

YOUTH FUTSAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Youth Olympic Futsal Tournaments
Buenos Aires, 7-18 October 2018

FIFA

**BUENOS
AIRES
2018**



YOUTH
OLYMPIC
GAMES

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TECHNICAL STUDY GROUP

The Technical Study Group (TSG) for this competition was assembled for the purposes of assessing development needs for future futsal growth across the FIFA member associations at youth level, and to better understand the position of each confederation in terms of competitive strength.

The FIFA Technical Development Division was responsible for the activities of the Technical Study Group, which comprised the following members: Brent Rahim (FIFA Futsal and Beach Soccer Development Manager), Javier Lozano (ESP – FIFA Futsal Instructor, FIFA Futsal Consultant) and Graeme Dell (ENG – FIFA Futsal Instructor, FIFA Futsal Consultant).

Scope and terms of reference

The terms of reference for this TSG were as follows:

- Establish an understanding of the competition level in order to target youth development activities post event.
- Review and understand the differences between teams from the same confederation and teams from different confederations at this new international level of competition for young men and women.
- Establish the current standard of women's futsal development.
- Review and understand trends in national teams.
- Establish any links between the trends at this level and the trends at senior national team level for men and women (and to evaluate the key differences and the likelihood of trends at this level impacting future developments at senior national team level).
- Establish and define any potential differences in coach education needs and resource content for the women's and men's games.
- Identify content that could be used after the event to support the technical delivery of FIFA coach education and resource production.
- Review and agree on the winners of the FIFA Fair Play Awards.
- Establish, through coach interviews during the competition phase, what development challenges they face (domestically) at association level and which challenges shaped their progress.
- Understand member associations' commitment to age group/youth development.
- Ensure an expert consensus on a defined link between youth development and the elite level.
- Determine the different challenges for performance at this level for women and men, e.g. how the teams prepare, how they are funded, how they perform differently.
- Review the training sessions of competing nations to establish/review/assess the application of age-specific coaching and the differences (or alignment) with adult elite teams.



From left to right: Graeme DELL (ENG), Brent RAHIM (FIFA) and Javier LOZANO (ESP).

INTRODUCTION

This report has been compiled by the Technical Study Group (TSG) futsal experts appointed by the FIFA Technical Development Division.

Unlike conventional FIFA TSG reports, this report is not intended to give a detailed statistical analysis of the Youth Olympic Futsal Tournaments. Instead, the aim is to challenge and direct the development focus for youth futsal players between the ages of 15 and 18, their different development pathway stages and related FIFA guidance.

The TSG terms of reference for this activity can be found in the previous chapter.

The structure and content of this report is therefore different to those produced for the first two editions of the Youth Olympic Games (Singapore 2010 and Nanjing 2014) at which football was played.

This document is not intended to give a comprehensive set of detailed findings or outcomes, but to identify and report on the key findings and outcomes associated with the TSG terms of reference for these tournaments.

FIFA intends to develop guidance for technical development in youth futsal in due course.

2018 YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES

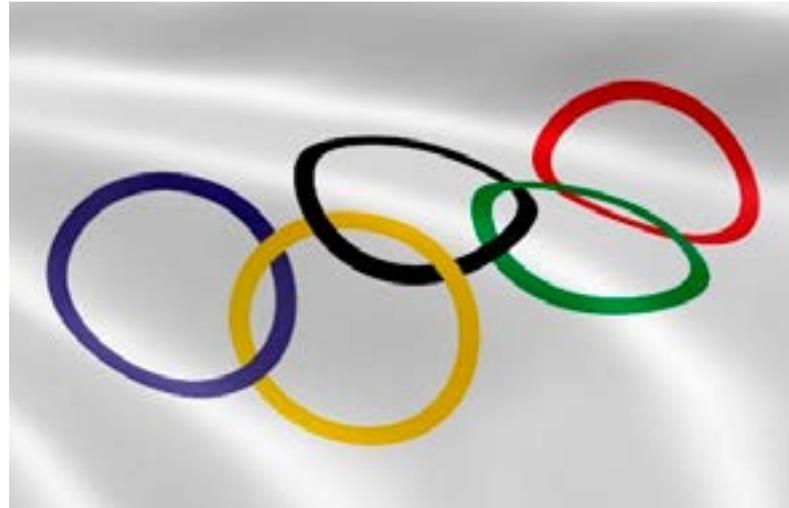
Outline and brief overview

Futsal made its Youth Olympic Games debut at the third Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, taking the place of football, which had featured in the two previous editions at Singapore 2010 and Nanjing 2014.

This was a huge step forward for futsal, with both men's and women's tournaments being held at the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) major youth gathering between 7 and 18 October 2018.

This change was agreed in early 2015, following a proposal tabled by the IOC.

The underlying idea was to make the competition format a better fit for the general structure of the Youth Olympic Games with futsal having certain similarities to other sports, such as basketball and handball.



The inclusion of futsal, with ten teams taking part in the men's tournament and ten in the women's, was in line with the IOC's development of other small-format team sports, among them basketball 3x3 and rugby sevens.

It was also aimed to promote the development of the discipline around the world. The men's tournament started on 7 October and concluded on 18 October 2018, whereas the women's tournament started on 7 October and concluded on 17 October.

Change in eligibility (age limits)

Only players born between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2003 were eligible to play in the Buenos Aires 2018 futsal tournaments. In other words, the players had to be between the ages of 15 and 18. The age range at Nanjing 2014 and Singapore 2010, for example, was 14 to 15 years of age, so this also represented a step change.

Prior to the tournaments, FIFA had no futsal competitions at youth level and the principle was to guarantee two entertaining tournaments by trying to get high-quality players – closer in age to 18 than 14 – to take part.

A total of 100 male and 100 female players graced the courts at Tecnopolis and the CeNARD (Argentina's National Centre of Elite Sporting Performance), the two venues chosen to host the futsal tournaments.

Development and women's futsal

Expectations are very high in terms of the impact that futsal being an Olympic discipline will have on its development. When futsal consolidates its position in the competition, we will no doubt see even more development of the game and greater attention being paid to the discipline's youth categories. However, futsal cannot simply sit back and wait for such a catalyst, and knowledge-led development activity is therefore essential to impact the game and create future generations of players who can enjoy and excel in futsal.

The opportunities for growing the girls' and women's game are clear. In particular, it is considered essential to have a tournament of this standard promoting futsal among women and moving towards senior and youth women's futsal competitions, something already seen in some confederations such as UEFA, the AFC and CONMEBOL.

This competition showed that these confederations are faring best, and that may well be no coincidence. Two of the four women's semi-finalists were from UEFA, with one each from the AFC and CONMEBOL, which demonstrates the need for competitive regional and local competitions to prepare nations for this level of play.

The recently published FIFA Women's Football Strategy seeks to create a women's futsal competition, which also represents progress and a step in the right direction.



Route to qualification

The Youth Olympic Games were created to allow young players from as many countries as possible to compete against each other, with the IOC regulations for team sports binding. With the exception of 2018 hosts Argentina, each nation could field only one team in certain team sports, including futsal, and this resulted in a quite complicated yet structured qualification route.





A core concept of the Youth Olympic Games is that young athletes from as many different parts of the world as possible take part in them. This founding principle was one of the key rules that underpinned the Youth Olympic Futsal Tournaments in Buenos Aires 2018: no country could be represented by more than one team in futsal, beach handball, hockey 5s and rugby sevens.

By way of example, if a nation succeeded in qualifying for the futsal and handball tournaments in both sports and one or more gender, the National Olympic Committee was required to decide which of the teams it would send to Buenos Aires 2018, but it could only choose one team sport irrespective of gender.

