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47 **ABSTRACT**

48 **Purpose:** To quantify and compare the internal workloads
49 experienced during the playoffs and regular season in basketball.

50 **Methods:** Ten professional, male basketball players competing
51 in the Italian first division were monitored during the final 6
52 weeks of the regular season and the entire 6-week playoff phase.
53 Internal workload was quantified using the session-rating of
54 perceived exertion (s-RPE) method for all training sessions and
55 games. A two-way repeated measures ANOVA (day type ×
56 period) was utilized to assess differences in daily s-RPE between
57 game days, days within 24 h of games, and days >24 h from
58 games during the playoffs and regular season. Comparisons in
59 weekly training, game, and total workload were made between
60 the playoffs and regular season using paired *t*-tests and effect
61 sizes.

62 **Results:** A significant interaction between day and competitive
63 period for s-RPE was found ($P=0.003$, *moderate*). Lower s-RPE
64 was apparent during playoff and regular season days within 24 h
65 of games than all other days ($P<0.001$, *very large*). Further, s-
66 RPE across days >24 h from playoff games was different than
67 all other days ($P\leq 0.01$, *moderate-very large*). Weekly training
68 ($P=0.009$, *very large*) and total ($P<0.001$, *moderate*) s-RPE were
69 greater during the regular season than playoffs, while weekly
70 game s-RPE was greater during the playoffs than the regular
71 season ($P<0.001$, *very large*).

72 **Conclusions:** This study presents an exploratory investigation
73 of internal workload during the playoffs in professional
74 basketball. Players experienced greater training and total weekly
75 workloads during the regular season than playoffs, with similar
76 daily game workloads between periods.

77
78 **Keywords:** session-RPE; monitoring; finals; postseason;
79 congested schedule; training.

80

81 **INTRODUCTION**

82 A basketball season is typically organized into three
83 distinct periods: off-season, pre-season, and competitive season
84 (including both regular season and playoff phases).¹ During the
85 off-season, players aim to recover from the accumulated stress
86 across the previous season and undergo maintenance training
87 programs to avoid excessive detraining.¹ The pre-season aims to
88 prepare players for the upcoming competitive season, during
89 which, teams compete to attain the highest possible rank in
90 competition standings.¹⁻³ The final team rank is typically used to
91 determine the best-performing teams for progression to a playoff
92 phase, during which basketball teams typically play several
93 games against the same team in each series, aiming to win each
94 sequential series and reach the finals to compete for the
95 championship. Given the varied phases encountered across a
96 basketball season, it is important to embed methods that permit
97 quantification of player workloads to ensure the underlying aims
98 of each phase are being met.^{2,4} In this regard, monitoring of the
99 physical stimuli encountered by players during training and
100 games (external workload), as well as the psychophysiological
101 responses of players to these stimuli (internal workload) are
102 recommended to elucidate the complete demands imposed on
103 players across a season.^{4,5}

104 Monitoring internal and external workloads can assist in
105 optimizing physical performance in basketball players,^{2,6} while
106 reducing the negative consequences of training^{2,7} (i.e. injury risk
107 and non-functional overreaching) and risk of undertraining.^{4,6}
108 Furthermore, monitoring player workloads provides insight into
109 the precise demands imposed on players during training and
110 games across different periods of the season. Given basketball
111 activity encompasses frequent multi-directional, high-intensity
112 movements requiring extensive force and power development
113 (e.g. sprints, shuffling, changes of direction, jumps,
114 accelerations),⁸ erroneous management of prescribed workloads
115 in players may impair neuromuscular mechanisms,² promote
116 fatigue states,⁹ and negatively affect game performance in
117 players as the season progresses.¹⁰ However, it should be
118 considered that basketball practitioners may face difficulties in
119 collecting external workloads as existing methodologies require
120 time- and labour-intensive data analysis (e.g. time-motion
121 analysis)¹¹ or their use is not always permitted during official
122 games (e.g. microsensors)¹².

