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The Effect of Possession Exercises on Developing Anaerobic Power and Some Basic Skills of Young Football Players

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to: Design possession exercises for developing anaerobic power and some basic skills of young football players. Determine how exercises built on the possession approach influence the development of anaerobic power and a number of fundamental skills among junior footballers. Determine how the control and the experimental groups differ in their post-test outcomes for anaerobic power and for the selected fundamental skills of junior footballers. A purposive population made up of the junior players of Samarra Club was adopted, and (60%) of that population formed the study sample. Once the data had been treated with the SPSS package, the findings showed that the prepared exercises left a clear imprint on anaerobic power and on the selected fundamental skills of the junior footballers. Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test tests, the control group showed a significant but not significant increase in anaerobic power (RAST)($t\text{-count} = 0.741 < t\text{-table} = 2.009$), while the experimental group experienced a significant improvement($t\text{-count} = 3.579 > t\text{-table} = 2.009$), with a percentage progression of 21,190% and control only 3,485%. On the skill variables, the control group showed no significant differences for ball handling, rolling, and damping(all $t\text{-counts} < t\text{-table} = 2.009$), while the experimental group showed significant improvements in all three variables (ball handling: $t = 4.834$; rolling: $t = 6.563$; damping: $t = 4.778$; all > 2.009), with a greater percentage of development. Furthermore, post-test comparisons between the experimental and control groups also showed significant differences both in anaerobic power($t\text{-count} = 5.431 > t\text{-table} = 2.074$) and in all skill variables (ball handling: $t = 2.71$; rolling: $t = 7.886$; damping: $t = 9.08$; all > 2.074). Conclusions: Exercises based on possession play contribute positively to raising anaerobic power together with a number of fundamental football skills. Their influence within the junior age stage proved clearly appreciable.

Keywords: Possession training; Anaerobic power; Basic football skills; Young players.



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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk: Merancang latihan penguasaan untuk mengembangkan kekuatan anaerobik dan beberapa keterampilan dasar pemain sepak bola muda. Menentukan bagaimana latihan yang dibangun berdasarkan pendekatan penguasaan bola memengaruhi perkembangan kekuatan anaerobik dan sejumlah keterampilan dasar di antara pemain sepak bola junior. Menentukan bagaimana kelompok kontrol dan kelompok eksperimental berbeda dalam hasil pasca-tes untuk kekuatan anaerobik dan keterampilan dasar yang dipilih oleh pemain sepak bola junior. Populasi tujuan yang terdiri dari pemain junior Samarra Club diadopsi, dan (60%) dari populasi tersebut membentuk sampel studi. Setelah data diproses dengan paket SPSS, temuan menunjukkan bahwa latihan yang disiapkan meninggalkan jejak yang jelas pada kekuatan anaerobik dan keterampilan fundamental yang dipilih oleh pemain junior football. Berdasarkan hasil tes pra-dan pasca-tes, kelompok kontrol menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan namun tidak signifikan pada daya anaerobik (RAST) ($t\text{-count} = 0,741 < t\text{-table} = 2,009$), sementara kelompok eksperimental mengalami peningkatan signifikan ($t\text{-count} = 3.579 > t\text{-table} = 2.009$), dengan persentase progresi 21.190% dan kontrol hanya 3.485%. Pada variabel keterampilan, kelompok kontrol tidak menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan untuk ball handling, rolling, dan damping (semua $t\text{-count} < t\text{-table} = 2.009$), sementara kelompok eksperimental menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan pada ketiga variabel tersebut (ball handling: $t = 4.834$; rolling: $t = 6.563$; redaman: $t = 4.778$; semua > 2.009), dengan persentase perkembangan yang lebih tinggi. Selain itu, perbandingan pasca-uji antara kelompok eksperimental dan kontrol juga menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan baik dalam daya anaerobik ($t\text{-count} = 5.431 > t\text{-table} = 2.074$) maupun dalam semua variabel keterampilan (pengendalian bola: $t = 2,71$; rolling: $t = 7.886$; redaman: $t = 9,08$; semua > 2.074). Kesimpulan: Latihan berbasis penguasaan bola berkontribusi positif dalam meningkatkan kekuatan anaerobik bersama dengan sejumlah keterampilan sepak bola dasar. Pengaruhnya pada tahap usia junior terbukti sangat signifikan.

