

# SOME NUTRITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISE PERFORMANCE IN ELDERLY PEOPLE

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## ABSTRACT

In any attempt to make nutritional recommendations to senior athletes, four major points have to take into account: i) the age-related nutritional modifications; ii) the exercise-related nutritional needs; iii) the presence of any chronic illnesses or diseases and iv) the goal of the exercise i.e. fitness, recreation or competition. This report, focussed on the senior athletes vitamins, minerals and fluids requirements, give some nutritional suggestions synthesized on the basis of these four points. It appears that the nutrients for which food consumption is often inadequate and has the largest impact on the exercising elderly population include vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, calcium, vitamin D as well as fluids. When adequate dietary intake cannot be obtained, supplementation with a multivitamin complex is recommended, also strongly suggested is a correct hydration schedule to prevent, or at least to limit ipohydration during the exercise.

## INTRODUCTION

The ACSM (American College of Sport Medicine) recommends that all the adults must have 3-5 days per week a regular exercise of 20-60 minutes by moderate intensity physical activities (Chatard et al., 1998). Such habit promotes the development and the maintenance of a good health of cardiovascular apparatus and body composition together with an appropriate muscular strength, duration and flexibility. The same agency recommends that the elderly people have to cautiously begin any program of physical exercise and that they gradually draw near to the physical exercise, although it is clear that the training to the exercise is not limited from the age.

In Italy in 2005 the over 65 years old people overcome 11 millions (about 20% of the population) and the ISTAT (Italian National Statistic Institute) estimate that in 2015 they will be more than 13 million (www.istat.it). In the United States the people with more than 65 years of age are now the 12,3% of the population and will be the 20% in 2030. Although the percentage of

adults that regularly participate to vigorous physical activity (jogging, aerobics and team sports to high-intensities) diminish when the age increases, the percentage of adults that participate in some form of physical activity (exercise to the 50% of maximum cardiovascular ability for at least 20 minutes for session and three times the week) is higher in the over 65 that for the young adults and, furthermore, is increasing the number of elderly people that include the performance as a goal of physical exercise (Trappe, 2001; Bames and Schoenbom, 2003).

It is well known that the nutrition influences the physical performance and therefore the selection and the intake time-table of food and drinks as well as the eventual use of integrators have to be considered fundamental factors to optimize the exercise performance and for the maintenance of the physical form (ACSM et al., 2000). It is known that the human nutrition is age-dependent (Chernoff, 2001; Bates et al., 2002), so that the senior athletes that use the food as a mean to reach the physical performance have to be informed that the alimentary



necessities are dependent from both their type of exercise and age.

The dietary suggestions, for instance those of the Italian Society of Human Nutrition (SINU), are generally based on of the maintenance of the health and on the decrease of the risk of degenerative illnesses of groups of healthy and active people. For the elderly ones the recommendations of the SINU concern the males and the women above the 60 and 50 years old, respectively. In the United States recommendations are for two groups of diversified age and that is elderly from 51 to 70 years and over 70 years old. More recently the ACSM, in collaboration with the American Dietetic Association (ADA), are preparing dietary suggestions for competitive adults in terms of energy, micronutrients and fluids intake specifications based not only on the chronological age but also emphasizing the nutrient requests for the best possible performance for elderly competitors. Waiting for the publication of these recommendations, the aim of this paper is to underline the requests for senior athletes in terms of micronutrients and fluids and to suggest the quantities of their intake.

# MORPH-PHYSIOLOGICAL SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ROAD CYCLISTS AND MOUNTAIN BIKERS

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** To characterize and compare the anthropometrics and physiological variables in Brazilian road cyclists and mountain bikers.

**Methods:** Seven trained road cyclists (RC); 10 trained mountain bikers (MTB) and 6 untrained road cyclists (UC) were selected to participate of this study. All athletes were submitted to graded exercise test in the cycle-simulator, with 90-110 rpm (trained group) and 60-80 rpm (untrained group), initial load of 100 W and 30 W of increment for each 3 min until exhaustion.

