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Digest contains a listing of pertinent, recent coaching and coach education articles and updates from other sources.

How Can Coaches Build Mental Toughness? Views from Sport Psychologists

Weinberg, R. Freysinger, V., & Mellano, K. (2018). *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 9(1), 1–10.

Most of the literature exploring mental toughness has been based on interviews with coaches, athletes, and to a lesser degree, parents. The present article presents views of sport psychologists who had applied and research experience in mental toughness and thus more integrated views of how coaches should build mental toughness. The authors propose a model that states that to build mental toughness coaches need to be thoughtful and purposeful both in how they think about athletes (i.e., be instructive and encouraging, foster autonomy, see them as individuals) and their staff (i.e., be multidimensional and educate them about mental toughness), as well as what they do (i.e., create adversity and at the same time teach mental skills). This paper allows coaches to explore the concept of mental toughness from a different perspective and provides practical guidance to build it in athletes.

The Prevalence of Pseudoscientific Ideas and Neuromyths Among Sport Coaches

Bailey, R.P., Madigan D.J., Cope, E., & Nicholls, A.R. (2018). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 641. doi:[10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00641](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00641)

The aim of this study was to examine the prevalence of pseudoscientific ideas among British and Irish sports coaches. In total, 545 coaches from the United Kingdom and Ireland completed a measure that included questions about how evidence-based theories of the brain might enhance coaching and learning, how they were exposed to these different theories, and their awareness of neuromyths. Interestingly, 41.6% of the coaches agreed with statements that promoted neuromyths. The most prevalent neuromyth was “individuals learn better when they receive information in their preferred learning style (e.g., auditory, visual, or kinesthetic),” which 62% of coaches believed. This paper reveals that a relatively large percentage of coaches base aspects of their coaching practice on neuromyths and other pseudoscientific ideas. It proposes strategies for addressing this situation including changing the content of coach education programs. The paper also helps coaches identify those neuromyths by themselves and reflect in their own practice.

Compromising Talent: Issues in Identifying and Selecting Talent in Sport

Baker, J., Schorer, J., & Wattie, N. (2018). *Quest*, 70(1), 48–63. doi:[10.1080/00336297.2017.1333438](https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2017.1333438)

The past few decades have seen a significant change in the delivery of sport and in trends related to athlete development. However, the notion of talent continues to play a critical role in most athlete development models. This brief review highlights concerns with the notion of talent and how it is conceptualized in high performance sport systems. These include: the assumption that talent is a fixed capacity that can be identified early, the influence of talent beliefs on athlete development, the different levels of risk for talent selection decisions, biases evident in approaches to athlete selection, the inadequacy of current statistical approaches, the problems with using current performance to predict future outcomes, and how short-term priorities and competition between sports for talented athletes undermine the overall efficiency of athlete development systems. These concerns form the basis for more focused discussion of avenues for future work in this field. This paper supports coaches gaining a greater understanding of the key issues surrounding talent identification and how these may affect their practice.

Transfer of Life Skills in Sport-Based Youth Development Programs: A Conceptual Framework Bridging Learning to Application

Jacobs, J.M., & Wright, P.M. (2018). *Quest*, 70(1), 81–99. doi:[10.1080/00336297.2017.1348304](https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2017.1348304)

Research has demonstrated that many quality sport-based youth development programs promote life skill acquisition (e.g., leadership, self-control) with the ultimate goal of facilitating positive outcomes in youth participants' social and academic environments. Researchers call this “transfer of life skills”. Research surrounding this topic has been eclectic with mixed results. In this article, a variety of learning theories are integrated to propose a conceptual framework for the transfer of life skills in sport-based youth development. Specifically, this article focuses on how previous research has overlooked the cognitive processes that bridge student learning within a sport program to application outside of the program. A description of the cognitive components youth experience during transfer are described and represented in a

logic model. This paper allows coaches to gain a more balanced and practical view of the issue of transfer of life skills outside sport and devise more suitable strategies to foster it.

No Place to Hide: Football Players' and Coaches' Perceptions of the Psychological Factors Influencing Video Feedback

Middlemas, S., & Harwood, C. (2018). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 30(1), 23–44. doi:[10.1080/10413200.2017.1302020030](https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2017.1302020030)

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of psychological factors within the delivery of video feedback in elite youth football, incorporating both the players' and coaches' perspectives. A thematic content analysis identified three general dimensions: The first was the psychological responses to Video Feedback (VFB); whereas VFB was associated with largely positive psychological responses (e.g., development of confidence, focus, self-awareness, mental toughness, visualisation). However, athletes often perceived the process as negative and uncomfortable with particularly the emphasis on being critically assessed in front of others causing anxiety. The second theme focused on the impact of using a range of delivery strategies; with both coaches and athletes acknowledging the value of team, one-to-one and individual focused strategies. Athletes however much preferred the one-to-one and individual focused delivery. The final theme covered the impact of the delivery climate surrounding practice; highlighting particularly the need for a safe environment for peer-to-peer communication and the value of additional support staff support. The findings suggest that a greater appreciation of these factors would add significant value to the way coaches, sport scientists, and athletes currently use video technology for performance enhancement.

