Effect of Playing Basketball in Young Basketball Players

Carlo Castagna¹,², Vincenzo Manzi², Maurizio Marini³, Giuseppe Annino², Elvira Padua² and Stefano D’Ottavio²

¹Scuola Regionale dello Sport delle Marche, Italian Olympic Committee (CONI), Ancona, Italy; ²School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Rome Tor Vergata, Rome, Italy; ³Stamura Basket, Ancona, Italy.

Introduction

Competitive basketball is considered as an intermittent high-intensity physical activity that requires a well-developed aerobic and anaerobic fitness (McInnes, Carlson et al. 1995). Whilst several studies have examined the physiological demands of adult basketball competition, to date, there has been no studies that have examined the physiological demands of match-play in young basketball players. Therefore the aim of this study was to assess the physiological demands of youth basketball match-play, in order to obtain information useful for training and competition.

Methods

Twenty basketball-players (body mass 72.4±11.4 kg, height 181.7±6.9 cm, and age 16.8±2 y, VO₂max 60.4±5.1 mL·kg⁻¹·min⁻¹, VT 40.2±4.7 mL·kg⁻¹·min⁻¹) were observed during match-play. Each match consisting of two 10 min periods of effective play (30 min total play) interspersed with a 2 min recovery interval without substitutions. Heart rate (Polar Team System, Polar Electro Oy, Kempele, Finland) and earlobe blood-lactate concentration (Lactate Pro, Arkray, Tokyo, Japan) were monitored throughout the games. Before and after competition vertical jump (CMJ, Muscle Lab, Bosco System, Rieti, Italy), 15m shuttle running sprint (15mSR, Microgate Polifemo, Bolzano, Italy) and line-drill (LD) performance were assessed in random order in each player (Hoffman, Nusse et al. 2003). Games were performed in an air-conditioned gymnasium in order to keep environmental condition constant.

Discussion/Conclusion

Although the present observations were made using an experimental-match, the intensity attained by players during competition is in line with what has been reported for professional basketball players during highly competitive games (McInnes, Carlson et al. 1995). The intensity measures taken during this study shows that the research design devised for this investigation was ecologically valid. The results of this study also showed that youth basketball imposes physiological stresses similar to those reported for adult basketball. Only LD showed significant post-game decrements. These LD performance decrements suggest that the ability to repeat sprint may be a limiting factor in basketball performance. On the basis of these results, we suggest that changes in repeated sprint performance during match play be empirically tested using specific time-motion analyses.

References