

The effectiveness of well-planned tactical exercises in successfully executing a corner kick in football

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ABSTRACT

In football, there are many skills and variables, and these skills differ according to the players' abilities and skill levels. Therefore, sports training aims to minimize these differences through sound and scientifically planned training methods that encompass the entire team. Furthermore, a football team consists of eleven players, and for training to be successful and for results to be seen, there must be harmony, coordination, and understanding among the players. This is achieved through the continuity and repetition of tactical and skill-based exercises, resulting in coordinated movement patterns among the players. The well-thought-out tactical movements in football always achieve their movement goals, in addition to the enjoyment they bring when watching the ball move between the players' feet with precision and skill. Conversely, when the balls are random and inaccurate, or when there is difficulty in moving the ball, most of the balls are cut off and useless, causing boredom and frustration for the viewer. These movement lessons are provided by the competent coach as a result of his experience in extracting what the team needs and choosing exercises that suit the capabilities of the players, their categories and even their positions. These exercises are specific to a particular goal, which may be offensive, defensive or to implement a static situation, all for the purpose of scoring goals. The corner kick or corner kick is one of the most important attacking situations that is considered a golden opportunity to score goals if it is executed correctly, and this requires training effort and intensive planned work. The corner kick, or corner kick, is a set piece in football and a significant source of goals if executed correctly. The researcher observed, through watching some Iraqi Second Division football matches, that set pieces, especially corner kicks, are executed haphazardly, relying solely on tall players, mostly defenders, without any prior agreement on specific movements or drills. The player taking the corner kick is simply tasked with getting the ball into the penalty area, and then it's up to the players on both sides to try and win back possession, which is often intercepted by the defense.

The researcher explained this by noting that training sessions almost entirely lack drills for set pieces, particularly corner kicks. This crucial skill, being a potential goal-scoring opportunity, should be included in training, yet few coaches pay attention to it. Therefore, the researcher decided to focus this study on this important attacking element in football and to incorporate specific tactical drills, taught scientifically and repeatedly, into training sessions to maximize its effectiveness during matches.

Keywords: Football, Effectiveness of Exercises, Corner Kick.

1-1 Introduction:

Modern sports training is no longer haphazard but rather a structured, deliberate, and purposeful process aimed at raising performance levels to the highest degree, whether for the individual or the team. In football, there are many skills and variables, and these skills differ according to the players' abilities and skill levels. Therefore, sports training works to minimize these differences through sound and scientific planning of the training program, which encompasses the entire team. Furthermore, a football team consists of eleven players, and for training to be successful and for results to be seen, there must be harmony, synergy, and understanding among the players. This is achieved through the continuity and repetition of tactical and skill-based exercises, resulting in coordinated movement patterns among the players.

The well-thought-out tactical movements in football always achieve their movement goals, in addition to the enjoyment they bring when watching the ball move between the players' feet with precision and skill. Conversely, when the balls are random and inaccurate, or when there is difficulty in moving the ball, most of the balls are excerpt and useless, causing boredom and frustration for the viewer.

These movement lessons are provided by the competent coach as a result of his experience in extracting what the team needs and choosing exercises that suit the capabilities of the players, their categories and even their positions. These exercises are specific to a particular goal, which may be offensive, defensive or to implement a static situation, all for the purpose of scoring goals.

The corner kick is one of the most important attacking situations that is considered a golden opportunity to score goals if it is executed correctly. This requires training effort and intensive planned work, as the corner kick depends on the player executing it and his ability to deliver the ball to the specified or agreed-upon area first, and secondly on the players' movements and their correct positioning with the ball and their ability to read the movement and coordinate it with the movement of the ball, thus overcoming the defense.

Because of the importance of set pieces, including corner kicks, in scoring goals and achieving victories, the researcher wanted to highlight them and study them practically and scientifically from all aspects, and develop exercises that are appropriate for corner kicks through movements and coordination between players, thus making it possible to apply these exercises in the future.

1-2 Research Problem:

Set pieces are among the most important attacking skills in football, through which goals can be scored by relying on distinguished players who specialize in executing these pieces, as we see when watching matches of various leagues around the world, where it is noticeable that there are players who specialize in executing these pieces when they occur. A corner kick or corner kick is one of the fixed situations in football and is an important source of scoring goals if executed correctly. The researcher observed, through his observation of some matches of the Iraqi Second Division Football League, that set pieces, especially corner kicks, are executed in a random manner, relying only on tall players, most of whom are defenders, without any prior agreement on a specific movement or prior training on execution. That is, the one executing the kick is responsible for getting the ball into the penalty area, and the next role is for the players present from both teams to obtain the ball, and most of them are balls intercepted by the defense.

