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Original article


## The treatment of the wrestler's tactical preparation, based on requirements, contents and tactical means

### El tratamiento de la preparación táctica del luchador, sustentado en exigencias, contenidos y medios tácticos

### O tratamento da preparação tática do lutador, com base nas exigências, conteúdo e meios táticos

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## ABSTRACT

In sport wrestling, tactical preparation is determinant for the achievement of competitive results, however, there are limitations in the recommended procedures for its development in training. The research faces this problem and its objective is to design a methodology for the treatment of the tactical preparation of juvenile wrestlers of Greco-Roman style in Villa Clara based on the demands, contents and tactical means. In the research, the current state of the conceptions used for the treatment of tactical preparation in wrestlers was diagnosed by means of surveys, observations of training sessions and competitions. From this, the elements that support the methodology were determined and its instrumental apparatus was organized based on the tactical demands, the tactical contents and the tactical means. After being evaluated by experts, its application in the juvenile Greco-Roman wrestling team of the Sports Initiation School of Villa Clara is exposed, where the effectiveness of the application of tactical situations is corroborated from the increase of individual tactical performance, causing the increase of sports results.

**Keywords:** Tactics; wrestling; Tactical demands; Tactical contents and means.

## RESUMEN

En la lucha deportiva, la preparación táctica es determinante para el logro de resultados competitivos, sin embargo, se encuentran limitaciones en los procedimientos recomendados para su desarrollo en el entrenamiento. La investigación enfrenta dicha problemática y se traza como objetivo diseñar una metodología para el tratamiento de la preparación táctica de los luchadores juveniles del estilo grecorromano en Villa Clara a partir de las exigencias tácticas, los contenidos tácticos y los medios tácticos. En la investigación, se diagnosticó mediante encuestas, observaciones a entrenamientos y competencias, el estado actual de las concepciones utilizadas para el tratamiento de la preparación táctica en los luchadores. A partir de este, se determinaron los elementos que sustentan la metodología y se organizó su aparato instrumental sustentado en las exigencias tácticas, los contenidos tácticos y los medios tácticos. Luego de ser valorada por expertos, se expone su aplicación en el equipo juvenil de Lucha grecorromana de la Escuela de Iniciación Deportiva Escolar de Villa Clara, donde se corrobora la efectividad de la aplicación de las situaciones tácticas a partir del incremento del rendimiento táctico individual, provocando el aumento de los resultados deportivos.

**Palabras clave:** Táctica; Lucha; Exigencias tácticas; Contenidos y medios tácticos.

## RESUMO

Na luta esportiva, a preparação tática é determinante para a obtenção de resultados competitivos, entretanto, há limitações nos procedimentos recomendados para seu desenvolvimento em treinamento. A pesquisa enfrenta este problema e visa projetar uma metodologia para o tratamento da preparação tática dos jovens lutadores do estilo greco-romano em Villa Clara com base nas exigências táticas, no conteúdo tático e nos meios táticos. Na pesquisa, o estado atual das concepções utilizadas para o tratamento da preparação tática em lutadores foi diagnosticado por meio de pesquisas, observações de sessões de treinamento e competições. A partir disto, foram determinados os elementos que suportam a metodologia e seu aparato instrumental foi organizado, com base nas exigências táticas, no conteúdo tático e nos meios táticos. Após ser avaliada por especialistas, é apresentada sua aplicação na equipe de luta greco-romana jovem da Escola de Iniciación Deportiva Escolar de Villa Clara, onde a eficácia da aplicação de



situações táticas é corroborada pelo aumento do desempenho tático individual, levando a um aumento nos resultados esportivos.

**Palavras-chave:** Tática; Luta; Exigências táticas; Conteúdo tático e meios.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, contemporary training planning systems are more demanding. Records, marks, starting points, competitive rules, anti-doping controls and lists of anabolic agents as limiting prohibited substances incite scientists, specialists and coaches to look for the most effective ways, means, methods and systems so that, in the shortest possible time, sports form can be achieved at the right moment of sports performance [Romero and Becali \(2014\)](#).