As a result of this rule, the qualification system for the Youth Olympic Futsal Tournaments is a little more complex than for other FIFA competitions. Just because a team won a qualification tournament or had an automatic right to play in Buenos Aires 2018, it did not mean to say that it would end up playing in the Youth Olympic Futsal Tournaments.

The National Olympic Committees (NOCs) had until 6 August 2018 to provide confirmation of which teams they were going to send – in which gender and in which sports – which is why the teams playing in the futsal tournaments were classed as “eligible” rather than “qualified”.

UEFA adopted a notable development approach to its men’s and women’s qualification competitions. If a national association succeeded in securing an eligibility place in both competitions, the priority to

participate was awarded to the women’s team, whilst also observing the IOC rationale associated with team sport participation.

A special case

Argentina, as hosts, were able to field more than one team in some team sports, although they could only enter one in futsal – either a men’s or women’s team, but not both.

Argentina confirmed their participation in the men’s event, which meant that the women’s futsal tournament had ten teams, and the men’s nine plus Argentina, leaving one less place for teams from the CONMEBOL zone in that tournament.

In cases where nations qualified through an over-18s tournament or via the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking, they were represented at Buenos Aires 2018 by their U-18 teams.

Only once regular senior women’s “A” futsal competitions are staged can a ranking formula be applied. From that point onwards, a suitable mechanism for qualification will be applicable across all confederations.

The criteria for each confederation in the men’s tournament:

- **AFC (2): IR Iran and Iraq** were eligible for Buenos Aires 2018 after finishing first and second at the AFC U-20 Futsal Championship in Thailand in May 2017. Both confirmed their participation.



- **CAF (1): Egypt** represented Africa after defeating Angola in the continental final.
- **Concacaf (2):** The FIFA Futsal World Cup Colombia 2016 was used to help select the region's two eligible sides – **Costa Rica** and **Panama**.
- **CONMEBOL (2):** South America staged its qualifying tournament in March 2018 to decide its sole representative. Brazil won the tournament, while Argentina, who qualified as hosts, finished as runners-up.
- **OFC (1):** The **Solomon Islands** secured their place by winning the OFC Youth Futsal Tournament that was played between 4 and 7 October 2017.
- **UEFA (2):** The qualifying tournament was played between 1 and 4 November 2017 and featured 16 teams split into four groups. After finishing the zonal qualifiers, **Russia** confirmed their place, but Italy selected their beach handball team instead of futsal. The next eligible team was **Slovakia**, who accepted.

The criteria for each confederation in the women's tournament:

- **AFC (2):** IR Iran and Japan, the two finalists in the AFC Women's Futsal Tournament, were given priority in terms of eligibility for Buenos Aires 2018, but with an U-18 team. IR Iran decided to play in the men's tournament, but **Japan** accepted. **Thailand** finished third and were the next eligible team.
- **CAF (1):** The 23 March 2018 edition of the FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking decided the

team that would represent Africa at Buenos Aires 2018: **Cameroon**.

- **Concacaf (2):** The 23 March 2018 edition of the FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking determined the two teams that would represent Concacaf at Buenos Aires 2018: **Trinidad and Tobago** and the **Dominican Republic**.
- **CONMEBOL (2):** *The Copa América Futsal Femenino 2017*, which was held in Uruguay in November 2017, established the ranking priority to select South America's two representatives. **Bolivia** and **Chile** confirmed their participation.
- **OFC (1):** New Zealand won the OFC Women's Youth Futsal Tournament, which was played between 4 and 6 October 2017. However, the New Zealand NOC opted to send a women's team for another sport, which surrendered their eligibility spot in futsal. This was passed on to **Tonga**, who represented Oceania.
- **UEFA (2):** UEFA's qualifying tournament featured eight countries split into two mini-competitions of four teams apiece. **Portugal** and **Spain** won the competitions, thereby gaining priority to participate in the Buenos Aires 2018 women's tournament as part of UEFA's development strategy.

Argentinian spectacle

The Argentinian people's passion for football is known the world over, and there was every reason to believe that they would show just as much fervour for futsal, not least because Argentina are the current men's FIFA futsal world champions (2016).





As was the case at the 1978 World Cup, when the homes of River Plate and Vélez Sarsfield were buzzing during matches, and in 2001, when Vélez's stadium was once again part of the World Youth Championship fray, the Tecnopolis and CeNARD venues were expected to be brimming with fans for the futsal action – and they did not disappoint.

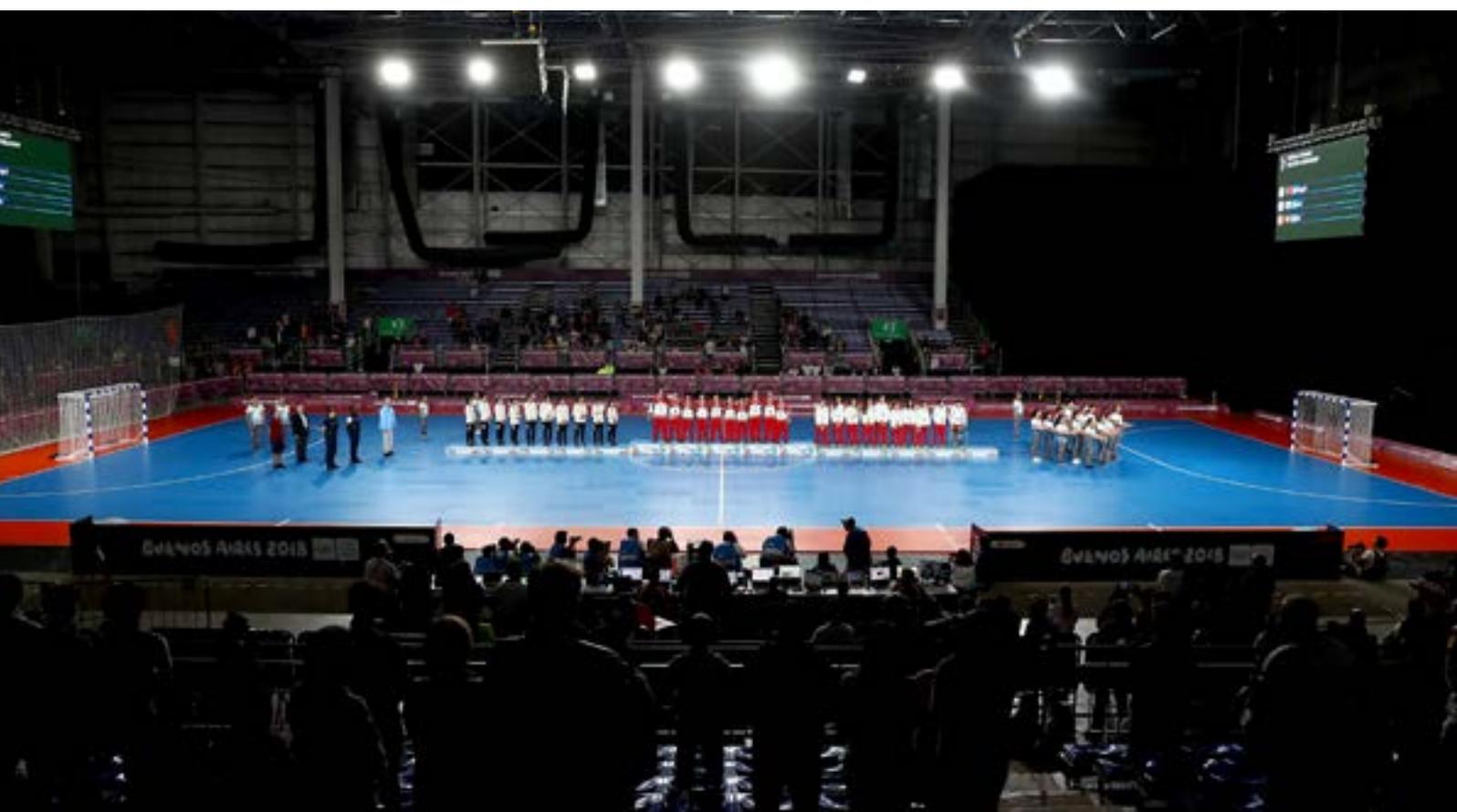
The Tecnopolis Stadium was the futsal focal point, staging the medal matches, the semi-finals, and several first-round encounters. This facility, which opened in 2011 to house an annual science and technology fair of the same name, welcomed futsal for the first time, but had previously hosted tennis, basketball and handball games. The stadium boasted capacity crowds of 6,500 for the host nation's

matches, although there were regular attendances of 2,500+ across both tournaments.