The researcher explained this by saying that training sessions are almost devoid of exercises for set pieces, especially corner kicks, as there must be exercises for this important skill since it is one of the situations from which goals are scored. Therefore, few coaches pay attention to this kick. The researcher explained this by saying that training sessions are almost devoid of exercises for set pieces, especially corner kicks, as there must be exercises for this important skill since it is one of the situations from which goals are scored. Therefore, few coaches pay attention to this kick.

1-3 Research Objectives:

- Preparing tactical exercises for executing corner kicks for football players.
- Identifying the impact of studied tactical exercises on the successful execution of a corner kick in football.

1-4 Research hypothesis:

- There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test for executing the corner kick for the experimental group, in favor of the pre-test.

1-5 Areas of Research:

- Human field: Players of Al-Khalis Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League for the 2025 season.
- Time frame: From 2-1-2025 until 15/3/2025.
- Spatial area: Al-Khalis Sports Club Stadium, Al-Khalis City, Diyala Governorate.

2 - Research methodology and field procedures:

2-1 Research Methodology: The researcher used the experimental method because it was suitable for the research problem.

-2 Research Sample: The research sample consisted of 26 players from Al-Khalis Club, participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League. The researcher focused on the frequency of corner kicks, considering this skill to be executed strategically. Therefore, the researcher determined the number of repetitions or observations to be measured, and the data was analyzed accordingly. The team was divided into two groups of 10 players each, after excluding the three goalkeepers and three other players who were not registered and were on trial with the coach.

2-3 Devices, tools, and methods of collecting information.

- Scientific sources. - Personal interviews*. - 10 footballs conforming to the standards of the Iraqi Football Association competitions. - Data registration form. - 20 ground cones. - 20 cones, 40 cm high. - Canon digital camera. - Sleeveless training shirt.

2-4 Search procedures:

2-4-1 Design of a corner kick test with a football:

The researcher designed a corner kick test with a football, based on the method of executing it from the designated place to the penalty area, by determining the launch of the ball to influential places in the opponent's goal. The areas of the ball's fall and its direction were determined, and an attempt was made to coordinate the movement of the players with the movement of the ball to reach it and score towards the goal before the opponent's movement.

The researcher determined the scoring area inside the penalty area based on the extension of the two goal area lines up to the cross line of the penalty area, with an area estimated at 200m². The executing player must kick the ball towards the specified area from both sides, as shown in Figure (1).

