

***Research Quarterly  
for Exercise and Sport***

**Reproducibility of Internal and External Training Load  
During Recreational Small-Sided Football Games**

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| Journal:             | <i>Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport</i> |
| Manuscript ID        | 19-01-MEV-11.R1                                  |
| Manuscript Type:     | Original Article                                 |
| Manuscript Category: | Measurement and Evaluation                       |
| Keyword:             | Soccer, GPS, Activity profile, Movement pattern  |
|                      |  |

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Manuscripts

1                    **Reproducibility of Internal and External Training Load During Recreational**  
2                    **Small-Sided Football Games**

For Peer Review

### Abstract

*Purpose:* The aim of this study was to evaluate the reproducibility of internal and external load parameters during recreational small-sided football games. *Methods:* Ten healthy untrained young adult males (age:  $20.2 \pm 1.9$  yr, body mass:  $69.2 \pm 6.3$  kg, height:  $175.4 \pm 5.9$  cm, body fat:  $19.7 \pm 5.2\%$ ) performed two 2x20-min sessions of four versus four plus goalkeeper small-sided games (SSG) one week apart on a standard, outdoor, 40x20-m artificial grass pitch. Twelve external (total distance, peak speed, player load, work rate and distance covered at 0–2, 2–5, 5–7, 7–9, 9–13, 13–16, 16–20 and >20 km/h) and seven internal load parameters (heart rate and time spent in different heart rate zones [ $<70\%$ , 71–80%, 81–90%, 91–95%, 96–100%, 91–100%]) were measured. Reproducibility was reported as intraclass coefficient correlation (ICC), the coefficient of variation (CV), and the typical error of measurements (TE). *Results:* No statistical differences ( $p > 0.05$ ) between sessions were found in any measures. Minimal test-retest variability was noted for mean and peak heart rate ( $HR_{\text{peak}}$ ) relative to  $HR_{\text{peak}}$  with CV values of 3.4% and 2.6%, respectively. Acceptable variability ( $CV < 10\%$ ) was demonstrated for total distance covered, distance covered at 2–5 km/h, and peak speed. Distance covered in different speed zones ( $CV = 15.7\text{--}47.6\%$ ) and percentage of time in each HR zone showed large-to-very large variability ( $CV = 36.2\text{--}128.4\%$ ). Mean heart rate ( $HR_{\text{mean}}$ ),  $HR_{\text{peak}}$ , distance covered at 5–7, 13–16 and >20 km/h, and percentage of time above  $95\%HR_{\text{peak}}$  were the most reliable variables ( $ICC = 0.74\text{--}0.79$ ), followed by total distance covered, peak speed, and percentage of time at  $80\text{--}90\%HR_{\text{peak}}$  ( $ICC = 0.39\text{--}0.67$ ). The lowest reliability was observed for distance covered in the moderate speed zones 7–9 km/h ( $ICC = 0.12$ ) and 9–13 km/h ( $ICC = 0.09$ ), and percentage of time at  $70\text{--}80\%HR_{\text{peak}}$  ( $ICC = -0.01$ ). *Conclusions:* Small sided games can be used when planning training-induced exercise responses in relation to total distance covered, peak speed, and mean heart rate. This evidence further supports the use of SSG when

- 27 organizing recreational football training, in young adult males, with the purpose of improving
- 28 health profile due to high reproducibility of  $HR_{\text{mean}}$  and total distance covered.
- 29 Key words: soccer, activity profile, GPS, movement pattern.

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30 One of the most important public health priorities is to increase the levels of physical  
31 activity according to recommendations and guidelines (WHO, 2013). However, a large number  
32 of adults worldwide do not meet the usual recommendations, due to lack of interest or  
33 motivation (Kilpatrick, Hebert & Bartholomew, 2005). Consequently, sport-based physical  
34 activities have been introduced as being highly motivating compared with conventional  
35 exercise programmes for improving wellbeing and fitness (Castagna, de Sousa, Krustrup &  
36 Kirkendall, 2018; Milanović, Pantelić, Čović, Sporiš & Krustrup, 2015). However, these  
37 activities can vary greatly in terms of physical and physiological responses (Randers, Orntoft,  
38 Hagman, Nielsen & Krustrup, 2018), therefore determining the reproducibility of training load  
39 is of great importance.

