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Peer Review Report for "Effects of the Directionality and the Order of Presentation Within the Session on the Physical Demands of Small-Sided Games in Youth Soccer"

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Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 17 Dec 2018
Revised Date: 27 Feb 2019
Accepted Date: 2 Apr 2019

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

30 Dec 2018

Dear AE,
First of all I should thank for choosing me as the reviewer of your valuable journal.
In my opinion: this manuscript will be suitable to be published in the Asian Journal of Sport Medicine after considering some minor revisions:
1- As the authors described in the result part many physical demands of subjects were improved in the group 1GK similar to MAI group. Moreover I didn't see any direct comparison between MAI group and 1GK group in regard of evaluated parameters.
2- As the main goal of this study is to compare the physical demands of soccer small-sided games performed with or without directional based on presence or not presence of goal keeper, it is better to also compare the MAI and 1GK groups together.
3- In the line 214 -217 the authors described the contradictory result of one study in regard of influence of the directional of the game in the presence of goalkeepers in tasks of 8 vs 8, which increases the HRR, however there was not any explanation for this difference. It can be assumed that the number of players might be an effective factor.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 31 Dec 2018

Dear AE,
I read this manuscript with great interest, but in my view there are some remaining points that should be changed .Here I have collected some of my general comments, may be helpful for best result of the manuscript.
The title of this article is better to be edited and revised to become a more fluent one.
Please mention the new ideas and novelty of your study design in introduction part. I don't see the practical point of the research to help the youth soccer players playing in a more healthy manner and reducing their injuries. How did the authors choose their sample size? What is the reason of investigation in only 10 people. Suggest the new feasible way of reducing the youth soccer player's physical demands and fatigue due to the findings in conclusion.
Kind Regards

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 31 Dec 2018

Dear EIC,
The authors should consider the reviewers comments and provide a point by point response to suggested changes.
- The English can be improved with some changes: e.g line 130-133:
We analyzed 4 formats of SSGs involving 5vs5 played for 10 minutes in a 37 x 20 m length x width pitch, with an average [of] 74 m2 per player. The teams were established according to player's minutes played in [the] competition, playing [the] position,
Regards.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 2 Jan 2019

Dear Author,
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Asian J Sports Med. I now have the reports of the Referees, which suggest that your manuscript might be suitable for publication following a number of revisions. I attach some reviewer comments and invite you to submit a revised version of your manuscript addressing the points made.
- In revised paper, please, provide Ethical Approval footnote for your manuscript. It must be inserted in full manuscript file.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear editor of the Asian Journal of Sports Medicine:

We would like to thank the reviewers and editors for the attention paid to our work and the opportunity to revise and resubmit our manuscript.

A detailed list of the changes and responses given, in a point-by-point fashion, are printed on separate pages. The following is a brief summary of the main actions and/or changes that we have introduced in the paper.

In addition, we made some improvements in Figure 2, included in the current response.

Reviewer #1.

Comment 1. As the authors described in the result part many physical demands of subjects were improved in the group 1GK similar to MAI group. Moreover I didn’t see any direct comparison between MAI group and 1GK group in regard of evaluated parameters.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. The physical demand in MAI and 1GK does not differ. For this reason it is not mentioned in the results.

Comment 2. As the main goal of this study is to compare the physical demands of soccer small-sided games performed with or without directionality based on presence or not presence of goal keeper, it is better to also compare the MAI and 1GK groups together.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. It is not possible to analyze MAI and 1GK together, since they are different formats: MAI has no directionality; 1GK does have directionality, to attack a regular goal defended by a goalkeeper. We kindly ask the reviewer to take this into consideration during the next revision round. Thank you!

Comment 3. In the line 214 -217 the authors described the contradictory result of one study in regard of influence of the directionality of the game in the presence of goalkeepers in tasks of 8 vs 8, which increases the HRR, however there was not any explanation for this difference. It can be assumed that the number of players might be an effective factor.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. Yes, the number of players can be a key factor in these results. For this reason we already indicated in the text: "In this study, unlike others that analyzed the influence of the presence of goalkeeper (12) the number of players was higher (8vs8 compared to 3vs3), and could have conditioned the results". We kindly ask the reviewer to take this into consideration during the next revision round. Of course, we would be happy to further discuss this issue if the reviewer consider this as necessary. Thank you!

