

THE MAGAZINE FOR CANADA'S COACHES

VOL 2 NO 1
SPRING 2014

COACHES plan DU COACH

THE LEGACY OF
BASKETBALL COACH
ALLISON McNEILL

ETHICAL DECISIONS
IN SPORT

ATHLETES AND
EATING DISORDERS

**KICK-START
YOUR COACHING**

Regina Red Sox coach Rob Cherepuschak
and 16 other coaches offer their best advice

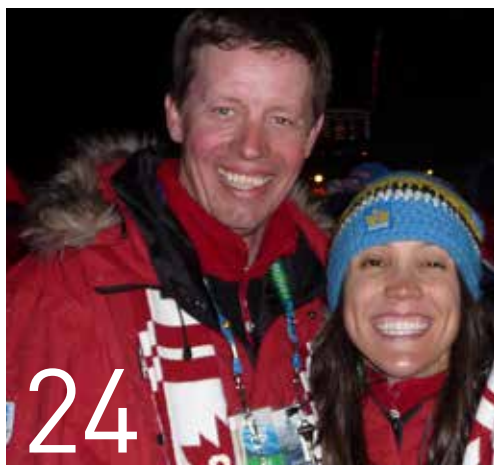
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SHOULD YOU HELP IN AN ATHLETE APPEAL?

COACHES plan DU COACH

SPRING 2014



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STOBBE PHOTOGRAPHY

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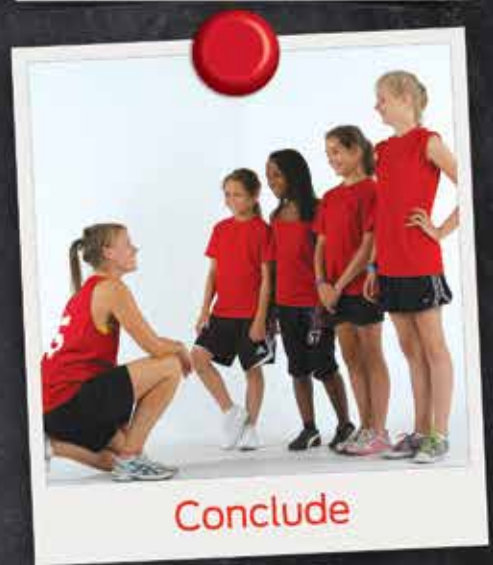
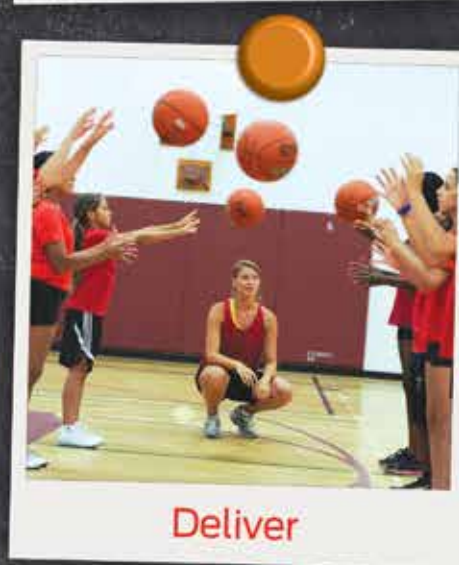
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COACHES **plan** DU COACH

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Our best advice ever

“There is a misleading, unwritten rule that says if advice comes from someone famous, very old, or Greek, then it must be good advice,” writes the American author Bo Bennett. We couldn’t agree more — after all, good advice comes from all types of folks, from your mother, to your barber, the barmaid and yes, even your kids. Of course, coaches are known for giving great advice, too. It’s their job to motivate their athletes by saying the right thing at the right time. For our cover story in this issue we approached 17 top coaches from across the country and asked them for the best advice they’d give to their coaching peers. What we got back was a treasure trove of perfect pearls of wisdom —herewith a small sampling:

“You can only be an effective coach if you are a happy and balanced coach.”

“Design your training sessions so that you are excited about leading them.”

“Be a lifelong learner and stay on top of trends and research.”

“Encouraging athletes to take risks, make decisions, and problem-solve in the game will in turn empower them to become citizens capable of critical thinking in all aspects of their lives.”

This issue is all about helping you be the best coach you can be. Our Performance column on coach development encourages you to think about whether you have what it takes to help develop other coaches. We also offer expert advice on how to tackle thorny issues such as potential eating disorders with your athletes and knowing when to intervene in an athlete appeal. Our feature “Making the Right Call” offers guidance on how to handle the many ethical dilemmas that can arise in sport and presents an outline of the NCCP’s six-step ethical decision-making process that can help you determine the right path to take.

And, as in every issue, we hope to inspire you in your coaching efforts by profiling outstanding coaches who have made their mark in the sport world. *Canadian Press* reporter Lori Ewing puts the spotlight on the dynamic basketball coaching duo of Allison McNeill and Lisa Thomaidis, while Paralympic ski champion Karolina Wisniewska tells us why Lasse Ericsson is her favourite coach.

We’d love to get your feedback on these articles and hear about any ideas you have for future topics for this magazine. *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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‡ The Medical Post & L'actualité médicale 2012 Survey on OTC Counselling & Recommendations. Overall recommendations were: brands only 39%, private label 6%, both brands and private label 40%. Drugstore Canada & L'actualité pharmaceutique 2012 Survey on OTC Counselling & Recommendations. Overall recommendations were: brands only 48%, private label 3%, both brands and private label 45%

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Weight worries

HOW YOU CAN HELP NURTURE A HEALTHY BODY IMAGE IN YOUR ATHLETES

By Shaunna Taylor

PARENTS OFTEN SAY THEY WANT THEIR KIDS TO PARTICIPATE IN sport so they'll be healthy and feel good about what their bodies can do. The last thing they want is for their child to end up having a negative body image. However, this is often what happens.

There are many complex reasons why problems can occur in the way a person views their body. In sport, athletes are at higher risk in some sport cultures for negative body image and taking unhealthy measures to alter their physique. Athletes involved in aesthetically judged sports and activities (e.g., figure skating, gymnastics, synchronized swimming, dance) have high rates of body image dissatisfaction, which is ironic considering how many people are inspired by the fitness level and physique of these athletes. Weight class sports, where athletes must be in a specific weight range in order to race (e.g., rowing) or participate in combat (e.g., boxing and judo) are also high risk groups for body image and disordered eating problems, as are endurance or racing sports (e.g., running and cycling) due to their rigorous training regimes and a preoccupation with leanness. Athletes who wear revealing uniforms (e.g., beach or court volleyball) and those who feel they must fulfill a particular role on the team, such as being very large (e.g., tackle football) or very muscular (e.g., weightlifting) are also at higher risk. However, it's important to note that all athletes face some risk of body image issues since they are under pressure to be in superior shape and to perform in increasingly challenging circumstances the higher they rise in competition.



Shaunna Taylor is the Director, Sport Development | High-Performance, Para-Triathlon at Triathlon Canada, and is the Co-Chair of the Managing Council 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.

It's all about control

There are four aspects to body image: the mental picture you have of your body (perception), the way you feel about how you look (affective), the thoughts and beliefs you have about your body (cognitive) and the measures you take in relation to your body (behavioural). These measures can sometimes involve various forms of disordered eating that can turn into eating disorders.



BE RESPECTFUL OF EVERYONE ON THE ICE



RESPECTEZ TOUJOURS TOUS CEUX QUI SONT SUR LA GLACE



"I feel very fortunate that hockey has been part of my life since I was very young and admire Hockey Canada's commitment to educating families and players about all aspects of the game. It is important to always give your best effort and yet always be respectful of everyone on the ice. Be smart, stay safe and have fun."

– 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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In sport, athletes are at higher risk in some sport cultures for negative body image and taking unhealthy measures to alter their physique.

An eating disorder generally results from psychological factors, including low self-esteem, feelings of inadequacy or lack of control, depression, anger, or loneliness. A preoccupation with body image and weight is often a way to control anxiety and have a feeling of control over one's life, especially for athletes who have difficulty dealing with the pressures they may feel are placed upon them. Ironically, this preoccupation actually causes athletes to lose control over their health and wellbeing.

While many more women are affected than men, it should be noted that male body dissatisfaction and disordered eating are on the rise. Thus, coaches should be aware of signs and symptoms of body image issues in both their female and male athletes.