40 Recreational small-sided football has received a lot of attention in recent years due to  
41 its broad spectrum health-related fitness benefits regardless of gender and fitness level  
42 (Milanović et al., 2018). Many factors can influence the intensity of small-sided games (SSG),  
43 including pitch size, game duration, and number of players (Randers, Nielsen, Bangsbo, &  
44 Krustrup, 2014; Randers et al., 2010; Randers, Ørntoft, Hagman, Nielsen, & Krustrup, 2018).  
45 It is therefore of major importance to understand the internal and external load components of  
46 recreational football. Previous studies (Milanovic, Pantelic, Covic, Sporis & Krustrup, 2015;  
47 Milanović et al., 2018; Randers et al., 2010) have established an average intensity of 80–85%  
48 of maximal heart rate ( $HR_{max}$ ), with 15–50% of total training time in the highest aerobic  
49 training zone above 90%  $HR_{max}$ , total distance of 3–4 km, including ~900 intermittent activity  
50 changes, and 100 high-intensity runs during one recreational football game. However, little is  
51 known about the reproducibility of the internal and external load components of 5-a-side  
52 recreational football in young adult males, despite it is the most applicable game format.

53 A recent study (Beato, Jamil & Devereux, 2018) has proven the reliability of internal  
54 and external load parameters in recreational football. After replicating matches, the authors

55 found very high reliability for mean HR (ICC = 0.82), percentage of maximal heart rate (ICC  
56 = 0.78), total distance covered (ICC = 0.66), high-speed running (ICC = 0.77), and acceleration  
57 (ICC = 0.62). Moreover, Beato (2018) has proven the reliability of internal and external load  
58 parameters in 6-a-side and 7-a-side recreational football, presenting high consistency in the  
59 produced workload for both formats. However, the reliability of work rate, player load, and  
60 distance covered in different speed zones, and fraction of training time in each heart-rate zone  
61 remains unproven due to the scarcity of research attention.

62 Most studies on SSGs have dealt with professional players (Aguiar, Botelho, Goncalves  
63 & Sampaio, 2013; Dellal et al., 2008; Dellal, Drust & Lago-Penas, 2012; Little & Williams,  
64 2007; Owen, Wong del, McKenna & Dellal, 2011) or amateur players (Dellal, Hill-Haas, Lago-  
65 Penas & Chamari, 2011), whereas less attention has been given to untrained individuals  
66 (Randers et al., 2010). At the moment, the assertion of internal and external load in recreational  
67 small-sided football has not been established in details and this raises the question of the  
68 reliability of load parameters in untrained young adult males. Limited evidence is available  
69 regarding work rate, player load and distance covered in different speed zones elicited during  
70 recreational football SSG, with most of the available data focused on only total distance  
71 covered (Beato, 2018; Beato et al., 2018). All aforementioned activity parameters provides  
72 insight into the physical workloads which is associated with physical fitness and health.  
73 Specifically larger amount of time spend in higher intensity zones (>85% HRmax) improves  
74 cardiorespiratory fitness more likely than moderate continuous running despite average  
75 intensity is similar during both training mode (Milanović, Sporiš & Weston, 2015). However,  
76 excessive workload or large amount of high intensity running in recreational players may  
77 contribute to overreaching, therefore workloads should be evaluated. Therefore, the  
78 reproducibility of internal load distribution is considered as an important in examining whether  
79 cardiovascular stress is consistent during recreational football. Consequently, further

