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## 1 **Abstract**

2 Terbutaline is a prohibited drug except for athletes with a  
3 therapeutic use exemption certificate; terbutaline's effects on  
4 endurance performance are relatively unknown.

5 Purpose: To investigate the effects of two therapeutic (2mg; 4mg)  
6 inhaled doses of terbutaline on 3km running time-trial  
7 performance.

8 Methods: Eight males (24.3±2.4yrs; 77.6±8kg; 179.5±4.3cm)  
9 and eight females (22.4±3yrs; 58.6±6kg; 163±9.2cm) free from  
10 respiratory disease and illness provided written informed  
11 consent. Participants completed 3 km running time-trials on a  
12 non-motorised treadmill on three separate occasions following  
13 placebo, 2 mg or 4 mg inhaled terbutaline, in a single-blind,  
14 repeated-measures design. Urine samples (15mins post-exercise)  
15 were analysed for terbutaline concentration. Data were analysed  
16 using one-way repeated measures ANOVA, significance was set  
17 at  $p < 0.05$  for all analyses.

18 Results: No differences were observed for completion times  
19 (1103±201; 1106±195; 1098±165s;  $P=0.913$ ) for the placebo  
20 trial, the 2mg inhaled trial and the 4mg inhaled trial, respectively.  
21 Lactate values were higher ( $P=0.02$ ) following 4mg terbutaline  
22 ( $10.7 \pm 2.3 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ ) vs. placebo ( $8.9 \pm 1.8 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ ). FEV<sub>1</sub>  
23 values were greater following inhalation of 2mg ( $5.08 \pm 0.2$ ;  
24  $P=0.01$ ) and 4mg terbutaline ( $5.07 \pm 0.2$ ;  $P=0.02$ ) compared to  
25 placebo ( $4.83 \pm 0.5 \text{ L}$ ) post-inhalation. Urinary terbutaline  
26 concentrations were mean ( $306 \pm 288 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$ ;  $435 \pm 410 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$ ;  
27  $P=0.2$ ) and peak ( $956 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$ ;  $1244 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$ ) following 2mg and  
28 4mg inhaled terbutaline, respectively. No differences were  
29 observed between the male and female participants.

30 Conclusions: Therapeutic dosing of terbutaline does not lead to  
31 an improvement in 3 km running performance despite  
32 significantly increased FEV<sub>1</sub>. Our findings suggest that athletes  
33 using inhaled terbutaline at high therapeutic doses to treat  
34 asthma will not gain an ergogenic advantage during 3 km  
35 running performance.

36

## 37 **Introduction**

38 Short-acting  $\beta_2$ -agonists are used therapeutically by athletes with  
39 asthma related conditions to prevent and/or reverse the  
40 bronchoconstriction of the airways, leading to restoration of  
41 airway function.<sup>1-5</sup> The majority of athletes treat symptoms of  
42 exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB) through the use of  
43 salbutamol, making it the most commonly used inhaled  $\beta_2$ -  
44 agonist in these individuals.<sup>4</sup> However other  $\beta_2$ -agonists, such as  
45 terbutaline, are available which is a suitable alternative to  
46 salbutamol, should an athlete not respond appropriately to  
47 salbutamol treatment.<sup>6-10</sup> Athletes that are subject to World Anti-

48 Doping Agency (WADA) regulations, who require alternative  
49  $\beta_2$ -agonist therapy can apply for a therapeutic use exemption  
50 certificate (TUE) in order to use inhaled terbutaline.<sup>11</sup>

51 The prohibited status of terbutaline is due, in part, to the inability  
52 to distinguish between therapeutic inhaled and therapeutic oral  
53 doses (with all oral  $\beta_2$ -agonists being banned under the WADA  
54 code), given that an oral dose far exceeds the inhaled dose in  
55 terms of the systemic bioavailability when given  
56 therapeutically.<sup>12,13</sup> In some athletes the need for the use of  
57 terbutaline is justified, however there are currently no measures  
58 in place to prevent an athlete with a legitimate TUE for  
59 terbutaline from using the medication at a suprathreshold dose  
60 with impunity.<sup>13</sup>

61 The current WADA guidelines monitor the use of the inhaled  
62 short-acting  $\beta_2$ -agonists, salbutamol and formoterol via a urinary  
63 threshold limit, above which will present an adverse analytical  
64 finding (AAF).<sup>11</sup> For salbutamol this limit is 1000 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup> with  
65 a decision limit of 1200 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup> and for formoterol this limit is  
66 40 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup> with a decision limit of 50 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup>, with any levels  
67 over this presenting an AAF. The current guidelines for use  
68 indicate that no more than 1600  $\mu$ g salbutamol can be inhaled in  
69 a 24 hour period and within this no more than 800  $\mu$ g can be  
70 inhaled in a 12 hour period, with the equivalent for formoterol  
71 being 54  $\mu$ g over a 24 hour period.<sup>11</sup> If a threshold for terbutaline  
72 could be determined, this would enable it to be monitored in  
73 much the same way as both salbutamol and formoterol,  
74 preventing an athlete with a TUE for terbutaline from potentially  
75 using the medication at a suprathreshold dose. Recently  
76 Jacobson et al.,<sup>13</sup> presented the case for establishment of dosing  
77 thresholds for terbutaline, these dosing thresholds are extremely  
78 important given recent evidence of ergogenic effects of  
79 suprathreshold dosages of inhaled terbutaline on sprint and  
80 power performance, muscle strength and muscle hypertrophy, as  
81 well as inducing muscle phenotype alterations.<sup>8,9,14,15</sup>

82 The establishment of a urinary threshold for terbutaline has  
83 proven to be difficult to attain, recently Dyreborg et al.,<sup>16</sup>  
84 examined high-dose (4 mg) inhaled versus oral (10 mg)  
85 terbutaline, finding that the bioavailability and pharmacokinetics  
86 vary distinctly between routes of administration. Peak urinary  
87 concentration of 4 mg inhaled terbutaline occurred 2 hours post-  
88 inhalation and peak urinary concentration of 10 mg oral  
89 terbutaline occurred 6 hours post-ingestion, interestingly there  
90 was also no significant difference between urinary levels of  
91 inhaled vs oral terbutaline at the 6 hour stage. Similar work was  
92 previously performed by Elers et al.,<sup>12</sup> in which inhaled (2 mg)  
93 and oral (10 mg) terbutaline were examined, the study found that  
94 although there was a significant difference between urine  
95 concentrations dependent upon route of administration, no

96 threshold was able to be established due to high variability  
97 between individuals. It is therefore important to assess urinary  
98 levels of terbutaline for doping control purposes.

