

# *Recovery of neuromuscular function following competitive football match-play*



*Dr. Callum Brownstein*



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# Contents

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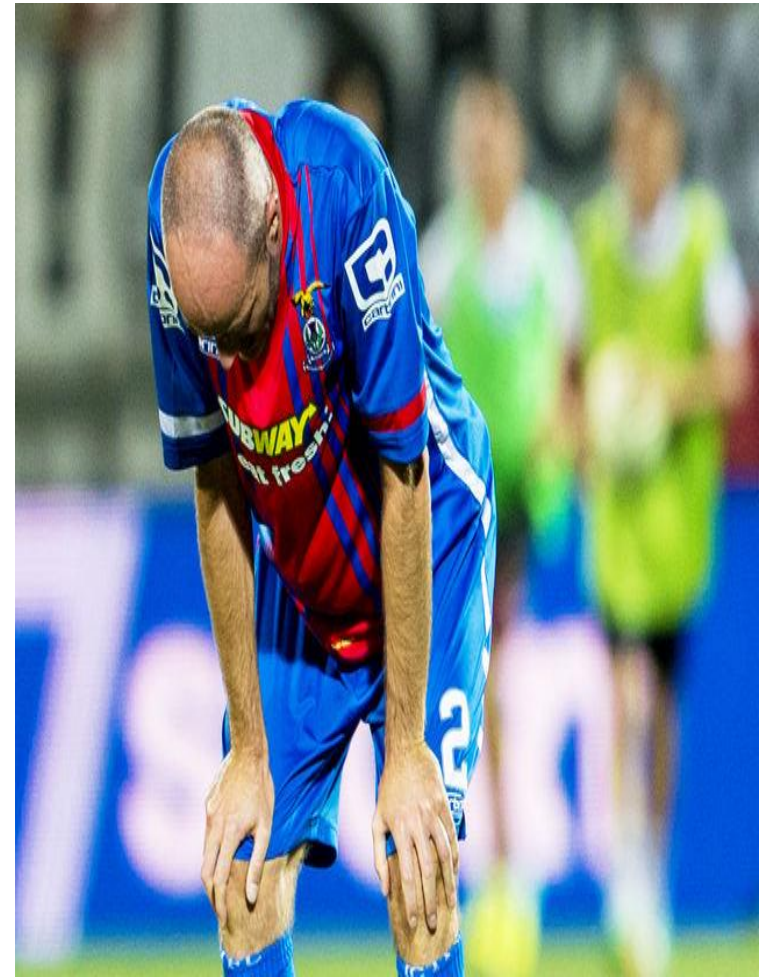
- Demands of football match-play
- Importance of recovery in modern football
- Fatigue and recovery, what is known?
- Recovery of neuromuscular function following football match-play
- The effect of phase change material (cryotherapy) on recovery of neuromuscular function following football match-play
- Practical implications: training scheduling, fixture congestion and recovery strategies



# Demands of competitive football match-play

## Typical match-demands (aerobic)

- Total distance: 10-13 km
- High-intensity running: 2-3 km
- Average heart rate: 80-90% HR max
- Average  $VO_2$ : 70-80% of  $VO_{2max}$
- **Substantial aerobic demand**



# Demands of competitive football match-play

## Typical match-demands (anaerobic)

- 1500 activities performed per-match
- Sprint distance (200-400 m)
- Change in activity every 4-6 s
  - Jumping/landing
  - Tackling
  - Accelerating/decelerating
  - Changing direction
  - Kicking
- **High anaerobic energy turnover**
- **Substantial muscle damage**



Akenhead *et al.* (2013); Nielsen *et al.* (2012)



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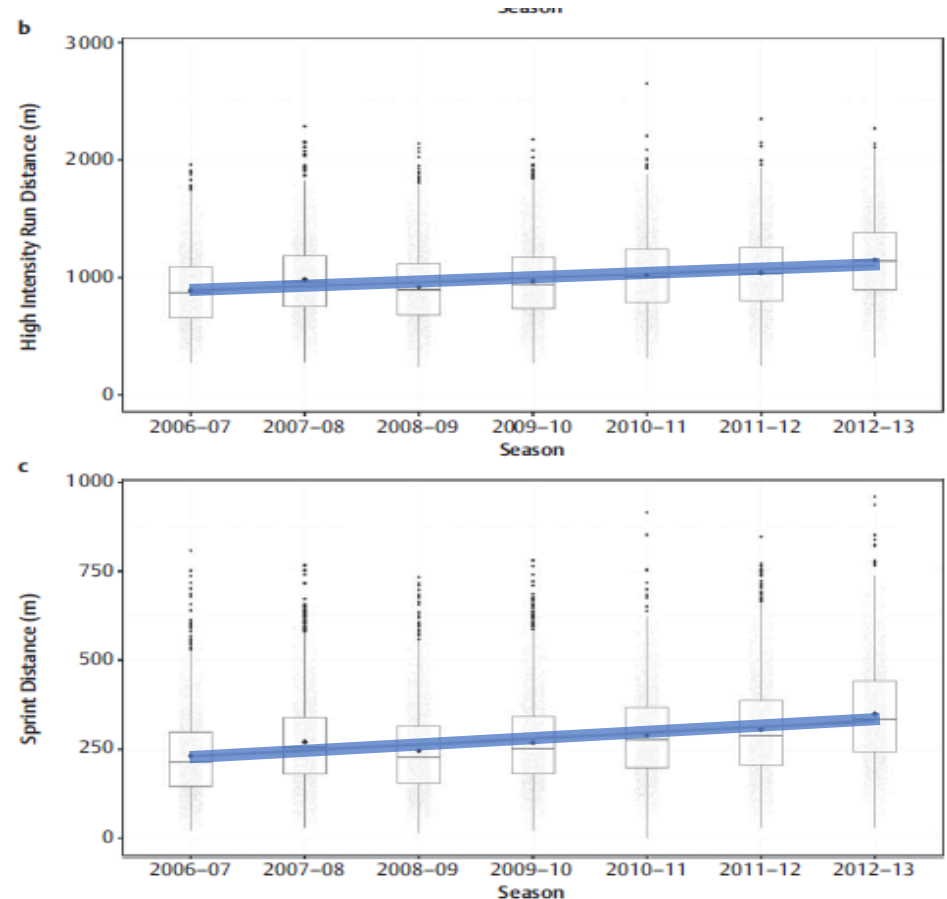
# Demands of competitive football match-play



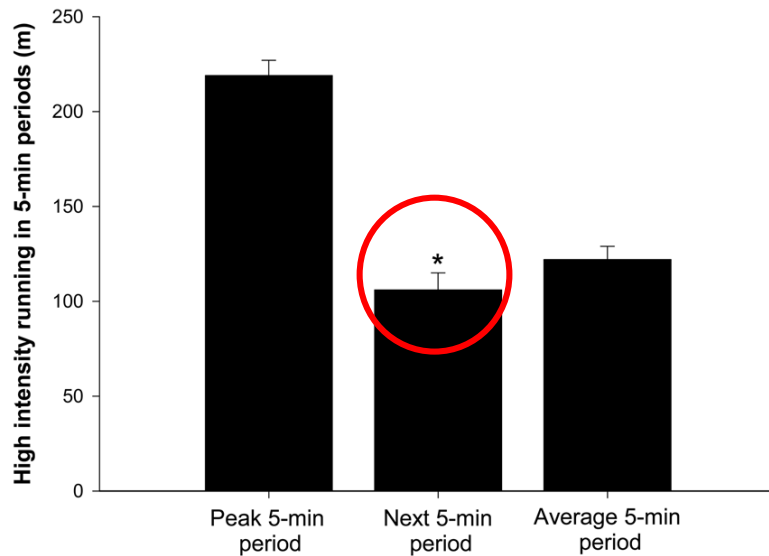
# Increasing demands of competitive football match-play

## Barnes et al (2014)

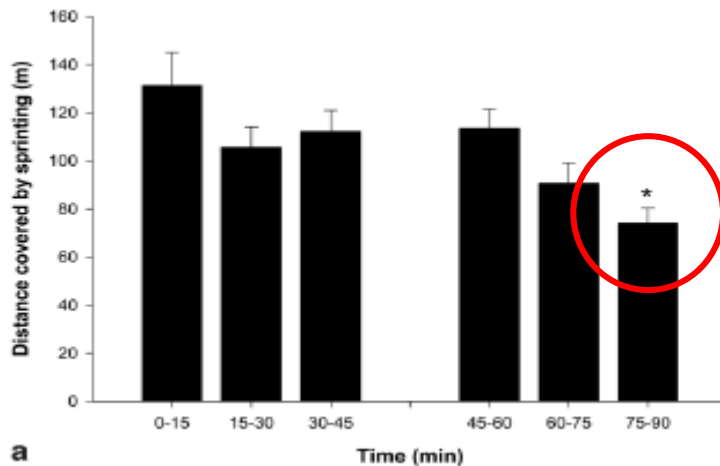
- Study conducted between 2006/07 and 2012/13.
- ~30% increase in high-intensity running
- ~35% increase in sprint distance
- ~85% increase in number of sprints



# Fatigue during match-play: match-running performance



Transient fatigue: temporary reductions in work-rate following the most intense periods of a match



Cumulative fatigue: reductions in work-rate towards the end of a match.



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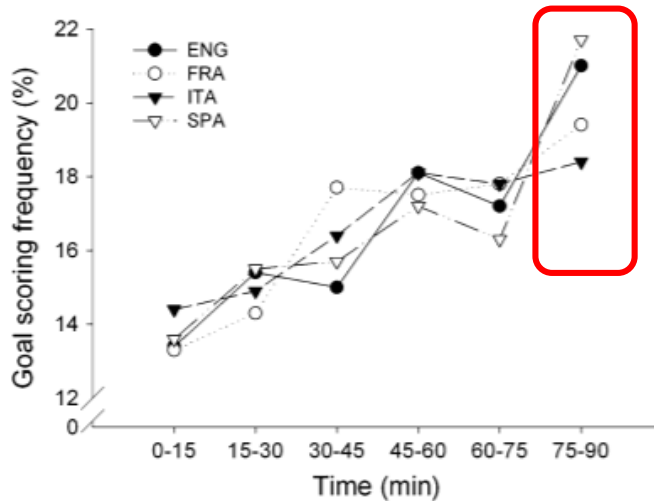


Mohr *et al.* (2005)



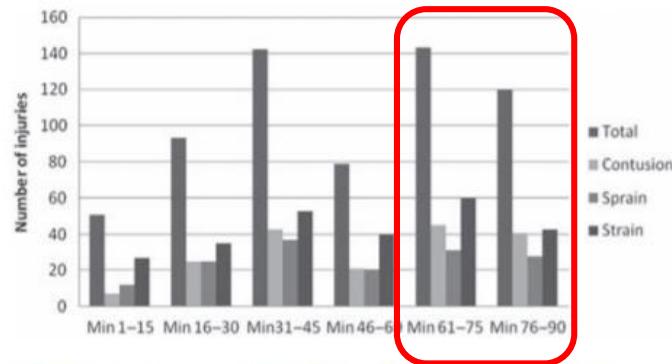
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# Fatigue during match-play: technical performance and injury risk



**Table 2** Differences between first and second half in physical and technical performance during official soccer matches of the Italian Serie A (n = 416)

Variables	First half	Second half	Difference mean value	Difference 95% CI
<b>Physical data (m)</b>				
Total distance	5966	5862	-104	-145 to -61
High-intensity running	2038	1909	-129	-176 to -83
Very high-intensity running	633	591	-42	-66 to -18
Total distance with the ball	250	237	-13	-22 to -3
High-intensity running with the ball	142	130	-12	-19 to -5
Very high-intensity running with the ball	60	55	-5	-9 to 1
<b>Technical data (number)</b>				
Involvement with the ball	20.4	18.7	-1.7	-2.4 to -1.0
Short passes	12.0	10.8	-1.2	-1.8 to -0.7
Successful short passes	11.1	10.0	-1.1	-1.6 to -0.5
Percentage of successful short passes	91.6	91.3	0.3	-2.2 to 1.5
Long passes	2.2	1.9	-0.3	-0.5 to 0.1
Successful long passes	1.4	1.3	0	-0.3 to 0.1
Crosses	41.8	42.8	1.0	-3.9 to 5.9
Headers	0.6	0.6	-0.1	-0.1 to 0.1
Tackles	1.3	1.2	0	-0.3 to 0.1
Dribbling	0.7	0.7	-0.1	-0.1 to 0.2
Shots	0.4	0.3	-0.1	-0.1 to 0.1
Shots on target	0.7	0.7	0	-0.1 to 0.1



**Figure 1** Distribution of traumatic injuries during a match (data from the 2006/07 and 2007/08 seasons).



# Fatigue and recovery following football match-play



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# Fatigue and recovery in football: what is known?

