

## Protecting football players in the heat - UEFA medical research grant 2023

“Testing a simple cooling intervention to improve health, safety and performance of footballers playing in the heat.”

This study is part Edgar Schwarz’ PhD project “Improving health, safety and performance of footballers playing in the heat “. This is a joint project together with the University of Technology in Sydney and is funded by the “Deutsche Fußball Liga GmbH”.

This experimental study is investigating a cooling intervention within two football matches held in heat (crossover design). The cooling intervention will consist of mixed internal and external cooling strategies that can be applied by any football team, using only methods that can easily be applied in real world football matches, considering time constraints within a matchday. The matches are going to contain an additional 3-minute cooling breaks in each half, as currently applied by football federations. The aim is to derive a best practice cooling strategy and investigate the effects on physiological (core body temperature, heart rate, fluid balance), subjective (thermal sensation, rating of perceived exhaustion) and performance (running, match play) markers.

We are currently recruiting teams in different countries, to find a setting with consistently hot environmental conditions, to be able to compare the two matches that are one week apart.

More information on the exact study procedure can be found in the German Clinical Trials Register:

- DRKS-ID: DRKS00032208

The study is funded by the UEFA medical research grant 2023. As many other football federations, they are interested in the effects of heat on footballers and strategies to mitigate these effects, to protect players health and safety, and the quality of the game.

