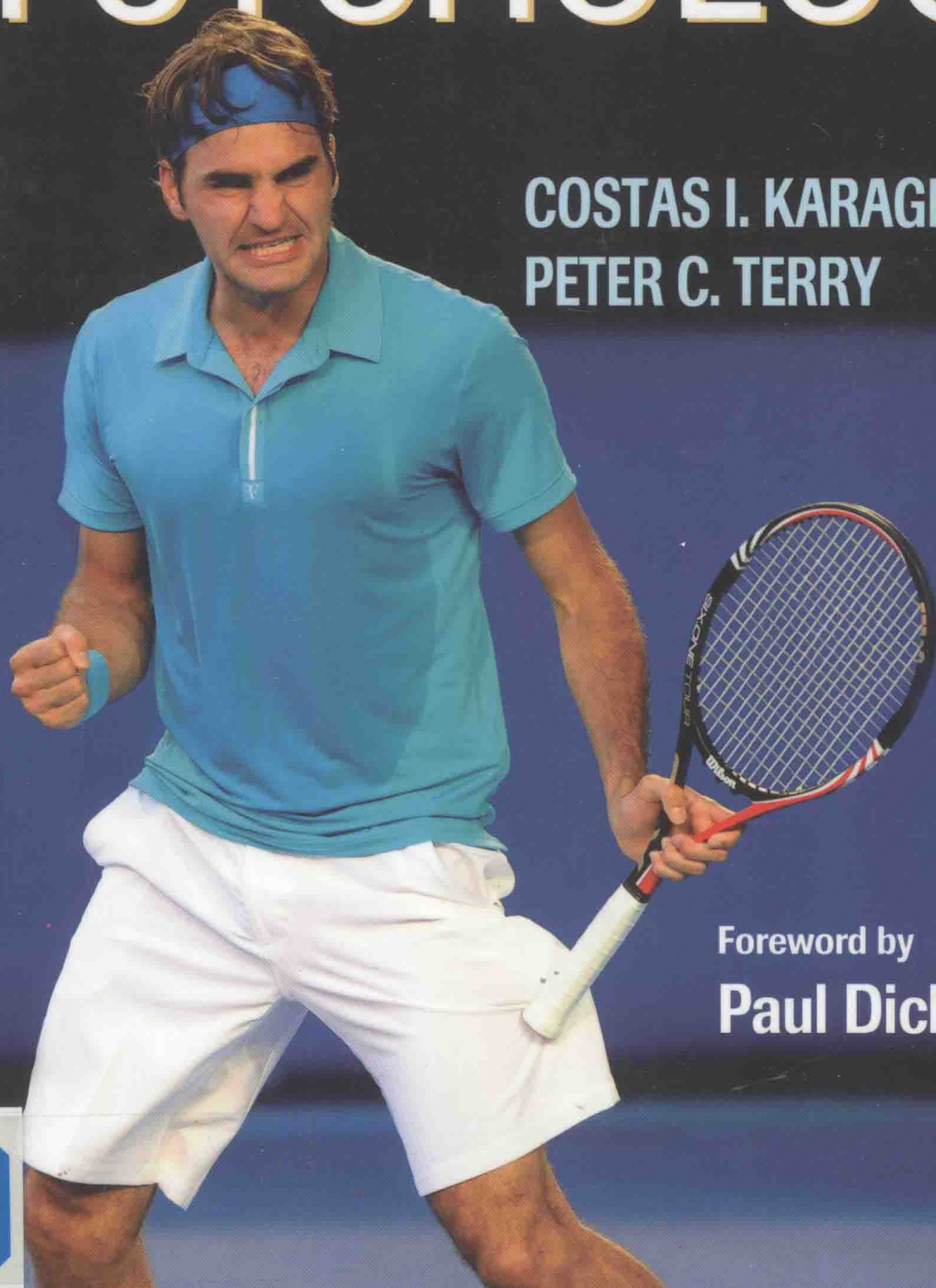


INSIDE SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

COSTAS I. KARAGEORGHIS
PETER C. TERRY

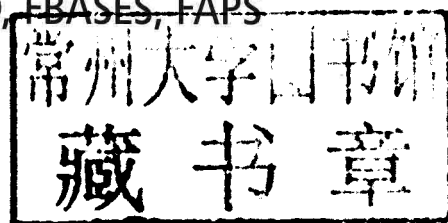


Foreword by
Paul Dickenson

INSIDE SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

Costas I. Karageorghis, PhD, CPsychol, FBASES

Peter C. Terry, PhD, FBASES, FAPS



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Human Kinetics

Web site: www.HumanKinetics.com

United States: Human Kinetics
P.O. Box 5076
Champaign, IL 61825-5076
800-747-4457
e-mail: humank@hkusa.com

Canada: Human Kinetics
475 Devonshire Road Unit 100
Windsor, ON N8Y 2L5
800-465-7301 (in Canada only)
e-mail: info@hkcanada.com

Europe: Human Kinetics
107 Bradford Road
Stanningley
Leeds LS28 6AT, United Kingdom
+44 (0)113 255 5665
e-mail: hk@hkeurope.com

Australia: Human Kinetics
57A Price Avenue
Lower Mitcham, South Australia 5062
08 8372 0999
e-mail: info@hkaustralia.com

New Zealand: Human Kinetics
P.O. Box 80
Torrens Park, South Australia 5062
0800 222 062
e-mail: info@hknewzealand.com

To my children, Anastasia and Lucia; my wife, Tina; and my parents,
John and Anastasia.

—Costas Karageorghis

To my children, Dominic and Lucas; my loving partner, Victoria;
and her son, Finn.

—Peter Terry

The book is also dedicated to our many wonderful students, past and
present, from whom we have drawn inspiration and learned so much.

FOREWORD

One of the greatest competitive athletes in history, U.S. discus thrower Al Oerter, was considered to be a man who competed at his best when it mattered most. Being a four-time Olympic champion testifies to that, especially when you consider that he was not ranked number one in the world in any of the Games that he won! But for me, there were two very good reasons why he prevailed as the Olympic champion from 1956 to 1968. First, he considered the Olympic Games to be the greatest contest of athletic prowess on planet Earth, and to him it really mattered as a test of himself not just as an athlete but also as a man.

