



The Belgium vision on youth development

Bob Browaeys

Split 21/11/2012



CONTENT



- **Football in Belgium**
- **Development Vision of the Belgian FA**
- **The Competition Structure**
- **The National Youth Teams**
- **Coach Education School**
- **The Topsport Schools**
- **Talent Identification**
- **Grassroots**



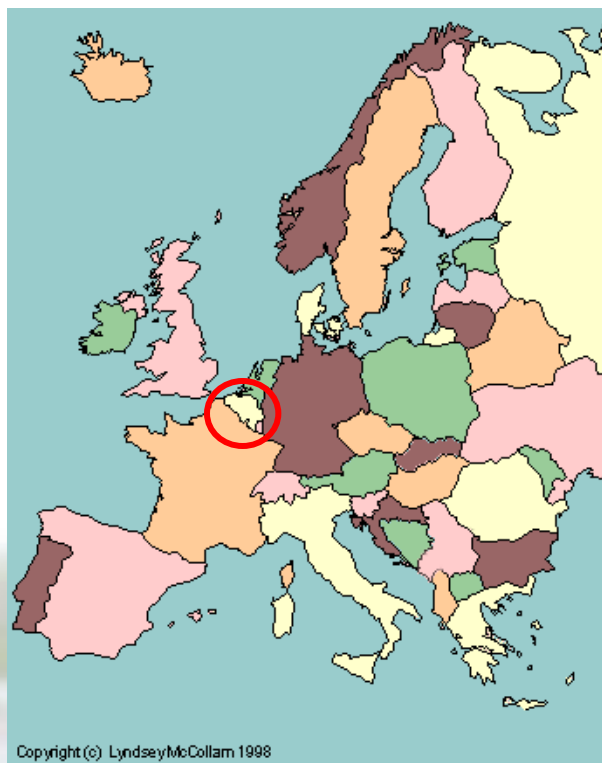
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Football in Belgium



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- Population 11.065.600 habitants
- Surface area 32 545 km²
- National languages French (40%), Dutch (60%), German (74.000)
- Population density 355,1 hab/km²
- Max distance 280 kms
- Clubs +/- 2000
- Registered players +/- 400.000
- Teams 17 902

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Development Vision of the Belgian FA



- Development vision of the Coach Education School is the reference
 - has been developed, taught and adapted for 10 years
 - has been tested in practice during training sessions at the topsport school and in the national youth teams
- Adjustment of the playing systems since the season 2003-2004
 - **5-5, 8-8 and 11-11** instead of 5-5, 7-7, 9-9 and 11-11
 - based upon scientific research (KUL)
- Spreading of the vision towards all Belgian FA projects and Belgian clubs
- The final product has a wide bearing surface: consultation and feedback of clubs, youth coaches, teachers, ...
- Constantly adapted to new trends in international football

Development Vision of the Belgian FA

4. Actor = PLAYER

3. Method = GAME and intermediate forms

2. Programme = LEARNING PLAN

1. Philosophy = ZONE

Youth
Player



**F
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adult
football player



DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

1.

The FUN-aspect



FUN = learning while playing !



- Fun for everyone: from 5 year old to professional player
- Even adults come to the training session to play a game
- Fun for every player, the less talented included!



FUN = learning while playing !



EACH PLAYER

- **plays football almost all the time**
- **touches the ball frequently**
- **gets many scoring occasions**
- **can play freely**
- **is encouraged by his coach**
- **is supported by the parents**



FUN = learning while playing !



**We lost, we won,
either we have fun !**



DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

2. The EDUCATION aspect



EDUCATION = learning step by step



EXPLORATION = to get used to the ball (5 – 7 years)



INDIVIDUAL development (7 – 17 years) :

**Basic skills and tactics
= BASICS**



**Functioning in team
= TEAM TACTICS**



**INTEGRATION in adult football
(from 17 years)**





DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

3. ZONE PHILOSOPHY



FOOTBALL IN ZONE AS DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY



Zone



Individual marking !

A playing concept and not a playing system!

Principles in loss of the ball (B-) and in possession of the ball (B+)!

⇒ Principles of zone are applied while playing 11 vs 11 from which the team tactics will be derived.

⇒ The learning plan contains team tactics which are learned in 5-5, 8-8 and 11-11 (next chapter)

ZONE PHILOSOPHY: WHY ?



To improve

- ➡ the reading of game situations
- ➡ the process of “decision making”
- ➡ the courage to take initiatives
- ➡ the collective game (defense and attack)
- ➡ the ability to communicate
- ➡ the ability to concentrate

ZONE WITH YOUTH FOOTBALL PLAYERS

=

Putting brains in the muscles !



DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

4.

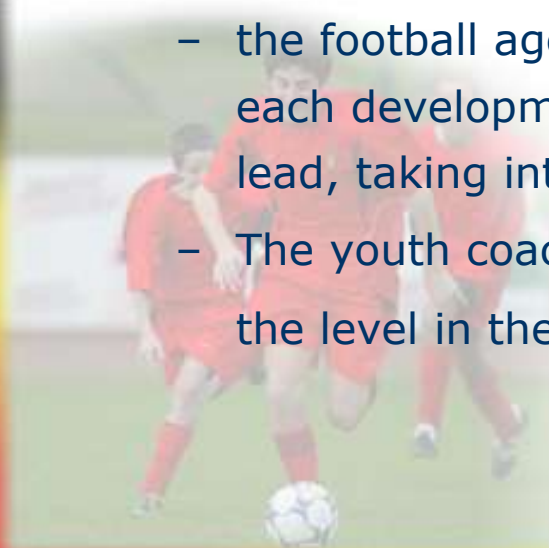
THE LEARNING PLAN



THE MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT IN FOOTBALL



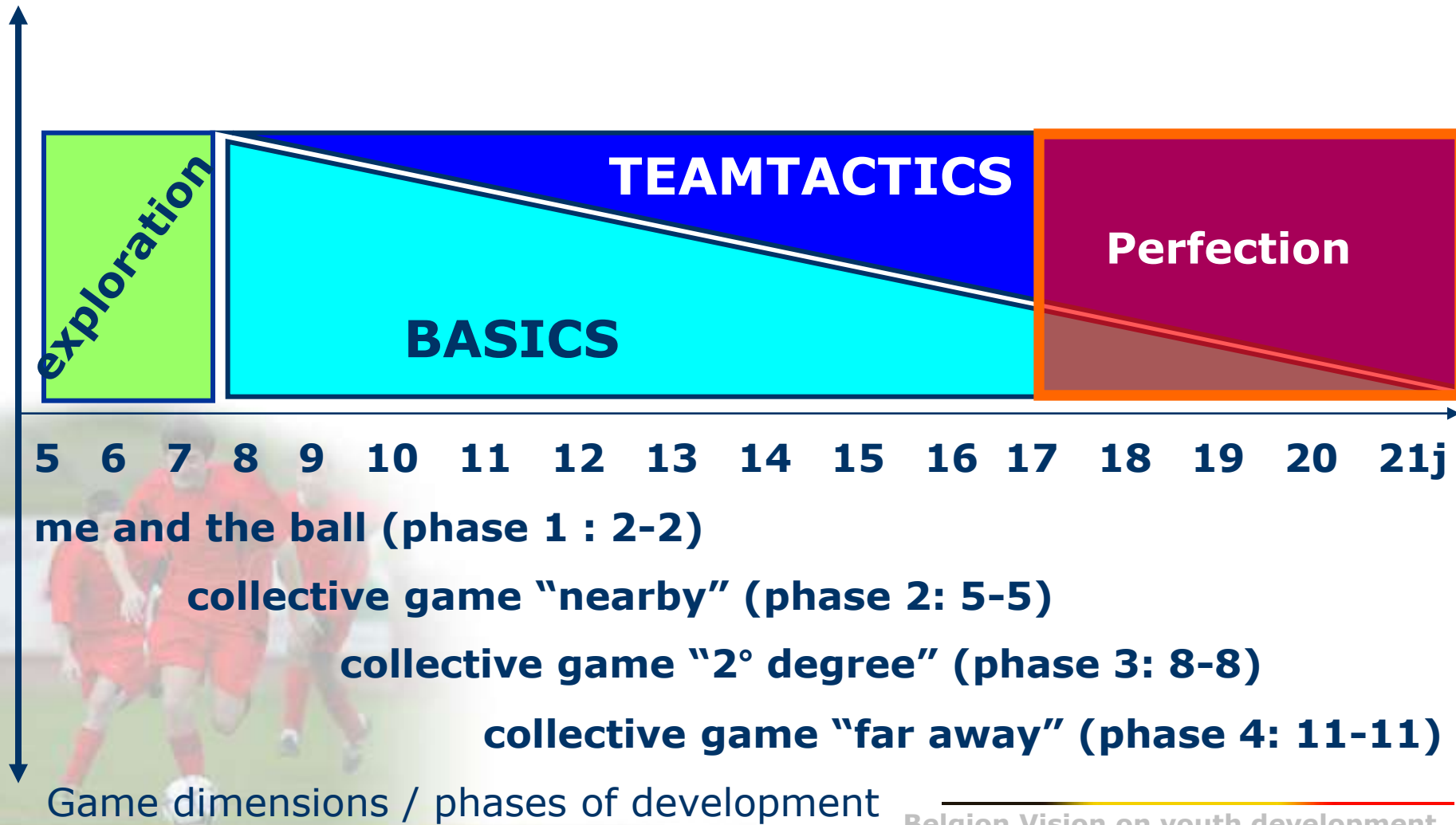
- To learn is:
 - a continuous process: objectives of development via.... via.... to (= lines of development)
 - cumulative: the acquired skills represent the basis for the skills yet to be learned
- The model of development in football:
 - based upon the development model in « ball sports »
 - 4 phases of development : fluent transition of one phase into the other
 - the football age is the clue: big individual differences are possible in each development area (f.e. physical inferiority in relation to mental lead, taking into account the biological age)
 - The youth coach chooses learning objectives and contents based upon the level in the model of development





THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL

Technical and tactical objectives within the learning plan



THE MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT IN FOOTBALL



Mental objectives within the learning plan

exploration

Use of mental skills in competition

Use of mental skills in training sessions

Teaching of
mental basic
skills

1. Motivation
2. Self controll and self discipline
3. Concentration
4. Self confidence
5. Inter-personal and team relations
6. Lifestyle

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21j

me and the ball (phase 1 : 2-2)

collective game "nearby" (phase 2: 5-5)

collective game "2° degree" (phase 3: 8-8)

