8th EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FOR WOMEN
FYRO MACEDONIA 2008
QUALITATIVE TREND ANALYSIS

Wolfgang Pollany
EHF MC Member / AUT
Introduction

The event took place in the cities of Skopje and Ohrid from December 2nd to 14th.

The set up and the organisation in Ohrid was good, in Skopje it was excellent due to the fast of a brand new hall just a few steps away from the main hotel.

The commitment and the passion of all the volunteers and the other people was outstanding, due to bad weather conditions there were some problems arising in Skopje but all the hosting people fought very hard to overcome it.

The hall in Skopje was packed in the matches of the host team, unfortunately the other matches could not find top response in terms of audience. Nevertheless the public interest was massive, there was a huge number of journalists accredited and a lot of TV stations broadcasting live. For more details I refer to the specific media report.

As usual at the start of a new Olympic cycle many teams had rookies in their squad and due to the fact that there was a World Championship for the men coming up soon the same applied to the team of referees and officials.

In spite of this the level of the matches was very good and we saw a lot of very close matches and only very few were decided by big margin.

All in all the event for sure was a step forward into even more popularity of handball and it was a great contribution to the effort to stabilize handball as the number one indoor team game in Europe.

Many thanks and congratulations to everybody who worked hard to achieve that.
Some statistical data of interest

Table 1

Table of results of the European Championships with 16 teams in the final round

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DEN</td>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>NOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>DEN</td>
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<td>ESP</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>RUS</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>RUS</td>
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<td>GER</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>ROU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>YUG</td>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>CRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>MKD</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>POL</td>
<td>HUN</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>AUT</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>AUT</td>
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<td>UKR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>DEN</td>
<td>DEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>SCG</td>
<td>MKD</td>
<td>BLR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>SRB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>NED</td>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>SRB</td>
<td>FRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>NED</td>
<td>AUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>BLR</td>
<td>BLR</td>
<td>SLO</td>
<td>POR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the positions in women handball in Europe are pretty clear. Three teams established themselves in the first row: NOR, RUS and GER.

Behind them ESP, CRO and ROU seem to be on the way up, as for MKD it is too early to rate exactly.

DEN, HUN and AUT seem to be out for the moment and struggling to stabilize their performance.

SWE, SRB, UKR and BLR are competitive for the lower half of the table only.

FRA seems to undergo a specific four years cycle and POR was the only newcomer in the tournament.
Table 2 (Teams 1-12 only)

Development of the scores in preliminaries and main round

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total average</th>
<th>Preliminaries</th>
<th>Main round 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; haltime</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>32-23 (14-11)</td>
<td>29-20 (15-10)</td>
<td>34-27 (14-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>24-22 (11-12)</td>
<td>25-23 (13-13)</td>
<td>24-22 (10-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUS</td>
<td>28-23 (12-11)</td>
<td>26-22 (12-10)</td>
<td>30-24 (13-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER</td>
<td>29-25 (15-21.5)</td>
<td>30-27 (16-13)</td>
<td>29-24 (14-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>29-28 (13-13)</td>
<td>28-24 (13-12)</td>
<td>30-32 (13-14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>30-29 (15-14)</td>
<td>29-30 (14-14)</td>
<td>31-28 (16-14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKD</td>
<td>27-29 (14-13)</td>
<td>28-28 (14-13)</td>
<td>25-30 (14-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>24-27 (14-13)</td>
<td>25-26 (14-14)</td>
<td>22-27 (10-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>22-22 (11-10)</td>
<td>21-17 (11-6)</td>
<td>23-28 (12-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>28-29 (13-13)</td>
<td>27-27 (12-14)</td>
<td>29-30 (14-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEN</td>
<td>24-27 (12.5-13)</td>
<td>25-25 (13-13)</td>
<td>23-28 (12-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLR</td>
<td>27-29 (14-15)</td>
<td>26-24 (13-12)</td>
<td>29-33 (15-17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the score balance only the first 6 teams managed a positive difference in the total average.

The score in the second halftime of the main round parted the successful teams and the not successful.
The first four teams had a clear positive score and went to the semifinals.
MKD, HUN and DEN had a very clear set-back in this section of the matches.
BLR had their defence specialist injured after the preliminaries which resulted in a clear breakdown of their defence performance.

Table 3

Match dynamics (all 47 matches)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Draw</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-5</th>
<th>6-9</th>
<th>&gt;10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>5 (10)</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td>3 (6)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main round</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>3 (7)</td>
<td>6 (7)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7 (4)</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the tournament had a lot of balanced matches.
15 matches were tied or won by 1-2 goals difference and another 15 were won by 5 goals or less.
17 matches were decided by more than 6 goals and 7 out of those were matches of NOR.
After their starter draw NOR won two matches by 6 and five matches by more than 10 !!!!
Qualitative Analysis Euro 2008 Fyro Macedonia

And – as already indicated by table 2 – most of the important matches were decided in the second halftime, more than 50% of the matches were as close at 2 goals or less at intermission.

Table 4

**Rankings in scores, makes, international matches and number of rookies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Goals shot</th>
<th>Makes</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>Rookies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>RUS</td>
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<td>GER</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKD</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEN</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLR</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the goals and makes the 6 matches until the end of the main round were taken.
For the number of IM the median of the teams was used, because of statistical reasons.
The number of rookies represents the number of players without IM at the start of the tournament.
The * with the team of MKD means, that most probably the number of international matches has to be considered higher due to appearances of some players in the team of former YUG.

**Statements:**

1. The crucial factor of top success is the defence performance. The semifinalists are ranked 4,1,3 and 5 in the makes.
   ROU and CRO were very effective in the offence play but suffered from bad defence play (8 and 10 only).

2. The Scandinavian teams played good defence (4, 2 and 6) but SWE and DEN failed due to weak attack play (12 and 10).

3. Three out of the four most experienced teams made it to the semifinals, RUS was the only exception.

4. A change of generations has taken place in the “Russian” teams (RUS, UKR, BLR) and HUN, who had 5 to 6 new players with them, SWE and DEN have to consider the next step.

5. Looking at the first string the semifinalist represented large numbers of international appearances: NOR more than 940, GER 980, RUS still more than 600 and ESP stand at more than 425.
**General trends**

In the following the most common trends in defence and offence set-play will be discussed more in detail with reference to the respective video clips (when available).

In this discussion only the teams participating in the main round will be respected.

1. **Defence systems**

It seems that we have reached another step in the development of the set-play defence. In the old days the figures of the concepts made it very clear how the defence formation worked and how the style of the cooperation of the players was.

