

This study involved an analysis of the effectiveness of Kenya's top men's field hockey teams in using offensive tactics of passing and shooting with the drive, push, flick and scoop, corners and penalty corners in competition. The objective of this analysis was to identify the strengths and/or weaknesses of the teams in executing the offensive tactics on the basis of which the teams' coaching programmes may be adjusted to optimize their performance.

The study focused on the observation and analysis of pre-recorded matches of Kenya's national hockey league for the year 1995/96. Out of a total of 114 league matches played on the astroturf surface, a sample of 30 (26.7%) matches was randomly selected for the study. Match analysis instruments that have been developed and tested for the observation of play activities in field hockey were used to collect data on the selected offensive tactics. To ensure accuracy in data collection one trained research assistant was used. The winning and losing teams were compared on their execution of the offensive tactics to determine if winning resulted from the teams' effectiveness in executing these play actions.

Data collected was analyzed using frequencies, percentages and means. The t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used to determine if there was a significant difference between winning and losing teams in executing the offensive tactics.

From the findings, it was noted that the teams that won matches achieved higher numbers and percentages of passes using the drive, push, flick and scoop than the teams that lost. Additionally, the winning teams realised higher proportions of successful shots with drive, push and flick, corners and penalty corners. However, there was no significant difference between the teams that won and those that lost in their effectiveness in shooting with the scoop. These findings indicate that winning in Kenya's national league matches was determined by the teams' effectiveness in executing the offensive tactics of passing using the drive, flick, push and scoop, shooting with the drive, push and flick, corners and penalty corners.

From the study, it is recommended that Kenya's top men's hockey teams should boost their chances of winning league matches by polishing more on their passes using the drive, push, flick and scoop and shots with the drive, push and flick. Furthermore, the teams should be made to realise that successful execution of corners and penalty corners in league matches determines a team's successful performance and as such, they need to carry out incessant and appropriate practice of these play situations in a game.