



Physiology

“Soccer is characterized as a high intensity, intermittent non-continuous exercise. Players cover approximately 10 km of ground per game”

It is very important to keep your body in the best possible shape for soccer. The physiology of soccer encompasses the ability to understand your body's limits, the reason why we train and why we push ourselves even further.

General Health

What is fitness?

Being fit is not only defined by what activity you do, how long you do it, or at what level of intensity. Physical fitness can be described as the “capability of the body in distributing inhaled oxygen to muscle tissue during increased physical activity”.

In other words; physical fitness is the ability to meet the various demands of soccer without reducing the player to fatigue.

Physical Fitness

Why should we keep fit?

One of the misconceptions of soccer is that; by just playing the sport in games will get you into the right physical shape to compete at a high level. If an average level of performance is your goal, then merely playing soccer will keep you at that level. However, if you want to reach your utmost potential you must participate in conditioning programs.

What are the components of fitness?

Basic physical fitness can be broken down into four different components; strength, speed, stamina and flexibility. However, physical fitness can be broken down into a further nine components; strength, agility, power, balance, flexibility, local muscular endurance {a single muscles ability to work consistently}, cardiovascular endurance {the hearts ability to deliver blood to the muscles}, strength endurance and co-ordination.

These components of fitness can all help with the game of soccer, further to this, they can all be helped with the right physical training, and determination.



Training

What do we train?

When our aim in training is not only to become a more accomplished soccer player, but to have a greater level of conditioning, there are a number of physical changes that need to happen. These changes can be as simple as being able to run for a more sustained period of time, or be capable of a greater throw in, or a bigger goal-kick. All of these changes will take physical adaptations, which will occur after a sustained period of training.

There are various muscle groups and body systems that we train, and we can see physical changes. There are also changes that you can't see, but still have a big effect. For instance, after around six weeks of continuous endurance training, 2 or 3 times a week, there will be a physical change in the heart. It will start to get bigger. This size change will help the body deliver oxygen to the muscles quicker. As the heart is bigger, it takes less energy to pump the same amount of blood as it did when it was smaller.

This is not the only physical adaptation from training. Your resting heart rate, and blood pressure get lower. These changes happen as a direct result of the increase in heart size. A further adaptation that occurs is a more efficient oxygen uptake, due to greater lung capacity. This means that there is more oxygen coming into the body to help the muscles recover during and after activity. After such continuous training, the physiological mechanisms such as the energy systems start to function more efficiently. The chance of illness occurring drops, due to the strengthening of the immune system.

Competition

Why is it important?

The point of using conditioning as part of the training principles with soccer is to continuously improve upon the player's physical attributes. The importance of becoming physically fitter than another team, or player, cannot be underestimated. Soccer is a very fast-paced sport, and as such it places a bigger emphasis on the physical attributes demonstrated by the players. By reaching a higher level of fitness, there is a greater chance you'll reach your full potential, as well as being able to avoid injury.

During the highest competition, such as the Super Y finals, or Dallas Cup, there is a large amount of games to be played over a small number of days. Therefore the fitness of the players is going to be tested on many levels. The fitter the players are, the better their recovery is going to be, and the higher the level they will play in the following games. Furthermore to this, the fitter the players are the less chance there is of them getting injured.

Does it make a difference?



The whole purpose is to increase endurance and strength, develop speed, increase flexibility, improve coordination, and attempting to achieve a harmoniously developed body. Our intention is to create a strong base for the players, and develop a more improved athletic performance. Players with a greater athletic foundation will have a superior body form, and thus increasing self-esteem, and reflecting a stronger personality.

The aim of correct physical preparation in training is to enable the player to use their technical, tactical, and mental capacities to the full throughout their time at TSF. Not only through the season, but through pre-season, and winter training also.

If younger players go on to play in high school, college, or professional, it is becoming increasingly more important to coaches and players alike to have a strong physical foundation, to go along with refined technical abilities. At TSF, it is our goal to start this foundation from the ages of 14 and up, and gradually build into their normal growth, player development and mental maturity.

When working with the younger soccer players and physical conditioning, it is important to include the soccer ball as much as possible, since its an vital tool of the soccer players trade. Nevertheless, as the soccer player grows up, it is important to get a balance between integrated physical conditioning and seperate physical conditioning. This can depend upon the coaches goals of the sesssion, and what the team might have on the upcoming weekend.