99 Evidence exists that the use of terbutaline at a suprathreshold  
100 dose has the potential to be ergogenic.<sup>17,18</sup> These purported  
101 effects are due to the fact that short-acting  $\beta_2$ -agonists (a class of  
102 sympathomimetic amines) are able to activate the  $\beta_2$  adrenergic  
103 receptors within the body, which are mainly present on bronchial  
104 smooth muscle.<sup>19-21</sup> Activation of the  $\beta_2$  adrenergic receptors  
105 reverses the constriction of bronchial smooth muscle during  
106 bronchoconstriction. These same  $\beta_2$  receptors are also present on  
107 cardiac smooth muscle and skeletal muscle.<sup>21,22</sup> Adrenergic  
108 activation of skeletal muscle has the potential to improve  
109 musculoskeletal function and thus has the potential to be  
110 ergogenic during exercise performance.<sup>23</sup> Recent investigations  
111 suggest an acute suprathreshold inhaled dose (15 mg) of  
112 terbutaline may have ergogenic action in sprint cycling  
113 performance.<sup>8,9,14,18</sup> This 15 mg dose is approximately eight  
114 times the recommended therapeutic dose for inhaled terbutaline  
115 and in athletes with a TUE this would not be permitted according  
116 to the WADA code,<sup>11</sup> however current regulations would not be  
117 able to accurately detect this misuse of terbutaline, due to a lack  
118 of urinary thresholds with which to monitor terbutaline use.  
119 Given the ergogenic potential of suprathreshold inhaled  
120 terbutaline, it remains to be determined whether athletes using  
121 terbutaline therapeutically to treat asthma symptoms could also  
122 experience an ergogenic effect, traditionally the therapeutic dose  
123 of inhaled terbutaline is between 1-2 mg, however studies have  
124 shown therapeutic use as high as 4 mg.<sup>10,16</sup>

125 The aim of the present study was to examine the potential  
126 ergogenic action of 2 mg and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline on  
127 exercise performance during a 3 km running time-trial and to  
128 measure urinary thresholds of terbutaline post-exercise  
129 performance.

130

## 131 **Methods**

132 Following ethical approval from the Liverpool John Moores  
133 University research ethics committee (Ethics No. P11SPS044),  
134 eight males (age:  $24.3 \pm 2.4$  years; weight:  $77.6 \pm 8$  kg; height:  
135  $179.5 \pm 4.3$  cm) and eight females (age:  $22.4 \pm 3$  years; weight:  
136  $58.6 \pm 6$  kg; height:  $163 \pm 9.2$  cm) volunteered to participate in  
137 the study, providing their written informed consent. All  
138 participants were in good health, non-smokers and took part in  
139 sport and exercise activities for at least 3 hours per week. No  
140 participant had previously been diagnosed with asthma and/or  
141 EIB, all participants were free from chest infection for at least  
142 two weeks prior to testing. Participants presented with a negative

143 eucapnic voluntary hyperpnoea (EVH) challenge.<sup>24,25</sup> No  
144 participants competed at a level where they were subject to  
145 regular anti-doping tests. Participants were informed about the  
146 nature and the risks of the experimental procedures before  
147 providing written informed consent.

148

### 149 3 km Time-Trial

150 The 3 km time-trials were conducted on a non-motorised curved  
151 treadmill (Woodway Curve, Woodway, USA). Participants were  
152 familiarised to running on a non-motorised treadmill prior to  
153 initiating their recorded 3 km time-trials. Familiarisation runs  
154 took place on at least two occasions and participants progressed  
155 to the recorded 3 km time-trials only once they felt comfortable  
156 pacing themselves on the non-motorised curved treadmill over a  
157 3 km distance (Figure 1).

158 Each participant was required to perform a 3km time-trial on  
159 three occasions in a randomised, single blind, repeated measures  
160 design with a minimum of 7 days between trials. Participants  
161 were instructed to follow the same 24-hour dietary intake prior  
162 to each trial and were instructed to abstain from caffeine for 6  
163 hours before attending. Prior to completing the 3 km time-trial  
164 participants completed baseline maximal flow-volume  
165 manoeuvre in accordance with ERS/ATS criteria.<sup>24</sup> Following  
166 baseline spirometry participants inhaled either eight inhalations  
167 of non-active inhalant (placebo), four inhalations of non-active  
168 inhalant plus four inhalations of 0.5 mg terbutaline (2 mg) or  
169 eight inhalations of 0.5 mg terbutaline (4 mg). Participants  
170 received the inhaled terbutaline via turbuhaler (Bricanyl,  
171 Turbuhaler, AstraZeneca, Canada), participants were advised to  
172 inhale at a steady flow-rate for 2 seconds until full inhalation and  
173 to hold each inhalation for 10 seconds, a minimum of 1 minute  
174 was required between each subsequent inhalation. Ten minutes  
175 post-inhalation spirometry was repeated, before the completion  
176 of a standardised warm-up (5 minutes on a motorized treadmill  
177 at 10 kph). The 3km time-trials were performed under controlled  
178 laboratory conditions of 18°C, 20.9% O<sub>2</sub> and 40% humidity.

