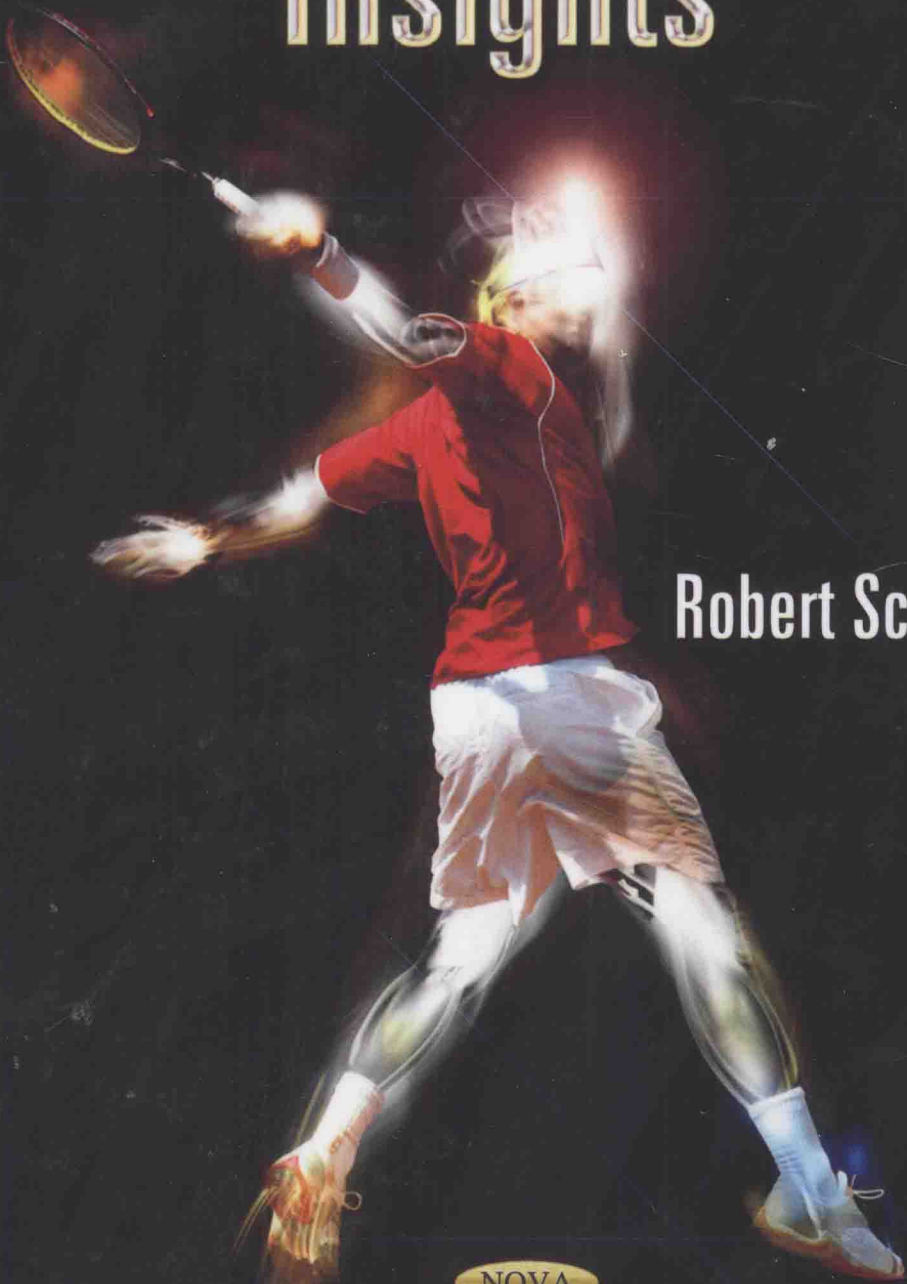


SPORTS AND ATHLETICS PREPARATION,
PERFORMANCE, AND PSYCHOLOGY

Sport Psychology Insights

Robert Schinke
Editor



NOVA

SPORTS AND ATHLETICS PREPARATION, PERFORMANCE, AND PSYCHOLOGY

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY INSIGHTS

ROBERT SCHINKE
EDITOR



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PREFACE

This edition, similar to last year's, features the accepted publications to *Athletic Insight*, released in 2010. This book focuses on topics such as mental toughness, perfectionism, team dynamics, team building, moral behavior, stress, athletic transitions, attentional focus, environmental influences on performance, coach-athlete relations, athlete affect, and social-physique factors. The targeted populations for the aforementioned topics are comprised of professional athletes, elite amateur athletes, youth sport athletes, and those engaging in physical activity