The second characteristic that really set him apart from his rivals was that he had such a positive, strong mental attitude. To paraphrase the great man, “I never set out to beat the world. I just set out to do my absolute best.” He was able to maximize his sport performance from a simple psychological perspective that he had rationalized himself, and it worked.

I remember all too well my first international athletics meeting in the old GDR (East Germany). I was number one in Britain so had no problem consolidating my status on a domestic front, but when I came face to face with three Eastern Bloc giants in the changing rooms, my heart sank. I thought that their immense size and perceived strength were to be the beating of me before we had even entered the arena. I was beaten before I started. Al Oerter’s psychology now rings loud in my ears.

Dr. Karageorghis and Professor Terry have written a book that not only explores theoretical principles, research findings, and anecdotal evidence; but it also assists in maximizing sport performance from a psychological perspective. It offers competitors, coaches, students, and teachers the techniques that enable athletes to engage in an optimal mental state, and it presents strategies for dealing with the stressful situations that sport can conjure up.

In my capacity as a television commentator I am lucky to travel all over the world observing and contributing to great sporting events. An Olympic 100-meter final on the track is a superb example of “people watching” as well as a demonstration of who is the fastest man or woman on Earth. When the cameras close in on the athletes before the start, it is an opportunity for the world to catch a glimpse of the competitors in their final preparation for what could be the most important moment of their lives. Often you get a few clues about how they are handling the experience of severe pressure.

I have often thought that sport is an art form as well as a science. The scientific approach to training and competition is a well-trodden path, and the artistic nature of a superb sport performance is by definition a truly wonderful spectacle to behold. If you can experience this firsthand as I do, you are very lucky indeed.

