

THE MAGAZINE FOR CANADA'S COACHES

VOL 20 NO 2
JUNE 2013

COACHES

plan

DU COACH

TAP INTO
COACH FUNDING

BOUNCING BACK
FROM A LOSS

6-STEP PLAN FOR
INJURY RECOVERY

DAWN SMYTH:

Leading the next generation
of basketball coaches

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PHOTO BY ANDY ANDERSON

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Helpful advice—for on and off the field

“If you learn from defeat, you haven’t really lost.” Those words, from the American author and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar, no doubt ring true for any coach. Sometimes we learn more from our losses than from our wins.

The feature article “Bouncing back” in this issue of **Coaches plan du coach** examines how coaches can help their athletes cope with loss and put them back on the road to victory. It looks at some recent devastating losses in Canadian sport and the lessons that can be learned from these difficult experiences.

This issue also offers advice on how to bounce back from injury. Columnist and coach Jeff Krushell outlines a very specific six-step recovery approach that coaches can follow if one of their athletes has been injured, and journalist Rosalind Stefanac tackles the important issue of how concussions have been a neglected problem in the sport and medical fields and why there is an urgency to provide more information about what a concussion is and how to recognize and manage it. (The CAC has developed a broad range of concussion resources designed to help coaches gain the knowledge and skills required to ensure the safety of their athletes—you can find these resources at www.coach.ca).

We’d love to receive your feedback on these or any other articles in this issue and we’d also like to hear about any topics you’d like to see addressed in these pages. Remember, **Coaches plan du coach** is your magazine. Help us make it as relevant to you as possible by dropping us a line at coach@coach.ca.

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- Sidney Crosby

« Je me trouve très chanceux que le hockey fasse partie de ma vie depuis que je suis tout jeune et j'admire l'engagement de Hockey Canada pour éduquer les familles et les joueurs sur tous les aspects du jeu. Il est important de toujours donner le meilleur de soi tout en respectant toujours tous ceux qui sont sur la glace. Soyez intelligents, restez en sécurité et amusez-vous. »

- Sidney Crosby

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Sawicki takes the helm at 2014 Paralympic Winter Games

Ozzie Sawicki, ChPC, who has been named Team Canada’s Chef de Mission for the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games, will lead Canada towards its goal of being in the top three nations in the gold medal count at the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Games.

Sawicki has extensive experience working with both Paralympic athletes and able-bodied athletes in alpine skiing, including a role as head coach and program director of the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team from 2000 to 2004, head coach of the Para-Athletics Program with Athletics Canada from 2009 to 2011, and, most recently, performance advisor to the Canadian Para-Equestrian Team at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

“The opportunity to lead a team that is striving towards excelling at the highest performance levels on an international stage is a chance of a lifetime,” says Sawicki, who has previously been involved in four Paralympic Games.

The Sochi 2014 Paralympic Games will take place March 7-16 and will include five sports: para-alpine skiing (including para-snowboard), biathlon, para-Nordic skiing, sledge hockey and wheelchair curling.

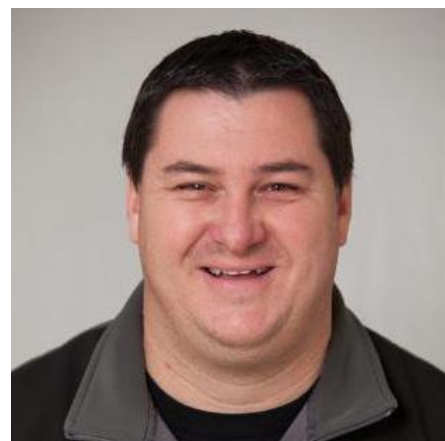


Diving coach Donald Dion honoured

The 2012 inductee into Coaches of Canada’s Lifetime Member Wall of Fame is diving coach **Donald Dion**, ChPC.

With the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles looming, Dion agreed to coach three-metre diver Sylvie Bernier, then ranked seventh in the world. Bernier was convinced that only Dion, with his immense technical knowledge, attention to detail, meticulous research, ability to dissect a dive and excellent teaching methods could help her to reach the top of the Olympic podium. She was right—she won the gold.

In 1995, Dion was named Senior Coach of the Year by Diving Plongeon Canada and won a Petro-Canada Coaching Excellence Award in 1996. In 2000, he was the inaugural inductee in the coach category into the Canadian Olympic Hall of Fame.



Connors gets top honours from CCAA

Fred Connors, a women’s basketball coach at St. Thomas University (STU) in Fredericton, New Brunswick, has received the 2013 Coaching Excellence Award Across All CCAA Sports from the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association.

Connors, a fully-certified NCCP Level 3 coach, was named ACAA Coach of the Year in four of the past five seasons and was named CCAA Coach of the Year this past season. His STU team won 77 straight games against the ACAA competition and placed in the top four at the last three CCAA National Championships.

“Fred Connors has done an excellent job with the STU team,” says Judy Smith, CCAA’s vice president of governance. “He has a good basketball mind, and the team has done really well in the ACAA conference the last five years.”



Coaches of Canada teams up with Blue Jays’ Baseball Academy

Coaches of Canada has created a partnership with the Baseball Academy Department of the Toronto Blue Jays. Instructors within the Academy conduct instructional baseball clinics for children in Ontario, and also travel across Canada with the Blue Jays’ Super Camp program. Instructors are required to be screened through Coaches of Canada’s membership application and renewal process, which includes a background check as well as a police record check with a vulnerable sector search.

“In the past we asked for a police record check from our instructors. We are raising the standard in terms of background checks for our instructors by using Coaches of Canada’s expertise in the area of screening coaches,” says Rob Jack, manager of social marketing for the Blue Jays. “We have also raised the bar with respect to baseball training. Beginning with the 2013 season, all of our instructors must also be NCCP trained.”

MUST-READS FOR COACHES

Shattered Hopes: Canada's Boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games

by Sheila Hurtig Robertson

Published by Iguana Books (sheilarobertson.iguanabooks.com/)

This book examines the impact of Canada's decision to boycott the 1980 Olympic games in Moscow. Canada pulled out of the Games after the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan late in 1979. This forced more than 200 Canadian athletes to shelve their Olympic dreams, some temporarily, many more permanently.

Shattered Hopes is an oral history of the key players involved, including national team coaches, senior administrators, Canadian team personnel and many of the athletes.

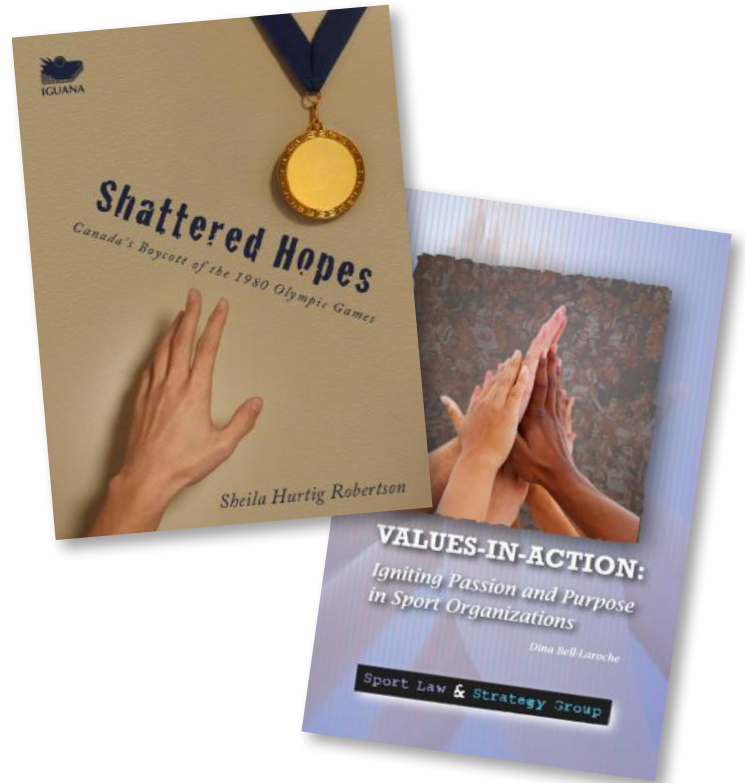
Values-in-Action:

Igniting Passion and Purpose in Sport Organizations

by Dina Bell-Laroche

Published by Sport Law & Strategy Group (www.sportlaw.ca).

This practical handbook is designed to help sport leaders manage their sport organizations more effectively by leveraging one of their greatest untapped assets—their organization's values. Sports organizations operated and guided by values will have fewer conflicts, more successes and can better manage risks.



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Athlete identity: Who are you?

COACHES NEED TO HELP ATHLETES CONSIDER WHO THEY ARE WHEN OFF THE FIELD OF PLAY

by Shaunna Taylor, PhD (c.), Certified Canadian Counsellor

WHEN I POSE THE QUESTION “WHO ARE YOU?” to athletes, it’s insightful to hear how they define their different roles. Their answers will vary widely, depending on the athlete’s life experience: some will name roles defined by interpersonal relationships, such as mother/father, daughter/son or boyfriend/girlfriend. Others will refer to a job title (web designer, ski instructor or part-time student) or favourite hobbies or leisure activities (sailor, gamer, artist). Not surprisingly, many will first name their sport involvement and define themselves as a cyclist, soccer player, diver, etc. How a person answers this question of “Who are you?” says a lot about their sense of identity.

Private vs. public identity

In psychology, there are two dimensions to identity: public and private. Public identity refers to how we think others perceive us and private identity refers to how we actually see ourselves. These two dimensions are closely related and have an effect on our behavior, since we tend to act according to how we would most like to see ourselves and how we’d like to be seen by others. These identities have an internal ranking, and the identity that is the most prominent is the one that is most likely to play out in our behaviour.

Most competitive athletes give a high ranking to their athletic identity, which is the degree to which they identify with their personal role as an athlete. Their private athletic identity concerns how they think and feel as an athlete, and their public athlete identity is the one most recognized by others. As coaches and support staff, we often don’t know what an athlete’s private athletic identity truly is, since the athlete is in control of their internal thoughts and feelings. In fact, they often aren’t very aware of it themselves.



