Small Sided Games What is going on?

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"Small sided games are commonly used by coaches to <u>develop the technical abilities</u> of soccer players and are increasingly being used for aerobic fitness development"

Stephen V.Hill-Hass, Brian T Dawson, Aaron J. Coutts & Greg J. Roswell (2009). Physiological responses and time motion characteristics of various small sided soccer games in youth players.

School of sports science, University of Western Australia, Perth

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Small Sided Games

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- Research into Small sided games is patchy
- Inconsistent rules, formats and team sizes
- Difficult to identify players
- What should we look for?
- Levels of physical activity?
- Ball in play%?
- Ball contacts per player?



Lower Island Soccer Association

- Southern portion of Vancouver Island
- 10 clubs
- Approx. 7800 players
- Approx. 660 coaches
- Mandate coach certification by summer 2015
- High Performance to grassroots





Study Method

- Not scientific- Weekend life is not a lab
- Boys and girls data together
- Ball in play- manual with two stopwatches
- Physical activity-Accelerometers
- Ball contacts manually recorded-tick sheets
- To provide a general picture of what happens in U8-U9 soccer games

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Physical Activity Levels

- Accelerometers used to measure activity
- Four categories of activity
- Sedentary, Light, Moderate and Vigorous
- Each player's activity levels measured during the game and half time
- Unit's are time stamped
- Provided no other data, GPS, distance covered

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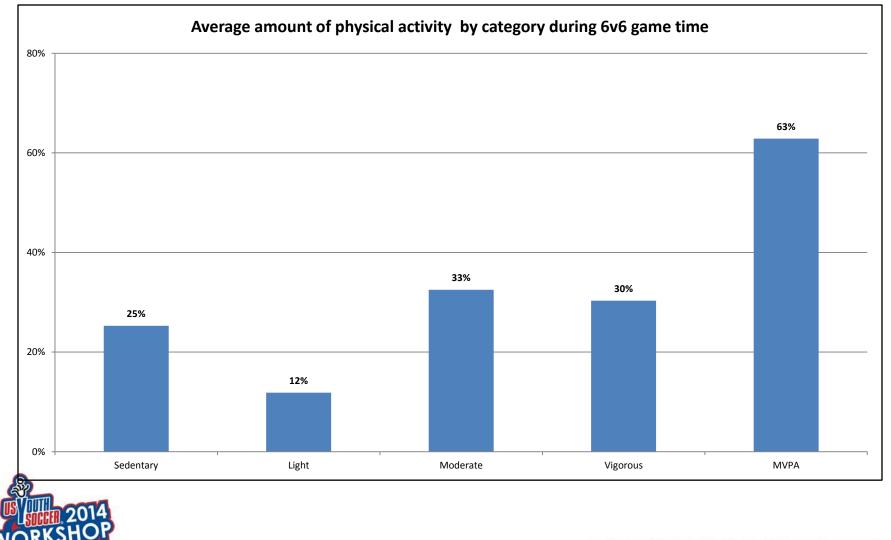
Findings

- The Government of Canada states that every child should get 60 minutes MVPA each day
- How much MVPA in their soccer game
- Only 63% of time spent in MVPA
- More players on the team leads to less MVPA
- That's not rocket science, its common sense