**Results:** The maximum aerobic power output ( $W_{max}$ ) and the peak oxygen consumption ( $\dot{V}O_{2peak}$ ) has not presented significant differences between the groups of trained athletes; however, the values are superior to UC. The blood lactate peak concentrations [Lapeak] were significantly superior in MTB if compared with the RC ( $12.5 \pm 2.6$  vs  $9.2 \pm 1.0$  mmol · l<sup>-1</sup>) ( $p < 0.05$ ). The sub maximal variables do not presented significant differences between the groups, except the workload in the lactate thresholds that are smaller in UC.

**Conclusion:** In general, except for [Lapeak], Brazilian road cyclists present similar morph-physiological characteristics to mountain bikers.

**Uniterms:** heart rate, lactate threshold, power output, aerobic, anaerobic.

## INTRODUCTION

The training programs of high-level athletes are based on the optimization of training workloads, which are mainly determined by the balance between volume and intensity. One of the main purposes of researchers and coaches is the identification of training strategies that induce substantial physiological adaptations in athletes, thus maximizing individual performance for a specific competitive setting. The discrimination of determinant physiological variables of performance in laboratory as well as in the field is a reference for training workloads prescription and control. In road cycling, the physiological demands during competitions are related according to the event contested, in particular 3-week tour racers (i.e. Tour de France, Vuelta a España and Giro d'Italia). These competitions are disputed in road terrains and usually involve different events (1, 2): 1) flat stages where athletes cycle at high speeds in large groups (~ 200 km); 2) individual time trials in prologue (5-10 km); 3) individ-

# L'ALLENAMENTO DELLA RAPIDITÀ NEGLI SPORT DI SQUADRA: UN ESEMPIO NEL BASKET GIOVANILE

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## ABSTRACT

### QUICKNESS TRAINING IN TEAM SPORTS: AN EXAMPLE IN YOUTH BASKETBALL

The aim of this work is to estimate quickness like a specific skill of team sports and as such it must be trained in a specific way according with the typical needs of each team sport. So, a training program is carried out with a youth basketball team, in order to estimate if 8 weeks of specific quickness training can guarantee any improvements in terms of feet quickness increase and rapidity of movements in short spaces. Proposed training is valued with three tests, showing to achieve the enounced targets with significant results ( $P < 0,05$ ).

**Key words:** team sports, quickness, basketball training, physical conditioning



## INTRODUZIONE

La caratteristica principale degli sport di squadra è quella di essere costituiti da situazioni sempre in continuo cambiamento e difficilmente prevedibili (Gréhaigine J.F. e coll., 1997; McGarry T. e coll., 2002). A tal proposito Brettschneider (Brettschneider W. D., 1990) identificava 5 capacità fondamentali che ogni giocatore di sport di squadra dovrebbe possedere: Capacità di anticipazione, Capacità di decisione, Disponibilità a rischiare, Rapidità di azione, Capacità di cooperare. La rapidità di azione riveste 1 aspetto su 5 ma sommando anche la capacità di anticipazione e la capacità di decisione, come espressioni di una forma di rapidità di tipo cognitivo e di riconoscimento della situazione corrente, la rapidità riveste i 3/5 della capacità di gioco nei giochi



# IL GIOCO DELLA PALLAMANO NELLA SCUOLA PRIMARIA: CAPACITÀ MOTORIE E RAPPORTO INTERPERSONALE A CONFRONTO

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## ABSTRACT

### THE GAME OF HANDBALL IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: MOTOR ABILITIES AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP COMPARISON

The aim of this project is to show how the handball game affects in the motor field, improving the coordinative and conditional abilities specific of handball, and the interpersonal relations (relations between students of the same age and between students and teachers) in 2 classes of students attending the fifth term of primary school.

Two groups have been examined: a *work group* (5<sup>a</sup>B) composed of 14 ten years old students, 9 boys and 5 girls, and a *control group* (5<sup>a</sup>A) composed of 11 students, 7 boys and 4 girls, all ten years old with the exception of 4 of them who were one or two years older than the others. The work group has worked for 12 weeks at the improvements of handball fundamental techniques by using games; meanwhile motor tests have been carried out at the beginning, after 5 weeks and at the end of the study. The control group has only carried out the same tests of the work group without ever practicing any physical activities all through the project. At the end of this study both groups have also compiled a social-affective test.

