



“Watching a soccer game in the near future will be like a tennis match, where you sometimes do not see the ball. When I began my career as a player, the training sessions were all aerobic, very slow. Coaches wanted players to perform nice technically but not related to speed. So, I still use a lot of things from the time I was a player, but in a different way. It is where soccer has changed. Today, the requirements are anaerobic. A player has to run as fast as possible and recover at the same pace, and it must be trained. So, I adapt the training sessions from the past in a new context, with much more power and speed without losing the technical part.”

Vanger Mancini – Paulista FC Coach

Overview

The demands of the game are always changing and evolving. Average practice times last 90-120 minutes and games last about 130 minutes with warm up and cool downs. The Utica College Men’s Soccer Staff along with sport specific fitness experts and gurus have generated an all-inclusive and comprehensive off-season strength and conditioning regimen. It includes four sample routines and daily log sheets for soccer specific strength and conditioning routines. Included are agility, plyometric, sprinting, and track routines. The last piece of the puzzle is the nutritional guide, which is cited from a credible resource.

Warm Up

Warm up is an essential part of an injury prevention program. Soccer players should properly warm up before every practice and game. This enables the body to; increase the temperature of muscles, increase blood flow and oxygen to the muscles, increase the speed of nerve impulses, and increase the range of motion at joints reducing the risk of tearing muscles and ligaments. Our warm ups will generally last between 15-30 minutes.

A dynamic warm-up is the form of stretching that we would recommend before practices and games. Dynamic stretching is movement based patterns for game and practice situations. It assists in warming up the entire body by increasing muscle temperature, increasing the oxygen to the muscles, and increasing tissue elasticity. Dynamic movements for soccer players include, lunges, high knees, knee up to hip joint then out to the side, leg kicks, heels to buttocks, etc... We would recommend a minimum of 10-15 minutes of dynamic stretching.

Cool Down

After every game and practice players will have a mandatory 10-15 minute cool down period. A cool down allows a player to lower their heart rate, circulate blood and oxygen to muscles, restoring them to the condition they were in before exercise, remove waste products such as lactic acid, and reduce the risk of muscle soreness. The cool down will consist of light jogging followed by stretching periodically. Players should perform stretches, which put an emphasis on the hip flexors, quadriceps, hamstrings, and calf muscles and groin.

There are numerous studies and different theories about flexibility training. The form of stretching our coaching staff would recommend is static stretching after every game and practice. Static stretching is for a specific muscle, which the player will generally hold the stretch for 10-45 seconds. Static stretching receives the most results when incorporated about 3-4 hours post practice or match. Waiting this amount of time allows the nervous system to relax. Players should perform static stretching about 10-15 minutes every night before bed. The key to this technique is to stretch the muscles and joints to the point you feel slight tension.

Aerobic & Anaerobic Fitness

Aerobic and anaerobic training for senior level soccer players should be sport specific. We will incorporate aerobic training into our preseason and offseason training regimens as well as our training sessions during the season. A senior level player should report to preseason fit and conditioned. A senior level player should develop their aerobic fitness base by running consistently and intensely. Throughout the season we will perform 3-5 mile jogs to help maintain our aerobic fitness.

Anaerobic fitness helps the player achieve match fitness. Some examples include: starting and stopping quickly, intermittent sprinting for periods of time, explosive cutting, striking through the ball, quickness in tackle, and etc... During the season we will incorporate a period of 30-40 minutes one session per week, which will include sprinting, jogging, walking periodically, which will incorporate interval training. One interval test we will use during the season is the Beep Test. The Beep Test pushes the player to his or her maximum anaerobic threshold. Furthermore, we will use plyometric exercises such as speed ladders, bounding, box drills, and squat jumps to help train players anaerobic fast-twitch muscle capacity.

Whenever possible we will perform aerobic and anaerobic training with a soccer ball because soccer is played with a ball. Players will eventually become disinterested if training becomes a track meet. Soccer players are passionate about playing soccer and enjoy touching the ball as much as possible.

Weight training for soccer should be done aggressively to improve muscle stamina, strength, recovery, and to prevent injury. Weight training is vital because soccer players need to have strength and quickness simultaneously. Examples include: tackling, shielding the ball, challenging for headers, and 1v1 defending. We will perform the strength training regimen below 1-2 times per week throughout the entire season. The players will be allotted 30 minutes to complete the program. This will keep their rest periods short between sets, which results in muscular endurance gains. The exercises chosen are for large muscle groups, the core, and exercise that target muscles that the senior level player uses more often while playing.

Hydration, Rest, & Nutrition

Proper hydration is a key component to injury prevention. Dehydration results in cramps, irregular heart beat, headache, vomiting, and thirst. We will allow player's hydration breaks during transitions at practices. We would offer water and Gatorade at all practices and games. It is recommended an athlete consume a minimum of 1 ounce of fluid for every 2 minutes of activity. During humid and hot weather we would promote Gatorade because it will help refuel and replenish electrolyte loss. We will create a culture that believes in proper hydration to achieve optimal athletic performance on the soccer field. Soccer players should stay hydrated pre, during, and post games and practices.

Recovery allows players to become mentally and physically stronger. A player's body must have time to replenish and rebuild itself. It is able to do this with proper nutrition, which includes proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and liquids. A player needs adequate rest and sleep to perform at an optimal level. The practice after a game we will warm up and cool down longer and keep the intensity at a lower level. For a senior level team I would recommend a tactical video session followed by more shadow play and tactics during the training session rather than high impact 5v5 to goal or 1v1's. Since players bodies will generally be sore this would lead to more injuries. We would train our reserves that played a limited amount of time at a high intensity.

Notes

Soccer is the most popular sport in the entire world. The greatest of soccer players play at a maximum level when they are healthy. Coaches understand what it takes to perform at a high level every day. Coaches educate themselves about the four different phases of the game, which are physical, psychological, technical, and tactical. This will allow them to use all the different strategies above, throughout an entire season, to ensure its team the greatest opportunity to achieve success.

Recommendations

Strength workouts should be performed twice per week.

Plyometric workouts should be performed once per week.

Agility workouts should be performed once per week.

Track or Sprinting workouts should be performed once per week.

Players should play soccer 5-6 times per week in addition to these workouts!!!

All exercises can be "Googled" for proper form and technique!!!



UTICA COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER WORKOUT & EXERCISE LOG

Date (Month/Day/Year): _____
 Start Time: _____
 End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: _____ STRENGTH #1 _____

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE(Choose the 2 or 5 mile each workout)

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
2 Miles @ 8-11 MPH		
5 Miles @ 7-10 MPH		

WEIGHT, STRENGTH & RESISTANCE TRAINING

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>SETS</u>	<u>REPS</u>	<u>REST</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
DUMBBELL SNATCH		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
WOODCHOPPER		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
SQUAT		3	6-10 REPS @ 64%, 73%, 80%	90 SEC.	
DUMBBELL INCLINE BENCH		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
DUMBBELL REVERSE LUNGE		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
LEG CURL MACHINE		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
DUMBBELL PULLOVER		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
ISO DUMBBELL HAMSTRING STABILITY		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
ABS			250 REPS "SEE MANUEL"	30 SEC.	

DIET & NUTRITION

<u>MEAL</u>	<u>FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>APPROXIMATE CALORIES</u>
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: _____ STRENGTH #2 _____

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE(Choose the 2 or 5 mile each workout)

EXERCISE	TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES	NOTES
2 Miles @ 8-11 MPH		
5 Miles @ 7-10 MPH		

WEIGHT, STRENGTH & RESISTANCE TRAINING

EXERCISE	WEIGHT	SETS	REPS	REST	NOTES
DUMBELL HIGH PULL		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
HANG CLEAN		4	6-8 REPS @ 61%, 73%, 76%, 79%	90 SEC.	
BENCH PRESS		4	6-8 REPS @ 61%, 73%, 76%, 79%	90 SEC.	
DUMBELL BENT OVER ROW		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
DUMBELL SHOULDER PRESS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BARBELL BENTOVER RDL'S For HAMSTRINGS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
DIPS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
PULL-UPS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
ABS			250 TOTAL REPS "SEE MANUAL"	30 SEC.	
			250 TOTAL REPS " SEE MANUEL"	30 SEC.	