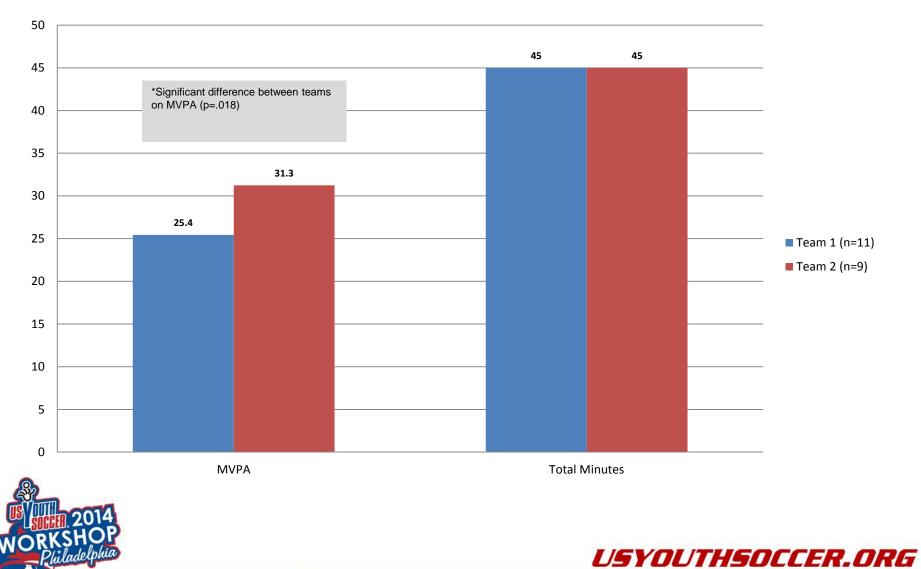
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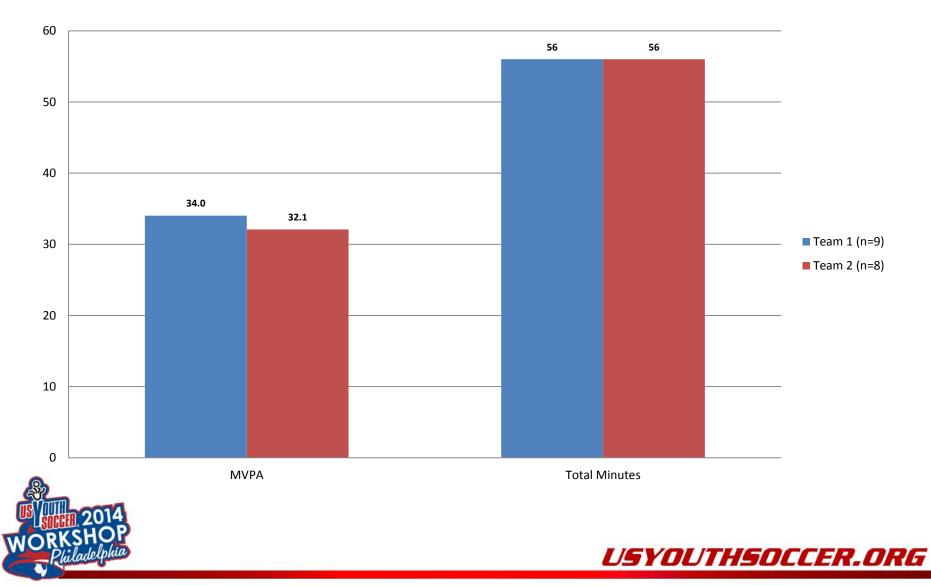
Average amounts of MVPA



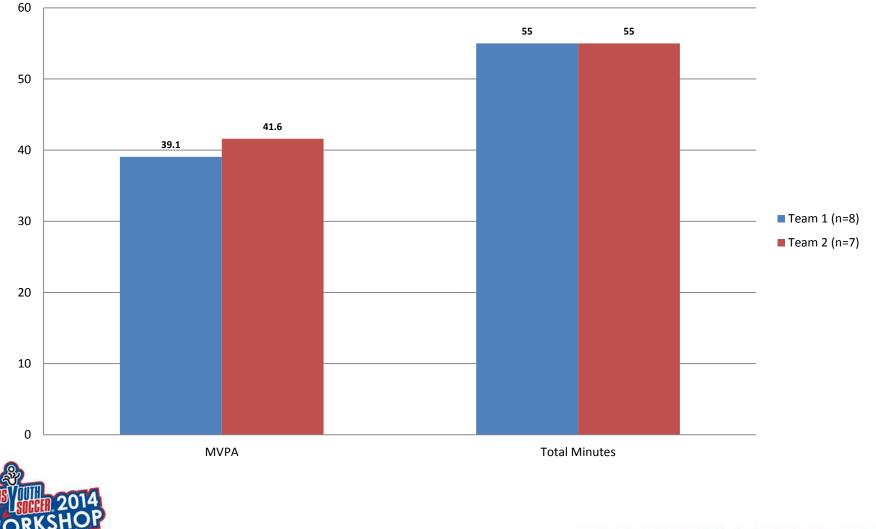
MVPA 11v9



MVPA 9v8



MVPA 8v7





Summary and comments

- The game itself may not provide the levels of physical activity that is required each day
- What extra do we need to fill the gap and provide the level of activity needed
- Is it as simple as a couple of laps at the start and at the end of the game?
- Experience is heavily dependant on the coach

