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Contributions to the evaluation methods of physical training for the junior Alpine Skiing national team

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Abstract

This research has suggested the introduction of two new tests (specific balance and modified speedy jumps) for evaluating the physical training status of the Romanian junior alpine skiing team.
The experiment evaluated the skiers at the beginning and at the end of the dry-land training period consisting of physical training. This training lasted for 3 weeks, during which a group of 9 athletes were evaluated.
The results obtained during the tests compared with the athletes' performance in the 2012-2013 season showed similar rankings for both the tests and the competition performance.

Keywords: Evaluation; training; evolution.

1. Introduction

This research has suggested the introduction of two new tests (specific balance and modified speed jumps) for evaluating the physical training status of the Romanian junior alpine skiing team. Both of these tests are used in the Austrian skiers' selection and evaluation procedure.

These tests were proposed in order to develop an objective performance-based selection procedure of the junior alpine skiing team that could also improve competition results in the upcoming years. The alpine skiers' effort is mixed, both aerobic and anaerobic. As far as the aerobic component of the effort is concerned, research has proved that high oxygen consumption is not necessary for obtaining high performance in alpine skiing. The anaerobic effort can amount to as much as 65-70% of the global energy consumption (Toth, 2011).

The objectives of Romania's high-performance alpine skiing team for the following years can only be achieved by implementing an appropriate training methodology based on scientific research. This quality improvement is not possible without focusing on the following factors influencing the training methodology:

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- The continuous updating of the theory and practice by applying the newest research results and recommendations.
- Adjusting the workload concept in order to reach a total of 1200-1400 training hours per year.
- Improving indices for "motor fitness" (Davis, 2000) and specific physical training.
- Focusing on achieving and perfecting technical capabilities for the training of children and juniors, with an emphasis on competitive conditions (speed) for the senior team.
- Enhancing psychological qualities: willpower, firmess, stress resistance, combativeness.
- Steering the training process based on objective data. (Pelin, Gaspar, Lungociu, 2007)

The main drive for evolution is represented by competitions. The current level of competitions in alpine skiing is absolutely amazing. Skiing evolves at its own pace. (Toth, 2009) Remarkable results in these competitions can only be obtained by gradually increasing the training effort year after year, and, at the same time, by providing appropriate regeneration methods. This increase represents the main element that can contribute to enhancing the body's capacity for effort. In order to achieve high performance, a systematic and continuous (all through the year) training program needs to be developed over several years, with the possibility of introducing operational changes. Another very important element is the skiing equipment (skis, boots, training and competition suits, wax etc.).

In order to improve the level of national results there is a need for a continuous training program with an appropriate volume and quality of effort that addresses a larger number of athletes. This program would help the national team adapt to the level of international competitions.

2. Material and methods

2.1. The premises of our research

- The relatively modest performance of Romanian alpine skiers in international competitions.
- The need to update methodological orientation regarding the training for performance of the junior skiing team.
- The need to adapt to the level of international competitions in modern skiing.

2.2. Subjects, duration and location

The testing took place at the Olimpic training facility in Izvorani and lasted for 3 weeks, during which a group of 9 athletes were evaluated. The group included 3 girls and 6 boys aged between 16 and 17 years.

2.3. Research methods

The following methods have been used:

- Quasi-experiment;
- Bibliographic study;
- Observational research;
- Graphical method;
- Tests method.

In order to get a clearer picture about the efficiency of the specific physical training of the alpine skiing national team, a limited group with unique particularities that cannot be compared with a control group, we have chosen the quasi-experiment method with the "pretest-posttest" model (Epuran, 2005).