Wrestling is one of the oldest sports in Olympic competitions, its participation is permanent in these events. For [López and Tamayo \(2016\)](#), it is essential in the preparation of the wrestler the development of the five components of the preparation, among them: the physical, technical, tactical, theoretical and psychological, which should be developed in close relationship, even sometimes in an integral way. These components are presented in a general, special and competitive way.

It is classified within the group of combat sports, which makes tactical preparation a determining factor for the achievement of high sports results. It is therefore crucial in the preparation of wrestlers, to provide them with a high tactical preparation, which does not coincide with the current characteristics of the preparation that is carried out.

Of these components, according to [Fernández \(2020\)](#), tactics has been one of the least treated, which may be due, among other aspects, to the complexity of its treatment; in this sense, [Rodríguez \(2017\)](#) states that one of the weaknesses of Cuban athletes in the Olympic Games was the application of tactics in competitive actions, reaffirming the existence of limitations in the treatment of this component of preparation.

The above inadequacies are observed in sport wrestling. In this sport, tactical preparation has been addressed by different authors, [Vicente and Bandera \(2016\)](#) offer technical actions for tacking with unbalance, [Sando \(2019\)](#) detects insufficiencies that cause limitations in the effectiveness of the execution of the wrestler's actions and proposes a group of exercises in which special technical and physical elements are combined for this purpose, similarly [Rodríguez \(2017\)](#) proposes actions for projections with arching.

In research conducted on the subject by [Fernández \(2020\)](#), relating tactical preparation with psychological factors, concludes about the importance of emotional control, essential for the achievement of concentration that allows to adequately carry out the conduct of combat, however, does not offer the tools to carry out the process of tactical preparation in this direction.

In coincidence with the above, studies by [González \(2020\)](#) demonstrate the correspondance between theoretical knowledge and intellectual capacity and points out that, in addition, there are other psychological factors related to tactical preparation. The author himself considers that self-control and perseverance are decisive in the choice of tactical actions, which would also influence the results of combat, but, as in



the previous cases, they do not reflect the procedures and means to achieve these results.

Regarding control in competitions, the records used for it refer to specific actions of defenses, counterattacks and the effectiveness in them, both in the standing position and in four points, but aspects related to tactics are not assessed [Sando, J. \(2019\); Perera, M., López, R., and Guevara, L. \(2016\)](#).

In this regard, it is considered by [González \(2017\) Tropin, Y., Romanenko, V., and Ponomaryov, V. \(2016\)](#) that increasing the use of tactical training in combat sports, modeling the competitive activity, will provide the possibility for the fighter to approach in training to the competitive reality.

In this direction, [López and Tamayo \(2016\) and González \(2020\)](#), offer a group of elements that allow the coach to guide the tactical actions of the athlete, but reduce the richness of the tactical aspect, they limit themselves to offering recommendations for tactical actions, thus reducing the richness of the tactical component, in addition, in such proposals, directive methods for teaching are observed, which are focused on technical teaching and are characterized by:

- The learner is a passive subject, as the coach occupies the leading role in the process.
- They emphasize the development of the execution mechanism and do not consider the tactical actions and partial performances in this sense during training and competition.
- The types of situations are decontextualized, with little similarity to the real combat situation, as they focus on technical execution.

The studies carried out in the province of Villa Clara in master's theses and specialties coincide and reveal that in the pedagogical practice present in the teaching-learning process of sport wrestling, the aforementioned methodological procedure predominates.

These limitations found in the treatment of tactical preparation determine that the objective of the research is to design a methodology for the treatment of the tactical preparation of youth wrestlers of the Greco-Roman style in Villa Clara, based on the tactical demands, tactical contents and tactical means.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A diagnosis of the current state of the methodological conceptions used for the treatment of tactical preparation in youth wrestlers was carried out; normative and methodological documents related to the treatment of tactical preparation were analyzed. A survey was carried out with the objective of obtaining information about how the treatment of tactical preparation is carried out and the cognitive and practical needs that the coaches have. The 16 coaches of the youth category who participated in the National Youth Olympics of the year 2017-2018 and 8 Wrestling coaches of the province of Villa Clara, belonging to the Sports Initiation School "Héctor Ruiz Pérez" were surveyed.