The second step was when we had to define in between the figures which style of the respective formation was played. French 5-1 is very much different from the late Russian 5-1 and both are far away from old style 5-1. The same applies in the different interpretations of 6-0, where Scandinavian, Spanish and German 6-0 all are far away from the old orthodox one, which makes it impossible to characterize a formation by mere figures.

Some examples for this:

**5-1 GER**

Refer to video clip GER 5-1

![Diagram of 5-1 GER set-up](image)

- Basically a 5-1 set up, but will never look like that.
- With LOERPER (#10) playing very deep, it will look a lot like a 4-2.
- If there is any transition to a 4-2 by the offence, WÖRZ (#7) will fall back to the line, therefore the set-up will look like the asymmetric Russian 5-1.
- In any case JURACK (#4) will play very aggressive and go for steals and early fast break.
- With LOERPER playing on BR, JURACK will stay at the line – but not always. This will be a matter of individual agreement between the two players, when to switch.
6-0 BLR
No video clip

From a 6-0 set-up, KURCHANKOVA (#14) will go deep in the style of „Red Indian“. She will move according to the situation and cover a wide area in a total irregular way making it impossible to predict the action. Sometimes she will even go for short 5+1 and then return back to the line.

6-0 ESP
Video clip ESP 6-0

In this variation of 6-0 all the four players in the central area will go deep. IR and IL will go up to 9m, BR and BL will go to 10m or even more. According to the situation there will be anticipating move in order to screen ball flights as shown in this sketch.

In case of an attack player sweeping in, this player will be accompanied and after switch the respective defender will return to her basic position.

These are just some examples of a development that took place in all the teams. If we give basic formations for the teams now in the set-play there are much more individual interpretations than it was some years ago.
So we have to take into account that if we talk about 8 teams playing 6-0 as the basic formation we have to split into

- BLR, UKR - individual solutions by single players
- HUN, RUS – more or less orthodox
- SWE, DEN, NOR – Scandinavian style, but BR and BL more deep than before
- ESP – specific style.

Four teams played 5-1 as the basic conception, but the same applies here as well.

- GER – very specific version
- ROU – basically French style 5-1
- MKD – orthodox version
- CRO – very deep, sometimes going into 3-2-1.

Alternative formations were 6-0 (ROU, CRO), 5-1 (RUS, HUN) and 5+1 (CRO, DEN) in specific situations.

2. Goalkeeper styles and trends

In general the old fashioned basic systems are still in operation in terms of the task distribution between defenders and goalkeepers. There were the
- short – long side of the goal system
- throwing arm system
- Scandinavian system which is a mixture depending on the kind of shot fired.

But in terms of the goalkeepers the situation is even more unclear than it is in the defence systems. The only general line is that Scandinavian goalkeepers play Scandinavian style – mostly. In certain cases after consultation with the defence even some of them will do variations. As for all the others they all play very individual and they do have a lot of specific agreements with their defenders. One of the main reasons for this might be seen in the transfer situation. Many of the goalkeepers are quite experienced and playing abroad, some even played in different clubs in different countries, so they had to arrange themselves with different systems and interpretations.

Adding to this we had a situation in this tournament with a good number of very experienced goalkeepers facing many young strikers thus giving them quite some advantage. It could be seen during the course of the tournament that because of scouting and the gain of experience the extreme high figures of saves of the first days decreased. Still we had very fine appearances of the goalkeepers and some promising youngsters in this position. And still the performance of the goalkeeper is a decisive factor for the result of the game in most of the matches.
3. Fast break and fast throw-off

Since the turnover play of all the teams has improved tremendously the conceptive fast-break has disappeared. All the teams play fast-breaks with single players after a steal and with 4-5 players running straight lanes if they win the ball by saves or blocked shots.

Fast throw-offs were hardly seen, only the teams of HUN (just for initiation) and GER (until termination) showed this as a regular element that was played frequently.

4. Offence set-play

The basic statement is that team tactics are out, all the successful teams used to build their offence play on group tactics 2-2 or 3-3.
In these moves the shot of the backcourt player will be fired over the lineplayer or through a gap created by this player.
This is a style that is taken from men’s handball, the team of FRA was the first one using it very frequently in the 1992 OG in Barcelona.
There are fast jump shots as well as forearm shots and even lay-away shots for executing this particular goal shots. That means that we have a good development in terms of the shooting skills of the backcourt players in female handball since we can find three or four players in every team with that capability.
The second very common action is straight breakthrough after a diagonal pass following a crossing or double-crossing.

This is a general finding, there is only a clear difference in the preparation of this shooting situation and according to the nations I will talk about a “Northern” (NOR, SWE, DEN, GER) and a “Southern” (ESP, ROU, CRO, MKD) style of preparation.

The “Northern” preparation is done by crossings, double-crossings or sweeping in of a backcourt player.

“Northern” 1
Video clip Northern 1

After an initial crossing the LB will be in a central position for a shot over the LP.
At the same time the RB and the PM will be ready to receive the ball and go for penetration.

Additional solution: LP moves with the ball flight, either for creating a shot position for RB or to receive the ball.

After a re-pass LB to PM continuation by breakthrough or by pass to LW.
**Remark:** In the video clip the team of GER has done the crossing already before the free throw and so the shot of JURACK is executed after a fast give and go move with LOERPER only.

"Northern" 2  
Video clip NOR DX+KM

Double-crossing starting from the PM with the RB playing a short pass to the LP in the end.

Alternative solutions will be shot of the RB over the LP or pass to the PM who will go for breakthrough.

If this penetration by the PM after the diagonal pass might be prevented by the OR, a short pass to the LW will follow.

"Northern" 3  
Video clip NOR add player

In a short-handed situation NOR brings in an additional court player to the position of RB, because RUS starts playing 5+1 against LARSEN (#14).

This player sweeps inside for the line after passing the ball to the PM (LUNDE #9).

The PM passes on the LB who can take the ball in spite of being pressed and moves fast towards throwing arm.

A shot of the LB is prevented by the defence but still she succeeds in passing the ball to the LP for the shot.
The “Southern” style preparation is done by 1-1 actions and continuation by parallel thrust. Sometimes the initiating move can be sweeping in of a wing player as well, but again we will find 1-1 plus continuation.

“Southern” 1
Video clip ROU Off2

The move starts with a 1-1 towards throwing arm to fire over LP. If this does not work, continuation follows with parallel thrust until the wing position.

This is the basic move from which passing to the LP might come from every position.

The finish might be breaktrough as well as fast jump shot or forearm shot.

“Southern” 2
Video clip ESP Off1

After a short crossing with the LB the LW passes the ball on to the PM and sweeps in for the line.
After a short parallel thrust of PM and RB the RB (righthanded) passes on to the LW at the line.

