

## Organizational structure of the german club Berliner TSC

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**Key words:** football, training, german style

### Abstract

Football is one of the most popular sports disciplines in the world. Rules and regulations are well known but football clubs differ in terms of their level. There are many variables that can influence the success of football clubs. In this paper we made an attempt to describe how the football club from East Germany functions. Teams in a german club Berliner TSC served as our research material. The research was conducted in Berlin in 2017/2018 season. It was shown that recruiting strategies are similar in the german club and in polish clubs. What is different is their selection and goals of the clubs. It is considered that it is worth to adapt some of the solutions applied in german clubs to polish clubs.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, football is being commonly commercialized and it is a powerful industry. Sport clubs have become market companies and economical as well as marketing factors play a big role (Grabowski 2009). Such clubs as Manchester United, Chelsea, Juventus, AC Milan, Bayern Munich, Real Madrid or FC Barcelona are companies and their incomes can be counted in hundreds of millions of euros. Economical development of professional football is dependent on such factors as: tv transmissions, technology of mass media and the level of fulfillment of fans' needs (fans more and more often called 'customers') (Grabowski 2009). Disparities between the best and the worst clubs are becoming bigger, what has been observed also in Germany. Also institutional, economical and social changes were important. In the

early 1990s especially the clubs from the old German Democratic Republic (East Germany) have been obliged to get used to the new managing standards which were already practised in more developed West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany). After almost two decades the differences are still visible. In the season 2018/2019 in the first Bundesliga there is just one representative from the area of West Germany - RB Leipzig. Among 18 teams in the second Bundesliga there are three representatives of German Democratic Republic: FC Magdeburg, FC Union Berlin and SG Dynamo Berlin. In the third Bundesliga among 18 teams there are 5 teams from East Germany: FC Carl Zeiss Jena, Hallescher FC, Hansa Rostock, Energi Cottbus and FSV Zwickau. Together at central level of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bundesliga among 54 teams there are only 9 teams from German Democratic Republic. These statistics show how difficult the transformation from the early 1990s turned out to be for the East Germany. The functioning of clubs in the area of old German Democratic Republic in the years 1946-1990 was dependent on government financing, like in Poland, and it had to face the new requirements after the transformation. Getting used to the new standards did take place but this process is slow. In this article we will show the organizational structure of multi-sport club Berliner TSC, which is located in the east part of Berlin, in order to show the model of the club functioning after almost two decades since the Unification of Germany. In connection with this we can assume that Berliner TSC faced similar conditions to polish clubs. Therefore, the aim of this work will be the characteristics of the functioning of the club from East Germany and the comparison with polish clubs.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY**

In this work we used the following research methods: an indirect observation method, an interview and an analysis of senior and youth teams' results. Preparing this article we took into account mainly the literature, but also branch magazines and an indirect observation. We also used foreign reports concerning the state of football in east Germany.

Therefore, we put forward the following research questions:

- 1) How does the process of recruitment and selection of players proceed?
- 2) Could the organizational structure of Berliner TSC be used in polish clubs with the limited financial capacity?
- 3) Can some chosen managing actions in german club be implemented into polish clubs?

### ***The research environment***

The organizational structure of multi-sport club Berliner TSC, founded in 1963 located in the east part of Berlin.

### ***Training structure in the club***

„The club of Berlin was founded in 1963. It is a multi-sport club officially called Berliner Turn und Sportclub e.V. In the club there are 18 sports sections which associate altogether 3500 players. In the past the club was represented by world record-holders and by Olympic medalists. In the season 2016/2017 the club was represented by 21 football teams (Kalinowski et al. 2017, p.21).

In the season 2017/2018 the club was represented by 22 football teams. The main goal of the club is to create a club identity and to select and train as many players as possible. What is more, the club cooperates with FC Union Berlin and BFC Dynamo Berlin.

