

2015

Tracking 6 Weeks of training/surfing sessions of adolescent competitive surfers: Just what are these young surfers up to?

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This poster was originally published as:

Farley, O. R. L., Secomb, J. L., Parsonage, J., Lundgren, L., Abbiss, C., & Sheppard, J. M. (2015). *Tracking 6 Weeks of training/surfing sessions of adolescent competitive surfers: Just what are these young surfers up to?* Poster presented at the Australian Strength and Conditioning Association Conference, Gold Coast, QLD, Australia.

Recommended Citation

Farley, Oliver; Secomb, Josh; Parsonage, Joanna R.; Lundgren, Lina; Abbiss, Chris; and Sheppard, Jeremy, "Tracking 6 Weeks of training/surfing sessions of adolescent competitive surfers: Just what are these young surfers up to?" (2015). *ECU Posters*.
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuposters/11>

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Tracking 6 Weeks of Training/Surfing Sessions of Adolescent Competitive Surfers: Just what are these young surfers up to?

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Purpose

The assessment of weekly and even monthly surf practice/training hours is vital for understanding the loads these up and coming surfers endure. Such information will help understand what kind of training these athletes are undertaking, how long they are surfing, what they consider training, and also areas that should be improved upon, in terms of specific training. The purpose of this study was to establish surfers' training hours in terms of strength, balance and conditioning hours, as well as surfing hours, coached hours and competition hours. The monitoring of the athletes will provide insights into the weekly surf hours compared to land-based training these athletes do.

Methods

Experimental Approach

The study was a descriptive analysis, whereby eight adolescent surfers were required to report their surfing hours and physical training hours over a six week period. After each training session over a six week period, the participants were asked to report their surfing and training hours for the week by filling in a paper and pen questionnaire twice a week. Specifically, the participants were asked to provide the amount of hours spent free surfing, being coached, competing, strength training, conditioning and balance work. Athletes were questioned about what they did to make sure sections were filled in correctly in terms of the physical activity (i.e. running, skateboarding = conditioning, periodized strength training = strength, gymnastics = balance).

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables and reported as mean \pm SD. A one-way ANOVA was performed between the surfing variables; free surfing vs coach, coached vs competition, free surfing vs competition, and between the training variables; strength vs conditioning, conditioning vs balance, balance vs strength on the average weekly hours. Data was statistically analysed using statistical analysis package (SPSS, Version 22.0; Chicago, IL), with statistical significance defined as $p \leq 0.05$.

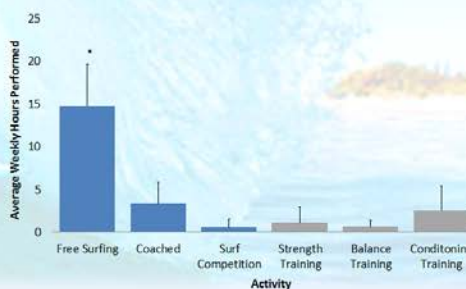
Results

A significant difference was identified between weekly free Surfing hours and competition hours ($p=0.037$), no other significant differences were reported between the surfing variables (Free surfing vs Coached $p=0.751$; Coached vs Competition $p=.523$), or between the training variables (Strength vs Conditioning $p=.553$; Conditioning vs Balance $p=.269$; Balance vs Strength $p=.722$).

Table 1: The average (\pm SD) hours spent surfing and training per week, over 6 weeks for 8 adolescent surfers

Measure	Week 1 hours	Week 2 hours	Week 3 hours	Week 4 hours	Week 5 hours	Week 6 hours	Average hours
Surfing							
Free Surfing	16.63 \pm 7.19	13.00 \pm 6.02	15.38 \pm 4.78	15.50 \pm 3.07	12.75 \pm 3.37	15.50 \pm 4.11	14.79 \pm 4.86
Coached	3.81 \pm 3.35	2.75 \pm 2.60	3.00 \pm 2.39	3.44 \pm 2.19	3.44 \pm 2.19	3.50 \pm 2.33	3.32 \pm 2.51
Competition	0.13 \pm 0.35	2.33 \pm 3.28	0.25 \pm 0.53	0.25 \pm 0.71	0.18 \pm 0.36	0.24 \pm 0.37	0.56 \pm 0.93
Total surfing hours	20.56 \pm 10.89	18.08 \pm 11.91	18.63 \pm 7.70	19.19 \pm 6.61	16.36 \pm 5.93	19.24 \pm 6.81	18.68 \pm 8.31
Training							
Strength	0.80 \pm 1.34	1.30 \pm 2.41	1.18 \pm 2.07	1.05 \pm 1.75	0.93 \pm 1.43	1.30 \pm 2.16	1.09 \pm 1.83
Balance	1.05 \pm 0.87	0.36 \pm 0.44	0.61 \pm 0.70	0.61 \pm 0.70	0.74 \pm 0.61	0.74 \pm 0.66	0.69 \pm 0.67
Conditioning	2.43 \pm 4.04	3.03 \pm 3.52	2.65 \pm 2.80	2.28 \pm 2.16	2.28 \pm 2.16	2.44 \pm 2.06	2.58 \pm 2.84
Total training hours	4.28 \pm 5.71	4.69 \pm 6.37	4.44 \pm 5.57	3.94 \pm 4.60	3.94 \pm 4.60	4.48 \pm 4.88	4.35 \pm 5.34

Figure 1: The average (\pm SD) weekly hour's adolescent surfers perform free surfing, being coached, competing in surfing competitions, and performing land-based strength, balance and conditioning training



Conclusions

- The typical attitude for surfing athletes in terms of training is to simply surf, thus obtaining the most specific fitness responses, which is clearly demonstrated from the results. Some athletes questioned did not do any form of strength work, nor have a reason to why they should be implementing such an aspect into their weekly training routine. Often skateboarding was mentioned by the males as an activity they would partake in when surf was inadequate, or to have fun with friends. This would provide motor-skill acquisition, balance and conditioning work which would also develop the quadriceps endurance, considering some were skating for an hour at a time.
- From the study it appears that adolescent surfers are implementing on average, 14 hours extra surfing than any form of land-based training, with approximately only 1 hour per week doing any form of strength work. Therefore, such athletes should be looking to increase training hours per week, especially strength work which would aid these athletes in terms of paddle ability through upper-body training [1, 2], turning manoeuvres and landings, through lower-body strength work [3]. The added training may decrease chances of these athletes sustaining an injury through overuse from the amount of surfing performed each week, not to mention poor biomechanical landings/body movements, which if the athletes are not strong enough would likely increase the chances of sustaining an injury [4].

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