Dubai International Symposium for Sports Psychology

Mental Preparation Programs for Athletes
13th 14th September 2011

Our Vision Creating A Unique Sports Community

Strategic partners
His Highness Sheikh
Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan
President of the UAE
His Highness Sheikh
Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum
UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and
Ruler of Dubai
His Highness Sheikh
Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Crown Prince of Dubai
Chairman of the Dubai Sports Council
Introduction:

In order to achieve the vision of H.H. Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince & President of the Dubai Sports Council, this Symposium in accordance with scientific principles through the initiatives and programs adopted in the Strategic Plan of the Council, as part of the responsibilities and competences of the Council in the development of efficient administrative and technical staff of the sports organizations in Dubai, is due to increase awareness in the sports circles. As this area is relatively new in the United Arab Emirates, we want to facilitate staff in understanding the importance of preparing the players mentally, has been a key element in the industry to win sports competitions where the player can use his physical, technical and tactical abilities in the best possible manner.

Dubai Sports Council, which is an extension of the Dubai International Sports Conference, is organizing the Symposium for this.

This Symposium, the first of its kind in the UAE will discuss many matters including issues related to preparing the players psychologically, how team spirit can be enhanced and the development of the player’s mental skills through the role of Sports Psychologists.

Additionally, speakers will give presentations about the most important benefits of setting mental practices and how to increase the level of performance of the players allowing them to develop the best methods of use. The psychologists will help to give some skills to improve focus and self-isolation from
the outside world, and control the short-term and long-term psychological pressure and to remove the causes of tension and anxiety caused by disabilities, increase self-confidence, and encourage the participants to use their strengths and block the opponent’s weaknesses. Also, they will be encouraged to control their emotions in a positive way and focus on the responsibilities and duties required from them on the pitch without being influenced by the surrounding environment. They will clarify the role of the mental preparation needed to promote team spirit through the creation of harmony and remove the differences between team members so that a sense of belonging to the team as a group is created.

In order to achieve this, Dubai Sports Council, invited a group of prominent professionals to participate in this Symposium. We hope to contribute to this event in order to work alongside others to develop and meet current and future challenges in the field sports.
Symposium Objectives

- Shed light on vital issues within sports
- Highlight the importance of psychological preparation of players for competitions
- Identify the different ways to prepare athletes mentally
- Find examples of successful experiences from various countries in the field of mental training for athletes
- Qualify and develop cadres through the national sports highlighting the axis (Applied Sports Psychology)
- To communicate with international bodies, organizations and specialists in the field of sport psychology
- To contribute to achieving the vision of Dubai Sports Council in building a community of sports excellence

Symposium Program

- Mental Skills and Mental Training
- Programs of Mental Training Techniques for Athletes
- The Reality of Mental Preparation within the UAE Sports Sector, with the prospect of development within the Arab World
Suggested Subjects

- Importance of psychological preparation in Athletic achievement
- Psychological factors and sporting excellence
- Mental skills and Mental preparation techniques
- The Role of Applied Psychology in raising the level of Athletic achievement
- Tension, anxiety and their effects on Athletic achievement
- The future of psychology in the United Arab Emirates
- Some forms of mental training for the athletes
- How to develop a relationship between the coach and the players

Target Audience

- General Authority of Youth and Sports Welfare
- UAE National Olympic Committee
- National Sports federations
- Sports Councils within the UAE
- Coaches
- Athletes
- Administrators
- Sports Media
Symposium Style

- Lectures related to themes of the Symposium
- Open panel discussion
- Workshops (Application forms)

Expected Outcomes

- Highlight the role of mental preparation resulting in the promotion of sports
- Implement the fundamentals of sport psychology by implementing a new strategy for training systems
- Qualification in the field of sports through mental preparation by the cadres
Symposium Program
### Tuesday 13th September 2011

