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The effects of strength and conditioning interventions on sprinting performance in team sport athletes: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Brief Title: S&C for team athlete sprinting

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Abstract

Linear sprinting is a key determinant of athletic performance within team sports. The aims of the review were to quantify and compare the effectiveness of popular strength and conditioning (S&C) training modes to improve sprint performance in team sport athletes, with additional focus on potential moderators and the relationships between improvements in physical factors (e.g. strength, power and jump performance) and improvements in sprint performance. Inclusion was restricted to resistance, plyometric, sprint and combined training interventions comprising team sport athletes. Multi-level, Bayesian meta-analysis and meta-regression models conducted with standardised mean difference effect sizes were used to investigate training modes and potential moderators. Weighted regression models conducted on shrunken estimates from initial Bayesian meta-analyses were used to quantify relationships between improvements in physical factors and improvements in sprint performance. Certainty of evidence was assessed using the Grading of Recommendations Assessment Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach. Similar improvements in sprint performance were obtained across training modes, with some evidence of the largest effects with resistance training ($SMD_{Pre_{0.5}}=0.55$ [95%CrI:0.36-0.78; very low certainty]). A strong moderating effect of training intensity was identified across all training modes with evidence of greater improvements in sprint performance with high intensity training ($\beta_{Low:High_{0.5}}=0.17$ [95%CrI:0.01-0.33; very low certainty]). Strong positive relationships were identified between improvements in all physical factors and sprint performance ($\beta_{Strength_{0.5}}=0.56$ [95%CrI:0.36-0.77; low certainty], $\beta_{Power_{0.5}}=0.80$ [95%CrI:0.50-1.0; low certainty], $\beta_{Jump_{0.5}}=0.78$ [95%CrI:0.57-0.97; low certainty]). The findings indicate that focus on developing speed in team sport athletes should be placed on S&C training with high intensities, including the use of resisted sprint training.

Key words: S&C; Strength; Power; Specificity; Transfer; Bayesian

Introduction

Strength and conditioning (S&C) is frequently used with athletes to enhance athletic performance and reduce injury risk. Research has consistently demonstrated that engagement in S&C training modes such as resistance exercise increases the ability to express force and power during resisted movements (1-3). However, the ability to improve athletic performance is also dependent on the magnitude of transfer between training adaptations and desired performance outcomes (4). Long-term performance adaptations and the transfer of training are dependent on the principles of overload and specificity (3, 5, 6), with the magnitude of adaptations influenced primarily by overload and the amount of transfer influenced primarily by the degree of specificity with target outcomes. The principle of specificity generally considers the kinematic and kinetic similarities between S&C training and the targeted sporting outcomes and actions (7, 8). For example, resisted sprint training comprises a high degree of specificity with sprint performance, and is frequently referred to in this context as a “direct training” method. In contrast, traditional resistance training comprises low specificity with regards to sprint performance and can therefore be considered in this context an “indirect training” method.

It has been identified that overload and specificity can be conflicting with greater overload of an exercise reducing specificity and vice versa (8). Multiple theoretical models have been developed by practitioners to describe transfer of training, however, research has predominantly focussed on empirical models quantifying correlations between sporting actions and kinematic and kinetic variables collected during performance of S&C exercises (9-12). Frequently this correlational research has included athletes participating in teams sport where actions such as linear sprinting are performed regularly and have been shown to be a key determinant of athletic performance (13-18). Correlational research conducted specifically with team sport athletes had consistently demonstrated that lower-body maximum strength and power output scaled relative to body mass

produced moderate to strong correlations with sprinting performance (19-23). Baker and Nance (19) and McBride et al. (21) reported comparable correlations between scaled lower-body strength and 10 and 40 m sprint performance. Conversely, more recent studies from Cunningham et al. (23) and Furlong et al. (24) reported low and non-significant correlations between relative strength and maximum velocity sprinting over 30 m. However, the authors did report moderate to strong correlations between measures of jump height, reactive strength index, lower limb stiffness and maximum velocity sprinting. These more recent results suggest that relationships between measures of physical capacity and sprinting may be different through the acceleration and maximum velocity phases.

Maximum effort sprinting commonly occurs over short distances (<30 m) and durations (2-3 s) in team sports, therefore S&C training and subsequent longitudinal research has emphasised development of speed and acceleration over similar distances (16, 25, 26). Previous intervention studies have reported reductions in sprint times of 0.03-0.41 s across a range of athletes and distances up to 40 m, with an average percentage difference of 3-4% (15, 27-35). Training status and mode of training have been identified as potential moderators (36, 37) with researchers suggesting more experienced athletes require training modes with high levels of specificity for continued improvement in sprinting performance (7). As a result, a range of training modes have been developed in attempts to maximise production of kinetic variables associated with sprinting performance to maximise transfer of training. The most common modes include resistance training, ballistic resistance training, plyometric training, combined training methods featuring both resistance and plyometric modes, as well as sprint specific training methods (e.g. resisted, free sprinting and assisted/overspeed). Given the broad range of training modes and the likely existence of other moderating factors including training status and specific training dose (e.g.

frequency, volume and intensity), identification of the most effective S&C training interventions to improve sprinting performance remains challenging.

Multiple narrative reviews and systematic reviews combined with meta-analyses (36-47) have been conducted to synthesise research investigating S&C training and sprinting performance. Reviews from Bolger et al. (40) and Haugen et al. (38) focussed on training methods to improve sprint performance in elite track and field sprinters. Bolger et al. (40) and Haugen et al. (38) suggested that both direct and indirect training modes may produce positive adaptations with elite sprinters; however, both reviews identified the need for further research. Employing meta-analytic techniques, Rumpf et al. (39) compared effect sizes for direct and indirect training modes across a range of sprint distances in physically active team and non-team sport athletes. The authors reported moderate to large effects on sprint performance following sprint specific training, with resisted sprint training producing the largest effect on distances of 0-20 m and free sprinting producing the greatest effects at distances over 31 m. In contrast, indirect training modes including resistance and plyometrics produced only small to moderate effects. Recently, two large scale meta-analyses' including 121 and 86 studies compared the effectiveness of multiple training modes on acceleration (46) and maximum velocity (47) with football code athletes competing in sports such as soccer, American football, Canadian football, Australian football, Gaelic football, and rugby. The authors' concluded that combined specific and non-specific training modes, focussing on the development of physical capacity in conjunction with high specificity sprint training in the form of resisted sprinting produced the largest effects during the acceleration phase. In contrast, non-specific training methods were shown to produce the greatest improvements in maximum velocity performance within the same population. Whilst recent meta-analyses have begun to provide clearer results regarding the relative effectiveness of different training modes in the development of sprint performance in team sport population, there remains limited understanding of the

potential moderating role of programme variables such as training intensity and volume. To the authors' knowledge, there is no meta-analysis to date that has attempted to model relationships between changes in strength and power and subsequent changes in sprint performance in team sport athletes. Given the availability of previous data and a lack of large-scale modelling research investigating some of the more complex relationships between S&C training and sprint performance in team sport athletes, the purpose of this systematic review and meta-analysis was to: 1) synthesise and compare effect sizes of different S&C training modes on sprint performance; 2) investigate the effect of potential moderators including athlete level, training duration, frequency, intensity and volume; and 3) investigate the relationships between improvements in standard S&C training outcomes such as strength and power and improvements in sprint performance.

Methods

Overview:

The current systematic review and meta-analysis comprised a comprehensive synthesis quantifying effectiveness of S&C training on sprinting performance of team sport athletes. Primary analyses investigated the effects of potential moderators including athlete demographics (e.g. training type and training level) and training dose parameters (e.g. frequency, volume and intensity). Secondary analyses investigated relationships between changes in standard S&C training outcomes such as strength and power and improvements in sprint performance. The methods used in the systematic review adhered to an a-priori protocol (3) and previously published guidelines including the checklist of Preferred Reporting items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (PRISMA-P) (48) which is presented in the supplementary files (SF-1).

Eligibility Criteria:

The PICOS (Population, Intervention, Comparator, Outcomes and Study Design) approach was used to guide determination of eligibility criteria for this review.

Population:

Healthy males and females aged 16 and over participating in a team sport at any level and of any training status were considered for inclusion in this review. Participant age was restricted to reduce any pre-post difference in sprint performance that may be due to changes in the early biological maturation status occurring during the intervention period (49, 50). Additionally, it has been suggested that S&C interventions may become more targeted towards sport specific outcomes (e.g. sprint performance) in later adolescence potentially through inclusion in performance academies and other high-level sporting environments (49).