Twenty observations were made to the training sessions of the youth Greco-Roman wrestling team of Villa Clara, 10 in the general preparation and 10 in the special preparation, with the objective of verifying in practice how the treatment of the wrestler's tactical preparation is manifested. In addition, the totality of the bouts performed by the wrestlers of the Villa Clara team in the National Youth Olympics in 2018 were observed, whose results served as a starting point for the construction of the proposal (90 bouts).

The elements that would support the methodology were determined and on that basis, the instrumental apparatus for the treatment of tactical preparation in youth wrestlers was organized; for this purpose, the systemic approach was used with the objective of establishing the relationships and interdependencies between the component elements of the methodology.

A consultation with experts was carried out to assess the viability of the proposed methodology based on their criteria. A total of 14 specialists were initially selected to form the group of experts, of which 11 obtained scores between 0.85 and 0.95, which accredits them as having a high coefficient, after which an experiment was carried out to assess the results of the implementation of the proposal.

The research also worked with the population of the youth Greco-Roman wrestling team of the provincial Sport Initiation School (Eide in Spanish) of Villa Clara, composed of 14 athletes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The diagnostic study yielded the following elements:

In the survey conducted, it was found:

- The bibliography available to coaches on the subject of the treatment of tactical preparation in combat sports is limited; they are oriented for their treatment by the methodological indications of the PPID, which are insufficient since they only consider tactical recommendations.
- A directive and traditional approach to the tactical preparation process is presented.
- The wrestler is not offered the basic concepts of the use of tactics, so that they can apply their knowledge and skills to new competitive situations.
- There is no systematization in the treatment of tactical content based on the individualization of the wrestlers.
- Lack of actions for the treatment of tactics that guide the wrestlers on how to work consciously, independently and creatively in the different moments of the preparation to obtain the desired results.

In the observation of training sessions and competitions, it was found that:



The training sessions are reproductive and directed, the creative and independent role of the athletes is limited, and the different situations presented in the training are structured, derived from a vertical or logical thinking and not from a divergent and intelligent thinking, causing the athletes to act mechanically.

The content of anticipating, observing, deceiving the opponent, as well as the lack of preparation and continuity in tactical actions are not shown in the sessions; work with problem situations is not used as a medium method with the required frequency, which is why creative thinking is limited.

On many occasions, there were favorable situations that were not taken advantage of because the development of the second aspect of the psychological phase of tactical thinking, which refers to the search for possible mental solutions to the changing situations of the actions that arise, was ignored.

In competitions, no tactical plan is conceived in advance to go up to fight, considering the weaknesses and strengths of the opponent and the use of the athlete's preferred techniques.

Anticipation of the opponent's actions was shown on thirty-two positive and thirty-nine negative occasions. In this aspect, the most notable incidence was the anticipation of the ground work at the referee's signal to start the fight.

The tactical plan followed to work in the zone of passivity and win the technical point on offense or to take the opponent out of the area of competition led to the opponent being cautioned; it was positive on nineteen occasions and against, on thirty-two occasions. The tactical plan followed in the course of the combat favored maintained the advantage in the actions when the score was favorable, favored in four occasions and allowed to overcome the advantage in the actions when the score was below, only in two occasions.

The athletes were able to articulate two or more actions in a combined manner, and to promote their continuity from the standing position to the ground work, on thirty-eight occasions.

### **Methodology design**

The design of the methodology is based on the considerations of Valle (2007), therefore, it is based on the results obtained in the diagnosis of the research, a prognosis of what should be obtained is assumed, and from there, the Methodology to be tested in practice is established. The objective of the methodology was aimed at contributing to the improvement of the treatment of the tactical preparation of youth wrestlers, based on the organization of the content, demands and tactical situations.

The use of different methods, the antecedents that characterize from the historical point of view the treatment of tactical preparation and the theoretical analysis, support the methodology used to elaborate the research proposal.

