

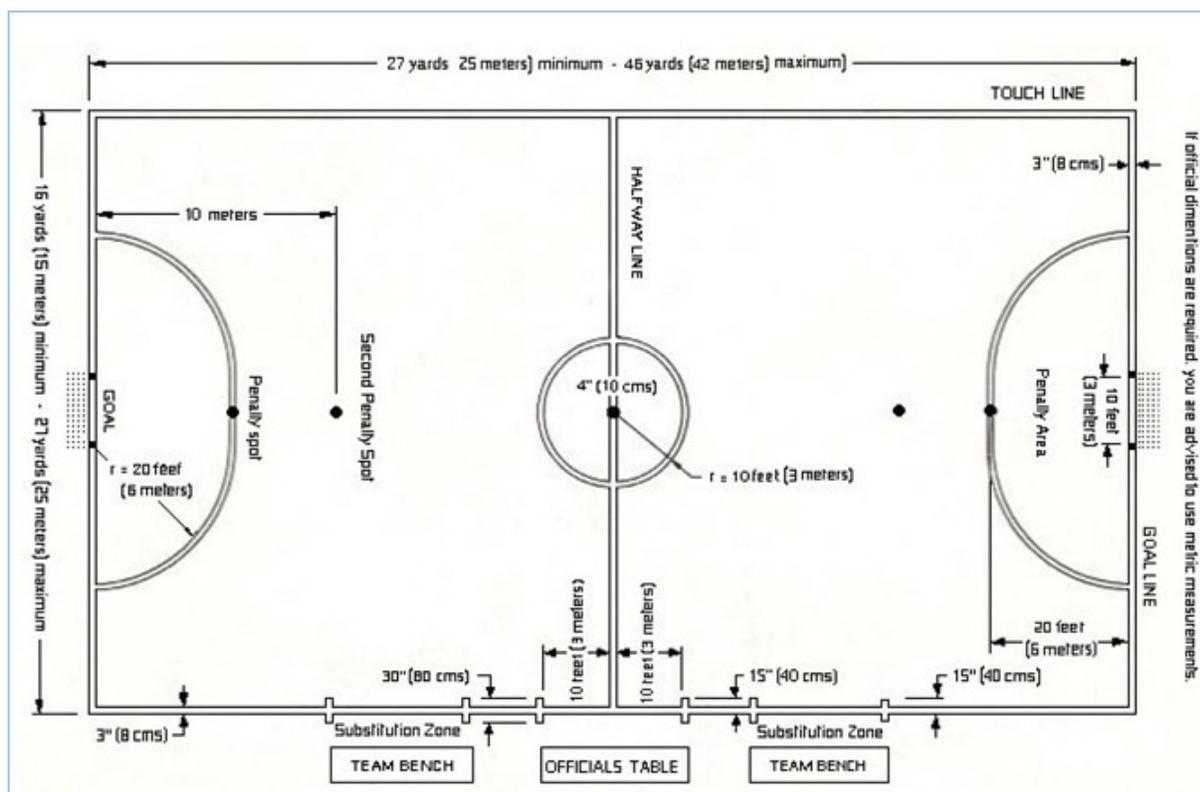
FUTSAL

AN INNOVATIVE FORMAT OF FOOTBALL

□ Himanshu Sharma

Imagine yourself fully excited about playing football out in the bright day on lush green grounds. Sounds thrilling, isn't? Rushing passion in young boys coupled with as brilliant a game as football is something worth watching for. No doubt today classical football is a trillion dollar industry including every kind of merchandise viz. cloths, food brands, movies, cars on its compass.

Now consider another scenario, what if due to unruly nature, it pours some day and grass is soaking wet or it is a snow blizzard and still players are sweating outside. Won't it affect the game or the fitness of players? Fed up by unpredictability of nature and cancelled training sessions back in 1930s, Juan Carlos Ceriani a football coach decided to bring classical football (also called



soccer) under concrete roofs. There was a certain problem in front of Ceriani so he came up with an unorthodox and innovative solution. Many a times it so happens that initial reasons for an innovation are left behind and the innovation itself is taken into stride by world. This also happened with futsal. Although initially, futsal was started as an indoor practice game with certain modified features borrowed from various games, it became successful not only as a practice drill, but as an alternative to classical soccer. Later with firmer organisation and faster rules, it was being played both indoors and outdoors.

What is Futsal?