Time-course of recovery:

- Sprint speed



- 5 hours (Andersson *et al.*, 2008)
- 96 hours (Ascensao *et al.*, 2008; Magalhaes *et al.*, 2010)

- Countermovement jump (CMJ) height



- 48 hours (Ispirlidis *et al.*, 2008; Fatouros *et al.*, 2009)
- 72 hours (Andersson *et al.*, 2008; Magalhaes *et al.*, 2010)

- Maximal voluntary contraction (MVC)



- 48 hours (Rampinini *et al.*, 2011)
- > 72 hours (Thomas *et al.*, 2017; Ascensao *et al.*, 2008)

# Fatigue and recovery in football: what is known?

Sports Med  
DOI 10.1007/s40279-017-0798-8



SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

## Acute and Residual Soccer Match-Related Fatigue: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

J. R. Silva<sup>1,2</sup> · M. C. Rumpf<sup>1,3</sup> · M. Hertzog<sup>1</sup> · C. Castagna<sup>4</sup> · A. Farooq<sup>5</sup> · O. Girard<sup>5,6</sup> · K. Hader<sup>1,7</sup>

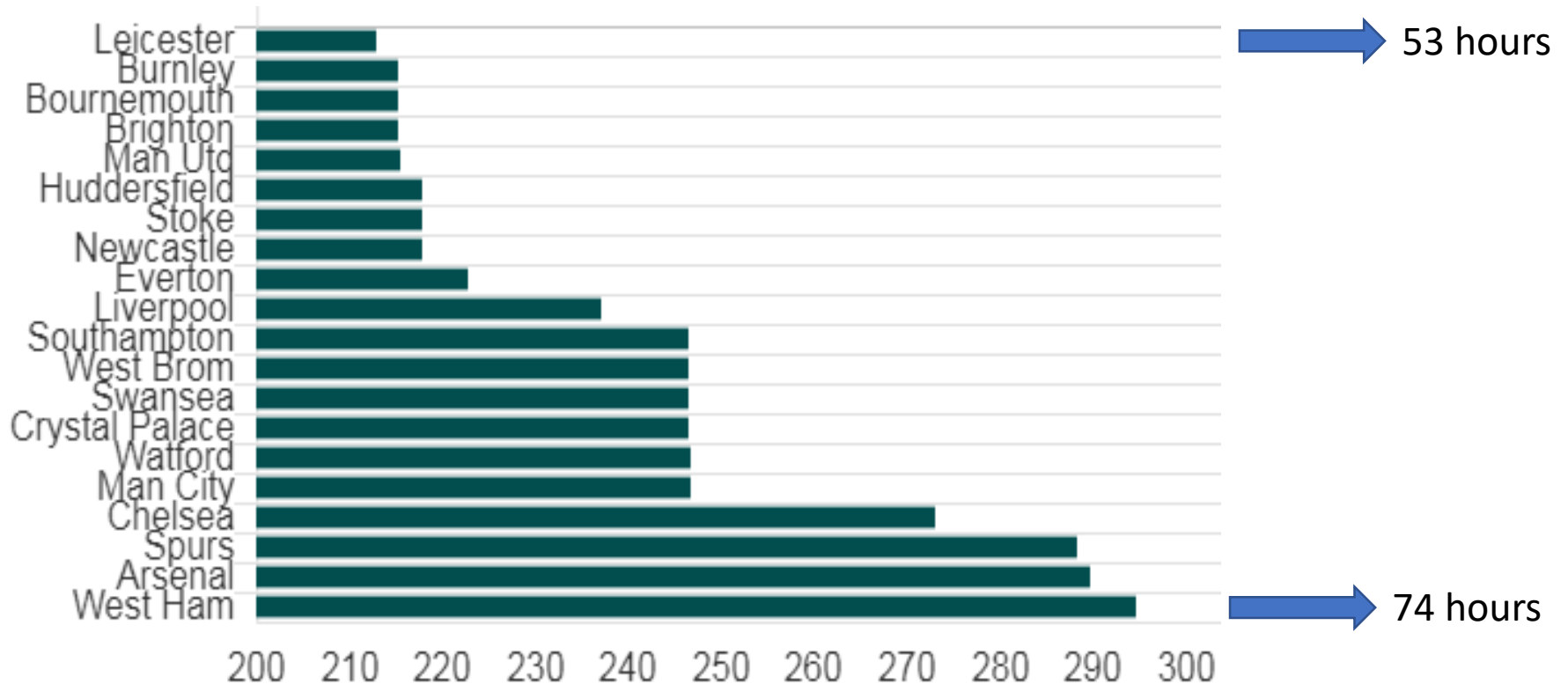
*“While some parameters are recovered, our systematic review shows that a period of 72 h post-match play is not long enough to completely restore homeostatic balance.”*

*“Overall, coaches must adjust the structure and content of the training sessions during the 72 h post-match intervention to effectively manage the training load within this time-frame.”*



# Recovery in football: a topical area

Hours between start of first fixture and end of last fixture during the festive period



# Recovery in football: a topical area

## Pep Guardiola: Man City boss says fixture list congestion a 'disaster' for players

2 January 2018 | Man City

Share

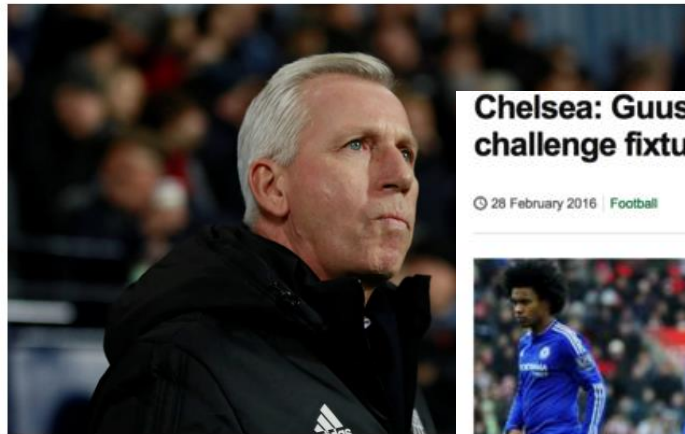


Kevin de Bruyne, who has the most assists in the le

## West Brom make formal complaint to Premier League over their 'terrible' fixture congestion

share

2



Alan Pardew isn't happy with West Brom's congested fixture

## Chelsea: Guus Hiddink wants doctors to challenge fixture calendar

28 February 2016 | Football

Share



Chelsea attacker Pedro suffered a hamstring injury in the win over Southampton

Chelsea manager Guus Hiddink says Premier League club doctors should put pressure on the game's authorities to change the fixture calendar.



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# Recovery in football: a topical area

Original article

## Muscle injury rates in professional football increase with fixture congestion: an 11-year follow-up of the UEFA Champions League injury study

Håkan Bengtsson,<sup>1</sup> Jan Ekstrand,<sup>1,2,3</sup> Martin Hägglund<sup>1,4</sup>

### Effect of 2 Soccer Matches in a Week on Physical Performance and Injury Rate

Gregory Dupont,<sup>\*,††</sup> PhD, Mathieu Nedelec,<sup>††</sup> MSc, Alan McCall,<sup>‡</sup> MSc, Derek McCormack,<sup>‡</sup> MD, Serge Berthoin,<sup>†</sup> PhD, and Ulrik Wisloff,<sup>§</sup> PhD

From the <sup>†</sup>Laboratory of Human Movement Studies, EA 3608, Artois and Lille 2 Universities, France, <sup>‡</sup>Celtic Lab, Sport Science Department, Celtic FC, Glasgow, Scotland, and the

<sup>§</sup>Department of Circulation and Medical Imaging, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

Original article

## The effects of a congested fixture period on physical performance, technical activity and injury rate during matches in a professional soccer team

Alexandre Dellal,<sup>1</sup> Carlos Lago-Peñas,<sup>3</sup> Ezequiel Rey,<sup>3</sup> Karim Chamari,<sup>2,4</sup> Emmanuel Orhant<sup>5</sup>



# Recovery in football: a topical area

Original article

## Muscle injury rates in professional football increase with fixture congestion: an 11-year follow-up of the UEFA Champions League injury study

Håkan Bengtsson,<sup>1</sup> Jan Ekstrand,<sup>1,2,3</sup> Martin Hägglund<sup>1,4</sup>

**Table 4** Comparison of injury rates in matches with short (four or less days) or long (six or more days) recovery before the match

	≤4 days' recovery	≥6 days' recovery	RR	95% CI	p Value
<b>All injuries</b>					
League	29.0	26.6	1.09	1.00 to 1.18	0.045
UCL	33.0	27.1	1.22	0.85 to 1.75	0.290
EL	24.7	37.9	0.65	0.41 to 1.03	0.064
Other cup	27.8	23.6	1.18	0.94 to 1.47	0.153
<b>Muscle injuries</b>					
League	11.9	9.0	1.32	1.15 to 1.51	<0.001
UCL	13.1	7.9	1.66	0.85 to 3.24	0.135
EL	8.2	16.5	0.50	0.25 to 1.01	0.055
Other cup	10.5	8.3	1.26	0.87 to 1.83	0.218
<b>Ligament injuries</b>					
League	5.0	5.6	0.90	0.75 to 1.09	0.292
UCL	5.7	7.0	0.81	0.39 to 1.67	0.567
EL	3.7	8.2	0.45	0.17 to 1.25	0.126
Other cup	5.6	3.1	1.84	1.03 to 3.30	0.041

EL, Europa League; RR, rate ratio; UCL, UEFA Champions League.  
Injury rate is expressed as the number of injuries per 1000 h of match exposure.

# Recovery in football: a topical area



## Football : reprise de la Ligue 1

Du 8 août 2014 au 23 mai 2015





# Fatigue and recovery in football: what is known?

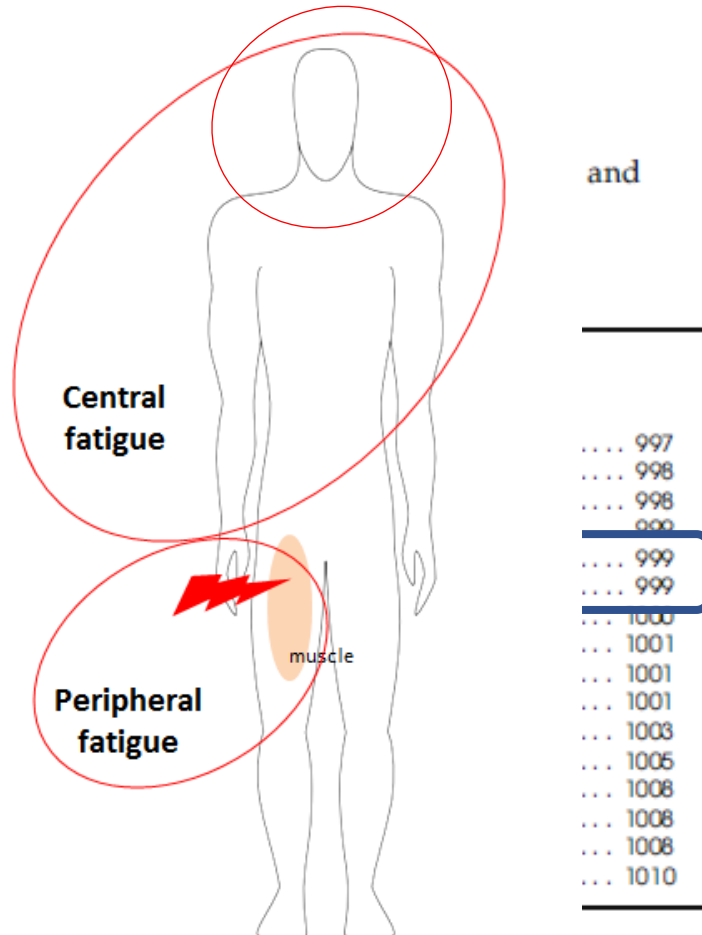
## Recovery in Soccer Part I – Post-Match Fatigue

Mathieu Nédélec,<sup>1,2</sup> Alan McCall,<sup>1,2</sup> and Gregory Dupont<sup>1,2</sup>

1 Université Lille Nord de France, Lille, France  
2 LOSC Lille Métropole Football Club, Lille, France

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# Fatigue and recovery in football: what is known?



## Is recovery driven by central or peripheral factors? A role for the brain in recovery following intermittent-sprint exercise

**Geoffrey M. Minett<sup>1,2\*</sup> and Rob Duffield<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation, Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

<sup>3</sup> Sport and Exercise Discip

## Is it time to turn our attention toward central mechanisms for post-exertional recovery strategies and performance?

**Ben Rattray<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Christos Argus<sup>2</sup>, Kristy Martin<sup>1,2</sup>, Joseph Northey<sup>1,2</sup> and Matthew Driller<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Discipline of Sport and Exercise Science, Faculty of Health, University of Canberra, Canberra, ACT, Australia, <sup>2</sup> University of Canberra Research Inst and Leisure Studies, Th

JOURNAL OF SPORTS SCIENCES, 2016

VOL. 34, NO. 14, 1296

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2016.1170475>

EDITORIAL

## Fatigue in football: it's not a brainless task!



Minett & Duffield, 2014; Rattray *et al.*, 2015; Coutts, 2016



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# Aims

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**To examine the aetiology of fatigue and the time-scale of recovery following competitive football match-play**



**To profile the time-course recovery of a range of simple measures of perceptual & physical function as markers of readiness to train**





## Etiology and Recovery of Neuromuscular Fatigue following Competitive Soccer Match-Play

Callum G. Brownstein<sup>1</sup>, Jack P. Dent<sup>1</sup>, Paul Parker<sup>1</sup>, Kirsty M. Hicks<sup>1</sup>, Glyn Howatson<sup>1,2</sup>, Stuart Goodall<sup>1</sup> and Kevin Thomas<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, Northumbria University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, United Kingdom, <sup>2</sup> Water Research Group, School of Environmental Sciences and Development, Northwest University, Potchefstroom, South Africa



# Methods

- 16 male semi-professional footballers (level 9 of EFL)
- Players studied over two 90-minute matches
- Measures taken pre-, post-, 24, 48 & 72 h post-match
- Neuromuscular measures:
  - Maximal voluntary contraction
  - Voluntary activation (motor nerve and motor cortical stimulation)
  - Potentiated twitch force
- Corticospinal excitability & SIC1
- Physical measures:
  - CMJ
  - Drop-jump RSI
  - 20 m sprint