123 Previous studies have provided extensive insight into
124 internal workload monitoring approaches and management in
125 basketball.^{2,4,6,13-16} The session-rating of perceived exertion (s-
126 RPE) method has been widely used to quantify internal workload
127 in basketball due to its user-friendliness and strong concurrent
128 validity (i.e. relationship with objective internal and external
129 workload variables).¹⁷ s-RPE workloads administered to players
130 are usually greater during the preparation period than other parts

131 of the season as the absence of official competition permits
132 coaching staff to plan greater training volumes and
133 intensities.^{2,15,18} In turn, during the competitive period, player s-
134 RPE workloads are managed to optimize physical performance
135 for upcoming games according to the team schedule. As such,
136 player training workloads are usually adjusted in an inverse
137 manner according to the number of games played per
138 week.^{14,15,19} While existing basketball studies provide
139 descriptive indications of the s-RPE workloads encountered
140 during the preparation period^{2,6} and regular season within the
141 competitive period^{13-15,19}, no studies have yet quantified
142 workloads sustained during the playoffs in basketball. This lack
143 of research attention is surprising considering the importance of
144 the playoff phase in the competitive period, where errors in
145 workload management may be amplified given reductions in
146 player performance may result in team elimination. Accordingly,
147 during the playoffs, basketball players are required to compete
148 in several games across a relatively short period in most leagues
149 (e.g. a game every 48 h), potentially augmenting fatigue
150 responses, stress, and injury risk in players.²⁰ As such,
151 understanding the workloads sustained by basketball players
152 during the playoffs will provide basketball practitioners with
153 useful insight to potentially inform the development of strategies
154 that may enhance team success. The limited data available
155 regarding playoff workloads is likely a consequence of the
156 difficulties in recruiting teams during such an important period
157 for research purposes combined with the limited number of
158 teams that participate in an entire playoff phase.

159 Therefore, the aim of the present study was to quantify
160 and compare the internal workloads experienced during the
161 playoffs and regular season in professional, male basketball
162 players.

163

164 **METHODS**

165 **Subjects**

166 Ten professional, male basketball players (age: 28.3 ± 5.7
167 years, stature: 199.3 ± 10.2 cm, body mass: 97.7 ± 12.2 kg, body
168 fat: $11.2 \pm 3.7\%$) were recruited from the same basketball team
169 competing in the Italian first division (i.e. Serie A) to participate
170 in this study. The inclusion criteria encompassed being part of
171 the team during the entire investigated period, while the
172 exclusion criteria included having played an average playing
173 time ≤ 5 min during the monitored games. All players
174 experienced an average playing time ≥ 15 min during the
175 monitored games across the season. The study was approved by
176 the Independent Institutional Review Board of MAPEI Sport
177 Research Center (IRBMMS122019001) in accordance with the
178 Helsinki Declaration.

179

180 **Design**

181 A longitudinal, observational study design was followed
182 to monitor the internal workloads experienced by players during
183 the final 6 weeks of the regular season (i.e. end of March to early
184 May) and during the entire 6-week playoff phase (i.e. early May
185 to mid-June) of the 2015-16 season. Regular season data were
186 limited to the final 6 weeks to create an equivalent timeframe for
187 comparisons across regular season and playoff phases. The daily
188 training and game schedules followed by the players during the
189 regular season is presented in Figure 1. At the end of the regular
190 season, the team was ranked second (out of 16 teams), winning
191 29 games and losing 9 games. Specifically, during the last 6
192 weeks of the regular season, the team disputed 6 official games
193 (i.e. 1 per week), winning 3 of them. The playoff phase started 3
194 days after the end of the regular season and lasted 39 days
195 encompassing 16 official games. Team results in each series
196 across the playoffs included 3 wins and 0 losses for the quarter-
197 finals; 4 wins and 3 losses for the semi-finals; and 2 wins and 4
198 losses for the finals. The daily training and game schedules
199 performed by the players during the playoff phase is presented
200 in Figure 2. Regular season and playoff days were classified as:
201 game days; days ≤ 24 h from a game; and days > 24 h from a
202 game. Days where a player was unable to participate in a training
203 session or game (i.e. physical complaints, illness, personal
204 reasons) were not included in the analysis. All players included
205 in this study performed more than 80% of the team training
206 sessions and games, which has been suggested as a suitable
207 benchmark in basketball workload monitoring research.^{3,21}

208

209 ***Insert Figure 1 around here***

210 ***Insert Figure 2 around here***

211

212 **Methodology**

213 Internal workload was quantified using the s-RPE
214 method as previously described by Foster, et al.²² and used
215 widely in basketball research.^{2,6,14,23} Specifically, individualized
216 ratings of perceived exertion (RPE) were multiplied by session
217 duration (min) to derive s-RPE workload in arbitrary units (AU).
218 s-RPE was assessed using the Borg's category-ratio (0-10)
219 scale²⁴ collected for each player 30 min following each training
220 session and game without peer influence.^{2,6,14} The duration of
221 each training session was recorded individually for each player
222 and included within-session recovery periods and warm-up
223 activity.^{2,6} Game duration was recorded from the warm-up to the
224 end of the game including all stoppages (i.e. free-throws, out-of-
225 bounds, fouls, injury pauses, time-outs, and between-quarter
226 breaks).^{2,6} All players were familiarized with providing
227 individualized RPE as this monitoring approach had been
228 previously utilized in the team prior to commencing the study.