Kata Kunci: Latihan penguasaan bola; Kekuatan anaerobik; Keterampilan dasar sepak bola; Pemain muda.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the methods and styles of sports training have diversified, all of them aiming to raise the standard of the trained player technically, physically, tactically and psychologically, and thereby to achieve the intended objective. Coaches in all sporting events seek to attain the best level of performance and the best results; they therefore continue to study and investigate, combining this with the practical side so as to establish coherence between theoretical scientific knowledge on the one hand and applied scientific knowledge on the other, in order to reach the level they plan for.

In today's world, football occupies a large and important share of sports training owing to the great popularity this game enjoys, which has led to its extensive development until it reached its present state. This development and advancement in standard is the outcome of continuous research and studies covering everything related to the progress of this game, for attaining a good level of performance for the individual



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or the team cannot occur by chance; rather, it comes through sustained research and continuous study of everything new.

Training exercises planned in a scientific manner in terms of volume, intensity and rest are among the best means of bringing the player or the team to the comprehensive and integrated preparation required in competition. In order to achieve a good standard in carrying out these duties, the coach must plan and organise his training programmes in line with what his players possess physically, technically and in terms of character, within a unified framework, so as to bring them to the highest level of sporting performance, particularly during matches.

Skill performance is one of the fundamental pillars through which a good standard can be achieved, since no team can accomplish what it has planned in order to reach positive results unless it possesses a good level of skill performance, because the value and standard of a sports team depend to a great extent on the skill level of its players. Possession exercises are among the most important exercises that play a significant role in developing the various skills of football; they assist the player technically and mentally in terms of passing, ball control, vision, dealing with the opponent's pressure and speed of decision-making. Cruyff states that everything that happens in a match can be reproduced in possession training: the competitive aspect, the fight for space, what to do when the ball is in your possession, what to do when you do not have the ball, how to play one-touch football and how to win the ball back.

"Those concerned with football have persistently sought the best exercises to develop this game, to increase its attractiveness and enjoyment and to raise the standard of its performance by improving the efficiency of its practitioners across its various age categories, among them the youth category, since this category receives considerable attention from those concerned. Exercises are used that may stimulate the interests of that category, renew their activity, participation and enthusiasm and, in addition, may bring them pleasure and refresh their vigour; for bringing this category up to the required standard is among the foremost concerns, since the youth category is the base upon which senior teams are built".

Accordingly, the player must enhance his physical standard so that he is able to execute and perform the required duties. Since most of the work in football is anaerobic (non-oxidative), with roughly 80-90% of that effort drawing upon the anaerobic system. Anaerobic (non-oxidative) power plays an important role in the standard of the player's performance, and since the manner of play is a reflection of the manner of training, one of the fundamental principles of comprehensive training in football is to bring all players to a good level of football-specific physical fitness.

The significance of the present study therefore lies in employing possession exercises, whose demands closely mirror match situations, given that skill performance and anaerobic (non-oxidative) power form two mutually reinforcing pillars upon which footballers depend.

Research problem:

Despite the development and progress witnessed in the world today in the methods and styles of sports training in football, as well as modern styles of play intended to raise players' capacities to a high standard of performance, and the selection of exercises that are close to the reality of what takes place during a match, attention to age-category teams in our country remains weak. Through a survey of the opinions of



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specialists and technical staff (and through a review of previous studies, which have not employed possession exercises and their effect on skill performance and on anaerobic (non-oxidative) power, the researcher has also observed, through his experience as a player and a coach and through following the youth-category league of the clubs of Salah al-Din Governorate, a weakness in skill performance and in anaerobic (non-oxidative) power, represented by the physical aspect of the players. This prompted the researcher to examine this problem, and it raised the following question:

Do possession exercises have an effect on anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and on some basic skills of young football players?