The secondary venue was at the CeNARD, Argentina's National Centre of Elite Sporting Performance, which is regularly used for indoor sports matches and was able to accommodate 1,000-strong crowds during the Games. It hosted first-round fixtures and team training sessions.

Futsal had been held there before, specifically during CONMEBOL's inaugural South American League in 2017.

Both venues had standard international size pitches (40 x 20m), supplied and installed by the LOC Equipment provider.



TOURNAMENT OBSERVATIONS

The two tournaments, men's and women's, have been considered separately by the TSG as each presented different dynamics, but also collectively in this summary. The combined outcomes are pivotal for youth development across both genders and for the evolution of futsal as a discipline.

The rationale for tournament eligibility is an important facet in the review of the tournaments and is reflected in this summary.

The men's tournament delivered a high standard of play, the pace of which was beyond all expectation. However, the pace heavily affected the technical and tactical outcomes, which have been highlighted in this report.

Similarly, it must be acknowledged that women's futsal remains largely under-developed globally. The women's tournament was a focal element of that engagement and promotion for female participants.

The eligibility criteria for these tournaments produced teams from across the performance and development spectrum, from the clearly advanced teams technically and tactically, to teams who were simply composed of 11-a-side players. The progress by those inexperienced futsal nations as the women's tournament progressed through the preliminary stages was evident and a reflection of the development that can be made tactically with several fixtures in a focused period.



Elaborate tactical approaches without the basics

Looking at repetitive trends from established futsal competitions, as well as considering the evidence of new trends which may impact futsal, were key reference points for the TSG across these tournaments.

A concerning yet repetitive trend seen across the game generally is the hunger for knowledge of more advanced tactical play. This has almost become an obsession amongst the community as coaches seek to edge closer to their aspirations for success, and whilst this is to be commended, it also sets a dangerous threat to the evolution of futsal.

The TSG noted, with concern, that this competition demonstrated nothing different in terms of that trend. This trend and the focus of coaches must be adjusted for the benefit of development.

Tactics are of course a vital aspect of competitive play, but so is technical ability. Tactics, basic or otherwise, are wholly dependent upon players being able to execute the fundamental yet basic technical assets of individual play. Passing, control, balance, feinting to move/play, pace, accurate shooting, moving with the ball, knowing when to pass to feet or into space, when to find space or when to fill it, and coping with 1v1 challenges are just some of the key areas requiring initial focus in player development.

The hunger for a tactical advantage without first having established these and other strands is a flawed approach to futsal and is inappropriate for young players.

A focused approach to developing technical strands in individual players is essential up to the age of 18 in both boys and girls. Players who have acquired and developed basic technical abilities at an early age along with the skill to use them appropriately, and who evolve through a structured development pathway, will have a firmer foundation to apply both basic and complex tactical concepts with improving success. This is a fundamental principle that is being ignored in player development.

This competition demonstrated that however experienced the coach is, irrespective of how basic or complex the tactical approach, without the fundamental technical assets in place it is an impossible and unfair expectation of under-developed players.

The responsibility to address this failing rests with coaching and futsal development pathway strategies from five years of age.

Tactical concepts were often over-elaborated or complex, which further complicates a quite simple game. It was felt that, in many instances, tactical elaboration was challenging due to the low level of technical development of many of these young players. The cohesion between tactical deployment and technical ability is of paramount importance.

This has been a concern for some time across the futsal development debate, namely that far too often tactical resources are inappropriately applied to players who are not equipped with the technical wherewithal to appropriately deploy those tactical intentions.

Both the men's and the women's tournament highlighted the need to focus more heavily on developing the technical skill sets of young players before applying elite tactical actions. This is a fundamental failing, impacting upon performance, and it is clear at this age of competitive play.

Developing and unorthodox teams

Unorthodox futsal play causes problems for established futsal nations, but this unorthodox nature also presents challenges to those opponents who have a more evolved futsal culture and consequently can disrupt futsal patterns and tactical intentions. This unorthodox play unexpectedly challenges the

approach of both experienced players and coaches to game play, and the more developed futsal nations should consider more playing opportunities against unorthodox nations as an educational tool to prepare their players for such challenges.

However, for those unorthodox and emerging nations, the coaching message is clear. Whilst performances against established and knowledge-led futsal nations may be encouraging, despite game outcomes, if futsal is played in the correct style and approach, generally this achieves successful outcomes.

Preparation will always overcome unorthodox teams, but they will remain a challenge.

Intelligent goalkeepers

In both tournaments, the importance of a bright, brave goalkeeper with good reactions was important for team success.

The goalkeeper is no different to outfield players with a fixed role, in that goalkeepers too must possess an understanding of every position and its specific, yet strategic role in team tactics.





This is considered to be a key aspect of the player development experience and can be considered as more fundamental in futsal than in football.

However, there was also strong evidence that goalkeeper selections were founded upon other technical aspects such as footwork, pass selection and the ability to join as a “five” in a powerplay without the need to exchange outfield players, thus presenting less risk.

This trend also suggests that goalkeepers also need to develop as efficient outfield players through their individual yet specific development pathway. The importance of bright, adaptable goalkeepers was a TSG outcome from the 2016 FIFA Futsal World Cup report, and the trends seen here in Buenos Aires could reflect the influence of that outcome.

To powerplay or not to powerplay?

Many teams used the powerplay but few really understood the principles, application and deployment of this tactical structure.

The powerplay is designed to create numerical superiority in attack and is used to unbalance the defensive structure of the opponent.

As in all aspects of futsal play, to be effective the powerplay requires competent technicians who can move the ball accurately and with speed, but who can make rapid decisions as the powerplay unfolds, either with or without the ball.

Some teams used the powerplay effectively and improved their opportunities, but having scored, reverted to game play that had previously not provided a positive outcome. In other instances, teams used the powerplay for several minutes when behind but without creating a single shooting opportunity despite their perseverance.

The powerplay is not simply an action to be performed, but one which requires diligent practice and understanding by all players (and coaches) of how to achieve an imbalance through connecting passing and movements that creates the deadly passing line to shoot.

If the TSG had to identify a deficiency trend in teams, deploying the powerplay would be one of them.

The impact of scoring first

Trends were also observed across all tournament matches. In the preliminary stages of the men’s and women’s tournaments, there were 40 matches and all but six were won by the team that scored first.

In the semi-finals and medal matches, i.e. a total of eight matches, all but three were won by the team that opened the scoring.

The TSG can draw many conclusions from this statistic but in general it was felt that it may reflect strategic approaches to matches or be an indication of the psychological impact at this age, both positive for the team that scored first, and negative for the opponent.



Overall, psychological strength is a key aspect to be considered in the development and preparation of youth futsal players across both genders.

In the latter preliminary games and the semi-finals, where progression was on the line, conceding first appeared to re-focus a team's efforts as there was a spike in terms of teams coming back to win after going behind.