179 During the time-trial participants wore a heart rate monitor  
180 (Polar RS400; Polar Electro Oy, Kempele, Finland) and face-  
181 mask connected to a breath-by-breath gas analyser (Oxycon Pro,  
182 Jaeger, Wurzburg, Germany). Every 0.5 km the following  
183 variables were measured: time (s), heart rate (HR), oxygen  
184 consumption ( $\dot{V}O_2$ ), carbon dioxide production ( $\dot{V}CO_2$ ), minute  
185 ventilation ( $\dot{V}_E$ ), respiratory exchange ratio (RER) and rating of  
186 perceived exertion (RPE).<sup>26</sup> Two minutes following the  
187 completion of the 3 km time-trial a finger-tip capillary blood  
188 sample was collected to measure blood lactate concentration

189 (Lactate Pro, Arkray KDK, Japan) followed by spirometry and  
190 collection of a post-exercise urine sample (Figure 1).

191 During the 3 km time-trial participants were only given feedback  
192 on the distance they had covered. They were blind to all other  
193 feedback such as time and HR. Participants were encouraged to  
194 complete the time-trial as fast as possible, a-priori power  
195 calculations for the 3 km running time-trial predicted that for an  
196 expected completion time of 1100 seconds, with a standard  
197 deviation of (14%) 154 seconds, a sample size of 8 would be  
198 sufficient to significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) predict a 2.5% 27 second  
199 change in performance with 80% power.

#### 200 Urinalysis

201 Collected urine-samples were measured for pH and osmolality  
202 before 30 ml of each sample was distributed into a Nalgene  
203 bottle (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Leicestershire, UK) prior to  
204 freezing the sample at  $-80\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  until urinalysis. All urinalysis was  
205 performed at HFL Sport Science (Fordham, United Kingdom),  
206 an independent drug surveillance laboratory and former WADA-  
207 accredited laboratory. All samples were packaged in dry ice  
208 during transportation to prevent thawing. The laboratory used a  
209 validated proprietary analytical method. In brief, urine samples  
210 were thawed, centrifuged and subaliquotted prior to addition of  
211 a deuterated internal standard (Terbutaline  $\text{D}_3$ ; CDN Isotopes via  
212 QMX Laboratories Ltd, Thaxted, UK). Following overnight  
213 enzymatic hydrolysis with  $\beta$  glucuronidase from *E. Coli* (type  
214 1X-A; Sigma Aldrich, Dorset, UK), sample clean-up was  
215 performed using solid phase extraction (Strata XC 30 mg 96-  
216 well plate; Phenomenex, Macclesfield, UK). After elution,  
217 samples were evaporated to dryness, reconstituted and analysed  
218 using an AB Sciex 4000 QTrap mass spectrometer (AB Sciex,  
219 Warrington, UK), with a Waters Acquity UPLC system (Waters  
220 Ltd, Elstree, UK). Chromatographic separation was achieved  
221 using a Waters Acquity HSS T3 Column (2.1 x 100 mm, particle  
222 size  $1.8\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ ) and gradient solvent programme using methanol  
223 and water, both containing 10 mM ammonium formate.

224

225 Sample concentrations were measured using a calibration line  
226 containing Terbutaline at different concentrations (10 to 3000  
227  $\text{ng}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$ ) which were extracted and analysed in the same batch.  
228 Quality control samples were tested along with samples to  
229 confirm assay performance.

230

#### 231 Sample Correction

232 All urine concentrations of terbutaline were corrected to a urine  
233 specific gravity of 1.02 prior to analysis using the following  
234 equation<sup>12</sup>:

235

236 Corrected urine concentration = terbutaline urine concentration  
237 x (0.02/(urine specific gravity -1)).  
238

### 239 Statistical Analysis

240 Statistical analysis incorporated one-way repeated measures  
241 analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare between trial  
242 conditions during time-trial performance and two-way ANOVA  
243 to compare spirometry measurements between conditions at  
244 different time-points, a Bonferroni correction was applied to  
245 correct for multiple comparisons. Significance was set at  $P <$   
246  $0.05$  for all analyses. All data were reported as mean ( $\pm$ SD)  
247 unless otherwise stated. Statistical analysis was performed using  
248 the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS v21.0, IBM,  
249 New York).

250

### 251 Results

252 Sixteen participants successfully completed all trials, participant  
253 demographics and lung function screening values are shown in  
254 Table 1. No adverse side-effects were reported by any of the  
255 participants during the study.

256

257 There were no significant differences in completion time  
258 between trials either within the combined group ( $1103 \pm 194$  s;  
259  $1106 \pm 118$  s;  $1098 \pm 160$  s;  $P = 0.9$ ) or when groups were split  
260 according to gender: female ( $1249 \pm 149.3$  s;  $1257 \pm 112$  s;  $1215$   
261  $\pm 96$  s;  $P = 0.37$ ) and male ( $956 \pm 102$  s;  $955 \pm 113$  s;  $982 \pm 122$   
262 s;  $P = 0.28$ ) for PLA, 2 mg and 4 mg trials respectively (Figure  
263 2).

264 Post time trial blood lactate was greater following 4 mg inhaled  
265 terbutaline ( $10.7 \pm 2.3$  mmol·L<sup>-1</sup>) when compared to the placebo  
266 trial ( $8.9 \pm 1.8$  mmol·L<sup>-1</sup>;  $P = 0.02$ ; Figure 3). There were no  
267 differences in gas exchange variables for  $\dot{V}O_2$  ( $49.1 \pm 7.7$ ;  $49.3$   
268  $\pm 5.2$ ;  $48.9 \pm 5.1$ )  $\dot{V}CO_2$  ( $50.3 \pm 5.9$ ;  $52.5 \pm 5.5$ ;  $52.1 \pm 4.5$ ) or  
269 RER ( $1.08 \pm 0.1$ ;  $1.09 \pm 0.05$ ;  $1.12 \pm 0.07$ ), for placebo, 2 mg  
270 inhaled and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline, respectively.

271 Exercising heart rate (HR) did not differ ( $P=0.95$ ) between trial  
272 conditions, ratings of perceived exertion (RPE) values did not  
273 differ between trials at any time-point during performance  
274 (Figure 4).