80 investigation on this topic using separate analysis for each speed zone or each heart-rate zone  
81 are needed to better understand reproducibility of load distribution and amount of high intensity  
82 running encountered during football SSG in recreational players. Although the variability of  
83 the physical and physiological responses during recreational SSGs has been previously  
84 mentioned, an understanding of the reproducibility of the physiological responses and  
85 movement demands of these games when completed between different training sessions is also  
86 important. On this basis, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the reproducibility of internal  
87 and external load parameters during recreational small-sided football games. We hypothesised  
88 that recreational 5-a-side football games will produce similar internal and external load during  
89 different training sessions in young adult males.

## 90 **Methods**

### 91 **Participants**

92 Ten healthy untrained **young adult** males (age:  $20.2 \pm 3.9$  yr, body mass:  $69.2 \pm 6.3$  kg,  
93 height:  $175.4 \pm 5.9$  cm, body fat:  $19.7 \pm 5.2\%$ ) participated in the study. The participants were  
94 instructed to avoid any type of physical exercise for 3 days before the first and second  
95 recreational football sessions. Additionally, they were instructed to maintain their normal daily  
96 routines, including dietary habits. All the participants were non-smokers and free from injury  
97 and medical conditions based on self-reported data obtained through structured interviews. All  
98 the participants were informed of the study procedures and provided written informed consent  
99 prior to participation. All procedures were approved by an institutional Human Research Ethics  
100 Committee.

### 101 **Procedures**

102 The experimental design of the study was similar to that of a previous manuscript  
103 (Pantelić et al., 2018). The participants performed two training sessions of four versus four plus  
104 goalkeeper (4v4+GK) 1 week apart on a standard, outdoor, artificial grass pitch. Both training  
105 sessions were conducted on the 40x20-m pitch, with a relative pitch area of  $80 \text{ m}^2$  per player  
106 **and consistent goal sizes (2 m high x 3 m wide)**. Each training session lasted approximately 60  
107 min, including a 10-min low-intensity warm-up followed by 2x20-min periods of play  
108 interspersed with 5 min of passive rest and ending with a 5-min cool-down. Both sessions were  
109 performed between 10:00 and 11:00 under similar weather conditions (temperature:  $25.6 \pm 0.4^\circ$ ,  
110 humidity:  $40 \pm 1\%$ ). The warm-up, half-time and cool-down periods were not included in the  
111 analysis. The participants were not allocated playing positions. However, after every 5 minutes  
112 of each half, the goalkeeper was replaced by another player to give a balance between time as  
113 an outfield player and time as a goalkeeper. Both training sessions were supervised by one of  
114 the investigators, who also acted as referee. **Official football rules were used except for the**



115 offside rule. There was no external encouragement from other than the players themselves  
116 during sessions. Several additional balls were placed around the pitch to minimize the time that  
117 the ball was out of play and provide similar total session times with the ball in play.

118 Time-motion analysis was performed to measure the participants' movement using  
119 GPS units (MinimaxX S4, Catapult Sports, Canberra, Australia) at a 10-Hz sampling rate. A  
120 standard procedure was used during both training sessions, with a GPS unit placed in a harness  
121 on the player's upper back, as described by the manufacturer. The number of satellites during  
122 session one and session two was  $13.1 \pm 1.9$  and  $13.3 \pm 1.6$ , respectively. Furthermore, horizontal  
123 dilution of precision was similar for both sessions (session 1:  $0.87 \pm 0.14$ , session 2:  $0.86 \pm 0.11$ ).  
124 Total distance, work rate, heart rate, peak speed, number of efforts (speed zone entries), and  
125 distance covered at 0–2, 2–5, 5–7, 7–9, 9–13, 13–16, 16–20 and >20 km/h were measured. In  
126 addition, heart rate (HR) was measured during both sessions and expressed as absolute and  
127 relative to individual maximal heart rate ( $HR_{max}$ ).  $HR_{max}$  was determined as the highest  
128 observed HR during the two sessions (Randers et al., 2018). Relative HR is presented in HR  
129 zones <70, 70–80, 80–90, 90–95, and 95–100%  $HR_{max}$ . Player load (PL) was measured by the  
130 accelerometers built into the GPS units at a 100-Hz sampling rate. PL is an estimate of physical  
131 demand combining the instantaneous rate of change in acceleration in three planes.

