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### Differences in the interceptions, tackles and counterattacks of the World Champions in the final soccer matches of the 1994 - 2014 World Cup

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#### Abstract

Aspects of technical and tactical actions of football players in World Cup matches are insufficiently studied. Indices of quantity and quality of fights for the ball, tackles and interceptions of the ball in the matches of the European League 2011-2012 of the team "Metalist" (Kharkiv, Ukraine) were studied. The authors studied the performance of interceptions and tackles in the competitions of the teams of the first league of the Ukrainian championship in 2010, 2011 - 2016, and 2019; teams of the high league of Ukraine, and compared the performance of interceptions and tackles in the matches of the high and first leagues of Ukrainian championships.

The aim of the research was to determine the differences between the selections, interceptions of the ball and

counterattacks of the champions in the 1994-2014 World Cup finals. In the final matches, the world champions are much less likely to fail or incomplete interceptions, rebounds and counterattacks.

However, the sources we analyzed do not contain information on the methods of tackle performance, interception of the ball with the feet or head, counteraction to passes, and shots.

In the course of the research, we conducted pedagogical observations on the tackles, interceptions, and counteractions performed by the world champions of 1994-2014 in the final matches using video recordings of the matches. The results of pedagogical observations are analyzed using the methods of mathematical statistics.

**Keywords:** Premier League, First League, Ukrainian Teams, Soccer, Technical, Tactical Actions

#### 1. Introduction

Interception of a ball is an action when a player intercepts a ball directed from an opponent to his partner. According to Perevoznyk V. I., Zhurid S. M., Marchenko V. A., there are two consequences of intercepting the ball (as well as tackling the ball) - complete and incomplete (Perevoznyk, V. I., Zhurid, S. M., Marchenko, V. A., 2012) <sup>[13]</sup>. When the ball is completely intercepted or taken from the opponent, it is completed by the player of the other team or his partner taking possession of the ball. In case of incomplete interception, the ball is bounced away from the place of the game situation, or is kicked out of the pitch. And although the ball is taken over by the opponent, the dynamics and structure of the attack are reduced, and time is gained to rebuild the defense.

The tackling of the ball from the opponent occurs when he moves in front, facing the player, sideways from the player and back to the player. Picking up the ball is done in different ways: - kicking the ball forward or sideways, kicking the ball with the front or back foot; slide tackles, push shoulder to shoulder or into the torso of the opponent. Players oppose opponents when they pass the ball or scoring a goal (Pertsukhov, A., 2009) <sup>[16]</sup>.

Balan B. A. notes that the tackling the ball is 12.4%, and the interception of the ball is 16.6% of the total number of tactical and technical actions (TTA) (passes, tackles, interceptions, stepovers, flick-ons, etc.) during the matches of qualified teams at the stage of conditioning before championships (Balan, B. A., 2020).

Indices of technical and tactical actions of football players during competitions are studied by many researchers. In particular, the structure of technical and tactical actions of football teams, coalitions of players in attack and defense; actions of qualified football players of various positional roles in the playing areas of the pitch; indices of the passes (short, long, rapid, headed, backward, deep, etc.), dribbling, interceptions, tackles and slide tackles, shots, headers, scissors kicks, spinning shots, and actions of goalkeepers are determined. However, in our opinion, the differences between the performance of tackles, interceptions and counteractions to opponents by the world champions in the final matches of the 1994-2014 World Cup have not been sufficiently studied.

A number of authors (Zhurid, S. M., Sleman, R., 2015; 2016; Zhurid, S. M., Dovbiy, O., 2018; Perevoznik, V. I., Pertsukhov, A.A., 2009; Perevoznik, V. I., Mulyk, V. V., Payevsky, V. V., 2020) <sup>[5, 6, 7, 12, 14]</sup> studied the performance of interceptions and tackles in the competitions of the teams of the first league of the Ukrainian championship in 2010, 2011 - 2016, and 2019; football players aged 19-20 at the stage of conditioning for higher achievements, teams of the high league of Ukraine and compared the performance of interceptions and tackles in the matches of the high and first leagues of Ukrainian championships (Budzyn, V., Matviyas, O., Khorkavyy, B., Karp, I., Zharska, N., 2019; Mulyk, V. V., Perevoznik, V. I., Pertsukhov, A. A., 2015; Perevoznik, V., Payevsky, V., 2018) <sup>[3, 11, 15]</sup>.

