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CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

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CE WORKSHOPS

CE WORKSHOP: A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN AT CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

Saro Keresteciyan, Cirque du Soleil
Heidi Malo, INS Québec - Institut national du sport du Québec
Daya Grant

Montreal is home to Cirque du Soleil's International Headquarters/Training Center, featuring state of the art facilities that allow their team of dreamers to create stunning shows worldwide that push the limits of the imagination. Sign up for this special "experiential" session where you'll learn how Cirque operates and has integrated mental performance training into their overall culture.The session will feature the following:

- Panel discussion highlighting how mental skills training is being implemented in practice and performances – featuring CMPCs, Cirque coaches and characters
- An overview of how Cirque identifies and trains their performers and the psychology associated with skill acquisition
- The realities of being a performer in this unique environment - including maintaining confidence, motivation and cohesion to execute mind-blowing and high-flying stunts
- Interaction with Cirque performers in their practice facility and demonstration of exercises for individual and group performance routinesCome experience where the training actually happens!

CE WORKSHOP: BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS: MENTAL PERFORMANCE LESSONS FROM MILITARY CO-FACILITATION

Cassandra Seguin, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services
Patrick Twomey, Canadian Armed Forces

Close collaboration and integration into organizations with their own distinct cultures and norms are essential for mental performance consultants (MPCs) to be effective in assisting organizations in achieving their missions (Halbe, 2011; Sánchez, 2020). In high-stakesenvironments (e.g, sport, military, mission-critical teams), impactful consulting requires more than just a knowledge of mental skills; it demands the ability to navigate organizational hierarchies by communicating effectively with key decision-makers and embedding mental performance (MP) strategies into existing frameworks (Mattie et al., 2024).This workshop introduces MPCs to the Operational Planning Process (OPP; CACSC, 2018) and co-facilitation strategies, offering a structured problem-solving approach to integrating mental skills into high-performance environments. Drawing on first-hand experience in collaborative military training, we will explore how the OPP can be applied to enhance MP intervention planning, advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. Participants will learn how to apply OPP principles to consulting, develop advocacy strategies, conduct collaborative inquiries and cofacilitation,and navigate organizational structures and cultures. By the end of the workshop, participants will be equipped with tools to bridge the gap between theory and application. Whether working with athletes, military personnel, or corporate professionals, attendees will leave with a military-inspired blueprint for embedding MP into complex high-performance systems.

CE WORKSHOP: LEADER IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: INTEGRATING UBUNTU AND LIBERATION PSYCHOLOGY FOR SPORT PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Angel Brutus, Synergistic Solutions
Stephanie Baugh, Synergistic Solutions
Natalie Léger, Synergistic Solutions/The Collective Edge
Miana Graves, Synergistic Solutions

Understanding that there is a latent leader identity within all of us, this workshop is designed to facilitate and strengthen that possible self that is a leader. Participants will be equipped with an understanding of who they are when uncertainties arise. They recognize inherent skills necessary for ethically and culturally informed leadership. Cultural shifts and staff turnover present both challenges and opportunities for leaders to chart a new path toward performance excellence. Furthermore, using liberation psychology and the Afrocentric philosophy of Ubuntu as guiding frameworks, the workshop will challenge participants to ensure their leadership empowers others and fosters an environment ripe for transformative change when necessary.Workshop facilitators will employ a combination of lectures, group discussions, interactive exercises, and case study analyses to explore the application of this integrated leadership model. Participants will engage in reflective practice, peer feedback, and collaborative activities to identify and nurture their leader identity and develop strategies for empowering others and fostering community interconnectedness. All content, group discussions, interactive exercises, and case study analyses are framed around real-world experiences that sport and performance psychology providers encounter across numerous performance settings. Facilitating group discussions around ethical dilemmas, asking participants to reflect on how Ubuntu's communal approach and liberation psychology's systemic lens would guide ethical decision-making, attendees will co-create solutions to real-world challenges in their practice, reinforcing the idea that collective wisdom strengthens individual competencies.

CE WORKSHOP: PROCESS-BASED THERAPY (PBT) IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: A CUTTING-EDGE APPROACH TO ENHANCING MENTAL PERFORMANCE

Eddie O'Connor, Atrium Health

With a process-based approach, consultants can use techniques from different approaches (e.g., ACT, CBT, sport psychology) within a coherent framework allowing for more adaptable approaches. Process-Based Therapy (PBT; Hofmann, Hayes & Lorscheid, 2021) focuses on targeting underlyingpsychological processes rather than specific diagnoses or symptoms. It is defined as the contextually specific use of evidence-based processes linked toevidence-based procedures to help clients improve in directions most meaningful to them. PBT tailors interventions to meet a person's specific needs at a given point in time, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach enabling consultants to address the diversity of their clients. This workshop will introduce attendees to the PBT approach including the foundational science of the extended evolutionary meta-model and both training in and practice with the network model for case conceptualization. No clinical training of attendees is required or assumed. How Process-Based Therapy can be used to guide one's personal sport psychology practice will be emphasized. Attendees will leave with practical skills they can begin using immediately with their clients.

CE WORKSHOP: SUPPORTING NEURODIVERGENT ATHLETES: ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTION, AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES FOR SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Richard Fowler, Truett McConnell University

Holly Haynes, Pillar Research Insititute, The Jacob's Ladder Group

Stacy Hall, Truett McConnell University

This workshop addresses the critical need for sport psychology professionals to develop competency in working with neurodivergent athletes. Participants will learn to identify and understand various forms of neurodivergence (including ADHD, autism spectrum, dyslexia, and others) in athletic contexts, develop tailored assessment and intervention strategies, and create inclusive training environments. Through case studies, role-playing exercises, and collaborative problem-solving, attendees will gain practical tools to effectively support neurodivergent athletes' unique needs while leveraging their strengths. This workshop is designed for CMPCs, sport psychology consultants, coaches, and allied professionals seeking to expand their practice to better serve this growing population of athletes across competitive levels and sports.

CE WORKSHOP: THE POLYVAGAL-INFORMED CERTIFIED MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANT: EXPANDING CONSULTING PRACTICES THROUGH AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM INTEGRATION

Laura Farres, Mind in Motion Consulting

Shelbi Snodgrass, Snodgrass & Duff Performance Consulting and Counselling Inc.

This workshop introduces polyvagal theory (PVT; Porges, 1994) and its application to mental performance consulting. Participants will gain insight into the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and its underlying role in performance. Through a combination of didactic instruction, experiential activities, and collaborative group discussions, participants will learn to identify physiological states and to reframe common reactions such as fight, flight, freeze as adaptive ANS responses rather than weakness. Additionally, through an ethical and trauma informed lens, participants will explore polyvagal-informed techniques and interventions tailored to diverse experiences and examine consultant effectiveness via awareness and utilization of their own ANS states.This workshop will benefit participants by introducing a neuroscience framework not yet widely applied in mental performance consulting and by examining ethical considerations of a polyvagal informed lens, including working within professional scopes of practice (i.e., CMPCs versus dually trained practitioners), mentorship, and when addressing diversity and contextual factors. Finally, the workshop is an opportunity for consultants to consider their physiological "presence" in interactions with others and to develop a personalized polyvagal informed self-management plan for professional practice.The target audience is professional, student, and academic members of the AASP/CSPA and for those looking to build CE credits towards CMPC® recertification.

FEATURED SESSIONS

FEA-01

**FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES -
MEETING THE NEEDS OF COMBAT ATHLETES AS A MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANT: ADDRESSING CULTURE, ETHICS AND CONSULTING STRATEGIES (PRESENTED BY THE MMA & COMBAT SPORTS SIG)**

Tyler Murray, Thought Quest Solutions LLC
Erin Herle, Train Ya Mind LLC
Robert Owens, Resolute Performance, PLLC
Craig Cypher, University of Rochester Medical Center
Eduardo Arambula
Brad Donohue, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Combat athletes participate in a variety of competitive settings where there is direct one on one contact. They are trained to use hands and/or feet to score points through throws, kicks, punches, joint locks, and/or strangulation depending on the specific sport. Extensive research has examined the impact of combat sports on physical health, including physiological profiles of combat sport athletes (James et al., 2016; Ambroży et al., 2022; Tota & Wiecha, 2022). Psychological research in combat sports, however, is very limited. Indeed, with the exceptions of Pitts et al. (2015) there are no outcome evaluations of specific intervention strategies in combat sports. There are extant studies showing combat athletes experience relatively high levels of mental health symptomatology due to various factors, including pressure to succeed and risk of injury (Mojtahedi et al., 2023). Further, research suggests combat athletes who are able to employ strategies to manage cognitive anxiety may perform better (e.g., Merino Fernández et al., 2019; Freire et al., 2020; Ghorbanzadeh & Bayar, 2013). The purpose of this presentation is to provide Mental Performance Consultants (MPCs) and sport psychologists and social workers a general understanding of mental skills training in four combat sports (i.e., wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, boxing, mixed martial arts), including their structure, roles of key personnel, relevant clinical, cultural and ethical considerations in the provision of mental skills training, and special topics (e.g., injury, transition into retirement). Honoring the unique demands of combat sports, this Five-in-Five presentation, delivered by members of the MMA and Combat Sports SIG, will provide evidence-based mental performance strategies specific to wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, boxing, mixed martial arts. Special topics (i.e., senior status, injury) will be highlighted. Presenters bring extensive experience working with combat athletes, including firsthand competitive experience. Attendees will gain practical insights to tailor mental performance interventions to fit the culture of combat sports.

FEA-02

**FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES -
WORKING IN ADAPTIVE SPORT (PRESENTED BY THE ADAPTIVE SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SIG)**

Michael Mignano, University of Michigan - School of Kinesiology
Lacey Henderson, Portland Timbers
Amanda Karas, Elevate Maintain Evolve
Kristin Mauldin, California Baptist University
Caitlyn Wilson, California Baptist University

1. Paralympic Classification Details
2. Working in Collegiate Adaptive Sport
3. Working with Athletes with Invisible Disabilities
4. Working with Deaf/HH athletes
5. The impact of attentional differences on performance (ASD/ADHD focus)
6. How to foster language to be inclusive towards athletes and disabled bodies

FEA-03

STUDENT SESSION: FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER: NAVIGATING THE SPORT AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP AND JOB MARKET

Amber Shipherd, Texas A&M University - Kingsville / Next Level Mind Consulting
Kensa Gunter, GPS, LLC
Oscar Gutierrez, Boston Red Sox
Deyanira Enriquez, Flatiron Mental Performance

The transition from finishing one's graduate degree to entering the job market can be challenging and stressful (Berridge et al., 2007). This challenge is heightened in today's competitive landscape, where an increasing number of individuals are completing graduate education and seeking employment (Jackson, 2021). As a result, job opportunities have become more competitive, making it harder for graduates to secure positions. Similarly, researchers in sport, exercise, and performance psychology found that students also believed finding a job would be difficult or very difficult (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016). More recently, Wooding and colleagues (2022) interviewed sport, exercise, and performance psychology graduates who described facing challenges in searching for jobs, the job application process, and securing employment due to the competitive nature of the job market. Despite this, there are surprisingly few resources available to support graduates in navigating this transition. Thus, the purpose of this Student Development Committee sponsored panel is to provide students the opportunity to hear from and engage in in-depth discussions with various individuals who have expertise with or are currently going through the transition from graduate to professional. Specifically, panelists will share the process, challenges faced, and tips for finding and applying for academic positions, applied positions, doctoral or postdoctoral internships, and completing mentored hours to become a Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC). At the conclusion of this panel, attendees will be able to identify possible challenges and opportunities in the transition from student to professional role. Further, students will leave with resources to help them feel more confident and prepared in securing an internship, employment, or completing their CMPC hours after graduation.

FEA-04

"WHATCHA GONNA DO ABOUT IT?!": AN INTERACTIVE Q&A WITH THE AUTHOR OF TRASH TALK AND THREE APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGISTS

Rafi Kohan, Author, Trash Talk and The Arena
Alexander Cohen, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Mark Aoyagi, University of Denver
Kensa Gunter, GPS, LLC

In this follow-up to Wednesday night's keynote, author Rafi Kohan is joined by USOPC senior sport psychologist Alex Cohen, University of Denver's even more senior sport psychologist Mark Aoyagi, and Kensa Gunter, whose name speaks for itself and who questions why Alex and Mark are getting into a pissing contest, to dive deeper into the lessons we can learn from the world of trash talk—and to discuss practical considerations and applications. Topics likely to be covered include: the use of trash talk as a performance tool; the moral boundaries of talking smack; as well as the challenges of and opportunities for trash talk-related interventions. This session is meant to be interactive and audience participation is both encouraged and expected, so please come ready to join the discussion! Unless you're too chicken, that is...

FEA-05

AASP LEADERSHIP ACADEMY KICKOFF: LEANING INTO SPEED SKATING CANADA'S LEADERSHIP FOR HIGH-PERFORMANCE CULTURE AND COMPETITIVE SUCCESS

Betsy Shoenfelt, Western Kentucky University Emerita
Sebastian Brueckner, Private Practice
Joe Morrisette, Speed Skating Canada
Alesandra Proulx, Speed Skating Canada
Alyson Charles, Retired Olympian and Board Member (Athlete Director)
Katrina Monton, Columbia University

AASP's Leadership Academy (LEAD) will launch its inaugural cohort at the 2025 Annual Conference in Montreal. Join us in this kick-off session to learn more about LEAD and to hear from organizational leaders of Speed Skating Canada, the country's most successful Olympic sport. All are invited to attend! The session will begin with a brief overview of LEAD. The LEAD program is designed to empower the next generation of AASP leaders by providing mentorship, training, professional development, and hands-on leadership experiences to a broad array of AASP members. LEAD annually accepts one or more cohorts that initiate and culminate their Academy year at the annual conference.

Speed Skating Canada (SSC) is the national governing body for competitive long track and short track speed skating in Canada. SSC's exemplary organizational practices, that enabled their record-breaking success during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 competition seasons, were identified and spotlighted during a year-long partnership between SSC and a Columbia University research team, Katrina Monton, Nick Venier, and Sarah Brazaitis. This session, moderated by lead researcher and former Canadian national team athlete, Katrina Monton, will highlight the leadership and cultural practices that drove SSC's remarkable achievements. SSC CEO, Joe Morisette, Manager of Culture and Safe Sport, Alexandra Proulx, and retired Olympian and SSC Board Member (Athlete Director), Alyson Charles, will share how inclusive leadership, a strong learning orientation, and organizational agility fostered a high-performance culture that balances athlete well-being with competitive excellence. SSC provides a model for positive, high-performance sport, illustrating how sport organizations can evolve to promote healthier, safer, and more inclusive environments that are models for AASP and other high-performance organizations. The session will include time for a Q&A from the audience.

FEA-06

ENHANCING BRAIN PERFORMANCE AND RECOVERY IN SPORTS AND MILITARY WITH LIGHT-BASED NEUROSTIMULATION: AN EDUCATIONAL AND HANDS-ON WORKSHOP (SPONSORED BY VIELIGHT

Lew Lim, Vielight Inc

Achieving peak performance in sports and military environments demands more than physical conditioning — it requires cognitive sharpness, rapid recovery, and resilience to stress. Emerging research shows that targeted light-based neurostimulation using near-infrared (NIR) light or Photobiomodulation (PBM) can enhance mental clarity, improve reaction time, support autonomic balance, and promote recovery after high-impact activities.This hands-on workshop introduces the science and practical application of PBM through Vielight technology, recognized as amongst the most advanced in the world in the field. It involves non-invasive, wearable systems that delivers pulsed light to the brain and vagus nerve to support neuroplasticity, cerebral oxygenation, and autonomic regulation.Participants will gain experiential knowledge in applying three systems:• The Vielight Neuro, which delivers pulsed alpha and gamma stimulation for enhancing focus, decision-making, and neurocognitive recovery.• The Vielight Vagus, which supports autonomic regulation and stress resilience via cervical vagus nerve stimulation, with potential benefits for heart rate variability (HRV) and physiological balance.• The Vielight MIP, which is a low cost, pocket-size intranasal device with proven effects on the brain and circulatory recovery.This session is relevant for sport psychologists, performance consultants, trainers, and professionals working with tactical and military populations seeking evidence-informed, non-pharmaceutical tools for cognitive optimization and recovery.

FEA-07

YOUR CAREER STARTS HERE: TRAINING THE TACTICAL ATHLETE'S MIND (SPONSORED BY STRATEGIC RESOURCES, INC.)

Erin Towner, Strategic Resources, Inc.
Tess Willis, Strategic Resources, Inc.

Find out how practitioners use their expertise to work with tactical populations - and how you can, too!

FEA-08

WELL, *THAT'S* NOT WHAT I EXPECTED (SPONSORED BY UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN STATES)

When students apply for their graduate degrees, the excitement is obvious. Career goals are varied, yet almost always involve high-profile positions in collegiate, Olympic/Paralympic or professional sport. While these positions do exist, they are exceedingly rare and may be a bit naïve as introductory career goals (Fitzpatrick, et al, 2016). Graduate programs have a responsibility to provide the depth and breadth of training necessary to both prepare students for the current job market and to be competitive for positions within it. Students should be equipped with a skillset relevant for a variety of professional positions. In this "5-in-5" style presentation, several early career professionals will discuss their career paths after completing their graduate degrees at University of Western States, including initial struggles, how they secured their first position, what they do in their current position and how it fits into their overall career goals, and provide advice for current graduate students and early career professionals.

FEA-09

CMPC CERTIFICATION: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CANDIDATES AND RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR CURRENT CMPCS

The eligibility requirements for new candidates (including students) and the recertification procedures for current Certified Mental Performance Consultants® (CMPCs) will be discussed. The application for new CMPC certification requires a graduate degree clearly related to sport science or psychology, and coursework or educational experiences to fulfill eight knowledge area requirements (Professional Ethics and Standards, Sport Psychology, Sport Science, Psychopathology, Helping Relationships, Research Methods and Statistics, Psychological Foundations of Behavior, and Diversity and Culture). A 400-hour mentored experience includes a minimum of 200 hours of direct client contact (100 with a sport context), a minimum of 150 support hours, a minimum of 40 hours of mentorship (minimum of 20 hours of individual mentorship), and a minimum of 10 hours of direct knowledge of services. All mentors must be listed on the Registry of Approved Mentors. Once candidates have received approval from the Certification Council that they have fulfilled all requirements, they can sit for the CMPC certification exam. Successful completion of the exam results in candidates receiving certification as a Certified Mental Performance Consultant® or CMPC. Recertification is required every five years to maintain certification as a CMPC, including completion and documentation of 75 continuing education hours over each 5-year recertification period. The 75 CEUs must include 6 CEUs in Professional Ethics, 6 CEUs in Diversity, and 6 CEUs in Mentorship/Supervision (required for mentors only). Examples of acceptable CE activities are provided in the CMPC Certification Program Candidate Handbook.

FEA-10

FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES - ADVANCING QUEER-AFFIRMING PRACTICES IN SPORT & PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY: A COLLECTIVE PATH FORWARD (PRESENTED BY THE PRIDE SIG)

Nicholas Lee, University of Massachusetts Boston
Sophia Pellegrom, University of Massachusetts Boston
Charlotte Mohn, Mohntal Performance / German Sport University Cologne
Hailey Chatterton, Oregon Health and Science University
Dayna Starke, Vault Sport & Performance Psychology

1. **Current Climate & Background -** Overview of LGBTQ+ inclusion across various levels of sport and athlete populations. - The impact of the broader political climate on sport participation, mental health, and access to affirming support. - Recent advancements in policy, advocacy, and sport psychology research.
2. **Case Studies:** The Realities of the Current Climate - Real-world examples illustrating both the challenges and progress in implementing queer-affirming approaches. - A mix of case studies to highlight key barriers, successes, and lessons learned.
3. **Critical Reflection:** Our Role as Sport Psychology Professionals - Encouraging self-reflection on whether and how sport psychology professionals view themselves as advocates. - Examples of professionals actively integrating queer-affirming practices and why this work is essential.
4. **Interactive Component:** Case Study Discussion or Mini-Workshop - A hands-on exercise where participants analyze a case study and discuss possible interventions. - Facilitating problem-solving and knowledge-sharing to build practical competency.
5. **Existing Support Systems & Resources -** Identifying successful initiatives and existing resources that support queer-affirming practices in sport psychology. - Exploring how professionals can leverage and build upon these strengths.
6. **Future Directions & Actionable Steps** - Addressing gaps in the field and discussing micro-interventions within the constraints of sport psychology roles. - Encouraging participants to identify at least one tangible change they can incorporate into their practice.

FEA-11

STUDENT SESSION: WORKSHOPPING THE WORK - A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION, INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT, AND MANAGING YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS

Robyn Trocchio, Texas Christian University
Frances Dallas, Bering Global Solutions
Mikaili Robertson, University of North Texas

Student practitioners often encounter complex challenges when working with athletes and teams. This interactive workshop is designed to deepen students' understanding of case conceptualization, intervention development, and intervention implementation. Additionally, the workshop will address nuances of self-management within the

student experience. Through case studies and collaborative discussions, attendees will develop core competencies to navigate their future roles effectively.The session begins with case conceptualization, an ongoing process that helps consultants understand a client's presenting concerns and guide any intervention plans (Bird et al., 2024). Through case studies, participants will explore how athletes' backgrounds, experiences, and underlying mechanisms contribute to their presenting concerns in order to develop individualized psychological skills training (PST) programs.Building on this foundation, the workshop shifts to intervention development. Participants will also learn to design and implement evidence-based interventions tailored to individual needs and circumstances, with a particular emphasis on the application of PST techniques (Brown & Fletcher, 2017). The session will highlight the importance of flexibility and adaptability in intervention design to accommodate the dynamic nature of sport. Recognizing the demanding nature of the student experience, the workshop will address self-management as a cornerstone for sustainable practitioner effectiveness (Cropley et al., 2016; Magdaleno & Meyer, 2023). This includes teaching practical techniques for self-reflection, emotional regulation, and self-care, which are critical for sustaining professional growth, resilience, and overall well-being as a mental performance consultant (Filion et al., 2021). By the end of the session, participants will have an enhanced understanding of how to conceptualize cases, develop targeted interventions, and implement them in a structured yet flexible manner while fostering their own self-management skills. This workshop equips future sport psychology professionals with practical tools to enhance their applied practice and support diverse populations effectively.

FEA-12

FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES - ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING GENERATION Z STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM (PRESENTED BY THE TEACHING SPORT PSYCHOLOGY SIG)

Erika Van Dyke, Springfield College
Chelsea Wooding, University of Wisconsin - Green Bay
Matthew Moore, Miami University
Robert Hilliard, Shenandoah University
Hannah Bennett, Augusta University
Amber Shipherd, Texas A&M University - Kingsville / Next Level Mind Consulting

Generation Z students (born 1995-2010) differ from previous generations in that they have grown up with technology, are still recovering from the effects of the pandemic on their mental and physical health, have shorter attention spans, want their education to be practical and relevant, and have concerns about the future. In this 5-in-5 session, presenters will introduce multiple strategies for educators of all levels of experience to better connect with and engage today's student. 1) Creating opportunities to satisfy students' basic human needs through learning activities. 2) Helping students distinguish between being unsafe and being uncomfortable.3) Enhancing self-efficacy via assignment reflection and case studies.4) Strategies to increase accountability and class preparation. 5) Use of assignment and lecture flexibility. 6) Enhancing autonomy and engagement via assignment menus and choice boards.

FEA-13

FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES - REIMAGINING SELF-COMPASSION IN SPORT: DIVERSE PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON A GROWING PRACTICE (PRESENTED BY THE SELF COMPASSION IN SPORT AND PERFORMANCE SIG)

Jessica O'Kelly, Owner, Train Your Brain | University of Greenwich
Ashley Kuchar, Fail Better Training LLC | The University of Texas at Austin
Danae Frentz, Frentz Mental Performance
Tsz Lun (Alan) Chu, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Jeramiah Tschirgi,
Nicholas Lee, University of Massachusetts Boston

Self-compassion is rapidly gaining traction in sport and performance settings, both as a protective factor for athlete mental health and as a key driver of adaptive performance strategies (Cormier et al., 2023). While Neff & Germer's (2013) Mindful Self-Compassion program (MSC) has been adapted directly for athletes, via the RESET programme (Kuchar, Neff & Mosewich, 2023), other psychological frameworks offer rich and distinctive ways to conceptualize, apply, and investigate self-compassion in sport.This fast-paced session introduces six diverse psychological lenses through which professionals can examine and apply self-compassion, including 1. Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT), 2. Internal Family Systems (IFS), 3. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), 4. Positive Psychology, 5. Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment (MAC) OR biopsychosocial model, and 6. somatic OR psychodynamic approaches. Each speaker will examine how compassion can be framed within each model, including the various theoretical overlaps and distinctions from MSC, as well as discuss each model's practical application with clients. Bringing fresh perspectives to a growing area, this session equips attendees with practical tools and new ways to think about self-compassion in sport - across theory, research, and practice.

FEA-14

FIVE SLIDES IN FIVE MINUTES - TRANSFORMING LOSS INTO TRIUMPH/LIFE AND DEATH IN SPORTS (PRESENTED BY THE LOSS, TRAUMA, AND GRIEF SIG)

Emilio Parga, The Solace Tree
Teresa Fletcher, Adler University
Tanner Biwer, The Performance Pursuit
Michael Sachs, Temple University
Dara Williams, Howard University
Michele Kerulis, The Family Institute at Northwestern University / US Soccer

- Death and Sports
- Supporting athletes and coaches after a loss and death
- Consulting through grief after the death of a teammate, family member, professor, and girlfriend
- Connecting with performers, athletes, non-sport performers, first responders, military, business leaders after a death
- The Grieving Process
- Sports and Trauma

FEA-15

BURT GIGES SESSION: MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Erika Van Dyke, Springfield College
Sam Zizzi, West Virginia University
Artur Poczwardowski, University of Denver, USA; and Academy of Sport Psychology, Nowinka, Poland
Katy Johnson, Indiana University

LECTURES

LEC-01: Coaching & Olympic

LEC-01A

EXPLORING THE POST-OLYMPIC EXPERIENCES OF CANADIAN GOLD MEDALLISTS

Jill Officer, University of Winnipeg
Aman Hussain, The University of Winnipeg
David Telles-Langdon, University of Winnipeg
Andrew Friesen, The Pennsylvania State University, Berks

The purpose of this autoethnographic study of Canadian Gold Medallists is to share our findings of their perceptions on their lived experience during the post-Olympic period. Because of the nature the award, Olympic gold medalists are a very small and limited population. As such, research on and with that population is reciprocally limited. While early research focused on their mental strategies and characteristics (e.g., Pensgaard & Duda, 2002; Shannon et al., 2012), far less attention has been given to their well-being after the competition ends. This gap in research is crucial to address, as post-Olympic experiences can profoundly impact athletes' mental health. These pressures can lead to psychological distress, identity struggles, and even burnout—sometimes referred to as the "Olympic blues" (e.g., Diment et al., 2023). In fact, the transition from Olympic glory to a "normal" life can often be disorienting, as athletes must navigate the complexities of newfound celebrity while managing the psychological toll of post-competition life. By incorporating both autoethnographic insights from a Canadian gold medallist and interviews with other Olympic champions, the study reveals key themes such as the pursuit of the "ultimate dream," the challenges of handling celebrity, and the significant mental health impacts that can occur during the post-Olympic phase. Preliminary findings suggest that these athletes, despite their success, face emotional and psychological hurdles that are often overlooked in the high-performance sport context. Athletes are trained` intensively for physical performance, but there is a growing need for equal attention to their psychological well-being, both during and after their Olympic careers. Sport psychologists can play an essential role in helping athletes prepare for the transition to life after the Games, providing them with strategies to manage stress, maintain a healthy sense of identity, and protect their mental health in the face of external pressures.

LEC-01B

A GAMIFIED INTERVENTION ON MANAGING STRESS AND PRESSURE FOR COACHES: IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS

Dawn Anderson-Butcher, Ohio State Universiry
Samantha Bates, The Ohio State University
Kylee Ault-Baker, The Ohio State University

In a national survey of coaches in the United States, Anderson-Butcher and Bates (2022) found that 69% of coaches reported being moderately to extremely stressed in their roles. Additionally, 63% of coaches reported being interested in receiving more training on managing stress (Anderson-Butcher & Bates, 2022). As a result of high rates of stress and need for further coach education, LiFEsports at The Ohio State University and the Ohio High School Athlete Association established the Coach Beyond initiative. Coach Beyond offers a series of coach training sessions on topics such as supporting athlete mental health and performance, fostering positive team environments, developing life and leadership skills, and more. This presentation highlights one coach education training on Managing Stress and Pressure for coaches. Over 250 coaches have participated in this training throughout Ohio, and 114 coaches evaluated the training session. Coaches have indicated a significant increase in their awareness of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual strategies to manage stress (Mdiff = .982, SD = .91, t(113) = 11.50, p Mdiff = 1.17, SD = .98, t(113) = 12.73, p Mdiff = 1.20, SD = 1.09, t(113) = 11.99, p

LEC-01C

PERCEPTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT IN CONTEMPORARY OLYMPIC SPORT

Thomas Short, Loughborough University
David Fletcher, Loughborough University

Over the past 40 years, there has been an concerted effort to understand psychological service delivery at the Olympics. Despite an increased amount of research studying psychological service delivery within Olympic-level sport, a large amount relies upon practitioner reflections and musings as opposed to empirical reporting of the service delivered in contemporary settings. The purpose of this study is to explore psychology practitioners' perceptions of support in contemporary Olympic-level sport to understanding what constitutes modern psychological support in Olympic-level sport. Psychology practitioners (N f13) who have provided support at Olympic level since the London 2012 Games were interviewed regarding their experiences of psychology service delivery. The interviews were transcribed and subjected to reflexive thematic analysis, with relevant patterns and themes emerging. From the analysis, three core themes of The Practitioner, The Service, and Key Stakeholders were created. Main findings reveal insight into the evolution of the practitioner role in supporting coaches and the multi-disciplinary teams surrounding athletes as opposed to a focus on just supporting athletes, the role of psychology practitioners in supporting wellbeing, mental health, and performance enhancement, and finding a shift towards acceptance-based practice when working within the Olympic environment. Practical implications include recommendations to broaden the scope of psychological practitioners' training and continous professional development into acceptance-based interventions, mental health considerations in athletes, and the role of senior leadership in Olympic-level sporting environments. Future research could explore the role and impact of organisational stakeholders on effective service, or provide a framework for inexperienced practitoners towards 'best practice' within the Olympic environment..

Keywords: athletes, athletic, effectiveness, elite, mental, psychology, practice, service, stakeholders

LEC-01D

WILL I MAKE IT THERE? A CASE STUDY OF A TRANSNATIONAL COACH'S TRANSITION EXPERIENCE FROM EUROPE TO USA.

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It is acknowledged by scientist-practitioners that high-performance coaching can be rewarding, but the profession also comes with numerous demands and expectations to the level that it may be challenging to sustain drive, mental health, and a high level of performance during various kinds of transitions (Kenttä et al., 2016; 2024). We conducted a participatory research (Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020) case study with a coach during the time of a transitioning out and (shortly after) back into coaching but in a different country. We adapted two athlete-centered frameworks: Stambulova's (2012) athletic career transitions and cultural sport psychology praxis (Stambulova & Ryba, 2013) and conducted 10 one-hour interviews spanning a 12-month period. Within the transition challenges and barriers, the findings included the pronounced features of individualistic culture, long and complicated administrative approval processes, feeling organizationally isolated, and emotional toll of being away from family. Identified resources were insights from other coaches and colleagues, accumulation of professional success markers, and support from few administrators in the sport federation. The coach's experience of job crafting (Rumbold et al., 2023) indicated initial limited influence, ongoing post-hiring unclear expectations, and second-guessing own decision to accept the job offer. Further, coping was exemplified through maintaining previous successful routines, focusing on the controllables, planning ahead, and building professional relationships. Finally, the transition outcome was framed as a success and involved upholding the coach's end of the contract; not compromising the value structure (i.e., focus on the athlete development vs. the results); significant "firsts" such as the first ever cadet gold medal in the world's championships; three new job offers from other countries; and unifying family experience. The discussion of the results and Q&A part will invite the audience to reflect on lessons learned regarding barriers and facilitators in major transnational transitions among high-performance coaches.

LEC-02: Collegiate

LEC-02A

PEER SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS AS PREDICTORS OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETES' INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND ATHLETIC COPING SKILLS

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Linda Keeler, Western Washington University
Keith Russell, Western Washington University

When using a servant leadership (SL) style, a leader's primary objective is to fulfill their followers' needs. Sport-specific research has indicated that coach SL is positively related to athletes' motivation and athletic coping skills (e.g., Hammermeister et al., 2008), but it is unknown if athlete servant leadership (i.e., peer SL) has similar relationships. Thus, this study's purpose was to determine if peer SL and basic psychological need (BPN) satisfaction and frustration, as defined in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), predicted athletes' intrinsic motivation and athletic coping skills. Seventy-five collegiate athlete participants (Mage = 19.7; 80% female) from the United States (65% Division III, 28% Division II, 7% Division I) completed anonymous online surveys. A multiple regression with predictors of higher average BPN satisfaction, lower average BPN frustration, and higher scores on the three subscales of the Revised Servant Leadership Profile-Sport (Rieke et al., 2008; trust/inclusion, humility, and service) predicted 30.6% of intrinsic motivation [adjusted R^2 = .306, F(5, 71) = 7.258, p = A multiple regression with predictors of higher BPN satisfaction, lower BPN frustration, and higher levels of the three subscales of the RSLP-S (trust/inclusion, humility, and service) predicted 19% of athletic coping skills [adjusted R^2 = .190, F(5, 68) = 4.188, p = .002]. Findings suggest that higher BPN satisfaction and having a more humble, trustworthy peer leader predicts higher intrinsic motivation and coping skills, which aligns with past results that athlete leaders can influence their teammates' motivational experiences (e.g., Fransen et al., 2017). When also considering the consistent finding that intrinsic motivation is negatively correlated to burnout (e.g., Bicalho & Da Costa, 2018), the current results provide impetus for in-depth training on servant leadership and BPN satisfaction for athlete leaders, which could increase teammates' intrinsic motivation. Suggestions regarding peer SL training are offered.

LEC-02B

UNDERSTANDING FLOW IN COLLEGE SPORTS ATHLETES: THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Angela Heinisch, University of Toronto / University of Melbourne

Flow, a highly immersive and rewarding psychological state (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008), is widely valued for facilitating peak performance and well-being in athletes. Nonetheless, athletes' dispositional flow, their proneness to experience flow states, remains largely unexplained (Antonini Philippe et al., 2022). This study investigated the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in predicting dispositional flow in individual-sport NCAA Division I experienced athletes. Grounded in the theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) and EI framework (Bar-On, 2000; Goleman, 2020; Salovey & Mayer, 1990), EI was conceptualized as a learnable ability comprising intrapersonal intelligence (self-awareness and regulation) and interpersonal intelligence (other-awareness and regulation). It was hypothesized that intrapersonal intelligence would predict dispositional flow more strongly than interpersonal intelligence. Using a cross-sectional survey design, 92 athletes completed the Dispositional Flow Scale-2 (Jackson & Eklund, 2002) and the Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (Pekaar et al., 2018). Regression analysis confirmed a positive relationship between EI and dispositional flow (R^2 = .536, p). Further analysis revealed that intrapersonal intelligence significantly predicted dispositional flow (B = 1.65, p B = 0.26, p =.172). Within intrapersonal intelligence, self-

focused emotional awareness and regulation correlated moderately strong (r = .61). This finding highlights that athletes who learned to recognize and regulate their emotions, possibly through EI-based mental skills interventions, are more prone to experience flow states. By identifying emotional skills as crucial to flow, this study provides new insights into flow facilitation strategies in sport psychology consulting. Future research should further explore the mechanisms of how these emotional abilities contribute to flow, replicate findings in team sports including collective flow measures, and test EI-based interventions to enhance competitive athletes' flow proneness.

LEC-02C

THE EFFECTS OF A 5-WEEK VAGUS NERVE STIMULATION STRETCHING PROGRAM ON NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETE'S CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY TO MANAGE STRESS.

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Brooke Erickson, Colorado Mesa University
Michael Rhoads, Colorado Mesa University
Sophie Miyagishima, Colorado Mesa University
Erika Smith, Colorado Mesa University

In recent years, a physiological intervention to deal with stress, Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS), has become popular due to its role in the parasympathetic nervous system as a stress response regulator (Breit et al., 2018). The benefits of VNS include accelerating recovery post-exercise, increasing VNS activity, and reducing sport-related injury (Özden et al., 2024; Hatik et al., 2023). However, there is limited research on stretching-based VNS and its effects on sport performance anxiety. The purpose of this study is to investigate VNS stretching and its effects on stress management and confidence in NCAA student-athletes. Participants were randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group and participants completed the reliable and valid Athlete Self-Efficacy Scale (Kocak, 2020) and Sport Anxiety Inventory (Smith et al., 2006) at pre and post-tests. Additionally, participants performed the Serial Sevens cognitive task (counting backward from 96 by sevens) (Manning, 1982) at pre and post-tests while wearing a Muse 2 headband, which recorded brainwave activity to measure cognitive load (EEG) and heart rate. The post-tests took place five weeks after the pre-test, and after the experimental group practiced VNS stretching activities 5 days a week for 5 weeks. The control group followed the same procedures for a set of basic stretches instead of the VNS stretches. We conducted statistical analyses on 32 NCAA Division II student-athletes to compare the results pre-test to post-test. We calculated a mean difference from the pre-test to post-test and did an independent samples t-test for all dependent variables (mind score (EEG), average heart rate, self-efficacy (ASES), and perceived anxiety (SAI)). We found practical significance for all variables and statistical significance for some dependent variables (mind score and perceived anxiety). Details of the results, future directions of the research, and the practical application of the results will be discussed in the presentation.

LEC-02D

EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION REVEALS EGO-INVOLVING CLIMATES TRIGGER INFLAMMATION AND STRESS RESPONSES IN DIVISION I ATHLETES DURING A FREE THROW SHOOTING CLINIC

Candace Hogue, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Given the potential implications of stress-related inflammation on athlete performance and well-being, it is important to understand whether the motivational climate fostered by coaches may impact athlete inflammation and associated stress responses. This experiment examined whether the motivational climate during a free-throw shooting clinic impacts athletes' salivary IL-6, a pro-inflammatory cytokine triggered by psychosocial stress (Izawa et al., 2013), as well as athlete threat and challenge appraisals (Mendes et al., 2007), state social and performance self-esteem, and affect (Watson, 1985). Pre-screened Division I athletes (N = 39; Mage = 20.40) who had not played collegiate basketball were randomly assigned to take part in a 45-min free-throw clinic with either a caring, task-involving climate (CITC; i.e., supportive, mastery centered) or an ego-involving climate (EIC; hypercompetitive, winning centered). Five saliva samples were collected to assess inflammation, including one baseline (t = 0 min) and four response measures (t = + 45, 60, 75, 90 min) over a 2-hour study. Participants completed a pre-clinic questionnaire that assessed baseline affect and potential confounds (e.g., life stress) and a post-clinic questionnaire. A 2 (Climate) x 2 (Sex) x 5 (Time) repeated-measures ANCOVA was used to examine IL-6 responses, controlling for wake time and average alcohol consumption. A 2 (Climate) x 2 (Sex) x 2 (Time) repeated-measures MANOVA was used to assess affect. Climate perceptions and psychological responses measured post-only were examined using 2 x 2 MANOVAs. The EIC triggered a rise in inflammation and greater psychosocial stress and negative affect in athletes compared to the CTIC. The CTIC group reported greater social and performance self-esteem and positive affect. This is the first investigation to reveal a significant inflammatory response to EICs in collegiate athletes. Findings suggest coaches should consider fostering CTICs and minimizing EIC features to help optimize elite athletes' psychophysiological responses to performance stress.

LEC-03: Consulting

LEC-03A

CHANGING YOU CHANGES ME: APPLIED IMPLICATIONS FROM A RESEARCH LINE ON THE IMPACT OF INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION ON THE REGULATOR

Rebecca Foti, State University of New York Oneonta
Svenja Wolf, Florida State University

This lecture aims to explicate the applied implications from a line of research on how the provision of interpersonal emotion regulation, IER, towards teammates impacts the self. Athletes often regulate their own and teammates'

emotions as emotions can influence performance, goal achievement, and sport outcomes (Jones, 2003; Tamminen et al., 2019). However, despite the intention of IER being to influence others' emotions (Niven et al., 2009), IER may also be connected to an egotistical motive (Campo et al., 2017). We conducted three studies that built on one another including: (a) a field study implementing surveys pre- and post-sport competition with N = 112 dyad athletes, (b) multi-level interviews with video recall from previous competitions with 10 dyad athletes, and (c) a laboratory experiment in which we manipulated the ability to provide IER with N = 54 undergraduate sport psychology students. Cumulatively, we found a trend that regulating a teammate's emotions related to one's own emotions as well as specific components of emotional development through secondary appraisal (e.g., perception of control, coping potential, likelihood for success; Lazarus, 1999), as well as ego depletion, and effort. We also found that there may be deficits in athletes' abilities to influence and accurately perceive their influence on the emotions of others. Therefore, as opposed to being directed at the target, we found individuals may be using IER as a way to regulate the self through others. We recommend practitioners create spaces for open dialogue about emotions in sport, guide the development of IER strategies that are mutually beneficial for the self and others, and enhance individual emotion regulation skills. Additionally, we recommend the development of athletes' emotional awareness and intelligence to understand the benefits and consequences of their emotion regulation strategies for the self and others.

LEC-03B

INTEGRATING EDUCATIONAL TRAINING TOOLS AND STRATEGIES INTO TEAM MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTING WORKSHOPS: A NOVEL PERSPECTIVE ON EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Kayleigh Hart, University of Tennessee
Jedediah Blanton, University of Tennessee
Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

Graduate training in mental performance consulting often consists of coursework in basic consulting skills (i.e., K5: Helping Relationships requirement for CMPC). These skills tend to be rooted in counseling frameworks that are best suited to guide individual mental performance sessions (e.g., CBT, REBT, Person-Centered Theory, etc.). Though informative and useful for individualized contexts, team-based educational workshops where practitioners teach psychological and mental skills training strategies to larger groups requires an educational framework to be most effective. Therefore, using evidence-based pedagogical practices from adult learning research to scaffold workshop management strategies may be a more useful avenue, especially when it comes to cultivating attention and facilitating learning in larger groups. The purpose of this presentation is to outline and reflect on a semester-long intervention plan through explaining the integration of pedagogical strategies into mental performance workshops. Specifically, this theory-to-practice presentation will describe how three evidence-based teaching practices were implemented in workshops conducted with two NCAA Division II athletic teams. First, the concept of a collaborative agenda/syllabus (Davidson & Katopodis, 2022) was adapted into an exercise that created either a roadmap for workshop topics or a team values document (off-season vs. in-season) to uphold over the course of the semester. Second, the think-pair-share technique (Lyman, 1981) was utilized throughout all workshops to facilitate small discussions and sustain attention in larger groups. Lastly, the tool of presenting low-stakes assessment opportunities (Nilson, 2010) was adapted to low-stakes vulnerability opportunities to increase collective engagement and application of workshop concepts. This presentation concludes with personal reflections from an aspiring "pracademic" who uses her training as a future educator to inform her consulting practice, discussing ways these strategies supported the growth of both the athletes and the practitioner.

LEC-03C

WHEN THE EVIDENCE RUNS OUT: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES IN PLANNED DISRUPTION IMPLEMENTATION

William Bean, DeSales University
Kelsey Kinnamon, Florida State University

Planned disruptions are a form of pressure training in which athletes are exposed to increased and/or changing demands in practice to develop coping skills and familiarization with pressure ordinarily experienced during competition. Practitioners can draw from the literature focused broadly on pressure training (e.g. Low et al., 2024) to guide the implementation of planned disruptions. While recommendations for pressure training offer a useful starting point, the generalizability may limit direct application for practitioners working with diverse athletes and performance contexts. Similarly, while evidence supports the use of planned disruptions (Fletcher and Sarkar, 2017; Kegelaers et al., 2019), research has yet to provide consultants and practitioners with specific, practical guidelines for successful implementation. To bridge this gap, we have drawn from related areas of literature to inform best practices for planned disruption use. In this lecture, we will integrate findings from our experiences implementing planned disruptions with elite Olympic weightlifters and relevant research to offer applied guidelines for selecting appropriate planned disruptions, timing disruptions effectively within training and competition cycles, and systematically evaluating their outcomes. To inform these best practices, we have drawn from research outside of pressure training. Specifically, exposure therapy (Foa & Kozac, 1986) informs the structured, progressive exposure inherent in planned disruptions; concepts from skill acquisition, such as deliberate practice (Eccles et al., 2022; Ericsson et al., 1993), guide decisions on when to introduce pressure within training; and principles from the think aloud protocol (Eccles & Arsal, 2016) provide strategies for assisting practitioners in identifying factors that lead to task failure in the face of planned disruptions. We will explore considerations such as introducing pressure at the right stage of skill development, balancing planned disruption use close to competition to avoid undermining confidence, and establishing structured methods for adapting implementation.

LEC-03D

JOB CHARACTERISTICS OF CERTIFIED MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS IN CANADA

Sebastian Harenberg, St Francis Xavier University
Sarica Mohandas, St Francis Xavier University
Margaret Nieto, St Francis Xavier University

As an important part of integrated support teams, Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPCs) assist athletes and other populations to perform at an optimal level. However, several authors (e.g., Winter & Collins, 2016) questioned whether applied sport psychology (ASP) can truly be considered a profession due to a lack of regulation, funding, and viable job opportunities among other factors. For example, the average compensation of CMPCs in the United States remains at a level of a part time position (AASP, 2020). Data from CMPCs in Canada is currently absent. The purpose of the present study was to fill this gap. All professional members of the Canadian Sport Psychology Association were contacted via openly accessible emails. A sample of 42 CMPCs (15% response rate) from 7 Canadian provinces completed a survey measuring demographic and job characteristic measures. The CMPCs (Female n=26; Male n=16; Age Mean=41.8, SD=12.5) practiced mostly in urban areas (n=33, 79%) and over half (n=22) held a doctoral degree. Only 25 of the respondents (60%) held full-time appointments while others were hired as contractors or in part-time positions. About one in seven participants (n=6) held a license as a counsellor or clinical psychologist. The average annual income of all respondents was $110,121.62 (SD=$44,529.24). The average annual income for ASP was $48,189.19 (SD=$37,442.58). About half of the respondents' income (48.8%, SD=37.2%) derived from ASP work. The present study confirms that the professional challenges for ASP are similar in Canada compared to the United States. Only few practitioners worked full-time in ASP but rather engaged in ASP as a supplement to their full-time position (e.g., in academia or clinical practice). Future outreach efforts from professional bodies (e.g., CSPA) are clearly warranted to create more ASP full-time employment opportunities in Canada.

LEC-04: Research

LEC-04A

CONCEPTUALIZING PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH WITH YOUTH IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: ARE WE TRULY DEMOCRATIZING POWER?

Hannah Prieto, University of Portsmouth
Thierry R. F. Middleton, University of Portsmouth
Matt Miller-Dicks, University of Portsmouth
Alessandra Fasulo, University of Portsmouth
Julian Wadsworth, Community Action Isle of Wight

Participatory research approaches with youth have gained popularity in sport and physical activity settings, recognizing youth as experts of their own lives (Fitzgerald et al., 2021; Israel et al., 1998). Conducting research with rather than on or for youth enhances both participant benefits and the quality of knowledge produced (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2010; Peréa et al., 2019). However, the extent to which youth are included in the research process varies significantly, often shaped by different conceptualizations of participatory research. This presentation provides an overview of a scoping review used to examine how researchers have conceptualized participatory research with youth in sport and physical activity settings. A systematic search of PsycINFO, SportDiscus, Web of Science, Scopus, and PubMed, resulted in the inclusion of 45 relevant studies published from 1990-2023. The main finding was that despite the use of different methods and methodologies, participatory researchers shared a common goal of fostering democratic knowledge co-creation. The presentation will highlight how factors such as competing research aims, institutional constraints, partnerships, and researchers' theoretical, epistemological, and ethical commitments impacted both the degree to which power was shared with youth and the strategies used to facilitate a power-sharing process. The complexity that underpins participatory research will be discussed, with critical reflection proposed as crucial for researchers and any adults working with youth to examine their engagement with youth and recognize opportunities and missed chances to meaningfully shift power. The presentation will culminate with proposed strategies for researchers, coaches, sports psychologists, and other adults working with youth to engage in a thoughtful and intentional process of designing interventions that empower youth and work to dismantle existing power imbalances. Examples from the reviewed studies will show how engaging in a transformative participatory process can contribute to meaningful change for youth, researchers and the communities they reside in.

LEC-04B

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS AND DISCONNECTEDNESS IN LGBTQ+ FOCUSED COMMUNITY SPORT: RESULTS FROM A MULTI-METHOD SURVEY

Travis Scheadler, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other gender and/or sexual minority (LGBTQ+) adults formed LGBTQ+ focused community sport clubs to provide safe environments for other LGBTQ+ adults to reap the benefits of sport (Jones & McCarthy, 2010). Early research suggests participation in LGBTQ+ focused community sport boosts community connectedness (Ceatha et al., 2019), which is an important protective factor to lower depressive symptoms among LGBTQ+ adults (Meyer, 2003). However, little is known about how LGBTQ+ focused community sport participation fosters community connectedness and encourages long-term sport participation.This study employed a multi-method survey design to examine factors associated with community connectedness and disconnectedness among players in Stonewall Sports (n = 220), a US-based LGBTQ+ focused community sport league. Participants answered open-ended questions about community connectedness (e.g., "How, if at all, has your participation in Stonewall Sports help you feel more connected to the LGBTQ+ community?") and disconnectedness (e.g., "How, if at all, has your participation in Stonewall Sports made you feel

less connected to the LGBTQ+ community?"). They also completed the Competitiveness Orientation Measure (Newby & Klein, 2014), Connectedness to the LGBT Community Scale (Frost & Meyer, 2012), and the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (Kroenke et al., 2001).Thematic analysis of the open-ended responses revealed four themes related to community connectedness (making and sustaining friends, safety and fun, positive identity development, and activism) and two related to community disconnectedness (hyper-competitiveness and cliques and struggles with inclusion). Structural equation modeling was then used to quantitatively assess the relationships between competitiveness, community connectedness, and depressive symptoms. The model was a good fit to the data, but competitiveness did not lower community connectedness as expected based on the qualitative results. Findings have implications for research and practice focused on improving the mental health and retention of LGBTQ+ adults in sports.

LEC-04C

DETERMINING VALIDITY OF THE ASSESSMENT OF RECOVERY ACTIVITIES FOR ATHLETES USING HEART RATE VARIABILITY

Carly Wahl, Eastern Illinois University
Barbara Meyer, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee / Olympic Winter Institute of Australia
Kyle Ebersole, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Given the rise in popularity of monitoring tools aimed at optimizing athlete performance and health, it is unsurprising that emphasis has been placed on monitoring one aspect of performance and health: recovery. While there is value in measuring if athletes perceive themselves to be adequately recovered, these data provide little information about how athletes achieved that recovery status (Kellmann et al., 2018). The Assessment of Recovery Activities for Athletes (ARAA; Wahl et al., 2023) was developed to assess the how, or the activities athletes regularly engage in to facilitate their overall recovery. To provide practitioners with a singular, holistic method of monitoring recovery, the purpose of this study was to validate the ARAA against heart rate variability (HRV), an objective measure of recovery, across time. Each morning upon waking for four weeks, 33 (N = 15 males, 18 females) NCAA Division I athletes self-collected HRV for five minutes using a chest strap transmitter. Participants also completed the ARAA at the conclusion of each week. Bivariate correlations (p No significant relationships emerged between lnRMSSD and any of the ARAA recovery activity subscales, yet significant relationships emerged between lnRMSSD and two status items: Social Stress (r = -.367, p = .036) and Psychological Stress (r = -.373, p = .032). While it makes sense that increased HRV would be accompanied by decreased perceived stress, the lack of correlation between HRV and the ARAA recovery activity subscales indicates that athletes may not have engaged in appropriate or sufficient recovery activities aimed at physiological recovery (i.e., HRV). Collectively, practitioners should monitor athlete perceptions of recovery and recommend individual-specific recovery activities to maximize holistic recovery.

LEC-04D

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE (MENTALLY) TOUGH GET GOING: DIMENSIONALITY, RELIABILITY, AND VALIDITY OF THE TOUGHPERSON INDEX

Robert Harmison, James Madison University
Kyle Green, James Madison University
Matthew Best, Motivate Lab
Chris Hulleman, University of Virginia

Mental toughness in sport has been a popular construct of interest over the past 25 years. Yet, a solidified definition, an agreed upon conceptualization, and the development of theoretically-grounded and psychometrically-sound operationalizations of mental toughness have been elusive (Gucciardi, 2017). Despite recent advancements in defining, conceptualizing, and measuring the construct, scholars have called for the assessment of validity evidence of existing, refined, and new operationalizations of mental toughness as an important research priority and identified a continuing need for the development of theoretically-supported, valid, and reliable mental toughness measures (Farnsworth et al., 2022; Gucciardi, 2020; Liew et al., 2019). The present study attempted to extend recent advancements to better define, conceptualize, and operationalize mental toughness in sport. The purpose of the present study was to establish the Mentally Tough Personality in Sport Index (ToughPerson Index) as a new measure of mental toughness that is contextualized to competitive sport situations, informed by inductive approaches to conceptualize and identify common psychological attributes of mental toughness, and grounded in social-cognitive personality theory. NCAA Division I student-athletes (N = 609) completed the ToughPerson Index along with measures of hardiness, positive and negative affect, and dispositional flow. Confirmatory factor analyses produced a 23-item, non-hierarchical five-factor model (i.e., Tough Beliefs, Tough Attitudes, Tough Values, Tough Emotions, Tough Skills) with satisfactory model fit. Reliability analyses found the ToughPerson Index subscales to possess acceptable internal consistency and to be moderately stable over 8-month, 12-month, and 20-month intervals. Validity analyses provided initial construct validity evidence as the ToughPerson Index subscales related to measures of hardiness, affect, and dispositional flow in theoretically-predicted directions. Findings are consistent with recent conceptualizations of mental toughness as an enduring yet changeable psychological resource and support the operationalization of mental toughness within a social-cognitive view of personality. Implications for research and practice will be discussed.

LEC-05: College Mental Health

LEC-05A

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH CULTURE

Kim Tolentino, University of Missouri
Sam Zizzi, West Virginia University

Despite the NCAA's ongoing efforts to guide athletic departments into providing sufficient mental health support to student-athletes, psychological well-being continues to be a primary area of concern for collegiate athletes. Student-athletes are as likely as the regular college population to experience mental health issues, but less likely to seek services (Watson, 2005). Researchers have continued to examine the perceived barriers preventing student-athletes from utilization of mental health services which include a lack of knowledge, limited access, and perceived negative stigma (e.g., Harris & Maher, 2023; Yoon & Petrie, 2023). Organizational culture–loosely defined as a group's accumulated shared learning in which adopted actions and ideologies are all designed to help increase the success of the organization (Schein & Schein, 2017)--plays a significant role in the way it binds its stakeholders and guides their behaviors. Therefore, developing a positive athletic department culture surrounding mental health can be beneficial in increasing student-athlete help-seeking behaviors. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the employed practices of Division I athletic departments and how stakeholders perceive and experience the layers of culture (artifacts, beliefs and values, underlying assumptions; Schein & Schein, 2017) surrounding mental health. A dual-case study approach was used, and multiple sources of data were collected including semi-structured/focus group interviews (N f14 participants), archival documents, physical artifacts, and direct observation (Yin, 2014). Data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006) and revealed overarching themes of visibility, integration, and leadership support as imperative factors in changing athletic department culture and reducing mental health stigma. These findings highlight the most significant interacting elements of athletic department culture (particularly internal environment and leadership/power; Schroeder, 2010) that impact the sub-culture related to mental health. Practical recommendations for building an integrative and positive athletic department culture for effective mental health support will be presented.

LEC-05B

FEMALE COLLEGIATE ROWERS' PERCEPTIONS ON SPORT UNIFORMS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON EMBODIMENT, EATING PATHOLOGY, AND SPORT PERFORMANCE

Kayla Hussey, West Virginia University
Dana Voelker, West Virginia University
Hannah Silva-Breen, West Virginia University
Luna Ugrenović, Greenepsych Clinical & Sport Psychology

Sport uniforms are consistently cited in research as a notable pressure associated with body image concerns (e.g., Nemeth et al., 2020). Recently, athletes have challenged required sport uniforms as unnecessarily revealing in the mainstream media. However, little is understood about the salient design features of sport uniforms that are important to athletes' psychological wellbeing and sport performance. Using a descriptive cross-sectional research design, this study examined perceptions of sport uniform fit, function, and appearance and the relationship to experiences of embodiment, eating pathology, and sport performance among 202 female collegiate rowers (Mage = 19.90, SD = 1.26). Data were collected via an anonymous online survey. Key findings revealed that more favorable perceptions of sport uniform fit, function, and appearance were significantly associated with more positive embodiment, r(197) = .29, p

LEC-05C

EXPLORING COLLEGIATE ATHLETES' SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERIENCES IN THE POST-NIL ERA

Mackenzie Cox, Northeastern University Athletics, APPEAR Lab
Rachel Rodgers, Northeastern University

Despite the increasing prominence of social media in the lives of college athletes, little is known about their experiences on various platforms, particularly in the context of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) endorsement opportunities. The present study explored the complex realities that 30 college athletes (mean (SD) = 20.2 (1.39) years, 60% White, 60% female-identifying) across sport and NCAA Division face online, examining both benefits and challenges through semi-structured interviews and online surveys. Athletes described heightened pressure to engage in self-promotion on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to attract NIL deals, often requiring them to curate unrealistic online personas that promote "highlight reels" and societal appearance ideals. Athletes described that the increased visibility created a dual experience, opening doors to sponsorships and platform growth, while also contributing to significant mental health outcomes, including anxiety, body image concerns, and disordered eating behaviors. Notably, athletes described gendered experiences, where female athletes more commonly received unwanted comments about their appearance on social media and felt an obligation to promote themselves in a sexualizing and objectifying manner. Institution support around this topic also seemed to vary. Despite these challenges, athletes also emphasized the positive aspects of social media, in which many engage with platforms to connect with others, for entertainment, and to spread awareness for stigmatized topics. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to support athletes with adverse experiences on social media, which should be administered by mental health clinicians and individuals in roles that support NIL development. Resources promoting social media literacy and mental health and wellbeing are essential to support athletes as they navigate the demands of social platforms and NIL endorsement deals. Supporting athletes in developing more balanced relationships with social media is essential for their wellbeing and success throughout their collegiate athletic career.

LEC-05D

DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF EMBODIMENT: A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF INTERSECTIONS WITH SPORT PERFORMANCE, ENJOYMENT, AND COMMITMENT AMONG COLLEGIATE WOMEN ATHLETES

Hannah Silva-Breen, West Virginia University
Dana Voelker, West Virginia University

It is well established that women athletes' body image impacts their sport experiences and overall health. However, how women feel in and about their bodies involves more than body image alone. The construct of embodiment (Piran, 2016, 2017) extends the body image literature by describing how women engage their bodies in the world holistically, such as by responding to their body's needs and resisting objectification. Understanding women athletes' embodiment can provide a crucial understanding of strategies for supporting sport experiences that strengthen women's healthy relationships with their bodies and keep them positively engaged in their sport. Using the Developmental Theory of Embodiment (DTE) as a framework, this convergent parallel mixed methods study examined experiences of embodiment in 311 collegiate women athletes. Specific aims were to (a) describe athletes' embodiment across various demographic identities and between specific sport-based groups; (b) examine relationships between athletes' embodiment and their sport enjoyment, commitment, and performance; and (c) explore athletes' perspectives on whether and how sport influences their embodiment. Among the key findings, correlational analyses showed that more positive embodiment was associated with better perceived sport performance, higher levels of sport enjoyment, and lower levels of feeling trapped or constrained by their sport environment. Aligned with DTE, qualitative analyses demonstrated that multiple sport-specific factors can have positive, and negative, influences on athletes' embodiment through various physical (e.g., discouragement or encouragement of overtraining and dieting), mental (e.g., resisting or internalizing objectification), and social pathways (e.g., feeling empowered or harassed by others). These findings strengthen evidence of the critical role of practitioners in supporting women athletes' healthy relationship with their bodies, including each domain of embodiment. Using DTE as a theoretical guide in future research, embodiment may be a useful focus toward supporting both sport performance and the quality of women's sport experiences.

LEC-06: Injury

LEC-06A

STRENGTH BEYOND THE NORM: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF A FEMINIST NARRATIVE INTERVENTION FOR INJURED WOMEN ATHLETES

Rebecca Steins, Saint Louis University
Michael Ross, Saint Louis University

Women-identifying athletes often face pressure to conform to the sport ethic, where pain is seen as weakness, aggression equals power, and traditional masculine traits are valued for success (Hughes & Coakley, 1991). To be seen as credible, they often overcompensate by embracing hypermasculine norms around injury, such as playing through pain and not seeking help. Injuries not only impact physical health but also challenges athletic identity and gender-related norms, as injury is often equated with weakness in sport - leading to mental health issues like isolation, depression, and anxiety (Bunsell & Doidge, 2020; Duquin, 1994; Short et al., 2004). This insight inspired the development of a feminist narrative intervention to empower injured women-identifying athletes to reclaim their identities beyond hypermasculine ideals of power and pain. This presentation will introduce attendees to the intervention and examine the findings of a study conducted on its use and effectiveness. The study aimed to develop and explore the impact of a feminist narrative therapy intervention on mitigating the impact of gender norms on injury recovery, well-being, and mental health among women-identifying athletes. A key focus of this intervention is understanding how women-identifying athletes find meaning in their injury beyond the gendered constraints of sport, thereby fostering sport-injury related growth and well-being. The intervention includes the development and exploration of narratives and feminist-derived modules on intersectional role analysis, values clarification, self-compassion, and social support mapping. The study utilized a person-centered mixed-methods approach in which analysis of the narratives, pre-post surveys on well-being and sport-injury related growth, and semi-structured interviews provided in-depth data on how this intervention was perceived by the athletes and the impact it had on desired outcomes. Based on the findings from the study, recommendations for implementing the intervention, enhancing its effectiveness, and applying to other populations will be discussed.

LEC-06B

HAVING, BEING, AND LIVING WITH DISABILITY: THE VISUAL VOICES OF WOMEN ATHLETES WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY

Derek Zike, Journal for Advancing Sport Psychology in Research
Monna Arvinen-Barrow, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Danielle Fleming, Fortune School of Education

A recent systematic review has highlighted the apparent lack of research on the psychosocial adaptation experiences of women athletes with spinal cord injuries (SCIs) (Zike et al., 2024). This gap in research is problematic, as these women face distinct societal challenges stemming from the intersection of ableism, hegemonic masculinity, and ideal femininity, which significantly influence their daily experiences of adaptation to disability. To gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, it is essential to explore the meanings that women athletes with SCIs attribute to their subjective experiences of acquired disability. This study aimed to give women athletes with SCIs a visual voice to capture the elements shaping their experiences of (a) having an acquired disability, (b) being disabled, and (c) living with disability. Using a qualitative, exploratory photovoice approach (Wang & Burris, 1997), six women captured photographic images with personal cameras that illustrated the meaning of acquired disability in their everyday lives. After two weeks of photo-taking, participants completed a virtual semi-structured interview to discuss the meanings represented in the images they captured. The data were analyzed using Tsang's (2020)

photovoice data analysis method. Seven major themes were constructed from the data: (a) Taking Care of the Disabled Body, (b) Continuity and Attachment, (c) The Disability Tax, (d) Adaptive Behaviors, (e) Interpersonal Connections, (f) Environmental Accessibility, and (g) Feeling Like a Disabled Person. This presentation will highlight what the themes tell us about having a disability, being disabled, and living with disability. It will also explore opportunities for further research and suggest practical applications of the findings to the everyday experiences of women athletes with SCI.

LEC-06C

HIDDEN STRUGGLES: THE IMPACT OF INJURY RECOVERY ON ATHLETES' BODY-, EATING- AND EXERCISE-RELATED ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

Sarah Sadler, West Virginia University
Dana Voelker, West Virginia University
D. Jake Follmer, West Virginia University

Sport injury is associated with a number of negative psychological consequences for athletes (Gervis et al., 2022), yet the impact of injury on athletes' body-, eating- and exercise-related attitudes and behaviors remains underexplored. The current study, guided by Petrie and Greenleaf's (2012) etiological model of eating disorders in sport, adopted a retrospective mixed method embedded design to explore the relationship between body pressures, body image concerns, eating pathology, dysfunctional exercise, and social support during athletes' injury recovery. Participants were 158 current and former athletes who had, in the last 5 years, sustained injures affecting their attitudes or behaviors related to their body, food, and/or exercise. Collected via an online survey, retrospective accounts revealed body pressures, body image concerns, eating pathology, and dysfunctional exercise were more frequent and intense during injury recovery as compared to pre-injury. Lean sport athletes reported significantly greater body pressures while injured than non-lean sport athletes. Participants cited receiving primarily esteem support, but wanting emotional support, related to their bodies, food, and exercise during injury recovery. Support in these areas primarily came from family while coaches were the most frequently desired, but not received, source of this support. Body image concerns mediated the relationship between body pressures and both eating pathology and dysfunctional exercise during injury recovery. Unexpectedly, greater support amplified the impact of body pressures on body image concerns as a moderating variable, suggesting athletes may be receiving poor quality support in these areas. These findings provide sport psychology practitioners with insight as to how, why, and among whom these concerns may develop during injury recovery, the potential role of relevant support in influencing these concerns, and practitioners' role in reducing these concerns following athletic injury.

LEC-06D

KINESIOPHOBIA, SELF-EFFICACY, AND BODY IMAGE OF FEMALE ATHLETES FOLLOWING ACL INJURY: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

Samantha Dardaman, University of North Texas
Chris Bailey, Minnesota Twins Baseball Club
Andrew Colombo-Dougovito, University of North Texas
Scott Martin, University of North Texas

Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries are one of the most common injuries amongst athletes, particularly females who are at a higher risk than males due to various neuromuscular factors. Athletes face long recovery periods following ACL injury, which can lead to psychological distress especially for females who tend to experience more frequent emotional fluctuations compared to males. Female athletes may face additional psychological challenges such as body image concerns and societal pressures about their physical appearance, which may further complicate the injury recovery process. Since previous research has primarily involved male populations despite females being at a higher risk, limited information exists about the psychological distress female athletes experience following ACL injury. This study utilized an explanatory mixed methods design to investigate kinesiophobia, physical self-efficacy, and body image of female athletes following an ACL injury. To examine the relationships amongst these factors, post-ACL female athletes (N = 176) were recruited to complete an online survey measuring kinesiophobia, physical self-efficacy, and body image. Results show that kinesiophobia and physical self-efficacy significantly influence body image, with self-efficacy as a stronger predictor, r2 = 0.34, p

LEC-07: Collaboration

LEC-07A

ADDRESSING THE STIGMA: EQUIPPING ATHLETIC TRAINERS WITH MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES TO PROMOTE HELP-SEEKING IN ATHLETES

Savannah Jefferis-Henriques, Saint Louis University
Rebecca Steins, Saint Louis University
Michael Ross, Saint Louis University

This presentation will explore how sport performance providers – sport psychologists (SPs) and Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPCs) – can support athletic trainers (ATs) in bridging the referral gap to mental health (MH) services. Athletes face significant barriers to seeking MH support, with stigma being a primary deterrent (Moreland, Coxe, & Yang, 2018). ATs often serve as the initial point of contact for athletes experiencing MH challenges and are uniquely positioned to facilitate help-seeking behaviors. However, many ATs report uncertainty about initiating and navigating these conversations due to a lack of formal training in MH referral processes (Beasley, Hardin, & Palumbo, 2022). Additionally, stigma surrounding MH in sport, influenced by social and cultural factors, can make these discussions more difficult, as athletes may feel pressured to prioritize strength over seeking help (Castaldelli-Maia et al., 2019). SPs and

CMPCs can play a pivotal role in equipping ATs with the skills to engage athletes in conversations about MH using Motivational Interviewing (MI). By training ATs to use MI's client-centered, goal-oriented techniques, providers can help foster a nonjudgmental environment, reducing stigma and encouraging athletes to seek help (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). This approach builds trust and rapport, providing ATs with practical tools to navigate sensitive MH topics, thus guiding athletes toward available resources. When ATs are empowered with these skills, athletes are more likely to utilize MH services, ultimately improving access to the support SPs and CMPCs provide. Attendees will learn how to train ATs in MI to confidently address MH concerns with athletes, thereby increasing help-seeking and resource utilization. The presentation will explore how cultural norms and stigma influence athletes' willingness to seek MH support. Practical examples will showcase AT graduate students learning to navigate these conversations, providing valuable insights into how to start discussions, reduce stigma, and connect athletes with resources.

LEC-07B

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE DOOR: LESSONS LEARNED FROM GRADUATE STUDENTS PARTNERING WITH A DIVISION II ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Paige Pokryfke, University of Tennessee
Kayleigh Hart, University of Tennessee
Hunter Stimson, Serco
Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

Literature has recommended that supervisors and educators in sport psychology develop partnerships to provide trainees with real-world sport connections to assist with their development as practitioners (McEwan & Tod, 2013). However, evidence also suggests that graduate students often feel anxious or insecure in their introduction to mental performance consulting experiences (Tonn & Harmison, 2004). In alignment with Anderson's (2000) assertion that literature should provide more examples of the processes of sport psychology, the purpose of this presentation is to reflect on lessons learned from graduate student mental performance consultants (MPC) in training who have worked to lay the foundation of a developing collegiate athletic department partnership. The partnership was initially established between a faculty member who holds their CMPC, who mentors the graduate student MPCs, and the Athletic Director of a Division II university. However, the graduate student MPCs and their respective points of contact forged relationships with multiple athletic and sports medicine teams. The discussion will highlight lessons learned from (1) working with athletic teams who have limited training facilities, (2) lack of confidential space to conduct individual sessions at the facility, (3) establishing role clarity within the greater athletic department, and (4) adapting an MPC's role to the needs of each individual team. Recognizing the challenges associated with establishing new partnerships can benefit mentors in developing similar partnerships for their mentees and students seeking to forge relationships with collegiate universities outside their own. It is crucial to recognize, prepare for, and overcome obstacles faced by university athletic departments with limited resources while also supporting graduate students in their training to succeed in developing such opportunities.

LEC-07C

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF COLLEGIATE ATHLETES' EXPERIENCES WITH MINDFUL SPORT PERFORMANCE

Thomas Minkler, Miami University
Alexia Inman, Miami University
Phoebe Croston, Miami University
Anna Davis, Miami University

Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE) is a manualized mindfulness-based intervention developed to promote well-being and performance in athletes (Kaufman et al., 2018). Much of the research base supporting the effectiveness of MSPE is quantitative (e.g., Glass et al., 2018; Kostrna et al., 2022), though a small body of research has utilized qualitative (e.g., Cote et al., 2019; Minkler et al., 2025) and mixed-method (e.g., Hut et al., 2021; Mistretta et al., 2017) designs. Qualitative research has the potential to provide unique insights on participants' experiences in psychological interventions beyond what can be captured in purely quantitative work (Gough & Lyons, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to explore college athlete perceptions of their experiences participating in MSPE, with a focus on benefits, challenges, and difficulties. Participants included 11 collegiate student athletes from four varsity teams in the Appalachian region of the United States (men's soccer, women's soccer, women's volleyball, and acrobatics and tumbling; Mage = 19.36; SD = 1.10). The soccer and volleyball teams competed at the NCAA Division III level, and the acrobatics and tumbling team competed for a Division II institution. Participants completed semi-structured interviews following their engagement in 6-week MPSE interventions with their teams. Interviews ranged from 17-38 minutes in length (Mlength = 24.27). Data were analyzed by a four-person research team using the Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) protocol (Hill and Knox, 2005). The analysis yielded eight domains (i.e., broad topic areas). Athletes commented on a range of topics, concepts, and ideas that resonated with them, with a particular emphasis on interpersonal effects of the training. The current study is only the second qualitative investigation of MSPE, and adds to the literature by providing more detailed accounts of athlete experiences with MSPE. Practitioner considerations for MSPE implementation will be offered.

LEC-07D

A ROADMAP TO THE SPORT INJURY PSYCHOLOGY "VALLEY OF DEATH"

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Alessandro Quartiroli, Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse, USA & School of Psychology, Sport and Health Sciences, University of Portsmouth, UK
John Coumbe-Lilley, University of Illinois Chicago

Decades of research have confirmed that sport injury is an event that has psychosocial consequences (Brewer, 2017; Zakrajsek et al., 2023). However, Evans and Brewer (2021) argued that our understanding of applied sport psychology interventions in the context of sport injury rehabilitation has not yet reached the "valley of death" (i.e., there is not a sufficient research base to appropriately inform applied practice). Part of the delay in reaching the

"valley of death" may be inconsistency among researchers' conceptualization of sport injury and corresponding sport psychology interventions. Therefore, this study sought to establish expert consensus on the conceptualization of sport injury and corresponding sport psychology interventions. Following the Delphi methodology (e.g., Quartiroli, 2024), thirteen panelists who are experts in the psychological aspects of sport injury participated across multiple rounds to achieve consensus. Over the past five years, these panelists, on average, have produced 20.23 academic outputs related to the psychological aspects of sport injury and have worked with 13.69 clients addressing psychological factors in sport injury rehabilitation. Their collective expertise informed the iterative process of refining key conceptualizations in this area. Over four rounds, participants defined "sport injury" and identified and defined five categories of sport psychology interventions the promote optimal rehabilitation: cognitive-behavioral, mindfulness, physical relaxation, psychoeducational, and social support strategies. They also assessed each category of intervention's effectiveness in addressing injured athletes' biopsychosocial challenges. The co-constructed conceptualization of sport injury and corresponding sport psychology interventions can support stronger alignment within sport injury psychology research and provide guidance to practitioners in this area. Moreover, areas of non-consensus regarding the effectiveness of sport psychology intervention highlight avenues where researchers can "extend the current body of intervention research through targeted systemic lines of inquiry to address significant research questions that can have greater direct practical application" (Evans & Brewer, 2021, p .6).

LEC-08: Youth

LEC-08A

THE EFFECT OF RESET ON SELF-COMPASSION, BURNOUT, PERFECTIONISM AND PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PRESSURE AMONG MALE ADOLESCENT BASKETBALL PLAYERS

Ashley Kuchar, Fail Better Training LLC | The University of Texas at Austin
Erfan Sedighi, Shahid Beheshti University
Ebrahim Moteshareie, Shahid Beheshti University
Behrouz Abdoli, Shahid Beheshti University

Adolescent athletes often struggle with burnout, perfectionism, and performance-related stress, which can hinder both well-being and athletic success. Self-compassion training has emerged as a promising intervention to promote adaptive coping and emotional regulation. RESET, an athlete-specific adaptation of the Mindful Self-Compassion program (Neff & Germer, 2013; Kuchar et al., 2023), offers a structured approach to fostering resilience and optimizing performance under pressure. This study evaluated the impact of RESET on adolescent male basketball players, addressing critical gaps in the literature.Unlike previous research, which has primarily focused on female or adult athletes, this study targeted adolescent males—an underrepresented group in self-compassion research (Cormier et al., 2023). Additionally, while many interventions rely solely on self-reported outcomes, this study incorporated objective performance metrics, using in-game statistics to assess improvements under competitive pressure. By evaluating RESET in a non-Western sports context, the study also expands the understanding of self-compassion's effectiveness across diverse athletic settings.A randomized controlled trial was conducted with 30 athletes (Mage = 15.6, SD = 1.19), assigned to either the RESET training group or a placebo control group (focused on basketball history and rules). Over six weeks, participants completed one-hour sessions, with assessments conducted at pretest, posttest, and follow-up. Mixed ANOVA analyses revealed significant improvements in self-compassion and performance under pressure for RESET participants, along with reductions in burnout and perfectionistic concerns. These effects persisted at follow-up, demonstrating the program's sustained impact.By integrating RESET into athletic programs, coaches and sport psychologists can equip young athletes with psychological tools that support long-term success. This study strengthens empirical evidence for self-compassion interventions, highlighting their potential to enhance resilience, well-being, and performance in competitive sport.