Chapter 1- This study investigated the relationship between mental toughness and coping in an ultra-endurance (100km walk/run) event. A two-stage procedure was adopted: First, in situ data was collected during the early, middle and later stages of the Trailwalker UK event, with 12 participants asked to report how they were coping, and the personal attributes that were enabling them to persist. The second stage consisted of a follow-up focus group, which was attended by three men and four women who successfully completed the event. Participants were questioned on the demands of the event and how they coped with these demands. Participants were also asked to describe the attributes of the ideal mentally tough Trailwalker. Data was transcribed, and themes were identified using an inductive content analysis and agreed with the participants. Results suggest that successful participants were stubborn / bloody-minded (tenacious), totally committed to their goals, objective, had a sense of humor, thrived on challenges, were able to maintain perspective in adversity and possessed humility. The attributes identified as key components of mental toughness in the present study appear relatively consistent with previous mental toughness research using elite athletes. Participants generally possessed a large variety of coping strategies that were used interchangeably during the event. Further research is encouraged to compare differences between elite and non-elite athletes in relation to mental toughness.

Chapter 2- The sport of pole vaulting is a relatively new endeavor in the world of track and field. There is a great deal of consensus regarding the element of risk associated with this event. A series of rule changes were enacted in the pre-Olympic year 2003 involving facilities, procedures, and judging. A significant procedural change involved reducing the time limit in preparation for the vault; preparation for the takeoff run was reduced from 90 to 60 seconds. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of the rule changes on top athletes' perceptions and behaviors. Fifteen elite German pole vault athletes were interviewed regarding the perceived effects of the rule changes on preparation and performance. The

majority of athletes reported that the time limit required them to alter their preparation and performance routines. The results further suggest that male athletes feel more disturbed by the rule changes than female athletes. These results are discussed in light of previous research on the influence of performance routines and implications for coaches and athletes.

Chapter 3- The current study examined the role played by self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism in the context of exercise behavior and how factors such as self-presentation affect the frequency of exercise activity in people with varying degrees of perfectionism. Regression analyses revealed self-oriented perfectionism as a moderator in the relationship between self-presentation and exercise behavior. That is, the desire one has for appearing toned and fit to others influenced exercise differently depending on the degree to which people demand perfection from one's self. Specifically, individuals who were strongly motivated to present themselves as an exerciser and who demanded perfectionism from the self were found to engage in physical activity more frequently than did those who rated high on self-presentation in exercise but demanded less perfection from the self. The results of the study clarify the characteristics of regular exercisers and further the understanding of the role perfectionism plays in exercise behavior in the general population.

Chapter 4- The purpose of this study was to examine the mediational relationships between athletes' perceptions of task cohesion, role ambiguity, and the intensity and direction of cognitive anxiety during a European rugby union championship. A total of 26 athletes from the 'Under 18' French national team completed task cohesion and role ambiguity inventories before the tournament and a measure of the intensity and direction of cognitive anxiety before each of their three games. In general, the regression analyses supported a mediating effect of group integration-task (GI-T) in the relationship between role ambiguity (i.e., scope of responsibilities and role behaviors in the offensive and defensive contexts) and the direction of cognitive anxiety before two of the three games. Taken together, the results provide support for the contention that the psychological environment created within a group influences the psychological state of its members. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Chapter 5- The relationship between sport and morality is important for many reasons, particularly for those who seek to use sport as a vehicle for moral development. Previous research has revealed contradictory findings. The present study assessed the perceived legitimacy of unethical sport situations for 78 high school athletes. Five ethical domains (coach aggression, player aggression, cheating, disrespect, and rule bending) were examined across sex, grade level, level of physical contact, and level of competition. The present findings demonstrated male athletes were more accepting of player aggression than female athletes. In addition, varsity athletes were more accepting of player aggression and disrespect than junior varsity athletes. The results are discussed with respect to past research and specific psychological theories.

