

# PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE MOVEMENT

**2017-18 WINTER NEWSLETTER**

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## How can I get involved with PEM?

- Contact the current editors to learn more: Alan Chu (Alan.Chu@unt.edu) and/or Carra Johnson (cj0011@mix.wvu.edu)
- Read the newsletter and spread the word
- Attend an AASP regional conference in the spring to meet PEM committee members and/or article writers

## WHAT IS PEM?

The Performance Excellence Movement (PEM) is a newsletter designed to increase awareness of sport and exercise psychology topics. PEM also provides insight into applying these concepts to a number of different domains, including business coaching, medicine, the military, music, and elite sport. PEM has historically consisted of one annual issue; however, we are excited to announce that two biannual issues have been correspondingly published by the 2016 and 2017 PEM team!

In our "Committee Corner" section, current PEM committee members Eric Biener and Dan Marshall reflect on their experiences of applying sport psychology skills in strength and conditioning and rehabilitation settings.

This issue also includes two interviews with professionals, one with a clinical and sport psychologist Dr. Chelsi Day, who is the Director of Counseling and Sport Psychology at

Indiana University, and one with a CMPC and licensed clinical social worker Mr. Vince Lodato, who is the executive director for the National Sports Performance Institute (NSPI).

Last but not least, we have two student articles in the field of sport and performance psychology. In the first contribution, Mason Blake from the University of Denver discusses his research on the capabilities of observation-based interventions in augmenting collective efficacy of team sport athletes. In the second contribution, Jacey Keeney from the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science discusses her research on the role of sport participation and gender in binge eating symptoms.

We hope you can learn from some of the experiences shared in this issue, and that you enjoy reading the PEM newsletter!

## How to contribute to the PEM in 2018:

We are always looking for students who are willing to share their experiences and help others improve their consulting expertise. As we are working on the transition of PEM to a peer-reviewed, student-focused journal, we will not be publishing newsletters in 2018. However, please contact us (contact information on final page) if you are interested in being involved in the planning and organization of a new journal for PEM. We would like you to be part of the process for this exciting change!

## COMMITTEE CORNER

### Sport Psychology in Strength and Conditioning Coaching and Rehabilitation

**Eric Biener, University of Missouri**

**Dan Marshall, University of North Texas**

The psychological aspects of strength training and preparation, as well as the psychological aspects of rehabilitation and recovery, are integral to the performances athletes display during competition. In the following article, the authors will first examine the benefits of psychological techniques on strength training and rehabilitation. They will then discuss their personal experiences implementing these techniques within the strength and conditioning (S&C) and rehabilitation domains.

Strength training is one activity for which mental skills strategies can be useful. Indeed, sport psychologists and consultants routinely implement techniques and strategies before, during, and after training sessions and competitions to increase sport performance when working with athletes and teams (Tod, Iredale, & Gill, 2003). S&C coaches have been found to utilize specific techniques with their athletes during training sessions as well. For example, Radcliffe, Comfort, and Fawcett conducted a study looking at the types and frequencies of psychological strategies used by S&C coaches. They discovered that the most frequently used strategies were related to goal-setting and increasing adherence; these strategies were strongly emphasized by S&C professionals due to their belief that the strategies were

strongly related to performance. Alternatively, the authors identified imagery as the psychological skill least utilized by S&C coaches (Radcliffe, Comfort, & Fawcett, 2013). In a separate study, Massey and colleagues (2002) observed S&C coaches across multiple training sessions and found that more than 11% of the coaches' total behaviors were spent encouraging the desired effort and intensity from their athletes.

The goal of cognitive strategies in a weight room setting is to enhance strength performance and facilitate recovery time. Generally, enhanced performance in the weight room is observed by an increase in the amount of weight or number of repetitions an athlete can perform, leading to improved strength development (Lebon et al., 2010), electromyographic activity (Wilson et al., 2010), technique development (Silbernagel et al., 2007), and stress regulation (Williams et al., 2010). Furthermore, these strategies may give a competitive edge in their respective areas of competition.

There are several hypotheses that attempt to explain how cognitive strategies increase sport performance. The potential mechanisms include changes in cognitive, motivational, biomechanical/physiological, and affective states (Hardy, Oliver, & Tod, 2009). However, the most widely accepted idea is that there seems to be an optimal level of arousal at which athletes perform their best. In other words, every athlete has a unique level of arousal that facilitates his or her best performance for a given task (Hanin, 2000).



