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PHYSICAL AND SPORT PREPARATION FOR THE PATROUILLE DE FRANCE PILOTS

PRÉPARATION PHYSIQUE ET SPORTIVE DES PILOTES DE LA PATROUILLE DE FRANCE

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Introduction: The authors evaluate the physical and sport preparation of the 9 pilots of The Patrouille de France ("PAF"), the French Air Force flight demonstration squadron.

Method: On the occasion of their annual evaluation at the military aeromedical center of Toulon, the PAF pilots are interviewed by an anonymous questionnaire. Several aspects are searched successively: socio-demographic characteristics and lifestyle, aeronautical experience and possible remarkable aerial events, precise and detailed modalities of their sport and physical activity, and results of the military assessment tests of the physical condition.

Results: The 9 PAF pilots are fighter pilots and French Air Force officers. They are 35 years old on average and have no particular medical history. They all have a regular sport practice, mainly 3 to 6 hours per week. Despite their busy schedule, the planned sport slots are respected by all. Their practice combines endurance exercises (running and mountain biking) and split exercises (including Tabata and strength training of the back and the abdominal strap).

Conclusion: This physical background training in winter allows them to physically ensure the summer season of flight demonstrations. Despite all these results and the available bibliographic data, it is necessary to provide the PAF pilots with the best advice for their physical and sport training. The aim is of course to ensure the best, safest and best adapted sport practice to the constraints of demonstration flights.