The authors of *Inside Sport Psychology* have come to realize that their area of expertise is as much an art as a science. I celebrate this as a real breakthrough in understanding, simplifying, and truly getting inside sport psychology.

Paul Dickenson

BBC TV sports commentator and former
international hammer thrower for Great Britain

PREFACE

This book is primarily for athletes, coaches, team managers, and students of sport psychology. It also carries many important messages for the parents and guardians of aspiring athletes. The principles that are promoted transcend the sporting arena and are applicable to those who wish to excel in other fields of human endeavor: It is not unusual nowadays for sport psychology techniques to be applied in business and the performing arts, or indeed any other performance-oriented environment.

Virtually all athletes and performers recognize the importance of psychology; nonetheless, many consider their state of mind to be a random performance factor over which they have little control. They may be unsure of how to develop their psychological skills, motivation, and mental toughness. The aim of this book is to provide a structured and theoretically grounded approach to developing the psychological aspects of training and competition. In addition to the topics that one might expect in such a text (e.g., motivation, self-confidence, competition anxiety), there is a great deal of unique and original material that stems from our applied experiences and research publications.

Athletes often wonder how it would feel to lock into their optimal mental state at will. The likelihood is that their performances would be far more consistent. It might also be easier for them to achieve their goals and they would never need to bemoan the fact that they “weren’t in the mood” or “didn’t feel up for it.” Such a positive mental approach to sporting competition can be achieved through training the mind using principles that are quite similar to those applied when training the body. In fact, the mind offers myriad resources that can be harnessed for the purpose of maximizing athletic performance. A consequence of learning mental skills is that their gradual development can lead to even greater enjoyment of sport.

Inside Sport Psychology uses examples predominantly from sports that are popular in Europe and the Commonwealth of Nations, such as soccer, rugby, tennis, and track and field, to illustrate the psychological principles. We have also considered the North American readership by using examples from sports that are popular in that region. Nonetheless, the style and outlook of this book differ from those of scores of sport psychology texts targeted at the North American market. This book integrates theoretical principles, research findings, anecdotal evidence, psychological measures, and applied interventions that are supported by our wide-ranging experiences.

All chapters share a similar format to help readers absorb the material and use it readily. Each topic is first defined and contextualized by using clear definitions of psychological terms. Second, the main theory or theories underlying the topic are explained using plain English to orient readers to the conceptual foundations of the interventions that follow. Along with the theory, key findings from recent research are provided to illustrate the potential effectiveness of interventions, developmental issues (i.e., changes across the lifespan), and gender differences.

Third, problem areas and roadblocks that are sometimes encountered when applying sport psychology techniques are discussed. Where appropriate, this discussion takes place immediately following the presentation of specific interventions. Fourth, the mainstay of each chapter is a detailed presentation of the most effective intervention techniques related to the topic. Because some of these interventions are applicable

across topics (e.g., self-confidence and motivation), links throughout the text enable readers to quickly locate all of the material that may be relevant to them.

Finally, each topic is summarized using a synthesis of the main themes covered in the chapter. This synthesis includes a recap of the most important practical implications for athletes, coaches, team managers, students, and parents or guardians. The summaries can be revisited as *aide-mémoires* for the material covered in the chapters.

Chapters also address how well certain techniques are likely to work and when they might best be used. For example, we do not recommend positive self-statements as a singular intervention strategy for athletes experiencing low self-esteem; this can cause them to adopt negative counterstatements. This is because our minds can begin to question and challenge repeated positive self-statements.

Competitors often wish to know how they can overcome a motivational slump or how to focus better in critical situations. One of the primary aims of this book is to provide techniques that enable athletes to reproduce their optimal mental states and develop sound coping strategies for the stressful situations that sport can conjure. The interventions are based on theoretical principles stemming from the cutting edge of sport psychology research. We are both award-winning researchers and have acted as consultants to thousands of sportspeople. This gives us a unique insight into the application of theory in real-world situations. Over the years, we have come to realize that sport psychology is as much an art as a science.

