



EUROPEAN HANDBALL
FEDERATION

XIII. MEN'S EURO 2018 CROATIA

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The IV. Men's European Championship was played in Croatia in 2000.

Then the Swedish National Team became the Champion, because in the final match SWE won against Russia. The home team finished at the 6th place.

18 years later Croatia organised again the final tournament of the XIII. Men's European Championship between 12-28. of January 2018.

This year the Spanish team won the final against Sweden and became first time the best team in Europe! Again, the home team could not win a medal, CRO ended in the 5th place.

The preliminary rounds - as usually - were held in four cities.

SPLIT	POREC	ZAGREB	VARAZDIN
A	B	C	D
CRO	FRA	GER	ESP
SWE	BLR	MKD	DEN
SRB	NOR	MNE	CZE
ISL	AUT	SLO	HUN

After the 3 group games, the last ranked team had to go home and the 3 teams of each group created 2 Main Groups (A+B and C+D) in Zagreb and Varazdin.

They played furthermore 3 matches and the first and second ranked teams played for the final, for the bronze, silver and gold medal in Arena Zagreb.

The playing sport-halls were almost full of spectators and a high number of TV stations broadcasted the event.



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The matches of the home team filled the sport halls completely. In Arena Zagreb 14,000 spectators supported their favorite team, but the fans of several countries produced a very good atmosphere for their own teams (AUT, HUN, MKD, SLO, NOR, DEN).

During the first week of the tournament the EHF organised the 1st Module of the Master Coaches and Licencing Renewal Course parallel with the Croatian Coaches National Course and Croatian Master Course 2nd Module.

700 coaches attended the course, such a high number had never participated in an EHF course.

40 coaches participated at the 1st Module for the eight-day programme and 21 coaches prolonged their licence during four days.

One day before the Final there was a draw for the Qualification's matches, which will be played in June 2018 between two teams for the participation of the next World Championship in GER and DEN in 2019.

The organisers arranged everyting for the smooth settlement of the tournament. They produced professional circumstances for the teams and EHF delegates during the EURO 2018 in Croatia. Many thanks for them!



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PARTICIPANTS and RANKING 2018

TEAM	MP	W	D	L	AV RESULT	GOAL DIFFERENCE	POINT
1. ESP	8	6	-	2	28:24	4	12
2. SWE	8	5	-	3	27:27	0	10
3. FRA	8	7	-	1	31:27	4	14
4. DEN	8	5	-	3	29:27	2	10

5. CRO	7	5	-	2	30:25	5	10
6. CZE	7	3	1	3	25:27	-2	7

7. NOR	6	4	-	2	32:28	4	8
8. SLO	6	2	2	2	27:25	2	6
9. GER	6	2	2	2	26:24	2	6
10. BLR	6	2	1	3	26:29	-3	5
11. MKD	6	2	1	3	24:27	-3	5
12. SRB	6	1	-	5	27:32	-5	2

13. ISL	3	1	-	2	25:27	-2	2
14. HUN	3	-	-	3	25:31	-5	0
15. AUT	3	-	-	3	27:33	-6	0
16. MNE	3	-	-	3	22:30	-8	0



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PARTICIPANTS and RANKING 2016 and 2018

2016	2018
1. GER	ESP
2. ESP	SWE
3. CRO	FRA
4. NOR	DEN
5. FRA	CRO
6. DEN	CZE
7. POL	NOR
8. SWE	SLO
9. RUS	GER
10. BLR	BLR
11. MKD	MKD
12. HUN	SRB
13. ISL	ISL
14. SLO	HUN
15. SRB	AUT
16. MNE	MNE

This year **ESP** became the Champion. After the last ECH, they changed the silver medal for the gold.

SWE improved their ranking with seven places and ended on the second place.

FRA and **DEN** played against each other - like two years ago - but now for the bronze medal with FRA success.



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CRO was obviously disappointed with the 5th place, they expected a medal.

The performance and ranking of the **CZE** team was the positive surprise of the tournament.

FRA lost just one game during the tournament, against **SWE** in the semi-final.

From the 1-6th ranked teams of the previous European Championship, 4 teams saved their places among the best ones.

