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'Garra Charrua'
The unlikely success of Uruguayan football

A qualitative study of how 7 professionals describe and experience
the Uruguayan culture for player development

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Summary

This study explores the unique characteristics of the Uruguayan culture for player development in football. The literature on the cultural setting in which player development embedded is scarce, even though many researchers call for more contextual based research. Uruguay with its 3,46 million inhabitants appears to be unique in terms of producing elite football players and achieving results from international competitions with their national team. The purpose of this study was therefore to explore the success of Uruguayan football, which was done through investigating how Uruguayans experience and describe their football culture and how best practice in athlete development is perceived.

The study was designed as an explorative case study. The data collection was based on interviews with seven professionals with insight in Uruguayan football (two active players, two ex-professionals, one coach, one football-jurist and one agent) and week of fieldwork in Uruguay, consisting of observations from six games and informal conversations. The Environment Success Factors (Henriksen, 2010) were employed as the conceptual framework for this thesis.

The central findings show that the proud history and intense culture for football appears to have created several basic assumptions that facilitate expertise development in Uruguayan football. Within this culture, Uruguayan football players learn numerous psychological skills associated with expertise development in football such as ambition, commitment to succeed, collective efficacy and the ability to manage adversity. Distal and proximal role models appear to be important for the individual and cultural identity. I have focused the discussion on the potential positive and negative aspects of this culture for football-specific and psycho-social development. I also provide recommendations for further research.

Table of Contents

Summary	3
Prologue	6
Abbreviations	8
1.0 Introduction.....	9
2.0 Previous Research	11
2.1 Athlete development pathways in football.....	12
2.2 Cultural perspectives on athlete development	14
3.0 Theoretical framework and Context	17
3.1 The Environment Success Factors	18
4.0 Design and Methods.....	21
4.1 Epistemological foundation	22
4.2 Data collection	22
4.3 The informants	24
4.4 Collection of data.....	26
4.5 Data analysis	27
4.6 Quality evaluations	28
4.7 Ethical considerations	29
5.0 Context of Uruguayan Football.....	31
5.1 The history of Uruguayan football culture.....	31
5.2 International achievements and world class players	36
6.0 Results	40
6.1 Preconditions: An environment where no one gives you anything	40
6.1.1 Relatively poor personal and general economy	40
6.1.2 Huge quantity but poor-quality pitches.....	41
6.1.3 Baby football and coach education	41

6.2	You can play poorly, but you cannot be afraid	42
6.3	An intense culture for football	44
6.3.1	Football is the most important thing in life	44
6.3.2	El fuego sagrado- The burning will to succeed.....	46
6.3.3	We thrive in adversity	48
6.3.4	A small country where everything is possible	49
6.3.5	Baby football is the foundation for our success	50
6.4	Individual Development and Achievement: early specialization	51
6.4.1	Facilitators for development	53
6.4.2	Barriers to development	54
6.5	Team development and achievement	55
7.0	Discussion	58
7.1	Limitations and further research needed	75
8.0	Summary of Central Findings and Concluding Reflections	77
9.0	References	78
	Appendix 1 NSD declaration	84
	Appendix 2 Informed consent.....	85
	Appendix 3 Liverød consent	89
	Appendix 4 Interview guide.....	90

Prologue

3 years ago, my bachelor thesis was completed and a one-way ticket to Montevideo in Uruguay was booked. For a long time, I had the dream of travelling to the football crazy continent of South America that has given us players like the Brazilian Ronaldo, Alvaro Recoba, Ronaldinho, Gabriel ‘Batigol’ Batistuta among *many* others that have been favourites of mine on television, and numerous video and PC games up through my adolescence. The trip was motivated by a combination of the adventure of travelling, the fascination for South American players, the urge to learn from another culture to improve my own football coaching skills and the desire to improve Norwegian player development. When I learned that Uruguay was barely 3,4 million inhabitants but also had players like Forlan, Cavani, Godin and Suarez, I knew I had to go there. However, in the meantime of working and saving money for my trip, I met my future wife Sandra and the plans changed. A decision I have *never* regretted. Luckily, 1,5 years later Geir Jordet gave me the ‘thumbs up’ to explore Uruguayan football through my master’s thesis. Thank you for putting your faith in this crazy project. Without your inspiration this thesis would not have seen daylight. You have been the person I have learned the most from and have had the single biggest influence on me during my 5 years at NSSS and I hope our cooperation will remain strong in the years to come. Christian Thue Bjørndal, if you are ever in need of a second job, I know you can always become a lifesaver, because that is what you have done to this thesis. You have given so much more of your time than I ever could have expected. Your honest and precise feedback has dramatically increased the quality of this thesis. I am forever grateful.

Another person that this thesis was solely dependent on is Terje Liverød. From the day I sent you an (hopeful) e-mail asking for advice on how to access the Uruguayan field, you have given everything without expecting anything back. You provided invaluable insights into what parts of the Uruguayan football worth exploring. You got me into six games for free. You were there for every interview, translating and providing informants that were way too important and had way better things to do than to talk to a Norwegian student. I will always be grateful for the time and enthusiasm you showed me. I still owe you a pizza.

I would also like to thank my colleagues at Stabæk Fotball and especially Stephen Ravnaas for helping me out while I was writing the final part of this thesis. I

look very much forward to being more present in the office and helping young football players getting one step closer to their dream, one day at the time.

Finally, I would like to thank my fiancé Sandra for your patience, encouragement and understanding. You are the love of my life. Now it is my turn to do the dishes, the next 3 months. I look forward to spending more time with you and becoming your husband next summer. Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to all the young football-crazy children with a dream of becoming professional. I hope this thesis in some form will improve Norwegian player development in a way that the children can be brought up in a culture and environment where their dream of playing in the champions league and competing the Euros and World Cup, has a chance of coming true.

Ski, Mai 2018

Kristoffer Grønbakk Kolsrud

Abbreviations

Norsk Toppfotball – NTF

Toppfotballsenteret- TFS

Norges Fotballforbund- NFF

The Uruguayan Football Association – La Asociación Uruguaya de Fútbol- AUF

Norwegian School of Sport Sciences- NSSS

1.0 Introduction

There are about 265 million people in the world playing soccer and of these are 238,6 million male. Of approximately 38 million registered footballers, only 113,000 players are considered professional, equivalent to 0.3% (Kunz, 2007) which speaks for the fact that becoming a professional football player is difficult and something only very few athletes achieve. Phillips, Davids, Renshaw, and Portus (2010) argue that expertise is facilitated or hindered by interacting constraints at several levels. The role of constraints in the development of expertise can be thought of as the many variables that shapes each individual's developmental trajectory, and it is important to identify the magnitude of constraints on the development of expertise (Phillips et al., 2010). In this perspective, different cultural constraints, such as the football culture, the organizational culture and/or the national culture, affects the individual players' development throughout his career.

The background for the study was a wish to explore if there were any countries that produced great football players and performances with a similar population to Norway? For example, the great football nations of Brazil and Argentina, has per January 2018 210 million and 44 million inhabitants, respectively ("South America Population ", 2018). This makes them both somewhat incomparable to Norway's 5,3 million inhabitants. However, sandwiched between Brazil and Argentina is the tiny country of Uruguay. Uruguay is per may 2018 on 17th place at the FIFA ranking and with only 3,47 million inhabitants their results are extremely intriguing ("FIFA world ranking men," 2018; "South America Population ", 2018). Furthermore, Uruguay has 1,8 million less inhabitants than Norway, which may not seem a great deal, but it is more than 50% of Uruguay's total population. In comparison, Brazil alone has 2,1 million *registered* football players (Kunz, 2007).

This thesis assumes that there are specific cultures and environments that are more able than others to develop expert performance. Within this perspective, athlete development is viewed as a social affair and a social practice (Bjørndal, 2017; Ryba, Stambulova, Si, & Schinke, 2013; Storm, 2015). Following this line of thought, the purpose of this thesis was therefore to explore the unique characteristics of the Uruguayan football culture, potentially contributing to the development of more contextualised knowledge of athlete development. Moreover, the study focused on which factors characterizes the success of Uruguayan football. I was interested in

questioning how Uruguayan football professionals experience and describe their own football culture, and what factors they emphasize as important for athlete development.

In order to answer the research questions, I travelled to Uruguay and conducted a case study of player development and Uruguayan football culture. This thesis is the result of that process.

2.0 Previous Research

Expert performance in sports can be defined as consistent superior athletic performance over an extended period of time (Starkes, 1993). But how does one develop expertise? Who has the biggest probability of reaching it? What differs those who reach expertise versus those who do not? These questions have fascinated researchers for centuries. Bjørndal (2017) writes that the initial research paradigm was preoccupied with studies from the natural sciences and focused on innate abilities, genes and giftedness to explain why a small percentage succeed and others do not. The next period was dominated by the cognitive science paradigm that introduced new perspectives which focused on how the *individual* best acquired skill and competency in order to reach expertise. The third and present paradigm has been more focused on ecological, cultural and sociological perspectives on skill development. This thesis is based on the latter paradigm, and employs the definition of Henriksen (2010, p. 27) which defines talent as “a set of characteristics, competencies and skills developed based on innate potential and multiyear practice, competition and interactions with the environment”. This definition acknowledges the importance of innate abilities *and* practice, and the environment is perceived as an interactive mediator for development. This is in line with the findings of Carey (2012) stating that external and environmental factors can switch genes on and off and can affect gene expression (Carey, 2012). Furthermore, this definition also acknowledges the cognitive paradigm to athlete development, that expert performance is developed through years of quality practice (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993; Ford, Ward, Hodges, & Williams, 2009). This also fits this thesis’ assumption that there are not necessarily more innate talented athletes in Uruguay, but the interacting constraints between the athletes and the environment facilitates effective athlete development. The athlete-environment-relationship shapes both the learning and developmental opportunities open to the athletes, and the barriers they face when striving to achieve elite performance (Bjørndal, 2017; Phillips et al., 2010). I will refer to ‘talent’ in different ways within this thesis, however I acknowledge that the term ‘talent’ should be used carefully, because it is commonly referred to in everyday language and in the sports media, even though it is an ambiguous concept that is easily misunderstood (Aggerholm, 2015).

2.1 Athlete development pathways in football

One of the reasons for football's popularity is that players does not need a specific set of skills in the technical, tactical, physiological or psychological domain, but can rather possess a reasonable level in all areas (Stølen, Chamari, Castagna, & Wisløff, 2005). In football, a player can compensate for his deficiencies in one domain by adding strength in another. For example, the four-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi says he was always the smallest in school and on the pitch. When Messi retrospectively reflected on this, he found that it helped him develop because he had to become quicker and more agile (Vik, 2013), which is an example that expertise can be achieved through a unique combination of skills (Meylan, Cronin, Oliver, & Hughes, 2010). The developmental process from youth player to expert professional in football is therefore complex, and dependent on various interacting personal and circumstantial factors (Haugaasen & Jordet, 2012). However, as Abernethy (2008) argues; athlete development in football, as in sport in general, is in its infancy and there is much to learn about how these factors interact with each other. Coutinho, Mesquita, and Fonseca (2016) elaborates on this point that the process of talent identification and development in football may be influenced by a set of determinants specific to this sport such as technical, tactical, perceptual, social, physiological and psychological factors, which are influenced by the complexity of the 11 vs 11 game in addition to the different playing positions. In line with this reasoning, more contextualised knowledge is needed, rather than relying on general aspects common to several sports.

However, theoretical perspectives that advocates pathways leading to expertise in sport is general and not specific to football. The two most known theories of pathways to expertise are more commonly known as 'early specialization' (Ericsson et al., 1993) and 'early diversification' (Côté, 1999), and both claims to be non-domain specific and general across sports. The developmental model of sport participation(DMSP) (Côté, Baker, & Abernethy, 2007) summarizes the two different pathways leading to expertise, also adding a third pathways focusing on recreational enjoyment. The early specialisation pathways is based on Ericsson et al. (1993) theory of deliberate practice. According to this theory, it is not necessarily the amount of practice that differentiates whether or not some athletes reach expert performance, but more precisely the amount of deliberate practice. Deliberate practice is characterized by being specially designed to improve current level of performance, consisting of highly

structured goal-oriented intense effort and little to no immediate reward. Although this theory originated from a study of musicians in Berlin, it has later been transferred to and supported by studies in sport (Haugaasen & Jordet, 2012). The theory emphasizes the importance of the amount of domain-specific practice, which means a focus on one sport from an early age. The early specialization approach suggests that athletes who engage in domain-specific deliberate practice from an early age will have an advantage in developing skills compared to “late specializers”, and that they may eventually reach elite levels within their respective domains.

In comparison, the early diversification pathway is based on Côté’s studies of the psycho-social influences on sport development and the notion of ‘deliberate play’ Côté et al. (2007). This perspective emphasizes the need for children to build an inner motivation for the sport, if they are to eventually reach a level of an expert professional. Thus, the initial years in sports should be focused on the enjoyment for the activity itself. For a football player, deliberate play activities may consist of street matches/backyard games that resembles football, whereas climbing in trees are not considered deliberate play due to its lack of contextual transference. Specific deliberate play is hypothesized to encourage adaptive skill, creativity and improvisation and role-playing rather than pure sport skill repetition, where enjoyment rather than skill improvement, is the main motive of the participants (Araújo et al., 2010). In addition, an early diversification perspective supports an athlete to do multiple sports, not specializing solely in one domain, and this is hypothesized to result in development of a broader base of motor skills. Consequently, this will lead to better performances in the long-term, and also reduces the risk of chronic injuries and burnout (Côté & Hay, 2002). As the athletes grow older and more mature, the athletes are recommended to gradually move towards one domain and specialize. Côté et al. (2007) state that play activities are important for motoric and cognitive development in the early stages of an athlete’s career. However, while the play activity is the key aspect of this pathway, the DMSP does not specify whether the play activity is carried out solely in the athlete’s primary sport. Another debated theme is the ‘transferability’ of skills from one sport to another. Dependent on the view, there is no rush to specialize in one specific sport domain (Côté et al., 2007). Haugaasen and Jordet (2012) found no evidence for transferability, but they did suggest that transfer may occur if there is resemblance between sports, e.g. from handball to football because both are invasion game team sports. Ford et al. (2009)

found no significant evidence in favor of the early specialization or the early diversification pathways in football. However, they suggested an ‘early engagement’ pathway that combines high levels of deliberate play and deliberate practice in football, and less time spent in other sports.

2.2 Cultural perspectives on athlete development

Several researches have called upon the need for research exploring the background-processes driving talent identification and development (Araujo & Davids, 2009; Krebs, 2009; Martindale, Collins, & Abraham, 2007). Bjørndal (2017) states that this paradigm of ecological, cultural and sociological perspectives on skill development acknowledges the non-linearity and complexity in reaching expertise and takes account for the context in which the athlete is embedded. The research conducted have tended to focus on the importance on environments, social relationships and the interactions shaping athlete development. In this paradigm both the nature and nurture perspectives are relevant, however its main focus’ are how the interaction between the athlete and the environment either facilitate or debilitate effective development. Research in this paradigm are concerned with the unique and universal characteristics of the environments and cultures that that are effective in producing expert performance (Bjørndal, 2017).

Moreover, Ryba et al. (2013) argues that in order to understand the diversity and complexity of behaviours and motivation in athlete development, it is useful to employ a reflective cultural perspective that can contribute to understanding experiences as being contextually contained within socially and culturally available resources. For example, this may include questioning how athlete development is contextually understood, for example what deliberate play and specialization means in Uruguay. Additionally, Larsen, Alfermann, Henriksen, and Christensen (2013) argues that the responsibility of equipping players with resources to reach expertise lies in the athlete development environment, and not in the individual player or the club.

Reviewing various athlete development research, Martindale et al. (2007, p. 190) suggests that effective practice appears to require integrated, holistic and systematic development, due to the complex, dynamic and multi-layered nature of human development. In their study of athlete development environments across 13 different sports in the United Kingdom, their purpose was to investigate expert professional’s

perceptions of effective athlete development environments and to see how this fits with the knowledge derived from contemporary research. Using qualitative interviews, they found 5 main characteristics of effective athlete development environments: (1) Long-term aims and methods, (2) wide-ranging coherent messages and support, (3) emphasis on appropriate development, not early success, (4) individualized and ongoing development, and (5) integrated, holistic and systematic development. However, there is an increasing need for domain and context-specific holistic approaches due to the innate uniqueness of every athlete development culture and environment (Davids, Gullich, Shuttleworth, & Araújo, 2017; Larsen, 2013; Storm, 2015).