Intervention:

Longitudinal studies comprising S&C interventions of at least 4 weeks in duration that could be categorised as an indirect or direct (definitions provided in table 1) sprint training mode were included. A minimum duration of 4 weeks was selected as it is considered the shortest period required to elicit measurable adaptations from S&C training interventions and considered a common unit of time to describe a single training block (51, 52). Lower-body strength and power are regarded as important factors in determining sprint performance of team sport athletes (22) and therefore inclusion was restricted to interventions that targeted development of the gluteals, quadriceps, hamstrings, gastrocnemius, and soleus.

Comparator:

Both controlled and non-controlled study designs were included with non-controlled effect sizes used for analyses. Where studies include comparators that did not meet inclusion criteria, only group data that matched the criteria were included.

Outcomes and Prioritisation:

The primary outcomes for the review included sprint time (s) and sprint velocity ($\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$). Sprint outcomes were included across all distances, with subset-analyses performed on sprint outcomes up to 40 m separated into 10 m intervals (36, 37). Secondary outcomes included measures of lower-body strength and power. Measures of strength were restricted to those assessing maximum force production (e.g. 1RM and isometric mid-thigh pull), and measures of power included both indirect (e.g. vertical jump height) and direct assessments measured in Watts collected during performance of a lower-body resisted or non-resistance movement (e.g. leg press, squat, squat jump or appropriate cycle ergometer assessment). These secondary outcomes were used to assess the relationship between improvements in strength and power and subsequent improvements in sprinting performance. Given the modelling focus of this review and attempts to quantitatively

explore moderators and relationships among outcomes, only studies that included sufficient data including pre/post means and standard deviations or standard errors, along with specific information of moderating factors such as intervention intensity, volume, exercises included and frequency, to be incorporated in meta-analyses were included.

Table 1: Definitions of indirect and direct training modes used for review.

Training Mode	Definition
<i>Indirect training modes:</i>	
Standard resistance	Multi-joint exercise (e.g. squat or deadlift) performed on a flat, stable surface with bodyweight, free weights or machines in which it is possible to replicate lower-body multi-joint exercises (e.g. smith machine and hack squat).
Ballistic resistance	Exercise performed at maximum intent with the projection of an external load at moderate to high velocity (e.g. Olympic weightlifting and loaded jump squats).
Plyometric training	Exercises which utilise the stretch shortening cycle with rapid transition of eccentric to concentric contraction phases to produce high velocity movements resulting in jump or bound.
<i>Direct training modes:</i>	
Free sprint training	Maximum intent sprinting performed on a flat, stable surface without any external resistance or assistance.
Resisted sprint training	Maximum intent sprinting performed on a stable surface against an external resistance with the use of a sled, wearable resistance or incline with the aim to decrease maximum achievable velocity and increase kinetic output.
Assisted sprint training	Maximum intent sprinting performed with assistance in the form of a pulley, towing or bodyweight reduction harness with the aim to improve certain sprint kinematics, namely achieve supramaximum velocities.
<i>Combined training modes:</i>	
Combined training	Combinations of resistance, sprint, ballistic and/or plyometric training. To be considered a combined training mode, the secondary mode must account for at least 30% of total lower body training volume (number of lower body exercises multiplied by averages number of sets completed multiplied by average number of repetitions completed will be used to calculate training volume). If indirect combined with sprint training, more than 5+ sets must be completed, and/or $\geq 100\text{m}$ in sprinting must be completed within the training week.

Search Strategy:

The search strategy used for this study was part of a larger search conducted to investigate the distribution of effect sizes across most of the S&C literature (3). The search was performed using Embase, Medline, Web of Science, Sport Discus and Google Scholar. Hand searching of relevant

journals including *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, the *J Strength Cond Res*, and *Research Quarterly* was also conducted. Database search terms were included to identify various training modes, longitudinal interventions, and a range of outcome measures. The following keywords and phrases were combined with Boolean operators; “strength” OR “resistance” OR “sprint” OR “plyometric” OR “exercise” AND “intervention” OR “training” OR “program” OR “programme” AND “1RM” OR “repetition maximum” OR “speed” OR “velocity” OR “power” OR “jump” OR “change of direction” OR “agility” OR “acceleration” OR “rate of force development”. No restriction was placed on the date of the study. The initial larger search was conducted in January 2018, with subsequent searches restricted to focus on acceleration, speed and velocity outcomes made on August 2020 and May 2022.

Study Selection:

A two-stage selection strategy (Title/Abstract and full text screen) was independently undertaken by three members of the review team (AM, AH and RA). The independent screeners convened at the end of each screening stage to resolve any discrepancies. During the full text screen reasons for exclusion were categorised as one or more of the following: 1) ineligible population; 2) ineligible intervention; 3) ineligible outcomes; 4) insufficient data; and (5) other.

Data Extraction:

A codebook and extraction files were developed using Microsoft excel, and pre-piloted prior to data extraction. Data were extracted independently by three members of the review team (AM, AH and RA) into separate extraction files then merged following discussion of any differences. The following data were extracted where available: study details (authors, year, total number of groups, control type); participant characteristics (final study n, sex, training status, age); exercise

characteristics (type, intervention duration, frequency, intensity, volume); pre and post-intervention data (means and standard deviations) collected from: 1) sprint performance; 2) maximum strength (tests of lower body strength where time was not limited, e.g. isometric mid-thigh pull); 3) power: any direct measurement of power in Watts measured during lower body activities and measures of jump height; and 4) jump performance measured in distance. Participants for each study were categorised on the basis of their experience with structured S&C as novices (<1 year experience), intermediates (1-5 year experience) and advanced (>5 year experience) (53). Interventions were categorised based on the key exercises matching the definitions outlined in table 1. Intensity for resistance training interventions were coded as low and high based on a percentage 1RM ($\leq 80\%$ low and $>80\%$ high). Ballistic resistance training and speed training interventions were always coded as high intensity due to the maximal intent of the movements, unless a submaximal intensity was specifically stated. Where studies did not provide a percentage 1RM, the number of repetitions performed per set was used to estimate intensity based on equivalent percentages suggested by Haff and Triplett (54). Plyometric training intensity was based on the characteristics of the included exercises, for example, extensive pogo jumps, vertical jumps and double leg static jump variations were generally coded as low intensity. Unilateral jumps for height or distance, repeated bounding and drop/depth jumps >30 cm drop height were categorised as high intensity. Training volume for resistance training interventions was categorised as low or high based on the average number of repetitions performed in the main exercises (1-9 low and ≥ 10 high). The same method was applied to ballistic resistance exercise with different cut-offs (1-6 low and >6 high). Training volume for plyometric training was based on the average number of foot contacts performed per session (<120 low and ≥ 120 high). Categorisation of speed training volume was based on the average number of total sprints performed per session (<10 low and ≥ 10 high).

Certainty in cumulative evidence

Certainty in meta-analytic outcomes was assessed by RA and PS using the Grading of Recommendations Assessment Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach (55). Potential downgrading factors included risk of bias, inconsistency, imprecision, and the presence of small-study effects. Risk of bias for each study was appraised using the PEDro scale based on the Delphi list developed by Verhagen et al., (56). A total of two domains were evaluated including: (1) internal validity; and (2) statistical information. For non-comparator studies, the PEDro scale was modified to only include questions 8, 9 and 11. Individual studies were assigned a final risk of bias score interpreted as 8-10 “low risk” (80% +); 6-7 “moderate risk” (60 – 79%); ≥ 6 “high risk” ($\geq 59\%$) (57). Assessment of risk of bias for meta-analytic outcomes was conducted by calculating the mode risk of bias score from the studies comprising outcomes in the analysis. Inconsistency was assessed based on meta-analysis results and comparison of central and variance parameter estimates and identified as high risk if between study standard error was $>90\%$ of effect size. Imprecision was judged based on the number of data points available (number of studies, treatment arms and outcome measures) and width of credible intervals for central estimates. Certainty of evidence was categorised as high/moderate/low/very low. Assessments began with a categorisation of high certainty and were downgraded one level for each of the domains that were not judged low risk.