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Ball in play

- In the adult game ball is in play for 60 of the 90 minutes
- 66% in play 34% out of play
- Stoppages in play-
- time wasting by design
- feigning injury
- substitutions late in the game





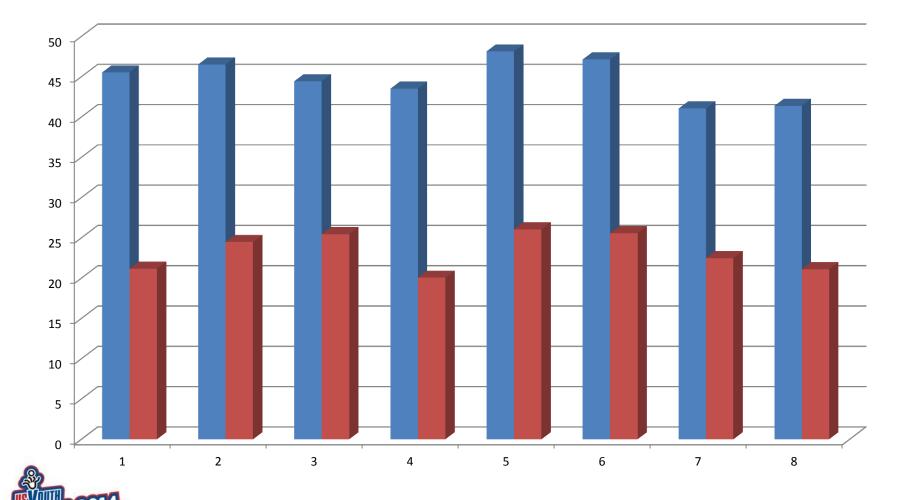
Ball in play study

- U9 and U10 games dual age group jamboree
- 8 games studied
- 4 girls games
- 4 boys games
- Some mixed teams in boys games

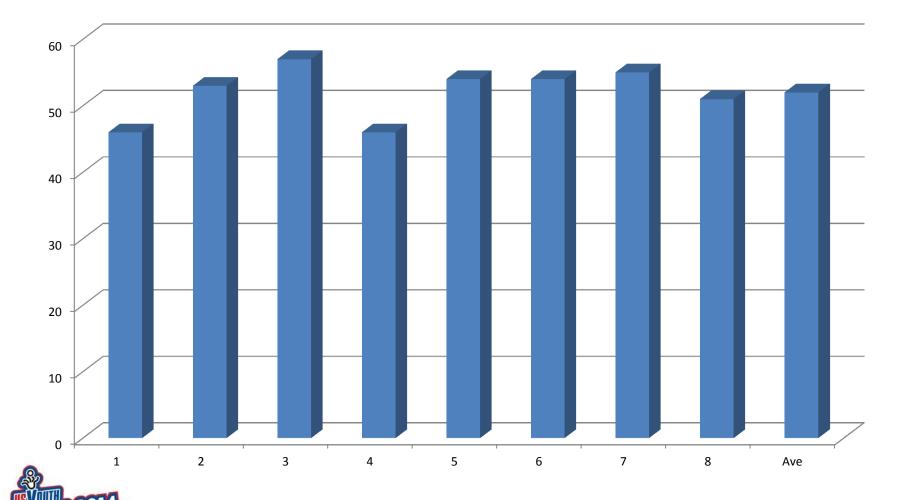




Game total time vs. in play



Ball in Play game %



Summary of ball in play

- High 57% Low 46% Ave 52%
- Boys game more consistent than girls
- Ball is out of play almost as often as in play
- "Its like turning the light off at a children's party for half of the time"





Ball Contacts

- Simple contact with the ball during the game
- Touches per minute TPM
- 5 games, 10 teams, 89 players recorded
- All games on the same field 2 x 25 mins
- Jean Tigana "Players need 2500 touches a day to develop" 2001-unsourced comment
- How many touches do our players need
- How many touches do they get?



