

# Injury Prevention Tournament Strategies for 055-065+ Soccer Players

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## Pre-Tournament

### Injury-prevention strategies in the weeks prior to participating in a 1-2 day 055-065+ masters soccer tournament



- Start your specific build up/preparation as early as possible prior to the tournament.
- Reduce/taper-off** from your usual high impact activities e.g., distance-speed running or football training/games (1-2 football sessions/week as a MAXIMUM or less! - don't play football to get fit - get fit to play!). If you do go for a run in this pre-tournament phase, avoid road running, reduce quantity and use softer terrain such as a turf field, a track or nature trails.
- Cross-train** whenever possible with activities that are less stressful on the joints and tissues and can still provide intensity training e.g., use the elliptical machine, stair-climber, rowing machine, upright stationary bike, hiking/speed walking, or swimming. For one of the cross-training sessions, perform an interval type bout (2-3 mins at a moderate to high intensity and then 2-3 mins at light intensity for 4 repeats) will help to better prepare you for the changes in running intensity that may be experienced in the tournament.
- Increase core conditioning exercises (e.g., strength training for major muscle groups) in weeks/month prior to the tournament.
- Warm-ups before each training session should last 15-20 mins.
- Ensure rest-day recovery periods in between any vigorous training sessions and don't overdo pre-tournament games/training exercises and increase risk of injury and non-participation!
- The two key range of motion losses that we experience with aging that are crucial to football are: Hip Extension and Thoracic Rotation → exercises in the videos will help to improve these two areas and get you feeling better on the pitch (video segment 1) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urSzJ-9035Y&list=PLvnuYLNfB5G6Pd\\_QtFBC-Q07oA14sKLE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urSzJ-9035Y&list=PLvnuYLNfB5G6Pd_QtFBC-Q07oA14sKLE)
- Calf and hamstring and quad strains are also very common injuries, so we have included some exercises to help strengthen these areas as well (video segment 2) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXI4Z6DsD4&list=PLvnuYLNfB5G6Pd\\_QtFBC-Q07oA14sKLE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXI4Z6DsD4&list=PLvnuYLNfB5G6Pd_QtFBC-Q07oA14sKLE)
- Post training and games, try to increase your fruit intake (natural anti-inflammatory) and protein consumption **within the first ½ hour of finishing**. Having a protein bar or shake and a small tin of fruit immediately post training is usually the fastest, easiest and most convenient way to do this).
- Drink water frequently throughout the session. Sports drinks can help to replenish electrolytes lost, particularly if the weather is warm, so using one interspersed with water is always a good idea.



### Specifics for Warm-up Pre-Training or Pre-Game

- Most of the time in masters/seniors football, the warm-ups get shorter and less comprehensive (players will often use the first 15 mins of the match to warm up!). The following guidelines will help to get your body feeling better for the start of the match and help prevent some of the non-contact injuries that occur due to poor preparation.
- Warm up should last 15 mins (can be a bit less in warmer weather).
- Start slow and gradually build the intensity.
- Ensure multidirectional movements (fwd/bwd/side to side/diagonal).
- There are many different ways to approach the warm up but a framework that seems to work well for players is: 5 mins of 4 directional jogging, 2 minutes of safe, dynamic stretches (video segment 3) <https://youtu.be/gjw9Mvya2PY>, then 5 mins of medium intensity running with 2 mins of further dynamic stretching followed by 1 minute of short, quicker 5 metre runs.
- Including the ball in the 5 minute running chunk will always help with motivation and compliance (video segment 4) <https://youtu.be/5MKrDCcew>



### Specifics for Cool-downs Post-Training or Post-Game

Most of the time in masters/seniors football, systematic cool-downs are non-existent. The following guidelines will help to get your body feeling better for the start of the next day or match and help prevent some of the non-contact injuries that occur due to poor post-game preparation.

- 5 mins of slow jogging.
- 5-6 stretches with 20-30 secs holds.
- Eat!+ Hydrate with water +/- sports drink.
- If you are able to do a light spin on a stationary bike for 10-15 mins in between games, even better.

In the longer term for months (rather than weeks) prior to a 5-a-side seniors football tournament, here is a sample training week for either one or two football sessions:

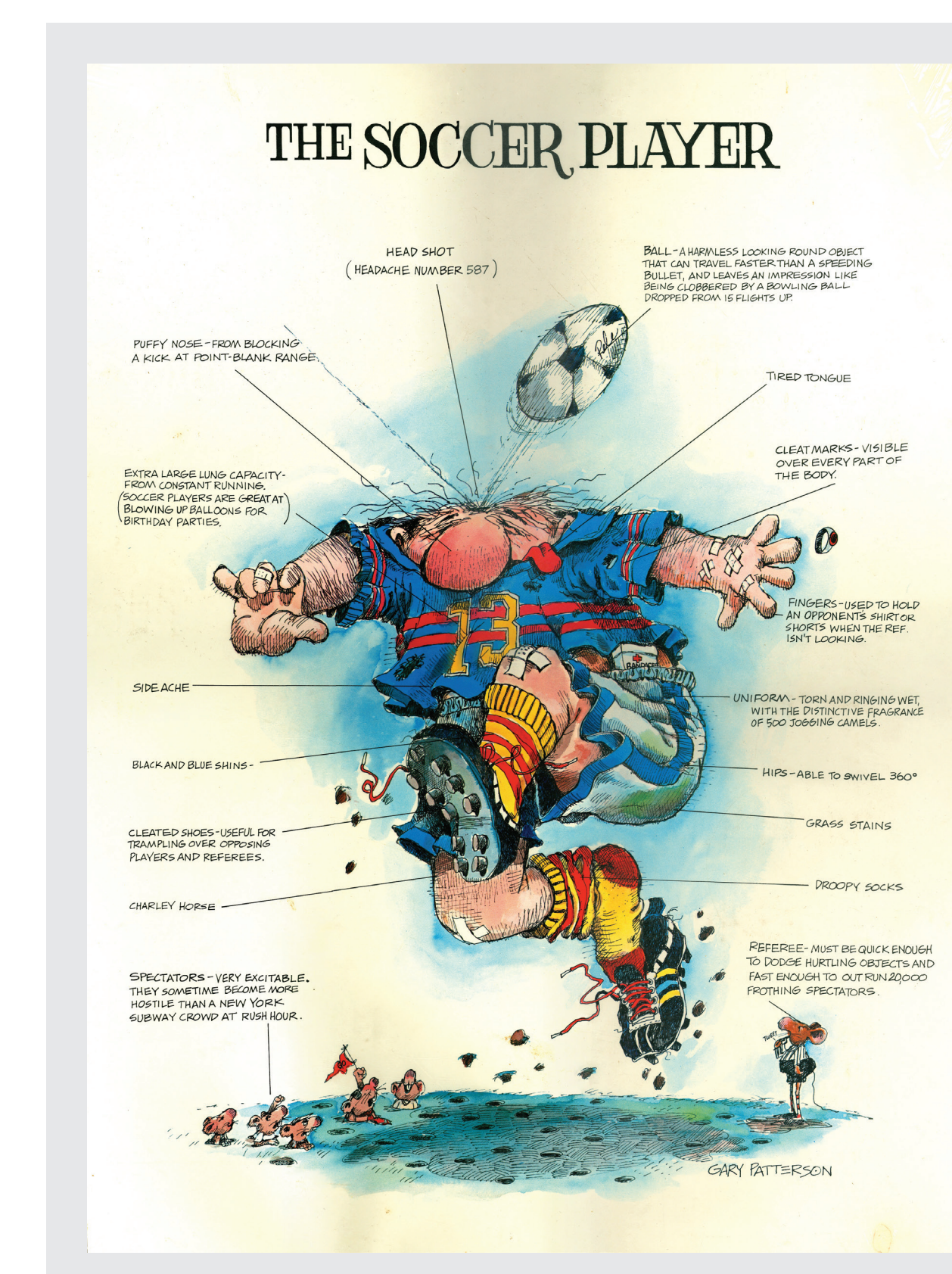
- Monday → 45-60 mins football session (e.g., similar age group, small-sided games).
- Tuesday → 15 mins on a stationary bike = light to moderate intensity + gentle stretch.
- Wednesday → 20-30 mins cross training (medium intensity) + exercises in video segments 1 & 2; Thursday → OFF.
- Friday → 45-60 mins football session (e.g., similar age group, small-sided games) + exercises in video segments prior to the football session.
- Saturday → 15 mins on a stationary bike.
- Sunday 20-30 mins cross training (medium intensity) + exercises in video segments.

## During the Tournament

### Injury-prevention strategies DURING a 1-2 day 055-065+ masters soccer tournament



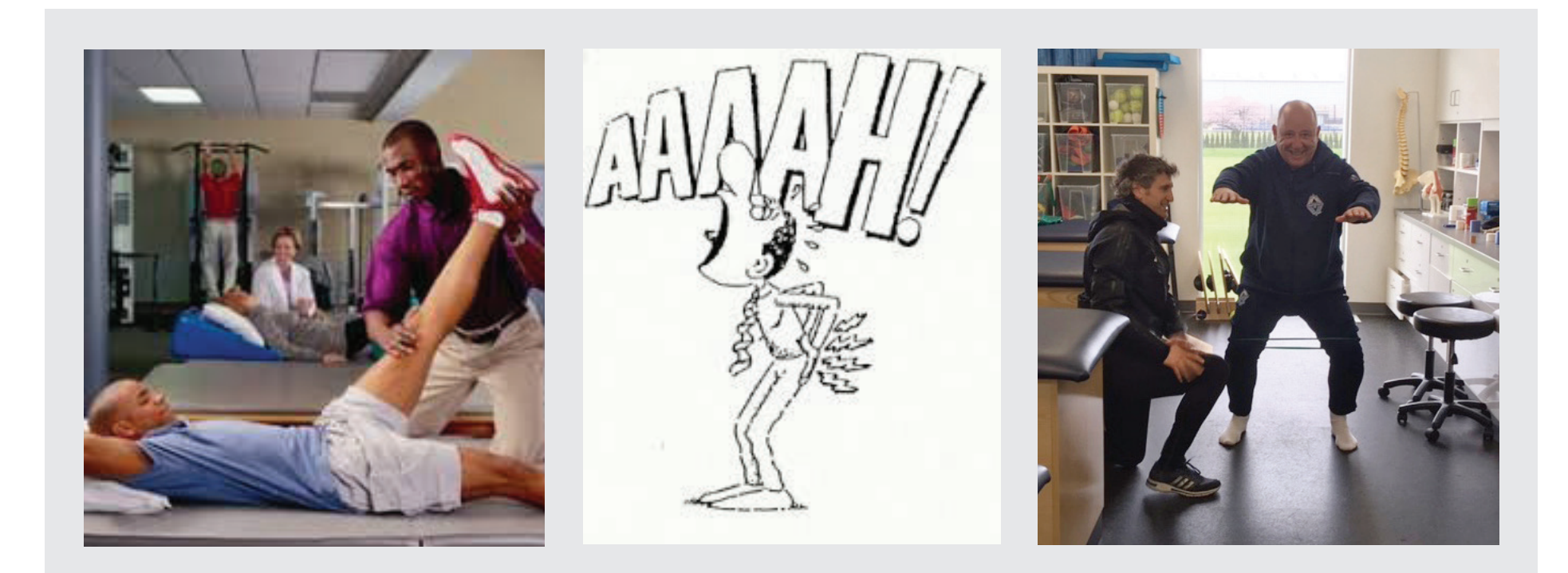
- Try to eat a meal with complex carbohydrate (CHO) and lean protein at least 3 hours prior to the first game.
- Have a small snack 30-60 mins prior to kickoff (eg. granola bar) and a simple CHO (eg. gummy candies, sports gel...etc) just prior to kick-off and/or in between tournament matches/halftime.
- SAFETY: Tournament Rule number 1!** Absolutely no dangerous challenges (e.g. from behind, defensive slide tackles with ball and opposition player). It is imperative to play with safety in mind toward others and self (including shin pads must be worn). The collegial atmosphere among world cup masters players, teams and referees has always been exceptional and SAFETY will be strictly enforced by the match officials. In the unlikely event of multiple yellow or red card offences, the number of game forfeits will be determined by the Head Referee.
- Eat right away after the game is completed (protein → minimum 15g and CHO such as a granola bar).
- Force yourself to drink frequently throughout the day and include a sports drink, especially in warmer weather, and avoid excess exposure to the sun.
- Keep the body moving in between games → easy cycling, short frequent walks or easy jogging, gentle stretching, massage.
- Doing hot/cold contrasts baths following the first day can help to increase circulation and decrease soreness in the legs for the following day → 2 mins HOT then 2 mins COLD for 20 mins.
- Go on a stationary bike for 15 mins at a light - mod intensity after the first day's games are done to again help with circulation and decrease leg soreness the following day.
- Prior to beginning the second day's games, a hot bath for 5 mins followed by some gentle stretching can help to ease body soreness and muscle tightness.
- A light cycle prior to the second day's games for 10-15 mins is also helpful.



## Post Tournament

### Injury-prevention strategies in the hours/days/week following a 1-2 day 055-065+ masters soccer tournament

- Beer, pasties and chips!!
- Light activity such as walking, easy cycling or other unloaded cardio activities are recommended on a daily basis...keep moving!
- Get any post tournament injuries looked at sooner than later to help decrease injury duration and prevent re-injury of the same area in future.
- Avoid vigorous bouts of exercise and allow adequate time/weeks for your body to heal from a 1-2 day seniors tournament, prior to resuming your regular football or high impact activity schedule!



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