

ACHIEVING PERFORMANCE IN 3X3 BASKETBALL BY USING FIBA FREE WEB APPLICATION

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Abstract. *Background.* Streetball was included for the first time in history at the 2012 Olympics - Tokyo. The qualification of the 3x3 teams at the Olympic Games is based on the ranking obtained by each team after participating in as many matches as possible. Each participation is counted in the Event Maker free web application and at the end of the qualification period, the application generates the final ranking of the teams qualified for the Olympics.

FIBA is developing 3x3 with a Click& Brick approach. The Brick are the actual events. The Click is FIBA's Digital Platform [6] that is supported with the *Event Maker* free web application. Event Maker is a web application, developed specifically for 3x3 and customized to help event organizers with the organization of their 3x3 events. All basketball sporting events, created with the Event Maker application are published on the play.fiba3x3.com website, being visible globally.

Objectives. Through this study, we aim to highlight the importance of using the web application in obtaining sports performance, respectively the qualification of the Romanian team at the Olympics.

Methods. Based on the organization and participation in sports events, and by using the web application, important data were obtained on the activity of the 3x3 women team in the two pre-Olympic years.

Results. The data provided by the Event Maker application contributed to the orientation of the competition organization process, so that, at the end of 2019, Romania will be in the world ranking in the first four teams qualified for the Olympics.

Conclusion. The data generated in due time by this free web application formed the basis for designing the activity of organizing and participating in streetball competitions, so that coaches have continuously updated information regarding the world ranking at any time during the qualifying stage.

Keywords: Streetball; Event Maker; competition; 3 on 3 Women's Series.

Introduction

Streetball (or street basketball), derived from basketball, is played on outdoor fields and has its own structure and rules much simplified compared to basketball, developed for half-court play. Thus, its format is more accessible and at the same time more attractive, allowing players to display their individual skill.

The new discipline is the most beloved urban team sport, according to a study at the request of the International Olympic Committee - over 250.000.000 practitioners (Bărbăscu, 2018).

The simple rules, the small size of the field and the inexpensive equipment of the participants, help an accessible and flexible organization of 3x3 tournaments in various locations - from gyms, parks, to shopping malls or areas of tourist interest.



By initiating many such events, "street basketball" has become an Olympic discipline. In addition to the desire to promote a healthy lifestyle, it also offers the opportunity to integrate into society through sport, addressing various age groups (from 6-8 years to 60).

Streetball experienced an unexpected development, which can be seen both in various statistics and in the number of events organized in relation to participants / teams registered on the online platform recognized by FIBA(Bărbăscu, 2018).

Streetball or 3 on 3 (3x3) is an opportunity for basketball players or new athletes, but also for organizers around the world to organize such events worldwide. On June 9, 2017, 3x3 was added to the Olympic Program, starting with the Tokyo 2020 Games, but due to the pandemic of Covid 19, the Olympics will take place in 2021.

The network of official competitions from 3 to 3 represents a hierarchical system directed by FIBA (International Basketball Federation), which integrates all the events supported by this Federation.

Being a new sport, there are a few specialized works in this field. Several authors present aspects related to: the performance profile of game-related statistics of elite senior 3x3 basketball (Conte et al, 2019), the physical and physiological demands of 3x3 basketball, focused on 3x3 elite male and female basketball players participating in under-18 World Championships, Senior European and World Championships (Montgomery et al, 2018), or mass streetball training and education process technology (Timoshina et al, 2016). These authors highlight in their works the lack of points of view regarding this sport, precisely because it has a recent appearance. In addition, the approach of our topic is a novelty in the field of scientific research, having rather a practical character through its usefulness in organizing streetball competitions.

Romania was present with the 3x3 women's basketball team at the Olympic Games in Tokyo - 2021, along with Russia, China and Mongolia and four other nations, which was established after playing qualifying tournaments. Romanian basketball obtained this historic qualification thanks to the position in the world ranking of national federations made by FIBA until October 31, 2019.

The purpose of the paper

In this paper we want to highlight the efficiency of the free web application of FIBA - Event Maker – in monitoring the competitions in Romania and the way to obtain the world rankings, which qualified the women's streetball team at the Tokyo Olympics, 2021.