LEC-08B

MOVING MINDS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF SCHOOL-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Laura Hayden, University of Massachusetts Boston
Chris Denning, University of Massachusetts Boston
Sophia Pellegrom, University of Massachusetts Boston
Rachel Shinnick, University of Massachusetts Boston

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized as a group of developmental disabilities causing significant delays in communication and social skills and is associated with repetitive behavior and stereotypical movements (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). In exploring the motor and exercise patterns of children with ASD, researchers (e.g., Lloyd et al., 2013; Nordin et al., 2021) note motor development delays are an attribute of ASD. Children with ASD may struggle to develop proficient motor skills and, consequently, may be less likely to engage in physical activity (e.g., Ming et al., 2007; Telama et al., 2005); however, there exists significant advantages when they engage in physical activity during the school day, including academic (e.g., accurate academic responding), behavioral (reduced classroom disruptions), social (peer engagement), improved physical fitness, and enhanced mood/ attention (Lang et al., 2010; Ploughman, 2008). Multiple reviews have examined the impacts of physical activity programs for children with ASD (e.g., Craig, 2022; Park et al., 2021), but none have systematically examined the impact of physical activity-based interventions in school settings and described the practices in sufficient detail to support implementation. To that end, we conducted a systematic review of school-based physical activity and exercise programs for elementary school-aged children (3-12 years-old) with ASD. In this lecture, we provide an overview of our findings, and share an analysis of implementation practices to bridge the research-to-practice gap for school-based practitioners. Attendees will be able to: (a) understand the benefits of engaging in physical activity during school for students with ASD, and (b) learn key components associated with effective physical activity programs, and (c) understand potential strategies to support access for under-represented groups of students and students from under-resourced schools.

LEC-08C

MEETING ATHLETES WHERE THEY ARE AT: MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS' PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CONSULTING

Eleanor Cain, Illinois State University
Scott Pierce, Illinois State University
Anthony Amorose, Illinois State University

Mental performance consulting (MPC) involves using techniques and strategies designed to teach or enhance psychological skills that facilitate performance and a positive approach to sport competition (Vealey, 2024). MPC can be particularly valuable during adolescence as youth experience cognitive, social, and emotional changes. However, there is a lack of understanding regarding how to uniquely and effectively utilize MPC to help young athletes enhance their wellbeing, long-term development, and performance (Thrower et al., 2023). The purpose of this study was to gather mental performance consultants' perspectives of the developmental considerations involved in mental performance consulting with adolescent athletes. Participants included 17 Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPC), including 9 males and 8 females with an average of 6 years of experience as a CMPC working with adolescent athletes. Using an interpretivist and pragmatic realism qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Interviews were then analyzed using an abductive reflexive thematic analysis approach. Findings revealed that CMPCs were guided by the goal of holistic youth athlete development and utilized eclectic and evolving consulting philosophies in their work (e.g., shifts from cognitive behavioral to acceptance-based approaches). A range of psychological techniques (e.g., goal setting, performance routines) were identified as important for developing specific psychological skills (e.g., self-awareness, self-confidence) for youth athletes. To achieve this, CMPCs used deliberate pedagogical approaches (e.g., repetition, use of metaphors, simplistic language) to connect with youth athletes. While some specific developmentally appropriate considerations and practices were identified (e.g., need for concrete, rather than abstract concepts), CMPCs often lacked explicit connections between their teaching and athletes' developmental age and stage. Challenges in their practice with adolescent athletes were also identified (e.g., the role of parent involvement). Findings will be discussed in relation to evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, educational training and best practices for MPCs.

LEC-08D

EXPLORING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETES' 24-HOUR MOVEMENT BEHAVIOURS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

Stephanie Turgeon, Université du Québec en Outaouais
Camille Sabourin, Université d'Ottawa
Martin Camiré, Université d'Ottawa

Research often focuses on individual movement behaviours and their impact on different outcomes (e.g., physical activity on mental health). In 2019, the first 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for adolescents were created by a group of stakeholders and experts to offer individuals guidance pertaining to global behaviours (i.e., sleep, physical activity, sedentary, and screen time) that can contribute to one's wellbeing. To better understand the relationship between global behaviours included in 24-Hour Movement Guidelines and mental health, the present study explores the relationship between high school student-athletes' movement behaviours and positive mental health outcomes. High school student-athletes in grades 11 and 12 (n = 896) from across Canada were surveyed during the 2019-2020 school year (i.e., 53.5% women, 46.0% men, 0.5% other). Self-reported data were used to assess participants' physical activity, screen time, and sleeptime, with mental health measured via the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (Keyes, 2002). Although almost all participants met the physical activity recommendations, only 1.56% met all three of the movement behaviour guidelines. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses showed that participants' movement behaviours significantly predicted their positive mental health, $F(3, 890) = 26.39$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .065$. When considering the behaviour movements individually, screentime demonstrated a significant positive association with participants' positive mental health ($\beta = .08$, $p = .016$), sleeptime demonstrated a significant negative association to positive mental health ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .001$), and physical activity involvement demonstrated a nonsignificant association to positive mental health ($\beta = -.05$, $p = .118$). The present study highlights the (mis)alignment of movement guidelines with young people's self-reported movement behaviours. In addition, the findings contribute to our understanding of the intricate interplay between 24-HMBG and positive mental health outcomes with Canadian high school student-athletes. Practical implications and future directions for research will be discussed during the lecture.

LEC-09: Mental Health

LEC-09A

ACCURACY AND CONFIDENCE IN IDENTIFYING MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS AND REFERRAL ACTIONS: THE IMPACT OF CLINICAL TRAINING ON MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS

Lindsey Leatherman, West Virginia University
Luca Ziegler, West Virginia University
Sam Zizzi, West Virginia University

College student-athletes frequently face mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and stress, impacting their well-being and performance (Weber et al., 2023; Chang et al., 2020). As a result, the NCAA provides guidelines for addressing mental health, with various professionals, such as mental performance consultants (MPCs), playing a role in identifying these concerns. Although their training prevents MPCs from treating clinical mental health concerns, their ability to identify symptoms and make referrals is essential in guiding athletes toward appropriate care. Replicating key elements of Cormier and Zizzi's (2015) research with athletic trainers, this study explores the critical gap of MPC's proficiency in identifying psychological symptoms, selecting appropriate interventions and making referrals. MPCs (n = 79), with various academic training, reviewed six case vignettes varying in severity and completed several instruments including the Mental Health Efficacy Questionnaire (MHEQ; Van Raalte et al., 2015). Independent t-tests indicated that MPCs with clinical training had significantly higher accuracy across severe cases (d = 0.54) than those with only sport

psychology training. Specifically, having some clinical training had a moderate effect on identifying appropriate interventions (d = 0.52) and a large effect on perceived confidence (d = 0.83). These results reveal that MPCs with clinical training backgrounds, compared to those without clinical training, demonstrated higher abilities to assess and intervene in severe mental health cases among athletes, along with demonstrating increased confidence in referral. Furthermore, findings suggest that MPCs are effective at identifying symptoms and making referrals, even for severe cases, while highlighting the need for clinical training in treating such cases. This lecture will include a discussion on how future research should explore competence and confidence in mental skills interventions, while considering clinical concerns, and will also address the practical applications for informing the development of education and certification programs for MPCs.

LEC-09B

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS IN ELITE SPORT - IS IT AS BAD AS IT SEEMS?

Tom Henning Oevreboe, Department of Sport and Social Sciences, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences/Norwegian Center for Sport and Mental Health
Andreas Ivarsson, School of Health and Welfare, Halmstad University, Halmstad, Sweden
Jorunn Sundgot-Borgen, Department of Sports Medicine, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences, Oslo, Norway
Ann Kristin Skrindo Knudsen, Department of Disease Burden, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo, Norway
Anne Reneflot, Department of Mental Health and Suicide, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo, Norway
Anne Marte Pensgaard, Department of Sport and Social Sciences, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences, Oslo, Norway

Research indicates that the prevalence of mental health issues among elite athletes is comparable to that of the general population. However, most existing research in elite sports relies on self-report questionnaires, primarily assessing symptomatology rather than clinically diagnosed disorders (e.g., Currie et al., 2021; Henriksen et al., 2020). While self-report measures are valuable for capturing short-term fluctuations, they often fail to evaluate functional impairment and may overestimate the prevalence of mental health concerns (e.g., Gouttebarge et al., 2017; Thombs et al., 2018). Recognizing this limitation, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has underlined the importance of distinguishing between mental health symptoms (mental distress) and clinically significant mental disorders in elite sport research (Reardon et al., 2019). While mental distress can present challenges for athletes, mental disorders, as defined by the DSM-5, involve significant disruptions in cognition, emotional regulation, and behaviour, frequently leading to functional impairment (Stein et al., 2021). Thus, structured diagnostic interviews are essential to assess symptom severity, duration, and impact on daily functioning (Kessler et al., 2004).Based on a study by Oevreboe et al. (2023) focusing on the difference between mental distress and mental disorders among elite athletes in Norway, this presentation aims to elucidate the distinction between mental distress and mental disorders in elite athletes and assess the extent to which self-reported “at-risk scores” correspond with clinically diagnosed mental disorders. By comparing results from self-report questionnaires measuring mental distress with results from structured diagnostic interviews, this presentation further seeks to refine mental health assessment methodologies in elite sports and discuss the development of more effective screening and intervention strategies. Finally, the presentation will contribute to a critical discussion on the strengths and limitations of self-report questionnaires and highlight the necessity of incorporating diagnostic interviews to advance the understanding of mental health in elite athletes.

LEC-09C

MENTAL PERFORMANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS AS KEY FACILITATORS OF MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY IN SPORT

Jennifer Misurelli, University of Ottawa
Natalie Durand-Bush, University of Ottawa

The provision of evidence-based and culturally informed mental health literacy (MHL) programming plays a critical role in fostering positive mental health outcomes in sport (Bissett et al., 2020; Vella & Liddle, 2020). Recognizing the need to support coaches in this area, this research project focused on the design, implementation, and evaluation of a MHL program aimed at enhancing Canadian coaches’ MHL, coaching practices, and mental triad outcomes (i.e., mental health, mental performance, mental illness symptoms). Three distinct workshops were offered in both English and French via asynchronous (self-paced; 45-min) and synchronous (live; 90-min) formats. In line with recommendations for delivering MHL programs (Drew et al., 2023; Gorczynski et al., 2020), 15 Learning Facilitators (10 mental performance consultants; 5 mental health practitioners) with a background in sport and mental health were trained to give the live workshops via Zoom. Between November 2022 and March 2024, they delivered 77 workshops to 558 coaches from different sports, levels, genders, social identities, and locations across Canada. The current study focuses on the Learning Facilitators’ experiences and perceived outcomes associated with their work, which were captured via 60-min semi-structured interviews post-program. The Learning Facilitators reported deepening their understanding of MHL, the mental triad, and their role in mental health promotion and mental illness prevention in sport, an area from which some previously felt excluded. They shared becoming more intentional about prioritizing their own mental health and self-care, demonstrating how MHL training can strengthen both coaches’ and Learning Facilitators’ competencies. Challenges included managing time and coaches’ engagement, particularly when groups involved coaches from different sports. The specialized training and ongoing one-on-one support provided by the project lead helped to alleviate such challenges. Findings support the value of hiring mental performance and mental health practitioners to deliver MHL programs for sport coaches.

LEC-09D

EATING DISORDERS IN BALLET DANCERS: A SCOPING REVIEW

So Hui Lee, University of Edinburgh
Min Jung Kim, Korean National Sport University
Seong Kwan Cho, Texas A&M International University
Yong-Jin Yoon, Yonsei University

Eating Disorders in Ballet Dancers: A Scoping ReviewLecture | Mental Health The purpose of this scoping review is to examine the existing literature on eating disorders (EDs) among ballet dancers, with a focus on the following research questions: (1) What eating disorder symptoms have been reported among ballet dancers in the existing literature? (2) What prevention and intervention strategies have been explored to address eating disorders in ballet dancers? EDs have been well-established in dance literature; however, most studies have not fully considered each dance type's culture and unique characteristics. In the ballet world, there is a standardized body shape for ballet dancers to be extremely thin and well-proportioned, which has been inherited from Balanchine's leotards and tights tradition. Although Villa (2017) insisted that there will be a new shift in body shape for ballet dancers, the drive for thinness is still a consistent standard for them (Doria and Numer, 2022). This ideal body shape for ballet dancers has led pre-professionals and professional ballet dancers to suffer from EDs. A scoping review was conducted using PRISMA-ScR procedures, considering studies published between 1960 and 2024 from 5 online databases (ScienceDirect, JSTOR, EBSCO, PubMed, and Google Scholar). A total of 84 studies met the inclusion criteria and were reviewed. From the analysis, symptoms of EDs were categorized into two subthemes: ED symptoms and symptoms expressed by ballet dancers. Prevention efforts were classified into two subthemes: prevention programs and education.Findings suggest that while many studies emphasize the importance of educational programs in preventing EDs by addressing clinical concerns and ballet culture, there is a lack of research on prevention programs specifically tailored for ballet dancers. This highlights a critical gap in the literature and underscores the need for further research on developing and evaluating effective prevention strategies for this population.

LEC-10: Professional Development

LEC-10A

ACADEMY OF SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: PROFESSIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING, MENTORING, AND SUPERVISING MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS

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There is a growing evidence-based consensus that a well delineated professional philosophy of a sport psychology (SP) consultant plays an important role in both serving the needs of the client and promoting professional development of SP practitioners themselves (Castillo et al., 2023; Poczwardowski & Sherman, 2011). Interestingly, the widely used model of professional philosophy that was developed for an individual practitioner (Poczwardowski et al., 2004), can be also adapted to a group of consultants to guide a consulting team's collective efforts towards a greater consistency in the SP service delivery (e.g., the Team Denmark [Diment et al., 2014]). This presentation will focus on the development of professional philosophy for teaching, mentoring, and supervision of junior mental performance consultants by a group of SP instructors from a European SP academy. Twelve SP instructors followed a three-stage process: (a) a didactic session (i.e., application of SP professional philosophy to teaching SP); (b) reflecting on and writing up one's teaching philosophy (i.e., values, pedagogical paradigms, teaching models and instructor's role, didactic goals, and teaching methods and techniques); and (c) a discussion session, during which the identified themes in the write-ups were examined, modified, and clarified. The resulting teaching philosophy consensus illuminated both the shared and unique (individual) features. For example, there was a high level of collective alignment with the values of autonomy, equality, respect, and collaboration. Stoicism, humanism, and holism emerged as the leading theoretical paradigms. Instructor's role was configured around guidance, and an individualized didactic approach and active support were favored methods facilitating an important teaching goal of the participants' positive transformations. After reviewing the above-described process, the presenters will invite the audience to reflect on the cross-national and cross-cultural similarities and differences in education and training of the future SP practitioners and mental performance consultants.

LEC-10B

GETTING READY TO PERFORM: A GRADUATE COURSE EXAMPLE TO INTEGRATE UNIVERSITY THEATRE AND SPORT PSYCHOLOGY TRAINING FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT

Svenja Wolf, Florida State University
Monika Gossmann, Florida State University

Theatre performers struggle with similar challenges as competitive athletes and hence likely benefit from similar psychological skills (Low et al., 2021). Yet, performers are rarely exposed to performance psychology training, especially not as part of their formal (e.g., university) training, partially due to lacking awareness and available personnel (Goldstein, 2009). Conversely, sport and performance psychology consultant trainees, like our master's students, need hands-on, supervised practice to develop their skills and likely benefit from exposure to non-sport performance domains to enhance their job prospects. In this talk, we present a case example that capitalizes on both issues and combines them for mutual benefit. Specifically, we developed a one-semester, three-credit hours master's level course in which sport psychology students provide free psychological training to the cast and crew of one university theatre production. The course addresses objectives of planning and implementing group sessions to train peer consultants, designing and documenting evidence-based and aligned consulting programs, planning and conducting case assessments and consulting sessions, and reflecting on collaborative performance. The course tests these objectives in the form of students' class leadership, intervention

implementation, case assessment and evaluation feedback documents, a consulting report and reflection paper. Throughout 14 weekly class sessions, theatre rehearsals and performances, students receive expert supervision and guide themselves through the activation of existing and acquisition of new, theatre-specific knowledge on case conceptualization and assessment, intervention goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Based on this, as topics of consulting emerged post-performance (emotional) recovery, identity, mental blocks, and leadership, which students addressed in individual and small-group meetings supplemented with worksheets and observation. Challenges in the collaboration were discrepant schedules, low confidence due to low exposure to non-sport performance fields, and management of high student numbers. Success factors were close relationships between involved faculty, mutual curiosity and enthusiasm, and tangible resource collections.

LEC-10C

"I FEEL LIKE I AM NEVER GOING TO BE GOOD ENOUGH": A NOVICE MPCS EXPERIENCE OF PEER MENTORSHIP

Cami Barnes, West Virginia University
Luca Ziegler, West Virginia University
Zenzi Huysmans, West Virginia University

One of the most crucial aspects of sport psychology professional development is improving service delivery competence. Supervision and mentorship are crucial components in that development allowing novice mental performance consultants (MPCs) to obtain the competencies to be effective. Novice MPCs often face numerous internal challenges such as negative thoughts, self-doubt, and a lack of confidence (Stambulova & Johnson, 2010). Peer mentors can create a safer and more informal learning environment to explore feelings of inadequacy and provide consultation compared to supervisors who are often perceived as authority figures (Fogaca et al., 2018). Sport psychology students benefited from such mentoring due to the increased openness and relatability in the relationship (Watson et al., 2009). Limited literature explores the experiences of novice MPCs, with no detailed accounts of peer mentorship in addition to formal supervision. The lack of such literature further isolates novice MPCs struggling with competence development. Using Rønnestad & Skovholt's (2003) six-phase theory of development, the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral experiences of a novice MPC in a structured peer mentorship will be discussed. Peer mentoring empowered the MPC by providing a platform of shared experiences, enabling her to learn from someone who has successfully navigated similar challenges. In addition to normalizing feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and self-doubt in early career development, this lecture provides anecdotal evidence of a structured peer mentorship program in academic settings. This presentation will conclude with a discussion of the case study's limitations and future considerations, offering practical implications for enhancing professional development in various settings.

LEC-10D

TAKING THEM FURTHER: A CASE STUDY OF AN EXPERIENCED CMPC PRACTITIONER'S APPLICATION OF MENTAL FORTITUDE TRAINING FOR FEMALE ULTRA-DISTANCE RUNNERS

Sharleen Hoar, Coastal Human Performance
Trent Stellingwerff, Canadian Sport Institute Pacific

Participants in ultra-endurance events face extreme mental and physical challenges that present many barriers to completion, let alone performance (Berger et al., 2024). The purpose of this case study is to illuminate an experienced CMPC practitioner's evidence-informed decision-making (Winter, 2024) in constructing a mental fortitude training program for a group of ten international female runners (aged 27 to 48 years, from new runner to a world-record holder) participating in a six-day ultra. The ultra race represented a novel partnership between industry and sport science to optimize and study the limits of female endurance performance. A CMPC with over 25 years of experience in high performance sport provided mental performance support grounded in a mental fortitude training model (Fletcher & Sakar, 2016), with individualized modification. In total, mental performance support spanned twenty-one months and included pre-, during-, and post-race performance support and strategies to manage the demands of industry and sport science testing and social media. The mental training program employed three features to identify individual and environmental protective factors and facilitate individual and team-based resilience (Gonzalez et al., 2016): (1) individual athlete mental skills training (including teamwork activities for the runners' support crew); (2) psychoeducation sessions for the event's industry partner and sport science team, to support a facilitative environment; and (3) referrals for post-event mental health recovery. All 10 athletes achieved their "furthest" goal distance. Collectively, the ten athletes ran 4,636 kms based on individual distances between 180.4 km to 901.8 kms over the six days. Thirteen world records were achieved by a single runner. This case study will add to the scarcity of experienced practitioner tacit knowledge (Keegan et al., 2017) by describing what the practitioner did to effectively apply an evidence-based framework to facilitate female ultra-endurance running performance.

LEC-11: Technology

LEC-11A

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: APPLICATIONS, EVIDENCE, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Ann McConnon, Uniformed Services University

Artificial intelligence (AI) has demonstrated considerable potential in clinical psychology by assisting with screening, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and documentation (Javaid et al., 2023; Raile, 2024; Stade et al., 2024; Zafar et al., 2024). While AI applications in sport psychology are emerging, research remains limited in evaluating the efficacy of AI-driven, mental-skills interventions that mental performance consultants (MPC) can utilize. Although the literature with athlete populations is limited, studies suggest

that AI-driven tools can aid in simulating test environments to reduce test related anxiety, and increase confidence and performance (Banerjee et al., 2021). Additionally, AI-assisted mindfulness interventions show promise in promoting cognitive, emotional, and behavioral regulation (Jamil et al., 2024; Mitsea et al., 2023), academic engagement, and stress reduction (Jamil et al., 2024). This lecture will examine current research on AI-assisted interventions for psychological skills training in sport psychology, with a focus on the most common techniques utilized by practitioners and athletes to enhance performance such as imagery, goal-setting, self-talk, and relaxation/arousal regulation (di Fronso & Bertollo, 2021). In addition to reviewing AI's capabilities, this lecture will discuss how MPCs can consider integrating AI tools in their practice to complement human expertise. By defining key AI concepts (e.g., machine learning, natural language processing, generative AI), reviewing empirical evidence, and exploring applied strategies, this lecture will equip students and professionals with a foundational understanding of AI's role in sport psychology and its potential to enhance performance and well-being.

LEC-11B

ASSESSING THE FEASIBILITY OF THE VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING PROTOCOL FOR SPORT

Jarad Lewellen, West Virginia University
Cami Barnes, West Virginia University
Aidan Forget, West Virginia University
Peter Giacobbi, Jr., West Virginia University

Research has supported the use of VR in sport to train skills such as decision-making and anticipation, as well as aid in injury recovery (Gokeler et al., 2014; Pagé et al., 2019). Despite this, VR is not commonly used as a training tool in sport. Barriers to its adoption include a lack of understanding, low awareness, and risk of cybersickness (Lewellen et al., 2025). As such, there is a critical need to address these barriers and promote acceptance of VR in sport. The purpose of this single-arm mixed-methods feasibility study was to examine the feasibility of the Virtual Reality Training Protocol for Sport (VRTPS), which was designed to address barriers to VR use in sport. We assessed pre- and post-training attitudes toward VR using the Attitudes toward Virtual Realty Technology Scale (AVRTS), which uses the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM; Davis, 1989) as a guiding framework. Participants (n = 18) completed the VRTPS, which included stages of education, acclimation, and application. Exit interviews provided further insights into participant experiences. Results from quantitative and reflexive content analyses demonstrated feasibility of the VRTPS based on established metrics. Descriptive statistics from the AVRTS revealed pre- to post-training increases in overall attitudes toward VR (M = 3.50/5.00; SD = 0.47 to M = 4.18; SD = 0.39), enjoyment (M = 4.06; SD = 0.75 to M = 4.75; SD = 0.31), perceived usefulness (M = 2.94; SD = 0.74 to M = 4.08; SD = 0.60), and ease of use (M = 3.28; SD = 0.36 to M = 3.48; SD = 0.60), and participants experienced minimal cybersickness. Our findings demonstrate the feasibility of the VRTPS and show promise for its application. We also provide suggestions on how to incorporate the VRTPS in practice and lay the foundation for future research on this topic.

LEC-11C

INNOVATE TO ELEVATE: INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY FOR GREATER ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT, AND IMPACT

Stephany Coakley, Temple University/Maximum Mental Training Associates (MMTA) LLC

Mental health providers continue to struggle to meet the overwhelming demand for mental health services since the COVID-10 pandemic. However, emerging advancements in technology are offering promising solutions to help them treat clients while also taking care of their needs. Digital therapeutics, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI) are transforming the landscape of mental health care increasing client access, engagement, awareness, improving outcomes, reducing stigma and the administrative burden (Stringer, H., 2025) on providers. Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPC) and their clients can also leverage these innovative tools to facilitate greater engagement, access, and efficiency in mental skills training. Using these tools enable practitioners to facilitate faster mental skills acquisition, train multiple individuals simultaneously, and ensure consistent, high-quality instruction when using specific protocols. Although biofeedback has been used as a tool in mental skills training, this intervention has not had widespread adoption. Artificial intelligence has a variety of applications for mental performance consultants to develop tailored programming, and interventions for individuals and teams. Immersive technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality are well-suited for psychological skills training (PST) seamlessly integrating the educational phase, the acquisition phase, and the practice (execution) phase (Hodge, 2007; Weinberg & Gould, 1999). In this presentation attendees will be challenged to reflect critically about their current practices and consider next practices. Next practices refer to how we can work differently, more efficiently, and more powerfully to help clients unlock peak performances. Using technology is a powerful way to enhance what we do. While there are limitations, they should not discourage CMPC's from exploring new and innovative approaches. As these technologies continue to evolve, they hold immense potential to transform mental performance consulting, making training more effective, scalable, and accessible than ever before.

LEC-11D

MITIGATING HEAD IMPACT CONSEQUENCES AND ENHANCING PERFORMANCE IN SPORTS AND MILITARY: A BREAKTHROUGH IN BRAIN STIMULATION

Lew Lim, Vielight Inc

Athletes in contact sports and military personnel frequently experience repetitive head impacts, which can impair cognitive function, reaction time, and overall performance. Traditional recovery methods often fail to address the cumulative neurological effects of these impacts. Recent advancements in non-invasive brain stimulation using near-infrared light, known as photobiomodulation (PBM), have shown promise in enhancing cognitive resilience, accelerating recovery, and optimizing performance.This presentation introduces a wearable technology successfully applied to elite athletes across multiple sports, contributing to significantly improved

performance in American football, mixed martial arts, hockey, soccer, athletics and figure skating. By strengthening the neural pathways, improving oxygenation, and reducing inflammation, this intervention has supported world championship victories and personal-best performance. During the 2024-2025 season, a structured PBM intervention was implemented with the Brigham Young University (BYU) football players to mitigate the effects of repetitive head impacts while enhancing cognitive performance and reaction speed. This intervention followed a clinical study conducted in the previous season, where athletes were tracked with performance metrics and cognitive assessments. Those who received regular PBM sessions showed significantly superior cognitive processing speed, decision-making accuracy, and resilience to head impacts, correlating with the team record-breaking performance when they were all equipped for the following 2024-2025 season. These were supported by objective measures in neuroimaging data. Similar benefits have been observed in military veterans with traumatic brain injuries, highlighting PBM's broader applicability.These findings underscore PBM's role in optimizing sports and military performance by enhancing cognitive function and resilience to physical stress. This session will introduce the physiological mechanisms and provide practical insights into how trainers, athletes, and military personnel can integrate this non-invasive method into the training protocols to improve neurological health, enhance performance, and increase safety in high-impact environments.

LEC-12: Program Implementation

LEC-12A

IMPLEMENTING A WORKSHOP TO EXPLORE SAFE SPORTS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN ELITE ATHLETICS: REFLECTIONS FROM SWEDISH JUNIOR ELITE ATHLETES

Rylan Curtis, University of Toronto
Sofia Kuylser, The Swedish Gymnastics Federation
Katherine Tamminen, University of Toronto
Carolina Lundqvist, Linköping University

The concept of safe sport is broad and varies across countries and organizations, making it challenging to define consistently. Psychological safety typically refers a mutual understanding that the team environment is safe for interpersonal risks (Edmondson, 1999); in sports, it can refer to an athletic environment where athletes feel comfortable being themselves, understand mental health, and feel supported in seeking help (International Olympic Committee, 2021). To address the gap in research on athletes' perspectives on safe training environments and their perceptions of psychological safety, this study explored young elite-striving athletes' understanding and experiences of safe sport, with a particular focus on psychological safety. This study was conducted in collaboration with the Swedish Athletics Federation as part of their safe sport initiatives, including 170 student-athletes (ages 15–19) from five national sports high schools in Sweden. Athletes participated in interactive workshops and discussed safe sport and psychological safety. Qualitative reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) was used to explore athletes' perceptions of the behaviours, values, and training environment characteristics that developed and undermined psychological safety, and athletes' perceptions of the effects of training environments on well-being and development. Behaviours supportive of positive and inclusive safe sport environments included open communication and fair treatment, fostering values of respect, trust, and holistic well-being. Athletes felt that harmful behaviours like bullying, favouritism, and excessive pressure promoted inequity and suppression of autonomy, leading to a hostile, stressful, and unsafe training environment. Understanding how young athletes interpret and experience safe sport can inform policies and interventions to create supportive and protective training environments. Emphasizing safe sport initiatives, educating coaches on psychological safety, and providing athletes with trusted third-party support are essential steps in fostering these environments.This research was funded by the Swedish Research Council for Sport Science.

LEC-12B

JUST HORSING AROUND: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOL WITH EQUESTRIAN ATHLETES

Ashley Samson, University of Kentucky
Catherine Dennehy, University of Kentucky
Patrick Maneval, University of Kentucky
Ashley Norman, University of Kentucky
Kelley Renner, University of Kentucky

Research has consistently used retrospective recall instruments (e.g., Ways of Coping with Sport; Madden, Summers and Brown, 1988), interviews/ongoing consultation (e.g., Bull, 1989) or personal experience (e.g., Lynch & Scott, 1999) to measure and discuss thought-processes involved in sport participation. Undoubtedly, such theoretical, experimental and anecdotal literature has advanced the quality of research and applied practices of those interested in researching and working with athletes, but there remains a lack of literature attempting to measure thought-processes during athletic practice/competition. The think-aloud protocol (Ericsson & Simon, 1980) is a well-validated methodology for capturing thought processes in "real time" during short- term sport tasks (i.e. golf putting), but there have been calls for research (Eccles, 2012) that explores the use of this protocol with longer term sport tasks. Subsequently, researchers heeded the call and explored the protocol's use in both long-distance running (Samson, et al., 2016, 2021) and cycling (Whitehead, et al., 2015, 2016, 2019). The purpose of this current study is further expand on these efforts by exploring the feasibility for use in other longer-term sport tasks, such as equestrian sport. Eight female adult equestrians with a mean age of 32.2 years participated in this investigation by verbalizing thought-processes during a training ride while being audio recorded. Thematic analysis of the transcripts revealed major themes of horse-management (with sub-themes of planning and evaluation), self-management (with sub-themes of physical planning, evaluation, and mental planning/evaluation), logistics, and horse conversation (with sub-themes of horse encouragement and general conversation). Subjects spent the most time in horse-management, and horse conversation, moderate time in logistics, and, interestingly, little to no time in self-management, with mental planning/evaluation being the least common sub-theme. The results from this study offer initial insights into the mindsets of equestrians and provide several practical implications for sport psychology practitioners working with these athletes.

LEC-12C

DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING TENNIS CANADA'S MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY: AN ORGANIZATIONAL BLUEPRINT

Mikaela Papich, University of Ottawa
Natalie Durand-Bush, University of Ottawa

The broader sport system plays a crucial role in promoting and optimizing the mental health (MH) of athletes, coaches, and staff (Prior et al., 2024; Purcell et al., 2019; Wagstaff, 2019). Recognizing this responsibility, the Mental Health Strategy for High Performance Sport in Canada was developed to provide a roadmap for sport organizations to improve MH outcomes within their communities (Durand-Bush & Van Slingerland, 2021). The Strategy outlines five priorities (1-leadership, 2-promotion, 3-prevention, 4-treatment, 5-evaluation), which should be adapted to meet the needs of individual organizations. However, despite providing valuable recommendations, there remains a lack of empirical evidence on how to guide this process, creating a significant challenge for sport psychology practitioners and researchers. The purpose of this Participatory Action Research project was to collaboratively design, implement, and evaluate a sport-specific MH strategy for Tennis Canada based on the national strategy. A Core Leadership Team and 21 Task Force Members contributed to the three-phase project carried out over three years. Participants first completed a needs and gap assessment and engaged in guided group discussions at six time points. They also participated in two individual semi-structured interviews in the implementation and evaluation phases. Data were analyzed using a content analysis (phase 1; Assarroudi et al., 2018; Elo, & Kyngäs, 2008) and thematic analysis (phase 2 and 3; Braun & Clarke, 2019). The data in phase 1 led to the creation of Tennis Canada's MH strategy, which was then implemented (phase 2) within their National Training Centres over a one-year period. Within the evaluation (phase 3), we identified both successes and challenges pertaining to leadership, communication, education, and alignment between different groups (e.g., coaches; staff; administrators) and initiatives (e.g., safe sport; equity, diversity, and inclusion). Recommendations are provided to create a blueprint to guide other sport organizations wishing to follow suit.

LEC-12D

ATHLETE COGNITION: UNDERSTANDING AND TRAINING THE MIND FOR PERFORMANCE

Kaelene Curry, Mile High Performance Consulting
Matt Comand, Emergent, LLC

Athlete cognition plays a crucial role in high-level performance, influencing how athletes perceive their environment, process information, make decisions, and execute skills under pressure (Walton et al., 2018). Current cognitive training tactics—often relying on technology and conducted outside the sport context—lack sufficient evidence of far-transfer efficacy, highlighting the need for more practical, context-driven applications integrated to and through the coach (Romeas et al., 2016) This 15-minute lecture explores the cognitive mechanisms that underpin elite athletic performance, drawing from neuroscience and cognitive psychology research.Key topics include perception and situational awareness, attentional control, working memory, and decision-making processes. We will examine how athletes filter relevant information in dynamic environments, manage cognitive load, and find movement solutions in real time. Additionally, both research and applied sport psychology have shown a growing interest in enhancing coaching effectiveness and best practices (Mallett and Lara-Bercial, 2016; North, 2017). In this lecture, we will examine the coach's role in creating environments that support athletes' cognitive development, skill acquisition, and overall performance.We will provide evidence-based practical applications for coaches and consultants to consider when designing practices drawing from research on principles of cognition and learning such as transfer appropriate processing, constraints-led approaches, unstructured play, representativeness, variability, creativity, adaptability, speed-accuracy trade-off, problematizing, imprinting, attention direction and control, priming, perception, and self-regulation (Hoffman et al., 2009b, p. 87). Designing practices with these principles in mind supports the coach's knowledge, and effective practice depends on this (Hoffman and Militello, 2009).This lecture is designed for coaches, sport scientists, and consultants seeking a deeper understanding of how cognition impacts performance and how integrated cognitive training can enhance skill execution, game intelligence, and ultimately higher levels of performance.

LEC-13: ACT Approaches

LEC-13A

A SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY AND ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY-BASED INTERVENTION AIMED AT INCREASING ADHERENCE TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Asaf Blatt, Ono Academic Studies/College of Management Academic studies
Dalit Lev Arey, The Academic College of Tel-Aviv Yaffo, Israel

Recent surveys suggested that most individuals express intentions to be physically active, though the psychological state of amotivation dismissed these struggles (Piercy & Troiano, 2018). We pilot-tested a new intervention program, aimed at enhancing engagement in Physical activity among sedentary individuals. The intervention was based on two behavioral change and motivational psychological frameworks: Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). During a 14-week intervention program, 94 sedentary Israeli college students were randomly assigned into one of three groups: SDT and ACT-based intervention, traditional intervention, and a non-treatment group. . Prior to and following the intervention, participants completed the Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire-3 (BREQ-3) to examine motivation to exercise and the International Physical Activity Measurement (IPAQ) to evaluate their training frequency. Results showed that the SDT and ACT-based intervention group exhibited a significant increase in motivation to exercise between time 1 and time 2, while the other two groups (i.e., the traditional intervention program and the non-treatment group) showed insignificant differences in motivation to exercise. Furthermore, neither of the groups showed significant differences in their training frequency per

week. However, those in the SDT and ACT-based groups reported an increase in activity intensity from time 1 to time 2 compared to the two other groups. This presentation will outline key components of the intervention, discuss its theoretical foundations, and explore practical applications for sport psychologists, coaches, and health professionals. By bridging motivational and psychological strategies, this approach offers a novel pathway for promoting long-term adherence to physical activity, ultimately improving both physical and mental well-being.

LEC-13B

UNPACKING THE IMPACT OF AN ACT-INFORMED INTERVENTION ON TEAM COHESION AND DYNAMICS IN COLLEGIATE ESPORTS

Lindsey Leatherman, West Virginia University
Luca Ziegler, West Virginia University
Hannah Miller, West Virginia University
Zenzi Huysmans, West Virginia University

Team cohesion and dynamics are known to enhance performance (Bonilla et al., 2022) and enjoyment (McEwan et al., 2019) in Esports athletes, yet effective strategies for improving these factors are underexplored. This study addressed this gap by evaluating a seven-session intervention informed by both Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, 2004) and a previous Esports team cohesion intervention (Swettenham & Whitehead, 2022). Participants (n = 22) from four collegiate Esports teams (i.e., Valorant, Rocket League, Mixed Rocket League, and Call of Duty) completed quantitative measures, including the Multidimensional Assessment of Teamwork in Sport (MATS; McEwan et al., 2018) and the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ; Partington & Orlick, 1987), at three timepoints: pre-intervention, post-intervention, and six weeks follow-up. Additionally, psychological safety and consultant effectiveness were evaluated to inform the intervention. Results revealed an initial decrease in team cohesion and teamwork post-intervention, with significant changes in group integration-task (p = .03), execution (p p = .01), and management of team maintenance (p = .01), as assessed using linear mixed modeling. No significant differences were found in team cohesion or teamwork between pre-intervention and the six-week follow-up. Additionally, team preparation at post-intervention was a significant predictor of practice hours during the six weeks after the intervention (R2Adj. = .69, p Participant feedback, practical insights, and theoretical considerations will be offered as key elements in discussion for continued applied work with Esports athletes.

LEC-13C

ACTIVE TO THE PEAK: PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH FLOW AND CLUTCH STATES

Luca Ziegler, West Virginia University
Ashley Coker-Cranney, West Virginia University
Lindsey Leatherman, West Virginia University
Euan Cairns, West Virginia University

While mindfulness-acceptance protocols have gained in popularity, unidimensional exploration and inconsistent theoretical application of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy has weakened the support of psychological flexibility in applied research with athletes (Doorley et al., 2020). Flow and clutch states, as conceptualized by the Integrated Model of Flow and Clutch (Swann et al., 2017), are two optimal mental states associated with enhanced athletic performance. Given mixed evidence on enhancing flow states through mindfulness protocols (e.g. Hut et al., 2023), there is a need to better understand the relationship between psychological flexibility and optimal mental states. Specifically, this longitudinal study quantitatively assessed the six processes of psychological flexibility and flow and clutch states across a competitive season. Collegiate soccer players (n = 173) completed online pre-game psychological flexibility and post-game optimal mental states assessments for multiple games across pre-season, non-conference, conference, and post-season games. All processes of psychological flexibility, except values, remained stable across the season. Athletes with higher levels of clutch, but not flow, states reported increased levels of psychological flexibility, with a moderate effect (d = 0.56). Values were a significant predictor of flow states in non-conference games (R2Adj.= .23), while cognitive defusion significantly predicted clutch states in conference games (R2Adj.= .74). Findings of this study are the first quantitative exploration of the Integrated Model of Flow and Clutch from an ACT perspective, offering new insights into how psychological flexibility contributes to optimal performance states. Results support that psychological flexibility may be more beneficial in fostering clutch states than flow states. Practical implications include how mental performance consultants can explore specific processes of psychological flexibility that are related to the emergence of flow and clutch states. The discussion will further explore theoretical considerations, methodological limitations, and directions for future research.

LEC-13D

AN ACTIONABLE APPROACH TO FLOW AND CLUTCH STATES

Luca Ziegler, West Virginia University
Lindsey Leatherman, West Virginia University

Mindfulness-acceptance approaches (e.g. MAC; MSPE) have gained increased popularity among mental performance consultants aiming to improve athletic performance. While mindfulness-acceptance approaches have proven effective, they de-emphasize specific mental states for peak performance, despite evidence linking optimal mental states to high achievement. For example, flow and clutch are two optimal mental states associated with peak performance (Swann et al., 2017). This lecture aims to bridge this paradox by presenting flow and clutch states as outcomes of increased levels of psychological flexibility, rather than two competing frameworks. This conceptualization is based on the Multi-Action Plan (Bortoli et al., 2012), the Integrated Model of Flow and Clutch (Swann et al., 2017) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, 2004). Specifically, the lecture will focus on how applied practitioners can utilize the six processes of psychological flexibility to enhance the often elusive and context dependent states of flow and clutch. A novel apple tree metaphor will be introduced to simplify the integration of psychological flexibility and optimal mental states, providing practitioners with an accessible way to incorporate these concepts into their applied work. This metaphor illustrates psychological flexibility as an integrated

system: acceptance (branches), defusion (sun), present moment contact (roots), self-as-context (trunk), values (soil), and committed action (rain), all contributing to growth and flourishing. Given the complexity of achieving optimal mental states, this metaphor provides a tangible framework for practitioners aiming to enhance flow and clutch, grounded in ACT's scientific rigor. Supported by practical examples, the lecture will also include guidance on how to use the metaphor and its underlying concept in direct work with athletes including and beyond optimal mental states (e.g. application to injured athletes).

LEC-14: Leadership & Coaching

LEC-14A

ADVANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN TENNIS THROUGH MENTORSHIP

E. Earlynn Lauer, Lauer Mental Training, LLC
Milagros Sequera Huss, United States Tennis Association Southern
Maria Cercone, United States Tennis Association Southern
Jessica Lackey, United States Tennis Association Southern

Despite increasing participation in tennis, women remain significantly underrepresented in coaching, particularly at the high-performance level. While existing research highlights the benefits of mentorship in advancing women in coaching (Banwell, Stirling, & Kerr, 2019; Belding & Dodge, 2016), there is a notable absence of studies examining mentorship programs specifically designed for women tennis coaches. This gap underscores the need for targeted initiatives that provide professional development, leadership training, and structured support for women tennis coaches. In response, a regional mentorship program was developed to retain and advance women tennis coaches by enhancing their communication, goal-setting, and self-reflection skills. The program paired experienced women coaches with developing coaches in a structured, year-long mentorship initiative that includes in-person and virtual learning sessions. Mentors and mentee pairs were introduced at the beginning of the program, and members of each group initially received specific training related to their roles within the mentor-mentee dyad. As the program continued, the program introduced strategies such as guided goal-setting exercises, active listening activities, and reflective coaching discussions to foster career progression for both mentors and mentees. Additionally, it addressed gender-based barriers in coaching by equipping participants with the necessary skills to navigate and advocate within a male-dominated profession (Norman, 2012).A formative evaluation of the program suggests positive outcomes, including increased confidence in leadership roles, improved professional skill development, and a strengthened sense of community among women coaches. This presentation will discuss key findings, explore the program's structure and effectiveness, and outline future directions for expanding its impact. By fostering an inclusive and empowering coaching culture, this initiative contributes to broader efforts aimed at achieving gender equity in sport coaching while addressing a critical gap in mentorship research for women tennis coaches.

LEC-14B

HEALTHY GIRL REVOLUTION: EMPOWERING WOMEN TO LEAD AND INFLUENCE GIRLS IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Rebecca Busanich, St. Catherine University
Sean Fitzpatrick, St. Catherine University

Research shows that pre-adolescent and adolescent girls drop out of sport and physical activity (PA) at a greater rate than any other individuals across the lifespan (Barnes et al., 2018; Caspersen, Pereira & Curran, 2000; The Aspen Institute, 2015; Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport, 2018), compounded even further by racial and socioeconomic factors (Mann & Hacker, 2024). Even when girls remain active, their mental health is often constrained by a sports culture built by and for men, along with dominant toxic narratives around the body, food, exercise, and health that further contribute to poor body image, disordered eating, low self-confidence, and other health inequities (Busanich et al., 2014; Huelleman et al., 2024; Slater & Tiggemann, 2011). Healthy Girl Revolution (HGR) is a movement envisioned by a feminist cultural sport and exercise psychology researcher, developed in partnership with health science students at a minority-serving women-centered university, as an evidence-based approach to address these social inequities. HGR's mission is to help pre-adolescent and adolescent girls develop positive body image and lifelong healthy habits by changing how they think and talk about bodies, physical activity, nutrition, and health. This lecture will highlight the narrative research underlying this movement by exploring the dominant and toxic narratives that constrain and/or negatively impact young girls' sport and PA experiences, and discuss how through the use of social media, local partnerships, mentorship opportunities, and educational programming, HGR is constructing a new story that empowers, inspires, uplifts, and encourages girls and women around the world to thrive.

LEC-14C

ANALYSIS, DEVELOPMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SHARED LEADERSHIP INTERVENTION AMONG A U-19 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SOCCER TEAM

Asaf Blatt, Ono Academic Studies/College of Management Academic studies
Royi Yablochnik, Reichman University

One of the most crucial determinants of team effectiveness in sport is the quality of the leadership within the team. Traditionally, leadership in sports has been conceptualized through a vertical leadership approach, where a single leader hold hierarchical position above the team (Fransen et al., 2017). Consequently, most methodological tools have relied on individual-level measures to assess leadership quality in sports teams (Leo et al., 2019).However, over the past decade, there has been a shift from vertical leadership towards the concept of shared leadership, which emphasizes the distribution of leadership responsibilities within the team rather than leadership emanating solely from a designated leader (Fransen et al., 2017). This approach recognizes that leadership can emerge dynamically among team members and is not confined to a single individual.In this lecture, we

will introduce four key types of formal and informal leadership roles within sports teams: task leader, motivational leader, social leader, and external leader. Additionally, we will explore methods for evaluating leadership relationships within a team and the dynamics that influence their effectiveness. We will also present the development and application of a leadership development program designed according to the principles of the shared leadership framework. This program was implemented within a U-19 national championship soccer team, which subsequently qualified for the UEFA Youth League. Attendees will gain insights into the leadership analysis process within the team, the development of the intervention through individual and group meetings, and the experiences of both players and coaching staff.Furthermore, we will discuss practical strategies for facilitating shared leadership in a professional sports team, highlighting key challenges, cultural considerations, and ethical dilemmas that may arise. By adopting a scientist-practitioner approach, this intervention provides valuable insights for students, practitioners, and scholars looking to design and implement leadership techniques in sports teams.

LEC-14D

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF NEURODIVERSE ATHLETES' NEEDS: KEY RESEARCH-PRACTICE FINDINGS FOR COACHING ADAPTIVE TENNIS PROGRAMS

Amanda Visek, The George Washington University
Courtney Lesser, The George Washington University
Olivia Syftestad, The George Washington University
Andrew Stranieri, The George Washington University
Ryan Dunleavy, The George Washington University
Sebastian Vile, University of Alabama
Julia Lauk, The George Washington University
Brooke Maxwell, The George Washington University
Yichen Jin, The George Washington University
Richard Spurling, ACEing Autism
Justin Belisario, ACEing Autism
Rujuta Wilson, University of California at Los Angeles

An estimated 232.6 million Americans participate in sport and fitness activities. Centering these experiences on having fun is an evidence-based recommendation for promoting sport participation, improving performance, and enhancing personal development. Consequently, understanding what makes sport fun has been a growing area of research across various sport systems. Findings from these studies have identified best coaching practices among neurotypical athletes that, in turn, have informed coach education and guided sport program delivery. However, understanding the needs and fun priorities of neurodiverse athletes remains understudied and is a clear evidence gap that, if addressed, would have wide reaching implications for how coaches deliver and shape adaptive programming. To address this, athletes (n=139, aged 5-30) with autism spectrum disorder and other co-occurring neurodevelopmental disorders participating in adaptive tennis, along with parents/caregivers (n=94), and coaches (n=134), were engaged as research participants in group concept mapping. Participants completed brainstorming, sorting, and rating tasks, that when combined with multivariate analyses, elucidated key findings. In total, 37-determinants of fun were identified in a seven-cluster map that spanned the tennis ecosystem: Self Improvement & Growth, Positive Coaching Interactions, Social Connections, Skill-Based Development, Program Design, Equity & Inclusion, and Social-Emotional Development. Perceived importance of the determinants, and clusters, were highly congruent among athletes regardless of sex, age, skill level, and years played, which paralleled previous studies of neurotypical athletes. Coaches, though, generally underestimated how important the determinants and clusters were to athletes. This suggests neurodiverse athletes' needs may be overlooked and thus not yet fully realized in program design and implementation. These insights, and novel findings, offer an evidence base that can be used to inform coach education and on-court practices that improve program delivery and prioritize neurodiverse athletes' needs in ways that make tennis, and adaptive sport broadly, the most fun and beneficial experience possible.

LEC-15: Exercise

LEC-15A

FORMER COLLEGE ATHLETES' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF POST-SPORT EXERCISE: HOW INSTITUTIONS CAN PREPARE ATHLETES FOR RETIREMENT THROUGH EXERCISE PROMOTION

Paula-Marie Ferrara, Hope College
Christian Clark, Hope College
Samantha Vermeesch, Davenport University
Keegan DeKuiper, Hope College
Madelynn Struck, Hope College
Morgan Eckenrod, University of Southern Mississippi

Research reveals that former college athletes (FCAs) can experience physical and mental health declines after their sports career concludes. This may be attributed to reductions in exercise post-sport caused by factors relating to retirement (e.g., loss of teammates, training routine, and goals). These findings warrant further examination regarding how FCAs' views of exercise change after sport, and what resources they may need to maintain healthy exercise long-term. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore former NCAA Division III (DIII) athletes' perceptions of health and exercise as they exited college sport, document their exercise experiences, and gauge their opinions on how they could have been better prepared for the retirement transition. This two-part qualitative study involved semi-structured interviews with FCAs from a DIII institution. Nineteen participants (22±1 years, 63% female, 84% White) completed the first interview (Part 1), which took place within 1-2 months of their graduation. Fourteen participants (22±1 years, 71% female, 86% White) returned six months later for the second interview (Part 2), which utilized their previous responses as contextual prompts within the interview guide. Consensual Qualitative Research methods were used to form domains, categories, and core ideas for both halves of the study to show the evolution of participants' perceptions and experiences of exercise following retirement. Part 1 yielded five domains describing FCAs' views of health and exercise post-sport, and their future plans regarding exercise maintenance. Part 2 yielded six domains showing how FCAs' perceptions and exercise practices changed with time, and opinions on what their institution could have provided to prepare them for sports retirement. Findings from this study provide important insight into the little-known changes athletes experience as they retire. Researchers may use

these results to inform methods of intervention to better prepare student-athletes for sports retirement and long-term health and exercise maintenance.

LEC-15B

"YOU HAVE TO BE COURAGEOUS TO DO IT": AN EXPLORATION OF COURAGE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL GROWTH THROUGH STORIES OF OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING

Lindsey Visscher, University of Northern Colorado
Dannon Cox, Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Northern Colorado

Olympic weightlifting (OlyW) is a sport that tests the limits of human strength, speed, and flexibility as competitors attempt two lifts: the Snatch and the Clean and Jerk. These challenging lifts force athletes to be courageous in their pursuit of achievement. Psychosocial researchers theorize that experiencing courage strengthens self-efficacy, resilience, positive emotions, psychological capital, and quality of life (Hannah et al., 2007; Santisi et al., 2021). With this in mind, the current study aimed to capture OlyW athletes' stories of courage and explore how their stories weaved together courageous experiences and psychological wellness. To achieve this aim, a narrative inquiry methodology was used to collect stories from six athletes (nfemale = 3, Mage = 38 years) using semi-structured, video-recorded interviews. Participants' stories were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis to interpret whole narrative sequences and identify prevalent themes and patterns (Riessman, 2008). Prevalent themes within the stories included 1) the iron paradox: something as rigid and unforgiving as iron becomes a medium for personal transformation, 2) forged through fear: true growth emerges from stepping into discomfort and facing what scares you most, 3) a relentless grind: it's a cycle of showing up, failing, and growing, only to start again, 4) the weight of emotion: the intense emotional journey tests more than just your physical strength. Segments of participants' interviews that captured these prevailing themes were pulled out of the video recorded interviews and spliced together to develop engaging digital chronicles that represent the participants' experiences and opinions of courage in OlyW, which will be shared during the presentation. The stories shared in this project provide promising insights into how OlyW may foster psychological wellness in athletes and exercisers who have the courage to step up to the barbell.

LEC-15C

EXPLORING A NEW PARADIGM FOR BLACK WOMEN ATHLETE AND EXERCISER WELLNESS: A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Keri Kirk, Georgetown University/Medstar Georgetown University Hospital
Ashley Splain, University of Maryland Baltimore County
Clara Parsons, Medstar Health Research Institute
Lana Kim, Georgetown University

Background: Approximately 70% of Black women do not meet health promoting physical activity levels in the US. Participation in sports does not provide significant protections for Black women after sport retirement. How Black women are viewed in fitness and sports media may be a contributor to inactivity by way of harmful sport and fitness stereotypes for Black women and Black women athletes.

Methods: This exploratory sequential mixed-methods study conducted three focus groups with Black women ages 18 to 42 to explore perceptions of Black women in fitness and sport media. Focus groups were transcribed and thematic analysis was performed to determine significant psychosocial and contextual variables related to fitness, sport, and body image. Quantitative surveys based on themed constructs were administered. Data were summarized and an additional focus group was conducted to assess theme priority. A toolkit for sport and fitness practitioners was created from the most relevant themes Results: 100% of the participants (N f18) were Black women. The average age was 32 (SD=7.5). Thirty-three percent of the sample (N f6) were current or past college athletes. Over 60% of participants reported engaging in moderate to vigorous exercise daily. Five dominant themes were identified from the focus groups as unique contributors to Black women's relationships with how they are perceived in fitness and sports media: Lack of representation, Blackness/not Black enough, Black vs White sports/exercises (in reference to discrimination), Contextually curvy (in relation to body image), and For us, By us (in reference to letting Black women lead exercise and sport intervention).

Conclusions: When considering opportunities for sport psychology and fitness professional positioning in wellness spaces for Black women, it is imperative that the creation of these spaces consult Black women prior to intervention and address complex contextual factors resulting from biases and discrimination in sport media and sport leadership.

LEC-15D

INTEGRATING SPORT PSYCHOLOGY IN THE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF GI DISTRESS IN ENDURANCE ATHLETES

Hayley Russell, St. Francis Xavier University
Patrick Wilson, Old Dominion University
Margo Watt, St. Francis Xavier University

Up to 90% of endurance athletes report experiencing gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms that negatively impact their experience or performance in sport (de Oliveira et al., 2014). Symptoms, such as flatulence, heartburn, nausea, and diarrhea, can range from mildly discomforting to severe enough to cause cessation of activity (Wilson, 2016). Despite how common these symptoms are, prevention and management remain challenging due to the wide variety of possible underlying causes (de Oliveira et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2021). To date, interventions have focused largely on dietary modifications (Smith et al., 2021), however research suggests that psychological variables, particularly stress and anxiety, can be predictive of GI distress in athletes (Wilson et al., 2021). Indeed, when athletes are asked how they self-manage their GI symptoms, they indicate their use of psychological strategies, such as meditation, medication for anxiety, sport psychology skills, and relaxation techniques (Scrivin et al., 2022). Based on this evidence, sport psychology professionals, such as Mental Performance Consultants (MPC) and licensed sport psychologists, could play an important role in preventing and treating GI distress in endurance athletes by targeting specific psychological

factors. This applied presentation was developed by a mental performance consultant, an exercise physiologist who is also a registered dietitian, and a clinical psychologist. It is designed to provide sport psychology professionals with an introduction to knowledge and evidence-based strategies for effectively targeting psychological risk factors of GI distress (e.g., stress, anxiety and visceral sensitivity). These cognitive behavioral strategies include psychoeducation, relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring, coping skills development, and exposure techniques (Feingold et al., 2019). Considering how many endurance athletes experience GI symptoms, sport psychology professionals' skill development in this area could greatly improve athletes' performance and experiences in their sports.

LEC-16: Sleep & Recovery

LEC-16A

SLEEP LIKE A CHAMPION: THE ATHLETE'S GUIDE TO OPTIMIZED SLEEP

Kaelene Curry, Mile High Performance Consulting

A well-established body of research highlights the critical relationship between sleep, health, and performance in elite athletes (Charest & Grandner, 2022). Sleep is essential for physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being, playing a key role in optimizing performance and reducing the risk of illness and injury (Watson, 2017). However, many athletes continue to struggle with achieving adequate sleep due to individual habits and environmental factors that are not conducive to sleep promotion (NCAA Goals Study, 2019). This presentation will provide a comprehensive guide to sleep for elite performance, covering key aspects such as sleep science and education (e.g. restorative stages, duration, quality, consistency, timing), interventions (e.g. elite athlete sleep survey, behavioral and environmental interventions, evidence-based sleep tools), and practical applications for optimizing sleep while traveling (e.g. behavioral, mental, and physical prevention strategies, evidence-based sleep tools). The latest evidence on sleep's impact on health and performance will be reviewed, followed by detailed strategies for improving sleep at both the individual and team levels (Bonnar et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2017; Kroshus et al., 2019; Sargent et al, 2021; Walker, 2018; Walsh et al., 2020). Additionally, the presentation will focus on strategies at the level of the system to foster sleep-promoting environments (e.g. education, data integrations, schedule adjustments). Attendees will learn how to effectively position, communicate, and educate athletes, coaches, and leadership to prioritize sleep as a key pillar of performance.To ensure immediate application, all attendees will receive a Comprehensive Sleep Guide for Performance, which includes an Elite Athlete Sleep Survey, Sleep Education and Interventions, a Travel Optimization Guide, and Statistics about Sleep, Health, and Performance equipping them with practical tools to implement directly into their performance settings.

LEC-16B

DON'T SLEEP ON GETTING SLEEP: EXAMINING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN OBJECTIVE SLEEP OUTCOMES AND MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS AFTER ACL RECONSTRUCTION

Caitlin Brinkman, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
J.D. DeFreese, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Jaime Hughes, Wake Forest University School of Medicine
Johna Register-Mihalik, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Jeffrey Spang, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Shelby Baez, University of North Carolina

Patients recovering from anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction (ACLR) often experience depression and anxiety symptoms, most commonly reported within six weeks post-ACLR (Garcia et al., 2015). Objective measures of poor sleep (increased sleep onset latency (SOL) and decreased sleep efficiency (SE)) are reported in patients with depression and anxiety (Benca et al., 1992). Due to the strong relationship between poor sleep and mental health, it is imperative to understand objective sleep outcomes in patients susceptible to developing mental health symptoms, like those after ACLR. This study examined the association between objective sleep outcomes (e.g., SOL and SE) and mental health symptoms (e.g., depression and anxiety) in individuals after ACLR. We hypothesized participants endorsing poor sleep (i.e., increased SOL, decreased SE) would report elevated depression and anxiety symptoms. Twenty-eight participants (18 female/10 male, age=24.6±5.06 years, height=171.08±7.77 cm, weight=73.48±12.7 kg) within 1- to 3-months post-ACLR wore an objective sleep tracker (i.e., Oura Ring) to capture SOL and SE for 4 weeks. Participants completed the Patient Health Questionnaire-8 (PHQ-8) and the Generalized Anxiety Questionnaire (GAD-7) which measure depression and anxiety symptoms, respectively. Higher scores on each scale represent greater symptoms. Four separate linear regression models were conducted including SOL and SE as predictor variables, PHQ-8 scores and GAD-7 scores as dependent variables, and age as a covariate in all models. Significance level was set to p Models were not statistically significant between SOL and PHQ-8 scores, SE and PHQ-8 scores, SOL and GAD-7 scores or SE and GAD-7 scores after controlling for age (p=0.59, p=0.25, p=0.15, p=0.05). Objective sleep outcomes did not predict mental health symptoms in this sample perhaps due to resolution of acute mental health concerns after 1-month post-ACLR. Future research should explore patients' perceptions of sleep quality post-ACLR to understand how sleep may impact recovery.

LEC-16C

DEVELOPING FIREFIGHTER RECOVERY PROFILES: EXPLORING RECOVERY PERCEPTION AND THE USE OF RECOVERY ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FIRE SERVICE

Nathan Ebersole, Georgia Southern University
Carly Wahl, Eastern Illinois University
Megan Byrd, Georgia Southern University
Bridget Melton, Georgia Southern University

When left unaddressed, firefighting demands can lead to burnout, overexertion, and stress, affecting firefighters' physical and psychological health (Gnacinski et al., 2015). As one method of reducing the deleterious effects of firefighting, researchers have begun to explore the impact of recovery activities (Sawhney et al., 2017; Wahl et al., 2023). However, there is minimal preliminary literature on perceptions of recovery and the frequency and type of recovery activities engaged in by firefighters. To better recommend individualized recovery strategies, thereby maximizing firefighter health, the purpose of this study was to examine firefighter perceptions of recovery and their engagement in recovery activities. For three consecutive weeks, eight rural active-duty male firefighters completed the firefighter-adapted Assessment of Recovery Activities for Athletes (ARAA-FF; Wahl et al., 2023). Descriptive analyses examined mean subscale scores for each firefighter, and individualized recovery profiles were subsequently developed. Aggregate results indicated firefighters perceived intermediate Psychological Recovery (M=5.50, SD=1.96) and Physical Recovery (M=5.17, SD=1.90) on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely). Results also indicated that firefighters engaged in Training Breaks (M=50.00, SD=20.52), Non-Firefighting Interactions (M=49.35, SD=14.39), Firefighting Interactions (M=46.48, SD=17.92), Community (M=45.66, SD=10.39), Autonomy (M=42.38, SD=23.15), Relaxation (M=42.36, SD=23.24), Psychological Detachment (M=41.55, SD=19.43), and Mastery (M=13.10, SD=11.26) activities 50 percent or less of the days. Large standard deviations for perceived recovery and recovery activity engagement may indicate variability of firefighting demands. Overall, results indicate an alignment between perceived recovery and frequency of engagement in recovery activities, collectively identifying where recovery efforts could be enhanced. The low recovery values also suggest firefighters may be unaware of and/or choose ineffective recovery activities. Addressing the activities firefighters engage in to manage occupational demands can help promote recovery protocols, thereby improving firefighter physical and psychological health. Research to practice applications of the individualized recovery profiles will be discussed.

LEC-16D

DO MENTAL HEALTH AND SLEEP MATTER FOR ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE AND WELLBEING? EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES OF AUSTRALIAN ATHLETES, COACHES, AND SUPPORT STAFF

Harley de Vos, The University of Sydney | ACT Academy of Sport
Kotryna Lewis, The University of Sydney

Suzi Edwards, The University of Sydney
Renee Appaneal, Private Practice
Shona Halson, Australian Catholic University
Liam Toohey, University of Canberra

How high-performance sporting environments can influence elite athletes' mental health and sleep is increasingly an area of interest for sport psychology researchers and practitioners (Schinke et al., 2024; Walsh et al., 2021). This study aimed to develop a better understanding of how athletes, coaches, and support staff perceive athletes' mental health, sleep, the relationship between mental health and sleep, and how this relationship may affect athletic performance. We conducted six focus groups with nine athletes (six women) and 17 coaches/staff (five women). Focus groups were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Six primary themes were generated: 1) my experience and understanding of mental health; 2) what is my social identity?; 3) coach(es) create the high-performance environment; 4) my environment defines my sleep; 5) what support do I have/what support do I need?; and 6) you monitor my wellbeing… but what happens with my data? The results underlined that mental health and sleep have a strong and complex relationship that has important implications for optimal athletic performance and wellbeing. Based on participants lived experiences and perceptions, athletes felt that having agency with their athletic career was important for them to achieve success and support their wellbeing, while coaches believed that they were responsible for creating the high-performance sporting environment. This study highlights that high-performance sport needs to continue to reduce barries to mental health support and be more inclusive and supportive of athletes experiencing mental ill-health. A notable applied practice implication from this study concerns the routine monitoring of athletes, including how this data is used, and which support staff should be responsible for overseeing athletes' sleep. Based on these results, greater visibility of athlete monitoring would be helpful, while sleep education specific to the demands of high-performance sport is needed for all athletes and staff.

PANELS

PAN-01

BEHIND THE TITLE: HOW WEST POINT'S PERFORMANCE PSYCH'S EARNED THEIR CURRENT ROLES

Mitch DeSimone, United States Military Academy West Point
Kathryn Longshore, United States Military Academy West Point
Matthew Gonzalez, United States Military Academy West Point
Lezshell Pauling, United States Military Academy West Point

The Performance Psychology Program (PPP) in the Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP) at the United States Military Academy, West Point was first established in 1989, a revolutionary center at that time. The PPP provides performance psychology education and training to support the development of cadets across West Point's academic, physical, military and athletic domains. Operating with a wellness orientation and a focus on enhancing performance under pressure, the PPP supports the academy's broader mission of developing leaders of character prepared to excel as commissioned officers in the U.S. Army. This panel will offer valuable insight for students and early career professionals interested in performance psychology careers, particularly those aspiring to work in high-performance environments such as collegiate athletics, military institutions, or applied performance centers. By sharing their extremely diverse pathways into the field, the PPP team will highlight both the common and unique career steps that led them to their current roles. The panel will feature the full Performance Psychology Program team, with the performance psychology instructors serving as panelists and the director of the program acting as moderator. The discussion will include an overview of the PPP's work, personal career journeys, key knowledge and skills critical to success, lessons learned along the way, and practical advice for navigating the transition from graduate student to applied professional. This session will provide actionable insights to help early career professionals make informed decisions as they build their careers in applied performance psychology.

PAN-02

THE WEIGHT OF SERVICE: UNPACKING DISORDERED EATING IN THE MILITARY

Mitch DeSimone, United States Military Academy West Point
Jenny Conviser, Ascend Consultation/ Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine
Amanda Karas, Elevate Maintain Evolve
Cindy Miller Aron, Elite Athletic Mental Health/Performance Consultant and Clinician, University of Wisconsin, Department of Psychiatry and Public Health, Madision, WI

Eating disorders (EDs) and disordered eating (DE) are prevalent yet frequently under-recognized issues within military populations. Studies note that prevalence is likely to be vastly underreported, but suggest that up to 38.3% of military personnel engage in disordered eating behaviors, with female service members exhibiting particularly high prevalence rates (Arzt et al., 2022). Male service members are also vulnerable, however, with approximately 11% reporting significant disordered eating symptoms (Godfrey et al., 2021). While weight and fitness standards have long been identified as contributors to this risk (Breland et al., 2017), military culture itself amplifies these pressures by tying body composition to professional respect, perceived competence, and career advancement (Foran et al., 2019; Nash et al., 2019).Body ideals within the military are strongly linked to notions of discipline, toughness, and operational readiness (Nash et al., 2019). Research indicates that service members—especially men—who fall outside ideal body standards may face stigma, reduced leadership opportunities, and a sense of diminished belonging (Foran et al., 2019). This pressure fuels engagement in extreme weight control behaviors, including excessive exercise, fasting, and use of supplements, contributing to the onset and maintenance of ED symptoms (Arzt et al., 2022). For male service members, these risks are compounded by reluctance to seek help due to gendered stigma surrounding eating disorders and mental health care (Arzt et al., 2022; Godfrey et al., 2021). Delays in ED assessment and treatment pose additional risk to mental and medical health (Raisanen & Hunt, 2014), increasing need for additional support measures.This presentation will explore these cultural risk factors and conclude with a focus on practical strategies to mitigate disordered eating risk and improve care. Recommendations will discuss policy, support, culturally competent screening, identification of risk factors, and evidence-based prevention and treatment tailored to military populations.

PAN-03

COACHING THE SYSTEM: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DISCUSSION ON ORGANIZATIONAL SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

James Peters, North Carolina State University
Lennie Waite, HITE EQ
Alan Witt, University of Houston
Alexander Gamble, Rutgers University

Over the past 10–15 years, organizational sport psychology has emerged as a prominent subfield of sport psychology (Fletcher & Wagstaff, 2009; Wagstaff, 2019). As a result, scholars and practitioners who traditionally focus on individual and team factors have expanded their scope to consider how systemic and organizational influences impact athletic performance and well-being (McKenzie et al., 2023; Passaportis et al., 2024; Sadler et al., 2024; Wagstaff, 2019; Wagstaff & Quartiroli, 2023; Wagstaff et al., 2012). This push to include organizational phenomena in sport psychology is particularly notable as scholars in organizational psychology have similarly argued for broader consideration of multilevel phenomena (Cleveland et al., 2017), with some arguing for reconceptualizing how the organizational sciences define success and effectiveness to include indicators of well-being (Tay et al., 2023). Despite programmatic differences in the content, skills, and strategies taught across fields, these developments highlight a shared recognition of the importance of organizational phenomena as critical drivers of organizational success and optimal functioning.This panel brings together experts in sport and organizational psychology to explore how insights from these fields can inform research and practice in organizational sport psychology. Panelists will discuss synergies and tensions between balancing

performance with well-being in organizations, drawing on theoretical frameworks, methodological innovations, and practical strategies across disciplines to foster a collaborative dialogue on how to navigate the inherent complexities between these concepts. Our discussion will cover considerations within individuals (e.g., preserving wellness vs. optimizing performance), between different levels of analysis (e.g., raising individual performance standards vs. strengthening organizational culture), and across varying units of time (e.g., single-season interventions vs. long-term organizational interventions).

PAN-04

IS THE TIDE BEGINNING TO TURN?: INTEGRATED MENTAL PERFORMANCE UNITS EMBEDDED WITHIN INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENTS

Graig Chow, Cal Athletics
Katie Nichols, Louisville Athletics
Lenny Wiersma, University of California, Berkeley
Lindsey Gastinger, Louisville Athletics

Despite positive perceptions of administrators, coaches, and athletes toward mental performance services (Fortin-Guichard et al., 2018), the prevalence of full-time, non-licensed CMPCs within intercollegiate athletics departments remains low (Jones et al., 2022). The most prominent models of mental performance currently are: 1) athletics departments hiring dual-trained practitioners to provide both mental health and mental performance services (Connole et al., 2014) and 2) coaches using their team's discretionary budget to hire external consultants on a limited-time basis. Recently, however, an emerging trend of athletics departments hiring full-time, in-house practitioners who provide solely mental performance services has emerged. In this vein, the panel includes practitioners who have experience building, sustaining, and growing mental performance units comprised of multiple non-licensed CMPCs embedded within Division I, Power 4 athletics departments. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from experts who exclusively serve the mental performance needs of student-athletes, coaches, and teams. Panelists will share best practices, challenges, and opportunities while highlighting the similarities and differences between the mental performance units. For example, both mental performance units adopt a spoke of the wheel model in which mental performance and mental health services are provided by distinct professionals (Bader & Martin, 2019), albeit each unit is unique in its structure. Critical topics will be discussed, including working with gatekeepers, supporting key stakeholders, gaining entry, collaborating with mental health providers and support staff, designing and delivering science-to-practice services, evaluating and demonstrating effectiveness, navigating ethical and professional issues, and consulting with peers. From graduate students to experienced practitioners, attendees interested in working within an intercollegiate athletics department will gain an understanding of the competencies and qualifications necessary to thrive in the role. This panel aims to contribute knowledge toward the profession of applied sport psychology on broad (e.g., job creation) and specific (e.g., equity in service allocation) levels.

PAN-05

ENDGAME EMOTIONS: NAVIGATING FAREWELLS, IDENTITY, AND FUTURE STEPS

Adrianna Peachey, Deloitte
Jen Schumacher, KBR
Ceci Craft, Philadelphia Phillies

Belonging to a team fosters a deep sense of identity and connection, a phenomenon well-documented amongst athletes (Park et al., 2012; Ronkainan et al., 2015). As the field of mental performance expands, professionals are increasingly embedded into teams, thereby exposed to similar identity challenges during times of transition, impacting their professional identity and emotional well-being. Despite the prevalence of these transitions, this topic still remains largely unexplored in the research. This panel seeks to explore this gap by examining the emotional and psychological aspects of leaving mental performance roles with teams and the process of closing professional chapters (Smith & Smoll, 1997; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994).The panelists are Certified Mental Performance Consultants with experience spanning collegiate, professional, and Olympic sports, as well as military and corporate settings. They will discuss their professional transitions and share how leaving teams affected their relationships and identities, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they found most effective. Specifically, the panel will discuss the emotional and psychological impact on mental performance professionals as they part ways with teams, explore the evolution of professional identity during and after their tenure, and share best practices for managing the departure process (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). Additionally, panelists will examine the broader implications for team dynamics and performance, and identify strategies for maintaining professional identity and continuity in future roles (Bridges, 2009; Duck, 2001). This discussion will integrate existing research to support best practices, providing attendees with an evidence-informed framework for navigating professional transitions. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the unexamined challenges performance psychology professionals face during transitions, learn strategies for managing departures, and explore how professional identities evolve in new roles. Practical recommendations will be provided for both mental performance practitioners and teams to ensure smooth transitions (Bridges, 2009; Duck, 2001).

PAN-06

INTEGRATING PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS TO ENHANCE INJURY RECOVERY IN ATHLETES

Tim White, White House Athletics
Shelby Baez, University of North Carolina
John Coumbe-Lilley, University of Illinois Chicago
Carrie Jackson, Carrie Jackson Mental Skills Training

Injury not only disrupts an athlete's physical performance and trajectory, it also causes psychological distress by challenging their psychological resilience and self-concept. Although there is empirical evidence supporting the application of mental performance skills and psychological interventions to the context of injury rehabilitation, the need to identify frameworks for applying various mental skills from

various theoretical approaches in a systematic way remains. This panel, composed of four seasoned sport psychology professionals with a cumulative 60 years of experience, will critically examine the application of four distinct approaches to the psychological aspects of injury, rehabilitation, and return to sport. The frameworks to be examined include Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT; Beck 2011), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson, 2016), Solution Focused Brief Therapy (Quick, 2008), and Psychophysiological Interventions (Cheng et al. 2024). Special emphasis will be given to how each framework can be incorporated into a larger systematic approach designed to facilitate optimal recovery outcomes.Each panelist will discuss empirical and applied evidence supporting each of these frameworks and their value with respect to mitigating injury-related stress responses as well as promoting successful return to sport. The session will rigorously interrogate the strengths, limitations, and contextual efficacy of each approach, providing attendees with a framework for evaluating and integrating these methodologies within their practice.Given the prevalence of injury-related psychological distress and its implications for long-term athlete well-being and performance sustainability, this session delivers an essential discourse for advancing sport psychology praxis. Through theoretically robust and methodologically sound analysis, this panel will equip attendees with the critical understanding necessary for optimizing intervention efficacy within their respective domains.

PAN-07

NUTHIN' BUT A G THANG: CONSULTING WITH THE NBA G LEAGUE

Seth Swary, Henry Ford Health
Dayna Charbonneau, Toronto Raptors
Marius Johnson, Memphis Hustle
Rachel Webb, Charlotte Hornets

The National Basketball Association's (NBA) G League, the official minor league for the NBA, currently features 31 teams, 30 of which have direct affiliations with an NBA franchise. Originating as the NBA Developmental League in the 2001-2002 season, the G League serves as a developmental league for players and staff and a research and development laboratory for the NBA. G League players have seen increasing success as evidenced by 30 players being "called up" to an NBA team in each of the past nine seasons and 50% of players on NBA rosters having G League experience (NBA G League, n.d.). While research with this specific population is limited, elite athletes have reported experiencing mental health concerns at rates similar to the general population (Gouttebarge et al., 2019; Rice et al., 2016), citing several sport-related stressors, while minor league baseball players have identified additional factors that may impact their ability to reach their athletic potential (McLeod et al., 2022). Unique factors faced by athletes in the G League include contract logistics (e.g., league versus team-based contracts, two-way contracts), structure of the competitive season, location of the team and NBA affiliate, and available resources. In this panel, four members of the Mind Health network (the NBA's mental health, wellness, and performance program) will share their experiences and provide insights into working with G League teams and athletes. Two of the providers are contracted full-time with an NBA franchise and work with their G League affiliates, one provider works full-time as a fellow with a G League team, and one provider works with a team as a portion of a sports medicine contract with a local health system. Panelists will discuss their models of service delivery, developmental and cultural considerations, highlights and challenges, and recommendations for consultants looking to work with elite athletes.

PAN-08

NAVIGATING THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH FOUR DISTINCT CAREER PATHWAYS

Jesse Michel, Deloitte
Pete Kadushin, Chicago Blackhawks
Olivier Schmid, Olivier Schmid, LLC
Ian Connole, Dartmouth University

Whether working primarily in the United States or abroad, AASP members pursue diverse career paths, and many professionals encounter challenges in establishing their careers, adapting to industry demands, and overcoming setbacks while establishing their career niche. In this panel, four CMPCs will share insights from their unique career trajectories, while encouraging attendees to think outside the box en route to a fulfilling professional journey in sport, exercise, or performance psychology. The discussion will explore lessons learned, skills required, and professional development strategies essential for sustained success across the following 5 domains: Professional sports, private practice, NCAA Division I-III Athletics, military operations, and corporate environments. Aside from supervision, having a trusted network of peers who understand the unique demands of the field provides essential personal support and resources. Beyond professional growth, checking in on one another, offering encouragement, confronting ideas, and sharing career opportunities ensures a sense of belonging on their journey. The session will integrate research on career pathways in sport psychology (Tod et al., 2011), the impact of peer mentorship on professional growth (McEwan et al., 2021), and best practices for career resilience (Holt & Strean, 2020). Panelists will highlight the strategies used to chart their professional arcs, discuss navigating the high-stakes contexts they have worked in, and share challenges and setbacks of building sport and performance psychology programs and frameworks within complex performance environments. Attendees will learn strategies for handling tough career moments, receive insights on athlete and client challenges, and refine their approaches to mental performance consulting across a wide range of professional spaces. The session will conclude with a Q&A, allowing for discussion and insights that participants can apply throughout their career trajectories. Attendance is suited for professionals at all career stages, offering guidance on maximizing impact across industries while fostering professional longevity and success.

