

# PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE MOVEMENT

ASSOCIATION for APPLIED  
**SPORTPSYCHOLOGY**



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## WHAT IS PEM?

The Performance Excellence Movement (PEM) is designed to increase student, practitioner, and public awareness of the application of sport and exercise psychology skills. PEM also serves to increase awareness, knowledge, and skill sets in relation to how sport and exercise psychology expertise can be effectively applied in a number of domains. The hope of PEM is to provide readers with interesting information about how some of our colleagues successfully apply their sport and exercise psychology techniques in their field and in other areas.

In this year's newsletter you will find three articles written

by current students that take place in three very different contexts. First, a student from the University of Missouri describes her experiences applying a culturally relevant mental training intervention with an urban high school boys' basketball team in "Building a Beat to #W.I.N.: Mental Training with Hip-Hop." Second, students from Indiana University explore the prevalence, prevention, and treatment of eating disorders in student-athletes in "Disordered Eating in College Student-Athletes: Prevention and Intervention through Sport and Performance Psychology." Finally, students from the University of Missouri write about the applica-

tion of mental toughness training in "Applying a Model of Mental Toughness with a Division I College Tennis Team."

In addition to the student-written articles, four professionals in various aspects of the field of performance psychology offer insights on a variety of topics including how they began, skills students should be developing, and advice for being a professional member in the performance psychology field.

The editors of the PEM hope you can learn from these experiences and begin to reflect on how you can improve or modify your own practices in the consulting world. We hope you enjoy!

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED WITH PEM?

- Contact the editors to learn more
- Submit a proposal to write an article
- Read the newsletter and spread the word
- Attend the AASP conference to meet those involved

## HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE 2016 PEM:

Do you have consulting or applied experience other students could benefit from and are willing to share? Do you want to obtain experience in a peer-review process? Then consider submitting to the PEM!

We are always looking for students willing to share their experiences and help others improve their consulting expertise. Please contact us if you are interested in submitting an article. (See contact information on final page.) We want you to be part of the process for the 2016 newsletter!



### What is your background as it related to sport and exercise psychology?

I started out as a physical education major at Brooklyn College and intended to be a physical education teacher and a coach. But due to one specific faculty member, I applied to Graduate School and went to UCLA. I was still going to teach and be a coach after getting my M.S. in Kinesiology but then I read an old book (now out of print) by Arnold Beisser called *The Madness in Sport*. He was a junior Davis Cup tennis player and then he had an accident and was relegated to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. His book was a series of case studies of athletes who had mental issues (some of a clinical nature). The field of sport psychology was only just beginning at this point and these interesting psychologically-based case studies really tweaked my interest as I really liked sport and really liked psychology. Now I thought that maybe I can make a profession out of sport psychology. I went back to UCLA but this time in Psychology and received an M.A., Ph.D and was a postdoctoral scholar in sport psychology. There really was not a true sport psychology major, so I majored in social and industrial psychology and took sport psychology courses in the Kinesiology Department. By this time I really wanted to focus on sport psychology and I got excited about both research and working with athletes (although consulting took a while to take off). I knew I wanted to be a faculty member focusing on both teaching and research in sport psychology and hopefully doing some consulting on the side.

### In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?

Sport psychology IS my professional life. I have been a faculty member at the University of North Texas and then went to Miami University (Ohio) to Chair the Kinesiology and Health Department for a number of years before returning to the faculty. Throughout my career I have been involved in teaching, researching, and consulting in sport psychology. I have been very much involved in professional organizations; NASPSPA for the first part of my career and AASP for the second (and present) part of my career. I have also been involved in the editorial process, first as a reviewer, then editorial board member and associate editor, and finally editor-in-chief. Where I was more focused on independent research earlier in my career, I have become more interested in summarizing and integrating sport psychology knowledge into book chapters and books.

### What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the performance psychology field?

Most importantly, students need to know what they want to do within performance psychology in order to know what is the best way to prepare themselves. When I first entered the field academics was basically the only option. But today, there are many more options including academics, consulting, the military, IMG, and coaching. Depending on what path the student wants, it will dictate the kind of courses, internships and courses one would pursue. As one example, if a student wanted to build a consulting career, a good mix of business courses would be relevant since a consulting sport psychologist is really an entrepreneur.

### What is one piece of advice you would offer a student who wants to practice sport/exercise psychology as a career?

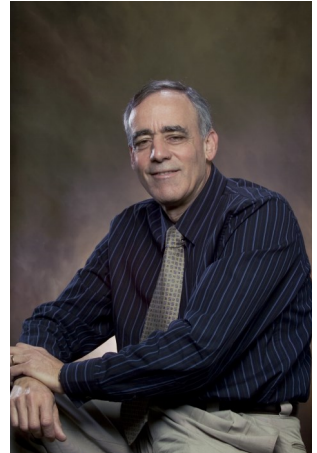
Make sure you are passionate about the field of sport/exercise psychology. With maybe a few exceptions, the field is not particularly lucrative, so you need to really love what you do. You need to be dedicated as it may take a couple of years for you to find the right job for you or to get your business profitable. For example, I came in 2nd place for three academic positions after I received my PhD and had an opportunity to go into another type of position, but I held out for my passion and fortunately it came to pass a year later.

### What should students do to prepare themselves in finding a job in your field?

In terms of being an academic, students need to develop a line of research in their graduate work. Along these lines, it is important to choose a program and especially a mentor who can help you develop this line of research. You want to be in a program where a mentor (or two) can help bring you along on their research while you develop your own line of research. Also make sure you get teaching experience in sport/exercise psychology courses, as this is also critical for landing a sport psychology position. Furthermore, students should decide what type of academic program they want to pursue. Research 1 institutions are basically going to be interested in your research and grant writing abilities whereas other institutions might focus as much on your teaching abilities. Finally, presenting and attending professional conferences and making contacts is always a good thing to do.

### What tools do you suggest students develop in aims of working in the performance psychology field?

If consulting is your passion, then besides knowing the intervention, and mental skills areas, it is important, as noted above, to develop business skills. These might include such things as advertising (e.g., presentations, books, TV/radio appearances), internet website development, making professional contacts, managing money, and marketing. In essence, having a business of sport psychology requires entrepreneurship skills. Developing counseling skills is also critical as it's not only what you know but also how you relate to clients. As an old adage goes, they don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.



**Dr. Bob Weinberg**  
Faculty of Kinesiology and  
Health, Miami University  
(Ohio)

*"Developing counseling skills is also critical as it's not only what you know but also how you relate to clients. As an old adage goes, they don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."*

## Building a Beat to #W.I.N.: Mental Training with Hip-Hop

By Amber Lattner

University of Missouri—Columbia

Cultural differences play a critical role in the application of effective sport psychology services. Schinke and Moore (2011) posited that the field of sport psychology has embraced the integration of cultural aspects into its work more slowly than other domains of psychology, thus contributing to the prevalent challenge of delivering transformational sport psychology services to cultures different than one's own – that is, effective cultural sport psychology (CSP) services. Stead (2004) defined culture as “a social system of shared symbols, meanings, perspectives, and social actions that are mutually negotiated by people in their relationships with others” (p. 392). The deep integration of one's culture within his or her sense of being and interaction with the world makes it nearly impossible to separate behavior and development from one's cultural context (Stambulova & Alfermann, 2009). As sport psychology practitioners, it is important for us to develop CSP competencies if we desire to transform the minds and hearts of our clients.

