

Underage GAA

What is the best Approach?

Participation in Sport Among Children

Determinants

- **To have fun** – principle reason cited by boys and girls for participating in school sport and non-school sport
- **Lack of fun** and **lack of perceived competence** are the major reasons cited for drop-out after the age of 12
- A critical task for coaches is to discover ways of promoting enjoyment and enhancing children's perceived competence



GAA Coaches are Experts
Want Evidence!

Studies on Young GAA Players!

Is there any Evidence?

- Other approaches work
- Is there a formula to insure that all children get equal access, and meaningful playing time?
- Increased levels of enjoyment
- Increased perceived competence
- More ball contacts
- Physically demanding for all children

Proof

Where do we Start?

Got to start somewhere!

15 a-side vs. 7 a-side

Study Questions

1. Will U-14 players have more involvement (in terms of intentional ball contacts) during a 7 a-side than a 15 a-side game?
2. Will the levels of enjoyment and perceived competence be greater or less in U-14 players during a 7 a-side than a 15 a-side game?
3. Will a 7 a-side game be more challenging than an 15 a-side game in terms of the hard the players have to work?

Research Design

Overview

- IRB approval and meeting with parents
- Visit to the Human Performance Laboratory in DCU - Ht, Wt, BMI, % fat, lung capacity and aerobic fitness levels were assessed
- 2 competitive games (15 a-side and 7 a-side) which were videotaped
- Heart rate monitors were worn for the duration of each game
- Heart rate data was continuously recorded and used to determine physiological responses during each game
- Questionnaire to assess enjoyment levels and perceived level of competence was completed following each game

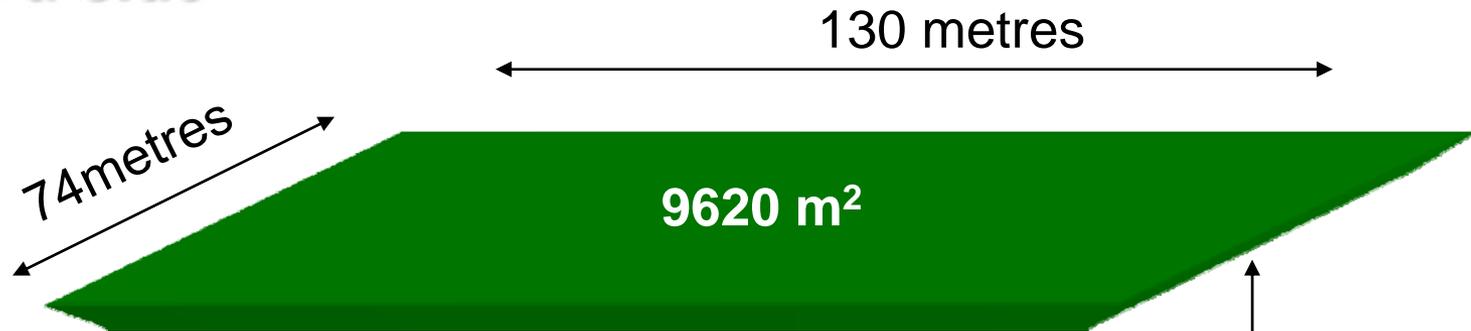
Subjects

Physiological Characteristics

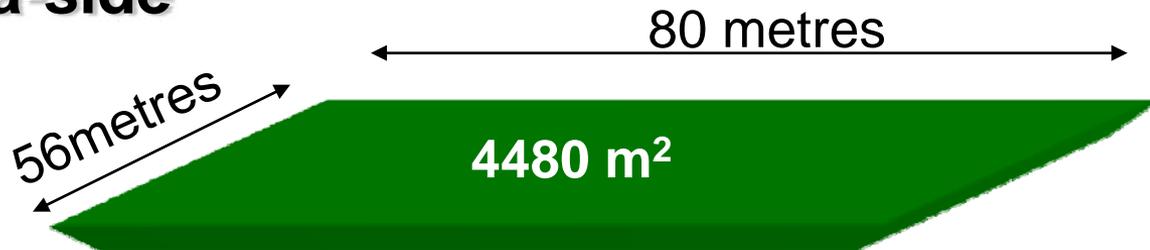
Variable	Mean \pm SD
Age (y)	14.0 \pm 0.0
Ht (cm)	172.0 \pm 2.8
Wt (kg)	64.5 \pm 10.7
BMI (kg/m ²)	20.7 \pm 3.3.
%fat	15.9 \pm 6.7
VO ₂ max (l/min)	3.5 \pm 0.4
VO ₂ max (ml/kg/min)	56.9 \pm 4.0
Ve max (l/min)	97.6 \pm 12.0
HR max (b/min)	204.0 \pm 10.0
%VO ₂ @VT	88.8 \pm 1.9
FVC	4.2 \pm 0.6