229 Individual daily workloads according to day type (i.e.
230 game days, days ≤ 24 h from a game, and days > 24 h from a

231 game) were determined across the regular season and playoff
232 phase. Weekly s-RPE workload was calculated separately for
233 training sessions, games, and total (training and games
234 combined) across the regular season and playoff phase. As the
235 last game of the regular season was disputed 3 days before the
236 commencement of the playoffs (i.e. in the same week) and the
237 last week of the regular season included no games, weekly s-
238 RPE workloads were calculated during the first 5 weeks of the
239 6-week monitoring period in the regular season and during the
240 last 5 weeks of the playoff monitoring period to avoid overlap of
241 data. s-RPE workload data were averaged for each player during
242 each day type (game days, ≤ 24 h from a game, and >24 h from a
243 game) and weekly workload (training, game, and total
244 workloads) within each competitive period (regular season and
245 playoffs) for subsequent statistical analyses. When the player
246 was unable to take part to a training or game session (e.g. injury
247 or missing game), average values were determined excluding the
248 missing session.

249

250 **Statistical analysis**

251 Data are reported as mean \pm standard deviation (SD). The
252 assumption of normality was verified by the Kolmogorov-
253 Smirnov test for each variable, with log transformation applied
254 when data were not normally distributed. A two-way repeated-
255 measures analysis of variance was utilized to assess differences
256 in daily s-RPE workload between conditions for 2 within-player
257 factors: (1) 3 conditions for day type (game days, days ≤ 24 h
258 from a game, and days >24 h from a game) and (2) 2 conditions
259 for competitive period (regular season and playoff phase). Partial
260 eta-squared²⁵ ($\eta_p^2 = \frac{\text{sums of squares effect}}{\text{sums of squares effect} + \text{sums of squares error}}$)
261 was used to indicate the size of the effect and classified as
262 follows: $\eta_p^2 < 0.04$, *no effect*; $0.04 \leq \eta_p^2 < 0.25$, *minimum effect*;
263 $0.25 \leq \eta_p^2 < 0.64$, *moderate effect*; $\eta_p^2 \geq 0.64$, *strong effect*.²⁶
264 When a significant main effect was found, Bonferroni post-hoc
265 correction was applied to locate significant pairwise differences.
266 Pairwise comparisons in weekly training, game, and total s-RPE
267 workloads between the regular season and playoff phase were
268 performed using separate paired *t*-tests. Cohen's *d* with 95%
269 confidence intervals were calculated²⁷ to indicate the size of the
270 effect for all pairwise comparisons and interpreted as follows:
271 < 0.20 , *trivial*; $0.20-0.59$, *small*; $0.60-1.19$, *moderate*; $1.20-1.99$,
272 *large*; ≥ 2.00 , *very large*.²⁸ Statistical significance was set at *P*
273 < 0.05 . SPSS (version 26.0, IBM SPSS Statistics, Chicago, IL,
274 USA) and JASP (version 0.11.1, jasp-stats.org) statistical
275 software were utilized to perform data analyses.

276

277 **RESULTS**

278 Daily s-RPE workloads experienced during the regular
279 season and playoff phases are presented in Figure 1 and Figure