Danish researchers have been at the forefront of undertaking studies in environmental athlete development. For example, Larsen et al. (2013) utilized an ‘holistic ecological approach’ that highlights the central role of the environment as it affects the athletes development. The researchers did a case study of a Danish football club known for producing elite players, and employed multiple qualitative tools (interviews, fieldwork and document analysis) for analysing its success. Using the Athletic Athlete development Environment-approach (ATDE) and the Environmental Success Factors (ESF) as a conceptual lens, they found that the environment was centred around the relationships in the athlete’s micro-environment: coaches, assistant and managers, that helped the footballers to focus on a holistic lifestyle, handling dual careers (sport and school), developing the ability to work hard, and being self-aware and responsible for their own training. Furthermore, the environment was characterized by a strong, open, and cohesive organizational culture based on integrated values concerned with the balance of the player’s daily lives in school and sport. They found that the characteristics of the culture became the character of the athletes.

In another study focusing on the environment, Pyrdol (2013) studied the athlete development environment of the European football giant Ajax Amsterdam, a club well known for its ability to produce world class players. He also used interviews, observations and document analysis. Similarly, he used the ATDE and ESF as his theoretical framework. His results highlight that there were a lot of former Ajax players working as coaches and simultaneously benefitting the social integration for the youngsters to the “Ajax way of playing”. There were clear communication pathways between the key stakeholders such as the school, administrators, coaches and players.

Moreover, the environment had a strong organizational culture that were economically dependent on developing players, taking care of its investments and focusing on the individual player. Ajax shared some similarities with the features of the successful Scandinavian environments in terms of focusing on long term development, providing players with support from the broader environment, creating opportunities to develop psycho-social skills, securing integration of efforts in the environment and having a strong and coherent organizational culture. The main differences between Ajax Amsterdam and the Scandinavian athlete development environments were that Ajax Amsterdam created training groups with intragroup competition, selection based on performance, did not have elite athletes as proximal role models, and required early specialization.

Pyrdol and Larsen both deployed a ‘holistic ecological approach’ (HEA) to athlete development. This approach highlights that a comprehension of the complex nature of athlete development in sport requires an understanding of the cultural setting (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2017). Such studies include a focus on both the athletic and non-athletic domain, and consider how both the macro but also micro-contexts influence development, and consider different time periods (past, present and future) in the environment. Within this perspective, athletes are simultaneously both influenced by and influencing the environment and context in which the athlete is embedded (Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010).

3.0 Theoretical framework and Context

The Environment Success Factors model was chosen as the theoretical framework because it is concerned with higher culture levels (organizational and macro-level) and it has an explanatory potential, meaning it tries to describe which factors that mostly affects the given environment's success in developing juniors to elite senior players/athletes (Henriksen, 2010). Additionally, is the ESF model built upon cultural and cross-cultural psychology that are relevant for the research question posed in this study. Cultural psychology explores the connection between culture, thoughts and behaviour. It is a cyclic process in which the mind is affecting and is affected by cultural behaviours, traditions and belief-systems (Cole, 1998). Cross-cultural psychology also explores the cultural influences that affects thought and behaviours, but additionally it examines patterns between various cultures with their unique characteristics and its universal similarities. The perhaps biggest difference is that cultural psychology studies patterns in behaviour and how culture in general influence those behaviours, while cross cultural psychology studies the patterns of similarities and difference between cultures and how these factors affect behaviour (Berry, 2002).

Storm (2015) argues that the environment is concrete and specific in nature focusing on 'who', 'what' and 'where', which differs from the culture that is more overarching, abstract and focuses on 'in which way' and 'why' and derives from interpretation. She further argues that according to this way of thinking, the environment might be considered an artefact of the culture, which is the background of doing 'as one does'. Cultures exist in and through practices, interaction and communication, and so to speak is the 'glue' that holds social life together (Storm, 2015). Schein (2010, p. 18) defines culture as:

a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaption and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.

This definition of culture will be employed throughout the thesis and states that there is a connection between culture and social learning. According to this definition the culture serves two main functions; adaptation to the external environment and internal integration, which are in a dialectic relationship that affects each other.

3.1 The Environment Success Factors

The ESF model emphasizes the need to perceive the culture holistically in order to discover its successful or less successful characteristics in developing elite senior athletes (Henriksen, 2010). Schein (2010) argues that culture is both a present-day dynamic phenomenon and a kind of forced background structure that influences people in multiple ways. Culture is reproduced and created by social interactions, and thus can be thought of as the foundation of the social order that we live in and of the rules we abide by.

The first component of the ESF model is the ‘preconditions’ which includes financial, human and material resources that helps, but is not an absolute necessary factor in itself. The human resources such as the number of players and club’s possibility of hiring enough and competent coaches and, in addition to the quantity and quality of pitches and the equipment available. These resources can either work as facilitators or barrier for the athlete development.

The second component is the process or the daily routines, which is the training, competitions and camps that have 3 different outcomes; the first is the individual development and achievements that leads to sport specific improvements. The second outcome is the team achievements that are less described in the literature, but are concerned with the results that the team achieves. Henriksen (2010) writes that the team’s athletic success is mainly relevant to team sports. Individual and team achievements are, of course, a product of the process, most notably countless hours of training, but they are also a product of organizational development and culture.

The third outcome is the organizational development and culture, which also affects the process and preconditions. Larsen (2013, p. 44) writes that “Organizational culture is characterized by the integration of the key basic assumptions into a cultural paradigm guiding socialization of new members, providing stability and adapting the organization to a constantly changing environment.” The culture of macro-systems such as societies is more stable and ordered than that of an organizational culture, which will vary in stability, and this is related to the length of time they have existed and the emotional intensity of their actual history. The organizational culture is central to the model and consists of three levels; the first level is the “cultural artefacts” which are the

visible manifestations of the organization, for example myths and stories, special clothing, buildings and organizational documents. Artefacts and institutions embody and reify cultural practices and play an important role in the continuation of cultures. Yet artefacts cannot play this role by themselves. They need to be used and enacted in order to exert their influence. In a sporting context such artefacts may include buildings, clothing style, daily routines, typical training behaviours, drills, the coach's communication style, warm-up routines and physical attitude in a match. (Storm, 2015). The second level is the "Espoused values" that are the ideals, goals, values, aspirations, ideologies and standards the coaches and players shows to the world. It is what the organization say they do, that may or may not be in line with what they actually do. In sport context it can for example be the explicit ideas of athlete development. The third level is the "basic assumptions" that are the actual motivational reasons for doing what they do, that are no longer questioned but taken for granted and thus strongly affecting what the members really do. They are reflected in behaviour, perceptions, thoughts and feelings. Basic assumptions are so taken for granted that someone who does not hold them is viewed as a 'foreigner' (Schein, 2010). Storm (2015, p. 40) writes that tensions are embedded within a strong culture, which is vital in order to accommodate the need to change. Successful athletic athlete development and elite sport organisation management involve achieving equilibrium between stability and change, continuity and innovation, and tensions can play a positive role in this process. The environment effectiveness is what the environment itself perceives as success, often its ability to produce senior elite athletes from its own junior department.

In summary the goal of ESF is to predict the environment's success in producing elite senior players. The environments effectiveness is achieved by a mixture between the preconditions, the process, individual and team development and achievement, in addition to the organizational culture driving these processes and integrating the different components.

4.0 Design and Methods

The thesis was designed as a case study. Case studies are often employed to go into depths within a certain area of interest and are well suited to answer describing or explanatory research questions (Yin, 2017). In case studies, explanations and interpretations are seen in relation to the context in which it is embedded (Andersen, 1997). In this study, I investigated the specific football culture and beliefs about player development in the context of Uruguayan football. Methodology should be understood as a tool that can help the researcher to highlight the research questions, and therefore governs the choice of method (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The analytical unit is the culture for player development, and the observational units are the key informants, the six games attended along with informal conversations and reflective field notes.

The use of multiple methods for data collection can potentially create a wider understanding of the case, and the methods used are decisive for how one should bring forth knowledge and develop the theories, in addition to how one can make sure that this fulfils the demands to science quality (Grønmo, 2004). Qualitative research is often criticized for not being able to generalize its findings. However, this study was not primarily made to generalize, but to describe the phenomenon of Uruguayan football culture and to expand the existing research in this area. Due to the lack of research in this area this case study also has an explorative design. I chose this because explorative research is inductive in nature and aim to provide new empirical insights and create hypothesis' that can further be tested. Uruguayan football culture and player development was especially of interest since this small country of barely 3,4 million people continuously produce world class players and compete internationally with its national team. This study is part of the qualitative approach, as the aim of the study was to gain insight into and the informants own descriptions and experiences about Uruguayan football culture and athlete development. The study will take on perceptions and processes that I could not achieve through statistical analyses, and I therefore excluded quantitative methods. According to Thagaard (2013) qualitative methods are well suited for studying topics that have been less explored, and as there is little research on the subject of this thesis, it became even clearer to me that qualitative method was best suited to answer my research questions.

4.1 Epistemological foundation

Through my epistemological and methodological approach, I have had the opportunity to get in-depth with the informants, and tried to interpret what is behind their experiences, actions and opinions about Uruguayan football culture and athlete development. This study can therefore be placed within the social sciences and hermeneutics. Hermeneutical analyses assume that understanding and interpretation are based on various forms of pre understanding, in other words the frame of reference or the glasses we consider a phenomenon through (Grønmo, 2004) My understanding and interpretations will affect my analysis and results, and therefore will I influence the data created. Therefore as a researcher, it becomes vital to be open and account for one's position, which will enhance the quality of the thesis (Thagaard, 2013).

The researchers personal background might affect the data analysis, and it is deemed important to be self-reflective about one's own position to avoid biased interpretations (Neumann & Neumann, 2012). Personally, have I always been passionate about football. Through my education at the NSSS I have become more and more interested in sport psychology, which might have influenced me into interpreting more psychological phenomena than what existed from facts. Neumann and Neumann (2012) also states that the relation between the interviewer and the informant will affect the data produced. In this study was an interpreter present for every interview and he had a personal relation to the informants that made the interview situation less formal and more relaxed, and thus worked as an 'icebreaker' which might have helped to gain access to valuable information that would maybe otherwise not have occurred (Thagaard, 2013). There are however some issues attached to the translation process; the questions and answers goes through one more 'filter' increasing the risk of misunderstandings and bias, additionally the ability to read cues from *how* things are said, which words or phrases that are emphasized might be hard to comprehend, thus potentially losing out important content and follow-up questions (Temple & Young, 2004).

4.2 Data collection

I conducted five semi-structured interviews, where four interviews contained one informant and one interview contained two informants, in addition to Liverød and me being present at each interview. Qualitative interviews are particularly suitable for

gaining insight into the informants' own opinions, attitudes and experiences related to the current topic of research (Thagaard, 2013). Interviews seek to understand the world from the informants side, but they can also be used to understand interactions beyond individuals (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

The interviews took between 45 and 105 minutes/hours and all interviews were transcribed verbatim. Prior to the interviews, I developed and used an interview guide (see Appendix 1). Even when the interview is only partially structured, the interview guide is important to ensure that you do not change focus and risk losing something central to the study (Markula & Silk, 2011). The interview guide also included relevant follow-up questions that could be used if I wanted more information on the main issues (Hassmén & Hassmén, 2008). The interview guide was directly built upon the original interview guide of Larsen (2013), and focused on questions regarding the ESF-model, but also relevant questions from the ATDE-model. Additionally, questions about psychological behaviours (Jordet, 2016) that characterizes the typical Uruguayan were included, because it does not make sense from an ecological standpoint, to perceive psychological skills as inner independent and stable features of the individual, but it should rather be viewed as socially supported and dependent on the specific environmental circumstances (Sarmiento, Anguera, Pereira, & Araújo, 2018).

As done by Larsen (2013) the questions were individually adapted done in order to get the informants talk about what they actually know more about. For example, there were more questions regarding organizational structure for the coach and the jurist, more questions regarding being a role model for the experienced players, and more questions regarding current development issues for the active players.

I also employed fieldwork, mainly observations of Uruguayan Primera Division games but also informal conversations with persons attending football games. The week I was in Uruguay, I watched six Primera Division matches and had several informal conversations about Uruguayan football with Liverød and people I met before or after games. Observation as a method is often used if you want to study a phenomenon "in action", and it involves the researcher studying and interpreting the linguistic and bodily expressions and actions of others (Widerberg, 2002). Observation means that the researcher participates in or observes daily activities, rituals, interaction and events to understand and learn more about different people's practices and cultures (DeWalt &

DeWalt, 2011). The observations supplemented the interviews and made me consciously reflect on the cultural differences between Uruguay and Norway. At the end of every day field notes were made in line with the ethical and rigorous qualitative research recommendations of Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018). Hence, I made sure contextual information was collected, stored and disseminated.

Since I employed a translator, every interview undertaken could be interpreted as a group interview or more commonly named 'focus group', because there were more than two persons present at the time. According to Watts and Ebbutt (1987) the group interview is an appropriate method for interviewing people that is working for the same purpose. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) argues for the focus group stating it can produce opinions and experiences that one would not otherwise have discovered during a single interview. For example, in one of my interviews the age difference between Rafa and Ezequiel meant they could discuss the differences in the youth culture for football, where they agreed that nowadays there is less deliberate play outside, due to more computers and crime. The group interview has the advantage that participants can get feedback on their understanding of reality and they can provide feedback on other people's understandings. In addition, the researcher can get some form of understanding of the informant's reality through the interview. The role of the interviewer is then to lead the informants to share of their experiences and open up for natural discussions.

4.3 The informants

My key informants were seven professionals with insights into Uruguayan football. The purpose of qualitative research is not to achieve a statistical representative sample. Instead, in qualitative research one searches for informants with thorough insights into the given theme, and this is commonly known as a strategic sample. A sample should be suitable for examining the research question (Thagaard, 2013). According to Holter (1996, p. 13) the qualitative sample should ensure that different types of respondents, processes and contexts are included in the selection. With these principles in mind, a strategic sample were gathered. As Liverød was a 'gatekeeper' and provided access to the field he was the one who eventually recruited the informants based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) The informant needed to have experience from professional football in Uruguay; (b) They needed to have experience from professional football outside of Uruguay, in order to have experienced another culture in comparison to their

own; (c) There should be a variation in the sample regarding age and experience. All three criteria's were met, and the seven key informants ranged from 22 to 62 years of age (mean= 42); had an average of 22,4 years in professional football (included football abroad and jobs in football after the end of their playing career); and had an average of 14,3 years in Uruguayan professional football.

Even though there was not a formal interview set up with Liverød, he acted as a support through all the interviews, and as a reference in many informal conversations and in the many e-mails from me asking for clarity in various topics. Thus, he co-constructed the data together with me and helped me ensure the reliability of my interpretations.

The informants were given fictive names to protect their confidentiality. However, this was not done for Liverød given that he is known in the media for his Uruguayan contacts, and his name would have been too easily exposed anyhow. His consent to exposure of name was explicitly given prior to the data gathering (see Appendix 3). The translator's name is Terje Liverød and he is a 62-year-old licensed FIFA player-agent and a talent scout who has worked for the German Bundesliga team Schalke 04 among others. His main region is Uruguay and Argentina. When active, he played for Sandefjord and in Denmark, Brazil and Singapore, before returning to Sandefjord. He has 30 years of experience in professional football and 19 years experience in Uruguayan football

The translator was vital for the data collection and analysis because my Spanish is only basic and, most importantly, due to his role as a gatekeeper. He had personal relationships with the informants that worked as an 'access to the field' in form of informants with valuable insights. He also possessed perspectives and insights to the differences in the Norwegian and Uruguayan football culture, and thus were for example able to explain why the question of differentiation in child football did not make any sense to a Uruguayan. As a result, he was able to articulate the basic assumptions in the Uruguayan football culture taken for granted by the Uruguayans e.g. "Of course, we select team based on skill level from the inception to football".

'Rafa' is 34 years old and has played professionally for 16 years with 10 years in Uruguayan professional football. He has played for some of the biggest clubs in Uruguay, before he went to Europe playing for a big club and then for some smaller

ones. He has international caps and is now back in his mother club, taking coaching certificates. He was a part of the focus group along with Ezequiel.