#### 1- Oral Presentations

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>08:30-09:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>09:00-09:15</td>
<td>Opening Ceremony</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>09:15-10:15</td>
<td>Prof. Terry Orlick (University of Ottawa– Canada)</td>
<td>Psychological Factors and Sport Excellence: The Heart of Excellence</td>
<td>Dr. Mohammad Abaily</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>10:15-11:00</td>
<td>Dr. Ahmed Anajjar (UAE University)</td>
<td>Importance of Mental Preparation in Performance Enhancement</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>11:00-11:15</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>11:15-12:15</td>
<td>Prof. Sidónio Serpa (Technical University of Lisbon- Portugal)</td>
<td>«Developing Young Talents in Sport: A Psychological Processes Approach»</td>
<td>Dr. Mohammad Abaily</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>12:15-13:00</td>
<td>Prof. Baria Abderrahim (Hassan II Golf Trophy Association Morocco)</td>
<td>Mental Skills: Instruction and Practice</td>
<td>Dr. Mohammad Abaily</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>13:00-13:45</td>
<td>Dr Tadhg Eoghan MacIntyre (University of Ulster – Ireland)</td>
<td>Mental Imagery, Simulation and Action: Using Your Mind to unlock Your Potential</td>
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### 2- Round Table

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15:00-16:30</td>
<td>Group of Specialists in the Field</td>
<td>Mental Training in the UAE and Arab Clubs: Reality and prospect</td>
<td>Dr. Mohammad Abaili</td>
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**Wednesday 14th September 2011**

### 3- Presentation & Workshops

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<td>2</td>
<td>08:30 – 09:15</td>
<td>Prof. Mohamed ElAraby Shamoun</td>
<td>4 Steps Mental Training to Enhance Performance</td>
<td>Dr. Abdelrzaq Al Medharab</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>09:15 – 11:15</td>
<td>Prof. Terry Orlick</td>
<td>How To Build Effective Mental Training Programs</td>
<td>Dr. Abdelrzaq Al Medharab</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>11:30 – 13:30</td>
<td>Prof. Sidónio Serpa</td>
<td>Developing and Maintain an Effective Coach – Athlete Relationship</td>
<td>Dr. Abdelrzaq Al Medharab</td>
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<td>6</td>
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Dubai International Symposium of Sport Psychology
Speakers and Abstracts
Terry Orlick, PhD, Founder of the Zone of Excellence is a world renowned leader in teaching and coaching people how to perform to their capacity and enhance the joyfulness of their lives. He has been leading the field of focus training for excellence in multiple disciplines for over 35 years. Terry has worked with thousands of Olympic and Professional athletes and coaches, corporate leaders, astronauts, surgeons, top classical musicians, dancers, opera singers and other performing artists, mission control professionals, and many others engaged in high stress performance missions. Terry teaches and coaches the key mental links to excellence that are necessary for consistent high quality performance and high quality living for children, teenagers and people of all ages.

In addition to his extensive work with high level performers, Terry has committed much of his life to helping children and teenagers grow and perform
with a stronger sense of self-confidence, harmony and joy in their lives. Terry knows first-hand the challenges involved in getting the best out of yourself, giving your best to others and living with a higher sense of joy and balance in your life. His work has made a meaningful difference in the lives of millions of people around the world- including children, parents, teachers and many of the world’s best performers.

Terry is the author of over 200 articles, 24 books and 8 audio CD’s which have sold millions of copies worldwide. His highly acclaimed books include In Pursuit of Excellence, Positive Living Skills, Embracing Your Potential, Feeling Great, Nice On My Feelings and Cooperative Games and Sports. His innovative audio CD’s include the Zone of Excellence CD series for Performance Excellence and his Positive Living Skills audio CD Program for children, teenagers and adults.