Data Synthesis

A Bayesian framework was chosen as it provides a flexible modelling approach that enables results to be interpreted intuitively through reporting of subjective probabilities (58). The effects of each intervention were quantified by calculating effect sizes in the form of standardized mean differences (SMDs). To account for the small sample sizes generally used in S&C, a bias correction was applied. Magnitude-based SMDs obtained by dividing the mean difference by the pre-

intervention standard deviation are the most popular form of effect size used in meta-analyses in sport and exercise science and are informative when considering the change an individual can be expected to make relative to a population pre- to post-intervention (59). Effect sizes were calculated for all outcomes that met the inclusion criteria with most studies providing multiple effect sizes. All relevant effect sizes were incorporated within each meta-analysis comprising a nested four-level mixed effects structure which is presented in the supplementary files (SF-2). The series of nestings included the individual study (level 4), the outcome (level 3, e.g. studies generally included multiple outcomes), the measurement occasion (level 2, e.g. studies frequently measured outcomes at multiple points following baseline) and the within-study sampling variance (level 1) which were calculated according to standard distributions with bias correction for small samples applied (59, 60).

To investigate potential differences in effect size distributions across training modes and moderators such as sprint distance, training dose and training status, meta-regressions were performed with variables categorised as factors and entered into meta-analysis models as fixed effects. Meta-regressions were presented by selecting one level of the factor as a reference to make comparisons with the median and 95% CrI given ($\beta_{\text{Reference:Comparison}} = \text{median [95\%CrI: lower bound to upper bound]}$), such that $\beta > 0$ indicates an increased effect of the comparison relative to the reference).

Meta-regressions were also performed to investigate potential associations between changes in physical capacity (strength, power, or vertical jump performance) and changes in sprint performance. First, separate meta-analyses were conducted pooling either strength, power, vertical jump, or sprint performance data. For each meta-analysis, individual studies were allocated a single study specific effect size and associated standard error. This effect size represented a ‘shrunk estimate’ across all data points included from the study, borrowing strength from data across all studies and being pulled towards the pooled mean to represent more probable values. The study

specific effect size and standard error were taken from the study posterior distribution as the median and standard deviation, respectively. An illustration of study specific posterior distributions can be seen in the Bayesian forest plot in figure 2, where the black circles represent the median and the width of the distribution reflects the standard error. A final series of weighted meta-regressions were then performed with the shrunken sprint performance estimates for the dependent variable along with their standard error, and the shrunken strength, power, or vertical jump estimates as continuous moderator values with weighting applied based on the reciprocal of their standard error. This approach was used to account for the use of different numbers of independent and dependent outcomes across studies.

Weakly informative Student-t priors with 3 degrees of freedom were used for intercept and slope parameters in regressions, and half Student-t priors with 3 degrees of freedom were used for variance parameters (61). Inferences from all analyses were performed on posterior samples generated using the Hamiltonian Markov Chain Monte Carlo method with four chains for 20,000 iterations with a burn-in period of 10,000. Interpretations were based on the median value ($ES_{0.5}$: 0.5-quantile), the range within credible intervals (CrIs). Bayesian CrIs can be interpreted probabilistically, such that with a 95% CrI there is a 95% probability that the true (unknown) estimate would lie within the interval given the priors implemented and the evidence provided by the observed data. Additionally, the $ES_{0.5}$ represents the centre of the posterior such that values close to this point are generally more probable. Analyses were performed using the R wrapper package brms interfaced with Stan to perform sampling (62). Convergence of parameter estimates was obtained for all models with Gelman-Rubin R-hat values below 1.1 (63).

Results

The literature search initially identified a total of 119,642 potential studies, after removal of duplicates and title and abstract screening, 804 full articles were evaluated according to the inclusion/exclusion criteria. A total of 157 studies comprising a median group size of 11 (IQR:9-13), met the inclusion criteria and featured sufficient data to be included in the meta-analysis (Figure 1). A full reference list of the included studies is provided in the supplementary files (SF-2). A total of 1805 outcomes were extracted (sprint time: 699; sprint velocity: 131; strength: 319; power: 229; jump: 427), from interventions categorised as resistance (34.0%), sprint (18.0%), plyometric (10.0%) and a combination of the three (38.0%). Most outcomes were obtained from participants categorised as intermediates (30.4%), followed by novices (57.5%) and advanced (12.1%) based on their S&C experience. A high percentage of outcomes were obtained from male only groups (82.7%), followed by female only (10.4%), then mixed (6.9%) groups. Measurement of outcomes was performed on a consistent basis with a tight distribution (median: 8; IQR:6-9 weeks). Strength of evidence assessments for the meta-analysis outcomes and risk of bias for individual studies are presented in supplementary files (SF-4 & SF-5).

Meta-analysis: Sprint outcomes

Meta-analysis of all sprint outcomes estimated a mean pooled effect size of $SMD_{Pre_{0.5}} = 0.44$ [95%CrI: 0.37 to 0.52; very low certainty], with between study standard deviation $\sigma_{v_{0.5}} = 0.46$ [75%CrI: 0.42 to 0.50] which accounted for approximately 70% of the variance across levels (Figure 2). Analyses indicated that the mean pooled effect size for sprint outcomes measured by time or velocity were equivalent ($\beta_{Time:Velocity_{0.5}} = 0.02$ [95%CrI: -0.09 to 0.14; very low certainty]). In addition, estimated pooled means were similar across sprint distances ($\beta_{\leq 10m:\leq 20m_{0.5}} = -0.03$ [95%CrI: -0.09 to 0.05; low certainty], $\beta_{\leq 10m:\leq 30m_{0.5}} = -0.04$ [95%CrI: -0.14 to 0.07; low certainty], $\beta_{\leq 10m:\leq 40m_{0.5}} = -0.01$ [95%CrI: -0.10 to 0.09; very low certainty]). The largest estimated mean pooled effect size was obtained for interventions comprising resistance training ($SMD_{Pre_{0.5}} = 0.55$ [95%CrI: 0.36 to 0.78; very low certainty]); however, there was considerable overlap in estimates across all intervention types ($\beta_{Sprint:Resistance_{0.5}} = 0.11$

[95%CrI: -0.03 to 0.26; low certainty], $\beta_{\text{Sprint:Plyometric}_{0.5}} = -0.03$ [95%CrI: -0.21 to 0.16; low certainty], $\beta_{\text{Sprint:Combined}_{0.5}} = 0.07$ [95%CrI: -0.08 to 0.20; low certainty]).

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram depicting the search and screening process.