Research objectives:

1. Designing exercises based on the possession method to develop anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and some basic skills of young football players.
2. Determining how possession exercises act upon anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and upon selected fundamental skills of the junior footballers forming the experimental group.
3. Identifying the differences in anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and some basic skills between the two groups.

Research hypotheses:

1. Possession exercises exert a positive influence upon anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and upon selected fundamental skills of junior footballers.
2. A statistically significant gap separates the pre-test from the post-test in anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and in the selected fundamental skills of junior footballers, the post-test being favoured.
3. A statistically significant gap separates the two post-tests in anaerobic (non-oxidative) power and in the selected fundamental skills of junior footballers, the experimental group being favoured.

Research domains:

1. Human domain: footballers of the junior team of Samarra Sports Club, aged under 20 years.
2. Temporal domain: from 30/8/2025 through to 30/11/2025.
3. Spatial domain: Salah al-Din Governorate / Samarra / the football pitch of Samarra Sports Club

Definition of terms:

1. Anaerobic (non-oxidative) power: it is "the capacity of the human body to provide the energy necessary to perform high-intensity effort in the absence of oxygen".
2. The researcher's operational definition of possession exercises: exercises performed in the form of games whose rules are set by the coach, in which a group of players competes against another group within a defined area, so as to sharpen the player's skills while he is under pressure and of accelerating and transferring the tempo of play.

METHOD

Research method

The researcher used the experimental method because it suits the nature of the research, and because it "is distinguished by control over the variables under study, whereby an intended change is produced in some of them while other variables are



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controlled; it is therefore the only research method that establishes the relationship between cause and effect precisely".

Research population and sample:

The population was chosen purposively and comprised the junior footballers of Samarra Sports Club during the (2020-2021) season, totalling (40) players. Twenty-four of them, that is (60%) of the population, made up the sample and were assigned by lot to two equal groups of (12) players each, one serving as a control group and the other as an experimental group. Goalkeepers, players who were absent from part of the testing, and those involved in the pilot trials were all left out.

Experimental design

The researcher used the experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests for the experimental and control groups.

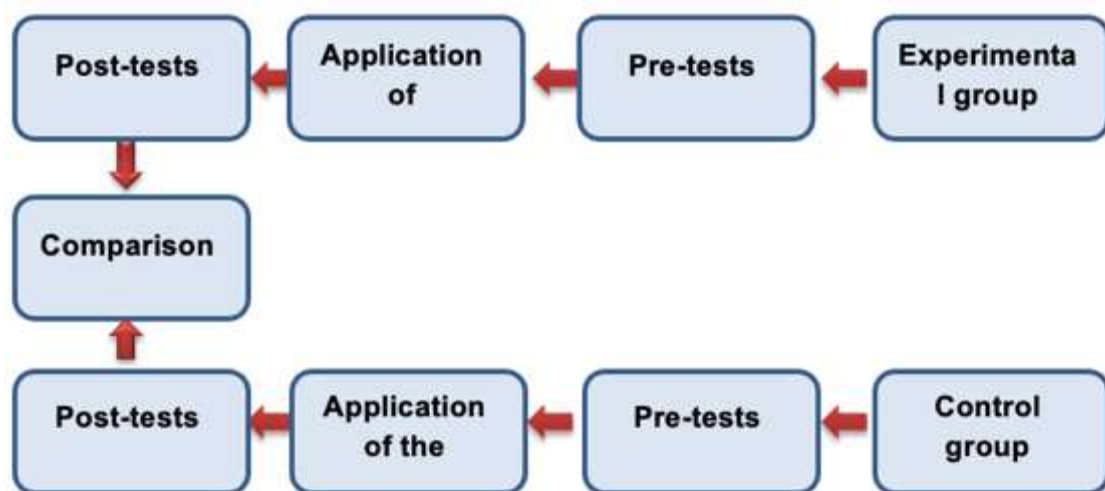


Figure 1. The experimental design

Devices, tools and means used in the research:

