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Special Issue Reprint

Sport-Specific Testing and Training Methods in Youth

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In youth sports, it is believed that starting early and specializing in one sport is the best way to become a champion. However, this idea is being questioned, as young athletes are not simply small adults—they are growing and maturing, and this affects how they respond to training, their risk of injury, and their overall development. This reprint collects the scientific contributions from the first edition of our Special Issue, "Sport-Specific Testing and Training Methods in Youth". We aimed to provide a platform to studies that examine young athletes in a different way, with the goal of moving away from generic training programs and focusing on methods that are specific both to the sport and to the age of the athletes. The fourteen articles included here cover two main areas: training and testing. The studies in the training area show how specific programs, such as reaction training for fencers or small-sided games for basketball players, can improve performance, provided attention is also given to recovery. The testing area proposes new ways to evaluate young athletes, with methods that are practical and can be used outside the laboratory, thus making assessment more accessible for coaches. Overall, this reprint aims to provide coaches, athletes, and researchers with evidence-based information derived from rigorous scientific investigations. By disseminating these findings, we intend to bridge the gap between research and practice, thereby offering valuable insights that can inform training strategies and testing protocols for those working with youth populations.



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