We focused on this topic, as the national and international specialized literature there are no reference data on the scientific approach to the issue. We believe that it is necessary to highlight the importance of knowing this web application in the development of global competitive performance in streetball. In this sense, we consider that the approach of this topic is a premiere in the theoretical field of sports.

We would also like to point out that the intelligent use of the Event Maker can lead to outstanding performances in 3x3 basketball, as in the case of Romania by obtaining the 4th place in the world hierarchy that allowed the direct qualification to J.O.

The Hypothesis

Using the free web application Event Maker in organizing women's streetball competitions in Romania and by engaging the most valuable players in the country, can determine the qualification of the women's 3x3 team at the Olympics by increasing the world rankings of the team and of each participant and making their results visible all over the world.

Methods

The description of the Event Maker

The Event Maker is a web application, developed specifically for 3x3 and customized to help event organizers with the organization of their 3x3 events.

Play.fiba3x3.com is FIBA's digital platform for 3x3. The site is focused on getting people to play more 3x3 by offering them a repository of all their game history, an individual ranking, the ability to compare with friends and rivals.

The Event Maker and the FIBA website are both completely free digital tools that can be used to organize FIBA-approved streetball sporting events and manage recordings, match schedules and results, as well as other features. The homepage of Event Maker is shown below (figure 1).

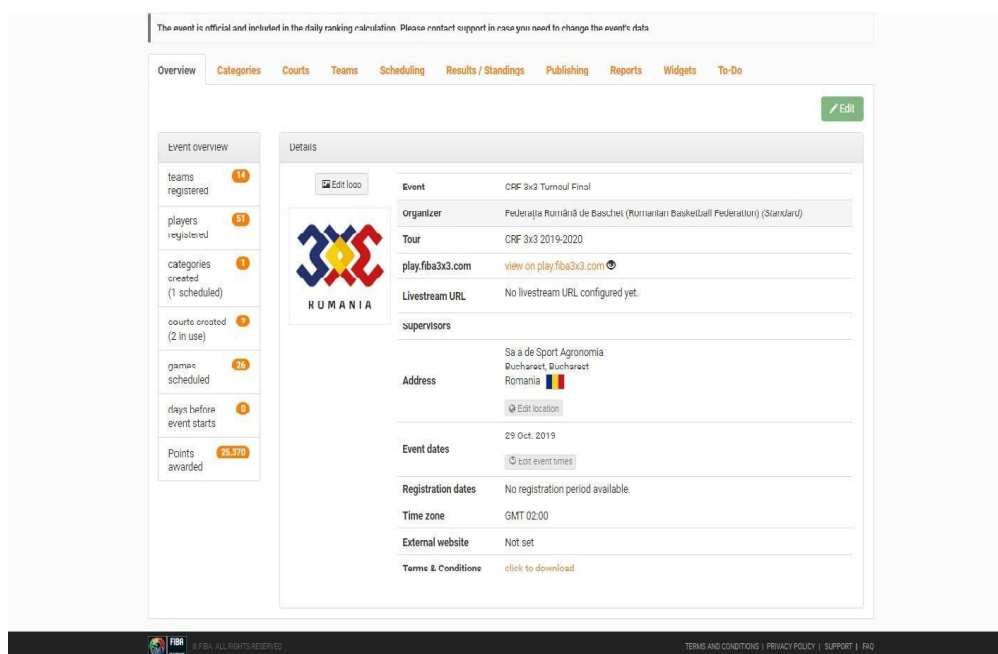


Figure 1. The homepage of Event Maker.

This web application helps run 3x3 events around the world and generates the data required by the FIBA website, including player rankings, performances, game histories and a worldwide database of events. From free registrations to online scheduling and results displayed in real time, managing competitions with Event Maker is very easy. It can set up multiple events, create tours, manage registered teams and display results online worldwide. It also creates a wealth of information to demonstrate the merits and popularity of 3x3 to public administrations, sponsors and TV.

Easy steps to get started (figure 2):

<u>Platform Registration:</u>	<u>Creating 3x3 Organizer account:</u>
➤ Register and create an account on website: play.fiba3x3.com	• Go to Event Maker web application and login with the previously created credentials (email and password)
2. After signing up – a confirmation email	2. Create organization/ company/ National Federation account
3. Click on the Confirm button to activate account	3. Start creating events, tours

Figure 2. How to create an account on Event Maker web application.