In general, as far as the interpersonal within, the behaviours turned out in the average; students had negative relations either with parents or teachers, while they had a positive approach with students of the same sex.

On the contrary, in the motor field remarkable progresses have been noticed in the work group that has improved in every motor tests in comparison to the control group.

**Key words:** Handball in primary school; interpersonal relations; motor abilities; children; test

## INTRODUZIONE

### Con il gioco della pallamano i bambini migliorano le relazioni interpersonali? Affinano le abilità motorie?

Elementi importanti che riguardano questo progetto sono le capacità motorie, il rapporto interpersonale (allievo/coetanei e allievo/insegnante) ed infine, la pallamano e i suoi obiettivi nella scuola primaria.

Le capacità motorie sono la base per l'attuazione di gesti e movimenti consapevoli; sono a disposizione di ogni individuo e per di più permettono di strutturare ed affinare le abilità motorie (AA.VV. 1992).

Il rapporto interpersonale viene definito da Parker & Asher come "elemento necessario per l'adattamento psicosociale dei bambini" (Bracken 2003).

Lo si può distinguere in rapporto interpersonale allievo/coetanei e allievo/insegnante: il primo, vede i bambini mettere in gioco la loro personalità; li rende protagonisti nella nascita di alleanze o inimicizie e di senso di adeguatezza o inadeguatezza; il secondo, mostra le qualità che un buon istruttore deve utilizzare per creare il giusto feeling con i bambini: capacità di ascoltare, capacità di osservare e capacità di motivare.

# ANALISI LONGITUDINALE 3D DELLA SINCRONIA DEL MOVIMENTO NELL'ESECUZIONE DI UN KATA A SQUADRA

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## ABSTRACT

### LONGITUDINAL 3D ANALYSIS OF THE SYNCHRONY OF MOVEMENT DURING THE PERFORMANCE OF A KATA TEAM EXERCISE

Team kata is one of the antagonistic events currently performed in traditional karate. Three karateka must synchronously perform the same set of standardized movements maintaining the same velocity, precision and power. Moreover, since they have to maintain the same relative distance, the kata must be executed with the same movement length and direction. In the current study, a longitudinal assessment of movement synchronization was made on the Italian national team.

**Keys words:** karate, martial art, kata team, synchrony, 3D analysis, optoelectronic image analyzer.



## INTRODUZIONE

Nel corso degli anni, la pratica delle arti marziali si è ampiamente diffusa nel mondo conquistando sempre più consensi in ogni fascia di età, dai bambini agli anziani. Le motivazioni sono diverse, da una parte i benefici a livello fisico e psichico, dall'altra motivi più utilitaristici dovuti alla conoscenza di tecniche di difesa personale. Per quello che riguarda i benefici sul corpo, aspetti positivi riguardano sia le diverse capacità fisiche (condizionali e coordinative), come l'equilibrio e la mobilità (Xu et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2004; Violan et al., 1997), sia aspetti psicofisiologici con il miglioramento e il mantenimento della capacità regolatoria del sistema cardio-respiratorio (Vaananen et al., 2002; Taylor-Piliae, 2003). In particolare, nel karate shotokan, la continua pratica di questa disciplina, tende a migliorare l'attenzione, la capacità di osservazione, e l'autocontrollo con una conseguente diminuzione di aggressività, soprattutto nei bambini (Layton, 1993; Reynes & Lorant, 2002).

Sebbene non esista, per motivi diversi, una organizzazione mondiale unica di questo sport, il numero dei praticanti è, allo stato attuale, davvero consistente: si contano infatti almeno 55 milioni di atleti ed amatori nel mondo, diffusi nei cinque continenti. Solo in Italia i praticanti sono circa 100 mila divisi nei diversi stili.