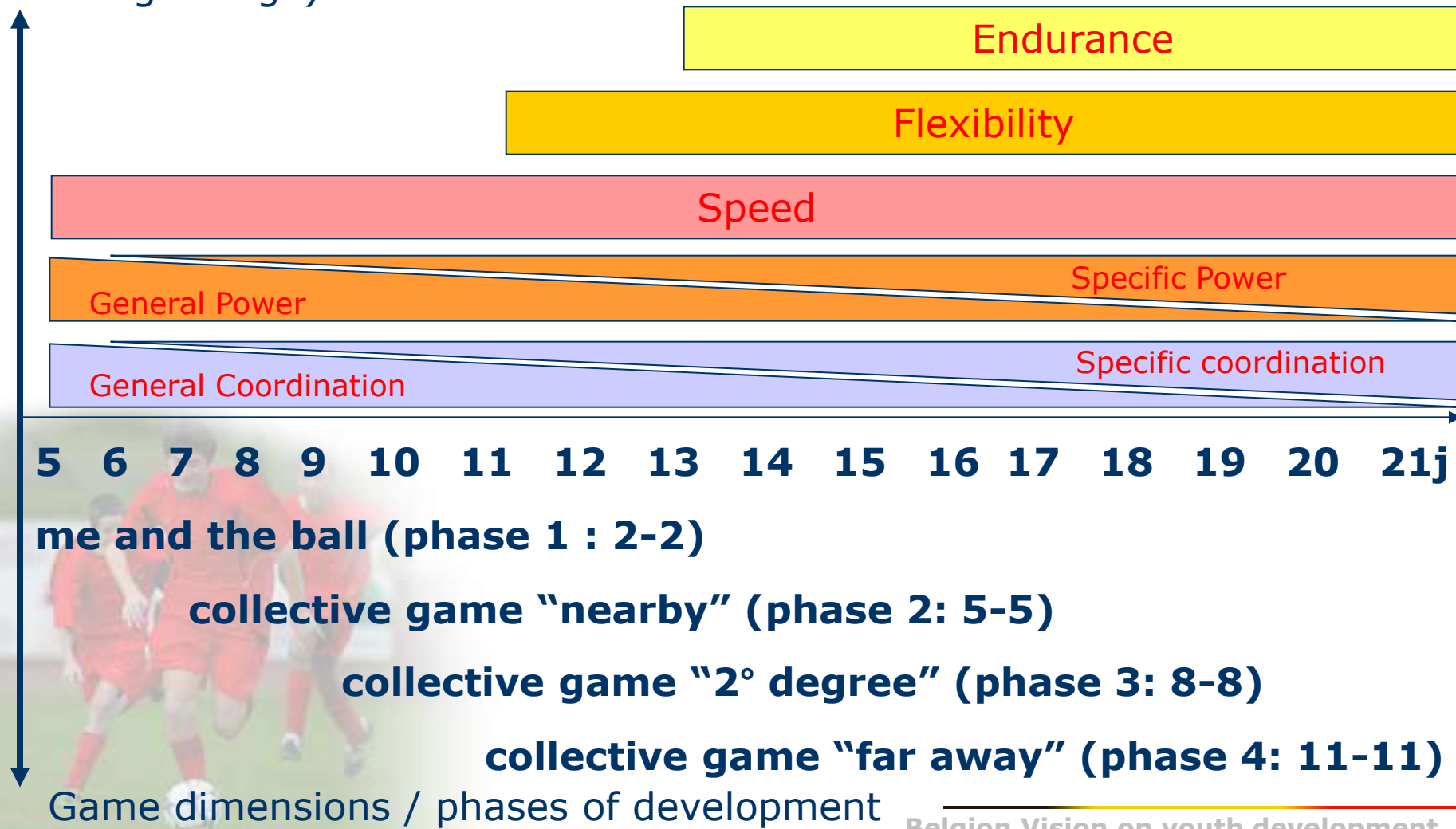
collective game "far away" (phase 4: 11-11)

Game dimensions / phases of development



THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL

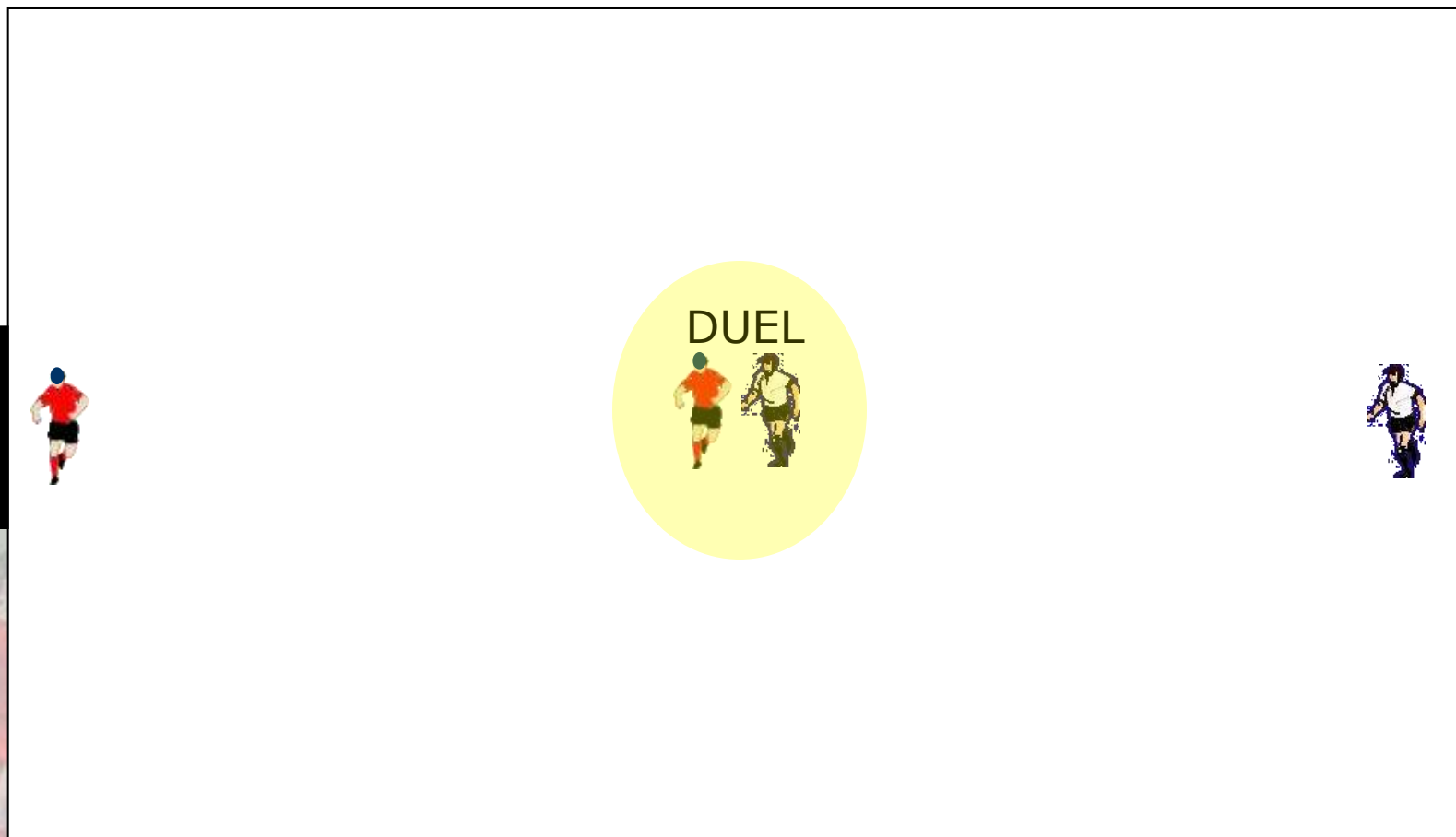
Physical objectives within the learning plan (taking into account the biological age)



THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL



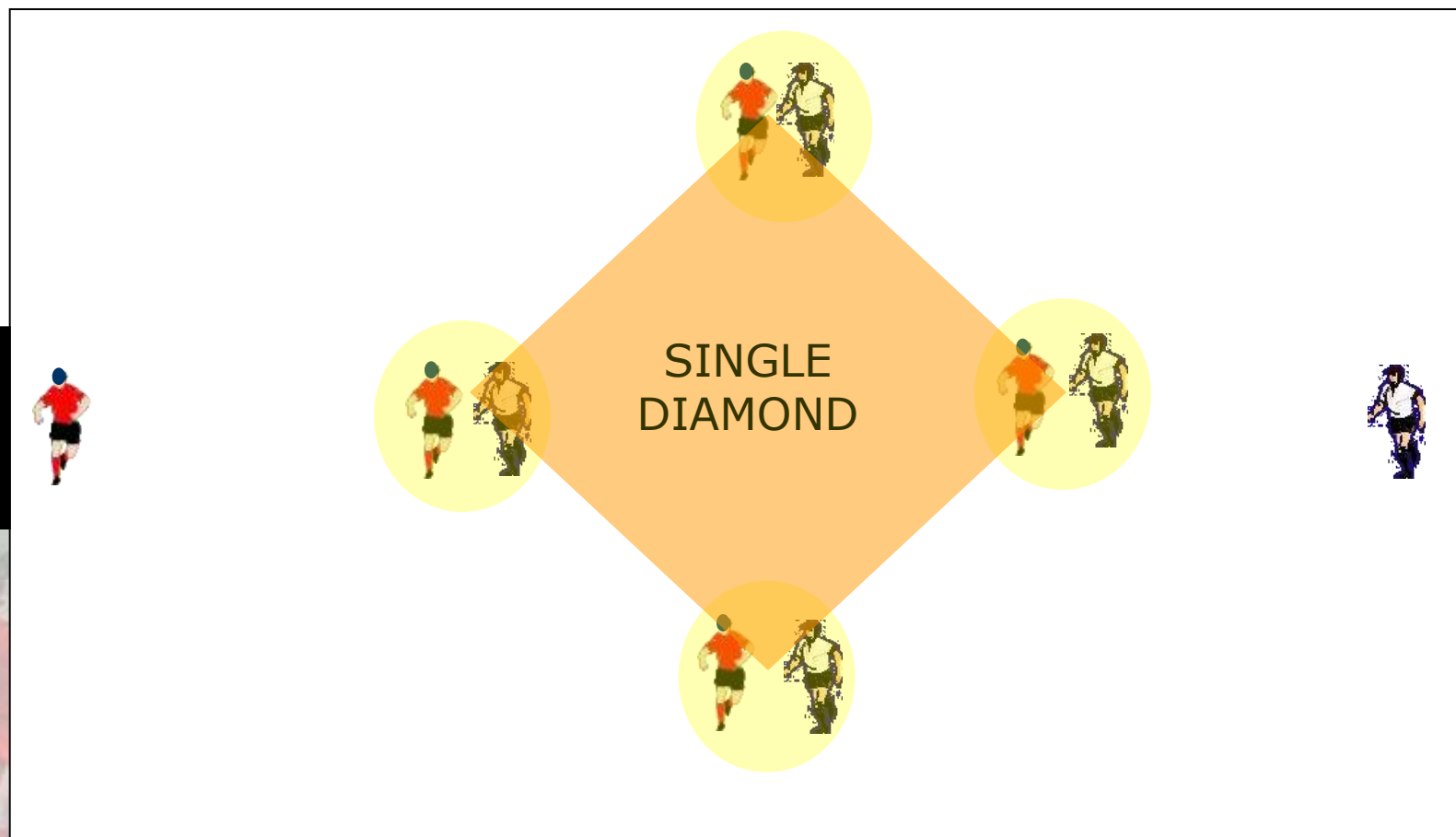
2 v 2 : duel (20m to 12m)



THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL



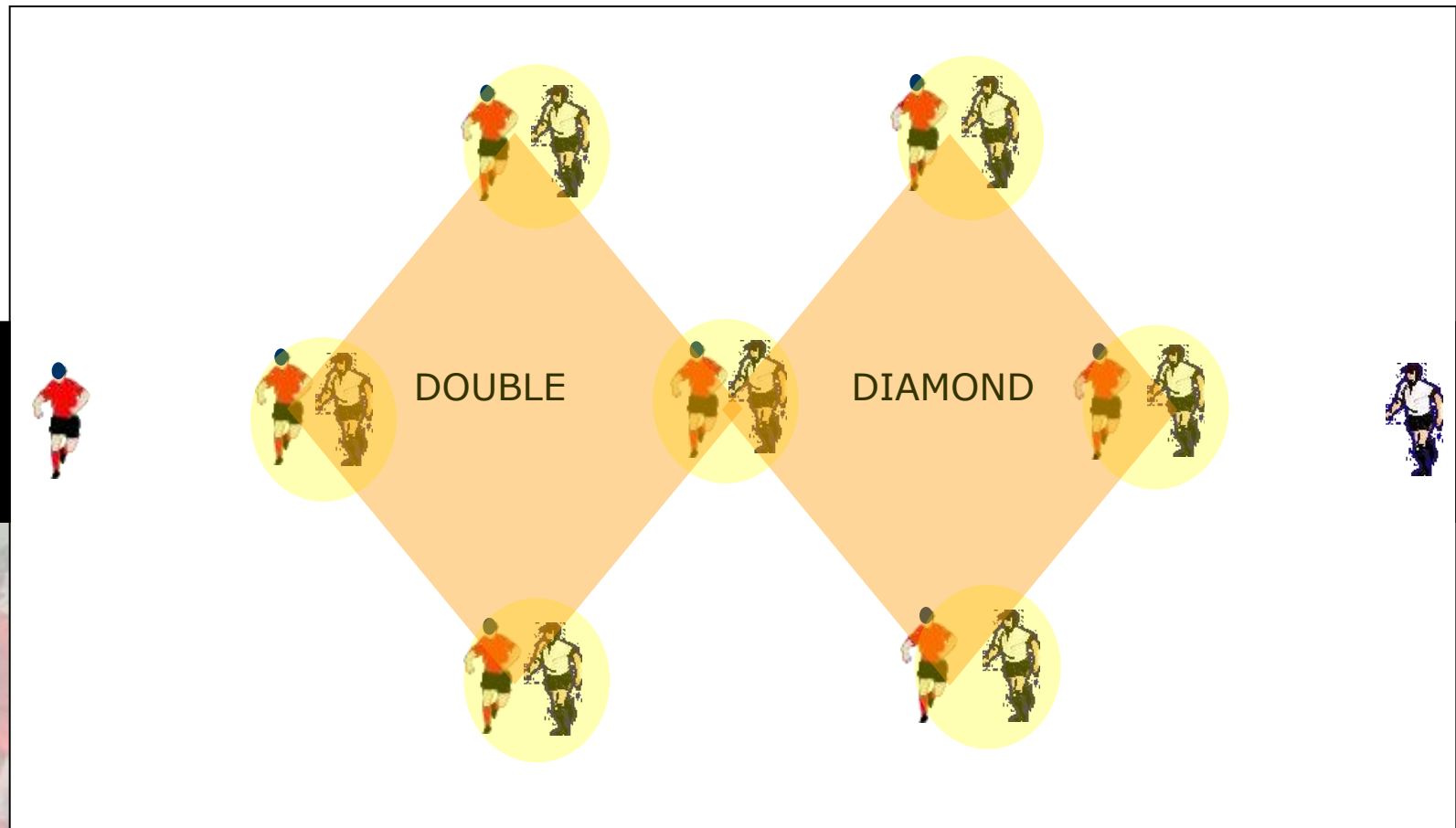
5 v 5 : single diamond (35m to 25m)





THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL

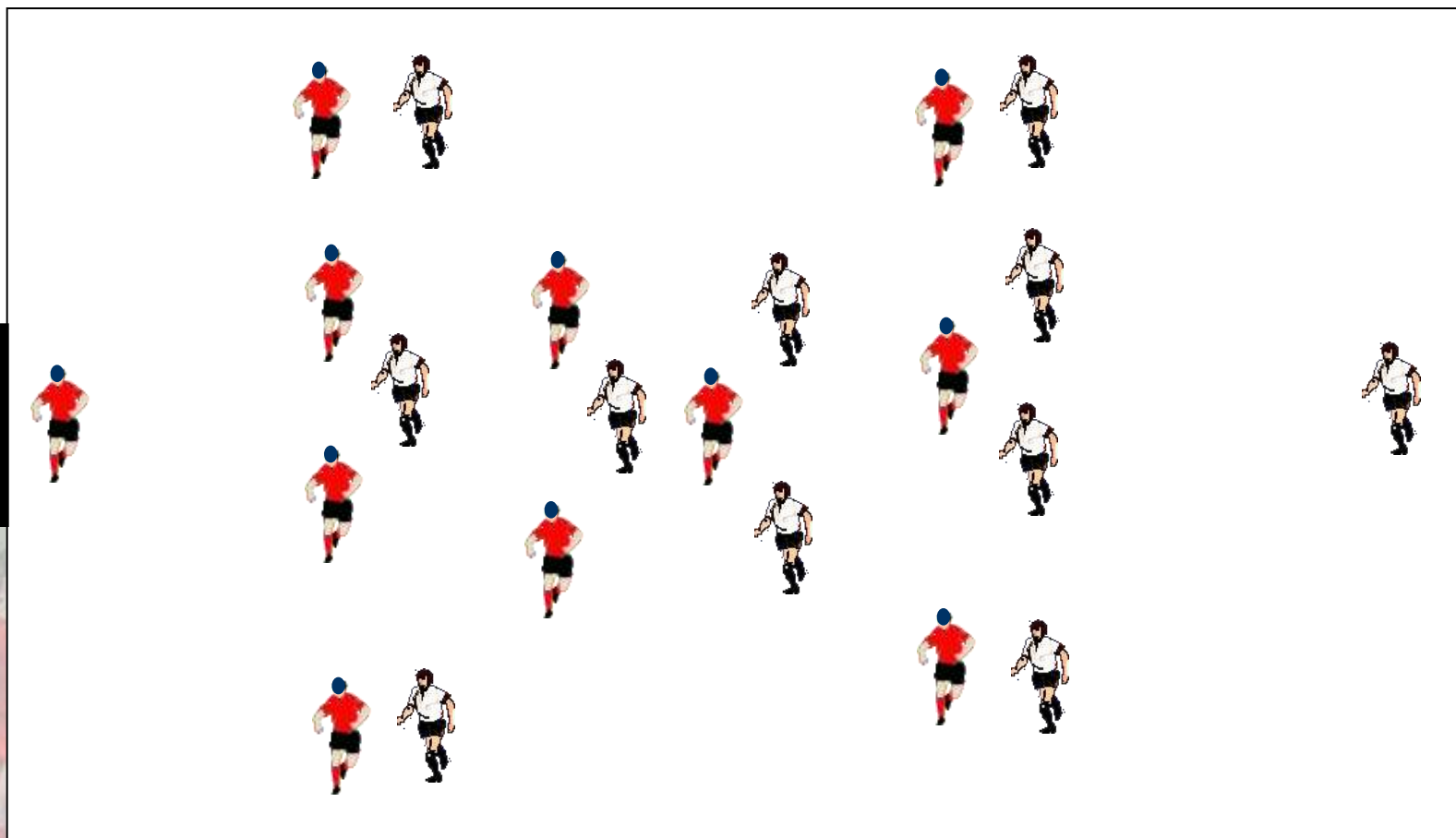
8 v 8 : double diamond (60m to 40m)



THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN FOOTBALL



11 v 11 : 1-4-3-3 (100m to 60m)





