

## OPTIMIZATION OF THE ROMANIAN HANDBALL COMPETITIVE SYSTEM

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### Abstract

*Research goal: establishing a new national competition to include those athletes who do not participate in any competition, and are not yet able to exceed experienced athletes, in spite of the fact that they are components of junior and youth national teams.*

*Hypothesis: establishing national youth championship will help improve the youth national teams results and, on the long run, the seniors’.*

**Key words:** handball national team, youth, competition, sports value.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

Statistical analyses of the past 15 years reveal a reduced number of clubs and an even more reduced number of registered active athletes in Romanian handball. Coaches of all national youth complain of the lack of games of the members of the national team, the main cause of poor results in recent years (national youth teams made up of reserves of the clubs which sometimes have not attended any official game before playing in the national games). The athletes who are at the end of juniorship run the highest risk because if they have certain qualities which recommend them as future performers, they will choose stronger teams (with a generous budget), but as a game participation, those will fail to totalize the minutes of a half of the game in a whole championship.

The need to increase the number of players and teams is a strategic priority of the Romanian Handball Federation.

Material and financial resources available to the Romanian practicing handball system increased (the amount of declared budgets of the senior teams, new sports halls and in the areas covering virtually the entire country, etc.) but cannot compare yet, with those of the top international handball countries. The human resource (athletes, coaches, etc.) has common features with other

countries, indicating that the qualification level of coaches is low, especially in the young coaches.

So, the most important component that needs to be exploited by the most efficient use of existing resources is the organization, in order to achieve the following objectives:

- an increasing number of teams and players
- an increasing number of competitions at all levels
- the establishment of improvement school for coaches at the Romanian Handball Federation
- the establishment of operating licenses for handball coaches at all levels.

Under these conditions, a simple analysis of the number of players under 23 years old, male, from each National League team, in the last three years shows that only in this echelon activate 107 athletes under 23 years old, with an average team about 9 athletes ( $\bar{x} = 8.92$ ) and in the second echelon we have 326 athletes from 21 clubs.

In making lots of athletes, each club has at its disposal two solutions:

- player transfer periods;
- player formation in their own club.

Reality shows us that the best is to conjugate the two ways of forming the team, but from a core of players trained or consecrated in the club location residence.

Team	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	Total
HCM Constanta		2	1	1					4
St. Bacau		4	1		1				6
HC Odorhei	3	1	2	1	3	4			14
CSU Suceava	3	3	4	3	8	1			22
HC Caras Severin		1	1		1	1			4
Poli Timisoara	1	3	6		1				11
CSM Bucuresti				1	1				2
CSM Ploiesti	1	1		1	1	2			6
Dinamo Bucuresti	1	1	2	4	9				17
Pandurii Tg.Jiu	3		1	1					5
U Cluj	3	4	1		2	1			11
ACS Turda	1	2	1					1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>107</b>

## MOTIVATION BASIS

1. The strategy of RHF (Romania Handball Federation) aims with priority to increase the number of players and the number of teams and so, to grow the area of the selection for national teams.

2. Some good results obtained by juniors and youth teams (fourth place at the World Championship - generation of 1982, sixth place at the European Championship - generation of 1984) were not confirmed to seniors, which show that the transition from juniors to seniors, the sports activity is not properly and needs improvement measures.

3. Coaches of all national youth teams complained of lack of the games of the national team players, as the main cause of the poor results in the past years (national teams of reserves from de clubs and which sometimes have not attended even a minute in an official game, before playing in the national games.

4. Most of the teams in the National League have a component of 19-20 players, from which a number of 16 are on the game report, and from those only 9-10 players consistently participate in the game. Due to this situation, 10 to 11 players will be affected regarding their condition and sports value, and soon they will not represent a real competition for who are "the holders", they will become "the ballast", and the club will give up on them, to favor the others to whom the same procedures will be applied.

5. The athletes who are at the end of juniorship are the most exposed, because if they have some futures that recommend them as futures performers they will choose stronger teams (with a generous budget) but they not achieve to totalize even the minutes of a half of the game, in a whole championship as participation in the game. These types of examples are found each year, each generation, players who came from the Excellence Center, about one or two years later they will not be found anymore in any of the teams.

6. The average cost per player (for food, accommodation, medical care and equipment) is at least 10,500 lei/month, regardless of the contribution to the team results. If those players (7) do not play, the amount of 10,500 lei/month and 126,000/year will be lost, without taking in consideration the salary of each of them. Of course, none of the clubs will remain with only the athletes who play consistently, because of the injuries, because of the competition of the players positions in the game, etc. The only reasonable measure is the establishment of the organized climate in order to even and those who are not active in the games of the first teams, to be able to play, to be familiar with everything and to present available solutions if will be needed.

7. Next to own players, juniors with double license may also be taken into consideration, assuring the number of the youth team, in case of injuries, disease, etc. For them, the participation

next to the big team, in competitions, may mean great gain, rapid progress, attachment to the club, the wish to imitate the preferred model players from the first team, and so engaging the club leaders and the coaches to appropriate discipline climate.

8. From the youth team, reserves may be present and a number of three players over the established limit (23 years age to complete, eventually the license studies) who are returning after recoveries and restart progressively sports and effort capacity or players who do not participate in the training or do not respect the team discipline, and the received sanction will not be to remove him from the competition, but give him the possibility to rehabilitate.

9. The second coach who takes care of the youth team, train himself professionally, through responsibility regarding the team results, the preparation of each player under direct supervision of the first coach who informs him directly regarding the development of the players from the youth team.

10. Additional costs are not significant:

- transport of team I (by bus) - 0 lei

- food is provided at home - 0 lei

- accommodation can be made in terms of reciprocity or lower comfort for team I.

- arbitration may be taken from the referees of the game I, with 25% of the scale or local referees (first instance).

11. The games of the youth teams must display after the game of the first teams, in order to allow the inclusion of the players who did not participate or participated less than 20 minutes in the first game.

12. Disadvantages invoked regarding:

- mixing the players of different ages/values / standards, more time allocated to coaches' work, additional expenses merely reveal the need for more serious work in a climate of financial discipline and high efficiency.

13. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2012 meeting, with a single absence, the Technical Male Committee voted unanimously in favor of this suggestion, so the coaches recognized the need for this measure.

Establishing the National Youth Championship will represent a first step towards revitalizing the handball game. Other measures taken in view of the same purpose are:

- establishing the national championship - Division B;

- promoting and extending the practice of creating private schools to initiate children in the handball game.

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