Sport-related concussion (SRC) has received much media coverage over the past 5 years. In the face of misinformation about this injury in the minds of parents, coaches and athletes, it is critical that all involved stakeholders receive scientifically sound and up-to-date information regarding SRC and its potential consequences.

One of the most significant developments in SRC over the past two decades has been the establishment of the Concussion In Sport Group (CISG). This group has organised the key consensus meetings in this field and has published assessment tools that have become regarded as the best available information globally. The outcome documents from the meetings are first and foremost intended to guide clinical practice; however, it is hoped that they also help form the agenda for SRC research.

In November 2001, the 1st International Conference on Concussion in Sport was held in Vienna, Austria. The subsequent four conferences (Prague, Zurich (twice) and Berlin) have developed into more formal consensus meetings broadly following the organisational guidelines established by the US National Institutes of Health. The most recent meeting held in Berlin (on 27–30 October 2016) was supported by International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) in partnership with FIFA, the IOC, World Rugby, and the International Equestrian Federation (FEI). In addition to the expert panel and observers, 400 participants representing the international sporting federations, medical committees, clinicians and researchers attended. For the meeting, the CISG expert committees reviewed almost 60,000 published papers on SRC definition, assessment, biomarkers, management, treatment, pathophysiological changes, CTE and injury prevention. The systematic review papers were presented to the audience for discussion and following the open sessions, the expert panel finalised these reviews.

The resulting Consensus Statement and the Sport Concussion Assessment Tools (SCAT) presented in a pair of BJSM issues contain important advancements in the field. Among others, there is a clarification of the definition of concussion, a clear approach to initial management, and a recovery period that involves shorter initial rest and, in some cases, the need for rehabilitation. In these special issues of BJSM, the 12 review papers are published with the abstracts from the consensus meeting to provide important background information. The Consensus Statement, the Concussion Recognition Tool 5, the SCAT5 and the Child SCAT5 (the version number 5 has been utilised to be consistent with the numbering of the 5th International Conference on Concussion in Sport) are provided with the objective of offering a simple, clear message with tools that equip the practitioner to diagnose and manage concussion in various different sports.

Competing interests For full author disclosures and competing interests see the online supplementary folder ICMJE forms on the BJSM website (http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2017-097878).

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5th International Conference on Concussion in Sport (Berlin)

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