### 132 **Statistical analysis**

133 Data analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (v19.0; IBM Corp., Armonk,  
134 NY, USA). Normality of data distribution and equality of variances were checked using the  
135 Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Levene's test for twelve and seven variables of external and  
136 internal load markers, respectively. All data are presented as means  $\pm$  standard deviation (SD)  
137 with 95% confidence intervals. A paired t-test was used to determine differences in player load,  
138 distance covered, and percentage of time in each training zone between session one and session

139 two. The Cohen's d effect size (ES) was also calculated for each outcome measure using the  
140 following formula:

$$141 \quad ES = (mean_1 - mean_2) / \sqrt{\frac{(\sigma_1^2 + \sigma_2^2)}{2}}$$

142 where  $mean_1$  and  $mean_2$  are the means for outcome measure in the first and second session,  $\sigma_1$   
143 and  $\sigma_2$  standard deviations for outcome measure in the first and second session. In order to  
144 determine the magnitude of the changes, the following criteria were used: *trivial* = <0.19, *small*  
145 = 0.20–0.59, *moderate* = 0.60–1.19, *large* = 1.20–1.99, and *very large* = >2.0 (Hopkins, 2007).  
146 For further reliability assessment, an established spreadsheet (Hopkins, 2007) was used to  
147 calculate the intraclass coefficient correlation (ICC), the coefficient of variation (CV), and the  
148 typical error of measurements (TE). ICC values were interpreted as: *low* = <0.10, *moderate* =  
149 0.11–0.30, *high* = 0.31–0.50, *very high* = 0.51–0.70, *nearly perfect* = 0.71–0.90 and *perfect* =  
150 0.91–1.0 (Hopkins, 2007). The statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

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## Results

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\*\*\*Table 1 about here\*\*\*

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The means±SD for each outcome measure performed during session 1 and session 2 are shown in Table 2. All variables were normally distributed. No statistical differences ( $p>0.05$ ) between session 1 and session 2 were found in any measures (Table 1). Trivial, non-significant differences between session 1 and session 2 were observed for total distance covered (ES=-0.06,  $p=0.865$ ), work rate (ES=-0.06,  $p=0.883$ ), player load (ES=0.17,  $p=0.608$ ), peak heart rate (HR<sub>peak</sub>) (ES=-0.04,  $p=0.881$ ), and peak speed (ES=0.08,  $p=0.785$ ). Moreover, trivial to small changes were noted for distance covered in different speed zones and percentage of time in each heart rate zone, with ES ranging from 0.04 – 0.54 and 0.17 – 0.47, respectively.

Test-retest variability and reliability statistics for outcomes measures are displayed in Table 2. Minimal test-retest variability was noted for mean and peak heart rate relative to HR<sub>peak</sub> with CV of 3.4% and 2.6%, respectively (Table 2). Both HR<sub>mean</sub> (CV=6.0%) and HR<sub>peak</sub> (CV=4.2%) showed very low variability between session 1 and session 2. In addition, total distance covered (CV=7.8%), work rate (CV=7.9%), distance covered at 2–5 km/h (CV=8.5%), and peak speed (CV=8.5%) demonstrated acceptable variability. Moderate test-retest variability was observed for total player load (CV=12.9%) and player load per minute (CV=12.6%). However, the majority of distance covered in different speed zones showed large test-retest variability (CV=15.7–47.6%). Also, percentage of time in each heart rate zone showed very large variability (CV=36.2–128.4%).