Many of the exercises are as applicable to coaches and team managers as they are to athletes. Sport leaders play a vital role in delivering the fundamental principles of sport psychology and satisfying the needs of athletes. Indeed, fulfillment of athletes' psychological needs is a philosophy that lies at the very heart of this text. To this end, approaches such as getting athletes involved in the decision-making process, developing their sense of competence through the attainment of bite-sized goals, and promoting strong interpersonal relationships are explored. These approaches are underscored by a wealth of anecdotal evidence from some of the world's best-known athletes.

We have each produced a chapter on the application to sport of our specialist area of research. Karageorghis presents his groundbreaking work on the application of music within the sport domain and provides several music-related interventions that can be used to boost performance (chapter 8). In a chapter on mood and emotion, Terry explains how mood profiling can increase the likelihood that athletes will experience an optimal mindset for performance. He also demonstrates the application of mood profiles in a range of sporting contexts including the monitoring of training load (chapter 5).

Following an introduction that outlines the main facets of sport performance and provides guidance on maximizing skill learning (chapter 1), the remaining chapters cover important topics in contemporary sport psychology. Chapter 2 addresses motivation and includes some interesting self-assessment tests as well as a range of approaches on goal setting and overcoming slumps in motivation. Chapter 3 examines self-confidence, the guardian angel of performance, providing a range of novel approaches on how to bolster athletes' self-belief.

Chapter 4 focuses on competition anxiety with a detailed explanation of the anxiety-performance relationship followed by an array of anxiety control techniques. Chapter 6 spotlights concentration with applied examples to help the reader understand various types of concentration. Chapter 7 explores visualization and self-hypnosis using a range of innovative techniques that can enhance the consistency of performance. With judicious use, the contents of this book will help bridge the gap between sporting potential and sporting performance.

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CONTENTS

Foreword vii | Preface ix | Acknowledgments xi

Chapter 1	Sport Psychology Applications	1
Chapter 2	Motivation	27
Chapter 3	Self-Confidence	59
Chapter 4	Anxiety	89
Chapter 5	Mood and Emotion	119
Chapter 6	Concentration	143
Chapter 7	Visualization and Self-Hypnosis.	169
Chapter 8	The Power of Sound	197

Suggested Resources 223 | Index 229 | About the Authors 235

Sport Psychology Applications

In training everyone focuses on 90 percent physical and 10 percent mental, but in the races it's 90 percent mental because there's very little that separates us physically at the elite level.

—Elka Graham, Australian swimming legend

We have written this book principally for athletes, but it is equally useful for coaches and team managers, students of sport psychology, as well as the parents and guardians of aspiring athletes. It may also interest those who are striving to excel in other fields of human endeavor such as business or the performing arts. This is because many of the psychological principles associated with excellence in sport can be applied universally.

Ask any champion athlete whether psychology is vital to success, and the answer every time will be a resounding yes. What many athletes and coaches are unsure about is how precisely to develop psychological skills and the mental approach to training and competition. Our aim is to provide a structured, easy-to-use guide to help athletes and coaches develop the psychological aspects of performance. The contents of this book should serve as an ideal complement to athletes' existing skills and physical aptitudes for their chosen sports.

Clearly, the mental aspect of performance can vary from day to day. If this were not the case, Tiger Woods would always win the US Open, Usain Bolt would always win the Olympic 100-meter title, and Brazil would always win the FIFA World Cup. The huge appeal of sport stems from its unpredictability: We never know for sure who's going to win. It is precisely this uncertainty that can be a source of great frustration

for athletes and often accounts for thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are not conducive to good performance.

One of the main challenges for athletes and their coaches is to be able to produce strong performances consistently, week in and week out. A lack of consistency is often what prevents people with considerable skill and ability from reaching the pinnacle of success for which they seem destined. The funny thing is that athletes have much more control over the consistency of their performance than they might imagine.

