ABSTRACT: The most serious soccer’s professionals are searching for the most possible balanced way to play, that is to say, a way of playing that let attack and defense with the same competence, resign in that functions, biggest most quantity of players as possible, using the most balanced system. Aiming at drawing a parallel between the W-M system - the most balanced system of play that has ever existed - and the 3-5-2 system, this has been used by the biggest teams in the world, making clear a big similarity between the first system and the dynamic of the second system. There’s no doubt that the 2006’ Soccer World Cup will serve to test the teams and their competence to carry their basic functions, to attack and to defend. However, it’s important to know the way to use the system and know the player’s characteristics that will play by themselves way. It’s fundamental to know, for example, that “cabeça-de-área” doesn’t exist, this function is abnormal, a wrong interpretation that has been causing serious damages for the Brazilian soccer.

Keywords: world cup, match system.
and Elkjaer, in the long projections aiming the penetration of the fast Laudrup simple strategic questions: The Danish based their game's power with Spain in the following phase, with a scathing 5x1, due to winning the strong Germany with 2x0. The Danish got surprised final score 6x1, overpowering Scotland with a score of 1x0 and participation, scoring many goals against Uruguay and winning with the European zone and went to the Mexico, with an amazing participation, scoring many goals against Uruguay and winning with the European zone and went to the Mexico, with an amazing.

In the end of each Soccer World’s Championship, the following question among the coaches and other students of this subject: “What is new?” And the answer is always: Nothing!” Therefore, since 1982, some Brazilians that traveled to the Europe alerted: “Pay attention to Denmark, they are playing different from everything that is known.” In fact, the German coach Sepp Piontek implanted, in the Danish national team, his game’s philosophy based on the fact that “if you want to complicate the game for your opponent, fill in your team’s midfield”, which meant to act with only three defenders, five midfield players and the traditional two forwarders, which means the 3-5-2.

The success, therefore, wasn’t immediate because, in 1982, Denmark was eliminated from the World Cup in the classification stage, because besides being part of a very strong group, they needed international experience, which resulted in repeated losses, which resulted in not going to Spain, where the competition headquarters was located.

However, in 1986, playing in the 3-5-2 system and with a more consistent team, has been easily classified in its group of the European zone and went to the Mexico, with an amazing participation, scoring many goals against Uruguay and winning with the final score 6x1, overpowering Scotland with a score of 1x0 and winning the strong Germany with 2x0. The Danish got surprised with Spain in the following phase, with a scathing 5x1, due to simple strategic questions: The Danish based their game’s power in the long projections aiming the penetration of the fast Laudrup and Elkjaer, and the Spanish didn’t provide the necessary spaces, marking the Danish team only from the midfield line. The Spanish took advantage of the counterattacks, while the Danish midfield lavished quantity but lacked quality.

The Denmark way of playing, therefore, had already fallen into public dominion:

- Three defenders: two more advanced, marking individually the two forwarders (they played in the 4-4-2 system), and the third was the “líbero”, the one who does not have to mark anyone but needs to cover the other two defenders.
- Five midfielders, detaching the bound defenders, which were the real fast forwarders through the extremes. The Danish team sinned with the low quality of the other three;
- Two forwarders that were fast and artful players - when they were not going towards the goal, they held the ball and waited for somebody to arrive from the back.
- In 1990, many teams that took part in the World Cup in Italy used the 3-5-2 Danish system, including Brazil.

THE 3-5-2 IN BRAZIL

The adoption of the 3-5-2 system in Brazil has not happened in a calm way, on the contrary, it was traumatic, because many people claimed (and still claim) that Brazilian soccer should not copy anything from the Europeans.

The fact is that Brazilian teams – even the national team – presented defensive difficulties in international matches, despite playing with four defenders to mark two forwarders. The two bounds very

RESUMO

Sistemas de jogos e a copa do mundo de 2006

Os profissionais mais sérios do futebol estão em busca permanente da maneira de jogar mais equilibrada possível, isto é, uma forma de jogar que permita atacar e defender com a mesma eficiência, utilizando nestas funções a maior quantidade possível de jogadores, adotando o sistema considerado mais equilibrado. Procuramos estabelecer um paralelo entre o W-M, sistema de jogo mais equilibrado que já existiu, e o 3-5-2, sistema que vem sendo usado pelo maior número de grandes equipes, ficando clara uma grande semelhança entre o primeiro sistema e a dinâmica do segundo. A Copa do Mundo de 2006, sem dúvida alguma, servirá para avaliar as equipes e a competência delas para executar as funções básicas, atacar e defender. É preciso, entretanto, saber utilizar o sistema e conhecer bem as características dos jogadores que vão atuar segundo os seus princípios. É fundamental saber, por exemplo, que “cabeça-de-área” não existe, que esta figura é uma excrença, uma anomalia, um erro de interpretação que vem trazendo graves prejuízos ao futebol brasileiro.

