



Nottingham Trent  
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# Grassroots Injury Surveillance in Walking Football

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# Overview

- This project is the first to establish injury risk in Walking Football at a grassroots level
  - August – November 2024
  - **7** participating clubs
  - **6019** hours of playing time in **training**
  - **345.55** hours of playing time in **matches**
  - **45** injuries documented

# Definitions

- **Injury Incidence**

- The number of injuries per 1000 hours of playing time

- **Time-loss injuries**

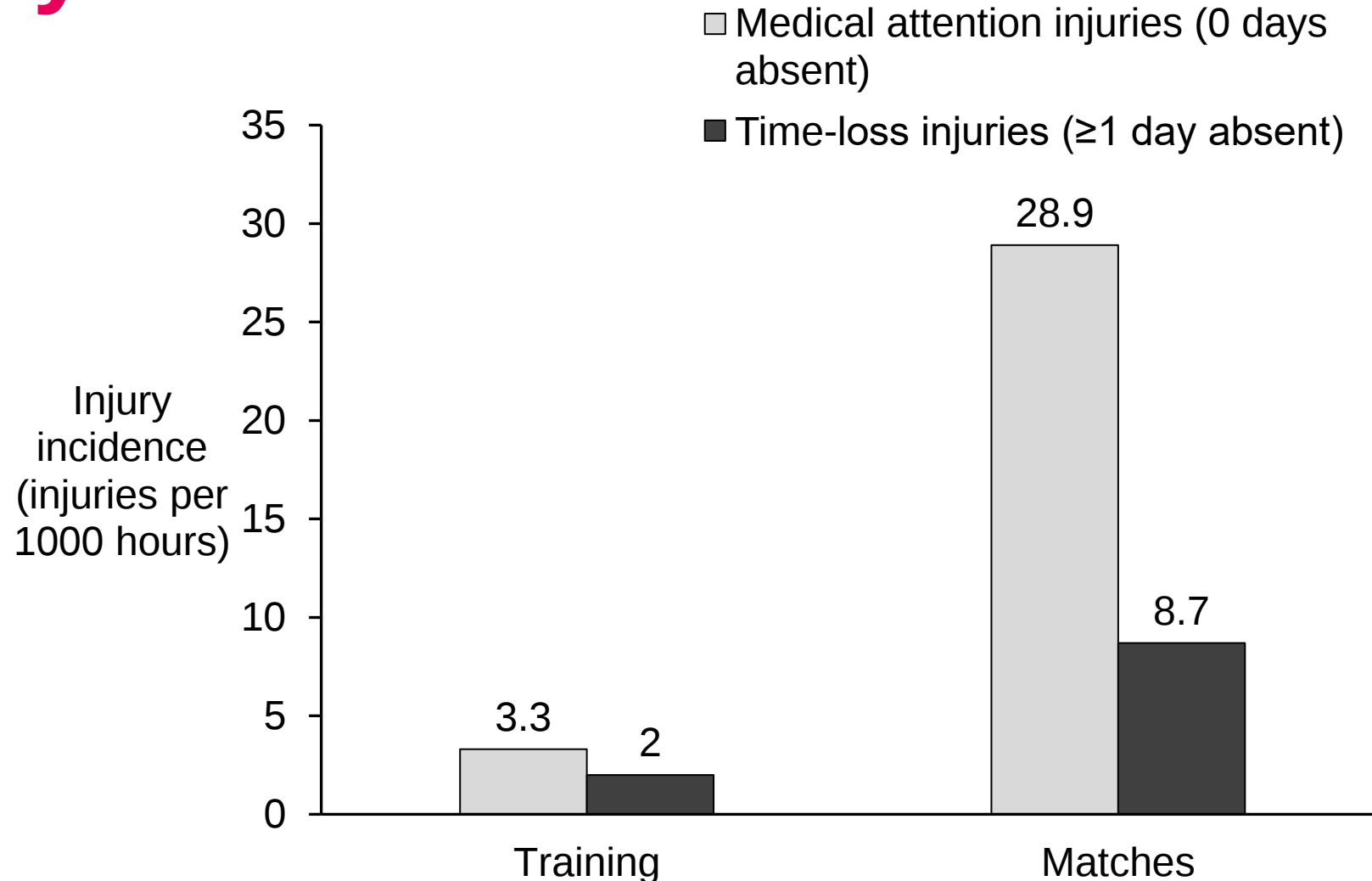
- $\geq 1$  day of estimated participation absence