HR<sub>mean</sub>, HR<sub>peak</sub>, distance covered at 5–7, 13–16, and 20–39 km/h and percentage of time above 95% HR<sub>peak</sub> were the most reliable variables with nearly perfect ICC ranging between 0.74 and 0.79. High to very high reliability was noted for total distance covered (ICC=0.39), work rate (ICC=0.39), player load (ICC=0.54), player load per minute (ICC=0.54),

177 peak speed (ICC=0.63), and percentage of time at 80–90%  $HR_{peak}$  (ICC=0.67). Distance  
178 covered at 0–2 km/h (ICC=0.32) and 2–5 km/h (ICC= 0.59) were also highly reliable. In  
179 contrast, the lowest reliability was observed for distance covered in the moderate speed zones  
180 7–9 km/h (ICC=0.12) and 9–13 km/h (ICC=-0.09), and for percentage of time at 70–80%  
181  $HR_{peak}$  (ICC=-0.01).

182 *\*\*\*Table 2 about here\*\*\**

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## Discussion

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The aim of this study was to determine reproducibility in external and internal workload measures during recreational SSG. As expected, reproducibility was higher for internal measures than external measures of workload. These results indicate acceptable reproducibility for absolute HR responses and external load measures, including total distance covered, work rate, and peak speed.

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Relative reproducibility refers to the magnitude of the association of repeated measurements by quantifying the correlation between them (ICC), while absolute reliability refers to the variability of the outcomes from trial to trial (within-participant variability, CV) (Atkinson & Nevill, 1998; Hopkins, 2000). The reproducibility of internal load measures is important in examining whether cardiovascular stress is consistent within football players. A nearly perfect relative reproducibility rating was noted for absolute HR responses ( $HR_{\text{mean}}$ : ICC=0.74;  $HR_{\text{peak}}$ : ICC=0.75), while small non-significant test-retest differences were observed ( $HR_{\text{mean}}$ : ES=0.26;  $HR_{\text{peak}}$ : ES=0.24). These findings are congruent with past research reporting an 'excellent' relative reliability score for  $HR_{\text{mean}}$  (ICC=0.66–0.82) in middle-aged recreational football players (Beato, 2018; Beato et al., 2018). In addition to relative reproducibility, our absolute reproducibility HR data (CV=2.56–6.03) were slightly higher compared with the results in young (CV=2.2–3.4%) (da Silva et al., 2011) and professional football players (CV=1.3–2.8%) (Little & Williams, 2006). Lower within-participant variability in young and professional players could be explained as a logical consequence of the selection process. In addition to mean HR response, it is also important to consider the amount of time spent in certain relative HR zones. As far as we know, this is the first study to report on the test-retest variation in HR zones during recreational SSG in football, and thus comparison with previous literature is not possible. In contrast to running-based conditioning, where workload intensity can be easily manipulated, the unpredictable and intermittent nature

208 of SSG makes it impossible to constrain the intensity of activities within specific HR zones  
209 throughout the game. Consequently, percentage of time in each heart rate zone showed very  
210 large variability (CV=36.2–128.4%). Nevertheless, overall these data suggest that SSG  
211 provides reliable internal mean HR responses and should therefore be used as an effective  
212 strategy for developing and maintaining cardiorespiratory fitness.