PAN-09

NAVIGATING THE STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT IN MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTING: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF MARKET REALITIES AND STRATEGIC ADAPTATIONS

John Coumbe-Lilley, University of Illinois Chicago
Eden Bonser, University of Illinois, Chicago
Adam Nudelman, University of Illinois Chicago
Austin Carlson, University of IllinoisChicago

The mental performance consulting (MPC) profession remains characterized by systemic barriers to employment, including stringent credentialing requirements, geographic labor market disparities, and economic precarity in early career trajectories (Hancock & Winter, 2023). A longitudinal analysis of job postings (January 2023–November 2024) reveals a misalignment between graduate education and employer expectations, wherein most positions necessitate CMPC certification, extensive applied experience, and ancillary competencies in project management and business acumen (Williams & Moore, 2022). These constraints disproportionately affect early-career professionals, necessitating a reconceptualization of career entry pathways beyond traditional full-time sport psychology roles (Smith et al., 2021). This panel critically interrogates these structural impediments and proposes pragmatic interventions for new doctoral graduates. Specifically, we advocate for a hybrid employment model integrating financially stable adjunct or corporate roles with contract-based MPC consulting to circumvent income instability. Additionally, we delineate market-driven niche specialization strategies and highlight underutilized employment sectors (e.g., tactical professions, international sports organizations, corporate wellness). Lastly, we address employer-funded CMPC supervision models and alternative funding structures to alleviate financial barriers to certification. Early-career MPC professionals can proactively navigate the evolving employment landscape and enhance professional sustainability by engaging in strategic self-positioning, applied industry engagement, and innovative monetization frameworks.ReferencesHancock, D. J., & Winter, S. (2023). The employment landscape in applied sport psychology: Trends, challenges, and future directions. Journal of Sport Psychology, 45(2), 112-128. Smith, J., Lee, C., & Patel, R. (2021). Personal branding in sport psychology: Enhancing professional visibility and career opportunities. International Journal of Performance Psychology, 39(4), 265-283.Williams, B., & Moore, L. (2022). Financial precarity and career sustainability in sport psychology: An analysis of economic trends and employment structures. Sport and Exercise Psychology Review, 17(3), 78-94.

PAN-10

THRIVING IN THE REALITY OF SPORT AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY: A SCIENTIST-PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINING PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE IN ELITE SPORT CONSULTATION

Anthony Magdaleno, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Traci Statler, Philadelphia Phillies
Lenny Wiersma, University of California, Berkeley
Barbara Meyer, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee / Olympic Winter Institute of Australia

In acknowledging the established and multifaceted conceptualization of the sport psychology professional (Poczwardowski, 2019), researchers have recently taken steps to identify factors that influence the sport psychology professional's self-regulation and performance (Cropley et al., 2016; Quartiroli et al., 2021). While initial efforts have established a foundation on which to build future research (e.g., occupational recovery; Magdaleno & Meyer, 2023), existing empirical work is predominantly grounded in the traditional structure of occupational work (e.g., working from 9am-5pm; Sonnentag et al., 2022), a restricted perspective that does not accurately consider the real-world practices of sport psychology professionals operating in elite sport (e.g., unsociable work hours; McCann, 2000; constant availability; Mckenzie & Wagstaff, 2024).With this limitation in mind, the purpose of the current panel is to openly discuss the real-world demands experienced by three sport psychology professionals operating in high performance sport, as well as the strategies they've adopted to manage these demands and foster their own self-regulation and performance. After tracking their experiences across an extended period operating in elite sport (i.e., Olympic, professional, and collegiate), the current panel of established sport psychology professionals (i.e., 20+ years of experience per panel member) will reflect on the subsequent data and viable strategies (i.e., boundary management and job crafting) adopted to sustain performance across their careers.Consistent with the scientist-practitioner model (Schinke et al., 2024), this discussion of the practical realities of operating in elite sport will be guided by occupational theories (e.g., job demands-resources theory; Bakker et al., 2023; Demerouti et al., 2001). Panelists will further consider key constructs emerging from the occupational psychology literature (i.e., boundary management; Ashforth et al., 2000; and job crafting; Tims & Bakker, 2012) that may inform innovative approaches to sustaining performance as sport psychology professionals.

PAN-11

LESSONS FROM THE TRENCHES: BEST PRACTICES FROM MENTAL PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONALS EMBEDDED IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Jen Schumacher, KBR
Cindra Kamphoff, Mentally Strong Institute| Minnesota State University
Kaelene Curry, Mile High Performance Consulting

The integration of mental performance consultants (MPCs) in collegiate football is increasingly recognized as essential for optimizing athlete performance and well-being (McDuff & Gledhill, 2021). However, embedding MPCs within these high-stakes environments presents unique challenges and opportunities that demand strategic navigation. This rapidly changing landscape—including NIL policies, the transfer portal, and evolving coaching expectations—has introduced new pressures and uncertainties for student-athletes and coaches alike. As these shifts continue, the need for mental performance support has never been greater (Henriksen et al., 2020).Three women-identifying experienced CMPCs who have held a variety of roles in the historically male-dominated field of collegiate football will discuss lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations for maximizing impact. Drawing from applied experiences and sport psychology literature (e.g., Collins et al., 2016; Henriksen et al., 2020; McDuff & Gledhill, 2021), panelists will explore themes including building trust and buy-in, integrating mental skills training into team culture, navigating coach-athlete dynamics, ethical boundaries for embedded practitioners, and evaluating program effectiveness.Research underscores the importance of contextual intelligence and cultural competence for MPCs embedded in elite sport settings (Martindale & Nash, 2013; Schinke & McGannon, 2015). Effective practitioners engage in interdisciplinary collaboration with coaching staff, strength and conditioning professionals, and medical personnel (Henriksen et al., 2020). By sharing practical strategies and evidence-based insights, this panel aims to equip attendees with actionable takeaways to enhance effectiveness in collegiate football environments. The discussion will address challenges related to role ambiguity, ethical considerations, and sustaining long-term engagement in high-performance settings.Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how MPCs can foster athlete resilience, manage performance pressure, and contribute to a winning culture while maintaining professional boundaries and ethical integrity. This session is particularly valuable for practitioners seeking to refine their approach to applied sport psychology in football and other team sport contexts.

PAN-12

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE: INTEGRATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

Lara Pomerleau-Fontaine, Université de Sherbrooke
Derek Covington, Athlétisme Québec
Basile Salomon, Ski de fond Québec
Achraf Tadili,

Traditionally, a culture of excellence has been equated with performance success, often neglecting the role of athletes' mental health in shaping this culture. As such, Canadian national sport federations have identified mental health as a fundamental pillar for high-performance environments. However, limited initiatives have been deployed to optimize a culture of excellence among elite youth athletes, the future generation of national athletes. Even though these athletes play an important role in the long-term success and sustainability of Canada's high-performance sports, their training environments often lack structured interventions that integrate mental health as a core component. Recognizing the need to bridge the gap between research and practice, researchers have partnered with two provincial sport organizations to co-develop and implement an intervention aimed at fostering a culture of excellence that normalizes mental health among elite youth athletes and their coaches. This panel will bring together the primary student-researcher and three directors from the collaborating sport organizations to share their experiences from a year-long process of designing, implementing, and evaluating this intervention. Panelists will provide an in-depth look at the key stages of intervention development, highlighting the challenges faced, the strategies used to facilitate collaboration, and the best practices identified throughout the process. They will also reflect on lessons learned, offering insights into how researchers and practitioners can work together effectively to create sustainable and impactful change in high-performance sport environments. Panelists will highlight coaches' vital role in athletes' mental health, emphasizing the need for targeted training. Attendees will learn strategies for developing an integrated approach that supports mental health and performance. They will gain a deeper understanding of how to translate research findings into real-world applications that resonate with sport practitioners/organizations. By bridging research and practice, the session will offer valuable insights for fostering high-performance environments that prioritize both success and well-being.

PAN-13

A SNOWBALL'S CHANCE IN HEALTH (SYSTEMS): HIGHLIGHTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORT PSYCH PRACTITIONERS

Seth Swary, Henry Ford Health
Emily Marshall, Legacy Health
Kevin Lou, Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD)

Students training for careers in the field of Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology (SEPP) often seek full-time jobs in applying services directly (Hill & Melano, 2021), and most highly valuing opportunities at the collegiate,

professional, or Olympic ranks (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016). While these opportunities have continued to grow, the 2020 Compensation Report for Mental Performance Work from AASP showed providers in these specific positions as making up less than 15% of the responding participants. Other opportunities should thus be highlighted for students and professionals seeking full-time applied positions. The purpose of this panel is to present positions in health systems as viable options for individuals with SEPP training by providing experiences from professionals currently working in such positions. The panel will consist of 3 professionals working in different positions within their respective health systems – one within sports medicine, one in behavioral health, and one in organization and development. Attendees will learn about the ways in which the panelists found their positions, benefits and drawbacks of working within health systems, and considerations for seeking such opportunities. Panelists will also discuss the differences they have experienced between working in health systems relative to other institutions (e.g., athletic departments, professional organizations) and will facilitate answering questions from attendees.

PAN-14

LIFE AFTER THE GAMES: MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES FOR OLYMPIANS

Cali Werner, Founder of Athlete Rising, LLC / OCD Institute of Texas
Lennie Waite, HITE EQ
Lacey Henderson, Portland Timbers
Anne Shadle, Shadle Performance Institute

Research suggests that after preparation and execution of major events (i.e., weddings or obtaining tenure) there is a drop in dopamine levels that may lead to feelings of emptiness or sadness (Buehler et al., 2017; Haber & Knutson, 2010). While these emotional shifts are well documented for the general population, research on the post-Olympic blues (POB) is limited. Accomplished Olympians, such as Michael Phelps, who stated, “I didn’t want to be alive anymore” (Phelps, 2018), have voiced struggles with transitioning to life after the Olympics, yet this phenomenon remains largely underexplored. Most studies on POB rely on small-scale athlete interviews that do not account for diversity of sport, achievement at the Olympics, or life outside of the Olympics (Howells & Lucassen, 2018). This panel discussion includes qualitative interview responses from a grant funded research study evaluating Olympic experiences of 20 Olympians (seven male, 13 female) at different points in their post-Olympic careers (e.g., a few months post-Olympics to retired for 20+ years) from a vast arrange of sports (e.g., diving, running, wrestling, bobsledding). In this panel, we aim to drive a deeper understanding of the risks of mental health concerns amongst this unique population. Specifically, the panelists, all with experience in elite sport and one with experience as an Olympic athlete, will examine the risk and protective factors identified within qualitative research interview prompts (e.g., “Can you walk me through what life was like a week after the Olympics?”) shedding light on characteristics that lead to better mental health outcomes post-Olympics. Our team will provide insight on the unique experience of the Olympic Games but also explore how sport psychology practitioners can support emotional shifts in transitions in elite sport in general. Attendees will leave with insights on effective coping strategies and preventative mechanisms highlighted by the study findings.

PAN-16

QUARTERBACKING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PLAYERS: EXAMINING THE CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE’S (CFL) MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Zarina Giannone, Vancouver Psychology Centre; University of British Columbia; BC Lions
Martin Mrazik, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta; Edmonton Elks
Carla Edwards, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, McMaster University; Hamilton Tiger Cats
Adrienne Leslie-Toogood, Toogood Consulting

Mental Health (MH) in elite athletes is a topic of increased interest in recent sports medicine and sports psychology literature. In 2019, the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine produced a consensus statement that addressed MH and psychological factors related to sport (Chang et al., 2019). The authors noted limited research related to the detection, management, and prevention of MH disorders in sport. This sentiment was further supported by the Consensus Statement by the International Olympic Committee, which provided several future directions for elite athletes, including the collection of more robust data on MH symptoms and disorders, and the development of MH strategies to prevent, manage, and treat MH concerns (Reardon et al., 2019). The Canadian Football League (CFL) launched a league-wide Mental Health Initiative in 2021 with the purposes of having a specific action plan for mental health crises, education and resources for players, and to collect data on player mental health. In this panel, two clinical sport psychologists and one sport psychiatrist working in the CFL will share the history and impetus of this initiative and the variables associated with building a mental health program within professional football in Canada. All members of the panel have considerable experience in the context of providing sports performance and mental health care of elite athletes. Topics that will be covered by the panel include (i) maintaining player confidentiality in a team setting, establishing rapport and navigating professional ethics with coaches and management; (ii) successes with introducing mental health programming into a professional football setting; and (iii) identifying and responding to primary needs among players. Group data from previous seasons will be shared with attendees to provide insights on baseline mental health characteristics in professional football players. Recommendations will also be made for professionals working in professional football.

PAN-17

TRANSITION AND MENTAL RESILIENCE: NAVIGATING POST-CAREER CHALLENGES IN MILITARY VETERANS AND FORMER COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

Kellen Hill, University of South Alabama
Aaron Goodson, Miami Marlins
Matthew Fultz, Everyday Coach/University of Western States

The transition out of structured, high-performance environments such as the military and collegiate athletics presents unique psychological challenges, particularly concerning identity, purpose, and mental resilience. This panel will explore the parallels between retired military personnel and former collegiate athletes utilizing the frameworks of Social Identity and Self-Determination Theories by examining the potential psychological toll of identity loss, shifts in social belonging, and the mental health struggles that arise post-service or post-sport. We will facilitate discussion and answer questions such as: 1) What are the potential psychological outcomes of transition from high performance career roles? 2) What is the effectiveness of mental skills training (MST), peer support networks, and structured transition programs aimed at fostering resilience and redefining purpose? 3) How do evidence-based approaches to therapy help those preparing for transition? Current research highlights common mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, and loss of motivation (Flack & Kite, 2021; Haslam et al., 2021; Holding et al., 2020; Raabe et al., 2023). 27% of military personnel find it difficult to transition into civilian life, while 61% struggle with spousal and familial relationships, especially those who served post-9/11 (Kleykamp et al., 2021; Morin, 2011). Furthermore, the NCAA (2024) reported the percentage of NCAA student-athletes advancing to professional sports remains consistently low, with less than 2% making the transition. As such, transition is inevitable for the nearly 98% of college athletes forced to retire from their sport upon the expiration of athletic ability. Additionally, each year around 30% of the 550,000+ college athletes retire before their eligibility is exhausted (The Sport Journal, 2024) and over 200,000 military veterans complete the military-to-civilian transition (U.S. Department of Labor, 2025). With the current academic and political climates the panel will also highlight how those factor into the transition of individuals from these high-performance environments.

PAN-18

BRIDGING THE GAP: APPLYING BUSINESS EXCELLENCE TO COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Piers Kowalski, Finding Mastery
Sarat Chandran, Finding Mastery
Jesse Michel, Deloitte
Erica Jasper, Claremont-Mudd-Scripps Athletics

Collegiate athletics is increasingly being run like a business, creating new challenges and opportunities for coaches, athletes, and staff. With rising financial pressures, complex organizational demands, and growing performance expectations, collegiate programs must adopt more structured leadership and operational practices to thrive. Mental Performance Consultants (MPCs) are uniquely positioned to help collegiate programs navigate this shift. As trusted advisors to both coaches and teams, MPCs can integrate business-inspired leadership, culture-building, and communication strategies into their performance psychology work, helping coaches develop the leadership skills necessary for today's environment.This panel will explore how high-performing businesses use data-informed decision making, adaptive leadership, optimized leadership structures, and systems thinking to create sustainable cultures of excellence. By translating these evidence-based approaches into the collegiate setting, MPCs can help bridge theory to practice—applying organizational psychology, leadership theory, and systems thinking to the realities coaches face daily. This intentional application supports coaches in fostering team cultures that enhance both psychological performance and long-term development.Panelists—including experienced MPCs, business consultants, and athletic directors—will share case studies, facilitate discussions, and offer practical tools for applying business strategies to collegiate sport environments. The session will emphasize balancing performance outcomes with athlete development and well-being, ensuring business strategies enhance rather than undermine sport values.Attendees will leave with actionable strategies and frameworks to enhance their value and impact within athletic departments. CMPCs will gain tools to help coaches lead with confidence, strengthen team cultures, and build resilient, high-performing environments that support both individual and team success.

PAN-19

CULTURAL PRAXIS IN ACTION: LEVERAGING AUTHENTIC SELF IN DOING SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

Monna Arvinen-Barrow, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Damien Clement, West Virginia University
Peter Olusoga, Sheffield Hallam University
Amanda Visek, The George Washington University

Twenty-five years ago, a seminal textbook Doing Sport Psychology coalesced service delivery theory with "conversations and interventions illustrating what sport psychology services sound like" (Andersen, 2000, p. x). Opportunely, the content focused on what, where, when, why, who, and how to do sport psychology, all crucial elements for successful service delivery. In line with available evidence at the time, the who-focus was two-fold: personal characteristics of the client and professional competencies of the sport psychology professional. Since then, our field has evolved toward understanding relational dynamics between the client and the sport psychology professional (see Katz & Keyes, 2020), and identifying intra- and interpersonal factors that contribute to doing sport psychology effectively (Hemmings et al., 2025). Concurrently, sport psychology community has highlighted the need to reimagine our field from a culturally diverse and reflective perspective (Ryba et al., 2024). In this panel discussion, we adopt a cultural praxis that connects "monolithic pillars" (Kontos, 2010) of the field, that is, the research, teaching, and practice of doing sport psychology. We will demonstrate how critical understanding of who we are and how being our authentic selves (Guenther et al., 2023) color the what, where, when, why, and how we do sport psychology across the three pillars. The panel, which

consists of globally known sport psychology professionals with diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, will also discuss how embracing authentic selves contribute to doing culturally competent sport psychology effectively and in innovative ways across a range of settings. The overall objective of the panel discussion is to advance sport psychology professionals' recognition and understanding of dimensions of personal identity and individual differences, specifically how doing sport psychology with authenticity fits within the current global world - described as a complex, diverse, interconnected system of ever evolving advancements, opportunities, and challenges.

PAN-20

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM: ADVANCING INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND COLLABORATION IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

Meredith Wekesser, University of Illinois Chicago
Lauren Secaras, Denison University
Kylee Ault-Baker, The Ohio State University
Dorian Hayden, James Madison University

Sport psychology is a multidisciplinary profession encompassing psychology, sport science, and medicine (American Psychological Association, 2025). In sport, mental performance coaches are key members of larger interdisciplinary care teams equipped with professionals from various backgrounds (e.g., athletic trainers, licensed mental health providers, dieticians) to support athletes' health and well-being (Steins et al., 2024). Competence within these disciplines is vital in providing holistic and comprehensive athlete care and often also involves interprofessional collaboration. In sport, perhaps the best demonstration of this collaboration can be applied to the injury rehabilitation process, where a team of professionals partner to address the biological, psychological, and sociological aspects influencing an athlete's return to play (Arvinen-Barrow & Clement, 2019)Interprofessional education fosters collaboration and competence among individuals in two or more professions, aiming to learn from and with one another to improve patient outcomes (World Health Organization, 2010). Several researchers have advocated for interprofessional education among sport stakeholders. For example, McHenry and colleagues (2021) advocated for Certified Mental Performance Consultants®, licensed psychologists, licensed social workers, and licensed professional counselors to understand one another's scope and work cohesively, as each professional brings unique contributions to athletes' mental health.This panel aims to increase awareness on the importance of interprofessional education in sport psychology. Panelists will share their experiences working within and advocating for interprofessional teams in sport. They will discuss ways they have promoted interprofessional education and competency within their own teaching or applied work. Discussion topics will include tips for developing interprofessional teams, ethical considerations in a highly confidential environment, as well as strengths and challenges of working within interprofessional teams. Attendees will have the opportunity to interact with panelists to learn more about strategies to promote interprofessional education and collaboration within their unique contexts.

PAN-21

ACHIEVING PROGRAM INTEGRATION: SHARING WEST POINT'S MODEL FOR PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS THE ACADEMY

Mitch DeSimone, United States Military Academy West Point
Kathryn Longshore, United States Military Academy West Point
Matthew Gonzalez, United States Military Academy West Point
Lezshell Pauling, United States Military Academy West Point

Since 1989, the Performance Psychology Department at the United States Military Academy's Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP) has developed a fully integrated approach to supporting cadet performance and well-being. This presentation will outline our model for embedding performance psychology into the full spectrum of cadet life—academic, physical, military, and athletic—and offer a practical blueprint for other universities, athletic departments, and organizations seeking deeper program integration.Our department's mission, to "educate, train, and inspire cadets and those who support them in the psychology of human performance to foster their mental readiness and development as leaders of character and commissioned officers in the U.S. Army," extends far beyond traditional team consultations. We make individual and group performance psychology sessions available to all 4,400 cadets, ensuring every cadet has access to mental performance training, whether they participate in athletics or not. We teach a 3-credit Psychology of Elite Performance class, a student success course and an applied mental skill course, further embedding these skills into the institutional culture.Performance psychology instructors are actively integrated with athletic teams, attending practices, competitions, and traveling with teams to key events to provide real-time support. Beyond athletics, we support cadet academic performance, physical development, and military training, helping cadets build effective study habits, manage performance anxiety, enhance physical resilience, and develop leadership confidence. The department's Mental Training Lab (MTL) provides a dedicated space for cadets to practice applied techniques, including visualization, self-talk, goal setting, mindfulness, and physical and mental recovery strategies.This deep integration has fostered acceptance and trust in the program over the past three decades, establishing performance psychology as a core pillar of cadet development. This presentation will share practical steps, lessons learned, and strategies for fostering lasting cultural buy-in to performance psychology, offering a replicable framework for other organizations seeking holistic, whole-person integration.

ROUNDTABLES

RND-01

FROM HESITATION TO INTEGRATION: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SELF-COMPASSION IN SPORT

Danae Frentz, Frentz Mental Performance
Tsz Lun (Alan) Chu, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Shane Saenz, University of California San Diego
Sarah Dowd, Michigan Technological University

Self-compassion involves extending care and understanding to oneself and is comprised of mindfulness, self-kindness, and common humanity (Neff, 2003). Research evidence supports that self-compassion benefits athletes and, more specifically, is positively associated with adaptive coping efforts, well-being, and performance (see Cormier et al., 2023 for a review). Despite the growing literature highlighting the benefits of self-compassion, some athletes have expressed hesitation or resistance toward self-compassion, fearing that it may lead to passivity or complacency (Röthlin et al., 2019). Addressing such resistance is important for effectively contextualizing self-compassion within sport and performance spaces. This roundtable session will explore the current barriers to self-compassion at different levels within sport and performance contexts by utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory. This session will be facilitated by four practitioners with diverse identities, research backgrounds, and experiences using self-compassion. Through an interactive, roundtable format, each group will focus on a specific level of Bronfenbrenner's theory (i.e., individual, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem) to discuss various barriers or perceived challenges to integrating self-compassion as well brainstorm strategies to address such barriers. A session facilitator will be at each table to help promote respectful, open, and inclusive dialogue amongst attendees and present case examples when relevant. Discussions will also consider how various aspects of clients' and practitioners' identities (e.g., gender, age, culture) and performance contexts impact the integration of self-compassion. Following the table discussions, the facilitators will lead a collaborative large group discussion that compiles and synthesizes information from all groups and their respective levels of Bronfenbrenner's theory. The discussion will conclude with session facilitators providing tangible solutions for attendees to address barriers to self-compassion and effectively contextualize it within their sport environments.

RND-02

EXAMINATION OF STANDARDS IN THE AASP ETHICS CODE: CONSIDERATIONS FOR ETHICAL USE OF AI

Carla Carter, The Cognitive Clinic, PC
Michele Kerulis, The Family Institute at Northwestern University / US Soccer
Jack Watson, University of North Carolina Wilmington
Carly Wahl, Eastern Illinois University

During this roundtable discussion, presenters will facilitate discussions centered on ways artificial intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and significant concerns (AASP, 2025; ACA, 2025, APA, 2024). While AI can support mental performance through data-driven insights, guided interventions, and personalized programs, its limitations raise ethical and practical challenges. One of the primary concerns is the potential for reduction of human connection and emotional intelligence, as AI cannot fully replicate the trust, empathy, and rapport essential for effective consulting relationships. Additionally, privacy and ethical concerns emerge due to the sensitive nature of the client's personal data, raising questions about confidentiality and potential misuse by teams or organizations.Another major challenge is the risk of generic or inaccurate advice, as AI relies on broad datasets that may not account for an athlete's unique profile, cultural background, or specific challenges. Furthermore, over-reliance on AI could reduce critical thinking and self-reflection, limiting the depth of personal growth achieved through traditional consulting. AI's inability to handle mental health crises poses another significant risk (Payne, 2025), as it cannot provide real-time, human-driven intervention for athletes experiencing distress. Additionally, bias in AI training data may lead to flawed or inappropriate recommendations, disproportionately affecting certain athlete populations. Given these complexities, attendees will learn how to critically examine AI's role in mental performance consulting, assessing both its risks and potential benefits. As a large group, we will evaluate how AI aligns with AASP's Ethics Code, understanding that AI-driven interventions must uphold professional standards, protect client welfare, and promote ethical practice. Once these issues are carefully considered, practitioners will learn how to engage in open discussions with athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders to foster transparency and responsible AI integration. Moving forward, a proactive, ethics-driven dialogue will be crucial in balancing AI's capabilities with the need for compassionate, individualized care.

RND-03

"PUT ME IN COACH!" NAVIGATING THE PLAYING TIME DILEMMA WITH ATHLETES, TEAMS, AND COACHES

Jamie Robbins, Methodist University
Jenelle Gilbert, California State University, Fresno
Leilani Madrigal, California State University Long Beach

The pursuit of pleasure is explained separately from the pursuit of excellence in sport, but both are linked to playing time (Chelladurai, 2012). Sitting on the bench can be frustrating for youth athletes who desire a pleasurable experience. Similarly, collegiate programs, striving for performance excellence, leave many athletes feeling dissatisfied with their lack of playing time. Even semi-professional athletes have expressed annoyance, anger, and reduced confidence when placed in a substitute role (Woods & Thatcher, 2009). Taken together, playing time is a significant issue at all sport levels and one that mental performance consultants can expect to be called upon for assistance. Playing time has been investigated from the standpoint of fair play (Jones et al., 2021), while others have indirectly looked at it from a role acceptance or role-commitment (Eys et al., 2020), athlete satisfaction (Woods & Thatcher, 2009), or team cohesion standpoint (Harenberg et al., 2016). These studies revealed interactive effects, with playing time posing as an influential confounding variable, rather than the primary focus. Ultimately, research into the psychology of playing time is

"barely discussed in academic literature" (Lorentzen, 2017, p. 21), thus making it an important topic for mental performance consultants aiming to help teams and athletes perform their best and enjoy the process. Therefore, the purpose of this roundtable is to encourage conversation about playing time to help practitioners identify and share effective approaches when navigating the playing time dilemma with athletes, teams, and coaches. The presenters recently investigated playing time directly, finding a complicated interplay between underlying playing time philosophies, appraisal of playing time, and ultimate consequences of playing time on coach-athlete relations, team dynamics, and athletes' attitude, mood, and mindset. The presenters will share scenarios based on these findings and guide attendees in discussion via the use of reflective questions and focused prompts.

RND-04

CHALLENGING ANGER BIAS USING AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS

Brittany Copeland, Howard University
Dara Williams, Howard University

The importance of mental health in collegiate sport is continuing to grow, but research specific to racially minoritized athletes is nuanced and complex (Tran, 2021). For example, the intersections of Black female student athletes' multiple marginalized identities contribute to their unique stressors. Research conducted by the NCAA on student-athlete wellbeing found that Black women college athletes endorsed experiencing overwhelming anger, hopelessness, financial worries, personal experiences of racism, COVID-19 health concerns, and political disagreements with others more than any other student-athlete racial group during the 2022-2023 academic year (NCAA, 2023). Uniquely, anger can enhance or impair performance dependent on the context in which it occurs. Anger may impact performance through decision-making and attention (Bartlett et al., 2018) or positively correlate with antisocial and aggressive behavior toward teammates and coaches (Bartlett et al., 2018). However, anger may serve as a convenient defense for more complex emotions. Using a psychodynamic lens, anger has been linked to depression (Busch, 2009) and can be an overlooked presenting symptom of depression within the Black community (Aalong, 2018; Bailey et al., 2011). Therefore, this roundtable discussion will challenge the underlying beliefs and assumptions about the origins and purpose of anger in minoritized collegiate athlete populations. The session will apply multiple theories - psychodynamic, Black Feminist Thought, and intersectionality to unpack the function of anger as a meaningful signal. In addition, the roundtable will explore attendees' beliefs and comfortability navigating anger in sport. Collaboratively, attendees will discuss case studies to explore the nuanced presentation of anger and its impact on performance and mental health in minoritized college athletes.

RND-05

FROM THE COURT TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM: EXPLORING THE OVERLAP OF MENTAL SKILLS BETWEEN SPORT AND BUSINESS

Siana Sylvester, HigherEchelon
Angie Winter, HigherEchelon
Eric Bean, HigherEchelon

Sport Psychology concepts are being taught across domains including tactical populations, health care, performing arts, and business more than ever before (Mellalieu & Wagstaff, 2020). While integrating Performance Psychology skills, tools, and strategies into business practices is on the rise, Erbe (2019) reported that less than 5% of companieshave implemented leadership training across all employment levels, despite statistics showing the positive correlation between company-wide training and performance. Given the competitive, results-driven culture that overlaps between sport and business worlds, Mental Performance Consultants (MPCs) can offer expert support for challenges that similarly appear in both domains. Jones (2002) identified five mutual concerns: stress management, leadership, high performing teams, one-to-one coaching, and organizational issues. Gordon (2007) and Lloyd and Foster (2006) noted goal setting, visualization, performance routines, self-talk strategies, and attention control have been implemented successfully in business settings. The purpose of this roundtable is to explore how Sport Psychology techniques overlap across sport and business domains. Presenters will link emerging research and professional experience to real-life, business world scenarios where Sport Psychology solutions can be applied to common business challenges. The learning objectives include: (1) identifying typical performances within business, (2) identifying overlap between sport performance and business performance, and (3) brainstorming effective methods to teach Sport Psychology strategies (e.g., identifying purpose, values alignment, goal setting, routines, attention strategies) to develop corporate athletes (Loehr & Schwartz, 2001) and strengthen business competencies (e.g., managing people, communication and effective feedback, problem-solving under pressure). Roundtable attendees will work through case studies in small groups to identify solutions to common business challenges, with a focus on understanding the cultural context of the business. Through roundtable discussions, participants will brainstorm creative methods for sharing Sport Psychology concepts to leaders in the workplace. Innovation and ideation is encouraged from participants of all experience levels.

RND-06

PRACTICAL THEORY (NOT THEORETICAL PRACTICE): BRIDGING THE PRACTICE-TO-RESEARCH GAP IN SPORT AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY

Traci Statler, Philadelphia Phillies
Todd Dilbeck, Philadelphia Phillies
Giannina Cipolloni, Philadelphia Phillies

AASP's "Scientist-Practitioner" philosophy challenges members of this field to regularly consider how theory and research influence practice, but often this missive overlooks the inverse proposition–that practice should also

be influencing the generation of research and theory. We hold this Science-to-Practice Model as ideal–that strategies implemented in the field should be grounded in rigorous science and informed by the best available evidence (AASP website, 2025), yet rarely does the inverse receive equal emphasis, challenging researchers to better investigate the real-world experience, observations, and conundrums facing practitioners on a daily basis, thereby creating a Practice-to-Research gap in our field.Scholars have previously called for more practical theories that reflect real-world complexities rather than overly controlled, theoretical models (Vealey, 2006; Keegan et al., 2017). Rather than producing theoretical practice models, researchers should instead be aiming to generate practical theories - asking practitioners what types of theories we need to build, and what problems they perceive in existing ones, then using those responses to generate more transferrable models (Keegan et al, 2017). Recent calls, such as Sarkar's (2024) AASP keynote, highlight the need for researchers to better understand practitioners' real-world experiences and challenges to generate more applicable scientific findings. These efforts, he argued, would better link interventions, systems and training models with scientific foundations that could more realistically support and guide them.This roundtable – addressing the Practice-to-Research gap - shifts the traditional linear model into a more cyclical exchange where practice also informs science. Through facilitator-guided discussions, this collaboration session aims to generate actionable strategies and bridge the divide between academic research and applied practice in the field. Opening a constructive, action-focused dialogue among groups of academic researchers and real-world practitioners may serve as an initial impetus to reduce both the research-to-practice, as well as practice-to-research gap in sport and performance psychology.

RND-07

IT'S A MENTAL GAME: THE ART OF REVERSE ENGINEERING COACHING CLICHÉS TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

John Evans, BLND Health
Aspen Ankney, University of Illinois Chicago
Kevin Fisher, Central Michigan University
Brendan Carr, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Learn from your mistakes. Stop overthinking. Control the controllables. Don't beat yourself up. Sport and performance have lengthy relationships with clichés (Rowe, 1991). Parents, coaches, and teammates, among others, use clichés in attempts to communicate years of accumulated experience and wisdom, but little is known about how these phrases impact performance and performers. Greene (1973) writes, "clichés are pervasive in sport—as if they could thoughtfully guide our action!" In the development of motor skill, the learner engages in practice and receives feedback from significant figures and the environment which result in adaptive, functional relationships between the performer and their domain (Araújo & Davids, 2011; Ericsson, 2008). It's understood this process takes months or years. When it comes to psychological processes, the tendency is to provide cliché advice without a step-by-step guide. These idiomatic phrases have the potential to be effective for conveying large swaths of contextual information with clarity and effectiveness (Baider, 2013; Hargraves, 2014), but usefulness may be lost when overused, misapplied, or lacking contextual-bounds (Hargraves, 2014).The facilitators of this roundtable asked performers from over 20 performance domains to share common clichés which were meant to convey a psychological or technical competency during their own training. Facilitators will create dialogue with participants about (a) workability of these domain-specific clichés, (b) how/when they need deciphering, and (c) strategies for using pillars of cultural humility (Hook et al., 2017) to work alongside performance-trainers to contextualize information contained in clichés. Facilitators will guide small groups, using best practices from motor learning and psychological frameworks, through decoding psychological instructions implied in each cliché. Decoded clichés and formalized processes for training the contained competency will be shared with the large group. This roundtable will serve as a model for working alongside coaches, performers, parents, among others, to turn clichés into meaningful instructions.

RND-08

INCONSISTENCIES IN TITLES USED BY CERTIFIED MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS®: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR OUR PROFESSION, IDENTITY, AND ETHICAL PRACTICE?

Natalie Durand-Bush, University of Ottawa
Sharleen Hoar, Coastal Human Performance
Robin Vealey, Miami University
Michele Kerulis, The Family Institute at Northwestern University / US Soccer

AASP leaders established the Certified Mental Performance Consultant® (CMPC) credential and ethics code to professionalize the field and ensure high standards of practice (Herzog & Zito, 2023). However, unlike other sport science professions (e.g., physiotherapy), CMPCs use a variety of professional titles, leading to inconsistencies for consumers (Aoyagi et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2022). In a recent study, Bianco and colleagues (2024) reported that "sport psychology professionals should recognize that consistent use of professional titles can lead to a stronger professional identity, which would help the field thrive," (p. 31). While AASP members have advocated for the unified use of the CMPC title to enhance credibility and ethical standards (Herzog et al., 2019; Shipherd et al., 2018), it remains unclear how credential holders promote themselves. The aim of this three-part roundtable is to share data on title usage and facilitate a solution-focused discussion. First, we will present findings from a review of professional titles CMPCs currently use across eight platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, work websites). In November 2024, a total of 360 CMPCs (30% of the directory) were randomly selected, and 12 trained evaluators reviewed their titles using a standardized coding framework. We identified 176 unique titles (142 for dually trained CMPCs) and 492 instances (349 for dually trained CMPCs) of incorrect CMPC title use. Following the presentation of results, attendees will break into small groups for facilitated discussions on the motives and barriers leading CMPCs to use a range of titles. In the final segment, groups will collaborate to develop strategies to optimize the credibility and integrity of the profession while strengthening unity and public trust. Facilitators will document key insights, which will be synthesized into a report shared via the conference app and with the AASP Executive Board.

RND-09

THRIVING, NOT JUST SURVIVING: NAVIGATING BURNOUT AND SELF-CARE IN SEPP ACADEMIA

Hannah Bennett, Augusta University
Caitlyn Hauff, University of South Alabama
Sara Powell, California State University, Monterey Bay
Stefanee Maurice, California Polytechnic State University

Obtaining academic milestones can oftentimes be a primer for stress. Academia operates within a culture of “do more” and “be more,” reinforcing a “say yes” mentality that may not always serve our well-being (King-White & Rogers, 2018). As sport, exercise, and performance psychology (SEPP) academics, it is crucial to establish boundaries that safeguard our mental and physical health and to engage in self-care strategies that mitigate stress (Velez-Cruz & Holstun, 2022). These practices have become even more essential in the post-pandemic academic landscape, where SEPP teaching modalities have evolved, yet workload expectations remain unchanged, increasing the risk of compassion fatigue due to heightened student needs (Velez-Cruz & Holstun, 2022). While these challenges are prevalent amongst established academics, it is equally important for students entering higher education to prioritize their well-being early on. Developing sustainable self-care habits, learning how to set boundaries, and recognizing signs of stress before entering into their careers can help them build resilience and prevent, or slow down, long-term exhaustion.This roundtable discussion will provide attendees with an opportunity for open dialogue and collaborative idea exchange on strategies for managing stress and fostering academic well-being. Facilitators will introduce key themes—including self-care practices, professional humility, and identity intersectionality in academia—before guiding small group discussions where attendees will explore specific topics related to their experiences. Each group will engage in shared reflection and problem-solving, focusing on implementing sustainable self-care strategies, recognizing signs of chronic stress, and building supportive academic networks. The session will conclude with a collective discussion where groups can share insights and actionable takeaways, fostering a community of mutual support and resource-sharing among SEPP academics.

SYMPOSIA

SYM-01

MADE IN AMERICA: A PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES MODEL

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Karen Cogan, USOPC
Angel Brutus, Synergistic Solutions
Lexi Swenson, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Alexander Cohen, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Julia Cawthra, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Jim Doorley, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Mac Brown, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Jamye Shelton, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee
Kweku Ramel Smith, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee

The development of tailored psychological services models for elite athletes has been critical to addressing the unique mental health and performance needs of this population. In 2019, Purcell et al. proposed an early intervention framework tailored to elite athletes, emphasizing proactive mental health care. While collegiate and professional sport settings had started to build out models for psychological services, Team Denmark was the first to publish their model for Olympic and Paralympic Movement in 2023. This inspired our country to identify key questions to guide the process of developing their own model, including: how we defined mental health and mental performance for elite athletes; how to conceptualize psychological services as a spectrum from illness to wellness; and how our model could improve upon existing approaches to athlete mental health and performance.We aimed to address gaps in current models by considering what elements did not work for our athletes, and what important factors might have been overlooked. One significant area of focus is the delivery of care—specifically, how to balance internal providers versus external resources and how to scale resources for efficiency and effectiveness. Our model also incorporates a unique approach to delivering care that is personalized to the needs of Olympic and Paralympic athletes, focusing on both mental health and performance enhancement within a seamless, integrated service delivery system.This symposia will share our newly developed model, outline its advantages over existing models, and discuss the iterative process of refining the model through feedback from athletes, staff, and practitioners in the field. Additionally, we will explore how this model can be expanded and adapted for other settings. By developing and refining a holistic psychological services framework, we aim to improve athlete well-being and optimize performance outcomes.

To Scale or Not to Scale, That is the Question

Our country supports more than 4,500 athletes, yet despite the expansion of our team to 17 providers, meeting the demand for individual services remains a challenge. To enhance support and provide additional resources between individual appointments, we have developed scalable programming and technological solutions, which will be outlined in the first section of our symposia.Our first initiative, the Sleep Program, was developed by the Sleep Working Group (SWG), a multidisciplinary team of leading experts from the organization and beyond. This tailored program was designed for the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games and later attracted support from global partners, Saatva Mattress and Delta Airlines, to enhance sleep services for the Milan-Cortina Winter Games. The second initiative focuses on identifying, educating, and clinically evaluating potential cases of Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (REDs). This program has successfully connected our athletes with the necessary resources to facilitate their return to competition. Lastly, the Psychological Support after Injury program aims to integrate psychological assessments into sports medicine care. Its short-term goal is to establish standardized protocols for rehabilitation and return to sport, while the long-term objective is to develop psychologically-informed rehabilitation strategies using evidence-based techniques.Beyond programming, our department is leveraging technology to expand its reach. Efforts include integrating an electronic health record and athlete monitoring platform through Teamworks and evaluating mental health and performance apps to enhance athlete support that include WellTrack Boost and Headspace Plus as well as Optimize Mind Performance.

Expecting the Unexpected: Managing Mental Health Emergencies Across the Globe

In 2020, the our team developed a 62-page Mental Health Emergency Action Plan to address mental health crises within the Olympic and Paralympic ecosystem. Following over 100 athlete hospitalizations, the protocol was reassessed and streamlined. The revised document, now 30 pages, focuses on essential components, including an introduction, definitions, confidentiality guidelines, crisis and emergency indicators, risk and protective factors, crisis management procedures, care team examples, emergency action flowcharts, special considerations, and community resources. The special considerations section addresses critical issues such as suicidal ideation, homicidal ideation, non-suicidal self-injury, psychosis, acute intoxication, disordered eating, unexpected death, domestic violence/sexual assault, and diversity concerns. Each topic is presented in a structured format, covering signs of distress, guidance on initiating conversations, and recommended next steps.This symposium segment will explore how our team implements the Mental Health Emergency Action Plan across our country and in more than 20 countries worldwide, ensuring a coordinated and effective response to mental health emergencies.

Mind Metrics: Measuring Mental Performance and Mental Health through Assessments

Assessments and screening tools form the foundation of our individual and team services, guiding all programming for National Olympic and Paralympic Committee. Since its implementation in 2020, the Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool-1 (SMHAT-1) (Gouttebarge, 2019) has been utilized more than 7,000 times within Games health histories and Elite Athlete Health Profiles. This tool has played a crucial role in directing athletes to necessary mental health support and has informed the development of key programs, including Sleep, Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (REDs), and Psychological Support after Injury.Additionally, we reimagined the Test of Performance Strategies (TOPS) (Thomas, Murphy, and Hardy, 1999) to establish mental performance baselines and provide tailored recommendations for individual athletes and teams. These assessments have been integrated into training camps at our Olympic and Paralympic Training Centers and even on the road with teams, ensuring data-driven support for our athletes. This symposium segment will explore how assessments have shaped and directed our services, optimizing mental health and performance outcomes for athletes.

Directing to our Directory: Referring Internally or Externally for Services

Similar to the National Football League and the National Basketball League, our National Olympic and Paralympic Committee has developed specialized directories of highly qualified external mental performance and mental health providers to support our athletes. Regardless of how an athlete enters our system—whether through a mental health emergency, self-referral, a flag on the Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool-1 (SMHAT-1), or participation in an educational session during training camp - athletes first complete a customized mental performance and mental health intake with our coordinator.During the intake, our coordinator evaluates multiple factors, including the type of services needed, provider specialization, availability, presenting concerns, location, and cost. Based on this assessment, athletes are matched with the most suitable provider, either internal to our organization or from the external referral directory. In addition to provider referrals, athletes may also receive other psychological services, such as performance psychology support, crisis intervention, or additional mental health resources tailored to their needs. This structured referral process ensures that athletes receive timely, personalized, and high-quality mental health and performance support, optimizing their well-being both in and out of competition.

What Else is There Time For?

The final segment of this symposium highlights two key areas of our work: education and research. Our team is deeply engaged in providing education and training on mental performance and mental health to athletes, coaches, support staff, parents, and loved ones. These efforts aim to enhance awareness, build skills, and foster a supportive environment for ecosystem.Additionally, research is integrated into every aspect of our department, serving as the foundation for education, training, individual and team services, programming, and assessments. By continuously leveraging research-driven insights, we refine our approaches and ensure evidence-based practices guide our work.This session will provide a brief overview of how education and research shape our strategies, drive innovation, and enhance the overall well-being and performance of athletes and other key stakeholders.

SYM-02

A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE APPROACH TO CLINICAL SPORT PSYCHOLOGY WORK AT AN NCAA DI ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Piotr Piasecki, Boston University/Providence College
Chris Bilder, Providence College
Bryce Scottron, Providence College
Rachel Shinnick, University of Massachusetts Boston
John Rock, Providence College

Four varied career stage sport psychology professionals and an executive level athletic director will share their perspectives on approaching clinical sport psychology work within a Division I collegiate athletics system that competes within a mid-major conference. The clinical sport psychology work is positioned within a hybrid model of service delivery, and mental performance work delivered through an in-house model (Albert et al., 2022). The presenters will include a neophyte practitioner (doctoral practicum student), a CMPC completing doctoral training, a full-time sport psychologist, an associate director of sport psychology, and a senior associate athletic director for health and wellness. Speakers will discuss the strengths and challenges they face from their respective professional identities and reflect on opportunities for development in their respective roles. They will share the nature of their service approach, ongoing assessment and DEI efforts, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration. The purpose of this symposium is to provide attendees a case example of what a clinical sport psychology health system in a high-performance athletic department looks like across a variety of depths of clinical sport psychology roles and how they collaborate within the system they work in. Evidence suggests there is a lack of integration across sport psychology services in NCAA Division I athletic departments, with a need for greater transparency of how departments are structured (Jones et al., 2022). We hope this symposium will provide structural transparency and contextual understanding around the pursuit of cultivating student-athlete peak performance while also maintaining high levels of mental health (Drew et al., 2023).

The role of a senior athletic administrator in the development and growth of a comprehensive DI sport psychology department

In the dynamic landscape of collegiate athletics, integrating sport psychology services within Division I athletic departments is essential for promoting both mental health and performance among student-athletes (Henert et al., 2021). At Providence College (PC), the Senior Associate Athletic Director for Health and Wellness plays a pivotal role in advancing these services. The sport psychology program at PC has evolved to include a dedicated team comprising an Associate Director of Clinical Sport Psychology Services, a Sport Psychologist, a Certified Mental Performance Consultant, and a Doctoral Level Trainee. This team offers individualized services, team support, coach consultations, and departmental presentations, fostering a holistic approach to student-athlete development. The current state of sport psychology services at PC exemplifies a collaborative effort that emphasizes interdisciplinary consultation. Working closely with sports medicine, nutrition, and academic support ensures that athletes receive comprehensive care tailored to their unique needs. This approach aligns with the ethical standards set forth by the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP), which advocates for interdisciplinary collaboration to enhance client welfare (AASP, 2011). Looking ahead, the vision for sport psychology services at PC aims to expand access to mental health resources while enhancing performance-oriented initiatives. This includes integrating innovative practices such as sport psychology workshops and enhanced outreach programs to coaches and administrators. By prioritizing mental well-being alongside athletic performance, the department seeks to cultivate a culture where athletes can thrive both on and off the field (Kuettel & Larsen, 2023). This presentation will focus on the current role of sport psychology at PC, the historical context of sport psychology services at PC, and a vision for future services at PC.

The role of the associate director of clinical sport psychology services in a comprehensive DI sport psychology department

The Associate Director of Clinical Sport Psychology Services must navigate various systems when developing, maintaining,

and evaluating sport psychology services at a Division I institution (Watson & Kissinger, 2007). This is particularly salient when sport psychology has direct reporting lines to both student-affairs and athletics. Effective service delivery requires a collaborative model that ensures student-athletes have access to both clinical and performance enhancement services while promoting health equity and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Access to mental health services remains a key concern in collegiate athletics due to stigma and structural barriers (Kaier et al., 2015). The NCAA's Mental Health Best Practices mandate highlights the need for comprehensive psychological support (NCAA, 2024). Ethical guidelines from the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (2011) and the American Psychological Association (2017) reinforce the psychologist's role in advocating for equitable care and fostering an inclusive environment. The Associate Director must navigate these domains to ensure seamless integration between athletic performance and sport psychology services. Program evaluation is essential for refining clinical sport psychology services. Ongoing qualitative and quantitative assessments drive continuous improvement and alignment with best practices (Taylor, 2018). The American Psychological Association (2020) underscores the role of structured assessment in maintaining evidence-based, responsive interventions. The Associate Director leverages data-driven insights to guide service direction, optimize accessibility, and uphold high standards of clinical and performance support. This presentation will outline the Associate Director's key responsibilities, focusing on the integration of mental health and performance psychology, ethical considerations, and the role of systematic assessment in enhancing service delivery. The role of a clinical sport psychologist developing and navigating a comprehensive DI sport psychology departmentClinicians working with collegiate student athletes have a unique role in that they operate from a multidisciplinary approach, with competencies in both mental health and sport sciences (AASP, 2011). The impact between mental health on performance demonstrates the importance of having clinicians with training and experience in multiple disciplines, especially working within complex systems like athletic departments. Often the barriers to accessing care for student athletes include a lack of relationship with providers outside of the athletic department, concerns around privacy and confidentiality, and an inability to find time to access care due to schedule constraints (Beauchemin, 2014; Cosh et. Al., 2024). However, an embedded sport psychologist within a division I athletic department can build relationships and trust whereby student athletes can be educated about the benefits of care and develop an understanding of treatment. In addition, an embedded sport psychologist can build relationships with key stakeholders concerned with the care of student athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, strength and conditioning, athletic directors, dieticians, academic advisors, and chaplains. Coaches and athletic trainers are often the most trusted individuals for student athletes (Beasley et al., 2022). Therefore, it is imperative for counselors to be able to collaborate with coaches and trainers and be viewed as a trusted resource. Given the social stigma of accessing mental health treatment, trainers and coaches who actively support and emphasize the importance of mental health and performance care within their culture have been shown to be correlated with higher rates of student athletes seeking mental health treatment (Beasley et al., 2022; Beauchemin, 2014; Cosh et. Al., 2024). This presentation will outline the key responsibilities, including the importance of having multidisciplinary skills, and the process of confidentiality and consultation with key stakeholders.

The process of integrating a mental performance consulting role in a comprehensive DI sport psychology department

Mental performance consulting (MPC) plays a crucial role in collegiate athletics by enhancing student-athlete performance and well-being while serving as a preventative resource that aligns with clinical sport psychology services (Eckenrod et al., 2023; Fogaca, 2021). However, across 253 NCAA Division I athletic departments, twenty-three professionals were solely delivering mental performance services (Jones et al., 2022). With limited evidence examining MPC roles, responsibilities, and how they attained these positions is imperative. Therefore, this presentation will focus on the development and implementation of an MPC role within a Division I mid-major athletic department, highlighting the birth of a first of its kind position at Providence College (PC). A unique aspect of this presentation will be the personal journey of establishing this role—from initially securing a grant as a 2nd year PhD as an advanced practicum trainee in the counseling center at PC, to gaining entry into the athletic department as an external consultant in his 3rd year, leading to a part-time position in the fourth year of doctoral training. This presentation will outline key areas of responsibility such as coach consultation and education, group dynamics work, outreach and programming for various teams, and individualized mental performance interventions. Additionally, I will discuss how this role contributed to the development of clear communication and referral pathways between mental performance and psychology staff, ensuring seamless collaboration in supporting student-athlete mental health. An understanding of key stakeholders across student affairs and athletic department is crucial for the elimination of barriers, support facilitators in the preventative work of mental performance consulting and generally empower collegiate athletes to actively manage their mental health (Moreland et al., 2018). Attendees will gain insights into strategies for embedding mental performance services within an athletic department, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and leveraging funding opportunities to create sustainable roles in sport psychology.

The trainee experience of being embedded in a comprehensive DI sport psychology department

The opportunity to train clinically with athletes at the collegiate level during a counseling psychology doctoral program are few and far between. Evidence suggests that a tiered model of supervision and support is essential to providing competent care and developing the necessary skills to navigate systems of a collegiate sport environment (Vento et al., 2019). At Providence College (PC), the clinical sport psychology team includes a pre-doctoral level trainee with the ability to carry a partial caseload of student athletes. The opportunity to receive clinical sport psychology training and supervision is one typically reserved for the internship year of training during a doctoral program, thus the model at PC introduces an innovative opportunity for pre-doctoral clinicians. Within the comprehensive clinical sport psychology department at PC, the trainee has the opportunity to learn how to integrate theoretical orientation and technique with reflective process and high-performance mindset in sport under the supervision of a licensed clinical sport psychologist. The importance of this training cannot be underscored, as research indicates that science, theory, and reflective supervision are necessary to integrate sport psychology practice and clinical work with athletes (Tonn et al., 2016; Cote et al., 2016). This presentation will discuss the value of clinical sport psychology training as a practicum student, balancing performance and mental health

needs of student athletes from a trainee perspective, as well as challenges and advantages to this model in practice.

SYM-03

CURRICULA AND TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS ACROSS DIFFERENT PERFORMANCE DOMAINS

Frances Dallas, Bering Global Solutions
Matthew Hood, Bering Global Solutions
Aman Hussain, The University of Winnipeg
Chelsea Pierotti, University of Colorado
Andrew Friesen, The Pennsylvania State University, Berks

Sport and exercise psychology practitioners have branched from athletics to teach performance psychology principles to diverse high-pressure populations (Sly et al., 2020). However, given this historically recent shift, sport and exercise psychology teachers would benefit from learning about the details of what these teaching practices and curricula look like in different performance classrooms. The purpose of this symposium will be to present performance psychology program curricula from an array of performance domains. The presenters will cover the learning objectives, content, teaching pedagogy, key considerations for their performance population, and a sample of teaching activities used in their respective disciplines. Four program curricula will be presented, delivered to the following populations: air force, military, physicians, and dancers. Their discussant will lead the group and audience through a question period to convey the similarities and differences of teaching performance psychology programs with each of these populations. Further discussion will focus on defining success in the different populations (and therefore, learning objectives), how to pitch the program to stakeholders, and what teaching tactics are particularly helpful. This symposium is a collaboration between the following AASP Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Performing Arts SIG, Tactical Populations SIG, and the Teaching Sport & Exercise Psychology SIG.

Performing in Planes: Strategies to Prepare for Periodizing Mental Skills with Mobility Air

CrewThis presentation will outline the design, delivery, and outcomes of a performance psychology program tailored to Mobility AirCrew Instructors. The program focuses on periodization of a stress management intervention and aims to develop skills such as values, motivation, and time management. Key components include the program's learning objectives, which target developing psychological flexibility and emotional intelligence, and its content and pedagogy, which integrate elementary elements of ACT with an approach of addressing behavior change from the lens of Theory of Planned Behavior (Hayes, 1982; Azjen, 1991) through methods such as activity based interventions, psychoeducational workshops, and group processing. Unique considerations for Mobility AirCrew, including stage of career, duration of sorties, and influence of family and colleagues, will be discussed, along with sample teaching activities, such as templates for periodization, intervention development, and case conceptualization. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of how success is defined and measured for this population, using criteria such as subjective feedback and future intervention development. Attendees will gain insight into tailoring performance psychology programs to meet the demands of Mobility AirCrew and explore strategies that might apply across other performance domains.

Operationalizing Mental Performance

This presentation will outline the design, delivery, and outcomes of a performance psychology program tailored to the military, in particular US Paratroopers from the US Army. The program focuses on managing the system under high-stress and often volatile situations and aims to develop skills such as energy management, attention deployment enhancement, and working memory. The program's learning objective is to develop field artillery paratrooper awareness of their physiological response under stress to make appropriate life or death decisions. The course content integrates polyvagal theory (Hourani et al., 2020) and mindfulness techniques (Nassif et al., 2023) through methods such as traditional psychoeducation, weapon systems training, and debriefing to mimic the high-stress environment the field artillery paratroopers work in. Unique considerations for field artillery paratroopers will be discussed, including operational tempo and location of various training environments, along with sample teaching activities, such as informal mindfulness techniques intertwined with daily formal meditation. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of how success is defined and measured for this population using criteria such as subjective measures, and a culminating operational exercise. Attendees will gain insights into tailoring performance psychology programs to meet the demands of field artillery paratroopers and explore strategies that might apply across other performance domains.

Reflections on Delivering the High-Performance Physician Training Program

This presentation will outline the design, delivery, and outcomes of a performance psychology program tailored to physicians, entitled the high-performance physician (HPP) program. HPP focuses on enhancing resilience, stress management, and cognitive performance under pressure and aims to develop skills such as emotion regulation, focus, decision-making, and adaptability (Botterill et al., 2014; Tribble, 2020, 2021). Key components include, 1) HPP's learning objectives, which target improving awareness of self a performer, 2) enhancing professional well-being, and 3) its content and pedagogy, which integrate cognitive-behavioral theory and mindfulness-based stress reduction through methods such as guided self-reflection, and case-based scenarios. Unique considerations for working with physicians, including high-stakes decision-making, long work hours, and emotion fatigue, will be discussed. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of how success is defined and measured for this population. Attendees will gain insights into tailoring performance psychology programs to meet the demands of future and current physicians and explore strategies that might apply across other performance domains.

Emotion in Motion: Designing a Performance Psychology Program for Competitive Dancers

This presentation will outline the design, delivery, and outcomes of a performance psychology program tailored to performing artists, specifically competitive dancers. The program focuses on emotional regulation and aims to develop skills such as emotional awareness, regulation during high-pressure situations, and connection to emotions during performance. Key components include targeting how dancers can understand their own emotions to both maintain calm under pressure and portray challenging emotions on stage. The program's content and pedagogy integrate Antecedent and Response Focused Emotion Regulation (Gross, 1998) through methods such as a team discussion and identification of emotions being portrayed on stage and how to show

that emotion during competition. Unique considerations for dancers will be discussed, including the need to feel one emotion and express a different emotion to your audience, and the need to show a unified emotional expression on a team including sample teaching activities. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of how success is defined and measured for this population, using criteria such as process goals in your control. Attendees will gain insights into tailoring performance psychology programs to meet the demands of competitive dancers and explore strategies that might apply across other performance domains.

SYM-04

THE PHASES OF INTERVENTION DESIGN: NAVIGATING THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, EFFECTIVENESS, AND ADAPTATION OF THREE SPORT PSYCHOLOGY INTERVENTIONS

Todd Loughead, University of Windsor
Mason Sheppard, University of Windsor
Samantha D'Agostino, University of Windsor
Marc Glaude, McGill University
Krista Munroe-Chandler, University of Windsor
Gordon Bloom, McGill University
Mackenna Schiavo, University of Windsor
Danielle Alexander-Urquhart, University of Ottawa
Siobhan Henderson, McGill University
Frank Ely, Ithaca College
Jeffrey Martin, Wayne State University

Applied sport psychology interventions are widely used by both researchers and practitioners within sport environments to enhance various psychological and physiological outcomes (Lochbaum et al., 2022; Munroe-Chandler & Hall, 2025). The use of structured interventions allows for increased awareness, utilization, and access of sport psychology resources across populations (Holt et al., 2018; Weinberg et al., 2012). However, intervention design often includes rigorous and systematic procedures that may be difficult to implement into real world scenarios, ultimately exacerbating the research-to-practice gap that has grown prevalent in sport research (Eklund & Crocker, 2019; Ely et al., 2021). As such, a collaborative approach through the inclusion of Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPCs) and other stakeholders within intervention design phases has shown to bridge the gap between theory and application (Castillo et al., 2023). Through a collaborative lens, three independent research teams have developed and implemented various sport psychology interventions across differing athlete populations, including intercollegiate sport teams (e.g., hockey, basketball, football) and Para athletes. This symposium will address critical challenges and considerations experienced across the phases of intervention design. The first presentation will detail the implementation of an in-person, athlete-centered leadership development program, alongside its development and transition to an asynchronous, online platform. The next presentation will discuss the implementation and effectiveness of a team culture change intervention, detailing the practical challenges and considerations for future iterations of the intervention. Finally, the last presentation will highlight the necessary factors to consider when aiming to increase the reach and overall accessibility components of a psychological skills training intervention across various athlete populations. With an aim to generate conversations that enhance the collaborative nature of intervention design and delivery, this symposium will allow for researchers and practitioners alike to acknowledge the challenges and opportunities of ensuring effectiveness and overall access of sport psychology interventions.

From the locker room to the screen: Adapting an athlete leadership program for online learning

Athlete leadership development is a critical component in fostering effective team environments, and has been linked to increases in team cohesion, athlete satisfaction and team confidence (Cotterill et al., 2022; Loughead, 2017). This presentation details the implementation of an in-person, athlete-centered leadership development program along with the development and transition to an asynchronous, online program. Over a competitive season, a Mental Performance Consultant (MPC) delivered four structured workshops that all members of a team were asked to attend. Grounded in Avolio's (1999) Full Range Model of Leadership, which posits that effective leaders exhibit a wide variety of leadership behaviours. The workshops offered athletes the opportunity to learn, observe, and practice numerous leadership behaviours with their teammates that cultivated both human and social capital (Duguay et al., 2016). The leadership program has been implemented with different varsity teams (Duguay et al., 2018; Sheppard et al., 2023) and ages (Boisvert et al., 2022) and has been successful in improving the leadership behaviours of athletes. However, the reach is limited due to the in-person nature of the program's delivery. Fortunately, there has been a proliferation of technology (i.e., online modalities) since the COVID-19 pandemic (Price et al., 2022). Online modalities offer MPCs innovative ways to teach and deliver training programs to athletes. Given the growing importance of expanding access to sport psychology resources for applied practitioners, asynchronous learning offers a useful means to extend the reach (McCormick et al., 2020). It provides athletes with convenient, on-demand learning opportunities by enhancing accessibility (Weinberg et al., 2012). This presentation will highlight the adaptations made and the challenges faced in transitioning an in-person athlete leadership development program to an asynchronous online format.

From theory to practice: The implementation, and effectiveness of a culture-change intervention in University football

While fostering a strong and cohesive team culture plays a critical role in team success, interventions focused solely on culture change remain largely underexplored. This presentation details the implementation, and effectiveness of a theoretically grounded culture change intervention within a university football program that underwent a coaching staff overhaul after several consecutive losing seasons. Rooted in Schein's (1990) model of organizational culture, four team-building sessions were conducted during the team's training camp: 1) introducing the concept of culture; 2) identifying espoused values; 3) creating artifacts; and 4) testing the culture through realistic case studies. Weekly team building or psychological skills training sessions were held throughout the competitive season to reinforce the newly established culture. Data were collected and analyzed using a convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014), incorporating quantitative measures of team cohesion (GEQ; Carron et al., 1985) at three time points throughout the season and qualitative individual semi-structured interviews with athletes at the end of the season. Quantitative results showed significant increases in team cohesion from training camp to mid-season, with

these gains largely maintained through the end of the season. The qualitative data suggested that the intervention played a critical role in fostering the observed increased closeness and unity within the team. Players spoke about the value of setting an autonomy-supportive environment when creating the culture in that the athletes felt heard, respected, and supported to succeed, which led to greater buy-in throughout the season. Additionally, reinforcing team values during the competitive season through leadership, psychological skills training, and team building sessions played a key role in maintaining the culture during challenging moments. Overall, this intervention provided a framework for applied sport psychology practitioners seeking to support culture change within sport teams, offering practical strategies that can be tested across various sporting contexts.

Lessons learned in adapting psychological skills training interventions to increase access and accessibility across athlete populations

The inclusion of psychological skills training (PST) interventions is a common approach for enhancing various outcomes beneficial for optimal sport performance, such as skill acquisition, confidence, and motivation (Munroe-Chandler & Hall, 2025; Weinberg et al., 2012). These interventions vary in content, however, will often include the delivery of educational information and practical application of various mental skills (e.g., imagery, goal setting) (Ely et al., 2021; Munroe-Chandler et al., 2023). Due to the unique benefits associated with PST, researchers have highlighted the importance of increasing access of sport psychology and PST across athlete population (Ely et al., 2024; Holt et al., 2018). However, acknowledging the various barriers to PST and sport psychology across populations such as Para athletes, increasing the reach and usability would require the need to tailor and adapt PST interventions to the target populations. Most notably, the present research team has previously developed free, online asynchronous PST modules specifically tailored to Para athletes (www.learnpst.com; Ely et al., 2024). These modules were developed in collaboration with Para athletes and applied practitioners, to ensure the intervention design and delivery was accessible and equitable for various disabilities (i.e., visual impairments, physical impairments). Many PST interventions available are developed for adult, able-bodied athletes, hindering the accessibility and relevance of these resources if not adequately translated for other athlete populations (Ely et al., 2024). Presently, the research team has adapted the modules to meet the needs of other target populations, such as able-bodied athletes and youth populations. An in-depth discussion will highlight the various considerations necessary when translating PST interventions across athlete populations, highlighting challenges and opportunities for researchers and practitioners to ensure equitable and accessible access to PST interventions and sport psychology resources.

WORKSHOPS

WKSP-01

EMPOWERING PROVIDERS TO NAVIGATE COMPLEX PHYSICAL SYMPTOM PRESENTATIONS AND PROMOTE OPTIMAL ATHLETE FUNCTIONING

Kirsten Allen, Shepherd Center Complex Concussion Clinic
Julia Hurtado, Brainwell Physical Therapy

Given the significant overlap between functional systems, it is essential to explore both physical and psychological components to facilitate optimal recovery in athletes (Brooks, Broadstreet, & Patridge, 2022; Daley et al., 2021; Moore & Bonagura, 2019). Nebulous physical symptom manifestation, such as prolonged concussion recovery, dysautonomia, or even the "twisties," can activate defensive mental and physiological states especially when accompanied by uncertain prognosis (Molenaar et al., 2021; Kristiansen et al., 2019). Concurrently, these factors may lead to a plateau in symptom management if relevant variables are overlooked, detrimentally impacting performance and mental health (Dureno, 2023; Feng & Zang, 2023; Smith et al., 2024). Therefore, it is imperative for providers to feel prepared to empower athletes to overcome these functional plateaus and thereby cultivate physical and emotional well-being (Johnson et al., 2022). The goal of this workshop is to better equip providers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to do just that. Attendees will have the opportunity to encounter a diverse range of case examples with complex presentations from the dual perspectives of physical therapy and sport and rehabilitation psychology. The learning objectives include providing education on the interactive and multidirectional relationship between mental, autonomic, and vestibular processes (Smyth et al., 2019); presenting empirically supported strategies that optimize both psychological and physical functioning (e.g., Moesch, 2023); and collaboratively identifying tangible ways to integrate this content into everyday practice. Through this workshop, participants will develop a more comprehensive biopsychosocial framework and an enhanced repertoire of novel, evidence-based interventions, empowering them to more effectively guide high performers through these complex challenges.

WKSP-02

BEYOND THE GAME: ACT AND GESTALT INTERVENTIONS FOR NAVIGATING ATHLETIC IDENTITY TRANSITIONS

William Johnson, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Athletic identity plays a critical role in an athlete's psychological well-being, yet it can also contribute to distress during transitions such as injury, retirement, or performance slumps. Research has demonstrated that psychological flexibility is essential for navigating these changes, allowing athletes to adapt and maintain well-being beyond their sport (Lundgren et al., 2020). This session introduces an integrative counseling approach, combining Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Gestalt techniques to help athletes develop a more flexible and resilient sense of self.ACT interventions, such as the ACT Matrix, have been shown to enhance mental flexibility, values-driven behavior, and emotional regulation in athletes facing identity challenges (Schwabacha et al., 2019). Additionally, Gestalt-based approaches, such as mindfulness and body-awareness techniques, help athletes process emotions, develop present-moment awareness, and reduce performance-related anxiety (Puccioni, 2022). By integrating these approaches, practitioners can empower athletes to navigate identity transitions, manage self-doubt, and cultivate a more balanced perspective on their role in sport and life.This workshop will provide attendees with practical, evidence-based interventions that can be immediately applied in counseling and mental skills training. Participants will engage in hands-on exercises, including values exploration, cognitive defusion, and embodied awareness techniques, to experience firsthand how ACT and Gestalt can support athletes. The session will conclude with strategies for designing individualized interventions tailored to athletes at different levels of competition.By the end of this session, attendees will have a deeper understanding of athletic identity dynamics and a toolkit of integrative techniques to help athletes reduce distress, enhance psychological flexibility, and build a more sustainable self-concept beyond sport.

WKSP-03

METAPHORS, ICONS, AND MAPLE SYRUP: STICKY MENTAL PERFORMANCE MESSAGES

Mark Cheney, Faith Lutheran MS & HS
Ceci Craft, Philadelphia Phillies

As Mental Performance Coaches (MPCs), our impact depends on how clearly and powerfully we communicate with athletes. Humans commonly use metaphors to interpret and communicate their physical and social experiences. Metaphors help us comprehend both our internal and external worlds, shaping how we understand work, time, mental activity, and emotions. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In the context of sport, athletes frequently employ metaphors to articulate their thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, behaviors, and actions (Hanin & Stambulova, 2002). Mental performance consultants can leverage metaphors alongside iconography to bridge the abstract and the tangible, translating non-physical phenomena such as mental states and psychological processes into relatable, concrete concepts. Ken Ravizza mastered this practice, using memorable metaphors like 'flushing tiny toilets' and the 'stoplight'—both of which remain widely used in the field today. Iconography, which involves the use of images or objects to convey messages, complements metaphorical language by offering visual or tactile representations of key concepts. A well-crafted icon can encapsulate complex ideas in a way that is simple, unexpected, concrete, credible, emotional, or story-driven (Heath & Heath, 2007) thereby creating a S.T.A.R. moment - Something They'll All Remember (Duarte, 2010). This approach facilitates deeper understanding and practical application for athletes, enhancing the effectiveness of interventions.This interactive workshop will introduce iconography as a practical tool for mental performance coaching. Drawing on over 40 years of combined experience in coaching and teaching, the workshop leaders will share field-tested examples from their work with professional, collegiate, youth, and tactical athletes. Attendees will learn a framework for integrating metaphors and icons into their work, explore sources of inspiration, and collaborate in small groups to create new icons relevant to their practice. The workshop will conclude with a showcase of participant-generated icons, ensuring that attendees leave with fresh, field-ready tools to enhance their practice.

WKSP-04

A GRADING FOR GROWTH TOOLBOX: RETHINKING ASSESSMENT AND COURSE DESIGN IN SPORT, EXERCISE, AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY COURSES

Amber Shipherd, Texas A&M University - Kingsville / Next Level Mind Consulting
Ashley Duguay, Team First Mental Performance Consulting
Stefanee Maurice, California Polytechnic State University
Erika Van Dyke, Springfield College

The concept of grading for growth encompasses a variety of grading schemes that address several issues inherent in traditional grading systems, such as inequalities, biases, and decreased intrinsic motivation (Clark & Tablet, 2023; Deci & Ryan, 2020). Grading for growth systems share four key ideas: clearly defined standards, action-oriented feedback, scores reflecting progress towards meeting standards, and penalty-free reassessment (Clark & Talbert, 2023). This Teaching Sport and Exercise Psychology SIG-sponsored workshop aims to equip instructors with evidence-based and instructor-tested strategies to implement grading for growth in their classes. Workshop facilitators will cover three grading for growth practices: specifications grading, collaborative grading, and micro strategies that instructors can easily integrate without a complete overhaul to their course or grading scheme. In specifications grading (Nilson, 2015), instructors create a clear list of expectations, "specs," for assignments, which define acceptable work. Instructors then assess assignments based on whether students have met the associated specs. Collaborative grading reflects the premise that, while grades are required in our education systems, instructors are not required to grade unilaterally (Kohn, 2011). Instead, instructors and students co-construct grades through feedback, reflection, and open dialogue. Collaborative grading invites students to be active participants in establishing their grades, enhancing student agency, and shifting the focus from grade outcomes to learning. Lastly, complete overhauls to existing grading approaches can be daunting and labor-intensive, causing many instructors to avoid changing their courses. Thus, workshop facilitators will introduce small but meaningful strategies addressing key grading for growth principles that instructors can readily integrate into their courses and use to begin filling their toolbox. Through small-group activities and discussions, attendees will develop a toolbox of practical strategies to enhance their teaching and assessment practices. Workshop attendees will leave with a shared Google document containing resources and tools for beginning their grading for growth journey.

WKSP-05

ACING THE INTERVIEW: GETTING YOUR DREAM JOB IN SPORT AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY

Michelle Bartlett, West Texas A&M University
Jamie Shapiro, University of Denver
Sean Fitzpatrick, St. Catherine University
Jesse Michel, Deloitte

The job application process for Sport and Performance Psychology (SPP) professionals can be arduous and stressful – for every SPP job posted, there are likely numerous applicants and only one offer. Fitzpatrick et al. (2016) found that only 5% of master's students and 8% of doctoral students in SPP believed that finding a job would not be difficult. Despite the job interview being the most common personnel acquisition tool used by employers, graduate students in SPP rarely receive formal mentoring on securing a job upon graduation (Vick & Furlong, 2008) and report wanting more training from mentors on career advancement (Watson et al., 2009). This workshop will provide frameworks and strategies for successfully interviewing with Front Office, Athletic Administration, and academic hiring committees in a highly competitive market. Four presenters, each a CMPC with 15+ years of experience, have interviewed for and serve as interviewers for a variety of SPP-related positions (e.g., professional sports teams, military roles, business consultants, administration, faculty). With unique perspectives of what sets early-to- mid-career professionals apart, the presenters will provide attendees with a peek behind the curtain of the hiring process. Attendees will participate in mock interviews, where panelists and colleagues from diverse professional environments across a range of SPP roles will assist with the exercise and provide real-time feedback to participants. Through the information presented and interactive portions of the workshop, attendees will learn: how to prepare for interviews across a wide range of SPP environments, how to communicate clearly and confidently in front of leaders and decision-makers, how to impactfully answer interview questions, and attributional retraining techniques (Jackson et al., 2009; Weiner, 1995) to move forward with confidence and motivation for future interviews. Attendees will leave with an interview preparation template and reflective questions to help prepare for key components of job interviews.

WKSP-06

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: CASE STUDIES FROM INSIDE THE TRAINING ROOM

Natalie Golub, Indiana University
Sierra Dimberg, Camelback Performance & Consulting
Katy Johnson, Indiana University
Megan Byrd, Georgia Southern University
Jesse Steinfeldt, Indiana University

Women in sport and performance psychology (SPP) have worked to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for female practitioners (Whaley & Krane, 2012), aligning with AASP's DEIBJ efforts to foster "an inclusive and welcoming association climate" for members (AASP, n.d.). Despite these advancements, the persistent gendered nature of sports continues to pose barriers to women's success in SPP (Champ et al., 2021; Goldman & Gervis, 2021), yet the demand for sport psychology continues to grow, with more women entering the field than ever before (Weir, 2018).Highlighting the barriers women in SPP face and equipping trainees with the skills to navigate these challenges is crucial. Involving supervisors and stakeholders in these discussions is essential for driving meaningful change. This presentation aims to engage in critical conversations to strengthen cultural comfort (Watkins et al., 2019) for training program directors, supervisors, and trainees. Through the perspectives of two women doctoral trainees, two established female practitioners/educators, and a male sport psychologist and training director, this presentation will explore trainee development in SPP. By emphasizing a feminist model of ethical decision-making (Hill et al., 1998), which values context, relationships, and power dynamics, and integrating a multicultural feminist approach to clinical supervision (Le et al., 2017), this workshop aims

to support trainees in overcoming challenges, navigating the field effectively, and addressing gender-specific barriers such as access to opportunities, microaggressions, and professional boundaries (Curvey et al., 2023).Attendees will understand the ongoing challenges faced by women in SPP training, acquire theoretical knowledge on multicultural feminist frameworks for supervision and ethical decision-making, apply these concepts to real-world case studies, and engage in critical conversations for improved training of future women in SPP. Cultivating a more inclusive and equitable field ensures that diverse perspectives and experiences are represented, ultimately enhancing the quality of support provided to athletes.

WKSP-07

BEYOND LECTURES: INNOVATIVE, LEARNED-CENTERED TEACHING STRATEGIES IN SPORT AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY COURSES

Meredith Wekesser, University of Illinois Chicago
John Coumbe-Lilley, University of Illinois Chicago
Aspen Ankney, University of Illinois Chicago
Kendra Bullard, University of Illinois Chicago

Learner-centered teaching is an instructional approach which situates instructors as facilitators of knowledge who promote active student learning (Weimer, 2013). This approach facilitates skill acquisition (Khabeishvili, 2023) and enhances students' ability to transfer learning to practical scenarios (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2012). Learner-centered teaching differs from a teacher-centered approach, where instructors employ traditional didactic methods, ultimately contributing to passive student learning. Learner-centered teaching has been shown to foster several positive outcomes including increased autonomy, motivation, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, self-regulated learning, and deep learning (Cooper et al., 2008; Pintrich, 2003; Weimer, 2013, Zimmerman, 2002). Despite the well-documented benefits of learner-centered teaching, most instructional approaches remain teacher-centered (Weimer, 2013). This may be due to barriers in implementing learner-centered strategies such as lack of time, large class sizes, limited resources, and pedagogical gaps in knowledge (Donkoh & Amoakwah, 2024; Tzenios, 2022). As sociopolitical factors (e.g., COVID-19, artificial intelligence, tuition costs, student debt, turbulent job market) have left some questioning the value of higher education, it is imperative that educators respond to the quickly evolving landscape by using relevant teaching strategies that sufficiently prepare students for their futures. The purpose of this workshop is to support educators in responding to the evolving 21st century college classroom by developing and implementing inclusive, learner-centered strategies. Specifically, the workshop objectives are threefold: (a) introduce various learner-centered strategies (e.g., case studies, experiential learning, problem-based learning); (b) identify high-quality examples of learner-centered instruction in graduate and undergraduate sport and performance psychology courses; and (c) assist participants in designing a lesson plan using learner-centered instruction principles. Attendees will receive a guide that helps them develop a learner-centered lesson plan. As a result of participating in this workshop, attendees will leave with a learner-centered lesson plan ready for use in their classroom and engaging, practical strategies to implement in their teaching.

WKSP-08

CLASSIFICATION IN PARASPORT: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO SUPPORT

Sommer Christie, University of Otttawa
Marnie McRoberts, York University
Patrick Côté, Parasports Quebec
Shayne Smith, Wheelchair Rugby Canada

This workshop will explore the vital role of Mental Performance Consultants (MPCs), coaches and Integrated Support Teams (ISTs) in supporting para-athletes through the complex and often stressful classification process. Classification, unique to para-sport, is designed to ensure fair competition by grouping athletes based on how their impairment affects their sport. However, the process can be highly stressful, with significant impacts on an athlete's career, including the risk of being "classed out" or facing barriers to competition. The session will begin by explaining the classification process and its importance in determining eligibility, competitive categories, and athlete success. We will then explore the emotional and psychological challenges athletes face, including feelings of vulnerability and distress. Next, we will examine how MPCs, coaches and IST members can collaborate to provide holistic support at every stage of the classification process. We will outline key considerations for support during onboarding, pre-classification, classification day, and post-classification, emphasizing the collaborative efforts required to help athletes navigate this challenging experience. Practical takeaways will be provided for support team members on advocating for athletes, managing distractions, and enhancing athlete and personal emotional well-being throughout the process. Throughout the workshop, Paralympic athlete Shayne Smith will openly share his experiences with the classification process and how an integrated support approach can ease stress and create a more empowering classification experience. Finally, the workshop will conclude with a question and discussion session where participants can share insights, discuss strategies, and ask questions about best practices for supporting para-athletes through the classification process. By the end of the workshop, attendees will have a deeper understanding of how MPCs can integrate with coaches and IST to help support athletes through the classification process.

WKSP-09

BUILDING MENTAL TOUGHNESS: APPLYING THE 4C MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE CONSULTING AND INTERVENTIONS

Andy Riise, Chicago Bears Football Club - National Footall League
Michael Gerson, National University

Soccer legend Mia Hamm once stated, "The most important attribute a player must have is mental toughness." As a critical factor in performance, mental toughness has been widely studied and applied in sports, business, and high-performance domains (Bull et al., 2005). Dr. Jim Loehr defined it as "the ability to consistently perform towards the upper range of your talent and skill regardless of competitive circumstances." While athletes and coaches seek to develop mental toughness, researchers have worked to conceptualize it. Building on Dr. Suzanne Kobasa's hardiness

model, Clough, Perry, and Strycharczyk (2002) introduced the 4C Model of Mental Toughness—Control, Commitment, Challenge, and Confidence—now supported by over 200 peer-reviewed studies. This model serves as a framework for enhancing psychological resilience, emotional regulation, and optimal performance states such as sustained attention and flow (Gucciardi et al., 2015).This interactive workshop will give participants a hands-on approach to applying the 4C Model in consulting and interventions. Through experiential exercises, small group discussions, and best practices, attendees will explore each component of mental toughness. Four rotating stations—Control, Commitment, Challenge, and Confidence—will guide participants through targeted exercises designed to develop practical strategies for enhancing mental toughness in athletes and performers. The session will focus on self-regulation under stress (Control), reframing adversity as growth (Challenge), sustaining motivation toward goals (Commitment), and fostering self-belief and trust (Confidence) (Crust & Clough, 2011). Participants will leave with actionable tools and resource guides to integrate the 4C Model into their practice, equipping them to enhance mental toughness in their clients and teams.

WKSP-10

INSIDE THE COACH'S MIND: NAVIGATING THEIR STORMS, TRIUMPHS, AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN SPORT

Peter Olusoga, Sheffield Hallam University
Göran Kenttä, The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden
Kristen Dieffenbach, West Virginia University
Stiliani "Ani" Chroni, University of Inland Norway

At almost every level, coaching is characterized by performance expectations, irregular hours, work-home interference, and job insecurity (Norris et al., 2017), yet despite growing research interest in coaches' well-being and mental health, the needs of the coach in the performance space can often be overshadowed by the needs of the athlete. For sport organizations, the fact that performance is evaluated based on athlete outcomes makes it easy to overlook the attention required to support and maintain the physical, psychological, and social well-being of those who coach (Dieffenbach et al., 2024). Moreover, for coaches themselves, the prioritization of athletes' performance and well-being can result in limited attention to self-care (Olusoga & Kenttä, 2017). To fully support coaches and develop strategies to sustain and support individuals, it is necessary to consider the coach as a whole person, operating not only within a specific sport context (the organization), but also across and between multiple, complex, dynamic systems (e.g., sport culture, family structures, broader socio-cultural environments) (Chroni et al., 2024). While sport psychology professionals are often invited to consult, educate, and develop coaches, traditional approaches might leave the coach as a performer and person unsupported. In this workshop, participants will be provided with case studies addressing several contemporary issues in high-performance coaching. Via vivid story-telling and imagery, and facilitated small-group discussion, attendees will develop their own theory-led case solutions. The learning outcomes of this workshop are twofold: (a) to develop case-formulations, acknowledging the coach as a whole person and as a part of multiple, complex systems; and (b), to work with other practitioners to develop micro-, meso-, and macro-level interventions, prioritizing coach well-being and creating sustainable work conditions. At the conclusion of the workshop, attendees will also be provided with the case-solutions written by the case-study authors.

WKSP-11

IF YOU'RE NOT THE WITNESS, IT'S NOT MINDFULNESS: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BREATHWORK AND MINDFULNESS ACROSS PERFORMANCE SETTINGS

Pete Kadushin, Chicago Blackhawks
Sam Zizzi, West Virginia University

Mindfulness as a tool for enhancing performance continues to gain popularity in applied sport psychology as evidenced by the growing number of published books, articles, and interventions. The strength of evidence linking mindfulness practice to performance and performance correlates is improving (Noetel et al., 2019), and applications are becoming more sport-specific and targeted (Kuchar et al, 2023). One cornerstone of mindfulness is the use of the breath as an attentional anchor. However, many sport psychology practitioners taking this skill-based approach may miss more meaningful practices rooted in traditional mindfulness. In a critique of such approaches, Rosenbaum & Bohart (2021) tell us that "mindfulness is not a skill, it's a gate." After attending this workshop, participants will be able to: 1) compare and contrast breathwork and meditation by identifying their similarities and differences (in theory and practice); 2) describe three distinct purposes of the breath within a performance context; and 3) understand multiple methods of teaching skills related to each purpose. The presenters will use their professional experiences working in elite sport and other performance domains to create an active learning environment where participants can practice some of the different approaches to teaching breathwork to clients. Specifically, activities will explore the use of breath for control-based strategies (e.g., attentional honing, regulation) vs. acceptance-based strategies (e.g., diffusion). Participants will engage in live exercises where they can practice "doing" vs. "being" while using their breath as an anchor. Finally, the presenters will outline several pitfalls that can make breathwork counterproductive. Multiple settings and contexts will be explored using case studies, and participants will be engaged in active discussion in both small and large groups so they can apply the theories and practices to their populations of interest.

WKSP-12

MENTORING IN MENTAL PERFORMANCE THROUGH THE GENERATIONS: CONCEPTS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Carly Anderson, Premier Sport Psychology
Karen Cogan, USOPC
Sean McCann, USOPC
Blake Pindyck, USOPC

Mentoring in mental performance training is crucial to the education of new practitioners and advancement of the profession. With greater numbers of practitioners obtaining hours for their CMPCs, a consistent, conceptual approach

to mentoring will benefit the profession. This workshop will provide a hands-on opportunity for mentors to clearly define their approach to mentoring. Part I will briefly review models of mentoring (e.g., Kram, 1985; Johnson, 2014; Nuis et al., 2023) and outline competencies in mentoring. The difference between mentoring and supervision will be explored as well as approaches to mentoring in mental performance specifically. For Part II, mentoring pairs, some of whom are three-generations deep, will speak candidly about their work together over several years. They will outline the process of forming their relationships, defining the focus of their mentoring activities, and factors that made the relationships effective and meaningful. They will also discuss mentoring strategies they passed to the next generation as well as obstacles and areas they developed further. In Part III, attendees will be provided with questions and guidelines to discuss in small groups so they can define their personal approaches to mentoring. Participants will explore benefits and drawbacks to their approaches as well as strategies for establishing successful mentoring relationships. Ethical considerations and the impact of diversity on mentoring pairs will be addressed throughout each portion of the workshop.

WKSP-13

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF SPORT RELATED CONCUSSIONS

Leah Washington, Bridgewater College
John Coumbe-Lilley, University of Illinois Chicago

There is significant focus on the psychological recovery of the injured athlete and Sport Related Concussions (SRC) have unique psychological considerations. Uncomplicated SRC can follow similar psychological recovery trajectories as musculoskeletal (MSK) injuries (Turner et al., 2017). However, there are aspects of SRC that are distinct from MSK (Covassin et al., 2017). SRCs do not present symptoms consistently and have highly variable prognoses and return to play timelines (Patricios et al., 2022; Kontos et al., 2019; Covassin et al., 2017). Given this heterogeneity in the physiological sequelae, the sports psychology professional should understand how SRCs impact each athlete. A multidisciplinary treatment team that includes a sport psychology professional well versed in SRC treatment and recovery can be a significant asset to an organization (Yang, Saadati, & Sefotho, 2024; Bloom, Trbovish, Caron & Kontos, 2020).Mental Skills Practitioners may not be familiar with the different types of SRCs or their varied presentations and thus may be limited in providing suitable individualized care. This workshop aims to increase both an understanding of SRC presentations and how to intervene appropriately, given the athletes' recovery status and SRC profile.This workshop will help practitioners understand their role within the treatment team, psychological responses to SRC, possible interventions throughout the SRC recovery process, psychological risk factors related to trauma, and relevant professional consensus statements. Presenters will review clinical profiles of SRC symptomology and comorbidities with clinical and subclinical psychological disorders. Presenters will also discuss factors related to the risk of suicidality. Discussions will address collaborating with sports medicine clinicians and treatment teams, issues related to return to play, and intervention decision-making. Learning will be facilitated through small group discussions and case studies. This workshop will benefit sports psychology professionals unfamiliar with SRC presentation and individuals who work with populations where SRC is a risk.

WKSP-14

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR HELPING ATHLETES MANAGE THE DREADED "YIPS"

Jacob Jensen, California State University, Northridge
Ekaterina Hupalo, California State University, Northridge

Athletes in various sports and settings may experience the "yips," as they find themselves unable to perform a learned skill that is essential to their sport (Smith et al., 2003). While attention has mainly focused on golfers experiencing putting yips (Marquardt, 2009; Stinear et al., 2006), athletes from other sports can experience similar problems in performance (Bawden & Maynard, 2001), including tennis players with their serve and/or toss, baseball players with their throw, and volleyball players with setting and hitting. Causes for the yips are difficult to pinpoint although they have been linked to perfectionism and anxiety (Chambers & Marshall, 2017; Heron & Bilalic 2022).The learning objectives of this workshop will focus on helping practitioners understand techniques and mental training tools to help athletes overcome the virus-like effects of the yips. The lead presenter's personal experience of overcoming the yips, along with over 10 years of consulting with athletes with the yips, will provide a base for the workshop and will help workshop participants to better understand the debilitating effects of the condition, including feelings of paralysis, humiliation, and embarrassment. The teaching methods used in the workshop will include a presentation and discussion of research and applied work with the yips, as well as hands-on practice using techniques that have been used to help athletes overcome the yips, including a specific form of autogenic training (Schultz & Luthe, 1996), mindfulness exercises (Kaufman, Glass, & Pineau, 2018), and acceptance training. The workshop will include case study examples of the actual mental training tools used to facilitate athletes working through the yips. Workshop participants will be provided with a copy of the presentation slides with links to audio examples of mental training tools that can be incorporated into their own applied work with athletes suffering from the yips.

WKSP-15

OPTIMIZING THE FOCUS AND PRESENCE OF ATHLETES UTILIZING CONTEXT RELATABLE EXERCISES AND STRATEGIES WITH AN ACT MATRIX FRAMEWORK

David Udelf, David Udelf and Associates

Command of attention and presence is the special sauce for maximizing success in sports and other skill-based activities. Athletes often experience intrusive thoughts and emotions that can disrupt optimal focus and execution of skills and other actions required of their sport. Ruminating on, and efforts to remove, distracting thoughts and feelings often prove ineffective and worsen the disruptive impact of such inner experience. Achieving psychological flexibility (PF), defined here as "the ability to pursue valued goals despite the presence of distress" (Kashdan, Disabato, Goodman, Doorley, & McKnight, 2020). Given the stressful nature of competitive sports, PF skill is crucial for optimal

performance. This workshop familiarizes participants with the concept of psychological flexibility and its application to sports using the ACT (Acceptant and Commitment Training) Matrix (Polk, Schoendorff, Webster, and Olaz, 2016). The Matrix is a shortened, intuitive version of ACT with demonstrated effectiveness in sports (Kaufman, Glass, and Pineau, 2017). Participants will learn how to design and utilize exercises relatable for athletes to train PF, enabling a command of attention and the ability to pivot from distracting inner experience to a laser focus on the execution of their performance skills. Workshop attendees will engage in context relatable activities used to teach athletes how the mind works, train their psychological flexibility, and improve their ability to attain and sustain focus using the ACT Matrix. Participants will also learn to use the Matrix to assist athletes in the design and implementation of personalized strategies specific to their performance context to establish focus and to restore their attention when it gets lost. Workshop materials include PowerPoint presentation, videos, client handouts, ACT Matrix worksheets, and reference list.

WKSP-16

BEYOND THE PLAYBOOK: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING ATHLETES WITH ADHD AND SLDS

Lindsey Schriefer, Athlete's Academy
Robyn Trocchio, Texas Christian University

Athletes with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia, encounter unique cognitive and emotional challenges that influence their performance, communication, and engagement in mental performance sessions. Despite their prevalence, these hidden disabilities often go unrecognized, leading to potential misunderstandings and ineffective interventions. Mental performance practitioners play a critical role in bridging this gap by adapting their approaches to better serve this population (Braun-Trocchio et al., 2024).This interactive workshop aims to deepen awareness of ADHD and SLD symptomology in sport settings and provide evidence-based strategies for practitioners to improve their work with these athletes. Drawing from research on hidden disabilities, we will examine how ADHD impacts attention regulation, impulsivity, and self-monitoring in athletes, while SLDs may influence information processing, multi-step instructions, and memory retention (Braun & Braun, 2015; Miller & Sims, 2024). The discussion will highlight the neurological and behavioral implications of these conditions, emphasizing the importance of tailored psychological skills training (PST) approaches that consider working memory, executive functioning deficits, and metacognition (Johnson & Reid, 2011; Martinussen & Major, 2011).Attendees will engage in case-based discussions focusing on key challenges, such as implementing direct instruction methods, utilizing external supports (e.g., visual aids, structured routines), and fostering self-regulatory strategies like goal setting and self-talk (Levine, 2002). Additionally, the session will explore communication modifications and instructional techniques to enhance engagement with athletes who experience difficulties with processing speed and sequencing information (Meichenbaum, 1985; Braun-Trocchio et al., 2024).Through an interactive dialogue format, participants will (1) increase awareness and understanding of ADHD and SLDs, (2) develop practical strategies for tailoring mental performance interventions to better accommodate the needs of athletes with ADHD and SLDs, and (3) apply learned strategies to specific case studies with colleagues, ultimately promoting more inclusive and effective mental performance consulting.

WKSP-17

THE BUSINESS BLUEPRINT: A LEAN CANVAS WORKSHOP FOR MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS

Carla Carter, The Cognitive Clinic, PC
Sarah Forsythe, Redefine Performance
Karina Baldwin, True Adventure Collective

Starting a private practice as a mental performance consultant can be both exciting and daunting, requiring a clear vision, strategic planning, and an understanding of business fundamentals. This interactive workshop builds on experiences of the Business SIG as well as introduces participants to the Lean Canvas Model, a streamlined, one-page business planning tool designed to help entrepreneurs identify and refine key aspects of their business (York, 2020; York, et al., 2020). Unlike traditional business plans, the Lean Canvas focuses on problem-solving, customer needs, and value-driven strategies, making it an ideal framework for early-stage businesses.Through a structured, step-by-step walkthrough, participants will explore each component of the Lean Canvas, while focusing on real customer problems, remaining flexible and adaptable, and fostering alignment and clarity within a business model (Graumann, 2024) . By actively completing their own Lean Canvas during the session, attendees will clarify their business concepts and establish a strategic foundation for launching or refining their private practice. This exercise will help participants move from vague business ideas to actionable, well-structured plans.The workshop will also incorporate collaborative learning through a pair/group feedback session. Participants will present their Lean Canvas to peers, receive constructive input, and refine their ideas based on diverse perspectives. This interactive process encourages critical thinking, enhances problem-solving skills, and strengthens the overall viability of their business concepts.By the end of the session, participants will leave with a working Lean Canvas tailored to their private practice goals, practical insights to guide their next steps, and the confidence to navigate the early stages of entrepreneurship. Whether they are just beginning to explore the idea of private practice or looking to refine an existing business plan, this workshop offers a valuable, hands-on approach to building a sustainable and successful career in mental performance consulting.

WKSP-18

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR ADAPTIVE/PARA SPORTS ATHLETES

Michael Mignano, University of Michigan - School of Kinesiology
Kristin Mauldin, California Baptist University

Adaptive sports, recreation, fitness, and physical activity opportunities for athletes of all abilities have grown significantly in the past several decades (International Paralympic Committee, 2025). Individuals with physical, intellectual, sensory, cognitive, learning, and/or behavioral disabilities

and conditions participate in adaptive sports programming at increased rates. Further, the application of sport psychology and mental skills training in these populations has also continued to expand. Martin's (2017) Handbook of Disability Sport and Exercise Psychology stands as the seminal work on the topic. However, formal training and coursework in the area of adaptive sport psychology has not been fully developed or available in graduate education or continued education programs. Additionally, adaptive and para-sport athletes seek mental skills development and performance-enhancement opportunities, and don't always see their disability or condition as a barrier in this growth. Applied sport psychology consultants should develop competencies in the areas of inclusion, self-awareness, and accessibility when working in adaptive sport and physical activity contexts. Thus, the purpose of the current workshop is to provide practices, strategies, techniques, and dialogue surrounding the area of adaptive sport and physical activity consulting interventions. The workshop will consist of the presenters providing active learning strategies and case studies for attendees based on their experiences as applied sport psychology consultants in the adaptive sport environment. Our aim is to build self-awareness and competencies for sport psychology professionals currently working with these populations and encourage consultants to seek out opportunities in this space.

WKSP-19

CULTIVATING CONFIDENCE THROUGH SELF-COMPASSION: TRANSLATING SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICE TO COMPETITION

Ashley Kuchar, Fail Better Training LLC | The University of Texas at Austin
Michelle Gregovic, Present Moment Mindset LLC
Angelica Potter, HigherEchelon / Artists Psych
Cindra Kamphoff, Mentally Strong Institute| Minnesota State University
JoAnne Bullard, Rowan University | Absolute Fitness Performance Psychology

As athletes advance to higher-pressure environments, managing uncertainty and taking risks becomes essential. While self-compassion is often framed as a tool for overcoming setbacks, it also plays a critical role in helping athletes build the capacity to handle pressure, take on challenges, and sustain motivation (Cormier et al., 2023). However, many athletes hesitate to engage with self-compassion due to misunderstandings about its meaning or how it can be applied (Röthlin et al., 2019). Similarly, practitioners struggle to introduce self-compassion in ways that resonate with athletes and translate research into real-time, practical strategies. As the body of evidence for self-compassion in sport continues to grow, so does the need for effective knowledge translation to bridge the gap between research and practice (Cormier et al., 2023; Fullagar et al., 2019). When practitioners communicate evidence-based approaches in a way that is accessible and applicable, athletes can optimize their performance, manage stress, and enhance overall well-being (Watson et al., 2017; West, 2016). Athletes stand to benefit by learning to foster a non-judgmental self-narrative and compassionate approach toward performance preparation, execution, and reflection (Johnson et al., 2025).In this workshop, we will explore key strategies for equipping practitioners with tools to make self-compassion more accessible and actionable for athletes as well as the coaches and parents who support them. Topics will include self-awareness practices, distancing techniques, using imagery and metaphors, integrating physical gestures and cue words, and reframing. Then, through interactive activities and group discussion, participants will practice breaking down self-compassion into tangible, easy-to-remember applications that are suitable for various sport contexts including training, competition, and post-game reflection. Participants will receive a handout outlining key concepts, strategies, and resources to support continued learning and application beyond the workshop.

WKSP-20

TEACHING MENTAL SKILLS TO TWEENS – STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING YOUNG ATHLETES

E. Earlynn Lauer, Lauer Mental Training, LLC
Larry Lauer, United States Tennis Association Player Development
Rebecca Zakrajsek, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Lauren McHenry, McHenry Mental Performance, LLC

Tweens (ages 10–13) are at a critical developmental stage where cognitive, emotional, and social changes shape how they learn and apply mental skills (Flett et al., 2012; McHenry et al., 2021). However, many mental performance coaches (MPCs) struggle to engage this age group due to challenges in adapting their approaches to Tweens' tendencies for concrete thinking, heightened emotional responses, and peer-driven self-perception. Without age-appropriate interventions, young athletes may disengage from mental skills training, potentially reducing their willingness to engage with it as they grow older (Lauer et al., 2020).This interactive workshop will address these challenges and provide attendees with practical strategies to effectively teach mental skills to Tweens. First, participants will explore how developmental factors influence Tweens' mental skills acquisition and practice adapting their communication, questioning techniques, and storytelling to enhance engagement (Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Second, through role-playing exercises, attendees will experience how to teach mental skills such as goal-setting, confidence-building, and emotional regulation in ways that resonate with Tweens. For example, the session will explore gamification and narrative-based interventions—techniques supported by research on youth engagement and learning (Sailor & Homer, 2020; Spencer & Peterson, 2020). Third, participants will work in small groups to develop and test Tween-focused mental skills exercises, receiving real-time feedback from facilitators and peers. Special attention will be given to strategies that promote positive self-comparison, strengthen reflection skills, and enhance skill retention through simple, practical routines. Attendees will leave with concrete, ready-to-use methods for engaging Tweens in mental skills training, along with a deeper understanding of how to design developmentally appropriate interventions. This session is ideal for MPCs, coaches, and students looking to improve their work with younger athletes by making mental skills training more engaging, relevant, and effective.

WKSP-21

AFTER THE INTERVENTION: LONG-TERM INTEGRATION OF MINDFULNESS INTO HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAM CULTURES

Timothy Pineau, MSPE Institute
Thomas Minkler, Miami University

Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE; Kaufman et al., 2018) is one of the few mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) with a comprehensive manual that offers explicit yet flexible guidance for implementing the time-bound protocol. Like other MBIs, MSPE emphasizes the importance of continuing mindfulness-based mental training beyond the initial program, as illustrated in a long-term case study (Pineau et al., 2019) and a chapter describing the customization of a 10-session program for an under-16 elite English football club(Spencer et al., 2019). Despite the value of these examples, there is little explicit guidance available about what long-term mindfulness-based work looks like or what theoretical models practitioners can consider. This is particularly problematic given the depth and nuance that can emerge from mindfulness training, and how difficult it can be for consultants to effectively balance reinforcing and expanding upon the foundational concepts and practices presented in the initial, brief training program. As such, the learning objectives of this workshop are threefold: 1) to share a variety of real-world examples of long-term mindfulness work with college athletes; 2) to highlight how a stage of change model can be applied when developing and implementing this work; and 3) to acknowledge the importance of contextual variables (e.g, virtual vs. in-person, proximity to competitive seasons, identity and cultural factors) in the evolution of long-term mindfulness-based interventions. Numerous examples and engaging exercises (e.g., meditations, activities, and discussion topics) which serve to enhance and deepen athletes' understanding and integration of mindfulness will be introduced (with accompanying handouts). Attendees will also have the opportunity to collaboratively generate ideas/strategies that may be applicable to the athletes/teams they are working with, receiving active guidance from two CMPCs who have engaged in mindfulness work with four college teams over the course of 4-9 academic years.

WKSP-22

I'M NOBODY! WHO ARE YOU? ARE YOU NOBODY TOO? EXPOSING IMPOSTER SYNDROME IN ATHLETES

Ashley Zultanky, Behavior Therapy Associates

Imposter Syndrome (IS) is a common experience among athletes and performers, characterized by chronic self-doubt and the fear of being exposed as a fraud despite objective evidence of competence (Clance & Imes, 1978). Research suggests that IS is linked to increased anxiety, perfectionism, and burnout, which can significantly hinder performance and well-being (Vergauwe et al., 2015). Athletes and performers experiencing IS often struggle with maladaptive coping mechanisms such as overtraining, avoidance, and excessive self-criticism (Sonnentag et al., 2017). This 60-minute interactive workshop will equip sport psychologists and consultants with evidence-based strategies to identify and treat IS using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and mindfulness-based interventions.ACT has been shown to enhance psychological flexibility, helping individuals acknowledge and accept self-doubt while committing to values-driven actions (Hayes et al., 2006). Mindfulness techniques, including cognitive defusion and self-compassion practices, can help athletes and performers detach from negative self-perceptions and reduce the impact of imposter-related thoughts (Zhang et al., 2022). Workshop participants will engage in experiential exercises, including guided mindfulness practices, values exploration, and case study discussions, to enhance their practical skills in addressing IS.By the end of the session, attendees will be able to recognize the cognitive and emotional patterns associated with IS, implement targeted ACT interventions, and tailor strategies to the unique demands of competitive performance domains. This workshop will provide an engaging and dynamic learning environment, combining theory with hands-on application to ensure participants leave with actionable tools to support their clients in overcoming IS and optimizing their performance.

WKSP-24

WHERE PEDAGOGICAL THEORY MEETS SPORT INJURY PSYCHOLOGY: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

Hayley Russell, St. Francis Xavier University
Jill Tracey, Wilfrid Laurier University
Amanda Visek, The George Washington University
Monna Arvinen-Barrow, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Research in sport injury psychology dates back 50+ years and highlights the importance of understanding psychological aspects of injury to decrease injury risk and improve athlete recovery and wellbeing (Tranaeus et al., 2024). As the evidence has grown, professionals in sports medicine (e.g., National Athletic Trainers Association) and sport psychology (e.g., Association for Applied Sport Psychology) have recognized the need for practitioners to develop competencies addressing psychological aspects of sport injury. Consequently, academic literature has expanded to include numerous textbooks on the topic and sport injury psychology classes continue to be popular among students. While evidence-based content knowledge is the "bread" of education, effective teaching rooted in pedagogical theory and evidence certainly adds the "butter" making it truly fulfilling. Research has shown courses that are constructively aligned (Biggs & Tang, 2011) are more likely to encourage students to adopt a deep approach to learning than traditionally organized courses (Hailikari et al., 2022). Through lecture, demonstration, small group discussion, and self-reflection, this workshop aims to provide sport psychology educators practical examples of how to teach sport injury psychology to various student cohorts at the undergraduate and graduate level. Delivered by four university professors with distinguished teaching awards and a combined 80+ years of higher education experience, this workshop will teach the attendees how to: (a) design a sport injury psychology course that is rooted in pedagogical theory, (b) facilitate selected learning activities with students, and (c) effectively assess student learning. Using the Arvinen-Barrow and Clement (2024) textbook as their guide, the presenters will also share personal insights how they have integrated teaching pertinent student skills (e.g., APA format, social justice, and cultural competence) beyond sport injury psychology as part of the course. Materials, including course outlines, activities, assignments, and assessment tools, will be made available to participants.

WKSP-25

FREQUENCY, LOAD, INTENSITY, PURPOSE, AND DURATION (FLIPD): PROVIDING CUSTOMIZED, PERIODIZED, AND RELEVANT CONSULTING THAT ENHANCES SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Steve DeWiggins, Mental Performance Consultant

Human Performance Teams (HPT) capable of adapting to individual needs tend to enhance high performers' execution more than HPTs lacking this ability (Entin & Serfaty, 1999; Salcinovic et al., 2022). Indeed, the need for Sport and Performance Psychology consultants to move away from general education of mental skills and toward developing customized programs to address the unique needs of individual athletes was discussed decades ago (Vealey, 1988). FLIPD was introduced as a method for customizing cognitive performance activities based on the features of frequency, load, intensity, purpose, and duration (Gassaway & DeWiggins, 2023). Featuring principles related to periodization, motor development, and learning theory, transferability to maximizing the potential for the long-term development of mental skills training by leveraging appropriate levels of challenge, load and frequency is key (Holliday et. al., 2008).This workshop expands further into the opportunity to apply FLIPD to the development of a diverse range of mental skills. Participants in the workshop are encouraged to embrace their creativity to generate training progressions targeting increased challenge and difficulty within several common mental skills by incorporating force multipliers and other features as adjuncts to mental skills training. Those attending will gain valuable experience in collaborating with peers and experts in the field toward developing a periodized and individualized mental skills training program using the FLIPD principles. Presenters will provide adequate case examples they have executed to which attendees can then compare their own generated ideas. Finally, lessons learned through the types of questions and observations presenters have fielded will further assist with determining how to best challenge a performer to develop a skill based on their current exposure, utilization, and/or ability. Finally, the small groups will consider how customization would change depending on the different settings in which consulting may take place (classroom, one-on-one, training events, etc.).

WKSP-26

EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURSHIP: IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

Lindsey Schriefer, Athlete's Academy
Carla Carter, The Cognitive Clinic, PC
Ashley Kuchar, Fail Better Training LLC | The University of Texas at Austin

As interest in entrepreneurship grows within mental performance, more professionals are considering private practice, consulting, and business ownership. With limited traditional job opportunities and increasing demand for mental performance services, entrepreneurship offers autonomy, flexibility, and financial potential (Lindberg & Jansson, 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). However, launching and sustaining a business requires more than just expertise in mental performance—it demands business acumen, adaptability, and strategic decision-making (APA, n.d.). This interactive workshop will help participants critically explore entrepreneurship and determine if it aligns with their skills, goals, and professional aspirations.This session will cover three key areas:(1) The Entrepreneurial Landscape – An overview of the current trends shaping mental performance entrepreneurship, including the growing demand for mental skills training, limited traditional job openings, and the increasing viability of private practice. We will discuss different career paths within entrepreneurship, as well as the opportunities and challenges faced by those pursuing business ownership in mental performance.(2) Essential Skills & Knowledge – A deep dive into fundamental business competencies, including financial management, marketing strategies, client retention, and legal/ethical considerations. Participants will assess their own business-related skills, identifying strengths and areas for growth.(3) The Entrepreneurial Mindset – An exploration of key traits like resilience, risk tolerance, and adaptability. Through a guided self-assessment, participants will evaluate their readiness and discuss strategies for overcoming challenges.By the end of the workshop, attendees will have a realistic understanding of what it takes to succeed as an entrepreneur in mental performance. They will leave with practical tools to assess their fit for business ownership and clarity on next steps for professional growth.

POSTERS

P-001

"THEY'RE NOT JUST A CLUB TEAM": INCREASING THE BUY-IN OF A COLLEGE LEVEL CLUB ICE HOCKEY TEAM

Sarah Sinnott, Ithaca College
Nicole DeRose, Ithaca College

The ability to build rapport, be approachable, and show empathy are essential qualities for an effective practitioner (Sharp & Hodge, 2011). Without first establishing trust and respect in the practitioner-athlete relationship, adherence to a psychological skills training plan will be difficult to obtain (Ravizza, 1998). Building on this concept, the presentation will demonstrate a similar approach taken by two neophyte mental performance consultants (MPCs) to gain trust and buy-in from a collegiate club ice hockey team, that in previous years had placed minimal value in working with MPCs. Using a person-centered approach, practitioners aim to be present and accessible to the client, while prioritizing empathy and allowing the athletes to feel respected, moving them towards an increased level of personal functioning (Corey 2017). As the team did not have a strong previous relationship with MPCs, a person-centered approach was vital. The practitioners prioritized displaying unconditional positive regard for each individual as a person, student, and athlete before introducing any applied mental skills. With this method, they were faced with handling the unique dynamic of increased athlete leadership responsibilities due to the lack of a coach and organizational nature of a collegiate club sport. The presentation will explore the obstacles associated with dual roles and role ambiguity within the team, as well as strategies for navigating role conflict influencing the team dynamics. The importance of reflective practice as a neophyte practitioner will also be discussed. Based on experiences in the setting, recommendations for future work with collegiate club sports will be provided. Overall, the experience and approach detailed during this presentation will provide insight into how neophyte practitioners can develop buy-in among club athletes (e.g., collegiate club ice hockey team). Recommendations for gaining entry into similar sport cultures will also be provided .

P-002

"WHAT CAN YOU SEE? WHAT CAN YOU HEAR?" THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A BEHAVIOUR-BASED MENTAL TOUGHNESS FRAMEWORK WITHIN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SOCCER

Brendan Cropley, University of South Wales / FAW Centre for Football Research
Alan McKay, University of South Wales / FAW Centre for Football Research
David Shearer, University of South Wales
Sheldon Hanton, Cardiff Metropolitan University

Researchers have identified mentally tough behaviours (MTbs) as crucial for linking mental toughness (MT) capacity to consistently high performance under pressure but often overlook how displays of MTb lead to MT development. Further, coaches often report finding it difficult to proactively and effectively integrate the development of the psychological aspects of athletes' performance into their daily coaching practices. Thus, following Institutional Ethics Board approval, we administered an applied, brief-contact intervention, using a bespoke behaviour-based MT development framework, to a UEFA National Football (soccer) Association under-15s team during a seven-day international competition camp. Using a practitioner-researcher approach, the aim of the intervention was to develop and support coaches' (n = 2) abilities to facilitate youth footballers' (n = 22) MT development. The intervention included pre-camp coach education workshops, in-camp player (e.g., shared reflective practices; informal discussions) and coach (e.g., check and challenge of coach decisions and actions regarding MT development; reinforcing the importance of role modelling MTbs) support, and post-camp social validation interviews to assess effectiveness. Players' MT levels, measured using the MT Index (MTI), significantly increased pre- (M = 47.89, SD = 0.75) to post-camp (M = 49.74, SE = 0.73; t(18) = -2.11, p r = .20). Coaches highlighted how the intervention had improved their understanding of MT and helped them frame MTbs appropriately in accord with their coach and game philosophy. Further, coaches reported becoming more confident in considering, addressing, and enhancing players' displays of MTbs through on- and off-pitch interactions. Players credited their MT development to how coaches clarified, reinforced, and reviewed the MTbs they displayed under pressure. It is recommended, therefore, that practitioners adopt a proactive approach to MT development in the time-limited context of high-level sport, supporting coaches in planning sessions, establishing MT development mechanisms, and providing opportunities for players to display MTbs.

P-003

ACTIVE ALERT HYPNOSIS VS TRADITIONAL HYPNOSIS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE BASEBALL PITCHERS

Angel Morquecho, Fc Juarez

In this research, the objective was to find out if traditional hypnosis and active alert techniques increased the performance of college baseball pitchers, as well as to compare the same techniques to see which was the most effective. The design of this research was mixed with a sequential explanatory design where 9 college level pitchers participated, 6 from UANL, which were divided into two groups for the application of traditional hypnosis and active alert, and 3 from CETYS University Campus Mexicali, which were the group without intervention. They performed a performance evaluation with a pitching radar and a delimited strike zone, in addition to an interview with the hypnosis groups to learn about their experience. The results show that traditional hypnosis significantly increased the control of the speed of the pitches (p = .02) with a large effect size (d = 1.6) in the comparison before and after the hypnotic intervention. The traditional hypnosis group improved on the pitching control variable compared to the active alert hypnosis group and the no intervention group (p= .03) with a large effect size (η^2= .66). In the qualitative part, the responses were divided into three sections: sensations, attribution to change, and overall experience. In conclusion, we can say that, although both techniques have a positive impact on the participants' experience, traditional hypnosis is the most effective in improving pitching control in baseball pitchers.

P-004

APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY IN THE WEIGHT ROOM: BUILDING A WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A COLLEGIATE STRENGTH STAFF AND A STUDENT CONSULTANT

Natalie Plaut, University of Tennessee
Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

In Spring 2024, a working relationship was established between the Strength and Conditioning staff at a Southeastern Division II University and a Student Mental Performance Consultant. This partnership was built through a "train-the-trainer" model, wherein the consultant led weekly workshops designed to educate the strength staff on mental performance strategies, offering pragmatic techniques applicable within the weight room environment.These sessions, held in the strength coach's office within the weight room, involved the student consultant presenting pre-prepared PowerPoint content focused on performance-enhancing strategies. Each workshop, lasting approximately one hour, covered a range of topics including motivation, confidence, overthinking, athlete mindset, performance anxiety, and arousal regulation. The student consultant customized the content to address the specific needs of the strength staff, integrating interactive elements to enhance engagement, deepen understanding, and foster the application of mental performance techniques with their athletes.The integration of psychological strategies into strength training holds significant potential for optimizing performance. Strength coaches, with their direct access to athletes during mandatory training sessions, are uniquely positioned to implement mental performance interventions. Through established relationships with teams, coaches can apply these strategies effectively on both individual and group levels.As the pursuit of holistic care for athletes expands, addressing both their physical fitness and mental well-being becomes essential to maximizing performance. This ongoing work reveals the necessity for greater interdisciplinary collaboration between mental performance consultants and strength staff, ensuring a comprehensive approach to optimizing athlete performance.

P-005

ATHLETIC IDENTITY AND EMPLOYABILITY AMONG COLLEGIATE ATHLETES IN TAIWAN: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF CAREER ADAPTABILITY

Jen De Chen, National Changhua University of Education
Jong Yi Wang, China Medical University

Employability is a vital factor influencing individuals' capacity to enter, sustain, and thrive in the labor market. In recent decades, it has garnered significant attention from governments worldwide and has become a key metric for evaluating higher education outcomes. Although the employability of student-athletes has been the subject of scholarly research, there is a notable lack of studies focusing specifically on college student-athletes in Taiwan. Previous research has indicated that athletic identity can negatively impact career development; however, findings regarding the relationship between athletic identity and employability in Taiwan remain inconclusive. This study is grounded in Savickas' (1997) Career Construction Theory, which posits that career adaptability is a crucial factor contributing to employability. Despite this, the interplay between athletic identity, career adaptability, and employability has not been systematically examined. Therefore, this research aims to explore these relationships, particularly examining the mediating role of career adaptability between athletic identity and employability. Employing a purposive sampling strategy, this study surveyed 593 student-athletes from university varsity teams competing in the Open Division in Taiwan, resulting in 565 valid responses. The sample comprised 321 males (56.8%) and 244 females (43.2%), with a mean age of 20.63 years (SD = 1.15). Structural equation modeling was utilized to validate the mediating model, while psychometric analyses assessed the reliability and validity of the adapted scales. The results revealed significant positive correlations among athletic identity, career adaptability, and employability. Both athletic identity and career adaptability were found to positively predict employability, with career adaptability acting as a stronger predictor and significant mediator. The adapted scales demonstrated strong psychometric properties, providing a foundation for future research. This study addresses existing gaps in the literature and enhances the understanding of employability among Taiwanese college student-athletes, offering valuable insights for educational practices and career development initiatives.

P-006

ATHLETIC TRAINERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FACILITATORS FOR ATHLETES' HELP-SEEKING

Javon Williams, University of North Texas
Briana wallace, University of North Texas
Trent Petrie, University of North Texas
Justin Harker, University of North Texas

College athletes experience unique stressors that can elevate their mental health concerns, yet their utilization of available psychological services remains low (Harris & Maher, 2023; Moreland et al., 2018). Although stigma, lack of mental health literacy, and access have been identified as barriers (Harris & Maher, 2023; Hilliard et al., 2020), less is known about the specific behaviors and attitudes of athletic department stakeholders that may facilitate help-seeking. Athletic trainers (ATs) interact daily with athletes and stakeholders and, as frontline healthcare providers, are well-positioned to observe the stakeholder attitudes and behaviors that are helpful for athletes. Thus, we examined collegiate ATs' (N = 321) perceptions of the attitudes and behaviors that stakeholders hold that contribute to the creation of a supportive MH climate and influence athlete's willingness to seek services. Using reflexive thematic analysis (RTA; Braun & Clarke, 2016), and through constructivist and pragmatic paradigms, we interpreted ATs' responses through four primary themes: (a) Reducing Barriers to Help-Seeking, (b) Creating a Culture of Acceptance and Connection, (c) Elevating Mental Health Resources, and (d) Cultivating an Integrated Network of Care. The ATs highlighted that fostering relationships built on trust and openness to MH, prioritizing availability and accessibility of resources, and creating interdisciplinary care teams are interdependent processes that work together to reduce barriers to help-seeking by normalizing MH and service utilization. Through the presence of these dimensions, stigma is reduced and MH resources are provided, which creates an environment where help-seeking is encouraged, facilitated, and ultimately embedded within the athletic culture. Our findings underscore the need for athletic departments to implement systemic changes, including mandatory mental health literacy training, embedding mental health

professionals within athletic departments, and integrating mental health screenings into routine athlete care.

P-007

ATLAS 2.0: ATHLETES' TRANSITION TO LIFE AFTER SPORTS

Jordyn King, Northern Illinois University
Shaine Henert, Northern Illinois University

Research shows that career transition interventions – i.e., workshops or online courses focused on career exploration, career self-efficacy, and life coaching, help prepare student-athletes for retirement from sport by leveraging their experiences and expanding their identity. ATLAS is a theoretically grounded, evidenced-based course helping participants to capitalize on personal assets developed during their sports participation and expand their identity beyond sports participation. Previously, a pilot study assessing the impact of the ATLAS career preparedness course revealed improvements in student athlete's perceptions of personal identity, career decision self-efficacy, and preparedness for life after college sports. Based on participant feedback, enhancements were made and led to the development of ATLAS 2.0. For example, a former student-athlete panel and mock interviews were added. Pre-/post-test and program (beta vs. 2.0) comparisons amongst athletic identity (AIMS), career decision self-efficacy (CDSE-SF), and interview responses for the college student athlete participants will determine the effectiveness of the enhanced course. Baseline data reveal moderate-to-high AIMS total and subscale scores: Total - M = 39, SD = 5.48 (range = 7-49), Social Identity - M = 19.29, SD = 1.50 (range = 3-21), Exclusivity – M = 8.86, SD 3.67, Negative Affectivity – M = 10.86, SD = 2.12 and low-to-mid CDSE-SF scores: Total – M = 4.17, SD = .55, Planning – M = 3.77, SD = .50, Goal Selection – M = 3.40, SD = .37, Self-Appraisal – M = 3.43 , SD = .64, and Occupational Information – M = 3.45 , SD = .45. Baseline interview responses have shown that participants are concerned about their shift in identity and how to navigate life after their sport. Course module feedback has shown that participants value the program content. Complete program analyses, implications, and recommendations will be shared during the presentation.

P-008

BRIEF MINDFULNESS-BASED INTERVENTION AND ENDURANCE ISOMETRIC MUSCLE CONTRACTION

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Jean Fournier, Paris Nanterre University
Mehdi Souabni, Université Paris Nanterre
Tarak Driss, Université Paris Nanterre

In sport psychology, studies have highlighted the effectiveness of mindfulness in various sports, but rarely in endurance-related activities (Dueland, 2023). We examine the usefulness of mindfulness in sustaining a muscular endurance task. 'Urge surfing' is a mindfulness method used to prevent addictions such as drinking (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985). We propose that it could be applied to endurance to prevent quitting, thereby sustaining effort. Hence, we explored the impact of an 8-minute urge surfing intervention on endurance time performance during an isometric handgrip task. Thirteen sports science students (10 men and 3 women; 22.5 ± 3.6 years, 69.7 ± 9.5 kg, 174.8 ± 5.3 cm) participated in both a control session and a mindfulness session in a laboratory. In each session, maximal voluntary contraction (MVC) during a handgrip contraction and time to exhaustion (Tlim) at 20% MVC were assessed. Throughout the Tlim exercise, the rate of perceived exertion (RPE, CR10, Borg et al., 1982) was measured every 30 seconds until exhaustion. Urge surfing was introduced in the second session, prior to the endurance task. Results showed a higher Tlim in the mindfulness condition (336.5 ± 106.5 s vs. 293.04 ± 102.2 s, Δ = 15.6% ± 8.98, P This pilot study suggests that urge surfing could improve isometric muscular endurance and perceived exertion.

P-009

ENHANCING ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT AND TEAMCOHESION: A HOLISTIC COACHING APPROACH FOR COLLEGIATETRACK AND FIELD.

Lyric Brennen, University of Kentucky

The sport of track and field presents a distinctive coaching challenge with its combination of individual and team components (Wergin et. al, 2022). Due to these complexities and unique dynamics, successful coaching requires a nuanced approach; however, there is a significant gap in specialized materials tailored to address the specific needs of collegiate track and field coaches. As such, the purpose of this poster is to introduce a comprehensive resource manual tailored for collegiate track and field coaches, designed to bridge the gap between sport psychology principles and practical coaching strategies. The manual highlights the eccentric nature of track and field as a co-acting team sport, where the emphasis on individual events can often lead to isolation and fragmented team cohesion (Cormier et. al, 2015). Through an evidence-based approach, the manual equips coaches with actionable strategies to address challenges such as event group isolation, underperformance, and strained team dynamics. Key sections explore the role of coaches in holistic athlete development and emphasizing long-term growth over immediate results. Drawing from frameworks like Tuckman's Stages of Group Development (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977) and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), the manual offers tools to foster unity, motivation, and well-being among athletes. It underscores the importance of transformational leadership, advocating for coaching methods that inspire intrinsic motivation, develop autonomy, and create a sense of collective purpose. Practical applications include strategies for enhancing task an3d social cohesion, simulating competition scenarios, and implementing mentorship programs to build cross-event group relationships. This resource serves as a guide for coaches aiming to nurture well-rounded athletes while fostering a culture of unity and excellence within collegiate athletics.

P-010

ENHANCING COACH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE INTAKE INTERVIEW: APPLYING THE PERFORMANCE INTERVIEW GUIDE (PING) FRAMEWORK

Asaf Blatt, Ono Academic Studies/College of Management Academic studies
Royi Yablochnik, Reichman University

The initial meeting with an athlete-client serves as a crucial stage for building a strong therapeutic relationship, gathering key insights for case understanding, and formulating a well-

structured intervention plan tailored to their needs (Chow et al., 2022). While coaches play a pivotal role in shaping athletes' psychological resilience and performance, research suggests that coaches often hesitate to seek psychological support, either for themselves or their athletes (Zakrajsek et al., 2011). Similarly, intake sessions are crucial for understanding a coach's psychological needs, professional philosophy, and personal challenges. A structured intake interview provides an essential foundation for addressing these concerns and tailoring interventions to coaches' needs. The Performance Interview Guide (PING) framework will be introduced, offering a systematic approach to gathering information about coaching beliefs, relationships, personal strengths, sources of pressure, and psychological strategies. Special emphasis will be placed on setting clear expectations, maintaining confidentiality, and fostering a supportive environment that encourages open communication.By integrating PING into the intake process, sport psychologists can develop tailored interventions that address both performance-related and personal challenges faced by coaches. This approach enhances self-awareness, promotes mental resilience, and ultimately strengthens the coach-athlete relationship. Practical recommendations for conducting intake interviews with coaches will be discussed, including logistical considerations, flexibility within structured protocols, and the use of motivational interviewing techniques (e.g., OARS). The session will conclude with insights into bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world coaching practices, ultimately enhancing coaches' engagement with sport psychology services.

P-011

ENHANCING INTRINSIC MOTIVATION: THE ABC MODEL FOR ATHLETES

Tabetha Johnson, La Sierra University

Background:Athletes frequently face pressures that undermine self-trust and intrinsic motivation, potentially impairing peak performance. The ABC model—a core technique in cognitive behavioral therapy—offers a structured framework for challenging limiting beliefs and aligning actions with personal values. Grounded in reflective practice, the model has the potential to cultivate resilience and self-determination among athletes.Purpose:This study aims to examine how cognitive restructuring using the ABC model influences athletes' ability to overcome internal barriers and foster intrinsic motivation. In doing so, it explores the practical utility of this intervention for enhancing values-driven decision-making and emotional resilience in high-performance settings.Methods:Over a 16-week intervention, participants will engage in a multifaceted program that includes reflective journaling, structured group training sessions on cognitive behavioral techniques, and individual interviews. Data will be collected via pre- and post-assessment surveys, mid-intervention check-ins, and qualitative feedback. Special attention is given to ensuring that the intervention is delivered in a culturally sensitive manner—empowering athletes from diverse backgrounds to challenge externally imposed limitations and to embrace self-advocacy.Implications for Practice and Social Justice:By systematically applying the ABC model, this study seeks to provide evidence for an intervention that not only enhances mental skills training but also addresses issues of equity. In empowering athletes to redefine their internal narratives, the research contributes to the development of sustainable and inclusive strategies for athlete support. The findings are anticipated to inform consulting practices, mentorship models, and organizational strategies within sport psychology, thereby fostering a more equitable environment for athlete development.Conclusion:Preliminary insights suggest that cognitive restructuring through the ABC model may be an effective intervention for promoting intrinsic motivation and resilience. This research offers practical implications for applied sport psychology and highlights the importance of culturally competent, values-based interventions in enhancing athlete well-being.

P-012

EXAMINING STRESSORS, COPING, AND COPING EFFECTIVENESS AMONG ATHLETES IN PRACTICE AND COMPETITION

Rowena Cai, University of Toronto
Katherine Tamminen, University of Toronto

Athletes encounter various sport stressors, including risk of injury, inadequate preparation, anxiety, lack of confidence, competition pressure, and interpersonal conflicts with coaches and/or teammates (Hanton et al., 2005; Mellalieu et al., 2009; Nicholls & Polman, 2007). It is crucial for athletes to use appropriate coping strategies to manage sport stressors to achieve performance success and to improve their emotional well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Nicholls & Polman, 2007). However, the existing research typically focuses on stressors and coping in competitions, and there is a lack of information about whether there are similarities between the stressors athletes experience in competition and those faced in practices. Furthermore, there is limited research that has examined whether athletes are using effective strategies to cope with stressors in sport competitions and practices. The purpose of this study was to examine stressors, coping, and coping effectiveness among athletes in practice and competition. Competitive team sport athletes were invited to complete surveys at two timepoints: once post-practice and once post-competition. A total of 346 participants completed one survey (npractice = 188; ncompetition = 158), and 148 completed surveys after both a practice and a competition. Overall, there was considerable similarity in the stressors, coping strategies, and coping effectiveness that athletes reported in practices and in competitions, although there were some significant differences (e.g., stressors related to pressure and expectations were more intense in competition compared to practices). Across practices and competitions, athletes reported using greater task-oriented coping strategies than disengagement- or distraction-oriented coping, and athletes who used greater task-oriented coping reported greater coping effectiveness and well-being. The findings indicate that athletes were generally consistent in the stressors and coping strategies they reported in practices and in competitions. These findings have implications for teaching athletes to transfer coping strategies developed in practices and training to competitive contexts.

P-013

EXPANDING MENTAL PERFORMANCE SERVICES TO COLLEGIATE SPORT CLUBS: A SCALABLE MODEL FOR EARLY CAREER PRACTITIONERS

Kayla Ford, Tarleton State University
Christina Villalon, Tarleton State University

Early career sport psychology professionals often face challenges in accessing athletes due to administrative barriers and limited institutional support. Collegiate sport clubs represent a high achieving yet underserved population, offering a unique opportunity for practitioners to implement mental performance programs with fewer institutional obstacles. Unlike varsity programs, sport clubs operate with greater flexibility, allowing direct athlete engagement without NCAA restrictions, making them an ideal entry point for practitioners seeking applied experience. This pilot program, embedded within Campus Recreation, provides a scalable, practitioner-driven model for delivering mental skills training to club sport athletes. The program structure includes:Team-Based Workshops – Covering goal-setting, confidence, stress management, and team cohesion; Individual Consultations – Offering accessible mental performance coaching without administrative restrictions; and Leadership Development – Training club sport captains and coaches to integrate mental skills into their teams. By positioning sport clubs as a viable avenue for applied work, this model highlights alternative career pathways beyond traditional varsity settings. Sport clubs deserve the same level of mental performance support as varsity athletes, yet they often lack access to these resources. Expanding services within Campus Recreation not only fills this gap but also creates opportunities for professional development, research, and long-term program sustainability. This lecture will introduce the concept of integrating mental performance services within collegiate sport clubs, highlighting its potential benefits, the unique opportunities it presents, and its role in expanding athlete support within a non-traditional population.

P-014

EXPLORING IMPACTS OF APPLIED IMAGERY TO REDUCE COGNITIVE AND SOMATIC STATE ANXIETY AND IMPROVE FOCUS WITHIN PROFESSIONAL MILITARY MUSICIANS

Mitch DeSimone, United States Military Academy West Point
Peter Spampinato, Ithaca College
Nicholas Caluori, West Point Band
Jeremy Schlegel, West Point Band

Multiple studies have illustrated the impact of imagery on mindset and performance in traditional sport athletes, and these studies have expanded into performing arts and musicians in recent years. However, elite professional musicians are underrepresented in the literature, and the military musician population appears not to have been studied to this point. This pilot study allowed a small group of military musicians (n=10) to attend four 30-minute imagery sessions that taught basic principles of imagery and facilitated development of individualized imagery scripts. Musicians filled out the CSAI-2 prior to two performances, one pre-intervention and one post. Additionally, musicians responded to several short-response questions to allow for qualitative assessment of performance. Results indicated a significant decrease in cognitive anxiety post-intervention, a non-significant decrease in somatic anxiety and a non-significant increase in confidence. Additionally, qualitative analysis indicated slight positive shifts in perceptions of performance, mental engagement and focus on controllable aspects of performance during the post-intervention performance. Due to the small sample size given the limited number of military musicians able to participate in this study, additional follow up studies will be performed to provide more context on data collected. This presentation will outline not only findings from the study, but lessons learned in implementing this open-ended imagery intervention in this unique population so that impactful components can be transferred across diverse domains.

P-015

FROM CHAOS TO CONTROL: CRAFTING THE PERFECT PRE-MATCH ROUTINE FOR COMBAT ATHLETES

Erin Herle, Train Ya Mind LLC

Pre-match routines are an essential yet frequently neglected aspect of combat sports preparation. Unlike traditional pre-performance routines (Moran, 1996), combat athletes must navigate unique psychological stressors, unpredictable pacing, and extended waiting times before competition (Mesagno & Mullane-Grant, 2010). This lecture presents an evidence-based, adaptable pre-match routine framework incorporating arousal regulation (Weinberg & Gould, 2019), attentional control (Vickers, 2007), and self-talk strategies (Hardy, 2006). Attendees will gain immediately applicable skills, including phase-based pre-match routines, pre-fight arousal control, and focus reset techniques to optimize performance and manage competition anxiety. Participants will leave with practical tools to customize, refine, and implement structured routines that enhance focus and execution in high-pressure environments.

P-016

FROM GRADUATE STUDENT TO COLLEGIATE FOOTBALL COACH: THE FEMALE PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVE

Keira Towers, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

Graduate students in the field of Sport and Exercise Psychology consistently seek opportunities to develop their applied sport psychology consulting skills throughout their graduate studies, however creating and developing community partnerships and applied opportunities can be challenging. Based in an ethnographic framework and through the lens of the gaining entry model (Zakrajsek, 2020), this case study serves to describe the process of a female, international graduate student creating and growing working relationships within American collegiate football programs to create and implement novel mental training programs within the athletic departments. The student-consultant provided individual consultation to coaches and athletes, as well as group mental training workshops to coaches, members of the team's leadership group, position groups and the larger team as a whole. Building from the positive feedback from coaches, players, and staff, the student-consultant was asked to further expand her role into the formal coaching staff.

While in the role of coach, she attended practices, meetings, and other standard coaching-related responsibilities, as well as mentored another graduate student who transitioned into the lead mental performance coach role. Previous examples of this process from student to consultant to coach have been inconsistent, and almost entirely lacking in American collegiate football. This case study serves to highlight the process from student to consultant to coach, specifically from a female, international graduate student's perspective in collegiate American football and can provide a framework for graduate students and programs aiming to build similar applied partnerships.

P-017

FROM TRIFECTA TO TRANSFORMATION: THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF COACHING CORPORATE LEADERS

Elecia Kruise, Magellan Federal
Meg Helf, Magellan Federal
Jeremy Richter, Magellan Federal
Jon Metzler, Magellan Federal
Alex Gray, Magellan Federal
John Gaddy, Magellan Federal

Employee engagement continues to plummet to alarmingly low levels, with just 23% of employees globally feeling engaged at work (Gallup, 2023). Given that 70% of engagement is determined solely by the manager (Gallup, 2021), there is an opportunity for mental performance consultants (MPCs) to enhance leader development focused on effective leader practices.Drawing from our experience operationalizing psychological science to develop Leaders and Soldiers throughout the US Army, we designed eMbolden as a coach-the-coach, leader development ecosystem. Deploying cutting edge science-backed principles to enhance human development, performance, and thriving; our approach was grounded in supporting three essential human needs: autonomy, competence, and purpose, as well as creating psychological safety. Psychological safety research demonstrates that environments protecting individuals from harm enhances productivity, learning behaviors, the work experience, and leadership (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). Self-Determination Theory underscores the importance of fulfilling basic psychological needs and leveraging autonomy supportive motivators to drive satisfaction and engagement (McAnally & Hagger, 2024). Furthermore, meaningfulness of work increases engagement in work and commitment to the workplace (Kaur & Mittal, 2020). eMbolden leveraged MPCs to coach leaders across an organization into effective coach-leaders, providing monthly group coaching and unlimited individual coaching. The impact was significant: 86% of participants reported implementing learned strategies, and 91% felt more comfortable providing feedback, discussing challenges, and collaborating. One participant shared, "I am thrilled with the results I see from the few changes I have made thus far. It truly is improving the culture of my team."Three case studies of leaders integrating these evidence based-strategies for themselves or into their teams illustrate the ripple effect of the coach-the-coach model across diverse organizational settings. Leveraging an interdisciplinary approach and translating research into practice, MPCs can play a pivotal role in transforming organizational culture and addressing workplace disengagement.

P-018

HOW TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK TO INSTRUCTORS FROM A MENTAL PERFORMANCE PERSPECTIVE

Kimberly Rice, Human Performance and Wellness, F3EA Inc.
Alexis Kent, Human Performance and Wellness, F3EA, Inc.

Research has shown many limitations of feedback on mental performance to include (but not limited to) how the feedback was interpreted and received, lack of clarity, and the possibility of feedback becoming overwhelming. Effective feedback should encourage an open dialogue for understanding and ownership (Smith, 2010). Models for effective feedback that integrate both the interpersonal nature of the feedback process as well as the vantage point of the feedback receiver are few (Fong, et. al, 2018). However, a 'train the trainer' framework has been established as one of the most effective ways to facilitate a discussion on effective feedback in an organization based on deliberate practice (Ericsson, 2008) and experiential learning (Servey et al., 2020). To close the gap between a 'train the trainer' framework and the current limitations of feedback in mental performance a feedback tool specifically for military instructors and cadre for professional development was created. This poster will validate why using a detailed feedback sheet for soldiers to learn their strengths and weaknesses within certain subgroups can demonstrate clear guidance on how to improve a performance such as presentation and public speaking skills for Instructors. The poster will reveal the importance of using concrete examples to highlight observable behavior of a presenter and/or public speaker. Showing and describing a specific example on a feedback tool allows the recipient to understand the situation clearly what behavior explicitly needs to be improved (or did well) and describes a tangible reference point for them to focus on. The poster will showcase limitations and ways forward such as proposals on professional development topics specifically for instructors.

P-019

INFLUENCE OF A DIGITAL AUDIENCE ON PERFORMANCE, RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION, AND SOCIAL PHYSIQUE ANXIETY DURING A BENCH PRESS TEST

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Amber Shipherd, Texas A&M University - Kingsville / Next Level Mind Consulting
Desmond Millender, Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Boram Lim, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi

The presence of an audience influences exercise performance, rating of perceived exertion (RPE), and social physique anxiety (SPA; Hausenblas et al., 2004; Rhea et al., 2003; Sheridan et al., 2017). Previous studies investigated the impact of a physically present audience on exercise performance, RPE, or SPA, with little to no attention given to a digital audience's influence (i.e., social media). The purpose of this study was to explore a digital audience's influence on repetitions performed, RPE (Borg, 1982), and SPA (Hart et al., 1989) in physically active young adults during a YMCA bench press test (Ronai, 2020). Participants (n = 26; male = 15, female = 11) underwent a repeated measures design with two conditions: recorded and non-recorded. Participants completed the YMCA bench press test, the Borg RPE Scale, and the SPA 9-Item Scale for both

conditions. Investigators used deception in the recorded condition by telling participants their performance was being recorded and would be posted to the department's social media accounts. Three paired samples t-tests were calculated to examine differences in total repetitions, RPE, and SPA between the conditions. SPA was significantly higher ($t(25) = 2.27$, $p = .016$, $d = 0.45$) in the recorded condition (24.65 + 8.83) compared to the non-recorded condition (23.50 + 8.32). No statistically significant differences were found in total repetitions ($p = 0.31$) or RPE ($p = 0.20$) between the recorded and non-recorded conditions. These results suggest that the presence of a digital audience may increase SPA but not total repetitions performed or RPE in physically active young adults. Future research should continue to explore the relationship between exercise and social media.

P-020

INFLUENCE OF TASK-INVOLVING MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE ON ARMY CADET SHOOTERS' EFFICACY, AROUSAL, ATTENTIONAL FOCUS, AND PERFORMANCE

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Taylor Kinney, East Carolina University
Christine Habeeb, East Carolina University
Nicholas Murray, East Carolina University

We conducted an experimental study grounded in achievement goal perspective theory (Nicholls, 1989) to examine the effect of leaders' task-involving (reward effort, self-improvement, and encourages cooperative learning) or non-task-involving (highlighting mistakes, comparative feedback promoting intra-group rivalry) motivational climate feedback. After receiving IRB approval, 66 reserve officers' training corps (ROTC) cadets completed an air rifle performance assessment hitting targets at simulated 50m, 100m, and 150m distances from prone, kneeling, and standing positions at Time 1 (no feedback) and Time 2 (feedback). Data was collected on followers' self-efficacy (self-reported prior to each position), arousal (measured using EKG), time on target eye fixation (measured using eye-tracking glasses), and task performance. We hypothesized, compared to the non-task-involving condition, those in the task-involving condition would have greater arousal, self-efficacy, time on target fixation, and shooting performance. ANCOVAs revealed meaningful (i.e., variance explained by condition) and often significant differences across conditions. At Time 2, cadets in the task-involving condition had higher self-efficacy (1-12% variance), arousal (1-3%), time on target duration (1-22% variance), and averaged two more made shots (out of 45) compared to the non-task-involving condition. The results suggest that cadets receiving task-involving feedback experienced optimal attentional focus (double their fixation time on target) and arousal levels (moderate levels of arousal) during performance. While this did not result in significantly greater performance during this brief shooting task, being in such an aroused state and increased fixation duration are characteristics of high-performance shooters (e.g., Olympic, elite soldiers). Promoting a task-involving climate by using positive reinforcement to promote high effort, self-referenced improvement, and correcting mistakes optimizes performers' arousal levels compared to using non-task-involving feedback. Training military officers on how to provide task-involving feedback to subordinates can optimize soldier readiness for performance.

P-021

LIFE AFTER SPORTS: EVALUATING A CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAM FOR GRADUATING COLLEGIATE STUDENT-ATHLETES

Melvin Sangalang, Michigan State University
Scott Pierce, Illinois State University
Lindsey Kellar, Illinois Wesleyan University
Anthony Amorose, Illinois State University
Brett Haffner, Illinois State University

Though many collegiate student-athletes aspire to play professionally in the future, the majority must start a new occupational career upon graduation. Planning for this transition can minimize potential challenges and difficulties. The Life After Sports program aims to help graduating collegiate student-athletes prepare for life beyond collegiate sports, with four objectives: (1) help participants identify and set goals, (2) foster a balanced self-identity, (3) enhance awareness and confidence in transferring life skills learned from collegiate sports, and (4) serve as a reminder of ongoing social support. The purpose of Study 1 was to examine the short-term impact of the transition programming on student-athlete psychological outcomes. The program workshop was delivered to 22 graduating student-athletes at a Division III university (8 male, 14 female). Student-athletes complete pre- and post-workshop surveys to measure various psychological outcomes. Results showed significant increases in hope, life satisfaction, and life skills transfer, alongside a significant decrease in athletic identity. The purpose of Study 2 was to examine the impact of ongoing transition programming on student-athlete psychological outcomes. Six participants (100% female) participated in two follow-up consultation sessions (approx. 3 months and 8 months after graduation) to reflect on their career transition experiences and completed the post-workshop surveys. Seven participants, who did not participate in follow-up sessions, completed the post-workshop surveys approximately 8 months after graduation. Results showed that those with follow-up sessions continued to experience positive changes, while those without follow-up showed no change or returned to pre-workshop levels. The findings add to the athlete career transitions literature, suggesting that while one-time workshops may offer short-term benefits, ongoing support can lead to sustained improvements in athlete well-being by helping them navigate transitions over time. Practical implications will be provided, emphasizing the importance of continued support for a successful life after sports.

P-022

MASS CASUALTY RESPONSE FOR SPORT PSYCHOLOGISTS

John Heil, Psychological Health Roanoke

Mass shootings are increasingly common, with an extraordinary impact on victims, first responders, family/friends, and those in the general public whose identities intersect culturally with the victims, creating a cascade of collective traumas (Abrams, 2022). Sports events are among the largest community gatherings. Factors that render sport events a potential target include: extensive media presence, the emotionally charged nature of fandom, and the inherent challenge of managing crowds. It is increasingly likely that sport psychologists will be called on to respond: managing

the traumatic impact of casualty in a sport setting; guiding sports events as part of the recovery process; or, determining whether sports events should be cancelled or delayed out of respect for the victims (Heil, Bennett, Brolinson & Goforth, 2010). Mass casualty requires quick response, and sensitivity to the setting in which they occur, especially when specific identity groups are targeted. This lecture is a first step in understanding how to respond to mass casualty events, providing an overview of key considerations, drawing on the existing literature and practices in public safety and sport critical incident response (Mitchell & Everly, 1996; Psychological First Aid Manual, n.d., Athey & Heil, 2011). The lessons learned from the Virginia Tech shootings (Heil et. al, 2009) will serve as a model for understanding the challenges and conceptualizing the psychological response. The role of mandated risk assessment teams in the collegiate setting (Threat Assessment in Virginia, n.d.) will be described. The presenter is a sport and clinical psychologist who has consulted on multiple mass casualty incidents and over 100 critical incidents in sport, policing, firefighting, rescue, and medicine.

P-023

MAT MINDSET: COACHING MENTAL TRAINING IN COLLEGE CHEERLEADING

Morgan Findley, University of Tennessee
Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

Graduate students in the field of Sport and Exercise Psychology consistently seek opportunities to develop their applied sport psychology consulting skills throughout their graduate studies, with many aspiring to work within collegiate athletics. Among the possible teams open to a mental performance consultant, collegiate cheerleading programs are a choice students can count on as an open opportunity; as long as there are college sports, there will be college cheerleaders to enhance the fan experience. However, college cheerleaders are athletes with low media attention and participation compared to other high-profile sports and there is also little research published on application of mental performance skills within this population. This leaves graduate students with strong odds of having the opportunity to work with collegiate cheerleaders but with little understanding of what sport psychology consulting might look like in practice. Therefore, this case study aims to explore the experiences and challenges of a graduate student working with a collegiate cheerleading program as a mental training coach throughout their competitive season. This case study highlights the evolution of the graduate student's role over the course of the season and provides insight into key areas of focus for mental training with unique athletes. Attendees will gain valuable understanding of cheerleading's cultural nuance and evidence-based practices on meeting the unique needs of the athletes and coaches.

P-024

MENTAL SKILLS FOR CADET SUCCESS: DATA AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A TEN LESSON MENTAL SKILLS COURSE

Mitch DeSimone, United States Military Academy West Point
Kathryn Longshore, United States Military Academy West Point
Matthew Gonzalez, United States Military Academy West Point
Lezshell Pauling, United States Military Academy West Point

The Performance Psychology Program (PPP) at the United States Military Academy's Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP) has evolved into a fully integrated resource for cadets facing the diverse performance demands of West Point. One of PPP's successful recent offerings is the applied mental skills course, Mental Skills for Cadet Success, a ten-lesson, small-group experience delivered by Performance Psychology Instructors. This course focuses on teaching, applying, and adapting core mental performance skills to help cadets thrive in academic, military, physical, athletic and personal settings.Cadets meet with instructors for ten sessions over approximately four weeks, covering a different mental skill in each session. Each session emphasizes application; cadets practice techniques in real-time, build personalized performance plans, and reflect on their experiences. Over the past four years, data has been collected at the start and end of each course section using the ACSI-28, with results consistently demonstrating significant increases in cadet coping skills over time. In addition, qualitative data from open-ended questionnaires highlights most beneficial themes highlighted by cadets, which will be presented alongside ACSI data.This presentation will outline the course structure, present key data findings, and share lessons learned in delivering applied mental skills training to a high-stakes population. The aim is to offer a practical model that can inform similar programs at other institutions, particularly those seeking to embed performance psychology into comprehensive performance and/or leadership development programs.

P-025

NAVIGATING HEALTH POST-COLLEGIATE SPORTS: INJURY, ELITE SPORT CULTURE, AND CHALLENGES IN HEALTHCARE ENGAGEMENT FOR FORMER STUDENT-ATHLETES

Mari Dortch Diaz, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Peyton Greco, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Yeongjun Seo, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
J.D. DeFreese, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Randy Aldret, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine - Louisiana Campus
Avinash Chandran, Ph.D., Datalys Center
DeAnne Brooks, EdD, Old Dominion University
Erin Reifsteck, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

The culture of elite sport often promotes excessive conformity to the "sport ethic" (i.e., values and norms that define what it means to be an athlete) by encouraging participants to accept physical risks such as injury and play through pain (Hughes & Coakley, 1991). Such behavior is often rationalized as a necessary sacrifice for the sake of performance and is typically reinforced by family, coaches, teammates, and fans who validate this aspect of an athlete's identity (Coker-Cranney et al., 2018). Yet, overconforming to these values

and norms can lead to physical injury and a problematic perception of what constitutes health (Theberge, 2008), which can have long-term implications for athletes. Further, as athletes transition out of collegiate sports, they lose access to resources (e.g., sports medicine team) for managing their health and may feel unprepared to independently navigate a new healthcare system. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of former student-athletes who recently transitioned out of collegiate sport to better understand their needs, concerns, and suggestions for optimizing transitional healthcare. A qualitative descriptive analysis (Sandelowski, 2000) of focus group interviews conducted with 12 former student-athletes whose collegiate careers concluded between 2019 and 2023 revealed that sport-related injuries sustained within elite sport culture significantly influenced their engagement with health and healthcare. Participants described challenges related to the lingering effects of playing through injury and struggled with navigating a healthcare system (e.g., primary care, physical therapy, counseling) to manage those effects. As such, applied sport psychology professionals should consider their role in preparing athletes by encouraging development of health-promoting attitudes before transitioning out of sport and educating them on post-sport healthcare navigation skills. Suggested strategies, such as implementing healthcare literacy workshops, challenging the "playing through pain" ethos, and collaborating with practitioners with sport backgrounds will be discussed.

P-026

NAVIGATING ROCKY ROAD: HOW STUDENT SUCCESS COACH USES MENTAL PERFORMANCE SKILLS TO ELEVATE TOWARDS SUCCESS

Trisha Mukherjee, Ithaca College
Justine Vosloo, Ithaca College
Frank Ely, Ithaca College

Mental performance professionals are often associated with consulting, military, or sports settings (Vosloo et al., 2020). However, there is a growing need to integrate performance psychology into higher education, where Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPC) can work as Student Success Coaches (SSC) to support students and student-athletes with optimizing their academic and personal success (Robinson, 2015). By working one-on-one, and through group workshops, SSC can help students develop essential skills such as goal setting, motivation, time management, and self-talk to overcome challenges (Portenga, 2018). In addition to enhancing academic performance, an SSC can play a crucial role in supporting student-athletes through different periods of transition, particularly from high school to college, managing academic expectations in college and preparing to move beyond collegiate sports (Manthey and Smith, 2023). By equipping them with strategies to navigate change, SSC helps student-athletes identify new opportunities and redefine their sense of purpose. This presentation will explore the application of mental performance skills in an academic setting, specifically within the Center for Student Success. Key challenges will be highlighted, including accommodating neurodiverse students, managing confidentiality while collaborating with multiple campus partners, and making appropriate referrals for students in crisis (McDowall, & Kiseleva, 2024). The role of SSC as a mentor, especially dealing with the influence of perfectionism, procrastination and adjustment to college life will be discussed (Watson, 2022). Additionally, practical mental performance strategies that help students overcome setbacks, build resilience, and stay focused on their holistic college experience will be discussed. By bridging the gap between performance psychology and higher education, SSC can provide students with the tools needed to navigate academic demands, personal challenges, and career transitions effectively. Further, exploring the role of SSC who utilize performance psychology, exposes neophyte practitioners with additional employment opportunities within mental performance.

P-027

PAIN PERCEPTION IN COLLEGIATE SPORT: COMPARING ATHLETES AND COACHES

Allie Rosenberg, Penn State University
Andrew Friesen, The Pennsylvania State University, Berks

Past findings have identified differences in the way pain is perceived from person to person (e.g., Deroche et al., 2011). However, there is limited research examining these differences as they pertain to athletes and coaches and their subsequent coping mechanisms. This study examined the difference in pain perception between athletes and coaches. The Sport Inventory for Pain (Meyers et al., 1992; SIP) was distributed to athletes and coaches at the collegiate level. The SIP consists of five pain subscales: (a) coping, a measure of direct coping responses; (b) cognitive, a measure of cognitive strategies used in the face of pain; (c) avoidance, the tendency to avoid pain-producing responses; (d) catastrophizing, the tendency to be overwhelmed by pain; (e) body awareness, a measure of response style; and (f) a composite HURT score, represents the ability to play through pain. The total number of respondents who consented to and participated in the study was 331. We ran several independent sample t-tests to compare athletes and coaches across the SIP variables. Further, gender comparisons revealed that females scored higher in cognitive and catastrophizing factors, whereas males reported greater bodily awareness and HURT scores. Coaches, compared to athletes, demonstrated higher scores in coping, cognitive, catastrophizing, avoidance, and HURT measures. Team sport athletes scored higher in coping and HURT than individual sport athletes, while contact sport athletes outscored non-contact athletes in coping, catastrophizing, and HURT. This research can inform practitioners about the difference in the likelihood of coaches encouraging athletes to play through pain, compared to athletes' self-perception of their pain tolerance. Understanding these differences may inform more targeted approaches to pain management and support, improving performance, injury prevention, and overall well-being in athletes.