Indices of quantity and quality of fights for the ball, tackles and interceptions of the ball in the matches of the European League 2011-2012 of the team "Metalist" (Kharkiv, Ukraine) were studied (Perevoznik, 2018) <sup>[15]</sup>.

Polish researchers (Mlynek, S., Stula, A., Soroka, A., 2019) <sup>[10]</sup> analyzed the performance of tackles, in particular, slide tackles, as well as the indices of counteractions in the matches of the 2018 World Cup. Scientists from Iran (Mohsen Javani, Mohammadreza Hamedinia, Kazem Khodaei, 2015) <sup>[9]</sup> have determined the number of interceptions and losses of the ball per match by players of Iranian Premier League teams.

However, in our opinion, the differences in the methods of tackles, interceptions and counteraction to opponents by the world champions in the final matches are insufficiently studied.

## 2. Materials and methods

During seven games of the European League 2011-2012, according to research Perevoznik, V., Payevsky, V., (2018) <sup>[15]</sup>, the team "Metalist" (Kharkiv, Ukraine) performed 41.28 TTAs per game on the average (the figure ranged from 26 to 65 times per match), and the failures number was 45.85% on the average, ranging from 32% to 63% in various matches. The team tackled the ball 56.57 times per match on the average (ranged from 49 to 71 tackles per match), and the average number of failures was 53.57% (ranging from 45% to 65%). "Metalist" intercepted the ball on the average 39.28% per match (ranged from 29 to 55 interceptions per match), and the performance failures was on the average 20.57% (ranged from 14% to 30%). The authors concluded that the indices of TTAs are low due to the successful, effective attacking actions of the team, and the interception of the ball was at the level of model characteristics (Perevoznik, V., Payevsky, V., 2018) <sup>[15]</sup>.

Szymon Mlynek, Aleksander Stula, Andrzej Soroka, (2019) <sup>[10]</sup>, analyzing the effectiveness of the teams in 52 matches during the 2018 World Cup in Russia, note that the players of the teams that won the matches performed on the average  $42.1 \pm 6.9$  tackles per match, and the players of the teams that lost the matches performed on the average  $41.2 \pm 8.3$  tackles. The effectiveness of slide tackles was on the average  $17.2 \pm 4.9$  for the winners and  $15.7 \pm 5.6$  for those who lost the matches.

Analyzing the episodes in the penalty area of the opponent teams participating in the World Cup 2014, the authors (Mulyk, V. V., Perevoznik, V. I., Pertsukhov, A. A., 2015) <sup>[11]</sup> determined that on the average per match the team performed 3.0 fights for the high ball, 0.3 tackles and 0.2 interceptions of the ball. The most effective in the penalty

area of the opponent were ball stops and interceptions 62.5%, while the efficiency of tackles was 22.2%, the efficiency of fights for the high ball - 26.8%.

In the matches of the second round of the Ukrainian Football Championship 2008, footballers of "Metallurg" (Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine), among technical and tactical actions in defense (counteraction, interception, tackles, etc.) performed on the average 68 counterattacks, 78 interceptions, 63 tackles (Doroshenko, E. Y., 2009) <sup>[4]</sup>.

Studying the technical and tactical actions of the teams of the Premier League of Iran, scientists (Mohsen Javani, Mohammadreza Hamedinia, Kazem Khodaei, 2015) <sup>[9]</sup> determined that the attackers had a much lower level of interceptions (7.94) and a high level of loss of the ball (3.14) compared to defenders, where were 16.61 interceptions and 1.12 losses of the ball, and with midfielders, (14.36 and 1.62, respectively). That is, the players of the Iranian Premier League intercepted the ball on the average 38.91 times per match.

Balan B. A. determined the number of technical and tactical actions in the defense of qualified players of different game roles. Most interceptions of the ball (10.9 times) and tackles (10.1 times) are performed by defenders; midfielders intercept the ball 9.2 times and tackle 8.5 times; attackers intercept the ball 4, 3 times and tackle the ball 6.6 times (Balan, B. A., 2020).