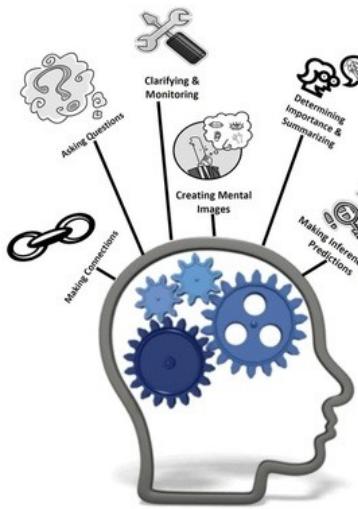
**Eric Biener, M.A.**



**Dan Marshall, M.S.**

***"There are several hypotheses that attempt to explain how cognitive strategies increase sport performance"***





### Cognitive Strategies

**"Four cognitive strategies commonly used to regulate arousal and optimize athletes' internal states are the use of imagery, goal setting, self-talk, and preparatory arousal exercises"**

According to this hypothesis, cognitive strategies facilitate performance by enabling athletes to adjust their internal states to one that is most desirable for the upcoming task (Mellalieu & Shearer, 2013). Four cognitive strategies commonly used to regulate arousal and optimize athletes' internal states are the use of imagery, goal setting, self-talk, and preparatory arousal exercises (Shelton & Mahoney, 1978).

In a recent meta-analysis, Tod, Edwards, McGuigan, and Lovell (2015) evaluated the effects of cognitive strategies on strength performance. The purpose of the review was to determine whether the use of goal setting, imagery, self-talk, or preparatory arousal, prior to or during strength training sessions was effective in increasing maximal strength, muscular endurance, or muscular power. The authors found that, generally, cognitive strategies were reliably associated with increased strength performance. Specifically, 61 to 65% of studies included in the meta-analysis reported an increase in strength depending on which strategy was used. For this reason, the authors suggested that individuals wishing to maximize training or competitive performance could be advised to employ a psychological strategy.

Mental skills techniques have also been shown to be effective in injury rehabilitation. The literature suggests that the most effective strategies integrate a combination of mental imagery and physical practice (Paivio, 1985). Specifically, mental imagery has been implemented in the treatment of strokes (Page, Levine, Sisto, & Johnston, 2001), spinal cord injuries (Cramer, Orr, Cohen, & Lacourse, 2007), and to alleviate chronic pain (Moseley, 2004).

### Psychological Skills in Strength and Conditioning Coaching

Eric, one of the Committee Corner authors, spent more than a decade as a collegiate S&C coach, working with a variety of team and individual sport athletes and teams. Throughout this experience, Eric sought to incorporate aspects of mental skills techniques into his training programs and the larger culture of his overall training environment. Due to the extensive utilization of these techniques, it would be impossible to provide a truly in-depth discussion of them within this article. Thus, what follows are two examples of ways in which psychological skills can be incorporated into S&C coaching.

According to the Cognitive Evaluation Theory, a person's intrinsic motivation will be increased as the basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness are satisfied (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017). One example of Eric's efforts to satisfy these needs as an S&C coach were, ironically, when his athletes were away from campus for winter and summer breaks. Within the athletes' workouts, Eric would provide a general structure for the athletes along with opportunities for the athletes to choose the specific drills that comprised their workouts on certain days. For example, rather than dictating specific agility exercises to be performed, Eric would write "shuttles" within the program and then provide detailed examples of shuttles from which the athletes could choose. The examples could differ in various ways, such as distances or number/angle of changes of direction. In this way, the athletes were free to choose the drills that would best suit their needs, preparation, and improvement heading into the upcoming season.

## COMMITTEE CORNER

Regarding competence, each individual athlete's program was customized to suit his/her unique needs. For example, suggested resistances and exercise selection would be tailored to the individual training level and injury history of the athlete, giving him/her specific targets for which to aim relative to his/her individual training status and strength levels. There would also be benchmarks within the program to help the athletes identify their progress while working toward passing off-season or preseason testing. These benchmarks also allowed for the third psychological need—relatedness—to be met, as they should be connecting with the athletes on how training (and life in general) was going while they were away from campus. Further, many of the teams would engage in group chats throughout the break (especially around benchmark workouts) to check in with and encourage each other as they continued to individually prepare during breaks.

A second example of incorporating sport psychology techniques within coaching relates to goal orientation. Competitive sport, especially at the elite level, provides abundant information to satisfy social comparison and an ego orientation. While Eric was fortunate to work with some incredibly talented and successful teams/athletes, he was intentional about using specific terminology that supported a task-orientation and praising his athletes' efforts to be at their best. For instance, consider a challenging conditioning workout Eric implemented with

one of his teams. One of the athletes struggled with making her time within the workout, yet her unsuccessful attempts were often less about her fitness level than truly giving her best effort during the workout. Therefore, Eric's feedback to her was not about missing the time, but about her effort (i.e. "I think you have more [effort] to give than what I just saw"). Later in the training program, when the athlete performed a similar workout and successfully made her times, she was clearly excited and proud of herself. While Eric shared those same sentiments, his comments focused on how proud he was of the improved effort that allowed her to accomplish this.

