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| **Supplementary File 2.** Comparison of the main characteristics of the teaching units.  |
| Elements | Experimental group | Control group |
| Unit length | 12 lessons | 12 lessons |
| Teacher role | Teacher leads the class only during the *Introduction* and *Teacher-directed* phases, and later acts as a guide/support for students to work autonomously | Teacher has the main role and leads the class throughout the whole teaching unit |
| Students’ roles | Students participated in roles, other than player, within their team: coach, physical trainer, captain, or material assistant | Students only assumed the role of player |
| Teams | Homogeneous teams were constituted according to students’ initial level. These teams remained permanent throughout the season | Teams were randomly selected and changed in each class |
| Affiliation | Affiliation was enhanced through: (a) the identification of team names; (b) design of uniforms, emblem and flag of the team; and (c) choosing a hymn | No affiliation was promoted, since there were no permanent teams |
| Rules | Small-sided games were played increasing the difficulty throughout the season (i.e., 1vs.1; 2vs.2; and 3vs.3) | 3vs.3 small-sided games were played during the whole teaching unit |
| Competitions | A schedule of matches was previously established (i.e., day, hour, and teams), which allowed students to organize their matches autonomously | No schedule of matches was established and each lesson played random matches |
| Statistics | A duty-team (referee, scorekeeper, and reporter) supported the competitions. They recorded and publicized the results throughout the season | The teacher controlled and refereed all the matches, but scores were not officially collected nor publicized. |
| Final event | In the final lesson, a friendly championship with an awards ceremony was celebrated in a festive atmosphere | The last lesson was no different from the rest of the teaching unit |