The elements that allow the design of the methodology for the treatment of tactical preparation in youth wrestlers are based on the criteria of different authors on tactical action. They agree that tactical action is the intelligent application of tactical resources in combat; it is a decision-making process, which involves the will to apply or not, a particular action and/or create the conditions to execute it, the methodology is also





based on the tactical requirements, tactical content and tactical means proposed by López, Fernandez and Lanza (2009).

### Tactical requirements

1. *The actions follow one another in a constant variation and in two fundamental distances* (short and medium). Actions in wrestling take place in the short and medium distance, being the first one the most effective way, because it allows to feel the interactions of the opponent, besides allowing a better proximity for the attack, defense and counterattack.
2. *Predict the opponent's intentions and conceal his real plan*. The wrestler must be able to discover the opponent's intentions, being able to surprise and not be surprised and, at the same time, hide his plans. To do this, he must establish a duel between unmasking and masking the true intentions.
3. *Decrease the schematism in the actions*. The wrestler has to master the actions and possess different ways to reach them (through postures, displacements, grabs, feints, or baits), taking into consideration the level of the opponent, the marker and the rules.
4. *To find the answer in the shortest possible time*. Actions in sport wrestling are performed in a short time, therefore, the wrestler acts under actions and reactions, hence the sense of time is vital to respond to the demands of combat.
5. *The actions are performed taking into account those of the opponent*. In sport wrestling, both opponents have the same possibilities, both to attack and to be attacked, to defend, to counterattack, to be defended, to counterattack, which demands a high concentration of tension during the development of the combat periods.
6. *Make the opponent act according to your intentions*. The wrestler has to impose his way of fighting, which means that he can more easily apply his tactical plan and, therefore, be closer to victory.
7. *To perform the combat on the different areas of the mat*. The Wrestling match is dynamic, active and variable, so it takes place on the entire Wrestling surface and includes the passivity zone, taking into account that by the current rules the latter becomes a more advantageous place, so it is important to master the dimensions of the mat.
8. *The combat is defined taking into account the score, the time, the value of actions, the number of penalties and the last action*. The wrestler must take into account that, depending on the score, the time periods end. But he must have a great sense of the time, the score, the value of the actions and the number of penalties, because in case of a tie, he decides by the latter.
9. *The referee and the public influence the development of the fight*: these two external factors influence the behavior of the wrestler, hence the importance of the presence of the referee and the public during the preparation as part of the psychological preparation. The refereeing body is the one that regulates the validity of the actions and the public favors or disfavors the emotions of the athletes.





10. *To carry out the athletic preparation process, as well as the competitions in favorable environmental conditions.* The coach must take into account the hygienic and sanitary conditions of the training and competition premises, lighting, ventilation or air conditioning, organization, cleanliness, painting, decoration, etc., in such a way that it is pleasant and welcoming for the entire time it is necessary to stay there. so that it is pleasant and welcoming to stay in the place for as long as it is necessary to stay in it.

Taking into consideration these requirements, the following contents (knowledge and skills) to be taught in sport wrestling are determined:

### **Tactical contents**

- *Observing:* makes it possible to persist, to analyze the moment, the distance, the opponent's action, the opponent's positions and is responsible for informing the wrestler of the state of the competitive situation. The ability to observe uses as fundamental ways the actions of preparation, baiting, maneuvers, incitements, explorations, provocations, etc.
- *Deception:* it is based on misrepresenting the true intentions, so as to allow the Fighter to confuse, distract or surprise the opponent. For this purpose, the preparation actions are feints, masking, doubled attacks, in series and baiting.
- *Anticipate:* allows you to anticipate the opponent's initiatives, thus obstructing his actions and breaking his combat alternatives; to do so, it is important to take into account the position of the body and the location on the mat.
- *Combine:* the combination makes possible the union of two or more actions that allow to surprise, confuse and interrupt the opponent's actions. The combination requires a great variability in the actions.
- *To choose:* It brings with it the decision from perceiving, analyzing and evaluating the possibility; in it, cognitive independence is reflected and implies the moment of executing the solution.
- *Driving:* this is one of the most general mental skills, since it is where the others are manifested. It requires knowledge about planning and foresight of competitive actions, distribution depending on the situations and circumstances, as well as control of the results and effectiveness of one's own actions, the opponent's and teammates' in case of team competitions. Driving allows the wrestler to guide, explore and surprise.
- *Create:* refers to the power of resolution that the athlete must demonstrate, given the variable situations that arise, both in competition and in training, which must be solved with a satisfactory degree of effectiveness and efficiency.
- *Apply:* It is related to the selection or appropriate response of successful execution of offensive, defensive or counterattack actions with a satisfactory degree of effectiveness. With respect to the means to be used for teaching tactics, the following are considered (Table 1).