280 2. s-RPE workloads according to day type (i.e. game days; days
281 <24 h from a game; days >24 h from a game) during the regular
282 season and playoffs are presented in Table 1. The two-way
283 repeated measure ANOVA showed a significant interaction
284 between day type and competitive period for s-RPE workload (P
285 = 0.003, $\eta_p^2 = 0.47$, *moderate*). Post-hoc analysis revealed no
286 significant difference in s-RPE workload on game days between
287 the regular season and playoffs ($P = 1.000$, $d = 0.37 \pm 0.64$,
288 *small*). Furthermore, no significant differences in s-RPE
289 workload was apparent between game days during both
290 competitive periods (regular season and playoffs) and days >24
291 h from games in the regular season (regular season game day: P
292 = 0.171, $d = 1.00 \pm 0.77$, *moderate*; playoff game day: $P = 0.396$,
293 $d = 0.84 \pm 0.73$, *moderate*). In contrast, significantly greater s-
294 RPE workloads were evident during game days (regular season
295 and playoffs) compared to days ≤ 24 h from games in the regular
296 season (regular season game day: $P < 0.001$, $d = 3.81 \pm 1.83$, *very*
297 *large*; playoffs game day: $P < 0.001$, $d = 4.07 \pm 1.95$, *very large*),
298 days ≤ 24 h from games in the playoffs (regular season game day:
299 $P < 0.001$, $d = 3.84 \pm 1.85$, *very large*; playoff game day: P
300 < 0.001 , $d = 4.80 \pm 2.26$, *very large*), and days >24 h games in
301 the playoffs (regular season game day: $P = 0.002$, $d = 1.97 \pm 1.09$,
302 *large*; playoff game day: $P < 0.001$, $d = 2.53 \pm 1.30$, *very large*).
303 Similarly, significantly greater s-RPE workloads on days >24 h
304 from regular season games were found compared to days >24 h
305 from playoff games ($P = 0.010$, $d = 1.61 \pm 0.96$, *large*), days ≤ 24
306 h from playoff games ($P < 0.001$, $d = 4.22 \pm 2.01$, *very large*),
307 and days ≤ 24 h from regular season games ($P < 0.001$, $d = 4.53$
308 ± 2.14 , *very large*). Greater s-RPE workloads were also apparent
309 during days >24 h from playoff games compared to days within
310 24 h of regular season games ($P < 0.001$, $d = 2.88 \pm 1.45$, *very*
311 *large*) and within 24 h of playoff games ($P < 0.001$, $d = 4.89 \pm$
312 2.30 , *very large*). No statistically significant difference was
313 found between s-RPE workloads on days within 24 h of regular
314 season games and days within 24 h of playoff games ($P = 0.855$,
315 $d = 0.69 \pm 0.68$, *moderate*).

316

317 ***Insert Table 1 around here***

318

319 Weekly training, game, and total s-RPE workloads
320 during the regular season and playoffs are presented in Figure 3.
321 Training ($P < 0.001$, $d = 2.35 \pm 1.24$, *very large*) and total ($P =$
322 0.009 , $d = 1.06 \pm 0.79$, *moderate*) weekly s-RPE workloads were
323 greater during the regular season than the playoffs. In contrast,
324 weekly game s-RPE workloads were greater during the playoffs
325 than the regular season ($P < 0.001$, $d = 3.93 \pm 1.89$, *very large*).

326

327

328

329

Insert Figure 3 around here

DISCUSSION

330 The present study provides an exploratory investigation
331 of the internal workloads encountered by professional, male
332 basketball players during the playoffs, highlighting differences
333 in loading with the regular season. While significant, *moderate-*
334 *very large* differences were found in weekly s-RPE workloads
335 (training, games, and total weekly loading) between the playoffs
336 and regular season, internal workloads imposed by games across
337 these periods were similar ($P > 0.05$, *small*).

338 Our study presents the first data quantifying the internal
339 workload of professional basketball players during an entire
340 playoff phase, lasting 39 days and including 16 games. Overall,
341 individual games during the playoffs induced a similar internal
342 workload to individual games monitored at the end of the regular
343 season, suggesting the phase of the competitive period does not
344 affect internal responses during games in players. Accordingly,
345 it is plausible that, despite higher-level opponents being more
346 consistently faced during the playoffs than the regular season,
347 game demands remain relatively unchanged and the *small*
348 discrepancies we observed between these phases may be
349 attributed to game-to-game variations.⁸

