

A STATISTICAL REVIEW OF RUGBY UNION GAME FOR AGE 13 TO 15 IN JAPAN

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Keywords: rugby football, game analysis, modified game

Introduction

Japan Rugby Football Union (JRFU) has adopted a modified game (junior rugby) for age 13 to 15. This game was designed to increase ball in-play time and to promote more running and handling skills and to reduce contact plays in a match. Laws of junior rugby, regarding number of players and lineout players, duration of a match and scrum, differ from 15 a side laws. The reason why JRFU has introduced junior rugby is clear, however, game profiles of junior rugby have never been investigated since the adoption. The purpose of this study was to present statistical features of junior rugby.

Methods

A manual notation system was used to gather data from digital video recording of the 1st junior rugby tournament in 2010. Seven games were analyzed. The scoring points, modes of scoring, sources of try, frequency of pass, kick, ruck/maul, lineout, scrum and restart were observed. Chi-Square test was used to identify significant differences among phases that preceded each of the tries.

Results & Discussion

Overall statistical features of junior rugby are shown in Table 1. Inspection of the results reveals some similarities to those of top league games with some exceptions specially regarding the frequency of rucks and mauls. Significant differences were found on the number of phases that preceded each of the 43 tries ($p < .05$). In fact, 53% of the total tries were scored at first phase. This finding indicates that, before the try was scored, not as many rucks and mauls were formed as they are in top league games.

Conclusion

The junior rugby matches contain lower frequency of ruck/maul than top league games .

Table 1. Statistical summary

Average points per game	37.4
Average tries per game	6.1
Percentage of points from tries	82%
Conversion success rate	51%
Tries from own lineout	9%
Tries from own scrum	21%
Tries from PK/FK	16%
Tries from turnover/handling error	40%
Tries from opponent kicks	14%
Average ball in-play time	16m04s
Average passes per game	102
Average kicks per game	13
Average ruck/mauls per game	44

References

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