‘Ezequiel is 22 years old and has played professionally for 5 years with 3 years in Uruguayan professional football. He has played for one of the biggest clubs in Uruguay, and then on loan to a couple of South American clubs and some small European clubs before he transferred permanently to Argentinian football. He was a part of the focus group along with Rafa.

‘Joaquin’ is 41 years old and has played professionally for 21 years, 16 of which for one of the biggest clubs in Uruguay and 5 years in various big and small European clubs. He is considered a legend in his club and was interrupted 3 times in our interview, people asking for autographs. He has international caps. He is retired from football.

‘Leandro’ is 39 years old and has played professionally for 20 years, 12 of which in Uruguayan football. He started out for one of the biggest clubs in Uruguay before he transferred to a middle sized European club, then he went back playing for various Uruguayan and South American clubs before he retired.

‘Gonzalo’ is 37 years old and has 18 years’ experience from professional football included 6 years of working for the player association as a jurist after his retirement. He has 14 years’ experience within professional Uruguayan football. He has mainly played for medium sized clubs in Uruguay, but also some stints in other medium sized South American clubs in addition to 1 small European club.

‘Lucas’ is a 59-year-old coach currently working in a medium sized Uruguayan club. He has combined with his own playing career and his current coaching career 47 years’ experience from professional football, 25 of which were in Uruguayan football.

4.4 Collection of data

Data collection was based on the interviews made and the field work made including informal conversations and observation of a total of six games, as well as other unforeseen cultural situations. Which naturally lead me to travel to Uruguay and stay there for 1 full week. The interview lasted between 45 minutes and 105 minutes. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) points out that it is important that the researcher has good

knowledge of the topics covered by the interview. I work as a coach in Stabæk football and have worked with player development for 8 years. I also have a good overview of research and theory in the field. This is a good starting point for planning and conducting good interviews, and strengthening my analytical control (Andersen, 2013). All the interviews were recorded with tape recorders and the interviews were transcribed verbatim afterwards.

4.5 Data analysis

In the analysis of qualitative data, coding and categorization is considered a core activity (Yin, 2017). According to Kvale & Brinkman (2009: 208): "Coding means that one or more keywords are associated with a text section, in order to categorizing a statement.". In the data analysis, I undertook a theoretical coding based on the Environmental Success Factors-model (Larsen, 2013). The different categories and the labels were as follows: Preconditions; Process; Individual development and Achievement; Team Achievement; Organizational Development and Culture; Artefacts; Espoused Values; Basic Assumptions; and Environment Effectiveness. Additionally, I used the category 'Other' (OTH) to capture all other interesting statements that did not fit the theoretical categories. Most of the statements in the results were labelled with more than one category due to the interconnection between the themes. Grønmo (2004) explains a category as being a collection of phenomena with specific common characteristics. This led to a time-consuming analysis of what results to categorize where, in which a natural interpretation and pattern recognition process within were initiated. This led to a lot of back and forth discussion and reasoning with myself about what was relevant.

After every quote had been categorized, I started to write the results often several categories at the same time, due to the quotes still overlapping, and I needed to prioritize what to discard and what to keep in every category. The further along this process, the more I let go of the initial theoretical framework and an inductive approach was utilized discovering patterns in the Uruguayan context. This is in line with the criticism of the thematic analysis; that it does not consider holistic and new perspectives, due to its rigidity in its categories (Thagaard, 2013). This process led to four main themes: "Preconditions: An environment where no one gives you anything", "You can play poorly, but you cannot be afraid", "An intense culture for

football” and “Individual Development and Achievement: early specialization”. Sub-themes were dedicated to the main themes, e.g “baby football is the foundation for our success” and “Fuego sagrado- the burning will to succeed”.

According to Thagaard (2013, p. 187), the analytical process is often characterized by "shifting the attention between exploring meaning in the empirical data and incorporating theoretical concepts" (p.187). Therefore, in the next step, the ‘discussion-chapter’, a more focused analysis was made where attention was shifted from a descriptive analysis in the ‘results-chapter’ to a more theoretical analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). That is, I linked theoretical concepts to the data material, thus creating a connection between the phenomena in my project with similar phenomena in other studies and literature (Thagaard, 2013), to see what extent the empirical data matches or disagrees to contemporary theory. The purpose of the analysis was to create topics and categories that could illuminate and describe the Uruguayan football culture, and how involved actor’s perceive ‘best practice’ in athlete development. The final part of the interpretation must be conveyed in an understandable manner to be considered as quality research(Yin, 2017).

4.6 Quality evaluations

Reliability refers to the quality of data, and is about the fact that research has been conducted in a credible and trustworthy manner (Thagaard, 2013). For a study to be reliable, another researcher should be able to repeat data collection and get the same results. In qualitative research, data development can be understood as an interaction between researcher and the interviewees, and complete neutrality is therefore not possible (Grønmo, 2004). In this methodology chapter, I have attempted to provide an open and comprehensive description of my research approach. I have also attempted to provide a detailed and explicit presentation of the research process with sample and selection of informants, description of preparation and implementation of data collection, transcription of collected material and description of the interpretation and analysis process, which I believe will help to strengthen the study's reliability.

Validity refers to the fact that the answers found in the research are actually answers to the research questions you attempted to ask (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Semi-structured interviews were used as research methods, which meant that I could better ensure that I studied topics that are central to the thesis' research questions, at the

same time, I believe that analysis of relevant documents in addition to the interviews helps increase the validity of the project. According to Thagaard (2013), the term validity also implies that the interpretations the researcher has made is valid in relation to the reality studied. This requires the researcher to critically review the basis for research (Thagaard, 2013). To ensure a validity in the data material, the analysis and interpretations presented in results and discussion have been the subject of a thorough and critical reflection. In line with a hermeneutic approach, I have worked between parts and whole. That is to say, in working with the analysis, I have chosen quotes that present different parts, and later I have returned to the interview as a whole to ensure that the quotes were used in the correct context.

Thagaard (2013) stated that the researcher should explain how the analysis has given the basis for conclusions. My interpretations are based on the views of the informants, the context of the study, previous research and the theoretical framework, as well as my own background and pre-understanding. Triangulation is a contribution to improving the validity, meaning that you cross-check the data with other data sources (Vedeler, 2000), which I did with Liverød when confused about certain concepts or literature I read. In this sense he would either answer me right back, or he would check with his Uruguayan connections that had even more in-depth contextual knowledge than him. Despite this, I cannot say for certain that my subjective understanding has not affected my interpretations. Based on my own experiences working as a coach for dedicated football players in elite environments, I also believe that my study provides valid insight into the Uruguayan football culture and how they believe good athlete development is being done.

4.7 Ethical considerations

The study is approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD), and I have complied with the ethical guidelines I have received from NSD (see Appendix 1). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) highlight four different ethical aspects that apply in qualitative research; informed consent, confidentiality, consequences of participating in the study and the role of the researcher.

In order to provide sufficient information and to protect the informants, a thorough presentation of the informed consent was given and signed at the initial

contact (see Appendix 2). Here, the purpose of the study was described, and the participants were informed that the study required voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. They were also informed about how their personal data were to be stored and they were given my phone number and email-address, so that they could contact me if they had any questions related to their participation in the project. (see Appendix 3).

Confidentiality in research deals with the disclosure of personally identifiable information (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It may be problematic with research in familiar environments, as it may be difficult to anonymize informants in these environments (Markula & Silk, 2011). Widerberg (2002) argues that the informants will provide more honest answers if they are anonymized in addition to protect their privacy. The principle of confidentiality also includes questions about the storage of information (Markula & Silk, 2011). To protect the confidentiality of the informants, I deleted the audio recordings after the transcripts, and kept the transcribed text on a portable hard disk in a locked cabinet that only I had access to. According to Kvale (1997) an ethical aspect of the researcher's role is linked to his scientific responsibility. This deals with the publication of knowledge and findings as accurate and representative of the field of research as possible (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). During the entire research process, I have been very conscious of my scientific responsibility as a researcher. I strive to be open and transparent in my choices, from the start of the project to the end.

5.0 Context of Uruguayan Football

In order to understand why the Uruguayan football culture is as it is today, it is vital to know their history. Therefore, this chapter will present both the football history in Uruguay, but also the contemporary achievements and facts needed to comprehend the findings.

5.1 The history of Uruguayan football culture

Giulianotti (1999) argues that since the early 19th century, Uruguay's general history is interchangeable from its football history. The identity of the country is heavily affected by its football performances. Galeano (1997, p. 42) writes; "The sky blue shirt was proof of the existence of the nation: Uruguay was not a mistake. Football pulled this little country out of the shadows of universal anonymity." The national team is nicknamed "La Celeste", translated "the sky-blues" from their emblematic shirts. Where there before was no common cultural identity, Uruguay's early football achievements helped to collectivize the country into a whole. Arocena and Bowman (2014) stated that the British brought football to South America and Uruguay at the end of the 19th century, and the beautiful game was quickly embraced and popularized. The early football success winning the Olympics in 1924 and 1928 and hosting and winning the first World Cup in 1930 coincided with the need for a national identity (Giulianotti, 1999). Ondino Viera, the Uruguay manager of 1966, points to this in a famous quote "Other countries have their history, Uruguay has its football." (Glanville, 2010, p. 16). Additionally, there were a rare economic and political stability at the beginning of the 20th century, allowing the people to pursue football and simultaneously being politically backed by the government in terms of preconditions such as pitches and being able to travel and compete internationally with the national team. The current national team coach Oscar Tabarez ("El Maestro"- The teacher) reflects on the present day challenges compared to the past achievements in a rare interview with The Blizzard (Mazur, 2013b, para. 1):

Interviewer: When you mention reality, the first thing you must face is numbers: Uruguay is a nation of fewer than 3.5 million people.

Tabarez: Exactly. The first thing that had to be done was to understand the real chances of Uruguay in the world football scenario of the present day, which is very different from the time when we enjoyed a domination of football in the first

half of the 20th century, when Uruguay was never beaten in FIFA competitions. Half a century unbeaten is not for anyone, but Uruguay was another country and the relation with the rest of the countries was also different. We enjoyed supremacy not only in football but also in the democratic system, in public education, in welfare, in the sense of poverty, because being poor in those days was to eat homemade puchero [stew] every day, as opposed to certain ways of being poor today that make me feel embarrassed.

Tabarez further states “We couldn’t just live based on the glory of the past” emphasizing the importance of not being content with former achievements, but rather use it as motivation to achieve future success. Additionally, this quote also states the importance not to look upon their past football success in a vacuum, but to recognize their success in a holistic perspective through economy, education level and politics.

Arocena and Bowman (2014) writes that as early as 1874 the English High School became the first Uruguayan institution with a soccer coach. Later on in 1878, the first of many games played between British residents of Uruguay and British sailors around the Montevideo harbour was witnessed. This early introduction to the sport combined with the passion for the game are some of the reasons that South American countries, especially Uruguay, dominated the game in early years (Arocena & Bowman, 2014). The English influence on Uruguayan football is apparent when you read the name of some of the clubs in the Primera Division; Boston River, Liverpool FC Montevideo, Racing Club de Montevideo, River Plate and Montevideo Wanderers. One of the biggest clubs in Uruguay, Penarol, has gotten its yellow and black shirts from the railroads distress signals, and the nickname “los carboneros” (the coal-shovellers). Where railroads were built, football clubs were made as well, especially in Uruguay and Argentina (Arocena & Bowman, 2014). Before the Olympics and the World cup, matches between Argentina and Uruguay took place on a regular basis, creating a derby atmosphere. Giulianotti (1999) illustrates the passion and temperament in South American football when in 1916 too many tickets were printed and sold to eager fans, forcing a postponement to the game for security reasons. This enraged the fans, who set fire to the stadium, leaving nothing but the central pavilion standing. Another example of this early football hooliganism happened in the second match between Argentina and Uruguay when the crowd started throwing stones at the Uruguayan players, who in turn

responded by returning the favour. The game was abandoned within 5 minutes, forcing the Uruguayans to leave the pitch for their own safety.

There is an apparent lack of research written in English into the football culture of Uruguay, which is odd due to the fact the Uruguayans dominated the game the first half of the 20th century. After winning the Olympics in 1924 and 1928, Uruguay was chosen to host the first official World Cup in 1930, which they also won against their biggest rivals Argentina at the newly built Centenario stadium. Bayce (1991) claims that the Uruguayan's early successes were because they had been taught two different ways of playing football; the physical "kick and run" of England and the more intricate "pass and move" game from Scotland. This is said to have given the Uruguayans an advantage over the other South American and European countries which tended to favour 1 style. For example, at the 1924 summer Olympics in Paris, the Uruguayan had won 5-1 over France in a style described as "combining artistry, entertainment, virtuosity and professionalism." (Hare & Dauncey, 1999, p. 47). Additionally, Arocena and Bowman (2014) writes that the triumphs of the first half of the twentieth century were sustained fundamentally by the technical quality of Uruguayan players and their "garra charrua," which is a main label to the Uruguayans fighting spirit, brave tenacity and courage to face adversity. Garra charrua is named for the Charrua Indians who inhabited the Uruguayan territory before the arrival of the Europeans. Garra is the Spanish word for talon or claw. It is a defining characteristic of Uruguay and of the national team, and especially the unlikely 1950 World Cup win epitomized this behaviour (Arocena & Bowman, 2014). Another reason for the unlikely early Uruguayan success is the number of public playing areas in the capitol of Montevideo, that rose from 2 in 1913 to 118 in 1929, which facilitated the possibility to play and develop for the gifted players in the years to come (Krotee, 1979).

Still, not everything was as successful as their football. Giulianotti (1999) writes that a decade long military dictatorship took control in 1932, which intensified Uruguay's financial problems and only the two biggest clubs; Penarol and Nacional, were able to pay a reasonable salary, which in turn led to the best players seeking clubs outside of the country to especially Argentina or southern Europe. This trend is also present today. Uruguay missed the chance to defend their title at the World Cup in Italy 1934 allegedly due to Italy's refusal to enter the 1930 World Cup in Uruguay. Uruguay also declined

the 1938 World Cup in France because they thought every other World Cup would be hosted outside Europe (Arocena & Bowman, 2014). Uruguay was also threatened by “theft” of their best players, especially by Italy, who won the 1938 World Cup, with the former Uruguayan key player Andreolo in defence.

Giulianotti (1999) writes that World War 2 and the Korean War gave Uruguay an economic boost, giving Uruguay the highest income per capita in Latin America. This also gave more football success, as Uruguay’s biggest success in 1950 was achieved; the infamous “Maracanazo”; as there was a different format to the finals than the present knockout stages, in the round of games between the four finalists the hosts Brazil only needed a draw against Uruguay to become world champions. In a game which still holds the Guinness’ world record for the highest attending crowd, 200,000 home spectators saw a win for the Brazilians as a formality; carnival celebrations was prepared, the gold medals were printed with the Brazilian names on it and the FIFA president had even prepared a congratulatory speech for Brazil which he clutched in his hands during the game (Giulianotti, 1999; Janela, 2014). The Brazilians took the lead 1-0 right after half-time, meaning Uruguay needed 2 goals to win. They managed to turn the game around, and in the end won 2-1, where captain Varela’s performance personified the mentioned Garra Charrua fighting spirit. One might speculate that the earlier victories (1924, 1928, 1930) might have been assisted by the lack of European teams competing (Glanville, 2010; Murray & Murray, 1998), and the 1950 World Cup was right after the devastating World War 2, which did not negatively influence the South American’s ability to perform as much as their European competitors. However, Brazil had shown better technical skill and creativity, only to be outfought by the Uruguayan’s effort and attitude. These qualities like endeavour, teamwork and dedication has affected and separated the way Uruguayan play the game from its South American neighbours (Giulianotti, 1999). Suárez (2014, p. 67) and the rest of the Uruguay national team squad, were visited in the preparation for the World Cup of 2010 by Ghiggia, the man who had scored the decisive goal at the Maracanazo, saying “It is hard to quite digest how much their win means for us Uruguayans. It is not that we learn about it, it is that we feel were born knowing about it. “This story has according to him become such a strong and innate part of the Uruguayan folktale, that it feels like they are “born knowing about it.”