213 The evaluation of external load measures provides a better understanding of the  
214 requirements of recreational football. Pairwise comparisons showed trivial to small non-  
215 significant differences across test-retest trials in external load measures, demonstrating the  
216 absence of learning effect. High to nearly perfect relative reproducibility was noted for total  
217 distance covered (ICC=0.39), work rate (ICC=0.39), player load (ICC=0.54), player load per  
218 min (ICC=0.54), peak speed (ICC=0.63), and distance covered at 0–2, 2–5, 5–7, 13–16, 16–20  
219 and >20 km/h (ICC=0.32–0.75). The relative reliability for total distance covered was  
220 congruent with past research reporting ‘good’ (0.66) (Beato et al., 2018), and ‘excellent’ ICC  
221 (0.82) (Beato, 2018). Likewise, distance covered (CV=7.8%), work rate (CV=7.9%), and peak  
222 speed (CV=8.5%) demonstrated acceptable absolute reproducibility. Knowledge of this  
223 reliability data allows researchers to detect ‘real’ changes in distance covered, work rate and  
224 peak speed during intervention-type studies. In contrast, our absolute reproducibility data  
225 across running speeds displayed greater variability, suggesting that external load demands  
226 encountered during SSG are inconsistent. These findings parallel those observed in elite young  
227 soccer players (1 vs 1 and 2 vs 2), who exhibited large variance (CV=13.6–141.1%) in very-  
228 high-speed running (19.9–25.2 km/h) and sprinting (>25 km/h) (Ade, Harley & Bradley, 2014).  
229 It is difficult to make CV comparisons by speed zone between our results and those produced  
230 previously due to disparities in methodological procedures, including activity categorisation  
231 and game format. It should be noted that GPS receivers generally report greater variability at  
232 higher speed thresholds (Hill-Haas, Dawson, Impellizzeri & Coutts, 2011). In addition, these

233 results are somewhat inevitable when considering the inherent characteristics of SSG, such as  
234 unpredictability and complexity, requiring players to adapt their actions to situational demands.  
235 Based on these results, readers should be cognisant of these values when interpreting changes  
236 in the aforementioned variables. Our findings were obtained in recreational football players, so  
237 the applicability of these results remains limited to other playing groups given that  
238 physiological response and external load have been shown to differ according to playing level.

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#### **What does this article add?**

241 The SSG is a reliable protocol that can be used to profile exercise-induced change in  
242 HR response, total distance covered, work rate, and peak speed, so the aforementioned  
243 variables can be used to investigate the effect of a game format (number of players,  
244 presence/absence of goalkeepers, continuous vs interval regime) on exercise intensity as well  
245 as the efficacy of training interventions in recreational football players. However, the  
246 inconsistent findings for HR zones and speed zones generated by the GPS receiver should be  
247 considered by researchers when interpreting these measures across intervention-type studies.

248

249 **Funding:** The authors have no support or funding to report.

250 **Conflict of interest statement:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest with  
251 reference to this paper.

252 **Competing interests:** None

253

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**Table 1.** Differences between session 1 and 2 in internal and external loading for small-sided recreational football games for young adults