Alternative: In some matches the LW passed on to the RW in the corner.
5. Cooperation between coaches and referees

According to all the details that have been mentioned in this paper and the fact that the average time of the attacks was around 20 seconds the cooperation between coaches and referees must be thought over in two very important aspects at least. First of all the set play in this tournament turned out to be too hectic, therefore we do need a new definition of the so called “passive play”. Because, if a team really tries to score and just fails to succeed, the term “passive play” is not correct. So we have to find a different term for the delay of play and the denying of terminating the attack play. Second both sides must take actions for a real cooperation in the future. Following the findings of this tournament and previous observations in men’s tournaments it has to be stated clearly that for the good referee of the future rules and regulations is just too little.

The referees must learn about tactics and philosophy of the game and train actively in cooperation with teams. They will have to change habits and even the positioning at the pitch in order to match the requirements of the more and more changing set-ups of the teams. One of the most important tools of the referee of the future will be anticipation and this can only be achieved by constant training and active cooperation with coaches and teams. On the other hand the coaches must learn more about rules and regulations and they have to keep themselves on line with the guidelines that are worked out for the referees. This will enable them to work out strategic concepts in accordance to refereeing and will lead from the present “hide and seek” behaviour to a real kind of cooperation.

Referees cannot play without coaches and players – coaches cannot win titles without referees.

Dr. W. Pollany – February 2009
The Top Teams 12 – 1

BELARUS

8th WOMEN’S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

BLR - Belarus
After 6 Matches

Coach: CHAROVAROV Konstantin

Time outs: 12  Avg. Time outs: 2.0

| No | Name            | M | P | Total Goals | Shots | % 7mP | 3mP | 2mP | 3mC | Wing | BT | FR | 9m | VC | WC | 3M | 2x3 | 2x2 | RX | AR | RT | TO-TP | ST | BL | BB | TP |
|----|----------------|---|---|-------------|-------|-------|------|-----|-----|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1  | SAFONOVA Alexya| 4 | 1 | 107/115     | 100   | 0    | 1/3  | 0/1 | 1   | 1   | 1   | 3   | 1  | 2  | 26 | 6  | 10 | 4   | 2   | 3   | 3  | 23:26:36 |
| 2  | PANEWYLA Hanna | 5 | 1 | 146/155     | 108   | 0    | 1/3  | 0/1 | 1   | 1   | 1   | 3   | 1  | 2  | 28 | 6  | 10 | 4   | 2   | 3   | 3  | 23:26:36 |
| 4  | KAUFENHOLTHJA Anastasiya | 6 | 8 | 3/3 | 13/15 | 5/6 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 53:40 |
| 5  | MAHLINA Iryna  | 6  | 20 | 46/43     | 5/5   | 100  | 1/2  | 2/4 | 2/3 | 10/22 | 1  | 10 | 6  | 4  | 5  | 1  | 2  | 22:39:47 |
| 6  | HADHUTSITSE Ineta | 4 | 4  | 5/5 | 1/3 | 4/7 | 2/2 | 2/3 | 15 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 53:22 |
| 7  | BENDRIN Taniara | 6 | 11 | 29/38     | 1/3   | 2/2  | 4/7  | 2/2 | 3/15 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 53:22 |
| 9  | PLATANOVA Natalia | 6 | 24 | 31/77     | 22/26 | 1/3 | 1/2 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 4/5 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 5:12:01 |
| 10 | BULAYA Yulya    | 5 | 7  | 12/58     | 1/2   | 1/1  | 1/3  | 4/5 | 1/1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1:16:17 |
| 11 | ARTSHUKOVICH Liiva | 6 | 18 | 53/34     | 1/4   | 25/22 | 2/1 | 1/2 | 2/5 | 11/38 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 2:18:20 |
| 12 | SOKOLOVICH Yelena | 2 | 2  | 7/7  | 6/6 | 1/1 | 1/1 | 1/1 | 1/1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1:16:17 |
| 13 | HADHUTSITSE Ineta | 6 | 16 | 38/42     | 1/2   | 2/2  | 0/1 | 2/3 | 3/2 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 2:40:07 |
| 14 | KUROHNOVA Aleksey | 6 | 24 | 46/52     | 7/12  | 5/5  | 3/3 | 0/10 | 3/15 | 2 | 1 | 14 | 4 | 11/4 | 8 | 1 | 4:26:59 |
| 15 | DRONAVIA Iryna  | 6 | 12 | 14/86     | 2/2   | 8/10 | 2/2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3:30:13 |
| 16 | ABRAMOVICH Aiena | 6 | 5  | 7/7 | 3/3 | 1/1 | 1/1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3:21:33 |
| 17 | MLEKAYA Tatiana | 4 | 6  | 8/6 | 3/3 | 1/1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2:41:24 |
| 18 | HRTHORDIEVA Valentina | 17 | 17 | 42/43 | 0/1 | 0 | 2/2 | 1/2 | 2/2 | 1/2 | 1 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3:38:35 |
| 19 | Totals          | | | 164 | 335 | 49 | 15/26 | 58 | 29/49 | 19/31 | 13/20 | 39/43 | 50/166 | 17 | 2 | 31 | 0 | 74 | 26 | 50 | 50 | 6:00:00 |

Defence set-up

Basic set-up was a 6-0 with #14 playing very deep, sometimes irregularly even.

Single switch, only if #5 played in defence – double switch.

Dr. W. Pollany – February 2009
Later in the tournament #6 got injured, after that they played with #9 and #8 in the centre of the defence. No second system was used in defence.

**Defence performance (average per match)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The defence allowed fewer shots on target than most of the other teams but the performance of the GK was the weakest of all. High number of steals, average number of blocks. In total the team suffered from the performance of the GKs.

**Offence set-up**

Regular 3-3 with frequent transition to 4-2 by the playmaker.

#17 played both wing positions.

**Offence performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4.5 / 5.5</td>
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</table>

Weak percentage in shooting in general, the performance of the fastbreak was better than average, the turnover play was average, but they had a negative quota in both parameters of penalty shooting.
Offence moves

Transition 3-3 to 4-2 vs 6-0 def.
PM rushes in straight and after that a fast diagonal pass follows from RB – LB.
LB will have a couple of options as indicated.

Play 6-5
After short crossing with LB the PM goes for 6m.
Finalizing will take place from the line always, no shots from distance.
Fastbreak concept

BLR was the least experienced team by far. They had an average of 16 international matches (Med. = 13) and 6 of the squad had no IM at all at the start of the ECh. Even more they lost their defence specialist after a few matches, this meant quite a blow to their defence play. Taking this into account the team showed good potential and it has to be mentioned that they were under very good coaching.

The only squad with a full team concept.

PM #14 will go to the centre of the court and receive the ball. She will start dribbling to the position of RB.