Shaunna Taylor is a coaching consultant at the Coaching Association of Canada and a professional member of the Canadian Sport Psychology Association. She has been consulting with coaches and athletes from the grassroots level to the Olympic/Paralympic level for 15 years.

Athletic identity and dysfunctional behaviors

Coaches and support staff usually agree that a strong athletic identity is a must for high-performance athletes. Research shows there are significant advantages—such as increased motivation, commitment and ability to focus on performance—

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Thinking, living and breathing sport 24/7 is not only counter-productive for sustainable high performance over the long term, it simply isn't healthy.

related goals—among these types of athletes. However, when the athletic identity becomes too strong, it can result in harmful and dysfunctional behaviors that lead to negative outcomes such as over-training. (Coen & Ogles, 1993; Brewer et al, 1993 Horton & Mack, 2000.) Overtraining is both an emotional and behavioral condition and can have a link to high anxiety when the athlete is not training or it can lead to sport burnout. Athletes experiencing too high a level of athletic identity are more likely to take performance-enhancing drugs or engage in other negative risk-taking behavior (Miller, 2009). These are the athletes who also have the most difficulty making a transition in retirement and taking steps towards a sustainable career. (Albion & Fogarty, 2005; Murphy et al., 1996; Shachar et al., 2004.)

At all points along the athlete pathway—from the playground to the podium—individuals experience different attitudes, emotions and behaviors that resonate with what it means to be an athlete. Sometimes an athletic identity can form too soon or be too powerful, and leave no room for other significant activities or personal development. For example, early intense specialization in one sport could contribute to this phenomenon. Similarly, there are high-performance athletes who have become so consumed by their sport that they are no longer able to function outside it.

Research supports the idea that athletes who are able to develop other parts of their identity beyond sport are ultimately more successful in and beyond sport.

This is called “identity foreclosure,” a narrow labelling and self-definition that can lead to depression, isolation and distress over a lack of career options later in life. An “identity crisis” might occur with a career-ending injury or de-selection from a team, since being an athlete was the paramount identity that has now been stripped away. If they are no longer considered an athlete, they feel lost.

What coaches can do

Great coaches spend time helping athletes determine their athlete identity. They can do this by helping athletes define their role on a team, identifying the beliefs and emotions that help or hinder their performance and encouraging them to cultivate commitment to their athletic achievements. But great coaches and support staff must also help athletes consider who they are as people off the field of play. Many coaches fear that athletes may dilute their performance if they spend time and effort on other non-sport activities. But research supports the idea that athletes who are able to develop other parts of their identity beyond sport are ultimately more successful in and beyond sport. Thinking, living and breathing sport 24/7 is not only counter-productive for sustainable high performance over the long term, it simply isn't healthy. By developing a broader sense of self and other roles and identity dimensions, the athlete is better protected when poor performance, injury or de-selection occurs. This helps athletes regulate their motivation and gets them through to the off-season, which protects them from burnout. (Albion & Fogarty, 2005; Murphy et al., 1996; Shachar et al., 2004.)

Coaches and staff can encourage developing athletes to talk about other interests beyond their sport that are important to them. They can support them in learning how to engage totally on the basketball court, but also by wishing them luck at the piano recital.

For high-performance athletes, the development of a transition plan in their periodized seasonal plan, for example, giving allowances for academic or vocational training, and time for family/recovery activities, shows that their entire self is acknowledged and validated.

In situations where an athlete may be suffering from identity foreclosure or an identity crisis, coaches can refer them to counselling that can be sourced out through a Canadian Sport Centre for individual support on how to make healthy mental transitions. This can help the athlete develop both the mental toughness and healthy psychological skills that are needed to kick into full training mode: thus their performance is optimized and their focus is sharpened, knowing that there are other important dimensions in their lives that can provide them with added resilience. In this way, these healthy and balanced athletes can become more healthy and balanced people.

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DAWN SMYTH

HOOP DREAMS

She travelled the world and learned from the best. Now, Dawn Smyth is leading Canada's next generation of basketball coaches

By Stephanie Wereley

AS MANAGER OF COACH EDUCATION and development at Canada Basketball, **Dawn Smyth** just might have your dream job. She works alongside the organization's coaching staff, oversees national team programs and administers Canada Basketball's National Coaching Certification Program. "It's a position I'm really passionate about because I'm a product of the Canada Basketball coaching system," says Smyth. "And I want to create an educational structure where all coaches can benefit."

Her position at the national sport organization is just the most recent milestone in an already impressive career. From collegiate national championships to international competition, Smyth has continued to prove just how far coaching can take you.

An invitation that changed her life

A native of Ottawa, Ontario, Smyth's passion for basketball emerged at an early age. "I absolutely loved it. I played in club leagues throughout high school." When a reoccurring ACL injury resigned her to the bench, her coach extended an invitation that would change her life. "I was asked to assist one of the teams, and it's the perfect example of having one door close and another opened. I became almost addicted to watching players and helping them get better."

Smyth stayed in Ottawa after high school and continued developing her skills; she served as head coach of two bantam clubs, founded a junior girls' house league, officiated local games and served as convenor for the Eastern Ontario Girl's Basketball Association—all before

completing a degree in human kinetics from the University of Ottawa.

After assisting with the Ottawa Gee-Gees women's program, she went on to pursue a Masters of Education and attend the National Coaching Institute (NCI) at the University of Victoria. A scholarship from the Coaching Association of Canada paired her with former Canadian national men's basketball coach **Ken Shields**, who would become her mentor. "He was my turning point in terms of understanding basketball," says Smyth. "He really opened my eyes. He stressed the importance of preparation and always going in with a game plan. It's a valuable piece of advice I've tried to integrate into my life, not just basketball."

The move to Victoria was also the beginning of her coaching career in the



JUNE
2013

DAWN SMYTH :: BASKETBALL

MANAGER OF COACH EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT, CANADA BASKETBALL

COACH PROFILE

PHOTO: JUSIM



PHOTO: DOUG SMYTH

"Dawn focused on improving players and helped them develop into strong student-athletes."

Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA). She served as assistant coach for the Camosun College Chargers men's basketball team, finishing second in the B.C. conference and qualifying for the 2006 CCAA Men's Basketball National Championship. She then became head coach of the women's team; an experience that remains one of her favourites in sport. "My time at Camosun has stuck with me. We were turning the program around, and were not expected to qualify for provincials, but we did and finished with bronze. It's an example of what you can do with determination, and how important the mental side of the game is."

Smyth continued her CCAA career in Alberta with a move to the Red Deer Queens' basketball team, serving as their head coach for five seasons. She would immediately go on to her position at Canada Basketball.

"Dawn focused on improving players and helped them develop into strong student-athletes," says Keith Hansen, Red Deer College athletic director and

2012 CCAA Athletic Director of the Year. "Her team performed well academically and competed hard."

How collegiate coaching prepared her

Smyth is quick to acknowledge how collegiate coaching prepared her for her current role.

"I gained experience in Ontario, B.C. and Alberta on both the men and women's side. I got to know coaches in different provinces and saw that each province has different needs. It helped me understand how basketball works across the country."

Her time spent in the CCAA also provided professional development opportunities. "Red Deer College really encourages coach development. I served as a mentor in the CCAA Female Apprentice Coach Program because it's important to have female role models in coaching, and we have to keep pushing for it. I also received financial support from the CCAA Coach Professional Development Program; I attended a week-long coaching clinic with the Euroleague in Spain, and, in turn,

completed a Euroleague masters program in Venice, Italy." Basketball has also taken her to Germany, Bermuda, Holland and Japan, and allowed her "to have friends all over the world," she says. "Basketball culture is everywhere."

When asked what advice she has for coaches, Smyth remembers the words of athletic director Hansen at Red Deer College. "Keith won seven CCAA men's volleyball titles, and he would say finding balance is one of the most important things. Coaching is addictive; you can always learn more, always do more. But don't burn yourself out."

It's advice that Smyth herself has continued to follow. "I have lots left to accomplish," she says. "Sometimes when you work hard, the path finds you. I'm excited for my future path and seeing where it might lead."

Stephanie Wereley writes for the CCAA, a national sport organization enriching the lives of student-athletes through intercollegiate competition.

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What coaches can do to prevent this potentially devastating injury

by Rosalind Stefanac

ANDREW LAHEY, A TWO-TIME GOLD MEDAL WINNER in short track speed skating, has represented Canada at four world junior championships. But today, at the age of 31, he can barely take a light jog around the block let alone a race on the ice.

Despite a promising future with Speed Skating Canada's national short track team, Lahey was forced to retire at the age 21 because of symptoms related to repeated concussions. In fact, he estimates he had 10 concussions caused by skating falls over the course of his short career. "I probably had my first one at 14," he recalls. "With the last concussion, my symptoms got so severe I lost all form of short-term memory and my vision was badly affected." The symptoms lasted two years, and while Lahey has regained all his mental functioning, he hasn't been able to maintain any consistent form of physical activity since. "Even now, when I go for a run my vision is scattered and my balance is off."

According to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, up to 3.8 million concussions happen in the U.S. each year, based on emergency room visits (there are no definitive stats for Canada). Experts say this number is conservative given that some people go to their family physician or don't see a doctor at all for a diagnosis.