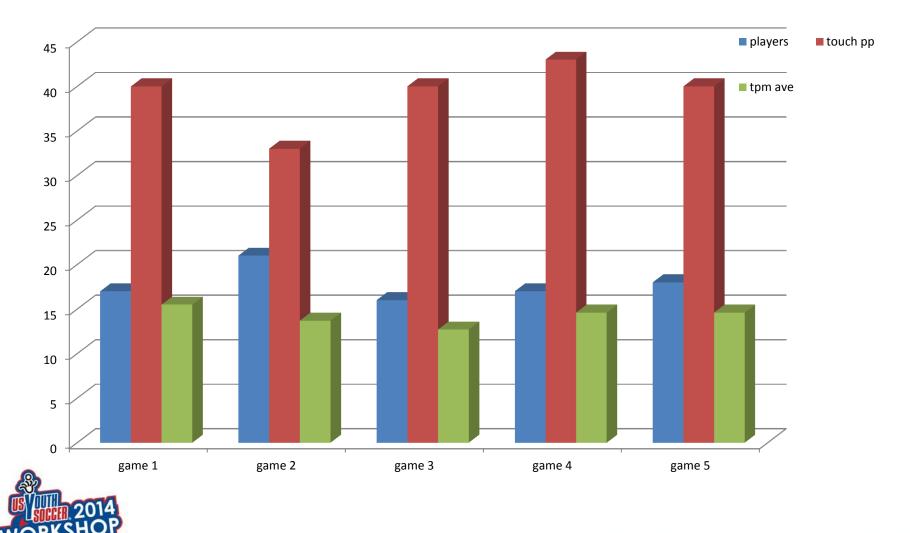
The Games

- #1678 touches 17 players active
- 40 touches per player 13.5 TPM in the game
- # 2 685 touches 21 players active
- 33 touches per players 13.7 TPM in the game
- # 3 637 touches 16 players active
- 40 touches per player 12.7 TPM in the game
- # 4 732 touches 17 players active
- 43 touches per player 14.6 TPM in the game
- # 5 732 touches 18 players active
- 40 touches per player 14.6 TPM in the games