The RW (in this case right-handed #17) will sweep inside shortly for the line.

RB will cross behind her and go for the position of RW.

LP #9 aims for the line with full speed as well as LW does for her position.

O/D switch and #11 aims for her LB area crossing behind the PM.

Solutions as shown, sometimes continuation to LW after a pass PM – LB, but this will only take place if the opponents will close the other options by good turnover-play.
DENMARK

8th WOMEN'S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

DEN - Denmark
After 6 Matches

Coach: PYTLICK Jan

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<th>Offence</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Team | Totals | 145 | 288 | 50 | 24/34 | 71 | 17/19 | 25/47 | 14/20 | 19/28 | 46/149 | 20 | 1 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 72 | 33 | 46/58 | 20 | 10 | 39 | 6:00:00 |

Defence set-up

Skandinavian 6-0 with doubleswitch.
The defence seemed less determined than in the past, the impression was that they reacted more than to put pressure on the opponents offence.

No second system in operation, only in the match with NOR they played 5+1 against #14 (Larsen) but with little effect.
In 6-5 they switch to 5+1 like most of the others.
In 5-6 situations they will play 5-0.

Dr. W. Pollany – February 2009
Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average number of shots on target, GK below average, lowest number of blocks and second lowest in steals.
As mentioned above already, the performance in defence was below expectation; given the fact that the team consisted of pretty experienced players this was surprising.

Offence set-up

Regular 3-3 with frequent substitutions. Established play with long crossings and permanent switch of the backcourt players.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 / 48</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>4 / 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>3.5 / 5</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The negative quota in fastbreak performance is very surprising for a team from DEN, but it corresponds with the weak performance in defence which of course limits the performance in fastbreak-play.
Offence moves

The well established basic moves of all the Scandinavian teams, in this case I picked some crossing without the ball, followed by another crossing with the RB and a corresponding move of the LP towards the ball.

Play 7-6
In this case the additional player will go for the line.
After crossing PM – LB the LB will aim for the shot from the central position.
If one of the defenders IL or IR will tackle the shot, the respective player on the line will receive the pass.

Crossing and diagonal pass vs. 6-0
Crossing by PM and RB, followed by a diagonal pass to LB #22 (T. Troelsen), who will receive the ball in full move and fire a fast forearm shot over or close to her LP.
These moves are tailor-made for young T. Troelsen and her ability to run very fast and fire fast shots from full motion.

Fast shot vs. 6-0
With the LP in the very center, the PM will play a (T. Troelsen) who will fire a fast forearm or underarm shot through the gap created by the LP

Main variations in the play 6-5
1-1 Initiation of the PM against throwing arm side.
Pass to LB who will shoot over the screen or to LW.
If the chance for the shot will not be good enough, pass to LW by LB.

5-6 vs. a 5-1 defence.
From a fake crossing move with the LB the PM will release a pass for a „Kempa“ with LW.
The bad result of DEN was probably the biggest surprise of the tournament. Especially since they appeared with a pretty experienced squad. The average of the IM was 64 and the Median still 43 and – they were the one and only team without rookies in their line up beside POR who finished last.

The impression was that this was not Danish Dynamite anymore; they played much slower and a lot less determined in defence than in the past.
UKRAINE

8th WOMEN'S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

Ukr - Ukraine
After 6 Matches

Coach: YEVTSUHENKO Leonid

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<td><strong>31</strong></td>
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Defence set-up

Orthodox 6-0, #9 played a little more deep than the other ones.

No alternative system, in case of 6-5 they most likely played 5+1.
If shorthanded, the system will be 5-0.
Qualitative Analysis Euro 2008 Fyro Macedonia

Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The defence allowed more shots on targets than most of the other teams, the performance of the GK was below average, very low number of steals but highest number of blocks. All this indicates that their defence operated somewhat passively, in most of the situations they just seemed to react instead of putting pressure on the offence.

**Offence set-up**

- Regular 3-3 set up with variations in the back row only.
- Two shooters (#17 and #4) and three 1-1 specialists.

**Offence performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 / 50.5</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td>4.5 / 5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The shot efficiency was among the best of the tournament, a result of the style they played obviously. Offence play was based upon 1-1 actions strictly followed by breakthrough. So they had quite a lot of shots from close range. Fastbreak and turnover play were both average but still the quota is negative. More penalty shots than average due to the style of offence play.
Offence moves

Transition to 4-2 by LW
This simple move of an inside sweep of the LW following the flight of the ball they played vs. 6-0 and 5-1 identically. RB will fire either over the twin-block or through the gap created by the LW and the LP.

Play 6-5
Crossing of PM and LB followed by approach of the PM to the line. LB will shoot over the LP, but the most common solution was the re-pass to the PM. RB does support move. The concept can be extended until the RW for shooting.

UKR was the second least experienced team. They had an average of 33 IM with the Median standing at 22 only. 5 of the squad came to the tournament without any international appearance before.

They had to play NOR and ESP in the group and after that they suffered from the injury of their most effective offence player #9 (Shymkute).

Their defence play as well as the offence basic concept was very old fashioned, almost antique, but their penetration game based upon the individual skills of the backcourt players in 1-1 was very effective and spectacular.
In order to continue with this style in case of shorthanded play they played 5-6 without LP even.

The team is pretty young in total and they seem to be on a good route.
Defence set-up

There is only this defence system, no alternative is played.
In case of 6-5, sometimes change to 5+1.

Swedish 6-0 of course with switching of specialists.

Most of the time single switch #18 / #15 or, with #15 playing already - #18 / #6.

Sometimes double switch as indicated.
Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
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<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They allowed the lowest number of shots on target (together with NOR and ESP !!!) and the performance of the GK was better than average. Blocking was good but the number of steals was the lowest of all teams.

All this indicates that SWE played quite a solid defence and the weak point was their offence play.

**Offence set-up**

3-3 with a lot of substitutions in the first row and a good number of variations in the back row.

This might be a cause for the inconsistency in the offence play of the team, but it can also be the result – hard to decide.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22 / 46</td>
<td>3.5 / 5</td>
<td>1 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lowest number of goals and the second lowest number of shots come together with a disastrous quota in penalties.

The turnover play was quite ok but could not equalize the catastrophic performance in the offence play.
Offence moves

Swedish basic vs. 6-0

A very complex move, starting with the PM doing a frontal crossing with the LP and continuing to another crossing without the ball with the LB. The RB has received the ball from the LP and passes to the LB thrusting through the centre. Sometimes LB will shoot but in most cases she will continue with a pass to PM aiming for breakthrough. If the wing defender tackles, continuation to LW follows.

Transition to 4-2 vs. 5-1

Orthodox inside sweep of the LW with a countermove by the LP. Parallel-thrusting in the back row, finalized by good 1-1 of the RB between OL and BL.

