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Indoor-rugby in Kalmar

- The development through time

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ABSTRACT

The purpose with my paper is to see how the indoor-rugby has changed through the years. To my help I have interviewed Ulf Lindh (2011-11-21), who was the one, along with Lars Karlsson, that came up with the idea of indoor-rugby. I have also interviewed Hans Engström (2011-11-18), who is a teacher in physical education at Lars Kaggskolan. To get further perspectives on how it was in the beginning I have also interviewed Katarina Nilsson, earlier Tornegård, who was a player the first years of indoor-rugby. I have also interviewed Lars Svedberg who was a player in the 80's. By interviewing them I have found that there are both differences and similarities between indoor-rugby now and then. The preparation now and then is very different. Before there was no preparation at all, however, that developed rather fast. In the 80's there were some preparations, but know at all as much as it is today. A similarity between the match now and then is the audience. The atmosphere in the stands is the same as it was before. To show these differences and similarities in my paper I have used my own experiences, since I was a member of Stagneliuskolan's team this year. I have also found out why the indoor-rugby started. It was because Stagneliuskolan and Lars Kaggskolan wanted to compete in something else than handball and athletics. It then became indoor-rugby and from there it became larger. Today it has been spread to many other cities in Sweden and hopefully it will continue to spread both in Sweden and maybe even to other countries.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory remarks

I got interested in indoor-rugby when I started high school because it is such a big part of the school spirit. This year I was in the team and I wanted to know more about indoor-rugby. All I knew is that it used to be a handball match between Stagneliuskolan and Lars Kaggskolan, but then it turned into indoor-rugby, which is a sport some students at the schools came up with themselves. Because I did not know more about indoor-rugby I decided to get to know more about indoor-rugby. I wanted to know more about how it all started and how it has developed through time.

1.2 Aim and scope

In my paper I will find answers to the following questions:

- How did indoor-rugby come to life?
- How has the indoor-rugby developed through time?
- What differences is there between the preparations now and then?
- What differences is there between the match now and then?
- What are the rules of indoor-rugby?
- How will the indoor-rugby develop in the future?

1.3 Material and method

To get the information I need I am going to use my own knowledge of rugby since I was one of the players last year, 2011. I will also talk to different people who have been working with the indoor-rugby for a very long time and to players from different decades to get to know the differences between then and now. One of my sources is Hans Engström, a teacher in physical education at Lars Kaggskolan. He was the one writing down the rules and he has been involved with indoor-rugby for 20 years. I will also use newspaper articles to get more information. For example I will use an article from Barometern about Ulf Lindh, who was the one, along with Lars Karlsson, that came up with the idea of indoor-rugby. An interview with him will be one of my sources. I will also do an interview with Katarina Nilsson, who was a

player the first years and an interview with Lars Svedberg, who was a player in the 80s. The last person I will interview is Amanda Larzon who played for Lars Kaggskolan between 2008 and 2012. To get different perspectives on how the indoor-rugby will develop in the future I will talk to players throughout the years and also with people who have watched the indoor-rugby a few times but not played themselves.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 The beginning

Indoor-rugby came to life in 1973. Ulf Lindh and Lars Karlsson were the ones who came up with the idea. Ulf Lindh was the president for the sports club at Stagneliuskolan and Lars Karlsson was his counterpart at Lars Kaggskolan. At that time there already was a handball- and athletics exchange between the two large schools in Kalmar, Stagneliuskolan and Lars Kaggskolan. Because it was mostly boys at Lars Kaggskolan then, they often lost against Stagneliuskolan on the girl side. Therefore Lars Karlsson wanted to compete in something new. He and Ulf exchanged ideas and indoor-rugby came up as a suggestion. From there it became larger. Today indoor-rugby is very popular. It is a big part of the school spirit in Kalmar and it has also spread to other big cities, for example Malmö (Lindh, 2011-11-21).

Ulf Lindh was the one who invented the rules, totally from scratch. At that time, he did not even know how real rugby was played and had never seen a match. It was decided to use medicine balls, because at that time real rugby balls were almost impossible to find in Kalmar. Medicine balls, on the other hand, were available at the schools for both girls and boys. It was also decided to play both a girl match and a boy match and to use rugs as goals. It later became high jump mats to avoid injuries due to goal attempts. In contrast to real rugby forward passes are allowed in indoor-rugby, but since the ball weighed 4 kg, it was not easy to pass it on. Therefore there were not so many passes the first years, mostly handovers (Lindh, 2011-11-21). In the beginning much more was allowed compared to today. At that time it was allowed to push an opponent in the back. Today you will get an expulsion if that happens. Many rules are taken from hockey, especially the expulsion rules. The expulsion rules are almost the same as in hockey. The only thing that is different is the things you get an expulsion for but otherwise it is the same. To read a full compilation of the rules turn to appendix 1 (Engström, 2011-11-18).