Description of different aspects according to the development model





Description of different aspects according to the development model

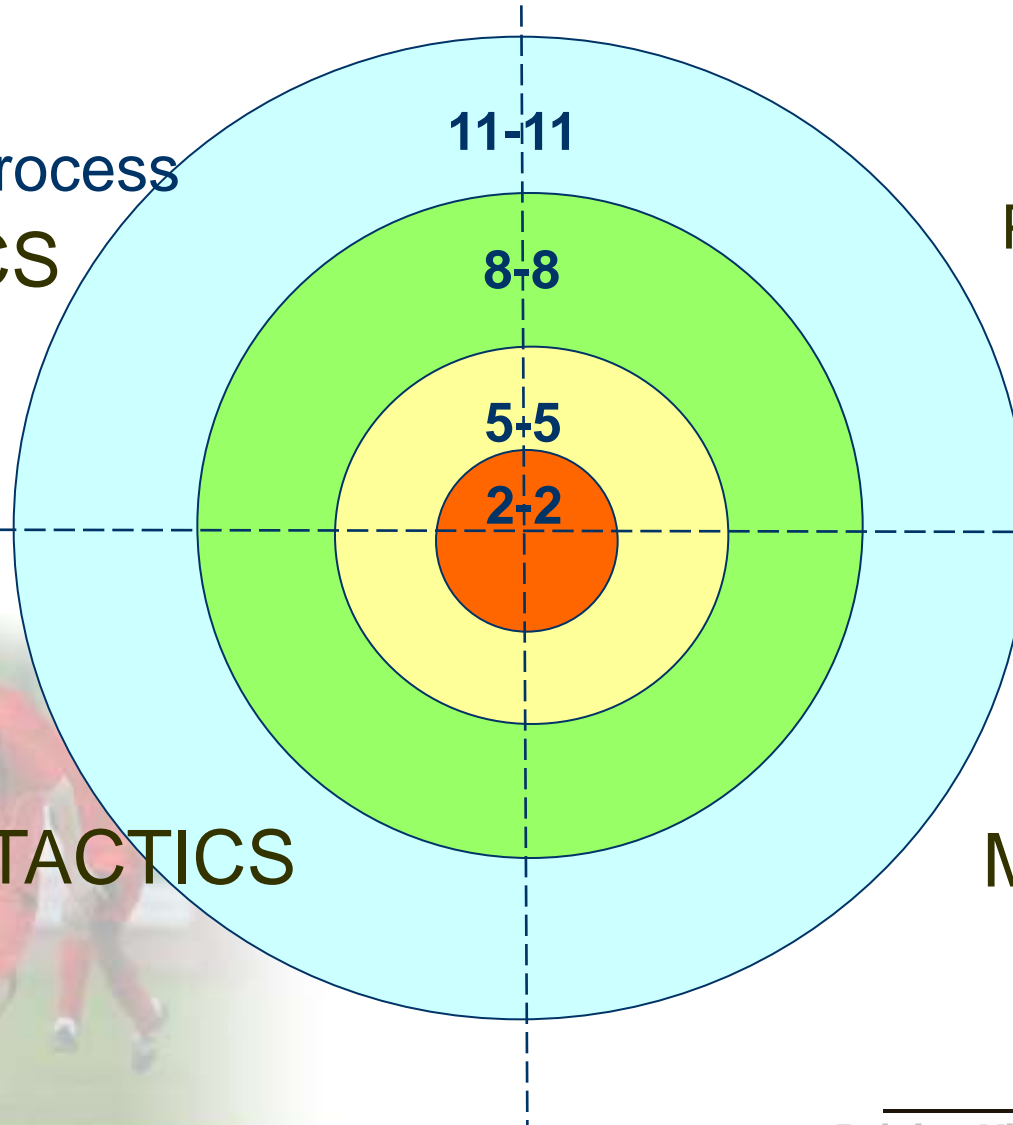
To learn is a cumulative process

BASICS

PHYSICAL

MENTAL

TEAM TACTICS





Description of different aspects according to the development model

- Setting out the basics and team tactics for each development level
- Setting out the training session topics on a physical level
- Setting out the characteristics on a mental level

	BASICS	TEAM TACTICS	PHYSICAL	MENTAL
2-2 5-7 years				
5-5 7-9 years				
8-8 9-11 years				
11-11 (1) 11-13 years 13-15 years				
11-11(2) 15-17 years				

Adaptation of the team tactics to new trends in international football



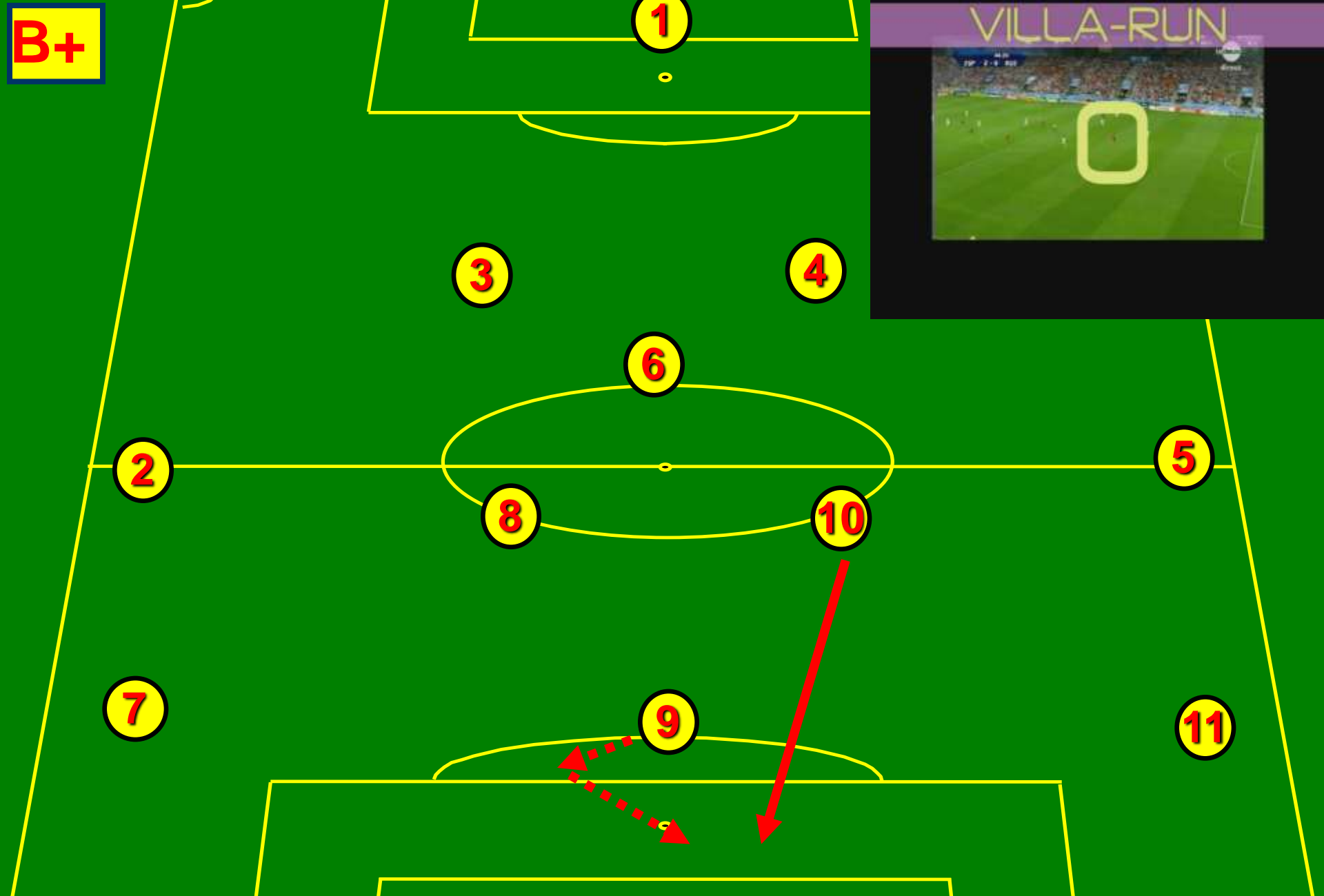
- 100% possession of the ball
 - ➔ building-up from behind (short, half long and long)
 - ➔ aggressive high pressing
 - ➔ to counter the counter
- Runs : create space and exploit space (ex. The Villa-run)
- Efficiency in the zone of truth
- Challenging players to make “new” mistakes by playing the most difficult football (also the physical and mental requirements are higher)
- 4-3-3 ➔ 1 holding midfielder



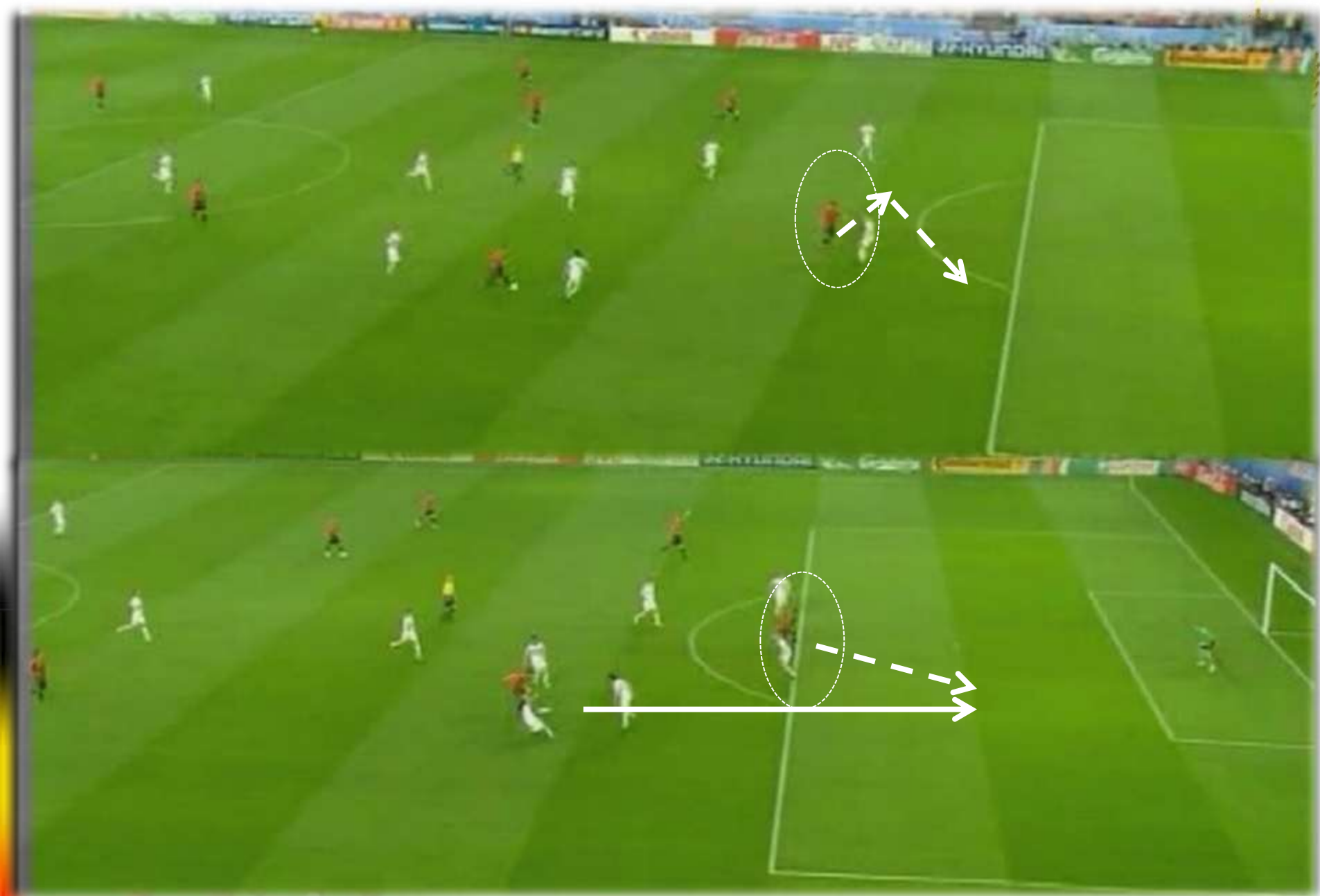
1-4-3-3 with 2 holding midfielders (from 1999 to 2002)



1-4-3-3 with 1 holding midfielder (since 2003)



5.8 Villa-run (9): cut-in after a counter movement: first away from the ball (out of vision of his opponent) and then a cut-in behind his opponent



5.8 Villa-run (9): cut-in after a counter movement: first away from the ball (out of vision of his opponent) and then a cut-in behind his opponent



5.8 Villa-run (9): cut-in after a counter movement: first away from the ball (out of vision of his opponent) and then a cut-in behind his opponent



DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

5.