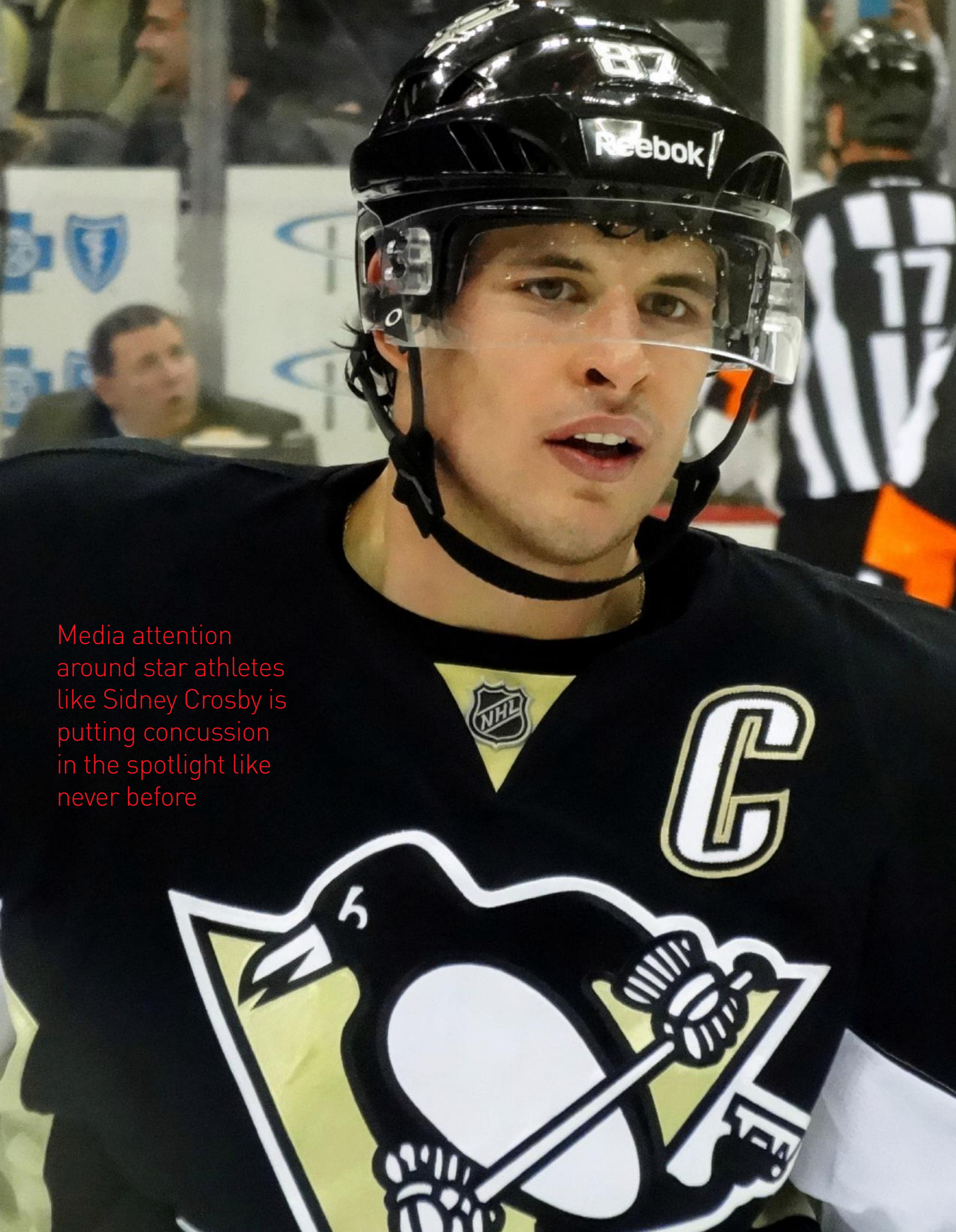
Tackling Concussion HEAD ON

Concussion in the spotlight

Media attention around star athletes like Sidney Crosby is putting concussion in the spotlight like never before, but the awareness is still nowhere near where it should be, says Dr. Charles Tator, professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Toronto and founder of ThinkFirst Canada, an organization dedicated to preventing brain and spinal cord injuries. "Concussions have been a neglected problem in the medical field and we haven't gone far enough in terms of education in the sports world around what a concussion is and how to recognize and manage it," he says, adding that there are plenty of people who still refer to concussions as a "ding" or "getting your bell rung," and who believe a person needs to lose consciousness to have had one.

He says another major misconception is that helmets will protect against concussion. "Every hockey player I see in my office who has been concussed has been wearing a helmet," he says. "These helmets may prevent more catastrophic brain injuries and save lives, but they have little or nothing to do with preventing concussion." Helmets protect the head, but can't fully protect the brain. >>

MICHAEL MILLER/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Media attention
around star athletes
like Sidney Crosby is
putting concussion
in the spotlight like
never before



Managing Children with Concussion

Concussions can affect people all ages, but when it comes to children, coaches should be particularly vigilant in taking immediate action if a concussion is suspected.

Gad Espinosa, technical director of Toronto High Park FC soccer club and a former professional athlete, says concussions are typically harder to detect with children because they may not be as vocal about symptoms. “With adults, we complain much more about the aches and pains so feedback is much more prevalent,” he says, adding that it’s important for coaches who see a rough fall among children to be extra cautious. Espinosa says coaches suspecting a possible concussion should bring the player out and ask a series of questions to determine their cognitive state.

Dr. Jamie Kissick, who specializes in sports medicine, agrees that extra caution is essential when dealing with young athletes. “Children are unique and not just small adults,” he says. “Because their brains are still developing, we’re always concerned about the impact a concussion could have.” His advice to coaches is to keep a close eye on young players who have experienced a hit or fall even if they are seemingly okay. “If you think you’ve seen a hit, your radar should be on about any further signs of symptoms,” says Kissick. “What we want to emphasize with coaches working with kids is not that they have to diagnose the concussion but recognize when it might have occurred and take the appropriate action.”

And for parents who may be reluctant to put their children in sports for fear of concussions, Dr. Kissick says it’s important to stress that the benefits still far outweigh the risks. “At the end of the day, with awareness and proper training, the benefits of sports are massive and risk of concussion relatively small.”

Dr. Tator says what he’s learned over the course of 50 years of dealing with concussed patients, is that everyone involved in the sport needs to be informed about the condition—players, parents, coaches, trainers, teachers, physicians and other healthcare personnel. “It takes a whole team of properly trained, informed and interested people to both diagnose and manage concussions.”

He says coaches play a particularly significant role on the team because they are ultimately in charge of the safety of their players. “The coach has the power to prevent injury or to cause injuries, and the way he or she coaches the game will determine what happens.”

Jonathon Caver, national team coach for Short Track Speed Skating Canada in Calgary, has worked with a variety of athletes, including Lahey, and says with increased awareness around concussions, he and his staff are taking every precaution to keep players safer. When a concussion is suspected, Caver says having the initial assessment done by a qualified person other than the coach can make it easier to

negotiate with athletes around decisions to take them out of play. “Playing the ‘heavy’ role is our responsibility,” he says. “For selfish reasons we want to see them perform, but I know I can sleep better at night if I’ve ensured their health and safety is my number one concern.”

Caver says it’s also essential for coaches to be the ones athletes ultimately trust, sometimes even over family and other supporters. “Because a concussion isn’t as tangible as a visible wound, it’s easier for an athlete’s entourage to push—they want their child to be safe but they also want them to succeed,” he says. “You have to cut through the forest at times and deal directly with the athlete and ensure they are hearing your voice clearly.”

While safety awareness may be heightened in professional sport circles, there is still a lack of knowledge about the severity of concussion at the community level, says Jesse Smith, a pseudonym for a rep soccer coach in Toronto who asked that we not use her real name. “I know a little more because I did some first aid training, but I think that many coaches don’t understand the difference between somebody tripping and falling and somebody who might have a brain injury,” she says. “It’s also tricky to make an assessment of an injury on-site because it may take a few days for the brain to swell and the symptoms to show.”

Need for return-to-play protocol

In addition to more training around concussion symptoms for coaches, Smith advocates for a more formalized return-to-play protocol for players who have been diagnosed. “We had one player who came back after a couple of weeks without a doctor’s note and her symptoms were triggered just by running some laps around the field,” she says. “We suggested she go back to her doctor and helped her parents see that things were off—she ended up missing the whole summer of soccer.”

Ottawa-based sports medicine physician Jamie Kissick says coaches are in the best position to note



IS IT A CONCUSSION?

Keep an eye on the three possible aspects of concussion symptoms: physical, cognitive and emotional, says Dr. Jamie Kissick. Determine if the player is showing signs of imbalance, disorientation or drowsiness. Check his or her concentration and memory by asking questions around the game score, or place of play. Note if a spirited child is suddenly withdrawn or if a normally quiet one is overly talkative or irritable. For a full list of possible symptoms go to www.thinkfirst.ca

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symptoms pre- and post-concussion because they get to know their athletes and can quickly see when behaviour is off-kilter. “Coaches have a significant amount of influence and if they don’t buy into the [severity] of concussion, the athletes are going to be reluctant to say they don’t feel right.”

When it comes determining when players can get back to play, Dr. Kissick says a step-wise approach monitored by a qualified physician is key. “Think of a dimmer where you can adjust the light as needed rather than simply turning it off and on,” he says, noting that 85 per cent of concussions require at least seven to 10 days of rest—and more severe ones require even more. “I’ve seen people get worse because they push through it. They should be at a level of rest where they’re not provoking symptoms.”

Statistics also point to the fact that people who have had a concussion are likely to have a second and third so they need to be cautious when returning to play, says Dr. Kissick, adding that the coach can play a part in making sure the athlete takes things slow.

With all the emerging research around the detrimental effects of concussion it’s time to start making things better for athletes, says Cyndie Flett, ChPC, vice-president of research and development at the Coaching Association of Canada. “There have been deaths and serious long-term brain injuries that have led to debilitating life issues for young athletes,” she says. “The coach is the first front-line contact with the players and while we have no intention of training coaches to take the place of doctors in diagnosing concussions, they can play a significant role in identifying signs and seeking follow up where necessary.”

The federal government contributed to the cause by providing \$1.5 million towards the development of resources to promote concussion awareness and management through a new charitable organization called Parachute. Part of the project entailed a series of six eLearning modules—developed in part by the Coaching Association of Canada—that provide training around concussion prevention, detection, and the proper return-to-play protocols for coaches dealing with young athletes ages five to 19. The first module is a multi-sport version and was launched on www.coach.ca in April 2013. Modules targeting soccer, football, snowboarding, freestyle skiing, and speed skating will be available in June 2013.

