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### **Performance evaluation in soccer: The Fabio Capello Index project**

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The development of strong skills in soccer business management mainly regards club and leagues, as well as other industries that see soccer as an investment opportunity (fantasy games, entertainment, etc.). The managerial skills of who decides, promotes and operates in a sector with such a potential business are thus increasingly required. In this context, in particular, performance measurement tools are especially needed and welcomed. More generally, the problem concerns the management of human resources for organizations that operate in highly competitive environments. In particular, evaluation and measurement of the performance for both teams and players (who are the strategic resource of a club) offer ample possibilities for innovation and it is assuming an increasing relevance towards the potential interest of the fans and the usefulness for those who govern and manage the activities of sport businesses.

The Fabio Capello Index (hereafter, FCI) takes place at the cross of these different points of view. The FCI project provides as the output a performance measurement index for soccer players, which can also be aggregated at different levels of interest (player, match, club, etc.). It aims to measure in real time the soccer player's performances, in order to build an objective players' rating. After a thorough review of the reference literature, mainly related to the resource-based approach (e.g. Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984), we investigate the FCI project through the case study research method by combining information coming from different data collection sources (interviews, data samples, comparison with other competing methodologies, etc.). The project has been developed thanks to the support provided by Fabio Capello (successful coach of England national Soccer Team), both from the technical and the promotion points of view. The basic criteria adopted for the development of the FCI have been understandability, simplicity and usability for both the soccer professionals (club managers, league heads) and fans. The FCI is based on statistically sound principles and it has been already tested on a significant set of matches taken from different tournaments and countries. The index can have many different potential uses. In particular, it can be of interest for club managers who need tools to take right strategic decisions related to players' management (selection, acquisition, training, compensation, exit etc). In fact, as confirmed by the aforementioned resource-based view, stable competitive advantage may depend on critical and unique resources difficult to imitate (e.g. Miller e Shamsie, 1996; Schoemaker e Cooper, 1998).

1) The FCI is based on a list of more than 500 events selected on the basis of their relative importance for a match. Although these events have been identified subjectively, they span almost every possible action that can be performed on the field. To each event a numerical evaluation is then assigned taking into account both the field zone where the event takes place and the role of the player performing it.

2) Preliminary tests on a sample of around hundred matches have shown that the FCI is able to replicate the match results. In particular, the Spearman's nonparametric correlation index between the FCI difference and the goals gap in every match is approximately 70%, and highly significant.

To conclude, we propose some ideas that can stimulate the discussion about innovation, primarily cultural, implied in the creation of new performance analysis tools that should be sufficiently sophisticated from a scientific point of view, stimulating for enthusiasts who want to grapple with the complex nature of the soccer game, useful for the management of organizations that govern and deliver soccer, and essential for people wishing to embark on new B2C businesses whose target is represented by billions of fans worldwide.