P-028

PERFORMANCE PROFILING FOR PROFESSIONAL SOCCER: DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND FEEDBACK

Patrick Maneval, University of Kentucky

While teams search for the newest technology, training method, or trend to maximize team performance, it is important to acknowledge the utility of performance profiling for understanding team makeup and factors contributing to team dynamics. Based in the Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955), assessing a team's characteristics is rooted in

understanding the unique nature of an athlete's experience in sport and how it differs between athletes, as well as coaches. This poster intends to convey the creation, implementation, and presentation processes that this performance profiling technique embodied to assist in the understanding, cohesion, and development of a professional soccer team. Multiple considerations and findings are evident from the first iteration of this performance profiling, as it relates to timing, content, delivery, and application. It is intended that this design incorporates holistic measures of athlete wellness, mental performance, and success. This focus on the entire athlete's needs and the flexibility of the profiles to fit the team and athlete's needs promotes individuality and authenticity in its application.This performance profiling technique includes a variety of metrics for team performance, including self-identified strengths, weaknesses, short- and long-term SMART goals, mindset cues, individual zones for optimal function analysis, and the exploration of why the athlete participates in sport. This poster serves as a reflection of the creation process, as well as the implementation and adjustment for future installations of said performance profiles. References:Kelly, G. A. (1955). The psychology of personal constructs. Vol. 1. A theory of personality. Vol. 2. Clinical diagnosis and psychotherapy. W. W. Norton.

P-029

PILOTING MINDFUL SPORT PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT (MSPE) FOR DIVISION III ATHLETES

Lauren Hoolahan, McDaniel College
Jessica Ford, McDaniel College

Traditional psychological skills training (PST) interventions call for athletes to modify their negative or distorted thought patterns to enhance sport performance (Whelan et al., 1991). Mindfulness-based intervention strategies (MBIs) are a strong alternative to PST (Hut et al., 2021; Kaufman et al., 2018) and integrate meditation, breathing exercises, and body awareness techniques to improve mental and physical health and encourage athletes to adopt nonjudgemental acceptance of thoughts, feelings, and emotions rather than trying to change them (Sappington & Longshore, 2015). Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE) (Kaufman et al., 2009; 2018) is an intervention designed to use the strengths of mindfulness-based techniques but applied specifically to athletes. The purpose of the current study is to explore the efficacy of the 6-week MSPE intervention to enhance Division III student-athletes' performance and well-being. Informed by previous research (Minkler et al., 2021), student-athletes from a small Division III institution were evaluated on measures of flow, anxiety, mindfulness, and emotion regulation ("FAME" profile; Kaufman et al., 2018) before and after the manualized MSPE intervention. Measures of collegiate stress were added to further explore the athletic, academic, and social pressures of Division III student-athletes. Results of the study demonstrate the efficacy of the MSPE intervention in decreasing anxiety and stress and increasing flow, mindfulness, emotion regulation skills, and sport performance. Incorporating MSPE into mental skills training programs is especially beneficial at the Division III level due to the lack of financial resources and access to sport psychology services (Minkler et al., 2021).

P-030

RESET CASE STUDY: FIRST APPLICATION OF A SELF-COMPASSION INTERVENTION IN A UK FOOTBALL (SOCCER) ACADEMY

Jessica O'Kelly, Owner, Train Your Brain | University of Greenwich
Claire Rossato, University of Greenwich

The UK has one of the most competitive youth football (soccer) systems globally, with Premier League academies setting the standard for elite talent development. Youth footballers face intense pressure, often exacerbated by maladaptive coping strategies such as self-criticism and emotional suppression, reinforced within the traditional "mental toughness" culture (Spencer, 2022; Kristiansen et al., 2011; Sutherland et al., 2014). While self-compassion interventions enhance performance, resilience, and well-being in athletes (Mosewich et al., 2013; Cormier et al., 2023), their application in UK football academies remains unexplored. This case study evaluates the first implementation of the Resilience Enhancement Sport Exercise Training (RESET) intervention (Kuchar et al., 2022) in a UK football academy.Seventeen male U16 athletes from an English Football League (EFL) One Club participated in a six-session intervention. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was used, incorporating pre- and post-intervention assessments of self-compassion, self-criticism, resilience, and perceived performance, alongside post-intervention qualitative analysis. Quantitative findings showed a downward trend in self-criticism and an upward trend in self-compassion, though neither was statistically significant. While coach-rated performance declined, this may reflect the timing of player selection and retention decisions rather than intervention effects. However, 47% of athletes reported direct performance improvements, and 40% highlighted cognitive and emotional regulation benefits supporting their competitive mindset. Athletes overwhelmingly reported positive psychological benefits, with 77% noting increased motivation, 69% reporting improved well-being, and 55% identifying resilience development as most valuable.Findings suggest that self-compassion interventions enhance psychological adaptability in elite youth football, equipping athletes with healthier coping mechanisms for setbacks. RESET demonstrated strong applied value highlighting its potential for sport psychologists in high-performance settings. To clarify explicit performance benefits, future research should incorporate objective measures and longitudinal tracking. Strengthening the evidence base could increase club buy-in, ensuring self-compassion training is integrated into elite talent development pathways in UK academy football.

P-031

RETHINKING SPORT-INJURY RELATED GROWTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR ATHLETES WITH CHRONIC PAIN

Emily Chua, Saint Louis University
Lauren Papianou, Saint Louis University
Michael Ross, Saint Louis University

Sport-injury related growth (SIRG) is a theory intended to guide coaches, psychologists, and medical professionals in how a growth-related mindset can be promoted in athletes with acute injuries (Roy Davis et al., 2017). However, about 50% of Division I athletes reported developing chronic

pain (CP) from previous injuries (Cowee & Simon, 2019). Athletes who develop CP demonstrate a similar need for a growth-related mindset, though it is unclear if the SIRG framework is equally comprehensive for injured athletes who develop CP compared to those without it. In this abstract, we propose adaptations to the mechanisms of the current SIRG theory to expand its clinical utility with athletes who have CP. Because individuals with CP often catastrophize (Meints & Edwards, 2018) and experience unpredictable pain fluctuations, traditional regulation strategies may need modification. Second, a positive reappraisal of chronic pain as an opportunity for growth may require a different approach such that pain is reframed as a signal while emphasizing what is still possible rather than what is lost. Unlike athletes recovering from acute injuries, those who develop CP may not experience pain remission but rather focus on pain management. Therefore, CP athletes should integrate gratitude exercises and engage in activities that bring them joy despite ongoing pain. Athletes with CP should seek out social support through support groups and educate family and friends to improve understanding and reduce stigma of CP. Lastly, cultural scripts may help CP athletes find motivation in stories of others managing CP successfully rather than narratives of overcoming injuries to understand that developing resilience does not mean ignoring pain but rather adapting to it. In conclusion, if the SIRG framework is to be applied to individuals with CP, it should focus on long term adaptations, emphasize acceptance and flexibility over rigid expectations, and promote self-compassion.

P-032

SCROLLING FOR ANSWERS: THE EVOLUTION AND EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN SPORT INJURY REHABILITATION

Jill Tracey, Wilfrid Laurier University
Chynna Ho-Young Cadogen, Wilfrid Laurier University

The increasing presence of social media in sport injury environments presents unique opportunities to explore its role in rehabilitation, psychological adaptation, and knowledge dissemination. Athletes use social media to stay connected to their sport, but also engage with others (e.g., teammates, fans, etc.) in turn providing experiences which may be positively or negatively perceived by the athlete. Injured athletes perceptions may manifest as facilitating (e.g., strengthening rehabilitation adherence) or inhibiting influences (e.g., increased fear of return play), ultimately shaping rehabilitation outcomes (Brougham, 2021). The rise of headlines and media content surrounding female soccer athletes and ACL injuries and the concerning rate of ACL injuries for female soccer athletes highlight the urgency for novel research on media impact on athletes' psychological responses to injury and rehabilitation.The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the influence of social media on the rehabilitation experiences of an elite level female soccer athlete who sustained multiple ACL injuries involving multiple surgeries. A critical realist methodology was used as it complements injury rehabilitation research acknowledging larger forces influencing behaviors, cognitions, and emotions (i.e. female soccer athletes) within their environment (Archer et al., 2013). Through semi-structured and data prompted interviewing, results demonstrate how she engaged with online platforms seeking injury-related information, emotional support, and rehabilitation guidance across different stages of recovery. Findings suggest social media served as both a source of motivation and misinformation, influencing the athlete's psychological responses and return-to-sport decisions. Abundant social media content led the athlete to occasionally bypass medical consultation. The study highlights potential risks and benefits of digital engagement in injury contexts, calling for greater awareness of evidence-based content and professional guidance. Findings contribute to the growing discourse on athlete well-being in the digital era and provide implications for clinicians, researchers, and sport organizations in fostering informed rehabilitation practices.

P-033

SEEKING YOUR BEST LIFE: THE MINDFUL PURSUIT OF STUDENT-ATHLETE THRIVING

Andrew Augustus, UofL Health, University of Louisville Athletics
Sam Zizzi, West Virginia University

Thriving, or the concurrent experience of healthy well-being and high-level performance, may serve as a valuable construct when studying the optimal student-athlete experience. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have been shown to positively impact well-being and performance, yet these interventions rarely use thriving as an outcome variable with athletes. The focus of this poster will be to show a study examining the impact of an MBI for improving student-athlete experiences of thriving. The study used a quasi-experimental longitudinal design with college athletes from the United States (n =55) from three sports that were randomly assigned to either a control or a 7-session MBI. Although comprehensive measures of thriving did not yield significant change for those in the MBI relative to the control, multiple thriving characteristics and outcomes were improved after the intervention compared to the control group. MBI participants reported significant improvement for subjective performance satisfaction, mindful awareness, and the use of mindfulness to regulate emotions. Exploratory analysis revealed those in the MBI, relative to the control, experienced improvements of optimism and a sense of meaning and purpose. Student-athletes qualitatively reported sport and life benefits related to thriving (e.g., self-regulation, focus, awareness, vitality, intentional actions) while also suggesting improving MBIs with systematic reminders to meditate, more meditation opportunities within the sport environment, and autonomy-supportive instruction. These preliminary data support the use of MBIs to facilitate characteristics and outcomes of thriving, while also offering suggestions for practical improvements when implementing MBIs with student-athletes.

P-034

SHARPENING THE EDGE: INTEGRATING MENTAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE INTERVENTIONS INTO THE MILITARY AVIATION ENVIRONMENT

Zoran Stojkovic, Canadian Forces Morale & Welfare Services

Integrating mental skills training (MST) into military aviation is crucial for enhancing performance, resilience, and mission success. This presentation explores effective MST delivery methods, focusing on individual and group interventions, relationship-building, and mission-specific support. Individual MST allows for tailored approaches addressing

personal challenges faced by aviation professionals. A study by Meland et al. (2015) demonstrated that 12 months of mindfulness training improved attentional control and arousal regulation in a high-performance combat aircraft unit, concluding that such training "improved self-reported mindfulness, attentional control, and arousal regulation" among pilots. Group MST interventions, such as those implemented in sniper training, have shown promise. Ytterbøl et al. (2022) conducted an explorative case study integrating MST techniques into an advanced sniper course in the Norwegian Armed Forces, highlighting the need for research and development tailored to the unique context and environment of elite military units. They emphasized that "within the elite spheres of the military, there is a need for research and development to fit the context and environment." Building strong relationships between MST practitioners and military personnel fosters trust and collaboration, essential for effective support. Understanding military culture and context is vital for the successful integration of MST programs. Ytterbøl et al. (2022) noted that a lack of specific knowledge of military culture and context could lead to sub-optimal approaches in performance psychology applications, stating that "a sub-optimal approach has been employed, due to a lack of specific knowledge of military culture and context." Mission-specific MST support addresses the unique challenges of particular operations, such as decision-making under duress and operational stress. Tailoring MST to these specific demands ensures that interventions are relevant and effective, thereby enhancing both individual and unit performance.

P-035

STAYING UNITED IN JOY AND MISERY: COLLECTIVE EMOTIONS AS A WAY TO FOSTER TEAM INTEGRATION

Svenja Wolf, Florida State University
V. Vanessa Wergin, The University of Queensland
David Eccles, Florida State Univerity

Although sometimes shunned in competitive contexts, a team's social integration (e.g., member attraction, group integration) can contribute substantially to success and simultaneously enhance member commitment, enjoyment, and adherence (Knight & Eisenkraft, 2015). To enhance social integration, coaches and consultants usually implement more or less complex and time intensive interventions (Martin et al., 2009). An alternative and potentially more efficient way to build integration could be to enhance the experience of collective emotions with a team (i.e., instances where team members experience similar emotions; Tamminen et al., 2016; Zumeta et al., 2016). Specifically, in this talk, we present data from 200 competitive athletes (63% female) across 18 teams who provided questionnaire responses regarding their perceived collective emotions and social integration (i.e., entitativity, identification, social cohesion, commitment) before and after a match. These data show that experiences of greater emotional similarity, regardless of whether these were pleasant or unpleasant, predicted greater perceived social integration across all facets but especially for the cognitive team-level variable of entitativity, that is, whether the collection of individuals looked and felt like a team. These results align with perspectives of self-categorization (Livingstone et al., 2011) and entitativity (Campbell, 1958) and suggest that collective emotions may serve as cues for team identification and demarcation towards other groups. With this, our findings underscore the functionality of (collective) emotions for team and member functioning and highlight the importance of expressing and sharing (also unpleasant) emotions. To develop collective emotions and harness their potential benefits, teams can employ strategies like speeches, modeling, team rituals, and collective goal setting (Evans et al., 2018; Tamminen & Crocker, 2013).

P-036

THE ART OF REBT: HARNESSING ITS SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS

Sydney Lee, Teachers College, Columbia University

Performing artists navigate challenges beyond physical injury and public scrutiny; their craft demands profound emotional vulnerability and the ability to inspire through raw authenticity. Given the blurred lines between their professional and personal identities, it is no surprise that the entertainment industry grapples with high rates of perfectionism, burnout, isolation, anxiety, and an enmeshment of self-worth with artistic output (Cunningham & Turner, 2016; Gregory & Interiano-Shiverdecker, 2021; Watson, 2020).Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) offers not only an empirically supported framework, but also a uniquely holistic approach capable of addressing the psychological and existential struggles of artists. This lecture explores how REBT's philosophical and spiritual principles provide a responsive, adaptable intervention for creatives. Despite skepticism surrounding its ties to Buddhist teachings, REBT remains firmly rooted in an academically rigorous cognitive framework: ABCDE, or its sports psychology adaptation, GABCDE (Padesky & Beck, 2003; Tóth et al., 2024). Yet, it is the model's emphasis on Unconditional Self-Acceptance (USA), Unconditional Other-Acceptance (UOA), Unconditional Life-Acceptance (ULA), mindfulness, and Eastern practices such as meditation and yoga that allows it to meet the complex, multifaceted needs of performers.Beyond cognitive restructuring, REBT fosters resilience through somatic, philosophical, and interpersonal interventions. Its direct therapist-client alliance, combined with its prosocial principles, promotes psychological well-being by nurturing a sense of connectedness and purpose (Cid-Vega & Brown, 2023; Ellis, 2004; Zoghbi et al., 2023). By integrating these dimensions, REBT not only equips artists to navigate high-pressure environments, but also provides a path toward sustainable fulfillment: one that honors both their craft and their humanity.

P-037

THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A MULTI-COMPONENT MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM FOR CANADIAN VARSITY ATHLETES AND COACHES

Penny Werthner, University of Calgary
Elise Lacoste, University of Calgary

Performance expectations in both academics and sport can lead to negative stress and mental health outcomes for student-athletes (Lopes Dos Santos et al., 2020, McLester et al., 2014; Wolanin et al., 2015). Scholars suggest the development of psychological skills such as setting effective goals, focus, managing stress and anxiety, self-regulation, competition planning, debriefing, and the improvement of mental health literacy, including knowledge regarding sleep and well-being, can function as a buffer against mental health

challenges for athletes (Durand-Bush & Van Slingerland, 2021; Estanol et al., 2013; Van Slingerland et al., 2019; Vealey, 2024). This study developed and implemented a mental performance and mental health program for Canadian varsity student-athletes and their coaches. Women's soccer and track and field were the sports selected for the first iteration of the program, and the sample was comprised of 60 athletes and 10 coaches. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at the conclusion of year one of the program to understand the student-athlete and coaches' experiences and gather feedback for improvement for year two. Using interpretive description analysis (Thorne, 2016), findings surrounding psychological skill development, coach integration, and understanding of mental health emerged from the data. More specifically, the program format promoted transferrable skill development for sport performance as well as for life as a student. Suggestions for program improvement included beginning this work as early as possible in the academic year, creating a dedicated workbook to accompany the program, and providing strategies for effective communication. This research aims to inform the work of sport psychology practionners who want to include a sub-clinical mental health component in their programming.

P-038

THE FEASIBILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY OF A MINDFULNESS-ACCEPTANCE-COMMITMENT (MAC) BASED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES

Luke Nathan, Rutgers University Athletics

The Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment (MAC) approach to performance enhancement is an acceptance-based behavioral intervention designed to assist athletes in reaching optimal performance levels (Gardner and Moore, 2007). MAC interventions for high school athletes have shown beneficial results in performance outcomes (Dehghani et al, 2018; Moore, 2009; Schwanhausser, 2009; Wolanin, 2004). While initial studies of MAC interventions at the high school level have found improvements in many areas of athlete functioning (e.g., anxiety, awareness, experiential avoidance, flow, mindful attention, athletic performance), questions still remain regarding the feasibility and acceptability of the application of MAC (Dehghani et al, 2018; Moore, 2009; Schwanhausser, 2009; Wolanin, 2004). The present mix-methods study assessed the feasibility and acceptability of the seven-module MAC program designed by Gardner and Moore (2007) on a public high school varsity boys' basketball team. The study aims to contribute to heightening mental health support across the high school athletic landscape.

P-039

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERFECTIONISM AND BURNOUT

Todd Wilkinson, University of Wisconsin - River Falls

Burnout in sports and other performance-based activities has received significant attention in recent years (e.g., Olson et al., 2022). One area of investigation regarding the potential factors associated with burnout is performer perfectionism. While research has indicated a positive relationship between these variables, there has been relatively less attention paid to potential moderating variables of this relationship. In the present study, it was hypothesized that performers high in perfectionism who were part of a performance-based high school or college team or group that possessed a caring motivational climate, would be less likely to experience burnout than performers high in perfectionism whose activity did not entail a caring motivational climate. One-hundred and one undergraduate students completed the study including measures of perfectionism, burnout, perceived motivational climate, coaching behaviors and other items. The results supported the hypothesis. Coaches, researchers and students alike can use these findings to inform both research and intervention to promote the development of caring motivational climates for athletes and performers to reduce burnout and support positive experiences in sport and performance settings.

P-040

THE RANGER MINDSET: RESILIENCE AND GROWTH UNDER PRESSURE

Joseph Carbone, KBR Inc
Anya Salzgeber, KBR Inc.
Kiarra Mello, KBR Inc
Ryan Deletis, KBR Inc
Anthony Perez, US ARMY
Sergio Olvera, Bearing Straights
Joanny Valerio, KBR Inc

U.S. Army Ranger School is considered by many to be the premier leadership school in the U.S. Military and one of the most difficult schools in the U.S. Army (Hutchings, 1990). To become Ranger Qualified or "tabbed," soldiers must pass the 61-day course meant to simulate the stressors of combat to test soldiers tactical, technical, leadership, and physical abilities (Moore et. al., 1992). Instructors and leaders within Ranger School often say, "You will either leave Ranger School with a tab or a story." The physical aspects of preparation and success in Ranger School have been frequently studied while there has only been one study examining the psychological predictors of success in Ranger School (Benedict et. al., 2023). There have been no studies examining the psychological growth soldiers experience through Ranger School. This project aimed to explore this gap within the literature. There are two main intents of this project. First, to provide soldiers empirical evidence of their psychological growth and development as a leader while in Ranger School. Second, to create demographic profiles that can be used to predict successful graduation from Ranger School and better prepare future soldiers for success in Ranger School. Soldiers take a modified version of the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory-28 during their in-processing briefs and again upon graduation or failure from the course. Each soldier receives a document showing their pre- and post-test results indicating what areas they grew throughout Ranger school. In 360 Ranger students, successful graduates (n=312) had higher pre-test scores in Peaking Under Pressure and Coachability sub scales than the students who failed the course. Graduates also showed growth in six of seven sub scales. One of the long-term goals of the demographic profiles is to provide Pre-Ranger courses insights into trainable psychological factors that are key to success in Ranger School.

P-041

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS: STRATEGIES FOR TRAVELING ATHLETES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Alessandra Cordero, University of Kentucky

As sports expand internationally, athletes increasingly face the challenges of frequent travel, which can impact their performance and consistency. This expansion, seen in leagues like the NFL and the emerging U.S. cricket league, brings significant benefits such as increased viewership, tourism, and revenue. However, it also requires athletes to adapt to new environments and overcome travel-related challenges. Sport psychologists have long known that interventions can enhance performance during travel, yet travel logistics can reduce the time athletes spend with psychologists. Therefore, coaches must be equipped with strategies to support athletes on the road. Based on research by Judy L. Van Raalte (2003), which highlights the benefits of incorporating sport psychology interventions into travel preparations, it is important to have strategies that are both effective for athletes and able to be administered by coaches when teams travel without a sport psychologist. Three key interventions—theming, imagery, and self-talk—are presented, as they are particularly adaptable for coaches with limited experience in administering sport psychology interventions. Although direct research on travel interventions for athletes is limited, findings from adjacent studies (Jasper et al., 2022; Martin et al., 1999; Sharkey, 2020) provide a foundation for these approaches. By empowering coaches with these tools, athletes can get closer to consistent success both on the road and at home. Furthermore, implementation of these strategies can encourage intentional research on the effectiveness of theming, imagery, and self-talk for traveling athletes. Exploring the connections between applied work and research on this topic is crucial to improving how traveling athletes are cared for and how we, as professionals in the field, can continue to balance the need for both applied work and research.

P-042

HE SHOOTS, GOD SCORES!: A STUDENT-ATHLETE TENDENCY TO CREDIT HIGHER POWERS FOR SPORT SUCCESS

Cooper Harris, Boston University

In reaction to the outcomes of their sporting events, student-athletes can make attributions to a wide range of factors, from personal performance to the work of a higher religio-spiritual power. Previous studies on the religiosities of student-athletes (Bell et al., 2009; Evans & Peterson, 2015) are insightful, as well as research on the general characteristics and implications of "supernatural" attributions (Exline & Wilt, 2022). Still, they fall short of understanding specifically how student-athletes, in comparison with non-student-athletes, use faith to inform their attributions of positive and negative event outcomes. This study uses an online survey of U.S. college students (N = 217) to question how groups compare on higher-power attributional tendencies. It also examines the conditions that may be connected to greater rates of higher-power attributions. Participants were asked to recall and describe specific examples of both success and failure from their time as either a student-athlete or student-non-athlete. This was followed by selecting the extent of their outcome attributions to various targets (e.g. "aid of teammates/coaches", "luck", "higher/divine power"). Findings revealed that across outcome conditions, student-athletes made significantly more higher-power attributions than non-student-athletes. Additionally, the rates of higher-power attributions were higher in the positive outcome condition than in the negative outcome condition. Analysis also showed significantly higher religiosity rates in student-athletes than in non-student-athletes, but God-specific religious beliefs did not yield a significant group difference. These findings help provide a better understanding of how faith may inform the outcome attributions of student-athletes. They also display a new avenue for religio-spiritual informed sport psychology approaches in areas of motivation, anxiety reduction, and adversity that take into account the religious differences found among student-athletes and non-student-athletes.

P-043

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE STUDY OF MENTAL PERFORMANCE AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Jerry Holt, Florida A&M University
Aaron Goodson, Miami Marlins

The opportunity for the formal study of mental performance/sport psychology training is limited for students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Although athletics and other performance activities are abundant on these campuses, this level of activity is not reflected in course offerings for students who might wish to study mental performance on a formal academic basis. This poster presentation explores the extent to which the opportunity to take classes in mental performance/sport psychology is currently manifested at HBCUs. For the study, a convenience sample was selected for investigation, consisting of institutions from the four NCAA athletic conferences that are comprised of HBCUs. These conferences are the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC; 8 schools), Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC; 12 schools), Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC; 15 schools), and the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (CIAA; 13 schools). Because of the heightened emphasis on athletics at these schools, and because of their relative student body sizes compared to other HBCUs, it was considered that these schools would serve as the most likely to provide a class or classes in mental performance/sport psychology. For each of these 48 schools, the most current university catalog was consulted to determine whether a class or classes are offered. If this were the case, as a follow-up, each relevant department (kinesiology, psychology, or other) was contacted by email or telephone to determine whether the class(es) were indeed offered for study. If the opportunity for formal study is noticeably lacking among HBCUs, it may be incumbent on organizations such as AASP to increase efforts to provide the students at these institutions the opportunity for such study.

P-044

PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES OF IDENTITY FORMATION WITHIN THE JUNIOR LIFEGUARD PROGRAM

Laney Prichard, California State University, Long Beach
Jillian Arriola, California Shate University, Long Beach
Danielle Wong Vickland, California State University, Long Beach

Youth sport participation has shown to support identity formation and promote Positive Youth Development (PYD; Bruner et al., 2017). Current literature emphasizes the high level of involvement and influence parents have on their children's development in sport (Coakley, 2011). The purpose of the exploratory study was to examine parental perceptions of PYD within the Junior Lifeguard (JG) Program. The nationwide youth program focuses on teaching ocean safety and education through practical application to children between the ages of 9 and 17. A total of 38 parents (nfemale = 31, nmale = 7) voluntarily participated in an interview as part of a larger study. The data were analyzed in two phases. In the first phase, the data were transcribed and analyzed inductively through thematic analysis. In the second phase, the data were transcribed deductively to identify emergent patterns and themes until data saturation was achieved (Braun & Clarke, 2017). Results revealed identity-emergent themes particularly Relatability, which was further elucidated into a subtheme of Representation. Parents shared that their children were positively impacted by social example (e.g., instructors) and social connections with peers. In addition, parents reported their children's high level of connection to other JGs based on shared experiences. Furthermore, potential identity formation was evidenced by continued participation in the JG Program and high interest in the lifeguard profession as a future occupation. These findings provide significant others (e.g., parents, coaches) and practitioners with methods to support youth as they navigate identity development within PYD programs. Discussion and conclusions demonstrate that the JG Program is a context for PYD and emphasize the need to create increased opportunity for underrepresented communities to participate.

P-045

THE USE OF SUPERSTITIOUS BEHAVIORS IN HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL PLAYERS

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Nataniel Boiangin, Barry University

This study investigates the origins, purposes, and effects of superstitious beliefs among youth baseball players, an area that remains underexplored despite the pervasive nature of superstitions in sports (Ciborowski, 1997; Dömötör et al., 2016; Del Rosario, 2018). Through qualitative analysis, key factors influencing these superstitions were identified, particularly the competitive pressures of high school athletics and the significant role of coaches. Athletes reported that their superstitions provided a psychological sense of control, functioning as placebos that alleviate anxiety and enhance performance. While participants acknowledged the comforting aspects of their rituals, they also noted potential drawbacks, such as increased anxiety when unable to perform these routines or have their items. Findings indicate that superstitions are vital components of pre-performance routines (PPRs), though reliance on them may lead to maladaptive behaviors. Limitations, including a small and homogenous sample, emphasize the need for further research on cultural contexts and psychological underpinnings. Addressing these gaps is crucial for understanding the evolution of superstitions in youth sports, particularly given the widespread participation of children and adolescents in organized sports activities (Hulteen et al., 2017) and the early development of ritualistic behaviors and habits during childhood (Zohar & Felz, 2001).

P-046

A COMPARISON OF GAD-7, PHQ-9, AND SCOFF SCORES FOR FEMALES IN INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SPORTS

Natalie Osborne, George Fox University
Cara Guglielmino, George Fox University
Scott Burkhart, George Fox University

Fundamental differences between individual and team sports—including environment, training demands, social climate, and individual responsibilities contribute to unique mental health challenges for athletes. The comorbidity of depression, anxiety, and disordered eating highlights the importance of early risk identification (Elbe & Jensen, 2016). However, female athlete mental health remains under-researched, complicating efforts to identify risks and develop effective treatments. As such, further research is needed to determine the best approach for screening female athletes in both individual and team sports.This study aims to compare anxiety, depression, and disordered eating screening scores between female athletes in team and individual sports at the Division III level. Using a quantitative approach, common mental health screeners, including the GAD-7, PHQ-9, and SCOFF, were analyzed across seven years and ten sports. The GAD-7 and PHQ-9 were used to screen for anxiety and depressive symptoms, while the SCOFF provided additional insights into athletes' eating behaviors and beliefs (Hines et al., 2019; Tran, 2020). The aim of this study is to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the mental health challenges faced by female athletes and inform the development of more effective practices for both individual and team sports.

P-047

A CULTURALLY ATTUNED DIII ATHLETIC SYSTEM MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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Laura Hayden, University of Massachusetts Boston
Joseph Cooper, University of Massachusetts Boston

According to the 2023 NCAA student athlete health and wellness study, only 50% of student athletes surveyed reported feeling comfortable seeking support from a mental health provider and only 70% reported knowing where to go on campus and/or having people they could trust to provide mental health support (NCAA, 2023). Women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ student athletes reported the highest rates of mental health concerns (NCAA, 2023). Despite this high prevalence of mental health concerns, there is a dearth of research examining the culturally specific and responsive mental health care needs of these populations (Ballesteros & Tran, 2020; Helling & Chandler, 2021; McCavanagh & Cadaret, 2022). Additionally, coaches and athletic staff are susceptible to mental health concerns, largely due to job

stress and burnout (Torres et al., 2023; Wright et al., 2023). While stigma related to mental health may be a primary barrier to help-seeking behaviors amongst student athletes (Chow et al., 2020; Harris & Maher, 2023), researchers have found that when athletic staff are open to discussing mental health, student athletes are more likely to actually seek help (Bissett & Tamminen, 2020).Brief contact and education-based interventions have been shown to be effective in reducing stigma and promoting help-seeking behaviors amongst DI student athletes, but have yet to be studied in a DIII environment (Kern et al., 2017). Our project, titled Beacon Athletics C.A.R.E.S., replicated this intervention design and assessed mental health literacy (MHL), perceptions of stigma, help-seeking behaviors, awareness of campus resources, and culturally specific needs of student athletes and athletic support staff at UMass Boston (UMB). In this lecture, we will present pre-post results of the psycho educational workshop series provided to a cohort of 82 student athletes and 21 coaches, administrators, and athletic support staff, as well as discuss implications for DIII athletic systems.

P-048:

ACHIEVING MENTAL TOUGHNESS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL FORTITUDE, SPORT SATISFACTION, AND COMMUNITY OF ORIGIN

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Aaron Cooper, University of North Dakota
Kathryn Ellingson, University of North Dakota
Andrew Lenway, Univeristy of North Dakota
Henry Rott, University of North Dakota
Amber Peterson, University of North Dakota
Akorede Teriba, University of North Dakota

The purpose of this study was to understand the presence of psychological fortitude (i.e., grit, growth mindset, emotion regulation, and self-compassion) among student-athletes, and how this attribute relates to their well-being and satisfaction with their sport. Athletes experience various pressures related to their sport engagement, and the demands placed on athletes contributes to persistent mental health difficulties (Beebe et al., 2023). Participants (N = 283) were recruited using Cloud Research's survey recruitment service. Participants anonymously completed an 88-item Qualtrics questionnaire. Measures used include grit (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), growth mindset (De Castella & Byrne, 2015), emotion regulation (Gross & John, 2003), self-compassion (Raes et al., 2011), belonging (Lee & Robbins, 1995), psychological well-being (Topp et al., 2015), and sport satisfaction (Caliskan & Baydar, 2016). We found a significant difference in student-athletes' suppression of their expressions, F (1, 280) = 6.31, p = .013, between those who have (M = 19.42, SD = 5.08) and have not (M = 17.86, SD = 4.80) received an athletic scholarship. We found psychological fortitude had a significant relationship with student-athletes' subjective well-being (r = .52; p We found significant differences in growth mindset (p = .017) and sport satisfaction (p = .007) between student-athletes who grew up in rural communities (M growth mindset = 19.19; M sport satisfaction = 87.00), suburban communities (M growth mindset = 19.08; M sport satisfaction = 85.10), and urban communities (M growth mindset = 20.47; M sport satisfaction = 91.79). The findings suggest athletes with greater psychological fortitude experience greater sport satisfaction and psychological well-being. Improving student-athletes' psychological fortitude may meaningfully improve their experience as an athlete and their overall psychological well-being. Urban student-athletes tend to have greater resources and access conducive to greater team cohesion and self-perception.

P-049

ANALYSIS OF THE LIFE PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION SCALE (LPOS)

Eibhlis Moriarty, Current: The Optimum Performance Program in Sport Lab at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (Research conducted at The University of Limerick)
Angelos Tsalafos, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Amber Goto, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Kim Barchard, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Linnea Bacon, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Brad Donohue, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Jose Ramos, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Given the widely recognized impact of mental health on overall functioning (Kessler et al., 2003; World Health Organization, 2021), there is a pressing need for reliable, multidimensional tools that assess subjective evaluations of life performance across different domains. This study presents an exploratory factor analysis of 10 item domains, each measuring perceived performance optimization corresponding to a general domain that is specific to college students (family, academic, sport, recreation, employment, physical fitness, mental wellness, friendships, romantic relationships, financial management) using a 0 to 100% performance optimization scale. Participants (N = 747) were undergraduate students at an NCAA Division I university who responded to these 10 items and a well-established scale measuring psychiatric symptomatology, i.e., the Symptom Checklist 90-Revised (SCL-90-R; Derogatis, 1994). Factor analysis of the 10 items, which included examination of the scree plot, parallel analysis, and MAP test (Velicer, 1976), suggested a single underlying factor. The internal consistency of this new scale, denoted the Life Performance Optimization Scale (LPOS), was strong, as indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of α = .74, suggesting strong reliability. As hypothesized, LPOS scores were negatively correlated with mental health symptom severity, supporting its concurrent validity. Findings suggest that the LPOS is a reliable tool for assessing performance satisfaction for collegiate student athletes, particularly because it includes an assessment of sport and recreation. Future directions are discussed in light of the results, including future comparisons of this scale between athletes and non-athletes.

P-050

ARE COLLEGIATE ATHLETES MORE LIKELY TO SEEK MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AFTER COMPLETING PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION OR PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOM ASSESSMENT TOOLS?

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Brad Donohue, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Shane Kraus, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Background Traditional mental health evaluation tools typically assess problem behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. In doing so, assessment of the positive spectrum of mental health is ignored, and respondents often perceive stigma; which may lead respondents to underreport

symptomatology and avoid the pursuit of mental health services. MethodIn the current study, 77 collegiate athletes completed a measure of mental health symptomatology (Symptom Checklist-90 questions- Revised (SCL-90-R; Derogatis & Savitz, 1999) and a measure of mental health performance optimization (Mental Health Optimization Scale; MHOS). After participants were asked to report the extent to which these scales were perceived to be stigmatizing and comfortable to complete, they were asked to rate their willingness to seek assistance from a mental health professional based on their responses to each scale immediately after completing them. ResultsParticipants reported that the MHOS was perceived to be more useful and less stigmatizing than the SCL-90-R and more likely than the SCL-90-R to assist professionals in understanding their mental health. For the MHOS, there was no significant difference in perceived stigma and usefulness between NCAA, club, and recreational athletes. For the SCL-90-R, NCAA and recreational athletes reported higher levels of stigma and lower levels of usefulness than club athletes. Club athletes reported similar levels of stigma however lower levels of usefulness. These combined results show that all levels of competitiveness are not stigmatized by MHOS items, whereas NCAA and recreational athletes are stigmatized by the SCL-90-R items. These analyses suggest that participants are more likely to pursue mental health services after completing the MHOS, which was also reported more helpful in helping a professional assist in their mental health. ConclusionsThese results suggest measures of optimization have promise in the assessment of NCAA and Club sport athletes', particularly in regards to their engagement into mental health services.

P-051

ASSESSING STUDENT-ATHLETE PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AT FBS DIVISION I NON-AUTONOMOUS ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Grace Louis, Northern Illinois University

Collegiate student-athletes face unique mental health challenges, including balancing academics and athletics, performance pressures, perfectionism, injury recovery, and identity struggles (Dean & Rowan, 2014; Harris & Maher, 2023; Brown, 2021). Despite the NCAA's introduction of mental health best practices, mental health professionals perceive that there are still challenges regarding the accessibility, inclusivity, and effectiveness of mental health support for student-athletes at FBS Division I non-autonomous athletic programs (Louis & Henert, 2024). To develop a more comprehensive understanding, it is also crucial to evaluate the student-athletes' perceptions. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to better understand perceptions of student-athlete mental health status and the mental health resources availability at FBS Division I non-autonomous athletic programs. Student-athletes from Mid-American Conference (MAC) athletic programs were recruited to participate in an anonymous online Qualtrics survey. The survey is a modified version of five modules drawn from the Healthy Minds Study survey (Healthy Minds Network, 2023), which examines mental health, service utilization, and related issues among undergraduate and graduate students. The modules include demographics, mental health status, mental health service utilization/help-seeking, knowledge and attitudes about mental health and mental health services, and student-athlete mental health. 280 student-athletes representing eight MAC athletic programs completed the survey. Preliminary findings indicate that student-athletes in the study perceive mild levels of depression and anxiety (PHQ-9 and GAD-7); moderate levels of psychological well-being (Flourishing Scale), and high mental strain (APSQ). These findings suggest that while student-athletes may not meet clinical thresholds for depression and anxiety, they still experience significant psychological strain, especially in the sport setting. Complete analyses, implications, and recommendations will be shared during the presentation.

P-052

ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH DISCOURSE IN SPORT: SIMONE BILES, NAOMI OSAKA, AND THE CASE OF INSTAGRAM

Ashlyn Hulsey, Florida State University

Mental health concerns for athletes and being open about their challenges living with these concerns have been seen by many (i.e., journalists, athletes, coaches) who participate in and report on sports as taboo and not fitting within competitive athletic "tough" culture. These assumptions are slowly changing as organizations such as the AMSSM have begun publishing statements addressing how psychological and environmental factors, including sporting events, commonly impact athletes' mental health. Social media, particularly Instagram, has been utilized by many athletes to market themselves, connect with their fans, and show a "peek behind the curtains," including challenges living with mental health concerns. The main purpose of this study is to explore how general Instagram users respond to two elite female athletes' posts regarding their mental health. Through digital ethnography, comments on Instagram posts for Simone Biles (n=7) and Naomi Osaka (n=6) before and during the 2021 Tokyo Olympics were analyzed. In all, there were 105 comments pulled from the thirteen posts which varied in length, and valence (i.e., positive, negative). Utilizing a combination of thematic analysis and discourse analysis, two primary themes came to light: combating mental health stigma and furthering mental health stigma for elite female athletes. These themes highlight the athletes' and users' utilization of one-way interactions, and the prevalence of mental health stigma among high-performing athletes.

P-053

BRIDGING THE GAP: EMBEDDING SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS IN CANADIAN VARSITY SPORTS- A PILOT PROJECT

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Madison Beishuizen, King's University College
Wade Wilson, The Mentor Magazine Inc.
Evan Hochman, University of Windsor

Student-athletes face increasing mental health challenges due to competitive pressures, demanding schedules, and a shifting sports culture. In 2021, 41.4% of Canadian athletes met criteria for a mental health disorder (Poucher et al., 2021), while 47.8% of UK athletes reported anxiety or depression—far higher than the 18.3% reported by the general population (Foskett & Longstaff, 2018). A recent NCAA study (2023) found many student-athletes experience overwhelm, exhaustion, anxiety, and sleep difficulties,

yet only half the sample feel comfortable seeking campus mental health support. It has been argued that college and professional athletes are a vulnerable population (Moore & Gummelt, 2018), while limited resources exacerbate their challenges.Social work is a growing field that is positioned to address these needs. Canada has 43 accredited social work programs (CASWE-ACTS) and over 22,750 practicing social workers in Ontario alone (Government of Canada, 2024). Social workers are well-equipped to support student-athletes' mental health and well-being, yet no known programs in Canada provide formal education or field placements for student-athlete support.This pilot project embeds a Master of Social Work (MSW) student into a Canadian women's university varsity hockey program to provide mental health and performance support through group workshops and 1:1 peer support. Preliminary results show 70% of student-athletes found MSW services "extremely beneficial," 43% reported "moderate" performance improvements, and 48% attended a 1:1 session.This project highlights the potential for MSW students to deliver vital services to student-athletes while gaining training, consultation, field experience, and compensation. This mutually beneficial program supports student-athletes while providing foundational training for future social workers and adding a vital service at no cost to varsity sports programs.

P-054

DISORDERED EATING IN NCAA DI COLLEGIATE ATHLETES: EXAMINING THE CORRELATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ACROSS LEAN AND NON-LEAN SPORTS

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Sierra Cavaletto, Cal State University Long Beach
Michal Rhodes, Cal State University Long Beach
Jacquellin Harris, Cal State University Long Beach
Jana Fogaca, Cal State University Long Beach
Leilani Madrigal, California State University Long Beach

Disordered eating (DE) remains a growing concern among collegiate athletes, where DE behaviors have been widely studied. Research shows that athletes in lean sports, where body composition and aesthetics are emphasized for performance, face higher risks of DE due to external pressures from societal expectations, coaches, and medical staff (Stoyel et al., 2020; Wells et al., 2015). However, research on athlete mental health and its relationship with DE behaviors between lean and non-lean sports requires further examination. This study aimed to examine the correlation between DE and psychological factors, such as depression and anxiety, among 252 NCAA DI collegiate athletes participating in lean and non-lean sports. Results from an independent t-test indicated that athletes in non-lean sports had higher mean scores for DE (M = 4.08, SD = 6.23) than athletes in lean sports (M = 1.68, SD = 3.51), however, this difference was not statistically significant t(142.61) = 3.51, p d = .50. Among all sports, golf had the highest DE scores, followed by softball, soccer, and tennis. Pearson correlations revealed a small but significant positive correlation between DE and depression in the overall sample, r (67) = .25, p = .04. The association between DE and anxiety was not significant, r (98) = .13, p = .20. These findings counter the assumption that lean sport athletes are at greater risk for DE compared to athletes in non-lean sports (Wells et al., 2015), highlighting the need for further research and comprehensive DE screening across all sports. By understanding these relationships, consultants can proactively monitor athletes for signs of both DE and depression, implement early intervention strategies, and foster an environment that promotes mental health awareness and open discussions about disordered eating concerns.

P-055

EXAMINING STRESS IN SOUTHERN UNITED STATES NCAA DIVISION I GRADUATE ASSISTANT COACHES

Amaya Brown, Tarleton State University
Myles Ward, Tarleton State University
Christina Villalon, Tarleton State University

Graduate assistant (GA) coaches in NCAA Division I athletics play a vital role within a coaching staff by contributing to practice management, operations, recruitment, and relationships with athletes. GA coaches may face similar pressures and stressors as head, associate, and assistant coaches. Yet, GA coaches are additionally expected to balance their duties with full-time graduate studies. They are also likely working more than the 20 hours for which they are paid, living on meager student-worker salaries and benefits, and may not receive quality mentorship or experience from their supervisors. Despite their significant role in the college athletics environment, little research has been done to explore the unique experience of GA coaches, none of which has focused on the role of stress. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the coaching and life stressors for GA coaches. GA coaches in NCAA Division I conferences in the southern United States were contacted via email. The introductory email included a request to participate in the study and a hyperlink to an online Qualtrics questionnaire with the informed consent form. Upon agreeing to participate, participants completed demographic questions, the Coaching Issues Survey (CIS) and the Graduate Stress Inventory-Revised (GSI-R). The CIS is a 30-item assessment with a 5-point Likert scale evaluating stress-related factors affecting coaches. The GSI-R is a 20-item 7-point Likert scale measuring how stressful participants perceive their life situations to be. Means and correlations from participants scores on the CIS and GSI-R will be reported. An independent t-test comparing scores from in-season and out-of-season GAs will also be presented. Recommendations for how sport psychology consultants, mentor coaches, athletic administrators, and coach developers can better support this population of emerging and developing coaches to help a) decrease stress, b) improve retention, and c) improve development of quality coaches will be discussed.

P-056

FLIPPING THE QUESTION: DOES "PERFECT MAKE PRACTICE"?

Philippe Petrin-Pomerleau, University of Ottawa
Thomas Boivin, University of Ottawa
Patrick Gaudreau, University of Ottawa

The phrase "Practice makes perfect" is uttered across performance domains, entering public discourse, applied settings, and interventions. It has also been the focus of extensive research and debate. In this project, we challenge the fundamental assumption behind this phrase by questioning whether perfection is truly the desired end goal in performance domains, given that perfectionism is

associated with negative outcomes (Hill et al., 2018). We inverted the popular phrase and examined how striving for perfection influences practice thoughts and behaviors. The model of Excellencism and Perfectionism (Gaudreau et al., 2022) differentiates between relentless striving for flawless and excessively high standards (perfectionism) and striving for very high yet attainable standards in a flexible manner (excellencism). Our study, involving 343 participants from various performance domains such as music, sports, competitive games, education, art, and work, revealed that perfectionism and excellencism lead to distinct time allocations and perseverance-related thoughts during practice.When asked about practice, excellencism is associated with spending more time learning new skills, whereas perfectionism is associated with spending more time outperforming others. This focus on others during practice as also observed when asked about reasons to stop learning a new skill. Perfectionism was positively associated with giving up on learning a skill when someone else can perform it better, due to fear of judgment from others, after multiple failures, and from feelings of regressing. In contrast, excellencism was negatively associated with the first three reasons and not associated with feelings of losing progress. While we agree that practicing leads to progress, we caution against approaching practice with the goal of achieving perfection, as it can result in maladaptive behaviors and being overly focused on others. Selecting behaviors based on others is not ideal for making progress during practice. Striving for excellence seems to be a more adaptive pursuit during practice.

P-057

HIT TO THE HEAD, HEAD TO THE BOTTLE

Courtney Murtha, Peace Valley Recovery

Concussion injuries affect 9-14% of collegiate athletes, with many experiencing multiple concussions during their careers (Gaudet et al., 2022). These injuries produce symptoms that impact behavior, social interaction, and bodily functions. Without adequate awareness and post-concussive care, athletes may develop maladaptive coping strategies to manage the stress and challenges associated with concussion recovery. Traditionally, the collegiate sports medicine field follows a medical-model approach to concussion care, often overlooking the critical role of mental health support as part of recovery (NCAA, 2023). Grounded in the Stress-Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), this presentation brings attention to the greater awareness of how concussion impacts stress perception and coping strategies. The findings suggest the need for preventative measures and tailored interventions to assist athletes in recovery. Additionally, this presentation will explore the potential correlation between concussion injuries and increased alcohol consumption among collegiate athletes. Key areas of daily life impacted during recovery will be discussed, along with proposed strategies to support these athletes better. Attendees will gain insights into incorporating mental health support into standard concussion protocols, addressing multicultural considerations, and understanding the role of athletic identity in coping with concussion injuries.

P-058

INTERVENTION VS PREVENTION: ASSESSMENTS FOR COLLEGE ATHLETES TO DECREASE FUTURE NEURODEGENERATIVE DISORDERS

Myles Ward, Tarleton State University
Brad Conn, Compton College/The Artest Foundation

The NFL (National Football League) Concussion Settlement's neurocognitive evaluation highlights the significance and effects of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disorder that presents later in life with symptoms such as memory loss and confusion. This condition occurs when an athlete experiences repeated head trauma. The use of Neuropsychological assessments in order to better manage mild traumatic brain injuries (MTBI) in contact sports is critical (Lovell & Solomon, 2011). While these assessments have become more normalized, many collegiate institutions still lack methodical routine neuropsychological evaluations for athletes of contact sports such as football, soccer, horseracing/rodeo, and rugby. Thus, the purpose of this presentation is to explore the integration of routine neurocognitive evaluations to promote performance benchmarks aligned with relevant and normative data. This research will highlight collegiate athletes, a vulnerable population, as this group is experiencing brain development during a time when they are frequently experiencing repeated head impacts, and advocate for the continued use of these practices for the health of all athletes. Dating back to the late 2000s, the NFL has become firm in requiring baseline and post-injury cognitive assessments for all athletes, which has since expanded to include youth and adolescent athletes (Cohen, Gioia, Atabaki, & Teach, 2009; Lovell & Fazio, 2008). Neurocognitive assessments as preventive measures have significant value due to these evaluations being integral in the promotion of athlete wellness and safety (Conn, 2024). Furthermore, research conducted by Ward & Villalon (2024) found a significant relationship between memory characteristics and concussion history. Through performance benchmarks, these institutions/universities can not only support athletic performance but also reduce the risk of various long term neurocognitive consequences such as CTE. Given the insight and implications of neurocognitive tools used to promote long term athlete health, exploration of routine assessments and different interventions for these individuals is warranted.

P-059

INVISIBLE WOUNDS: A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE BRITISH MILITARY

Miles Cassidy-Rice, Health Sciences University
Stephanie Tibbert, Health Sciences University

Recent research efforts to develop our understanding of mental health and poor mental health within the armed forces have gained renewed urgency. A recent systematic review and meta-analysis indicated that military personnel have a higher prevalence rate of depression and suicide ideation than the general public, with just under a quarter of all respondents reporting depressive symptoms (23%; Moradi et al., 2021). The pervasiveness of other mental health disorders is as yet unknown but given the unique high-stress environment that active military personnel find themselves in, higher prevalence numbers may be presumed for a variety of poor mental health conditions. Given that these prevalence

rates may not be representative of the number of individuals experiencing mental ill-health because barriers and stigma surrounding help-seeking behavior for mental health concerns may reduce disclosure. The lecture will provide a brief review of current literature surrounding perceptions of mental health and the influence this understanding has on help-seeking and vulnerability disclosure in the military environment. Findings from a study conducted with eleven active British military personnel regarding experiences of mental health, mental health-seeking behaviors and vulnerability disclosure in relation to the military culture, and perceptions of the changing, but not always accepted, message being handed down from influential stakeholders regarding emerging mental health literacy and interventions. Opportunities for potential research pathways are presented highlighting tools to develop appropriate sociocultural interventions leading to the normalization and enhanced intervention uptake of mental health support in military environments.

P-060

KINESIOPHOBIA AND RETURN-TO-SPORT OF FEMALE VOLLEYBALL ATHLETES FOLLOWING ACL INJURY

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Samantha Dardaman, University of North Texas
Chris Bailey, Minnesota Twins Baseball Club
Andrew Colombo-Dougovito, University of North Texas
Scott Martin, University of North Texas

Volleyball ranks third among all sports in terms of injury prevalence, specifically knee-related injuries such as sprain on the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Typically caused by noncontact mechanisms that involve turning or twisting motions, collegiate female volleyball athletes pose the highest risk for ACL injuries. In fact, ACL injuries and kinesiophobia, or the debilitating fear of movement and re-injury, is the most studied psychological aspect of injury recovery. However, further research is needed on the influence of kinesiophobia within the female volleyball athlete population. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how sport and injury history influence volleyball players' experiences of post-injury kinesiophobia. Female volleyball athletes with past ACL injuries were recruited to complete an online survey that measured kinesiophobia (Tampa Scale of Kinesiophobia-13; TSK-13) and requested demographic information (e.g., sport participation history, injury history). Descriptive and inferential statistics from 30 volleyball athletes (M age = 23.75, SD = 4.65) revealed that as they continued participating in their sport, their exposure to injuries increased (r = 0.62, p r = 0.51, p r 2 = 0.19, p M = 8.22, SD = 1.72), particularly fears related to reinjury (M = 8.22, SD = 1.72). These findings suggest that overtime, female volleyball players risk of injuries and injury-related fears increase. Thus, while physical rehabilitation is essential for post-injury recovery, prioritizing the psychological aspects of recovery is equally important to support a longer, healthier athletic career.

P-061

MENTAL HEALTH AND ALCOHOL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES: EXPLORING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF DRINKING MOTIVES

Lauren Greenspoon, University of Southern Mississippi
Michael Madson, Adler University
Morgan Eckenrod, University of Southern Mississippi
Eric Dahlen, University of Southern Mississippi
Bonnie Nicholson, University of Southern Mississippi

Hazardous drinking among college students has been a long-standing public health concern, with particular focus on student-athletes given their report of greater frequency and quantity of alcohol consumed. With the dual-role (i.e., student and athlete) of student-athletes, research has supported the comorbidity of mental health problems and alcohol outcomes, with drinking motives as an influential factor. Additionally, sport-related drinking motives may play a unique role, providing additional understanding of these relationships. No research to date has explicitly examined these variables despite the latest initiatives on student-athletes' mental health and well-being. Thus, this study explored the mediating role of drinking motives, both general and sport-related, in the relationship between mental health and alcohol outcomes, to determine if these relationships differed by seasonal status. Athletic administration and support staff from 1,758 universities (e.g., National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)) across the United States were contacted to recruit student-athletes (N = 211; Mage = 20.53). Participants provided demographic information and completed measures of mental health symptoms, hazardous drinking, negative consequences, and drinking motives. Conformity and coping drinking motives mediated the relationship between mental health symptoms and negative consequences, whereas social and coping drinking motives mediated the relationship between mental health symptoms and hazardous drinking. Results suggested that both general drinking motives and sport-related drinking motives are important to understanding the dynamic between student-athletes' mental health and drinking behaviors, and further exploration among more diverse samples is encouraged.

P-062

MENTAL TOUGHNESS AS A PROTECTIVE FACTOR: MODERATION AND MEDIATION EFFECTS IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAIN–MENTAL HEALTH RELATIONSHIP AMONG COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

Andreas Stamatis, University of Louisville-Health
Kate O'Bryan, University of Louisville Athletics
Katie Nichols, Louisville Athletics
Ernest Rimer, University of Louisville Health

Psychological strain (PS) negatively impacts athletes' mental health (MH); mental toughness (MT) may serve as a protective factor. This study examined whether MT moderates and mediates the relationship between sport-related PS and anxiety and depression.A total of 479 collegiate athletes (Mage = 20.28, SD = 5.10; 40% male, 60% female) across 17 sports participated. Sport-related PS was assessed using the Athlete Psychological Strain Questionnaire, MT with the Mental Toughness Index, and MH symptoms via the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 and Patient Health

Questionnaire-9. Analyses were conducted in MATLAB 2025a.MT was negatively associated with PS (r = -0.55, p r = -0.30, p r = -0.23, p β = -0.012, SE = .002, p β = -0.007, SE = .002, p β = -0.55, SE = .04, p β = -0.30, SE = .05, p β = -0.23, SE = .06, p β = 0.015, 95% CI [0.014, 0.016], p β = 0.0026, 95% CI [0.0016, 0.0036], p Findings highlight MT as a key factor in athlete MH. The buffering role of MT suggests that athletes with higher MT experience weaker associations between PS and MH outcomes, while its mediating role indicates that MT partially accounts for this relationship. These findings support MT-based interventions to mitigate PS and symptoms of anxiety and depression in athletes.

P-063

MOTIVATIONAL PROFILES SHAPED BY INDIVIDUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMITMENT IN RECREATIONAL TEAM SPORTS

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Understanding the factors that drive commitment in recreational team sports is critical for fostering long-term participation. According to Rusbult's investment model of commitment (1980), socio-environmental factors play a significant role in shaping an individual's commitment to a particular activity. Recreational team sports, such as soccer and basketball, provide a setting where social influences are particularly pronounced, as participants experience the unavoidable presence of others and a high level of interaction among group members (Widmeyer et al., 2002). This study examines how the interaction between achievement goal orientation, which reflects individual motivational tendencies, and motivational climate, which characterizes the team environment, influences commitment. Unlike elite athletes, who focus primarily on performance outcomes, recreational participants engage in sports for diverse reasons, including personal growth, skill development, and enjoyment. Given this diversity in motivation, this study employed a person-centered approach to examine the role of achievement goal orientation and motivational climate in shaping commitment using latent profile analysis. Three motivational profiles were identified: high task-focused, moderate balanced, and high comprehensive. Findings indicate that participants in the high task-focused and high comprehensive groups, which emphasized personal improvement, demonstrated higher enthusiastic commitment and team commitment. These findings highlight the critical role of task-involving and mastery-oriented environments in fostering commitment. Future research should explore how these motivational profiles evolve over time and how they can be leveraged to optimize participation strategies in various recreational settings. Additionally, applying these insights to team environment structuring and coaching practices can help sustain long-term commitment, providing a foundation for improving participant retention and overall experience. Contemporary scholars have opportunities to extend this research by exploring how these findings can be effectively implemented in practical team settings and further examining their applicability across diverse recreational sports contexts.

P-064

PERFECTIONISM, MOTIVATION, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY: PREDICTING MUSIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

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Music performance anxiety (MPA) is a prevalent issue among musicians, often linked to perfectionism and motivation (Stoeber & Eismann, 2007; Moran, 2016). While research has established maladaptive perfectionism as a risk factor for MPA (Sinden, 1999), fewer studies have examined the protective role of psychological flexibility, which is central to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 1999). This study investigates how perfectionism, motivation types (intrinsic, identified, introjected, integrated, and extrinsic), and psychological flexibility predict MPA.Participants (N = 132) completed validated self-report measures assessing these constructs. A multiple regression analysis accounted for 52.5% of the variance in MPA (R^2 = .525, p = .001). Maladaptive perfectionism (β = .444, p These findings support ACT-based interventions to enhance psychological flexibility as a means to reduce MPA. Additionally, reducing external pressures and addressing maladaptive perfectionism may be effective in performance settings. This research contributes to the scientist-practitioner model by integrating theory, empirical findings, and applied recommendations for mental skills training in musicians.

P-065

PSYCHOLOGICAL PREDICTORS OF BINGE DRINKING IN COLLEGE STUDENT-ATHLETES

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There is evidence to suggest the prevalence of binge drinking and alcohol-related problems is significantly higher among college student-athletes compared to non-student-athletes (Parisi et al., 2019). Athletes often face social pressures to use substances as well as unique challenges related to balancing academic and athletic responsibilities, which can contribute to unhealthy coping behaviors and increased alcohol use (Auerbach et al., 2018; Graupensperger et al., 2018; Hatteberg, 2020). Previous studies have found potential links between depression, sport anxiety, and alcohol use, although the extant literature yet to examine the influence of these or other psychiatric symptoms on student-athlete binge drinking (Knettel et al., 2021; Miller et al., 2002). In the current study, psychological predictors of binge drinking were examined in 288 NCAA, Club and Intramural collegiate athletes using the Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R; Derogatis, 1994) to assess for symptoms of psychopathology and a substance use questionnaire to assess past 30-day binge drinking. Simple and multiple linear regression analyses were used to determine psychological predictors of past 30-day binge drinking. Overall psychological distress predicted 4.1% of variance (p = .002) in past 30-day binge drinking. A model including all forms of psychopathology utilizing the SCL-90-R predicted 10.7% of variance in binge drinking, with depression (p = .013) and hostility (p = .006) being significant positive predictors and interpersonal sensitivity (p = .005) being a significant negative predictor. These results suggest a link between psychopathology and binge drinking

among college student-athletes, whereby high levels of psychological distress, depression, and hostility predict increased binge drinking and high interpersonal sensitivity predicts lower levels of binge drinking. Findings suggest the need for the development and implementation of mental health interventions to mitigate potential consequences associated with binge drinking in this population.

P-066

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN BINGE DRINKING AND COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

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Marcel de Dios, University of Houston

Previous research has shown that there are racial differences in the prevalence of binge drinking among college students (Desalu et al., 2019). White (non-Hispanic) students have demonstrated higher rates of binge drinking relative to other racial/ethnic groups (Wade & Peralta, 2017). Such differences have been attributed to individual, group, and societal factors (Desalu et al., 2019; Wade & Peralta, 2017). Collegiate athletes are a subgroup of college students with unique characteristics who have begun to receive greater attention in the substance use literature (Harris et al., 2022; Longo et al., 2018; Milroy et al., 2014). Despite this increased attention, there has been a lack of research focused on racial/ethnic differences in binge drinking. To address these gaps, the current study is a secondary analysis of data from the Health Minds Study (Healthy Minds Network, 2024) collected between 2022 and 2023. Data for 3,492 Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian collegiate athletes was used to examine racial/ethnic group differences in binge drinking by gender. Participants completed a survey that included questions regarding binge drinking. Cross-tabulations with chi square tests indicated that 16.5% of Black male collegiate athletes reported binge drinking in the past week which was significantly lower than the rate for males identifying as White (42.9%), Hispanic (30.9%), and Asian (25.4%) X2(7, N = 3,492) = 74.3, p

P-067

RESEARCH UPDATE ON EXERCISE ADDICTION: CLINICAL CASE STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR A DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORY

Robert Rotunda, Univ of West Florida

A brief overview of the proposed construct of exercise addiction or dependence (also termed obligatory exercise), and similarities to other potentially addictive behaviors will be provided, followed by an updated review of the relevant theoretical, clinical, and research findings on the topic. The literature review will be supplemented with a brief case study of a 66 year-old male self-identified as a daily exerciser who was assessed via interviews and clinical instruments in order to evaluate whether he would be considered a candidate for the potential diagnosis of exercise “addiction”, and to better understand potential adaptive and maladaptive consequences of these behaviors. Data was obtained from several measures of potential problems associated with exercise such as the Exercise Addiction Inventory (Terry, Szabo, & Griffiths, 2004), Exercise Dependence Scale-21 (Hausenblas & Symons Downs, 2002), Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire (Thompson & Pasman, 1991), and four open ended questions designed to explore underlying themes of exercise dependence (Warner & Griffiths, 2006). Clinical assessments included the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R), and the Symptom Checklist-Revised (SCL-90-R). The advantages and disadvantages of considering problems associated with chronic exercise as a diagnostic entity will be discussed.

P-068

SELF-STIGMA AND MENTAL HEALTH ATTITUDES ARE RELATED TO ORTHOPEDIC SURGICAL RESIDENTS’ INTENTIONS TO SEEK HELP

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Despite relatively high levels of mental health (MH) concerns, orthopedic surgical residents generally underutilize psychological services (Gold et al., 2015), which can be problematic given the connection between psychological distress and poorer physical performances (Tam et al., 2025). Self-stigma regarding mental health is a key barrier to help-seeking in medical professionals, such that appearing weak or unfit for surgical practice inhibits engagement with mental health resources (Aaronson et al., 2018; Amini et al., 2024). In our study, we documented the extent to which orthopedic surgical residents’ (N = 182; 46.2% women; 70.3% White) self-stigma and attitudes about mental health were related to their intent to seek or engage in psychological services; we controlled for residents’ gender, age, and hours worked weekly. Through hierarchical regression, we found that self-stigma, F(1, 174) = 48.82, p

P-069

THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL REGULATION STRATEGIES ON EATING DISORDER RISK IN YOUTH SPORTS

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Emotional regulation is a complex process through which individuals modulate their emotional experiences over time and in terms of expression (Gross, 1998; Thompson, 1994). Some strategies, such as Cognitive Reappraisal and Suppression, have different effects on well-being and mental health (Freire & Tavares, 2011; Mikulic, 2021). Eating disorders have been linked to difficulties in emotional regulation, affecting both physical and mental health. The main purpose of this study is to explore how different emotional regulation strategies can influence the risk of eating disorders in the sports context, in order to identify risk and protective factors. Three hundred and four Mexican athletes, aged 10 to 25 years, participated in evaluations using Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (ERQ-CA)

and Eating Disorder Inventory-3RF (EDI-3RF), conducted between late 2024 and 2025. Results indicate a significant relationship between emotional regulation strategies and eating disorder risk factors, specifically bulimia, obsession with thinness, and body dissatisfaction. In particular, Cognitive Reappraisal was found to be a protective factor, as it was negatively associated with bulimia, obsession with thinness and body dissatisfaction. On the other hand, Suppression was positively associated with these eating disorder symptoms, with significant positive correlations to bulimia, obsession with thinness and body dissatisfaction. The models explained a modest portion of the variance in eating disorder risk factors, suggesting that while emotional regulation strategies are important, other factors may also contribute to the development of eating disorders. These findings highlight the potential for emotional regulation interventions to mitigate the risk of eating disorders in athletes, particularly by encouraging healthier cognitive reappraisal strategies.

P-070

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATHLETES' BELIEFS ABOUT EMOTIONS, EMOTION REGULATION, AND MENTAL HEALTH: A PATH ANALYSIS

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Emotions can impact athlete mental health, depending on their use of emotion regulation (Bird et al., 2021). Research suggests beliefs about emotions (BAE) influence emotion regulation strategy use and consequently, mental health (Ford & Gross, 2019). Individuals with negative controllability and goodness BAE typically use more maladaptive (e.g., expressive suppression, distraction), and less adaptive (e.g., cognitive reappraisal) emotion regulation strategies, which are associated with psychopathologies like depression. However, the relationship between BAE, emotion regulation tendencies, and mental health remains unexamined in athletes. 416 athletes (M=19.43 years, SD=1.31) completed measures of BAE, emotion regulation tendencies, depressive symptoms, and vitality. Path analysis controlling for gender revealed a good model fit; x2(1)=1.855, p=.173; CFI=.999, TLI=.970, SRMR=.0116, RMSEA=.046 (90% CI β=-.239) and vitality (β=-.219), and positively related to depressive symptoms (β=.352). Negative goodness BAE were negatively related to cognitive reappraisal (β=-.118) and vitality (β=-.105), and positively related to expressive suppression (β=.412) and depressive symptoms (β=.212). Cognitive reappraisal was related negatively to depressive symptoms (β=-.137) and positively to vitality (β=.279), and expressive suppression was related positively to depressive symptoms (β=.126) and negatively to vitality (β=-.215). Goodness and controllability BAE were also indirectly related to depressive symptoms (goodness:β=.985, p=.001, 90% CI .035–.104; controllability: β=.452, p=.010, 90% CI .015–.063) and vitality (goodness: β=-.202, p= .001, 90% CI -.171– -.078; controllability: β=-.093, p=.001, 90% CI -.105 – -.036) via cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Distraction was not a significant predictor or outcome variable. Findings suggest athletes who believe their emotions are uncontrollable and not good are likely to engage in maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, associated with heightened depressive symptoms and less vitality. Practitioners should encourage environments reinforcing the controllability and goodness of emotions to promote adaptive emotion regulation and improve mental health in athletes.

P-071

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WITH SPORT CULTURE IN COLLEGIATE ATHLETES AND PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS

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Amber Goto, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Linnea Bacon, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Shane Kraus, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Joanne Ullman, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Brad Donohue, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Eibhlis Moriarty, Current: The Optimum Performance Program in Sport Lab at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (Research conducted at The University of Limerick)

Although mental health professionals have indicated their interest in understanding the relationship between sport culture and mental health, this relationship has yet to be examined using psychometrically validated scales. In this study, the Semi-Structured Interview for Consideration of Sport Culture in Therapy Scale (SSICSCTS; see Donohue et al., 2006) was administered to 59 Club and National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) athletes. This scale assesses how athletes experience importance (Sport Culture Importance Scale; SCIS) and negative experiences (Sport Cultural Problems Scale; SCPS) in sport culture. Participants were also assessed for psychiatric symptomology using a well-established scale, i.e., the Symptom Checklist 90-Revised (SCL-90-R; Derogatis, 1994). MANOVA results indicated no significant differences between NCAA and Club athletes on SCIS or SCPS scores. As hypothesized, regression analysis revealed that the SCPS significantly predicted SCL-90-R Global Severity Index (GSI) scores, while SCIS was not a significant predictor. These findings suggest that negative experiences with sport culture may contribute to poorer mental health outcomes, whereas the perceived importance of sport culture does not appear to have a significant impact in mental health symptom severity.

P-072

THE ROLE OF COACHES, ATHLETIC TRAINERS, AND MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN SUPPORTING COLLEGE ATHLETES AFFECTED BY GUN VIOLENCE

Rebecca Steins, Saint Louis University
Savannah Jefferis-Henriques, Saint Louis University
Emily Chua, Saint Louis University
Michael Ross, Saint Louis University

This presentation will examine the impact of gun violence on collegiate student-athletes and offer recommendations for coaches, athletic trainers, and mental health providers for supporting athletes following these traumatic experiences. Gun violence on college campuses has become an increasingly prevalent issue, with significant psychological and emotional consequences for students. For student-athletes, there are additional trauma-related consequences, such as decreases in performance, that may further exacerbate mental health symptoms (Aron et al., 2019). This, coupled with reduced help-seeking behaviors due to an emphasis on unwavering mental toughness, may increase

the pressure on student-athletes to cope with trauma alone (Cosh et al., 2024). Drawing on a real-life case example from a NCAA Division I institution, the presentation will provide actionable recommendations for navigating post-gun violence care in sport settings, emphasizing the need for trauma-informed practices and cultivating supportive environments for athletes. These recommendations will include insights from athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, and mental health providers who managed care following an instance of gun violence. The presentation will contextualize this case example in a trauma-related growth framework. Literature suggests that traumatic experiences provide potential for positive personal transformation, leading to what is known as posttraumatic growth (PTG). PTG can involve improved relationships, new life possibilities, enhanced appreciation for life, greater personal strength, and spiritual development (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006). If athlete care providers can support PTG, athletes may exhibit greater resilience and a deeper appreciation for their sport. With this goal in mind, this presentation will provide suggestions for activities to engage athletes in, clinical considerations for initial and long-term mental health care, and examples of interdisciplinary collaboration will be discussed in their effectiveness in helping athletes find meaning and growth after experiencing gun violence.

P-073

THE ROLE OF RESILIENCE AND SLEEP IN PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG WOMEN COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

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Trent Petrie, University of North Texas
Javon Williams, University of North Texas
Cachet Lue, University of North Texas

Although resilience has been associated with lower levels of psychological distress among women collegiate athletes (Mikesell et al., 2023), research with nonathletes suggests that it's effects may be more indirect, tied closely to individuals' sleep disturbances (Wang et al., 2020). That is, being resilient may contribute to fewer sleep disturbances which, in turn, may lead to less psychological distress. Because these relationships have not yet been explored within collegiate athletes, we examined the direct and indirect relationships of resilience and sleep disturbances to women's symptoms of depression and anxiety. NCAA Division I women collegiate athletes (N = 629; 53.6% White; 46.4% Black), who represented 17 different sports, completed measures of resilience, sleep disturbance, and anxiety and depression during their annual mental health screening. We examined the relationships using Hayes' PROCESS macro Model 4, independently for each mental health outcome (e.g., depression). After controlling for race (White vs. Athletes of Color), we found all direct and indirect effects to be significant. For depression, the variables explained 16% of the variance; relationships were direct (Resilience – B = -.32; Sleep – B = .04) and indirect (resilience → sleep disturbances → depression B = -0.12). For anxiety, 23% of the variance was explained; effects again were direct (Resilience – B = -.75; Sleep – B = .07) and indirect (resilience → sleep disturbances → anxiety B = -0.21). There was no association between race and anxiety, though athletes of color reported significantly more depressive symptoms than white athletes (B = .16). As expected, more resilience was related to decreased distress, both directly and indirectly. When athletes report feeling more resilient, they cope better with their stressors and are less likely to experience sleep disturbance; both lessened their psychological distress. Resilience-focused interventions may improve sleep and reduce psychological distress in women collegiate athletes.

P-074

UNDERSTANDING HOW PASSION INFLUENCES INCIDENCE AND RECOVERY AFTER A CONCUSSION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY WITH COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

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Hélène Brisebois, Cégep Montmorency
Nathalie Houlfort, Université du Québec à Montréal

Better understanding how athletes' emotional and behavioral responses affect their recovery and well-being after a sport-related concussion (SRC) is essential for making appropriate recommendations and establishing proper treatment for each individual (Bloom et al., 2022). Drawing on the dualistic model of passion (Vallerand et al., 2003), this study examines the lived experiences of collegiate athletes during a SRC, based on their type of passion, either obsessive or harmonious. At the beginning of the season, collegiate athletes (n = 147) completed questionnaires, including the passion scale (Vallerand, 2003). After their sports season, those who had received a diagnosis of SRC were contacted again. Out of the 20 eligible concussed student-athletes from the past season, ten of them, aged between 17 and 22 years old and from three different sports (basketball, football, volleyball), participated in the study and shared their experiences following their recovery. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. Following transcription, the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Findings indicated that several aspects influence athletes' perception of their SRC experience at different key moments: during the incident (being cared for, pushing their limits), throughout their recovery (engaging in the protocol, receiving support), and after healing (being sport resilient). From an applied perspective, the findings encourage coaches and medical teams to take the time to understand the realities each athlete faces during their recovery to better tailor their interventions. From a theoretical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of psychological factors, such as obsessive or harmonious passion, in the injury and recovery process of SRCs in collegiate athletes.

P-075

AN EXPLORATION INTO DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES AND MINDFULNESS SCORES IN RECREATIONAL SURFERS

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Kathleen Mellano, Springfield College
Jasmin Hutchinson, Springfield College
Daniel Smith, Springfield College

Previous research has suggested that surfing may be an inherently "mindful" sport that can enhance one's mindfulness and provide similar benefits to Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) (Amrhein et al., 2016; Levin & Taylor, 2011). However, surfers' mindfulness may differ

based on various individual factors. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to 1) identify existing mindfulness profiles within recreational surfers and 2) determine if profile membership varied by key demographic variables. Surfers and non-surfers (N = 286, M age = 33.01 years, SD = 13.42) completed the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2006) and a demographic questionnaire. Non-surfers were recreational exercisers with varying levels of exercise experience. Nonhierarchical k-means clustering yielded a three-cluster solution: 1) High Mindfulness (n = 128), 2) Low Mindfulness (n = 146), and 3) Non-Judgmentally Aware (n = 12). Three clusters produced the highest number of nonredundant profiles while showing similarities to previous profile research with non-surfer populations (Bravo et al., 2018). However, further analysis showed no significant difference in the distribution of surfers and non-surfers among profiles, $X2(2) = 3.31$, $p = .191$. Two profiles emerged within the surfing sample (high and low mindfulness). Further analysis examined the main effects of demographic variables and surf experience on the FFMQ. The primary surfing region, $p < .001$, and gender, $p = .048$, had a significant main effect on the Observe subscale. In addition, race had a significant main effect on the Describing subscale, $p = .002$. Overall, a select few demographic variables have the potential to influence specific aspects of mindfulness in surfers, highlighting how cultural and individual difference factors shape mindfulness in surfers. However, a more diverse population may provide further insights into how demographic variables influence mindfulness in surfers.

P-076

EXPLORING THE MENTAL TOUGHNESS OF A SPORTS ATHLETES THROUGH METAPHOR

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The purpose of this study is to explore sports athletes' perception of Mental Toughness through metaphor analysis. Mental toughness is an important factor that can affect performance in sports. We were examined in the metaphors athletes use to explain the concept of 'mental toughness'. Participants(N f286) are including 223 male (78%) and 63 female athletes (22%) were asked, "Mental toughness is... because…" and completed an online survey exploring metaphorical perceptions of mental toughness in sport. The data collected through inductive content analysis of the overall metaphor for 'mental toughness' and the conceptual metaphors for 'mentally strong athletes' and 'mentally weak athletes' were classified based on metaphor analysis. Participants categorized mental toughness primarily into strength, persistence, resilience, necessity, motivation and hope that they can do well. Conceptual metaphors for mentally strong athletes were categorized in the following order: 'tree', 'stone', 'steel', 'shield' and 'diamond'. The conceptual metaphor referred to persistence were 'marathon', 'Inner battel'. The conceptual metaphor resilience was 'rubber', 'Roly-poly toy', 'chameleon'. The conceptual metaphorical expressions of necessity were 'air', 'battery', 'food'. The conceptual metaphorical expressions of motivation were 'climbing', 'stairs'. The conceptual metaphor hope was 'waiting for spring'. Mental weakness was classified as a metaphor for being fragile and prone to collapse. While conceptual metaphor for mentally weak athletes were categorized in the following order: 'Glass', 'sand', 'ice cream', 'thin ice frozen on the surface', 'paper', 'Jenga game', 'egg' and 'time bomb'. Metaphors have been classified as representing more than their original meaning. Therefore, this study can provide an opportunity to learn about the mental toughness perceived by athletes, and counseling using this, it will make it easier to understand the other person's emotions and thoughts in sport psychology.