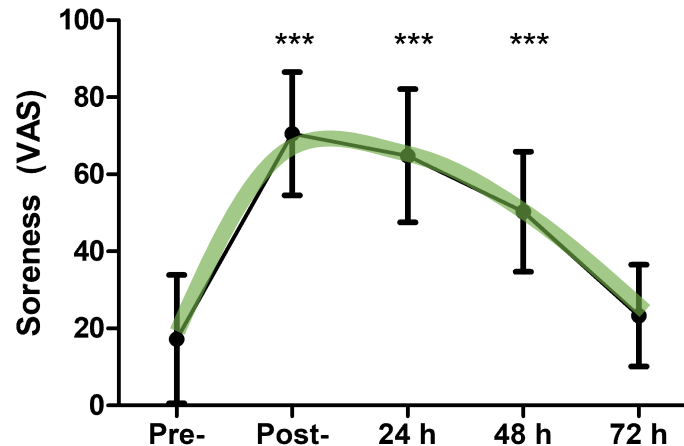
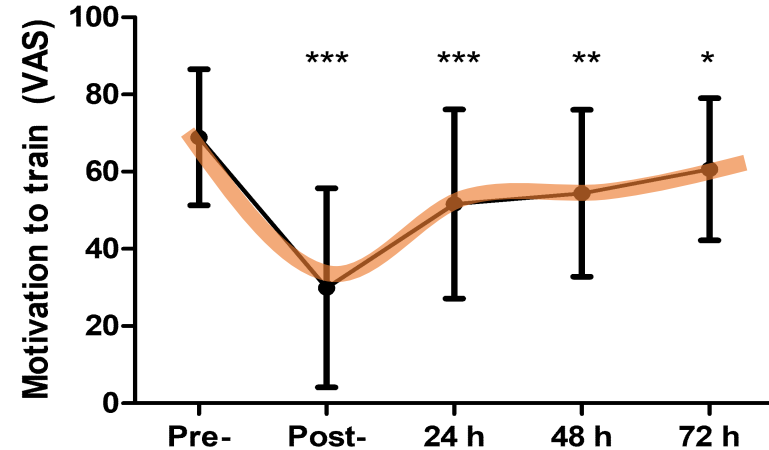
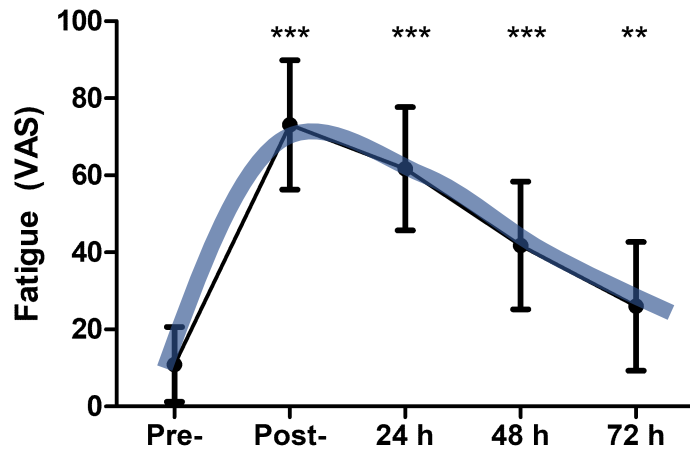
# Results

**TABLE 3** | Match activity and heart rate variables during competitive soccer match-play.

	Total distance	High-intensity	Accels	Decels	Mean HR	Max HR
	(m)	(m)	(no.)	(no.)	(bpm)	(bpm)
Pooled data	10,041 ± 626	1,211 ± 257	315 ± 64	208 ± 56	164 ± 11	193 ± 10
Game 1	10,037 ± 552	1,286 ± 199	301 ± 64	197 ± 49	170 ± 11	197 ± 12
Game 2	10,046 ± 770	1,126 ± 303	329 ± 64	218 ± 64	158 ± 7	189 ± 5
Season average	10,076 ± 1,363	1,456 ± 143	289 ± 97	204 ± 63	158 ± 12	194 ± 12

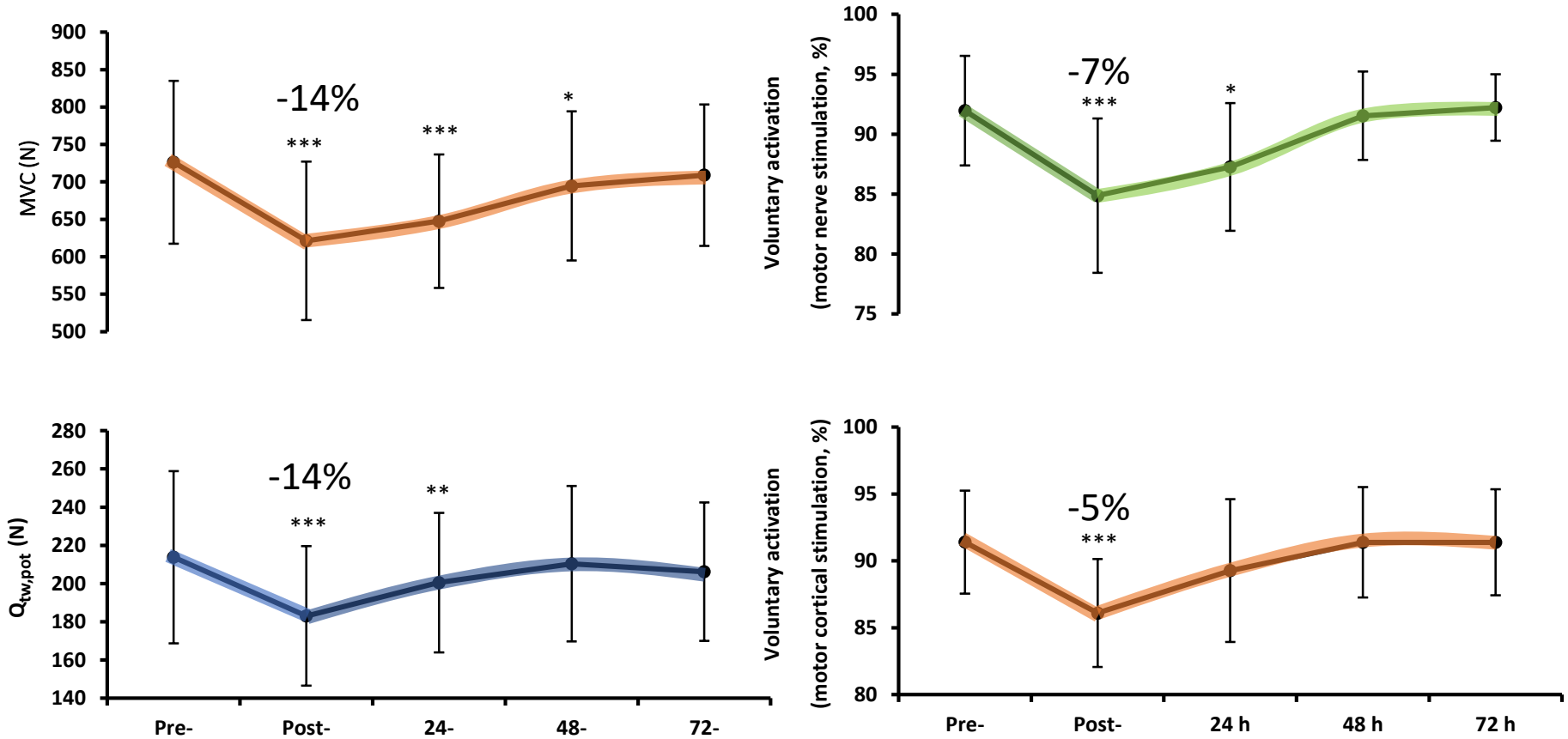
The study data was gathered across two competitive matches, while normative data from the same players was gathered throughout the competitive season ( $n = 16$ ). Values are mean  $\pm$  SD. HIR, high-intensity running; Accels, accelerations; Decels, decelerations, HR, heart rate.

# Results: perceptual measures



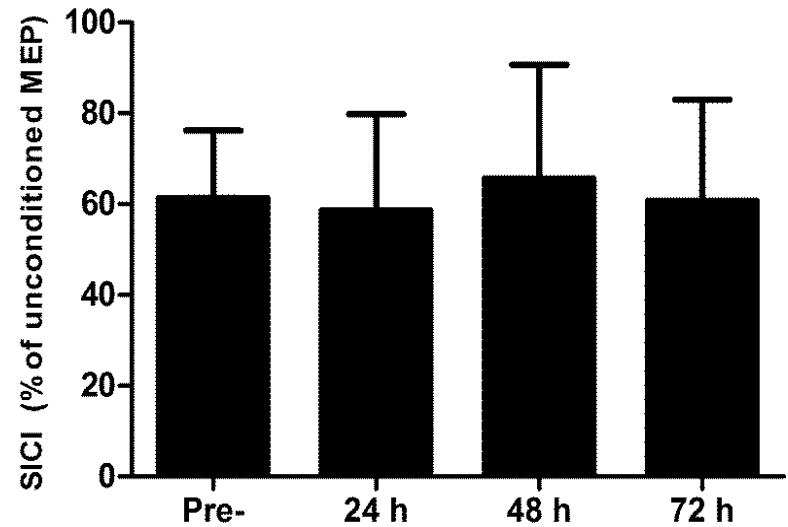
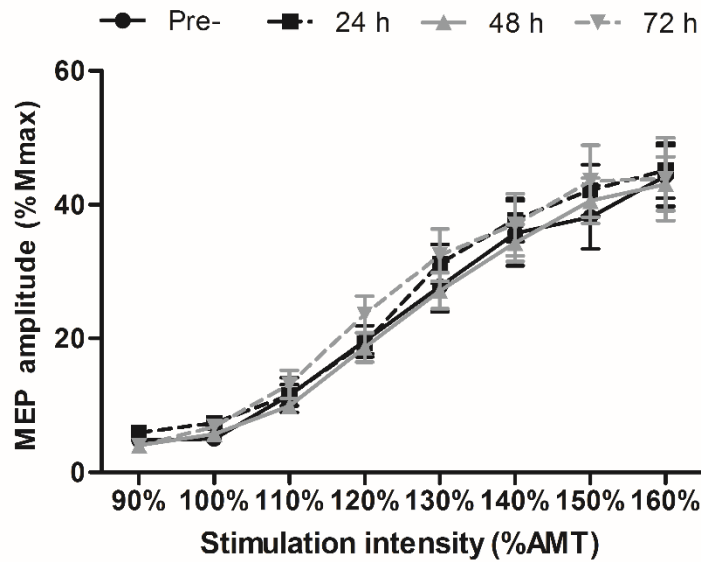
Significant differences indicated by \* =  $p < 0.05$ ,  
\*\* =  $p < 0.01$  and \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ .

# Results: neuromuscular fatigue

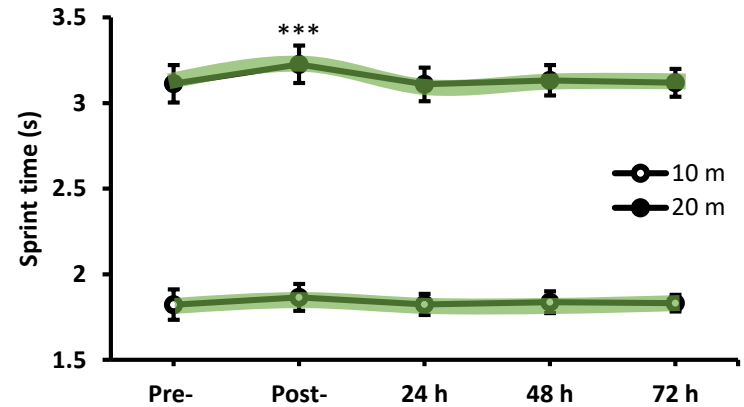
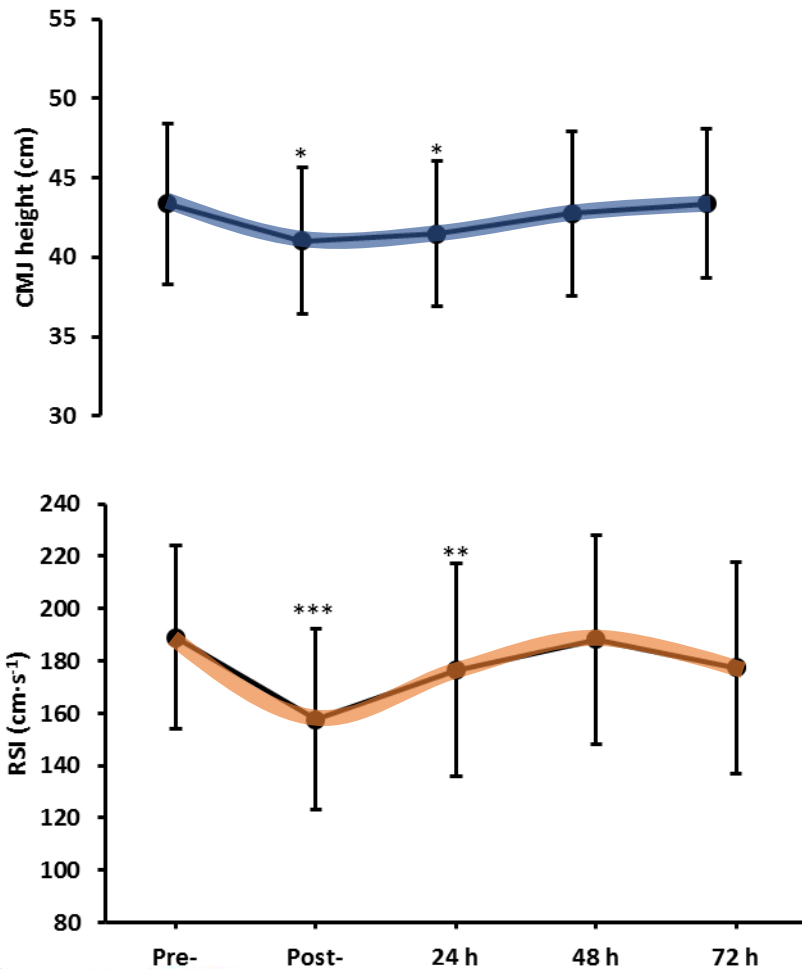




# Results: corticospinal excitability and SICI



# Results: physical measures



# Conclusions

**Football match-play elicits impairments in voluntary activation and contractile function which persist for 48 to 72 h post-match**



**Perturbations within the central nervous system contribute to the prolonged decrement in muscle strength post-match**



# Conclusions

**The similar decline and subsequent time-course of recovery of the drop-jump RSI test suggests that this might be appropriate tools to indirectly assess the recovery of neuromuscular function post-match**



**Perceptual fatigue persisted even after neuromuscular function had recovered**

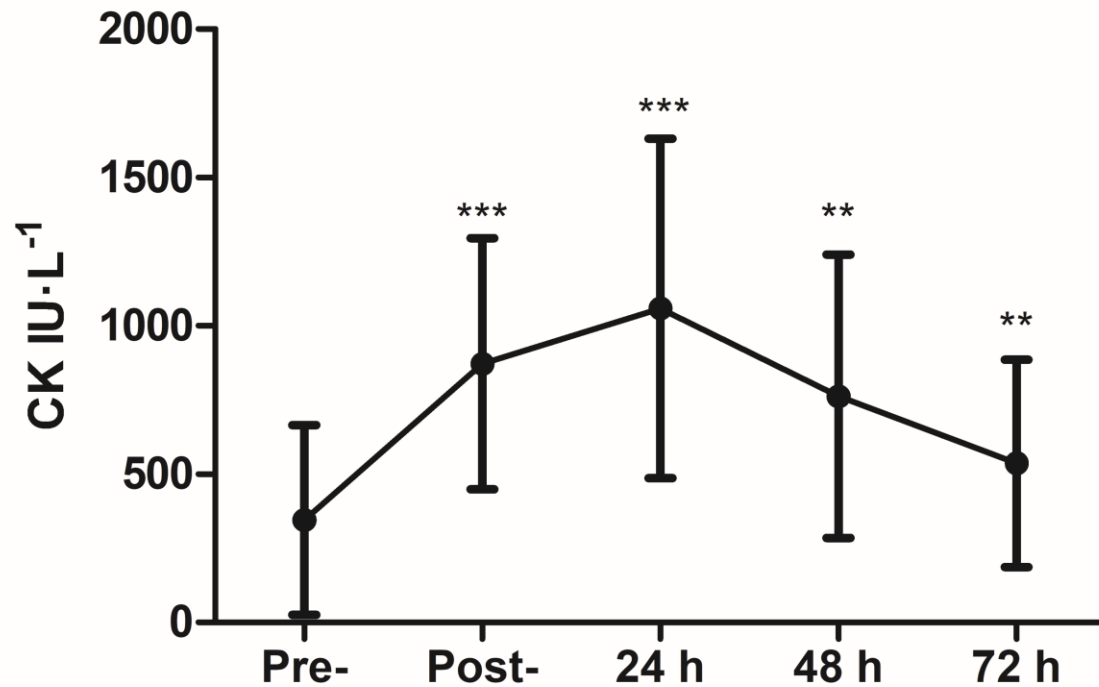


# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force – mechanisms: muscle damage?