At the end of each event, the registered data will be validated and the correctness of the entered data will be verified once again. The last step that the application will carry out will be to validate the tournament. In this final stage, detailed reports are configured about the category of the competition, about the present teams and the individual reports of each player in terms of performance. All the details of the event are automatically sent to FIBA which will then make all the data public and will update for each player the points earned.

The subjects

The subjects of this study represent 100 Romanian women athletes who participated in 3 on 3 at national and international competitions in Streetball, aiming to qualify Romania for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics. The Events took place all over the country, between October 31, 2018 and October 31, 2019, totaling 276 matches. The participation of the athletes in so many matches determined a world ranking of Romania in the first 4 places, which means the qualification at the 2021 Olympics Games.

Research methods used

Observation method – necessary to observe the real-time dynamics of the organization of events by each country, in order to have a clear record of the provisional ranking. Based on the study of these data generated by Event Maker, the Romanian organizers established the share of their own matches in the competitive period, in order to exceed the number of participations made by the participating countries, to obtain the qualification to JO.

The method of analyzing the video recordings of the matches organized in Romania - which the best Romanian players were identified, to play in all matches in order to increase the country ranking, and therefore the Romania's rise in the world rankings.

The interpretation of the results

In 2018 Romania participated in 46 matches and ranked 26th in the world rankings (figure 3), and in 2019 participated in 230 matches and ranked 8th (figure 4). After evaluating the participation of all teams in competitions, FIBA decided that Romania ranked 4th, qualifying at the 2021 Olympics.

Only 3x3 certified national federations with a minimum of three FIBA endorsed events held in their territory in the 12 months prior to the deadline are eligible.

SPORT EVENTS		
Romania's position in the world ranking	Country	Number of events 1 - 31 Oct. 2018)
1	Russia (RUS)	298
2	France (FRA)	267
3	China (CHN)	261
26	Romania (ROU)	46

Figure 3. Romania's position in the world ranking in 2018 after 46 sport events.

SPORT EVENTS		
Rmoania's position in the world ranking	Country	Number of events 1 - 31 Oct. 2019)
1	Russia (RUS)	827
2	France (FRA)	628
3	Italy (ITA)	492
8	Romania (ROU)	230

Figure 4. Romania`s position in the world ranking in 2019 after 230 sport events.

As can be seen from the analysis of figures 3 and 4, Romania intensified in 2019 the organization of 3x3 events, allowing players who were in the national top 100 to participate in most competitions and thus increase Romania's country ranking. For this reason, it can be seen that Romania, which at the end of 2019 was in 8th place in terms of number of organized competitions, still managed to reach the 4th place in the ranking of federations and thus obtain direct qualification to the Olympics. Teams such as France or Italy, that were in 2nd and 3rd place in the ranking of organizing 3x3 events failed to qualify, this is due to the fact that not all competitions organized by these countries used the Event Maker web application that globalizes the performance and also they were not involved the top 100 players in all matches that brought points.

Event Maker offered in real time the ranking of Romania after each event, as well as the ranking for each player. In the figure below (figure 5), we can observe the evolution of Romania in 2018, in which the 3x3 team participated in 46 events, and the ranking of the athletes increased to 2915, which ranked it at the end of the year on the 26th place in the world hierarchy. Thus, through the evidence of the participations from 2018, more intense action was taken for 2019 in the organization and participation of the Romanian women's streetball team to increase the world ranking.

