confident in getting a clean strike on goal, then take the opportunity. The key in this scenario is the ability of the player to make sensible decisions, to put ego aside, and to play to benefit the team as a whole.
This key and important evidential information should shape your philosophy and have a major impact on what is emphasized on the training ground; the number and accuracy of strikes inside the Gold Zone (GZ)!

However, other coaches may believe that long range shooting from outside the GZ is appropriate and the player's insistence on striking outside GZ is acceptable. Consequently, WHAT they may decide to coach is the player's long range shooting ability. You are the coach and you must decide what guides your philosophy and coaching actions.

### 1.8. Win Probability

## Win Conversion

During the 2014 FIFA WC, there were 19 matches in which teams scored three or more goals and all 19 matches were won.

Table 14

| Goals Scored | Matches $(\mathbf{n}=\boldsymbol{)}$ | Win/Draw Conversion | Win Conversion |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 0 | 24 | $20.8 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ |
| 1 | 15 | $36.0 \%$ | $28.9 \%^{*}$ |
| 2 | 24 | $80.6 \%$ | $75.0 \%^{\star}$ |
| 3 or more | 19 | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ |

Upon completion of the 48 Group Stage matches the eight teams which finished first in the Group had collective Win Conversion of $83.3 \%$

## Table 15

| Group Position | Matches | Win/Draw Conversion | Win Conversion |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 24 | $100 \%$ | $83.3 \%$ |
| 2 | 24 | $70.8 \%$ | $50.0 \%$ |
| 3 | 24 | $45.8 \%$ | $29.2 \%$ |
| 4 | 24 | $20.8 \%$ | $0.0 \%$ |
| Final Four | 24 | $70.8 \%$ | $95.8 \%$ |

The data for the 'Final Four' (Argentina, Brazil, Germany and the Netherlands) includes data from the Knockout Stages.

## Summary

Obviously, to win matches teams need to score goals. The data clearly shows that teams which score a minimum of three goals in a match significantly increase their probability of winning

### 1.9. Scoring Sequences: Scoring First, Winning at Half-time and Scoring 2 Goals in the First Half

Table 15 illustrates data for the three variables of scoring the first goal in the match, holding a winning position at half-time and scoring at least two goals before the end of the first half of the match.
During the Group Stage a team scored the first goal in 39 matches and went on to win 29 of those matches; win Conversion of $74.4 \%$. In the remaining 10 matches, three games were tied and the remaining 7 games were lost. Teams scoring the first goal scored an average of 2.2 goals/game while conceding an average of 1.1.

Table 16 Group Stage Matches: Win Probability Variables

| Variable | Matches <br> $\mathbf{n}=)$ | WCR | GSA | GCA | 1st Half <br> Goals | 2nd Half <br> Goals | AT Goals |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| SF | 39 | $74.4 \%$ | 2.2 | 1.1 | $47.7 \%$ | $45.3 \%$ | $7.0 \%$ |
| WHT | 20 | $95.0 \%$ | 2.8 | 0.8 | $57.1 \%$ | $37.5 \%$ | $5.4 \%$ |
| 2@HT | 7 | $100 \%$ | 3.6 | 1.1 | $68.0 \%$ | $28.0 \%$ | $4.0 \%$ |

WCR - Win conversion rate: GSA - Goals scored average: GCA - Goals conceded average: AD -Additional time goals
There were 20 matches in which a team was leading at half-time. In 19 (95\%) of those matches the winning team went on to win the match with a GSA of 2.8. Whereas the average of first-half goals was $38.2 \%$ for all matches in the Group Stage, team winning at half-time scored $57.1 \%$ of their goals in the first half. First-half goals increased o $68.0 \%$ for teams which had scored at least two goals by half-time. In those seven matches the winning teams scored an average of 3.6 goals per match.

Table 17

| Variable | W | L | D | GSA | GCA | SF | WHT | 2@HT | 1st H | 2nd H | AT |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 3 goals or more | 19 | 0 | 0 | 3.7 | 0.9 | 16 | 12 | 7 |  |  |  |
| \% | $100 \%$ |  |  |  |  | $84.2 \%$ | $63.2 \%$ | $36.8 \%$ | $44.3 \%$ | $52.9 \%$ | $2.9 \%$ |
| Final Four | 17 | 6 | 1 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 16 | 8 | 4 |  |  |  |
| \% | $70.8 \%$ |  |  |  |  | $66.7 \%$ | $33.3 \%$ | $16.7 \%$ | $41.7 \%$ | $45.8 \%$ | $12.5 \%$ |
| Germany | 5 | 1 | 0 | 2.8 | 0.2 | 6 | 3 | 2 |  |  |  |
|  | $83.3 \%$ |  |  |  |  | $100 \%$ | $50.0 \%$ | $33.3 \%$ | $52.9 \%$ | $35.3 \%$ | $11.8 \%$ |