Reviewer #2.

Comment 1. The title of your article is better to be edited and revised to become a more fluent one.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. Now you can read: “Effects of the Directionality and the Order of Presentation within the Session on the Physical Demands of Small-Sided Games in Youth Soccer”.

Comment 2. Please mention the new ideas and novelty of your study design in introduction part.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. We have included the following sentence: “To our knowledge, no study have analyzed the effects of different forms of directionality of the offensive game according to the moment of the training session, on the external load in youth male soccer players”.

Comment 3. I don’t see the practical point of your research to help the youth soccer players playing in a more healthy manner and reducing their injuries.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. Accordingly, in the new version of the manuscript (last paragraph of the Discussion section), we wrote. “Such information may allow coaches to better schedule training sessions with the aim of inducing optimal external loads on youth male soccer players. As a result, the trainer may improve the design of training microcycles. This, in turn, may increase the effectiveness of the training process, increasing the player's performance and decreasing the incidence of injuries.”

Comment 4. How did you choose your sample size? What is the reason of investigation in only 10 people.

Response. Thanks for the comment. Small-sided games 5 vs 5 (10 players) are usually employed by the coach of the team where the research was conducted. This information was included in the new version of the manuscript, in the “Participants” *section*: “For practical reasons (i.e., 5vs5 SSGs are usually employed by the coach of the team where the research was conducted), 10 athletes were considered for the study”. In addition, the 5 vs 5 SSGs are the most basic structures that encourage the appearance of specific behaviors related to the game, allowing physical-physiological and tactical-strategic development simultaneously (Vázquez, M. A. C., Gómez, D. C., Suárez-Arrones, L., Jurado, J. A. G., Bendala, F. J. T., & Prados, J. A. L. (2017). Medium-sided games in soccer: physical and heart rate demands throughout successive working periods. Journal of Human Sport and Exercise, 12(1), 129-141.

Comment 5. Suggest the new feasible way of reducing the youth soccer player’s physical demands and fatigue due to your findings in conclusion.

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. The conclusion was rewrited, as follow. “The SSGs emphasizing ball possession (i.e., MAI or 1GK) increase the physical demands of youth male soccer players compared to SSGs formats with 2 goals that develop free or fixed attack. The directionality with free attack rule (i.e., 2GKF: teams can attack any of the two goals defended by goalkeepers) is a good compromise between stimulating physical fitness and technical ability to shoot and score. This format implies less fatigue than games without goals and goalkeepers. However, when you want to encourage fatigue behavior, you can place the formats at the end of the training session. Due the reduced physical performance during SSGs with directionality towards the end of the training session, these conditioning games can be used to improve players’ soccer-specific endurance”.

Associate Editor's Comments:

The English can be improved with some changes: e.g line 130-133:We analyzed 4 formats of SSGs involving 5vs5 played for 10 minutes in a 37 x 20 m length x width pitch, with an average [of] 74 m2 per player. The teams were established according to player’s minutes played in [the] competition, playing [the] position,

Response. Thank you for the suggestion. Changes have been made to the document.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 4 Mar 2019

Dear AE,
First of all this was my pleasure to have the opportunity to cooperate with the Asian Journal of Sport Medicine as a reviewer. Following the evaluation of authors responses to my previous comments, I suppose this manuscript is eligible to be accepted for publishing in the Asian journal of sports medicine.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 31 Mar 2019

Dear EIC,
I am pleased to inform that all the concerns of reviewers have been addressed.
Thanks.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (1) 2 Apr 2019

Dear Author,
The second round of peer review of your manuscript has been completed, and I am pleased to inform you that your manuscript has now been accepted for publication in our journal.
Thanks.