Minor discretionary revisions

I needed to gather some information about this sport (not familiar to me).

Gaelic football is one of the world’s oldest game (Hurling even older), and is the national sport in Ireland. The officials of the game are: the referee, two linesmen, one sideline official/or standby linesman (inter-county games only), and four umpires (two at each end of the field).

It would have been good to have some description of the game, and also on the officials. Not all the readers will probably know Gaelic football & Hurling.

The paper is well written, and focus on an interesting topic. Referees are often overlooked not only in research studies, but also in the sport itself.

The purpose of the study is well stated, and method, data, and discussion are presented in a clear way.

The retrospective design is obviously a limitation of the study: a paragraph at the end of the discussion address this issue.

Even considering the potential inaccuracy of the retrospectively collected data, it would have been also of interested to present (estimated) injury incidence rates for match and training.

With a mean age over 40 years, and with a considerable exposure time in matches and training, one would expect not only a certain risk for acute injuries, but also a high proportion of overuse problems.

This aspect (likely because of the nature of the questionnaire used) was not addressed in the study, and this should mentioned under the “limitations”.

Same consideration for the response rate (to the questionnaire): 80% is good (but of the remaining 20% we don't know), but this is another point to be mentioned under the “limitations”.

In the discussion, some comparisons are made with a study on soccer referees of the FIFA selection 2006. It is to note that this group stated to officiate less than 40 matches per year in average, whereas most of the Gaelic referees stated to officiate 3-4 times per week. This is quite a difference in match exposure time, which would be of interest to discuss.

I would suggest to expand the “limitations of the study” paragraph with the above
mentioned issues.

For the discussion, the comparison with the soccer referees could have been a bit more detailed, and additionally few other papers could have been taken into consideration:


Congratulations to the authors for investigating on the Gaelic Games Referees, and I encourage them to conduct future prospective studies on this topic.

**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.

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