Reviewer's report

Title: Injuries at a Canadian National Taekwondo Championships

Version: Date: 18 April 2004

Reviewer: J. David J Casssidy

Reviewer's report:

General

The manuscript is well written and covers an interesting and important topic.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Did the participants consent to be included in this study and was there an ethics review of the study protocol?

The use of statistical testing is not warranted or useful in this paper. There has not been any a-priori consideration of sample size or power. In this study the number of injuries is small and the difference between males and females is obvious without a statistical test (35 vs. 5 is a seven-fold difference!).

The use of rates (injuries/A-E) can be misleading without putting confidence intervals around them. These rates are based on small numbers and it would be more informative to give the actual numbers in the text along with the rates and their 95% confidence intervals. That way, the reader can see that some rates are based on a small number of injuries. This issue becomes important in the discussion, where the authors compare rates from various studies without taking into account the precision of these estimates.

The authors should give some details as to how they defined the various injuries in the study. There is anatomical location, but what defined it as an injury? For example, did the injury stop the athlete from further competition? How where strains and sprains differentiated? How was concussion defined?

Also, the authors present findings on "joint dysfunction". This is controversial because joint dysfunction has never been validated as a diagnostic condition. I would suggest that the authors either drop it from the paper, or admit that it is a term used almost exclusively by chiropractors and physical therapists and has not been validated as a diagnostic condition.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

In the abstract, under results, second sentence, "The overal number of injures was 62.0/1,000 A-E" should be changed to the overal "rate" was...

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None