This book is certainly not a magic wand, and it won't transform someone without the right physical makeup into a Serena Williams, Jenson Button, or Cristiano Ronaldo. What it will do is enable athletes to concentrate far better, guide them toward improving their self-confidence, reduce the number of times they choke in pressure situations, and perhaps help them to conquer that opponent who has hitherto gotten the better of them.

No one can really afford to be an analogue athlete in a digital age. There is now huge interest in how to enhance sport performance using state-of-the-art methods. Athletes and coaches should take advantage of the wealth of sport science knowledge and research to give themselves the best possible chance of success. With margins of victory and defeat so slight, such knowledge can be the difference between triumph and disaster.

Applied sport psychology is closely related to its parent disciplines of psychology, physical education, and sport science. It has become extremely popular over the last three decades because coaches and athletes have begun to realize just how much of sporting performance depends on the mental approach. We would argue that applied sport psychology is both a science and an art. It is a science insofar as key principles from psychology are applied to sport often with the goal of enhancing performance, but it can also be considered an art because finding the right mix of applied interventions takes great skill, imagination, guile, and creativity.

Hence, you cannot expect to apply sport psychology out of a textbook in the same way that you can cook a gourmet meal or build a kit car. A detailed knowledge of a wide range of scientific principles is required because these underpin the area. Yet these principles need to be applied artfully. That is why you should be selective in what you decide to use from this book. Many techniques are presented, and although some will be entirely relevant to many people, they will not work for all.

In addition to enhancing performance, applied sport psychology is concerned with improving the experience of sport as a whole. A good sport psychologist equips athletes with skills that help them in many other aspects of their lives. They also educate athletes and coaches so that they eventually become self-sufficient. Competitors are taught a repertoire of mental skills and interventions to be used as and when required. Applied sport psychology is therefore about empowering athletes to improve their performances in the sporting arena while also enriching their lives.

This introductory chapter continues with a warm-up exercise (see exercise 1.1) and a brief history detailing the evolution of applied sport psychology. We then consider the constituent parts of sporting performance and focus in great detail on the development of key skills. This includes coverage of how to organize practice sessions to maximize skill learning; our advice draws upon the very latest research on skill development. We will go on to explore the intriguing nature-versus-nurture debate in sport and complete the chapter with a brief recap of the main points.

Exercise 1.1

What's Within Your Control?

Take a moment to reflect on all the excuses you have made in the past when you lost to an opponent or team you knew deep down that you could have beaten. Write down the list of excuses on a piece of paper before you go any further.

We are confident that your excuses may have included some of these: *I lost my focus at a critical moment, I wasn't feeling 100 percent, I was worried about what my teammates might say if I missed, I just talked myself out of it, I got too wrapped up in the referee's poor decisions, or I kept thinking about the consequences of not winning.*

Now go through the list and mark each excuse with either WMC for *within my control* or OMC for *outside of my control*. Add up the number of WMCs and OMCs. What you will most probably find is that the number of WMCs (factors within your control that caused you to underperform) far exceeds the number of OMCs. If this is indeed the case, it means that you lost as a result of poor psychological skills. This is something you might seek to rectify.

HISTORICAL USE OF SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

The interdependence of mind and body has fascinated people since ancient times. The celebrated Greek philosopher Plato popularized the maxim "healthy mind in a healthy body," which captures the essence of sport psychology. This is because many professional practitioners adopt a holistic approach wherein the general wellbeing of athletes is considered equally as important as their performance levels. In addition, many of the principles described in this book (skill formation, competitive tactics, emotional control) have their roots in traditional Chinese culture.

The exact birthplace of sport psychology is shrouded by historical uncertainty, although the efforts of early pioneers can be traced to central Europe. As early as 1830, the German scientist Carl Friedrich Koch published an article on "the psychology of calisthenics." This was followed, a few decades later, by Wilhelm Wundt's skill-related experimental work conducted at the University of Leipzig in 1879.