275 There was a significant difference in FEV<sub>1</sub> between trial  
276 conditions post-inhalation of 2 mg and 4 mg terbutaline (Table  
277 2). There were no differences between FEV<sub>1</sub> values in the  
278 placebo trial following terbutaline administration or following  
279 time-trial completion, there was no difference in baseline lung  
280 function values between conditions. There was a significant

281 difference in post inhalation FEV<sub>1</sub> values compared to placebo  
282 (P=0.007; P=0.003) for both 2 mg and 4 mg inhalation trials,  
283 respectively (Table 2; Figure 5). Interestingly, the difference in  
284 FEV<sub>1</sub> post time-trial between conditions was not significant  
285 (P=0.06) (Figure 5), possibly due to a slightly raised FEV<sub>1</sub>  
286 following exercise in the placebo trial.

287 There was no significant difference (P=0.195) in urine  
288 concentration between either the 2 mg inhalation or the 4 mg  
289 inhalation post time-trial in males or females with mean  $\pm$  SD  
290 for the pooled groups (306  $\pm$  288 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup>; 435  $\pm$  410 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup>)  
291 and the peak values (956 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup>; 1244 ng·mL<sup>-1</sup>) for 2 mg  
292 inhaled terbutaline and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline, respectively  
293 (Figure 6).

294

## 295 **Discussion**

296 This study demonstrates that inhaled terbutaline (up to 4 mg)  
297 does not lead to improved 3 km running time-trial performance  
298 in recreationally active individuals. This is despite an observed  
299 small improvement in FEV<sub>1</sub> and an increase in post-exercise  
300 lactate (4 mg terbutaline only) when compared to placebo.

301 Our study is in agreement with others that suggest there is no  
302 significant effect on endurance performance following a high  
303 dose of inhaled terbutaline.<sup>8,9</sup> Previous work investigating the  
304 effects of oral supra-therapeutic doses of terbutaline (8 mg)  
305 failed to show an ergogenic effect on endurance performance  
306 and maximal sprint cycling performance.<sup>7</sup> Further experiments  
307 performed by Kalsen et al.,<sup>8</sup> examined the effects of high-dose  
308 (15 mg) inhaled terbutaline on 300 kcal cycling time-trial  
309 performance, there was no difference in completion times (1054  
310  $\pm$  125 s; 1072  $\pm$  145 s) for placebo vs 15 mg inhaled terbutaline,  
311 respectively. These results are comparable to the present study  
312 in which completion times were (1102  $\pm$  125 s; 1098  $\pm$  109 s) in  
313 the pooled groups for placebo vs 4 mg inhaled terbutaline,  
314 respectively. This evidence supports a lack of ergogenic  
315 potential for terbutaline in moderate duration (~1100 s)  
316 endurance running and cycling performance.

317 Hostrup et al.,<sup>9</sup> reported that high-dose (15 mg) inhaled  
318 terbutaline increased muscle strength, and maximal sprint  
319 cycling performance but did not enhance endurance cycling  
320 performance. In line with these findings, further examination of  
321 this acute dose of 15 mg inhaled terbutaline was performed by  
322 Kalsen et al.,<sup>14</sup> investigating the effects on maximal 10s sprint  
323 cycling performance, with the finding that the observed increase  
324 in power output was also associated with increased levels of  
325 plasma lactate. They concluded that for a short period of time,  
326 terbutaline can counteract a reduction in ATP in type II muscle



327 fibres, further enhancing maximal sprint potential. The general  
328 consensus from Kalsen et al.,<sup>14</sup> and Hostrup et al.,<sup>9</sup> was that 15  
329 mg inhaled terbutaline promotes a shift towards anaerobic  
330 carbohydrate metabolism during exercise, which may lead to  
331 greater power production in short-term anaerobic activity and  
332 greater fatigability over longer duration aerobic activity.<sup>8,9,14,17,18</sup>

333 Following the 4 mg inhaled terbutaline condition we observed  
334 an increase in post-exercise lactate ( $10.7 \pm 2.3 \text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ ) when  
335 compared to placebo ( $8.9 \pm 1.8 \text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ ). This may be, in part,  
336 due to enhanced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release and increased contractile properties  
337 of skeletal muscle following terbutaline administration.<sup>14,17,18</sup>  
338 Hostrup et al.,<sup>18</sup> suggest that this enhanced contractility of  
339 skeletal muscle leads to elevated glycolytic activity during high-  
340 intensity exercise. These findings are in accordance with the  
341 findings of Kalsen et al.,<sup>8</sup> when investigating the effect of high-  
342 dose (15 mg) terbutaline on steady state exercise and also 300  
343 kcal time-trial cycling performance, where lactate accumulation  
344 was higher during steady state exercise and was found to be  
345 attributable to higher rates of glycogenolysis and glycolysis,  
346 with no concomitant improvement in endurance performance. In  
347 association with the findings of Kalsen et al.,<sup>8</sup> it is possible that  
348 the lack of ergogenic effect seen in both our study and the study  
349 by Sanchez et al.,<sup>7</sup> can be explained by an earlier onset of fatigue  
350 during endurance performance due to enhanced glycolytic  
351 activity induced by terbutaline.<sup>9,14</sup>

352 The improvements seen in other studies with regard to sprint and  
353 power performance, could be due to greater potentiation of  
354 adrenergic receptors at very high dosages, according to Baker et  
355 al.,<sup>27</sup> a combination of selective affinity and intrinsic efficacy  
356 (ability to induce a response) dictate the strength of response at  
357 a given receptor. A highly selective partial agonist of the  $\beta_2$ -  
358 receptor such as terbutaline, with high intrinsic efficacy, given  
359 at a supra-therapeutic dose would have the ability to bind to the  
360  $\beta_2$ -receptors in many types of tissue, increasing the ergogenic  
361 potential of the drug.<sup>27</sup> This could be one factor that could  
362 support the ergogenic effects found in those studies examining  
363 15 mg inhaled terbutaline for strength and power  
364 performance.<sup>9,14,17,18</sup> With this in mind, the distribution of the  
365 high therapeutic dose (4 mg) in the present study, would likely  
366 have been lower than that of the 15 mg inhaled dose studies,  
367 therefore there could have been a lower potency of the  $\beta_2$ -agonist.  
368 Given that the present study's evidence stems from  
369 recreationally active individuals, it is likely that these results are  
370 transferrable to highly trained individuals, , (i.e. the  
371 physiological response would be the same in both groups).  
372 Although this is a limitation, ethically, it would not have been  
373 possible to perform this study in an elite population, due to the  
374 athletes' responsibility to undertake out-of-competition testing.

