

THE MAGAZINE FOR CANADA'S COACHES

VOL 3 NO1
WINTER 2015

COACHES

plan

SHOOTING COACH
BOB KIERSTEAD
AIMS HIGH

TOP COACH
SHAWNEE HARLE
ON BEING HONEST
WITH ATHLETES

COACHING
MASTERS ATHLETES

Trina Campbell, masters women's water polo club coach

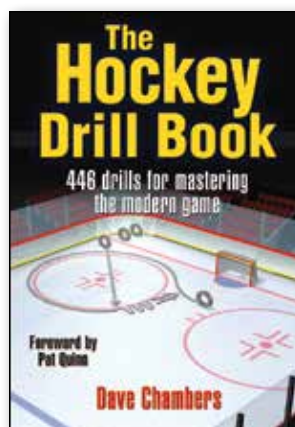
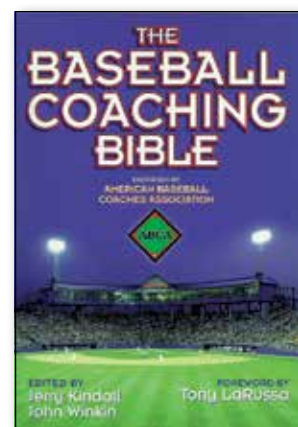
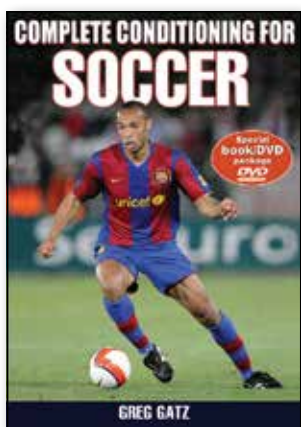
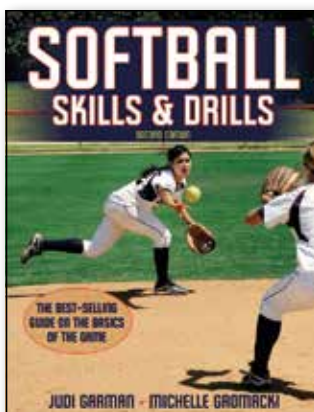
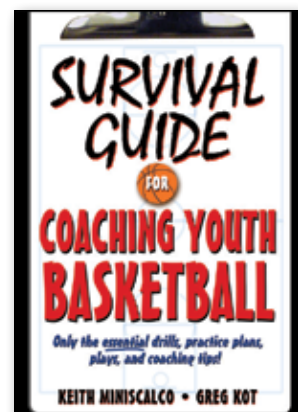
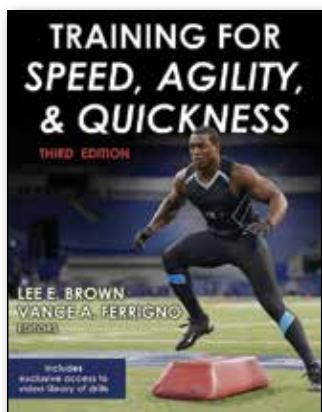
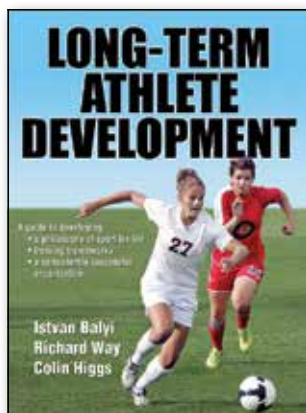
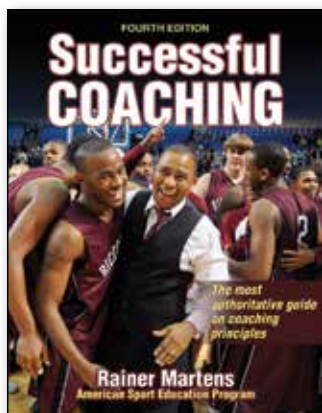
 National Coaching
Certification Program

coach.ca



SUGAR: HOW IT CAN FUEL TRAINING | HOW TO AVOID A LAWSUIT

Help your athletes be their best with great training books from Human Kinetics Publishers!



Sign up & Save!

HK
REWARDS

Keep up to date on
New Releases

Save up to 25% on
all purchases

Receive
special offers

Sign up for a Free
eNewsletter and HK Rewards
and SAVE up to 25%.

Sign up at
HumanKinetics.com/Rewards

Check out our complete line up of resources at
www.HumanKinetics.com

COACHES plan

WINTER 2015



ON OUR COVER: TRINA CAMPBELL
PHOTO BY KEVAN MORAN/CURTIS COMEAU PHOTOGRAPHY

columns

- 4 **Message from the publisher**
Make the most of the Year of Sport
- 6 **And the Winners are...**
CAC honours top coaches
- 8 **Law: How to avoid a lawsuit**
What coaches need to know about their legal obligation to their athletes
- 10 **Nutrition: Athletes shouldn't sour on sugar**
The right amount of the sweet stuff can fuel training
- 22 **News**
Initiatives from the Coaching Association of Canada

features

- 13 **Why coaches need to tell the truth**
Shawnee Harle, Canada's highest certified basketball coach, explains how being honest with your athletes can lead to productive conflict, courageous conversations, and great results
- 16 **Never too old...to go for the gold**
CAC resource offers guidance on coaching masters athletes
- 20 **Coach talk with Bob Kierstead**
Shooting coach aims high — and is rewarded with the CAC's Geoff Gowan Award for lifetime contributions to coaching development

Make the most of the Year of Sport

2015 has been designated as the Year of Sport in Canada. This is a proactive pan-Canadian initiative to celebrate the role that sport plays in our country and to encourage Canadians to participate in and seek the benefits of sport. With events such as the World Junior Hockey Championship, the Canada Winter Games, the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015, the Pan and Parapan American Games and many others, it's going to be a year to remember.

Coaches, of course, are a crucial part of the celebration because they play a key role in the world of sport by guiding and nurturing athletes to be the very best they can be. We'll be profiling 52 of our countries national team coaches throughout the year as they share their top coaching tips – make sure to check them out every week on coach.ca and in upcoming issues of *plan*.

At the CAC we also aim to provide coaches with the support they need to develop their expertise and grow in their profession. A good example of this is our resource, *Coaching Masters Athletes*, profiled in this issue, which guides coaches on how to assist mature athletes as they strive to learn new skills, to improve their performance, and to compete successfully. We created this comprehensive and practical guide in response to the lack of resources available to support coaches involved with this class of athletes.

Elsewhere in this issue we celebrate the achievements of outstanding coaches who were recently honoured for their positive impact on sport at the CAC's Petro-Canada Sport Leadership awards gala. As Lorraine Lafrenière, the CAC's CEO, states: These award-winning coaches "demonstrate the values and core competencies of the National Coaching Certification Program, and the positive impact that a coach's passion and dedication to the profession can have on an athlete in all aspects of their life." Be sure to check out our insightful Q & A with one of these award-winners, shooting coach Bob Kierstead.