Effective vs. all sustaining 5-1; totally ineffective vs. GER who pulled back the point covering the winger and approaching the RB by the BL immediately.
Give & Go vs. 5-1

Simple move with the LB threatening for a shot over the LP and the PM running behind the point.

The same applies like before – effective vs. AUT and MKD, useless vs. GER.

Give & Go vs. 3-2-1

Almost identical move, quite effective in the match with CRO.

6-5

After crossing with the LB, the PM will play the ball to LW. With the re-pass she will thrust and fire a fast diagonal pass to the RB (righthanded #15). Breakthrough or continuation to RW.
Team SWE was quite experienced; they had an average in IM of 61 and – even better a Median of 53. In the squad they had 3 rookies like many other teams.

They played well in defence but their offence play was not effective enough. Maybe their basic move was too complex and the alternatives became too schematic. It seemed that they had one strong line-up and the substitutes were not consistent enough. On the other hand even the first string showed a lot of ups and downs in their performance.
Defence set-up

6-0 orthodox style.
Single switch between PM and defence specialist.
In the match vs UKR 5+1 from min 45 on and 4+2 for the last 10 minutes of the game even. This was necessary because the flat zone defence could not stop the 1-1 specialists of UKR. In case of playing 6-5 they shifted into a 5+1 set-up.

Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The performance of the GK was the second lowest of all teams thus effecting an average defence performance in total, although they had good figures in steals, blocking and in shots on target.

Offence set-up

All the initiative is started by the PM, substitutions will take place on the right side of the offence mostly. Therefore the offence play becomes somewhat stereotype thus resulting in the second least effective of all the teams.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 / 51</td>
<td>2 / 4</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4 / 6</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Very weak offence percentage and the weakest fastbreak-play of all the teams. The turnover play was average and the penalty shot balance equal. In total the offence play was disappointing.

**Offence moves**

---

**Basic move vs. 6-0**

Crossing between PM and LB followed by a shot of the LB over the LP. If the defence will not allow the shot, the LB will continue with a pass to RB or, more likely, back to the PM who will aim for breakthrough.

---

**Two times crossing vs. 6-0.**

The PM will go for a wide crossing with the LW, followed by a pass to the LB moving to the centre. A diagonal pass LB to RB follows. The RB will go to the centre with the ball again, starting a long crossing with the LB who will shoot over the LP from the position of the RB.
All the moves of the team required long running lanes of the players and in all the moves 4 or 5 players even were involved. This gave a lot of problems in terms of coordination which resulted in one of the two problems explained in the following:
If the move was played slowly the defence in many cases was able to move with the attacking players and therefore could close the gaps.
If the team tried to speed up there was a sharp decline in the precision of the attack play resulting fumbles and thus delay of the play or turnovers even.

All this seems to be the explanation for the low percentage of the offence play of the team HUN.

Double-crossing vs. 6-0.
The PM starts the crossing move with the RB, followed by a wide crossing between RB and LB.
The LB aims for the shot over the LP in the central position.
If this shot is not possible, the diagonal pass goes to the PM who will aim for breakthrough in the RB position.
This move might be continued up to the RW.
Fast throw-off

Team HUN was the one and only team that played a clear concept in the fast throw off frequently. The LP passes the ball to the LW and moves to the line. The LW starts dribbling and passes the ball back to the RB, after that she takes the position at the line. RB passes on to LB and this player passes on to the fast moving PM who goes for finishing from the wing position. If the angle seems to be too small for the shot the PM will bring the ball back to the LP. Sometimes the PM will pass the ball on to the LP directly according to the situation.

Like in all the play the decision either to finish the move or to cut it and reorganize the positions and continue with a regular 3-3 set-up lies in the hand of the PM solely. The move was started quite often but in most of the cases the PM decided to cut and continue with set-play.

Team HUN was quite experienced, they had an average of 56 IM and a median of 41 still, but on the other hand they had 5 rookies in the squad and this perhaps might be a reason for the low number of substitutions they used.

The offence play was very complex as mentioned already and it seemed very difficult to restart the flow if there was a cut in the game.

The biggest problem seemed to be the dependency upon the decision making of the PM only. Because of that all the other players did not take responsibility in decision situation and shifted all of this load towards their PM. Because of that the defending teams could concentrate on the PM in the first place and that resulted in the low overall effectiveness of the offence play of the team in the end.
**FYRO MACEDONIA**

8th WOMEN’S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

**MKD - Macedonia**

**Coach:** GLIGOROV Vladimir

**Time outs:** 11  
**Avg. Time outs:** 1.8

| No | Name               | M | P | Total Goals | Total Shots | % | All Goals | Shots | 7mP | 3mP | 6mC | Wing | BT | FB | 9m | YC | RC | 2M | 2v2 | EX | AS | R7 | TO/TF | ST | BS | P7 | TP |
|----|--------------------|---|---|-------------|-------------|---|-----------|-------|-----|-----|-----|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | NAJMOŠKA Bijana    | 1 | 1 | 1           | 1           | 100% | 1         | 0     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 13:58
| 2  | MECEVSKA Robertina | 6 | 10| 12 83      | 1            | 79%  | 1         | 2     | 4   | 1   | 6   | 4    | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 4:19:30
| 3  | KOCEVSKA Natasja   | 5 | 10| 6 17       | 1            | 100% | 1         | 1     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1    | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 3:10:09
| 4  | JOGJEVŠKA Elona     | 4 | 1  | 3 11     | 0 1 1       | 0%   | 0         | 0     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 42:43
| 5  | KRESGA Dragica     | 6 | 20| 28 71      | 5/6 83 5/6 2/3 4/4 2/5 2/4 | 1      | 8   | 2   | 3/3 | 6   | 2   | 3:07:36
| 6  | RADULOVIC Valentina | 6 | 1  | 3 33 1/1 100 0/2 | 1     | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 43:39
| 7  | PODGOŠKA Natasja   | 6 | 30| 33 100 0/2 | 2     | 2   | 2   | 2   | 2   | 2   | 2   | 2:26:12

**Defence set-up**

**Orthodox 5-1**

The main pillars remained unchanged most of the time.  
#14 played both back positions.  
Single switch for the offence specialist.
With the only exception of the match mentioned above the team remained in the 5-1 set-up. Shorthanded they used 5-0 and in man advantage they played 5+1 frequently.

**Defence performance (average per match)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The defence allowed more shots on target than average, the performance of the GK was average in total, they had a good number of steal but the lowest in blocking.
In the end MKD finished with the highest score of makes against of all teams.