Field Dimensions

15 a-side



7 a-side



320m²/player



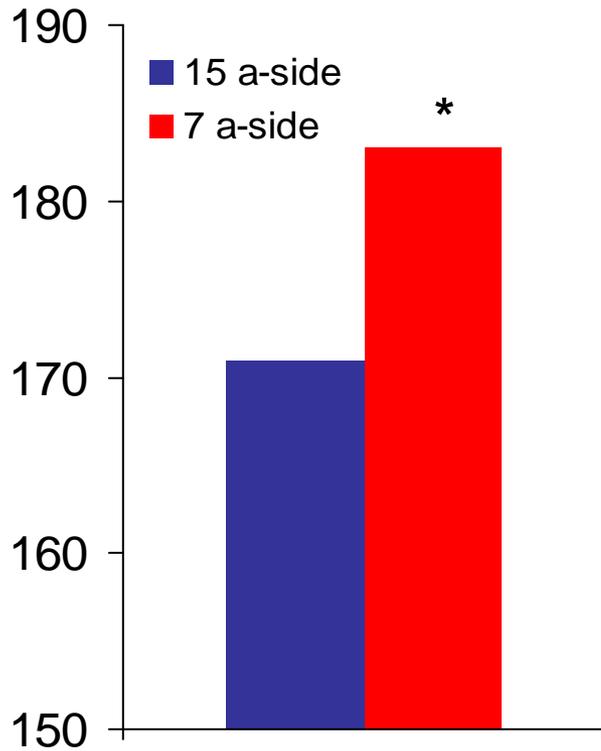
Match Analysis

Player	John		Micky	
Event	Fistpass	Handpass	Footpass	Punt
	Pick-up	High catch	Chest catch	Low catch
Event	Foul com	Foul won	Intercept foot	Intercept hand
	Solo hop	Solo tap	Shot Score	Fisted Shot
Outcome	Won Clean	Break Won	Turnover	Break Lost
	Point	Goal	Technical	Personal

