



Blessed more ways than one

Daniel Hoy

NOT only are they well-paid, put on a pedestal and idolised, but now it seems elite athletes live longer than the rest of us.

A study in last month's *The Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, published by Sports Medicine Australia, examined the mortality and longevity of elite athletes in an effort to understand the association between exercise training and survival rates.

Results showed elite endurance athletes, such as distance runners and cross-country skiers — and elite mixed sports athletes who perform both endurance and power activities, such as soccer, ice hockey, basketball and short-to-moderate term events in track and field — are more likely to live longer than the general population.

Masaru Teramoto said his study highlighted how long-term vigorous exercise was

associated with an increased survival rate within a specific group of athletes.

"The study showed that endurance and mixed-sports athletes tend to survive longer than the general population," Mr Teramoto said.

Lower cardiovascular disease among these athletes seems to play a major role in their better survival rates.

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