SF = Scoring First; WHT = Winning at HT; 2@HT = Scoring a minimum of two goals by half-time; GSA = Goals Scored Average; GCA = Goals Conceded Average

Teams which scored 3 goals or more averaged 1.6 goals scored in the first half/match. The final four scored an average of 0.8 goals by half-time

## Summary

Group stage winners need to have a plan to score two goals before half time
It has been the philosophy of the authors for some time, based on previous evidence followed by programme design and experienced match outcomes that scoring first, going in at half time with a 2 goal lead and scoring that important 3rd goal is the winning mentality. This requires a tactical plan and a "is the boss" mentality of the players

## Goalkeeper's Distribution Opportunities to Provide the Team With a Possession in the Attacking-Third

What percentage of the GK's distribution results in a possession in the attacking third?
Table 18 shows that a Goalkeeper's distribution is an important starting point for entering the attacking third (A3) with possession
Key: Dist. - No. of GK distributions, A3P - successful possession entries into the attacking third. \%A3P The \% of GK Dist's converted to A3P's.
Table 18 Goalkeeper distributions resulting in a possession in the attacking third, directly or indirectly

|  | TEAM | DISTS | A3P | $\%$ A3P |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| GERMANY ARGENTINA | 45 | 17 | $38 \%$ | ROUND |
| ARGENTINA GERMANY | 38 | 2 | $5 \%$ |  |
| BRAZIL NETHERLANDS | 28 | 2 | $7 \%$ | $3 / 4$ PLACE |
| NETHERLANDS BRAZIL | 27 | 2 | $7 \%$ |  |
| ARGENTINA NETHERLANDS | 27 | 0 | $0 \%$ | SEMI |
| NETHERLANDS ARGENTINA | 28 | 1 | $4 \%$ |  |
| BRAZIL GERMANY | 22 | 3 | $14 \%$ | SEMI |
| GERMANY BRAZIL | 35 | 3 | $9 \%$ |  |
| FRANCE GERMANY | 26 | 7 | $27 \%$ | QUARTER |
| GERMANY FRANCE | 46 | 16 | $35 \%$ |  |
| BRAZIL COLUMBIA | 20 | 1 | $5 \%$ | QUARTER |
| COLUMBIA BRAZIL | 11 | 0 | $0 \%$ |  |
| ARGENTINA BELGIUM | 29 | 2 | $7 \%$ | QUARTER |
| BELGIUM ARGENTINA | 24 | 12 | $50 \%$ |  |
| NETHERLANDS COSTA RICA | 42 | 3 | $7 \%$ | QUARTER |
| COSTA RICA NETHERLANDS | 38 | 10 | $26 \%$ |  |
| TOTALS | 486 | 81 | $17 \%$ |  |
| AVERAGE PER MATCH | 30 | 5 | $17 \%$ |  |

Table 19 below shoes the top 4 GK distribution performers averaged 14 A3P's per match. This shows the gap between the average performers and the elite Top Four performers who produce three times as many A3P's. Germany's Neurer, and the team's technical/tactical abilities produced 17 A3's in the final match.

## Table 19 top four GK distributions

|  | DIST | A3P | $\%$ A3P |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| BELGIUM ARGENTINA | 24 | 12 | $50 \%$ |
| GERMANY ARGENTINA | 45 | 17 | $38 \%$ |
| GERMANY FRANCE | 46 | 16 | $35 \%$ |
| COSTA RICA NETHERLANDS | 38 | 10 | $26 \%$ |
| AVERAGE PER MATCH | 38 | 14 | $37 \%$ |

## Major Findings

On average, teams gained an attacking-third possession on just 17\% of the GK's distributions in a match. In the top four performances the average jumped to $37 \%$ primarily due to Courtois of Belgium attaining a $50 \%$ value. In he Final, Neuer contributed to 38\% of Germany's attacking-third possessions - double the average in \% terms!