We're also thrilled to draw attention to a very special feature in this issue, written by Shawnee Harle, Canada's highest certified basketball coach, who offers up some straightforward advice to coaches on the importance of being honest with their athletes – even if it may be difficult at times to do so. Harle writes: "Are you worried about upsetting your high maintenance athlete or their parents? Are you spending your valuable time managing the emotions of your athletes so nobody is offended? Have you lowered the bar on your standards so your athletes are happier? If so, you are allowing false harmony to become more important than truth."

It's hard-hitting stuff and we are proud to have Harle contributing to *Coaches plan*.

Yes, there is much to celebrate in this Year of Sport – not the least of which are all the amazing coaches out there who train, motivate, and inspire their athletes to reach their fullest potential. Thanks coaches!

— Julie Parkins-Forget, Executive Editor

COACHES **plan**

Vol 3 No 1, Winter 2015

**The Official Publication of
the Coaching Association
of Canada**

Executive Editor

Julie Parkins-Forget

Editor

Anne Bokma

Art Director

Linda Crawley

Creative Direction and Design

Field Day Inc.

Translation

Jean-Pierre Tibi

Copy Editor

Lucie LeBel

Advertising Sales

James O. Hall
jhall@keithhealthcare.com

Jim Farley

jfarley@keithhealthcare.com

Lilla Sutera (Montreal rep)

lsutera@keithhealthcare.com



Chief Executive Officer

Lorraine Lafrenière

Chief Operating Officer

Marc Schryburt

**Executive Director,
Coaches of Canada**

Wayne Parro

Directors

Gabor Csepregi, Chair

André Lachance, ChPC

Gail Donohue, ChPC

Paul Carson

Mathieu Boucher

Manon Landry Ouellette

Greg Guenther

Stephen Gallant

Martin Cléroult

Ian Mortimer

Danielle Goyette

Jean Blackie

Kerry Mummery

Daniel Domitrovic

Ranil Sonnadara, ChPC

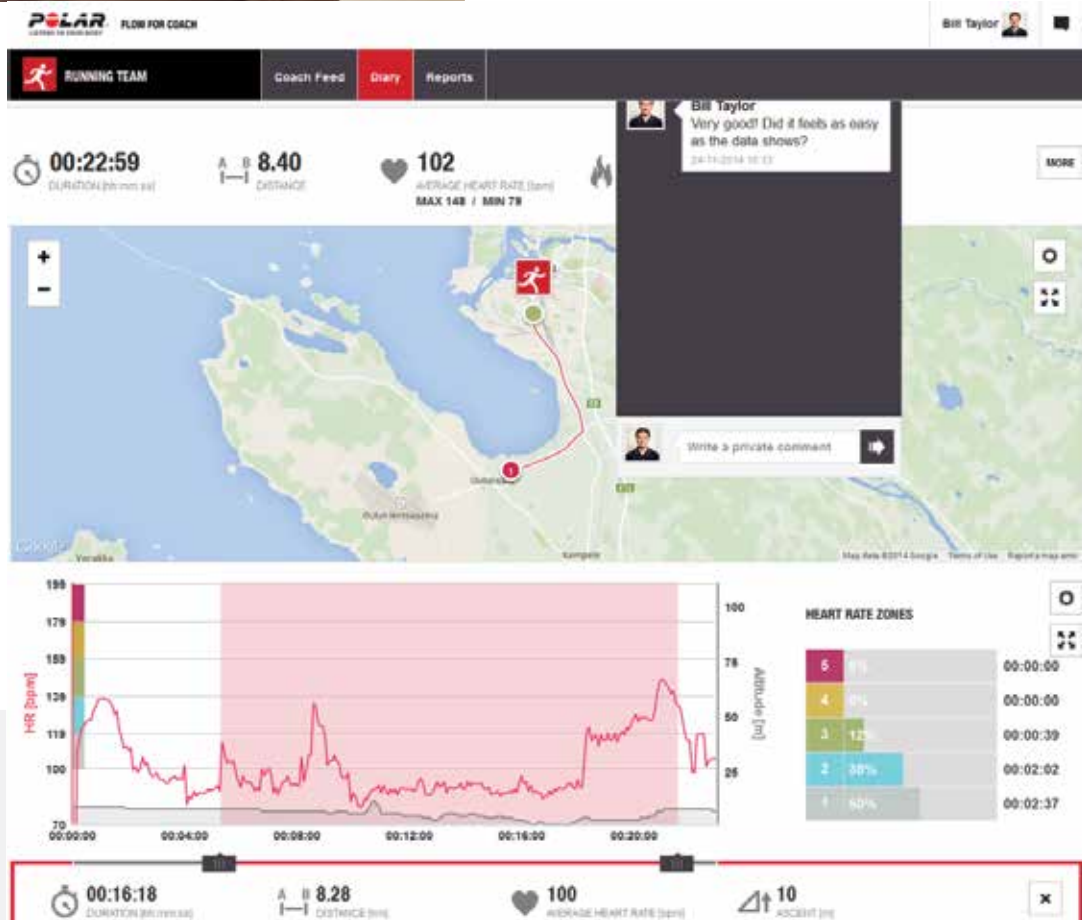


Team App

- Free iPad app
- Compatible with the Polar H7 Bluetooth Smart heart rate transmitters
- Follow up to 40 players live on 1 iPad
- Monitor heart rate, 5 training zones & calories
- Share training summaries via email with coaches and players

Flow for Coach

- Free service
- Connects coaches to their athletes remotely
- Monitor and guide their training.
- Provide training feedback to multiple athletes



Contact Svein Piene
Svein.Piene@Polar.com

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

CAC honours top coaches

An impressive line-up of coaches and coach developers were recognized for their positive impact on sport at the recent Petro-Canada Sport Leadership Awards Gala, hosted by the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) in Ottawa, Ontario. "These coaches demonstrate the values and core competencies of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), and the positive impact that a coach's passion and dedication to the profession can have on an athlete in all aspects of their life," says Lorraine Lafrenière, CEO of the CAC.