- **Medical attention injuries**

- on-field attention without subsequent absence

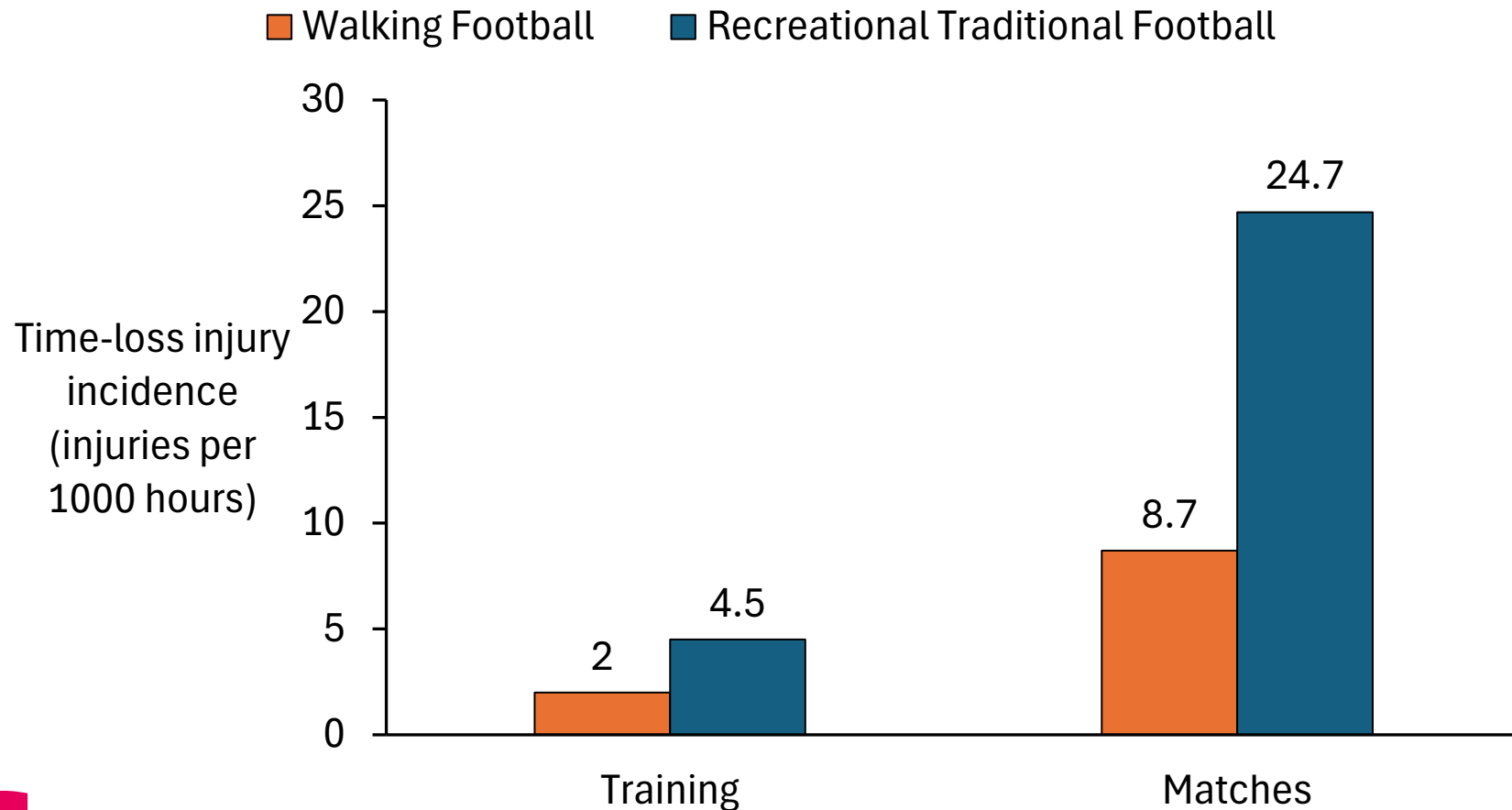
| <b>Injury Classification</b>                      | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cause</b>                                      | Contact, Non-Contact, Cumulative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Type</b>                                       | Muscle Strain/Tear/Rupture/Cramps, Ligament Sprain/Tear/Rupture, Tendon Injury/Rupture/Tendinopathy, Haematoma/Contusion/Bruise, Concussion, Cartilage/Disc/Meniscus, Bursitis/Impingement/Synovitis, Bone Fracture, Pain (Undiagnosed), Other                                |
| <b>Location</b>                                   | Abdomen, Achilles Tendon, Ankle, Anterior Thigh, Elbow, Foot/Toe, Forearm, Head/Face, Hip/Groin, Knee, Low Back, Lower Leg, Medial Thigh, Neck/Cervical Spine, Pelvis/Sacrum, Posterior Thigh, Shoulder/Clavicle, Sternum/Ribs/Upper Back, Upper Arm, Wrist/Hand/Finger/Thumb |
| <b>Activity at time of injury</b>                 | Tackled, Tackling, Collision, Running, Jumping/Landing, Kicking, Heading, Direct Blow, Cumulative, Other                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Re-injury occurrence</b>                       | Yes, No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Injuries linked to pre-existing conditions</b> | Yes, No<br>If yes, player stated the existing condition.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