Physicality of youth

Teams managed physicality and aerobic exertion efficiently as this was a demanding schedule that is rarely repeated in domestic or confederation competitions. This also indicates the importance of physiological preparation to maintain performance across the competition phase, and that the resilience of young players is perhaps greater than those who are more mature.

The physicality of better conditioned teams such as Spain, Brazil, Russia, Portugal and Japan resulted in positive outcomes as they were all notably the fittest teams from the outset. The contribution of appropriate physical conditioning at this level, as at senior level, will also influence technical execution and tactical deployment as fatigue starts to take hold. Decision-making was also notably better by the fittest teams in both the men's and women's tournament.

Game play must reflect training, and vice versa. Play as you train, train as you play could be considered as a motto for competition preparation.

Domestic competitions should be progressive and increasingly offer realistic challenges to test players and ensure that they become capable decision-makers under pressure.

Expecting the challenges of play in sedate domestic competitions to suitably prepare players for the rigours of high-level international competition is misguided. Domestic competitions must be structured to be competitive and challenging so that young players progressively improve to such an extent that the step up to international competition is not too great.

Utilisation of resources

It is important to note that each squad was limited to ten players, a development principle for this competition to maximise the number of competing teams. Larger squads would have meant reduced team opportunities due to the IOC limitation on overall accreditation numbers for each sport competition.

Each team included two goalkeepers in their squad, which logically enabled a number of teams to prepare and play with two defined quartets, in some instances using both goalkeepers in specific halves of a match,





whilst in others interchanging them depending on how play was unfolding.

Where the quartet principle was strategically adopted, most quartets were well structured, technically competent, and each had an intrinsic player understanding. This reflected preparation before arrival at the competition. Quartet interchanges due to injury were mostly effective. This may not be a simple consequence of working with limited squad constraints but more of a reflection of a trend being seen across the domestic game where quartets train together to develop a more focused and collaborative understanding in game play. Nevertheless, this trend is filtering more and more into national team philosophies.

The importance of developing composure

Many teams demonstrated the exuberance of youth but also a lack of composure and maturity in the final third. This was specifically the case when a decisive final pass or interruption of a passing line was required.

Patience and composure under pressure is a fundamental psychological asset of the developing youth futsal player that has to be trained and harnessed.

Composure and strong mental resilience is challenging for young players, but this requires an age-specific approach by coaches and support staff alike to both teaching and culture.

This approach has a direct relationship to technical ability, yet it may be developed comprehensively even at the ages of the players in this competition. The vital stage of development is the formative age of 5-12 years, and a number of teams demonstrated evidence of good development, but these were generally the semi-finalists in each tournament.

Preparation and competitive experience is vital

Confederations can also assist their teams, but this requires a commitment to organise structured qualifying competitions that offer more competitive opportunities to qualify and prepare. This is particularly relevant for women's teams but also for men's futsal at this age in some regions.

However, it is also important for this to be supplemented by domestic competitions that present challenges and experiential development for players, technical staff and referees alike. Whilst this competition saw some huge progress in performance terms within the first rounds of competition, it is incumbent upon member associations and confederations to facilitate the best experience possible for young athletes to ensure future engagement with futsal beyond an Olympic competition.

At U-18 level, we cannot expect players to have developed the mental state of mind to "raise their game" on demand or to arrive knowing what to expect as, unlike the Olympic Games, these Youth Olympic Games offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity due to the athletes' ages and the frequency of the event. Competitive play cannot therefore be expected to mature in a two-week period, but it must be an evolutionary outcome through their development cycle. Strong and structured domestic competition presents such an opportunity.

A concerning trend

The TSG also noted a marked increase in fouls and injury simulation across matches, intended to seek to gain an advantage or to delay and disrupt play. This

was seen as a worrying aspect for the discipline at this age and showcase level.

Steps across the game to eradicate this prevalence that enable quick restarts should be addressed through coaching leadership, player education and referee game management.

The unwavering application of the Futsal Laws of the Game in context with the specific match is just one way of enforcement. It is incumbent upon match officials and coaching staff to ensure that, at this age, the tolerance level remains low, otherwise this could result in a growing prevalence across senior competitions in the years to come, which must be avoided.

The TSG recognised that this is a subjective area and that referee enforcement may not be universally consistent, whilst ensuring that a player who is genuinely injured can be treated or allowed time to recover to continue without treatment. However, this also requires a greater awareness of the complete match context whilst demonstrating that such behaviour will not be tolerated at any level.

Preparing the young player – technically, tactically, psychologically and physically

In both tournaments, there was a large gap in terms of the standard of play between the top and lower performing teams.

Young players, at all ages, are mentally fragile and the impact of a non-positive experience can harm the athlete and disengage them from futsal and the other assets of social interaction promoted by futsal.

For the developing futsal player, performing at a Youth Olympic Games and not having a positive experience can be damaging in the same way as it can be in both confederation and domestic competition.



For this reason, it is vital that the psychological impact of preparation, training and play are considered and balanced in all aspects and at every technical session.

This approach must be structured alongside the three other areas of player development to ensure positive learnings: technical, tactical and physical preparation. Deployment should be carefully considered and respectful of each player's individual circumstances. This is not a one-size-fits-all approach to player development, and the welfare of the child (U-18) must always be the key priority for anyone working with young players. They are first and foremost children, and secondly athletes.

The exposure to play is the fifth aspect that offers the opportunity to experiment, challenge and expand knowledge through the play experience, and it is this overall combination that develops better players and young people for society through futsal.

The importance of training the appropriate mental approach to both match play and training is a vital constituent part of preparation, maturation and performance delivery, irrespective of ability, and this was an overwhelming finding of the TSG observations at this competition.

Understanding the value of the time-out

Anecdotally, the TSG noted that where a time-out was used for tactical purposes, this proved to have the desired effect although tactical time-outs were in the

The attacking play of Portugal should, at this age, act as an example that encourages and develops creativity and movement without the ball but also requires the fundamental technical skill sets to be well embedded.



minority. Some further education and understanding of the use of time-outs may be required.

Some teams clearly had an understanding of the effective use of a time-out and how it can impact game outcomes. The most effective use of the time-out was by Japan, and it significantly contributed towards their success, but others were less successful. This is a key skill of the coach in selecting the appropriate time and message to send, whilst connecting with each player mentally to ensure that they receive the appropriate information and in a very narrow window of time, and then adjust play accordingly.

Age-appropriate coaching

In considering just the men's teams because men's futsal is more developed than the women's at this moment in time, seven of the ten teams were coached by their senior men's national "A" team coach.

The TSG questions whether this is appropriate at this age.

There are undoubted differences between coaching children through their revolutionary stages of maturation and adolescence, and mature men or women.

The skill sets of most senior "A" team national coaches can probably not be considered to be child-centric, and children evidently have different outcome and development needs. An established "A" team national coach has different drivers, results and complex tactical concepts as a priority, whereas a youth coach is required to possess different qualities and child development skill sets to achieve educational outcomes in a different way. This area requires careful consideration by member associations.

Age-appropriate coaching by age-specific specialists generally achieves more by addressing pedagogical learning with teaching, using appropriate processes to facilitate and manage the development of young people.

Coaching and coach appointments should be considered in the wider context of what is best for the developing athlete, through all stages up to U-18.

An athlete who is under the age of 18 is not yet fully mature so their emotional characteristics and their management require a very different approach to those of an adult. This was a specific observation across both tournaments, where the psychological approach and competition impact weighed heavily on many teams and individuals.

An inappropriate approach to this area of young person development throughout their pathway to 18 years of age can be more of a disabler than a perceptive enabler of using an elite, yet adult-centric coach and teaching style.

If associations do not possess age-specific futsal experts, they should pay immediate attention to it and focus on it. Equipping child development specialists with futsal knowledge will have more of an effect than simply taking the most experienced adult futsal coaches and asking them to work with young players.