# INCIDENZA DEL PRE-AFFATICAMENTO SUL MUSCOLO ANTAGONISTA RISPETTO ALLA COMPARSA DI FATICA SUL MUSCOLO AGONISTA

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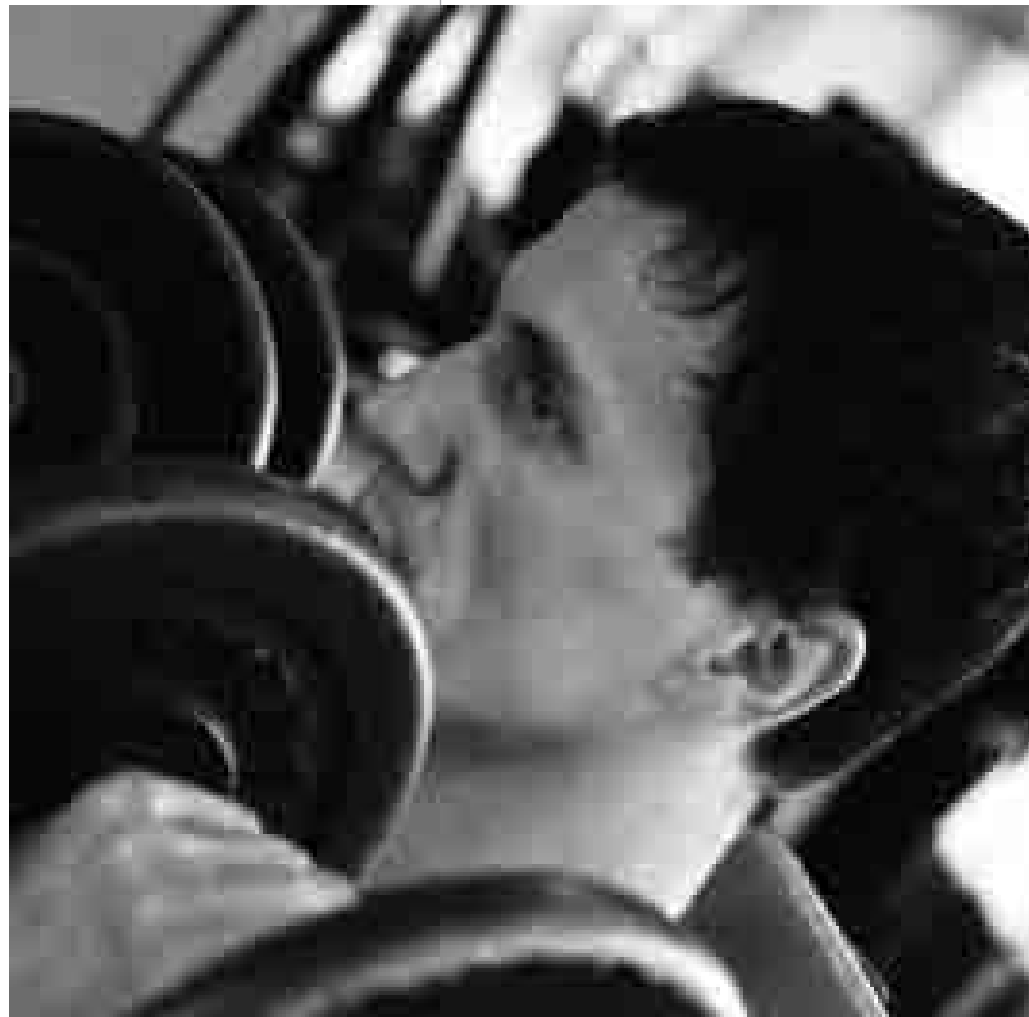
## ABSTRACT

### THE EFFECTS OF ANTAGONIST PREFATIGUE ON AGONISTIC FATIGUE APPEARANCE

Several studies analyzed muscle activity after pre-fatigue due to co-contraction, but differences in experimental setting (load, muscles, kind of contraction) make difficult to obtain a unique view. Therefore, the effects of antagonist contraction on agonist performance are still incompletely known. The purpose of this study was to determine if the contraction of antagonist muscles modify muscular fatigue during agonistic performance. In particular, EMG signal was used to estimate biceps brachii muscle fatigue (through the recording of motor unit activity) during isometric contraction made with/ without previous contractions of the antagonist muscle (triceps brachii). Pre-fatiguing the antagonist did not increase the negative effects of fatigue (the strength level was constant); expert trainers suggest that this kind of exercise organization could be useful to develop motor patterns strategies for ballistic sports activities.

