

FOOTBALL MEDICINE - THE LANDSCAPE



Dvorak J

FIFA - Medical Assessment & Research Centre (F-MARC)
Schulthess Clinic, Zürich, Switzerland

2014 the year of FIFA World Cup Brazil offered many challenges. Large country, different climatic conditions, revocation of the accreditation of the doping laboratory in Rio. The challenges were mastered as teamwork with our Brazilian colleagues.

We have observed continuous decrease of injuries, due to an excellent preparation of the teams, strict refereeing and good work of the team doctors. The climate was well tolerated, only one drinking break had to be initiated when Wet-Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) exceeded 32°C.

Biological passport for the players participating was established using out and in competition samples, analysed in Laboratoire d'Analyse du Dopage (LAD) Lausanne. The process proved to be feasible. All samples analysed proved to be negative, no change to the steroid profile.

The philosophy of prevention was the main focus of all activities developed by FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre (F-MARC) over the past year. The number 11 (11 players) became synonymous for prevention:

- 11+ complete warm up programme - to prevent injuries
- 11 steps - to prevent sudden cardiac arrest
- 11 rules - to prevent doping in football
- 11 for health - to prevent communicable and non-communication diseases

With particular reference to the last point, it must be noted that the strategy has changed from Medicine for Football to Football for Health. Using the powerful platform and popularity of football, F-MARC disseminate educational health messages combined with physical activity while playing football, in a simple yet effective school-based programme contributing to the improvement of public health and promoting a healthy life-style.

The FIFA Congress 2014 at Sao Paulo, the supreme governing body supported the notion of President Joseph S. Blatter to implement the FIFA 11 for Health programme as a FIFA Global Health Initiative. The programme is currently being run in 20 countries, namely Africa, South America, Asia and Oceania. The same approach has been used in a fast track action 11 against Ebola contributing to the reduction of new infections in West Africa 2014-2015.

To disseminate the educational messages as well as improve the quality of Football Medicine 42 FIFA Medical Centres of Excellence has been accredited around the world.