### Psychological Skills in Rehabilitation

Over the past several months, Dan, another Committee Corner author, volunteered his time as a trainer at a new gym. This gym was unique in that it provided more than just a workout for the participants. The distinction between this gym and others can be most aptly described by its mission: to redefine the limits of individuals with disabilities and to restore hope through physical movement. The staff continually accomplishes this mission by selecting ten veterans or athletes with a physical disability from the community and engaging them in a free 9-week strength and conditioning program.

Although the focus of the gym is strength and conditioning, many of the cognitive skills mentioned earlier in the article are implemented because the trainers at the gym believe in a relationship between physical and mental health. They believe that the perceived ability to change behavior and improve physical strength helps support mental and emotional well-being. For these reasons, cognitive skills are taught

### Effort Meter:



"Continuous effort is the key to unlocking our potential!" Winston

***"The distinction between this gym and others can be most aptly described by its mission: to redefine the limits of individuals with disabilities and to restore hope through physical movement"***





***"Another cognitive strategy the athletes were taught was to regulate their self-talk, because most of them admitted that their disability changed how they saw themselves and diminished their self-worth"***

systematically in order to enhance the experience of the athletes. The first skill taught at the gym was goal setting. To start the process, every athlete submitted an application that included an explanation for why the athlete would like to join. In the eyes of the trainers, this is the most important aspect of the application because it highlights the athletes' most personal motivations. Understanding where the athletes were are the start of training allowed the trainers to better assist the athletes in setting goals for themselves. The scope of these goals was not limited to strength; however, the trainers required that the goals to be specific and measurable.

The athlete with whom Dan worked had one primary goal: to be able to walk his daughter to school. After a serious motorcycle accident, he lost both legs above the knee and one arm at the shoulder. The loss was devastating and could not stand the thought of being bound to a wheel chair. Although he was going through physical therapy, he felt the need for additional help in using his new prosthetic legs. Dan and the athlete discussed the athlete's family and explored why it was so meaningful to him. Along with the other trainers, Dan used this knowledge to develop smaller goals that would lead the athlete to his main goal. In this way, the staff broke the process down into smaller, more manageable parts.

The athletes were reminded of their goals before, during, and after each workout. Before the session, the athletes gathered together to listen to the head trainer guide them through an imagery workshop. The athletes were told to visualize themselves performing the strength training exercises and imagine what it would feel like to go through the movements. Most importantly, the athletes were told to imagine achieving their primary goal. The head trainer told them that if they could see the goal achievement in their mind, it would instill a sense of encouragement and the belief that it was pos-

sible. During the workouts, the staff reminded the athletes of their goal when they were struggling or tired. The reminders refocused them and provided them with the motivation to continue. After the weight training session, the athletes gathered again to listen to the head trainer. The post-workout sessions included breathing exercises and a chance to reflect on the workout. Specifically, the head trainer would ask two questions: What went right today, and what went wrong?

Another cognitive strategy the athletes were taught was to regulate their self-talk, because most of them admitted that their disability changed how they saw themselves and diminished their self-worth. The goal of helping the athletes regulate their internal thinking was to refocus themselves on the present. The head trainer asked them to develop a word or phrase that they could tell themselves when they were feeling down. These individual phrases helped athletes refocus on the things that they could do instead of ruminating about their limitations and what they have lost. The phrase helped the athletes reshape their identity and challenged the negative thought patterns that arose naturally.

In conclusion, volunteering in this gym was a great experience and helping others grow stronger physically, mentally, and emotionally was extremely rewarding. Furthermore, it illustrated the importance of understanding the background and motivations of clients with whom you are working. Whether implementing a cognitive skill or teaching a squat, the person you are teaching has a complex history and reason for being there. Displaying empathy and compassion for the client is vital to inspiring growth and positive change.

# [INTERVIEW WITH A CLINICAL & SPORT PSYCHOLOGIST]

The PEM professional interviews serve the purpose of helping audience understand how different professionals in the field apply sport and performance psychology in research and practice. Thanks to Travis Scheadler for connecting us with Dr. Chelsi Day with her interview on this page and Mr. Vince Lodato with his interview on p. 10.

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

My background in sport and exercise psychology began when I was an athlete. At a young age, I was a gymnast, but I was too tall, so I became a diver. I went to Miami University in Oxford and I was a diver there. Originally, my major was criminology. However, I was the stereotypical injured athlete. I didn't even compete in my senior year! These injuries and my engagement in sports made me interested in helping other athletes, leading to my interest in sport psychology. I then picked up a second major in health and sport studies. I also coached Division III diving for a couple years and participated in a sprint triathlon to keep myself honest with exercise. I then went on to earn my doctorate in clinical psychology focusing on college-aged athletes.

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

I am the Director of Counseling and Sport Psychology at Indiana University where I work with all 24 teams and any student-athletes who are interested. The bulk of what I do is mental health stuff, but that bleeds over into performance as well. As a psychologist, I know that all performance issues have some degree of psychological underpinnings, so I work to correct and improve those issues.