Before addressing the potential cultural needs of our clients, however, Stambulova and Alfermann (2009) stated that it is important for sport psychology researchers and consultants to explore their own cultural background. Such culturally reflective and reflexive practices lay the foundation upon which to build our CSP fluency. Mio, Barker-Hackett, and Tumambing (2006) highlighted three basic multicultural competencies that we as practitioners should develop to build that fluency: self-awareness of our own cultural values and biases, understanding of our client's worldview, and an arsenal of culturally appropriate interventions and strategies.

Schinke and Hanrahan (2009) described the need for integrating a culturally sensitive approach to sport psychology, and offered an exploration of various theories and philosophies of effective CSP, including gaining practical experiences consulting with diverse populations. To help facilitate opportunities, supervised field placement experiences and a minimum number of hours working with diverse populations are requirements for graduation in some graduate-level sport psychology programs. Furthermore, it is important to note that diversity does not just imply race: it also refers to gender, socio-economic status (SES), religion, geographic location of origin, sexual orientation, age, and more; gaining experience in different domains is critical when developing true cultural competency.

During my master's program, my main field placement was with an urban high school that had over 60 different nationalities represented (e.g., African, Indian, Swedish, Mexican). I worked with the athletic director to lay the foundation for a partnership that included team and individual sport psychology consulting, coaching education, and leadership development training. One of the teams I worked with directly was the varsity boys' basketball program. It was comprised of student-athletes from five different ethnic backgrounds; the majority (9) of the team was Black/African American, and the four remaining student-athletes, all comprised of different ethnic identities (1 Latino American, 1 Caucasian American, 1 of African decent, and 1 of European decent). Furthermore, they ranged from low to medium socioeconomic status (SES).

It is pertinent to note that as their consultant, I differed in gender, race, SES, age, and geographic location of origin. Cultural competency was critical as I worked to connect these young men's minds, hearts, and bodies to drive their cohesive performance. First and foremost, it was imperative that I built a strong relationship with the entire coaching staff, particularly with the head coach. Having complete buy-in and support from the head coach, a middle-aged African-American male, was critical

because it allowed me to establish initial rapport with the team. The athletes trusted and respected their coach, so his opinion of me, sport psychology, and how he positioned my role within the team led the players to be more open to our work together. Additionally, my relationship with the head coach allowed us to develop consistent messaging across mental performance training sessions, practices, games, and locker room discussions.

At the initial meeting with the team, the coach established that respect and engagement were clear expectations with our work together. He positioned me as part of the “Family” from Day 1, and within this program, “Family” had a very clearly defined meaning: we support, respect, and encourage one another, and we “hold the rope” (“Hold the Rope” was a team building activity that we did in one of our initial sessions). Everything I did with the young men was centered on respect, “Family,” self-control, and decision-making, in order for them to position themselves to be successful individuals and a successful team, both on and off the court.

Intentionality, or purpose behind interactions, is an important aspect for any leader or coach to optimize his or her influence with a team (Maxwell, 2007). I tried to follow this notion when working with this group of young men, as I believe that every interaction we have with clients is an opportunity to positively impact their mindset and/or life skill development. For example, we always started and ended our interactions with a firm handshake and eye contact to teach them the basic skill of shaking hands; I always referred to



*“The deep integration of one's culture within his or her sense of being and interaction with the world makes it nearly impossible to separate behavior and development from one's cultural context”*

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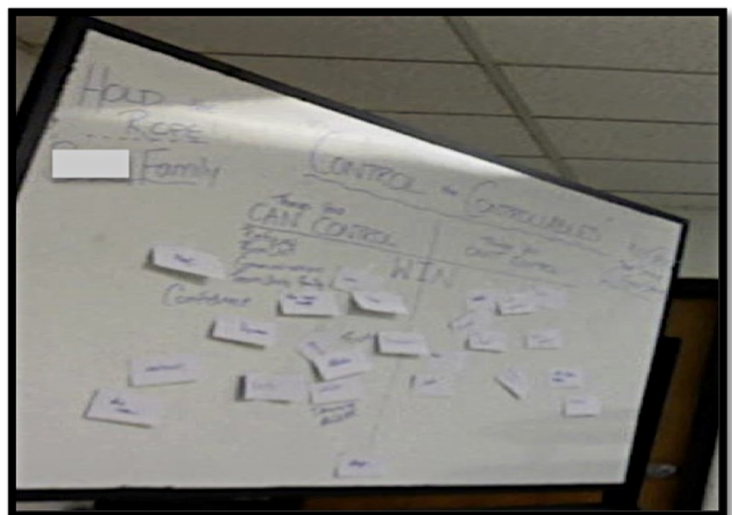
them as “sirs,” “young men,” or “gentlemen” so they would start to see themselves as such; I used images and videos that reflected their cultural background and challenges that were pertinent to their lives; I modeled professionalism by the way I dressed and the way I spoke with them so they could practice engaging in professional interactions and dialogue. Furthermore, the strong working relationship I established with the coaching staff allowed them to experience men and women working together in equal roles, with proper boundaries being modeled. For the three short months I worked with this team, these young men were taught different ways of thinking and managing their emotions to drive performance excellence through mental performance team sessions. They were inundated with positive messages about themselves as men, as leaders, and as ball players through conversations around and applications of personal and team strengths. In addition, they were exposed to what professional relationships between men and women can and should look like, regardless of differing racial backgrounds, through daily modeling between myself and the coaching staff.

Although there were several cultural considerations accounted for in this consulting relationship (e.g., word choice, media, attire, activities), this article explores one culturally-specific mental training intervention with the team in which we used hip-hop to explore a topic. I was brought on-board mid-season when the team demonstrated not only incredible potential for a state-title run but also unstable emotional responses to pressure. Although I had only been with the team for one month prior to conducting this session in which we leveraged components of hip-hop and spoken word therapy (HHSWT; Levy, 2012), I had spent a total of 33 hours either directly consulting or observing the team. This time proved critical to the level of trust I had with the young men as individuals and the team as a whole; therefore, they were willing to engage in activities that were perhaps outside of their comfort zones.

Prior to entering the state basketball tournament, the coaching staff and I decided that a recap of focus and composure in the face of adversity would be important at this juncture, as it would allow them to manage any additional pressure they may feel since the school had not advanced through the tournament since the 1970s. The recap would reinforce particular concepts and cues the team created and applied in both practice and game settings throughout our earlier work together. In a dynamic, interactive session, we discussed how “Controlling the Controllables” could drive both focus and composure in the face of pressure or adversity. HHSWT provided theoretical and empirically-based principles by which we were able to connect this mental performance training session in a culturally-relevant manner.

