

Physical and Anthropometric Profile of Youth Tunisian Elite Football Players According to Their Playing Position: A Longitudinal Study

Mohamed Ali Hammami¹, Karim Ben Ayed^{1,2}, Rim Mekni¹, Hatem Ghouili^{1*}, Mohamed Mansour Bouzouraa¹, Lamia Ben Izzeddine³

¹ High Institute of Sport and Physical Education. Kef. University of Jendouba, Tunisia

² Sharjah Women's Sports. Sharjah. United Arab Emirates

³ High Institute of Sport and Physical Education Ksar-Saïd, University of Manouba, Mannouba 2010, Tunisia

* Corresponding author email address: Hatemghouili@gmail.com; ghouili_hatem@hotmail.com

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Editor

Hamdi Chtourou¹
High Institute of Sport and Physical
Education, University of Sfax, Sfax,
Tunisia
hamdi.chtourou@isseps.usf.tn

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Mohamed Saifedine Fessi¹
Education, Motricity, Sport and Health, High Institute of Sport and Physical
Education, University of Sfax, Tunisia.
Email: saifefessi@gmail.com

Reviewer 2: Noomen Guelmami¹
High Institute of Sport and Physical Education of Kef, University of Jendouba, Kef,
Tunisia
Postgraduate School of Public Health, Department of Health Sciences (DISSAL),
University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy
Email: noomen.gualmemi@issepkef.u-jendouba.tn

Reviewer 3: Ismail Dergaa¹
High Institute of Sport and Physical Education of Kef, Jendouba, Kef, Tunisia.
Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Doha, Qatar.
Email: Phd.dergaa@gmail.com

1. Round 1

1.1 Reviewer 1

Date: 23 December 2023

Recommendation: Revisions Required

- Please include "Youth" in the title. Physical and anthropometric profile of youth Tunisian elite football players according to their playing position: A longitudinal study.
- Add a sub section for Testing Protocol

A: The word "youth" is added to the title



1.2 Reviewer 2

Date: 23 December 2023

Recommendation: Revisions Required

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your valuable contributions to revising our manuscript. Your insightful comments, detailed comments, and constructive suggestions have greatly improved the quality and depth of this work.

This paper was a longitudinal study conducted in 2022 at a football youth academic center, Tunisia: Players underwent testing twice during the season: at the beginning of the preparation period (T1) and at the end of the competitive period (T2). Anthropometric measurements and fitness tests assessing aerobic and anaerobic performance were performed at both T1 and T2. The study concludes that while there were significant improvements in physical fitness parameters, differentiating players based on playing position was difficult. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the physical development of young elite soccer players and highlights the complexities in differentiating players based on playing positions in terms of physical and anthropometric characteristics. I'll focus on areas that could benefit from further clarification, additional analysis, or an improved presentation.

Here are suggestions:

- **Clarification of Study Design and Methods: Participant Selection:** Elaborate on the criteria used for selecting the players. Were there any specific physical or performance characteristics considered? **Measurement Consistency:** Ensure that the anthropometric and fitness assessments were performed under similar conditions at T1 and T2 for all players to maintain consistency.

A: The methodology section has been reworded and improved following your suggestions.

- **Details on Training Regimen:** Provide more details about the training programs followed by the players during the season. This information can help in understanding the impact of specific training methods on the observed outcomes.

A: Details about the training program have been added.

- **Longitudinal Data Analysis Techniques:** Utilize appropriate longitudinal data analysis techniques to account for repeated measures on the same subjects.

A: The results and analysis section has been redone following your request.

- **Results and Interpretation: Detailed Discussion on No Positional Differences:** Provide a deeper analysis or discussion on why no significant positional differences were found in certain tests, such as sprint performance.

A: These details have been added to the discussion section.

- **Comparison with Previous Literature:** Expand the comparison with existing literature, especially regarding the physical characteristics and performance parameters of players in similar age groups or competitive levels.

A: The comparisons were made following your suggestions.

- **General Presentation and Reporting: Tables and Figures:** Ensure that all tables and figures are clearly presented and adequately referenced in the text. Consider adding visual representations (like graphs) for key findings. **Consistency in Reporting Measurements:** Maintain consistency in reporting measurements (e.g., using the same units throughout, clear indication of mean \pm standard deviation).

A: The tables have been redone and the measurements have been redone concisely.

- **Address Study Limitations:** Clearly discuss the limitations of the study, such as the lack of a control group, potential selection biases, and the generalizability of the findings to other populations or age groups.

A: Limitations of the study have been added

- **Future Research Directions: Suggestions for Future Studies:** Offer suggestions for future research, such as investigating the long-term impact of different training methodologies on player development or exploring position-specific training adaptations in youth players.

A: Les directions futures ont été ajouté.

1.3 Reviewer 3

Date: 25 December 2023

- **Recommendation:** Revisions Required

Peer Review Report of "Physical and anthropometric profile of Tunisian elite football players according to their playing position: A longitudinal study" for the Tunisian Journal of Sports Science and Medicine

The article by Hammami et al. offers significant insights into the physical and anthropometric profiles of Tunisian elite football players, demonstrating high academic quality. However, there are major comments to be addressed for publication in the Tunisian Journal of Sports Science and Medicine:

- **Abstract Structure:** The journal mandates a structured abstract with sections for background, objectives, methods, results, and conclusion. Please add a background section and rename 'Purpose' to 'Objectives' for compliance.

A: The abstract has been reformulated following your request.

- **Terminology Consistency:** Replace 'subjects' with 'participants' throughout the manuscript to align with contemporary research terminology.

A: The word 'subjects' has been replaced by the word 'participants'

- **Methodology Details:** Clarify the total duration of the intervention in the methodology section. Specify whether it's 3 months, a year, or another duration.

A: The duration of the study has been indicated following your request.

- **Alignment of Title and Study Aim:** Ensure the study's aim and the article's title are in harmony, avoiding discrepancies between the two.

A: The title and objectives of the study were aligned.

- **Results Section Alignment:** Adjust the results section, especially in the abstract, to directly address the study's aim, also the authors are requested to add the exact dates of the testing sessions inside the figure.

A: The results in the abstract section have been reformulated.

- **Practical Implications in Conclusions:** The conclusions, both in the abstract and main text, should elucidate the practical applications of your findings. Please include this crucial aspect.

A6. Practical implications have been added.

- **Keywords Modification:** In the keywords, replace 'young' with 'youth', add 'adolescent', and separate 'Elite soccer' into 'Elite' and 'Soccer' for better clarity and indexing.

A: Keywords have been changed.

- **Objective Consistency:** Align the objectives stated at the end of the introduction with those in the abstract to ensure consistency.

A: The objectives in the abstract have been corrected.

- **Ethical Approval Statement:** Include a statement of ethical approval with the appropriate reference number, as required.

A: The code of ethics has been added concisely.

- **Separate Limitations and Conclusion Sections:** According to the journal's guidelines, write the limitations and conclusion sections as distinct paragraphs following the discussion.

A: The limitations and conclusion sections have been separated.

- **Additional Required Sections:** At the end of the acknowledgments, add the missing sections in the following order:
 - Funding Statement: Provide details.
 - Ethical Compliance Statement: Mention the ethical approval details with the reference number.
 - Conflict of Interest: State any potential conflicts.
 - Author Contributions: Detail the specific contributions of each author to the research.

A: Additional sections have been added.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.