## ***What educational training do you recommend students seek in order to apply sport and exercise psychology in a position that is similar to what you do?***

In terms of what I do, you need a licensed mental health degree of some sort. Specialized training in sport and exercise psychology, whether at the master's level or the doctorate level, is essential. The most important thing with my role, though, in the NCAA is the mental health license.

## ***What should current students be doing to prepare themselves in finding a job/being a young***

## ***professional in the field?***

Connect with people doing the job right now. I recently have run into graduate students whom I encouraged to reach out to me and gain shadowing experience. Some of them never follow up, but you need to seize those opportunities. In our field, you will be best prepared if you are connected to the people that are doing the work you want to do.

Those people, like me, can connect you to the people to get you a job. Connecting with professionals helps you become more marketable. And please, respond to emails!



**Chelsi Day, Psy.D,  
HSPP**

Clinical and Sport Psychologist, Director of Counseling and Sport Psychology; Indiana University

*What is  
piece of  
you  
offer a  
who*



*one  
advice  
would  
student  
wants*

## ***to do both research and applied work in sport and exercise psychology?***

It depends if you want to get paid to do research or if you want to do research because it interests you. If practice and research interests you, you will need the skill set and ability to balance time. In my opinion, one of them will have to be a side venture. Pick which one will be your priority and main role and then figure out a way to incorporate the other one. If I wanted to conduct research, I could, but my focus is primarily on applied work.

***“...you will be best prepared if you are connected to the people that are doing the work you want to”***

# [INTERVIEW WITH A CLINICAL & SPORT PSYCHOLOGIST]

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

It sounds silly, but it's that people are people. It came from Mitch Abrams. Everyone in our field are people. Reach out to them and get connected. If you have questions, e-mail them, call them. People are just people. That to me was a game changer. I remember when I was in school still. I was too scared to reach out to professionals in the field because they were such a big deal and I didn't think that lonely me as just a student should reach out to them. However, reaching out to them opened doors that otherwise would have been closed

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

Again, connecting with people. Secondarily, gain some specialized skill set that will be valuable. Find something that is a special interest that might make you stand out. If someone comes in with an eating disorder specialization or substance abuse specialization, for example, I may be more likely to hire that person over someone who has a generalized training in the field. Find a special interest area and really develop an expertise in that will put you above other candidates who aren't doing that. Being a generalist, however, may be a strength in the director role, like mine. Depending on what you want to do, you should keep this in mind.



**What tools (research and practice) do you suggest students develop in terms of working in the field?**

Students should become really aware of valuable resources. Students, especially these days, are under a lot of pressure to know everything. Knowing where your resources are can make things easier. I think it is special to know what your resources are and where to find them. You may not know the best app to use or the best depression screen to administer, but you should know where you can go to find them. It's a huge tool that I think we don't think about. I don't have to know where the screwdriver is as long as I know where to go to find the toolbox.

**Thank you so much for all of your responses! Is there anything else you would like current and future students to know?**

One thing that I think is really important is that we get a lot of mixed messages in our field right now. I think we scare students by saying that there are no jobs right now. The work is there and the needs are there. If you are persistent and flexible, there are jobs. This is a worthwhile job. I am in my dream job. I love my job and love coming to work every day. I feel confident that it is worth pursuing and this is the best job in the world. If you can be persistent and flexible, you can find your dream job just like I did.



**SPECIALIZED  
TRAINING PATHS**

***"I don't have to know where the screwdriver is as long as I know where to go to find the toolbox"***

# VISUAL GAZE OF TEAM SPORT ATHLETES

## Visual Gaze of Team Sport Athletes When Viewing a Team Performance: The Influence of Familiarity

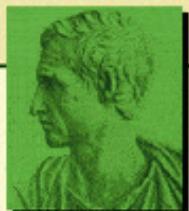
Mason Blake, University of Denver

Collective efficacy is a group's shared belief in their ability to produce the desired outcome (Bandura, 1997), and can be considered a group's equivalent to self-efficacy (i.e., belief in one's ability to succeed). The concept of collective efficacy is particularly pertinent to sport and performance domains, with research consistently showing that collective efficacy is a positive predictor of numerous desirable group characteristics, performance-predicting psychological constructs, and even performance itself (Beauchamp & Eys, 2008; Blecharz, Luszczynska, Tenenbaum, Scholz, & Cieslak, 2014; Myers, Feltz, & Short, 2004; Shearer, Holmes, & Mellalieu, 2009). Whilst representing a distinct construct, collective efficacy has been proposed as being rooted in self-efficacy, and thus shares similar antecedents in the form of vicarious experiences (i.e., directly observing one's own performance or the performance of another) and enactive mastery experiences (i.e., experiencing successful performance; Bandura, 1997). Based on this notion, researchers have sought to develop interventions that incorporate these antecedents of efficacy beliefs in an effort to cultivate collective efficacy. It has been suggested that interventions reliant on external stimuli, such as observation-based interventions, incorporate sources of efficacy beliefs in both vicarious and mastery experiences. This allows for observations of performance and experiences of success, resulting in a superior intervention technique (Holmes & Camels, 2008). Empirically, observation-based interventions have proven to be capable of manipulating collective efficacy perceptions of team sport athletes, with content familiarity identified as a salient factor (Bruton, Mellalieu, & Shearer, 2014).