Terry Orlick’s insights and practical contributions are sure to provide unique and meaningful guidelines for anyone, at any age, committed to improving their performance and living joyfully.
Abstract

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AND SPORT EXCELLENCE: THE HEART OF EXCELLENCE

Effective focusing is the most important psychological skill for attaining and sustaining high levels of performance excellence in sport and other high performance domains. A positive and fully connected focus is clearly required for Quality Learning and Quality Performance in Sport. The Wheel of Excellence which grew out of the experiences of thousands of great athletes and other exceptional performers outlines the psychological skills that need to be nurtured to achieve the highest levels of excellence. The center of the Wheel of Excellence is focus (a positive fully connected focus) because focus drives all the other psychological skills required to perform to one’s potential. The spokes of the Wheel of Excellence include: commitment, mental readiness, positive imagery, confidence, distraction control and ongoing learning. If any of these skills are weak, inconsistent, or missing, an athlete will not perform to his or her true capacity on a consistent basis. Athletes need and gain from effective focusing and refocusing plans to enhance the quality of their focus and the quality and consistency of their performance.

It is important for athletes and coaches to continue to appreciate the positive parts of their performances and lives and to embrace the simple positive opportunities they have – every day. It is very important to keep the joy in the pursuit while they focus on the process of getting to where they want to
go, one little step at a time. They then need to continue to act on their good intentions and encourage athletes and others to continue to act on their good intentions. Only Action counts in the world of high performance sports. For more information visit www.zoneofexcellence.ca and read Terry Orlick’s most recent edition of his book In Pursuit of Excellence (2008).

Figure 1. The Wheel of Excellence (Terry Orlick)
Dr. Ahmad Abdulaziz Alnajjar

Associate Teacher, Social Psychology, UAE University

Scientific Certificates & Professional Experiences:

- Assistant Dean for student’s affairs, Education College, UAE University, 1991-1993.
- Assistant Dean for Scientific Researches Affairs, Education College, UAE University, 1994-August 1996.
- Founder and previous Manager of the Centre of Social and Security Studies and Researches, Abu Dhabi Police.
- Approved and licensed Psychologist and Hypnotist.
- Founder of Araa Consultation, Studies & Training centre, Dubai.
- Approved trainer for several courses in Human Development and Self-Development.
- First Arab to be combined in the list of World Social Psychologist.
- Member of American Psychology Association APA and American Consultancy Association ACA.
- Vice Chancellor of UAE Association of Psychology.
- Member of the Board of Directors of Emirates Association for Talented.
- Has several books and many papers in journals and periodicals that have been published worldwide.

Publications
Abstract

Mental Preparation role in raising the level of athletic performance

For discussion: true or false? Why and how?

1. What are the causes of fluctuation of the level of sports from game to game?
2. Why is the application of skills, which athletes trains seriously practice times not up to the level of ambition?
3. What is the best way to maintain the balance of the nerves during the competition?
4. Is there a way to develop the performance of the player less expensive and more effective?

The basic points of presentation

1. Introduction: purpose and the means, result and field.
2. Importance of mental preparation in sports performance.
3. Mental and psychological preparation for competition sports.
4. Mental disorders is appropriate occurring before the competition and need to deal psychologically.
5. Some of the mechanisms of mental preparation and themes
6. Prepared for competition and challenge by lead the mind for the guidance of excellence.
Sidonio Serpa is a Professor at the Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal, and the chair of the Sport Psychology Department (Faculty of Human Kinetics). His main research areas are relationships between coach and athlete, the psychology of doping and the psychology of sports excellence and talents. As an applied sport psychologist, Sidonio has participated in the Olympics at Atlanta and Sydney as a member of the staff of the Portuguese sailing team along with being a consultant of top level athletes and medalists in International major competitions. He has published scholarly papers and made presentations in five continents.

He has also been an invited professor in several universities from different countries and has been a member of the teaching staff of the European Master in Sports & Exercise Psychology since 1996. He has organized conferences like the 8th World Congress of Sport Psychology (Lisbon, Portugal, 1993) and the 13th FEPSAC European Congress of SP (Madeira Islands, Portugal, July, 2011) and participated in a number of academic projects and sport psychology activities. Currently he is the President of the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) and an active member of the European Forum of Applied Sport Psychologist in Topsport (FAST). In 2009, Sidonio Serpa received the Distinguish International Scholar Award from the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP), in Salt Lake City, USA.
Abstract

Developing Young Talents in Sport: A Psychological Processes Approach

Bloom (1985) defined talent as the exceptionally high demonstration of skills, achievements, or abilities in a given area of activity.

