

28th ECSS Anniversary Congress, Paris/France, 4-7 July 2023

Effect of soccer congested schedule on performance and injury risk: the relevance of recovery

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During periods where the schedule is particularly congested (i.e. two matches per week over several weeks), the recovery time allowed between two successive soccer matches lasts 3-4 days, which may be insufficient to restore homeostasis. Alternating between domestic, continental and international matches during these periods may additionally lead to exhausting travel stress and sleep restriction. As a result, players may experience acute and chronic fatigue potentially leading to injury. There is a lack of scientific data to date examining the specific role of sleep restriction on the risk of acute injury. Available evidence suggests that post-match sleep restriction may result in fatigue, reduction in muscular strength, change in mood and altered cognitive functioning the following days, which may affect attention and decision-making skills during ensuing training sessions and matches, potentially resulting in injury risk increase. With the present lecture, we will discuss the interest of implementing, during a congested schedule, a recovery monitoring protocol including questionnaires, sleep records and physical tests in order to help practitioners preventing injuries.

Topic: Training and Testing

Presentation: Invited

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