Palavras-chave: copa do mundo, sistema de jogo.

RESUMEN

Sistemas de partido y el mundial de fútbol de 2006

Los profesionales más serios del fútbol están en búsqueda permanente de la manera de echar más equilibrada posible, esto es, una forma de echar que permita atacar y defender con la misma eficiencia, utilizando en estas funciones mayor cantidad posible de jugadores, adoptando el sistema considerado más equilibrado. Buscamos establecer un paralelo entre el W-M, sistema de partido más equilibrado que ya existió, y el 3-5-2, sistema que viene siendo utilizado por la mayoría de las grandes equipos, quedando clara una gran semejanza entre el primer sistema y la dinámica del segundo. El Mundial de Fútbol de 2006, sin duda alguna, servirá para evaluar los equipos y la competencia de ellas para ejecutar las funciones básicas, atacar y defender. Hay que, sin embargo, saber utilizar el sistema y conocer bien las características de los jugadores que van a actuar según sus principios. Es fundamental saber, por ejemplo, que “cabeza-de-área” no existe, que esta figura es una excreencia, una anomalía, un error de interpretación que viene trayendo graves perjuicios al fútbol brasileño.

Palabras clave: mundial de fútbol, sistema de partido.
often projected themselves at the same time, letting the two area defenders one-on-one showdown with the forwards.

We can add the fact that the strategy called “area defender” in the Brazilian soccer has been created, which acts in a neutral area, with absolutely worthless strategies and, therefore, unnecessary, because its presence means to have one missing player.

In matches between teams which play in the same way the problem does not exist, because both teams play with ten players. In international matches the difficulties show up, because to play with one missing player may represent a significant disadvantage when there’s no midfielder defender. In this way it becomes very difficult to balance the actions.

If we observe the pictures, we can notice that, in the first case, the defense is balanced with two defenders-markers and one in the “remain”, for an eventual coverage.

In picture 2, the number of forwards is equal to the number of area defenders, annoying the bound defenders (displacement) and a midfield player, the atrocious area defender, producing an absolutely unbalanced strategy.

In 1989, during the America’s Cup, the coach Sebastião Lazaroni managed to structure a Brazilian national team in the 3-5-2 system.

In fact, Lazaroni’s proposal was very simple: they would play in the 4-4-2 system with a false outside of the old 4-1-2-3 or 4-3-3 through the middle (as the system was known). This system consisted on receding one of the three most advanced players to reinforce the midfield. Lazaroni removed one false outside and put one more area defender, liberating the bound defenders, who he also called “wingbacks”.

In 1989 the lineup of the national team was like this:

The match’s dynamics worked perfectly and the team was strategically balanced:

- Two defenders individually marked the two rival forwards and a third defender “remained” (nobody spoke about sweeper, but the function was the same). Sometimes these defenders relayed in their functions to mark or remain.
- Two wingbacks that attacked in a high speed, sometimes working as a triangle with the halfbacks and sometimes looking forward to get to the goal line for the crossings.
- A defensive midfielder, Dunga – and never an “area defender”, due to the fact that this player’s function is to distribute the match with projections and to cover the midfielder who got to the attack. The practical result is that the team attacked with six or more players and defended with eight, plus the goalkeeper.

**THE 3-5-2 AND THE W-M**

Historically, the most balanced match system ever existed was the W-M, with three forwards and three defenders, counting on four players in the bigger zone, the midfield.

The attack was formed as a W and the defense as an M, in the inferior and superior extremities of the two letters: the midfield, which formed what known as “the magic square”.

Notice that, in the picture 4, if the right and left defenders advance a little more, we will have the three defenders’ formation of the 3-5-2 (picture 5).

In the same way, if the most skillful forwarder is sent to the midfield line (picture 6), we will have the design of a team with three defenders, five midfielders and two forwarders.

It means that, if we put the W-M’s strategic design above the 3-5-2 one’s, there will be wispy significant differences, specially if we consider the great advance in nowadays’ physical preparation,
which allows the players to exercise more than one function, acting in more than a line in his team (defense, midfield, and attack).

We believe that the current 3-5-2 system is as balanced as the W-M was in its days of glory. It is a question of having the players to use the system properly.

The same Sebastião Lazaroni, after conducting the Brazilian national team to win the America’s Cup, one year after, in 1990 in Italy, was sharply criticized for using the system and being eliminated by Argentina from the World Cup. However, it is convenient not to forget that Dunga and Alemão – players with identical characteristics - have been lined up together, which means two players to execute the same function, allowing the conclusion that the team worked with only ten players. Against some rivals, with ten players, is possible to win, but not against any rival, especially the Argentina’s national team, which is as strategically well-structured as the first one.

Jairo dos Santos, one of the biggest soccer scholars, has announced that in this World Cup, seven of the eight finalists have used the 3-5-2 system.