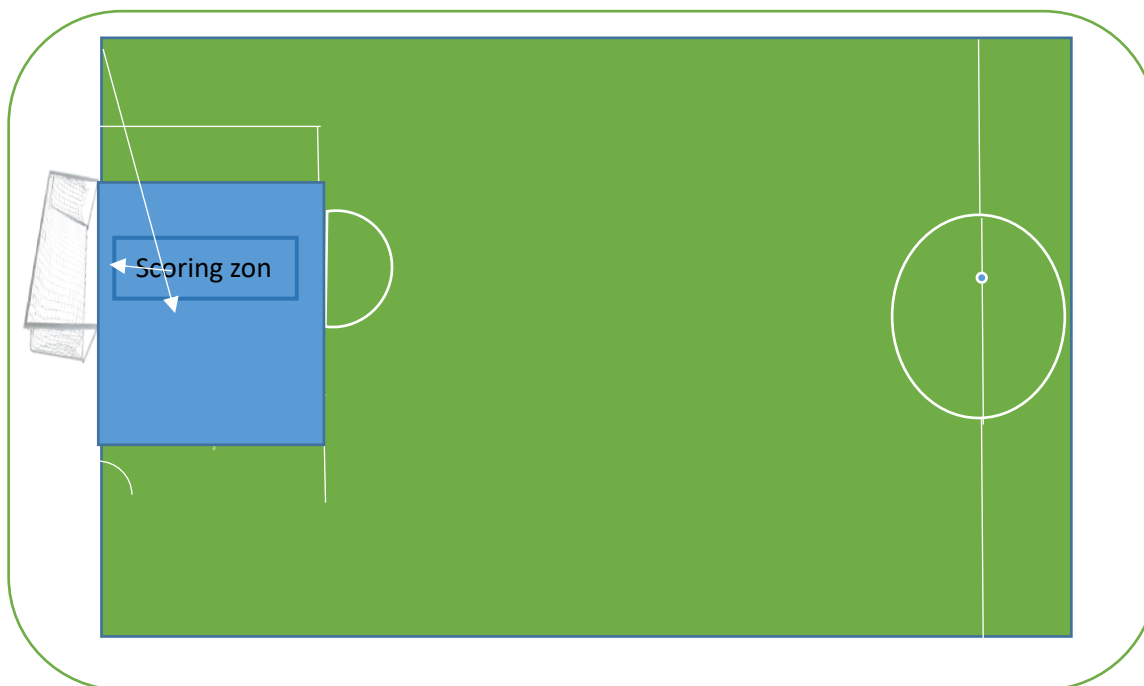


Figure (1)

Show the method of executing a corner kick and the scoring area.

2-4-2 Corner Kick Test Description:

- The test is based on the corner kick being executed into the designated area (goal zone) by the player taking the kick. If the ball goes outside the designated area, it is not counted.
- The designated player takes 10 successful kicks (five attempts for each side).
- A team scores 3 points if the ball is headed or struck with any part of the body except the arms and enters the goal.
- A team scores 2 points if the ball is struck towards the goal and saved by the goalkeeper or rebounds off the post or crossbar.
- A team scores 1 point if the ball is struck and goes out of bounds.
- A shot is given zero points if the ball is hit or cleared by the defending team.
- For 50/50 balls, the score is based on the ball's trajectory.

2-5 Pilot Test:

The researcher conducted a pilot test on Thursday, January 2, 2025, at the Al-Khalis Sports Club stadium, as a preparatory step to ensure the success of the test without problems or errors, in addition to identifying work points and avoiding field obstacles that may occur during the test, and to produce a sound and well-defined scientific test.

2-6 Scientific Foundations of the Test:

First: Test Validity:

The researcher relied on content validity to establish test validity. This means that the test measures what it is designed to measure; in other words, a valid test measures the function it claims to measure and does not measure anything else instead or in addition to it.

The researcher presented the test to a group of experts and specialists in the field of testing and measurement, and sports training science/soccer. The test's validity was confirmed after the experts agreed that it fulfilled its intended purpose.

Second: Test Reliability:

This name is given to the test if the test is used repeatedly and gives the same results each time. To calculate the reliability coefficient of the test, the test method was chosen and the test was reapplied to a sample of (11) players from outside the research sample, which is the team of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences (University of Diyala). The test was reapplied after four days to the same sample and under similar conditions. "The test is applied to the same individuals twice, with an interval of (7-1)" (Mohammed Jassim Al-Yassiri 2010-75) to extract the correlation coefficient between the first and second application using the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson). The test results showed high correlation coefficients with reliability and a percentage of 0.84.**2-6 Pre-test:** After the researcher completed all the scientific test outputs, the researcher conducted the pre-test for the experimental research group on Saturday, January 4, 2025, at 2:00 PM on the grounds of Al-Khalis Sports Club in Diyala Governorate, taking into account all the conditions of the practical application of the test.

2-7 The main experiment (exercise implementation).

The exercises began on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. They were performed within a specific portion of the main training session, lasting 35-40 minutes.

The exercises were conducted across 24 training sessions, divided into five short training cycles. Each cycle consisted of five days, running from Saturday to Wednesday each week.

The training unit includes 3-4 exercises under investigation, implemented using repetitive training methods, taking into account the gradual progression of exercises based on the number of defending players. The first training session included exercises without an opponent, the aim of which was to ensure the correct movement of players inside the penalty area when executing a corner kick.

The second training session focused on individual player movement within the penalty area in specific locations. The third session involved defenders, initially with a smaller number of players, gradually increasing their positioning, and aimed to improve their speed in approaching the ball. The fourth session outlined the duties and methods for executing a corner kick, focusing on optimal player positioning within the penalty area before and after the kick. The fifth session was a competitive match, closely resembling a game. Training concluded in session 24 on Sunday, February 9, 2025.

2-8 post-test:

The researcher conducted the post-test for the research group in the corner kick test after they completed the exercises during the training sessions on Monday, February 10, 2025, taking into account all the conditions and circumstances that were established in the pre-test.

2-9 Statistical methods:

The researcher used the SPSS statistical package to extract the statistical features.

3- Presentation, analysis, and discussion of the results:

3-1 Presentation and analysis of the pre- and post-corner kick test results for the research sample:

Table (1)

shows the values of the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and standard error for the corner kick test.

