

POLO

TIMES

ARGENTINE TRIPLE CROWN UNDERWAY

La Natividad Secure Tortugas Open

CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

There's Something for Everyone!

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

A Groom's Life in the 1950s & 1960s

PLUS: BRITISH ARMY POLO TOUR & THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTEIN



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What's inside... November 2022



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Cover photograph: 82nd Tortugas Country Club Stella Artois Open Tournament Top Goal Scorer La Natividad's Camilo 'Jeta' Castagnola eyes up the ball. By Matias Callejo

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Liquid Energy

Just before could be too late!



The combination of heat stress, dehydration, and exercise imposes perhaps the most severe physiological challenge for the human body short after serious bleeding. Many polo games are played in a super-hot environment. The polo player with their shirt and protective equipment on is getting sweaty quite fast in this physically demanding sport. The primary mechanism for maintaining normal body temperature during physical exercise in the heat is the evaporation of sweat. With profuse sweating, water loss far exceeds electrolyte loss. Rigorous exercise in the heat places the athlete at risk of thermoregulatory dysfunction from dehydration. The three primary syndromes of heat illness are heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Personalised hydration strategies play a key role in optimizing the performance and safety of athletes during sporting activities.

Training & Preparation Phase

Therefore, it is questionable, particularly for top competitors, whether drinking can be truly ad libitum (defined as “whenever and in whatever volumes chosen by the athlete”). While there are variable relationships between fluid intake, fluid balance across tournaments, and finishing times, in many situations it appears that top players take calculated risks in emphasizing the costs of drinking against the benefits. The past decade has seen controversy over guidelines for fluid intake during sport. The best advice to enable adequate replacement of sweat losses has been debated, as have the benefits/impairment to performance associated with proactive or passive hydration strategies. What is irrefutable is that the fluid needs of most athletes are determined by their reliance on the evaporation of sweat to dissipate the heat produced during exercise or absorbed from a hot environment.

Staying hydrated comes with various benefits for bodily functions, it helps regulate our body temperature, keeps joints in minimal friction, delivers nutrients to cells,

Hydration is critical in all sports

Photograph by Kathrin Gralla

enables proper organ functions, stable sleeping cycles, maintains brain function, better performance prevents constipation, and many more direct and indirect benefits.

Recommendation

All strategies should be well practiced in training and fine-tuned for the specific event.

Special issues for hot weather events

Consider pre-cooling with ice slurry in addition to external cooling strategies if significant thermal challenge is anticipated. Consider pre-tournament hyperhydration if a large fluid deficit is anticipated. Adjust fluid intake during an event where possible in view of increased sweat losses. Be aware of sweat rates for an array of environmental conditions so that rehydration plans can be individualized and rehearsed prior to the event.

Special issues for hot weather events for non-elite or slower competitors

Do not overdrink by consuming fluid in excess of sweat losses. A good tip is to avoid drinking beyond thirst cessation if not aware of individual fluid needs.

Additional considerations

Although the role of within-race CHO (Carbon, Hydrogen, Oxygen) intake as additional substrate for the muscle and brain has been understood for nearly a century, there is now evidence that CHO consumed during exercise can provide an additional performance benefit via central (brain/nervous system) effects. More specifically, CHO intake can stimulate areas of the brain that control pacing and reward systems via communication with receptors in the mouth and gut.

Domestic and international travel represents a regular challenge to high-performance athletes, particularly when associated with the pressure of competition or the need to support specialized training (e.g., altitude or heat adaptation). Jetlag is a challenge for trans meridian travellers, while fatigue and alterations to gastrointestinal comfort are associated with many types of long-haul travel. Planning food and fluid intake that are appropriate to the travel itinerary may help to reduce problems. Resynchronization of the body clock is achieved principally through manipulation of zeitgebers such as light exposure and the typical timing of meals. More investigation of the effects of melatonin, caffeine, and the timing/composition of meals will allow clearer guidelines for their contribution to be prepared.

For more information on Polodoc contact Andreas Krüger at drmedkrueger@gmail.com or www.polodoc.ch



Steve Hiestand

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We encounter the topic of fluid management mainly in industry. There it is often associated with lubricants that circulate in the machines. I like to bring examples from mechanics or as Prof. Luhmann defines it in his constructivist approaches, the allopoietic system. In these systems it is relatively easy to keep the control and therefore also to promote the positive output. On the other hand, we consider the autopoietic systems, in our case living systems, the human beings. There we struggle daily to understand what is happening in this unique black box: one could also say in this unique machine! Both systems have something in common, if they are not adjusted correctly or if they are not monitored then it will be difficult to generate the best possible output. The machine simply breaks down or switches off; our body on the other hand has coping strategies that allow many things, we see this phenomenon daily in our society. In competitive sports we cannot and do not want to let it come down to this.

When we talk about fluid management, we also talk about body core temperature. That's why we focus on the CORE device from GreenTec, which also helps me personally to map my core body temperature and thus better control my fluid management. What influences the core body temperature is the circadian rhythm, in women it is influenced by menstruation, illness or physical activity. Now, many studies have shown that it is crucial how long the core body temperature can be kept at 36° degrees, the longer being, the better the performance output.

That is, if the core body temperature exceeds the critical mark of 41° during exercise, we are talking about 2 – 4 percent water loss, depending on the individual. This has direct consequences with the strength and endurance performance and with prolonged dehydration, then follow symptoms like concentration and reaction weakness which can result to fatal accidents in high risk sports such as polo. To be perfectly prepared to achieve the highest performance, you need to know your sweat rate and should calculate it as follows:

1. record the body weight before training naked = e.g. 49.5kg
2. record the training time = 105min
3. record the body weight after training naked = 47.9kg
4. record the difference of body weight = water loss = 1.6kg ~1.6L
5. sweat loss in l/h = 1.6L / 1.75h = 0.91l/h

Polo playing time:

~2.5h incl. warm-up and cool-down (outside temperature ~15°degrees).
 Calculated fluid loss during exercise 0.91l/h x 2.5h = 2.3l (=4.65% of body weight)
 Drink recommendation 80% of fluid loss.
 = 0.8 x 2.3l = 1.84l from warm-up to cool-down. Results in approx. 0.7l/h
 = 2 - 3 % dehydration tolerable (approx. 1.3kg)
 = Recommended fluid intake during warm-up/game/cool-down:
 2.3kg -1.3kg = 1kg resp. 1liter / 2.5h activity time = approx. 0.4L per hour

Source: https://www.ernaehrungs-umschau.de/fileadmin/Ernaehrungs-Umschau/pdfs/pdf_2019/03_19/EU03_2019_M152-M159.pdf
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Remember that the above example was evaluated and determined during a running activity. And the ambient temperature was 15° degrees. For higher temperatures up to 30° degrees and more, such as in the regular polo season, this could much more. I wish you continued good and successful games and much success in your competitions.

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