# Injury incidence



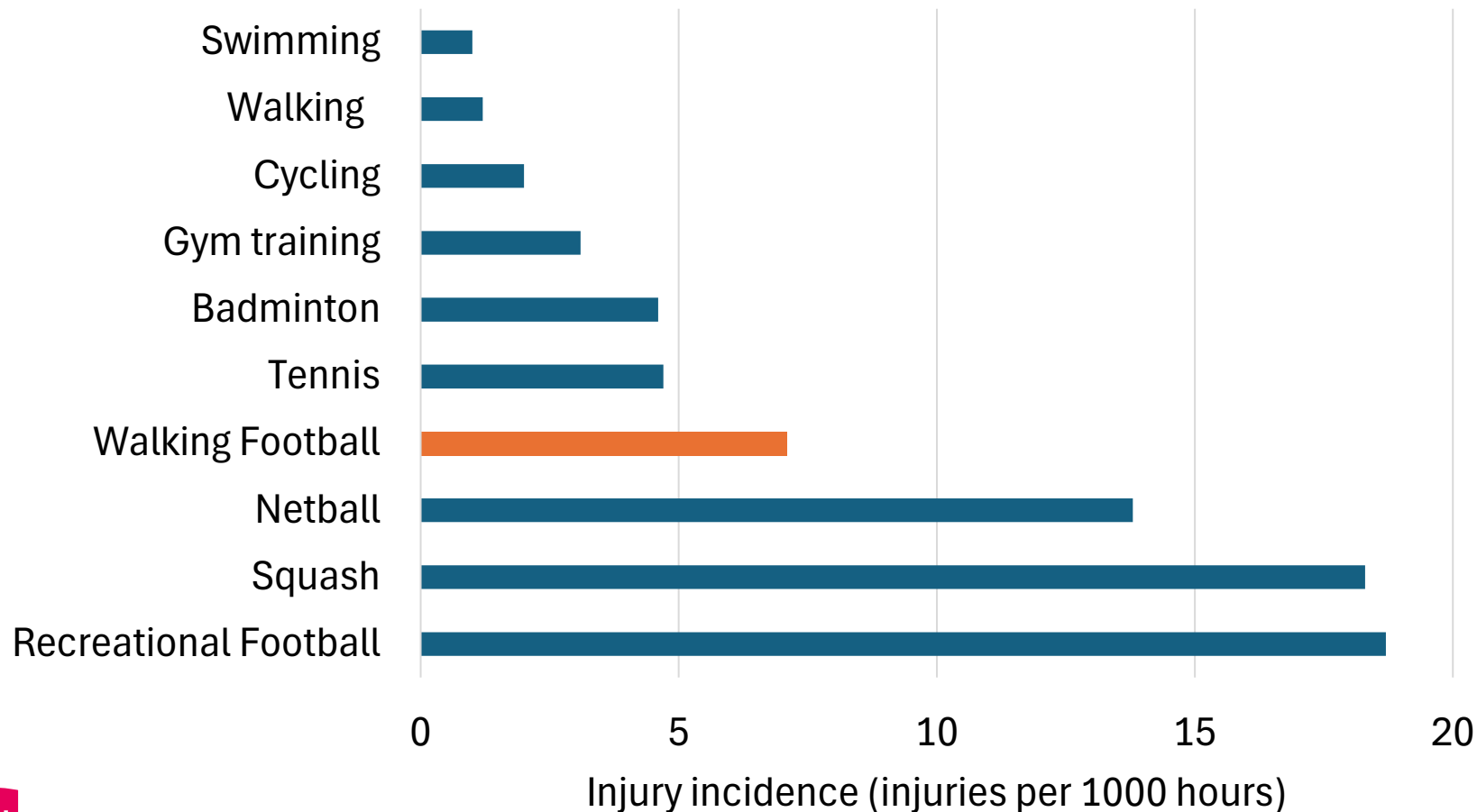
- Injury incidence was substantially higher in formal competitive matches (e.g. league games) compared to training

# Comparison to traditional football



- Walking Football has a lower time-loss injury incidence compared to traditional football in players aged 32-69 years (Hammes et al., 2015)