350 In contrast to comparisons between the regular season
351 and playoff game day workloads, the daily s-RPE workload
352 during days within ≤ 24 h of regular season and playoff games
353 were considerably lower (*very large*) than all other day types (i.e.
354 game days and days > 24 from games). This finding might be
355 expected given each playoff series involved games being
356 disputed every 2 days with coaching staff typically prescribing 1
357 training session including a recovery intervention or tactical
358 basketball practice at low intensities on days between games.
359 Similarly, during the regular season the coaching staff typically
360 prescribed a low-intensity team basketball practice the day
361 before the game and a day-off after a game day.^{15,29} Different
362 strategies were adopted in workload management during days
363 > 24 h from game days during the regular season and playoffs.
364 Specifically, daily s-RPE workload experienced > 24 h from
365 games during the playoff phase substantially increased
366 compared to s-RPE workload on days within 24 h of games, but
367 without reaching the workloads evident on game days. On the
368 contrary, *moderately* greater s-RPE workloads were encountered
369 during days > 24 h from games in the regular season compared
370 to the playoffs, reaching s-RPE workloads similar to game days.
371 The more closely matched s-RPE workloads during training and
372 game days in the regular season compared to playoffs is likely
373 due to the longer periods between regular season games (i.e. 7
374 days) allowing practitioners to plan more frequent training
375 sessions (i.e. up to 2 sessions per day) and players to undergo
376 greater training demands.

377 When comparing the present findings with research on
378 the topic, it can be noticed that a similar approach in workload
379 management (i.e. less loading on days ≤ 24 h from games

380 compared to >24 h from games) was reported in professional,
381 male basketball players competing in the first Portuguese¹³ and
382 Spanish²⁹ divisions during the regular season. While we are
383 unable to compare our findings during playoff games with past
384 investigations due to the novelty of our data, comparisons in
385 regular season game workloads indicate the s-RPE workload
386 experienced by the players in our study are higher than
387 previously reported by Manzi, et al.¹⁵ in professional, male
388 players (695 ± 131 AU vs 522 ± 51 AU). Despite investigating
389 players from the same league (i.e. Italian first division),
390 discrepancies across studies may be due to temporal changes in
391 game demands. Specifically, we provide a more contemporary
392 analysis of s-RPE workloads during basketball games than
393 Manzi, et al.¹⁵ (i.e. regular seasons investigation in 2015-16 vs
394 2006-07). Consequently, it is plausible that the internal game
395 demands imposed on professional basketball players have
396 increased across this timeframe due to increased professionalism
397 and wider evidence leading to adapted training approaches
398 promoting greater physical capacities in modern players.³⁰
399 Additionally, differences in game s-RPE workloads between
400 studies may be attributed to different tactical strategies adopted
401 by each of the recruited teams.³¹ Furthermore, a methodological
402 difference in s-RPE data collection was apparent between our
403 study and the study conducted by Manzi, et al.¹⁵. In the present
404 study, we included warm-up activity (~30 min)^{2,6} when
405 calculating s-RPE, which was not considered by Manzi, et al.¹⁵
406 As such, depending on the team environment, excluding warm-
407 up activity from monitoring data may underestimate the
408 complete workloads sustained by basketball players and
409 therefore practitioners may need to consider including warm-up
410 activity when calculating entire game workloads using the s-RPE
411 method.

412 In addition to daily variations in s-RPE workload, we
413 observed differences in the weekly s-RPE workloads sustained
414 during the regular season and playoffs, which may reflect the
415 different periodization strategies adopted during these phases of
416 the competitive period. The greater total weekly s-RPE during
417 the regular season compared to the playoffs (3087 ± 564 vs 2365
418 ± 408 AU, *moderate*) are a clear consequence of the greater
419 weekly training workloads delivered to players during the
420 regular season (2362 ± 437 AU vs 650 ± 485 AU, *very large*).
421 Moreover, the team competed in only 1 game per week during
422 the regular season (compared to 1-4 games per week during the
423 playoffs), providing greater freedom for coaching staff to plan
424 multiple training sessions across the week (encompassing both
425 basketball practice and strength training sessions). As such,
426 players in the present study completed weekly training
427 workloads during the regular season that were over threefold
428 greater than during the playoff phase. To the contrary, weekly
429 game workloads during the playoff phase were considerably

430 greater than the regular season (1715 ± 289 AU vs 725 ± 166 AU
431 *very large*) as a consequence of the different game schedules
432 encountered. In line with this finding, previous investigations
433 demonstrate more games played within the same week leads to
434 lower total weekly s-RPE workloads in collegiate¹⁴ and
435 professional, male basketball players.¹⁵ As such, it appears
436 fundamental to implement recovery interventions for
437 preservation of physical status in players during congested
438 weekly schedules (e.g. playoffs) and to include sufficient loading
439 during training plans to avoid detraining effects during single-
440 game weeks (e.g. regular season).