Eating problems fall within a broad range of eating-related feelings, attitudes, and behaviours. The continuum along which eating disorders generally develop usually involves the following four stages:

- 1. Confident about body size/shape/weight:** Athletes in this category have mostly positive feelings about their body, despite the myriad media messages focussing on ideal body size on and off the field of play.
- 2. Preoccupied with body size/shape/weight:** This stage involves frequently thinking about food, eating, and one's body. There may be increasing inflexibility about eating and exercise habits, and feelings of guilt if the athlete veers off track from their pre-set plans. Generally these feelings do not prohibit the athlete from engaging in social situations involving food or from enjoying life. Many athletes fit into this range and fluctuate between confidence and preoccupation as their careers develop.

3. Distress about body size/shape/weight: This stage is defined by a focus on body image that interferes with daily life. The athlete becomes consumed by rigid eating practices, calorie calculations, and withdraws from activities due to pressures surrounding food and compensation measures (fasting, dehydration, vomiting, extreme or excess exercise). This stage does not typically involve a severe change in weight or body shape/size.

4. Eating disorder: This is the most dangerous and difficult to treat stage, and can involve steroid or supplement use to gain weight or increase muscle mass, or excessive exercise and extreme dieting, which results in disorders such as anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, and muscle dysmorphia (in which a person becomes obsessed with the idea that they are not muscular enough). Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses, with 10-20 per cent eventually dying from complications, according to the Canadian Mental Health Association.

What coaches can do

Take the focus off body size/shape/weight: Focus instead on true performance indicators such as speed, power, technical ability, tactical awareness, or mental skills, which have a direct, measurable and positive proven effect on overall performance. Coaches should be aware of the potentially harmful effects of routine group weigh-ins and body composition testing in athletes who are already under extreme pressure to perform.

Don't compare: Athletes are in a highly competitive environment, which means they are continually comparing themselves against others. It's healthy to attempt to match or exceed another athlete's excellent technique or great work ethic, but it's unhealthy for them to 'compare and despair' when sizing themselves up against another athlete's physique. Coaches should avoid using 'fat talk' about both their athletes and themselves and discourage these comparisons from being part of their sport culture. If your athlete says, "I feel fat," remind him or her that fat is not a feeling and encourage the athlete to explain what is really going on.

Encourage and model healthy coping skills: Ensure athletes engage in stress-relieving activities, have a forum to express themselves and have an outlet — such as someone they can talk to in or outside of your program — when the pressure gets to be too much.

Know where to get help: Treatment for eating disorders is available — it can be a long process to heal but these disorders can be overcome. The following resources can help:

- *BodySense*, a program to promote positive body image in sport, is offered by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport and the True Sport Foundation, and has training resources for coaches, parents and athletes. www.bodysense.ca
- *The National Eating Disorder Information Centre*, a non-profit Canadian organization, can help with regional resources, counsellors, and education consultants to help your program or athletes at risk. www.nedic.ca

FACTS ON EATING DISORDERS IN ATHLETES

- Up to 70 per cent of elite athletes competing in weight class sports are dieting and engage in abnormal eating behaviours to reduce their weight before a competition.

(Oppliger et al., 1996; Torstveit & Sundgot-Borgen, 2005)

- A study including the total population of female elite athletes in Norway found the prevalence of eating disorders among high intensity athletes to be 47.8 per cent.

(Torstveit et al., 2008).

- A British study of adolescent elite athletes found key causes of the high prevalence of disordered eating reported could be due to the increased awareness of low body fat as a performance variable, lack of educated coaches, and being told by coaches to reduce weight.

From good to great

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A COACH DEVELOPER?

By Kathy Brook



Kathy Brook is a Senior Coaching Consultant at the Coaching Association of Canada and currently works with a variety of sports helping them to develop their NCCP and Coach Developer Systems. She is a Master Learning Facilitator and Master Evaluator for the Coaches Association of Ontario and Basketball Ontario. She also works internationally with the International Council for Coaching Excellence as a member of the Coach Developer working group.

THERE IS A LOT OF FOCUS ON ATHLETES TRANSITIONING INTO COACHES, but who are the people who are teaching the coaches? More importantly, could you become one of them?

‘Coach developer’ is the umbrella term used to capture the roles in the Coaching Association of Canada’s National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) that are directly responsible for the development of coaches, including: Master Learning Facilitator, Advanced Learning Facilitator, Learning Facilitator, Master Evaluator, Advanced Evaluator, Evaluator, Mentor, and Content Expert. According to the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), coach developers “are not simply experienced coaches or transmitters of coaching knowledge — they are trained to develop, support, and challenge coaches to go on honing and improving their knowledge and skills in order to provide positive and effective sport experiences for all participants.” Coach developers need to be experts in learning as well as experts in coaching. They may also have expertise in disciplines such as sport-specific technical coaching, coaching pedagogy, sport science, sport medicine, and sport psychology. Coach developers respond to coaches’ needs by providing and facilitating a range of formal and informal learning opportunities with the goal that coaches will take responsibility for their own ongoing development. Coach developers teach coaches to learn and reflect so they themselves will become lifelong learners.

“There are no fast tracks to becoming a coach developer,” says Manon Landry Ouellette, executive director of Coach New Brunswick. Those who want to transition from coach to coach developer must be proficient in their own context. The coach developer pathway (see chart) shows the opportunities and roles available for those who have the interest and mindset to develop coaches.

Three key qualities are necessary for coach developers to be able to execute the tasks and demonstrate the behaviours required to fulfill their roles: knowledge of the sport context they work in, facilitation skills, and a growth mindset that is committed to lifelong learning.

PATHWAY	ROLE
Master Coach Developers are highly effective advanced coach developers and can also:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide initial training for coach developers • support advanced coach developers and coach developers through mentoring, co-delivery, and feedback • design learning programs • provide quality assurance for programs • assess coaches
Advanced Coach Developers are effective and experienced coach developers and can also:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customize coach education programs and sessions • provide non-formal learning • encourage ongoing independent learning • co-deliver programs and support coach developers • assure quality /compliance and monitor local programs • assess coaches
Coach Developers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide formal learning situations through prescribed coach education programs with minimal customization • assess coaches

ICCE Coach Developer Working Group, 2012

The typical pathway for someone who wants to be a coach developer involves the following steps:

SELECTION: Not everyone has the experience, skills, and attitude to be effective as a coach developer — that’s why it’s critical that quality control be exerted when selecting someone as a coach developer.

TRAINING: Coach developer candidates must complete rigorous training. This training must be consistent across Canada. To that end, the following training is required by all coach developers: NCCP Core Coach Developer Training, workshop/role specific training (including micro-facilitation or micro-teaching, which gives coaches an opportunity to practice delivery with their peers) and co-facilitation/teaching/evaluation with an experienced coach developer. Coach education provides coaches with the opportunity to examine how they can apply new knowledge and ideas to their own context. In NCCP workshops coaches can practice their skills in a safe environment.

EVALUATION: Evaluation confirms that the coach developer is capable of certain abilities, such as communication skills and creating a positive learning environment, which are deemed important in the training of coaches. The evaluation must reflect the framework of ethical coaching practices promoted by the Canadian sport system.

The job of a coach developer can be very rewarding — in fact, it can be just as rewarding as playing or coaching a sport. It gives you the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of athletes, while also learning from great coaches.

Contact your sport organization today to see how you can become a coach developer. Contact information is available at <http://coach.ca/partner-directory-s16628>.

REAPING THE REWARDS

The joys of being a coach developer

Barb Cooper

Head pro at Mayfair Lakeshore Racquet Club in Toronto

“Every time I deliver a course I learn from the participants and it gives me a chance to interact with people who come from different backgrounds and experiences. Delivering these courses always offers me a huge amount of new growth — I’m always learning.

I like the fact that I can guide other coaches and help them find different or more effective ways of doing things. It’s a lot easier to affect the sport if you can affect a lot of coaches because each coach affects a lot of kids who play the game. With squash, coaches have to learn to deliver the sport so that people love it from the time they are four or five right up until they are 80 and still playing. It’s a sport for life. We might get one or two champions in our lifetime but the majority of what we do is with recreational players who want to enjoy the sport and get as much out of it as they can.”