**Offence set-up**

Like in the defence set-up the team MKD kept the key positions unchanged in offence as well most of the time.
The substitutes came only to the pitch if it seemed inevitable.
The first string was very much competitive, but they had two problems: either they would fall back because of weariness or they would fall behind because of the lower quality of the substitutes.

### Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 / 51</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>5.5 / 6.5</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The offence percentage was average but the turnover play was pretty bad. They were one of only four teams reaching a positive balance in penalty shots. In total the offence play was average, but they had the worst performance of all the teams in the main round in the second period of their matches.

### Offence moves

#### LB 1-1 vs. 6-0

Very simple move based upon a shooting faint of the PM in the centre, followed by a fast diagonal pass to the LB who will shoot after a fast switch of the move towards throwing arm side.

#### Parallel-thrust vs. 6-0

From a different set-up the PM will start with throwing faint again, the LB aims for he shot in the centre over the LP and with the defence approaching she will continue with her regular move towards throwing arm side. This will open a chance for breakthrough for the RB (righthanded!!). If OL tackles – continuation to RW.
Clearing the floor for RW
Fake shot of PM, followed by an inside move of the RB against throwing arm side. LP will follow this move and pull the defence. Fast pass to the RW offering a 1-1 situation with a lot of space.

Transition of LW vs. 6-0
LW sweeps in bringing the ball to LB who thrusts. With a fast pass to the PM, she will fire through the gap, because the defence is outnumbered.

Moves in 6-5

Give&Go
Simple give and go move between PM and RB, supported by a side block of the LP against the BC.
The wing defender cannot fight the righthanded RB because then the RW will be all alone.
The team of MKD was very experienced and the first string was pretty strong and competitive.
The figures they had in IM of course were misleading since this figures showed the appearances in the team MKD only.
The problem of this team was the clear gap in the performance between the first string and the substitutes.
The same applies to the moves shown in the sketches: Very effective if played by the first 6, but much less convincing if substitutes had to play.
This explains the overall performance with the very close matches in the preliminaries and the set back in the second halftime of the matches of the main round.
If this team manages to delay the change of the generations for two more years they might have a lot of potential for the next big events.

Clearing the floor for LW
The LB will thrust between OR and BR, forcing the OR to approach.
After the pass to the PM, the whole defence has been pulled away from the LW which gives all the chances for the long diagonal pass PM-LW.
CROATIA

8th WOMEN’S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

CRO - Croatia
After 7 Matches

Coach: ZOVKO Zdravko

Time outs: 12  Avg. Time outs: 1.7

Defence set-up

3-2-1 set up.

The main system, played either flat or deep, according to the situation and the opponent.

Double switch for LP and PM.
The basic 3-2-1 system could be changed in the character between flat (almost like a 5-1) and pretty deep. The alternative 6-0 gave them the chance to change the style completely and by this provoking some troubles for the offence. Only the 5+1 seemed to be no good because obviously the team GER was absolutely well prepared for the situation.

Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the figures are average, two things have to be mentioned. First the performance of the team increased constantly during the tournament and second they played very fast thus resulting in a very high score on one side but a very high figure of makes on the other side as well.
Offence set-up

Their offensive play was based upon the individual abilities of the PM in the 1-1 situation and the fast flow of the ball combined with surprising fast shots.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 / 56</td>
<td>6 / 9.5</td>
<td>5 / 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
<td>2 / 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They had the highest number of shots and the second highest score. They played many fastbreaks and they were one of only four teams with a positive balance in the fastbreaks. They had the highest figure of penalty shots due to the fantastic 1-1 performance of their PM and they had the best penalty shot balance of all the teams by far. The offence play was among the best of the tournament.
Offence moves

Move vs. Swedish 6-0

The PM will go to the LB-position with the ball and play the pass to the LW.

The LW will start a 1-1 action and this will be continued in a parallel thrusting of the PM and the LB who had moved to the centre without the ball.

Move vs. orthodox 6-0

PM in the position of the LB from the start.

LW starts 1-1, continued by a doublefaint of the PM. If IR will move for support, short pass to the LP follows.
In matches vs a 6-0 defence they played the regular double-crossing move in the backcourt (see HUN – offence moves) additionally. This move they played either side and finished with breakthrough as well as continuation to the wing.

Team CRO was quite experienced with an average of 55 IM and a median of 59 even, thus showing a compact squad. This was underlined by the fact that they had 1 rookie only in the team.

They started the tournament quite shaky but improved their offence game match by match and they played a much better main round than the preliminaries.
Defence set-up

Orthodox 5-1 set-up

Few substitutions only.

#2 was injured in the second match.
The 6-0 was not satisfactory, so they played their 5-1 most of the time. This 5-1 could be changed from a very flat one with the point on 8m only to a pretty aggressive one with all the players approaching from 7m. The stability of the team suffered from the injury of #2 MAIER early in the tournament, who could not be substituted at all.

Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The performance of the GK was among the very best of the event although the team allowed the highest number of shots on target of all the competitors. Steals and blocking were both average. After a very good start in the preliminaries Rou suffered from a massive set back in their defence performance in the second half time in the main round. In this section the defence performance of ROU was the weakest of all the teams participating.

Orthodox 6-0

This system did not work at all. They used it vs. ESP and you can see by the number of alternatives that the coach was not happy with it.
Offence set-up

Their offensive play was based upon the individual abilities of the players in the 1-1 situation and the continuation with parallel thrust. Beside that they used short crossings with the ball and screening.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 / 54</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>4.5 / 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They had the second highest number of shots and they were one of four teams only to score more than 170 goals in 6 matches. Their penalty shot balance is average, but the fastbreak balance is disappointing because of bad turnover play.
Offence moves

Basic move vs. 6-0

The move starts with a 1-1 towards throwing arm to fire over LP. If this does not work, continuation follows with parallel thrust until the wing position.

This is the basic move from which passing to the LP might come from every position.

The finish might be breakthrough as well as fast jump shot or forearm shot.

Crossing vs. 6-0

Wide crossing of the PM with the ball for LB who will aim for the shot over the LP in the centre.

If tackled by IL, continuation to RB who will aim for breakthrough.

Might be continued until the RW if necessary.

Crossing, different position of the LP.

Identical move, but according to the different position of the LP, the finish will be from 6m.

Will not work well vs. flat 6-0 or Spanish 6-0.
The team of ROU was somewhat inhomogeneous which can easily be demonstrated by the figures of the IM: the average of the team was 50, but the median as low as 29, with four rookies in the team.

They started with a very impressive performance at the preliminaries but they fell behind in the main round due to a weak defence performance in the second halftime of all the matches.

Their biggest problem was the fact that they had some moves and set-ups that were well trained and very effective, but they lacked of alternatives.

And it was lousy luck of course to lose their top right winger after a few minutes of the first match of the main round. The resulting shock for the team was one of the main reasons for losing this match to ESP.