AUT and **CZE** played instead of **POL** and **RUS**.

BLR, **MKD**, **ISL** and **MNE** remained in the same ranking in the second half of the field.

GER, the last Champion was defeated and ended in the 9th place.

SLO improved its position by six places.

Just 6 teams conceded more goals (27) than the 2-4th ranked teams.



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PLAYERS

256 players played in 16 teams.

2018

165 players are playing abroad, average 10 players in each team and 91 at home, average 6 players/team.

2016

143 players played abroad and 113 at home.

The number of players who are playing at home, even decreased.

Average Age of Players/Team: 27.3 years

	2016	2018
U23:	2	3
23-30:	10	9
over 30:	4	4

Majority of players are between 23 and 30 years.

Most	Fewest
DEN: 29.4	BLR: 25.0
CRO: 29.3	HUN: 25.8
ESP: 29.3	SRB: 25.8
MKD: 29.2	SWE: 25.9



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Used the **most** players U 23:

BLR 7, HUN 6, ISL 5

Fewest:

MNE 0, SRB, SLO, ESP, DEN 1-1

Used the **most** players over 30:

MKD 10, SRB, SLO, ESP, DEN 8-8

Fewest:

NOR, MNE 2-2, SLO, GER 3:3

Average international games played/teams/players

Most:

DEN: 108

ISL: 105

FRA: 90

ESP: 89

Least:

MNE: 25

SRB: 43

MKD: 48

The most international matches played teams - except ISL - finished on the top.

The fewest international experienced teams ranked on the 11th, 12th, and 16th places.



Coaches

Number of foreign coaches : 2014: 2

2016: 7

2018: 5

1-6 ranked teams worked with domestic coaches :

FRA, ESP, SWE, DEN, CRO, CZE

The last four teams, ISL, HUN, AUT, MNE: 3 of them participated with foreign coaches.

Results

Goal difference among the teams by results

	2016	2018
<u>Draw :</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>1:</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>2:</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>3:</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>4-6:</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>7-9:</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>+10:</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>

2016: 48 games: 22 finished max. with 2 goals and 12 with a big difference.

2018: 47 games: 13 finished max. with 2 goals and 14 with a big difference.



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Number of goals/matches

Most

SRB-FRA: 30:39 = 69

NOR-AUT: 39:28 = 67

CRO-SWE: 31:35 = 66

Fewest

FRA-SWE: 23:17 = 40

GER-CZE: 22:19 = 41

ESP-CZE: 32:15 = 47

Some surprises by results

CRO-SWE : 31:35

MKD-SLO: 25:24

CZE-DEN: 25:24

MKD-GER: 25:25

Just **HUN**, **AUT** and **MNE** left the event without gaining points after 3 matches.

SWE and **FRA** took 4 points to the Main Round.

Before the last Main Round matches 9 from 12 teams had a chance to reach the semi finals!



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OFFENCE

Scored goals

In 47 games 16 teams from 4322 attempts scored 2562 goals.

AV: 46 shots, 27 goals/team/match, efficiency: 59%

EURO 2016/POL: **28** goals, **46** shots and the same efficiency!

Ranking

	Best	Least
7.	NOR 32	16. MNE 22
3.	FRA 31	11. MKD 24
5.	CRO 30	13. ISL 25
4.	DEN 29	14. HUN 25
1.	ESP 28	

The most goals scored teams finished on the top or in the first half of the field .

The fewest goals scored participants finished on the end of the European Championship.

Number of attacks

4322 shots and 927 turn overs

56 attacks/team/match



Turn Overs

AV : 10/team/match

Most	Fewest
CZE: 13	DEN: 6
MKD: 12	NOR: 6
FRA: 11	ESP: 8

9m shots

730 goals from 1693 shots

AV: 8 goals/18 shots,effeciency: 43%

Most	Fewest
CZE: 10 , 46%	ESP: 5.5, 37%
FRA: 9, 54%	MKD: 5.5, 34%
SWE: 8.5, 46%	CRO: 7, 46%