Robert (Bob) Kierstead, ChPC, of Fredericton, New Brunswick, received the Geoff Gowan Award, which recognizes lifetime contributions to coaching development. Kierstead has played a significant role in the shooting world for more than 50 years. Not only has he competed in rifle and pistol target shooting at the local through international levels, he is also the first-ever Olympic head coach from New Brunswick in any sport. In addition to his coaching work, he has served on the international executive committee of the world governing body for all Paralympic target shooting sports, where he was the only member from the American continent. More info: www.coach.ca/-p156822

Gerald (Gerry) Dragomir, ChPC, of Vancouver, British Columbia, received the Jack Donohue "Coach of the Year" Award, given in recognition of a coach who exemplifies the qualities of legendary coach Jack Donohue who was a founder of the Canadian Association of National Coaches. In 1978 Dragomir began coaching his son's little league baseball team and he's been passionate about helping athletes reach their potential ever since. With a keen eye for technical skills, an interest and aptitude for sport science, and an amazing ability to motivate others, he continued to coach other neighbourhood baseball and fastball teams, then athletes with Special Olympics BC, and eventually started his own race walking club. More info: www.coach.ca/-p156822

Glenn Cundari of North Bay, Ontario, received the Investors Group National NCCP Coach Developer Award, which recognizes an outstanding individual who has gone above and beyond to inspire and develop NCCP coaches in their community. Cundari has been a great asset and driving force behind the building, maintenance, and future of the National Coaching Certification Program in golf. He was part of the original team that developed the *Long-Term Player Development Guide for Golf in Canada*, and

as the PGA of Canada's technical lead, he contributes to the content development of Golf in Schools, CN Future Links, and helped develop the resource *Career Coach Guide – Building a Career in Coaching Golf*. More info: www.coach.ca/-p156822

Hockey Canada is the recipient of the Sheila Robertson Award, which recognizes a sport organization that demonstrates a consistent approach in valuing and recognizing the role of the coach within the organization, the media, and the public. Hockey Canada has recently updated its coach development programs, including the introduction of Hockey University, the online entry for new coaches in the development pathway. And its high-performance coach development program includes updated content and new standards for coaching at the higher levels of amateur hockey. More info: www.coach.ca/-p156822

Fifty coaches from across the country received a Petro-Canada Coaching Excellence Award, which recognizes coaches whose athletes have excelled at World Championships, Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the Special Olympics World Games. The full list of coaches is available at: www.coach.ca/-p156822



Robert (Bob) Kierstead, ChPC - Winner of the Geoff Gowan Award for lifetime contributions to coaching development.



Gerald (Gerry) Dragomir, ChPC - Winner of the Jack Donohue "Coach of the Year" Award.



Glenn Cundari - Winner of the Investors Group National NCCP Coach Developer Award.



SPORT LEADERSHIP SPORTIF

SAVE THE DATE

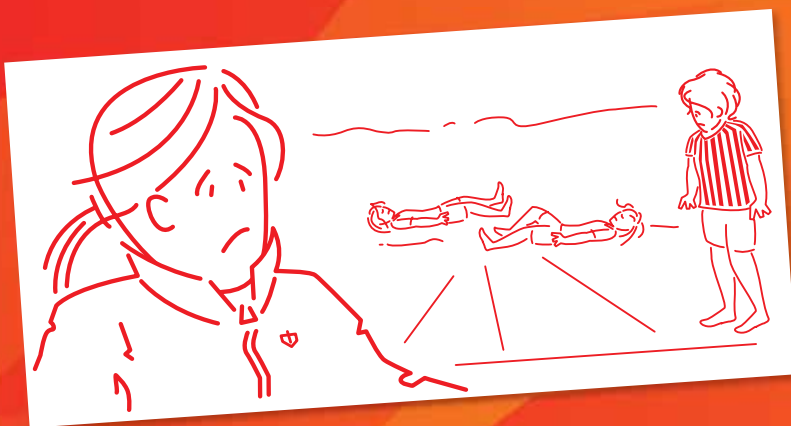
November 12-14, 2015 • Winnipeg, Manitoba
#SportLeadership

Photo: Dan Harper



Making Head Way in Sport

Concussion eLearning Series



- ✓ Award-winning eLearning module
- ✓ Designed for coaches in ALL sports
- ✓ Also available in 5 sport-specific modules
- ✓ Recognized NCCP professional development modules

Now available for FREE!

Get concussion smart today. Visit coach.ca



How to avoid a lawsuit

WHAT COACHES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATION TO THEIR ATHLETES

By LeeAnn L. Cupidio, LL.B.



LeeAnn L. Cupidio, LL.B., is a lawyer based in Toronto. She joined the Sport Law and Strategy Group in 2010 and has served as investigator, mediator, adjudicator, and counsel in many sport-related disputes and acts as a case manager to sport organizations who choose to outsource their internal disputes. She has worked with all levels of sport providing consulting services and presentations relating to governance, employment, contracts, policies, and legislative requirements. A dragon boat enthusiast, LeeAnn retired last season after 15 years of competition, and has now taken up karate alongside her daughter.

REGARDLESS OF THEIR CERTIFICATION LEVEL, experience, employment or volunteer status, sport discipline or location, coaches have a legal obligation to provide a safe environment for their athletes at all times.

This obligation extends to ensuring that coaches have met the standard of care that is expected of them in the following areas:

- **Facilities and organization:** Coaches have a duty to select premises and equipment that are reasonably safe and suitable for their intended purpose and to ensure that the event or activity is safely organized.
- **Instruction and supervision:** Coaches have a duty to exercise reasonable care in the control and supervision of activities. This includes anticipating and warning against dangers, as well as preventing athletes from participating in unreasonably dangerous activities.
- **Medical care:** Coaches have a duty to inquire about illness or injury and prohibit participation where necessary. In the event of a medical emergency, coaches have a duty to provide suitable first aid until professional assistance arrives.

If coaches do not provide a safe environment for participants, they risk being sued for negligence. This is understandably one of the biggest concerns of coaches, particularly in today's litigious culture. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the law does not expect coaches to be perfect in their behaviour, but rather to be reasonable, and to act as any other reasonable coach would in similar circumstances.

A coach's conduct would only be deemed negligent when it can be proven that a duty of care exists, that the duty imposes a standard of care that was not met by the coach, that harm or loss occurred as a result, and that the coach's failure to meet the standard caused, or substantially contributed to, harm or loss.

Coaches must have a clear understanding of the standard of care owed. This can be challenging, however, as the standard of expected care varies with the type of activity, number and age of participants, location of the program, skill level, weather conditions, and other factors.

To determine the standard of care that is owed in any given circumstance, coaches can utilize these four sources:

- **Written/published standards:** This includes the relevant equipment standards, organizational policies and rules, facility rules, code of conduct, and other information contained in published coaching/teaching/leadership manuals.
- **Unwritten/unpublished standards:** These include any known and accepted developments and trends in the sports world.
- **Case law:** Court decisions dealing with similar fact situations.
- **Common sense:** This takes into consideration such factors as the coach's intuition, knowledge, and experience.

Reasonable and prudent coaches should be familiar with the written policies that govern their conduct, the unwritten norms, the relevant case law, and have good judgment. They should also be aware of the standard of care expected, and meet or exceed this standard by anticipating risks and taking steps to manage risks in all coaching activities.

What sport organizations can do

Risk management is also crucial for sport organizations, which need to also properly manage and assess risk in order to avoid liability. *Sport Liability Law: A Guide for Amateur Sports Organizations and Their Insurers* also sets out a list of recommendations that sport organizations should consider in order to reduce the risk of injuries to participants, defend themselves against lawsuits, reduce insurance costs, and protect their coaches, officials, and volunteers. These include:

- Design a system that results in facilities and equipment being regularly and thoroughly inspected.
- Follow a policy that imposes minimum standards and qualifications for instructors, coaches, and other staff.
- Obtain adequate insurance.
- Develop a general safety plan to deal with foreseeable situations that could be dangerous or lead to liability.
- Display easy-to-read signs or images to inform and warn participants and spectators of the risks associated with the activity.
- Prepare and properly administer carefully drafted waivers and informed consent agreements.
- Keep a written record of safety systems and specific steps taken to avoid injury and loss.
- Inform coaches, staff, volunteers, and administrators of various ways in which liability could be incurred and train them never to admit liability or fault.

While these tasks may seem daunting, it bears repeating that the law does not expect perfection, only reasonableness. As long as coaches can demonstrate that they acted reasonably in any given situation, the likelihood of being found negligent is significantly reduced.

Despite this, having adequate insurance in place remains critical for sport organizations and coaches alike, particularly volunteer coaches. Coaches should not assume they are covered by the sport organization they volunteer for. Be sure to enquire about insurance and make sure you are covered. Coaches of Canada offers affordable liability insurance to its licensed and registered coaches. For more information visit: www.coachesofcanada.com

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM LIABILITY

Katherine Fast, a Canadian lawyer and author of *Sport Liability Law: A Guide for Amateur Sports Organizations and Their Insurers*, outlines the steps coaches must take in order to protect themselves from liability:

- Provide competent and informed instructions to sport participants on how to perform any activities.
- Assign drills and exercises that are suitable for the age, ability, fitness level, or stage of advancement of the group.
- Progressively train and prepare participants for any activities according to an acceptable standard of practice.
- Clearly explain to participants the risks involved in an activity.
- Group participants according to size, weight, skill, or fitness level to avoid potentially harmful mismatching.
- Inquire about illness or injury and prohibit participation when necessary.
- In the event of a medical emergency, provide suitable first aid.
- When possible, keep written records of attendance, screening, training, and teaching methods in order to provide evidence of competent coaching.

Coaches should be encouraged to develop their own personal risk management plan, which will help provide a safe environment as well as protect them from liability — or reduce the chances of getting sued — when injury cannot be prevented.

Athletes shouldn't sour on sugar

THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF THE SWEET STUFF CAN FUEL TRAINING

By Angela Dufour, MEd., RD, IOC Dip Sports Nutr, CFE
and Heidi Stirling, Dietetic Intern, BSc. HNu

WHETHER IT'S SPORTS BARS, SPORTS DRINKS OR DRIED FRUITS, athletes have come to fear sugar as a nutrient that should be avoided in their diet. Added sugar has gained a bad rap — and for good reason since it's related to increased risk of heart disease, high blood cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, and certain forms of cancer. But diet histories reveal that 50 percent of athletes are not getting enough total energy, with the majority of the deficit coming from carbohydrates (CHOs), which can lead to compromises in athletic performance.

Athletes have a higher requirement for nutrients because of the increased energy they expend during training. CHOs are the main source of fuel in training and competition and inadequate intake is linked with early onset of fatigue and decreased concentration during exercise. Most athletes require between 6-10 g CHOs/kg body weight/day depending on training protocols. Thus, a 60 kg athlete would require ~ 360-600 g CHOs/day. If you consider that two slices of whole wheat bread (56 g total weight) contain ~ 22 g of CHOs, an athlete would need to consume seven to 12 slices of bread/day to meet their total CHO requirement if this was the only source of CHOs. Including small amounts of additional sugar in their diet can help athletes meet their high CHO requirements to adequately fuel their training.

Not all CHOs are created equal in terms of nutrition though. Table 1 outlines the CHO content in some common foods.



Angela Dufour owns and operates Nutrition in Action, a private counseling and nutrition services practice for athletes, coaches, and the general public in Bedford, Nova Scotia, and also works with the Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic. She is the author of *PowerFuel Food: Planning Meals for Maximum Performance* (Glen Margaret Publishing, 2013).

Complex versus simple sugars

“Simple” CHOs can be referred to as monosaccharides or disaccharides and are defined as foods containing one to two simple sugars. Monosaccharides include glucose, fructose, and galactose. Common sources of simple CHOs include honey, jams, jellies, fruits and vegetables, 100 percent fruit juices, and sports drinks. Disaccharides consist of two monosaccharides linked together. Table sugar (also known as sucrose) is a common example of a disaccharide, because it contains two monosaccharides: glucose and fructose.

Complex CHOs consist of two or more monosaccharides linked together. Due to their chain lengths, they take longer for the body to digest, absorb, and oxidize into energy. Examples include fibrous grains such as quinoa, oatmeal, and brown rice, and starchy foods including potatoes, beans, peas, and lentils.



**Table 1:
Common foods and
their carbohydrate content**

FOOD GROUP	AMOUNT CHO _s (g)
VEGETABLES AND FRUIT	
1 cup fresh fruit salad in own juice	40
1 medium banana	30
Medium fruit (orange, apple, etc.)	12
¼ cup dried fruit	25
GRAINS AND STARCHES	
1 cup cooked squash	19
2 slices of whole wheat bread (56 g)	22
1 English muffin (56 g)	22
1 cup cereal (Shreddies)	42
4 Melba Toast	15
1 cup cooked brown rice	45
1 cup cooked pasta	16
1 medium baked potato	34
1 ear corn	30
¼ cup granola	26
2 Fig Newtons	24
1 package plain instant oatmeal	25
1 six-inch pancake/waffle	22
1 pita (70 g)	40
1 six-inch tortilla	18
1 slice naan bread (25 cm diameter)	100
MILK AND ALTERNATIVES	
2 cups low-fat milk	24
Yogurt, drinkable (200 mL)	24
1 cup cottage cheese	4.5
¾ cup low-fat fruit-flavoured yogurt	32
Low-fat cheese (30 g)	1
½ cup low-fat pudding	20
1 cup soy milk	12
2 tbsp skim milk powder	8
MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES	
Hummus (75 mL)	16
1 cup baked beans	55
1 cup lentils	38
¼ cups nuts/seeds	6
2 tbsp nut butter	13
EXTRAS	
½ cup Jell-O	20
2 tsp jam	7
1 tsp honey/molasses	6
SPORTS FOODS	
Sports drink (500 mL)	33
Instant breakfast made with 2% milk, (200 mL)	26
Liquid meal supplement (250-300 mL)	41
Sports bar (55 g)	30
Sports gels (30 g)	20

Simple CHO_s are the most immediate source of energy and are beneficial for athletes to consume close to, or soon after, exercise since they are quickly absorbed, increase energy levels, and refill depleted CHO stores. Athletes may be advised not to consume more complex CHO_s two to three hours prior to exercise because the increased fibre and protein content may result in stomach discomfort before exercise.