Futsal is a modified version of soccer with all its principles intact. The basic soccer principle says you can touch the ball with any part of your body, be it head, torso or legs, but not the hand. The spirit of soccer is maintained brilliantly in this modified version of game. To add on top, this game keeps in mind that its constraints and rules ensure that simply playing this game the way original soccer is played is not enough. This game pushes the limits of players, encourages them to showcase their creativity with ball. Simple passing and dribbling proves of little help in this fast paced soccer as the halves of 20 minutes provide little window for old school methods. Players have to be innovative in their skills, and a great emphasis is laid on their technical and innovative skills under high pressure games.

Rules of Futsal

Length of the field : 25 to 42 m × 16 to 25 m

Ball: Size 4, weight between 400–440 g at the start of the game.

Time : There are two periods of 20 minutes with time stopping at every dead ball. Between the two periods there is a break of 15 minutes.

Number of players : There are five players for each team in the field, one of them as goalkeeper, and a maximum number of 12 players that can be used in each match. Substitutions are unlimited and on-the-fly.

Fouls : All direct free kicks count as accumulated fouls. A direct free kick is awarded for kicking, tripping, charging, jumping, pushing, striking, tackling, holding, spitting, and deliberate handling. Indirect free kicks, such as playing dangerously and impeding, do not count as accumulated fouls. A team is warned by the referee when they commit five accumulated fouls in a half.

Cards : A yellow card is shown for unsporting behavior, dissent, time wasting, encroachment, persistent infringement, and illegal subbing. A red card is shown

for serious foul play, violent conduct, spitting, illegally denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, abusive language, and receiving a second yellow. Red carded players are ejected from the game and their team must play short for two minutes or until the other team scores a goal.

Free kicks : Taken from the spot of the infringement or on the line of the penalty area nearest the infringement (indirect only). All opponents must be at least 5 m away from the ball. The kick must be taken within four seconds or an indirect kick is awarded to the other team.

Kick from the second penalty mark : Awarded when a team commits 6 or more accumulated fouls in a half. Second penalty mark is 10 m (11 yd) from the goal, opponents must be behind the ball, goalkeeper must be at least 5 m (5.5 yd) away

Goalkeeper : When in possession of the ball, the goalkeeper has 4 seconds to get rid of the ball. If the ball is kept too long, the referee will give an indirect kick to the other team. The goalkeeper may play freely when in the opponent's half.

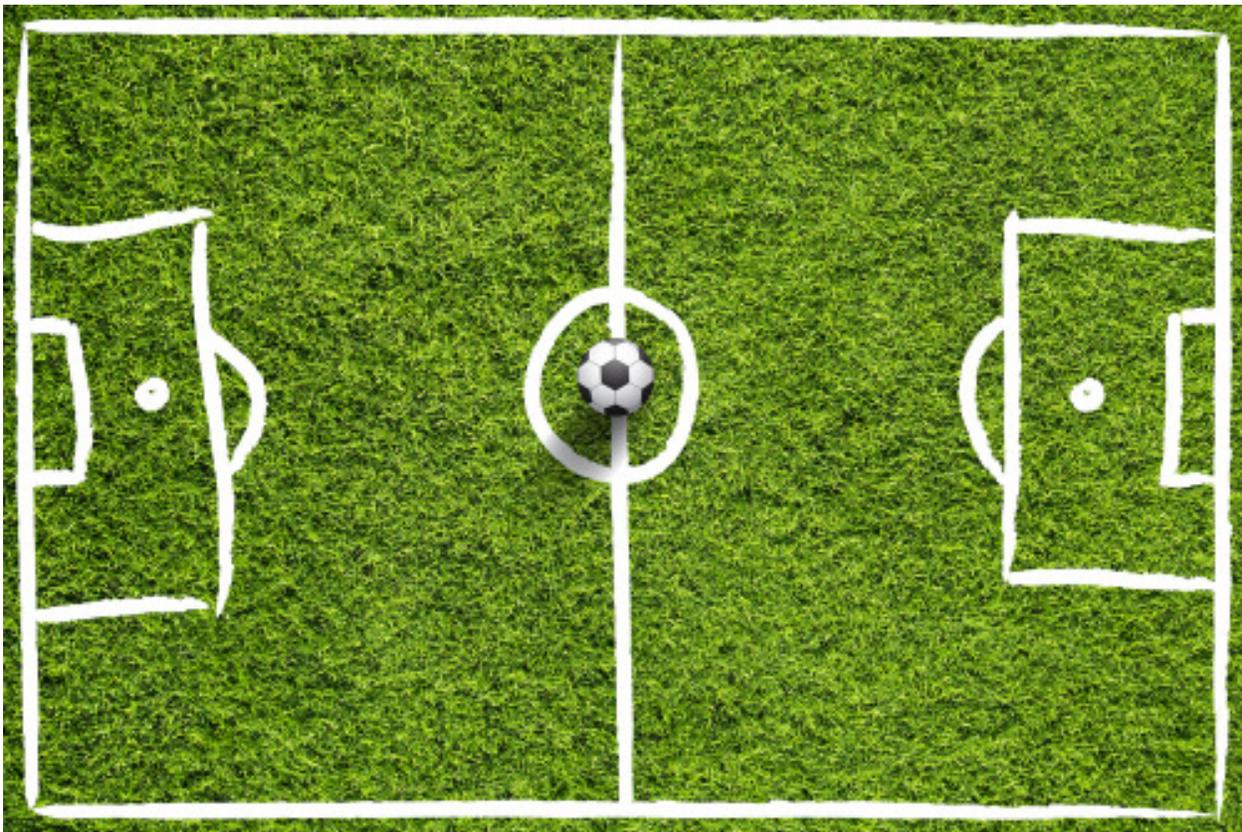
Goalkeeper pass-back restriction : Once the goalkeeper has released the ball either by kicking or throwing, the goalkeeper may not touch it again until the ball goes out of play or is touched by an opponent. The sanction for violation is an indirect free kick. The goalkeeper may receive the ball freely when on the opponent's half