In the USA, just before the turn of the twentieth century, Norman Triplett of Indiana University produced one of the first journal publications on sport psychology, which addressed psychological factors in cycle racing. He found that the presence of another contestant "served to liberate latent energy not ordinarily available." Nowadays, we call this influence of the presence of others *social facilitation*, and Triplett's contribution is widely acknowledged as a landmark in social psychology.

The first use of the term *sport psychology* is credited to the founder of the modern Olympic movement, French nobleman Pierre de Coubertin. In 1900 he published an article titled "La Psychologie du Sport" and went on to write extensively on psychological aspects of sport until his death in 1937. Notwithstanding de Coubertin's contribution to the field, few of the early writings or experiments were systematic, progressive, or clearly defined within the context of sport.

The first person to make a career out of sport psychology was American psychologist Coleman Griffith, who is often referred to as the grandfather of sport psychology. In 1925 the University of Illinois asked Griffith to work with coaches in the hope that there would be some positive consequences for their athletes. Griffith's interventions contributed to the University of Illinois winning two national championships and three Big Ten championships in American football.

Griffith opened the first sport psychology laboratory in the USA and taught the first course in the subject. He also published the first two textbooks, which have long since been considered classics, *Psychology of Coaching* (1926) and *Psychology of Athletics* (1928). Many of Griffith's experiments were more concerned with the learning and retention of motor skills than with what we would today consider sport psychology. He was fascinated by topics such as reaction time and anticipation skills. Griffith's laboratory was forced to close in 1930 when the university withdrew its funding as a result of the Great Depression.

In 1938 Griffith became the first sport psychologist to work with a professional team: the Chicago Cubs baseball team. His appointment was made at the behest of the club's owner, William Wrigley Jr. (the chewing gum magnate), but it was ardently resisted by the team manager, Charlie Grimm. Griffith produced a fascinating study on the personality of the players, although he did not enjoy a great deal of competitive success with the Cubs. This may well have been due to the team manager's resistance to Griffith's services, but his efforts left the door ajar for the thousands of sport psychologists who followed.

Sport psychology gathered considerable momentum in the 1960s particularly through the work of two psychologists at San Jose State University, Bruce Ogilvie and Thomas Tutko. Like Griffith before them, they were very interested in how personality influenced sport performance. Ogilvie and Tutko courted controversy through the extensive use of a paper-and-pencil test known as the Athletic Motivation Inventory (AMI), which they claimed could accurately measure the motivation of athletes.

These pioneers of sport psychology advised coaches on the selection of athletes based on the results of the AMI. Other prominent psychologists of the time argued that selections could not be made on the basis of questionnaire results and that such tests were hardly worth the paper they were written on. This debate raged on for many years. For his many contributions, Bruce Ogilvie became known as one of the fathers of applied sport psychology in North America. He shares this title with Rainer Martens, a former professor of sport psychology at the University of Illinois, who founded the publishing company Human Kinetics.

Another American, Charles A. Garfield, visited the former USSR in the late 1970s and noted the considerable investment in athletic-related research since the 1950s as part of the Soviet space program. The race to be the first into space led the USA and USSR governments to explore highly innovative methods that might increase the endurance, resilience, and adaptability of astronauts.

Thinking outside the box in this way drove Russian scientists toward successfully employing ancient yogic techniques to control mental processes in space. The techniques they adopted were called *self-regulation training* or *psychic self-regulation*. These were used to control emotions such as the anxiety associated with living in zero gravity, as well as bodily functions such as muscular tension and heart rate.

The self-regulation techniques were not systematically applied to Russian athletes until a generation later, at which point the outstanding success of Soviet Bloc countries across a wide range of sports in the 1970s and 1980s enthralled the world. The state-sponsored selective schooling of young athletes, intensive training delivered by highly educated coaches, optimal nutrition, and sport psychology techniques created a conveyor belt of champions who were at the forefront of world sport right up until the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1991. Western sport authorities learned a great deal from this highly structured approach, and following disappointing performances at major events such as the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal (where Eastern European countries enjoyed a medal bonanza), Australia, the UK, and the USA began to take sport psychology very seriously.