On the other side, a decline soon followed in the 50's, 60's and 70's, both in terms of political and economic endeavours, but also for its football team. Public protests against the ineffective administration become more increasing, and the urban guerrilla group "Tupamaros" who sought to create a socialistic revolution started terrorist attacks. The fear of socialism is said to be the precursor to the military coup in 1973, by the extreme rightist force. During this military dictatorship, Uruguay had the highest per capita political prisoners in South America, additionally were torture, kidnapping and murder a normality (Giulianotti, 1999). The football decline is symbolized with Denmark providing the outdated Uruguay with the greatest humiliation of its history. In this period the Uruguayans developed a negative image as a rough and brutal team that employed excessive fouls to intimidate their opponents, the exaggeration of the Garra Charrua, as they could not win with their skill (Arocena & Bowman, 2014).

Interestingly in that period, the only political positions that were not scrutinized were the administrators of the football clubs. The military regime had hosted a few football tournaments, included the "Mundialito" in 1980, translated "the little World Cup". Six former World Cup winners was invited, 5 countries accepted except for England, leading to the Netherlands being invited. The tournament was a 50 year anniversary celebration of the World Cup, in which Uruguay fittingly won 2-1 against Brazil in the final, as they had done in 1950 at the Maracanazo. The military regime of Argentina had 2 years previously successfully hosted the world cup of 1978, which Argentina also won. The strong status and position of football in Uruguay also meant that the military regime twice would save the popular club Penarol from bankruptcy to please the public (Giulianotti, 1999).

Luckily, free elections were negotiated in 1985 and Uruguay was one again "the Switzerland of South America", its only true democracy (Hobsbawm, 1994, p. 111). Giulianotti (1999) further elaborates that Uruguay has managed to shake of the brutal political style, while not managing to get rid of the brutal style on the football pitch; Uruguay has a dialectic playing identity exemplified with their current coach Oscar Tabarez' pedagogical and technical approach, while Borras', the coach from 1982-1987, encouraged a physical and brutal style of play. This style is illustrated through a rough first game against Scotland in which Batista received a red card after 40 second after a tackle on the Scottish playmaker Hendry, which caused Borras to be banned from the

sidelines in the 1986 World Cup. Bayce (1991) argues that the physical approach is caused by an unrealistic public expectation put on Uruguay to compete internationally which results in increased pressure and a more nervous and physical approach for the national side.

5.2 International achievements and world class players

Interviewees reflecting on Uruguayan football success firstly ranked the past and present achievements with the national team and secondly regularly producing world class players. These achievements were seen in relation to their relatively low number of inhabitants.

Uruguay's national team has won 2 Olympic golds equivalent to the World Cup, 2 world Cups and a South American Record of 15 Copa America's, the latest in 2011. Additionally, the youth teams of U17's and U20's reached the World Cup final of 2009 and 2013 respectively. Since the reinstatement of Tabarez in 2006 they have qualified for every World Cup (2010, 2014 and 2018).

Uruguay possess in the modern history fantastic players like Francescoli, Recoba, Montero, Zalayeta and Forlan, but to more objectively find out the present world class players, I used the same metrics as Olafsen et al. (2017) applied in the academy classification report; however employing solely the squad from the qualification game against Bolivia 11.10.2017, it was found that 9 out of 23 Uruguayan internationals are playing in Europe's top 50 clubs ("Club Coefficient," 2018) see table 1 and 2 below. This number is significant, but it is even more amazing considering a few other variables;

The vast distance from South America to Europe.

9 players in European top 50 clubs is the same total amount as Sweden, 6 more than Norway and better than countries like Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Albania, Scotland and Finland.

This result does not include the 19 year old loanee Valverde even though he is owned by Real Madrid(ranked #1), because he is loaned to Deportivo La Coruna which is not in the top 50.

The other players are playing for high profiled clubs outside of UEFA like Racing Club and Independiente in Argentina, Monterrey in Mexico, Cruzeiro in Brazil, along with the 2 top clubs in Uruguay; Penarol and Nacional.

Table 1. Uruguayan starting line-up against Bolivia 11.oct. 2017. Reported march 2018.

	Name	Club	Top 50 UEFA club?	Comment
1	F. Muslera	Galatasaray	Yes	
22	M. Cáceres	Lazio	Yes	
3	D. Godín	Atletico Madrid	Yes	World class
13	G. Silva	Independiente	-	Cinco Grandes *
2	J. Giménez	Atletico Madrid	Yes	
15	M. Vecino	Internazionale	No	Top club in Italy #83
10	G. De Arrascaeta	Cruzeiro	-	Top club Brazil
6	R. Bentancur	Juventus	Yes	
4	F. Valverde	Deportivo	No	On loan from Real Madrid ranked #1
9	L. Suárez	Barcelona	Yes	World class
21	E. Cavani	Paris Saint Germain	Yes	World class

SUBSTITUTES

Table 2 Available substitutes for the game against Bolivia 10.oct.2017. Reported march 2018.

	Name	Club	Top 50 UEFA	Comment
7	<u>C. Rodríguez</u>  for <u>F. Valverde</u> 60'	Penarol	-	32 years old. Previously played for

				PSG, Atletico, Parma, Porto
16	<u>M. Pereira</u>  for <u>G. Silva</u> 77'	Porto	Yes	
14	<u>N. Lodeiro</u>  for <u>G. De Arrascaeta</u> 77'	Seattle Saunders	-	Major League in USA
12	<u>M. Campaña</u>	Independiente	-	Big five in Argentina
5	<u>C. Sánchez</u>	Monterrey	-	Mexico
8	<u>J. Urretaviscaya</u>	Monterrey	-	Mexico
11	<u>C. Stuani</u>	Girona	No	17 goals La Liga
20	<u>Álvaro González</u>	Nacional	-	Top 2 club in Uruguay
23	<u>E. Conde</u>	Nacional	-	Top 2 club in Uruguay
19	<u>S. Coates</u>	Sporting CP	Yes	
17	<u>E. Arévalo</u>	Racing Club	-	Cinco Grandes*
18	<u>M. Gómez</u>	Celta Vigo	No	13 goal in La Liga. #72

* In Argentina, Independiente, Boca Juniors, River Plate, San Lorenzo and Racing Club are known as “Cinco Grandes” translated “the big five”.

Table 1 shows that Uruguay have more players in top 50 clubs in Europa than many other European countries bigger than them. Players that have played regularly in top 10 UEFA club are classified as world class, and within this categorisation are Luis Suarez for Barcelona FC, Diego Godin of Atletico Madrid and Edinson Cavani of Paris Saint Germain. Additionally, there are other great Uruguayans playing for significant outside of UEFA. Even though the Uruguayan ‘Primera Division’ barely is ranked over the Norwegian ‘Eliteserien’ (Primera Division #37 and Eliteserien #40) (“21st World Super League,” 2017), Uruguay has 443 players playing professionally abroad, in comparison Norway has 105 players, which is a significant difference (Soccerway.com, 2018). This numbers suggest that the ‘Primera Division’ and ‘Eliteserien’ are somewhat on the same level. However, Uruguay has 338 more professional players abroad than Norway and knowing that the Uruguayan league is mostly filled with Uruguayan players, indicates that they are able to produce a magnitude of professional football players.

Summarized, even though Uruguayans only are 3,46 million inhabitants they are still able to produce a huge quantity of professional players but also world class players, and consistently compete internationally with their national team. The Uruguayans own experiences and descriptions of their unique football culture and international success will be presented in the next chapter.

6.0 Results

6.1 Preconditions: An environment where no one gives you anything

The preconditions of an athletic environment are the human resources such as the number of players and club's possibility of hiring enough and competent coaches and, in addition to the quantity and quality of pitches and the equipment available. These resources can either work as facilitators or barriers for athlete development (Larsen, 2013). Analysis revealed three sub-themes; personal and general economy, pitches and facilities and human resources and baby football.

6.1.1 Relatively poor personal and general economy

For the interviewee's there is a poor but bearable state of economy. As education costs, some interviewees saw the "school/football-dilemma" as a logical choice to make. Some said they had to ask their parents if they could try to become football players. Due to the poor state of most personal economies there were no middle ground for most of them; the choice was to either prioritize school and education *or* try to become a football player. Rafa said "it costs us to go to school, it costs learning languages so the only thing we think of and have thought of is football." One can discuss if this attitude strengthens the dedication to football which illustrated when talking to Liverød about a former Uruguay international:

They lived on the floor, the floor was made out of dirt. The neighbor had to help economically, and he had to play with the same shoes [for years] for example. He went 6 km to practice and that does something to your mind ... The determination ...

This former Uruguay international seems to interpret his own lack of money as something that triggered his determination to succeed, rather than being a barrier. Similarly, talking to the 59 year old coach Lucas about what makes the Uruguayan environment successful he emphasized the link between the football culture and, the socio-economic reality: "Because you have an economic increase in football that is very big, so your family and parents are more interested in [you] playing soccer." According to him is it the absence of a strong financial platform that together with a strong dream of making it as a professional football player, that facilitates a positive environment supported by their family in which more players dedicate themselves. However, not all of the interviewees had the same perspective; Rafa and Ezequiel stated

that when parents see their sons as their economic rescue, pressure to perform arises and the enjoyment in football can be lost: “The environment for football is not necessarily worse for developing players, it will still do, but it has become uglier”.

6.1.2 Huge quantity but poor-quality pitches

When the interviewees were asked directly about if there are sufficient preconditions needed to create a good athlete development environment such as competent coaches, good pitches and facilities, the answer were “Absolutely not!” often accompanied with a grin and a headshake of disbelief. As Liverød said: “I can give you an example: A normal grass pitch here in Norway is far better than the professional pitches in Uruguay. There are no proper football pitches in Uruguay!”. This is supplemented by the first authors observation: “This morning I ran around the west coast of Montevideo. It looks like there are a lot of pitches here that used to be grass, but now there is only dirt, except for in the corners...” Even though the quality of the pitches is poor, the data suggests that there is a vast quantity of pitches, thus making it very easy and available to find a local pitch to play

6.1.3 Baby football and coach education

Baby football is the term of organized football in Uruguay and has been around since the 60’s and it appears the average age of starting organized football is 5 or 6 years. Some of the top clubs has their own baby football teams, but it is mostly played in local clubs and is overseen by the ‘barrios’ (the regions). This system ends at the age of 13 when the best players are selected for the youth academies of the top clubs. Gonzalo states that there are about 60’000-70’000 children under the age of 13 playing baby football and that “In Uruguay, plays 100 % of the youngsters under 12 years football, and 100% wants to be top football players”. This last sentence is probably an exaggeration but it still says something about the cultural standing football has, however the total number estimate of players are probably true since Gonzalo works daily with the Uruguayan player association. As mentioned, the cultural significance of football in Uruguay means that there is only football that matters for a youngster. Liverød says:

There are no other sports. It was a bit strange, we [Liverød, Ezequiel and Rafa] watched athletics, it was a little fun because then there was actually someone from Uruguay. We had never seen that before. We were cheering, but we do not remember what they did; height, jump, length or sprint ... No, if you are engaged

in sports other than soccer, you must pay everything yourself. There is no government subsidy for anything else. So that's football. Done.

There also appears to be a focus on the quality of coaching from the AUF. It is mandatory for every coach in the youth academies of the top clubs to have coaching certificates, and it is also mandatory for coaches in baby football to attend a coaching seminar twice a year hosted by the association in and around Montevideo. A magnitude of the experienced professional players are taking coaching certificates at the end of their career. The obvious exaggeration “In Uruguay we have 3 million coaches” made by Rafa, shows the cultural importance of football in Uruguay, where everyone has an opinion on the beautiful game. Gonzalo says he pays 5000 pesos, around 1500 NOK a year for his son to play baby football. That is a large amount for the average Uruguayan and if that fee is representative, a big share of the household economy is spent on baby football.

6.2 You can play poorly, but you cannot be afraid

This section is organized chronologically starting with baby football, going into the adolescent and lastly the seniors. When starting to play organized “baby football”, you normally train 2-3 times a week plus 1 game, in addition to every day at school. It is played 6-a-side on pitches 1/3 of normal size. There are more than 1200 teams across 9 different age categories, playing matches in and around Montevideo in the weekends. When asked about the frequency of training for a youngster aged 6-12, Rafa responded:

It has changed. Just in the last few years, when Ezequiel was a kid, just 10 years ago, people played in the streets, on all corners, for the past eight to ten years, this has changed because of computers and crime. The children are much more inside now than before. [...] They play a lot less outside in the neighbourhoods ...

Interestingly, Rafa being 12 years older than Ezequiel, had played a lot more in the streets throughout his youth years. As mentioned, until they are 13 it is mostly the local clubs doing the job of developing the players. It seems this is a holistic approach; even though most teams are located in Montevideo the organization is done in a way that is minimizing the distance to travel to training and games, thus reducing the travelling expenses and increasing the safety. When asked if there were differentiation (teams based on skill level) for teams younger than 13 years of age, the Uruguayans seemed

perplexed and more often than not, did not understand the question. There appears to be a basic assumption that “of course teams are selected based on skill level from the youngest age”. Contrary to Norway where teams are selected based on skill level closer to the age of 15-16. In Uruguay one can choose to play in a team that selects the best and wants to perform, or a team that is more for fun. When asked about how this kind of early selection affects the psychology of the players Gonzalo said: “the weaker ones will always want to play the bigger better or the bigger ones... In order to win!”. It seems that it is more natural to the Uruguayans to select teams based on performance, than not to. When talking to Lucas, the competitiveness of baby football is confirmed: “What is important is to have ‘balls’, not being afraid. You can play poorly, but you cannot be afraid.” He goes on about the improvement that he has noticed in coaching In Uruguay:

What has improved in Uruguay is that it is not just a focus on winning; There is as much focus on winning, but playing better football, possession football, one or the other thing, playing better, better quality coaches, better educated coaches, it has improved quite a bit. Before, it was in quotation marks "a little primitive football", but they have been trying for the last 10 years ... So they have improved the quality.

In the youth academies of the top clubs, they normally train every day and often follow the routines of the senior team. When discussing with Liverød the reasons for the youth national teams training as much as 1-2 times per week he said the primary reason to be the best playing with the best for their development, but also mentioned other factors such as the 14-20 year old’s poor preconditions in their own club, a potential lack of economic resources, some might come from homes with unemployment and drugs, and the need to be able follow them up due to the range of different circumstances that might prevent them from reaching their potential.

Looking over the field notes from the six games I watched there were only two teams that managed to control the game with the ball, namely Penarol and Nacional. However, both these two top teams employ a direct style of play when needed. The fighting spirit on the pitch was evident and the players were heavily encouraged by the passionate fans to fight for every ball and to play forwards at every opportunity. There were a lot of injuries during the game, especially head injuries, but they always got up

to continue to play. Based on my observations it seems that you need to be brave to play in this league, due to the intensity of the challenges. The intensity in which the Uruguayans seem to play the game shares similarities to their general culture for football.

6.3 An intense culture for football

This section will start with the overarching present culture for football and then will a description of the organizational culture of the Uruguayan football environment follow. The three layers of the organizational development and culture; artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions will be explored in light of the research questions. As there are many subjects overlapping and interchanging, it would not be wise nor possible to totally separate these findings, but it will rather be presented in themes with their coherence or incoherence.

6.3.1 Football is the most important thing in life

As mentioned, the data suggests that there is an extreme culture for football that penetrates the society, thus making the game the center of attention in radio, TV, the newspaper and in everyday conversations. The historical early triumphs of the Olympics in 1924 and 1928, and the first World Cup win at 1930 at home soil and especially the win in 1950 in Brazil, built a strong cultural foundation for football which appears evident in several different ways with the artefacts, the espoused values and the basic assumptions. Talking to Joaquin about why he thought passion characterized Uruguayan football culture: "That is because for Uruguayans, when they are children and growing up, for a Uruguayan, whether you play football or not, football is life. It is like food, you get up and watch it. It is sort of life." It seems a common assumption for men that football is the most important thing in life and this is coherent with the culture and shown in the artefacts. The presence and passion the supporters show during my observations are coherent with the song Rafa sung when asked about a typical cultural situation from Uruguayan football:

If you start the game after 5 minutes with a backpass, the supporters will start singing " Now show more balls, play the ball forwards!" and then you lead 1-0 they sing "Yes that's more like it!" and if you lead them 2-0 they sing even more: "That's how we play, now we'll become champions!"

To see and reflect upon one's own culture is sometimes hard due to the basic assumptions being taken for granted, Joaquin struggled a bit in the beginning with the question, but said this about the reasons for the Uruguayan football success:

There is no easy answer to it, and there is certainly no research answer for it. There are many answers, but there are some things; When there is a boy born, his first gift is a ball. And everybody wants him to become a football player, just about everybody at least. There is a tremendous interest for football, culture for football, passion for football. You get brought up with football from the moment you're born and can walk you play football. You play "baby football "from the age of 4-5-6 where you play for points. It is from an early age of a combination of passion for football, a culture of football, focus on football in all respects, which creates a very strong dedication to football, he says.