## 1) Football match-play elicits considerable muscle damage

Biochemical i

António Ascen



'se of

é del Ojo<sup>b</sup>,

rmonal, muscle

abra, António Ascensão,

# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force – mechanisms: muscle damage?

## 2) Muscle damage causes prolonged impairments in contractile function (peak twitch force)

### Reduction in peak twitch

#### Metabolic

- Accumulation of Pi
- Accumulation of H<sup>+</sup> (maybe)
- Accumulation of ADP
- Rapid recovery



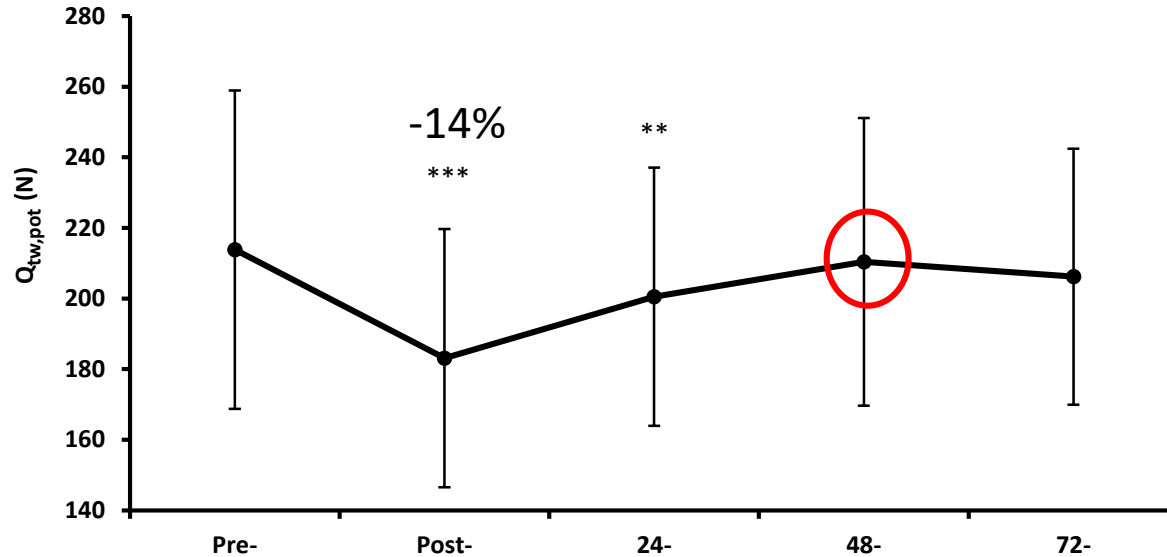
#### Mechanical

- Disorganisation of sarcomeres
- Damage to sarcoplasmic reticulum
- Impaired calcium release
- Slow recovery

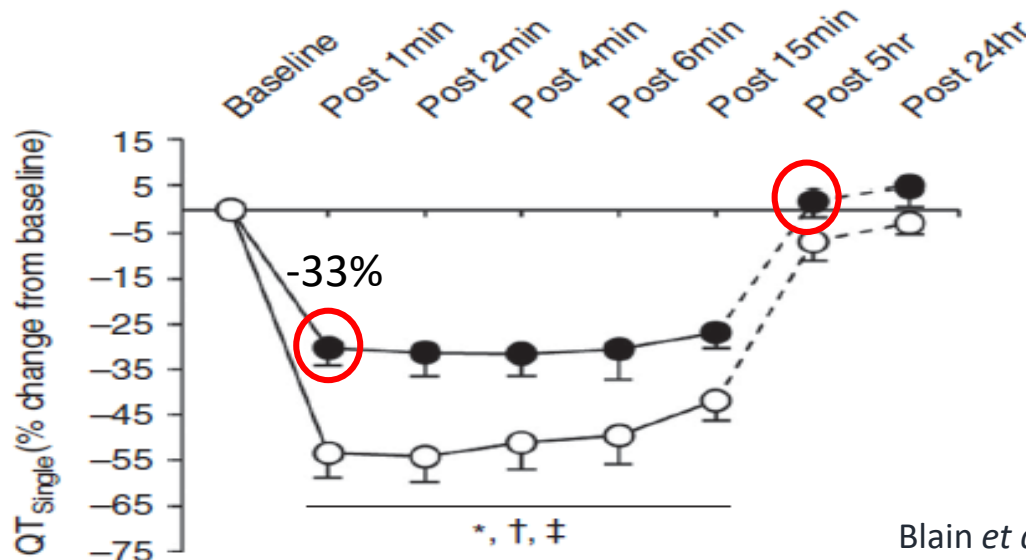


# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force - mechanisms: muscle damage?

Present study

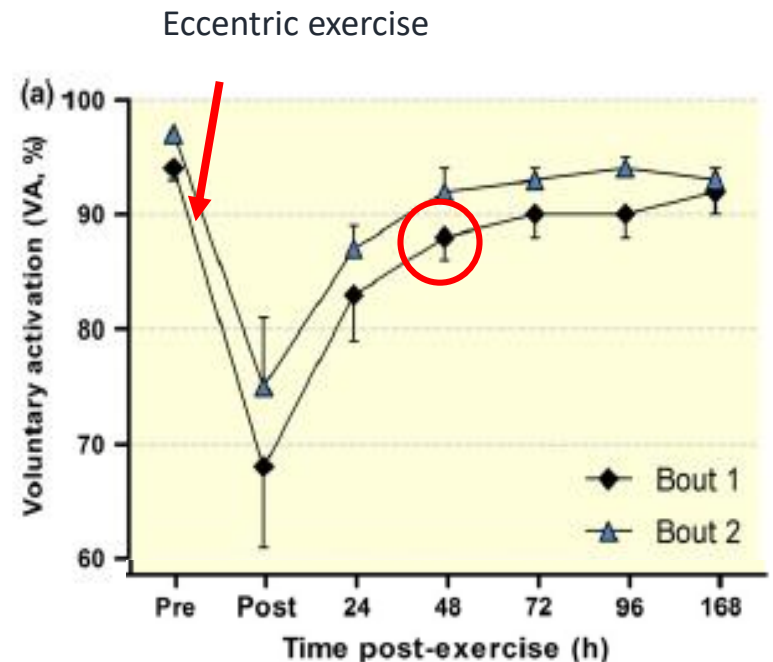
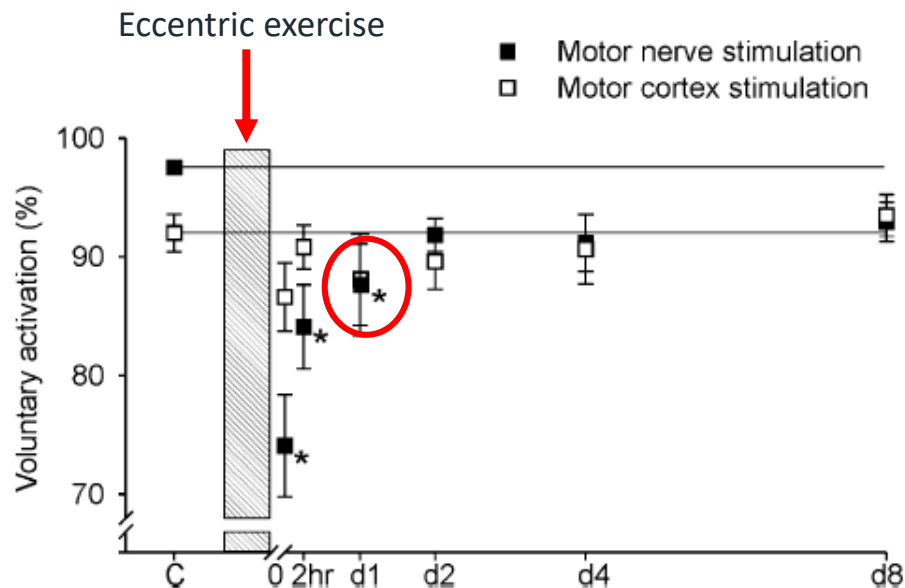


5km cycling time-trial



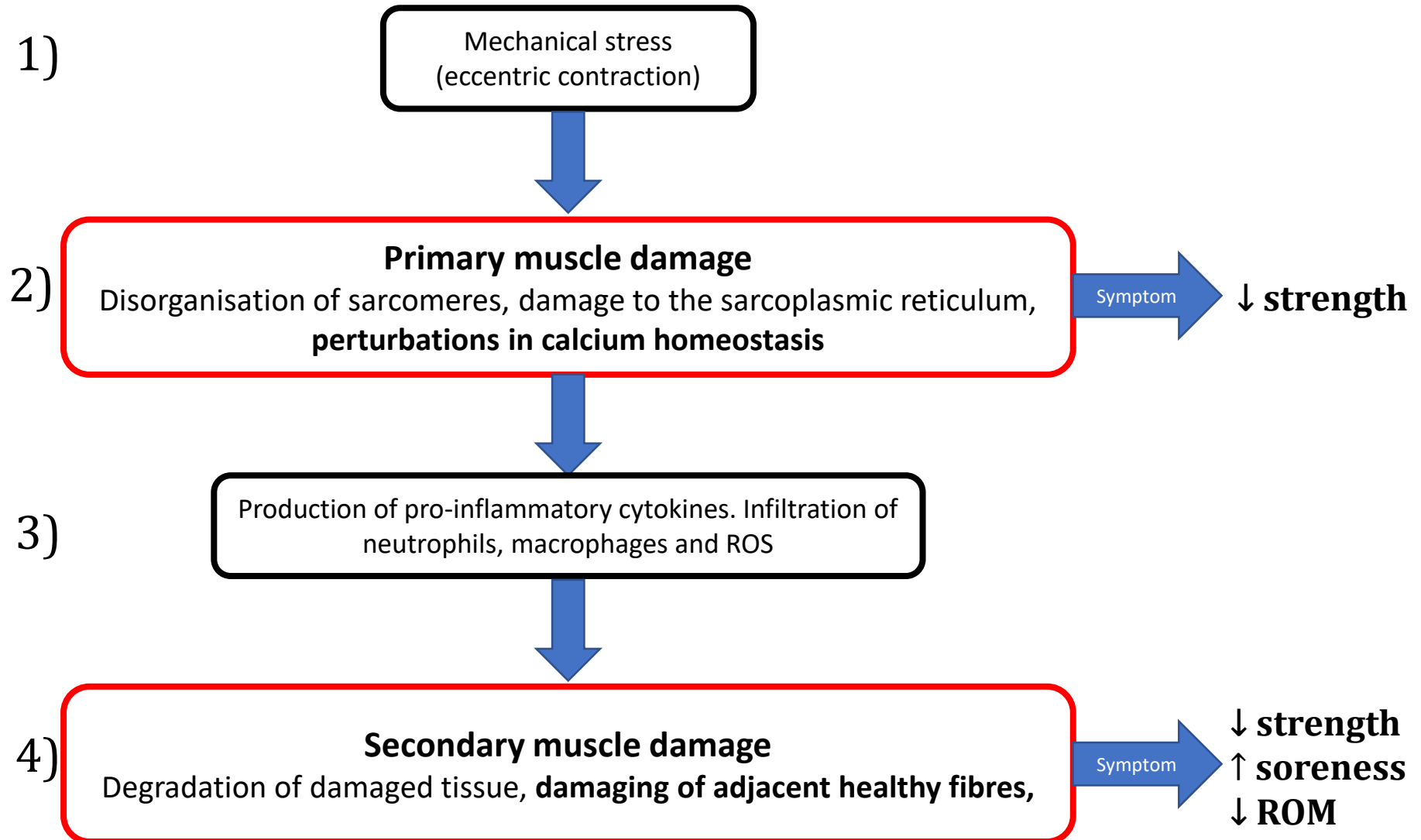
# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force - mechanisms: muscle damage?

## 3) Muscle damage elicits prolonged reductions in voluntary activation





# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force – mechanisms: muscle damage?



# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force – mechanisms: muscle damage?