National team strategies, as exemplified by Portugal, can be a golden thread through all teams from boys and girls through to the senior men and women. This philosophy does not require the same national coach to be responsible for all teams.



COMPETITION OVERVIEW

MEN'S TOURNAMENT

Winners:	Brazil
Total attendance:	74,024
Average attendance:	3,084
Total no. of goals:	174
Average no. of goals:	7.25
Most goals scored:	32 – Brazil
Least goals scored:	5 – Slovakia
Most goals conceded:	39 – Solomon Islands
Least goals conceded:	5 – Iraq
Number of penalties:	17 (7 converted, 10 missed)
Number of own goals:	3
Goals scored by substitutes:	52 (out of 174, 29.89%)
Goals in first half v. second half:	84 v. 90
– goals in 1 st half additional time:	0
– goals in 2 nd half additional time:	0
Goals in first 10 minutes:	29 (16.67%)
Goals in last 10 minutes:	0 (0.00%)
Goals in extra time:	0 (0.00%)
Top goalscorer:	11 – GUILHERMAO (BRA)
Youngest goalscorer:	15y 0m 28d LEAI Raphael (SOL), 07.10.2018 (IR Iran v. Solomon Islands)
Fastest goal:	23" GUILHERMAO (BRA), 13.10.2018 (Solomon Islands v. Brazil)
Highest number of assists:	6 – NEGUINHO (BRA)
Highest win:	2-12, 13.10.2018 (Panama v. Argentina)
Highest-scoring match:	6-11, 09.10.2018 (Solomon Islands v. Costa Rica)
Highest number of wins:	6 – Brazil
Highest number of defeats:	4 – Solomon Islands
Number of yellow cards:	66 (avg/game 2.75)
Number of red cards:	2 (avg/game 0.08)
Most yellow cards:	11 – Brazil, Egypt
Least yellow cards:	4 – Solomon Islands
Most red cards:	2 – Costa Rica
Least red cards:	0 – Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, IR Iran



WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT

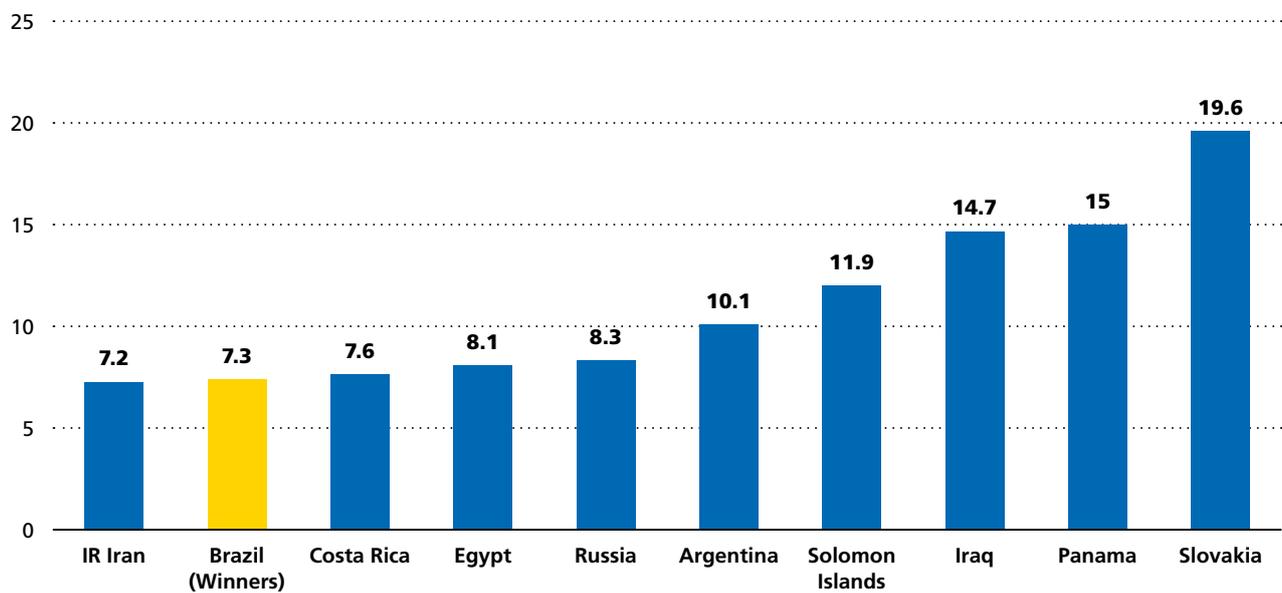
Winners:	Portugal
Total attendance:	44,338
Average attendance:	1,847
Total no. of goals:	226
Average no. of goals:	9.42
Most goals scored:	57 – Portugal
Least goals scored:	6 – Chile 6 – Dominican Republic
Most goals conceded:	44 – Bolivia
Least goals conceded:	5 – Portugal
Number of penalties:	3 (1 converted, 2 missed)
Number of own goals:	5
Goals scored by substitutes:	85 (out of 226, 37.61%)
Goals in first half v. second half:	103 v. 123
– goals in 1 st half additional time:	0
– goals in 2 nd half additional time:	0
Goals in first 10 minutes:	50 (22.12%)
Goals in last 10 minutes:	0 (0.00%)
Goals in extra time:	0 (0.00%)
Top goalscorer:	21 – FIFO (POR)
Youngest goalscorer:	14y 10m 6d MEJIAS Moenesa (TRI), 10.10.2018 (Tonga v. Trinidad and Tobago)
Fastest goal:	8'' FIFO (POR), 17.10.2018 (Portugal v. Japan)
Highest number of assists:	10 – LOPEZ-PARDO Marta (ESP) 10 – NUATHONG Pattarawarin (THA)
Highest win:	16-1, 13.10.2018 (Spain v. Trinidad and Tobago)
Highest-scoring match:	16-2, 15.10.2018 (Portugal v. Bolivia)
Highest number of wins:	6 – Portugal
Highest number of defeats:	4 – Tonga
Number of yellow cards:	17 (avg/game 0.71)
Number of red cards:	3 (avg/game 0.12)
Most yellow cards:	4 Trinidad and Tobago
Least yellow cards:	0 – Japan, Portugal, Spain
Most red cards:	1 – Chile, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago



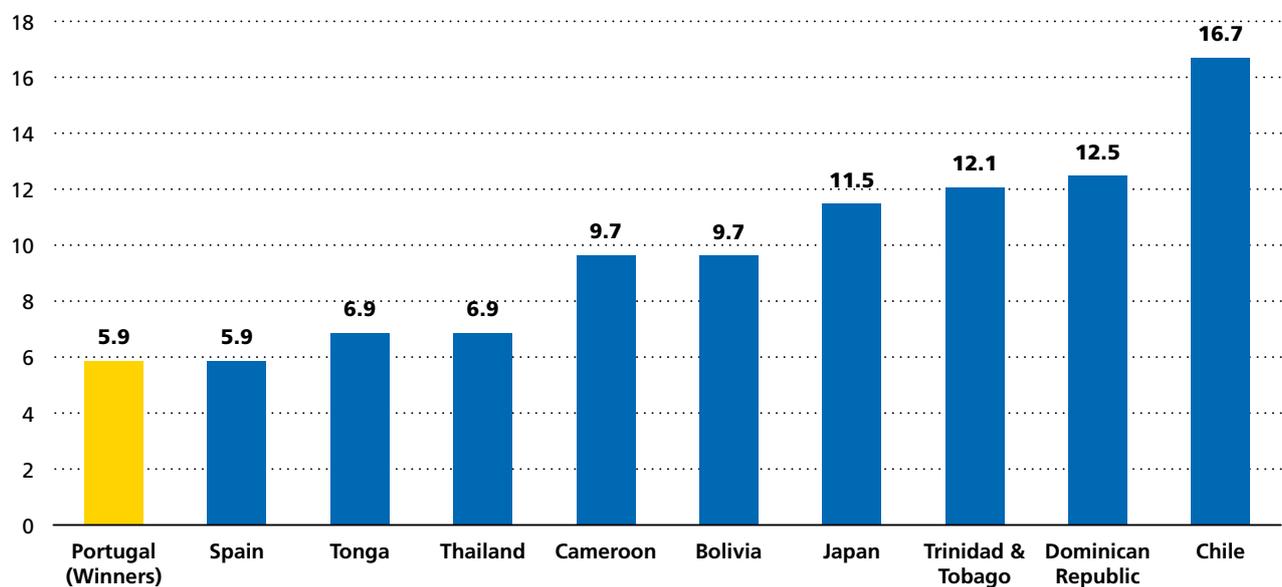
PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