The authors (Zhurid, S. M., Sleman, R., 2015; 2016; 2018; Perevoznik, V. I., Zhurid, S. M., Marchenko, V. A., 2012) <sup>[5, 6, 7, 13]</sup>, analyzing the indices of technical and tactical actions of the team "Helios" (Kharkiv, Ukraine) in the matches of the first league in 2011-2012, 2014-2015, 2015 and 2016, ie, in the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> (first round) and 26<sup>th</sup> Championships of Ukraine, found that the team performed on the average 62.3, 48.9 and 49.81 fights for the high ball, with a performance failure 50.5%, 49.46% and 37.22%, ball interceptions 54, 24.76, 31.6, and 25.63, with a performance failure 35.1%, 28.45%, 28.96% and 27.72%, tackles 48.7, 50.22, 46.0 and 51.0 times, with a performance failure 56.7%, 57%, 51.73% and 58.86%.

That is, the team "Helios" (Kharkiv, Ukraine), in the championships of the first league of Ukraine performed on the average per match from 62.3 to 48.9 fights, with a performance failure 50.5% - 37.22%, interceptions of the ball from 54 to 24.76, with a performance failure 35.1% - 27.72%, ball tackles from 51 to 46.0, with a performance failure from 58.86% to 51.73%.

The team "Illichivets" (Mariupol, Ukraine) in the first league of Ukraine in 2010, according to the authors (Zhurid, S. M., Dovbiy, O., 2018) <sup>[7]</sup>, performed interceptions on the average 101.1 times during the match with a performance failure 6.28%; low ball tackles 60.7, with a performance failure 20.36% and high ball tackles 58.4, with a performance failure 31.45%. In our opinion, the high rate of interceptions (101.1) is due to the probable inclusion of interceptions performed by players due to unsuccessful passes of opponents.

Studying the performance of fights for the high ball by players of the "Metalist - 1925", (the first league of Ukraine in 2019), the authors (Perevoznik, V. I., Mulyk, V. V., Payevsky, V. V., 2020) <sup>[14]</sup> found that players performed on the average 34.6 fights for the high ball per match, with a performance failure 47.65%. In the second half, the performance failure was higher than in the first half, because of players' fatigue.

According to (Perevoznik, V. I., Pertsukhov, A.A., 2009; Pertsukhov, A., 2009)<sup>[12, 16]</sup>, the players of the top league of Ukraine have almost the same indices of the interceptions and tacklers number per match as the players of the first league. The number of flick-ons is significantly higher in first-league players (5.90) than in top-league players (3.23). However, the coefficient of efficiency of the flick-ons is significantly higher in the players of the top league (87%) than in the players of the first league (52.9%).

However, the sources we analyzed do not contain information on the methods of tackle performance, interception of the ball with the feet or head, counteraction to passes, and shots.

In the course of the research, we conducted pedagogical observations on the tackles, interceptions, and counteractions performed by the world champions of 1994-2014 in the final matches using video recordings of the matches. The results of pedagogical observations were

analyzed using the methods of mathematical statistics.

### 3. Results

Pedagogical observations of the interceptions, tackles and counteraction performed by the players of the World Cup teams during the normal time of the final matches of the World Cup 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014 revealed the following.

Most times, the ball was intercepted by the feet, by slide tackles, in the jump, or due to the chosen position by the players of the French national team in 1998 - 48 times in total, 17 of which were unsuccessful or incomplete (Table 1). The players of Brazil in 2002 and Italy in 2006 intercepted the ball the least - 26 times, although the Italians only 5 times intercepted the ball unsuccessfully or incompletely.