Understanding the psychological processes of sport talents has been a major aim of researchers and practitioners in sport psychology. The goals have been either founding the best selection procedures, or developing strategies that might increase the psychological adaptation of young athletes. During the 1960’s and 70’s, researchers looked for stable characteristics that might differentiate talents from non-talents in order to establish specific profiles. However, no genetic or innate profiles were found. Currently it has been suggested that talents’ differentiation comes from the way they interact with situations rather than from trait characteristics.

Gagné’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (2009) suggests that talent concerns the systematic development of gifted youngster’s natural abilities in a given domain, such as sports, that will depend on intrapersonal and environmental catalysts, as well as chance.

The Model of Sports Participation (Côté, Baker & Abernethy, 2007) also contributes to the understanding of talent development. It takes into account the concepts of deliberate practice and deliberate play, as well as the idea of early specialisation aiming at top performance in sport. The authors discuss the efficacy of the methodologies based on initial non-formal activities related to various sports and the progressive focusing at a specific sport, versus the early commitment to the intense training in a given sport.
On the other hand, various methods of talent selection and development have been used but their scientific foundation is not evident. The sports success of the athletes that followed these programs may be due to the exceptional good training conditions and facilities, rather than to the real efficacy of the selection procedures.

Despite there is not a talent homogenous profile, international literature suggests that there are some psychological characteristics associated to the process of talent development, such as motivation, adjusted perfectionism, commitment, resilience and coping.

Moreover, the cognitive, emotional and social variables of sports participation depend on the participant’s personal experiences, which are influenced by the social context, including the coaching and parental issues. The family environment seems to be a fundamental factor for the development of ability and career in sport. Overall, parents’ influence on children’s development of their sporting performance is positive when they have balanced expectations in relation to the children’s skills, show a task oriented motivation, and provide support and encouragement. On the other hand, research suggests that high levels of pressure and negative appreciations by parents and coaches lead to high anxiety levels and to a tendency to drop out in young athletes. Therefore, parental support, as well as the coach’s support, seem to be associated to the characteristics of sport talents’ environment.

The lecture will discuss the models and present some research data on psychology of talents in regard to personal and social characteristics. The complexity of talent will also be discussed.
Prof. Abderrahim Baria

Vice President of International Society of Sport Psychology
Hassan II Golf Trophy Association

Prof. Baria, Professor of sport psychology and ex-Head of the Department of Physical Education at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Casablanca, Morocco. Prof. Baria holds a Masters Degree from the University of Montréal (1987) and a PhD degree from the University of Ottawa, Canada (1994), both supervised by Dr John H. Salmela.

Prof. Baria is presently Vice President of the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) and the President of the Moroccan Association of Sport Psychology (MASP).

Prof. Baria is currently a performance consultant with the Moroccan professional golfers, along with being the Executive Manager of the Moroccan Academy of Golf in Bouznika, Rabat, Morocco. His research interests focus on cross-cultural studies in sport psychology, on sport excellence and coach
expertise development. He has papers published in accredited international
and national journals (in French and in English) and has made presentations at
international and national congresses and seminars.

Prof. Baria was the Congress Chair of the 12th World Congress of Sport Psy-
chology organized in Marrakech, Morocco (17 - 21 June 2009).

He has served as an assistant editor for the International Journal of Sport
Psychology from 1991 - 1995 and provided peer review service to research
journals in french and english (e.g., IJSP AVANTE & STAPS).

Prof. Baria’s current contact details:

Address: Abderrahim Baria, 364 Mustapha El Maani, Casablanca, 20 000, Mo-
rocco

Email:bariaabdou@yahoo.fr

Tel: +212 663 04 28 74
Abstract

Mental Skills: Instruction and Practice

Achieving excellence in sport is not an easy task. Sport psychologists have conducted extensive research exploring the various factors that affect athletic performance. The main finding that emerged from these studies is that athletes who excel, often have the same mental skills enabling them to feel that their bodies and minds worked all together and in synergy (state of Flow; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Moreover, scholars involved in expertise development and sport excellence agree that it takes 10,000 hours of deliberate practise to become elite (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Römer, 1993). The essence of this assumption is that the amount of time spent in deliberate practise is not exclusively devoted to conditioning, strength training or physical training; but also dedicated to a structured mental preparation along with a set of accompanying mental skills that meet the requirements of the sport practiced.

