The Effect of Sport Specific, Governed, and Non-Controllable Focal Point on Female Vertical Jump Performance

Robert T. Sanders, Andy M. Bosak, Christopher B. Carver, Austin P. Smith, Jonathan M. Houck, Matthew L. Sokoloski, Jared R. Feister. Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Few studies have assessed factors that directly impact vertical jump performance in females. Prior studies investigated varying warm-up protocols as a means to enhance jump performance without seeking to manipulate the target (i.e. sport specific focal point, non-controllable, or governed focal point) that the female subjects focused on to complete the jumps. A previous focal point vertical jump study utilizing male subjects suggested that vertical jump performance increased when using a sport specific focal point. However, this has not been assessed using a female population to the best of the researchers' knowledge. **PURPOSE:** To determine if a sport specific focal point contributes to an increase in jumping performance compared to non-controllable (i.e. no set focal point), and a governed (i.e. set focal point) in averagely fit females. **METHODS:** Thirty averagely fit female participants had descriptive data collected (i.e. age, HT, WT, BF). Participants completed an 8 min warmup, which avoided static movements, and then received a 4 min passive recovery. After completing four familiarization jumps in a counter movement manner participants completed four jumps per each jump trial with thirty seconds of rest between jumps and 2 min of passive rest between each trial. The jump series protocol consisted of three separate counterbalanced trials which included a sport specific (FPS), governed (FP), or non-controllable focal point (FPN). FPN, FP, FPS were compared using ANOVA with significance determined at an alpha level of 0.05. **RESULTS:** FPS (51.56 cm $\pm$ 8.69 cm) was significantly different ($p = .0005$) versus FP (50.67 cm $\pm$ 8.70 cm) and FPN (50.50 $\pm$ 8.83 cm). Also, there was no significant difference ($p = .245$) between FPN and FP. **CONCLUSION:** It appears that using a sport specific focal point may elicit a higher jump in averagely fit females as compared to the jumps when females utilized a non-controlled focal point or a governed focal point. Further research is necessary in order to evaluate the use of a sport specific focal point on vertical jump performance with females who participate in jumping sports (i.e. basketball, volleyball) at the high school, collegiate, and professional level.