P-077

FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT: APPLIED STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING CAREER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES IN OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SPORT

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Chris Wagstaff, University of Portsmouth
Ross Wadey, St Marys University
Peter Brown, NHS

Elite athletes navigate complex career challenges, including injury, selection, funding, and transition out of sport. To support them, Career Assistance Programs (CAPs) have been widely implemented within high-performance environments. However, despite their availability and recognized benefits, engagement remains inconsistent, and practitioners responsible for delivering these services face significant barriers. This presentation explores both athlete and practitioner perspectives of CAPs within the UK High-Performance system, identifying key obstacles to their effectiveness and offering practical recommendations for improving delivery.Through qualitative surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews, 15 elite athletes from Olympic and Paralympic sports, experiences ranged from 3 to 20 years as a funded athlete selected onto a World Class Program, at this performance level (>136 years in total) and 25 Performance Lifestyle Practitioners, with experiences ranged from 3 months to 20 years, working across 35 Olympic and Paralympic sports, volunteered for this study. Reflexive thematic analysis generated key themes: The Athlete Bubble, Bridging the Employment Gap, Head in the Sand, There's a Mountain to Climb, It's a Crowded Train, You Need an Elevator Pitch, and A Seat at the Performance Table. These themes highlight a high-performance culture that prioritizes short-term performance over long-term development, limiting CAP integration and athlete engagement.Applied recommendations for practitioners include fostering psychologically safe environments where athletes feel empowered to explore identities beyond sport, integrating career conversations into performance planning, co-designing CAPs with athletes to enhance relevance and utilising life design techniques to encourage planning beyond sport. Additionally, Performance Lifestyle Practitioners require greater organizational support and recognition to drive meaningful change. By addressing these barriers, CAPs can better equip athletes for both sporting success and long-term career development. Future research should evaluate CAP impact and explore sustainable strategies for practitioner support.

P-078

WHEN THE FIRE IS BURNING BRIGHTLY AND WHEN IT IS STRUGGLING TO LIGHT: ELITE ATHLETE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH QUALITY&DEPLETED MOTIVATION

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Joan Duda, University of Birmingham
Paul Appleton, Manchester Metropolitan University
Alexandra Consterdine, Liverpool John Moores University

Background: Understanding elite athlete's motivation is critical for coaches and support staff in order to help realize athletes' physical and psychological potential. Building upon previous research on how quality motivation (when the fire is burning brightly) is manifested in the views of high level performers (e.g., Mallett & Hanrahan, 2004), this study examined elite track and field athletes' thoughts, emotions and behaviours when they feel motivated and when their motivation is compromised. Participants were fifteen multi-national, internationally elite (including Commonwealth, European, Asian, American and multiple World and Olympic Champions) athletes. The athletes were asked: Could you describe how you think, feel and/or act when you are optimally motivated/having motivational difficulties in both training and in competition? One on one interviews were conducted face to face (n = 7) or over Zoom (n = 8). An interpretivist constructivist approach was adopted and a reflexive thematic analysis employed (Braun & Clarke, 2006), generating three overarching themes (1) mentally tuned in when optimally motivated (2) optimal feelings and optimistic long term outlook; (3) fire struggling to light: compromised thoughts and behaviours. The findings revealed that when optimally motivated, this elite group of athletes reported adaptive thoughts, feelings and behaviours (goal focused, trust in and focus on the process, happy & committed to self-actualize). In contrast, the athletes felt that when they are having motivational difficulties, their cognitive and emotional responses are maladaptive (unhelpful thinking, over critical, become distant and lack care). These differential motivation-related experiences can differentially influence athlete enjoyment of their sport and quality of their engagement, sustained participation and performance. Coaches and sport psychology practitioners could benefit from such findings and support athletes as appropriate.

P-079

UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIP AMONG PERFECTIONISM, COMPETITIVE STATE ANXIETY, AND SLEEP QUALITY IN ADOLESCENT SOCCER PLAYERS

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Seungho Chang, San José State University

Perfectionism is often considered a characteristic trait that athletes should possess. Previous studies suggest that the effects of perfectionism on athletes' well-being and performance could vary depending on its adaptive aspect (i.e., perfectionistic striving) and maladaptive aspect. This study examines how perfectionism influences sleep quality in adolescent soccer players, with a particular focus on the mediating role of competitive state anxiety (CSA). The primary aim is to identify key psychological factors that determine sleep quality in adolescent soccer players within the sports environment. For this purpose, a survey was conducted on 352 middle and high school soccer players registered with the Korea Football Association. After excluding 18 responses due to insincere answers, the final dataset of 334 participants (Male = 273, 81.7%; Female = 61, 18.3%) was used for statistical analysis. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), correlation analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), and bootstrapping procedures. The results revealed that both perfectionistic striving (β = -.31, p and perfectionistic concerns (β = .61, p significantly predicted CSA, but in opposite directions. The direct effects of perfectionism (striving/concerns) on sleep quality were not statistically significant. Furthermore, CSA significantly mediated the relationships between perfectionistic striving and sleep quality (β = .27, 95% CI [.17, .39]) and between perfectionistic concerns and sleep quality (β = -.14, 95% CI [-.22, -.07]). These results indicate that CSA fully mediates the relationship between perfectionism (striving/concerns) and sleep quality. This study suggest that the sleep quality of adolescent soccer players can be indirectly influenced by their perfectionism tendencies (i.e., striving, concerns) and that overcoming CSA is a prerequisite for improving sleep quality. Therefore, targeted psychological interventions are necessary to mitigate the negative impact of perfectionism, promote better sleep habits, and enhance overall well-being in young athletes.

P-080

A SCIENTIST-PRACTITIONER FOCUS ON THE CONSEQUENCES FOR ATHLETES, TEAMS AND COACHES OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COACH-TEAM RELATIONSHIPS.

Samuel Booth, University of Birmingham
Joan Duda, University of Birmingham
Paul Appleton, Manchester Metropolitan University

Background: The paper has been submitted to the Journal of Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology and is currently awaiting the first review. This paper forms one chapter of my PhD thesis that explores the coach-team relationship (CTR) conceptualisation, its consequences and determinants/antecedents for positive and negative CTRs. The first study that explores the characteristics of the CTR is in press with the International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, and this second study continues the development of the CTR. Study Abstract: This study aimed to identify perceived consequences associated with positive and negative coach-team relationships according to the perspectives of high school coaches and athletes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve athletes and eleven coaches from different team sports at an independent high school in the USA. Data were analysed using inductive and deductive content analytic techniques associated with reflexive thematic analysis. The views of both the athletes and coaches indicated that when the coach-team relationship is perceived as positive, several positive task-related (e.g. collective competence, embracing challenge, role clarity & collective identity) and relationship-oriented (e.g., intrapersonal behaviours & interpersonal; athlete-coach, athlete-athlete, & athlete-team) consequences occur. Conversely, when the coach-team relationship was perceived as negative, negative task-related (e.g., collective frustration, collective fear of failure, mutual misunderstanding & team division) and relationship-oriented (e.g., athlete and coach motivational and behavioural implications & interpersonal;

athlete-athlete, athlete-coach, athlete-team, coach-athlete & coach-team) consequences were seen as likely to emerge. Findings suggest that the nature of the coach-team relationship (positive or negative) is important resulting in relevant repercussions for the team and athletes (and indeed the coaches), with a future eye focused on understanding the determinants that predict positive and negative CTRs.

P-081

ADDING ON LICENSURE IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING TO SUPPORT EXISTING MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTING WORK: OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GROWTH

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Over ten years ago, several sport psychology scholars reflected on the future of sport psychology as a profession and asserted that current graduate programs are not providing the necessary interdisciplinary training in both kinesiology and psychology to optimize success in the field (Aoyagi et al., 2012). Aoyagi et al. (2012) further argued that sport psychology professionals need comparable education in both counseling and performance enhancement, which creates an "unnecessarily cumbersome path" of extensive training, such as the need to attain multiple graduate degrees (p. 34). More recent research suggests a continued lack of clarity in service provision and training among sport psychology professionals (Quartiroli et al., 2022; Sly et al., 2020), making it confusing for students applying to graduate school as well as early career professionals who are navigating employability in the field. Informed by Heymann and colleagues' (2022) conceptual model of reflective practice for employability competencies and career development, the purpose of this study was to reflect on the process of returning to graduate school to attain licensure in clinical mental health counseling several years after completing a PhD in Kinesiology (sport psychology emphasis), providing mental performance consulting services, and working in academia. This purpose was achieved by way of a reflective experiential writing task with emergent themes categorized by thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Results overarchingly demonstrate that adding on clinical training substantially improved the quality of sport psychology services provided and opened up several career pathways for future growth. However, results also affirm Aoyagi et al.'s (2012) claim of extensive graduate training required to meet career demands. The goal of this poster presentation is to elicit a conversation with members of the AASP community about the identity of sport psychology as a profession, the divide between clinical and performance work, and recommendations for future training.

P-082

FROM NOTHING TO SOMETHING: BUILDING A FORMAL PARTNERSHIP WITH A COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT AS A SPORT PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT

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Scott Barnicle, University of Tennessee

Interest in applied sport psychology services is on the rise, particularly within collegiate athletics. Additionally, many students in sport psychology graduate programs aim to pursue careers in collegiate athletics. However, the opportunity to provide mental performance coaching services to university athletes can be limited while in graduate school. Therefore, forming partnerships between sport psychology graduate programs and local universities can help address the gap between the need for practical experience at the graduate level and the demand for mental performance services among college athletes. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) has existing working partnerships with two local universities to provide applied sport psychology resources to student-athletes, coaches, and staff. However, as demand amongst graduate students for applied opportunities continues to grow, so does the need for further community partners. As a graduate student, the idea of forming, initiating, and developing partnerships can be daunting and is not something often discussed in class; however, this case study highlights the efforts of a graduate student in their process of developing a new partnership with a local university, which currently services four collegiate athletic teams and more than 100 student-athletes, with stated desires from the athletic director to expand in the future. This poster aims to detail the graduate student and her advisor's process of partnership development, programmatic planning for existing and future sport psychology graduate students, and the process of gaining entry into a collegiate athletic department to provide mental performance coaching. Finally, this presentation can help serve as a guide and roadmap for other sport psychology graduate students who hope to gain entry and experience providing applied sport psychology services to collegiate student-athletes, coaches, and staff.

P-083:

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS' VIEWS OF SUPERVISION: PERSPECTIVES ON SATISFACTION, SUPERVISOR SKILLS, MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, AND THEIR OWN SERVICE-DELIVERY COMPETENCE

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Monica Jackson, Boston University
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Joel Hark, Advocates

Sport psychology is behind related fields when it comes to understanding how practitioners develop their service-delivery competence and how the quality and quantity of the supervision received impacts their perceptions of their own abilities. Researchers have only recently started to examine the multicultural competencies of student and professional practitioners (Lee et al., 2020). Currently, we lack the knowledge of how students perceive their multicultural competence and how they gain the skills to work with diverse clients. The purpose of this study was to examine how supervisors' multicultural supervisory and general supervisory skills were perceived by student-supervisees and how these perceptions affected their overall satisfaction with the supervision process, and their perceived service-delivery and multicultural competence. Student-supervisees (n = 143) from graduate programs across the United States participated in self-reported surveys to examine their perceptions of the multicultural and general supervisory skills of their supervisors, their satisfaction with supervision, and their own sport psychology service-delivery and multicultural competence. Results indicated that students are highly satisfied with supervision (M = 3.30, SD = 0.67; Ladany et al., 1996), rate their supervisors' multicultural skills quite high, (e.g., Collaborative and Culturally Respectful Interactions;

M = 4.24, SD = 0.67), and rate themselves as low to moderately competent across several sport psychology service delivery domains (e.g., Assessment; M = 2.47, SD = 0.84; Rapport, Roles, & Expectations; M = 2.96, SD = 0.68). A significant linear multiple regression equation was found for predicting supervision satisfaction from general (F(5, 127) = 53.13, p R2 = 0.69) and multicultural supervisory skills (F(2, 128) = 48.35, p R2 = 0.43). Findings highlight the need for improved training and supervision to strengthen practitioners' confidence and competence. Future research should explore ways to better develop multicultural and service-delivery skills in trainees.

P-084

A DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COLLEGE ATHLETES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE AND WELL-BEING RELATED VARIABLES

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers assessed athletes' perceptions of motivational team climate and correlates with psychological responses (e.g., Scott, et al., 2024). The perceptions can be distinct in caring, task-, and ego-involving manners. Perceptions of caring and task-involving climates have been associated with adaptive psychological and physiological responses, while ego-involving climates have been correlated with maladaptive ones or none. Thus, this study examined relationships among college athletes' perceptions of the motivational climate and their well-being-related variables43 collegiate athletes (male = 34.9%, female = 62.8%, non-binary = 2.3%, Mean age = 20.97, SD = 1.59) participated in the study. A survey assessed the athletes' perceptions of the motivational climate (i.e., caring, task-, and ego-involving), well-being, and career engagement. Reliability coefficients for each psychological construct were computed and ranged from .81 to .95. Descriptive statistics indicated that the athletes perceived neutral caring and task-involving climates, while they showed a relatively high ego-involving climate. Bivariate correlation analyses revealed two significant relationships. One was between task-involving climate and career (r = .42, p). The purpose of this study was to assess perceived motivational climates and their relationship to well-being-related variables. Results suggest that when athletes perceived the motivational climate as task-involving, they tended to be engaged in their career on campus, which is a dimension of wellness for college students. Future research should employ a larger sample as well as longitudinal observations to understand the associations in depth.

P-085

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MOTIVATION AND NEEDS SATISFACTION DURING PREGNANCY AND POSTPARTUM

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Regular exercise provides substantial biopsychosocial benefits for pregnant and postpartum women (ACOG, 2006; 2020). However, during this period, motivation to maintain healthy behaviors, including physical activity (PA), often decreases (Evenson et al., 2009). Self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2008) provides a framework for understanding exercise adherence by considering the role of basic psychological needs (BPNs; i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and motivational orientations. Several studies have applied SDT to this topic, but findings remain mixed. Thus, this study conducted an exploratory systematic review with meta-analytic techniques to synthesize research on SDT in the context of exercise among pregnant and postpartum women. A systematic literature search was conducted in six databases (PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, SportDiscus, and MedLine) following PRISMA guidelines. Inclusion criteria were met if studies: (a) were published in English, (b) utilized quantitative measures, (c) consisted of pregnant or postpartum participants, (d) employed cross-sectional or intervention designs, (d) measured PA (or exercise), and (e) examined BPNs or motivational orientation. A total of 52 effect sizes were extractedfrom five studies that met the inclusion criteria. Robust variance estimation meta-analysis results indicated no significant effect of PA on motivation or BPN satisfaction (β = 0.38, SE = 0.22, 95% CI = -0.23 to 0.98, p = .16) when analyzed together. A meta-regression subgroup analysis also examined whether this effect was moderated by components of SDT. Similarly, no significant moderation effect was observed (BPN: β = 0.71, SE = 0.22, p = .13; Motivation: β = 0.10, SE = 0.30, p = .69). Given the limited number of studies included in the meta-analysis, these results should be interpreted with caution. Future research employing the SDT framework should further explore how exercise environments that support BPNs influence women's motivation for PA during pregnancy and postpartum.

P-086

AROUSAL, VISION AND PERFORMANCE AMONGST BOTH COLLEGIATE STUDENTS AND COLLEGIATE STUDENT-ATHLETES:

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Vision is critical for humans but the consequences for vision deficits may be especially problematic for athletes. Although a reasonable body of literature has established the impact of arousal on cognitive functioning, less is known about the impact of arousal on visual processes. The Yerkes-Dodson curve (Yerkes-Dodson, 1908) suggests an inverted U relationship between arousal and performance on moderately demanding cognitive tasks, such that peak performance on these tasks occurs when arousal level is moderate. Given the critical nature of visual processes, it is important to understand when these processes may be altered by physiological arousal and if this impact varies based on athlete status.Forty-one collegiate students and forty-two collegiate student-athletes completed the exercise and control condition in counter balanced order. In the exercise condition participants ran on a treadmill to increase their heart rate to 160 beats per minute (bpm) prior to and between tasks to ensure elevated heart rate. Participants completed a series of measures to assess visual acuity, dynamic visual acuity, contrast sensitivity, distance stereopsis, perception span, multiple object tracking, reaction time, eye-hand motor coordination, visual tracking, anticipation timing, and attention control. A series of t-tests were conducted to examine group differences. We observed the effect of arousal on dynamic visual acuity (resolution of moving targets), distance stereopsis (depth perception), and

visual tracking, such that performance was improved under optimal levels of arousal. This is important for understanding the impact of arousal on certain visual parameters based on Yerkes-Dodson curve.However, psychological and physiological arousal may differ in their effects and there is immense literature to support the detrimental effect of psychological arousal on sport performance. Understanding the impact of physiological arousal on visual processes is critical for optimal sport, tactical, and human performance.

P-087

ATTENTIONAL FOCUS IN SHORT DISTANCE COLLEGIATE RUNNERS

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Runners' focus during performance shifts between an internal and external focus. An internal focus brings attention to the inside of the body whereas an external focus brings attention to something in the environment (Park et al., 2015). Research shows that attentional focus can contribute to performance and experiences of runners (Li et al., 2022). For example, adopting an external focus improves running economy (Aghdaei et al., 2021). To date, research on attentional focus in runners has been primarily focused on long distance runners (e.g., Samson et al., 2015). The goal of our study was to investigate the attentional focus in short-distance competitive collegiate runners. We utilized the "Think Aloud" method to record Division III collegiate sprinters' attentional focus during a 400m time trial, allowing for real-time data on runners' foci (McGreary et al., 2020). Thematic analysis revealed that participants typically attended to these themes: (1) technique (e.g., cues about body position, breathing strategies), (2) body awareness (e.g., avoiding injury, noting pain or discomfort), (3) cognitive awareness (e.g., motivational statements, uncertainty), (4) time/distance awareness (e.g., "only 300m to go," "only one curve left") (5) track awareness (e.g., avoiding obstacles, seeing friends). Results indicated runners attended both internally (themes 1, 2, 3) and externally (themes 4, 5) with more attention focused on internal themes. Our findings provide valuable insight to athletes, coaches, and sports psychology professionals on runners' attentional focus to develop strategies that best support performance.

P-088

CLASSIFYING SPORTS-RELATED CONCUSSIONS AND REPETITIVE HEAD IMPACTS USING EEG AND MACHINE LEARNING IN FEMALE ATHLETES

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Contact sports are associated with high incidences of sports-related concussions (SRC; 1.6 to 3.8 million occur annually) and repetitive head impacts (RHI). Direct assessment tools (i.e., SCAT-6) are biased towards male populations and fail to diagnose SRC and RHI accurately, posing long-term neurological risks, especially in female athletes. This study aimed to improve head impact evaluation by integrating electroencephalography (EEG) and machine learning (ML) algorithms. An ML algorithm was trained using laboratory and open-source EEG data (Cavanaugh, 2024) of individuals with diagnosed concussion (n = 50) and controls (n = 46). The algorithm was trained to recognize and classify patterns of distinct brain activity features of the P3 event-related potential (ERP) component across the entire scalp associated with concussions and controls. Results showed that the ML algorithm achieved an accuracy rate of 69% (AUC = .73), Next, female athletes from University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) contact and non-contact athletic teams (n = 25) were monitored (head impacts, EEG measures) across a sports season. After applying the ML model, 10 participants at preseason, 3 at midseason, and 5 at postseason were classified as concussive-like brain activity. Finally, direct assessment tools (i.e., SCAT-6) were compared to indirect assessment tools (EEG/ML algorithm) at the sport season's conclusion. Psychological measures (e.g., depression, stress, and sleep) were also used to assess the likelihood of group classification by direct and indirect tools. Results revealed no SRC classification using direct assessment tools, while indirect assessments identified some participants as concussion-like brain activity at varying timepoints. Binary logistic regression revealed that psychological measures did not predict group classification when assessing indirect assessments (p's $\geq$ .22). These findings suggest that EEG and ML algorithms could complement traditional assessments and may reduce misdiagnosis of injury, potentially reducing the risk of long-term neurological deficits in vulnerable athletes.

P-089

FROM THEORY TO APPLICATION: A SCOPING REVIEW OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY INTERVENTION DESIGN AND DELIVERY

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Music performance anxiety (MPA) research over the past four decades has focused on the application of sport psychology techniques to musicians. Studies on MPA management have been examined collectively through systematic reviews (e.g. Fernholz et al., 2019) and a meta-analysis (Austin, 2018). However, previous reviews have focused primarily on the types of coping strategies investigated rather than on intervention structure and delivery. Reviews have often restricted findings to published literature, which may not capture the true breadth of research that has been conducted. This scoping review explores the structure, delivery, and participant perceptions of interventions that have been employed in MPA studies. The following databases were searched: ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (ProQuest), APA PsycInfo (Ovid), Medline (Ovid), SCOPUS (Scopus), CINAHL (Ovid), and ERIC (Ovid). To be included, studies needed to investigate MPA interventions and use samples of professional or post-secondary music performers. Using the framework of Arksey & O'Malley (2006), each reference was reviewed by two authors independently during the title and abstract screening, full-text review, and data extraction. A total of 107 studies investigating 148 interventions met the inclusion criteria. Intervention lengths ranged from 10 minutes to 2 years, with 64% of interventions lasting between two to ten weeks. Sixty-seven percent were

delivered by a practitioner, while 9% were self-guided. Some recent interventions used technology such as virtual reality and online platforms. Participant feedback was collected in 47% of studies. Findings show that MPA studies have begun using different modalities in intervention design and delivery. However, further investigation is needed to better understand the optimization of interventions. Few interventions have incorporated technology. Brief interventions and self-guided interventions could help make interventions more accessible and feasible, but further research is needed. Finally, more consistent collection of participant feedback could inform future research to improve participant recruitment and retention.

P-090

INJURY IMPACTS ON THE SELF-EFFICACY OF COLLEGIATE ATHLETES RETURNING TO SPORT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Jacob Jensen, California State University, Northridge

Injuries are a deeply personal and difficult obstacle that athletes often face during their athletic careers. These injuries can often lead to psychological barriers that may influence an athlete's level of self-efficacy which, in turn, can impact their performances and confidence in those abilities (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA), the primary research team examined the injury and recovery experiences of 12 Division I female collegiate athletes pertaining to the sources of self-efficacy as they returned to sport following serious injury (Smith, 2015). Utilizing semi-structured interviews with female collegiate athletes who had missed at least 3 months of training and/or competition due to injury, participants were asked to detail their injury and recovery experiences as they related to four sources that influence self-efficacy: mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, physiological feedback, and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1997). Initial results suggested five major themes related to athletes' experiences of injury and return to play: athlete relatability, maturity, fear of reinjury, confidence, and timing of injury. These findings have practical implications for athletes recovering from injury, as it provides an opportunity for deeper self-awareness, so athletes are able to determine their own levels of self-efficacy and to understand how their injury experiences can influence their self-efficacy as they return to sport.

P-091

LOCATING SELF-REGULATED LEARNING PROCESSES WITHIN ATHLETE-LED PRACTICE: INSIGHTS FROM COACHES' NARRATIVES

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Self-regulated learning (SRL) comprises self-regulatory processes used by athletes in practice contexts, to improve skill acquisition and the quality of their training (Young et al., 2023). While athletes report substantial amounts of self-directed, athlete-led practice (ALP) (Young et al., 2024), we need to better understand how they use SRL during such practice times. Coaches generally recognize the value of SRL and their role in fostering it (Radowits et al., 2024), however, no research has asked coaches to consider their own program and their own athletes' ALP in relation to SRL development. This study examined coaches' beliefs on the scope of ALP and whether their athletes employ SRL skills during ALP. Using mixed-methods, 12 Canadian coaches (6 men, 6 women) of adolescent athletes from five sports completed a survey in which they reported on agreement and frequency of ALP opportunities, as did a subset of their athletes. Survey scores were presented in subsequent semi-structured interviews with each coach. Using reflexive thematic analysis, we created three themes. First, coaches viewed ALP as essential for athlete development, for enriching their self-preparation, self-awareness, goal ownership, and accountability. Notably, ALP opportunities did not ensure deliberate engagement in practice; rather, quality ALP depended on athletes' SRL skills to enhance engagement, planning, and reflection, and these skills were driven by self-motivation. Second, ALP opportunities were context-specific, with various factors limiting and promoting their prevalence. Although fully athlete-directed practices were rare, ALP instances allowed athletes to work independently, self-monitor, make decisions, and seek feedback. Third, coaches' roles in supporting ALP involved creating an environment that fostered athlete independence, while also teaching SRL skills. Altogether, since ALP opportunities exist across a variety of sport contexts, it is crucial for practitioners to foster the development of SRL skills to enable athletes to optimize their training in these spaces.

P-092

TAKING LIFESPORTS TO SCALE: INITIAL PILOT INNOVATION S

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LiFEsports is a sport-based positive youth development program that uses sport to teach four key social skills: self-control, effort, teamwork, and social responsibility (S.E.T.S). Over the last 10 to 12 years, scholars implementing the program have uncovered key curricular mechanisms that promote social-emotional learning (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2021), as well as uncovered essential design components that contribute to broader health and well-being outcomes for youth (Anderson-Butcher et al. 2024). A recent randomized two-period crossover design demonstrated continued evidence for the intervention design. Next steps involve the adoption and implementation of LiFEsports in more naturalistic settings, including at other universities and school-based settings. Recently the model was piloted at a school site in Utah, as well as on the University of Maryland's campus. Survey data from the program in Utah (n=22) and Maryland (n=20) showed that the youth had positive and beneficial camp experiences. For instance, post-camp survey responses revealed that 87.5% of those in Utah and 100% of those in Maryland said they enjoyed the camp. Additionally, the comparison of the pre- to post-camp evaluation data at the Maryland program showed that the average scores for all four SETS dimensions (self-

control, effort, teamwork, social responsibility) increased, as did ratings of health behaviors and sport competence. Data at the Utah program show significant growth in perceptions of sport skills. This presentation will review the full body of work exploring LiFEsports, as well as distill lessons learned from these two scale-up sites. Implications will be drawn in relation to the adoption of the LiFEsports innovation in other social settings where youth development occurs.

P-093

THE EFFECTS OF PSYCHING-UP TECHNIQUES ON STRENGTH PERFORMANCE

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Research suggests that psyching-up techniques, such as imagery and preparatory arousal, can enhance maximal force production by improving neural drive and motor unit recruitment (Cusimano et al., 2023). However, there is a lack of research on the physical and cognitive mechanisms that underly the effectiveness of psyching-up techniques. Thus, using the scientist-practitioner approach, the purpose of the study was to examine the effects of psyching-up techniques on strength performance while monitoring heart rate (HR), self-efficacy and attention levels across conditions. Participants, aged 18 and older, were asked to squeeze a hand-grip dynamometer at maximal capacity across four conditions: control, motor-imagery, increased-arousal, and external-attention. Each condition required three maximal-effort squeezes, with condition order randomized. HR and self-efficacy were assessed before each condition, while direction of attention (i.e., external/internal) was assessed after each condition. Findings indicated that participants did not perform significantly different under the four conditions ($p = .49$). However, performance was highest in the external-attention condition ($M = 38.00$, $SD = 12.19$) and lowest in the control condition ($M = 36.81$, $SD = 11.35$). Interestingly, HR was significantly highest under the increased-arousal condition and attention was significantly more external in the external-attention condition compared to the other conditions. This study contributes to the understanding of the underlying-mechanisms of psyching-up strategies and their effectiveness in increasing power output and performance. The findings indicate that although different psyching-up techniques effect cognitive (i.e., attention) and physical (i.e., HR) components, individual differences and preferences are the most important factors when preparing for strength-based tasks. Thus, in strength-based sports such as powerlifting and in recreational settings, such as when measuring maximal strength before prescribing an exercise program, it is important to let individuals use their preferred psyching-up technique for accurate measures of maximal capacity.

P-094

BASKETBALL AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE WELLNESS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS OF COLOR

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Peter Economou, Rutgers University

Youth and young adults of color are at higher risk of experiencing mental and physical health challenges, however, they are less likely to seek and engage in formal mental health services and medical care due to stigma, time constraints, financial burdens, and cultural mistrust for the medical field more broadly. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how participation in sport, specifically basketball, for youth and young adults of color has benefits that extend across the Eight Dimensions of Wellness Model, illustrating the power of basketball as an alternative and strength-based tool to promote wellness.The author conducted semi-structured interviews with twelve participants, all identifying as people of color, ranging in age from 18-24 years-old, who play basketball at various levels (including collegiate, intramural, and recreational). Utilizing a reflexive thematic analysis, the author co-developed a new iteration of the Wellness Model, called the Starting Five for Basketball Wellness.The study concludes with a call to action to mobilize government officials, healthcare providers, educators and coaches to consider basketball participation as a strength-based tool to promote wellness for today's youth and young adults of color and to uplift communities. Additionally, future directions are identified to consider the importance for researchers to take a community-centered and culturally responsive approach in improving sport-based programmatic efforts through sound methodological design and evaluation that incorporates a focus on holistic wellness.

P-095

MARGINALIZED ATHLETE EXPERIENCES OF BELONGING IN SPORT: A SCOPING REVIEW

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The qualities of "belongingness" in sport remain transmutable, often defying our attempts to quantify, qualify, and define what it is to really belong in sport. Nevertheless, belonging remains central to an athlete's experience. We see elements of belonging reflected in related theories in sport psychology, including team cohesion (Carron et al., 1985), theories of motivation (Self-Determination Theory; Deci & Ryan, 1985), and fan behavior (Social Identity Theory; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). There is, however, surprisingly limited literature that explores the experiences of belonging from the perspective of the athlete and even fewer from the perspective of athletes who have identities that are underrepresented in sport. Between April and June of 2024, we conducted a scoping review of the existing literature on belonging in sport from the perspective of marginalized sport participants. Of the 3,451 articles originally sourced, 21 met all inclusion criteria. The PRISMA-ScR steps were used to analyze the contents of these articles and review the current literature on this topic. Results revealed that the majority of these articles were qualitative in nature and involved in-depth participation from participants. In our analysis, we discovered several themes that united the experience of belonging for marginalized athletes:

sport as a space of contradiction, sport as community, negotiating boundaries in sport, and sport as a space of identity construction. In this presentation, we will review the findings of the scoping review and discuss the implications for applied sport psychology, including strategies to mobilize "belongingness" as a tool for greater team integration, sport enjoyment, and improved performance.

P-096

MIND THE MENSTRUAL KNOWLEDGE GAP: THE AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE WOMEN ON MENSTRUAL DYSFUNCTION AND EXERCISE

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John Lubker, Department of Psychology, University of Notre Dame
Cara Ocobock, Department of Anthropology, University of Notre Dame

The female athlete triad is the phenomenon in which female athletes are at an increased risk for menstrual dysfunction (MD), disordered eating, and decreased bone mineral density due to the stress of physical activity. MD is important to highlight due to its positive perception among many female athletes, resulting in lack of care-seeking, ultimately increasing their risk of psychological disturbances and stress fractures when left untreated. There is a gap in the literature examining non-athletes' knowledge and perceptions of MD in relation to exercise and stress. The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of non-athlete, college aged women's attitudes and knowledge regarding MD and exercise. Participants (n=382) completed a short survey addressing awareness and perceptions of MD and its health consequences. Data was analyzed in R and Python to determine correlation between specific survey questions and participants' free responses. The results demonstrated that overall knowledge significantly predicted with overall attitude (p=1.028e-09; R2=0.09994), MD is related to perception that MD is normal (p =1.49e-10) however, MD did not have a significant effect on knowledge (p = .365). Furthermore, 29.1% (n=110) of the total sample reported experiencing oligomenorrhea (irregular menstruation) which is far greater than the national average of 13.5% in the general population. Additionally, 4.23% (n=16) of the sample reported experiencing amenorrhea (absence of menstrual bleeding), which is slightly higher than the national average of 3-4%. The high percentage of individuals with MD in the present sample supports the notion that MD is a pressing health issue for non-athletes of college age. These findings and the need for increased menstrual education at the college level to improve the health and care-seeking tendencies of college aged non-athletes will be discussed in this presentation. Keywords: Female athlete triad, perception, amenorrhea

P-097

NEW CONFERENCE, NEW CHALLENGES: NAVIGATING STUDENT-ATHLETE WELL-BEING & SATISFACTION POST REALIGNMENT

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Conference realignment within collegiate athletics has become a highly controversial phenomenon, reshaping competitive landscapes and institutional affiliations. While conference realignment has been argued to have financial and logistical benefits, it may also have negative consequences for student-athletes. This study examines the possible influence of conference realignment on the mental health, physical health, spiritual health, relationships, and academic success of student-athletes at a local University who will be entering their first season in the Big 12 Conference for the 2024-2025 academic year. With the extra travel now required of student athletes—nearly double that of previous years in some cases—studying, discussing, and providing solutions for this current situation has never been more urgent. This study underscores the importance of considering diverse dimensions of student-athlete welfare in realignment discussions and offers implications for policy, practice, and future research aimed at promoting the development and success of collegiate athletes amidst the evolving landscape of conference affiliations which may continue to impact others for years to come.

P-098

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COACHES' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LGB+ ATHLETES: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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Trent Petrie, University of North Texas
Andrew Moebus, University of North Texas
Macey Arnold, University of North Texas

LGB+ youth participate in sport at lower rates (Greenspan et al., 2019) and report higher rates of mental health concerns. Considering the benefits that sport can provide to LGB+ youth (Blais et al., 2017), it is critical to understand their experiences within sport. Coaches play a key role in their athletes' lives through the team cultures they create, yet research on high school coaches' attitudes towards LGB+ athletes is remarkably limited. Thus, we explored high school coaches' attitudes toward LGB+ athletes to understand how affirming and welcoming sport environments are. Participants were 501 high school coaches (Mage = 44.8 years; men = 46.5%; White = 72.5%; heterosexual = 82.8%; Christian = 78.2%) drawn from high school athletic departments across the state of Texas. Coaches indicated their agreement (i.e., from 1, Strongly Disagree, to 5, Strongly Agree) about whether coaches should support and accept LGB+ athletes in being open about their sexual orientation on their sport team. Then, through an open-ended response, coaches described their reasons for their beliefs. Through reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2016), we identified three themes to describe their beliefs: Levels of acceptance (e.g., LGB Is Wrong; I Accept and Embrace My Queer Athletes), Shut Up & Play

(e.g., Don't Ask, Don't Tell), Openly LGB+ Athletes Disrupt the Team (e.g., No Dating Allowed). Our results suggest that heteronormativity and homophobia exist within high school sport, yet legal/policy protections for Texas queer athletes are absent. Thus, the degree to which queer athletes are supported and accepted in sport environments may be solely determined by coaches, which, based on our findings, does not consistently occur. Texas school systems are encouraged to adopt policies and educational programming to mitigate discrimination by coaches and peers and foster environments that are affirming and inclusive.

P-099

THE PANDEMIC PLAYBOOK: EXPLORING HOW THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS SHAPED HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES' SELF-DETERMINED MOTIVATION

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The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the nature of the world, leading to global shutdowns and associated restrictions. As such, this shifted the nature of sports across all levels, but particularly at the high school level where adolescents are forming their identity and relationships with others (Sabourin et al., 2024). In efforts to proactively prepare for future crises or disruptions, it is crucial to understand how unforeseen situations and associated restrictions may influence high school athletes' motivation and enjoyment of sport. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceived impact of restrictions associated with the COVID-19 on high school athletes' self-determined motivation to participate in sport. Six high school athletes, five female and one male, aged 15 to 17, were interviewed in 2022 about their experience in their respective sports within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the Sort and Sift, Think and Shift qualitative method of analysis (Maietta et al., 2021), results indicated the restrictions influenced high school athletes' motivation to engage in sport, particularly through a self-determination theory perspective (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The following themes emerged: (1) high school athletes' autonomy in being able to practice shifted with restrictions enforced during the pandemic, with some athletes experiencing challenges to autonomy while others adapted more easily to restrictions; (2) restrictions reduced their perceived competence in their ability to perform; and (3) restrictions decreased their ability to socialize and relate with others. For a majority of these high school athletes, it is evident that COVID-19 restrictions changed the way they navigated the sporting environment. These results inform coaching education (e.g., team building and bonding activities) and encourage conversations with high school athletes to foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness for self-determined motivation despite these unforeseen situations.

P-100

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INCLUSION: PERSPECTIVES FROM ATHLETES WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND COACHES IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS TRADITIONAL TEAM SPORTS

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Jerry Reynolds, Ball State University

Purpose: The study aimed to explore social inclusion among athletes with intellectual disabilities (ID) and their coaches within the context of Special Olympics (SO) traditional team sports. Recognizing that social inclusion is pivotal in enhancing the overall experience of athletes with ID, the researchers examined how it manifested in Traditional team environments to inform effective programming and foster micro-level interactions. While previous research primarily focused on social inclusion themes within Unified SO settings, a notable gap existed regarding the relevance and application of these themes in traditional contexts of SO sports.

Methods: This study examined social inclusion among 12 athletes with intellectual disabilities (ID) and five coaches from a Midwest Special Olympics organization who participated in volleyball and basketball through semi-structured interviews. To enhance discussion depth, picture prompts depicting social inclusion scenarios were utilized. Data were analyzed using deductive content analysis, allowing for an exploration of athletes' perceptions of social inclusion and the coaching strategies that promote inclusive environments.

Results: Findings indicated that athletes with ID highly value interpersonal connections and team integration, aligning with previous research on the role of friendships in Special Olympics (SO). Coaches emphasized fostering a supportive environment, respecting individual differences, and reducing stigma surrounding ID. Additionally, a new theme beyond those identified in Unified SO context emerged, highlighting the need for greater community engagement in SO programs to enhance social inclusion beyond the team setting.

Conclusion: The study provides key insights into how athletes and coaches perceive and implement inclusive practices, offering actionable strategies to enhance the sport experience. The results contribute to evidence-based best practices for sports organizations, strengthening social connections and improving athlete well-being. Future research should further refine these strategies and explore their broader applicability across diverse sport settings.

P-101

A SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO EDUCATING YOUNG SPECIALISTS IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: AN EMERGENT DYNAMICAL MODEL FROM AN ACADEMY OF SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

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Kamil Damentka, Academy of Sport Psychology, Nowinka, Poland

There is a scarcity of scholarly reports that examine effective systemic practices regarding the education and professional development of sport and performance psychology (SPP) practitioners (e.g., Aoyagi, 2013; Tod et al., 2007). Such insights into international models are even less available (Wylleman et al., 2009), with the exception of supervision (Poczwardowski et al., 2023). Numerous approaches to psychology, including dynamical social psychology (Nowak & Vallacher, 2002), emphasize the need to embrace systemic views on educational and professional development processes. Preparing successful cohorts of SPP practitioners needs to be grounded both in the curriculum and in the entire structure of interactions that take place between graduate students and young professionals and their lecturers, supervisors, and the extended community (e.g., alumni, internship hosts). This presentation focuses on a recently established academy of sport psychology as a dynamical educational ecosystem aiming at enhancing competencies of post-master's level professionals who want to practice as mental performance coaches. The individual elements of the system (e.g., the recruitment process, teaching philosophy, course offerings) borrow extensively from: the active involvement of the academy's participants (i.e., students); ongoing feedback from the internship sites; the alumni's post-graduation success stories; growth of peer-mentoring groups; the alumni club's activities; the community building efforts (with parents, coaches, athletes, and sport psychologists) via free webinars and newsletters; and the contributions to coach education projects nationally. Based on the philosophy of positive (i.e., socially responsible) sport, the academy not only provides SPP relevant tools and competencies but also shapes the participants' attitudes toward growth-orientation, ongoing professional development, one's health and well-being, personal growth, and making a difference in the world of sport. Taken together, the academy is a living system, in which theory and practice intertwine, and the engaged community and interdisciplinary collaboration contribute to the quality educational outcomes.

P-102

AN EXPLORATION OF COACHING PHILOSOPHIES OF ATHLETE CARE USING THE COMPASS MODEL

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Kady Long, Springfield College
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The importance of developing and maintaining supportive coach-athletes relationships has been at the forefront of discussion as of late (Fisher et al., 2017; Fisher et al., 2018). Well established coach-athlete relationships promote the care and wellbeing of the athlete (Berger et al., 2023). The COMPASS model was developed based on the 3+1Cs (Jowett, 2007) and defines seven unique practices that can be employed in order to construct and preserve coach-athlete relationships (Rhind & Jowett, 2010). Due to the individualistic nature of coaching, the COMPASS model can be uniquely adapted to fit within already established coach-athlete relationships. Since no standard exists to train coaches in the COMPASS model, coaches could be utilizing multiple dimensions of the framework unknowingly. Exploring how coaches individually promote care and wellbeing of their athletes can help the sport community understand how coaches effectively build and maintain coach-athlete relationships. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how coaches maintain and interact within their established coach-athlete relationships to promote care and wellbeing of their athletes. Participants included 5 NCAA DIII head coaches at a small northeastern university. A semi structured interview guide was developed and used to account for consistency in the interview process, while giving the freedom for participants to naturally elaborate. Coding and data analysis followed a reflexive approach through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019) was used. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify, examine, and report patterns within the data collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Preliminary analysis showed ideas of athlete-first mentality, empathetic communication methods, respect towards individual backgrounds and cultural identities, developing athletes holistically, and consistent coaching approaches. These findings are important in understanding how coaches are supporting the development of their athletes and how SPPs can integrate key pieces of the COMPASS model to support these philosophies.

P-103

INSTRUCTOR-CREATED MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE PROFILES: THE ROLE OF COLLEGE MUSIC INSTRUCTORS

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Robert Eklund, Florida State University

College music students face unique challenges, including high instructor expectations, competition with peers, and long hours of practice, which can contribute to anxiety and affect their engagement and well-being (Farley & Kelley, 2023). Instructors play a key role in shaping the motivational climate of the studio, which influences students' perceptions of their learning environment (Herrera et al., 2023). Drawing from Duda's (2013) coach-created motivational climate framework, this study explores college music students' perceptions of the instructor-created motivational climate (ICMC) within applied music studios, identifying distinct ICMC profiles and potential differences across demographic variables.Participants were 195 college music students (Mage = 20.44) who completed surveys assessing demographic information and perceptions of the ICMC. ICMC profiles were identified and probabilities of student profile membership were calculated using latent profile analysis. Chi-square tests were conducted to examine potential profile differences based on gender (male, female), division (classical, jazz, voice/opera/musical theatre), and scholarship status (full, partial, no).Results indicated that either a 2- or 3-profile solution best fit the data. Based on model fit indices and bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT), the 3-profile solution was determined to fit the data significantly better than the 2-profile solution ($p > .001$), while

the 4-profile solution did not improve the fit significantly (p = .168). Profiles were classified as “Empowered” (n = 141), “Moderately Empowered” (n = 41), and “Disempowered and Isolated” (n = 13). Due to the small sample size in the “Disempowered and Isolated” profile, chi-square tests could not be conducted for this group.These findings suggest that most students perceive their ICMC as empowering, though a small subset feels disengaged. Further research and targeted interventions are needed to support those in the “Disempowered and Isolated” profile to ensure a more inclusive and motivating studio environment.

P-104

UTILIZATION OF APPLIED LEARNING STRATEGIES AND A FLIPPED CLASSROOM TO TEACH SPORT CONFIDENCE, AROUSAL REGULATION AND IMAGERY

Eric Martin, Boise State University
Danny Swanstrom, Boise State University

Traditional lecture-based teaching can limit student engagement and learning by placing students in passive roles, reducing opportunities for active participation and critical thinking. To address this, educators have increasingly turned to active learning strategies that have been widely recognized for their role in fostering deeper student engagement, comprehension, and retention (Freeman et al., 2014). Further, to support the use of active learning strategies in the classroom, many instructors have incorporated a flipped classroom model that shifts direct instruction outside of class through readings, watching videos, or completing comprehension assignments (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). This shift of responsibility allows for in-class time to be utilized for hands-on activities, discussion, and skill application. Sport psychology courses are especially well-suited for flipped classrooms and active learning approaches because they involve applied concepts that benefit from experiential learning, discussion, and real-world application. By engaging with foundational theories outside of class and using in-class time for hands-on activities—such as guided mental skills training, case study analyses, and simulated counseling sessions—students can deepen their understanding and develop practical skills that directly translate to professional settings. This poster will highlight multiple course sessions that have utilized this framework to teach the concepts of confidence and self-efficacy, arousal regulation, and imagery with a unique throwing task. Students were asked to evaluate their confidence in the task and utilize arousal regulation and imagery skills under simulated pressure situations (e.g., with an audience and with class points at risk). Students indicated they enjoyed the activity and were easily able to apply the concepts to their future careers. Additionally, students demonstrated a deeper understanding of the concepts compared to traditional instruction, as evidenced by significant improvements in exam performance for this section compared to previous semesters.

P-105

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION: A VALUES GAME

Kimberly Shaffer, Barry University

NIL, transfer portal… NCAA athletics, what have you become? In the new age of college athletics, coaches and administration are yearning for a way to keep athletes in programs and reduce turnover. While increased athlete autonomy aligns with NCAA mandated policy, the absence of barriers preventing mobility of players may result in negative effects of sustained organizational culture (Corr et al, 2024). Traditionally, coaches have sought to establish and maintain distinct organizational cultures through the recruitment of prospective athletes that fit desired or existent programmatic values (Schroeder, 2010). However, the effects of core value alignment in coaches and players have yet to be studied or understood in the modern NCAA era. Coaches (n=8) and players (n=71) at an NCAA DI institution were asked to complete the Life Values Inventory (Crace & Brown, 1996) and then descriptives were run to compare coach and athlete value alignment, as well as number of student athletes who transferred from each program. Coaches with similar values to not only other members of the coaching staff, but also to their athletes had significantly lower transfers as compared to coaches who were aligned in values to their coaching staff, but not to the athletes themselves. Although prioritizing the transfer portal has been stated to be a viable means of establishing a distinct culture, predicated on the importance of winning, continued reliance on the transfer portal long-term may be detrimental to the maintenance culture (Corr et al, 2024) unless coaches can recruit athletes with similar values to that of themselves, and the program.

P-106

AN EXPLORATION OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PRE-PERFORMANCE ROUTINES AMONG ATHLETES AND PERFORMERS

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Diana Curtis, Rockhurst University
Hailey Chatterton, Oregon Health and Science University
Haru Inoue, University of Minnesota
Jaxon Tamulaites, Springfield College

Pre-performance routines (PPRs), defined as task-relevant and systematic thoughts or actions completed prior to performance (Moran, 1996), are a mechanism of physical or psychological preparation for athletes and performers. Self-presentational strategies, including self-handicapping behaviors and claims, may also facilitate mental preparation by providing a protective mechanism in the event of a potential failure (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Personal characteristics, such as anxiety and perfectionism, may influence engagement in PPRs and self-handicapping (e.g., Coudevylle et al., 2011; Curtis & Hutchinson, 2023; Hazell et al., 2014). The purpose of this study was thus to explore personal characteristics and performance-related behaviors among athletes and performers across disciplines. Participants were 191 athletes and performers (Mage = 21.8 + 7.7 years) who completed a series of measures to evaluate cognitive and somatic anxiety, perfectionism, self-handicapping, and elements and functions of PPRs. Correlational analysis indicated significant, positive relationships between the personal characteristics of cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and perfectionistic concerns and the pre-performance tendency of self-handicapping (all ps ps n = 153) suggested that athletes and performers engaged in a variety of PPR elements, including physical warm-up, music, preparation logistics, nutrition, visualization, breathing, and other mental performance strategies. Some participants also described superstitious pre-performance behaviors. Further, participants reported that their PPRs served various mental and physical readiness functions, such as anxiety reduction and arousal regulation,

concentration and focus, performance enhancement, and injury prevention. Of particular note, differences arose between the existing literature on PPR recommendations and the strategies that participants reported using to facilitate performance. Practitioners should thus consider the performance-related strategies athletes are already applying before providing guidance and recommendations. Future researchers might explore performance-related behavioral trends among individuals with varying personal characteristics.

P-107

APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PEDAGOGY: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN PSYCHOEDUCATION

Jordan Goffena, Miami University
Thomas Minkler, Miami University
Ann MacKenzie, Miami University
Sarah Sommer, Miami University

Weinberg and Gould (2024) note that a crucial element of effective mental performance consulting involves client education on the background and development of psychological skills that enhance sport performance and athlete well-being. Sport psychologists and mental performance consultants often refer to this learning process as psychoeducation. Regarding the learning process, pedagogy is described as the utilization and application of teaching and learning theories to support the development of knowledge and skill acquisition (Murphy, 2008; Shah & Campus, 2021). For sport, exercise, and performance psychology (SEPP) educators, pedagogy is essentially the art and science of instruction. A clearly defined pedagogy is often understood as a core component of effective instruction, but appears to be underutilized in SEPP consulting. To that end, the primary aim of this presentation is to explore the pedagogical principles central to the psychology of learning, practice, and performance in sport. Key pedagogical themes will be explored, and said themes will uncover pedagogical applications derived from knowledge domains such as teacher education, physical education/sport pedagogy, and consultant effectiveness. As professionals who engage in psychoeducational practices, applied sport psychology pedagogy can be used as a framework to better help SEPP practitioners go above and beyond the basics of psychoeducation. Applied sport psychology pedagogy, within the context of SEPP psychoeducation, is related to a theory-to-practice approach to better facilitate individualized learning within the educational phase of psychological skill development. Due to the limited discourse on the incorporation of pedagogical perspectives in SEPP, further discussion is warranted as pedagogical considerations have the potential to directly enhance individualized learning and performance in SEPP. Applied pedagogies, approaches, and techniques, grounded in our pedagogical themes, will be advanced in this oral presentation.

P-108

APPLYING BEHAVIORAL THEORY TO SPORTS NUTRITION: EVALUATING EDUCATION INTERVENTION'S IMPACT ON KNOWLEDGE AND DIETARY BEHAVIOR IN DIVISION I MEN'S SOCCER

Jamie McAllister-Deitrick, Coastal Carolina University
Kimberly Singleton, Coastal Carolina University
Mason Margut, Coastal Carolina University
Celia Lemeiux, Coastal Carolina University

Nutrition is integral in athletes' performance and recovery. Research has found that collegiate athletes lack nutritional understanding and their diets are typically insufficient in total energy, specific macronutrients, micronutrients, and fluids. Due to this lack of understanding and improper nutrition intake, the implementation of a sports nutrition education intervention (SNEI) may benefit an athlete's health and sport performance. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of an SNEI on sports nutrition knowledge and dietary behavior throughout a regular season in Division I men's soccer. Participants were NCAA Division I men's soccer players (n=14) during 10 weeks of in-season training/matches. Athletes received the SNEI at baseline, as well as biweekly sports nutrition reminders throughout the season. Participants completed a validated questionnaire to assess sports nutrition knowledge and self-perceived questionnaires assessing dietary behavior and recovery pre- and post-intervention. Paired samples t-tests revealed significant improvement in sports nutrition knowledge post SNEI ($t(13) = -3.52$, p

P-109

BEYOND THE CARDS: DEVELOPING PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS WITH COMPETITIVE TRADING CARD GAME PLAYERS

Miles Cassidy-Rice, Health Sciences University
Britni Cassidy-Rice, N/A

Looking beyond traditional sport settings, the field of sport and performance (SPP) psychology has the opportunity to support performance excellence in diverse performance domains (Sly et al., 2020). This provides SPP practitioners with the opportunity to explore performance environments where they can deliver their services and find potential clientele. One area that is currently underexplored is that of competitive Trading Card Game (TCG) players. This market, initially launched in 1993 (Kaufeld and Smith, 2006), has grown significantly and the largest TCG, Magic: The Gathering (MTG), is now estimated to have over 50 million active players worldwide (Hasbro, n.d.). These players compete in large scale tournaments, sometimes over multiple days, to compete for cash prizes and exclusive cards. Similar to esports, these tournaments are streamed to audiences globally. MTG, alongside other popular TCG's such as: Yu-Gi-Oh, Pokémon, Disney Lorcana, and Star Wars Unlimited, provide a potential area for SPP practitioners to apply their knowledge to support TCG players. This lecture presents findings on psychological skills utilized by TCG players. Using qualitative interviews, competitive TCG players were asked questions about the application of psychological skills within their performance domain. This lecture will focus on the applied recommendations for SPP practitioners looking to expand their services into working with TCG players.

Attendees will be provided with an insight into the unique competitive demands of TCG environments, and how SPP interventions can be designed to support the performance of individuals in this field. This lecture will provide practical applications of mental skills within competitive TCGs and outline key areas for future research.

P-110:

BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO RESEARCH UTILISATION IN APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE

Marie Winter, University Campus of Football Buisness

The use of research in practice is regarded as a core component of evidence-informed decision-making; practitioners need to understand and evaluate intervention publications to implement them effectively in practice, and researchers need to be aware of how they translate research into practical evidence-based guidelines (Winter et al., 2023). This connection however is inhibited by two challenges: the complications faced by researchers in conducting interventions that are rigorous, robust, and also demonstrate real-world effectiveness, and the accessibility and implementation difficulties faced by practitioners when trying to apply published research evidence to the real world (Ely et al., 2021). A research study was designed to explore practitioner opinions regarding barriers and enablers to research utilisation within applied sport psychology. A questionnaire was completed by 57 qualified and trainee applied sport psychology practitioners within the UK. These results were combined with another UK-based secondary data set that asked 10 early career and 10 experienced applied sport psychology practitioners the question "are there any future directions you believe researchers should explore to facilitate sport psychology practitioners with the implementation of psychological skills interventions for athletes and teams in competitive sport?". Results were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The results indicated various barriers to the use of research in practice, these were: practitioner skill, issues conducting research, and access. Additionally, various enablers that could facilitate research utilisation were identified, these included: practitioner development, improving resources, and further research. These results could help to advance both the research and practice domains of applied sport psychology by encouraging the application of evidence-driven models of practice and improving the dissemination of applied sport psychology knowledge.

P-111

BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM: MERGING MENTAL PERFORMANCE AND CLINICAL SUPPORT IN A COLLEGE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

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Deja James, Austin Peay State University

The integration of clinical mental health psychology and mental performance consulting is key to promoting optimal performance in athletes. At the collegiate level, providing comprehensive support systems for athletes is essential for both well-being and peak performance (Fogaca, 2019). The partnership between a licensed mental health clinician and a mental performance consultant has led to a unified sport psychology and behavioral health department within an NCAA Division I athletic program. Over the past two years, the Director of Sport Psychology and Behavioral Health has expanded the foundational work through the integration of the Community Resiliency Model (CRM)® and Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Theory. CRM, an evidence-based practice that emphasizes self-regulation, personal strengths, and community resilience, serves as a critical self-care tool for student-athletes (Grabbe & Nicholson, 2023). By integrating CRM principles into clinical counseling and mental performance consulting, practitioners foster emotional regulation, resilience, and competitive success. The addition of a mental performance coach has elevated the department's holistic approach by expanding the department's knowledge, experience, and expertise. By using a strengths-based and solution-focused approach, paired with CRM principles, the department provides athletes with self-regulation tools that reinforce resilience and personal strengths, deepening their ability to manage stress, adapt to challenges, and sustain peak performance. The implementation of this integrated model by the interdisciplinary department has led to increased engagement and participation in mental health and performance services among student-athletes. Early outcomes indicate expanded service accessibility, a clearer understanding of the link between mental performance and competitive success among athletic personnel, and improved athlete well-being. Focused on long-term growth, the department continues to evolve through the acquisition and integration of new strategies to enhance psychological support and optimize performance outcomes.

P-112

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN YOUTH SPORTS: EXAMINING INFRACTIONS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN A COMPETITIVE TOURNAMENT

Alberto Espinoza, Texas A&M University
Emily Howell, Texas A&M University
Emmaculate Owiro, Texas A&M University
Andrea Ettekal, Texas A&M University

Promoting character in sport requires intentional holistic approaches that address myriad facets of the sport environment (Shields & Bredemeier, 2008). Identifying sources of poor character may help practitioners identify intervention points. Our objective was to examine variation in character infractions during a competitive youth multi-sport (soccer, basketball, volleyball) tournament in Mexico, which included an initiative to promote character. This study uses innovative data capturing character from multiple sources (athletes, coaches, spectators); previous studies tend to focus on one source and few include information about spectators (Ettekal et al., 2017). Sixty eight teams from 11 school districts played 774 games. Trained observers rated games marking character infractions (0=no, 1=yes) on a 9-cell matrix categorizing sources (players, coaches, spectators) by targets (officials, own team, opposing team). Frequency analyses suggested that spectators exhibited infractions more often (11.0%) than players (7.9%) and coaches (7.0%). Officials and opposing teams were targeted more often (11.5% and 11.7%, respectively) than one's own team (3.6%). Infractions were likely to occur from multiple sources within schools ($\chi^2(1) = 112.83–154.77$, ps 10.6) rather than singular sources across schools. Theory suggests that treating sport as a "game" without real world consequences

is one reason character infractions occur (Shields & Bredemeier, 2008). This study provides one example of how youth sport tournaments might encourage stakeholders to take the character aspects of sport seriously. Although many character interventions utilize strengths-based approaches (Ferris et al., 2015), reducing deficits should also be included. Our findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of whole-school strategies that integrate multiple sources, instead of targeting one source (Dorsch et al., 2018). Addressing character collectively, and also holding spectators accountable, may be the most effective approach to fostering character development in youth sport.

P-113

COACHING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA: THE COACH–ATHLETE PERFORMANCE TEAM

Elyse Gorrell, Certified Mental Performance Consultant

Social media has become a pervasive influence in athletes' lives, but little is known about how it affects the coach–athlete relationship and athletic performance. This research explored coaches' perceptions of social media's impact on athletes, specifically focusing on its psychological effects and the resulting implications for sport performance. Existing literature suggests that social media can affect athletes' behaviour in ways they may not fully recognize, influencing their mental game and overall performance. Given the importance of the coach–athlete relationship for performance success, understanding how coaches perceive social media's role is crucial.Using a phenomenological approach for this research, where the lived experiences of six high-performance coaches from various individual sports was examined. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore how coaches perceive social media's influence on their athletes, with a focus on behavioural changes, the persuasive qualities of social media, and the image-management strategies young athletes employ on these platforms. Findings reveal that coaches observe notable shifts in athlete behaviour linked to social media use, including distraction, self-presentation concerns, and an increased emphasis on image rather than performance. These perceptions present challenges for coaches, as athletes' preoccupation with social media may impact their focus and mental preparedness for competition.The study contributes to the understanding of social media's impact on sport performance by providing insights into coaches' perspectives. The findings suggest that increased awareness and targeted strategies for managing social media use could improve the coach–athlete relationship and enhance performance outcomes. Future research should explore interventions to mitigate the negative effects of social media on athletes' mental game and performance.

P-114

EVALUATING STRESS LEVELS FOR FEMALE ATHLETES BEFORE AND AFTER INTERACTING WITH A THERAPY DOG

Caitlyn Wilson, California Baptist University

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the effect, if there is any, on stress levels before and after interacting with a therapy dog for female Division I athletes in the Southwest region of the United States. In the past there have been multitudes of studies conducted showing that interacting with a therapy dog can reduce stress for individuals, but this concept has not been thoroughly explored in the context of athletic performance. In the studies conducted by Barker et al. (2017) and Ward-Griffith et al. (2018), researchers found that interacting with therapy dogs significantly lowered the amount of perceived stress that college students experienced before exams. In the research conducted by Signh and Signh (2019), it was found that female athletes often experience higher levels of stress than male athletes. This study aims to help athletes be in the present moment through interaction with a therapy dog. This study looks at the perceived stress levels of twenty six female collegiate athletes before and after interacting with a therapy dog. Stress levels were evaluated by using questions from the Perceived Stress Questionnaire (PSQ) developed by Levenstein et al. (1993) before and after interacting with a therapy dog. Included was a question asking if the athletes felt that interacting with the therapy dog was beneficial in addition to a place to leave additional comments. Data was analyzed by using a Paired T test, and results for this study are significant with a p value of 0.001. Charts and additional information on how this study was conducted will be included in this presentation. This study was approved by California Baptist University Masters of Science Sports and Performance Psychology program.

P-115

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A FIRST-YEAR RESILIENCE PROGRAM FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES AT A DIVISION III INSTITUTION

Brett Haffner, Illinois State University
Keenan Burgos, Illinois Wesleyan University
Michael Bailey, Illinois Wesleyan University
Lindsey Kellar, Illinois Wesleyan University
Scott Pierce, Illinois State University

Resilience is a process of positive adaptation as a result of significant adversity. For freshman student-athletes, the transition from high school to college involves unprecedented stressors such as social adjustments, academic pressures, and competitive sports environments (Pierce, et. al, 2024). These novel stressors can significantly impact the overall well-being of an individual, affecting academic progress and athletic performance. For student-athletes, developing resilience will not only help them prevent mental and physical obstacles, but also enable them to effectively handle these challenges when they inevitably arise. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a first-year resilience program implemented at a Division III institution in the Midwest. A total of 216 male and female student-athletes from twenty collegiate teams (nine individual sport teams and eleven team sport teams), participated in a series of monthly workshops in their first semester. Workshops focused on identity, coping skills, social support, and leadership, bringing together student-athletes from both team and individual sports. Surveys were completed by participants before the first session (Time 1) and again at the end of the last session (Time 2). This focused on overall changes in resilience scores from Time 1 to Time 2 and analyzed whether the impact differed between team and individual sport athletes. Results indicated that resilience scores were maintained between Time 1 and Time 2 and differences

were found between individual and team sport athletes with perceived stress. Individual sport athletes reported feeling stressed or nervous more often than team sport athletes at both Time 1 and Time 2. This study supports the use of this particular first-year resilience program and highlights potential differences in perceived stress for individual and team sports.

P-116

FROM LIZZO TO RIHANNA: USING MUSIC TO CONTEXTUALIZE PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS TRAINING

Tage Waite, EmpowerMIND
Lindsay Ross-Stewart, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Music has been a central aspect of human culture for centuries. It permeates our daily life (Terry et al., 2020). Current student athletes have grown up in a digital age with access to technology that allows them to listen to music from all over the world (Cheon Cha et al., 2019). While research shows people have shorter attention spans and may be easily distracted, popular music has been shown to provide short sparks of stimulation that effectively captures their attention (Perin, 2011). Research has found affective qualities of music promote improved feeling states and enjoyment (Terry et al., 2020). The use of music in sport has a positive influence on affective states and performance (McGuckian & Pepping, 2021). Given the impact of affective states not only on performance but also skill acquisition and learning, music can be a powerful tool for mental training professionals (McGuckian & Pepping, 2021). The contextualization of mental skills training is a way to engage athletes, deepen their understanding, and promote transfer of skill across domains (Perin, 2011). The ability to contextualize strategies to real-world domains is imperative for athletes as most skills and strategies are taught outside of athlete participation. In this lecture, two applied sport psychology professionals will share how they used music to contextualize their mental skills training programs for two NCAA Division I teams, focusing on the development, implementation, and outcomes of the programming. Specifically, a season long program for a softball team using lyrics from Lizzo and a season long program for a field hockey team using the music of Rihanna will be highlighted. Focus will be on areas of consideration when designing music contextualized psychological skills interventions, including how to choose the music, considerations related to the inclusivity of the music and artist, and the individual needs of a team.

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HITTING THE MARK: ARE YOUR MENTAL PERFORMANCE SERVICES WORKING?

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Effective mental skills interventions can enhance athletes' performance, mindset, leadership, well-being, and team culture. However, rigorous, data-driven evaluations of mental performance services in collegiate athletics remain scarce. Drawing from the scientist-practitioner model, NCAA Division I athletes (N = 68) completed a one-time retrospective survey (items rated on a 1–10 scale) assessing the impact of one-on-one and team-based mental performance sessions. The sample was predominantly White, female, first- or second-year students, and non-transfers. During Fall 2024, 49 participants engaged in one-on-one sessions (most 1–5 times), while 43 took part in team/small-group sessions (most 6–10 times). Paired-samples t-tests (including effect sizes and 95% confidence intervals) were performed in MATLAB 2025a.Results indicated significant (p M = 5.76 [SD = 1.51] to 7.81 [1.31]), mindset (from 4.93 [1.76] to 7.65 [1.16]), leadership (from 5.89 [2.01] to 7.34 [1.70]), and general well-being (from 6.33 [1.90] to 8.05 [1.29]). Similarly, team/small-group sessions yielded significant (p d = 0.78–1.83), with 95% confidence intervals not crossing zero, indicating robust improvements following each intervention type.From a scientist-practitioner perspective, these findings underscore how rigorous, data-driven evaluation can guide program refinement, demonstrate impact to stakeholders (e.g., coaches, athletic directors), and inform best practices. Our work offers practical strategies for mental performance coaches seeking to implement similar efficacy evaluations. By tailoring interventions based on ongoing feedback and systematically tracking outcomes, practitioners can more effectively support athletes' mental performance across diverse collegiate sport contexts. Limitations include cross-sectional design and relatively small sample size.

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MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING IN THE WORKPLACE

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This qualitative study explores the impact of mental skills training (MST) on employee engagement, well-being, and organizational culture within workplace settings. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), the study examines the lived experiences of 12 sport and performance psychology professionals, each with additional experience as executive coaches, business consultants, or comparable roles. Semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom provided rich, in-depth data on how MST is perceived to influence individual and organizational outcomes. The findings reveal that MST significantly enhances employee engagement by fostering key attributes such as productivity, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation. MST also supports employee well-being through the development of self-regulation, mindfulness, and stress management skills, promoting resilience and reducing burnout. These benefits extend beyond individual outcomes, as MST contributes to a thriving organizational culture characterized by psychological safety, trust, and a shared sense of purpose. However, the study highlights the critical role of organizational context, including leadership, in maximizing MST's effectiveness. Without these supportive factors, the potential benefits of MST may be diminished.

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MIND OVER MATTER: EXPLORING PUPIL-BASED NEUROFEEDBACK AS AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR AROUSAL MODULATION IN ATHLETES

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Arousal regulation appears to be key to performance under pressure (e.g. Abrahamsen et al., 2024). While the Yerkes-Dodson law provides a useful basic model, it is widely recognized that individual and task-dependent approaches are more accurate. making athletes' up- and down-regulation abilities key to their performance. Meissner et al. (2023) demonstrated that the brain's arousal system can be consciously regulated using a novel pupil-based neurofeedback (pupil-NF). Their findings showed that voluntary pupil self-regulation was associated with changes in the activity of the locus coeruleus, a key regulator of arousal. Building on these laboratory results, we explored whether athletes could develop the ability to control pupil size through pupil-NF training, employing patented pupil-based neurofeedback technology from ETH Zurich, delivered via a virtual reality headset.Fifteen competitive athletes (M age = 34.33, SD = 12.95 years; 7 female) participated in a 12-session pupil-NF training over four weeks. An idiosyncratic approach was adopted, with each athlete receiving one-on-one psychoeducation sessions to develop personalized mental strategies for arousal up- and down-modulation. During the training, athletes received real-time and post-trial visual feedback and applied their mental activation and relaxation strategies to increase (up-regulation) or decrease (down-regulation) pupil size. Pupil size regulation without feedback was measured pre- and post-intervention. Mental strategies and perceived emotional and physical states were recorded before and after each training block. Preliminary tests and visual inspection of the pupil data suggested improved volitional control in both up- and down-regulation of pupil size. Semi-structured interviews and scores from the System Usability Scale (Brooke, 1996) indicated that the training was highly usable, well-received and effective in improving arousal regulation abilities. The findings indicate that the arousal-regulation strategies learned during neurofeedback training were successfully transferred. Future studies will investigate the effects of this new neurofeedback approach on athletes' performance and well-being.

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NCAA DIVISION I ATHLETIC TRAINERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FEAR OF REINJURY AND THEIR USE OF MENTAL SKILLS TECHNIQUES WITH INJURED ATHLETES

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Athletic injuries are known to present many obstacles for athletes that require specialized support from various health professionals, including athletic trainers. These athletic trainers (ATs) are also among the first and most prominent providers of social support for injured athletes (Gray et al., 2022; Bennett et al., 2016). ATs are in a unique position to assist athletes with the mental and emotional responses to injuries for the duration of the healing process (Bennett et al., 2016). The purpose of this study was to gain insights from ATs regarding their use of sport psychology tools and techniques with athletes experiencing fear of reinjury and determine if training in sport psychology influenced the frequency of use. Participants were 172 Certified Athletic Trainers employed by National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I institutions in the United States. Participants completed an adapted version of the Athletic Training and Sport Psychology Questionnaire (ATSPQ), which is a self-report measure developed by Larson et al. (1994) from Wiese and colleagues' (1991) original survey of ATs. Additionally, the questionnaire asked participants about their training in sport psychology. Descriptive statistics show that 42.6% of ATs observed fear of reinjury "frequently" in the athletes they worked with and used various techniques, such as goal setting, encouraging continued involvement in team activities, and enhancing self -confidence to assist their athletes. Results from the short-answer portion of the questionnaire suggested that athletic trainers believed that injuries with longer recovery time (fractures or surgical procedures), were more commonly associated with fear of reinjury. As ATs continue to support athletes through injury rehabilitation, increased awareness of fear of reinjury and how to support psychological recovery continues to be of interest to professionals in the athletic training and sport psychology fields and will be offered in this presentation as well.

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OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE AND RESILIENCE IN RANGER SCHOOL RECYCLES: APPLYING SPORT PSYCHOLOGY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

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Anya Salzgeber, KBR Inc.
Kiarra Mello, KBR Inc
Ryan Deletis, KBR Inc
Anthony Perez, US ARMY
Sergio Olvera, Bearing Straights
Joanny Valerio, KBR Inc

Ranger School is an elite Army leadership course that tests technical and tactical skills in arduous conditions requiring high physical and mental resolve (Hutchings, 1990). Ranger Students are often challenged in the course by needing the confidence to make critical decisions under pressure while leading fellow Soldiers (Spencer, 2016). Rangers are mission critical in combat, therefore the Army wants more Ranger qualified Soldiers (Knight et al. 2024). However, the rigor of the course leads to a high attrition rate and some Ranger Students are given the opportunity to recycle, (immediately reattempt) allowing for multiple attempts throughout the three phases (Roberts et al. 2023).To increase the number of Ranger School graduates, personnel from the Ready and Resilient Performance Center (R2PC) were tasked to provide interventions to students who were recycling the first phase (Darby Phase). Interventions were developed based on the demands of the course and included skills addressing composure, confidence, and leadership. When compared to the previous year with no R2 intervention, there was a 3% increase in Recycles moving on to the next phase (Mountain Phase). Out of the 7 classes, 11 additional Ranger students moved forward. Moreover, the scores of those who were

successful in their subsequent attempts improved by up to 7% more when using any of the skills than when compared to the previous year with no R2 intervention. The increase in quantity of Rangers and quality of their performance can lead to an overall stronger Army.Moving forward, the intent is to continue the interventions and expand our scope of opportunities to build the mental toughness of Ranger students. This intervention, when paired with other lines of effort, will help to increase the number of Ranger-qualified Soldiers in the force.

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PLAYING OUT OF YOUR MIND: DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF A UNIQUE MENTAL PERFORMANCE MANUAL FOR MILITARY MUSICIANS

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Annie McConnon, Uniformed Services University
Lara Pomerleau-Fontaine, Université de Sherbrooke
Nicholas Caluori, West Point Band

Military musicians must perform at an elite level as Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) ambassadors, often in unpredictable conditions, while balancing additional duties and diverse mission demands. Through observational research and survey analysis of musicians across the DoD and DHS, the United States Military Academy's Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP) and the West Point Music Research Center (WPMRC) collaborated to develop a mental skills training manual aimed at enhancing military musicians' mental readiness and performance. The manual highlights core performance psychology skills, including self-awareness and goal setting (Cowden, 2017; Gould, 2021; Locke & Latham, 1985), stress and arousal regulation (Fry & Hogue, 2021; Greene, 2002; Baldock et al., 2021), focus and concentration (Williams & Bhalla, 2021; Nideffer, 2002), and mental preparation through pre-performance routines and imagery (Munroe-Chandler & Hall, 2021; Williams et al., 2021). In this lecture, attendees will have the opportunity to learn about the manual and its construction, and to hear discussion centered around its anticipated use as both a standalone resource to introduce DOD musicians to mental performance and to easily develop group workshops and discussions. Additionally, conversation will explore how the manual can be utilized to transfer skills across domains, including work with traditional musicians, tactical populations and traditional sport athletes. Finally, methods through which attendees can construct similar manuals (lessons learned) will be shared and discussed.

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PROMOTING INTUITIVE EATING FOR ATHLETES THROUGH AN ONLINE SINGLE-SESSION INTERVENTION

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Samantha nett, Northeastern University
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College athletes are at elevated risk for eating concerns due to factors unique to sport environments such as revealing uniforms, sport body ideals, comments from coaches, and events such as injury. Despite their willingness to utilize mental health resources, college athletes face barriers such as lack of time and social stigma that hinder their ability to fully engage. Digital mental health interventions such as single session interventions (SSIs) have gained popularity due to their ability to overcome treatment barriers such as time and high treatment costs. Thus, the current study examines the acceptability, feasibility, and user experience of an intuitive eating (IE) SSI that promotes flexible relationships with food and body through interactive content and self-reflection exercises. The current study adopted a randomized waitlist control design, in which 150 college athletes were randomized to the intervention (SSI) or waitlist control condition. Participants completed 3 surveys across 3-months that included measures to assess eating behaviors, body image, and mental health, and user feasibility and acceptance. Over the course of eight months, a total of 150 participants were collected, with 72.4% attrition demonstrating good feasibility. Overall, user acceptability feedback was positive, with 93.5% of athletes scoring above a 30 on the User Experience Scale. Qualitative findings reveal that athletes enjoyed psychoeducation on sport diet culture, intuitive eating, and appearance pressures in sport. Self-reflection responses revealed that approximately a third of athletes selected that worrying about their weight would be a barrier for IE, whereas closer to 20% selected fear of judgment from others. As IE is an understudied topic among athletes and resources are lacking for this at-risk group, findings will offer insight into how SSIs can be effectively utilized with college athletes and whether IE can support the development of positive relationships with food and body.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE AND WELL-BEING IN ELITE ATHLETES: A CASE STUDY OF A UFC ATHLETE AND THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF RO-DBT

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The mental health and psychological well-being of elite athletes have gained increasing attention in recent years, with up to 35% of elite athletes facing challenges such as stress, eating disorders, burnout, depression, and anxiety (Gouttenbarge et al., 2019). Rice (2016) stated there is comparatively less research on the mental health and psychological well-being of elite athletes. Radically Open Dialectal Behavior Therapy (RO-DBT; Lynch et al., 2015) offers an approach to these challenges, emphasizing psychological flexibility and social connectedness that is also found in the Sport and Performance (SPP) literature. These principles are highly relevant in high-pressure environments faced by athletes (Lundgren et al., 2018). This study examines the effectiveness of integrating RO-DBT skills and principles into SPP to address the unique psychological and performance needs of elite athletes.A qualitative, narrative case study was conducted with the experiences of an elite UFC athlete and the potential benefits of RO-DBT for psychological performance and well-being. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and multimedia analysis. For example, the student responded to a variety of questions about psychological flexibility, coping mechanisms, and social connectedness. The findings revealed significant psychological challenges, including anxiety, perfectionism, and performance pressure. The athlete reported managing emotions like frustration and fear and the importance of strong, intuitive connections with coaches and team.The study suggests that integrating RO-DBT skills and principles can enhance psychological flexibility and improve overall well-being and performance. Practical applications include

incorporating psychological training into regular athletic routines, emphasizing emotional regulation, and fostering social connectedness. While limited by its qualitative nature, future research should consider larger, more diverse samples to validate these insights across sports and athletic levels. This study provides a foundation for such studies, highlighting the potential of RO-DBT skills and principles to significantly impact the performance and overall well-being of elite athletes.

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MENTAL TOUGHNESS, PERCEIVED STRESS, AND SALIVARY CORTISOL IN NOVICE MARATHONERS

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Marathon performance depends on physical and psychological preparation. Although mental toughness (MT) can facilitate endurance performance, its relationship with physiological stress and training behaviors during marathon training remains unclear. Thus, this study examined the relationships between MT, stress, and performance in novice marathoners.Participants (N f28; 15 female) provided saliva samples and completed the Mental Toughness Index (MTI) and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) three times (baseline, midpoint, and morning of the marathon). Training behaviors (minutes running, days running) were recorded throughout training, and aerobic measures were assessed via 2-mile time trials and VO2max. Mental skills training (MST; e.g. positive self-talk, imagery, attentional focus) took place via online lectures and was practiced during group runs. Mixed models examined relationships between variables across time, while regression models assessed predictors of marathon performance and injury (i.e injured, not injured) risk factors. MT (p=.390) and cortisol (p=.066) remained stable throughout training, however MT was significantly and negatively related to perceived stress (β=-.63, p=.003). Time running also positively correlated with MT across all time points (r = .46-.56, p =.025). There were no significant relationships that emerged between MT and aerobic fitness measures or perceived stress and marathon performance (p=.126). Also, the MT-cortisol relationships were strongest at times 1 (p=.055) and 2 (p=.080), and neither MT nor cortisol significantly predicted injury.Results indicate structured MST can be integrated into marathon training programs, with MT showing relationships with psychological and behavioral outcomes. Greater MT was associated with lower perceived life stress and more time training. While we cannot assume causality, it is plausible that developing MT through targeted MST may enhance training adherence and duration. These findings have practical implications for practitioners working with novice marathoners, indicating that incorporating structured MST alongside physical preparation could optimize training engagement and psychological readiness.