“We don’t want to see a decline in the number of parents signing up for mass participation sports for their children,” says Flett. “We want to be diligent about preventing concussions, and when they do happen, diligent about managing them in the best way.”

CONCUSSION RESOURCES:

The Coaching Association of Canada has a variety of concussion resources designed to help coaches gain the knowledge and skills required to ensure the safety of their athletes. Coaches can test their concussion IQ, find out what happens during a concussion, get concussion smart via the “Making Head Way” eLearning modules, or simply browse through real concussion stories. www.coach.ca

Parachute is a new, national non-profit organization culminating from the amalgamation of four leading injury prevention groups: ThinkFirst, Safe Kids Canada, Safe Communities Canada and SMARTRISK. It provides the latest news on safety initiatives and programs and houses a multitude of free resources on concussion for coaches, parents and athletes. www.parachutecanada.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a Heads Up Tool Kit for Youth Sports, which provides information on preventing, recognizing and responding to a concussion for coaches, parents and athletes. For coaches there are downloadable fact sheets, clipboard information, posters and quizzes. www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/youth.html



BOB THOMAS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Rosalind Stefanac is a freelance writer in Toronto who specializes in health issues.

I think I'm
pretty tough but

I'm not
invincible.

I love sports!



Last year during a game, I fell and hit the ground head first.
I was dizzy and confused
but I went right back into the game.

After the game I was crying and shaking and unable to speak.
My mom took me to the doctor who told me
it was a concussion.

The next six months were hard. I pretended I was ok, but
I wasn't. I couldn't focus and sound & light really bothered me.

It took time, but

I'm finally playing sports again!

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the hard way.

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and keep your
head in the game.

For Info Visit coach.ca/concussion

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THE VALUE WOMEN BRING TO THE BOARDROOM

Women's leadership is making headlines. Witness the furor aroused recently by *Lean In*, Facebook CEO Sheryl Sandberg's provocative book examining the "systemic and cultural inequality" of women. Rose Mercier's compelling article in the *Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching* makes an important contribution to the discussion. Matching careful analysis with stark statistics, she presents irrefutable evidence of the value women bring to the boardroom, if allowed in. And, importantly, she tells coaches and organizations how to "create a new normal", one that "reflects different experiences that should be consistently factored into our decision-making." May the discussion lead to change, and soon.

— Sheila Robertson, *Journal* Editor



The case for more women on boards

By Rose Mercier

THE PERSISTENTLY LOW PERCENTAGE of women on corporate, public, and non-profit boards continues to confound regulators, governments, advocates, educators, researchers, think tanks and the public. Is it surprising then, that women are also hard to find on sport organization boards? Of course, this is a generalization. Certain sport organizations actively pursue gender balance and others entrench gender diversity in their bylaws (the Canadian Curling Association and Ringette Canada are two examples). But, in general, these are exceptions.

Why does it matter?

Boards (or whatever the name used to describe the small group that is chosen or volunteers to act on behalf of others) make decisions:

- What values do we want our organization to operate by?
- What is our strategy for the future?
- Which goals should our club or association pursue?
- Which goals are most important?
- How should our money be spent?
- What programs or services should we offer?
- Who should we select to lead, coach, officiate or organize?
- What do we consider to be unacceptable behaviour?

These decisions, at every level they are made, have an impact on women and girls in sport. They ultimately determine how easy—or hard—it is to participate, or get involved as a coach, official, or leader, and how supportive the environment is when you get engaged.

In a January 29th article in *The Globe and Mail*, Kim Campbell (Canada's first and, regrettably in her opinion, only female prime minister) spoke about having six of 13 provincial premiers who are women: "Their visibility will change the landscape of Canadian politics and our sense of what is 'normal' in public life." Campbell says we need to care about gender parity in decision-making because "women's lives reflect a different set of experiences that need to be represented deliberately in our democratic deliberations."

Coaches, and everyone who is part of a sport organization, should care about who makes decisions in their clubs—provincial, regional, national, and international federations—for the same reason: Girls' and women's lives do reflect different experiences and they should be consistently factored into our decision-making. Decisions made year over year create 'normal' in sport.

Creating a new normal

What is seen as "normal" in a sport association is defined by its organizational culture. Decision-making helps shape that culture. As Clayton M. Christensen notes in a Harvard Business Review article: "In other words, culture is comprised of processes, or ways of working together, and of shared criteria for decision-making, which at one point in the organization's history were explicitly debated, but which have been employed so successfully so often, that they come to be adopted by assumption."

Lessons from elsewhere

A growing body of research reveals the importance of diversity in decision-making. In 2007, Lois Joy and Nancy M. Carter reported that Fortune 500 corporations with more women on their boards substantially outperformed those who had the fewest on three bottom-line measures: return on equity, return on sales, and return on invested capital. The April 2012 Catalyst report, "Increasing Gender Diversity on Boards," reported that "A growing number of governments and businesses across the globe are recognizing the importance of gender diversity on boards...the general consensus is that including more women on boards is good for business."

Since 2008, at least nine countries, among them Norway, Spain, France, and Italy, have legislated some form of quota (33-50%) for diversity on corporate boards.

A further 20+ countries—the United States, Britain, Australia, and Germany among them—have adopted some form of regulation. Australia and Britain have corporate governance codes that require boards to disclose their policy, targets and progress toward diversity. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission requires corporations to disclose whether diversity is a consideration when directors are named and how their diversity policy is evaluated for effectiveness.

And there are other countries where voluntary efforts are the norm, like Canada, where the proportion of women directors on Financial Post 500 boards has stayed at 10% since 2009. (In contrast, the proportion of women directors in France has grown to 16.6% in 2011 from 9.1% in 2009.)

What's happening in sport?

Internationally, SportAccord, the organization of International Sport Federations, reported in February 2013 on the current status of women in leadership positions. Highlights (or lowlights) include:

- The overall percentage of women on decision-making bodies of SportAccord members is 13%.
- 25% of SportAccord members have no women on decision-making bodies. A further 45% have less than the target of 20%.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) set an objective that National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and National Sport Organizations (NSOs) reserve at least 20% of their decision-making positions for women. At present, 31% of the sports on the winter and summer Olympic program meet this target.

One wonders why the IOC chose 20% as a target. Why do countries legislate quotas of 33% or 40% for corporate boards? What lies behind the percentages? In 1992, the Swedish government commissioned Gerd Engman to study women's representation in government. She cited research on decision-making, which she interpreted this way: When a group has 10% women, they remain tokens; at 20%, women become visible in the group. At 30%, women's voices are heard and at 40%, women's perspectives impact and shape decisions.

While most initiatives in sport are voluntary, Australia may be setting a new trend. Sports Minister Kate Lundy has stated that "Good governance, increasing participation and strong sporting performance go hand-in-hand, and, as the corporate world has long understood, good governance requires substantial presence of women on boards." The Australian Sport Commission is requiring boards of all funded sports to comply with its Mandatory Sports Governance Principles, one of which requires that 40% of board positions be occupied by women.

At present, six of 58 funded Australian sports have no women directors and 26 have just one. Only one of the seven top funded sports meets the 40% voluntary target.

What is happening in Canada?

The approach in sport mirrors the emphasis on voluntary efforts in other sectors of Canadian society. Sport Canada has used the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework Accountability Standards to motivate positive change in various areas, including gender equity. In the past quadrennial, sports were assessed as having "Partially Met" if boards included women directors, but only by circumstance, or "Fully Met" if an NSO had policies and procedures to ensure there were women directors. "Best Practice" was a board that annually includes 30% women directors. As of 2011, 55 NSOs (compared with six in 2006) had "Fully Met" and another seven were in the "Best Practice" category. For this past quadrennial, Sport Canada measured some of the gender demographics and those with stronger data scored higher; in effect the result of not meeting some of the accountability standards is a lower score.

What can you do?

As a coach

- Recognize how decision-makers influence your coaching environment and opportunities.
- Look for problem-solving habits that omit consideration of women's life experiences.
- Become knowledgeable about the approaches to gender representation.
- Develop an analysis of how problem-solving changes as the percentage of women participating changes.
- Support women who accept roles on boards, particularly those who are the only female director.

As an organization

- Adopt a bylaw that mandates a specific percentage for gender representation.
- Adopt a board profile that requires diversity inclusive of sport experience, functional area of expertise, geography, age, gender, ethnicity and Aboriginal status.
- Use gender inclusive language in material that describes board opportunities.
- Write terms of reference for the nominations committee that require finding male and female candidates for each vacancy.
- Appoint independent directors to address gender imbalances on the board.
- Develop a pipeline of future directors that has equal numbers of women and men.
- Adopt term limits or maximum number of terms to encourage new leadership.
- Develop a diversity policy with goals and targets; report regularly on progress.

References available upon request

For a more detailed version of this article, contact Rose Mercier at rmercier@cogeco.ca or Sheila Robertson at sheila.robcom@gmail.com



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

During her early career, Rose Mercier was director of education with Swimming Canada, director general of the Canadian Cycling Association, a policy analyst with the International Relations and Major Games Directorate within the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch and director of the Tait McKenzie Institute for the Canadian Sport and Fitness Administration Centre. A founding mother of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport, Rose was awarded its National Historical Award in 1998. She continues her commitment to women in sport through the CAC Women in Coaching programs, in particular in authoring *Journal* articles. Through Maverick Consulting, her Kingston, Ontario-based consulting firm, Rose's work focuses on facilitating organizational transition through leadership, effective governance, strategic and business planning, and innovative problem-solving.

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TAP INTO FUNDING

IT MAY BE TEMPTING FOR Canadian coaches—especially the 1.8 million who are volunteers—to see coach education as an unaffordable frill, particularly when a course or workshop requires an investment of money as well as time. Luckily, there are a number of funding sources that make some remarkable professional development opportunities more accessible to all coaches, from the community to national level.