3)

Production of pro-inflammatory cytokines. Infiltration of neutrophils, macrophages and ROS



**Peripheral**

Damage to healthy fibres  
ROS interfere with  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release and sensitivity  
Possible contributor to reduction in  $Q_{tw}$ ,  $p_{ot}$

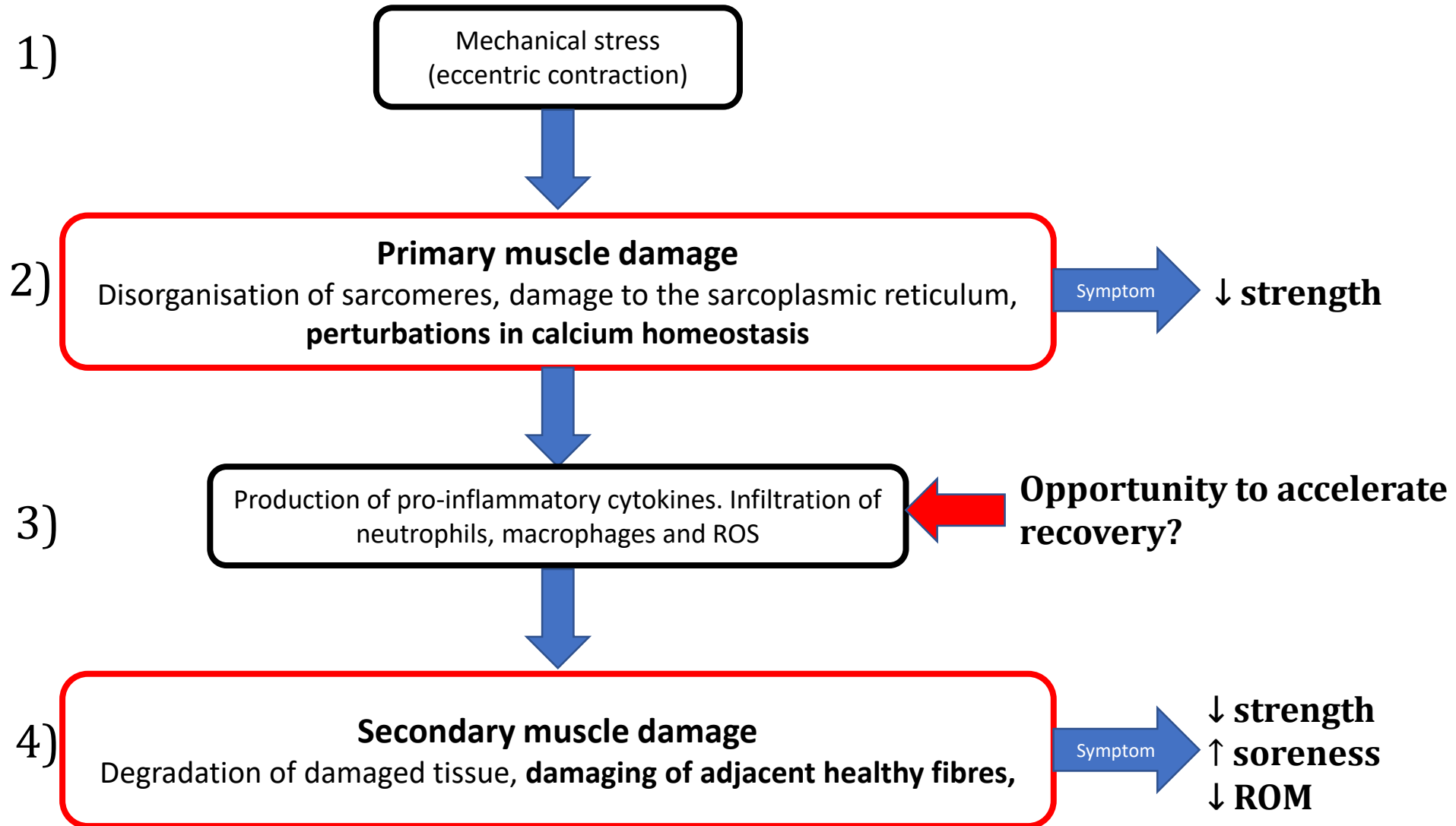


**Central**

↑ firing of group III/IV afferents  
↑ systemic inflammation  
Possible contributor to reduction in VA



# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force - mechanisms: muscle damage?



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***Effect of phase-change material on recovery of neuromuscular function following competitive football match-play***



# Phase change material vs traditional cryotherapy

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## **Cold-water immersion**

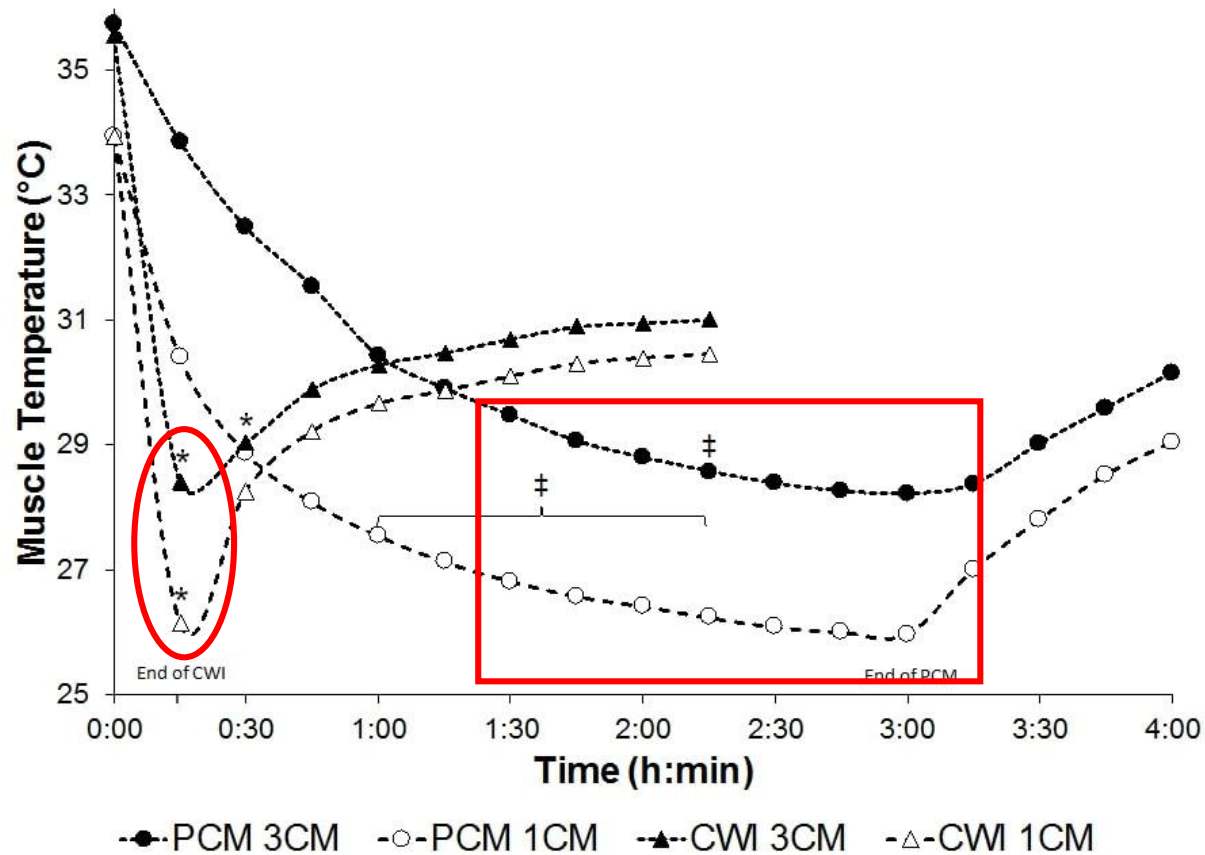
- Brief cooling stimulus (typically 10-15 minutes)
- Thermal discomfort
- Logistically impractical (e.g. away fixtures)



## **Phase change material**

- Prolonged cooling stimulus
- Lower thermal discomfort
- Easy to implement

# PCM: prolonged decrease in muscle temperature



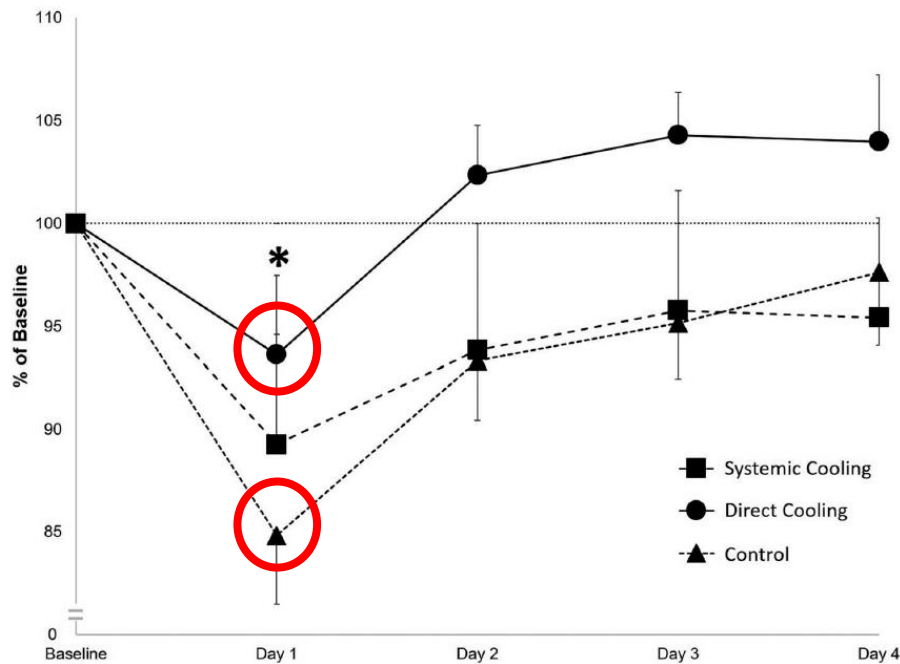
# PCM: recovery of muscle function

JOURNAL OF SPORTS SCIENCES, 2017  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2017.1312492>



## The efficacy of cooling with phase change material for the treatment of exercise-induced muscle damage: pilot study

Susan Y. Kwiecien<sup>a,b</sup>, Malachy P. McHugh<sup>a</sup> and Glyn Howatson<sup>b,c</sup>



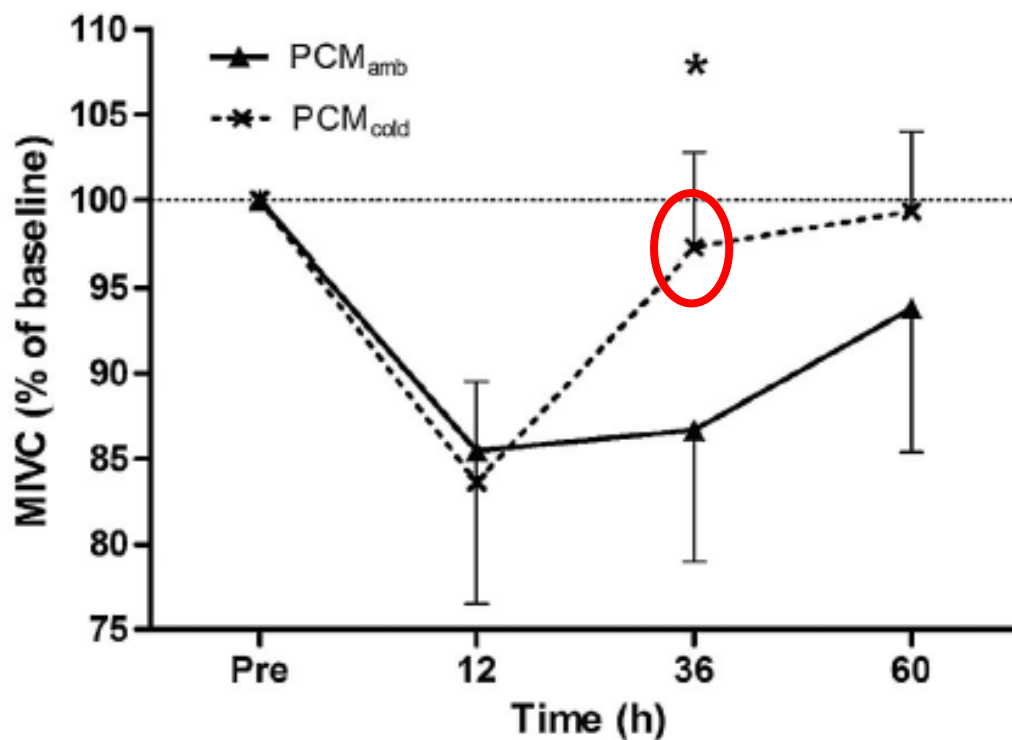
# PCM: recovery of muscle function

*International Journal of Sports Physiology and Performance*, 2018, 13, 584-589  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/ijsp.2017-0334>  
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Human Kinetics  
ORIGINAL INVESTIGATION

## Cryotherapy Reinvented: Application of Phase Change Material for Recovery in Elite Soccer

Tom Clifford, Will Abbott, Susan Y. Kwiecien, Glyn Howatson, and Malachy P. McHugh