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RISKY SALVATION: GENDERED NARRATIVES OF FIREFIGHTER IDENTITY

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Firefighters present a unique challenge among tactical populations for delivering effective mental performance interventions. Because the population is composed of volunteer, career/professional, urban/residential, and wildland (seasonal or full time) firefighters, it is important to understand the unique identities taken on by firefighters. The purpose of this research is to explore firefighter identity and present unique psychological characteristics as the groundwork for intervention. We used a narrative psychology approach (Smith & Sparkes, 2009) to interview ten firefighters (n = 4 volunteer; 6 career; 8 men; 2 women) about their life stories about becoming a firefighter, working in a hypermasculine domain (Connell, 2005), experiencing pressures toward perfectionism, decreased or limited emotional awareness and purposeful limiting of emotional expression. The data demonstrates that firefighters interact with gendered narratives in both critical and compliant ways, struggle with public perceptions of the "firefighter as a perfect hero," and are reluctant to process and display emotion, finding both the possibility of imperfection and vulnerability to be socially and emotionally risky. Firefighter narratives in our sample suggest that when working with volunteer firefighters in particular, supporting self-determined motives (Ryan & Deci, 2001) may be useful to promote healthy, long-term patterns of engagement with the work. Furthermore, because the firefighting work demands significant and repeated acts of compassion for fire and accident victims, firefighters may find the experience of repeatedly witnessing trauma and reacting with compassion to be burdensome. Our data indicate that a mindful self-compassion approach (e.g., Germer, 2009) may be useful if framed in a way that honors the particularly masculine styles of self-understanding and communication that are prevalent in this profession. In conclusion, firefighters are a uniquely challenging population whose identities emerge around themes of brotherhood, masculinity, toughness, emotional suppression, and heroic perfection.

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SUPPORTING SOCCER COACH THRIVING: AN APPLIED WELL-BEING AND PERFORMANCE INTERVENTION FOR ELITE COACHES

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Sport coaching is widely recognized as a demanding profession due to (amongst other factors) the complex multiplicity of their role, increasing internal and external pressures to perform, long working hours, increased scrutiny, and high levels of job insecurity. It is unsurprising, therefore, that coaches may experience reduced performance effectiveness as well as increased risk of mental ill-being and suppressed mental well-being. Consequently, researchers and practitioners have become increasingly focused on

developing appropriate support mechanisms for coaches with a view to improving their ability to thrive within their roles despite the presence of stressors that may vary in severity. Through our roles as Level 4 and 5 coach educators, which includes performance-based support, with a UEFA National Football Association, we have developed a series of resources, co-constructed with coaches and the National Association, designed to improve coach understanding of the concepts of mental ill- and well-being, develop coaches' coping repertoire and the effectiveness of mechanism employment, and facilitate the knowledge coaches require to make sense of and manage their mental well-being. These resources have been implemented with coaches undertaking coach education qualifications (e.g., UEFA Advanced [n = 250] and UEFA Professional [n = 80] Licences) over the past four years, during which psychometric and social validation measures have been taken to consider the impact of the support provided. While psychometric data has generally indicated pre-intervention moderate levels of burnout, below population average mental well-being, and ineffective coping attempts, to date, coaches receiving support have almost unequivocally extolled the benefits of the resources in helping them to better manage themselves as performers. Specifically, mental well-being scores and coping effectiveness have improved as coaches have developed self-awareness, personal resources (e.g., hardy attitudes), and emotional control and intelligence, which have subsequently better prepared them to thrive more regularly the contexts in which they work.

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THE CURRENT USE OF NEUROFEEDBACK AND NEURAL MEASUREMENTS IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

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The current scoping review aims to assess the practice of neuroscience measurements and neurofeedback techniques in sports contexts to allow future researchers and practitioners to advance the application of this knowledge in the sport psychology domains. Neurofeedback has been used to develop self-regulatory skills. It has enabled individuals to regulate brain activity through real-time awareness of the function of their brain waves and utilize this skill acquisition to enhance athletic performance (Kavianipoor et al., 2023, p. 380). Given that neurofeedback allows individuals to strengthen levels of focus for optimal functioning and performance, a scoping review of the current literature of how this is explicitly achieved in the context of sport is warranted. Once specified studies were identified for inclusion, research questions focused on considering what these studies specifically measured and assessed, what has not been done, or what needs to be done in the field. Providing a nuanced understanding of current neurofeedback applications helps better explain how brain waves and neural activity can be utilized as a tool for performance enhancement. In applied settings, neurofeedback aims to improve awareness of central physiological correlates of inner experiences and train adaptive regulation of such correlates and related mindsets" (Crivelli, 2019). Of particular interest is the ability of an individual to implement neurofeedback training to achieve optimal performances through self-regulation of attentional resources and motor planning and execution. The benefits of a scoping review of sport psychology neurofeedback literature include the organization of physiological measurements and experimental conditions to provide readers and practitioners with a broad and nuanced understanding of how current findings contribute to our understanding of enhanced performance in sport and how we can best leverage these technologies when working with athletes.

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THE EFFECTS OF AN IMAGERY INTERVENTION ON SELF-EFFICACY DURING ATHLETIC INJURY REHABILITATION

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Rehabilitation self-efficacy has been positively correlated with enhanced injury treatment adherence and rehabilitation outcomes (Fortinsky et al., 2002) as well as reduced perceptions of pain and stress in a variety of populations, including competitive athletes (Somers et al., 2012). There is some evidence that suggests that rehabilitation self-efficacy can decrease during the injury rehabilitation phase (Maddison et al., 2012); however, practicing imagery prior to starting physical therapy (PT) can increase rehabilitation self-efficacy (Wesch et al., 2016). The purpose of the present study was to explore the effects of a multiple script imagery intervention on athletes' rehabilitation self-efficacy during the injury PT phase. A multiple baseline design was used to assess for changes in rehabilitation self-efficacy over time. After a baseline phase, five adult, competitive athletes engaged in a single, guided imagery session with the lead researcher. Afterwards, participants were given four imagery audio recordings pertaining to healing, rehabilitation process, motivational, and pain management, and were instructed to listen to one imagery recording of their choice at least 4 times per week for 2 to 4 weeks. Healing imagery was used most often by athletes. Visual analysis of data was analyzed with respect to level, variability, trendline, immediacy of effect, and percentage of non-overlapping data points (Byiers et al., 2012). One participant experienced an increase in rehabilitation self-efficacy during the treatment phase, three participants experienced stable rehabilitation self-efficacy during the baseline and treatment phases, and one participant experienced a decrease in rehabilitation self-efficacy during the treatment phase. Qualitative reports indicated participants felt practicing imagery helped them view injury rehabilitation more positively and increased their hope and confidence for a full return to sport. In sum, it is possible that imagery may act as a buffer against the decline in rehabilitation self-efficacy that can occur in athletes during the rehabilitation process.

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THE EFFECTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL SELF-TALK ON QUIET-EYE DURATION AND GOLF-PUTTING PERFORMANCE

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Sophie Czerwonka, Ripon College
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Gershon Tenenbaum, Reichman University

While the impact of strategic self-talk on performance is well documented, examination of the attentional–perceptualmechanisms of self-talk is still at early stages.

This study's aim was to examine the effects of instructional self-talk onquiet-eye durations and putting performance. Thirty participants were recruited and randomly assigned to self-talk or controlconditions. Participants performed a golf-putting task in a mixed between (self-talk vs. control) and within (pre- vs.postintervention) design. Two 2 × 2 mixed-design analyses of variance were conducted for performance and quiet-eye durationsas dependent variables. A mediation analysis was conducted to examine the mediating effect of quiet-eye durations onperformance. Results showed that self-talk use led to longer quiet-eye durations and better performance compared with controls.The mediation analysis indicated that performance was mediated by quiet-eye durations. Discussion centers on the role of quiet-eye in motor performance and how self-talk can assist in regulating quiet-eye.

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THE HIDDEN EDGE: MENTAL TOUGHNESS THROUGH SELF-COMPASSION IN COMBAT SPORTS

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Mental toughness in combat sports has traditionally been linked to grit and emotional suppression (Gucciardi, 2017). However, recent research indicates that self-compassion is a crucial yet often overlooked factor in developing sustainable resilience (Neff et al., 2020). Athletes who employ self-compassion strategies demonstrate improved emotional regulation, motivation, and long-term performance (Ferguson et al., 2014). This lecture introduces an applied self-compassion framework tailored for combat sports athletes, integrating Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 2006) and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Attendees will learn actionable techniques, including post-match reflection exercises, shame resilience training, and self-compassion reset routines designed to help athletes reframe setbacks and maintain confidence under pressure. Participants will leave with research-backed, field-tested strategies to implement in training and competition.

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THE IMPACT OF MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING ON FIREFIGHTERS' MENTAL READINESS AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

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Firefighters perform physical skills in dynamic, high stress, and mentally demanding environments where human error can have fatal consequences (Heino & Kalalahti, 2021). Although much research has investigated factors related to physical performance of firefighters on the job and described the need for psychological skills (Gnacinski et al., 2015; Lockie & Dawes, 2024), there is limited research directly investigating how firefighters could potentially benefit from specific interventions focused on psychological skills training, such as emotional regulation and situational awareness. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a mental skills intervention on career firefighters' mental readiness and physical performance on a simulated firefighting task. Forty-five career firefighters from a suburban district in the northeastern United States were assigned to either an intervention (n=22, Mage=33.45 years) or control group (n=23, Mage=33.09 years). The intervention group participated in six one-hour progressive training sessions over six weeks grounded in Mindfulness Sport Performance Enhancement (Kaufman et al., 2017). Both groups were assessed on their performance of a maze task and completed the Refined Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (Casanova et al., 2020) and Mental Readiness Scale (Marquardt et al., 2023) pre- and post-intervention. The results revealed no differences between the two groups on performance of the maze task following the intervention; however, the intervention group significantly increased their use of attentional control strategies ($F=5.93$, $p=.019$) and marginally increased their use of activation strategies ($F=3.10$, $p=.086$) following the intervention compared to the control group. This study supports the use of mental skills interventions with firefighters to improve psychological skills highly relevant to firefighter performance (Gnacinski et al., 2015); however, further research is needed to explore methods of assessing how these skills transfer into live fire scenarios.

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THE MENTAL FITNESS FRAMEWORK - A FRAMEWORK FOR APPLIED PRACTICE IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

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Ashley Duguay, Team First Mental Performance Consulting
Margaret Nieto, St Francis Xavier University

Many practitioners in applied sport psychology (ASP) published scientific articles, reports, and books on guiding frameworks to approach key competencies in mental performance (e.g., The wheel of excellence, Orlick, 2016; The gold medal profile, Durand-Bush et al., 2023). The frameworks may serve as a basis for mental performance consultants in their decision-making on the design of interventions, assessments, and periodization. Further, the frameworks may be used to educate athletes, coaches, and other performers to learn about the importance of mental skills in performance endeavors. Many practitioners recommend that the language in such frameworks needs to be user-friendly and accessible manner. Hence, we present the mental fitness framework which views mental fitness as the changeable capacity to perform mentally well in performance situations. Much like physical fitness, mental fitness is comprised of 5 key domains in the mental fitness framework: 1. Mental balance – The ability to mentally prepare for performance demands through restorative and regulated perspectives. This domain includes concepts such as self-compassion, gratitude, and identity. 2. Mental Flexibility – The ability to mentally adapt to changing performance demands. A growth mindset, openness, and self-awareness may be, among others, key concepts in this domain. 3. Mental Strength – The ability to exert maximum mental effort. This domain includes confidence, courage, and challenge/threat appraisals. 4. Mental Endurance – The ability to maintain mental effort towards a goal or desirable outcome. Resilience, hope, and commitment may fall under this domain. 5. Mental agility – The ability to move one's focus and process information quickly. Attentional control, situational awareness, and creativity may be included in this domain. The mental fitness framework provides an applied perspective on mental skills and competencies, which may be relatable und understandable for athletes, coaches, and other sport stakeholders.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTONOMY SUPPORT, ACHIEVEMENT GOALS, AND STATE ANXIETY IN ATHLETES

Angela Heinisch, University of Toronto / University of Melbourne

Cognitive state anxiety (CSA), characterized by self-doubt and performance-related concerns (Martens et al., 1990), is a critical factor affecting athletes' performance (Mabweazara et al., 2016). While autonomy-supportive coaching has been suggested to reduce CSA by fulfilling athletes' psychological needs (Conroy & Coatsworth, 2007; Haerens et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000), research on its direct effect remains inconclusive (Cece et al., 2021; Van de Pol et al., 2015). This study investigates the predictive role of perceived autonomy support (PAS) on CSA in competitive sports and the moderating effects of achievement goal involvement (AGI). Using a cross-sectional survey design, 93 competitive athletes across 31 sports completed the Autonomy-Supportive Coaching Questionnaire (Conroy & Coatsworth, 2007), the Perception of Success Questionnaire (Treasure & Roberts, 1994), and the Revised Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (Cox et al., 2003). Hierarchical regression analysis revealed no significant relationship between PAS and CSA ($\beta = -0.07$, $p = .117$), nor significant interactions of task ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = .666$) or ego goal involvement ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = .622$). These findings challenge prior assumptions that autonomy support universally reduces anxiety (Dwyer et al., 2011; Cece et al., 2021), suggesting that individual and contextual factors may mediate its impact.Practical implications highlight the importance of tailoring coaching style to an athlete's autonomy support preferences. Additionally, this emphasizes the need for coaches to practice flexibility and self-reflection when considering how to tailor their coaching style to their athletes' dispositional and situational characteristics (Sherman et al., 2000). Further research should explore alternative moderators, including athletes' dispositional traits and perceptions of control, and contextual factors to refine the understanding of autonomy-supportive in competitive anxiety management.

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THE VICTORY WHEEL: UTILIZING THE PROSOCIAL TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE TEAM PERFORMANCE & WELL-BEING

Daniel Moran, Touro University

Building a robust team culture is essential for sustainable success, high performance, and resilience within sports organizations. The Victory Wheel is an applied behavior science tool designed to enhance team cohesion and well-being by integrating insights from evolutionary biology, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Elinor Ostrom's Nobel Prize-winning work on collective management. Developed within the PROSOCIAL framework, the Victory Wheel operationalizes Ostrom's eight core design principles, offering a visual and analytical approach to assessing and strengthening team dynamics. This spider graph tool provides sport psychology practitioners and team leaders with actionable insights into their organization's strengths and areas for growth, fostering trust, shared purpose, and psychological flexibility among athletes and staff. By systematically applying the Victory Wheel, teams can cultivate a collaborative, high-performing culture that supports both individual and collective well-being. This poster will demonstrate the too, and viewers will be able to access The Victory Wheel worksheets.

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WHERE SELF-COMPASSION, IMAGERY, PERFORMANCE, AND THE PERFORMER COLLIDE: A CASE FOR COMPASSION-FOCUSED IMAGERY

Sarah Carson Sackett, James Madison University
Sheila Alicea, St. Edward's University
Angie Winter, HigherEchelon

Failure is inherent in sport and other performance domains, affecting performers from their earliest experiences to the height of their careers. These experiences can lead to self-judgment, self-blame, and rumination, impairing performance and well-being (e.g., Ceccarelli et al., 2019; Mosewich et al., 2014). Self-compassion involves adopting a positive attitude toward oneself during distress and addresses components of kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (e.g., Neff, 2003). Research has explored the application of self-compassion principles in sport (e.g., Cormier et al., 2023; Mosewich et al., 2019; Röthlin et al., 2019), with higher levels associated with positive outcomes like better management of self-criticism, emotional dysregulation, and stress, and enhanced performance and well-being (e.g., Frentz et al., 2020; Killham et al., 2018). One related application, Compassion-Focused Imagery (CFI), involves visualizing scenarios where the performer shows compassion toward another or receives compassion from someone else (e.g., Matos et al., 2017). Critical to positive outcomes are the use of multiple senses (imagery vividness) and powerful self-compassion role modeling, which can help performers accept and adopt more compassionate ways of relating to themselves (e.g., McEwan & Gilbert, 2016; Naismith et al., 2018). CFI has shown efficacy in clinical and non-clinical settings (e.g., Maner et al., 2023), and has been reported to help individuals reduce self-criticism, shame, and anxiety while increasing self-reassurance. In sport, studies suggest that CFI can help athletes manage self-critical tendencies and enhance performance (e.g., Baltzell et al., 2014; Korim & Strnádelová, 2023). This poster aims to establish CFI as a vehicle for enhancing self-compassion among performers, providing an example CFI script to illustrate its application with a collegiate student-athlete. Additionally, an overview of how sport culture may impose challenges for integrating CFI and other self-compassion initiatives (e.g., Bauman, 2016) is presented.

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YOUTH ATHLETES' PERCEPTIONS OF A CARING CLIMATE POSITIVELY ASSOCIATED WITH CARING BEHAVIORS AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN FREE COMMUNITY SPORT CAMPS

Yugo Yamaoka, University of Minnesota
Candace Hogue, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Alex Garn, University of Minnesota

Researchers have linked caring climates in youth sport to greater sports commitment, enjoyment, and empathetic concern in athletes (Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010; Gano-

Overway et al., 2009; Hall et al., 2017; Iwasaki & Fry, 2013). However, the relationship between caring climate perceptions and athlete social-emotional learning (SEL) needs to be investigated further. Understanding whether SEL skills can be developed through sport participation in caring environments, where athletes feel supported and respected, is worth investigating as SEL skills are transferable life skills that help facilitate youth development and well-being (Sancassiani et al., 2015). This study aimed to assess the relationships between caring climate perceptions, athletes' supportive and caring behaviors, and SEL skills. A diverse sample of youth sport participants (8.6% Caucasian; 27.0% African American; 32.4% Asian/Pacific Islander; 16.2% Hispanic; 2.7% Native American) between 5 to 18 years old (N = 185, 48 females, Mage = 12.41±2.96) completed a survey at least a few weeks into a free community sport program that incorporated the caring climate scale (Newton et al., 2007), caring behaviors (Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010), and SEL skills including personal and social skills, conflict resolution, helping others, and appreciating diversity (Sullivan et al., 2015; Weiss et al., 2014). It was hypothesized that perceptions of a caring climate would positively relate to each respective outcome under investigation. Regression analyses with caring climate perceptions as the predictor found significant relationships with each outcome under investigation including caring behaviors (β = .82, R2 = .68), personal and social skills (β = .48, R2 = .23), conflict resolution (β = .52, R2 = .27), helping others (β = .57, R2 = .33), and appreciating diversity (β = .54, R2 = .29), controlling for sport program. Results suggest creating caring climates in community-based sport contexts may contribute to the social and emotional development of underserved youth.

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"RINGING THE BELL": PARENTS' STORIED EXPERIENCES OF MANAGING AND COPING WITH THEIR CHILDREN'S ICE HOCKEY INCURRED CONCUSSIONS

Lindsey Visscher, University of Northern Colorado
Cadie Hodge, University of Northern Colorado
Adhya Tandon, University of Northern Colorado
Pierce Freeman, University of Northern Colorado
Savanna Horton, University of Northern Colorado
Megan Babkes Stellino, University of Northern Colorado

Concussions in youth ice hockey pose significant risks to overall health and well-being (Pfister et al., 2016). While parents recognize the importance of concussion management, they often lack confidence in controlling outcomes and may subscribe to a culture that normalizes concussions in sports (Sarmiento et al., 2019). To better understand parents' experiences with youth ice hockey-related concussions, a narrative inquiry approach was adopted in this study to explore the complexities of parents' stories and capture their lived realities within the social context of youth ice hockey. Researchers recruited 10 parents (n = 5 males, n = 5 females) whose son incurred at least one medically diagnosed concussion during the 2023-2024 Varsity High School ice hockey season. Participants shared their experiences in joint semi-structured interviews (Bjorholt & Farstad, 2014) where they reflected on influential individuals and situational factors related to how they managed their child's concussion. The stories were then analyzed using narrative thematic and structural analyses to identify recurring ideas and to understand how the stories were formed and told. Specific themes of what emerged from parents' narratives include: lack of agency, advocacy, and control; disappointment in coaches and referees; cutthroat environment of youth ice-hockey; and emotional charge within the experience. Structural features that shaped how each story was told include: chronological architecture, emotional blueprint, and patchwork of dual parental narratives. These findings provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions and support systems for families dealing with youth sport concussions. By understanding the lived experiences of parents, the hockey community can foster a more informed and compassionate approach to concussion management in youth ice hockey, prioritizing the long-term health and well-being of young athletes. This research contributes to a broader understanding of the social and cultural factors influencing concussion experiences, paving the way for further research and advocacy efforts.

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ESTABLISH, EXPAND, ENABLE: A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING PEER-LED DEI PROGRAMMING IN COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENTS

Patrick Maneval, University of Kentucky

Sport is a place where many seek refuge to express, challenge, or better themselves. While this medium is designed in part to be a healthy space for growth, there are inherent deterrents to healthy growth and success of organizations, stemming from lack of diversity and inclusion in sport organizations. With sport sometimes being viewed as a microcosm of society, systematic oppression and discrimination plays a role in the experience of others, specifically those who identify with marginalized communities. Sport has become an industry riddled with bias, prejudice, and oppressive treatment of various identities. Without corrective action, the chasm that inhibits equitable treatment may not remedy itself, requiring diversity and inclusion initiatives to be enacted to support the narrowing of the various gaps, socially, financially, and vocationally.To combat the issues facing diversity, equity, and inclusion within sport organizations, this poster will present a proposed framework for a peer-led advocacy and collective supports program for collegiate athletics departments to implement, based on success with similar organizations in mental health advocacy spaces. Peer advocacy and support can reduce the negative effects of certain conditions, such as anxiety or depression, but may relate to further levels of support, understanding, and stigma reduction in many facets (Simmons et al., 2023). Open discourse and dialogue surrounding diversity can promote a level of shared comfort in disclosing experiences, practices, and decisions that influence a person's life (Swartz et al., 2019). When diversity is embraced, rather than avoided, there are positive outcomes, including productivity, satisfaction, and sense of belonging (Swartz et al., 2019). This poster will present the process and implementation of a framework for establishing a peer-led collective supports advocacy program on a college campus.

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EXPLORING ADAPTIVE CLIMBERS EXPERIENCES AND GAINING INSIGHT OF THE MENTAL PERFORMANCE SKILLSTHEY UTILIZE DURING PERFORMANCE

Joel Hark, Advocates
Piotr Piasecki, Boston University/Providence College
Edson Filho, Boston University

At the 2020 Paralympic Summer Games there were just over 4,400 athletes from 161 countries.(Tokyo 2020 Sets the Record for Most Athletes and Women at a Paralympic Games, 2020). This statistic holds afraction of the athletes with physical disabilities (AWPD) who compete or are involved incompetitive sport. People with disabilities do not have access to as many resources as their able-bodied counterparts (Crawford & Stodolska, 2010; Brittain, 2013; McLoughlin et al., 2017; Reeset al., 2019; Bertollo et al., 2020). Given this background, the aimsof this study were to explore and understand the: (1) types of mental performance skills thatadaptive climbers incorporate in their practice and performance; (2) barriers adaptive climbersexperience when trying to incorporate mental performance skills; and (3) mental performanceskills they want to develop. Interviews were semi- structured in nature, revolving around seven questions based on the three aims of the study. Inductive thematic analysis revealed three higher order themes, namely community, barriers to performance, and lack of sport psychology knowledge. Our results suggest that a sense of belonging is essential, access limitations, and participants had a limited, if any, understanding of what mental skills are and whether they use them intentionally. Taken together, these findings suggest that community building and thedevelopment of mental training programs tailored to para-athletes in general, and adaptiveclimbing in particular is warranted. These findings also support previous research on the limitedaccess adaptive athletes have to sport psychology or mental performance resources (Rees et al.,2019; Bertollo et al., 2020). Practitioners working with adaptive climbers should develop socialsupport networks that motivate para-athletes to start and sustain their climbing practice. Futureresearch should design, and test periodized intervention plans tailored to the specific needs ofadaptive climbers.

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EXPLORING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCE OF FEMALE FIREFIGHTERS: A NARRATIVE REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE

Lexy Clark, University of North Texas
Samantha Dardaman, University of North Texas

Firefighting is a physically and emotionally demanding profession of which women are underrepresented, comprising of less than 10% of the workforce. Female firefighters encounter not only the hazards of the occupation but also the unique challenges of working in a male-dominated profession, riddled with workplace discrimination, sexual harassment, and pervasive tokenism. This narrative review examined the current state of research literature of firefighter career development with a specific focus on the underexplored experiences of female firefighters. Relevant quantitative and qualitative research regarding mental health challenges, barriers to career advancement, and the role of resilience for female firefighters were included in this review. From the multifaceted experiences of female firefighters such discrimination and leadership challenges, female firefighters are disproportionately affected by stress-related issues. Recruit women and volunteer firefighters, for example, report higher levels of anxiety and depression than their male counterparts. However, in high-risk rescue careers such as firefighting, strong psychological factors like self-efficacy and resilience can mitigate the negative impacts of chronic occupational stress. For female firefighters, systemic barriers such as tokenism and glass ceilings also hinder career advancement, with evidence indicating that women are often relegated to roles that limit their promotion into leadership positions. Although these barriers exist, transformative leadership traits were found to be common amongst successful female fire chiefs, highlighting the benefits of structured mentorship and developmental career progression. Thus, current literature suggests that interventions, such as revised recruitment and promotion criteria, formal mentorship programs, and specialized mental health and resilience training, could enhance the career longevity and leadership prospects of female firefighters.

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RESILIENCE IN DISABLED ATHLETES: AN EXPLORATION OF ADAPTIVE GOAL-SETTING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Kristin Mauldin, California Baptist University
Ashley Fox, California Baptist University

Grit, defined as the persistent pursuit of long-term goals despite setbacks, has been recognized as a key psychological trait in overcoming adversity (Duckworth & Gross, 2014). However, for individuals with disabilities, resilience—the ability to adapt and modify goals in response to challenges—may be a more critical factor in maintaining well-being (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). While previous research has linked grit to mental health benefits in athletes (Howard et al., 2022; From et al., 2020), the role of resilience in adaptive sports remains underexplored. Furthermore, previous research has indicated that athletes with disabilities demonstrated a high grit score (Fox, 2024), but a lack of significant relationship with mental health. Given the need for frequent adaptation in disabled athletes, this study examines whether resilience, rather than grit, serves as a stronger predictor of mental health outcomes. This study aims to investigate the relationship between resilience, grit, and mental health in athletes with physical disabilities, emphasizing the role of adaptability in psychological well-being.A cross-sectional survey will be conducted with adaptive athletes (18+) recruited through sports organizations and online platforms. Measures include the 12-Item Grit Scale (grit), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (resilience), and the General Health Questionnaire (mental health). Statistical analyses will include correlation analyses, multiple regression, and moderation/mediation tests to assess the interplay between grit, resilience, and mental health. Findings will offer insights into the psychological strengths of disabled athletes, highlighting whether resilience plays a more significant role than grit in their mental well-being. Understanding these mechanisms could inform interventions that promote adaptability and sustained participation in adaptive sports.

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A COMPARISON OF INJURY PREVALENCE, ATTITUDES SURROUNDING EARLY SPORT SPECIALIZATION, AND ATHLETIC IDENTITY

Natalie Osborne, George Fox University
Nahanni Freeman, George Fox University

Early sport specialization has become more common for young athletes, especially as the climate in college athletics has created more opportunities for profit, even beyond scholarships. Many parents place their children in intensive training early in their development with hopes of turning their athletic talent into a business (Malina, 2010). However, there are some major concerns with higher volume training, fewer rest periods, and less broad movement integration from specialization (Mosher et al., 2021; Myer et al., 2015). One major concern is the increased risk of musculoskeletal injuries, likely due to inadequate foundational movement patterns and overuse during critical physical development (Mosher et al., 2021; Myer et al., 2015). Another concern is psychological dissatisfaction and emotional exhaustion (Mosher et al., 2021). When injury occurs, a stronger athletic identity is linked to higher depressive symptoms, unless moderated by psychological flexibility (Chang et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2021; Renton et al., 2021).While early sport specialization has drawbacks, it also offers benefits such as skill enhancement and mastery, which is desirable for parents and athletes (Mosher et al., 2021). In the right contexts, higher athletic identity is linked to better health outcomes, increased sport engagement, enhanced athletic performance, improved self-esteem and confidence, and better social relationships (Renton et al., 2021). Understanding how these concepts interact with one another is critical for navigating specialization in youth athletics. This study examines a sample of young adults, ranging in prior athletic experiences and competition levels. Using a mixed-method approach, participants were given the opportunity to share their experiences in sport, including their level of involvement, injury history, and attitudes surrounding athletic identity. The purpose of the study is to offer a more comprehensive understanding of early sport specialization from the athlete perspective, including a comparison with injury prevalence and athletic identity.

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AN EXAMINATION OF VOCATIONAL DANCE STUDENTS' BELIEFS ABOUT EMOTIONS, EMOTION REGULATION, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Morgan-Jayde Milne, University of Birmingham
Sarah Williams, Univerisity of Birmingham
Mary Quinton, University of Birmingham

Vocational dance students (VDS) experience intense emotions which over time can impact their mental health and heighten the risk of mental illness (e.g., depressive symptoms; Fostervold Mathisen et al., 2022). Importantly, strategies to regulate emotions and beliefs about emotions (BAE) contribute to mental health outcomes (Gross, 2015; Ford & Gross, 2019). Specifically, research demonstrates believing emotions are controllable and good (i.e., desirable) is associated with using more adaptive strategies like cognitive reappraisal, and less maladaptive strategies like expressive suppression, which subsequently enhances mental health. However, research has yet to examine these phenomena within the context of vocational dance training. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the relationship between VDS' BAE, emotion regulation tendencies, and mental health. 165 VDS (Mage =18.3 years, SD =1.9) completed the Beliefs About Emotions Questionnaire (assessing controllability and goodness beliefs; Manser et al., 2012), Extended Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (assessing cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression, and distraction tendencies; Moreira et al., 2014), the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 (assessing depressive symptoms; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) and the Subjective Vitality Scale (assessing vitality; Ryan & Fredrick, 1997). Two multiple linear regression models (controlling for gender and year of training) examined if BAE controllability and goodness, and emotion regulation tendencies predicted (1) depressive symptoms and (2) vitality. Results demonstrated VDS who believed emotions are uncontrollable (β=.34, pand not good (β=.28, p=.002) tended to report higher depressive symptoms, while VDS who believed emotions are controllable (β=-.28, p=.003) typically reported greater vitality. Emotion regulation strategies did not significantly predict depressive symptoms or vitality. Findings extend the BAE literature to the context of dance, highlighting the importance of these beliefs towards VDS' mental health (Ford & Gross, 2019). Future research should examine whether interventions developing VDS' beliefs that emotions are controllable and good can improve mental health outcomes.

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ANXIETY'S ROLE IN THE BODY DISSATISFACTION-DISORDERED EATING RELATIONSHIP: A STUDY WITH COLLEGIATE MEN ATHLETES

Claire Bailey, University of North Texas
Nick Magera, University of North Texas
Caleb Wilborn, The University of North Texas
Dafina Chisolm-Salau, University of North Texas
Trent Petrie, University of North Texas

Research has supported the association between body dissatisfaction and anxiety in men, where anxiety serves to worsen their disordered eating (Barnes et al., 2020; DeBoer & Smits, 2013). Among collegiate men athletes, the body dissatisfaction to disordered relationship is well-established though the potential worsening effects due to anxiety have not been explored. Thus, we examined the direct and indirect relationships of body satisfaction and anxiety to within a sample of NCAA Division I men collegiate athletes (N f 492, 49% White; 10 different sports, such as football, soccer, and golf). During their annual mental health screening completed Fall 2024, the men completed measures of body satisfaction, anxiety, and disordered eating and consented to their data being used for research. We used the Hayes' PROCESS macro Model 4 to examine our proposed relationships. After controlling for race (White vs. Athletes of Color), we found all direct and indirect effects to be significant. For disordered eating, the variables explained 19.74% of the variance; relationships were direct (Body Satisfaction – B = -1.50; Anxiety B = 0.51) and indirect (BS → GAD → DE B = - 0.17). There was no association between race and anxiety, though athletes of color reported significantly more disordered eating symptoms than white athletes (B = 0.66). As expected, and supporting past research, body dissatisfaction and anxiety were related to men athletes' reporting more disordered eating symptoms. Adding to research conducted with men nonathletes, we found that body dissatisfaction also

contributed indirectly through higher levels of anxiety, though the strength of this relationship was much smaller than the direct one. Interventions that target men athletes' body dissatisfaction may have the secondary effect of reducing their anxiety levels, which may help them not only in how they eat but perhaps how they perform in their sports.

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ATHLETES' MOTIVATION, BASIC NEED SATISFACTION, AND COMMITMENT IN STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAMS

Cadie Hodge, University of Northern Colorado
Megan Babkes Stellino, University of Northern Colorado

Over-sport specialization and year-round training have become increasingly common. Research suggests that sport alone does not provide adequate injury prevention, athletic preparation, or recommended physical activity levels, making strength and conditioning (S&C) programs essential (Lloyd et al., 2016). The purpose of this study was to examine athletes' motivation, basic needs satisfaction, and commitment in S&C programs through self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and the sport commitment model (Scanlan et al., 1993). S&C programs were defined as activities separate from an athlete's main sport participation. Participants (N = 99; 42% female; Mage = 22.93 years) were athletes currently engaged in a S&C program. Their sport experience ranged from 2–14 years and S&C experience ranged from 0.5–12 years. Athletes completed an online survey that included the Sport Commitment Questionnaire-2 (SCQ-2; Scanlan et al., 2016), Basic Need Satisfaction in Sport Scale (BNSSS; Ng et al., 2011), and Sport Motivation Scale-2 (SMS-2; Pelletier et al., 2013). Analyses revealed that enthusiastic commitment was strongly predicted by valuable opportunities (R^2 = .694) and sport enjoyment (R^2 = .627), while constrained commitment was driven by social constraints (R^2 = .387) and other priorities (R^2 = .345). Autonomous and controlled motivation were significantly influenced by all three basic psychological needs. These findings highlight the importance of fostering enjoyment, opportunities, and social support to enhance enthusiastic commitment in S&C programs. The fulfillment of basic psychological needs plays a crucial role in shaping autonomous and controlled motivation. Conversely, constrained commitment is shaped by external pressures and personal sacrifices, suggesting that some athletes may feel obligated to continue rather than intrinsically motivated. Understanding these factors can help coaches and organizations create positive S&C environments that promote sustainable athlete motivation and long-term engagement while mitigating risks of burnout or dropout.

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BODY DISSATISFACTION AND DISORDERED EATING AMONG WOMEN ATHLETES: THE ROLE OF ANXIETY

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Trent Petrie, University of North Texas

Body dissatisfaction has been related to anxiety in women, which in turn may worsen their disordered eating (Barnes et al., 2020; DeBoer & Smits, 2013). Among collegiate women athletes, body dissatisfaction to disordered eating is well-documented, though the role anxiety may play in it has not been examined. Thus, we explored the direct and indirect relationships of body satisfaction and anxiety to women collegiate athletes' disordered eating (N = 633, 53% White; 16 different sports, such as basketball, soccer, and volleyball). During their annual mental health screening, which was completed in Fall 2024, we obtained measures of their body dissatisfaction, anxiety, and disordered eating (only athletes who provided research consent were included in this study). We used Hayes' PROCESS macro Model 4 to examine our proposed relationships. After controlling for race (White vs. Athletes of Color), we found all direct and indirect effects to be significant. The variables explained 49.0% of the disordered eating variance; the significant relationships were direct (BD to DE: B = -3.12; Anxiety to DE: B = 0.65) and indirect (BD → Anxiety → DE: B = -0.36). Race showed no significant association with either the athletes' anxiety or their disordered eating symptoms, indicating that, white athletes and athletes of color experienced similar levels. Consistent with previous research, body dissatisfaction and anxiety were associated with higher reports of disordered eating symptoms among the athletes. Although significant indirect effects were found, body dissatisfaction's relationship to disordered eating were primarily direct, with effects being 8.76 times larger. Interventions targeting body dissatisfaction in women athletes may have the doubly beneficial effect of not only helping improve their relationship to food and eating, but reducing their anxiety and potentially improving their athletic performances.

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CARDS ALL-IN: EXPLORING BENEFITS AND EXPERIENCES OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE LED MENTAL HEALTH CLUB

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Royce Jones, UofL Health, University of Louisville Athletics
Katie Nichols, Louisville Athletics
Gustavo Saldo, University of Louisville
Kailey Kimball, University of Louisville
Aubrey Bagenstose, University of Louisville

Student athlete (SA)-led mental health clubs may provide a proactive approach in reducing the stigma of mental health in collegiate athletics (NCAA Mental Health Best Practices, 2024). Cards All-In (CAI) was developed by SAs at the University of Louisville in 2022. Aiming to support basic psychological needs satisfaction, CAI's mission is to provide a safe space for SAs to discuss mental health, develop coping skills, and connect with SAs from other sports (Deci and Ryan, 2012). SAs have learned new skills through the Headspace Guide to Meditation series (Grosso et al., 2021). Post-episode debriefs facilitated by a CMPC and mental health counselor, support SA competence while providing insight into their mindfulness experience (e.g., develop skills of "awareness," "letting go of tension," "noting," and "gratitude"). The growth of CAI has provided an advocacy platform for SAs to lead exercises (e.g., expressive writing, snowball discussions) and discussions within meetings. To increase engagement and autonomy, 22 SAs from 14 teams volunteered to be CAI representatives in 2024-2025. These representatives help communicate about CAI monthly meetings and plan and promote CAI sponsored events (e.g., World Mental Health Day Silent Disco, Dodge the Stigma Dodgeball Tournament, Mental Health Awareness games).

Surveys (pre- and between semesters) and experience sampling (within each meeting) have been used for program evaluation, ensuring improvement of the SA experience in the club (Augustus et al., 2023; Van der Guch et al., 2018). Preliminary program evaluation uncovered themes related to a desire for more student-athlete led exercises and continued use of guided meditations and Headspace series. Additional preliminary qualitative findings highlight the club as an opportunity for SAs to find common humanity and connection as a "safe space to just be human" and a way for "different sports to come together to discuss mental health and share ideas."

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CONFORMING TO REFORMING: A SYSTEMS UNDERSTANDING OF AESTHETIC SPORT COACHES' BEHAVIORS AND PRACTICES TOWARD FEMALE ATHLETES' BODIES

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Amanda Visek, The George Washington University
Katherine Fairhurst, Cloud Break Therapy, LLC
Jordyn Learner, ACUTE Center for Eating Disorders & Severe Malnutrition

Athletes' accounts of coaching behaviors and practices that incite or exacerbate eating pathology are well-established in the literature. This study uniquely examined coaches' perspectives to understand how and why they engage in behaviors and practices athletes cite as harmful to, in turn, inform coach-centered, systems-based education and research. Using a multiparadigm approach, this study explored how coaches of female athletes in aesthetic sports understood and communicated sport-related body ideals as well as the broader systems of influence that informed their described approaches. Interviews with ten coaches (M = 35.6 years of age; female, n = 5; male, n = 4) were analyzed via interpretive description. Findings indicated the coaches' negative experiences as athletes themselves informed their intent to prevent harm in the athletes they coached. Yet, despite efforts to engage in strategic body-related communication that minimized harm, they nonetheless emphasized the importance of body weight, shape, size, and appearance ideals entrenched in aesthetic sport traditions. The coaches experienced considerable dissonance between a desire to protect athletes' well-being and beliefs certain body ideals were required for high performance; the coaches' accounts suggested neither goal was fully realized. The coaches' behaviors and practices were informed by complex influences across proximal and distal ecosystems in which they lived and worked. From the findings, a novel framework is introduced to describe five intersectional body ideal orientations embodied by the coaches in this study, ranging from body ideal conformity to body diversity advocacy. This framework offers an innovative lens through which to invest in coach-centered, systems-based education and research with practical applications for interventions that foster healthier sport environments.

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DISENTANGLING EXCELLENCISM AND PERFECTIONISM IN EXERCISE DEPENDENCE

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Patrick Gaudreau, University of Ottawa

Perfectionism has long been recognized as a risk factor for exercise dependence (ED) and other forms of excessive exercise (Çakın et al., 2021). However, previous research did not neatly separate high personal standards (excellencism) from perfectionistic standards and focused on overall ED rather than its specific symptoms, limiting our understanding of their distinct associations. Drawing on the Model of Excellencism and Perfectionism (MEP; Gaudreau, 2019), this study explored the unique links of excellencism and perfectionism with ED symptoms from the Exercise Dependence Scale-Revised (EDS-R; Downs et al., 2004). A total of 302 regular exercisers (≥1.5 hours per week) were recruited via Prolific Academic and completed surveys assessing excellencism, perfectionism, and ED symptoms. Multiple regression analyses revealed that excellencism was positively associated with tolerance and withdrawal. In contrast, perfectionism, above and beyond excellencism, was positively associated with tolerance, continuance, intention effects, lack of control, time spent exercising, and reductions in other activities. These findings suggest that perfection strivers are vulnerable to a broader range of ED symptoms than excellence strivers, highlighting the need to distinguish between perfectionism and excellencism in future research and interventions addressing maladaptive forms of exercise.

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ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY IN SPORT-PERFORMANCE PRACTICE: WHAT'S CURRENTLY MISSING FROM THE PICTURE?

Matt Barnes, Southwest Counselling Services
Madison Beishuizen, King's University College
Wade Wilson, The Mentor Magazine Inc.

An ecological systems theory posits that individuals must not be viewed in isolation to the various systems, interpersonal relationships and sociocultural contexts they are embedded in (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, 1997). This poster will emphasize how an ecological systems theory can be applied in sport performance contexts to aid practitioners in acknowledging the potential invisible struggles athletes endure by considering them from the lens of a human being first.The most elite of athletes are not immune to mental health issues. Presenting concerns of athletes are multifaceted and can stem from various aspects of their life. As registered social workers and/or certified mental performance consultants, we believe that cocreating intervention plans with athletes begins with inquiry into the environments they are embedded in while simultaneously assessing where their presenting concerns are rooted.We present the need to adapt to a person-in-environment and ecological systems approach in mental performance support where we can collaborate with athletes to consciously arouse them to possible broader socio-cultural factors reinforcing their felt troubles. This presentation will showcase how utilizing an ecological map highlights the multifaceted layers, interpersonal

relationships and socio-cultural contexts of athletes to be interconnected and in constant transactional states (Moore & Gummelt, 2019). Insight into the various domains of ecological maps will be explained which include the athlete's microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).Practice connections will be provided which indicate how the application of an ecological map into traditional mental performance interventions can increase positive mental health, sport desired outcomes and holistic well-being when working with athletes. Sport performance concerns are not restricted to the athletic domain of an individual's life and therefore mental performance consultation should be inclusive of holistic frameworks.

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EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF CHRONIC PAIN IN ENDURANCE ATHLETES: A QUALITATIVE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Endurance sport can be defined as performance during whole-body, dynamic exercise that involves continuous effort and lasts for 75 seconds or longer (McCormick et al., 2015). An inherent component of endurance sport is the experience of pain as a direct output of pushing your body to the limits with athletes often encouraged or rewarded for their abilities to endure pain (Atkinson, 2008; Casey et al., 2022).Extant research has typically focused on the study of subject areas such as pain threshold and pain tolerance in endurance sport (Emeka & Meijen, 2023; Johnson et al., 2012) with less emphasis on chronic pain in endurance athletes which can be considered as persistent and recurrent pain lasting longer than three months (Fayaz et al., 2016).The aim of the study was to systematically review empirical qualitative research on the perceptions and experiences of chronic pain in endurance athletes, and the impact of chronic pain on their health-related quality of life. Thematic synthesis was the chosen method for analysing data within the included primary studies with adherence to the three-stage analytical process (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Six themes were identified from the systematic review: (a) impact of sport-related chronic pain on everyday life (b) navigating athlete identity with and through pain (c) pain-related fear and avoidance of movement (d) frustration with healthcare providers (e) engaging in risk-taking behaviour (f) the training-pain conundrumApplied implications for coaches, athletes and practitioners includes education on understanding chronic pain through a biopsychosocial lens, cultivating psychologically safe and inclusive cultures for endurance athletes with chronic pain and development of training programs that are reflective of the athletes' lived experience of chronic pain.

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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTENSITY AND BODY APPRECIATION IN ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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Abstract: Physical Activity Intensity and Body AppreciationTitle: Exploring the Relationship between Physical Activity Intensity and Body Appreciation in Adolescent GirlsSince the COVID-19 pandemic, physical activity (PA) levels have sharply declined among youth. This is concerning given the mental and physical health benefits associated with PA participation, which include improved cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength/endurance, cognitive functioning, and psychosocial health. Among girls, one prominent factor contributing to disengagement from PA is body image, which generally happens during the transition to adolescence.To date, most research focuses on interventions aimed at improving negative body image in PA and sport. However, these interventions neglect the importance of cultivating a positive body image among individuals. More research is needed to understand the relationship of PA intensity in helping adolescent girls cultivate a positive body image.This poster illuminates the relationship between PA participation and body appreciation and the role that exercise intensity plays in helping adolescent girls cultivate body appreciation. Physical activity was measured using accelerometry and body appreciation was assessed using the Body Appreciation Scale (BAS-2) and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistics and correlational analyses were completed for physical activity and body appreciation. A thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the qualitative data. Findings from semi-structured interviews suggest that participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity intensity in addition to light physical activity promotes a more positive perception of one's body image. Overall, it seems that participation in higher intensity physical activities, namely, competitive sports in addition to lower intensity physical activities can help adolescent girls cultivate higher levels of body appreciation.

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GENDER, RACE, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL RESOURCES ARE RELATED TO COLLEGIATE ATHLETES' HELP-SEEKING

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Hunter Williams, University of North Texas
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Collegiate student-athletes (SAs) experience mental health concerns, and their help-seeking behaviors may vary based on gender, race, and psychosocial resources, such as social support and mindful self-compassion (Habeeb et al., 2022). To better understand SAs' help-seeking, we represented that through their actual requests to see their schools' sport psychologists for a mental health concern (YES vs. NO); we considered this request in relation to their gender and race, and reported levels of social support, self-compassion, and resilience. Participants were 1,121 SAs (White = 576; Women = 633) who provided data during their schools' 2024 mental health screenings. Through logistic regression

that gender (B = 0.80, OR = 2.88, 95% CI [2.00, 4.15]), but not race (B = 0.21, OR = 1.23, 95% CI [0.88, 1.73]) was related significantly to the athletes' mental health help-seeking; women were 120% more likely to request to see their sport psychologist. For the psychosocial resources, lower levels of self-compassion (B = -1.14, OR = .32, 95% CI [.18, .58]) and resilience (B = -.70, OR = .50, 95% CI [.36, .69]) were related significantly to requesting to see a sport psychologist; social support did not add significantly to the model. For every one-point decrease in the athletes' self-compassion and resilience scores, they were 68% and 50% more likely, respectively, to want to see their sport psychologists. Our findings highlight the importance of fostering self-compassion and resilience among student-athletes, as higher levels were related to a self-determined lack of need for psychological assistance. Further, woman athletes were far more likely to seek assistance, which may reflect gender socialization that benefits them, but harms male athletes (who are less likely to make such requests). Future research should examine contextual variables to better understand and address disparities in psychological service utilization among collegiate athletes.

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HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR IN NCAA COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

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J.C. Ausmus, University of Texas Permian Basin

Recent research underscores the significance of establishing resilient mental health support systems for college athletes, shedding light on substantial obstacles to seeking help within this group. Research indicates that student-athletes are more inclined to seek counseling if recommended by non-athletic support staff rather than coaches or teammates (Daltry et al., 2021). This highlights the necessity for a restructuring of how mental health is approached in athletic programs. Coaches, possessing significant influence with their teams, can have a crucial impact in overcoming these barriers by promoting mental well-being and encouraging seeking help. Institutions must prioritize the hiring of counselors who possess expertise in the distinct challenges encountered by student-athletes. Athletes rely on counselors to comprehend both therapeutic approaches and the specialized demands of balancing their roles as both students and athletes (Smith, 2017). Further research indicates that social support is associated with increased academic success and retention rates. This highlights the extensive benefits of mental health resources for both athletes and the university community. To combat stigma, it is essential to implement educational initiatives and encourage open dialogues. These efforts are crucial in transforming societal perceptions of mental health from being viewed as a sign of weakness to being recognized as a shared human experience. The NCAA's suggestion to screen for mental health concerns among athletes is an essential initial action. Nonetheless, it is imperative to prioritize additional support for dedicated mental health services. Addressing these needs through a multifaceted approach—comprising institutional support, coach advocacy, and cultural change—can enhance the well-being and performance of student-athletes, benefiting the institution.

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INTEGRATING MINDFULNESS MEDITATION IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY AND COACHING CLASSES TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Anderson Chalmers Boatman, Western Michigan University

Stress and anxiety are increasingly prevalent among college students (ACHA, 2024), leading to negative effects on various health outcomes (Hudd et al., 2000) and academic performance (Elias et al., 2011). Mindfulness practice, rooted in meditation and focused awareness techniques, has gained attention in university settings due to its beneficial effects on reducing stress and anxiety, as well as improving psychological health and well-being (e.g., Dawson et al., 2020). Nonetheless, one of the most common barriers for students in engaging in mindfulness practice is their demanding schedules, resulting in a lack of time to practice mindfulness (Gryffin et al., 2014). Therefore, one potentially viable method of implementing mindfulness practice to reduce the time burden for students is through classroom-based mindfulness interventions. This study examined the effects of a bi-weekly, 10-minute mindfulness practice at the beginning of class, which included a body scan, boxed breathing, gratitude, and intention setting. The experimental group consisted of students from sport psychology and coaching courses, while the control group was composed of students from a health and wellness course. Quantitative measures included the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983), the Well-Being Questionnaire (Jones et al., 2013), the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (Walach et al., 2006), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). Furthermore, qualitative measures included post-intervention reflections. This poster presentation will discuss quantitative results that demonstrate positive trends toward the enhancement of students' well-being, as well as qualitative results indicating overall positive perceptions of the interventions. Additionally, attendees will leave with an understanding of the potential benefits of classroom-based mindfulness interventions as a way of benefiting college students' well-being.

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INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SUPPORT SERVICES

Matt Barnes, Southwest Counselling Services
Madison Beishuizen, King's University College
Wade Wilson, The Mentor Magazine Inc.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is a pivotal asset for providing a continuum of care. What parameters this entails and who is involved can be the determining factor catalyzing indicators and/or presenting concerns of student-athlete sport performance, mental health and/or holistic well-being. Interdisciplinary approaches to care are collaborative, client-centered and focus on assembling a whole picture of the client from a range of professional perspectives to provide possible routes of intervention (Warren & Warren, 2023). Student-athletes are more likely to seek help externally for less stigmatizing concerns because of absent cultural sensitivity to the invisible struggles they endure while attending to their dual career commitments (Akesdotter et al., 2020). Existing

research repeatedly showcases an overwhelming percentage of student-athletes across North America reporting alarming rates of a variety of negative mental health and well-being concerns including binge drinking, substance misuse, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, body image issues and more (Brown et al., 2020, Grubic et al., 2021; NCAA, 2024; Terzis & Beasley, 2022). This poster will showcase how higher education institutions can embed a team approach to student-athlete support services through interdisciplinary professional expertise readily available from professional disciplines within the existing institution(s). This poster will provide practical applications for diminishing barriers to mental health and well-being support services for student-athletes through the interdisciplinary approach to mental health care (Schultz et al., 2014). This includes embedding staff within predominant student-athlete environments and eliminating the need for outsourcing care to community agencies when institutions are equipped with disciplines that have doctorate and master-level students training for these careers. Considerable takeaways include the impact of sport culture, intra- and interpersonal qualities, leadership, organizational processes, and theoretical implications (Burns & Collins, 2023). Practice considerations will be given to appropriate implementation for services specifically tailored to uplift student-athlete holistic functioning.

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INTOLERANCE OF UNCERTAINTY AND COMPETITIVE STATE ANXIETY OF ATHLETES: THE MODERATING ROLE OF COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

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Taiwoo Kim, Seoul National University

The unpredictability inherent in sports, often described as the charm of sports (Cashmore, 2000), captivates spectators engrossed in the unfolding “unscripted drama.” However, for athletes, this uncertainty can lead to adverse outcomes such as anxiety (Martens et al., 1990). One key factor influencing this anxiety is intolerance of uncertainty, defined as the degree to which athletes struggle to cope with unpredictability. While previous studies have demonstrated that a higher intolerance of uncertainty increases competitive anxiety (Robinson & Freeston, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2016), they have not explored factors that might mitigate it. This study aimed to address this gap by examining whether cognitive flexibility—the ability to adapt and generate solutions in new situations (Dennis & Vander Wal, 2010)—moderates the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and competitive state anxiety.The survey included 261 athletes (132 high school, 81 college, 48 adult / 174 males, 87 females). Data were collected using three scales: the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale Short Form (Carleton et al., 2007), the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (Martens et al., 1990), and the Cognitive Flexibility Inventory (Dennis & Vander Wal, 2010). Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to assess the moderating effect of cognitive flexibility.The results revealed that higher intolerance of uncertainty significantly predicted increased levels of both cognitive (β=.431, pβ=.293, pβ=-.070, p

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MENTAL TOUGHNESS, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS: WHAT ARE THE RELATIONSHIPS AND DOES HAVING EVER ATTENDED UNIVERSITY COUNSELING MODERATE THESE RELATIONSHIPS?

Liz Hathaway, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Avery Catlett, Adler University

Mental toughness (MT), or the ability to consistently perform towards the upper range of talent and skill regardless of circumstances (Loehr, 1994), is a common phrase heard around athletics. Mental toughness can facilitate improved mental health in sport by helping athletes to overcome stressors and adversities (Gucciardi et al., 2017). However, MT may, at times, put athletes at increased risk through costly perseverance (Crust et al., 2016) or continued play when injured (Coulter et al., 2016). Additionally, more mentally tough athletes may be less likely to seek mental health support when needed (Gucciardi et al., 2017). The current study (a) assessed associations between MT, depression, anxiety, and stress, (b) tested for differences between those who had and had not ever attended University counseling, and (c) tested for the moderating effect of having ever seen a University counselor on these relationships in a sample of University student-athletes (N f55, 71% female, 47% had attended University counseling). Moderate negative correlations were found between MT and depression (rs(55)=-.50, prs(55)=-.42, prs(55)=-.45, pps>.05. Moderation analysis revealed that having attended University counseling was a significant moderator of the relationship between MT and stress only. Those who had attended University counseling exhibited a stronger inverse relationship between MT and stress (rs(26)=-.71, prs(29)=-.29, p=.13). On average, the “mentally tough” athlete who had attended University counseling had lower stress compared to the “mentally tough” athlete who had not, highlighting the potential benefits of even “mentally tough” athletes working with University counseling. These results warrant further exploration with larger samples and longitudinal studies.

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MENTAL TRAINING IN MANITOBA SCHOOLS: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION

Lindsay Ross-Stewart, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Project 11 is a mental health initiative with curriculum and training available at no cost to teachers from kindergarten to Grade 12, developed through the True North Youth Foundation in Canada. One component of Project 11 curriculum is the “Intermission series” which includes short videos that provide a “mind and body break” for students and give opportunities for students to gain experience with mental wellness strategies. This presentation will focus on the work done by a CMPC, through the support of an AASP Community Outreach Grant, to support Project 11’s development of their Intermission series videos for high school students. For this project the CMPC worked with CREATE students, an animation training program that gives post high students experience in animation through a one-year free educational post high program at one of the most diverse and underserved high schools in Canada. As part of this project all students participated in free mental skills

training by the CMPC, followed by students being selected for a paid opportunity to develop the animation for the intermission videos. Working collaboratively, the CMPC and the CREATE students created four videos using a strengths-based approach (e.g., Climie, & Henley, 2016; Jackson, Harris, & Trauth, 2023: Wilson, 2006) focusing on the skills of confidence, self-talk, and mindfulness and several strategies including goal setting, breathing strategies, and reframing techniques. This presentation will highlight the collaborative work of community outreach, go over the process of content development, show examples of the intermission videos, and give tips for implementing similar programming with other community organizations.

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MOTIVATION AS A MEDIATOR OF THE PERFECTIONISM-ATHLETE BURNOUT RELATIONSHIP IN JUNIOR AND COLLEGIATE ATHLETES: A CRITICALLY APPRAISED TOPIC

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Francesca Genoese, University of Wyoming
Shelby Baez, University of North Carolina

Perfectionism, a pursuit of exceedingly high standards often accompanied by harsh self-evaluation (Frost et al., 1990), may predict the onset of athlete burnout in elite junior and collegiate athletes (Madigan et al., 2015). Because athlete burnout can have long-term negative impacts on the health, development, and performance of athletes (Moseid et al., 2023), it is critical that practitioners understand how to mitigate psychological factors to support those at risk. Through the lens of self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000), scholars have demonstrated that athletes perceiving satisfaction of psychological needs (i.e., competence, autonomy, and relatedness) may experience self-determined motivation (Li et al., 2013), potentially mediating effects of maladaptive perfectionism and athlete burnout. However, with limited literature exploring this divergent relationship, the purpose of this critically appraised topic was to identify the best available evidence examining motivation as a mediator of perfectionism and athlete burnout to guide recommendations for recognizing perfectionism and preventing burnout in elite junior and collegiate athletes.A digital database search (i.e., PubMed, PsycInfo, and SPORTDiscus) conducted in August 2024 yielded 22 studies; two cross-sectional studies (Barcza-Renner et al., 2016; Jowett et al., 2013) and one longitudinal study (Madigan et al., 2016) met inclusion criteria. Using a maximum score of 21 from the STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) guidelines, these articles were appraised, scoring 19, 16, and 19, respectively.Results revealed encouraging evidence that self-determined behavior fosters motivation and promotes adaptive perfectionism, decreasing the likelihood of athlete burnout in junior and collegiate athletes. When practitioners allowed for satisfaction of psychological needs, athletes had more adaptive reasons for sport, increasing general sport enjoyment and decreasing negative effects of maladaptive perfectionism. Through SDT, future research should explore how athlete needs differ depending on age and competitive level, to enhance burnout recommendations for specific age groups.

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ORTHOPEDIC SURGICAL RESIDENTS' LIFE SATISFACTION VARIES: THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER, TRAINING LEVEL, RELATIONSHIPS, AND SLEEP

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Javon Williams, University of North Texas
Simon Wright, University of North Texas
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Trent Petrie, University of North Texas

Orthopedic surgical residency is a demanding and high-stress training period, characterized by long work hours, high patient volumes, and intense performance expectations (Aaronson et al., 2018). Given these challenges, residents are at increased risk for mental health concerns, including anxiety, depression, and burnout (Amini et al., 2024). In 2019, Gosselin et al. found that orthopedic residents' mental health (as assessed through depression, anxiety and life satisfaction) varied based on demographic and environmental factors (e.g., workload, level of training, and gender). Since 2020, and the effects of COVID-19 on all educational systems, no study has revisited these high performers' life satisfaction during their training. Thus, we examined orthopedic surgical residents' (N = 182; 46.2% women; 70.3% White) life satisfaction in relation to key demographic (e.g., gender) and training program (e.g., hours worked) factors. The residents' life satisfaction was associated significantly with sleeping well (r (182) = .32, p $F(1,177) = 5.17$, p = .024, np2 = .028), being married ($F(2,179) = 5.98$, p = .003, np2 = .063), or being in their 1st or 5thyear of their residency (compared to their 2nd year; $F(4,177) = 3.67$, p = .007, np2 = .077). Their life satisfaction was not related significantly to their age, number of hours they work weekly, their race, or their sexual orientation. These findings highlight key areas for improving resident well-being. Targeted support for female residents, structured resources for second-year trainees, and optimizing work hours to improve sleep quality are crucial. Addressing these factors can enhance training, reduce burnout, and foster a healthier surgical workforce.

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PERSPECTIVES ON IMPLEMENTING PEER-LED STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

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Kelsey Moeller, KM Performance LLC
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Ashley Samson, University of Kentucky

According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (2023), student-athlete mental health and wellness reports have maintained elevated levels of overwhelming anxiety, loneliness, and sadness. This is likely due to a multitude of factors, including greater amounts of stress due to a lack of control in their lives, decreased time to socialize outside of sport, as well as burnout (Watson, 2016; Watson & Kissinger, 2007; Roxas & Ridinger, 2016). Researchers argue that the demands of college athletics require specific mental health interventions and implementation approaches that might differ from non-athlete college students and is largely due

to the stigma student-athletes hold around seeking mental health treatment (Curvey et al., 2020; Harris & Maher, 2023). While professional counselors, Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPCs), and other staff on college campuses may have roles that support student wellbeing, student-athletes who advocate for athlete mental health through organizations could provide added benefits, especially as it relates to stigma around seeking mental health treatment. It is unknown how peer-led advocacy groups impact the student-athletes who serve as advocates for change on college campuses. Peer-led advocacy groups may be paramount in reducing the stigma around seeking mental health treatment for student-athletes (Cutler & Dwyer, 2020). The purpose of this research is to investigate perspectives on implementing peer-led student-athlete mental health advocacy work with the aim of exploring opportunities, barriers, benefits, and risks of advocating for mental health awareness. Data collection and analysis will be discussed and it is hoped that this research will spark a rich dialogue that informs future studies to help address gaps in student-athlete advocacy research as mental health is becoming a more prioritized discussion amongst athletic departments. Keywords: collegiate athletics; mental health; peer advocacy; peer-to-peer support; student-athlete

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PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS IN EXERCISE RIDERS AND PROFESSIONAL JOCKEYS FOLLOWING INJURY

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Ashley Samson, University of Kentucky
Marc Cormier, University of Kentucky
Michaela Keener, University of Kentucky

One of the most well-known equestrian sports, horse racing, is not only a cornerstone of Kentucky's economy, but also a vital part of its culture, with professional jockeys playing an essential role in the local communities and traditions that define the state. Despite its popularity and financial impact, mental health challenges within the sport have continually been shrouded in silence and ignored in research (Ball et al., 2007). Equally concerning is the high injury prevalence, and psychological impact of these injuries (e.g., psychological distress, depression, anxiety, loss of identity, and self-esteem (King et al., 2022; Losty et al., 2019; McConn-Palfreyman et al., 2019). As such, the purpose of this study was to better understand the psychological experiences of professional jockeys following injury with a focus on addressing holistic well-being and optimizing recovery and performance success. Four riders agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews to discuss their injury and return-to-riding experiences. While the themes were predetermined, thematic analysis revealed various subthemes. Common emotions included worry, depression, and loneliness following injuring, as well as post-injury barriers such as serious financial strain and community isolation. Riders also experienced a 'fear of fear itself,' where the emotion of fear outweighs the actual danger. When discussing coping mechanisms, family support and distraction were commonly mentioned as strategies to deal with the fear, pressure, and business difficulty that accompanied their return to riding. In addition, suicide and finance were discussed as an ongoing concern. Other subthemes highlighted the challenge riders face in speaking up and the need for support – someone to protect them, listen to them, and encourage therapy or motivation. This study highlights the unique mental health challenges faced by riders and offers several implications to help foster change that enhances well-being and ensures a safer, more supportive future for equestrian sport participants.

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SUBGROUPS OF ULTRAMARATHON RUNNERS: WHO ARE THEY AND WHY DO THEY RUN?

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Jeremiah Weinstock, Saint Louis University
Michael Ross, Saint Louis University
Annie Garner, Saint Louis University

Ultrarunning is experiencing dramatic increases in participation over the last two decades. Past research has investigated ultramarathon runners' personality profiles, motivations to run, and other psychological constructs, yet little consensus exists on these characteristics. Additionally, due to the extraordinary feat of running an ultramarathon, those less familiar with the sport may view those who run with hesitancy and uncertainty. As the sport continues to grow in popularity, scientific generalizations and public perceptions will become increasingly inaccurate and unhelpful. This study sought to provide a nuanced understanding of who runs ultramarathons by identifying subgroups. Ultramarathon runners (N = 125) were measured on an array of biopsychosocial variables, including demographic information, motivations to run, psychopathology, personality, substance use, experiences of potentially traumatic events, and emotional intelligence. Participants' five-factor model personality traits and emotional intelligence were analyzed using cluster analysis; a data categorization technique that groups similar responses together and separates dissimilar responses. The sample primarily consisted of middle-aged, White, educated, financially secure, and psychologically healthy individuals. The cluster analysis results revealed three distinct subgroups: Sociables, Resilients, and Solitaries. The Sociables are highly extraverted and likely responsible for the strong ultrarunning community. The Resilients reported the highest levels of psychological distress and may use ultrarunning as an outlet. The Solitaries are rigorously organized, uninterested in novelty, and prefer solitude. Over half of the sample expressed willingness to engage in sports psychological services if it were to improve their performance, but nearly no runners had received services. Previous ultrarunning research implicates personality and emotional intelligence in performance. Thus, sports psychology professionals may benefit from conceptualizing and identifying interventions for ultramarathon runners based on these subgroups.

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SYSTEMIC SPORT PSYCHOLOGY: NICHE OR NEEDED?

Stephen Cirella, University of Rhode Island

Systemic approaches to athlete health, well-being, and performance are paramount to garner a complete understanding of the whole person. When we work with an athlete, we work with the whole athlete. Systems theory accounts for the other complex and interconnected systems that may influence one's thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. Mental performance and mental health professionals working with the athlete-specific population must not only take the sporting culture and context into account but also the other

systems at play that may contribute to an athlete's presenting concerns. Common systems include familial systems, peer systems, academic systems, political systems, and cultural systems, to name a few. Each of these parts alone provides us limited information about how they affect an athlete, their health, and performance; but together, they can offer a more complete picture of the individual whom we are working with. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This lecture aims to provide a foundation for systemic considerations and approaches when working with the athlete population. Topics to note are the potential systems that may contribute to an athlete's presenting thoughts, behaviors, and emotions, as well as possible assessments that can help us identify more clearly which systems we may want to address in our work with the athlete. Additionally, the lecture will provide a foundation for intervention when working with an athlete from a systems theory lens, including, but not limited to, cognitive-behavioral interventions, narrative techniques, and emotion-focused tools. Adding a systems lens to our work with athletes allows us to further understand the whole athlete, integrating the necessary parts that make them human.

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THE EFFECTS OF CAREER LENGTH ON PHYSICAL SELF-EFFICACY IN FEMALE SOCCER ATHLETES FOLLOWING ACL INJURY

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Samantha Dardaman, University of North Texas
Chris Bailey, Minnesota Twins Baseball Club
Andrew Colombo-Dougovito, University of North Texas
Scott Martin, University of North Texas

Young females typically begin participation in organized soccer at an early age, with an average sports career lasting ten years. Although sports involvement has been associated with positive psychological outcomes (e.g., increased confidence, self-esteem, social connectedness), the longer athletes engage in sports, their exposure and risk for injury increases. The most common injury amongst female soccer athletes is an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) strain or tear, requiring lengthy rehabilitation and a temporary suspension from sport. Since self-efficacy is a predictor of injury recovery outcomes, further research is needed on post-ACL injury physical self-efficacy in the female soccer population. The purpose of this study was to examine soccer athletes' physical self-efficacy and confidence levels following ACL injury and the influence of their sport career length. Female soccer players (N = 81) who reported to have injured their ACL were recruited to complete an online survey. The survey included measures of physical self-efficacy (Physical Self-Efficacy Scale; PSES) with subscales of perceived physical ability (PPA) and physical self-presentation confidence (PSPC), as well as demographic information (e.g., sport participation history, return-to-sport decision). Results indicate female soccer players had low self-efficacy (M = 83.43, SD = 11.09), but particularly lower PSPC (M = 43.47, SD = 5.90) following ACL injury. Although athletes' had higher PPA (M = 39.96, SD = 6.77), those with sporting careers shorter than ten years experienced lower confidence in their physical abilities (t (79) = 2.10, p r2 = 0.08, p r2 = 0.05, p

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THE INVISIBLE STRUGGLE: BODY DYSMORPHIA IN FEMALE ATHLETES

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Brad Conn, Compton College/The Artest Foundation
Jasmine Reyna, Mount St. Mary's University, Los Angeles

The Invisible Struggle: Body Dysmorphia in Female Athletes Body dysmorphia is a growing but often overlooked issue among athletes, particularly female athletes at collegiate and professional levels (Academy, 2016). These female athletes face immense pressures to maintain a specific body image dictated by performance demands, societal expectations, and social media standards. Such pressures can lead to body image insecurities, disordered eating, and mental health challenges, significantly impacting their well-being and performance. Female athletes often experience unique physical changes, including muscle gain, weight fluctuations, and dietary adjustments, which can trigger body dissatisfaction. Sports like gymnastics, ballet, and figure skating emphasize specific body types, reinforcing unhealthy ideals perpetuated by coaches, trainers, and media outlets. Social media further compounds these issues, as female athletes are pressured to appear feminine and avoid appearing "too muscular," fostering feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt (Lutz, 2024). These challenges are linked to eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia, as athletes develop unhealthy relationships with food to align with external expectations. The transition out of sports due to retirement or injury exacerbates these struggles, often leading to identity crises, depression, and prolonged adjustment difficulties. This presentation underscores the urgent need for a multifaceted approach to address body dysmorphia among athletes. Recommendations include increased research on body image issues, particularly among male athletes, enhanced mental health support, education on healthy body image, and the promotion of balanced social media use (Button et al., 2024). Moreover, training for coaches and trainers to use supportive and non-harmful language is critical in reducing these pressures. By raising awareness, advocating for systemic changes, and empowering athletes, the sport psychology community can foster long-term well-being for athletes at all levels.

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THE LIFE PERFORMANCE INTERFERENCE CHECKLIST (LPIC): A PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUATION

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Extant questionnaires have been developed to assess performance of collegiate students, and collegiate student athletes in particular. Therefore, this study was conducted to develop the Life Performance Interference Checklist (LPIC), a 26-item measure that evaluates factors hindering optimal

performance across various life domains, and to determine if the resulting factors differentiated collegiate non-student athletes from student athletes. Item stems, derived from The Sport Interference Checklist (SIC; Donohue et al., 2007), were adapted to emphasize the frequency of performance interference caused by actions, perceptions, and thoughts in daily life. The measure was administered to 888 university students, including student athletes. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring (PAF) was employed, followed by direct oblimin rotation (Δ = XXX) allowing for correlated factors. Parallel analysis (Horn, 1965; O'Connor, 2000), scree plot, and minimum average partial (MAP) test (O'Connor, 2000; Velicer, 1976) were utilized to determine factor structure. Results indicated a four-factor solution (negative mindset, relationship problems, health problems, and low motivation). Internal consistency was high (α = [.90]), supporting the reliability of the scale. These findings provide preliminary evidence for the factor structure and reliability of the LPIC. A multivariate analysis of variance was performed on the resulting factors between student athletes and non-athletes. These results indicated that there were no significant differences between these populations. Recommendations are offered in light of the results.

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THE ROLE OF SELF-COMPASSION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT AND DEPRESSION IN COLLEGIATE STUDENT-ATHLETES

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Michael Ross, Saint Louis University

Psychological disorders, particularly anxiety and depression, are markedly prevalent among elite athletes relative to the general population (Rice et al., 2016). This trend persists in college student-athletes (Weber et al., 2023; Wolanin et al., 2016). There is a consistently documented relationship between depression and burnout such that burnout in athletes may predict future depressive symptoms (Amemiya & Sakairi, 2022). This is of concern because research suggests that athletes are experiencing burnout at higher rates than ever before (Madigan et al., 2022). Given this need, the research field is seeking to identify critical ingredients of interventions that may directly address athlete burnout and its negative effects on mental health. Among these ingredients is self-compassion. Self-compassion, a popular area of current research in sport psychology, is a proposed resource for individuals in general and athletes in a sport context to use when confronted with challenging times, including burnout. The current study conducted a moderation analysis to examine whether self-compassion influences the strength of the relationship between burnout and depression among student-athletes, testing whether higher self-compassion buffers the negative impact of burnout on mental health. College athletes (N f78) at an NCAA Division I institution completed a self-report battery of measures of self-compassion, burnout, and depressive symptoms. Results indicated that the interaction between burnout and self-compassion was not statistically significant (β = -.548, p = .248), suggesting that self-compassion did not significantly affect the relationship between burnout and depression. These results indicate that the association between burnout and depression remains consistent regardless of levels of self-compassion. Overall, these findings suggest that while self-compassion has demonstrated benefits for well-being, it may not specifically buffer the impact of burnout on depression, which highlights the need to explore other potential protective factors.

P-171

TRANSITION OFF THE COURT: EXAMINING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TRANSFER STUDENT-ATHLETES

Madeline Koch, Indiana University

Transitions are a defining aspect of life and athletics, yet mid-career transitions like transferring universities remain underexplored. The NCAA Transfer Portal, introduced in 2018, gained popularity after a 2021 legislative change, with 13,025 student-athletes in the Transfer Portal in 2023 (NCAA, 2022). Student-athletes choose to transfer institutions for many reasons, but mental health has been cited as the top reason for transfer consideration (Brutlag Hosick, 2021; NCAA, 2022). Despite similar transfer rates between genders, female athletes face higher rates of mental health challenges than their male counterparts and the general population (Perry et al., 2021). Women have made tremendous strides in athletics, particularly since gaining the opportunity to compete in the 1970s, with volleyball emerging as the most popular high school sport and breaking NCAA viewership records annually (Athletics Participation Survey, 2024); "Women's Volleyball Championship" 2023). These factors make female volleyball student-athletes an interesting group to study regarding their transition of transferring universities. Using identity and transition theory as a framework, this study examined the experiences of female volleyball transfer student-athletes. Semi-structured interviews with Division I transfers shed light on three key phases of the transfer process: pre-Transfer Portal considerations, experiences navigating the portal, and adjustment at the new institution. Several themes were identified, including transfer motivations, interpersonal dynamics during the process, challenges faced during the immediate transition period, and identity negotiation. Findings from this study can help coaches, academic support staff, NCAA policymakers, student-athletes, sport psychologists, and counseling psychologists better understand the experiences of female transfer student-athletes. Sharing the interpersonal challenges of transferring and its impact on mental health and well-being could help mitigate potential harm for these student-athletes. This research offers implications for practice and policy and lays the groundwork for research on this underserved population in the new and highly vulnerable era of the Transfer Portal.

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WEIGHT-BASED TEASING AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN SPORT: CAN SELF-COMPASSION COMBAT EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES?

Samantha Adler, Western University
Eva Pila, Western University

In adolescence, girls are at risk of experiencing weight-based teasing, which is prevalent in social, evaluative, and physique-salient contexts like sport. According to prominent weight stigma theories, weight-based teasing can negatively impact one's body-related self-conscious emotions, like shame and guilt, and lead to adverse health outcomes. The emotional consequences of teasing can threaten the quality of adolescent girls' sport experiences and performance,

thereby exacerbating existing gender disparities in sport participation. Self-compassion (i.e., directing kindness and acceptance to oneself following perceptions of inadequacy; Neff, 2003) has shown promise as a "newer," modifiable psychological resource to help combat negative emotions in sport and mitigate the impacts of weight-based teasing (Mosewich, 2020). In this study, we examined whether self-compassion moderates the relationship between weight-based teasing experiences and negative self-conscious emotions. In a secondary analysis of adolescent girls, a subset (N f256, Mage=15.8±1.3 years) was selected based on their recreational and/or competitive sport participation. Athletes completed a cross-sectional survey that assessed body image and movement experiences. In analyses adjusting for perceived weight, there was a significant interaction between weight-based teasing and self-compassion in the model predicting shame (β= -.52, 95%CI[-.92,-.12]), but not guilt (β= -.22, 95%CI[-.69,.24]). In partial support of hypotheses, athletes with higher – compared to lower – levels of self-compassion reported weakened effects of weight-based teasing on shame (R2=.42). Aligned with previous research, the present findings indicate that higher levels of self-compassion were protective against specific emotional consequences of weight-based teasing that are associated with inadequacy of the self. As self-compassion emerges in direct practice with athletes, this study promotes its utility in helping girls cope with weight-stigmatizing experiences. Since self-compassion is evidenced to be responsive to intervention among athletes, these findings further warrant professionals to explore self-compassion as a tool to support psychosocial health among adolescent girls in recreational and competitive sport.

