Reviewer's report

Title: Low back pain status in elite and semi-elite Australian football codes: a cross-sectional survey of football (soccer), Australian-Rules, rugby league, rugby union and non-athletic controls

Version: 2 Date: 14 January 2009

Reviewer: Susan Picavet

Reviewer's report:

I have one major issue (compulsory revision):
I miss prevalences of LBP expressed as %: how many of the players had a current LBP or otherwise phrased: what was the point prevalence of LBP? If I understand Table 3 correctly these are: 68% for elite players, 58% for semi-elite and 54% for non-athletic. Is this OK?
This information affects table 1, because the QVAS question on LBP now is only relevant for those with a current episode of LBP, or is it not?
This information also affects table 2, because you can only measure severity of (back) pain among those with (back) pain.
The presentation of the results in the tables should be reconsidered, and after re-presenting it should be possible to show and conclude that (1) LBP is more prevalent among elite players, and (2) among those with pain the pain is more severe for the elite players.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests