THE ROLE OF TESTOSTERONE IN ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

Based on our collective expertise and experience, the undersigned specialists in the sports science and sports medicine communities consider the following to be indisputable scientific facts:

1. The main physical attributes that contribute to elite athletic performance are:

- **power generation** (speed and strength), which is based on muscle mass, muscle fiber type, and biomechanics;
- **aerobic power** (VO2 max), which is based on hemoglobin concentration, total blood volume, maximal stroke volume, cardiac size/mass/compliance, skeletal muscle blood flow, capillary density, and mitochondrial content;
- **body composition**, i.e., lean body mass and fat mass;
- fuel utilization, i.e., glycogen breakdown and anaerobic capacity; and
- economy of motion.

2. Biological males and biological females are materially different with respect to these attributes.

Compared to biological females, biological males have greater lean body mass (more skeletal muscle and less fat), larger hearts (both in absolute terms and scaled to lean body mass), higher cardiac outputs, larger hemoglobin mass, larger VO2 max (also both in absolute terms and scaled to lean body mass), greater glycogen utilization, higher anaerobic capacity, and different economy of motion.

3. The primary reason for these sex differences in the physical attributes that contribute to elite (> 99th percentile) athletic performance is exposure in gonadal males with functional androgen receptors to much higher levels of testosterone during growth and development (puberty), and throughout the athletic career.

No other endogenous physical or physiological factors have been identified as contributing substantially and predominantly to these differences. As a policy matter, the exogenous factors that influence elite athletic performance – nutrition, training, sports psychology, environmental manipulation, sports medicine techniques, etc. – should be equally accessible to biological male and biological female athletes.

4. Therefore, the primary driver of the sex difference in elite athletic performance is exposure in biological males to much higher levels of testosterone during growth, development, and throughout the athletic career.

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Benjamin D. Levine MD, FACSM, FAHA, FACC

Professor of Medicine and Cardiology, Distinguished Professor of Exercise Science -University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center; Director, Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine - Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas; Fellow - American College of Sports Medicine, Cardiovascular Section of the American Physiological Society, American Heart Association, American College of Cardiology.

Míchael J. Joyner

Michael J. Joyner, MD

Professor of Anesthesiology in the Departments of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine and Physiology & Biomedical Engineering at the Mayo Clinic Rochester; Trustee of the American College of Sports Medicine; Co-Chair CTSA National Regulatory Knowledge and Support Committee, National Institutes of Health.

Thible R. Kett

NiCole R. Keith, Ph.D., FACSM

Professor of Kinesiology at Indiana University; American College of Sports Medicine Advisory Board; Chair, National Physical Activity Plan Revision Diversity Committee; National Physical Activity Plan Revision Executive Committee; American College of Sports Medicine Strategic Health Initiative for HealthEquity Committee; Exercise is Medicine Advisory Board.

Aaron L. Baggish, MD, FACC, FACM

Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Director, Cardiovascular Performance Program, Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Baggish's research focuses on heart function and heart disease in athletic individuals. Dr. Baggish is medical director for the Boston Marathon and serves as team cardiologist for the New England Patriots, the Boston Bruins, the New England Revolution, US Men's and Women's Soccer, and US Rowing.

Baule her Lede

Bente Klarlund Pedersen, MD, DMSc

Professor of Integrative Medicine, Director of Centre of Inflammation and Metabolism (CIM) and Centre for Physical Activity Research (CFAS), Rigshospitalet and University of Copenhagen. Former Director of the Copenhagen Muscle Research Center.

Walter Schmidt Walter Schmidt, MD Head of Department of Sports Medicine / Sports Physiology, University of Bayreuth.

Nina Stachenfeld

Nina Stachenfeld, Ph.D. Fellow, John B. Pierce Laboratory, Obstetrics Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences at the Yale School of Medicine

girad

Olivier Girard, Ph.D. & FECSS Research (sport) Scientist and Senior Lecturer in Exercise Science at Murdoch University in Perth (Western Australia).