6m centre shots

385 goals from 546 shots

AV: 4/6, 71%

Most	Fewest
NOR: 6, 76%	CZE: 2, 48%
ESP: 5.5, 62%	CRO: 2.5, 82%
FRA: 5, 72%	BLR: 3, 67%



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Wing shots

500 goals from 817 shots

AV: 5/9, 61%

Best

NOR: 8, 64%

DEN: 8, 68%

BLR: 6.5, 63%

Least

CZE: 3.5, 47%

SLO: 4, 62%

SWE: 3.5, 39%

Fast Break

356 goals from 491 shots

AV: 4/5, 73%

Best

FRA: 6, 80%

SWE: 5.5, 73%

ESP: 5, 71%

Least

MNE: 2, 67%

SLO: 2.5, 71%

CZE: 2.5, 66%

Fast Throw Off

52 goals from 75 attempts, 69%

Best: FRA 8, SLO 7, DEN 6



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Breakthroughs

AV: 3/4, 75%

277 goals from 355 shots

AV: 3/4

Best

CRO 5, 86%

SWE 4, 79%

SLO 4, 86%

Least

FRA 1.5, 75%

DEN 2, 78%

CZE 2, 94%

7m penalty shots

263 goals from 345 attempts

AV: 3/4, 76%

Best

MKD: 3.5, 74%

ESP: 4, 74%

CRO: 3.5, 80%

Least

FRA: 2.5, 69%

SWE: 1.5, 63%

BLR: 2, 60%



Average Scored Goals by Positions/Shots/Efficiency

2016: 28/46/59%

2018: 27/46/59%

Positions:

9m:	8/18, 44%	8/18, 43%
wing:	5/8.5, 59%	5/9, 61%
6m centre:	5/7, 66%	4/6, 71%
breakthrough:	2/2.5, 85%	3/4, 75%
fast break:	4/5, 80	4/5, 73%
7m penalty:	3/4, 75%	3/4, 76%

Goal Distribution by Positions

	2016	2018
9m:	29%	30%
wing:	18%	19%
6m centre:	15%	19%
breakthrough:	8%	11%
fast break:	15%	14%
7m penalty:	11%	11%

The time stopped! There was not any relevant change in the number of the scored goals by positions.



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The shot's efficiency decreased via breakthrough by **10%** , fast break by **7%** and increased via 6m centre shots by **5%**.

At the goals distribution by positions we can find the following changes: by fast break goals increased by **4%** and by breakthrough goals by **3%**.



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THE BEST

scorers	assists	goals + assist
1. O. Zdrahala (CZE), 55	S.Sagosen (NOR), 38	R. Lauge Schmidt 76
2. M. Hansen (DEN), 43	R.Lauge Schmidt (DEN), 36	S. Sagosen 70
3. R. Lauge Schmidt (DEN), 40	N.Karabatic (FRA), 33	M. Hansen 67
4. K. Bjorsen (NOR), 37	J.Gottfridsson (SWE), 25	N. Karabatic 63
5. F. Sole (ESP), 36	M.Hansen (DEN), 24	O. Zdrahala 60
6. K. Mahe (FRA), 34	I. Karagic (CRO), 24	J.Gottfridson 54
7. S. Kasperek (CZE),33	M. Zarabec (SLO), 23	P. Nenadic 52
8. S. Sagosen (NOR), 32	L. Cindric (CRO), 22	L. Cindric 47
9. N. Karabatic (FRA), 30	P. Nenadic (SRB), 22	K. Mahe 47
10. H. Lindberg (DEN/), 30	V. Porte (FRA),21	M. Zarabec 46

7 back court players and **3** wingers were the best scorers. Among the best **10** scorers are **3** Danish , **2-2** French and Norwegian players.

S. Sagoen, N. Karabatic, M. Hansen and R. Lauge Schmidt took place among the 10 best players of each category.

R. Lauge Schmidt was the most succesful offender of the tournament: he reached a rank among the best 3 players of each categories.