The first years Ulf Lindh and Lars Karlsson were referees, together with the famous discus thrower Ricky Bruch. Bruch was in Kalmar for a sponsoring mission at Intersport. Lindh went there in hope of persuading Bruch to agree on being a referee and he succeeded. Ricky Bruch

was very popular among teenagers and therefore, many students came to the match just to see him (Barometern, 2007-11-28, p 1)

2.2 The preparation now and then

The first years of indoor-rugby there was no audition to become a member of the team. At that time anyone could write their name on a paper at Stagneliuskolan's main entrance. There were not many that had written their names down but there was enough to make a team (Nilsson 2012-03-20).

After a few years many students wanted to become a member of the team, but there was still no audition and it was only the best football players, handball players, hockey players and other good athletics that made the team. Because of this not everyone could become a member of the team. You had to be good in sports and if you were not you did not have a chance to become a member of the team. Even though it was hard to find players for the rugby teams back then, the teams had status. People looked up to the rugby players and wanted to be in the team themselves (Lindh 2011-11-21).

In the 80s however the competition of becoming a member of the team became bigger. There was no audition like it is today. However, anyone could come to the trainings but many of the candidates dropped out after a while. In the end there was just the good athletics left because the others felt that they were not good enough. Back then becoming a member of the team was more of an excuse to party than to practice rugby. If there was a party somewhere the rugby team was invited. It did not matter whose party it was the rugby team were always welcome and everybody wanted the rugby team to be there (Svedberg 2012-02-27).

However, today it is very different. The auditions start already in September for both girls and boys. Anyone can audition to become a member of the team and there are many candidates. In 2011, for example, there were over 50 girls and 40 boys that wanted to make the team.

Usually there are five to seven meetings for training before there is a match for the candidates. In that match the candidates meet former players. After that match it is up to the trainers to decide who will make the team. Today the teams do not have that much status. Of course most of the students at the school know who are in the teams but it is not same as it was then. When it comes to partying it is not at all the same. Three weeks before the match both the girl team and the boy team are forbidden to drink alcohol. If a player drinks alcohol anyway and the trainers find out about it this player would not be allowed to play the game.

Another large difference between now and then is the training and preparation before the match. Back then there was almost no training at all. The first years the boys had one or two trainings before the match and the girls had one (Nilsson 2012-03-20). Other than that the only preparation they had was that the referees went through the rules with them. Except for that the teams came to the match unprepared and because of that the game was not very organized. There were many passes in the game and almost no tactics at all (Engström 2011-11-18). However, in the 80's the preparations before the match were a bit different. At that time there were trainings every week and they prepared for the game. The training was not as serious as they are today but at least they got a bit prepared for the game. Still there were many passes and not that much tactics in the match, even though the teams had become much more tactical then back when indoor-rugby started (Svedberg 2012-02-27).

Nowadays the teams are nothing without training and preparation. Training starts directly after the team is selected. The teams have two and a half months to get ready for the match. This year, when I played, we trained four times a week, two times on weekdays and two times at the weekend. There were also two camps during these months. The first was just a few weeks after the team was selected. It was for three days and one of those days we had a party. That was a camp for getting to know each other. The next camp was in the autumn holiday and we trained twelve times in eleven days. This year we also chose to practice wrestling for a few weeks to learn techniques for cutbacks and get more strength in the upper part of our body. This was very good for us and made us ready to take on Lars Kagg. Because of all preparations before the match everybody knew what to do in if something unexpected happens. For example if the team has to play four against five everybody knows who is going to play and who is not. And everybody knows all the structures before the game so there are no misunderstandings during the match.

At Lars Kaggskolan however, the preparations are a bit different from Stagneliuskolan. At Lars Kaggskolan they practiced five times a week. Three times in the sports hall, one running training and one time at the gym. The thing that differs Lars Kaggskolan's preparations from Stagneliuskolan's is that Lars Kagg focused more on physics than on tactics. They thought they would win if they were physically stronger than the players at Stagneliuskolan. Otherwise the preparations at the schools are very similar. Both schools want their teams to be

as prepared as they can be in time for the game but also to have good cohesion within the team and have as fun as possible during the time they spend together (Larzon 2012-02-21).