DIET & NUTRITION

MEAL	FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS	APPROXIMATE CALORIES
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: _____STRENGTH #3_____

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE(Choose the 2 or 5 mile each workout)

EXERCISE	TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES	NOTES
2 Miles @ 8-11 MPH		
5 Miles @ 7-10 MPH		

WEIGHT, STRENGTH & RESISTANCE TRAINING

EXERCISE	WEIGHT	SETS	REPS	REST	NOTES
1 Arm Kettlebell Snatch		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
CABLE ROW (back)		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BOX SQUAT		3	6-10 REPS	90 SEC.	
HANG CLEAN INTO SPLIT SQUAT OVERHEAD		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BARBELL STAR (DIAGONAL LUNGE)		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
Good Mornings (Barbell)		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
GLUTE BRIDGE (FLOOR)		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
FRONT + BACK LUNGES DUMBBELL		3	8 REPS	90 SEC.	
ABS			250 REPS "SEE MANUEL"	30 SEC.	

DIET & NUTRITION

MEAL	FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS	APPROXIMATE CALORIES
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: _____ STRENGTH #4 _____

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE(Choose the 2 or 5 mile each workout)

EXERCISE	TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES	NOTES
2 Miles @ 8-11 MPH		
5 Miles @ 7-10 MPH		

WEIGHT, STRENGTH & RESISTANCE TRAINING

EXERCISE	WEIGHT	SETS	REPS	REST	NOTES
PULL-UPS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
DIPS		3	6-8 REPS @	90 SEC.	
PUSH UPS OVER WEIGHT ON GROUND		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BARBELL BENT OVER ROW		3	6-8 REPS Each Side	90 SEC.	
FRONT/SIDE RAISE SHOULDER		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
LOWER BACK EXTENSIONS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BENCH HIP THRUSTS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
BARBELL STEPUPS		3	6-8 REPS	90 SEC.	
ABS			250 TOTAL REPS "SEE MANUAL"	30 SEC.	
			250 TOTAL REPS " SEE MANUEL"	30 SEC.	

DIET & NUTRITION

MEAL	FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS	APPROXIMATE CALORIES
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: AGILITY TRAINING

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Begin With Dynamic Warm-UP		Work on breaking sweat in warm up to be efficiently "Loose" before conditioning drills

Agility and Conditioning

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>SETS</u>	<u>REPS</u>	<u>REST</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Off Set Weave		6	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
M Drill		6	1 Time Through= 1 Set	60 SEC.	
40 yd T Test		5	1 Time Through= 1 Set	60 SEC.	
Line Drills		10	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
Pro Agility Drill		5	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
Colgate Agility		5	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
Shuffle Ladder Drill		6	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
Diagonal Shuffle Drill		5	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
300 Yd Shuttle Run		3	1 Time Through = 1 Set	60 SEC.	
"You may add or substitute exercises from our manual."					

DIET & NUTRITION

<u>MEAL</u>	<u>FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>APPROXIMATE CALORIES</u>
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Scale Weight:	
Body Fat %:	
Fitness Goal:	Strength/Muscle Building/Fat Loss/Endurance/Other:
Sleep (HRS):	

Name of Workout: _____ PLYOMETRICS _____

Body Parts Trained (Circle all that apply):

Whole Body | Chest | Back | Shoulders | Legs | Calves | Biceps | Triceps | Abs | Other: _____

WARM-UP CARDIO/AEROBIC/CONDITIONING EXERCISE

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>TIME/DISTANCE/ INTENSITY/SPEED/CALORIES</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
P90X PLYOMETRIC ROUTINE AS A SUBSTITUTE PROGRAM		DYNAMIC WARM-UP 5-10 MINUTES

PLYOMETRIC TRAINING

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>SETS</u>	<u>REPS</u>	<u>REST</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
SIDE TO SIDE BOX SHUFFLE		3	1 Minute Straight	60 SEC.	
ALTERNATING PUSH OFF		3	1 Minute Straight	60 SEC.	
BOX JUMPS		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
DEPTH JUMP to STANDING LONG JUMP		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
ZIG ZAG DRILL		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
SPLIT SQUAT LUNGE		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
5-5-5 SQUAT JUMP		3	15 REPS	60 SEC.	
DOUBLE LEG HOPS		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
SINGLE LEG DEPTH JUMP		3	10 REPS	60 SEC.	
"You may add or substitute exercises from our manual."					