375 A TUE is needed for the use of inhaled terbutaline during  
376 competition, largely due to the inability to distinguish between  
377 route of administration and total dose administered.<sup>12,16,28</sup> In the  
378 present study we were able to measure urine concentrations of 2  
379 mg and 4 mg doses of terbutaline, interestingly our values for 2  
380 mg ( $305.5 \pm 288.3 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{ml}^{-1}$ ) inhaled terbutaline are lower than  
381 those found in a previous investigation by Elers et al.,<sup>12</sup> for 2 mg  
382 inhaled terbutaline ( $472 \pm 324 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{ml}^{-1}$ ) and our values after 4 mg  
383 inhaled terbutaline ( $435.4 \pm 409.8 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$ ) are comparable to the  
384 values after 10 mg oral terbutaline in the Elers et al.,<sup>12</sup> study  
385 ( $402 \pm 663 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{ml}^{-1}$ ). Interestingly, these values for both varying  
386 dosages and alternate routes of administration have very similar  
387 mean values, further highlighting the difficulty in distinguishing  
388 between therapeutic and supra-therapeutic use of terbutaline.<sup>12</sup>  
389 Of note, the timing of the urine sample in the Elers et al.,<sup>12</sup> study  
390 was at 4 hours, whereas in the present study urine samples were  
391 collected 1-hour post-inhalation. Indeed, serum concentrations  
392 of terbutaline reached a peak at the 4-hour stage in the Elers et  
393 al.,<sup>12</sup> study, therefore it is possible that inhaled terbutaline may  
394 not have reached peak levels in the urine at the 1-hour sample  
395 collection in the present study. The 4 mg inhaled dose was  
396 previously examined by Dyreborg et al.,<sup>16</sup> with peak  
397 concentrations reaching  $1954 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$  at the 2 hour stage post-  
398 inhalation, the present study found peak concentrations reaching  
399  $1244 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$  1 hour post-inhalation, it would have been  
400 beneficial to examine urinary levels of terbutaline at additional  
401 timepoints in the present study in order to ascertain time to  
402 maximal concentration ( $T_{\text{max}}$ ) of terbutaline. A number of factors  
403 contribute to the varying levels of urinary terbutaline, recent  
404 work by Kreiberg et al.,<sup>29</sup> indicate varying pharmacokinetics of  
405 4 mg inhaled terbutaline dependent upon external factors such as  
406 exercise performance and also environmental conditions, these  
407 differences exist post-correction for urine specific gravity,  
408 explanations for such variance include but are not limited to;  
409 inhalation technique, exercise intensity and hydration status.

410 In the investigations by Elers et al.,<sup>12</sup> and Dyreborg et al.,<sup>16</sup>  
411 significant differences were found between oral and inhaled  
412 doses, but no cut-off value could be established. If a cut-off value  
413 were able to be established then it is possible that inhaled  
414 terbutaline would be able to be monitored in much the same way  
415 as both salbutamol and formoterol, where an AAF would  
416 indicate possible supra-therapeutic inhaled use or oral  
417 administration, which have established ergogenic potential in  
418 strength and power performance.<sup>7-9,14,17,18</sup> Further investigation  
419 is needed to establish the ergogenic effects of therapeutic inhaled  
420 terbutaline on sprint and power performance. Recent findings  
421 also highlight that daily use of 4 mg inhaled terbutaline displays  
422 repartitioning properties, allowing for reductions in body fat and

423 increases in muscle mass.<sup>30</sup> Care is warranted with regard to the  
424 use of terbutaline in athletes with a TUE.

### 425 **Practical Applications**

426 Therapeutic use of terbutaline in athletes with a TUE will not  
427 lead to an ergogenic advantage during running-based endurance  
428 exercise. Investigations into appropriate monitoring of  
429 terbutaline are warranted in order to prevent the potential misuse  
430 of terbutaline via suprathreshold dosing.

### 431 **Conclusions**

432 The findings of the present study suggest that therapeutic doses  
433 of inhaled terbutaline (up to 4 mg) do not improve 3 km running  
434 time-trial performance. Endurance running athletes using  
435 inhaled terbutaline via TUE, as therapy for their asthma, are  
436 therefore unlikely to experience an additional ergogenic  
437 advantage. Further research is needed investigating the effects of  
438 therapeutic inhaled doses of terbutaline during strength and  
439 power performance to fully elucidate any ergogenic potential.

440

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581 **Tables**

582

**Table 1:** Mean ( $\pm$ SD) Participant Demographics and Lung Function at Baseline and % Change in Lung Function Post-EVH in Males and Females.

| <b>Group</b>         | <b>Height (cm)</b> | <b>Weight (kg)</b> | <b>Age (yrs)</b> | <b>Baseline FEV<sub>1</sub> (L)</b> | <b>% Predicted FEV<sub>1</sub></b> | <b>Baseline FVC (L)</b> | <b>% Predicted FVC</b> | <b>FEV<sub>1</sub>/FVC Ratio</b> | <b>Baseline PEF (L)</b> | <b>% Predicted PEF</b> | <b>Post-EVH % Fall in FEV<sub>1</sub></b> |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---|
| <b>Males (n=8)</b>   | 179.5 (4.3)        | 77.6 (8)           | 24.3 (2.4)       | 5.2 (0.2)                           | 114 (4.6)                          | 5.9 (0.6)               | 110.5 (8.2)            | 0.83 (0.05)                      | 580.6 (57.9)            | 96 (10)                | 5.1 (6.1)                                 |
| <b>Females (n=8)</b> | 163 (9.2)          | 58.6 (6)           | 22.4 (3)         | 3.6 (0.5)                           | 108.9 (13.4)                       | 3.93 (0.5)              | 105.3 (12)             | 0.92 (0.03)                      | 439.1 (75.7)            | 102.8 (17.8)           | 3.8 (1.6)                                 |