441 There are some limitations that should be considered
442 when interpreting our findings. First, due to the difficulties in
443 recruiting professional players from multiple teams for research
444 purposes during the playoff phase, the sample size is limited, and
445 the players were recruited from only 1 team. Consequently, our
446 data might not be considered as representative of all basketball
447 player populations. Second, it was not possible to perform an
448 analysis according to playing role (starters vs bench players) or
449 position (guards vs forwards vs centers) due to the small sample
450 of players recruited. Third, only internal perceptual workload
451 was monitored in this study and, therefore, these results might
452 not be representative of more objective internal workload
453 variables or external workload variables. Therefore, further
454 research is encouraged encompassing wider workload variables
455 investigating the training and game demands encountered during
456 the playoffs in different basketball leagues. Furthermore, while
457 the present findings were gathered using an observational study,
458 we recommend future experimental research being implemented
459 to examine the effect of daily and weekly workloads on in-game
460 performance and to determine the most appropriate periodization
461 strategy to be adopted during different week types and seasonal
462 phases.

463

464 **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

465 The present study provides novel insight regarding the
466 periodization strategies adopted surrounding games during the
467 regular season and playoff phases of the competitive period in
468 professional basketball. Overall, it appears a logical coaching
469 strategy to ensure players sustain lower workloads during the
470 days ≤ 24 h from a regular season or playoff game to avoid high
471 levels of fatigue leading into games and to permit optimal
472 recovery following games.^{15,29} On the contrary, during days >24
473 h from games, basketball practitioners should increase
474 workloads where appropriate to avoid potential detraining and
475 maintain an optimal level of stress being placed on players in
476 preparation to meet game demands.^{14,15} However, these
477 strategies should be carefully developed considering the
478 different timeframes available between games. In this regard, the
479 present findings indicate different periodization strategies

480 should be adopted according to the phase of the competitive
481 period encountered across the season in professional basketball.¹
482 Specifically, it appears that reaching daily s-RPE workloads
483 similar to those experienced on game days may not be
484 recommended during the playoffs where congested schedules
485 (i.e. game every 2 days) and higher weekly game workloads are
486 faced compared to the regular season. Thus, including
487 appropriate recovery interventions (e.g. cold water immersion,
488 massage, nutritional approaches)³² in addition to training
489 sessions should be planned as opposed to multiple training
490 sessions per day across the playoff phase. During the regular
491 season, higher daily s-RPE workloads and multiple training
492 sessions per day can be prescribed but tapering strategies should
493 be adopted before games to optimize players' physical readiness
494 to compete.^{9,15,29}

495

496 **CONCLUSIONS**

497 The present study provides the first investigation of the
498 internal workloads sustained by professional basketball players
499 during the playoff phase of the competitive period with
500 comparisons made to the regular season. Professional basketball
501 players undergo greater internal workloads (weekly training and
502 total s-RPE workload) during the regular season than the
503 playoffs. In contrast, players experience greater weekly game
504 workloads during the playoffs compared to the regular season
505 while experiencing similar daily individual game workloads
506 across these periods.

507

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632

633 **FIGURE CAPTIONS**

634 **Figure 1.** The daily schedule and session-rating of perceived
635 exertion (s-RPE) workloads experienced during the last 6 weeks
636 of the regular season in professional, male basketball players.

637 *Abbreviations:* G, game day; T1, day ≤ 24 h from a game; T2,
638 day > 24 h from a game; 1-, one daily training session; 2-, two
639 daily training sessions; BP, basketball practice; ST, strength
640 training; DO, day off; R, recovery intervention.

641 *Note:* The white columns represent the duration of training/game
642 sessions; the grey columns represent workloads experienced
643 during training days and the black columns represent workloads
644 experienced during game days.

645

646 **Figure 2.** The daily schedule and session-rating of perceived
647 exertion (s-RPE) workloads experienced during the playoff
648 phase in professional, male basketball players.

649 *Abbreviations:* G, game day; T1, day ≤ 24 h from a game; T2,
650 day > 24 h from a game; 1-, one daily training session; 2-, two
651 daily training sessions; BP, basketball practice; ST, strength
652 training; DO, day off; R, recovery intervention.

653 *Note:* The white columns represent the duration of training/game
654 sessions; the grey columns represent workloads experienced
655 during training days and the black columns represent workloads
656 experienced during game days.

657

658 **Figure 3.** Total weekly session-rating of perceived exertion (s-
659 RPE) workloads during the regular season and playoff phase
660 with relative contribution of training sessions (grey) and games
661 (white) in professional, male basketball players.