**GAME and
INTERMEDIATE
forms**



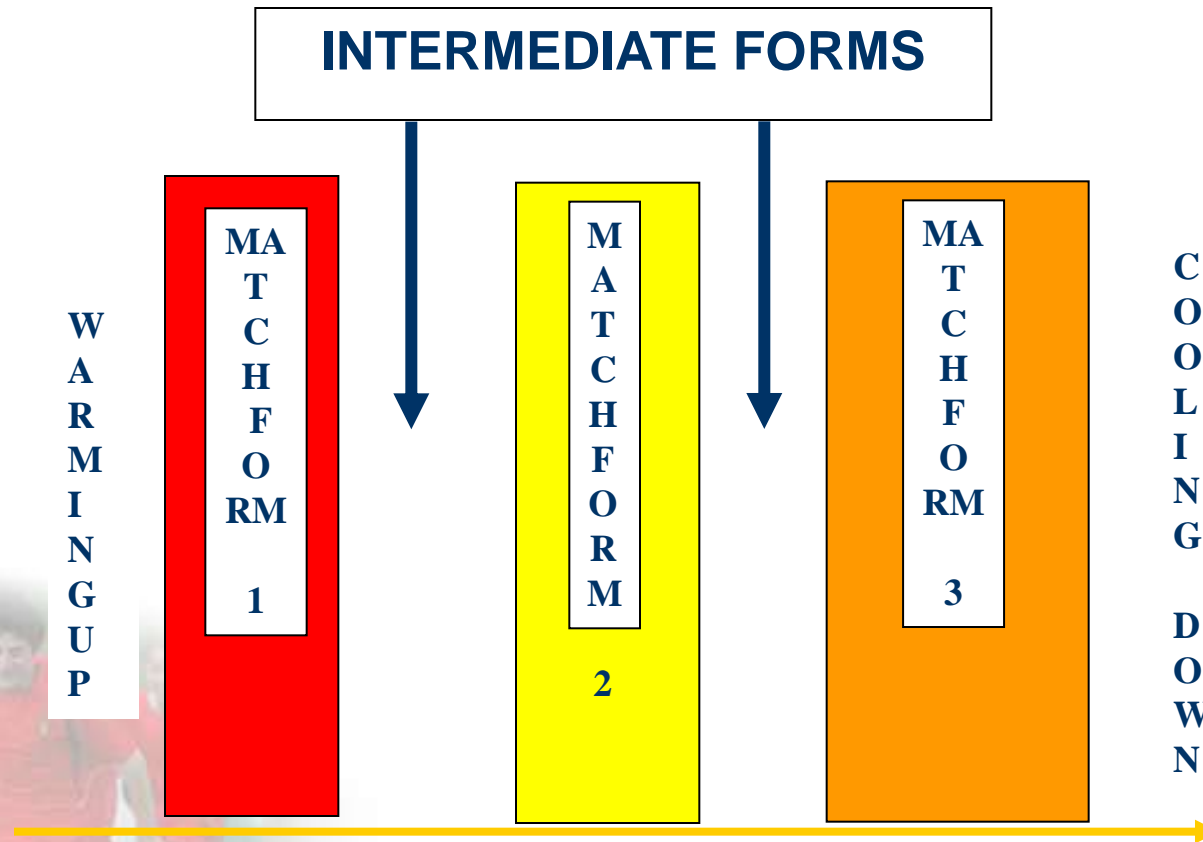
THE LAW OF THE TRANSFER



“An acquired skill in the application of certain activities (**training session**) can only be transferred into a new condition (**the match**) when there exists a maximum of resemblances between the two situations”



BUILT-UP OF A TRAINING SESSION



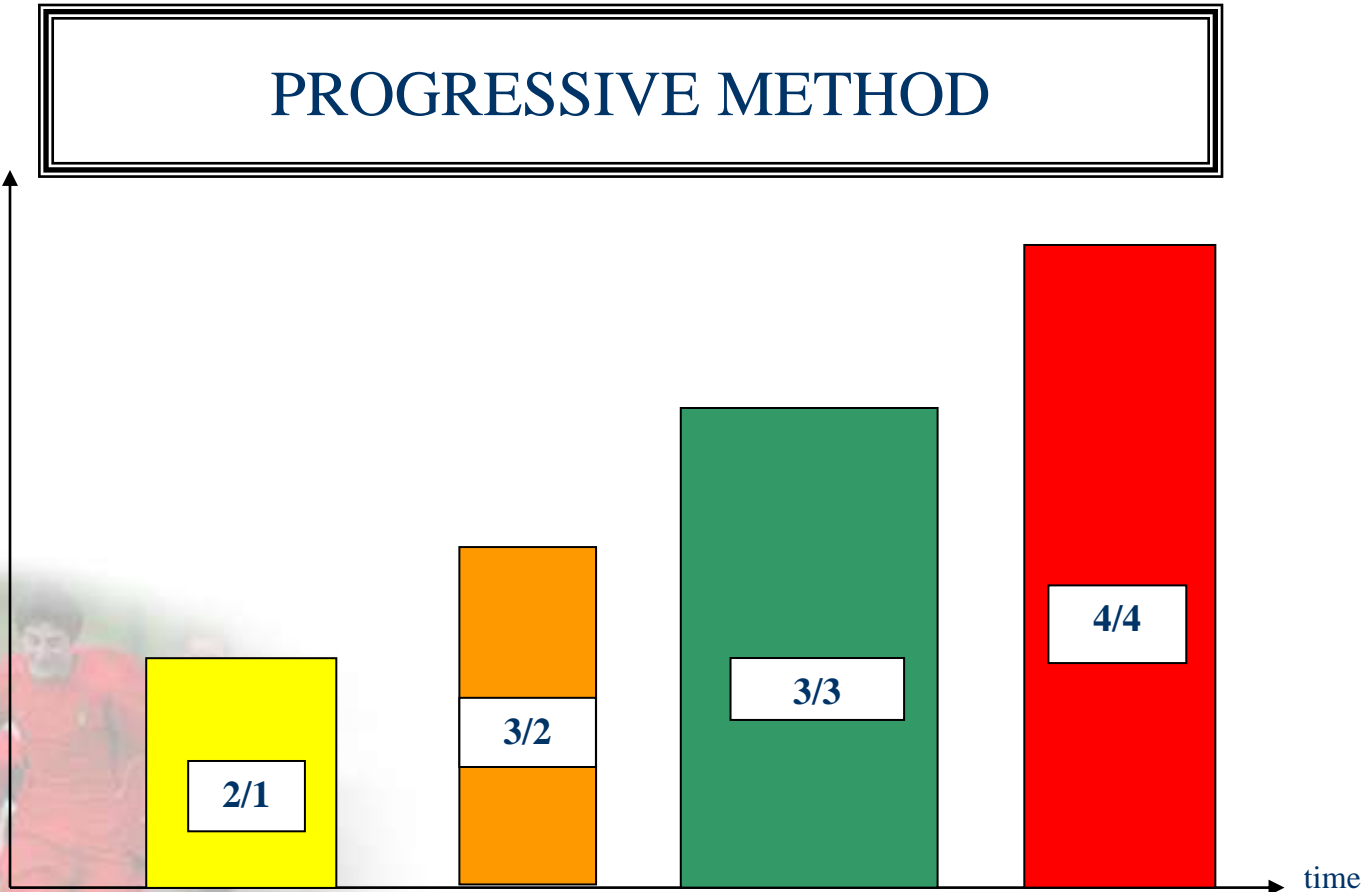
**Variation of match forms and intermediate forms
1 session can include different training units**

METHODICS



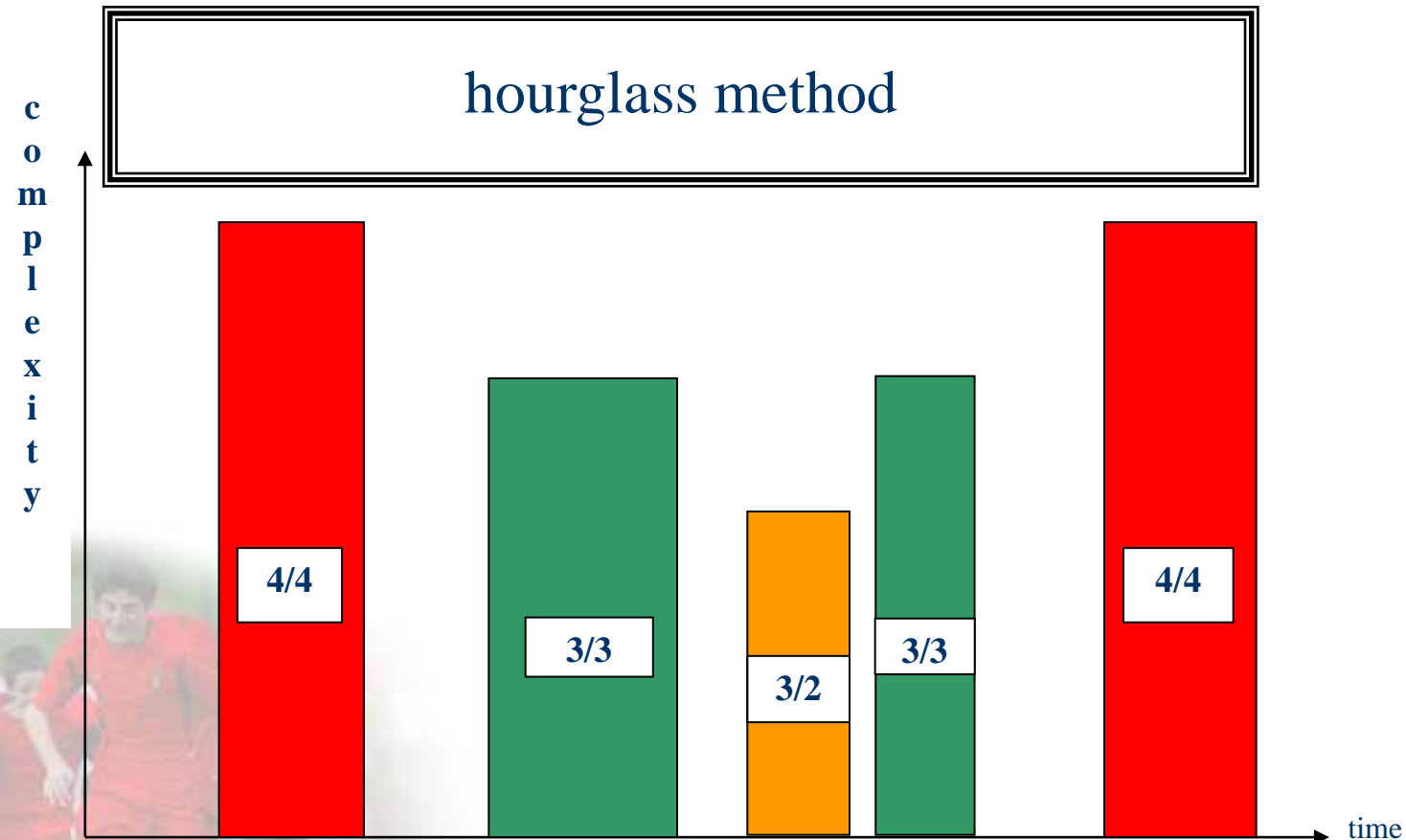
PROGRESSIVE METHOD

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In the beginning: most simple match form (f.e. 2 against 1), afterwards evolution to more complexe forms and ending with the most complexe match form (f.e. 4 against 4).