- **General basic position of the teams:** both wingers took positions in the corners, LB/RB close to the side line, in order to get bigger area from the defenders.
- Using simple technical elements: crosses, transitions from different positions, piston movements, positions changing with and without ball, one against one actions.
- The teams played almost the same or similar sets and actions with more or less successes:
 - L/R wingers transition with and without ball.
 - CB crosses LP or RB who passes the ball for the opposite side.
 - CB transition with ball to opposite side of the LP and passing the ball back to LB or RB of the LP side.
 - CB passing one of the LB/RB and empty cross with the opposite back court player.
 - Transition of the LB/RB to short side.
 - LB/RB crosses for RB/LB and CB goes parallel.
 - **HUN, CRO, SLO, GER, DEN, SWE and MKD** used during the games the 7:6 system:

Player for goal keeper. They played with two fixed LP, between 1-2nd and opposite side between 2-3rd defenders.

- Some teams played temporarily 7:5.

They used the last phase of the game if it was necessary, taking big risk because they played without goal keeper.

- During the attacks the teams changed the speed and pace of their actions.

The most successful teams by fast break had the best goal keeper performances and the most steals of balls: **ESP:** 34%, 5.7, **FRA:** 33%, 4.6, **SWE:** 36%, 2.9



Numerical superiority

- Using two fixed line players
- CB transition with and without ball on the same side or with ball on the opposite side, passing the ball to LB/RB
- to create numerical superiority: one of the right or left side (2 against 3 or 2 against 1)

Numerical inferiority

- almost each team changed temporarily goal keeper for player during the offence in order to score a goal 6 against 6 and afterwards, as soon as possible to change the goal keeper back again.

Generally:

- Using individual and small groups actions.
- During the action change the speed and pace.
- Playing just few and simple sets.
- Few surprises and few new ideas in the attacks.
- Each team forced to score by fast throw off and fast break with more or less succes.
- Each teams used changing player for goal keeper for different situations.



DEFENCE

Conceded goals

AV: 27 goals

Fewest

ESP: 24

GER: 24

SLO, CRO: 25-25

Most

AUT: 33

HUN: 31

MNE:30

For the teams wich conceded few goals, there was no guarantee for a good ranking.

With the most conceded goals, the teams finished on the last places.

Blocked shots

AV: 2.2/team/match

Best

DEN: 3.4

GER: 3.2

SLO: 3

Least

MKD: 1.2

SRB: 1.2

AUT: 1

Steals

AV: 3.3/team/match

Best

ESP: 5.7

FRA: 4.6

DEN: 4.4

Least

HUN: 1.2

AUT: 1.5

MKD: 2



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7m penalties

AV: 3.7/team/match

Most

SLO: 6.5

BLR: 4.2

SWE: 4.1

Fewest

ISL: 2

ESP: 2.2

CRO: 3

Goal keepers performances

AV: 12 saves/team/match

AV: 31%

Best

SWE: 36%

ESP: 34%

BLR,CZE,

FRA,GER, SLO: 33-33%

Least

MNE: 19%

HUN: 23%

SRB: 25%

Savings Efficiency from the Positions

9m: 43%

wing: 33%

6m centre: 25%

fast break: 19%

breakthrough: 18%

fast throw off: 22%

7m penalty: 20%



Comprehensive performance of the defence of the best four teams

teams	conc.goals	AV s/saves	g.k %	AV blocked s.	AV steals
1.ESP	24	42/15	34	1.9	5.7
2.SWE	27	36/12	36	1.3	2.9
3.FRA	27	40/13	33	2.8	4.6
4.DEN	27	39/11	30	3.4	4,4

The opponent teams attempted to score against the top teams less than the average **(46)**.

SWE, FRA and DEN conceded the same number of average goals **(27)**.

CRO (25), SLO (25) and GER (24) conceded less goals than the **2-4th** ranked teams, but they finished behind them.

The best teams' goal keepers performance was better than the others.

The teams, which finished on the end of the field performed the weakest: **MNE 19%, HUN 23%, SRB 25% and AUT 28%**.

Saving from 9ms: **43%** saving efficiency is outstanding.

SWE, ESP and FRA goal keepers efficiency was over the average.

ESP and FRA saved more balls than the average **(12)**.