FEV<sub>1</sub> - Forced Expiratory Volume in 1 Second; EVH - Eucapnic Voluntary Hyperpnoea; FVC – Forced Vital Capacity; PEF – Peak Expiratory Flow

ECCS – European Community for Coal and Steel Reference Values for Predicted Lung Function

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**Table 2:** FEV<sub>1</sub> (L) for trial conditions at baseline, post inhaler and post time trial in the pooled group

| <b>Time point</b>      | <b>Placebo</b>  | <b>2 mg</b>      | <b>4 mg</b>      |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Baseline</b>        | 4.81 $\pm$ 0.55 | 4.84 $\pm$ 0.54  | 4.80 $\pm$ 0.55  |
| <b>Post Inhaler</b>    | 4.83 $\pm$ 0.54 | 5.08 $\pm$ 0.55* | 5.07 $\pm$ 0.48† |
| <b>Post Time-Trial</b> | 4.87 $\pm$ 0.56 | 5.07 $\pm$ 0.55  | 5.04 $\pm$ 0.49  |

Significantly different from placebo \* P=0.01 † P=0.02

FEV<sub>1</sub> – Forced Expiratory Volume in 1 Second

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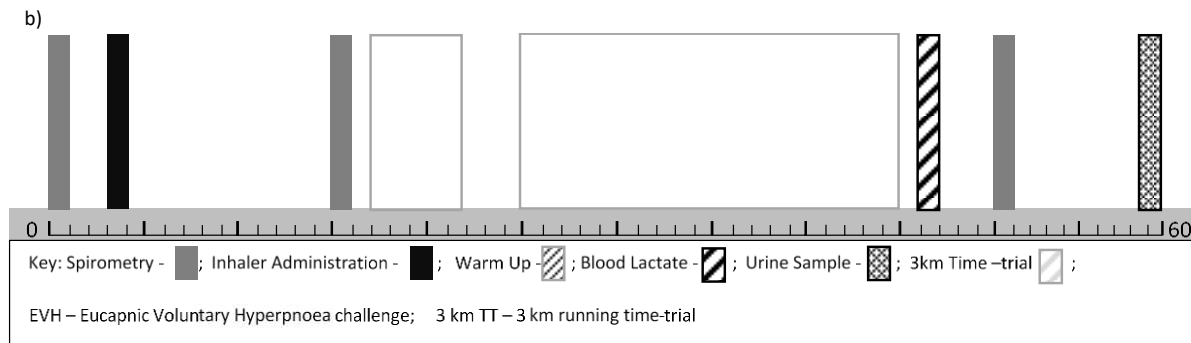
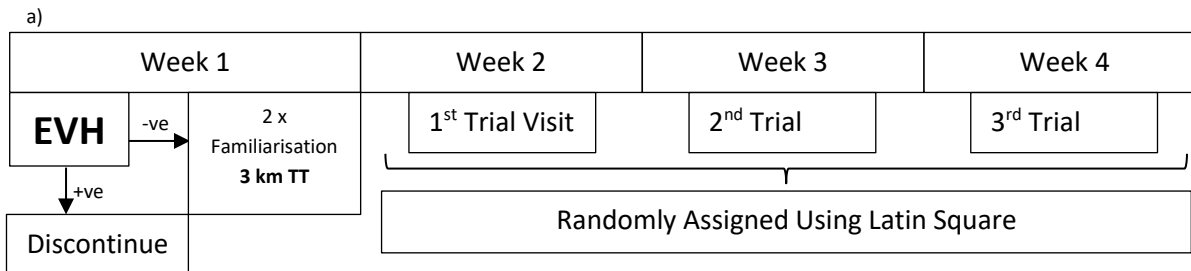
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593 **Figure 1:** a) Study duration, progression and randomisation protocol b) Schematic diagram of the test procedures during the 60-minute trial visit