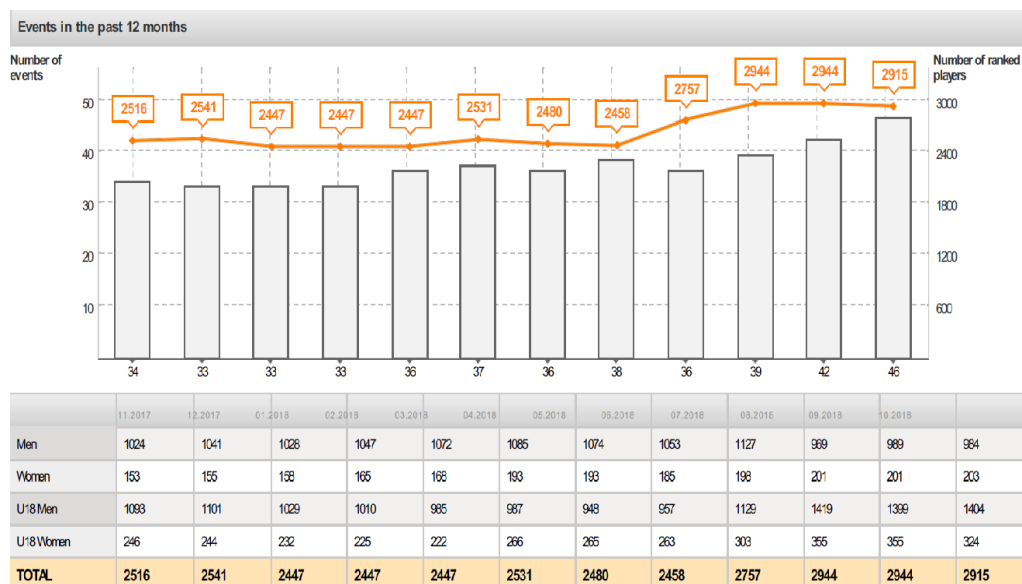


Figure 5. Events 2017–2018.

The big difference between the two years is very obvious, regarding the increase in the number of participations in 2019 and implicitly the increase of the final ranking by countries (figure 6). After a number of 276 sporting events in which the Romanian team participated, the ranking offered by Event Maker placed Romania on the 4th place and thus managed to qualify for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics.

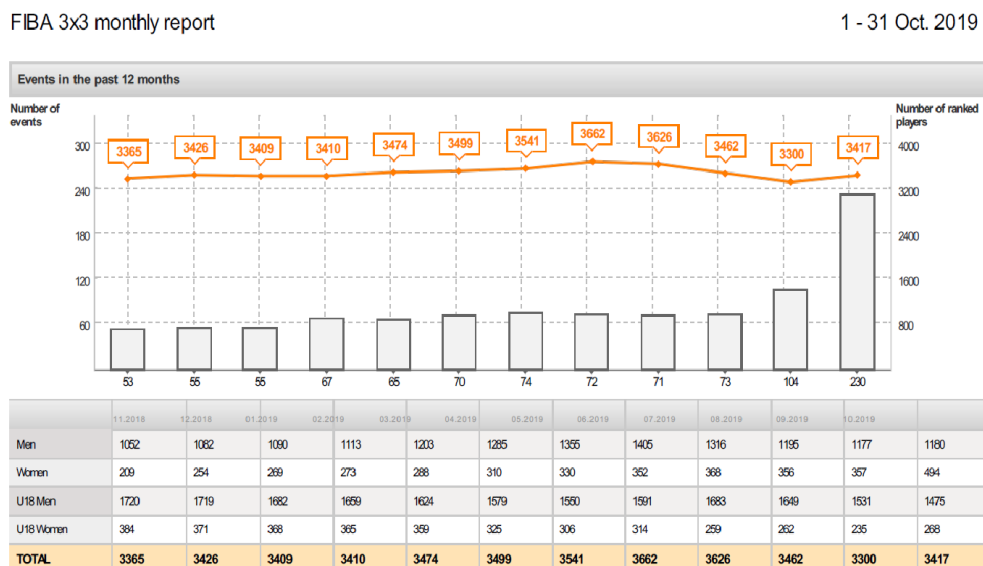


Figure 6. Events 2018-2019.

Further, we obtained more information through the Score board (figure 7), the FIBA free application connected with Event Maker – that counts the players performances in each game.