The Role of Implicit Beliefs and Achievement Goals as Protective Factors in Youth Sport

Gardner, L.A., Vella, S.A., & Magee, C.A. (2018). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 30(1), 83–95. doi:[10.1080/10413200.2017.1334160](https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2017.1334160)

Understanding the factors contributing to dropout has become an important research agenda. The first factor this study focused on was implicit beliefs, an individual's conceptions about the nature of their ability in a given context. These beliefs can be incremental (i.e., the belief that with training ability is malleable) or entity (i.e., ability is fixed or innate). The second factor within this study was 2×2 achievement goals (i.e., performance vs mastery and avoidance vs approach). This study aimed to explore whether implicit beliefs and 2×2 achievement goals were related to enjoyment in youth sport over one year and whether perceived changes in the coach–athlete relationship moderated these relationships. 247 sport participants (Mage = 13.03 years) completed a questionnaire assessing the key study variables twice, 12 months apart (Time 1 and Time 2). Results showed that when adjusting for enjoyment at Time 1, the belief that ability is malleable and can be improved through practice is related to greater levels of enjoyment at Time 2, in part due to a mastery–approach achievement goal focus. However, this effect was evident only when the coach–athlete relationship was perceived to have deteriorated over the course of the year. These findings indicate that adaptive implicit beliefs (i.e., incremental ones) and achievement goals (i.e., mastery–approach) may have protective value in youth sport. It is suggested that coaches promote adaptive implicit beliefs and achievement goals on a regular and ongoing basis.

A Qualitative Exploration of Thriving in Elite Sport

Brown, D.J., Arnold, R., Reid, T., & Roberts, G. (2018). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 30(2), 129–149. doi:[10.1080/10413200.2017.1354339](https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2017.1354339)

Athletes are often described as *thriving* in sport; however, so far research on this construct in sport has been divergent. This study aimed to provide the first dedicated exploration of thriving in elite sport performers by considering its characteristics, outcomes, and facilitators. Semi structured interviews ($n = 15$) were conducted with athletes, coaches, and sport psychology practitioners and were analyzed using applied thematic analysis. Thriving was perceived to comprise a sustained high-level of performance and dimensions of well-being. In particular, thriving was characterised by an optimistic outlook, a sense of being focused and in control, an active awareness of areas for improvement, possessing high quality motivation, displaying upward progressing and experiencing a sense of holistic development and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, predominantly positive outcomes of thriving were described, including personal and performance development benefits. For example, increased self-confidence and a platform for momentum. Yet the authors also identify that when athletes are no longer thriving they may experience decreased mood and motivation. Finally, participants identified a network of personal and contextual enablers that could facilitate thriving. Coaches can utilise the wide variety of enablers identified to facilitate thriving.

“There's No Place to Hide”: Exploring the Stressors Encountered by Elite Cricket Captains

Smith, M.J., Arnold, R., & Thelwell, R.C. (2018). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 30(2), 150–170. doi:[10.1080/10413200.2017.1349845](https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2017.1349845)

This study aimed to enhance the understanding of stressors that elite sporting captains face in their role. The autobiographies of 12 international cricket captains were sampled. Stressors relating to the captaincy role were identified, and following thematic analysis, seven general dimensions of stressors were recognized: multiple roles (i.e., particularly combining the role of leading the side and playing themselves), team stressors (i.e., dealing with the team's emotions on the pitch, changing relationships due to changing roles), interactions with players (i.e., dealing with player indiscipline on and off the field, providing emotional support for players particularly on tour), selection, interactions with other personnel (and the differences in approaches these may bring), the media (i.e., dealing with scrutiny and criticism), and extreme situations. It appears that stressors are heightened due to a combination of playing and leadership responsibilities that captains experience. The authors highlight that the findings may provide coaches and athletes a better understanding of what it may be like to be a captain. They also suggest coaches should provide support for captains and equip them with the skills required to cope with these stressors effectively.

Sportspersonship Coaching Behaviours, Relatedness Need Satisfaction, and Early Adolescent Athletes' Prosocial and Antisocial Behaviour

Bolter, N.D., & Kipp, L.E. (2018). *International Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 16(1), 20–35. doi:[10.1080/1612197X.2016.1142461](https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2016.1142461)

Previous research has found that high school athletes' prosocial and antisocial behaviours were predicted by coaches' behaviours