A Pilot Study Examining Injuries in Relation to Field Position of Competitive Football Players

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to quantify the football injuries in relation to field position in competitive football players and to determine the nature, location, causes, outcome of injuries and the possible risk factors involved. Information on injuries were collected through a questionnaire from eight Indian football teams which were participating in All India Mayor Trophy football tournament held in Aurangabad, Maharashtra in September-2006. The age range was 16 to 30 years, 68% (87) of players were in the range of 20 to 25 years. The football players were asked to recall injuries over the preceding one year period. A total of 98 out of 128 football players sustained injuries in relation to field position. One hundred and eight injuries were recorded of which 27% were recurring injuries. Lower limb injuries predominated; the ankle and knee being the most commonly injured anatomical site. A significant proportion of injuries occurred in the upper limb region. A high number of injuries occurred in the Goalkeepers, and were mainly related to the thumb. Most injuries were of soft tissue in nature and relate to muscle, ligament, and tendon. Most common situations giving rise to injuries were collision (27.77%), twist/turn (22.22%) and stumble (17.59%). Those football players directly involved in attack or defense are more likely to be injured. Lower limb injuries were found to be predominated, muscle injuries being the most common type, collision is common causes of injuries. The results of the research provide a useful insight into the injuries in relation to field position, nature and sites of injury in competitive football players.

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Key Words: Treatment, Sustained, Anatomical Site, incidence, Soft tissue, Limbs

Introduction

Football has been demonstrated to be among the most hazardous of organized team sports and injury is a frequent event in football *(Winter Griffith, 1989; Sinku, 2006).*

Football requires a variety of physical attributes and specific playing skills therefore participants need to train and prepare to meet at least a minimum set of physical, physiological and psychological requirements to cope with the demands of the game and to reduce the risk of injury. It is an enjoyable and social sport that can be played from childhood to old age, either at a recreational level or as a competitive sport.

Football playing largely involves starting, running, slopping, twisting, jumping, kicking and turning movements' that place the players to greater risk of injury *(Waston, 1993).*

In the epidemiological studies, injury occurs in training or matches, interrupted or hampered play (*Sinku, 2006 & 2007)*. Special treatment is required in order to continue the game, or if the injury has made playing impossible. Football has received a little interest in