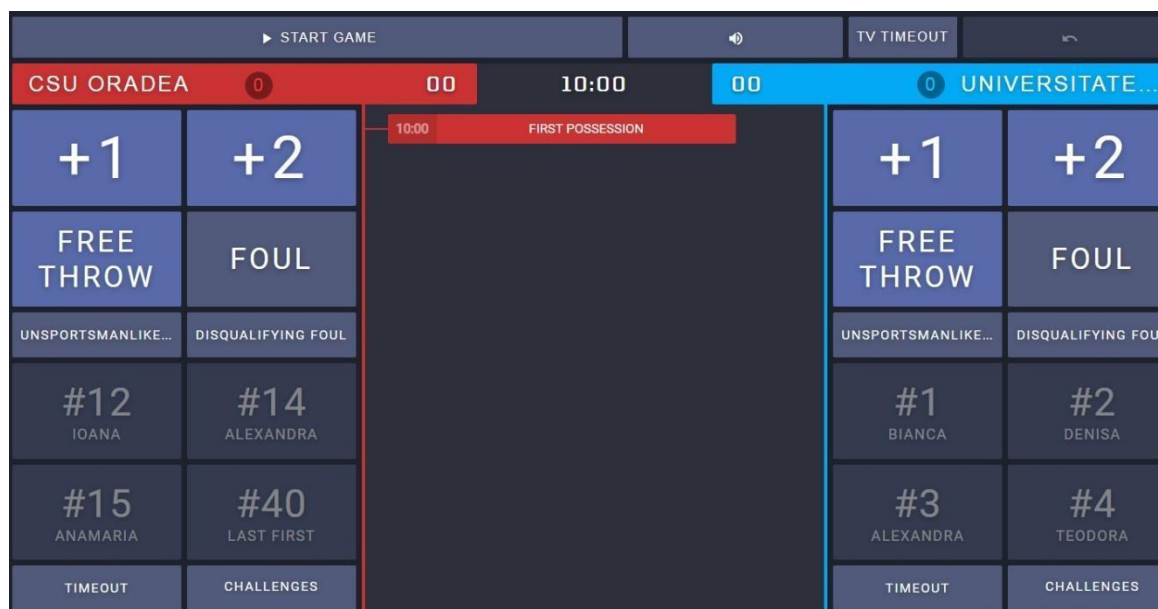


Figure 7. The Score board of Event Maker.

The use of the Event Maker application at all the competitions organized in our country, as well as the engagement of the players from the top 100 nationally at these tournaments led to an exceptional result for Romania, in this case the qualification to the Olympics. This result confirms the hypothesis of our study presented at the beginning of the paper.

The qualification of the 16 3x3 teams, male and female, for the 2021 Olympics is as follows:

- the first four national teams in the world with the highest country ranking will qualify directly for the Olympics;
- then 20 gender teams participated in the pre-Olympic tournament, which took place in India on March 2020. For the list of teams going to the pre-Olympic tournament, universality criteria were taken into account, which allowed a maximum of 10 teams on a continent and be at least 30 countries represented, but also other restrictions. Six tickets for Tokyo were awarded in India, 3 for the women's teams, 3 for the men's teams.
- the last chance to qualify for the 2021 Olympic Games was in April 2019, when the FIBA 3x3 Universality Olympic Qualifying Tournament is the last available place for each competition. Six gender teams out of the unqualified were participate, depending on the ranking, but the main condition is that they have not been represented in the last two editions of the Basketball Olympic.

In this regard, all these efforts paid off and the goal was achieved. Romania obtained the direct ticket for Tokyo 2021, being in the top 4 in the ranking of federations on November 1, 2019. The other three teams qualified directly to the Olympics in the women's competition were: Russia, China and Mongolia (figure 8).



Figure 8. The qualified teams (male and female) at the Olympics – Tokyo 2021.

Conclusions

The data generated in due time by this free web application formed the basis for designing the activity of organizing and participating in streetball competitions, so that coaches have continuously updated information regarding the world ranking at any time during the qualifying stage.

Event Maker also ranked the women athletes, based on their participation in competitions, thus increasing their visibility in the world. All game results, final standings and team list are validated at FIBA by the event organizer who organized this special event. Therefore, FIBA did not change these results based on requests from a player or management team.

The use of the Event Maker in the process of qualifying Romania for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics was the essential tool in obtaining this qualification. Therefore, the hypothesis from which we started in this paper was confirmed.

Romania has worked hard to qualify the women's national team at the Olympic Games in Tokyo and for this purpose many tournaments have been organized in the last year(2019), especially for one day, in which the representatives of the teams from the National League participated. The senior national team went to many tournaments in summer and autumn, where it accumulated points.

At that moment, Romania is ranked 4th in the world in women's Streetball and 2nd in Europe. This special result is due to the trainers and the over 1000 women athletes from Romania who participated from 2018 to 2019 in 3x3 basketball competitions and who contributed with important points in the world ranking. Based on this world ranking, Romania's qualification for the 2021 Olympics was achieved.

Authors' contributions

All authors have an equal contribution to the publication.

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