



EFFECTS OF FLOTATION REST AND
PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION ON
BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART-RATE, ANXIETY,
AND MOOD OF CYCLISTS

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Statement

This thesis does not contain material which has been previously offered for any other degree or diploma at any other university, nor to the best of my knowledge, does it contain previously published material, except where due reference is made in the text.

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Abstract

The effects of relaxation on athletic performance, reducing an athletes' susceptibility to injury, and overcoming the effects of over-training were considered. 15 competitive cyclists were randomly assigned to either a Flotation Rest condition, or a Progressive Muscle Relaxation condition. Pre-test and post-test measures of blood-pressure and heart-rate were obtained over six treatment sessions. Pre-experimental and post-experimental measures of mood and anxiety were obtained using the POMS (McNair et al, 1971) and the SCAT (1977) respectively. Significant reductions were obtained on the post-test measures of blood-pressure and heart-rate for both conditions. Diastolic blood-pressure was significantly lower across all sessions on the post-test measures than on the pre-test measures for the Flotation Rest condition. This reduction was significantly lower for the Flotation Rest condition than the Progressive Muscle Relaxation condition. Both treatment conditions resulted in lower post-test systolic blood-pressure measures. Heart-rate was significantly lower on post-test measures following either treatment. No changes were detected in the POMS total mood scores on the sub-scale scores. Significant reductions were obtained in anxiety for the Progressive Muscle Relaxation condition. It was concluded that repeated exposure to Flotation Rest increases the reductions in blood-pressure on each subsequent session.