Devices and tools:

1. Electronic device for measuring weight, number (2)
2. Measuring tape for measuring height, number (2)
3. Stopwatches reading to one hundredth of a second, number (6)
4. Marker cones, number (30)
5. Regulation footballs, number (30)
6. Training bibs, number (30)
7. Movable goals, number (2)
8. Handball goals, number (2)
9. Small goals, number (4)
10. Electronic device for measuring pulse rate, number (2)
11. Whistles, number (3)
12. Rope
13. Marking powder

Means of data collection:

1. Content analysis of scientific sources and references.

2. Tests and measurements

3. The assistant work team

Field procedures of the research

Tests of basic football skills

Dribbling assessment through zigzag running with the ball. Objective of the test: to measure dribbling. Tools used: a regulation football, a stopwatch and 5 marker cones. Description of the test: five cones are set out in line, each spaced 9 feet, that is (2.70) m, from the next, with the same distance separating the first cone from the starting line. Holding the ball behind the starting line, the examinee sets off on the signal and drives the ball with his feet in and out of the cones to the far end and back again. Two successive attempts are allowed for every examinee. Method of scoring: each attempt is timed to one hundredth of a second, and the two attempts are added together to give the score.

Unit of measurement: time.

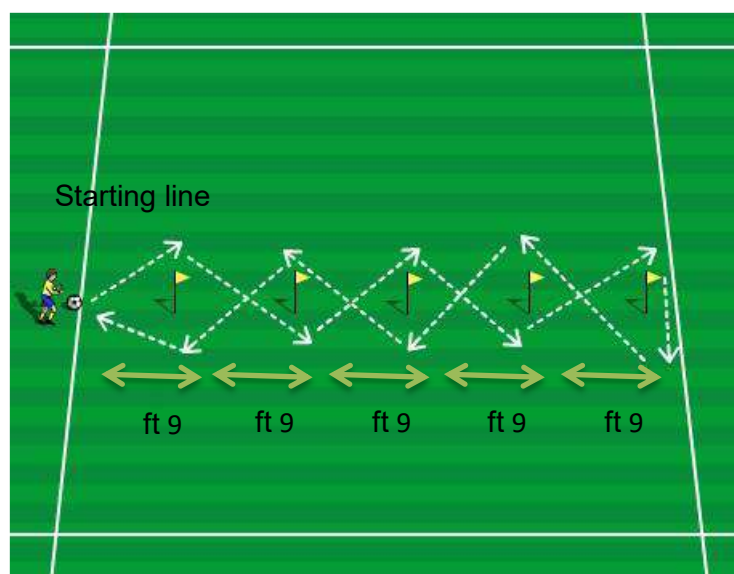


Figure 2. Dribbling assessment through zigzag running with the ball.

Passing-accuracy assessment: lofted passes into circles marked on the ground.

Objective of the test: to measure passing accuracy.

Description of the test:

1. Three concentric circles are drawn with diameters of (3 m, 5 m, 7 m).
2. A starting line (5 m) wide laterally is marked (25 m) away from the centre of the circles. Standing behind that line, the player sends the five balls one after another through the air, trying to land them inside the innermost circle.
3. Two successive attempts are allowed.
4. Should the ball land on a line shared by two circles, the greater value is awarded.
5. Each attempt consists of (5) balls.

Method of scoring:

Innermost circle: three points. Middle circle: two points. Outer circle: one point. Beyond the circles: nothing. Unit of measurement: points