**STILL THE 4-4-2**

Brazil was the World champion in 1994 using the 4-4-2, very well-set up by Carlos Alberto Parreira. The team was consistent when defending and had Romário and Bebeto in a great shape attack.

In 1998, playing in the 4-4-2 system, we lost to France – which played in the 3-5-2 - in the final.

In 2002, we used the two systems: the 3-5-2, when one of the defenders – Edmilson – also played hard and even appeared in the attack, and the 4-4-2 with Ronaldinho Gaúcho, receding to help compounding the midfield and attacking with the foot trap.

Moreover, the great Brazilian improvising capability has been allowing the simultaneous utilization of the two systems: the 4-4-
and the 3-5-2 by the same team in the same competition and even in the same match. In 2002, we saw a Brazilian national team play with:

We saw, in the same 2002 World Cup, the Brazilian team playing with:

If we analyze the 3-5-2 used by Brazilians in 2002, we are going to find that the great equilibrium between the team’s lines. If we only consider the numbers, it will seem that the midfield line predominates above the other two, because it is compounded by five players, against three and two players of the other lines. In practice, however, what happens in a well-balanced team, and, therefore, well-distributed in the field, is a harmonious composition that allows attacking and defending with the biggest possible number of players. They look forward to attacking with at least six players and defending with eight (pictures 9 and 10).

During the 2002 World Cup, we also observed a great difficulty to advance, due to the strong defense exercised by all teams. There was a latent preoccupation not to let the other team play.

They strongly defend the most skillful and released the ones who had more difficult to handle the ball, aiming at its quick recuperation.

Brazil won because they had differentiated players, soccer stars and so on, and, thanks to the team that, besides not letting the rival play, had the competence to play.

We also verified that some teams made the direct goalkeeper’s ball replacement to the forwarder, the so called “outlet pass”. We hope that it is a momentary problem.

THE MATCH OFFICIATING CREW

This subject deserves a special chapter. We have been watching, not only in Brazil but everywhere, match officiating crews provoking uncountable losses for the clubs and national teams with their disastrous directions.

Many times the referee only care about the disciplinary aspect, especially when their authority is questioned by words or acts, while the violence that comes from bad players is tolerated.

A great part of the referee has convinced themselves that they are the “highest authorities” of the spectacle when in, fact, they are only “mediators” of the match.

There is no news about the presence of public in a match in which the referee is the detach, the “spectacle’s owner”. No one watches a match because of a good referee.

The spectacle’s owner, no doubt, is the soccer star. The public goes to the stadium to watch him and the spectacle’s quality depends on the soccer star’s acting.

The referee may compromise the spectacle’s quality with wrong decisions but, when he once rights, it does not guarantee the game’s quality, while the soccer star - when acting with competence - can guarantee the public’s satisfaction.

It is necessary, however, that the match officiating crew worries to assure that the soccer star is able to act without been a victim of violence, of unfair matches and of that ones who are only interested in provoking fouls, practicing the anti-match due to the evident lack of talent. This is the referee role and not the role of being the “spectacle’s owner”, as many people believe.

We also hope that in the next World Cup, in Germany, the soccer star is the spectacle’s starlet.

The predominantly used system will be the 3-5-2, but, anyway, what we desire the most is the soccer star’s presence, showing his whole potential and match officiating crew that assure that these players the right to show their talent.
A World Cup full of great moves, without violent players and plays with competent match officiating crew is the minimum desired by the admirers of the most popular sport in the world.

**CONCLUSION**

I believe that it will be proved, whereas in 2006, because of the German’s World Cup, that the 3-5-2 system is as balanced as the W-M, because its purpose is to attack and defend with a great number of players.

This is possible thanks to the great progress that physical preparation has got in the last years, allowing the players to accomplish more than one function in their teams, filling, in a balanced way, the field spaces.

We need to abolish permanently the area defender’s figure, who is a very often technically limited player, violent and disabled to produce quality plays, meaning a “dead weight” for the team. It is not very suffered when the rival plays in the same way. But, in international matches, for instance, they play with ten or less players against eleven.

Finally, it is worth remembering that the V rule establishes that “the referee has the discretionary power to decide about the subject occurred during a match”. Discretionary power means the faculty of acting inside determined ambit. To say “it was or it wasn’t”, “It happened or it didn’t happen”, “the rule prohibits or the rule do not prohibit”, “it is or it is not”, about a fact. The referee’s powers end there. It is an absurd to suppose that the referee is the “spectacle’s owner, “the highest responsible” for the match, because he is not. He is, as the rule says, the match’s mediator, an interpreter of the facts that happen during the match and he can decide if there was any infraction and apply the appropriate punishment.

We finally hope that, in 2006, referee of a high category and who act in big sportive centers are designated to arbitrate the matches which demand more responsibility, unlike 2002, when referee from countries without a soccer tradition were lined-up and caused uncountable damage to many teams.