Table 1

**Table 1:** Performance of interceptions by the players during the normal time of the final matches of the World Cups 1994 – 2014

S. No	Types of interceptions, counteractions	Number of full/and incomplete, failed interceptions					
		Brazil 1994	France 1998	Brazil 2002	Italy 2006	Spain 2010	Germany 2014
1	Interception by feet, ahead of the opponent	10/-7	15/-12	7/-3	13/-3	11/-8	11/-7
2	Interception by feet in a jump, slide tackles	1/-1	4/-4	3/-1	3/-1	1/-2	4/0
3	Interception by feet, due to the chosen position	17/-1	12/-1	9/-3	15/-1	10/-2	10/-3
4	Total	28/-9	31/-17	19/-7	21/-5	22/-12	25/-10
5	Interception by head, chest	16/-9	21/-8	15/-11	14/-5	16/-8	14/-14
6	Interception and possessing the ball due to unsuccessful actions of opponents	16/-1	9/-1	13/-4	13/-1	14/-1	8/-1
7	Interceptions: total:	60/-19	61/-26	47/-22	48/-11	52/-21	47/-25
8	Counteraction, fight for the high ball	3/-5	4/-2	3/-3	6/-4	4/-2	1/-5
9	Counteraction to rapid passes	5/-1	6/-11	5/-4	1/-5	1/-4	3/-9
10	Counteraction to shots	0/-2	2/-2	1/-1	4/0	0/-1	1/-3
11	Counteraction: total	8/-8	12/-15	9/-8	11/-9	5/-7	5/-15

The most frequent interceptions of the ball with the head and counteracting the opponent in the fight for the high ball among the world champions 1994-2014 in the normal time during the final matches were performed by the French national team in 1998: 35 times, 10 of which - incomplete or failed interceptions. The players of the Italian national team in 2006 intercepted the ball with their heads and opposed the opponent in the fight for the high ball: 29 times, 9 of them were incomplete or unsuccessful interceptions.

The players of the French national team in 1998 intercepted the ball with their feet and head the most times - 87 times, 26 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely. The players of the Italian national team in 2006 intercepted the ball in various ways the least times - 59 times, 11 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely.

Also, the players of the French national team in 1998 counteracted the most times with rapid passes and shots - 21 times, 13 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely. The players of the Spanish national team in 2010 counteracted the fewest passes, shots on goal 6 times, 6 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely (Table 1).

Most of the time the ball was taken with the feet (except for slide tackles) from the opponent, who was facing the player, the players of the French national team in 1998 - 33 times, 20 of which the tackles were incomplete or unsuccessful (Table 2). The least number of times the ball was taken in such situations by the players of the Brazilian national team in 2002 - 14 times, 8 of which failed or incomplete.

The most times the ball was taken from the opponent, who

was next to the player, were performed by the German national team in 2014 (13 times), 11 of which - unsuccessfully or incompletely, and the least times (3) in similar situations, the ball was taken by players of Brazil in 2002 (Table 2).

The players of the national team of France in 1998 took the ball with their feet from the opponent who had his back to the player - 12 times, 9 of which were unsuccessful, and the players of the national teams of Brazil 2002 and Italy 2006 performed tackles the least times in such situations (9 times), the Brazilians tackled the ball less successfully.

Thus, most of the times the ball was taken with the feet, except for slide tackles, from opponents who were in front of the player, next and back to the player, the players of the French national team in 1998, - 48 times, 33 of which failed or incomplete. The players of the Brazilian national team tackled the ball with their feet (except for slide tackles) the least times - 26, 18 of them unsuccessfully (Table 2).

Among the world champions during the normal time of the final matches of 1994-2014 the most times and most successfully possessed the ball after the slide tackles, when the opponent was in front of the player, the national teams of France in 1998 and Italy in 2006 (5 times), 2 of which were unsuccessful or incomplete, and the least times the ball was taken by the players of the Spanish national team in 2010, - 1 and, unsuccessfully (Table 2).

Most times the ball was taken in the slide tackles, when the opponent was next to the player of the German national team in 2014 - 7 times, mostly unsuccessfully, and only

once the player of the Spanish national team in 2010 tackled the ball in this way but unsuccessfully.

Very rarely, world champions took the ball in the tackle slide when the opponent was with his back to the player. The French footballers of 1998 took the ball the most times when the opponent was with his back to the player, - 4 times, 2 of them were unsuccessful or incomplete. The players of the Spanish national team in 2010 did not perform such an action.

In general, the players of the national teams of France in 1998 and Germany in 2014 performed slide tackles the most times, both 13 times, and the team of France in 1998 was more successful. The Spanish national team in 2010 performed slide tackles the least times - 2, both times unsuccessfully, incompletely.