|   | <b>Session 1</b> | <b>Session 2</b> | <b>Mean Difference</b> | <b>Effect size</b>  | <b>% diff</b> | <b>p-value</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Mean ± SD</b> | <b>Mean ± SD</b> | <b>(95%CI)</b>         | <b>(95%CI)</b>      |               |                |
| <b>Internal and external load</b>                 |                  |                  |                        |                     |               |                |
| Distance covered (m)                              | 3597±240         | 3615±322         | -17.9 (-249.6, 213.8)  | -0.06 (-0.94, 0.81) | -0.5          | .865           |
| Work rate (m/min)                                 | 89.90±6.10       | 90.30±8.10       | -0.4 (-6.4, 5.6)       | -0.06 (-0.93, 0.82) | -0.4          | .883           |
| Player Load (AU)                                  | 367.60±44.22     | 359.6±49.47      | 8.0 (-26.1, 42.1)      | 0.17 (-0.71, 1.05)  | 2.2           | .608           |
| Player load per min (m/min)                       | 9.30±1.06        | 9.00±1.25        | 0.3 (-0.7, 1.3)        | 0.26 (-0.62, 1.14)  | 3.3           | .520           |
| HRmean (bpm)                                      | 166±9            | 164±10           | 2.4 (-3.2, 8.0)        | 0.24 (-0.64, 1.12)  | 1.5           | .355           |
| HRpeak (bpm)                                      | 189±8            | 190±8            | -0.3 (-4.7, 4.1)       | -0.04 (-0.91, 0.84) | -0.2          | .881           |
| HRmean (%HRpeak)                                  | 85.86±2.10       | 84.65±3.68       | 1.2 (-1.7, 4.1)        | 0.40 (-0.48, 1.29)  | 1.4           | .373           |
| HRpeak (%HRpeak)                                  | 97.9±2.4         | 98.1±2.6         | -0.2 (-2.5, 2.2)       | -0.06 (-0.94, 0.81) | -0.2          | .879           |
| Peak speed (km/h)                                 | 24.7±1.9         | 24.5±2.3         | 0.2 (-1.2, 1.5)        | 0.08 (-0.80, 0.96)  | 0.7           | .785           |
| <b>Distance covered in speed zones</b>            |                  |                  |                        |                     |               |                |
| 0-2 km/h  | 100±21           | 90±14            | 9.3 (-5.9, 24.5)       | 0.52 (-0.37, 1.41)  | 10.3          | .199           |
| 2-5 km/h  | 1002±67          | 1024±106         | -22.8 (-84.0, 38.4)    | -0.26 (-1.14, 0.62) | -2.2          | .421           |
| 5-7 km/h  | 642±73           | 634±92           | 7.9 (-38.9, 54.7)      | 0.09 (-0.78, 0.97)  | 1.3           | .712           |
| 7-9 km/h  | 442±76           | 432±83           | 9.8 (-66.5, 86.1)      | 0.12 (-0.75, 1.00)  | 2.3           | .778           |
| 9-13 km/h   | 754±125          | 760±113          | -5.6 (-130.5, 119.3)   | -0.05 (-0.92, 0.83) | -0.7          | .921           |
| 13-16 km/h  | 322±67           | 359±83           | -36.8 (-78.6, 5.0)     | -0.49 (-1.37, 0.40) | -10.3         | .078           |
| 16-20 km/h  | 235±50           | 237±71           | -2.7 (-46.0, 40.6)     | -0.04 (-0.92, 0.83) | -1.1          | .891           |
| >20 km/h  | 101±42           | 78±43            | 23.0 (-0.9, 46.9)      | 0.54 (-0.35, 1.43)  | 29.6          | .058           |
| <b>Percentage of time in each heart rate zone</b> |                  |                  |                        |                     |               |                |
| <70 %   | 6.9±5.5          | 8.0±6.8          | -1.1 (-7.7, 5.6)       | -0.17 (-1.05, 0.70) | -13.4         | .724           |
| 70-80 %   | 13.8±5.3         | 12.3±4.2         | 1.5 (-3.3, 6.3)        | 0.31 (-0.57, 1.20)  | 12.2          | .501           |
| 80-90 %   | 34.9±14.1        | 41.9±15.3        | -7.0 (-16.2, 2.3)      | -0.47 (-1.36, 0.41) | -16.6         | .121           |
| 90-95 %   | 31.4±7.4         | 29.0±14.6        | 2.4 (-8.3, 13.1)       | 0.21 (-0.67, 1.09)  | 8.4           | .620           |
| 95-100 %  | 13.0±13.7        | 8.9±14.3         | 4.1 (-3.0, 11.3)       | 0.29 (-0.59, 1.18)  | 46.6          | .224           |
| 90-100 %  | 44.3±13.6        | 37.8±22.3        | 6.5 (-9.3, 22.4)       | 0.35 (-0.53, 1.24)  | 17.3          | .375           |

