

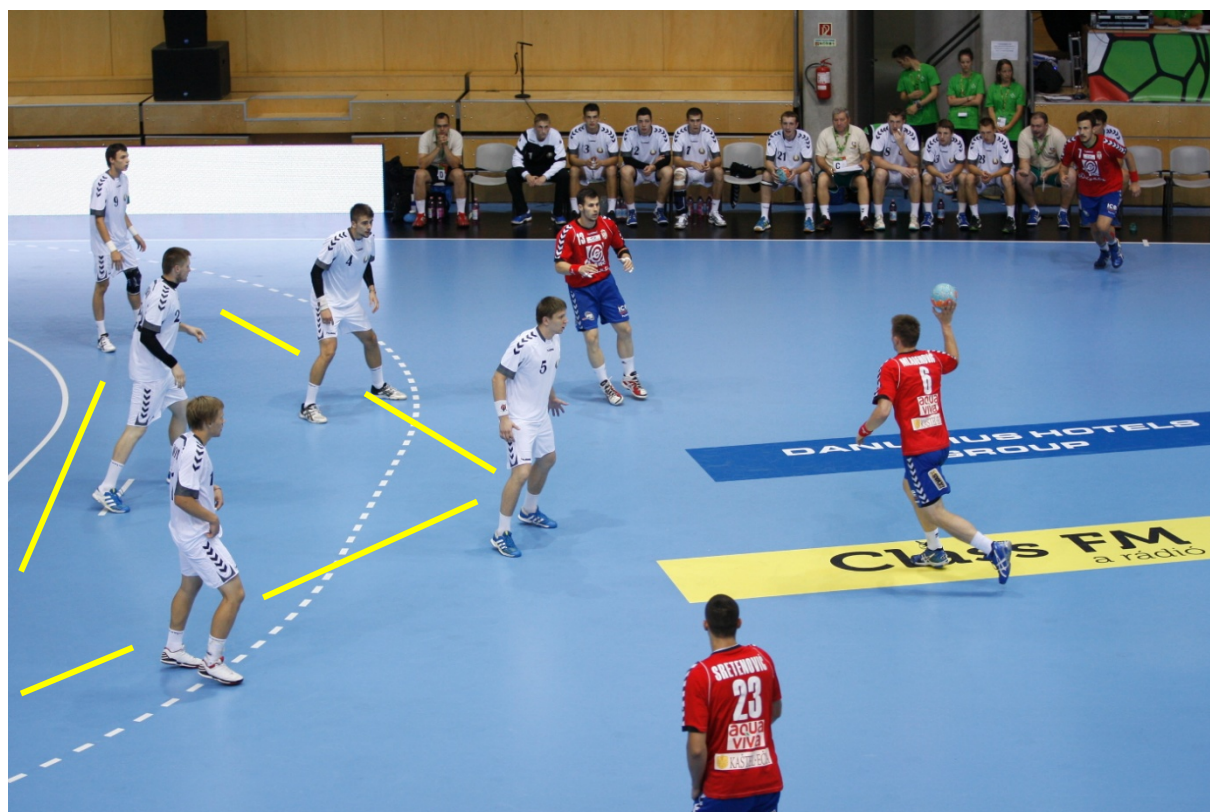
Egypt wins the clash between open defences

by

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In their first two matches of the preliminary round both team applied open defence formations with success. So, in the third round it was not only interesting to see the battle of the two unbeaten teams so far but also the contest between the two defences. Belarus dominated the first half (EGY-BLR 5 min.: 0-4, 30 min.: 14-17), then Egypt produced a strong finish (20.min.: 27-27, 25. min.: 33-30, 30.min.: 37-30) converting the 3 goals half time deficit into a seven goals lead winning the second half by 10 goals. This remarkable comeback was strongly aided by the African team's diversified open defence.

While Belarus applied a ball oriented 3:3 or 3:2:1 zone defence formation most of the time (**Picture 1**), the Egyptian defence was more diversified and flexible.





The four zoning defenders around the goal area line provided a good base for their defence while the role of the two players in front of them varied: they either applied a close man-to-man marking (4+2) or zoning at the front (4:2) or even combined the two roles (4:1+1). **(Picture 2)**

This can be seen in the selected videos 1-4.

Video clip 1.

After scoring a goal the Egyptian players retreat quickly to their own goal-area. In front of their zoning team-mates, two forward defenders shift with the attack, constantly putting pressure on the player with the ball, forcing him to attempt a shot at the goal from an unfavourable position.



Video clip 4.

When the attacker runs in to pivot position, one forward defender maintains close marking while the other moves back to the main defence line. With extensive footwork the defenders crowd around the ball. Under time pressure the attackers are forced to attempt a shot at the goal which is then blocked successfully.