Chapter 6- The coach-athlete relationship is an important determinant of athlete stress and motivation levels. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between athlete evaluations of coaching characteristics (specifically likeability and technical expertise), student-athlete motivation, perceived stress, and self-reported skill. Participants were one hundred and five high school student-athletes representing a variety of sports. Results indicated that significant relationships existed between coach technical expertise and emotional stability, interest/enjoyment, competence, and social motivation. Higher ratings of coach likeability were related to lower levels of perceived stress. An interaction also existed

between coach evaluations and motivation for participating in sport in predicting self-reported skill. These findings are congruent with and extend prior research emphasizing the impact of coaching on student-athletes. Further research should attempt to more narrowly define the particular coaching traits related to increased motivation and performance, including techniques which may aid in improving performance and reducing the negative effects of stress.

Chapter 7- Research with professional sport coaches is rare in sport psychology compared to studies with athletes. The aim of this study was to explore the career transition experiences of coaches. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were employed to examine career transition experiences of professional football coaches in England. Interviews were based on the model of human adaptation to transition. Qualitative content analysis revealed five categories in relation to transitions experienced by the coaches; perceptions of the transition, sources of support, adjustment strategies, lack of planning and career awareness, and competencies supporting transitions. Sources of social support (from family and football community), and employing certain strategies (completing coaching qualifications, gaining credibility early, adopting a new perspective) were related to a positive adjustment to career transitions. Consistent with previous research there was an absence of career planning activities beyond mandatory qualifications. Applied interventions that encourage career planning and develop interpersonal skills are suggested as a suitable means for supporting career transitions and broader coach development. Recommendations are made regarding future research on career transitions with coaches.

Chapter 8- Many different measures have been used to investigate the content of persons' attentional focus during exercise. Attentional focus has typically been divided into two categories: association and dissociation. Subsequent researchers suggested adding an internal/external dimension. We proposed a number of changes regarding how to measure attentional focus, including additional subcategories and a new measure: Measure of Attentional Focus (MAF). Previous research was discussed in order to establish the rationale for the development of the various components of this measure. Cognitive interviews with coaches and athletes were conducted before finalizing the MAF. Finally, results from a field study employing the MAF are reported. Two hundred and twenty-seven participants completed the MAF following a 5k race or routine workout. The validity of the MAF was examined, and comparisons were made between the results based on the MAF and the traditional dichotomized model of attentional focus. Novel descriptive and correlational findings afforded by the new attentional focus measurement approach are discussed. Last, limitations and practical applications are delineated.

Chapter 9- Despite team building (TB) methods having their roots in organizational development (OD), this theoretical background has been seldom applied in sport. The purpose of this study was to provide chronological narrative review of the recent (1997-2008) sport-related research on team building. A total of 28 articles were reviewed. The findings suggest that team building has a positive effect on group functioning, especially increasing group cohesion. It was also apparent that thus far, the team building research in sport is mostly focused on cohesion. In conclusion, it would be advantageous for researchers to familiarize themselves with the existing organizational development research tradition. This could assist in establishing a clear definition and a solid theoretical framework for team building in sport, as well as preventing sport researchers making the same mistakes made in work

organizations. By doing so, team building, and the development of group functioning and performance, could become an even more promising area for sport science research.

Chapter 10- This study investigated mental toughness in an English Premier League football academy. 112 football players aged between 12 and 18 years of age completed the Mental Toughness Questionnaire 18 as a measure of mental toughness. A cross-sectional design was used to test for differences in mental toughness across age groups, and data concerning players who were either retained or released by the club was also compared. A one-way ANOVA showed no differences in mental toughness between age groups, and an independent t-test also found no differences in the mental toughness of players who were either retained or released. These results suggest that older and more experienced academy football players do not possess higher levels of mental toughness than younger, less experienced players. Qualitative research involving academy staff and players is encouraged to provide a more detailed evaluation.

Chapter 11- In 2009 the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) staged the 12th World Congress of Sport Psychology in Morocco and it was the first one in Africa since the Society was founded in 1965. Now all the continents as they are represented in the five circles of the IOC logo have hosted this event and this may provide proof that Sport Psychology today is affirmed through a global community. International colleagues from all over the globe contribute on the one hand through their research to the advancement of athletic insights and on the other hand by their service to the enhancement of performance and well-being for athletes, coaches and further groups of people involved in sports and exercise. Essential processes as they have been discussed in the Congress and as they are highlighted in the various contributions to this special edition will be briefly outlined in the following by a systematic approach in sport psychology from an action- theory perspective.