Sports drinks and athletic performance

Sports drinks can be beneficial to athletic performance in certain situations since their specific CHO and electrolyte concentrations are designed to help restore/maintain glycogen and electrolyte balance for fluid reabsorption, cognition, and energy levels. While sports drinks are sometimes criticized for their added sugar, they can be a practical, convenient, and tolerable choice for active individuals engaged in exercise longer than 60-90 minutes because they can prevent dehydration, hypoglycemia, and hyponatremia. Sports beverages with little or no CHO_s can be recommended in sports situations where exercise is less than 60-90 minutes and for athletes with heavy sweat rates. When there is more than 60-90 minutes of continuous activity, additional CHO_s, in the form of a piece of fruit or granola bar, for example, are required.

Athletes can make their own, more “natural” homemade sports beverages, although it’s important that they contain six to eight percent CHO_s or 60-80 g/L to optimize energy levels and replenish depleted glycogen stores. Table 2 lists the ingredients for sample homemade sports beverages.

Adapted from *PowerFuel Food: Planning Meals for Maximal Performance*, Dufour, A. Values from www.eattracker.ca, 2012. [All values are approximate and depend on actual brands. Check labels for more information.]

Table 2:
Sample homemade sports drinks

Recipes make 4 servings, 1 cup (250 mL) each	COCONUT COOLER 2 cups coconut water 2 cups orange juice pinch of salt	REFRESHER 2 cups water 2 cups 100% pineapple or juice blend (eg. Oasis) ½ tsp salt	ORANGE OASIS 2 cups water 2 cups orange juice ⅓ cup honey ¼ tsp salt	BEET IT 2 cups concentrated beetroot juice 2 cups pineapple coconut water ¼ cup water pinch of salt
Nutrition Facts per 250 ml serving				
Calories	79 kcal	66 kcal	72 kcal	93 kcal
Protein	2 g	0.4 g	1 g	2 g
Carbohydrate	17 g	16 g	17 g	22 g
% Carbohydrate	7%	6%	7%	8%
Sodium (mg)	166	152	151	185
Potassium (mg)	548	164	252	475

Values taken from *Dietitians of Canada eaTracker* at www.eatracker.ca 2012 and product Nutrition Facts tables. May vary by brand.

Simple CHOs are the most immediate source of energy and are beneficial for athletes to consume close to, or soon after, exercise since they are quickly absorbed, increase energy levels, and refill depleted CHO stores.

Understanding the sugar content in foods

Because too much sugar can lead to excess calorie consumption, unwanted weight gain, and can increase the risk of developing major chronic diseases – and because such diets may lack essential vitamins and minerals, Health Canada has recently proposed the following three changes to the Nutrition Facts table and product ingredients in an effort to better inform Canadians about sugar in their diet:

1. Better identification of the contribution of all sources of sugar in the list of ingredients.

Currently, all sugar-based ingredients added directly to a food are listed separately in the list of ingredients and in descending order based on their proportion by weight to the food. Health Canada is proposing that all ingredients that are a type of sugar (for example: sugar, glucose-fructose, honey, fancy molasses) be grouped in parentheses after the common name “Sugars.”

2. Highlight amount of added sugar in the Nutrition Facts table. The amount of sugar added to the food would be declared as “added sugars” in the Nutrition Facts table to help consumers identify foods with added sugar and to choose foods with less, or no added sugar.

3. Provide a benchmark to help consumers identify foods that contain a lot of sugar.

Establish a Daily Value target for total sugar consumption at 100 grams.

Take-home message for athletes and coaches

Athletes should strive to meet their high CHO requirements on a daily basis with a well balanced diet of nutrient- and CHO-rich sources. For athletes who need to remain energized throughout long and strenuous workouts, sports bars, gels, and drinks can be a practical and adequate option for sustaining energy levels. Regardless of whether sugar comes from natural or artificial sources, the body processes both types identically. One difference is that natural sugars have an additional nutritional benefit because they contain other micronutrients, fibre, and antioxidants that are generally not found in the synthetic forms.

Sugar should not be a nutrient athletes fear. They may want to consume some foods at certain times during training/competition that have added sugar when they want a quick energy source or when CHO loading. The key is not to make those foods the main source of CHOs in their daily training diets.

References available upon request.



WHY COACHES NEED TO TELL THE TRUTH



Canada's highest certified basketball coach explains how being honest with your athletes can lead to productive conflict, courageous conversations, and great results

By Shawnee Harle

WHEN I MEET WITH COACHES, I always ask them about their team culture. I want to know whether they strive for truth or harmony with their athletes. They always say “truth.” But the truth is, nobody really wants truth — it’s uncomfortable, it forces people to stretch in new directions and it raises the bar for expectations. Most people actually prefer harmony because it feels good and it’s easier. I’m not against harmony. In fact, I believe all successful teams have a healthy dose of it. But there is a difference between real harmony and false harmony.

False harmony looks like this:

- **We say what we think our athletes, teammates, or parents want to hear**
- **We avoid conflict and difficult conversations**
- **We have perceived agreement on everything**

The most destructive part of false harmony is third-party conversations — the “meeting after the meeting,” when issues that really matter are discussed behind closed doors and in the locker room. The front door of false harmony is always nicely decorated, but once you get behind the door, where nobody can see or hear, it’s dark and gloomy.

Are you worried about upsetting your high maintenance athlete or their parents? Are you spending your valuable time managing the emotions of your athletes so nobody is offended? Have you lowered the bar on your standards so your athletes are happier? If so, you are allowing false harmony to become more important than truth. False harmony may feel better because it’s easier, but it’s also the fastest avenue to mediocrity.

Truth leads to harmony

Great leaders value truth and they understand that it leads to real harmony. Real harmony means you can share thoughts and ideas with the understanding that everyone might not agree — and that’s okay. Real harmony means you and your athletes understand the important battles are won or lost before the competition begins. It also means coaches and athletes are not worried about how their words may be perceived. Truth allows us to put our cards on the table and see each other’s hand.

Real harmony looks like this:

- **Truth is invited into every conversation**
- **Truth is spoken to help us reach our potential**
- **Truth is used to evaluate the performance of our athletes, team, and organization**

Truth often invites productive conflict. Conflict may not always feel good, but as the leader of the team, your job as a coach is to give athletes what they need, which may not necessarily be what they want. What your athletes may want is ice cream, but what they really need are vegetables. The truth is much like vegetables — you don’t always like them, but they’re good for you.