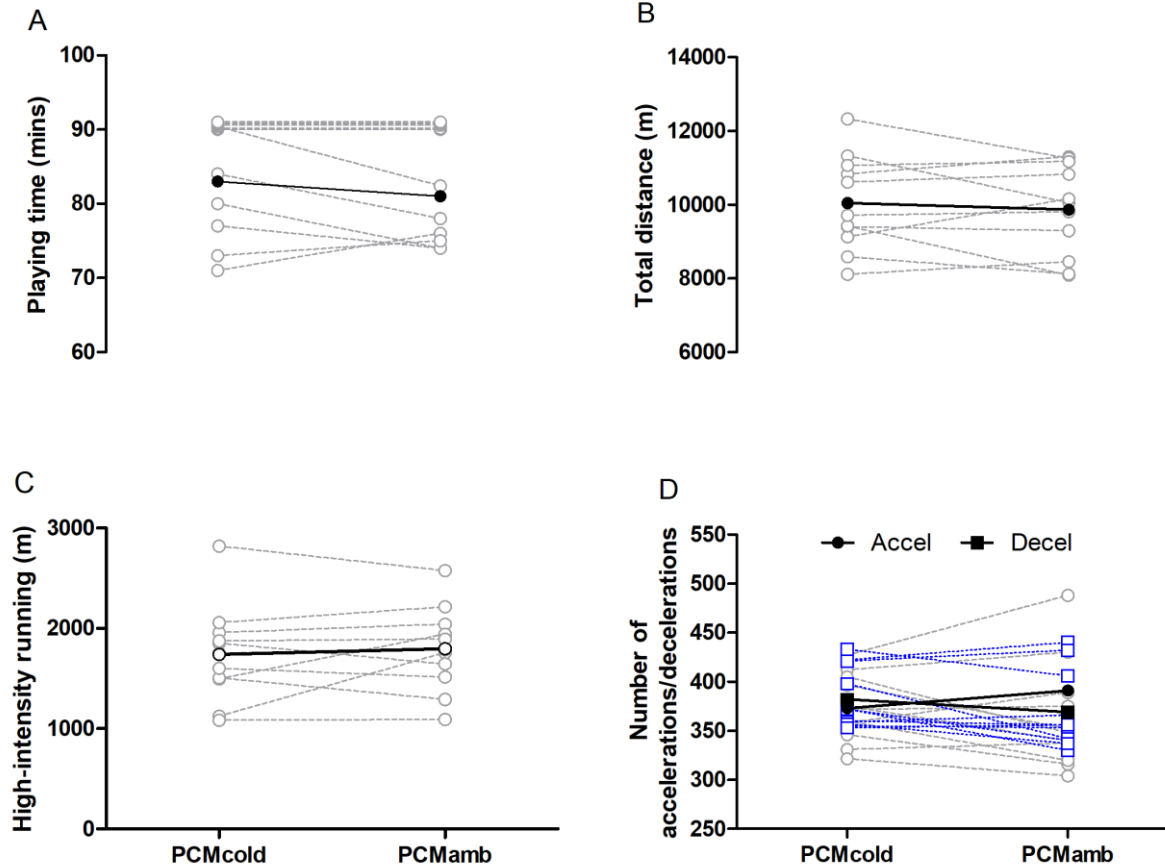


# Methods

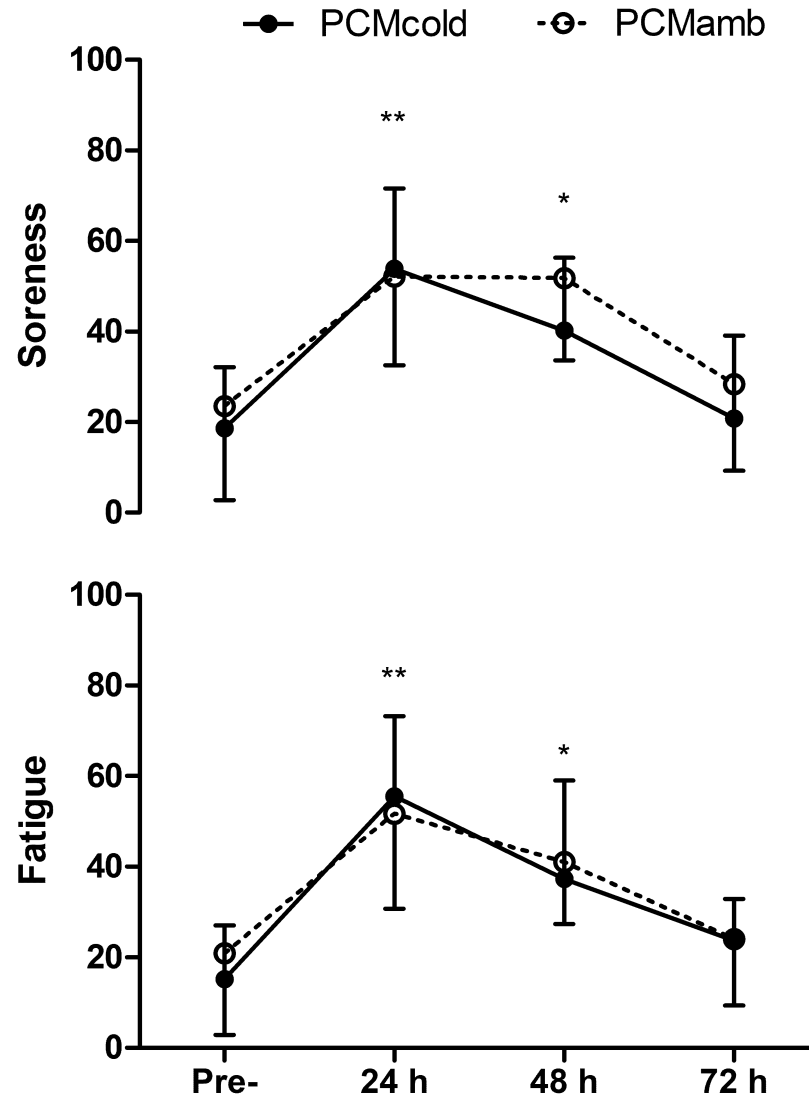
- 11 male semi-professional footballers (level 8 of EFL)
- Players studied over two 90-minute matches. Players wore either frozen PCM ( $\text{PCM}_{\text{cold}}$ ) or unfrozen PCM ( $\text{PCM}_{\text{amb}}$ ) for 3 h post-match.
- Measures taken pre-, 24, 48 & 72 h post-match
- Neuromuscular fatigue measures:
  - Maximal voluntary contraction
  - Voluntary activation (motor nerve and motor cortical stimulation)
  - Potentiated twitch force
- Physical measures:
  - CMJ
  - Drop-jump RSI



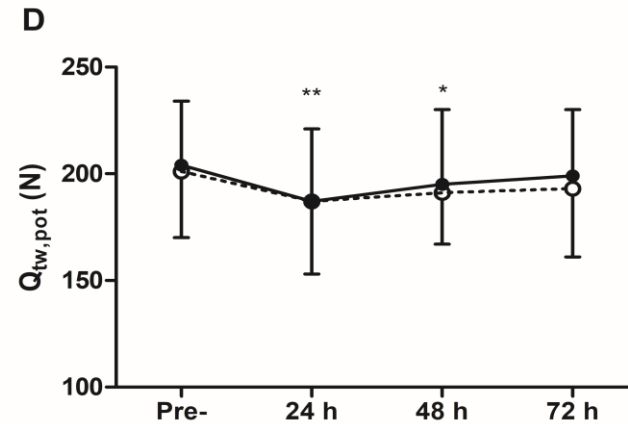
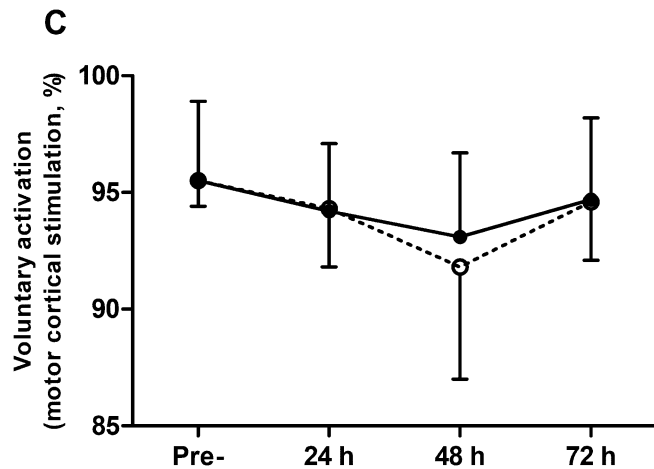
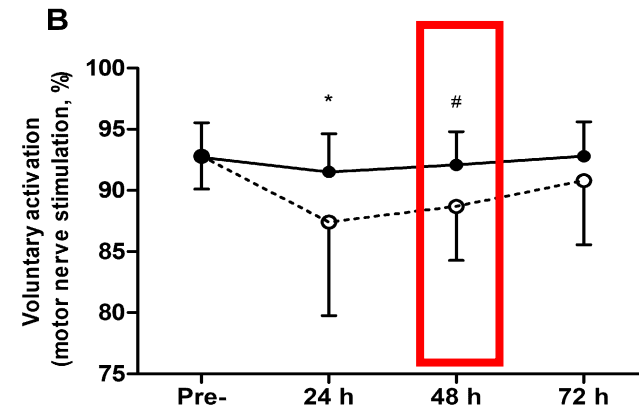
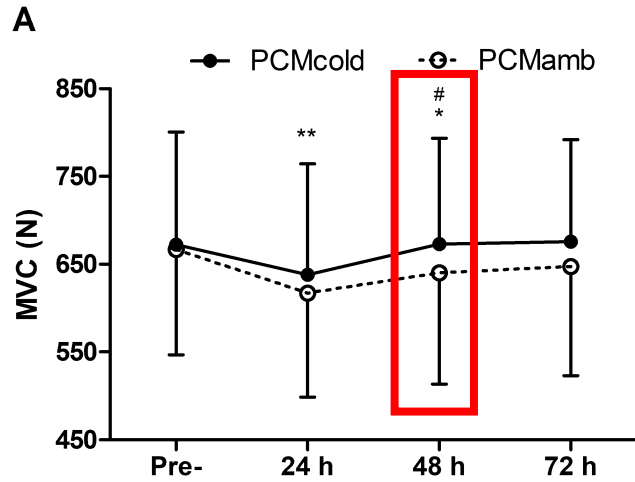
# Results: match-demands