With observation-based interventions established as effective tools for enhancing collective efficacy, researchers are now seeking to elucidate the mechanisms underlying collective efficacy development. Eye-tracking technology is an emerging experimental approach in the psychology literature that can be used to analyze real time cognitive processes associated with visuomotor tasks, with fixations (gaze fixed on object or location for more than 99.99 milliseconds) being the most commonly used measurement (McCormick, Causer, & Holmes, 2013). Despite the central role of eye gaze in all social communication, limited attention has been given to its role in complex social interactions such as collective efficacy (Itier & Batty, 2009). Simply through observing another individual's gaze, head and body orientation, we are able to extract social-cognitive presumptions in relation to their goals, intentions and actions (Nummenmaa & Calder, 2009). Taking this into consideration, eye gaze registration has the potential to further our understanding of complex human social interactions such as collective efficacy. Thus, the present study explored the effect of familiarity on collective efficacy across different sports teams, using eye-tracking technology to identify areas of attentional focus during collective efficacy development. By addressing these aims simultaneously, some of the processes team-sport athletes engage in when developing collective efficacy may be elucidated. During this time, the ambitions, rationale, and expectations were discussed, eventually serving to generate the basis of a positive consulting relationship between the instructor and myself. As Sharpe and Hodge (2013) propose, the consultant is able to facilitate a positive relationship with a coach when the consultant can (a) convey his/her knowledge of the sport as well as sport psychology theories, (b) develop trust through outlining boundaries and outlining confidentiality, (c) immerse him/herself in the team culture and, (d) display flexibility in format and consulting approach. It is surmised that this positive, collaborative relationship made the novelty of a consultant being introduced to the students easier and more comfortable to grasp.

*"They are able  
who think they are able."*

Virgil



# VISUAL GAZE OF TEAM SPORT ATHLETES

Thirty-four interdependent team-sport athletes were recruited from an institute of higher education. All participants were recruited from sports that require a ball. Two competitive fixtures were recorded per team, with this performance footage subsequently edited into 11x12s clips of successful team performance, celebratory reactions and teammate interactions to formulate interventions. A Tobii X120 fixed eye-tracker was used to record eye movements at a sample rate of 60Hz (Tobii Studio 3.2.3, Tobii Technology) during intervention sessions. In order to examine the influence of content familiarity on collective efficacy and gaze registration, each participant was exposed to both familiar (own team performing) and unfamiliar (unfamiliar team playing an unfamiliar sport) interventions across two separate experimental sessions. Pre and post-intervention collective efficacy scores were recorded using the Collective Efficacy Questionnaire for Sports, a 20-item collective efficacy measure that gauges an individual's confidence in their team's ability, effort, persistence, preparation, and unity (CEQS; Short, Sullivan, & Feltz, 2005).

Collective efficacy scores were significantly higher for both familiar and unfamiliar post-interventions, with the familiar condition eliciting a significantly higher score increase. In relation to eye gaze registration, no significant main effects were observed for the intervention condition. However in both familiar and unfamiliar conditions, participants fixated more times and significantly longer on the home compared to the away team, the home team compared to the ball, and the away team compared to the ball.

The current study demonstrates the capabilities of observation-based interventions in augmenting collective efficacy regardless of team and sport familiarity. The absence of significant differences in eye gaze and presence of significant differences in post-intervention collective efficacy scores suggests visual processes facilitate divergent cognitive processes. Whilst the extraction processes seemingly correspond, the interpretation of extracted information appears to be different or is being acted upon in a different manner. Additionally, although the gaze behaviors seemingly correspond, the interpretation of

***“Thus, in order to ensure collective efficacy remains elevated, positive and successful performance footage should consistently be featured in video-based sessions”***

the information extracted appears different or is being acted upon in a different manner. It can be proposed that visual information obtained from familiar video footage is interpreted as a mastery experience, whilst the same information extracted from unfamiliar video footage is interpreted vicariously. Theoretically and empirically, mastery experiences have been found to be the most powerful antecedents of efficacy beliefs, thus this interpretation can be seen as developing stronger efficacy perceptions in relation to one's own team (Ashford, Edmunds, & French, 2010; Bandura, 1994; Warner et al., 2014).