Truth isn’t easy, whereas harmony is. Truth is uncomfortable, while harmony feels good. Great leaders are okay with being uncomfortable because they understand that productive conflict and courageous conversations lead to great results.

The difference between honesty and truth

Telling the truth isn’t a license to say whatever you want. Saying whatever you want is honesty, but that is different than truth. Honesty tends to be emotional and personal. It usually involves feelings, mingled with words, designed to hurt. Hurtful honesty can exhibit itself in a variety of ways — comments that make an athlete look bad, challenging authority, or undermining an athlete or the team. Honesty usually invites defensiveness and results in divisiveness.

Truth, on the other hand, is rational. Truth is thoughtful, truth is thought provoking, and truth invites productive conflict. It involves ideas, which are different than feelings. Truth requires team members to explore and debate possibilities with an open mind, without attaching personal feelings.

Strong leaders understand that athletic greatness is difficult to achieve without personal greatness and the foundation of truth is based upon helping our athletes reach their highest podium in life and exploring their true potential as people.

If the truth is like vegetables, and harmony is like ice cream, then honesty is like poison. Truth raises the bar, harmony lowers the bar, and honesty destroys the bar. Great leaders build and strengthen their team culture with open, thoughtful dialogue — one truthful brick at a time.

“If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always gotten.”

—Author Jane Kirkpatrick

Communication strategies for coaches

Now that we've examined the importance of truth and understand the guise of honesty, there are some key communication strategies to consider if you hope to get the best from your team members.

Consider the difference between passive and assertive communication: passive communication is common on many teams and often results in false harmony.

Passive communication looks like this:

- Silencing of voices
- Withdrawal
- Disengagement
- Holding grudges
- Participating in third-party conversations

Never make the mistake of ignoring those passive people who seem to be easy to get along with. Those who are willing to go with the flow are often the most dangerous team members. They silence their voice in a big group but later stir the waters and paddle the boat in the wrong direction. Everyone on your team will have an opinion and passive communicators will express theirs one way or another. Do not mistake silence for agreement. Anyone who is silent during a team meeting is likely not silent once they leave the meeting.

The opposite of passive communication is aggressive communication and it looks like this:

- Complaining
- Criticizing
- Demanding
- Bullying
- Guilt trips

While it's possible to ignore passive communicators, it is impossible to ignore aggressive ones. You know what they look like — they dominate meetings, talk loudly and interrupt, they complain about small things, and are critical of almost everything. Worst of all, they often get their way because they guilt-trip and bully people.



“Great leaders value truth and they understand that it leads to real harmony.”

Aggressive communication is used by negative, insecure, ego-driven people who are only willing to paddle if the boat goes in the direction they choose. But if you let them lead, you'll head for the rocks.

Winning teams use assertive communication with each other and it looks like this:

- Engagement
- Asking for what you want
- Asking clearly, concisely, and rationally

Assertive communicators have nothing to hide. They know that being passive, silent, withdrawn, or holding a grudge is not acceptable on a winning team. They get to the point and specifically ask for what they want. They understand that to move people to action, they must make a request.

Assertive communication is not easy. And telling the truth can be hard. But as Tom Hanks' baseball coach character says in the movie *A League of Their Own*: "It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard everyone would do it. The hard is what makes it great."

Great coaches create a culture of truth. Even if that is hard to do.

Shawnee Harle is the assistant coach for the Canadian Olympic Basketball Team. She was a basketball student-athlete at the University of Victoria and a member of two CIS National Championship teams led by coaching legend Kathy Shields. She has a master's in coaching studies and is the highest certified basketball coach in the country. Harle is also a Master Learning Facilitator for the National Coaching Certification Program, where she trains and mentors both advanced and novice coaches from all sports. Her vast experience in the world of sport has made her a sought-after business coach and motivational speaker.



Masters coach Trina Campbell with members of her Calgary Polo Splash team

KEVIN MORAN



CAC resource offers guidance on coaching masters athletes

Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko

NEVER TOO OLD... TO GO FOR THE GOLD



CURRENT RESEARCH indicates there is no noticeable decline in physical ability until about the age of 70, as long as people stay active. So it's little wonder that aging boomers are driving the growth of masters sport, which involves athletes 35 and older. Masters athletes are motivated to engage in sport for a host of reasons: a love of a particular sport, a desire for personal challenge and achievement, social connection, and a commitment to health and fitness.

The Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) has recently developed a valuable coaching resource, *Coaching Masters Athletes*, which details the rise in masters sport and offers coaches guidance in helping these more mature athletes as they strive to learn new skills, improve their performance, and compete successfully.



“Coaches need to have an appreciation for *why* a masters athlete wants to participate so that they can help the athlete meet those goals.”

—Nigel Kemp

Need for coach resources

Cyndie Flett, the former director of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) and the principal trainer with Performance Coaching in Ottawa, Ontario, spearheaded the development of this practical guide because she says there was a need for resources to support coaches involved with this class of athletes. “There have always been masters athletes, but we are seeing more baby boomers wanting to be physically active, and they want coaching as a component of that.”

This generally affluent demographic is both willing and able to pay for coaching expertise and thus represents, “a real opportunity for coaches to start to generate some revenue,” says Flett, who points out that coaching masters athletes challenges coaches to learn how to transition their skill set to an older class of athletes. “This is what led the CAC to drive the development of the *Coaching Masters Athletes* resource.”

Nigel Kemp, current coach of the Halifax Chronos Masters Swimming Club and a past president of Masters Swimming Canada, is the main author of *Coaching Masters Athletes*. He says one of the reasons individuals are drawn to coaching at the masters level is because they, “have a certain identity associated with the sport and want to maintain their interest as they get older.”

He also points out that there are generally three categories of masters athletes — lifelong competitors, those who take a break and return later in life, and those who take up a sport for the first time when they are older. Each type of athlete needs to be coached differently says Kemp. Life-long competitors need to continue to hone their skills and fitness, those who return to a sport need to work at getting their skills and fitness back to previous levels, and those with no experience in a sport have to start at the beginning to develop the skills it takes to become technically proficient. “Coaches need to have an appreciation for *why* a masters athlete wants to participate so that they can help the athlete meet those goals,” says Kemp.

Skill set and motivation levels vary

Trina Campbell has been coaching the Calgary Polo Splash, a masters women’s water polo club, for 13 years and notes that her group of about 40 athletes — who range from novices to past Olympians — not only have varying skill levels, but also different levels of interest in the sport. Some of her athletes train to win championships, some to improve health, others just to have fun. “Some are more committed than others and, as a coach, you have to learn to accept that it’s okay — that everyone isn’t there for the same purpose.”

Both Campbell and Kemp agree that a key aspect of masters coaching, as in all coaching, is helping athletes set goals. It’s important to offer these athletes flexibility, allowing them to decide, for example, the frequency of their participation. Both coaches also encourage mentoring among their athletes, with more seasoned athletes sharing skills with newcomers to a sport.