The session began with a recap of previous discussions on the two topics, and how the team had used those skills to impact performance. On a large board at the front of the room there were two columns: “Controllable” and “Uncontrollable.” The young men were divided into two teams, and each designated a “runner” for the game. They were given a stack of index cards with tape and two minutes to post (via their designated runner) as many things under each column as they could. Concluding the session, the young men explained what they meant by each card, and discussed the implications of mental and emotional energy management as it related to controllables and uncontrollables in the upcoming games. The critical take-away was that they should not spend time and energy on things that are uncontrollable, and instead ask themselves: “W.I.N?” or “What’s Important Now?” The answer to this question is always to where one’s attention should be directed, allowing them to remain composed and successfully execute in the present moment.

After we discussed potential distractions or elements of adversity that may arise in the upcoming game, we wrote our four key team phrases on the board that defined our team culture: “Family,” “Hold the Rope,” “Wolf Pack,” and “Start Strong. Finish Strong.” The team had a very clear understanding of what each phrase meant to them and thus, they each aimed to trigger appropriate mental, emotional, and behavioral cues when referenced. With a full list of controllables, uncontrollables, and key team phrases, the teams were then tasked to create a rap stanza using only the words, phrases and concepts on the board in front of them:





*Lattner continued from Page 4*

After 10 minutes of building their small group stanza, the teams stood up and faced one another for a “rap-off.” However, instead of viewing it as a battle between teams, the young men were primed to view it as “building” a collective rap; after both sides presented their stanza, they went back and forth in a free-style segment that culminated with one of their team leaders breaking them down to go to practice.

Prior to the Sweet 16 game later that week, the team was presented with a copy of the rap they had built together, entitled, “Family Beat: #W.I.N.” Stanzas 1-3 were written by one group and Stanzas 4-6 were written by the other group:

**“Family Beat: #W.I.N.”**

**We gotta keep our minds  
On things we can control, control.  
This the wolf pack,  
We hold that rope.  
Boy you already know how that goes.**

**We be changing tempos  
On that court.  
Work, work mode, no quittin.’  
What do ya know, we play to get it.**

**Start strong, finish strong;  
What do ya know, we winning.**

**There’s not an I in team,  
But there’s an I in W.I.N.  
Let go of that rope...  
and we won’t win again.**

**We some big wolves,  
You all some kitt-ens.  
South Family – we on a mission.  
Don’t argue w the refs  
Cause they’re not your friend.**

**Play hard – aw tempo wins games,  
Not crying on the bench.  
Play hard and do your best...  
Go on March, we goin’ a cut down them nets.**

As a current sport psychology doctoral student in a Division I, Power 5 Conference, the importance of and need for competent CSP service delivery is becoming more evident. It goes beyond applying basic CSP interventions like using rap to connect with student-athletes in culturally-relevant ways. It extends to understanding systems of power and privilege that impact diverse and minority populations, so that we as sport psychology practitioners can work with individuals and teams in ways that integrate an understanding of the macro and micro cultures that affect and drive behavior and performance, on and off the field of play. It is this type of understanding that leads to trust, which ultimately allows the mental performance training that we conduct to have a transformational impact on how our clients use their minds to optimize their performance.

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### What is your background as it related to sport and exercise psychology?

With regards to my education background I obtained a BSc in Sport and Exercise Science from Loughborough University and then completed an MSc in Sport and Exercise Psychology also at Loughborough. I then moved to Canada where I completed my PhD in Physical Education and Recreation, specializing in sport psychology and particularly parental involvement in youth sport. During my time in Canada, I also worked (under the supervision of Dr. Nicholas Holt) with a number of university teams and athletes providing sport science support. Since returning to the UK (in 2013) I have gained my accreditation as a sport scientist (in the area of psychology scientific support and research) through the British Association of Sport and Exercise Science.

### In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?

I am a Senior Lecturer in sport and exercise psychology at Swansea University in the United Kingdom. In this role I am responsible for teaching undergraduate students about sport and exercise psychology, as well as conducting research in this field. I also work with a number of organizations to provide research and scientific support in the area of sport and exercise psychology, particularly focused upon parent support and education. As well as lecturing in this area, I also work with a few youth athletes to provide them with sport science support. Currently I am informally working with a few children aged 9-15 who participate in various sports to help them develop strategies to manage competition demands, perform at their potential, and most importantly enjoy their sporting experience.

### What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the performance psychology field?

Spend as much time as you can with athletes from a variety of sports and take as many opportunities as you can to engage with and learn from experienced practitioners. Study a diverse range of topics and areas, and understand what different theories and research can offer your practice. Make a commitment to furthering the field and helping to identify and integrate best practice and research throughout your work.

### What is one piece of advice you would offer a student who wants to practice sport/exercise psychology as a career?

My main piece of advice is to read, read, and read a little more! When I first started working in this area (both as a researcher and a practitioner) I was continually struck by the breadth of knowledge I needed to understand the different situations I encountered and to best help the people I was working with. I was very lucky to develop a strong base of knowledge through my MSc and PhD but I still regularly find myself returning to the literature to ensure I am appropriately applying theory, research, and best practice to the situations I encounter.

### What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to performance psychology?

The best piece of advice I got was to try to make yourself obsolete. When working with athletes I found it really easy to get caught up in the successes and failures of the athletes I was working with; their successes became my successes and their failures were mine also. Consequently, I could quite quickly get drawn into wanting to do more and more to help clients and would be willing to provide as much support as they needed. However, I had to remember that if I really wanted the clients to succeed, they needed to be able to do it without me and thus, I needed to make sure I would work to support athletes but with the ultimate aim of them no longer needing me around.

### What should students do to prepare themselves in finding a job in your field?

In my opinion, probably the most important thing is to ensure you know exactly what criteria must be fulfilled to ensure you have the correct qualifications and accreditations to be able to work in the field. Gaining experience across a range of sports and working with different age and types of athletes would also be of great value to allow you to start to identify where your strengths and weaknesses lie. Similarly, spending time with different practitioners and seeing how others work could be beneficial in allowing you to identify exactly what type of work you want to do and how you want to approach it. Such insights will ensure that when you are applying for work or working in the field you can do it in a manner that is consistent and true to yourself.

### What tools do you suggest students develop in aims of working in the performance psychology field?

Although there are numerous tools that are needed to succeed in this field there are three that really stand out for me. The first is the ability to engage in continual reflection and ensuring that such reflection focuses not only on things that went wrong but also things that went right. Tied to reflection, the second tool I think is particularly important is self-awareness. In my experience, the very best practitioners are those who understand themselves, know how they are likely to react in different situations, and are consequently able to adjust their behaviors if required. Finally, I think it is really important to be open to alternative ideas and be willing to turn to others to gain different perspectives or insights on issues clients are presenting.



