

Robotic football

The article talks about robots that are programmed to play football. FIRA and RoboCup have hosted the competitions in robotic football for the last 20 years. Some events are rather simple. The owners control the robots by remote control; others are more complex, like the event where the robots use CCD cameras to move around the field.

Their robots are capable avoiding obstacles and executing different tactics. The team consists of three computer-controlled players. One of them is a goalie. The game has two five minute halftimes. The main thing about these robots is that they all have the same abilities, so they can play defence or offence, which allows the programmers to make strategies they couldn't execute with real players. Penalties and free kicks are also an important part of game play. The robots have to be programmed not to get too rough. But these robots also have their downsides. One of them is that they cannot lift the ball or play with their heads, but scientists are working on that.

Building and maintaining robots is rather expensive, so only well-funded research labs are able to participate in these games. The faculty for electronics in Ljubljana is trying to put together a team of three robots. At the moment they are still working on the artificial intelligence of the robots and are hoping they can finish in a couple of months.