He implies that there are variables to the success that are not possible to articulate, but still he appears to have pretty strong suggestions to what he believes are the main reasons for their success: intense culture for football from an early age. It seems that the social learning regarding football the child is exposed to from an early age is one important factor to their success, it extreme interest for football stimulates and almost “forces” the kid to be interested in football. Another interesting piece is the artefact; the first gift a child gets is a ball and a shirt. This was of significant importance to the interviewees, due to its symbolic exemplification of the importance of football. In addition to the ball, ‘every’ boy were either given a Penarol or a Nacional shirt, and thus he becomes a supporter. I had a special football culture experience on Friday 10.11.17:

On my way home from the beach I noticed a lot of people gathering at the main street in Montevideo. There was a huge screen on the building opposite of the open space outside the library showing the international friendly between Uruguay and Poland! There were all types of people sitting on the pavement. I guess 400-500. Everything from children, students, old people to alcoholics. It was a truly outstanding experience to see people from all parts of society gather around football...

When asked about the importance of football in Uruguay, I mostly got the answer “Todo” (everything) right away. Rafa said “What matters is to get food on the table and watch football.” I had to postpone my departure to Uruguay for 2 weeks due to the

football players going on strike over image rights, Gonzalo utilized the strike to illustrate the importance of football:

It has just been a 15 day strike from Uruguayan players. What happened then was that the president and politicians got involved in the case right away, and the one who got the negotiator job was the ex-president. So he got the job from the parliament to be the negotiator. (Laughter). That's how important football is here ... If there had been a teacher strike, that would not have happened.

Gonzalo was convinced that only football had this political influence, and thus being more culturally significant than education and school. The passionate relationship to football on a broader level can be linked to the inner drive to succeed at the individual level.

6.3.2 El fuego sagrado- The burning will to succeed

Analysis reveals that among the typical Uruguayan player there are several basic assumptions and espoused values regarding the desire to succeed, to win and to become the best, which epitomizes in the behavioural artefacts. Liverød had spoken to a former Uruguay international with 50+ caps about the Uruguayan football success:

When I mentioned the topic, he spoke non stop for 20 minutes. El Fuego Sagrado is what's inside you, the burning will, which boys here get from birth, the burning will to succeed. Where money is not the driving force, but the triumph.

‘El fuego sagrado’ meaning ‘the holy fire’ is to this former Uruguay international the burning will to succeed and triumph. The espoused value is that football success and performance to succeed are more important than money. In addition it is an espoused value that Uruguay’s is not happy solely to qualify for championships, and he continued stating that “Uruguay’s goal is to win the World Cup”. The demands and the standard for what is success and what is failure is set sky-high. This ambition and desire to be the best is seen by Joaquin as a basic assumption in order to perform: “The day Uruguay lose the belief that they can become world champions, they are done.” Joaquin’s point of view is shared by the other interviewee’s, when Uruguay enters the World Cup, their goal is to win it. Joaquin also mentions that the cultural significance of football manifests as this inner drive to succeed at an individual level:

What characterizes the Uruguayan player is that he is born and raised with what comes from within; an infinite passion for the game. What you can not name. When Uruguay participate in the World Cup, they believe they can become world champions.

It seems that this innate passion for the game is not solely associated with the enjoyment of playing the game itself, but also appears a “passion to succeed”. Liverød tells a story from another former Uruguayan international, that for him embodies this “Fuego Sagrado”:

In March we played at home. He jumped for a header and crashed with his opponent and was knocked out. But he was swiftly back up on his feet. The doctor did not even get on the pitch. 15 minutes later he was injured again, this time a blow to the thumb. It was broken. The doctor looked at him and asked if everything was ok, he looked distant. "I'm dizzy, but it's fine as long as I keep on running." The doctor checked a little more and realized that something was seriously wrong. It went to the hospital with full sirens. He had played 15 minutes with a skull fracture. Had he played for a few more minutes he would have died. The fracture in his thumb saved him. [...] Naturally, we asked why he did not stop, if it did not hurt, etc. "I wanted to play, everything went blurry, but as long as I was in motion it went OK. So I continued to run. The game was not over. I wanted us to win."

The desire to win seemed to him more important than his own health, and this will to win seems to be of fundamental importance to the interviewed Uruguayans. When asked about the significance to win or lose, the answers were “Todo” meaning “everything”, and when asked what happened after a loss Rafa looked genuinely uncomfortable saying “no matter if you’re 40 or 10, you suffer.” It appeared a basic assumption to the interviewees that to lose was the worst feeling in the world. Leandro had the same impression: “He says that if he loses, or a typical Uruguayan loses, it's a total failure. For a Uruguayan, it's absolutely fundamental: winning is what matters.” Joaquin made a similar statement «To win is everything. But then you have to find out how to win. It may be one or the other or the third, but ultimately, it's about winning. Losing is the worst thing that exists.” It seems that to win or lose is heaven or hell for a

Uruguayan, and Leandro goes on using Suarez as an example of the effect this way of thinking:

*He is not a technical phenomenon, but he must win every ball, every ball is going into the F*****g goal. And he is a strong / typical example of how a Uruguayan must win every ball. Each ball he loses is a defeat.*

It seems obvious to the Uruguayans that “the game is first and foremost about winning”, when asked about if this way of thinking were present from an early age Leandro answered: “Obviously, Uruguayan footballers are born with this, that's nothing you can buy or learn, you have it. And here, you're born with it.” This winning mentality is in his perspective not a learnt skill but given by birth. Lucas the coach repeated the need to be brave on the pitch and fight, from an early age even though you are a kid “if you don't have balls, you have no reason to be on the pitch”. This fighting spirit appears coherent with the interviewees and my impression through fieldwork. This physical way of playing the game, seems to share the similarities when in psychological adversity: you never quit, you fight.

6.3.3 We thrive in adversity

Another emergent theme that seems interrelated to the ‘fuego sagrado’ is the ability to handle adversity and also thrive upon it. This skill was both talked about as a reason for their success and as a characterization of the Uruguayan mentality. Asking Rafa and Ezequiel what they thought were the reason for the Uruguayan national team success, Rafa said “It is a fundamental attitude in Uruguay that the more and bigger problems [you experience], the more effort you exert. The more you fight.” Ezequiel agrees and says: “Something that is typical, is that the more you are down in games the more you manage to fight yourself out of it.” This ability to handle adversity and even become better from it seems to be a basic assumption, Lucas said: “The more adversity a Uruguayan have, the better they become.” Lucas told about his own experience with adversity about 40 years ago, when he was a player himself:

He tells about what Uruguayans have, that maybe no one else possesses ... It is this inner drive to overcome all obstacles. He tells about his own situation, when he was young he injured his ACL [...] he would by any means possible come back again. Had he been operated now it would have taken 4-5 months to return

again, but then it took 2 years to come back again. But he was never in doubt, never giving up hope or dedication that he would return again.

This refusal to quit even though severely injured is somewhat similar to the abovementioned skull fracture, and it appears a typical Uruguayan mentality to cope with adversity and injuries, which appears connected with the dedication from the 'fuego sagrado' and the fighting spirit of the 'Garra Charrua'. The extreme ambitions characterizing the 'fuego sagrado' might be motivated by the belief in the collective created by Uruguay national team's early triumphs.

6.3.4 A small country where everything is possible

"Ganar todo!" (Winning everything) as Gonzalo explained to me with enthusiasm. After winning every game at the Olympics in 1924 and 1928, Uruguay was chosen as hosts for the first World Cup in 1930 which they also won at their new stadium, the 'Centenario'. Liverød translated Gonzalo's reflection on the significance of these achievements:

What he says then, is that it did something with people all the way until today. It has created something innately that makes you know that you can win from you're a kid. It has created a winning mentality and self-confidence in a way, they are small, but they can make it. They are born and raised with it.

Gonzalo adds: "Todos posible! Little country but all is possible." This may have created an artefact out the 'Centenario stadium', a proof that Uruguay has become World Champions and that even though they are small, you can achieve the impossible and become world champions again. Inside the stadium on the walls are pictures of the Olympic and World Cup winning teams, in addition have around 1000 concrete seats been protected in honour to the memory of the World Cup victory in 1930. Perhaps an even more significant point in Uruguay's football history came in 1950, in the infamous 'Maracanazo' at the Maracana stadium, in front of a reported 200'000 home fans. In which Brazil only needed a draw to become World Champions and was leading 1-0, but Uruguay managed to come from behind and win 2-1. Gonzalo had some interesting reflections on the influence this had on the national identity and psychology:

Gonzalo: It has created a fundamental attitude among people that you can manage it no matter how difficult it may seem, no matter how small you are, you can do it. It has created awareness amongst people that the impossible can be possible. The impossible can be possible. Created a consciousness among people. These 1950's championships, not just in football, but in general, you have to continue no matter how hard it looks. You go on and on and on.

Interviewer: A kind of innate self-esteem?

Gonzalo: Yes ... It is possible regardless of how big the opposition is.

According to Gonzalo have these victories created the basic assumptions that “we are a little country, but all is possible” and that “the impossible can be possible”. Additionally, it seems to work as a reminder in adversity that one must go on no matter how hard it seems; the physical artefact of the Centenario stadium, and the verbal artefact of the ‘Maracanazo’ appears to work as reminders of these assumptions of optimism and self-efficacy, thus creating a coherence in the culture. This is summarized in the comments of Joaquin, translated by Liverød;

It's hard to put it into words because it's more than self-esteem, but the moment they [Uruguay] lose faith in it, even though they have less of one thing or the other; bad conditions, bad preparations. The day they lose the belief that they can become world champions, they are done.

So how are the basic assumptions of the ‘fuego sagrado’, thriving upon adversity and the self-efficacy learnt? For the Uruguayans, the answer to that seems clear and concise: baby football.

6.3.5 Baby football is the foundation for our success

When asked directly the reason for Uruguay’s football success, almost all interviewees mentioned baby football. Hence, it seems an espoused value that baby football is the foundation for Uruguayan football success. It is not solely the “what” of baby football in Uruguay that separates them, but they report that the “how”/the way children’s football is played here separates them. The coherence of the importance of baby football is evident in the symbolic artefact of a kid’s first gift being a ball and a shirt, in addition to availability to be able to play and the professional preconditions in which a baby football game often is played; with coaches, matching shirts with names, a proper

referee and linesmen and the spectators outside of the fence from the pitch. Talking to Gonzalo about baby football he mentions that there is one club that do player development from the kids are 5 years solely to get them into bigger clubs so they can make money. Gonzalo said:

So money has actually gotten a meaning down to the age of 5, it's actually just this one club that's doing that and just that aspect is not something that you want here ... We try to avoid that. Even if you play with the best, it's not an economic aspect about it, [there is] only 1 club that does that.

An interesting basic assumption is that it is unwanted to do baby football for the money. One might stimulate the kids to play from an early age, and to play the best with the best, but it is frowned upon to do this for the money. This basic assumption seems coherent with the ‘fuego sagrado’; you are motivated for the triumph, not the money. What this culture teaches the individuals is the focus of the next section.

6.4 Individual Development and Achievement: early specialization

This section will start with the repetition of what the culture teaches the children from an early age, then follows a more football specific description of the development and lastly will the perceived facilitators and barriers to this development be presented. It appears like the typical Uruguayan child early is taught the important place football has in the culture. This significant position football has in society seems to be taught even before they start playing baby football. The children must from the inception to baby football be able to handle competition and to learn that it is not okay to lose. Another point made was that early selection was a necessity for development: “If 2 good players play with 10 bad ones will they develop slower and poorer. Exercises will be poorer, and yes, intensity will become worse. The opposite when the best play together, plus they will compete.” Some interviewees mentioned that on the worn-out pitches and in the streets it is harder trying to play a passing game and that in combination with competitiveness seems to teach that in order to win you have to fight. When asked if he had any idols or role models a player himself, Lucas swiftly said: “Tito Goncalves. He was a leader. He was a good footballer, very tactically good, always central. And stood up when there was adversity. Typically [one] that never gave up.» The ability to handle adversity appears like an admirable skill. It seems being a part of the Uruguayan football environment also teaches you independence and self-organization; many youths

does not have the social backup from home or the money to take the bus, thus forcing them to either quit football or find a way. In order to break through from the junior to the seniors Lucas said that the football level and the mentality was the two most important aspects to break through to the senior team. Mentality for him being the attitude and adaptability. When asking Gonzalo which behaviors from the 11-model that was important to him, he also rated this adaptability to new circumstances highly for a footballer:

Every day is an exam in football and you have to adapt to new situations all the time, every day. Not just in games, but in training. The coach assesses you every day if you're going to play the next game. Every day. Adapt to new scenarios/circumstances. If you change clubs how you manage to adapt new circumstances. The one day you play, the next day you're on the bench...

When I asked the interviewees what was important for them to break through to the senior team, they also mentioned a dedication to always improve. This improvement mindset was by Leandro seen in relation to the 'fuego sagrado': "If you don't work all the time to become better, you won't triumph neither, so it is connected." When asked about what was important to succeed Gonzalo said:

So the first game is important, but it's not really important because there are many who play the first match, but do not go any further. So what's important is to move on from the beginning, constantly improving yourself. So it means constantly seeking improvement. All the time.

This dedication to improvement was also seen by Leandro as vital, in relation to the dedication to improve he mentions that he always tried to study the game and learn from other players to improve, in addition he also saw football as work, where one needs to be professional 24 hours a day. The fuego sagrado dedication also reflected in the way to view the talent concept, Joaquin said:

There are many who have talent and many who throw away the talent and there are many talents around Uruguay too, but the key to everything, for him [Joaquin] too of course, is to work, train better all the time, train better than the others, because if you have talent and train better you will be better. Fundamental in all is discipline, training discipline and hard work.

To Joaquin, to be talented does not help if you do not train the right way. Summarized, in addition to the basic assumptions of the importance passion for the game, the dedication of the ‘fuego sagrado’, the significance of a collective belief in the Uruguayan national team and coping with adversity, there seems to be a range of other skills needed to succeed in this environment; Independence and self-organization, dedication to improve, self-discipline and the ability to work hard. The data suggests that there are barriers and facilitators to the development of these skills, which will be the focus of the next section.

6.4.1 Facilitators for development

All interviewees stated that they had role models in football inspiring and helping them to become better players. Some were distal, like for example Francescoli, Zalayeta and Forlan who seemed to work as inspiration of the symbolic and financial success that Uruguayans can achieve in Europe. These role models were most often in the same position on the pitch as them, and inhabited admirable football qualities like vision for the game, movement off the ball, technique, heading, shooting and so forth. In that sense the distal role models worked both as inspiration and template for the footballing qualities they would like to achieve and become. When Ezequiel were asked what was the key for his success, Liverød translated: “The most important thing was that he had role models, that he saw on TV and that were in the club”. Having a proximal role model appeared helpful for Ezequiel:

Yes, he experienced it. And he who was captain, Toni Pacheco, helped him very much. In every possible way. It's about explaining things, show their place in the lockerroom, take them in so they feel safe. Talking to the management. So that role is quite big and important.

It seems this role is vital in helping the holistic development for the young player, both on and off the pitch. Being experienced footballers Rafa and Joaquin acknowledged the importance of being a role model, to the youth. Joaquin was very conscious about the content of this role, seemingly due to having a role model himself was of great help. In Joaquin’s perspective was the purpose of the role model to teach the youngsters how to become professional, and this was not only done by talking, but also your approach, attitude and behavior on and off the pitch. Rafa also viewed this role as important:

Yes he [Rafa] has a big role. He is now back in the club he was raised, so he knows everyone, and he has a big role in implementing the youngsters. If they have problems, they call him. He can talk to the management and help them. Yes, he has an important role.

It seems that having distal and proximal role models were important for their development, and the experienced footballer also appeared to view their role as important to facilitate development on and off the pitch.

Social support was also a factor that every interviewee mentioned important to succeed. It seems like the closest family, mother and/or father, were the most important facilitators for development, however to at least have *someone* close, a family member, coach or neighbor, were experienced as vital. Rafa and Ezequiel said:

For example for Rafa, he had friends that perhaps had better prerequisites to succeed than him, were better than him, that didn't have support from anyone and therefore did not succeed. [...] Support can be from anyone. Can be from the neighbor, but the family is very important.