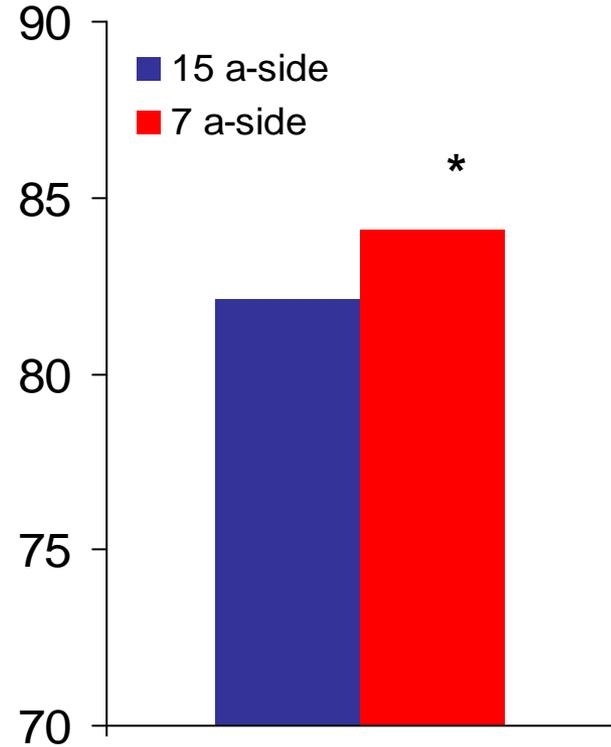
Study **Results**

Heart Rate Response

Heart Rate

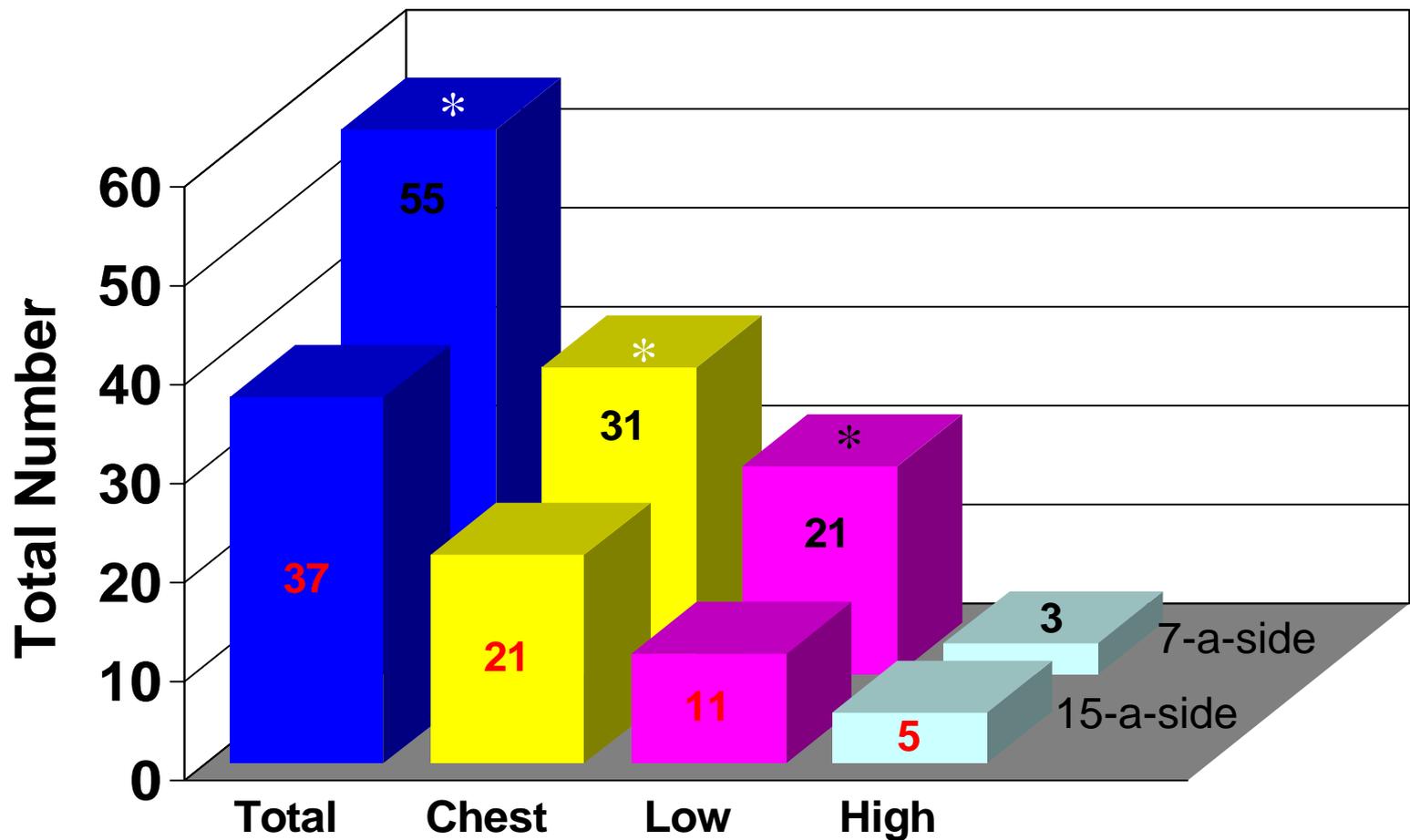


% Max HR



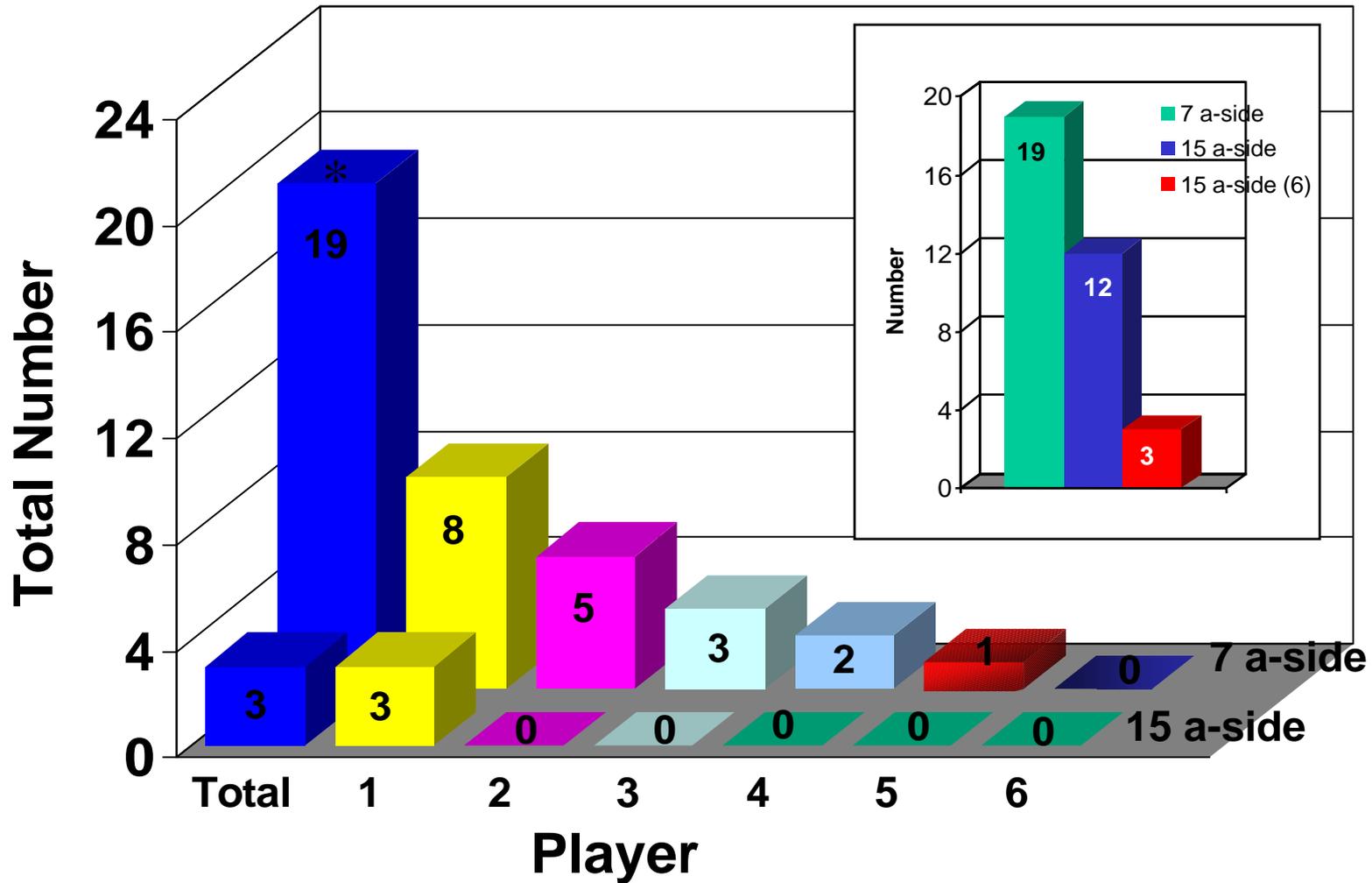
Match Analysis

Chest, Low and High Catch