Ryoichí Nagatomi

Ryoichi Nagatomi, Ph.D. & MD

Professor of Health and Sports Science at the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering and School of Medicine, Tohoku University; Vice dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering, Tohoku University; Vice President of Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine; Fellow of the European College of Sports Science; Board member of the International Society of Exercise and Immunology.

Col

Carl Foster, Ph.D., FACSM

Professor of Exercise and Sport Science, Director, Human Performance Laboratory, Director of Research, Clinical Exercise Physiology Graduate Program, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; Fellow, American College of Sports Medicine.

Kazunobu Okazakí

Kazunobu Okazaki, Ph.D.

Professor, Research Center for Urban Health and Sports, Osaka City University and Department of Environmental Physiology for Exercise, Osaka City University Graduate School of Medicine.

Frent Stettingh

Trent Stellingwerff, Ph.D., FACSM

Director of Performance – Canadian Sport Institute Pacific; Athletics Canada – Sport Science, Sports Medicine and Innovation Lead; Adjunct Professor - Kinesiology Department, University of British Columbia; Adjunct Professor - Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education, University of Victoria; Member of Own The Podium Innovation & Research Advisory Council; Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Zhao, Jiexíu Zhao, Jiexiu Professor, Vice-president of China Institute of Sport Science, Vice-president Asia of International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), Secretary-general of Chinese Association of Exercise Physiology.

Susanne J Robson Susanne J Robson, Ph.D., M.Sc. Specializing in Female Sports Endocrinology and Neurophysiology; Smartabase Product Manager and Head Sports Scientist, Fusion Sport Pty Ltd.



Damian M. Bailey, Ph.D., FPVRI FRSC FACSM FPS

Professor of Physiology & Biochemistry and Head of the Neurovascular Research Laboratory at University of South Wales (UK); Royal Society Wolfson Research Fellow.

bosult

Andrew Bosch, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Division of Exercise Science & Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology, University of Cape Town; Chair of ACSM Endurance Athlete Medicine & Science interest group; Member of Scientific Commission of the South African Institute for Drug Free Sport; Member of International Association of Ultra-Running Medical Committee; Co-leader of the sub2 hour marathon project.

Robyn M. Murphy Robyn M. Murphy, PhD

Professor and Head, Department of Biochemistry and Genetics, LaTrobe Institute for Molecular Science, La Trobe University – Melbourne; Executive Member, Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Research Focus Area; Chair, International Biochemistry of Exercise conference.

Qiu Jun

在此处键入文本

Jun Qiu

Professor of Elite Athletes Performance Research & Exercise Physiology at Shanghai Research Institute of Sports Science; Vice Director of Shanghai Research Institute of Sports Science; Director of Shanghai Society of Exercise Physiology & Biochemistry

Herbert Löllgen, MD, Ph.D., FAHA, FACC, FFIMS

Professor of Internal Medicine and Cardiology at the University of Mainz, Germany; Sport Cardiology; Space Medicine, Cardiology Consultant to ESA; Member of Executive Commission, EFSMA; Past – President, German Federation of Sports Medicine.

Jere Mítchell Jere Mitchell, MD

S. Roger and Carolyn P. Horchow Chair in Cardiac Research, Departments of Internal Medicine and Physiology at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Specializing in Cardiovascular response and adaptation to exercise and neural control of circulation during exercise. Distinguished Scientist Award, American College of Cardiology; Carl J. Wiggers Award, CV Section, American Physiological Society; Honor Award, American College of Sports Medicine.

/ Jay T. Kearney, Ph.D., Fellow ACSM

Jay Kearney, Ph.D., Fellow ACSM

Retired Director of Sports Science and Senior Sports Scientist at the United States Olympic Committee; Professor and Chair, University of Kentucky Department of HPER; Performance Consultant, Osprey Leadership Consulting; 1980 Olympian.

Marth

Jessica M. Scott, Ph.D. Assistant Member, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; Assistant Professor, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY, USA; Member, American College of Sports Medicine; specializing in exercise and cardiovascular outcomes.