Jill Brewer

Advanced Learning Facilitator for Newfoundland and Labrador

“My way of giving back to sport is coach development. It’s wonderful to work with other coaches and help them develop their skills. I really love the education component and the interaction with other adults about something you are all passionate about. Their comprehension is high and so sharing ideas with colleagues keeps me involved in sport in a meaningful way. And hopefully I’m having some impact on making sport a better place to be, which, in turn, has a positive impact on athletes who will then have a better experience in sport.”

Athlete appeals: Should you help?

HOW TO DETERMINE WHEN TO GO TO BAT FOR YOUR ATHLETE
AND WHEN TO STEP ASIDE

By Kevin Lawrie

APPEALS BY ATHLETES ARE MOST OFTEN ON SELECTION DECISIONS made by the organization. The athlete launches an appeal because he or she feels that selection criteria were improperly applied, thereby denying the athlete a spot on a team, an entry in a competition, or a nomination for the athlete assistance program. When it's warranted, the athlete can appeal this decision by using the organization's appeal policy or by going to the arbitration mechanism of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.

In some cases, a coach may assist an athlete with launching the appeal because the coach and athlete share the same goals and destiny. But the coach may also choose to stand aside and let the athlete handle the process on his or her own, or with the help of a representative such as a parent or lawyer. Having a knowledgeable representative may be best for the athlete who has to focus on training and must also maintain positive ongoing relationships with his or her teammates.

When making a decision about your best role as a coach, you need to consider the merits of the appeal, the age and maturity of the athlete, the preferences of the athlete's parents (especially in the case of younger athletes), your relationships with other coaches and athletes, and whether the appeal revolves around technical matters for which you might have a high degree of knowledge and thus can make an important contribution.



Kevin Lawrie is a researcher/writer with the Sport Law & Strategy Group, a consulting company operating in the amateur sport sector for more than 20 years. He has degrees in Sport Management and Education and a Masters in Applied Health Sciences. Kevin is an NCCP Level 3 certified baseball coach.

When coaches succeed, and when they fail

Coaches who have acted as the athlete's representative have experienced both success and failure. One example of a coach who experienced success is University of Guelph track coach Dave Scott-Thomas, who represented his athlete Eric Gillis in a successful appeal to Athletics Canada that saw the athlete become selected for and compete in the 2008 Olympic Games.

Rachel Corbett, founding partner with the Toronto-based Sport Law & Strategy Group and the administrator of the Gillis appeal, credits Scott-Thomas's success

to the fact that he was knowledgeable about the appeals process, confident in his assertions, highly respectful about the appeal panel, the work of the administrator, and of the entire process. “He did not exaggerate claims, stretch the truth, or criticize the technical expertise of the selectors at Athletics Canada,” says Corbett. “His approach and deferential tone made him a valued partner in a collaborative, problem-solving process, which is extraordinary given that appeals are adversarial to begin with.”

Corbett has also been involved in cases where coaches criticized the sport organization and its leaders and where coaches used a scattergun approach, “which involves a tiresome tirade about a lot of little errors instead of a thoughtful focus on one or two significant errors. It is important to understand that an appeal panel will have difficulty finding in favour of a party that is negative, critical, aggressive, and disrespectful.”

To be a strong athlete’s representative, a coach needs to fully understand the selection criteria and what errors may have been made. Appeals follow a very stringent process and adhering closely to these requirements gives the athlete’s appeal the best chance of succeeding.

Coaches can encounter problems if an appeal involves an athlete who may be de-selected if the appeal succeeds. If this occurs, coaches can find themselves pitted against each other. In some cases, a coach may have a relationship with both athletes, which also creates a dilemma. Sometimes a coach may not believe the appeal is warranted and may need to help the athlete understand what is best for both the athlete and the organization. Maintaining a cooperative atmosphere and an open line of communication are important in these situations.

When athletes appeal discipline decisions, coaches face an even tougher choice about getting involved as they are in the unenviable position of potentially defending or trivializing conduct that may have been detrimental to the organization. If the coach doesn’t get involved, their athlete may wonder why the coach is not a complete supporter. The coach must be delicate in determining if, how, and when to intervene in discipline appeals.

A good rule of thumb in these situations is for coaches to continue to act as the best coach possible for the athlete. This may mean intervening to stop a misguided athlete from launching an appeal, working with the athlete and other parties to try to find an alternative resolution to the dispute, assisting the athlete in making his or her own arguments, or acting as the athlete’s main representative.

ADVICE FROM A PRO: 8 TIPS

Cross-country coach Dave Scott-Thomas, who successfully appealed on behalf of his athlete Eric Gillis who was originally not selected to the athletics team for the 2008 Olympics, offers these tips:

- 1 Consider whether the athlete is emotionally prepared for the rigours of an appeals process.
- 2 The coach must be completely convinced of the merits of the appeal and must be confident about proving an error was made.
- 3 Prepare thoroughly for the appeal with background information, technical data, and performance indicators.
- 4 Enlist the support of other interested and qualified individuals and have them work with you as a team.
- 5 Back up arguments with proven facts that stay focused on legitimate issues.
- 6 Be honest — acknowledge when facts do not support your argument.
- 7 Understand that the appeal is not personal — you have to be logical, principled, direct, and completely unemotional.
- 8 Be respectful and professional — you will lose the appeal if you lose your cool.



KICK-START your coaching

17 Canadian coaches
share their top advice
for fellow coaches



ROB CHEREPUSCHAK

Coach, Regina Red Sox and
director of player personnel,
Western Major Baseball League

(NCCP Certified Level 3 baseball coach)

“Coaches need to understand that athletes perform at their best when they focus on the process. For me, this process is driven by the coach’s desire to help the athlete become a better person first. Coaches must focus on the individual before the athlete. In order to create a culture that supports this approach, it’s essential for coaches to model effective behaviour and develop trust with their athletes. There is no tool more critical to success than trust. Once this culture is established, the ceiling for success is very high.”



NATALIE LUKIW

Aboriginal coaches and officials program
coordinator, SaskSport and Coaches
Association of Saskatchewan

(NCCP Level 2 Certified volleyball coach)

“The most difficult part of coaching for me is making team selections and cutting youth. When faced with this challenge I encourage youth to keep on trying and not give up. We all develop at different stages and even though they may not make a team now, they may later on. I sometimes use my own personal example of getting cut from the team in Grade 8 to eventually representing Canada at an international level in both indoor and beach volleyball.”



ALICIA VEY

Head coach and junior team coach,
Mount Pearl Synchro, Mount Pearl,
Newfoundland and Labrador

*(NCCP Competition – Introduction
Trained synchro coach)*

“Keep things positive, encouraging and fun, while maintaining a strong dedication to excellence. It can be difficult for coaches in a small club setting to maintain the fun and social parts of sport while balancing this with high performance expectations and retaining athletes. While my athletes work hard, it’s imperative that we always encourage them and give positive feedback along with constructive criticism. They are more receptive to corrections and feedback if there’s a positive outlook and also tend to work harder when they know their efforts are appreciated.”



LUKAS STRITT

Men's head coach, Campia Gymnastics, Newfoundland and Labrador

(NCCP Level 3 Certified men's artistic gymnastics coach, Level 2 Certified women's artistic gymnastics coach, Level 2 Certified trampoline coach)

"Coaching is reflective by nature. The capacity of a coach to think creatively, imaginatively, and at times self-critically about his or her coaching practice is a key component in effective coaching and self-growth. Coaching is also a problem-solving activity. An important feature of coaching successfully is the willingness to try different methods, and treat failure as a challenge. One of my goals is to try different approaches to teaching a skill, and to find ways to tailor training sessions to fit the many different needs of many different athletes."



LISA DAVISON

Founder and coordinator of Shuttlesport North Central Badminton Academy, Prince George, B.C.

(NCCP Level 2 Certified badminton coach)

"If something seems scary, try it. Trust your instincts and don't be afraid to try something new. Start with a foundation of knowledge you are comfortable with and as your athlete's needs increase and your confidence grows, expand your coaching toolkit. Utilize the resources in your community by filling in the gaps, such as mental and physical training workshops. You do not always have to be the expert in everything. Also, it's important to know when to make a change and rejuvenate yourself. Reflection is a powerful way to celebrate your successes, learn from your challenges and ensure you are going in the direction you want to go. You can only be an effective coach if you're a happy and balanced coach."