While older athletes can certainly achieve impressive fitness levels, masters coaches do need to be especially cognizant of potentially limiting health factors and thus modify their programs based on individual circumstances. *Coaching Masters Athletes* presents a comprehensive review of health conditions — from Alzheimer’s, to coronary heart disease, diabetes, and osteoarthritis — that can affect older competitors.

COACHING TIPS

Coaching older athletes shares many similarities with coaching their younger counterparts. However, there are some key differences, as outlined in *Coaching Masters Athletes*, to keep in mind:

- They have different physical characteristics than younger athletes, and they may need to train some of these characteristics differently than younger athletes.
- They are more likely than younger athletes to have certain health conditions and their training may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- They are less likely to respond well to “command” styles of coaching and generally have a greater need to have input into coaching decisions.

Masters rower Volker Nolte



As the rowing head coach at Western University in London, Ontario, and a masters rower with Middlesex-Western Rowing Club, Volker Nolte has an oar in both the professional world of high performance university athletes and in performance masters. His coaching experiences with the university student and masters' teams are "completely different." For example, "with the university program, my word is law," Nolte says with a laugh. With the masters performance athletes he says camaraderie among players is of higher importance: "I am a peer player," he says. "I do this for my own benefit." Nolte derives satisfaction from seeing the team improving, having fun, and achieving goals. "And we always go out for dinner after a session," he says.

Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko is a freelance writer in Hamilton, Ontario.

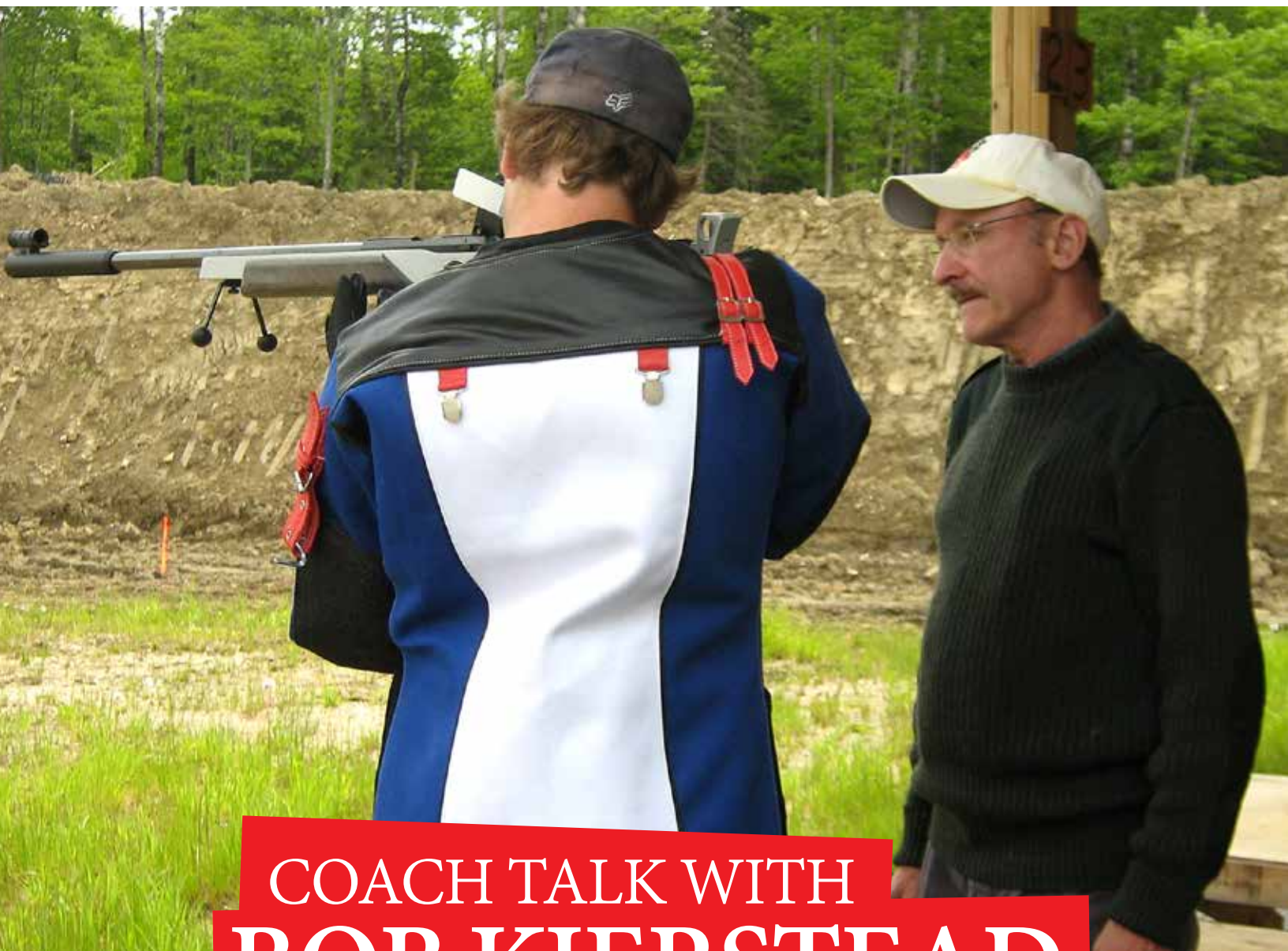
COACHING MASTERS ATHLETES: AN INVALUABLE FREE RESOURCE

The CAC's *Coaching Masters Athletes* resource is an introduction to coaching masters athletes, and contains basic need-to-know information that will help coaches get started in this area. The free resource is suitable for any National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) coach in any NCCP context or sport who wants to know more about coaching masters athletes.

Coaching Masters Athletes has six sections:

1. **Masters Sport and Masters Athletes** provides an overview of masters sport and masters athletes today.
2. **General Coaching Guidelines** presents general information on how to coach masters athletes well.
3. **Physical Characteristics** summarizes suggestions for how to plan the physical training of masters athletes.
4. **Health Conditions** covers training modifications that age-related health conditions may call for.
5. **Masters Wrap** summarizes the key takeaways about coaching masters athletes.
6. **Resources** lists key resources coaches can use to deepen their knowledge of masters athletes and coaching masters athletes.

Coaching Masters Athletes is available online at www.coach.ca.



COACH TALK WITH **BOB KIERSTEAD**

SHOOTING COACH AIMS HIGH – AND IS REWARDED WITH THE CAC’S GEOFF GOWAN AWARD FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO COACHING DEVELOPMENT

Julie Parkins-Forget

Bob Kierstead has played a significant role in the shooting world for more than 50 years. Not only has he competed in rifle and pistol target shooting at the local through international levels, Kierstead is the first-ever Olympic head coach from New Brunswick in any sport. He pioneered the integration of disabled target shooters with able-bodied target shooters at the National Team level, making Canada a world leader in this area and became the head coach of the Canadian Paralympic rifle and pistol target shooting team in 1995. In 2000 in Sydney, he became the only Canadian national sport coach to coach at both the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games. Kierstead is the 2014 winner of the CAC’s Geoff Gowan Award for lifetime contributions to coaching development. *Coaches plan* sat down with him to talk about his career.