It is within such perspective that the present talk has been made. Specifically, the presentation will deal with two parts. The first part one will focus on a brief review of mental skills as: commitment, belief, goal setting, concentration, imagery, self-talk, distraction control and mental routines etc. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative tools and inventories (e.g., OMSAT) on how to identify and assess these mental skills will be presented. The second part is to provide suggestions for acquiring and applying these mental skills to the Arab
sport field in order to help athletes enhance their performance and develop their mental toughness. The presenter will also attempt to share some of his experiences in delivering sport psychology intervention with Moroccan professional golfers.
Specialization Professor Development At Al Ahli Soccer Academy

Academic field:
Professor of Sport Psychology, College of Physical Education- University of Halwan and previous head of Sport Psychology’ Department.
Member of the Permanent Scientific Committee of promoting professors and assistants professors of Sport Education in Egypt Universities.

Current work:
Specialist in Performance Development at Al Ahli Soccer Academy.

Sports field:
Previous Vice- Chairman of Egyptian Gymnastics Federation for three terms
Former international player
Current referee and participated in Beijing Olympic Games
Chairman of first Committee of men’s artistic gymnastic for the African Gymnastic Federation.
Psychological field:
Vice-Chairman of Egyptian Sport Psychology Association.
Member of International Society of Sport Psychology.

Practical field of mental training:
Mental preparation for several national teams.
Boxing: winning of three medals at Athens Olympic Games, silver and bronze.
Karate: winning of the World Championship in Kumite and third in Kata.
Modern Pentathlon: winning of the World Championship and sixth in Beijing Olympic Games.
Athletics: winning of the gold medal in 3000m walking in African Games and many individual activities.

Publishing field:
Several books including: Mental Training in Sports, The Player and Mental Training, Mental Training and Tennis, Sport Psychology and Psychometric and Leadership in sport field.

Awards:
Order of Merit from King Fahad, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques.
Prince Faisal Bin Fahad Award for research in Physical Education and Sport.
Appreciation Certificate from International Olympic Committee.
Appreciation Certificate from International Gymnastics Federation.
Abstract

Mental Training in four steps to develop performance

Unethal define Mental Training as long term sequential training for mental trends and skills aiming to reach high sport levels and quality of life. Studies and research confirmed the importance of Mental Training in the development of performance in various sport activities.

There are several programs of Mental Training. We have Massimo, Connelly, Penit and other programs that have spread and been applied in wide levels which have proved their effectiveness in sport field.

The program of Mental Training has been set in four steps in order to develop a fixed system (routine) working to elaborate the mind to accept the dynamic and tactical tasks which will be exercised in training session or competitions. In addition, to ensure the arrival of the message to the player in a manner providing the achievements of planned objectives and assessing the positives and negatives in performance. This closed session should be repeated throughout the training season to reach the target.

The program was applied first to the players of the Egyptian Team of Boxing in preparation for Atlanta Olympic Games 1984, and continued until the team won three medals in Athens Olympic Games 2004, one silver and two bronze. The program has been applied also on several individual activities including Karate when the World Championship in Kumite was won along with a player
winning third place in Kata. A player of the Modern Pentathlon won the World Junior Championship and also got sixth place in the Beijing Olympic Games 2008. A player won the gold medal in walking (3000m) in the African Games. Another player broke the Egyptian record in men’s breaststroke swimming (50 m) which lasted for a period of 12 years, along with many other achievements at Arab and African level.

The program is based on the philosophy of working with and through the coach, after mastering the skills of mental relaxation and visualization, continuous assessment and ensuring that there is a positive direction from the players towards the Mental Training.

The four steps of Mental Training can be summarized as following:

First step: mental preparation for the following training.