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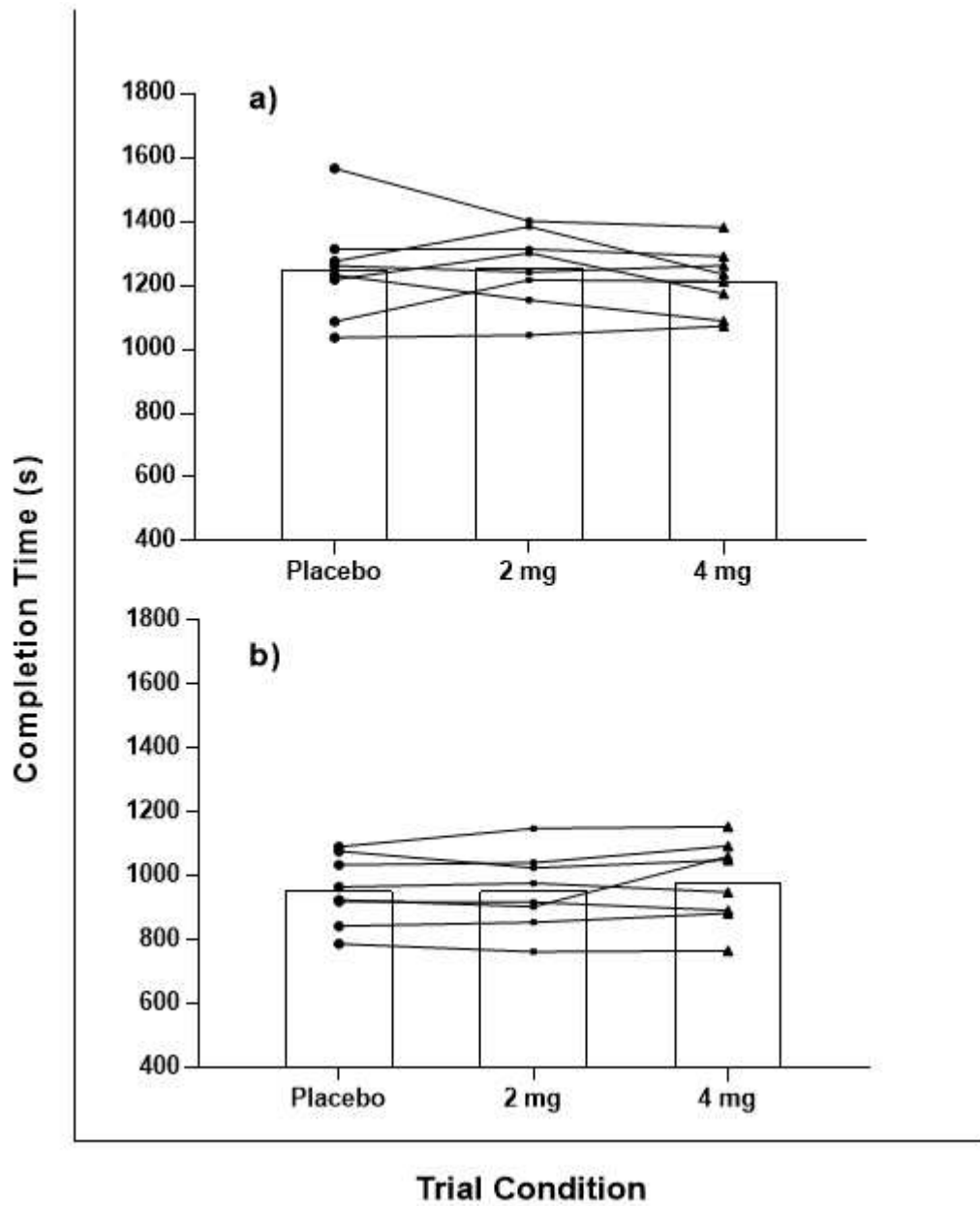
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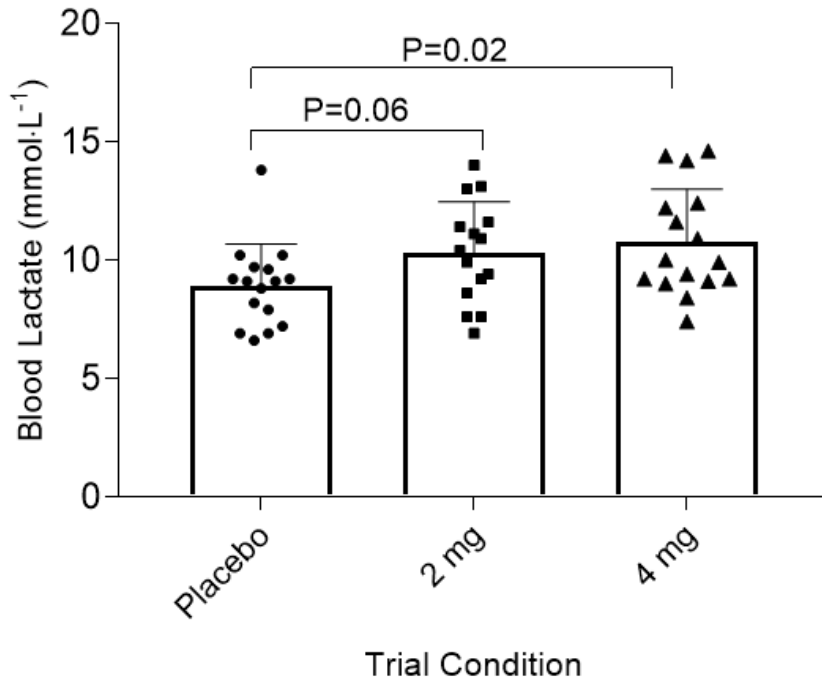
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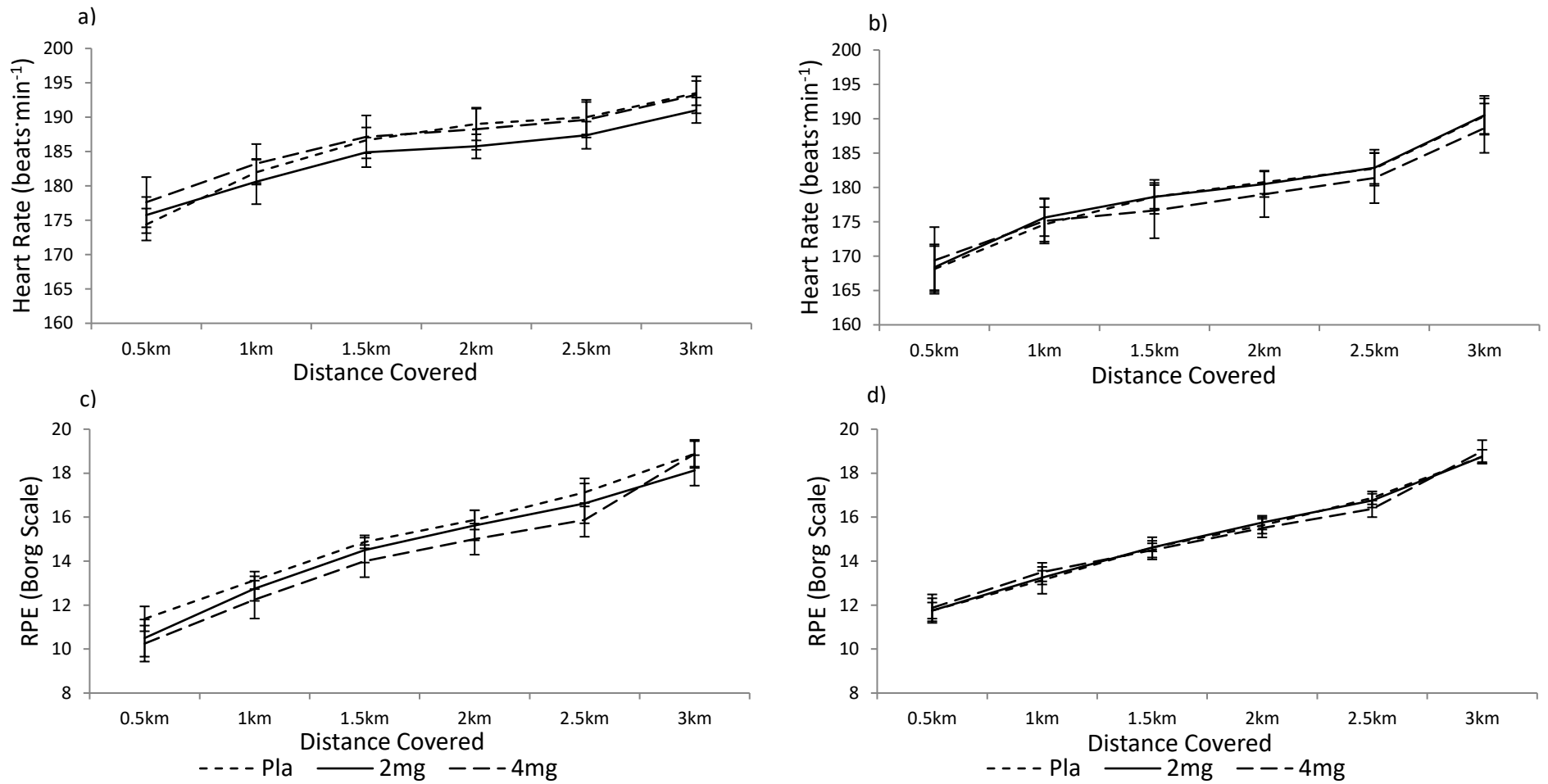