**Dr. Camilla Knight**  
Sport Psychology Lecturer  
at Swansea University,  
Swansea, United Kingdom

*"In my experience, the very best practitioners are those who understand themselves, know how they are likely to react in different situations, and are consequently able to adjust their behaviors if required."*

## Disordered Eating in College Student-Athletes: Prevention and Intervention through Sport and Performance Psychology By: Jessica David and Daniel Goldberg Indiana University Bloomington

Athletes are striving to compete at higher levels and are under more pressure than ever. This pressure is often associated with a host of negative physical and psychological outcomes as student-athletes strive to cope or adjust. Due to the extreme demands placed on male and female student-athletes to perform physically at an elite level of competition, they are at a unique risk for developing eating disorder (EDs) or subclinical eating problems (DiPasquale & Petrie, 2013; Heffner, Ogles, Gold, Marsden, & Johnson, 2003; Leone, Sedory, & Gray, 2005). Despite the promotion of holistic student-athlete health and development through initiatives such as CHAMPS/Life Skills, EDs and subclinical eating problems continue to be prevalent conditions affecting the college student-athlete population (Becker, McDaniel, Bull, Powell, & McIntyre, 2012; Berg, Frazier, & Sherr, 2009; Chatterton & Petrie, 2013). Additionally, past researchers have observed an increase in the number of reported cases of disordered eating among male and female student-athletes (Carter & Rudd, 2005; Thompson & Sherman, 1993).

Johnson, Powers, and Dick (1999) conducted a study to assess the prevalence of eating disorders. Of the 1,445 student-athletes who participated, 13.17% were diagnosed (according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition [DSM-IV]) with clinically significant eating problems. The resulting statistics were considered to be an underestimate due to the use of self-report measures. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of disordered eating behaviors in the student-athlete population occur at the subclinical threshold (Chatterton & Petrie, 2013; Johnson et al., 1999). While many athletes do not reach the severity required for clinical diagnosis, researchers found that almost 50% of their samples engaged in eating or compensatory behaviors associated with Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, or Binge-Eating Disorder (Chatterton & Petrie, 2013). Additionally, Nowicka, Eli, Ng, Apitzsch, and Sundgot-Borgen (2013) found that two-thirds of coaches failed to report disordered eating as a problem in their sport despite their accounts of currently coaching athletes with EDs. Coaches and athletic department staff need to be aware of concerns associated with EDs and subclinical ED patterns to ensure athletes who are struggling receive quality care.

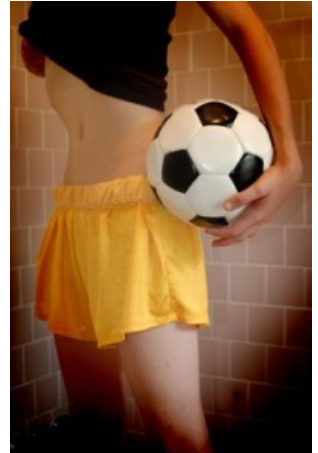
Athletes must be mindful of their energy availability, which is a measure of dietary energy intake minus the amount of energy that is expended during physical activity (Desbrow et al., 2014; Manore, Kam, & Loucks, 2007). While every athlete requires a different amount of energy to function based on their body composition, basal metabolic rate, level of activity, and developmental growth (Burke, Loucks, & Broad, 2006; Desbrow et al., 2014), many athletes exhibit poor eating and exercise behaviors and are subsequently at risk for developing Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S) (Mountjoy et al., 2014). Formerly referred to as the Female Athlete Triad (Becker et al., 2012; Manore et al., 2007), RED-S is a more comprehensive term that describes the physiological impairment that results due to energy deficiency in male and female athletes. It expands upon the Triad by accounting for many aspects of health including metabolic rate, menstrual function, bone density, immunity, protein synthesis, cardiovascular health, and psychological health (Mountjoy et al., 2014). Low energy availability is common in male and female athletes who participate in weight-class or weight-dependent sports, such as wrestling and gymnastics, and can seriously compromise the overall health and performance of student-athletes (Chatterton & Petrie, 2013; Manore et al., 2007; Mountjoy et al., 2014).

Physiological issues can result from insufficient levels of energy intake and engaging compensatory behaviors, including esophageal and dental problems, amenorrhea in women, loss of bone density, chronic fatigue, increased risk of infections or illnesses, and compromised major organs (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013; Mountjoy et al., 2014.). Furthermore, psychological problems associated with disordered eating behaviors include depression, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, anxiety, and substance use (Lenz, Taylor, Fleming, & Serman, 2014; APA, 2013). Given the severity of EDs and the prevalence in the student-athlete population, the remainder of this article examines current models of psychoeducation and interventions for disordered eating, with concluding remarks focused on incorporating exercise and physical activity into the treatment and recovery process.

### Intervention

#### Prevention

Psychoeducation can be used as a means of prevention by increasing the knowledge base of student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. While didactic psychoeducation is effective in increasing knowledge, cognitive dissonance-based prevention (DBP) and healthy weight intervention (HWI) are two empirically-supported approaches shown to reduce ED pathology (Becker et al., 2012). DBP stems from the theory of cognitive dissonance which asserts that change occurs through the process of reducing dissonance that exists as a result of the incongruence between an individual's beliefs and behavior. Participants using DBP publicly advocate against the thin-ideal standard of female beauty, thereby creating cognitive dissonance and the motivation to change one's actions or



*"While many athletes do not reach the severity required for clinical diagnosis, researchers found that almost 50% of their samples engaged in eating or compensatory behaviors associated with Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, or Binge-Eating Disorder"*

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practices in efforts to maintain a healthy weight. Becker et al. (2012) found that when DBP and HWI were modified for athletic populations specifically, female student-athletes experienced reduced thin-ideal internalization, dietary restraint, bulimic pathology, body shape concern, and negative affect.

Athletic departments can provide annual psychoeducational training workshops or seminars for student-athletes, coaches, and administrators to increase their knowledge and awareness of disordered eating. Public advocacy regarding proper nutrition and restructuring thin-ideal standards of beauty can be promoted throughout athletics facilities via posters, video campaigns, and other forms of visual media. Coupling education with the public commitment to healthy dieting and exercise and the various forms of athletic body types can be an effective approach to the prevention of EDs.

### **Treatment**

Student-athletes diagnosed with EDs are strongly encouraged to utilize a sport management team, including a mental health practitioner or sport psychologist who is trained to work with EDs, a nutritionist, an athletic trainer, and a medical doctor or team physician (Thompson, 1987). This team would be responsible for coordinating the individualized services needed to best serve the student-athlete (Heffner et al., 2003). Using a sport management team emphasizes a holistic approach in helping the student-athlete recover.