Chapter 12- The anxiolytic effect of exercise is well-established although the associated mechanism(s) are still debated. One proposed explanation is the thermogenic hypothesis. Existing studies have tested this hypothesis via manipulation of body temperature through clothing or exercise in water of varying temperatures. The purpose of this study was to test the thermogenic hypothesis via different environmental temperatures. Participants cycled for 60 minutes at 90% of ventilatory threshold with trials counterbalanced in thermo-neutral (18C/65F) vs. hot conditions (33C/91F). Anxiety was measured pre, post, and 30 minutes post exercise. Results revealed that anxiety was significantly higher after exercising in the hot condition vs. the thermo-neutral condition where anxiety decreased after exercise. Discussion of the thermogenic hypothesis, suggestions for future research and applied implications are provided.

Chapter 13- Evaluation models are being developed to comprehensively evaluate coaching effectiveness, but few researchers have empirically validated coaching intervention programs. The purpose of the current study was to examine the impact of a coaching intervention on athletes' satisfaction, enjoyment, self-confidence, and intrateam attraction and their perceptions of their coaches' socio-emotional behaviors following Mallett and Côté's evaluation model. Nine boys' high school soccer coaches and their respective teams were randomly placed in a control, feedback, or educational group. Using 3 (treatment) x 2 (time) MANOVAs, significant interactions were found for the coach-athlete relationship subscales and psychosocial variables. Post-hoc tests revealed significant results for caring coaching behaviors and athlete self-confidence over time as well as a significant improvement over time for athlete intrateam attraction.

Chapter 14- This study investigated relationships between trait emotional intelligence, pre-race emotions, and post-race emotions among a sample of 93 competitive 10-mile runners. Participants completed emotional intelligence and pre-race emotion scales approximately one hour before starting a 10-mile race, repeating completion of the emotion scales within one hour of finishing. Results indicated emotional intelligence correlated significantly with higher pleasant emotion and lower unpleasant emotion before and after racing. Path analysis results revealed emotional intelligence predicted both pre and post-race emotion. Results lend support to the notion that emotional intelligence is associated with emotional well-being. Future research should investigate emotional intelligence and its relationship with strategies used by athletes to regulate emotion before, during, and after competition.

Chapter 15- Drive for thinness is one of the major predictors of disordered eating behaviours. A wealth of research has identified various aspects of the culture of sport as risk factors for the development of drive for thinness. However, despite the consistency of these findings, drive for thinness in sport remains relatively under-researched. The purpose of this study was to examine the development of drive for thinness among females in sport. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 37 competitive female athletes, aged 18 – 25, representing a variety of sports. Data were analyzed inductively using open, axial, and selective coding procedures. A model of the process by which females develop drive for thinness in sport is proposed, including six sequential stages of augmentation. Implications of these findings are discussed relative to prevention and best practice in sport.

Chapter 16- Twenty one English Premier League academy football players gave self-ratings of mental toughness two times during the competitive season. Two senior academy coaches also rated the player's levels of mental toughness using the same scale. Three important findings emerged: first, both player and coach ratings of mental toughness were found to be highly stable over a three-month period. Second, the players' self-ratings of mental toughness were found to be significantly higher than the ratings of one of the two senior coaches. Finally, there were very low levels of agreement between the two coaches, and between coach and player ratings of mental toughness. These results suggest that even amongst elite level professional soccer coaches, there are considerable differences in interpreting the behaviors and attributes of mentally tough performers.

Chapter 17- Acute psychological outcomes of interactive video game (exergames) were compared to traditional aerobic exercise. Volunteers (20 males, 17 females) exercised at a self-selected intensity for 30 minutes in three separate conditions: (1) interactive cycle ergometer, (2) interactive video dance game, and (3) traditional cycle ergometer. Participants were assessed five minutes pre- and five minutes post-exercise on positive and negative affect, concentration, and short-term memory. Positive affect results indicated a significant time effect, with higher post-activity positive affect across conditions compared to pre-test scores. Negative affect also showed a significant time effect, indicating lower post-activity negative affect across conditions compared to pre-activity affect. Finally, a significant time effect for short-term memory indicated higher digit-span recall across conditions compared to pre-activity levels. Exergames appear to provide similar acute psychological benefits to traditional exercise when performed at a self-selected intensity.