**Tab.1.** The organizational structure of Berliner TSC

Altliga U 50	D – Junioren I	Frauen
Altliga U 40	D – Junioren II	
Altliga U 32	D – Junioren III	B – Juniorinen
Herren I	E – Junioren I	C – Juniorinen
Herren II	E – Junioren II	
A – Junioren I	F – Junioren I	D – Juniorinen
C – Junioren I	F – Junioren II	E – Juniorinen
C – Junioren II	G – Junioren	
	G – Junioren II	

### ***Recruitment and selection in training groups***

In Berliner TSC the first age group is up to 7 years old (G-Junioren – Bambini U7) where children play in 4-people teams. Then children are moved to the next age group – up to 9 years old (F-Junioren U8/U9), where they play in 7-people teams. The next level is the group up to 11 years old (7-people team). Then there is the group up to 13 years old (D-Junioren U12/U13), in which there are 9 players per team. The next level is the group up to 15 years old (C-Junioren U14/U15) in which there are 11 players in each team. The next group is up to 17 years old (B-Junioren U16/U17). The next group, up to 19 years (A-Junioren U18/U19) is quite important, as this is the last group before a senior team.

Futhermore, in the club there are also such groups as: a group of substitutes, a group of players over 32, a group of players over 40 and a group of players over 50. At the same time, in the club there are also trainings for women starting from E Juniorinen (10 years old) up to adult women (Frauen). In the club there are 6 women teams.

A recruitment to the youngest groups is open. Mostly children who live in the district Prenzlauer Berg take part in the trainings. Each kid who starts a training in the club becomes its member. Members of the club pay dues to the club, 6-20 euros. The age groups up to 14 years are described with the use of chronological age. In these groups playing is an important part of their trainings. Then, in the groups from the age of 14 the leading groups are

created. The main goal of the club is to select and train as many players as possible. In the club there is a rule that a child can switch to a different sport if it is better for its genetic predispositions.

### ***Coaching staff***

Each team is led by two coaches (the first coach and his assistant). Furthermore, there are also trainings for coaches, which take place, among others, on the basis of the agreement between Berliner TSC and the University of Szczecin. What's more, players from the youth groups take part in goalkeeper trainings which take place in every microcycle.

The control over all youth teams is exercised by the director of football section, the coordinator of youth teams (Jugendkoordinator) and two coordinators of young teams.

There are two people responsible for the organization, connected indirectly with teams. One of them is responsible for „adult” football and the second is responsible for „youth” football. During summer and winter holidays camps are organised for children.

### ***Diagnostic and control tests***

Depending on the age group, appropriate diagnostic tests are run, accordant with DFB recommendation. The periodic control of trainings takes place twice a year. The first measurement take place in the summer preparation period and the second measurement takes place in the winter preparation period.

With regard to a diversified level of physical function and skills among players in the beginning groups, appropriate tests are run. The aim of these tests is to determine some chosen indicators of physical function (mostly suppleness, coordination and pace) and to assess the basic technical skills, such as passing a ball and 1x1 game.

Groups of players are created on the basis of their skills and physical functions. Starting with the younger junior B1 category there are also additional endurance tests. The players' game is parameterized all the time. This parameterization is about giving the players point between 1 and 6 (1 is the highest amount of points).

### ***The characterisation of technical skills of players***

In the youngest groups, classes are mainly conducted in the form of a play. Then, an introduction to technical skills learning takes place. A training process is focused on extensive movement tasks carried out with balls. The main goal is to get used to a ball, to learn how to lead, pass, and hit it as well as how to play 1x1, 2x2, and 3x3 games. A science of tactical elements is introduced from the category of the C1 coach. A club doesn't have a single imposed game system in its philosophy. According to the National Game Model (2016), a game system is a specific way of players' game “in attacking, defending and transitional phases, it includes the players' starting position on the pitch with the assignment

of tasks appropriate to the occupied position. Each game system is a tool for implementing a chosen strategy, taking into account the opponent's strength and his way of playing. The game system imposes on the opponent a way of conducting the least expected and the least favorable fighting for him (Dorna et al. 2016, p. 23). An overriding premise of the club is to run the game "contacting the ball one or two times" and to learn how to accelerate and slow down the game.

A selection of training methods and forms is dictated by ontogenesis and emotional development of children. Technical elements teaching is conducted in a strict and playful form or by means of small games. Due to the fact that individual exercises and ball games are practiced for most of the time during training, it is possible to improve skills of this type.

One of the most important elements of the training is dribbling (1x1) and small games (2x2 and 3x3). In the teaching of special techniques elements, such as receptions and transfers, a strict and playful form is alternately used. One of the most significant assumptions of the club is individualization and subjectivity. Classes are adjusted to the players' individual level. In addition, once a month a meeting of trainers of all children and youth groups is held in order to discuss the implementation of training plans and their possible correction at the level of the training unit or microcycle.