# Results: soreness and fatigue



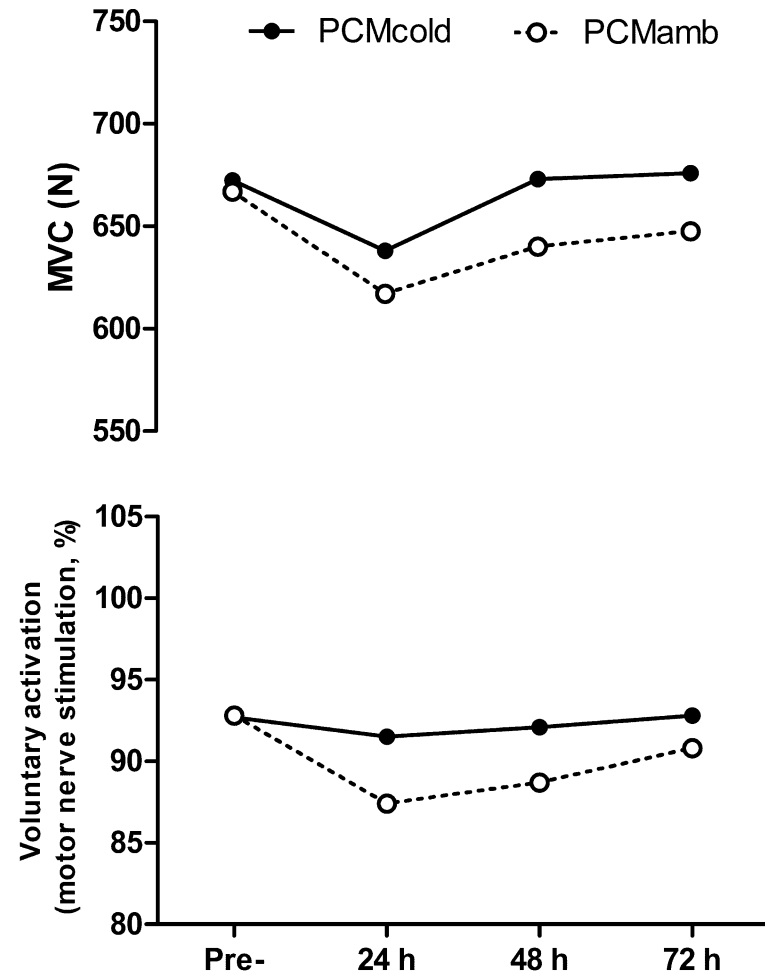
# Results: neuromuscular responses



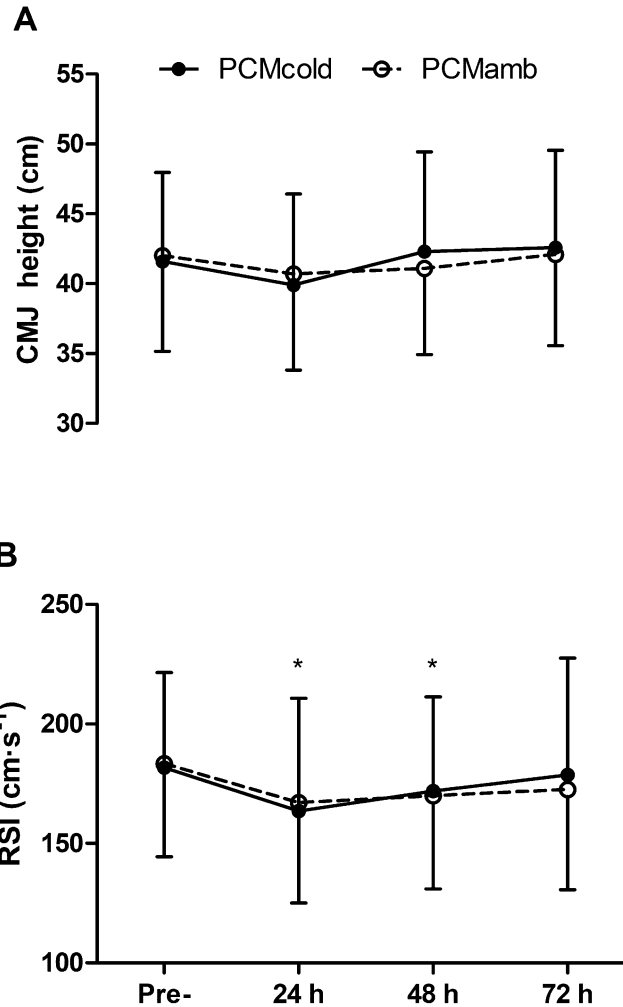
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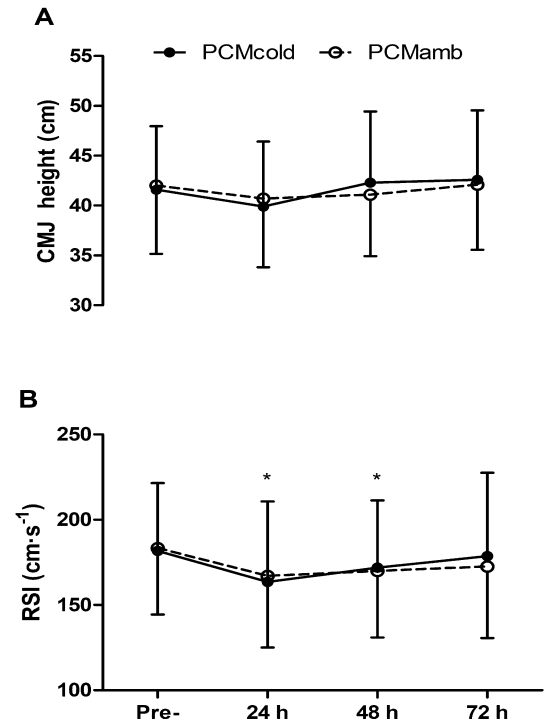
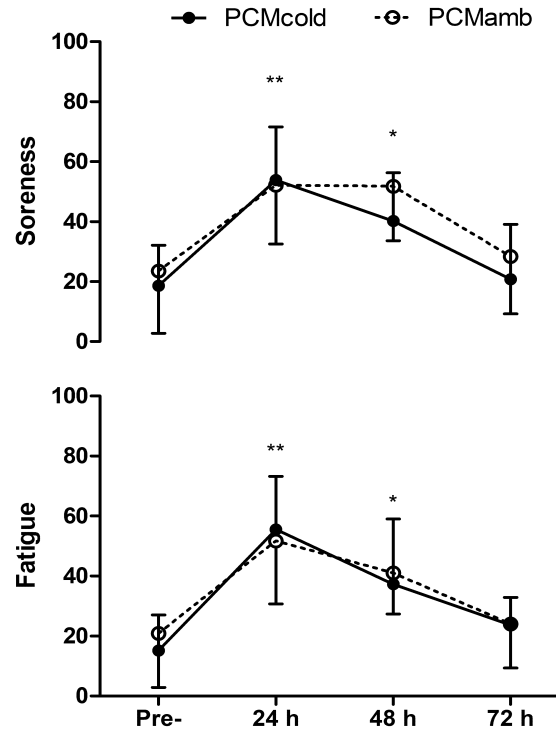
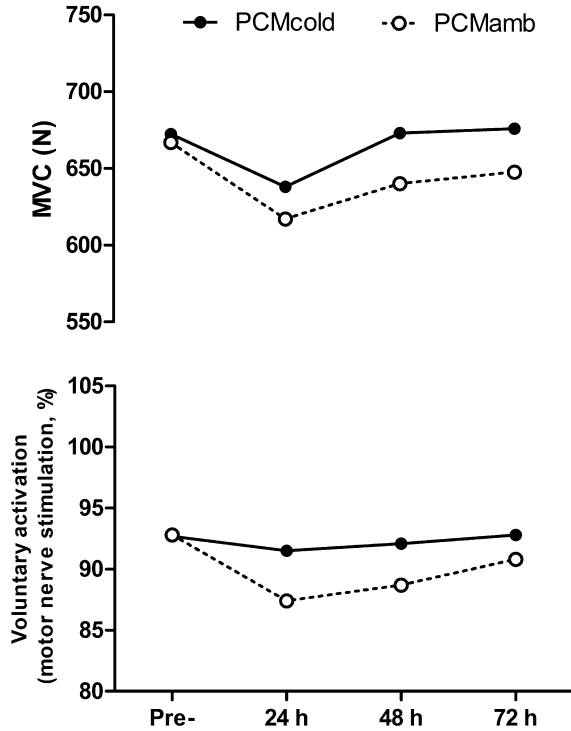
# Results: neuromuscular responses



# Results: physical function

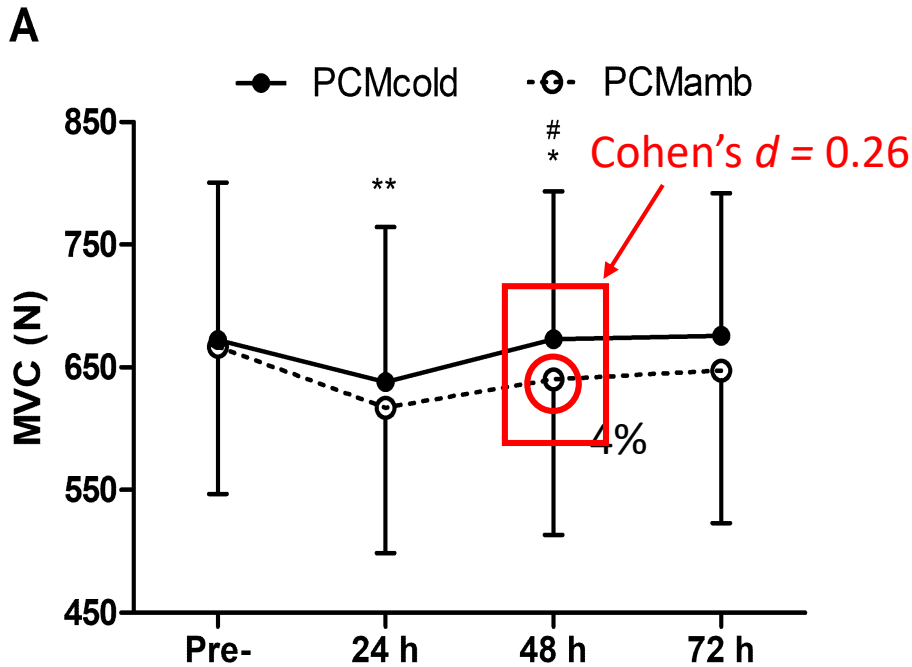


# Conclusions

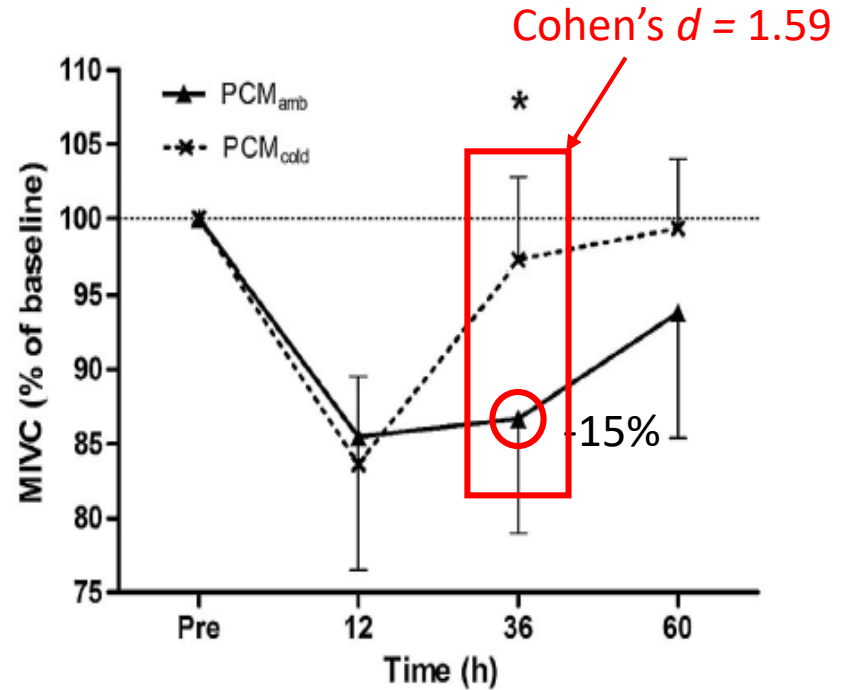


# Conclusions

Present study



Clifford et al. (2018)





# Practical implications: training scheduling



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# Practical implications: training scheduling

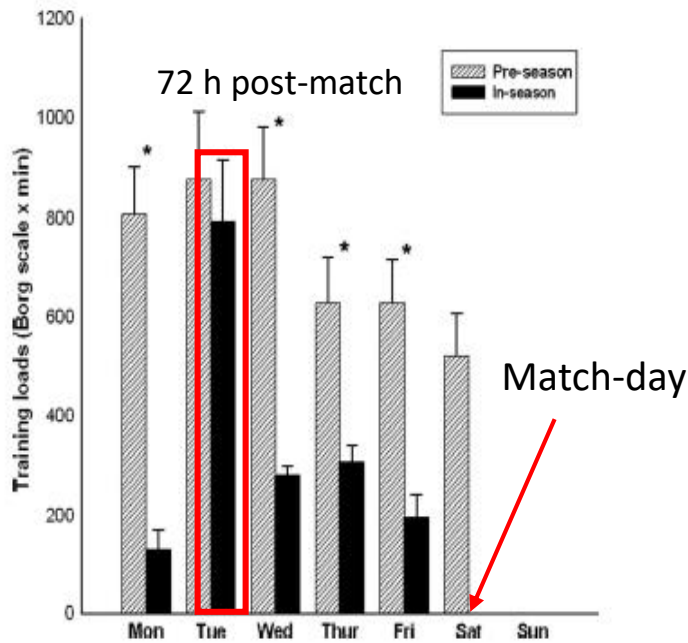
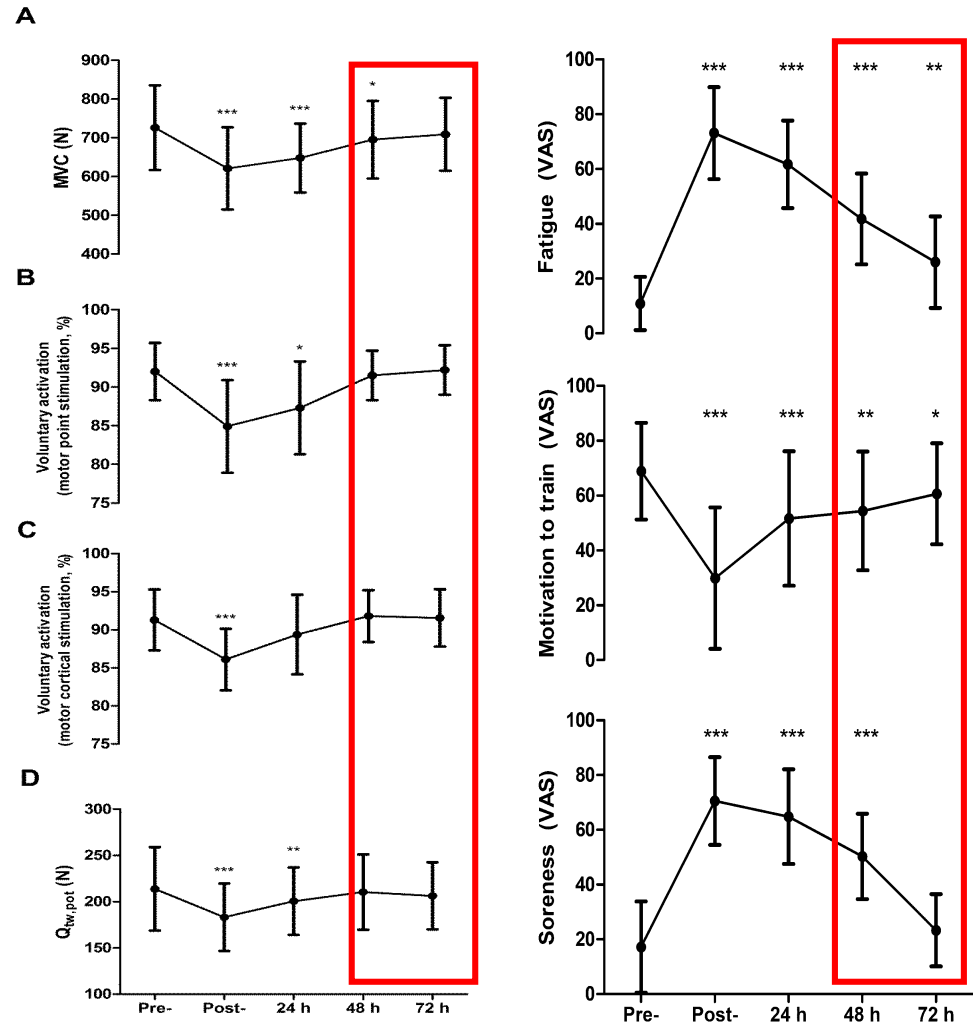