662 *Note:* negative error bars are presented for training and game
663 workloads, while positive error bars are presented for total
664 workloads; *, significant ($P < 0.05$) difference between
665 competitive periods for the same s-RPE workload variable
666 (training, game, or total).

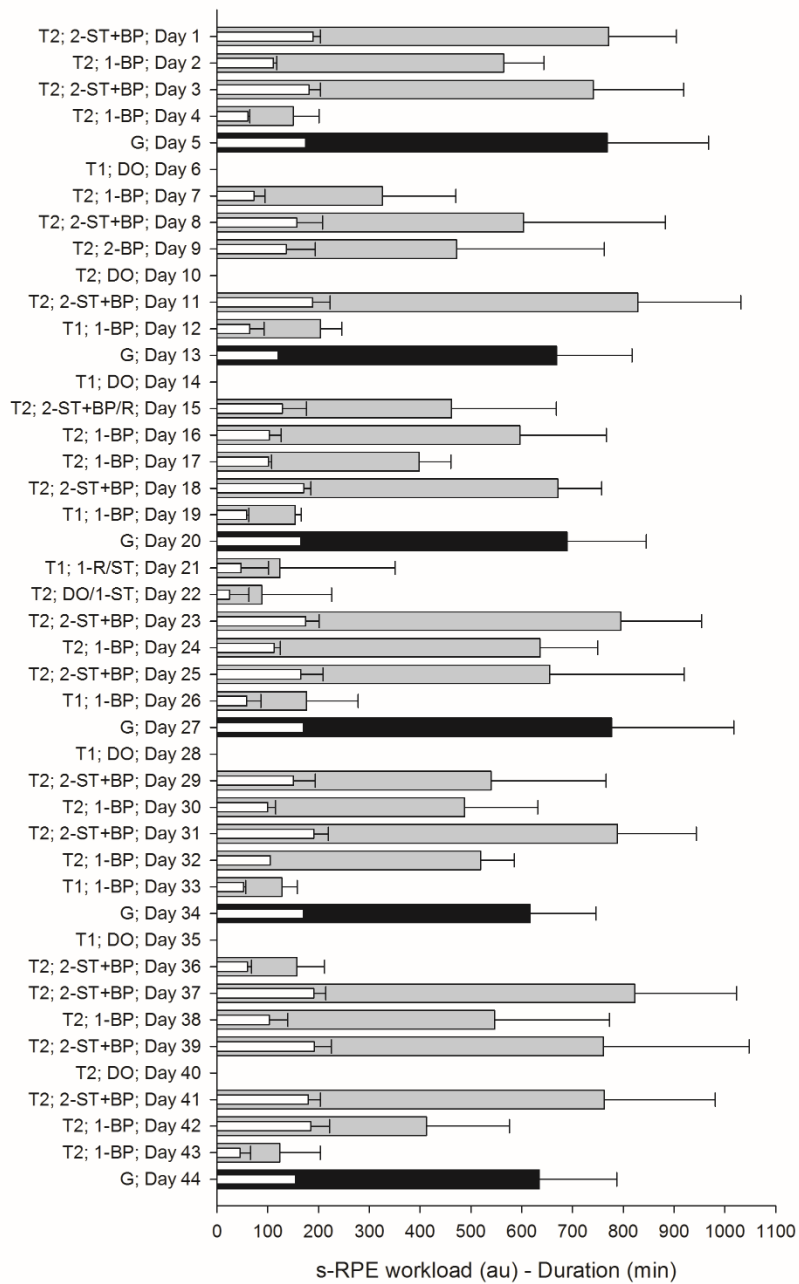
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Table 1. Daily session-rating of perceived exertion workload during game days, days within 24 h of games (T1), and days >24 h from games (T2) across the regular season and playoff phase in professional, male basketball players.