Protective and match gear today is nothing like it use to be. When indoor-rugby started the teams had no match gear and no one wore protective. Because they did not wear protection at that time there were many more injuries back then than it is today. Even the referees got injured sometimes because there was more enthusiasm than skill back then. The teams borrowed match gear from the football team. However, it was in bad condition when they returned it because of the tough game (Lindh 2011-11-21). The first year the girls even had to play in clothes they got from the sports hall's care taker. That was clothes that people had forgotten in the sports hall and never picked up (Nilsson 2012-03-20). However these developed rather fast. Because in the 80's the team had real match gear and just like today there was a new match gear every year so they never used the same two years in a row. They had also started to wear protection at this time. Many players wore knee pads and many boys wore suspensors (Svedberg 2012-02-27).

Here it is very clear that the indoor-rugby has evolved very much since the beginning but not much since the 80's. Today all players wear knee pads during the match because if they do not, their knees would be totally destroyed. Even if you just forget the knee pads during training you will get bad scratches. The match gear is also different. Just like in the 80's the rugby team gets new match gear every year and all players get to keep their own match gear. There is also an agreement between Lars Kaggskolan and Stagneliusskolan about the color on the match gear. Every other year Stagneliusskolan has a light color on their match gear and Lars Kaggskolan has a dark color and vice versa.

2.3 Day of the match now and then

On the day of the match there were not that many preparations back then. The teams came to the sports hall, changed and played the match. The first year at the day of the match there were only three girls showing up to play even if there was many more that signed up. Katarina Nilsson, at that time Tornegård, was one of the girls that wanted to play. The other two was her sister and her sister's friend. Because they were only three girls showing up Katarina and the other two had to try to force girls from the stands to play the match. At the same time the boys started to play. Katarina and the other two girls managed to get together a team and

when the boys played their second period they even had time to practice for a while before match start (Nilsson 2012-03-20) .

At this time indoor-rugby was mixed with athletics. When it was period in the rugby match the schools competed in athletics. However, it was very quickly showed which sport was most popular. The indoor-rugby got the entire audience's attention. Because of the great attention to the indoor-rugby, athletics was removed and only indoor-rugby lived on (Lindh 2011-11-21).

This we can see today. Today it is only indoor-rugby that is played on the match day. There are also many preparations before the match. From the teams it is focus on the match the whole day. Both teams meet up in the morning and have separate reviews of the game. When both teams are ready they go to the dining room and eat together. After everybody finished eating, the teams get ready for team photos. Then it is time to go to the sports hall. While there both schools practice their entrance before warming up and getting ready for the match. When it is finally time to start both schools does their entrance and after that the game starts. The girls play first and then the boys. There are no pauses because when it is period for the girls, the boys play and vice versa.

However, on the stands it is almost the same as it has always been. The stand was full already the first year. Lindh had convinced the principal to release the students earlier the day of the match so they could make it in time for the match. The atmosphere in the stand was of the sort that never happened during usual sport events. Both schools had arranged cheer sections and there were pranks between the schools. All students were excited about the new sport (Lindh 2011-11-21). The atmosphere continued to be great in the 80's and it is said that the indoor-rugby was at its highest in the 80's. Everybody was there to watch the game and it was a great spirit in the stands (Nilsson 2012-03-20).

Today it is the same as it was then. The pranks between the schools are something that lives on. Sometimes the pranks are really mean. For example students from Lars Kaggskolan welded a car around the tree in Stagneliusskolan's schoolyard and some students from Stagneliusskolan put fish in Lars Kaggskolans venting system so they had to replace the whole venting system. However, the last few years the schools have been nicer to each other when it comes to pranks. This year Lars Kaggskolan had made dolls with Stagneliusskolan's team member names on. These dolls they hung up in the three in Stagneliusskolan's

schoolyard. Stagneliuskolan did nothing back so there are not the same pranks as it used to be even if it lives on today. Even the atmosphere in the stands lives on and it is very similar to when it all started. School day ends at two pm so everybody can make it in time for the match and even though everybody knows what kind of sport they will see the stands are full and everybody supports their team. Every school has their own cheering squad and a band that play drums. The audience is very loud and sings along with the cheering squad so the atmosphere in the stands is still there.

Finally it is the party that is the closure of the indoor-rugby season. Both back then and today both school teams go to the Rugby Swing and get their medals. The reason why they decided to have a party after the rugby match was because of the economic benefits. The sports club got a lot of money from the parties and could therefore finance trips to other countries for the athletic teams. The only difference between the first years and now is the location of the party. In the beginning the Rugby Swing was located at Folkets Park in Kalmar. Now the Rugby Swing is located at Palace, which is a night club in Kalmar, but just as it was in the beginning the party is the perfect closure for the rugby season (Lindh 2011-11-21).