Following the successful application of sport science by Soviet Bloc countries, Western athletes became very interested in sport psychology. In the 1980s, governing bodies of sport throughout the West were encouraged to employ consultant psychologists to work with athletes, coaches, and team managers.

Initially, those interested in sport psychology based their interactions and interventions on theories and research from general psychology. As time went on, however, a number of sport-specific theories were developed and tested. For example, Rainer Martens and colleagues' book *Competitive Anxiety in Sport*, which described multidimensional anxiety theory, or how anxiety influences sport performance, was hugely influential.

By the 1990s, the number of sport psychology journals had increased, and scholarly bodies such as the International Society of Sport Psychology and the Association for Applied Sport Psychology organized frequent scientific meetings. The discipline had well and truly arrived and was duly recognized as a bona fide branch of psychology by organizations such as the American Psychological Association, the Australian Psychological Society, and the British Psychological Society.

Despite the strong scientific underpinnings of modern-day sport psychology, there are many reported instances of so-called charlatans working with managers and players, even at the elite level. Names such as Uri Geller, Mystic Meg, and Eileen Drewery are familiar to those who regularly read British tabloid newspapers. Many others who are not known publicly routinely tout their services to professional clubs. Although such individuals may appear to do some good initially, perhaps by lending a sympathetic ear or providing a prematch pep talk, their practices are generally not based on a sound methodology, and they are not licensed or accredited to provide such services. Accordingly, we urge you to exercise caution and to seek out qualified and recognized practitioners.

A high-profile case illustrates this point. The former England soccer manager, Glenn Hoddle, enlisted the services of faith healer Eileen Drewery to work with the national squad in preparation for the 1998 World Cup in France. Hoddle had a 20-year association with Drewery that began when he dated her daughter as a teenage player. At the age of 17, Hoddle was taken aback by an offer from Drewery of psychic help to fix a torn muscle, but he found that the injury miraculously disappeared following some "remote healing." During the 1990s, a string of professional footballers visited Drewery's home, including England internationals Paul Merson, Ian Wright, and Paul Gascoigne. Most of the 1998 World Cup squad had been directed to have sessions with Drewery, but

Major Sport Psychology Organizations Around the World

American Psychological Association (APA)—Division 47: www.apa.org/about/division/div47.aspx

Asian South Pacific Association of Sport Psychology (ASPASP): www.aspasp.org

Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP): <http://appliedsportpsych.org>

Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Sportpsychologie (ASP; German Sport Psychology Society): www.ispw.unibe.ch/asp

Australian Psychological Society (APS) —College of Sport Psychologists: www.groups.psychology.org.au/csp

British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) —Sport and Exercise Psychology Interest Group: www.bases.org.uk/Sport-Psychology-Interest-Groups

British Psychological Society (BPS) —Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology: www.bps.org.uk/spex/spex_home.cfm

Canadian Society for Psychomotor Learning and Sport Psychology (SCAPPS): www.scapps.org

De Vereniging voor SportPsychologie in Nederland (VSP; Dutch Society for Sport Psychology): www.vspn.nl

Εταιρεία Αθλητικής Ψυχολογίας (ΕΑΨ; Hellenic Society of Sport Psychology): www.sportpsychology.gr

Federación Española de Psicología del Deporte (FEPD; Spanish Sport Psychology Federation): www.psicologiadeporte.org

Fédération Européenne de Psychologie des Sports et des Activités Corporelles (FEPSAC; European Federation of Sport Psychology): www.fepsac.com

International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP): www.issponline.org

North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSA): www.naspsa.org

Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Sportpsychologie (SASP; Swiss Society for Sport Psychology): <http://sportpsychologie.ch>

Sociedade Portuguesa Psicologia do Desporto (SPPD; Portuguese Society of Sport Psychology): www.sppd.com.pt

Società Italiana di Psicologia dello Sport (SIPSIS; Italian Society of Sport Psychology): www.psicologiadello sport.it

Société Française de Psychologie du Sport (SFPS; French Society of Sport Psychology): www.psychodusport.com

Svensk Idrottspsykologisk Förening (SIPF; Swedish Sport Psychology Association): www.svenskidrottspsykologi.nu

many claimed to feel very uncomfortable about this. When the press caught wind of the story, it ran and ran. Eventually, Hoddle was dismissed as the England manager.