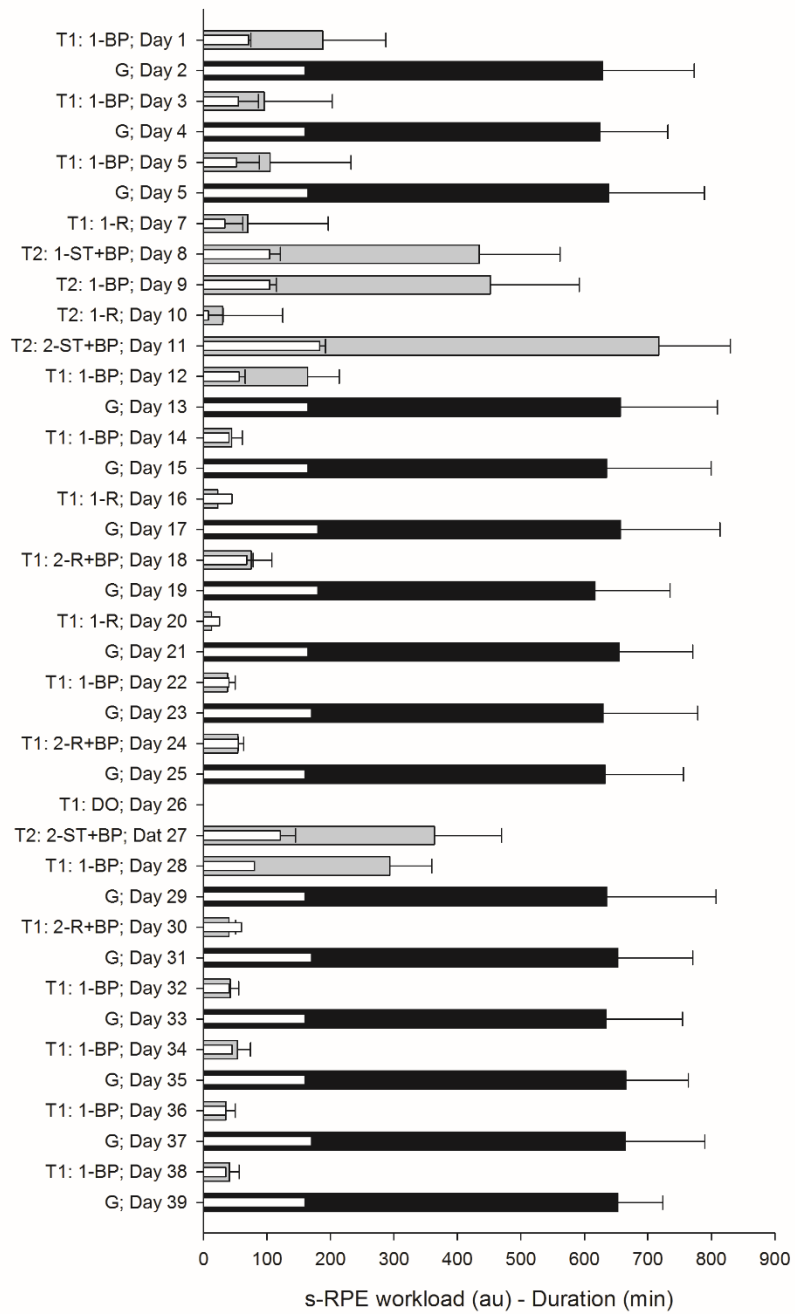
Regular season	Playoff
695 ± 131 [†]	642
123 ± 62	84
549 ± 107 [‡]	402

Note: †, significantly ($P < 0.001$) greater than T1 conditions; ‡, significantly ($P \leq 0.01$) different to all other conditions.

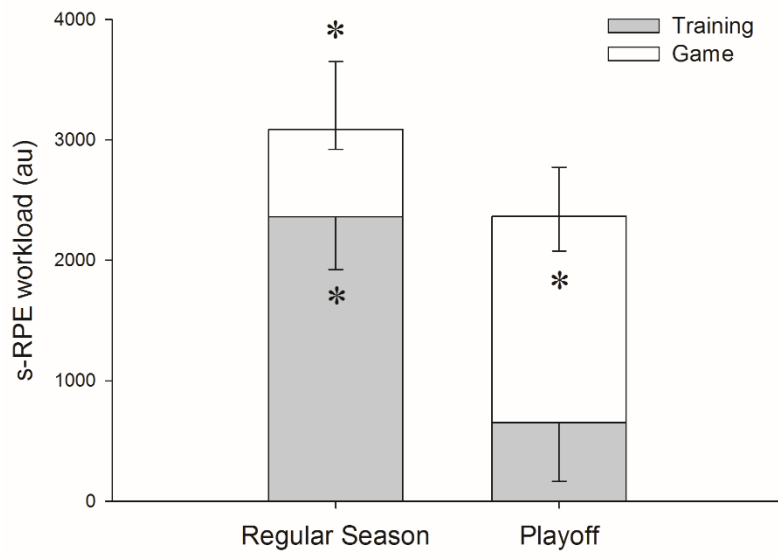
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