LAURIE WACHS

Head coach, Saskatoon Aqualenes Synchronized Swimming Club and high performance director, Synchro Saskatchewan

(NCCP Level 3 Certified synchro coach)

"Create a vision and team culture that inspires you and each of your athletes to be passionate about coming to practice. In my club, our visionary role model is Yoda of *Star Wars*' fame. Everyone in our club lives by his famous quote 'Do or do not. There is no try!' At the start of the season, we show the footage of Luke Skywalker using the force and positive thought/belief to lift the ship out of the pond. We have Yoda banners and mascots to remind us daily to use the force within each of us to achieve our goals. It's also important to reward routinely and recognize relentlessly. When a club swimmer demonstrates 'Just do it' or 'light side/using the force' versus 'dark side' thinking, they are rewarded with a Yoda Pez dispenser. Our younger and older athletes are determined and excited to collect their earned Pez at the end of each practice. We also have an 'Athlete of the Month' award for a swimmer who lives the values our club athletes deem important to reach their goals, such as discipline and team work. Having a club vision or team culture that every swimmer, coach, and volunteer in our club has committed to, helps our members invest their spirit in our club. They see themselves as part of a larger whole and this has made our club unstoppable."



JEAN-PHILIPPE BÉLAIR

Head coach, National Montréal Midget Espoir

(NCCP Level 3 Certified hockey coach, Level 1 Certified soccer coach)

"You aren't coaching a team, you are coaching many different individuals. All players want to feel important, and to achieve this goal, the coach must adapt to each of the players. When this happens, players will put the team first because they know that they can really make a difference."



BARRY MORRISON

Head coach, Fredericton District Soccer Association, New Brunswick

(NCCP Level 4 Certified soccer coach)

“Design your practice or training sessions so that you are excited about leading them. This isn’t to say only plan fun activities or only plan things that you like to do — maybe challenge yourself with a new practice session, or different training methods. When you are excited about the practice you lead, you bring more energy, more passion and more fun to every aspect of the session. Believe it or not, athletes of all ages can tell when a coach is excited about what they are doing and it rubs off.”



ALLISON KIRBY

Head coach, Cygnus Gymnastics Training Centre, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador

(NCCP Level 2 Certified women’s artistic gymnastics coach)

“When you are feeling frustrated, at the verge of defeat, or underappreciated, always remember your athletes need you. Because of you, they are stronger. Because of you, they understand how to persevere. Because of you, they know that having high expectations for themselves brings better things their way. Because of you, they have confidence in their ability to get back up each time they fall. Remember, you are necessary and you are important. Do not forget that — ever.”



CATHARINE EDWARDS

Coach, Nanaimo Diamonds Synchro Club and program coordinator, PacificSport, Nanaimo, B.C.

(NCCP Level 3 Certified synchro coach)

“My favourite part of coaching is the relationships I’ve developed with my athletes and their families. Sure, it’s great to have a winning team or athletes who shine on the podium. But nothing is sweeter than having an athlete acknowledge that I was her first coach, that she thinks of me every time she swims her solo, and even though she is now an Olympic athlete, what I may have to say about her swim means something to her. During all of the rough times this makes it all worth it.”

CYRIL DORGIGNE

Junior head coach, Water Polo Canada and provincial head coach and executive director, Water Polo Sask

(NCCP Certified Competitive water polo coach)

“We all know that the perfect movement, the perfect skill, the perfect technique, and the perfect tactic will never be met. Your interest as a coach is not in this end. Instead, have a perfect idea of what you are expecting your athletes to accomplish, from the smallest detail of the smallest motion, to the smallest detail of the largest organization — and aim for this in the deepest way. It’s only with this exigency that you will be able to evaluate your orientation and make the changes that will become obvious in your path toward perfection.”

COLIN WALKER

President & CEO, Sportscan Corp., Ottawa, Ontario

(NCCP Certified basketball, hockey, soccer, and volleyball coach)

“I have three pieces of advice. First, love coming to practice every day. The opportunity to help a young athlete develop is such an awesome privilege. Second, be a lifelong learner and stay on top of trends and research. My approach to training, practices, and game management is so much different than when I first became a coach 30 years ago. Finally, have a seasonal plan that works with the athlete’s five-year development plan — it’s important to remember you have the athlete for one year but they are on a long journey.”

CINDY TYE

Coach, High Performance Program, Soccer Nova Scotia and head coach of NS U15 Girls

(NCCP Level 1 Certified soccer coach)

“I once had a coach tell me ‘don’t confuse activity with learning.’ That’s great advice when it comes to planning sessions. I try and follow these few simple steps when I plan my practices:
1. Determine a focus. Tell the players what we are trying to accomplish.
2. Engage them quickly. I love fast-paced and fun warm ups.
3. Make any drill relevant so they can connect it to the game.
4. Play a game to end things off.
I always try for fast, flowing, and fun!”



SUZANNE CHAULK

Coach, The Coven WRFC and the eastern Ontario component of Ontario Rugby's Highway to High Performance 7s program

(NCCP Level 4 Certified rugby coach)

"Most coaches have a collection of expressions that reflect their coaching philosophy and capture their preferred style of play. One I frequently use is: 'mistakes are simply opportunities in disguise.' As demanding as rugby can be physically, it is even more demanding cognitively, which means decision-making and the ability to problem-solve are key assets in an athlete's toolkit. I am a big believer in unstructured play — too much structure simply teaches your athletes to implement your decisions and does little to teach them how to make their own. However, the process of learning how to make good decisions requires athletes to take risks and manage the mistakes that may result. None of this is possible unless we provide them with an environment where it is not only safe to err, but where mistakes are welcomed as opportunities for learning. Encouraging athletes to take risks, make decisions, and problem-solve in the game will in turn empower them to become citizens capable of critical thinking in all aspects of their lives."

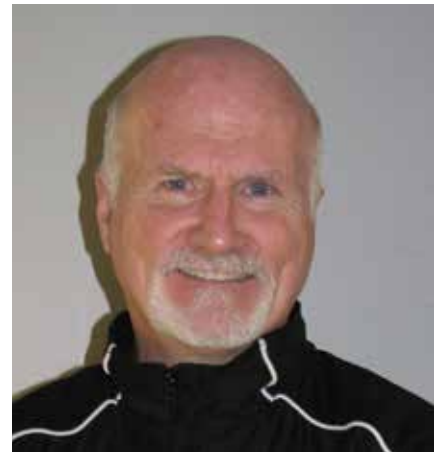


JODI GRAM

Head coach, Team Ontario (women's basketball) and performance analyst, Cadette Women's National Team

(NCCP Certified Competition – Introduction Learn to Train basketball coach)

"If I exemplify the things that our team has deemed important to our culture, then I can hold my players and staff accountable to their roles with confidence. So I ask myself these questions: Am I early and prepared for training, bringing energy, parking outside distractions, and controlling what I can control? How did I react to, and move forward from, our last poor performance? What part did I play in owning it, learning from it, and planning to improve it? Am I working on a goal for myself that is action-oriented and can be measured? Am I listening to my players and staff, questioning them, and implementing or exploring the ideas that they offer?"



LARRY SADLER

Coach and director, SmartGoalie, Toronto, Ontario

(NCCP Level 2 Certified hockey coach)

"Coaching knowledge is no one's exclusive property, yet I know of coaches who prevent others from taping their practices because they might 'steal' something. Knowledge is like a great meal — it's better shared. Fear becoming an 'expert,' lest you think you've 'arrived.' Good coaches know that when it comes to knowledge we never 'arrive' — we're always moving forward. Keep questioning yourself. For the past five years I've been travelling to Finland to study goaltending. My first visit showed me that my prior knowledge was incomplete and just plain wrong. I redesigned my entire program as a result and continue to re-tweak it daily."



BILL LAING

Head coach, Northern Edge Snowboard Club, Mackenzie, B.C.

(NCCP Certified Competition – Introduction Snowboard Coach – Speed)

"Maintain a balance in your coaching and personal life. Look inside yourself and remember why you became a coach. This will help keep your passion alive and help sustain it in the future."