DIET & NUTRITION

<u>MEAL</u>	<u>FOODS EATEN/INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>APPROXIMATE CALORIES</u>
PRE-WORKOUT:		
POST-WORKOUT:		
DAILY SUPPLEMENTS:		

OVERALL WORKOUT RATING (1-10)		MIND/BODY/WORKOUT NOTES:	
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Utica College Men's Soccer Sprinting Program

WEEK 1

May 18-May 24th

8 x 20 yds

6 x 40 yds

4 x 60 yds

2 x 80 yds

1 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 2

May 25- May 30th

10 x 20 yds

8 x 40 yds

6 x 60 yds

4 x 80 yds

2 X 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 3

June 1- June7th

12 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

6 x 60 yds

4 x 80 yds

3 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 4 & 5

June 8-June 21st

14 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

8 x 60 yds

6 x 80 yds

4 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 6

June22-July 5th

16 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

8 x 60 yds

6 x 80 yds

4 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 7 & 8

July 6-July 19th

18 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

8 x 60 yds

6 x 80 yds

4 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 9 & 10

July 20-August 2nd

18 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

8 x 60 yds

6 x 80 yds

4 x 100 yds

1 time per week

WEEK 11 & 12 & 13

August 3-August 21

20 x 20 yds

10 x 40 yds

8 x 60 yds

6 x 80 yds

4 x 100 yds

1 time per week

REST PERIOD WEEKS 1-7

30 seconds for 20's

45 seconds for 40's

60 seconds for 60's

75 seconds for 80's

90 seconds for 100's

REST PERIOD WEEKS 8-13

20 seconds for 20's

30 seconds for 40's

45 seconds for 60's

60 seconds for 80's

75 seconds for 100's

Utica Men's Soccer Track Workout (Choose one workout per session)

TRACK WORKOUT A

4 laps	1 mile	under	6:00	Rest 3 minutes
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:40	Rest 90 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:40	Rest 90 seconds
1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	Rest 90 seconds
1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	Rest 90 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:40	FINISHED

TRACK WORKOUT B

4 laps	1 mile	under	6:00	Rest 2 minutes
3 laps	¾ mile	under	4:10	Rest 90 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:40	Rest 90 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:40	Rest 90 seconds
1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	Rest 90 seconds
1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	FINISHED

PYRAMID TRACK WORKOUT

1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	Rest 30 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:30	Rest 70 seconds
3 laps	¾ mile	under	4:30	Rest 90 seconds
4 laps	1 mile	under	6:00	Rest 2 minutes
3 laps	¾ mile	under	4:30	Rest 90 seconds
2 laps	½ mile	under	2:30	Rest 70 seconds
1 lap	¼ mile	under	:70	FINISHED

RECORD EXACT TIME, PULSE RATE, AND DISTANCES. BE EXACT!
BE SURE TO STRETCH 10-15 MINUTES BEFORE & AFTER WORKOUTS.

Utica College Men's Soccer Summer Skill Program(Perform Daily)

Ball Control

2 minutes – Jog while dribbling ball with quick touches, changing direction and speed. Do this in a confined space where many changes and touches are necessary.

2 minutes – Head Juggling

2 minutes – Throw ball up, jump and while you are in the air trap the ball with you head, settle the ball to your feet, and move off quickly – repeat.

2 minutes – Thigh Juggling

1 minute – Throw ball up, jump, and while you are in the air trap the ball with your chest, settle the ball to your feet, and move off quickly – repeat.

2 minutes – Foot juggling with no spin on the ball.

2 minutes – Starting in a sitting position, throw ball up, get up and stop the ball before it hits the ground, settle it to your feet, and move off quickly – repeat using head, chest, each thigh, each foot in that order to trap the ball.