Second step: Includes three dimensions, 1st: explaining all the details of the training session, 2nd: to ensure the arrival of the message to the player’s mind, 3rd: the mental perception of the required performance, including the practical application in the field. While the fourth dimension comes at the end of training, including the clarification of positives and negatives of session by the coach and the player’s mental perception of these positives and negatives.
Tadhg MacIntyre, Ph.D.

University of Ulster

Tadhg MacIntyre PhD Sport Psychologist at the Ulster Sports Academy

Tadhg MacIntyre is the director of the postgraduate training programme in Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology at the University of Ulster. He initiated this course, the first university level postgraduate specialism in this field on the island of Ireland in 2009. An accredited sports psychologist with both the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences, and the Irish Institute of Sport, he is a former Olympic squad level athlete and competed for Ireland at world level for 15 years in canoe-sport. He is also a registered psychologist with the British Psychological Society. In 1993, he graduated from the University College Dublin (Ireland) with a BA in psychology, and subsequently was supervised by Professor Aidan Moran, a world expert in concentration research for both his Masters in 1996 and PhD in 2007.

His research record of 16 refereed articles is focused on investigating the
construct of mental imagery, a topic which is at the cross-roads of perception, cognition and action, combines a cognitive neuroscience approach with a natural laboratory approach. In other words, it has explored mental imagery with experts in human movement and action representation (e.g., sport people) to develop models of imagery processes and to enhance applied interventions. His research collaborators include Prof. Stephen Kosslyn (Harvard University), Prof. Anders Ericsson (Florida State University) and Prof. Aidan Moran (UCD).

He has been funded to conduct research by the World Anti-Doping Agency, the Irish Institute of Sport and the Irish Sports Council. In the area of application, he has more than 15 years experience consulting with sports performers including both Olympians and professional athletes. In motor sport, Tadhg has consulted in both circuit racing and in rallying. He conducted one of the first studies to profile the mental skills of WRC drivers and co-drivers at the Rally Acropolis in 2000.

Tadhg brings a combination of a pragmatic approach and neuroscience to his consulting, providing a model of support that focuses on sport systems as well as individuals.

Curriculum Vitae

- Course Director MSc Applied Sport & Exercise Psychology,
- 1996 - Postgraduate research award for paper on the psychology of motor sport which focused on Ayrton Senna: A Case Study.
• Keynote lectures at three conferences including the at 3rd International Applied Sport Psychology Congress at University of Minho, Braga, Portugal, July, 18th, 2007.

• Over 30 International conference presentations and invited lectures at Harvard, University of Tasmania, and the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, Sydney.

• 16 refereed research publications including high impact outputs such as the British Journal of Psychology and Exercise and Sport Science Reviews.

• Contributed chapter to text on neuroscience of motor imagery published by Oxford University Press in 2010.

• Forthcoming book chapters in second edition of Routledge text Skill Acquisition in sport: Research, theory and practice and in the bespoke monograph: Sport management in the Middle East edited by Dr. David Hassan.

• Appointed in 2005 as coordinator of sport psychology services for the Irish Sports Council and part of a multi-disciplinary workgroup (Sport Science Support Network) a think-tank on high performance sport.

• Appointed in 2009 to the Irish Institute of Technical Sport Quality Assurance Panel as sport psychology representative with the remit of reviewing applications for professional recognition.

• 2011 Conducted research in talent development in motor sport for Automobile and Touring Club of UAE.
Abstract

Mental Imagery, Simulation and Action:
Using your mind to Unlock your Potential

Mental imagery has a long past, but a short history. Despite over a century of research across several disciplines there are, as we will see, known knowns, known unknowns and unknown unknowns. But firstly, let us examine the concept of mental simulation or imagery.

One of the most remarkable capacities of the mind is its ability to simulate sensations, actions, and other types of experience. A mental simulation process that has attracted recent attention from cognitive neuroscientists and sport psychologists is mental imagery or the mental rehearsal of actions without engaging in the actual physical movements involved. Imagery for action is conceptually complex. For example, one can imagine what a movement looks like from the inside and from the outside, and one can feel the movement, hear its consequences, rehearse its structure, perceive the effort exerted, or plan a sequence.