METHODICS



During the recognition phase: starting with the end form, and afterwards evolving toward the most simple match form needed to solve a problem. Afterwards, more complex forms are progressively introduced and at the end the same match form is used as at the beginning.



DEVELOPMENT VISION OF THE BELGIAN FA

6. FOCUS ON THE PLAYER



FOCUS ON THE PLAYER





Strong learning environment

Definition

- Inspiring and stimulating learning environment
- Interaction youth instructor and player
- Match focused tasks and game situations
- Player is given the opportunity to solve the game problems himself
- Learning environment is responsible for learning results



FOCUS ON THE PLAYER



- 👍 Let him
 - make his own decisions
 - experience (own experience)
- 👍 Support him, be patient and give him confidence
- 👍 Help him
 - to make the right decisions
 - to find a solution
 - with a positive coaching

Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day ...

Teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime !

DEVELOPMENT VISION BELGIAN FA



More games

More fun

And more brains !



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Competition structure **First Team**



BELGIUM

Professional Football



1st National Division
(16 teams)

2nd National Division
(18 teams)

Amateur Football

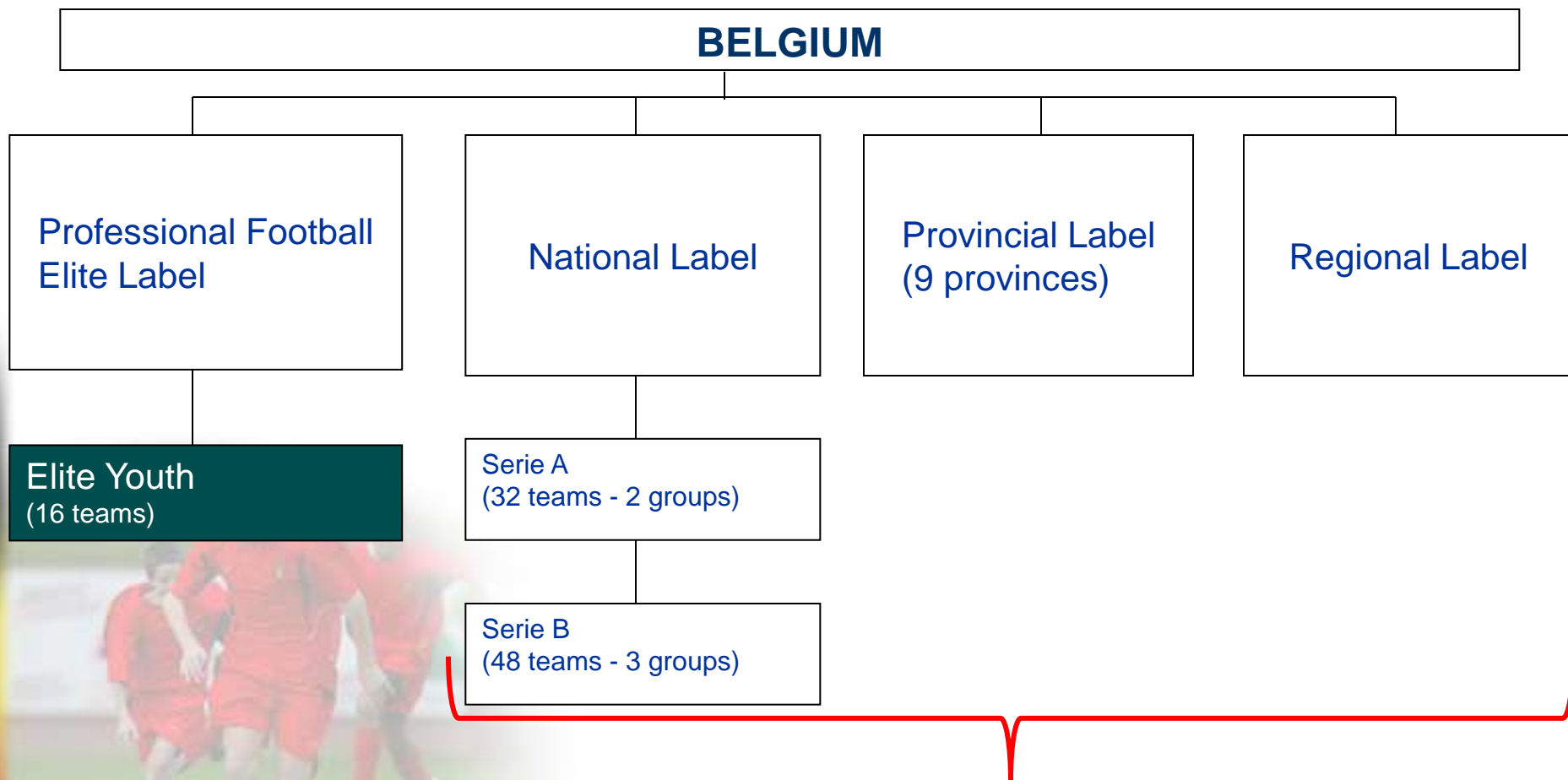


3rd National Division
(32 teams - 2 groups)

4th National Division
(64 teams - 4 groups)

Provincial Divisions

Competition structure Youth Teams



Labeling system based on quality criteria (checklist)

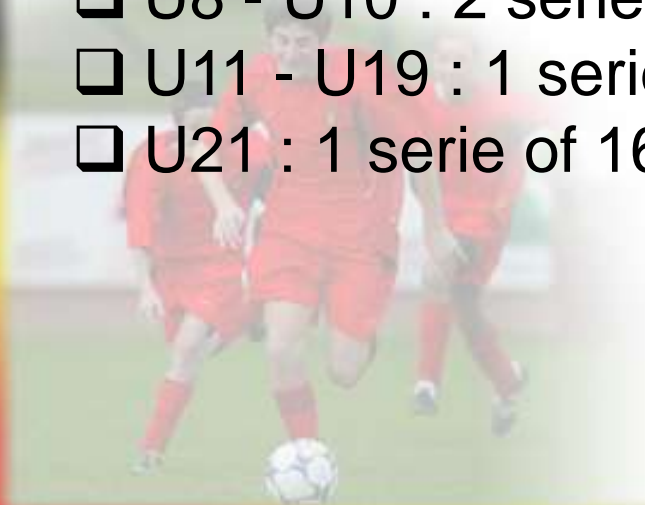
Competition structure



- ❑ U6, U7, U8 and U9 : 5v5
- ❑ U10 and U11 : 8v8
- ❑ U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19 and U21 : 11v11

Elite

- ❑ U7 : only friendly games
- ❑ U8 - U10 : 2 series of 8 clubs (A + B-teams)
- ❑ U11 - U19 : 1 serie of 16 clubs
- ❑ U21 : 1 serie of 16 clubs



CONTENT

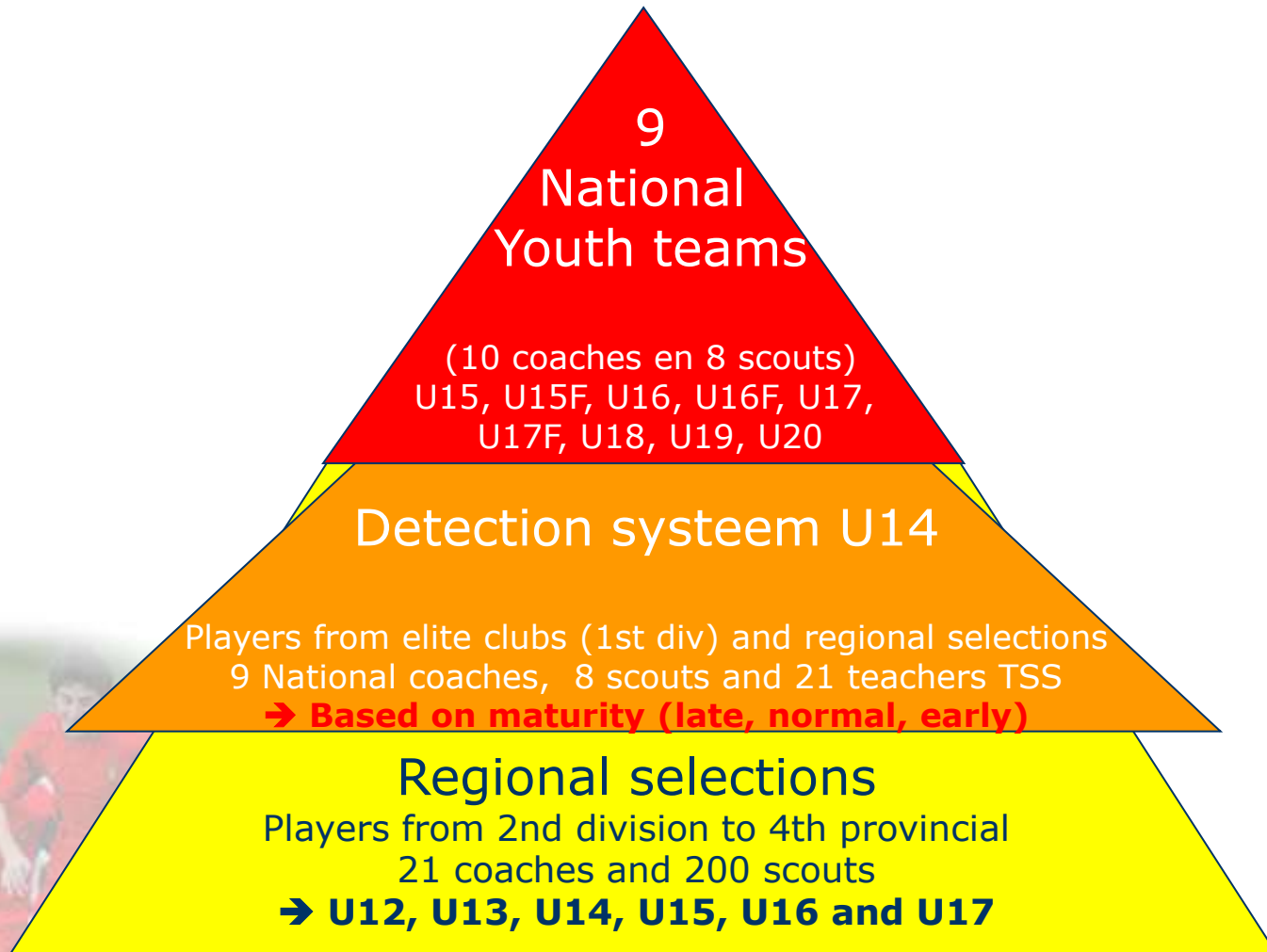


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The Talent Identification Pyramid



EACH PLAYER ON THE RIGHT LEVEL !