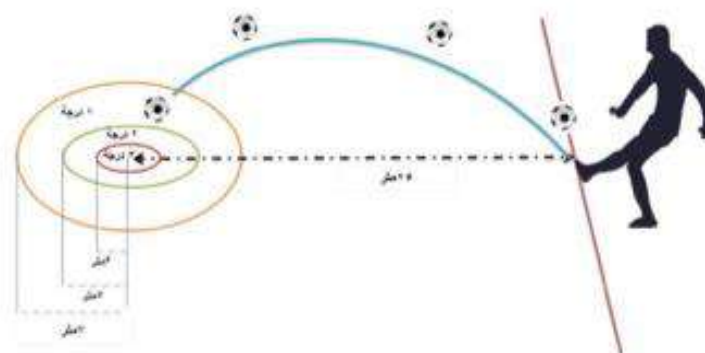


Figure 3. Ball-control

Ball-control assessment: halting the ball from (6 m) inside a (2 m) square. Objective of the test: ball control (stopping the movement of the ball) Tools used: five footballs, a square measuring two metres on each side, and a line marked six metres away from that square. Description of the test: the player takes up position behind the marked test area while the examiner lofts the ball towards him; the player then advances into the area and tries to bring the ball to a halt using any part of the body other than the arms, after which he returns to the starting area and begins again, repeating the sequence five times in succession.

1. Bringing the ball to a halt must take place inside the area set aside for the test.
2. Any faulty throw by the examiner means the attempt is taken again.
3. An attempt is judged incorrect in the following situations:

Failure of the player to bring the ball to a halt. Stepping outside the area set aside for the test. Contact between the ball and the arm while the ball is being stopped.

Method of scoring: two points are awarded where the attempt succeeds at the first touch and one point where it succeeds at the second, while a ball leaving the designated area scores nothing; the five attempts therefore total ten points. Unit of measurement: points.

Anaerobic power test (RAST test).

Objective of the test: to measure anaerobic power.

Tools required for the test: a pitch, (4) stopwatches, an electronic scale, (2) whistles to signal the start, and an electronic pulse-rate monitor.

Description of the test: the examinee performs six maximal sprints of (35 m) each, taking a (10)-second recovery between one sprint and the next.

Method of scoring: the time taken over each (35 m) is registered individually in seconds and hundredths of a second, after which anaerobic power for every repetition is derived as follows:

Anaerobic power (in watts) = $\text{weight} \times \text{distance}^2 / \text{time}^3$.

Mean anaerobic power (in watts) = the sum of the values / 6.

Pilot study

The researcher, together with the assistant work team, conducted a pilot study on (6) players from the research population, who were excluded when the main research



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procedures were implemented. This trial was carried out on (30/5/2025), and its purpose was as follows:

1. To verify the fitness for use of the devices and tools employed.
2. To identify the difficulties and obstacles that might confront the assistant work team during the tests.
3. To calculate the time required to carry out the tests.
4. To ensure that the assistant work team understood what they were to do.

Pre-tests

Under the researcher's supervision, the assistant work team administered the pre-tests of anaerobic power and of the skills of (passing, dribbling and ball control) to the sample of (24) players across two days (2-3/9/2025); the skill tests took place on 2/9/2025 and the anaerobic power test on 3/9/2025.

Main experiment

Once the pre-tests had been completed, the researcher's exercises were put into practice across (30) training units at three units weekly (Saturday, Monday, Wednesday), following a (1-2) wave pattern so as to secure the training effect throughout the period of sporting practice, which extended over (10) weeks. The main experiment ran with the sample from 5/9/2025 to 11/11/2025 and drew upon scientific references and sources concerned with training science; in preparing the exercises the researcher gave weight to the following:

1. Main-part exercise time was fixed at (30-42) minutes.
2. The weekly count of training units.
3. The recovery intervals separating repetitions.
4. Gradation in difficulty.
5. The age stage of the research sample.

Post-tests

Following completion of the exercises, the post-tests were administered to the sample under the same conditions as the pre-tests, on 14-15/11/2025, so that the influence of the independent variable and the degree of progress achieved by the experimental and control groups could be established.

Statistical means

The researcher used the (SPSS) statistical package

1. Arithmetic mean
2. Standard deviation
3. Skewness coefficient
4. Correlation coefficient
5. Rate of development
6. Median
7. Percentage

Post-test mean - Pre-test mean

Rate-of-development law $\text{Development \%} = \frac{\text{Post-test mean} - \text{Pre-test mean}}{\text{Pre-test mean}} \times 100$

Pre-test mean

If, however, the measurement is by time, the law is reversed.