REACH FOR THE TOP

Celebrated basketball coach Allison McNeill has mentored a generation of coaches, including current Canadian national team head coach, Lisa Thomaidis

By Lori Ewing

Allison McNeill laughs about it now, but in her early days as head coach of the Canadian women's national basketball team, she didn't find it so funny. She recalls many times just before tip-off in international games when officials would come over to greet the head coach and pass right by her and Lisa Thomaidis, her assistant at the time, to make a beeline for McNeill's husband, Mike, who was also one of her assistants. "Mike would just point to me and say, 'She's the head coach,' and shake his head," says McNeill.

McNeill was a rarity at the time — a woman in charge in a sport that was, and still is, dominated by men. At the 2006 women's basketball world championship, just three teams (the U.S., Australia, and Canada) had female head coaches — and McNeill was one of them. At the 2010 worlds it was just Australia and Canada. Two years later, at the London Olympics, it was the same two teams.

When McNeill retired from Canada's national team after the London Games and more than a decade on the job, Thomaidis was hired to replace her after an extensive international search by Canada Basketball. The move keeps Canada ahead of the curve when it

comes to female basketball coaches (both women are big believers in mentoring young female coaches), and makes for what McNeill says is "a seamless transition that's best for the program."

The transition was a natural one, since Thomaidis had been McNeill's long time assistant and, along with Mike McNeill, the trio brought respectability to a program they pulled from the ashes to back-to-back world championship appearances and a quarter-final berth in London. But more than that, the trio comprised a solid coaching force. "The three of us made such a great pair," jokes Thomaidis.

Sights set on coaching

McNeill and Thomaidis both knew early on they wanted to have careers in coaching. The 54-year-old McNeill played high school basketball in Salmon Arm, B.C., winning 89 games in a row and back-to-back provincial titles on a team that boasted Canadian Basketball Hall of Famer Bev Smith. She went on to play at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, and then at the University of Oregon, where she first discovered her love of coaching while working at basketball camps.

Thomaidis, 42, got a similar start to her coaching career, working at camps at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, where she earned three Ontario University Athletics all-star selections with the McMaster Marauders before heading overseas to play professionally in the Greek first division. During her summers back home, she coached with Basketball Ontario, and then was hired as head coach of the University of Saskatchewan's women's Huskies team, just two years out of university. "They took a chance on someone totally new and totally green. It worked out for me for sure," she says. In the 14 years that followed, Thomaidis transformed the Huskies into a team that's consistently in the top ten in Canadian Interuniversity Sport.

After more than a decade together on the bench, you might think McNeill and Thomaidis view the game the same way. While there are similarities — both are strong communicators who are player-oriented — they each have their own unique coaching style. "We worked hard to establish a certain way of playing, a certain demeanour, and type of player," says McNeill, referring to her partnership with Thomaidis. "We were



PHOTO COURTESY CANADA BASKETBALL

Allison McNeill (left) and Lisa Thomaidis

very collaborative, so a lot of what we did was also what she believed. I know she'll change some things, but it will be good."

McNeill is more obvious in her passion for the game. For example, in the two-year run-up to qualifying for the London Olympic Games, she used the numbers "2012" in all of her email and banking passwords. Thomaidis, meanwhile, says her approach is more of a practical one. "It's very obvious that Allison is very passionate. Me, I'm a little understated and more of an introvert. I'm

a little more black and white, very logical," she says. "The teams I coach are going to be more prepared than their opponent, and smarter than their opponent. That's how my teams have been successful — we play the game very intelligently and we're very prepared. I hope when [the national team] players step on the floor, they know there's nothing more they need to know to be successful."

Despite the fact that they're both NCCP Level 4 coaches, the women agree there's no end to learning as a coach. McNeill established the Women's Coach-

ing Circle in B.C. in 2009 to provide female basketball coaches with the opportunity to interact with and learn from senior coaches and facilitators.

She jokes about how every family vacation she and Mike take is to a coaching camp of some sort — perhaps with a couple of days of golf tacked on. She makes a point of attending one every spring and fall. One of those trips was to Las Vegas for a camp that included more than 200 coaches from the NBA and NCAA — it was memorable because she was the only female coach.

McNeill: An admirable legacy

Leading the way for a new generation of female coaches

Allison McNeill won the Geoff Gowan Award from the Coaching Association of Canada for her contribution to coaching development, and her legacy can be seen on the benches of basketball teams from Australia to Germany. Between McNeill and Lisa Thomaidis, Canada should see another generation of coaches following in these women's footsteps.

Canadian team players who are now coaching include:

- Claudia Brassard: Coaches in Townsville, Australia for the Townsville Fire
- Nikki Johnson: Coaches Theo-Koch-Schule in Germany, and will be an assistant with the German national team this summer
- Jordan Adams: Assistant coach at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California
- Kaela Yuen (formerly Chapdelaine): Coaches the Mercer Island High School girls team in Seattle
- Kadie Riverin: Skills development coach for Ryerson University in Toronto
- Alisha Tatham and Tamara Tatham: Run basketball camps in Ontario
- Carrie Watson: Assistant coach at University of British Columbia
- Megan Pinske: Assistant coach at the University of Alberta
- Courtney Pilypaitis: Assistant coach at University of Vermont
- Leanne Evans: Assistant coach at University of Victoria

Speaking up

How McNeill faced her fear of public speaking

Allison McNeill is an eloquent and sought-after public speaker who has addressed crowds numbering in the hundreds.

It's hard to believe she once was so shy she was afraid to address her teammates at basketball practice.

McNeill was a junior at the University of Oregon when she first faced her fear of public speaking by asking her coaches if she could make a presentation to her team. She prepared for four hours for a talk that took less than ten minutes.

In the 30-plus years since that talk, McNeill has become one of Canadian sport's most popular motivational speakers. She presents about a dozen speeches a year, for crowds of up to 800 people.

She attributes her confidence at the podium to a public speaking course she took at Simon Fraser University — as well as her development as a coach.


"You just gain confidence the more you do it," she says. "And as you get more experience, you have more knowledge to share."

Need for female coaches

With the progression to higher levels in sport, there are fewer female coaches, McNeill says. In addition to the scarcity of women in the upper ranks, she also questions the motivation of the occasional technical calls she's received from officials and believes some were the result of her being a vocal female coach. "I've hardly ever gotten [a technical foul], but [when I have] it's when I've stood up and said something. Internationally, sometimes maybe it was a male referee who didn't want a little woman standing up and yapping at him," she says with a laugh.

Humour aside, McNeill says it's not easy being a female coach. She and Mike ensured they mentored Thomaidis from the first day she joined them on the Canadian team bench. "I think there can be more criticism sometimes of a female coach and I don't know why. [Some say] we're not qualified, or we got the job because we're female. But that's not true. For us to get there, we had to be very qualified." The lopsided ratio of male to female coaches is unfortunate, agrees Thomaidis. "I think women bring a whole different perspective and approach to coaching. And I think if you don't see females coaching, you don't see it as a viable profession; you don't see it as something you can do."

McNeill, who has more than 30 years of coaching experience, says she was fortunate to have great mentors, such as the late Joe Kupkee, her high school coach at Salmon Arm, who "pushed very hard but you knew he cared." There was also Bev Bland, her predecessor at Simon Fraser University, and former long time University of Victoria coach Kathy Shields.

Now numerous women can count McNeill and Thomaidis as their mentors and are following in their footsteps. Says Thomaidis: "Some really great people have gone on to give back to the game." 

Lori Ewing is a sports reporter with The Canadian Press

MAKING THE RIGHT CALL

How coaches can learn to handle ethical decisions

By Anne Bokma

Athletes who feel pressed to play when injured, biased referees who make unfair calls, parents who try to bribe a coach to get a spot on the team for their child, sports stars who use performance enhancing drugs or tamper with equipment in the hopes of improving their performance, teams that agree to throw a match in order to get an easier seed in the next round — the sports world is filled with plenty of examples of questionable ethical behaviour. As a coach, it's important to be able to identify such problematic situations, but, more importantly, you need to know what to do about them.

Handling ethical dilemmas can be tricky territory for coaches, says Cyndie Flett, former vice-president of research and development with the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC). "It's not usually the sport-specific stuff such as their technical or tactical expertise that can potentially get coaches into trouble — it's problem solving ethical dilemmas that causes them the most stress and can lead to challenges with parents, board members, or athletes. I've seen coaches walk away from or be removed from their coaching positions because of these types of situations."