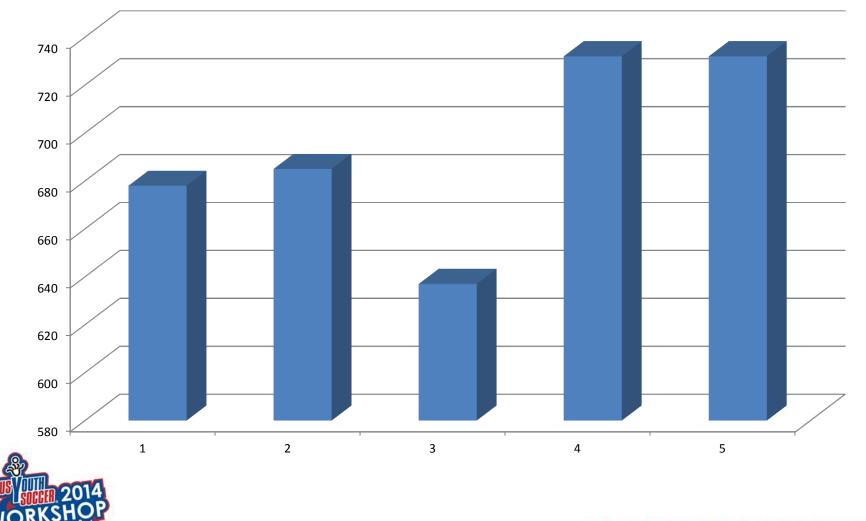




Game Summary



Total Touches in each game

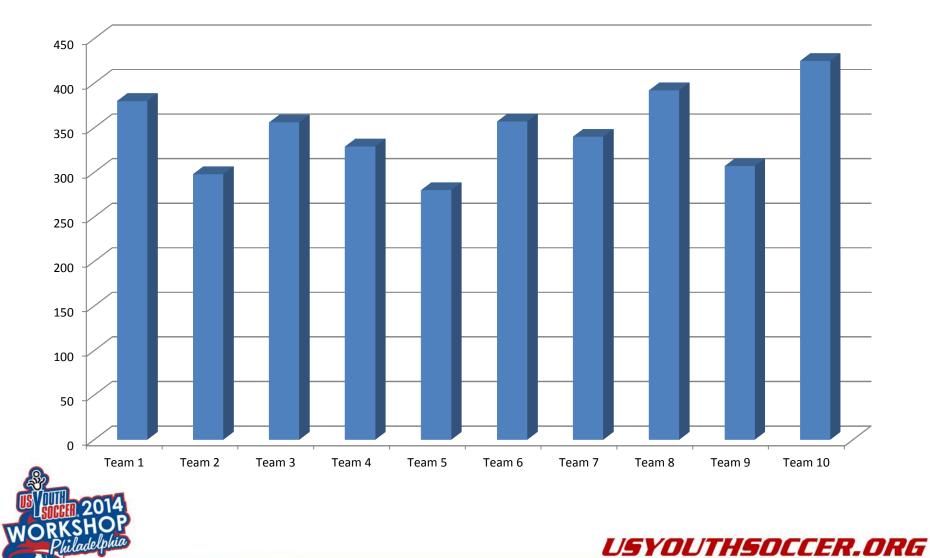


The Teams

- 1 380/8 players= 47 touches pp = .95 TPM
- 2 298/9 players= 33 touches pp = .66 TPM
- 3 356/11 players= 32 touches pp = .64 TPM
- 4 329/10 players= 33 touches pp = .66 TPM
- 5 280/8 players= 36 touches pp = .72 TPM
- 6 357/8 players= 44 touches pp = .84 TPM
- 7 340/9 players= 38 touches pp = .76 TPM
- 8 392/8 players= 49 touches pp = .98 TPM
- 9 307/8 players= 38 touches pp = .76 TPM
- 10 425/10 players= 43 touches pp = .84 TPM



Team total touches



The Players

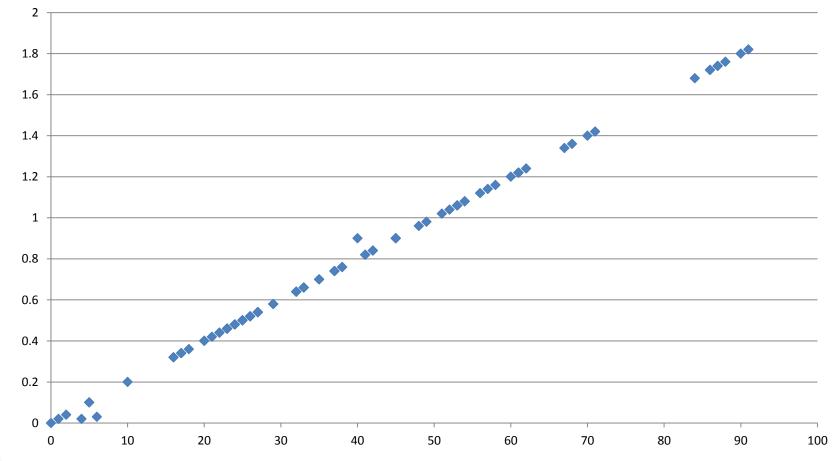
- 89 players
- 250 minutes of soccer
- 3464 touches of the ball
- Only 28 players (31%) had more than 1 TPM

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- Highest TPM 1.82 91 touches
- 61 players (69%) had less than 1 TPM
- 26 players (30%) had less than 0.5 TPM



Touches Per Minute





Summary of Ball Contacts

- Game touches range 637-732
- 4 of 5 games within 54 touches
- Smaller squads = more touches per player
- Team touches range 280 to 425
- 6 teams within 63 touches
- Game time was constant
- Field size was constant





