
INTRODUCTION

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Introduction to Special Issue: Coach Education

Wade D. Gilbert, Guest Editor
California State University, Fresno

Welcome to this special issue of *The Sport Psychologist* on coach education. At the 2003 International Council for Coach Education (ICCE), Global Coach Conference, and General Assembly, an international group of coach education designers and researchers proposed a special issue on coach education. The editorial board of *The Sport Psychologist* approved the special issue, in partnership with the ICCE, at the 2004 conference of the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP). The objective of the special issue is to publish high quality manuscripts that provide an international perspective on current research, theory, and “best practices” in coach education.

Formal coach education programs have been present for at least 50 years, and comprehensive coach education programs are now offered worldwide (Trudel & Gilbert, in press). Yet despite this proliferation of coach education, two significant issues remain. One, there is a lack of published research on the effectiveness of coach education (best practices) and two, the coaching science that can be used to inform coach education research and practice is dispersed across hundreds of publication outlets (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). It is the intent of this special issue of *The Sport Psychologist* to specifically address these two issues. It is anticipated that the special issue will serve as a contemporary resource for individuals involved in coach education research, development, and implementation. To this end, this special issue includes two brief introductions, nine articles, and two book reviews.

Along with my introduction, John Bales, president of the ICCE, shares his insights on the current state of coach education. His introduction is then followed by six original research articles. In the first article, David Conroy and J. Douglas Coatsworth present an enhanced conceptual model of coach training effects on youth development. Their comprehensive research on coach education is a direct extension of Smoll and Smith’s (2002) seminal work in this area. The next five original research papers present research on new and innovative coach education initiatives across sports, levels of competition, and countries. Tania Cassidy, Paul Potrac, and Alex McKenzie report on a theory-based coach education program designed for rugby union coaches in New Zealand, using a curriculum change framework. Guylaine Demers, Andrea Woodburn, and Claude Savard share their research on the development of a university undergraduate competency-based coach

The author is with the Department of Kinesiology at California State University, Fresno, Fresno, CA.
E-mail: wgilbert@csufresno.edu

education program in Canada, referred to as the Baccalaureate in Sport Intervention (BIS). Lee Nelson and Christopher Cushion use a case study and the conceptual framework of reflection to document the process of designing a new coach education program with a National Governing Body in the United Kingdom. In the fourth research article, Kristine Chambers and Joan Vickers highlight the efficacy of a coach education program for swimming coaches that teaches coaches how to incorporate bandwidth feedback and questioning into their coaching practice. The final original research article is written by Penny Werthner and Pierre Trudel, who use research with a Canadian Olympic coach to illustrate how coaches learn in mediated, unmediated, and internal learning situations.

These original research articles are followed by a professional practice section with three articles. In the first professional practice article, Cliff Mallett and Jean Côté introduce a three-step method of systematically and reliably evaluating high performance coaches. Katie Kilty then discusses unique challenges encountered by women coaches and suggests strategies for coach education programs based on her observations from women in elite level coaching conferences. The third and final professional practice article is written by Imornefe Bowes and Robyn Jones, who draw on relational schema and complexity theory to present a new perspective on coaching and how we train coaches. The special issue concludes with two invited book reviews. Kristen Dieffenbach provides a review of *Coaching for the Inner Edge* and Gordon Bloom reviews *You Haven't Taught Until They Have Learned: John Wooden's Teaching Principles and Practices*.

It is my hope that this collection of articles, written from a wide array of theoretical and methodological perspectives by scholars from around the world, will stimulate reflection and public discourse on coach education best practices. I am also hopeful that this special issue will nurture the ongoing development of national and global coach education collaborations that bring together researchers and practitioners. Evidence of these collaborations is seen in new initiatives such as the AAASP coaching science special interest group (http://www.aaasponline.org/asp/performance_enhancement/coach.php) and two new scholarly journals devoted exclusively to coaching research (*International Journal of Coaching Science* and *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*).

I would like to thank the editor of *The Sport Psychologist*, Ian Maynard for his constant encouragement and guidance throughout the long and challenging process of coordinating this special issue. All of us who work in areas related to coach education owe a special thanks to John Bales, president of the International Council for Coach Education, for his continued promotion of coach education research. Thank you also to the 27 guest reviewers who accepted my request to review manuscripts. I would like to thank Pierre Trudel at the University of Ottawa for his many years of support and mentoring, and for believing in my ability to make this special issue become a reality. Finally, thank you to the many individuals who responded to the call for submissions. The quantity and the quality of the work submitted illustrates to me that the future of coach education is bright. I look forward to following these new developments in the years to come.

References

- Gilbert, W. D., & Trudel, P. (2004). Analysis of coaching science research published from 1970-2001. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *75*, 388-399.