Carsten Lundby Carsten Lundby

Professor of Integrative Human Physiology at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark; and of Exercise Physiology at the University College of Lillehammer, Norway.

Jurgen Steinacker, MD, Dr. hc

Dr. med. Dr. hc., Full Professor of Sports- and Rehabilitation Medicine and Cardiology Division of Sports- und Rehabilitation Medicine at Ulm University Hospital, Chair, Sports Medicine Commission, World Rowing Federation (FISA), Chair, European Initiative for Exercise in Medicine.

Stoff Try-

Scott Trappe, Ph.D., FACSM

John and Janice Fisher Endowed Chair of Exercise Science, Director, Human Performance Laboratory, Director, Human Bioenergetics Program at Ball State University.

X.L. A. PALDIND

André La Gerche MD, Ph.D., FRACP, FESC

Director, National Centre for Sports Cardiology Australia. Head, Sports Cardiology Lab and Domain Head, Clinical Research – Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute. Cardiologist at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne. Member of the EAPC Sports Cardiology Section Nucleus

増木静江

Shizue Masuki, Ph.D.

Professor of Sports Medical Sciences, Shinshu University Graduate School of Medicine, Matsumoto, Japan.

Roley & Roal

Robert Roach

Director, Altitude Research Center, Co-Chair, International Hypoxia Symposia, Division of Pulmonary Sciences and Critical Care Medicine, Department of Medicine at the University Colorado Anschutz Medical Center.

Suzanne M. Schneider

Suzanne M. Schneider, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, Department of Health and Exercise Sciences at the University of New Mexico.

Grégoire Millet Professor of Exercise Physiology, Institute of Sport Sciences, Faculty of Biology and Medicine, University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

Tomblest

Wendy M Kohrt, PhD, FACSM

Professor of Medicine in the Division of Geriatric Medicine, Nancy Anschutz Chair in Women's Health Research, University of Colorado – Anschutz Medical Campus

ilfan O Koberta

William O Roberts MD, MS, FACSM

Professor - Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; Past President American College of Sports Medicine, American College of Sports Medicine Clinical Medicine Advisory Committee.

William Ekjacom

William E. Kraus MD, FACSM, FAHA, FACC

Richard and Pat Johnson Distinguished University Professor of Cardiovascular Genomics; Professor of Medicine, Division of Cardiology, Duke School of Medicine; Professor, Division of Biomedical Engineering, Duke School of Engineering; Professor, Duke School of Nursing; Director of Translational Research, Duke Molecular Physiology Institute; Medical Director, Duke Cardiac Rehabilitation; Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine; the American Heart Association; and the American College of Cardiology.

Holly J. Benjamín Holly J. Benjamin, MD, FAAP, FACSM Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, Rehabilitation Medicine & Pediatrics Director of Primary Care Sports Medicine University of Chicago CJSM Associate Editor for CME ACSM Vice-President 2016-18

Jos J. de Koníng Jos J. de Koning, Ph.D., FACSM

Associate Professor of Human Movement Sciences at the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine; Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Sports Physiology and Performance

Hennes Jake

Hannes Gatterer, Ph.D. Senior Scientist and High Altitude Research Group Leader, Eurac Research, Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine

for Wehlin

Jon Peter Wehrlin, Ph.D Head Endurance Physiology Group, Section for Elite Sport, Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen, Switzerland. Head Research, Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen, Switzerland.

Nísha Charkoudían

Nisha Charkoudian, Ph.D., FACSM

Research Physiologist, Thermal & Mountain Medicine Division, U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine; Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Justín S. Lawley

Justin S. Lawley, Ph.D.

Professor and Chair of Physiology, Department of Sport Science, University of Innsbruck, Austria.

Maria T.E. Hopman, MD, Ph.D., FACSM

Professor of Integrative Physiology, Department of Physiology, Radboud University Medical Center, the Netherlands; Radboud Institutes for Health Sciences and Molecular Life Sciences.

Janavier

Professor John Hawley, Ph.D. Director, Mary MacKillop Institute for Health Research Director, Exercise and Nutrition Research Program Australian Catholic University