Coaches who want to learn how to handle all types of ethical situations should complete the *Make Ethical Decisions* workshop, a cornerstone module of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) offered by the CAC. The workshop helps coaches identify the legal,



ethical, and moral implications of difficult situations that present themselves in the world of team and individual sport.

During the 3½ hour workshop, participants interact with a skilled learning facilitator and other coaches for face-to-face learning that is focused on working through a six-step decision-making process for resolving ethical problems. "This module is the gold standard for coaches who want to improve their ethical decision-making skills," says Flett. "It will help them improve their confidence on the approach they should take when resolving problems. And the competencies and skills they gain are transferable — this six-step process is one they can

use in their coaching, in their work environment, and in their personal and family environment."

Other modules offered by the CAC that build on the *Make Ethical Decisions* workshop include: *Empower+*, which teaches coaches how to ensure they are providing a safe and positive training and competition environment for their athletes, and *Leading Drug-free Sport*, which assists coaches with their leadership of athletes as it relates to anti-doping.

To sign up for any of these programs, contact your provincial/territorial coaching representative (<http://www.coach.ca/-p140497>) for more information.

What would you do?

Two coaches each tackle an ethical scenario.
See how they respond.



MARCEL LACROIX
Associate Director of Sports,
University of Calgary
Olympic Coach Specialist,
Canadian Olympic Committee

A struggling skater reaches out to his old coach, thinking that the coach may be able to help improve his performance more than his current coach. How should the athlete's previous coach handle the situation?

Here's the scenario from the perspective of the skater: "I came away from the national speed skating selections knowing I was going to need to make a

change in order to salvage this season, so I returned to the person who helped bring me success in the past. I contacted my former coach to discuss why I'm not skating the way I should. I decide that if he offers me a spot in his training group, I'll go and it will fix everything.

When I sit down with my old coach and start to explain how my current coach and I aren't connecting, how I can't stand my training group, how I miss skating with him and how what I'm doing isn't working, he listens patiently. I stop short of asking to join his group outright because I want him to say he can make me faster and he wants to coach me, and then we can get to work. But he doesn't. Instead, he asks if I'm stronger than I've ever been. I say I am. He asks if my endurance is better than it has been, and again the answer is yes. When he asks about my technique, I tell him it's worse than when I was with him. I think this is the point at which he will say he can fix my technique if we work together, but instead he asks why I think my technique isn't what it should be. I get impatient and all I can think to say is that my current coach isn't helping me the way he should.

My old coach starts to smile and explains that since I'm now in a very elite group I'm stronger and fitter than I've ever been. He says I'm working with a coach who genuinely wants me to go faster, and if I'm not it's my own fault. We talk for a while and although I'm disappointed not to be working with him again, I realize he is right and I was looking for someone else to solve my problems. Once I accept the fact that the problem is my own, rather than get angry and frustrated with my group and my coach, I am able to once again take control and commit to making myself better.

Since my meeting with my old coach, the transformation in my skating has been dramatic. Small technical changes and major attitude changes resulted in great training days and even better races. Last week I skated two of my best times, one in the 1500 m and the other in the 5000 m (my second fastest time ever skated)."

In this real case scenario, the previous coach could have done what many have done in the past — offer his "special fix" and make this struggling athlete his own. He could have listened, sympathized, undermined the athlete's actual coach, and taken away any responsibility or wrongdoing on the athlete's part. By doing so, he would have taken the wrong ethical pathway.

Instead, this coach made the right ethical decision and made it for the good of the athlete. He had the courage to let the athlete know that the solution to his problems needed to come from within — not from the previous coach. The coach in this case was courageous because it's never easy to tell people things they don't want to hear. Thanks to the wisdom of the coach, this athlete learned a valuable lesson that will last a lifetime.

GENERAL TIPS ABOUT ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

- When in doubt about what to do, consider the NCCP's Do No Harm principle
- Never second-guess yourself on decisions made with integrity, intelligence, thoroughness, and based on accepted values, core principles, and expected standards of behaviour.
- Make sure you are clear about your coaching values and that you can talk about them in a way that is easily understood by everyone.
- Cross-reference your coaching values and principles with the NCCP Code of Ethics.

Source: Make Ethical Decisions: Reference Material



KATHY BROOK
Senior Coaching Consultant
Coaching Association of Canada

Coaching a high school basketball team presents plenty of ethical dilemmas. Fortunately, thanks to the NCCP’s ethical decision-making process (see chart), I can solve these dilemmas quickly and efficiently.

The upcoming season looks promising since I have some returning players. The team has spent a lot of years at the bottom of the league, sometimes getting beaten by 40 points. Now it looks like we might be able to move up in the standings. In exhibition play, we beat out another team by a wide margin. This is mostly due to the provincial level player we have on our team. If we focus on this all-star, we may be able to make the play-offs. The team and school could use the boost that

this would represent. It’s the beginning of the season and as a coach I have to decide which style of play we’ll go with and which tactics we’ll use. I have two choices: build a system around our star player and be guaranteed a number of wins, or build a system to develop the entire team, which might mean losing some games.

I decided to focus on the entire team. My job as a coach is not to worry about winning games, but to teach all players the game. Each player pays the same amount of money and gives the same amount of time. In the end, the all-star player went on a university visit to the U.S. during our first play-off game. Our team was able to win the game since all players had contributed during the season. When we found out our all-star was going to be absent, no one was worried and the team rose to the occasion. It was also good for the all-star to have to play a different role, improving her ability to pass, which, in the end, demonstrates the kind of leadership that may improve her chances to gain the scholarship she was looking for. The U.S. schools never watched one high school game and didn’t seem concerned with the high school stats. When the American coaches asked me about the all-star player’s leadership, marks, and work ethic, I could report that all of these improved. All of this confirmed that focusing on the entire team was the right thing to do.

DECISION	PROS	CONS	CONSEQUENCE
Play around all-star	Develop all-star for future play; possible scholarship to U.S. university Win games Team and school improves confidence	Rest of team doesn’t develop	Not discovering some potential player If all-star player gets hurt or injured, no one to take their place Other teams can easily defend
Develop whole team	Teach sport Develop all players Everyone makes a contribution Develop individual player confidence Build program	May take longer May lose games All-star may not have the ball as much so therefore stats will not be as good	May lose All-star may not get scholarship

THE 6-STEP ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

1. Establish the facts

Determine what has happened and who is involved.

2. Decide whether the situation involves legal or ethical issues

To determine whether the situation has legal implications, assess whether anyone has been harmed and whether the situation contravenes any laws. If it’s a legal situation, the coach has a duty to do something about it. Some forms of conduct may be unethical even though they are legal — actions or decisions that are immoral, unprofessional, or unjust can represent unethical behaviour.

3. Identify your options

Once several options for a decision have been identified, assess the possible consequences of each option.

4. Evaluate your options

The NCCP Code of Ethics (www.coach.ca/files/NCCP_Code_of_Ethics_2012_en.pdf) and the associated expected behavioural standards are important criteria to apply when determining the merit of the options open to you. Coaching decisions should reflect a fair balance between the outcomes sought (i.e., striving to do what is good for individuals or the team) and the means used to achieve them (i.e., striving to do things right).

5. Choose the best option

In deciding the best course of action, ask yourself what the NCCP Code of Ethics suggests in this type of situation and which of the Code’s five core values you consider to be most important. Even though it’s a sensitive issue to suggest ranking values, the NCCP considers it a coach’s duty above all to ensure the decision made does not result in harm — physical or otherwise — to athletes. In a moral dilemma, physical safety or the health of athletes is the overriding concern. The NCCP training program offers a series of questions designed to help you validate your decision.

6. Implement your decision

This step involves considering likely outcomes, identifying who needs to be informed of the decision, determining if you can seek an informal resolution, informing the person of the consequences of what might happen if a situation is not resolved, and thinking about what you might do next if the chosen plan of action doesn’t work.

Source: Adapted from the NCCP’s Make Ethical Decisions: Coach Workbook

My favourite coach: Lasse Ericsson

Karolina Wisniewska

I'm an eight-time Paralympic medallist, a World Champion, an Overall World Cup Champion and I've won dozens of World Cup races in my sport of alpine skiing. So, you might be wondering: who coached me to achieve all that success? I have had many coaches over the years. Some were incredible skiers and technicians, some were supportive and very knowledgeable, some stressed me out, some were ego-maniacs — you get the picture. As an athlete, you need to try and learn as much as you can from each coach. Even though the list of people who have coached me is long, one coach stands out above the rest: Lasse Ericsson, World Cup coach with the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team.