**Running title:** fatica e allenamento.

**Key words:** training, electromyography, fatigue, isometric contraction.



# ANTHROPOMETRIC CHARACTERISTICS AND BODY COMPOSITION OF AGONIST AND NON-AGONIST SOCCER PLAYERS

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## ABSTRACT

The physical and body composition profile of agonist and non-agonist soccer players was investigated in order to assess competitive level-related differences. Comparison was made with physically active control individuals. Standard anthropometry and skinfold measurement were used. It was found that sum of skinfolds, estimated body density and percent body fat are different in the three groups, in the presence of similar body mass index. Agonist players showed the lowest figure for each parameter above as well as for several individual skinfolds, but differences were only significant in comparison with control subjects whereas non-agonist players showed intermediate, not significantly different values; however, percent body fat in agonists was larger than optimal (about 9%). It is concluded that competitive level is not a major determinant of adiposity in non agonist soccer players. Similarities in body size and percent body fat of players could represent a physical basis for the positive results often obtained by lower ranking squads.

**Key words:** football; body composition; anthropometric characteristics; physical activity; male; skinfold; athlete



## INTRODUCTION

Football (soccer code) is a most popular sport all over the world. However, literature data on the body composition of soccer players i.e., a physical parameter relevant to performance [1-3], are relatively limited. In the past the soccer environment greeted the scientist "at worst with suspicion and hostility and at best with muted skepticism"[4]; this may have been causing underproduction of scientific information in the field.

More recently, some journal papers appeared dealing with the anthropometric characteristics and body composition of elite players [5-12], also in relation to identification and selection of talented soccer players[13] or somatic differences according to the team position[14]. To our knowledge, data on the relative physical characteristics and body composition of soccer players of different competitive level are very limited; therefore, we investigated some anthropometric characteristics as well as body composition as determined by skinfold measurement in a group of agonist and non-agonist soccer players.

## SPORT E FORMAZIONE

# LEARNING PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND HYGIENE IN HIGHER EDUCATION. THE EXPERIENCE IN A FACULTY OF EXERCISE AND SPORT SCIENCES

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of teaching on the learning of undergraduated students attending the Faculty of Exercise and Sport Sciences at Bologna University. The investigation was applied in particular to the course in Hygiene applied to Sport and Exercise. An anonymous and purpose made questionnaire with 22 multiple choice questions, was administered, after testing and validation, at the start (pre-test) and end (post-test) of the course in order to assess any variations in knowledge that had occurred.

The highest level of knowledge was recorded for questions concerning the aspects of Hygiene applied to sport, where the percentage of correct answers in the post-test was 75.15%, followed by infectious diseases (73,36%) and non infectious diseases (66,78%). The greatest improvement in the scores and percentage of correct answers was observed when the level of knowledge was lower at the start of the course, particularly for the structural specifications

of indoor sport centers ( $p < 0.0001$ ). On the whole the level was higher among females in the pre-test ( $p < 0.05$ ), but the males tended to catch up in the post-test.

The practising of a competitive sport was found to obstruct learning. The most substantial increases in scores were achieved by male students (whose initial level was lower) and by students not involved in competitive sport or in work, probably because these commitments interfere with the regular attendance of learning activities.

Implication for teaching are discussed. More innovative teaching methods could be adopted to increase the students' interest and improve the learning process.

**Key words:** learning, hygiene applied to sport and exercise, preventive medicine, sport and exercise sciences graduated.

## INTRODUCTION

Regular physical activity significantly affects our quality of life by improving health and reducing the risk of general mortality. The risk of contracting serious pathologies such as cardiovascular diseases (Gassner et al., 2003; Haskell, 2003; Pang et al., 2005; Yusuf et al. 2004), metabolic diseases (De Moraes et al., 2005; Dehghan et al., 2005; Mohan et al., 2005; Stone and Saxon, 2005), some types of tumour

(Holmes et al., 2005; Jian et al., 2005; Matthews et al., 2005; Patel et al., 2005; Samad et al., 2005) and osteo-articular diseases (Borer, 2005; Kohrt et al., 2004; Pearson et al., 2005), can in fact be considerably lowered by such activity. The Task Force on Community Preventive Services (CDC, 2001) identified physical activity as one of the key indicators for health in the "Healthy People 2010" scheme and has promoted programmes to increase exercise among adults, ado-

lescents and children. The same objective has been given priority in Italy in the National Health Program 2003-2005. An important role in this field can be played by graduates in Exercise and Sport Sciences, who can help to promote and maintain good health through the knowledge they have acquired about preventive medicine and hygiene.