As a consequence of such cases, governing bodies of sport are now very mindful about whom they hire and their scientific credentials. The new millennium has witnessed a considerable expansion of the training available for aspiring sport psychologists. It's actually so extensive that, in some countries, it takes longer to qualify as a sport psychologist than it does as a general medical practitioner! Athletes and coaches looking to engage the services of a sport psychologist should be certain that the person is accredited, licensed, or chartered by a recognized national body (see Major Sport Psychology Organizations Around the World on the previous page).

Before hiring a sport psychologist, keep in mind that although sport psychologists may well enhance the experience of sport, bolster motivation, or improve elements of performance, they cannot guarantee successful outcomes. The outcome of a sporting contest often relies on factors outside of an individual athlete's control, including the performance of teammates and the opposition, the impartiality of officials, and environmental conditions. This is an important consideration to bear in mind regarding all aspects of sport psychology.

COMPONENTS OF PERFORMANCE

One of the first steps in planning a way forward involves determining how performance is controlled and examining its constituent parts. Performance in any sport is determined by a combination of three main elements: *physical conditioning* for competition, *skill level*, and *psychological readiness* to compete.

The relative importance of these factors differs considerably from sport to sport. For instance, cross-country skiers rely heavily on physical conditioning but devote less time to the actual skills involved in skiing. In contrast, top golfers, who need constant practice to keep their skills razor sharp, can perform well with relatively low levels of aerobic fitness. Similarly, developing stamina is much more important for a marathon runner than for a trap shooter. Trap shooting, however, involves very precise skills that require more practice than the relatively straightforward and repetitive skill of running efficiently.

The element of performance that makes demands of all sportspeople equally is the psychological readiness to compete. Without mental toughness, no athlete can be considered suitably prepared for competition. Yet many people enter the sporting arena having given very little thought to mental preparation. It is a component of performance often left to chance; you might feel up for it, but then again, you might not!

The great irony associated with the lack of attention to psychological readiness is that athletes, coaches, and fans invariably attribute lackluster performances to psychological factors rather than physiological or biomechanical ones. If even a small fraction of the time athletes spend on physical conditioning and skills training were devoted to improving their mental approach, they would at least be giving themselves the chance to avoid the frustration of inconsistency. This book explains how performance in sport is affected by mental factors and includes a range of psychological techniques that you can learn and practice, the first of which we demonstrate in exercise 1.2 on page 8.

Exercise 1.2

An Applied Sport Psychology Technique to Get You Started: The Standing Long Jump

We have used this exercise many times in lectures and public presentations to demonstrate how sport psychology techniques can assist performance. Ask a friend or a coach to read the following instructions to you one by one and follow them carefully:

1. Perform a gentle stretch, particularly of the major muscles in your legs.
2. Mark a line on the floor ensuring that there is at least 6 yards (about 6 meters) clear in front of you. Stand just behind the line with your feet shoulder-width apart.
3. Perform a standing long jump (i.e., bend your knees and propel yourself forward to land on both feet), jumping as far as you can (see figure 1.1). Have your friend or coach place a marker to the side of where your heels landed.
4. Repeat this process a few times so that you are properly warmed up.
5. Now place another marker a few inches beyond your current best effort to give you a specific goal to aim for. Before you jump, close your eyes and visualize yourself reaching the target distance.
6. When you have seen yourself achieving this improved distance in your mind's eye, take another jump. Measure the distance between the best of your earlier trials and the post-visualization trial. You may well find that you have jumped a significant distance farther.



Figure 1.1 Jump as far as you can and have a partner place a marker to the side of where your heels landed.

Photo courtesy of Sally Trussler, Brunel University photographer