RESEARCH RESULT

Anaerobic power of the control group: display, analysis and discussion.

Table 1. Pre-test and post-test statistical indicators of anaerobic power in the control group

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Mean Difference	Percentage of Development
Mean $\pm$ SD	Anaerobic Power (W)	327.196 $\pm$ 48.012	385.17 $\pm$ 36.964	0.741	2.009	12.97	3.485%

As Table (1) indicates, the calculated (t) for the anaerobic power test came to (0.741), a value below the tabulated (t) of (2.009) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 ; the difference in this test is accordingly non-significant.

Anaerobic power of the experimental group: display, analysis and discussion

Table 2. Pre-test and post-test statistical indicators of anaerobic power in the experimental group.

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Mean Difference	Percentage of Development
Mean $\pm$ SD	Anaerobic Power (W)	371.447 $\pm$ 61.09	450.16 $\pm$ 45.497	3.579	2.009	78.713	21.190%

As Table (2) indicates, the calculated (t) for the anaerobic power test reached (3.579), exceeding the tabulated (t) of (2.009) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 ; the pre-test/post-test difference is therefore significant and favours the post-test.

Skill variables: display, analysis and discussion. Skill variables of the control group: display, analysis and discussion.

Table 3. Pre-test and post-test statistical indicators of the skill variables in the control group.

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Mean Difference	Percentage of Development
Mean $\pm$ SD	Ball Handling (degree)	7.58 $\pm$ 1.88	9 $\pm$ 3	1.384	2.009	1.42	18.730%
Mean $\pm$ SD	Rolling (sec)	24.930 $\pm$ 0.81	24.904 $\pm$ 1.209	0.06	2.009	0.026	0.10%
Mean $\pm$ SD	Damping (degree)	3.416 $\pm$ 1.187	3.75 $\pm$ 0.595	0.872	2.009	0.334	9.777%

As Table (3) indicates, the calculated (t) values for (passing, dribbling and ball control) came to (1.384, 0.061, 0.872) respectively, all of them below the tabulated (t) of (2.009) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 , so none of these differences reaches significance.

Skill variables of the experimental group: display, analysis and discussion

Table 4. Pre-test and post-test statistical indicators of the skill variables in the experimental group

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Mean Difference (Xf)	Percentage of Development
Mean ± SD	Ball Handling (degree)	7.83 ± 1.46	11 ± 1.73	4.834	2.009	2	40.48%
Mean ± SD	Rolling (sec)	24.863 ± 0.912	22.593 ± 0.777	6.563	2.009	2.27	9.13%
Mean ± SD	Damping (degree)	3.50 ± 1.322	5.666 ± 0.849	4.778	2.009	2.166	61.885%

The calculated (t) values in Table (4) for (passing, dribbling and ball control) stand at (4.834, 6.563, 4.778) respectively, above the tabulated (t) of (2.009) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 , which points to significant differences favouring the post-tests.

Post-test anaerobic power of the experimental and control groups: display, analysis and discussion

Table 5. Statistical indicators of the two post-tests of anaerobic power in the experimental and control groups

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Control Group	Experimental Group	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level
Mean ± SD	Anaerobic Power (W/sec)	385.17 ± 36.964	450.16 ± 45.497	5.431	2.074	Significant

Table (5) reveals a significant post-test difference between the two groups on the (RAST) measure of anaerobic power, in favour of the experimental group, the calculated (t) reaching (5.431) against a tabulated (t) of (2.074) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 .

