



SCAT Testing for Athletes

All athletes within the BSS are being encouraged to take a SCAT test to help aid and evaluate their condition in the event of a concussion.

As part of the BSS' ongoing commitment to increasing awareness of concussion, UK Sport funded athletes will have to complete a SCAT test.

It's not mandatory for other ski and snowboarders but will be hugely beneficial, not only for their short and long-term care and assessment, but to formulate a return-to-action plan, if they take one.

The SCAT test is used as a baseline for evaluating any suspected concussions throughout the season and can be found at <http://physicians.cattonline.com/scat/>

The SCAT (Sports Concussion Assessment Tool) test is completed first under normal conditions and the scores are then used to compare and contrast results when an athlete has taken a bang to the head. Low scores can flag up potential concussions and alert medical staff to the situation for continued treatment under supervision.

The test takes 15-20 minutes to complete and measures selected brain processes to give each individual athlete a baseline score, which they are compared to after any incident.

The SCAT test enables medical staff to carefully plan a return to action to reduce risks of any further complications.

The dangers of repeated concussion within many contact sports have been well-documented in the media. Better awareness and SCAT test results allow medical staff at the BSS to put the best possible practices into place to aid recovery.

BSS take concussion very seriously in order to safeguard the short and long-term health and welfare of its athletes.

The majority of concussions resolve in a relatively short 7-10 day period. During that time, the brain is still vulnerable to further injury and a return to action too early can result in prolonged symptoms or possible long-term psychological disorders.

The 'Four Rs' of concussion management are: recognize, remove, recover and return. While some concussions involve a loss of consciousness, this is not the case every time and symptoms such as headache, dizziness, blurred vision, sleeplessness, nausea and ringing in the ears can all be associated with the condition.

Sports like rugby, boxing, gymnastics, cycling and ice hockey have all implemented stringent policies aimed at recognising the signs of concussion and putting protocols in place to improve treatment and reduce the risks of further short and long-term injury.

Skiing is no different – a sport for which the dangers of high-impact injuries are well-known and FIS and BSS are making sure the best practices are in place for their athletes.





The Rugby Union (RFU) has done a lot of work on the issue of concussion and the 'Headcase' section of their website at www.englandrugby.com is a fantastic tool to learn more about the issue. A small online course is available here with a certificate at the end of the course giving an online qualification. Unlike the SCAT test, this is not mandatory but can educate athletes on the issues surrounding concussion.