Kick-in : A kick-in is used instead of a throw-in. The player must place the ball on the touchline or outside. If four seconds elapses or an illegal kick is taken, the referee will award a kick-in to the other team. It is not allowed to score directly from a kick-in: the goal is valid only if someone else touches the ball before it enters in goal.

Goal clearance : A goal clearance is used instead of a goal kick. The goalkeeper must throw the ball with their hands and it must leave the penalty area within four seconds. If goal clearance is taken illegally the goalkeeper may retry, but the referee will not reset the count. If four seconds elapses, the other team gets an indirect kick on the penalty area line.

An Interesting Story

It would be worthwhile sharing an interesting story related to the origin of the term 'Futsal'. A gentleman named Alexander Para is credited with coming up with this term. We all know the mentality of school authorities, or for that matter, any authority from which we seek to use their infrastructure to play any game. The host authority is quite protective and conservative about their infrastructure.



They fear great damage might be done to their auditoriums or gymnasiums. Similar was the situation with in front of Mr. Para. When he used to ask permission from the school authorities to let him conduct matches of ‘Soccer’ inside their gymnasiums, the natural response of schools was in negative due to their presumption of how damaging would be playing soccer to their indoor infrastructure. And before he could even explain them, his requests were rejected. So, he had this brilliant idea of changing the prejudice related to ‘indoor soccer’ by giving it a virtual makeover. He decided to use a word similar to ‘Kodak’ or ‘Nike’ that would describe sport in all languages of world [2] and would also life the image of sport from just ‘indoor soccer’. He took notice of Spanish and Potuguese word for soccer - FUTbol or FUTebol [2], and French or Spanish word for ‘indoor’ - SALon or SALa. And that was how this beautiful game was named! I would urge the reader to notice the innovative mindset behind the naming of the game.

Life Take Aways!

Having talked about the game, I would like readers to have a few takeaways from this article for their lives as well.

1. **Be solution oriented:** In our lives, many times we find ourselves in hot water. We seem to have complete idea about the problem, but that is it. We spend so much time and effort thinking about in the problem only that forget about giving a thought to the solution. Just like Carlos Ceriani

when the faced the problem about the weather conditions seriously affecting his team and the sport as a whole, we shall have an opportunity to innovate and find a solution.

2. **What is there in a name? Well, quite a lot!:** By reading the story behind the naming of Futsal, this should now be obvious how simply changing the name uplifts or makeovers an image related to certain things.
3. **Keep up with time:** In-order to remain in pace with the world, you have to keep evolving. There are many instances in front of us today which re-iterate this fact time and again. For example, Nokia and Kodak simply are very rarely, seen is todays market the market leaders of yesteryears of photographic market due to their slow pace of keeping up with the world.

References

- 1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Futsal#Summary_of_rules
- 2 <http://futsal.com/history-of-futsal/>

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