The findings of this study also highlight practical implications for consideration. Primarily, the significant positive effect on collective efficacy observed across multiple sports teams implies observation-based interventions could elicit similar benefits in different domains (e.g., educational, organizational, military). With collective efficacy displayed as a powerful predictor of performance, organizations should strive to incorporate video-based sessions into regular training regimes. Video footage is typically utilized within sport and performance organizations to highlight errors, facilitating awareness of these aspects and thus improvement. Whilst performance evaluation is considered vital to development, previous research has indicated negative footage as detrimental to the collective efficacy beliefs of team-sport athletes (Bruton et al., 2014) and thus may not be the most effective use of video footage in regards to team functioning and performance. Consistent with previous research, due to the presence of vicarious and mastery experiences, the present study evidenced positive performance footage as increasing collective efficacy. Thus, in order to ensure collective efficacy remains elevated, positive and successful performance footage should consistently be featured in video-based sessions. To conclude, the results of this study indicate observation-based interventions as effective tools for enhancing individual collective efficacy beliefs within a team, with familiar footage eliciting superior improvements due to the presence of mastery experiences. It was suggested individuals engage in the same visual behavior when observing sport performance irrespective of familiarity, implying these differences are attributable to the interpretation of visual stimuli.

# INTERVIEW WITH A CMPC & CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER

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

I am a Master's-level Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Florida and a Certified Consultant for the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP). I am completing my doctorate (Ed.D.) in sport and performance psychology through the University of Western States. I am finishing my dissertation and am a course facilitator in their graduate programs. I teach Sport in society; Professional Practice in and Counseling Ethics; Group, Team, and Organizational Dynamics; and Psychological Preparation and Mental Skills Training.

I have been with the Tampa Bay Rays for 17 seasons providing clinical work at the Major league level down through to the minor league player development. Twelve of those years I provided those same services for the Toronto Blue Jays, Washington Nationals, and Arizona Diamond backs. I was with 4 teams all at once as the lead clinician, providing services at different levels. For the Tampa Bay Rays, myself and a colleague review the psychological profiles of prospective players entering the amateur draft to assist with scouting during the Major League Baseball's draft. Additionally, I have a mental and vision center through the National Sports Performance Institute and have several contracts to provide mental skills training and services at the college and club levels.

Originally, I got into this as a clinician way back before we had the specific disciplines and curriculums for sport psychology. A lot of folks, now, got into this field specifically from a sport and performance psychology program. Finally, I am also an attendee of the Big Sky Clinical Sport Psychology Symposium, consisting of licensed clinicians who work with athletes and athletic teams.

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

Get involved with AASP and stay networked in your professional association. Also, find a mentor, whether it is through a formal mentorship or someone who can help you gain experience. The hardest thing with students is finding a practical experience and getting

good mentorship. Find a mentor, get ground floor experience, and stay networked in professional associations. Also, be sure that your mentor is a good credentialed mentor.

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

As a clinician and also trained in delivering and developing mental skills in sport psychology, I focus on the whole person and not just the performer. Primarily, I work with 18-to-20-year olds, college-level athletes, and professional athletes.

Also note that a dominant number of jobs are asking for individuals to be licensed clinicians and CMPCs. Therefore, I am able to navigate across different areas. The most direct answer for what I do is that having both a clinical license and the CMPC gives depth to understanding the whole person. The individuation and navigation of college into adulthood, as well as the stressors of performance, present issues that are common themes with which I work. In all, it's the whole person with whom I work

## ***What educational training do you recommend students seek in order to apply sport and exercise psychology in a position that is similar to what you do?***

I believe that with current trends, it is important to get the clinical training along with sport and performance psychology training. A foundation of a Bachelor's degree in psychology or a background in mental health counseling is a good start. Then, continue to earn your CMPC. From my perspective, this approach broadens your opportunities rather than limits you to a skill set. I would recommend that students look into graduate programs that blend counseling and performance psychology together.



**Vince Lodato, M.S.W.,  
LCSW, CMPC**

Executive director;  
National Sports Performance Institute (NSPI)

***"Find a mentor, get ground floor experience, and stay networked in professional associations"***

# INTERVIEW WITH A CMPC & CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER

## ***What is one piece of advice you would offer a student who wants to do both research and applied work in sport and exercise psychology?***

From my experience, find somebody who knows statistics and knows research design. Search the literature and find something new and novel and look at different populations. Try to find something newer and novel. Researching the current literature, I haven't seen much research on mental health and performance. I have seen mental health and sport, but find something that bridges sport and performance. Does general mental health translate to performance? As sport psychology focuses more on the scientist-practitioner model, you need to do research that is outcome-based. What interventions really make a difference? Be a scientist practitioner and be outcome-based. Folks want to know, "will this make me a better hitter?" Be sure to control for talent. You might improve high school athletes and help them reach their high school potential, but they won't always make it to the professional level. Absolutely increase intrinsic enjoyment to maximize this potential and that should help.