Average shots per goal

Men's

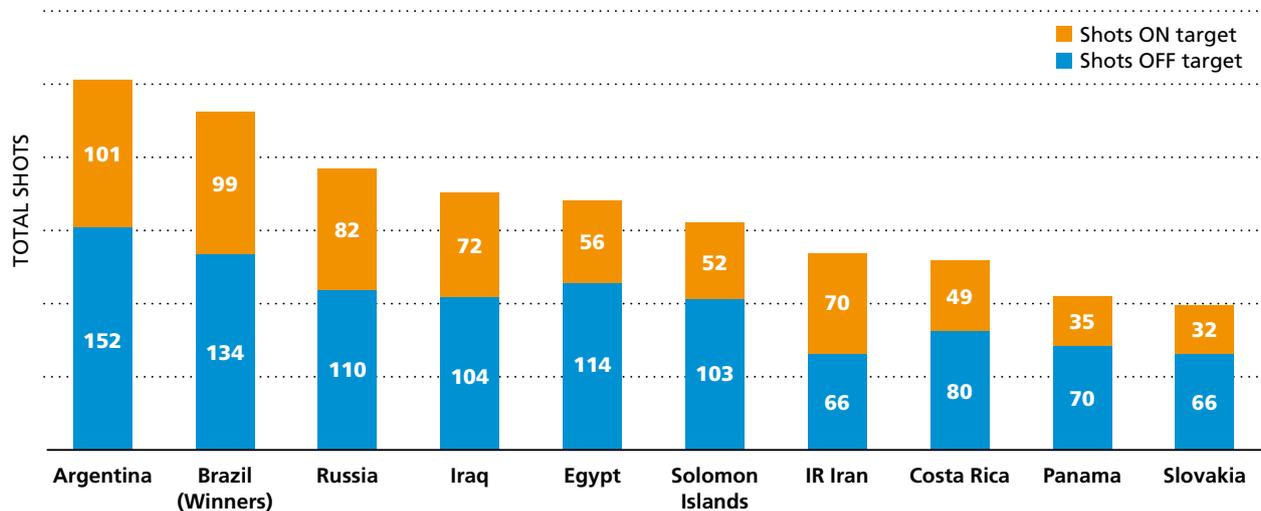


Women's

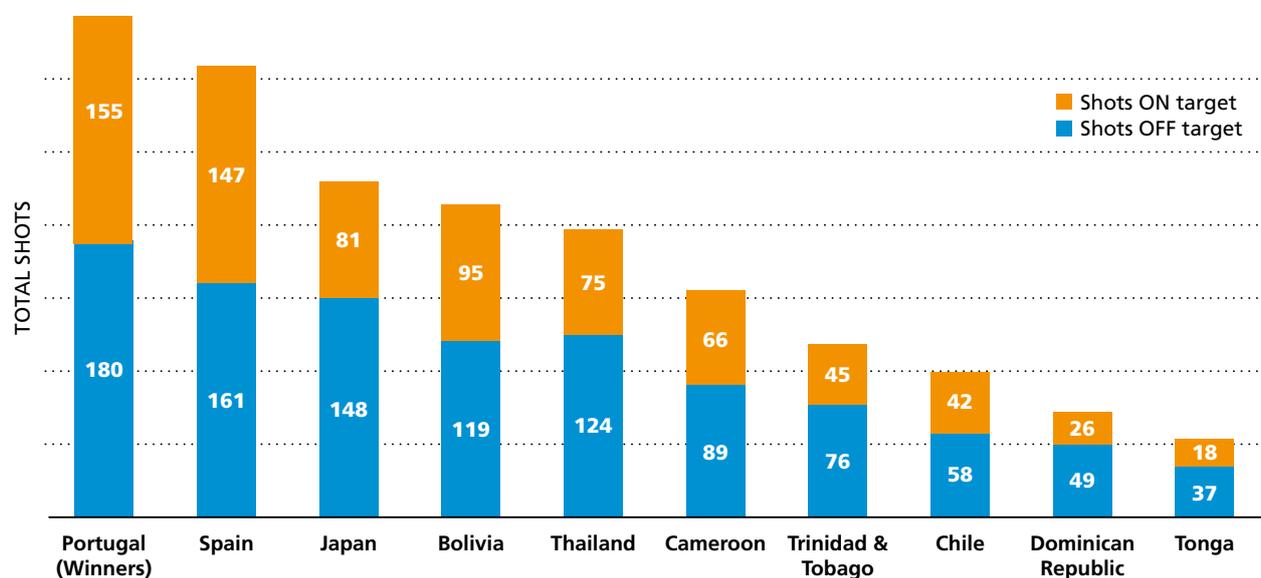


Shooting accuracy

Men's

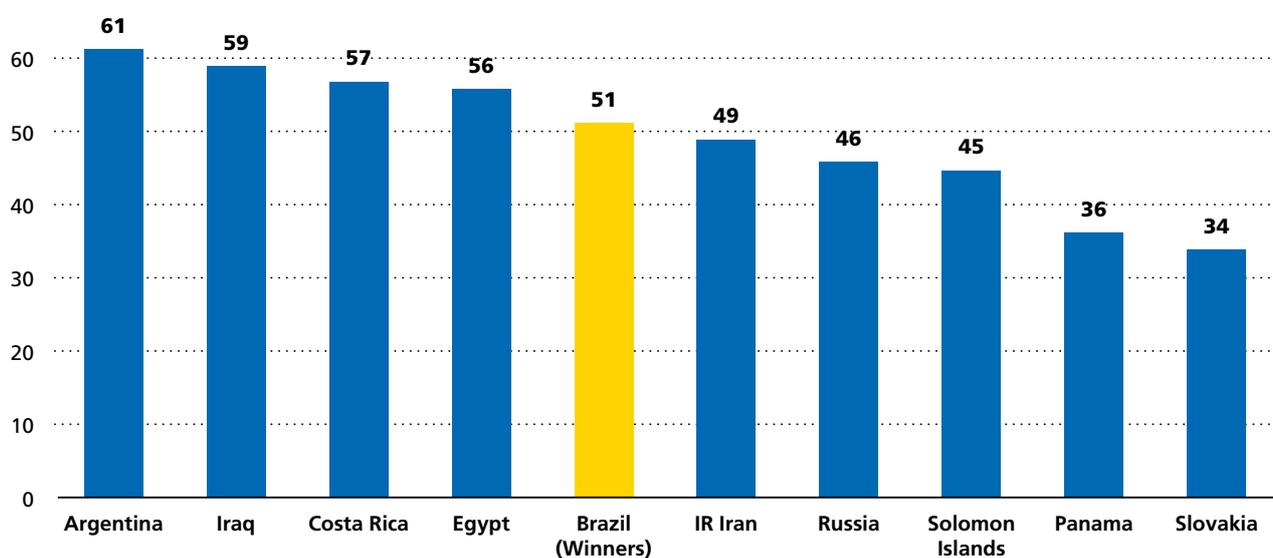


Women's

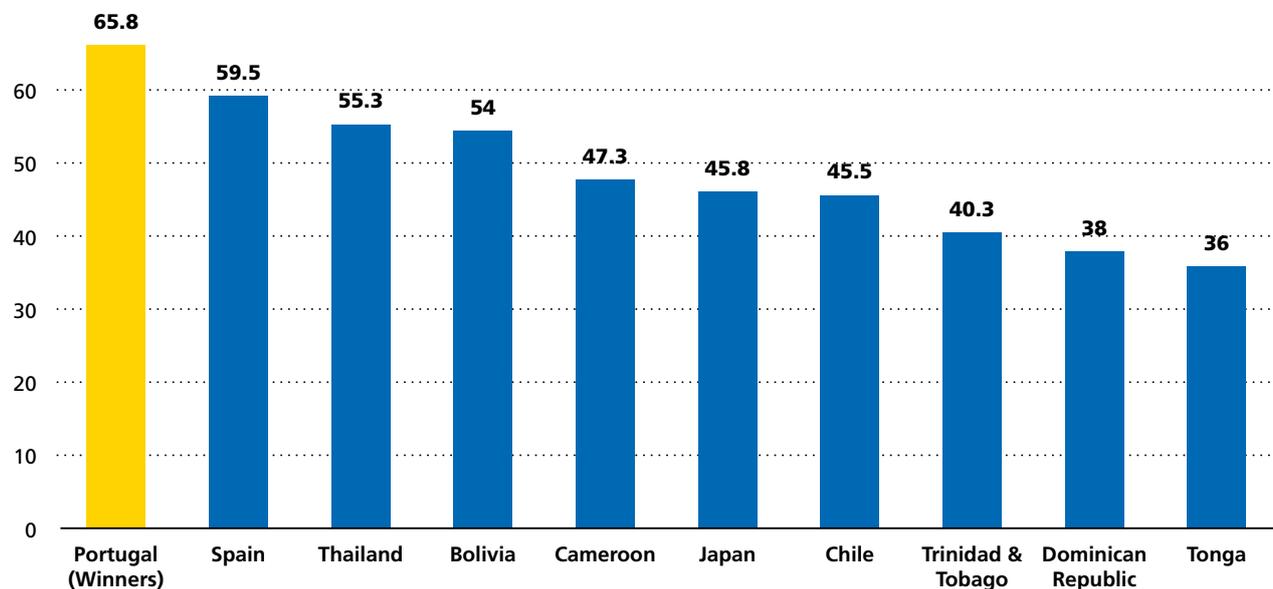


Average possession %

Men's



Women's



ORGANISATION

Doping & Medical

This competition was governed by the IOC testing protocol in accordance with the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations.

Consequently, both an “in” and “out of competition” testing programme was undertaken for all participating teams. This was based upon both random draws and targeted testing.

This procedure sent a strong message that futsal is covered by the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations at all levels for both athletes and athlete support personnel.



Disciplinary

The disciplinary record in this competition should be considered as “good” with “nothing of note” to report.

A total of 66 yellow cards were issued in the 24 men’s matches, with two indirect red cards. There were no direct red cards.

In the women’s tournament, a total of 17 yellow cards were issued in the 24 matches, with no indirect red cards and no direct red cards.

Off the field of play, a total of three incidents were reported with three warnings and one fine issued. This record was consequentially considered to be insignificant.

Member associations are, however, reminded of the need to set an example in behaviour at all levels, particularly at youth level (U-18). Leading by example and setting high standards of behaviour, both on and off the field of play, is a vital hallmark for the developing athlete. The three reportable off-field incidents were all avoidable and one was within the control of team staff, who should be setting an example at this age level. This issue was dealt with by a written warning and a fine.

Given the low ratio of cards issued to matches played, it is not surprising that just 51% of free kicks awarded in the men’s tournament were direct, whilst in the women’s tournament it was 57%.



Attendances

All matches were non-ticket events to meet the IOC principle of making the events open to as many spectators as possible and ensuring that athletes performed in front of full stadiums, whilst encouraging young people to watch new sport formats without having to buy a ticket.

The futsal competition took place at two venues, Tecnopolis Park with a capacity of 6,500 and CeNARD with a maximum capacity of 1,000 spectators.

As expected, Argentina's preliminary stage matches and their semi-final against Brazil attracted capacity crowds at Tecnopolis, with thousands more unable to enter the venue.

Average age of teams



In the women's tournament, Portugal were the oldest of the competing teams with an average age of 18 years. Their youngest player was born in February 2002 whilst their oldest was born in January 2000.

By contrast, Trinidad & Tobago were the youngest team with an average age of 16 years and seven months. Their youngest player was born in December 2003 and the oldest in February 2001.

The youngest player in the competition was 14 years and ten months old, whilst the oldest was 18 years and nine months old, and this appears to have satisfied the objectives of attaining a higher age demographic for the competition.