The players of the national team of Germany in 2014 most often tackled the ball by pushing torso to torso or shoulder to shoulder, running in one direction, overtaking, blocking, and pushing the opponent - 13 times, 10 of them incomplete or unsuccessful. The Brazilians took the ball from the opponent in such way the least times in 2002, - 8 times, 2 of them unsuccessfully.

Among the 1994-2014 world champions, the players of the national team of France 1998 performed various tackles during the normal time of the final matches - 73 times, 44 of which were incomplete or unsuccessful. The players of the Brazilian national team in 2002 performed various tackles least times - 41, 25 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Performance of tackles by the world champions during the normal time of the final matches of the World Cup 1994 – 2014

S. No	Types of tackles	Number of full/and incomplete, failed tackles					
		Brazil 1994	France 1998	Brazil 2002	Italy 2006	Spain 2010	Germany 2014
1	Tackles with feet, facing the opponent	6/-11	13/-20	6/-8	6/-13	7/-10	6/-12
2	Tackles with feet, the opponent next to the player	1/-3	1/-4	1/-2	1/-5	2/-4	2/-11
3	Tackles with feet, the opponent with his back to the player	3/-7	3/-9	1/-8	5/-4	3/-8	1/-9
	Total:	10/-21	17/-33	8/-18	12/-22	12/-22	9/-32
4	Slide tackles, facing the opponent	1/-4	3/-2	1/-2	3/-2	0/-1	0/-4
5	Slide tackles, the opponent next to the player	2/-2	3/-1	1/-2	3/-3	0/-1	1/-6
6	Slide tackles, the opponent with his back to the player	1/-1	2/-2	0/-1	0/-1	0	2/0
	Slide tackles, Total:	4/-7	8/-5	2/-5	6/-6	0/-2	3/-10
7	Tackles, push to shoulder or torso	2/0	1/-1	0	2/-3	1/-3	0
8	Tackles, running in one direction with the opponent	4/-3	3/-5	6/-2	3/-2	4/-4	3/-10
9	Tackles, total:	20/-31	29/-44	16/-25	23/-33	17/-31	15/-52

During the extra time of the final matches in 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, players of the Italian national team in 2006 most often intercepted the ball with their feet outrunning the opponent, slide tackling or in the jump and due to the chosen position - 16 times, 7 of which were incomplete or unsuccessful. The players of the Spanish national team in 2010 intercepted the ball with their feet during the extra time only 4 times (Table 3).

The players of the German national team in 2014 intercepted the ball with their heads and opposed the opponent in the fight for the high ball the most times during the extra time of

the final matches - 24 times, 9 - incomplete or unsuccessful. The players of the Italian national team in 2006 intercepted the ball with their heads and opposed the opponent in the fight for the high ball the least times - 11 times, 3 of them were incomplete or unsuccessful (Table 3).

Also, during the extra time, the players of the national teams of Brazil 1994, Italy 2006, and Germany 2014 counteracted to rapid passes and shots, each team - 9 times, 7 of them were unsuccessfully or incompletely performed by the Italians and Germans, and the Brazilians - 8 times. (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Performance of interceptions by the world champions during the extra time of the final matches of the World Cup 1994 – 2014

S. No	Types of interceptions, counteractions	Number of full/and incomplete, failed interceptions			
		Brazil 1994	Italy 2006	Spain 2010	Germany 2014
1	Interception by feet, ahead of the opponent	2/-2	3/-2	1/0	4/-3
2	Interception by feet in a jump, slide tackles	1/0	0/-1	0	2/-1
3	Interception by feet, due to the chosen position	3/-1	6/-4	3/0	4/0
4	Total	6/-3	9/-7	4/0	10/-4
5	Interceptions with the head, chest, due to the chosen position, outrunning, jumps, pushes	6/-4	4/-2	5/-5	10/-5
6	Interception and possessing the ball due to unsuccessful actions of opponents	6/0	5/0	2/0	1/-1
7	Interceptions, total:	18/-7	18/-9	11/-5	21/-10
8	Counteractions with jumps, pushes	1/-1	4/-1	0/-3	5/-4
9	Counteraction to rapid passes	1/-6	2/-5	2/0	2/-5
10	Counteraction to shots	0/-2	0/-2	0	0/-2
11	Counteractions, total:	2/-9	6/-8	2/-3	7/-11

In extra time, among the world champions in 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, the players of the Italian national team in 2006 tackled the ball with their feet the most, - 18 times (except for slide tackles), 15 of them unsuccessfully or incompletely

(Table 4).