## ***What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to sport and exercise psychology?***

Ken Revizza was my mentor when I went through the CC-AASP process. He said: there are a lot of athletes who are going to buy in, some are going to use you when they need you, and some are not going to use you at all. Don't take it personally—work with everybody and be prepared because you're going to make mistakes. Not everybody is going to love you but work with everybody and build your relationships, trust, and credibility first. A lot of new sport psychology consultants come in and feel like they have to be the smartest person in the room. Build your relationships with them first, though, especially staff because they will be with players a lot more than you will. And be protective of and respect the athletes' privacy.

## ***What should current students be doing to prepare themselves in finding a job/being a research professional in your field?***

What I am seeing is that you need to find internships. If you're going to do research and go on to graduate programs, look at schools that do research on campus. Again, be sure to stay networked. The field is so broad and there is an increasing amount of jobs and opportunities, but there are only so many professional teams. If your goal is to work with pro-

fessionals, you have to be sure to stay networked.

## ***What tools (research and practice) do you suggest students develop in terms of working in the field?***

For applied practice, looking back at what we use in my lab, there are some really good tools and technology out there. I like them because we can use them to measure the athletes' application of the mental skills we train. If you can use good, sound, training tools and technology, you can have immediate feedback with behavioral observation. However, be sure to look at the research behind those tools. Look at who funds it. If the research is not published and is funded by the group that conducts it, then I would be wary.

And how do we take the research and transfer it into the applied realm of sport psychology? Bridge the sport science data and tools with applied methods and techniques. Can it make a difference in the real world?

With all of the analytics in sports, the athletes' psychological make-up and strength and durability of mental skills is what is going to separate athletes. If you can take something and develop it into the applied sense, you'll get something out of it. You have something that is practical and of value. How do you transfer the knowledge that exists? Having a knowledge-base of tools in sport psychology and being able to transfer the tools from research to applied practice is critical to enhance one's success in the field .

## ***Thank you so much for all of your responses! Is there anything else you would like current and future students to know?***

Sport and exercise psychology has become an attractive major for a lot of people just like sports business. Have a passion about your field. That is important, but also develop a professional identity. Because it is an attractive field, you need to develop that identity and have professional boundaries. Be a professional first. Know your boundaries and build trust. Everybody wants to be around the pros, but be professional. I think that's the most important thing. Know your place and know your role. You'll build trust, credibility, and acceptance with that. Your professional style and respect is what gets you in.

# BINGE EATING SYMPTOMS IN ATHLETES AND NONATHLETES

## Does Sport Participation and Gender Matter? Examining Binge Eating Symptoms in Male and Female Undergraduate Athletes and Non-Athletes Jacey Keeney, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science Leila Azarbad, North Central College

Eating disorders are serious psychiatric disorders associated with the highest mortality rate compared to any other mental illness (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). In the U.S., approximately 30 million individuals struggle with a clinically significant eating disorder (Wade, Keski-Rahkonen, & Hudson, 2011). While eating disorders affect a number of individuals, they have been known to affect some populations with greater frequency than others. Given that binge eating disorder was added to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-V; APA, 2013) as a recognizable eating disorder, and many college students suffer from eating disorders, understanding the nature and prevalence of binge eating among undergraduate athletes is important and timely.

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that 25% of undergraduate students have an eating disorder (Hudson, Hiripi, Pope, & Kessler, 2007). Research suggests that the prevalence of eating disorders also varies by gender. The National Comorbidity Replication reported that 10-20% of female undergraduate students and 4-10% of male undergraduate students are affected by a clinical eating disorder (Hudson et al., 2007). Anorexia nervosa has been recognized as an eating disorder since the publication of the DSM-I. Binge eating disorder, however, was not recognized as an eating disorder until the publication of the DSM-V in 2013. As a result, studies about binge eating disorder are limited. Sev-



eral studies posit that compared to anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, binge eating presents itself as an even greater concern among college students. A study in Portugal reported that 10.6% of the 805 college students met criteria for binge eating disorder (Ribeiro, Conceicao, Vaz, & Machado, 2014). Another study in the U.S. reported that 48% of 211 undergraduate students reported binge eating at some point during college (Kelly-Weeder, 2011).

Collegiate athletes are a subpopulation of college students who may be at risk for struggling with binge eating. Johnson, Powers, and Dick (1999) examined 1,445 Division I collegiate athletes and identified clinically significant problems with binge eating in 10.9% of females and 13.0% of males. DePalma and colleagues (1993) examined eating behaviors in male college football players and found that 74% of 131 participants met the criteria for binge eating disorder. The present study aimed to compare the occurrence of binge eating symptoms between (a) undergraduate athletes and non-athletes, (b) male and female undergraduate athletes, (c) male and female undergraduates, and (d) undergraduate athletes of different sports.