FINDINGS

10 countries, SRB, NOR, CRO, CZE, GER, DEN, SLO, ESP, HUN, MNE used basically the **6:0** defence system. During EURO 2016/POL from 16 teams 15 used it.

5 teams , **FRA, SWE, MKD, AUT, ISL** started frequently with **5:1** system and **CRO, CZE, DEN and BLR** changed temporarily also to this one.

In **6:5** numerical superiority the teams used temporarily **5:1 or 5+1** instead of **6:0** system.



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NOR, SWE, ESP, AUT, MNE and FRA used variable , flexible and transformable defence systems regarding the offence of the opponent teams or according the actual results: **6:0-5:1-4:2-5+1-4+2-3:2:1-3:3**

FRA used temporarily **5:1** defence successful against **7:6** offence of **CRO** and **SWE**.

Quick change of a goal keeper for a player.

Successful saving the empty goals: -by goal keeper

-by player.

After the loosing ball very quick retreat and organised defence.

Successful defence by one against one actions.

Good cooperation between goal keepers and defenders.

The defenders provoked attacker faults and tried to steal the balls by wing defenders.

Just few rough and tough violations happened during the games.

Maybe a new record: **FRA-SRB** , the referees decided at **0:25 sec.** the first 2m penalty against FRA player, and at **1min. 57sec.** red card against SRB player!

11 IMPORTANT DETAILS OF HANDBALL PERFORMANCE

The teams are in top three in each category of the eleven relevant details.

The best performances by teams:

1. Scored goals: NOR, FRA, CRO
2. Conceded goals: ESP, GER, SLO-CRO
3. *Goals from 9m: CZE, FRA, SWE*



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4. Goals from 6m centre: NOR, ESP, FRA
- 5. Fast break goals: FRA, ESP, SWE**
6. Goals from wing: NOR, DEN, BLR
7. Blocked shots: DEN, GER, SLO
- 8. Steals: ESP, FRA, CRO**
- 9. Goal keepers performance: SWE, ESP, FRA**
10. Scorers efficiency: CRO, FRA, NOR
11. Average number of international games played/players: DEN, ISL, FRA

5, 8, 9: the best performances from the best four teams.

3.: the best performance from the 1-6th ranked teams.

The top teams, their ranking and number of point of the above mentioned details:

1. ESP: 5
2. SWE: 3
- 3. FRA: 8!!**
4. DEN: 3
5. CRO: 4
6. CZE: 1



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Short Performance Analysis of the Best Four Teams

1. place: ESP

Match played: 8, Won: 6, Lost: 2 matches

goals/shots/efficiency: 225/391/58%

Goals from 9m: 44, 6m centre: 44, wing: 43, fast break: 41

blocked shots: 22, steals:33, 2m penalty: 18

goal keeper's performance: 34%

2. place SWE

MP: 8 , W:5, L: 3

g/S/eff.: 218/389/56%

9m: 68, 6m: 29, wing: 29, f.b.: 45

b.s.: 10, st.: 23, 2min: 33

g.k.: 36%

3. place: FRA

MP: 8, W:7, L: 1

g/s/eff.: 244/375/65%

9m: 73, 6m: 39, wing: 44, f.b.: 48

b.s.: 22, st: 33, 2min: 24

g.k.: 33%



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4. place: DEN

MP: 8, W:5, L:3

g/s/eff: 235/387/61%

9m: 65, 6m: 34, wing: 67%, f.b.: 26

b.s.: 27, st.: 31, 2min: 24

g.k.: 30%

Players, who realized their talents since EURO 2016/POL

FRA: N. Remili

CRO: M. Mamic

BLR: U. Kulesh, V. Saldatsenka

SWE: L. Nilsson

GER: J. Kohlbacher, R. Dahmke,

MKD: F. Kuzmanovski

SLO: B. Blagotinsek

MNE: M. Vujovic

13 players from **21**-who were selected as talented in EURO 2016/POL- played in their National Teams and had important roles this year.