In addition to the literature on the benefits of sport management teams, researchers support including exercise and sport activity in the treatment of EDs. Hausenblas, Cook, and Chittester (2008) reviewed studies that incorporated exercise as part of the treatment for EDs. Participants reported improved physical benefits, like body composition, and improved psychological benefits such as body satisfaction, more positive mood, and an improved quality of life. Sundgot-Borgen, Rosenvinge, and Bahr (2002) found that participants with EDs in an exercise-only group, compared to a Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy group, reported better outcomes with regard to bulimic symptoms, body dissatisfaction, and the drive for thinness.

Athletes who are separated from their sport by injury have been found to have diminished self-worth and increased mood disturbances, especially depression (Nippert & Smith, 2008; Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993). It can be inferred that these same effects could result when athletes are separated from sport due to disordered eating. Exercise has been found to have numerous benefits to one's mental health (especially in decreasing depressive symptoms) and physical health (Conn, 2010; Penedo & Dahn, 2005). In fact, Carless and Douglas (2008) found that men with serious mental illness benefitted from a sport and exercise intervention, as it provided social interaction and helped them build an identity. With appropriate treatment management and support, the effects of healthily engaging in sport and exercise may help athletes maintain their athletic identity while simultaneously improving their mental and physical health.

Research meets practice at McCallum Place, a nationally acclaimed eating disorder treatment center, which emphasizes the inclusion of physical activity as a part of the recovery process. The Victory Program is specifically designed to treat athletes diagnosed with EDs. Athletes begin training in preparation for their eventual return to competition when deemed appropriate based on the athlete's medical condition and treatment progress (McCallum, 2015). With support and oversight by licensed and trained clinicians, athletes also engage in mental training to learn traditional psychological skills such as self-talk, imagery, arousal regulation, and mindfulness. The comprehensive treatment model should be mirrored in athletic departments when working with student-athletes with ED issues.

### **Implications**

Research suggests that student-athletes are at risk for developing EDs. They are at an even greater risk for engaging in subclinical eating behaviors. Psychoeducation of EDs is imperative for all student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. It can be used as a preventative measure when emphasis is placed on healthy dieting and exercise practices and proper weight management strategies. When EDs are diagnosed, student-athletes should work with sport management teams for treatment. The role of each physician and specialist is pertinent to the overall treatment and recovery of the student-athlete. Additionally, management teams should consider the incorporation of exercise in the recovery process—when appropriate—to help increase treatment outcomes for student-athletes with clinically diagnosed EDs or subclinical eating problems.

*References for David & Goldberg can be found on Page 15.*

***“Athletic departments can provide annual psychoeducational training workshops or seminars for student-athletes, coaches, and administrators to increase their knowledge and awareness of disordered eating.”***





### What is your background as it related to sport and exercise psychology?

As a researcher and practitioner in the field of sport and exercise psychology, I think all my background closely relates to the field. With regard to my educational background, I obtained both my doctoral degree (Bielefeld University, Germany) and master's degree (Wuhan Sports University, China) in sport psychology. Then I also completed my post-doctoral research (Bunderswehr University Munich, Germany) in the field of sport psychology.

Concerning my academic career background, I worked at the University of Hangzhou, China, as an assistant teacher of sport psychology; and the Wuhan Sports University as an associate professor and then full professor of sport psychology. I was also head of the Sport Psychology and Monitoring Centre in Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) for over 14 years. Currently, I work at the Hong Kong Institute of Education as an associate professor.

As for my applied career background, I have been working with several Chinese national teams as a sport psychology consultant to help them prepare for important competitions, such as the Olympic Games and the Asian Games. I also have worked with various Hong Kong teams providing sport psychology services and participating in major international competitions.

In addition, I have conducted a series of research studies in the field of sport and exercise psychology as the principal investigator. I have published over 50 papers in academic journals of sport and exercise psychology, and contributed to different academic books as author, co-author, and chapter author, in both English and Chinese.



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### In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?

As mentioned above, I teach sport psychology as a professor in universities, and I provide sport psychology service for professional athletes and teams as a sport psychology consultant. Meanwhile, I also do research and make academic contributions to the field of sport and exercise psychology. Regarding the topic of mental training for excellence, I have also been invited to give a series of keynote presentations at international conferences for the insurance industry in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

### What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the performance psychology field?

First, try to find your own specific strengths in one to two areas, then systematically develop them. Second, try to build professional networks with various (or different levels of) colleagues and professionals. Third, develop your cultural sensitivity within the work setting.

Prepare the basic knowledge and skills in counseling and sport psychology; to find an experienced consultant who can supervise you for an internship; to gain a professional certificate.

### What is one piece of advice you would offer a student who wants to practice sport/exercise psychology as a career?

One of the happiest things in life is that your mentality/personality matches your job.

### What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to performance psychology?

Problems are normal, while smoothness is an exception.

### What should students do to prepare themselves in finding a job in your field?

1) Prepare the basic knowledge and skills in counseling and sport psychology; 2) Find an experienced consultant who can supervise you for an internship; and 3) Gain a professional certificate in sport psychology.

### What tools do you suggest students develop in aims of working in the performance psychology field?

I suggest that students work on personal competence as well as principles and methods of emotion regulation, mindfulness, cultural competence, and social intelligence. Building proficiency in imagery, goal setting, self-talk, behavioral routine, etc. will allow students to develop a mental skills training package for working with teams and athletes.

*“One of the happiest things in life is that your mentality/personality matches your job.”*

## Applying a Model of Mental Toughness with a Division I College Tennis Team

By Katie McLean and Amber Lattner  
University of Missouri—Columbia

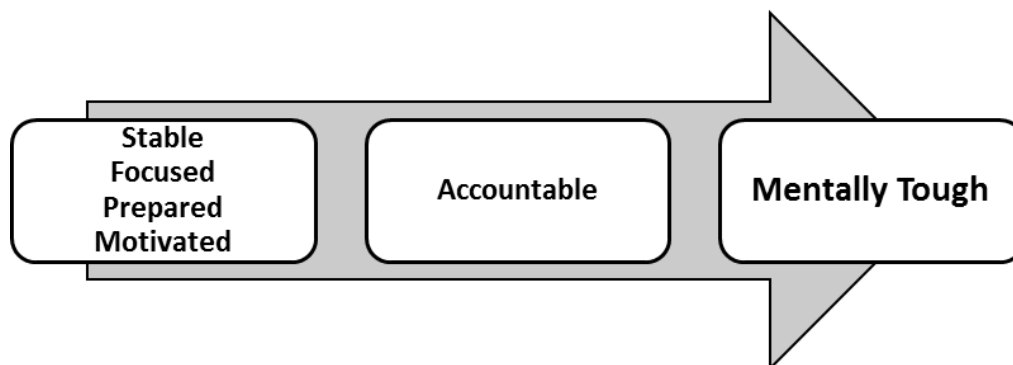
Mental toughness (MT) is a construct that elicits strong interest and endorsement from coaches and athletes in the collegiate athletic space. Given its perceived value, the McGuire-Ivey-Lattner Model of Mental Toughness (MIL-MMT; see Appendix A) was developed to give coaches and athletes an empirically grounded model by which to develop this construct within individuals and teams through a partnership with the team's mental performance coach. This article will begin with a discussion around the construct of MT, move into a description of the each of the six tiers of the MIL-MMT, and conclude with an application of the MIL-MMT on a Division I, Power Five Conference Women's Collegiate Tennis team by a fully integrated mental performance coach.

