

Biological Maturity in Selection of Young Athletes – Example from Basketball

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Abstract

In children's sports, the basis for top sporting results is created. The selection of young athletes is a dynamic management process focused on the selection of individuals who possess the desirable - optimal morphological, physical and psychological conditions for achieving top results in the future. Biological maturity and chronological age are important factors for the selection of young athletes. Differences among child athletes of various chronological ages are in most cases clearly noticeable in most anthropometric measurements (especially body height), as well as in their motor, functional and cognitive abilities. Biologically mature young athletes often achieve better competitive results than those with less biological maturity. Therefore, in sport practice (even in basketball), in the selection process, they are more often chosen biologically mature (and average) than those who are biologically late and they are often born in the first part of the year, from January to June. There are a small number of studies dealing with the problem of differences among children / athletes of the same chronological age, except for studies related to the impact of the relative age effect. A survey conducted on basketball players aged 14 (divided into three groups based on biological maturity: early, average and late) showed that average maturers achieved the best results in almost all variables, while late maturers achieved the worst results. Early maturers achieved the best results only in one variable - medicine ball throwing. Harmonious chronological and biological growth and development give the best opportunity to express motor skills and skills based on morphological characteristics.