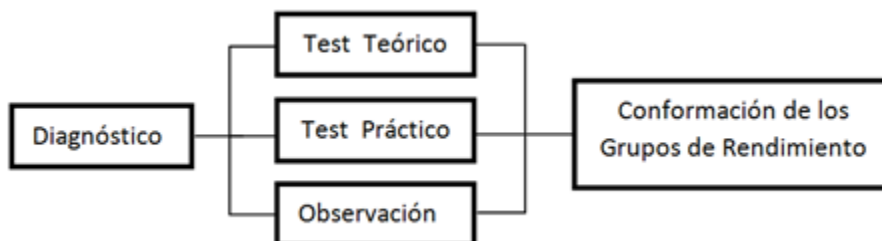


**Table 1.** - Means to be used in the teaching of tactics in wrestling

General tactical means		Special tactical means
Pre-sports games	Masking	Fighting on the defensive
Sports Games	Baits	Fighting on the counterattack
Games in small spaces	Fintas	Fighting against time with tasks
Activities with predetermined tasks	Double attacks	Fighting to maintain an advantage
	Serial attacks	Fighting at a disadvantage on the scoreboard
Troubleshooting	Fighting passivity zone	Problematization of tactical teaching
	Blocking	
	Immobilization	Theoretical tactical classes
	Obstruction	
	Fighting on the offensive	

**Phases of the procedural components of the methodology**

1. Diagnostic phase: In this phase, the aim is to diagnose the current level of development of the wrestlers' tactical preparation (Figure 1), which allows determining performance groups for the individualization of such preparation (Fernández, 2020).



**Fig. 1.** - Diagnostic phase of the methodology

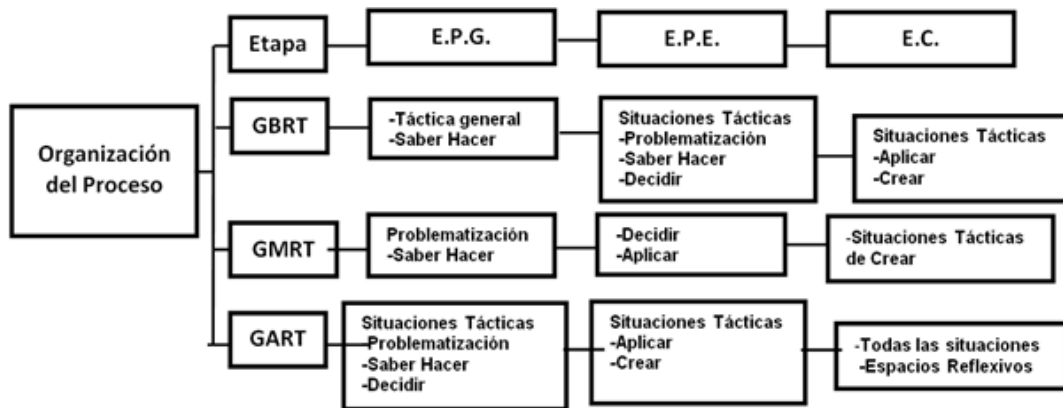
- a) Application of the tactical tests: the theoretical test to provide a solution to the different tactical situations and the practical test to provide a motor solution to these situations.
- b) Observation in training to determine the tactical effectiveness of the wrestlers.
- c) Assessment of the current state of the wrestlers' tactical preparation.
- d) Determination of performance groups for the organization of the wrestlers' tactical preparation.

