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Nico Pieres celebrates his first Open de France win. By Adèle Renaudon - R&BPresse

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Dr.med. Andreas Krüger is a Swiss board orthopaedic and trauma surgeon in Zurich, who specialises in knee and shoulder surgery. Andi is a second generation of tournament doctors for equine sports, known as Polodoc since 2013

Less is More

Lose weight to perform better



Semaglutides such as Ozempic can help with obesity but should only be prescribed by your doctor



Eaglefit Electrical Muscle Stimulation (EMS) system

Obesity is generally not conducive to being a successful polo player. Polo is a physically demanding sport that requires strength, agility, balance, and endurance. The players must simultaneously ride the horse and engage in quick and precise movements while controlling a mallet to hit the ball. Being outside of the optimal weight target will not only impact your health but also provide challenges for your polo game. New treatments with pharmaceutical products like injectable semaglutid (Hollywood injection) and physical treatments (EMS) can help you to be slimmer and faster – maybe also healthier.

Problem Insight

Limited Mobility: Extra kilos around your abdomen will restrict the range of motion and make it difficult to move quickly and effectively on the horse. This can impair a player's ability to navigate quickly on the field, react to swiftly changing game situations and to compete at the highest level.

Decreased Endurance: Polo matches

can be physically exhausting, lasting anywhere from one to two hours (including breaks) under demanding climate conditions. Carrying excess body weight (and extra fat) needs more energy and can lead to fatiguing faster, affecting a player's ability to perform at their best throughout the match.

Risk of Injuries: Obesity can increase the risk of injuries, both on and off the horse. The extra strain on joints and muscles can make players more susceptible to sprains, strains, and other injuries.

Horse Welfare: Obesity can also impact the welfare of the horse. Carrying excess weight can be uncomfortable for the horse and affect its performance. Researchers have found that an average adult, light riding horse can comfortably carry about 20 percent of their bodyweight which includes the rider and tack. The bottom line is that you don't need to be overweight by much to exceed the 20 per cent ratio, especially if you are riding lighter Thoroughbreds.

Competitive Disadvantage: In competitive sports like polo, where every

advantage counts, being overweight can put a player at a significant disadvantage compared to fitter, more agile opponents. To excel in polo, players typically need to maintain a high level of physical fitness, including cardiovascular endurance, strength, and flexibility. Many polo players engage in rigorous training and conditioning programs to prepare for matches. Maintaining a healthy diet and body weight is often an integral part of their training regime.

Ways to Slim

Alongside the well-known training methods like cardio and HIIT methods, Electrical Muscle Stimulation (EMS) system is a style of training that's designed to work with you. With the EMS system, you wear a body vest and straps around your arms, legs and glutes. These electrode straps carry a small electrical impulse through to your muscles. This then creates a harmless and painless stimulation that actually boosts the muscles' effectiveness. It enhances and boosts your metabolism, producing a more intense and



EMS systems aids weight loss and intensifies your workout

targeted workout in a fraction of the time. It aids weight loss and intensifies your workout, so you can get results quickly. It also works without moving for example during a rehabilitation interval. Optimising your nutrition with regards to swapping to more a vegan, protein-based diet is recommended so that your muscles are protected from self-combustion. When your BMI (Body-Mass-Index) is above 30, additional weekly application of semaglutide (Ozempic, Wegovx) after a basic lab test with your doctor to check your overall health and if you

are eligible. About 15 percent of your body weight can be reduced due to the impact on the GL-1 receptor from semaglutid, which leads to a slower emptying of the stomach and also the a reduction in the hunger feeling in your brain. Also, the pancreas is stimulated to produce more insulin so that the release of glucose in the liver is reduced.

Obesity may not be conducive to success in polo, but also for those aspiring to play polo at a competitive level, maintaining a healthy weight and fitness level is a basic essential.

Expert Box

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In the modern world, we all live in a high calorie environment. While being active and in a full sport routine most athletes are aligned with their weight in reasonable range. There are some exceptions, but there is an optimal weight for each specific sport to deliver constant top performance. Nearly every athlete changes his weight in their career, so different techniques are commonly used to keep the weight low with lean musculature. The toughest point is a return to the sport after a break or an injury. Struggling with obesity is especially game changing in polo because it must be carried around and needs to be accelerated – so weight loss also helps your equine partner for the perfect ratio. As David Morley illustrates the problem of arbitrary percentages and how horsemanship plays a huge part. “A lot has to be said for how you ride, and the type and conformation of horse is obviously vital. A spindly Thoroughbred, no matter how fat you get it, can’t carry the same weight as a solid, part-bred pony with good conformation. The ratios for those two types won’t be the same”.

Many ways lead to quick weight change, but some are quite exceptional from extreme diets to heat training in non-breathable

clothes to lose water like in boxing. But is this healthy? However, a ‘normal’ lifestyle with a good balanced sport and nutrition routine in both non and competitive sports environment is crucial. Therefore, I recommend that everyone who has the same goal should follow the steps below:

Consultation with a professional:

The player should first consult a physician or nutritionist to check basic body parameters to develop a safe and healthy weight loss and fitness recovery plan.

Diet and exercise:

Depending on how much weight loss is needed, a long term program is needed to achieve this in a safe and sustainable way. A balanced nutritional program and targeted training are critical.

Start with submaximal step test with spiroergometry over three months to monitor cardiovascular advances, followed by body composition measurement every two weeks.

Two weight training sessions per week to speed up basal metabolism, 45min of cardio (OMT – Oxygen-Multistep-Therapy). HIIT (High-Intensiv-Interval-Training) can be started when the body is ready to do 120 Watt with 2mmol lactat (blood test).

Probation:

Once the target weight is reached, time should be invested in technique and riding skills. This may take some time as previous form and skills may needed to be rebuilt to maintain performance level.

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