The players of the Brazilian national team tackled the ball the most times in 1994, - 5 times, successfully. Only once the players of the German national team failed performing a



slide tackle in 2014.

During the extra time in the final matches of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, players of the Italian national team in 2006 performed the most number of tackles running in one direction, outrunning, blocking, and pushing the opponent - 7 times, 4 of which were incomplete or unsuccessful. The players of the Brazilian national team in 1994 performed only 2 tackles, one of them failed.

Among the football champions of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, during the extra time of the final matches, the players of the Italian national team in 2006 tackled the ball in various ways 26 times, 21 of which failed or incomplete. The players of the German national team in 2014 performed tackles the least times - 10, 5 of them failed or incomplete (Table 4).

**Table 4:** Performance of tackles by the world champions during the extra time of the final matches of the World Cup 1994 – 2014

S. No	Types of tackles	Number of full/and incomplete, failed tackles			
		Brazil 1994	Italy 2006	Spain 2010	Germany 2014
1	Tackles, facing the opponent	2/-6	2/-11	6/-3	3/-2
2	Tackles, the opponent next to the player	3/-2	0/-2	1/0	0/-2
3	Tackles, the opponent with his back to the player	0/-4	1/-2	3/-1	0
4	Total:	5/-12	3/-15	10/-4	3/-4
5	Slide tackles, facing the opponent	2/0	0/-1	2/0	0
6	Slide tackles, the opponent next to the player	3/0	0/-1	1/-1	0/-1
7	Slide tackles, the opponent with his back to the player	0	0	0	0
8	Slide tackles, Total:	5/0	0/-2	3/-1	0/-1
9	Tackles, push to shoulder or torso	0	0	0	0
10	Tackles, running in one direction with the opponent, outrunning, blocking or pushing	1/-1	3/-4	0/-3	2/0
11	Tackles, total:	11/-12	6/-21	13/-8	5/-5

#### 4. Discussion

The world champions in 1994-2014 in the normal time of the final matches tackled the ball with their feet outrunning the opponent, performed slide tackles and tackles in the jump or due to the chosen position, etc. on the average 34.33 times, 10 of which failed or incomplete and 13.66 times the ball was tackled due to unsuccessful actions of opponents; 1.5 times unsuccessfully or incompletely. The studied tackles differ slightly from those performed by "Metalist" (Kharkiv, Ukraine) in European League matches (39.28 interceptions), Iranian Premier League teams (38.91) the first league teams of Ukraine, and differ significantly from the indices of qualified players (24.4).

Comparing the average number of interceptions of the ball with the feet performed by the world champions during normal time (90 ') and during extra time (30') x 3, it was found that in extra time the average indices decreased slightly, and the number of unsuccessful and incomplete interceptions increased slightly.

During the normal time of the final matches, the world champions of 1994-2014 intercepted the ball with the head, chest, due to the chosen position, outrun, jump, push and counteracted the opponent in the fight for the high ball, jumping, pushing, etc. on the average 32.16 times per match, 12.66 of which failed or incomplete. Indices of the number of interceptions and counteractions to the opponent for the high ball differ slightly from the indices of fights for the high ball of Ukrainian teams in the Premier League and the first league, however, unsuccessful actions of world champions are much less.

In the extra time of the final matches of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, this average index increased by 40% compared to the normal time of 1994-2014 finals, and their unsuccessful and incomplete performance increased by 48%.

In general, the world champions of 1994-2014 intercepted the ball in different ways (feet, head), during the normal time of the final matches, on the average 73.16 times per match (max. 87 – min. 59), 20.66 of which failed or incomplete. In extra time, the average number of interceptions of the ball in various ways increased slightly,

and their unsuccessful and incomplete performance increased by 12.5% compared to the average in the normal time of the 1994-2014 finals.