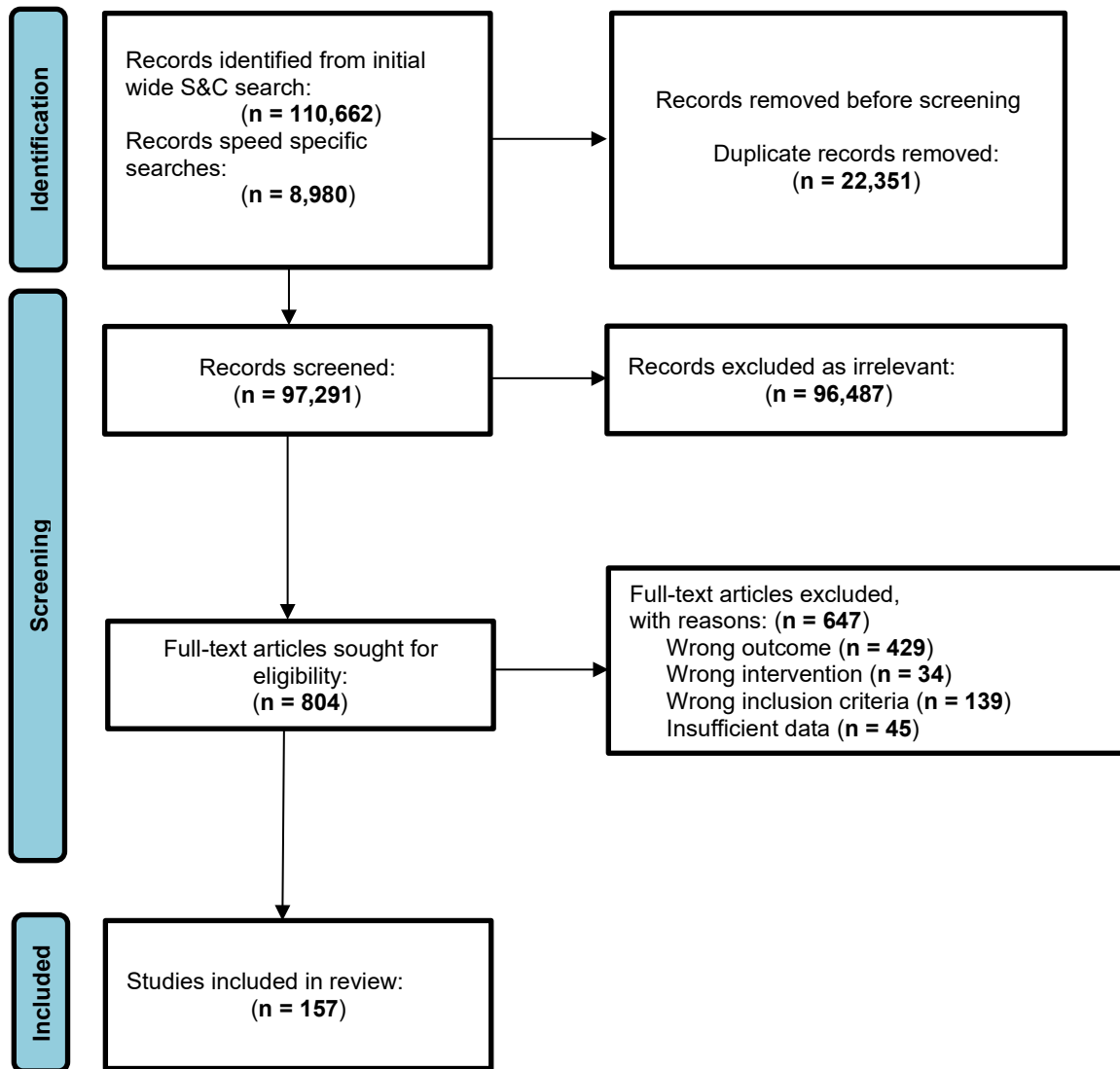
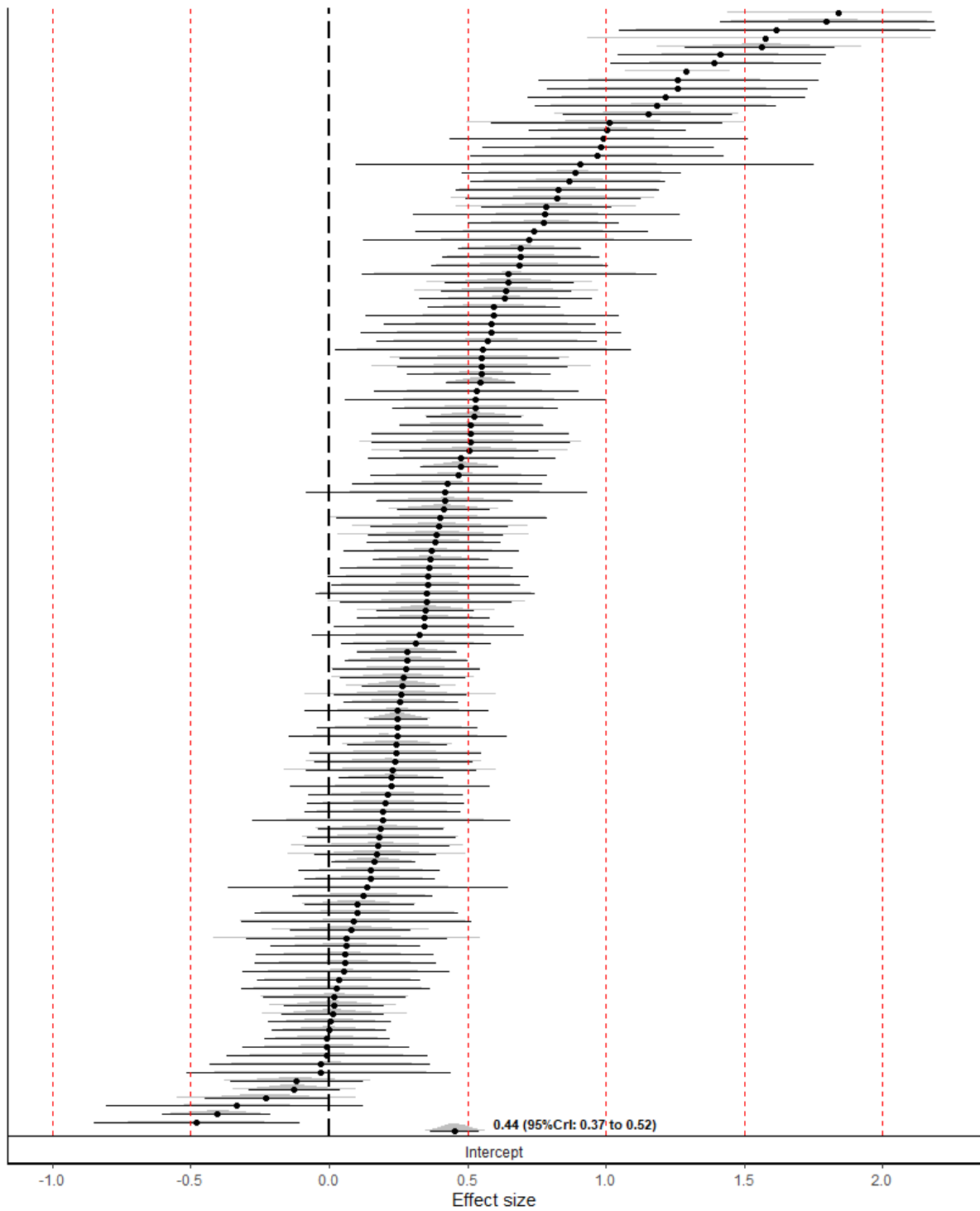


Figure 2. Bayesian forest plot estimating pooled mean across all sprint outcomes



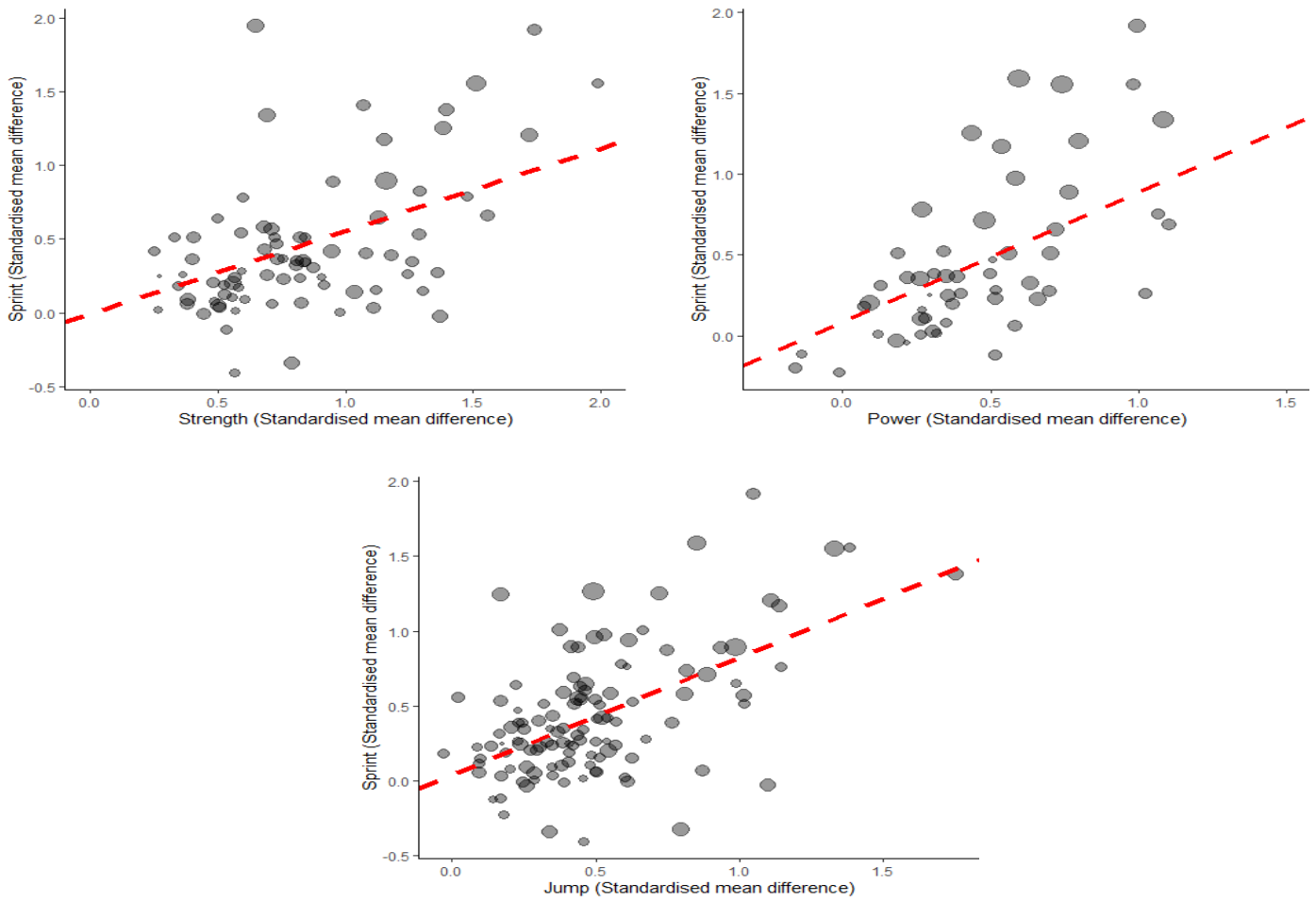
Distributions represent “shrunken estimates” from individual studies based on all relevant effect sizes, the random effects model fitted, and borrowing of information across studies to reduce uncertainty. Black circles and connected intervals represent the median value and 95% credible intervals for the shrunken estimates. Black dashed line denotes the zero line, with red lines set at 0.5 intervals. CrI: Credible interval.

