

## Editor's Farewell Remarks

Like the rest of my life, the last 6 years as Editor-in-Chief of *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly* (*APAQ*) have gone by swiftly. When I initially accepted the invitation from Kathleen Burgener at Human Kinetics (HK) to head up *APAQ*, I was a bit reticent. I had recently finished a 5-year term as the Founding Editor of *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology* (*SEPP*) and was looking forward to a break from editorial responsibilities, not continuing them!

However, a number of people critical to *APAQ*'s emergence and success dating back to the 1980s had ensured that *APAQ* was special to me. Claudine Sherrill, Carol Mushett, Greg Reid, and Dale Ulrich (and others) had all encouraged my efforts to publish my research in sport and exercise psychology with people with disabilities in *APAQ*. As a result of those early efforts (1992), I was able to bring sport and exercise psychology theory, research questions, and results to an adapted physical activity (APA) audience. In turn, I also delivered “disability” to an exercise and sport psychology audience via HK journals like *The Sport Psychologist*. Claudine Shirrell, as *APAQ* editor, guided my first few *APAQ* publications with rigor and kindness. Without digressing too much, it is gratifying to see that most sport and exercise psychology edited handbooks now contain chapters on disability sport and exercise; such content was unheard of in the '90s.

Because I had obtained my PhD in exercise and sport psychology and had attended conferences in that field, I was a newcomer and relatively unknown to most people attending conferences such as that of the North American Federation of Adapted Physical Activity. The mentoring efforts of the leaders of APA in North America, including Claudine, were vital in helping me feel welcome and accepted among a new group of professional colleagues from the APA world. Meeting enthusiastic and dedicated younger professionals like Eva Prokesova, Justin Haegele, Nancy Spencer, Tânia Bastos, and Leah Ketcheson over the last 20 years has continued to nurture my commitment to APA.

Once I committed to become the *APAQ* editor I felt honored and excited as I anticipated a number of different opportunities for growth in a host of ways. The next section is a bit self-indulgent, as I am admittedly proud of the many accomplishments and changes that have occurred over the last 6 years, as I note next. The “bit” part of self-indulgent is because many of the *APAQ*-related changes were clearly team efforts that I could not have implemented alone. My first major goal for *APAQ* was to reduce reviewing time, as I sensed this was a measurable area where *APAQ* could improve. I viewed reducing reviewing time as a clear path to enhancing *APAQ*'s reputation. No author wants to submit to a journal that makes editorial decisions 6 to 12 months out. I saw a number of ways to achieve this goal.

First, we were able to increase the size of the editorial board (EB) to provide some well-deserved recognition to accomplished scholars and reviewers.

Additionally, and intentionally, this also led to more strong reviewers who felt obligated to review given their prominent role as EB members. *APAQ* EB members have routinely provided high-quality and timely reviews during my tenure. Authors (I know first-hand how this feels) do not like getting their work rejected, but if they receive strong and fair reviews in a swift manner they are far less disappointed than when receiving insubstantial and/or rude reviews that take far too long. EB members are to be strongly commended, especially since we live in the world of the corporatized university where service is often undervalued—to the point where I have heard some folks refer to it as unpaid labor (a point I vehemently disagree with, but that is a topic for another day). We also increased our base of ad hoc reviewers by reaching into the broader parent discipline of kinesiology (e.g., sport and exercise psychology) and fields where professionals may not have even heard of *APAQ* (e.g., physical therapy, rehabilitation). I believe that effort found us more good reviewers and potential authors and helped expose *APAQ* to more of an international group of professors and their students. Making *APAQ* more international to achieve worldwide visibility was another important goal of mine.

Finally, I added more associate editors (AEs) to help reduce the burden on the initial group of AEs. The above steps all contributed to us being able to cut down reviewing time while maintaining reviewing quality. For example, the average time for authors to receive decisions for research papers in 2021 was 25 days, whereas in 2015 it was approximately 84 days.

With a stronger reputation we were able to attract more submissions in general and more higher-quality submissions, specifically. At the same time, our rejection rate increased, leading to a view of *APAQ* being rigorous and of high quality. Our Impact Factor (IF) also increased, and this continued to enhance the positive perceptions that scholars had of *APAQ* as, despite its flaws, journals IFs are viewed as important metrics. The IF is a function of increased citations, and that was another important goal of mine on assuming the *APAQ* editorship. Not only did we want to increase quality submissions and ultimately publications, but we also wanted more strong (e.g., innovative, theory driven, state-of-the-art statistic use) publications that scientists read and found interesting, shared, used, and cited. Data for citations and the IF since I assumed the Editorship indicate a positive trend over time, as indicated in Table 1.

It is important to recognize that *APAQ*'s publisher, Human Kinetics, was strongly supportive of all of our initiatives. HK was very receptive to my suggestion to fund stipends for all AEs and provide financial rewards for reviewer of the year and paper of the year awards, which we implemented during my term.

**Table 1** *APAQ*'s Citations and Impact Factors 2016–2021

	Year					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Citations	725	1,037	1,098	1,171	1,651	1,632
1-year IF	1.45	1.61	1.11	1.46	2.93	2.74
5-year IF	1.64	2.38	2.38	2.35	3.20	3.20

Julia Glahn and Christina Johnson were instrumental in making sure *APAQ* ran smoothly on a day-to-day basis, and I cannot thank them enough. I would never have known, given their responsiveness and extreme competence, that *APAQ* was just a small portion of their HK responsibilities.

I also would like to thank the AEs, who are so absolutely critical to finding strong reviewers swiftly, managing split reviews, or handling tardy reviewers who are unresponsive to our encouragement to complete their reviews. Current AEs include Stamatis Agiovlasitis, Kelly Arbour-Nicitopoulos, Janine Coates, Phil Esposito, Justin A. Haegele, and Cindy Sit. When Dr. Haegele comes on board in 2023 as *APAQ* Editor-in-Chief, he will also welcome Andy Pitchford and Seán Healy, to whom I am very thankful, also. When I first came on board, Deborah R. Shapiro, Nancy Spencer-Cavaliere, Vivienne Anne Temple, and Joonkoo Yun were in the process of rotating off being AEs but were still instrumental in helping me acclimate to my role. Nancy stayed on for quite an extended bit, and I am very grateful for that commitment. Finally, Dr. Donna Goodwin, who recently retired, has played a major role in establishing *APAQ* as a quality journal—she was a tremendous help and will be missed.

As I leave my role and near the last few miles of my career, I feel very confident that Dr. Haegele and his strong team of AEs will meet the various challenges and changes that are occurring in the world of publishing and science. Dr. Haegele and his AEs are well positioned to address concerns such as replication and sample size; plagiarism; salami-slicing publication practices; the challenge of implementing open science (e.g., transparency and openness promotion [TOP] guidelines), if *APAQ* takes that direction; and actively promoting *APAQ* (e.g., social media) in ways a technology dinosaur like myself view as daunting.

In ending, being *APAQ* editor has been rewarding and illuminating. However, I am content and proud to see my name join an illustrious list of emeritus editors on the *APAQ* masthead.

*Jeffrey J. Martin, APAQ Editor-in-Chief*