# Comparison to other activities

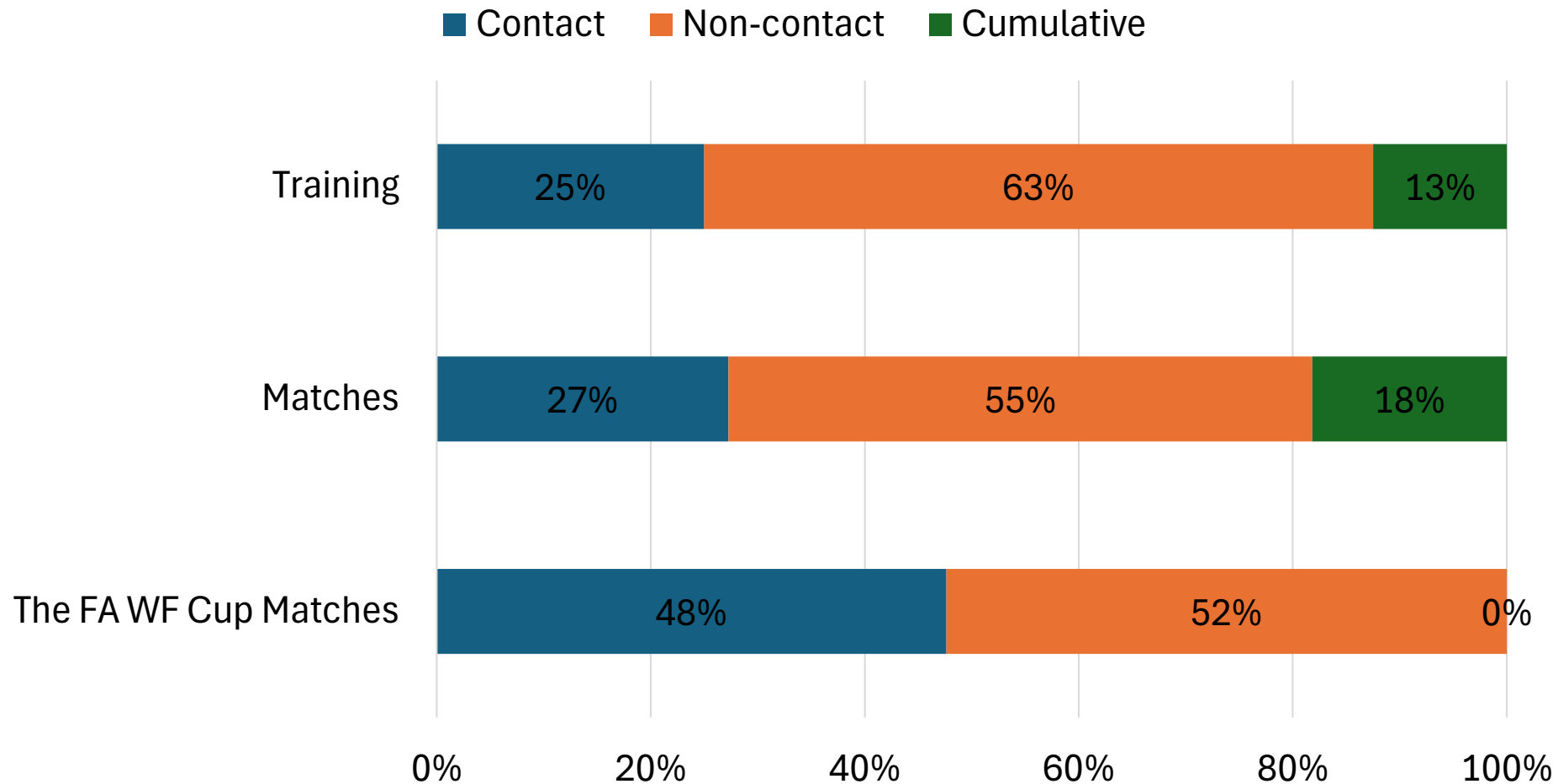


- When considering all injuries across both training and matches, the injury incidence of Walking Football can be compared, albeit not age-matched, to other sporting and leisure-time activities (Gebert et al., 2019; Parkkari et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2020)