“Don’t be overcome by obstacles. Instead overcome the obstacles.”

How did you get involved in shooting?

“As a little boy, I used to get these little spring-loaded toy guns, put a rock or a berry in them and shoot. From a very young age, I was absolutely fascinated — not with the gun, but with firing projectiles at something. We didn’t have the firearm laws we have in Canada today so at 12-years-old, I went to a pawn shop and bought a .22 rifle. I found another pawn shop where I could buy .22 calibre ammunition. I could buy a brick of 500 rounds with two weeks of my paper route money. I would put that in my backpack, take my .22 rifle and strap it on the crossbar of my bicycle — no one ever batted an eye at a kid with a rifle strapped to his bike! I’d drive up to what is now the Moncton City Hospital, but then was a swamp, and I would shoot off the 500 rounds of ammunition. That’s when the marksmanship started.

Then I found a rifle club that was started by a group of men who had come back from World War II. It wasn’t for kids. I would bug them to let me shoot, which they never would do, but I kept hanging around, and eventually someone said, ‘ah, let the kid shoot to get him out of here.’ I took to it right from the start. At an early age, I got involved with the structure and discipline of target shooting. Within a year, I won the club championship. The men were not happy about that!”

How did your involvement in Paralympic shooting come about?

“After the 1992 Olympic Games a woman from the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association approached us about integrating the wheelchair shooters with the able bodied shooters. Nobody wanted to do it.

There was no literature on disabled shooting, but I thought, ‘Ok, I’m an able-bodied shooter, and I know all about standing, kneeling, prone with a rifle, and shooting with a pistol. Let’s work on this and see how we can do it.’ This was the national wheelchair shooting team and they were not high performance, they did not have coaches. I brought the high-performance perspective to them — they’d never been exposed to high performance on any front.”

Is there a uniquely Canadian model for coaching?

“When coaches get an athlete in Canada, we get them for the long-term. Not just for practices, not just for games, but we’re in it for the long term. That’s what I’ve always thought of as our Canadian model for coaching, and that’s what we want our coaches to do. Unlike the Soviets — they just rip the guy apart and throw him away. We don’t do that. Yeah, they win a lot, but how do you define winning? We define it a little bit differently. We get criticized for that, and I know the media just wants to know about medals. What really counts, is when you win, what do you become? You can become pretty bad from winning.

The best theme song for coaching is *The Wind Beneath my Wings*. I’ve watched the European coaches, the Asians, the Chinese — their athletes will come down off the podium and give their medal to the coach. Some of these coaches I’ve talked to say, ‘It’s my medal. It’s because of me that the medal was won.’ With Canadian coaches, it’s all about the athlete up there winning the medal. How many Canadians can even tell you the name of an athlete’s coach? They don’t know who the coaches are.”

What needs to change in coaching?

“There needs to be something in it for coaches. For the athlete, it’s that chance at a medal — the chance to have their name on the scoreboard, and to stand on the podium. There are some real concrete benefits for athletes. Those same things aren’t there for a coach. As a coach you need to get your excitement and your satisfaction from having taken someone from here to here — to have made a significant difference in that person. That’s slow in coming and that’s not very exciting to the current generation.

National sport organizations put a lot of money into their high performance athletes, but very little into their coaches. You want someone to coach at the national level and they get nothing? The system has to be there to support coaches in the long-term, the way we support the athletes. Organizations have



Robert (Bob) Kierstead, ChPC (right), winner of the Geoff Gowan Award with Gabor Csepregi, Chair of the Board for the Coaching Association of Canada.

to have a long-term goal of coaching development — attracting, retaining, and developing coaches. A lot of them don’t have it.”

How did it feel winning the Geoff Gowan Award, which recognizes lifetime contributions to coaching development?

“I knew Geoff [a CBC sports broadcaster and CAC sport executive], liked him, and respected him. This award is attached to Geoff and it’s that much more meaningful because I know what Geoff stood for, and what he was passionate about. I hope what it says about me, is that [I’ve] been passionate about coaching, coach development, and coaches over a long period of time at a lot of different levels. That’s what we want in Canada. That’s why this award is significant to me.”

Do you have a favourite saying that motivates you?

“Don’t be overcome by obstacles. Instead, overcome the obstacles.”

Julie Parkins-Forget is manager of marketing and communications at the Coaching Association of Canada and executive editor of *Coaches plan* magazine.

NEW FROM THE *CANADIAN JOURNAL FOR WOMEN IN COACHING*

Sharing best practices, striving for gender equity in sport, and more

The *Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching* has built a proud tradition of breaking new ground. Its recent feature, *Three Executive Coaches Share Best Practices*, reaffirms that tradition. Through penetrating interviews with three female leaders, author Claire Carver-Dias explores the relatively new world of executive coaching, unearthing important parallels with sport coaching, both in perspectives and techniques. She offers conclusive evidence of the overlapping link between two facets of the coaching profession, citing multiple learnings on how best to have an impact on people, whether athletes or clients, and their ability to perform effectively. This article provides valuable information to female coaches, regardless of their sport, and the CJWC strongly supports the “open dialogue” Claire urges.

Two additional recently published articles are also noteworthy:

- *Striving for Gender Equity in Coaching: Female Athletes’ Perspectives on Pursuing Coaching as a Career* by Gretchen Kerr and Jenessa Banwell
- *Women in Olympic Medal-Winning Coaching: A Leadership Perspective* by Cari Din and Penny Werthner

The *Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching* provides timely, accurate, targeted information to aid in creating a healthier and more positive environment for women coaches — in Canada and around the world. Articles are available at: www.coach.ca



JUPITERIMAGES / THINKSTOCK

65+ free nutrition tips for athletes

coach.ca also helps locate registered dietitians

Whether you coach first-time participants at the community sport level or national team athletes, proper nutrition is essential for overall good health and optimal athletic performance. Participants of all ages and at all levels of competition are affected by good nutrition. It’s important to understand what to eat, but also when to eat — especially if you’re on the road with your athletes.

Plan ahead to maintain good eating habits by browsing the more than 65 free nutrition tips available on coach.ca. The site also helps you find registered dietitians in your area through the Sport Nutrition Registry at: www.coach.ca



BERENNE / THINKSTOCK

Get Coaching!

Get Coaching!

is a **FREE** online interactive series that will equip new coaches with the confidence to take their first steps into coaching!

Through four tutorials, coaches will prepare for their first practice by creating their very own practice plan.

