

Hard Knock Life: Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before deciding whether to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the project?

Over the past few years there has been increasing concern about the risks associated with concussion and blows to the head experienced during sporting activities. These fears have led to calls for technological innovation, rule change, and legislation all aimed at preventing negative health consequences associated with playing sport. This project involves fieldwork across a number of sporting contexts and seeks to understand how sporting communities understand themselves and their conduct given the possibility of head injury. It is hoped that findings from the project will contribute to our understanding of head injury and how the possibility of injury affects athletes and sporting practice.

Who is funding this project?

This research is supported by a grant from The Wellcome Trust (reference number: 212694/Z/18/Z).

Who has approved this project?

“This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by an ethics committee at The University of Leeds.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been asked to participate in this study due to your association with a sport where there are believed to be risks associated with possible head injury. If you choose to take part in the study you will be joining a wide array of other participants including: Various members of diverse sporting communities (players, coaches, and supporters, for example); research scientists; representatives of governing bodies; representatives of leading charities. In all, over a hundred individuals are expected to be interviewed with many more coming under observation.

What do I have to do?

You are being asked to take part in a semi-structured interview which will take place at a time and place of convenience to yourself. The interview itself will revolve around discussions of sporting practice and head injury, although questions will be open ended and you will be encouraged to discuss the topics of most importance to yourself. The interviews are expected to last roughly an hour, although length may vary considerably and if you wish to limit the length of the interview then you are able to do so. You may ask to see the interview topics in advance, although the open-ended nature of the interview means that novel questions and topics of discussion will almost certainly arise during the course of the conversation.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable disadvantages or risks associated with taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no immediate benefits associated with participating in the project. It is hoped, however, that this work will contribute to our understanding of head injury in sport and contribute positively to this ongoing discussion.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is entirely up to you whether or not to take part in this study. If you do decide to take part in this research you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

What happens if I take part in the research and then change my mind?

If you choose to take part in research now and subsequently change your mind that is absolutely fine. You can ask for your data to be withdrawn at any time up until the project is completed in August 2021 without it affecting you or your relationship with the University of Leeds in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

What happens to the collected information?

The interview will be audio-recorded and some notes may be made both during and after the interview. The recording of the interview will then be transcribed by a professional for subsequent analysis. Electronic data (audio recording and transcript) will be stored on the University of Leeds Storage Area Network (SAN): File servers are located in physically secure data centres, sensitive data will be encrypted, and the SAN is located behind the University's Institutional firewall to protect against external attacks. Prior to being placed in the SAN, data will be securely stored on an encrypted USB device. Hard copies of consent forms will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's personal office and will be destroyed as soon as practicable.

When the current project concludes, anonymised data will be made available to other researchers via the University of Leeds Research Data Repository ('Research Data Leeds': <http://archive.researchdata.leeds.ac.uk>) so that data can be shared, reused and help as many as possible. If you would prefer that your data not be shared you can make this known when completing your consent form.

Will I be named in any research outputs?

No, names and other uniquely identifying information will be removed from research outputs with pseudonyms used in their place.

Full anonymisation cannot be guaranteed, however. If, for example, you discuss a particular event and certain individuals have intimate knowledge of that event then it is possible that they will be able to decipher pseudonyms.

Will my data be confidential?

While pseudonyms will be used throughout, portions of transcript will be directly quoted in research outputs, as will field work notations. These quotations may include relevant medical information discussed during interview (experiences of concussion, for example). If you wish for specific portions of a discussion to be excluded from analysis (and thus remain confidential) then this is absolutely fine.

In the unlikely event that information on sensitive topics is divulged (e.g. intention to engage in criminal activity; information concerning public health issues; potential physical or psychological harm to children or vulnerable adults) then it may be necessary to breach confidentiality and inform the appropriate authorities.

Contact for further information

To discuss any aspect of this project please contact:

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Keep up to date with the project by visiting: hardknocklife.leeds.ac.uk