The university courses of Exercise and Sport Sciences were set up in Italy after the Legislative Decree n. 178

## SPORT E FORMAZIONE

# EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES AND CHOICE OF THE SPORT DISCIPLINE IN CHILDHOOD

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## ABSTRACT

The sport training is able to produce a series of benefits and advantages interesting the whole organism, from the apparatus of support to the behavior and the personality of the sporting child. The sport, regularly and adequately practiced since the infancy, helps to reach a state of psico-physical comfort. The movement helps the body to find a healthy sleep-wakefulness rhythm; therefore, the start of children to the sport is very important. Nevertheless, the choice is always not simple. The principal worry is due, above all, to the identification of a sport that must be the more possible complete for a correct physical development of that specific child. The aim of this study is to analyze the incidence of the sport practice and the influence of the various educational agencies in the choice of that sport in a population of 967 children (503 boys and 464 girls).

**Key Words:** Performance, Childhood, Sporting choice, Growth

## INTRODUCTION

To develop a constant physical activity represents an essential element for a correct style of life. Scientific community is unanimous to underline the benefits induced by a regular motor activity, above all if started since young (Boreham et al., 1997; Cale, 2004; McMurray, 2003). Motor activity is very important for physical and psychic development of child, since it influences not only the muscle-skeletal apparatus, circulation and respiration, but also it facilitates social insertion, motor coordination and leisure.

In the last years, a considerable attention has been set on the existing relationship between young people and sporting habits (Riddoch et al., 2004). The sporting practice introduces a decreasing course among infancy, adolescence and maturity (Sirard e Pate, 2001). Certainly, a key setting for the promotion of the physical activity in the young people is represented by school (Cavill et al., 2001). The physical education, in fact, represents in the life of the boys the central nucleus of the scholastic formation in motor field (Biddle et al., 2004). To address children towards the sport activity is very important; nev-



ertheless, the choice is always not simple. The principal worry is due, above all, to the identification of a sport that must be the more possible complete for a correct physical development of that specific child (Marchi, 2000). To correctly direct the subjects in childhood to the practice of some motor activities, it is essential that the programs of training respect the morphological and functional characteristics of the young sportsmen. The sport doesn't have only the merit to contribute to the physical-structural development and to the improvement of the abilities of coordination, but it has a fundamental role for socialization and fun (Giovannini e Savoia, 2002). It is, therefore, important to consider the desires of the same children. The passion for a physical activity must be lived as a play; this allows the increase of the appointment, of the concentration and of the motivation, characteristics that not only contribute to the physical growth but also to that emotional (Allen, 2003).

The aims of this study is: 1) to assess how the concept of sport is perceived from children; 2) to observe if the game-sport is considered an important moment in the life of a child of the XXI century; 3) to analyze the influence of the various educational agencies (family, school, television, etc.) in the individual choices.

## SPORT E CULTURA

# POLITICA SPORT E IDENTITÀ NAZIONALE

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## ABSTRACT

### POLITICS SPORT AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

This study examines the relationship between politics, sports and national identity in contemporary society, following a search path historiographical launched by the British school and only in recent years landed in Italy. Therefore, we initially approached the distinctive features of the Italian national identity and then those of any other national identities, trying to highlight the role of politics in these processes. We tried then to verify whether the phenomenon Sports has been a decisive factor in creating the Italian national identity through the deepening of two sports that have better represented the Italian's costume: football and cycling. Finally, we analysed the many elements that characterize national cultures in the globalised context of the Olympic Games, through the critical review of existing literature.