## What Is The Most Effective Means For A GK to Initiate An Attacking Third Possession?

 Diagram 6

1. Again, making reference to the above top four teams, combined they created 56 A3P's that were initiated from the GK. Ground passes from the GK totaled 19 (34\%), and throws 17 (38\%)
2. Diagram 4 shows the defending attacking third split into 5 zones (6-10). $71 \%$ of all distributions from GK were delivered into these pitch zones. 6 to 10 with zone 8 (21\%) and 10 (20\%) being the most preferred. $61 \%$ of the A3P's were from 4 or more passes, this includes the GK's first pass. Teams are capable of playing with 3 passes or more with purposeful possession.
3. As you will read elsewhere in this report, the Gold Zone (GZ) is the most effective area from which goals are scored, $23 \%$ of all GK distributions resulted in a Goal Zone delivery (GZD)

## Implications for coaching

1 GK distributions can be a major contributor to securing a possession in the attacking-third. However, the coach must have a plan to effectively use the team's technical and tactical abilities to transfer the ball from the defending-third to the attacking third.
2. Develop your team's ability to receive outside the penalty area in the defending third (zones 6 to 10) and play through into the attacking third with possession (A3P). Awareness of players and space, receiving the ball under pressure, accurate forward passing and the confidence to play forward passes under pressure are the key attributes which are required to be developed

## What GK Actions Lead To a Loss of Possession in The Attacking \& Middle Thirds?

From the data available from this World Cup it would be for the Goalkeeper to kick the ball long!

## Throw-Ins

Throw-ins also provide an opportunity for teams to increase the number of possessions in the attacking-third.

## Table 20 - Throws resulting in a final possession in the attacking third

| ROUND | TEAM | THROWS | A3P | $\begin{gathered} \% \\ \text { A3P } \end{gathered}$ | DC | \% DC | $\begin{aligned} & \text { DC- } \\ & \text { A3P } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { \% OF } \\ \text { DC } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { NDC- } \\ & \text { A3P } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { \% OF } \\ & \text { N DC } \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| FINAL | GERMANY ARGENTINA | 31 | 17 | 55\% | 22 | 71\% | 16 | 73\% | 1 | 5\% |
|  | ARGENTINA GERMANY | 30 | 5 | 17\% | 13 | 43\% | 5 | 38\% | 0 | 0\% |
| 3/4 PLACE | BRAZIL NETHERLANDS | 18 | 1 | 6\% | 6 | 33\% | 1 | 17\% | 0 | 0\% |
|  | NETHERLANDS BRAZIL | 15 | 2 | 13\% | 4 | 27\% | 0 | 0\% | 0 | 0\% |
| SEMI | ARGENTINA NETHERLANDS | 18 | 5 | 28\% | 6 | 33\% | 2 | 33\% | 3 | 50\% |
|  | NETHERLANDS ARGENTINA | 19 | 1 | 5\% | 6 | 32\% | 0 | 0\% | 1 | 17\% |
| SEMI | BRAZIL GERMANY | 14 | 2 | 14\% | 9 | 64\% | 2 | 22\% | 0 | 0\% |
|  | GERMANY <br> BRAZIL | 21 | 2 | 10\% | 5 | 24\% | 1 | 20\% | 1 | 20\% |
| QUARTER | FRANCE GERMANY | 28 | 6 | 21\% | 11 | 39\% | 6 | 55\% | 0 | 0\% |
|  | GERMANY FRANCE | 30 | 7 | 23\% | 12 | 40\% | 5 | 42\% | 2 | 17\% |
| QUARTER | BRAZIL COLUMBIA | 10 | 2 | 20\% | 2 | 20\% | 1 | 50\% | 1 | 50\% |
|  | COLUMBIA BRAZIL | 18 | 4 | 22\% | 5 | 28\% | 3 | 60\% | 1 | 20\% |
| QUARTER | ARGENTINA BELGIUM | 29 | 7 | 24\% | 9 | 31\% | 7 | 78\% | 0 | 0\% |
|  | BELGIUM ARGENTINA | 33 | 16 | 48\% | 11 | 33\% | 6 | 55\% | 5 | 45\% |
| QUARTER | NETHERLANDS COSTA RICA | 18 | 4 | 22\% | 8 | 44\% | 3 | 38\% | 1 | 13\% |
|  | COSTA RICA NETHERLANDS | 20 | 0 | 0\% | 4 | 20\% | 0 | 0\% | 0 | 0\% |
|  | TOTALS | 352 | 81 | 23\% | 133 | 38\% | 58 | 44\% | 16 | 12\% |
|  | TEAM AVERAGE | 22 | 5 | 23\% | 9 | 40\% | 4 | 41\% | 1 | 11\% |

