

28th March – Reading Part C

Text 2: Heading, concussion and dementia: how medicine is changing football forever

Coroner
Consensus
Attribute

Football, particularly the act of heading, has been linked to damage to players' brains since 2014, when a coroner attributed England Striker Jeff Astle's death to 'industrial disease' (one of the standard short form conclusions used by coroners) from repeated heading. Studies found that Astle's brain showed signs of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disease commonly seen in boxers. Since then, other studies have investigated the connection with football, and 'a growing scientific consensus' exists that heading increases the risk of dementia, says Gill Livingston, a professor of psychiatry of older people.

15 What do we learn about Jeff Astle?

- (A) His brain injuries resembled those typically suffered by boxers.
- (B) His death led to more research into the link between football and dementia.
- (C) The cause of death originally given for him was changed on further investigation.
- (D) He was the first footballer to claim that his dementia was caused by heading a ball.

Football, particularly the act of heading, has been linked to damage to players' brains since 2014, when a coroner attributed England Striker Jeff Astle's death to 'industrial disease' (one of the standard short form conclusions used by coroners) from repeated heading. Studies found that Astle's brain showed signs of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disease commonly seen in boxers. Since then, other studies have investigated the connection with football, and 'a growing scientific consensus' exists that heading increases the risk of dementia, says Gill Livingston, a professor of psychiatry of older people.

16 What is suggested about the writer's attitude towards the phrase **industrial disease**?

- (A) He assumes it is a carefully considered explanation.
- (B) He believes it shows the coroner wasn't thorough enough.
- (C) He doesn't feel it is completely appropriate in this case.
- (D) He thinks it effectively highlights the seriousness of the findings.

Steered
Sparked concern
Unresolved

Risk factors for dementia include traumatic brain injury, CTE, alcohol misuse, diet, air pollution, lack of education and genetics. The decision to include CTE was steered by the FIELD study (Football's Influence on Lifelong health and Dementia risk), which compared health records for 7,676 male, ex-professional football players who mostly played between 1950 and 1980 with 23,028 people from the general population of the same age, sex, and socio-demographic profile. Unsurprisingly, it found that football was beneficial to health. The footballers lived longer and were less likely to die of heart disease or lung cancer. But they were also 3.5 times more likely to die of dementia. The finding sparked concern and the establishment of new commissions, studies, regulations, and difficult and unresolved discussions over the sport's future.

1. Why does the writer include statistics in this paragraph?
2. What were the findings of the FIELD study?
3. What were the consequences of the FIELD study?

17 According to the writer, the FIELD study

- (A) had its results challenged by later research.
- (B) didn't include data from a wide enough range of people.
- (C) didn't reveal any new findings about football and dementia.
- (D) has raised questions about the action football authorities need to take.

Answers:

15. A

16. C

17. D