The first manifestation of individualization is the organization of a training process with the maximum number of contact with the ball by the player. Therefore, each young player performs his tasks at his own pace and to the best of his abilities.

The next assumption is a selection of training groups to the level represented by young football adepts. Players in these groups have similar technical skills and abilities to understand the game. It can be assumed that such a division creates a favorable environment for all players.

In addition, during small games players who compete with each other are selected in such a way that they have similar skills and are in the same physical state. Thus, all children take an active part in the game. Adults competing in 1x1 games are also adequately selected.

In addition, there is a principle of grading difficulties for outstanding young players through 3x2 and 2x1 games, where players with lower skills are outnumbered. A leading player has a more difficult task, while those who play in the majority have a better chance of equal fighting even though their football skills are lower at the moment. Individualized classes are used in each training unit. Teams represent similar skills during games.

### ***Sporting purposes, team and individual goals***

Sporting purposes, which have been characterized above, as well as non-sporting purposes, are diverse and, as a result, adapted to the degree of a child's psychomotor

development, to the level of his/her skills, motivation, personality, and needs. The most important ones include:

- being in a group of peers and friends
- fun and joy of training
- nice and active spending of free time
- comprehensive motor development
- development of football skills
- cooperation in a group

An overarching goal is a child's comprehensive and harmonious development as well as learning and improving of his/her football skills. The results of teams under 14 years old are irrelevant in the context of achieving the milestone goals. Consequently, training groups have a permanent staff on recruitment. Moreover, it is very important to teach cooperation and group activities. Development of social skills and creativity of young football adepts. As it was mentioned above, the goal of individual players is to improve the motor skills and continuous development of children.

In addition to training at the club, there are also numerous integrational and occasional actions, including trips to tournaments, Christmas meetings, trips to summer camps, and participation in important sports events in Berlin, as well as training parents and children together. A lot of pressure in the club is imposed on introducing/maintaining the Fair Play principle.

### **3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Generally, an organizational structure of the German club is similar to the organizational structures of Polish clubs. Nevertheless, some differences in functioning could be found. One of the most significant elements differentiating Polish and German clubs is the amount of membership fees. In Berlin, they range from EUR 6 to 20, while in Poland, depending on the location, from PLN 100 to PLN 150. Taking into account the economic situation in Poland and Germany, the amounts are considerably divergent. A parent should work 0.5 to 1 hour (depending on a profession) in order to pay a monthly fee in Germany, while in Poland the expenditure ranges from 3 to even 10 working hours.

The following condition may have a significant impact on the structure, the course of recruitment and selection, which fulfill a fundamental role in the sports training process. This role is about diagnosing talented individuals and managing their development. Talent is perceived as a genetic, above-average ability in a specific field that a human manifests. Ambition, fortitude, as well as self-determination in pursuing the goal are also the components of talent. Talent identification is associated with the initial stage of training. Accordingly, it may also seem reasonable to analyze issues related to the conditions

of recruitment and selection in the aspect of potential costs related to the selection of a sports club and/or discipline. In this sense, such a question might be formulated: Can premium rates have a significant impact on the recruitment process?

Sozański and Kosmol present the qualification process as a carefully organized cycle of program tasks for children and youth. Apart from all developmental, health and creative functions, it is an organized sequence of diagnosing talents, which functions in an ordered system in accordance with the laws of a biological development within a specific training system (Sozański 1999). Thus, recruitment and selection of players are considered, as stated previously, as key factors in sport.

It is assumed that the earlier the correctness of the assessment of the athlete's psychophysical equipment is confirmed, the better his/her subsequent training is (Czajkowski 1982). In sport, a term natural selection and rational selection appear, too. Rational selection, also called scientific, supersedes natural selection through its constant development and widening of diagnostic methods (Naglak 1996). Natural selection is related to the so-called "pyramid theory". The main assumption of this theory is the largest recruitment to the practiced discipline. Bompá states that natural selection is ineffective because it is ineffective in a time sense. However, with the approach directed to the main goals of recruitment and selection, it is difficult to carry it out. "The concepts of recruitment and selection are often combined with each other, but in the meantime they are completely different activities. Recruitment consists in creating and expanding training groups, and the selection consists in eliminating people who don't promise opportunities for success in sport from the training" (Naglak 1996). Is it possible while considering the above commercial assumptions? Certainly, some doubts related to this matter arise.