It seems that to have social support from someone is a prerequisite to be able to dedicate themselves to football, especially for the ones growing up in poorer conditions, due to not having money for the bus ticket or sufficient nutrition, but also for safety reasons due to the perceived increased crimes. The sacrifice and support Leandro received from his parents led him to becoming more professional, and also led to Leandro giving up short term temptations: “he sacrificed a lot in his youth. Friends, other things, social relationships, to become a professional football player.” Having distal and proximal role models in addition to having some kind of social support seemed important facilitators to the individual development. Analysis reveals that there are also barriers to this individual development.

6.4.2 Barriers to development

When asked for potential barriers in the environment to their development Gonzalo first said “If you’re dedicated you don’t see obstacles!”, but soon corrected himself saying:

Generally what might be a problem is the economy, because you don't get nutrition or have to work, or don't have money for the bus to training. So what

might be a problem Is the economy. Might be. I had teammates that had problems that couldn't afford the bus, so that might be...

For Gonzalo it appeared that if you really were dedicated there was not much that could stop you. *Maybe* the economy. The economy also seemed to affect the parents as Rafa said: “the parents look upon their kids as an economic saviours, so the pressure has become bigger than it previously was.”, Ezequiel agrees and adds: “the football is the same, but what has gotten worse is the pressure from the parents due to the economy. That wasn't there before. It has become a very negative aspect.” The general household economy seems to both be a potential barrier for development in terms of nutrition and logistics getting to training, but also as an increased form a parental pressure to succeed and be the financial savior (see preconditions for extensive info). In the transition from the juniors to the senior teams many interviewees mention going out with friends, dancing and meeting girls as a potential barrier to development. Agents were also seen as a potential barriers to development by Rafa and Ezequiel: “The biggest barrier may be agents ... It is not on your list. [...] They start when you are 8 years old. Very much, and more and more agents...” Talking to the focus group another potential problem emerged;

If we talk about the football environment, then it has changed quite a bit. At Rafa's time, you had much more respect, you had to work harder, there were no computers, you had to exert more and sacrifice much more. And one had more respect in football for the elderly, because there were fewer youths [in the senior team]. Only 1-2 youths came up every year to the first team. Now it has changed because many more players are sold, therefore you need to promote more youths. So today it's not that the younger ones shall adapt to the elderly, it's almost reversed. It has changed a lot, and Ezequiel also confirms it.

Given that the environment is changing from respecting the elderly, to the younger making their own rules, it might be an obstacle to the social integration of the basic assumptions given by the proximal role models.

6.5 Team development and achievement

This category has been referred to in the literature mainly as “Team Achievements”, however it will in this thesis be named “Team Development and Achievements”, to emphasize that the achievements are the product of long term development taken place

in the team. The national team “La Celeste” has been thoroughly described in the previous chapter, hence in this section will a brief description of the domestic clubs be given. Even though the national team seems to matter even more for the Uruguayans, the club teams appears to be of great importance domestically. The characteristics of the biggest teams are summarized by Liverød talking with Rafa and Ezequiel:

Penarol (Carboneros) for example, shall win no matter how, it does not matter how they perform; chopping down opponents and winning. Then it's Nacional, they're gonna win, but they're going to play pretty football. They come from the wealthier districts. Then you have the club where he [Rafa] comes from; Danubio; which is a development facility for the players. They should also have some ball artists, like Rafa. And then you have a club called Defensor, where everything should be serious and proper, organized ... These are things that characterize the clubs and teams. And you'll see it as you go and watch those you see it on the pitch, on the spectators.

There seems to be an intense rivalry between “big ones” Nacional and Penarol, which is heartily described by Gonzalo and Liverød:

Last year when his son [Gonzalo's son] was 5 years old, he denied joining the Penarol match because he was the Nacional supporter. (Laughter) When we finally got in, we spent a long time walking to the other side [of the stadium] because there were Penarol fans... Then he wanted to play football at the stand, but there was only a Penarol ball there, so we used a long time to persuade him to play with it! (Laughter)

Penarol and Nacional are attracting the best players in Uruguay, but they are again prone to sell their best players abroad which again decrease their probability of winning internationally. This leads to the national team being the gathering point of the people and representing the Uruguayans internationally. Lucas summarizes his assumptions on the national team success and what is important to achieve more in the future:

What's important in Uruguayan football is continuing to maintain what has always characterized Uruguayan soccer. 1. that you're humble within the team, that you're humble for football and 2. that you're never afraid of anything. O: 3. The more adversity a Uruguayans have, the better they become.

Point number 2 and 3 are described within the “intense culture for football” and in individual development and achievements, however point 1 about humility might also be a characteristic for the national team. As we have seen there are various factors influencing the success of the Uruguayan football. How these factor and characteristics are in relation to contemporary research will be explored and discussed in the next chapter.

7.0 Discussion

This study sought to explore how Uruguayan ex-professional players and coaches described and experienced the characteristics of the Uruguayan football culture, and which factors they emphasized as important for athlete development. My analysis was undertaken using the Environment Success Factors model as a conceptual framework. The results revealed an intense culture for football that has created various basic assumptions. These basic assumptions have shaped the athlete¹ development processes.

The national team are at the mercy of the quality of its players (Olafsen et al., 2017), and may thus be seen as an extension of the athlete development in its country. Hence, the main focus of this thesis was how the culture facilitates or work as a barrier for development, in that sense this study contributes to a wider understanding of the various ways of reaching expertise and that successful talent development is contextually based (Storm, 2015). In this chapter, I will discuss my findings in relation to the existing body of talent development research.

The most obvious finding is that there is an intense culture for football in Uruguay and football seems to be an important part of everyday life in the society. Using the examples of Canadian ice hockey, Kenyan distance running, Jamaican sprinting, Australian cricket and football in Brazil, Araújo et al. (2010) argues that the historical emphasis a nation or community places on a particular sport can have a significant influence on their international competitive success, which also appears to be the case for football in Uruguay.

According to Schein (2010) there are four categories of culture; macro-culture exemplified as ethnic and religious groups and occupations that exists globally, organizational culture that is either private, public, non-profit or government organizations, sub-cultures being occupational groups within organizations, and micro-culture that is micro-systems within or outside organizations. In this sense, Uruguayan football culture permeates the broader macro-culture, but might more adequately be analysed as an organizational culture, which is the core of the ESF model (Henriksen, 2010). Schein (2010, p. 2) argues that macro-cultures such as societies are more stable and ordered than that of an organizational culture. Organizational cultures will vary in

1

stability, and this is related to the length of time they have existed and the emotional intensity of their actual history. Uruguayan football culture has deep historical roots from the introduction to the game by the British as early as the second half of the 19th century, their fantastic early 20th century achievements in international tournaments and their search for a national identity (Giulianotti, 1999), seems to have made football the natural cultural focal point.

This intense culture appears to have created what is reported as something the Uruguayans are born and raised with; “What comes from within, an infinite passion for the game.” Passion is defined by Vallerand and Verner-Filion (2013, p. 35) as a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity that people like (or love), find important, and in which they invest time and energy. Two types of passion are proposed; harmonious and obsessive. Harmonious passion leads people to choose to engage in the activity that they love on the other side obsessive passion creates an internal pressure to engage in the activity. Harmonious passion is hypothesized to lead to more adaptive outcomes than obsessive passion such as flow and positive emotions, psychological well-being, physical health, relationships, and performance. The authors argue that if one is to engage in the given activity for long hours over several years and sometimes a lifetime, one must love the activity dearly and have the desire to pursue engagement especially when times are rough. This appears to be related to the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) which examines the quality of motivation for undertaking activities in the search to fulfil three basic needs; autonomy-to feel a sense of personal initiative, competence -interacting effectively with the environment and relatedness -to feel connected to significant others. A few of these activities will feel especially enjoyable and important, and will resonate with the identity or the self-perception and thus will become passionate activities (Vallerand & Verner-Filion, 2013) or known as identified, integrated or internally regulated activities. These forms of motivation are shown to be of high quality and lasting for any activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Vallerand and Verner-Filion (2013) also found that both the harmonious and obsessive passion appeared to contribute to higher amounts of deliberate practice and better short-term performance. However, it appears that obsessive passion leads to a type of suffering and lower levels of psychological well-being than harmonious passion when striving for high performance. This suffering is in line with how the interviewees said they reacted to a loss in football; “you suffer”, “the worst feeling in the world” and “all hell breaks

loose”. Additionally, Vallerand and Verner-Filion (2013) also investigated the relationship between the two passions and the four different types of goals in the achievement goals theory (Elliot, 1999) being mastery avoidance or approach (also known as task-orientation), whereas one is motivated to either become more skilful and exerting effort or by not becoming worse. The other two main motivations are the performance approach or avoidance (also known as ego-orientation), whereas one is motivated to perform better than a peer or by winning, or to be motivated by not performing worse than a peer or by not losing. Vallerand and Verner-Filion (2013) found that harmonious passion, being a form of autonomous regulation is predicted to be positively related to mastery goals but not to performance goals of either type. On the other hand, obsessive passion, being a more pressured, internally controlling form of regulation is likely to lead the individual to feel compelled to seek any and all forms of success at the activity and may evoke concerns about doing poorly. As such, obsessive passion should be positively related to mastery goals as well as performance approach and avoidance goals, however performance avoidance goals (e.g. not being the worst in the team or not losing) are claimed to undermine performance and well-being. It may seem like the Uruguayans passion for football are more of the obsessive kind, with their high degree of performance approach “The *need* to win” and the performance avoidance “losing is the worst feeling in the world and a total failure”.

The results also revealed forms of mastery approach “the need to improve and become better in order to triumph and become professional”. However, the performance approach to win and especially the avoidance to lose from the introduction to football seems to be of even greater importance. Even though obsessive passion is claimed to reduce the psychological well-being, it appears to be a strong motivation for the Uruguayan’s to achieve elite performance, when the Uruguayans appear high in mastery approach and very high in performance-approach and performance-avoidance, however more context specific research is needed to say for certain. This obsessive passion does not seem to the Uruguayan’s as a negative, but rather as a factor for success. There appears to be a strong cultural coherence to the basic assumptions that “football is most important thing in life” and that “the game is first and foremost about winning” and these assumptions appear to be reinforced in baby football. The dedication to the triumph (reported as ‘fuego sagrado’, meaning the holy fire) appears to be an internalized part of their motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and is reported to be one of

the main differences to their unlikely success. The Uruguayan's sky high standard for success "The goal is to win the world cup" and the high and 'difficult goals' such as "becoming a professional football player" (Locke & Latham, 2006) are more likely to lead to a higher level of performance and more deliberate practice. However, in order to reach difficult goals, a higher level of goal commitment is needed. Goal commitment reflects motives that athletes use to overcome motivational constraints (Ericsson et al., 1993). It is argued that commitment is one of the most important factors for expertise because only the extremely dedicated athletes are able to produce the deliberate practice hours needed to reach elite level (Baker & Côté, 2003). The 'fuego sagrado' seems to summarize the Uruguayan's obsessive passion for football, and the ambition and commitment to achieve difficult goals are all likely to promote more deliberate practice. The next section will discuss the potential benefit and negative consequences of such a commitment.

Baker, Cobley, and Fraser-Thomas (2009, pp. 77-78) suggest that early specialization is defined by: (a) an early start age in sport; (b) an early involvement in one sport; (c) an early involvement in high intensity formalized training, and; (d) an early involvement in competitive sport. All these four parameters appear to be present in Uruguayan football, whereas only the third parameter might be different because one can choose if one wants to play for a 'performance' team or a more 'social' team. The other parameters seems present because one can start as early as four with baby football (Suárez, 2014), only football matters (there exist other sports, but they are not culturally relevant), and no matter what team you play for, when you enter the pitch the one thing that matters is to win the game.

The findings reveal that baby football was perceived as one of the main reasons for Uruguayan football success. This was perhaps due to these early explicit targets of improving performance and winning games rather than solely enjoying the activity in itself. This might contribute to the Uruguayan's earlier accumulating more hours of deliberate practice compared to other nations starting a deliberate practice routine at a later age, and thus would be unable to "catch up", all other things being equal (Baker et al., 2009). In their football specific review of expertise, Haugaasen and Jordet (2012) stated that although not originally considered deliberate practice, team practice has repeatedly been shown to be an important discriminator across skill level, and this is

most likely due to its deliberate practice properties. The Uruguayan's play baby football for their local club of choice (either performance or social team) and do not select the best players to the top club's academies until they are about 13 years of age, which can be viewed as a form of later specialization.

If the most important target is to become professional, perhaps the Uruguayan environment teaches the kids at an early point how to manage a top level professional career? For example, the English Premier League (EPL) is ranked as the second best league in the world ("21st World Super League," 2017) and Nesti, Littlewood, O'Halloran, Eubank, and Richardson (2012, p. 21) describes the inner workings of the EPL teams and organizations as 'volatile' and to have a short term focus such as exhaustive focus on winning and surviving at all costs. This impact the culture of the organization, that leads the people within it to work under intense pressure and stress. The basic Uruguayan assumption that "The game is first and foremost about winning" may lead to the Uruguayans experiencing this volatile and short-term side of professional football at an earlier point and learning to cope and manage the stressors (e.g. de-selection, coping with competition). One might speculate that having experienced this makes the transition from the junior to the professional team less of a cultural shock, however this 'darker' side of football has its many negative implications on long term development, as will be further elaborated. Duda, Olson, and Templin (1991) found that low mastery approach and high performance approach corresponded to an endorsement of unsportsmanlike play and cheating, in addition to positively perceive aggressive acts as more legitimate. This corresponds well with the findings regarding baby football that you "Play to win at almost any cost" and that you need to be brave due to its "ferocious competitive" nature, aggression and intensity. Moreover, Collins, Fields, and Comstock (2008) found that the sociocultural acceptability of aggressive and illegal behaviours are shown to increase the numbers of injuries in sports.

The Uruguayan combination of deliberate play and deliberate practice from the inception is suggested by Ford et al. (2009) to be facilitative to reach football expertise. Haugaasen and Jordet (2012, p. 196) summarizes the need for specific training to reach expertise in football: "Our review indicates that the most optimal way of improving football-specific skills and performance is through practice that is conducted as close to

individual role and position-specific variations as possible.” This domain-specificity seems apparent in Uruguay, however there might be downsides to this intense way of playing the game such as injuries and loss of motivation (Côté et al., 2007)

The findings showed that the perceived general lack of finances was both positively and negatively interpreted in terms of development. The economic incentive, whereas football is viewed as a way out of poverty is reported as something that triggered the Uruguayan’s dedication and determination to become professional football players. Similarly, Van Yperen (2009) found that dedication and determination were factors differing the ones that became professional football players and not. This led to the players feeling psychologically bound to their goals, which is hypothesized to increase their willingness to put effort into goal attainment, persistence in pursuing the goal over time and a reluctance to lower or abandon their goals. The lack of money combined with the dream of becoming professional were reported to create a positive talent development environment where one dedicated themselves more and got more backing from their parents. This dedication to excellence were reported as “The triumph”. On the other hand, a struggling personal economy were also interpreted as something that created an “uglier” environment, where parents put pressure upon the child to become their financial saviour. Parental pressure has been related to maladaptive achievement striving in football, which is characterized by an overconcern for mistakes, doubts about performance and actions and a lowered perception of football skill, as reported by Ommundsen, Roberts, Lemyre, and Miller (2006).

Uruguay is generally poor, but they are still better off than most of their neighbour countries, Argentina and Brazil. Perhaps this is the optimal financial level, where one has enough money for the basic needs, but where one still has to struggle, creating an environment of ‘desirable difficulty’ (Bjork, 2017). A Desirable difficulty is a learning task that requires a considerable but desirable amount of effort, thus leading to long term development. While it initially might slow down learning, the long-term benefits are greater than with easy tasks. Moreover, in order to be ‘desirable’, the task must also be accomplishable. For example, walking to training 6 kilometres every day for a child might be hard initially, however, in the long term it may teach the value of hard work and independence knowing you have to take care of yourself. This struggle is seen as vital in order to learn positive proactive coping skills and a “learn from it”

approach to challenge, a mindset that some researchers have suggested has to be learned at an early age (Collins, MacNamara, & McCarthy, 2016, p. 9).