Since this team has a lot of young players high potential is to be recognized for upcoming tournaments.
Defence set-up

![Diagram of defence set-up]

Basically a 5-1 set up, but will never look like that.
With LOERPER (#10) playing very deep, it will look a lot like a 4-2.
If there is any transition to a 4-2 by the offence, WÖRZ (#7) will fall back to the line, therefore the set-up will look like the asymmetric Russian 5-1.
In any case JURACK (#4) will play very aggressive and go for steals and early fast break.

With LOERPER playing on BR, JURACK will stay at the line – but not always. This will be a matter of individual agreement between the two players, when to switch.

This specific defence was the basis for the successful appearance of the team GER.
Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
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<th>Blocks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although they allowed a high number of shots on target, due to the performance of the GK which was the best of all teams, they managed to keep the number of makes low. On the other hand this flexible system gave them the top figures in steals and in fastbreaks.

**Offence set-up**

![Diagram of Offence set-up]

Regular 3-3

All the positions were covered by two specialists. Only LOERPER (#10) played all the backcourt positions. This was a different approach from that of most other teams.

**Offence performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 / 52.5</td>
<td>7 / 10</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4.5 / 6</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GER had the second best offence percentage due to their very good fastbreak play. Their turnover play and the penalty shot balance was average.
Offence moves

Crossing vs. 6-0

The PM will go for a wide crossing with the ball and the RB will aim to shoot over the LP in the centre.

If the defence can control this situation, the RB will play a fast pass to the running LB. The pass LB – LP follows.

If IR will move to the centre in order to fight the LP, the LB will just penetrate.

Outnumbering vs. 5+1

The player pressed will go for the centre and lay off the defence thus pulling the defender with her.

Now the RB (left-handed) will run to the centre with the ball finding some options:
- Tackle by BC – pass to the LP
- Tackle by BR – pass to the LB
- No tackle – shot or breakthrough
GER was well prepared for a 5+1 system in order to stop JURACK (#4). The respective countermoves they played with great efficiency.

The team was very experienced, standing at an average of 95 in IM and a median still at 88. They had the second highest figures in that respect and they brought two rookies with the team only.

In total they played a very good tournament and deserved it well to go for the semis. There they met highflying ESP and lost a close game after a great fight. With this tournament GER established themselves very well among the first line of women handball.

Unfortunately they lost their top scorer JURACK before the bronze medal match which meant a massive blow against their chances to defeat RUS and clinch the medal.
**Initial remark:** It has to be mentioned as a preface that the characteristics of the performance of the team RUS as well as the style of coaching represented the approach you would most likely find in a test tournament.

Coach TREFILOW used 8 different set-ups in defence play and still 6 different ones in the offence play. Therefore in the following you will only find a sample of those ones that were used with some consistency.
Defence set-up

6-0 flat, closing the line.
This was the most common set-up in defence with short approach only against shooters and with a very tight formation at 6m.

Double switch for the PM and the main striker.

Orthodox 5-1
In this configuration the PM plays OL in defence, LW goes for point. This is a very traditional set-up.

They will play it flat or deep, either way is possible, the flat one seemed more efficient.

The double switch will lead to a 4-2 offence, if a 3-3 is planned, #18 will not switch.

Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The defence performance was pretty good in total. The GK were among the best, the same applies for the steals, blocking was average. But when you sum it up the defence of RUS was the third in the ranking of makes.

In spite of all the frequent substitutions and changes in the set-up, they played with great consistency, especially in defence.
Offence set-up

Regular 3-3
Frequent substitutions in all the positions.
Three wing players only, #11 plays both wings.
In the back-row a mix of 1-1 specialists, shooters and universal players.

4-2 set-up
RUS was the one and only team using a 4-2 set-up with two LPs.
In this set-up they played with 1-1 specialists in the second row,
fostering pick and roll actions or breakthrough supported by the LP.

Offence performance

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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4 / 6</td>
<td>3 / 4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The offence performance of RUS was pretty good as well. The shooting percentage was among the best ones and they were one of only three teams having a positive balance in both the offensive parameters. They were positive in the fastbreak play – turnover play calculation and in the penalty shot balance as well.
Offence moves

Besides that RUS used to relay on the 1-1 brilliance of their PM (they brought in three of them) and their ability in using pick and roll and bounced passes to the LP.

The team was pretty inhomogeneous since they had an average in IM of 50 but a median of 32 only. And they had 6 rookies with them, both LPs for instance.

In spite of all that the team played with great stability, in defence even more than in offence and – they were the best team of all in the crucial second half time in the main round matches, the period that decided about the participation in the semis in the end.

4-2 vs. 6-0

The PM in the position of the LB will run to the centre and receive the ball in full move.

Continuation according to the reaction of the defence players.

Play 6-5

Breakthrough move of the PM towards throwing arm side supported by a pick of the LP.

Continuation till the RW or direct diagonal pass by the PM.
SPAIN

8th WOMEN’S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

SPAIN

Defence set-up

Specific style 6-0

In this variation of the 6-0 IR and IL will play rather flat on 6-7m only.

BR and BL will go deep 8-10m and, if necessary, they will follow the ball carrier to the middle.

In this case the set-up will look like a 5-1 shortly.

With the player passing on, they will return to their basic position and the whole formation will shift accordingly.

ESP never changed the defence set-up.
This was their one and only system and it was extremely well trained obviously, because all the players did know exactly what to do in every situation. Funny enough – the two defence specialists were both rookies.
They play it very physical in 1-1 and with excellent legwork.

Dr. W. Pollany – February 2009 - 58 -
Defence performance (average per match)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GK saves</th>
<th>Shots on target</th>
<th>Steals</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lowest figure in shots on target together with NOR which compensates the performance of the GK which is below average. Second highest in steals as well as in blocking. These figures prove that the Spanish defence worked extremely effective as well in terms of putting pressure on the attack as well as protecting the own goal. As a matter of fact they had the lowest number of makes of all the teams and they played this kind of effective defence with great consistency throughout the whole tournament.

**Offence set-up**

Regular 3-3

Two clear PMs (#10, #2) and a very clear right-handed specialist in the position of RB.

There was a clear first string and the substitutes came for support only. (Exception: PM).

#20 played both wings.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 / 44</td>
<td>3.5 / 5</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
<td>3.5 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first figures demonstrate the high level of discipline that was shown in the offence play of the Spanish team. With a minimum number of shots and a very good percentage they controlled the game, playing always very close to the defence, fast and with excellent shooting discipline.
Offence moves

Basic move vs. 6-0

The LP is placed in the very centre.

Constant parallel thrust on 8m only until the defence is outnumbered.

