Reviewer's report

Title: Low back pain in junior Australian Rules football: a cross-sectional survey of elite juniors, juniors and non-football controls

Version: 1 Date: 11 March 2010

Reviewer: Eamonn Delahunt

Reviewer's report:

GENERAL COMMENTS:
Overall the manuscript is well written and I am fully confident that the authors can respond in a positive manner to any of the suggestions outlined below.

The manuscript details the prevalence of low back pain in adolescent AFL players and a control cohort group. The article is timely and will be of particular interest to those involved in coaching and the medical management of adolescent sports injuries. It is a common clinical observation that athletes exposed to increased frequency and intensity of training do present with an increased incidence of musculoskeletal injuries and of particular concern is the potential for the development of chronic low back pain.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

SECTION - BACKGROUND:
LINES: "It was the aim ...
REVIEWER COMMENT: This may read better if written as follows "The aim of the present study ..." (DISCRETIONARY REVISION)

SECTION - METHODS
REVIEWER COMMENT: It would be preferential if the authors used the term "non-elite juniors" to distinguish this group from the elite junior group (DISCRETIONARY REVISION). This could be adopted throughout the manuscript.

SECTION - RESULTS
LINE: "Fur current ...
REVIEWER COMMENT: This should read "for current ... " (MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION)

SECTION - BACKGROUND
LINE: " This theory has been validated with clear correlations between LBP in childhood and adolescences ...
REVIEWER COMMENT: This should read "This theory has been validated with clear correlations between LBP in childhood and ADOLESCENCE ... "(MINOR
ESSENTIAL REVISION)

SECTION - BACKGROUND

LINE: "Thus it was the objective ...

REVIEWER COMMENT: It would be preferential to state that the primary objective of the study was " ... " while the secondary objective of the study was " ... "

(MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION)

SECTION - RESULTS

LINE: "Analysing the MPQ-SF ...

REVIEWER COMMENT: It would be helpful if the authors could provide a Table detailing the results of this part of the questionnaire. This would allow the following sections to be more easily understood with cross-reference to data in tabular form. (MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISION)

TABLE 2

REVIEWER COMMENT: It would be helpful if the authors could provide a KEY to indicate where the statistical differences occur [e.g. (a)significant difference between elite junior and non-elite junior etc ...](MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION)

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'