



ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF THE GOALKEEPER IN FUTSAL

Cătălin Octavian MĂNESCU¹

Abstract

Futsal is fast, dynamic sport taking place on a small field; it is a game that requires physical qualities and technical and tactical skills on a higher level; is a game where players can score many goals, being pleasant to the eyes of the spectators. Due to the laws of the game, very special and different from football, the role of the goalkeeper is also different. He learns to move with the game by staying in line with the ball, not to be „glued” on the goal line and also how to participate in the attack, be proficient with his feet and develop quick reflexes. The essential characteristics of a goalkeeper are: courage, concentration, confidence, speed reaction, flexibility, balance, strength and power.

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Introduction

The special rules of futsal require that the goalkeeper should not only have the same skills as a football player, but also some additional qualities, that is to master some abilities specific to futsal. It happens often that the goalkeeper initiates the attack or participates in the attack of his team; as soon as he gets possession of the ball, he is responsible for the development of the attack, he either passes the ball to the nearest co-player, or he throws it or kicks it to the player in the most advantageous position for scoring.

The goalkeeper may often find himself in the special position of being a real field player („flying goalkeeper”) when the score board shows a score which is not in favour of his own team; in such situations he has the role of strengthening the attack, although most of the times this duty will be taken over by a field player from the reserve bench.

1. Current level reflected in the specialized literature

Unfortunately, the specialized literature offers us quite a few information about futsal generally, but also about the role and essential qualities required by the goalkeeper; this thing just make this article more interesting regarding the theme proposed for it. Generally, we take the information from UEFA, where well-known

¹ Cătălin Octavian Mănescu, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, ctlm.manescu@gmail.com, 0213191900



authors in this domain (Tim Burns, Vic Hermans, Rainer Engler) present and publish regularly reports, synthesis, courses and specialized books. Internally, things are simply, despite the more and more interest for the game, there are a few book or courses authors.

1. Approached issue

The essential qualities of the futsal goalkeeper are: courage, focus, self-confidence, speed of reaction, flexibility, balance, force and power.

Courage – during the entire game, the goalkeeper will face fast actions and sharp attacks. He needs to be all the time ready to dive to the feet of the opponent attackers, to intervene in case of any shooting towards the goalpost from any position, no matter how fast it is, to be ready to jump in order to catch any ball that threatens the goalmouth.

Focus – the goalkeeper needs to maintain maximum focus from the first to the last minute of the game, so as to be prepared any time to interfere when the game requires it. He must keep focusing on three main aspects:

1. Position of the ball – the goalkeeper's eyes permanently follow the position of the ball, especially when the opponent has possession of the ball; he must be any time aware of the ball position and of how dangerous the action is, in order to get efficiently involved.
2. Movement of the opponents – he must track at the same time the opponents' position on the field, in order to anticipate the actions and to prevent surprise attacks.
3. Organization of the defence – both in football and futsal, the goalkeeper is also called the “field coach”, because his position offers a panoramic view of everything that is happening on the field and, at the same time, offers him the possibility to permanently communicate with the other players of his team in relation to the position and orientation of the team on the field.

Self-confidence – a goalkeeper needs a high level of self-confidence, as well as the ability to get over inherent and difficult moments that might be caused by a mistake that can affect the entire team, without losing his self-confidence. The goalkeeper is the king of his own goalmouth, where he must not hesitate in any of his actions, where he commands in a loud voice both in order to be heard by his team, and to transmit them his force and vigour, and, last but not least, in order to mentally dominate his opponent. A confident goal-keeper has the power to transmit his own confidence to his co-players.

Speed of reaction – the fact that the game is mostly played close to the two bars shows the importance of the speed of goalkeeper's reaction to different stimuli that might anytime occur. It is a complex process that starts by analyzing with the eyes



the opponent's movements, it goes on by reading the indications, such as the angle of an opponent's position, the movements of such an opponent, and lastly it sends the information to the brain, which gathers all information piece by piece and turns it into an alarm signal concerning the duty that the goalkeeper must pay attention to. The higher the speed of reaction, the lower is the danger.

Flexibility – goalkeeper must be confident to use his entire arsenal of technical procedures, without the risk of injury, therefore flexibility is especially important, both in the upper and the lower part of the body.

