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# Performance in Water Polo: a Content Analysis of the Romanian National Senior Championship

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## Abstract

This paper aims at presenting the development of the water polo game in Romania, by analyzing the Competition Calendar booklets published by the Romanian Water Polo Federation between the years 2003-2012. The article analyzes the main characteristics involved in obtaining performance in sports, starting from the organization of the national championship and ending with the number of athletes participating. By using the method of content analysis and observation, each team was assessed using individual sheets. Team results were compared in relation to their structure, player effectiveness, continuity of coaches and team financial possibilities. The study deserves special attention due to the remarkable results obtained in the field of water polo during the past 10 years as compared to other team sports in Romania, also based on appropriate financial support.

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Keywords: water polo, sports performance, team

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## 1. Introduction

One of the coaches' essential tasks is to analyze and investigate the changes produced after training in the behaviour of athletes. Learning, strengthening and perfecting the physical qualities of athletes and the individual and collective tactical elements depend on the coach's analysis in order to improve athletic performance (Hughes & Franks, 2004). To achieve sports performance the need to acquire specific skills and physiological complex adaptations during preparation is highlighted (Bompa, 2008).

Sports performance measurement criteria have evolved in the past years and the number of athletes capable of outstanding performance increased because sport as a field of competition and motivation encouraged them to

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devote many hours of intense effort for developing performance. Training has become increasingly complex, involving specialists and sports scientists who have developed appropriate training programs based on a large amount of information about sports (Ericsson and Charness, 1994). In a team sports performance can be analyzed from two perspectives: individual assessment of the team players and evaluation of a performance indicator for the whole team (Bartlett, 2007).

## **2. Methodology**

### *2.1. Research purposes*

The paper aims to present the development of the water polo game in Romania by analyzing the main features in obtaining sports performance in the senior category, starting from the system for conducting the national championship and the number of participating athletes.

### *2.2. Research questions*

- Does the structure of the team affect the general performance?
- Might the presence of foreign experienced athletes and the promotion of players for the national team contribute to its performance?
- Could the effectiveness of players, represented by the average goals scored per match during the whole championship, be significant in differentiating performance in water polo?
- Can the differences in obtaining performance, for teams that have a financial support and for those who cannot obtain financial aid, be considered as significant?
- Is coach continuity an important predictor for team performance?

### *2.3. Objectives*

- Identifying factors underlying the achievement of performance in water polo game;
- Determining the effectiveness of players based on the following data: the number of games attended, number of goals scored, national team selections in senior team;
- Identifying the role of the following factors in obtaining performance: composition of teams and coaches continuity;
- Determining the significance of the team's financial potential in obtaining of performance. For this analysis, following evaluation criteria have been considered:
  - Rankings obtained by each team during the last 10 years;
  - Selection of players for the national team and number of foreign players in each team;
  - Efficacy of the athletes;
  - Financial potential offered by sponsors.

### *2.4. Research items*

- Team composition;
- Effectiveness of players;
- Coaches continuity;
- Financial possibilities of team.

### *2.5. Methods, techniques and research tools*

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