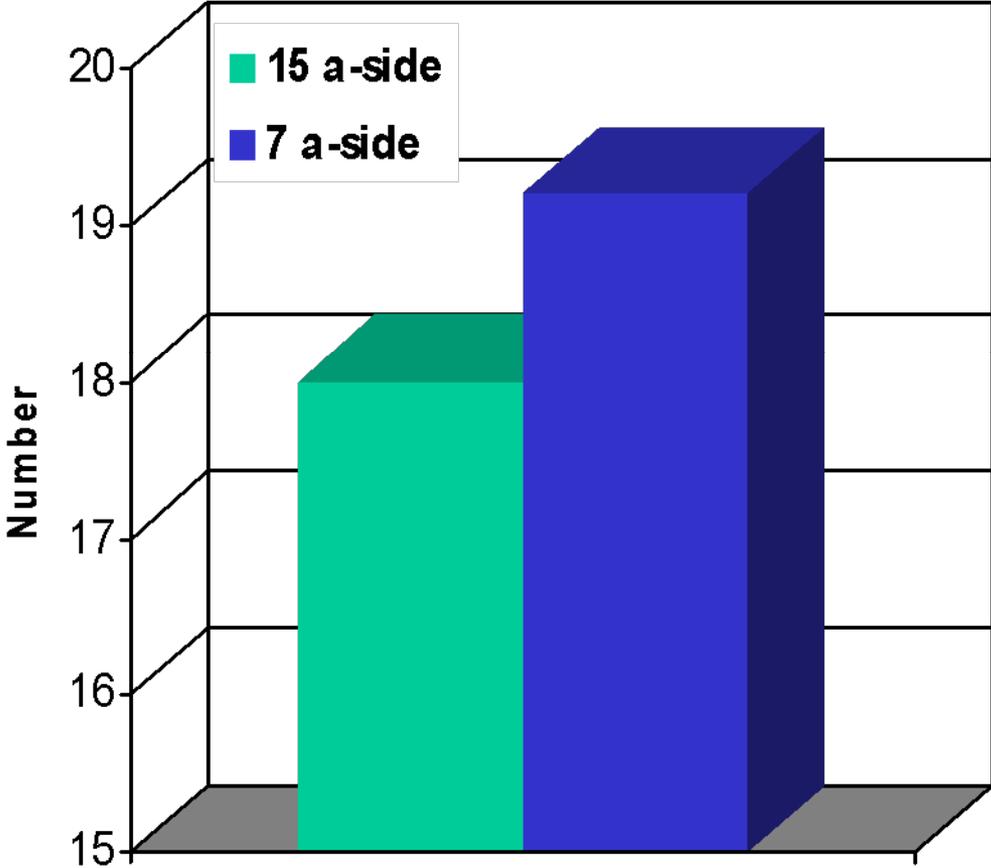
Match Analysis

Scoring Attempts



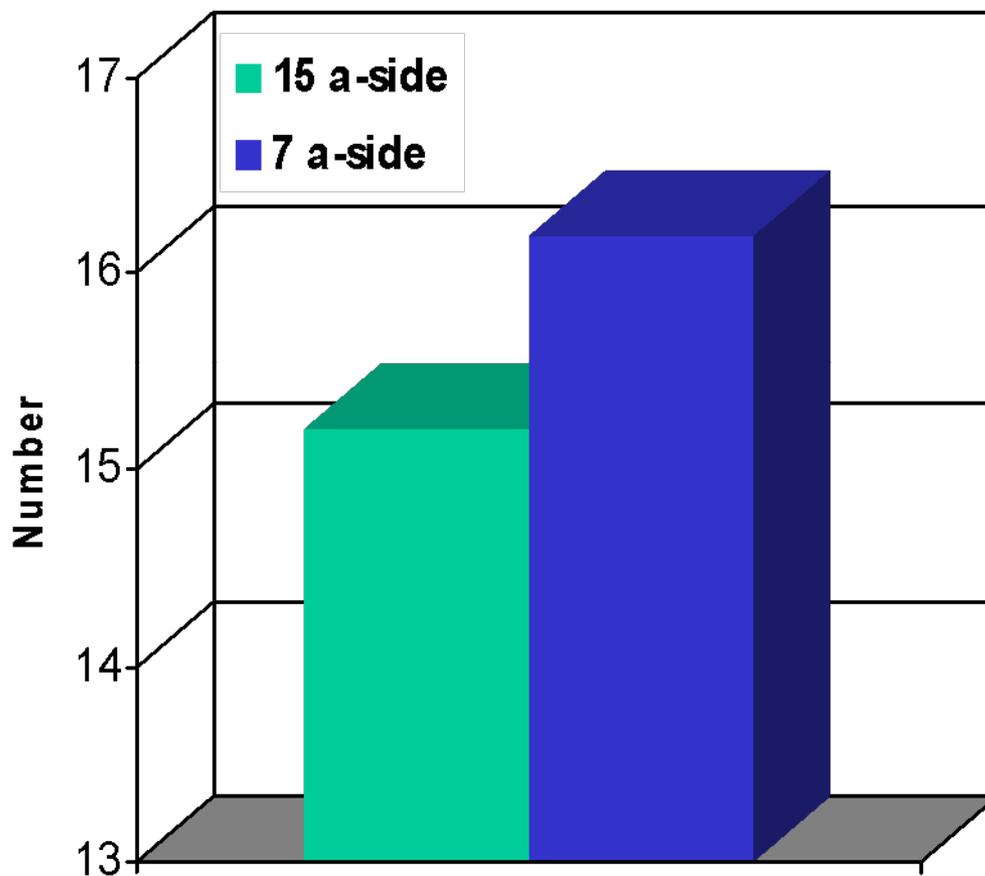
Match Analysis

Enjoyment



Match Analysis

Perceived Competence



Study Summary

1. There was a greater number of catches, passes, pick-ups and scoring attempts in the 7 a-side than a 15 a-side games
2. Levels of enjoyment and perceived competence were higher during the 7 a-side than the 15 a-side game
3. The players worked harder during the 7 a-side than the 15 a-side game