

Title*

FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY AND SKILL IN ADOLESCENT FOOTBALL PLAYERS

Authors*

Valente-dos-Santos J¹, Figueiredo AJ², Malina RM^{3,4}, Coelho-e-Silva MJ²

Institution, city and country*

¹ CIDEFES, Lusófona University, Lisboa, Portugal

² CIDAF, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal

³ Department of Kinesiology and Health Education, University of Texas, Austin, USA

⁴ School of Public Health and Information Sciences, University of Louisville, Louisville, USA

Contact (Email address)*

joao.valente.santos@ulusofona.pt

BACKGROUND/AIM*

The development of sprinting and dribbling were investigated among youth football players aged 12–19 [1]. Dribbling appeared to improve further after late adolescence, while sprinting after that age hardly improved. The present study identified the predictors of functional capacities and skills in adolescent football players.

METHODS*

Data for Portuguese players aged 11–12 (n=75) and 13–14 (n=68) years included chronological age (CA), skeletal age (SA – [2]), anthropometry, functional capacities (yo-yo intermittent endurance; 7x35-m sprints with a 25-s recovery interval; countermovement jump, 10x5-m agility), football skills and experience (see [3]). Multiple linear regression analysis was used.

RESULTS*

Explained variances differed among functional capacities (22–48%) and skills (<25%) and were greater for composite functional (younger: 37%; older: 58%) than skill (younger: 26%; older: 18%) scores. SA was a predictor of the countermovement jump in both groups and of composite functional and skill scores in older players. Age and adiposity were primary predictors in players aged 11–12 years, while experience and a proportionally longer trunk appeared among predictors in players aged 13–14 years.

CONCLUSIONS*

Adolescent players somewhat later in SA for CA (lower SACA ratio) tended to have a higher football skill composite score. Experience in football and CA had a positive influence while adiposity in younger players and body weight in older players had a negative influence on dribbling. Additional research is needed to examine longitudinal changes of functional and skill scores (using multilevel modelling) separately for early pubertal players contrasting in biological maturation at the baseline.

REFERENCES

[1] Huijgen BCH, *et al.* (2010). *J Sports Sci*, 28 (7), 689-698.

[2] Roche AF, *et al.* (1988). Assessing the skeletal maturity of the hand-wrist. Illinois. Springfield.

[3] Figueiredo AJ, *et al.* (2009). *Ann Hum Biol*, 36 (1), 60-73.