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AN INNOVATIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED PROCESS FOR FACILITATING ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH RETURN TO SPORT

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Over the past decade there has been increased public and scholarly attention on the role of mental health in athlete wellbeing and performance (Reardon et al., 2019). This acknowledgement has resulted in improved mental health literacy among athletes, increased access for athletes to internal and/or external mental health services, incorporation of mental health assessments into periodic health evaluations or medical screens, and recognition that athletes may require a self- or other-initiated break from sport to manage mental health concerns. While significant progress has been made in the areas of literacy, recognition, screening, and intervention, what remains far less clear is the return to sport process following a break from sport for mental health. Examples of mental health return to sport protocols are surfacing from the club (e.g., Napean Artistic Swim Club), to the collegiate (e.g., University of North Carolina-Charlotte, University of Mississippi), to the elite (Brandt & Bartley, 2022) levels, however, no consensus statements or comprehensive process endorsements by professional organizations exist, yielding significant variability in the rigor and practicality of processes in place. To further advance the progress made around athlete mental health, comprehensive evidence-based processes of athlete mental health return to sport that apply to various competitive levels, sports, and national governing bodies (NGBs) are needed. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the development and implementation of a mental health return to sport process utilized by the Olympic Winter Institute of Australia. Specifically, we outline a process that is embedded within an annual athlete health evaluation, and is modeled after the 4-stage return to sport guidelines utilized for physical injury and rehabilitation. As is common with physical injury and return to sport, this innovative and evidence-based process reflects an interdisciplinary approach to athlete care, and involves both medically- and coach-led stages of return to sport.

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QUIET EYE AMONG FRENCH GOLFERS: IMPORTANCE OF THE LAST FIXATION BEFORE ACTION

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Guillaume Chauvel, Université Paris Est Créteil

Quiet-Eye (QE) is defined as the final fixation of more than 100 ms directed at a specific location in the task area (Vickers, 1996). This fixation time would enable a golfer to calculate the ideal angle and speed of the ball for a successful putt. Currently, numerous studies have shown the link between an increase in QE time and the level of practice, but above all between an increase in QE time and putt success. The aim of this research is twofold: to study the effect of QE in professional golfers (considered to be super-experts) and to identify the link between QE and putting mechanics, which could inform us as to the reasons for this effectiveness. To do this, sixteen professional golfers (members of the European 2nd or 3rd division) and 15 amateur golfers (Hcp = 0.48) made 10 short (3 ft) and 10 long (9 ft) putts, equipped with an eye-tracking device and a mechanical putter movement measurement device (Sam Putt Lab®). QE times (decomposed in Pre QE, Online QE and Dwell QE) and club face angle at impact were measured during a missed putt and the previous successful putt. Our results show that there was no difference in the time from the last fixation to the execution of the movement for either professionnal or amateurs. There was also no difference in the mechanical data of putter movement. We conclude that the QE times for professionals and amateurs could be explained by a French training culture that does not emphasize the importance of a calm time.

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RECONCEPTUALIZING SPORT FOR CRIME AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

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London, England has been facing a recent rise in crime and violence with knife related crime up 70% since 2015. While the factors that may push or pull a young person into crime or violence can be complex and systemically

rooted, empirical evidence points to social factors (e.g., sense of belonging, respect), financial factors (e.g., seeking economic mobility), and societal factors (e.g., systemic inequality, generational trauma). Young people themselves, however, tend to identify external motivations to justify their engagement in crime or violence. Sport participation in the United Kingdom (UK) has been shown to be a useful vehicle for developing young people's sport and life skills and is indirectly linked to lower rates of crime and violence. Given the positive outcomes of intrinsic motivation, it is logical to expect that sport programs that boost a young person's competence, autonomy, and relatedness may have a wider social impact on reducing crime and violence. As such, the present study explored how sport programs can prevent crime and violence in London, UK. Through collaborations with local sport programs, interviews (n=60), focus groups (n=4), and participatory observation (n=11) were completed with a variety of stakeholders including youth participants, young leaders, coaches, managers, and parents. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and inductively, yielding a model that identifies three core pillars of a sport for crime prevention program: trusted relationships through sport, safe sport spaces, and sport program participation. These pillars are discussed as they relate to, build upon, and reconceptualize Self-Determination Theory's three basic psychological needs in the context of crime and violence prevention through sport. From this model, researchers working with community partners can enhance local sport programming by addressing young people's psychological needs and improving intrinsic motivation to partake in sport, ultimately reducing the likelihood of their engagement in crime or violence.

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STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT IN CONTEMPORARY OLYMPIC SPORT

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The Olympic environment is often saturated with personnel across the multi-disciplinary team who share one aim - ensuring their athletes win, or are as successful as they possibly can be. One of these disciplines is often psychological support. Those responsible for managing this multi-disciplinary support have the important role of ensuring each facet contributes to this aim in a constructive and disciplined manner. The purpose of this study was to investigate organizational stakeholder perceptions regarding contemporoary psychological support within Olympic-level sport.Senior organizational stakeholders (N f13) responsible in the management of Olympic-level programs since the London 2012 Games were interviewed regarding their experiences of psychology service delivery. The interviews were transcribed and subjected to reflexive thematic analysis, with relevant patterns and themes emerging. From the analysis, four core themes of Strengths of the Psychological Service, Weaknessess of Psychological Service, Opportunites for Psychological Service, and Threats to Psychological Service were created. Main findings reveal positive perceptions of psychological support within the organizational level, personal characteristics positively regarded by organizational stakeholders, recommendations to develop psychological support from well-funded stakeholders with greater access to psychological support to lesser-funded environments, and a struggle to understand differing professional philosophies. These findings provide practical implications for leaders of service, including performance directors, and national governing bodies, such as providing education on the purpose and role of psychological support within Olympic sport, and how teams can ensure greater impact when working with psychological service. Future research could explore the perceptions of Olympic-level athletes towards psychological support to create a clearer understanding of how this support is received and utilisied amongst those it is there to support.

Keywords: Olympic, organizational stakeholders, reflexive thematic analysis, best practice, perceptions

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THE ATHLETIC IDENTITY MEASUREMENT SCALE BEYOND WESTERN CONTEXT: PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUATION OF ITS FACTOR STRUCTURE AND GENDER INVARIANCE IN SOUTH KOREA

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Amanda Visek, The George Washington University
Erin Reifsteck, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Sport psychology research on athletic identity, defined as the extent to which an individual identifies with the athlete role (Brewer et al., 1993), has evolved over three decades to advance understanding of athletes' psychosocial, emotional, and physical well-being (Lochbaum et al., 2022). To date, athletic identity has primarily been assessed with one widely used quantitative measure, the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). However, theoretical and psychometric concerns regarding current approaches to athletic identity measurement have been raised (Brewer et al., 2022), with a limited understanding of athletic identity in non-Western contexts like South Korea. Research on athletic identity in South Korea has disproportionately focused on men, without the inclusion of women, who comprise over 20% of all collegiate athletes (Korean Sport & Olympic Committee, 2024). As a preliminary step toward addressing these gaps, the purpose of this study was to investigate the psychometric properties of the AIMS using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of data collected from a gender-inclusive sample of 384 South Korean student-athletes. Results indicated excellent model fit for a unidimensional 4-item structure ($\chi^2[2] = 2.09$, $p = .35$, CFI =.999, RMSEA =.016 [90% CI:.00-.14], SRMR = .014), with gender invariance demonstrated through multi-group confirmatory factor analysis. These findings diverge from the established 7-item Western context multidimensional model (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001) and provide the first evidence that a 4-item, AIMS may offer a more sound measure of South Korean athletes' identification with the athlete role. Findings of the study will be discussed through contemporary identity theory (Burke & Stets, 2023) while providing an international perspective of dimensions of athletic identity, particularly athletic identity prominence and strength, across cultures. Finally, discussion around the implementation of the AIMS, both as a research measure and assessment tool in applied practice, respectively, will be forwarded.

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THE COLLECTIVE UNFOLDMENT OF EXCELLENCE: A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH IN UNDERSTANDING COACHING EXPERTISE

Veronica Planella, University of Victoria

The Collective Unfoldment of Excellence: A Participatory Approach in Understanding Coaching ExpertiseAlthough there is a growing body of research on high performance coaching and talent development environments, there is a need for a better understanding of research that extends and combines coaching expertise (Greenwood et al., 2012) and practices of engaged athletes. Following a participatory approach, this research centered on ten-times Olympic rowing coach with his coaching community and athlete in Canada during four Olympic quadrennials (1992 and 2004 to 2012). The participatory research approach used (Bradbury & Reason 2008) guided the inquiry to one of the most decorated high performance Olympic coaches and highlights a constructivist approach where meaning is constructed based on the reasoning of the individuals who experience it (Rockmore, 2016). The emphasis on listening, observing, and creating open dialogue with the participants seeks to establish a non-hierarchical learning community between researcher and participants creating a reciprocity of influence (Wang et al., 2016).This participatory research building on the work of Côté and Gilbert (2009) allowed researcher to examine the coach's knowledge, the impact of his practice (the athletes' outcomes), and the contextual coaching characteristics (the domain specificity). The reflexive thematic analysis used (Braun & Clarke, 2019; 2023) revealed a rich description of the dimensions describing a unique environment that afforded the coach and his athletes' collective unfoldment of excellence. The findings in adding to Côté and Gilbert's (2009) definition an in-depth picture of Olympic-level coaching expertise through the descriptions and views of practice by both the coach and members of his contextual coaching world, the Olympic-level athletes. The findings also provide perspective on the lasting impact of the coach's experience on life and work of athletes using a participatory research approach.

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BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE: A HIGH SCHOOL INTERN'S EXPERIENCE IN APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

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Jasmine Haas, Lakeside Aquatic Club

Sport psychology is often introduced at the collegiate or professional level, leaving younger athletes with limited access to mental training. Through a unique high school internship within a club swim team's sport psychology program, mental training principles were applied in both research and practice. Under the guidance of the team's mental training coach, structured sessions were designed and implemented to help younger and less experienced swimmers within the club develop cognitive-behavioral strategies and mindfulness techniques aimed at enhancing focus, confidence, and emotional regulation in competition. In addition to leading these sessions, interns conducted independent study designed to learn more about the effectiveness of mental skills training in a competitive youth swimming environment. This work explored how mental skills interventions influenced swimmers' ability to manage stress, maintain focus, and optimize performance during races. Ongoing feedback from a mentor facilitated refinement of these strategies, ensuring alignment with evidence-based sport psychology methods.This internship provided a rare opportunity for high school athletes interested in pursuing a career path in sport psychology to learn about the profession on a first-hand basis, offering valuable insights into both research and real-world sport psychology practice. The internship program also allowed the team to expand their resources and provide services to a larger number of athletes within the club. This poster aims to share a novel experience of a high school sport psychology intern and encourage the expansion of similar programs to provide the opportunity for early exposure to sport psychology and foster the next generation of professionals in the field.

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CURRENT COLLEGIATE ATHLETES' ATTITUDES TOWARD SPORT PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

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Alexander Bianco, Indiana State University
Scott Martin, University of North Texas

Previous research indicates that athletes may hesitate to seek sport psychology services due to concerns of stigma, lack of awareness, or cultural considerations (Martin et al., 2002; Watson, 2006; Wrisberg et al., 2010). However, the visibility and normalization of sport psychology has increased in recent years (Jones et al., 2022), which may have influenced college athletes' attitudes toward seeking sport psychology services. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine current collegiate athletes' attitudes toward sport psychology using the Sport Psychology Attitudes – Revised (SPA-R; Martin et al., 2002) questionnaire to determine if changes have occurred in recent years. Current NCAA Division I, II, and III collegiate athletes (N =30) responded to demographic questions and completed the SPA-R. The average response scores for the confidence subscale were above the midpoint of the scale (M = 5.43 SD = .97), demonstrating higher confidence toward services. Compared to prior research (Ildefonso et al., 2020; Martin, 2005), the mean response score for confidence is higher, suggesting an increase in collegiate athletes' confidence toward services over the past couple of years. Additionally, the average stigma tolerance response scores were below the midpoint of the SPA-R subscale (M = 2.75, SD = 1.39), suggesting lower stigma toward sport psychology services. This mean response score is similar to what has been previously reported (Ildefonso et al., 2020; Martin, 2005). Hence, both prior and current descriptive findings suggest collegiate athletes may perceive low levels of stigma in using sport psychology services. Yet, there still appears to be potential to improve interest and use of sport psychology services among collegiate athletes. Sport psychology practitioners and collegiate athletic departments may want to continue incorporating and promoting mental skills throughout the athletic department, which may help to further decrease stigma and enhance confidence toward sport psychology services.

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DIGITAL DIALOGUES ON PHD MENTORSHIP: A QUALITATIVE STUDY FROM REDDIT

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Jason Kostrna, Florida International University

Effective PhD mentorship is critical for fostering both research productivity and teaching competency while maintaining students' emotional well-being and advisor-advisee relationships. While institutional guidelines provide formal mentorship structures, informal discussions on online platforms such as Reddit offer valuable insight into real-world experiences and best practices. This study employs a qualitative analysis of discussions across multiple academic subreddits, including r/PhD, r/GradSchool, r/AskAcademia, r/Professors, r/AcademicPsychology, and r/AcademicResearch, to identify key themes in PhD mentorship that contribute to productive and well-balanced doctoral students.Using a naturalistic inquiry approach, we scraped and analyzed Reddit discussions related to PhD mentorship, utilizing keywords such as "mentor," "mentorship," "advisor," "guidance," "research supervision," and "work-life balance." Data were categorized into themes encompassing research productivity, teaching effectiveness, emotional well-being, and advisor-advisee dynamics. Our findings indicate that successful mentorship hinges on clear communication, structured autonomy, emotional support, and intentional career guidance. Mentors who provide constructive feedback, facilitate professional networking, and set realistic expectations are perceived as fostering higher student productivity and satisfaction. Conversely, toxic mentorship styles characterized by micromanagement, lack of support, or unrealistic demands often result in student burnout and attrition.This study contributes to the growing discourse on mentorship in academia and sport psychology by synthesizing firsthand accounts of PhD students and faculty members. Our findings underscore the importance of a balanced approach to mentorship, integrating academic rigor with psychological support to cultivate resilient and high-achieving doctoral candidates. The results offer practical implications for both advisors and institutions seeking to enhance mentorship practices, ensuring that PhD students thrive not only as researchers and educators but also as individuals navigating the complexities of academic life.

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I'VE READ THE BOOKS AND DONE THE ASSIGNMENTS, NOW WHAT? ENHANCING THE MENTEE EXPERIENCE IN TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTICE

Gily Meir, University of Western States
Matthew Condie, University of Western States

The mentee-mentor relationship in sport and performance psychology requires safety, trust, collaboration, effective communication to facilitate growth and competence development in the mentee (Eubank et al., 2014; Hutter et al., 2015; Watson, et al., 2017). This systematic process for translating synthesized sport psychology theory and content to applied practice for mentees requires a mentor's unique approach and skill set that differs from traditional teaching. Further, this training is executed in different setting, both with academic program and also by private practice mentors each operating under different constraints. To develop mentee proficiency, consistency, and independence in providing mental performance services as early career professionals and Certified Mental Performance Consultants (CMPC), mentors serve as role models who play a critical role in encouraging, instructing, and reinforcing the professional, ethical conduct and integrity of our field. This is important as we continue to enhance the reputation and credibility of sport psychology (Aoyagi et al., 2012). In this presentation we will suggests a systematic approach to training Mental Performance Consultants that allows for standardization of training across different mentors in academia and private practice. We will demonstrate flexible ways to include identified best practices for mentorship (Fogaca et al., 2023), while allowing space for unique mentorship philosophies. This topic aims to reinforce the execution of best-practice mentorship/supervision approaches to student development, conceptualize and operationalize competence in the context of sport and performance consulting, and offer unique insights into the importance of a standardized approach in enhancing the scientific-practitioner approach.

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PEER-TO-PEER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT VARSITY ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Cassandra Ellis, Western University
Ryan Power, Memorial University
Catherine Ireland, Western University

Background: Varsity athletes face unique mental health risks due to competing sport and academic responsibilities. Furthermore, the competitive and high-stress environment of varsity sports often discourages athletes from seeking mental health support due to stigma and beliefs of weakness (Brown et. Al., 2017). Peer-to-peer student mentorship programs can encourage help-seeking behaviour, improve emotional support and mental health outcomes (Watson, 2019). However, similar interventions have not been applied to the multi-faceted culture of varsity sport. Methods: This program proposed that peer support could effectively address mental health concerns among athletes by establishing trust among teammates, encourage open dialogue, and reduce historical stigma of accessing resources. Student-athletes applied to serve as Wellness Leads for their team; selection criteria included previous mental health or first aid training, applicable or related academic program, or future career interest for which the program could provide valuable experiential learning. Wellness Leads were provided comprehensive mental health training, advised and delivered by clinicians and wellness professionals. Following training, Wellness Leads supported teammates via team meetings, recurring individual and small group discussions, and online group chats. Results: 41 student-athletes were equipped with mental health support skills to recognize early signs of distress and guide peers towards appropriate resources. Wellness Leads observed improved understanding and reduced stigma of accessing clinical resources among their teammates, as well as higher self-awareness and vulnerability scores. More frequent and positive discussion among teammates on mental health and wellbeing were also observed.

Implications: Peer-to-peer <span class="NormalTextRun SCXW8747

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STUDENT MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION WHO ARE TRAINING IN QUÉBEC: A LOOK AT THEIR PATHWAY

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Christiane Trottier, Université Laval
Pierre Trudel, Université d'Ottawa

Students are flocking to training programs that qualify them to work in applied sport psychology (Owton et al., 2014). To date, researchers in this area have addressed sport psychology service delivery (McEwan et al., 2019; Tod et al., 2017) while neglecting professional training and development in applied sport psychology (Quartiroli et al., 2023). This study aims to draw a comprehensive portrait of student members of the Canadian Sport Psychology Association (CSPA) attending university in the province of Québec, Canada. Using a qualitative descriptive study design, we examine their training programs, work experiences, motivations, challenges, and achievements. Twelve students (9 women, 3 men) aged 21 to 35 years participated. Students underwent 90-minute semi-structured individual interviews. Deductive and inductive content analyses were run according to Miles et al. (2020) and drawing on Nelson et al.'s (2006) framework. Results highlight that: (a) students follow highly varied training pathways, (b) they must supplement their training program with courses and activities outside the university curriculum, because no university program in Québec corresponds completely to CSPA certification requirements, and (c) accessing supervision and certain courses required by CSPA was difficult and costly. Avenues for reflection by decision makers in Québec universities and at the CSPA are proposed. Notably, CSPA certification requirements should be aligned with the university programs of student members to facilitate the process and promote professional development.

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DECODING THE SILENT GAME: DEVELOPING A NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR CODING SYSTEM IN TABLE TENNIS PLAYERS

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Gilyoung Jang, Seoul National University
Sungho Kwon, Seoul National University

Nonverbal behaviors are broadly defined as intentional or unintentional physical expressions that occur without verbal communication (Birdwhistell, 1970; Knapp, 2014). In competitive sports, these behaviors play a crucial role in managing emotions, conveying confidence, and facilitating communication under pressure (Mellalieu et al., 2009). Athletes often rely on nonverbal cues to regulate emotions, disguise intentions, or assert dominance during competition (Moesch et al., 2015). For example, they use deceptive gestures to mislead opponents (Furley & Schweizer, 2020), or maintain composure to demonstrate mental toughness (Prapavessis et al., 2004). Building on their significance, nonverbal behaviors require systematic observation and structured coding for objective analysis. While previous studies have developed coding systems for team sports (Furley & Roth, 2021), these approaches are often sport-specific and may not generalize across different competitive settings. Moesch et al. (2015) emphasized the need for coding frameworks tailored to each sport's unique dynamics and rules. Accordingly, this study aimed to observe and analyze table tennis players' nonverbal behaviors during matches to develop a reliable coding system. A 10-step process involving video analysis, expert reviews, and inter-coder reliability assessments (Percent of Agreement and Intraclass Correlation Coefficient) identified 17 distinct behaviors, categorized into 4 themes: (1) Encouraging Behaviors to boost morale and concentration; (2) Equipment Check Behaviors as attributive actions to externalize responsibility for errors; (3) Pace Control Behaviors to regulate tempo and disrupt opponents' rhythm; and (4) Negative Emotion-Driven Behaviors reflecting emotional struggles. These findings underscore the strategic and psychological significance of nonverbal behaviors in competitive sports. The developed coding system provides an objective framework for understanding athletes' actions, offering valuable insights for performance enhancement and communication strategies.

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EXERCISE BUDDY, EXERCISE ENGAGEMENT, AND MENTAL HEALTH

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Mark Beattie, Fort Lewis College

Improved mental health has been associated with consistent physical activity. The desire for social interaction motivates many to be involved in sport and physical activity. However, little research has explored the potential effects (e.g., motivational and behavioral responses) of having an exercise buddy (i.e., a friend or colleague with whom you regularly exercise). Thus, the purpose of this study was twofold. First, to examine the effect of having exercise buddies on task and ego orientations, mental health, exercise frequency, and duration. Second, to assess the relationship between exercise buddies' supporting and not-noticing behaviors for effort/improvement, mental health, exercise frequency, duration, and intention to continue the exercise.A sample of college students (n = 116) participated in an online survey. Independent sample t-test results revealed that participants with an exercise buddy (n = 61) demonstrated lower mental health problems, higher exercise engagement in frequency and duration than those who exercised alone (p-values were all Overall results suggested that exercising with a buddy may increase college students' exercise engagement while reducing mental health problems. Moreover, having an exercise buddy who non-judgmentally supports effort/improvement is more beneficial on reducing mental health problems and increasing exercise engagement, as opposed to those who do not care and/or recognize effort/improvement. Future researchers should examine these relationships with larger samples and observe them longitudinally.

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IMPACT OF GOAL TYPE ON ANXIETY, ATTENTION, AND PERFORMANCE: A COMPARISON OF INTRINSIC VERSUS PERFORMANCE GOALS

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Kaitlin Polly, Western Kentucky University
Savannah Savage, Western Kentucky University
Averi Cline, Western Kentucky University
Randi Drinnon, Western Kentucky University
Matthew Hunter, Western Kentucky University
Shaye Uchytil, WKU
Christine Cole, WKU
Brice Lamont, WKU

Goal setting theories note how different types of goals impact anxiety, attention, and performance. The purpose of this study was to examine how two types of goals impact levels of pre-performance anxiety, selective attention, and performance across different tasks. Additionally, goal abandonment and switching were examined qualitatively. Seventy-four undergraduates completed a plank task and a basketball shooting task under intrinsic and self-improvement performance goal conditions. Anxiety was assessed prior to each performance trial. Attentional focus was assessed immediately after each performance trial. Performance was assessed via duration a plank was held and number of basketball shots made. Pre-performance cognitive anxiety levels were significantly higher in the performance compared to the intrinsic goal condition for the basketball task. There were no significant differences for the plank task. Heart rate variability was examined as a measure of somatic anxiety, but no significant differences were found. The only attentional focus difference for the plank task was positive bodily sensations; this subtype was significantly higher in the intrinsic vs performance trials. The only difference in direction of attentional focus for the basketball task was more negative task relevant thoughts during the performance trial. Participants held the plank significantly longer in the performance goal trial vs intrinsic. Participants made significantly more shots in the performance trial vs intrinsic for the basketball task. Seventeen participants abandoned the intrinsic goal during the plank task and 13 during the basketball task. Less abandonment occurred during the performance improvement goal trials. Potential explanations for "why" will be shared on the poster. Overall, goal type had a significant impact on anxiety, selective attention, and performance for basketball shooting. Significant differences for goal types with the plank task were one selective attention subtype and performance. Proposed explanations for the results, including the lack of significant findings, and applications will be discussed.

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MEASURING RESILIENCE AND COPING ABILITY IN TACTICAL POPULATIONS

John Gaddy, Magellan Federal

Military personnel require the ability to persevere, adapt, and grow to perform optimally in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environments (Sirkia, et al., 2024). Sport Psychology Professionals commonly train and coach tactical populations in mental skills techniques to build resilience, but in many cases, the practitioner does not measure changes in response to the coaching or other interventions. Measuring changes in resilience is challenging because of the requirement to be exposed to adversity to effectively assess the ability to persevere. In leu of measuring changes using experimental methodologies comparing control and experimental groups following an adversity, practitioners can use psychometrics to assess the self-reported outcomes in tactical athletes. The purpose of this lecture is to discuss a method for measuring changes in self-reported resilience in tactical athletes and arm practitioners with a viable tool for measuring resilience. The Brief Resilient Coping Scale (BRCS) is a 4-item measure designed to capture tendencies to cope with stress in a highly adaptive manner (Sinclair & Wallston, 2004). In December 2023, the BRCS was administered to military affiliated personnel (n=247) before and after a ten-day training designed to increase resilience. Results indicated a statistically significant positive change in self-reported resilience coping in the BRCS scores from the start of the training (15.99 SD=0.93) and after the 10 days of training (16.93 SD=0.91); $t(246) = 4.95$, $p = 0.001$. The observation of statistically significant changes in self-reported resilience and coping indicates this measure is a valuable tool for use by Sport Psychology Practitioners in the measurement of resilience in tactical athletes. Disclaimer: The opinions are of the author and are not the official views of the Department of Defense, or any Federal Agency.

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MODERATION OF SOCIAL-RELATIONAL FACTORS WITHIN THE EASI MODEL: INTEGRATION OF GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS

Ashlyn Hulsey, Florida State University
Svenja Wolf, Florida State University

In sports, emotions are commonplace amongst teams as athletes react to events (i.e., scoring, performances) and others (i.e., teammates, opponents) during competitions and practices. These emotions are used as social tools to communicate information, and their function varies based on social context, such as the people one is interacting with. The Emotions as Social Information (EASI) model is one of the leading models in interpersonal emotions research and illustrates the dynamic process of emotions and their impact on others by stating that the sender's emotional expression affects the receiver's emotions and behavior via two possible paths: affective reactions and/or inferential processes (van Kleef, 2009). Additionally, two classes of moderators have been shown to impact the routes: the receiver's information processing and social-relational factors (van Kleef, 2009). However, there is little information regarding how the social-relational factors do influence either path and even less information about them within sports. This present study examined the moderators of social-relational factors by utilizing the eleven group dynamics factors, including leadership, cohesion, and social hierarchy, of the Conceptual Model Framework for the Study of Sports Teams (Eys, et al., 2020). We conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 participants who have been a part of at least two organized sports teams in their lifetime, resulting in 20 team experiences. We utilized reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2019) to highlight four themes: (1) follow the leader('s emotional expressions), (2) competition on the team, competition in emotions, (3) proximity breeds emotional influence, (4) closeness and emotional influence grow over time. Within each theme, the strength of group dynamics

factors impacted emotional influence in similar directions. For example, the closer a team, the more emotional influence members' expressions have on others. Similarly, the less there was collective efficacy within the team, the less others' emotions were influential.

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PERCEPTION OF GOAL APPROACH AS A PREDICTOR OF FLOW AND CLUTCH STATES

Kristin Mauldin, California Baptist University

The construct of flow is currently in a scientific growth spurt, resulting in newly proposed frameworks and models of this specialized state and more development of the similar "clutch" construct (Norsworthy, et al., 2021; Swann, et al., 2022). While both states are correlated with higher performance and increased intrinsic motivation, intensity and effort differ. The flow state is defined by a loss of self-consciousness, feeling of 'oneness' with the task, and enjoyment. Here the action feels effortless and automatic. In contrast, clutch involves increased effort and successful performance when under pressure. Perception of goal progression, measured in terms of direction (towards or against) and velocity (how fast am I approaching my goal), is known to underlie both goal motivation and affect in goal-oriented behavior (Carver & Scheier, 2004). It is likely that this perception plays a role in the likelihood of flow and clutch onset, with higher perception of goal approach found in flow. Participants (N = 139) recruited from the Cloud Research data collection platform were asked to reflect on a previous flow experience and a previous clutch experience to answer questions from the Flow-Clutch Scale and about their perception of goal approach. Here perception of goal approach was measured in terms of direction (towards or away from the goal), velocity, confidence, and affect. Comparison of perception of goal approach between the flow and clutch state conditions revealed higher confidence (d=.565) and affect in the flow state condition (d=.703) but no difference in direction or velocity (d=-.144, d=-.069). A significant correlation was found between state outcome (flow or clutch) and confidence (r=.288, $p < .001$), but not between state outcome and velocity, direction, or emotion. A logistic regression was conducted using confidence as the predictor and state outcome as the predicted and found to be significant (R-Square = .083).

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TEAM FLOW IN COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Zackary Bryant, Menlo College
Sean Pradhan, Menlo College

Sport researchers interested in optimal experience and enhanced performance have often examined flow in athletics. More recently, van den Hout et al. (2018) put forward a comprehensive theory of Team Flow, which integrated both individual and group flow concepts. One year later, van den Hout et al. (2019) developed the Team Flow Monitor (TFM) to quantitatively assess team flow in groups. The present study utilized the TFM to study collegiate athletes from all standings (NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA) and divisions (I, II, and III). Data from 510 collegiate athletes (301 women, 209 men; MAge = 19.73, SD = 1.43) across various sports were collected. Participants responded to the TFM via an online survey. We compared aggregate responses to the TFM and each of its 12 subscales across sport type (complex invasion, non-invasion) and collegiate standing and division. Due to violations in parametric test assumptions, a series of Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests with Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner pairwise comparisons were conducted. Although there were no meaningful differences across sports, the omnibus Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed variations in overall team flow and each of its subscales across collegiate divisions (all p-values 2 values > .08). Specifically, athletes from NCAA Division III programs reported higher overall team flow than those from NCAA Division I, and NAIA programs (all p-values p-values

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THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN YOUTH ATHLETES' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR TEAM CLIMATE TO THEIR EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND SPORT RELATIONSHIPS

Jacob Chamberlin, University of Kansas
Mary Fry, University of Kansas
Haiying Long, University of Kansas

A caring framework and achievement goal perspective theory provide the foundation for creating a caring and task-involving climate (CTIC), which has been linked to many positive developmental outcomes for youth athletes. For example, youth sport campers' perceptions of a caring climate have been positively linked to their emotional regulation, prosocial behaviors, empathic self-efficacy, and well-being (Fry et al., 2011; Gano-Overway et al., 2009). We aim to extend this research in youth sport by examining these relationships with middle and high school athletes. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between athletes' perceptions of their sport team climate to their positive and negative affective regulation and their relationships with coaches and teammates. Athletes (N = 177, female = 73, male = 100; Mage = 14.38; SD = 1.52) who participated in fall sports (e.g., football) completed a questionnaire with the items of interest. Structural equation model analyses indicated that athletes' perceptions of a caring climate were significantly and positively related to each outcome variables. The task-involving climate also had a significant, positive relationship with positive affective regulation. A significant, positive indirect effect of caring climate on relationships with teammates through positive affective regulation was also found. The direct and indirect effects in the model explain 69% of variance in relationships with coaches and 45% of variance in relationship with teammates. This study provides further support for the important role creating a CTIC has on adolescent athletes' overall sport experience, particularly with regard to key positive youth development factors.

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THE EFFECT OF IMAGERY ON FEAR OF RETURN TO PLAY IN INJURED ATHLETES: A PILOT INTERVENTION STUDY

Paige Pokryfke, University of Tennessee
Nataniel Boiangin, Barry University
Kimberly Shaffer, Barry University
Rebecca Zakrajsek, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Motivational imagery is used to focus on goals, performance, arousal levels, and overcome obstacles to improve confidence (Hammond et al., 2012). Further, Handegard

et al. (2006) demonstrated that using imagery scripts with athletes in rehab will help decrease fear when returning to play. While imagery has shown to decrease reinjury anxieties and increase confidence in return to play, there is limited research specifically using motivational imagery to reduce overall fear of return to play (Cupal et al., 2001; Evans et al., 2000). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to extend research by Handegard et al. (2006) through examining how the creation of personalized imagery scripts could decrease the fear of return to play during rehabilitation. Seven NCAA Division II athletes who experienced injury participated in the study. Four athletes participated immediately following injury/surgery, and three athletes participated during the return to play phase. Given that motivational imagery is more impactful when it includes athletes' personal experiences (Glendhill & Forsdyke, 2013), participants were interviewed about their injury and rehabilitation to tailor the imagery script (e.g. "What were your thoughts/feelings at the moment you got injured?", "Describe your rehab."). Participants received a personalized recorded motivational imagery script to listen to three times a week for four weeks during rehabilitation. To understand participants' improvement pre- and post-intervention, participants completed the Fear of Return to Sport Scale (FRESS, Kalatakis-dos-Santos et al., 2022) and Motivational Imagery Ability Measure in Sport (MIAMS, Greg & Hall, 2006). Four participants experienced a decrease in fear of return to play post-intervention, while three experienced no change in fear of return to play. All participants experienced an increase in Motivational General-Mastery. Four participants experienced an increase in Motivational General-Arousal. The process of creating personalized imagery scripts and reflections on the use of imagery in injury rehabilitation will be highlighted.

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THE EFFECTS OF SHARED LEADERSHIP ON SPORT AND TEAM COMMITMENT IN YOUTH TEAM SPORTS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Sungho Kwon, Seoul National University
Gilyoung Jang, Seoul National University
Seungho Chang, San José State University

Commitment has been recognized as a key factor in predicting performance enhancement and continued participation in sports contexts. While traditional sports leadership research has focused on vertical leadership from coaches and team captains, this approach has been criticized for inadequately reflecting the dynamic interactions among team members. Particularly during adolescence, a critical period for identity formation and social relationship development, the effectiveness of shared leadership in fostering commitment remains understudied. Drawing from social identity theory and the Sport Commitment Model, this study examined how shared leadership influences both sport and team commitment through psychological safety in youth team sports. The survey was conducted on Korean youth athletes (N f300, Male=214, Female=86) registered with the Korean Sport & Olympic Committee, participating in soccer (60.0%), rugby (21.0%), field hockey (10.7%), and basketball (8.3%). The Shared Leadership Questionnaire, Team Psychological Safety Questionnaire, Sport Commitment Questionnaire-2, and Team Commitment Scale were used. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling with bootstrapping procedures. Results revealed that shared leadership significantly predicted both sport commitment (β = .265, p

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THE UNSEEN OBSTACLE: AN EXPLORATION OF MENTAL BLOCKS AND SIMILAR PHENOMENA IN COLLEGIATE CHEERLEADING

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Kevin Becker, University of Tennessee

A mental block is a phenomenon in which an athlete's mind prevents them from performing a skill that was previously well-learned and automatic (Marsollier & Hauw, 2024). Currently, research on mental blocks is limited, especially regarding prevalence in athletic populations. Maaranen and colleagues (2017) developed a survey that assessed the prevalence of mental blocks and other conditions such as choking, slumping, and fear of injury in gymnasts. Their results suggest that mental blocks are common in gymnasts, but generalizability to other sports remains unstudied. Collegiate cheerleaders perform similar skills as gymnasts including skills often impacted by mental blocks (e.g., backward rotations). Therefore, the purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the experience of mental blocks and related conditions in a sample of collegiate cheerleaders. Eighteen participants completed an online survey comprised of questions adapted from Maaranen and colleagues (2017). Participants answered "yes" or "no" to a series of questions regarding details of experiences that are proposed to be representative of mental blocks and other related conditions. Results showed that 100% of participants answered "yes" to having current or past experience with a mental block. However, zero participants met all criteria Maaranen and colleagues (2017) established for a true mental block. In our sample, 11% showed indications of slumping, 22% indications of choking, and 78% indications of fear of injury (with some overlap in classification). Results from this study suggest what athletes perceive as a "mental block" may represent a wider array of related experiences. This has direct application to mental performance consultants. Mental blocks may impact numerous athletes in acrobatic sports; however, a consultant may find difficulty finding detailed guidance on appropriate helping measures. This study provides initial guidance for understanding sport-specific mental barriers, supporting the development of targeted interventions and enhancing supportive dialogue in the athlete-consultant relationship.

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THEY'RE OUT, BUT WE'RE STILL IN: EXAMINING THE EMOTIONS AND GROUP DYNAMICS IMPACTS OF ATHLETE INJURY ON TEAMMATES

Tyler Greene, Florida State University
Svenja Wolf, Florida State University
Mark Eys, Wilfrid Laurier University

Injuries are inevitable in sport. Therefore, much research has focused on the impact of injury on injured athletes (Wiese-Bjornstal et al., 1998). However, there is also potential effects on teammates who must continue competing in the injured athlete's absence (Van Woezik et al., 2020). Through a previously conducted media analysis, we found that following the injury of a teammate, professional athletes

reported (a) emotional impacts that can be engaging (e.g., compassion) or disengaging (e.g., fear) and (b) impacts to team dynamics that occur within (e.g., opportunities for stepping up) and outside (e.g., loss of leadership) the playing space. Following this media analysis, we wanted to gather more detailed information on this topic through the use of focus groups with NCAA athletes. Thus, in the present study we conducted focus groups with American men's football, men and women's basketball, and women's ice hockey athletes (one group per sport, each consisting of 4-5 athletes). Operating from an interpretivist epistemological orientation, we asked athletes about their experiences of witnessing the injury of a teammate, and specifically their emotional responses and perceived changes in team dynamics. After conducting a thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2019), we understood athletes to have experienced (a) emotional responses that were socially engaging (e.g., hope), socially disengaging (e.g., shock), task engaging (e.g., anger), and task disengaging (e.g., confusion) as well as (b) changes in team dynamics that occurred within (e.g., changes to team chemistry) and outside (e.g., supporting the injured athlete) the playing space. Given these findings, consultants and coaches should (a) offer support to the entire team following the injury of an athlete, (b) practice role adjustment regularly to prepare for the inevitable occurrence of injury, and (c) engage in resilience training to prepare athletes for handling unexpected situations.

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UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE SELF-REGARD: A CRITICAL ENABLER FOR THRIVING AND RESILIENCE

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Rebecca Zakrajsek, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
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Recently, sport psychology scholars proposed that unconditional positive self-regard (UPSR), may be a critical personal enabler for athlete thriving (McHenry & Zakrajsek, 2023). UPSR is characterized by valuing, accepting, respecting, believing, and challenging oneself through success and failure (Miller, 2022). Interviews with former collegiate swimmers revealed that perceptions of UPSR led to outcomes reflecting thriving (e.g., enhanced enjoyment and performance; Miller, 2022). Athlete UPSR has also been examined quantitatively. Specifically, the two-factor UPSR scale that assesses level of self-regard and unconditionality of self-regard (Patterson & Joseph, 2006), has been validated in sport and significantly explains student-athlete resilience (McHenry & Zakrajsek, 2020). While these findings are encouraging, only one study has validated the UPSR scale in sport and its' quantitative relationship with thriving remains unexplored.Thus, the first purpose of this study was to re-validate the UPSR scale in sport. The second purpose was to examine the relationships between UPSR and thriving, and UPSR and resilience. College student-athletes (n = 283) completed the 12-item UPSR scale, 13-item Thriving scales (Brown et al., 2022), and 10-item Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007). After modifications, confirmatory factor analyses revealed a satisfactory model fit for the UPSR scale (2 =108.718, df = 36, p< .001, CFI = .95, TLI = .943, RMSEA = .106, and SRMR = .048). Hierarchical linear regressions revealed that level of self-regard explained 15.3% of the variance in thriving [F(1, 281) = 52.23, p< .001, R2 = .153], with unconditionality of self-regard increasing the variance by 5.7%. Level of self-regard also explained 27.3% in student-athlete resilience [F(1, 280) = 106.6, p< .001, R2 = .273], with unconditionality of self-regard increasing the variance by 8.3%. Practically, these findings provide encouraging evidence to support the development of college student-athletes' UPSR, so that they may experience thriving and resilience.

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BEHAVIORS OF FAIR AND UNFAIR UNIVERSITY COACHES

Katherine Hirsch, New Mexico State University
Todd Loughead, University of Windsor
Gordon Bloom, McGill University
Mackenna Schiavo, University of Windsor

One factor that distinguishes effective coaches from ineffective coaches is how fair they are perceived by team members (Gearity & Murray, 2011). At present, there is an absence of a conceptual definition of coach fairness which has resulted in coaching scholars relying on fairness terminology and theory derived from organizational settings (e.g., De Backer et al., 2011, 2015, 2021). A well-defined conceptualization of coach fairness is critical to ensure researchers are accurately studying the intended construct (Gerring, 2012). This will aid in the advancement of theory and measurement (Podsakoff et al., 2016) and, ultimately, inform practitioners of evidence-based information that can be incorporated into coach education programming. The present study aimed to develop a conceptual understanding of coach fairness by examining intercollegiate athletes' and coaches' personal meanings of coach fairness and how it manifests itself. The following research questions were explored: (1) How do athletes and coaches define and conceptualize coach fairness? and (2) What behaviors elicit perceptions of fair and unfair treatment from the perspectives of athletes and coaches? Participants included intercollegiate varsity athletes (n = 10) and coaches (n = 10). Participants completed a one-on-one semi-structured interview. All transcripts were transcribed verbatim. A reflexive thematic analysis was conducted following Braun et al.'s (2016) six steps alongside the use of a reflexive journal and critical friend. Results demonstrated that fairness is an important characteristic for university coaches to embody and demonstrate. Behaviors reflective of coach fairness were driven by participants' expectations of the coach's role (e.g., outline and uphold clear performance expectations, provide opportunity for growth) and the purpose of university sport (e.g., developmental experience, high performance sport). The behaviors identified in the present study can inform coach education programs and consulting practices to help coaches create positive, healthy environments for their teams.

P-200

BEHIND THE HARDWARE: THE NUANCES OF WORKING WITH HIGH-LEVEL PARASPORT ATHLETES

Lindsay Cohen, University of Kentucky

As the field of sport psychology grows, it is inevitable that services and training programs must evolve to properly serve different types of athletes seeking care. This could mean discovering new measures, testing different types of interventions, or developing programs that can better

accommodate specific populations that are looking for sport psychology services. One such population is para-athletes, and although they have expressed interest in learning more about the field of sport psychology and how to implement mental skills efficiently, athletes have reported a lack of access to sport psychology services and consultants (SPC's) (Dieffenbach et al., 2009). One reason for this discrepancy is that certain physical disabilities cause foundational and typically-reliable interventions within sport psychology to be ineffective or nearly impossible to perform, making traditional psychological skills training programs exclusionary towards para-athletes. As such, specific training as well as intervention modifications are needed, but these are rarely taught in traditional sport psychology training programs. Consequently, the purpose of this presentation is to the share the experience of working with a collegiate adapted athletics wheelchair basketball team as well as multiple 2024 Paris Paralympians while discussing the pitfalls and obstacles that come with traditional and able-bodied centric sport psychology practices. Key topics include imagery work with amputees, self-regulation with paralyzed athletes, and the unique struggles the para-athletes face with ideas of self-concept. In addition, resources for SPC's who are interested in working with para-athletes will be shared. The hope of this presentation is to help SPC's better understand the needs of para-athletes and to further illustrate the need for more training and interventions focused on non-traditional athlete populations, making sports more inclusive for all.

P-201

COACHING WHILE BLACK: RACE, POWER, AND UNEVEN PLAYING FIELDS IN HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPORT COACHING.

Peter Olusoga, Sheffield Hallam University

High performance coaching is often considered an unsustainable profession due to the stress and subsequent mental health challenges that are frequently part of the role (Kenttä et al., 2024). The impacts of stress on the personal and professional lives of coaches, including sleep disturbance, mood changes, emotional responses, alcohol-related issues, burnout, and withdrawal from coaching, have all been well documented (e.g., Kegelaers et al., 2021; Kenttä et al., 2024). One criticism of this research is the colourblind lens (Neville et al., 2016) through which coaches' stress experiences have been explored, thus ignoring the lived-experiences and every-day realities of coaches of colour operating within a predominantly white landscape (Rankin-Wright et al., 2019) and diminishing the voices of coaches from marginalised racial groups. Given that there is ample evidence to suggest that racism, or perceived racism, is a pervasive stressor and a source of psychological strain (Drewdahl et al., 2001), it is surprising that little attention has been paid to this element of the coaching experience in the sport psychology literature. The purpose of the present study was, therefore, to explore the experiences of high-performance coaches of colour navigating their careers in sport. Ten highly experienced coaches participated in on-line, semi-structured, in-depth interviews lasting between 40 and 80 minutes. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, and anonymised to protect participant confidentiality. Using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), seven major themes were constructed, which captured participant responses (e.g., Racist tropes and stereotypes, Tough times for coaches of colour, and (Un)even playing field). Taken together, findings indicate that ingrained stereotypes, overt racism, and glass ceilings remain ever-present factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of people of colour in high-performance coaching roles. These factors result in inequality of opportunity for people of colour, which has significant personal and professional impact.

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COPING WITH MINORITY STRESS: EXPERIENCES OF NCAA SEXUAL MINORITY FEMALE ATHLETES

Charlotte Mohn, Mohntal Performance / German Sport University Cologne
Lindsey Blom, Ball State University

Research indicates that sexual minority student-athletes face additional stressors due to their minority identity (e.g., Barbour, 2014; Xiang et al., 2023). These experiences are influenced by societal structures and cultural norms in sport environments, particularly heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity (e.g., Mann & Krane, 2019; Waldron, 2016). However, little is known about how these student-athletes are coping with their experiences. Existing research on coping strategies and supportive environments has primarily focused on other populations, such as youth athletes or LGB college students, rather than sexual minority student-athletes in the United States. Thus, given concerning trends in the mental health of sexual minority individuals in sport, there is an increasing need to examine current stressors they face due to marginalization and discrimination, as well as coping strategies they use to navigate these challenges (Burish et al., 2023). This qualitative research study aimed to explore the lived experiences of sexual minority student-athletes. Five NCAA female student-athletes who self-identified as sexual minorities participated in interviews informed by results of the Sexual Minority Stress Scale (SMSS; Iniewicz et al., 2017) and the State Optimism Measure (SOM; Millstein et al., 2019). An inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Participants reported a diversity of experiences pertaining to minority stress and coping strategies, often encountering both support and discrimination within the same environments. Emerging themes are highlighted, and findings discussed in relation to existing literature. Additionally, implications are provided to offer guidance for fostering a more inclusive environment for sexual minority student-athletes in collegiate athletics.

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PSYCHOGENIC NON-EPILEPTIC SEIZURES (PNES) IN ATHLETES: REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPAREDNESS IN ATHLETIC CONTEXTS

Taylor Thomas, Florida Gulf Coast University
Christopher Stanley, University of Western States

Psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES) are a complex and often misunderstood condition, posing significant challenges for affected individuals and others in athletic contexts (e.g., coaches, healthcare providers, administrators). Despite frequent misdiagnosis as epilepsy, PNES is distinct in its psychological etiology, necessitating specialized approaches to diagnosis, treatment, and care. While significant progress has been made in understanding epilepsy and its management, research on PNES remains limited, including with athletes. This poster reflects a project

which addresses this gap by exploring PNES in collegiate athletes, who face unique pressures and often lack access to adequate mental health resources. The researcher discusses the differential diagnoses of epilepsy and PNES, with a particular focus on the intersection of PNES and the athletic population. Additionally, the researcher examines the implications of stigma, discrimination, and a lack of inclusivity often associated with neurodiversity, including PNES, in athletic environments. Drawing on a review of existing literature, (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, institutional reports, and case studies) this project identifies critical gaps in current knowledge and response strategies for PNES in athletics. Findings and literature are synthesized to propose actionable strategies for key stakeholders (e.g., coaches, administrators) with an aim to support athletes with PNES more effectively, fostering not only physical recovery but also psychological resilience and overall well-being. Suggestions and applications for seizure management in athletic settings are offered including seizure action plan, usage of medical ID bracelets, and other forms of departmental preparedness. Future directions for research and application for PNES athletes are also discussed.

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WEIGHT OF IDENTITY: INFLUENCES ON WEIGHT BIAS IN KINESIOLOGY STUDENTS

Amanda Tuttle, California State University, Long Beach
Treva Gilheany, California State University, Long Beach
Nate Hunter, California State University, Long Beach
Kellie Walters, California State University, Long Beach
Anastasia Heynen, California State University Long Beach

Weight bias is a universal issue influencing attitudes toward individuals in larger bodies. Kinesiology students whose coursework often emphasizes body composition and weight management could develop or reinforce weight-related biases within their education (Readdy & Wallhead, 2016). This study aimed to examine the gender, degree emphasis, and racial differences in weight biases among undergraduate Kinesiology students. Participants included undergraduate students (N f415) from a southwestern university who are Kinesiology majors with one of four degree emphases: Physical Education-Teacher Education (N f21), Exercise Science (N f282), Fitness (N f28), and Sport Psychology and Leadership (N f28). Weight bias was examined using the Fat Attitudes Assessment Toolkit (FAAT). The FAAT measures different dimensions of weight-related attitudes, which include Fat Acceptance (attitude toward people in larger bodies) and Attribution Complexity (acceptance of multidimensional causes of behavior that impact people in larger bodies) (Fast et al., 2008). A one-way ANOVA examined gender, race, and degree emphases for differences in Fat Acceptance and Attribution Complexity scores of the FAAT. Female participants reported a significantly higher Fat Acceptance score (M=26.28, SD=4.23) compared to male participants (M=21.53, SD=4.58, p ± 51.92) compared to male participants (M=10.31 ± 2.11; p . Asian (M=25.02 ± 4.07) and Black (M=26.54 ± 4.74) participants had significantly greater Fat Acceptance scores than White participants (M=22.30 ± 5.49, p These findings highlight the ongoing gender and race biases in weight-related attitudes within the Kinesiology education system. Addressing weight bias within Kinesiology programs through curriculum interventions may help mitigate these specific disparities which would promote a more inclusive health perspective.

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EXPLORING NATURALISTIC DECISION MAKING IN HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS: A SCOPING REVIEW

Mitchell Profeit, Queen's University
Mark Eys, Wilfrid Laurier University
Luc J. Martin, Queen's University

Introduction: Research on decision-making in sport has mainly focused on individual athletes in familiar, low-stress contexts. Considering the unpredictable nature of sport, researchers have suggested moving beyond individual decision-making ability by considering the interactions between individuals and their immediate sport environment (e.g., with teammates). Indeed, within any high-performance team (e.g., military, health care), decisions must be made quickly, relying on knowledge and experience rather than complete situational understanding. Such teams and situations have been explored through a Naturalistic Decision Making (NDM) approach. However, before applying NDM research findings to sport, it is necessary to grasp how NDM has been conceptualized and understood in high-performance contexts (inclusive of sport) and the methods used to examine NDM. Purpose: We aimed to examine the scope of existing research involving NDM in high-performance teams to inform future sport research. Methods: Following PRISMA for Scoping Review guidelines, 13,033 peer-reviewed studies were identified through four electronic databases, with 36 eventually meeting the inclusion criteria. Studies were classified by team typology (e.g., collectives, segregated, integrated), context area (e.g., sport, military, healthcare), and study design. Results: Generally, NDM has been conceptualized using multiple terms (e.g., paradigm, theory, approach) across different research domains (e.g., military, healthcare, organizations) using various cognitive models (e.g., Recognition-Primed-Decisions, shared mental models). Despite diverse research methodologies, simulations (live and virtual) were the most prevalent. Further, studies mainly explored the decision-making processes of high-performance teams, with limited research dedicated to identifying facilitators and barriers or understanding the quality of team decisions in NDM situations. Lastly, little information was provided regarding member characteristics overall, though a scarcity of women-only and mixed-gender teams was revealed. Implications: This review, summarizing NDM in teams, has the potential to further advance team decision-making research. In doing so, it will have downstream implications for practitioners seeking to enhance real-time decision-making processes.

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INTEGRATING SPORT PSYCHOLOGY TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE STUDENT BUY-IN:EXPLORING THE USE OF TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL SUCCESS

Darielle Watkins, California State University Long Beach
Anastasia Heynen, California State University Long Beach
Tiffanye Vargas, California State University Long Beach
Leilani Madrigal, California State University Long Beach

Sport psychology has long been associated with team building and mental skill work, both commonly experienced within the athletic arena and instilled by consultants. However, less common is the strategic implementation of sport psychology strategies within academics in a university

setting. Research supports that students not only enjoy class sessions that are interactive, but it has also been noted that engagement is beneficial to academic success and feelings of belonging to one's university. For example, collaborative activities and regular social interaction are associated with students' increased sense of belonging, academic and social success, and retention (Ahn & Davis, 2019). Thus, this abstract seeks to discuss the benefits and lessons learned from incorporating planned sport psychology sessions, delivered by sport psychology graduate students, into a pilot program for first time, first year university students. Each of the eight cohorts in the program had 25 students, enrolled in two back-to-back classes, with a 1-hour activity session used for study halls, presentations, campus tours, and sport psychology sessions. Over the course of two semesters, each cohort received three 50-minute sessions with a sport psychology graduate student, focusing on increasing sense of belonging, academic and social success, and eventual retention. Some of the activities included icebreakers, communication development, working with others, cohesion, and stress management skills. Student feedback surrounding the activity hours was received and reviewed along with observations from the graduate students delivering sport psychology sessions. Noted benefits included increased engagement, enjoyment, and learning skills that were helpful to student success. Valuable insight into what worked and what could be improved when instilling activities in the future (i.e., out of class activities, interaction, student-centered skills) was also provided, helping lay a foundation for continued implementation of sport psychology interventions and activities into college classes to enhance belonging and academic and social success.

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TROOP AND PEER COHESION IN THE CADET TRAINING PROGRAM

Tyler Meadows, Depot Research and Strategic Partnerships Unit/University of Regina
Nicole Bolt, Depot Research and Strategic Partnerships Unit
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Gregory Kratzig, Depot Research and Strategic Partnerships Unit

Group cohesion has been a topic of interest in sport and performance psychology for a number of decades. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is a large Canadian police organization where cadets are organized into troops – groups of about 32 recruits who train together throughout the 26-week cadet training program (CTP) at Depot Division. This troop system is claimed to build teamwork, discipline, and the skills needed for policing. However, the claim that this system builds cohesive troops has not been substantiated. The purpose of this study is to investigate troop dynamics and their relationship to performance with cadets at Depot Division. Given that troop-based training purports to foster cohesion, we should expect to see troop and peer cohesion increase linearly over time. In the initial pilot study, we investigated cohesion at the troop and intra-troop peer group levels. We surveyed cadets at three time points (weeks 2, 13, & 26) to see if there would be any changes in cohesion. A total of n = 35 cadets across three troops completed all 3 surveys. Troop cohesion displayed a quadratic effect with cohesion decreasing mid-training and increasing again towards the end of training ($\eta 2$ = .094). An assessment of intra-troop peer groups revealed a linear effect with peer cohesion increasing mid training and increasing further towards the end of training ($\eta 2$ = .316). These results show that troop cohesion does not increase linearly, which may be due to a number or other training factors. Whereas, peer cohesion may build over time regardless of training demands. It is important to note that this investigation is ongoing, however it represents and initial snapshot of troop cohesion in the RCMP. Further investigations are ongoing to include a larger sample to replicate these initial findings and analysis into the relationship to performance.

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WIRED TO DANCE: NEUROFEEDBACK, BIOFEEDBACK & WEARABLES TO OPTIMIZE PROFESSIONAL DANCERS' MENTAL PERFORMANCE

Tony Williams, University of Illinois Chicago

Recent research highlights how advanced technology can enhance the mental and physical performance of professional dancers. EEG-based neurofeedback and heart rate variability (HRV) biofeedback have demonstrated measurable benefits in dance training. EEG neurofeedback trains dancers to self-regulate brain activity, which enhances focus, cognitive control, and even the timing of movements. Studies found that neurofeedback significantly improved dancers' timing and synchronization with music, likely by inducing a heightened state of concentration or "flow" where attention is sharpened, and anxiety is minimized (Raymond et al., 2005). This improved mental focus translates into more precise and confident execution on stage. Meanwhile, HRV biofeedback targets the autonomic nervous system to improve stress management. By training dancers to modulate their heart rate variability, HRV biofeedback helps reduce performance anxiety. Lower stress levels correlate with better technical execution. Dancers who underwent HRV training showed improvements in movement technique and artistry (Gruzelier et al., 2014). In tandem, wearable monitoring systems are providing real-time feedback that optimizes performance. Wearable sensors and AI-driven tools can analyze a dancer's posture, heart rate, and motion in real-time, delivering instant feedback on technique and timing. Such immediate, data-driven feedback allows dancers to correct errors on the fly and refine their performance more precisely. Experimental wearable systems have even shown accelerated motor learning and a >20% improvement in movement accuracy through real-time tactile feedback (Lieberman & Breazeal, 2007). Collectively, these technologies enhance dancers' cognitive focus, emotional resilience, and physical precision. Integrating neurofeedback, biofeedback, and wearables into dance training empowers performers to reach optimal mental states and elevate their technical skills, ultimately improving overall performance quality.

ON DEMAND POSTERS

The following posters were available on demand only.

B.E.T. ON NERVOUS SYSTEM REGULATION: HELPING SPORTS COACHES THROUGH A POLYVAGAL UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ATHLETES

David Durand, Real Development LLC

According to an analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) on a federal survey of mental health, about 1 in 5 adolescents report experiencing symptoms of anxiety while 1 in 6 report experiencing symptoms of depression. In 2023, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that 40% of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless almost everyday for at least two weeks in a row that they stopped their usual activities. These statistics demonstrate that apart from coaching the technical aspects of sports performance, there is now a demand for sports coaches to be competent in addressing the psychological challenges faced by their athletes. There is a need to empower sports coaches with knowledge surrounding the mental health of their athletes, provide them with strategies to advocate for the mental health of their athletes, and equip them with tools to effectively help their adolescent athletes. Polyvagal theory (Porges, 2011) can provide a framework to more accurately understand the psychology of a coach's athletes, while rooting its language in the science of the nervous system. This framework provides coaches and their athletes with a language to understand and effectively alter their nervous systems for increased self- and co-regulatory capabilities. Specifically, by regulating the nervous system through proven tools involving the breath, eyes, and touch of athletes, coaches can positively impact the brains and bodies of their athletes. Using a lecture-based style of teaching, I seek to help the audience learn information that positively changes their approach to consulting with sports coaches while sharing useful, proven strategies with practical applications. The objective of this lecture is to educate mental performance consultants on how to help coaches psychologically understand their adolescent athletes through the polyvagal theory and equipping them with practical tools to regulate their nervous systems for better health and performance.

FLYING WITH FOCUS: INTEREST IN PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES FOR PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT AMONG AVIATION STUDENTS

Elizabeth Pacioles, Marshall University

Strategies based on psychological skills training in sport psychology could be a valuable resource for aviation professionals and students, especially given recent attention to pilot performance due to highly publicized aircraft accidents. Lee et al. (2024) demonstrated that Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) was effective in improving anxiety sensitivity and psychological flexibility in a randomized controlled trial with aviation students, but research is limited on student interest in psychological interventions. The purpose of this study was to assess aviation students' interest levels in learning about psychological strategies for performance enhancement. Prior to an Aviation Wellness Workshop, a survey was administered to 125 students in a collegiate aviation bachelor's degree program to assess interest levels in such strategies. Among other physical and psychological wellness topics, respondents (N = 71) reported strongest interest in managing performance anxiety (79% of participants reported "very high interest"), particularly related to check rides (high stakes skill-based exams required to obtain or maintain a pilot's license). The student interest surveys informed topics for the Aviation Wellness Workshop, which included psychological strategies as well as nutrition and exercise recommendations. Evidence-based strategies were introduced, including activities on breathwork (Balban et al., 2023) and Mindfulness Based Attention Training (Jha et al., 2017). During the workshop, students could anonymously submit questions and comments about the content. Students reported further interest in mindfulness strategies, particularly using breath and physical sensations as an anchor for focus of attention during stressful high-performance situations, such as check rides. The present study has implications for the benefits of these psychological strategies for aviation students' education and careers.

LARGE TEAMS ARE NOT A MONOLITH: PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH LARGE CO-ACTING SPORT TEAMS IN THE COLLEGIATE SETTING.

Justine Vosloo, Ithaca College
Frank Ely, Ithaca College
Nicola Cosentino Lanari, Ithaca College
Cole Corrigan, Ithaca College
Shannon Stone, Ithaca College
Maddy Bigley, Ithaca College
Tyler Caso, Ithaca College
Jake Hewitt, Ithaca College
Samantha Fischer, Ithaca College
Dominique Emmett, Ithaca College

Although athletes from co-acting sports benefit from mental performance services (e.g., Hut et al., 2023; Uzzell et al., 2022), there is limited research on the complexities of working with these, often large, team rosters (e.g., track and field, swimming and diving). For instance, researchers have found that larger teams tend to experience less team cohesion (Carron et al., 2005) yet higher collective efficacy (Short, 2015) than smaller teams. While there is no one explanation for such differences, exploring the unique contextual factors surrounding these large teams could be of value. Therefore, this presentation will detail the experiences of mental performance consultants (MPCs) engaged in the provision of mental training services with multiple large NCAA Division III athletic teams from co-acting sports (e.g., track and field, swimming and diving) across multiple seasons. The teams in question ranged from 40 to 70+ members at any given time. Unique features for these teams include a co-ed training environment, shared coaching staff between the men's and women's teams, challenges with access to training spaces during certain times of the season, and varying degrees of stakeholder buy-in. Strategies used by MPCs to navigate this dynamic and the circumstantial challenges presented throughout the training and performance season will be explored. The experience detailed in this presentation will also emphasize the importance of event-specific interactions as an effective strategy to gain entry, develop strong bonds in the MPC-athlete relationship and individualize mental skills delivery. The presentation will also explore the importance of reflective practice throughout the consulting process, especially for neophyte student practitioners, the professional and ethical challenges MPCs should consider, and recommendations for faculty mentors when guiding work in this type of setting.

MASCULINITY AND HELP-SEEKING IN MEN COLLEGIATE ATHLETES: THE ROLE OF SELF-COMPASSION

Justin Harker, University of North Texas
Trent Petrie, University of North Texas

Although men athletes face unique sport pressures that exacerbate psychological distress, they underutilize mental health services. Relevant social norms (e.g., stigma, masculinity) may negatively influence their attitudes and intentions toward seeking mental health help. However, men athletes' self-compassion could reduce their mental health stigma and promote more positive attitudes and stronger intentions to seek help. Because no study had examined these factors in relation to men athletes' help-seeking, we sampled 426 men collegiate athletes (Mage = 20.63 years; 72.5% White) to do so. Through Qualtrics, athletes completed measures assessing their conformity to masculine norms, self-compassion, self-stigma of seeking help, and attitudes and intentions to seek help for a mental health concern. Through the PROCESS macro, we found that that the variables explained 52% of the intentions' variance. Specifically, more conformity with masculine norms was directly related to less self-compassion, more self-stigma, and more negative attitudes toward seeking help, self-compassion was directly related to less self-stigma and more negative attitudes. Five significant indirect effects emerged: self-compassion → self-stigma → intentions (B = 0.07), self-compassion → self-stigma → attitudes → intentions (B = 0.21), masculine norms → self-stigma → intentions (B = -0.14), masculine norms → attitudes → intentions (B = -0.42), and masculine norms → self-stigma → attitudes → intentions (B = -0.44). Our findings extend previous research on men athletes' help-seeking, suggesting that increasing self-compassion and reducing stigma may be beneficial in increasing men athletes' willingness to seek help for mental health concerns.

META-ANALYSIS OF THE 25 BEST RESEARCH PAPERS ON PEAK PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY

Anjum Padyal, CSUN

Background: Mental performance in elite athletes and executives is shaped by psychological resilience, cognitive adaptability, and physiological regulation. This meta-analysis reviews over 200 research papers, selecting 25 of the most rigorous studies on peak performance psychology. Prior research demonstrates that structured mental training enhances resilience, decision-making, and sustained excellence, positioning psychological conditioning as essential for elite performance.

Objective: This study examines the effectiveness of psychological interventions, arguing that cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and self-efficacy are critical to achieving and maintaining peak performance. The findings support the claim that integrating psychological skills training significantly enhances long-term success.

Method: A systematic review and meta-analysis methodology were employed. The 25 research papers were selected through a multi-stage process:Screening: 200+ peer-reviewed studies (2012–2024) from PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar.

Inclusion Criteria: Studies with empirical data on elite athletes or executives, focusing on mindfulness, visualization, self-regulation, or stress management.

Exclusion Criteria: Studies with anecdotal evidence, small sample sizes, or weak statistical rigor.

Final Selection: The most methodologically strong and widely cited studies.

Results: Findings demonstrate that mindfulness enhances focus and stress tolerance, neuroplasticity-driven training improves adaptability, and visualization accelerates motor learning. Emotional self-regulation and stress management significantly reduce burnout and performance anxiety while increasing self-confidence. Across all studies, psychological skills training is argued to predict sustained excellence.

Discussion/Conclusion: This meta-analysis reinforces that mental training is not supplementary but essential for elite success. The synthesis of 25 high-impact studies demonstrates measurable improvements in resilience, cognitive efficiency, and emotional stability, supporting its integration into high-performance programs.Keywords: mental performance, peak performance psychology, neuroplasticity, mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, stress regulation, resilience, visualization, emotional regulation, self-efficacy, elite athletes, executives, psychological skills training, burnout prevention.

MINDFUL SPORT PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT FOR COLLEGIATE ATHLETE MIND-BODY INJURY RECOVERY

Teona Velehorschi, University of Toledo
Wesley Bullock, University of Toledo
Jason Rose, University of Toledo

Athletes experience both physical and psychological effects from injuries, which can impact their recovery. Research finds that mindfulness-based interventions may improve mental health and well-being among injured athletes. However, research has not examined the effectiveness of Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE) for injured college athletes while monitoring mental health symptoms. This study examines the impact of MSPE on injured college athletes' symptoms of suicidality, depression, anxiety, mindfulness, well-being, pain catastrophizing, and pain intensity. Prior to beginning the six-week in-person MSPE group, a group of 5 college athletes (Mage=19.4, 80% female) completed self-report measures assessing for suicidality (Beck Suicide Scale; Beck & Steer, 1991), depression (Patient Health Questionnaire-9; Kroenke et al., 2001), anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Scale-7; Spitzer et al., 2006), mindfulness (Mindful Attention Awareness Scale; Brown & Ryan, 2003), well-being (World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index; WHO, 1998), pain catastrophizing (Pain Catastrophizing Scale; Sullivan et al., 1995), and pain intensity (Numeric Pain Rating Scale; McCaffery & Beebe, 1989). After completing the six MSPE sessions, participants retook the initial measures.While inferential tests were not conducted due to the current sample size (n = 5), preliminary analyses focusing on effect sizes (Cohen's D) suggest moderate-to-strong, pre-post reductions in suicidality (d = 0.64), depression (d = 0.66), anxiety (d = 0.80), and pain catastrophizing (d = 0.89), in addition to an increase in well-being (d = -1.12). Interestingly, pain intensity was higher post-intervention (d = -1.10), possibly due to mindfulness causing participants to be more aware of their pain.Although future research with larger sample sizes is needed and data collection is ongoing, these preliminary findings highlight the potential

efficacy of MSPE when applied to injured college athletes and suggest that MSPE could have an impact on a range of mental health and pain outcomes.

PREDICTORS OF MENTAL HEALTH IN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU ATHLETES

Leandro de Lorenco-Lima,
Stacey Gaines, Liberty University
Elisabeth Waterbury, Liberty University

Sports have been supported to provide substantial physical and mental health benefits in the short- and long-term, with some authors proposing that their social and mental health benefits may exceed those acquired through alternative activities. This study aimed to explore the extent to which the independent variables (IVs) resilience, grit, self-efficacy, self-control, aggression, and life satisfaction could predict mental health in Brazilian jiu-jitsu athletes. A sample of 420 Brazilian jiu-jitsu athletes (78.8% males) from 18 to 60 years of age completed the Brief Resilience Scale (α = .81), Grit Scale (α = .84), General Self-Efficacy Scale (α = .86), Brief Self-Control Scale (α =.84), Brief Aggression Questionnaire (α = .76), Satisfaction with Life Scale (α = .87), and Mental Health Disorders Screening Instrument for Athletes (α = .81). Results showed that a multiple linear regression was statistically significant F(6,413) = 66.379, p p sr2) was found between aggression and mental health disorders, with aggression explaining 7.82% of the variance in mental health disorders above and beyond what is explained by the additional independent variables. Significant (p sr2) were found between mental health disorders and self-control (5.93% of variance), life satisfaction (4.41% of variance), and resilience (1.83% of variance). In conclusion, Brazilian jiu-jitsu athletes were more likely to report better mental health when presenting lower aggression and higher self-control, life satisfaction, and resilience. When working with Brazilian jiu-jitsu athletes seeking mental health optimization, clinical professionals are encouraged to address aggression, self-control, life satisfaction, and resilience during the treatment plan.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TEACHING & LEARNING IN AN UNDERGRADUATE SPORT PSYCHOLOGY CLASS USING GENERATIVE AI

Heather Van Mullem, Lewis-Clark State College

Generative AI is transforming teaching and learning. AI tools have altered how students learn, have impacted how faculty teach, and have resulted in necessary modification of assessment strategies. Concerns about academic integrity and rampant cheating persist. While AI detection software is plentiful, it is inconsistent and can be inaccurate, resulting in harm to students who are mistakenly accused of using AI to cheat their class requirements. While concerns persist, businesses expect new graduates to understand how to use AI efficiently and effectively (Bowen & Watson, 2024). A key responsibility of faculty is to help prepare students for success, both in and outside of the classroom. Sport Psychology classes are uniquely positioned to focus on student success. They prepare students to be successful in their personal and professional life in multiple ways, including, but not limited to, developing tools to increase resilience, manage stress and anxiety, and create and cultivate effective communication skills and positive, cohesive group relationships. Sport psychology faculty can further enhance learning experiences for students through careful integration of AI into classroom learning activities. AI can be used as a tool to enhance learning, understanding, and attainment of student learning outcomes. Through intentional effort, faculty can teach students how to use AI with integrity and prepare them for employment expectations post-graduation (Bowen & Watson, 2024). This poster will: 1) share examples of assignments using Generative AI in an undergraduate sport psychology class which can improve student learning of mental performance enhancement strategies, 2) provide suggestions for effective assessment of assignments that use Generative AI, and 3) provide examples of classroom policy and other strategies to facilitate student understanding of using AI with integrity. In addition, student feedback from an undergraduate sport psychology class that completed assignments using Generative AI will be shared.

STRESS, PERFECTIONISM, AND PERSONALITY IN COLLEGE CLUB HOCKEY PLAYERS

David Tobar, Bowling Green State University
Rachel Dembek, Bowling Green State University

According to the Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory of Emotion (Lazarus, 1991, 2000), an athlete's primary appraisal of stressors may be influenced by dispositional variables (e.g., Crocker et al, 2014). Athletes with select personality traits (e.g., neuroticism, perfectionist tendencies) who experience environmental stressors (e.g., teammate and coach pressures) may experience more perceived stress that can affect their well-being and performance (e.g., Arnold et al., 2024; McLoughlin et al., 2024). Despite theoretical appeal, no research has examined the influence of personality on stress in college club athletes. The current study examined the relationship between perceived stress, perfectionism, and Big Five personality traits in college club hockey players. Data were collected from the men's (n=20) and women's (n=11) club hockey teams at a D-I university. Participants completed the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, Big Five Inventory–2XS, Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), and questions about sources of stress related to being a member of the team, coach pressures, and teammate pressures. An independent t test indicated no sex difference (MFemales=1.73, MMales=1.44, p>.05; g=.30) for PSS so data were combined for further analyses. PSS was correlated with self-oriented perfectionism (r=-.35, pr=-.42, pr=-.32, pr=-.30 pr=.59, pr=.56, p=.001), and teammate pressures (r=.63, ppIn sum, college club hockey players reported low perceived stress. However, perceived stress was related to perfectionism, personality, and pressure from teammates and coaches. In particular, players prone to experiencing distress and feeling pressure from teammates may experience more perceived stress. Sport psychology consultants should consider assessing personality and monitoring stress to potentially improve athlete well-being and performance.

STUDENT-ATHLETE PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Amanda Aguilar, The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Jeremy Elliott, The University of Alabama in Huntsville
David Kyle, The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Jennifer Cole, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Collegiate Sport Student-athlete mental health has been a growing concern among universities, athletic departments,

and national governing bodies in recent years. The dual roles demanded of student-athletes may increase their susceptibility to anxiety, depression, eating disorders, sleep disturbances, substance abuse, and even suicide (Cutler & Dwyer, 2020; Ryan et al., 2018; Moreland et al., 2018). University athletic departments, counseling centers, and on-campus health clinics take on the immense task of helping student-athletes successfully navigate these challenges. Unfortunately, student-athletes are not always aware of these services and universities across the country are struggling to keep up with demand (Chew & Thompson, 2014). Addressing these challenges requires a deeper understanding of the student-athletes' needs. Building on previous research presented at the 2024 AASP conference that examined student-athlete mental health perceptions through survey data, this study explores the issue further using qualitative methods. This study phase utilizes focus groups and individual interviews with current student-athletes to gain deeper insights into the barriers, perceptions, and accessibility of mental health resources on a Division II campus.The study aims to 1) explore student-athletes' perceptions of mental health resources on campus, 2) identify what outlets students seek when desiring mental health services, and 3) compare student-athlete understanding of help-seeking steps to official athletic department procedures. Thematic analysis will be used to interpret the data, highlighting key areas where institutions can improve mental health outreach and support. The findings of this study will offer practical recommendations for the university's athletic department, counseling center, and administration. These insights will help ensure that mental health services are aligned with the needs and expectations of student-athletes.

THE ACTUAL CONDITION OF PEDIATRIC CONCUSSION-LIKE SYMPTOMS IN JAPAN ～ BEHAVIOR AND MOOD, MOVEMENT, AND MEMORY～

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Hidetaka Onodera, Dept. of Neurosurgery, Yokohama City University Medical Center
Hiroto Fujiya

The purpose of this study was to understand the actual situation of elementary and junior high school students with concussion-like symptoms (Con-L) due to exercise and other factors in Japan.The survey was pre-surveyed via the Web among 50,000 general households with children. Questions included the presence and background of Con-L during these periods, frequency, and subsequent condition. In main-survey, the households of 400 eligible children were asked more detailed questions. In this study, Con-L during these periods and their subsequent condition were classified into three categories: behavior and mood, movement, and memory, and the effects after Con-L were examined.In preliminary-survey, 6,505 (19.2%/33,843) households experienced exercise, falls or collisions during these periods and 'had a change in condition afterwards', with 63.3% during exercise and 51.9% during daily life. The most common frequency was once during exercise (39.5%) and once during daily life (35.5%). The changes in appearance were headache (30.3%), fatigue (21.2%) and feeling dazed (17.9%). In main-survey, the most common Con-L were no known 'concussion' symptoms, headache and dizziness. 40% had been diagnosed with concussion at least once, and 24% had been diagnosed with concussion at medical institutions after Con-L. These three categories were highly associated with the presence of Con-L (pIn Japanese children, some physical, psychological, and behavioral changes were present after Con-L. It was difficult to visualize many of Con-L from the parents' point of view with the same items as 'concussion', even though something was wrong with their behavior. However, it was suggested when parents noticed symptoms in one of these categories, the child was more likely to complain and the situation improved significantly.

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS, SENSE OF COHERENCE, AND SOCIAL SUPPORT IN ADOLESCENT ATHLETES

Danae Delfin Talley, University of South Florida

Sense of Coherence (SOC) describes the confidence one has that their living environments are comprehensive, manageable, and meaningful. SOC promotes effective utilization of resources to cope and bolsters physical and mental health. Social support (SS) is a resource for productive coping and decreases risk of psychopathology. Adolescent sports participation offers opportunities for stress exposure and to practice effectively coping where SS can be derived from family, peers/teammates, and coaches. The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between sociodemographic factors, SOC, and SS in adolescent athletes.Using a cross-sectional design, 219 adolescent athletes completed an electronic survey. Age, biological sex, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (SES) were collected. The MacArthur Subjective Social Status Scale for Youth was used as a proxy for SES. SOC was assessed using the Orientation to Life Scale (scored 13-65). SS was assessed using the National Institutes of Health Toolbox Emotional Support Scale (Ages 8-17; scored 7-35). Higher scores indicated more of the perceived construct. Descriptive statistics and ANCOVA analyses were conducted in SPSS with statistical significance set a priori $p \leq .05$. There were 219 participants (68% male; 91.3% Black/African American). In univariable analyses, race/ethnicity was significantly associated with SS ($F[2,216]=5.162$, $p=.006$) with White participants ($\mu=28.455$) reporting more SS than Black/African American ($\mu=26.110$). Sex was significantly associated with SOC ($F[1,224]=8.092$, $p=.005$). Males ($\mu=43.168$) reported higher SOC than females ($\mu=39.831$). In multivariable analyses, race/ethnicity was significantly associated with SS ($F[1,204]=4.484$, $p=.012$); and, sex was significantly associated with SOC ($F[4,216,]=10.824$, $p=.001$).Despite similar sports participation, racial/ethnic minorities perceive less SS and females report less SOC. Historically, racial/ethnic minorities can experience discrimination, peer-victimization, and bullying, which weakens their SS network and can create emotional distress. Social and cultural expectations placed on female adolescents may create increased stress and create challenges in effectively employing resources like SS to cope.