## Table 21 - Top fou

| ROUND | TEAM | THROWS | A3P | $\%$ <br> A3P | DC | \% DC | DC- <br> A3P | $\%$ OF <br> DC | NDC- <br> A3P | $\%$ OF <br> N DC |
| :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| FINAL | GERMANY <br> ARGENTINA | 31 | 17 | $55 \%$ | 22 | $71 \%$ | 16 | $73 \%$ | 1 | $5 \%$ |
| QUARTER | BELGIUM <br> ARGENTINA | 33 | 16 | $48 \%$ | 11 | $33 \%$ | 6 | $55 \%$ | 5 | $45 \%$ |
| QUARTER | GERMANY <br> FRANCE | 30 | 7 | $23 \%$ | 12 | $40 \%$ | 5 | $42 \%$ | 2 | $17 \%$ |
| QUARTER | ARGENTINA <br> BELGIUM | 29 | 7 | $24 \%$ | 9 | $31 \%$ | 7 | $78 \%$ | 0 | $0 \%$ |
|  | TEAM AVERAGE | 31 | 12 | $38 \%$ | 14 | $44 \%$ | 9 | $63 \%$ | 2 | $15 \%$ |

Key:
A3P - Attacking third possession entry
\% A3 - the \%age of throws that contribute to an A3P
DC - The throw (and/or) the first pass produced a direction change away from the congested throw-in zone \% DC - the \% of the throw-ins which resulted in a direction change: DC-A3 - the number of A3's following a direction change of the throw. \% of DC - \% of the total A3's following a direction change of the throw:
NDC-A3 - the number of A3's following a non-direction change of the throw:
\% of N DC - \% of the total A3's following a non-direction change of the throw.

## Major Findings

The data in Table 20 shows, on average, from 22 throw-ins per match, five (23\%) produced an attacking-third possession. This percentage increased to $38 \%$ for the Top 4 teams. In the final, Germany converted $55 \%$ of their throws into attacking-third possessions and some $26 \%$ from the three matches shown in the table.

## Findings

1. When taking a throw-in the team has two options. Throw the ball into the congested throw-in zone and continue to play from there, or throw the ball in such a way that provides an opportunity to change the direction (DC) of play away from the throw-in zone.
2. The teams on average produced 9 DC's from $22(40 \%)$ throws per match, 8 teams had a DC on fewer than 3 occasions.
3. The top four performances averaged 14 DC's from 31 throw-ins ( $44 \%$ ).
4. Germany produced 22 DC's from 31 throws ( $71 \%$ ) in the Final.
5. The average teams produced an A3P from $41 \%$ of DC's and only $11 \%$ from NDC's

Germany's data from the Final tells us what's possible when there is a direction change from the throw-in.

## Implications for coaching

Teams with a tactical strategy and the technical ability to change the direction of play after the throw into areas where players have more time and space may gain an extra 16+ A3P's from around 30 throws.

## Summary

This report provides a summary of data collected for selected performance variables during the 2014 World Cup

1. Teams which scored 3 or more goals in a match had a $100 \%$ win probability.
2. $80 \%$ of the goals were from strikes inside an area called the "Gold Zone" (GZ)
3. Strike attempts taken inside the Gold Zone were more effective and accurate.
4. The most productive zones for delivering the ball into the Gold Zone (GZ) were the areas identified as the Central Attacking Zone (CAZ) and Box Pass Zone (BPZ).
5. In open play $49 \%$ of all goals were scored within 5 seconds of regaining possession and over $80 \%$ of goals were scored within 15 seconds of regaining the ball
6. Effective distributions by Goalkeepers played a role in securing attacking-third possessions.
7. Teams which directed their throw-ins away from the congested area and into a more spacious area were more effective in securing a possession in the attacking-third.

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## Books:

- Soccer Coaching and the Web: A Guide to Support Player Development
- 'Potentialing Your Child In Soccer: A parent's guide for helping kids maximize their potential in soccer and in life
For details see www.amazon.com
Coming soon in November 2014 - 'Soccer Coaching and the Web: A Guide to Support Coach Development' for those coaches involved in the ongoing development of soccer coaches in clubs at all levels.


## Consultancy

Sports Path are currently assisting a number of clubs to develop a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to support their Coach Development. These include Youth Soccer Clubs in the USA in Ohio, Texas and New York as well as Youth Academies in Europe. For Further details of this service contact RRussell@sportspath.com
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## Notes

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