Further moderator analyses identified increased mean pooled effect size with interventions comprising high intensity compared with lower intensity activity ($\beta_{\text{Low:High}_{0.5}} = 0.17$ [95%CrI: 0.01 to 0.33; very low certainty]). In contrast, considerable overlap and limited evidence of moderating effects were obtained for training volume ($\beta_{\text{Low:High}_{0.5}} = -0.02$ [95%CrI: -0.14 to 0.10; low certainty]), intervention length ($\beta_{<8\text{Weeks}:\geq 8\text{Weeks}_{0.5}} = 0.12$ [95%CrI: 0.01 to 0.23; low certainty]), and participant S&C training status ($\beta_{\text{Novice}:\geq\text{Intermediate}_{0.5}} = -0.06$ [95%CrI: -0.18 to 0.07; low certainty], $\beta_{\text{Novice}:\geq\text{Advanced}_{0.5}} = 0.01$ [95%CrI: -0.24 to 0.26; low certainty]). In a sub-analysis conducted on all sprint outcomes obtained from interventions categorised as free sprint or resisted sprint, an increased pooled mean effect size was estimated for resisted sprint interventions ($\beta_{\text{Free:Resisted}_{0.5}} = 0.19$ [95%CrI: 0.09 to 0.29; moderate certainty]).

Meta-analysis: Relationships between sprint and other outcomes

From the 157 studies included in the review, 82 (52%) studies included 318 strength outcomes, 56 (36%) studies included 229 power outcomes, and 118 (75%) studies included 424 jump outcomes. Mean pooled effect sizes of $\text{SMD}_{\text{Pre}_{0.5}} = 0.70$ [95%CrI: 0.60 to 0.79; low certainty], $\text{SMD}_{\text{Pre}_{0.5}} = 0.43$ [95%CrI: 0.31 to 0.54; moderate certainty], and $\text{SMD}_{\text{Pre}_{0.5}} = 0.49$ [95%CrI: 0.42 to 0.57; low certainty], were obtained for strength, power and jump outcomes, respectively. To quantify relationships between magnitudes of improvement in sprint outcomes and all other outcomes, shrunken estimates from each intervention group were obtained combining all outcomes from each category into a single estimate. Relatively strong relationships were obtained between improvements in sprint and all other outcome measures ($\beta_{\text{Strength}_{0.5}} = 0.56$ [95%CrI: 0.36 to 0.77; low certainty], $\beta_{\text{Power}_{0.5}} = 0.80$ [95%CrI: 0.50 to 1.0; low certainty], $\beta_{\text{Jump}_{0.5}} = 0.78$ [95%CrI: 0.57 to 0.97; low certainty]). Bubbleplots illustrating the relationship between shrunken estimates across studies are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Bubble plot illustrating the relationships between improvements in physical variables (Left: Strength; Right: Power; Bottom: Jump) and sprint performance across intervention studies.



Slopes of regression lines: $\beta_{\text{Strength}_{0.5}} = 0.56$ [95%CrI: 0.36 to 0.77]; $\beta_{\text{Power}_{0.5}} = 0.80$ [95%CrI: 0.50 to 1.0]; $\beta_{\text{Jump}_{0.5}} = 0.78$ [95%CrI: 0.57 to 0.97].

Discussion

The present study represents one of the largest meta-analyses to date investigating the transfer of S&C training to sprint performance in team sport athletes. Meta-analyses conducted across all training modes identified similar improvements in sprint performance across distances of 5 to 40 m, for both time and velocity. Considerable overlap in pooled estimates were obtained for resistance, sprint, plyometric and combined training modes, with the highest point estimate obtained for resistance training. The strongest moderating effects were identified for training intensity and intervention duration. Higher intensity training, including the addition of resistance during sprint training, resulted in increases in standardised mean differences of approximately 0.15 to 0.20. Greater improvements were also associated with longer duration interventions. In contrast, limited evidence of moderating effects was obtained for training volume, or S&C training experience. Across the included studies, similar standardised mean difference improvements were obtained for strength, power and jump performance, with pooled mean values ranging between 0.50 and 0.70. In addition, similar strong relationships were identified across studies for improvement in strength, power or jump performance, and improvement in sprint performance. Weighted regressions estimated that for each standard deviation improvement in the physical variables, sprint performance would be expected to improve by 0.5 to 0.8 standard deviations.

The studies included in the present systematic review and meta-analysis comprised primarily team sport athletes that were novices in S&C (59% of studies) with less than 1 year training experience. In addition, training interventions were generally short, with the median duration for data collection equal to 8 weeks (IQR:6-9 weeks). No evidence of a moderating effect was identified for experience in S&C. The focus on relatively untrained populations has been viewed as a consistent limitation within S&C research as it is expected that untrained individuals will elicit greater training effects due to neural and motor skill adaptations, rather than the potential targeted

morphological adaptations (3). However, the results from the current review did not provide clear evidence of differences in sprint performance improvements across novice, intermediate and advanced team sport athletes, categorised based on their S&C training experience. These results are consistent with the findings of a recent meta-analysis (45) conducted with team sport athletes performing either complex or contrast training. Cormier et al. (45) categorised athlete status based on their level of competition as amateurs or professionals, and reported substantial overlap in effect size estimates for the groups of sprint times across distances from 10 to 40 m. In contrast, in another meta-analysis conducted with healthy adults, Seitz et al. (37) reported differences across groups based on the level of practice, with some sub-analyses indicating greater improvement in sprinting performance with increasing level of practice. Differences across reviews may be due to several factors including categorisation based on either the level of the athlete according to their ability in the sport, or their experience with regards to S&C. The approach adopted in the present review could be considered more relevant when assessing the transfer of training with regards to physical improvements within the context of strength and power (2, 3, 52, 64-66).

In a recent very large meta-analysis (3), the effects of specificity were clearly identified with coupling between training intervention and outcome shown to result in an approximate 0.2 increase in standardised mean difference compared to non-coupled interventions and outcomes. In the current review, considerable overlap in improved sprint performance was obtained for resistance, plyometric, sprint, and combined intervention types. However, some evidence was obtained indicating that the greatest improvements in sprint performance occurred with resistance-based interventions. It is important to note that these results do not contradict the specificity findings of the previous large scale meta-analysis. That is, resistance training was shown previously to result in the largest increases across all outcome measures (strength, agility, jump, sprint, and explosiveness), but that additional increases were obtained when resistance training was combined

with strength outcomes (3). In contrast, sprint training was shown to result in the lowest increases across all outcomes measures, but that an additional specificity effect occurred so that sprint outcomes were improved to a greater degree. The results from the current meta-analysis identify that these relative general and specific effects appear to balance each other out to some degree, such that each of the training methods results in similar improvements in sprint performance, with potentially resistance training providing the largest improvements in team sport athletes. The findings are in agreement with a recent meta-analysis conducted with football code athletes that showed similar improvements in sprint performance for training methods categorised as primary (sprint technique drills and unresisted sprinting), secondary (forms of resisted sprint training), tertiary (non-specific sprint training including strength and/or plyometric training), combined specific (combinations of primary unresisted and secondary resisted sprint training) combined (combinations of the tertiary, non-specific training and primary or secondary sprint specific training) (46, 47).