CI – confidence interval

**Table 2.** Reliability statistics for internal and external training load between session 1 and 2 for young adults

|   | <b>TE (95% CI)</b>      | <b>ICC (95% CI)</b> | <b>%CV (95% CI)</b>    |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Internal load</b>                              |                         |                     |                        |
| Distance covered (m)                              | 229.04 (157.54, 418.14) | 0.39 (-0.27, 0.81)  | 7.80 (7.41, 8.18)      |
| Work rate (m/min)                                 | 5.72 (3.94, 10.45)      | 0.39 (-0.27, 0.81)  | 7.88 (7.49, 8.26)      |
| Player Load (AU)                                  | 33.67 (23.16, 61.46)    | 0.54 (-0.09, 0.86)  | 12.88 (11.77, 14.00)   |
| Player load per min (m/min)                       | 0.84 (0.58, 1.54)       | 0.54 (-0.09, 0.86)  | 12.60 (11.49, 13.72)   |
| HRmean (bpm)                                      | 5.51 (3.79, 10.06)      | 0.74 (0.26, 0.93)   | 6.03 (5.81, 6.24)      |
| HRpeak (bpm)                                      | 4.35 (2.99, 7.94)       | 0.75 (0.26, 0.93)   | 4.15 (4.05, 4.25)      |
| HRmean (%HRpeak)                                  | 2.88 (1.98, 5.26)       | 0.08 (-0.55, 0.65)  | 3.39 (3.31, 3.46)      |
| HRpeak (%HRpeak)                                  | 2.29 (1.58, 4.19)       | 0.19 (-0.46, 0.71)  | 2.56 (2.52, 2.60)      |
| Peak speed (km/h)                                 | 1.35 (0.93, 2.47)       | 0.63 (0.05, 0.89)   | 8.45 (8.02, 8.87)      |
| <b>Distance covered in speed zones</b>            |                         |                     |                        |
| 0-2 km/h  | 15.01 (10.33, 27.41)    | 0.32 (-0.35, 0.77)  | 18.35 (16.06, 20.64)   |
| 2-5 km/h  | 60.47 (41.59, 110.39)   | 0.59 (-0.02, 0.88)  | 8.52 (8.08, 8.95)      |
| 5-7 km/h  | 46.28 (31.83, 84.48)    | 0.74 (0.25, 0.93)   | 12.95 (11.88, 14.03)   |
| 7-9 km/h  | 75.39 (51.86, 137.63)   | 0.12 (-0.52, 0.67)  | 18.24 (16.06, 20.41)   |
| 9-13 km/h   | 123.51 (84.95, 225.46)  | -0.09 (-0.65, 0.54) | 15.71 (14.18, 17.24)   |
| 13-16 km/h  | 41.36 (28.45, 75.50)    | 0.75 (0.27, 0.93)   | 22.10 (18.18, 26.02)   |
| 16-20 km/h  | 42.79 (29.43, 78.12)    | 0.57 (-0.05, 0.87)  | 25.65 (19.47, 31.83)   |
| >20 km/h  | 23.65 (16.27, 43.18)    | 0.74 (0.25, 0.93)   | 47.59 (-45.21, 140.38) |
| <b>Percentage of time in each heart rate zone</b> |                         |                     |                        |
| <70 %   | 6.56 (4.51, 11.97)      | -0.16 (-0.70, 0.49) | 81.71 (-68.82, 232.24) |
| 70-80 %   | 4.78 (3.29, 8.72)       | -0.01 (-0.61, 0.6)  | 36.23 (29.5, 42.95)    |
| 80-90 %   | 9.11 (6.26, 16.62)      | 0.67 (0.12, 0.91)   | 38.29 (12.63, 63.96)   |
| 90-95 %   | 10.54 (7.25, 19.25)     | 0.19 (-0.46, 0.71)  | 36.47 (-26.10, 99.04)  |
| 95-100 %  | 7.06 (4.86, 12.89)      | 0.79 (0.37, 0.94)   | 128.44 (35.03, 221.85) |
| 90-100 %  | 15.66 (10.77, 28.6)     | 0.32 (-0.35, 0.77)  | 43.66 (-52.35, 139.67) |

TE – typical error; ICC – interclass correlation; CV – coefficient of variation