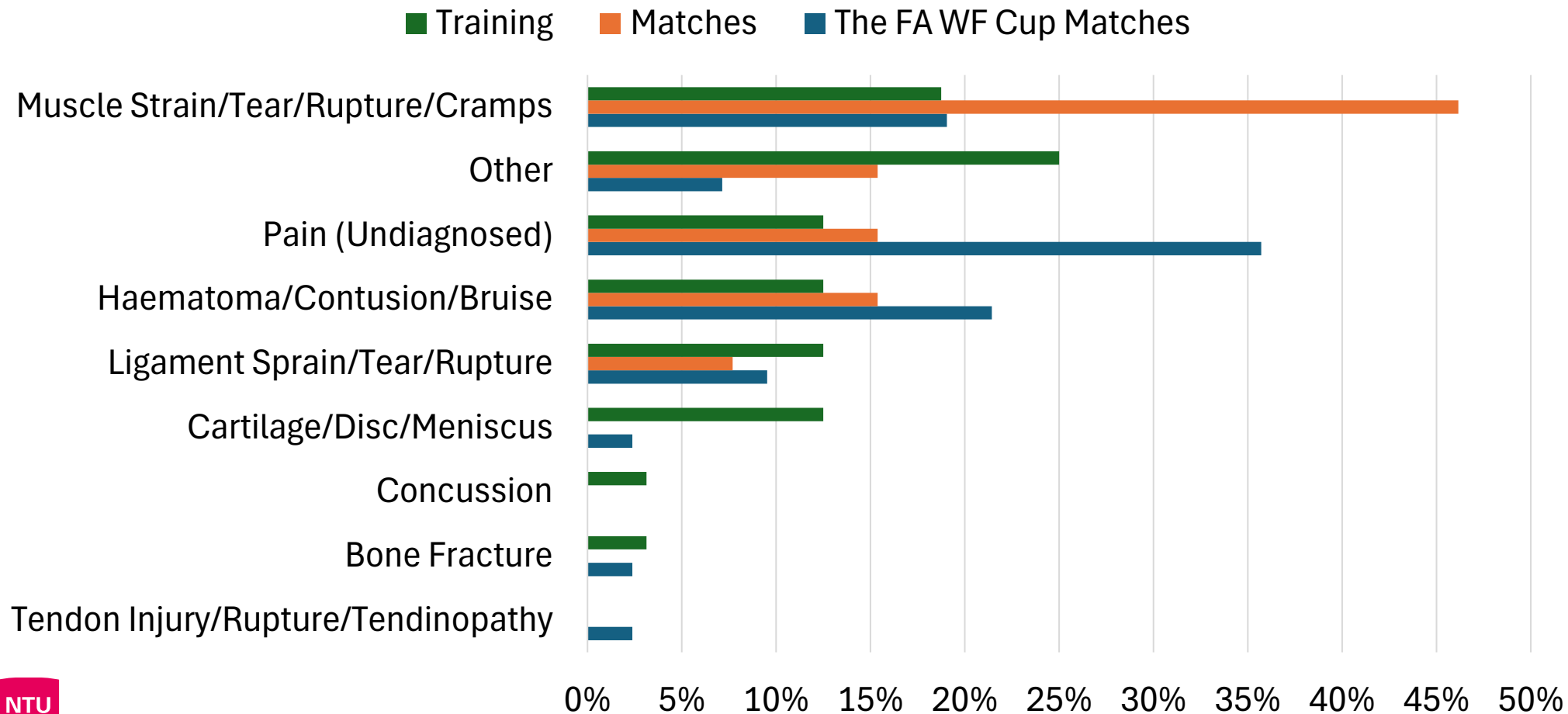
# Injury characteristics

- Injury characteristics are presented alongside injury surveillance results from the Regional Finals and National Final of The FA Walking Football Cup 2024 to provide a comparison between grassroots and the 'elite' level of Walking Football participation. This inaugural cup consisted of 6-a-side matches in a tournament format. For more information on the rules and regulations followed in The FA Walking Football Cup 2024, please see here:  
<https://community.thefa.com/teamwalk-online/m/resources/1080>

