What creates a “show” in sport, particularly handball?

From Patrice Canayer’s preliminary analysis, trainers react depending on the level of game, men’s first and second leagues, women’s first league and make suggestions to develop the sporting “show” in handball.

Preliminary Analysis: What creates a “show” in sport?

A certain number of remarkable aspects have to be part of the “show” to strengthen its spectacular aspect:

- The notion of suspense is important, it makes reference to the balance of chances between the two teams, to the balance of the battle of wills; also for the purpose of this report, for example in a cup competition where a first league club meets an inferior club, which makes an almost compulsory performance making reference at this moment to the notion of challenge.

- The movement of the players and the ball constitutes an important attraction by the speed, quality and variety of original and successful aspects.

- The physical confrontation between players is also to be underlined by knowing that this confrontation has to present “extraordinary” character. The physical report sets out the importance of an appropriate and legible fight.

- The publics understanding of what is taking place on the ground with regards to rules, scoring, to the tactical progress. We talk about a culture of reading the game by the spectators. Understanding will multiply the interest tenfold.

- The dynamism and the continuity of the game are also important and have to seek the attention of the spectator by avoiding “quiet” moments.

- The clarity of the trainer’s management with the players, the evolution of game strategies over the course of a match in particular circumstances of the game (numeric inferiority or superiority) are to be valued.

- The remarkable technical skills and the “beautiful” skills expected by the public are sometimes not very effective, but spectacular. It raises the contradiction between the spectacular aspects of the game and the necessary rigour for the result. Does the intention to win exist when playing an aesthetic game? Too often victory is associated with notion of fight and bitterness.

- The players, in a broader sense meaning the referees, the table, the benches and the spectators contribute to the spectacular aspect of a sporting event.

The following parameters are to be taken into account according to achievable objectives to develop resources generated by handball:

- Improve the economical aspect by increasing income; attract more spectators into the sports halls.
– Develop the impact of handball on the TV market, obtain more televised handball programmes (live or delayed)

– Increase income by making more people pay to view a handball match. It has to be established that there is a price for entertainment

– Increase presence in advertising market

In what way can the trainer, in his role, intervene regarding the improvement of the spectacular aspect of handball?

The advanced ideas are actually summaries of debates that took place between trainer’s representing all levels of the game.

**PRESENTATION / DRESS**

– Initiate a protocol of the teams’ presentation at the beginning and end of a match, uniform and quality. Reference to the National Handball League and Denmark for girls

– Improve dress, particularly in female teams. Link dress to femininity, fashion. Variety of colours and cuts, the luminosity of fabric

– Name of the player on the shirt

– Work on the attire of all involved. Coloured uniforms in accordance with roles and tasks (delegates, referees, speaker, secretary, floor cleaners)

**RULES**

– Try to influence the rules which leave too much room for interpretation by the referees. For example passive play, steps, etc...

– Physical confrontation; penalise the defence on back faults; make the defender accept defeat by the attacker. At the end of a fast break when the defender is behind the attacker. Strongly sanction all contacts in this situation. In particular, sanction the second defender, who intervenes as the first defender is defeated, for unsportsmanlike conduct

– The officiators of the match have to make the rules respected in a clear way by using the entire range of penalties that are available to them

**EVOLUTION OF THE GAME**

– To be more inventive in offensive and defensive strategies for entertainment value, volume, activity, intensity and dynamism

– To consider the value of the “spectacular” goals marked by locatable sectors, for example outside 9 meters, wing or by a specific move, e.g. a twisted rebound ball

– Develop physical and driving qualities of players (speed, strength) and manage the recovery periods in the game in the best way. Establish time-outs (2 by halftime and by team) in the 1/3 or the 1/4 time of the game
– Improve the tactical knowledge of the players and the game. This is to make it understandable to the spectator

– The attire of the manager; avoid the current tendency that aims at “disinfecting benches” to authorise a more demonstrative attitude of the manager in respect for ethics and rules; recognisable clothing

**PROGRESS OF THE GAME**

– Decrease / reduce / remove the time dedicated to wipe the court after a player falls. Change shirts at half-time. Work on tissues. Wipe court as the game continues in the other half of the court. Give responsibilities to the goalkeeper to wipe their areas when the ball is in the other half

– Is the number of 14 players on the match report too much?

– Introduce point bonuses for the important scores, for example +35 goals given or -20 goals taken. Or for differential of 5 + goals with the opponent

– Create the event around the match, coupled with the results of the championship in other playing halls

– Improve the speaker’s commentary, define his moments of commentary, the contents; announce the goal scorer, the number of goal marked by this player since the beginning of the match, use the statistics at halftime to inform spectators

– Improve the ball colour to realise better trajectories and increase the ball charm

– To improve the handball court in such a way that it is seen as the most important and the most visible court

– Make public participate

**CHAMPIONSHIPS**

– Propose championships that are more clear for all officials and which facilitate regularity of the time schedule. A match every week or every 2 weeks. No too long a break, or then it is necessary to invent an activity for players who are not part of the French national team. It is not normal that the local handball activity stops, it entices spectators away towards other forms of sport entertainment

*How do we maintain the level of public interest?*

– Increase the number of matches

– Increase the suspense, develop the stake in the matches multiplying the formula of play-off in which all the teams are concerned (high, average and low level)

– Organise more matches with direct elimination; these meetings will leave the team with an obligation to win

– Stabilise the formula of the championship to allow the spectators to get acquainted and to better follow the progress and the strong moments of the season
Quality for the European Cup through various forms of competitions / classifications

These propositions aim to make handball more spectacular and susceptible to move the spectators in the direction of halls or televised broadcasts. They are to be discussed between the main protagonists and should contribute to the opinions voiced during the discussions on handball “assizes”.

François Rongeot
National Trainer