From the results obtained in the application of the tests and the observations, the coaches determine the weaknesses and strengths in the tactical order presented by the wrestlers and proceed to the determination of the performance groups. These are:



- High tactical performance group: when the wrestler is able to solve tactical situations of mental and motor type in a satisfactory and fast way and obtains a percentage of effectiveness in the observations made of more than 50 %.
- Group of medium tactical performance: when the wrestler is able to solve tactical situations of mental and motor type in a satisfactory manner in an adequate time and obtains a percentage of effectiveness in the observations made between 35 and 49 %.
- Group of low tactical performance: when the wrestler delays in solving the tactical situations of mental and motor type in a satisfactory way and obtains a percentage of effectiveness in the observations made of up to 34 %.

2. *Process organization phase:* Based on the determination of the performance groups, the contents, demands and tactical situations to be worked on by each performance group in the different stages of preparation are organized, taking into account the characteristics of each of the aforementioned groups (Figure 2).



**Fig. 2.** - Process organization phase

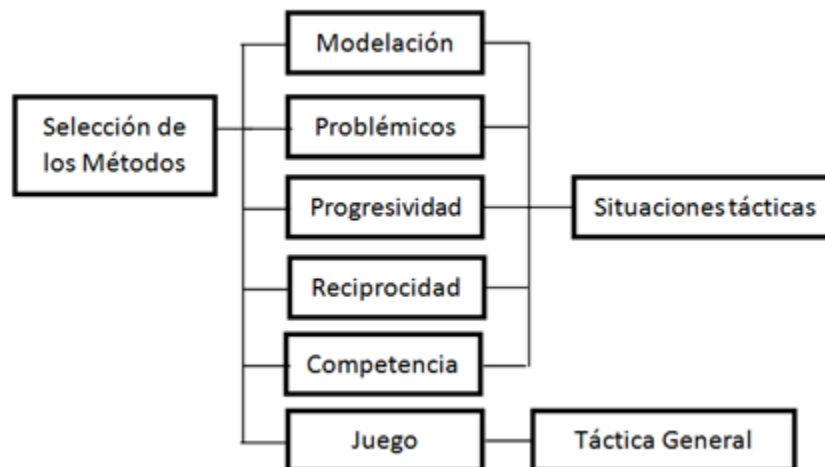
Legend GART- High Tactical Performance Group. GMRT- Medium Tactical Performance Group. GBRT- Low Tactical Performance Group. G.P.E. - General Preparation Stage. E.P.E. - Special Preparation Stage. C.P.E. - SPECIAL PREPARATION STAGE. - Competitive Stage.

It is started working with the problematic situations, taking into consideration that they are at the beginning of the preparation, they are used for consolidation, and also include the tactical situations of know-how.

In the special preparation stage, we work on the tactical situations of deciding and applying, and in the competitive stage, the tactical situations of creating, based on reflection spaces.

3. *Method selection phase:* The methods to be used in the different stages of preparation are determined, taking into consideration the characteristics of the different performance groups (Figure 3).





**Fig. 3.** - Method Selection Phase

The organization of the methods is based on the tactical methods proposed by **Morales Águila (2001)**, which considers modeling, problematization, progressiveness and reciprocity, and includes, according to the researcher's criteria, game and competition methods.

- Modeling: It consists of the abstraction of situations or solutions of combat that occur more or less frequently depending on the age category, competitive level, characteristics of the opponents, among other aspects.
- Problematization: Each situation is a problem to be solved and the solution becomes, at the same time, a new problem. The same problem can have different solutions and the same solution can be used for different problems.
- Progressivity: The complexity of the situations and solutions increase depending on the objectives, technical volume and intellectual capacity of the athletes. It is not always used continuously.
- Reciprocity: It forces the athlete to think not only as himself, but also as an adversary, so that every situation that the athlete creates, he himself must be able to solve it. It is preferably used with the athlete's preferred actions.

4. Evaluation phase: the level reached by the wrestlers is verified, comparing the initial results with the final ones, which allows the reorientation of the tactical preparation process. In this phase, the actions of the diagnostic phase of tactical preparation are used again, from the use of the same diagnostic instruments and tactical *tests*. The objective is to determine the current state of the wrestlers' tactical preparation and to make possible adjustments in the performance groups, in the tactical situations and the methods to be used depending on the results in each training stage.