**Keywords:** national identity, politics, sports, Olympics, football, cycling

## PREMESSA

Come si costruisce un'identità nazionale? Quali sono i fattori che ne rappresentano la radice costitutiva? Innanzitutto, quando ci si occupa di identità nazionale occorre definirne i contorni concettuali che scaturiscono da un duplice movimento storico-culturale: all'interno di una nazione, nel perenne confronto con le varie identità locali e regionali, ed all'esterno, nel rapporto con altre nazioni. Ci è sembrato, allora, utile proporre un lavoro che indagasse come quei legami tra

sport e identità si declinassero nell'attuale società contemporanea.

Gli studi sull'identità nazionale hanno ripreso un certo interesse presso la comunità accademica dagli anni novanta, da quando cioè gli storici hanno cominciato ad utilizzare lo sport come angolo d'osservazione per comprendere i diversi aspetti del problema. Da questo punto di vista il volume curato da Cronin e da Mayall, *Sporting nationalism: identity, ethnicity, immigration and assimilation* [1], rappresenta un positivo contributo all'inizio del dibattito. Alla "scuola sto-

rica britannica" si devono i primi lavori sul ripensamento dell'idea contemporanea di nazione, all'indomani della caduta del blocco comunista all'est e con le inesplorate potenzialità della globalizzazione. Escono, così, una serie di studi di Hobsbawm, *Nazioni e nazionalismo dal 1780: programma, mito e realtà* [2], di Breuilly, *Il nazionalismo e lo stato* [3], di Gellner, *Nazioni e nazionalismo* [4] e di Anderson, *Comunità immaginate: origini e diffusione dei nazionalismi* [5]. Ed è proprio quest'ultimo lavoro ad esaltare il valore e la funzione dello sport, come



## SPORT E CULTURA

# THE ESSENCE AND THE PHYSIOGNOMY OF HOMERIC ATHLETICS AND THE ETHICS OF ATHLETICS COMPETITIONS IN HOMER

## A CRITICAL OFFICIAL SCRUTINY ON THE ASPECTS OF PHILOSOPHY AND PEDAGOGY IN ATHLETICS

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to mark out the physiognomy and the essence of the Homeric athletics and examine the relation between athletics and ethics and particularly the relation of the ethics of athletics competitions in the Homeric epic poems. From this study it was observed that the human bodily existence is the only thing that is worth mentioning in this life and most importantly, that glory and honour can lead to prosperity. Athletics competitions always contained an aim, supremacy, which is translated into esteem, fame and glory. Also, according to the big problem that is related to ethics and athletics competitions, it was concluded from the research, that the sacred contribution does not suppress the human ability in the carrying out of competitions and athletic victory, and that it has its source in the human area and in the sacred. Finally, the winner's oath constituted the biggest moral barrier and obstacle for the deceit and trickery, for the athletes, during the conceptions of athletic competitions.

### SOURCES AND METHODS

Basic source for the above research was the work of T. Arvanitakis 'Plato perikiniseos' (1996), Thessaloniki as well as Plato's and Pindar's work (Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes, Nemean Odes and Isthmian Odes).

The method was based on the philosophical and historical critical method.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Falcos-Arvanitakis (2003) the phenomenon of athletics is firstly characterized by movement and then by the movement of bodies. There is an undeniable affinity between the body and spirit, and this, if someone accepts the opinion that the spirit is the perfect materialistic product, or adopts the belief that they are substances individually different, that

come in provisional affinity and dependence. The spirit and perceptible (body) are not incompatible and hostile. The body is no longer considered a 'prison' or a 'grave' of the soul, as in the precocious idealism. On the occasion of exercising the non materialist philosophers can develop in a better way the high Platonic principle 'you can't move your soul without your body nor your body without your soul' (Timaios, 88b), in combination with the excellent utterance of Apostle Paul that, the body is, the temple of the Holy Spirit (Α' προς Κορινθ.σ, 19), that gives off an unusual light in the perceptible.

The theorist that is interested in the enormous problem of values, origin, configuration, and gradual of change, will find particular interest in the study of the athletic and struggling phenomenon. The ideal of the benign-



nity that dominated for many centuries in Greece owes a lot to athletics. The ideal of beauty was combined with the old ideal of goodness that initially meant simply the supremacy in any region, while later it took an ethic tinge. Therefore, the ideal of benignity in not a creation of a single person or of a school. An entire population molded it in the gyms and in the rings (Falkos-Arvanitakis, 2003).