The results of the current review also highlighted that across all training types increased intensity resulted in greater improvements in sprint performance. This finding agrees with previous research demonstrating an ordered effect for resistance training interventions and improvements in sprint performance across intensities categorised as light (0.8% improvement), medium (3.3% improvement) and high (5.0% improvement) (37). In the present review the increased effectiveness of higher intensity exercise on improved sprint performance was also demonstrated when comparing free sprint and resisted sprint interventions. Whilst free sprint training is most specific to the target task of improving sprint performance, the ability to overload and develop physical output during the target task becomes compromised. In contrast, resisted sprint training allows for the ability to overload kinetic outputs such as the production of force and power in opportune directions, whilst also maintaining high levels of kinematic similarity. In a systematic

review of the use of resisted sled training, Petrakos et al (41) identified that non-specifically sprint trained athletes demonstrate greater rates of improvement from interventions that target sprint-specific muscle output or technical efficiency, in which the use of resisted sprint training could encompass both. Research and use of resisted sprint training has gained popularity over recent years (66). However, considerations are required in load selection to balance overload while maintaining levels of specificity. Meta-analysis results from Alcaraz et al. (43) concluded resisted sprint training (sled towing) was most beneficial with loads $<20\%$ body mass at up to 20 m distances. More recently, very heavy resisted sled training ($80+\%$ body mass) has also been shown to improve horizontal force, power, and mechanical efficiency in soccer players with the greatest improvements measured during accelerative sprinting ($<20\text{m}$), with small or unclear improvements in maximum velocity (67). In the current review no evidence of differential improvements in sprint performance were identified across distances of between 5 and 40 m. However, the possibility that differential effects exist within specific training methods is possible.

To the authors' knowledge, the current review is the first to implement an extensive analysis approach across many studies to quantify the magnitude of transference from improvements in strength, power and jump height to improvements in sprint performance of team sport athletes. The results showed similar strong associations between all three physical factors and sprint performance with the point estimates of the beta-coefficient ranging from 0.56 to 0.80. Additionally, visual inspection of the data indicated that a linear relationship may be appropriate (Figure 3). The results obtained in the current review support those by Seitz et al. (37) who reported an absolute correlation value of 0.77 between improvements in the squatting and sprint performance. In the analysis by Seitz et al. (37), precision in effect size estimates were not accounted for when calculating the association. Additionally, Seitz et al. (37) included multiple outcomes from the same study without accounting for dependencies in the data. Collectively, not

accounting for dependencies and different levels of precision in the data is likely to overestimate confidence in the estimate provided by Seitz et al. (37). In the present review a Bayesian approach was adopted using shrunken estimates that borrow information across studies tending to increase precision in study estimates. Additionally, the present study used a single effect size value from each study informed by the measurement of multiple outcomes and performed a weighted regression accounting for uncertainty in the individual study estimates. The process resulted in similar point estimate to Seitz et al (37), but uncertainty in the estimate in the current study was wider. The findings of the current review demonstrate that similar strong relationships were obtained for improvements in power and jump performance with improved sprint performance, further highlight that implementation of the most effective S&C methods to develop the physical capabilities of team sport athletes should be expected to result in substantive improvements in sprint performance.

Whilst the current review represents the largest systematic review employing robust meta-analytic approaches to investigate the effect of S&C interventions on sprint performance within team sports, there are multiple research, process and statistical limitations that should be considered. Although an extensive literature search was implemented the process was not exhaustive and many studies particularly those published in languages other than English are not included. The certainty of the evidence presented in this review was generally low based on evaluations using the GRADE approach. This was due to the consistent high risk of bias, high risk of inconsistency due to the heterogenous nature of the research with regards to many intervention and participant related factors, and frequent risk of small-study effects that have been shown to results in very large and potentially unrealistic effect size estimates (68). Previous meta-analyses have categorised playing level (amateur, sub-elite, elite) as a moderating variable and/or indicator of experience whereas, the current analysis included training status based on stated years of S&C experience. However,

several studies did not specify participant training history, meaning this field was estimated based on playing level and values of outcome variables. Additionally, future research in the area should consider applications of combined specific training methods such as combinations of free and resisted sprint training versus non-specific training methods (resistance and plyometric training), and to the type and intensity of load applied during resisted sprint training.

The statistical limitations of the review include those common to many meta-analyses and some specific to the approaches adopted. The use of meta-regressions is generally recommended to explore associations between a limited number of between study factors and effects sizes (70). Most meta-analyses including that presented here, however, are conducted on aggregate data from studies comprising different combinations of potentially relevant factors including training and participant characteristics. Firstly, estimates from individual meta-regressions may be confounded by imbalances in other factors. Secondly, it is expected that there will be differences between associations of effects with aggregate study-level data and true associations obtained from individuals which has been referred to as the ecological fallacy or aggregation bias (71). Thirdly, even where associations from aggregate level data appropriately reflect those at the individual level, there may be limited causal structures such that targeting development in one factor (e.g. strength) may not improve the other (e.g. speed) by the expected magnitude.

Statistical limitations specific to this review include the layering of regressions and their shrunken estimates to quantify relationships between changes in sprint performance and strength, power and jumping. It is possible that this process may have caused additional dependencies within the data thereby influencing estimates. However, sample sizes were generally consistent across the

studies such that the estimates were shrunken primarily based on the magnitude of the effects calculated.

Practical applications

The findings from the current systematic review and meta-analysis demonstrate that both non-direct and direct S&C training can provide sufficient stimulus when attempting to improve sprint performance in team sport athletes. Evidence was obtained indicating that resistance training may produce the largest improvements, but considerable overlap with other methods should be expected. In addition, more successful S&C interventions with regards to development of strength, power, or explosive performance in the form of vertical jumping, are expected to result in the largest improvements in sprinting performance. Therefore, practitioners should aim to maximise improvements in such physiological qualities to increase the possible transference to sprinting performance. Collectively, the findings suggest that when attempting to develop sprinting performance in team sport athletes, practitioners should aim to implement periodized training interventions incorporating the most effective S&C interventions to develop strength, power, and explosive ability. Additionally, interventions that feature high intensity loading for each training mode are likely to be the most effective, including resisted sprint training. Based on these results, practitioners and athletes' can use short time periods (~8 to 12 weeks), potentially during off-season or pre-season, to incorporate high intensity loading, through non-direct (resistance training, plyometric or combined) or direct (free sprint or resisted sprint) training methods to overload and promote physiological adaptations likely to lead to improvements in sprint performance. Further research is required to investigate which periodized approaches are most effective, however, the finding that many training types improve sprint performance and the existence of strong positive relationships between magnitude of improvements between physical factors and sprint performance suggests that many contemporary S&C approaches are likely to be effective.

DECLARATIONS:

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate:

Not applicable.

Consent for Publication:

Not applicable

Availability of Data and Materials:

Sections of the large data set can be made available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Competing Interests:

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Authors' Contributions:

AM, PS and KB designed the protocol. AM, AH and RA conducted the searches and screened the studies. PS developed and piloted the codebook with ongoing critical input from AM and KB. AM, AH and RA extracted the data. AH and RA conducted the quality appraisal of all articles. PS undertook the statistical analysis with critical input from AM. AM and PS wrote the first draft of the manuscript with ongoing critical input from all authors.

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Figure legends

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram depicting the search and screening process.

Figure 2 (TOP): Bayesian forest plot estimating pooled mean across all sprint outcomes

Figure 2 (Bottom): Distributions represent “shrunk estimates” from individual studies based on all relevant effect sizes, the random effects model fitted, and borrowing of information across studies to reduce uncertainty. Black circles and connected intervals represent the median value and 95% credible intervals for the shrunk estimates. Black dashed line denotes the zero line, with red lines set at 0.5 intervals. CrI: Credible interval.

Figure 3 (TOP): Bubble plot illustrating the relationships between improvements in physical variables (Left: Strength; Right: Power; Bottom: Jump) and sprint performance across intervention studies.