Looking at the four semi-finalists, Portugal and Spain were the two oldest teams in the women's tournament, whilst Japan and Bolivia were amongst the youngest.

In the men's tournament, IR Iran were the oldest team in terms of average age. Their youngest player was born at the very end of March 2001 and the eldest at the start of January 2000.



In the women's tournament, the largest crowd in the preliminary round was 4,690 for the Bolivia v. Thailand encounter at Tecnopolis, yet the women's matches were enthusiastically supported throughout. The largest women's crowd, however, was for the semi-final between Spain and Japan, with an impressive 6,200 spectators watching the Asians overcome one of the pre-tournament favourites and take their place in the gold medal match.

The youngest team, the Solomon Islands, had an average age of 16 years and five months, with players born between November 2000 and September 2003.

Three of the men's semi-finalists were in the oldest age band, with only Russia in the youngest half.

Goals galore

A total of 226 goals were scored in the women's tournament's 24 matches, an average of 9.42 goals per match, well above the 7.25 goals-per-game average of the men's tournament.

There were no remarkable trends relating to the minutes of play in which goals were scored, and in percentage terms, the timings were fairly consistent across both the men's and women's tournaments.

In both tournaments, there were slightly more goals scored in the second halves of matches than in the first.

In the men's tournament, Argentina had the most shots (253), but accuracy was poor with less than 50 per cent of shots on target, equating to 10.1 shots per goal.

Of the men's medallists, Brazil were the sharpest shooters with 7.3 shots per goal.

In the women's tournament, Portugal amassed an incredible 335 shots with an accuracy of 46.2% resulting in 57 goals scored. This should be considered in the context of an impressive average possession of 65.8%.

MEDALLISTS

Women's



GOLD:
Portugal

SILVER:
Japan

BRONZE:
Spain

Men's



GOLD:
Brazil

SILVER:
Russia

BRONZE:
Egypt

FIFA FAIR PLAY AWARD

The FIFA Fair Play Award was presented to the team in each tournament that showed the greatest adherence to the principles of fair play and recognition of exemplary behaviour that promotes the spirit of fair play and compassion in futsal.

The TSG was responsible for assessing and determining the winner of each tournament award.

Teams were assessed against established criteria in respect of the receipt of yellow cards, indirect and direct red cards, behaviour of players and team officials, respect shown by teams towards the match officials, and the behaviour of the crowd towards both teams.

In addition, the TSG scored teams on their approach to **positive play**, which was defined as

- Playing in a manner which aims to encourage goalscoring opportunities, in contrast to:

negative play, which would result in any of, but not limited to, the following:





- Maintaining possession without a notable intent to create a goalscoring opportunity;
- Continual use of the powerplay with an intent to simply maintain possession;
- Continually defending without an intent to create attacking play (this must be a measured assessment as some teams may not have the technical ability to do anything other than defend against superior technical and tactical teams).