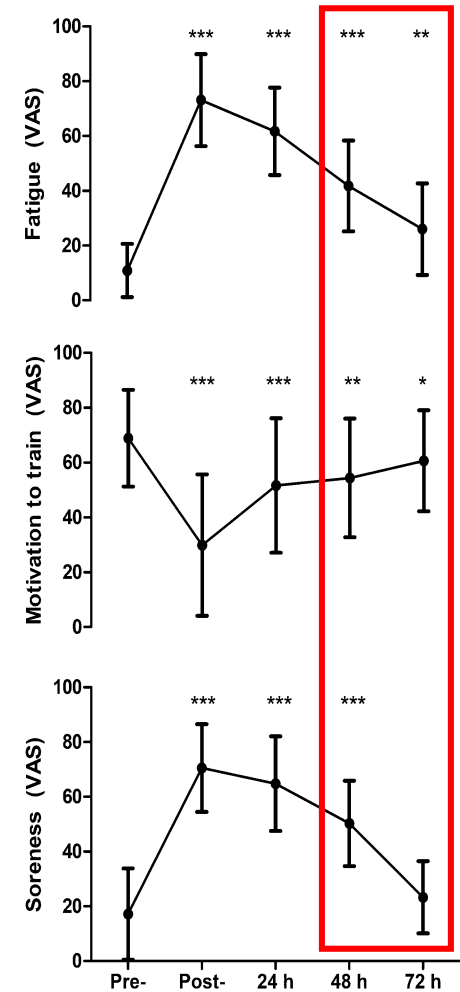
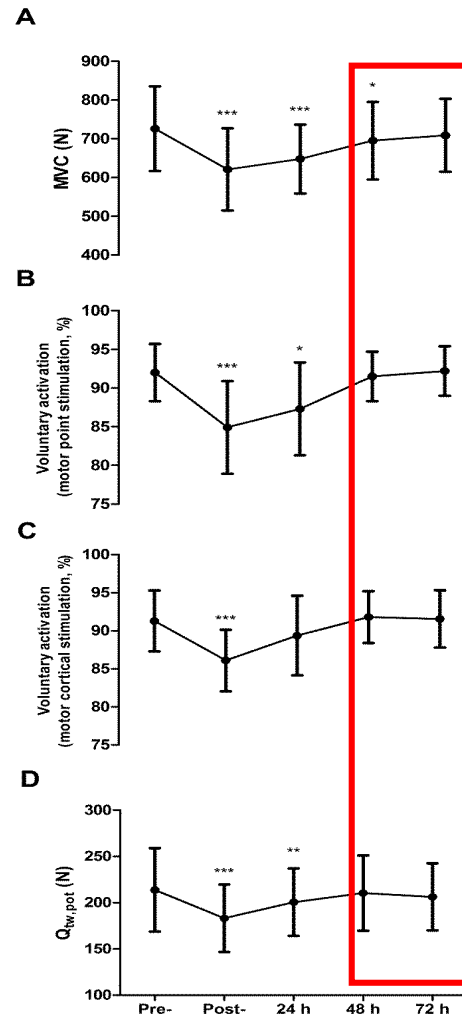
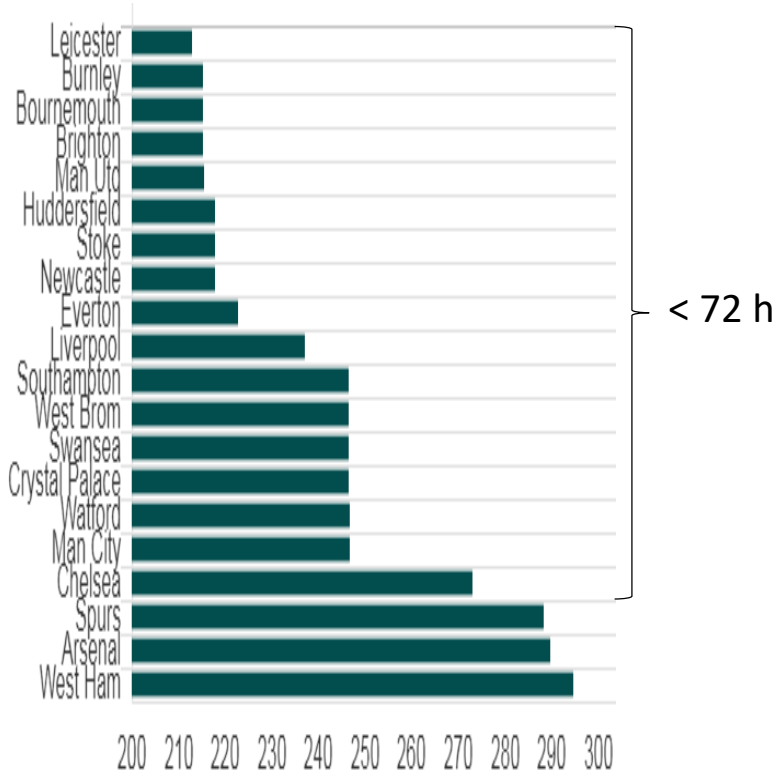
Figure 2. Representation of the weekly training loads calculated using rating of perceived exertion during the pre-season and in-season periods. \* $P < 0.05$ , significant difference between the pre-season and in-season periods.



# Practical implications: squad rotation



# Practical implications: squad rotation



# Practical implications: recovery strategies



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# Merci, désolé je n'ai pas pu présenter en français !

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**Dr. Kevin Thomas**



**Dr. Stuart Goodall**



**Prof. Glyn Howatson**

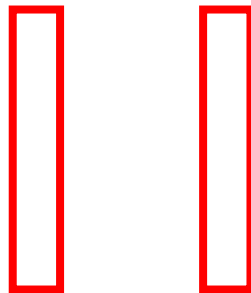
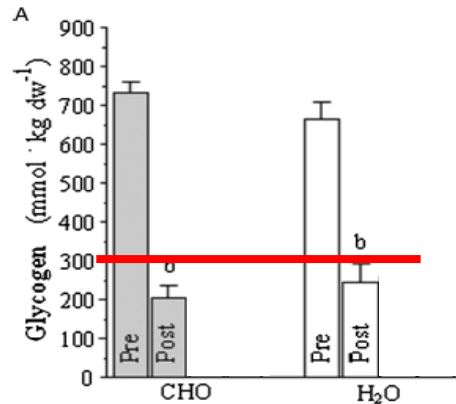


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# Prolonged impairments in VA and peak twitch force – mechanisms: Glycogen depletion?

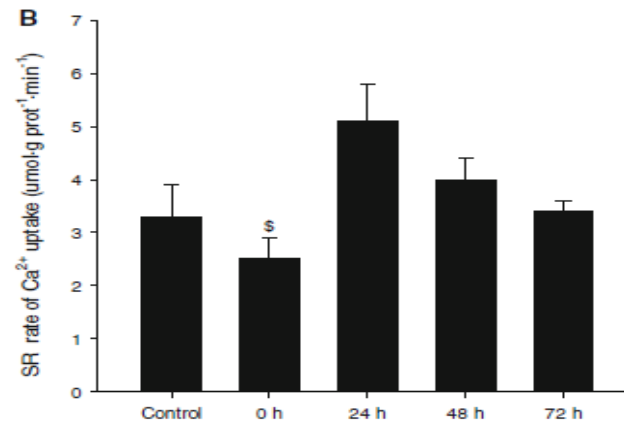
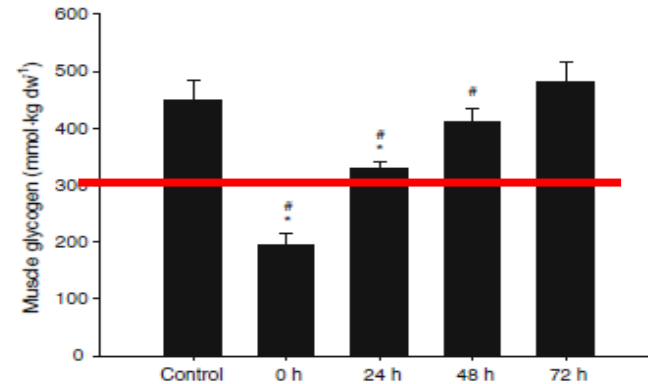
## Muscle Glycogen Content Modifies SR $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ Release Rate in Elite Endurance Athletes

KASPER DEGN GEJL<sup>1</sup>, LARS GRØNDAHL HVID<sup>1</sup>, ULRIK FRANSEN<sup>1</sup>, KURT JENSEN<sup>1,2</sup>, KENT SAHLIN<sup>3</sup>, and NIELS ØRTENBLAD<sup>1,2</sup>



## Maximal voluntary contraction force, SR function and glycogen resynthesis during the first 72 h after a high-level competitive soccer game

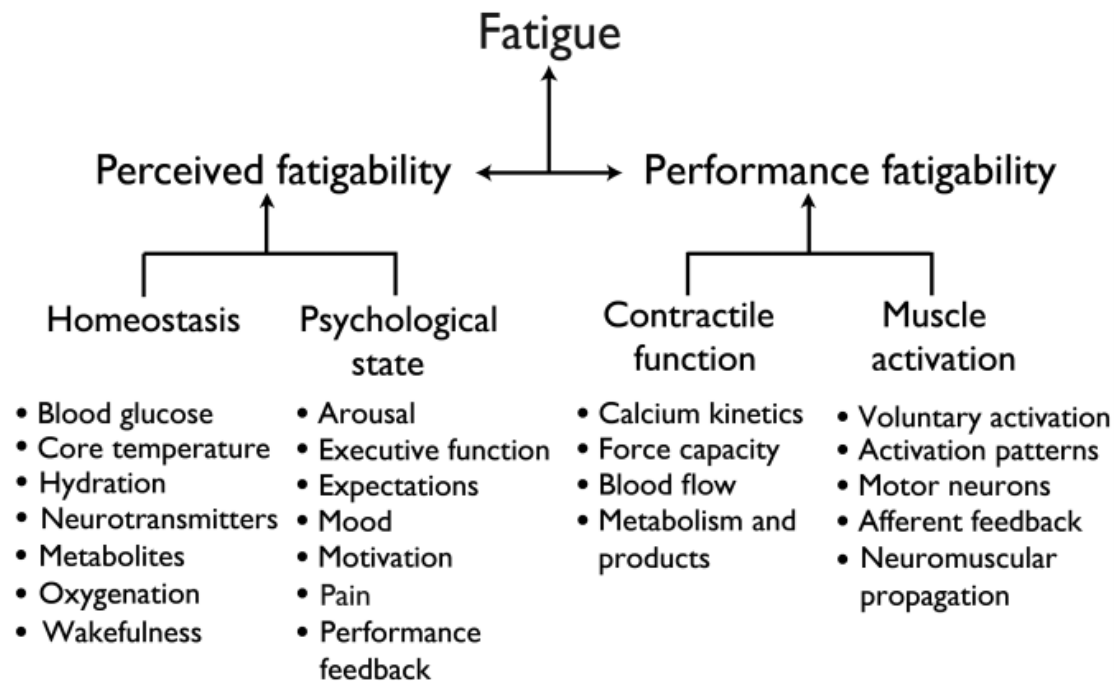
Peter Krustrup · Niels Ørtenblad · Joachim Nielsen · Lars Nybo · Thomas P. Gunnarsson · F. Marcello Iaia · Klavs Madsen · Francis Stephens · Paul Greenhaff · Jens Bangsbo



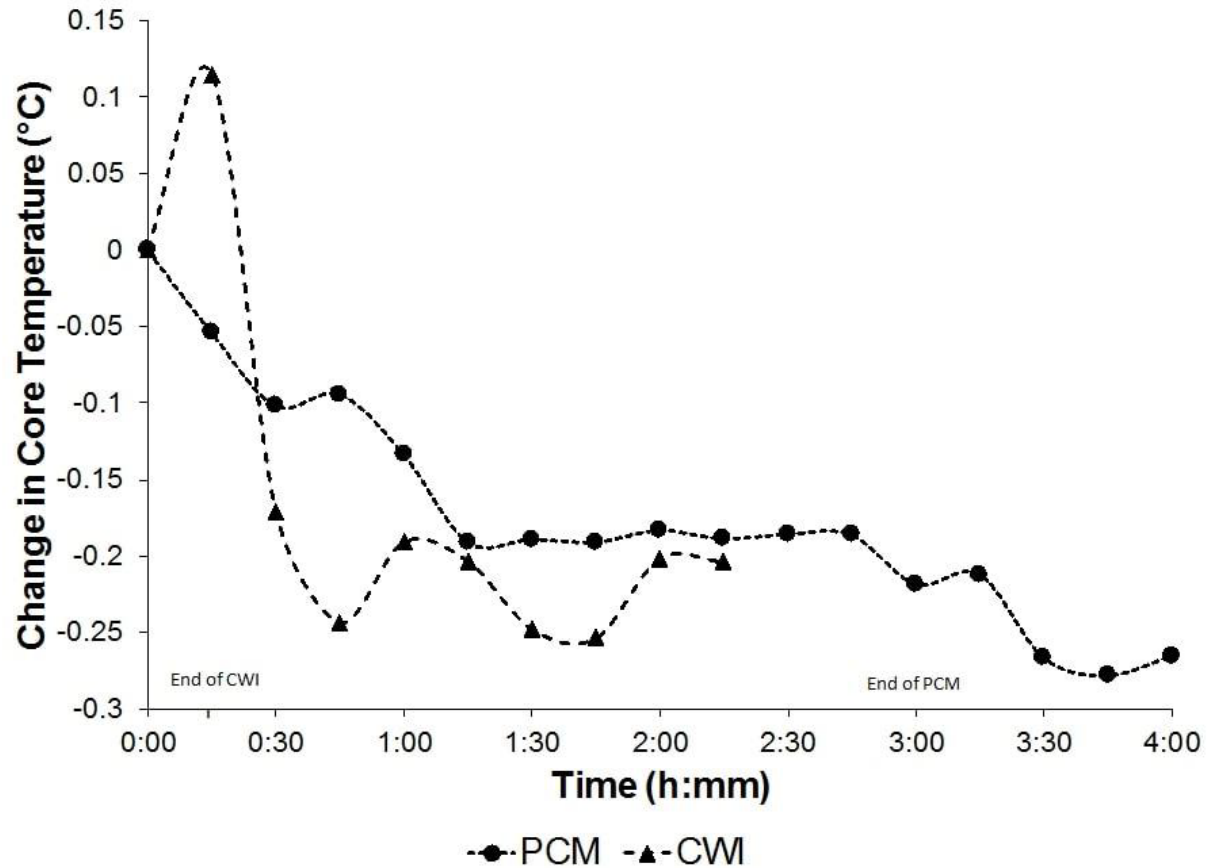
	Present study	Thomas <i>et al.</i> (2017)
<b>MVC</b>		
pre-post	-14 ± 9%	-16 + 8%
pre-24	-11 ± 6%	-10 + 6%
pre-48	-4 ± 6%	-7 + 5%
pre-72	-2 + 9%	-3 + 4%
<b>Q<sub>tw,Pot</sub></b>		
pre-post	-14 ± 6%	-14 ± 10%
pre-24	-6 ± 6%	-13 ± 5%
pre-48	-1 ± 4%	-9 ± 6%
pre-72	-3 ± 7%	-5 ± 6%
<b>VA</b>		
pre-post	-8 ± 6%	-9 ± 4%
pre-24	-5 ± 5%	-4 ± 2%
pre-48	0 ± 4%	-2 ± 3%
pre-72	0 ± 3%	-2 ± 4%
<b>CVA</b>		
pre-post	-6 ± 4%	-11 ± 6%
pre-24	-2 ± 5%	-3 ± 3%
pre-48	-1 ± 5%	0 ± 4%
pre-72	0 ± 5%	0 ± 3%







# PCM: prolonged decrease in muscle temperature



# Neuromuscular impairment throughout match-play