The teams in the Uruguayan Primera Division also generally lack finances resulting in the best players swiftly being sold abroad. This means that Uruguayan clubs cannot buy foreign players but have to rely on their own talents. Thus, for local talented players, more opportunities may arise and players get their senior debuts early. TFS found that for the world class players, the average senior debut came at 18 years of age (TFS, 2018), and they were established seniors between the age of 19 and 22 (TFS, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c), which suggest that it is important to get the opportunity to be involved with a senior team in late adolescent and to be established in early adulthood in order to become a professional football player. This appears to be the case in Uruguayan football, however more research is needed to say for certain. On the other side, it is possible that this player migration also interrupts the development process. Mills, Butt, Maynard, and Harwood (2014) writes that there is a lack of research into the experiences of young players taking part in a talent development environment, additionally there appears to be a lack of research of the challenges young players face when migrating to another country. However, one study conducted by Richardson, Littlewood, Nesti, and Benstead (2012) they investigated the experiences of young talents as they engaged in a migratory transition from their home country to an English Premier League club. They found that some players felt isolated and helpless when they encountered challenges such as injuries and were missing their family and friends. Learning a new language and building new relationships were also seen a challenge. Additionally, some found it difficult adapting to another way of playing the game, another way of being coached and they also felt pressure to justify the resources being spent on them. The authors of this study found that the family was vital in the career progression of the youngsters, through guiding and supporting their sons. “Without this parental support, it is likely that these players would not have been able to make the migratory transition.” (Richardson et al., 2012, p. 1610). However, when reflecting on these experiences, some stated it had made them a stronger person and they were able to appreciate the benefit of negative experiences on their development. Maybe this early Uruguayan migration actually is a beneficial ‘tool’ in ‘the rocky road to the top’ (Collins & MacNamara, 2017). However, more in depth research is needed to state

whether it is best for the development to stay in your familiar environment or migrate early.

There appears to be local and non-professional approach to the organization of baby football, especially in the capitol of Montevideo, where several needs are met: Easy availability to play football, avoidance of huge distances due to crime and a lack of money for the bus. Additionally, it seems the top clubs trust the ability of baby football's organization (e.g. early specialization and selection) to develop the best players until they are 13, which holistically makes it best to only start selecting players to the top teams after 13 years of age. This appears to have created a basic assumption of 'how we do player development here', which is not questioned and therefore leads to a coherence in the organizational football culture. A cultural coherence is found to be an important feature of a successful player development environment (Larsen et al., 2013).

Interestingly, it appears that the Uruguayans perceive themselves as less technical but compensate for this by their competitiveness and 'garra charrua', meaning fighting spirit. The 'garra charrua' seems to stem from the symbolic early success of their international team, and thus has become a part of the national identity (Giulianotti, 1999). This lack of skill might be due to the poor standards of the pitches which are incoherent with Tabarez opinion that one cannot play the modern day technical football on poor pitches (Mazur, 2013a). The poor pitches might, in combination with the fighting spirit, lead to more 1v1 duels, rather than being able to play rapid passes along the ground. However, Araújo et al. (2010) have studied the experience of Brazilian football players where they emphasize a type of deliberate play, a competitive street-games without coaches called "Pelada". 'Pelada' is played with adapted norms and rules in a variety of locations – such as streets, beaches, town squares, yards, courts and dirt fields. This broad exposure to game-related football activities is hypothesized to increase the motoric and perceptual skills (Fonseca, 2007). Fonseca and Garganta (2008) argues that this kind of deliberate play is critical to the acquisition of expertise, due to the pleasure and passion that a child gains from playing football and the possibilities for exploration, creativity and goal achievement under unpredictably variable performance conditions. The players interviewed also considered that unstructured street football allowed them to become familiar with assorted features of the game, because it is possible for the players to try many different skills in varying

conditions without fear of judgment from an observing coach. Araújo et al. (2010, p. 170) refers to the Brazilian football legend Socrates' description of his own training environment: "When you play in orchard, with irregular surfaces and surrounded by trees, there is a need for developing a bunch of abilities in order to prevent injuries." This motivation to learn to avoid injuries is shared by the legendary dribbler Garrincha: "Dribbling the ball barefoot, without twisting or damaging your ankle on uneven surfaces is a considerable feat in itself." Araújo et al. (2010, p. 170) These experiences contrast to traditional practices, mainly because of its variable, unstructured way of practicing, with high intensity, from an early age and with an abundance of unplanned competitive situations, which is argued to develop improvisation, skills and creativity (Côté & Hay, 2002; Fonseca & Garganta, 2008) . Even though some of the Uruguayans say that children do not play as much in the streets nowadays, they still seem to play these 'Peladas' in school. The availability of pitches appears to facilitate the 'Peladas', whilst the poor pitches both can work as facilitators for the 'garra charrua' and skill building, on the other side they may work as barriers to the modern day passing characteristics. This might have caused what Schein (2010) refers to as 'tensions' in Tabarez' vision of the future Uruguayan footballer which infused the need to change, and might be one of the reasons the U15, U17 and U20's train 1-2 times per week together on the fantastic facilities of the Uruguay Celeste training complex (Arocena & Bowman, 2014).

Even though the Uruguayans appear to have found a talent pathway that works for them, there are also downsides associated to their football culture. The obsessive passion can be felt like "I must do" rather than "I want to", and are thus a internally controlling type of motivation which is counterproductive to intrapersonal outcomes such the psychological well-being, physical health and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vallerand, 2010). Obsessive passion is as mentioned related to more performance-approach (ego-involvement) which is a less controllable form of motivation due to its normative form of comparison (e.g. perform better/avoid to perform worse than opponents/teammates). Also a high performance approach combined with low mastery approach is found to employ less facilitative coping approaches, maladaptive perfectionism and to decrease performance due to an increased performance anxiety (or one needs at least a high perceived competence to perform well against better opponents) however when meeting easy opponents one will lower one's

effort and subsequently perform worse than one's best (Elliot, 1999; Ommundsen, Roberts, Lemyre, & Miller, 2005). This performance anxiety is illustrated by Suárez (2014, p. 10) trying to understand why he bit Chiellini in the game against Italy in the World Cup of 2014:

The feeling is very hard to explain. After everything you have done, you don't want it to stop there; you want more, you can't bear the thought of failure. It's not that I want to win; it's that I need to win. The fear of failure clouds everything for me – even the blatantly obvious fact that I have at least 20,000 pairs of eyes on me; it is not as if I am not going to be seen. Something shuts down in my head. Logic doesn't come into it anymore.

Furthermore, this performance anxiety and decrease in performance high ego and low task is likely to lead to extrinsic regulated motivation due to the extrinsic nature of evaluation (opponents) rather than being self-referenced, which is associated with negative consequences of participating in sports, additionally it is associated with more stress (Kristiansen, Halvari, & Roberts, 2012). In their article “What do we know about early specialization? Not much!” Baker et al. (2009) summarized a range of negative physical and psychosocial consequences potentially following the early specialization, such as: lower degree of health, more injuries, slower maturation, compromised social development, burnout, dropout and eating disorders. All which might lead to a lot of potential elite players either quitting football, be forced to quit and/or losing the enjoyment of the game itself. Additionally, when selecting youth teams based on current performance level there are several biases that can affect the children. Bjørndal (2017, p. 7) points to the bias that current performance can predict potential and future performance in children, which has been disproved by several researchers. Furthermore, the most known ‘relative-age-effect’-bias is the phenomenon of skewed birth date distributions in athletic populations and the overrepresentation of athletes born close to age cut-off dates in diverse sports. Hancock, Adler, and Côté (2013) argues that this selection organization inevitably become self-fulfilling prophecies when resources and positive motivational influences such as being selected to better teams or activities (e.g. national team) to develop talent, better coaches and more positive feedback, are given unequally across a population of athletes. ‘Linear’ selection/de-selection methods are therefore likely to be biased and may even be directly counterproductive to talent

identification and development (Peterson, 2013). Renshaw, Davids, Phillips, and Kerhervé (2012) propose that talent identification should take place at a later stage in athlete development and closer to a sports person's expected peak performance in a given sport. This early selection might be a weakness of the Uruguayan talent development organization where they might lose potentially elite players born later in the year, however more research is needed to state whether the early selection bias used are being countered by other initiatives.

As we have seen there are potential benefits to expertise development but also downsides to the passionate football culture of Uruguay; in which football is the most important thing, winning is what matters and early specialization is the norm. However, these assumptions permeate society and appear to have such intense emotional history with the early glories with the national team that it is not likely to change (Schein, 2010). The history is additionally fuelled with the contemporary achievements of La Celeste and producing world class players such as Suarez, Godin and Cavani, which seem to have caused the assumption that “baby football is the foundation to our success”, or rather “*the way we play* baby football is the foundation for our success”.

The findings also reveal that there seems to be a strong sense of self-belief and optimism regarding one's ability to achieve difficult goals, especially on the behalf of the national team, which appears to have caused the basic assumption of “little country but everything is possible”. This belief or self-confidence is often referred to as ‘self-efficacy’ in the research literature and is defined as “the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997). It is shown that self-efficacy strongly influences the choices of activity (easy tasks or harder tasks) exertion of effort, adaptive coping styles and persistency when facing obstacles, and are thus perceived as a strong predictor of athletic performance in a range of different domains (Bray, Balaguer, & Duda, 2004; Fransen et al., 2015). The determinants affecting self-efficacy are personal mastery experience, vicarious experience, physiological and emotional states, and verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1997). The Uruguayans talk about this concept more indirectly in terms of the individual development through the vicarious experiences of the role models which later will be elaborated, however they explicitly mentioned this concept in form of the national team's capability to perform. Fransen et al. (2015) refers to two types of team

efficacy; collective efficacy and team outcome efficacy, which appear to share similarities to the dichotomy of the mentioned achievement goal theory (Elliot, 1999); whereas ‘collective efficacy’ are the group’s belief in the process of performance, whilst ‘team outcome efficacy’ are the group’s collective belief to achieve results. The Uruguayans mentioned more often the outcome efficacy in achieving results e.g. “The day they [Uruguay national team] lose the belief that they can become world champions, they are done.”. These might have been caused by the previous mastery experiences of the early triumphs (see chapter 5) “It has created something innately that makes you know that you can win from you're a kid.” Self-efficacy is also related to the concept of optimism which also seems evident in the Uruguayans and it is defined as a “major determinant of the disjunction between two classes of behavior: (a) continued striving versus (b) giving up and turning away” (Scheier & Carver, 1985, p. 227) . Optimism is found to facilitate approach (rather than avoidance) coping mechanisms and to increase the performance in soccer (Gordon, 2008; Nicholls, Polman, Levy, & Backhouse, 2008). In this sense is it plausible that the team outcome efficacy and optimism might counter some of the negative ego-oriented consequences (Elliot, 1999) such as the maladaptive coping responses and giving up and turning away when the opponent are perceived as better, which bring us over to the basic assumption that “we thrive in adversity”.

As mentioned are a high sense of self-efficacy and optimism predicated to increase effort of goal-attainment and persistency facing obstacles, which are essentials when managing adversity. Jordet (2016, pp. 21-22) writes that “Ultimately, the goal for a player is to work through adversity, setbacks, and failure, so he/she maintains the same or more focus and energy in practice and games as he/she would have had without the adversity”. Almost all interviewees mentioned that coping with adversity is characteristic of the Uruguayan player, and this assumption also seems created by the glorious history, more especially the previously mentioned “Maracanazo” (see chapter 5) where the Uruguayans managed to turn the game around and win away in Brazil even though being heavy underdogs: “These 1950's championships, not just in football, but in general, you have to continue no matter how hard it looks. You go on and on and on.” and which are similar to “It is a fundamental attitude in Uruguay that the more and bigger problems, the more effort you exert. The more you fight.” It may seem like the Uruguayans employ a problem-focused coping approach which is proactively doing

something about the stressful situation rather than an emotion-focused coping approach which is defined as the cognitive regulation of stressful emotions (Van Yperen, 2009). For example, when in adversity being down 1-0 in a game, instead of being caught up in the negative emotions often following an ego-oriented performance climate (Ommundsen et al., 2005) the Uruguayans report adversity as a trigger for increased effort which resembles the facilitative problem focused coping approach. Collins and MacNamara (2017) argues the importance not only promote the positive experiences, but also help the athletes deal with inevitable negative experiences that will come at some stage. They emphasize that the right amount of trauma at the right time of the development process might be facilitative or even vital for development into expertise or “super-champions” as the highest achievers are referred to. Too much trauma or adversity and no trauma/adversity are both positively associated with lower achievers or “almosts”. The lower achievers were characterized by external attributions e.g. “It is my coach’s fault that I get de-selected” whereas the super champions generally had more internal attribution “It is my fault I get de-selected, I need to work harder”. As previously suggested “baby-football” appears to share similarities with the volatile professional football (Nesti et al., 2012) (de-selection, short-termism, extensive focus on winning) and thus is it plausible that the Uruguayans are exposed to sport challenges at an earlier age (Collins et al., 2016). Correlated to coping with adversity there appears to be an ability or at least an admirable skill among the Uruguayans to cope with physical pain and injuries, which also appears a necessity to handle the mentioned aggressive ‘garra charrua’ playing style where “if you don’t have balls, you have nothing to do on the pitch” – assumption appears dominating. Levy, Polman, Clough, Marchant, and Earle (2006) found that the ability to cope with pain was related to a higher degree of mental toughness, and among the many concepts related to mental toughness resilience in face of different types of adversity appears to be a consistent feature (Thelwell, Weston, & Greenlees, 2005).

As previously elaborated there are a magnitude of potential negative long-term consequences related to early specialization approach such as burnout, dropout, injuries and mental health issues, and it seems vital that there are educated and conscious coaches in such a volatile environment, in order to help the athletes develop the mental skills needed interpret the traumas in a facilitative way. It appears more important what the performers *bring* to the challenge than *what* they experience, and Collins et al.

(2016, p. 1) suggests that “a periodic and progressive set of challenge, preceded and associated with specific skill development, would seem to offer the best pathway to success for the majority.”

The data suggest that there appears to be an intense culture for football, which is a characteristic of a successful talent development environment (Henriksen, 2010; Larsen, 2013; Martindale et al., 2007). This appears to have been caused by the early triumphs which appear to have created a coherence in the present basic assumptions causing the ‘early specialization’-approach to be taken for granted as the pathway leading to football success. This appears to have caused a magnitude of potential beneficial factors (e.g. passion, dedication, collective efficacy, managing adversity) facilitating football development, combined with a range of potential debilitating factors (e.g. dropout, burnout, injuries, mental health issues). MacNamara and Collins (2015, p. 78) argues that:

[...] psychological aspects of development should be completely embedded within each sport’s unique environment and coaching process, with additional support specialist input and each performer’s lifestyle and support network integrated toward a common set of goals.

Furthermore, MacNamara and Collins (2015) argue that in order for these skills to develop there a need they are a part of the learning environment, because when life skills or mental skills are taught in isolation there is generally poor transfer and application to the performance context. How are these basic assumptions and the facilitative way to cope in this environment taught? And what are the barriers needed to avoid to successfully guiding one’s way in the Uruguayan talent development environment? This will be the focus of the last part of the discussion.

All the interviewees rated role models as important for their development, which is coherent with the findings of Larsen (2013) and Henriksen (2010) claiming that proximal role models are an important characteristic of a success talent development environment due to the opportunity for the young talent to learn from the elite players, and a willingness from the elite players to pass on their knowledge. The importance of a role model in the learning process was confirmed important by Balish and Côté (2014) and Christensen, Laursen, and Sørensen (2011) found that the opportunity to ‘play upwards’ and ‘mirroring older players’ resulted in meaningful development

experiences, this also seemed the case for Uruguayans stating e.g. “The most important thing was that he had role models, that he saw on TV and that were in the club”. It seems like the national youth teams systematically have created a ‘community of practice’ through Tabarez’ plan, with the U15, U17 and U20 training together 1-2 times per week and are staying at the ‘Uruguay Celeste’-training complex ahead of international tournaments(Arocena & Bowman, 2014). Community of practice(CoP) are one of the core concepts of the social learning theory of Wenger (1998), and was built upon the master and student’-relationship where they found that learning mostly occurred through interaction. By sharing information and experiences between the members of the group, they can learn from each other and have an opportunity to develop personally and professionally(Lave, 1991). A CoP can occur naturally based on the individual’s common interests but is can also be deliberately created with the goal of increasing knowledge in a specific area, which both seem to be the case for the Uruguayan youth national teams. The CoP are less specific than role modelling because there is a mutual engagement. A CoP provides a set of what is termed ‘paradigmatic trajectories’, which embodies the history of the community through the participation and identities of its members, and they include actual people as well as stories. These paradigmatic trajectories involve a community of mutual engagement and is therefore less specific than a role model (Wenger, 1998). The experienced senior players were deemed vital for the development both on and off the pitch, however the previously elaborated trend of player migration appears to have caused a ripple where more youth players are being promoted, and thus have the experienced players have felt marginalized due to being ‘outnumbered’ by the younger in the senior team e.g. “. Today it's not that the younger ones shall adapt to the elderly, it's almost reversed.” This trend might be debilitating for the youth in the internal adaption to the existing culture from the role models (Schein, 2010) and the culture of the CoP as a whole.