It would be impossible to try to list them all. Instead, we've highlighted five categories to give you a sense of what's out there and provided tips for doing your own research and writing a winning application. (You won't find specific dollar figures here simply because programs vary by province and are reviewed each year.)

Even with the financial barrier removed, coaches may feel they don't have time for professional development. "I hear it a lot, especially from community-level coaches," says **Wayne Parro, ChPC**, a chartered professional coach and executive director of Coaches of Canada. "People feel that they only have so much time and money to invest. But coaches should be life-long learners."

"You shouldn't ask less of yourself than you do of your athletes," says **David Hill, ChPC**, director of the National Coaching Institute (NCI) in B.C. "You've asked your athletes to grow and change, reach higher levels, push the envelope. What are you doing to push your own envelope?"

Coach education is a differentiator, says **Susan Kitchen**, executive director of the Coaches Association of Ontario. "Education prepares you for coaching well beyond the technical aspects. It builds confidence and competence in coaches and trust with athletes." **André Fournier**, director of education services at the Institut

Coach education could be more affordable than you think!

By Jennifer Dawson

National du Sport du Québec, agrees. "Coaches must be in a constant mode of gaining new knowledge and exploring new technology. If you stand still you'll lose ground."

5 programs to look for

1. Aboriginal coach funding. If you're an aboriginal coach, the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan offers financial support to attend training and opportunities to apprentice at the Saskatchewan Summer and Winter Games. Aboriginal coaches from every province and territory should check out the national Canada Games Aboriginal Apprentice Coach programs.

2. Advanced coaching diploma funding. Grants and bursaries are available for the Advanced Coaching Diploma program, the highest level of national coach certification. Contact the National Coaching Institute in your province or region for more information.

3. Coach-initiated funding. Coaches can apply directly to provincial organizations or offices for dollars to support their professional development. In Ontario, bursaries and apprenticeships are available through the Quest for Gold program (see coachesontario.ca and csiontario.ca). >>



Alberta coaches can apply for an Above & Beyond Grant to pursue education (see bit.ly/108EsR7); if you're a school coach in the province, you can apply for an education voucher to cover part of the cost of the Fundamentals of Coaching course offered by the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (details at asaa.ca). Saskatchewan coaches can apply for a variety of coach development grants (details at saskcoach.ca). **Bob Bearpark** bursaries are available for BC coaches (see coachesbc.ca). Sport Nova Scotia offers Support4Sport and Nova Scotia Amateur Sport Fund grants (visit sportnovascotia.ca). Coaches must have a minimum certification level to apply for some of these opportunities.

4. Travel assistance. Travel grants help coaches located in smaller provinces or outside of large urban centres access education. In New Brunswick, coaches can apply to Coach New Brunswick for funding to attend courses that aren't offered in the province or in French (visit coachnb.com for details). In Manitoba, travel assistance is available for remote coaches to attend national certification clinics, provincial seminars and conferences, and to support travel to opportunities outside the province (see coachingmanitoba.ca for details). Okanagan-area coaches can apply to PacificSport Okanagan for a travel grant (pacificsportokanagan.com).

5. Funding for women. Women coaches across Canada should visit coach.ca for details on grants for professional development (including scholarships to the National Coaching Institute) and apprenticeship programs. In Manitoba, Women to Watch grants are available to support the development of female coaches in the province (check out sportmanitoba.ca). B.C. coaches can check out the B.C. Games Women in Coaching apprenticeship program (see coachesbc.ca). In Saskatchewan, high performance women coaches can access a Saskatchewan-specific Women in Coaching grant to support their training and development (visit saskcoach.ca).



“Education prepares you for coaching well beyond the technical aspects. It builds confidence and competence in coaches and trust with athletes.”

—Susan Kitchen, executive director of the Coaches Association of Ontario

PROVINCIAL SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

In many cases, the first stop on your quest for professional development funding should be your provincial sport organization (PSO). These organizations apply for government dollars and connect with corporate sponsors to support coach development. The end result is often very creative, says Kitchen of the Coaches Association of Ontario. Skate Ontario, for example, brought in an international expert and hosted a two-day seminar for 42 coaches on teaching triple jumps.

Sometimes the money is used to fund training for individual coaches but more often it's used to host conferences or workshops that many coaches can attend at an affordable price—spreading limited dollars over a larger group. To help you connect with a PSO in your province, we've assembled this list of links.

British Columbia	www.pacificsportnorthernbc.com
Alberta	www.sportalberta.ca
Saskatchewan	www.sasksport.sk.ca
Manitoba	www.sportmanitoba.ca
Ontario	www.mtc.gov.on.ca
Quebec	www.sportsquebec.com
Prince Edward Island	www.sportpei.pe.ca
New Brunswick	www.sportnb.com
Nova Scotia	www.sportnovascotia.ca
Newfoundland & Labrador	www.sportnl.ca
Yukon	www.sportyukon.com
Northwest Territories	www.sportnorth.com
Nunavut	www.cley.gov.nu.ca

It pays to ask

A quick Google search or tour around the website of your provincial coaching association or sport organization might reveal some opportunities for coach development dollars, but it's always a good idea to send an email or make a phone call to confirm you haven't missed anything. Who you contact will depend on your coaching context and the organizations available in your community, region and province. Your provincial or territorial coaching office is a good place to start, says **Greg Guenther**, director of coaching for Sport Manitoba. "Chances are if they don't have the answer you're looking for, they can direct you to the appropriate person or organization."

Sometimes the funds aren't available—until you make a request. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease," says Hill of BC's National Coaching Institute. He often recommends that coaches applying for the two-year Advanced Coaching Diploma (ACD) go back to their club or organization for support. "In some provinces there will be a tie-in to gaming, and clubs and organizations can apply for a gaming grant to cover a coach's professional development."

Local schools, community sport clubs, municipal parks and recreation departments and other sports-oriented organizations can apply for a grant from the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) to host National Coach Certification Program (NCCP) workshops and conferences (see coach.ca for details). Perhaps your request for funding will prompt your local or provincial organization to apply for this money, and bring some coach education to your back yard.

Sports organizations aren't the only source of funding, says **Laura Watson**, sport development lead for viaSport in BC. "Try to look outside of sport, to local volunteer groups or organizations such as the YMCA. Sometimes it's just a matter of asking."

FREE RESOURCES No application required

Don't feel you have to limit your professional development to formal conferences and courses—create your own free learning opportunities to fit your schedule, interests and coaching context.

Go surfing. There's a lot you can learn for free and on the fly, thanks to the Internet. Here are a few examples. The Coaches Association of Ontario teamed up with Sunnybrook Hospital to produce "Return to Play," a series of free webinars on injury prevention (check out bit.ly/XNdImE). A number of national, provincial and community-level organizations have given their coaches free access to the Respect in Sport training program (see respectinsport.com for details). French speakers can check out www.savoir-sport.org for more than 800 papers on the scientific and technical aspects of sport. The Sport Medicine and Science Council of Manitoba offers free resources on nutrition, mental training and hydration (visit sportmed.mb.ca).

Find a mentor. If you're a club-level coach of a team sport, you can learn valuable lessons from watching provincial or national-level coaches work with their athletes. You can also create informal relationships with coaches in your sport, gaining insights over a cup of coffee or a quick phone call. Making connections with potential mentors is easier when you're involved with your provincial or national sport organization.

Check out Coaches Week. Celebrated at different times of the year across the country, Coaches Week is a perfect opportunity for some free professional development, including webinars and National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) clinics.


Look for free seminars. In New Brunswick there's the free monthly Podium Performance coaching seminar series, hosted in a central location, the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, with live stream options at set locations throughout the province. The Institut National du Sport du Québec offers eight to 10 free lunchtime lectures each year in French; register online in advance and tune in to a free live stream of the event.

Be prepared

In all cases, you should have a professional development plan, identify educational activities, research funding opportunities, find a fit and put together a solid application, advises **Mark Bracken**, manager of coaching for the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan. "Each PD [professional development] grant application or PD funding program may be a bit different, but what we like to see is the coach clearly articulating how the PD initiative fits within their PD plans."

Watson of viaSport recommends being very specific on applications, telling good

"stories" about the value of the funding and making sure you aren't "just another application" by contacting the funder to learn more.

"Professional development and continuous learning are so important for all levels of coaches," says Bracken. "If a coach can access financial support to help them along the way, good on them." 

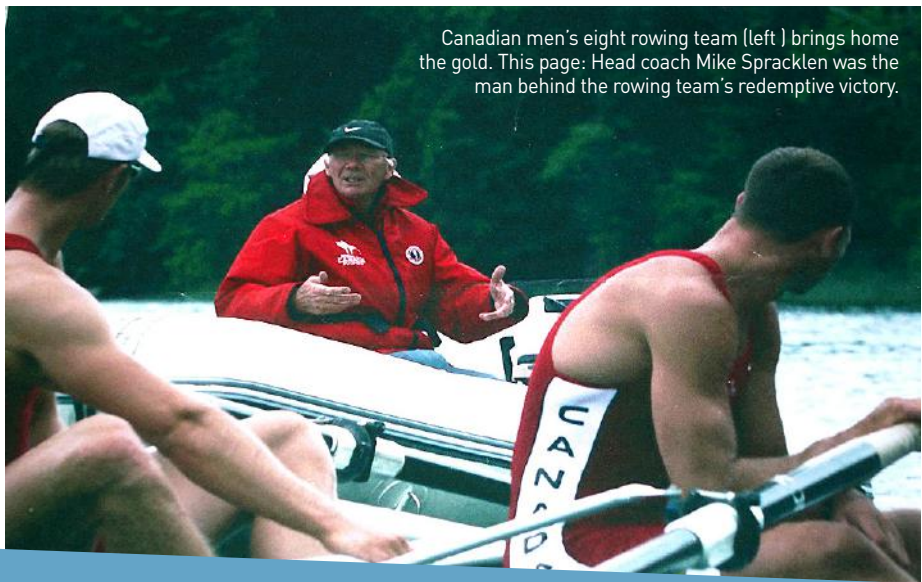
Jennifer Dawson is a freelance writer living in Hamilton, Ontario.