The future for indoor-rugby

The indoor-rugby has already started to spread within the country and it will probably continue to spread. When Lindh and Karlsson came up with indoor-rugby they had no idea of how big it would be in Kalmar and they never thought it would spread to other places but of course it is fun that it has spread to other places and hopefully it will continue (Lindh 2011-11-21).

Nowadays indoor-rugby is not only a big part of the student life in Kalmar but also in Nybro, Emmaboda and even Malmö. At first the indoor-rugby spread to Nybro which is a city not far from Kalmar. They started a rugby exchange with Emmaboda just as it is in Kalmar between Stagneliuskolan and Lars Kaggskolan. It is not as big as it is in Kalmar because the schools are smaller but most of the students at the schools in Emmaboda and Nybro want to see the match and they also have a party at the evening as a closure. However, the most impressive is that the indoor-rugby has spread all the way to Malmö in Skåne. You can read in the papers that it is a big part of the student life there too. The reason why indoor-rugby already has spread as far as Malmö is because it is a fun sport to watch and fun to play. Eventually indoor-rugby maybe becomes a real sport. It is unlikely that this will be but you can always

hope even if it will take a long time. Hopefully the indoor-rugby continues to spread within the country and also to other countries. It is not impossible that it will spread to other countries. The indoor-rugby has developed very much since the start forty years ago and it will probably continue to develop in the future. It is a sport that is very easy to learn and it is fun to watch even if you do not know how to play or what the rules are. You do not have to be interested in any kinds on sports to like indoor-rugby. So if indoor-rugby comes to new places it will not take long before many people will like the sport and try to play the sport. As a player you get to know indoor-rugby from the inside and it is very different from watching the game from the stands. (Larzon 2012-03-21). Because of how big media is today and the great power it has in our society the indoor-rugby will probably be a big sport in other countries soon. It is partly because of media the indoor-rugby already has spread as far as Malmö. If the media had not paid attention to indoor-rugby when it started and continued to write about it during the years it probably would not spread at all. But if the media continues as it does know it is just a matter of time before we can find indoor-rugby in other countries (Arvidson 2012-03-17).

3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In my paper I have used interviews to find facts about indoor-rugby and to compare indoor-rugby between now and then. In my result you can find four different chapters. In the first chapter I describe the background of how and why indoor-rugby came to life. In the second chapter I write about what differences and similarities there are between the preparations now and then. I also compare the day of the match now and then and that you can find in the third chapter. Last but not least you can read about what people think will happen to the indoor-rugby in the future.

As we can see in my paper, indoor-rugby has developed very much since it came to life. There is much that has changed but at the same time there is much that is almost the same as in the beginning. The biggest change is the preparations before the match. There was no preparation at all in the beginning but it developed fast. Already in the 80's there were much more preparation and nowadays there is very much preparations. I think it is good that the preparation has developed because now the teams are more prepared in time for the match. Because of good preparation there are less passes and much more tactics in the game. Also, when the teams come to the match they are prepared with different structures. They know what to do if something unexpected happens during the match. For example, if there is an expulsion everybody knows who is going to play and who is not. That is a major advantage for the flow in the match. Otherwise there would be chaos if something like that happened. It is also good that there are auditions now because it leads to everybody having a chance to make the team. Everybody has the chance to show the trainers what they are made of and then it is up to the trainers to choose the team. This is a very good idea and that really showed this year. There were more than 50 girls and 40 boys auditioning for the team at Stagneliuskolan. With so many auditioning it is no wonder that the quality of the teams and the match is good. Before only the best athletics could make the team and no one else had a chance. Thus, it is fairer now than it was before.

Something with indoor-rugby that is similar now and then is the atmosphere on the stands. I think it is amazing that a sport like indoor-rugby can attract so many people. The stands are full every year and everybody is cheering for their school. I was in the team this year and it was incredible to stand on the field and receive the audience's cheers and applause. It is something I will never forget and Ulf Lindh told me it was the same already in the beginning.

The stands were full already the first year and everybody cheered for their team back then too. I do not think this will ever change because the indoor-rugby match is a big part of the students' time at high school. It is an experience which can not be compared to anything else.

In the first chapter of my paper you can read about how it all started and how it has developed since then. Something I think is amazing is that the indoor-rugby has spread from Kalmar to other cities in Sweden. For example indoor-rugby is a tradition at a few schools in Malmö nowadays. Also many smaller cities, like Nybro and Emmaboda, have taken over the tradition. I do not think that the spreading stops here. Indoor-rugby will probably spread to many other places and we can always hope that indoor-rugby will spread to other countries. Media has a big part in the spreading and in as Amanda Arvidson said in my interview with her she thinks that if the media continues to write about the indoor-rugby it will continue to spread not only in Sweden but in other countries as well. I also think that the indoor-rugby will continue to develop. It will probably become more and more tactical and tougher and it will be funnier to watch the game. Therefore, I think it will continue to spread and I will do my best to make sure it does. But whatever happens I think Ulf Lindh and Lars Karlsson should be very proud of what they have accomplished.