Tests		arithmetic mean	standard deviation	standard error
Corner kick	Pre-test	0.900	0.737	0.233
	Post-test	2.100	0.738	0.223

Table (2)

shows the values of the differences, their deviations, the calculated (T) value, the error percentage, and the significance of the differences in the pre- and post-corner kick test for the research sample.

Variables	Unit of Measurement	Average Differences	Differences deviation	Value (T)	Error rate	Significance
Corner kick	degree	1.200	0.422	9.00	0.00	moral

Tables (1-2) show the statistical values for the pre- and post-corner kick test for the research sample. The arithmetic mean for the pre-corner kick test was (0.900) degrees with a standard deviation of (0.737), and the arithmetic mean for the post-test was (2.100) degrees with a standard deviation of (0.738).

When the differences were statistically analyzed, it was found that the average difference was (1.200) with an average deviation of (0.422) and the calculated value of (T) was (9.000) with an error rate of (0.00), which indicates the existence of statistically significant differences in favor of the post-test in the results of the corner kick test.

3-2 Discussion of the results:

Tables (1-2), which show the statistical values for the pre- and post-tests of the corner kick technique for the research sample, indicate statistically significant differences in favor of the

post-test. The researcher attributes this to the effectiveness of the exercises under investigation.

These exercises were characterized by organization and planning of how to perform corner kicks, starting from the player executing the kick, up to the players in the opponent's penalty area who receive the ball, and they are aware of where it passes and the space available to them, according to well-thought-out and agreed-upon movements. "Regular and gradual training leads to a clear improvement in the accuracy of performance in static cases" (Mufti Ibrahim 2014, p. 222).

Furthermore, the continuous repetition of player movements within the scoring area contributed to correct and unobstructed movement. The player was already familiar with their movement and direction, and since repetition leads to a quick and accurate response, they possessed the element of surprise, enabling them to catch the opponent off guard. This is due to the adaptation of the nervous and motor systems as a result of repetition, leading to improved timing in reaching the ball before the defender during execution. (As Abu Al-Ala 2012, p. 158) confirms, "The systematic repetition of a skill contributes to stabilizing the motor program and improving the accuracy of performance."

The effectiveness of executing a corner kick is linked to the tactical and technical understanding of the players. This is what the researcher adopted in his exercises to try to make the players understand their roles inside the penalty area or the scoring area when sending the ball from the corner mark, taking into account the correct positioning and appropriate movement according to the movement of the ball and at an ideal time. This is what the execution of the corner kick depends on, as the success of corner kicks depends to a large extent on the tactical organization and the collective movements of the players (Qasim Hassan 2010. 90).

Since the success of a corner kick depends on the player taking the kick delivering the ball to the correct position, as pre-arranged according to specific signals, thus enabling the attacking players to anticipate the ball's direction and prepare for it, the researcher designed exercises for the taking player to improve the accuracy of execution towards specific areas. "Because accuracy in executing a corner kick is the most influential factor in creating scoring opportunities" (Spyridon & Oth, 2025, p. 6).

The emergence of differences favoring the post-test results in corner kicks is evidence of the successful implementation and effectiveness of the designed exercises. "As organized and well-planned training leads to improved effectiveness of corner kicks" (Xiaobin, 2025, p. 11).

Conclusion

The effectiveness of the exercises is demonstrated through the final results, which showed better scores, as evidenced by the study of the differences between the pre-test and post-test, as well as the accuracy and organization of the work.

Understanding the tactical aspects of the exercises and applying them correctly is one of the most important factors affecting the success of teamwork. Since corner kicking is a team action that begins with the player executing the kick, who must be good at it, and ends with the players present inside the scoring area (penalty area), the teamwork must be understood



by everyone, which makes the players' movements organized, purposeful, and effective, thus achieving good results.

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Appendix (1)

Names of the experts and specialists in the field of football training

Sequence	Scientific title	The name	Specialization	workplace
1	Professor	Dr. Sadiq Jaafar Muhammad	Sports training/football	University of Diyala
2	Professor	Dr. Diaa Hamoud Mawloud	Sports training/football	University of Diyala
3	assistant professor	Dr. Hussein Jabbar Al-Dinawi	Sports training/football	Ministry of Youth and Sports
4	assistant professor	Dr. Basim Khudair Abbas	Sports training/football	University of Diyala
5	assistant professor	Dr. Ali Khalifa Baris	Sports training/football	University of Diyala