

Amputee Appendix

Safety and impairment specific considerations

Some amputee players may use a prosthesis in everyday life. In amputee football, the outfield players are either above or below knee single-leg amputees.

In international competition the outfield players remove their prosthesis during play and use aluminium wrist crutches. This is because of the risk of danger or injury to themselves or other players if they wear their prosthesis when playing.

In mainstream football, players are allowed to compete with their prosthesis. When competing with other players in a pan disability game amputee players can also use aluminium wrist crutches.

Appropriate footwear to suit the nature of the playing surface is essential. New players starting amputee football may need padded gloves (weight-lifting gloves are ideal) to protect against blisters on the palms of their hands.

New players may also need more numerous and more frequent rest periods because of the physical demands of playing using crutches. The players may not use crutches in everyday life as they may use a prosthesis or a wheelchair for mobility. Players are permitted to play football with their prosthesis (but only if it has been checked and agreed by The FA Medical Committee).

Amputee players have greater difficulty regulating body temperature because the ratio of surface area to body volume is different and could result in overheating. Coaches must therefore ensure players wear suitable clothing and ample opportunities are provided for rehydration and recovery.

When working with amputees, you would also need to consider the following:

- How movement is affected?
- What movement patterns are already established?
- Level of motivation and personal goals.
- The player's understanding of personal safety and medical care.
- Whether or not the player could be fully integrated into the session?
- An appropriate warm-up.
- Which limb or part of limb is missing and how this may affect their involvement?
- Is the amputation acquired or congenital? This may affect, for example, the length of time a player may be able to train as some congenital amputees have less 'stump soreness' than amputees who have lost a limb through injury.
- Whether the player has had time to adjust to the loss of a limb. Some players may have had a leg amputated as a result of accident or disease and may cope with their impairment in a different way to a player who has been born without a limb.
- Whether specific exercises are needed to strengthen the remaining muscles. For example, above knee amputees may need to undertake specific exercises to ensure muscle wastage does not occur.

Rule adaptations

- There are two halves of 25 minutes each in duration.
- There are no off sides.
- In international competition there are seven players on each team with unlimited substitutions.
- Pitch and goal sizes are different (the pitch is usually 60m x 40m). Games should be played on an Astro Turf Pitch (ideally 3rd Generation).
- The goalkeeper is not allowed out of the penalty area.
- Players are not allowed to strike the ball or any other player with their crutches. An infringement would result in a 'handball' decision being made against the player, with the opposition receiving a direct free kick.
- Slide tackles are not allowed.
- Players kick the ball into play instead of throwing.
- Players are not allowed to touch the ball with their stump.
- The goalkeeper is not allowed to save the ball with the stump; a penalty is awarded if this rule is broken.

Competition structure

There are World Championships and European Championships every two years.