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A COMPARISON OF FITNESS SCORES BETWEEN INJURED AND UNINJURED POLICE CADETS

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METHODS

Archival data for police cadets (n=81) from two 27-week state patrol training academy and their uninjured counterparts. Methods: Archival data for eighty-one cadets from two 27-week state patrol training cohorts were utilized for this analysis. This data was collected as part of the agency’s normal training academy fitness assessment prior to commencement of training. The data included self-reported age (yrs); height (in) and weight (lbs); and push-up, sit-up, vertical jump and 20 meter multi-stage fitness test (20m-MSFT) scores. Injury was defined as any musculoskeletal damage that resulted in the cadet being assigned to altered training duty or that led to exit from the training academy. Injuries were routinely documented by the state patrol training staff and provided to the primary investigator for analysis. Fifteen cadets reported an injury during their time at the training academy. Independent t-tests were performed to examine mean score differences between injured and uninjured cadets. The level of statistical significance was set a priori at 0.05. Results: Descriptive data for both injured and uninjured groups is presented in Table 1, with any significant differences between injured and uninjured personnel in mean scores on the measured variables indicated by an asterisk. Injured personnel were significantly older and exhibited poorer push-up, sit-up, vertical jump and 20m-MSFT performance at baseline than their uninjured counterparts. Conclusion: There were significant mean score differences in age and fitness levels between injured and non-injured state patrol cadets attending academy training, with injured cadets being significantly older and less conditioned. Practical application: Initial fitness levels may impact a cadet’s chance of successfully completing their academy training. Subsequently, acceptable, and legally defensible, entry level standards may reduce injuries (and associated costs) and improve cadet retention.

RESULTS

- Descriptive data for both injured and uninjured groups is presented in Table 1.
- Significant differences between injured and uninjured personnel in mean scores on the measured variables indicated by an asterisk.
- Injured personnel were significantly older and exhibited poorer performance at baseline than their uninjured counterparts in test scores on 1 minute push-up and sit-up scores, vertical jump height and shuttle score on the 20m-MSFT.

REFERENCES