Overall Picture

- Ball is out of play as often as its in play
- Players are relatively active for two thirds of the time
- Game alone does not provide enough activity
- Games did not provide adequate opportunities for ball contact and technical development

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So What

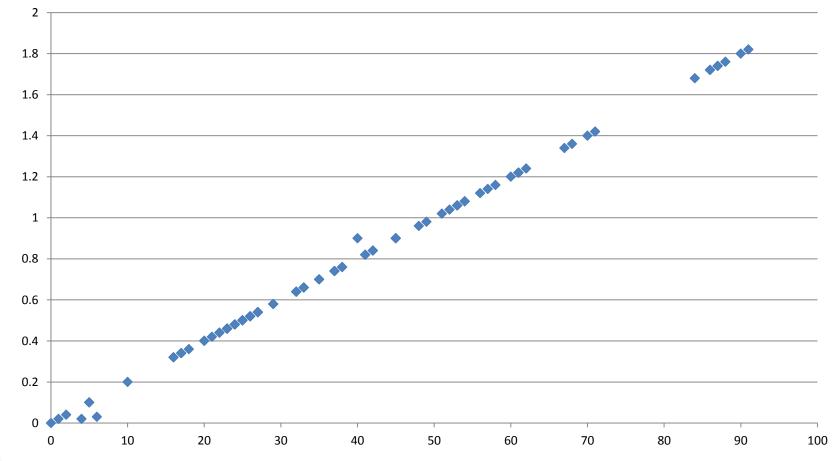
- Does it really matter?
- The cream rises to the top
- We need more cream!
- LTAD tells us that the late developer can develop better over time
- Talent Code- We want ignition in our sport

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Keep them interested and engaged



Touches Per Minute





Areas to look at

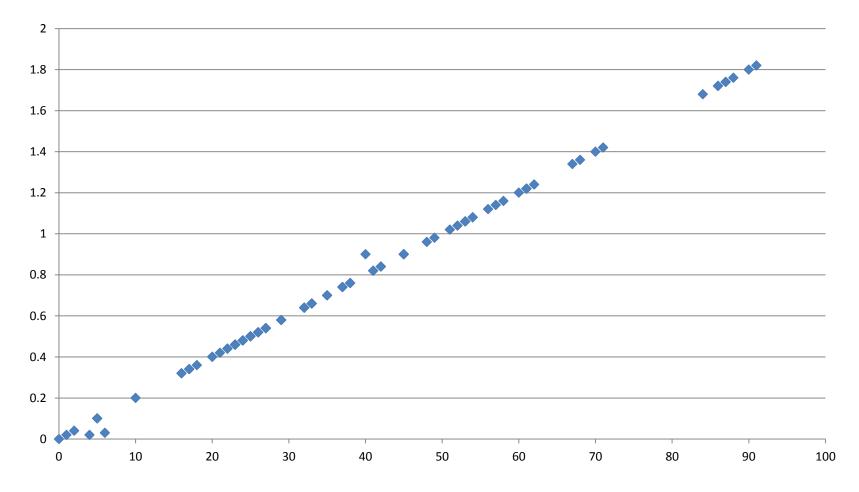
- Can we improve the environment and if so how many modifications do we need to make?
- Reduce players on the field
- Reduce lost time when ball is out of play
- Roll in: kick in: don't repeat the throw in
- Danish FA suggests 5 balls at each field and parents and siblings as ball boys (2013)
- What is the optimum number of touches

Talent Predictor

- What else can you measure in youth soccer players that will tell you who is going to be the best? In the 10year Groningen sports talent study, good predictors were technical skills at age 12 and psychological skills along the lines of "how can I make myself a better player" (high levels of reflection and effort; aspects of self-regulation of learning) [Elferink-Gemser, M].
- Reflection was also the skill that distinguished those who rose to senior international level in a 4-y prospective study of 54 elite youth athletes by these researchers [Jonker, L].



Touches Per Minute



Questions or Comments?