This evaluation makes it possible to compare the results obtained at the beginning of the training with the current state of development achieved by the wrestlers at the stage in question, which confers a systemic and continuous character to the evaluation in the methodology.



The methodology was evaluated by the experts, who expressed themselves positively, highlighting the aspects related to the quality of the theoretical concepts proposed, the relationship between the tactical demands and the tactical contents with the tactical situations and the performance groups for the individualized treatment of the wrestler's tactical preparation.

Similarly, when asked whether the methodology fulfills the specific function for which it was conceived and whether its components were adequately selected, high approval rates were also achieved.

The methodology was applied in the academic course 2018-2019. The possibility of applying the methodology allowed comparisons in the application of the different tactical situations during the three observations carried out, based on the individual tactical performance of the wrestlers.

As shown in table two, when comparing the observations in the different moments, it is observed that there are significant differences in the results that allow asserting that there was a positive influence on the results that show the application of the methodology in the Greco-Roman Wrestling youth team (Table 2).

**Table 2** - Friedman's test on the observations made

Tactical solutions	Significance
Know-how	0.00
Know how to decide	0.00
Know how to apply	0.00
Know how to create	0.00

A similar situation is observed in Table 3, when analyzing the results of the application of the Wilcoxon test to the observations made; they show significant changes when comparing the results achieved in the effectiveness of the tactical solutions of knowing how to do, deciding, applying and creating, with the exception of the comparison between the second and third moment in the tactical situations of deciding (Table 3).



**Table 3.** - Wilcoxon test on the observations made

Effectiveness in tactical know-how situations.			
Measurements	First and second	First and third	Second and third
Significance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Effectiveness in tactical situations of knowing how to decide.			
Measurements	First and second	First and third	Second and third
Significance	0.01	0.01	0.15
Effectiveness in tactical situations to know how to apply.			
Measurements	First and second	First and third	Second and third
Significance	0.01	0.00	0.00
Effectiveness in tactical situations of knowing how to create.			
Measurements	First and second	First and third	Second and third
Significance	0.01	0.01	0.01

The non-existence of differences in this comparison could be due to the fact that the third observation was made in the scenario of the fundamental competition, where several factors converge in the making of this type of decision, however, if the number of comparisons is analyzed, it can be pointed out that in 91.66 % significant changes occurred. The previous results allow inferring that the treatment of the tactical preparation, from the different tactical situations according to the individual tactical performance of the wrestlers, allowed improving their performance in this sense.

By way of conclusion, the results of the diagnosis of the current state of the treatment of tactical preparation in Greco-Roman style youth wrestlers showed insufficiencies in the application of tactical methods, as well as in their contents and a guiding role of the coach in this process, which limits the possibilities of wrestlers in their independence in decision making.

The designed methodology, based on the tactical demands, tactical contents and tactical means in youth wrestlers, as well as its phases and procedures, allowed coaches and athletes to develop the process of the treatment of the wrestler's tactical preparation in an effective way.

The results of the experiment corroborate the effectiveness of the application of tactical situations, based on the individual tactical performance of youth wrestlers subjected to the influence system.



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**Conflict of interests:**

The authors declare not to have any interest conflicts.

**Authors' contribution:**

**Liván Ariel Fernández Pérez:** Conception of the idea, literature search and review, instrument making, statistic análisis, preparation of tables, graphs, and images, database preparation, general advice on the topic addressed, drafting of the original (first version), review and final version of the article, article correction, authorship coordinator, translation of terms or information obtained, review of the application of the applied bibliographic standard.

**Osnel de Jesús Cedeño Linares:** Literature search and review, instrument making, instrument application, compilation of information resulting from the instruments applied, drafting of the original (first version).

**Jordan La Rosa Muñoz:** Literature search and review, instrument making, instrument application, compilation of information resulting from the instruments applied, drafting of the original (first version), review and final version of the article.

**Antonio de la Caridad Lanza Bravo:** Conception of the idea, statistic análisis, preparation of tables, graphs, and images, database preparation, general advice on the topic addressed, article correction, authorship coordinator, translation of terms or information obtained, review of the application of the applied bibliographic standard.



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