All teams were scored against an established mechanism, and their total scores were averaged across the number of competition games played to arrive at an overall ranking.

In the women's tournament, the FIFA Fair Play Award was presented to Japan.

In the men's tournament, the FIFA Fair Play Award was given to Russia.



FIRST ROUND – Group Stage – Men

Group A							
Date	Match	Referee				Result	
07.10.	Panama v. Iraq	AMARAL MESSA Ricardo, BRA				1-1 (0-0)	
07.10.	Argentina v. Egypt	OLIVEIRA CASTILHO Miguel Duarte, POR				2-2 (0-2)	
08.10.	Iraq v. Slovakia	JELIC Nikola, CRO				5-0 (0-0)	
09.10.	Egypt v. Panama	AL BAHHAR Hussain, BHR				8-3 (3-0)	
10.10.	Slovakia v. Argentina	LEE Po Fu, TPE				0-4 (0-3)	
10.10.	Iraq v. Egypt	MOLINA Diego, CRC				2-3 (0-2)	
11.10.	Slovakia v. Panama	PALMA Valeria, CHI				4-1 (3-0)	
12.10.	Argentina v. Iraq	JELIC Nikola, CRO				1-4 (0-0)	
13.10.	Panama v. Argentina	HNICH Khalid, MAR				2-12 (2-6)	
13.10.	Egypt v. Slovakia	NAZEMI DEYLAMI Gelareh, IRN				2-1 (1-0)	
Rank	Team	MP	W	D	L	GF/GA	P.
1.	Egypt	4	3	1	0	15-8	10
2.	Argentina	4	4	2	1	19-8	7
3.	Iraq	4	2	1	1	12-5	7
4.	Slovakia	4	1	0	3	5-12	3
5.	Panama	4	0	1	3	7-25	1

Group B							
Date	Match	Referee				Result	
07.10.	Costa Rica v. Russia	URDANOZ APEZTEGUIA David, ESP				1-6 (0-4)	
07.10.	IR Iran v. Solomon Islands	BARRERA Jose, SLV				9-2 (4-0)	
08.10.	Russia v. Brazil	HASSAN HASSAN AHMED YOUSSEF Mohamed, EGY				1-6 (0-1)	
09.10.	Solomon Islands v. Costa Rica	VANHAITSMA Lance, USA				6-11 (3-6)	
10.10.	Brazil v. IR Iran	OLIVEIRA CASTILHO Miguel Duarte, POR				4-0 (2-0)	
10.10.	Russia v. Solomon Islands	PERONA Chiara, ITA				10-4 (7-1)	
11.10.	Brazil v. Costa Rica	CURTA Ovidiu, ROU				6-2 (3-0)	
12.10.	IR Iran v. Russia	KOBAYASHI Hiroyuki, JPN				1-2 (0-0)	
13.10.	Costa Rica v. IR Iran	CURTA Ovidiu, ROU				3-9 (3-6)	
13.10.	Solomon Islands v. Brazil	PERONA Chiara, ITA				1-9 (0-5)	
Rank	Team	MP	W	D	L	GF/GA	P.
1.	Brazil	4	4	0	0	25-4	12
2.	Russia	4	3	0	1	19-12	9
3.	IR Iran	4	2	0	2	19-11	6
4.	Costa Rica	4	1	0	3	17-27	3
5.	Solomon Islands	4	0	0	4	13-39	0

FINAL STAGE – Semi-finals

Date	Match	Referee	Result
15.10	Brazil v. Argentina	JELIC Nikola, CRO	3-2 (2-1)
15.10	Egypt v. Russia	HNICH Khalid, MAR	1-3 (1-2)

Bronze Medal Match

Date	Match	Referee	Result
18.10	Argentina v. Egypt	URDANOZ APEZTEGUIA David, ESP	4-5 (3-1)

Gold Medal Match

Date	Match	Referee	Result
18.10	Brazil v. Russia	HASSAN HASSAN AHMED YOUSSEF Mohamed, EGY	4-1 (1-0)



FIRST ROUND – Group Stage – Women

GROUP MATCHES – Group C								
Date	Match	Referee					Result	
07.10.	Spain v. Bolivia	KOBAYASHI Hiroyuki, JPN					9-2 (3-0)	
07.10.	Trinidad and Tobago v. Thailand	RILEY Antony, NZL					0-14 (0-6)	
08.10.	Bolivia v. Tonga	VELIKANOVA Irina, RUS					7-2 (4-1)	
09.10.	Thailand v. Spain	BERG AUDIC Victor, FRA					2-6 (0-4)	
10.10.	Tonga v. Trinidad and Tobago	AMARAL MESSA Ricardo, BRA					5-7 (2-1)	
10.10.	Bolivia v. Thailand	SANCHEZ Roberto, CUB					6-4 (2-2)	
11.10.	Tonga v. Spain	HNICH Khalid, MAR					0-8 (0-7)	
12.10.	Trinidad and Tobago v. Bolivia	NAZEMI DEYLAMI Gelareh, IRN					2-5 (1-2)	
13.10.	Spain v. Trinidad and Tobago	AMARAL MESSA Ricardo, BRA					16-1 (10-1)	
13.10.	Thailand v. Tonga	MORENO SARABIA Tayana Raquel, VEN					9-1 (3-0)	
Rank	Team	MP	W	D	L	GF/GA	P.	
1.	Spain	4	4	0	0	39-5	12	
2.	Bolivia	4	3	0	1	20-17	9	
3.	Thailand	4	2	0	2	29-13	6	
4.	Trinidad & Tobago	4	1	0	3	10-40	3	
5.	Tonga	4	0	0	4	8-31	0	

Group D								
Date	Match	Referee					Result	
07.10.	Dominican Republic v. Cameroon	NAZEMI DEYLAMI Gelareh, IRN					1-9 (0-4)	
07.10.	Chile v. Portugal	CURTA Ovidiu, ROU					2-15 (0-6)	
08.10.	Cameroon v. Japan	PENA GARCIA Andres Daniel, ARG					2-6 (0-2)	
09.10.	Portugal v. Dominican Republic	MOLINA Diego, CRC					14-0 (5-0)	
10.10.	Japan v. Chile	LORENZO Leandro, ARG					4-1 (1-1)	
10.10.	Cameroon v. Portugal	VILLALBA Rafael, PAR					0-6 (0-3)	
11.10.	Japan v. Dominican Republic	MORENO SARABIA Tayana Raquel, VEN					6-2 (4-2)	
12.10.	Chile v. Cameroon	VILLALBA Rafael, PAR					0-5 (0-2)	
13.10.	Dominican Republic v. Chile	LEE Po Fu, TPE					3-3 (2-0)	
13.10.	Portugal v. Japan	VILLALBA Rafael, PAR					2-0 (1-0)	
Rank	Team	MP	W	D	L	GF/GA	P.	
1.	Portugal	4	4	0	0	37-2	12	
2.	Japan	4	3	0	1	16-7	9	
3.	Cameroon	4	2	0	2	16-13	6	
4.	Chile	4	0	1	3	6-27	1	
5.	Dominican Republic	4	0	1	3	6-32	1	

FINAL STAGE – Semi-finals

Date	Match	Referee	Result
15.10	Portugal v. Bolivia	SANCHEZ Roberto, CUB	16-2 (6-1)
15.10	Spain v. Japan	VANHAITSMA Lance, USA	2-3 (1-0)

Bronze Medal Match

Date	Match	Referee	Result
18.10	Bolivia v. Spain	PALMA Valeria, CHI	0-11 (0-6)

Gold Medal Match

Date	Match	Referee	Result
18.10	Portugal v. Japan	NAZEMI DEYLAMI Gelareh, IRN	4-1 (3-0)