Balance – goalkeeper must be able to move in any direction, especially to the side, left-right, in order to cover the goalmouth, but at the same time keeping all the time his balance on both feet, so that he could react in any required direction. After any defended ball, he must get back to a perfect balance as fast as possible in order to act in any ulterior threatening event.

Force – goalkeeper's position must always be balanced and, at the same time, tensed, he must be all the time ready to act, both against an opponent, and against any ball heading to his own goal; that is why the legs strength, in particular, is mandatory and a highly ranked goalkeeper needs it. Most of the goals received are due to the relaxation and the need of rest of a goalkeeper in a certain moment of the game.

Power – in order to move fast and to dive for avoiding the goals, the goalkeeper needs maximum power, especially in the lower part of his body. Explosiveness and, at the same time, permanent control of his own movements represent important conditions for catching, punching the ball, for performing adequate dives, for sliding interventions, etc.

Importance of the individual physical qualities is given by three fundamental elements:

1. Eyes – sportive performance is closely connected with the quality of the eyesight, especially due to the fact that approximately 80% of stimuli are visual. The eyesight provides to the brain the information that is necessary for a good relationship with the environment.
2. Hands – most of the times they are or they must be used with “the speed of the light”, due to the fact that most shootings are from extremely small distances; that's why it's extremely difficult for the goalkeepers to catch all balls, most of the time they prefer to ward them off. However, we need to mention that a high percentage of the goals scored consists of goals scored as a result of balls having been deflected by the goalkeeper; that's why such an aspect must be taken into consideration when training the goalkeepers; he must be prepared for such situations, as he must not stop after deflecting a ball, but he must continue to act in the event until complete elimination of the danger.



3. Legs – they represent the most important part of the body. The goalkeeper uses his legs in order to move in any direction, in order to actively participate in the attack, but, most importantly, in order to be able to position himself behind the ball, because it is easier for him to catch a ball when the ball is heading straight towards him; it's no use for a goalkeeper to perform good catches or to have special reflexes, unless he is also able to move his feet in order to get to the ball. One last interesting detail: in futsal there are more goals prevented by moving the body or by moving the feet than by using the hands.

Technical elements of the goalkeeper:

1. Technical elements with the ball:
 - catching the ball;
 - punching the ball;
 - deflecting the ball;
 - blocking the ball;
 - returning the ball in the game by hand;
 - returning the ball in the game by leg.
2. Technical elements without the ball:
 - fundamental position;
 - movement in the field.

From the tactical point of view, the goalkeeper's style of playing is characterized by the individual and the collective tactics.

Individual tactics

For attack:

- Throwing or kicking the ball to the best positioned players, to the engaged ones or the ones launched in future positions.
- Knowing the playing system of the team and the tactics allows the goalkeeper to guess and to select the most adequate moment, the most appropriate technical procedure, the player most favoured by the current action, so that the ball could reach its aim.

For defence:

- ✓ Taking the correct and inspired post inside the gate and in the penalty area.
- ✓ Choosing the best posts and interventions at out throws, direct and indirect kicks, corner kicks and penalty shots.
- ✓ Going out in order to meet the balls launched by opponent attackers, must be performed at highest speed possible, and the ball must be kicked towards the centre of the field.



- ✓ For an extended attack of his team, the goalkeeper can advance outside the gate area, in order to be able to intervene into any long kick sent to his goalmouth.

Collective tactics

For defence:

- Permanent collaboration with the players, guiding their possible interventions and position modifications.
- Fair appreciation of his individual tactical actions, in order to harmonize them with the other players participating in the defence of the gate.

For attack:

- ✓ After taking possession of the ball, the goalkeeper must quickly analyze the actual situation on the field, in order to find the best solution to throw in the ball.

If the opponent team has attacked, and the opponent goalkeeper went left the penalty area, being quite far from it, the goalkeeper, by using a launching trick, can kick a long ball trying to score.

3. Conclusions

The most important thing that needs to be known is that the whole specific training of the goalkeeper must take into account his role during the game; he is not just defending the goal, but also anticipates situations and actively participate in the game, therefore he should also perform the drills with the field players in training.

The combination of the technical-tactical training with the physical-mental training of goalkeepers must be continuous and must be started as early as possible, because learning the game rules and the special techniques requires time and perseverance. At the same time, goalkeeper must actively participate in all technical-tactical exercises of the field players, according to the needs and to the game momentum, because is necessary for him to be both a defender, providing safety for his team, and an attacker that can provide imagination, speed or decisive passing of the ball.

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