BOUNCING B



KEVIN LIGHT



KEVIN LIGHT

Canadian men's eight rowing team (left) brings home the gold. This page: Head coach Mike Spracklen was the man behind the rowing team's redemptive victory.

From zero to hero, coaches can turn a devastating loss into a sweet victory—and teach important life lessons along the way

By Elizabeth Garel

WHEN THE CANADIAN men's eight rowing team walked into the Olympic Stadium in Athens for the opening ceremonies of the 2004 Games, they were considered all but a sure-thing to bring home the gold. But not only did they lose gold, they failed to medal, falling to fifth place in the final. The devastating defeat made their 2008 gold medal win in Beijing all the sweeter.

The man behind the team's redemptive victory was head coach **Mike Spracklen**. "Mike Spracklen creates the most demanding training regimen in the world," wrote team member Adam Kreek in a blog for CBC Sports. "He doesn't just pressure his athletes with volume and intensity of work. He constantly presents opponents to compete against."

Spracklen's successful coaching strategy goes beyond the rigors of his training program, says Veronica Planella, a sports psychology consultant and 1995 PanAm bronze medalist in field hockey who currently teaches at the School of Exercise Science and Physical Education at the University of Victoria and is also a coach

for the Pan-American Field Hockey Federation. "After the Athens loss, Spracklen invited team members to rethink their commitment to the sport," she says. "He created an environment with clear expectations where he constructed training situations in which the desired goal exceeded their current level of performance. The athletes were free to make a choice in their intent to commit to work harder and better than any other athlete in order to achieve their personal best."

This personal commitment is the key to an athlete's motivation, says Planella, adding that a coach cannot be successful unless their athletes are highly motivated. "Motivation is the driving force that will direct your thoughts and behaviours that ultimately help you persevere when experiencing a challenge. Motivation promotes engagement. This, in turn, increases opportunity to experience and reflect on improvements, thus developing a sense of control and confidence, which leads to success, which reinforces motivation in a continuous loop." >>

The taste of defeat

With a history of 28 years of coaching basketball for high school, club teams and men's leagues, **Steve Gazmin** of Toronto has been subjected to his share of lost games. From experience, he has learned to adjust his comeback coaching tactics according to the cause of the defeat.

"When we lose because we didn't try hard enough or the other team out-willed us, I tell my players to remember how losing tastes and feels. I want them to learn to hate that taste," he says, adding that he almost feels sorry for the next team they play after a bad loss.

When his team loses due to lack of talent, on the other hand—that is, the other team demonstrated superior skills—then Gazmin focuses on motivating his players to push themselves beyond their limits, to set higher expectation levels for themselves. "If the other guy is better, that is the benchmark we have to set," he says.

Perhaps more important than why a player or a team loses is how they perceive that loss, says Philip Sullivan, professor and department chair of the Depart-

ment of Kinesiology at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. "How you attribute or explain a loss has a big impact on your confidence, which can affect your next performance," he explains. For example, a team that attributes a defeat to bad officiating might be able to diminish the loss with little impact to their confidence and subsequent performance compared to a loss that they attribute to their own inadequacies.

To help players regain their footing, Sullivan advises coaches to build confidence by focusing on process and self-comparison.

Process to progress

Sullivan coaches a youth basketball team from a small nearby community. His players are good, but because they always compete against larger communities that have a pool of taller and better talent, his team developed an expectation to lose. He helped turn that mentality around and convince his players that they can win by focusing on process.

"Sports is based on outcome, but there is a lot about outcome that you can't control; for example, if all your basketball



PHOTO COURTESY PAULA FINDLAY

DEFEAT-BUSTERS

Suggestions for handling setbacks

- Tailor the coaching strategy to the athlete's stage of development. Younger players may need help understanding that setbacks can be opportunities to explore and develop new skill sets. With more mature athletes, coaches can work through a loss by reviewing their practice design and creating different scenarios for the players to practice. At a senior level, coaches may have to ask their athletes to reaffirm their commitment to their sport.
- Help athletes develop a multidimensional sense of identity exploring all different dimensions of their lives.
- Focus on the solution, not the problem.
- Document, monitor and reflect what works and what does not work. Learning from setbacks will occur only with an accurate review.
- Collaborate with your athletes to set realistic, measurable goals. Review them often.
- Create practice scenarios in which the athlete can be challenged yet perform well, building confidence to move on to more difficult challenges.
- Explain the natural process of ups and downs of training and competition.
- Communicate and celebrate progress.
- Monitor and reflect regarding your own behaviours and thoughts as to how your coaching interventions are helping or not helping your athlete.

players are five feet tall and everyone on the other team tops six feet, the other guys are going to get more rebounds. Focusing on the process means building your players' skills and emphasizing how they do what they should do," he says. Sullivan has the team practice skills and situations in which he knows they will perform well, and then gradually increases the level of difficulty as their confidence builds.

This approach changes the focal point from winning and losing to defining success in terms of performance—for example, the number of times players get into the proper box out position. And rather than comparing their performance to others, players are told to focus on their own record—i.e., whether their skills are improving over time. This self-comparison helps build confidence, as players come to recognize that they have experienced a particular challenge in the past and found the resources that helped them respond in positive ways.



THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE OF BOUNCING BACK

Paula Findlay qualified for the triathlon event at the 2012 Summer Olympics but due to an injury, she finished in 52nd place, the final athlete to complete the race. Her coach Joel Filliol, ChPC explains her comeback strategy:

“Our approach has been to return to the basics. It’s the right time in many ways, after a challenging performance at the Games, where there were so many different factors involved. So we have been objective and rational about how Paula needs to grow as a person, and athlete. We put our efforts into establishing a sound foundation on conditioning, effective habits, and skills to handle the process, the inevitable ups and downs that are part of any athlete’s development. We can’t change the past, however we can learn from her experiences, and use that to move forward, and evolve. No athlete is the finished product, and Paula being just 23, having achieved some big successes, and faced some big challenges, we leverage all that into patience, perspective and focus on what we can control, moving forward a little bit each day.”

Four steps to resiliency

Ultimately, coaching an athlete to bounce back from defeat is about teaching self-regulation and resiliency, says Planella: “The coach’s role is to help the individual effectively regulate response to any situation and quickly adapt and develop a new strategy. How you react to setbacks determines your success”.

She offers this four-step approach:

1. Help the athlete understand what is required: The setback requires the coach and athlete to return to the drawing board and look for new opportunities to learn. Understanding the reason for the setback and the emotional response is the first step. Then, identify situation-specific tasks to be implemented in new strategy.

2. Set goals and plan: The athlete needs to understand why the goal is important, what didn’t work in the past and what options are realistic for the future. Then he or she has to choose to commit to putting in the physical, emotional and cognitive effort to achieve the new standard.


Athletes are motivated when experiencing improvement. Therefore, effective goal setting will encourage persistence on daily tasks.

3. Try the new strategy: Actually do the task. The coach and the athlete would benefit from documenting and reflecting on whether the new plan is working. Review new strategies focusing on behaviors, cognition, emotions and levels of motivation.

4. Adapt: Is the athlete learning from his or her mistakes or repeating them? Is the coach providing the support and resources needed? Success will be the result of learning from experience and of continually striving to do better.

These steps are cyclical, as coaches and athletes continuously monitor, reflect and evaluate their progress. “When athletes take control of their own learning by being aware of and deliberately adapting what they do, what they think, and how they feel they will be better prepared to effectively manage any setback,” says Planella.

“Developmental, recreational or elite contexts have distinctive goals that the coach would benefit from considering when implementing strategies to help athletes manage setbacks. Still, the value of persistency in developing resilience is a skill that requires shifting attention from a setback, perceived as a problem, to positive change—and it can gradually be learned from the developmental stages of sport involvement.”

“Resilience is an important part of life, not just sport. We all have to learn how to use setbacks to our advantage,” says Planella. “The best coaches deliberately create environments that offer opportunities for the athlete to explore and discover new possibilities, and to develop values that will make the individual successful in both sport and life.” 

Elizabeth Garel is a freelance writer living in Toronto, Ontario.

Injury recovery

HAVING A PLAN IN PLACE IS KEY

by Jeff Krushell

INJURIES ARE ONE THE MOST COMMON AND FRUSTRATING SETBACKS

in the athlete development model. In fact, often the main reason many athletes never reach their true potential is lost time due to injury. Missing valuable training time or periods of competition can be a major setback to development. This is why rehabilitation and return to play protocols must be organized and managed properly.

Many injuries are preventable. Lack of preparation and overtraining are two of the main contributors to the development of injuries.

In order to optimize development and performance, injury prevention must be a key consideration in the design of an athlete development program. It starts with ensuring that adequate rest and recovery time are available in a training plan. Then we can allot time for strength and conditioning, skill development, technical and tactical work and competition.

Experts need to work together

It may seem straightforward, but too many coaches underestimate the importance of athlete management and the role of rest and recovery. This becomes even more vital when there is a multidisciplinary performance team involved (consisting of various experts such as strength coaches, athletic trainers, physiotherapists, specialty coaches, core trainers, psychologists, dietitians and the sport academy school programs), who are all vying for the athlete's time and effort. We have seen firsthand the destruction of athletic potential when the primary coach and separate skills coaches are involved in uncoordinated efforts to help an athlete improve. If these experts don't work together, the results can be not only suppressed development, but also a higher risk of lost time due to injury.

Regardless of how well you plan and manage your athletes, injuries will happen; they are an inevitable part of sport. And when they do occur, it's



Jeff Krushell is a former strength and conditioning coach for the Toronto Blue Jays and a strength and conditioning consultant for Major League Baseball International. He also hosts the Krush Performance Radio Show in Edmonton, Alberta.