Chapter 18- Athletes in different sports can experience the "yips" - an inability to perform a learned skill - although most research has focused on golfers and their putting "yips." Tennis players can also experience the "yips" with their serves, and this study utilizes

the first author's personal autoethnographic account of his experience as an NCAA collegiate tennis player dealing with the serving "yips" during his senior season. His account provides an insider view of the debilitating effects of the "yips," including paralysis, embarrassment, and powerlessness, and of the long process he went through to eventually overcome them. His account and the subsequent analysis of that experience provide insights into possible causes of and cures for the "yips." Overcoming the virus-like and often career-ending effects of the "yips" requires considerable time, perseverance, resilience, self-awareness, and hard work. Training in mental skills can also facilitate this process.

Chapter 19- For approximately 30 years, researchers have found momentum to be a difficult variable to quantify scientifically. While various definitions of momentum have been utilized and the numerous methods undertaken to investigate its significance, there is a need for more focused, empirical study of certain aspects of this potentially vast factor. Although mostly ignored by researchers, the Antecedents-Consequences Model provided a specific framework in which to better understand this broad concept. The ACM, which suggested momentum may be experienced by both spectators and athletes, stated personal control (PC) is a fundamental variable establishing whether momentum is perceived. Other aspects of the ACM are presented along with discussion of the past and future research challenges in the investigation of momentum.

Chapter 20- Evidence suggests that emotional states of athletes are influential of athlete well-being and athletic performance, and therefore strategies that help athletes regulate emotions are advantageous. A factor shown to influence emotional states is waking to sunlight with unpleasant emotions increasing during the winter months when daylight hours are fewer. The aim of this study was to examine the effects of waking to simulated natural sunlight on emotions experienced among National level athletes. A within-subject counter balanced design was used in which participants completed daily measures of emotion (experienced and ideal) and emotion regulation strategies for four weeks. Half of participants used their natural light simulator to assist waking during the first two weeks, switching half way through the test period with the other half doing the opposite. Results indicate using light therapy associated with reduced unpleasant emotions. Further, the use of deliberate strategies intended to regulate emotions reduced during light therapy suggesting conscious processes did not explain the results. We suggest that athletes who train in the morning and regularly waken to darkness should consider using light therapy.

Chapter 21- Studies examining the use of pre-performance routines in self-paced events have focused mainly on the sequences of routines demonstrated by skilled performers when readying themselves for the act. However, few investigations have looked at the amount of time performers take to prepare themselves for the task as well as the influence of situational pressure on the duration of preparatory intervals. The purpose of this observational study was to examine the influence of situational pressure, such as the quarter in which the free-throw shots were taken, the point margins, and the outcome of the throw on the actual time available for free-throw shooters in basketball to prepare themselves for the shooting act, from the moment they knew that they were going to perform the shot until they actually made the shot. In addition, the sequences of behaviors demonstrated by the players during this time were also observed. A four-way ANOVA revealed that preparatory times were consistently used by the shooters, and that their duration was slightly influenced by situational pressure. In addition, preparatory intervals were not associated with shooting success. It was found that an interval of unofficial preperformance time of about 19-sec was available to the players from

the moment they knew that they were going to shoot the free throw until the moment they were given the ball by the referee while standing at the free-throw line. During this time, players went directly to the free-throw line and stood there. About four more sec – official preperformance time – were used by the players after the ball was handed to them by the referee, mainly for dribbling and/or holding the ball.

Chapter 22- Athletes may be more vulnerable than non-athletes to exercise dependence due to their exercise motives. Media exposure to magazines targeting and featuring athletes may increase body dissatisfaction, which in turn predicts exercise dependence. However, no studies have examined whether exercise motives and media exposure predict exercise dependence in collegiate athletes and non-athletes, or whether these factors may differ between the two groups. Three hundred twenty one students completed exercise dependence, exercise motives, and media exposure scales. Results showed predictors of exercise dependence in athletes included: exercising for enjoyment, exposure to mass media, exposure to general magazines, and internalizing what an athlete should look like based on athletic images in magazines. In non-athletes, predictors of exercise dependence included: exercising for improved mood, exercising for fitness, and internalizing what an athlete should look like based on athletic images in magazines.