### Mental Toughness

Mental toughness is often linked to performance, being cited as a critical driver to success when it is present or as a contributor to failure when it is absent (Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2007; Gucciardi & Gordon, 2011; Lattner & Weiler, 2014; Meggs, Ditzfeld, & Dolby, 2013). Despite its popularity among athletes and coaches, however, the construct itself is widely debated in terms of definition and quantification (Gucciardi & Gordon, 2011). A multitude of studies conducted have resulted in the emergence of several consistent factors within the construct, including self-belief, self-motivation, competitiveness, control under pressure, resiliency, concentration, dealing with adversity, and commitment (Crust & Azadi, 2010; Crust & Swann, 2010; Gucciardi & Gordon, 2011; Sheard, 2010). Additionally, it is generally agreed that MT is multi-dimensional, comprised of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components that ultimately are linked to performance (Crust, 2008; Crust & Swann, 2010; Meggs et al., 2013).

### McGuire-Ivey-Lattner Model of Mental Toughness

Leveraging the former conceptions of MT and the consistent factors that prior research has identified, the MIL-MMT was developed to offer a theoretical model that could be applied by coaches and mental performances coaches seeking to improve the MT of individual athletes and teams. McGuire, Ivey, and Lattner (2015) defined mentally tough individuals as those who are properly motivated, fully prepared, completely focused, and emotionally stable. They are individuals who are accountable to doing what they say they will do, and who properly manage and apply the preceding elements. The image below describes this notion visually:

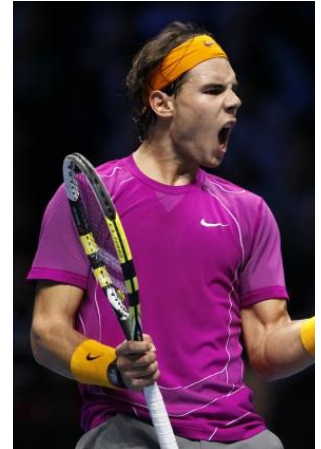


*"It is generally agreed that mental toughness is multi-dimensional, comprised of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components that ultimately are linked to performance"*

Based on research and extensive experiences of applying sport psychology with elite athletic populations, McGuire, Ivey, and Lattner developed the MIL-MMT. This six-tiered model integrates foundational performance research to offer a well-grounded, empirical structure for understanding, teaching, and developing MT. The six tiers, which will be described in detail below, include: motivation, preparation, focus, emotional stability, accountability, and performance. It is important to note that although each tier can influence the others, none is dependent upon others; that is, one can be properly motivated and not be emotionally stable.

### Motivation

Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the foundational tier of mental toughness is about having highly motivated, self-driven athletes. Self-Determination Theory has demonstrated that when the three basic psychological needs of competence (having the knowledge, skills, and abilities to complete a task or manage a situation), autonomy (making decisions by one's self, for one's self, about one's self), and relatedness (having a sense of belonging) are met, not only do self-determined behaviors increase but mental health, physical output, academic success, overall engagement and well-being do also (Ryan & Deci, 2000).



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McGuire's Model of Motivation (McGuire, 2015) encapsulates SDT by describing Intrinsic, Internal, Approach, and Positive Motivations as the most powerful, longest lasting, most enduring types of motivation that an individual can possess.

Type of Motivation	Description	Applied Understanding
Intrinsic	Source of the reward; sits on the other end of the spectrum from Extrinsic.	Are you driven to succeed because you find joy in the process and the grind of the journey, or to receive a prize?
Internal	Source of the driver; sits on the other end of the spectrum from External.	Are you pushing yourself to get through the next set, or do you require someone or something else on the outside to drive you to work hard?
Approach	Direction of action; sits on the other end of the spectrum from Avoidance.	Are you showing up to training to attack the challenge and to get better, or to avoid getting punished? Are you seeking success, or trying to avoid failure?
Positive	Ethical context of behaviors; sits on the other end of the spectrum from Negative.	Are you tackling someone with the intent to introduce them to your preparation, or with the intent to harm them?

It is important to note that although we encourage student-athletes and coaches to engage most frequently with the Intrinsic-Internal-Approach sides of the motivational spectrums, having a healthy distribution of motivation across each spectrum is both normal and beneficial. An exception to this notion is the positive-negative spectrum, in which we consistently teach toward the positive motivation side of the spectrum: it is never okay to intentionally hurt another in athletics.

## Preparation

Adapted from Bompa's training pyramid (2012), four distinct areas of preparation emerge that drive all athletic performances:

- Physical - Sport-specific fitness and conditioning.
- Technical - Fundamental skills and techniques of one's sport.
- Tactical - Awareness and understanding of one's sport; "game smarts."
- Mental - Perseverance in the pursuit of excellence, despite adversity.

By understanding preparation in these four distinct areas, coaches and athletes can ensure that they are adequately prepared to perform at their very best. By deliberately training all four areas, athletes can ensure that they are physically strong, technically sound, tactically smart, and mentally solid.

## Focus

According to McGuire (2012), the ability to focus and then re-focus is the most fundamental sport skill that exists. In the sport psychology program at the University of Missouri, we teach focus as a complex skill that can be learned and developed by understanding, learning, and conditioning the five component skills that lead to complete focus: (time orientation, positive self-talk, composure, confidence, and concentration).

**Time orientation.** Performance is optimized when we are totally present in the moment, and our minds are fully connected with our bodies. Only when our minds are "right here, right now" can our bodies perform all the preparation that we have invested.

**Positive self-talk.** "Right" thoughts help performance, and "wrong" thoughts hurt performance (McGuire, 2012). Athletes' thoughts about any situation drive their emotions, which then have a physiological impact on their bodies, which ultimately impact their performance, or behavioral response to the situation at hand (Ellis, 1977). According to Ellis's model (1977), the controllable variable in this sequence is the athlete's thoughts. By developing power statements—positive, powerful, and productive thoughts about themselves, their team, and their mission—and by choosing those thoughts in the midst of preparation and competition, athletes better position themselves to control the moment instead of allowing the moment to control them.

**Composure.** For a given athlete, on a given day, under a given set of circumstances, there is a given level of arousal that will lead to optimal performance; that is, there are individual zones of optimal functioning that drive optimal performance (Hanin, 2003). It is critical for athletes to know what their optimal level of arousal is for different task executions (e.g., maxing out on a squat versus running a route versus making a tackle), and then get into that zone at the point of execution.