The Training Diet

Soccer players require a high carbohydrate intake on a daily basis to replenish muscle stores after each training session. This requires making carbohydrate foods such as bread, breakfast cereal, fruit, pasta, rice, vegetables, yogurt and flavored low-fat milk the focus of meals and snacks. Players who fail to consume sufficient carbohydrate may suffer mid-week slumps and progressive fatigue over the season. Players in heavy training need to start recovery nutrition tactics immediately after each training session. Ideally, players should aim to have 800-1000 grams of carbohydrate within 30 minutes of finishing training. Recovery snacks should be combined with fluid to replace any fluid lost during the session.

50g Carbohydrate =

24-32 ounce sports drink
3 medium pieces fruit
2 cereal bars
2 x 200g cartons yogurt
bowl of cereal with low fat milk
bowl of fruit salad with 1/2 carton of
yogurt
24-32 ounce smoothie
3 slices toast

Match Preparation

Ideally, a light, high-carbohydrate meal should be eaten at least two hours before a match. Breakfast cereal plus fruit, pasta with tomato sauce, rolls or sandwiches, baked potatoes with low fat fillings and fruit salad with yogurt are all good options. You should experiment to find the best solution for you.

Match Considerations - Fuel and Fluid

Soccer matches place reasonable demands on both fluid and carbohydrate stores of players. Studies have reported low muscle glycogen levels in players after a match -- sometimes with significant depletion occurring by half-time. Players with depleted muscle glycogen stores had a lower average speed and covered less ground than their team-mates in the second half of the

match. Studies show that strategies to increase carbohydrate supplies - both eating a high carbohydrate diet in the days before a match and drinking sports drink during the match, keep players running faster and further in the second half. In one study, high carbohydrate tactics helped the players to make fewer errors.

Sweat losses of 1-2.5 liters per 90-minute game in cool conditions and approximately 4 liters during hot conditions have been reported in some studies. However, the reported fluid intake of players is typically less than half of the sweat rate.

Tips for better drinking during soccer are:

- Drink sports drinks that encourage better fluid intake because of their taste, as well as supplying extra fuel for the match.
- Drink well during warm up and half time breaks.
- In hot weather especially, be creative in finding ways to grab a drink during halves. Some players leave their bottles around the side of the pitch and dash for a drink whenever there's a stoppage in play.
- Practice good drinking strategies in training sessions.

Pre-Match meal

The goals of the pre-match meal are to: 2 ½ hours prior to the match

- Achieve proper fluid levels
- Leave you feeling comfortable (neither too full or hungry)
- Leave you feeling confident and ready for action.

There are plenty of meal combinations which can achieve these goals but players need to experiment to find the best combination for them. Generally, the following is recommended:

- Have a normal size meal four hours before the match and a snack one to two hours before the match
- If your match is early in the morning, have a high carbohydrate meal the night before and a snack one to two hours before the match
- Choose high-carbohydrate, low-fat foods to ensure easy digestion and to fill carbohydrate fuel supplies
- Experiment with the type, timing and amount of food that works best for you
- Drink plenty of fluids leading up to the event
- If you suffer from pre-match nerves, try a liquid meal supplement such as a fruit smoothie as a pre-match meal.

Pre-match meal ideas include:

- breakfast cereal with skim milk and fruit + toast + juice
- fruit + yogurt + bagel
- pancakes + syrup + fruit
- baked potatoes with low fat filling + juice
- pasta with low fat sauce + juice
- rolls/sandwiches + fruit + yogurt
- liquid meal (supplements or homemade fruit smoothies)

Pre-match snack ideas include:

- cereal bars
- fruit
- yogurt
- toast
- sports drink

The psychological effect of the last meal can be as important as the nutritional effects for some players. However, for the majority of players, a high carbohydrate meal is the best option. All players need to experiment to find the best food choices and timing for them.

Alcohol Intake

There is a tendency in team sports to celebrate or commiserate match results with alcohol intake - and unfortunately this often means excessive amounts of alcohol. Alcohol acts a diuretic and may slow down the process of rehydration after the match. After exercise, the soccer player should concentrate first on rehydration and refueling goals. Rehydrate and refuel with carbohydrate-rich foods and fluids. The injured athlete who consumes alcohol immediately after the match may cause extra swelling and bleeding and delay recovery.

Department of Sports Nutrition, AIS © Australian Sports Commission 2004

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