National and regional teams : goals



- To search for the most talented players by age group
- To organise training sessions, training camps and games and to provide quality development according to the Belgian FA vision
 - ➔ the best with the best against the best
 - ➔ it's all about making new mistakes)
- To make post-game analyses (on strenghts and weaknesses) for the player and the club
- To make mental and physical screening (national youth teams)
- To improve communication between Belgian FA and clubs
 - ➔ **To prepare for a professional and international carreer**
 - ➔ **To prepare for the A-team (ultimate aim)**

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Basic courses 2012-2013



EXPERIENCE



EXPERIENCE 1 year



Specific courses 2012-2013 (1)



- UEFA-A Elite Youth : 150h → **Started September 2012**
- Crash courses
 - ex-internationals UEFA-B : 40h
 - ex-internationals UEFA-A : 60h
 - ex-profesional players UEFA-B : 60h
- Course Goalkeeping coach
 - level I (youth) : 36h → **Start January 2013**
 - level II (seniors) : 36h
 - level III (prof) : 36h → **Start April 2013**
- Course for Director of Youth Academy
 - Amateur (level I) : 90h → **Start January 2013**
 - Elite (level II) : 60h → **Start April 2013**



Specific courses 2012-2013 (2)

- **Futsal**
 - UEFA-B FUTSAL : 120h
 - UEFA-A FUTSAL : 120h

New structure from 01/09/2013 ?
- **Physical coach**
 - level I (youth) : ? h
 - level II (seniors) : ? h
 - level III (prof) : ? h

New project from 01/09/2013 ?
- **Mental coaching:**
 - level I (youth) : 20h → **Start November 2012**
 - level II (seniors) : 20h → **Start November 2012**
- **Talent identification : 16h** → **Start March 2013**
- **UEFA-updating courses (to obtain a UEFA-licence valuable for 3 years)**
 - UEFA-PRO : 15h = 15 points
 - UEFA-A : 15h = 15 points
 - UEFA-B : 15h = 15 points



Main principles of our Coach Education

- **Focus on quantity → to increase the number of qualified coaches (2000 candidates/year)**
 - organization of C-level (60 hours) on demand of the clubs
 - on different days
 - low fee
- **Focus on quality**
 - ➔ **to increase the number of competent coaches**
 - sessions of 4 hours (1x/week) ➔ reflection time
 - content continuously adapted on new trends
 - to coach the (new) instructor
 - mentorship during practical sessions in clubs
 - focus on self-development and long life learning
 - reality based learning

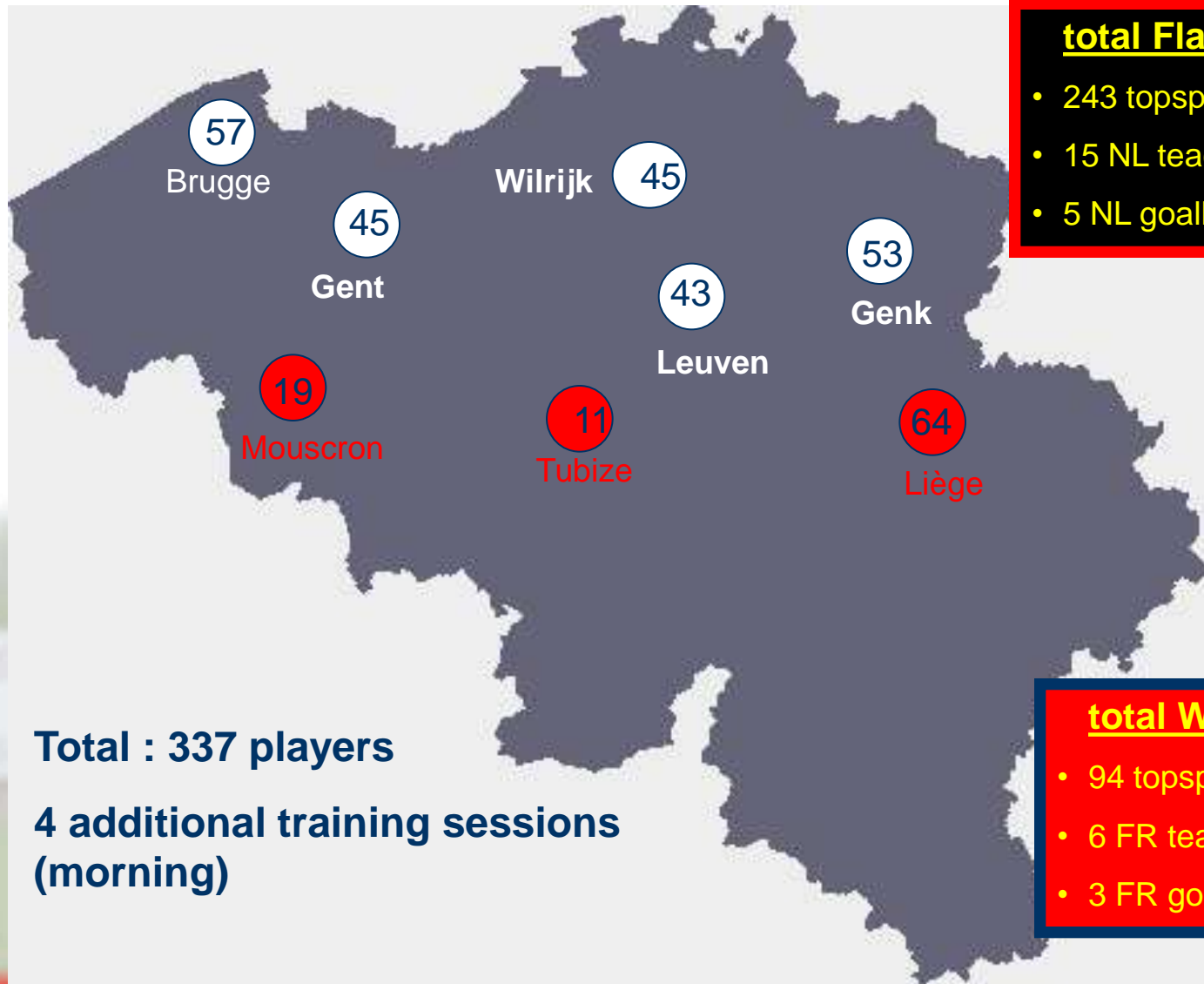
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Topsport/Foot-Elite 2012-2013 (14y – 18y)



total Flanders

- 243 topsport pupils
- 15 NL teachers football
- 5 NL goalkeepers coaches (3h/w)

total Wallonia

- 94 topsport pupils
- 6 FR teachers football
- 3 FR goalkeeper coaches (3h/w)

Total : 337 players

**4 additional training sessions
(morning)**

The objective of the Topsport Project



To offer a supplementary quality education of 4 additional training sessions a week, which is complementary to the education in the club (the HELP-FUNCTION)

Talented players who automatically obtain the topsport status:

- automatically as a youth international
- or after passing a selection test (elite label clubs, national label clubs and provincial final selection)



5 crucial keys of success



1. **All** talented players have the opportunity

- early and late mature
- players mainly from 1st division clubs but also from lower divisions and girls from national selections
- favorable geographical spreading (no problem of transport)

2. **Strong** learning environment:

- training sessions with all the most talented players
- 250 extra training hours a year, based upon the development vision of the Belgian FA.

3. A specific **educational** "topsport"-management offering the possibility to obtain a full diploma

- teachers of football (experience as players and coaches, diploma UEFA-A and pedagogical diploma)
- smaller class groups, study guidance, specific exams regulations and possibility to train with the A-team

5 crucial keys of success



4. **Guarantee** for continuity and expertise

- Continuity: same staff of coaches, same learning plan
- Expertise : 14 years of know-how

5. **100% oriented** to individual development

- not based upon the formation of a team
- a modular system with BASICS and TEAMTACTICS objectives and qualitative evaluations (7 per year)
- learning objectives per training session, per week, per module and per year
- a specific individual monitoring



From Topsportschool to International level



Dries Mertens (PSV, °87)



Thibaut Courtois (A. Madrid, °92)



**Moussa Dembele
(Tottenham, °87)**



**Steven Defour
(Porto, °88)**



**Axel Witsel
(Zenit, °89)**



WINNER EURO LEAGUE 2012

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Talent in football



Talent : individual qualities which can lead to excellent and lasting high standard performances.



International standards = characteristics on the highest level

1. Versatility in qualities to excel :

- there are top defenders who lack dribbling skills
- there are top strikers who lack offensive heading skills

2. Versatility in team functions and positions :

- defending versus attacking
- field players versus goalkeepers
- defenders, midfielders versus forwards
- central players versus wingers

Talent in football



Characteristics on a top level

1

Versatility in qualities



Defining the **basic competences** or skills a player needs to excel

2

Versatility in team functions



Defining the different **profiles** a team needs to excel

Basic competences



**A future top player requires
6 basic competences :**

1. Winner's mentality
2. Emotional stability
3. Personality
4. Explosivity
5. Insight in the game
6. Ball and body control

These basic competences are equally important !



Profiles in football

- **Dictionary :**
a description of someone's qualities or skills.
- **Player's profile :**
a description of the specific qualities you need to be (become) a top player.
- **Seven different team profiles (1-4-3-3) :**
Goalkeeper – Wing defender – Central defender –
Defensive midfielder – Offensive midfielder – Winger –
Striker
- **International standards :**
have an influence on the profiles and may change them
in the (near) future.

