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Design of a Screening and Training Programme for Young People with High Abilities in U-14 Women's Volleyball

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Date read: 30 October 2017

Abstract

In recent years there have been numerous major advances in the sport of volleyball, and it is especially challenging and complex to determine who is part of what is considered the “sporting elite”. The screening and training stage of young people with high sporting abilities in junior categories is crucial and one of the most significant and relevant parts of any programme geared towards their training and development on a personal, collective, human and technical level.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this thesis was to design a screening and training programme for young people with high abilities in volleyball in the U-14 women's category. In order to do this, the main performance factors of an elite volleyball sportswoman, including physiological, technical and tactical and psychological ones, were identified along with others directly associated with performance such as agility and hand-eye coordination. Many of the components of these factors can be evaluated in a U-14 women's player, although other circumstances or dimensions such as education in values for the athlete should also be considered.

The Screening and Training of High Abilities in Volleyball (DeFACaVo) programme was designed following the quoted references in which physiological factors were addressed using the Beunen-Malina-Freitas method to estimate the height which the adolescents will have in their adulthood; Lince software was used to analyse the technical and tactical elements during matches and/or competitions; and the relevant sections of the Questionnaire of Psychological Characteristics related to Sports Performance (CPRD) were used for psychological factors. Information was additionally included about whether the player had played other sports. As for the factors which show whether the player is appropriately educated in values, Lince software was used to analyse her behaviour in terms of fair play, justice and sportspersonship (both positive and negative) during matches and/or competitions.

A report was drawn up on the player using all the results derived and which also included her personal details (name and surname, date of birth, place of residence, etc.) and her sporting details (club, years of playing volleyball, sporting category to which the club belongs, etc.). This information was used to effectively gauge which players had high abilities to play volleyball in the U-14 women's category, taking into consideration for this purpose the assessments made by various experts (academics, researchers, athletes, coaches, etc.) to validate the programme and its instrumental developments.

Keywords: volleyball, high sporting abilities, U-14 women's category, sports training, sports screening, education in values

Editor:

© Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de la Presidència
Institut Nacional d'Educació
Física de Catalunya (INEFC)

ISSN: 2014-0983

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Section:

Doctoral Dissertations

Original language:

Spanish

Cover:

New Olympic Sports
for Tokyo 2020. Surf.
Photo: Gabriel Medina (BRA)
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beach 2018 WSL Championship
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