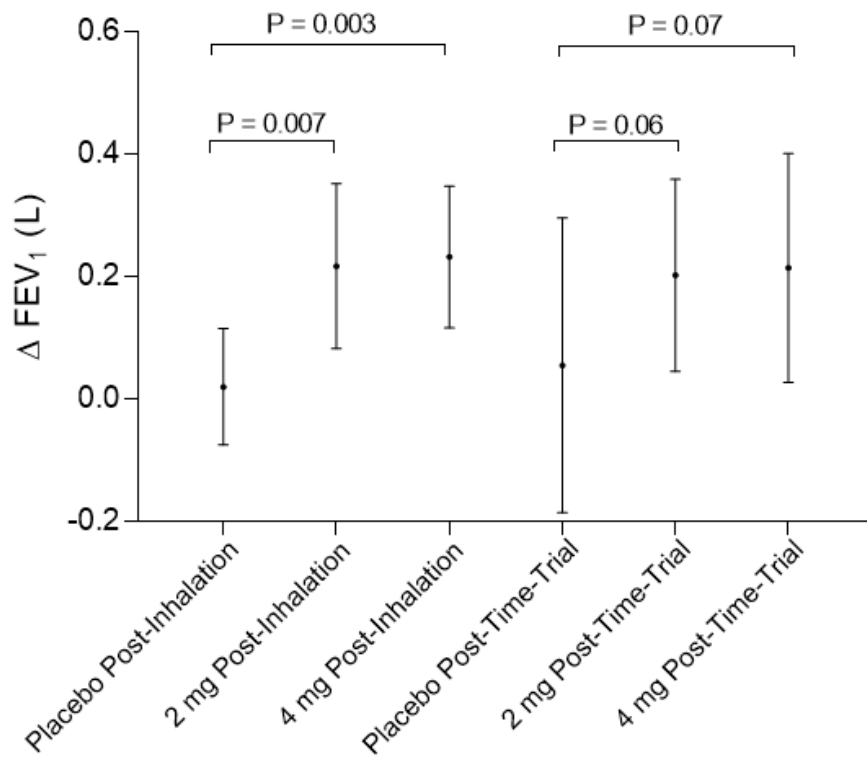
**Figure 2:** Mean and individual 3km running time-trial completion times for a) females and b) males following placebo, 2 mg inhaled terbutaline and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline trial conditions.



**Figure 3:** Mean ( $\pm$ SD) Lactate values post 3km running time-trial for placebo, 2 mg inhaled terbutaline and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline conditions.

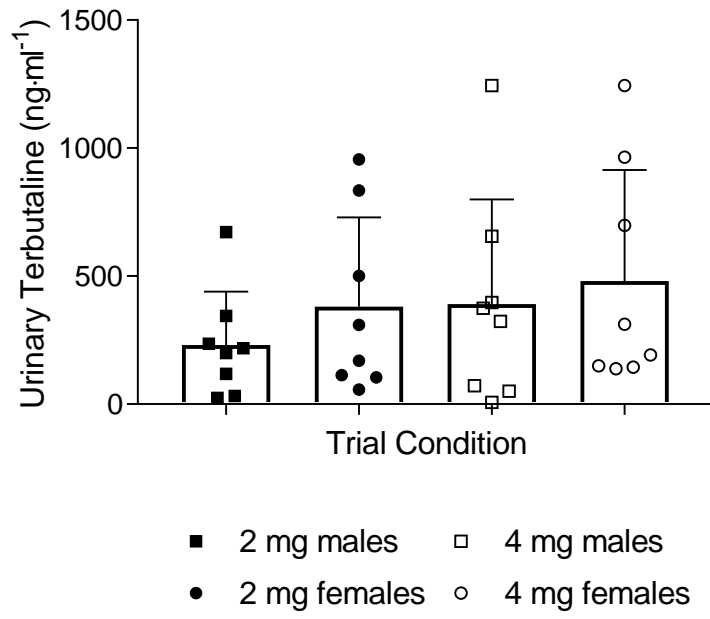


**Figure 4:** Exercising values (Mean  $\pm$  SD) for: Heart Rate (HR) in a) females b) males and rating of perceived exertion (RPE) in c) females d) males during each of the three trial conditions, placebo, 2 mg inhaled terbutaline and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline.



**Figure 5:** Mean ( $\pm$  SD) change in  $FEV_1$  from baseline post-inhalation and post-time-trial completion for placebo, 2 mg inhaled terbutaline and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline.

$\Delta FEV_1$  – Change in  $FEV_1$  compared to baseline



**Figure 6:** Individual peak and mean ( $\pm$  SD) urinary concentrations 1 hour post terbutaline inhalation in the 2 mg inhaled and 4 mg inhaled terbutaline trials in males and females.