If one of the defenders fails to tackle, every player is always ready for finishing or passing to the LP.

Inside sweep of LW vs. 5-1

The LW sweeps inside with the ball flight, all the backcourt players do parallel-thrusting in a countermove.

The right-handed RB will go for breakthrough.

This move is played vs. 6-0 as well.
"Kempa" vs. 6-0

Very nice move with both PMs on court and the main striker in RB position.

After the inside move and the pass to the PM the 1-1 specialist lays off the ball and receives the pass in full outside move.

LW receives the ball in the outside move and jumps for the pass to the PM in the air.

"Scissors" vs. 5-1

The PM goes for the ball and continues with a pass to the LP in a countermove from the ball.

According to the tackle of the BR the LP passes on to the LB for the breakthrough.

This move was played to either side.

6-5 vs. 5-0

Just a 1-1 running faint by the PM supported by a pick of the PM.

The LB will start for parallel thrust. Continuation will follow if necessary.

The move was played to either side.
The team ESP based their success on brilliant teamwork both in defence as well as in the offence play.
In defence they played very physical with fantastic legwork and with utmost determination. They tried to prevent the opponents from shooting with all effort thus causing massive stress on the attackers.
In offence they moved in quite closely and managed to pass the ball on in the very last moment before the defence could nail them down. By this they played on and on and on with great discipline until they really found a good chance for scoring.

The team in total was quite experienced, although they only had an average of 40 IM, but their median stood at 57. The reason for these figures was that they had three rookies in the team and a few other players with few matches only, but the core of the team had played together for quite some time.

This resulted in excellent teamwork and well rehearsed moves in offence and defence that worked quite efficient.
From this emerged a good deal of self confidence thus leading to a highflying rush through the tournament.
NORWAY

8th WOMEN'S HANDBALL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
EURO 2008

Cumulative Statistics

NOR - Norway
After 8 Matches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach: BREIVIK Marit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Time outs: 9 | Avg. Time outs: 1.1 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>All Goals / Shots</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Goals, Shots, %</td>
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<td>Foul</td>
<td>Wng</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>AAMODT Ragnhild</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LØKKE Heidi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NGESTYOLD Torje</td>
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<td>BREIVIK Kari Inge</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>LARSEN Tanja</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12/14</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>12/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<td>7</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Goals, Shots</th>
<th>2/3</th>
<th>3/9</th>
<th>1/1</th>
<th>3/4</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2:27:38</th>
<th>42:23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Defence set-up

Swedish 6-0

The regular Swedish 6-0 system, BR and BL somewhat more aggressive than in the orthodox style.

NOR did not change the defence system and they had no reason to do so.
They showed very good teamwork and all the players knew exactly what to do on their respective position, even when they just came in as substitutes.
They played very tough and physical at the line but with very good anticipation at the same time.

Dr. W. Pollany – February 2009 - 63 -
Defence performance (average per match)

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<th>GK saves</th>
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</table>

Top performance of both the defence and the Gks. Fewest shots on target allowed, good number of steals, good number of blocks. The defence obviously put a lot of pressure on the attackers, allowing few shots on targets only, they had a very good coordination with the GK and they were constantly going for steals as well.

**Offence set-up**

Regular 3-3

A clear first string is given but besides that there is a lot of rotation.

But even with the substitutes the flow of the games remains unchanged.

Offence performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals / Shots</th>
<th>Fastbreak G / S</th>
<th>7m G / S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32 / 53</td>
<td>8 / 10</td>
<td>4.5 / 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>2 / 3</td>
<td>3.5 / 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Highest score of all the teams and an absolute unique position in terms of fastbreak play and turnover play. The balance in penalty shots is positive as well. The outstanding performance in the fast play in either direction marks the position of NOR in this tournament where they represented a class of their own.
Offence moves

Basic move vs. 6-0
Wide crossing with the ball between LB and PM bringing them back to their original positions.
The PM will continue with a fast diagonal pass to the penetrating LB.
If the OR comes up early to prevent the breakthrough the PM will launch the diagonal pass to the LW immediately.

Doublecrossing vs. 6-0
Doublecrossing in the backrow, finished with a pass to the LP in the centre.
No numbers because it was played with any string of players.
The team of NOR played on a level beyond all the others. They only struggled in their opener vs. ESP, but after that they represented a class of their own. They were top in all parameters and did not show a weak point.

The team was very compact and experienced. They had an average of 85 in the IM and a median of 75 still, which shows that their core team was very experienced. They had two rookies with them only.

The teamwork and the cooperation in the team was outstanding and the readiness of all the players to take over initiative and responsibility was unique among the teams of the tournament.

Additional player vs. 5+1

Transition of the additional player to a 4-2 set up from RB.

The main striker will go for the ball and receive it from the PM.

Now she starts a long diagonal run to the position of RB and plays a short pass to the LP.

Move vs. 5+1 DEN

With the main striker pressed away, this player moved to the centre.
At the same time the LP positioned herself between OL and BL.

The move starts with a short approach of the RW, passing to the RB immediately.
The RB swings inside and from this move she plays the ball to the LP.

Support move by the LB is necessary.
Some final remarks

1. More and more elements of male handball are transferred to the women game.
   - Team moves disappear one by one, the dominant tactical elements are group tactics 2-2 or 3-3.
   - Shots are fired as fast jump shots or forearm shots over the LP.
   - The turnover play has improved tremendously, therefore the fastbreak concepts are based on single or group fastbreak, team concepts have vanished.
   - The GK-play has developed, it has become more individual and flexible.
   - Scandinavian teams will bring an additional player whenever shorthanded and sometimes in specific situations as well.
   - Coaching has become more task oriented and less emotional with many nations.
   - Many teams play with righthanded players on the position RB in the first string, even if they have a lefty available. It seems that the switch has become a tactical element.

2. Specific findings
   - Some teams have wing players who are capable of playing either wing.
   - Most of the teams have one or two defence specialists, some switch the defence specialist with the PM in the offence.
   - Score runs of one team and then of the other one are still very common.

3. Weak points
   - Although the international attention was great, many matches suffered from a lack of spectators.
   - The performance of the referees was below expectation, analysis and solution of this problem are in progress.
   - The preliminary groups were imbalanced, B and D turned out to be stronger and closer than the other ones.
   - In case of an injury it seemed unlikely for the teams to compensate the elimination of a player of the first string.

The new format with more rest days seemed to be an advantage for the level of the tournament overall.
Of course this was a special situation due to the fact that there were two venues only available for the matches but in the future this fact has to be taken into consideration.
In total it was a great event with a high number of good quality matches and with some surprising results as well as promising teams and players for the future.

Women handball obviously is on a very good way, so let us look forward to even more attractive development in the future.