Post-test skill variables of the experimental and control groups: display, analysis and discussion

Table 6. Statistical indicators of the two post-tests of the skill variables in the experimental and control groups

Statistical Parameters	Variable	Control Group	Experimental Group	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level
Mean ± SD	Ball Handling (degree)	9 ± 3	11 ± 1.73	2.71	2.074	Significant
Mean ± SD	Rolling (sec)	24.904 ± 1.209	22.593 ± 0.777	7.886	2.074	Significant



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Mean $\pm$ SD	Damping (degree)	3.75 $\pm$ 0.595	5.666 $\pm$ 0.849	9.08	2.074	Significant
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Table (6) points to significant post-test differences between the experimental and control groups across the skill tests (passing, dribbling and ball control), in favour of the experimental group, since the calculated (t) values were, respectively, (2.71, 7.886, 9.08) all of them above the tabulated (t) of (2.074) at an error level of ≤ 0.05 , which confirms that the two groups differ significantly. The researcher attributes these differences, in addition to what has been mentioned previously, to the use of possession exercises, which led to an improvement in the physical aspect represented by anaerobic power and to an improvement in the skill aspect that appeared clearly through the tests, since these exercises were characterised by a great deal of movement and by continuous repetition of the skills, so that the development of anaerobic power became a reason for the good performance of the skills.

Discussion

In the researcher's reading, the absence of a significant difference on the (RAST) anaerobic power measure for the control group traces back to the shaky scientific grounding of the training programme drawn up by the coach, since exercises that rely on the codification of training loads and are built on scientific foundations are the basis of the player's development; the rate of development was therefore weak. For this reason, sports training "aims to prepare the body and to improve the condition of its organs and systems so that it functions under suitable conditions that help to raise the level of its physical readiness". However, this did not occur among the members of the control group.

The researcher attributes the significant difference that appeared in the anaerobic power test (RAST test) for the experimental group to the scientific foundations on which the training programme relied, to sound organisation, to the conditions suitable for carrying out the research, and to the provision of all means capable of giving the players comfort in performing the exercises within the training unit in a manner compatible with their capabilities; this development therefore appeared in the experimental group. For this reason, the training process is "that organised, continuous process which provides the individual with knowledge, skill, ability, ideas or opinions necessary for the performance of a particular task, in addition to achieving organisational objectives and adaptation to the work, together with whatever information, skills or mental attitudes are provided to the individual and are necessary, from the organisational point of view, for the achievement of objectives".

Moreover, "advancement in standard requires correct repetition at a time when the traces of the previous load are still present, since a high efficiency of the body's functional systems in exerting effort becomes evident during this period, and consequently the functional level of the body's systems is raised". Furthermore, "the training process for any activity requires an emphasis on bringing about adaptation in the energy systems that contribute to that activity.

Thus the exercises prepared by the researcher play an important role in achieving the required objectives, which allows the researcher to attribute this development in anaerobic power to the reasons mentioned above, in addition to the adoption of interval



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training (high and low intensity), which reinforces the preceding reasons because it enables players to achieve the highest possible load with the least fatigue, since the body tolerates the burden of the work performed three times more when it is performed intermittently than when it is performed continuously". In addition, the processes of physiological adaptation occur in a specific manner, meaning that advancement in sporting standard is achieved through the use of training exercises linked to the natural form of performance of the specialised sport". This is a further reason, since the use of the possession exercise method, which closely resembles what occurs in a match, gave the player the opportunity to adapt and develop in all aspects, including the physical aspect represented by anaerobic power, as well as the skill aspect.

Table (3) further shows the absence of any significant pre-test/post-test difference in the lofted-passing accuracy test into ground-marked circles, by which passing skill was measured.

In the researcher's reading, this stems from a programme drawn up by the coach without a scientific footing, and thus lacking the integration and coherence needed to register in the players' level and in their performance, whether individually or collectively.

That is, the application of a traditional training programme without progressive increase leads to weakness in, and a reduction of, the training effect on the athlete. This is what occurred with the control group.

Table (3) likewise reveals no significant pre-test/post-test difference in the zigzag run with the ball, by which dribbling was measured. The researcher attributes this to the failure of the training programme prepared by the coach to allocate sufficient time to this skill in a manner compatible with the conditions for its development, since dribbling is one of the important and fundamental skills in football and the degree of a player's prominence depends on the extent to which he masters it. This, however, was absent among the members of the control group, in addition to the programme's departure from a considered scientific basis.