Birthmonth



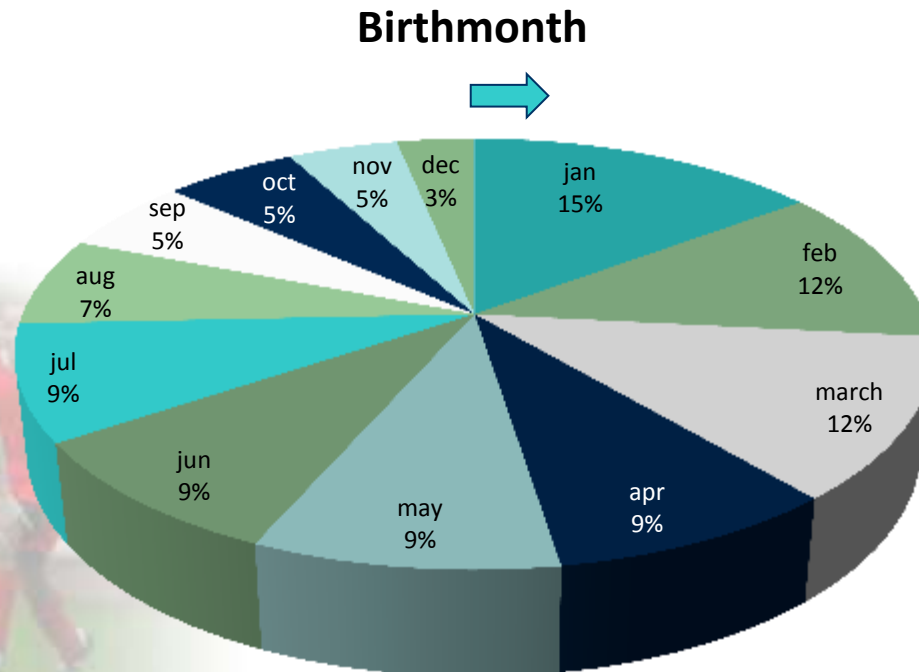
- Detection of talent should be based on the 6 competences and the individual profile (skills), not considering the age (year and month of birth) of the player.
- **Important** : if there is a detection of talent based on « immediate preformance » there are remarkable differences between players born in a different month :
 - A player born in january is 11 months older than a player born in december !
 - The older (month of birth) a player, the more powerful (mature) he is, the easier he can make a difference (physically) !



Birthmonth



- Talent detection tournament U14 november 2009 (613 players, first and second division).
- 66% of the competing players born in the first half (january – june) of the year.

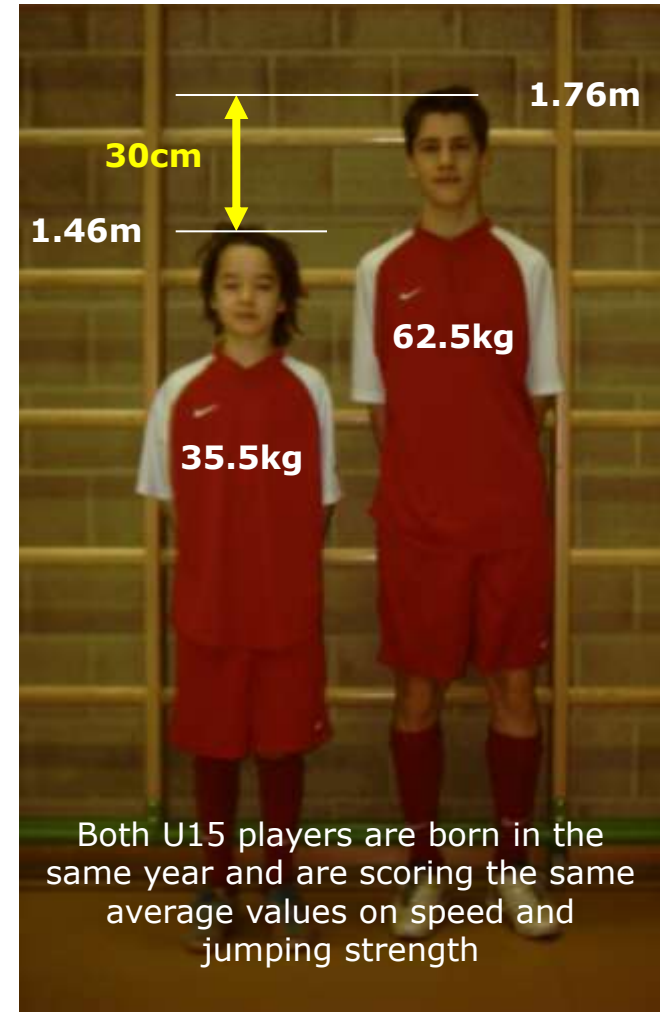


Maturity



- **Early mature players :**
biologically speaking far more mature (difference up to 2 years with late mature players)
- **Normal mature players :**
biological age and age by birth or calendar are the same
- **Late mature players :**
biologically speaking less mature (difference up to 2 years with early mature players)

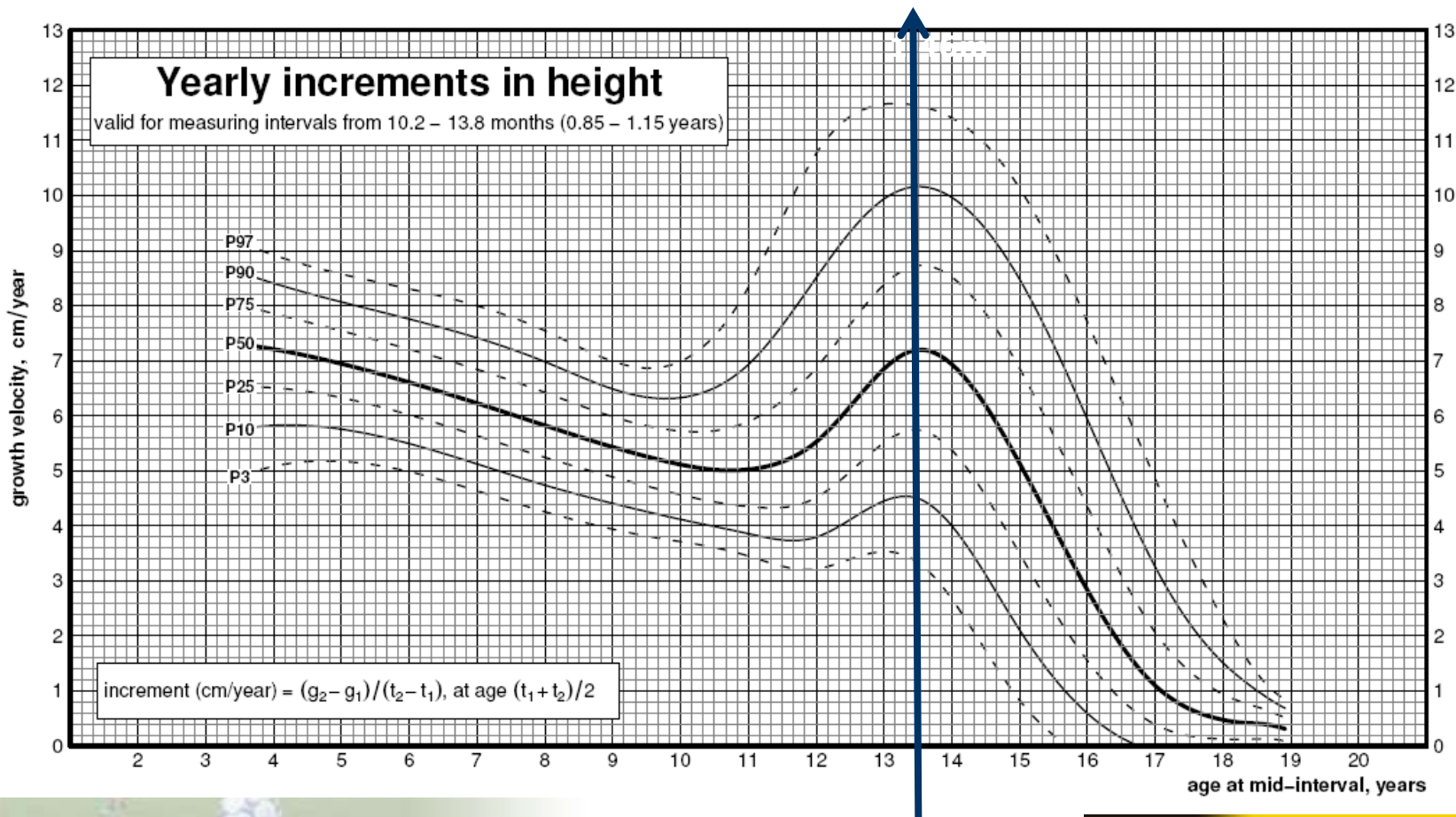
Late mature players are not necessarily small nor will they be the smallest when they grow into adult players.



Maturity



Average Age of the Peak high velocity = 13y6m
Most of the players grows with the highest velocity during U14



Maturity



How to measure the degree of maturity only by watching ?

	Grow in height	Grow in width	Early mature	Normal mature	Late mature
Before puberty	0	0	Till U11	Till U13	Till U15
Beginning of puberty	x	0	U12-U13	U14 -U15	U16-U17
End of puberty	0	x	U14 -U15	U16-U17	U18-U19
Adult	0	0	From U16	From U18	From U20

- disproportion length legs comparing with the trunk
- begin hairiness on the legs

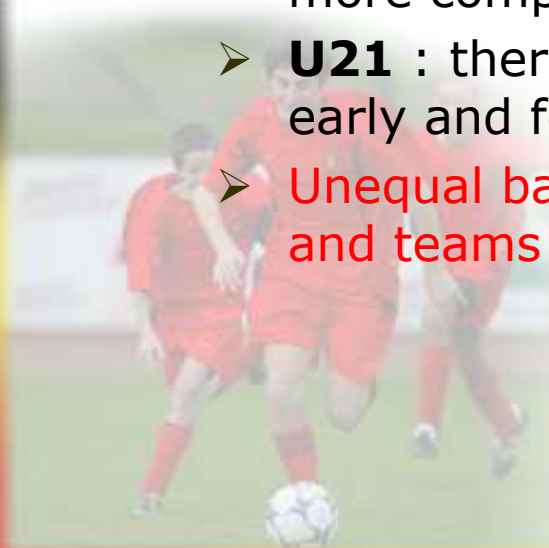
- ↑ muscular mass
- developed body

U14	Late mature	Normal mature	Early mature
Length	153.5	159.4	166.1
Weight	40.6	46.5	54.0
Figures of talent detection tournament U14 (1995)			

Maturity



- Detection of talent should be based on the 6 competences and the individual profile (football skills), not considering the age (year and month of birth) of the player.
- More (early) mature players have a physical advantage on their late mature colleagues :
 - **U13/U14** : more mature players are stronger, faster, more competitive !
 - **U21** : there's no longer a difference between former early and former late mature players !
 - Unequal battle between early and late mature players and teams !



Maturity



Unequal battle between early and late mature players !

U16 Futurs Belgium (°1993)
(late mature players)



U16 Belgium (°1993)
(normal and early mature players)



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Grassroots in Belgium





Grassroots in Belgium : main tasks

- To **promote** football and futsal for youth (boys and girls)
- To let **more youth players play more** hours football per year (footballcamps, football at school, futsal competitions, ...)
- To organise football activities and promote football for **disabled people**
- To raise the quality of the lessons **football in the schools**
- To guarantee the “**rights of the child**” when playing football
- To raise the **quality of the youth academies** in the clubs in accordance with the development vision of the Belgian FA (= club development)



To raise the quality of the youth academies in the clubs in accordance with the vision of the RBFA (= club development)

5 regional coaches visit the clubs to give support (info sessions, open trainings, feedback about technical organisation, ...)

Financial support for quality audits





The Belgium vision on youth development

Bob Browaeys

Split 21/11/2012

