The Prez Sez

In this President’s Message, Jean Williams, President of AAASP, addresses the question, “How should we define sport psychology?” She begins by noting the progress within the organization, which is rapidly approaching its 10th year of existence. For Williams, the 10-year mark serves as impetus to reflect on the field of sport psychology, more specifically, the definition and scope of the field. One point made is the potential diversification of the field of sport psychology outside that of sport and exercise applications. These other areas of application could include schools, businesses, and medical settings. Williams notes that this diversification is present, and the membership of AAASP is obligated to address the issue in order to have a role in directing and shaping the field of sport psychology. A number of questions naturally arise when one considers this diversification, including “Would it enhance or detract marketability of graduates?” “Would it lessen ‘sport psychology’ in the process?” and “What would be the impact on research funding opportunities?” Having posed these questions, Williams requests feedback from the membership to address the issue of the boundaries of AAASP.


Questionable Ethics?

In this third, and final, installment of “Considering Ethics,” Whelan discusses both the objectives he formulated to begin the process and his perception of provocative issues he feels are begging to be addressed. His first objective was to provide updates on the actions of the AAASP Ethics Committee. The second objective was to provoke dialogue among members on the issue of ethics. Whelan identifies successful completion of the first objective but an inability to complete the second. Consequently, in this third installment he tries to foster dialogue by tweaking members sensitivities with a more confrontational approach. The issues Whelan highlights and takes a stand on include (a) the dual relationships of a practitioner as an applied sport psychologist and as a coach, friend, and so on; (b) confidentiality, which becomes dicey due to conflicts with NCAA rules, coaching responsibilities, and the like; and (c) competency of practitioners who are limited in their use of assessment and intervention techniques. To summarize the author’s stands on each of the issues proposed, they may be characterized respectively by the terms unethical, unmanageable, and unbridled. The author ends with a challenge for the membership to foster a dialogue on the issue of ethics.

CBT Versus ET: Phone Home?

This study attempted to compare cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) with a combination of aerobic and anaerobic exercise therapy (ET) for treating elevated levels of body image disturbance in college females. For the purpose of this study, the CBT was tailored for group intervention, and the ET consisted of weight lifting and aerobic dance. The selection criteria for subjects were (a) a lower quartile score on the Appearance Evaluation subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire, (b) lack of evidence of severe psychopathology, (c) self-reported weight between ±12.5% of ideal body weight, and (d) no serious medical condition. Out of 500 college females surveyed, 73 met the criteria and 54, ranging in ages from 17 to 45, were selected to participate. The treatment groups (CBT, ET) participated in two 6-week sessions with the ET subjects participating in one organized session of aerobics and weight training and two self-directed sessions per week. In comparison to a control group, both treatments produced equal reductions in trait and state body weight anxiety, cognitive-behavioral aspects of appearance, and overall body dissatisfaction. Relative to these findings, the authors discussed fitness training as an adjunct to cognitive-behavioral interventions, noting that body image dysfunction extends beyond those with eating disorders.


Psychological Benefits of Downhill Running

Seven active young men were assessed on several psychological factors, including the Profile of Mood States (POMS) and perceived exertion, while engaging in 60 min of level running, downhill running, and cycling. Results indicated that perceived exertion increased in the following order: cycling, downhill running, and level running. Vigor and fatigue on the POMS also followed this pattern. These findings were consistent with physiological responses that occurred during these forms of exercise. The results suggest that downhill running elicits physiological and psychological responses that are between those elicited by level running and cycling.


Attention and Performance in Miniature Golf

These researchers compared the attentional abilities of highly skilled adolescent (age 15–19), young (25–35), middle-aged (50–57), and older (58–73) miniature golfers in practice and competition situations using the Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS). Results indicated (a) increases in anxiety from practice to competition were similar across groups; (b) the two younger groups showed an increase in performance from practice to competition, whereas the two older groups showed a deterioration; (c) increased concentration time for the two younger groups and decreased concentration time for the two older groups; and