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Also available: *Survival Guide for Coaching Youth Baseball* \$16.95

Six-step recovery approach

Consider this six-step recovery approach to make the most of the situation if one of your athletes has been injured:



Depending on the injury and the athlete, recovery can be a long and gruelling process. Defining the recovery strategies and the return to play timetable as soon as possible post injury is key to offsetting the physical and mental stress the athlete may experience.

- 1 Decrease pain:** All injuries are different in this regard but the initial shock of any injury can be a traumatic experience. Coaches are often the first responders and it's important to be a calming voice as the athlete takes inventory of what has happened. Once the athlete is in the hands of the medical team, the first step is to decrease the pain and comfort the athlete in order to accurately evaluate the injury.
- 2 Reduce inflammation:** In order to accurately assess an injury, inflammation and swelling must be reduced. Inflammation is part of the healing process, but managing inflammation properly through the initial stages of assessment and rehabilitation can have a big impact on the healing time. Ice, compression and contrast strategies are commonly used.
- 3 Establish range of motion:** Once the injury has been assessed and the healing is at a point where the athlete may move without discomfort or risk of irritating the injury, with the physician's clearance you can begin to reestablish range of motion or begin light exercise.
- 4 Regain strength:** Once healing has reached the appropriate stage, the strength base can begin to be re-established in order to proceed with the full-on return to play program. The duration of this stage depends on the type of injury and time lost due to injury. The longer the athlete has been inactive the longer this stage of rehab will be. It is here that many athletes make the mistake of rushing back to competition too quickly. They may feel great and be symptom-free but they still may not be functioning properly. This stage must not be overlooked or cut short!
- 5 Sport specific training for return to play:** This is a stage of performance drills and exercises that mimic the intensity and demands of the sport. With the physician's clearance and under the supervision of an athletic trainer or strength and conditioning specialist, this is a progression of aggressive movement and power drills as well as sport specific drills that are used to evaluate if the athlete is ready to re-enter the competitive environment. For contact sports, this is the stage where partner drills and controlled contact drills can be introduced. In this stage of rehab the progressions are dependent on the athlete's response and recovery from the day's training. After an aggressive training session, the athlete's performance is evaluated and then the athlete must be observed to determine how he or she responds and recovers from the training. The progressions are based on the day-to-day recovery of the athlete. This is a very important stage of the rehabilitation process and it must not be rushed.
- 6 Return to competition:** Once the athlete has passed all of the stages of the sport specific training phase he or she can be reintroduced to the competitive setting. It is recommended that coaches use great caution here and gradually increase playing time as the athlete makes the return to sport. It is very difficult, maybe even impossible, to match the intensity of competition in the return to play drills of rehabilitation.



important that they be dealt with promptly and properly. From the initial assessment to the treatment plan and the return to play strategy, it all must be organized and coordinated for a fast and safe return to competition. A well designed plan can be a powerful influence in optimizing recovery time.

Even though we have a good understanding of the physical process involved in injury recovery, we often overlook the mental issues an athlete may face when dealing with such a setback. Having an injury procedure in place is vital to maintaining a positive attitude and speedy recovery.

Being injured has been linked to a higher incidence of depression among athletes. Thus, it's imperative to turn an injury situation into a valuable opportunity by working with the athlete to set goals using the injury recovery time for training and development. This allows the athlete to return to play not only as a healed player, but as a better athlete than they were prior to being injured. The injury recovery time allows the athlete to train and work on areas of development that would not typically get attention if they were training and competing on a regular schedule.

Depending on the injury and the athlete, recovery can be a long and grueling process. Defining the recovery strategies and the return to play timetable as soon as possible post injury is key to offsetting the physical and mental stress the athlete may experience.

TIPS FOR SAFELY RETURNING TO SPORT

- When setting up your developmental plan, the first priority must be maximizing rest and recovery.
- Organize and co-ordinate the multidisciplinary team to avoid overtraining.
- Use injury recovery time to challenge your athlete and improve on performance variables that would not typically be addressed in a regular health setting.
- Implement a procedure such as the six-step recovery approach to engage your athlete and optimize the use of recovery time.
- Always determine the progression of the rehabilitation process under the supervision of the physician.
- Do not rush the return to play program since getting back to competition too soon can have devastating consequences.

Think before you tweet

THE POTENTIAL PITFALLS OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ATHLETES AND COACHES

By Catherine Willson, B.A., L.L.B. and Adrian Roomes, B.A., J.D.

A 2009 INCIDENT INVOLVING CHARLIE VILLANUEVA, an NBA basketball player then playing for the Milwaukee Bucks, illustrates perfectly the pros and cons of social media in high profile athletics. At halftime of a tied game against the Celtics, Villanueva posted the following message to his Twitter account: “In da locker room, snuck to post my twitt. We’re playing the Celtics, tie ball game at da half. Coach wants more toughness. I gotta step up.”

Step up he did—Villanueva finished the game as his team’s leading scorer in a crucial victory. However, reaction after the game was surprisingly negative and Villanueva’s coach was forced to publicly (if lightly) reprimand the player. When asked if he thought the tweet meant that Villanueva wasn’t paying attention to the game, coach **Scott Skiles** said, “I think a reasonable person could look at that either way. And I’m a pretty reasonable guy. And so the answer is no, not necessarily. But I also know from the comments I’ve gotten from some people in the game that there could be people who think it’s a sign. We just want to distance ourselves, that’s all.”

Needless to say, no NBA player has tweeted during a game since then.



Willson Lewis LLP is a Toronto-based litigation law firm practising in civil litigation, employment law, construction law, commercial litigation, family law, tax disputes and equine law.

Catherine Willson is the founding partner at Willson Lewis LLP.

Adrian Roomes is a student-at-law with Willson Lewis LLP.

Private becomes public

This is emblematic of the dual nature of social media, especially in high profile fields like athletics. While on the one hand, outlets such as Facebook and Twitter bring fans closer to the action, they also have the potential to expose aspects of the game that coaches and managers would prefer remained private, leading to discord within the team or league, and even legal action.

Many of the problems with social media as it relates to coaching are the same as the problems that arise in any sphere. Social networking has the potential to be an extremely engrossing and time consuming activity. This holds true for coaches just as much as for athletes. It can distract from the intense focus required for competitive sport.

It’s also important to recognize that there are legal implications for the use of social networking. Harassment and cyberbullying are big problems. Social networking platforms,

cell phones and smart phones unfortunately all pose new ways for people to engage in harassing and bullying behaviour. The fact that many people divulge personal information via social networking applications can potentially exacerbate the situation.

Similarly, defamation (making negative public statements about a person or other entity) is a major problem with today's social media, where a few ill-considered keystrokes can be broadcast to a huge audience at a moment's notice. Such postings lead to lawsuits on a regular basis. The Supreme Court of Canada has held that even posting a link to another website where defamatory statements are made can be a breach of the law in some cases (*Crookes v. Newton*, 2011 SCC 47). Once things have been put out into cyberspace, there is no taking them back.

Several precedents have already been set in Canada, despite the relatively short period of time in which social networking has been a major part of our culture. The courts have been quite clear that evidence from social media outlets is admissible in court.

In the case of *Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board v. Lentini*, a school principal was the subject of insulting language on a Facebook page set up to discuss the fact that the school's hockey team would be playing AA hockey instead of AAA that school year. The comments received local media coverage. The judge ruled that the Facebook page comments were "offensive and humiliating" and diminished the principal's reputation in the community. The principal was awarded \$27,500 in damages, payable by the individuals who had made the defamatory Facebook comments.

Although not related specifically to sport, an important precedent that points to the potential pitfalls of social media is the case of *Chatham-Kent (Municipality) v. National Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada*. In this case, an employee was dismissed for breach of confidentiality agreement, insubordination and conduct unbecoming a personal care giver because of her blog. She had posted comments about her employer, conditions in the retirement home, and personal information about residents in the home without consent. She filed a grievance contesting her dismissal. The arbitrator held that the blog comments were insolent, disrespectful and contemptuous of management and an attempt to undermine management's reputation and authority. The arbitrator also ruled that she had breached her confidentiality agreement by disclosing residents' personal information on a website accessible to the public.

Clear policies are needed

Clearly, the legal pitfalls of social media are relevant regardless of one's occupation. As the story that introduced this article demonstrated, social media in a highly public realm such as sport can be a double-edged sword. Athletes and sports organizations have frequently been in the news for a controversial tweet or Facebook posting. The most important thing coaches and sports organizations can do is to have a clear policy with respect to social media, both for athletes and staff, and stick to it. Define what subjects are appropriate for social media and when it is appropriate to post about them (how long before or after games, etc.). Some organizations mandate a total ban on social media statements by athletes during big events or tournaments. The less damage control necessary, whether from a legal or public relations standpoint, the better. As in medicine, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.



While Facebook and Twitter bring fans closer to the action, they also have the potential to expose aspects of the game that coaches and managers would prefer remained private.

The legal information provided in this article is based on the laws of Ontario. If you find yourself in a situation to which this article may apply, please consult a lawyer before acting or relying on any of the statements made herein.

Voltaren Emulgel®

Diclofenac diethylamine Gel, 11.6 mg/g (1.16% w/w)



Prescribing Summary



Patient Selection Criteria

THERAPEUTIC CLASSIFICATION

Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drug (NSAID) Analgesic agent for topical use.

INDICATIONS AND CLINICAL USE

Voltaren Emulgel (diclofenac diethylamine gel) is indicated for the relief of aches and pain associated with recent (acute), localized joint or muscle injuries such as sprains, strains or sports injuries (e.g. sore ankles, knees, hands or shoulder). This is typically as an adjunct to other measures such as rest for the relief of discomfort associated with such injuries.



Safety Information

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Patients who are hypersensitive to this drug or to any ingredient in the formulation or component of the container. For a complete listing, see the Dosage Forms, Composition and Packaging section of the product monograph.

Hypersensitivity to diclofenac, acetylsalicylic acid or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Patients with or without chronic asthma in whom attacks of asthma, urticaria or acute rhinitis are precipitated by acetylsalicylic acid or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents.