Players for the Future (U 23/

SWE: S. Jeppson (22), J. Tollbring, (22), P. Henningsson (20)

FRA: D. Mem (20), R. Legarde(20),

BLR: A. Karvatski (22), A. Yourinok (21), A. Padshyvalau (21), A. Karalek (21), V. Gayduchenko (22)



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NOR: M.Rod (20)

AUT: N. Bilyk (21), T. Wagner (22), S. Frimmel (22)

GER: P. Drux (22)

MKD: F. Taleski (21), M. Velkovski (20)

SLO: B. Janc (21)

ESP: D. Dujšebaev (20)

CZE: S. Kaspárek (21)

HUN: D. Fekete (21), A. Juhasz (21), P. Ligetváry (21), A. Borbely (22), B. Banhidi (22), D. Bartók (21)

DEN: M. Landin (22)

All Stars Team

Goal keeper : V. Gerald (FRA)

Left wing : **M. Strlek (CRO)**

Left back : M. Hansen (DEN)

Centre back: S. Sagosen (NOR)

Line player : J. Nielsen (SWE)

Right back : A. Dujšebaev (ESP)

Right wing : F. Sole (ESP)

Best defender : J. Gojun (CRO)

MVP: J. Gottfridsson (SWE)



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Vision for the All Stars Team of the Future

GK: V. Saldatsenka (BLR, 24)

LW: A. Yourinok (BLR, 21)

LB: P. Dux (GER, 22)

CB: N. Bilyk (AUT, 21)

LP: B. Banhidi (HUN, 22)

RB: S. Kasparek (CZE, 21)

RW: B. Janc (SLO, 21)

SUMMARY

Two years ago **ESP** finished in the second place, this year they became the European Champion.

Germany - as the actual Champion - ended just in the 9th place.

The number of players playing abroad still increased.

Just 3 teams left the tournament without any point.

Before the last Main Round matches, 9 teams from 12 even had chance to reach the semi finals.

FRA: just 1 game lost, and 3rd place.

FRA had the best pointers of performance

SWE: 2nd place, **BLR:** 10th place, **MKD:** 11th place with 3-3 lost games.

ESP: 1st place, **CRO:** 5th place with 2-2 lost Matches.



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The number of scored goals and attempts – compared to the last ECH - remained almost the same.

The offence system and sets were similar to the last years: few sets and simple actions.

Every team used changing goal keeper for players temporarily, during the attack in numerical inferiority and superiority or by 6:6.

The attacks 7 against 6 were not very variable but attractive and exciting because of the empty goal of the attacker team.

Goal keepers and players tried to score goals in the empty goal from far distance.

ESP changed its goal keeper **A. Sterbik** for the injured **Perez de Vargas** for the last two games. His performance was excellent, he saved with 42% efficiency!

MKD and **FRA** used some times left handed players in the centre back position.

The best scorer was **O. Zdrahala (CZE)** with 55 goals. Almost the half of his goals he scored against two teams, versus **HUN 14** and **CRO 13!**

For me the best offender of the European Championship was **Rasmus Lauge Schmidt (DEN)**, who as a scorer and also as an assist was one the best.

The goal keepers performance had significant influence in the ranking of the teams.

The number of conceded goals did not influence the ranking of the top teams, but influenced the performance of the last ranked teams.

The teams used more variable and transformable defence systems than two years ago.

In the future I expect more saving process from players and goal keepers against the shots of empty goal.

The referees controlled some cases by „video referee” and afterwards could find good decisions.

The referees did not hesitate to use the red card, if it was necessary.

Some star players did not have their best performance.

Due to their good performance a number of players became wellknown: O. Zdrahala (CZE), M. Mamic (CRO), A. Yourinok (BLR), F. Solé (ESP), N. Bilyk (AUT), S. Kasperak (CZE), D. MEM (FRA), A. Lagergreen (SWE), T. Bergerud (NOR), F. Taleski (MKD), etc.

The organisers - the professionals and the volunteers - made a very good job, all participants and officers could be satisfied with the organisation and the atmosphere of the Event.

We met a number of players, from the last EURO/2016/POL, who realized their talent and played important roles in their National Teams.

The Match Schedule was excellent: the spectators in the sport halls and in front of the TV screen could follow and enjoy the games every day for more than two weeks.

submitted by Kovács Péter

EHF/MC Member

February 2018