Like almost all the coaches on the Para-alpine circuit, Lasse started out coaching able-bodied skiers. In 1996, he was asked to join the Paralympic team in his native Sweden as an assistant coach. Two years later, he coached his first Paralympic Games, and I participated in the Games for the first time that year too. When I look back on Nagano, I realize I went into those Games expecting so much of myself. I came out of Nagano with two silver medals which, by any standard, was fantastic. But what haunted me most was the fact that I didn't win a gold. That lit a fire in me to train harder than I ever had for the 2002 Salt Lake City Games, but our national team head coach changed three times between Nagano and Salt Lake City and I felt like I was constantly having to adapt to new coaches. Even though he wasn't my coach for many years to come, Lasse was there for me at that time — I could always ask his opinion during course inspection, or have

him assess how I had skied. He would tell me what I needed to hear, not necessarily what I wanted to hear. If I skied badly, he would tell me. But he would also tell me why I skied that way and, most importantly, what changes I needed to make.

Lasse also provided this kind of inspiration to two of his most accomplished athletes — Ronny Persson, a sit-skier from Sweden, and Asle Tangvik, an above-the-knee amputee from Norway. At the 2002 Salt Lake City Games, Lasse was the head coach of the Swedish team, which accomplished something remarkable when it won six medals at those Games.

After Salt Lake City, Lasse coached for both Sweden and Norway and in 2004 he and his family moved to Kimberley, B.C. At the 1998 Games in Nagano, Lasse had met Kevin Jardine, who also became one of my coaches. Thanks to Jardine, by the 2006 Paralympic Games in Torino, Lasse was helping coach a massive U.S. team which consisted of 27 athletes. The following year, I was at my first Nationals since retiring after a bad concussion in 2003. The Nationals happened to be in Kimberley, and that's where I once again met up with Lasse. I was in the midst of making my comeback for 2010 and had just started working with another great coach, Mike Clarke. I couldn't wait to introduce these two men to one another and, to this day, I think it's the best match I've ever made. In June 2007, I was at my first official camp with the National Development Team since my comeback, and both Mike and Lasse were coaching me. This was a great experience for me and it was especially meaningful to have Lasse there since he had known me for so long

and knew how I skied. My skiing progressed so well that I was asked to attend a camp with the World Cup Team in Chile that year.

Lasse and Mike stayed on as the Canadian Para-alpine development coaches to the 2010 Games in Vancouver. While I had moved on to the World Cup Team and was being coached by others, I still felt Lasse was there for me. I'm one of those people who believes that once someone great has been my coach, in a way they are always my coach. Lasse is no exception. I could always ask him questions and get his feedback. I was so excited to share my experience — and my two bronze medals — with him in 2010.

I'm happy to report that Lasse is still coaching for Canada. The team of athletes who competed in Sochi includes many old teammates and friends including Chris Williamson and his guide, Robin Fémy, Kimberly Joines, Josh Dueck, and Matt Hallat. It also included a whole bumper crop of amazing new young athletes who have been coached by Lasse, including Mac Marcoux and his brother and guide, Billy Joe; Braydon Luscombe, Caleb Brousseau, Kirk Schornstein, Kurt Oatway, Alex Starker, Alana Ramsay and Erin Latimer. I was lucky to be in Sochi with my job at Sport Canada and was able to get some time away from my duties to go and watch these skiers race and bring home some hardware. Like each of these skiers, I have had many people help me throughout my skiing career and I am proud to acknowledge one very special coach: Thanks Lasse!

Karolina Wisniewska is a senior program officer with Sport Canada in Ottawa, Ontario.

Lasse Ericsson has been a constant support and influential mentor for Paralympic alpine ski champion Karolina Wisniewska



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 overdosage 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.



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Playing like a Girl

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE FEMININE APPROACH TO SPORT AND COMPETITION

By Jennifer Walinga

The word “compete” means to strive or vie for something for which others are contending. Without others, competition does not occur. Research studies of gender differences highlight ways that girls and boys differ in their approach to learning and competing in sport. Competition is described as a “learned” social process that is influenced by the social environment. Patterns of play result from the influence of socializing agents and institutions. Family, friends, teachers, and role models are socializing agents; institutions of socialization include education, government, religion, the media, and sport. Studies have shown that “girls typically interact in a cooperative and caring way within a competitive sport environment whereas boys tend to interact in an individualized and egocentric way.” At the same time, masculine traits can be seen as more valuable than feminine traits in competitive sport, and female athletes are typically valued more highly as athletes, by themselves and others, when they “demonstrate masculine traits.”

This article considers the consequences of valuing one competitive approach over another in sport, both for athletes and for the culture of sport, and asks what we can learn from the female approach to competition that can inform and enhance the current culture of sport.

One could argue that feminine competitive traits are also valuable, and that such traits could potentially inform and enhance the social conceptualization of competitive sport. Integrating the feminine approach to the competitive sport culture could help to resolve some of the challenges and issues currently threatening the reputation of sport, such as doping, cheating, violence, and abuse, much of which is born of an individualistic mentality. If competitive sport were grounded in

Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching Online

What an important perspective this article provides! Author Jennifer Walinga conclusively demonstrates the immense value “the feminine approach to sport and competition” could bring to the experience — if only it was accepted and entrenched. What is required, she suggests, “is a paradigmatic shift in sport culture that moves beyond ‘winning’ to ‘human excellence.’” So powerful. So challenging. The implications are huge, but does Canada’s sport community have the will to accept this approach? Enough said. Read this article and be convinced.

—Sheila Robertson, Journal Editor

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the values of care and cooperation in addition to individualization and egocentricity, the culture of competitive sport could broaden and evolve to a new level of play that expands and supersedes the win-at-all-costs approach.

There are costs associated with the abdication of feminine attributes in competitive sport. This article examines the benefits of an approach that integrates both the feminine and masculine competitive approaches and holds human excellence as its fundamental goal, as opposed to simply the goal of ‘winning.’ It also includes a review of the literature on gender differences in competitive and learning style in sport, describes the current culture of competitive sport — which includes dominant values and beliefs guiding coaching and athlete interactions — and discusses the implications for girls attempting to compete within a sport culture that runs counter to feminine values and beliefs. It concludes by identifying ways that the feminine approach could inform and enhance sport’s culture and reputation, and recommending strategies for building a sport culture that leverages the best of both genders.

Gender differences in competitive approach and learning style in sport

Common themes emerge within the limited and often complex literature on gender differences in competitive and learning style in sport. Minimal research has been conducted on how girls and young women experience, value, or approach competitive sport, and results stemming from this research are complicated, entwined in cultural, societal, familial, and personal factors and influences. However, themes do emerge to differentiate young women’s approach to competition and sport participation from those of young men, including differences in stress appraisal, focus, values, and goals.

Women and men differ in their interpretations of the process of competition and the structure of cooperation. Generally, female athletes value the interdependence between cooperation and competition both within a team and between opponents, while male athletes are more concerned with the outcome of competition. “For women, the primary experience of self is relational, that is, the self is organized and developed in the context of important relationship,” wrote Janet

Surrey. This model contrasts the traditional separation/individuation model of development. John Dickinson, in his study of 125 athletes, found gender differences regarding competitive style with boys scoring significantly higher in focus on skill and speed and girls in focus on luck. Mark Anshel and colleagues found differences in perception of competition stressors involving a cheating opponent, experiencing pain, and a 'bad' call by the referee/umpire between genders. Jonathan Wildman discovered significant differences between men and women on variables measuring preferred performance/task, relationship, motivation, and representation behaviours.

These studies indicate the most stark difference between genders to be that of goal orientation: a person with a predominantly task orientation defines success as mastering tasks or improving one's personal skills, whereas an individual with a primarily ego orientation defines success as being better than competitors. Stephanie Hanrahan and Ester Cerin, in their study of 272 athletes (108 males and 164 females) from team and individual sports competing at recreational and competitive levels, found girls scored significantly higher on task orientation than boys. Likewise, studies using the Sport Orientation Questionnaire devised by Diane Gill and Tom Deeter, which examines competitiveness, win orientation, and goal orientation in competitive sports, revealed that while males consistently score higher than females in sport competitiveness and win orientation, females scored just as high on goal achievement. Thus, the gender differences observed do not reflect interest in competitive sport, but interest in winning.