Concomitant use of other products containing diclofenac.

Concomitant use of oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

Voltaren Emulgel is for topical use only to intact, non-diseased skin, and not to skin wounds or open injuries. It should not be used with occlusion. It should not be allowed to come into contact with the eyes or mucous membranes, and should never be taken by mouth. Systemic availability of diclofenac diethylamine through percutaneous absorption is low compared with plasma levels obtained following oral forms of diclofenac. Nevertheless, the possibility of systemic side effects cannot be completely excluded.

Some possibility of gastro-intestinal bleeding in patients with a significant history of peptic ulceration has been reported in isolated cases, Voltaren Emulgel should therefore be used with caution by patients under medication for active peptic ulcers in the stomach or duodenum (e.g., proton pump inhibitors or histamine H2 receptor antagonists), If the patient is uncertain, they should be advised to consult their doctor or pharmacist.

Like other drugs that inhibit prostaglandin synthetase activity, diclofenac and other NSAIDs can precipitate bronchospasm if administered to patients suffering from or with a previous history of bronchial asthma.

Asthma has been rarely reported in patients using topical NSAID preparations.

Local irritation, erythema, pruritus or dermatitis may occasionally occur with topical diclofenac diethylamine. Skin photosensitivity, desquamation, discoloration and bullous or vesicular eruptions have been reported in isolated cases. Patients should be warned against excessive exposure to sunlight in order to reduce the incidence of photosensitivity.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Pregnant Women:

Since no experience has been acquired with diclofenac diethylamine gel in pregnancy or lactation, its use is not recommended.

Geriatrics (>65 years of age):

No specific hazards.

Paediatrics (< 16 years of age):

Not for use in children under 16 years of age.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adverse Drug Reaction Overview

The adverse event incidence in the clinical studies was very low. The benign safety profile documented in the clinical studies is confirmed in the post-marketing experience in over 300 million patients worldwide.

Similar percentages of local skin reactions including mostly itching, burning, erythema, local allergy and blistering were reported after both Voltaren Emulgel (3.4%) and placebo (5.5%). Most of the local AEs were mild to moderate.

To report an adverse reaction please notify Health Canada at 1-866-234-2345 or Novartis Consumer Health at 1-888-788-8181.

Drug-Drug Interactions

Overview

No drug-drug interactions were noted in the clinical studies presented.

Customary drug-drug interactions between oral NSAIDs and anticoagulants, oral antidiabetic agents may be predicted to be very unlikely with use of Voltaren Emulgel.



Administration

RECOMMENDED DOSE AND DOSAGE ADJUSTMENT

Adults and adolescents 16 years and older. Apply 3-4 times a day and rub gently into the skin. The amount needed depends on the size of the painful area: 2g to 4g Voltaren Emulgel (1 g equals a strip approx. 2 cm long) is sufficient to treat an area of about 400-800 cm². After application, wash hands unless they are the treated site.

The duration of treatment will depend on the natural course of healing, rest and also on clinical response. The gel should not be used for more than 7 days without consulting a doctor.

Missed Dose

Next dose should be applied when the consumer remembers and then again at the next scheduled time. A double quantity should not be applied.

OVERDOSAGE

The low systemic absorption of topical diclofenac renders overdose extremely unlikely. In the event of accidental ingestion, resulting in significant systemic side effects, general therapeutic measures to treat poisoning with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs should be used.



Novartis Consumer Health
2233 Argentia Road, Floor 2, Suite 205
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www.voltaren.com



TOP TECH TOOLS AND APPS FOR COACHES

Best picks for motion and video analysis, heart rate measurement and motion, training and nutrition tracking

By Dean Kriellaars, BPE, MSc, PhD, CEP

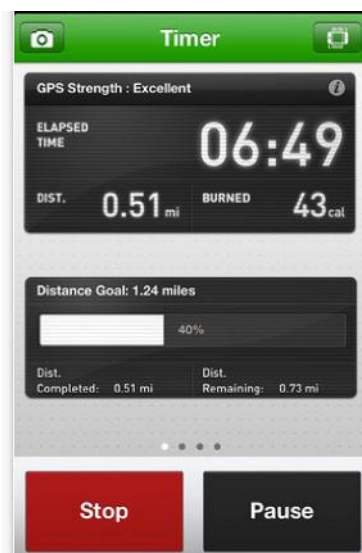
I am all about “tools not toys” when it comes to tech products for coaches. Tools provide function; toys provide amusement. As a sport scientist, I need tools. Here are some of the top tools I routinely use when working with the sport community:

MOTION TRACKING WITH GPS

Both the **iPhone** and **iPad** are equipped with GPS capability to track motion second-by-second and record movement.

Ski Tracks is a ski and snowboard app that keeps track of your stats while on the slopes. Just press the record button and put your phone in your pocket to capture data including speed, distance, vertical descent, number of runs and more. The app also works for running, rowing, walking and cycling but was designed specifically for winter sports. Available on iPhone and Android for 99 cents.

The **Walktracker Pro** from Training Peaks is designed for walking, running and cycling. You can set your workout to music, try to beat your past performances and opt for high-intensity intervals, which are called out via audio feedback. Stores workout data such as time, distance, speed, pace, calories and elevation. Available on iPhone and Android for \$3.



The Garmin family of products (**Garmin GPS** and **Garmin Connect**) for GPS tracking of sport activities are very effective, particularly the Forerunner 610 (\$399.99) for running, the Edge 510 (\$329.99) for cycling and the Forerunner 310XT (\$279.00) for water sports. These GPS devices record position, speed and heart rate throughout the training session. (If you have a bike with a “power tap,” you can also record power output). Athletes can download data on their training session and share it with their coaches using the Garmin connect software.

HEART RATE MEASUREMENT

Azumio has developed the **Instant Heart Rate app** for iPhone and Android phones. It uses the phone’s camera to detect the pulse from your fingertip. The app is free, although there’s a pro version with slightly enhanced features. **Cardio Buddy**, also from Azumio, is another app that determines your heart rate from a distance by using the camera sensor within your phone to analyze tiny color variations from different parts of your face to give you an accurate measurement.



MOTION ANALYSIS

In many sports the ability to perform basic motion analysis can be very useful. For hi-speed video, you need a camera that captures images at a frame rate that slows the motion down. A higher frame rate video also minimizes the “blur” of fast moving bodies.

The **Nikon COOLPIX AW110** (\$379) captures images at regular rates (1920 x 1080 at 30 frames per second) and also at 1280 x 720 at 60 frames per second, 640 x 480 at 120 frames per second and 320 x 240 at 240 frames per second. The 120 frames per second 640 x 480 mode does a great job of stopping motion, allowing you to watch movement as fast as a punt kick frame by frame without any blur. This point-and-shoot camera is waterproof, freeze proof and shockproof and also packs Wi-Fi and GPS. It has a 5x optical zoom lens with lens-shift vibration reduction that allows you to get close to a subject from a distance, and also has the ability to record full HD movies with stereo sound.



The **GoPro HERO3 Black Edition** (\$449.99), billed as “the world’s most versatile camera,” is designed more for the cinematographer than the video motion analyst, but is worth a mention. It’s not as easy to transfer videos with this camera because it uses a micro-SD, but it has a wide-angle lens, which distorts the image somewhat to allow for a big field of view. It can capture video at high resolutions for cinema, and captures high-speed video at 848 x 480 at 240 frames per second, as well as at 1280 x 720 at 120 frames per second—better than the Nikon.

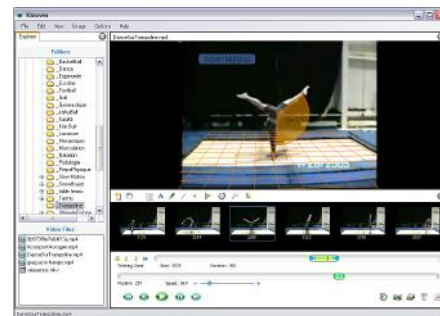


The video recorded from an **iPhone 5** or an **iPad mini** is set to record at a slow rate of 30 frames per second at 1080 resolution. This frame rate is a bit sluggish for motion analysis, but can work for some lower speed movements, such as a free throw in basketball.

TRAINING AND NUTRITION TRACKING

The **EATracker.ca** website from the Dietitians of Canada provides tools to better analyze the diet of your athletes. You can check food and activity choices, analyze recipes, plan meals, set goals and track progress. This software is a quick and easy way to get a handle on daily caloric input and macronutrients.

Training Peaks offers training and nutrition software for both athletes and coaches (check out the Coach Edition). This platform allows coaches to monitor, analyze and plan training and nutrition programs for athletes of all levels. Starts at \$49 per month.

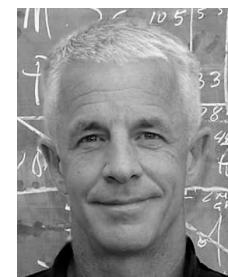


VIDEO ANALYSIS

If you’re going to transfer videos to a computer, one of the best motion analysis software applications is **Kinovea**. It has most of the key features you need to perform an analysis of sport skills. You can step one frame at a time forward and back, annotate your video, track motion, measure angles and more. Kinovea is a freeware application that only runs on Windows.



If you use an iPhone or iPad, the minimal feature you need is the single frame advance feature. **VideoPix** is the most inexpensive (99 cents) app for this task. It allows you to review video in slow motion mode, single frame advance, and create pictures (freeze frames) to highlight important points of movement.



Dean Kriellaars is an associate professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Manitoba where he operates the Human Performance Laboratory. The lab conducts research on functional restoration, exercise, physical literacy and obesity.

INSPIRATION
LEADERSHIP
KNOWLEDGE MENTORING
CONFIDENCE
SKILLS Innovation
COMPETENCY
CREDIBILITY
VALUES



Deesh Bhattal, Game Changer
NCCP Master Learning Facilitator
& Community Soccer Coach

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