Figure 3 (Bottom): Slopes of regression lines: $\beta_{\text{Strength}_{0.5}} = 0.56$ [95%CrI: 0.36 to 0.77];
 $\beta_{\text{Power}_{0.5}} = 0.80$ [95%CrI: 0.50 to 1.0]; $\beta_{\text{Jump}_{0.5}} = 0.78$ [95%CrI: 0.57 to 0.97].

Supplementary File 1: Checklist of Preferred Reporting items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (PRISMA-P)

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Location where item is reported
TITLE			
Title	1	Identify the report as a systematic review.	Title - Page 0
ABSTRACT			
Abstract	2	See the PRISMA 2020 for Abstracts checklist.	Abstract - Page 1
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of existing knowledge.	Introduction - Page 2-5
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of the objective(s) or question(s) the review addresses.	Introduction - Page 5
METHODS			
Eligibility criteria	5	Specify the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review and how studies were grouped for the syntheses.	Eligibility Criteria – Page 6-8
Information sources	6	Specify all databases, registers, websites, organisations, reference lists and other sources searched or consulted to identify studies. Specify the date when each source was last searched or consulted.	Search Strategy – Page 8
Search strategy	7	Present the full search strategies for all databases, registers and websites, including any filters and limits used.	Search Strategy – Page 8
Selection process	8	Specify the methods used to decide whether a study met the inclusion criteria of the review, including how many reviewers screened each record and each report retrieved, whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Study Selection – Page 9
Data collection process	9	Specify the methods used to collect data from reports, including how many reviewers collected data from each report, whether they worked independently, any processes for obtaining or confirming data from study investigators, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Data Extraction – Page 9-10
Data items	10a	List and define all outcomes for which data were sought. Specify whether all results that were compatible with each outcome domain in each study were sought (e.g. for all measures, time points, analyses), and if not, the methods used to decide which results to collect.	Eligibility Criteria – Page 6-8
	10b	List and define all other variables for which data were sought (e.g. participant and intervention characteristics, funding sources). Describe any assumptions made about any missing or unclear information.	Data Extraction – Page 9-10

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Location where item is reported
Study risk of bias assessment	11	Specify the methods used to assess risk of bias in the included studies, including details of the tool(s) used, how many reviewers assessed each study and whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Certainty in cumulative evidence – Page 10-11 SF-4
Effect measures	12	Specify for each outcome the effect measure(s) (e.g. risk ratio, mean difference) used in the synthesis or presentation of results.	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
Synthesis methods	13a	Describe the processes used to decide which studies were eligible for each synthesis (e.g. tabulating the study intervention characteristics and comparing against the planned groups for each synthesis (item #5)).	Results – Page 14 Prisma Flowchart (figure 1)
	13b	Describe any methods required to prepare the data for presentation or synthesis, such as handling of missing summary statistics, or data conversions.	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
	13c	Describe any methods used to tabulate or visually display results of individual studies and syntheses.	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
	13d	Describe any methods used to synthesize results and provide a rationale for the choice(s). If meta-analysis was performed, describe the model(s), method(s) to identify the presence and extent of statistical heterogeneity, and software package(s) used.	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
	13e	Describe any methods used to explore possible causes of heterogeneity among study results (e.g. subgroup analysis, meta-regression).	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
	13f	Describe any sensitivity analyses conducted to assess robustness of the synthesized results.	Data Synthesis – Page 11-13
Reporting bias assessment	14	Describe any methods used to assess risk of bias due to missing results in a synthesis (arising from reporting biases).	Certainty in cumulative evidence – Page 10-11
Certainty assessment	15	Describe any methods used to assess certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for an outcome.	Certainty in cumulative evidence – Page 10-11
RESULTS			
Study selection	16a	Describe the results of the search and selection process, from the number of records identified in the search to the number of studies included in the review, ideally using a flow diagram.	Results – Page 14-16
	16b	Cite studies that might appear to meet the inclusion criteria, but which were excluded, and explain why they were excluded.	Results –

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Location where item is reported
			Page 14
Study characteristics	17	Cite each included study and present its characteristics.	Supplementary file 3
Risk of bias in studies	18	Present assessments of risk of bias for each included study.	Certainty of evidence assessment – Supplementary file 4
Results of individual studies	19	For all outcomes, present, for each study: (a) summary statistics for each group (where appropriate) and (b) an effect estimate and its precision (e.g. confidence/credible interval), ideally using structured tables or plots.	Results – Figure 2
Results of syntheses	20a	For each synthesis, briefly summarise the characteristics and risk of bias among contributing studies.	Results – Page 14-15
	20b	Present results of all statistical syntheses conducted. If meta-analysis was done, present for each the summary estimate and its precision (e.g. confidence/credible interval) and measures of statistical heterogeneity. If comparing groups, describe the direction of the effect.	Results – Page 14-15
	20c	Present results of all investigations of possible causes of heterogeneity among study results.	Results – Page 14-15
	20d	Present results of all sensitivity analyses conducted to assess the robustness of the synthesized results.	Results – Page 14-15
Reporting biases	21	Present assessments of risk of bias due to missing results (arising from reporting biases) for each synthesis assessed.	Results – Page 14-15
Certainty of evidence	22	Present assessments of certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for each outcome assessed.	Results – Page 14-15
DISCUSSION			
Discussion	23a	Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence.	Discussion – Page 17-23
	23b	Discuss any limitations of the evidence included in the review.	Discussion – Page 21-22
	23c	Discuss any limitations of the review processes used.	Discussion – Page 21-22
	23d	Discuss implications of the results for practice, policy, and future research.	Practical Application – Page 23
OTHER INFORMATION			

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Location where item is reported
Registration and protocol	24a	Provide registration information for the review, including register name and registration number, or state that the review was not registered.	Methods – Page 6
	24b	Indicate where the review protocol can be accessed, or state that a protocol was not prepared.	Methods – Page 6
	24c	Describe and explain any amendments to information provided at registration or in the protocol.	Methods – Page 6
Support	25	Describe sources of financial or non-financial support for the review, and the role of the funders or sponsors in the review.	Declarations – Page 24
Competing interests	26	Declare any competing interests of review authors.	Declarations – Page 24
Availability of data, code and other materials	27	Report which of the following are publicly available and where they can be found: template data collection forms; data extracted from included studies; data used for all analyses; analytic code; any other materials used in the review.	Declarations – Page 24

Supplementary File 2: Description of meta-analysis model

All meta-analyses were conducted using a nested four-level mixed effects meta-analytic model. The series of nestings included the individual study (level 4), the outcome (level 3), the measurement occasion (level 2) and the sampling variance (level 1). The meta-analysis model (null model) describing the average effect and variance across each level can be expressed as:

$$\text{Level1: } d_{ijk} = \beta_{0ijk} + e_{ijk}, \quad e_{ijk} \sim N(0, \sigma_e^2)$$

$$\text{Level2: } \beta_{0ijk} = \eta_{0jk} + r_{ijk}, \quad r_{ijk} \sim N(0, \sigma_r^2)$$

$$\text{Level3: } \eta_{0jk} = \theta_{0k} + u_{0jk}, \quad u_{0jk} \sim N(0, \sigma_u^2)$$

$$\text{Level4: } \theta_{0k} = \gamma_0 + v_{0k}, \quad v_{0k} \sim N(0, \sigma_v^2)$$

To give

$$d_{ijk} = \gamma_0 + v_{0k} + u_{0jk} + r_{ijk} + e_{ijk}$$

where d_{ijk} is the observed effect size at measurement occasion i ($i = 1, 2, \dots, I_{jk}$), from outcome j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, J_k$) and from study k ($k = 1, 2, \dots, K$). The indexing I_{jk} denotes that the number of measurement occasions may vary across outcomes and studies, and J_k denotes the number of outcomes may vary across studies. The random effects across the different levels ($v_{0k}, u_{0jk}, r_{ijk}, e_{ijk}$) were assumed to be independent such that the variance of an observed effect size was $\sigma^2(d_{ijk}) = \sigma_r^2 + \sigma_u^2 + \sigma_v^2 + \sigma_e^2$. The null model states that the underlying true population average effect size is γ_0 , and for each study the average effect size will equal θ_{0k} , and due to the use of a normal distribution, the value for most studies will lie in the interval $\gamma_0 \pm 2\sigma_v^2$. The true effect sizes for different outcomes within studies, and across measurement occasions within outcomes can then move further from θ_{0k} , based on the magnitude of the variances σ_u^2 and σ_r^2 . If we consider two observations $d_{ijk}, d_{i'j'k'}$, then the covariance of these are

$$\text{cov}(d_{ijk}, d_{i'j'k'}) = \text{cov}(v_{0k}, v_{0k'}) + \text{cov}(u_{0jk}, u_{0j'k'}) + \text{cov}(r_{ijk}, r_{i'j'k'}) + \text{cov}(e_{ijk}, e_{i'j'k'}).$$

Which is equal to $\sigma_v^2 + \sigma_u^2 + \sigma_r^2$ (for $i = i', j = j', k = k'$), $\sigma_v^2 + \sigma_u^2$ (for $i \neq i', j = j', k = k'$), and σ_v^2 (for $i \neq i', j \neq j', k = k'$).