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APPENDIX 1

RULES OF INDOOR-RUGBY

FIELD:

Normal sized handball field, 40x20 meters

GOAL:

One rug in each end of the field

MATCH TIME:

Boys 3x20 minutes

Girls 3x15 minutes

In the last period the last five minutes are played in effective time for both girls and boys. That means that the clock stops every time there is an interruption in the game. It also stops when the referee gives a sign, when a team scores a goal and when there is an expulsion.

If the result is a draw when the match is over the match result is decided by sudden death, which means that the first team who scores wins. In sudden death, both teams play with 4 players for five minutes. If no team scores during these five minutes they will play three against three. If no team scores then they will play two against two and if no team still has not scored it will be penalties, one against one.

TIME OUT:

Time out is requested by the team leader.

Every team has the right to one time out per period and every time out lasts for one minute.

MATCH BALL:

Boys 3 kg medicine ball

Girls 2 kg medicine ball

NUMBER OF PLAYER:

On the field every team can have five players at the time and the squad can contain up to 20 players.

THE GAME:

Indoor-rugby is about scoring goals by placing the ball on the opposing team's rug without there being any body parts between the ball and the rug. If any body part is between there is no goal.

The attacking team has three attempts to score and if they miss the ball it goes to the other team.

The ball may be driven by a player from the attacking team who runs with it or passes it. You may pass the ball in every direction.

KICK OFF:

Kick off occurs from the middle of the field by one of the players in the attacking team. All the other players are placed with one foot on their rug. Kick off occurs in the beginning of the match, new period and when a team scores. Lottery decides which team starts with the ball, thereafter alternately every other period.

FREE-THROW:

All free-throws count as "1 attempt".

Free-throw occurs when there are three players on an unplayable ball.

All free-throws are played where the free-throw was caused.

Exception for this is when the free throw was caused within free-throw area, then the ball is placed on the free-throw line. The defending team is then placed with one foot on their rug.

At free-throw on the field the defending team has to stand at least five meters from the ball, however, not behind the ball. The line runs by the ball.

Free-throw is given when:

There are more than three players on an unplayable ball.

Cutback, with at least three players on the ball.

Intentionally kicking on the ball.

Intentionally delaying of the game.

Intentionally treading on the side lines.

At all expulsions.

THROW-IN:

Throw-in does not count as an attempt.

Throw-in occurs from the place on the line where the throw-in was caused. Exception from this is when the throw-in is caused within the free-throw area.

Throw-in is given when:

There is a push-out, which means that the player with the ball steps on or outside the line on one side because one of the opponents pushes him.

Exception for this is when the player clearly seeks for a push-out. If this happens the attacking team loses an attempt.

The ball goes to the opposite team if:

All three attempts are spent

A team scores

Someone intentionally kicks the ball

There is an expulsion

A team intentionally delays the game

The player with the ball steps on or outside the line on one side and there has been no close encounter with an opponent player

The ball is dropped outside the line on one side.

EXPULSION:

In occurrence of the following 2 minutes expulsion will be given:

Punches and kicks
Gripping around the neck
Pulling the clothing
Elbow foul
Pulling the arms
Restraint of a player who does not have the ball
Unsportsmanlike behaviour
Throwing over your own shoulder
Tripping
Misconduct
During expulsion the rules are the same as in hockey.

Delayed expulsion will be given if the attacking team has advantage of the ball.

The referee has the right to distribute the following expulsions: 2 min, 2+2 min, 5 min, 10 min (personal) and game misconduct penalty.

One player can be deported for a maximum of three times and the fourth time there will be a game misconduct penalty.

If one team has too many players on the field there will be 2 minutes team penalty.

The time does not stop at expulsion if the referee does not ask for it. However, the countdown for the expulsion does not start until the game is running. During expulsion three new attempts are given to the other team.

Interpretations for expulsion:

The border for gripping around the neck is by the shoulder joint.

If a player breaks the rules, for example pulling the clothing, but discover it before it affects the game an expulsion is not needed.

Special prohibitions:

It is not allowed to play with hard shields (except for suspensor), jewellery, long nails, oils and other dangerous or unsportsmanlike phenomena. If a player breaks any of those prohibitions it can result in a 2-minute team penalty.