Other differences in the sense of *largo* are the rules of functioning of the DFB (German Football Association) and PZPN (Polish Football Association), which don't make it easier for Polish clubs to function.

In Germany, in parallel to the recruitment and selection held in all clubs and associations since 2002, over 380 support points have been set up throughout the country. This project makes it possible to train football adepts at the same high level everywhere in the country. It aims to equalize opportunities for all children and young people living in Germany. Trainers are accounted for from the implementation of the all-German program. The training staff at all support points has high standards set, competences and qualifications, and licenses of the UEFA European football federation are in force. Once a week, the so-called training takes place at the main points/locations. "TopTalent" for a group of the most talented youth in a given district. Classes are held throughout Germany at the same time and are conducted by the qualified specialists. In addition, all athletes practicing this sport are under constant

monitoring. This obligation rests with the trainers and includes both registration of training loads and reporting on the state of physical, mental and sport 'health'. The main goal of the German ball is to select and introduce as many players as possible to the senior ball at the highest level of the competition. In the training microcycle there are complementary school basketball and volleyball training sessions. Individualized training loads and compensatory classes are applied. High diagnostics and monitoring guarantee the selection of appropriate training loads up to the developmental age. Equalizing classes, functional training or rehabilitation training are conducted individually or in small groups of several people (Kalinowski, Jurdeczka 2015).

In Poland, however, only some changes have been introduced. In recent years, the prevalence of such supplements as the National Game Model, Position Training and Task Games may be a good prognostic. Still, they seem to be insufficient in the context of German actions undertaken over the last two decades. The subsidizing of football academies by PZPN is marginal – some structures are just being created.

Certainly, in recent years, the demanding discussion in the development trend of commercial "football schools" characterized by a strictly business approach has been observed. Classes are held twice a week, only until the age of 12. These entities don't prepare leading teams and, primarily due to the conflict of interest, don't cooperate with other clubs and sections that conduct training in sports other than football. Clubs that have great traditions have huge problems with functioning. A similar situation took place over the years in the GDR. Nevertheless, the main assumptions of the functioning of German clubs such as Berliner TSC are different from the majority of associations and clubs in Poland. Long-term actions result from clearly defined long-term goals, while in Poland there are no long-term goals, and actions aim at achieving immediate effects. Hence, it may be assumed that in the future they may be ineffective, and even unsustainable in the context of the above-mentioned ontogeny.

Another aspect observed in the German club is the lack of "focus on the result" in youth and children's groups. Despite similar slogans operating in the sports environment, in recent years in Poland such competitions as the Cup of the President of PZPN U 12 are organized with the final match being held at the National Stadium in Warsaw and all teams in Poland want to win one cup. A situation when the largest international children's tournaments are organized within the U11 and U12 age categories seem to be adequate. The approach of the organizers is inconsistent with the slogans disseminated "games aren't on the score" in children's groups.

Finally, a rather valid mechanism that doesn't function in Poland is redirection of children to another sport, which, as indicated, is the result of a business model and a commercial



approach. In a club from the former East Germany, the lack of a business approach allows fluctuation of talented children to such disciplines as swimming, table tennis, boxing, wrestling or skating, in a situation where they don't show the sought-after football predispositions. In Poland, however, potential material benefits are displayed as a motive to maintain funding, at the expense of a child's development opportunities (not only sports).

In response to the research questions asked, the following conclusions are made:

1. The recruitment of players in the German club is quite similar to that in Polish clubs, while the main differences could be seen in the selection process itself.
2. The organizational structure of the Berlin club resembles the structures of Polish clubs with lower financial capacity, but there are some significant differences in their goals and attitudes.
3. It can be assumed that certain management activities of the German club should be adopted in Polish teams, because they might be beneficial in the future. Nevertheless, since these phenomena are identical with the theoretical premises appearing in Polish literature in the twentieth century, they aren't new at all.

Nowadays, the position of Polish football in European and world ranking is worse than the position of German football. Perhaps if the consciousness rises, the attitude changes and the discipline is still developed, Poland will have a chance to equal to foreign teams in the future. One can assume that the foundation of the club from East Germany can be easily adapted into Polish conditions because it does not need such big financial expenses.

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