Athletics is a basic event of human culture, proportional with the technique, science, good arts, justice, ethics, religion or philosophy. It includes in it material objects, systems of knowledge as well as material and spiritual values. It directly influences almost all the other events of culture and is also influenced by them. Thus it influences and is influenced by religion. Basically, religion and athletics are different things. But

## SPORT E CULTURA

# THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH IN THE HIPPOCRATIC COLLECTION (CORPUS HIPPOCRATICUM)

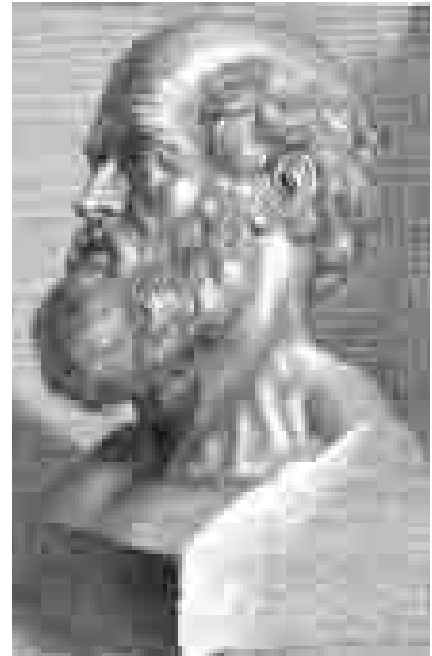
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## ABSTRACT

This research concerns the notions of the writers of the Hippocratic Collection<sup>1</sup> about physical activity<sup>2</sup> and the way it is associated with a person's health. It has been made clear through this endeavor that Sports is the art of safeguarding health and well-being – since it conduces to the prevention and healing of a number of diseases – whereas Medicine is the science of treating and curing illness. Health and physical fitness are integral parts of human nature, therefore people ought to make a habit of engaging themselves in sports and gymnastic exercises. However, they it is vital that they see to it that they exercise in moderation, never in extremity, otherwise they run the risk of seriously injuring themselves. People should never fail to keep in mind that every individual is different from each other, their bodies have different needs, limitations and capabilities, and the discovery of a golden mean when it comes to exercising, along with a suitable diet, is an essential prerequisite for physical health and fitness. According to the texts of *Corpus Hippocraticum*, citizen's health should become the main focus of health sciences (Medicine, Physical Education, Dieting), and the state ought to provide the citizens with proper facilities where they can exercise and do a sport. Citizens on their part should realize as soon as possible the importance of being healthy and make exercise and sports parts of their daily life.

**Key Words:** Physical activity, medical, dieting, health, sports, golden mean

## THE METHOD

In order for this research to be effective it has to be methodologically multiple (Menne, 1984), in other words it has to be historical, analytical and comparative. It also needs to take into account the beliefs of Hippocrates himself on exercise. This is the only way to ensure that the present research is internally consistent and valid, and thus become the cornerstone of further research on the subject of Sport Pedagogy and Physical Education.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORTS, MAN'S NATURE AND HEALTH

According to the texts of the Hippocratic Collection, the body and soul of man are put in good order by nature. “Ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου, καὶ σῶμα ὁκοίον ἡ ψυχὴ διακοσμεῖται<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, because of the fact that “somebody's soul is closely related to his physical state,”<sup>4</sup> people ought to keep their bodies in good condition. According to Hippocrates, “ἡ φύσις” constitutes the driving force behind the biological processes needed

for all living beings to remain alive. Man's chief objective in life should be its preservation and consolidation, as it is a necessary requirement in order to secure good health. “Nature lays down the laws and principles that govern people's lives” (Heinimann, 1945) and “the majority of the diseases man is afflicted by are caused because of consequential changes in his habits and nature.”<sup>5</sup>

It is stated in the Hippocratic Collection that “human bodies are differentiated both by nature and vigorous exercise.”<sup>6</sup> Apart from providing us with the view Hippocrates would most possibly hold