We can see from examples that imagery is potentially polysensory, it may involve all your senses, integrated with our memory system (e.g., linked to episodic memory) and dependent upon our expertise (e.g., motor racers can imagine driving a lap similar to their actual driving time).

From a neuroscientific perspective, imagery consists of brain states like those that arise during perception but occurs in the absence of the appropriate immediate sensory input. This evidence is fundamental to our understanding of the role of
imagery in simulating action. Researchers in the 1990’s theorized that the difference between imagery and movement is one of degree and not of kind. In other words, mental imagery is. Moreover, imagery is an integral process in movement preparation and this is illustrated by the role it has in pre-performance routines (e.g., for putting in golf).

Measurement of imagery has progressed vastly over the century with advances in our conceptualisations of the construct. Mental travel is now a well-established measure of what is termed motor imagery or simulated action. Furthermore, athletes knowledge and understanding of how their mind works appears to be vital in the effectiveness of imagery. This is known as meta-cognition, or more specifically, meta-imagery, and has led to the discovery that athletes often utilise only the relevant senses during imagery, and engage in movement while imagining action.

Mental imagery is no longer the ephemeral concept that William James alluded to over a century ago. As a result of research in neuroscience, sport psychology and the new field of motor cognition, it has been clearly established as a cognitive simulation process worthy of further study. Nevertheless, a number of areas of further exploration exist in our quest to understand imagery more deeply. For example, now that we have moved beyond the simplistic recommendations to imagine with all our senses, we have to explore which senses work best for which skill? A joint study with Harvard is currently exploring this question with elite athletes, specifically, it is attempting to see which combination of senses produces the best results in terms of the mental travel effect. Secondly, we need to conduct brain imaging
studies to examine whether it is useful to move during imagery, and indeed, if the type of movement (i.e., synchronous or asynchronous) has an impact upon the effectiveness of the imagery? And finally, we need to answer the question on the deliberation of mental imagery, that is, does it have to be done in a highly conscious manner or should we let spontaneous images emerge like a fish springs from water. Reports with elite athletes tend to hint at a combination of these processes.

Imagery as a cognitive simulation process has been demonstrated to have a significant positive effect on the performance of skilled actions. It has been shown to be useful across a range of domains, sport skills, recovery from stroke, in pilot training and in training surgeons. New perspectives will enable it to be a more effective simulation process in sport and beyond and consequently, become a key to many doors.
Workshops
Abstract
How to Build Effective Mental Training Programs

This workshop is centered on how you can begin to help athletes and other performers develop and improve the effectiveness of their focusing skills so they can perform to closer to their potential on a consistent basis in practices, training, performances, games and important competitions. This includes discussing ways of enhancing Focus, Commitment, Goal Setting (daily goals, dream goals, realistic goals, focusing goals and goals of self acceptance) Mental Imagery, Focusing Skills, Distraction Control Skills, Respecting Patterns that work best for individual athletes and developing effective plans to help athletes and coaches learn from every experience – Meaningful Ongoing Learning (which includes Focusing and Performance Debriefs after Practices, Training, Performances, Games and Competitions.
During this workshop, Coaches, Trainers and Athletes and other in attendance are encouraged to ask me specific questions about specific real situations they have faced or challenges they are now facing that are related to sport psychology, mental training, focusing issues or the mental side of sport.
Abstract
Developing and Maintain an Effective Coach Athlete Relationship