# BINGE EATING SYMPTOMS IN ATHLETES AND NONATHLETES

## Methods

Participants were 255 undergraduate students ( $M_{age} = 18.8$  years,  $SD = 1.80$ , 66.7% female, 81.2% Caucasian) enrolled in a liberal arts college in the Midwestern United States. A total of 80 participants (31.4%) identified themselves as current Division III college athletes. Participants completed a demographics questionnaire and the Binge Eating Scale (Gormally, Black, Daston, & Rardin, 1982).

Participants were asked to self-report their age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, year in school, major(s), GPA, and sports played in college (e.g., baseball/softball, basketball, cross country/track and field, football, golf, soccer, swimming and diving, tennis, wrestling, lacrosse, volleyball). The Binge Eating Scale is a 16-item scale used to assess the presence of binge eating symptoms. Items examine behavioral characteristics, as well as emotional responses to eating.

Three separate independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the occurrence of binge eating symptoms between (a) undergraduate athletes and non-athletes, (b) male and female undergraduate athletes, and (c) male and female undergraduates. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the occurrence of binge eating symptoms among undergraduate athletes of different sports.

## Results

Approximately 14.1% ( $n = 36$ ) of the sample and 17.1% of the females reported clinically significant levels of binge eating. Compared to athletes, non-athletes reported greater levels of binge eating,  $t(240) = -2.572$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Approximately 4.02% of the non-athletes reported clinically significant levels of binge eating. Female undergraduates reported greater levels of binge eating than male undergraduates,  $t(240) = -3.655$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . There were no significant differences in the occurrence of binge eating symptoms between male and female undergraduate athletes,  $t(75) = 0.107$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , and among undergraduate athletes of different sports,  $F(10,66) = 1.955$ ,  $p > 0.05$ .



**NON-ATHLETES** vs **ATHLETES**

## Discussion

Undergraduate non-athletes and females may be at higher risk for binge eating compared to undergraduate athletes and males. The results of this study support prior research that reported undergraduate students and athletes had greater frequency of eating disorders than the general population (DePalma et al., 1993; Johnson et al., 1999). This study further highlights that binge eating symptoms may be more common than anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa in college population, which warrants further exploration, including examination of the nature and prevalence of binge eating disorder in undergraduate populations.

There are several limitations to this study. First, the present study surveyed current Division III college athletes. While Division III college athletes may be passionate about their sport, the pressure to excel may not be as strong as at a Division I or II school. The differences in the presence of binge eating among Division I, II, and III athletes deserve further investigation. Second, the present study examined a relatively small representation of individual sports; future research should aim to obtain a more representative sample of both individual and team sports. Future research should also examine how to prevent and treat binge eating in undergraduate athletes, as well as how to educate athletes, coaches, athletic administration, and parents to proactively demonstrate the importance of a healthy body.

**“Undergraduate non-athletes and females may be at higher risk for binge eating compared to undergraduate athletes and males”**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

As editors of the 2017 PEM Newsletter, we first want to thank the students who have shared their experience in this newsletter. Additionally, we would like to thank all who have made the final product possible. This includes the AASP Executive Board and Student Representatives, former PEM Initiative Leaders, and the professionals in the sport and performance psychology field who so willingly participated in our interviews. The PEM Newsletter would not have been possible without their helpful contributions and support. We would also like to send special thanks to the AASP Student Representatives for giving us the opportunity to serve on the PEM Committee and make changes to the newsletter this year and the upcoming years. We decided to change PEM to a peer-reviewed, student-focused journal in the next two years. We are in the process of working on the initial planning and recruitment of editorial board student members. Because of the time and effort in making this change, there will not be any PEM publications in 2018.

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 applied techniques in sport, exercise, and performance psychology. We also believe that it is crucial for AASP student members to have a venue through which they may publish articles in this field. As PEM editors, we have tried to create a best product that reaches these goals and serves the diverse interests in our field. Looking to the future, we invite AASP student members to be involved in the future and to help this initiative grow as we are moving to a student-focused journal!

**Please email any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the newsletter to PEM Committee Co-Chairs Alan Chu and/or Carra Johnson as we continue to improve. Newsletters from previous years are available on the PEM Initiative Website: <http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/>**

*Thank you,  
The 2017 AASP PEM Team*

## PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE MOVEMENT Editorial Staff

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Alan Chu</b><br>University of North Texas<br>alan.chu@unt.edu       | <b>Eric Biener</b><br>University of Missouri<br>ebiener@mail.missouri.edu         | <b>Daniel Marshall</b><br>University of North Texas<br>daniel.marshall@unt.edu         |
| <b>Carra Johnson</b><br>West Virginia University<br>cj0011@mix.wvu.edu | <b>Jacob Chamberlin</b><br>Miami University<br>jakechamberlin17@gmail.com         | <b>Nicholas McMillen</b><br>Georgia Southern University<br>nm02945@georgiasouthern.edu |
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