Evaluation of Balance Skills in Male Subjects Aged 6-7 Years

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The purpose of this investigation was to measure and compare the balance ability of male soccer players and sedentary control subjects between ages 6-7. 50 male soccer players and 50 male sedentary control individuals of ages 6-7 years were selected to participate in this study. Subjects were matched for: age; BMI and injury history. Balance skills were measured using a battery of five relevant tests. These included: The Single Leg Balance Test, The Heel-toe Standing Test, The Heel-toe Walking Test, The Stick Lengthwise Balance Test and The Balance Board Test. Balance-skill differences between the soccer players and the sedentary control group were recorded in tables and graphs and were then analysed. There are significant balance skill differences between the soccer players and sedentary control subjects, within the same age range. Soccer players have a more stable kinetic chain resulting in better integration of their vestibular, vision and somatosensory systems. They demonstrate a better sense of their body's position in space as they possess an efficient ability to process sensory information from somatosensory input, using their central nervous systems. The soccer players do display greater agility and better balance while stimulating multiple components of their balance system. There were statistically significant differences in the balance skill differences between the soccer players and the sedentary control subjects, with soccer players demonstrating better skills in all five tests.

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