Also, during the normal time of the 1994-2014 final matches, the world champions counteracted to rapid passes of the opponents on the average 9.16 times per match (max. 17 – min. 5), 5.66 of which failed or incomplete, and counteracted to the shots on the average 2.83 times. During the extra time of the finals of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, the average number of counteractions to the opponent's rapid passes increased by 88%, their unsuccessful and incomplete performance increased by 112%, and counteractions to shots increased by 59% compared to the average index during the normal time of the 1994-2014 World Cup matches.

The world champions counteracted to the opponent in the fight for the high ball, rapid passes and shots in total 18.66 times per match (max. 27 – min. 12), on the average of which 10.33 times failed or incomplete. During the extra time of the finals 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, the average number of counteractions doubled, as well as the unsuccessful and incomplete performance of counteractions (compared to the normal time of the finals 1998-2014).

During the normal time of the final matches the world champions tackled the ball with their feet (except for slide tackles) on the average 36 times per match, 24.66 of which were unsuccessful. Performing slide tackles, the ball was taken on the average 9.66 times per match, 5.83 of which failed or incomplete. Adding the slide tackles and tackles in jumps - 6.25 times (Table 1), we got on the average 15.91 tackles in the 1994-2014 final matches. At the World Cup 2018, the winning teams performed on the average 17.2 slide tackles per match.

During the extra time of the final matches of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, the average number of tackles (except for slide tackles) increased by 16.7%; unsuccessful and incomplete tackles in this way increased by 6.4%, slide tackles increased by 6.8%; unsuccessful and incomplete slide tackles decreased by 35.7% compared to the normal time of the 1994-2014 finals.

Also, during the normal time, the ball was taken by pushing torso to torso, shoulder to shoulder on the average 2.16 times per match, 1.16 of which failed. The players tackled the ball, running in one direction with the opponent, outrunning, blocking, and pushing the opponent on the average 8.16 times per match, 4.33 of which failed or incomplete. During the extra time, the average number of tackles increased by 28.7%, and the number of unsuccessful and incomplete tackles increased by 38.6%.

In total, the world football champions of 1994-2014 during the normal time of the final matches performed tackles in various ways (with feet, push torso to torso, shoulder to shoulder, running in one direction with the opponent, outrunning, blocking, pushing the opponent) on the average 56 times per game (max. 73 – min. 41), 36 of which were incomplete or unsuccessful. Similar figures we observed in the matches played by “Metalist” (Kharkiv, Ukraine) in the European League, - total 56.57, and unsuccessful 30.3, at the World Cup in Russia in 2018 - 42.1, at the first league of Ukraine (51 - 46). Twice as many indices of tackles were observed in qualified footballers. During the extra time of the final matches of the 1994, 2006, 2010, and 2014 World Cups, tackles in various ways increased on the average by 8.5%, and the number of unsuccessful and incomplete tackles decreased slightly, by 4.17%, compared to normal time averages at finals of 1994-2014.

## 5. Conclusions

1. The world champions of 1994-2014 in the normal time of the final matches performed interceptions the ball with their feet, slide tackles, in the jump, thanks to the chosen position, intercepted and tackled the ball due to unsuccessful actions of opponents on the average 47.99 times per match, 11.5 of which 11.5 or incomplete. In total, during the normal period of the final matches, the ball was intercepted in various ways (feet and head) on the average 73.16 times per match (from 87 to 59 times), 20.66 of which failed or incomplete.
2. The world champions counteracted the opponent in the fight for the high ball, rapid passes and shots in total 18.66 times per match (from 27 to 12 times), on the average 10.33 of which failed or incomplete; tackled the ball in various ways on the average 56 times per match (from 73 to 41 times), 36 of which 36 were incomplete or unsuccessful.
3. Indices of the number of interceptions, tackles and counteractions shown by the champions in the finals of the 1994-2014 World Championships differ slightly from the indices of the Premier League and the first league of Ukraine and Iran, however, unsuccessful and incomplete interceptions, tackles and counteractions to the opponent in the matches of world champions is much less.
4. During the extra time of the final matches of 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014, the average number of interceptions and unsuccessful interceptions, as well as the total number of tackles in various ways increased slightly compared to the average indices during the normal time at finals of 1994 -2014 years. Instead, the average of the total number, as well as the number of unsuccessful interceptions and counteractions to the opponent in the fight for the high ball, counteraction to shots, and rapid passes increased significantly during the extra time.

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