

Peer Review

Review of: "FIFA World Cup 2022 Qatar Corner Kicks: An Analysis on Effectiveness and Match Context"

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This study presents a detailed analysis of the tactical and technical characteristics of corner kicks observed during the 2022 FIFA World Cup, examining their effectiveness and influence on match dynamics. Given the significant role set pieces can play in deciding the outcome of football matches, a rigorous examination of corner kicks, a frequent set piece opportunity, is highly relevant to understanding contemporary football strategies and performance. The study's focus on a major international tournament provides a rich dataset for analysis. A significant strength of this research lies in its comprehensive examination of a large number of corner kicks (570) using a sequential notational approach. This systematic method of data collection allows for the detailed recording of various parameters associated with each corner kick, providing a solid foundation for quantitative analysis. The subsequent descriptive statistical analysis effectively summarizes the observed patterns and provides key metrics, such as the goal conversion rate and the influence of corner kicks on match status. The study effectively identifies and highlights key tactical and technical elements associated with more effective corner kicks. The finding that deliveries into the central zones in front of the goal (PA1/2) are associated with the highest number of goal attempts and goals provides valuable tactical insight for attacking teams. Similarly, the observation that direct out-swinging deliveries generate more goal-scoring opportunities offers a specific technical preference that coaches and players can consider. Furthermore, the analysis of defensive strategies employed during corner kicks is another strong point. The study's differentiation between mixed zonal dominance and mixed individual dominance structures and their respective associations with goals conceded and goal attempts provides practical insights for defensive organization. Understanding the trade-offs between these approaches (e.g., fewer goal attempts with mixed individual dominance but requiring more defensive involvement) is crucial for

optimizing defensive tactics. The identification of common actions during corner sequences, such as defender interventions and short passes, and the zones where action development most frequently occurs (W1/2 and PA1/2) and where successful teams often operate (AFGM), adds further layers of detail to the analysis. These findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic nature of corner kick situations, encompassing both attacking and defending perspectives. However, there are several opportunities for improvement that, if addressed, could significantly enhance the scientific rigor, depth of analysis, and practical applicability of this research. While the study provides descriptive statistics, a deeper inferential analysis could explore potential correlations and causal relationships between the observed characteristics and outcomes. For example, investigating whether specific combinations of delivery type, zone of delivery, and defensive structure are statistically significantly associated with higher goal conversion rates would provide more robust conclusions. The study mentions that corner kicks influenced the match status in 73.3% of cases, but a more detailed breakdown of how the match status was influenced (e.g., scoring a goal, preventing a goal, leading to a subsequent scoring opportunity, changing the momentum of the game) would provide a richer understanding of the broader impact of corner kicks beyond just the immediate goal conversion rate. While the study examines tactical and technical characteristics, the "humanized" aspect could be enhanced by considering the individual player roles and decision-making processes during corner kicks. Analyzing how factors such as player positioning, movement off the ball, and individual duels influence the effectiveness of corner kicks would add a valuable layer of human agency to the technical analysis. Furthermore, the study focuses solely on the 2022 FIFA World Cup. While this provides a consistent dataset, comparing these findings with data from other tournaments, leagues, or different periods in football history could help to identify trends, variations, and the potential evolution of corner kick strategies over time. This comparative approach would enhance the generalizability and long-term relevance of the findings. Finally, while the study describes patterns, the practical implications for coaching and player development could be more explicitly discussed. Translating the statistical findings into actionable recommendations for optimizing corner kick execution (both attacking and defending) would significantly enhance the study's utility for practitioners in the field of football. In conclusion, this study provides a valuable analysis of corner kicks during the 2022 FIFA World Cup, offering detailed insights into their tactical and technical characteristics and influence on match dynamics. Its strengths lie in the comprehensive data collection and descriptive statistical analysis. However, to maximize its impact, future research could benefit from deeper inferential analysis, a more detailed examination of how corner kicks influence match status, the incorporation of individual player dynamics, a comparative approach across different contexts, and a

more explicit discussion of the practical implications for football coaching and development. Addressing these opportunities will contribute to a more comprehensive and applicable understanding of this crucial aspect of football.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.