The difference in competitive values and goals between genders is clear, and most likely socially and culturally mediated. Perhaps most problematic is the differing cultural valuation of these competitive orientations. Valuing one competitive approach over the other poses consequences for girls attempting to compete in a 'man's world,' according to her 'woman's values and goals' and for a society attempting to develop social capacity.

The current culture of sport

Culture takes shape when values, beliefs, and assumptions are communicated, shared, and enacted. The values, assumptions, and beliefs enacted in western sport are typically masculine in nature and based on a military model: the object of the game is to win, dominate your opponent with size, strength, speed, and skill, and develop and run both a strong defensive and offensive strategy. Little exists in the coaching media, literature, handbooks, or training materials to highlight the value of striving for excellence, understanding one's opponent, collaborating with one's team and one's opponent, sharing best practices, or being creative in sport. Instead, girls must negotiate a competitive environment dominated by masculinity by supplanting these feminine values with masculine or androgynous traits. Often, a woman's only choice in the competitive sport arena is to compete like a man.

Competitive sport requires competitive behaviours. In many cultures, however, those behaviours are considered appropriate only for males. As a place where traditionally masculine traits and qualities such as performance, strength, power, dominance, and winning are glorified, sport is not as encouraged or celebrated for girls and women as it is for boys and men. Research into sport as male territory has highlighted the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" or "cultural dominance of a masculinity that embodies traits which legitimate patriarchy, the dominant position of some men over others, and the subordination of women":

"... we don't have a word — or even a concept — for a 'tall strong feminine woman'...we have instead the word Amazon, a term equated with female power and in the same breath with masculinity and therefore deviance or aberrance" (Mariah Nelson, 1994, p. 67).

For girls attempting to compete within a sport culture that runs counter to feminine values and beliefs, devalues feminine competitive orientation, and offers little to

no space for feminine values to thrive in the sport culture, the implications are significant. As Cheryl Cooky and Mary MacDonald report in their narrative inquiry into the lived experiences of 10 young girls, the dominant sport culture shapes and places limitations on the experiences and the possible narratives girls could co-create to understand their experiences within the institution of sport. While the 'tomboy' approach may satisfy many girls, the absence of feminine values within the cultural framework of sport leaves a cultural gap and communicates a negative message to those who uphold feminine values as well.

Of course, the implications of denying important human values are significant for an individual, and for a society. Girls cannot win. Those who strive to play according to masculine values and goals are perceived as deviant; those who strive to play with a collectivist mindset are perceived as non-athletes. Likewise, a society focused solely on winning, individualism, and being better than one's opponent, is missing the overarching goal of sport—human excellence.

Playing like a girl in a boy culture

There's no doubt that the feminine approach could inform and enhance western sport's culture and reputation and that strategies are needed to build a sport culture that leverages the best qualities in the approaches of both genders. What may be called for is a paradigmatic shift in competitive sport culture that moves beyond winning to human excellence. Feminine-oriented athletes need not only to be allowed to play, but to play as they want to. Such a shift in focus may be fostered by a more intentional and complete integration of both the feminine and masculine approaches to competitive sport.

Integrating the best of both gendered values in competitive sport would essentially androgynize sport by making sport more about human excellence through competition than simply about winning through competition. A focus on human excellence would encourage competition



“Perhaps it will be from women that the world of sports is reminded about the performance-enhancing aspects of teamwork.”

— (Timothy Wildman, 1998, p. 80).

as a collaborative effort and contextualize outcomes as collective, thereby discouraging cheating, violence, doping, and abuse.

Coaches and athletes themselves have the power to shift culture by communicating a new, more integrated set of values, beliefs, and assumptions. As Katie Liston says, “sport can highlight and challenge the polarization of the binary oppositions of masculinity and femininity. In particular, it is the sports persons themselves who can challenge the perceptions of gender, masculinity, and femininity.” Kari Fasting and Sheila Scraton support the power of sport to transform itself, acting as an important sphere for the disruption of the binary oppositions of masculinity and femininity and the emergence of potentially transgressive forms of sporting femininities.

Efforts can be made to shift the culture of competitive sport by intentionally seeking

channels by which to communicate integrated values, assumptions, and beliefs. Athletes can share their narrative experiences of sport as a collectivist rather than gendered activity. Spectators can be challenged to cheer for demonstrations of excellence as opposed to taking sides. Parents and educators can teach young children to focus on setting goals, challenging themselves and others, all for the purpose of bettering the overall mark as opposed to besting each other. The idea is not to be better than our opponent; the idea is to be the best we can be together. Imagine a coach handing out cards to the parents in the stands that say: “Today, let’s try cheering for both teams to see what happens.”

Finally, we can acknowledge more intentionally the values, icons, and role models we already possess as beacons of more holistic sport values. Olympic values could be better integrated into our educa-

tional systems, and better leveraged by coaches, educators, and parents as an illustration of the overall goals of sport: excellence, respect, friendship. Writers and broadcasters can act with greater awareness of the role that feminine values play in sport, highlight the link between competition and human excellence, and celebrate the outcomes more intelligently and explicitly.

References available upon request.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Jennifer Walinga earned a PhD in Organizational Studies from the University of Victoria, where she developed a coaching process called Integrated Focus that she applies with individuals and organizations. As a facilitator, educator, and consultant, she draws heavily upon her experience as a member of Canada’s Commonwealth, world, and Olympic gold medal rowing teams from 1983 to 1992. She is the mother of three and is an active member of the athletic and educational communities in Victoria.

BACKEND

STATS & FACTS FROM THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES IN SOCHI



Canadian women's hockey gold medalists

CANADIAN COACHES AT SOCHI

Canada was represented by 108 coaches at the winter Olympic Games and 11 coaches at the Paralympic Games. The oldest coach at the Olympics was curling coach Tom Coulterman (68), while the youngest was snowboarder Mark McMorris' personal coach Adam Burwell (26).

MOST MEDALS, LEAST ATHLETES

The speed skating team from The Netherlands won 23 medals (eight gold, seven silver, eight bronze) with just 41 athletes in Sochi. Canada earned one more medal with 180 more athletes.

While the Netherlands led the total for medals per athlete (one medal for every 1.7 competitors), Belarus was second with one medal for every four competitors, followed by Norway (one medal for every 5.15 athletes), and France and Russia (one medal for every seven athletes).

ON GUARD FOR THEE

With 221 athletes and 25 medals, Canada scored one medal per 8.8 athletes in Sochi – 12th overall out of 88 countries. Canada had the top medal count of all countries in curling (2/0/0), hockey (2/0/0), and freestyle skiing (4/4/1).

BRINGING HOME THE HARDWARE

Norwegian biathlete Ole Einar Bjoerndalen became the most decorated winter Olympian in history, winning his 13th career medal in Sochi. Another Norwegian cross-country skier, Marit Bjoergen, became the most decorated female Winter Olympian ever. She won her sixth career gold in Sochi.

Dutch speedskater Ireen Wust was the most decorated athlete in Sochi taking home five medals (two golds and three silvers). Norwegian biathlete Tora Berger and Suk Hee Shim, a Korean short-track skater, had the Olympic rainbow award, winning gold, silver and bronze at these Winter Games.

BELARUS & CROATIA MAKE THEIR MARK

Belarusian athletes won five golds and finished eighth in the medal count. On her own, biathlete Darya Domracheva (three gold medals) did better in Sochi than her entire nation had done at the five previous Winter Olympics.

Croatia was the smallest delegation to medal, winning one with just 11 athletes.

POOR PERFORMERS

The worst medal-per-athlete rate was Slovakia, which won a single medal for its 62 athletes. The biggest delegations not to medal in Sochi were Romania and Estonia, both shutout with 24 athletes each.

JUST MISSING THE GOLD

The hard-luck athlete in Sochi was Russian cross-country skier Maxim Vylegzhanin. He won three silvers, the final two coming in races that totaled 2 hours, 13 minutes. In those, he was a combined 1.68 seconds away from gold.



Vladimir Putin with Maxim Vylegzhanin.

SOURCE: USA Today sports

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