The evolution of the study on the coach-athlete relationship allowed an escalating of the knowledge about its different dimensions. The theoretical models provided the necessary fundamentals and consistency to research, whose results agree with the non-existence of an ideal coach style or of universally efficient behaviours. The suitability of the relational pattern of each dyad should result from the analysis of the athletes’ characteristics, the sport situation and the social and cultural context where it takes place, as well as from the coach’s personal factors. The coach interacts with the athlete in function of these aspects, aiming clearly at the athlete’s sport and personal development, which result from the instrumental, social and emotional components of his/her intervention. However, once this relationship is experienced in a context of enormous meaning for both actors, it only exists as a result of a cost-benefit balance and has a strong phenomenological impact on them.
The perspective of the relationship coach-athlete based on the leadership processes became one of the most productive in the international literature. It aimed at the scientific comprehension of the relational issues, and at generating methodologies to be field applied in order to optimize the athletes’ performance. Due to the fact that sport psychology still had not developed specific theoretical models by the 70’s, the theories of organizational leadership emerged as conceptual references in this initial phase. Progressively, the specificity of the sports context and, thus, the relation coach-athlete, has been accepted.

Specific sports leadership models have been developed. For example, the Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978) still is the conceptual reference for numerous current researches. It suggests that the leader’s action takes place in a group of particular characteristics, as the sport team is, which, on its turn, subsists in a particular organization, such as a club or a federation. It regards the performance and satisfaction of the group members as the final result of the coach’s behaviour, who has, upstream, the situational characteristics of the leader and the members. The behaviours required by the situation and sought by the members of the group, while they are simultaneously influenced by those characteristics, interact among themselves and with the real coach’s behaviours.

The Dynamic Model of Coaching (Côté, Trudel & Salmela, 1993) that also has generated important research aims to understand, in a systemic way, the sport training process and the coach’s intervention, based on the integration of the different variables influencing or determining the major objective, which is the
development of the athlete’s competences. It includes three interacting core components, which define the training process and which are competition, training and organization. These are mediated by the coach’s estimate about the athletes’ potential. On the other hand, the coach’s personal characteristics, the athlete’s personal characteristics and his/her level of development, as well as the contextual factors, are the external components. The athletes’ development is regarded as the prior goal of the training process. It uses an open system of assessment, which may include questionnaires, interviews or observation, depending on the particularity of the problem to the studied. The need to manage the relationship based on the psychological knowledge underlying the strategies to be used and the communication processes, to promote the co-participation of both actors in the establishment of targets and procedures, to formalise the contract between coach and athlete and to maintain a permanent availability to adapt the relational pattern to the incoming changes, are some of the main conclusions we may take from the international research. On the other hand, the coach’s philosophy must lead his/her interactive style, either athlete centred or win centred. Following the approach of Jewett & Ntoumanis (2002), research suggests that high scores on emotional closeness, cognitive commitment, and behavioral complementarity in the coach-athlete relationship are associated with higher levels of satisfaction with performance and personal treatment, levels of team cohesion, higher levels of harmonious passion toward the activity (as opposed to obsessive passion), and
lower levels of role ambiguity in team sports (Mees, Serpa & Cuypers, 2010).

Relational processes among coach and athletes tend to be understood within a framework that should promote the personal development of the athlete to be facilitated by the coach’s strategies. The goal should be promoting the athlete’s sports achievement as an expression of his/her human potential. The coaches’ behaviours are a result of the interaction among contextual, task and individual (related to the coach and to the athlete) variables. Therefore, the constraints vary with time, space and circumstances.

Nowadays, successful coaches are observed and studied by experts from other professional fields, trying to understand how they influence the performers’ achievement by means of managing the social-emotional aspects associated to the instrumental issues. Coaching is now defined as a process used by the leader (coach) to develop the subordinate’s potential, aiming at improving his/her capacity to efficiently interact with the situations and solve the problems. The sports coach tend to approach the training process as an exercise of managing the contextual and personal variables in order to maximize the athlete’s adaptation capacities. Therefore, instead of being considered as a human resource, the athlete should be seen as a human being having personal resources that must be developed by the coaching strategies.

Some methodologies concerning coach-athlete relationship were developed, often in an empirical way, and coaches became experts in managing people in the sports context.
The objectives of the workshop are:

1. To understand the complexity of the relational process coach-athlete;
2. To use the theoretical models for a better management of the coach-athlete relationship in the sports field;
3. To discuss coaching as a process for the sport and personal development of the athlete
4. To discuss strategies of relationship coach-athlete

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