**Concentration.** In athletics, as in life, there are always distractions that can deter us from achieving our goals. When we are fully concentrated, we identify the relevant information in a situation and then remain focused on the pertinent cues until completion. To enhance concentration and confidence, athletes can train to "See it...Feel it...Trust it" (Vernacchia, McGuire, and

*McLean & Lattner continued from Page 11*

Cook, 1995). That is, take in all the information and identify the relevant cues; imagine yourself executing the task successfully; then trust your training through execution.

**Confidence.** McGuire (2012) describes confidence as a thought that can be chosen. For that choice to be a logical one, however, one must choose to develop his or her competence in a given area. Performance precedes outcome, and so it is critical to develop competence that therefore supports the choice to be confident.

### **Emotional Stability**

Jim Loehr (1995) outlined four markers of emotional stability that are important for athletes to manage their emotions during competition. They include:

- Emotional Flexibility – Absorb and adapt to adversity.
- Emotional Responsiveness – Engage and connect under pressure.
- Emotional Strength – Fuel the fighting spirit.
- Emotional Resilience – Bounce back after blows.

These emotional markers offer a mental-emotional connection that helps drive consistency in one's performance. It is aligned with current MT literature and offers a concise way to understand and enhance the emotional aspect of elite athletic performance.

### **Accountability**

Accountability is about doing the things you say you will do. Accountability becomes the determining choice: if one chooses to develop each of the preceding tiers, that is, if they are accountable to intentionally developing the physical, mental, and emotional habits that lead to mental toughness, teams and organizations can count on them to deliver under even the most difficult of conditions (McGuire, Ivey, & Lattner, 2015). The final tier of performance is optimized when an individual is accountable to developing the first four tiers.

### **Performance**

Ultimately, elite athletics is about performance. And yet, the human being will always out-perform the performer, so if we truly want to optimize performance, then we must understand that the development of MT is in service to the person as a whole. As mental performance coaches train each of the tiers of the MIL-MMT, as athletes practice each of the component skills, and as everyone within the athletic performance system (sport coaches, strength coaches, nutritionists, athletic trainers) becomes accountable to being properly motivated, fully prepared, completely focused, and emotionally stable, individuals, teams, and organizations become mentally tough.

### **Applying Mental Toughness**

This past year, the MIL-MMT was used as a comprehensive, visual representation for a Division I, Power Five Conference Women's Collegiate Tennis team to describe and teach mental toughness. As mentioned, the construct combines both physical and mental components that relate to successful sport performance. Throughout the preseason and season, the components of each tier of the Model had been presented, discussed, and exercised in various settings, including team mindset meetings, team conditioning, and tennis practices. The MIL-MMT was used during the season as a visual aid to show members of the team how they have learned and practiced the tiers throughout the offseason and preseason, and can continue to practice such tiers during season as well.

The foundational tier of the model relates specifically to motivation. Throughout offseason and preseason, the tennis coaches attended several Positive Coaching sessions that related to autonomy and motivation, and how to implement these strategies into sport programs to create more opportunities to foster intrinsic motivation within their athletes (McGuire, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Competence, relatedness, and autonomy were intentionally interwoven throughout the offseason and preseason training structure. For example, a summer blog was created by a member of the tennis team to connect with each member of the team throughout off-season training. In this blog, the mental performance coach also offered voluntary participation in weekly positive psychology interventions to stay connected to each other, learn more about their teammates, and engage in activities to enhance personal well-being (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). During the preseason, members of the team were paired with each other and asked to do an activity outside of tennis to learn more about the other. During the season, the MIL-MMT was presented to the team, and Intrinsic, Internal, Approach and Positive motivation were defined and discussed.

After discussing motivation, the preparation tier was presented to the team. Throughout the year, the tennis team participated in weekly strength and conditioning activities. These activities were discussed in relation to the physical preparation in the model. Technical and tactical preparation was interwoven into daily tennis practices. The coaches and team members identified drills and other sport-specific activities as examples of technical and tactical preparation. The players were also encouraged to practice mental skills during practice, strength and conditioning activities, and matches. Specific examples such as pre-serve routines and positive affirmations were discussed as examples of mental preparation.

The mental component of the preparation tier provided a smooth transition into the focus tier of the MIL-MMT with the team. During the preseason and season, the tennis team met with the mental performance coach for weekly mindset meetings. Various



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mental conditioning strategies were presented throughout these meetings, including the five skills of the focus tier. A week of instruction was dedicated to each of the five skills (time orientation, positive self-talk, composure, concentration, and confidence). Additionally these five skills were referenced throughout other mindset meetings, during strength and conditioning sessions, and at daily tennis practices. Team members identified many examples of these focus components and how they practice them.

Next, the emotional stability tier was introduced to the team. Emotional flexibility, responsiveness, strength, and resilience were defined to team members and sport-specific examples were used to describe each. Additionally, quotes from professional tennis players were used to supplement the components and demonstrate the concepts.

Finally, accountability was presented and discussed with the team. The tiers and their individual components were recognized as skills by team members. Because they are skills, they can be learned and practiced. Members of the team and coaches described their own examples of how to practice and, therefore, be accountable to the preceding tiers of the MIL-MMT.

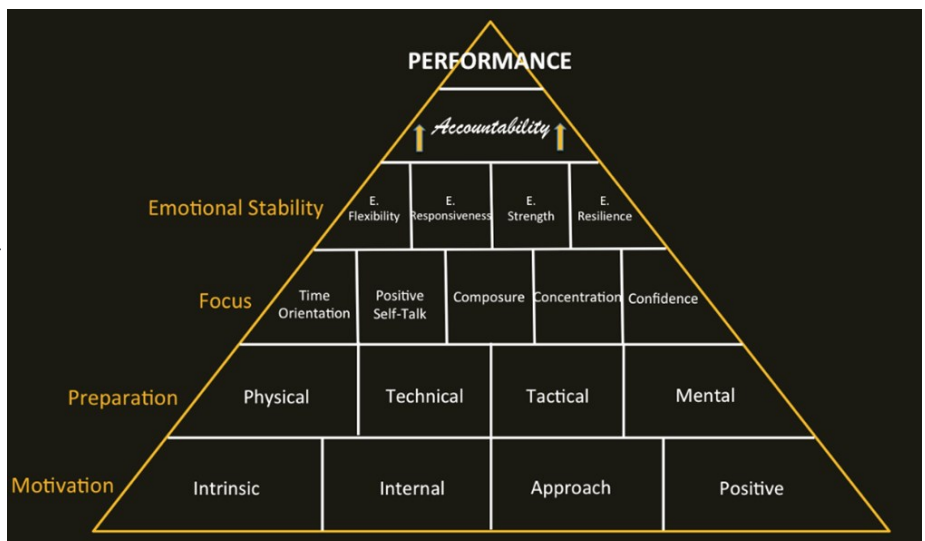
Following the presentation and team discussion, players were given printouts of the MIL-MMT pyramid. They used the MIL-MMT to evaluate and identify the extent to which they currently perceive themselves exemplifying each component of MT. Team members visually represented their current perceptions by shading in the different MT components on the pyramid; the more fully the block was shaded, the more competent the student-athlete perceived herself/himself to be in that skill. Players met individually with the mental performance coach to share their current, personal MIL-MMT. Strengths were celebrated and areas of improvement were identified and discussed to encourage continued skill development in the various tiers that make up mental toughness, as developed in the current model. For example, one team member identified physical preparation as an area of improvement. Goals for physical conditioning and nutrition plans were then executed with the strength and conditioning coach, athletic trainer and nutrition staff. Another member identified positive self-talk as an area of improvement. This sparked conversations between this athlete and the mental performance coach to identify the current self-talk, as well as strategies to implement during practice, conditioning and matches to improve self-talk patterns.