Both the proximal and distal role models share similarities to vicarious experience, whereas Bandura argues that a magnitude of our learning is learnt through observation and modelling and that we can increase our self-efficacy in achieving a certain target through observing others (Bandura, 1997). There are some determinants to the degree we appear to learn from the role model included social status, age and similarity to observer, which seem coherent with the role models chosen by the interviewees; they were often captain or regarded as great players, older than

themselves and in the same position on the pitch. It appears that for the Uruguayans the proximal role models plays a vital part in the development on the pitch and helps them deal with other life challenges off the pitch (e.g. talking with management, social integration, professionalization etc) whilst the distal role models (often a star player playing in Europe) worked as ‘vicarious experience’ that enhanced the self-efficacy to achieve the dream of playing in Europe. The experienced athletes interviewed also rated their role as being important and seemed willing to pass on their knowledge. Summarized, role modelling and CoP seem a vital part of the integration to the culture and personal development on and off the pitch, however somewhat alarming is the reported negative trend of the marginalization of the experienced role models due to the senior team becoming younger in average.

In the extension of the social learning, social support was also deemed crucial for the development. There was an emphasis on parents being the most influential, which is coherent with various literature, for example studying football players perception of which psychosocial competencies and environmental conditions they deemed important for their own development, Holt and Dunn (2004) found that parent played a vital part, also in adolescence, due to a range of supportive behaviors. The father was deemed extra important in this process by the Uruguayans, which is in line with the findings of Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles, and Sameroff (2001), speculating that this was because the fathers were able to provide informational support because they had prior personal involvement in soccer, whereas the mothers had not, which also appear plausible with the Uruguayans. However, both parents appeared to help the players with emotional and tangible support. On the contrary, as previously elaborated parents were also for some seen as sources of stress due to their pressure on their child to become their financial saviour. O’rourke, Smith, Smoll, and Cumming (2014, p. 395) found that parent-initiated motivational climate was a significant predictor of late-season self-esteem, trait anxiety, and autonomous regulation over and above coach-initiated motivational climate, these findings appear related to the Uruguayans perceptions. Furthermore, Van Yperen (2009) found that the successful players were more likely to seek social support when encountering problems and drawbacks, this might be why the Uruguayans stated that solely having *someone* was the most important factor for their development. Some reported that they had friends that were better football players than them that did not succeed in becoming

professional football players because they did not have anyone to support them. In Uruguay, where it seems a common ambition to play abroad especially in Europe, agents may work as another form of social support and guidance, however it appeared that the Uruguayans perceived agents more as a barrier than a facilitator for development. The agents start offering money for as young as the age of 8 to give up their registration rights. Following the call from Richardson et al. (2012) there is an apparent need for more research examining the role of the agent in the development trajectory, and the social and psychological capabilities of the agent in advising and supporting players through their migratory transition. The early migration- trend of the best talents appears to have debilitating effects on the domestic league making it weak in quality (Arocena & Bowman, 2014), ranked as number 37 ("21st World Super League," 2017), even though their national team are ranked as number 17 ("FIFA world ranking men," 2018), which might create a downward facing spiral of an increased need to play abroad in order to be challenged enough to take the step to the next level and be nominated for the national team.

Another potential social barrier to development were reported as going out at nighttime and dancing with girls, this social life were seen as a necessary sacrifice in order to be able to train well. Holt and Dunn (2004) writes that due to an increasing influence of friends during youth, it is likely that some players may not recognize the impact that an overly-active social life away from the competitive environment may have upon their readiness to compete or train. Furthermore, they found that elite soccer players must resist negative peer influences and sacrifice valuable areas of their social lives, not to the point of isolation from friends, however, an awareness of what it takes to train and play at elite level is advocated by the authors. The Uruguayans used terms as 'self-discipline' 'ability to work hard' and 'sacrifice of social life' to describe what was needed in order to become professional, which are all related to 'The self-regulatory strength model of self-control' (Bauer & Baumeister, 2011) which in common language is known as 'will power' (Mischel et al., 2011). When using will power to do certain tasks (e.g. going to bed rather than going out partying) 'ego depletion' is hypothesized to happen, leading to a decrease in the 'will power-stocks', which is related to lower persistence for the next self-regulatory task undertaken (De Ridder, Lensvelt-Mulders, Finkenauer, Stok, & Baumeister, 2012). There are findings stating the 'will power' works as a muscle, right after one use it the muscle gets weaker,

but with regular use over time it gets stronger (Hagger, Wood, Stiff, & Chatzisarantis, 2010), which might be the Uruguayan case whereas there seems to be a need to be self-organized and professional from an early age, that might over time lead to an increase in the ‘will power-stockings’ and increase the many self-regulatory actions required to become an elite player.

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the findings with contemporary research, however it is important to emphasize that the findings from seven Uruguayan professionals are not meant as a generalization but rather as an exploration into their descriptions, insights and experiences, that might work as a gatekeeper to more research in this unique football culture. Due to the lack of research on the Uruguayan culture there was employed an explorative design and the findings have as hypothesized provided more questions than answers, which will be the focus of the last section.

7.1 Limitations and further research needed

The purpose of the study was to explore the unique characteristics of Uruguayan culture for player development in football. The Interviews revealed several interesting findings regarding the experiences and descriptions about the Uruguayan football culture, and what factors they emphasized as important for development in football. Even though the interviews were supplemented with fieldwork of observation and informal conversations, solely seven informants can be seen as a limitation to this thesis, more informants could have enriched the data basis and even more informants with an overview of the Uruguayan football organization such as experienced coaches and AUF representatives could have provided an even more holistic picture of the organization and culture for athlete development. Additionally, due to the small sample in this study, results are not concluding, but it can imply how Uruguayan professionals consider the unique characteristics of their football culture and their perspective on athlete development. This study was obviously affected by a Norwegian perspective, consciously and unconsciously, seeing and comparing the findings with the Norwegian football context and culture. Due to the translator Liverød’s presence in every interview, the translation and interpretation might also have affected the findings.

Even though there is more emphasis on the context of culture and environment in athlete development, this thesis concurs with Araújo et al. (2010) that there are still

an apparent lack of socio-cultural constraints in the acquisition of sport expertise, more specifically successful soccer cultures and environments. Additionally, it would be interesting to quantitatively explore the average age of the senior teams and the debut age of the players in the Primera Division teams compared to Norway and to further explore if there is an advantage or disadvantage with the reported young senior teams and early debuts. In relation to this, the magnitude of Uruguayan players playing abroad may also need more uncovering exploring the psycho-social effects of this early migration, in addition to the potential facilitating or debilitating effects on development.

Regarding the Uruguayan organization of baby football and the ‘pelada’s’ effect on the long term development, it would be enlightening to do similar research the dissertation of Haugaasen (2015) that explored the practice engagement characteristics throughout the elite male youth and senior football players, to see how the results related to recommendations from prior research. It would be interesting to primarily quantitatively explore the potential positive and negative effects of the early specialization approach, and to see whether they are somehow countered by the cultural normalization of this phenomenon or not. Due to seemingly less proximal role models, the coaches might become even more important in cultivating the motivational climate leading to expert performance, but also psychological well-being.

On the background of the statement of Suárez (2014, p. 195) “He [Oscar Tabarez] changed absolutely everything. From the youth team, up to the top. He deserves an own chapter in the history of Uruguayan football.”, it would be interesting explore the extent of the influence Oscar Tabarez and his vision for the Uruguayan football has had on the organizational culture of the Uruguayan football association (AUF). As De Bosscher et al. (2006) suggest, further in-depth research is needed to provide an international comparison and comparisons on a sport-specific basis, therefore similar to Henriksen (2010) and Larsen (2013) studies it would be of interest to explore the micro-environment in the most effective Uruguayan clubs (and national team) in producing elite players, and compared them to successful Scandinavian clubs to see which features are more universal and which are more contextual based.

8.0 Summary of Central Findings and Concluding Reflections

The most compelling finding appears to be the intense culture for football itself that appears to have created several basic assumptions that has led to a cultural coherence about how effective player development should be done (e.g. a combination of early specialization and deliberate play). In the extension of this culture there appears to be a need to learn numerous psychological skills associated with expertise development in football (e.g. ambition, commitment to succeed, collective efficacy, managing adversity). Distal and proximal role models appear to be important for the continuation and development of this culture. These characteristics combined are described by the Uruguayan professionals as some of the reasons for Uruguay's effectiveness in producing world class players and thus being able to compete internationally with their national team, despite being only 3,46 million inhabitants

9.0 References

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Appendix 1 NSD declaration

Geir Jordet
Postboks 4014 Ullevål stadion
0806 OSLO

Vår dato: 06.09.2017

Vår ref: 55290 / 3 / STM

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

Tilbakemelding på melding om behandling av personopplysninger

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 10.08.2017.
Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>55290</i>	<i>The ones who made it</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Norges idrettshøgskole, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Geir Jordet</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Kristoffer Kolsrud</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget [skjema](#). Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en [offentlig database](#).

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 25.05.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Dersom noe er uklart ta gjerne kontakt over telefon.

Vennlig hilsen

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS Harald Hårfagres gate 29 Tel: +47-55 58 21 17 nsd@nsd.no Org.nr. 985 321 884
NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data NO-5007 Bergen, NORWAY Faks: +47-55 58 96 50 www.nsd.no

Appendix 2 Informed consent



REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT:

The unique characteristics of the Uruguayan football culture

To whomever it might concern,

A master's degree student from Norwegian school of sport sciences(NSSS) has started a project to gain valuable insight in Uruguayan football culture and performance psychology. The purpose is to find out why Uruguay in spite of a low number of inhabitants, manages to create world class football players and have a successful national team. This is done in order to improve Norwegian football player development. This will be conducted with the perspective of the significance of the culture and how it effects player development.

Project participation entails an interview lasting 30-90 minutes, which will be conducted in a shielded environment. Project leader will be the interviewer, and due to the language barrier a translator will be present. There will be employed a tape recorder.

The information gathered will be treated with full confidentiality where only the research team will know the identity of the informant. Storing of the information will be done in a secure server where only the project leader has access. The project is expected to end in the summer of 2018, and the information will be deleted after 5 year. If requested, the informant will receive the master thesis in its whole and also the transcribed interview if needed.

Participation is voluntarily, and the informant can quit whenever he/she wants to, without explaining the cause. The project is considered by Personvernombudet for forskning (Norwegian center of research data).

If you agree to these terms, please sign the informed consent and return it to the project leader.

Best regards

Kristoffer Kolsrud

Project leader

Masters student by the section for coaching and psychology Norwegian School of Sport Sciences

Questions?

Please contact:

Kristoffer Kolsrud: 004745467452 / kolsrud90@gmail.com

The unique characteristics of the Uruguayan football culture

Informed Consent

- I am aware of the purpose of the study.
- I am aware that it will be used a tape recorder.
- I am aware how the information will be stored.
- I am aware that personal information will be confidential.
- I am aware that participation is voluntarily, and I can quit whenever I want to, without explaining the cause.

Place

Date

.....

.....

.....

Signature

.....

Name with big letters

.....

Address

.....

Telephone

.....

E-mail

.....

Appendix 3 Liverød consent



The ones who made it

Informed Consent

- I am aware of the purpose of the study.
- I am aware that it will be used a tape recorder.
- I am aware how the information will be stored.
- I am aware that personal information will be confidential.
- I am aware that participation is voluntarily, and I can quit whenever I want to, without explaining the cause.

Place Jusseluf Date 30/1/18

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

TERJE LIVERØD
Name with big letters

Rep. de Mexico 5627 - Montevideo - Uruguay
Address

0059894597043
Telephone

t.liverod@clarkross.com
E-mail

Jeg er inneforstått med at mitt navn kan bli
i undersøkelsen, og at den er helt anonym og
gjøre. T. Liverød
31/01/18

Appendix 4 Interview guide

Intervjuguide Uruguay

<p>Innledning</p>	<p>(Forteller kort om meg selv og hvorfor jeg er her)</p> <p>«Vi skal ha en prat om hva som kjennetegner Uruguayansk fotballkultur, og hvordan dette påvirker spillerutviklingen i Uruguay.»</p> <p>Kan du først fortelle litt om hvem du er og om din tilknytning til Uruguayansk fotball?</p> <p>Hvor mange år har du i profesjonell fotball?</p> <p>Hvor mange år har du i profesjonell Uruguayansk fotball?</p>
<p>ESF: Environmenta I effectiveness</p>	<p>Til tross for få innbyggere (3.4 mill) så har Uruguay produsert mange gode fotballspillere. Hva tror du er årsaken til dette?</p> <p>Hva mener du er årsaken til suksessen til landslaget til Uruguay?</p>
<p>Makro miljø National culture Educational env Youth culture Reference groups(idols) General sports culture</p>	<p>Hvordan ser hverdagen ut for en typisk Uruguayaner?</p> <p>Hvor viktig er fotball i Uruguay?</p> <p>Hva er viktig for barn under 12 år?</p> <p>Er det noen andre idretter som er viktig i Uruguay enn fotball?</p> <p>Kan du nevne noen Uruguay legender (spillere eller trenere) som du har sett opp til/ blitt påvirket av?</p> <p>Hva slags mentalitet og verdier hadde de, og hvordan fremsto de?</p>

Specific football culture	
Mikro miljø ESF pre-conditions ESF prosess ESF individuell og lags-utvikling og prestasjon	<p>For å bli god nok til å få kontrakt med A-laget er det mange aktører som påvirker spilleren, blant annet: skole, familie, venner, lagkamerater, trenere, seniorspillere, A-lagstrenerne agenter, speidere og eksperter (fysio, analyse, mental trener, etc)</p> <p>Hvem mener du har størst påvirkning på utviklinga til spillerne, og hvorfor?</p> <p>Hvem kan hindre utviklinga til spillerne?</p>
ESF prosess ESF individuell	<p>Hva er nøkkelen for din personlige suksess?</p> <p>Hvor stor betydning har resultat(vinne/tape) for unge spillere?</p> <p>Hva fokuserer trenerne mest på for gode spillere under 19 år? Fysikk (løping, styrke), teknikk (mange involveringer med ball), taktikk (forståelse for spillet) eller mentalitet (holdninger, tenke riktig)?</p> <p>Hvorfor?</p>
Role model	<p>Som en erfaren spiller, hadde du en rolle i utviklinga av de unge spillerne i klubben? I så fall hvordan?</p>
ESF organisasjonskultur	<p>Hva karakteriserer den spesifikke kulturen du er/har vært en del av med tanke på:</p> <p>Verdier? (hva er viktig)</p> <p>Normer? (Uskrevne regler alle følger)</p> <p>Kommunikasjon? (Feks direkte eller sensitiv?)</p> <p>Tradisjoner? (feks før eller etter kamp)</p> <p>Kan du fortelle en historie som beskriver denne kulturen?</p> <p>Hva har du lært av å være en del av denne kulturen?</p>
Jordets 11	<p>Hvilke mentale faktorer, eller hvilke mentale ferdigheter/mindset er viktig for at unge spillere i Uruguay skal komme opp og lykkes?</p> <p>(Presenter kort 11er-modellen... 2-3 setninger på hver faktor)</p>

ATDE Tid (nåtid og fremtid)	<p>Hvilke 3 faktorer i modellen synes du representerer Uruguay spilleren eller Uruguay mentaliteten?</p> <p>Hva er årsaken til at du valgte disse 3 faktorene?</p>
Avslutning	<p>Er det noe annet du kan tenke deg å si om dette, som du ikke har fått sagt?</p> <p>Tusen takk for intervjuet. Jeg setter stor pris på at du tok deg tid til å være med!</p>