Supplementary File 3: References of included studies

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Supplementary File 4: Certainty of Evidence Assessment

Sprint meta-analysis outcomes

Category	Analysis	Overall RoB	Inconsistency	Imprecision	Small study-effects	Certainty
Sprint	Time (691 outcomes / 141 studies) + Velocity (131 outcomes / 27 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Time (691 outcomes / 141 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Velocity (131 outcomes / 27 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Distance ≤ 10 m (290 outcomes / 113 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low
Sprint	Distance ≤ 20 m (185 outcomes / 92 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low
Sprint	Distance ≤ 30 m (96 outcomes / 50 studies)	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Low risk	Low
Sprint	Distance ≤ 40 m (80 outcomes / 35 studies)	High risk	High risk	High risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Sprint training (232 outcomes / 29 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Sprint	Strength training (263 outcomes / 62 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Plyometric training (65 outcomes / 24 studies)	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Low risk	Low
Sprint	Combined training (262 outcomes / 66 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Low intensity (200 outcomes / 45 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	High intensity	High risk	High risk	High risk	High risk	Very low

	(190 outcomes / 45 studies)					
Sprint	Low volume (665 outcomes / 132 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	High volume (155 outcomes / 36 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Sprint	<8 Weeks (330 outcomes / 70 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Sprint	≥8 Weeks (492 outcomes / 93 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Novice (255 outcomes / 59 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	High risk	Very low
Sprint	Intermediate (430 outcomes / 82 studies)	High risk	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low
Sprint	Advanced (125 outcomes / 18 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Sprint	Free sprint (111 outcomes / 22 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Sprint	Resisted sprint (113 outcomes / 21 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate

Strength, power and jump meta-analysis outcomes

Category	Analysis	Overall RoB	Inconsistency	Imprecision	Small study-effects	Certainty
Strength	All outcomes (318 outcomes / 82 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low
Power	All outcomes (229 outcomes / 56 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate
Jump	All outcomes (424 outcomes / 118 studies)	High risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low

Supplementary File 5: Risk of bias of individual studies using the PEDro scale

Study	Author/Year	Criterion										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Abade, 2020	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
2	Abade, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
3	Aloui, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
4	Alves, 2010	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
5	Appleby, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
6	Arazi, 2018	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
7	Asadi, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
8	Ayers, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
9	Barbalho, 2018	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
10	Barr, 2014a	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
11	Barr, 2014b	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
12	Bianchi, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
13	Blazevich, 2003	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
14	Borges, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
15	Bouterraa, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
16	Branquinho, 2020	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
17	Brito, 2014	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
18	Cahill, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
19	Callister, 1988	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
20	Carlos-Vivas, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
21	Chaabene, 2021	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
22	Chaalali, 2022	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
23	Chakshuraksha, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
24	Chelly, 2009	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
25	Chelly, 2010	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
26	Chelly, 2014	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

27	Cherni, 2021	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
28	Chimera, 2004	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
29	Cin, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
30	Clark, 2010	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
31	Comfort, 2012	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
32	Coratella, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
33	Coratella, 2018	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
34	Corrêa, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
35	Coutts, 2007	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
36	Coutts, 2004	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
37	Cressey, 2007	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
38	Cross, 2018	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
39	de Hoyo, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
40	de Hoyo, 2015a	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
41	De Hoyo, 2015b	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
42	Dello, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
43	Douglas, 2018	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
44	Falk Neto, 2021	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
45	Faude, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
46	Feser, 2021a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
47	Feser, 2021b	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
48	Freitas, 2019	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
49	Fry, 1991	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
50	Gavanda, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
51	Gee, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
52	Gil, 2018	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
53	Gjinovci, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
54	González-Badillo, 2015	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
55	Gonzalo-Skok, 2017a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
56	Gonzalo-Skok, 2017b	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

57	Gorostiaga, 2004	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
58	Griffiths, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
59	Hammami, 2019a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
60	Hammami, 2019b	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
61	Hammami, 2018	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
62	Hammami, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
63	Harries, 2018	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
64	Harris, 2000	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
65	Harris, 2008	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
66	Helland, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
67	Hennessy, 1994	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
68	Hermassi, 2011	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
69	Hermassi, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
70	Hermassi, 2019	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
71	Hoffman, 2004	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
72	Hoffman, 1990	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
73	Hoffman, 2005	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
74	Horwath, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
75	Idrizovic, 2018	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
76	Impellizzeri, 2008	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
77	Ishida, 2021	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
78	Johnson, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
79	Kargarfard, 2020	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
80	Karsten, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
81	Kawamori, 2014	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
82	Klnċ, 2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
83	Kotzamanidis, 2005	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
84	Koundourakis, 2014	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
85	Lahti, 2020	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
86	Lievens, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1

87	Lockie, 2014	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
88	Lockie, 2012	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
89	Lockie, 2014	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
90	López-Segovia, 2010	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
91	Los Arcos, 2014	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
92	Loturco, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
93	Loturco, 2015a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
94	Loturco , 2015b	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
95	Loturco, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
96	Loturco, 2020.	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
97	Luteberget, 2015	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
98	Lyttle, 1996	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
99	Manolopoulos, 2004	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
100	Manouras, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
101	Maroto-Izquierdo, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
102	Marques, 2019	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
103	Marzouki, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
104	McBride, 2002	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
105	McMaster, 2014	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
106	McMorrow, 2019	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
107	Miranda, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
108	Moir, 2007	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
109	Moore, 2005	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
110	Morin, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
111	Mujika, 2009	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
112	Mulcahy, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
113	Nikolic, 2017	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
114	Orange, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
115	Otero-Esquina, 2017	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
116	Ozbar, 2014	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1

117	Parnow, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
118	Paz-Franco, 2017	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
119	Pedersen, 2019	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
120	Pienaar , 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
121	Prieto, 2021	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
122	Rakovic, 2018	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
123	Randell, 2011	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
124	Rey, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
125	Rhea, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
126	Ribeiro, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
127	Rodríguez-Osorio, 2019	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
128	Rodríguez-Rosell, 2017a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
129	Rodríguez-Rosell, 2017b	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
130	Rønnestad, 2008	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
131	Sabido, 2017	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
132	Sagelv, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
133	Sanchez-Sanchez, 2021	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
134	Sander, 2013	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
135	Seitz, 2015	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
136	Shalfawi, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
137	Siegler, 2003	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
138	Speirs, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
139	Spinks, 2007	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
140	Stern, 2020	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
141	Styles, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
142	Talpey, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
143	Thomas, 2009	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
144	Till, 2017	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
145	Tønnessen, 2011	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
146	Torres-Torrelo, 2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

147	Tsimachidis, 2013	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
148	Vadivelan, 2015	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
149	Voelzke, 2012	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
150	Weakley, 2019a	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
151	Weakley, 2019b	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
152	Wirtz, 2016	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
153	Yanci, 2017	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
154	Yanci, 2016	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
155	Yáñez-García, 2022	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
156	Zabaloy, 2020	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
157	Zafeiridis, 2005	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

Criterion

1. eligibility criteria were specified
2. subjects were randomly allocated to groups (in a crossover study, subjects were randomly allocated an order in which treatments were received)
3. Allocation was concealed
4. The groups were similar at baseline regarding the most important prognostic indicators
5. There was blinding of all subjects
6. There was blinding of all therapists who administered the therapy
7. There was blinding of all assessors who measured at least one key outcome
8. Measures of at least one key outcome were obtained from more than 85% of the subjects initially allocated to groups
9. All subjects for whom outcome measures were available received the treatment or control condition as allocated or, where this was not the case, data for at least one key outcome was analysed by “intention to treat”
10. The results of between-group statistical comparisons are reported for at least one key outcome
11. The study provides both point measures and measures of variability for at least one key outcome