# Cause of injury

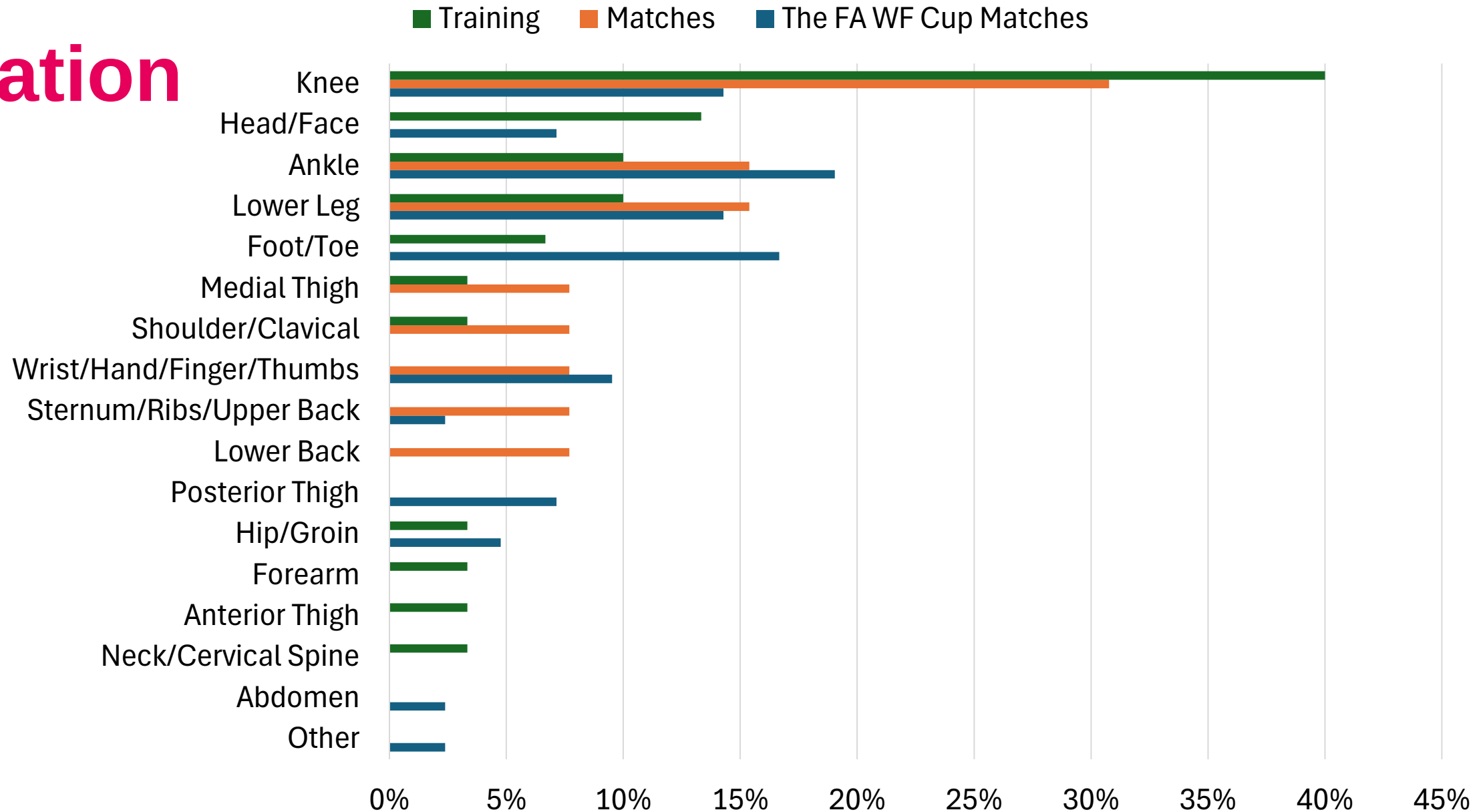


# Type of injury

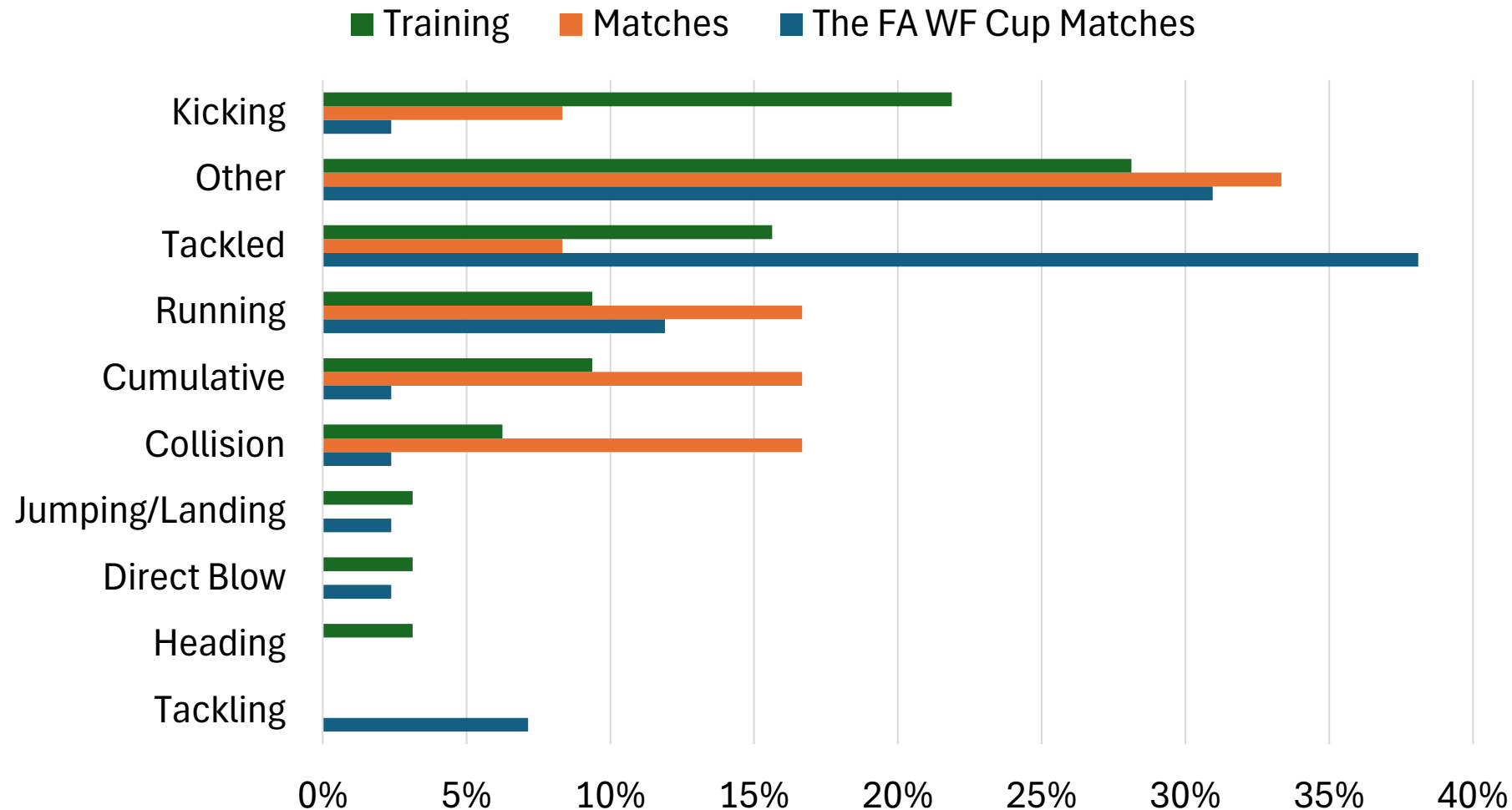


- 'Other' included, but was not limited to, grazes and shortness of breath

# Location

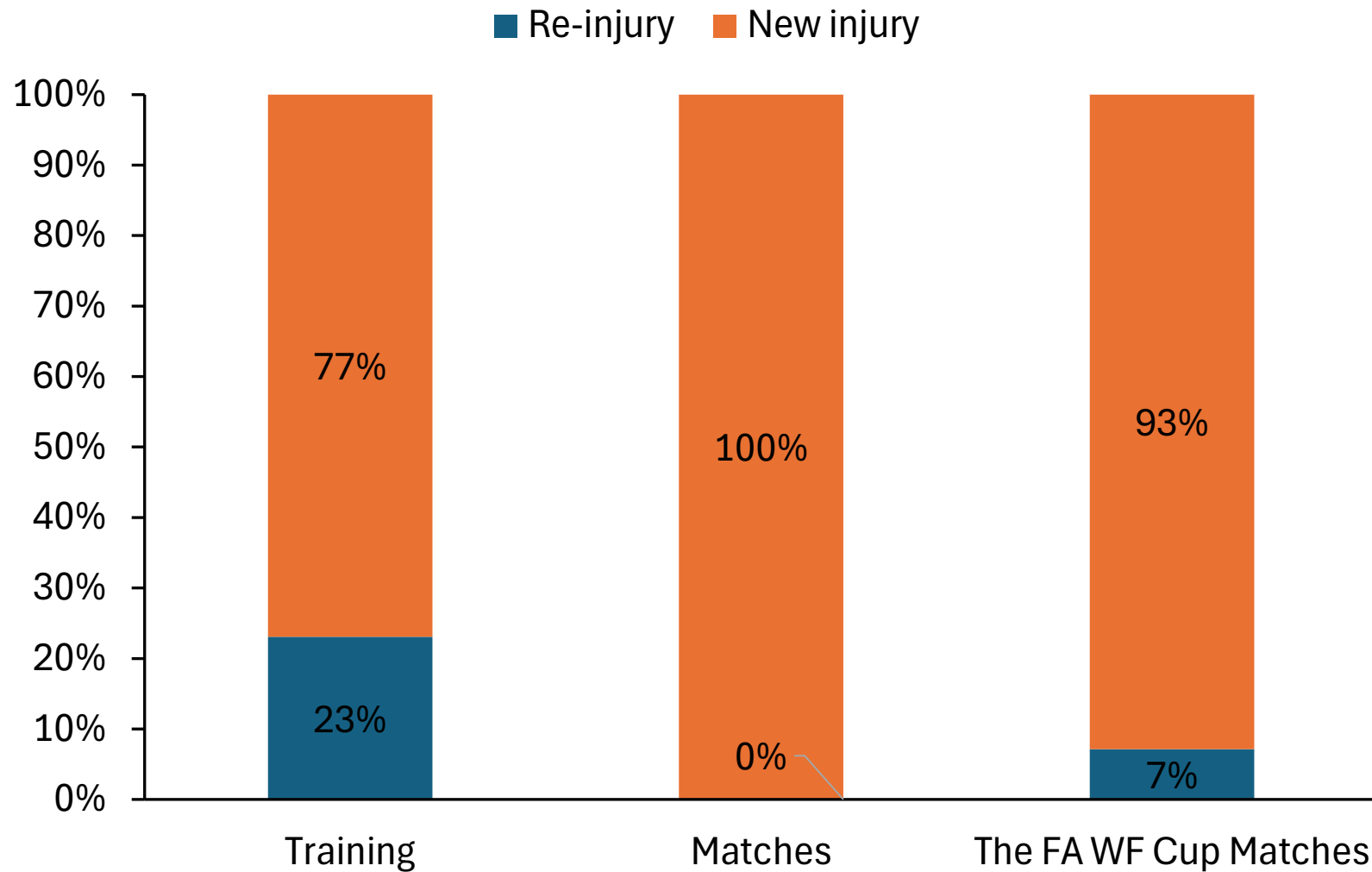


# Activity at time of injury

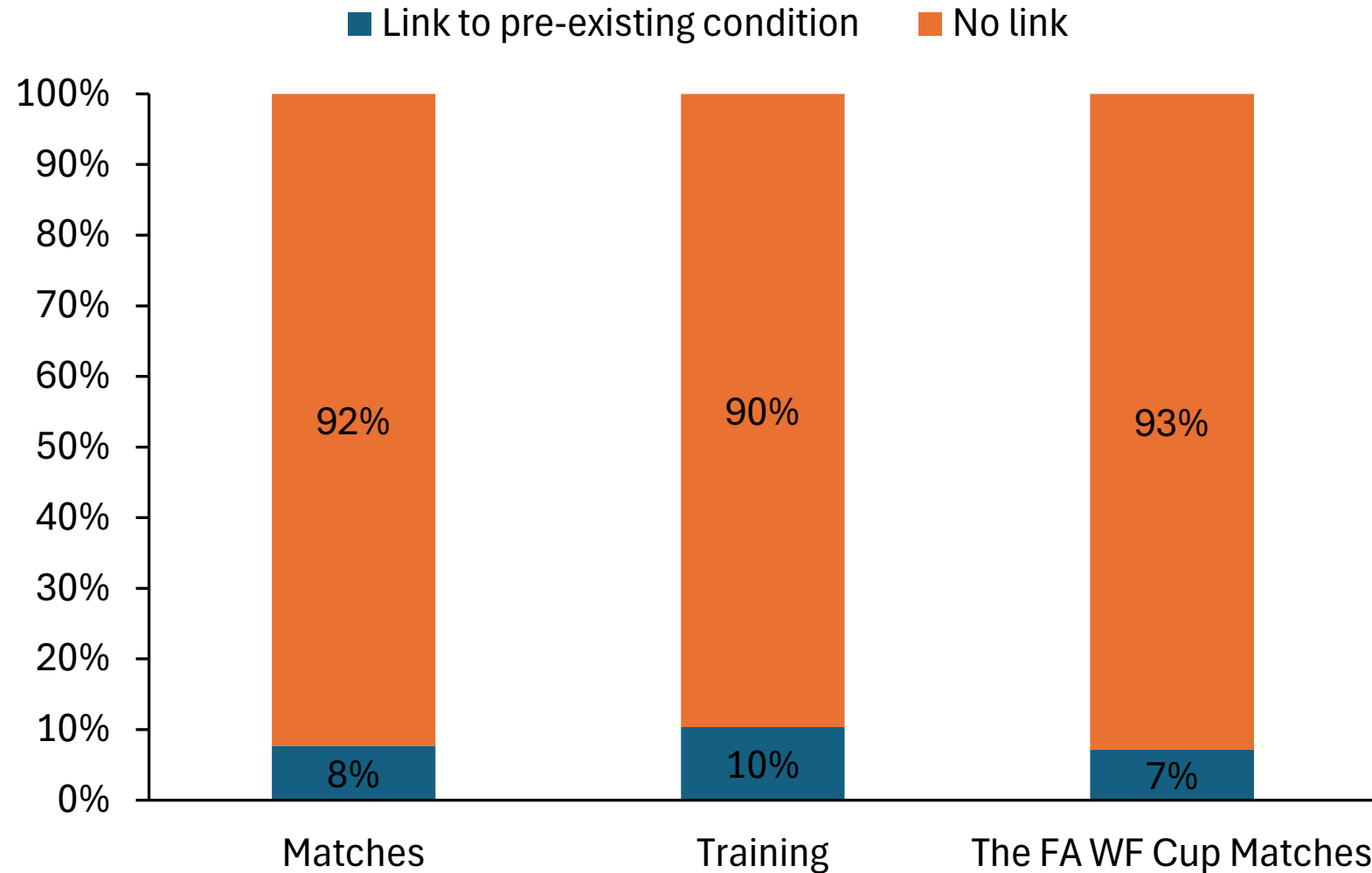


- 'Other' included, but was not limited to, overstretching and foot stuck in turf

# Re-injuries



# Injuries linked to pre-existing conditions



# Summary

- Training and match injury incidences are relatively low in Walking Football
- Walking Football has a lower injury risk than traditional football
- Non-contact injuries made up a majority of injuries in both training (63%) and matches (55%)
- Muscle strain/tear/rupture/cramps were the most common injury type in training (19%) and matches (46%)
- Running was linked to 9% of injuries in training and 17% in matches
- The knee was the most prevalent injury location in training (40%) and matches (31%)
- In total, only 10% of injuries were linked to pre-existing conditions, and 17% were re-injuries

# Conclusion

- While injury rates are higher in formal competitive matches compared to training, the overall injury risk is low
- Tackles in training, and running in matches, were two modifiable risk factors that made up a notable proportion of injuries
- Walking Football is a relatively safe activity for middle-aged and older adults, including those with pre-existing health conditions

# Thank you

- The project leads extend their heartfelt gratitude to all participating teams and their correspondents for their time and effort in collecting and sharing the data for this project. Your contributions have been invaluable, and this work would not have been possible without you
- We sincerely appreciate your support and hope the findings prove useful to your club. For example, by providing evidence to help potential players make informed decisions about participating in the sport. While we are unable to share individual club statistics due to the structure of the dataset, we are happy to answer any questions about the results and assist with any further information where possible. Please contact [Alfie.price@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:Alfie.price@ntu.ac.uk)

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# References

- Gebert, A., Gerber, M., Pühse, U., Gassmann, P., Stamm, H., & Lamprecht, M. (2019). A comparison of injuries in different non-professional soccer settings: incidence rates, causes and characteristics. *The Open Sports Sciences Journal*, 12(1).  
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# End