Table (3) equally shows no significant pre-test/post-test difference in the control test involving halting the ball from (6 m), by which ball-control skill was measured.

The researcher reads this as the outcome of the training programme's failure to give this skill the attention it required; and since the process of ball control is linked to a great extent to the level of the player's feel, which develops in him through continuous repetition and thereby creates in him a heightened sense of the ball, for "the feel for the ball grows with practice and constitutes a special kind of heightened perception that enables him to deal with the ball through his experience, whence the player comes to perceive the properties of the ball precisely. This was not present among the members of the control group.

Table (4) makes plain a significant pre-test/post-test gap favouring the post-test in lofted-passing accuracy into ground-marked circles, the measure of passing skill. The researcher attributes these differences to the programme that adopted scientific foundations, in which the researcher selected a set of realistic exercises consistent with the players' potential, capabilities and desires, thereby giving them the opportunity to use this skill in accordance with the conditions laid down by the researcher, who specified the number of touches and the playing area, which compelled the players to perform these skills in various situations. Likewise, the presence of an opponent made them perform the skills with high speed and accuracy so as to make them difficult for the



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opponent, and consequently they came to perform them well; the player attains automatic performance of the skill through constant repetition of the movement.

Table (4) likewise reveals a significant pre-test/post-test gap favouring the post-test in the zigzag run with the ball, which measures the dribbling skill. The researcher attributes these differences to the nature of the possession exercise method, which gives the player the incentive to gain possession of the ball and to retain it, as well as to dribble past the opponent and to reach a particular objective: "this type of exercise, played within areas and under conditions specified by the coach, aims at developing and improving individual skills such as dribbling, passing, ball control and feinting.

Table (4) further records a significant pre-test/post-test gap favouring the post-test in the control test involving halting the ball from (6 m), the measure of ball-control skill. The researcher attributes this development to the fact that most of the exercises used in the research emphasised playing with two or three touches, which led the player to perform this skill with numerous repetitions and stimulated him to concentrate on performing it smoothly, since it is linked to the level of the player's feel for the ball. The possession exercise method played a positive role, as it required the player to control the ball with the fewest possible touches and without error while protecting the ball from the opponent; thus the execution of the skill became a true reflection of the training process.

The researcher traces this significant difference, in addition to what was mentioned in the discussion of the results of the pre-test and post-test of anaerobic power, to strength of will and to the desire to perform the exercises and to persevere with them properly; strength of will is considered one of the factors associated with improvement in anaerobic energy because of its relation to energy stores" and the codification of the training load, which is regarded as the principal means of producing effects on the athlete's body, was among the reasons that led to this difference.

This is because "the physical attributes of the football player are what largely determine the efficiency of skill performance", and since "modern training is characterised by an increasing trend towards specialisation, with emphasis on the requirements of specialised performance in the type of sporting activity", the specialised training load means providing exercises that resemble the nature of competition; specialised training therefore has a direct and effective influence on the training process and is used as a principal means of developing physical attributes and skill performance". Since possession exercises are characterised by the quality of mental thinking, which gives the player the desire to train and helps him to be creative, and since a team-mate's participation in training in the form of play (competition) has a distinctive effect in increasing the effectiveness of the activity", this was a further reason for this development.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. Exercises built on the possession approach act positively upon the development of anaerobic power and of the fundamental football skills within the experimental group.
2. Within the junior age stage the exercises produced a marked positive influence, evident both in the players' acceptance of them and in the progress recorded on the anaerobic power and fundamental skill tests.



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3. The exercises had a considerable effect in adding an element of desire and excitement, in addition to the physical and skill benefit they provide.

Recommendations

1. Emphasis should be placed on the use of possession exercises in all training units for the youth category, in a manner appropriate to the potential of this category.
2. Attention should be given to the youth category and the necessary requisites provided for implementing training programmes in a manner suited to their desires.
3. Conducting a similar study using the same method and by other means.

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