Chapter 23- It is believed that adopting a constructivist approach to developing and implementing a coach education training program will be a challenging task in large-scale coach education programs when we consider the number of people to re-group, train, and evaluate. A research program was initiated to analyse the design and implementation of a revised large-scale coach education training program, the Canadian National Coaching Certification Program. The present article presents the perspectives of the Program Director and the four national Master Learning Facilitators (MLFs), who played a key role in the design and early implementation of the program. The results indicate that both the Program Director and the four national MLFs all seem well versed in the constructivist learning approach. However, they raised a number of concerns or potential challenges after attending their preparation workshop, and after the initial training of the Learning Facilitators (LFs). The results are discussed using the work of Moon.

2010 IN REVIEW: INTRODUCTION

This has been the second year that Athletic Insight has partnered with Nova Science Publishers. The shift to hard copy publishing has contributed to the monumental growth of the journal. As I write this editorial, already, there are a record number of submissions from the international scholarly community in 2011 and we are only in January. I attribute the increase in submissions to the development of our review staff, or associate editors, though also the support of Nova Science as our publisher of choice.

This edition, similar to last year's, feature the accepted publications to Athletic Insight, released in 2010. The papers were taken directly from submissions accepted into one of three installments of Athletic Insight. As you will see, submissions were conferred from England, Germany, the United States, France, Finland, and Canada. Additional submissions reflected work from a much wider representation of international scholars, as well.

I will not take the time to introduce each of these accepted publications to you as their contents can be found directly within the table of contents, forthcoming. However, just to give you some insight into the breadth of topic matter, the submissions span the following areas: mental toughness, perfectionism, team dynamics, team building, moral behavior, stress, athletic transitions, attentional focus, environmental influences on performance, coach-athlete relations, athlete affect, and social-physique factors. The targeted populations for the aforementioned topics are comprised of professional athletes, elite amateur athletes, youth sport athletes, and those engaging in physical activity. Reflecting Athletic Insight's mandate, the journal, and so this abridged compilation, affirms the diversity of topic matter in our field today.

There is an additional section of invited contributions as part of this compilation. These original contributions feature innovative work that to me, reflect intellectual sport psychology thought at its highest level. I have invited authors to contribute pieces to the installment, based on my previous experiences with them. In the original features section, you will find six pieces of original work. The first contribution features the work of Jacob Jensen and Leslee Fisher from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, US. Their work targets the yips, meaning the inability to employ a learned skill whilst under pressure. The area of yips is gaining traction within the scholarly literature, and adding value to their contribution, the authors feature an auto-ethnographic account. Second, Kevin Burke from Illinois State University, US, considers the topic of athlete momentum through the Antecedents – Consequences Model. Dr. Burke's piece is a conceptual contribution that hopefully will shed

new light on the topic of athlete momentum. Third, Dr. Andrew Lane from the University of Wolverhampton, England, has written about emotional regulation and a consideration of national level athletes' emotions to simulated sunlight. Dr. Lane is among the leaders in the area of emotional regulation, and in this research project, he considers the influences of artificial light on athletes' moods. Fourth, Dr. Roni Lidor, an Associate Editor for Athletic Insight, and his colleagues from the Wingate Institute in Israel engaged in an observational study to examine the influence of situational pressure, such as the point margins, and the outcome of the throw on the actual time available for free-throw shooters in basketball to prepare themselves for the shooting act, from the moment they knew that they were going to perform the shot until they actually made the shot. Fifth, Marie Pritchard and Allie Nielsen from Boise State University, US, examined whether exercise motives and media exposure predict exercise dependence in collegiate athletes and non-athletes, or whether these factors may differ between the two groups. Mary is

An Associate Editor with Athletic Insight, and within her featured work, Mary reveals that exercise motives can be very different for those who are physically active versus inactive. Sixth, Penny Werthner and her colleagues from Ottawa University, Canada feature their social constructivist project, undertaken with coaches on a national scale. Their submission focuses specifically on the coach education program for the competition-development context, in which coaches are trained to work with developing athletes "to refine basic sport skills, to develop more advanced skills and tactics, and are generally prepared for performance at provincial and/or national level competitions.

In closing, you will find that the Athletic Insight – Nova Science Publishers partnership is an extremely productive one. The outcome is many high quality submissions to the journal, and we believe that the work featured in this compilation is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

Robert J. Schinke
Editor in Chief of Athletic Insight

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