Players were able to acknowledge that MT is a complex state comprised of many skills that can continue to be nurtured, practiced, and developed further over time. Fostering a growth mindset, the subcomponents of MT can be practiced and enhanced; therefore, a person's level of MT according to the MIL-MMT is not fixed over time (Dweck, 2006). The degree to which an athlete is mentally tough depends on an athlete's own perceived level of competency in regards to each subcomponent. There were variations for each athlete's perceived level of competency in different subcomponents. Some of the variations in levels of competency were due to factors such as challenge, level of competition, frequency of practice of particular subcomponents throughout training, or comparison to other teammates. For example, if an athlete thought that a teammate had a higher level of tactical preparation, she ranked her own perceived tactical preparation lower.

With the help of their mental performance coach and tennis coaches, players were encouraged to utilize resources related to each particular subcomponent, as identified in the team presentation and discussion. With resources and continued training in each of the tiers and components of the MIL-MMT, players and coaches may perceive themselves an increase in mental toughness.

**Authors' Note:** The MIL-MMT model is based on scientific research, although the model itself has not been empirically validated. Student-athletes and coaches verbally expressed their understanding of the model and its structure, but pre- and post-assessments measuring the overall increase in MT as a result of the intervention were not assessed.

**References for McLean & Lattner can be found on Page 15.**



**What is your background as it related to sport and exercise psychology?**

I earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Wisconsin Lutheran College and a Master of Education in Counseling with an emphasis in Athletic Counseling from Springfield College. I first gained interest in the field as an athlete in high school when I wanted to know what leads some athletes and teams to achieve excellence and what causes others to fall short despite having similar work ethic and talent levels. I took this curiosity with me to college where I competed in football and baseball and continued to take classes and independent studies in sport psychology.

**In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?**

My current position is training the military on the mental side of performance and development. I use the skills I've learned along with new ones to help soldiers be as confident and focused as possible during training and deployments. Before working with the military, I worked with collegiate student-athletes. I assisted with academic and life skill programming.

**What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the performance psychology field?**

I would advise current students to identify their ideal position and then create a plan for how they want to reach that level. I also believe it is important to practice consulting or instructing as much as possible in front of teams, athletes, and groups. Effective sport psychology training is blending knowledge with rapport building. The only way to develop those things is to get out and do it.

**What is one piece of advice you would offer a student who wants to practice sport/exercise psychology as a career?**

Find opportunities to use your skill set even if the first job you get is not a "sport psychology job." What I mean by that is find opportunities to get in front of local teams, wellness centers, little leagues, or country clubs. Staying active in the field will help to build your resume and abilities when the opportunity comes that you really want.

**What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to performance psychology?**

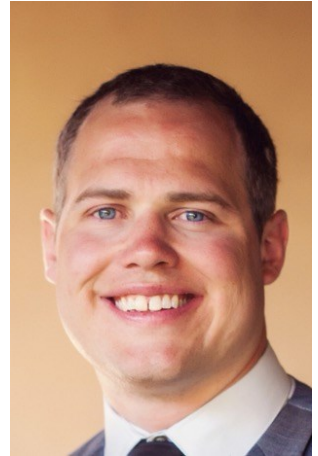
"Nobody cares about what you know until they know you care." This is something I remember whenever I'm in front of soldiers or athletes. I want to build rapport and trust first. I want to show them my passion for helping others get better. If I can build rapport and trust, then I have a better chance of connecting the skills to their specific needs.

**What should students do to prepare themselves in finding a job in your field?**

Network, network, network. Get out and meet people in the field. Talk to alumni in different fields of work. Stay in touch with mentors and colleagues. It's amazing how opportunities come about because there is someone you know who can help you get an interview. Once you have a chance at an interview, then it's all on you.

**What tools do you suggest students develop in aims of working in the performance psychology field?**

I would suggest that students develop their public speaking skills along with the ability to clearly define what it is they do and in what way the training can benefit the customer. Many teams and athletes are interested in sport psychology training, but they are not sure what to look for in a consultant or how it can benefit their team. If you can show confidence in what you train and in front of teams, that will go a long way to building rapport and buy-in from teams and coaches.



**Brad Marshall, M.Ed.**  
Master Resilience Trainer  
and Performance Expert,  
Fort Bragg, NC

*"Find opportunities to use your skill set even if the first job you get is not a 'sport psychology job'... Staying active in the field will help to build your resume and abilities when the opportunity comes that you really want."*

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**We are on the Web!**

[http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/  
initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/](http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/)

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

*As editors of the 2015 PEM Newsletter, we first want to thank the students that have contributed their experience to this year's newsletter. Additionally, we would also like to thank all others that have made the final product possible. This includes the AASP Executive Board and Student Representatives, former PEM Initiative Leaders, and the individuals in the performance field who so willingly participated in this effort. The PEM Newsletter would not have been possible without your helpful contributions, guidance, and support, and for this we are grateful. We would also like to thank the AASP Executive Board and Student Representatives for the opportunity to serve as the editors of the PEM Newsletter. This has been a learning experience for us, beginning with the initial development and design phases and continuing on through the process of recruitment and editing.*

*We would also like to reinforce the thoughts shared by the past editing teams. The current team of editors also believes that the PEM Newsletter is an excellent student publication that can increase student, practitioner, and public awareness of the application of sport and exercise psychology skills. Additionally, the PEM Newsletter has the potential to spread knowledge of the possible impact that the field of sport and exercise psychology can have on both sport and non-sport domains. We also believe it is essential that AASP student members have a venue through which they may publish articles regarding applied sport and exercise psychology. These articles help to create a newsletter that provides readers with information about sport and exercise psychology techniques and best practices. As your editors, we have tried to create a final product that reaches these goals.*

**Please submit any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the newsletter by using the online feedback form available on the PEM Student Initiative page on the AASP Website:**

**(<http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/>).**

*Looking to the future, we invite AASP student members to become more involved in the PEM Newsletter and to help this initiative grow!*

Thank you,  
—The 2015 PEM Team